

GREATER COOK COUNTY 2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Community Assessment

Cook County and the Cities of Adel, Cecil, Lenox and Sparks



September 2009



Prepared By:



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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose

The purpose of the Community Assessment is to present the foundation for the update of the 2030 Greater Cook County Comprehensive Plan. It provides a comprehensive review of the issues and opportunities that will affect the future growth of unincorporated Cook County and the Cities of Adel, Cecil, Lenox and Sparks. The Community Assessment includes an analysis and inventory of the existing Land Use, public policies and proposed revisions and capital improvements.

1.2 Preparation

The Community Assessment was prepared in compliance with the “Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning” as set forth by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) on May 1, 2005.

1.3 Scope

As required in the DCA Standards, the Community Assessment includes four basic components:

- 1) A list of issues and opportunities which the community wants to address.
- 2) An analysis of existing land use and development patterns.
- 3) An evaluation of the Community’s existing policies, actions, and development patterns for consistency with the State’s Quality Community Objectives.
- 4) An analysis of supporting data and information for seven different community elements: population, economic development, housing, natural and cultural resources, community facilities and services, intergovernmental coordination, and transportation.

The detailed statistical and quantitative findings of this assessment are included in the “Technical Addendum”.

2. STATEWIDE PLANNING GOALS

The State Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has established the following goals to assist communities in implementing their Comprehensive Plan. These goals will serve as a guide for the development of the 2030 Greater Cook County Comprehensive Plan and its Community Agenda.

2.1 Economic Development Goal

To achieve a growing and balanced economy, consistent with the prudent management of the state's resources that equitably benefits all segments of the population.

2.2 Natural and Cultural Resources Goal

To conserve and protect the environmental, natural and cultural resources of Georgia's communities, regions and the state.

2.3 Community Facilities and Services Goal

To ensure the provision of community facilities and services throughout the state to support efficient growth and development patterns that will protect and enhance the quality of life of Georgia's residents.

2.4 Housing Goal

To ensure that all residents of the state have access to adequate and affordable housing.

2.5 Land Use and Transportation Goal

To ensure the coordination of land use planning and transportation planning throughout the state in support of efficient growth and development patterns that will promote sustainable economic development, protection of natural and cultural resources and provision of adequate and affordable housing.

2.6 Intergovernmental Coordination

To ensure the coordination of local planning efforts with other local service providers and authorities, with neighboring communities and with state and regional plans and programs.

3. COMMUNITY PROFILE

Cook County is located in Southern Georgia along I-75 and Ga. Highway 37. Its population in 2008 was estimated to be 16,608 which was an increase of 5.3% from the 2000 census. Cook County encompasses 233.2 square miles area and its municipalities include the Cities of Adel, Cecil, Lenox and Sparks.

Cook County was the 153rd county formed in Georgia. It was created from Berrien County and named for General Philip Cook who fought in both the Seminole War and the Civil War and was Georgia's secretary of State for over 20 years. Cook County is in the 7th and 8th State Senatorial Districts, the 170th State House District and the 1st U.S. Congressional District.

The City of Adel is the county seat of Cook County and was incorporated on October 3, 1889. The original name of the city was Puddleville. The city's first postmaster, Joel "Uncle Jack" Parrish, wanted to change the name of the city. It is believed that he saw the name "Philadelphia" on a crocus sack, struck out the first and last four letters to create the present name of Adel. The City of Adel encompasses 7.97 square miles and its estimated population in 2007 was 5,399.

The City of Cecil was founded soon after the arrival of the Georgia Southern Railway in what is now Cook County (circa 1888). However, it was not incorporated until August 14, 1914. In the 1890s, the JN Bray Company established a sawmill at Cecil that resulted in an increase in job availability which also increased the population of this little town. However, that population growth faded when the Bray Company relocated its mill to nearby Valdosta. The City of Cecil encompasses 0.8 square miles and its estimated population in 2007 was 333.

Incorporated in 1901, the City of Lenox has become an agricultural hub for south central Georgia. The rise in the production of produce, such as watermelons, has put Lenox on the map with produce brokers from Florida and Missouri. In the late 1800's, railroad workers stumbled across some of the finest timber they had ever seen. In doing that, lumber mills began to set up and they called this little place Mogul. In the early 1900's two farmers were setting at the train depot when workers began to load an old ox. One farmer said to the other, "that sure is a lean ox" and the story goes from there. The City of Lenox encompasses 1.2 square miles and its estimated population in 2007 was 897.

The City of Sparks was incorporated on December 26, 1888- the same year that the Georgia Southern Railway came through what is now Cook County. It was founded by Dr. Isaac J. Goodman who named the town for President Sparks of the Georgia Southern and Florida Railway. Education was important in the growth of Sparks and early in the 20th century, the South Georgia Methodist Conference chose Sparks as the location of its new boarding school for boys and girls. The City of Sparks encompasses 3.7 square miles and its estimated population in 2007 was 1,792.

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Location Map 3-1

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4. ISSUES and OPPORTUNITIES

In order to be a realistic and implemental document, the Comprehensive Plan must identify and provide Cook County and its municipalities with workable goals, objectives and policies (= strategies) which will address the issues facing the communities and embrace opportunities that present themselves to all of Cook County. The Technical Addendum of this document was the first step taken towards identifying these issues and opportunities. The quantitative information detailed in the addendum is summarized in the Community Assessment in a series of concise issue and opportunity statements. However, this series of statements is only a preliminary list of potential issues. The list will be further studied, refined and prioritized during subsequent local public and technical planning efforts and a final list of locally defined issues and opportunities for Cook County will be included and published in the Community Agenda, which is the third and final portion of the Comprehensive Plan.

The following issues and opportunities are organized according to the elements of the Comprehensive Plan:

- Population
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Natural and Cultural Resources
- Facilities and Services
- Land Use
- Transportation
- Intergovernmental Coordination

The issues and opportunities statements included here were presented and discussed with the Stakeholder Committee. This committee was formed to guide the development of the Comprehensive Plan. These statements were also presented during public participation workshops in the planning process. Through these discussions and the resulting feedback the final list of issues and opportunities was developed for the Community Agenda as well as a series of strategies and implementation programs. These strategies and implementation programs were then the basis for the Short Term Work Program component of the Comprehensive Plan.

4.1 Population Change

Issues:

- **Retention of younger population segment:** In order to provide a sustainable population base and workforce, initiative needs to be taken to provide quality education and job opportunities for the younger population to minimize the desire to leave the area.
- **Attraction of Retirees:** The tax impacts of a change to an overall older population are not entirely clear and need to be understood before a concentration or marketing to that population segment will be made a priority, however the quality of life would lend itself to attracting retirees from adjacent States that are becoming too urbanized and expensive.

Opportunities:

- The rise in elderly population may enhance a community's economic base and provide a largely untapped knowledge and experience base for the labor market.

4.2. Economic Development

Issues:

- Incentives are needed to fill up existing vacancies in commercial or industrial buildings that have been vacated by businesses closing due to the current economic condition.
- The growth of the SR 41/I-75 industrial corridor through the county may result in water /sewer capacity problems and service gaps along the corridor
- The area needs more local employment opportunities.
- The local workforce needs to be increased in order to be able to attract more business and industry.
- The Cook County Airport needs additional T-hangers to serve future businesses and air traffic.
- Additional marketing materials need to be developed to market the airport and its terminal.

Opportunities:

- Cook County has six interchanges with I-75 that should be utilized to bring businesses and development into the County.
- The County has a diverse industry base.
- The County is strong in agriculture consisting mainly of produce, watermelons, cotton, corn and peanuts. Additional niche products should be developed to ensure continued diversity.
- Cook County is a certified Work Ready Community (June 2009), which will enable the County to increase the quality and education of the local work force in coordination with local educational institutions and businesses.
- Cook County is centrally located along I-75 halfway between Orlando and Atlanta. This is a good location to draw businesses for a maximum area of influence for those businesses.
- Two major rail lines, Georgia/Florida and Norfolk Southern have routes through the County.
- Cook County has 3000 acres developable land available for business.
- The South Georgia Motorsports Park is located in Cook County, which is just one component of quality recreation opportunities within the County. These opportunities need to be coordinated countywide and marketed.
- The airport runway length of 5000 feet may contribute significantly in the ability to attract businesses that rely on general aviation activities for employees and their business.

4.3 Housing

Issues:

- Several areas within Cook County and its cities experience varying degree of blight conditions that need to be addressed with a comprehensive enforcement and demolition program
- Cook County and its cities need to adopt a comprehensive strategy to provide for additional diverse housing such as low-income housing and rentals as well as quality low to moderate income housing.
- Location and lack of maintenance of Mobile Home Parks specifically and rental properties in general often result in low-quality housing: strategies need to be adopted to encourage maintenance of existing Mobile Home Parks and replace the older mobile homes with newer residential units.
- Cook County needs to develop a strategy to address the homeless population problem.

Opportunities:

- Develop mechanisms to maintain the value of the existing and future housing stock, while also providing diverse, affordable and quality housing.
- Old neighborhoods are also perceived as providing quality character to the area and should be maintained and preserved in high quality.
- Provide mechanisms to maintain the quality and number of mid to high level income housing.
- Utilize The House of Grace, a rehabilitation center and homeless shelter in Cook County

4.4 Natural Resources

Issues:

- Water in general and groundwater specifically are becoming a resource in high demand and low supply state wide. Local water resources need to be protected from a statewide re-distribution.
- Existing groundwater recharge areas need to be protected from increased use of residential wells and irrigation wells for produce crops.
- River corridors need to be protected from impact of development.
- State water restriction standards are geared towards northern Georgia and Metro Atlanta area and are not appropriate for the South Georgia area.
- State air emission standards for non-attainment areas are not appropriate for South Georgia conditions and should not be imposed on the area.
- **There is no existing tree planting campaigns or tree planting requirements in Cook County or the Cities of Adel, Cecil, Lenox, and Sparks.**

- Residents view Open Space and Green Space as healthy and an attractive part of the Greater Cook County Community.

Opportunities:

- Cook County needs to protect its groundwater resources to serve residents and businesses into the future. To protect groundwater recharge areas, implement management strategies which could include the following protection opportunities: wellhead protection program (Adel has already implemented a plan); limit impermeable surfaces with maximum building footprints and maximum paving areas; require sewer service instead of septic systems, especially for non-residential.
- Develop a County-wide Utilities Authority to implement coordinated and comprehensive planning.
- Protect and preserve Reed Bingham State Park.
- Continue with the implementation of the Wetlands Mitigation Bank.
- Develop tree and landscape standards for the preservation and or replacement of trees and vegetation as part of land development, to protect the existing native tree canopy and to encourage the planting of new trees and the preservation of green space.
- Encourage protection and expansion of Open Space and Green Space and consider developing some standards for Open Space and Green Space provision.

4.5 Cultural Resources:

Issues:

- A comprehensive historic resource survey for Cook County has not been completed.
- Cook County has many historic buildings that are empty, in poor repair, or contaminated by lead paint and/or asbestos.
- Funding is not available to restore historic buildings where needed and great resources are lost when those buildings fall into disrepair
- Cook County does not have a discernable character or identity.

Opportunities:

- Underutilized historic buildings and structures throughout Cook County should be adaptively used.
- Cook County’s cultural resources could be promoted and used to market the area, increasing economic and tourism opportunities in its communities, especially the Performing Arts Center which is state-of-the-art, and the Cook County Historical Museum which is housed in the old Post Office.
- Cook County has many historical churches that need to be inventoried and promoted as part of the cultural heritage of Cook County.

- **The development of an identity or “brand” for the area could help economic development initiatives and provide a tool to promote the Greater Cook County area as a quality community to live and work.**

4.6 Community Facilities and Services

Issues:

- Recreation programs in Cook County need to be expanded to operate and coordinate on a county wide level
- Funding to expand and improve county-wide recreational services is lacking and additional funding sources need to be identified
- Lowndes County residents are increasing utilizing garbage collection stations in south Cook County due to decreasing landfill capacity and increasing garbage disposal fees Lowndes County.
- Illegal dumping is on the rise in south Cook County.
- Cook County’s water/sewer infrastructure is aging and is in need of major improvements. Funding is not available for design and construction.
- The Hwy 41 industrial corridor requires additional sewer capacity to serve the industrial development area with adequate capacity.
- The City of Adel’s sewer capacity is rapidly decreasing. Expansion and modernization of the system is necessary before additional development can be accommodated.
- County wide fire protection capabilities and resources are limited and need to be expanded to provide adequate fire protection for the county’s residents and structures.
- The old Cook Middle School that houses the Boy’s and Girl’s club program was built in 1963 and is in need of sanitary upgrades for its facility.
- The City of Sparks is lacking a city park.

Opportunities:

- Plan and guide the growth via the provision of water and sewer lines and tie the services into the appropriate land use with the formation of a county-wide Water/Sewer Utility Authority and the development of a 20 year Water/Sewer Master Plan.
- Establish a joint Capital Improvement Program for all the communities which would be updated annually and would aid in planning future investments.
- Maintain the adequate landfill capacity for Cook County and its residents.
- Maintain all schools in their current condition. All schools in Cook County have been built in the last few years.

- Continue to utilize the new Boys & Girls Club, which has been in operation for the last three years. Coordinate with the school board and the County to provide a center for teens.
- Incorporate the existing 18 hole golf course at Circle Stone Country Club into the county-wide recreational efforts.
- Maintain the quality of the existing hospital system which includes state-of-the-art baby delivery suites

4.7 Land Use and Development

Issues:

- Many buildings in Cook County and its cities are vacant. Infill development is needed both for residential and commercial/industrial buildings.
- Encroaching development poses a threat to existing farmland, not only by turning existing farmland into residential subdivisions, but also by endangering neighboring farmland through perception of incompatible uses.
- Population numbers are stagnant. The county needs to find ways to increase population growth.
- Opportunities for reinvestment and redevelopment of declining residential and commercial areas need to be created.
- Most zoning maps and ordinances are outdated and require an update, especially the smaller cities such as Cecil, Sparks and Lenox.
- The City of Cecil lacks a town square or village center.

Opportunities:

- Improved quality of life will attract more residents, a better workforce and better employment opportunities by attracting industries that will rely on these residents.
- Protect existing farmland from development by developing incentives to keep farmland agricultural and make it productive for farmers to do so and require sufficient buffers or transitional areas to protect existing farm operations from perception and complaints about incompatible farming uses next to newer residential subdivisions.
- Develop zoning districts to develop the interchange areas into a cohesive and integrated area.
- Provide regulations that ensure that any proposed zoning will be compatible with the underlying “Future Land Use” as shown in the Comprehensive Plan. No zoning or development should be approved that is not consistent with the comprehensive plan. A compatibility matrix should be established to provide an easy overview at which “Future Land Use Designations” and zoning categories are allowed.
- Cook County is located in proximity to large attractions and larger city areas, but still provides a quality of life geared towards a more rural lifestyle. This characteristic needs to be preserved and enhanced.

4.8 Transportation

Issues:

- The existing airport master plan needs to be updated.
- Cook County needs an updated airport terminal. One or more funding sources need to be identified to update the marketing package and implement the update.
- An additional interchange needs to be constructed between exits 32 and 37 in order to provide access to the Hwy 41 industrial corridor and industrial park without having to drive through residential neighborhoods.
- The City of Adel needs a continuous east-west truck route through the city. The truck route needs to be tied in to the Alabama road project. Required right-of-way needs to be identified early and preserved for future construction.
- The railroad switching yard is currently located inside the City of Adel. Its location is causing severe traffic delay problems.
- Numerous at-grade railroad crossings in Cook County decrease traffic capacity of the roadway system.
- The transportation system (street network) in Cook County is aging and is in need of major improvements.
- County-wide transportation is lacking for kids not old enough to have a driver's license or who don't have a car to get to destinations such as the Boys & Girls Club facility. Continuous sidewalks are not available in most location to encourage safe walking or bicycling.
- Golf cart traffic is increasing and causes traffic accidents because cars and golf carts don't mix well.

Opportunities:

- Develop and coordinate a plan with the railroad to relocate the switching yard into the industrial area to the south of Adel.
- Develop a right-of-way corridor plan for future road construction planning.
- **Develop a bicycle and pedestrian master plan to address sidewalks, trails, and bicycle paths safety and improvements.**

4.9 Intergovernmental Coordination

Issues:

- **Lowndes County residents are increasing utilizing garbage collection stations in south Cook County due to decreasing landfill capacity and increasing garbage disposal fees Lowndes County.**

Opportunities:

- Maintain the good existing working relationship between local governments and other agencies.
- Coordinate with Lowndes County to eliminate cross-county garbage disposal or develop an I.D. system for limiting utilization of garbage collection systems to in-county residents only.

5. ANALYSIS OF EXISTING LAND USE and DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

In order to adequately develop Cook County’s vision for future development, an understanding of its historic development and existing land use patterns is necessary. For a future vision to be achievable, it must be grounded in the reality of the current environment. This section provides a brief synopsis of the historical development of Cook County and its Cities, an analysis of the Existing Land Use, and a discussion of the development patterns including any Character Areas and Areas which may require Special Attention during the planning process.

5.1 Existing Land Use

An existing land use map is a representation of what is on the ground at any given point in time. For the purpose of this analysis, Cook County’s and the Cities of Adel, Cecil, Lenox and Spark’s Current Land Use Maps (Map 5-1 through 5-5) were created based on information from residents, physical site visits and information received from the Cook County Tax Assessor’s Office. The depicted uses may or may not be accurately reflected by the property’s current zoning classification.

Table 5-1: Current Land Use Categories

| USE | OVERVIEW |
|--|--|
| Agriculture/Forestry | Land dedicated to farming, agriculture or commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting. |
| Commercial | Land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities, organized into general categories of densities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building. Office uses may be separated from other commercial uses such as retail, service or entertainment. |
| Industrial | Land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction activities, or other similar uses. |
| Parks/Recreation/Conservation | Land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. May be publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, parks, preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers or other similar uses. |
| Public/Institutional | State, federal or local government uses and institutional land uses. These include city halls, government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc. Institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals. Also includes major transportation routes, railroad facilities, radio towers, telephone switching stations, airports, ports, or other similar uses. |
| Residential | The predominant use of land within this category is for single family and multi-family dwelling units organized into general categories of net densities. |
| Transportation/Communication/Utilities | Includes major transportation routes, public transit stations, power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, telephone switching stations, airports, ports or others similar uses. |

Table 5-2: Current Land Use Unincorporated Cook County, July 2009

| Existing Land Use Category | Acres | % of Total |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| Agricultural/Forestry | 109,546.5 | 83.3 |
| Commercial | 2,111.9 | 1.6 |
| Industrial | 1,069 | 0.8 |
| Public/Institutional | 215.8 | 0.2 |
| Park/recreation/Conservation | 649.6 | 0.5 |
| Residential | 11,893.9 | 9 |
| Transportation/Communication/Utilities | 5,987.8 | 4.6 |
| Total | 131,474.5 | 100 |

Source: Cook County Tax Assessor, July 2009

Table 5-3: Current Land Use City of Adel, July 2009

| Existing Land Use Category | Acres | % of Total |
|--|---------|------------|
| Agricultural/Forestry | 621.3 | 12 |
| Commercial | 871 | 16.9 |
| Industrial | 944.9 | 18.3 |
| Public / Institutional | 363.2 | 7 |
| Park / Recreation / Conservation | 58 | 1.1 |
| Residential | 1,379.6 | 26.7 |
| Transportation / Communication / Utilities | 926.3 | 17.9 |
| Total | 5,164.3 | 100 |

Source: Cook County Tax Assessor, July 2009

Table 5-4: Current Land Use City of Cecil, July 2009

| Existing Land Use Category | Acres | % of Total |
|--|-------|------------|
| Agricultural/Forestry | 192.4 | 31.0 |
| Commercial | 93.7 | 15.1 |
| Public / Institutional | 6.8 | 1.1 |
| Residential | 230.4 | 37.1 |
| Transportation / Communication / Utilities | 97.7 | 15.7 |
| Total | 621 | 100 |

Source: Cook County Tax Assessor, July 2009

Table 5-5: Current Land Use City of Lenox, July 2009

| Existing Land Use Category | Acres | % of Total |
|--|---------|------------|
| Agricultural/Forestry | 148.3 | 14.3 |
| Commercial | 114.2 | 11 |
| Industrial | 219.8 | 21.1 |
| Public / Institutional | 88.4 | 8.5 |
| Residential | 323.7 | 31.1 |
| Transportation / Communication / Utilities | 145.3 | 14 |
| Total | 1,039.7 | 100 |

Source: Cook County Tax Assessor, July 2009

Table 5-6: Current Land Use City of Sparks, July 2009

| Existing Land Use Category | Acres | % of Total |
|--|---------|------------|
| Agricultural/Forestry | 874.9 | 33.8 |
| Commercial | 135.0 | 5.2 |
| Industrial | 266.2 | 10.3 |
| Park / Recreation / Conservation | 2.6 | 0.1 |
| Public / Institutional | 354.9 | 13.7 |
| Residential | 721.8 | 27.9 |
| Transportation / Communication / Utilities | 234.1 | 9 |
| Total | 2,589.5 | 100 |

Source: Cook County Tax Assessor, July 2009

With approximately 78%, unincorporated Cook County has a large percentage of its land use in agriculture. Residential development accounts for about 8.3% of the land use. This is the second major land use in the unincorporated area. Commercial and industrial uses cover about 2.2% of the area. Exempt land use, which includes state, local, federal government and institutional land uses accounts for approximately 1.8% with preferential land use (farm covenants) a fraction of a point higher at 1.9%. Missing data accounts for 3.8% of the total acreages of Cook County land uses which the Tax Assessor is researching at this time.

The City of Adel's residential and exempt land uses are very close in acreage with residential at approximately 26.4% and exempt at 26.8%. Commercial land uses are about 17% while agriculture trails at approximately 11%. Conservation and utilities combined covers only 1.19%. Missing data accounts for 12.7% of the total acreages of Adel's land uses which the Tax Assessor is researching at this time.

The City of Cecil has the largest percentage of residential uses when compared to the other cities and the county at 36.4%. Its agricultural land uses follows with 31%. Commercial averages at about 15% while exempt and utilities only make up approximately 2.49%. Missing data accounts for 15.1% of the total acreages of Cecil's land uses which the Tax Assessor is researching at this time.

The City of Lenox shows a diversified distribution of its land uses. Its residential land use lies at 30.5%, Industrial at 20.4%, agricultural and forestry at 14.3%, commercial at 11.3% and exempt at 9.6%. Missing data accounts for 13.9% of the total acreages of Lenox's land uses which the Tax Assessor is researching at this time.

The City of Sparks shows a good balance of land uses distribution with agricultural and forestry at approximately 33.8%, its residential land use lies at 27.9 %, commercial and industrial at 15.5% and exempt land uses at 13.8%. Missing data accounts for 9% of the total acreages of Spark's land uses which the Tax Assessor is researching at this time.

Current Land Use Map 5-1

Unincorporated Cook County

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Current Land Use Map 5-2

City of Adel

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Current Land Use Map 5-3

City of Cecil

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Current Land Use Map 5-4

City of Lenox

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Current Land Use Map 5-5

City of Sparks

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5.2 Areas Requiring Special Attention

Cook County’s growth and development will have significant impacts on its existing residents, natural and cultural resources, community services and facilities and its infrastructure. This section summarizes the locations of some of the likely impacts of growth, including delineating areas where growth should be restricted or even completely avoided. Also included are areas in need of additional investment because of aesthetics, disrepair, pollution or other special need. These would primarily be areas where growth and redevelopment should be directed to.

Map 5-5 shows the general location of these areas.

The Department of Community Affairs has identified the following seven special conditions and requires that they be addressed if they exist within the area of influence:

- Areas of significant natural resources include wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and river corridors particularly where they are likely to be intruded upon or otherwise impacted by development;
- Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur.
- Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation facilities.
- Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors).
- Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated such as Brownfield.
- Areas with significant infill development opportunities (scattered vacant sites).
- Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the community as a whole.

Through a review of Cook County’s Existing Land Use and the Technical Addenda, the following areas have been determined to warrant special attention:

5.2.1. Significant Natural and/or Cultural Resources

- Existing River Corridors and Floodplains:
 - Bear Creek
 - Brushy Creek
 - Little River
 - Hemp Springs Road
 - Futch Road
 - Lonnie Grinsley & Register
- Wetlands:
 - No Man’s Friend Swamp: This is a 1,200 acres large marsh type drained swamp with a peat moss base. This area is a watershed for Pike Creek flowing west towards the river and Morrison Creek flowing east-south to the river. It is also a water recharge area for the aquifer. In its current drained state, the area poses a tremendous fire hazard to the area, as peat moss, once ignited will burn to a

depth of several feet and is practically impossible to extinguish. The area should be re-flooded and returned to its previous condition.

- Giddens Mill Pond: This is an approximately 800 acres cypress swamp that was harvested for wood chips. It is also a possible recharge area for the aquifer.
 - Cecil Bay Wetlands Mitigation Pond: This is a re-established wetland area that has become part of the federal wetlands mitigation bank and a recharge area for the aquifer.
 - Goose Pond: This is an existing cypress pond, contributing to the recharge of the aquifer.
 - Hutchinson Mill Pond: This is a large cypress pond in the southeast portion of the county, which is part of the Hutchinson Mill Creek System. The pond provides recreation opportunities as well as a wild life refuge.
 - Boyette Pond: This is a large recreational pond that also provides agricultural irrigation for farm use.
 - Live Oak Plantation: This is a large hunting plantation and cattle farm that provides economic resources through tourism opportunities for the county.
 - Lime Sink: This is a small sink hole in the City of Adel that is located next to the Woodlawn Cemetery and Salem Primitive Church, which is a local noon time gathering place to eat lunch and feed the ducks.
 - Circlestone Pond/Gris Mill Pond: This is a large area of swamp land and several ponds that are incorporated into the Circlestone Country Club's 18 hole golf course. The ponds are part of the Young's Mill Creek water system. They provide not only recreation and animal habitats, but also aquifer recharge.
- Adel Area of Historical Significance encompasses approximately 10 blocks in the City of Adel proper including Delle Beamguard Old Elementary School, Court House, Old Hospital, several old churches. These structures have been continuously used to provide services since their construction. To sustain their character and continued level of service providing, rehabilitation is necessary.
 - Adel Downtown is the heart of the downtown area. The old Post office has been restored and presently houses the Cook County Historical Museum. The SOWEGA building, home to the chamber of commerce, is a three story structure in dire need of repair and rehabilitation to ensure it remains an iconic landmark in the heart of the downtown.
 - Lenox Resource Center- located on the edge of Lenox's downtown, this old school has become the home to RESA. The structure is in need of rehabilitation in order to continue its function of office space, training, and service delivery for the region's school systems.
 - Cecil Cemetery: This is a historic cemetery in the City of Cecil.
 - African American Cemetery at Sparks: This is a historic, un-surveyed African American cemetery in Sparks.

5.2.2. Areas where Development or Change of Land Use is Likely to Occur

- I-75 Interchange Areas (exits 32, 37, 39, 42, 45 and 49) - opportunities exist at all interchanges for commercial and industrial development. Gateway beautification, utility extensions, and proper signage are the key to maximum development potential.
- SR 41 south- The South Cook Industrial Corridor is the designated area for industrial growth. It will be developed in three phases. Phase I consists of a 350-acre industrial park with all utilities in place. Phase II and III will be developed accordingly as dictated by larger industrial projects requiring large tracts of land (200+ acres).

- Cook High mixed use area- With the development of a new county high school opportunity is available to re-develop the former high school. Expansion of the Boys and Girls club, alternative school, teen center, and utilization of the commercial kitchen lend itself to a mix-used transformation.
- North of Lenox along N. Broad Street due to water & sewer availability.

5.2.3. Areas where the pace of development may outpace the availability of public facilities and services

None identified

5.2.4. Areas of disinvestment, needing redevelopment, or improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness

- Adel: 16th Street, Railroad west from 5th to 9th Street; Federal Housing -This area is adjacent to the proposed new recreational complex flanked by sub-standard housing and mobile home park. This area requires code enforcement, property rehabilitation, and code violation remediation to improve the quality of life for citizens. Attention to public housing areas is essential to improve the availability of low-income housing opportunities.
- Sparks: downtown including the Junk Yard, south of Goodram, Railroad west between Meeting Street and Third Street to I-75 - Sparks- the downtown area is anchored to the north by an exposed junk yard. Code enforcement and code violation remediation are necessary to change a dilapidating area. Continued efforts are a must for in-fill development of empty buildings, store fronts, and vacant lots.
- Lenox- A small downtown area lends itself to in-fill development of existing properties and façade improvements.
- Cecil including the Old Commissary Building (1888) and south of Fellowship - There is a need to identify and develop a downtown area. The old commissary building could be an anchor tenant and cultural resource.
- Outlet Mall- the demise of the outlet mall creates opportunity for a major commercial overhaul of exit 39. New shopping venues, retail services, and mixed use opportunities could resurrect a once popular shopping destination known as the King Frog.
- Lenox Junk Yard- metal recycle venue located on a prominent corridor to the city. Efforts to aesthetically enhance the location are warranted.
- Adel old industrial park/landfill- Former industrial area that has opportunities for land reclamation and redevelopment purposes.
- Adel/Spark landfill- former landfill site that has opportunities for land reclamation and redevelopment purposes.
- Del-Cook- Former saw mill that provided economic opportunities to over 250 people for 40+ years. Consisting of 155 acres, this is a potential Brownfield site that has undergone environmental remediation. Located in the Adel Industrial park and because of the expansive utilities infrastructure in place, this site is a prime heavy industrial use area.

- Guthrie Saw Mill- Located in the southern part of the County and in the city of Cecil, this is an active cypress saw mill. Growth potential for cypress products provides expansion opportunities.

5.2.5. Large Abandoned Structures or Sites

- Cecil Old Fire station/Chevron Building housed the volunteer fire station. Exit 32 has potential commercial application.
- Old Commissary Building in Downtown Cecil is an old wooden vacant building, which was once used as a commissary in downtown Cecil.
- Del-Cook- Former saw mill that provided economic opportunities to over 250 people for 40+ years. Consisting of 155 acres, this is a potential Brownfield site that has undergone environmental remediation. Located in the Adel Industrial park and because of the expansive utilities infrastructure in place, this site is a prime heavy industrial use area.
- Adams St. Sparks - The northern portion of this street contains the remnants of a wood manufacturing facility/ saw mill, which is an eyesore for the city.
- Old Reames Plant - Former concrete plant site in Cook County. Served by rail and lend it to rail related activities.
- Old Motel at Cecil exit is an old abandoned motel located at Cecil's I-75 exit, which has been used as shelter by homeless people, is an eyesore for development in the City of Cecil.
- Williams Building at Adel exit has two abandoned structure at exit 37 at the entrance the Adel Industrial Park. Code enforcement measures would spur redevelopment.
- Old truck stop in Barneyville- dilapidated area on exit 45 suitable for commercial re-development, hotels, service activities. We will need utility extensions.
- Adel infill- tracts of property inside the corporate limits that are positioned for infill development due to location, existing infrastructure, and juxtaposition to similar and related uses

5.2.6. Areas with significant Infill Development Opportunities

- Sparks Downtown (Bloser, Simmons, Sparks School, MLK, W. Gosselman) these areas are all large tracts of land located within the City of Sparks, some of which are located adjacent to each other. These areas would be ideal infill development opportunities, with city utilities available.
- Lenox- A small downtown area lends itself to in-fill development of existing properties and façade improvements.
- Adel (S. Hutchinson, W.6th and S. Maple, N. Gordon & James Street, Old Talley-Corbett Property, Lavind Way area, W. of Whidbey, Williams Investment Property) Idea areas for infill development opportunities. Each area has utilities either onsite or possibly available for the developer. Some of these areas are residential and some are commercially zoned.

Map 5-6
Areas Requiring Special Attention
Unincorporated Cook County

Blank

Map 5-7
Areas Requiring Special Attention
City of Adel

Blank

Map 5-8
Areas Requiring Special Attention
City of Cecil

Blank

Map 5-9
Areas Requiring Special Attention
City of Lenox

Blank

Map 5-6
Areas Requiring Special Attention
City of Sparks

Blank

5.3 Recommended Character Areas

The use of “Character Areas” in planning acknowledges unique visual and functional differences that exist today in the various areas of Cook County and its cities. Character Areas are intended to pro-actively guide future development by putting in place policies and implementation strategies which are tailored to each area. It is important to recognize that the designation of a Character Area will reflect the defining character of the entire geographic area outlined, but may not be accurate for every single parcel in the area.

Recommended Character Areas can be used to more specifically define areas that:

- (1) Have unique or special characteristics that need to be preserved;
- (2) Have the potential to evolve into unique areas; or
- (3) Require special attention because of unique development issues.

Table 5-7 provides a description of the proposed Character Areas for Cook County and its cities and Maps 5-11 through 5-15 show their location.

| Recommended Character Areas | Description/Location | Development Strategy |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Agricultural Area | The predominant uses are agricultural farm operations and related activities, forestry, natural resources conservation, groundwater recharge areas, and very low-density residential development accessory to agricultural or farm operations of varying sizes. | Preserve farming and conservation options as a viable and important part of Cook County Industry. Apply right to farm principles and low density development to maintain agricultural and rural character. |
| Rural Residential Area | Rural land likely to face development pressures for lower density large lot type of development. These developments typically consist of large residential lot subdivisions and open space. | Provide connecting greenspace and recreational areas. Maintain lower density to preserve rural character with emphasis on rural residential use rather than farming activities. Include conservation subdivision planning. |
| Residential Area | These areas are located within incorporated city limits with smaller type residential lots in a more urban setting. They may include single family residential, multi-family or duplex housing. | Provide connectivity and walkability through continuous sidewalks, encourage infill development and limited mix of uses including educational uses, institutional uses and professional services to serve the immediate residential neighborhood without increasing traffic. |
| Suburban Neighborhood Area | These areas are typically predominantly residential with smaller lots on the fringes of incorporated or other more densely developed areas. These areas have a | Encourage lower density mixed used planned developments with emphasis on walkability and connectivity. |

| | | |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| | high reliance on the automobile, are predominantly single family with some townhouse developments and little commercial use. | |
| Historical Significance Area | These areas can be located anywhere in the unincorporated area or within the Cities and contain one or more features, landmarks and civil or cultural uses with high historic interest. | Preserve, restore and protect historic properties and areas from demolition and encroachment of incompatible uses. |
| Interchange Gateway Area | These are land areas within Cook County that are surrounding the interchanges with I-75 and provide either commercial, tourist or other gateways into the area. These serve as an important first impression and access into the community. | Encourage design guidelines including architecture, signage, landscaping and compatible mixed uses to express each interchange gateway's characteristic in the county. |
| Special Purpose Area | These are areas that serve a special purpose that is unique to the area and not replicated in the County. These would include the incorporated areas for the City of Sparks, Lenox and Cecil which have their own unique characteristics and opportunities for development. | Provide overlay zones addressing development needs and guidelines to improve and maintain each area's unique character and purpose as well as providing a sense of place while providing connectivity between places. |
| Commercial Area | These areas include general older established or newer commercial uses and nodes. | Encourage and maintain higher intensity commercial areas that are not as compatible with residential areas due to their high automobile orientation. |
| Industrial Area | These areas are intended to provide an environment suitable for light and heavy manufacturing, wholesale and warehousing activities that may impose undesirable noise, vibration odor, dust or other offensive effects on the surrounding areas together with other non-residential uses that may be necessary with industrial surroundings. | Provide guidelines and infrastructure programs to enhance the connectivity, accessibility of these areas in order to ensure business success while minimizing adverse impacts on neighborhoods and the environment. |
| Conservation Area | These are areas that contain environmentally sensitive wetland and/or upland areas and/or are home to endangered species. These areas should be protected from future development. | These areas would encourage and promote passive recreation and greenbelt connectivity. |

MAP 5-11
Recommended Character Areas
Cook County

Blank

MAP 5-12
Recommended Character Areas
City of Adel

Blank

MAP 5-13
Recommended Character Areas
City of Cecil

Blank

MAP 5-14
Recommended Character Areas
City of Lenox

Blank

MAP 5-15
Recommended Character Areas
City of Sparks

Blank

6. ANALYSIS of CONSISTENCY with QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

The Quality Community Objectives (QCO) as adopted by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) further define the statewide planning goals based on growth and development issues identified in local and regional plans throughout the state. The purpose of this analysis is to evaluate the consistency of Cook County’s goals, objectives and policies with those objectives and to propose any necessary improvements.

Proposals for recommended improvements will have been discussed in the Public Participation Phase of this Plan and will be utilized as a basis for the implementation program included in the Community Agenda.

The analysis shows that Cook County is in the process of addressing many of the Quality Community Objectives and will continue to do so with the development and implementation of existing and new planning strategies in the planning period.

6.1 Development Patterns

| Traditional Neighborhoods | | | |
|--|------------|-----------|--|
| Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity. | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| 1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district. | | x | Cecil provides for mixed use and other areas are currently exploring adding mixed uses to their zoning codes |
| 2. Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development “by-right” so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process. | | x | Planned Unit Developments are in place to address such developments in the City of Adel |
| 3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade bearing trees appropriate to our climate. | | x | |
| 4. Our community has an organized tree planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer. | | x | |
| 5. We have a program to keep poor public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe. | | x | |
| 6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would chose. | | x | The City of Adel provides these services. |
| 7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired. | x | | Downtown Adel is very walkable however; other areas could use improvements in sidewalk safety. |
| 8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely. | x | | More could be done to increase pedestrian safety through improvements to the existing network and the addition of more sidewalks and multi-use trails. |
| 9. Some of our children can and do bike to school safely. | x | | More could be done to increase bicyclist safety through the construction of bicycle lanes appropriate for children. |
| 10. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community. | x | | Several schools are located in or close to neighborhoods, but several are also located outside such as the new Cook County High School. |

| Infill Development | | | |
|---|------------|-----------|--|
| Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community. | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| 1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development. | | x | The Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Authority have an inventory available. |
| 2. Our community is actively working to promote Brownfield redevelopment. | x | | The Chamber of Commerce and other economic development entities are actively promoting redevelopment of brownfields, an effort that will be supported through specific policies in the proposed Comprehensive Plan however, the law is not easily navigated. |
| 3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfields redevelopment. | x | | This specifically applies to the Outlet Mall at Exit 39. |
| 4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road). | x | | Such areas will be identified as Character Areas in the Comprehensive Plan and will include downtown areas and interchange areas. |
| 5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses. | | x | |
| Sense of Place | | | |
| Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places, where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment. | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| 1. If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics. | | x | |
| 2. We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage, and have taken steps to protect those areas. | | x | This will be addressed as part of the Comprehensive Plan. |
| 3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas. | | x | This will be addressed as part of the Comprehensive Plan however; the Industrial Parks and Downtown Development Area already have design regulations. |
| 4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community. | x | | Sign ordinances need to be put in place for Cecil, Sparks and Lenox. |
| 5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community. | x | | Current subdivision regulations reflect the type of new development desired. |
| 6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland. | x | | Agricultural zoning is in place as is the 10 year conservation program for Ag lands. |

| Transportation Alternatives | | | |
|--|------------|-----------|---|
| Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged. | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| 1. We have public transportation in our community. | x | | Cook Transit |
| 2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit. | | x | |
| 3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations. | | x | More could be done to increase pedestrian safety through improvements to the existing network and the addition of more sidewalks and multi-use trails and ensure connectivity and continuity of sidewalks |
| 4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks. | | x | |
| 5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible. | | x | |
| 6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community. | | x | |
| 7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible. | x | | There may be opportunities to allow for additional shared parking requirements, especially in overlay districts or character areas. |
| Regional Identity | | | |
| Each region should promote and preserve a “regional identity”, or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics. | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comment |
| 1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage. | | x | |
| 2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products. | x | | Cook County has significant agricultural activity. |
| 3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.) | | x | |
| 4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development’s regional tourism partnership. | x | | |
| 5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region. | x | | Cook County is active in promoting local special events and celebrations. |
| 6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education. | x | | |

6.2 Resource Conservation

| Heritage Preservation | | | |
|--|------------|-----------|---|
| The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community’s character. | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| 1. We have designated historic districts in our community. | | x | Some will be identified as part of the proposed Comprehensive Plan. |
| 2. We have an active historic preservation commission. | | x | |
| 3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure this. | x | | Complementary development regulations in areas adjacent to historic districts will be suggested in the Comprehensive Plan |
| Open Space Preservation | | | |
| New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation | | | |
| 1. Our community has a green space plan. | | x | |
| 2. Our community is actively preserving green space, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development. | | x | |
| 3. We have a local land conservation program, or we work with state or national land conservation programs, to preserve environmentally important areas in our community. | x | | Cook County has an active wetland mitigation bank and is working with the USDA conservation programs. |
| 4. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity. | | x | |
| Environmental Protection | | | |
| Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved. | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| 1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory. | | x | |
| 2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas. | | x | |
| 3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them. | x | | Cook County has an extensive wetland inventory. |
| 4. Our community has passed the necessary “Part V” environmental ordinances, and we enforce them. | x | | |
| 5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced. | | x | |
| 6. Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development. | | x | |

| | | | |
|--|----------|----------|--|
| 7. We are using storm water best management practices for all new development. | x | x | |
| 8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.). | x | | |

6.3 Social and Economic Development

| Growth Preparedness Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs. | | | |
|--|----------|----------|--|
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| 1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions. | | x | This will be addressed as a part of the new Comprehensive Plan’s Capital Improvement Program. |
| 2. Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections. | | x | |
| 3. Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community. | x | | However, training opportunities will be provided as part of the Comprehensive Plan. |
| 4. We have reviewed our development regulations and /or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals. | | x | Adel and the unincorporated county have updated ordinances; codes for the small cities are in need of updating. |
| 5. We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth. | | x | Infrastructure improvements to further economic development are listed by the EDC. |
| 6. We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth, and these areas are based on a natural resources inventory of our community. | | x | These areas will be designated in the new Comprehensive Plan. |
| 7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development. | x | | |
| 8. We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community. | x | | The Community Participation Program applies to both the Comprehensive Plan and to regular public hearings which are used to educate citizens. |
| 9. We have procedures in place that make it easy for the public to stay informed about land use issues, zoning decisions, and proposed new development. | x | | All public information is on the website and clearly advertised in the newspaper. |
| 10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process. | x | | A comprehensive community participation progress has been developed and includes the use of public meetings, fliers and an up-to-date website. |
| Appropriate Businesses The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skills job opportunities. | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comments |

| | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| 1. Our economic development organization has considered our community’s strengths, assets and weaknesses, and has created a business development strategy based on them. | x | | |
| 2. Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit businesses and/or industries that will be compatible. | x | | |
| 3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products. | x | | |
| 4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy. | x | | |

Employment Options

A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|--|-----|----|----------|
| 1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program. | X | | |
| 2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor. | x | | |
| 3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor. | x | | |
| 4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs. | x | | |

Housing Choices

A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.

| | Yes | No | Comments |
|---|-----|----|---|
| 1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units. | x | | |
| 2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community. | x | | |
| 3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above average). | x | | However, there are geographic variations within the County. |
| 4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks. | | x | |
| 5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or “neo-traditional” development. | x | | |
| 6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing. | x | | |
| 7. We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community. | x | | |
| 8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households. | x | | |
| 9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs. | x | | |
| 10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas. | | x | |

| Educational Opportunities | | | |
|---|------------|-----------|---|
| Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions. | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| 1. Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens. | x | | |
| 2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community. | x | | |
| 3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does. | x | | |
| 4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose. | x | | There are job opportunities for college graduates, however, the number is limited and needs to be targeted for increase |

6.4 Governmental Relations

| Regional Solutions | | | |
|--|------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer. | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| 1. We participate in regional economic development organizations. | x | | |
| 2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues. | x | | |
| 3. We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services, such as public transit, libraries, special education tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security etc. | x | | |
| 4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders. | x | | |
| Regional Cooperation | | | |
| Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network. | | | |
| | Yes | No | Comments |
| 1. We plan jointly with our cities and county for comprehensive planning purposes. | x | | |
| 2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy. | x | | |
| 3. We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to raft region-wide strategies. | x | | |
| 4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern. | x | | |

7. SUPPORTING DATA AND INFORMATION

The validity of the identified Issues and Opportunities and recommended Character Areas was checked by evaluating data and information pertaining to the following seven elements:

- 1) Population
- 2) Economic Development
- 3) Housing
- 4) Natural Resources
- 5) Cultural Resources
- 6) Community Facilities and Services
- 7) Transportation
- 8) Intergovernmental Coordination

A 20-year planning time frame was employed for evaluating the listed data and information items. A variety of information and sources was used to compile the data including but not limited to interviews with city and county representatives, review of Census data, and review of past trends.

When evaluating this data and information, staff focused on:

- Whether it verified potential issues or opportunities identified above;
- Whether it uncovered new issues or opportunities not previously identified;
- Whether it indicated significant local trends that need to be brought to the attention of decision-makers;
- Whether it suggested adjustment of recommended character areas (e.g., to avoid intrusion into environmentally sensitive areas, etc.).

In order to ensure a concise and readable *Community Assessment* report, the following pages only include general statements and/or recommendations taken from the completed assessment. These statements pertain to potential issues or opportunities, significant trends affecting the community, or character area delineation.

**The complete evaluation including all data and maps
can be found in the respective Appendices A through G.**

APPENDIX A
POPULATION

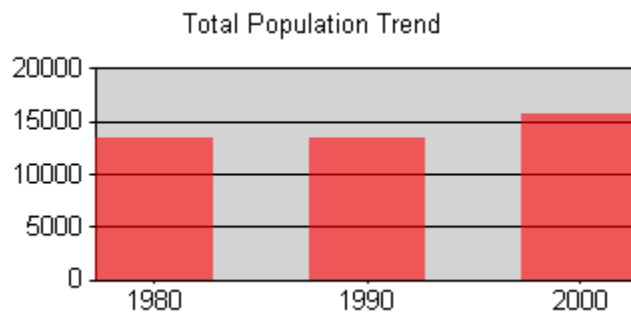
APPENDIX A: POPULATION

Understanding past population trends and patterns is an important first step towards understanding how the population may change in the future. This section presents detailed information on the population demographics for Cook County and the cities of Adel, Cecil, Lenox, and Sparks. This includes past trends using data provided by the U.S. Census and future predictions based on county and regional trends and development patterns.

Past Population Trends:

Between 1980 and 2000 the total population of Cook County increased from 13,490 to 15,771; an increase of 2,281. (Figure A-1)

FIGURE A-1 COOK COUNTY HISTORIC POPULATION TRENDS



Source: U. S. Census 2000 and the Southern Georgia Regional Commission 2009

FIGURE A-2 POPULATION GROWTH COMPARISON

| Total Population Growth Comparison | Cook | Adel | Cecil | Lenox | Sparks | Unincorporated Cook | Georgia |
|------------------------------------|--------|-------|-------|-------|--------|---------------------|-----------|
| 2000 Population | 15,771 | 5,300 | 330 | 901 | 1,760 | 7480 | 8,186,816 |
| 2007 Population | 16,432 | 5,399 | 333 | 897 | 1,792 | 8011 | 8,921,371 |
| Increase in Population | 661 | 99 | 3 | 4 | 32 | 171 | 734,555 |
| Growth between 2000 and 2007 | 4.2 % | 1.9% | 0.9% | -0.4% | 1.8% | 7.1 % | 16.6% |

Source: U. S. Census 2000 and the Southern Georgia Regional Commission 2009

In comparing the growth of Cook County to that of the State of Georgia, it appears that Cook County has experienced a positive growth rate from the 90's to 2000. While the county did not grow as rapidly as the State of Georgia as a whole, the County experience growth increases in most areas. The difference in the growth rate between the County and the State of Georgia is probably very reasonable considering rapid growth in the Atlanta region and some other more metro areas of the state. For a mostly rural area, the growth in Cook County from 2000-2007 seems to be accurate and reasonable. The City of Adel saw the greatest growth in all of Cook County in the 10 year period at an increase of over 4.2 percent. This growth is the highest of the other municipalities in Cook County probably due to the services and facilities in Adel. The unincorporated areas of Cook County experienced higher growth than any of the cities, at 7.1 percent. The only decrease was in Lenox, which was a small decrease with a loss of four.

FIGURE A-3 POPULATION PROJECTIONS

| Population Projections | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Category | 1980 | 1985 | 1990 | 1995 | 2000 | 2005 | 2010 | 2015 | 2020 | 2025 | 2030 |
| Adel | 5,592 | 5,343 | 5,093 | 5,200 | 5,307 | 5,236 | 5,165 | 5,093 | 5,022 | 4,951 | 4,880 |
| Cecil | 280 | 328 | 376 | 321 | 265 | 261 | 258 | 254 | 250 | 246 | 243 |
| Lenox | 965 | 874 | 783 | 836 | 889 | 870 | 851 | 832 | 813 | 794 | 775 |
| Sparks | 1,353 | 1,279 | 1,205 | 1,480 | 1,755 | 1,856 | 1,956 | 2,057 | 2,157 | 2,258 | 2,358 |

Source: <http://www.georgiaplanning.com/dataviews/census2>

The population projections for Cook County represent an increase in population for Cook County, Adel, Cecil, Sparks, and Lenox. Cecil is projected to see a rise in population from the loss they felt from 1990-2000. Lenox and Sparks are both projected to see small increases from their 2000 count. There were no huge increases in population projected for any area of Cook County. Most of the increases were steady and relatively small.

Age Distribution:

The most apparent trends in Cook County and its cities involve:

- The overall loss of people from ages 14 to 20
- some areas experiencing growth of people 55 and older
- The rapid gains of people 35 to 54 years old.

The City of Adel experienced small losses from 1980-2000 in ages 0-34, and moderate but not great gains in ages 35 and up. Table A-4 shows the historical age distribution of Cook County, Adel, Cecil, Lenox, and Sparks. Graph A-5 shows the age distribution for Cook County for the year 2000. Table A-6 shows age distribution comparisons for Cook County versus the State of Georgia and the rest of the country. County versus the state of Georgia and the rest of the country.

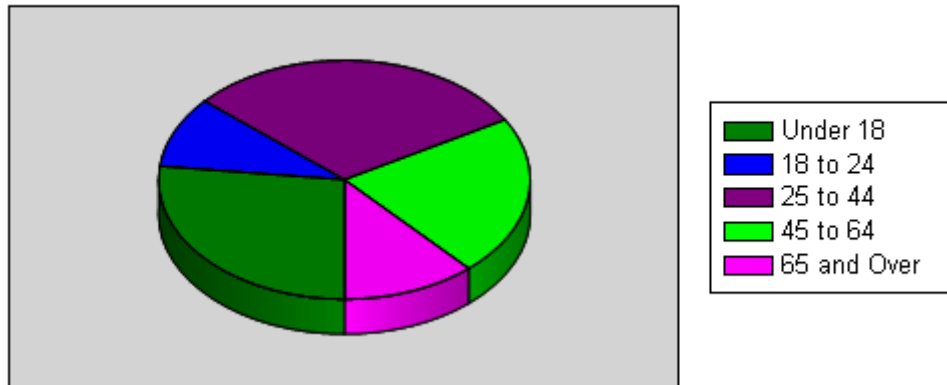
TABLE A-4, HISTORICAL AGE DISTRIBUTION

| Age Distribution Trend | COOK COUNTY | | | ADEL | | | CECIL | | | LENOX | | | SPARKS | | |
|------------------------|-------------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|-------|------|------|-------|------|------|--------|------|------|
| | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
| 0-4 Years Old | 1,090 | 1,059 | 1,221 | 488 | 439 | 440 | 11 | 35 | 21 | 67 | 65 | 73 | 81 | 84 | 153 |
| 5-13 Years Old | 2,352 | 2,110 | 2,530 | 1,042 | 816 | 871 | 48 | 43 | 43 | 151 | 118 | 122 | 224 | 160 | 311 |
| 14-17 Years Old | 1,071 | 692 | 702 | 488 | 258 | 247 | 19 | 25 | 11 | 66 | 46 | 38 | 102 | 60 | 77 |
| 18-20 Years Old | 669 | 646 | 638 | 264 | 255 | 229 | 13 | 28 | 4 | 50 | 30 | 36 | 86 | 48 | 69 |
| 21-24 Years Old | 752 | 783 | 794 | 306 | 283 | 270 | 18 | 40 | 4 | 50 | 40 | 41 | 79 | 64 | 87 |
| 25-34 Years Old | 1,922 | 1,919 | 2,144 | 743 | 692 | 687 | 36 | 62 | 40 | 149 | 95 | 98 | 193 | 184 | 265 |
| 35-44 Years Old | 1,440 | 1,738 | 2,258 | 529 | 565 | 699 | 24 | 49 | 35 | 95 | 98 | 104 | 162 | 134 | 260 |
| 45-54 Years Old | 1,284 | 1,449 | 1,915 | 524 | 517 | 586 | 32 | 28 | 32 | 91 | 76 | 135 | 134 | 157 | 178 |
| 55-64 Years Old | 1,290 | 1,198 | 1,523 | 510 | 451 | 473 | 39 | 25 | 23 | 96 | 85 | 106 | 130 | 119 | 146 |
| 65 And Over | 1,620 | 1,862 | 2,046 | 698 | 817 | 805 | 40 | 41 | 52 | 150 | 130 | 136 | 162 | 195 | 209 |

As the number of people from ages 35 and older growing, Cook County will have to increase certain services and facilities to meet the needs of these age groups, which include young families, entry level housing, pediatric services and job opportunities. Due to the increase in people of ages 65 and older, there will also be additional need for more health care facilities and services, as well as for retirement homes and communities serving the older generation. There is a slight growth rate in birth-13 years of age. While this growth may not have been as rapid from 1990-2000, it is evident that the growth is in fact occurring. If this age group continues to grow at a reasonable rate, there will be a need for increased schools, day cares, and child medical care facilities in order to meet growth demands. The decrease in the 14-20 year old category could be based on several factors. Young adults that graduated from high school could be moving on for different educational opportunities and some may leave to find other work opportunities. The Georgia County Guide states that in 2007, 6.9 percent of Cook County's population was made up of 15-19 year olds. 6.78 percent comprised the 20-24 year old category.

GRAPH A-5, AGE DISTRIBUTION FOR 2000

Age Distribution for Year 2000



It appears that in 2000, the greatest percentage of Cook County’s population was between 25-44 years of age. This should make for a very viable workforce and will also cause an increase in the younger population in the future years. With people having families and settling in Cook County, the total population will see an increase based on this age group growing. There will be a need for more housing and development to accommodate this group and their families.

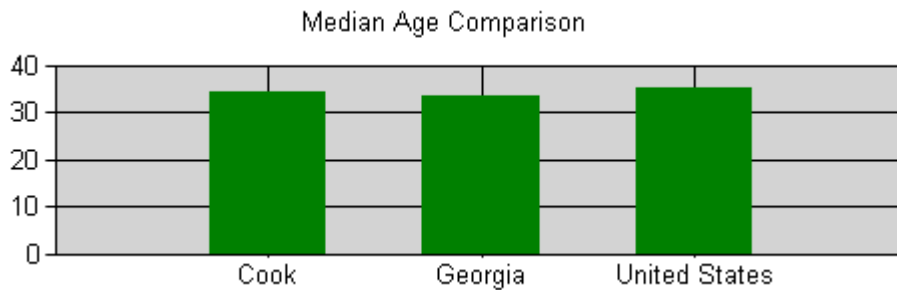
TABLE A-6, AGE DISTRIBUTION COMPARISON

| Age Distribution Comparison | Cook | Georgia | United States |
|-----------------------------|--------|-----------|---------------|
| Population | 15,771 | 8,186,453 | 281,421,906 |
| Percent below 18 | 28.2 | 26.5 | 25.7 |
| Percent 18 to 24 | 9.1 | 10.2 | 9.6 |
| Percent 25 to 44 | 27.9 | 32.4 | 30.2 |
| Percent 45 to 64 | 21.8 | 21.3 | 22 |
| Percent 65 and over | 13 | 9.6 | 12.4 |
| Median Age | 34.3 | 33.4 | 35.3 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

The percentage of people 25 and older in Cook County has increased moderately over time. Therefore, it is not unreasonable to assume that this population is a very stable population and is merely increasing naturally due to the general increase of the population. This age group should steadily contribute to the work force of Cook County and its municipalities.

TABLE A-7, MEDIAN AGE COMARISON COOK COUNTY



The median age of people in Cook County seems to be in line with the rest of the state and the United States as a whole. The Median Age in Cook County seems to be right around 34-35, which shows a natural increase in a steady population.

Race and Ethnicity:

Table A-8 shows the racial composition trend of Cook County based on use of 2000 Census data.

TABLE A-8 RACIAL COMPOSITION TREND

| Racial Composition Trend | COOK COUNTY | | | ADEL | | | CECIL | | | LENOX | | | SPARKS | | |
|---|-------------|-------|--------|-------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|-------|------|------|--------|------|------|
| | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
| White Alone | 9,362 | 9,311 | 10,714 | 2,955 | 2,505 | 2,546 | 174 | 259 | 131 | 603 | 449 | 521 | 901 | 795 | 933 |
| Black or African American Alone | 4,090 | 4,031 | 4,587 | 2,621 | 2,529 | 2,596 | 102 | 100 | 129 | 356 | 333 | 338 | 449 | 401 | 766 |
| American Indian and Alaska Native Alone | 7 | 34 | 34 | 4 | 12 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 7 |
| Asian or Pacific Islander | 21 | 30 | 71 | 5 | 5 | 18 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 7 | 7 |
| Other Race | 10 | 50 | 365 | 7 | 29 | 116 | 2 | 16 | 3 | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 42 |

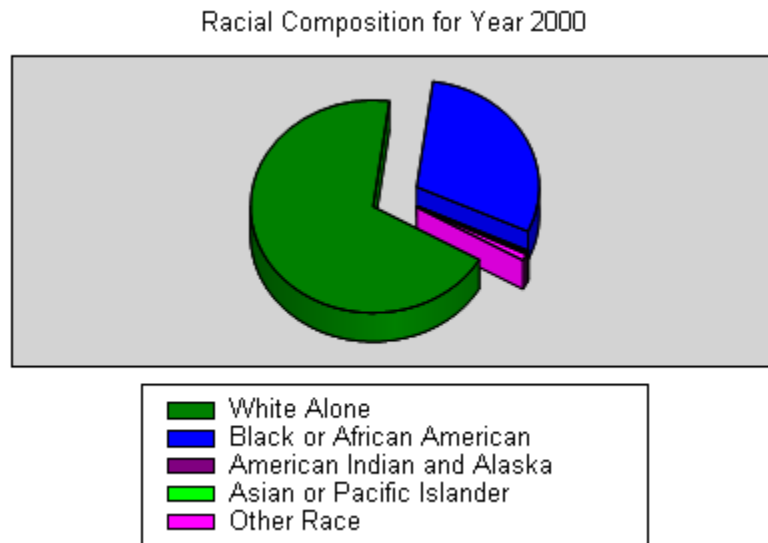
The racial composition of the population is changing some but overall remaining fairly constant. There have been increases in all race compositions, but not any drastic changes. All race groups seem to be growing fairly in line with each other.

TABLE A-9 RACIAL COMPOSITION COMPARISON

| Racial Composition Comparison (Percent) | Cook | Georgia | United States |
|---|------|---------|---------------|
| White Alone | 67.9 | 65.1 | 75.1 |
| Black or African American Alone | 29.1 | 28.7 | 12.3 |
| American Indian and Alaska Native Alone | 0.2 | 0.3 | 0.9 |
| Asian or Pacific Islander | 0.4 | 2.1 | 3.6 |
| Other Race | 1.5 | 2.4 | 5.5 |

The racial compositions of the population in Cook County are very much in line with the racial compositions in the rest of the State of Georgia and also in the United States. The population of Cook County seems to be very similar in race composition to Georgia and the United States. The US Census States that in 2007 Cook County’s race was 70.4% white; a slight growth from 2000. The black population in 2007 made up 27.8% of the total; a slight decrease from 2000. The American Indian and Alaska Native population experienced no change from 2000-2007. The Asian population rose slightly from 0.2% to 0.4% in 2007.

A-10 RACIAL COMPOSITION FOR 2000



A-11 TREND OF HISPIANIC RESIDENTS

| Hispanic Trend | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
|----------------------------|------|------|------|
| Persons of Hispanic Origin | 69 | 217 | 485 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

While most of the race groups in Cook County are increasing steadily, the Hispanic population segment appears to be increasing at a faster rate. From 1980-1990, the Hispanic population tripled. From 1990-2000, it more than doubled. This growth can be attributed to the large agriculture industry in Cook County and to the many migrant farm workers that may work on various farms in Cook County.

A-12 HISPANIC POPULATION COMPARISON

| Hispanic Population Comparison | Cook | Georgia | United States |
|--------------------------------|--------|---------|---------------|
| 2000 Population | 15771 | 8186453 | 281421920 |
| Hispanic Population | 485 | 435227 | 35305818 |
| Percent Hispanic | 3.08 % | 5.32 % | 12.55 % |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

While it does appear that the Hispanic population is growing at a very rapid rate in Cook County, in comparison with the state of Georgia and the United States, Hispanic growth is quite normal and steady.

Income:

According to the U.S. Census the household income in 1990 for Cook County was \$24,530.00. In 2000 the number rose to \$35,491.00. Therefore, household income rose by \$10,961.00.

Table A-14 shows how Cook County compares to the State of Georgia in Household Income. Cook County has a lower household income than the State of Georgia. The State of Georgia does appear to be much higher, but when looking back at table A-13 it is evident that although this number is lower, it is increasing at a steady rate. The difference in Georgia as a State and in Cook County is probably so large due to more metro areas being factored in to this count.

A-13 HOUSEHOLD INCOME, COOK COUNTY

| Household Income Trend | 1990 | 2000 |
|------------------------|--------|--------|
| Income (\$) | 24,530 | 35,491 |

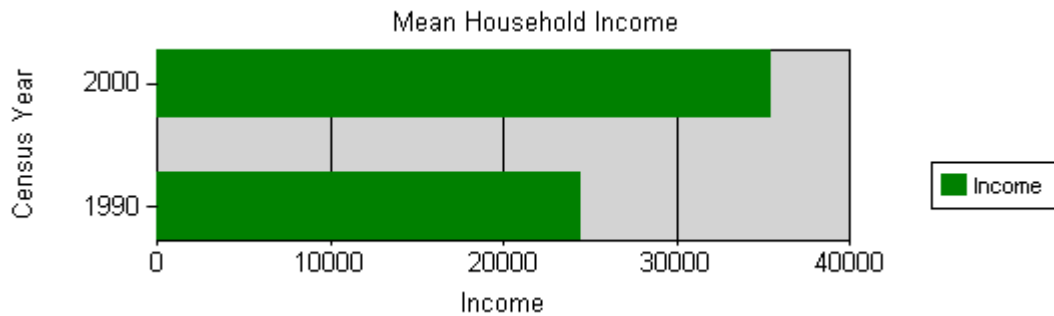
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

A-14 HOUSEHOLD INCOME COMPARISON

| Household Income Comparison | Cook | Georgia | United States |
|-----------------------------|--------|---------|---------------|
| Income (\$) | 35,491 | 80,077 | 56,675 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

A-15 HOUSEHOLD INCOME COOK COUNTY, GA



The household income for Cook County was around \$24,000. By 2000, the household income had increased to about \$35,000. This growth is normal for a 10 year period. The cost of living increases each year, so household income naturally increases to meet this growth.

A-16 PER CAPITA INCOME TREND

| Per Capita Income Trend | 1990 | 2000 |
|------------------------------------|-------|--------|
| Per Capita Income Cook County (\$) | 8,870 | 13,465 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

Cook County and all of its communities have seen a rise in per capita income as shown in Table A-16. Per Capita Income is the total personal income divided by the total population and is often used to measure the personal wealth of a population. The per capita income compared to the state of Georgia is outlined in Table A-17.

A-17 PER CAPITA INCOME COMPARISON

| Per Capita Income Comparison | Cook | Georgia | United States |
|------------------------------|--------|---------|---------------|
| 2000 Per Capita Income (\$) | 13,465 | 21,154 | 21,587 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

Cook County’s per capita income for the year 2000 was less than the per capita income of Georgia and the United States. Comparing per capita income of a small rural area like Cook County to the whole state is likely to not be the most accurate comparison due to the difference in income by industry. Georgia’s per capita income closely mirrors that of the Country, but Cook County falls about \$8000 below either. The 2009 Georgia County Guide states that Cook County’s per capita income for 2006 was \$20,122. The 2006 per capita income for the State of Georgia was \$32,095.

Educational Attainment

Since 1980, fewer children have dropped out of school and more adults have pursued college educations and graduate degrees. Cook County, Adel, Cecil, Lenox, and Sparks have all seen an increase in the number of people graduating from high school. Figure A-18 shows the educational attainment of Cook County and its City's residents in 1980, 1990, and 2000.

A-18, EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

| Educational Attainment Trend | COOK COUNTY | | | ADEL | | | CECIL | | | LENOX | | | SPARKS | | |
|---|-------------|-------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|------|------|-------|------|------|--------|------|------|
| | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
| Less than 9th Grade | 2,635 | 1,720 | 1,269 | 995 | 597 | 449 | 102 | 60 | 49 | 267 | 123 | 136 | 279 | 236 | 172 |
| 9th to 12th Grade (no diploma) | 1,994 | 1,966 | 2,222 | 829 | 724 | 820 | 39 | 57 | 48 | 150 | 123 | 140 | 216 | 228 | 221 |
| High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency) | 1,942 | 2,852 | 3,523 | 659 | 1,043 | 1,210 | 27 | 49 | 48 | 116 | 146 | 154 | 234 | 224 | 370 |
| Some College (No Degree) | 558 | 908 | 1,510 | 256 | 350 | 359 | 8 | 31 | 10 | 25 | 35 | 77 | 25 | 59 | 126 |
| Associate Degree | NA | 250 | 481 | NA | 100 | 147 | NA | 4 | 5 | NA | 0 | 13 | NA | 28 | 39 |
| Bachelor's Degree | 267 | 315 | 540 | 170 | 160 | 218 | 0 | 3 | 6 | 17 | 8 | 17 | 13 | 18 | 39 |
| Graduate or Professional Degree | 160 | 220 | 262 | 95 | 108 | 115 | 3 | 3 | 0 | 6 | 4 | 10 | 6 | 6 | 16 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

A-19, COOK COUNTY EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT COMPARISONS

| Educational Attainment Comparison | Cook | Georgia | United States |
|---|-------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Less than 9th Grade | 12.94 % | 7.54 % | 7.55 % |
| 9th to 12th Grade (no diploma) | 22.66 % | 13.86 % | 12.05 % |
| High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency) | 35.92 % | 28.71 % | 28.63 % |
| Some College (No Degree) | 15.40 % | 20.40 % | 21.05 % |
| Associate Degree | 4.90 % | 5.19 % | 6.32 % |
| Bachelor's Degree | 5.51 % | 16.01 % | 15.54 % |
| Graduate or Professional Degree | 2.67 % | 8.30 % | 8.86 % |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

Compared to the State, Cook County has a higher rate of high school graduates. Although the level of people receiving some form of higher education falls somewhat short compared to the state, the numbers are not terribly low. This data makes is apparent that the Cook County School System and other educational agencies are doing their job to drive students to graduate from high school or earn a GED.

APPENDIX B
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

APPENDIX B: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

A thorough understanding of the economic development characteristics can help to improve the overall economic wellbeing of Cook County and its cities, allows early planning for any future housing and education needs, and provides the basis to develop the necessary economic development tools to ensure sustainable growth in the targeted industries.

Employment by Industry

The Greater Cook economy is based on 13 primary sectors. Table B-1 shows the total number of residents employed in each sector for Cook County from 1980 to 2000.

B-1 COOK EMPLOYMENT BY SECTOR

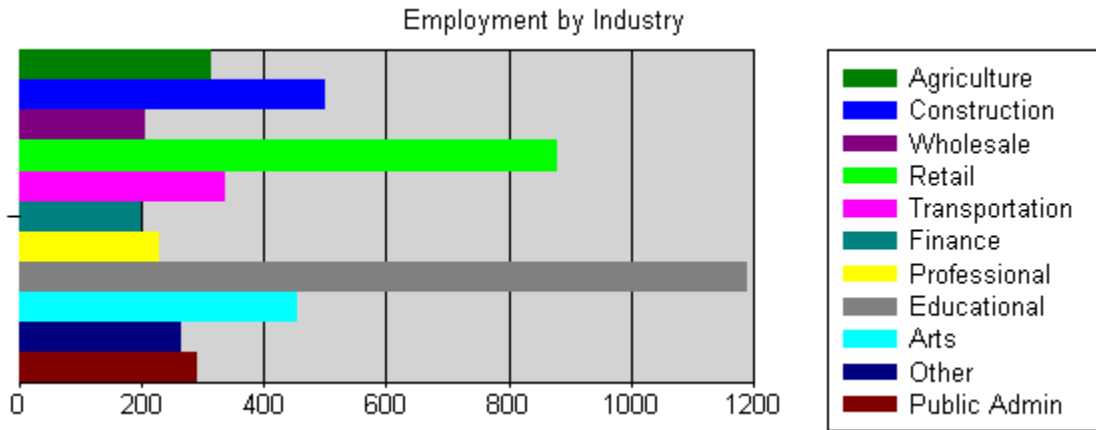
| Employment by Industry | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
|---|-------|-------|-------|
| Total Employed Civilian Population | 5,389 | 5,987 | 6,727 |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting & mining | 560 | 490 | 313 |
| Construction | 283 | 324 | 500 |
| Manufacturing | 1,861 | 1,835 | 1,785 |
| Wholesale Trade | 209 | 215 | 206 |
| Retail Trade | 780 | 909 | 879 |
| Transportation, warehousing, and utilities | 147 | 193 | 336 |
| Information | NA | NA | 80 |
| Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate | 202 | 185 | 199 |
| Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services | 39 | 231 | 228 |
| Educational, health and social services | 652 | 913 | 1,189 |
| Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services | 300 | 39 | 456 |
| Other Services | 92 | 447 | 264 |
| Public Administration | 264 | 206 | 292 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

The number of individuals employed in Cook County has increased by 1,338 from 1980-2000. This represents steady growth in the employment sector as a whole over the past 10 years. This is due to general growth in Cook County as a whole. Surprisingly, the number of working people in the agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting & mining field has decreased by 247 over the same 20 year period. Manufacturing has remained steady and constant for the 20 year period which shows that manufacturing

is a viable and steady economic engine in Cook County. The largest growth in a particular employment sector has been seen in educational, health, and social services. This growth is due to population increase. Education, health, and social services are services that all parts of the population's need to function. With the increase of population in young children and also older adults, it is evident that education and healthcare would grow to meet the needs of the population.

B-2 COOK EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

Cook County appears to have a higher percentage of individuals employed in the manufacturing industry than the State and the Country. The other employment sectors in Cook County remain fairly in line when compared to the state.

B-3 EMPLOYMENT COMPARISONS

| Employment by Industry Comparison | Cook | Georgia | United States |
|---|----------|----------|---------------|
| Total Employed Civilian Population | 100.00 % | 100.00 % | 100.00 % |
| Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting & mining | 4.65 % | 1.39 % | 1.87 % |
| Construction | 7.43 % | 7.94 % | 6.78 % |
| Manufacturing | 26.53 % | 14.81 % | 14.10 % |
| Wholesale Trade | 3.06 % | 3.86 % | 3.60 % |
| Retail Trade | 13.07 % | 11.97 % | 11.73 % |
| Transportation, warehousing, and utilities | 4.99 % | 6.02 % | 5.20 % |
| Information | 1.19 % | 3.53 % | 3.08 % |
| Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate | 2.96 % | 6.54 % | 6.89 % |
| Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services | 3.39 % | 9.44 % | 9.30 % |
| Educational, health and social services | 17.68 % | 17.59 % | 19.92 % |
| Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services | 6.78 % | 7.15 % | 7.87 % |
| Other Services | 3.92 % | 4.74 % | 4.87 % |
| Public Administration | 4.34 % | 5.03 % | 4.79 % |

While Manufacturing makes up a larger portion of the work force in Cook County than in the State of Georgia; the number of people working in the industry has not experienced large increases over this 20 year period. The current state of the United States' Economy has affected many industries, largely from 2007-2009. Many communities have seen a loss in manufacturing careers and establishments. .

The Community has done a very effective job of diversifying its industrial base. The Adel Industrial Development Authority (AIDA) and the Cook County Economic Development Commission (EDC) continue to develop strategies and long range goals to better provide for economic development activities. Niche industries, targeted markets, regional partnerships are a few strategies and goals that are being implemented.

Tourism is a key target market. Reed Bingham State Park and South Georgia Motorsports Park provide opportunities to showcase Cook County recreationally and to recruit ancillary businesses, support industries, and theme-related companies. The impact of South Georgia Motorsports Park has been 37 million dollars regionally on an annual basis based on upon 90 events a year. Travelers who come to Cook County and stay only a day are spending about 65-70 dollars a day per person; those staying overnight spend about 115 dollars per person. Reed Bingham is one of the most visited parks in the Georgia Park System today and offers many educational programs and events throughout the year which keep the crowds coming to Cook County. Their July 4 fireworks show alone brings 15,000 people to Cook County.

Cook County is a center for "Steel Building" manufacturing in the South. Industries that serve this cluster or benefit from this type of grouping are part of the cluster industry mix. Cook County's proximity to Florida gives it a competitive edge to solicit companies that are presently operating in Florida or serve the Florida market. Target solicitation of these industries is part of Cook County's business strategies. Cook County is also very agri-business oriented. There is a focus for agri-business processes, meaning taking products from the farm to the market. Vertical integration of processes is a core goal. Manufacturing and distribution are key elements in our economic development strategies. Boutique industries, defined as small manufacturing companies that make unique products, are a concentration of Cook's niche marketing plan.

B-4, LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION, COOK COUNTY

| Labor Force Participation Trend | 1990 | 2000 |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|
| Total Males and Females | 10,033 | 11,774 |
| In Labor Force | 6,321 | 7,127 |
| Civilian Labor Force | 6,257 | 7,107 |
| Civilian Employed | 5,987 | 6,727 |
| Civilian Unemployed | 270 | 380 |
| In Armed Forces | 64 | 20 |
| Not In Labor Force | 3,712 | 4,647 |
| Total Males | 4,684 | 5,553 |
| Male in Labor Force | 3,537 | 3,816 |
| Male Civilian Labor Force | 3,473 | 3,802 |
| Male Civilian Employed | 3,355 | 3,701 |
| Male Civilian Unemployed | 118 | 101 |
| Male in Armed Forces | 64 | 14 |
| Male Not in Labor Force | 1,147 | 1,737 |
| Total Females | 5,349 | 6,221 |
| Female in Labor Force | 2,784 | 3,311 |
| Female Civilian Labor Force | 2,784 | 3,305 |
| Female Civilian Employed | 2,632 | 3,026 |
| Female Civilian Unemployed | 152 | 279 |
| Female In Armed Forces | | 6 |
| Female Not in Labor Force | 2,565 | 2,910 |

B-5, LABOR FORCE COMPARISON

| Labor Force Participation Comparison | Cook | Georgia | United States |
|--------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------------|
| Total Males and Females | 11774 | 6250687 | 217168077 |
| In Labor Force (percent) | 60.53 % | 66.07 % | 63.92 % |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

It appears that the total number of males and females in the working force in Cook County is comparable with the total number in the working force in Georgia and the US. While there are slightly lower numbers in Cook County, it appears that the County is fairly in line in comparison to the larger pictures (the State and the Country).

B-6, LABOR FORCE BY PLACE OF WORK, COOK COUNTY

| Labor Force by Place of Work Trend | 1990 | 2000 |
|---------------------------------------|--------|--------|
| Total Population | 13,456 | 15,771 |
| Worked in State of Residence | 5,864 | 6,507 |
| Worked in County of Residence | 3,974 | 3,955 |
| Worked outside of County of Residence | 1,890 | 2,552 |
| Worked outside of State of Residence | 51 | 109 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

B-7 LABOR FORCE BY PLACE OF WORK for ADEL, CECIL, LENOX, AND SPARKS

| Labor Force by Place of Work | ADEL | | CECIL | | LENOX | | SPARKS | |
|--------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|------|--------|-------|
| | 1990 | 2000 | 1990 | 2000 | 1990 | 2000 | 1990 | 2000 |
| Total population | 5,093 | 5,307 | 376 | 265 | 783 | 889 | 1,205 | 1,755 |
| Worked in State of residence | 2,132 | 1,993 | 210 | 89 | 261 | 321 | 558 | 699 |
| Worked in place of residence | 1,267 | 1,152 | 20 | 11 | 39 | 53 | 59 | 68 |
| Worked outside of place of residence | 865 | 841 | 190 | 78 | 222 | 268 | 499 | 631 |
| Worked outside of state of residence | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Examining where individuals work, it appears that much of the work force in Cook County is employed within Cook County. The majority of the workforces who live in Adel also work in Adel. Individuals from Cecil, Lenox, and Sparks are probably often employed in City of Adel; a small portion of these individuals work in the town where they reside.

B-8 COMMUTING PATTERNS

| Geographic Area | Population 16 years and over—percent in labor force | | | Civilian labor force—Percent unemployed | Own Children—Percent with all parents in family in labor force | | Working 16 years and over | | | |
|-----------------|---|--------|---------------------------------|---|--|---------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| | Total | Female | | | Under 6 Years | 6 to 17 Years | Percent in car pool | Percent using public transportation | Who did not work at home—mean travel time to work (minutes) | Percent worked outside county of residence |
| | | Total | With own children under 6 years | | | | | | | |
| Cook County | 60.5 | 53.2 | 61.4 | 5.3 | 55.6 | 67.4 | 13.2 | 0.5 | 21.3 | 40.2 |

Looking at Census Commuting Patterns, 40.2 percent of the 16 year old and older working class from Cook County works outside of their county of residence. The mean travel time for people who do not work at home was 21.3 minutes at the time of the last census.

B-9 UNEMPLOYMENT STATISTICS

| Location | Labor Force | Employment | Unemployment | |
|----------|-------------|------------|--------------|------|
| | | | Number | Rate |
| Georgia | 4,786,333 | 4,283,128 | 503,205 | 10.5 |
| Cook | 7,331 | 6,508 | 823 | 11.2 |
| Berrien | 8,660 | 7,510 | 1,090 | 12.7 |
| Brooks | 8,462 | 7,754 | 708 | 8.4 |

Source: Georgia Department of Labor—Revised May 2009

In comparing Cook County’s unemployment rate with the rest of the State and the surrounding counties that are similar in size, Cook County is only slightly higher than Georgia, and closely in line Berrien and Brooks Counties. According the Georgia Department of Labor statistics, from June 2008 to May 2009, Cook County’s unemployment rate increased from 6.9 to 11.2. Berrien County’s rate increased from 6.3 to 12.0, and Brooks County’s rose from 5.7 to 7.3. With the current economic situation, many of Georgia’s Counties are facing increased unemployment rates.

Economic Resources

Development Agencies:

- *Adel - Cook County Chamber of Commerce:* The Adel-Cook County Chamber of Commerce is organized to advance the general welfare and prosperity of Cook County so that its citizens and all areas of its business community will prosper. Particular attention and emphasis are given to small business, entrepreneurs, tourism projects, and member support services.
- *Adel Industrial Development Authority:* The Adel Industrial Development Authority (AIDA) works to recruit new industry into Cook County and also seeks to help existing businesses to expand. The AIDA serves as the conduit for bond financing and project development.

- *Cook County Economic Development Commission:* The Cook County Economic Development Division (EDC) serves as the marketing arm for AIDA. The EDC markets Cook County to prospective industries, facilitates existing industry expansions, provides information on federal/state/local issues impacting industry, partners with the Chamber of Commerce to promote Cook County, and additionally supports local tourism venues.
- *Adel Downtown Development Authority:* The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is charged with the redevelopment of the downtown area in the City of Adel. They partner with the Chamber and EDC to support business activity.

Programs:

- *SGRC Loan Program:* The Southern Georgia Regional Commission’s loan department offers in-house loans and Small Business Administration financing to businesses within the 18- county region including Greater Cook County.
- *Workforce Investment Act Programs:* Various programs include the South Georgia Workforce Development Board, South Georgia CareerNET, area employers, and economic development organizations. The programs serve a 9-county region by providing job-skills training and education, establishing partnerships, and leveraging resources.
- *Department of Labor:* Through various programs, the department provides job matching for employers and job seekers, unemployment insurance, GED classes, a job-search resource center, assistance for individuals with disabilities, and education for migrant farm workers.
- *Certified Work Ready Program:* Cook County became a Certified Work Ready Community in June 2009. Certified Work Ready Communities have the skilled workforce that business demands and the educational infrastructure to drive economic growth and prosperity. To earn the designation, counties must:
 - Demonstrate a commitment to improving public high school graduation rates through a measurable increase
 - Show a specified percentage of the available and current workforce have earned Work Ready Certificates

Major Employers

The Chamber of Commerce identified the following as the major employers in the Cook County for 2008.

Top 10 Employers for Greater Cook County

| | |
|---------------------------------|------|
| Cook County School System | 496 |
| Williams Investment Company | 350 |
| Memorial Health System | 250 |
| BASF Sparks | 190 |
| Vulcan All Steel Structures | 150 |
| J-M Eagle | 140 |
| Xella Aircrete N. America, Inc. | 100+ |
| Sanderson Farms | 100 |
| Sierra Pine, Limited | 94 |
| Aluminum Finishing of Georgia | 84 |

APPENDIX C

HOUSING

APPENDIX C: HOUSING

Housing is not only an important resource for individuals and families; it is also an integral part of economic and community development. It is important to have a stock of affordable and quality housing that fits in with the character of the community. Substandard housing and a lack of affordable housing often show a relationship to crime, declining neighborhoods and many other social problems.

Following is a series of briefly discussed topics that provide a description of the existing housing conditions for Greater Cook County.

Housing Types

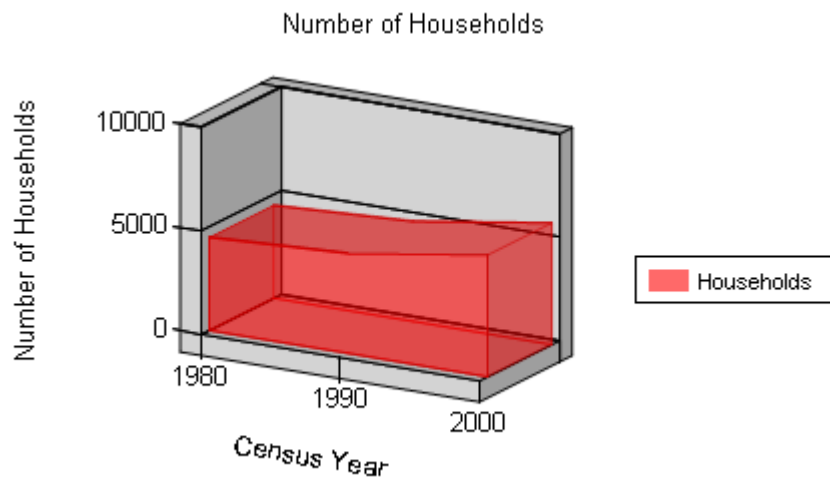
All housing type data comes from the US Bureau of Census, which identifies housing types by the amount of units per structure.

TABLE C-1, CURRENT AND PROJECTED HOUSING TYPES

| Number of Households Trend | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
|----------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Number of Households | 4,476 | 4,825 | 5,882 |

Source: US Census Bureau, 2007

GRAPH C-2, NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS



The number of households in Cook County has increased by 1,406 or 31% from 1980-2000. With the population in Cook County increasing at a steady rate, it is natural that the number of households would increase. From 1980-1990 the increase was only about 8%. This shows that most of the household growth occurred from 1990-2000. This is in line with the rate of population growth for Cook County which increased the most from 1990-2000.

C-3, HOUSING TRENDS

| Types of Housing Trend | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Total Housing Units | 4,844 | 5,340 | 6,558 |
| Single Units (detached) | 3,780 | 3,579 | 3,808 |
| Single Units (attached) | 54 | 31 | 107 |
| Double Units | 93 | 86 | 38 |
| 3 to 9 Units | 147 | 166 | 224 |
| 10 to 19 Units | 70 | 32 | 22 |
| 20 to 49 Units | 25 | | 36 |
| 50 or more Units | 62 | | |
| Manufactured Home or Trailer | 613 | 1,394 | 2,309 |
| All Other | | 52 | 14 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

The total number of housing units in Cook County increased by 35% from 1980-2000. From 1980-1990 the increase in housing units was a mere 12%. This closely mirrors the population increase as well as the number of household increases. The most significant increase in type of housing has been in the number of mobile homes in Cook County. From 1980-2000 the number of manufactured homes increased by 1696 (276%). It appears that there is a decent mix of housing stock in Cook County, but if trends continue to follow the pattern they have been, there will be more manufactured homes than any other type of housing in the County. The current economic situation facing the entire country has highly affected home building and the number of manufactured homes produced and sold. There are many contractors with new homes they are unable to sell and are being forced to rent, and many of these houses sit unoccupied at all. The US Census states that in 2007, the total number of housing units is 6,856. Comparing the growth from 2000-2007 with the previous year's growth, shows how the economy has slowed. Growth from 1980-1990 was 10% more housing units in Cook County. From 1990-2000, the number of housing units grew 23%. From 2000-2007, the number of housing units only increased by 4.5%.

C-4, HOUSING TRENDS COMPARISON

| Types of Housing Comparison | Cook | Georgia | United States |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|---------------|
| Total Housing Units | 100.00 % | 100.00 % | 100.00 % |
| Single Units (detached) | 58.07 % | 64.21 % | 60.28 % |
| Single Units (attached) | 1.63 % | 2.87 % | 5.56 % |
| Double Units | 0.58 % | 2.75 % | 4.31 % |
| 3 to 9 Units | 3.42 % | 9.32 % | 9.41 % |
| 10 to 19 Units | 0.34 % | 3.94 % | 4.00 % |
| 20 to 49 Units | 0.55 % | 1.76 % | 3.34 % |
| 50 or more Units | 0.00 % | 2.97 % | 5.29 % |
| Manufactured Home or Trailer | 35.21 % | 12.03 % | 7.57 % |
| All Other | 0.21 % | 0.13 % | 0.23 % |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

Cook County is similar to Georgia and the United States in percentages of household types. The largest difference seems to be in manufactured homes. While Georgia has only 12.03% of its total housing units as manufactured homes, and the United States 7.57% Cook County has 35.21% of its total housing stock made up of manufactured homes. This percentage probably represents the need for affordable housing in Cook County. If there were more affordable single family or multi-family residents, the number of manufactured homes in the area would likely decrease.

Age of Housing Units

It appears that Cook County and its cities have had a good mix of housing over the past 60-70 years. The age of the housing stock is getting newer each year, but it does appear that Cook County is preserving its older homes.

C-5, AGE OF HOUSING TREND

| Age of Housing Trend | COOK | | ADEL | | CECIL | | LENOX | | SPARKS | |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|------|------|-------|------|-------|------|--------|------|
| | 1990 | 2000 | 1990 | 2000 | 1990 | 2000 | 1990 | 2000 | 1990 | 2000 |
| Built 1970 - 1979 | 1,299 | 1,128 | 531 | 391 | 35 | 25 | 60 | 81 | 95 | 113 |
| Built 1960 - 1969 | 925 | 904 | 368 | 444 | 33 | 25 | 65 | 43 | 96 | 112 |
| Built 1950 - 1959 | 719 | 665 | 334 | 332 | 18 | 11 | 51 | 49 | 87 | 59 |
| Built 1940 - 1949 | 551 | 419 | 246 | 185 | 13 | 11 | 19 | 21 | 62 | 52 |
| Built 1939 or earlier | 705 | 672 | 214 | 227 | 9 | 15 | 63 | 54 | 85 | 77 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

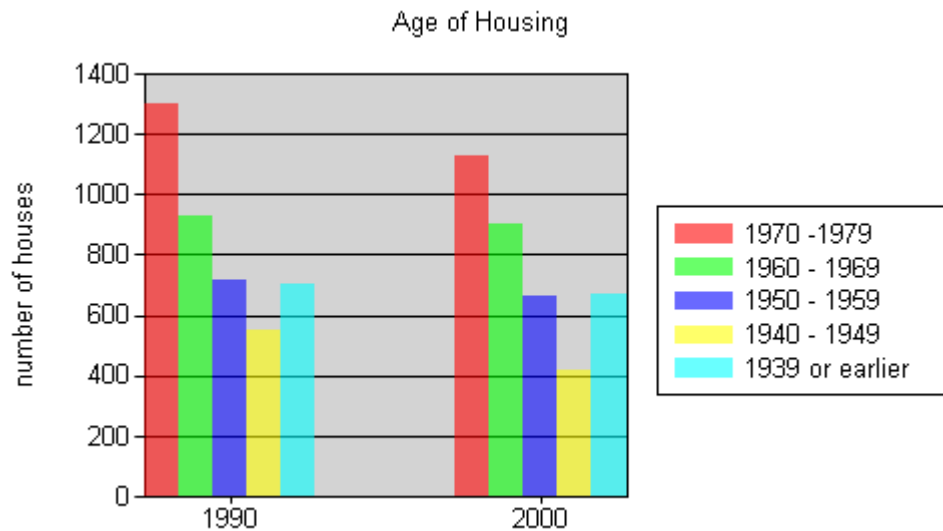
C-6, AGE OF HOUSING COMPARISON

| Age of Housing Comparison | Cook | Georgia |
|---------------------------|---------|---------|
| Built 1970 - 1979 | 17.20 % | 18.55 % |
| Built 1960 - 1969 | 13.78 % | 12.68 % |
| Built 1950 - 1959 | 10.14 % | 8.64 % |
| Built 1940 - 1949 | 6.39 % | 4.39 % |
| Built 1939 or earlier | 10.25 % | 5.88 % |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

When comparing Cook County’s housing stock to that of the State of Georgia, it appears that the age of housing in Cook County is much like that of the State. Cook County does have a noticeably higher percentage of homes built in or before 1939. This could attest to Cook County’s ability to restore and maintain its historic resources.

GRAPH C-7, AGE OF HOUSING



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

C-8, CONDITION OF HOUSING TREND

| Condition of Housing Trend | 1990 | 2000 |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Total Housing Units | 5,340 | 6,558 |
| Complete Plumbing Facilities | 5,229 | 6,427 |
| Lacking Plumbing Facilities | 111 | 131 |
| Complete kitchen facilities | 5,255 | 6,425 |
| Lacking complete kitchen facilities | 85 | 133 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

It appears that the many of the existing housing units in Cook County are in decent and complete condition. It appears that 98% of these houses have complete plumbing facilities and almost 98% of them have complete kitchen facilities. In comparing Cook County’s housing stock to that of the State and the Country, it appears that the County is behind in keeping their housing conditions up.

C-9, CONDITION OF HOUSING COMPARISON

| Condition of Housing Comparison | Cook | Georgia | United States |
|-------------------------------------|-------|-----------|---------------|
| Total Housing Units | 6,558 | 3,281,737 | 115,904,641 |
| Percent Lacking Kitchen Facilities | 2 | 1 | 1.3 |
| Percent Lacking Plumbing Facilities | 2 | 0.9 | 1.2 |
| Percent Built 1990 to 2000 | 28.2 | 27.9 | 17 |
| Percent Built 1939 or earlier | 10.2 | 5.9 | 15 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

C-10, OCCUPANCY CHARACTERISTICS

| Occupancy Characteristics Trend | 1990 | 2000 |
|---------------------------------|-------|-------|
| Total Housing Units Built | 5,340 | 6,558 |
| Housing Units Vacant | 515 | 676 |
| Housing Units Owner Occupied | 3,617 | 4,408 |
| Housing Units Renter Occupied | 1,208 | 1,474 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

Between 1990 and 2000, Cook County has slightly increased its vacancy rate in housing units. The number of people owning homes has remained about the same from 1990-2000. This category has seen no drastic changes. The number of people renting homes has stayed about the same as well. It appears that home ownership is something that the people of Cook County value. When compared to the State of Georgia and the Country, Cook County has a higher percentage of people owning homes. This home ownership rate could be because of lower property taxes in the area or just a sense of pride in owning a home. The percentage of people who rent housing units in Cook County is about equivalent as the State and the Country.

C-11, OCCUPANCY CHARACTERISTICS COMPARISON

| Occupancy Characteristics Comparison | Cook | Georgia | United States |
|---------------------------------------|--------|-----------|---------------|
| Total Population | 15,771 | 8,186,453 | 281,421,906 |
| Total Housing Units Occupied | 5,882 | 3,006,369 | 105,480,101 |
| Percent Housing Units Owner Occupied | 74.9 | 67.5 | 66.2 |
| Percent Housing Units Renter Occupied | 24 | 23.6 | 25.8 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

C-12, HOUSING COST TREND

| Housing Cost Trend (in Dollars) | 1990 | 2000 |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|
| Median property value | 39,100 | 60,900 |
| Median rent | 276 | 404 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

One factor that has not remained constant is the cost of housing. In 1990, the median property value was \$39,100. By 2000, it had risen by almost 56% to reach \$60,900. Rent saw an increase from \$276 a month to \$404 per month, a rise of 46%. The median property value in Cook County is much lower than that of Georgia or the Country. This is more than likely a reflection of the more rural location of Cook County compared to some of the larger more metro places in Georgia that account for a large portion of this percentage.

| Housing Cost Comparison (in Dollars) | Cook | Georgia | United States |
|--------------------------------------|--------|---------|---------------|
| Median property value | 60,900 | 111,200 | 119,600 |
| Median rent | 284 | 505 | 519 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1

Building Permit Data

| YEAR | Total Number of Permits |
|------|-------------------------|
| 2008 | 100 |
| 2007 | 177 |
| 2006 | 215 |
| 2005 | 187 |

Source: Cook County Planning & Zoning

Number of Mobile Home Tie-Downs

| YEAR | Number of Tie Downs |
|------|---------------------|
| 2008 | 82 |
| 2007 | 85 |
| 2006 | 103 |
| 2005 | 114 |

Source: Cook County Planning & Zoning

APPENDIX D
NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

APPENDIX D: NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

Consideration of natural resources is an important item in planning future growth patterns for any community. For Cook County, the characteristics of the natural environment, including soils, topography, water supply, and wildlife habitats is essential information in defining the county's existing attributes and potential areas of improvements. An understanding of these will guide community leaders in maintaining a high quality of life and protecting the community's vital natural resources. Numerous times in this appendix the communities will be advised to consult the enclosed maps for making basic determinations about land uses and location of development relative to the boundaries of environmentally sensitive areas. To assist the communities with making more accurate determinations at reasonable scales, this data has been integrated into each community's Geographic Information System (GIS) housed at the Southern Georgia Regional Commission (SGRC). This data is also available for viewing and query at numerous GIS-capable terminals throughout the county. Ordinances guiding "Environmental Planning Criteria" will be considered as part of the comprehensive plan update and implementation phase subsequent to the adoption of the comprehensive plan.

General Physical Environment

Cook County is in south – central Georgia and has a land area of 149,262.271 acres, or 233 square miles. It is within the Alapaha Soil & Water Conservation District which is in a six – county district established in 1937. Most of the land is well drained, which makes the county well suited for agriculture and the stream flow is generally southeastward. The physical landscape is fairly homogenous with no outstanding physical features. Much of the land is used for agricultural purposes, with no notable forms of mineral extraction except for sand and gravel.

Cook County is located within the "Tifton Uplands" of the Southern Coastal Plain physiographic province. The county's land surface is nearly level to gently sloping and is dissected by numerous shallow rivers and streams. The largest of these are the Little River which forms the county's western border with Brooks and Colquitt Counties, and the New and Withlacoochee Rivers which form the county's eastern border with Berrien County. The central and southern portions of the county, near the Cities of Adel, Cecil and Sparks, have a number of depressional bays and cypress ponds which range from a few acres to several hundred acres in size. The presence of these depressional areas with the nearly level topography around them greatly reduces the rate of surface drainage in this portion of the county.

Cook County's lowest elevation is about 142 feet along the county's southern border where the Withlacoochee River enters neighboring Lowndes County. The highest elevation is a little greater than 320 feet in the extreme northern part of the county, to the east of where I-75 and U.S. #41 enter Tift County. The City of Adel is generally above 230 feet. The lowest elevation is 205 feet in the extreme southeast portion of the city where Bear Creek exits the city limits. The highest elevation in the interior part of the city is 244 feet along West Fourth Avenue and the highest overall elevation is 248 feet in the extreme northeastern part of the city approximately 2 miles northeast of downtown. Elevations in the City of Cecil range from 220 feet in the extreme southwest portion of the city west of I-75, to a little more than 250 feet in the northern portion of the city just east of I-75. In the City of Lenox, elevations are generally around 290 feet. The lowest elevation is about 250 feet located near the sewer treatment pond northwest of I-75 and the highest elevation is a little greater than 300 feet in the residential area northeast of downtown. Elevations in the City of Sparks are generally about 240 feet. The elevations range from 225 feet where Bear and Giddens Mill Creek's exit southward from the City, to a little more than 250 feet in the extreme northwest portion of the City along I – 75. The elevations are shown on Maps D – 1 and D – 2.

Cook County's underlying bedrock is composed of Pliocene – Miocene – Oligocene sedimentary rocks which were formed mostly during the Cenozoic Era (up to 70 million years ago). Below this, the rocks are Eocene and Paleocene sedimentary rocks. The sediments which formed these rocks originated in the

"ancient" Appalachian Mountains which have been eroded to form the present day Piedmont and remnant mountains.

Cook County's climate is classified as humid – Mesothermal (Cfa) according to the Köppen climate classification system. Winters are short and mildly cool with periodic cold spells moderating in 1 – 2 days. Summers are hot and humid. Annual precipitation typically ranges from 45 to 50 inches and is spread evenly throughout the year (2 – 5 inches each month). Measurable snowfalls are very rare with a less than 5% probability each year. When they occur, snowfall amounts are most always less than one inch and melt quickly. In winter, the average minimum daily temperature is 39 degrees.

In summer, the average maximum daily temperature is 90 degrees. Cook County's growing season ranges from 8 – 9 months with an average of 260 days that have daily minimum temperatures greater than 32 degrees. The first winter freeze typically occurs in early November and the last freeze typically occurs in mid – March.

The county's topography is such that notable views and vistas are not present. The Little, New, and Withlacoochee rivers are all scenic rivers (but non-designated) containing a dense tree canopy, and they are navigable by canoes most of the year.

Water Resources

Annual precipitation runoff for Cook County ranges from 10 – 11 inches, which equals approximately 5.4 billion cubic feet (40.3 billion gallons) of water. This represents the volume of water directly entering the county's rivers, streams, and depressional areas. The remaining water either evaporates or is absorbed by the ground. Surface stream drainage within Cook County is directed by a dendritic (branching tree – like) pattern. The larger depressional areas have no drainage outlets and their water levels fluctuate greatly during the year. Elsewhere, drainage is through shallow streams which flow either eastward or westward toward the bordering rivers. All surface waters within the county eventually flow into the Suwannee River which empties into the Gulf of Mexico. The county can be divided almost equally into two (2) major drainage basins for both the Little and Withlacoochee Rivers. Map D – 3 depicts these drainage basins within Cook County. It should be noted that the Little River is actually a tributary of the Withlacoochee, and the two rivers flow southward from Cook County for about 15 miles before joining in west – central Lowndes County.

Flood hazards along the major rivers and streams typically occur in late winter and early spring. Within Cook County, only the Cities of Adel and Sparks have official flood hazard area maps (FIRMs -- Flood Insurance Rate Maps) prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Flood maps have not yet been prepared for unincorporated areas of Cook County, nor the Cities of Cecil and Lenox. In addition, the maps for Adel and Sparks were prepared in 1977 and updated in 2002. Map D – 4 depicts flood hazard areas for Cook County and Map D – 5 depicts flood hazard areas for the City of Adel. (It should be noted that these maps only show flood hazard areas for the portions of Adel which were within the city limits prior to 2002, and for Cook County) These maps represent areas affected by a 100 – year flood which has a 1% chance of occurrence in any given year. It should be noted that smaller flood events occur more frequently and affect portions of flood hazard areas.

Typical of coastal plain areas, most of Cook County, Adel, Cecil, Lenox, and Sparks consumer water comes from underground aquifers which are porous underground rock layers containing water. The main aquifer beneath Cook County is the Floridian aquifer which consists of confined limestone, dolostone, and calcareous sand. Beneath the Floridian aquifer are the Claiborne and Clayton aquifers. The Floridian aquifer is principally recharged immediately south of the Fall Line which stretches across central Georgia from Columbus to Macon to Augusta. This is the point at which streams from harder rock formations of the Piedmont cross into softer rock formations of the Coastal Plain. Most sedimentary rock formations of the Coastal Plain begin at the ground surface just south of the Fall Line; therefore this is where most aquifer water originates. Recharge can also occur at other points where the aquifer up dips to become closer to the surface allowing water from streams, sink holes, and ponds to permeate through more shallow ground into the aquifer.

The vertical distance from the ground surface to the top of the first major subterranean reservoir varies considerably in different parts of Cook County. This distance generally ranges from about 230 feet in the southern part of the county to about 300 feet in the northern part. Most wells in the county range from 200 – 500 feet deep. Groundwater throughout the county is typically very hard.

Environmental Planning Criteria

In 1989, the Georgia Planning Act encouraged each local government to develop a comprehensive plan to guide its activities. In order to provide the local governments with a guideline so that they could prepare their comprehensive plan, the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) developed a set of minimum requirements that each local plan must meet known as the “Minimum Planning Standards.” Part of the Minimum Planning Standards is the Part V Environmental Planning Criteria that specifically deal with the protection of water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, and wetlands. River corridors and mountains were added through a separate Act in 1991. In order for a comprehensive plan to meet the Minimum Planning Standards, it must identify whether any of these environmentally sensitive areas exist within the local government’s jurisdiction, and if so, must prepare local regulations to protect these resources.

MAP D-1
Greater Cook County Topography

Map D-2
City of Adel Topography

Map D-3
Greater Cook County Drainage Basins

Map D-4
City of Adel Flood Insurance Rate Map

Map D-5
City of Sparks Flood Insurance Rate Map

The Water Resource Protection Districts Ordinance (WRPDO) was adopted by Cook County and the City of Adel. This ordinance protects the sensitive natural resources: groundwater recharge areas, protected river corridors, and wetlands located throughout Cook County. By explaining the requirements for developing property containing protected water resources, the ordinances help ensure our water resources are protected from adverse affects of land development. Map D – 6 depicts the *Greater Cook County Water Resource Protection Districts*.

Water Supply Watersheds

Not applicable.

Wetlands

Freshwater wetlands are defined by federal law to be "those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions." Wetlands generally include bogs, marshes, wet prairies, and swamps of all kinds. When a wetland functions properly, it provides water quality protection, fish and wildlife habitat, natural floodwater storage, and reduction in the erosive potential of surface water; in addition to recreational opportunities, aesthetic benefits, and sites for research and education. However, a degraded wetland is less able to effectively perform these functions. Wetlands play an important role in both the natural and built environments and should be preserved for this purpose. Human activities cause wetland degradation and loss by changing water quality, quantity, and flow rates, increasing pollutant inputs, and changing species composition as a result of disturbance and the introduction of nonnative species.

Over the past several decades, expansion of both agricultural and urban development in Georgia has caused a steady reduction of wetlands acreage. This has resulted in the destruction of valuable plant and animal habitats, increased magnitude of floodwaters, and the removal of natural filters for surface water drainage thereby endangering water quality throughout the county. Draining wetlands for agricultural purposes is still a common, but declining practice, while development pressure is emerging as the largest cause of wetland loss. Many natural wetlands are in poor condition and man-made wetlands fail to replace the diverse plant and animal communities destroyed by development. Prior to developing parcels containing wetlands, or that are suspected of having wetlands, a detailed wetlands survey and all applicable requirements under Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act should be completed.

A National Wetland Inventory (NWI) database for the geographic extent of Cook County has been constructed by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service and integrated into the county's Geographic Information System (GIS) and should be used to protect these sensitive areas. Map D – 7 depicts the *Greater Cook County Generalized Wetlands*. See Table D – 1 for a breakdown of wetlands within the city and county boundaries.

Cecil Bay covers 1,670 acres and was established as a wetland mitigation bank in 2002 by the Williams Investment Company located in Adel, GA. EPA states that a mitigation bank is a wetland, stream, or other aquatic resource area that has been restored, established, enhanced, or (in certain circumstances) preserved for the purpose of providing compensation for unavoidable impacts to aquatic resources permitted under Section 404 or a similar state or local wetland regulation. The value of a bank is defined in "compensatory mitigation credits." A bank's instrument identifies the number of credits available for sale and requires the use of ecological assessment techniques to certify that those credits provide the required ecological functions.

The Cecil Bay Wetland offers mitigation credits for use by public and private end-users to provide advance compensatory mitigation for authorized impacts to the wetland. Use of mitigation credits provides a simple and cost-effective means of complying with all Federal, State and Local mitigation requirements for permitted development actions. The purpose is to have an adverse impact on the aquatic environment and need to compensate for those impacts as a condition of their permits or other regulatory requirements resulting from project impacts.

Map D-6
Greater Cook County Water Resource Districts

Map D-7
Greater Cook County Generalized Wetlands

Table D-1, Wetlands

| Location | Wetland Acreage | Overall Wetland Percentage |
|----------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Unincorporated Cook County | 34,015 | 24.3% |
| City of Adel | 878 | 17% |
| City Cecil | 56 | 9% |
| City of Lenox | 102 | 9.8% |
| City of Sparks | 701 | 27% |
| Total Wetlands | 35,752 | 87.1% |

Source: National Wetland Inventory and Southern Georgia Regional Commission

As Greater Cook County continues to grow, pressures from both the agricultural and development communities will only continue to impede on the sensitive wetland environments, especially along Interstate 75. To assist with the protection and incorporation of wetlands, examples of preservation opportunities for wetlands include:

- Use docks or boardwalks to cross a wetland rather than filling it in;
- Layout access paths along high ground;
- Preserve existing drainage and minimize diverting water to or from wetland areas;
- Avoid clearing or replacing natural native vegetation along the wetland edge;
- Control exotic/invasive plant species; and
- Follow State and Federal Wetland Regulations.

Conservation Areas

A conservation area can be defined as a tract of land that has been awarded protected status in order to ensure that natural features, cultural heritage or biota are safeguarded. A conservation area can include a nature reserve, park, land reclamation project, conservation easement, etc. In many cases, properties that cannot be developed due to natural features are placed in conservation easements and this information can be located at the local tax office.

Parks

A park can be defined as a piece of open land for either passive or active uses and maintained by a local, state or federal government. In Greater Cook County, there are approximately 76 acres of parkland and 629 acres of state park and historic sites. As new parks are always welcomed by the community, it is also important to enhance the existing parks within Greater Cook County. There are a variety of mechanisms for protecting the natural resources found in Greater Cook County. Opportunities can range from local government initiatives, private property owner, and joint public – private partnerships and result in the designation of conservation areas, parks, and/or open space. Map D – 8 depicts the *Greater Cook County Recreation Department Facilities and State Park*. Table D – 2 outlines the recreation department facilities.

Map D-8

Greater Cook County Recreation Department Parks & Facilities and State Park

Table D-2, Recreation Department Facilities

| Facility | Includes | Acreage |
|---------------------------------|---|----------------|
| City Park | Playground, restrooms, gazebo, and 3 covered shelters with grills. | 5 |
| Rob Lovett Park | 2 fields lighted complexes, concessions, 4 tennis courts and restrooms. | 28 |
| Jim Battle Park | Family park, playground, basketball court, walking track, ball field, restrooms, and 2 covered shelters with grills. | 5 |
| Massee Post Road Park & Complex | 4 field lighted Complex, Baseball, Softball, T-Ball, Soccer, Concessions, Restrooms, Playground, Family park and picnic area. | 38 |
| Reed Bingham State Park | 46 Tent, Trailer, RV Campsites - cable TV hookups, Pioneer Campground (\$25 and up, organized groups only), 6 Picnic Shelters (\$45), 4 Group Shelters (seat 50-120, \$60-\$225), Swimming Beach, 3 Boat Ramps, Playground, Accessible Fishing Pier | 629 |
| Total | | 705 |

Source: Adel - Cook County Recreation Department

Open Spaces

An open space can be defined as undeveloped land or common areas in a planned community that will not be developed and are reserved for parks, walking paths or other natural uses. These areas may not have any particular natural resources, but there has been a commitment to keep them from development.

Groundwater Recharge Areas

A groundwater recharge area is a surface land area where water that eventually enters an aquifer (an underground reservoir) is first absorbed into the ground¹. The term “recharge” is often used to describe the process by which groundwater is replenished. Most areas, unless composed of solid rock or covered by development, allow a certain percentage of precipitation to reach the water table. There are several factors that must be considered when calculating infiltration including vegetation cover, slope, soil composition, depth to the water table, and much more. It is also important to know that some areas allow more precipitation to infiltrate than in others and these areas of often referred to as "high", "critical", or “most significant” recharge areas.

Map D – 9 depicts the *Greater Cook County Groundwater Recharge Areas* within Cook County. Aquifer recharge areas are vulnerable to both urban and agricultural development. Pollutants from stormwater runoff in urban areas and excess pesticides and fertilizers in agricultural areas can access a groundwater aquifer more easily through these recharge areas. Once in the aquifer, pollutants can spread uncontrollably to other parts of the aquifer thereby decreasing or endangering water quality for an entire

region. Therefore, development of any kind in these areas, including installation of septic tanks, should be limited.

In Greater Cook County, there are two “most significant” groundwater recharge areas that consist of approximately 1,206.2 acres or 4.8% of Greater Cook County. The remaining portions of Greater Cook County are located in an “average” groundwater pollution susceptibility area². Table D – 3 provides a breakdown of the most significant groundwater recharge areas within the city and county boundaries.

2 Georgia Department of Natural Resources – Hydrologic Atlas 20

Map D-9
Greater Cook County Groundwater Recharge Areas

Table D-3, Most Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas

| Location | Groundwater Recharge Acreage | Groundwater Recharge Percentage |
|---|-------------------------------------|--|
| Unincorporated Cook County | 1,206 | 4.8% |
| City of Adel | 0 | 0% |
| City Cecil | 0 | 0% |
| City of Lenox | 0 | 0% |
| City of Sparks | 0 | 0% |
| Total Groundwater Recharge Areas | 1,206 | 4.8% |

Source: USDA – Hydrologic Atlas 18 and the Southern Georgia Regional Commission

If hazardous waste or toxic substances pollute the water that seeps into the ground in a recharge area, these pollutants are likely to be carried into the aquifer and contaminate the groundwater, making it unsafe to drink. Once polluted, it is almost impossible for a groundwater source to be cleaned up⁴. Since Greater Cook County receives all of its drinking water from groundwater, the Floridian aquifer, it is important that additional measures be taken to protect these highly sensitive areas. To assist with the protection of most significant groundwater recharge areas, examples of opportunities include:

- Wellhead protection program;
- Limit impermeable surfaces (e.g. maximum building footprints);
- Require sewer services instead of septic systems; and
- Zoning overlay district (e.g. types of development allowed, increased minimum lot size, incentives for recharge – sensitive cluster development).

Protected River Corridors

The Georgia General Assembly passed the "Mountain and River Corridor Protection Act" in 1991, which requires local governments to adopt river corridor protection plans for certain designated rivers affecting or bordering their jurisdiction. In Cook County, the only river affected by this Act is the portion of the Withlacoochee River located on the southwest county line of Cook and Colquitt. Map D – 10 depicts the *Greater Cook County Protected River Corridor*.

Under the Mountain and River Corridor Protection Act, Cook County is required to adopt a "Corridor Protection Plan" for these river segments in accordance with the minimum criteria contained in the Act and as adopted by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Cook County has reviewed the provisions of the Act and proposes implementation of its provisions by adoption of amendments to its erosion and sedimentation control ordinances, zoning ordinances, building permit requirements, and a septic tank permitting program, as appropriate.

3 Georgia Department of Community Affairs

Map D-10
Greater Cook County Protected River Corridor

Protected Mountains

Not applicable.

Community Facilities

Water

The City of Adel has 2 professional staff certified water /or sewer operators meeting the requirements of the Georgia State Board of Examiners for Water and Wastewater. The system has an annual average withdrawal limit of 3,300,000 Gallons per Day (GPD) and a monthly average withdrawal limit of 4,312,000 Gallons per Day. The System has three elevated storage tanks with a total storage of 800,000 gallons. The water distribution system has over 55 miles of mains, with pipe sizes up to 16 inches in diameter. The water is treated with chlorine for disinfectant to insure the bacteriological safety for human consumption. Also, The City adds phosphates to the water supply to inhibit supply line corrosion thus reducing "red water" problems. To efficiently operate the existing water system, the City has created a Geographical Information System (G.I.S.) for the water system within the City of Adel. For the maintenance staff, the (G.I.S.) is simply a set of Adel roads maps which shows the location of all water lines valves and fire hydrants with their respective sizes.

With water being such a valuable and precious resource, it is important to encourage ways to conserve. Here are a few examples:

- Offer credits/incentives to local water provides/companies/farmers that hold permits and do not withdrawal the maximum amount that their permit allows;
- Promote water conservation programs and funding opportunities with agencies such as USDA – NRCS for irrigation retrofits, construction of catchment ponds, etc.; and
- Provide education opportunities as to ways that homeowners and businesses can conserve water through low-flow fixtures, xeriscaping, etc.

Wastewater

The City of Adel operates one wastewater treatment facility, the Adel Sewage Treatment Plant, which has a capacity of 2.5 million gallons per day. The City is responsible for an Industrial Pre-treatment Program that is administered by the Water/Wastewater Supervisor and works with various industries to control the discharge of metals and other harmful pollutants into the treatment plant. The program goal is to cooperate with industries to keep their raw material out of the sewer system and utilize them as products. This helps the industries while preventing damage to the treatment system and the environment. All industrial customers discharging water used for industrial processes, large volumes of cooling water, and/or other material into the sanitary sewer system must obtain a permit for such discharge.

Stormwater

Stormwater is a term used by engineers to describe precipitation. Stormwater that does not soak into the ground becomes runoff, which either flows into surface waterways or is channeled into storm sewers. Impervious surfaces like driveways, sidewalks, and streets prevent stormwater runoff from naturally soaking into the ground. Stormwater can pick up debris, chemicals, dirt, and other pollutants and flow into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river, or wetland. Anything that enters a storm sewer system is discharged untreated into our local water bodies.

All communities are faced with stormwater issues; however, not all are required to address them. In 1990, the Phase I stormwater program was created under the Clean Water Act (CWA) and required a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for (1) "medium" and "large" municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) generally serving populations of 100,000 or greater, (2) construction activity disturbing 5 acres of land or greater, and (3) ten categories of industrial activity. In 1999, the Phase II stormwater program was created to further expand the Phase I program by requiring additional operators of MS4s in urbanized areas and operators of small construction sites, through the use

of NPDES permits, to implement programs and practices to control polluted stormwater runoff. Even though there are no Phase II communities in Greater Cook County, projects should be implemented to protect local water bodies. Table D – 4 depicts the *Greater Cook Average Daily Water Consumption*.

Table D-4, Greater Cook Average Daily Water Consumption (# of Gallons)

| Crop Irrigation | Livestock | Public Supply | Industrial and Mining | Domestic and Commercial | Totals | Consumptive Use |
|-----------------|-----------|---------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|--------|-----------------|
| 8.28 | 0.05 | 2.09 | 0.17 | 0.54 | 11.13 | 9.01 |

Source: USGS, Water Use in Georgia by County for 2005. (Numbers are translated from "millions of gallons per day (MGD)" calculations)

Assessment

- Current policies/ordinance meets state standards. Education outreach and enforcement should be implemented and/or continued.
- Offer credits/incentives to local water providers/companies/farmers that hold permits and do not pump the maximum amount of their permit in a given year.
- Depending on the size of an irrigation system, work with agencies such as NRCS and UGA to encourage/promote programs to construct or renovate irrigation water catchments, Variable Rate Irrigation Systems, etc.
- There are a number of things to do with homeowners to conserve water in their showers, toilets, faucets, and outdoor water use.

Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Steep Slopes

Not applicable.

Coastal Resources

Not applicable.

Floodplains

Flood hazards along the major rivers and streams typically occur in late winter and early spring. Within Cook County, only the Cities of Adel and Sparks have official flood hazard area maps (FIRMs -- Flood Insurance Rate Maps) prepared by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Flood maps have not yet been prepared for unincorporated areas of Cook County, nor the Cities of Cecil and Lenox. The major flood prone areas in Cook County are found along Bear Creek and Giddens Mill Creek.

Based off this information, approximately 36.44% of Greater Cook County is located in a flood zone. Maps D – 4 and D – 5 depict the *Greater Cook County Mapped Floodplains*.

Soils

Soils are considered to be a region's most basic and fragile natural resource, combined with such variable resources as air and water. In 1975, the United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service published the Soil Survey of Cook County Georgia in cooperation with the University of Georgia, College of Agriculture – Agricultural Experiment Stations, and the Soil Conservation Service. A general soil association map was also developed as a result of the study that includes six (6) soil associations. Map D – 11 depicts the *Greater Cook County Generalized Soil Associations*. Table D – 5 provides a general description of the 6 soil associations found in Greater Cook County.

MAP D-11
Greater Cook County Generalized Soil Associations

Table D-5, Soil Associations

| Soil Association | Soil Description | Percentage |
|-------------------------|--|-------------------|
| Kershaw-Alapaha-Fuquay | Excessively drained and well drained soils on nearly level to very gently sloping ridges; and poorly drained soils along drainage ways and in low, flat areas, primarily adjacent to the floodplains of the Little and New Rivers. Except for Fuquay soils, these are poorly suited for cultivation and pasture, and are typically found uncleared. Due to wetness or high sand content, this association has slight to severe limitations for most non-farm uses. | 4.1% |
| Leefield-Alapaha | Somewhat poorly drained and poorly drained soils on nearly level broad flatwoods areas. The entire City of Lenox is within this association. A moderate portion of this association is used for crops and pasture, although drainage is needed for some crops. Due to wetness, the association has moderate to severe limitations for non-farm uses. | 11.9% |
| Tifton-Alapaha | Well-drained soils on broad ridges and poorly drained soils in minor depressions and drainage ways. The City of Cecil is almost entirely within this association. Tifton soils are well-suited for crop, pasture, or forest production but are subject to erosion when row cropped. Due to wetness, Alapaha soils (drainage ways) are not well suited for crops and their non-farm usage is severely limited. | 46.1% |
| Fuquay-Alapaha-Leefield | Poorly drained, nearly level soils found in the central portion of the county on broad flat and ridges and some large depressional areas. The cities of Adel and Sparks are located entirely within this association. Only a small part of this association is used for the production of crops or pasture, and it has a slight to moderate limitations for non-farm usage. | 17.1% |
| Bayboro-Olustee | Very poorly and poorly drained soils found in large, nearly level, wet depressional areas in the central and south-central portions of the county. Only a very small portion of this association is used for pasture or cropland and it has very severe limitations for non-farm uses due to wetness or frequent flooding. | 4% |
| Osier-Pelham | Very poorly and poorly drained soils found on river and stream floodplains, generally along the Little and Withlacoochee Rivers and accompanying major tributaries. Due to seasonal high water table and frequent flooding, these are soils are not suitable for agriculture or non-farm uses. | 16% |

Source: USDA – Soil Conservation Service, 1975 Soil Survey of Cook County Georgia

Assessment

- Current policy/ordinance meets state standards. Education outreach and enforcement should be implemented and/or continued (E&S ordinance).

Land Capability

For purposes of this Comprehensive Plan, the eight general soil associations have been arbitrarily classified in terms of land development capability for both agricultural and urban uses. Table D – 6 depicts these classifications. The terms "good", "fair", and "poor" have been used to describe their relative capabilities. Agricultural yields per acre were used in determining agricultural capacity, and limitations on building site development were used in determining urban capability. Map D – 12 depicts the county's land capability for agriculture, and Map D – 13 depicts the county's land capability for urban development. As can be seen by these maps, Greater Cook County's best agricultural land is located in the eastern and western portions of the county.

Table D-6, Summarized Land Capability for Greater Cook County

| Soil Type | Agricultural Uses | | | Urban Uses | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------|------|------|------------|------|------|
| | Good | Fair | Poor | Good | Fair | Poor |
| Kershaw-Alapaha-Fuquay | | | X | | X | |
| Leefield-Alapaha | | X | | | X | |
| Tifton-Alapaha | X | | | | X | |
| Fuquay-Alapaha-Leefield | | X | | | X | |
| Bayboro-Olustee | | | X | | | X |
| Osier-Pelham | | | X | | | X |

Source: Soil Survey of Cook County, Georgia, 1975; U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Soil Conservation Service.

It should be noted that each soil association consists of individual soil types with varying degrees of capability for agricultural or urban uses. For example, a soil association containing soil types with a particularly high agricultural production may also contain soil types with a particularly low production. Therefore, the land capability ratings are generalized on the total composition of the soil association. For agricultural capability, it should be noted that Cook County's soil associations were compared only amongst themselves (within the county) and the ratings do not reflect a true regional comparison. The soil associations that are rated as "good" are exceptional for agricultural production in that they produce high yields for a wide variety of crops. The soil associations that are rated as "fair" are actually good for agricultural production in that they produce high yields, but are typically used for a slightly smaller range of crops. When considering a regional comparison, most of Cook County's soil associations would be rated as good for agriculture.

MAP D-12
Land Capability for Cultivated Crops

MAP D-13
Land Capability for Urban Development

Table D – 8 depicts the various individual soil types and their proportionate share of the county. It also depicts those soils identified by the USDA as being "prime farmland" or "farmland having statewide importance" which is based on underlying soil types. Prime farmland is defined as land that is best suited to producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained high crop yields if acceptable farming methods are used. Prime farmland produces the highest yields with minimal inputs of energy and money. The use of prime farmland for agricultural purposes results in the least damage to the environment. The supply of high quality farmland is limited and should be used with wisdom and foresight. Farmland of "statewide importance" consists of soils that are important to agriculture in the county but are considered to be marginal cropland. These soils do not meet the requirements for prime farmland and are typically less productive. Consideration of septic tank percolation fields was also included in the determination of land capability for urban uses. Although most soil associations appear to be at least "fair" for overall urban usage, none are considered "good" for septic tanks and all but two are considered "poor". Table D – 7 depicts the soil association ratings for septic tank usage. Map D – 14 depicts generalized locations of land capability for septic tanks in Cook County.

Table D-7, Land Capability for Septic Tank Absorption Fields

| Soil Type Association | Septic Tank Percolation Fields | | |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|------|------|
| | Good | Fair | Poor |
| Kershaw-Alapaha-Fuquay | | | X |
| Leefield-Alapaha | | | X |
| Tifton-Alapaha | | X | |
| Fuquay-Alapaha-Leefield | | X | |
| Bayboro-Olustee | | | X |
| Osier-Pelham | | | X |

Source: Soil Survey of Cook County, Georgia 1975; U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Soil Conservation Service.

When evaluating individual soil types, only Leefield, Fuquay and Tifton soils have a marginally "fair" rating in the county. All other soils are considered "poor" and none have a favorable rating. The use of septic tanks in "fair" soils requires expensive modifications to the drain field. The use of septic tanks in "poor" soils is cost prohibitive. Therefore, the effective use of septic tanks in Cook County is not compatible with natural soil conditions and the use of municipal sewers should be required in developing areas.

Existing Land Use

Natural land use classifications include wildlife areas, forests, and other open or undeveloped areas. Human land uses include residential, commercial, industrial, utilities, agricultural, recreational, and other developed uses. Management plans, policies, ordinances and regulations determine the types of uses that are allowable, or the types of uses that protect specially designated or environmentally sensitive uses.

MAP D-14
Greater Cook County Land Capability for Septic Tanks

The attributes of land use include general land use patterns, land ownership, land management plans, and special use areas. General land use patterns characterize the types of uses within a particular area. Existing land use patterns have a direct impact on a county or city's future growth. The preparation and analysis of existing land use maps and data are important in understanding land use relationships within and between Adel and Cook County.

Plant and Animal Habitats

River corridors, wetlands, and lakes provide natural habitat for a variety of rare and common plant and animal species. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) – Wildlife Resources Division – Georgia Natural Heritage Program has worked with a number of groups to compile a list of Georgia's rare species. The most recent data on threatened or endangered plant and animal species in Cook County is from 2008. Table D – 8 lists the *Endangered or Threatened Plant Species in Cook County* and Table D – 9 lists the *Endangered or Threatened Animal Species in Cook County*.

Table D-8, Endangered or Threatened Plant Species in Cook County

| Species Common Name – (<i>Species Name</i>) | Georgia (state status) | Federal |
|---|---|----------------|
| <i>Angelica dentata</i> Sandhill Angelica | | |
| <i>Balduina atropurpurea</i> Purple Honeycomb Head | X (rare) | |
| <i>Dalea carnea var. gracilis</i> Sprawling White – tassels | | |
| <i>Drosera tracyi</i> Tracy's Dew – threads | | |
| <i>Macbridea caroliniana</i> Carolina Bogmint | X (rare) | |
| <i>Sarracenia flava</i> Yellow Flytrap | X (unusual) | |
| <i>Sarracenia minor</i> Hooded Pitcherplant | X (unusual) | |
| <i>Sarracenia psittacina</i> Parrot Pitcherplant | X (threatened) | |
| <i>Sporobolus teretifolius</i> Wire – leaf Dropseed | | |
| <i>Stewartia malacodendron</i> Silky Camellia | | |

Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources – Wildlife Resources Division – Georgia Natural Heritage Program, 2008.

Table D –9, Endangered or Threatened Animal Species in Cook County

| Species Common Name – (<i>Species Name</i>) | Georgia (state status) | Federal |
|---|---|----------------|
| <i>Aimophila aestivalis</i> Bachman's Sparrow | X (rare) | |
| <i>Alosa alabamae</i> Alabama Shad | X (threatened) | |
| <i>Clemmys guttata</i> Spotted Turtle | X (unusual) | |
| <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i> Bald Eagle | | X (threatened) |
| <i>Pteronotropis metallicus</i> Metallic Shiner | | |

Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources – Wildlife Resources Division – Georgia Natural Heritage Program, 2008.

Impaired Streams

In 1994, a lawsuit was filed in the United States District Court against the United States Environmental Protection Agency (U.S. EPA) by the Sierra Club, Georgia Environmental Organization, Inc., Coosa River Basin Initiative Inc., Trout Unlimited, and Ogeechee River Valley Association for the failure to prepare Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs), under provisions under the Clean Water Act, for the State of Georgia.

A TMDL is a calculation of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a river, stream, or lake can receive and still be considered safe and healthy. A TMDL is a means for recommending controls needed to meet water quality standards, which are set by the state and determines how much of a pollutant can be present in a waterbody. If the pollutant is over the set limit, a water quality violation has occurred. If a stream is polluted to the extent that there is a water quality standard violation, there cannot be any new additions (or “loadings”) of the pollutant into the stream until a TMDL is developed. Pollutants can come from point source and non-point source pollution. Examples of “pollutants” include, but are not limited to: Point Source Pollution – wastewater treatment plant discharges and Non – point Source Pollution – runoff from urban, agricultural, and forested area such as animal waste, litter, antifreeze, gasoline, motor oil, pesticides, metals, and sediment.

In 2007, the SGRDC entered into a contract with the GA Department of Natural Resources (DNR) – Environmental Protection Division (EPD) to prepare eighteen (18) local TMDL Implementation Plans for stream segments in the Suwannee Basin that had been identified as impaired waterbodies due to high fecal coliform (FC) or low dissolved oxygen (DO). Of the eighteen (18) TMDL Implementation Plans located in the Suwannee Basin, 2 of the streams were located within Cook County.

The Georgia 2008 305(b)/303(d) list of waters was prepared as a part of the Georgia 2006 – 2007 assessment of water quality prepared in accordance with Sections 305(b) and 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act and guidance from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Assessed waterbodies are classified according to a comparison of water quality monitoring results to water quality standards and other pertinent information. Table D – 10 depicts the 2008 list of impaired streams located within Cook County. Map D – 15 shows the impaired stream segments in Cook County.

Table D-10, Cook County 2008 305(b)/303(d) List

| Waterbody Name | Location | County(s) | Impairment | Miles Impacted |
|-----------------------|--|--|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Bear Creek | City of Adel Lake to Withlacoochee River | Cook | Fecal Coliform (FC) | 10 |
| Giddens Mill Creek | U/S U.S. Hwy. 41/SR 7 to Bear Cr., Adel | Cook | Dissolved Oxygen (DO) | 1 |
| Morrison Creek | Adel | Cook | Fecal Coliform (FC) | 2 |
| Withlacoochee River | New River to Bay Branch | Cook/ Berrien/ Lowndes County | Trophic – Weighted Residue (TWR) | 23 |

Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division, 2008

MAP D-15
Cook County 2008 Impaired Stream Segments

Other Significant Natural Resources

Scenic Areas

Not applicable.

Prime Agricultural Land

Prime farmland is of major importance in satisfying the nation's short- and long-range needs for food and fiber. The supply of high quality farmland is limited and therefore should be used with wisdom and foresight. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines prime farmland as:

Land that is best suited to producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops.

In 1975, there were 23,910 acres (16%) that met the soil requirements for prime farmland in Greater Cook County. Based off USDA – NRCS, the acreage of prime farmland remains the same today. In 1975, there were 68,722.75 (46%) acres identified as marginal cropland. This is farmland that consists of soils that are important to agriculture, but do not meet the requirements for prime farmland. These soils tend to be more erodible, droughty, seasonally wet, difficult to cultivate, and less productive than prime farmland soils⁶.

Farmland not only provides food and fiber, but pays more in taxes than it requires in service expenditures as well as environmental benefits. As development pressures may rise in Greater Cook County, it is important to incorporate measures that will protect this limited resource and preserve farmland for future generations. Examples of opportunities include:

- Purchase Development Rights (PDR) / Agricultural Easement Purchase Program (AEPP);
- Conservation Easements;
- Local Tax Incentives;
- Agricultural Security Areas; and
- Agricultural Overlay Districts.

Major Parks, Recreation, and Conservation Areas

A small portion (629 acres) of the Reed Bingham State Park is located along the west – central border of Cook County with neighboring Colquitt County. There is no other Federal or State – owned recreation or wildlife management areas within Cook County. Table D – 11 lists the *State Parks and Historic Sites Within 70 miles of Cook County*.

⁴ USDA – Soil Conservation Service, 1975 Soil Survey of Cook County Georgia.

HISTORIC & CULTURAL RESOURCES

Introduction:

Though a county-wide comprehensive historic resources survey has not been completed for all of Cook County, it is quite evident to anyone that travels through the unincorporated areas and incorporated cities that there is a rich history of architecture present which is worthy of preservation. Historic properties and districts potentially eligible for the National Register of Historic Places (as well as the three properties already listed) form the basis for preservation efforts at the local level. In the future, more of these potentially eligible properties and districts could be listed on the National Register of Historic Places, or protected locally through Historic Preservation Enabling Ordinances and Local Historic Property and/or District Designation Ordinances. At the present time, there are no such ordinances in the entire county, although some work has been done in the past in working towards that goal of local protection.

Cook County

Properties on the National Register of Historic Places:

Cook County has a rich heritage that is evidenced by its historic sites. Three historic properties have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and the Georgia Register of Historic Places (GARHP).

Table D-17, Cook County Properties Listed On The National Register Of Historic Places

| SITE | ADDRESS | CITY | DATE LISTED |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|
| Cook County Courthouse | 212 N. Hutchinson Avenue | Adel | June 14, 1995 ⁵ |
| SOWEGA Building | 100 S. Hutchinson Avenue | Adel | March 29, 1990 ⁶ |
| United States Post Office-Adel | 115 E. 4 th Street | Adel | January 15, 2009 ⁷ |

The properties referenced in Table D-17 are shown on Map D-16.

Historic Cemeteries:

Throughout the years, various cemeteries, both public and private have developed in Cook County. Below, we have listed those that are believed to be both historic and still active. Some of these are not marked on USGS Maps and their location is approximate based on other sources.

⁵ National Register of Historic Places Record Page for Cook County Courthouse Record #206336

⁶ National Register of Historic Places Record Page for SOWEGA Building Record #196560

⁷ Talley-Moore, Helen. "United States Post Office-Adel Listed On National Register." [Georgia Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Division News Release](#), February 9, 2009.

Table D-18, Cook County Historic Cemeteries⁸⁹

| CEMETERY | LOCATION | MAP # |
|-----------------|---|--------------|
| Adel | S. Elm St. At Antioch Rd. Adel | 1 |
| Antioch | Antioch Rd. | 2 |
| Baker | Brushy Creek Rd. Near Meadows Ln. | 3 |
| Bethlehem | Bethlehem Church Rd. | 4 |
| Beulah Church | Beulah Church Rd. At Massey Post Rd. | 5 |
| Brushy Creek | Brushy Creek Church Rd. | 6 |
| Cecil Cemetery | Union Street/SR #41 Area, Cecil | 7 |
| Concord | Concord Church Circle | 8 |
| County Line | Fellowship Church Rd. Near Caulie Harris Rd. | 9 |
| Crossroads | Massey Post Rd. Near Conger Rd. | 10 |
| Daniel | Boyette Rd. Near Futch Rd. | 11 |
| Easters | CR #66 | 12 |
| Fellowship | Fellowship Church Rd. At Caulie Harris Rd. | 13 |
| Flowers | McConnell Bridge Road Near Neil Purvis Rd. Area (Approx.) | 14 |
| Folsom | Pike Creek Rd. Near Browning Rd. Area (Approx.) | 15 |

⁸ Ensley, Dillard D. A Survey of Cook Cemeteries Cook County, Georgia. Knoxville, Tennessee: Tennessee Valley Publishing, August, 2000.

⁹ USGS Quadrangle Maps (Various)

| | | |
|---------------------------|---|----|
| Forest Hill | SR #37 At CR #92 | 16 |
| Futch | Old Coffee Rd. Near County Line (Approx.) | 17 |
| Hancock | CR #246 At CR #59 | 18 |
| Hester | N of CR #195 | 19 |
| Hutchinson | Val-Del Rd. At Old Coffee Rd. | 20 |
| Lakeview | CR #244 At CR #205 | 21 |
| Lenox | E. Revels Ave., Lenox | 22 |
| Lenox City | W. Colquit Ave., Lenox | 23 |
| Mathis/Needmore | Darden Rd. Near US #41 | 24 |
| Money | Stalvey Rd. | 25 |
| Rose Hill | CR #187 NE Of Laconte | 26 |
| Rountree/Evergreen | CR #99 Near CR #251 | 27 |
| Sparks | Rhome St., Sparks | 28 |
| Sparks City | M.L.K. Dr. , Sparks | 29 |
| Spring Hill | CR #15 At CR #13 | 30 |
| Springhead | Springhead Church Rd. | 31 |
| Staunton | Staunton Rd., Staunton | 32 |
| Sylvester | CR #57 Near Nell Purvis Rd. | 33 |
| Wilkes | Community Church Rd. | 34 |
| Woodlawn/Salem | E. 4 th St., Adel | 35 |
| Woodlawn Memorial Gardens | Val-Del Rd. Near US #41 S., Adel | 36 |

The properties referenced in Table D-18 are shown on Map D-17.

Historic Schools

Various Cook County Historic Schools were identified as part of the South Georgia Regional Development Center’s (now Southern Georgia Regional Commission’s) Historic Rural School’s Initiative. The location and names of others were identified through available GNIS Data.

Table D-19, Cook County Historic Schools¹⁰¹¹²

| HISTORIC SCHOOL | LOCATION |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Adel Public School | S. Parrish St. At 8 th Ave., Adel |
| Alpha School | On SR #76 Near CR 96 |
| Brushy Creek School | Brushy Creek Rd. Near Concord Church Rd. |
| Grovenia School | Barneyville Rd. Near Massey Post Rd. |
| Lenox Elementary School | US #41, Lenox |
| Lenox School | College Ave., Lenox |
| Lone Star School | SR #37 Near John Crosby Rd. |
| Midway School | Massey Post Rd. Near Burnett Rd. |
| Sparks Collegiate Institute | S. College St., Sparks |
| Sparks Elementary School | US #41, Sparks |
| Sparks-Adel High & Industrial School | N. MLK Jr. Dr., Adel |
| Springhead School | Antioch Rd. at R. Folsom Rd. |

The properties referenced in Table D-19 are shown on Map D-18.

Historic Place Names

Throughout the history of Cook County, various communities have been named, many for the families that lived there, or a particular event, feature, or church. The following is a list of those known communities and their locations.

¹⁰ Southern Georgia Regional Commission (formerly South Georgia Regional Development Center). Historic Rural Schools Initiative Cook County Files. On file at the Southern Georgia Regional Commission Headquarters, Valdosta, Georgia.

¹¹ GNIS Data (Only Alpha School, Brushy Creek School, Grovania School, Lone Star School and Midway School)

¹² Dinnerman, Michael. Cook County Commission, Adel, Georgia. Interviewed by Amanda Peacock, August, 2009. (Springhead School Only)

Table D-20, Cook County Historic Place Names¹³

| HISTORIC PLACE NAMES | LOCATION |
|----------------------|------------------------------------|
| Adel/Puddleville | SR #37 At US #41 |
| Barnesdale/Barnsdale | Massey Post Rd. At Conger Rd. |
| Barneyville | I-71 At Barneyville Rd |
| Berrien | CR #15 At Clark Smith Rd. |
| Burney Hill | CR #99 Area Near SR #37 |
| Cecil | US #41 At Old Coffee Rd. |
| Chaserville | Massey Post Rd. At Barneyville Rd. |
| Fellowship | Fellowship Rd |
| Flat Ford | Barneyville RD. Near CR #186 |
| Greggs/Garnett | SR #76 At Greggs Rd. |
| Heartpine | US #41 Within Adel City Limits |
| Jerusalem | Off SR #76 At Brooks County Line |
| Laconte | US #41 N Of Barneyville Rd. |
| Lenox | US #41 AT SR #547 |
| Massey/Massee | Massey Post Rd. At Burnett Rd. |
| Nola | Clark Smith Rd. W Of Berrien |
| Pine Valley | SR #76 At Old Union Rd. |
| Sparks/Afton | US #41 N. Of Adel |
| Staunton/Mogal | US #41 N. of Lenox |
| Wagon Wheel | US #41 At CR #210 |

The properties referenced in Table D-20 are shown on Map D-19.

Historic Resources Surveys:

¹³ GNIS Data

A comprehensive historic resources survey has not been undertaken for all of Cook County. Only the City of Adel had a comprehensive historic resources survey completed in 1981, which identified 135 historic properties and potential districts.¹⁴

The purpose of such a survey is to identify and inventory what historic resources exist in order to take further actions to protect and preserve them. Because a complete comprehensive historic resources survey has not been done, it is difficult to assess Cook County's historic resources. However, based upon several windshield surveys of the area and several surveys of various types, it is obvious that there are numerous historic and cultural resources in Cook County.

Cook County also has many mature agricultural landscapes, which significantly contribute to the historic and aesthetic character of the county. Another significant feature, which is important to the rural character of Cook County, is the existence of tree canopies over several of the historic rural roads.

As stated previously, the City of Adel is the only community with any properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places to date, although it has properties and districts that may be eligible which were identified in the 1981 historic resources survey.¹⁵ Individual properties in unincorporated Cook County and the entire Cities of Cecil, Lenox and Sparks have had some type of project specific historic resources survey completed due to Federal Section 106 requirements. Those that identified National Register Historic Places Eligible Districts were not comprehensive in that no individual properties within them were individually identified & surveyed, only the boundary itself.¹⁶ In the case of unincorporated Cook County, at least three (3) properties were found to be individually eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.¹⁷ In the case of Cecil, at least four (4) properties were found to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places and no eligible National Register of Historic Places Historic Districts was identified.¹⁸ In the case of Lenox one (1) eligible National Register of Historic Places Historic District was identified.¹⁹ In the case of Sparks, one (1) eligible National Register of Historic Places Historic District was identified.²⁰

¹⁴ Gibbs, Kenneth. Georgia Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Division, Atlanta, Georgia. Interview by Michael Jacobs, August 24, 2009.

¹⁵ See Tables D-17 & D-24

¹⁶ See Tables D-21, D-28, D-30 & D-31

¹⁷ See Table D-21

¹⁸ See Table D-28

¹⁹ See Table D-30

²⁰ See Table D-31

Table D-21, Unincorporated Cook County National Register Eligible Properties & Sites Identified During Project Specific Historic Resources Surveys

| NR ELIGIBLE PROPERTY OR SITE | LOCATION | DATE OF SURVEY | AGENCY |
|--|---|----------------|----------------------|
| Lovett Farm | 223 Barneyville Road, Barneyville Community | 2006 | GA DOT ²¹ |
| Former Georgia–Florida Railroad Corridor | County-wide | 2006 | GA DOT ²² |
| Godwin House | Nelson Road, Near Lenox, GA | 2007 | GA DOT ²³ |

The properties referenced in Table D-21 are shown on Map D-20.

State Historic Markers:

There are presently four (4) state historic markers of various types located in Unincorporated Cook County.

Table D-22, Unincorporated Cook County State Historic Markers²⁴

| MARKER | LOCATION | Marker # |
|--------------------------------|---|--------------|
| Battle of Brushy Creek | Northbound I-75 Rest Area #5 | GHM 037-4 |
| Blue Star Memorial Highway | Northbound I-75 Rest Area #5 | GCG |
| Blue Star Memorial Highway | Southbound I-75 Rest Area #6 | GCG |
| Reed Bingham State Park Bridge | Bridge At Little River S of Park, N of GA #37 | GHM 037-5 |

The properties referenced in Table D-22 are shown on Map D-20.

²¹ Edwards-Pittman Environmental Inc. Assessment of Effects Report GDOT Project NHS-0000-00(764), Cook County, P.I. No. 0000764, H.P. No. 060525-001, Finding of No Adverse Affect To Lovett Farm, The Sparks Historic District and the Former Georgia & Florida Railway. Atlanta, Georgia: Privately Published, October 5, 2006.

²² Ibid.

²³ Edwards-Pittman Environmental Inc. Assessment of Effects Report GDOT Project CSNHS-0008-00(458) [formerly NHS-0000-00 (764)], Cook County, P.I. No. 0008458 [formerly P.I. No. 0000764], H.P. No. 060525-001, Finding of Adverse Effect To The Lenox Historic District And The Godwin House. Atlanta, Georgia: Privately Published, September 17, 2007.

²⁴ <http://georgiainfo.galileo.usg.edu/gahistmarkers/gamarkersA-E.htm#anchor818188>

GHM - Georgia Historical Marker [indicating an official state marker erected by the Georgia Historical Commission (1953-1971) or its successor, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (after 1971)]

GCG - Garden Clubs of Georg

Other Historic Properties and Sites:

The following is a list of historic properties and sites identified through various sources. With a comprehensive historic resources survey and further research, it is evident that additional properties and sites could be identified that would further enhance the knowledge of history in Cook County.

Table D-23, Unincorporated Cook County Historic Properties and Sites

| SITE | LOCATION ²⁵ | DATE | SIGNIFICANCE |
|------------------------------|---|---------|--|
| Cannon House | Old Staunton Rd., Staunton | 1890 | Staunton Landmark ²⁶ |
| Futch Fort Site | Old Coffee Rd. at Withlacoochee River | 1836 | Seminole War Period Fort ²⁷ |
| W.T. Futch House Site | Old Coffee Rd. Near Futch Rd. | c.1830s | Historic Site ²⁸ |
| Hutchinson Mill Pond | Caulie Harris Rd. Near Mill Pond Circle | c.1830s | Historic Site ²⁹ |
| Mansfield-Parrish House Site | CR #89 at CR #96 | c.1830s | Historic Site ³⁰ |
| McCranie Fort Site | Near Brushy Creek Rd. & Barneyville Rd. | 1836 | Seminole War period Fort ³¹ |
| Rountree/Morrison Fort Site | N of CR #99 @ CR 251 | 1836 | Seminole War Period Fort ³² |

²⁵ Southern Georgia Regional Commission (formerly South Georgia Regional Development Center). "Map 1-1: Cook County Historic Sites". A Joint City/County Comprehensive Plan for Cook County and the Cities of Adel, Cecil, Lenox and Sparks. Valdosta, Georgia: Privately Published, April, 1993.

²⁶ Coastal Plain Area Planning And Development Commission. Remembered Places Leftover Pieces Of the Coastal Plain Area. Valdosta, Georgia: Privately Published, April, 1976, p 39.

²⁷ Shaw, Minnie. History of Cook County Volume 1. Sparks, Georgia: Cowart Publications, 1984, pp. 45-49

²⁸ Southern Georgia Regional Commission (formerly South Georgia Regional Development Center). "Map 1-1: Cook County Historic Sites". A Joint City/County Comprehensive Plan for Cook County and the Cities of Adel, Cecil, Lenox and Sparks.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

³¹ Shaw, Minnie. History of Cook County Volume 1. pp. 45-49

³² Ibid pp. 45-49

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--|---------|---|
| Rountree House Site | CR #99 @ CR 251 | c.1830s | Historic Site ³³ |
| Old Staunton Post Office | Old Staunton Rd., Staunton | 1890 | First Post Office 1890-1923 ³⁴ |
| Wells House Site | Old Union Rd./CR #15 @ M.J. Taylor Rd. | 1847 | One of Oldest Homes ³⁵ |

The properties referenced in Table D-23 are shown on Map D-20.

³³ Southern Georgia Regional Commission (formerly South Georgia Regional Development Center). “Map 1-1: Cook County Historic Sites”. A Joint City/County Comprehensive Plan for Cook County and the Cities of Adel, Cecil, Lenox and Sparks.

³⁴ Historic information sign posted on building.

³⁵ Coastal Plain Area Planning And Development Commission. Remembered Places Leftover Pieces Of the Coastal Plain Area. Valdosta, Georgia: Privately Published, April, 1976, p 33.

MAP D-16

Cook County National Register of Historic Places

MAP D-17
Cook County Historic Cemeteries

Map D-18
Cook County Historic Schools

Map D-19
Greater Cook County Historic Place Names

Map D-20

Cook County National Register of Historic Places Eligible Properties & Sites, Historic Markers, Historic Properties, Sites & Districts

Adel

Properties Listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

The City of Adel has a rich heritage that is evidenced by its historic sites. Three historic properties have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) and the Georgia Register of Historic Places (GARHP).

Table D-24, City of Adel Properties Listed On The National Register Of Historic Places

| SITE | ADDRESS | CITY | DATE LISTED |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|------|--------------------------------|
| Cook County Courthouse | 212 N. Hutchinson Avenue | Adel | June 14, 1995 ³⁶ |
| SOWEGA Building | 100 S. Hutchinson Avenue | Adel | March 29, 1990 ³⁷ |
| United States Post Office-Adel | 115 E. 4 th Street | Adel | January 15, 2009 ³⁸ |

The properties referenced in Table D-24 are shown on Maps D-16 & D-21.

Historic Resources Surveys:

A comprehensive historic resources survey was conducted in 1981 in the City of Adel only. The survey shows that 135 properties were identified as historic at the time, although more may be considered historic now, as more than 28 years have elapsed since its completion.

Table D-25, City of Adel Comprehensive Historic Resources Surveys

| NR POTENTIALLY ELIGIBLE PROPERTIES AND DISTRICTS | LOCATION | DATE OF SURVEY | AGENCY |
|--|--------------|----------------|----------------------|
| 135 Historic Properties & Districts | City of Adel | 1981 | GA DNR ³⁹ |

The survey area referenced in Table D-25 is shown on Map D-21.

State Historic Markers:

There are presently two (2) state historic markers of various types located in the City of Adel.

³⁶ National Register of Historic Places Record Page for Cook County Courthouse #206336

³⁷ National Register of Historic Places Records Page for SOWEGA Building Record #196560

³⁸ Talley-Moore, Helen. "United States Post Office-Adel Listed On National Register".

³⁹ Gibbs, Kenneth. Georgia Department of Natural Resources Historic Preservation Division, Atlanta, Georgia. Interview by Michael Jacobs, August 24, 2009.

Table D-26, City of Adel State Historic Markers⁴⁰

| MARKER | LOCATION | Marker # |
|----------------|---|------------|
| Adel Lime Sink | Adel: E.4 th St. at S. Gordon Ave. | GHM 037-2 |
| Cook County | Adel: Courthouse | GHM 037-1A |

GHM - Georgia Historical Marker [indicating an official state marker erected by the Georgia Historical Commission (1953-1971) or its successor, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (after 1971)]

GCG - Garden Clubs of Georgia

The properties referenced in Table D-26 are shown on Map D-21.

Other Historic Properties and Sites:

The following properties and sites were identified as being significant to the history of Adel and have been singled out in publications.

Table D-27, City of Adel Historic Properties and Sites⁴¹

| SITE | LOCATION | DATE | SIGNIFICANCE |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------|------------------------|
| Wilkes Building | Goodman and 5 th St. | 1902 | Once County Courthouse |
| Hutchinson House | 600 E. Mitchell Dr. | 1850s | Earliest House |
| Juhan House | 202 N. Hutchinson Ave. | 1906 | Locally Noted |
| Salem Primitive Baptist Church | 107 S. Gordon Ave. | 1859 | Tied in W/Marker |

The properties referenced in Table D-27 are shown on Map D-21.

⁴⁰ <http://georgiainfo.galileo.usg.edu/gahistmarkers/gamarkersA-E.htm#anchor818188>

⁴¹ Coastal Plain Area Planning And Development Commission. Remembered Places Leftover Pieces Of the Coastal Plain Area, pp. 33-39.

Map D-21

City of Adel Properties on the National Register of Historic Places, Historic Markers, Historic Properties, Sites and Districts

City of Cecil

Historic Resources Surveys:

There has been at least one historic resources survey completed of the Cecil area in conjunction with the Georgia Department of Transportation for Section 106 Compliance. Several individual properties, but no districts, were identified in that study as being considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Table D-28, City of Cecil National Register Eligible Properties Identified During Project Specific Historic Resources Surveys

| NR ELIGIBLE PROPERTY OR SITE | LOCATION | DATE OF SURVEY | AGENCY |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------------|----------------------|
| Hodges Barn | 1040 Old Coffee Road, Cecil | 2008 | GA DOT ⁴² |
| Bray Commissary | Railroad St. and Richardson St., Cecil | 2008 | GA DOT ⁴³ |
| King-Goode Farm | Union St. and Coffee Road, Cecil | 2008 | GA DOT ⁴⁴ |
| Cecil Post Office | Railroad St. and Main St., Cecil | 2008 | GA DOT ⁴⁵ |

The properties referenced in Table D-28 are shown on Map D-22.

State Historic Markers:

There is presently one (1) state historic marker located in Cecil.

Table D-29, Cecil State Historic Markers⁴⁶

| MARKER | LOCATION | Marker # |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Old Coffee Road | Cecil: U.S. #41 | GHM 037-1B |

GHM - Georgia Historical Marker [indicating an official state marker erected by the Georgia Historical Commission (1953-1971) or its successor, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (after 1971) GCG - Garden Clubs of Georgia

The properties referenced in Table D-28 are shown on Map D-22.

⁴² Jordan, Jones & Goulding. Assessment of Effects Report GDOT Project NHS-0000-00(763), Cook County, P.I. No. 0000763, H.P. No. 080410-002, Finding of No Adverse Effect To The Hodges Barn, The Bray Commissary and the King-Goode Farm, Finding of No Effect To The Cecil Post Office. Atlanta, Georgia: Privately Published, May 8, 2009.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ <http://georgiainfo.galileo.usg.edu/gahistmarkers/gamarkersA-E.htm#anchor818188>

Map D-22

City of Cecil National Register of Historic Places Eligible Properties & Historic Markers

City of Lenox

Historic Resources Surveys:

There has been at least one historic resources survey completed of the Lenox area in conjunction with the Georgia Department of Transportation for Section 106 Compliance. One historic district was identified in that study as being considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

**Table D-30, Lenox National Register Eligible Districts Identified During
Project Specific Historic Resources Surveys**

| NR ELIGIBLE PROPERTY OR SITE | LOCATION | DATE OF SURVEY | AGENCY |
|------------------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Lenox Historic District | City of Lenox | 2007 | GA DOT ⁴⁷ |

The properties referenced in Table D-30 are shown on Map D-23.

⁴⁷ Edwards-Pittman Environmental Inc. Assessment of Effects Report GDOT Project CSNHS-0008-00(458) [formerly NHS-0000-00 (764)], Cook County, P.I. No. 0008458 [formerly P.I. No. 0000764], H.P. No. 060525-001, Finding of Adverse Effect To The Lenox Historic District And The Godwin House.

Map D-23

City of Lenox National Register of Historic Places Eligible Districts

Sparks

Historic Resources Surveys:

There has been at least one historic resources survey completed of the Sparks area in conjunction with a Georgia Department of Transportation for Section 106 Compliance. One historic district was identified in that study as being considered eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Table D-31, Sparks National Register Eligible Districts Identified During Project Specific Historic Resources Surveys

| NR ELIGIBLE PROPERTY OR SITE | LOCATION | DATE OF SURVEY | AGENCY |
|------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------------|
| Sparks Historic District | City of Sparks | 2006 | GA DOT ⁴⁸ |

The properties referenced in Table D-31 are shown on Map D-24.

⁴⁸ Edwards-Pittman Environmental Inc. Assessment of Effects Report GDOT Project NHS-0000-00(764), Cook County, P.I. No. 0000764, H.P. No. 060525-001, Finding of No Adverse Affect To Lovett Farm, The Sparks Historic District and the Former Georgia & Florida Railway.

Map D-24

City of Sparks National Register of Historic Places Eligible Districts

Archaeological Sites

The earliest known human inhabitants of the region now known as Cook County came into the area approximately 12,000 years ago, towards the end of the last Ice Age.⁴⁹ European settlers began to enter the area in the early eighteenth century, but more so in the early nineteenth century with the creation of Irwin County in 1818⁵⁰ and the land lottery land grants of 1820⁵¹. The population was further enhanced by the opening of the Coffee Road in 1823.⁵² Over the 12,000 years, humans have left a substantial material record of their lives. The study of this material record forms the basis of *archaeology* and the basic unit of this record is the *archaeological site*. To date, there have been twenty-seven archaeological sites recorded by the Georgia Archaeological Site File in Cook County.⁵³ Archaeological sites in Cook County can range from locations where hunters manufactured stone tools 12,000 years ago to small late nineteenth/early twentieth century farmsteads.

Historic Preservation

Historic communities and historic areas within communities represent a unique collection of resources, connected by time, place, and feeling. Historic preservation planning provides communities with the tools to protect these resources and their settings for future generations to appreciate and learn from. Historic preservation planning is also a thriving economic development tool. There are several historic preservation opportunities that communities in Cook County could take advantage of in order to promote the county, preserve its heritage and foster economic development.

Tourism

The rich history of Cook County is a tremendous cultural asset, but can also become a financial asset. The county's location on Interstate 75, a major transportation corridor, gives it many tourism opportunities that should be pursued. Other aspects of Cook County's heritage that would be of interest to tourists include agricultural heritage (such as with the SOWEGA Building and its association with crop producers, or Georgia Department of Natural Resources Centennial Farms), railroad heritage (many of Cook County's communities developed in conjunction with the railroad), and Adel's, Cecil's, Lenox's and Sparks' commercial and residential areas (which include many fine examples of architecture).

Cook County could also consider the development of a county-wide driving tour which would highlight areas of interest to both residents and tourists.

⁴⁹ <http://www.lostworlds.org/georgia.html>

⁵⁰ Cooksey, Elizabeth B. "Irwin County". *The New Georgia Encyclopedia* (www.georgiaencyclopedia.org), May 8, 2006.

⁵¹ Gigantino, Jim. "Land Lottery System". *The New Georgia Encyclopedia* (www.georgiaencyclopedia.org), February 17, 2006.

⁵² Georgia Historic Commission. "Old Coffee Road GHM 037-1". <http://georgiainfo.galileo.usg.edu/gahistmarkers/gamarkersA-E.htm#anchor818188>

⁵³ Clark, Hannah. Georgia Archaeological Site File, Athens, Georgia. Interviewed by Michael Jacobs, August 25, 2009.

APPENDIX E
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

APPENDIX E: COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The location and quality of community facilities and services is as important to a community's well being as the traditional development of commercial, residential, and industrial uses. Community facilities include schools, parks, government administration offices, libraries, hospitals and fire and police protection. Community services also include public or semi-public water and sewer systems. Included in this appendix is the inventory and assessment of each category of community facilities grouped by jurisdiction. Services are described for joint services and for each individual municipality.

Water Supply And Treatment

The City of Adel is responsible for providing water service to approximately 2,500 customers. The water system is comprised of five groundwater wells which draws water from the Floridian Aquifer. There are three elevated storage tanks with the capacity to hold 800,000 gallons of water. Chlorine is added to the water for disinfectant to make the biologically safe. Also, phosphate is added for corrosion control to reduce red water problems in our distribution system. The City of Adel is to provide our community with clean safe and a reliable drinking water.

The City of Cecil provides water to approximately 125 customers. There is one 100,000 gallon water tank located at City Hall and 2 wells within the city. One well is an emergency well located by the water tank at City Hall and one located by the Cecil fire department on Highway 41.

The City of Lenox is responsible for providing water service to approximately 450 customers. The water system is comprised of four groundwater wells which draws water from the Floridian Aquifer. There are three elevated storage tanks with the capacity to hold 400,000 gallons of water. Chlorine is added to the water for disinfectant to make the biologically safe. Also, fluoride is added into the system. The City of Lenox provides water to both Rest Areas on Interstate 75 going as well as to BASF Sparks located south of Lenox. The City of Lenox is to provide our community with clean safe and reliable drinking water.

The City of Sparks provides water to approximately 700 customers. The water system is comprised of two wells and a 200,000 gallon elevated storage tank. Also, a 250,000 gallon elevated storage tank has been scheduled for construction. The City draws its water from the Floridian Aquifer and adds chlorine to it to ensure that the water is biologically safe.

Sewer System and Wastewater Treatment

The City of Adel provides sewer service to approximately 2,500 customers. Our sewer collection system consists of many miles of 4" to 24" sewer lines. Our sewer system has 23 pumping stations that pump our sewer to our wastewater treatment plant for treatment.

Adel wastewater plant is permitted for 2.5 million gallons per day. The plant has a three acre aerated lagoon and a 30 acre holding pond. 280 acres are used for spraying on, of which 195 acres are planted with alecia grass for hay and 85 acres is forest land.

City of Cecil recently completed phase one of a sewer project. Phase one offered service to about 50 homes on the East side of Highway 41. A contract has just been put in place to start on phase 2 which the city hopes will complete all homes. There are presently two lift stations, one more or possibly 2 more is planned once the expansion is complete. All wastewater goes to Adel wastewater plant.

The City of Lenox provides sewer service to approximately 400 customers. The collections system consists of many miles of 4" to 12" sewer lines. There are five pump stations that pump the sewer to the oxidation pond. The City of Lenox provides sewer to both Rest Areas on Interstate 75 as well as to BASF Sparks located south of Lenox.

The City of Lenox has an oxidation pond. The City is in the process of installing a Chlorine Contact Chamber to disinfect the water before it is discharged into the creek.

The City of Sparks provides sewer service to approximately 700 customers. The collections system consists of many miles of 4" to 12" sewer lines. There are seven pump stations that pump the sewer to the wastewater treatment plant.

The City of Sparks wastewater treatment plant is a sequencing batch reactor that is permitted to treat 500,000 gallons of wastewater per day. The treated wastewater is disinfected with UV before being discharged into the creek.

Stormwater Management

Stormwater is a term used by engineers to describe precipitation. Stormwater that does not soak into the ground becomes runoff, which either flows into surface waterways or is channeled into storm sewers. Impervious surfaces like driveways, sidewalks, and streets prevent stormwater runoff from naturally soaking into the ground. Stormwater can pick up debris, chemicals, dirt, and other pollutants and flow into a storm sewer system or directly to a lake, stream, river, or wetland. Anything that enters a storm sewer system is discharged untreated into our local waterbodies.

All communities are faced with stormwater issues; however, not all are required to address them. In 1990, the Phase I stormwater program was created under the Clean Water Act (CWA) and required a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit for (1) "medium" and "large" municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4s) generally serving populations of 100,000 or greater, (2) construction activity disturbing 5 acres of land or greater, and (3) ten categories of industrial activity. In 1999, the Phase II stormwater program was created to further expand the Phase I program by requiring additional operators of MS4s in urbanized areas and operators of small construction sites, through the use of NPDES permits, to implement programs and practices to control polluted stormwater runoff¹.

Solid Waste Management

The City of Adel Sanitation Division is located at 404 North Poplar Street. The hours of service are from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Curbside garbage and yard debris are collected two times a week. There are about 2200 residential customers inside the city limits. In addition, collection of white goods occurs on Wednesday's. For commercial use, the city of Adel has 49 8-yard dumpsters and 55 swa-cars.

The City of Cecil provides curbside picked to approximately 126 customers. The collection occurs twice a week. Trash is transported to the Cook County Landfill.

The City of Lenox provides sanitation service contracted through Veolia. Garbage is picked up every Friday. Brown and White goods are picked up on the 1st and 3rd Friday at no extra cost to the citizens.

The City of Sparks provides curbside garbage pickup for approximately 705 customers once a week. Also, yard debris and trash waste (construction/demolition) is picked up once a week. The sanitation department consists of a garbage truck and three dump trailers. All trash is disposed of at the Cook County Landfill.

¹ United States Environmental Protection Agency

Fire Protection

The City of Adel Fire Department covers the 6.2 square mile radius of the city of Adel. Two volunteer and one career fire department cover this area. There are a total of approximately 35 fire fighters for the City of Adel. Along with their coverage, these departments also perform hazmat and extrication services for Cook County.

The Cook County Fire Department covers the area of unincorporated Cook County and Cecil, Lenox, and Sparks. There are six volunteer fire departments located throughout Cook County, Sparks, Lenox, and Cecil.

Public Safety

Sheriff's Department Cook County

The Cook County Sheriff's Office serves all areas of Cook County. The Sheriff's department and Jail are located at 1000 County Farm Road. Sheriff Johnny Daughtrey is responsible for the direction of the Cook County Sheriff's Department.

Police Department City of Adel

The vision of the Adel Police Department is to provide quality professional public safety and to partner with the community to enhance the quality of life in the City of Adel while providing a safe environment and serving the community with integrity. The Adel Police Department is located at 204 East 3rd Street in Adel. Services offered by the Adel Police Department include:

- A Patrol Division which is composed of uniformed officers who answer calls for service, detect and deter crime.
- The Criminal Investigation Division that investigates all felony crimes and prepares cases to be presented to the District Attorney. Crime Tips: ~ dial - 911.
- The K-9 Unit that consists of one handler dog trainer which supports officers in the field by searching for drugs and tracking for wanted or missing persons.
- The Records Department is responsible for recorders, archiving, and maintaining all official police reports. The Records Department prepares uniform crime reports received by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Georgia Criminal Justice System Communications. For additional information or questions, please call (229) 896 - 2224.

911 / Emergency Management Center

Cook County E-911 is the central answering point for all Cook County emergency and non-emergency calls and is located adjacent to the Cook County jail at 3295 County Farm Road in Adel. It consists of nine fulltime communication officers. Two communication officers cover each shift and a swing shift is implemented in busy times. The E-911 center provides 24 hour dispatching and other support services for the following Cook area Public Safety Agencies:

- Cook County Sheriff's Office
- Adel Police Department
- Lenox Police Department
- Sparks Police Department
- Cook County EMS
- Cook County Fire Department

- Cecil Fire Department
- Lenox Fire Department
- Sparks Fire Department

Additionally, the E-911 utilizes and maintains a state of the art mapping system that uses aerial photos and GPS coordinates to help locate addresses when emergencies arise. Director Denny Fulsom manages the activities of the Cook County E-911 Center.

Emergency Management Agency (EMA)

The Cook County Emergency Management Agency consists of two part time personnel: One Director and One Deputy Director. The primary purpose of EMA is to coordinate between local elected officials, public safety agencies and State Assets during large scale emergencies and disasters. Cook County EMA also maintains and tests Cook County's outdoor siren system, conducts and coordinates annual disaster training, and coordinates local disaster drills. Additionally, Cook County EMA funds and supports all volunteer Cook County (all hazard) Rescue Team.

Parks and Recreation

Adel-Cook County Recreation Department

The Adel-Cook County Recreation Department is staffed with highly trained professionals and members of the Georgia Recreation and Park Association and focuses on serving people of all ages and walks of life within Cook County and Adel. The main offices of the department are located at 120 North Forrest Avenue.

The Adel-Cook County Recreation Department offers Athletic and Senior programs as well as maintaining local parks and facilities such as community centers.

Athletic programs offered from the Adel-Cook County Recreation Department include: youth soccer, youth football, youth basketball, T-ball, youth baseball, girls fast pitch softball, girls softball, and adult church league softball.

Programs offered for seniors include: Bingo, Red hat Society, bridge, Sittercize, and Walk and Talk in the Park.

Many activities are offered at the Delle Beamguard Community Center, which include: Tumbling (gymnastics), piano lesson, voice lessons, guitar lessons, line dance, swing dance, and clogging for the family.

There are five park facilities maintained by the Adel-Cook County Recreation Department. These include: Masee Post Road Park, City Park, Rob Lovett Park, Jim Battle Park, and Masee Post Road Complex. All of these parks are open from dawn to dusk each day and include a variety of services at each location. Parks include things such as softball fields, playgrounds, walking tracks, gazebos with grills for public use, basketball courts, t-ball and baseball fields, soccer fields, concessions, and restrooms.

MISSION STATEMENT:

“The Adel-Cook County Recreation Department is proud to serve the community with the most diverse programs and with a passion to provide essential recreation, facilities, and programs that enhance the quality of life for all the citizens of Adel and Cook County.”

Hospitals And General Public Health**Memorial Hospital of Adel**

Memorial Hospital of Adel is a 60 bed acute medical and surgical facility geared towards serving the entire family with the very best in medical care. Located in Adel, the hospital's medical staff includes more than 10 physicians. Memorial provides a wide-range of services, including Memorial Skilled Nursing Facility (a hospital based nursing home) and Fast Track ER. Services offered by Memorial Hospital include:

- Emergency Services
- Medical & Surgical Services
- Obstetrical & Newborn Services
- Operating Services: Surgical Suites and Endoscopy Services
- Intensive Care Unit With Ventilator Support
Laboratory
- Radiology – PACS, Pillow Soft Mammography, Nuclear Medicine, Ultrasonography, Echocardiography, and Fluoroscopy
- Rehabilitation Services: Physical Therapy, Occupational Therapy, and Speech Therapy
Respiratory Therapy with Cardiac Stress Test Lab
Swing Bed
- Dietician Counseling

Value statement

We value our community and are committed to providing quality care.
We value integrity and professional conduct.
We value efficiency and effectiveness.

Mission statement

To improve the quality of life in our community, we are dedicated to providing the best health care services with confidence, dignity and excellence.

Our vision

To meet the challenges of tomorrow by continuing to provide the best quality health care.

Cook County Health Department

The South Health District provides services to protect the health & well-being of citizens in the Southern Georgia Counties of Ben Hill, Berrien, Brooks, Echols, Irwin, Lanier, Lowndes, Tift, & Turner. South Health District is one of 18 districts that comprise the Georgia Department of Human Resources Division of Public Health.

The Cook County Health Department is located at 204 North Parrish Avenue, Adel, Georgia. Key programs include:

- Community Health Planning
- Environmental Services
- Family Planning
- General Nursing
- Health Education
- Immunizations
- Infectious Disease Program
- Physicals
- School Health
- Sexually Transmitted Disease
- Sickle Cell Screening and Counseling
- Stroke and Heart Attach Prevention Program
- Travel Immunizations
- Urine Screenings

Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS)

DFCS's mission is to promote and protect the well-being of children, adults, families and the community through a comprehensive and coordinated social services program, and to seek a safe and responsible environment in which the achievement of family and individual goals is possible. A variety of services are offered through the department:

Adoption Services

Foster Care Program

Home Evaluation and Supervision

Home Management/Functional Educational Services

Information and Referral

Protective Services for Adults

Recreational Services

Services to Expectant Parents

Aid to Families with Dependent Children

Transportation

Libraries And General Cultural Facilities

The Cook County Public Library is a branch of the Coastal Plain Regional Library System which covers Tift, Turner, Cook, Berrien, and Irwin Counties. The library is located at 213 East Second Street in Adel. Library collections include popular fiction and non-fiction, magazines, books on tape, videocassettes DVDs, and reference materials. As a member of PINES, (Public Information Network for Electronic Services), materials can be easily borrowed between member libraries.

Many programs for children are offered throughout the year. The Library's hours are from 9:30-7:30 p.m. on Monday, 9:30-5:30 Tuesday-Friday, and 9:30-1:00 on Saturdays.

Educational Facilities

Cook County Public School System: Cook County's Public School System includes 4 schools that currently serve more than students in Grades Pre-K through 12. The schools include Cook Co. Preschool (Pre-K to 2), Cook County Primary School (K-2), Cook County Elementary School (3-5), Cook County Middle School (6-8), Cook County High School (9-12), and.

All facilities within Greater Cook County are depicted on Map E-1 and E-2. These facilities are definite benefits to the economic development of our community by providing jobs, preparing future employees, and attracting regional attention. However, both collective and individual planning is important to ensure each facility is surrounded by appropriate uses, has sufficient infrastructure, and does not cause a negative impact to the surrounding properties.

APPENDIX F
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

APPENDIX F: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

The number of activities, issues and services that need to be addressed by local governments to effectively plan for a community's future is immense. Increasing complexity of the issue is the fact that the actions of other local governments, governmental entities, and local authorities can have profound impacts on the implementation of a local government's comprehensive plan. A comprehensive review of the existing intergovernmental coordination facilities allows a community to identify weakness in communication and cooperation, which are vital to ensuring quality planning on a regional level.

Adjacent Local Governments

Tift County borders Cook County to the north, Berrien County to the north-east, Lowndes County to the south, Brooks County to the south-west, and Colquitt County to the west.

School Systems

Cook County Schools Mission Statement and Vision:

Mission

The Cook County School System will provide all students with an exemplary education, which will meet the diverse needs of individual students in a positive and safe environment while preparing them for academic success, productive citizenship, and lifelong learning.

Vision

The Cook County School System envisions a professional team of educators fostering community partnerships with the purpose of inspiring students to reach their individual potential. We envision a standards based, inclusive, and challenging curriculum that stimulates learning and creativity in a positive and safe environment

Independent Authorities And Districts

Housing Authority of the City of Adel
Hospital Authority
Cook County Airport Authority

Development Authorities

Adel-Cook County Chamber of Commerce
Cook County Economic Development Commission
Adel Downtown Development Authority
Adel Industrial Development Authority

Service Delivery Strategy

As required by House Bill 489, a Service Delivery Coordinating Committee was put in place to discuss and coordinate all services provided by and within Greater Cook County. The following are areas where joint service agreements have been put into place and action is underway to update the Service Delivery Strategy in conjunction with this comprehensive plan update.

| Service | GOVERNMENT OR AUTHORITY | | | | | |
|--|-------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|---|
| | COOK | ADEL | SPARKS | LENOX | CECIL | AUTHORITIES |
| Airport | | | | | | X Cook County Airport Authority |
| Animal Control | | X | X | | | |
| Building Inspection/Code Enforcement/Zoning | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Cemetery | | | X | X | | |
| Chamber of Commerce | | | | | | X Cook County Chamber of Commerce |
| Courts | X | X | X | X | | |
| Economic Development | | | | | | X Adel Industrial Development Authority |
| Electrical | | X | | | | |
| EMT-EMS-911 | | | | | | |
| Fire | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Garbage/Collection | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Garbage Disposal | X | | | | | |
| Indigent Care | X | | | | | |
| Indigent Defense | X | | | | | |
| Jail | X | X | | | | |
| Library | X | | | | | |
| Maintenance Shop | X | X | | | | |
| Natural Gas | | X | | | | |
| Police | | X | X | X | | |
| Public Housing | | | | | | X Housing Authority of the City of Adel |
| Public Transportation | X | | | | | |
| Recreation | | X | | | | |
| Road Construction | X | X | | | | |
| Sewer | | X | X | X | | |
| Sheriff | X | | | | | |
| Street Maintenance | X | X | X | X | | |
| Tax Assessment | X | | | | | |
| Tax Collection | X | X | X | X | X | |
| Water | | X | X | X | X | |

APPENDIX G
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

APPENDIX G: TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS

Transportation systems have a great impact on a community's growth and development, including established land use practices and quality of life for residents. Understanding the general regional impact of traffic facilities, the following traffic related elements are reviewed from a countywide perspective. However, individual communities have unique transportation issues, and any specific issues or opportunities are noted separately.

Road Network

According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), functional classification is the process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes, or systems, according to the character of service they are intended to provide. Most travel involves movement through a network of roads, and these roads receive a functional classification according to the character of traffic service intended for that roadway. There are two systems of roadway classifications, Urban and Rural, and four functional classifications.

Functional Classifications

Roads are generally classified into four major groups: (See Maps G1 through G5)

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| Interstate: | These roads have trip lengths and travel density characteristics that indicate substantial statewide or interstate travel. These roads serve almost all urban areas of 50,000 and over population and a large majority of those with a population of 25,000 or greater. |
| Arterial: | These roadways are designed to carry relatively high traffic volumes throughout the community and to major trip-generating destinations such as centers of employment and large shopping districts. |
| Collector: | These roadways are designed to collect traffic from the local street system and carry it to the arterial roadway system. While experiencing greater volumes than the local road network, these roadways also provide access to neighboring properties. |
| Local: | These roads serve to access adjacent lands and provide travel over relatively short distances. |

Interstate 75 (I-75), which runs north/south throughout the County, passes directly through the Cities of Lenox, Sparks, Adel, and Cecil (in order north to south). I-75 has 6 exits in Cook County, 2 of which are located within the City of Adel, one for each of the other communities on the interstate, and one located between Lenox and Sparks.

Interstate 10 (I-10), which runs east/west from Jacksonville, Florida through Tallahassee, Florida, is the next closest Interstate roadway to Cook County. Currently, I-75 in Cook County is being widened to three lanes in each direction from south of West Mitchell Street at Adel to north of Kinard Bridge Road near Lenox.

Other arterial roadways in Cook County include US 41/GA 7, GA 76, and GA 37. US 41/GA 7 runs parallel to I-75 throughout Cook County. US 41 runs from Miami, Florida, all the way to Cooper Harbor, Michigan, closely paralleling I-75 from Naples, Florida, through Chattanooga, Tennessee. In Georgia, US41/GA 7 links all major cities adjacent to I-75 from the City of Lake Park to the City of Perry, where GA 7 breaks off to follow US 341.

GA 76 begins in Berrien County and runs from Nashville through the City of Adel and into the City of Quitman, ending at the Florida state line. GA 37, which passes east/west throughout Cook County, moves from the City of Moultrie, through Adel, into the City of Lakeland, and comes to an end at US 84 just west of Homerville.

See Map G-6 for Cook County 2004 state roads traffic volumes.

Alternative Modes:

Bicycle Facilities

One designated State bicycle route passes through Cook County. The Central Route enters Cook County on GA 37 from Colquitt County and turns south on to Old Union Rd. From here, the route takes riders to Old Valdosta Rd. and into Lowndes County. Reed Bingham State Park, which is located in Cook County, also features 7 miles of bicycle friendly trails. See Map G-7 for Cook County Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities.

Sidewalks

The City of Adel currently has 6.2 miles of sidewalks. The City of Adel does have land subdivision regulations that require developers to include sidewalks with the construction phase of newly developed subdivisions. See Map G-8 for City of Adel Pedestrian Facilities.

Public Transportation

Cook Transit is the federally supported Section 5311 rural public transportation system for Cook County. Cook Transit is operated by a third-party operator, MIDS, Inc., and is funded by federal funds administered through the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). Cook transit operates as an on-demand transportation service, by which riders call and schedule a time for pick up. The cost of using the system is \$3.00 for up to 10 miles, and \$5.00 for any trip within the county past 10 miles. Ridership of the Cook Transit system is estimated at 2,000 riders per month, or 24,000 riders per year. MIDS, Inc. also operates DHR transportation and Medicaid transportation within Cook County. Currently, MIDS, Inc. operates 6 vehicles within the county.

Railroads, Trucking, and Airports

Rail Transportation

Rail freight moves through Cook County from north to south on a rail line owned by Norfolk Southern. This line carries approximately 29.3 million gross tons of materials each year and enters Cook County from Tift County and runs parallel to I-75, passing through the Cities of Lenox, Sparks, Adel, and Cecil.

The Georgia & Florida Railway (GFR), a shortline railway that is a network of approx. 297 miles of track that extends from Albany, Georgia into north-western Florida near the Gulf of Mexico, travels from Moultrie and through the Cities of Sparks and Adel. The GFR carries a mix of commodities including wood pulp, agricultural commodities and others throughout South Georgia and North Florida.

Trucking

Freight movement through South Georgia is especially important along I-75. Cook County experiences a fairly high amount of truck traffic because of its location along I-75, which GDOT estimate carries 1,000-3,000 trucks through the county per day. The federal Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982 (STAA) designated a network of roadways that can accommodate trucks that move freight throughout the country. In Cook County, three roads are designated STAA truck routes, including I-75, GA 76, and GA 37. Most of the truck traffic not on I-75 passes through the City of Adel on one of the other two routes.

Aviation

The Cook County Airport is located in western Cook County and can be accessed from north and south via I-75, from northwest and southeast by GA 37, and from the northeast and southwest by GA 76. The airport is located on 275 acres and is owned and operated by Cook County and accommodates a variety of aviation related activities including recreational flying, corporate/business jets, flight training, ultra lights, and experimental aircraft. The airport has two existing runways, one with a length of 5000 feet and one with a length of 4,000 feet. Currently under construction is a parallel taxiway which is estimated to be completed by the middle of 2010. The Cook County airport has been classified a Level II airport, which means it should be “capable of accommodating all business and personnel use single and twin-engine general aviation aircraft and a broad range of the corporate/business jet fleet. The minimum runway length objective for Level II airports is 5,000 feet with a non-precision approach. The typical service area for a Level II airport is 30 minutes.”

Currently, the Georgia Statewide Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP) includes plans to construct a parallel taxiway at the airport and these plans have been approved for funding under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).