

*Final*  
*For ARC and DCA Review*

**CITY OF ALPHARETTA**  
**2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**PART I**

**Community Assessment**  
**(including the Analysis of Supporting Data) &**  
**Community Participation Program**

Prepared for:

City of Alpharetta  
Alpharetta, Georgia

By:



MACTEC Engineering and Consulting, Inc.  
Atlanta, Georgia

In association with:

September 2010

*This page was intentionally left blank for two-sided printing.*

# PART I: TABLE OF CONTENTS

**TRANSMITTAL RESOLUTION** .....

**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT** .....

    Appendix: Analysis of Supporting Data .....

**COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM** .....

*This page was intentionally left blank for two-sided printing.*

RESOLUTION NO.

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF ALPHARETTA,  
GEORGIA FOR THE TRANSMITTAL OF PART ONE OF THE 2030  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TO THE  
ATLANTA REGIONAL COMMISSION AND GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF  
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS FOR OFFICIAL REVIEW.**

**WHEREAS, the Community Participation and Community Assessment documents constitute the first phase of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan and serve to evaluate existing conditions as well as identify the method for incorporating public involvement in the comprehensive planning process; and**

**WHEREAS, the Community Participation and Community Assessment documents have been completed and prepared in accordance with the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective May 1, 2005 and established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; and**

**WHEREAS, the required transmittal public hearing was properly advertised and held on September 27, 2010;**

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of the City of Alpharetta hereby transmits the first part of the 2030 Comprehensive Plan consisting of the Community Participation Program and Community Assessment to the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review.**

**SO RESOLVED this 27th day of September, 2010.**

CITY OF ALPHARETTA

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Arthur Letchas, Mayor

COUNCIL MEMBERS



\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Attest: \_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

*This page was intentionally left blank for two-sided printing.*

*Final*  
*For ARC and DCA Review*

**CITY OF ALPHARETTA**  
**2030 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**Community Assessment**

Prepared for:

City of Alpharetta  
Alpharetta, Georgia

By:



MACTEC Engineering and Consulting, Inc.  
Atlanta

September 2010

*This page was intentionally left blank for two-sided printing.*



# TABLE OF CONTENTS

**INTRODUCTION ..... 1**

    Purpose..... 1

    Scope..... 2

    Chapter Summaries ..... 2

**IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES..... 3**

    Population ..... 4

    Economic Development..... 4

    Housing..... 6

    Natural and Cultural Resources..... 7

    Community Facilities and Services..... 8

    Land Use..... 9

    Transportation ..... 10

    Intergovernmental Coordination ..... 11

**ANALYSIS OF EXISTING DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS ..... 13**

    Existing Land Use ..... 13

    Areas Requiring Special Attention..... 18

    Recommended Character Areas..... 29

**ANALYSIS OF CONSISTENCY WITH QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES ..... 35**

## LIST OF MAPS

Map 1	Existing Land Use.....	17
Map 2	Areas Requiring Special Attention: Significant Natural and Cultural Resources.....	19
Map 3	Areas Requiring Special Attention: Major Development Corridors.....	23
Map 4	Areas Requiring Special Attention: Opportunity Investment Areas .....	26
Map 5	Areas Requiring Special Attention: Infill Opportunities.....	28
Map 6	Alpharetta Recommended Character Areas.....	34

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1	Description of Existing Land Use Classifications .....	13
Table 2	Existing Land Use.....	14
Table 3	Summary of Community Elements.....	29
Table 4	Quality Community Objectives Analysis .....	35

# INTRODUCTION

## *Introduction to the Community Assessment for the city of Alpharetta*

The *City of Alpharetta 2030 Comprehensive Plan* is a long-range plan for guiding development in the city for the next 20 years. Located in the North Fulton County and part of the U.S. Census Bureau-defined Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta Metropolitan Statistical Area, the city of Alpharetta covers 27.3 square miles of suburban and urban landscape. Home to major corporations, small businesses, and many neighborhoods, the city has a major influence on the Atlanta Region.

Past comprehensive plans for Alpharetta encompassed adjacent, formerly unincorporated areas that the City could potentially consider for future annexation. The 2030 Comprehensive Plan focuses exclusively on land within the city limits of Alpharetta. All previously unincorporated land adjacent to the city limits within Fulton County, either incorporated into the new cities of Johns Creek and Milton, or became part of Alpharetta and Roswell via annexation.

Alpharetta has been on the forefront of planning for almost three decades. The City revised its original Comprehensive Plan in 1973, and subsequently adopted a major update in 1989 following a period of extraordinary growth in land area and development activity. The City supplemented the 1989 update by adopting an addendum in 1992 that incorporated 1990 Census data and included items then required to meet the state's new comprehensive plan guidelines. The City adopted major updates in 1995, 2000 and 2005, extending the planning horizon to 2025, consolidating various portions of past plan publications and separate functional plans into a single text, and adding a number of items needed to meet state guidelines. The overall goal of the current comprehensive plan (which this process will update) was to accommodate development in a timely, orderly, and efficient arrangement of land uses and public facilities and services that meet the needs of the present and future residents and businesses of Alpharetta.

## PURPOSE

The *Community Assessment* is the first step in the planning process for the *City of Alpharetta 2030 Comprehensive Plan*. It provides a factual and conceptual foundation for the remaining work involved in preparing the comprehensive plan update. Production of the *Community Assessment* involved the collection and analysis of community data and information. This document represents the final product of that analysis and presents a concise, informative report that forms the basis for developing the *Community Agenda*. The *Community Agenda* will express the community's vision, goals, policies, key issues and opportunities and will include an action plan highlighting the necessary tools for implementing the plan. The *Community Agenda* will be prepared within the context of an overall vision that stakeholders will develop during the planning process. This vision will guide the goals, policies and strategies, as well as overall implementation of the plan's recommendations. The *Community Agenda* will stand as the City's vision and intent to provide guidance for future growth.

The *Community Assessment* will be submitted to the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for review and approval. This *Community Assessment* meets the intent of the DCA “Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning,” as established on May 1, 2005. Preparation in accordance with these standards is an essential requirement for maintaining Qualified Local Government status.

## SCOPE

The *Community Assessment* encompasses all of Alpharetta. It includes the following information, consistent with DCA Standards:

- Listing of potential issues and opportunities
- Analysis of existing development patterns
- Analysis of consistency with the Quality Community Objectives recommended within the State Planning Goals and Objectives.

The *Community Assessment* serves as an executive summary of community analyses in order to provide an easy reference for stakeholders who will need to refer to the information throughout the planning process. More detailed presentations of data and analysis can be found in the *Community Assessment Appendix: Analysis of Supporting Data*.

## CHAPTER SUMMARIES

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

---

The introduction provides a brief summary of the contents of the plan and outlines the overall framework of the *Community Assessment* document.

### **Chapter 2: Identification of Potential Issues and Opportunities**

---

The Issues and Opportunities chapter presents a summary of potential issues and opportunities identified from a review of the *Community Assessment Appendix: Analysis of Supporting Data*, discussions with government staff, review of recently completed plans, review of plans currently under development, and other initiatives.

### **Chapter 3: Analysis of Existing Development Patterns**

---

The Analysis of Existing Development Patterns chapter presents an analysis of development conditions and growth patterns currently occurring “on the ground” in Alpharetta by considering three aspects of the existing development: existing land use, areas requiring special attention, and recommended character areas.

### **Chapter 4: Analysis of Consistency with Quality Community Objectives**

---

The Analysis of Consistency with Quality Community Objectives (QCO) is an evaluation of Alpharetta’s current policies, activities, and development patterns for consistency with the QCOs contained in the State Planning Goals and Objectives.

# IDENTIFICATION OF POTENTIAL ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

*Identification of potential issues and opportunities based on an analysis of supporting data and initial stakeholder input*

The potential issues and opportunities included in this chapter are based on review of the *Community Assessment Appendix: Analysis of Supporting Data*, discussions with City of Alpharetta staff, discussions with the Steering Committee (see *Community Participation Program* for a full description of the Steering Committee), review of recently completed plans, review of plans currently under development, and information from other initiatives. This analysis included an examination of the state's Quality Community Objectives (see the full analysis of these objectives in Chapter 4). This section organizes potential issues and opportunities by the major topics defined in the DCA Local Planning Requirements. The assessment topics include the following areas:

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

Some statements organized under the heading “issues” could also be considered as “opportunities” and vice versa. Potential issues and opportunities statements presented in this chapter will be refined during the public planning process and recast as primary issues and opportunities in the *Community Agenda* document.

## POPULATION

### Issues

---

**Growing population** – Alpharetta’s population increased from 30,511 in 2000 to an estimated 52,493 in 2010, which represented a 72.0% increase. The city’s growth rate outpaced that of the Fulton County (county), Atlanta Regional Commission counties (region), Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) and the State of Georgia (state). Population increases occurred due to greenfield suburban development as well as annexation. In 2009, the latest date for which comparable data for adjacent communities is available, Alpharetta was the fourth largest city in North Fulton County behind Roswell, Sandy Springs and Johns Creek. Alpharetta is projected to grow to a population of 69,395 by 2030. The existing city limits must accommodate population growth since annexation is no longer possible.

**Age** – Median age increased from 33.2 years in 2000 to 35.9 years in 2008, which is slightly older than the county, MSA and state, but slightly younger than the nation. Over the long term, an aging population can have implications on planning such as providing for aging in place (as described in Housing potential opportunities section)

### Opportunities

---

**Household income distribution** – Alpharetta experienced significant growth (75.1%) from 2000 to 2010 in the percent of households in the upper income brackets. Households earning more than \$100,000 made up 49.5% of all city households, compared to 31.1%, 25.1% and 19.3% for the county, MSA and state, respectively. Inflation-adjusted median income increased 7.1% compared to only 3.5% for the county, while the MSA, state and nation each recorded a decrease.

**Low prevalence of poverty** – Less than 4.0% of Alpharetta’s total population (all ages) lived in poverty compared to more than 13% for the county, state and nation in 2008

**Highly educated population** – Alpharetta residents were almost twice as likely as those in the MSA, state and nation to hold a *bachelor’s degree or higher*. At 62.8%, this level of educational attainment also exceeds the 46.3% countywide level. More than 20% of Alpharetta residents held *graduate or professional degrees*, which is also well ahead of the county, state and nation.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### Issues

---

**Slow pace of Downtown redevelopment** – While improvements have occurred in downtown due to investments in infrastructure and programs that provide façade assistance for local businesses, the Downtown area has not attracted the large-scale development that would provide the level of activity envisioned by the *Downtown Master Plan*.

**Bedroom community** – Recognizing that the latest Census data available is dated (and will be updated once 2010 Census data becomes available), approximately 69.2% of Alpharetta’s employed labor force worked outside the city in 2000, which was down from 79.7% in 1990 and was lower than the 76.4% recorded by Roswell residents. However, this statistic means that most residents worked in areas outside the city and spent additional time and money getting to and from work. It is anticipated that the number of residents leaving the city for work decreased even more after 2000.

## Opportunities

---

**Labor force growth** – Alpharetta’s labor force grew at a faster rate (84.1%) than the county (22.7%), MSA (75.7%), state (14.3%) and nation (8.2%) from 2000 to 2008.

**Balanced base of employment** – Retail trade represented the largest share of the city’s employment in 2009 at 17.8%, compared to 7.6% for the county and 11.3% for the MSA. High prevalence of lower-paying retail jobs, however, are offset by the proportion of higher-paying jobs represented by professional, scientific and technical services 12.6% (compared to 10.5% in the county and 7.2% in the MSA) and information 11.2% (compared to 6.6% in the county and 3.6% in the MSA). This balanced base of employment provides economic stability.

**Regional office and retail center** – Alpharetta is a regional jobs center, with more than 19.3 million square feet devoted to office use. Office space in Alpharetta represents 37.5% of all office space in North Fulton County. Of that, 63% is considered “Class A” office space. The city also contains 29% of all retail space in North Fulton County, which represents 8.24 million square feet. This existing, established infrastructure provides a base for economic growth.

**Master plan to guide economic development underway** – The city is currently initiating an economic development plan that will include a proactive strategy to guide future recruitment of office and commercial development. The results of this focused economic study are expected in early 2011 and will be used to inform recommendations in the *Community Agenda*.

**Management and professional occupations well represented in city labor force** – The city labor force was more likely than the county, MSA or statewide labor force to hold management, professional and related occupations and less likely to hold positions in lower-paying and lower-skilled production, transportation and material moving occupations. In 2008, 60.2% of Alpharetta’s labor force was in management, professional and related occupations (compared to 45.3% for the county, 37.8% for the MSA and 34.0% for the state). In 2008, 46.8% of the labor force was employed in the services industry (compared to 49.5% for the county, 43.6% for the MSA and 42.7% for the state) and 12.5% in finance, insurance and real estate industry (compared to 10.2%, 8.0% and 6.8% for the county, MSA and state, respectively). Alpharetta’s prominence in management and professional occupations positions the community to attract economic development at a high level.

**Job and business establishment growth from 1999 to 2007** – The number of jobs within the zip codes that include Alpharetta increased 54.7% from 101,894 in 1999 to 157,675 in 2007. Establishments increased 68.7% from 5,235 to 8,833. This represents a positive trend, though it is important to note that the available data predates economic challenges associated with the national economic recession.

**College satellite campuses** – Georgia State University, Reinhardt College, DeVry Institute of Technology, and Chubb Institute each have campuses in Alpharetta, providing area residents with convenient opportunities to pursue educational goals and improve job skills.

**Presence of local economic development advocates** – Alpharetta has several development agencies and authorities that support economic development activity, including the City’s Office of Economic Development, Alpharetta Development Authority, Greater North Fulton Chamber of Commerce and the Development Authority of Fulton County. If they operate in a proactive manner, these established economic development advocates can give Alpharetta an advantage in the competitive field of corporate and business recruitment.

## HOUSING

### Issues

---

**Increasing number of housing units** – Alpharetta experienced an estimated net increase of 7,000 new housing units from 2000 to 2009, growing from 13,894 in 2000 to 20,894 units in 2009. This 50.4% growth rate outpaced that of the county and state. Some of the increase occurred due to annexation. Alpharetta issued 3,973 building permits during the same period, which included 2,219 new single-family homes, 917 single-family additions and 837 multi-family units. Fast growth has the potential to tax civic infrastructure. Growth has slowed in recent years, however.

**Housing types** – *Single-family, 1 unit detached* houses represented 58.6% of Alpharetta's housing units in 2008 (an increase from 52.0% in 1990 and 55.1% in 2000). The number of *single-family, 1 unit attached* houses (e.g. townhomes) increased 177.4% from 2000 to 2008 and represented 10.6% of the city's housing units. The number of housing units in multi-family structures with *10 or more units* increased 42.2% from 2000 to 2008.

Overall, the city's share of multi-family units was higher than that of the MSA and state, and slightly lower than that of the county. Meanwhile, the city's share of *single-family, 1 unit detached* houses was slightly higher than the county, but lower than the MSA and state.

**Median property values** – Alpharetta's inflation-adjusted median property value increased more rapidly than that of the MSA and state, but slower than the countywide rate from 2000 to 2008. The city's median property value of \$340,500 in 2008, however, was 124% of that of the county, 176.1% of that of the MSA and 208.3% of that of the state. While higher than average property values are a positive indicator of community quality, they can present affordability challenges for many, as well.

**Median rent** – Alpharetta's inflation-adjusted median rent fell 12.9% from 2000 to 2009, but remained 116.7% of that of the county, 121.0% of that of the MSA and 123.0% of that of the state. The median rent fell from \$1,025 in 2000 to \$893 in 2008. The decrease in rent was much higher than the decrease experienced by the state and MSA, while the countywide median rent did not increase or decrease. Though falling rental housing rates may benefit those seeking affordable rental housing options, they may also represent challenges associated with quality of some existing apartment complexes.

**Increasing need for retirement and elderly housing** – Approximately 15.4% of the city's residents were at or near retirement in 2008. Approximately 6.0% were at retirement age or older. While the share of population in these groups for the city is much lower than the same for the county, MSA, state and nation, this fact still highlights the need for housing options and designs that address the needs of the elderly population. Especially considering that these age groups experienced considerable growth in the city from 2000 to 2008 at a time when there were few noticeable changes in development patterns that anticipate retired/elderly needs.

### Opportunities

---

**Newer housing stock** – Of Alpharetta's housing stock in 2008, 49.0% of the units were constructed from 1990 to 1999, 19.0% from 2000 to 2004 and 4.9% after 2005. The city added units at a faster rate than the county, MSA and state during the 1990 to 1999 and 2000 to 2004 time periods, but only outpaced the state after 2005 (as the county and MSA added homes at a faster rate than the city).



**Housing and employment balance** – Based on ARC’s jobs-housing balance toolkit Alpharetta’s balance of housing to jobs and jobs to labor force were each considered “ideal” in 2009. This indicates that Alpharetta residents and workers have opportunity to live and work in the same community in greater numbers than many of the region’s similarly-situated suburban cities.

**Low foreclosure rates** – Alpharetta has experienced relatively low foreclosure rates. From 2007 to 2008, the city’s 1.5% foreclosure rate compared favorably to countywide and MSA rates of 4.9% and the state rate of 5.0%. It was also slightly lower than rates recorded in Roswell (1.7%) and Sandy Springs (1.6%). The foreclosure crisis remains a destabilizing condition in neighborhoods throughout the nation. Alpharetta has thus far fared well in comparison.

**Preservation of historic buildings** – Alpharetta’s historic resources contribute to the city’s value and character and opportunities remain to identify incentives that encourage owners, business or residential, to improve or maintain the historic appearance of buildings located in the city’s historic areas. A Design Review Boards and design guidelines are in place to help.

**Aging in place** – As the “Baby Boom” population ages, finding ways to encourage seniors to continue to live in Alpharetta can help the social, cultural and economic well-being of the community. Options to consider include:

- Providing access to shopping and health-related services when use of a car is no longer viable allowing residents to otherwise live independently in their homes;
- Establishing close proximity of senior-oriented housing developments to convenient or centrally-located areas of goods and services such as downtown;
- Keeping flexible zoning that facilitates TND communities such as integrating commercial uses (e.g. pharmacies, neighborhood grocery stores, etc.) into a residential development and allowing “in-law suites”;

**Infill housing** – Infill housing opportunities, including accessory housing units, can contribute to an affordable housing stock as well as help to stabilize and enhance established neighborhoods. Compiling an inventory of vacant, tax delinquent, or government entity-owned properties that may be appropriate for infill development would enhance existing neighborhoods and encourage development in locations already served with urban and suburban-scale infrastructure. Infill housing opportunities abound near Downtown Alpharetta. This topic is discussed further in Chapter 3 in the section titled “Areas Requiring Special Attention”.

**Home ownership and occupancy** – Alpharetta’s 64.5% *home ownership rate* far exceeded that of the county (49.4%) and exceeded that of the MSA (61.1%) and state (58.7%) in 2008. The city’s 2008 occupancy rate was 93.1% compared to 83.7% for the county, 88.4% for the MSA and 86.6% for the state. High rates of home ownership and housing occupancy are indicators of a healthy housing market.

**Downtown housing** – Downtown Alpharetta can accommodate a greater mix in housing types (e.g. loft apartments or condominiums) within close proximity to shopping, recreation and employment. The adopted *Downtown Master Plan* encourages housing and recognizes its role in enhancing the vitality and economic potential of Downtown.

## NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

### Issues

**Air quality** – Alpharetta is within the Atlanta Region’s air quality non-attainment zone for ozone and particulate matter. Alpharetta will need to continue to work with regional neighbors to improve air quality and public health.

**Lacking locally-designated historic ordinance** – Although Alpharetta has adopted the “Downtown Incentive Zoning” classification in the Zoning Ordinance to regulate land uses and building design for downtown property, the lack of a historic preservation ordinance prevents the city from qualifying for potential grant funding and technical assistance to assist with the protection of historic resources. Adoption of a historic preservation ordinance and appointment of a historic preservation commission is needed to allow the city to identify and designate local historic districts, review major exterior changes and demolition by a body specifically established for this purpose, and become eligible to apply for federal historic preservation funds upon successful designation as a Certified Local Government (CLG) and Preserve America Community.

## Opportunities

---

**Tree canopy protection** – Alpharetta protects its Tree Canopy with its Tree Preservation Ordinance. The city’s arborist and Tree Commission work together to maintain the city’s urban forest. Due to this and other tree protection measures, the Arbor Day Foundation has designated Alpharetta as a “Tree City USA.” Protecting the city’s tree canopy touches the lives of people within the community who benefit daily from cleaner air, shadier streets, and aesthetic beauty that healthy, well-managed urban forests provide. In addition, it helps present the kind of image that most citizens want to have for the place they live or conduct business. As a “Tree City USA” designee, Alpharetta is able to make a statement to visitors, through signage, that it is a city that cares about its environment.

**Regulations in place that protect environmental features** – Alpharetta protects a wide range of sensitive environmental features with adopted environmental planning regulations. These include provisions for *watershed protection*, *groundwater recharge areas*, and *wetlands*, flood hazard, *soil erosion and sedimentation control*, and *stormwater management* ordinances to protect floodplains, wetlands, water resources and soil. In addition, with its water conservation permit (requires a minimum of 10% water use reduction for new construction projects) Alpharetta encourages site planning and design based on the understanding that water is a valuable natural resource that should be used conservatively, cleaned, and reused on-site.

**Potential for locally-designated historic district** – The boundaries of the Alpharetta Historic District (boundary drawn for Downtown Incentive Zoning), have the potential to form a locally-designated historic district. This designation would protect remaining buildings from inappropriate exterior alterations, signage, infill development, as well as demolition due to a required design review process.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

### Issues

---

**Library services** – Alpharetta has expressed interest in expanding the existing Atlanta-Fulton County library branch and has considered the option of investing in a city-owned facility. The city has explored the possibility of creating its own library separate from the Atlanta-Fulton County system.

**Greenspace, parks and trails** – The need for parks and greenspace preservation will increase as growth continues countywide. The 2008-2013 Alpharetta Recreation and Parks Master Plan addresses these needs.

## Opportunities

---

**Water supply** – Water availability remains one of the Atlanta Region’s most important issues. Fulton County Public Works Department provides Alpharetta with water service. Alpharetta will need to continue to work with the county and regional partners to ensure long-term access to a sufficient water supply to support the existing population and new growth.

**Sewage treatment capacity** – While Fulton County provides wastewater treatment services, Alpharetta works with the county to ensure that capacity is available for new development in Alpharetta. Sewer service is currently available for all but a few parcels (located in northwest Alpharetta).

**Infill development** – Opportunities exist within the city limits to take advantage of existing infrastructure and undeveloped property by encouraging appropriately planned, scaled and designed infill development.

**Schools** – Fulton County’s public schools serving the Alpharetta area are excellent and are a selling point for the community.

**Excellent city services** – Services provided by Alpharetta receive high marks from residents who have participated in a variety of surveys over the years. Having a reputation as an excellent service provider is a selling point for Alpharetta.

**Excellent park and recreation system** – Parks and recreation in the city, the focus of much previous planning and investment, is a selling point and major quality of life factor in Alpharetta.

**Providing “green” government services** – Local governments can lead by example by incorporating green, environmentally-friendly technology into day-to-day operations. This includes becoming less dependence on fossil fuels by replacing low-mileage vehicles with more fuel-efficient models (e.g. hybrids) as well as better reuse of waste, incorporation of solar energy, etc. A testament to the city’s green leadership, Alpharetta was one of the first local governments certified by ARC as a “Green Community.”

## LAND USE

### Issues

---

**Suburban development patterns** – Since Alpharetta’s population growth primarily took place after 1980, much of the development occurred in a widely spread-out suburban, car-dependent land use pattern. Retail and employment opportunities are primarily relegated to major corridors (e.g. Old Milton Parkway, Main Street, etc.) and the North Point Mall area along North Point Parkway.

**Strip commercial development** – The land uses along some highway corridors, in particular GA-9 north and south of Downtown, form stereotypical commercial strips that detract from the city’s character. Many of the conventional strip malls lack visual appeal and consist of aging structures in need of revitalization in order to seriously contend for the types of tenants the community desires. GA-9 development has formed streetscapes with unnecessary vehicular access conflicts and challenging situations for pedestrians.

**Planning for mixed use** – The 2025 Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map included areas where mixed use development could occur, however, the plan did not include a specific “mixed use” category. If the city wishes to promote a mix of fuses through redevelopment and infill, more modification will be needed to zoning districts to allow for parcel by parcel mix of uses rather than wait for assemblage of parcels with large acreage. The city currently requires a minimum of 25 acres for mixed use zoning.

## Opportunities

---

**Design guidelines and Design Review Board** – Design guidelines are in place to ensure appropriate new and infill development that complements the character of the community. As development occurs over time, the impact of these guidelines will result in high quality, higher value development.

**Redevelopment** – Redevelopment of highway corridors provides an opportunity to create a more seamless transition of land uses between existing sprawling single-use commercial strips and low-density single family residential. As opportunities for redevelopment of underutilized and under-performing properties arise along commercial corridors, the City and economic development advocates should recruit developers capable of providing commercial and mixed-use centers that produce tax revenue and provide jobs that may reduce commuting patterns for residents who commute to jobs in other parts of the region.

**North Point Activity Center LCI area** – New development in the North Point Activity Center LCI study area could improve the pedestrian environment and character of streets. Development standards that improve the design of the public realm, by addressing building orientation, location and architecture, could create a well-defined character for the LCI study area.

**Mixed-use development** – While community development patterns in much of the city separate residential from commercial uses, future development in the city's designated activity centers and corridors should allow mixed-use patterns creating activity nodes that provide jobs and services within walking distance of residences and preserve open space.

**Traditional neighborhood development (TND)** – TND can provide a wide range of housing types in newly-developing areas with a connected, pedestrian-friendly street system and ample open space. Alpharetta can encourage clustering of community facilities including schools, fire stations, libraries and parks within TNDs in order to create a sense of place.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Issues

---

**Automobile dependence and congestion** – The dependence on the private automobile for most trips in the city contributes to the region's air and water pollution problems. Increased regional traffic and peak-period congestion are reducing the level of service on many of the city's arterial roadways and the neighboring Interstate system.

**Inter-parcel connectivity and access management** – Arterial corridors have experienced increased peak-period traffic congestion, unattractive commercial sign clutter, and sprawling unconnected development. Inter-parcel connectivity is needed within new developments. While newly constructed corridors in the city handle access management and inter-parcel connectivity well, the city's more mature development corridors face conditions described in this paragraph, especially along GA-9 south of Downtown.

**Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure** – Alpharetta provides an expansive system of sidewalks and pedestrian paths. The pedestrian infrastructure provided is far superior to most Atlanta region suburban cities. Some areas of the city continue to have intermittent sidewalks, lack of sidewalks or are crossed by wide roads that hamper pedestrian safety. As stated in the city's Recreation and Park Master Plan, more work is needed to connect the city's greenway and pedestrian system to schools, parks and other civic attractions (as well as connecting to activity centers). Bicycle infrastructure in the city is less prevalent, however. Bike lanes are available in some locations, but cyclists must still share the road along most of the city's corridors.

## Opportunities

---

**Public transit service** – MARTA provides bus service to retail and employment centers in Alpharetta, connecting workers and residents to the rail system via the North Springs MARTA Station in Sandy Springs. Expanded bus service and extension of MARTA rail to the North Point Mall and office concentration would provide increased mobility and opportunities for mixed-use, transit-oriented development.

**Comprehensive multi-modal transportation plan** – ARC and North Fulton municipalities are currently working together to create and adopt a comprehensive multi-modal transportation plan (e.g. includes parking, traffic and transit, both local and regional).

**GA-400 Corridor** – The GA-400 corridor connects Alpharetta to major job and entertainment centers in Downtown Atlanta (and throughout the region via connection to the interstate system), in addition to connecting workers region-wide to jobs in Alpharetta.

**Implementation of bicycle/pedestrian improvements** – Implementation of bicycle/pedestrian recommendations from previous studies can enhance connectivity and transportation choice. In addition, the city could require that new developments include bicycle facilities (e.g. lanes, routes, etc.) as well as expand bike- and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes.

**Potential for MARTA heavy rail or BRT service** – Long-range potential for heavy rail service from MARTA (extending from North Springs Station in Sandy Springs). Additional public transit access would provide those who live in work in Alpharetta with additional transportation choice while also reducing traffic on already-congested corridors.

**Mixed-use development patterns** – The city promote mixed-use development patterns that blend uses by incorporating housing, jobs, and recreation. These development patterns provide activity nodes that make public transportation more effective as well as create dynamic destinations that draw community residents together.

**Improve access management as corridor redevelopment occurs** – Access management plans can be developed for corridors experiencing heavy traffic flow. This involves management of access points to homes and businesses along busy corridors. The city could improve access management along its more maturely developed corridors by requiring redevelopment projects to included shared access points for multiple businesses (including reduction in driveways and/or curb cuts) as new development occurs. Providing greater distances between entrances, a requirement that could vary depending upon the road type and land use, would facilitate better operations along heavily-traveled corridors without adding new lanes.

**Using CID to finance improvements** – North Fulton CID financing supports much needed transportation infrastructure improvements within the designated area which in turn encourages private investment. Transportation projects needing state and federal funding become more competitive due to matching funds provided by the CID. This in turn can help the area within the CID tackle its transportation challenges.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

### Issues

---

**Annexation no longer an option for growth** – Past comprehensive plans for Alpharetta assumed growth would continue via annexation into previously unincorporated areas of North Fulton County. However, no unincorporated areas remain in North Fulton County following the incorporation of Johns Creek and Milton, along with annexation efforts in Roswell and Alpharetta. This change presents both a challenge and an opportunity to Alpharetta leaders.

**Milton County** – Efforts to create Milton County have thus far failed to gain support from the Georgia Legislature, however, efforts will likely continue in future legislative sessions. As these efforts take place, the city must continue to weigh the potential positive and negative impacts a new county might create for Alpharetta in order to prepare for the future.

## **Opportunities**

---

**Inward focus** – The city can now focus all of its long-range planning efforts on property within the existing city limits and look for ways to continue to raise the city's profile such as revitalization of aging commercial strips, creating flex space for small business in underutilized shopping centers and adding mixed use in strategic areas.

**Cooperation with neighbors and regional partners** – Alpharetta officials will maintain active involvement in ongoing transportation planning activities with ARC and GRTA. Transportation issues affect everyone and are the foundation for many home purchases, employment selections and economic development decisions. The *North Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan* has provided a tremendous opportunity for Alpharetta and other North Fulton County communities to work together to address regional transportation planning issues. Working with North Fulton CID, in coordination with Roswell, to develop and now implement the *Blueprint North Fulton* was (and remains) an example of Alpharetta working in a proactive manner with its neighbors.

# ANALYSIS OF EXISTING DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

*Analysis of the existing land use, areas requiring special attention and recommended character areas*

This chapter describes development conditions and growth patterns in Alpharetta and further explores issues and opportunities related to the physical environment. The following analysis considers three aspects of the existing development patterns:

- Existing Land Use
- Areas Requiring Special Attention
- Recommended Character Areas.

## EXISTING LAND USE

Map 1 displays the current state of land use and development in Alpharetta, categorized into 11 existing land use classifications, which are organized by four major groups: residential, commercial, industrial and other. Table 1 defines each of the existing land use classifications presented in Map 1. Table 2 presents Alpharetta’s existing land use data. Existing land use information presented in these maps is derived from multiple sources, including the city’s land use database, the tax digest data provided by Fulton County, aerial photography and windshield surveys.

Alpharetta’s existing land use pattern is defined by proximity to major streets, GA-400 and natural features such as Big Creek and Lake Windward. The most intense development is clustered near GA-400 with many corporate offices and regional shopping centers located along several parkways. On either side of the GA-400 development corridor are large suburban neighborhood areas with parks and institutional uses. A detailed analysis of land use classifications is provided in the following pages, with classifications grouped under the headings residential, commercial, industrial and other.

**Table 1 Description of Existing Land Use Classifications**

Classification	Description
<b>Residential</b>	
Residential Estate	Personal agricultural uses (horse barns, etc.) and single-family detached houses on lots larger than 3 acres
Low Density	Single-family detached houses on lots less than 3 acres
High Density	Single family attached houses; apartments and condominiums; townhomes
<b>Commercial</b>	
Professional/ Office	Corporate headquarters; engineering companies; financial institutions; Insurance and real estate companies; medical and dental clinics; or other similar type uses
Retail Sales and Services	Shopping centers; entertainment; hotels/motels; or other similar retail sales, offices and service related businesses.
<b>Industrial</b>	
Business, Manufacturing and Warehousing	Research and development services; office-warehouse developments; administrative and sales space; or other similar type uses.
Light Industrial	Light manufacturing or processing; wholesale businesses; warehousing and distribution facilities; or other similar type uses.
<b>Other</b>	
Public/ Institutional	Federal, state and local government uses such as city hall, fire stations, and libraries; schools, colleges and universities; hospitals; nursing homes and assisted living facilities
Parks/Recreation/ Open Space	Public and private passive and active uses such as playgrounds, ball fields, parks, nature preserves, golf courses; cemeteries.
Transportation/ Communication/ Utilities	Electric substations; radio/TV/cable broadcasting; transportation facilities such as park-and-ride lots; and other similar utility facilities.
Vacant/ Undeveloped	No structure or no active use; vacant property with potential for development

## Residential

Residential represents 46.2% of Alpharetta land use and is defined largely by single-family residential developments. This group includes *residential estate, low density residential, and high density residential*.

*Residential estate* uses (lots larger than three acres) are primarily located west of Main Street/Alpharetta Highway and near Creek View Elementary. Many, previously large, rural lots near *residential estate* uses in this area have transitioned to more dense residential infill development, taking advantage of existing infrastructure that supports suburban-scale development.

*Low density residential* uses (single-family lots less than three acres) account for most of Alpharetta’s residential uses (35.6%). First-generation residential suburbs west of GA-400 and near Downtown and Main Street define one primary *low density residential* cluster. Post-1990 suburban neighborhoods define another major cluster east of GA-400.

*High density residential* uses (single-family attached, apartments, condominiums and townhomes) generally occur near GA-400 and along other major transportation corridors. The size and scale of these developments ranges from large apartment complexes to small townhouse clusters.

Since Alpharetta can no longer annex, future residential development will increasingly result from infill development on vacant parcels or redevelopment within existing residential and commercial areas. For example, developers may view existing *vacant/undeveloped* and *residential estate* uses for their potential to transition to *low density residential* development. Major corridors and activity centers may be seen as more supportive of *high density residential* development.

## Commercial

Commercial uses represent 17.1% of Alpharetta and include *professional/office* and *retail sales/services* uses. *Professional/office* uses represent 10.0% of the city and take two primary forms: large corporate office parks and smaller-scale neighborhood office uses. Corporate office park *professional/office* uses occur primarily near GA-400 with deep setbacks, significant landscaping, large parking areas and small building footprints in relation to parcel size. Small-scale *professional/office* uses (e.g. small businesses such as a doctor’s office, law office, etc.) are located along commercial corridors such as Main Street and Old Milton Parkway.

**Table 2 Existing Land Use**

Classification	% of Total
<b>Residential</b>	<b>46.2%</b>
Residential Estate	5.0%
Low Density Residential	35.6%
High Density Residential	5.6%
<b>Commercial</b>	<b>17.1%</b>
Professional/Office	10.0%
Retail Sales/Services	7.1%
<b>Industrial</b>	<b>1.5%</b>
Business, Manufacturing, Warehousing	0.7%
Light Industrial	0.8%
<b>Other</b>	<b>35.1%</b>
Public/Institutional	4.9%
Parks/Recreation/Open Space	11.6%
Transportation/Communication/Utilities	7.4%
Vacant/Undeveloped	11.2%



*Single-family subdivisions account for most of the residential development in Alpharetta.*



*Higher density residential development, such as these apartments for seniors, are developing along major corridors.*



Retail, sale and services uses are typically mixed with professional/office uses. Regional retail outlets are clustered near GA-400. Regional retail uses include big box retailers and North Point Mall. Smaller retail and service uses, located along major corridors, include uses such as dry cleaners and restaurants.

## Industrial

Residential and office growth has historically outpaced industrial growth. Industrial uses only account for 1.5% of the city's total area, but they represent an important source of jobs and tax revenue. Industrial uses include *business, manufacturing and warehousing and light industry*.

Primary industrial use, *business, manufacturing and warehousing*, describes developed centers located primarily near Windward Parkway. *Light industrial* uses generally located along Westside Parkway and west of Haynes Bridge Road are also part of the Alpharetta-Roswell industrial business cluster that includes the area between Westside Parkway and Alpharetta Highway/GA-9.



*Corporate office parks represent the majority of professional /office uses.*

## Other Land Uses

Other land use categories in Alpharetta include *public/institutional, parks/recreation/open space, transportation/communication/utilities, and vacant/undeveloped*. *Public/Institutional* uses include schools and government buildings, with the majority of such land in Alpharetta devoted to school properties.

*Parks/recreation/open space* represents 11.6% of the city. The primary land uses associated with this category are city parks, Big Creek Greenway and the Golf Club of Georgia. Additionally, many of the residential neighborhoods have private recreation amenities, such as golf courses, playgrounds, tennis courts and clubhouses, which provide recreation opportunities.

*Transportation/communication/utilities* uses represent 7.4% of the city, the majority of which accounts for utility substations and telecommunication towers.

Significant areas of *undeveloped/vacant* land remain within the city (11.2% of the city) in spite of Alpharetta's rapid growth during the last 20 years, especially near GA-400 and in northwest Alpharetta. The *undeveloped/vacant* northwest cluster may experience pressure to develop housing (including infill development) as the Alpharetta area continues to rise as a regional job center.



*Retail, sales and service uses are primarily located along the major transportation corridors, such as this development along Windward Parkway.*



*Public/Institutional uses include schools and government services, such as the new Department of Public Safety complex at Westside Parkway and Old Milton Parkway.*

## Land Use Patterns at the City's Edge

Land use patterns near the edge of Alpharetta's city limits are also important to note. How areas at the city's fringe develop will influence development patterns and impact infrastructure and transportation systems in Alpharetta. Additionally, knowing how adjacent communities are developing will help inform planning decisions about Alpharetta.

A prime example is the development along McGinnis Ferry Road, which serves as the Fulton County-Forsyth County boundary (and also Alpharetta's city boundary). Alpharetta's side consists of suburban residential neighborhoods, while Forsyth County's side has transitioned in part to commercial. While these two development types can complement one another by locating residents in close proximity to goods and services, the development pattern will also impact traffic on McGinnis Ferry Road.

Other important development areas at the edge of the city include commercial development in Milton along Cumming Highway/GA-9, in Roswell along Alpharetta Highway/GA-9, and at the intersection of Old Milton Parkway and Kimball Bridge Road. These areas have experienced significant commercial development or are established commercial areas. They are either established destinations for retail and professional services or are emerging areas for commercial growth. Special attention should be given to these areas in terms of transportation planning as well as commercial. These areas will continue to compete for market share within Alpharetta and adjacent communities.

The majority of development at the edge of Alpharetta is residential. This holds true along the majority of city's border with Johns Creek, Roswell and Milton. These areas will likely remain low density residential areas.

The majority of future change and redevelopment may happen along the commercial corridors connecting Alpharetta to Milton, Johns Creek, Roswell and Forsyth County. Cooperation among these jurisdictions to plan and construct needed transportation improvements is essential to ensure appropriate transitions between Alpharetta and adjacent communities, as well as to improve access and mobility.

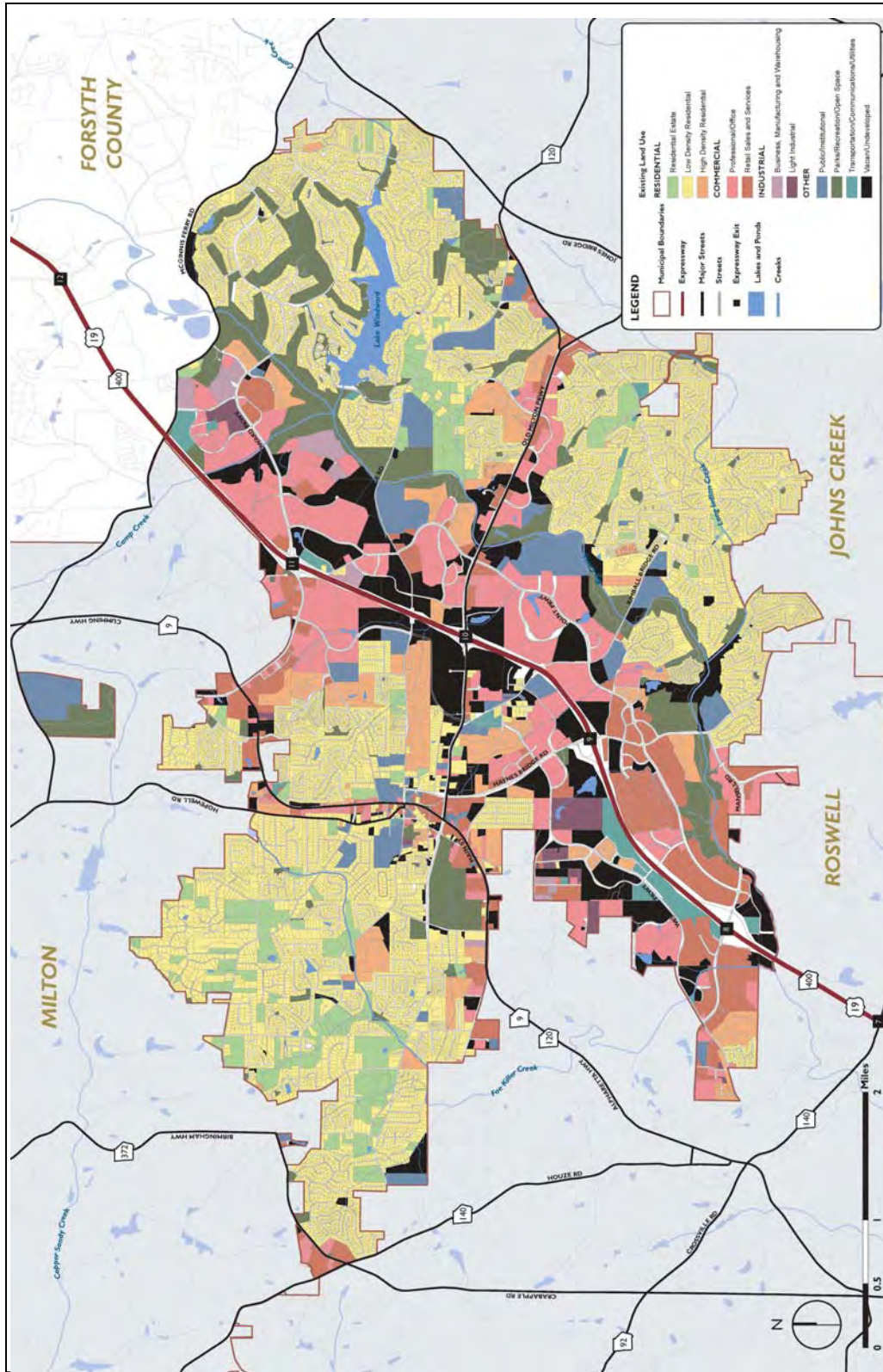


*Strip commercial development is emerging in Forsyth County and along McGinnis Ferry Road.*



*The majority of development at Alpharetta's edge is residential, such as this suburban development pattern along the Alpharetta-Johns Creek border.*

### Map I Existing Land Use



## AREAS REQUIRING SPECIAL ATTENTION

Growth inevitably impacts natural, built and cultural elements of the community as well as the community facilities, services, and infrastructure required to service residents and businesses. State planning standards require the identification of important preservation areas and areas where there is potential for significant growth, change, or need for special planning attention. The sections that follow identify:

- Significant Natural and Cultural Resources
- Major Development Corridors
- Opportunity Investment Areas
- Infill Opportunity Areas

### ***Significant Natural and Cultural Resources***

The preservation of Alpharetta's natural resources is important for community health and the wellbeing of the region's ecosystem. Map 2 presents the city's significant natural and cultural resources that require special attention during the planning process as well as when reviewing future specific development proposals. Those natural resources that are most sensitive to development should be given special preservation treatment as the city grows. Steep slopes and floodplains represent Alpharetta's two most sensitive (to development impacts) natural features.

Alpharetta has adopted measures to preserve sensitive natural features including stream buffers to regulate site development and a greenway program associated with Big Creek. Big Creek Greenway preserves an important natural area while providing recreation and educational opportunities for users.

Alpharetta's cultural resources that require special consideration include the city's historic central business district, cemeteries, and new cultural venues such as Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre at Encore Park. Downtown provides a historic and cultural important connection to the Alpharetta's past. The city is currently implementing the *Downtown Master Plan* to enhance the area with improved public spaces, retail and residential development.

Cemeteries represent another important cultural resource. These important resources connect the community to its past, and along with Alpharetta's other cultural resources, should be preserved to ensure their continued significance.

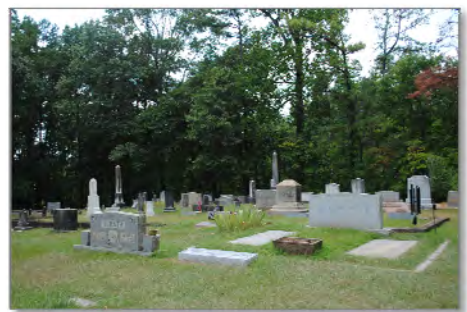
In three years the Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre at Encore Park has quickly become the entertainment destination for music lovers across the region. Set on 45 acres of beautifully-landscaped wooded land, the 12,000-seat venue provides a unique setting for both music lovers and first-time concertgoers.



*Big Creek Greenway is used for recreation and preservation of natural areas along Big Creek.*

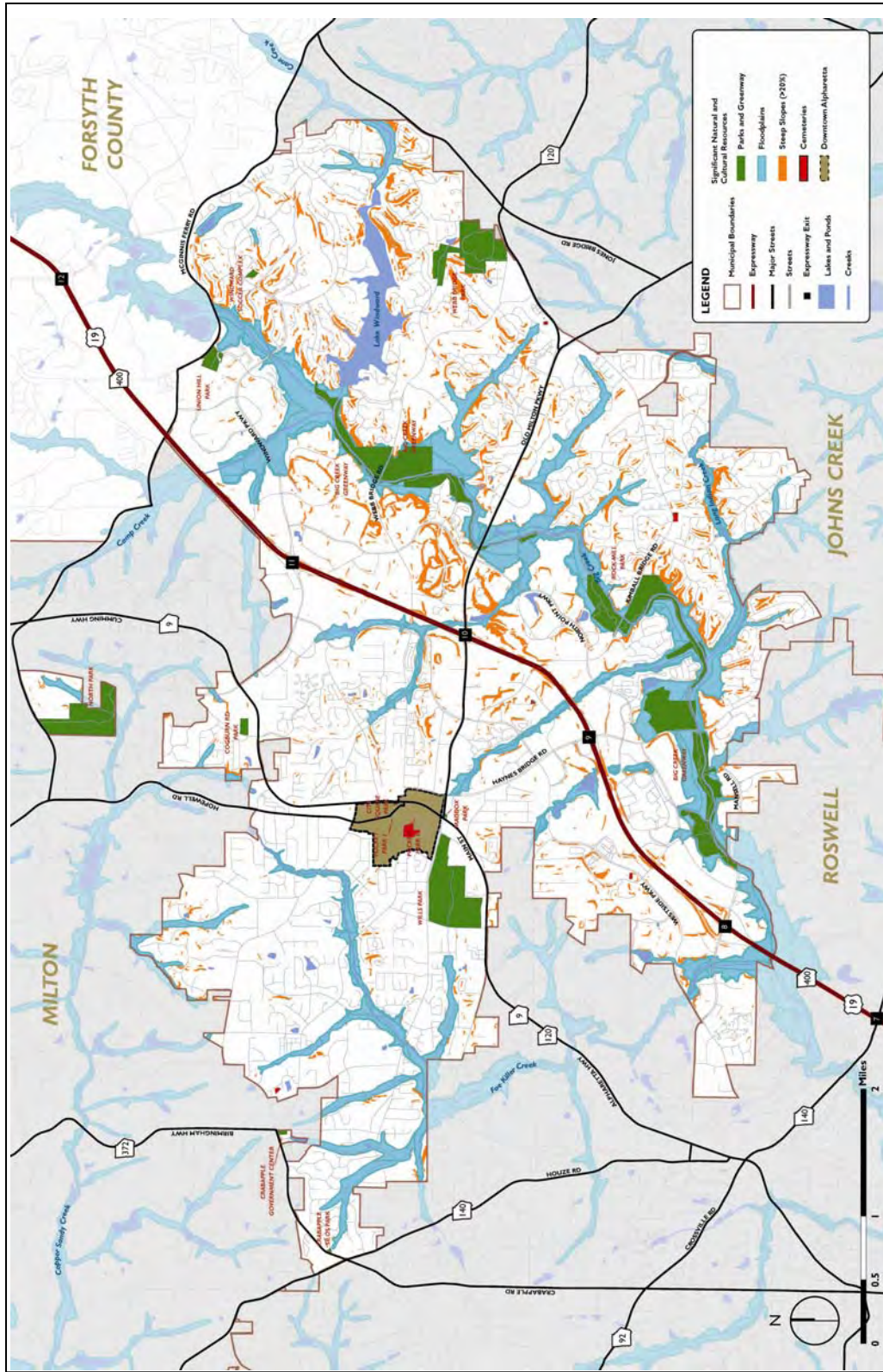


*Downtown Alpharetta is an important economic and cultural resource connecting the city to its past.*



*Several small cemeteries are located throughout the city, including Maxwell Cemetery along Westside Parkway.*

Map 2 Areas Requiring Special Attention: Significant Natural and Cultural Resources



## Major Development Corridors

Major corridors in Alpharetta that will require special attention during the planning process, as well as during future review of specific development proposals, are shown in Map 3 and include:

- Windward Parkway Corridor
- Old Milton Parkway Corridor
- North Point Parkway Corridor
- Haynes Bridge Road Corridor
- Westside Parkway Corridor
- Alpharetta Highway Corridor

These corridors have either developed and are in need of new investment, or are developing and will absorb a significant proportion of the city's future growth. To ensure these corridors remain economically competitive and that development along these corridors continues to improve the community, transportation and land use decisions need to be coordinated. These thoroughfares connect major destinations within the city and connect the city to other important regional destinations. They include the majority of the city's jobs, retail and commercial services, and entertainment services. The paragraphs that follow provide a brief summary of each corridor, including issues and opportunities associated with each.

### Windward Parkway Corridor

Windward Parkway is a major east-west connector in north Alpharetta and runs from McGinnis Ferry Road on the east westward to Alpharetta Highway/GA-9. From McGinnis Ferry Road to Big Creek, development along the corridor is single-family residential subdivisions and greenspace associated with the Golf Club of Georgia. Big Creek serves as a natural buffer between this residential development and the commercial and office development that lines the remainder of the corridor until its intersection with Alpharetta Highway.

The Windward Parkway corridor experienced significant commercial and office growth near the GA-400 interchange. In addition to the corporate offices that have located along the corridor, several shopping centers and hotels have been developed to serve both the daytime employees and the surrounding residential areas. Moving forward, transportation and congestion conditions will need to be reviewed and addressed as the area continues to grow as an important employment center.

### Old Milton Parkway Corridor

Old Milton Parkway is a primary east-west route through Alpharetta and connects residents to GA-400, Downtown Alpharetta, and areas to the east and west of the city. From the eastern edge of the city to Wills Park, the majority of development along the corridor is a mix of commercial and institutional uses. From Wills Park,



*The Windward Parkway Corridor has a mix of uses including this new commercial development just west of GA-400.*



*Old Milton Parkway is a primary east-west connector in Alpharetta.*

development along Old Milton Parkway is defined by a mix of higher density residential development and single-family neighborhoods. Because of the corridor's access to GA-400, as well as its intersections with major north-south connectors North Point Parkway, Westside Parkway, Haynes Bridge Road and Alpharetta Highway, the corridor will continue to be a major transportation route. Future development planning should balance the transportation needs to move people around the city with the continued growth of the corridor as a major destination itself. Access management issues and improved connections to residential areas adjacent to the corridor will be important issues to address in the future.

### North Point Parkway Corridor

The North Point Parkway Corridor is the most heavily developed non-residential corridor in Alpharetta. The corridor, as shown in Map 3, covers a wide area between GA-400 and Big Creek. North Point Parkway is lined by a mix of retail and entertainment destinations, corporate offices, schools, churches and some high density residential development. It connects North Point Mall (and surrounding big box commercial) to residential and employment destinations. Due to its access to GA-400, other major east-west streets, and proximity to Big Creek Greenway, the area has emerged as an attractive location for mixed use development. The physical barriers of GA-400 and Big Creek help relieve development pressure on lower density residential development to the east of Big Creek. Future issues and opportunities related to the corridor include managing traffic congestion, improving access to the corridor from GA-400 and residential areas to the east, improving the transportation infrastructure to support walking, biking, driving and public transportation, and continuing to promote new development that enhances the mixed-use development trend in the area.

### Haynes Bridge Road Corridor

The Haynes Bridge Road Corridor is a major north-south route in Alpharetta connecting Downtown Alpharetta and residential development in south Alpharetta, Roswell and Johns Creek to GA-400. Through Alpharetta, the majority of the corridor is defined by a mix of commercial and higher density residential. At the northern end of the corridor, Haynes Bridge Road dead-ends into Downtown Alpharetta. At the southern end of the corridor in Alpharetta, Haynes Bridge Road is lined by residential subdivisions. Because of the access that Haynes Bridge Road provides to major destination such as North Point Mall, GA-400 and Downtown Alpharetta, the corridor will continue to be an attractive location for commercial and higher density residential development. Additionally, because the corridor has less traffic demand than other major routes in Alpharetta, it is an attractive bicycle and pedestrian route to connect residential areas east of GA-400 and the Big Creek Greenway to Downtown Alpharetta.



*The south end of the North Point Parkway Corridor is anchored by the North Point Mall.*



*The Haynes Bridge Road Corridor is an emerging corridor with a mix of commercial and residential uses.*

### Westside Parkway Corridor

Westside Parkway is the major north-south connector west of GA-400. The corridor runs from Holcomb Bridge Road (just outside of Alpharetta) in the south to Cumming Highway/GA-9, which is just north of Alpharetta. Through Alpharetta, Westside Parkway connects with Mansell Road, Haynes Bridge Road, Old Milton Parkway, Webb Bridge Road and Windward Parkway. From Mansell Road to Old Milton Parkway, development along Westside Parkway is a mix of corporate offices, light industrial, warehouses and retail businesses. From Old Milton Parkway to Windward Parkway, development along the Parkway is mix of commercial and higher density residential development in close proximity. As Alpharetta continues to grow, the Westside Parkway will be an attractive location for more mixed use development that puts jobs, entertainment and higher density residential in close proximity. Additionally, there are several large, undeveloped tracks of land between Westside Parkway and GA-400 with potential for new higher intensity development.



*The Westside Parkway Corridor is experiencing but new development, such as these residential townhomes.*

### Alpharetta Highway Corridor

The Alpharetta Highway Corridor is the oldest commercial corridor in Alpharetta. Alpharetta Highway runs through Downtown Alpharetta and is the primary route connecting Cumming, Alpharetta, and Roswell. Development along the corridor is primarily a mix of commercial and civic uses. However, the character changes depending on which stretch of the corridor one is on. Along the southern edge of Alpharetta to Downtown Alpharetta, development is defined by auto-oriented strip commercial shopping centers. Through Downtown Alpharetta, development is reflective of a traditional town center. North of Downtown Alpharetta, development is defined by small-scale commercial with many of the businesses occupying converted single-family houses. Around the corridor's intersection with Windward Parkway, development transitions back to auto-oriented strip commercial developments.

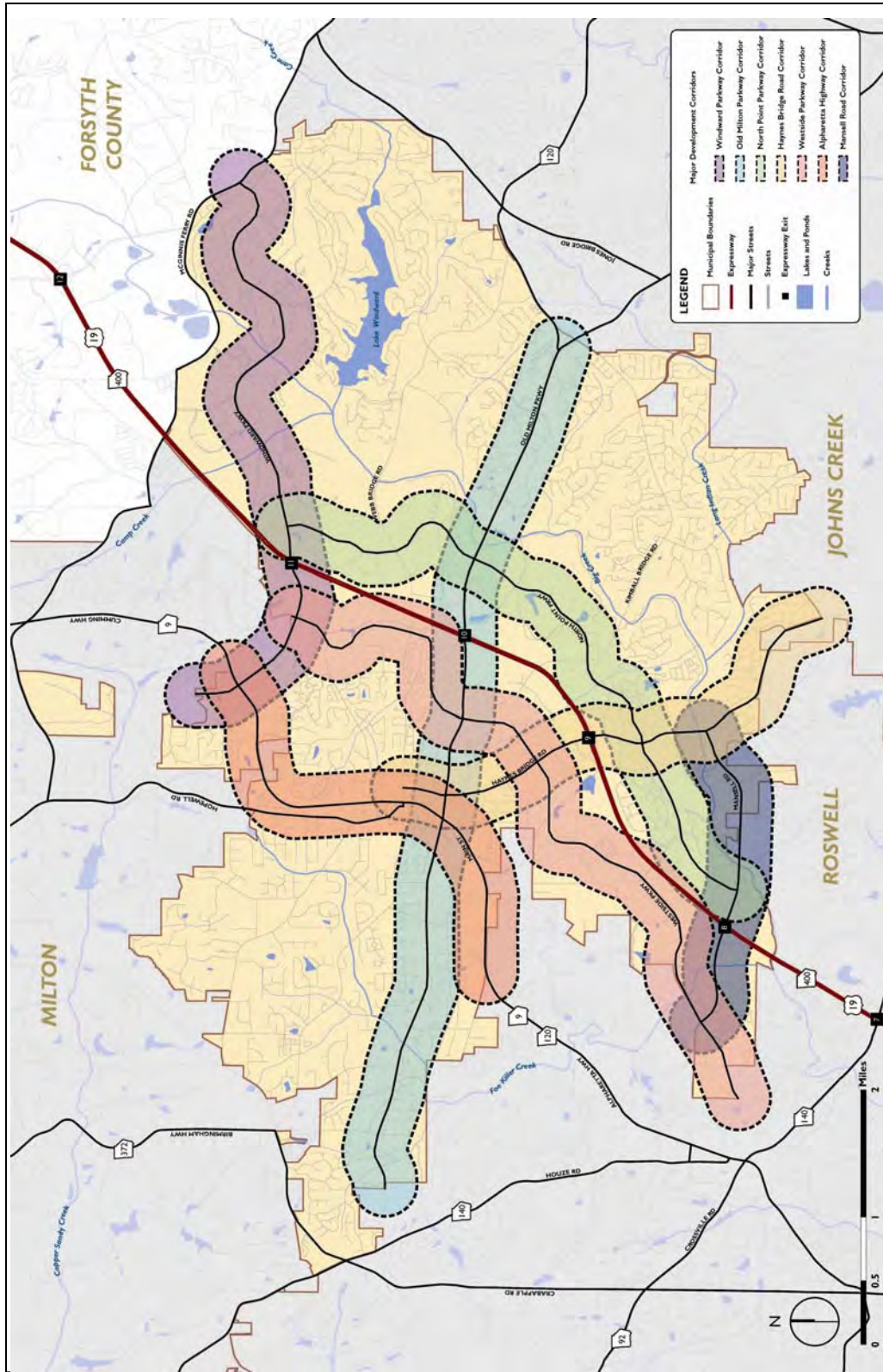


*Many of the residential buildings along the Alpharetta Highway Corridor north of Downtown Alpharetta have converted to commercial and office uses.*

The corridor has been negatively impacted by the newer commercial development that has taken place along the GA-400 corridor. To encourage new investment along Alpharetta Highway, transportation enhancements as well as development incentives will need to be pursued. Because of the corridor's proximity residential areas and its smaller-scale, it is an attractive corridor for retail, entertainment, and office uses that can serve the adjacent neighborhoods. Additionally, the corridor is an attractive location for medium density residential development, such as townhomes, that can provide new housing options in Alpharetta beyond the single-family home and large apartment complexes.



Map 3 Areas Requiring Special Attention: Major Development Corridors



## Opportunity Investment Areas

Alpharetta's opportunity investment areas requiring special attention during the planning process are shown in Map 4. Several have been identified as priority areas for infrastructure and development investment. New investment is needed in these areas because they are in need of revitalization, revitalization/enhancement or because they are locations that have been identified as having capacity to absorb significant new development as the North Fulton area continues to grow. Below is a brief summary of each of the following areas and the issues and opportunities associated with each:

- North Point Activity Center LCI Area
- Alpharetta Highway Corridor
- Downtown Alpharetta Master Plan Area
- North Fulton Community Improvement District Area

### North Point Activity Center Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) Area

The area around North Point Mall has been identified as an activity center with the potential to transition from an auto-oriented retail destination to a mixed-use activity center that supports a range of transportation options. In 2007, ARC awarded Alpharetta a Livable Centers Initiative grant to fund a planning study for the North Point Mall area. The study area generally covers the area from Mansell Road to Haynes Bridge Road and Big Creek to the Roswell-Alpharetta boarder west of GA-400.

The LCI study outlined several goals and strategies for the area including promotion of multi-story mixed use development, creating new publicly-accessible open spaces, enhancing pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, creating a new transit stop in the area to enhance regional connectivity and reduce traffic congestion, and improving transportation connectivity across GA-400 for all modes of transportation. The LCI designation brings with it eligibility for transportation enhancement funds needed to implement many of the goals described in the study. The North Point area is an attractive area for transportation investments and new mixed-use development due to both access to special transportation funds and because the area is identified as a potential location for a new MARTA transit station.

### Alpharetta Highway Corridor

The Alpharetta Highway Corridor is the oldest commercial corridor in Alpharetta and is in need of enhancements to improve its character and competitiveness. As other commercial corridors in Alpharetta continue to grow and develop due to strong market demand, the City will need to adopt targeted policies and programs to maintain this corridors' commercial competitiveness. Transportation improvements, such as streetscape projects and bicycle and pedestrian projects, can help connect the surrounding



*The vision for the future of the North Point Activity Center LCI study area is a transit-oriented and mixed use center.*



*Infill development and transportation enhancements are needed along the Alpharetta Highway Corridor to improve the area's image and competitiveness to attract quality development.*

residential areas to the retail and commercial businesses along Alpharetta Highway. Additionally, promoting new mixed use and residential development along the corridor can help improve the character of the area if new development is of high quality and good design. One competitive advantage of the corridor over other major commercial corridors in Alpharetta is its scale. Because the roadway and adjacent development have developed at a smaller scale, the corridor can make an easier transition to a walkable and bikable corridor.

### **Downtown Alpharetta Master Plan Area**

Downtown Alpharetta has been identified as an important investment opportunity and the City has taken several steps to support Downtown improvements. In 2003, the City adopted the *Downtown Master Plan* and in 2008 adopted the *Downtown Circulation Study* to identify transportation improvements. Additionally, the City adopted incentive zoning for the area intended to implement the *Downtown Master Plan* and encourage new development. The City has invested significant time and funds into developing a long-term vision and continued public and private investment will be needed to ensure the realization of its goals.

### **North Fulton Community Improvement District (CID) Area**

The North Fulton CID was developed in 2003 to maintain and enhance the quality of life and economic competitiveness of North Fulton. Primarily covering the GA-400 corridor through Roswell and Alpharetta, the CID's mission is guide planning efforts and transportation improvements within its boundaries. The CID is a self-taxing district that uses the funds raised to compete for transportation funding and leverage the transportation investments to spur new economic growth in the area. Because the CID has developed a long-term strategy for the district, the GA-400 corridor will continue to be priority investment area for new growth. North Fulton CID produced *Blueprint North Fulton*, which included the *North Point Activity Center LCI Study* area as well as other interchange areas and property near GA-400.

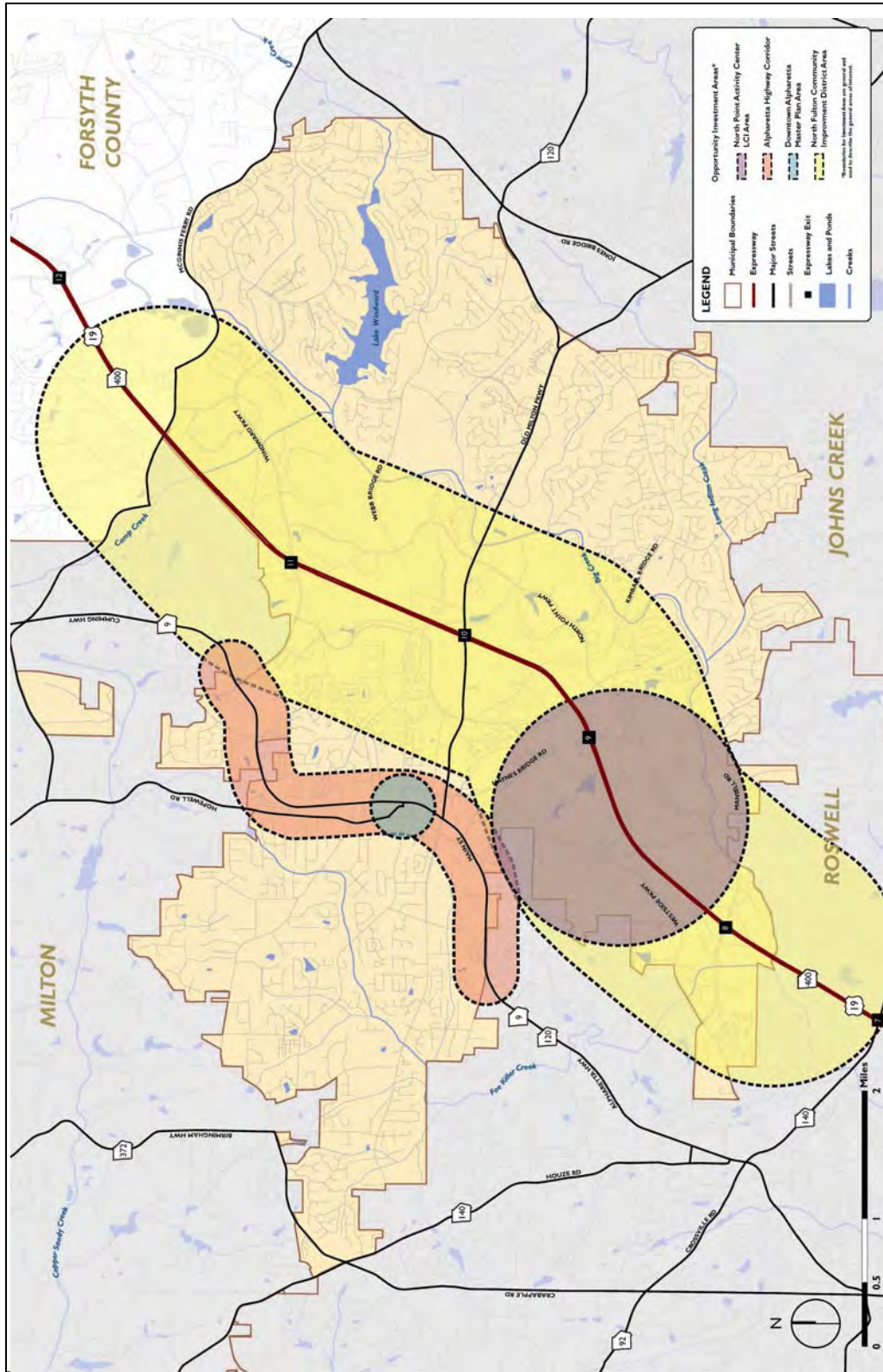


*Significant planning efforts have been completed to encourage new development in Downtown Alpharetta.*



*Transportation improvements are a key strategy to improve the quality of life and economic competitiveness for the North Fulton CID.*

Map 4 Areas Requiring Special Attention: Opportunity Investment Areas



## Infill Opportunities

Alpharetta's development infill opportunities that are here described as areas requiring special attention are shown in Map 5. Infill opportunities include areas where there are a significant number of vacant or undeveloped parcels or where large residential parcels are likely to transition to more dense residential development. In Alpharetta, there are three primary infill opportunity areas:

- Downtown Alpharetta,
- GA-400 corridor
- Northwest Alpharetta

### Downtown Alpharetta Infill Opportunities

The Downtown area has been targeted as the city's civic and cultural center. Additionally, there is a desire to grow the Downtown with new mixed-use development. These goals are supported by the Downtown Master Plan, Incentive Zoning, and Downtown Circulation Plan that have been adopted by the City. The City has put extensive planning effort into improving the economic competitiveness of Downtown, and because of this the area is an attractive location for new infill projects.

### Georgia 400 Corridor

Along the GA-400 corridor there are a significant number of vacant or undeveloped parcels. Many of these parcels are relatively large tracts of land. These conditions can allow the corridor to absorb new growth and development. The corridor has already developed as a major job and retail center. While this is the case, the GA-400 corridor is not built out and has many infill opportunities for businesses and residential development.

### Northwest Alpharetta Residential Infill Opportunities

The Northwest portion of Alpharetta includes by residential subdivisions and single-family homes. While the area is largely built out, there are a significant number of undeveloped parcels and large lot residential estates. Developers may view these larger lots and undeveloped properties as attractive locations for new, or infill, residential development, especially as demand continues for residential development in North Fulton.



*Several properties in Downtown Alpharetta are underdeveloped and are ideal locations for new mixed-use development.*

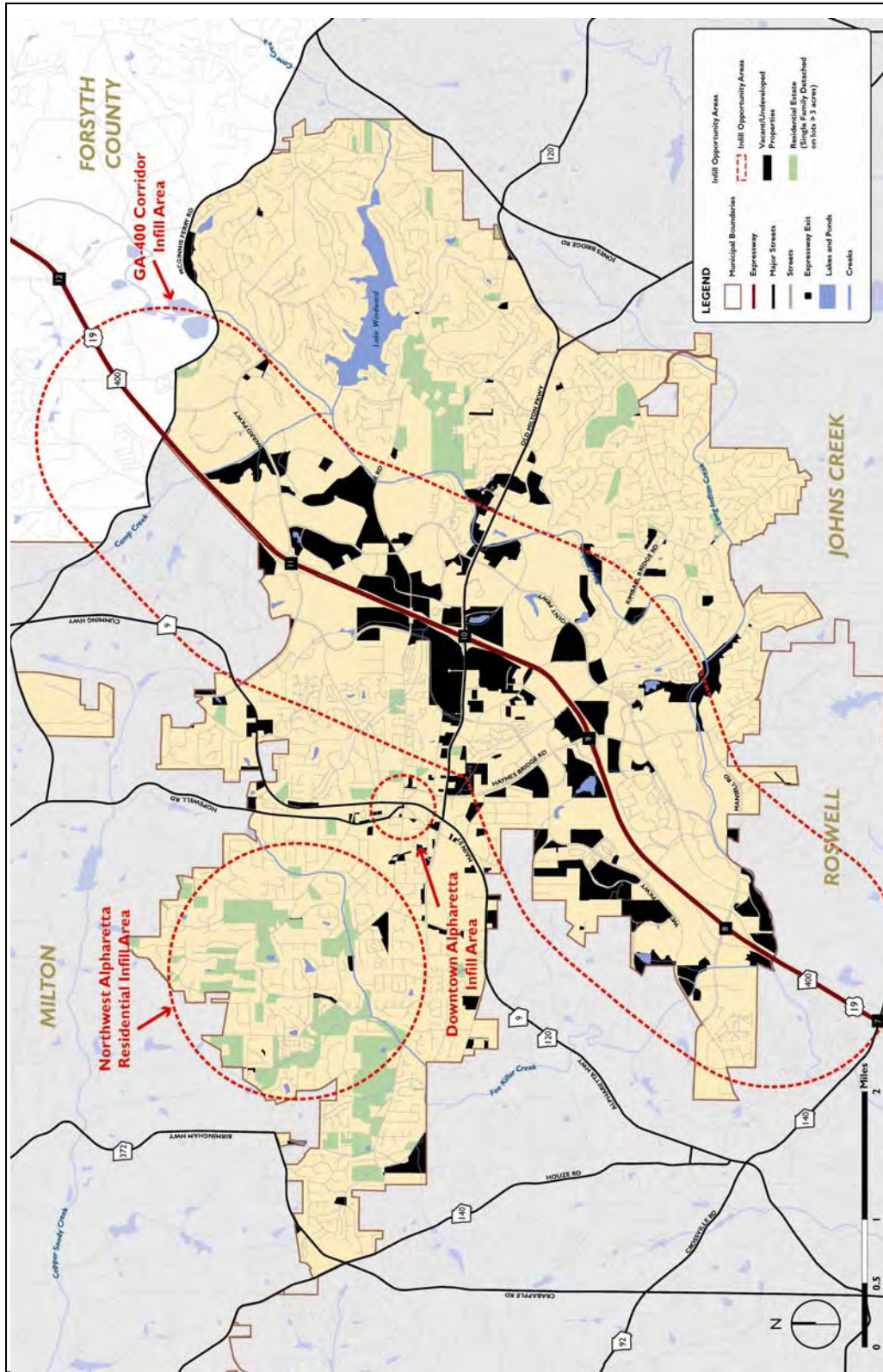


*Large, undeveloped properties are still located along the GA-400 corridor and represent opportunities for new business and residential development.*



*The remaining vacant and residential estate properties in Northwest Alpharetta are potential locations for infill development.*

Map 5 Areas Requiring Special Attention: Infill Opportunities

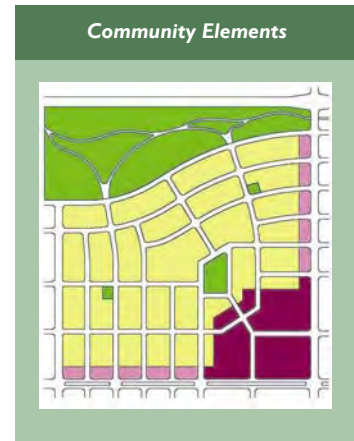


## RECOMMENDED CHARACTER AREAS

Character area-based planning focuses on the way an area looks and how it functions. Tailored strategies are applied to each area, with the goal of enhancing the existing character/function or promoting a desired character for the future. This technique helps to guide future development using policies and implementation strategies that support the desired character of an area. Applying development strategies to character areas in Alpharetta can preserve existing areas from future development, where appropriate (e.g. sensitive environmental features like wetlands), or help other areas to function better and become more attractive (e.g. urban areas in need of new investment and redevelopment).

The Recommended Character Areas shown in the *Community Assessment* represent a starting point in the discussion to create the Future Development Map that will be a key component of the *Community Agenda*. General areas shown in the *Community Assessment* Recommended Character Area map will be refined through community participation and continued planning analysis. Boundaries, descriptions and vision statements for the future of these areas will be developed during the community visioning process and the development of the *Community Agenda*.

The *Community Elements* describe unique development patterns and character elements in the City. For example, the development pattern for a neighborhood is different than that of a major transportation corridor. For this reason, the *Community Elements* to help describe in greater detail the form and function of different areas in the community. The *Community Elements* are described below in Table 3.



**Table 3 Summary of Community Elements**

Community Element	Diagram	Summary
Open Space		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ranges from woodlands and floodplains in natural areas to parks and squares in urban areas</li> <li>• Creates areas that preserve natural features and functions, and provides places for the community to connect with nature or play</li> </ul>
Corridor		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary link between neighborhoods and communities</li> <li>• Functions as either a thoroughway or a destination, depending on uses along corridor</li> </ul>
Neighborhood		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Primary area of residence for most of community</li> <li>• Provides diversity of housing</li> <li>• Locates housing in proximity to corridors, centers and open space</li> </ul>
Activity Center		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General gathering places within neighborhoods or at the edge of neighborhoods</li> <li>• Characterized by access to full range of retail and commercial services and civic uses</li> <li>• Typically represents highest level of activity within the community</li> </ul>

The Recommended Character Areas Map represents the first step in the development of the final character-based future development recommendations for the *Community Agenda*. The Recommended Character Areas map and associated character area descriptions will be refined during the community participation process, with the final character-based recommendations providing detailed descriptions of the type, scale, design and intensity of development that is appropriate in each character area. The recommended character areas are summarized below and presented in Map 6.

## Open Space/Natural Areas

### Recreation/Conservation

The Recreation/Conservation character area represents passive open space in the form of natural areas, and active open space in the form of city parks. The conservation areas are primarily associated with the natural land within the 100 year floodplain. These sensitive environmental areas require special protection to preserve their natural function. The city parks support a healthy life-style and provide a place to play and socialize with others in the community.



*Preserving natural resources, such as creeks and floodplains, will be important as Alpharetta continues to grow.*

## Corridors

### Mansell Road Corridor

The Mansell Road Corridor is one of the gateways to Alpharetta. When driving to Alpharetta from the south on GA-400, Mansell Road is the first entry point to the city. West of GA-400, development is a mix of strip commercial development, automotive dealers and some residential developments. East of GA-400, there is some commercial development but development is also restricted by Big Creek's floodplain. Because Mansell Road will continue to be a major gateway to the city, emphasis on transportation improvements and mixed use development will likely be important.



*The Mansell Road Corridor will continue to be a gateway to Alpharetta.*

### Old Milton Parkway Corridor

Old Milton Parkway Corridor stretches from Kimball Bridge Road to Downtown Alpharetta. As the major east-west route in Alpharetta, Old Milton Parkway connects to many important transportation routes including Northside Parkway, GA-400, Westside Parkway, Haynes Bridge Road, and Main Street/GA-9. The corridor is fully developed from its eastern edge to GA-400 with a mix of commercial, residential and public/institutional uses. From GA-400 to Downtown, the corridor is transitioning from an undeveloped and small-scale commercial corridor to a more prominent regional destination. Future development along this corridor could include a mix of more intense residential, commercial and civic uses. Transportation improvements along the corridor could include vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle and public transit improvements that are supportive of mixed use development.



*Old Milton Parkway Corridor will continue to grow as both an important transportation route and destination.*



### North Main Street Corridor

The North Main Street Corridor is a corridor in transition. Traveling north from Downtown Alpharetta, development is a mix of residential-to-commercial conversions and new, neighborhood commercial development. The scale of development along the majority of the corridor is small in comparison to commercial development closer to GA-400. At the north end of the corridor, development is defined by larger-scale strip commercial development. Future development along this corridor could be in the form of neighborhood commercial and high density residential development.



*Accommodating new development while preserving the small-scale character of the North Main Street Corridor could be accomplished with new, compact residential development.*

### South Main Street Corridor

The South Main Street Corridor is the oldest commercial corridor in Alpharetta and is in need of enhancement. The corridor has struggled to maintain its competitiveness with other commercial areas in North Fulton. This corridor is a good candidate for mixed use infill development such as townhomes, apartments, retail businesses and civic uses such as churches. Because the scale of development is smaller than other regional commercial corridors, this corridor has the opportunity to transform in to a unique and walkable mixed use corridor.



*Transportation enhancements along the South Main Street Corridor could support new development while making it more walkable by adding wider sidewalks, more pronounced cross walks, on-street parking, street trees, a tree-lined and landscaped median and buildings built to the edge of the sidewalk, as shown in this example photo.*

## Neighborhoods

### Central Neighborhood

As one of the first generation suburban neighborhoods of Alpharetta, Central Neighborhood is an established residential area. With Alpharetta's continued growth, this area is transitioning from single-family subdivisions to higher density development. Because the neighborhood is bound on all sides by commercial development and major transportation corridors, it can accommodate higher density residential development. With convenient access to GA-400 and Alpharetta's major roadways, the area will continue to be an attractive place to live.

### Windward Neighborhood

The majority of Windward Neighborhood is part of a large planned development. The development is defined by single-family subdivisions, many of which are built around the Golf Club of Georgia and Lake Windward. Because the Windward Neighborhood is comprised of established residential subdivisions, future planning efforts will largely be focused on maintenance and enhancement.



*Maintaining single-family subdivisions will be a primary strategy for the Windward Neighborhood.*

## Kimball Ridge Neighborhood

The Kimball Ridge Neighborhood includes the residential development between Old Milton Parkway, Big Creek and Haynes Bridge Road. Development in this neighborhood is exclusively residential, with single-family subdivisions and a few apartments adjacent to Big Creek. The future development strategy for Kimball Ridge will likely be similar to Windward Neighborhood – preserve and maintain the established residential subdivisions.

## Old Milton Neighborhood

The Old Milton Neighborhood is bounded by Big Creek, Old Milton Parkway, Kimball Bridge Road, and Webb Bridge Road. The neighborhood includes a mix of single-family subdivisions, higher density residential developments, schools and small-scale commercial uses at its eastern edge. With a mix of complimentary neighborhood uses, the Old Milton neighborhood could accommodate higher density, walkable development while also preserving and enhancing the established residential areas.

## Northwest Neighborhood

The Northwest Neighborhood covers the majority of northwest Alpharetta and incorporates the residential areas west of Main Street/GA-9. Residential development is almost exclusively single-family subdivisions with the exception of some higher density developments along major roads and some remaining residential estate properties. The neighborhood is largely built out, and future development will require residential estate and vacant properties to convert to single-family developments. Future planning efforts should focus on maintaining and enhancing the established neighborhoods and, where appropriate, encouraging residential infill.

## Activity Centers

### Windward Activity Center

The Windward Activity Center incorporates the majority of the North Fulton CID's *Windward Parkway Concept* area. Prior planning efforts have identified several mixed use development along Windward Parkway. To date, development opportunities along the parkway include a mix of strip commercial shopping centers, corporate office parks, and manufacturing and warehouse uses. While the area is largely built out, there are several large, undeveloped areas that present opportunities for mixed use developments.



*The Windward Activity Center is envisioned to include new mixed used development.*



*The established vision for the North Point Activity Center is to redevelop into an area that is walkable, bikable and is served by a new MARTA transit station.*



*New mixed use development typical of a traditional town center is desired in the Downtown Activity Center.*

### North Point Activity Center

The North Point Activity Center was the focus of a Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) planning study. The redevelopment concept for the North Point Mall area includes the long-term intent to create transit-oriented development surrounding a new MARTA transit station. Future planning and development in this area will be focused on creating a walkable, mixed use destination. Transportation changes will focus on making walking, biking and public transit use more convenient.

### Downtown Activity Center

Downtown Alpharetta Activity Center has grown and changed over Alpharetta's history – transitioning from Alpharetta's true economic center to one of many mixed use nodes. Recent planning efforts in Downtown have focused on revitalization needed to re-establish the area as Alpharetta's true city center. Transportation improvements have been planned and development incentives adopted to encourage new investment in Downtown. According to the master plan, future development will include higher density mixed use and residential components.

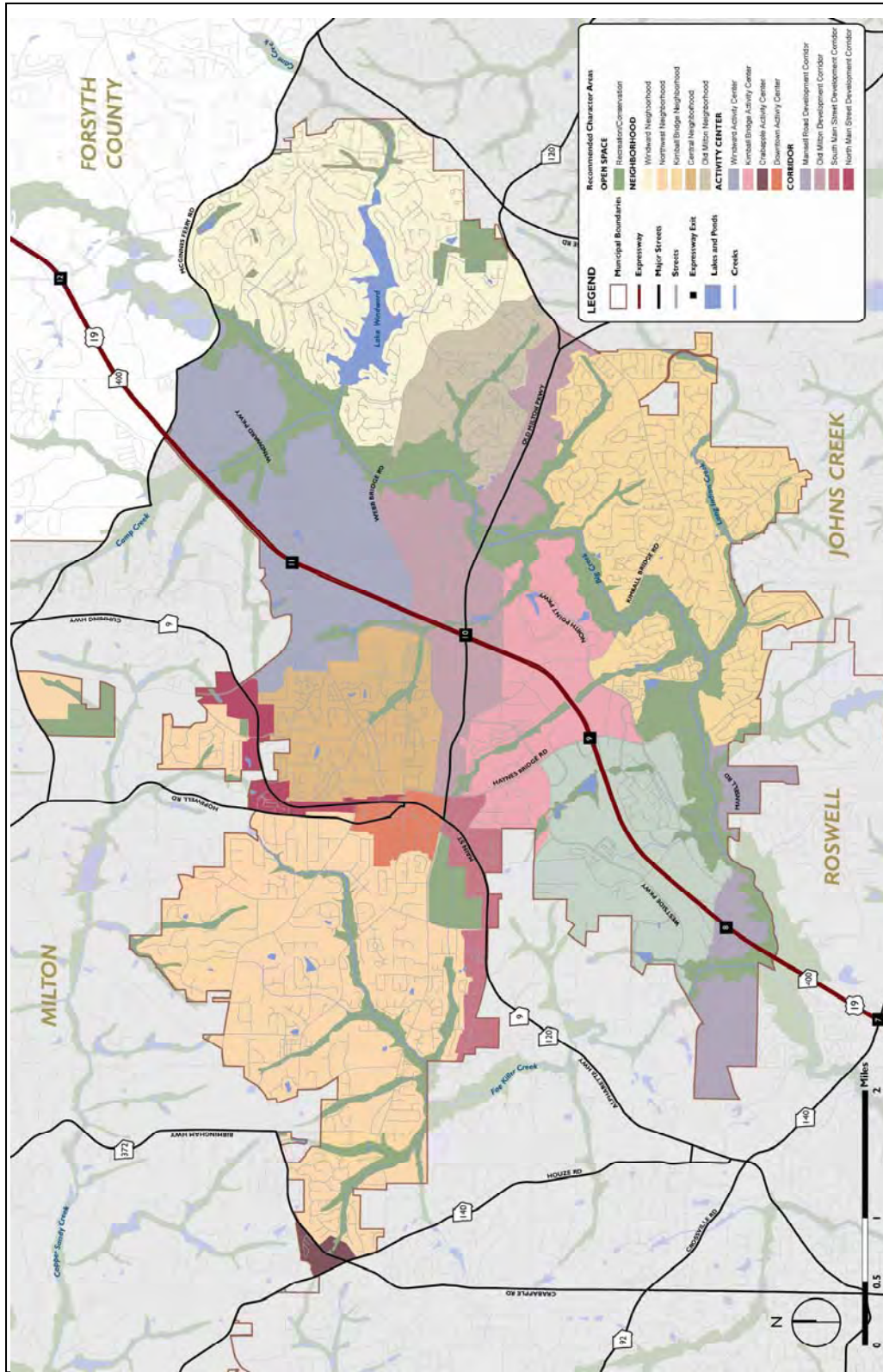
### Crabapple Activity Center

The Crabapple Activity Center is a small commercial center at the western edge of Alpharetta. The activity center sits at the cross-roads of GA-140, GA-372 and the cities of Roswell, Milton and Alpharetta. The area has historically been a commercial services destination for many in North Fulton. Future planning and development efforts will likely include maintenance and enhancement elements to ensure the area continues to serve the immediate residential areas.



*Strategies for the Crabapple Activity Center include preserving the existing commercial development and creating opportunities for new infill commercial projects, such as shown here near the Lindbergh MARTA Station in Buckhead.*

Map 6 Alpharetta Recommended Character Areas



# ANALYSIS OF CONSISTENCY WITH QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

*Evaluation of the community's current policies, activities and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives established by DCA*

This chapter presents an evaluation of the community's current policies, activities, and development patterns for consistency with DCA's Quality Community Objectives (QCO) contained in the State Planning Goals and Objectives. The QCO analysis (see Table 4) evaluates local government progress toward reaching these objectives. It consists of a series of questions associated with each objective. The "Y" represents an answer of "yes," while the "N" means an answer of "no." Additional notes that provide information are included in the comments column for some of the questions.

**Table 4 Quality Community Objectives Analysis**

Traditional Neighborhoods		
Question	YES/NO	Comments
Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.		
1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.	Yes	<b>MU</b> and <b>CUP</b> allow for mix of commercial, residential and retail.
2. We have ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development "by right" so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process.	Yes	Developers can build TNDs with CUP and MU without variances. Both require approval of a master plan.
3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.	Yes	<b>UDC Sec. 3.2</b> governs overall tree protection. <b>Downtown Incentive Zoning</b> Package includes specific street tree planting requirements for the downtown area. <b>Design Review Board (DRB) Ordinance and Design Guidelines</b> provide specific tree planting requirements for the city's "corridors of influence" (defined in the ordinance as Westside Parkway, Old Milton Parkway, Haynes Bridge Road, and Mansell Rd.).
4. We have an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer.	Yes	Sustainable Community Forestry Program in place; city is a Tree city USA; Tree Commission works with the City Arborist to plan and manage the city's urban forest.
5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.	Yes	Sanitation division of Public Works provides effective community cleanliness services.
6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.	Yes	Engineering/Public Works Dept. maintains sidewalks and associated vegetation within the ROW.
7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot.	Yes	Downtown provides for multiple errands on foot. Sidewalks are located throughout the city connecting neighborhoods to parks and other civic uses. However, connections to commercial areas could be improved.

Question	YES/NO	Comments
8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.	Yes	Sidewalks are provided near schools. Data not available regarding actual number of children who walk to school.
9. Some of our children can and do bike to school safely.	Yes	Bicycle infrastructure is limited, but growing. Data not available regarding actual number of children who bike to school.
10. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods.	Yes	Schools are located near neighborhoods.

#### 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.

Question	YES/NO	Comments
1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.	Yes	Primarily for undeveloped commercial, office, industrial and warehousing space (economic development), but not for housing within existing neighborhoods
2. Our community is actively working to promote Brownfield redevelopment.	No	Brownfields have not been identified within the city.
3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment.	Yes	North Point Activity Center LCI Study included focus on converting some existing parking and single-story, single-use shop areas into mixed use. In addition, the City uses retail space in an underperforming shopping center for the Community Development Department. The City will need continued focus more on greyfield redevelopment, especially since annexation is not longer an option for economic growth.
4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road).	Yes	Plans that have established specific development nodes include <i>2025 Comprehensive Plan</i> , <i>Downtown Master Plan</i> , <i>North Point Activity Center LCI</i> , <i>Blueprint North Fulton</i> , etc.
5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses.	Yes	<b>C-2</b> and <b>OSR</b> each have no lot size requirement. <b>R-8A</b> , <b>R-10A</b> , <b>MU</b> , <b>CUP</b> , and <b>PSC</b> have no lot size requirement for lots within the overall development, but have a minimum overall development lot size of greater than 5,000 sq. ft. Lot sizes are not smaller or larger based on use within any of the UDC zoning districts.

#### 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.

Question	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.	Yes	Distinctive areas include the North Point Mall activity center, Downtown Alpharetta, Big Creek Greenway, Windward.
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.	Yes & No	While no historic districts have been established (National Register or locally-designated via Historic Preservation Ordinance), the City protects the historic character of Downtown Alpharetta with design guidelines and Downtown Incentive Zoning with DRB reviews of all development plans.
3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.	Yes	DRB reviews all development plans to ensure Design Guidelines are followed potentially to promote aesthetics. Corridors of Influence and Downtown Alpharetta have been specifically called out to ensure quality design in these areas.
4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.	Yes	Our sign ordinance limits size and type of signage and promotes monument size off premise signs thereby reducing roadside clutter.
5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.	Yes	DRB Design Guidelines

Question	YES/NO	Comments
6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.	N/A	However, the northwest area of the city is characterized by rural density that is protected with the Future Land Use map and current zoning.

#### 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.

Question	YES/NO	Comments
1. We have public transportation in our community.	Yes	MARTA operates 3 bus routes within the city. Each links to the North Springs MARTA rail station in Sandy Springs. GRTA operates 1 stagecoach bus route (along GA-400) within the city connecting to Downtown Atlanta. However, the GRTA bus does not actually make stops in Alpharetta.
2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.	Yes & No	Developments must provide more than one entrance. However, they are not required to connect to adjacent neighborhood streets.
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.	Yes	Sidewalks are prevalent in Downtown and in new developments. However, sidewalks are lacking some of the older suburban neighborhoods. Safe quality sidewalks are lacking along older commercial corridors where existing sidewalks are narrow and placed close to automobile traffic
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.	Yes	Sidewalks are required on both sides of the street for all new development.
5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.	Yes	
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.	Yes	Regional bike plan and Big Creek Greenway (see Map 15 in the Appendix: Analysis of Supporting Data).
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.	Yes	Downtown incentive zoning.

#### Regional Identity:

Regions should promote and preserve an "identity," defined in terms of traditional regional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.

Question	YES/NO	Comments
1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.	Yes/No	Alpharetta's history differs from many other cities in the region since it grew along GA-400 rather than along a historic railroad. No railroads pass through the city. However, its rate of suburbanization is comparable with many other suburbs in the northern part of the region.
2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.	No	While the city was historically a trading post and based on agricultural production in surrounding areas, the current economy is based heavily in service related industry.
3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.).	No	There's currently no specific program, but the Economic Development Plan (currently underway) could address this).
4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development's regional tourism partnership.	Yes	
5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.	Yes	Alpharetta Convention and Visitor's Bureau
6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.	Yes	Verizon Wireless Amphitheater at Encore Park, Big Creek Greenway, North Point Mall, college satellite campuses, many corporate offices and business centers for professional employment.

### 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.

Question	YES/NO	Comments
1. We have designated historic districts in our community.	Yes & No	No locally-designated historic districts within the city. However, downtown is protected via the city's Downtown Incentive Zoning and DRB Design Guidelines.
2. We have an active historic preservation commission.	No	DRB is not established as a Historic Preservation Commission.
3. We want new development to complement our historic development; ordinances are in place to ensure this.	Yes	City has adopted incentive-based zoning that promotes compatible design for Downtown.

### 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.

Question	YES/NO	Comments
1. Our community is actively preserving greenspace, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.	Yes	Recreation Master Plan and Greenways Plan encourage set-asides in many of the zoning districts. The City has purchased property for the Big Creek Greenway and other parks.
2. We have a local land conservation program, or we work with state or national land conservation programs, to preserve environmentally important areas.	Yes	Variety of conservation entities associated with Big Creek Greenway.
3. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.	Yes	Conservation subdivision development standards are located in <b>UDC Sec. 3.3.1 I</b>

### Environmental Protection

Air quality and environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development. Environmentally sensitive areas deserve special protection, 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.

Question	YES/NO	Comments
1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.	Yes	GIS database includes environmental layers, and inventory has been included in previous comprehensive plans.
2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.	Yes	Included in review of development requests. This includes Floodplain ( <b>UDC Sec. 3.4</b> ), Stormwater Management ( <b>UDC Sec. 3.3</b> ), Erosion and Sediment Control ( <b>UDC Sec. 3.1.1</b> ), Stream Buffer ( <b>UDC Sec. 3.3.6</b> ).
3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.	Yes	Buffer ordinance, construction of Big Creek Greenway, Tree Protection Ordinance ( <b>UDC Sec. 3.2</b> ).
4. Our community has adopted and enforces the applicable "Part V" environmental ordinances	Yes	Water Supply Watershed ( <b>UDC Sec. 3.3.12</b> ); Groundwater Recharge ( <b>UDC Sec. 3.3.13</b> ); Wetlands ( <b>UDC Sec. 3.3.7</b> ).
5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced.	Yes	Tree Preservation Ordinance ( <b>UDC Sec. 3.2</b> )
6. We have a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.	Yes	Tree Preservation Ordinance ( <b>UDC Sec. 3.2</b> ), in addition to tree planting requirements within DRB Design Guidelines.
7. We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development.	Yes	Described in Article 3 of the UDC.
8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).	Yes	Floodplain Protection, Other regulations cited within this section (above).



**Growth Preparedness**

Each community should identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These may include housing and infrastructure (roads, water, sewer and telecommunications) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances to direct growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities.

Question	YES/NO	Comments
1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.	Yes	City maintains estimates for existing population and for future population and uses these for long-range planning across the board.
2. Our local governments, local school board, and other decision-makers use the same population projections.	No	
3. Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.	Yes	Elected officials receive training and are very involved and have qualified, professional staff.
4. We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.	Yes	Reviewed in association with comprehensive plan Community Assessment.
5. We have a CIP that supports current and future growth.	Yes	Capital Improvement Element of the 2025 Comprehensive Plan
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.	Yes	Future Land Use Plan from 2025 Comprehensive Plan and other studies prepared since 2005.
7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.	Yes	
8. We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.	Yes	Website, Planning Commission, DRB, City Council, etc. public meetings.
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.	Yes	Website, Planning Commission, DRB, City Council, etc. public meetings.
10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.	Yes	Community Participation Program.

**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, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.

Question	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.	Yes	Community Development Department's Economic Development Division is currently preparing and Economic Development Plan
2. Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses we have, and has a plan to recruit compatible businesses and/or industries.	Yes	Community Development Department's Economic Development Division is currently preparing and Economic Development Plan
3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products.	Yes	City and Fulton County level emphasis on sustainable industries.
4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy.	Yes	Strong economic base that includes retail, services, corporate management, professional, and industrial.

**Employment Options**

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

Question	YES/NO	Comments
1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.	Yes	Described on website <a href="http://www.alpharetta.ga.us">www.alpharetta.ga.us</a> (Economic Development Division).
2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	Yes	
3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	Yes	Primarily via retail and domestic services.
4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs.	Yes	

**Housing Choices**

Quality housing and 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.

Question	YES/NO	Comments
1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.	No	
2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.	Yes & No	Many who work in the city cannot afford to live in the city. However, many can, as well (see Chapters 3 and 4 of the Appendix: Analysis of Supporting Data).
3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average).		
4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks.	Yes	Where appropriate and specifically for areas surrounding Downtown.
5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or “neo-traditional” development.	Yes	Although currently few options are available. The <i>Downtown Master Plan</i> encourages this type of housing in Downtown. The <i>North Point Activity Center LCI</i> also encourages this housing type for that area.
6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.	Yes	Especially in the vicinity of GA-400.
7. We allow multifamily housing development.	Yes	<b>R-10A</b> and <b>MU</b>
8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.	Yes	North Central Georgia Habitat for Humanity
9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.	No	Fulton County provides these services.
10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.	Yes/No	<b>CUP</b> and <b>MU</b> all homes on lots smaller than 1,000, however both require a minimum square footage for dwelling space.

**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.

Question	YES/NO	Comments
1. Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens.	Yes	City promotes state and federal training assistance programs associated with corporate location and expansion incentives.
2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.	Yes	City promotes and encourages use of state and federal workforce development programs.
3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	Yes	Georgia State University, Reinhardt College and DeVry University each have Alpharetta campuses. Dozens of institutions of higher learning are also easily accessible within the region.
4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.	Yes	Opportunities in the wide range of industries that are in Alpharetta economy.

**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.

Question	YES/NO	Comments
1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.	Yes	North Fulton Chamber of Commerce
2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.	Yes	Participating member of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District

Question	YES/NO	Comments
3. We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services (e.g. such as transit, libraries, special education, tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security, etc.)	Yes	MARTA (transit via Fulton County sales tax), Fulton County (libraries, education)
4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.	Yes	For example, currently working with North Fulton municipalities on the <i>North Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan</i>
<b>Regional Cooperation</b>		
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.		
Question	YES/NO	Comments
1. We plan jointly with our cities and county for comprehensive planning purposes.	Yes	Comprehensive Plans prepared separately. Currently preparing <i>North Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan</i> in conjunction with ARC, GDOT, Fulton County, Johns Creek, Milton, Mountain Park, Roswell and Sandy Springs.
2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.	Yes	
3. We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft region-wide strategies.	Yes	
4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.	Yes	



*Final*  
*For ARC and DCA Review*

**CITY OF ALPHARETTA**  
**2030 Comprehensive Plan**

**Community**  
**Assessment**  
**Appendix: Analysis of Supporting Data**

Prepared for:

City of Alpharetta  
Alpharetta, Georgia

By:



MACTEC Engineering and Consulting, Inc.  
Atlanta, Georgia

In association with:

September 2010

*This page was intentionally left blank for two-sided printing.*

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

- I. INTRODUCTION..... 1-1**
- 2. POPULATION ..... 2-1**
  - 2.1. Total Population .....2-1
    - 2.1.1. *Historic Population* ..... 2-1
    - 2.1.2. *Population Projections*..... 2-1
    - 2.1.3. *Population Growth in Surrounding Areas*..... 2-1
    - 2.1.4. *Household Size*..... 2-2
  - 2.2. Age .....2-2
    - 2.2.1. *Age Distribution*..... 2-2
    - 2.2.2. *Median Age*..... 2-4
  - 2.3. Race and Ethnicity .....2-4
    - 2.3.1. *Racial and Ethnic Makeup*..... 2-4
  - 2.4. Income .....2-5
    - 2.4.1. *Household Income*..... 2-5
    - 2.4.2. *Median Household income*..... 2-5
    - 2.4.3. *Per Capita Income*..... 2-6
    - 2.4.4. *Personal Income*..... 2-6
    - 2.4.5. *Poverty*..... 2-6
  - 2.5. Educational Attainment.....2-7
- 3. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ..... 3-1**
  - 3.1. Introduction.....3-1
  - 3.2. Economic Base .....3-1
    - 3.2.1. *Employment*..... 3-1
    - 3.2.2. *Labor Force*..... 3-3
  - 3.3. Economic Resources .....3-4
    - 3.3.1. *Development Agencies* ..... 3-4
    - 3.3.2. *Programs* ..... 3-5
    - 3.3.3. *Tools*..... 3-6
    - 3.3.4. *Education and Training*..... 3-8
  - 3.4. Economic Trends .....3-9
    - 3.4.1. *Regional and State Context* ..... 3-9
    - 3.4.2. *Important New Developments*..... 3-9
    - 3.4.3. *Unique Economic Situations* ..... 3-10
- 4. HOUSING..... 4-1**
  - 4.1. Housing Types and Trends.....4-1
    - 4.1.1. *Number of Housing Units* ..... 4-1
    - 4.1.2. *Composition of Housing Stock*..... 4-1
  - 4.2. Condition and Occupancy.....4-3

4.2.1.	Housing Age.....	4-3
4.2.2.	Housing Condition.....	4-3
4.2.3.	Housing Occupancy and Tenure.....	4-3
4.3.	Housing Costs.....	4-4
4.3.1.	Median Property Value.....	4-4
4.3.2.	Median Rent.....	4-4
4.3.3.	Affordability for Residents and Workers.....	4-5
4.3.4.	Cost-Burdened Households.....	4-5
4.3.5.	Foreclosures.....	4-6
4.4.	Special Housing Needs.....	4-6
4.4.1.	Elderly and Frail Elderly.....	4-6
4.4.2.	Persons with Disabilities.....	4-7
4.4.3.	Mental Illness.....	4-7
4.4.4.	Persons with Alcohol or Substance Abuse Problems.....	4-7
4.4.5.	Domestic Violence.....	4-7
4.4.6.	Persons with HIV/AIDS.....	4-8
4.4.7.	Homeless.....	4-8
4.4.8.	Migrant Farm Workers.....	4-8
4.5.	Job-Housing Balance.....	4-8
4.5.1.	Supply of Affordable Housing.....	4-8
4.5.2.	Barriers to Affordability.....	4-10
<b>5.</b>	<b>NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES.....</b>	<b>5-1</b>
5.1.	Physiography.....	5-1
5.2.	Environmental Planning Criteria.....	5-1
5.3.	Other Environmentally Sensitive Areas.....	5-2
5.3.1.	Water Quality.....	5-2
5.3.2.	Air Quality.....	5-3
5.3.3.	Steep Slopes.....	5-3
5.3.4.	Floodplains.....	5-3
5.3.5.	Soils.....	5-4
5.3.6.	Plant and Animal Habitats.....	5-6
5.4.	Significant Natural Resources.....	5-8
5.4.1.	Scenic Areas, Forests, Recreation and Conservation Areas.....	5-8
5.4.2.	Agriculture and Forested Land.....	5-8
5.4.3.	Urban Forest Protection.....	5-8
5.5.	Significant Cultural Resources.....	5-9
5.5.1.	Local History.....	5-9
5.5.2.	Historic Resources.....	5-10
5.5.3.	Historic Resource Protection Tools.....	5-12
5.5.4.	Cemeteries.....	5-13
<b>6.</b>	<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES.....</b>	<b>6-1</b>
6.1.	Water Supply and Treatment.....	6-1
6.1.1.	Existing Facilities.....	6-1
6.1.2.	Improvement Plans.....	6-1
6.2.	Sewerage System and Wastewater Treatment.....	6-2
6.2.1.	Existing Facilities.....	6-2
6.2.2.	Improvement Plans.....	6-2
6.3.	Other Facilities and Services.....	6-2
6.3.1.	Public Safety.....	6-2
6.3.2.	Parks and Recreation.....	6-3
6.3.3.	Stormwater Management.....	6-5
6.3.4.	Solid Waste Management.....	6-5



6.3.5.	Education .....	6-6
6.3.6.	Libraries .....	6-7
6.3.7.	Public Health Care Facilities and Services.....	6-7
<b>7.</b>	<b>INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION.....</b>	<b>7-1</b>
7.1.	Adjacent Local Governments .....	7-1
7.2.	Independent Agencies, Boards and Authorities.....	7-1
7.3.	School Board.....	7-2
7.4.	Regional and State Programs .....	7-2
7.4.1.	Regional.....	7-2
7.4.2.	State.....	7-2
7.5.	Consistency with Service Delivery Strategy.....	7-3
<b>8.</b>	<b>TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM .....</b>	<b>8-1</b>
8.1.	Introduction.....	8-1
8.1.1.	North Fulton Transportation Plan .....	8-1
8.1.2.	Envision6.....	8-2
8.2.	Road Network.....	8-2
8.2.1.	Jurisdiction.....	8-2
8.2.2.	Functional Classification.....	8-2
8.2.3.	Lanes.....	8-3
8.2.4.	Medians.....	8-3
8.2.5.	Level of Service.....	8-4
8.2.6.	Improvement Projects.....	8-4
8.3.	Bridges.....	8-6
8.4.	Railroads.....	8-6
8.5.	Trucking.....	8-6
8.6.	Airports.....	8-7
8.7.	Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities .....	8-7
8.8.	Public Transit.....	8-8
8.9.	Private Transit System.....	8-9
8.10.	Parking.....	8-9
8.11.	Transportation and Land Use Connection .....	8-10
<b>9.</b>	<b>ATLAS OF MAPS .....</b>	<b>9-1</b>
	(See List of Maps)	

# LIST OF TABLES, FIGURES AND MAPS

## Tables

Table 2-1	Historic Population 1960-2009.....	2-1
Table 2-2	Historic Population Growth Rates 1960-2009.....	2-1
Table 2-3	Population Projections.....	2-1
Table 2-4	Population Growth in Surrounding Areas.....	2-2
Table 2-5	Historical and Projected Average Household Size 1990, 2000, 20010 and 2015.....	2-2
Table 2-6	Average Household Size 2008.....	2-2
Table 2-7	Age Distribution: Historical (1990, 2000, 2010) and Projection (2015).....	2-3
Table 2-8	Age Distribution Comparison 2008.....	2-3
Table 2-11	Race and Hispanic Origin Share of Population 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2015.....	2-4
Table 2-9	Median Age 1990, 2000 and 2008.....	2-4
Table 2-10	Race and Hispanic Origin 2008.....	2-4
Table 2-12	Household Income Distribution 2000, 2010, 2015.....	2-5
Table 2-13	Household Income Distribution 2008.....	2-5
Table 2-14	Median Household Income 1990, 2000 and 2008.....	2-5
Table 2-15	Per Capita Income 1989, 1999, 2008.....	2-6
Table 2-16	Personal Income 1990 and 2000.....	2-6
Table 2-17	Percent of Specified Age Groups in Poverty 1989, 1999 and 2008.....	2-6
Table 2-18	Educational Attainment 1990, 2000 and 2008.....	2-7
Table 2-19	Educational Attainment 2008.....	2-7
Table 3-1	Number of Employees 1999-2007 – Zip Codes 30004, 30005, 30009, 30022 and 30076.....	3-1
Table 3-2	Top 15 Employers.....	3-1
Table 3-3	Average Monthly Employment and Average Weekly Wage 2009.....	3-2
Table 3-4	Historical Labor Force Size 1990, 2000 and 2008.....	3-3
Table 3-5	Labor Force Employment Status 1990, 2000 and 2008.....	3-3
Table 3-6	Civilian Labor Force Employment by Occupation 2008.....	3-3
Table 3-7	Labor Force Employment by Industry 2008.....	3-4
Table 3-8	Labor Force by Place of Work 1990 and 2000.....	3-4
Table 4-1	Historical Number of Housing Units 1990, 2000, 2009, 2014.....	4-1
Table 4-2	Housing Unit Trends 2000 and 2008.....	4-1
Table 4-3	Types of Housing and Mix (units in structure) 1990, 2000, 2008.....	4-2
Table 4-4	Types of Housing and Mix 2008.....	4-2
Table 4-5	Residential Building Permits 2000-2009.....	4-2
Table 4-6	Housing Age 2008.....	4-3
Table 4-7	Housing Condition 2008.....	4-3
Table 4-8	Housing Occupancy and Tenure 2008.....	4-3
Table 4-9	Housing Occupancy and Tenure 1990, 2000 and 2009.....	4-4
Table 4-10	Median Property Value 1990, 2000 and 2008.....	4-4
Table 4-11	Median Rent 1990, 2000 and 2008.....	4-5
Table 4-12	Cost-Burdened Households 1990 and 2000.....	4-5
Table 4-13	Foreclosure Starts and Rate 2007-2008.....	4-6
Table 4-14	Type of Disabilities 2000.....	4-7
Table 4-15	Jobs-Housing Balance 2009.....	4-8

Table 4-16	Correlation of Average Weekly Wages to Housing Prices for Workers 2009.....	4-9
Table 4-17	Correlation of Household Income to Housing Prices for City Residents 2000 and 2009.....	4-10
Table 5-1	Compliance with Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria.....	5-1
Table 5-2	Local Protection Measures for Environmentally Sensitive Areas.....	5-2
Table 5-3	Soil Associations.....	5-4
Table 5-4	Fulton County Soil Suitability for Septic Tank Absorption Fields.....	5-5
Table 5-6	Species of Special Concern in Fulton County – Animals.....	5-7
Table 5-7	Species of Special Concern in Fulton County – Plants.....	5-7
Table 5-5	Federal and State Species Status Definitions.....	5-7
Table 5-8	Percent of Fulton County Land in Farms – 1982, 1989, 1997 and 2007.....	5-8
Table 5-9	Percent of Fulton County Land Forested– 1982, 1989, 1997 and 2007.....	5-8
Table 5-10	Historic Resource Survey Results (Buildings).....	5-10
Table 5-11	Housing Units Built Prior to 1960.....	5-12
Table 6-1	Public Safety Facilities.....	6-3
Table 6-2	Parks and Recreation.....	6-4
Table 6-3	Public Schools in Alpharetta.....	6-6
Table 6-4	Public Charter Schools in Alpharetta.....	6-7
Table 6-5	Private Schools in Alpharetta.....	6-7
Table 7-1	Fulton County Service Delivery Strategy Summary.....	7-3
Table 8-1	Functional Classification of Road Network.....	8-3
Table 8-2	Number of Travel Lanes.....	8-3
Table 8-3	Medians.....	8-3
Table 8-4	Envision 6 Roadway Improvement Projects.....	8-4
Table 8-5	Local Roadway Improvement Projects.....	8-5
Table 8-6	FY2008-2013 TIP Bridge Projects.....	8-6
Table 8-7	Public Transit Routes.....	8-8
Table 8-8	FY2008-2013 TIP Transit Projects.....	8-9

## Figures

Figure 5-1	General Soil Map for Fulton County (Alpharetta Area).....	5-5
Figure 5-2	Alpharetta Area Soil Suitability for Septic Tank Absorption.....	5-6

## Maps

Map 1 – Study Area.....	9-2
Map 2 – Regional Context.....	9-3
Map 3 – Environmental Planning Criteria.....	9-4
Map 4 – Slope Analysis.....	9-5
Map 5 – Floodplains.....	9-6
Map 6 – Soils of Statewide Importance.....	9-7
Map 7 – Scenic Areas/Forests/Recreation and Conservation Areas.....	9-8
Map 8 – Cultural and Historic Resources.....	9-9
Map 9 – Public Safety.....	9-10
Map 10 – Community Facilities.....	9-11
Map 11 – ARC Regional Transportation Plan Projects.....	9-12
Map 12 – Functional Classification.....	9-13
Map 13 – Regional Truck Routes.....	9-14
Map 14 – Sidewalk Network.....	9-15
Map 15 – Bicycle Facilities.....	9-16
Map 16 – Public Transportation.....	9-17

*This page was intentionally left blank for two-sided printing.*

# INTRODUCTION

## *Introduction to the Analysis of Supporting Data for the City of Alpharetta, Georgia*

The *Analysis of Supporting Data* follows the guidelines of the Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Chapter 110-12-1, Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, effective May 1, 2005. This document presents the full collection of analysis and supporting data that provides the backbone of the *Community Assessment*. Maps associated with this document can be found in Appendix A: Atlas of Supportive Maps.

Alpharetta, shown in Map 1: Study Area, covers approximately 27.3 square miles of predominantly suburban landscape and is part of the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), as defined by DCA for the purpose of regional planning. The ARC, referred to as the *region* in this report, includes the following 10 counties (inner 10): Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale. ARC also produces and collects data for a larger, 20-county area for air quality purposes. These include the inner 10 counties above plus Barrow, Bartow, Carroll, Coweta, Forsyth, Hall, Newton, Paulding, Spalding and Walton counties (outer 10). Map 2: Regional Context shows Alpharetta in relation to the 20-county ARC air quality area.

The U.S. Census Bureau defines Alpharetta as part of the 28-county Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta Metropolitan Statistical Area, referred to as the *MSA* throughout this report. The MSA includes Barrow, Bartow, Butts, Carroll, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, Dawson, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Haralson, Heard, Henry, Jasper, Lamar, Meriwether, Newton, Paulding, Pickens, Pike, Rockdale, Spalding and Walton.

The federal government defines the Alpharetta area as part of the 18-county Metropolitan Planning Organization, referred to as *MPO* in this report, for regional transportation planning to meet air quality standards and for programming projects to implement the adopted Regional Transportation Plan. The MPO includes Barrow, Bartow, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Newton, Rockdale, Spalding, and Walton counties.

*This page was intentionally left blank for two-sided printing.*

CHAPTER  
**2**

# POPULATION

Identification of trends and issues in population growth and significant changes in the demographic characteristics of the community

## 2.1. Total Population

### 2.1.1. Historic Population

Alpharetta’s total population grew significantly over the past 50 years, from 1960 to 2010, as shown in Tables 2-1 and 2-2. Alpharetta experienced population growth during each of these last five decades. Population increases have occurred in recent years thanks to a combination of annexation and development of new housing in previously undeveloped areas. The most dramatic population increase occurred between 1980 and 2000. Since 2000, the population has continued to grow rapidly, however at slower rate compared to the previous two decades.

**Table 2-1 Historic Population 1960-2009**

1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2009	2010 <sup>1</sup>
1,349	2,455	3,000	13,002	30,511	52,415	52,493

<sup>1</sup>2010 population estimate generated using ARC’s Annual Growth Rate projection for the Atlanta Region.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Estimates of the Population for Places of

**Table 2-2 Historic Population Growth Rates 1960-2009**

Calculation	1960-1970	1970-1980	1980-1990	1990-2000	2000-2009
Percent Change	82.0%	22.2%	333.4%	134.7%	71.8%
Ave. Annual Rate of Change	6.2%	2.0%	15.8%	8.9%	6.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Estimates of the Population for Places of Georgia; City of Alpharetta

### 2.1.2. Population Projections

Alpharetta’s population is projected to increase from an estimated 52,493 in 2010 to 69,395 in 2030, a 32.2% increase, as shown in Table 2-3. This represents a 1.5% average annual growth rate over the 20 year period.

**Table 2-3 Population Projections**

2010 <sup>1</sup>	2015 <sup>1</sup>	2020 <sup>2</sup>	2025 <sup>2</sup>	2030 <sup>2</sup>
52,493	56,494	60,800	65,434	69,395

<sup>1</sup>Based on 1.48% average annual growth rate from 2005 to 2040, the growth rate projected for the Atlanta Region by ARC during the Plan2040 planning process.

Source: City of Alpharetta, ARC, MACTEC

### 2.1.3. Population Growth in Surrounding Areas

As shown in Table 2-4, Alpharetta’s 2000 to 2009 growth rate outpaced that of Mountain Park and Roswell as well as the county, MSA and state. While areas within the current boundaries of Johns Creek, Milton, and Sandy Springs also grew during this period, the three municipalities were not incorporated in 2000.

**Table 2-4 Population Growth in Surrounding Areas**

Area	Total Population			1990-2000		2000-2009	
	1990	2000	2009	% Change	Ave. Annual Rate	% Change	Ave. Annual Rate
Alpharetta	13,002	30,511	52,415	134.7%	8.9%	71.8%	6.2%
Johns Creek	NA	NA	61,794	NA	NA	NA	NA
Milton	NA	NA	16,206	NA	NA	NA	NA
Mountain Park	554	506	570	-8.7%	-0.9%	12.7%	1.3%
Roswell	47,923	79,334	87,719	65.5%	5.2%	10.6%	1.1%
Sandy Springs	NA	NA	85,625	NA	NA	NA	NA
Fulton County	648,951	816,006	1,033,756	25.7%	2.3%	26.7%	2.7%
Atlanta Region (10-County Core)	2,513,612	3,429,379	4,124,300	36.4%	3.2%	20.3%	2.1%
Atlanta Region (20-County)	3,040,502	4,228,492	5,233,800	39.1%	3.4%	23.8%	2.4%
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta MSA	2,833,511	4,247,981	5,475,213	49.9%	4.1%	28.9%	2.9%
State of Georgia	6,478,216	8,186,453	9,829,211	26.4%	2.4%	20.1%	2.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Annual Estimates of the Population for Counties of Georgia 2009, U.S. Census Bureau Annual Estimates of the Population for Places of Georgia: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2009; City of Alpharetta; Atlanta Regional Commission

**2.1.4. Household Size**

Alpharetta’s average household size grew from 2.45 persons per household in 1990 to 2.73 in 2009. As shown in Table 2-5, the city’s average household size is projected to remain constant through 2015. The city’s 2009 average household size was larger than the county and state, but slightly smaller than the MSA, as shown in Table 2-6. Average household size does not include those living in group quarters. The increasing average household size is inconsistent with both state and national trends. The trend, however, is typical for a growing community that adds young families with children in a larger proportion than it adds childless households.

**Table 2-5 Historical and Projected Average Household Size 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2015**

1990	2000	2010	2015
2.45	2.5	2.73	2.73

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 1990 and 2000; ESRI Business Analyst Online

**Table 2-6 Average Household Size 2008**

Area	2008
Alpharetta	2.74
Fulton County	2.65
MSA	2.77
State of Georgia	2.69

Source: American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate)

**2.2. Age**

**2.2.1. Age Distribution**

Age distribution affects a variety of needs and services as the city plans for future housing, commercial development, public institutions, and recreational facilities. Table 2-7 shows the historical and projected age distribution for Alpharetta. The school age groups (those 5 to 19 years old) increased significantly since 1990. In doing so, these age groups increased their share of the overall population from 1990 to 2000, but then experienced slight declines in overall share from 2000 to 2010 as other age groups grew more rapidly. Increases for the 0 to 18 years group impact public services aimed at children (e.g. parks and recreation, social services, etc.).



One reason for the reduction in share for the school age groups is the growth of age groups in retirement or nearing retirement. For example, from 2000 to 2010 the 45 to 54 years and 55 to 64 years groups grew by 62.2% and 89.8%, respectively. The 85 years and older group increased by 69.8% between 2000 and 2010. Increases in the 85 years and older group, which follow state and national trends, also impact social services provided for seniors and the health care industry.

**Table 2-7 Age Distribution: Historical (1990, 2000, 2010) and Projection (2015)**

Age Group	1990		2000		2010		2015		% Change	
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	1990-2000	2000-2010
Under 5 years	1,108	8.5%	3,748	12.3%	4,332	8.3%	6,085	8.0%	238.3%	15.6%
5 to 9 years	843	6.5%	3,654	12.0%	4,281	8.2%	6,075	8.0%	333.4%	17.2%
10 to 14 years	708	5.4%	3,183	10.4%	4,266	8.1%	5,869	7.7%	349.6%	34.0%
15 to 19 years	695	5.3%	2,182	7.2%	3,483	6.6%	5,034	6.6%	214.0%	59.6%
20 to 24 years	952	7.3%	1,955	6.4%	2,719	5.2%	4,168	5.5%	105.3%	39.1%
25 to 34 years	3,178	24.4%	7,757	25.4%	7,204	13.7%	11,329	14.9%	144.1%	-7.1%
34 to 44 years	2,531	19.5%	9,467	31.0%	9,765	18.6%	12,544	16.4%	274.0%	3.2%
45 to 54 years	1,380	10.6%	5,606	18.4%	9,096	17.3%	12,439	16.3%	306.2%	62.2%
55 to 64 years	750	5.8%	2,404	7.9%	4,563	8.7%	7,723	10.1%	220.5%	89.8%
65 to 74 years	509	3.9%	1,205	4.0%	1,725	3.3%	3,409	4.5%	136.8%	43.1%
75 to 84 years	284	2.2%	636	2.1%	781	1.5%	1,172	1.5%	123.8%	22.9%
85 years and older	64	0.5%	164	0.5%	278	0.5%	421	0.6%	155.8%	69.8%

Source: City of Alpharetta; U.S. Census Bureau 1990, 2000; 2010 estimate and 2015 projection based on City of Alpharetta population data and ESRI Business Analyst data.

As shown in Table 2-8, the age distribution of Alpharetta in 2008 included a slightly smaller proportion of the population in the younger age group categories and slightly larger proportion in the older age group categories, consistent with that for the county and nation. The share of school age population for Alpharetta was slightly higher than that of the county, MSA, state and nation. The share of those 65 years and older in the city (6.0%) was significantly lower than the county, MSA, state and nation. However, those in the city approaching retirement age (45 to 64 years) accounted for 25% of the city's population.

The anticipated shifts in the overall age distribution of residents in Alpharetta are not predicted to change significantly in the next five years. The population in each age group is projected to see continued growth, increasing significantly the number of retirement-age and school-age residents. The rate of growth in total population will lead to significant growth for each age group and will impact the service demands for each group. National projections anticipate that the senior citizen share of the

**Table 2-8 Age Distribution Comparison 2008**

Age Groups	Alpharetta	Fulton County	MSA	State of Georgia	United States
Under 5 years	8.4%	7.2%	7.8%	7.6%	6.9%
5 to 9 years	9.3%	7.0%	7.4%	7.2%	6.6%
10 to 14 years	7.9%	6.7%	7.3%	7.2%	6.8%
15 to 19 years	6.1%	6.9%	6.9%	7.3%	7.2%
20 to 24 years	3.1%	6.5%	6.3%	6.9%	6.9%
25 to 34 years	12.9%	14.7%	14.6%	14.1%	13.3%
34 to 44 years	20.6%	17.3%	16.8%	15.4%	14.3%
45 to 54 years	16.2%	14.9%	14.6%	14.2%	14.6%
55 to 64 years	9.4%	10.9%	10.0%	10.2%	10.8%
65 to 74 years	3.2%	4.6%	4.8%	5.6%	6.5%
75 to 84 years	2.3%	2.3%	2.5%	3.2%	4.4%
85 years and older	0.5%	1.1%	0.9%	1.2%	1.7%

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online, American Community Survey 2006-2008

population will increase significantly during this time period. For example, the number of Americans aged 45 to 65 (who will reach age 65 over the next two decades) increased by 39% from 1994 to 2004, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Aging. The nation's 25 to 54 age groups are projected to increase from 55% to 59% between 2005 and 2030.

## 2.2.2. Median Age

Alpharetta's median age, as shown in Table 2-9, increased from 33.2 years in 2000 to 35.9 years by 2008, making the city's population slightly older than the county, MSA, and state, but younger than the national median of 36.7.

## 2.3. Race and Ethnicity

### 2.3.1. Racial and Ethnic Makeup

White residents comprised the largest share of Alpharetta's population in 2010 with an estimated 77.6%, as shown in Table 2-11. African American residents comprised 6.7% and Asian residents 9.0%. The Census defines *Hispanic origin* as "ethnicity" rather than "race," therefore *Hispanic origin* generally includes portions of more than one racial group. As a group, *Hispanic origin* population is projected to reach 6,271 by 2015. By comparison, Alpharetta's 2008 population was less diverse than that of the county, MSA and state, as shown in Table 2-10.

**Table 2-9 Median Age 1990, 2000 and 2008**

Year	1990	2000	2008
Alpharetta	NA	33.2	35.9
Fulton County	32.0	32.8	35.5
MSA	31.5	33.0	34.8
State of Georgia	31.6	33.4	34.8
United States	32.6	35.3	36.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000 Census, American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate)

**Table 2-10 Race and Hispanic Origin 2008**

Category	Alpharetta	Fulton County	MSA	State of Georgia
White alone	77.1%	48.4%	58.3%	62.2%
African American alone	9.4%	42.5%	31.1%	29.7%
American Indian alone	0.0%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Asian alone	9.7%	4.2%	4.1%	2.8%
Pacific Islander alone	0.8%	0.1%	0.1%	0.0%
Other Race <sup>1</sup>	3.1%	4.7%	6.2%	5.0%
Hispanic Origin (any race)	7.1%	8.0%	9.3%	7.7%

<sup>1</sup>Other Race includes the following categories: *Some Other Race Alone* and *Two or More Races*

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate)

**Table 2-11 Race and Hispanic Origin Share of Population 1990, 2000, 2010 and 2015**

Area	1990		2000		2010 <sup>2</sup>		2015 <sup>2</sup>		% Change 2000-2010
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	
White alone	12,380	95.2%	29,150	83.6%	40,734	77.6%	43,500	77.0%	39.7%
African American alone	332	2.6%	2,256	6.5%	3,517	6.7%	3,446	6.1%	55.9%
American Indian alone	27	0.2%	68	0.2%	157	0.3%	169	0.3%	131.6%
Asian alone	175	1.3%	1,998	5.7%	4,724	9.0%	5,593	9.9%	136.5%
Pacific Islander alone	2	0.0%	7	0.0%	52	0.1%	56	0.1%	649.9%
Other Race <sup>1</sup>	86	0.7%	1,375	3.9%	3,307	6.3%	3,729	6.6%	140.5%
Hispanic Origin (any race)	240	1.8%	1,927	5.5%	5,144	9.8%	6,271	11.1%	167.0%

<sup>1</sup>Other Race includes the following categories: *Some Other Race Alone* and *Two or More Races*

<sup>2</sup>2010 and 2015 are projections based on ESRI Business Analyst Online and City of Alpharetta projections.

Source: City of Alpharetta; U.S. Census Bureau (SFI); ESRI Business Analyst Online

## 2.4. Income

### 2.4.1. Household Income

As shown in Table 2-12, household income distribution changed between 2000 and 2010, shifting a larger share of the city's total households to higher income brackets, as evidenced by a 24.1% drop in households in the \$15,000-\$24,999 category and large percentage increases in households earning more than \$50,000. Inflation and rising incomes both contributed to these shifts. The \$200,000+ bracket experienced the largest 2000-2010 percentage increase (94.8%).

As shown in Table 2-13, the share of those in the city's highest income brackets (more than \$100,000) in 2008 was higher than the county, MSA and statewide share for those categories. Proportions of the population in Alpharetta within the middle income brackets (ranging from \$35,000 to \$99,999) and the lowest income brackets (incomes up to \$34,999) were lower than those for the county, MSA and state.

### 2.4.2. Median Household Income

As shown in Table 2-14, median household income in Alpharetta increased by 7.1% from 2000 to 2008. During the same period, median household income decreased by 7.3%, 7.8% and 3.9% in the MSA, state and nation, respectively while rising countywide.

**Table 2-12 Household Income Distribution 2000, 2010, 2015**

Household Median Income Category	2000		2010		2015		% Change 2000-10
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	
Less than \$15,000	859	4.7%	852	3.5%	545	2.0%	-0.8%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	874	4.8%	663	2.7%	475	1.7%	-24.1%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	1247	6.9%	802	3.3%	490	1.8%	-35.7%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	2,356	13.0%	2,382	9.8%	1,494	5.4%	1.1%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	3,447	19.0%	4,174	17.2%	4,693	16.8%	21.1%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	2,940	16.2%	4,047	16.7%	4,117	14.8%	37.7%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	3,408	18.7%	6,094	25.2%	8,439	30.2%	78.8%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	1,563	8.6%	2,318	9.6%	3,230	11.6%	48.3%
\$200,000 +	1,485	8.2%	2,893	11.9%	4,426	15.9%	94.8%

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online

**Table 2-13 Household Income Distribution 2008**

Category	Alpharetta	Fulton County	MSA	State of Georgia
Less than \$15,000	3.5%	12.0%	9.6%	13.4%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	3.2%	8.1%	8.3%	10.5%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	5.3%	8.9%	9.6%	10.8%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	8.0%	12.6%	14.1%	14.7%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	18.5%	16.3%	19.7%	19.0%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	12.0%	11.0%	13.6%	12.1%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	23.3%	13.5%	14.3%	11.5%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	11.0%	6.9%	5.4%	4.0%
\$200,000 +	15.2%	10.7%	5.4%	3.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate)

**Table 2-14 Median Household Income 1990, 2000 and 2008**

Area	1990	2000	2008	% Change	
				1990-2000	1990-2008
Alpharetta	\$76,980	\$92,023	\$98,535	19.5%	7.1%
Fulton County	\$48,393	\$59,261	\$61,332	22.5%	3.5%
MSA	\$57,941	\$64,587	\$59,882	11.5%	-7.3%
State of Georgia	\$50,389	\$54,837	\$50,549	8.8%	-7.8%
United States	\$52,186	\$54,270	\$52,175	4.0%	-3.9%

Note: Values shown for 1990 and 2000 are adjusted for inflation to year 2008 dollars based on the Consumer Price Index.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3 1990, 2000); 2006-2008 American Community Survey 2006-2008 three-year estimates. Dollar adjustments provided by U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator.

### 2.4.3. Per Capita Income

Per capita income is the average money income received in a given year computed for every resident of a geographic area. It is derived by dividing the total income of all people 15 years old and over in a geographic area by the area's total population. Income is not factors for people under 15 years old even though those people are included in the denominator of per capita income. Money income includes amounts reported separately for wage or salary income; net self-employment income; interest, dividends, or net rental or royalty income or income from estates and trusts; Social Security or Railroad Retirement income; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); public assistance or welfare payments; retirement, survivor, or disability pensions; and all other income. As shown in Table 2-15, inflation-adjusted per capita income in Alpharetta decreased significantly (7.4%) from 1999 to 2008. The county, MSA, state and nation each experienced decreases of 2.1%, 7.5%, 3.7% and 1.5%, respectively.

### 2.4.4. Personal Income

The most recent available and comparable data for personal income for Alpharetta is the 2000 Census. As shown in Table 2-16, residents received 84.4% of their personal income from wages and salaries in 2000, compared to 78.4% for the county, 81.4% for the MSA and 78.7% for the state.

### 2.4.5. Poverty

The share of Alpharetta residents living in households considered below the poverty thresholds in 2008, set by the U.S. Census Bureau, fell from 5.2% in 1999 to 3.8% in 2008, as shown in Table 2-17.

**Table 2-15 Per Capita Income 1989, 1999, 2008**

Area	1989	1999	2008	% Change	
				1989-1999	1999-2008
Alpharetta	\$35,627	\$50,959	\$47,198	43.0%	-7.4%
Fulton County	\$32,038	\$38,774	\$37,976	21.0%	-2.1%
MSA	\$28,540	\$32,031	\$29,623	12.2%	-7.5%
State of Georgia	\$21,692	\$25,774	\$25,676	18.8%	-3.7%
United States	\$19,828	\$27,897	\$27,466	40.7%	-1.5%

Note: Values shown for 1989 and 1999 are adjusted for inflation to year 2008 dollars via CPI.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3 1990, 2000); American Community Survey 2006-2008 three-year estimates. Dollar adjustments provided by U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator.

**Table 2-16 Personal Income 1990 and 2000**

Category	Alpharetta		Fulton County		MSA		State of Georgia	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Wages and/or Salaries	86.0%	84.4%	76.8%	78.4%	81.3%	81.4%	78.5%	78.7%
Other types	1.0%	1.1%	0.9%	1.2%	0.9%	1.3%	1.1%	1.7%
Self employment	4.2%	5.8%	7.6%	6.6%	6.2%	5.6%	6.3%	5.6%
Interest, dividends, or net rental	4.7%	5.2%	8.4%	7.8%	5.6%	5.0%	5.6%	5.3%
Social Security	2.1%	1.4%	3.2%	2.4%	3.0%	2.8%	4.3%	4.1%
Public assistance	0.1%	0.1%	0.6%	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%	0.7%	0.0%
Retirement	1.9%	2.0%	2.6%	3.1%	2.7%	3.5%	3.4%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 1990 (STF-3) and 2000 (SF3)

**Table 2-17 Percent of Specified Age Groups in Poverty 1989, 1999 and 2008**

Age Group	Area	1989	1999	2008
All Ages in Poverty	Alpharetta	3.7%	5.2%	3.8%
	Fulton County	20.0%	14.6%	14.9%
	State of Georgia	14.9%	12.7%	14.7%
	United States	12.8%	11.9%	13.2%
Ages 0-17 in Poverty	Alpharetta	0.6%	5.4%	5.3%
	Fulton County	30.4%	22.0%	19.7%
	State of Georgia	21.1%	18.3%	20.2%
Ages 5-17 in Poverty	United States	19.6%	17.1%	18.2%
	Alpharetta	0.3%	6.2%	3.9%
	Fulton County	28.1%	20.2%	17.9%
	State of Georgia	19.4%	16.8%	18.3%
	United States	17.7%	15.9%	16.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates 1989, 1999 and 2008

## 2.5. Educational Attainment

Overall, educational attainment of Alpharetta residents exceeds that of the county, MSA, state and nation. As shown in Table 2-18, the share of Alpharetta's 25-and-over age group with a bachelor's degree or higher increased from 36.9% in 1990 to 62.8% in 2008. The proportion of those without a high school diploma decreased during this same period.

In 2008, as shown in Table 2-19, the proportion of Alpharetta's population in the high school graduate or higher category (95.9%) was significantly higher than that of the county, MSA, state and nation. The proportion of city residents within the bachelor's degree or higher category (62.8%) was also significantly higher than that of the county, MSA, state and nation.

**Table 2-18 Educational Attainment 1990, 2000 and 2008**

Educational Attainment	1990		2000		2008	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Less than 9th grade	192	2.2%	298	1.3%	772	1.8%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	460	5.3%	788	3.5%	1,082	2.5%
High school graduate <sup>1</sup>	1,881	21.7%	2,755	12.4%	5,977	13.6%
Some college, no degree	2,266	26.1%	4,350	19.5%	6,245	14.2%
Associate's degree	677	7.8%	1,370	6.1%	2,325	5.3%
Bachelor's degree	2,329	26.8%	8,751	39.2%	18,801	42.7%
Graduate or professional degree	879	10.1%	4,004	18.0%	8,869	20.1%

<sup>1</sup>Includes high school equivalency

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online

**Table 2-19 Educational Attainment 2008**

Category	Alpharetta	Fulton County	MSA	State of Georgia	United States
Less than 9th grade	1.8%	4.3%	5.0%	6.2%	6.4%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	2.5%	7.3%	8.5%	10.9%	9.1%
High school graduate <sup>1</sup>	13.6%	21.0%	26.5%	30.0%	29.6%
Some college, no degree	14.0%	16.3%	19.5%	19.5%	20.1%
Associate's degree	5.3%	4.8%	6.6%	6.5%	7.4%
Bachelor's degree	42.7%	29.8%	22.5%	17.6%	17.3%
Graduate or professional degree	20.1%	16.6%	11.5%	9.5%	10.1%
Percent high school graduate or higher	95.9%	88.4%	86.5%	82.9%	84.5%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	62.8%	46.3%	34.0%	27.0%	27.4%

<sup>1</sup>Includes high school equivalency

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate)

*This page was intentionally left blank for two-sided printing.*

## CHAPTER

## 3

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Identification of trends and issues related to the economic characteristics of Alpharetta

## 3.1. Introduction

Data collected for and analyzed in this section comes from a variety of sources that include the Georgia Bureau of Labor, Georgia Department of Economic Development, U.S. Census Bureau, and U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. The national economic recession greatly impacted Alpharetta, the state, MSA nation. Data presented in this chapter can indicate little of this impact since much of the data reflecting the job losses and economic hardship was not available at the time this report was prepared. The 2010 Census, when available, will provide an updated assessment of economic.

Alpharetta's Community Development Department is currently initiating a focused economic development study with a planned completion date of December 2010. When available, applicable data and findings will be used to inform the comprehensive planning process.

## 3.2. Economic Base

The section defines "employment" as the jobs located in Alpharetta with no concern for where the employees live (Section 3.2.1). This section defines "labor force" as the eligible working population of Alpharetta with no concern for the location of the job (Section 3.2.2).

### 3.2.1. Employment

Table 3-1 shows the number of establishments and employees from 1999 through 2007 within zip codes 30004, 30005, 30009, 30022, and 30076. While these zip code boundaries do not match perfectly with the city limits, analysis of these areas can provide a view into local employment. The number of establishments and number of employees within these zip codes increased steadily from 1999 to 2007, though this trend most likely reversed during the recession. The largest employer in Alpharetta in 2009 was AT&T, as shown in Table 3-2, followed by Verizon Wireless and ADP Inc. In total, the top 15 employers in 2009 employed approximately 30% of the total number of employees who work in Alpharetta.

**Table 3-1** Number of Employees  
1999-2007 – Zip Codes 30004, 30005, 30009,  
30022 and 30076

Year	Number of	
	Establishments	Employees
1999	5,325	101,894
2000	5,776	112,802
2001 <sup>1</sup>	6,147	NA
2002 <sup>1</sup>	6,563	NA
2003	6,919	128,366
2004	7,613	138,307
2005	7,900	143,749
2006	8,196	142,057
2007	8,833	157,675

<sup>1</sup>The number of employees not disclosed by U.S. Census Bureau

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Zip Code Business Patterns

**Table 3-2** Top 15 Employers

Employer	Number of Employees
AT&T	3,500
Verizon Wireless	3,000
ADP, Inc./National Account Services	2,100
McKesson Provider Technologies	1,500
Hewlett Packard Co.	1,200
ChoicePoint, Inc.	1,100
UPS Supply Chain Solutions	880
ALG Agency Auto	800
Comcast Cable	750
Alcatel-Lucent	700

Source: City of Alpharetta website; 1<sup>st</sup> Q 2009

Table 3-3 compares Alpharetta's employment to the average monthly employment by NAICS sector to that of the county and MSA. *Retail Trade* represented the largest share of the city's employment at 17.8%, which is significantly higher than the percentage recorded for the county and MSA, thanks in large part to the North Point Mall and surrounding retail area. *Professional, Scientific and Technical Services* represented the second-largest private employment sector in Alpharetta at 12.6% followed by *Information* at 11.2%. *Government* sector (including local, state and federal employees) represented 1.5%. *Government* sector's share of total employment is significantly lower than that of the county and MSA.

### Wages

The average weekly wages offered by employers located in Fulton County were well above those for the MSA in almost every NAICS sector in 2009, also shown in Table 3-3. Wage data is not available at the city level. Alpharetta's largest NAICS sector, *Retail Trade*, brought in an average weekly wage of \$569 in 2009, which is only slightly higher than that of the MSA. The highest paying sector, *Finance and Insurance*, made up 8.3% of the jobs in Alpharetta.

**Table 3-3 Average Monthly Employment and Average Weekly Wage 2009**

NAICS Sector	Average Monthly Employment				Average Weekly Wage	
	Alpharetta 2009	% of Total	Fulton County	MSA	Fulton County	MSA
<b>Goods Producing</b>	6,087	9.8%	6.4%	11.4%	NA	NA
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	50	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	\$1,063	\$694
Mining	53	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	NA	\$1,130
Construction	2,603	4.2%	3.9%	4.5%	\$1,106	\$961
Manufacturing	3,381	5.4%	2.4%	6.7%	\$1,431	\$1,082
<b>Service-Providing</b>	54,460	87.4%	79.4%	73.4%		
Utilities	7	0.0%	0.6%	0.5%	\$1,857	\$1,586
Wholesale Trade	1,462	2.3%	5.5%	6.0%	\$1,572	\$1,289
Retail Trade	11,067	17.8%	7.6%	11.3%	\$569	\$522
Transportation and Warehousing	622	1.0%	4.5%	4.9%	\$1,087	\$954
Information	6,962	11.2%	6.6%	3.6%	\$1,741	\$1,537
Finance and Insurance	5,143	8.3%	6.8%	4.6%	\$1,870	\$1,485
Real Estate and Rental & Leasing	1,737	2.8%	2.7%	1.8%	\$1,099	\$958
Professional, Scientific & Technical Svc	7,831	12.6%	10.5%	7.2%	\$1,700	\$1,453
Management of Companies and Enterprises	26	0.0%	2.3%	1.8%	\$1,760	\$1,717
Admin., Support, Waste Mgmt, Remediation	2,073	3.3%	7.3%	7.2%	\$799	\$683
Education Services	2,407	3.9%	1.9%	1.9%	\$815	\$949
Health Care and Social Assistance	6,029	9.7%	9.3%	9.6%	\$1,000	\$877
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	410	0.7%	1.6%	1.2%	\$945	\$611
Accommodation and Food Services	4,666	7.5%	9.4%	9.0%	\$445	\$337
Other Services (except Public Admin.)	4,018	6.5%	2.9%	2.6%	\$669	\$611
<b>Unclassified - industry not assigned</b>	807	1.3%	0.1%	0.1%	\$1,283	\$1,063
<b>Total - Private Sector</b>	61,354	98.5%	85.9%	84.9%	\$1,235	\$934
<b>Total - Government</b>	929	1.5%	14.1%	15.1%	\$1,087	\$871
<b>All Industries</b>	62,283	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	\$1,151	\$924

Source: Georgia Department of Labor, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, ESRI Business Analyst Online



### 3.2.2. Labor Force

#### Participation

Labor force describes the workers who live in Alpharetta without regard for the location of their employment. As presented in Table 3-4, the Alpharetta labor force grew at a significantly higher rate than that of the county, MSA, state and nation from 1990 to 2000 and continued this trend from 2000 to 2008. The city's 84.1% labor force growth rate from 2000 to 2008 was almost four times that of the county.

#### Employment Status

As shown in Table 3-5, in 2008, an estimated 73.9% of all persons 16 years and over participated in Alpharetta's labor force in 2008, down from 76.5% in 2000. Alpharetta's civilian labor force unemployment rate for increased slightly from 2000 to 2008. Additionally, the rate of the population 16 years and over and not in the labor force also increased slightly during the same period.

#### Occupations

The share of Alpharetta's residents in specified occupation categories in 2008, shown in Table 3-6, differed significantly from the county, MSA and state. The city recorded a higher share of those working in *management, professional, and related* occupations (60.2%) and a lower share of those working in the *service, sales and office, construction, extraction and maintenance, and production, transportation and material moving* occupations.

**Table 3-4 Historical Labor Force Size 1990, 2000 and 2008**

Labor Force	Alpharetta	Fulton County	MSA	State of Georgia	United States
1990	7,880	344,956	1,705,341	3,300,136	125,840,000
2000	19,696	431,553	2,272,077	4,242,889	142,583,000
2008	36,266	529,318	3,991,402	4,847,650	154,287,000
Growth Rates 1990-2000					
% Change	150.0%	25.1%	33.2%	28.6%	13.3%
Ave. Annual Rate	10.0%	2.3%	2.9%	2.5%	1.3%
Growth Rates 2000-2008					
% Change	84.1%	22.7%	75.7%	14.3%	8.2%
Ave. Annual Rate	7.9%	2.6%	7.3%	1.7%	1.0%

Note: Labor force includes residents who are employed or actively seeking employment

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990 and 2000; American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008).

**Table 3-5 Labor Force Employment Status 1990, 2000 and 2008**

Category	1990		2000		2008	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Population 16 years and over	10,184	100%	25,755	100%	49,072	100%
In labor force	7,880	77.4%	19,696	76.5%	36,266	73.9%
Civilian labor force employed	7,657	75.2%	19,059	74.0%	35,140	71.6%
Civilian labor force unemployed	207	2.0%	637	2.5%	1,126	2.3%
Armed forces	16	0.2%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Not in labor force	2,304	22.6%	6,059	23.5%	12,806	26.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990 and 2000, American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008)

**Table 3-6 Civilian Labor Force Employment by Occupation 2008**

Occupation	Alpharetta		Fulton County	MSA	State of Georgia
	Total	% of Total			
Management, professional, and related	21,158	60.2%	45.3%	37.8%	34.0%
Service	2,657	7.6%	14.6%	14.2%	15.5%
Sales and office	8,702	24.8%	26.4%	27.2%	26.0%
Farming, fishing, and forestry	29	0.1%	0.1%	0.1%	0.6%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance	1,326	3.8%	6.2%	9.9%	10.5%
Production, transportation, and material moving	1,268	3.6%	7.5%	10.7%	13.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate)

### Labor Force Employment by Industry

As shown in Table 3-7, Alpharetta's employed civilian labor force in 2008 relied heaviest on the services industry (46.8%) followed by the finance, insurance and real estate (12.5%), manufacturing (9.4%) and retail trade (8.9%) industries. The proportion of the city's labor force in the services industry was similar to that of the county, MSA and state. While retail trade made up 17.8% of the jobs located in Alpharetta (see Table 3-3), the industry employed only 8.9% of the city's labor force, which means a majority of those who work in the city's retail establishments do not live in the city.

**Table 3-7 Labor Force Employment by Industry 2008**

Industry	Alpharetta		Fulton County	MSA	State of Georgia
	Total	% of Total			
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting and mining	130	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%	1.2%
Construction	1,443	4.1%	6.2%	8.7%	8.6%
Manufacturing	3,314	9.4%	6.2%	8.8%	11.4%
Wholesale Trade	2,296	6.5%	3.6%	4.1%	3.6%
Retail Trade	3,130	8.9%	10.4%	11.7%	11.6%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	1,126	3.2%	5.5%	6.7%	6.2%
Information	2,484	7.1%	4.7%	3.8%	2.9%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	4,388	12.5%	10.2%	8.0%	6.8%
Services	16,449	46.8%	49.5%	43.6%	42.7%
Public Administration	380	1.1%	3.5%	4.4%	5.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate)

### Labor Force by Place of Work

As shown in Table 3-8, 30.8% of Alpharetta's employed civilian labor force worked within the city boundaries in 2000 (the most recent year for which data is available at the city level), up from 20.3% in 1990. This represented a smaller share of the population who worked in their place of residence (i.e. city) than was recorded in Roswell.

**Table 3-8 Labor Force by Place of Work 1990 and 2000**

Category	Alpharetta		Roswell	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Worked in place of residence	20.3%	30.8%	23.6%	23.6%
Worked outside place of residence	79.7%	69.2%	76.4%	76.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF1)

## 3.3. Economic Resources

### 3.3.1. Development Agencies

#### Alpharetta Office of Economic Development

Alpharetta maintains an office of Economic Development staffed by a professional Economic Development Coordinator. The office is an integral part of the city's Department of Community Development. The office maintains a database of available buildings and sites, tracks, business financing programs and assists entrepreneurs in starting businesses in the city. Additionally, it is the center of economic development planning and marketing and is responsible for assisting and building relationships with existing businesses and industries.

The office also administers the Downtown Facade Grant program. In the program, a business owner can receive a grant matching their investment up to \$1,500 to make improvements to business fronts – or the back side of the buildings located in Downtown Alpharetta. New awnings, new signs, paint and perhaps more major exterior work on structures not compatible with the prevailing architecture of downtown Alpharetta could be funded through the matching grant program. The program requires the business owner to match the grant. Applications are reviewed first by city staff and then by the Design and Review Board.

### **Alpharetta Development Authority**

Alpharetta City Council created the Alpharetta Development Authority in 1995. The body, considered a “dependent” authority, was activated in 1997 and has since held the primary role of financing targeted development projects through the issuance of revenue bonds.

### **Greater North Fulton Chamber of Commerce**

The Greater North Fulton Chamber of Commerce promotes, advances and supports the business, civic and community interests of North Fulton County. Originally founded in 1972 as the North Fulton Chamber of Commerce, the chamber now represents businesses throughout North Fulton, including businesses in Alpharetta, Johns Creek, Milton, Mountain Park, Roswell and Sandy Springs. The Chamber offers several programs for both businesses and potential employees including programs for small business assistance and counseling, business development and job training workshops. The Chamber is also active in promoting transportation improvements and business-to-government relationships that support the high quality of life in the area.

### **Georgia Economic Development Administration (EDA)**

EDA provides funding for public facility expansion essential to industrial and commercial growth. Typical projects include industrial parks, access roads, water transmission and sewer collection lines; and airport terminal developments

### **Fulton County Economic Development Department**

Fulton County’s Economic Development Department markets and promotes Fulton County through comprehensive programs designed to promote the location of new and expanding business. Marketing, Financial Services and Business Services are the three divisions of the Economic Development Department. The services provided are designed to encourage residential, commercial and industrial growth in Fulton County, thereby creating jobs and expanding the tax base.

## **3.3.2. Programs**

Several agencies provide economic development assistance to Alpharetta including Georgia Power, the Technical College System of Georgia’s Quick Start program, the University of Georgia’s Small Business Development Center and the Georgia Department of Economic Development. Additionally, the North Fulton CID and development impact fees are two local programs Alpharetta uses to support economic development efforts.

### **Georgia Power**

Georgia Power offers assistance through its Community Development Department and its Resource Center. The Community Development Department offers development assistance in six program areas: research and information, business retention and expansion, leadership development, downtown revitalization, board governance, industrial location and demographic and labor market analysis. The Resource Center maintains a database of industrial parks and sites located throughout the State and serves as an *entrée* to the State’s economic development resources for prospective out-of-state and international industries.

### **Technical College System of Georgia Quick Start Employee Training Program**

The Quick Start Employee Training Program, which operates under the wing of the Technical College System of Georgia, is designed to train workers for specific, clearly designed jobs in a new or expanding company. Employees learn new skills and receive the opportunity to earn higher pay. Additionally, the company realizes one of its primary goals: increase production with minimum expenditures of time and money. The program provides customized comprehensive training at no cost to the company. Quick Start can provide pre-hire and post-hire training on-site with Quick Start trainers.

### **University of Georgia Small Business Development Center (SBDC)**

The University of Georgia's SBDC provides management consulting for entrepreneurs and conducts marketing analyses and surveys designed to evaluate a community's economic development potential.

### **Georgia Department of Labor**

The Georgia Department of Labor can provide labor recruiting and screening services for each available position for new or expanding companies.

### **North Fulton Community Improvement District (CID)**

The North Fulton CID was formed in 2003 by a group of business leaders committed to maintaining and enhancing the North Fulton community. Focusing on transportation planning, investment and improvement, the North Fulton CID is a self-taxing district that spans from Mansell Road north to McGinnis Ferry Road. A voluntary tax, paid by commercial property owners within the District's boundaries, funds the CID's efforts to improve the area. The cities of Alpharetta, Milton and Roswell fall within the CID's boundaries, and all three cities partner with the CID on projects, planning and initiatives.

Since its inception, the CID has invested more than \$7 million in the North Fulton community, leveraging investment dollars to create almost \$60 million in new infrastructure. In 2009, the CID spent \$2.6 million to advance the design of 10 projects, including designs for a new bridge at Encore Parkway that would include a pedestrian connection to the Big Creek Greenway and significant congestion relief at Windward Parkway and GA-400.

### **Development Impact Fees**

Alpharetta was the first community in the state to adopt impact fees after enactment of the Georgia Development Impact Fee Act in 1988. The fees have produced considerable income that can be seen today in improved roads, fire services, and parks and recreation facilities. Fair and reasonable development impact fees can be a useful tool in encouraging economic development when the development community recognizes that adequate public facilities are important to attracting buyers and tenants to their developments. This maintains the long-range health of the community and therefore the continued ability of development to be a profitable enterprise. Impact fees are also a mechanism to ensure that new growth and development contributes its share of infrastructure costs, thereby lessening the tax burden on the existing community.

## **3.3.3. Tools**

### **Freeport Tax Exemption**

Freeport is the general term used for the exemption of ad valorem tax on inventories as defined by Georgia law. The law offers manufacturers, distributors, wholesalers and warehouse operations an attractive inventory tax exemption. Alpharetta voters approved, via local referendum, the Freeport Tax Exemption in 2005. The Freeport Tax Exemption approved in Alpharetta exempts the following:

- 100% of raw materials and goods in process
- Finished goods of a Georgia manufacturer that are held for less than 12 months; and
- Finished goods destined for out-of-state shipment typically stored in distribution warehouses from payment of personal property tax.

### **Georgia. Business Expansion Support Act**

In 1994, the State passed legislation for tax credits against state income taxes to encourage economic development in Georgia. Some of the programs are targeted to specific industry groups such as manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, processing, telecommunications, tourism, or research and development (but does not include retail business).

Job tax credits and investment tax credits are available to the targeted industry groups at different levels, depending on the relative need of the area for economic development. Some credits are available to specific industry groups, while others apply to all employers. Overall, Fulton County and its cities are categorized as “Tier 3” communities within the plan and qualifying companies are eligible for associated credits. The following is a summary of the various provisions of the Act as they relate to Alpharetta:

#### *Job Tax Credit*

The job tax credit applies to business or headquarters of a business engaged in manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, processing, tourism, and research and development industries. It does not include retail businesses. In Alpharetta, companies creating fifteen or more new jobs may receive a \$1,500 tax credit. Wages for the new jobs must be at least ten percent (10%) above the average wage of the county.

#### *Investment Tax Credit*

The investment tax credit allows a corporation or person, which has operated an existing manufacturing or telecommunications support facility in the state for the previous three years to obtain a credit against income tax liability. Such companies expanding in Alpharetta that invest a minimum of \$50,000 qualify for a 1% credit. That credit increases to 3% for recycling, pollution control and defense conversion activities. Taxpayers qualifying for the investment tax credit may choose an optional investment tax credit with the following threshold criteria. In Tier 3 a minimum investment of \$20 million would qualify for a 6% tax credit. A taxpayer must choose either the regular or optional investment tax credit. Once this election is made, it is irrevocable.

#### *Child Care Credit*

Any employer in Alpharetta that provides or sponsors childcare for employees is eligible for a tax credit of up to 75% of the direct cost of operation to the employer. In addition, employers who purchase qualified childcare property will receive a credit totaling one hundred percent of the cost of such property. The credit is claimed at the rate of 10% per year for 10 years. These two childcare credits can be combined.

#### *Research and Development Tax Credit*

A tax credit is allowed for research expenses for research conducted within Georgia for any business or headquarters or any business engaged in manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, processing, telecommunications, tourism, or research and development industries. The credit is 10% of the additional research expense over the “base amount” provided that the business enterprise for the same taxable year claims and is allowed a research credit under Section 41 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

#### *Small Business Growth Companies Tax Credit*

A tax credit is granted for any business or headquarters of any business engaged in manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, processing, telecommunications, tourism, or research and development industries having a state net taxable income which is 20% or more above that of the preceding year if its net taxable income in each of the two preceding years was also 20% more.

#### *Ports Activity Job and Investment Tax Credits*

Businesses or the headquarters that increase their port traffic tonnage through Georgia ports by more than 10% over their 1997 base year reported traffic, or by more than 10% over 75 net tons, 5 containers, or 10 20-foot equivalent units (TEUs) during the previous 12-month period are qualified for increased job tax credits or investment tax credits. In Alpharetta companies can receive an additional \$500 per job or 5% investment tax credit or 10% optional investment tax credit. Companies that create 400 or more new jobs, invest \$20 million or more in new and expanded facilities and increase their port traffic by more than 20% above their base year port traffic may take both job credits and investment tax credits.

### *Retraining Tax Credit*

Any employer in Alpharetta that provides retraining for employees to use new equipment, new technology, or new operating systems is eligible for a tax credit worth up to 50% of the direct cost of retaining full-time employees up to \$500 per employee per approved retaining program per year

### *Headquarters Tax Credit*

Companies establishing their headquarters (or relocating their headquarters) within Alpharetta that pay at least 110% of the average wage of the county, invest a minimum of \$1 million dollars and create 100 new jobs may take a credit equal to \$2,500 annually per full-time job (or \$5,000 if the average wage of the new full-time job is 200% above the average wage of the county).

### *Sales Tax Exemptions*

Several sales tax exemptions are available within the City:

- Manufacturing Machinery and Computer;
- Primary Materials Handling
- Electricity

## **3.3.4. Education and Training**

### ***Higher Education Opportunities***

Alpharetta residents have access to local higher education and training opportunities at the Alpharetta campuses of Georgia State University, Reinhardt College, DeVry Institute of Technology, and Chubb Institute. These provide access to education opportunities for residents as well as recruiting opportunities for businesses in the city or looking to locate to the city.

### ***Atlanta Regional Workforce Board***

The Atlanta Regional Commission coordinates the Local Regional Workforce Board that provides job training and job seeking resources to Atlanta Region residents, including Alpharetta residents.

### ***Fulton County Human Services Department***

The Fulton County Workforce Preparation Employment Service offers a variety of services through four "one-stop" career centers and 22 electronic access network sites strategically located throughout Fulton County. Employment and training services, as well as associated supportive services are provided to area youth, adults and dislocated workers. Through these facilities, and in collaboration with numerous State and local agencies and organizations, employers and job seekers alike have access to free individualized services that link current labor market and financial information, employment readiness, skill upgrade and support services to a single unified system.

### ***Electronic Access Network***

The Georgia Department of Labor has developed an automated system that supports the delivery of Workforce Investment Act (WIA) services and meets WIA reporting and performance accountability requirements. These automated systems are part of Georgia's One Stop Career Network and are known in Fulton County as the Electronic Access Network Sites.

### ***Youth Services***

The Youth Services Program (provided by Fulton County's Human Services Department) is designed to provide assistance to youth in obtaining vocational training and unsubsidized employment. The program targets in-school, out of school and at-risk youth. These resources are provided through collaborations with existing providers. Where gaps in service exist, services are purchased through community providers.

### Other Education and Training Options

The HOPE Scholarship Program is Georgia's unique scholarship program that provides financial assistance in degree, diploma and certificate programs at any eligible Georgia public or private college, university or public technical college.

The Intellectual Capital Partnership Program (ICAPP) provides one-stop entry to the intellectual capital of the University System of Georgia - its education programs, faculty expertise, and research and development facilities. ICAPP Advantage is a direct economic development incentive that helps companies meet immediate human resources needs. Through this program, Georgia's public colleges and universities can expedite the education of highly skilled workers to meet specific work force needs. Companies specify the knowledge areas to be taught, then recruit and select the participants they will sponsor to be educated in those skills. These programs can be funded through the HOPE Scholarship program.

## 3.4. Economic Trends

### 3.4.1. Regional and State Context

In Georgia, the *government, retail trade, and manufacturing* NAICS sectors account for the greatest percentage of jobs (17.1%, 11.5% and 10.1%, respectively). *Health care and social assistance* and *accommodation and food services* follow with 9.5% and 8.7%, respectively. Following national trends, the number of jobs in *manufacturing* fell during the last decade; the *information* industry also lost ground during this time period. *Professional and business services, education and health services, construction, and leisure and hospitality* gained between 9% (*professional and business services*) and 6.7% (*leisure and hospitality*). The *trade and government* sectors also added jobs.<sup>1</sup>

Fulton County and the Atlanta Region are expected to continue to grow, although the types of industry jobs are changing. The recent shifts in the information industry have hit the Metro-Atlanta region hard. According to ARC, between 2002 and 2005 the region lost approximately 14,000 jobs in the *information* sector. When the region began to rebound after 2003, jobs gained were primarily in the lower-wage sectors. During the most recent downturn, the region's economy shed thousands of jobs, as well.

### 3.4.2. Important New Developments

#### North Point Activity Center Livable Centers Initiative (LCI)

The North Point Activity Center LCI Study was developed in 2009 after a year-long planning process focusing on the area around North Point Mall and Verizon Wireless Amphitheatre at Encore Park. More specifically, the study included properties along GA-400 bounded on the south by Mansell Road, the north by Haynes Bridge Road, the east by Big Creek, and the west (primarily) by the Roswell-Alpharetta boundary.

The study was developed with funding assistance from North Fulton CID and ARC. The goal of the LCI program is to encourage planning and investment in existing activity centers, integrate land use and transportation planning and encourage the creation of more sustainable, livable communities consistent with regional development policies. Communities who successfully complete and adopt LCI plans and show progress toward meeting the plan's initiatives through enacting appropriate development regulations, approving commensurate development projects, and showing local commitment toward necessary transportation improvements may be awarded up to \$4 million in funding toward each of two pre-qualified transportation improvement projects. The study provided an opportunity for Alpharetta to prepare for the future of the activity center and prioritize transportation improvements, including opportunities for future transit, to address existing congestion and provide for future growth. The plan also offered a future vision and redevelopment strategy for the district's major retail properties as many of them enter the second half of their life cycle. The plan considered existing and projected market conditions in addition to analysis of pertinent land use, urban design, transportation, natural resources, and cultural resources.

<sup>1</sup> Selig Center, University of Georgia

The plan recommended:

- A mixed use village center within 0.5-miles of Encore Parkway between North Pont Parkway and Westside Parkway with a vision for a concentrated, mixed use, walkable district that would reconnect the east and west sides of GA-400.
- Mixed use commercial centers that take advantage of GA-400, Mansell Road and Haynes Bridge Road to accommodate high intensity uses within a short distance of the GA-400 interchanges.
- Transitional areas west of Westside Parkway and east of North Point Parkway as mixed use areas with diminishing building intensities as it moves from the core of the activity center.

### ***Downtown Development***

The Downtown Master Plan was adopted in 2003 and followed up with the Downtown Circulation Study in 2008. Each study focused on encouraging redevelopment and enhancement of Downtown as well as overall multi-modal connectivity. Incentive zoning was also adopted for the area that is designed to encourage walkable, mixed use development to the area.

### ***Annexations and incorporation of Milton and Johns Creek***

State legislation in 2005 cleared the way for referendums in 2006 to create the cities of Milton and Johns Creek. Milton incorporated all remaining unincorporated properties north of Alpharetta while Johns Creek incorporated all remaining unincorporated properties east of Alpharetta. Prior to the existence of these two cities, Alpharetta considered much of this North Fulton area as having potential for annexation. The 2025 Comprehensive Plan included a future land use map for these areas to guide the city in the event of annexation. Now that annexation is no longer an option, Alpharetta must refocus its vision to reflect the fact that future growth must focus on remaining undeveloped land inside the existing city boundary as well as redevelopment of underutilized, underperforming commercial, industrial and residential areas, especially along corridors located west of GA-400. Corridor such as GA-9 and centers such as Downtown and nearby retail centers each provide potential for redevelopment that can take advantage of nearby job centers, retail, park land and the city's high quality of life.

## **3.4.3. Unique Economic Situations**

### ***Location in the Metro Area and Proximity to GA-400***

The area's proximity to Atlanta and easy access to the interstate system via GA-400 make Alpharetta attractive for new office and residential development.

### ***Regional Job Center***

Alpharetta is a major corporate office center in the Atlanta MSA. The city includes 540 office buildings with a total of 19.3 million square feet. The North Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan Needs Assessment included an inventory of existing market conditions in North Fulton County (included cities of Alpharetta, Johns Creek, Milton, Mountain Park, Roswell and Sandy Springs). According to that study, Alpharetta office space represents 37.5% of all office space in North Fulton County. The city has roughly 347 square feet of office space per resident. Of the available office space in the city, 63% is considered "Class A", 32% "Class B" and 5% "Class C". In addition to office space, Alpharetta also has the highest concentration of warehouse space in North Fulton County. While a hotbed for corporate office space, there will likely be limited demand for local serving office space during the planning period.

Future industrial growth in North Fulton will be limited by the lack of available land and interstate access. Adjacent areas of Forsyth County with GA-400 access will likely absorb demand for most industrial space in the area. Former retail sites throughout Alpharetta and North Fulton County, however, can potentially provide much needed flex space, which can help solve the problem of the area's overabundance of retail space.



**Retail Center**

Alpharetta is also a major regional retail player in the Atlanta MSA. The city includes 309 retail buildings with a total of 8.24 million square feet, which represents 29% of all retail space in North Fulton County. The city has roughly 138.3 square feet of retail per resident, which dwarfs the national average of 43.7 square feet of retail per person. The median year built of retail buildings in the city is 1997, compared to 1993 for North Fulton County, 2006 for Milton, 2000 for Johns Creek, 1987 for Roswell and 1983 for Sandy Springs. Over time, much of North Fulton County's retail centers will need to be revitalized and re-tented or demolished and replaced with a new use.

**Limited land remaining for development**

There is not a great deal of land remaining in Alpharetta for large-scale single-family detached development, but due to the tremendous potential for long-term office and retail development, it is anticipated that there will be a demand for additional housing close to the city's job centers.

*This page was intentionally left blank for two-sided printing.*

## CHAPTER

## 4

# HOUSING

*Evaluation of adequacy and suitability of the existing housing stock to serve current and future community needs*

## 4.1. Housing Types and Trends

### 4.1.1. Number of Housing Units

The number of housing units in Alpharetta grew by 50.4% from 2000 to 2009, according to City of Alpharetta estimates. The number of units increased from 13,894 in 2000 to 20,894 in 2009. The rate increase outpaced the county (26.9%) and state (22.7%). Projections shown in Table 4-1 indicate this trend should continue through 2014. The increase occurred as a result of new construction and annexation. Table 4-2 compares trends in Alpharetta to those recorded in the county and state.

### 4.1.2. Composition of Housing Stock

The 2008 American Community Survey provides the most recent data for housing types within the city, as presented in Table 4-3. The city's *1 unit, 10 or more units* and *Mobile Home and Other* housing types increased their share of the total housing stock from 2000 to 2008 while the *2 to 4 units* and *5 to 9 units* housing types decreased their share of the total housing stock over the same period. *1 unit (detached)* represented 55.1% of the total units in 2000 and 58.6% in 2008. The largest increase from 1990 to 2000 occurred in the *10 or more units* category (185.3%) while the largest increase from 2000 to 2008 occurred in the *1 unit (attached)* category (177.4%). The largest decrease (-47.2%) from 1990 to 2000 occurred in the *mobile home and other* category. The largest decrease from 2000 to 2008 occurred in the *2 to 4 units* and *5 to 9 units* categories. These trends show that low density attached housing units are being replaced with detached housing units and some higher density residential developments.

**Table 4-1 Historical Number of Housing Units 1990, 2000, 2009, 2014**

1990	2000	2009	2014	% Change		
				1990-2000	2000-2009	2009-2014
5,887	13,894	20,894	23,925	136.0%	50.4%	14.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; City of Alpharetta; ESRI Business Analyst Online

**Table 4-2 Housing Unit Trends 2000 and 2008**

Category	Number of Units		2000-2008	
	2000	2008	% Change	Ave. Annual Growth Rate
Alpharetta	13,984	20,862	49.2%	5.1%
Fulton County	348,632	442,481	26.9%	3.0%
State of Georgia	3,281,737	4,026,082	22.7%	2.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Annual Estimates of Housing Units for Counties in Georgia: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2008; City of Alpharetta

**Table 4-3 Types of Housing and Mix (units in structure) 1990, 2000, 2008**

Category	1990		2000		2008		% Change 1990-2000	% Change 2000-2008
	Number of Units	% of Total	Number of Units	% of Total	Number of Units	% of Total		
1 unit (detached)	3,064	52.0%	7,705	55.1%	12,225	58.6%	151.5%	58.7%
1 unit (attached)	511	8.7%	797	5.7%	2,211	10.6%	56.0%	177.4%
2 to 4 units	401	6.8%	517	3.7%	355	1.7%	29.0%	-31.5%
5 to 9 units	603	10.2%	1,356	9.7%	939	4.5%	124.9%	-30.8%
10 or more units	1,255	21.3%	3,580	25.6%	5,090	24.4%	185.3%	42.2%
Mobile home and other	53	0.9%	28	0.2%	31	0.1%	-47.2%	10.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990, 2000, American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate); City of Alpharetta

Table 4-4 compares the city's types of housing and mix to that of the county, MSA and state in 2008. The proportion of housing units in the *1 unit (detached)* category was less than that of the MSA and state but greater than that of the county. The city's proportion of the *2 to 4 units* and *5 to 9 units* housing types was less than that of the county, MSA and state. For the *10 or more units* category, Alpharetta had a greater proportion than the MSA and state but lower than that of the county.

Table 4-5 presents building permit data from 2000 to 2009, as recorded by the City of Alpharetta Community Development Department. This provides insight into the variety of housing types constructed in Alpharetta since the 2000. The issuance of a building permit does not always translate into construction of new housing units since plans for construction sometime change.

The number of permitted units peaked in 2006 at 651 and fell to a decade low of only 191 units in 2009. Seventy nine percent (2,219 of the 3,973 units) of the permits issued from 2000 to 2009 were for detached housing units. Conversely, 21% (837 of the 3,973 units) of the permits issued from 2000 to 2009 were for attached housing units.

Detached 'for sale' housing units have been the predominate housing type permitted over the past decade. Since 2006, no 'for rent' housing units have been permitted and only 102 'for rent' housing units have been permitted since 2003.

**Table 4-4 Types of Housing and Mix 2008**

Category	Alpharetta	Fulton County	MSA	State of Georgia
1 unit (detached)	58.6%	51.1%	67.3%	66.2%
1 unit (attached)	10.6%	6.3%	4.7%	3.5%
2 to 4 units	1.7%	5.5%	4.2%	5.5%
5 to 9 units	4.5%	9.5%	6.3%	5.3%
10 or more units	24.4%	27.3%	14.0%	9.3%
Mobile home and other	0.1%	0.3%	3.4%	10.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate)

**Table 4-5 Residential Building Permits 2000-2009**

Year	Single Family		Multi Family	Total
	New	Additions		
2000 <sup>1</sup>	76	0	308	384
2001 <sup>1</sup>	433	0	139	572
2002	79	166	275	520
2003	245	83	13	341
2004	150	70	0	220
2005	424	88	0	512
2006	474	75	102	651
2007	222	86	0	308
2008	84	190	0	274
2009	32	159	0	191
Total 2000-2009	2,219	917	837	3,973

<sup>1</sup>Single-family (SF) data for 2000 and 2001 was not divided into New SF and SF Additions building permits. SF data represents building permits both new SF and SF Additions.

Source: City of Alpharetta

## 4.2. Condition and Occupancy

### 4.2.1. Housing Age

As shown in Table 4-6, 23.9% of the city's housing units in 2008 were built after 2000, compared to 18% for the county, 21.8% for the MSA, and 17.7% for the state. In fact, 72.9% of the city's housing units were built after 1990. The city's housing stock is new relative to the county, MSA and state.

### 4.2.2. Housing Condition

Table 4-7 presents the housing conditions recorded in Alpharetta, the county, MSA, and state in 2008. The city had much lower rates than the county, MSA and state in both the *lacking plumbing facilities* and *lacking complete kitchen facilities* categories.

### 4.2.3. Housing Occupancy and Tenure

Table 4-8 compares the latest housing occupancy and tenure figures for the city to that of the county, MSA and state. Table 4-9 presents the city's historical housing occupancy and tenure. Alpharetta recorded a vacancy rate of 6.9% in 2008, significantly lower than the county, MSA, and state figures of 16.3%, 11.6% and 13.4%, respectively. Roughly 70% of the city's housing units were *owner occupied* in 2008, compared to 49.4% for the county, 61.1% for the MSA and 58.7% for the state. The number of *owner occupied* units in Alpharetta increased at a faster rate than *renter occupied units* from 2000 to 2008.

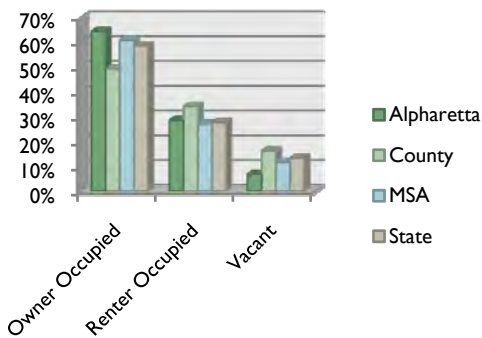


Table 4-6 Housing Age 2008

Category	Alpharetta		Fulton County	MSA	State of Georgia
	Units	% of Total			
Built 2005 or later	1,301	4.9%	5.5%	5.5%	4.4%
Built 2000 to 2004	5,025	19.0%	12.5%	16.3%	13.3%
Built 1990 to 1999	12,988	49.0%	18.2%	23.0%	22.0%
Built 1980 to 1989	5,230	19.7%	16.5%	20.1%	18.7%
Built 1970 to 1979	1,205	4.5%	12.2%	14.1%	15.4%
Built 1960 to 1969	290	1.1%	13.3%	9.3%	10.2%
Built 1950 to 1959	254	1.0%	10.4%	5.8%	7.2%
Built 1940 to 1949	27	0.1%	4.0%	2.3%	3.4%
Built before 1940	166	0.6%	7.5%	3.6%	5.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate)

Table 4-7 Housing Condition 2008

Area	Lacking Plumbing Facilities		Lacking complete kitchen facilities	
	Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total
Alpharetta	49	0.2%	97	0.4%
Fulton County	8,100	1.9%	12,797	3.0%
MSA	22,970	1.1%	42,784	2.0%
State of Georgia	68,336	1.7%	102,121	2.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate)

Table 4-8 Housing Occupancy and Tenure 2008

Category	Alpharetta	Fulton County	MSA	State of Georgia
Occupied	93.1%	83.7%	88.4%	86.6%
Owner occupied	64.5%	49.4%	61.1%	58.7%
Renter occupied	28.6%	34.2%	27.3%	27.8%
Vacant	6.9%	16.3%	11.6%	13.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate)

**Table 4-9 Housing Occupancy and Tenure 1990, 2000 and 2009**

Category	1990		2000		2008		2009		% Change	
	# of Units	% of Total	# of Units	% of Total	# of Units	% of Total	# of Units	% of Total	1990-2000	2000-08
Occupied	5,265	89.4%	13,843	94.5%	24,651	93.1%	23,494	92.3%	162.9%	69.7%
Owner occupied	3,001	51.0%	8,327	56.9%	17,082	69.3%	15,476	60.8%	177.5%	85.9%
Renter occupied	2,264	38.5%	5,516	37.7%	7,569	30.7%	8,018	31.5%	143.6%	45.4%
Vacant	622	10.6%	802	5.5%	1,835	6.9%	1,960	7.7%	28.9%	144.4%

Source: Census 1990 (DP-1, STF-1), 2000; American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimate), ESRI Business Analyst Online 2009

## 4.3. Housing Costs

### 4.3.1. Median Property Value

Alpharetta's inflation-adjusted median property value increased (from 2000 to 2008) more rapidly than the MSA and state, but more slowly than the county. Additionally, the city experienced a greater increase in property value from 1990 to 2008 than the county, MSA and state. While the consistent and steady increase in property values has benefitted property owners, it has also effectively decreased statistical affordability relative to the county, MSA and state. The city's median property value in 2008 was 124.3% of that of the county, 176.1% of that of the MSA and 208.3% of that recorded for the state.

**Table 4-10 Median Property Value 1990, 2000 and 2008**

Area	1990	2000	2008	% Change			Area as a % of in 2008:		
				1990-2000	2000-2008	1990-2008	County	MSA	State
Alpharetta	\$196,853	\$282,944	\$340,500	43.7%	20.3%	73.0%	124.3%	176.1%	208.3%
Fulton County	\$160,930	\$225,899	\$273,900	28.8%	21.2%	70.2%	100.0%	141.6%	167.5%
MSA	\$144,829	\$167,663	\$193,400	13.6%	15.4%	33.5%	70.6%	100.0%	118.3%
State of Georgia	\$116,465	\$139,034	\$163,500	16.2%	17.6%	40.4%	59.7%	84.5%	100.0%

Note: 1990 and 2000 values shown have been adjusted to 2008 dollars for comparison

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990 and 2000; American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimates)

### 4.3.2. Median Rent

As presented in Table 4-11, the city's median rent was higher than that of the county, MSA and state in 2008. Alpharetta, the MSA and the state all experienced inflation-adjusted decreases in median rent from 2000 to 2008 while median rent in Fulton County remained held steady. Fair Housing Rents (issued by HUD) for 2010 the county and MSA are \$757, \$820, \$912, \$1,110, and \$1,211 (values are the same for both the county and MSA).

**Table 4-11 Median Rent 1990, 2000 and 2008**

Area	1990	2000	2008	% Change		Area as a % of in 2008:		
				1990-2000	2000-2008	County	MSA	State
Alpharetta	\$1,037	\$1,025	\$893	-1.2%	-12.9%	116.7%	121.0%	143.6%
Fulton County	\$789	\$765	\$765	-3.0%	0.0%	100.0%	103.7%	123.0%
MSA	\$871	\$805	\$738	-7.6%	-8.3%	96.5%	100.0%	118.6%
State of Georgia	\$713	\$631	\$622	-11.5%	-1.4%	81.3%	84.3%	100.0%

Note: 1990 and 2000 values shown have been adjusted to 2008 dollars for comparison

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1990 and 2000; American Community Survey 2008 (2006-2008 three-year estimates),

### 4.3.3. Affordability for Residents and Workers

As demonstrated in Table 4-10, inflation-adjusted median property values increased from 2000 to 2009 in Alpharetta. Conversely, Table 4-11 shows that inflation-adjusted median rent decreased (from \$1,025 to \$893). The increasing property values can be attributed to the growing demand for owner-occupied housing in the city. Alpharetta includes a lower proportion of renter-occupied units and multi-family units than the county, MSA and state. Few multi-family units have come online in the city since 2000, according to building permit data. Hence, the share of single-family detached units has increased since 2000.

### 4.3.4. Cost-Burdened Households

Table 4-12 presents cost-burdened household information for Alpharetta households as calculated by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) in 2000 (note: update of these statistics will be possible following release of 2010 Census data).

**Table 4-12 Cost-Burdened Households 1990 and 2000**

Area	1990			2000				
	Total Units	30% to 49%		Total Units	30% to 49%		50% and Greater	
		Units	% of Total		Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total
Alpharetta	5,887	752	12.8%	14,645	1,866	12.7%	1,097	7.5%
Fulton County	297,503	80,559	27.1%	348,632	33,080	9.5%	42,534	12.2%
State of Georgia	2,638,418	521,113	19.8%	3,281,737	397,964	12.1%	278,401	8.5%

\* Rent 0-30% = Units with gross rent (rent and utilities) that are affordable to households with incomes below 30% of HUD Area Median Family Income. Affordable is defined as gross rent less than or equal to 30% of a household's gross income.

\*\* Value 0-50% = Homes with values affordable to households with incomes at or below 50% of HUD Area Median Income. Affordable is defined as annual owner costs less than or equal to 30% of annual gross income. Annual costs are estimated assuming the cost of purchasing a home at the time of the Census based on reported value of the home. Assuming a 7.9% interest rate and national averages for utility costs, taxes, and hazard and mortgage insurance, multiplying income times 2.9 represents the value of a home a person can afford to purchase. For example, a household with an annual gross income of \$30,000 is estimated to be able to afford an \$87,000 home without having total costs exceed 30% of their annual household income.

Source: Georgia Department of Community Affairs

### 4.3.5. Foreclosures

The U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development (HUD) estimates foreclosures (based on risk) and vacancy rates to assist state and local governments in their efforts to target the communities and neighborhoods with the greatest needs. The HUD estimates, shown in Table 4-13, represent the estimated number and percent of foreclosure starts from January 2007 through June 2008. North Fulton County communities experienced lower foreclosure rates than the county, MSA and state. Alpharetta's 1.5% foreclosure rate was lower than the adjacent cities Rowell and Sandy Springs during the reporting period.

**Table 4-13 Foreclosure Starts and Rate 2007-2008**

Area	Foreclosure Starts	Number of Mortgages	Foreclosure Rates
Alpharetta	217	14,474	1.5%
Roswell	424	24,472	1.7%
Sandy Springs	353	21,825	1.6%
Fulton County	12,407	255,621	4.9%
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Marietta MSA	64,994	1,357,537	4.9%
State of Georgia	101,630	1,981,801	5.1%

Note: Estimates are based on Federal Reserve Home Mortgage Disclosure Act Data on high cost loans, Office of Federal Housing Enterprise Oversight Data on falling home prices, and Bureau of Labor Statistics data on place and county unemployment rates. Recorded from January 2007 through June 2008.

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development 2008 Neighborhood Stabilization Data by County and Place

## 4.4. Special Housing Needs

At this time, most special needs housing data is only available at the county level. Fulton County has several special needs populations with particular housing needs, including elderly, frail elderly, persons with severe mental and physical disabilities, substance abuse, and those with HIV/AIDS. Households may have one or more persons with these special housing needs. Comparable data was not available at the city level; however, it is assumed that Alpharetta includes only a very small portion of Fulton County's special needs population at this time. Since information is not available at the city level, there is no accurate way to assess whether the needs of these populations within the city are being met through city and county services. For example, multiple mental health, mental retardation and/or substance abuse service providers are available to Alpharetta residents throughout the North Fulton County area. Fulton County has the largest population and probably one the most diverse in Georgia. Many county residents have special housing needs. This section provides a brief overview of special needs housing as presented in *Focus Fulton 2025*, the county's Comprehensive Plan, and based on available city data.

### 4.4.1. Elderly and Frail Elderly

This population includes those persons 65 years of age or older, with incomes up to 80% of average median income, spending more than half of their incomes on housing. In 2010, an estimated 5.3% of the Alpharetta population was represented in the 65 years and older category. Frail elderly are those individuals with two or more "personal care limitations." These are physical or mental disabilities that substantially limit one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting, or carrying. Frail elderly residents often require some type of supportive living arrangement such as an assisted living community, skilled nursing facility, or an independent living situation with in-home health care.

With fixed and/or reduced incomes, the affordability of elderly-occupied housing is an important issue. HUD (2000) estimates nationwide that 30% of elderly households pay more than 30% of their income for housing and 14% pay more than 50% toward housing. HUD reports that millions of elderly households live in housing that is in substandard condition or that fails to accommodate their physical capabilities or assistance needs. Lower-income elderly households, in particular, are more likely to live in physically substandard housing. Households with elderly occupants age 85 and over are particularly vulnerable to the above mentioned housing problems.

There are a variety of facilities and services available for the elderly and the frail elderly in North Fulton County, many of which are located in Alpharetta.



#### 4.4.2. Persons with Disabilities

The U.S. Census defines persons with mental disabilities as those with a condition that substantially limits one or more basic mental activities such as learning, remembering, and concentrating. This definition is quite broad, encompassing all types of individuals with varying degrees of mental ability. The Census defines persons with physical disabilities as those with a condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting, or carrying. This definition encompasses a wide spectrum of people, including those in wheelchairs or in need of a mobility device for support, those with sensory or respiratory discrepancies that impair short-term or long-term mobility, and those who require assistance with dressing or eating. Persons with disabilities in Alpharetta is presented and compared with those of the State in Table 4-14.

**Table 4-14 Type of Disabilities 2000**

Type of Disability	Alpharetta		State of Georgia
	Number	% of All Disabilities	% of All Disabilities
Total	5,435	100.0%	100%
Sensory	483	8.9%	9.7%
Physical	989	18.2%	23.0%
Mental	873	16.1%	13.6%
Self-care	256	4.7%	7.4%
Go-outside home	1,295	23.8%	21.2%
Employment	1,539	28.3%	25.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000 (SF3).

The Fulton Regional Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Board (Fulton MHMRSA Regional Board) provides a “comprehensive assessment of the demographic description” and “estimate of need” of persons with mental and developmental disabilities and substance abuse problems. According to their FY 2001 Annual Plan, there are an estimated 52,864 adults and children with severe emotional disturbance (SED), serious mental illness (SMI), or mental retardation and other developmental disabilities (MR/DD). Of the estimated population, a little over one-fourth (13,619) depend on public sector resources.

While figures regarding the housing costs of persons with disabilities in Fulton County are not available, it can be assumed that the majority of this population spends over 50% of their income on housing. The National Low Income Coalition (1999) reports that people with disabilities receiving Social Security Insurance are among the lowest income households in the country and that there is not a single housing market area in the U.S. where a person with a disability receiving SSI benefits can afford to rent a modest efficiency apartment.

#### 4.4.3. Mental Illness

There are an estimated 30,732 persons in Fulton County who are severely mentally ill. Approximately 31% are in need of public sector mental health services. Approximately 5,300 individuals are receiving some public services. These estimates are not available at the city level.

#### 4.4.4. Persons with Alcohol or Substance Abuse Problems

Individuals with chemical dependencies are often unable to maintain permanent housing. Without supportive services to help them overcome their addictions, many are at risk of becoming homeless. Relevant statistics are not available at the city level.

#### 4.4.5. Domestic Violence

In Fulton and DeKalb Counties and the City of Atlanta, an estimated 500 individuals and 995 families with children are in need of emergency shelter from domestic violence. Certified shelters for women and children fleeing domestic violence are located throughout the region. Specific estimates are not available at the city level.

#### 4.4.6. Persons with HIV/AIDS

Using current national statistics, it can be estimated that one in every 250 persons is HIV-positive. When applying this estimated rate to Alpharetta's population, the estimated number of HIV-positive city residents would be approximately 264. Since this is a relatively small number of persons, it is assumed that Fulton County's programs are adequate to address these needs at the current time and will continue to do so throughout the next 20 years.

#### 4.4.7. Homeless

Homeless shelters and services in are not currently provided in Alpharetta. However, services are available throughout the region where there are identified needs.

#### 4.4.8. Migrant Farm Workers

Based on the 2007 Census of Agriculture, there is not a significant enough population of migrant farm workers to warrant special housing in Fulton County.

### 4.5. Job-Housing Balance

The jobs-to-housing ratio compares the number of jobs in the city to the number of residents in the city. The ratio is a useful analysis tool because housing location decisions, in relation to workplace, affect commute times, costs, and congestion. An ideal community would provide housing for the labor force near employment centers that give the workers transportation choices (e.g., walking, biking, driving, public transit, etc.). Bedroom community suburbs often develop without such balance and require the labor force to commute to work in private automobiles along major arterials resulting in congestion and other quality of life challenges.

Communities can use two jobs/housing balance ratios to monitor their ability to achieve a balance of jobs and housing: (1) employment (jobs)/housing unit ratio, and (2) employment/labor force ratio. According to the *Jobs/Housing Balance Community Choices Quality Growth Toolkit*, prepared by the Atlanta Regional Commission, an employment (jobs)/housing ratio of between 1.3 and 1.7 implies an ideal balance with 1.5 as the standard target. An employment (jobs)/labor force (employed residents) ratio of between 0.8 and 1.25 implies a balance for that ratio with 1:1 as the standard target.

Table 4-15 presents the employment/housing ratio and employment/labor force ratio for Alpharetta. The 2009 employment/housing ratio of 1.43 falls within the ideal range of 1.3 to 1.7. This ratio means that there are more jobs than the number of housing units. Table 4-15 also presents the employment/labor force ratio for the city. The 2009 ratio of 0.85 also falls within the ideal range of 0.8 to 1.25. This ratio means that the labor force is larger than the number of jobs available in the city.

#### 4.5.1. Supply of Affordable Housing

Table 4-16 relates the average weekly wages received by employees who work in Fulton County to the housing values afforded by their wages. Table 4-16 also provides housing affordability ranges (based on 2.5 and 3.0 multipliers that are widely used to calculate affordable housing prices) for each employment sector based on the average wages paid by Fulton County employers in 2008.

**Table 4-15 Jobs-Housing Balance 2009**

Category	2009
Population	52,415
Average Household Size	2.7
Housing Units	20,894
Labor Force	35,383
Employment	29,972
Employment/Housing Unit Ratio	1.43
Employment/Labor Force Ratio	0.85

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online, City of Alpharetta

**Table 4-16 Correlation of Average Weekly Wages to Housing Prices for Workers 2009**

Sector	Average Wage			Monthly Income Available for Housing (30%)	Equivalent House Price <sup>1</sup> (2.5 multiplier)	Equivalent House Price <sup>1</sup> (3.5 multiplier)
	Average Weekly Wage	Average Annual Wage	Average Monthly Wage			
Agriculture, forestry, & fishing	\$1,063	\$55,276	\$4,252	\$1,276	\$138,190	\$193,466
Mining <sup>2</sup>	**	**	**	**	**	**
Construction	\$1,106	\$57,512	\$4,424	\$1,327	\$143,780	\$201,292
Manufacturing	\$1,431	\$74,412	\$5,724	\$1,717	\$186,030	\$260,442
Utilities	\$1,857	\$96,564	\$7,428	\$2,228	\$241,410	\$337,974
Wholesale trade	\$1,572	\$81,744	\$6,288	\$1,886	\$204,360	\$286,104
Retail trade	\$569	\$29,588	\$2,276	\$683	\$73,970	\$103,558
Transportation and warehousing	\$1,087	\$56,524	\$4,348	\$1,304	\$141,310	\$197,834
Information	\$1,741	\$90,532	\$6,964	\$2,089	\$226,330	\$316,862
Finance and insurance	\$1,870	\$97,240	\$7,480	\$2,244	\$243,100	\$340,340
Real estate and rental and leasing	\$1,099	\$57,148	\$4,396	\$1,319	\$142,870	\$200,018
Professional, scientific/tech services	\$1,700	\$88,400	\$6,800	\$2,040	\$221,000	\$309,400
Mgt companies/enterprises	\$1,760	\$91,520	\$7,040	\$2,112	\$228,800	\$320,320
Administrative and waste services	\$799	\$41,548	\$3,196	\$959	\$103,870	\$145,418
Educational services	\$815	\$42,380	\$3,260	\$978	\$105,950	\$148,330
Health care and social services	\$1,000	\$52,000	\$4,000	\$1,200	\$130,000	\$182,000
Arts, entertainment and recreation	\$945	\$49,140	\$3,780	\$1,134	\$122,850	\$171,990
Accommodation and food services	\$445	\$23,140	\$1,780	\$534	\$57,850	\$80,990
Other services (except government)	\$669	\$34,788	\$2,676	\$803	\$86,970	\$121,758
Government	\$1,087	\$56,524	\$4,348	\$1,304	\$141,310	\$197,834
All industries - County 2000 <sup>3</sup>	\$1,043	\$54,236	\$4,172	\$1,252	\$135,590	\$189,826
All industries - County 2008	\$1,151	\$59,852	\$4,604	\$1,381	\$149,630	\$209,482
All industries - State 2009	\$824	\$42,848	\$3,296	\$989	\$107,120	\$149,968

<sup>1</sup> Multipliers are applied to the Average Annual Wage - 2.5 and 3.5 are used widely to calculate affordable housing prices

<sup>2</sup> BLS did not release data for this sector in Fulton County

<sup>3</sup> Adjusted 2000 dollars to 2009 via the BLS Inflation Calculator

Source: Georgia Department of Labor (these data represent jobs that are covered by unemployment insurance laws), U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Approximately 70% of Alpharetta's labor force (Alpharetta residents) commuted to workplaces outside of the city in 2000, the latest year for which these statistics are available from the Census. This means a large portion of those working in Alpharetta commuted to the city from outside of the city limits, as well.

The city's largest employment category in 2009 was *retail trade* (17.8% of all jobs). Wages for this job sector in Fulton County are among the lowest of all categories reported. *Retail trade* paid an average weekly wage of \$569, which translates into income available to purchase a home in the range of \$73,970 to \$103,558 (or monthly rent of \$683). *Professional, scientific/tech services*, the second largest sector, paid an average weekly wage of \$1,700, which translates into income available to purchase a home in the range of \$221,000 to \$309,400 (or a monthly rent of \$2,040).

The Alpharetta median household income in 2009 was \$96,515. As shown in Table 4-17, that income level theoretically supports purchase of a home within the range of \$241,288 to \$337,803. As shown previously, the median property value in Alpharetta in 2009 was \$340,500. This comparison of median income with median property value suggests that the housing market in the Alpharetta area may be trending towards losing its ability to provide affordable homes for those who work in the area. The availability of housing for the median and/or average income households does not mean the community has met the housing needs of those employed within its boundaries, however. Statistically, the lower-paid workers employed in the city can face challenges in finding quality, affordable housing close to their place of work.

**Table 4-17 Correlation of Household Income to Housing Prices for City Residents 2000 and 2009**

<i>Annual Household Income</i>	<i>Maximum Annual Income</i>	<i>Maximum Monthly Income</i>	<i>Maximum Monthly Income for Housing (30 %)</i>	<i>Equivalent House Price (2.5 multiplier)*</i>	<i>Equivalent House Price (3.5 multiplier)*</i>
Less than \$15,000	\$15,000	\$1,250	\$375	\$37,500	\$52,500
\$15,000-24,999	\$25,000	\$2,083	\$625	\$62,500	\$87,500
\$25,000-\$34,999	\$35,000	\$2,917	\$875	\$87,500	\$122,500
\$35,000-\$49,999	\$50,000	\$4,167	\$1,250	\$125,000	\$175,000
\$50,000-\$74,999	\$75,000	\$6,250	\$1,875	\$187,500	\$262,500
\$75,000-\$99,999	\$100,000	\$8,333	\$2,500	\$250,000	\$350,000
\$100,000-\$149,999	\$150,000	\$12,500	\$3,750	\$375,000	\$525,000
\$150,000-\$249,999	\$250,000	\$20,833	\$6,250	\$625,000	\$875,000
\$250,000-\$499,999	\$500,000	\$41,667	\$12,500	\$1,250,000	\$1,750,000
\$500,000 or more	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
<i>Mean Household Income (in 2008 dollars)</i>					
2000	\$123,408	\$10,284	\$3,085	\$308,520	\$431,928
2009	\$137,491	\$11,458	\$3,437	\$343,728	\$481,219
<i>Median Household Income (in 2008 dollars)</i>					
2000	\$95,845	\$7,987	\$2,396	\$239,613	\$335,458
2009	\$96,515	\$8,043	\$2,413	\$241,288	\$337,803

\*\*Multipliers are applied to the Average Annual Wage - 2.5 and 3.5 are used widely to calculate affordable housing prices

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Online

#### 4.5.2. Barriers to Affordability

While Alpharetta provides a wide range of affordable housing options, statistics suggest that there are barriers to affordable housing that would be expected to hinder and/or limit affordable housing opportunities for those earning lower incomes (80% of AMI or below). A number of these obstacles are common in Metropolitan Atlanta regardless of geographic location and include the following:

***Increasing Land Prices and Costs of Development***

Once data is reported for the 2010 Census, an analysis most likely will show that in Alpharetta, housing is becoming less affordable for many who are employed in the city as a result of the rapidly increasing costs of housing (especially new single-family housing). Even after some cost/value reduction during the economic recession of the past few years, it is reasonable to presume that for a variety of reasons, including increasing land and development costs, market-rate housing remains out of the affordable range for a segment of the population.

***Burdensome Federal and State Regulations***

Federal and State programs and regulations often place requirements on local jurisdictions which drive up the cost of development. They frequently do not allow the flexibility needed for local communities to devise cost efficient solutions to their particular affordable housing problems.

***Lack of Public/Private Partnerships with Financial Institutions***

More lender involvement in affordable housing efforts is needed. There is also a need for more affordable housing, community awareness and homebuyer education. This can assist the critical local workforce such as teachers, law enforcement and other vital service providers. Homebuyer education programs are growing, and can be strengthened and expanded.

Despite these obstacles, Alpharetta has a history of integrating affordable housing into its community. The first Habitat for Humanity subdivision, Fuller Farms, was built in Alpharetta. It was located across the street from affluent homes to prevent the segregation of residential areas by income that often leads to the erosion of property values. In addition, federally-supported Section 8 rental housing can be found in Alpharetta as well as subsidized apartments for seniors. Residents, businesses, churches and other organizations have strongly supported non-profit groups such as the Habitat for Humanity North Central Georgia Chapter, which has added numerous affordable housing units to the area over many years. While there are many success stories, there are also challenges to continuing non-profit housing development in the Alpharetta area due to cost and availability of land, limited numbers of existing non-profit housing developers or private developers willing to construct affordable housing for low-income homebuyers and limited financial incentive programs to do so. To a great extent, affordability is a function of project economics which is driven by market forces. Alpharetta's challenge is to continue to reduce barriers to affordability by facilitating appropriate options in conjunction with housing development.

*This page was intentionally left blank for two-sided printing.*

CHAPTER  
**5**

# NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

*Evaluation of how new development is likely to impact Natural and Cultural Resources along with an identification of needed regulations and policies*

## 5.1. Physiography

Alpharetta is located entirely within the Atlanta Plateau of the Appalachian chain with an average elevation of 1,050 feet above sea level. Rolling, well-drained terrain with coarse loamy soils on the surface and clayey subsoils characterize the area’s topography. Underlying geology consists of igneous rocks, a prevalent characteristic throughout the Atlanta Plateau.

## 5.2. Environmental Planning Criteria

Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) developed minimum standards and procedures, *Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria* (Chapter 391-3-16 and also known as Part V Criteria), to protect the state’s natural resources and environment. Part V Criteria require city comprehensive plans to identify whether five specific critical environmental resources exist within the city limits and if so, whether the city has adopted ordinances that protect each resource. Table 5-1 lists and describes the three applicable Part V Criteria-addressed critical environmental resources and indicates the presence of three resources in Alpharetta. The City Council has adopted local ordinances that specifically address each resource and meet the “Part V Criteria” requirements. Map 3: Environmental Planning Criteria depicts the location of each resource.

**Table 5-1 Compliance with Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria**

<i>Critical Environmental Resource</i>	<i>Definition<sup>1</sup></i>	<i>Is the Critical Environmental Resource present within Alpharetta?</i>	<i>Ordinance Adopted</i>
<b>Water Supply Watershed</b>	Area of land upstream of a governmentally-owned public drinking water intake.	Yes ( <i>UDC Sec. 3.3.12</i> ). See Map 3: Environmental Planning Criteria for general location.	Adopted 2001
<b>Groundwater Recharge Areas</b>	Any portion of the earth’s surface where water infiltrates into the ground to replenish an aquifer.	Yes ( <i>UDC 3.3.13</i> ). See Map 3: Environmental Planning Criteria for general location.	Adopted 2001
<b>Wetlands</b>	Areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a 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.	Yes ( <i>UDC 3.3.7</i> ). See Map 3: Environmental Planning Criteria for general location.	Adopted 2001

<sup>1</sup>Definitions taken from DNR Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (Chapter 391-3-16)

## 5.3. Other Environmentally Sensitive Areas

### 5.3.1. Water Quality

Alpharetta is located in the Chattahoochee River Basin and is drained by Big Creek, Foe Killer Creek, and their associated tributaries. Alpharetta receives its water supply from the Chattahoochee River via the Fulton County Department of Public Works, which has permitted water rights to withdraw water. The city's Public Works Department operates a laboratory that tests source water samples collected weekly from lakes, streams, ponds, storm drain outfalls and other drainage pipes. The department uses the data to identify problems, such as erosion and sewer spills, as well as develop policy recommendations.

Alpharetta has adopted ordinances that address stormwater issues and watershed protection in addition to the "Part V Criteria" ordinances described in Section 5.2 and shown in Table 5-1. The city's Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District (MNGWPD) membership requires local adoption of environmental-protection-measure model ordinances (developed by the state) to improve water quality. Table 5-2 lists Alpharetta's local protection measures and describes the areas protected by the ordinances. Together, these ordinances help mitigate land development's negative impacts on water quality by managing stormwater, soil erosion, and sedimentation pollution. In addition, they also help preserve natural areas adjacent to water bodies.

**Table 5-2 Local Protection Measures for Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

<b>Ordinance</b>	<b>Required by MNGWPD</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
<b>Floodplain Management and Flood Damage Prevention</b>	Yes UDC Sec. 3.3.4	Floodplain regulations and development restrictions can greatly reduce flooding impacts, preserve greenspace and habitat, and protect their function in safely conveying floodwaters and protection water quality. The ordinance aims to help areas avoid potential flood damage by regulating future-conditions floodplains and providing building standards in flood-prone areas.
<b>Stream Buffer Protection</b>	Yes UDC Sec. 3.3.6	Stream buffers, along with other protection measures, can help protect streams and preserve water quality by filtering of pollutants, reducing erosion and sedimentation, protecting and stabilizing stream banks, preserving vegetation and providing both aquatic and land habitat. This ordinance provides a framework to develop buffer zones for streams as well as the requirements that minimize land development within those buffers. It is the purpose of these buffer zone requirements to protect and stabilize stream banks, protect water quality and preserve aquatic and riparian habitat. The city has adopted more stringent requirements than the Metropolitan River Protection Act. UDC Sec. 3.3.6 <i>Stream Buffer Protection</i> requires a 100-foot undisturbed buffer and a 150-foot impervious setback on perennial streams and a 50-foot undisturbed buffer and 75-foot impervious setback on non-perennial streams.
<b>Illicit Discharge and Illegal Connection</b>	Yes UDC Sec. 3.3.9.C & Sec. 3.3.9.D	An illicit discharge is defined as any discharge to a storm drainage system or surface water that is not composed entirely of stormwater runoff (except for discharge allowed under an NPDES permit or waters used for firefighting operations). The ordinance provides Alpharetta the authority to deal with illicit discharges and establishes enforcement actions for those properties found to be in noncompliance or that refuse to allow access to their facilities.
<b>Post Development Stormwater Runoff</b>	Yes UDC Sec. 3.3.4 & Sec. 3.3.5	The ordinance provides post-development stormwater management requirements for new development and redevelopment in Alpharetta. The ordinance defines requirements for development to address stormwater runoff quality and quantity impacts following construction resulting from the permanent alteration of the land surface as well as the nonpoint source pollution from land use activities.
<b>Litter Control</b>	Yes City Code, I-B-10-10	Litter found throughout the community often finds its way into the region's streams, rivers and lakes and detracts from area's quality of life. The ordinance provides a prohibition against littering and provides an enforcement mechanism with penalties for dealing with those found littering. The ordinance helps Alpharetta address the impacts trash and debris have on water resources.
<b>Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control</b>	Yes UDC Sec. 3.1.1	Soil erosion and sedimentation of water bodies can be a significant and negative environmental impact during development protections. To mitigate the negative impacts, Alpharetta has adopted this ordinance to manage and limit soil erosion and sedimentation during development and land disturbance projects.
<b>Alpharetta Chattahoochee River Protection Ordinance</b>	No	The water quality of the Chattahoochee River depends largely on the water quality its tributaries. To ensure adequate water quality of the Chattahoochee's tributaries in Alpharetta, the ordinance requires the creation of vegetative buffers along these tributaries and where land disturbances occur within these buffers, that the disturbances are regulated with requiring a permit to begin activity.



### 5.3.2. Air Quality

Environmental concern for air quality has become increasingly important region-wide during the last two decades. Air quality has a direct impact on public health and certain groups within the community, primarily young children, the elderly, and people with asthma and other respiratory ailments. These groups are especially vulnerable to polluted air conditions.

Alpharetta is within the Atlanta non-attainment area for ozone and particulate matter. As the regional transportation planning agency, ARC's policies and implementation measures must comply with the federal Clean Air Act. Compliance is established through monitoring and management of federally-regulated industries as well as transportation planning. ARC's responsibilities include developing transportation and land use measures that can help improve the region's air quality, when implemented at the local and regional level. These measures include supporting development patterns that reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled and reduce the number of vehicle trips. Alpharetta works with ARC to implement these development patterns and transportation projects to help reduce air pollution and improve the region's air quality.

### 5.3.3. Steep Slopes

Areas with a grade of 15% or greater are considered steep slopes. These areas are typically more prone to soil erosion and vegetation loss as a result of development, making it necessary to identify and manage them. Gently-rolling terrain slopping from 0% to 15% makes up the majority of Alpharetta. Consequently, much of the city's existing development occurred in these areas. Several steep slope areas exist in Alpharetta. Most are associated with creeks and the associated stream banks and are located east of GA-400 and in areas currently undeveloped. For more detail see Map 4: Slope Analysis.

Alpharetta has adopted development regulations, such as the Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control ordinance (UDC Sec. 3.1.1) and the Floodplain Management ordinance (UDC Sec. 3.4) to address steep slope development and to manage water quality and erosion. As a result, developers in Alpharetta must take additional measures necessary to limit soil erosion and sedimentation pollution in waterways, as well as development encroachment into sensitive environmental areas. The city also requires the notation of steep slopes on site plans during the land development process in order to identify negative impacts on areas with steep slopes.

### 5.3.4. Floodplains

Flooding is the temporary covering of soil with water from overflowing streams and by runoff from adjacent slopes. Water standing for short periods after rainfalls is not considered flooding, nor is water in swamps. A floodplain is any land area susceptible to being inundated by water from any source. Floodplains in their natural or relatively undisturbed state are important water resource areas. They serve three major purposes: natural water storage and conveyance, water quality maintenance, and groundwater recharge. Unsuitable development can destroy their value. For example, any fill material placed in the floodplain eliminates essential water storage capacity, causing water elevation to rise, resulting in the flooding of previously dry land. Alpharetta's 100 and 500-year floodplains are shown on Map 5: Floodplains. The city regulates floodplain development with the Floodplain Management ordinance (UDC Sec. 3.4).

Moderate flooding occurs periodically along Big Creek and its associated tributaries in east Alpharetta. Because the city has identified these areas as prone to flooding and an important natural resource, much of the floodplain of Big Creek and its associated tributaries (including Long Indian Creek) has been designated as open space and is being incorporated into the city's greenway system. Foe Killer Creek's floodplain impacts areas of west Alpharetta

Additionally, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has identified and mapped areas of the city that have the highest risk of flooding in order to establish actuarial flood insurance rates and promote sound floodplain management planning. To meet FEMA's floodplain management standards, the city has adopted the Floodplain Management ordinance, as shown in Table 5-2. The ordinance regulates new development based on FEMA's regulatory flood definition, which means the flood has a 1% chance of being equaled or exceeded in any given year assuming the drainage basin is fully developed. Among the requirements of the ordinance is that new development be at least 1 foot above the regulatory flood level.

The city is working in conjunction with DNR and FEMA to update the current flood maps. Preliminary maps are expected July 2011. Open house meetings will be schedule for the public to view the maps and a 90-day comment period will follow for the public to make appeals and protests to items shown on the maps. The city expects to adopt final maps in July 2012. When finished, the new digital flood maps will provide detailed, property-specific flood risk data to guide construction and flood insurance decisions. Alpharetta residents and business owners will have up-to-date, reliable, Internet-accessible data about the flood hazards they face.

### 5.3.5. Soils

Soils regulate water, sustain plant and animal life, filter potential pollutants, cycle nutrients and support structures. Knowledge of soil types in an area provides a good indication of topography (slope), erosion patterns, the presence and depth of rock, and the presence of water, as in wetland or floodplain areas. These characteristics in turn help indicate whether a soil type is suitable for a specific land use.

#### Soil Types

Alpharetta area soils include Congaree-Chewacla-Wickham, Cecil-Lloyd-Appling, Madison-Louisa, Lloyd-Cecil-Madison, and Appling-Cecil. Well-drained and moderately-permeable soils make up much of the city. These soils impose no potential development limitations, such as low-bearing capacity, poor soil drainage or other factors affecting suitability of the land for development.

The General Soil Map for Fulton County, as defined by the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), defines six soil associations for Fulton County. Figure 5-1 presents the Alpharetta area of the General Soil Map. Five of the soil associations are applicable for the Alpharetta area and described in Table 5-3.

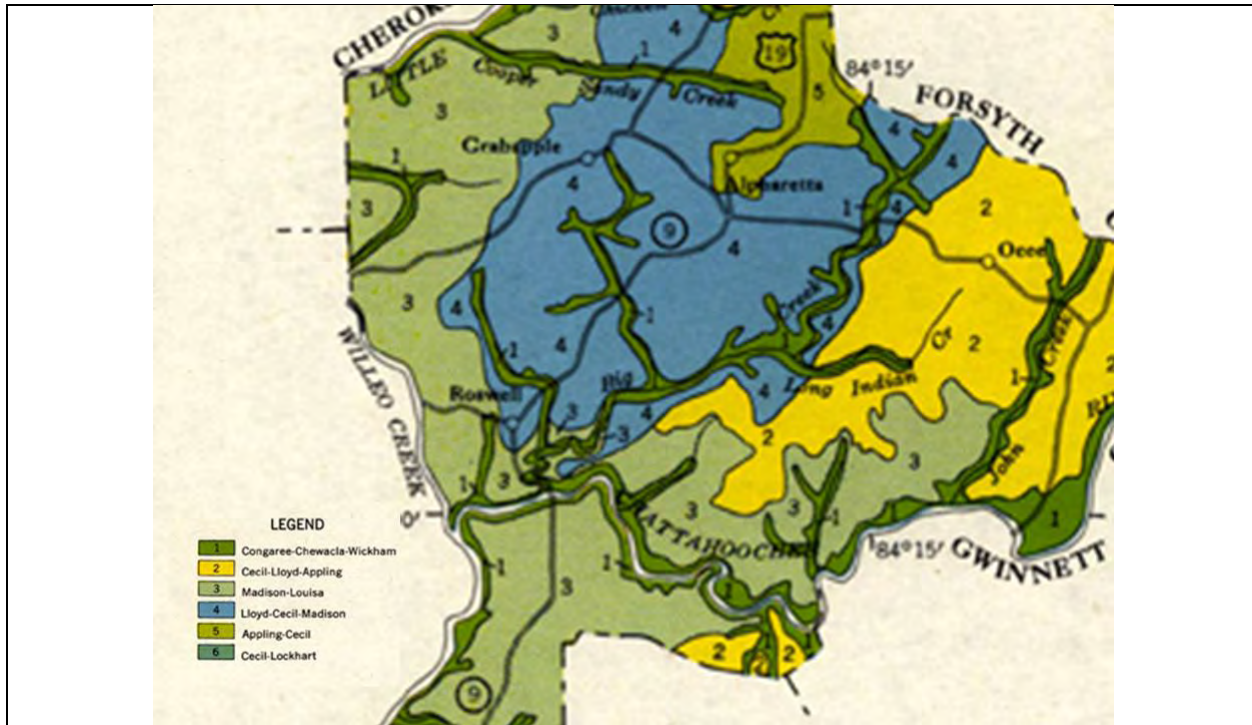
**Table 5-3 Soil Associations**

Soil Association	Description
<b>Congaree-Chewacla-Wickham (1)</b>	Occurs in irregular and comparatively narrow strips on first bottoms and terraces along the Chattahoochee and Little rivers and their tributaries. While drainage is good along the rivers (outside of Alpharetta), drainage can be somewhat poor along the small streams as sediment and undergrowth have clogged the stream channels and raised the water table. The natural fertility of the soils is moderate to high. They are largely covered with forest or bushes and water-loving grasses.
<b>Cecil-Lloyd-Appling (2)</b>	Occurs chiefly on rolling and hilly uplands, although some areas along drainageways are steep and others on interstream ridges are undulating. Includes a well-developed dendritic drainage system and natural drainage ranges from good to excessive. The natural fertility of the soils is low to medium. Moderate to severe erosion is common. The soils are best suited for forest, though much of the association has been cleared or are in second-growth pine. These soils are located primarily west of Big Creek.
<b>Madison-Louisa (3)</b>	Occupies the most dissected uplands of the Chattahoochee and its larger tributaries and is characterized by steep V-shaped valleys and sharp ridge tops. The association has a well-developed dendritic drainage system and its soils are well drained to excessively drained. Soil fertility is low. These soils are associated with pine and hardwoods. These soils have limited occurrence in Alpharetta.
<b>Lloyd-Cecil-Madison (4)</b>	Occurs on rolling to hilly uplands. The association has a well-developed dendritic drainage pattern and its soils are well to somewhat excessively drained. Soil fertility is low to medium. Erosion is moderate to somewhat severe for this association. Most of the land has been cleared. This is the largest soil association in the city and is primarily located near Big Creek on the east side of the city and includes a large swath of west Alpharetta
<b>Appling-Cecil (5)</b>	Made up of grayish sandy soil on rolling to hilly uplands. Deep soils are underlain by granite and gneiss having a high content of quartz. The association has a well-developed dendritic drainage system and its soils are well to somewhat excessively drained. Soil fertility is low. These soils occur mainly on the smoother areas. Erosion is generally moderate. Most of the association has been cleared, but much of it is idle or covered with second-growth pine. These soils are located primarily along GA-9.

Note: Number shown in parenthesis corresponds to areas shown in Figure 5-1

Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture

Figure 5-1 General Soil Map for Fulton County (Alpharetta Area)



Source: Soil Survey of Fulton County, Georgia, Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

**Prime Farmland and Soils of Statewide Importance**

Limited farmland or farming remains in within the city limits of Alpharetta due to wide-scale suburbanization. Scattered gardens, limited crop fields and a few pastures are all that remain of the city’s agricultural past. Horse farms primarily devoted to boarding horses for pleasure and personal enjoyment dot the western portion of the city. Map 6: Soils of Statewide Importance shows the general locations of these important soils in the Alpharetta area. These soils are primarily located in west Alpharetta, west of Foe Killer Creek and along GA-400 and North Point Mall.

**Suitability for Septic Systems**

The use of private septic systems is permissible in Alpharetta if public sewer is unavailable. Generally, septic systems are more common in recently-incorporated areas previously under the planning jurisdiction of Fulton County. Currently, Fulton County provides or has the potential to provide sewer service to approximately three-quarters of the land area of Alpharetta. The non-serviceable area, located in the northwest portion of the city, depends on individual septic tanks for waste water disposal and is characterized by low-density residential development.

Some soils, however, exhibit limitations for development with septic tanks and should be evaluated when planning for locations suitable for accommodating future growth. With respect to the effluent absorption capacity of a soil, NRCS data rates portions of land in Alpharetta area as “Very Limited” or “Somewhat Limited”. “Very limited” indicates that the soil has one or more limiting features that generally cannot be overcome without major soil

Table 5-4 Fulton County Soil Suitability for Septic Tank Absorption Fields

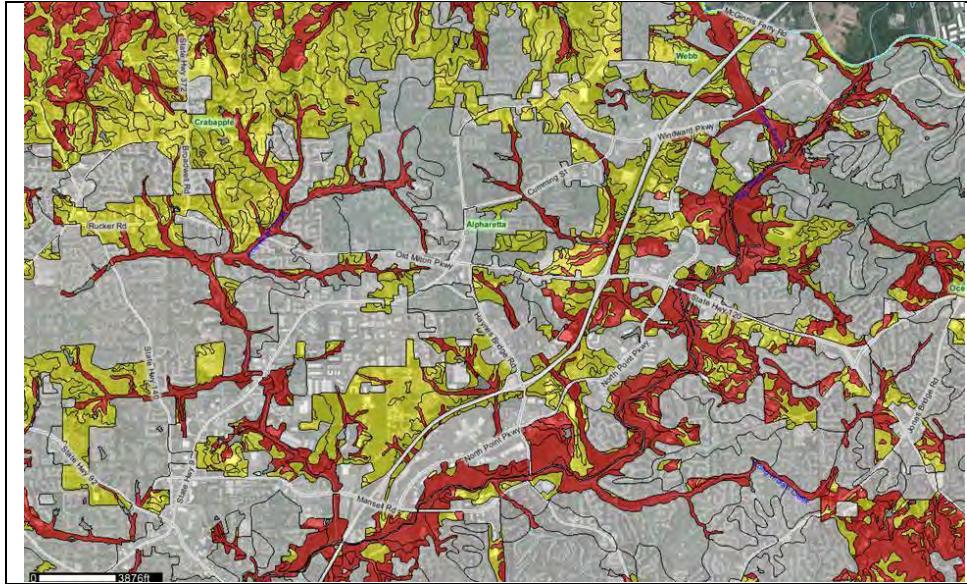
Rating	Acres	% of Total
Very Limited	116,570	34.1%
Somewhat Limited	83,666	24.5%
Null or Not Rated	141,879	41.5%
Totals	342,115	100.0%

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture , Natural Resources Conservation Service

reclamation, special design, or expensive installation procedures, likely resulting in poor performance and high maintenance. These areas are primarily associated with the creeks and streams in the area. “Somewhat limited” indicates that the soil has features that can be overcome or minimized by special planning, design, or installation. These areas are primarily located adjacent to GA-400 and in northwest portions of the city.

The NRCS ratings for septic tank absorption fields (areas in which effluent for a septic tank is distributed into the soil) are based on the soil properties that affect absorption, construction and maintenance of the system, and public health. Overall ratings are currently only available by county, as shown in Table 5-4 and mapped in Figure 5-2. Red indicates “Very Limited”, yellow indicates “Somewhat Limited” and white indicates “Null or Not Rated”.

**Figure 5-2 Alpharetta Area Soil Suitability for Septic Tank Absorption**



Note: Red indicates “Very Limited”, yellow indicates “Somewhat Limited” and white indicates “Null or Not Rated”.  
Source: Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture

### 5.3.6. Plant and Animal Habitats

The Fish and Wildlife Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior defines habitat as a combination of environmental factors that provides food, water, cover and space that living beings need to survive and reproduce. Habitat types include: coastal and estuarine, rivers and streams, lakes and ponds, wetlands, riparian areas, deserts, grasslands/prairie, forests, coral reefs, marine, perennial snow and ice, and urban areas. These habitats are vulnerable to land development and are in danger of becoming permanently altered or completely lost because of sporadic land development in and around ecologically sensitive areas. Ecologically sensitive areas include wetland, forests, and river corridor, and plant and animal habitats. Habitats specific to any endangered or threatened species should also be carefully protected. Endangered and threatened species are listed only by county and not at the city level. However, the county level should provide a close enough look at species that may be endangered in Alpharetta, as listed in the Tables 5-6 and 5-7.

To counteract negative or potentially negative impacts on the habitats of these plants and animals, the city has adopted several policies to protect important natural habitats. During both the master plan process and land disturbance-permitting process, the city requires identification of any plant or animal habitats. Additionally, as part of the city’s Tree Protection Ordinance, developments must retain certain existing mature trees and replant additional trees. Native vegetation is suggested to provide habitat for indigenous birds and animals.

**Species of Special Concern**

DNR maintains an inventory of federally protected, state-protected, and other rare or imperiled plants and animals. This working “special concerns list” includes 22 species of plants and animals in Fulton County that are tracked by the Nongame Conservation Section of the DNR Wildlife Resources Division. The list identifies species thought to be in need of conservation. Some listed species are currently protected by state or federal laws. Alpharetta does not currently provide additional protection for these species. Tables 5-6 through 5-7 list the species of special concern in Fulton County. Table 5-5 lists definitions of the federal and state status designations and provides the abbreviations for each that are used in Tables 5-6 and 5-7.

**Table 5-5 Federal and State Species Status Definitions**

<b>Federal Status</b>	
Listed As	Definition
Endangered (LE)	Most critically imperiled species; a may become extinct or disappear from a significant part of its range if not immediately protected
Threatened (LT)	Most critical level of threatened species; may become endangered if not protected
Candidate Species (C)	Enough scientific information to warrant proposing these species for listing as endangered or threatened
<b>State Status</b>	
Listed As	Listed As
Endangered (E)	In danger of extinction throughout all or part of its range
Threatened (T)	Likely to become an endangered species in the foreseeable future throughout all or parts of its range
Rare (R)	A species which may not be endangered or threatened but which should be protected because of its scarcity
Unusual (U)	Unusual, thus deserving of special consideration; includes plants subject to commercial exploitation

**Table 5-6 Species of Special Concern in Fulton County – Animals**

Species	Status	Habitat	
		US	GA
Bachman's Sparrow	Aimophila aestivalis	R	Open pine or oak woods; old fields; brushy areas
Chattahoochee Crayfish	Cambarus howardi	T	Moderate to swiftly flowing streams with rocky or rubble substrate
Bluestripe Shiner	Cyprinella callitaenia	R	Flowing areas in large creeks and medium-sized rivers over rocky substrates
Delicate Spike	Elliptio arctata	E	Large rivers and creeks with some current in sand and sand and limestone rock substrates
Cherokee Darter	Etheostoma scotti	LT	T Small to medium-sized creeks with moderate current and rocky substrates
Peregrine Falcon	Falco peregrinus	R	Rocky cliffs & ledges; seacoasts
Shinyrayed Pocketbook	Hamiota subangulata	LE	E Sandy/rocky medium-sized rivers & creeks
Four-toed Salamander	Hemidactylium scutatum		Swamps; boggy streams & ponds; hardwood forests
Gulf Moccasinshell	Medionidus penicillatus	LE	E Sandy/rocky medium-sized rivers & creeks
Highscale Shiner	Notropis hypsilepis	R	Flowing areas of small to large streams over sand or bedrock substrates
Sculptured Pigtoe	Quincuncina infucata		Main channels of rivers and large streams with moderate current in sand and limestone rock substrate

Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Wildlife Resources Division – Updated May 27, 2008

**Table 5-7 Species of Special Concern in Fulton County – Plants**

Species	Status	Habitat	
		US	GA
Pink Ladyslipper	Cypripedium acaule	U	Upland oak-hickory-pine forests; piney woods
Large-flowered Yellow Ladyslipper	Cypripedium parviflorum var. pubescens		Upland oak-hickory-pine forests; mixed hardwood forests
Log Fern	Dryopteris celsa		Floodplain forests; lower slopes of rocky woods
Mountain Witch-alder	Fothergilla major	T	Rocky (sandstone, granite) woods; bouldery stream margins
Harper Wild Ginger	Hexastylis shuttleworthii var. harperi		Low terraces in floodplain forests; edges of bogs
Southern Twayblade	Listera australis		Poorly drained circumneutral soils
Sweet Pinesap	Monotropsis odorata	T	Upland forests

Species		Status		Habitat
		US	GA	
American Ginseng	<i>Panax quinquefolius</i>			Mesic hardwood forests; cove hardwood forests
Bay Star-vine	<i>Schisandra glabra</i>	T		Rich woods on stream terraces and lower slopes
Georgia Aster	<i>Symphotrichum georgianum</i>	C	T	Upland oak-hickory-pine forests and openings; sometimes with <i>Echinacea laevigata</i> or over amphibolite
Barren Strawberry	<i>Waldsteinia lobata</i>		R	Stream terraces and adjacent gneiss outcrops

Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife Resources Division – Updated May 27, 2008

## 5.4. Significant Natural Resources

### 5.4.1. Scenic Areas, Forests, Recreation and Conservation Areas

Substantial development and redevelopment have occurred in Alpharetta, particularly along the GA-400 corridor. As a result of this development, few significant scenic views or visual landmarks remain within the city. However, while no major federal or state parks, recreation or conservation areas are located in Alpharetta, the city does maintain the Big Creek Greenway. The city created the greenway to help preserve the creek and adjacent natural areas while also providing a place for the public to connect with nature.

Additionally, portions of the Environmental Protection Agency’s Southeastern Ecological Framework (SEF) cover Alpharetta. The SEF is an EPA program meant to identify primary ecological areas, identify ecological corridors that can link the primary ecological areas, and create a green infrastructure network throughout the Southeastern United States. The areas within Alpharetta that have been identified as part of the SEF are primarily associated with land adjacent to the creeks and streams, as well as some large clusters of preserved forests. These areas are important for the natural health of the community and can serve as a guide for preserving important natural features in Alpharetta. Map 7: Scenic, Recreation and Conservation Areas shows the greenway system, city parks, and the Southeastern Ecological Framework areas. City parks and recreation areas are discussed in more detail in Section 6.3.2.

**Table 5-8 Percent of Fulton County Land in Farms – 1982, 1989, 1997 and 2007**

1987	1992	1997	2002	2007
9.6%	6.4%	7.9%	8.2%	4.5%

### 5.4.2. Agriculture and Forested Land

Farming and forestry activities are not significant in Fulton County, and do not occur in Alpharetta. These activities will most likely not play a role in the local economy over the planning period. The countywide percentage of land in farms (see Table 5-8) and as forested land (see Table 5-9) has decreased over the past 20 years.

**Table 5-9 Percent of Fulton County Land Forested– 1982, 1989, 1997 and 2007**

1982	1989	1997	2008
50.4%	41.1%	37.2%	35.3%

Source: Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development, Cooperative Extension Service, University of Georgia (Tables 5-8 and 5-9)

### 5.4.3. Urban Forest Protection

Alpharetta protects its Tree Canopy with its Tree Preservation Ordinance (UDC 3.2). This ordinance governs conservation, planting and replacement of trees citywide. The regulations are in place to prevent the indiscriminate removal of trees without denying the reasonable use and enjoyment of real property. The regulations require reasonable efforts to preserve and retain certain existing, self-supporting trees.

The Tree Commission, which was also established by the Tree Protection Ordinance, give advises City Council based on an annual re-evaluation of experience under the ordinance, provides leadership in the development of understanding of the objectives and methods of the tree program, and assist the city staff in the development and maintenance of technical specifications and guidelines.

In addition, the Design Review Board (DRB) Ordinance and Design Guidelines provide specific tree planting requirements for the city's "corridors of influence" (defined in the ordinance as Westside Parkway, Old Milton Parkway, Haynes Bridge Road, and Mansell Road).

The Downtown Incentive Zoning Package includes specific street tree planting and tree protection requirements specifically for Downtown Alpharetta, as defined in the ordinance. Planting requirements are presented in Chapter 5 of the Downtown Incentive Zoning Package and include detailed specifications for each of the major corridors (as well as corridors planned in the *Downtown Master Plan*). Tree protection requirements include protection of the critical root zone as well as protection of specific specimen trees located in Downtown Alpharetta and documented in maps included in the Downtown Incentive Zoning Package. This zoning designation seeks to preserve as many specimen trees as feasible, and encourages incorporation of these existing trees into development plans.

Due to this and other tree protection measures, the Arbor Day Foundation has designated Alpharetta as a "Tree City USA." Protecting the city's tree canopy touches the lives of people within the community who benefit daily from cleaner air, shadier streets, and aesthetic beauty that healthy, well-managed urban forests provide. In addition, it helps present the kind of image that most citizens want to have for the place they live or conduct business. As a "Tree City USA" designee, Alpharetta is able to make a statement to visitors, through signage, that it is a city that cares about its environment.

## **5.5. Significant Cultural Resources**

Cultural resources include structures, sites, and districts of historic, cultural or archaeological significance. Such resources provide a context for recent and current events due to their influence on development patterns and characteristics of a community.

The Historic Preservation Division (HPD) of the DNR is the delegated, state-level authority in matters of historic preservation. HPD also acts as the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), mandated by the federal Historic Preservation Act of 1966. HPD holds advocacy and administrative roles while coordinating statewide preservation initiatives, providing technical assistance, and allocating federal funding for local preservation-oriented projects. The protection of cultural resources is best accomplished on the local level with historic preservation planning, creation of appropriate growth strategies, comprehensive planning, the adoption of local protective ordinances, and coordination between all groups (those appointed by the local government and those organized by concerned private individuals) interested in preserving and promoting the community's history.

### **5.5.1. Local History**

#### *Early Settlement*

Settlement of New Prospect Campground, the first settlement in present-day Alpharetta, began in the 1830s following the relocation of the Cherokee Nation. The camp and surrounding farming lands established the area as a trading post for Native Americans and settlers. The town was chartered on December 11, 1858 as the "Town of Milton" and county seat of Milton County, including lands within a half-mile radius of what would become the courthouse (constructed shortly after the charter). The town was renamed Alpharetta from the Greek words *alpha*, meaning first, and *retta*, meaning town. When the Civil War began, Alpharetta was home to three hotels, several mercantile shops, numerous churches and a school and surrounded by small, family farms.

Railroads spurred much of the residential and economic development in Atlanta and surrounding towns during after the Civil War and through the Great Depression periods. Alpharetta lacked railroad service, and thus only experienced steady, limited growth. The city lost its county seat status when the General Assembly combined Milton and Fulton counties in the 1930s in order to spare Milton County from bankruptcy. Alpharetta's downtown and business district grew with the new investment in paved roads and other infrastructure that followed the

merger. From 1940 and into 1960s Alpharetta evolved into a cross-roads community catering to salesmen, travelers and residents, but remained largely a community focused on farming and cotton production. Suburban growth began as outmigration occurred from Atlanta during the 1960s and 1970s. By the 1980s, continued commercial and office development made Alpharetta a major business and residential area. The 1990s and 2000s saw an accelerated continuation of the city's residential and commercial growth. Today, the city is home to major corporations and is among the largest cities in the Atlanta.

## 5.5.2. Historic Resources

### Historic Resource Surveys

Over the past twenty years, several historic resource surveys have been conducted in the Alpharetta area. Several of these surveys have been uploaded to the Georgia Natural, Archeological and Historic Resources Geographic Information System (NAHRGIS) database. The most recent survey to be uploaded to the database was conducted in 2000.

Table 5-10 below presents summary information about the resources identified in Alpharetta. Several resources are listed more than once in the database, but are presented only once for brevity. The NAHRGIS ID column lists all ID numbers for each resource. Additionally, many of the resources may have been lost since they were documented due to new development. Where this is the case, the resource's location could serve as a place for a historic marker to document the resources significance. The resources are also presented in Map 8: Cultural and Historic Resources.

**Table 5-10 Historic Resource Survey Results (Buildings)**

Map ID	Resource Name	Address	National Register	Const. Year	Survey Date	NAHR ID
1	None	10480 Waters Rd.	No	c1930-39	1995	32221
2	Rayner House	3610 Kimball Bridge Rd.	No	c1910-19	1995	32222
3	Carter-Spruell House	3523 Spruell Cir.	No	c1870 -79	1995	32223
4	None	Clement Dr. and 0.1mi. E of Bailey Johnson Rd. intersection	No	c1928	1995	32224
5	Jackson house	10210 Jone Bridge Rd.	No	c1910	1995	32211
6	None	Kimball Bridge Rd. and 0.25 mi. S of State Br. Rd. intersection	No	c1890-99	1995	32212
7	None	Rucker Rd. across from Michaela Dr. intersection	No	c1910-19	1995	32281
8	None	1475 Rucker Rd.	No	c1936	1995	32282
9	Newport Broadwell House	12590 Broadwell Rd.	No	c1910-19	1995	32323
10	Rucker House	1225 Rucker Rd.	No	c1895	1995	32295
11	Rucker-Wright House	1045 Rucker Rd.	No	c1920-29	1995	32297
12	None	Charlotte Rd. and 0.3 mi. N of Rucker Rd. intersection	No	c1890-99	1995	32298
13	Joel Jackson Rucker Home	760 Old Rucker Rd.	No	c1903	1995	32300
14	None	418 Brady St.	No	c1940-49	2000	32755
15	None	388 Brady St.	No	c1930-39	2000	32756
16	None	378 Brady St.	No	c1940-49	2000	32757
17	None	370 Brady St.	No	c1940-49	2000	32758
18	None	341 Brady St.	No	c1920-29	2000	32759
19	None	365 Brady St.	No	c1910-19	2000	32760
20	None	350 Brady St.	No	c1930-39	2000	32761
21	Chelsea Antiques	356 S. Main St.	No	c1929- 34	2000	32762; 32291
22	Vordermeier Insurance	372 S. Main St.	No	c1920-29	2000	32763; 32294
23	None	12989 Providence Rd.	No	c1930-39	1995	32263
24	Reece-Krough-Lightsey House	1750 Mayfield Rd.	No	c1830-39	1995	32264



Map ID	Resource Name	Address	National Register	Const. Year	Survey Date	NAHR ID
25	None	371 S. Main St.	No	c1920-29	2000	32764
26	None	3310 Webb Rd.	No	c1910-19	1995	32235
27	None	13630 Cogburn Rd.	No	c1890-99	1995	32245
28	Smith-Blaizer-Haigler house	1825 Mayfield Rd.	No	c1910-19	1995	32285
29	None	341 Brady Pl.	No	c1930-39	1995	32289
30	Neal Gentry Cobb House	365 Brady Pl.	No	c1898	1995	32290
31	Matilda's Hen House	371 1/2 S. Main St.	No	c1930-39	2000	32765
32	None	935 Maxwell Rd.	No	c1935-44	2000	32767
33	None	1225 Harris Rd.	No	c1920-29	2000	32768
34	None	1080 Rucker Rd.	No	c1910-19	2000	32769; 32296
35	None	12330 Broadwell Rd.	No	c1920-29	1995	32326
36	None	342 Main St.	No	c1940- 49	1995	32292
37	None	348 S. Main St.	No	c1940-49	1995	32293
38	Big Creek Primitive Baptist Church	Kimball Bridge Rd. and 1000 ft. E of State Bridge Rd. intersection	No	c1890-99	1995	32421
39	Rucker, Simeon and Jane, Log House	755 Old Rucker Rd.	Yes	c1833	1997	81283; 32299; 32820

Source: Georgia Natural, Archeological and Historic Resources Geographic Information System (NARGIS) database

### Downtown Alpharetta

Although not a designated historic district, Downtown Alpharetta, shown in Map 8: Cultural and Historic Resources, includes several structures with historic significance connecting the city to its small-town roots. A 1989 survey of downtown district structures determined 51% of the buildings were built after 1960. Continued interest in the downtown as a tourist and activity destination continues. Historic building preservation and maintenance will allow the city to retain its history while maintaining the area as a viable commercial area of the city.

In 2005, the city has adopted an overlay zoning district to implement the Downtown Master Plan. The overlay district supplements the development standards in Alpharetta's Unified Development Code and includes design standards for new development as well as incentives to promote new development. Protecting existing development rights, protecting adjacent residential development, creating new residential and mixed use development, improving development review and promoting a high standard of design are all goals supported by the Historic Downtown Overlay District.

The city administers a grant façade grant program to assist Downtown in making improvements to business fronts – or the back side of the buildings located in Downtown Alpharetta. Section 3.1.1 describes this program in detail.

### National Register Listing

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is the official list of the nation's historic and archaeological resources worthy of protection. A program of the National Park Service, the National Register identifies, evaluates and protects historic places. It is an honorary designation and places no obligations or restrictions on private owners. However, in order to take advantage of incentive-based preservation programs such as the 20% federal tax credit (Federal Historic Preservation Tax Incentives Program), rehabilitation projects must retain a property's historic character by following the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The Rucker, Simeon and Jane Log House located at 755 Old Rucker Road is Alpharetta's one listing (built in 1833 and nominated to the register in 1997). This listing is also shown in Map 8: Cultural and Historic Resources.

### Housing Units Built Prior to 1960

As buildings age, they become suitable candidates for future historic resource surveys and/or nominations to the National Register of Historic Places. Table 5-11 identifies the number of housing units that may have historic value (at least 50 years old) based on 2008 U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey data.

#### Locally Designated Historic Districts

While National Register designation is largely symbolic, a locally-designated historic district can afford real protection to a historic resource. Local designation, accomplished by adoption of an ordinance, requires review and approval of proposed exterior alterations to an affected property. A historic preservation commission (HPC) is appointed as the reviewing body, as authorized by a historic preservation ordinance, and approvals are granted in the form of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA).

An HPC is also authorized to review and approve the proposed relocation or demolition of a building. A COA must be granted before building permits are issued. Paint colors and general maintenance items are not required to be reviewed, although guidance can be provided at the request of a property owner to help maintain the historic integrity of a building and neighboring properties. In Alpharetta, there are no districts that have been designated upon adoption of a historic preservation ordinance and establishment of a historic preservation commission.

Even though the city has not designated its downtown as a historic district, it has been focused on supporting the historic character of the area. Many investments have been made to enhance the livability and viability of the district that include streetscape enhancements, historic remodeling, façade improvements, road improvements and pedestrian connections. The city has also instituted a low interest loan program, with the help of local community banks, to assist property owners in improving their properties. In addition, the Design Review Board for the district reviews projects for aesthetic and architectural control.

Several organizations promote the unique character and history of the district that includes Awesome Alpharetta Welcome Center, the Greater North Fulton Chamber of Commerce, the Alpharetta Historic Society and the downtown merchants through special events and festivals.

### 5.5.3. Historic Resource Protection Tools

#### Alpharetta Historical Society

The Alpharetta Historical Society, whose mission is to preserve, document, and promote the history of the city, provides a variety of services and programs to its members and the public. Among the services the society provides are: historical and genealogical research, preservation and restoration projects, historical programs for Society members and the public, presentations and demonstrations for schools, and publications of local research.

Additionally, the society manages two historic buildings: the Mansell House and the Log Cabin at Milton High School. The Mansell House, a Queen Anne style house constructed in 1912, is owned by the City of Alpharetta and is used as a special events facility. The Log Cabin at Milton High School, originally constructed between 1934 and 1935 by the Future Farmers of American Milton High School Chapter, is owned by the Fulton County Board of Education. Both of these buildings are maintained as collaborations between the Alpharetta Historical Society and the City of Alpharetta. More information about the Alpharetta Historical Society and its work can be found at their website: <http://www.ahsga.org/about.htm>.

**Table 5-11 Housing Units Built Prior to 1960**

Category	Number of Housing Units
Built 1950 - 1959	254
Built 1940 - 1949	27
Built before 1940	166
<b>Total Built before 1960</b>	<b>447</b>

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2008

### **Georgia Main Street Designation**

The Georgia Main Street Program is an initiative of the National Trust for Historic Preservation that is administered at the state level by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) Office of Downtown Development. This nationally-recognized program combines historic preservation with economic development and focuses on the four-point approach” of design organization, economic restructuring, and promotion to restore prosperity and vitality to downtowns and neighborhood business districts. Cities accepted for participation in the Georgia Main Street Program are eligible to receive assistance in the form of technical services, networking, training and information.

DCA also administers the Affiliate Program under the Main Street umbrella. The Affiliate Program is a new concept that may be appropriate for communities just beginning to explore downtown revitalization, those that do not wish to become a designated Main Street community, or those that wish to use the Main Street Approach in a non-traditional commercial setting. Alpharetta is not a designated Main Street or Affiliate community.

### **Certified Local Government Program**

HPD provides state-level administration of the federal Certified Local Government Program (CLG). Any city, town, or county that has enacted a historic preservation ordinance and enforces that ordinance through a local preservation commission is eligible to become a CLG. The benefits of becoming a CLG include eligibility for federal historic preservation grant funds, the opportunity to review local nominations for the National Register prior to consideration by the Georgia National Register Review Board, opportunities for technical assistance, and improved communication and coordination among local, State, and federal preservation activities. Alpharetta has not adopted a historic preservation ordinance and has not established a historic preservation commission, currently making the city ineligible to apply to the CLG Program.

#### **5.5.4. Cemeteries**

There are eight cemeteries located in Alpharetta, as shown in Map 8: Cultural and Historic Resources. Most of cemeteries are small and associated with older churches. The largest cemetery is located in Downtown Alpharetta and directly across the street from Independence High School. The Downtown cemetery serves as an important historic and cultural resource of Alpharetta as well as a prominent green space. Development around all of these cemeteries should give special consideration to the cultural and historic significant of these areas.

*This page was intentionally left blank for two-sided printing.*

# COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

*Service areas and levels of services of public facilities and services with an evaluation of the adequacy and useful life*

This chapter provides an assessment of the community facilities and services in Alpharetta. Community facilities and services assessed were organized into the following major categories shown in the sections that follow: water supply and treatment, sewerage system and wastewater treatment, other facilities and services.

## 6.1. Water Supply and Treatment

### 6.1.1. Existing Facilities

Water availability is one of the most important factors in planning current and potential land use. Water service availability is primarily governed by the permitted withdrawal rate from the Chattahoochee River as allowed by the Environmental Protection Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Secondary factors that affect service availability include the reservoir impoundment volume, water treatment capacity and the hydraulic capacity of the distribution system. Alpharetta's water is provided by the Fulton County Department of Public Works from the Atlanta - Fulton Water Resources Commission (AFCWRC) Water Treatment Plant. Fulton County owns and operates water lines in Alpharetta.

An extensive infrastructure network of six-to 24-inch diameter water lines is currently in place and adequately serves the average and peak daily needs of Alpharetta residents and businesses. Deficiencies which have been identified in the system hydraulic capacity to meet sufficient water flows for firefighting needs are currently being addressed by Fulton County through both capital improvement projects and annual replacement projects.

The construction of several large water mains in the north Alpharetta and Johns Creek areas help meet current and projected demand for potable water. Fulton County has also added three elevated storage tanks and two new booster pump stations to insure proper pressure during the day.

Using the Fulton County consumption rates of 92 gallons per day (GPD) per resident, 210 GPD per industrial employee and 32 GPD for other employees<sup>2</sup>, in the year 2030 Alpharetta's 69,395 residents will need 6.4 million gallons per day (MGD), and its 129,000 employees will consume 4.6 million gallons per day, for a total of 9.0 million gallons per day.

### 6.1.2. Improvement Plans

It is expected that new development will continue to extend water distribution lines where necessary. It is the goal of Fulton County Public Works to design new water lines to meet both present and future demands. The City will continue to coordinate development activities with Fulton County to insure adequate water capacities are planned to meet future demands, and to enforce water conservation measures in all new development in the City.

---

<sup>2</sup> Fulton County Public Works Department

## **6.2. Sewerage System and Wastewater Treatment**

### **6.2.1. Existing Facilities**

An adequate infrastructure of sewer lines serves the existing development in Alpharetta. Fulton County currently provides service all but a small triangle area north of Mayfield Road between Freemanville Road and Bethany Roads (near the Milton/Alpharetta city boundary) that drains to Cooper Sandy Creek (Little River). Few areas in downtown are on septic tanks and will be seweraged through sewer petitions as they come up. The Big Creek Water Reclamation Plant provides wastewater treatment to Alpharetta. The Big Creek Water Reclamation Plant has a current capacity of 24 MGD and has planned to increase to 38 MGD in the next five years.

Fulton County estimates sewage generation in the Big Creek Basin at 100 GPD per resident, 230 GPD per industrial employee and 60 GPD for other employees.<sup>3</sup> Total demand at the plant is projected to reach 27 MGD in the year 2010. Breaking out the City of Alpharetta, in the year 2030 Alpharetta's 69,395 residents will generate 6.9 MGD, and its employment of 129,000 will generate 7.6 MGD for a total of 12.4 MGD. Maximum wastewater flow and pollutant loadings are currently being established by the EPD for the Chattahoochee River below the Big Creek Wastewater Reclamation Facility. According to EPD, the maximum amount of wastewater that can be safely discharged into the Chattahoochee River is 358 MGD. Currently, jurisdictions have been permitted for 302 MGD of wastewater discharge. Total sewer plant expansions, if approved, would increase wastewater flows to approximately 361 MGD within the next ten years; therefore, EPD is investigating several alternative options for wastewater treatment in the future, including enhanced treatment, implementing better stormwater management techniques and encouraging water conservation.

### **6.2.2. Improvement Plans**

While the current infrastructure of sewer lines in Alpharetta is adequate to serve the area, new infrastructure will be extended to accommodate new development as necessary. It is the policy of the City that new sewer lines be designed per Fulton County Standards to meet both present and future service demands and that lines should be sited to accommodate growth at the time of installation.

## **6.3. Other Facilities and Services**

### **6.3.1. Public Safety**

#### ***Existing Facilities***

The Department of Public Safety combines Police, Fire and E-911, and the Office of Emergency Management into a singular department. This public safety model offers a command and administrative structure that provides a coordinated emergency response. Police-fire collaboration has led to service enhancements that go beyond addressing routine issues. Daily collaboration between police and fire commanders on crime, fire, and quality-of-life issues has established a strong base upon which to build a comprehensive emergency preparedness program.

#### ***Fire and Emergency Services***

The Fire and Emergency Services Division provides fire protection and EMS to areas within the incorporated city limits. As shown in Map 9: Public Safety and described in Table 6-2, Fire and Emergency Services operates six fire stations with a total of 99 certified fire fighters. The city has an outstanding ISO rating of 2. The Fire Marshall's Office reviews all new and remodeling plans for businesses and conducts site inspections during construction.

---

<sup>3</sup> Fulton County Public Works Department

### Police Services

The Police Services Division delivers full service law enforcement to the city in addition to management and operation of a detention center and Emergency 911 center. The division currently employs 104 sworn police officers and is headquartered at 2565 Old Milton Parkway. Using Alpharetta's current 2010 population of 52,493, and to provide the highest level of public safety protection, the division staffs roughly 2 officers for every 1,000 residents. The city does however have a sizable non-residential population and therefore the current supply of officers is not overly generous.

### Joint and Other Services

The Department of Public Safety operates the Georgia's only ESU (Emergency Services Unit) vehicle. This special duty vehicle is staffed by police officers who have been and are also trained certified firefighters. This specialized vehicle and staff can respond to a scene and handle initial medical, fire or a law enforcement response. The department has a total of eight staff members who hold both the police and firefighter certifications. In addition, the department operates a reserve police officer program allowing for 25 unpaid reserve police officers who donate countless free policing services. The reserve officers must serve 20 hours each month to maintain their law enforcement certifications.

### Improvement Plans

There are currently no near-term plans for major changes to Public Safety related facilities.

## 6.3.2. Parks and Recreation

### Existing Facilities

The Recreation and Parks Department, with a staff of 51, is responsible for providing safe and pleasant recreation conditions for city residents and visitors. The department provides year-round sports, activities, and special events for children, adults and seniors and manages and operates park and recreation facilities located on approximately 754 acres that are presented in Table 6-2. The Recreation Commission, a nine-member board appointed by the Mayor, is charged with directing the city's recreation programs to include budgeting, planning and staffing. The commission adopts and implements the city's Recreation Master Plan, which serves as the blueprint for development of facilities and programs.

In addition to the parks shown in Table 6-2, several small pocket parks are also located throughout the city, including the downtown area City Square Park (a.k.a. Ole Milton Park), a greenspace adjacent to the Alpharetta Convention and Visitors Center, a pocket park at the intersection of South Main Street and Marietta Street, a pocket park at the Roswell Street/Canton Street intersection, and the Crabapple Silos Park. All parks in Alpharetta are shown in Map 10: Community Facilities. Although not counted towards public park and recreation needs, private parks complement the overall park system and help to satisfy the recreation needs of the citizens. Here are many private parks and recreation facilities located in Alpharetta such as the YMCA, the American Legion facility, the First Baptist Church, the Gold Club of Georgia and single and multi-family recreational facilities.

**Table 6-1 Public Safety Facilities**

Station	Location
Fire Station 1	2920 Webb Bridge Rd.
Fire Station 2	3070 Market Place Blvd.
Fire Station 3	9800 Westside Pkwy.
Fire Station 4	525 Park Bridge Pkwy.
Fire Station 5	1475 Mid Broadwell Rd.
Fire Station 6	3275 Kimball Bridge Rd.
Public Safety Headquarters	2565 Old Milton Pkwy.
Detention Center	2565 Old Milton Pkwy.
Emergency 911 Center	2565 Old Milton Pkwy.

Source: City of Alpharetta Public Safety Department

**Table 6-2 Parks and Recreation**

Park/Facility Name	Location	Acres	Activities/Facilities
Alpharetta Community Center	175 Roswell St.	10	2 gymnasiums, gymnastics area, outdoor track, dance room and restroom
Big Creek Greenway Trail	Big Creek	400	7.2-mile walking trail/path (12-foot-wide concrete path) along Big Creek and parallel to North Point Pkwy. from Webb Bridge Rd. south to Mansell Rd. and restroom facilities
Cogburn Road Park	12825 Cogburn Rd.	5.1	Walking path, passive play area, 2 pavilions, children's playground, arboretum and restroom facilities
Crabapple Government Center	12624 Broadwell Rd.	2	Gymnasium, multi-purpose room, classrooms
North Park (includes Alpharetta Adult Activity Center)	13450 Cogburn Rd.	97	<b>North Park</b> includes 7 tennis courts, 2 football fields, 3 picnic pavilions, 8 softball fields, 2 children's playgrounds, 3 meeting rooms, walking trail/path, North Park Adapted Sports Complex, and restroom facilities; <b>Alpharetta Adult Activity Center</b> includes 3 meeting rooms, 3 arts and crafts rooms, and computer room
Rock Mill Park	3100 Kimball Bridge Rd.	6	Green roof pavilion, outdoor classroom, small-group pavilion, restrooms, visitor comfort station, with trails that connect to the Big Creek Greenway.
Union Hill Park	1590 Little Pine Tr.	12.4	2 outdoor roller hockey rinks (1 covered and 1 uncovered), and restroom concession building.
Willis Park (includes Alpharetta City Pool, Equestrian Center and Recreation Center)	11925 Willis Rd.	110	<b>Willis Park</b> with 10 youth baseball fields, 6 tennis courts, 4 picnic pavilions, 3 children's playgrounds, 1 disc golf course, 4 stables (covered area/show rings), Olympic-size swimming pool/wading pool, walking trail/path, dog park, arboretum, community garden, restrooms. <b>Alpharetta City Pool</b> 50 meter pool, locker room, concession stand; <b>Equestrian Center</b> includes 50 acres (which is part of the 110 acres) show grounds/woods, 8 shed row barns with 298 stalls, 3 open and 1 covered show rings, bleachers, picnic area, viewing room, meeting room, 40 camper hook-ups and restrooms. <b>Recreation Center</b> includes a meeting room and gymnasium
Windward Soccer Complex	6435 Windward Pkwy.	2.3	Youth soccer field
Webb Bridge Park	4780 Webb Bridge Rd.	109	4 youth baseball fields, 3 youth soccer fields, 4 tennis courts, 3 picnic pavilions, children's playground, walking trail/path, arboretum, multi-purpose open field area and restrooms

Source: Alpharetta Recreation Department

### Improvement Plans

The 2008-2013 Alpharetta Recreation and Parks Master Plan established a vision for ensuring that the city's parks, greenways, and recreation facilities and programs continue to be an integral part of the community fabric. This document included an analysis of existing facilities and programs, provided updated standards, outlined strategic initiatives to guide future park development and detailed costs associated with priority projects. The plan's "Areas of Interest Chapter (Chapter 7) identified a wide-range of policies and projects, the highlights of these that impact the city's overall planning and community development include:

- Establish more small, neighborhood parks that offer opportunities for public interaction and passive recreation uses, and locate these parks within walking distance of residential areas (incorporated into the greenway system to improve connectivity, where possible). A specific need exists to provide more parks in the northwest. This includes providing more playgrounds, including destination playgrounds that parents drive to as well as smaller neighborhood playgrounds within walking distance of where people live.
- Add facilities for senior citizens and different cultural groups that have not traditionally been reflected.
- Create conceptual site master plans for each park site and open space that promote appropriate active and passive recreational use as well as environmental sustainability, presenting a functional vision for each site.



- Develop more multi-purpose rectangular fields that can be used for a variety of uses, including soccer, rugby, lacrosse, cricket and other activities.
- Develop an additional dog park on the east side of town.
- Develop a community center on the east side near Webb Bridge that includes a premier multi-use facility with an indoor Olympic size pool, multi-use courts, meeting rooms, and an exercise facility for all ages. This facility should be viewed as an opportunity to work jointly with Johns Creek, since Webb Bridge is near the Alpharetta-Johns Creek boundary (and since there is no similar facility in that particular area of Johns Creek).
- Expand the existing adult activity center in order to accommodate the changing demographics. In addition, develop a master plan for the adult activity center and tennis center that could review the large number of activities taking place in a relatively small area.
- Expand the Willis Park pool to help accommodate demand.
- Implement Phase II of the Alpharetta Community center that includes addition of a fitness facility, indoor track, meeting space and additional staff office space. Invest more in horticulture, the use of indigenous flowers and plants, and the greening of parks. Undisturbed greenspace should be set aside at each part to maintain a “green” feel in the city. This could include looking at community gardens and specialty gardens (such as butterfly gardens).
- Explore options for incorporating more tennis courts in the city. The city does not meet standards established in the plan for tennis courts per capita.
- Expand the existing greenway and create more connections with other trail systems, parks, greenspace, public gathering areas, and residential areas. Linear parks and greenways should help connect other parks in the city system.
- Aggressively pursue acquisition of land as it becomes available, especially for neighborhood parks and public gathering places. A second priority is to acquire land for greenspace, multipurpose trails and cultural and natural resource protection. The third priority is to acquire land for active recreation use.

### 6.3.3. Stormwater Management

Stormwater can be a significant non-point source of water pollution. The impervious surfaces associated with development and public infrastructure, such as roads, can dramatically change the hydrological function of an area and degrade water quality. Impervious surfaces reduce ground water recharge, increase water run-off rates and increase sediment and other pollutant levels in water bodies. The city maintains an inventory of more than 300 private stormwater outfall locations that discharge into waters of the state. A random audit of these outfalls is performed by the city on a yearly basis. In addition, the city Engineering/Public Works Department inspects and maintains 30 stormwater structures located on city properties on a yearly basis. The department also enforces the city’s Stormwater Management ordinance (UDC Sec. 3.3). Alpharetta encourages site planning and design based on the understanding that water is a valuable natural resource that should be used conservatively, cleaned, and reused on-site. However, Downtown Alpharetta includes common, shared stormwater detention facilities, since the urban development pattern makes providing onsite detention for individual parcels impracticable.

### 6.3.4. Solid Waste Management

Alpharetta has no solid waste disposal system of its own and contracts with Republic for solid waste collection, recycling and disposal. The city provides yard trimmings collection and disposal services. The city started the RecycleBank program in April 2010. RecycleBank is a rewards program that motivates participants to recycle by offering valuable Recycling Points for recycling efforts. Participants can save over \$100 annually through this rewards program.

### 6.3.5. Education

#### Public Schools

##### Existing Facilities

Fulton County Schools provides public school services for all of Fulton County, with the exception of the city of Atlanta. Nine county schools are located within the Alpharetta city limits. However, more than 25 county schools serve Alpharetta residents since district boundaries are not based on city boundaries. Three charter schools also operate in the city. County schools located in Alpharetta are shown in Table 6-3 (See Map 10: Community Facilities) along with 2009-2010 enrollment, capacities and enrollment forecasts for future years. Five of the nine county schools located in Alpharetta operated near or over their specified capacity during the 2009-2010 school year. School capacity numbers do not tell the full story on whether a school is overcrowded or not. Particularly at the elementary school level, some programs (e.g. special education) require certain classroom sizes. The school board uses a model based on classroom allocations to determine space. Charter schools located in Alpharetta are shown in Table 6-4 and in Map 10: Community Facilities.

**Table 6-3 Public Schools in Alpharetta**

School Name	Address	2009-10 School Year Enrollment	School Capacity	2009-10 % of Capacity	Forecasted Enrollment		Range
					2010-11	2014-15	
Alpharetta Elementary	192 Mayfield Rd.	711	775	91.7%	688	619	PK-5
Creek View Elementary	3995 Webb Bridge Rd.	960	850	112.9%	969	974	PK-5
Lake Windward Elementary	11770 E. Fox Ct.	851	875	97.3%	852	806	PK-5
Manning Oaks Elementary	405 Cumming St.	756	843	89.7%	826	843	PK-5
New Prospect Elementary	3055 Kimball Bridge Rd.	612	515	118.8%	583	515	PK-5
Haynes Bridge Middle	10665 Haynes Bridge Rd.	625	1,000	62.5%	630	679	6-8
Webb Bridge Middle	455 Webb Bridge Rd.	1,357	1,223	111.0%	1,302	1,223	6-8
Alpharetta High	3595 Webb Bridge Rd.	2,254	2,125	106.1%	2,303	2,172	9-12
Independence High <sup>1</sup>	86 School Dr.	400	NA	NA	NA	NA	9-12

<sup>1</sup>Forecasted enrollment not included for Independence High because it is an open campus school without a regular attendance zone, instead drawing students from throughout Fulton County.

Source: Fulton County Schools

##### Improvement Plans

Fulton County Schools does not currently have plans for new schools or expansion of existing schools located in Alpharetta, based on forecasted enrollment figures. However, they do plan to open a new high school for the 2012-2013 school year at the corner of Bethany Bend and Cogburn Road in Milton. As the school board prepares to open this school, they will modify other high school attendance zones in the area and may potentially consider modification of some middle and elementary school attendance zones. These modifications will impact forecasted enrollment numbers for each school.

**Private Schools**

There are five private secondary schools operating in Alpharetta (or on properties adjacent to the city limits) that offer post-kindergarten education. Table 6-5 presents the detailed list of private schools in Alpharetta. Private school locations are shown in Map 10: Community Facilities.

**Post-Secondary Education**

Residents have access to higher education and training opportunities at the Alpharetta campuses of DeVry Institute of Technology, Reinhardt College, and Georgia State University. In addition, there are a multitude of post-secondary opportunities at locations throughout the Atlanta region. Post-secondary education facility locations are shown in Map 10: Community Facilities.

**6.3.6. Libraries**

The Alpharetta Branch Library, a branch library that is part of the 35-branch Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System (AFPLS) is located at 238 Canton Street in Alpharetta. In its 35 years of operation, the Alpharetta Branch Library has grown from a collection of approximately 7,000 books to 80,000 books and currently ranks third in usage among the AFPLS branches, according to the Friends of the Alpharetta Library.

**6.3.7. Public Health Care Facilities and Services**

Major public health care facilities are shown in Map 10: Community Facilities. These include Public Safety Department resources as well as private hospitals and medical centers.

Alpharetta Fire and Emergency Services maintain a proactive emergency medical services (EMS) system. All engine companies are equipped with advanced cardiac life support supplies and tools to render emergency pre-hospital life support. Other first-line equipment that maintains basic cardiac life support includes semi-automatic defibrillators. Fire and Emergency Services manages and coordinates the service delivery of emergency medical transport services as provided by Fulton County approved third-party vendor.

Northside Hospital Alpharetta Medical Campus is located at the GA-400/Old Milton Parkway interchange area. It offers a variety of comprehensive outpatient services. It includes the Pediatric Imaging Center. Full-service Northside Hospital locations are located 12 miles north of the center in Cumming and 13 miles south in Sandy Springs. North Fulton Hospital located on Hospital Boulevard in Roswell (near the Roswell-Alpharetta border and the intersection of GA-9 and Hembree Road) provides the closest full-care hospital services to residents of Alpharetta. The North Fulton Health Center is located at 3155 Royal Drive in Alpharetta, operated by the Fulton County Department of Health and Wellness.

**Table 6-4 Public Charter Schools in Alpharetta**

School Name	Address	2009-10 School Year Enrollment	Range
Amana Academy	285 S. Main St.	425	K-8
Fulton Science Academy Middle School	1675 Hembree Rd.	503	6-8
Tech. Enriched Accelerated Charter High (TEACH) School	4100 Old Milton Pkwy.	190	9-12

Source: Georgia Charter Schools Association

**Table 6-5 Private Schools in Alpharetta**

School Name	Address	2009-10 School Year Enrollment	Range
Alpharetta Christian Academy	44 Academy St.	351	PK-5
Alpharetta International Academy	4772 Webb Bridge Rd.	164	PK-3
King's Ridge Christian School	2765 Bethany Bend	533	K-12
Preston Ridge Montessori School	3800 North Point Pkwy.	87	PK-K
Rivers Academy	38 N. Main St.		5-12

Source: greatschools.org

*This page was intentionally left blank for two-sided printing.*

# INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

*Identification of existing coordination mechanisms and process with adjacent local governments, independent special authorities and districts, independent development authorities and districts, school boards, and programs*

This chapter identifies existing coordination mechanisms and processes in Alpharetta. These include intergovernmental agreements, service delivery, joint planning and service agreements, special legislation or joint meetings or work groups for the purpose of coordination. Sections below outline the independent agencies, boards and authorities, regional programs, and consistency with the Fulton County Service Delivery Strategy. This chapter assesses the adequacy and suitability of existing coordination mechanisms to serve the current and future needs of the community.

## **7.1. Adjacent Local Governments**

Alpharetta shares municipal borders with the cities of Johns Creek, Milton and Johns Creek. In addition, the northeastern boundary is shared with the Fulton County-Forsyth County boundary. A substantial portion of intergovernmental coordination is achieved through informal processes, such as the exchange of data between Alpharetta and Fulton County government agencies. These informal processes are useful and effective, but formal mechanisms for intergovernmental coordination are also necessary to address some issues that cannot always be resolved through informal methods. The following sections will detail some of the many formal and informal coordination mechanisms that exist between Alpharetta and adjacent local governments.

## **7.2. Independent Agencies, Boards and Authorities**

### **Development Authority of Fulton County**

The Alpharetta Development Authority is a dependent state-enabled authority created by the Mayor and Council pursuant to O.C.G.A. 36-62-1. The city, however, does partner from time-to-time with the Development Authority of Fulton County (DAFC). An independent authority set up by the Fulton County Commission pursuant to O.C.G.A. 36-62-1. DAFC can serve as a tool by which commercial projects are attracted to the city. The Downtown Development Authority, discussed previously in this document, is also a dependent authority.

### **North Fulton Community Improvement District**

North Fulton Community Improvement District (CID) is a self-taxing district that uses additional property taxes to help accelerate transportation and infrastructure improvement projects. CIDs are leading the charge to implement vital transportation enhancements coupled with land use and zoning strategies that will enhance mobility and improve access to the North Fulton activity centers. One seat on the North Fulton CID is appointed by the City of Alpharetta.

### **Atlanta Fulton County Water Resources Commission**

The Atlanta Fulton County Water Resources Commission (AFCWRC) oversees issues relating to a contract signed between the City of Atlanta and Fulton County for the provision of water to the residents of North Fulton County, including the city of Alpharetta. The Fulton County Department of Public Works is the department with responsibility for coordinating with the AFCWRC.

## **7.3. School Board**

### **Fulton County Board of Education**

Alpharetta is served by the Fulton County Board of Education. The board's purpose is to manage the public school system and its facilities in Fulton County. The board is created by the state and receives its powers from state legislation. The board is governed by an elected seven-member board. Alpharetta is served by 15 elementary, seven middle and four high schools operated by the Fulton County Board of Education.

## **7.4. Regional and State Programs**

### **7.4.1. Regional**

#### **Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC)**

Alpharetta is within the service area of the ARC, the regional planning and intergovernmental coordination agency for local governments in the Atlanta metro area. ARC provides aging services, community services, environmental planning, government services, job training, land use and public facilities planning, and data gathering and analysis. ARC works with DCA to oversee the development of Comprehensive Plans in accordance with the Georgia Planning Act and to enforce the Part V planning criteria. ARC also acts as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for area-wide transportation planning. ARC's service area includes ten counties: Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry and Rockdale; and the 63 incorporated municipalities.

#### **Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District (MNGWPD)**

Alpharetta is a municipality within the MNGWPD. The MNGWPD develops regional plans for stormwater management, wastewater management, and water supply and conservation in a 16-county area comprised of Bartow, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Fulton, Forsyth, Gwinnett, Hall, Henry, Paulding, Rockdale and Walton Counties. As such, the City is required to abide by the guidelines established by these plans.

#### **Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA)**

MARTA is a public authority with a governing board including the City of Atlanta and the counties of Fulton, DeKalb, Clayton and Gwinnett for the purposes of planning, constructing, financing and operating a public transportation system. Although MARTA is governed by the aforementioned city and counties, the City of Atlanta, Fulton County and DeKalb County are the only local governments that contribute to the financing of the system. MARTA's revenue source is generated from fares and a 1% sales tax levied on the City of Atlanta, Fulton County and DeKalb County. As a city in Fulton County, Alpharetta is subjected to this sales tax. MARTA has bus routes that connect Alpharetta to the regional system.

### **7.4.2. State**

#### **Department of Transportation (GDOT)**

GDOT plans, constructs, maintains and improves the State and federal roads and bridges in Alpharetta. GDOT provides planning and financial support for other modes of transportation, including mass transit and airports. GDOT is the contractual agency for all transportation projects funded with federal dollars.

### **Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA)**

GRTA's mission is to combat air pollution, traffic congestions and poorly planned development in the metropolitan Atlanta region. Most of GRTA's activities pertain to the transportation, land use and economic development elements of the comprehensive plan. GRTA's legislation requires that it review Developments of Regional Impacts (DRI) within its jurisdiction. DRIs are large-scale developments likely to have effects outside the local government jurisdiction in which they are located. The Georgia Planning Act of 1989 authorizes DCA to establish procedures for intergovernmental review of large-scale projects. The procedures are designed to improve communication between affected governments and to provide a means of assessing potential impacts of large-scale developments before related conflicts arise.

### **Department of Community Affairs (DCA)**

DCA has several management responsibilities for the state's coordinated planning program and reviews plans for compliance with minimum planning standards. DCA provides a variety of technical assistance and grant funding to county and cities.

### **Department of Natural Resources (DNR)**

DNR is available to provide assistance and guidance to the local governments in a number of important areas including: water conservation, environmental protection, wildlife preservation and historic preservation. It is the mission of the DNR to sustain, enhance, protect and conserve Georgia's historic and cultural resources for present and future generations, while recognizing the importance of promoting the development of commerce and utilizing sound environmental practices. The department has nine divisions working to accomplish this mission: Environmental Protection Division (EPD), the Coastal Resources Division, Pollution Prevention Assistance Division, Wildlife Resources Division, Water Conservation Program, and the Program Support Division.

EPD is charged with protection of Georgia's air, land and water resources through the authority of state and federal environmental statutes. These laws regulate public and private facilities in areas of air quality, water quality, hazardous waste, water supply, solid waste, surface mining, underground storage tanks and others. EPD issues and enforces all State permits in these areas and has full delegation for federal environmental permits except Section 404 (wetland) permits.

### **Department of Human Resources (DHR)**

DHR is responsible for the delivery of health and social services. It is one of the largest agencies in state government and serves all Georgia citizens through regulatory inspection, direct service and financial assistance programs.

## **7.5. Consistency with Service Delivery Strategy**

In 1997, the Georgia General Assembly passed the Service Delivery Strategy Act (HB489). This law mandates the cooperation of local governments with regard to service deliver issues. The act required each county to adopt a Service Delivery Strategy (SDS). Table 7-1 provides a summary of services provided in Alpharetta.

**Table 7-1 Fulton County Service Delivery Strategy Summary**

<i>Service Provided</i>	<i>Summary of Service Delivery Strategy as it pertains to Alpharetta</i>
Electricity	Alpharetta provides this service within its boundaries via a franchise agreement.
Economic Development	Alpharetta also provides this service within its boundaries. Fulton Co. provides the service countywide.
Drug Task Force	Alpharetta provides this service within its boundaries. The GBI and DEA provide overlapping support to Alpharetta.
Law Enforcement (Police, Sheriff, Marshall)	Alpharetta provides this service (police) within its boundaries. Fulton Co. provides this service (Sheriff and Marshall) to Alpharetta via the Sheriff's duties and the Marshall's duties associated with the State and Magistrate Courts of Fulton Co.

Service Provided	Summary of Service Delivery Strategy as it pertains to Alpharetta
Building Inspection and Permits ,Planning and Zoning, Environmental Regulation, Environmental Health, Computer Maps, Code Enforcement, Engineering, Refuse Collection, Recycle/Curb, Yard Waste Collection, Street Maintenance, Street Construction, Storm Water, Building Maintenance, Vehicle Maintenance, Purchasing, Management Info. Systems, Jail, Fire, EMS, 911, Senior Centers, Parks, Recreation Programs, Art Programs	Alpharetta provides these services within its boundaries.
Courts	Alpharetta provides this service within its incorporated boundaries via municipal courts within its jurisdiction. Fulton Co. provides this service to Alpharetta via Probate, Juvenile, State and Superior Courts.
Solicitor	Alpharetta provides this service within its boundaries for violations of Alpharetta ordinances. Fulton Co. provides this service to Alpharetta for countywide offenses (i.e. misdemeanors and Fulton Co. ordinance violations).
Elections	Alpharetta provides this service within its boundaries for municipal elections. Fulton Co. will provide the service countywide for county, state and national elections.
Tax Collection	Alpharetta provides this service within its incorporated boundaries to provide collection of municipal property taxes. Fulton Co. provides this service to Alpharetta via tax collection services for the Fulton Co. General Fund and the Fulton Co. School System.
Housing	Alpharetta does not provide this service. Fulton Co. provides this service to Alpharetta via administrative program oversight, down payment assistance, housing rehabilitation program, rental rehabilitation, tenant based rental assistance and housing enterprise zones. The Fulton Co. Housing Authority provides this service to Alpharetta via Section 8 voucher and certificate Program and the tax exempt bond program.
Water Treatment, Water Distribution, Waste Water Treatment, Waste Water Collection, Tax Assessment, Voter Registration, Medical Examiner, District Attorney, Public Defender, Disability Affairs, Workforce Development	Fulton Co. provides these services to Alpharetta.
Board of Education	Fulton Co. Board of Education provides this service to Alpharetta.
Fulton Co. Airport	Fulton Co. provides this service to Alpharetta via the Charlie Brown Airport.
Atlanta Hartsfield Jackson Int'l Airport	Atlanta provides this service countywide.
Indigent Care	Fulton Co. provides this service to Alpharetta via the Fulton-DeKalb Hospital Authority (Grady Hospital)
Animal Control	Fulton County Animal Services provides this service to Alpharetta via a management contract with Barking Hound Village Foundation, Inc..
Physical Health	Fulton Co. provides this service to Alpharetta via the Fulton Co. Dept. of Health and Wellness.
Mental Health/Mental Retardation/Substance Abuse	Fulton Co. provides this service to Alpharetta via the Fulton Co. Dept. of Mental Health/Mental Retardation/Substance Abuse.
Welfare Service	Fulton Co. provides this service to Alpharetta via the Fulton Co. Dept. of Family and Children Services.
Atlanta/Fulton Public Library	Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System provides this service to Alpharetta.
Arts Service Grants	Fulton Co. provides this service to Alpharetta via funding grants (with required municipal matching funds) available through the Fulton Co. Arts Council.
Compatible Land Use Plan Agreement Policies	Fulton Co., Alpharetta and the remaining cities in Fulton Co. have signed intergovernmental agreements establishing compatible land use plan agreement policies as well as a land use conflict identification and resolution procedure.
Extraterritorial Water and Sewer Services Consistency with Land Use Plans and other Ordinances Agreement Summary	Fulton Co., Alpharetta and the remaining cities in Fulton Co. have signed intergovernmental agreements establishing the provision of extraterritorial water and sewer extension and any associated conflicts associated with land use and annexation.

Source: Fulton County Service Delivery Strategy 2002



# TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

*Identification and evaluation of the adequacy of the road network, alternative transportation modes, railroads, trucking, airports and the transportation-land use connection*

## 8.1. Introduction

The following section provides an inventory of the Alpharetta's existing transportation infrastructure, plans and projects. This inventory will provide a basis for future analyses and help identify an appropriate mix of strategies and projects necessary to address transportation and land use needs. Information from this section comes in part from the *North Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP)*, which is currently being developed, and *Envision6*, the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the Atlanta region.

### 8.1.1. North Fulton Transportation Plan

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) is working cooperatively with Alpharetta and the cities of Johns Creek, Milton, Mountain Park Roswell and Sandy Springs to develop a multi-modal comprehensive transportation plan for North Fulton County. The CTP made up of three parts: *Existing Conditions Report*, *Needs Assessment*, and *Recommendations*. To date, the *Existing Conditions Report* and *Needs Assessment* have been completed. The *Recommendations* portion will be guided by the CTP vision statement that was developed at the outset of the project, as follows:

*The North Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan's vision is to develop a functional, reliable and implementable transportation system that...*

- *Supports economic vitality, environmental responsibility, innovation and quality of life*
- *Is designed to achieve safety, connectivity, accessibility, and mobility for users of all modes and support lifelong communities enabling independence as citizens age*
- *Works cooperatively with the area's infrastructure and jurisdictional land use policies*
- *Is developed cooperatively with respect for the preservation of individual jurisdiction's community character*

The goals, needs and priorities identified in the completed NFCTP will help the city plan for improvements to the transportation system in Alpharetta while also informing the regional transportation planning process.

### 8.1.2. Envision6

The RTP is developed by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), which acts as the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for an 18-county area in metro Atlanta. The MPO was created in response to the Federal Aid Highway Act of 1962 that required transportation projects in urbanized areas with 50,000 or more in population be based on “comprehensive, coordinated, and continuing (3-C)” planning process. *Envision6* examines the region’s transportation needs through the year 2030 and provides a framework to address anticipated growth, enhance mobility, reduce congestion and meet air quality standards through systems and policies. A six-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) allocates federal funds to construct the highest priority transportation projects in the near term of the RTP. The TIP identifies federally-funded highway and bridge projects; safety and maintenance projects; bicycle and pedestrian projects; public transit projects; and State and locally funded transportation projects having regional significance. Both the RTP and FY2008-2013 TIP were approved in 2007. A major update to the RTP began in 2009 and is slated for completion in 2011. The resulting *Plan 2040* will also include a comprehensive regional development plan for the 10-county ARC area. Alpharetta related projects are described in tables presented in the following sections and collectively shown in Map 11: ARC Regional Transportation Plan Projects.

## 8.2. Road Network

### 8.2.1. Jurisdiction

The Alpharetta roadway network is comprised of a system of U.S., state and local (i.e. city) routes. The following is a listing of the major roads in Alpharetta:

- GA-400/US-19 (more commonly known as GA-400) is the principal expressway connecting North Fulton to other areas of the Atlanta Region. South of Alpharetta, GA-400 connects with I-285 and I-85. Alpharetta has four GA-400 exits: Mansell Road, Haynes Bridge Road, Old Milton Parkway and Windward Parkway.
- GA-120/Old Milton Parkway runs east to west through Alpharetta and connects the city to Johns Creek, Duluth and I-85 to the east and Roswell, Marietta and I-75 to the west.
- GA-9/Alpharetta Highway a primary north-south corridor west of GA-400 and connects Alpharetta to Milton and Cumming to the north and Roswell, Sandy Springs, Atlanta and I-285 to the south. the primary north-south connector to Downtown Alpharetta.
- Westside Parkway is a primary north-south corridor west of GA-400. The Parkway runs from Mansell Road to the south and to Windward Parkway to the north.
- North Point Parkway is the primary north-south corridor east of GA-400. It runs from Mansell Road to the south, and to Windward Pkwy to the north. Additionally, the roadway connects two major activity center, North Point Mall and the Windward Parkway Business Corridor.
- Windward Parkway is a major east-west connector on the north side of Alpharetta that connects to GA-400 and is a major employment corridor with many large businesses located nearby.
- Haynes Bridge Road is the only major north-south roadway that connects to GA-400. North of GA-400, Haynes Bridge Road connects to Downtown Alpharetta and Alpharetta Highway. South of GA-400, and to connects to North Point Mall and residential developments south of the city.

### 8.2.2. Functional Classification

Alpharetta’s road network is classified by function (service area, traffic mobility and volumes, trip length, land access) under the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) functional classification system. Table 8-1 highlights the functional classification system for urban areas, including a description of the road type and corresponding roads inside the city limits (See Map 12: Functional Classification). The functional classifications assigned to the listed roadways are current as of October 1, 2009.

### 8.2.3. Lanes

The number of available lanes on a road largely determines the roadway capacity, or the maximum traffic flow obtainable. In Alpharetta, most roads are two-lane (one lane in each direction). Roads that are designed to accommodate higher traffic volumes have additional lanes. These are generally arterial roads and freeways, although some collector and local roads may exceed two lanes due to their function. Primary examples are North Point Parkway (local road) and Westside Parkway (collector road), which have four to six lanes to facilitate access to regional commercial areas. Table 8-2 indicates the roads within the city that have more than two travel lanes.

### 8.2.4. Medians

Medians separate opposite direction travel lanes and may take the form of raised concrete, landscaping, a center two-way left-turn lane, or striped pavement not intended for travel. They are used to ensure the safe, efficient movement of travel, as an access management tool to control left-turn movements, or as a refuge for pedestrians crossing multi-lane roads. Table 8-3 lists the type and location of medians located in Alpharetta.

**Table 8-1 Functional Classification of Road Network**

Functional Classification	Description	Roadway in Alpharetta
Interstate and Freeway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Highest mobility and heaviest traffic volumes</li> <li>Serve longer distance travel</li> <li>Support regional mobility</li> <li>Access only at grade-separated interchanges</li> <li>Funded by GDOT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Interstate: None</li> <li>Freeway: GA-400 (with interchanges at Mansell Rd., Haynes Bridge Rd., Old Milton Pkwy., and Windward Pkwy.).</li> </ul>
Principal Arterial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Serve medium to longer distance travel</li> <li>Tightly-controlled access with few, if any, individual site driveways</li> <li>Funded by local governments and GDOT</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GA-9</li> <li>GA-120</li> <li>Old Milton Pkwy.</li> </ul>
Minor Arterial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Heavy traffic volumes</li> <li>Trips of medium length</li> <li>Provides intra-community connectivity</li> <li>Some emphasis on land access</li> <li>Funded primarily by local governments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Rucker Rd./Marietta St.</li> <li>Mid Broadwell Rd./Milton Ave.</li> <li>Mansell Rd.</li> <li>Haynes Bridge Rd.</li> <li>McGinnis Ferry Rd.</li> </ul>
Collector Street	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Medium traffic volumes</li> <li>Trips of moderate length</li> <li>Provides intra-community connectivity</li> <li>Some emphasis on land access</li> <li>Funded generally by local governments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Mayfield Rd.</li> <li>Cogburn Rd.</li> <li>Webb Bridge Rd.</li> <li>Kimball Bridge Rd.</li> <li>Waters Rd.</li> <li>Westside Pkwy. (west of GA-400)</li> </ul>
Local Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lower traffic volumes</li> <li>Moderate trip lengths</li> <li>Highest access and least mobility</li> <li>Least mobility and lowest traffic volumes</li> <li>Funded generally by local governments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Located throughout Alpharetta (includes North Point Pkwy. and Windward Pkwy. east of GA-400)</li> </ul>

Source: Georgia Department of Transportation

**Table 8-2 Number of Travel Lanes**

Number of Lanes	Roadway
Four (two in each direction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GA-9</li> <li>Old Milton Pkwy. (east of GA-400)</li> <li>Mansell Rd.</li> <li>Westside Pkwy.</li> <li>North Point Pkwy. (north of Kimball Bridge Rd.)</li> </ul>
Six (three in each direction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Old Milton Pkwy. (west of GA-400)</li> <li>North Point Pkwy. (south of Kimball Bridge Rd.)</li> <li>Haynes Bridge Rd. (north of North Point Pkwy.)</li> </ul>
Eight (four in each direction)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GA-400</li> </ul>

**Table 8-3 Medians**

Type	Roadway
Concrete median	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>GA-400</li> <li>Westside Pkwy. at Mansell Rd.</li> </ul>
Landscaped median	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Point Pkwy.</li> <li>Westside Pkwy.</li> <li>Windward Pkwy.</li> <li>Webb Bridge Rd. (from GA-400 to North Point Pkwy.)</li> <li>Haynes Bridge Rd. (from of GA-400 to North Point Pkwy.)</li> <li>Mansell Rd. (from Westside Pkwy. to Haynes Bridge Rd.)</li> <li>Old Milton Pkwy.</li> </ul>
Two-way left turn lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Portions of GA-9</li> <li>Westside Pkwy. at Haynes Bridge Rd.</li> </ul>
Striped median	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Haynes Bridge Rd. at Roswell city limits</li> </ul>

Source: North Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan, Existing Conditions Report (includes Tables 8-2 and 8-3)

### 8.2.5. Level of Service

The *Highway Capacity Manual* states that Level-of-Service (LOS) is a measure of operating conditions experienced by motorists. The LOS is an indication of delay and is measured on a grading scale from A to F, with A representing best conditions and F representing the worst conditions. LOS A typically occurs on roadways with free-flowing conditions and little delay, while LOS F typically occurs on roadways with high congestion and heavy delay (approaching gridlock). The NFCTP's *Existing Conditions* identified the following roadway segments with daily LOS F within Alpharetta:

- GA-9 from northern Fulton County line to Academy Street
- Windward Parkway From GA-9 to Windward Concourse
- McGinnis Ferry Road from Morris Road to the eastern Fulton County line
- Rucker Road from Arnold Mill Road to GA-9
- GA-120 from GA-400 to Jones Bridge Road
- Kimball Bridge Road/Waters Road from North Point Parkway to Jones Bridge Road
- Mansell Road from GA-9 to GA-400

### 8.2.6. Improvement Projects

The RTP identified improvement projects based on an evaluation of the number and type of regional land use objectives and growth policies that each transportation project supports, including system management (i.e. signal timing, access management), connectivity to activity centers transit amenities, and bike/pedestrian elements. Road improvement projects that are located in Alpharetta are listed in Table 8-2 and shown in Map 11: ARC RTP Projects. The list includes projects located entirely within the city limits as well as those where the project termini may be outside of the city. Projects identified as “programmed” are those for which one or more phases (preliminary engineering, right-of-way acquisition or construction) are scheduled to be undertaken during the years covered by the TIP (2008-2013). “long range” projects are those where all of the phases are not scheduled until 2014 or later. Local roadway improvement projects are also identified in several planning studies completed in recent years. Recommended projects are listed in Table 8-4.

**Table 8-4 Envision 6 Roadway Improvement Projects**

ARC ID	Project Type	Project Description	Status	Planned Completion Date
AR-936	General Purpose Roadway Capacity	GA-400 Flexible Shoulder Lanes from Spalding Dr. in North Fulton Co. to McFarland Rd. in Forsyth Co.	Long Range?	2011
FN-003A	General Purpose Roadway Capacity	GA-120 (Kimball Bridge Rd./Abbotts Bridge Rd.) from State Bridge Rd./Old Milton Pkwy. in Fulton Co. to Peachtree Industrial Blvd. In Gwinnett Co.	Long Range	2020
FN-031B	General Purpose Roadway Capacity	Haynes Bridge Rd. from Mansell Rd. to Old Alabama Rd.	Long Range	2020
FN-067A	General Purpose Roadway Capacity	GA-9 (N. Main St./Cumming Hwy.) from Academy St. to Windward Pkwy.	Long Range	2030
FN-067B	General Purpose Roadway Capacity	GA-9 (S. Main St.) from Upper Hembree Rd. to Academy St.	Long Range	2030
FN-107	General Purpose Roadway Capacity	Kimball Bridge Rd. from North Point Pkwy. to State Bridge Rd. / Old Milton Pkwy.	Long Range	2020
FN-126	General Purpose Roadway Capacity	GA-140 (Houze Rd. / Arnold Mill Rd.) from Mansell Rd. to Ranchette Rd.	Long Range	2020
FN-173A	General Purpose Roadway Capacity	Westside Pkwy Segment 2 from 1,000' south of Mansell Rd. to Rock Mill Rd. at Sanctuary Park	Programmed	2009
FN-192A	Intersection Improvements	Webb Bridge Rd. at Park Bridge Pkwy. / Shirley Bridge Rd.	Programmed	2011
FN-199	ITS <sup>1</sup> -Smart Corridor	GA-9 ATMS (Advanced Traffic Management System) from Abernathy Rd. to Forsyth Co. Line	Programmed	2011
FN-201	ITS-Other	Windward Pkwy. Traffic Signal Interconnections from GA- 9 (Alpharetta Rd.) to McGinnis Ferry Rd.	Programmed	2011
FN-202	ITS-Other	North Point Pkwy. Traffic Signal Interconnections from Mansell Rd. to Windward Pkwy.	Programmed	2011

ARC ID	Project Type	Project Description	Status	Planned Completion Date
FN-215	Intersection Improvements	Kimball Bridge Rd. at Waters Rd.	Programmed	2011
FN-222	General Purpose Roadway Capacity	GA-9 (Cumming Hwy.) from Windward Pkwy. to Forsyth Co.	Long Range	2030
FN-233A	General Purpose Roadway Capacity	McGinnis Ferry Rd. seg. I from Union Hill Rd. to Sargent Rd.	Programmed	2020
FN-242	Roadway Operational Upgrades	GA-140 (Houze Rd.) Traffic Signal Upgrades at four locations	Programmed	2009
FN-246	Roadway Maintenance/ Operations	GA-9 (Atlanta St.) Repaving from Chattahoochee River to GA-120 (Marietta Hwy.)	Programmed	2009

Source: *Envision6 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), FY 2008-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (Updated 06/24/10)*; City of Alpharetta

<sup>1</sup>Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

**Table 8-5 Local Roadway Improvement Projects**

Source	Project Description	Timeframe for Completion
<i>Comprehensive Plan 2025</i> (City of Alpharetta, 2006)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Webb Ridge Rd. from Red Oak Ln. to GA-400</li> <li>▪ Future Westside Pkwy. from Mansell Rd. to Old Milton Pkwy.</li> <li>▪ Norcross St. from Marietta St. to Thompson St.</li> </ul>	Short Term
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Westside Pkwy. from Old Milton Pkwy. To Windward Pkwy.</li> <li>▪ Mansell Rd. from Old Roswell Rd. to GA-400</li> </ul>	Intermediate
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Webb Ridge Rd. from GA-400 to Kimball Bridge Rd.</li> <li>▪ Alpharetta Rd. from Canton St. to Windward Pkwy.</li> <li>▪ Haynes Bridge Rd. from Mansell Rd. to County Line</li> </ul>	Long Term
<i>Downtown Circulation Study</i> (City of Alpharetta, 2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Install a median along Main St. from Old Milton Ave. to Mayfield Rd.</li> <li>▪ Reassign GA-9 designation to other city streets</li> <li>▪ Reduce lane widths of Old Milton Pkwy. to Mayfield Rd.</li> <li>▪ Dual right-turn lane NB Main St. to EB Old Milton Pkwy.</li> </ul>	Short Term
<i>North Point Activity Center Livable Centers Initiative</i> (City of Alpharetta, 2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ New roadway extending from Encore Pkwy. To Mansell Rd. and from GA-400 to North Point Pkwy.</li> </ul>	TBD commensurate with development
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Advanced traffic management system for North Point Activity Center, including Mansell Rd. and Haynes Bridge Rd.</li> </ul>	2010
<i>Blueprint North Fulton Master Plan</i> (North Fulton Community Improvement District, 2008)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mansell Rd. Triple-left-turn-lane onto North Point Pkwy.</li> </ul>	2010
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Windward Pkwy. Right-turn lane at GA-400 exit</li> </ul>	2011
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alpharetta Intersection Improvements</li> </ul>	2010-2011
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Key Corridor Signal Timing</li> <li>▪ Reconstruct Windward Pkwy./Windward Concourse intersection</li> </ul>	Ongoing Short Term
City of Alpharetta Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Old Milton Pkwy. at GA-9 intersection improvement project</li> </ul>	Priority II

### 8.3. Bridges

Seventeen bridges are located in Alpharetta, and they are inspected by GDOT every two years as required by the Federal Highway Administration. The bridges are assigned a sufficiency rating to provide an overall measure of their condition and to determine eligibility for federal funds. Bridges with a sufficiency rating of 50.0 or below qualify for federal replacement funds. Based on the *Existing Conditions* report from the NFCTP, four bridges in the city have a rating below 50.0:

- Windward Parkway EBL over Big Creek
- Windward Parkway WBL over Big Creek
- Douglas Road over Caney Creek
- Rockmill Way over Foe Killer Creek

The long-range RTP includes two bridge projects in Alpharetta, both of which are in the short-term TIP, as identified in Table 8-6 and shown in Map 11: ARC RTP Projects. In addition, Alpharetta's Capital Budget for Fiscal Year 2011 (July 1, 2010 through June 30, 2011) identifies maintenance measures for several city-owned bridges in response to biennial inspections by GDOT inspectors. The measures are intended to prevent further deterioration of bridge conditions at the following locations:

- Mansell Road over Big Creek (two bridges)
- Windward Parkway over Camp Creek (two bridges)
- Windward Parkway over Big Creek (two bridges)
- Rucker Road over Foe Killer Creek Tributary (one bridge)
- McGinnis Ferry Road over Big Creek (one bridge)
- Waters Road over Long Indian Creek (one bridge)
- Windward Parkway over Big Creek Tributary (one bridge)
- Deck joint/other repairs for bridges throughout the city

The city also plans to replace the Douglas Road bridge at Caney Creek in order to improve vehicular safety and pedestrian safety and connectivity.

**Table 8-6 FY2008-2013 TIP Bridge Projects**

ARC ID	Project Type	Project Description	Planned Completion Date
FN-165	Bridge Replacement	Kimball Bridge Rd. at Big Creek (includes sidewalks, bike lanes and Big Creek Greenway underpass)	2011
FN-173B	Bridge Capacity	Westside Pkwy Segment 2 – Rock Mill Rd. / Old Roswell Rd. at Foe Killer Creek	2009

Source: FY 2008-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (Updated 06/24/10)

### 8.4. Railroads

The Atlanta region is served by two primary Class I railroads, CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern, and three smaller rail lines: Georgia Northeastern, Fulton County Railway, and GDOT-owned rail lines. None of these railroads transverse Alpharetta.

### 8.5. Trucking

There are two officially-designated truck routes in Alpharetta, shown in Map 13: Regional Truck Routes, which include GA-400 and a portion of GA-9. Designated truck routes are part of a national network of highways suitable for safely and efficiently accommodating large vehicles authorized by provisions of the Surface Transportation Assistance Act of 1982 (STAA) as amended. However, the *Atlanta Regional Freight Mobility Plan* identifies an Atlanta Regional Priority Freight Highway Network. This network includes GA-92 and GA-120, in addition to GA-400.

## 8.6. Airports

There are no airports within the city boundaries. Alpharetta residents and workers are served primarily by Hartsfield-Jackson-Atlanta International Airport along with several small airports that do not offer commercial flights. No airports are located in Alpharetta.

## 8.7. Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The sidewalk network in Alpharetta includes the presence of sidewalks along one or both sides of arterial and collector streets, and sidewalks on local streets in most neighborhoods, as shown in Map 14: Sidewalk Network. As shown in Map 15 Bicycle Network, bicycle facilities include a designated bike lane on Windward Parkway from a shopping center driveway west of GA-400 to North Point Parkway, a paved shoulder on Kimball Bridge Road from Bridgeway Christian Academy to Jones Bridge Road, a designated bike lane at the intersection of Mayfield and Providence Roads, as well as a segment of the Northern Crescent State Bicycle Route. The Northern Crescent is an unmarked route that connects the Cities of Woodstock (Cherokee County) and Suwanee (Gwinnett County) and passes through Alpharetta along Webb Bridge Road and Mayfield Road.

The NFCTP's *Existing Conditions* assigns a LOS grade (A through F) based on how well a roadway segment accommodates the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists. Segments with graded "E" or "F" are considered to operate at a poor LOS. In Alpharetta LOS E or F roadways with respect to pedestrian use are Rucker Road and Old Milton Parkway / GA-20 east of North Point Parkway. Poorly operating segments for bicycling are GA-9, Old Milton Parkway east of North Point Parkway, McGinnis Ferry Road, and the eastern most portion of Windward Parkway.

Walking and cycling opportunities are combined in the city's multi-use paths at North Park, Wills Park and Recreation Center, and Webb Bridge Park, in addition to the Big Creek Greenway. The greenway extends from the southern end of the city just east of GA-400 to Webb Ridge Road. The city is currently constructing an extension of Big Creek Greenway, for completion in fall 2011. The project will extend the greenway from Webb Bridge Road to Marconi Drive. Further extensions are recommended in the *North Point Activity Center Livable Centers Initiative* (LCI) study, resulting in phased connections to and along Haynes Bridge Road and North Point Parkway from 2015 to 2017. Ultimately, the greenway is planned to connect to Forsyth County's greenway system to the north.

Several pedestrian and bicycle improvement projects were recommended in recent planning studies conducted by the city. Priority projects in the *Alpharetta Downtown Circulator Study* include the installation of new midblock crossings adjacent to the Smokejack Restaurant (South Main Street) and north of the South Main Street/Marietta Street intersection; associated projects are the reduction of lane widths on Main Street and the reassignment of GA-9 markers to other city streets. Other recommended priority projects are trail and path connections around the west and northwest sections of the Downtown area near Independence High School, bicycle enhancements (signage, striping, or shared lane symbol) along the Big Creek Greenway connection via Webb Ridge Road and Academy Street, and the Downtown Greenway to connect Old Milton Parkway and Milton Avenue.

In addition to the Big Creek Greenway extension projects, *North Point Activity Center LCI* recommendations include the construction of bicycle and pedestrian facilities on Mansell Road from Big Creek to the MARTA Park and Ride Lot, as well as the installation of sidewalks and bicycle lanes on Encore Parkway and its bridge over GA-400. The *Blueprint North Fulton Master Plan*, sponsored by the North Fulton Community Improvement District (CID), echoes the LCI recommendations related to Encore Parkway. The CID is currently coordinating with the city on the Encore Parkway Corridor Improvement project, which in addition to bike/pedestrian improvements is proposed to include median improvements and landscape upgrades.

The city is in the process of completing two local sidewalk construction projects: Mid-Broadwell Road Sidewalk (Phase II), which will connect Downtown Alpharetta and Wills Park, and Webb Bridge Road Sidewalk, which will connect surrounding neighborhoods with Creekview Elementary School. The city's FY2011 Capital Budget includes the construction of sidewalks on Devore Road and a northern segment of Houze Road.

## 8.8. Public Transit

The Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA) has several bus routes that pass through Alpharetta, and Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) Xpress Regional Commuter Service is accessible. GDOT Rideshare park-and-ride lots are located within at the GA-400-Mansell Road interchange and at the GA-400/Windward Parkway interchange, allowing commuters to ride a bus to the North Springs MARTA rapid rail station. Area MARTA bus routes are shown in Table 8-5 and in Map 16: Public Transportation. While Xpress' GA-400 Cumming to North Springs/Atlanta route passes through Alpharetta, it does not have an Alpharetta stop. Alpharetta residents who wish to use the service must take MARTA (or drive) to North Springs Station or travel north to the Cumming Park and Ride lot.

**Table 8-7 Public Transit Routes**

Service Provider	Route Number/Name	Route Description
MARTA	140 – North Point/Mansell Park & Ride	Service between Mansell Park and Ride in Alpharetta and the North Springs Station
MARTA	143 – Windward Park & Ride	Service from the Windward Pkwy. corridor and Windward Park & Ride (via US-19/GA-400) in Alpharetta to the North Springs Station
MARTA	185 – Alpharetta/Holcomb Bridge Rd.	Service between Windward Park and Ride in Alpharetta and the North Springs Station. Provides service between Alpharetta and the northern portion of Roswell along GA-9/GA-120.
GRTA	400 – Cumming to North Springs/Atlanta	Service between the Cumming Park and Ride lot in Forsythe County to the North Springs Station in Sandy Springs.

Source: North Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan Existing Conditions Report 2010

In 2008 a long-range transit vision, *Concept 3*, was developed by the Transit Planning Board (TPB), a joint venture of MARTA, ARC and the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA). In 2009, the Atlanta Regional Transit Implementation Board (TIB) was established to guide the implementation of *Concept 3*. TIB is a partnership between MARTA, ARC, GRTA and GDOT. *Concept 3*'s recommendations include major transit corridors for the North Fulton area, including bus rapid transit (BRT) systems on GA-9 and GA-120 and an extension of the MARTA North Line from the North Springs Station to Windward Parkway. In addition, the *North Point Activity Center LCI* study recommends the preservation of land for a future North Point station. The study also addresses the potential for a circulator/shuttle system. Although a 2008 North Fulton CID feasibility study showed there is the potential for a CID-wide commuter shuttle, the LCI study indicated a local shuttle in the city is not currently feasible due to development patterns, densities and cost.

The *Needs Assessment* report of the NFCTP summarizes transit-related needs based on stakeholder input. The primary need for Alpharetta was local bus service improvements, including the following examples:

- Improved east-west service (potentially along GA-120) to provide access to key destinations within North Fulton without having to go through Atlanta;
- Enhanced service to LCI areas in Downtown Alpharetta, the North Point area, and Windward Parkway; and
- Working with the North Fulton CID to coordinate employer shuttle service between the MARTA North Springs Station and the major employment centers.

Bus service improvements are reflected in the study recommendations of the *Alpharetta Downtown Circulator Study*, which proposes upgraded bus stops at 12 locations throughout the Downtown area. Other local transit-related projects identified for the city include those in the *City of Alpharetta Comprehensive Plan 2025*, as follows:

- Maxwell Road/Main Street from Upper Hembree Road to North Point Center East
- Hardscrabble Road/Houze Road/Hembree Road from County Line to city Limit
- GA-400 from City Limit to Windward Parkway
- North Point Center East from North Point Circle to Upper Hembree Road
- North Point Center East/North Point Parkway/State Bridge Road from North Point Circle to county line



- Morris Road from North Point Parkway to North Point Parkway

The current TIP includes one project that support transit, as identified in Table 8-9 and shown in Map 11: ARC RTP Projects. Previous to October, 2009 the TIP included the “MARTA Rail Line Extension – Feasibility Study and Alternatives Analysis, North Springs Station to Vicinity of North Point Mall”; however an amendment to the TIP removed the study.

**Table 8-8 FY2008-2013 TIP Transit Projects**

ARC ID	Project Type	Project Description	Status	Planned Completion Date
AR-H-400	HOV Lanes	GA-400 Managed Lanes (Bus/Auto) from I-285 to McFarland Rd.	Programmed	2020

Source: FY 2008-2013 Transportation Improvement Program (Updated 06/24/10)

## 8.9. Private Transit System

Passenger rail in Georgia is provided by Amtrak, which is the only entity authorized to operate on any freight railroad in the railroad. The Crescent line offers daily trips between New Orleans and New York City via Atlanta. The closest Amtrak station to Alpharetta is near downtown Atlanta. The closest Greyhound intercity bus stop is in downtown Atlanta.

## 8.10. Parking

Free parking is available throughout the city and primarily consists of privately owned surface parking lots located in front of individual developments as well as city-managed on-street parking in the downtown area. The GDOT Rideshare park-and-ride lots are currently underutilized and not convenient to transit users. Structured parking facilities are located at many of the city’s office parks, and large amounts of surface parking are provided with retail land uses.

Surface parking is particularly abundant east of GA-400 at North Point Mall and the large commercial centers along North Point Parkway. The *North Point LCI* study estimates there are more than 27,600 private parking spaces provided with the area’s major office and retail developments. The study also noted that the parking lots associated with the retail development provide interparcel access between outparcel uses and the inparcel uses; however this access does not benefit pedestrians due to a lack of sidewalks as well as the large size of the parking lots. The study points to these strip retail centers with their large parking areas as redevelopment opportunities over the next 5-10 years.

In the Downtown area, parking was first addressed in the *Downtown Master Plan (2003)*, which indicated there is a perception of inadequate parking serving local businesses and identified new locations for potential municipal private lots and decks. The *2008 Downtown Circulator Study* further evaluated the topic, and determined that there is an adequate supply of parking that should be used more efficiently and supplemented with additional parking in select locations. The study recommended several strategies in support of the overall objective to improve, expand, and better facilitate parking in and around the downtown area, as follows:

### Recommendation: Parking by Street/Corridor

- Move exclusive parking along Milton Avenue west of Roswell Street out to street and open to general use; add a defined sidewalk with streetscaped elements
- Enforce or meter Old Roswell Street lot in one- or two-hour increments

### Recommendation: Parking Structure

- Build a multi-story parking structure on the existing Roswell Street lot

- Enhance driveway/entrance to attract downtown visitors to the structure's location

*Recommendation: Improve Visibility of Signage*

- Erect signs directing drivers to “Public Parking” on Main Street, Milton Avenue, Canton/Roswell Streets, and Old Roswell/Old Canton Streets

*For Additional Discussion*

- Partner with the two churches adjacent to the downtown area to lease parking Monday to Saturday.
- Purchase new properties (such as the large residential track close to the Old Roswell/Roswell Street intersection) for potential parking lot/structure locations
- Consider a new Comprehensive Parking Strategy Study that is implementable and has broad political and business support

## **8.11. Transportation and Land Use Connection**

Transportation has had a significant impact on development patterns and opportunities in Alpharetta. In the latter 1980s, construction of GA-400 helped stimulate commercial and residential development east of the traditional city center, including concentrated office development along Windward Parkway and continued retail growth of the North Point Mall area. GA-400 also provided the city with accessibility to a major commuting and commerce route as well as Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

Due to the intensity of development that has occurred along GA-400, much of the corridor and adjacent areas in Alpharetta has been designated as a “Mega Corridor” on ARC’s Unified Growth Policy Map. The map was developed in 2008 as part of the *Envision 6* regional planning process for use in guiding future growth patterns. It identifies and encourages growth in established areas, including North Point Mall and Windward Parkway “regional centers,” and Downtown Alpharetta. The remaining areas in the city are identified as “suburban neighborhoods” intended to maintain the existing development pattern. The following land use policies are associated with the map, specifically for developed areas:

- Promote sustainable economic growth in all areas of the region
- Encourage development within principal transportation corridors, the Central Business District, activity centers and town centers
- Increase opportunities for mixed-use development, transit-oriented development, infill and redevelopment
- At strategic regional locations, plan and retain industrial freight land uses
- Design transportation infrastructure to protect the context of adjoining development and provide a sense of place appropriate for our communities
- Promote the reclamation of brownfield development sites

In support of these policies, the *Downtown Master Plan* envisions Downtown Alpharetta as a mixed-use center that provides a variety of housing types to attract a residential population who can support area businesses and reduce commute times to local employers. A key to realizing this vision is enhancing connectivity within Downtown and to surrounding activity areas. The *Downtown Circulation Study* cites the importance of concentrating infill development or redevelopment opportunities in the city’s Historic Businesses District and encouraging denser development patterns beyond the downtown core in order to maximize connectivity and walkability in the area.

In the North Point Activity Center, defined in the LCI Study as an area that includes North Point Mall, a collection of retail commercial developments, and the Big Creek Greenway on the eastern side of GA-400, a development framework of more compact mixed-use village and commercial centers is recommended. To that end, the study’s transportation recommendations address:

- Providing multi-modal connectivity throughout the study area;

- Leveraging the existing transportation network for vehicular and alternative mode travel;
- Creating an off-road network for pedestrian and bicycle travel; and
- Supporting potential future transit investments.

The potential for transit opportunities to increase in an area is dependent largely on the density, diversity, and design of future land uses, as summarized in the NFCTP's Existing Conditions report. MARTA's North Line Transit Oriented Development Study (2006) was developed to assess the potential for transit oriented development (TOD) and encourage new development patterns along the GA-400 corridor that could support future MARTA expansion in North Fulton County. The selection of an area best suited for a future TOD prototype was guided by a development strategy that encouraged a mix of commercial, residential and recreational uses, housing, transportation options, and connectivity to cities and major activity and employment centers. The North Point area was selected as the most viable option.

As these recent planning studies have illustrated, and consistent with *Envision6* policies, it is important to continue to coordinate transportation and land use planning. Development patterns should reduce daily vehicle use, improve air quality, and promote a transit-supportive infrastructure, a pedestrian-friendly environment, improved roadway connectivity and integrated mixed-use development.

*This page was intentionally left blank for two-sided printing.*

CHAPTER  
9

# ATLAS OF MAPS

Map 1 – Study Area ..... 9-2

Map 2 – Regional Context ..... 9-3

Map 3 – Environmental Planning Criteria ..... 9-4

Map 4 – Slope Analysis ..... 9-5

Map 5 – Floodplains ..... 9-6

Map 6 – Soils of Statewide Importance ..... 9-7

Map 7 – Scenic Areas/Forests/Recreation and Conservation Areas ..... 9-8

Map 8 – Cultural and Historic Resources ..... 9-9

Map 9 – Public Safety ..... 9-10

Map 10 – Community Facilities ..... 9-11

Map 11 – ARC Regional Transportation Plan Projects ..... 9-12

Map 12 – Functional Classification ..... 9-13

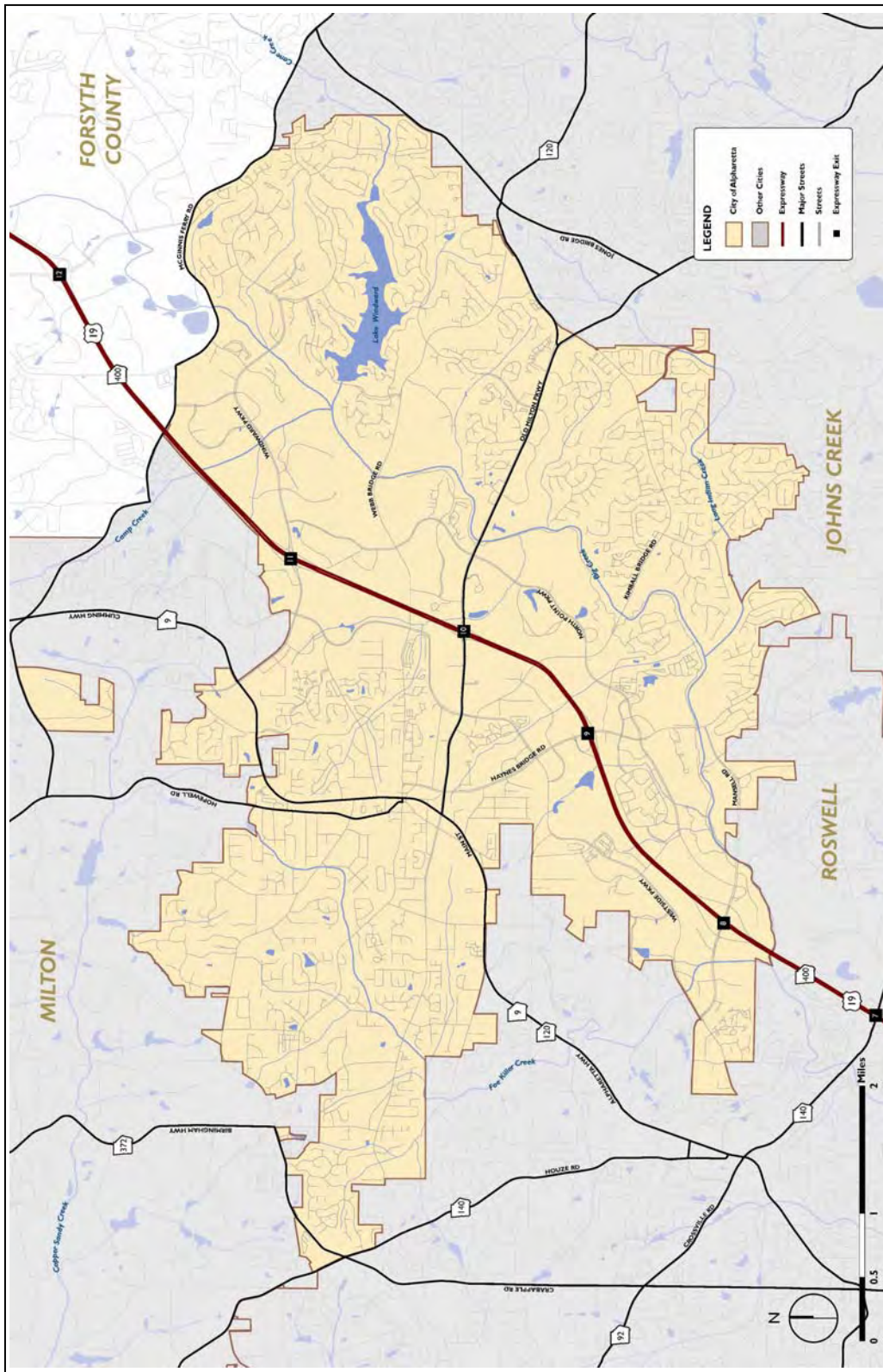
Map 13 – Regional Truck Routes ..... 9-14

Map 14 – Sidewalk Network ..... 9-15

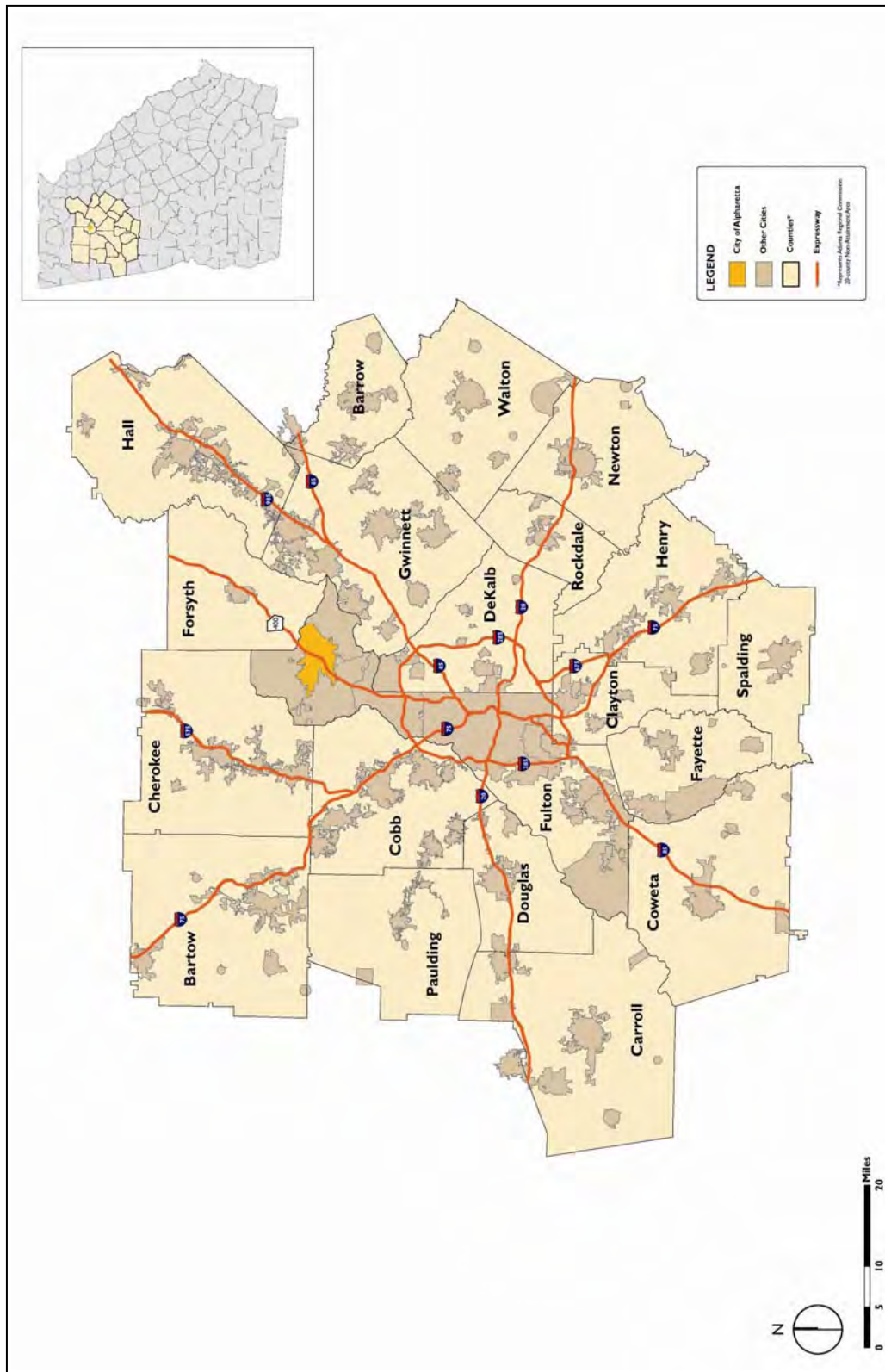
Map 15 – Bicycle Facilities ..... 9-16

Map 16 – Public Transportation ..... 9-17

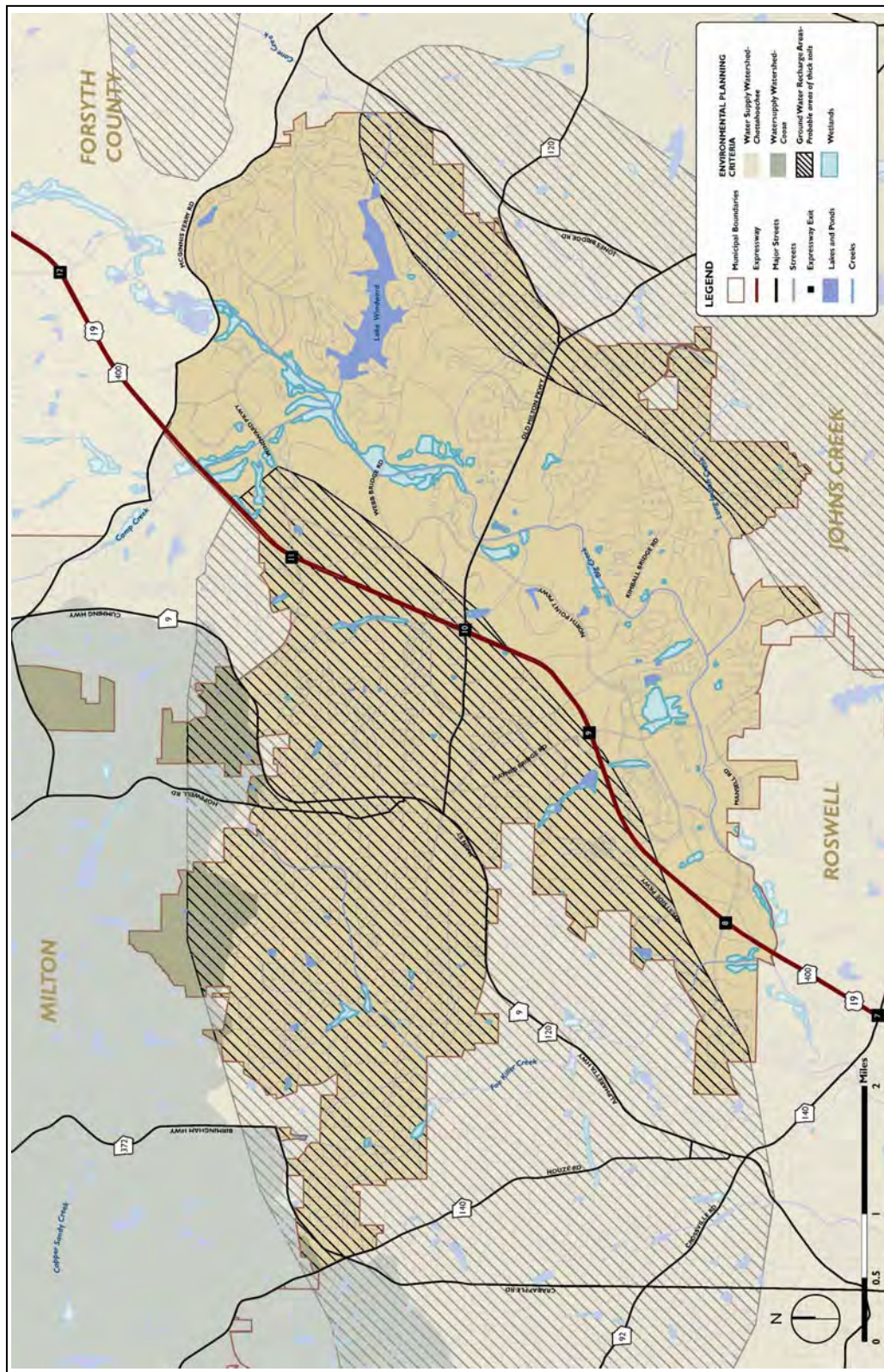
Map I – Study Area



Map 2 – Regional Context

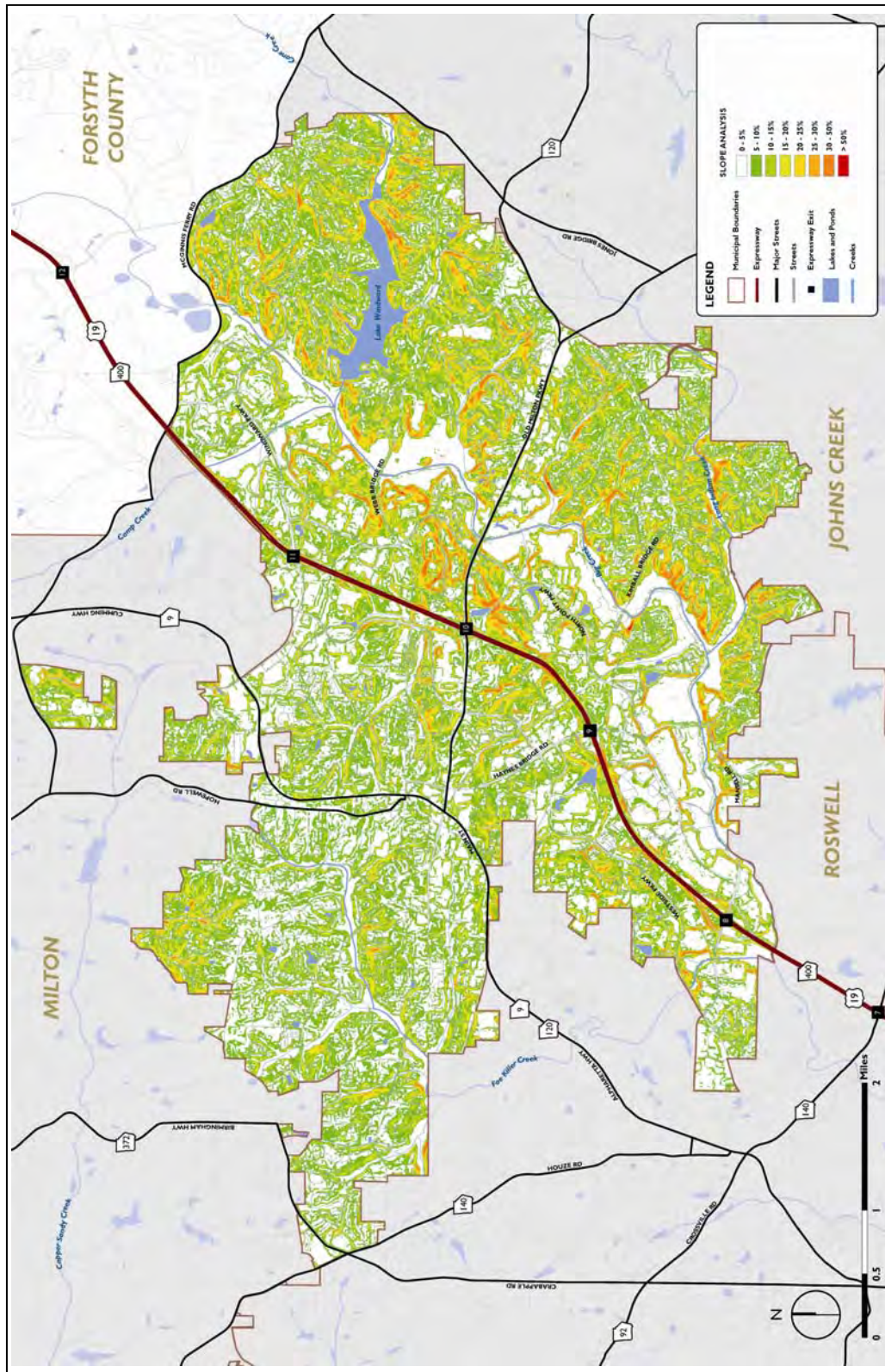


Map 3 – Environmental Planning Criteria

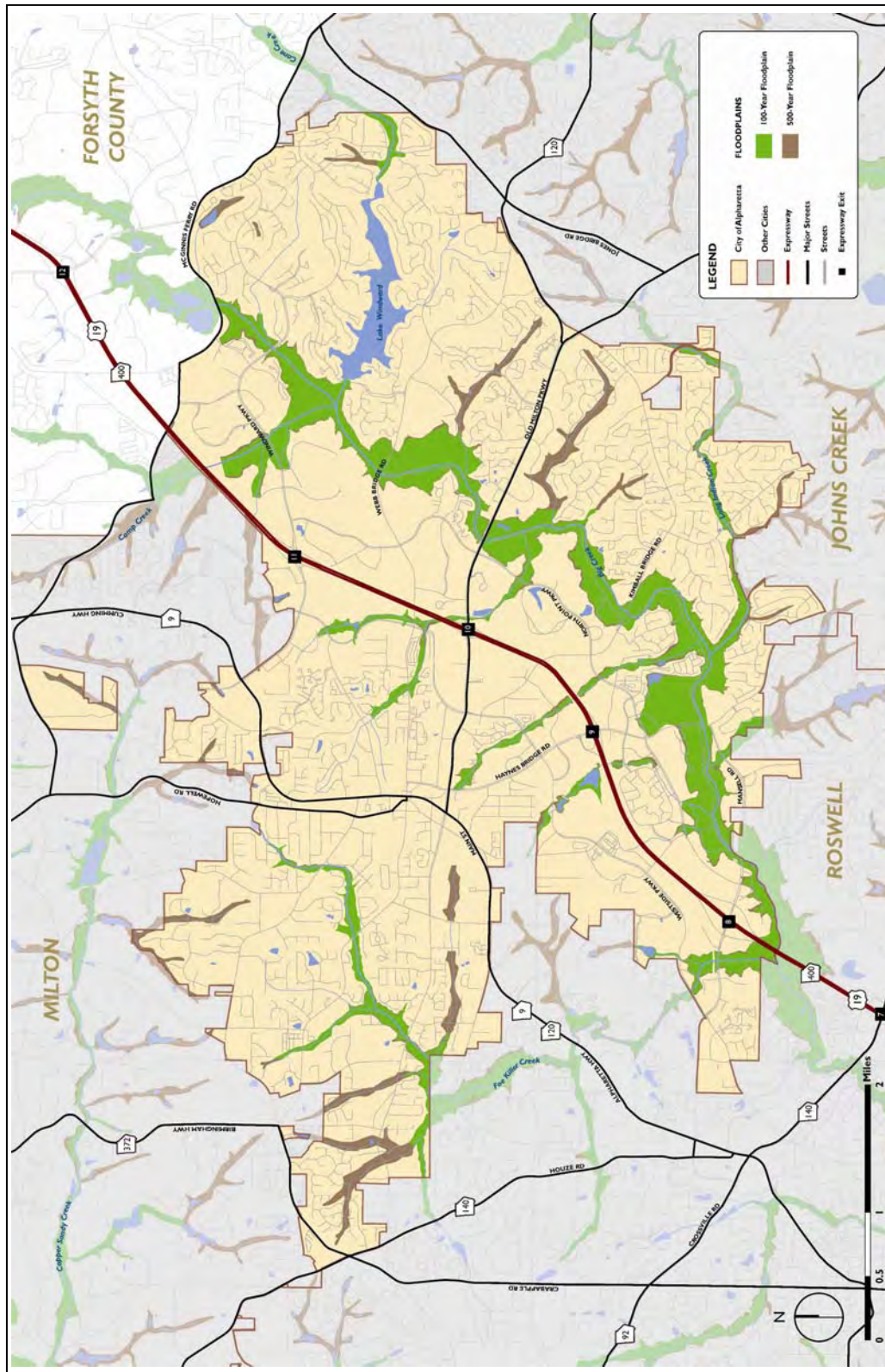




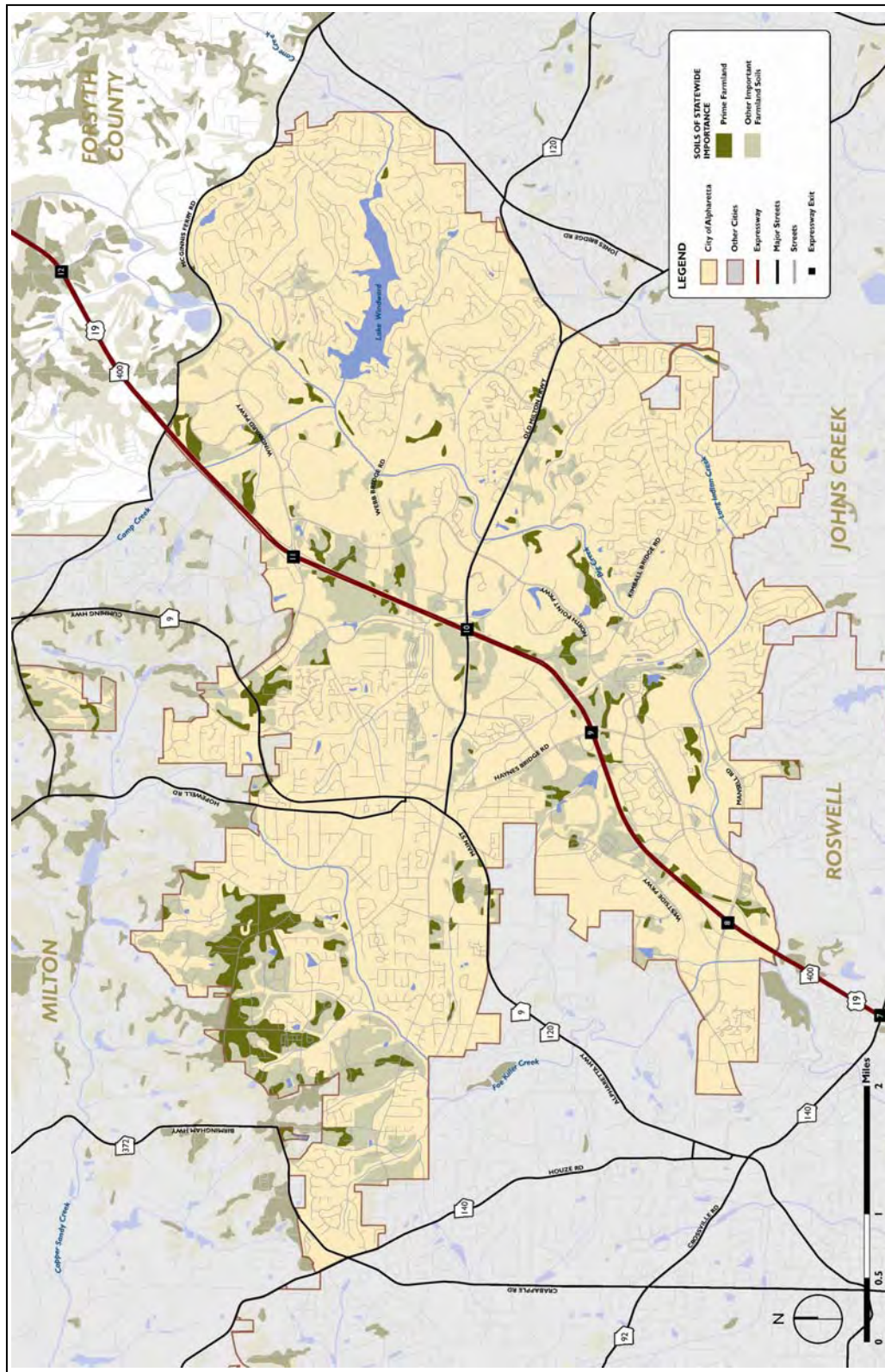
Map 4 – Slope Analysis



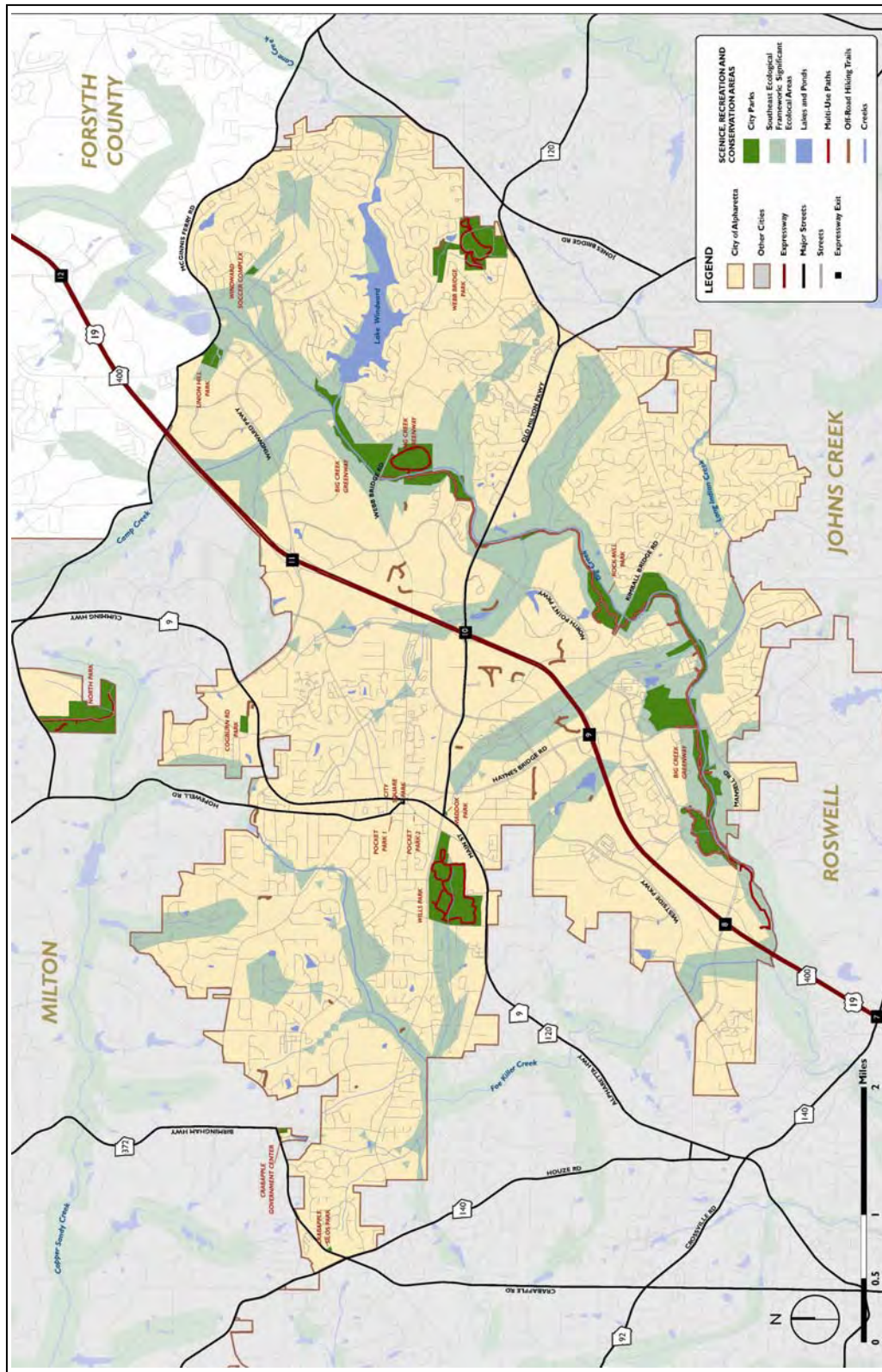
Map 5 – Floodplains



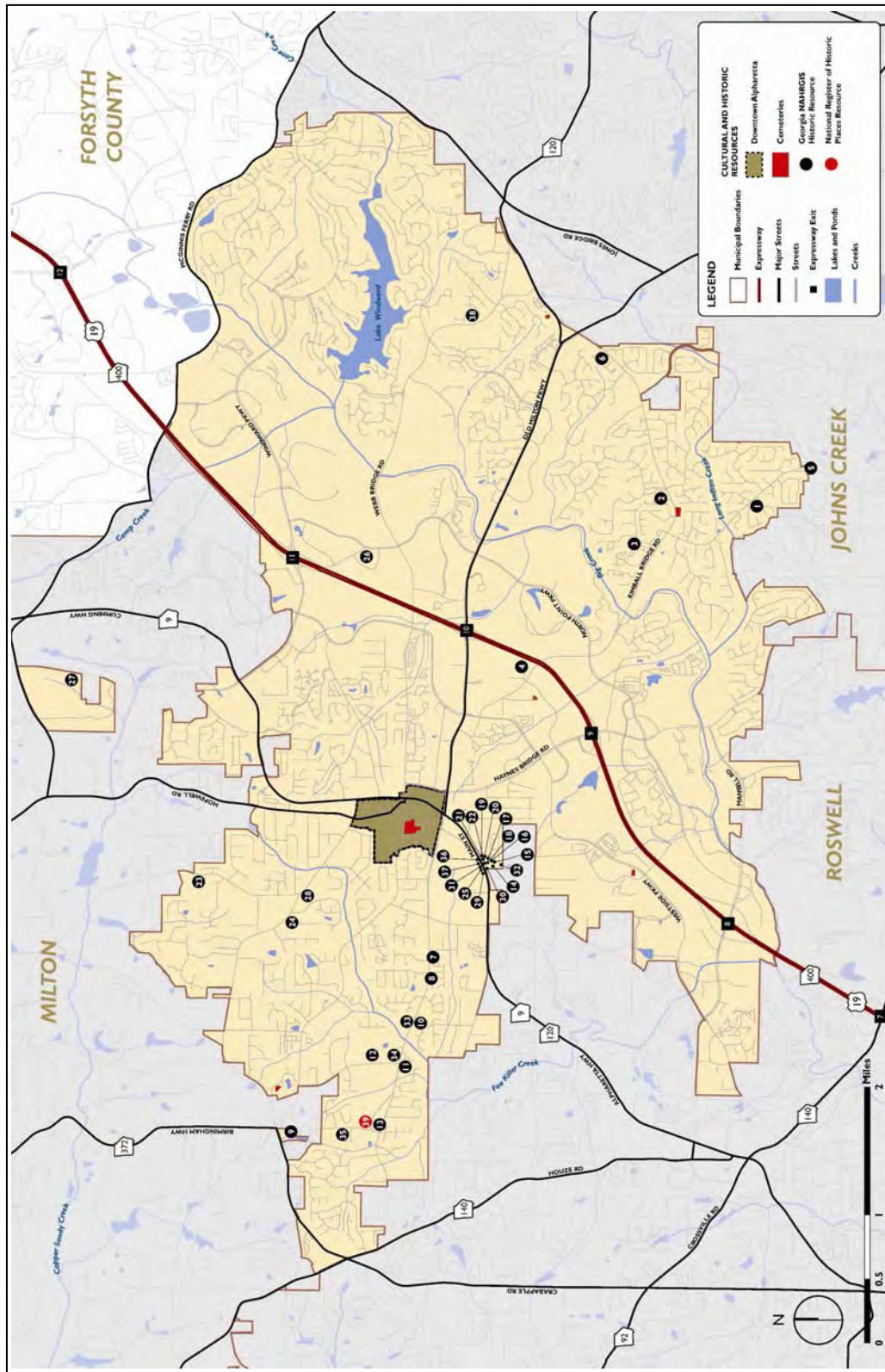
Map 6 – Soils of Statewide Importance



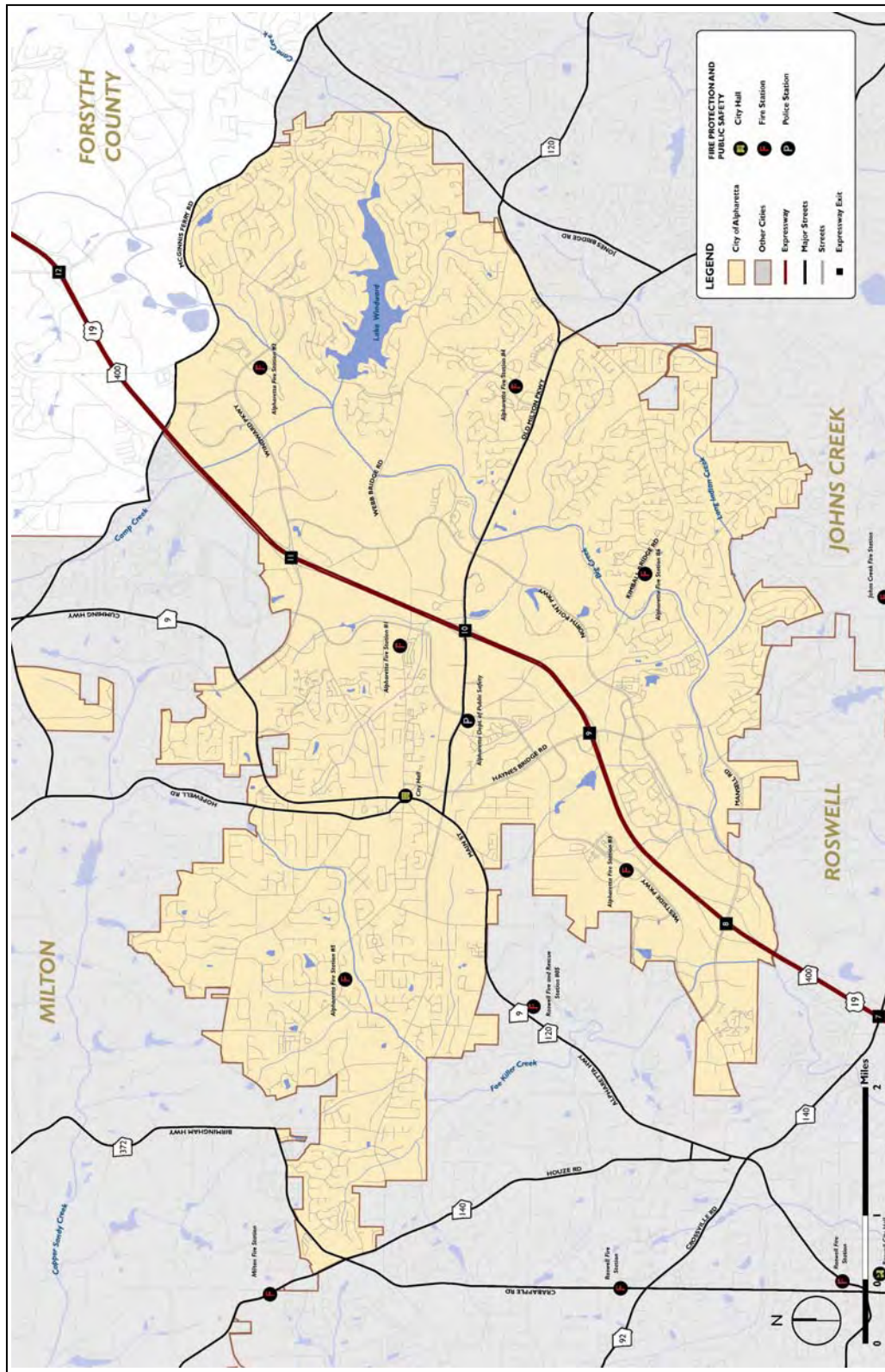
Map 7 – Scenic Areas/Forests/Recreation and Conservation Areas



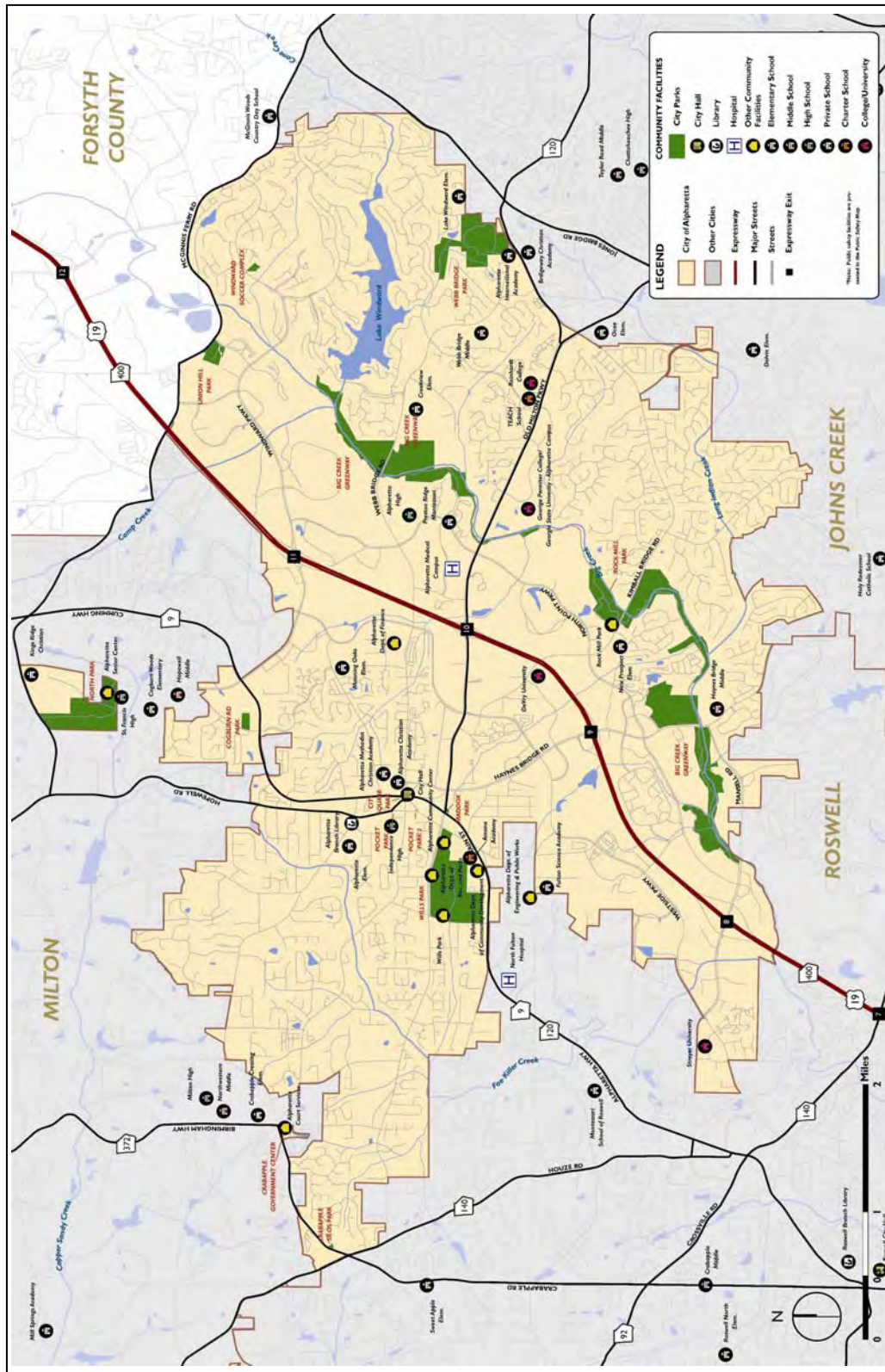
Map 8 – Cultural and Historic Resources



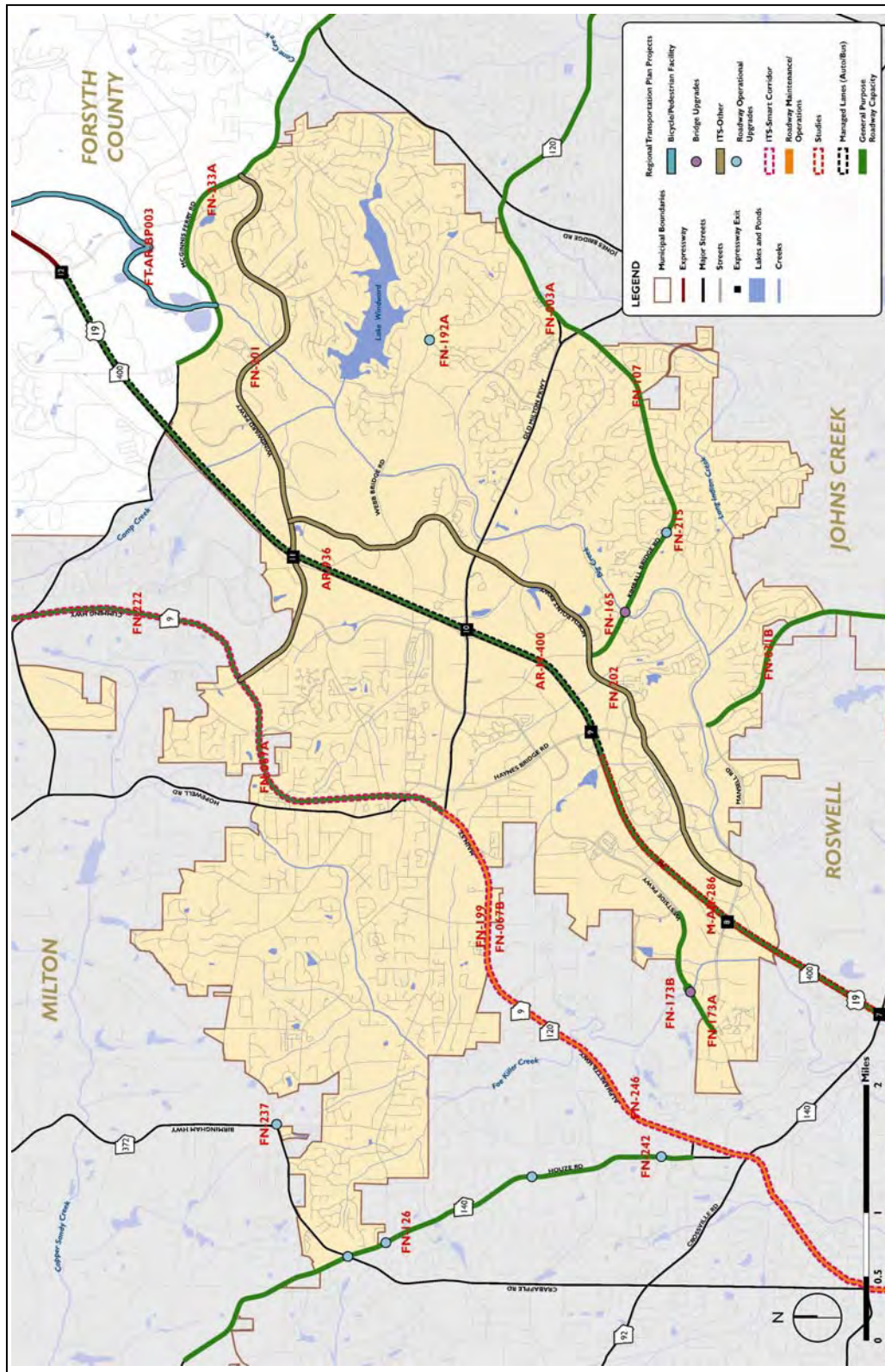
Map 9 – Public Safety



Map 10 – Community Facilities

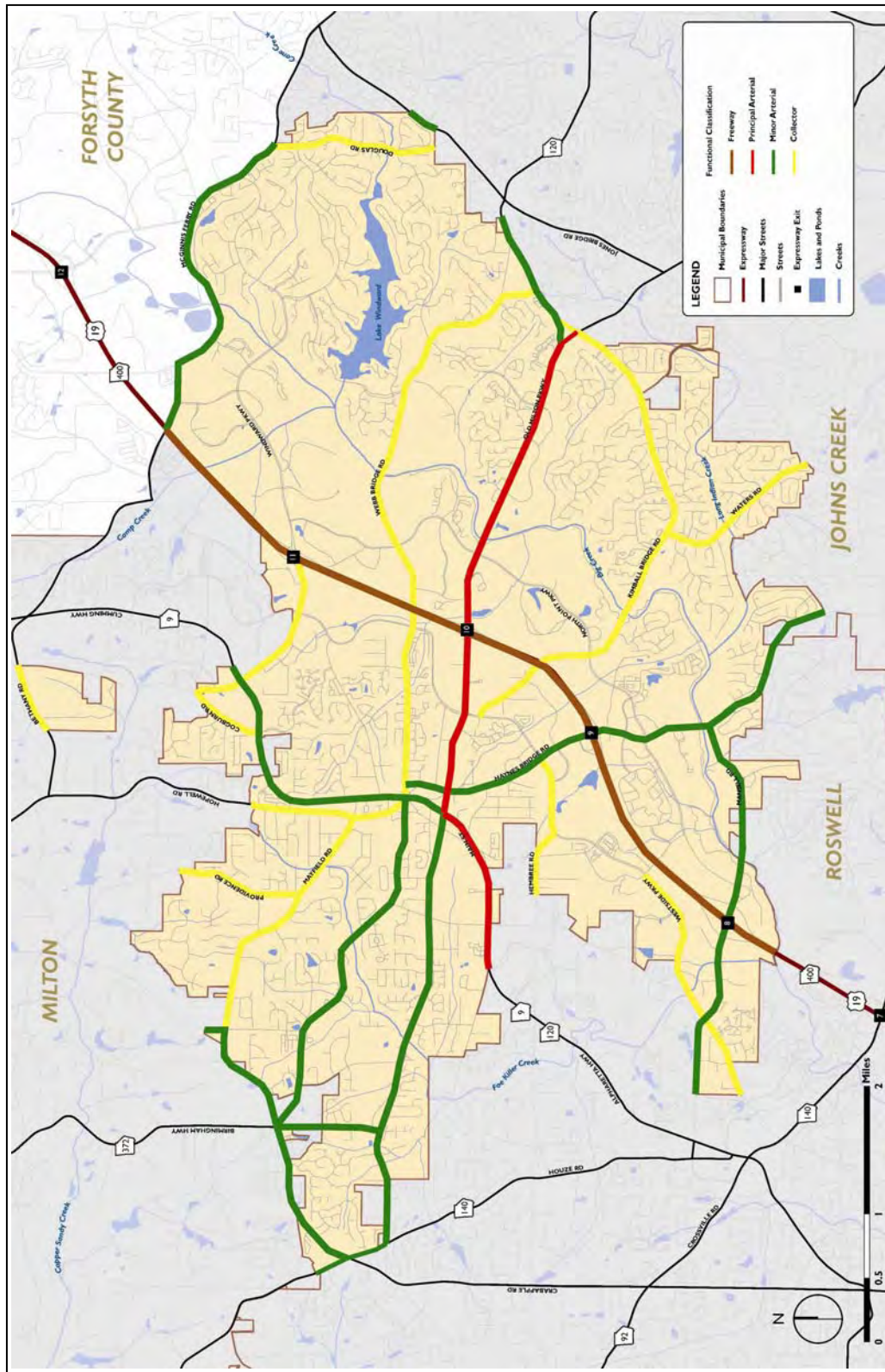


Map II – ARC Regional Transportation Plan Projects

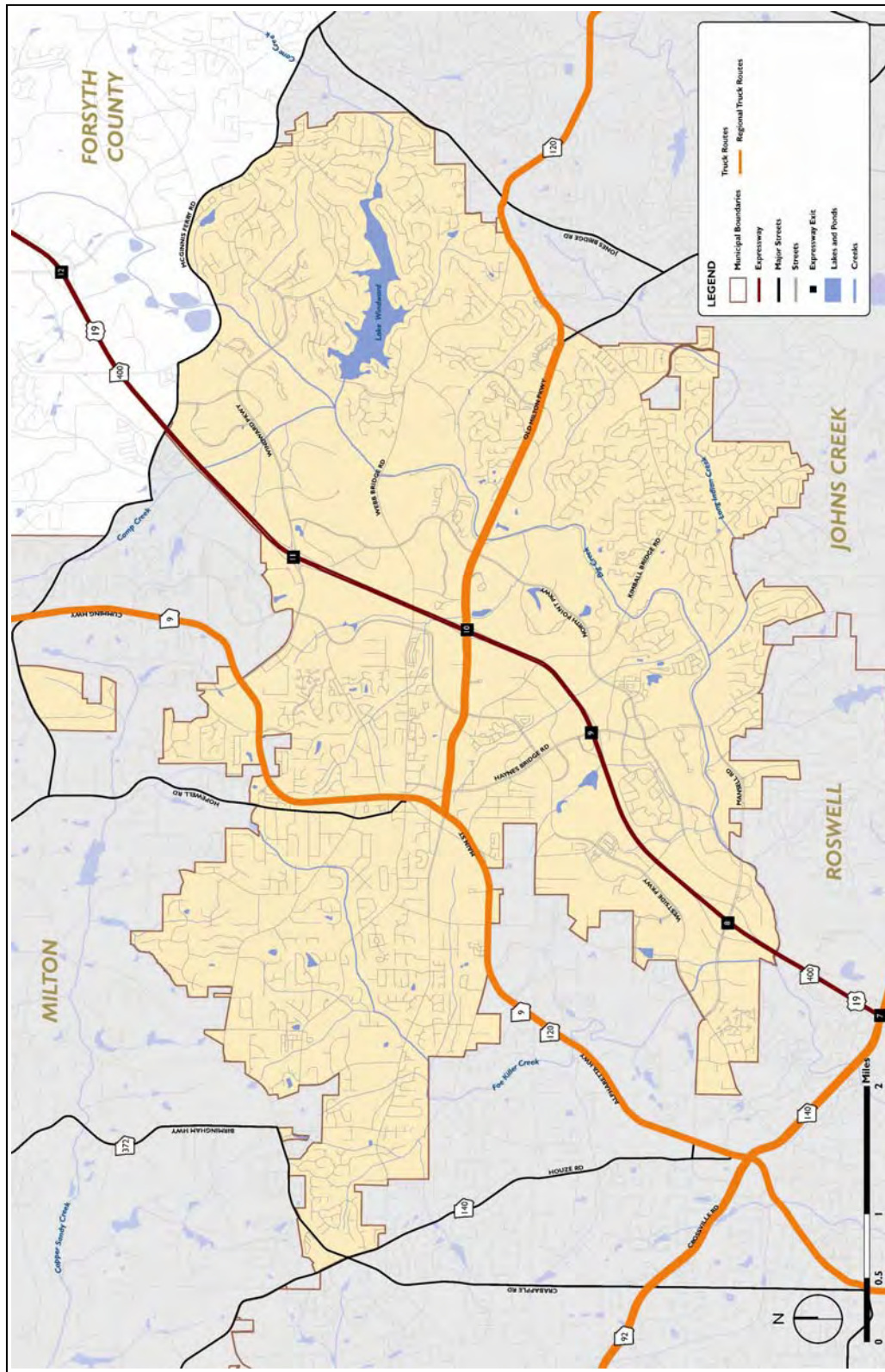




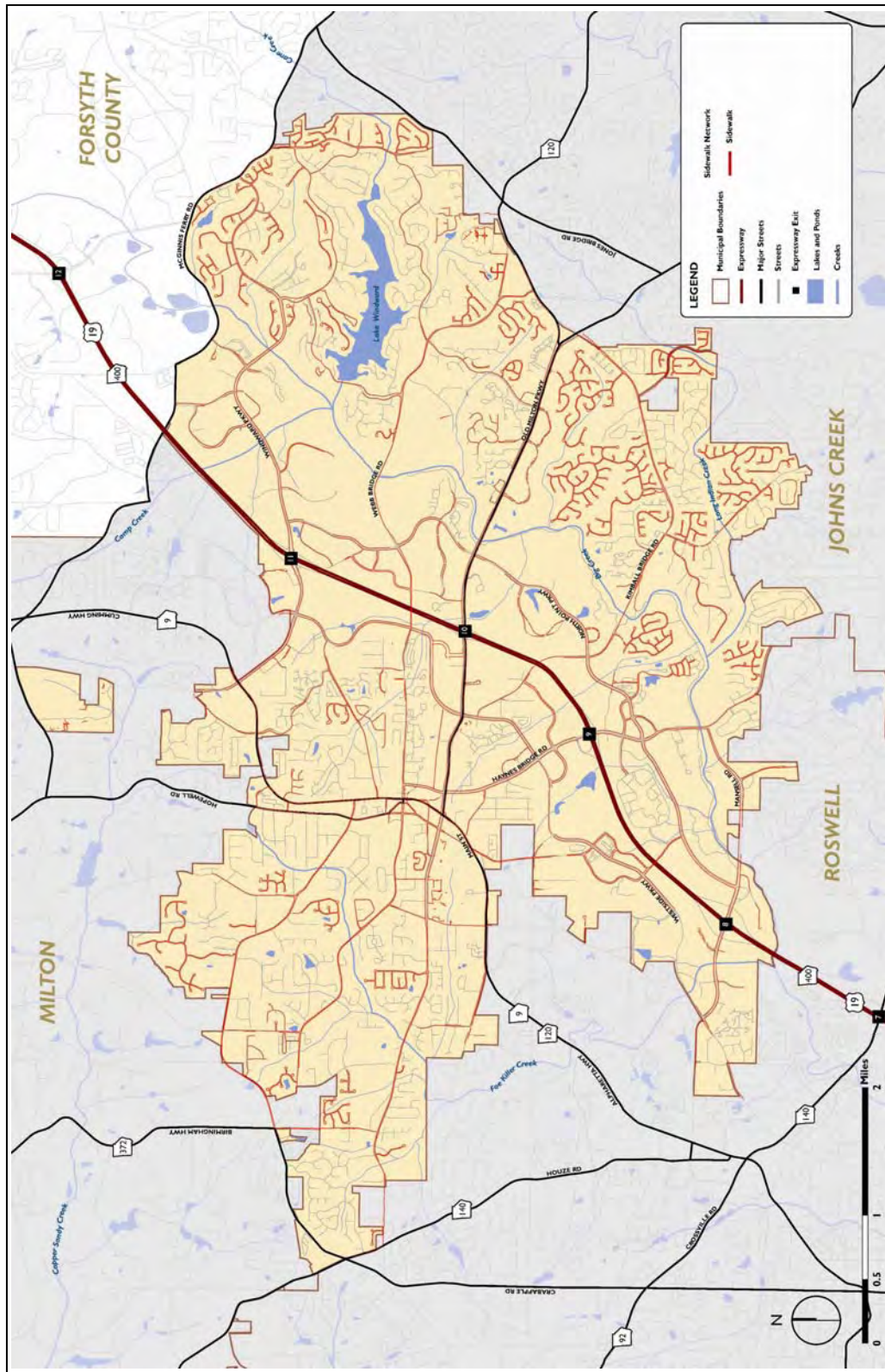
Map 12 – Functional Classification



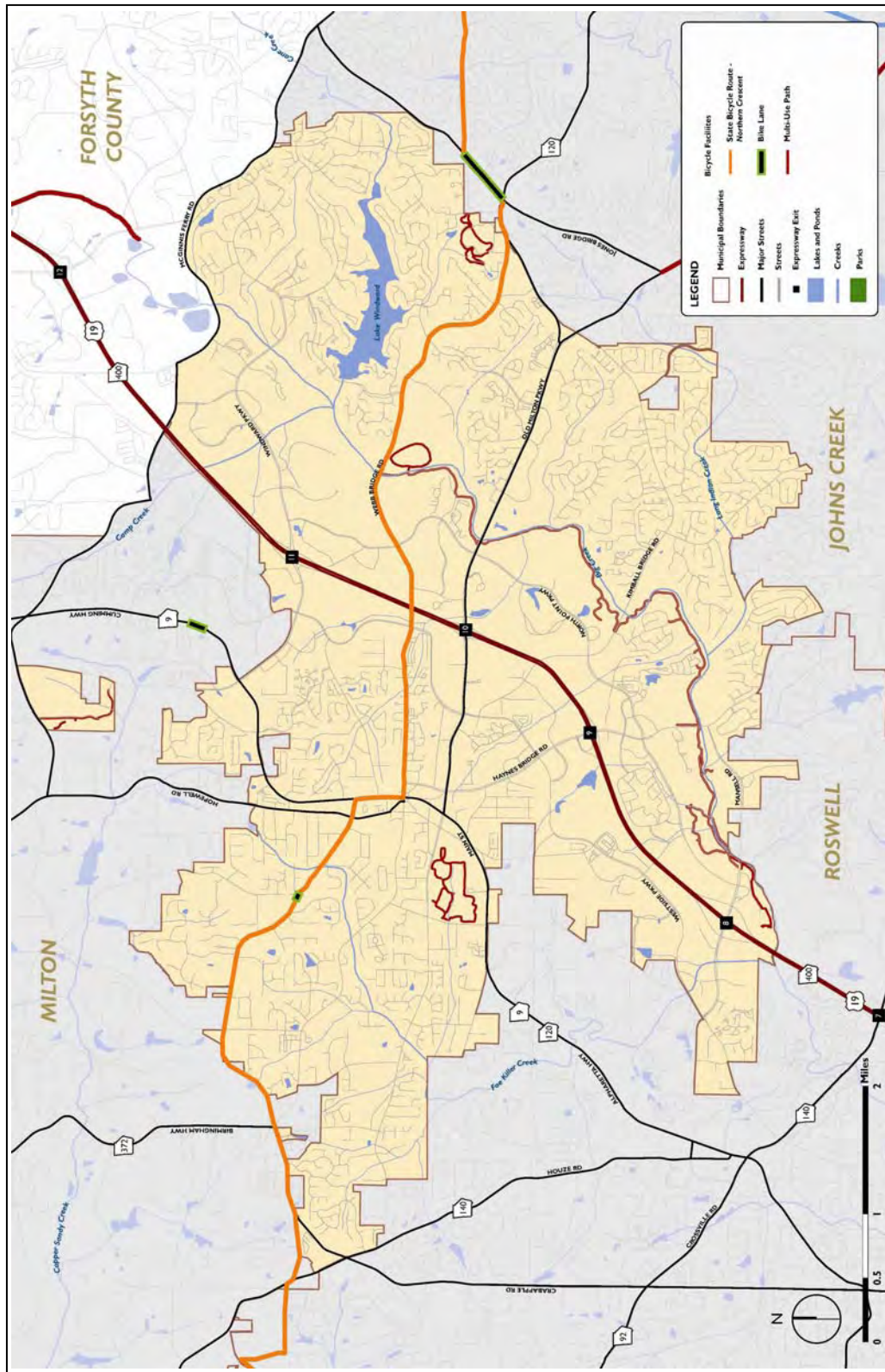
Map 13 – Regional Truck Routes



Map 14 – Sidewalk Network



Map 15 – Bicycle Facilities



Map 16 – Public Transportation

