



## Bainbridge Comprehensive Plan 2010 - 2030



### COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

**Final Draft**

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**CONTENTS**

Contents .....	i
Introduction.....	2
Community Profile.....	3
Potential Issues and Opportunities .....	5
Population .....	5
Housing .....	5
Economic Development.....	5
Natural and Cultural Resources .....	6
Community Facilities and Services .....	7
Land Use .....	8
Intergovernmental Coordination.....	8
Existing Development Patterns.....	9
Introduction.....	9
Existing Land Use .....	9
Land Uses by Acreage.....	10
Recommended Character Areas .....	12
Suburban Residential.....	12
Traditional Neighborhoods.....	12
Urban Residential.....	12
Town Center.....	12
Neighborhood Commercial.....	13
Highway Commercial .....	13
Institutional Campus.....	13
Industrial .....	13
Agricultural / Undeveloped .....	13
Parks and Conservation.....	13
Areas Requiring Special Attention .....	15
Areas of significant natural or cultural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon or otherwise impacted by development .....	15
Greenways .....	15
Historic Resources.....	15
Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur.....	16
Suburban Developing .....	16

Commercial Corridor Emerging.....	16
Neighborhood Commercial Corridors .....	16
Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation .....	17
Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors).....	17
Neighborhood Improvement Area .....	17
Highway Commercial Corridors.....	17
Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated.....	17
Industrial Redevelopment.....	17
Industrial Corridors.....	17
Areas with significant infill development opportunities .....	18
Potential Annexation Areas.....	18
Quality Community Objectives .....	20
Introduction.....	20
Traditional Neighborhoods.....	20
Infill Development.....	20
Sense of Place .....	21
Transportation Alternatives .....	22
Regional Identity.....	22
Heritage Preservation .....	23
Open Space Preservation .....	23
Environmental Protection .....	24
Growth Preparedness .....	25
Appropriate Business.....	25
Employment Options.....	26
Housing Choices .....	26
Educational Opportunities.....	26
Local Self-Determination .....	27
Regional Solutions & Cooperation .....	27

**Maps**

Figure 1 – Regional Location – Bainbridge, GA.....4  
Figure 2 – Existing Land Use Map, 2009 – Bainbridge, GA.....11  
Figure 3 – Recommended Character Areas – Bainbridge, GA.....14  
Figure 4 – Areas of Special Attention, City of Bainbridge .....19

**Tables**

Table CA1 – Existing Land Use Acreage Totals.....10

## INTRODUCTION

The Community Assessment is the first phase in the City of Bainbridge's Comprehensive Plan Update. The comprehensive plan is a long-range (20-year) statement of a community's vision for development (and redevelopment). By addressing the entire physical environment of the city and the multitudes of functions, policies, and programs that comprise their day to day workings, the plan seeks to guide the what, when, where, why and how of future physical changes to the landscape of Bainbridge.

The purpose of a comprehensive plan is to provide a guide for local government officials and other community leaders for making everyday decisions that are supportive of the community's stated vision for its future. The plan should serve as the local government's guide for assessing development proposals, including rezoning applications and redevelopment plans. For residents, business owners and members of the development community, the plan provides insight into what types of land uses and development are appropriate at various locations throughout the city. Finally, by evaluating various local government functions and services, the plan is a point of reference for government staff in preparing capital improvements programs and associated budgets.

The last full Comprehensive Plan for Bainbridge was completed and adopted in 1992 by the Southwest Georgia Regional Development Center. Since then a partial update to the Comprehensive Plan was completed in 2007. The partial update standards include many of the items added to Georgia DCA planning standards in 2005.

In April 2009, the City of Bainbridge selected a consulting firm, Robert & Company, of Atlanta, to complete a new Comprehensive Plan for the city. As much has changed since 1992, and

technology and available information are much improved, this plan establishes a new vision for the city, based on new and relevant information and resources. The Bainbridge Comprehensive Plan will be completed in 2010, and will lay the groundwork for citywide decision making through the year 2030 using relevant current data and both quantitative and qualitative analyses.

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) oversees and provides guidance for local comprehensive planning in Georgia. The department's Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, as updated in May 2005, outline three key components of a comprehensive plan: the Community Assessment, the Community Participation Plan, and the Community Agenda.

This Community Assessment document is the foundation from which the community's vision and strategies for implementing the vision over time will be developed during subsequent planning phases. The document is an objective summary of the current conditions in the county and city based upon an extensive review of the area's current demographics, economic environment, land use patterns, infrastructure conditions and policies.

As required by the DCA's Rules for Local Planning, this assessment was prepared without direct public participation. This document, along with the Community Participation Program (CPP) will be submitted to the SW Georgia Regional Commission (SWGRC) and DCA for review following a public hearing and 'resolution to submit' voted upon by the Bainbridge City Council.

Following the SWGRC and DCA review and acceptance of the Community Assessment and CPP, development of the Community Agenda will commence. This will be accompanied by extensive opportunities for the Bainbridge community to provide input into

the plan. The Community Agenda is the most important component of the comprehensive plan. This document includes the statement of the community's vision, the issues and opportunities that will be addressed during the twenty-year time period of planning (through 2030), and the strategy for achieving the vision and addressing the identified issues and opportunities.

The Community Assessment has four key sections:

- ❑ Analysis of Existing Development Patterns and Areas Requiring Special Attention
- ❑ Identification of Character Areas
- ❑ Analysis of Consistency with DCA's Quality Community Objectives
- ❑ Identification of Issues and Opportunities

The document is presented in an 'executive summary' format as to be attractive and accessible to all community members and serve as a quick reference for government officials and staff. The majority of the findings included in this report are supported by extensive data and analysis provided in the attached Technical Appendix.

## COMMUNITY PROFILE

The City of Bainbridge is the county seat of Decatur County, located in Southwest Georgia. Bainbridge is located near the geographic center of Decatur County, which borders Seminole County to the west; Miller, Baker, and Mitchell Counties to the north; Grady County to the east; and the State of Florida to the South. The largest neighboring city is Tallahassee, FL, located approximately 40 miles southeast of Bainbridge. Bainbridge is within the fourteen county Southwest Georgia Region, an area of the state heavily relied on for agricultural and forestry products.

Figure 1 shows a Regional Location for Bainbridge and Decatur County. Bainbridge now encompasses a total land area of 12,157 acres. In addition, the city has recently annexed a large parcel of land east of the city along with right-of-way along US-84 for use as the new Bainbridge High School. As a historical inland port city, Bainbridge is bisected by the Flint River. Today, the river and associated lakes and waterways provide scenery and recreational opportunities.

The 2000 population for Bainbridge was 11,722 as reported by the U.S. Census, which is 42% of Decatur County's population of 28,240. The most recent annual Census estimate (2007) for Bainbridge indicates a very slight increase in population (3%) to 12,108. Decatur County also experienced a very small population increase from 28,240 in 2000 to an estimated 28,544 in 2007.

Figure 1 – Regional Location – Bainbridge, GA



## POTENTIAL ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

### Population

#### Issues:

- ❑ Growth in the senior population will lead to increased public service needs geared toward the elderly.

#### Opportunities:

- ❑ The city may be able to attract growth as a retirement community.

### Housing

#### Issues:

- ❑ Some historic neighborhoods are experiencing conversion of homes into businesses and incompatible infill development.
- ❑ Some neighborhoods within the city have an abundance of dilapidated or sub-standard housing.
- ❑ Some residential areas are located in close proximity to heavy industrial land uses.
- ❑ There will be a need to provide active living or assisted care facilities for senior citizens in order to retain an aging population.
- ❑ Temporary housing is needed for seasonal migrant laborers who work in the County's agricultural harvest.
- ❑ The city's public housing complexes may lead to a geographic concentration of low income households.
- ❑ The vacancy rate increased from 1990 to 2000.
- ❑ Nearly a quarter of Bainbridge's households are cost-burdened, spending 30% or more of their income on housing costs.

- ❑ Three quarters of all housing units in Bainbridge are single-family homes. A greater mix of housing types should be provided.

#### Opportunities:

- ❑ Waterfront redevelopment may allow the city to attract high-end housing.
- ❑ Historic preservation tax credits may be available to help fund renovation of historic structures.
- ❑ The city's historic design guidelines can serve as the basis for enforcement of infill compatibility.
- ❑ Infill development can be encouraged in areas with existing infrastructure capacity.
- ❑ Targeted code enforcement programs may help stabilize declining neighborhoods.
- ❑ Mixed-income public housing developments and housing voucher programs may help prevent the concentration of low-income residents.
- ❑ Encourage the conversion of suitable existing structures to affordable or subsidized housing.
- ❑ Pursue participation in the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) Program.
- ❑ There may be a demand for allowing smaller residential lots (under 5,000) that will increase the stock of affordable workforce housing.

### Economic Development

#### Issues:

- ❑ There are vacant properties suitable for commercial and industrial development.
- ❑ The Georgia Ports Authority inland barge terminal, located in the city, is promoted by the Ports Authority and the Development Authority; however, it no longer serves the need to businesses that require shipping by barge due to



the current conditions of the river and Army Corps of Engineers permitting issues.

- ❑ There are hotels within the city to serve regional festivals and events, which is not highly promoted to capture tourism industry.
- ❑ The Commodore Industrial Park is promoted through the Development Authority; however, many parcels are undeveloped.
- ❑ Water and sewer is needed on the periphery of the downtown area to serve and encourage infill development.
- ❑ There are few job opportunities for recent graduates.
- ❑ Unemployment has increased substantially between 2008 and 2009 as the County has been negatively impacted by the national recession.
- ❑ Over a quarter of the population (26.9%) is below the poverty line.
- ❑ More emphasis should be provided in educational opportunities and workforce training to provide the local labor force with additional skills and higher-paying job opportunities.
- ❑ The local economy is heavily tied to manufacturing, which is experiencing a national trend of decline.

#### Opportunities:

- ❑ Conduct an inventory of vacant infill sites within the downtown area to be added to the Main Street website and also to the DCA Downtown Development/Redevelopment Opportunities in GA webpage, which is to be updated in the near future.
- ❑ Conduct an inventory of vacant industrial sites that are available and promote these to potential prospects.
- ❑ Expand the Heritage Tour of historic homes and increase promotion to capture tourist industry.

- ❑ Continue to promote the development of the 2006 Waterfront Connectivity Master Plan improvements, including the new marina.
- ❑ Expand upon incentives offered to attract businesses to the city and downtown area.
- ❑ Research grants that are available for downtown improvements and pursue them where appropriate.
- ❑ Look at new locations for neighborhood parks as part of the infill strategy.
- ❑ Coordinate efforts with the Chamber of Commerce, Georgia Ports Authority and Tri-Rivers Waterway Development Association to pursue ACOE permitting issues to restore the inland barge terminal use as an economic goal for the City's existing Port.
- ❑ Promote tourism by promoting hotel facilities within the city for regional festivals and events.
- ❑ Consider posting employment opportunities within the city on the Chamber of Commerce website.
- ❑ Recruitment of businesses that could hire local graduates should be expanded.
- ❑ Consider an analysis of extending water and sewer to the periphery of the downtown area to encourage infill development.
- ❑ Seek opportunities to attract industries that help diversify the local economy.
- ❑ Target new and emerging industries that could be an appropriate fit for Decatur County.

#### Natural and Cultural Resources

##### Issues:

- ❑ Protection of isolated wetlands, which are not currently protected under existing regulations, should be addressed.
- ❑ Protection for high aquifer recharge should be addressed.

## Opportunities:

- ❑ Continue to promote the historic and cultural resources in the city, including historic districts/neighborhoods and sites.
- ❑ The natural beauty of the Flint River and the recreational and cultural opportunities provided in the 2006 Waterfront Connectivity Master Plan should continue to be pursued and promoted.
- ❑ Continue to enforce existing environmental regulations and encourage conservation subdivisions where applicable.
- ❑ Seek significant natural areas to be acquired and preserved for public use.
- ❑ Review other acceptable/established regulations for isolated wetland protection/mitigation for the City to consider and amend the existing regulations if needed.

**Community Facilities and Services**

## Issues:

- ❑ The city currently does not have in-house GIS capabilities.
- ❑ There are few forms of alternative transportation available in the city.
- ❑ Sidewalk and bicycle connectivity, in general can be improved upon.
- ❑ Some parts of the city lack access to parks and recreation.

## Opportunities:

- ❑ Pursue GIS services to monitor police calls and incidences of crime which will enable the city to identify and target areas of high crime activity for future improvements; monitor land use and zoning; locate water and sewer facilities, and other areas that are benefited by GIS technology.

- ❑ Expand the Neighborhood Watch program to aid in patrolling the community while simultaneously creating a sense of ownership of neighborhoods among citizens.
- ❑ Continue to follow through with the improvements proposed in the 2006 Waterfront Connectivity Master Plan to enhance sidewalk and pedestrian connectivity in the specified Master Plan areas.
- ❑ Pedestrian and bicycle facility improvements could greatly enhance access, connectivity, and safety for residents to use alternative transportation modes to get to local shopping, schools, and parks.
- ❑ Complete the sidewalk, bike land, and roadway inventory and assessment and prioritize improvements to be made over the short-term (five-year).
- ❑ Take the sidewalk/roadway inventory and compare it to a map identifying schools, public facilities, hospitals, and major employment and shopping areas to identify sidewalk connectivity needs.
- ❑ Area schools are good candidates for implementing 'Safe Routes to Schools' programs.
- ❑ Seek opportunities to better distribute parks throughout the city.
- ❑ Consider demolition of abandoned and/or dilapidated properties on public property that have no historical value and use the land to develop parks or community gardens.
- ❑ Bainbridge's two middle schools will combine at the old Bainbridge High School site. The two buildings that will be vacated by these middle schools present an opportunity for re-use as additional community facilities, including community centers, museums, magnet schools, libraries, senior care, etc.

## Land Use

### Issues:

- ❑ Sidewalks are required, where appropriate, for new development – but not necessarily required in all development.
- ❑ New development should be sensitive to ecological and natural functions of the streams, wetlands, and drainage channels.
- ❑ Infill development should be carefully guided, especially in the historic neighborhoods in order to preserve the aesthetic integrity of the city.

### Opportunities:

- ❑ Ensure that buffers continue to separate residential neighborhoods from commercial and industrial land uses.
- ❑ Consider and plan for land use patterns for the growth areas along U.S. Highway 84 up to the Bainbridge High School site and the associated contiguous area; U.S. Highway 27 South; and the vacant land west of Shotwell Street connector and S.R. 97.
- ❑ A dedicated mixed-use zoning district could create more opportunities for infill development.
- ❑ Bainbridge should consider the joint use of school facilities (athletic facilities, classrooms, auditoriums) for public services during non-school hours and seasons. This provides additional services and facilities with minimal additional construction, administration, and maintenance costs.
- ❑ The opening of the new Bainbridge High School and annexation of Hwy 84 right-of-way provides a desirable location for future growth if adjacent properties are annexed into Bainbridge.

## Intergovernmental Coordination

### Issues:

- ❑ Comprehensive planning is not done cooperatively between Bainbridge and Decatur County.

### Opportunities:

- ❑ Joint planning between Bainbridge and Decatur County should be pursued, since Bainbridge is the economic and population center of the county.
- ❑ The city may wish to identify annexation opportunities based on public services and likely growth areas.

## EXISTING DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

### Introduction

The analysis of existing development patterns begins with a survey of existing land uses within the City of Bainbridge. This survey forms the basis of the detailed quantitative land use analysis. Next, the analysis of existing development patterns includes a character area assessment of the community. This allows for a generalized view of the character of the city's neighborhoods and activity centers. Finally, an analysis of areas of special attention is provided in order to identify areas of potential land use change, growth, and redevelopment.

### Existing Land Use

The Existing Land Use survey and Existing Land Use Map (See Figure 2) illustrate present land use patterns in the city and provide a basis for the development of the Character Areas Map, Future Development Map, and Future Land Use Map. A parcel-by-parcel survey was conducted through a comparison of current aerial photography with GIS-based land use data records. Following the survey of aerial photography, a windshield survey was conducted for verification. The field observations were noted on tax parcel maps and then recorded into the GIS database. Parcels were classified and coded according to the following ten land use categories:

*Residential:* The predominant use of land within the residential category is single family detached residential homes.

*Manufactured Housing Residential:* This category is for land dedicated to manufactured housing residential, whether located on individual lots or within land-lease communities (i.e. manufactured home parks).

*Duplex Residential:* This category includes residential development built for two-family dwellings, also known as "duplexes."

*Multi-Family Residential:* This category is for land dedicated to attached housing types such as townhomes, condominiums, and apartments.

*Office:* This category is for land dedicated to business and service establishments that do not have retail sales and which operate in an office environment. Although office land uses are a subset of commercial development, they are distinguished within the land use analysis because they are often more compatible with residential uses than retail commercial.

*Commercial:* This category is for land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, service, and entertainment facilities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center.

*Light Industrial:* This category is for land dedicated primarily to warehousing and wholesale trade facilities. It is a subset of the required industrial land use category per state rules. Some light manufacturing facilities may also be included within this category.

*Heavy Industrial:* This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, mining or mineral extraction facilities, landfills, or other similar uses. Generally, if a manufacturing facility has heavy bulk facilities or is known to have possible externalities, such as smoke, odor, or noise, it is classified as heavy industrial.

*Public/Institutional:* This category includes certain state, federal, or local government uses and institutional land uses. Examples of institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, and

hospitals. Government uses in this category include city halls or government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools and military installations.

*Transportation/Communication/Utilities:* Also referred to as “TCU,” this category encompasses various land use types associated with transportation, communication, and utilities. This category includes major transportation routes, public transit stations, power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, airports, water authority facilities and similar uses. The majority of land classified as TCU is road right-of-way.

*Agriculture/Forestry:* This category is for land dedicated to farming (fields, lots, pastures, farmsteads, specialty farms, livestock production, etc.) or other similar rural uses such as pasture; Forestry land is dedicated to commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting or other similar rural uses. Agriculture/Forestry land is not used for commercial purposes.

*Parks/Recreation/Conservation:* This category is for land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. This category also includes conservation lands which are to be preserved from development. These areas may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers, and similar uses. Conservation areas may be privately owned but subject to conservation easements or development restrictions.

*Vacant/Undeveloped:* This category includes undeveloped areas and wooded areas that are not dedicated to commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting.

### Land Uses by Acreage

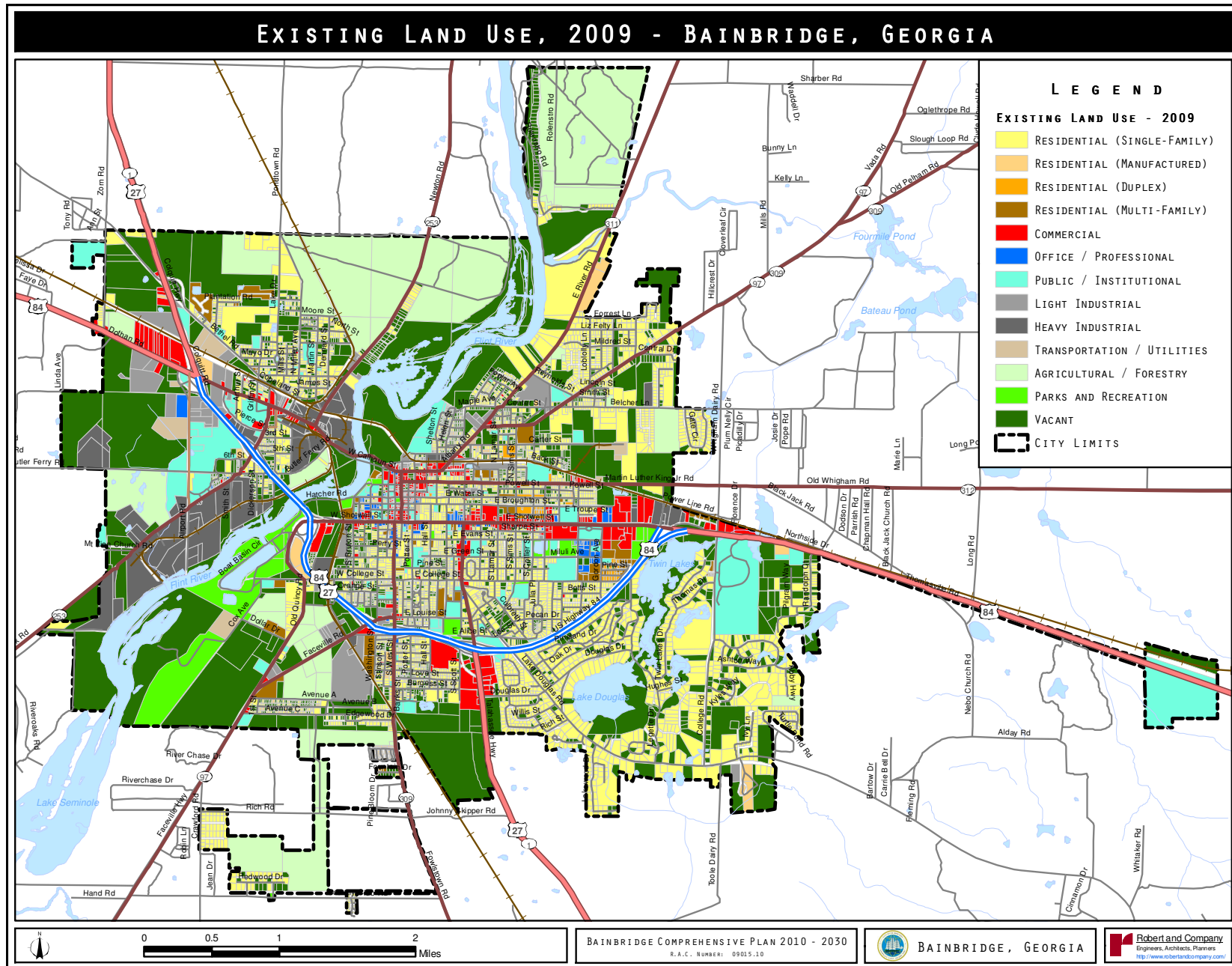
A summation of the acreage totals for each of the city’s land uses is provided in Table CA-1. Because a digital parcel file for the unincorporated county was unavailable, these acreage calculations do not include the large public institutional parcel recently annexed for the new Bainbridge High School site. Single family residential uses constitute the largest single land use aside from vacant / undeveloped land. The city’s large proportion of undeveloped land is due in large part to the floodplains and wetlands surrounding the Flint River. The predominance of agriculture and forestry in Decatur County is reflected by the large proportion of land dedicated to farming within Bainbridge.

**Table CA-1 – Existing Land Use Acreage Totals**

Land Use Classification	Acres	% of Total
Residential, Single-Family	2,646.4	20.8%
Residential, Duplex	30.9	0.2%
Residential, Mobile Home	105.9	0.8%
Residential, Multi-Family	152.0	1.2%
Office / Professional	61.6	0.5%
Commercial	391.4	3.1%
Light Industrial	293.2	2.3%
Heavy Industrial	513.5	4.0%
Public / Institutional	713.8	5.6%
Transportation / Utilities	75.0	0.6%
Right-of-Way	1,404.8	11.0%
Agriculture / Forestry	1,676.0	13.2%
Parks / Recreation	304.2	2.4%
Vacant / Undeveloped	4,346.1	34.2%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12,714.8</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: Robert and Company Survey 2009

Figure 2 – Existing Land Use Map, 2009 – Bainbridge, GA



## RECOMMENDED CHARACTER AREAS

The use of character areas in planning acknowledges the differences between neighborhoods and activity centers within a community and provides more intentional guidance of development and redevelopment through specific planning and implementation initiatives. For example, two neighborhoods may be both single-family residential in land use but distinct in character. Recommended character areas can define places that 1) have unique or special characteristics that should be preserved; 2) have potential to evolve into unique areas; or 3) require special attention related to development issues.

When reviewing this character area discussion, it is important to recognize that there may be some variation between land uses within a given character area. Each character area designation is a generalized reflection of the defining character of the entire area. It is anticipated that the delineation and description of these areas will be further developed and refined through work with a citizen steering committee and public input workshops.

The Community Agenda will include a Future Development Map based on the existing Character Areas Map. The Future Development Map will be accompanied by descriptions of the appropriate future land uses in each character area as well as short-term activities and long term policies for achieving the community's stated vision for the area. Thus, by creating generalized character area districts, policies can be created to guide land use in each distinct sub-area of the city.

### Suburban Residential

Suburban Residential neighborhoods are characterized by low pedestrian orientation with a high to moderate degree of building separation. Uses within suburban neighborhoods are almost

exclusively residential with some scattered civic buildings. Street patterns within suburban neighborhoods are typically curvilinear with low connectivity and cul-de-sacs designed to minimize cut-through traffic.

### Traditional Neighborhoods

The Traditional Neighborhoods character area consists of predominantly detached, single-family neighborhoods with some scattered multi-family, office, or neighborhood commercial uses. Thus, traditional neighborhoods can contain a variety of residential housing types as well as some low-intensity commercial uses. Traditional Neighborhoods comprise the oldest portions of the city. These areas typically feature high pedestrian orientation with sidewalks, street trees, street furniture, and on-street parking. Streets within Traditional Neighborhoods are often laid-out in a grid pattern. Parcels within Traditional Neighborhoods are usually relatively small, with buildings close to or at the front property line, and a low degree of building separation.

### Urban Residential

The Urban Residential character area consists of the highest density of residential found within the city. Housing types within this character area may include townhomes, apartments, condominiums, and some mobile home parks. Scattered single-family residential development may also be located within these neighborhoods.

### Town Center

The Town Center character area includes Bainbridge's traditional central business district (CBD) as well as some of the mixed-use neighborhoods surrounding the CBD. The defining characteristic of the Town Center is a mix of land uses developed in a compact, pedestrian-friendly grid street pattern. As the historic center of the

community, the Town Center features a concentration of government, civic, office, neighborhood commercial, as well as some historic residential.

### Neighborhood Commercial

Neighborhood Commercial consists of low-intensity commercial and office development which serves the surrounding neighborhood. Neighborhood Commercial maintains a strong pedestrian orientation with a low degree of building separation. Parking for Neighborhood Commercial is not excessive, and may feature on-street, side, or rear configurations. Large-scale commercial (>40,000 sq. ft) and auto-oriented establishments are not compatible with Neighborhood Commercial.

### Highway Commercial

Highway Commercial character areas contain concentrations of commercial and retail centers, office, and employment areas, serving a community of several neighborhoods. Highway Commercial areas can include both small and larger establishments, which may be combined within a shopping strip or plaza. These areas are often located along major commercial corridors or at expressway interchanges and feature a high degree of access by vehicular traffic and plentiful on-site parking.

### Institutional Campus

The Institutional Campus character area corresponds with significant concentrations of institutional land uses, such as schools, colleges, hospitals, large churches, prisons, or other public-use complexes (e.g. public works camps). In the case of schools and colleges, pedestrian accessibility is promoted, although other institutions are largely reliant on the automobile for access.

### Industrial

Industrial areas may include either light industrial and heavy industrial activities. While the existing character areas map does not distinguish between these uses; the existing land use and future development maps do include a distinction between heavy and light industrial areas. Light Industrial land includes areas used in low intensity manufacturing, wholesale trade, and distribution activities that do not generate excessive noise, particulate matter, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors, radiation, or other nuisance characteristics. Heavy Industrial areas include land used in higher intensity manufacturing, assembly, processing activities where noise, particulate matter, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors, radiation, or other nuisance characteristics are not contained on-site. There are typically some commercial uses interspersed within Industrial districts.

### Agricultural / Undeveloped

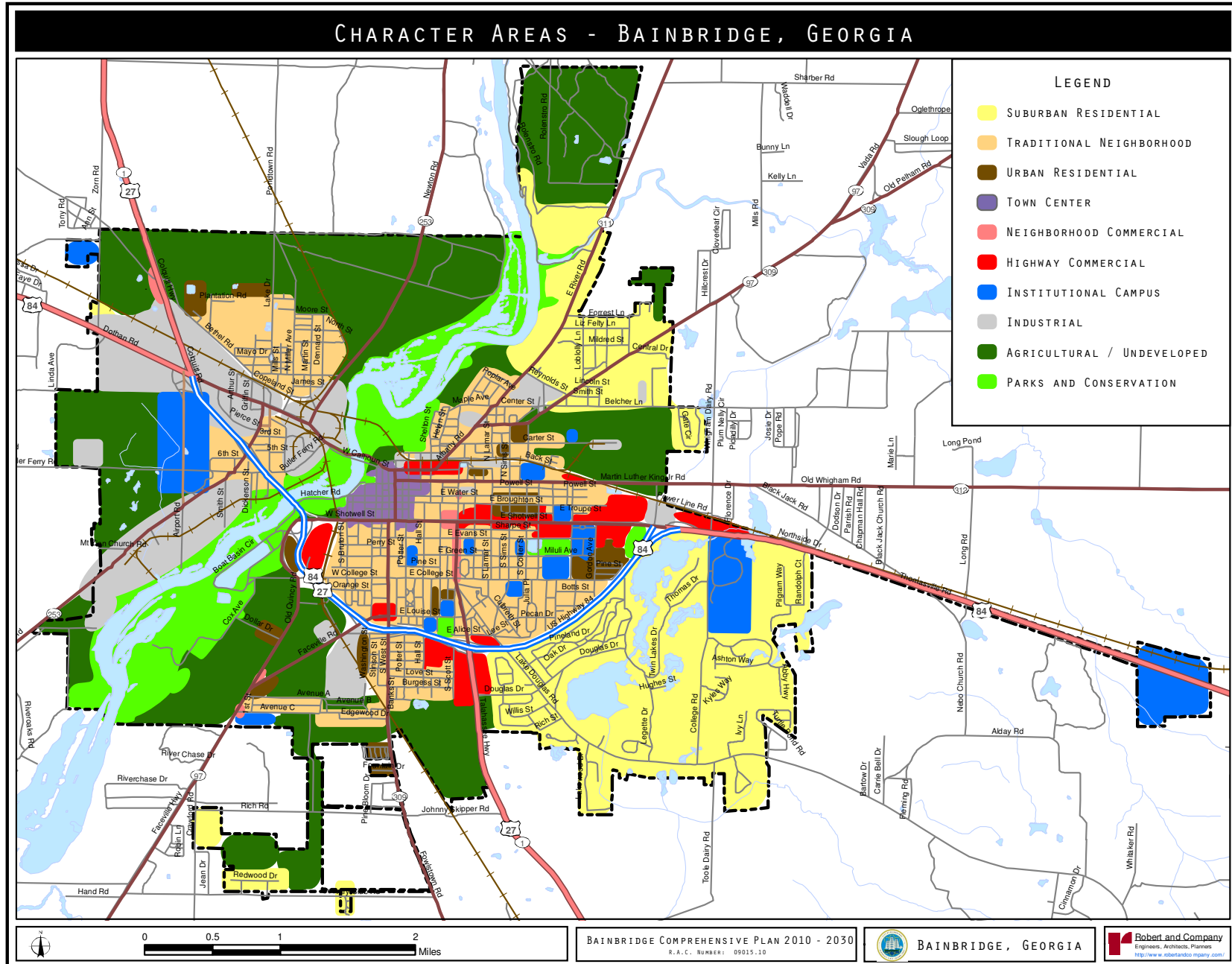
Agricultural / Undeveloped character areas contain lands in open or cultivated state including forestry operations, woodlands and pasture land. Large areas of undeveloped not in active cultivation are also included within this character area.

### Parks and Conservation

The Parks and Conservation character area includes passive and active recreational facilities as well as lands with significant natural resources. Conservation areas may include environmentally sensitive land not suitable for development, such as floodplains, wetlands, watersheds, and wildlife management areas.



Figure 3 – Recommended Character Areas – Bainbridge, GA



## AREAS REQUIRING SPECIAL ATTENTION

In addition to the Character Areas analysis, the 2005 Georgia DCA minimum standards for comprehensive planning added a new requirement to analyze “Areas Requiring Special Attention.” This portion of the land use analysis focuses on areas of the community where land use change is likely. The first function of the Areas Requiring Special Attention analysis is to manage potential new development and its impact on surrounding land uses, community services, and natural resources. Thus, ongoing, emerging, and likely anticipated land development trends are incorporated into the Areas Requiring Special Attention analysis.

Another function of the Areas Requiring Special Attention analysis is to identify areas where stabilization or redevelopment is needed. Trends of declining neighborhoods or commercial areas in need of maintenance and aesthetic improvement are identified. Likewise, areas where redevelopment is needed are also identified within this discussion. Figure 4 provides a map of the Areas of Special Attention in the City of Bainbridge that corresponds to the following discussion.

While DCA standards allow for some recognition of development trends within the Character Areas analysis, this plan has grouped the discussion of trends into the Areas Requiring Special Attention analysis. For the purposes of this planning study, the Character Areas analysis is restricted to existing conditions in order to maintain this distinction.

### **Areas of significant natural or cultural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon or otherwise impacted by development**

#### Greenways

Greenways are areas of open space that follows natural and manmade linear features for recreation, transportation and conservation purposes that link ecological, cultural and recreational amenities. Riparian greenways run alongside river or stream corridors and often include sensitive environmental features such as floodplains and wetlands. These linear natural areas can serve as protection for sensitive water features that are likely to be impacted by development. The most prominent natural resource within the City of Bainbridge is the Flint River and its surrounding floodplains and wetlands. While the city historically developed around the river as a trade and industrial transportation corridor, the Flint River and Lake Seminole are now faced with residential development pressure. The City of Bainbridge has developed a number of waterfront parks including the Earl May Boat Basin. While recreational uses along the river front offer the opportunity to encourage downtown revitalization, new development along the Flint corridor must be managed with care.

#### Historic Resources

Historic Resource areas also have the potential to be impacted by land use change and development. Within the City of Bainbridge, the historic downtown and surrounding historic residential areas fall within this category. Downtown redevelopment must be sensitive to and compatible with established historic resources in order to protect the character and charm of the city’s core. Likewise, the intrusion of new commercial development and the conversion of historic homes into small offices are both trends facing the city’s historic core. Again, new commercial development and conversion should respect the character of these areas and not negatively impact surrounding residences.

## **Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur**

### Suburban Developing

Suburban Developing areas include land where pressures for the typical types of suburban residential subdivision development are greatest. Without intervention, these areas are likely to evolve with low pedestrian orientation, little or no transit, high to moderate degree of building separation, predominantly residential with scattered civic buildings and varied street patterns, often curvilinear.

Currently, there does not appear to be a significant amount of suburban-style residential development occurring within the city. However, large tracts of undeveloped or agricultural land in the northern portions of the city have the potential for suburban tract housing development. Within the unincorporated portions of the County, there are some areas of suburban housing developing along major corridors, and adjacent to the Flint River. Some areas east of the city may also face suburban development pressure following the completion of the new Bainbridge High School.

### Commercial Corridor Emerging

The Commercial Developing character area includes developed or undeveloped land on both sides of designated high-volume transportation facility that is likely to convert to strip commercial uses. Characteristics include orientation of buildings to highway; high transit, including stops and shelters; on-site parking; and large set-backs for buildings.

Strip commercial development often occurs along major highway corridors and surrounding major new developments. For example, within the City of Bainbridge, a significant amount of new

commercial development has emerged along Tallahassee Highway following the development of the Super Wal-Mart. Similarly, the US-84 corridor east of the city is likely to face commercial development pressure as the Shotwell Street commercial corridor extends out toward the new high school.

### Neighborhood Commercial Corridors

Neighborhood Commercial Corridors are land alongside an important thoroughfare that includes low-intensity commercial, office, institutional, and residential land uses. Because these corridors often traverse historically residential neighborhoods, they face pressure for residential to commercial conversion. This land use change should be managed in order to limit the impact on surrounding neighborhoods and historic resources.

Within the City of Bainbridge, important neighborhood commercial corridors include Scott Street, S. West Street, and a portion of Shotwell Street. First, Scott Street/US-27 between Shotwell and the Bypass faces pressure for additional commercial conversion as the Tallahassee Highway Commercial Corridor expands. Likewise, S. West Street from downtown to the southern city limits currently retains a mixture of residential, neighborhood commercial, and office uses. Finally, the Shotwell Street Corridor west of Scott Street serves as a major east-west linkage into the city's downtown. While Shotwell Street widens into a major commercial corridor east of Scott Street, the roadway remains two-lane through the city's historic downtown core. There are a number of historic homes along this stretch of Shotwell, many of which have been converted into office and neighborhood commercial uses

**Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation**

Not applicable.

**Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors)**

Neighborhood Improvement Area

These neighborhoods are singled out as requiring special attention due to significant numbers of poorly maintained or dilapidated homes. Where the housing quality has declined due to substandard construction or lack of maintenance, poor housing conditions and associated problems need to be addressed in order to ensure that quality of life for residents is improved.

Within the City of Bainbridge, there are some neighborhoods where declining residential quality may lead to blighted conditions. North of the downtown, the neighborhoods adjacent to the Oak City Cemetery contain a significant amount of dilapidated and vacant homes. On the southern end of the city, there is a manufactured home community off GA-309 that appears to have significant maintenance issues. In West Bainbridge, the neighborhoods surrounding the intersection of the US-84/27 bypass and Spring Creek Rd also appear to be poorly maintained. This area is also impacted by the presence of surrounding heavy industrial operations.

Highway Commercial Corridors

Highway Commercial Corridors consist of land alongside major thoroughfares developed for conventional strip commercial uses.

Businesses along these corridors are predominantly retail and service oriented establishments designed to be accessed by automobile. Highway Commercial Corridors are often in need of improvement to aesthetics and pedestrian accessibility.

The Shotwell Street Corridor east of Scott Street is the largest concentration of highway commercial within the city. Currently much of this portion of Shotwell Street lacks sidewalks. Improvements to aesthetics and pedestrian accessibility could help improve the long-term viability of this commercial strip.

**Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated**

Industrial Redevelopment

Large abandoned structures or sites that may be environmentally contaminated are often referred to as “brownfields.” Because of real or perceived environmental contamination, these sites may be difficult to redevelop. Often, developers do not wish to take the risk or expense of environmental cleanup if a site is potentially contaminated. Public intervention may be necessary in order to facilitate environmental cleanup and redevelopment.

Within the City of Bainbridge, the former airport site on the west side of the city is a prominent example of a large abandoned site. While there has been some redevelopment of the site for industrial uses, much of the area is currently vacant.

Industrial Corridors

Industrial Corridors feature a mixture of industrial and commercial land uses along a major roadway or railway corridor. Industrial Corridors may require redevelopment planning in order to cope with economic change and environmental contamination.

According to the economic census, the Decatur County lost a significant number of industrial jobs over the previous decade. Likewise, the decline in barge traffic along the Flint and the new airport north of Bainbridge have displaced some of the transportation routes that have historically served the city's industrial areas. These trends, along with the national decline in manufacturing, pose challenges for industrial activity within the city.

The major Industrial Corridors in Bainbridge are located within the western portion of the city. These include Spring Creek Road, Dothan Road, and Airport Road. The largest concentration of heavy industrial uses in Bainbridge lies between Spring Creek Road and the Flint River. While the majority of this area is currently active, some of these industrial uses may become obsolete and vacant within the planning horizon. Airport Road, running between Spring Creek Road and Dothan Road passes by the former Airport site discussed above. This corridor contains heavy industrial uses as well as several publicly-owned sites, such as the public works department and prison. The Dothan Road (US-84) corridor extending west of the city contains light industrial and commercial land uses.

### **Areas with significant infill development opportunities**

Infill Development Opportunity areas include districts within the city where scattered vacant parcels are present. These areas present the opportunity to develop new housing within established neighborhoods where existing services are available. In addition, Infill Development Opportunity areas can include larger vacant sites within the city limits where additional infrastructure capacity is available. By encouraging infill development, the city can help to stabilize existing neighborhoods and prevent residential sprawl into the unincorporated county.

Compact infill development can also help to save on community facilities by making use of existing infrastructure capacity.

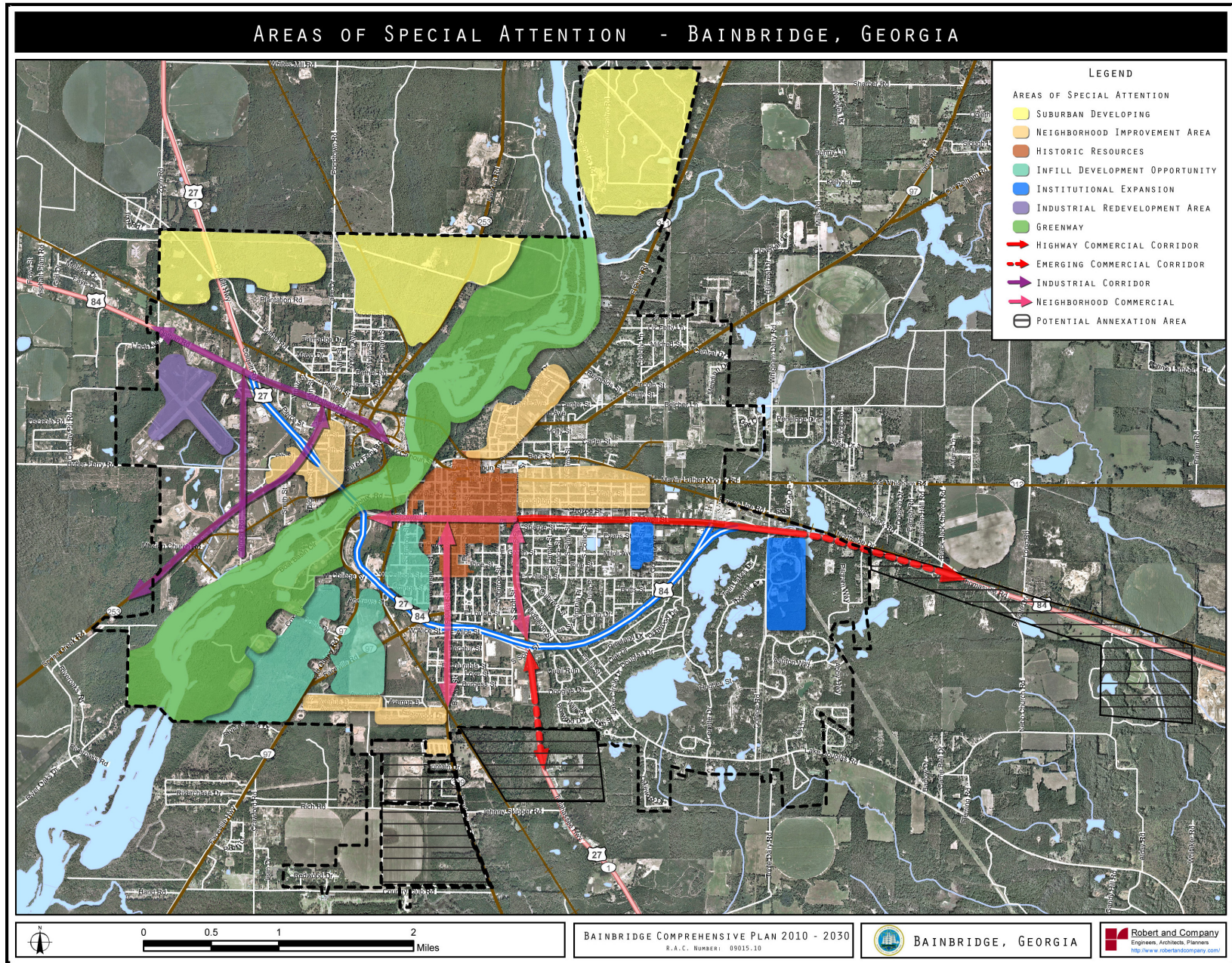
Within the Bainbridge, there are numerous scattered vacant parcels throughout the city. There are a significant number of vacant parcels within the neighborhood bounded by Shotwell Street, S. West Street, and the US-84/27 bypass. In addition, there are also several larger vacant areas within the city limits. Along GA-97 and Faceville Rd, there are some large vacant tracts where sewer service has been proposed. These areas could accommodate additional growth and take advantage of access to the city's riverfront parks.

### **Potential Annexation Areas**

Potential Annexation Areas are portions of the unincorporated county that may be annexed into the city. For the most part, the provision of community facilities and services drives annexation activities. Areas should be annexed only if it is viable to provide services to these new outlying areas. It is usually recommended that unincorporated islands surrounded by the city be annexed in order to streamline the provision of services. Another potential reason for annexation is to build tax revenue and control development along the fringes of the community.

There are some unincorporated islands on the south side of the city adjacent to Folkstown Rd (GA-309). The city has also recently annexed the future Bainbridge high school site east of the city as well as some of the right-of-way along the Wiregrass Georgia Parkway (US-84). As this area develops, it may make sense to annex additional areas along this corridor in order to control development and services. Likewise, the fast-growing Tallahassee corridor presents an opportunity to manage growth and commercial tax revenue.

Figure 4 – Areas of Special Attention, City of Bainbridge



## QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

### Introduction

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has created six general statewide planning goals based on growth and development issues. These six statewide goals offer general guidance on economic development, natural and cultural resources, community facilities and services, housing, land use / transportation, and intergovernmental coordination. DCA has also created a set of fifteen related Quality Community Objectives aimed at encouraging best practices, setting goals for the comprehensive plan.

### Traditional Neighborhoods

***“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.”***

Residential areas close to downtown Bainbridge, particularly in the city’s historic district, best exemplify the characteristics of traditional neighborhood design. Streets form a grid pattern, blocks are small and walkable, and sidewalks are adequate. Moving further out from the historic core, residential areas reflect more of a suburban pattern, and sidewalks are absent or inadequate.

Currently, there are not regulations that require sidewalks with new development or redeveloped properties. Walkability between different types of uses is primarily limited to the town square area and adjacent blocks. However, the city is in the process of enhancing streetscapes further out from the town square.

Bainbridge’s new zoning ordinance (adopted 2005) includes a Planned Unit Development District (PUD) that allows mixed use. Additionally, several of the non-residential districts allow residential uses either ‘by right’ or through conditional use.

The city does not have a Tree Ordinance; however the subdivision regulations require the planting of street trees along new roadways.

In order to more fully meet this Quality Community Objective, the following actions should be considered:

- ❑ Create a Traditional Neighborhood District in the zoning ordinance that allows and encourages traditional development and incorporates some mixing of uses to provide neighborhood services.
- ❑ Revise land development regulations to encourage smaller blocks with a rectangular grid pattern, especially in areas close to the downtown area.
- ❑ Incorporate a Mixed Use District into the zoning ordinance.
- ❑ Require sidewalks for new or infill residential developments.

### 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.”***

Although there are areas south and east of the Bainbridge’s current city limits that are likely to be annexed in the future, it is

not necessary to annex new land in order to accommodate projected growth between now and 2030.

Within the current city boundaries, there are numerous opportunities for infill development. There are both large vacant parcels that are undeveloped, which could serve as opportunities for large-scale traditional neighborhood developments; and there are neighborhoods with large numbers of dilapidated structures that present opportunities for parcel-by-parcel redevelopment. The extension of sewer services south of the historic downtown area presents the best opportunity for new development within the city.

Bainbridge west of the Flint River provides potential areas for non-residential infill. If the industrial sector in Bainbridge continues to decline, some of the sites along the river, as well as the former airfield off of Highway 84, may present opportunities for large-scale industrial redevelopment.

Bainbridge provides an online listing of existing buildings that are available for redevelopment, but it does not provide an inventory of available vacant sites. There is no evidence that the city is working to promote the redevelopment of existing brownfields or greyfields at this time.

In order to further this Quality Community Objective, Bainbridge should encourage infill development, especially in dilapidated or abandoned area, as a priority over annexation of additional undeveloped land. The city should also provide an inventory of vacant sites, brownfields, and and greyfields.

### 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.”***

Bainbridge’s two main community focal points are the town square and riverfront. The town square is a traditional town square surrounded by Bainbridge’s historic commercial district. Adjacent to the historic commercial district are traditional, historic neighborhoods. The Flint River waterfront is gaining momentum as a community destination for gatherings and recreation, and many planning efforts have been made to strengthen this area as a second focal point of the community. The 2006 Waterfront Connectivity Master Plan is a planning effort aimed at increasing pedestrian connectivity between the downtown core and the waterfront, which are walking distance apart.

Bainbridges’s Heritage Tour provides a walking tour of historic homes and sites within the city’s historic district. Additionally, the city also hosts several events throughout the year, including Artsfest, the Decatur County fall fair, and concerts at the new pavilion.

Bainbridge meets this Quality Community Objective, but should continue to seek opportunities for furthering its sense of place where possible. Most importantly, it should implements the goals and projects of the Waterfront Connectivity Plan where feasible.



### 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.”***

The population size and rural nature of Decatur County prohibit the practicality of a mass transit system, which reduces the opportunities for alternative means of transportation. The Southwest Georgia Regional Development Center (SWGRDC) provides limited transit service throughout the region, including the Decatur-Seminole Transit System, serving Decatur and Seminole Counties. This is an on-call service with fees based on mileage, and does not provide scheduled routes.

Because of the lack of public transit facilities, the best opportunities for alternative transportation in Bainbridge are through carpooling, biking, and most importantly, pedestrian mobility. Outside of the downtown core, sidewalk connectivity in the city is generally poor. Sidewalks are required in new developments ‘where appropriate’ but do not necessarily require them in all cases.

Although Bainbridge has not produced a bike and pedestrian plan, the city has engaged in two recent planning projects that seek to improve transportation alternatives in Bainbridge. The first is the 2006 Waterfront Connectivity Master Plan. The second is a recent partial inventory of sidewalks and bicycle facilities.

Mixing of land uses is another means of achieving pedestrian mobility. Convenient locations of neighborhood services provide the opportunity for residents to walk, rather than drive, to business and retail locations. A combination of mixed uses and adequate

pedestrian facilities is essential to providing a community’s citizens with an alternative to automobile transportation.

To further this Quality Community Objective, Bainbridge should produce and implement a bicycle and pedestrian master plan for the city, which will inventory current sidewalks and bicycle facilities, prioritize areas for new facilities, and identify costs and potential funding sources. Another worthy endeavor towards this objective would be the creation of a carpool or vanpool program, done on either a citywide or countywide level. Additionally, the city’s land use plan and zoning ordinance should gear themselves towards incorporating a better mix of uses, so that residents may live within walking distance of neighborhood services.

### 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.”***

Bainbridge is the center of activity and commerce in Decatur County, and is host to several events and festivals throughout the year. The city’s increasing stock of parks and recreational facilities, as well as its abundance of historic buildings and attractive streetscapes, provide a regional destination for local and county residents and tourists.

Beyond the county, Bainbridge is not necessarily a major draw for activity. At one time, the city was a major inland port; however the current conditions and environmental aspects of the river have halted the Flint River terminal use as a shipping area. As a result, Bainbridge does not have the strategic advantage it once had in attracting major industries.

In order to further this Quality Community Objective should continue developing its waterfront as a recreational and tourist destination, as it is unlikely the riverfront would return to a barge terminal use in the foreseeable future. Additionally, opportunities to expand local hospital facilities and Bainbridge Community College to a more regional scale, or to attract major employers to the city, should continually be pursued.

#### 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.”***

The city adopted a Historic Preservation Ordinance in June 2005, which established both a Historic Preservation Commission and a local historic district. The local historic district functions as an overlay zone to supplement additional standards to the zoning ordinance. The Preservation Commission oversees new development, redevelopment and renovations within the historic districts, through the issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness.

In addition to the local historic district, Bainbridge has two areas that are historic districts on the National Register of Historic Places – Bainbridge Commercial Historic District and Bainbridge Residential Historic District. Properties within National Register Districts are protected and are eligible for rehabilitation tax credits.

Additionally, Bainbridge is part of the national Main Street Program, has a Main Street Tourism office located in the city, and provides a Heritage Tour of its historic properties.

Bainbridge meets this Quality Community Objective, but could further it by better promoting its historic districts through unique street signage and way finding signage to better identify these areas.

#### 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 other forms of conservation.”***

The Flint River provides Bainbridge with a wonderful amenity for recreation and open space. The city has made a continual effort to develop park space and recreational amenities along the riverfront, and the Waterfront Connectivity Plan seeks to increase connections between downtown and the river in order to provide more access to these areas.

There is still a good amount of undeveloped land within the city limits, especially in proximity to the Flint River. A good portion of this should remain as open space, as it is within the river’s floodplain. As it is now, the undeveloped land provides a continuous greenway along the river. This should be maintained either in a natural state, or as a recreational greenway that would also serve as an environmental buffer for the river.

Bainbridge’s subdivision ordinance provides for Conservation Subdivisions, allowing new subdivisions to concentrate development in some areas, while preserving other areas for environmental conservation or community open space. Additionally, certain zoning districts require a minimum percentage of open space. The PUD district requires a minimum of 20% open space; the MHP district requires 15% for multi-family

developments; and the UR-12 district requires 10% for multi-family.

Overall, Bainbridge provides a good amount of parks and open space. To further this Quality Community Objective, additional open space planning should be done. At this time, Bainbridge does not have a greenspace plan or a land conservation program. A greenspace plan would further this objective by providing a long-term, strategic analysis of how undeveloped land in the city could best be used. If possible, areas surrounding the Flint River should be preserved as open space to provide a continuous greenway.

#### Environmental Protection

***“Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, especially 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 the area should be preserved.”***

The Flint River is a distinguishing feature of Bainbridge’s landscape, and is a valuable environmental resource. For the most part, areas along the river are undeveloped; however, there are several industrial uses concentrated on the west bank of the river. It was once necessary for industries to locate here because Bainbridge was an inland port; however, the port terminal is now defunct, and no longer provides a strategic location for manufacturing and shipping. Outside of this industrial area, most land surrounding the river has remained undeveloped or converted to park space. This helps provide a natural buffer for the river and provides recreational open space.

In addition to the Flint River, groundwater is a vital resource for the community. Bainbridge’s drinking water supply is entirely provided through groundwater, so it is important that groundwater recharge areas are protected from contamination. To what level heavy industrial uses in the city employ good environmental practices is unclear; however, it is important that this be monitored to ensure that groundwater is kept free of contaminants in order to provide a safe drinking water supply.

New industrial sites should certainly employ the highest standards for capping and environmental protection. Brownfield sites should be remediated as soon as possible to prevent continual contamination to both the Flint River and groundwater supply.

Bainbridge’s subdivision ordinance provides for Conservation Subdivisions, allowing new subdivisions to concentrate development in some areas, while preserving other areas for environmental conservation or community open space. This helps discourage development of wetlands and floodplains, while still allowing developers to maintain a feasible amount of development.

In the more urban areas of the city, the greatest threats to environmental quality are loss of trees and increased impervious surfaces. Tree canopies provide a number of environmental benefits, including: better stormwater protection, erosion control, bird habitats, and providing shade for pedestrians. The city has a tree protection ordinance requiring tree protection for new development. Additionally, the city has a tree-planting program for street trees.

Impervious surfaces include roads, building roofs, parking lots, and other structures built of impenetrable materials that do not allow stormwater to soak into the ground for natural filtration. Increased amounts of impervious surfaces contribute to reductions in water

quality, increases in erosion and flooding, and increases temperatures. Shared parking standards and maximum lot coverage in zoning regulations could help reduce the amount of paved surfaces in the city.

To ensure further compliance with this Quality Community Objective, the following measures should be considered:

- ❑ Preventing development within floodplains and wetlands.
- ❑ Protection of groundwater through highest standards of
- ❑ Cleaning brownfield/greyfield sites to prevent leakage of contaminants into groundwater supply and the Flint River.
- ❑ Limiting further development of undeveloped space in the city, especially in proximity to the Flint River.
- ❑ Continuing tree preservation efforts and tree planting programs to reduce heat islands.
- ❑ Employ maximum lot coverage regulations to reduce impervious surfaces, and reduce unnecessary surface parking.
- ❑ Encourage the use of pervious paver systems in order to reduce stormwater runoff.

#### 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 and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.”***

Both Bainbridge and Decatur have experienced only minimal growth over the last 3 decades. Since 1980, Bainbridge has added less than two thousand people (2007 Census estimate). Based on

historical growth, current economic conditions, and a declining manufacturing sector, it is not likely that Bainbridge will experience a high percentage of growth over the next 20 years. Population estimates provided by this plan show that Bainbridge should be prepared to accommodate a population growth within an approximate range of 1,000 to 4,500 by 2030.

The current stock of undeveloped land within the city limits, as well as infill opportunities, and the areas previously identified as likely annexation areas, should be adequate to handle the expected growth in Bainbridge. Bainbridge is currently extending sewer services in the south part of the city. This will accommodate a higher density of residents as this area develops.

In order to better meet the Growth Preparedness Objective, Bainbridge should direct growth into designated areas to help control the costs of providing services. A review of the zoning and development regulations and ordinances, and subsequently updating them to direct growth toward areas well served by city services will limit the need to expand facilities and services into new areas. This comprehensive plan’s Community Agenda will help the city determine appropriate areas of development growth and service expansion to accommodate growth over the next 20 years.

#### Appropriate Business

***“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.”***

The Development Authority of Bainbridge and Decatur County supplies prospective businesses with the information necessary to

make informed decisions on locating their business to the area through a website and other promotions. The Commodore Industrial Park, located in the City, is promoted through the Development Authority to attract appropriate businesses; however many vacant parcels remain undeveloped. Bainbridge and Decatur County offer several different levels of tax incentives for businesses that are considering locating to the area.

#### **Recommendations:**

- ❑ Continue to promote appropriate business through the Development Authority of Bainbridge and Decatur County and Chamber of Commerce.
- ❑ Continue to work with Congress and the Army Corps of Engineers to restore the river to its earlier conditions for inland barge terminal use.
- ❑ Seek to diversify economy with additional professional employment

#### Employment Options

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

A range of businesses exists within the City – retail, office, industrial, institutional, etc. to provide a range of job types. The Georgia Department of Labor’s Job Information System provides a listing of job openings for the City of Bainbridge. The city’s website also provides an Employment opportunities listing.

#### **Recommendations:**

- ❑ Consider posting employment opportunities within the city on the Chamber of Commerce website.

#### Housing Choices

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

Approximately three quarters of Bainbridge’s housing stock is made up of single-family detached houses. While the city offers both a traditional style of development close to downtown Bainbridge, and suburban style on the outer edges, the lack of multi-family and single-family, attached units decreases the opportunity for affordable housing.

As shown in the data appendix, approximately one quarter of Bainbridge’s households are cost-burdened, meaning they spend 30% or more of their income on housing costs. Bainbridge should encourage more development of townhomes, duplexes, and multi-unit structures in order to increase the stock of affordable housing choices and meet this Quality Community Objective.

#### 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.”***

The existence of Bainbridge Community College provides opportunities for either a technical based or liberal arts-based college education. Additionally, the Georgia Department of Labor has a Bainbridge Career Center that provides job training, education, and job placement services.

Outside of Bainbridge, there are several educational opportunities within an hour's drive. The city's proximity to other metropolitan areas such as Tallahassee, FL (Florida State University, Florida A&M) and Albany, GA (Albany State University, Albany Technical College, Darton College) increase the nearby educational opportunities.

### Local Self-Determination

***“Communities should be allowed to develop and work toward achieving their own vision for the future. Where the state seeks to achieve particular objectives, state financial and technical assistance should be used as the incentive to encourage local government conformance to those objectives.”***

The City of Bainbridge currently maintains its own independent community development department that conducts planning and visioning. In order to maintain its own vision for the future, the city is undergoing its comprehensive planning process independently of Decatur County and its smaller municipalities.

### **Recommendations**

- ❑ Participate in state sponsored planning workshops and continuing education programs in order to utilize state resources while developing an independent vision for the city.
- ❑ Seek out state planning grant programs in order to help fund planning activities.
- ❑ Conduct a through public outreach process as part of the Comprehensive Plan in order to build an independent vision for the city.

### Regional Solutions & Cooperation

***“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. Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.”***

While there is limited interaction between the City of Bainbridge and the other small municipalities in Decatur County, relations with the County are generally smooth. The city is satisfied with the current Service Delivery Strategy (SDS), which incorporates shared services within the county. There is a regionally administered ride-sharing program for residents of Decatur County, which serves the residents of the City.

### **Recommendations:**

- ❑ Bainbridge and Decatur County should strive to include Attapulgus, Climax and Brinson in their interactions, as appropriate.
- ❑ Work with the County to ensure that new development occurs in areas where existing services are available.



## Bainbridge Comprehensive Plan 2010 - 2030

### COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT DATA APPENDIX

**Adopted**

October 19, 2010

**Prepared by:**



**Robert and Company**  
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**CONTENTS**

Population..... 1

Housing..... 7

    Households with Housing Hardships..... 10

    Future Housing Needs ..... 15

    Special Needs Housing ..... 16

        Bainbridge Housing Authority ..... 16

        Senior Housing ..... 16

        Domestic Violence..... 18

        Drug Treatment..... 18

Economic Development..... 19

    Labor Force ..... 19

    Economic Base ..... 23

        Projected Employment ..... 24

        Top Employers..... 27

        Economic Development Resources ..... 27

Natural and Cultural Resources..... 29

    Water Supply Watershed..... 29

    Ground Water Recharge Areas ..... 29

    Wetlands..... 31

    Floodplains..... 33

    Other Environmentally Sensitive Areas..... 33

        Protected Rivers ..... 33

        Protected Mountains ..... 33

        Soils..... 35

    Plant & Animal Habitats..... 37

    Historic & Cultural Resources ..... 41

        Historic Districts ..... 41

        Historic Preservation Ordinance..... 42

Community Facilities..... 44

    General Administration..... 46

    Community Development..... 46

    Leisure Services..... 47

    Public Safety ..... 50



Public Safety Patrol Division .....	50
Fire Suppression Division .....	51
County Sheriff & Georgia State Patrol .....	51
Courts & Correction Facilities.....	51
Emergency Medical Services (EMS) & 911 .....	51
Public Works .....	52
Solid Waste .....	52
Utilities.....	53
Water .....	53
Sewer Service .....	54
Natural Gas .....	55
Power .....	55
Education & Health .....	55
Public Schools.....	55
Private Schools & Preschools.....	57
Colleges & Universities .....	57
Libraries .....	57
Other Educational Resources.....	57
Hospitals & Health Care.....	58
Transportation.....	59
Road Network .....	59
Traffic Counts .....	61
Roadway Projects.....	61
Public Transportation .....	61
Sidewalks.....	61
Air Travel .....	64
Ports.....	64
Intergovernmental Agreements & Coordination .....	65
Planning .....	65
Utilities.....	65
Service Delivery Agreements.....	66

## Tables and Charts

Table 1 - Historic Population Change.....	1
Table 2 – Population Projection Scenarios 2000-2030, Bainbridge, GA.....	1
Table 3 – Annual Building Permits 2000 – 2007, Bainbridge, GA.....	2
Table 4 – Historic Age Distribution 1990-2000, City of Bainbridge.....	3
Table 5 – Projected Age Distribution 2000-2030, Decatur County.....	4
Table 6 – Income Distribution 1990-2000, Bainbridge, GA.....	5
Table 7 – Per Capita Income 1980-2000 Bainbridge and Decatur County, GA.....	5
Table 8 – Population Below Poverty 1999, Bainbridge and Decatur County, GA.....	5
Table 9 – Race and Hispanic Origin 1990-2000, Bainbridge, GA.....	6
Table 10 – Educational Attainment 1990-2000, Bainbridge, GA.....	6
Table 11 – Housing Units by Type 1990-2000, Bainbridge, GA.....	7
Table 12 – Housing Units by Type 1990-2000, Decatur County, GA.....	7
Table 13 – Occupancy Status of Housing 1990-2000, Bainbridge, GA.....	7
Table 14 – Housing Conditions 2000, Bainbridge, GA.....	8
Table 15 – Overcrowded Housing Units.....	8
Table 16 – Housing Cost 1990-2000, Bainbridge, GA.....	9
Table 17 – Cost Burdened Households 1990-2000, Bainbridge, GA.....	9
Table 18 – Income of Households with Hardships, Bainbridge, GA, 2000.....	10
Table 19 – Sources of Income for Households with Hardships, Bainbridge, GA.....	10
Table 20 – Employment Status of Persons with Housing Hardships, Bainbridge, GA.....	11
Table 21 – Employment by Occupation for Persons with Housing Hardships, Bainbridge, GA.....	11
Table 22 – Household Type for Households with Hardships, Bainbridge, GA.....	12
Table 23 – Age of Householder for Households with Hardships, Bainbridge, GA.....	12
Table 24 – Household Size of Households with Hardships, Bainbridge, GA.....	13
Table 25 – Race of Households with Hardships, Bainbridge, GA.....	13
Table 26 – Unit Type for Households with Hardships, Bainbridge, GA.....	14
Table 27 - Average Household Size 1980 – 2000, Bainbridge, GA.....	15
Table 28 – Projected Average Household Size 2005-2030.....	15
Table 29 - Future Housing Needs 2000-2030, Bainbridge, GA.....	15
Table 30 – Special Housing Needs, Decatur County, GA.....	16
Table 31 – Labor Force Participation 1990-2000, Bainbridge, GA.....	19
Table 32 – Personal Income by Source (in \$thousands) – Bainbridge, GA.....	20
Table 33 – Commuting Patterns 2000, Bainbridge, GA.....	20

Table 34 – Occupation by Sector for Bainbridge Residents 1990-2000 .....	21
Table 35 – Unemployment Rate 1999-2009, Decatur County, GA.....	21
Table 36 – Average Weekly Wages (\$) 2001-2007, Decatur County, GA.....	22
Table 37 – Employment Change 1998-2007, Decatur County, GA.....	23
Table 38 – Employment by Industry (%) 2007, Comparison US, GA, and Decatur County .....	24
Table 39 – Projected Employment Change 2000 – 2030, Decatur County, GA.....	25
Table 40 – Projected Employment Change by Percent 2000-2030, Decatur County, GA .....	26
Table 41 – Soil Codes, Decatur County, GA.....	35
Table 42 – Threatened and Endangered Species, Decatur County, Georgia - Birds .....	37
Table 43 – Park Acreage and Type.....	47
Table 44 – Recreational Program Participation.....	48
Table 45 – Crime Statistics 2001-2005, Bainbridge, GA .....	50
Table 46 - Summary of Calls (2007) .....	51
Table 47 – Solid Waste Planning Standards.....	52
Table 48 - Decatur County Schools, Enrollment and Capacity for School Year 2009-10 .....	56
Table 49 - Bainbridge High School, Graduation Rates: 2008 & 2009.....	56
Table 50 – Health Care Facilities.....	58
Table 51 - Service Delivery Agreements, Decatur County, GA.....	67

**Figures**

Figure 5 – Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas, Bainbridge, GA.....	30
Figure 6 – Wetlands, City of Bainbridge, GA .....	32
Figure 7 – Floodplains, Bainbridge, GA.....	34
Figure 8 – Soils, Bainbridge, GA.....	36
Figure 9 – Historic Districts, City of Bainbridge, GA.....	43
Figure 10 – Community Facilities, Bainbridge, Georgia.....	45
Figure 11 – Parks and Recreation, Bainbridge, GA.....	49
Figure 12 – Roadway Functional Class .....	60
Figure 13 – Traffic Counts, 2008, Bainbridge, GA .....	62
Figure 14 – Sidewalks, Bainbridge, GA.....	63

**POPULATION**

The last full Census was performed in 2000, and the figures from that year show a population of 11,722 in Bainbridge (Table 1). This is a population growth of 9.4% since 1990, when the population was 10,712, and a growth of 11.1% since 1980. The slowest period of growth occurred over the 1980s at only 1.5%.

The U.S. Census Bureau’s most recent annual estimate (2007) for Bainbridge is 12,108. From 2000 to 2007, the city’s population has grown an estimated 3.2% in those 7 years.

Decatur County, by comparison, has had only a slightly slower rate of growth. From 1980 to 2000, the County’s growth rate was 10.8%. The estimated 2007 population of 28,544 represents a growth of just 1.1% since the last census count of 28,240 in 2000. Because both the city and county have grown at similar rates, Bainbridge’s proportion of the overall county population has essentially remained stable at 41-42% between 1980 and 2007.

**Table 1 - Historic Population Change**

	1980	1990	2000	2007*
<b>Bainbridge</b>	10,553	10,712	11,722	12,108
<b>Decatur County</b>	25,495	25,511	28,240	28,544

Source: US Census Bureau  
 \* Census Annual Estimates

Looking forward, Table 2 provides three projection scenarios for Bainbridge’s population through the year 2030. The first scenario was provided by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), which produces projections for all Georgia cities and counties. This is a linear average projection, a simple projection that uses past data and extrapolates it forward on a straight line. Basically, it is a projection forward using an historic average

growth in numbers. Using the 2000 Census figure as a baseline, the DCA projects a 2030 population of 13, 476, with a 9.5% growth rate from 2010-2030.

**Table 2 – Population Projection Scenarios 2000-2030, Bainbridge, GA**

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>Linear Avg (DCA)</b>	11,722	12,014	12,307	12,599	12,891	13,183	13,476
<b>Constant Share</b>	11,722	12,149	12,878	13,606	14,335	15,097	16,025
<b>Avg Bldg Permits</b>	11,722	12,706	13,913	14,541	15,242	15,939	16,636

Source: Robert and Company, Georgia DCA

Robert and Company has produced two additional projection alternatives. The Constant Share projection uses the historic proportion of Bainbridge population as compared to Decatur County as a whole. This proportion, or ‘share’, is then projected based on U.S. Census projections for Decatur County. As mentioned before, Bainbridge has maintained a consistent proportion of overall Decatur County population, and thus county projections are a reliable indicator of city growth. This projection represents a more aggressive forecast of growth over the next twenty years (24.4%).

The last population scenario produces the highest projected population. A 2030 population of 16,636 indicates a growth of 19.6% over the next twenty years. This projection scenario uses local building permit data to help project Bainbridge's population. Because of the large number of building permits issued over the previous seven years, this projection may more accurately reflect the recent building boom experienced within the city.

**Table 3 – Annual Building Permits 2000 – 2007, Bainbridge, GA**

Year	Building Permits (Units)
2000	39
2001	35
2002	47
2003	53
2004	203
2005	227
2006	66
2007	96
<b>TOTAL</b>	766
<b>Annual AVG 00-07</b>	96

Source: US Census Bureau

Bainbridge's age distribution in 1990 and 2000 are shown in Table 4. The city's age distribution did not change significantly over the decade, however a few aspects are notable. The age group of 45-54 years old gained the most population in numbers and percentage. The proportion of teenagers (14-17 years old) and college-aged adults (18-24 old) is relatively small. Citizens of retirement age and older (55+) represent nearly a quarter of the city's population. Additionally, those that were between 35 and 54 represent another quarter of the population (approximately), and will be retirement age by 2030.

**Table 4 – Historic Age Distribution 1990-2000, City of Bainbridge**

Age Cohort	1990	%	2000	%
<b>0 – 4 Years Old</b>	831	7.8%	966	8.2%
<b>5 – 13 Years Old</b>	1,685	15.7%	1,802	15.4%
<b>14 – 17 Years Old</b>	539	5.0%	519	4.4%
<b>18 – 20 Years Old</b>	468	4.4%	535	4.6%
<b>21 – 24 Years Old</b>	583	5.4%	626	5.3%
<b>25 – 34 Years Old</b>	1,587	14.8%	1,583	13.5%
<b>35 – 44 Years Old</b>	1,443	13.5%	1,570	13.4%
<b>45 – 54 Years Old</b>	944	8.8%	1,360	11.6%
<b>55 – 64 Years Old</b>	944	8.8%	891	7.6%
<b>65 and over</b>	1,688	15.8%	1,870	16.0%

Source: US Census Bureau

Looking forward, the age distribution projections through 2030 (Table 5) indicate an aging population. Between 2000 and 2030, all age groups under 45 years old are projected to decline in proportion to the overall population, while the age groups 45 and over are all projected to increase in proportion. Of particular importance is that the senior population (65 and over) may increase from 13.3% of the population in 2000 to 21.6% in 2030. This indicates that there will be a greater need for senior care facilities and health care services in Bainbridge. There may also be a higher percentage of the population that will rely on public financial assistance, as there may be less population involved in the local workforce.

**Table 5 – Projected Age Distribution 2000-2030, Decatur County**

Age Cohort	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>0-4 Years Old</b>	7.6%	7.1%	6.8%	6.8%	6.6%	6.3%	5.8%
<b>5-14 Years Old</b>	16.0%	15.3%	14.4%	13.7%	13.6%	13.4%	13.0%
<b>15-19 Years Old</b>	7.8%	7.6%	7.0%	6.7%	6.1%	6.1%	6.1%
<b>20-24 Years Old</b>	6.3%	7.0%	6.2%	5.7%	5.4%	5.0%	5.0%
<b>25-34 Years Old</b>	13.2%	12.9%	14.4%	14.1%	12.5%	11.7%	11.1%
<b>35-44 Years Old</b>	14.7%	13.9%	12.1%	12.7%	14.4%	14.2%	12.8%
<b>45-54 Years Old</b>	12.6%	13.8%	14.3%	13.1%	11.5%	12.2%	13.8%
<b>55-64 Years Old</b>	8.6%	9.7%	11.5%	12.7%	13.3%	12.2%	10.8%
<b>65 and Over</b>	13.3%	12.8%	13.2%	14.5%	16.6%	19.0%	21.6%

Source: Woods and Poole Economics

Household income and poverty status are crucial factors affecting the quality of life for people in the City of Bainbridge. Household income in Bainbridge is shown in Table 6. Although there are wide ranges of incomes, over half of the city's households (56%) had an annual income of less than \$30,000 in 2000. The city's largest income category, unfortunately, is a household making less than \$10,000 per year. In 2000, this income category comprised one-fifth (19.9%) of all Bainbridge households. On a positive note, Bainbridge's higher income categories increased in percentage. All income categories \$50,000 and higher had higher percentages in 2000 than in 1990. Additionally, the sub-\$10,000 significantly decreased from 31.2% in 1990 to 19.9% in 2000.

**Table 6 – Income Distribution 1990-2000, Bainbridge, GA**

Category	1990	%	2000	%
Total	4,009		4,492	
Income less than \$9999	1,252	31.2%	893	19.9%
Income \$10000 - \$14999	463	11.5%	573	12.8%
Income \$15000 - \$19999	383	9.6%	447	10.0%
Income \$20000 - \$29999	761	19.0%	597	13.3%
Income \$30000 - \$34999	220	5.5%	299	6.7%
Income \$35000 - \$39999	209	5.2%	249	5.5%
Income \$40000 - \$49999	358	8.9%	336	7.5%
Income \$50000 - \$59999	113	2.8%	253	5.6%
Income \$60000 - \$74999	110	2.7%	347	7.7%
Income \$75000 - \$99999	72	1.8%	199	4.4%
Income \$100000 - \$124999	25	0.6%	154	3.4%
Income \$125000 - \$149999	18	0.4%	51	1.1%
Income \$150000 and above	25	0.6%	94	2.1%

Source: US Census Bureau

On an individual basis, the per capita income in Bainbridge has increased from \$5,722 in 1980 to \$15,589 in 2000. Decatur County

has had a per capita income close in comparison, increasing from \$4,929 in 1980 to \$15,063 in 2000. Table 7 also provides inflation-adjusted numbers in 2009 dollars for each year to make more accurate comparisons. When adjusted for inflation, the numbers show that while per capita income has still increased over the years, the relative increase has not been quite as dramatic.

**Table 7 – Per Capita Income 1980-2000 Bainbridge and Decatur County, GA**

	1980	1990	2000
Bainbridge	\$5,722	\$9,291	\$15,589
Decatur County	\$4,929	\$9,246	\$15,063
<i>Adjusted</i>	<i>1980*</i>	<i>1990*</i>	<i>2000*</i>
Bainbridge	\$14,808	\$15,158	\$19,304
Decatur County	\$12,755	\$15,085	\$18,653

Source: US Census Bureau; \*Adjusted for inflation to 2009 dollars

Poverty affects over one out four people in Bainbridge, with 26.9% living below the poverty level. This is a higher percentage than Decatur County as a whole (22.7%). (See Table 8)

**Table 8 – Population Below Poverty 1999, Bainbridge and Decatur County, GA**

	Below Poverty	% Below Poverty
Decatur	6,240	22.7%
Bainbridge	3,013	26.9%

Source: US Census Bureau



Table 9 reports racial demographics in Bainbridge from the 1990 and 2000 Censuses. Bainbridge's population is near evenly split between blacks and whites, with other races representing a minimal percentage. In 1990, the white population was the majority race with 52.4% of the population; this has since decreased to 47.5% in 2000. The city's black population has increased in proportion from 47% in 1990 to 50.3% in 2000, and is now the majority race in Bainbridge. People of Hispanic origin comprise a very small (2%) but growing percentage of the population.

**Table 9 – Race and Hispanic Origin 1990-2000, Bainbridge, GA**

	1990	%	2000	%
White alone	5,612	52.4%	5,566	47.5%
Black or African American alone	5,032	47.0%	5,901	50.3%
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	23	0.2%	14	0.1%
Asian or Pacific Islander	18	0.2%	77	0.7%
other race	27	0.3%	164	1.4%
Hispanic Origin	200	1.9%	234	2.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>10,712</b>		<b>11,722</b>	

Source: US Census Bureau

Most of Bainbridge's population has achieved a high-school level of education; however, 28.8% of the population has not received a high school diploma (or GED equivalent). Fortunately this is a much lower percentage than the 40.2% in 1990 that had not achieved a high school diplomat.

**Table 10 – Educational Attainment 1990-2000, Bainbridge, GA**

Category	1990	%	2000	%
Less than 9th Grade	1,193	18.0%	846	11.9%
9th to 12th Grade (No Diploma)	1,473	22.2%	1,199	16.9%
High School Graduate (+ GED)	1,700	25.7%	2,012	28.4%
Some College (No Degree)	981	14.8%	1,394	19.7%
Associate Degree	271	4.1%	350	4.9%
Bachelor's Degree	674	10.2%	757	10.7%
Graduate or Professional Degree	331	5.0%	536	7.6%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,623</b>		<b>7,094</b>	

Source: US Census Bureau

## HOUSING

Approximately three of every four housing units in Bainbridge was a single-family detached home (74.6%) in 2000. Out of the remaining housing types, multi-family buildings of three to nine units are most common (10.6%), followed by duplexes (6.3%) and mobile homes (4.0%). Single-family attached housing (townhomes) make up a minimal percentage of the city's housing stock (1.1%). These proportions have changed only slightly since 1999 (Table 11).

**Table 11 – Housing Units by Type 1990-2000, Bainbridge, GA**

	1990	%	2000	%
<b>TOTAL Housing Units</b>	4,457		4,994	
<b>Single Units (detached)</b>	3,298	74.0%	3,725	74.6%
<b>Single Units (attached)</b>	53	1.2%	57	1.1%
<b>Double Units</b>	333	7.5%	315	6.3%
<b>3 to 9 Units</b>	515	11.6%	528	10.6%
<b>10 to 19 Units</b>	76	1.7%	24	0.5%
<b>20 to 49 Units</b>	0	0.0%	54	1.1%
<b>50 or more Units</b>	0	0.0%	92	1.8%
<b>Mobile Home or Trailer</b>	145	3.3%	199	4.0%
<b>All Other</b>	37	0.8%	0	0.0%

Source: US Census Bureau

Table 12 shows that Decatur County's housing stock is similarly dominated by single-family detached housing; however there is a much larger proportion of mobile homes. In 2000, mobile home units were nearly a quarter of the housing stock (23.8%), up from 20.5% in 1990. In both Bainbridge and Decatur County, there is a very low proportion of multi-family housing units.

**Table 12 – Housing Units by Type 1990-2000, Decatur County, GA**

	1990	%	2000	%
<b>TOTAL Housing Units</b>	10,120		11,968	
<b>Single Units (detached)</b>	6,818	67.4%	7,723	64.5%
<b>Single Units (attached)</b>	90	0.9%	107	0.9%
<b>Double Units</b>	388	3.8%	386	3.2%
<b>3 to 9 Units</b>	546	5.4%	659	5.5%
<b>10 to 19 Units</b>	91	0.9%	44	0.4%
<b>20 to 49 Units</b>	0	0.0%	54	0.5%
<b>50 or more Units</b>	0	0.0%	98	0.8%
<b>Mobile Home or Trailer</b>	2,072	20.5%	2,853	23.8%
<b>All Other</b>	115	1.1%	44	0.4%

Source: US Census Bureau

Table 13 shows the tenure status of housing in Bainbridge in 1990 and 2000. There were more owner-occupied homes in Bainbridge than renter occupied homes in both 1990 and 2000. In 2000, 12% of Bainbridge's housing stock was vacant, up from 10.4% at the start of the decade. The vacancy rate in Georgia was 8.4% in 2000, down from 10.3% in 1990. So while statewide vacancies have declined over time, Bainbridge vacancies increased.

**Table 13 – Occupancy Status of Housing 1990-2000, Bainbridge, GA**

	1990	%	2000	%
<b>TOTAL Housing Units Built</b>	4,457		4,994	
<b>Housing Units Vacant</b>	463	10.4%	601	12.0%
<b>Owner Occupied</b>	2,441	54.8%	2,668	53.4%
<b>Renter Occupied</b>	1,553	34.8%	1,725	34.5%

Source: US Census Bureau

Table 14 shows one indicator of housing unit conditions, which is the presence or lack of plumbing and kitchen facilities. Only a very small percentage of homes were lacking complete plumbing facilities in 2000 (0.6%), which is less than in 1990. However, there was actually an increase of home lacking complete kitchen facilities from 1990 to 2000, from 0.8% to 1.2%. There were twenty-one more homes without proper kitchen facilities in 2000 than there were in 1990.

**Table 14 – Housing Conditions 2000, Bainbridge, GA**

	1990	%	2000	%
<b>Total housing units</b>	4,457		4,994	
<b>Complete Plumbing Facilities</b>	4,409	98.9%	4,965	99.4%
<b>Lacking Plumbing Facilities</b>	48	1.1%	29	0.6%
<b>Complete kitchen facilities</b>	4,420	99.2%	4,936	98.8%
<b>Lacking complete kitchen facilities</b>	37	0.8%	58	1.2%

Source: US Census Bureau

This indicates that while only 399 housing units were added to Bainbridge's total households, overcrowded households increased by 97. This also shows a mismatch between the increase in vacant units with a simultaneous rise in overcrowded housing.

**Table 15 – Overcrowded Housing Units**

	1990	%	2000	%
<b>Total occupied housing units</b>	3,994		4,393	
<b>More than 1 person per room</b>	188	4.7%	285	6.5%

Source: US Census Bureau

Median property value in Bainbridge increased 54.9% from 1990 to 2000, and the median value in 2000 was \$62,500. In order to account for inflation so that the costs can be accurately compared, Table 16 also shows each year's inflation-adjusted price in 2009 dollars. Using this adjustment, the median value increased by 12.7% in true value.

Housing costs for renter-occupied housing in Bainbridge are also shown in Table 16. The median rent in Bainbridge increased from \$252 to \$266 from 1990 to 2000. Adjusting for inflation, the median rent in 2009 dollars went from \$411 to \$453, a true increase of 10.2%.

**Table 16 – Housing Cost 1990-2000, Bainbridge, GA**

	1990	2000	% Change
<b>Median property value</b>	\$42,100	\$65,200	54.9%
<b>Median rent</b>	\$252	\$366	45.2%
<i>Adjusted*</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>%Change</i>
<b>Median property value</b>	\$68,687	\$77,395	12.7%
<b>Median rent</b>	\$411	\$453	10.2%

Source: US Census Bureau; \*Inflation adjusted to 2009 dollars

A Cost Burdened Household is defined as one that spends over 30% of its income on housing costs. A Severely Cost-Burdened Household spends 50% or greater of their income on housing costs. Of Bainbridge's households, 13.4% were considered Cost-Burdened, and 10.5% were Severely Cost-Burdened in 2000. In total, nearly one quarter of households (23.9%) spent 30% or more on housing costs. Figures for 1990 were unavailable for Severely Cost Burdened households, but rates were slightly higher for Cost Burdened households in 1990 (14.3%) than in 2000, representing a decrease in proportion over the decade. These figures are shown in Table 17.

**Table 17 – Cost Burdened Households 1990-2000, Bainbridge, GA**

	1990	%	2000	%
<b>30% - 49%</b>	573	14.3%	587	13.4%
<b>50% and greater</b>	NA		460	10.5%

Source: US Census Bureau

## Households with Housing Hardships

Households with housing hardships are defined as those households or persons who have at least one of the problems of cost burdened status, overcrowding, or incomplete plumbing or kitchen facilities. The incomes of households with housing hardships are shown in Table 18. All households with hardships in Bainbridge received an income of less than \$35,000 in 2000. Of the total number of households shown in this table, a higher proportion of hardships (55%) occur in renter-occupied housing than in owner-occupied housing.

Of Bainbridge's households with hardships, many rely on social security or public assistance income – as reported in the previous table (Table 18), 902 households had at least one type of hardship. Of those, 468 (52%) received assistance. Table 19 shows the renter and owner-occupied households receiving assistance. Overwhelmingly, there is a much higher percentage of renters and owners with hardships that rely on Social Security rather than public assistance income, indicating that much of the households with hardships in Bainbridge are senior citizens.

**Table 18 – Income of Households with Hardships, Bainbridge, GA, 2000**

Income Range	Owners	%	Renters	%	Total	%
Less Than \$5,000	39	9.6%	88	17.8%	127	14.1%
\$5,000 - \$9,999	90	22.1%	167	33.7%	257	28.5%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	79	19.4%	125	25.3%	204	22.6%
\$15,000 - \$19,999	39	9.6%	72	14.5%	111	12.3%
\$20,000 - \$24,999	54	13.3%	39	7.9%	93	10.3%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	106	26.0%	4	0.8%	110	12.2%
\$35,000 and Over	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>407</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>495</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>902</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: US Census PUMS

**Table 19 – Sources of Income for Households with Hardships, Bainbridge, GA**

Income Type	Owners	%	Renters	%	Total	%
<b>Social Security Income</b>	103	81.1%	253	74.2%	356	76.1%
<b>Public Assistance Income</b>	24	18.9%	88	25.8%	112	23.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>341</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>468</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: US Census PUMS

Despite hardships, most individuals living in low-income household are in the labor force and do not rely solely on social security or other public assistance. None of the workers fitting this category are employed in the armed forces – this is not surprising for two reasons: there are very few people in Bainbridge in the armed forces, and the military normally provides housing for lower ranking servicemen. Table 20 shows that of persons with housing hardships, over half are employed. Only a very small percentage (3.9%) are in the labor force, but unemployed.

Of those that have housing hardships, the greatest percentage are employed in Management & Professional occupations, followed by Sales & Office occupations and Production, Transportation, & Materials Moving. The full breakdown of occupations for those with housing burdens is provided in Table 21.

**Table 20 – Employment Status of Persons with Housing Hardships, Bainbridge, GA**

Employment Status	Owners	%	Renters	%	Total	%
Employed	209	55.9%	463	52.8%	672	53.7%
Unemployed	13	3.5%	36	4.1%	49	3.9%
Armed Forces	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Not In Labor Force	152	40.6%	378	43.1%	530	42.4%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>877</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,251</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: US Census PUMS

**Table 21 – Employment by Occupation for Persons with Housing Hardships, Bainbridge, GA**

Occupation	Owners	%	Renters	%	Total	%
Management & Professional	61	29.2%	105	22.7%	166	24.7%
Services	35	16.7%	90	19.4%	125	18.6%
Sales & Office	39	18.7%	117	25.3%	156	23.2%
Farming, Fishing, & Forestry	5	2.4%	9	1.9%	14	2.1%
Construction, Extraction & Maintenance	24	11.5%	49	10.6%	73	10.9%
Production, Transportation, & Materials Moving	45	21.5%	93	20.1%	138	20.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>209</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>463</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>672</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

Source: US Census PUMS

The most common household type under hardships is the Married Couple Family, with 41% of the total. Although this is true of the total, the proportions are much different between those who own their home, and those who rent. Single mothers (Female Householder Family) are the most common in a rental situation, when renter-occupied units are looked at separately, while Married Couple Families are only second in rental situations. The table also shows that renter-occupied units with hardships have also have a much larger proportion of single-father led families (14.5%) than in owner-occupied housing (5.4%). Overall, family households led by a single parent comprise 44.8% of renter-occupied households with hardships, while this is only true in 23.1% of owner-occupied households with hardships.

Most households with hardships have a householder between the ages of 25 and 59. However, nearly a quarter (24.3%) are senior citizens, and this proportion is even higher when looking at owner-occupied units alone. When looking at renter-occupied units, the age demographics shift to younger households – for instance householders under 25 are 14.1% in rented units, whereas only 2.2% of owned homes had householders of that age group. Table 23 reports these numbers below.

**Table 22 – Household Type for Households with Hardships, Bainbridge, GA**

Household Type	Owners	%	Renters	%	Total	%
<b>Married Couple Family</b>	243	59.7%	127	25.7%	370	41.0%
<b>Male Householder Family</b>	16	3.9%	17	3.4%	33	3.7%
<b>Female Householder Family</b>	72	17.7%	150	30.3%	222	24.6%
<b>Male Alone Nonfamily</b>	22	5.4%	72	14.5%	94	10.4%
<b>Male not Alone Nonfamily</b>	2	0.5%	18	3.6%	20	2.2%
<b>Female Alone Nonfamily</b>	51	12.5%	87	17.6%	138	15.3%
<b>Female not Alone Nonfamily</b>	1	0.2%	24	4.8%	25	2.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	407	100.0%	495	100.0%	902	100.0%

Source: US Census PUMS

**Table 23 – Age of Householder for Households with Hardships, Bainbridge, GA**

Age of Householder	Owners	%	Renters	%	Total	%
<b>24 and Under</b>	9	2.2%	70	14.1%	79	8.8%
<b>25 to 59</b>	269	66.1%	335	67.7%	604	67.0%
<b>59 and Over</b>	129	31.7%	90	18.2%	219	24.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>	407	100.0%	495	100.0%	902	100.0%

Source: US Census PUMS

Household size of burdened homes is shown in Table 24. There is a good amount of variation here between renter- and owner-occupied units, with the predominant size being the single person household in rented housing, and the two-person household the largest category in owner-occupied housing. Owner-occupied housing with hardships also had a higher percentage of three- and four-person households, indicating higher numbers of traditional families (married couples with 1 or 2 kids).

Although the black population in Bainbridge was slightly higher in 2000, white households had a much higher share of households with hardships (58.1%) than did black households (39.1%). Hispanics and other races comprised a very small percentage of burdened households, reflective of the overall small numbers other races represent in the total city population. The complete breakdown of races of households with hardships is shown in Table 25.

**Table 24 – Household Size of Households with Hardships, Bainbridge, GA**

Household Size	Owners	%	Renters	%	Total	%
<b>1 Person</b>	71	17.4%	154	31.1%	225	24.9%
<b>2 Persons</b>	126	31.0%	105	21.2%	231	25.6%
<b>3 Persons</b>	84	20.6%	68	13.7%	152	16.9%
<b>4 Persons</b>	75	18.4%	67	13.5%	142	15.7%
<b>5 Persons</b>	29	7.1%	55	11.1%	84	9.3%
<b>6 Persons</b>	12	2.9%	24	4.8%	36	4.0%
<b>Over 6 Persons</b>	10	2.5%	22	4.4%	32	3.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>	407	100.0%	495	100.0%	902	100.0%

Source: US Census PUMS

**Table 25 – Race of Households with Hardships, Bainbridge, GA**

Race	Owners	%	Renters	%	Total	%
<b>White</b>	229	56.3%	295	59.6%	524	58.1%
<b>Black</b>	168	41.3%	185	37.4%	353	39.1%
<b>Hispanic</b>	6	1.5%	10	2.0%	16	1.8%
<b>Other</b>	4	1.0%	5	1.0%	9	1.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	407	100.0%	495	100.0%	902	100.0%

Source: US Census PUMS



Not surprisingly, most households with hardships are single-family detached homes, due to the fact that such a high percentage of the overall housing stock in Bainbridge is made up of single-family detached. However, a much greater proportion of households with hardships live in multi-family units than the overall housing stock, especially in rental situations (Table 26).

**Table 26 – Unit Type for Households with Hardships, Bainbridge, GA**

Unit Type	Owners	%	Renters	%	Total	%
<b>Single Family Detached</b>	290	71.3%	231	46.7%	521	57.8%
<b>Single Family Attached</b>	2	0.5%	10	2.0%	12	1.3%
<b>Multi Family Total</b>	5	1.2%	184	37.2%	189	21.0%
<b>2 Units</b>	0	0.0%	63	12.7%	63	7.0%
<b>3 or 4 Units</b>	5	1.2%	54	10.9%	59	6.5%
<b>5 to 9 Units</b>	0	0.0%	39	7.9%	39	4.3%
<b>10 to 19 Units</b>	0	0.0%	6	1.2%	6	0.7%
<b>20 to 49 Units</b>	0	0.0%	8	1.6%	8	0.9%
<b>50 or More Units</b>	0	0.0%	14	2.8%	14	1.6%
<b>Mobile Homes or Other</b>	110	27.0%	70	14.1%	180	20.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	407	100.0%	495	100.0%	902	100.0%

Source: US Census PUMS

## Future Housing Needs

Average household size is one factor in determining future housing needs. The average household size in Bainbridge has decreased from 2.78 to 2.52 over the 20-year span from 1980 to 2000 (Table 27). This follows the general national trend toward smaller household sizes. As Table 28 shows, the household size is projected to continue a decrease, down to an average household size of 2.49 by 2030. Although this is only a slight decrease, it shows an important trend towards smaller households and the need to provide housing befitting of smaller households.

Table 29 shows future housing needs in the City of Bainbridge between 2000 and 2030. Thus, approximately 1,250 new housing units will be needed in order to support the projected population growth of Bainbridge. The future proportional mix of housing types is based on the current distribution in the city. However, as the population ages, there is likely to be a greater demand for apartments and townhomes.

**Table 27 - Average Household Size 1980 – 2000, Bainbridge, GA**

	1980	1990	2000
<b>Persons per household</b>	2.78	2.58	2.52

Source: US Census Bureau

**Table 28 – Projected Average Household Size 2005-2030**

	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>Persons per household</b>	2.6	2.54	2.51	2.5	2.49	2.49

Source: Woods and Poole Economics

**Table 29 - Future Housing Needs 2000-2030, Bainbridge, GA**

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>TOTAL Housing Units</b>	4,994	5,153	5,776	6,109	6,429	6,750	7,045
<b>Single Units (detached)</b>	3,725	3,844	4,308	4,557	4,795	5,035	5,255
<b>Townhomes</b>	57	59	66	70	73	77	80
<b>Multi-Family</b>	1,013	1,045	1,172	1,239	1,304	1,369	1,429
<b>Mobile Home or Trailer</b>	199	205	230	243	256	269	281

Source: Robert and Company

## Special Needs Housing

Table 30 provides statistical estimates of special housing needs populations in Decatur County, GA as provided by Georgia DCA.

**Table 30 – Special Housing Needs, Decatur County, GA**

Special Housing Needs	
AIDS Cases 1981-2000	57
Family Violence, # of Police Actions Taken, 2000	106
Total, # Age 62+, 2000	4,413
Total, % Age 62+, 2000	15.63%
Disability (Any) % Age 16+, 1990	32.71%
Adult Substance Abuse Treatment Need, 2001	1,445
Adult Substance Abuse Treatment Need, % of Total Population, 2001	5.12%
Migrant & Seasonal Farm Workers and Dependents, Estimated # at Peak Employment, 1994	10,571
Migrant & Seasonal Farm Workers and Dependents, Estimated % of Total Population at Peak Employment, 1994	40.38%

Source: Georgia DCA

### Bainbridge Housing Authority

The Bainbridge Housing Authority administers 359 units of public housing located within the City of Bainbridge. Of the agency's 359 total units, 34 are handicapped accessible and 80 are designated for elderly residents. The Housing Authority currently has approximately 100 households on its waiting list for subsidized housing. Applicants are evaluated based on income and needs with preferential policies for the homeless, victims of domestic violence, victims of natural disasters, those involuntarily displaced, and residents of substandard housing. While the agency has not developed new housing since the 1980s, they have undertaken a rehabilitation and renovation program funded through approximately \$500,000 in annual federal grants.

### Senior Housing

Senior housing constitutes one of the largest segments of the city's special housing needs. The senior population in Decatur County is projected to increase substantially within the next twenty years as the population ages and south Georgia becomes a more popular location for retirement. (See Table 5, Future Age Distribution Projections) There are currently a number of providers of senior housing in the City of

Bainbridge, with a range of levels of service. Senior housing options generally range from independent living, to assisted living, to nursing homes based on the level of care needed. Independent living, as the name implies, is designed for seniors who are wish to live independently with little need for care or supervision. While independent living complexes may include an attendant, they typically do not employ medical staff. Assisted living facilities are designed for seniors who need some help with daily activities, but are largely self-sufficient. This can include assistance with transportation, medications, preparing meals/eating, bathing, dressing, housekeeping and getting to the doctor's office. Assisted living facilities also usually offer immediate access to emergency help. Nursing homes are designed for seniors who need daily care and supervision in order to survive. These facilities keep nursing staff available 24 hours.

### *Assisted Living Facilities*

	Moore, Sharlene's PCH 1401 Belcher Lane, Bainbridge, GA 39817
Port City Personal Care Home 720 E Shotwell Street, Bainbridge, GA 39819	Decatur County PCH No. 36 1602 Lincoln Street, Bainbridge, GA 39819
Decatur County PCH No. 35 803 Boulevard, Bainbridge, GA 39819	Starcher Personal Care Home 187 Sasser Store Road, Bainbridge, GA 39817
Emanuel / Mullins 431 Columbia Street, Bainbridge, GA 39819	Decatur County PCH No. 31 179 Sasser Store Road, Bainbridge, GA 39819
Shiloh PCH 1026 Wisteria Drive, Bainbridge, GA 39819	Duvall, Don Home 2020 East River Road, Bainbridge, GA 39817
Riverside Place Assisted Living Community 1151 West College Street, Bainbridge, GA 39819	Washington Melba's Personal Care Home 2573 Spring Creek Road, Bainbridge, GA 31717
Johnson's Personal Care Home 1007 Hall Street, Bainbridge, GA 39819	<i>Nursing Homes</i>
Four Seasons PCH 918 East Evans Street, Bainbridge, GA 39819	Bainbridge Healthcare 1155 West College Street, Bainbridge, GA 31717
Willow Ridge 801 Faceville Highway, Bainbridge, GA 39819	Memorial Manor Nursing Home 1500 East Shotwell Street, Bainbridge, GA 31717

### Domestic Violence

There are currently no shelters for victims of domestic violence within Bainbridge or Decatur County. When cases arise of spousal abuse, the Bainbridge Police and Decatur County Sheriff will refer persons to a shelter in Thomas County. Battered or abused children may be placed in foster homes within the County.

### Drug Treatment

There are currently no inpatient drug treatment facilities within Bainbridge or Decatur County. However, the Bainbridge Treatment Center does provide outpatient drug and alcohol treatment services. Patients may be referred to inpatient facilities in Thomasville or Tallahassee.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development analysis and initiatives must take into account both the workers living in Bainbridge (labor force) and the jobs located in the city (economic base).

### Labor Force

Labor force participation refers to the number of people of working age (16 and older) who are employed or seeking employment. In 2000, Bainbridge had 56.1% labor force participation among persons of working age. This is slightly higher than the 1990 rate (55.5%). However, the labor force participation in Bainbridge is substantially lower than the state average of 66.1% in 2000. This difference may be due to the number of retirees living in Bainbridge. The rate of female workforce participation in Bainbridge has increased from 49.2% - 51.9% over this time period.

**Table 31 – Labor Force Participation 1990-2000, Bainbridge, GA**

Category	1990	%	2000	%
<b>Total Males and Females</b>	8,002		8,692	
<b>In labor force:</b>	4,440	55.5%	4,875	56.1%
<b>Civilian Labor force</b>	4,371	54.6%	4,865	56.0%
<b>Civilian Employed</b>	4,071	50.9%	4,521	52.0%
<b>Civilian unemployed</b>	300	3.7%	344	4.0%
<b>In Armed Forces</b>	69	0.9%	10	0.1%
<b>Not in labor force</b>	3,562	44.5%	3,817	43.9%
<b>Total Males</b>	3,595		3,884	
<b>Male In labor force:</b>	2,271	63.2%	2,378	61.2%
<b>Male Civilian Labor force</b>	2,258	62.8%	2,368	61.0%
<b>Male Civilian Employed</b>	2,106	58.6%	2,199	56.6%
<b>Male Civilian unemployed</b>	152	4.2%	169	4.4%
<b>Male In Armed Forces</b>	13	0.4%	10	0.3%
<b>Male Not in labor force</b>	1,324	36.8%	1,506	38.8%
<b>Total Females</b>	4,407		4,808	
<b>Female In labor force:</b>	2,169	49.2%	2,497	51.9%
<b>Female Civilian Labor force</b>	2,113	47.9%	2,497	51.9%
<b>Female Civilian Employed</b>	1,965	44.6%	2,322	48.3%
<b>Female Civilian unemployed</b>	148	3.4%	175	3.6%
<b>Female In Armed Forces</b>	56	1.3%	0	0.0%
<b>Female Not in labor force</b>	2,238	50.8%	2,311	48.1%

Source: US Census Bureau

Table 32 shows the aggregate income by type in the City of Bainbridge in 1990 and 2000. In 2000, 66% of personal income was earned through wages or salaries – this is down slightly from 10 years prior, when 69.8% of personal income was earned through wages and salaries. Retirement income increased significantly during the 1990s, from 4.1% to 14.1%.

**Table 32 – Personal Income by Source (in \$thousands) – Bainbridge, GA**

	1990	%	2000	%
<b>Total income</b>	97,045		178,034	
<b>Aggregate wage or salary income for households</b>	67,731	69.8%	117,505	66.0%
<b>Aggregate other types of income for households</b>	1,560	1.6%	4,231	2.4%
<b>Aggregate self employment income for households</b>	4,743	4.9%	8,670	4.9%
<b>Aggregate interest, dividends, or net rental income</b>	8,327	8.6%	6,946	3.9%
<b>Aggregate social security income for households</b>	8,942	9.2%	13,070	7.3%
<b>Aggregate public assistance income for households</b>	1,770	1.8%	2,435	1.4%
<b>Aggregate retirement income for households</b>	3,972	4.1%	25,178	14.1%

Source: US Census Bureau

Tracking commuting patterns in a community reveals the balance between jobs and housing. If a community lacks adequate employment opportunities, workers are often forced to drive long distances to find jobs. In 2000, 90.9% of Bainbridge’s residents in the workforce work within the State of Georgia. Of workers that live in Bainbridge, 58.4% also worked within Bainbridge city limits. The remaining 32.5% of workers worked outside of Bainbridge but within the State of Georgia. It is likely that the majority of the workers fitting in this category are employed within Decatur County, or in other counties of the Southwest Georgia Region. Although Decatur County borders both Alabama and Florida and Bainbridge is only 40 miles from Tallahassee, only 7.9% of the local workforce commutes out of state.

**Table 33 – Commuting Patterns 2000, Bainbridge, GA**

	Workers	%
<b>Total:</b>	4,433	100%
<b>Worked in Bainbridge</b>	2,847	64.2%
<b>Worked outside Bainbridge</b>	1,586	35.8%
<b>Worked in Decatur County</b>	3,616	81.6%
<b>Worked in another GA County</b>	465	10.5%
<b>Worked outside Georgia</b>	352	7.9%

Source: US Census Bureau

Table 34 shows the occupation of the local workforce by industrial sector for the years 1990 through 2000. Currently, the largest employment sectors in Bainbridge are Education, health, and social services (25.5%); manufacturing (19.9%); and retail trade (11.9%). The largest shift in employment was the decline in manufacturing employment.

From 1999 to 2007, the unemployment rate in Decatur County was fairly stable, with rates generally 5% to 6% - the one exception was 2000, which had a low rate of 4.4%. Since 2007, unemployment has escalated not only in Decatur County, but the entire nation. The most recent national rate available is April 2009, when the unemployment rate was 8.9%

**Table 34 – Occupation by Sector for Bainbridge Residents 1990-2000**

	1990	%	2000	%
<b>Total Employed Civilian Population</b>	4,071		4,521	
<b>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting &amp; mining</b>	169	4.2%	141	3.1%
<b>Construction</b>	224	5.5%	286	6.3%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	1,026	25.2%	899	19.9%
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	188	4.6%	161	3.6%
<b>Retail Trade</b>	606	14.9%	538	11.9%
<b>Transportation, warehousing, and utilities</b>	151	3.7%	92	2.0%
<b>Information</b>	NA	NA	48	1.1%
<b>Finance, Insurance, &amp; Real Estate</b>	138	3.4%	169	3.7%
<b>Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services</b>	63	1.5%	244	5.4%
<b>Educational, health and social services</b>	938	23.0%	1,155	25.5%
<b>Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services</b>	40	1.0%	280	6.2%
<b>Other Services</b>	375	9.2%	214	4.7%
<b>Public Administration</b>	153	3.8%	294	6.5%

Source: US Census Bureau

**Table 35 – Unemployment Rate 1999-2009, Decatur County, GA**

Year	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Period</b>	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Annual	Jan
<b>Labor Force</b>	12,354	12,008	11,908	12,124	11,657(e)	12,206(e)	12,059(e)	11,728(e)	12,016(e)	12,216
<b>Employment</b>	11,805	11,368	11,214	11,446	10,889(e)	11,473(e)	11,378(e)	11,017(e)	11,099(e)	10,853
<b>Unemployment</b>	549	640	694	678	768(e)	733(e)	681(e)	711(e)	917(e)	1,363
<b>Unemployment Rate</b>	4.4%	5.3%	5.8%	5.6%	6.6% (e)	6.0% (e)	5.6% (e)	6.1% (e)	7.6% (e)	11.2%

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics; e : Reflects revised inputs, reestimation, and new statewide controls.



Table 36 displays the changes in average weekly wages from 2001 to 2007 in Decatur County. The loss of manufacturing jobs poses a challenge for the county, since the wages for the industrial sector are relatively high compared to other industries. For example the arts, entertainment, recreation, and accommodations sectors associated with the emerging tourism economy offer relatively poor wages compared to manufacturing.

**Table 36 – Average Weekly Wages (\$) 2001-2007, Decatur County, GA**

Sector	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
Agriculture	319	283	293	248	347	388	345
Mining and Extraction	974	985	1,013	1,083	1,107	1,117	1,120
Utilities	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Construction	447	399	403	456	501	552	519
Manufacturing	541	555	531	577	552	610	650
Wholesale Trade	400	483	524	511	NA	NA	NA
Finance and Insurance	560	581	602	638	656	651	687
Real Estate Rental and Leasing	404	416	462	513	541	614	506
Professional and Technical Services	367	370	450	NA	517	426	422
Management	860	934	1,008	NA	1,014	986	1,042
Administration and Waste Services	221	288	377	333	342	360	483
Educational Services	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Health Care and Social Assistance	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Retail Trade	304	323	339	352	356	363	377
Transportation and Warehousing	NA	NA	NA	NA	449	456	425
Information	567	445	565	541	539	574	610
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	NA	926	NA	203	192	NA	179
Accommodations and Food Services	NA	180	NA	172	177	NA	264
Other Services	256	377	321	323	349	276	292
Unclassified	367	310	289	420	1022	338	NA

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

## Economic Base

Decatur County's largest employment sector in 2007 was Education and Health Services, followed by Trade, Transportation, and Utilities, and third was Natural Resources and Mining. In total numbers, Education and Health Services added the most jobs (336) between 1998 and 2007. By percentage, the highest growing sector during the same time period was Information, growing by 71.6% - however, the Information sector remains the smallest employment sector in the county.

Of particular concern is the Manufacturing sector, which decreased dramatically from 1998 to 2007, and heavily contributed to the overall decline in county employment. Manufacturing lost 2,666 jobs out of its 3,528 employment total that existed in 1998 – a decline of 75.6% over the ten-year period. Other sectors that declined during the same period were Professional and Business Services (down 57.6%), Public Administration (down 19.7%) and Construction (down 6.4%).

**Table 37 – Employment Change 1998-2007, Decatur County, GA**

	Employment,	Employment,	Employment Change, 1998 - 2007	Percent Growth,
	1998	2007		1998 - 2007
<b>Natural Resources and Mining</b>	806	1,000	194	24.1%
<b>Construction</b>	346	324	-22	-6.4%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	3,528	862	-2,666	-75.6%
<b>Trade, Transportation, and Utilities</b>	2,251	2,375	124	5.5%
<b>Information</b>	74	127	53	71.6%
<b>Financial Activities</b>	393	435	42	10.7%
<b>Professional and Business Services</b>	1,073	455	-618	-57.6%
<b>Education and Health Services</b>	2,147	2,483	336	15.6%
<b>Leisure and Hospitality</b>	656	668	12	1.8%
<b>Other Services</b>	261	261	0	0.0%
<b>Public Administration</b>	178	143	-35	-19.7%
<b>TOTAL EMPLOYMENT</b>	<b>11,713</b>	<b>9,133</b>	<b>-2,580</b>	<b>-22.0%</b>

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, UGA Georgia Statistics System

The percentage of employment in each industry indicates the share of that industry in the local economy. By comparing the local share to statewide and national shares, the results show what industries have a higher or lower proportion. Industries that have a higher share comparably are industries that export their goods outside the local area. Those that are lower are industries whose goods or services must be imported. Table 38 shows this comparison. Decatur County has a much higher percentage of employment in the Natural Resources and Mining and Trade, Transportation, and Utilities industries, indicating that the goods and services of these industries are the county's main exports. Conversely, the county has a much lower proportion of employment in Professional and Business Services and Education and Health Services; meaning most of these services must be acquired from outside the county. Other industries have relatively similar proportions in Decatur County to the state and nation.

**Table 38 – Employment by Industry (%) 2007, Comparison US, GA, and Decatur County**

Industry	U.S. TOTAL	Georgia -- Statewide	Decatur County, Georgia
<b>Base Industry: Total, all industries</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
<b>Natural Resources and Mining</b>	1.60%	0.95%	14.37%
<b>Construction</b>	6.63%	6.49%	4.69%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	12.13%	12.65%	12.39%
<b>Trade, Transportation, and Utilities</b>	23.10%	25.83%	33.43%
<b>Information</b>	2.66%	3.34%	1.83%
<b>Financial Activities</b>	7.14%	6.70%	6.21%
<b>Professional and Business Services</b>	15.66%	16.44%	6.54%
<b>Education and Health Services</b>	15.29%	12.61%	7.16%
<b>Leisure and Hospitality</b>	11.69%	11.60%	9.60%
<b>Other Services</b>	3.89%	2.94%	3.75%
<b>Unclassified</b>	0.19%	0.45%	NA

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics

### Projected Employment

The following two tables on the next page show Decatur County's projected employment change, 2000-2030 (Table 39), and Decatur County's projected employment change by percentage, 2000-2030 (Table 40). The most notable change shown in these two tables is the significant decrease in manufacturing projected over the thirty-year span. This sharp decrease is most notable by percentage, where the manufacturing sector is projected to drop from 21.4% of the county's employment to 4.9%. Sectors projected to increase in proportion include retail trade, transportation and warehousing, real estate, professional and technical services, accommodation, and food services.

**Table 39 – Projected Employment Change 2000 – 2030, Decatur County, GA**

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>TOTAL EMPLOYMENT</b>	14,963	14,919	15,198	16,164	17,225	18,400	19,705
<b>FARM EMPLOYMENT</b>	577	597	560	559	557	554	551
<b>NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT</b>	14,386	14,322	14,638	15,605	16,668	17,846	19,154
<b>PRIVATE NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT</b>	11,519	11,300	11,541	12,456	13,474	14,611	15,886
<b>FORESTRY, FISHING, RELATED ACTIVITIES and OTHER EMPLOYMENT</b>	789	730	596	583	568	551	534
<b>MINING EMPLOYMENT</b>	376	330	349	364	379	394	409
<b>UTILITIES EMPLOYMENT</b>	64	77	84	85	85	84	84
<b>CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT</b>	641	721	758	813	870	928	988
<b>MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT</b>	3,206	1,530	1,347	1,248	1,152	1,061	974
<b>WHOLESALE TRADE EMPLOYMENT</b>	446	282	297	288	278	267	256
<b>RETAIL TRADE EMPLOYMENT</b>	1,539	2,098	2,163	2,347	2,541	2,745	2,959
<b>TRANSPORTATION and WAREHOUSING EMPLOYMENT</b>	398	566	631	677	723	770	817
<b>INFORMATION EMPLOYMENT</b>	96	138	161	175	190	206	223
<b>FINANCE and INSURANCE EMPLOYMENT</b>	398	436	456	481	505	529	553
<b>REAL ESTATE and RENTAL and LEASE EMPLOYMENT</b>	236	365	424	474	527	586	650
<b>PROFESSIONAL and TECHNICAL SERVICES EMPLOYMENT</b>	242	292	443	537	649	783	942
<b>MANAGEMENT of COMPANIES and ENTERPRISES EMPLOYMENT</b>	100	166	173	174	175	175	175
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE and WASTE SERVICES EMPLOYMENT</b>	650	717	566	657	757	866	985
<b>EDUCATIONAL SERVICES EMPLOYMENT</b>	166	173	207	236	269	305	345
<b>HEALTH CARE and SOCIAL ASSISTANCE EMPLOYMENT</b>	791	857	1,019	1,139	1,268	1,409	1,562
<b>ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, and RECREATION EMPLOYMENT</b>	37	64	47	52	58	64	71
<b>ACCOMMODATION and FOOD SERVICES EMPLOYMENT</b>	481	683	611	683	761	846	937
<b>OTHER SERVICES, EXCEPT PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION EMPLOYMENT</b>	863	1,075	1,209	1,443	1,719	2,042	2,422
<b>TOTAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT</b>	2,867	3,022	3,097	3,149	3,194	3,235	3,268
<b>FEDERAL CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT</b>	76	63	57	53	49	46	42
<b>FEDERAL MILITARY EMPLOYMENT</b>	93	87	88	89	89	90	90
<b>STATE and LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT</b>	2,698	2,872	2,952	3,007	3,056	3,099	3,136

Source: Woods and Poole Economics

**Table 40 – Projected Employment Change by Percent 2000-2030, Decatur County, GA**

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>FARM EMPLOYMENT</b>	3.9%	4.0%	3.7%	3.5%	3.2%	3.0%	2.8%
<b>NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT</b>	96.1%	96.0%	96.3%	96.5%	96.8%	97.0%	97.2%
<b>PRIVATE NON-FARM EMPLOYMENT</b>	77.0%	75.7%	75.9%	77.1%	78.2%	79.4%	80.6%
<b>FORESTRY, FISHING, RELATED ACTIVITIES and OTHER EMPLOYMENT</b>	5.3%	4.9%	3.9%	3.6%	3.3%	3.0%	2.7%
<b>MINING EMPLOYMENT</b>	2.5%	2.2%	2.3%	2.3%	2.2%	2.1%	2.1%
<b>UTILITIES EMPLOYMENT</b>	0.4%	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%
<b>CONSTRUCTION EMPLOYMENT</b>	4.3%	4.8%	5.0%	5.0%	5.1%	5.0%	5.0%
<b>MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT</b>	21.4%	10.3%	8.9%	7.7%	6.7%	5.8%	4.9%
<b>WHOLESALE TRADE EMPLOYMENT</b>	3.0%	1.9%	2.0%	1.8%	1.6%	1.5%	1.3%
<b>RETAIL TRADE EMPLOYMENT</b>	10.3%	14.1%	14.2%	14.5%	14.8%	14.9%	15.0%
<b>TRANSPORTATION and WAREHOUSING EMPLOYMENT</b>	2.7%	3.8%	4.2%	4.2%	4.2%	4.2%	4.1%
<b>INFORMATION EMPLOYMENT</b>	0.6%	0.9%	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%
<b>FINANCE and INSURANCE EMPLOYMENT</b>	2.7%	2.9%	3.0%	3.0%	2.9%	2.9%	2.8%
<b>REAL ESTATE and RENTAL and LEASE EMPLOYMENT</b>	1.6%	2.4%	2.8%	2.9%	3.1%	3.2%	3.3%
<b>PROFESSIONAL and TECHNICAL SERVICES EMPLOYMENT</b>	1.6%	2.0%	2.9%	3.3%	3.8%	4.3%	4.8%
<b>MANAGEMENT of COMPANIES and ENTERPRISES EMPLOYMENT</b>	0.7%	1.1%	1.1%	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%
<b>ADMINISTRATIVE and WASTE SERVICES EMPLOYMENT</b>	4.3%	4.8%	3.7%	4.1%	4.4%	4.7%	5.0%
<b>EDUCATIONAL SERVICES EMPLOYMENT</b>	1.1%	1.2%	1.4%	1.5%	1.6%	1.7%	1.8%
<b>HEALTH CARE and SOCIAL ASSISTANCE EMPLOYMENT</b>	5.3%	5.7%	6.7%	7.0%	7.4%	7.7%	7.9%
<b>ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, and RECREATION EMPLOYMENT</b>	0.2%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.4%
<b>ACCOMMODATION and FOOD SERVICES EMPLOYMENT</b>	3.2%	4.6%	4.0%	4.2%	4.4%	4.6%	4.8%
<b>OTHER SERVICES, EXCEPT PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION EMPLOYMENT</b>	5.8%	7.2%	8.0%	8.9%	10.0%	11.1%	12.3%
<b>TOTAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT</b>	19.2%	20.3%	20.4%	19.5%	18.5%	17.6%	16.6%
<b>FEDERAL CIVILIAN GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT</b>	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%
<b>FEDERAL MILITARY EMPLOYMENT</b>	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.6%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
<b>STATE and LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYMENT</b>	18.0%	19.3%	19.4%	18.6%	17.7%	16.8%	15.9%

Source: Woods and Poole Economics

### Top Employers

The top five employers in Decatur County are: Bainbridge-Decatur County Hospital Authority, Wal-Mart Associates Inc., Propex Fibers Inc., Elberta Crate & Box Co., and Englehard Corporation. Three of these (Hospital Authority, Wal-Mart & Propex) are in the top 10 employers in the Decatur Area, which includes Baker, Decatur, Grady, Miller, Mitchell and Seminole Counties.

### Economic Development Resources

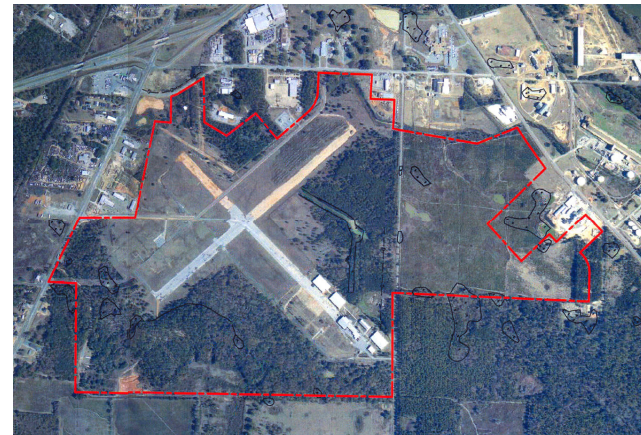
#### *Development Authority of Bainbridge and Decatur County*

The Development Authority of Bainbridge and Decatur County provides marketing and information resources intended to attract businesses to the City of Bainbridge and Decatur County. The organization maintains a list of available industrial properties and will proactively work with prospective employers to locate, retrofit, and develop prospective sites. As the designated Industrial Development Authority for Bainbridge and Decatur County, the organization can assist industries in financing through issuing low interest tax exempt industrial bonds. The Development Authority also manages and promotes the city and county's two major industrial parks, the Commodore Industrial Park in Bainbridge and the Decatur County Industrial Park. Recent business recruitment efforts include the Meredian and DaniMer facilities, both manufacturers of non-petroleum "biopolymer" plastics.

#### *Bainbridge-Decatur County Chamber of Commerce*

The Bainbridge-Decatur County Chamber of Commerce engages in marketing and promotional activities supportive of city and county business and economic development interests. The Chamber of Commerce promotes tourism by working with the Convention and Visitor's Bureau on promotions and activities, such

as the Decatur County Fair, and the River Town Days Festival in Bainbridge. The Chamber of Commerce also supports job training and educational programs for youth as well as adults. The Chamber of Commerce maintains standing committees on agriculture, education and job training, small businesses, entrepreneurship, industrial retention, government affairs, and tourism.



Commodore Industrial Park, Bainbridge, GA

#### *Bainbridge, Georgia Convention and Visitor's Bureau*

The Bainbridge, Georgia Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) holds as its mission to promote tourism and conventions in Bainbridge and Decatur County for the purpose of enhancing and developing the local economy. The CVB operates the Southwest Georgia Welcome Center, located at the intersection of Hwy 27 and Hwy 84 in Bainbridge. This facility provides welcome staff and numerous information resources on tourism activities and local history. In partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, the CVB sponsors numerous festivals and holiday events.

### *Bainbridge Main Street Association*

The Bainbridge Main Street Association promotes downtown revitalization through the national main street association's program for economic development and historic preservation. The organization promotes downtown shopping and dining opportunities and local businesses. The Bainbridge Main Street Association also helps promote the various festivals and events that occur downtown.

### *Bainbridge College*

Bainbridge College is a two year public college that is part of the University System of Georgia. As part of the state university system, Bainbridge College offers cooperative degree programs with Albany State University, Albany Technical College, Georgia Southwestern State University, and Southwest Georgia Technical College. The College offers associate of arts, associate of science, and associate of applied science degrees, certificates in business and technical fields, and non-credit continuing education courses.

### *Georgia Department of Labor, Bainbridge Office*

The Georgia Department of Labor (DoL) maintains a branch office at 310 South Scott Street in Bainbridge. This office serves as a resource for labor force development for applicants, claimants, as well as employers. The center DoL office operates a Career Center with a variety of services and a computerized Job Information System (JIS). For job seekers, the center offers workshops on job searches, recruiting sources, resume assistance, training referrals, and career development resources. For employers, the DoL provides listings of job vacancies, recruiting, labor market data and analysis and employer committees. The DoL also administers state unemployment insurance for claimants who have recently lost their jobs.

## **NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

### **Water Supply Watershed**

A water supply watershed is a drainage basin where rainfall runoff drains into a river, stream, or reservoir that is used as a source of public drinking water supply. Water supply watersheds can include reservoirs as well as rivers and lakes with a public water supply intake. Georgia's Part V Environmental Planning Criteria establish measures to protect water supply watersheds from pollution and keep drinking water free of contamination. Watershed protection measures include buffers and setbacks along streams within the watershed, limits on impervious surface, and special requirements for handling hazardous materials. Protection requirements are most strict for small watersheds, defined as those less than 100 square miles in size. Local governments containing any part of a water supply watershed must adopt these protective measures regardless of whether or not the government uses any drinking water from the source.

Most water supply watersheds in Georgia are located in the northern half of the state. There are no designated water supply watersheds within Decatur County or the City of Bainbridge. The city's municipal water system obtains its water from groundwater sources rather than surface water. The city operates four wells located at Louise Street, Scott Street at Alice Street, King Street at Scott Street, and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive near the railroad crossing.

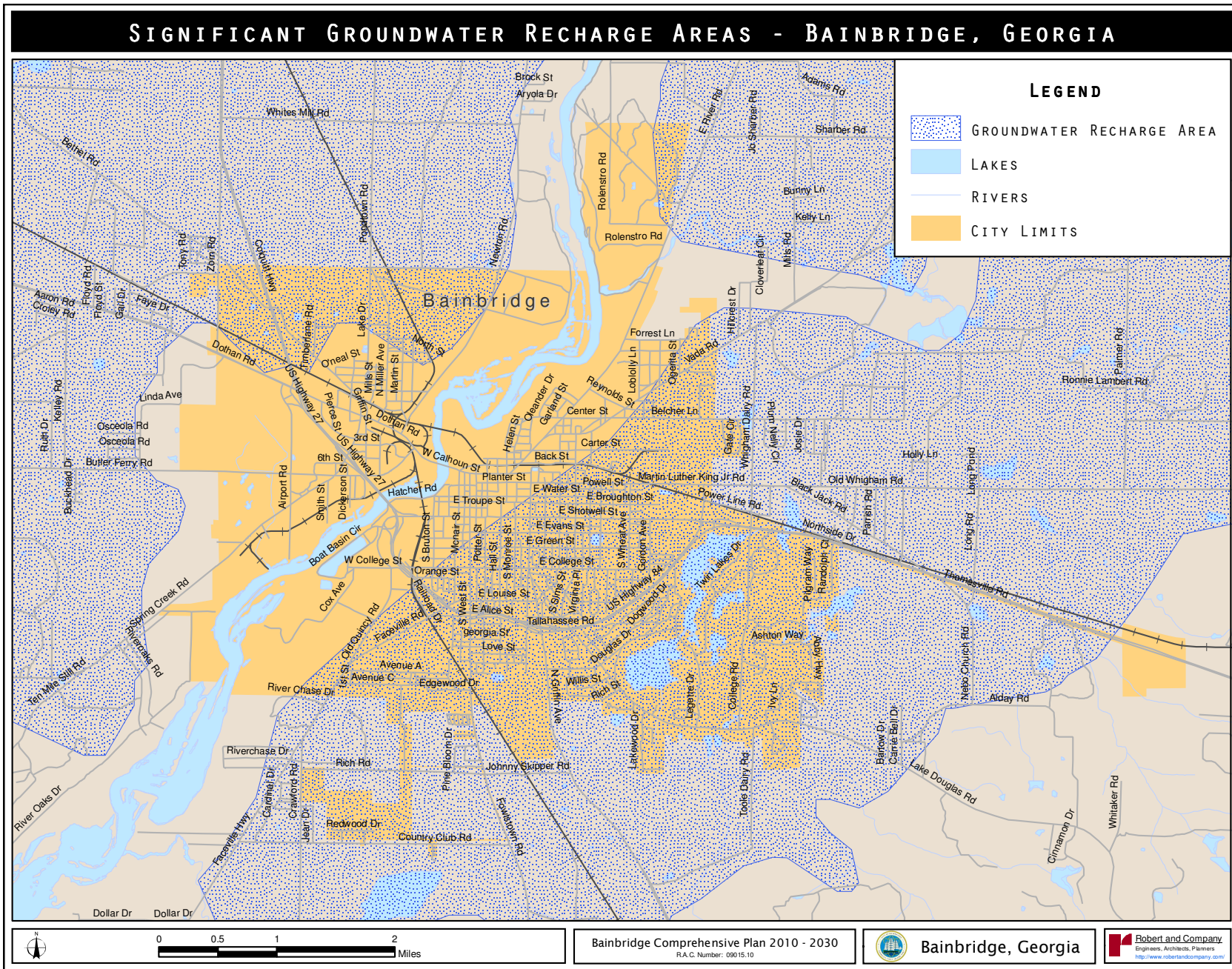
### **Ground Water Recharge Areas**

A groundwater recharge area is a surface land area where water that eventually enters an aquifer (an underground reservoir) is first absorbed into the ground. Significant water supply watersheds within the State of Georgia have been mapped by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) based on factors such as soil type and thickness, outcrop area, bedrock, and slope. Communities that contain identified significant groundwater recharge areas must adopt protection measures in order to ensure that the groundwater does not become contaminated and unsafe to drink. Part V Environmental Criteria protection measures for groundwater recharge areas include lot size restrictions for residential areas served by individual on-site septic systems as well as restrictions on the handling of waste and toxic materials.

Protection of groundwater resources is an important planning goal for the City of Bainbridge, since the city receives its water supply from well water. A dominant physiological feature of Southwest Georgia is the Floridan Aquifer system. In Georgia's Coastal Plain physiographic region, the significant recharge areas are the surface outcroppings of the large drinking water aquifers, such as the Floridan and Clayton aquifers. See Figure 5, Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas in Bainbridge, GA.



Figure 5 – Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas, Bainbridge, GA



## Wetlands

Wetlands are areas that are flooded or saturated by surface or groundwater often and long enough to grow vegetation adapted for life in water-saturated soil. Wetlands provide many important benefits, including:

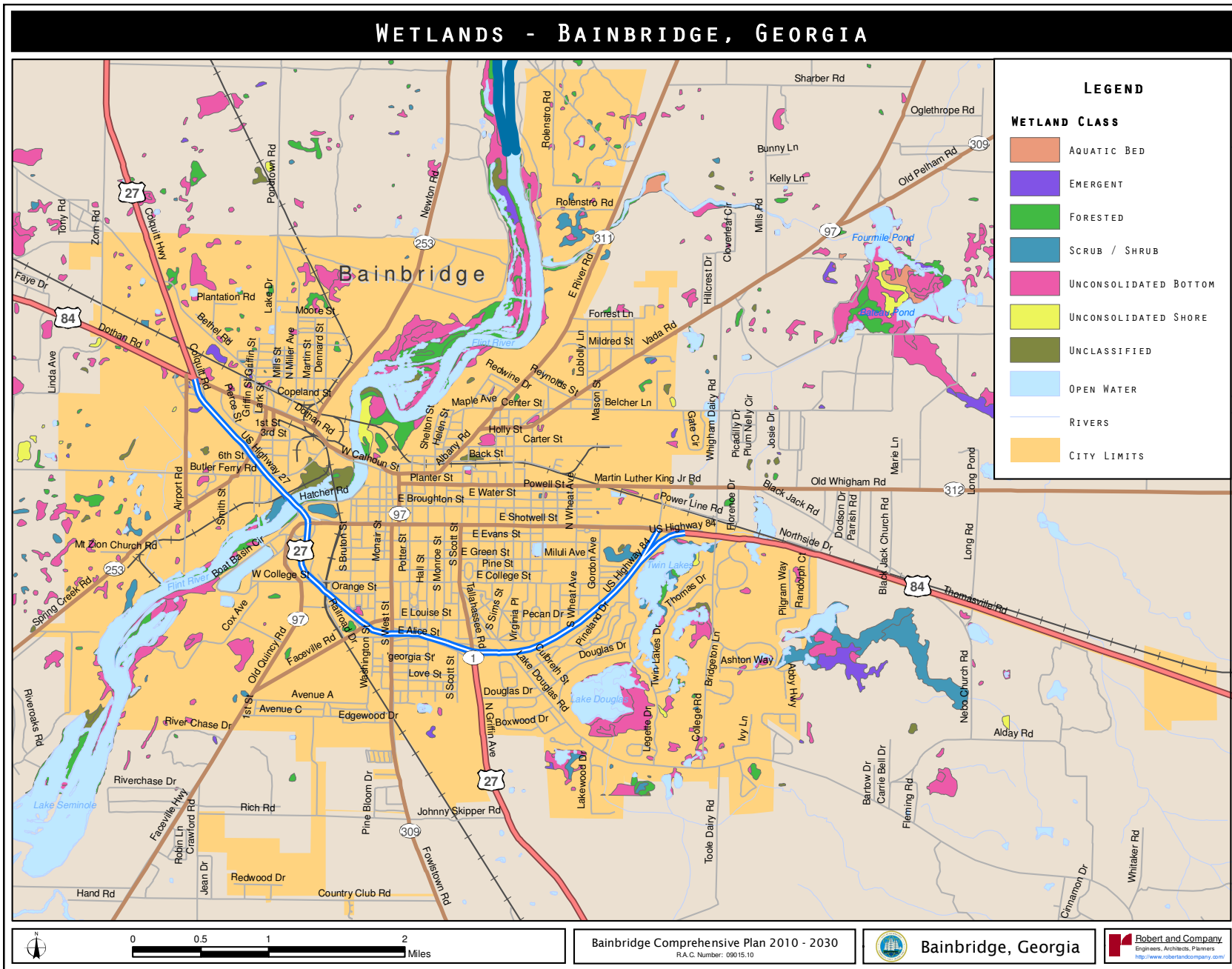
- ❑ Flood control – Wetlands act as natural sponges, absorbing and gradually releasing water from rain to groundwater and streams.
- ❑ Water quality improvement – Wetlands act as natural filters and remove sediments, nutrients and pollution from runoff;
- ❑ Groundwater recharge – Water migrates downward through wetlands to maintain groundwater levels;
- ❑ Habitats – Wetlands provide a critical habitat for many aquatic and terrestrial species;
- ❑ Recreation – Many recreational activities take place in and around wetlands, including hunting, fishing, hiking, birding and photography;

All local governments containing wetlands within their jurisdiction (based on the National Wetlands Inventory) are required to coordinate local permitting with the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permitting process. Local governments must ensure that, through granting a local permit, they do not inadvertently allow or encourage alteration of wetlands under the “jurisdiction” of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Local governments must also adopt and maintain on site a “generalized” wetland map (based on NWI, or more accurate wetlands information) as part of the local ordinance for reference purposes. A map of wetlands in the City of Bainbridge generalized by wetland class is provided in Figure 6. The generalized wetland classes are as follows:

- ❑ Aquatic Bed - Wetlands with vegetation that grows on or below the water surface for most of the growing season.
- ❑ Emergent - Wetlands with erect, rooted herbaceous vegetation present during most of the growing season.
- ❑ Forested - Wetlands dominated by woody vegetation that is greater than 6 meters (20 feet) tall.
- ❑ Scrub / Shrub - Wetlands dominated by woody vegetation that is less than 6 meters (20 feet) tall.
- ❑ Unconsolidated Shore - Wetlands with less than 75% cover of stones, boulders, or bedrock; and with less than 30 % vegetative cover; and the wetland is irregularly exposed due to seasonal or irregular flooding and subsequent drying.
- ❑ Unconsolidated Bottom - Wetlands that have a muddy or silty substrate with at least 25% cover.

Local governments are required to assign responsibility to someone at the local level to compare a proposed project location with the adopted Generalized Wetlands Map. If the proposed project appears to be near or within a wetland boundary, and the project is one that could alter jurisdictional wetlands, the responsible party must refer the applicant to the Corps of Engineers. Prior to issuance of a local permit or permission to proceed, the Corps must make a determination of whether or not jurisdictional wetlands may be involved on the site.

Figure 6 – Wetlands, City of Bainbridge, GA



## **Floodplains**

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) prepares Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) that depict the spatial extent of Special Flood Hazard Areas (SFHA) and other thematic features related to flood risk. SFHAs are areas subject to inundation by a flood having a one-percent or greater probability of being equaled or exceeded during any given year. This flood, which is referred to as the 1% annual chance flood (or base flood, or 100-year flood), is the national standard on which the floodplain management and insurance requirements are based. Figure 7 shows a map of FEMA designated floodplains within the City of Bainbridge.

The City of Bainbridge has adopted a floodplain management ordinance intended to prevent the development of obstructions preserve natural floodplain areas.

## **Other Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

### Protected Rivers

According to the Georgia Environmental Planning Criteria, river corridors are the strips of land that flank major rivers in Georgia. These corridors are of vital importance to Georgia in that they help preserve those qualities that make a river suitable as a habitat for wildlife, a site for recreation, and a source for clean drinking water. River corridors also allow the free movement of wildlife from area to area within the state, help control erosion and river sedimentation, and help absorb flood waters.

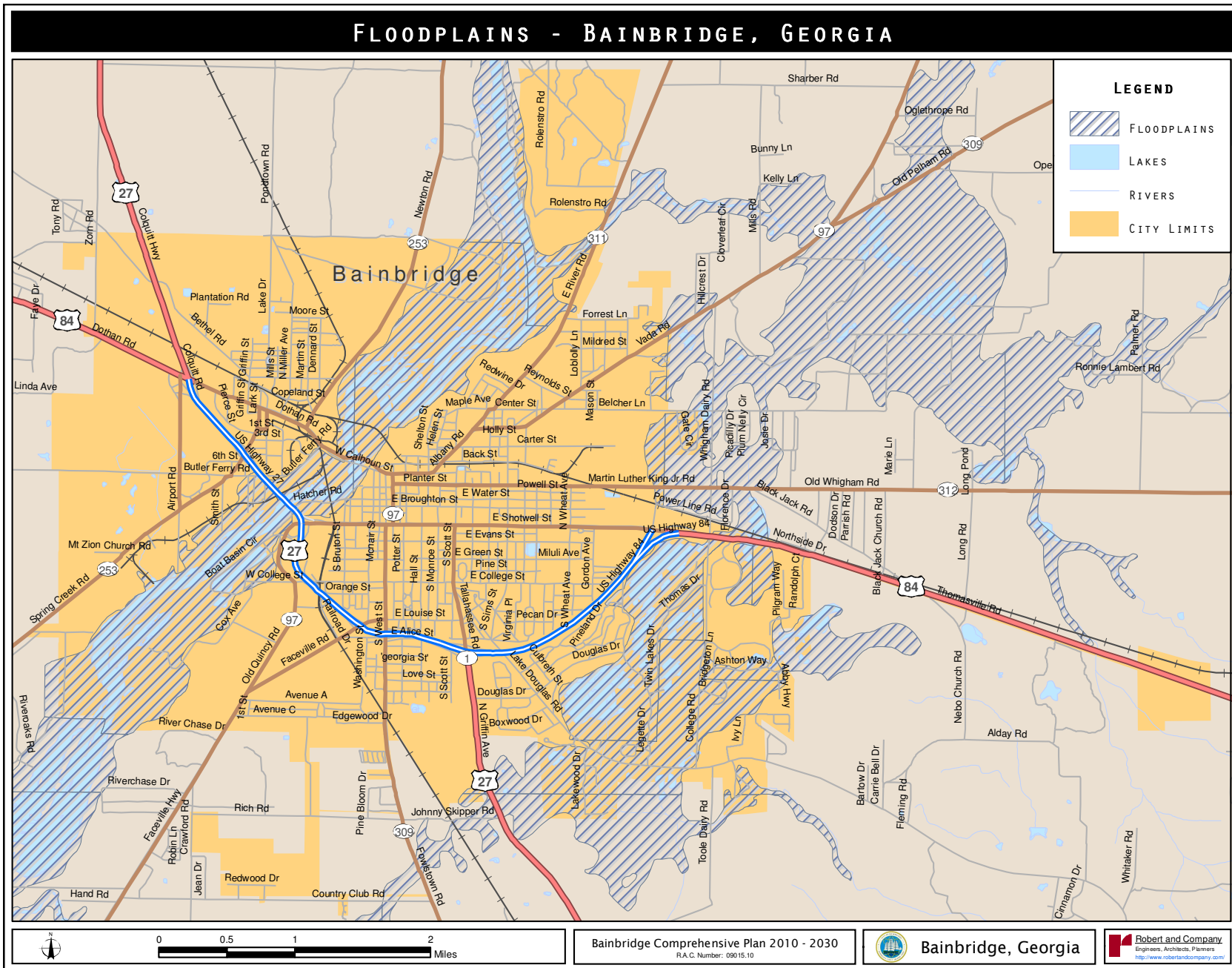
Georgia applies special regulations to designated “Protected Rivers” in order to preserve the integrity of these sensitive resources. A Protected River is defined as a perennial river or watercourse with an average annual flow of at least 400 cubic feet per second as determined by the USGS. Portions of the Flint River passing through Decatur County are classified as a protected river corridor.

Local governments that contain a protected river corridor within their jurisdiction are required by the state to adopt special ordinance for river preservation. Protective measures include primarily a vegetative buffer along protected river segments, with lot size restrictions and prohibition of certain uses within the buffer. Implementation issues include local government requests for approval of variances from the lot size restrictions. Many local governments have in the past granted approvals for riverfront lots that now do not meet the current regulations. Existing land uses are exempt from the criteria, but must meet specific criteria set forth in rules and statute. However, lots of record are not exempt from these requirements.

### Protected Mountains

There are no mountain areas within Bainbridge.

Figure 7 – Floodplains, Bainbridge, GA



## Soils

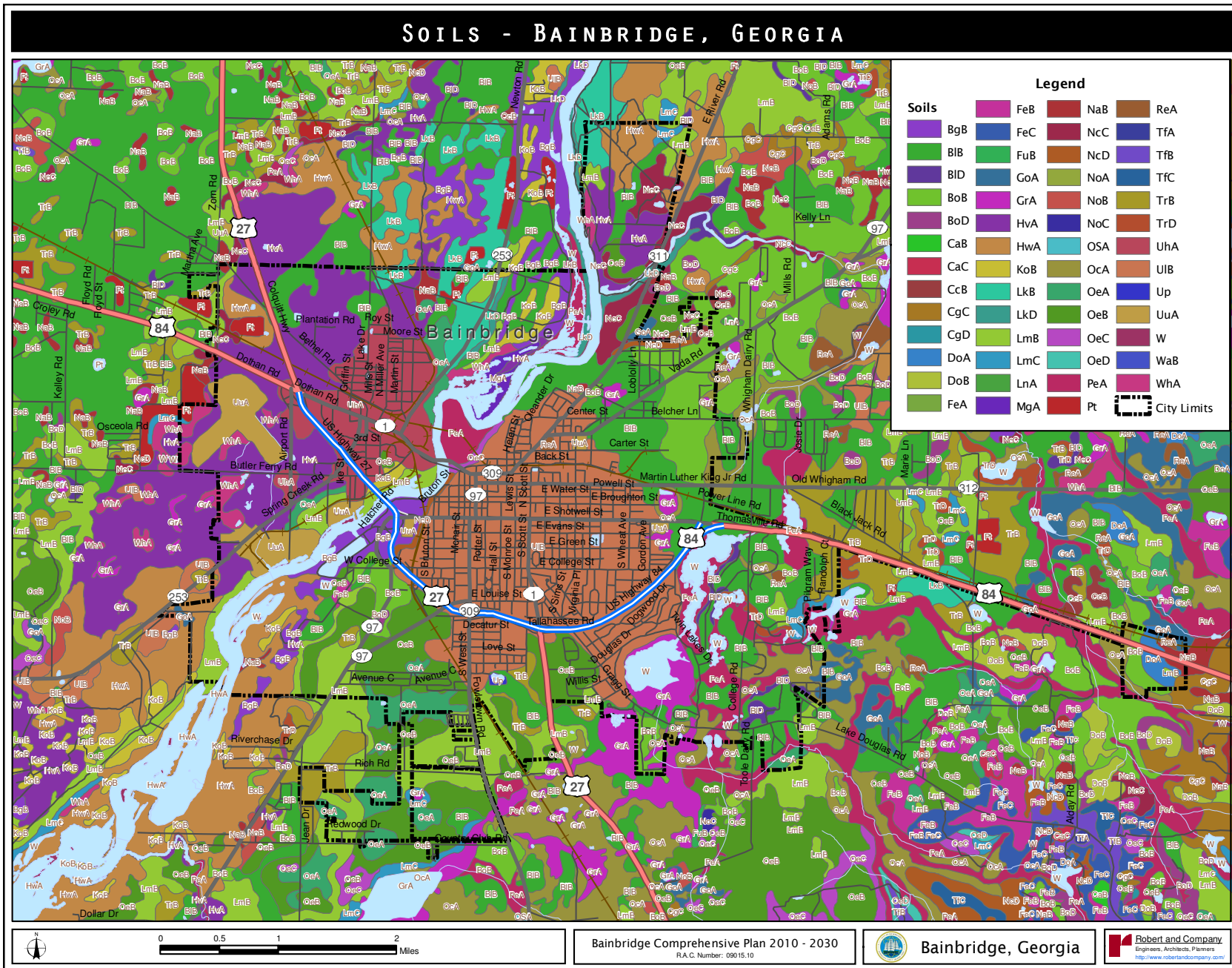
A map of detailed soil types is provided in Figure 8. Table 41 provides a corresponding description of each depicted soil code. The NRCS soil survey for Decatur County rates each soil group by suitability for agriculture, wildlife habitat, development limitations, and septic feasibility.

**Table 41 – Soil Codes, Decatur County, GA**

Code	Soil Name (Slope %)	Code	Soil Name (Slope %)
BgB	Bigbee loamy fine sand (0 to 5%)	NcC	Nankin-Cowarts complex (5 to 8%)
BIB	Blanton loamy sand (0 to 5%)	NcD	Nankin-Cowarts complex (8 to 12%)
BID	Blanton loamy sand (5 to 12%)	NoA	Norfolk loamy sand (0 to 2%)
BoB	Bonneau loamy sand (0 to 5%)	NoB	Norfolk loamy sand (2 to 5%)
BoD	Bonneau loamy sand (5 to 12%)	NoC	Norfolk loamy sand (5 to 8%)
CaB	Carnegie gravelly sandy loam (2 to 5%)	OcA	Ocilla loamy fine sand (0 to 2%)
CaC	Carnegie gravelly sandy loam (5 to 8%)	OeA	Orangeburg loamy sand (0 to 2%)
CcB	Chisolm loamy fine sand (0 to 5%)	OeB	Orangeburg loamy sand (2 to 5%)
CgC	Cowarts-Gritney complex (5 to 8%)	OeC	Orangeburg loamy sand (5 to 8%)
CgD	Cowarts-Gritney complex (8 to 12%)	OeD	Orangeburg loamy sand (8 to 12%)
DoA	Dothan loamy sand (0 to 2%)	OSA	Osier and Bibb soils (frequently flooded)
DoB	Dothan loamy sand (2 to 5%)	PeA	Pelham loamy fine sand (frequently flooded)
FeA	Faceville sandy loam (0 to 2%)	Pt	Pits
FeB	Faceville sandy loam (2 to 5%)	ReA	Rembert sandy loam (frequently flooded)
FeC	Faceville sandy loam (5 to 8%)	TfA	Tifton loamy sand (0 to 2%)
FuB	Fuquay loamy sand (0 to 5%)	TfB	Tifton loamy sand (2 to 5%)
GoA	Goldsboro loamy sand (0 to 2%)	TfC	Tifton loamy sand (5 to 8%)
GrA	Grady sandy loam (ponded)	TrB	Troup loamy sand (0 to 5%)
HvA	Hornsville fine sandy loam (0 to 2%)	TrD	Troup loamy sand (5 to 12%)
HwA	Hornsville-Wahee complex (0 to 2%)	UhA	Urban land-Hornsville complex (0 to 2%)
KoB	Kolomoki sandy loam (0 to 5%)	UIB	Urban land-Lucy complex (0 to 5%)
LkB	Lakeland sand (0 to 5%)	Up	Udorthents-Pits complex
LkD	Lakeland sand (5 to 12%)	UtC	Urban land-Tifton complex (0 to 8%)
LmB	Lucy loamy sand (0 to 5%)	UuA	Urban land-Udorthents complex
LmC	Lucy loamy sand (5 to 8%)	W	Water
LnA	Lynchburg fine sandy loam (0 to 2%)	WaB	Wagram loamy sand (0 to 5%)
MgA	Meggett fine sandy loam (0 to 1%)	WhA	Wahee fine sandy loam (0 to 2%)
NaB	Nankin loamy fine sand (2 to 5%)		

Source – NRCS Soil Survey – Decatur County, GA

Figure 8 – Soils, Bainbridge, GA



## Plant & Animal Habitats

The Federal Government uses two classifications for critical plant and animal species. The term 'Threatened Species' means any species that is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant part of its range. The term 'Endangered Species' means any species that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. Additionally, the State of Georgia uses a four-tiered classification system that includes:

- ❑ **Endangered (E):** A species, which is in danger of extinction throughout all or part of its range. They are protected by the Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 and Georgia's Rules for the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) beginning at 391-4-13.02. These rules authorize the state to acquire land or conservation easements on land for preservation of these species and to manage it for this principal objective and to cooperate with other agencies, including local governments to accomplish this goal. It prohibits capture, sale, killing or causing the death of these species except as specifically authorized by the DNR. Destruction of their habitats on land owned by local, state or federal government is prohibited.
- ❑ **Threatened (T):** A species that is likely to become an endangered species in the foreseeable future throughout all or part of its range.
- ❑ **Rare (R):** A species which may not be endangered or threatened, but which should be protected because of its rarity.
- ❑ **Unusual (U):** A species that has special or unique features that entitles it to special consideration to ensure its survival.

Endangered and threatened species that are known to exist in Decatur County as reported on Georgia's Fish and Wildlife Service website:

**Table 42 – Threatened and Endangered Species, Decatur County, Georgia - Birds**

Species	Federal Status	State Status	Habitat	Threats
<b>Bald eagle</b> <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	T	E	Inland waterways and estuarine areas in Georgia. Active eagle nests were located in Decatur County in 1988 and 1990-1999 and 2000-2002.	Major factor in initial decline was lowered reproductive success following use of DDT. Current threats include habitat destruction, disturbance at the nest, illegal shooting, electrocution, impact injuries, and lead poisoning.
<b>Red-cockaded woodpecker</b> <i>Picoides borealis</i>	E	E	Nest in mature pine with low understory vegetation (<1.5m); forage in pine and pine hardwood stands > 30 years of age, preferably > 10" dbh	Reduction of older age pine stands and to encroachment of hardwood midstory in older age pine stands due to fire suppression
<b>Wood stork</b> <i>Mycteria americana</i>	E	E	Primarily feed in fresh and brackish wetlands and nest in cypress or other wooded swamps	Decline due primarily to loss of suitable feeding habitat, particularly in south Florida. Other factors include loss of nesting habitat, prolonged drought/flooding, raccoon predation on nests, and human disturbance of rookeries.



**Reptiles**

<b>Species</b>	<b>Federal Status</b>	<b>State Status</b>	<b>Habitat</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<b>Alligator snapping turtle</b> <i>Macroclmys temminckii</i>	N/A	T	Rivers, lakes, and large ponds near stream swamps.	Destruction and modification of habitat and overharvesting.
<b>Barbour's map turtle</b> <i>Graptemys barbouri</i>	N/A	T	Restricted to the Apalachicola River and larger tributaries including the Chipola, Chattahoochee, and Flint Rivers in eastern Alabama, western Georgia, and western Florida.	
<b>Eastern indigo snake</b> <i>Drymarchon corais couperi</i>	T	T	During winter, den in xeric sandridge habitat preferred by gopher tortoises; during warm months, forage in creek bottoms, upland forests, and agricultural fields	Habitat loss due to uses such as farming, construction, forestry, and pasture and to overcollecting for the pet trade
<b>Gopher tortoise</b> <i>Gopherus polyphemus</i>	N/A	T	Well-drained, sandy soils in forest and grassy areas; associated with pine overstory, open understory with grass and forb groundcover, and sunny areas for nesting	Well-drained, sandy soils in forest and grassy areas; associated with pine overstory, open understory with grass and forb groundcover, and sunny areas for nesting

**Amphibian**

<b>Species</b>	<b>Federal Status</b>	<b>State Status</b>	<b>Habitat</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<b>Georgia blind salamander</b> <i>Haideotriton wallacei</i>	N/A	T	Subterranean waters of upland limestone karst system; restricted to Dougherty Plain region of Georgia	

**Fish**

<b>Species</b>	<b>Federal Status</b>	<b>State Status</b>	<b>Habitat</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<b>Alabama Shad</b> <i>Alosa Alabamae</i>			Candidate	Candidate
<b>Bluestripe shiner</b> <i>Cyprinella callitaenia</i>	N/A	T	Brownwater streams	

**Invertebrates**

<b>Species</b>	<b>Federal Status</b>	<b>State Status</b>	<b>Habitat</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<b>Fat three-ridge mussel</b> <i>Amblema neislerii</i>	E	E	Main channels of small to large rivers with slow to moderate currents, in substrates ranging from gravel to a rocky rubble mixture of sand and sandy mud to a mixture of sand, sandy/clay substrates	Habitat modification, sedimentation, and water quality degradation
<b>Gulf moccasinshell mussel</b> <i>Medionidus penicillatus</i>	E	E	Medium streams to large rivers with slight to moderate current over sand and gravel substrates; may be associated with muddy sand substrates around tree roots	Habitat modification, sedimentation, and water quality degradation
<b>Oval pigtoe mussel</b> <i>Pleurobema pyriforme</i>	E	E	River tributaries and main channels in slow to moderate currents over silty sand, muddy sand, sand, and gravel substrates	Habitat modification, sedimentation, and water quality degradation
<b>Purple bankclimber mussel</b> <i>Elliptoideus sloatianus</i>	T	T	Main channels of ACF basin rivers in moderate currents over sand, sand mixed with mud, or gravel substrates	Habitat modification, sedimentation, and water quality degradation
<b>Shiny-rayed pocketbook mussel</b> <i>Hamiota subangulata</i>	E	E	Medium creeks to the mainstems of rivers with slow to moderate currents over sandy substrates and associated with rock or clay	Habitat modification, sedimentation, and water quality degradation

**Plants**

<b>Species</b>	<b>Federal Status</b>	<b>State Status</b>	<b>Habitat</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<b>Bay star-vine</b> <i>Schisandra glabra</i>	N/A	T	Twining on subcanopy and understory trees/shrubs in rich alluvial woods	
<b>Buckthorn</b> <i>Sideroxylon thornei</i>	N/A	E	Oak flatwoods where soil normally is saturated for long periods after floods/heavy rain (i.e., calcareous swamps; woods bordering cypress ponds)	
<b>Climbing buckthorn</b> <i>Sageretia minutiflora</i>	N/A	T	Calcareous rocky bluffs, forested shell middens on barrier islands, and evergreen hammocks along streambanks and coastal marshes	
<b>Croomia</b> <i>Croomia pauciflora</i>	N/A	T	Rich moist deciduous woodlands, ravines, and river bluffs, often with ginseng	
<b>Curtiss loosestrife</b> <i>Lythrum curtissii</i>	N/A	T	Swamps over limestone, boggy open areas in pinelands, shallow water of wet thickets and floodplains, and occasionally in openings along right-of-ways	
<b>Florida anise-tree</b> <i>Illicium floridanum</i>	N/A	E	Moist wooded ravines and seepages along small streams	
<b>Florida torreya</b> <i>Torreya taxifolia</i>	E	E	Beech-magnolia forests and mixed hardwoods on middle slopes of steep ravines with nearly permanent seepage (steepheads)	A disease (first observed in late 1950's that killed all mature trees) that kills needles and stems, causing defoliation and tree death
<b>Fringed campion</b> <i>Silene polypetala</i>	E	E	Mature hardwood or hardwood-pine forests on river bluffs, small stream terraces, moist slopes and well-shaded ridge crests; two Decatur County populations last observed in 1993 and 1994	Residential development, logging, and spread of Japanese honeysuckle
<b>Lax Water-milfoil</b> <i>Myriophyllum laxum</i>	N/A	T	Sinkholes and other shallow freshwater pools; also sandy clear streams draining spring-fed swamps	
<b>Narrowleaf obedient plant</b> <i>Physostegia leptophylla</i>	N/A	T	Wet muck or peat in shallow water of river swamp openings and in the margins of both fresh and brackish (tidal) marshes	
<b>Pondspice</b> <i>Litsea aestivalis</i>	N/A	T	Margins of swamps, cypress ponds, and sandhill depression ponds and in hardwood swamps	

## Historic & Cultural Resources

The Federal Government uses two classifications for critical plant and animal species. The term 'Threatened Species' means any species that is likely to become an endangered species within the foreseeable future throughout all or a significant part of its range. The term 'Endangered Species' means any species that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. Additionally, the State of Georgia uses a four-tiered classification system that includes:

### Historic Districts

Bainbridge has two National Register Historic districts located within its city limits – Bainbridge Commercial Historic District and Bainbridge Residential Historic District.

**Bainbridge Commercial Historic District** is roughly bounded by Water, Clark, Troupe, West, Broughton and Crawford Streets. It encompasses approximately 100 acres and includes 56 contributing buildings. Architectural styles include Italianate, and Late 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals. The district was listed on the National Register in 1987.

**Bainbridge Residential Historic District** is roughly bounded by Calhoun, Scott, Evans, College, and Washington Streets. The Residential District is approximately 1250 acres and consists 197 buildings. Architectural styles include Late Victorian, Late 19<sup>th</sup> And 20<sup>th</sup> Century Revivals, Late 19<sup>th</sup> And Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century American Movements

### *National Register Properties*

The following buildings are individually listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

- ❑ Callahan, J.W., House (1907), located at 200 Evans St.
- ❑ Curry Hill Plantation (circa 1842-1845), located on US-84, 6 miles east of downtown Bainbridge.
- ❑ Decatur County Courthouse (1902), located at West and Water Streets, downtown Bainbridge.
- ❑ First African Missionary Baptist Church (c. 1904-1909)

There are over 500 sites or properties in Bainbridge that are identified and documented in the Georgia Historic Resources Survey.

Additionally, the following properties were identified in Bainbridge's 1992 Comprehensive Plan as having significant historical value:

- |                                 |                             |                               |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| ❑ McKenzie-Reynolds Home        | ❑ Willis Park               | ❑ Callahan Home               |
| ❑ Chason-Mijier Home            | ❑ First Presbyterian Church | ❑ First Baptist Church        |
| ❑ First United Methodist Church | ❑ Sollar Home               | ❑ O'Neal-Rich Home            |
| ❑ Wainman-Gragg-Carr Home       | ❑ Temple Beth-El            | ❑ Coleman-Vickers-Newton Home |

- Cooper Home
- Perry Home
- Floyd Home
- Graves-Godby Home
- Harrell-Gragg Home
- R.M. Reynolds Home
- 
- Donalson-Carpenter Home
- Ehrlich-Lewis Home
- Patterson-Powell-Kirkpatrick Home
- St. John's Episcopal Church
- Public Safety Building
- Troup Street Theatre
- Sharon Hotel
- Griffin Hospital
- Old Fire Station
- City Hall

### Historic Preservation Ordinance

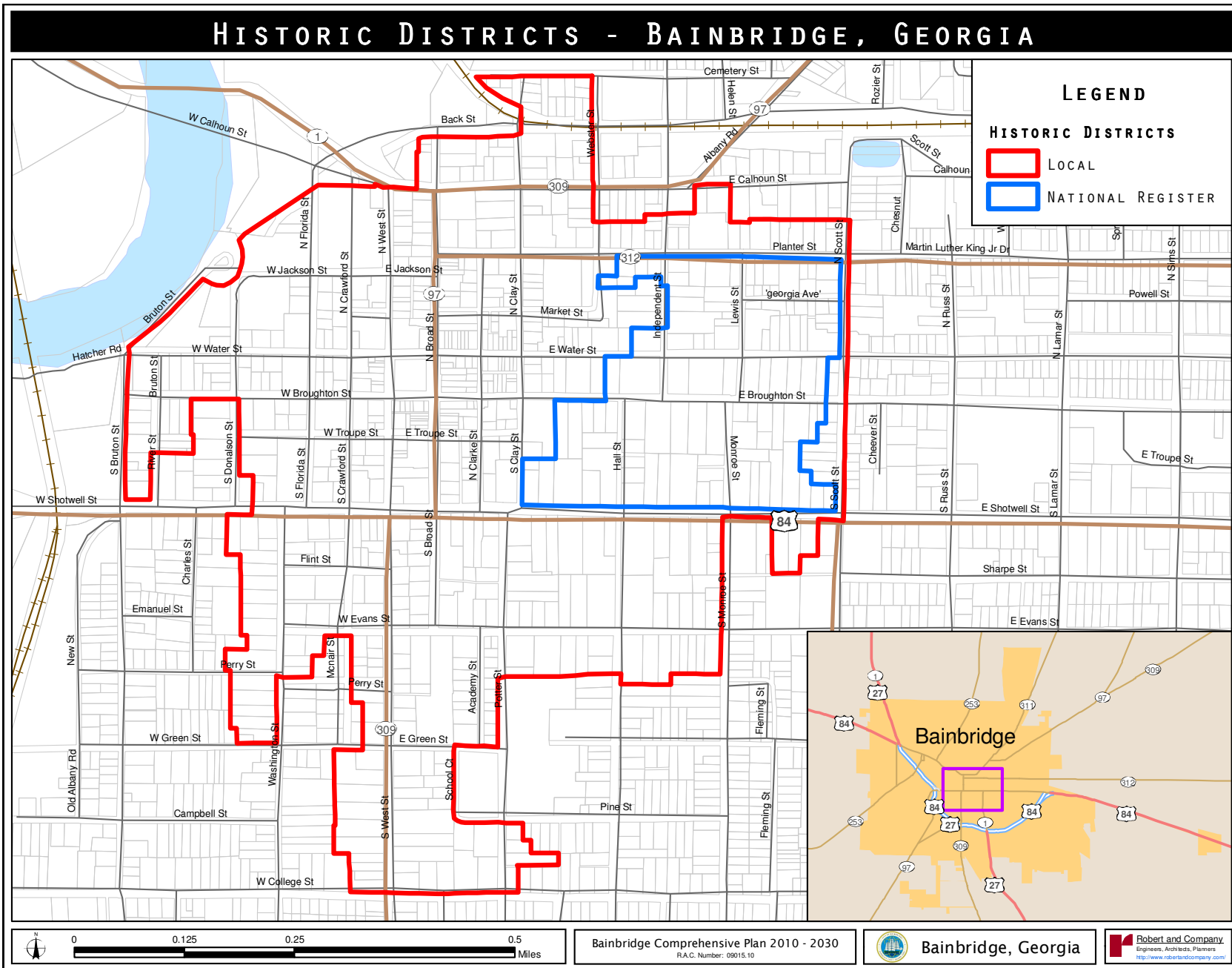
Historic Preservation Ordinance was written and proposed in June 2005, establishing the Local Historic District and the Bainbridge Historic Preservation Commission. The Historic District functions as an overlay to zoning classifications, supplementing additional regulations and review to help protect the historic characteristics of the area. New development and renovations must submit apply for a Certificate of Appropriate through the Commission.

Figure 9 on the next page shows the boundaries of the National Register District and the Local Historic District.

### *Archaeological Sites*

There are no known archaeological sites located within the city limits of Bainbridge

Figure 9 – Historic Districts, City of Bainbridge, GA



## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The purpose of this section is to provide an inventory of the community facilities and services serving the City of Bainbridge and assess their adequacy. A map of general community facilities is provided in Figure 10. The information contained in this chapter will assist the city in planning of public facilities and services with new development and redevelopment projects. After identifying major findings, issues, and opportunities in this Community Assessment, a Community Agenda will be prepared to formulate goals, policies, objectives, and programs for the improvement of community facilities and services to meet the long-term needs of Bainbridge.

Administrative rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) specify a relatively narrow list of facilities to be included in the community assessment. As consultants for the City of Bainbridge, we believe that a more thorough assessment of community facilities and services not specified in the rules is needed. This section is intended to provide a thorough inventory of community facilities data and an assessment of long-term needs.

The Mayor and City Council are the legislative body of the City. It is their responsibility to establish and amend city policies through the enactment of ordinances and resolutions. In 1976 the Mayor and Council elected to establish the council-manager form of government which allows for a democratically elected Mayor and Council. A City Manager is appointed by the council and delegated authority and responsibility to ensure services are provided in a timely and cost effective manner, to prepare and implement an annual budget, and to manage the City of Bainbridge work force and the day-to-day operations of the city.

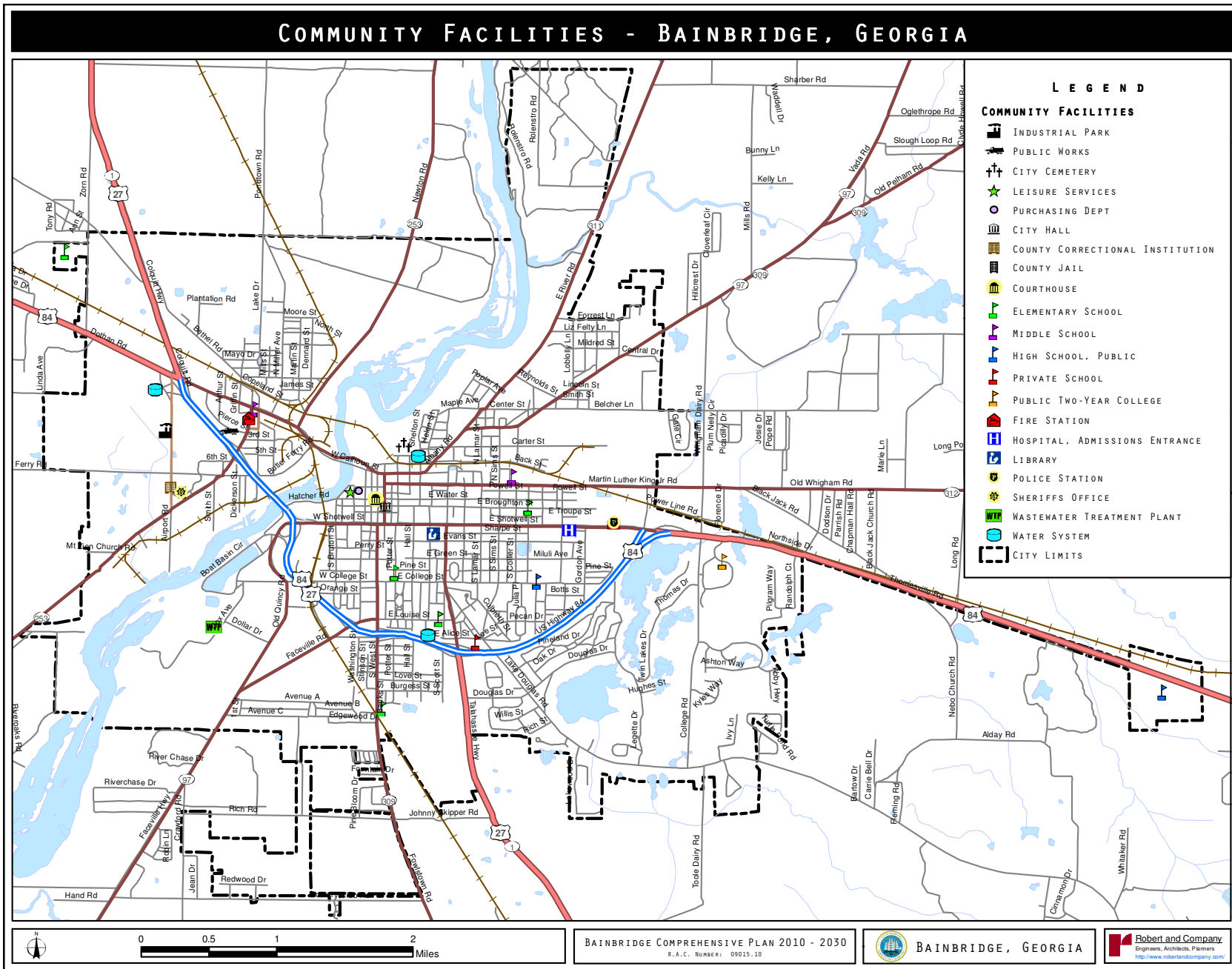
The Mayor and Council serve staggered four-year terms resulting in a city election every two years. There are six City Council members and two districts. District A is represented by two members and District B is represented by three members. The Mayor and Councilperson for Seat 1 are elected on an at-large basis and represent the entire city.

Council meetings are open to the public and conducted on the first and third Tuesday evenings of each month in the council chambers at City Hall.

Bainbridge has a City Manager, who oversees city staff and government operations. The city is organized in the following divisions:

- General Administration
- Community Development
- Leisure Services
- Public Safety
- Public Works
- Utilities

Figure 10 – Community Facilities, Bainbridge, Georgia





## General Administration

The General Administration Division includes City Clerk, Finance, Purchasing, Accounting, Computer Technology, and the Municipal Court. The city's General Administration currently includes fifteen total employees, including eight in Finance/Accounting, three in Purchasing, one in Computer Systems, and Three at Municipal Court. Bainbridge's Municipal Court hears minor cases involving traffic citations and code violations. The General Administration department is located in Bainbridge's City Hall building.

The General Administrative Division is currently adequate to meet the city's needs. Some technological improvements are under way with updates to the departmental website. Likewise, the Municipal Court has recently implemented a system for online payments. The Finance / Budget / Accounting portion of the Administrative Division has plans for updated financial software which have been delayed by current budget considerations.

## Community Development

The Community Development Division includes Planning & Zoning, Code Enforcement, Building Permits, Tourism, Public Information, and Bainbridge's Main Street manager. The Community Development Department includes eight total employees, with four employees in Main Street and Tourism, one in Planning and Zoning, one in Building Permits, one in Code Enforcement, and one in Communications. Community Development is housed in City Hall.

The Community Development Department is housed at the City Hall Building. Currently the City of Bainbridge is in the process of hiring an architectural consultant to design an enlarged City Hall. The city has purchased two buildings adjacent to the existing City Hall for expansion purposes. While the existing City Hall building will be maintained along with the facades of the adjacent buildings, significant internal improvements are anticipated. These improvements are expected to yield larger and more efficient office space while maintaining and restoring the historic exterior of these buildings.

In addition to the ongoing promotion of downtown development through the city's Main Street program, the Community Development Department has spearheaded plans for waterfront redevelopment along the Flint River through the Waterfront Connectivity Master Plan. This master plan calls for recreational development along the eastern shore of the Flint River as well as streetscapes and improved signage linking the waterfront and downtown areas.

The Community Development Department is currently adequate to meet most of the city's needs. However, as the city's planning and zoning agency, the Community Development Department does not currently maintain GIS mapping capabilities. Therefore they are currently unable to update and maintain their land use and future development maps.

## Leisure Services

The Leisure Services Division oversees all city parks and recreation facilities, and manages the city's numerous recreational programs and activities. The Leisure Services Department maintains a total of sixteen full time employees, with two in administration, twelve in park and cemetery maintenance, one in programs, and one at the tennis center. In addition to the department's full time employees, Leisure Services also employs several seasonal employees within their programs, tennis center, and aquatic center functions. The Leisure Services office is located at 223 Donaldson Street.

The City of Bainbridge's Leisure Services Division owns and maintains the city's parks and recreational facilities, and runs the city's recreational programs. The city has over 250 acres of developed park space, and is in the process of adding additional recreational facilities. Boat Basin Park, located along the Flint River is by far the largest park in Bainbridge, with over 200 acres of developed space, and a total of 554 acres total of developed and undeveloped land. Table 43 below lists Bainbridge's parks and their current facilities. Figure 11 shows the location of the city's parks and recreation centers.

**Table 43 – Park Acreage and Type**

Name	Acreage	Type	Facilities
Boat Basin Park	554 (approx. 250 acres developed)	Recreational Facilities & Passive Space	8 ballfields, 14-court tennis center, 10 campsites, 4 boat ramps, an outdoor stage and lawn, a public beach, a playground, & picnic pavilions
Coyle Park	4	Passive	Walking trail and playground
Griffin Park	3	Recreational	2 boat ramps
Andrew St. Park	2	Passive	Walking trail, benches, playground
Helen St. Park	0.5	Passive	Playground
West Bainbridge Park	0.25	Passive	Playground
Chason Park	0.25	Passive	No facilities
TOTAL	261.75 acres developed; 564 acres total (developed + undeveloped)		

Recreational Facilities – In addition to the parks above, the city owns three other recreational facilities: The Community Center, Aquatic Center, and Floyd Tennis Complex.

Approximately 40 acres of the available park space within Boat Basin Park is currently being developed into a sports park. This recreational complex will include 8 ballfields, 5 outdoor basketball courts, and 2 flex fields for soccer and football. This expansion is scheduled for completion in 2011. The boat ramps at Griffin Park and Boat Basin Park will be removed to construct a state-funded Go Fish boat ramp. This will feature 3 large double ramps and associated parking. Griffin Park will also feature a skate park. These renovations are being implemented as part of the Downtown Waterfront Connectivity Plan.

Over half of Boat Basin Park is undeveloped land and is available for future park expansion should the city need or desire to add more park space. Beyond this, there are no additional Bainbridge land holdings for additional park expansion. In addition to parks and recreation facilities, the Leisure Services Division also maintains 3 public cemeteries. Although cemeteries are certainly not considered parks or recreation, they do contribute to city open space.

There are no Decatur County parks within Bainbridge, but there are two county-owned boat ramps located within Boat Basin Park. The county contributes funds to Bainbridge for its parks and recreation services, and as a result, non-city residents do not pay additional service fees to use Bainbridge facilities. There are some shared facilities between the city and Decatur County Schools. This is done on an as-needed basis, and there are no written agreements in place.

The city's current park acreage meets the basic standards for parks established by the National Parks and Recreation Association (NRPA) of ten acres per 1,000 persons of population. However, the much of the city's parks acreage is within the boat basin area, which is not entirely active recreation and includes the boat basin itself. While the city maintains good community-wide parks and recreational complexes, the city has few neighborhood-scale parks. Neighborhood parks are particularly lacking on the west side of Bainbridge, where there is only one small passive park. The city's recreational programs include a diverse set of activities. However, some major sports, particularly basketball, are not available outside of the school system. In the future, the Leisure Services Department may wish to consider expanded programs for seniors, given the projected increase in the senior population.

### *Recreation Programs*

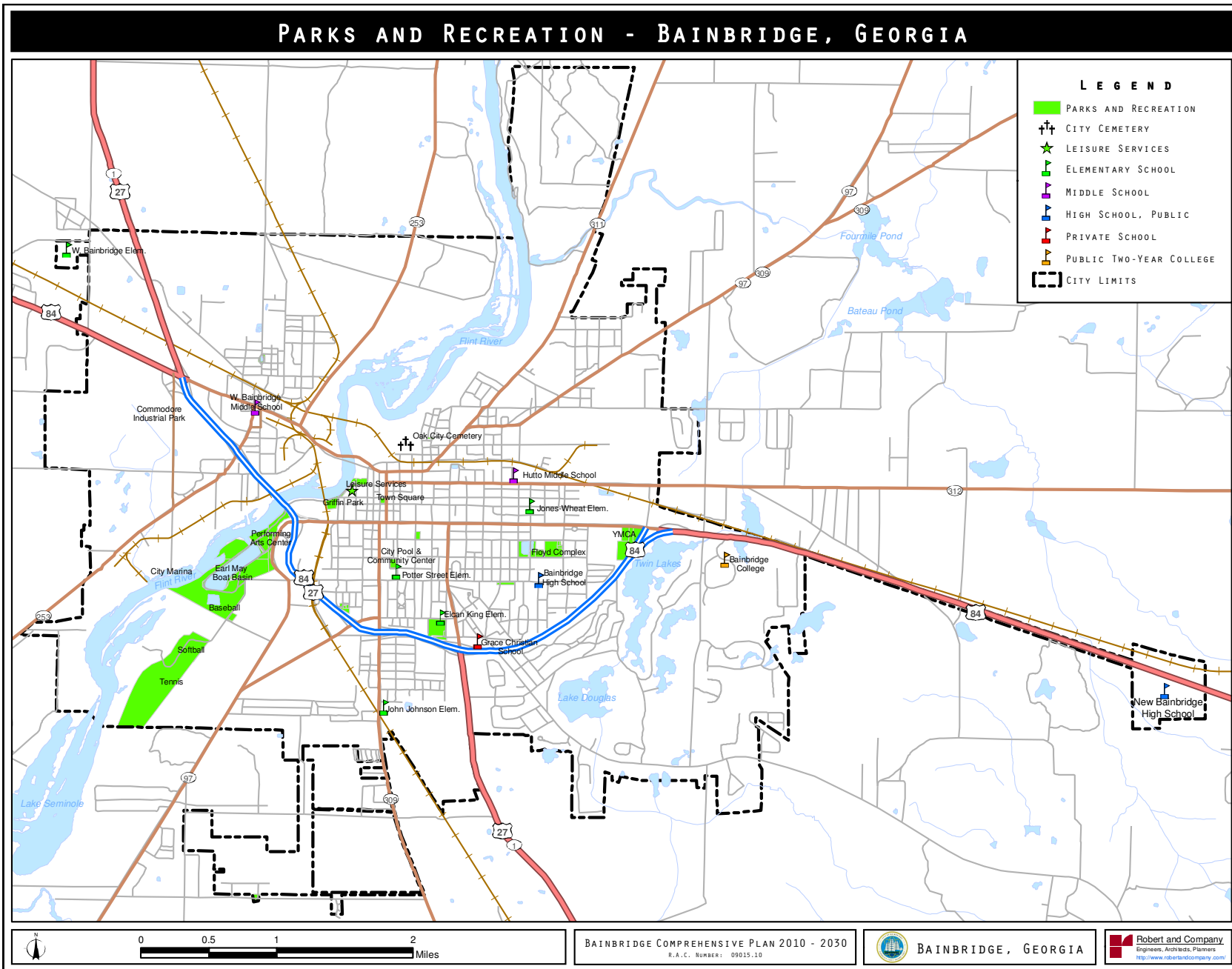
The city's Leisure Services Division provides numerous recreation programs for youths and adults, including youth baseball and softball, youth football, cheerleading, adult softball, youth and adult tennis, swimming and a senior exercise program. The following participation numbers for the recreation programs were reported for the 2007-08 year, as provided by the city's annual report:

**Table 44 – Recreational Program Participation**

<b>Programs</b>	<b>Participants</b>
Youth Baseball and Softball	796
Youth Football and Cheerleading	259
Adult Co-Ed Softball	357
Senior Exercise Program	25
Youth Tennis Program	101
Adult Tennis League	240
Youth/Adult Tennis Tournaments	214
Pumpkins in the Park/Games	500
Easter Egg Hunt	216
Cheerleading Camp	23
Swim Lessons	94
Aquatic Center	7,394

Source: Bainbridge 2007-2008 Annual Report

Figure 11 – Parks and Recreation, Bainbridge, GA



### Public Safety

The Public Safety Division includes Fire Suppression, Police Patrol, Animal Control and Criminal Investigations. The division has two stations, and its headquarters is located at Station 1 on Shotwell Street. The Public Safety Division includes sixty-three total employees, with seven administrative staff.

Bainbridge Public Safety is unique in that all members of the public safety department are cross-trained and certified in both police and fire fighting services. Police vehicles are equipped with fire suits and fire suppression equipment so that officers can immediately respond to fires.

The following call statistics were published in the City of Bainbridge’s 2007-08 annual report:

*Number of Calls:*

- Dispatched – 11,119
- Citations – 4,017
- Arrests – 1,424
- Incident Reports – 3,006
- Accident Reports – 768
- Funeral Escorts - 104

- Alarms – 1,037
- Animal Control Cars - 562
- Fire Incident Reports - 193
- Average Fire Response Time – 2 min., 5 sec.
- Detective Case File – 449
- DUI School - \$41,970

#### Public Safety Patrol Division

The Patrol Division has four shifts, each shift lead by a sergeant and a captain. Major Landrum oversees the division. Each patrol vehicle stores fire-fighting gear so that the cross-trained patrolmen can quickly respond to fires.

There is one Patrol Station in Bainbridge, located at 1707 Shotwell Street. The division has approximately 56 personnel, including 45 sworn officers, and 5 investigators.

A summary of crime statistics in Bainbridge compiled from FBI reports is provided in Table 45. Over the years tabulated, the City of Bainbridge had crime rates above the national per-capita average.

**Table 45 – Crime Statistics 2001-2005, Bainbridge, GA**

	2001	2002	2003	2005
<b>Murders</b>	1	2	3	1
<b>Rapes</b>	8	12	11	5
<b>Robberies</b>	33	26	24	24
<b>Assaults</b>	44	28	30	135
<b>Burglaries</b>	203	156	178	147
<b>Thefts</b>	714	699	769	798
<b>Auto thefts</b>	34	18	23	23
<b>Arson</b>	N/A	0	0	2

Source: FBI crime reports compiled by City-Data.com

Fire Suppression Division

The Fire Suppression Division enjoys a Class IV ISO rating and an excellent response time average of 2 minutes and 7 seconds for 2008. There are two fire stations: Station 1 at 1707 Shotwell Street is located at the east edge of downtown Bainbridge, and Station 2 is located at 108 Spring Creek Road across the river in West Bainbridge. There are four full-time firemen, two at each station, and the cross-trained public safety patrol members respond in the event of a call with their equipped vehicles. The city has 4 fire trucks – one ladder truck, three pumper trucks, and a rescue truck. Additionally, there is also a hazardous materials (HAZMAT) unit, located at Station 1. Two of the pumper trucks, the ladder truck and the rescue truck are housed at Station 1. The third ladder truck is housed at Station 2.

County Sheriff & Georgia State Patrol

The Decatur County Sheriff’s Department is located in 912 Spring Creek road in West Bainbridge near Bainbridge’s Public Safety Department. It staffs approximately 35, which includes road deputies and investigators.

Courts & Correction Facilities

Bainbridge does not have its own correction facilities. The city has a contract with the county to house and feed the city’s prisoners at the Decatur County Jail, located in the same complex as the Sheriff’s Department

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) & 911

Emergency (EMS) services are provided by Decatur County EMS. Decatur County EMS (DCEMS) provides 3 Advanced Life Support (ALS) Units 24 hours per day 7 days per week. DCEMS responds to Emergency 911 calls as well as emergency and non-emergency interfacility transfers. DCEMS also provides medical coverage for sports and community events. DCEMS operates 3 Shifts with each having a Shift Supervisor. Each shift works a 24 hour shift beginning at 8:00 am and ending at 8:00 am the following day. DCEMS Personnel are all certified EMTs and Paramedics.

The County EMS department has a staff of 25, which includes 19 paramedics and 6 EMT-intermediaries. Table 46 provides a summary of calls to the EMS department in 2007.

**Table 46 - Summary of Calls (2007)**

<b>Total Calls</b>	<b>3998</b>
<b>Call Type Classification</b>	
Cardiac/Medical	54%
Auto Accidents/Trauma	22%
Non-Emergency Transfers/Other	24%
<b>Call ‘Action-Taken’ Classification</b>	
Treated & Transported	65%
No Transport Required/Requested	19%
Cancelled or Other	16%

Source: Decatur County EMS website

### Public Works

The Public Works Division is responsible for solid waste collection and disposal. It also is in charge of vehicle and facility maintenance, street paving and resurfacing, and stormwater management. The Public Works Department includes forty-three total employees, including twenty in street maintenance, eleven in solid waste, nine in the shop, and three in property maintenance. The division’s service shop and offices are located at 1503 Pierce Street.

The maintenance division handles all repairs for the city buildings and parking lots. The service shop, located at 1503 Pierce Street handles service and repairs to all the city’s vehicles.

The Public Works Department also provides stormwater management. The stormwater system consists of 13 holding ponds, 12 of which are pumped into the Flint River at four different discharge points. The other pond is pumped into a drain field for natural filtration.

The Streets Department oversees the paving and resurfacing of all city roads. They are also providing grading and paving services for the new 40-acre sports complex, and for the parking lot at the new Go Fish boat ramp, which will offer enough parking for 138 vehicles with boat trailers.

### Solid Waste

Local governments in Georgia are required under the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act of 1990 to prepare and implement solid waste plans, which must also be in compliance with Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Chapter 110-4-3, Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures for Solid Waste Management. The framework of these requirements is represented in the Table 47.

**Table 47 – Solid Waste Planning Standards**

Elements of the Plan	Basic Questions for Each Element		
	Inventory & Assessment	Statement of Needs & Goals	Implementation Strategy
Amount of Waste	What do we have in the community?	What do we need to meet the required reductions and projected solid waste needs?	How are we going to get there?
Collection			
Waste Reduction			
Disposal			
Land Limitations			
Education/Public Involvement			
Finance & Implementation			

Source: Georgia Department of Community Affairs. December 1991. Preparing a Solid Waste Management Plan. Atlanta: Office of Coordinated Planning

The city does not have a formal waste management plan in place at this time.

### *Trash Collection & Disposal*

Bainbridge's Public Works Department provides weekly collection of household and commercial waste, as well as pickup of trash (yard trimmings, leaves, limbs, etc.). There are four residential routes, and two commercial routes. Solid waste and trash are disposed at the Decatur County landfill, which is located approximately 18 miles south of Bainbridge off Highway 27 South. The county's landfill is 3 years old, recently replacing a previous landfill that had reached capacity. The city recently reduced its frequency of residential service from twice weekly to once per week. There is no service beyond Bainbridge city limits.

### *Recycling*

The city does not provide recycling center. However, there is a Decatur County convenience center located within Bainbridge on Alice Street that provides drop-off for all county residents.

### *Equipment and Facilities*

The Public Works department owns a total of 10 garbage trucks. Six trucks are used for residential pickups (4 regular route trucks, plus 2 backup trucks), and 4 trucks are used for commercial pickup (2 regular, 2 back). Additionally, there are 5 trucks for yard trash pickup services. At this time, all trucks are in good, operable condition. The 2009-2010 city budget will include the purchase of two garbage trucks and one trash truck.

## **Utilities**

The Utilities Division provides the City of Bainbridge with public water treatment and distribution, sewer services, and natural gas. The Utilities Division includes thirty-one total employees, including four meter readers, eight sewage treatment plant workers, thirteen water and sewer distribution and collection workers, and six natural gas workers.

### Water

Public water is entirely supplied by groundwater from the Floridan Aquifer, one of the largest ground water sources in the nation. Water is drawn by 4 city wells, reaching approximately 500 feet deep. City wells are located at Louise Street, Scott Street at Alice Street, King Street at Scott Street, and Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. The aquifer provides water that is ready to drink, however state standards require treatment with fluoride and chlorine. As required by the state Environmental Protection Division, water is routinely sampled and tested for bacteria and



levels of fluoride and chlorine. Bainbridge Water has consistently passed inspections for water quality, and has never registered a reading for bacteria. Currently there are approximately 185-190 miles of water distribution lines throughout the city.

Five elevated water tanks provide water storage for the city. Each tank has an approximate capacity of 500,000 gallons, and a total citywide storage capacity of total of 2.4 million gallons. There are currently 14,000 residential and non-residential customers. There are not separate sources or water lines for irrigation and drinking water. Current water consumption averages 2.7 million gallons per day (MGD) throughout the year, with higher spikes during the summer growing season reaching close to 4 MGD. The city is permitted to treat up to 4.2 MGD – throughout most of the year the consumption of water is well below the permit limit.

Current facilities, including ground wells, water lines, and treatment facility, are in good condition, and are not expected to be replaced or need major repair in the foreseeable future. One of these wells has been recently constructed in order to accommodate the new Bainbridge High School. The other wells are fairly new, or have been rebuilt recently. There is not expected to be a significant increase in water consumption, so the treatment capacity should continue to be adequate well into the future.

The City of Bainbridge is currently in the preliminary stages of developing Water Service Master Plan. This plan will determine priority areas for new water lines and additional water storage tanks. One of the primary goals will be to provide improved water pressure throughout the city. Currently the outer areas of the city tend to have lower water pressure than the more central areas. The city will aim to provide additional storage tanks on the outskirts of the city and provide a closed-loop system of water lines to provide a more consistent level of water pressure citywide.

### Sewer Service

Bainbridge provides sewer services to much of the city, and it maintains over 100 miles of sewer lines. There is one treatment facility, the Bainbridge-Flint River Water Pollution Control Plant, located at 1200 Cox Avenue. The treatment plant has a capacity to treat 2.5 million gallons per day (MGD). The treatment load currently averages 1.4 MGD, well under the facility's full capacity.

The city's Master Sewer Plan provides the blueprint for future expansions of Bainbridge's sewer lines and facilities. Overall, the Master plan proposes adding 700 to 1,000 new sewer connections citywide. Phase I of the Sewer Master Plan was the Alice Street/U.S.-27 South Project, which was completed in early 2009. This project diverted the area's sewer lines to a new trunk line in order to run directly to the treatment facility, rather than flowing through downtown. Phase II, the Douglas Hills Project, is scheduled to start in Fall 2009. It will add new sewer lines and produce 400 new sewer connections to the residential area. Later phases of the Master Plan were originally planned on a more aggressive schedule; however, the recent economic conditions have slowed expectations and these phases are now viewed as long-term projects. In the near future, the treatment facility will undergo an upgrade to its aeration system, with a cost of approximately \$1 million.

### Natural Gas

The city provides natural gas service, which is supplied by South Georgia Natural Gas. Currently there are 1,500 commercial and residential customers. The city is capable of handling an increased supply based on projected growth.

### Power

Georgia Power provides electricity to Bainbridge and most of Decatur County. Their office is located at 308 Airport Road in the West Bainbridge area. Georgia Power charges a \$22 hookup fee. Three Notch EMC provides power to western Decatur County.

## **Education & Health**

### Public Schools

Bainbridge is served by Decatur County Public Schools. As Bainbridge is the county seat, by far the largest municipality within the county, and centrally located within the county, all but one of the county's schools are located within Bainbridge – Lillian Williams Elementary School, located in Attapulgus, was closed for the 2009-10 school year. Decatur County Schools constructed a new high school, which will open for the 2009-10 school year. The old high school site on College Street created a need for reorganization of school facilities. The following plans were made as part of this reorganization:

- ❑ The new high school will house all Decatur County students in 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade.
- ❑ The old high school is now Bainbridge Middle School, and will house all county students in 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grades.
- ❑ Hutto Middle School will house all county students in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grades, instead of grades 6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup>.
- ❑ West Bainbridge Middle School and Lillian Williams Elementary (Attapulgus) will be phased out as educational facilities.
- ❑ All remaining elementary schools now include Pre-K through 4<sup>th</sup> grade, rather than pre-K through 5<sup>th</sup> grade. This includes Elcan King, John Johnson, Jones Wheat, Potter Street and West Bainbridge Elementary Schools.

Table 48 below is the 2009-10 school year enrollment and capacity statistics for all Decatur County Schools.

**Table 48 - Decatur County Schools, Enrollment and Capacity for School Year 2009-10**

School	Address	Zip Code	Grades	Enrollment	Capacity	Enrollment/ Capacity
Bainbridge High School	1 Bearcat Boulevard	39819	9 to12	1570	1800	87%
Bainbridge Middle School	College Street	39817	7 & 8	780	1587	49%
Hutto Middle School	1201 Martin Luther King Jr. Dr.	39817	5 & 6	810	850	95%
Elcan King Elementary School	725 Louise Street	39819	Pre-K to 4	540	562	96%
John Johnson Elementary School	1947 West Street	39819	Pre-K to 4	515	537	96%
Jones-Wheat Elementary School	1400 East Broughton Street	39817	Pre-K to 4	460	487	94%
Potter Street Elementary School	725 Potter Street	39819	Pre-K to 4	400	512	78%
West Bainbridge Elementary School	915 Zorn Road	39817	Pre-K to 4	620	687	90%

Source: Decatur County Board of Education

### School Performance

Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is a measurement defined by the United States federal No Child Left Behind Act that allows the U.S. Department of Education to determine how every public school and school district in the country is performing academically according to results on standardized tests. AYP is measured by three performance indicators: academic performance, participation on standardized tests, and either graduation rates (high schools) or attendance rates (elementary and middle schools). Under No Child Left Behind, school systems that do not meet AYP two or more consecutive years are placed on 'Needs Improvement Status' and will be subject to corrective action after two years with escalating consequences each successive year remaining in that status.

The Decatur County system did not meet AYP for the 2008-2009 school year, because Bainbridge High School and Hutto Middle School did not meet AYP. Hutto Middle failed to meet academic performance measures; Bainbridge High School did not meet academic performance measures, nor did it meet graduation rate criteria (at or above a 75% graduation rate). Bainbridge's graduation rate fell from the previous year, as can be seen below in Table 49.

**Table 49 - Bainbridge High School, Graduation Rates: 2008 & 2009**

2008		2009	
Graduation Class Size	435	Graduation Class Size	442
Graduates (Regular Diplomas)	332	Graduates (Regular Diplomas)	307
Graduation Rate	76.3%	Graduation Rate	69.5%

Source: Decatur County Board of Education

### Private Schools & Preschools

#### *Private School:*

Grace Christian Academy, 1300 Lake Douglas Drive

#### *Pre-Schools:*

- ❑ Bright Beginnings Daycare, 2119 Dothan Rd.
- ❑ Cradles to Crayons, 1019 Zorn Rd.
- ❑ Little Blessings, 205 Independent St.
- ❑ Morningside CWE, 1303 Vada Rd.
- ❑ Mother Goose Nursery & Learning Center, 419 E. College St.
- ❑ Nelson Chapel Child Development Center, 640 Hall St.
- ❑ The Village Children's Center, 1400 Botts St.
- ❑ New World Academy, 406 West St.
- ❑ Rainbow Play & Learn, 1228 Garland Ave.

### Colleges & Universities

Bainbridge College, part of the University of Georgia system, is a two-year college that offers associates degrees and technical certificates. It is the only college located in the Decatur Area economic region, which consists of Baker, Decatur, Grady, Miller, Mitchell, and Seminole Counties.

### Libraries

Libraries are provided by the Southwest Georgia Regional Library System, which covers three counties including Decatur. The Gilbert H. Gragg Memorial Library is located in Bainbridge on the corner of Shotwell and Monroe Streets. In addition to serving the tri-county area, it is a sub-regional library for the blind and physically handicapped, serving an 11-county area. In addition to books, periodicals and newspapers, the library offers CD's, videos, and internet service. The library is part of the PINES network (Public Information Network for Electronic Services).

### Other Educational Resources

*Learning is for Everyone (LIFE)*, chapter of the Certified Literate Community (CLP). Located at 430 ½ East Shotwell Street. Improves literacy and education of Decatur County residents who have neither a high school diploma nor a GED.

*Adult Education Learning Center*, located at 1302 East Evans Street. Provides education for basic academic skills, GED preparation, and other skills for those 16 and up that are not enrolled in a school.

### Hospitals & Health Care

Decatur County is served by Bainbridge Memorial Hospital and Manor, located at 1500 East Shotwell Street on the east side of downtown Bainbridge. It has 80 beds and carried an average capacity of 46.7% in 2006. There are two nursing homes located in Decatur County: Memorial Manor, located at Bainbridge Memorial Hospital and Bainbridge Health Care, located at 1155 West College Street. For the year 2007, there was a 95.1% occupancy rate in the county's nursing homes, perhaps indicating a need for additional facilities. In addition to the two nursing homes, there are also several private assisted living facilities. Table 50 shows the capacity and occupancy of some of the city's medical institutions.

**Table 50 – Health Care Facilities**

Facility Type	Number of Facilities	Bed Capacity	Occupancy Rate
General Hospitals*	1	80	46.7%
Nursing Homes**	2	207	95.1%

Source: <http://www.georgiastats.uga.edu/>; \*Data from 2006; \*\* Data from 2007

## Transportation

Transportation planning is not required as part of the comprehensive plan for municipalities at the Basic Level, as designated by the Department of Community Affairs. Although it is not required, transportation is an important aspect of a community, and therefore warrants at least a basic level of evaluation.

### Road Network

The roadway system provides the backbone of the transportation network. By classifying the roadway system by how each roadway functions, it allows for analysis and evaluation of the roadway's effectiveness within the system. Roadways are described by the federal functional classification system which defines a roadway based on its accessibility and mobility. On one end of the spectrum are expressways or interstates, which provide the greatest mobility with controlled access. On the other end are local roads which provide the greatest accessibility and feed traffic into higher capacity roads. A description of the system's major functional classifications is presented below and is shown in Figure 12

#### *Urban Freeway and Expressways*

Urban Freeway and Expressways provide the greatest mobility because access is generally limited to intersections and interchanges. The US-84/27 bypass is the only urban freeway / expressway located within the City of Bainbridge.

#### *Urban Principal Arterials and Minor Arterials*

Urban Principal Arterials and Minor Arterials provide the essential network for connecting activity centers. Arterials carry large volumes of traffic at moderate speeds.

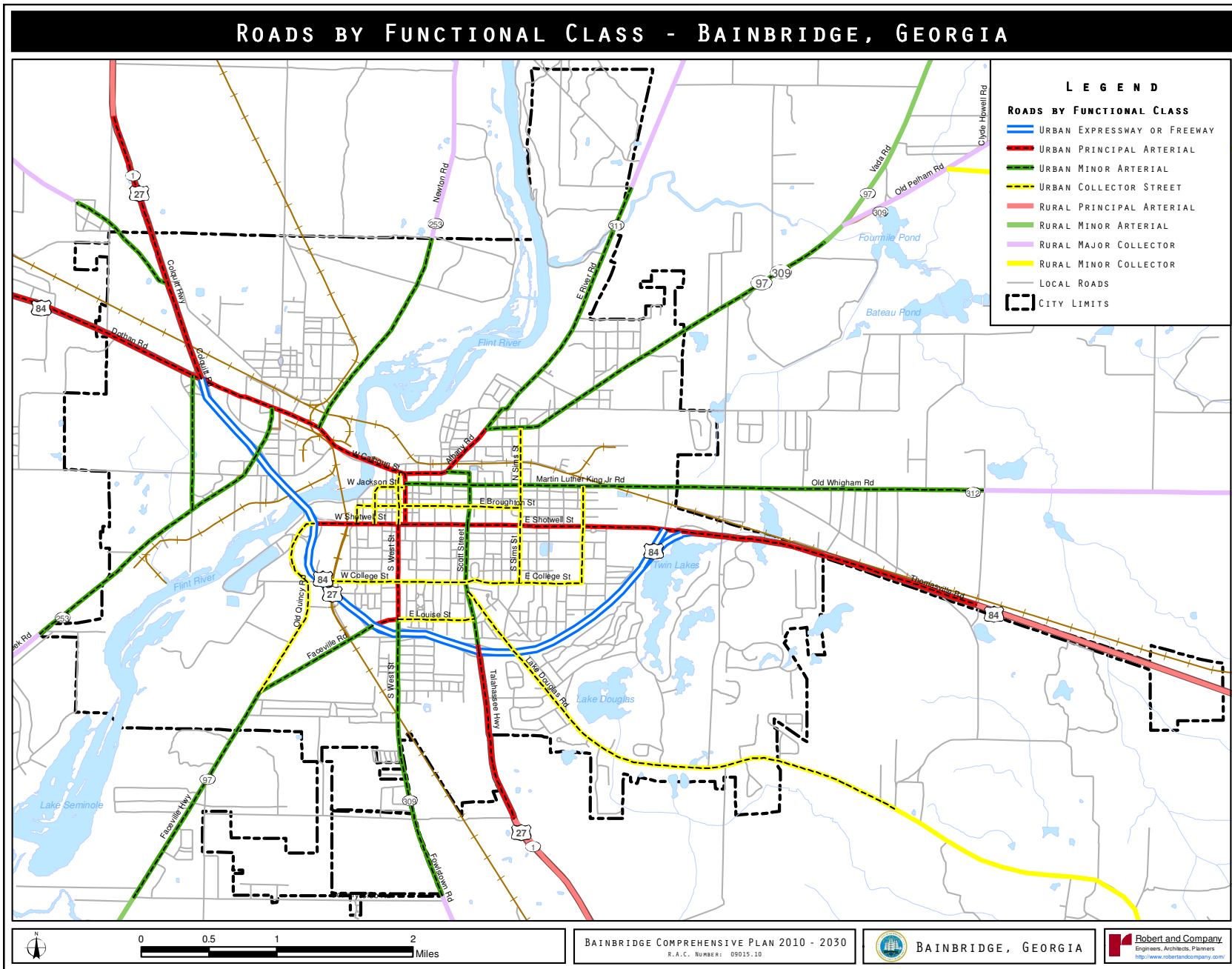
#### *Collector Streets*

Collector Streets connect activity centers and residential areas. Their purpose is to collect traffic from streets in residential and commercial areas and distribute it to the arterial system and carry traffic a low to moderate speeds.

#### *Local Streets*

Local Streets have the greatest access but the least mobility. Local streets feed the collector system from low volume residential and commercial areas at low speeds. Local streets are usually found in subdivisions.

Figure 12 – Roadway Functional Class



### Traffic Counts

Figure 13 Shows Annualized Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts within the City of Bainbridge in 2008. The highest traffic volumes are found on the city's main arterials: US-84/27 Bypass, Shotwell Street, Tallahassee Highway, Scott Street, W. Calhoun Street, and Dothan Road (US-84).

### Roadway Projects

In order to address issues of traffic and congestion, the Georgia DOT has identified numerous roadway projects for inclusion in transportation improvement plans.

- SR 38BU (Shotwell St) from SR 1BU to SR 38 – Resurfacing / Maintenance (Under Construction)
- SR 97 from SR 302 to SR 38BU – Resurfacing / Maintenance (Under Construction)
- Decatur Co SR 309/SR 84 to FL State Line – Shoulder Work (Under Construction)
- SR 38/US 84 from Bainbridge to Grady County - Median Turn Lanes (2011)
- SR 1 @ 1 LOC; SR 38BU @ 3 LOCS & SR 97 @ 2 LOCS – Traffic Signals (2011)
- SR 38/US 84 @ SR 1/US 27 – Intersection operational improvements (2013)
- SR 1/SR 38 from CR 393/Bethel Road to CR 208/Whigham Road – Miscellaneous Improvements (Long Range)
- Broad Street and Shotwell Street - Downtown Streetscape Phase II
- SR 1, SR 10LP; SR 54; CS 135 @ 4 Locs – Bridge Repair, Maintenance (2010)

### Public Transportation

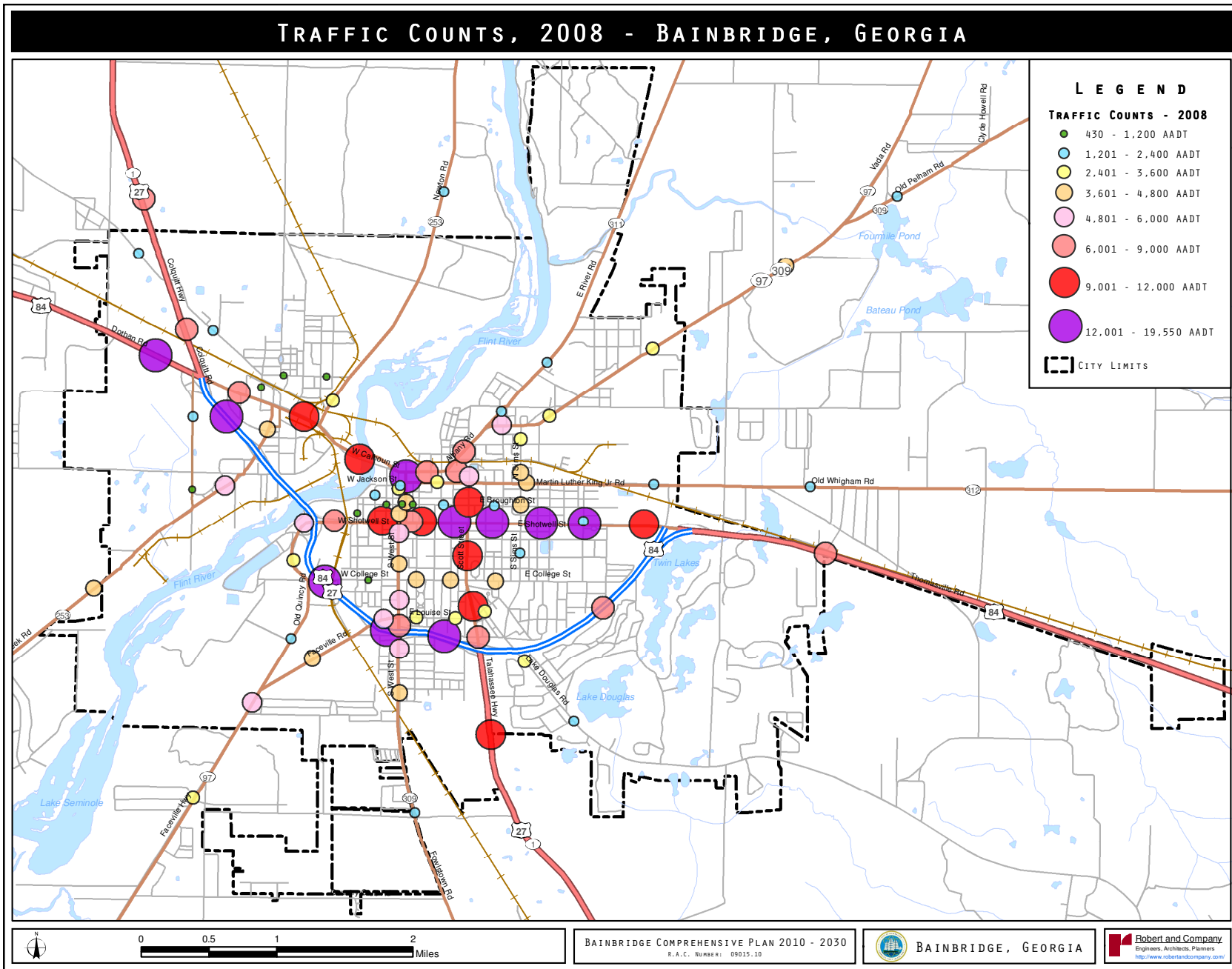
The population size of Bainbridge is prohibitive to public transit. However, Decatur County does provide a limited transportation service.

### Sidewalks

Sidewalks are an important element of alternative transportation infrastructure. Streetscape amenities such as sidewalks are also supportive of pedestrian oriented development. This is particularly important, given the city's plans for downtown connectivity and waterfront recreational development. A map of existing sidewalks in downtown Bainbridge is provided in Figure 14. Additional streetscapes and walking paths are planned for the implementation of the Bainbridge Waterfront Connectivity Master Plan.



Figure 13 – Traffic Counts, 2008, Bainbridge, GA





### Air Travel

Decatur County Industrial Airpark is located 6 miles northwest of Bainbridge in unincorporated Decatur County, off of U.S. Highway 27. There are two runways at the airfield – Runway 9/27 is a 5,500 feet long asphalt runway rated in good condition, and Runway 14/32, also asphalt is 5,000 feet long and rated in fair condition. There are 27 aircraft based at the airfield, with an average of 37 flights per day. Nearly all aircraft in operation (33 of the 37) are single-engine planes. The airpark is owned, maintained and serviced by Decatur County Aviation.

A former airfield is located within Bainbridge City Limits in the West Bainbridge area.



Aerial Photo of Decatur County Industrial Air Park

### Ports

Owned and operated by the Georgia Ports Authority, Port Bainbridge is on the west shore of the Flint River across from the Boat Basin. The multifaceted 107-acre facility is equipped to handle a variety of bulk cargoes via barge traffic. Long- and short-term storage is made available to customers via 93,000 square feet (9,292 square meters) of covered storage. However, legal restrictions on dredging of the river have severely limited the access of barge traffic to the Bainbridge Port facility.



Port Bainbridge

## **INTERGOVERNMENTAL AGREEMENTS & COORDINATION**

### Planning

Decatur County completed a Comprehensive Plan in 2007 jointly with the towns of Attapulgus, Brinson, and Climax. The Decatur County Comprehensive Plan includes data for all of the cities in Decatur County, including Bainbridge. However, the city has opted to conduct an independent comprehensive planning process.

There do not appear to be any land use conflicts between the County's Comprehensive Plan and the City of Bainbridge's currently adopted future land use map. However, annexation may arise as an issue as anticipated growth occurs along US-84 east of Bainbridge and US-27 south of Bainbridge. The city and county should work together to ensure that anticipated future annexation areas are established. It is also important to establish a process for resolving annexation disputes between the city and county.

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (SWGRC), formerly the Southwest Georgia Regional Development Center, is the regional planning agency for the City of Bainbridge and the 14-county surrounding area. The SWGRC provides a variety of services to local governments, including assistance with zoning, subdivision regulations, land use planning, environmental planning, economic development, GIS mapping, grant writing and administration. The Southwest Georgia Regional Development Center is responsible, in part, for determining the compatibility of proposed land use plans and comprehensive plans with other affected local governments. Each local government is required to have and follow a dispute resolution procedure for annexations and land use changes. The SWGRC also manages the Development of Regional Impact (DRI) approval process for major developments that have the potential to impact adjacent local governments. The DRI process improves communication between affected governments and provides a means of assessing potential impacts and conflicts the development may create.

### Utilities

There are no utility service agreements whereby Bainbridge supplies water, sewer or natural gas services to unincorporated areas beyond the city's boundaries. However, the city will provide services to outlying areas where feasible if the landowner or subdivision funds their own connections, lift stations, etc. and they must agree to be annexed into the City of Bainbridge.

Decatur County operates a landfill that receives municipal solid waste from the City of Bainbridge. The County also provides a recycling drop location located within the City of Bainbridge.

### Service Delivery Agreements

Service Delivery Strategies (SDS) Agreement – In 1997, the Georgia General Assembly enacted the Local Government Services Delivery Strategy Act (H.B. 489), created to limit competition and duplication among local governments and authorities providing local services. It also establishes processes to resolve disputes when a county objects to a municipal annexation.

The City of Bainbridge and Decatur County are required to update their Service Delivery Strategy document by the completion of this Comprehensive Plan. Thus, the updated SDS is scheduled by a deadline of October, 2010. As such, the updated SDS may not be available in time for the submission of the Community Assessment document. However, a copy of the previous SDS agreement dated August 2007 was obtained for inclusion in the Comprehensive Plan. A summary of the agreements listed within the current SDS document is provided below. The 2007 SDS document does not identify any conflicts between service provision across the county and its cities. However, the Decatur Comprehensive Plan calls for improved agreements for emergency medical services and fire protection across jurisdictions.

**Table 51 – Service Delivery Agreements, Decatur County, GA**

Service	City	County	Other
Airport		X	
Animal Control (Humane Society)	X		
Cemetery	X		
Code Enforcement	X		
Coroner		X	
Correctional Institution		X	
Courts	X		
Development Authority		X	
Elections	X		
Emergency Management		X	
Emergency Medical Services		X	
Fire Protection	X		
Garbage Collection	X		
Indigent Defense		X	
Indigent Healthcare		X	
Keep America Beautiful		X	
Landfill		X	
Library		X	
Parks & Recreation	X		
Police Department	X		
Public Health		X	
Public Housing	X		
Public Safety	X		
Public Utilities	X		
Road Bridge Maintenance	X		
School Resource Officer		X	
Sheriff's Department		X	
Tax Assessment		X	
Tax Commissioner		X	
Tourism			Convention and Visitor's Bureau, Chamber of Commerce
Welfare		X	

Source: Decatur County / City of Bainbridge Service Delivery Strategy Agreement, August, 2007.