

Chapter 1: Introduction

Purpose

The Hoschton Comprehensive Plan provides city elected officials, staff, and residents with a set of goals and policies to help manage future growth and development over the next twenty years. The Plan establishes a framework for planning for the provision of public facilities and services, choosing desirable economic growth, preserving the natural environment, protecting unique historic building or districts and scenic areas, and establishing compatible future land uses.

Planning Process

The Plan consists of a three-step planning process: Inventory and Assessment of existing conditions, Goals and Policies, and Implementation Strategy. The Inventory and Assessment addresses the seven planning elements using the basic planning process required by the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures of the Georgia Planning Act. The Goals and Policies are based upon the inventory and assessment, and address existing and future needs and aspiration of the community. The Implementation Strategy is a five-year work program based on the community needs and goals.

Inventory and Assessment

The Inventory and Assessment lists the resources within Hoschton and addresses the following seven elements. The adequacy of the community's resource base is assessed based on identified needs through meetings with elected officials, city employees, and residents.

- (A) **Population:** The population element provides historic population statistics as well as projections of future population trends in the city. This data is analyzed in increments from 1980 until 2023. Also included are data on the numbers of households, education levels, gender and race composition, and income of the population, as well as a comparison of the city, Jackson County, the Northeast Georgia region, and the state.
- (B) **Economic Development:** The economic development element examines various aspects of the city's economy, including employment by industry, the labor force and an analysis of the economic base.
- (C) **Natural Resources:** The natural resources element includes the environmentally sensitive and ecologically significant areas that are unique to Hoschton. Included in the inventory are discussion of soil types, hydrology, topography, prime agricultural land, forest resources, plant and animal habitats, wildlife, parks and recreation areas, wetlands, and watersheds.
- (D) **Historic Resources:** The historic resources section catalogs the historic sites and structures in Hoschton, including individual properties, historic areas, and archaeological sites.
- (E) **Community Facilities:** The community facilities section inventories existing public facilities and service that are important to the safety and well being of Hoschton residents. This section addresses, in particular, law enforcement, fire protection, emergency medical services, infrastructure, solid waste management, governmental, recreational, educational and cultural facilities.
- (F) **Housing:** This element provides an inventory of the existing housing supply in Hoschton and includes an assessment of the quantity, quality, cost and age of housing, as well as projected demand for the various categories of housing units.
- (G) **Existing Land Use:** The land use element of the plan surveys existing land uses at the tax level. Categories of land use include parks, recreation and conservation; agriculture, including crop forest; commercial; residential (single-family and mobile homes, and multi-family housing);
- (H) industrial; public/institutional; government; transportation, communications and utilities; and undeveloped or unused properties.

Statement of Needs and Goals

Based on the inventory and assessment, existing needs are identified. Goals and objectives are developed to meet identified needs of each jurisdiction. While the plan's goals and policies are a product of perceptions formulated by the public, city officials, and community leaders, they are also consistent with, and supportive of, the statewide planning goals as stated in the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures.

Implementation Strategies

Based on the needs assessment and goals and policies, a strategy to put the plan into action was prepared. This section of the plan includes a five-year work program that outlines projects and programs to meet identified needs and to achieve future goals. These programs are outlined on a year-by-year basis, and will need to be completed or underway by the year 2006.

The work program should be reviewed annually not only to note accomplishments, but also to determine adjustments in the work program. The work program is a realistic plan of local activities; however, circumstances, particularly financial, may necessitate adjusting the work program.

Public Participation

The first public hearing was held on April 17, 2003 prior to the preparation of the plan. Meeting began with the Advisory Committee immediately after the first public hearing and continued through August 2003.

The final document was presented at a public hearing on September 9, 2003.

Plan Products

Preparation of the Hoschton Plan followed the guidelines provided in the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures. This plan consists of an Inventory and Assessment; Goals, Policies, and Objectives; an Implementation Strategy; and Existing and Future Land use maps.

To be an effective tool for planning, general procedures must be followed in the utilization of the Plan.

- (A) Both the land use map and plan document should be applied together during the evaluation of any development alternative and proposals.
- (B) The Plan's policies must be applied in a practical flexible manner in order to ensure that they will be responsive to new opportunities and changing conditions.
- (C) The Plan will be implemented through a coordinated program establishing short, idle, and long-term courses of action.
- (D) The Plan should be used as a framework for guiding and coordinating planning where possible. This includes future development and transportation improvements, parks and recreation facilities, schools, fire stations, water and sewer systems, and other community facilities.

Chapter 2: Population

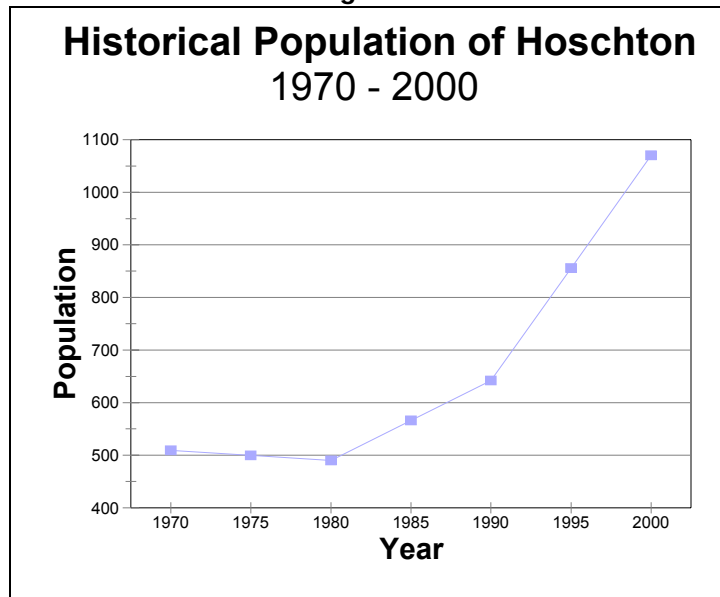
Introduction

The population element provides the City of Hoschton with the opportunity to inventory and assess various population trends and characteristics. The information provided in the population element will form the basis for several planning decisions on the Economic Development, Community Facilities, Housing and Land Use elements of the comprehensive plan. A community's future goals are largely dependent on population growth rates and demographic patterns. This chapter will analyze past and present population trends to determine future population projections. Components of this element include: population, households, age distribution, racial composition, education attainment, and personal/household income levels (See section "Population Trends").

Table 1 and Figure 1 show the historical population of Hoschton from 1970 through 2000 in comparison with other areas.

Table 1				
Total Population, 1970 - 2000				
Year	Hoschton	Jackson County	Georgia	Northeast Georgia
1970	509	21,093	4,589,575	224,923
1975	500	23,218	5,026,340	250,186
1980	490	25,343	5,463,105	275,449
1985	566	27,674	5,970,661	301,832
1990	642	30,005	6,478,216	328,214
1995	856	35,797	7,332,335	383,257
2000	1070	41,589	8,186,453	438,300
Percent Change				
1970 - 1980	-3.73	20.15	19.03	22.46
1980 - 1990	31.02	18.4	18.58	19.16
1990 - 2000	66.67	38.61	26.37	33.54
Source: U.S. Census, 1970 - 2000				

Figure 1



The City of Hoschton, like most of the smaller towns of Northeast Georgia, grew slowly or declined in population during the 1970's and preceding decades. In 1980, however, the explosive expansion of the Atlanta Metropolitan Area reached Jackson County, and Hoschton's population began to grow at an accelerated pace. It grew 31% from 1980 to 1990 and by 67% from 1990 to 2000. Most of the growth came from people moving into the town. Tables 2 and 3 show the source of growth from 1990 - 2000. More than 85% was from net in-migration. In the 2000 Census, nearly 40% of Hoschton's residents reported that they had lived in a different county five years earlier. Hoschton lost population in the 1970's, but has grown significantly faster, in terms of percent increase, than either Jackson County or Georgia as a whole during the past two decades.

Table 2 Composition of Population Increase 1990 - 2000			
Number by Natural Increase	% Natural Increase	Number by Net Migration	% Migration
344	14.2	2077	85.8
Source: Georgia County Guide, 2002			

Residence in 1995	Number	Percent
Same house	546	53.0
Same county	87	8.4
Different county in GA	317	30.7
Different state	53	5.1
Foreign	28	2.7
Source: U.S. Census, 2000		

Population Projections

The future population of Hoschton was projected using several methods. The results are shown in Table 4 and graphically in Figure 2.

Series A used linear regression based on historical trends from 1970 to 2000.

Series B also used the historical population 1970 - 2000, but fitted an exponential curve to the data. The exponential curve was a closer fit to the pattern shown in the past (rapidly increasing growth).

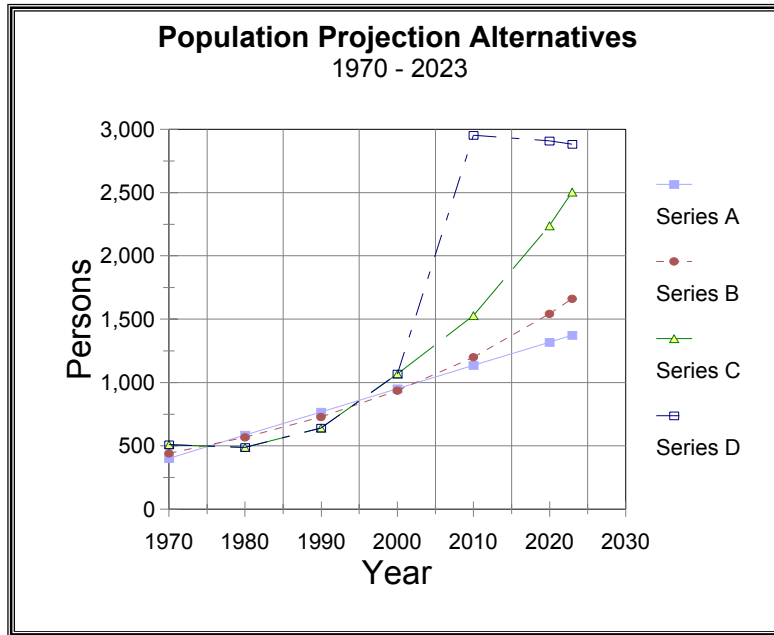
Series C was produced using the population growth model used by the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center. This series projected the most rapid growth rate, based on a growth curve derived from a multi-county region.

Series D was based on an examination of vacant land and land uses in the city. It was found that there was limited land that was vacant and unused and/or presently in agriculture or forest that might be re-developed for residential use. The comprehensive plan advisory committee, in consultation with NEGRDC staff, evaluated the developable land, estimated the probable density of housing units, and projected a probable population per household (see "Households"). From these data, the population of Hoschton at build-out was calculated. Note that the land area of the city is expected to be built out before 2010 and thereafter the population is projected to decline slightly as household size decreases.

Series D was selected by the committee as the most probable scenario for population growth in the future. For Hoschton to grow to more than the projected population either the city would have to annex additional land or the land use mix in the community would have to differ from what is planned.

Year	Historical	Series A	Series B	Series C	Series D
1970	509	403	442	509	509
1980	490	586	568	490	490
1990	642	770	729	642	642
2000	1,070	953	936	1,070	1,070
2010		1,137	1,202	1,530	2,955
2020		1,320	1,543	2,240	2,909
2023		1,375	1,663	2,507	2,882
Sources: U.S. Census, 1970 – 2000; NEGRDC, 2003					

Figure 2



Households

Table 5 shows the historical number of households and average household size in Hoschton from 1970 through 2000. It also shows three alternative projections of household size. Figure 3 displays these alternatives in graphical form. Table 5A shows the change in household size in Hoschton in comparison to other areas.

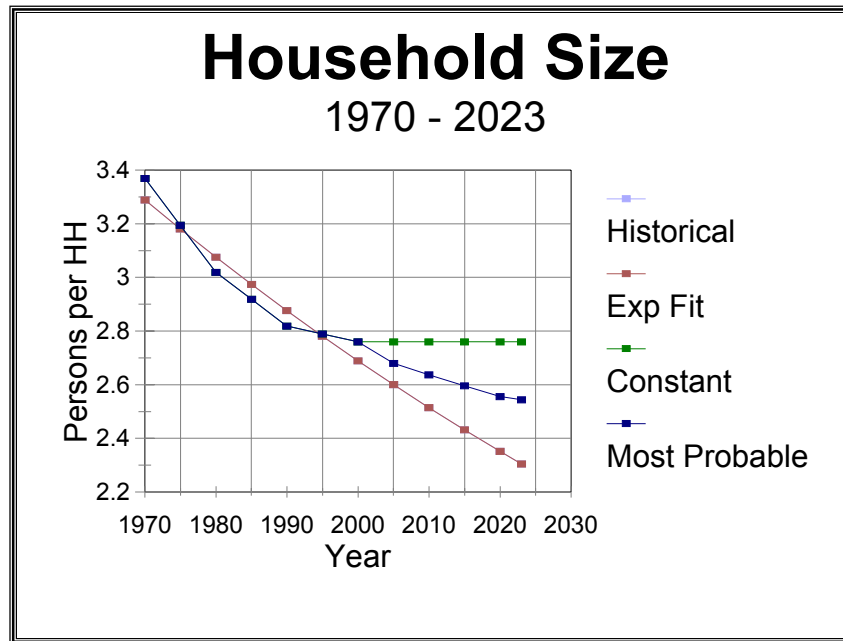
Household sizes in both the United States and Georgia have declined in the past three decades, due to a higher percentage of single-person households, an older population profile, and a trend toward smaller families. The trend is reflected in Hoschton. In Hoschton, the trend is partially offset by the in-migration of middle-aged persons in the prime employment years, which tend to be the most mobile portion of the population and who also tend to have children in the household. Hoschton has larger households than the state, region, or Jackson County, and the household size has not declined as rapidly as the household sizes of the region and state.

The advisory committee considered three projections of household size. One possibility considered was to assume that household size would remain constant. This seemed unlikely. The second series fit an exponential curve to the historical data (which proved a much better statistical fit than a linear regression). This method assumes that the trend seen in the past three decades will continue through the plan horizon (2023). The practical limit of one person per household, however, imposes a restriction on this method. It seemed unlikely to the committee that the decline in household size would continue for the next two decades. The third method, therefore, was to calculate the mid point between the regression line and the constant value. This is a very approximate way of projecting household size, but it seemed to be the most probable series. This series was chosen by the committee and was used to calculate population projections based on build out of developable land (see "Population Projections").

Table 5					
Households In Hoschton, 1970 - 2023					
	Households	HH Size			
Year		Historical	Exp Fit	Constant	Most Probable
1970	151	3.37	3.29	3.37	3.37
1975	160	3.20	3.18	3.20	3.20
1980	168	3.02	3.08	3.02	3.02
1985	198	2.92	2.97	2.92	2.92
1990	228	2.82	2.88	2.82	2.82
1995	228	2.79	2.78	2.79	2.79
2000	388	2.76	2.69	2.76	2.76
2005	738		2.60	2.76	2.68
2010	1138		2.52	2.76	2.64
2015	1138		2.43	2.76	2.60
2020	1138		2.35	2.76	2.56
2023	1138		2.31	2.76	2.54
Sources: U.S. Census, 1970 – 2000; NEGRDC, 2003					

Table 5A				
Comparison of Household Size				
1970 -2000				
	1970	1980	1990	2000
Hoschton	3.4	3.0	2.8	2.8
Jackson	3.1	2.8	2.5	2.7
Region	3.1	2.8	2.5	2.2
State	3.3	2.8	2.7	2.7
U.S.	3.1	2.8	2.6	2.6
Source: U.S. Census				

Figure 3



Age of the Population

The trends and projections for Hoschton’s age distribution are given in Tables 6, 7, and 8 and shown graphically in Figures 4 and 5. The aging of the United States population is well known. During the 1970’s and 1980’s, Hoschton, like many small towns in Northeast Georgia, also experienced net out-migration of certain age groups, primarily the middle-aged persons of prime employment age. The in-migration of middle-aged persons, many with children, has caused an increase in certain age groups in the late 1980’s and 1990’s. However, too much attention should not be attached to fluctuations in these figures because the size of the population in Hoschton is small.

Projections of the age distribution were made by performing a linear regression analysis on the percentage of the population in each age group over time and then multiplying the resulting percentage by the total projected population. The median age was projected by performing a linear regression on the historical data for median age. In summary, Hoschton can expect its population to become older on average, and to have a higher percentage of persons 55-64 and 65 and over in the population.

Age Group	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000
0-4	44	31	18	33	47	62	77
5-14	129	114	99	103	107	145	182
15-24	75	83	91	92	93	112	130
25-34	57	50	43	83	122	139	155
35-44	58	67	75	73	70	121	171
45-54	47	50	52	64	76	104	131
55-64	54	56	57	52	47	79	111
65 +	48	51	54	67	80	97	113

Sources: U.S. Census, 1970 - 2000; NEGRDC, 2003.

Age Group	1970	1980	1990	2000
0-4	8.6	3.7	7.3	7.2
5-14	25.2	20.2	16.7	17.0
15-24	14.6	18.6	14.5	12.1
25-34	11.1	8.8	19.0	14.5
35-44	11.3	15.3	10.9	16.0
45-54	9.2	10.6	11.8	12.2
55-64	10.5	11.7	7.3	10.4
65 +	9.4	11.0	12.5	10.6

Source: U.S. Census, 1970 - 2000

Table 8 Hoschton Median Age 1970 - 2023	
Year	Median Age
1970	26.4
1975	30.0
1980	33.6
1985	32.4
1990	31.1
1995	32.8
2000	34.5
2005	35.4
2010	36.4
2015	37.4
2020	38.4
2023	39.0
Sources: U.S. Census 1970 – 2000; NEGRDC	

Figure 4

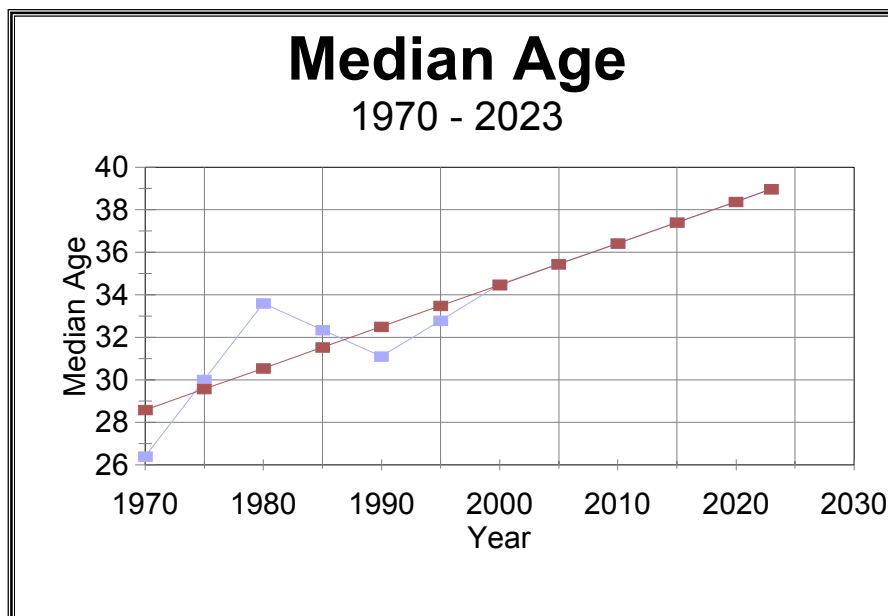


Figure 5

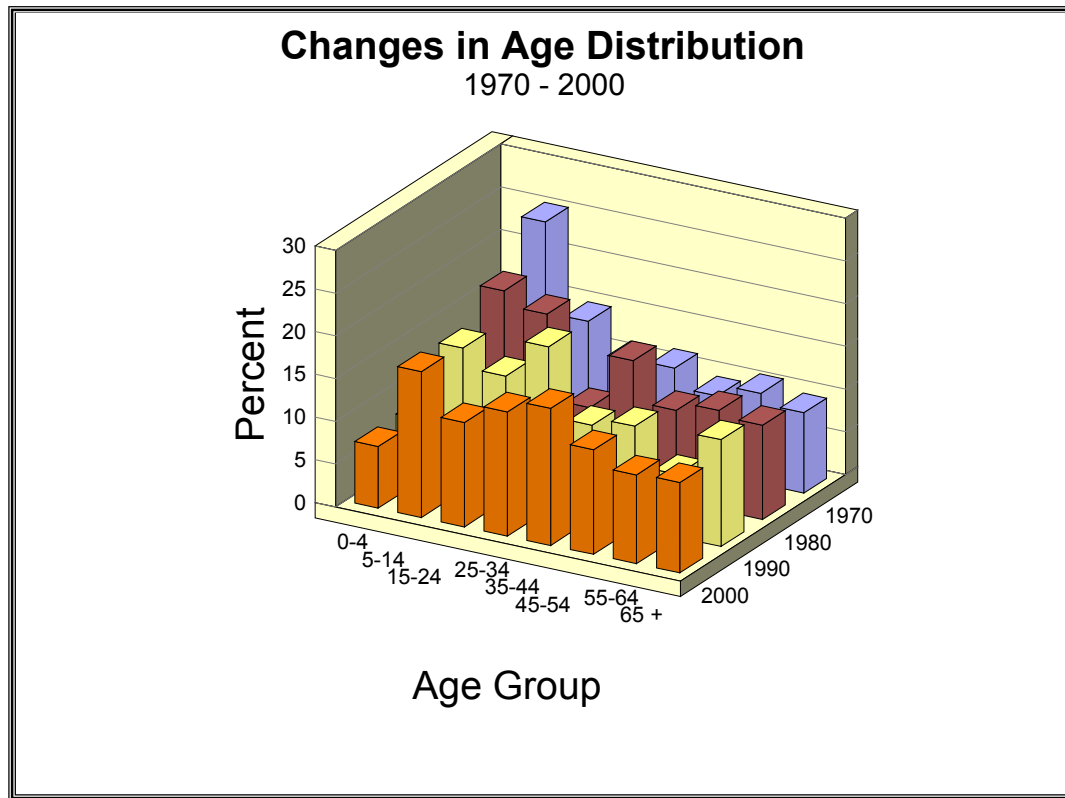


Table 9
Projected Age Distribution by Percent, 2005 - 2023

Age Group	2005	2010	2015	2020	2023
0-4	6.6	6.6	6.5	6.5	6.5
5-14	14.2	12.7	11.3	9.9	9.1
15-24	12.6	12.1	11.5	10.9	10.6
25-34	17.4	18.4	19.4	20.4	21.1
35-44	15.3	15.8	16.2	16.7	17.0
45-54	13.1	13.6	14.1	14.6	14.9
55-64	9.0	8.8	8.5	8.3	8.1
65 +	11.9	12.1	12.4	12.6	12.8

Source: Linear regression of distribution over time, NEGRDC, 2003.

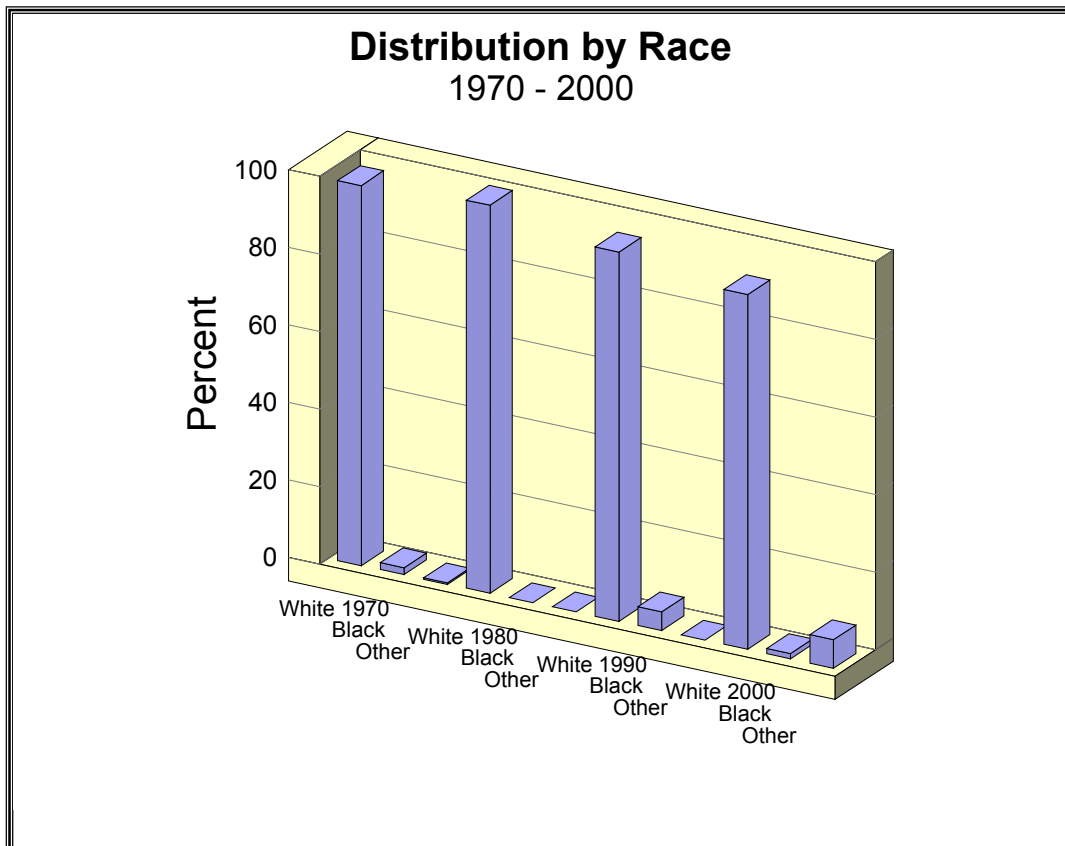
Racial Distribution of the Population

Table 10 shows the number and percent of Hoschton’s population by race from 1970 through 2000. The town is predominantly white, but racial diversity has increased over the past three decades. Note that the 2000 Census was the first to allow people to indicate their race as “more than one race.” Those figures have been included in the “Other” racial category in Table 10, and these persons account for most of the increase in that category from 1990 to 2000. Hoschton has less racial diversity, measured as percent non-white population, than Jackson County, the region, or the state. However, Hoschton’s percentage of non-white population is slowly approaching Jackson County’s average.

Table 10 Racial Distribution of the Population, 1970 - 2000												
	1970			1980			1990			2000		
	White	Black	Other	White	Black	Other	White	Black	Other	White	Black	Other
Hoschton	448	61	0	431	58	0	577	58	7	999	52	19
Percent	97.9	1.8	0.3	100.0	0.0	0.0	95.2	4.8	0.0	91.4	1.3	7.3
Jackson Percent	87.2	12.8	0.0	89.1	10.9	0.0	89.8	9.7	0.5	89.0	7.8	2.2
Georgia Percent	73.9	25.9	0.2	73.2	26.6	0.2	72.3	26.9	0.8	65.5	28.7	5.8

Source: U.S. Census, 1970 - 2000

Figure 6



Income of the Population

Table 11 and Table 12 show some indicators of income for Hoschton in comparison with Jackson County and the state as a whole. Very few conclusions can be drawn from the data due to the small sample size of households in Hoschton. However, in general the data show that while Hoschton has a per capita income only slightly higher than the state, it has a significantly higher median household income. The household income data in Table 11 reveal that the city has a higher percentage of incomes above \$75,000 than either the state or the county although its middle-income households are below or about the same as the state's and county's.

Income Groups	Hoschton	Jackson County	Georgia
< \$10,000	11.9	10.8	10.1
\$10,000 - \$14,999	5.8	6.7	5.9
\$15,000 - \$24,999	11.3	13.4	12.3
\$25,000 - \$34,999	6.3	12.7	12.6
\$35,000 - \$49,999	14.5	17.9	16.7
\$50,000 - \$74,999	21.9	21.7	19.7
\$75,000 - \$99,999	13.2	8.8	10.4
\$100,000 - \$149,999	8.7	5.2	7.8
\$150,000 and above	6.3	2.6	4.6

Source: 2000 Census.

	1969	1974	1979	1984	1989	1994	1999
Per Capita Income							
Hoschton	NA	NA	7,824	8,249	8,674	15,545	22,416
Jackson County	5,619	6,087	6,555	7,442	8,328	13,068	17,808
Georgia	6,827	7,298	7,769	9,099	10,429	15,792	21,154
Median HH Income							
Hoschton	NA	NA	21,624	19,891	19,510	35,068	50,625
Jackson County			18,944	20,792	22,640	24,339	40,349
Georgia			22,358	25,261	28,164	35,299	42,433

Source: 2000 Census

Educational Attainment of the Population

Table 13 compares the educational attainment of Hoschton’s adult population with the nation, the state, and the Northeast Georgia region as well as with Hoschton’s past educational attainment in 1990 (the only previous Census for which these data are available for Hoschton). In general, Hoschton’s population is better educated than the state as a whole and the region. Hoschton has a lower percentage of college graduates than the region or the nation, but exceeds the state in this regard. Hoschton’s population has shown significant improvement in educational attainment since 1990, probably as a result of persons with more educational attainment moving in, the passing away of generations who lacked higher educational opportunities, and better programs for encouraging completion of high school and matriculation to post-secondary schools.

Hoschton does not operate a school system, and the city is located entirely in Jackson County. Table 14 shows some measures of educational attainment for Jackson County, the Northeast Georgia region and the state. The small differences between Jackson County schools and the region and state averages are not significant. Jackson County schools perform at about the level of the region average and the state.

	Elem 0-8	HS 1-3	HS Grad	Coll 1-3	Coll Grad+
Nation	7.6	13.8	28.7	20.4	29.5
State	8.3	18.2	35.6	20.6	17.2
Region	8.5	16.9	32.6	18.1	23.9
Jackson County	11.5	20.5	35.5	16.9	11.7
Hoschton, 2000	7.6	13.2	35.8	22.1	21.3
Hoschton, 1990	18.7	27.8	29.1	11.7	12.7
Source: U.S. Census, 1990 and 2000.					

	Class Completion 1997 - 2001 (%)	% of Graduating Class Attending Post-secondary Schools, 2001	Dropout Rates, Grades 9 - 12	% Passing All Four Graduation Tests on First Attempt
Region Average	69.3	42	6.9	62
State	71.1	45	6.4	65
Jackson County	74.4	41	9.7	67
Source: Georgia County Guide, 2002.				

Chapter 3: Economic Development

Introduction

Economic development, defined by the International Economic Development Council, is:

“The process of creating wealth through the mobilization of human, capital, physical and natural resources to generate marketable goods and services. The economic developer’s role is to influence the process for the benefit of the community through expanding job opportunities and the tax base.”

Or simply put, it is the process of creating and maintaining a stable local economy. A key element of economic development, not mentioned within the definition, is the long-term requirement of maintaining the stability of the economy. It is not an overnight, nor a static process. The local economy must be diverse and capable of adapting to changes in regional, national and international markets.

Purpose

This element provides local government with an inventory and assessment of the city’s economic base, labor force characteristics, local economic development resources, and a framework to promote change within the local economy. The inventory identifies trends and characteristics of the local labor force, the economic base of the community, and local economic development programs, tools and resources. The assessment determines the adequacy of the local economy and identifies areas of strength and weakness for the local government to address in implementing its strategy.

There is a deficiency of data at the municipal level, and many datasets are derived from county level information.

Many forces affecting Hoschton’s economy are beyond the control of the local government. However, there are factors that the local government can affect and manage to direct the city towards its economic goals. This element examines the evolution of the local economy over the past decade and addresses the city’s strategy to develop a sustainable economic environment that achieves the following overall goals:

- Job Creation and Retention
- Downtown Preservation and Revitalization
- Increase in Tax Revenue Through Economic Development Initiatives

Organization

The outline of this element follows the minimum planning standards set forth by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The first section examines the economic base of the county and discusses employment and earnings by sector, average weekly wages, derivation of personal income, and major and unique economic activities that have occurred in the county since the previous plan update. Data is derived from census records, State Department of Labor, the City of Hoschton, and Woods and Poole Economics, Inc. forecasts.

The second section provides an inventory of the local labor force identifying occupational statistics, employment status, unemployment rates, and commuting patterns. Data sources include census records and State Department of Labor reports.

The third section inventories all local economic development resources including agencies, programs and tools that help facilitate economic development throughout the county. This information has been obtained from the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center (NEGRDC) and the City of Hoschton.

The fourth section discusses potential constraints that may affect the implementation of the economic development strategies. Each of these issues are discussed in terms of the impediments they pose on the city's ability to implement the plan.

The final section is a description of the needs and goals identified by the city and the policy measures required to achieve those goals. It also presents an assessment of the existing economy analyzing the economic base, labor force and economic development programs. The analysis captures the city's strengths and weaknesses and presents a strategy for achieving and maintaining economic stability.

Economic Base

A community's economic base refers to two main economic sectors of a community and their ability to serve non-local (referred to as the basic sector) and local (referred to as the non-basic sector) markets. The sectors are linked in two ways. First, the basic sector purchases goods and services directly from the non-basic sector. Second, basic sector employees purchase goods and services from the non-basic sector.

Conventional economic base theory discusses the notion of a multiplier effect. It theorizes that an increase in basic industry income generates an increase in total income for the community because of the extensive linkages between the basic and non-basic sectors. Using this theory, the industries most crucial to economic growth and stability are those that produce goods and services sold outside the community.

This section inventories both the basic and non-basic sectors of the Hoschton economy. The inventory includes information on employment and earnings, wages, personal income, and major and unique economic activities. Further analysis is provided in the final section, "Needs, Goals and Local Assessment."

Notes:

- All census data referring to employment represents the employment status of Hoschton residents.
- Information contained in the Economic Analysis section represents all employment located in Hoschton.
- Forecasts were done on five-year intervals beginning with 2000 census data and extending outwards to 2025.
- All forecasts beyond the year 2010 are reported as constant because the city feels that it will have built out by this time with no additional space for residential expansion without further annexations or major shifts in development densities.

Employment and Earnings

Sector Employment

Much of the following analysis refers to the term "sector". The federal government classifies local industries and businesses into nine major industrial sectors as follows:

- Farm/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting/Mining
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Transportation, Communication, Public Utilities
- Wholesale Trade
- Retail Trade
- Finance, Insurance, Real Estate
- Services
- Government

Each sector is a compilation of the full range of economic activities relating to that sector, as defined by the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS formerly the Standard Industrial Classification System, or SIC).

The nature of Hoschton's economy has changed drastically over the past century. The Hosch brothers established the first store in Hoschton in 1865. Much of the early commercial activity in the town was associated with the completion of the Gainesville/Jefferson/Social Circle railroad, which ran through Hoschton, in 1882.

The town's main economic role in the late 1800's and into the beginning of the twentieth century was as an agricultural market, primarily cotton and fruit and vegetables.

Hoschton developed as a railroad town and has retained its historic rail depot as a community landmark. The city's downtown square developed across from the depot and provided the center of the community's commercial activity. Much of the historic city square remains and houses a number of local businesses as well as the local government offices and police department.

Refer to Table and Figure 1 for numerical data on Hoschton's employment totals and to Table and Figure 2 for state employment totals.

Farm/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting/Mining

The farming sector can be defined as: *"all establishments such as farms, orchards, greenhouses, and nurseries primarily engaged in the production of crops, plants, vines, trees (excluding forestry operations), and specialties such as sod, bulbs, and flower seed. It also includes all establishments such as ranches, dairies, feedlots, egg production facilities, and poultry hatcheries primarily engaged in the keeping, grazing or feeding of cattle, hogs, sheep, goats, poultry of all kinds, and special animals such as horses, bees, pets and fish in captivity."* Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.

The Forestry/Fishing/Hunting sectors can be defined as: *"establishments primarily engaged in performing soil preparation, crop services, veterinary services, farm labor and management, and horticultural services. Forestry includes establishments engaged in the operation of timber tracts, tree farms, forest nurseries, and related activities such as reforestation. Fisheries include commercial fishing (including shellfish) and commercial hunting and trapping."* Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.

The Mining sector can be defined as: *"establishments primarily engaged in the extraction, exploration, and development of coal, oil, natural gas, metallic minerals (such as iron and copper), and nonmetallic minerals (such as stone and sand). Mining does not include refining, crushing, or otherwise preparing mining products; this activity is classified as manufacturing."* Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.

Hoschton's agricultural prominence began to wane in the mid-1900's. Residential development, associated with the 1990's, has all but eliminated productive agricultural land within the town's boundary. By 1990 local employment in these industries represented only 6.2% of total employment. This figure decreased further in 2000, representing only 0.6% of the local labor force.

Construction

The construction sector is defined as: *"establishments engaged in building new structures and roads, alterations, additions, reconstruction, installation, and repairs. It includes general contractors engaged in building residential and non-residential structures; contractors engaged in heavy construction, such as bridges, roads, tunnels, and pipelines; and special trade construction, such as plumbing, electrical work, masonry, and carpentry. Employment is counted at the fixed place of business where establishment-type records are maintained and not at the job site. Establishments engaged in managing construction projects are classified under services. Establishments engaged in selling and installations of construction material are generally classified under trade, except for materials such as installed elevators and sprinkler system. The installation of pre-fabricated building materials is included in construction."* Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.

Construction activity is generally cyclical and dependent on a variety of external variables such as, interest rates and housing demand. Also a factor is the increased mobility and specialization of construction companies, enabling them to compete in an expanded market. While the city saw an overall increase in construction employment from 40 in 1990 to 47 in 2000, the overall employment percentage decreased from 13.1% to 9.5%.

Manufacturing

The manufacturing sector can be defined as: *“establishments engaged in the mechanical or chemical transformation of materials or substances into new products. Included in manufacturing are establishments engaged in assembling component parts in or associated with structures, and those engaged in blending materials such as lubricating oils or liquor. Broadly defined, manufacturing industries include: food processing; tobacco products; textile mill products; apparel; wood products; furniture; paper; printing and publishing; chemicals; petroleum refining; rubber and plastics; leather, aluminum; machinery, including computers, office equipment, and engines; electronics and electrical equipment; transportation equipment; instruments; and miscellaneous industries, such as jewelry, musical instruments, and toys.” Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.*

The manufacturing sector was the largest employer in Hoschton in 1990. Over the past 10 years employment levels have consistently declined as the economy has shifted away from the traditional manufacturing industries. The 1990 employment figures reported that 63 employees were engaged in manufacturing activity, or 20.7%. The 2000 numbers report a greater number employed in the sector, 72, but this number now represents only 14.5% of the total

Transportation, Communication, Public Utilities

The transportation, communication, public utilities sector can be defined as: *“establishments providing, to the general public or to other business enterprises, passenger and freight transportation, communications services, or electricity, gas, steam, water, or sanitary services, and all establishments of the Postal Service.” Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.*

This sector has increased since 1990 and currently employs 40 persons, or 8.0% of all employees. As public utilities expand to serve the increased population and the Information and Communication industries continue to grow this sector should continue to expand.

Wholesale Trade

The wholesale trade sector can be defined as: *“establishments primarily engaged in selling merchandise to retailers, industry, other wholesalers or brokers. The merchandise sold by wholesalers includes all goods used by institutions such as schools and hospitals, as well as virtually all goods sold at the retail level. The three main types of wholesalers are merchant wholesalers; sales branches of manufacturing, mining, or farm companies; and agents, merchandise or commodity brokers, and commission merchants.” Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.*

Wholesale trade employment figures represent a small component of Hoschton's industrial sectors. The location adjacent to Braselton, an attractive wholesale trade location, diminishes the attractiveness of Hoschton as a warehousing location. Employment totals increased slightly from 13, representing 4.3%, in 1990 to 21, representing 4.2% in 2000.

Retail Trade

The retail trade sector can be defined as: *“establishments engaged in selling merchandise for personal or household consumption and rendering services incidental to the sale of goods. Buying goods for resale to the consumer is a characteristic of retail trade establishments that distinguishes them from agricultural and extractive industries. Retail establishments include hardware stores, garden supply stores, and mobile home dealers; department stores; food stores, including supermarkets, convenience stores, butchers, bakeries, and fruit stands; automobile dealers; gasoline service stations; apparel and accessory stores; furniture and home furnishing stores, including electronics and home appliances; eating and drinking places.” Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.*

The level of retail activity has increased significantly over the past ten years, keeping pace with the rapid population growth. Retail trade now represents the second largest employment sector in Hoschton. In 2000 retail trade employed 77 persons, representing 15.5%. This has increased from a total of 31 employees in 1990, to 77 in 2000. The overall percentage increased from 10.2% in 1990 to 15.5% in 2000.

Finance, Insurance, Real Estate (FIRE)

The FIRE sector can be defined as: *“establishments, depository institutions, such as commercial banks, savings and loans, and foreign banks; credit institutions; holding companies not engaged in operation; investment companies; brokers and dealers in securities and commodity contracts; security and commodity exchanges; carriers of all types of insurance; insurance agents and insurance brokers; real estate operators including operators of nonresidential facilities, apartments, other residential properties, mobile home parks and railroad properties; real estate agents and managers; title offices; and developers not engaged in construction.” Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.*

The FIRE sector has increased from 16 employees in 1990, representing 5.2%, to 25 employees reported in 2000, representing 5.0%.

Services

The service sector can be defined as: *“establishments primarily engaged in providing services for individuals, businesses, governments, and other organizations. Service industries include: hotel and other lodging places; personal services; business services; automobile repair and automobile services; entertainment services; health services; legal services; education services; social services provided in privately owned establishments; private museums and zoos; membership organizations; professional services, and public relations; and private household employment.” Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.*

Hoschton’s economy has reacted as many others around the nation with employment patterns shifting from the manufacturing to the services sector. In 2000 services represented the largest employment sector with 184 employees, representing 36.0%, compared with 49, representing 16.1%, in 1990.

Public Administration

The public administration sector can be defined as: *“all government workers regardless of their establishment classification includes executive offices and legislative bodies; courts; public order and safety; correctional institutions; taxation; administration and delivery of human resource programs such as health, education and public assistance services; housing and urban development programs; environmental programs; regulators, including air traffic controllers and public service commissions; and other government agencies.” Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.*

The population increase in Hoschton has resulted in a corresponding increase in government employees needed to adequately serve the local constituents. Employment increased from 16, representing 5.2%, in 1990 to 28, representing 5.6%, in 2000.

Table 1
City of Hoschton Employment by Sector 1990-2025

Category	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	305	394	497	686	1,408	1,408	1,408	1,408
Farm/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting/Mining	19	12	3	4	7	7	7	7
Construction	40	52	47	65	84	84	84	84
Manufacturing	63	81	72	99	127	127	127	127
TCU	25	32	40	55	141	141	141	141
Wholesale Trade	13	17	21	29	56	56	56	56
Retail Trade	51	66	77	106	218	218	218	218
FIRE	16	21	25	35	77	77	77	77
Services	62	92	184	254	598	598	598	598
Government	16	21	28	39	99	99	99	99

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; NEGRDC Calculations

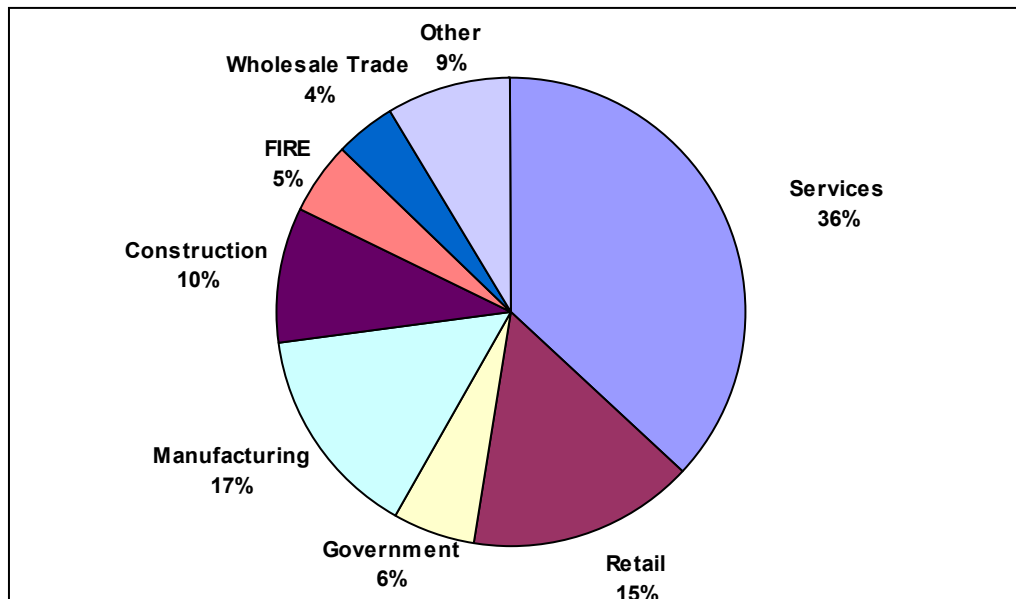
*TCU refers to the Transportation/Warehousing, Communication/Information, and Public Utilities sectors.

*FIRE refers to the Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate sector.

*Services aggregates the Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services; Educational, health and social services; Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services; and Other services.

*Forecasted totals are based on shifting employment percentage shares for each of the sectors based on economic trends and computed by multiplying average employees per household by number of households illustrated in Chapter 5.

Figure 1
City of Hoschton 2000 Employment by Sector (%)



*Other combines employment figures of the Farm/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting and Mining, and Transportation, Communication, and Public Utilities Sectors.

*Government includes Federal Civilian, Federal Military, and State and Local levels of government.

Table 2
Georgia Employment by Sector 1990-2025 (X 100)

Category	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	36,906	42,293	48,405	52,391	56,257	60,121	63,898	67,512
Farm/Forestry/Fishing, Hunting/Mining	1,164	1,129	1,361	1,397	1,432	1,468	1,505	1,540
Construction	2,123	2,361	2,835	3,020	3,181	3,329	3,472	3,613
Manufacturing	5,725	6,034	6,156	6,299	6,429	6,537	6,614	6,659
TCU	2,163	2,419	2,893	3,162	3,405	3,626	3,815	3,965
Wholesale Trade	2,282	2,425	2,835	3,100	3,347	3,594	3,835	4,064
Retail Trade	6,066	7,249	8,147	8,797	9,430	10,047	10,631	11,165
FIRE	2,449	2,692	3,208	3,457	3,694	3,921	4,131	4,316
Services	8,766	11,254	13,979	15,706	17,441	19,260	21,129	23,010
Federal Civilian Government	1,030	983	927	924	925	928	931	936
Federal Military Government	907	947	948	947	946	945	945	944
State and Local Government	4,230	4,699	5,116	5,581	6,027	6,464	6,890	7,300

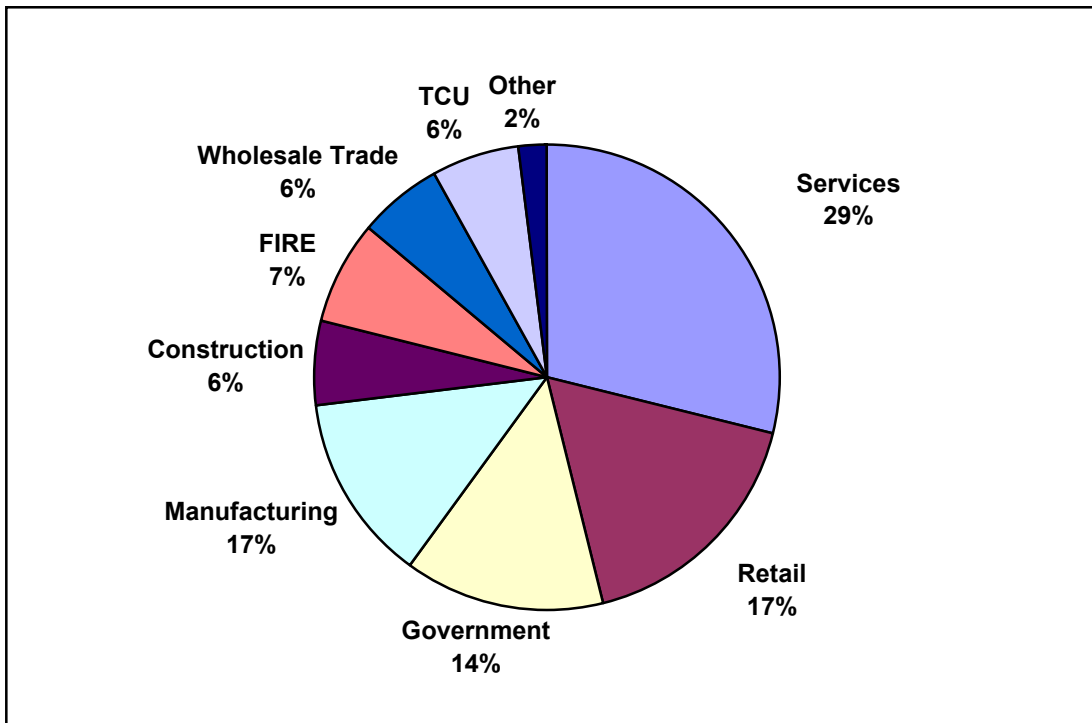
Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

*TCU refers to the Transportation/warehousing, Communication/information, and Public Utilities sectors.

*FIRE refers to the Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate sector.

*Services aggregates the Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services; Educational, health and social services; Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services; and Other services.

Figure 2
Georgia 2000 Employment by Sector (%)



*Other combines employment figures of the Farm/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting and Mining Sectors.

*Government includes Federal Civilian, Federal Military, and State and Local levels of government.

The most striking differences between state and local employment percentages relate to the government and services sectors. Because Hoschton is a relatively small city it does not have the same level of government services illustrated within the state figures. Also the lack of federal and state government offices within the city contribute to the low percentage.

The difference in the service sector illustrates its importance in Hoschton's labor force. The highly educated and mobile labor force is increasingly employed in professional service occupations, generally paying above average wages.

The contrast in percentages for the wholesale trade sector is better defined by Hoschton's proximity to Braselton. Braselton's location adjacent to the Interstate-85 corridor provides greater opportunity for wholesale trade industries to locate there rather than in Hoschton.

Sector Earnings

Earnings represent the total of wages, salaries and other earned income paid to employees of businesses and industries in a given geographic area. This section examines trends in sector earnings for both the city and state, and forecasts earnings for each sector through the year 2025. Refer to Table and Figure 3 for town earnings and 4 for state data.

Since 1990 the total earnings reported by local industries and businesses in Hoschton has grown by 109% from \$6.056 million in 1990 to \$12.644 million in 2000 (dollar figures are reported in 2000 constant dollars). This figure is greater than the 63% increase in total employment over the same time period. On average, Hoschton employees are earning higher wages today than they were in 1990.

The two leading sectors in earnings percentage for the city are the services (35%) and manufacturing (16%). The two combined represent over half of the total earnings. Both sectors are expected to continue providing the majority of earnings, however the reliance on manufacturing earnings should decrease slightly as the services sector continues to expand within the city.

Overall, the city reflects similar percentages as the state based in large part because of the high percentage of educated workers residing in Hoschton. The higher percentage of earnings reflected in the government sector for the state is a result of the lack of state and federal government offices in Hoschton.

There was no readily available municipal data to determine overall earnings. To determine these figures, employment figures were multiplied by the average weekly wage for each sector determined for Jackson County to aggregate the municipal earnings.

Table 3
City of Hoschton Earnings by Sector 1990-2025 (X 1,000)

Category	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	6,791	10,024	12,644	17,453	35,821	35,821	35,821	35,821
Farm/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting/Mining	462	227	56	76	132	132	132	132
Construction	1,129	1,499	1,356	1,877	2,424	2,424	2,424	2,424
Manufacturing	1,416	2,205	1,962	2,697	3,459	3,459	3,459	3,459
TCU	638	1,167	557	2,007	5,146	5,146	5,146	5,146
Wholesale Trade	202	451	1,237	769	1,485	1,485	1,485	1,485
Retail Trade	562	1,058	1,460	1,702	3,503	3,503	3,503	3,503
FIRE	371	521	620	868	1,910	1,910	1,910	1,910
Services	1,576	2,295	4,593	6,340	14,925	14,925	14,925	14,925
Government	332	602	802	1,117	2,837	2,837	2,837	2,837

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; NEGRDC Calculations

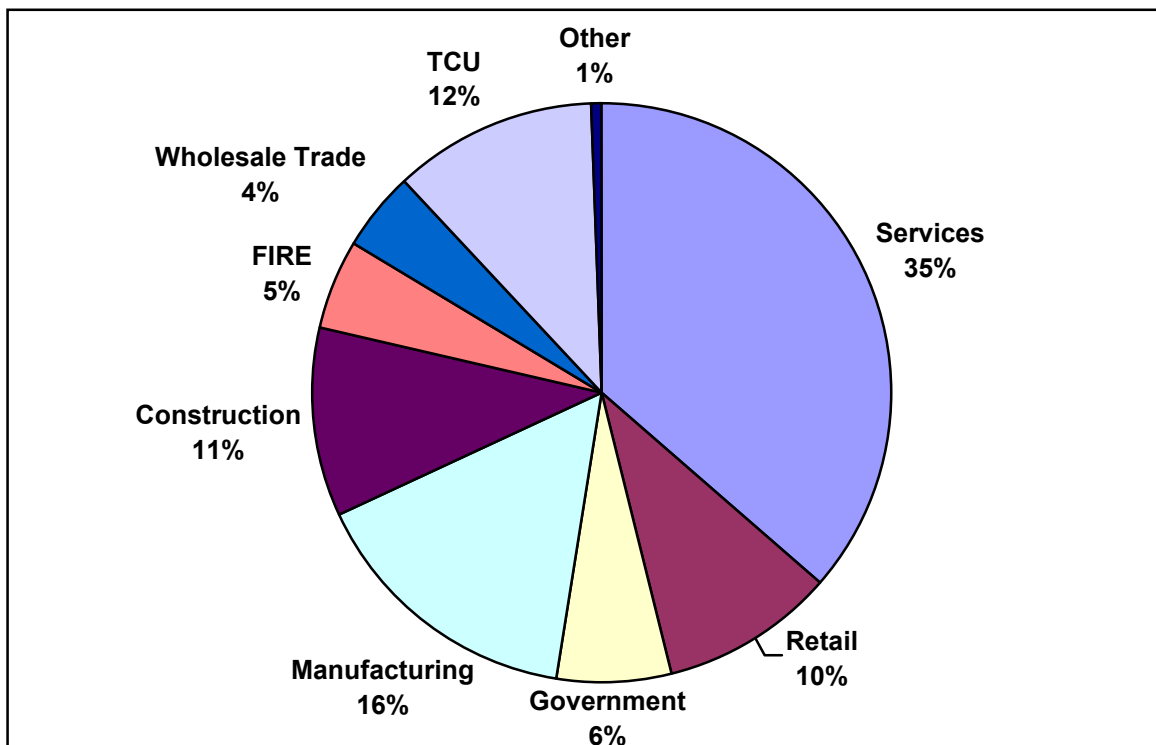
*TCU refers to the Transportation/warehousing, Communication/information, and Public Utilities sectors.

*FIRE refers to the Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate sector.

*Services aggregates the Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services; Educational, health and social services; Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services; and Other services.

*Forecasted totals are derived by multiplying average earnings per employee by the forecasted number of employees per sector.

Figure 3
City of Hoschton 2000 Earnings by Sector (%)



*Other refers to earnings from the Farm/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting and Mining Sectors.

*Government includes Federal Civilian, Federal Military, and State and Local levels of government

Table 4
Georgia Earnings by Sector 1990-2025 (X 100,000)

Category	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	102,642	123,514	157,037	178,093	199,848	222,606	245,945	269,434
Farm/Forestry/Fishing Hunting/Mining	2,240	2,754	2,846	3,123	3,413	3,719	4,039	4,369
Construction	5,975	6,661	8,829	9,693	10,490	11,253	11,997	12,728
Manufacturing	17,974	20,801	23,821	25,923	28,002	29,978	31,782	33,368
TCU	8,981	11,644	15,095	17,259	19,388	21,490	23,473	25,358
Wholesale Trade	9,091	10,085	13,433	15,109	16,737	18,399	20,049	21,651
Retail Trade	9,414	11,217	13,631	15,087	16,557	18,031	19,472	20,843
FIRE	6,601	8,476	13,360	14,277	16,258	18,271	20,247	22,117
Services	22,532	30,045	42,216	50,430	59,371	69,323	80,183	91,809
Federal Civilian Government	4,781	5,147	5,322	5,498	5,670	5,915	6,139	6,372
Federal Military Government	2,765	3,080	3,305	3,452	3,602	3,755	3,912	4,071
State and Local Government	12,287	13,603	16,179	18,243	20,332	22,473	34,651	26,846

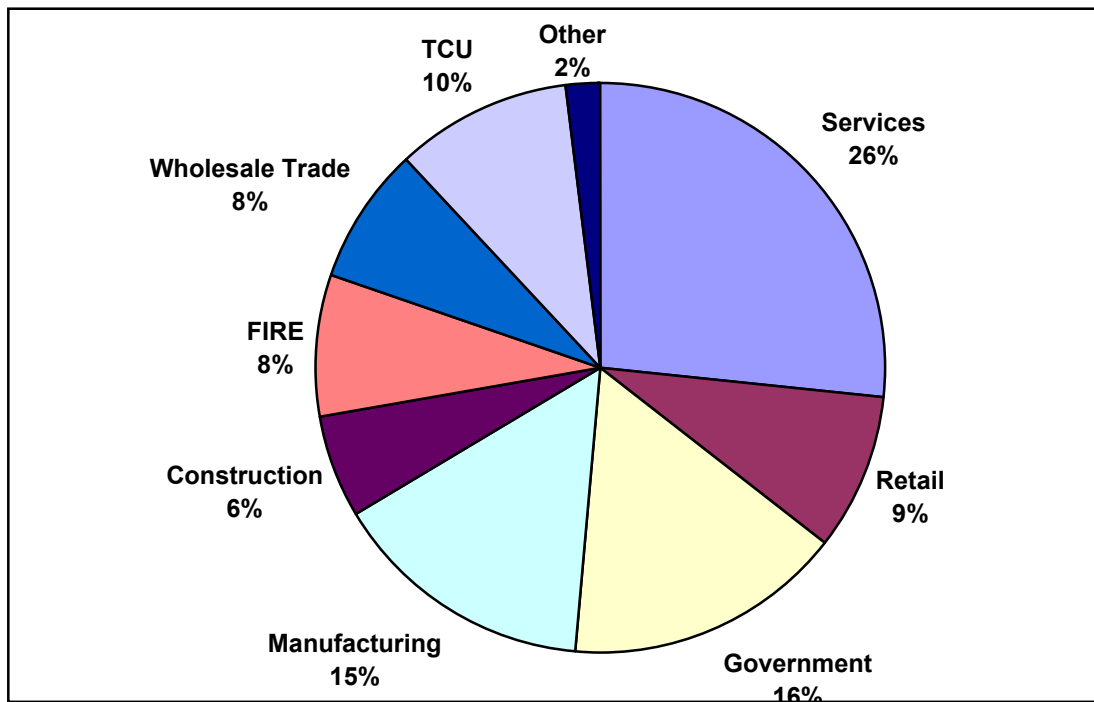
Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

*TCU refers to the Transportation/warehousing, Communication/information, and Public Utilities sectors.

*FIRE refers to the Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate sector.

*Services aggregates the Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services; Educational, health and social services; Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services; and Other services.

Figure 4
Georgia 2000 Earnings by Sector (%)



*Other combines employment figures of the Farm/Forestry/Fishing/Hunting and Mining Sectors.

*Government includes Federal Civilian, Federal Military, and State and Local levels of government.

Average Weekly Wages

Another variable to consider when analyzing the local economy is the average weekly wage paid by industrial sector. There is no readily available data at the municipal level, so for sake of comparison the Jackson County averages are used.

Since 1990 the average weekly wage for all industries in Jackson County increased by 16.1%, discounting for inflation, to \$497.00. During the same time frame the state average weekly wage increased by 55%, discounting for inflation, to \$658.00. See Table 5 for a detailed state and county comparison.

The overall percentage increase in Jackson County is well below the state increase, and on average local wages are well below state averages. However, as we have already seen in the section on Sector Employment, Hoschton residents are increasingly employed in higher wage occupations because of the in-migration of a highly educated workforce since 1990. This will be further illustrated in the section addressing the Labor Force.

Of note is that the largest employment sector, services, is decreasing in terms of average weekly wages. The high education levels of the local workforce indicate that local service sector employees are earning higher average weekly wages than Jackson County averages.

Table 5
State and County Comparison
of Average Weekly Wages by Sector

Category	County			State		
	1990	1995	2000	1990	1995	2000
All Industries	428	449	497	424	509	658
Agricultural Services	467	394	363	276	322	403
Mining	-	-	-	589	734	879
Construction	543	514	555	434	508	655
Manufacturing	432	465	524	450	555	721
TCU	647	682	702	603	737	949
Wholesale Trade	394	463	510	603	729	988
Retail Trade	279	282	309	236	275	350
FIRE	445	406	477	544	693	967
Services	489	596	480	414	501	657
Government	399	411	551	460	533	661
Federal	-	-	-	543	666	847
State	-	-	-	451	493	588
Local	399	411	551	387	440	549

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Sources of Personal Income

Sources of personal income are indicators of how a community obtains its wealth. Table 6 and Figure 5 illustrate actual and percentage income figures respectively. Table 7 and Figure 6 chart the same information for the state.

There are five categories used to analyze the sources of personal income. These categories are defined as followed:

1. **Wage and Salary:** Total income earned as compensation for working or rendering services;
2. **Other Labor Income:** Total employer contributions to private pension or worker’s compensation funds;
3. **Proprietor’s Income:** Measures total profits earned from partnerships and proprietorships;
4. **Dividends, Investment, Rent and Interest Income (DIRI):** Total income derived from investments and rental property; and
5. **Transfer Payments:** Total income from payments by the government under a variety of different programs including, Social Security, Unemployment Insurance, Food Stamps, Veterans Benefits, to name a few.

Associated with these categories is a category termed **Residence Adjustment Income (RAI)** that relates to the total income within the community. It is a measure of the personal income of local residents earned outside of the community. A positive number indicates that the amount of income earned outside the county by residents is greater than the amount of income earned inside the county by non-residents. Simply put, there are more people commuting out of the community to work than there are commuting in.

This number is reflected in Table 7 and represents a very small percentage of the total state income due to the fact that the majority of state residents work within the state borders. As urbanized areas continue to expand RAI should expand because of proximities to urban markets outside the state that are not currently within feasible commuting distances.

There is not an RAI figure that relates to Hoschton because of insufficient data at the municipal level. However, because of the number of highly educated residents that are commuting outside of the community to work on a daily basis this number can be reasonably expected to represent the greatest portion of the total earnings. Because of the lack of available data all earnings are reported without an RAI factor.

**Table 6
Hoschton Total Personal Income by Type (X 1,000)**

Category	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total Income	9,743	13,005	25,742	36,406	76,479	76,479	76,479	76,479
Wage and Salary	6,950	9,277	20,773	29,378	61,716	61,716	61,716	61,716
Other	105	140	229	324	680	680	680	680
Proprietor’s	1,357	1,811	1,300	1,839	3,862	3,862	3,862	3,862
DIRI	446	595	718	1,015	2,133	2,133	2,133	2,133
Transfer Payments	560	748	927	1,311	2,754	2,754	2,754	2,754

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

*DIRI: Dividends, Investment, Rent, and Interest

*Categories do not add to the total because of the contributions paid to social insurance programs

*Forecast totals are derived by multiplying the percentage of households earning each income type by the forecasted total of households and the 2000 total earnings per household.

Figure 5
Hoschton Percentage Personal Income by Type

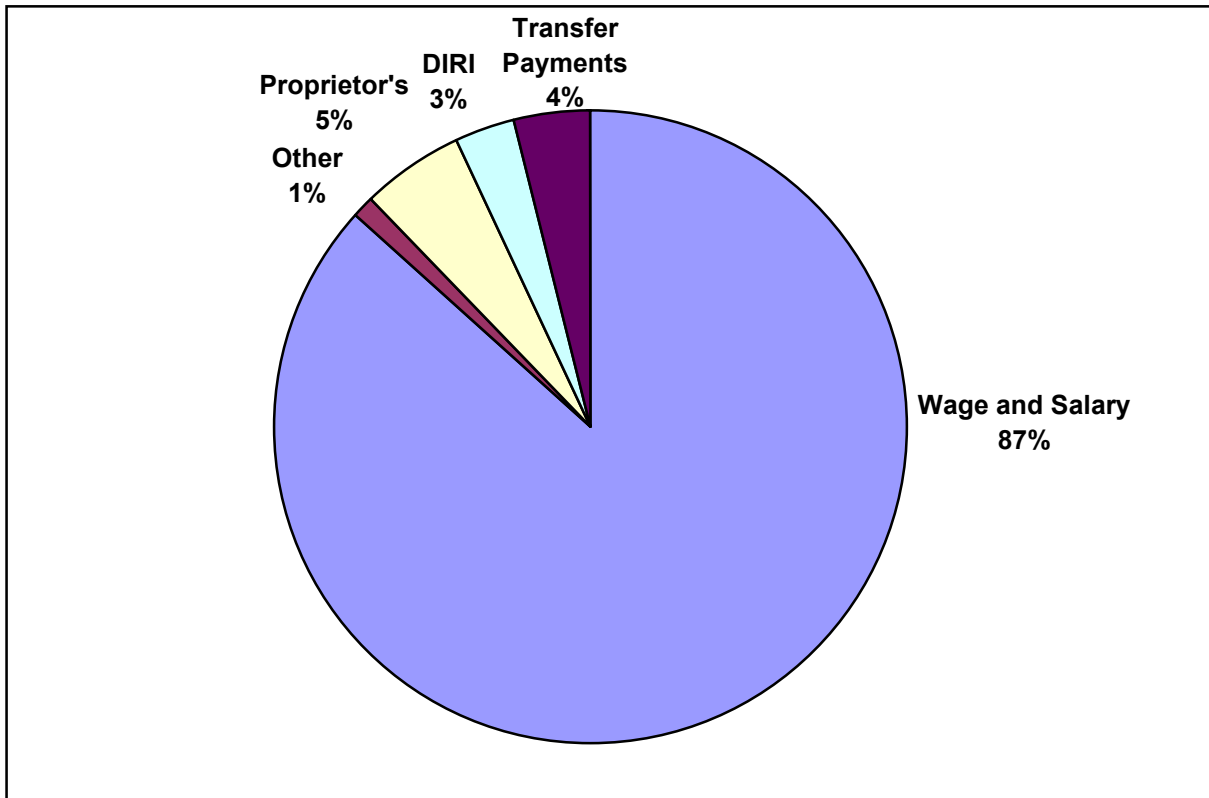


Table 7
Georgia Total Personal Income by Type (X 100,000)

Category	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total Income	134,782	163,230	203,905	231,841	261,193	292,236	324,550	357,693
Wage and Salary	81,356	96,423	124,507	141,630	159,337	177,925	197,065	216,414
Other	11,702	14,092	15,789	17,663	19,551	21,489	23,433	25,344
Proprietor's	9,584	12,999	16,741	18,800	20,960	23,193	25,447	27,675
DIRI	23,367	26,625	32,898	37,038	41,450	46,123	51,043	56,189
Transfer Payments	14,750	20,607	23,416	26,777	30,675	35,210	40,504	46,704
RAI	(136,775)	(245,276)	(331,309)	720,692	1,964,981	3,317,010	4,704,668	6,028,798

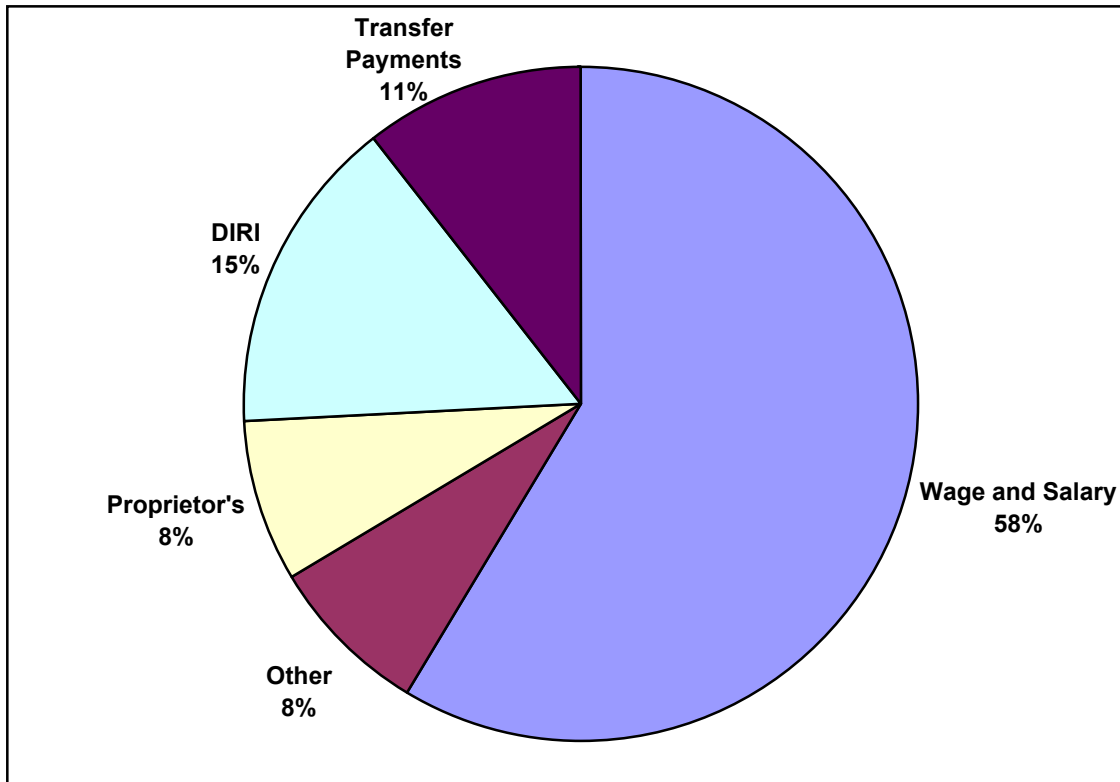
Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

*DIRI: Dividends, Investment, Rent, and Interest

*RAI: Residence Adjusted Income - *() reflects a negative number

*Categories do not add to the total because of the contributions paid to social insurance programs

Figure 6
Georgia Percentage Personal Income by Type



Major Economic Activities

The City currently houses 482 employment opportunities. Its three largest employers are Georgia Foundation, a concrete contracting firm employing 60 people, Precision Medical Inc., a plastics manufacturing firm employing 50 people, and Atlantic Engineering Group, a fiber optic construction firm employing 37 people.

There have been several other small business startups that have located in Hoschton, the majority of which are located within its business and industrial parks.

Hoschton currently has an abundance of developable industrial and commercial zoned land that will continue to attract businesses looking to establish themselves within a vibrant regional economy.

Unique Activities

The tourism sector is often overlooked in economic development strategies; however it can serve as a major stimulant to a local economy. The main purpose of promoting a local tourism industry is to generate revenue in the community through increased expenditures on goods and services by people outside of the community. In essence, it is an effort to attract consumers from outside the local economy to spend their money inside the local economy.

The emergence of West Jackson County as a major tourist destination has provided the region with a steady stream of income generated by the tourism industry. Its geographic location, situated along Interstate 85 and within the Atlanta Metropolitan area, has made it accessible not only to north Georgia residents, but also to out of state tourists as well. Hoschton's ability to capitalize on the increased tourism levels of the region can diversify the town's economic development initiatives.

Hoschton is rich in historic resources and has its historic rail depot centrally located within its downtown core. The depot was rehabilitated as part of a transportation enhancement project in 2002. Further work in the downtown, through the transportation enhancement program, is scheduled increasing the viability of the downtown commercial district and strengthening the local economy.

Labor Force

Employment by Occupation

Table 8 depicts the percentage of total employment by occupational classification for the Census years 1990 and 2000 (1990 data is aggregated in select categories to account for the 2000 classification system). The table offers a comparison between Hoschton, Georgia, and national figures related to occupational characteristics.

The trend in Hoschton since 1990 has been a shift in employment from the manufacturing sector, and other “blue collar” jobs, to the service sector. This trend is mirrored on the state, as well as the national level. The high percentage of *Management, Professional and Related Occupations* in Hoschton illustrate the high education levels of the workforce. As illustrated in the following table, the Hoschton rates are comparable to both state and national averages.

Despite the large decrease in percentage share of the *Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations* between 1990 and 2000, Hoschton continues to maintain rates approximately equal to or exceeding the state and national averages respectively. Hoschton continues to house a healthy manufacturing economy and the location to the metro Atlanta labor market ensures Hoschton residents access to a wide variety of occupations.

Table 8
Employment by Occupation

Occupation	Percentage of Total Employment					
	1990			2000		
	Hoschton	Georgia	U.S.A.	Hoschton	Georgia	U.S.A.
Management, professional, and related occupations	11.1	28.3	30.1	28.2	32.7	33.6
Service occupations	12.6	12.0	13.2	21.3	13.4	14.9
Sales and office occupations	24.6	28.3	28.1	24.9	26.8	26.7
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	4.9	2.2	2.5	0.0	0.6	0.7
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	20.9	12.8	10.7	10.7	10.8	9.4
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	25.9	16.5	15.4	14.9	15.7	14.6

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Employment Status

Table 9 identifies the labor force participation rates for Hoschton and compares them with state and national averages. The labor force identifies persons 16 years of age and older that are working or seeking work. The 2000 Census population of persons 16 years of age and older was 796 in Hoschton, of which 507 were considered in the labor force. This figure represents a 55% increase over the 1990 labor force total. Over 97% (495) of the labor force participants were employed in 2002.

Hoschton is relatively equal to state and national averages for participation rates, although slightly lower in all categories. Nearly 21% of Hoschton’s population is over the age of 55, accounting for the slight differences in

labor force participation rates. Only the armed forces category is significantly lower than state and national rates due to the fact that there are no significant military installations in the city at the present time.

**Table 9
Labor Force Participation Rates**

	1990			2000		
	Hoschton	Georgia	U.S.A.	Hoschton	Georgia	U.S.A.
Total in labor force	66.9%	67.9%	65.3%	63.7%	66.1%	63.9%
Civilian labor force	66.3%	66.4%	64.4%	63.7%	65.0%	63.4%
Armed forces	0.6%	1.5%	0.9%	0.0%	1.1%	0.5%
Males in labor force	73.0%	76.6%	74.4%	73.0%	73.1%	70.7%
Females in labor force	61.5%	59.9%	56.8%	55.5%	59.4%	57.5%

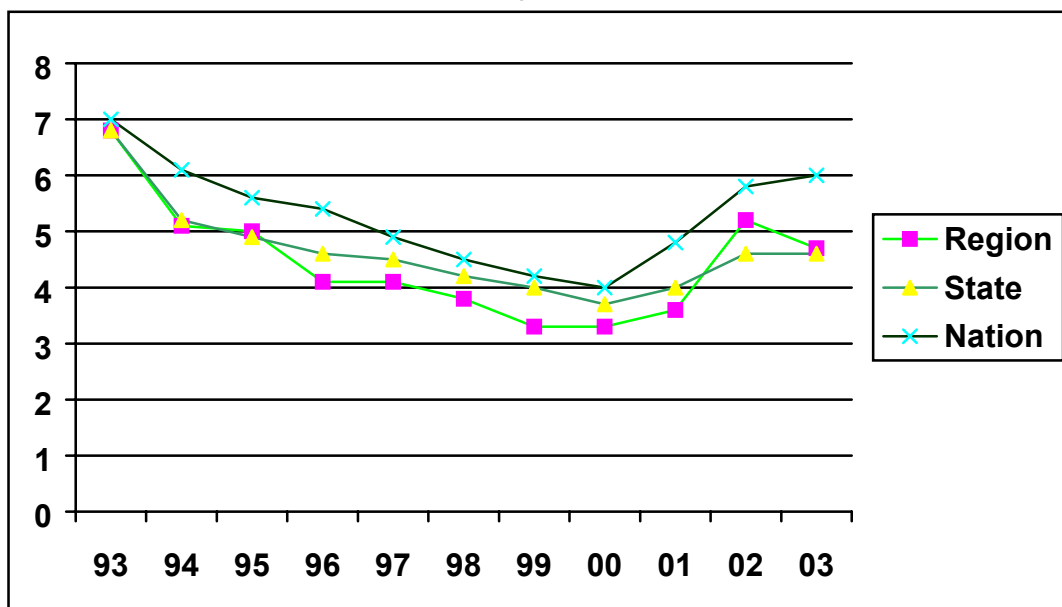
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Unemployment Rates

According to the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Hoschton had a 2000 unemployment rate of 1.3%. Census data are the only available unemployment figures for municipalities under 25,000 population. Therefore, there are no relevant data for Hoschton’s unemployment rates and the table illustrates state, national, and northeast Georgia rates (comprising Barrow, Clarke, Elbert, Greene, Jackson, Jasper, Madison, Morgan, Newton, Oconee, Oglethorpe, and Walton counties) for comparison.

Figure 7 illustrates the unemployment rates over the past ten years for the Northeast Georgia Region, Georgia and the nation.

**Figure 7
Unemployment Rates**



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Over the past decade the region's unemployment level has remained below both state and national averages. A spike in 2002 illustrates the high unemployment rates experienced in a small number of counties that inflated the overall rate. Historically economists have considered an unemployment rate under five as meaning that virtually everyone in the area that is actively looking for work is able to find it. The abundance of employment opportunity within reasonable proximity to the Metro Atlanta and Athens areas combined with the region's aggressive recruitment of new employers provides Hoschton residents with ample employment opportunity and choice. Such a low rate minimizes the community impacts associated with high unemployment rates including crime, poverty, stress, substance abuse, and domestic violence.

Commuting Patterns

Examining Hoschton's commuting patterns illustrates the challenges that the city faces not only in economic development planning but also dealing with overall land use issues. The city is working to reverse the trend of outward commuters through the recruitment of industry that can take advantage of the local labor force's characteristics. Hoschton not only deals with residents commuting out of the local economy for employment, but also experiences an inflow of daily commuters that fill the majority of the 480 jobs currently reported within the town.

Table 10
Commuting Patterns to Work

Commuting Category	1990	2000
Number of workers	301	495
Percent working in Hoschton	14.9	9.3
Percent working outside Hoschton	85.1	90.7
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	25.5	32.9
% of commuters traveling longer than 30 minutes to work	44.2	59.9
% of workers who worked at home	3.0	1.2
Total number of jobs in town	NA	480
Total number of residents employed in Hoschton	45	46
No vehicles available in household (as % of total households)	9.6	7.3
1 vehicle available in household	24.1	23.5
2 vehicles available in household	34.6	42.5
3+ vehicles available in household	31.6	26.6

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; Town of Hoschton

During the period between census years the percentage of the local labor force commuting elsewhere has actually increased by 5.6%. During the same time period mean travel time to work increased by over seven minutes, further illustrated by the fact that 15.7% more daily commuters are traveling greater than thirty minutes to work.

Another indicator of commuting patterns is the jobs-housing balance. A healthy local economy that retains the majority of its workforce within its jurisdiction maintains a jobs-housing ratio of approximately 1.5 jobs per household. The overall ratio relating to jobs actually located in Hoschton is 1.24 jobs per household, well below the average, indicating that Hoschton may be deficient in providing ample employment opportunities for its residents. This is merely one, of many possible, indicators that can be used to help identify potential deficiencies, or gaps, in the local economy and cannot, by itself, determine the effectiveness of local economic development.

If we solely examine the resident workforce increases between 1990 and 2000 in correlation with the housing data in Chapter 5, the data illustrates a similar ratio of 1.27 employed residents per household. The commuting data

illustrates that 93% of the resident workforce leaves the city for employment and is essentially replaced by the same number of workers filling local employment opportunities. This indicates that current employment opportunity in Hoschton may not adequately match the skills of the local labor force.

A contributing factor to this imbalance is the accessibility of Hoschton to major employment markets. This transportation network facilitates automobile access, allowing a mobile workforce to reside or commute elsewhere.

Local Economic Development Resources

Economic Development Agencies

The Jackson County Chamber of Commerce is a nonprofit organization that promotes the entire county, including each of the municipalities. It serves existing businesses through various volunteer committees, including community and economic development. Business membership dues and investment fund the Chamber's activities, which include the promotion of various school education seminars and expanding business opportunities for members. The mission of the Chamber is to serve the needs of its membership and to advance the interest of economic development while enhancing the quality of life in Jackson County.

Several agencies are capable of providing economic assistance to Hoschton. Georgia Power Company's Community Development Department offers Georgia communities development assistance in six program areas: research and information, business retention and expansion, leadership development, downtown revitalization, board governance, industrial location, and demographic and labor market analysis.

The Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism is another resource for industrial recruitment and tourism development. The University of Georgia Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in Athens provides management consulting for entrepreneurs and conducts marketing analyses and surveys designed to evaluate a community's economic development potential. The Institute of Community and Area Development (ICAD) offers technical assistance, training, and research services for local government community organizations.

Finally, the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center (RDC) provides assistance in many community development areas. The RDC prepares local comprehensive plans, which includes economic development information for communities, and provides assistance through the administration of various financial grants. Additional services include the preparation of special economic development surveys and evaluations on how to improve, promote or reorganize a segment of the community. The RDC is actively involved in youth job training programs that are designed to employ residents and enhance job skills. The center also has a comprehensive network of elderly-related programs that address social, health and employment needs.

Hoschton needs to develop cooperative relationships with these, or other similar, agencies in order to help promote the city as a viable local economy for business and industry to locate or expand their firms.

Economic Development Programs and Tools

Georgia Power Resource Center, located in downtown Atlanta, introduces prospective industries from other states and countries to the state's economic development resources. Georgia Power's database includes industrial parks and sites located throughout Georgia. The database can display photographs of a site or park and a list of its utility and infrastructure features. The Georgia 100 software is a computer program designed to meet the business needs of companies through geographic analysis. Georgia's SBDCs are equipped with the Georgia 100 program.

Hoschton's linkage to a major transportation network represents a locational advantage in terms of economic development opportunities. Access to interstate and state routes, combined with proximity to major urban markets, provides Hoschton with a competitive advantage over other potential locations. Hoschton also has ample land designated for economic development, minimizing any regulatory hurdles for economic expansion.

Educational and Training Opportunities

Hoschton is located within the Jackson County public school system offering a comprehensive education program from Pre-Kindergarten to Grade 12.

The Lanier Technical College is accredited by the Commission of the Council on Occupational Education. Lanier Tech offers a variety of programs of study tailored to meet the training needs of business and industry in Lanier Tech's eight county service area, which includes Barrow, Hall, and Jackson. Lanier Tech has its main campus in Oakwood, in Hall County with satellite offices in Winder (Barrow County) and Cumming (Forsyth County).

Georgia also has a unique manpower-training concept known as "Quick Start." The state designed this program to train workers for specific, clearly designed jobs in a new or expanding company. Employees learn new skills and receive the opportunity to earn higher pay. Additionally, the company realizes one of its primary goals: increase production with minimum expenditures of time and money.

When a company selects a plant site, the Director of Quick Start from Athens Area Technical Institute and the State Training Coordinator from the Department of Technical and Adult Education, consult with company officials. Together, they discuss the company's manpower needs, job requirements, and start-up schedule. Training coordinators develop a training plan and submit it to the company for approval. Training facilities are set up at Athens Tech or, if more suitable, on the plant site.

The local State Employment Agency in Athens will recruit, test, and screen applicants in accordance with company specifications. Costly recruitment hours are saved and only qualified applicants are referred to the company for final selection and enrollment. Once the company accepts an employee, the trainee begins an on-the-job training program. The trainee is able to contribute to the company but also sharpens his or her skills under the guidance of state-paid instructors.

There are a variety of higher education institutions operating in the vicinity of Hoschton. Included are the University of Georgia, Georgia Institute of Technology, Georgia State University and a variety of Junior and Community Colleges located throughout the region.

The Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center (RDC) provides staff support for the regional Workforce Investment Board (WIB). The WIB is a group of appointed local business, industry and education representatives that focus on meeting the local business needs for skilled workers and the training, education and employment of local individuals.

Economic Development Issues Analysis

Prior to the initiation of the economic development planning process a survey was distributed to each member of the citizens advisory committee, as well as all elected officials and staff. They were directed to identify, from a list of twenty, those issues that most affected the city's ability to generate successful economic development. The following is a summary of those issues that represented the greatest number of responses.

Historic Preservation

Residents believe strongly in preserving the heritage and historic character of the city. The city is not only rich in its local history, but also in historic structures. In order to accomplish many of the economic development goals, historic preservation must be a key component. Ensuring the preservation and revitalization of historic areas will facilitate the process of invigorating the local economy more than destroying them will. The city plans to utilize its historic structures and build upon the historic character of Hoschton through all of its economic development initiatives.

Timing and Location of Infrastructure

Timing and location of infrastructure expansion are a major issue in economic development. The main issues of concern, for economic development purposes, are infrastructure capacities for water and sewer. To fully promote the city for economic development purposes, infrastructure expansion is necessary to attract new, and facilitate the expansion of existing, business. The city must continue to direct development, including population and employment growth, to those areas that can be served most efficiently, maximizing on existing capacities and infrastructure.

Local Jobs

In order to improve commuting patterns the city must direct its economic development efforts towards attracting employment opportunities that best match the skills of the local labor force, and attracting new residents that match the requirements of the local jobs. As illustrated in the section, "Commuting Patterns," workers traveling into Hoschton on a daily basis fill the vast majority of local jobs. New employment should better match the skills of the local labor force in order to reverse this trend.

Downtown Development

This issue is directly tied to historic preservation, as the city's proposed historic district is located in the historic downtown core. Revitalizing the downtown is important to residents and can help to foster a greater sense of community. Restoring the central business district to a more traditional role, as an employment, shopping and gathering center, helps to balance the growth of the city and build additional economic development resources for the local economy.

Transportation

The city has experienced a period of rapid growth, which should continue throughout the planning horizon of this document. As development continues along major roadways, congestion mitigation needs to be addressed at the earliest possible stages to minimize the overall impacts on the transportation network. As a component of this, alternative transportation issues need also be addressed to increase the level of bicycle and pedestrian activity throughout the city.

Natural Resource Limitations

In order to maintain and expand infrastructure capacities it is imperative that natural resource limitations be examined and closely monitored. Of particular importance are the source and supply of potable water and the pollution levels created from wastewater discharge. Economic development must not be allowed to occur at the expense of the natural environment.

Other Issues

These issues appeared on a number of surveys, though not as prominently as the aforementioned.

- 1. Business Retention:** The city should be proactive in working with existing business and industry to help determine key factors associated with retaining a location in Hoschton.
- 2. Redevelopment:** Because of the age and deterioration of certain areas of the historic district, historically sensitive redevelopment efforts must occur to fully revitalize the historic downtown.

Needs, Goals, and Local Assessment

Economic Base Assessment

The economic base inventory, presented in the first section, provides an overview of the city's economic makeup. The assessment attempts to look at some of the underlying factors that have led to the existing conditions of the local economy and identify strategies for improving them. Table 11 presents the location quotient analysis for each of the major industry sectors of the local economy. In order to get a closer look at the existing specialization of the economy it is important to refine the search beyond major industrial sectors and look at sub-categories within each of those sectors. It is also important to note that this analysis looks at the local economy as a whole and deals with all local jobs as opposed to looking solely at employment characteristics of the local workforce.

As mentioned previously in the first section, economic base theory's guiding principle is that all economic activity can be classified as either basic (export oriented) or non-basic (local serving). Based on this principle, the theory further states that an area's economic stability is dependent on outside demand for locally produced goods and services. The location quotient analysis attempts to identify the basic sectors of the town and in which of those sectors the city enjoys a competitive advantage over other local economies.

Industries with location quotients greater than 1.25 indicate relatively high production of a good or service and are categorized as basic industries that help to support the economy as a whole. Conversely, those industries with location quotients less than 0.75 indicate sectors that are not meeting local needs. A location quotient between 0.75 and 1.25 are generally considered self-sufficient.

The analysis reveals thirteen sub-sectors with location quotients significantly above 1.25. Indicating that these areas are relative strengths of the local economy. Of the major industrial sectors, the largest location quotients are found in the manufacturing (Tetrad Inc., Precision Medical, and Jaeger Metal Fabrication) and construction sectors (Georgia Foundation, R.W. Construction, and Stephen Ross Plumbing Inc.). Within the services major industrial sector the professional, scientific and technical services sub-sector had the largest location quotient of all services sub-sectors, illustrating the potential to build on the high-end service sector firms to match the skill levels of the local population.

The analysis also revealed thirteen sectors with location quotients under 0.75, indicating that these sectors may not be meeting local needs. It is difficult to gauge the relevance of these statistics because of the relatively small economy that Hoschton represents. The larger numbers indicate that certain sectors are succeeding at greater rates in Hoschton than in other areas of the state. Whereas, the smaller numbers may simply mean that there is not a large enough population yet to fully support those sectors. Areas that may provide some insight are the retail and service sector, as these should have location quotients that, at a minimum, are approaching 0.75-1.25. The low figures associated with the sub-sectors may reveal potential gaps in the local economy.

Table 11
Hoschton Location Quotient Analysis
 Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1999 County Business Patterns

Major Industrial Sector	NAICS Code	Sector	City Employment	State Employment	Town L.Q.
Agricultural Services	11	Totals	0	9273	-
Mining	21	Totals	0	6598	-
Construction	23	Totals	132	202322	4.72
	233	Building, developing, general contracting	3	50542	0.43
	234	Heavy construction	10	30975	2.33
	235	Special trade contractors	119	120805	7.12
Manufacturing	31-33	Totals	115	518063	1.60
	321	Wood product manufacturing	26	29215	6.43
	326	Plastics and rubber products manufacturing	50	30089	12.01
	327	Nonmetallic mineral product manufacturing	13	20556	4.57
	332	Fabricated metal product manufacturing	15	33163	3.27
	334	Computer and electronic product manufacturing	10	16225	4.45
	336	Transportation equipment manufacturing	1	48548	0.15
TCU	22, 48-49, 51	Totals	10	134055	0.54
	48-49	Transportation and warehousing	10	134055	0.54
Wholesale Trade	42	Totals	0	198709	-
Retail Trade	44-45	Totals	60	464368	0.93
	441	Motor vehicle and parts dealers	28	58129	3.48
	443	Electronics and appliance stores	1	13859	0.52
	444	Building material, garden equipment dealers	7	43422	1.17
	445	Food and beverage stores	2	98455	0.15
	447	Gasoline stations	5	30929	1.17
	451	Sporting goods, hobby, book, and music stores	1	14995	0.48
	453	Miscellaneous retail stores	16	23700	4.88
FIRE	52, 53	Totals	25	222659	0.81
	52	Finance and insurance	8	163910	0.35
	522	Credit intermediation and related activities	7	79856	0.63
	524	Insurance carriers and related activities	1	66467	0.11
	53	Real estate, rental and leasing	17	58749	2.09
	531	Real estate	8	35363	1.63
	532	Rental and leasing services	9	21709	3.00
Services	54-56, 61-62, 71-72, 81, 95	Totals	140	1414782	0.72
	54	Professional, scientific and technical	71	202537	2.53
	56	Administrative, support, waste management and remediation	20	330441	0.44
	61	Educational services	11	63775	1.25
	62	Health care and social assistance	4	341987	0.08
	71	Arts, entertainment and recreation	2	35602	0.41
	72	Accommodation and food services	7	295906	0.17
	722	Food services and drinking places	7	250841	0.20
	81	Other services excluding public administration	25	144534	1.25
	811	Repair and maintenance services	16	37463	3.09
	812	Personal and laundry services	9	34867	1.87
Total Employment			482	3483500	-

Calculations by NEGRDC

- Shaded areas represent totals for the major industrial sector.
- NAICS is the North American Industrial Classification System code.
- Total employment differs from the total stated in the section on "Sector Employment" because this information represents data collected on the total number of jobs in the municipality rather than the employment information on the local workforce.
- City LQ refers to the location quotient value. The location quotient is a ratio comparing the percentage of employment in a specific industry in the local economy with the employment percentage in the same industry in the state economy.

Note:

The location quotient is meant to serve as a guideline to help identify potential strengths and weaknesses in the local economy that could be further pursued. Its general assumptions are that demand is constant throughout the state, labor productivity does not vary, and that each firm within an industry produces an identical product. Every

community does not need to be self-sufficient in every sector and a location quotient less than one may not be cause for alarm. According to economic base theory's general principles, basic (export) employment is the engine that drives local economic activity and linkages it creates lead to increased non-basic (local serving) employment. For example, an economic base ratio of 1:2 indicates that for every new basic job two new non-basic jobs are created. This is referred to as an employment multiplier. The use and reliance on multipliers is not a recommended strategy because they are inaccurate, and generally inflated. However, they do serve as a general guideline to illustrate the significance of new export industries locating within a community and the linkages that they create within the local economy.

Based on the information in Table 11, Hoschton houses a total of 482 jobs. Of these jobs, 289 can be considered basic and 193 non-basic sector jobs. This creates a basic to non-basic ratio of 0.67. What this illustrates is that for every new basic sector job in Hoschton a total of 1.67 jobs are created.

Despite the fact that Hoschton has an abundance of basic sector employment opportunities, there have not yet been sufficient linkages developed to have a major impact on the non-basic sector. This explains the relatively low multiplier value of 1.67. This may also help to explain the reasoning behind the low location quotient values for many of the retail and service sub-sectors, as well as other non-basic sectors, such as finance and insurance.

In order to generate a greater balance between the basic and non-basic sectors and to ensure that locally serving industries are self-sufficient a greater proportion of new basic sector employees must reside in Hoschton. As the local population rises more proportionately with employment the demand for locally serving businesses will increase accordingly.

Labor Force Assessment

The labor force assessment attempts to determine whether or not the jobs available in the community are appropriate to the residents in terms of skill and education levels required, and wages paid. The inventory and economic base analyses sections have identified strengths and weaknesses of the local economy, which are directly related to the characteristics of the local labor force.

As the population continues to increase, with the majority due to in-migration, the levels of educational attainment have risen dramatically between the 1990 and 2000 Census years. The difference between the city and state level with a minimum high school diploma has decreased from 17.4% below state levels in 1990 to 0.6% above state levels in 2000. The city has also experienced a substantial increase in residents possessing a bachelor's degree or better rising from 9.9% below state levels in 1990 to 6.4% below state levels in 2000. This is further illustrated by examining the change in percentage in the Managerial, Professional and Related Occupation category that increased from 11.1% to 28.2% over the same time period.

Despite the increased education levels and large presence of a professional service workforce, the economic base analysis illustrated the outflow of local employees to employment opportunities in non-local markets. In order to strengthen the local economy, new employment opportunities need to be matched with the skills of the available workforce to decrease these economic leakages.

Economic Development Agencies, Programs and Tools Assessment

As mentioned, Hoschton needs to increase its ability to market itself to potential businesses and industries as a suitable location for location or expansion. The region is rapidly expanding in terms of economic development and there are opportunities for Hoschton to invigorate the local economy while preserving the historic character of the city. This can be done through the transportation enhancement streetscape project, intended to revitalize the downtown, as well as increased cooperation with economic development agencies and developers in promoting the positive characteristics of locating in Hoschton.

The current availability of well-sited, fully serviced, industrial and commercial zoned land is one of the city's strongest assets and facilitates the expansion of the local economy while minimizing negative impacts on the surrounding community.

Needs, Goals, and Policies

Goal: Increase employment opportunities through the promotion of orderly economic growth that maintains, or enhances, the existing quality of life and utilizes historic resources in an efficient and productive manner.

Need: Concentrate economic development efforts on promoting business retention and expansion that matches the local labor force.

Policy: Match the skills of the local labor force with prospective business and industry.

Policy: Improve and expand local infrastructure to meet future economic development needs.

Need: Maintain the character and context of the downtown district.

Policy: Ensure that the downtown streetscape project is completed in accordance with the existing downtown structures.

Policy: Promote a context sensitive design of the downtown that incorporates a mixed-use component, including retail, restaurant and residential uses.

Need: Economic development efforts should not be undertaken at the expense of the local environment.

Policy: Promote existing downtown areas as viable business locations.

Policy: Promote cluster commercial and industrial development to maximize the efficient use of available land and preserve as much of the natural vegetation as possible.

Policy: Promote the preservation of historic structures for use in economic development efforts wherever feasible.

Need: Coordinate economic growth with the Future Land Use map and all other sections of the Comprehensive Plan to ensure that quality development occurs in suitable locations.

Policy: Recruit and locate business and industry that are compatible with adjacent land uses.

Policy: Ensure that adequate land is zoned to accommodate future commercial and industrial expansion.

Policy: Coordinate all economic development initiatives with environmental protection policies and regulations ensuring the preservation of existing natural and cultural resources.

Need: Increase marketing efforts to prospective employers, promoting Hoschton's attractiveness for location or expansion of locally compatible business and industry.

Chapter 4A: Natural Resources

Introduction

This section addresses the natural resources and vital areas found in Hoschton as defined in the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures, Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Chapter 110-3-2, as amended. Under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, natural resources include groundwater recharge areas, rivers, wetlands, protected mountains and river corridors, coastal resources, floodplains, soils, steep slopes, prime agricultural and forest land, plant and animal habitat, major park, recreation and conservation areas, and scenic views and sites. To preserve and protect a community's natural resources, the Department of Natural Resources established minimum protection standards for natural resources, the environment and vital areas of the state, specifically, water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, river corridors, and mountains.

Physiography and Topography

Topography and slope are important considerations in local planning because they provide indicators of suitability and cost of developing particular sites. Local relief and slope characteristics should be considered, particularly along streams of significant slope, flat or low-lying areas, and along ridges, hillsides and streams. Development without regard to slope and relief can damage the natural environment through increased stormwater runoff and soil erosion. In addition, an area's aesthetic quality can be damaged without consideration to topography.

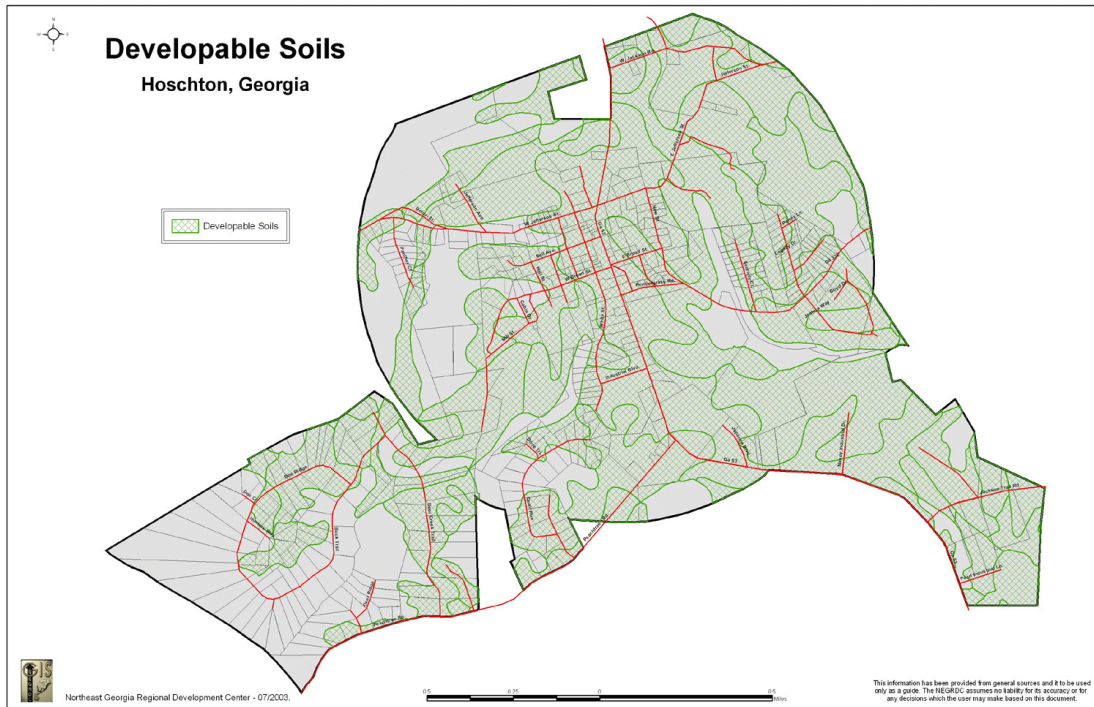
Jackson County, located on the upper fringes of the Piedmont Plateau section of Georgia, is adjacent to Banks, Barrow, Clarke, Hall, and Madison counties. The county covers 342 square miles, or 218,957 acres, of gently rolling ridges and valleys. Some areas near streams are steep. The floodplains of the rivers and creeks are level to nearly level.

The Mulberry, Middle Oconee, and North Oconee river systems drain the entire county. Jackson County is bisected by two broad ridges that run northwest to southeast. These two ridges extend the length of the county, running from the Hall County line in the north, south toward Clarke County. About half the county's acreage lies between the tops of these two ridges and slopes inward toward the Middle Oconee River. Outside of these ridges, the remaining acreage slopes toward the North Oconee River on the east and the Mulberry River on the west. In most places, the top of the ridge that separates these drainage areas is about 900 feet above sea level. Elevations in Jackson County range from 640 feet above sea level along the North Oconee River near the Clarke County line to 1,100 above sea level just west of Talmo near the Chestnut Mountain area of Hall County.

Hoschton, located in western Jackson County, borders Braselton to the north along Highway 53 in western Jackson County. Its elevation is also approximately 900 feet.

Geology and Mineral Resources

An inventory and analysis of local geology and mineral deposits are important in determining site-specific development potential as well as opportunities for expansion of extractive industries as part of the local economic base. Information is available countywide only. Geologically, Jackson County is underlain predominately by biotitic gneiss, schist and granite gneiss. Other minerals known to exist in the county are asbestos, beryl, granite and related rock outcrops.



Soils

The map above identifies soils in Hoschton that are suitable for development.

Prime Agricultural Soils

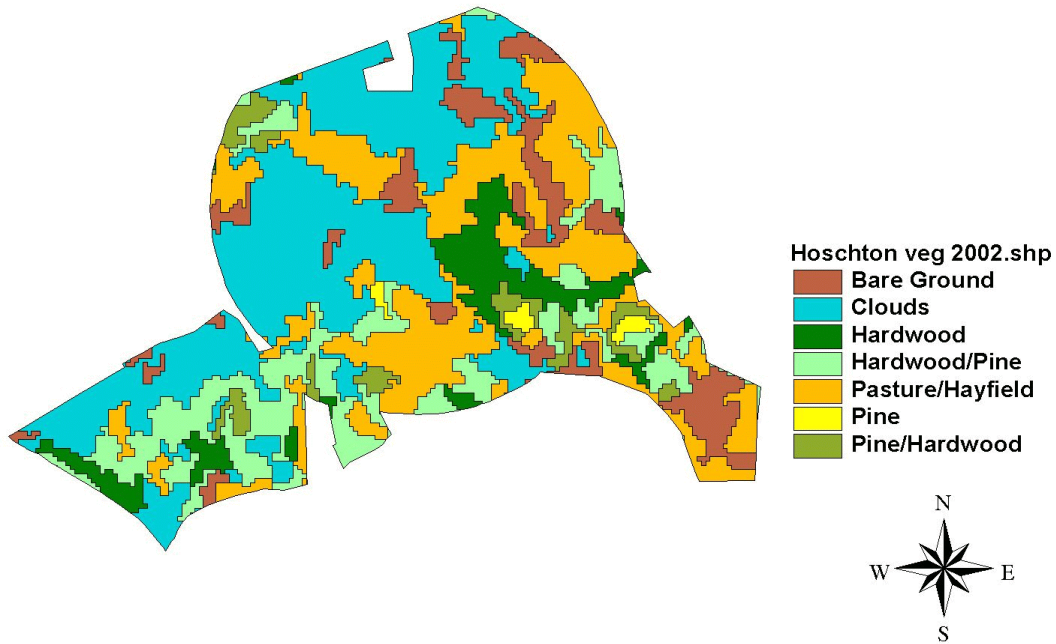
In Georgia, prime agricultural soils are soils best suited for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. These soils have the quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained good yields of crops economically if treated and managed, including water management. “Additional soils of statewide importance” are soils that, besides prime agricultural soils, also are important for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. These soils economically produce good yields if drained, protected against flooding, if erosion control practices are installed, or if additional water is applied to overcome drought.

Most of Hoschton is developed and few agricultural soils remain in production.

Assessment

Soils in Hoschton pose few limitations to development. The city is served by public water and sewerage and there are few steep slopes. Protection of Hoschton’s prime agricultural soils is not a concern as there is little agricultural land in the city and no row cropping. The city anticipates that such remaining land will transition to other land uses, primarily residential and commercial; therefore, protection of agricultural soils is not a priority.

Vegetation Classification 2002



Forest Resources

The city's vegetation is predominantly pasture; however, the importance of tree canopy is recognized. Tree canopy supports water quality and quantity, air quality, habitat and recreation, and reduces the urban heat island.

Clear cutting in anticipation of development is seen as a threat to the community's forest resources. The city's zoning ordinance requires landscaping with all development; however, new landscaping cannot replace the value of the mature trees that are typically sacrificed for development.

Assessment

This plan supports development and implementation of a tree ordinance. The ordinance should prohibit speculative clearing of vegetation, strive to save as much of the urban forest as possible without making development impossible, and preserve 50% of vegetation 8" diameter or greater on a development site as well as a large percentage of the tree canopy.

Habitat

The Department of Natural Resources, Freshwater Wetlands and Natural Heritage Inventory (FWNHI) section has compiled a list of rare element occurrences for Jackson County. Information is available countywide only. ¹ A rare element occurrence is a "species of concern . . . considered sufficiently rare or the status unknown so as to warrant the collection of occurrence information."² This information is available on a county wide basis only.

Jackson County has three plant species and one animal species included by the FWNHI on its list of rare element occurrences.

Amphianthus pusillus, commonly named "Little Amphianthus," "Pool Sprite," or "Snorkelwort," is an annual aquatic herb found in shallow, flat-bottomed depression pools of granitic outcrops. These pools are usually less than a foot in depth, entirely rock-rimmed and dry in the summer after the spring rains have evaporated. *Amphianthus* has both floating and submerged leaves attached by delicate, lax stems. The submerged leaves are arranged in a basal rosette, lanceolate, and less than 1 cm. long. The flowers are small, white to pale violet, inconspicuous, and found both among the submerged basal leaves and between the floating surface leaves. The fruit is a small capsule, 2-3 mm. broad, and 1 mm. long. The flowering period is March - April, fruiting period is April - May. This plant is endangered in Georgia and threatened in the United States.

Isoetes tegetiformans, common name "Mat-forming Quillwort" was last observed in the Chestnut Mountain quadrant in June 1987. The habitat of this perennial aquatic fern ally is the shallow, flat-bottomed depression pools of granite outcrops, and is closely associated with *Amphianthus pusillus*. The pools occur in natural solution pits that are entirely rock-rimmed and have accumulated 2-4 cm. of soil. This is an obscure plant evident only when in masse as a greenish mat of clustered, quill-like leaves. The leaves, which arise as plantlets, form an arched elongate, prostrate stem 3-35 mm. and 6-8 mm. wide. The spores are produced in an elliptical, veiled cavity, 1 mm. long on the flared inner surfaces of the leaf bases. Although green plants may be found following wet periods throughout the year, mature spores are most likely, though sporadic, from May to October. Spores are brownish when mature. *Isoetes tegetiformans* is classified by the state as threatened and is proposed for endangered listing under the Wildflower Preservation Act of 1973. The plant is further classified by the federal government as endangered under provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Isoetes melanospora, common name "Black-spored Quillwort," was last observed in the Chestnut Mountain quadrant in March 1986. The habitat of this perennial aquatic fern ally is restricted to the shallow, flat-bottomed depression pools of granite outcrops, and is closely associated with *Amphianthus pusillus*. The pools occur in natural solution pits or manmade quarry holes, and are generally completely dry in the summer after the spring rains have evaporated. This is a very inconspicuous plant from 2.5-8 cm. tall. The leaves, which arise spirally from a bulbous (corn-like) base, are bunched, linear, slender-tipped, 1-2 mm. wide, up to 8 cm. long, pale towards the base, and green above. The spores are produced in the leaf base in a cavity that is about 5 mm. long. Identification of this species is often difficult due to the size of the plant and the nature of the key morphological characteristics. Spores are produced sporadically from May

¹Georgia's Protected Plants, (Atlanta: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, 1977).

²Freshwater Wetlands and Natural Heritage Inventory, letter to Joe Tichy, Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center, December 1, 1989.

to October and are black when wet and gray when dry. This plant is classified by the state as threatened. The plant is further classified by the federal government as endangered under provisions of the Endangered Species Act of 1973.

Condylura cristata, common name “Star-nosed mole,” was last observed in the High Shoals quadrant in September 1950. This animal is not presently listed as protected in the state; however, it is ranked as imperiled in the state because of its rarity (6 to 20 occurrences or few remaining individuals or acres) or because of some factor(s) making it very vulnerable to extirpation from the state.

Assessment

It is unknown whether these resources are presently affected by incompatible land uses or other human activities. Currently, only federal and state regulations offer any protection to these plants. All three plants are associated with granite rock outcrops. Naturally occurring granite rock outcrops are a significant natural resource due to their visual aesthetics and the habitat which they provide for endangered plant species. The “Star-nosed mole” has no protection under federal or state regulations, but is considered imperiled in Georgia due to its rarity.

Hoschton has no known habitat necessary to support these rare element occurrences. Therefore, local policies to protect these resources are deemed unnecessary.

Parks and Recreation Areas

There are no park or recreation areas within Hoschton in addition to community parks identified in the Community Facilities chapter.

Scenic Views and Sites

No landscapes within the town were identified as scenic; however, a number of developed sites were deemed as important to the town, scenic, and assist in defining the town’s character. Sites identified are: the downtown square, large hardwood trees, and historic churches, homes, and cemeteries.

Assessment

This plan supports protecting these resources from incompatible development.

Rivers and Streams

Mulberry River

Several creeks join to form the Mulberry River in Hall County. The river then flows through Gwinnett County and is the border between Barrow and Jackson counties until it flows into the Middle Oconee River north of Athens. The river forms 21.3 miles of the southwest boundary of Jackson County.

This river is about 15-20 feet wide and has a narrow floodplain for the majority of its length. Some sections have been channelized and some sections have been dammed by beavers. The river flows through forests, pastures, and croplands; there are no urbanized areas in the floodplain.

The upland portions of the river basin are classified as oak-pine with species characteristic of that type forest. The steep slopes are vegetated with swamp chestnut oak, white oaks, red oaks and hickories with an understory of dogwood and other typical Piedmont vegetation. The seasonally flooded bottomlands or palustrine forested wetlands are dominated by maple, yellow poplar, sweet gum, elm, privet, and hop hornbean.

This area provides habitat for deer, squirrel, rabbit, quail, woodcock, fox, various songbirds and some turkeys. According to Natural Resources Conservation Service personnel, it is a very good waterfowl area.

River Corridor Protection

The protection of river corridors is critical to protecting the quality of surface waters against nonpoint source pollutants. The enactment of the Clean Water Act and its subsequent amendments, encouraged the clean up of point source contaminants by requiring states to establish and enforce water quality standards. However, as a result of the cleanup of concentrated pollution from specific sites, nonpoint source pollutants have increased in relative importance and now account for more than 50 percent of the pollution in U.S. waters. Nonpoint source pollutants include sediment, nutrients, pesticides, animal wastes and other substances that enter our water supply as components of runoff and ground water flow.

The establishment and maintenance of streamside forests are the most crucial elements in the protection of river corridors. The streamside forest functions as a filter by removing sediment -- probably the most common and most easily recognized of nonpoint source pollutants -- and other suspended solids from surface runoff. Sediment suspended in water can reduce or block the penetration of sunlight and adversely affect the growth and reproduction of beneficial aquatic plants. Sediment deposited on the stream bottom can interfere with the feeding and reproduction of bottom dwelling fish and aquatic insects, weakening the food chain. Large deposits of sediment can overfill stream channels and floodplains, increasing the potential for flooding.

Streamside forests can be effective in removing excess nutrients from surface runoff and shallow groundwater and in shading streams to optimize light and temperature conditions for aquatic plants and animals. Streamside forests also can ameliorate the effects of some pesticides, and directly provide dissolved and particulate organic food needed to maintain high biological productivity and diversity in the associated stream.

A “protected river” includes any perennial river or watercourse with an average annual flow of 400 cubic feet per second as determined by the U.S. Geological Survey. The Department of Natural Resources requires any local government with such a resource adopt a river corridor protection ordinance.

Assessment

No river in Hoschton meets the DNR “protected river” criteria.

Protected Mountains

The Environmental Planning Criteria provides for the protection of all land that lies above a 2,200 foot elevation and has a slope of 25 percent or greater for at least 500 feet horizontally. No land in Hoschton meets this criterion.

Coastal Resources

The Environmental Planning Criteria provides for the protection of coastal resources that are vulnerable to the impacts of development. This includes beaches, coastal marshes and estuaries. No land in Hoschton meets this criterion.

Floodplains

Flood hazard boundary maps were prepared for Hoschton.

Assessment

Generally, floodplains are not impacted by development and existing floodplain management is adequate for current and future development.

Environmental Planning Criteria

Environmental Planning Criteria prepared by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, established minimum standards for local governments to protect water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, and river corridors. This protection is essential to public health, safety and welfare.

Water Supply Watershed

Hoschton does not lie within a small water supply watershed.

Groundwater Recharge Areas

None of Hoschton lies within a groundwater recharge area.

Wetlands

Freshwater wetlands are transitional lands between terrestrial and aquatic systems which are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. The ecological parameters for designating wetlands include hydric soils, hydrophytic vegetation, and hydrological conditions that involve a temporary or permanent source of water to cause soil saturation.

The State of Georgia has provided criteria in §391-3-16(3)(c) "Criteria for Wetlands Protection" which describes for local government minimal considerations for wetlands protection in the land use planning process with regard to wetlands identified in the Department of Natural Resources freshwater wetlands' database. Those minimal considerations are as follows:

1. Whether impacts to an area would adversely affect the public health, safety, welfare, or the property of others.
2. Whether the area is unique or significant in the conservation of flora and fauna including threatened, rare or endangered species.
3. Whether alteration or impacts to wetlands will adversely affect the function, including the flow or quality of water, cause erosion or shoaling, or impact navigation.
4. Whether impacts or modification by a project would adversely affect fishing or recreational use of wetlands.
5. Whether an alteration or impact would be temporary in nature.
6. Whether the project contains significant state historical and archaeological resources, defined as "Properties On or Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places."

7. Whether alteration of wetlands would have measurable adverse impacts on adjacent sensitive natural areas.
8. Where wetlands have been created for mitigation purposes under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, such wetlands shall be considered for protection.

It is critical to understand that all freshwater wetlands identified by DNR are protected by federal law and are subject to the same minimal land-use planning considerations defined by the state of Georgia.

Wetlands in Hoschton are predominately palustrine wetlands, traditionally called by such names as marsh, swamp, bog, fen, and prairie wherever they are found throughout the United States.

Assessment

Federal and state regulations offer some protection to Hoschton's wetlands. However, Georgia requires all jurisdictions with such resources to adopt a local protection ordinance.

To comply with the Department of Natural Resource standards, Hoschton should adopt and implement a local ordinance that requires consideration of the eight issues detailed above. In addition, the local ordinance should allow the following uses provided there is no long term impairment of wetland function: wildlife and fisheries management, wastewater treatment, recreation, and natural water quality treatment or purification.

Needs

- ▶ Protect environmental, natural, and rural resources.
- ▶ Forest resources should be protected for their environmental and aesthetic value as well as the increased value of development when these resources are protected. Clear-cut harvesting prior to development should be limited in order to preserve existing, mature trees which will enhance the completed development and facilitate mitigation of future water quality degradation. Adopt and implement a tree ordinance.
- ▶ Protect water resources from contamination and degradation.
- ▶ Enforce ordinances.
- ▶ Prohibit degradation and destruction of wetlands. Adopt a local ordinance based on the DNR wetlands protection criteria.
- ▶ Protect identified scenic areas from adverse development as these resources define the city's character.

Goals and Policies

Goal: Conserve and protect environmental, natural, and rural resources.

- Policy: Encourage protection of sufficient forest resources to prevent loss of habitat and support habitat diversity.
- Policy: Conserve forest resources in general. More specifically, do not allow sacrifice of forest resources for development.
- Policy: Provide for open space conservation areas.
- Policy: Enforce ordinances and educate officials about existence of and importance of ordinances.
- Policy: Protect water resources for contamination and degradation.
- Policy: Consider cumulative effect of soil erosion on water resources.
- Policy: Provide for greenspace/greenways throughout the city.
- Policy: Provide for replacement of defined percentage of vegetative cover on developed properties.
- Policy: Protect Hoschton's rural character.
- Policy: Provide for undisturbed vegetative buffers adjacent to streams.

Chapter 4B: Historic Resources

Developmental History

The City of Hoschton's namesake comes from three Hosch brothers, J.R., R.A., and William, who moved to the area and built a store in 1865. The Town was, similarly, first known as "Hoschton's Store" and located east of present downtown at the intersection of Peachtree Road and SR53--where the J.E. Hill home stands. In 1880, two of the Hosch brothers, R.A. and J.R., sought to develop the town and began surveying lots. The brothers devoted many lots for public uses like a church, school, Masonic Lodge, cemetery and the town square. They also sold lots at a public auction on December 21, 1881 that allowed ownership for new residents. By 1889, the town with its linear, grid pattern formally existed in Georgia and within Jackson County. It eventually grew into a bustling town with two cotton gins, a tannery, newspaper, millinery, and school.

Like many towns in Georgia, Hoschton developed as a railroad town after the Gainesville Midland Railroad built its line through the town in 1878. Residents helped bring the railroad to the town by soliciting subscriptions, selling stock, and hiring former Governor A.D. Chandler to assist them in their efforts. The Hoschton Depot evidences the railroad's introduction and is a landmark around which the City rapidly grew. The city limits extended $\frac{3}{4}$ mile in every direction from the depot's center. Across from the depot is a commercial block that marked the town's commercial center. Beyond this commercial area, the majority of the City's residential homes existed within a three-block area. Other homes also existed along other streets on the north, west and south parts of town.

In 1976, a survey (Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources) of historic resources was conducted to identify historic properties in Jackson County. This survey found 11 historic buildings in Hoschton. These buildings generally date to the late nineteenth century and early 20th centuries, comprising residential, commercial and institutional buildings. They functioned as houses, stores, a depot, and church. These surveys typically did not include early twentieth century buildings that, at that time, were not "technically historic" or 50 years of age. This number is, therefore, probably low and a greater number of historic resources currently exist. For purposes of comparison, the U.S. Bureau of Census compiles data on "Houses Built Before 1939." This information reports that 30 historic, residential houses existed in Hoschton (2000). It also reports that 45 houses exist dated between 1940-59 in the 2000 census. However, this data does not include information about condition, architectural style and historical significance. It does suggest, however, a greater number of historic buildings exist than previously documented (i.e., 1976 survey).

More recently (2002), the Georgia "Find It" Program, a survey partnership sponsored by the Georgia Transmission Corporation (GTC) in partnership with the Georgia Historic Preservation Division (HPD) and the University of Georgia, surveyed cultural resources in Hoschton. It "intensively" identified historic resources and is probably the most accurate data available. It identified seventy-five historic properties in the town. Of these, twenty-seven were believed to be eligible for the National Register of Historic Places; 38 "may be" eligible; and ten were not eligible for the National Register. The twenty-seven eligible properties are shown on the table below with locations found on the historic resources map. The 38 "may be" eligible properties require further examination to determine eligibility and include properties like the City's two churches. The properties in the table below, as a result, represent a conservative account.

Survey #	Date	Address	Name/Type
199	1921		"Ye Old Station"
200	1890	45 Peachtree Rd.	House
201	1880	77 Peachtree Rd.	House
202	1880	Peachtree Rd.	Bethlehem Cemetery
203	1920	3756 Hwy. 53	House
206	1931	4051 Hwy 53	House
208	1920	4137 Hwy. 53	House
210	1931	4086 Hwy. 53	House
211	1919	Hwy. 53	House
213	1911		"Larry's Garage"
214	1941	73 First Street.	House
219	1901	59 Broad Street	House
221	1915	203 New Street	House
229	1941	100 Jefferson Street	House
230	1868	Main Street	House
231	1890	Main Street	House
232	1891	51 Main Street	House
237	1920	107 Jefferson Street	House
239	1931	131 Jefferson Street	House
243	1935	155 Jefferson Street	House
253	1900	73 Hwy. 53	House
254	1910	Lloyd Lott Ave.	City Hall
255	1951	4335 Hwy. 53	"P&G Superette"
264	1930		Abandoned
269	1891	Mulberry (end)	House
270	1920	153 Mulberry Ave.	House
271	1920	50 Hall Street	House

Based on this information and the numbers of historic properties, a small, intact historic district could be delineated and possibly nominated to the National Register. The survey's information also suggests that a closer examination of these properties is needed to determine, precisely, National Register eligibility, particularly for the questionable properties. However, the twenty-seven National Register eligible properties do fall within three historical periods. The majority of historic properties are from the period 1900-1930 with 16 or 59% of the total. The second largest number dates to the period 1880s-1900 with 8 properties representing 30% of the total. The least number is also the most recent dating from the period 1940s-1950s with 11% and only 3 individual properties. These numbers generally reflect Hoschton's historical periods of growth, beginning with the public sale of lots in the 1880s and expanding after the turn-of-the century. In terms of architectural style and building types, Hoschton is diverse. The Queen Anne and Craftsman styles are well represented as well as various vernacular building-types like central halls, New South Cottages, and bungalows.

Hoschton, in summary, is a historic town with relatively diverse historic resources still found. While some have been altered or, in limited cases, razed, it continues to retain some of its original, historic character. This is evident in original street patterns, representative commercial and residential buildings, and the cultural landscapes they occupy. Opportunities exist to not only retain the existing historic character but to progressively improve or reconstruct missing or vacant parcels. This approach could result in improving the appearance and character of the town while

accommodating new residential and commercial growth. Technical assistance, design standards, and protection of existing historic resources are ultimately required to accomplish this goal.

Recognized Cultural Resources

Properties Listed in the National Register of Historic Places:

Hillcrest-Allen Clinic and Hospital. Listed May 2, 1985

The Hillcrest-Allen Clinic and Hospital is a 1914-17 Neoclassical styled building that also includes several historic outbuildings. The house was once part of a 2,000-acre farm that cultivated diverse crops, such as cotton, corn, soybeans, apples, and pecans. It also is the location of the original “Hosch Store” that formally established the City of Hoschton. The store’s original location was across the street from the Hillcrest-Allen Clinic property. This property and the area around it evidence the site of the Town’s beginnings and exist as a cultural landscape. The home itself functioned as a residence and later as an important medical facility, beginning in 1930. It survives as Hoschton’s most significant historic resources.

Hoschton Depot. Listed March 31, 2000

The Hoschton Depot is the only physical evidence of the railroad that exists in the town. It was built in 1883 to provide train service with The Gainesville Midland Railroad line. The depot operated until 1947 and provided for both passenger and freight service. The depot, like others found in Georgia, contained a large freight room, a smaller passenger waiting room and an interior ticket room. The railroad line stretched from Gainesville to Monroe (Walton County) and then linked to the Georgia Railroad in Social Circle. The Hoschton Depot was rehabilitated in 2002 as part of a Transportation Enhancement project funded through the Georgia Dept. of Transportation.

[Copies of National Register nominations are on file with the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center in Athens and the Georgia Dept. of Natural Resources/Historic Preservation Division in Atlanta].

Properties for Future National Register Listing:

Hoschton Historic District. This district would include some of the 27 surveyed historic properties extending to the downtown’s commercial buildings and surrounding residential buildings. While Hoschton does contain many historic resources, many intrusions (e.g., infill development) have created gaps within the historic areas. In addition, physical changes to individual historic buildings that altered their historic character will affect the boundaries of a potential district. Further research is needed on individual historic properties and the district as a whole to evaluate Hoschton’s National Register eligibility.

Archaeological Resources:

Hoschton exists in an area inhabited over 12,000 years ago by human inhabitants known as Paleoindians. The Paleoindian period was followed by 10 other archaeological periods to the present. No known archaeological sites exist within the Town, yet there is potential for their existence. One archaeological investigation was conducted in 2003 on a 14-acre private tract that found one archaeological site. This site was determined to be limited in significance and not eligible for National Register listing.

One archaeological site (historical) in Hoschton, the Bethlehem Cemetery, was identified by the Advisory Committee and is considered a community landmark.

Community Landmarks:

Hoschton's important historic resources that evidence its past are called "community landmarks." The following list was identified by the Citizens Advisory Committee (see map for locations). They should be considered in the Town's future development, particularly when change (i.e., development) may negatively affect them.

- Hoschton Depot
- Hillcrest-Allen Clinic
- Bethlehem Cemetery
- City Hall
- Sell's Mill Park Area (located in Jackson County)

Georgia Historical Markers:

The Georgia Historical Society administers the Georgia Marker Program that places bronze plaques in places or sites of historical significance throughout Georgia. Each marker provides a written text about recognized places to educate the public and function as a resource for tourist. One marker exists in Hoschton and is listed below:

Hoschton Train Depot

The four Hosch brothers founded Hoschton in 1881 in the hope of influencing the proposed route of the Gainesville, Jefferson and Southern Railroad. In 1833 [sic] this depot was built on land donated by the brothers. The railroad transformed the town and surrounding areas, serving as a catalyst for the development of commerce, agriculture, education, industry, communications, and transportation. The railroad provided a link with other Georgia communities, opened the market for the region's agricultural products, made manufactured goods widely available, and stimulated the growth of businesses, churches, schools, and the town itself. Train service ended in 1947.

Erected by the Georgia Historical Society, the City of Hoschton, Hoschton Women's Civic Club, and Hosch Family Descendants.

The citizens' advisory committee considered erection of new historical markers and no new locations were identified.

Assessment

Future opportunities in Hoschton towards preservation are centered on 'saving what is left of the town.' Some changes have been made, but the City is committed to preserving the buildings that evidence J.R. Hosch's original town. This commitment is also expected to have community and economic development opportunities.

Two of Hoschton's cultural resources are recognized through National Register listing. The remainder of the town, as a district, is unrecognized. Beyond recognition, no local (zoning) protection exists for these recognized and unrecognized cultural resources. The City is proceeding with an overlay zone for the commercial downtown buildings to protect them from demolition and changes that alter their historic character. Once this overlay is in place, future plans may involve extending this zone or district to surrounding residential areas. However, public information that accurately informs about historic preservation ordinances is needed to build public consensus.

Hoschton has opportunities to redevelop within the historic area. Development in the form of infill construction that conforms to the existing historic character could help accommodate future growth as well as enhance the City. The parcel next to City Hall is particularly important, offering opportunities for (historically appropriate) expansion of City Hall or for private development. Design standards need to be in place to ensure compatibility with any future, new construction. Restrictions in the form of covenants or easements should be used if the current City Hall is

vacated or the adjoining lot sold to protect this area's visual character. More generally, this parcel, and others, offer redevelopment opportunities, both private and public, and proposals should be carefully considered and planned.

Economic development opportunities within the downtown area are considered strong. Most customers to local business are from surrounding areas (e.g., Winder, Monroe, and traffic off I-85) and not necessarily local residents. Business is expected to grow, building on prior successes and promoting Hoschton's 'local color' is a viable strategy. On the other hand, local residents walking to and patronizing business will not sustain these establishments and the City's economic vitality.

The commercial area is viewed as the most important to the town and first priority in terms of applying design standards and zoning protection. Businesses thrive on their original, unique character. Hoschton too prides itself on locally owned businesses and a place that is "franchise free" These qualities are believed to draw alternative crowds and provide economic development for the town. Streetscape improvements will contribute to this marketability. In short, historic preservation and economic development for the commercial downtown go hand-in-hand.

In the past, Hoschton has shown consistent interest in historic preservation, particularly in improving local properties (e.g., depot) and in recognizing places as historically significant. City Hall is, symbolically, located in a downtown, historic building. A local, non-profit organization, The Hoschton Civic Club spearheads local preservation efforts and has been instrumental in initiatives benefiting the Town.

Regional development and growth in adjacent Braselton will have effects on Hoschton. Traffic is likely to increase through the downtown and ways to alleviate this need to be considered.

Needs

- National Register district nomination for the City including commercial and residential areas.
- Design guidelines for existing properties and infill development in the downtown area.
- Historically appropriate development of vacant land.
- Further consideration of development of vacant parcel adjoining City Hall.
- Enhancements to downtown area for both residents and patrons frequenting local businesses.
- CLG Status for downtown area.
- Continued involvement and association with Sell's Mill as a community resource.
- Proceed and accomplish work items identified in comprehensive-planning process.
- Educate residents about the benefits of historic preservation.
- Information about historic preservation to build public consensus.

Goals and Policies

Goal: Allow for infill development while preserving town's historic character.

Goal: Make concerted efforts to save and preserve existing historic resources.

Policy: Work in coordination with local businesses to improve historic commercial area.

Policy: Encourage compatible commercial and residential development within town center that conforms to original patterns and designs.

Policy: Provide information about historic preservation to garner public support.

Chapter 5: Community Facilities and Services

Introduction

The availability and location of community facilities and services plays an important role in shaping the future growth of the county. One of the major impediments, or facilitators, of growth is the existence of community infrastructure. We have come to expect our local governments to provide us with a certain level of service and as growth increases so too do the demands for services. Many of the initiatives discussed in the economic development, housing, and land use sections of the plan rely on the expansion or construction of additional community facilities and services for their successful implementation. This chapter inventories the existing infrastructure and identifies needs related to accommodating future growth.

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to examine the inventories of existing facilities and services and to determine how adequately they are serving the existing population. Based on this assessment, future needs can be quantified relating to the expected population growth. The section attempts to illustrate the linkages between growth and the availability of community facilities and services. Rapidly growing municipalities, such as Braselton, are experiencing a strong demand for new infrastructure in the form of roads, water, sewer, and public protection. This increased demand, combined with the requirements for periodic maintenance and expansion of existing facilities, creates an increasing financial burden on the local government. The comprehensive plan's intent is to carefully coordinate future infrastructure expansion with each section of the plan to provide for the orderly growth of the town.

Organization

This element is divided into ten sections discussing each of the community facilities and services identified in the Department of Community Affairs Minimum Planning Standards. These include:

- Water supply and treatment;
- Sewer and wastewater;
- Transportation;
- Solid waste management;
- Public safety;
- Hospitals and other public health facilities;
- Recreation;
- General government;
- Educational facilities; and
- Libraries.

Each of these sections describes the presence and adequacy of the facility or service and the final section outlines the community needs, goals and policies.

Transportation

The purpose of this section is to inventory the existing transportation network and assess its adequacy for transporting the current and future population. The road network is a key element in determining the city's ability to grow and function. Adequate transportation facilities are necessary not only for the transport of people, but also of goods and services. The efficiency of the network has a direct impact on the land use through its ability to disperse increased traffic levels as a result of new residential, commercial and industrial development.

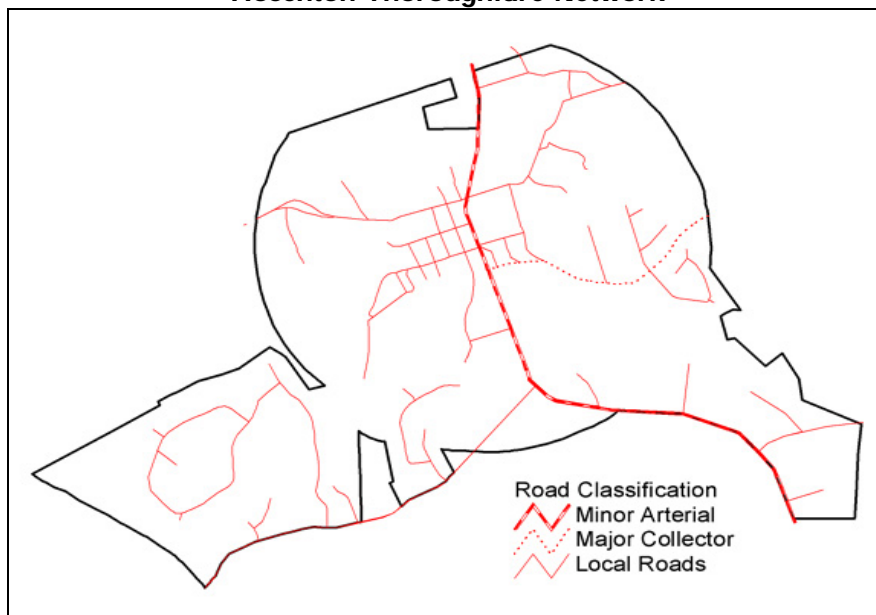
Existing Road Network

Hoschton is located in northeast Georgia and lies partly in the southwest corner of Jackson County. GA highways 53 and 332 intersect the city, with Interstate 85 directly north in Braselton. All other roads not designated as thoroughfares are considered as solely locally serving and are not designed to accommodate high levels of through traffic.

Roads are classified by the U.S. Department of Transportation based on their function within the local highway network. The general highway map of Jackson County was used to determine functional road classification and is presented in Figure1. Each classification category is defined in the following paragraph according to the U.S. Department of Transportation standards.

- 1. Principal Arterials:** These roads, which include interstates and rural freeways: serve "substantial" statewide or interstate trips, as defined by high mileage or volume; connect most urban areas of 25,000 or more and virtually all urban areas of 50,000 or more; and provide an integrated network without stub connections except where geography dictates otherwise.
- 2. Minor Arterials:** With the principal arterial system, these roads form a rural network that links other cities, larger towns, and other traffic generators, such as major resort areas, capable of attracting travel over similarly long distances; links all developed areas of the state; and serve corridors with trip lengths and travel density greater than those predominantly served by rural collector or local systems. Minor arterials therefore constitute routes whose design should be expected to provide for relatively high overall travel speeds, with minimum interference to through-movement.
- 3. Major Collectors:** These roads, with minor collectors, primarily serve the county rather than state traffic. Consequently, more moderate speeds are typical. They serve any county seat or larger town not on an arterial route, and other traffic generators of equivalent intra county importance, such as consolidated schools, shipping points, county parks, and important mining and agricultural areas; link the latter places with nearby larger towns or cities, or arterials and freeways; and serve the more important intra county travel corridors.
- 4. Minor Collectors:** Also serving county-wide traffic, these roads should evenly collect traffic from local roads and bring all developed areas within a reasonable distance of a collector road; provide service to the remaining smaller communities; and link the locally important traffic generators with the hinterland.

Figure1
Hoschton Thoroughfare Network



Roads classified on the map represent both major thoroughfares, as well as locally serving roads. Table 1 identifies the total mileage of each route classification.

Table 1
Total Mileage by Route Type

Type of Road	Mileage
Principal Arterial	0
Minor Arterial	3.02
Major Collector	0.85
Minor Collector	0
Local	16.45
Totals	20.32

Source: Northeast Georgia RDC

Level of Service

The quality of service provided by the road network requires a quantitative measure of the operational efficiency of the roads. A method of analysis is to determine the Level of Service (LOS) of the major thoroughfares within the network (Illustrated in Figure1). According to the Highway Capacity Manual, LOS is a measure describing operational conditions of a roadway in terms of average speed, travel time, maneuverability, and traffic interruptions. There are six LOS categories, ranging from A to F (described in Table 2), each describing the operating conditions associated with them.

Table 2
Level of Service Definitions

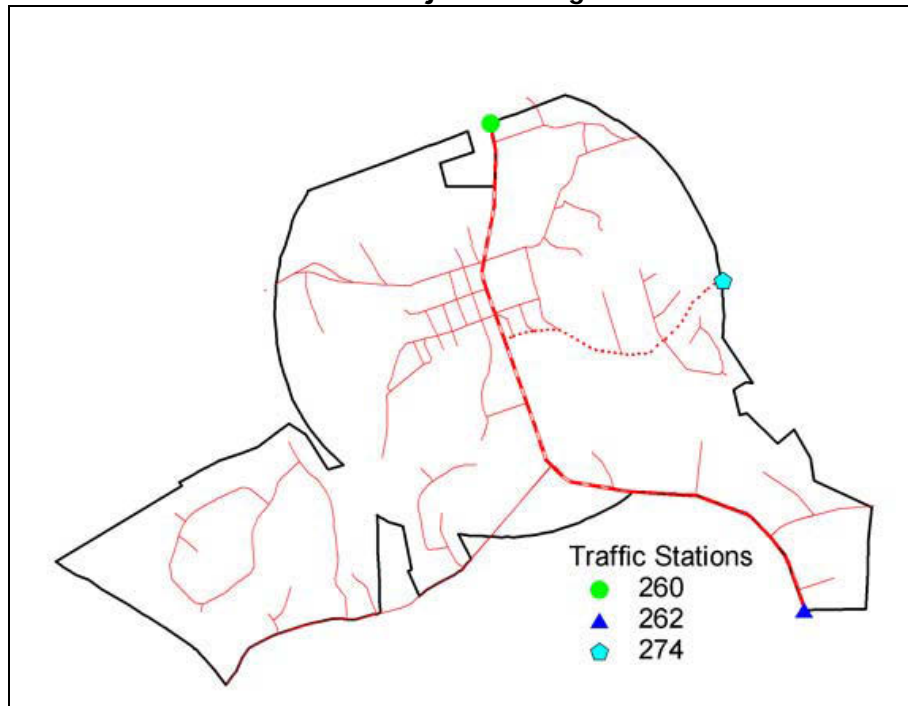
Level of Service	Quality of Traffic Operation
A	Free flow, minimum delay at signalized intersections.
B	Occasional short delays that may require waiting through one red light.
C	Stable flow with intermittent delays at signalized intersections (typical design level). Backups may develop behind turning vehicles.
D	Approaching unstable flow and may require waiting through two or more red lights.
E	Unstable flow. Roadway is operating at capacity with high levels of congestion that may result in lengthy delays.
F	Forced flow through jammed intersections. Excessive delays resulting in extremely high levels of congestion.

Source: Transportation Research Board Highway Capacity Manual, 2000

The LOS indicates the roadway conditions during the peak hour of traffic, generally those associated with the morning and evening “rush hours” (7:00-8:00 am and 4:00-5:00 pm). It is calculated by determining the ratio of traffic volume to roadway capacity for segments of individual roadways based on accumulated flow from collector roads within its “trafficshed”. A trafficshed operates in a similar fashion to a watershed, assuming that vehicular traffic will flow from rural collector roads onto larger arterial roads.

As indicated in Table 2, the typical design level of a road represents an operational LOS C. This indicates that roads are designed to adequately handle 65% of the road’s capacity while maintaining a stable flow of traffic. According to the most recent traffic count data (2001 counts from the Georgia Department of Transportation) the heaviest traveled roads in the city GA Highways 53 and 332. Figure 2 illustrates the traffic count station locations, and Table 3 illustrates the counts at each of the stations for 1997 and 2001.

**Figure 2
AADT of Major Thoroughfares**



***Note:** All traffic counts report on two-way traffic totals.
Station points do not reflect actual locations and are estimated based on GDOT maps.

**Table 3
Average Annual Daily Traffic Counts**

Route Name	Station No.	1997 Count	2002 Count	Percent Change
State Route 53	260	10,143	13,699	35.1
State Route 53	262	5,924	8,508	43.6
State Route 332	274	1,790	3,351	87.2

Source: Georgia Department of Transportation

*Station No.: Refers to the number illustrated on Figure 2.

The total Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) estimates increased for each of the major roads. The AADT is derived from the yearly traffic count data and estimates the average total daily traffic on identified segments of all major roads in the county. Segments of GA Highway 53 had relatively high percentage increases between 1997 and 2002, illustrating the increase in through traffic Hoschton has experienced as more vehicles are passing through the city traveling towards Interstate 85. The largest increase was along GA Highway 332, which recorded a 2002 count of 3,351. Total daily traffic increased 87.2% from a 1,790 count in 1997. This can be attributed to the increase in residential development outside of Hoschton and the use of GA Highway 332 as a collector route for traffic destined for GA Highway 53, and eventually Interstate 85.

Because of the lack of numerical data for roadways within each of the thoroughfare trafficsheds, it is difficult to quantify the level of service of the major thoroughfares. However, approximations can be generated using the Highway Capacity Manual Urban Street Concept, which formulates peak-hour service volumes based on a

standardized set of assumptions. Table 4 illustrates the directional design-hour peak volume, which factors peak-period traffic flows (a.m. rush hour statistics) and directional distribution.

Table 4
LOS Estimates for Major Thoroughfares

Route Name	Class	Station No.	2002 Count	DDHV	LOS
SR 53	1	260	13,699	822	B
SR 53	2	262	8,508	510	C
SR 332	1	274	3,351	201	A

Source: Highway Capacity Manual: Urban Street Concepts

*Class: Determined by the free-flow speed vehicles are able to travel under low-volume conditions when all signals are green throughout the entire trip.

*Station No.: Refers to the traffic count station number from Figure 2.

*DDHV: Direction Design-Hour Volume. Illustrates the peak hour trips traveling in the same direction.

Formula: $2002 \text{ Count} * \text{Directional Distribution for Urban Radials (0.60)} * \text{Peak-Hour Traffic Flow for Rural Areas (0.10)}$.

*LOS: Level of service estimate based on estimated volume capacities for different classes of roads.

Planned Transportation Improvements

The town does not operate its own Roads and Bridges Department. The majority of the major thoroughfares are state routes and operated and maintained by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT).

The only transportation improvement item currently planned within the city is the streetscape enhancement project in downtown Hoschton. The project is to be funded through a transportation enhancement award, totaling \$550,000. The project improves the availability of downtown parking, increases the pedestrian safety along GA Highway 53 through the planting of a tree-lined buffer and providing a cross-walk to the historic depot, and improves the aesthetics of downtown through increased vegetative cover.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

There is currently no comprehensive inventory of existing pedestrian or bicycle facilities in the town. Many of the new suburban developments throughout the region are not built to the pedestrian or bicyclist scale and lack the necessary facilities to encourage their maneuverability. One of the largest impediments to pedestrian and bicyclist movement is today's development pattern. Suburban development has become more scattered and further away from retail and service outlets, making it increasingly difficult to walk or ride anything other than a car to do basic everyday household activities. The lack of pedestrian and bicycle facilities is a national epidemic and has been linked to deteriorating health in suburban children by the Center for Disease Control.

There are no bicycle facility plans in place involving the location of bicycle lanes through either the Planned Statewide Bicycle Route Network or the Northeast Georgia Regional Bikeway Plan. The streetscape project is intended to increase pedestrian mobility in the downtown.

In addition to the streetscape project, the city has a strong desire to increase the accessibility of the downtown district to both pedestrians and bicyclists, and to link the downtown with the Intermediate School and the new park through sidewalk construction.

Public Transportation

There is currently no public transportation available in Hoschton, and it is not in the immediate plans. The population totals and density is not conducive to implementing a public transportation system, and until the number of locally employed residents increases there will not be a large demand for it.

Railroads

There is no rail service through the City of Hoschton. The closest rail service is the CSX Transportation System lines operating in Jefferson and Winder.

Aviation

There is no direct aviation service to the City of Hoschton. The closest local-serving airports are the Winder-Barrow and Jackson County airports. There is commuter air service at the Athens-Ben Epps Airport, and full commercial air service at Atlanta-Hartsfield International Airport.

Transportation Assessment

Overall the transportation system is adequately serving the existing population, however there is a current deficiency in the availability of pedestrian and bicycle facilities. These problems are being addressed through the implementation of the streetscape project, and through the identification of future funding sources to increase pedestrian mobility throughout the town. Increased pedestrian and bicycle access to the downtown will help to revitalize downtown businesses and encourage downtown activities.

The road network adequately serves the existing population. However, problems arise at peak-hour traffic periods because of Hoschton's location in proximity to Interstate 85. Traffic on GA Highway 53, through the center of the city, has increased tremendously over the past five years as development, both in, and surrounding Hoschton has increased. Much of this increased traffic is as a result of increased commuter traffic using GA Highway 53 as an arterial route to access Interstate 85. The downtown traffic issues must be addressed, particularly those related to pedestrian safety, to fully revitalize the district and to increase the use of alternative forms of transportation.

The future land use patterns play a large role in the efficiency of the transportation network, particularly in a rapidly expanding municipality dominated by single-family residential development. A typical single-family detached home generates an average of 9.54 vehicle trips per day, according to the Institute of Traffic Engineers. According to 2000 figures, there are now approximately 1.88 passenger vehicles per household, 42.5% of households reported they had two vehicles, and 26.6% of households reported three or more vehicles per household. Within the existing transportation network new development, in conjunction with development elsewhere in the region using GA Highway 53 as an access route to Interstate 85 will create LOS deficiencies within the city. Each new residential development is assumed to create one peak-hour trip (according to the 2000 Highway Capacity Manual). There is the potential for an additional 778 single-family residential homes to be constructed within the next ten years (according to housing forecasts in Chapter 5), not to mention the available commercial and industrial zoned land. Each of these homes deposits a peak-hour automobile trip onto the road network, eventually utilizing GA Highway 53, which will create LOS deficiencies.

Water Supply and Treatment

One of the most important issues throughout the state is the availability and quality of drinking water. The incredible growth rates experienced in the Atlanta Metro areas has put tremendous pressures on public drinking water sources and has depleted numerous private wells as the groundwater supply continues to decrease.

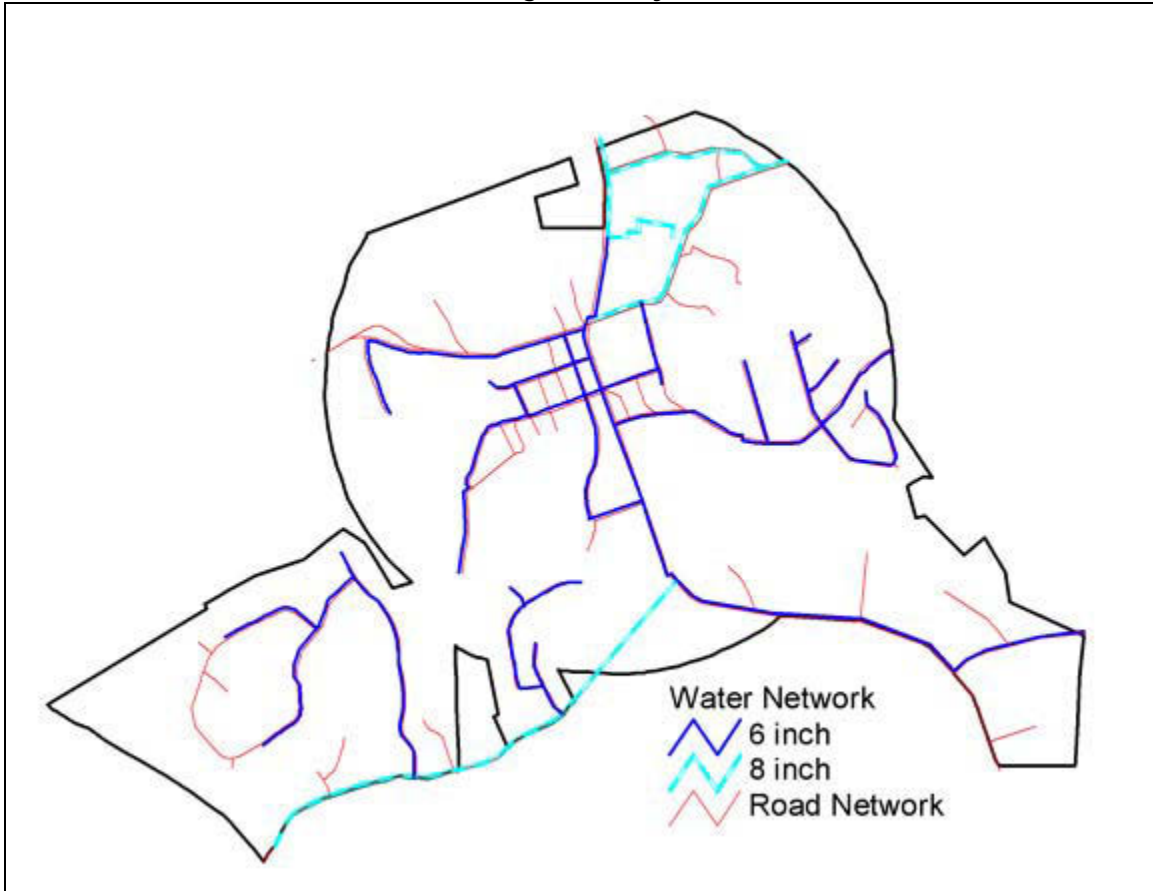
Inventory of Existing System

Hoschton is the public water supplier for all residents of the city. The system currently serves 565 (as reported in March of 2003) customers. The system is served by an underground well and purchased water from the Jackson County Water Authority.

The town has 0.100 million gallons per day (mgd) of available storage space through the use of one above ground storage tank. The entire system uses approximately 0.100 mgd, and has a current capacity of 0.892 mgd.

Figure 3 illustrates the location of the existing water network.

Figure 3
Existing Water System



Source: City of Hoschton

Water System Assessment

The system is in the need of an additional storage tank to adequately serve the existing population and would require a total of two additional storage tanks to ensure adequate levels of service for the expected population growth of Hoschton.

The expected growth in the area requires an increase in both the available and planned capacity. Population and housing forecasts estimate over 780 new housing units by the year 2010, creating a population of 2,882. Assuming an average consumption of 100 gallons/person/day, the increased growth will require an additional 0.181mgd of water. This only takes into account residential development and does not include future commercial and industrial development.

This illustrates the continued need for monitoring the adequacy of the water network to ensure its ability to accommodate the expected population growth. This is merely an approximation of the potential impacts on the water supply based on an estimate of residential development only.

Public Sewer and Wastewater

Another major issue concerning the development of Hoschton is the adequacy of the public sewerage system to accommodate future growth. The availability of a public sewerage system is an attractive feature to developers who often seek to annex into municipalities because of the lack of infrastructure in unincorporated areas of most counties.

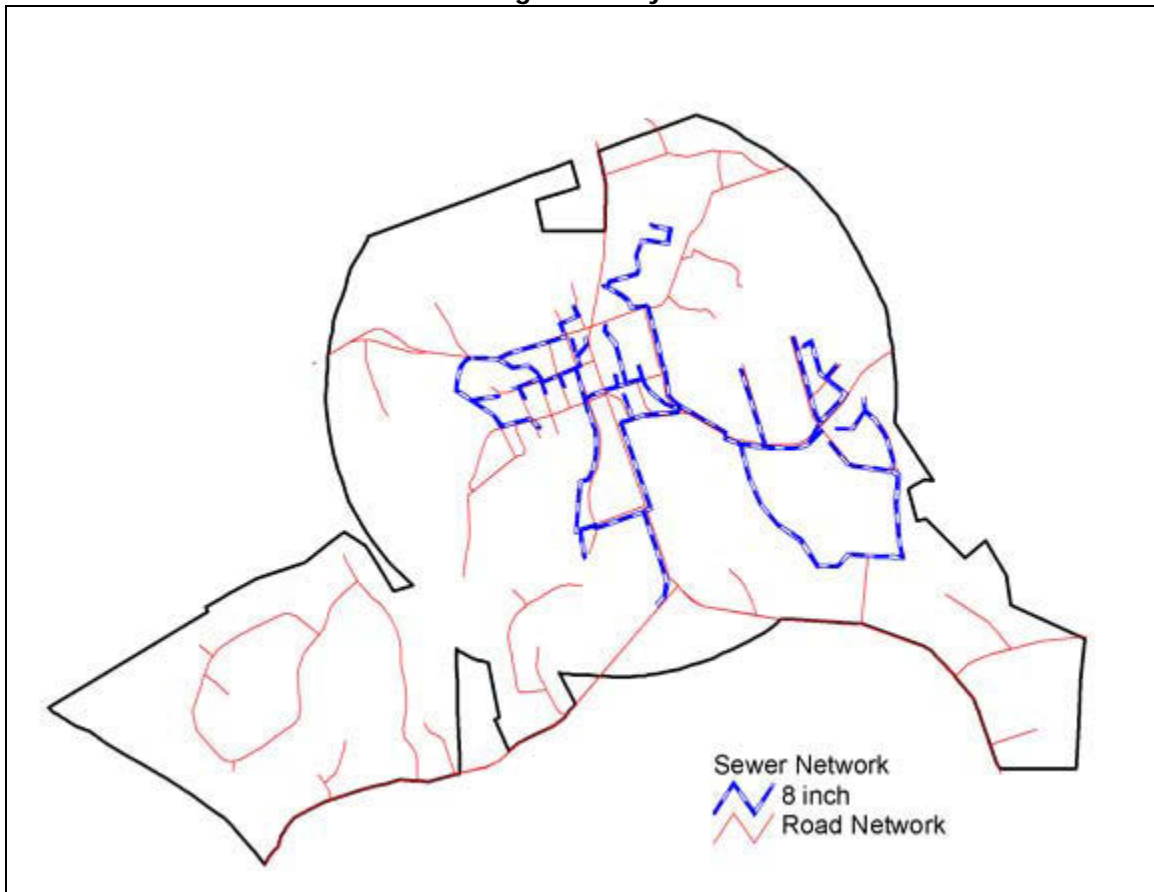
Inventory of Existing Systems

The town operates a water pollution control plant with a capacity of 0.100 mgd, serving a total of 343 total customers (as reported in March 2003). The average daily flow at the plant is near capacity.

All sewer customers are within the town limits and there are currently no plans for expansion of the sewer service area beyond that.

Figure 4 illustrates the existing sewer network.

**Figure 4
Existing Sewer Systems**



Source: City of Hoschton

Sewer System Assessment

The current system serves only a small percentage of the total potential users in the city and the demand for sewer service continues to increase as new development occurs on a yearly basis. Expansion is planned for 2004, increasing capacity to 0.500 mgd.

The projections for future growth pose the same dilemma to the sewer system as they do the water. The additional 780 housing units generate an additional 0.154 mgd demand on the sewer system. This is based on an average use rate of 85 gallons/person/day and an additional 1,812 residents resulting from the 780 new households. As mentioned in the previous section, this only includes residential development.

The planned expansion of the sewer system will handle the expected increase in residential development, assuming that all units will be connected to the network. However, capacity issues must be dealt with on a regular basis to ensure that an adequate level of service can be provided to future populations and that adequate capacities exist to accommodate future economic development initiatives.

Solid Waste

The city does not directly collect solid waste. Private haulers contract with the city. The city then bills individual users for the service.

Public Safety

Law Enforcement

The City of Hoschton operates its own Police Department, which is currently located in City Hall serving the entire city limits. The department staff consists of two full-time patrol officers, one Captain who handles investigations and the K-9 unit, one Chief who handles all administration, and three part-time uniformed officers. The department averages upwards of 2,500 calls per year with an average response time between two and ten minutes, depending on the time it takes for the dispatch to relay the call to the department.

Law Enforcement Assessment

The existing population has nearly outgrown the Police Department's ability to adequately serve the city. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Report of 2000, the national average of small urban centers under 10,000 people was 3.2 sworn officers per 1,000 residents and 4.1 total personnel per 1,000 residents. According to the staff figures for the Hoschton Police Department there are currently 2.8 sworn officers per 1,000 residents (not including the Chief), and 3.7 total personnel per 1,000 residents. This reflects, both a lack of administrative support and full-time uniformed officers needed to provide an increased level of service. Because of the expected growth the department estimates it will need an additional two full-time officers to adequately serve the future populations. Of particular importance is the expected traffic increases through town as a result of not only increased development in Hoschton, but also in the surrounding area.

Varying demographic traits greatly affect the requirements for law enforcement agencies from one jurisdiction to another. Any comparison between communities should be carefully conducted and national averages should only be used as indicators not benchmarks.

Fire Protection

Hoschton does not operate its own Fire Department. The town falls within the West Jackson County fire protection zone.

Emergency Medical Services

Hoschton does not operate its own emergency medical services. They are available through the West Jackson County fire department.

Hospitals and Other Public Health Facilities

Hospitals and Health Centers

Hoschton does not have direct access to a hospital or public health center located within the city limits. The nearest locations are in Braselton, Winder, Commerce, Athens, Lawrenceville, and Gainesville.

Nursing Homes

There are no nursing homes within Hoschton. Jackson County has two facilities totaling 237 beds. Occupancy rates are quite high with an average of 91.1% between the two Jackson County facilities.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

An important aspect of urban development is recreational opportunities, both passive and active. The availability of parks and recreation opportunities plays a large role in the perceived quality of life of one area over another and can make the difference in a relocation decision.

Inventory of Parks and Recreation Facilities

The National Recreation and Park Association has developed a set of standards that communities can use when developing guidelines for parks and recreation facilities planning. The Association defines parkland in a tiered approach and assigns a potential service boundary for each tier. The four tiers of parks can be defined as:

1. **Neighborhood Park:** serves the population of a neighborhood, and is generally accessible by bicycle or on foot. Typical facilities include an equipped play area, multipurpose courts, multipurpose fields, picnic area, and passive recreation area. The customary service area is a one-mile radius.
2. **Community Park:** located near major roadways and designed to serve the needs of more than one neighborhood. Typical facilities include a large group picnic shelter, swimming pool, lighted or unlighted baseball/softball fields, lighted tennis courts, recreation building, gymnasium, rest room, passive recreation area, and parking. The customary service area is a three-mile radius.
3. **Regional Park:** developed to serve several communities, population centers, or large portions of the county. Typical features include nature, hiking, riding or exercise trails, nature center, amphitheater, or other specialized building, area for boating or swimming, rest room, passive recreation area, and parking. The customary service area is a twenty-mile radius.
4. **Highly Specialized Park:** primarily used for athletics or specialized recreational activities. Typical facilities include baseball field, softball field, football field, soccer field, gun range, rest rooms, passive recreation area, and parking. The customary service area is a twenty-mile radius.

-Recreation, Park, Open Space, and Greenway Standards and Guidelines; National Recreation and Park Association, 1996.

There are other areas that may be classified as parks and recreation that do not meet the definitions set forth. Areas that have been set aside within new subdivision developments for common open space may provide passive recreational activities or simply be used for the conservation of naturally sensitive lands. Also, lands adjacent to river and stream corridors may provide passive recreation opportunities.

Table 5
Existing Park Acreages

Park Type	Acreage	Acres per 1000 Persons
Neighborhood	0.5	0.46
Community	0	0
Regional	0	0
Highly Specialized	18	16.82
Open Spaces	0	0
Totals	18.5	17.28

The only park areas currently in Hoschton is the Community Park, located adjacent to the historic depot, and the newly constructed ball fields, which the county is leasing for county recreation programs, located at the end of Cabin Drive.

Assessment of Parks and Recreation Facilities

The National Recreation and Park Association have set as a guideline level of service 10 acres of park, recreation, or open space per 1,000 persons. Table 6 breaks down those ten acres and identifies recommended levels of service for each of the identified park categories.

Table 6
Adequacy of Existing Facilities

Category	Existing Ratio (Acres/1000 persons)	Recommended Ratio
Neighborhood	0.46	0.7
Community	0	0.9
Regional	0	1.6
Highly Specialized	16.82	2.3
Open Spaces	0	4.5
Total	17.28/1000 persons	10 acres/1000 persons

Despite an adequate total acreage per 1,000 residents the city may be deficient in the types of recreation areas that it is providing. However, upon full completion, by Jackson County, of the eighteen-acre park (currently classified as Highly Specialized because of the ball fields) it is anticipated that it will provide a variety of recreation opportunities including children's playground areas and areas designated for passive recreation, which will provide a greater variety of facilities.

Government Facilities

Inventory of General Government Facilities

This section presents an inventory of general government facilities. Although the respective local government owns and operates a number of buildings only those that are used for everyday government activity are reported on. The only building currently used for everyday government activities is City Hall, located on the City Square on Highway 53, in downtown Hoschton.

City Hall houses all of the local government offices and departments and is also home to the Hoschton Police Department

Assessment of Government Facilities

The city reports that the current facilities adequately serve the existing needs of the local government. However, as populations continue to increase and the corresponding government and police staff increase accordingly additional space may need to be acquired to provide adequate room for all of the local government functions.

Educational Facilities

Hoschton does not operate a public school system, but does house the Jackson County Intermediate School. The town lies within the Jackson County public school district, offering elementary, middle and high schools providing pre-kindergarten to grade twelve.

In 2000, Hoschton reported a total of 284 students enrolled in Jackson County public schools, up from 152 reported students in 1990. As residential development continues in the city student populations are sure to rise. On average, an additional 0.72 public school-aged children are generated with each new single-family household. As single-family households continue to dominate new development (See discussion on housing in Chapter 5) an additional 700 school-aged children can be expected to enter Jackson County schools over the next 10 years.

Libraries and Cultural Facilities

Inventory of Existing Library and Cultural Facilities

Hoschton is a part of the Piedmont Regional Library System, that serves a three-county region including, Banks, Barrow, and Jackson. The Town of Braselton houses the nearest library facility, the West Jackson Library, located at the intersection of Harrison and Frances Streets.

Hoschton is rich in cultural facilities, as noted in the Historic Resources Section. Some of the major historic resources include, the historic rail depot and the historic Hillcrest-Allen Clinic and Hospital. Hoschton's two aforementioned historic resources are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the city is considering nominating the downtown historic district for National Register consideration.

Assessment of Libraries and Cultural Facilities

The library possesses a total of 2,050 total volumes, which is equal to 0.9-volumes per capita when considering the combined population for Braselton and Hoschton (not to mention the population associated with unincorporated residents within the library's service area). A standard level of service is 1.5-volumes per capita, indicating that West Jackson Library does not have an adequate supply of library volumes to serve the existing population.

Space is limited in the existing facility with little room for expansion. In order to increase the level of service to meet the demands of an increasing population a larger facility is needed. The city is working with Jackson County, the Town of Braselton and the Piedmont Regional Library System to construct a new facility adequate to accommodate the necessary expansion to match the expected population growth.

Needs, Goals, and Policies

Transportation

Goal: Provide a safe, efficient, and effective transportation system that reflects both existing and future needs while providing a variety of transportation options.

Need: Increase pedestrian and motorist safety along GA Highway 53 and all major thoroughfares.

Policy: Continue to work with the Georgia Department of Transportation to identify areas of concern related to road safety.

Policy: Monitor road conditions and analyze the potential adverse impacts of new development.

Need: Improve the mobility of pedestrians and bicyclists throughout the town, particularly in and around the downtown core.

Water Supply and Treatment

Goal: Provide potable water service in a safe, clean, efficient, economical, and environmentally sound manner concurrent with new development.

Need: Meet environmental criteria and public health rules and guidelines.

Need: Continue to maintain and expand existing facilities as required to efficiently meet the increasing demand.

Policy: Analyze the ability of the existing infrastructure to handle all new development prior to issuing permits.

Policy: Maximize the use of existing infrastructure for potable water service.

Policy: Invest in new infrastructure as needed to ensure the continued provision of an adequate level of service.

Need: Construct additional above ground water tanks to increase the adequacy of storage capabilities.

Sewer and Wastewater

Goal: Provide sanitary sewer service in a safe, clean, efficient, economical, and environmentally sound manner, concurrent with urban development.

Need: Meet environmental criteria and public health rules and guidelines.

Need: Continue to maintain and expand existing facilities as required to efficiently meet increasing demands.

Policy: Analyze the ability of existing infrastructure to handle all new development prior to issuing permits.

Policy: Maximize the use of existing infrastructure for sewer service.

Policy: Invest in new infrastructure as needed to ensure the continued provision of an adequate level of service.

Solid Waste Management

Note: The city does not directly provide solid waste services to residents. All solid waste collection is done by private enterprise.

Public Safety

Note: The city currently only provides law enforcement services and has no immediate plans to provide either fire or emergency medical services, which are both currently handled by Jackson County departments.

Goal: Provide responsive and effective law enforcement ensuring adequate staff, equipment and space is available.

Need: Continued investment in the law enforcement agency to maintain an adequate level of service in the face of increased population.

Policy: Invest in personnel, equipment, training and facility expansion as dictated by growth.

Hospitals and Other Public Health Facilities

Note: The city does not operate any hospitals or public health facilities and has no immediate plans for facility construction. All public health needs are served through nearby jurisdictions.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

Goal: Provide, protect and maintain a quality, accessible, and economically efficient network of parks, recreation facilities, and open space that serves all residents.

Need: Monitor the availability and adequacy of recreation areas and facilities to ensure they are providing an acceptable level of service.

Policy: Acquire, maintain and develop parks and recreation facilities as needed to accommodate increased populations.

General Government

Goal: Provide adequate space, equipment, and technology to local government officials and staff to facilitate the decision making process.

Need: Evaluate the use and efficiency of local government facilities and services.

Policy: Ensure adequate levels of staff, equipment and space are available for local government activities.

Policy: Maintain ongoing communication between county and municipal governments to provide services in a coordinated and efficient manner.

Policy: Continue to solicit and utilize citizen advisory committees to provide public input into all planning activities.

Educational Facilities

Note: The city does not operate a separate school system and relies on the efforts of the Jackson County public school system.

Libraries and Cultural Facilities

Goal: Continued support of the Piedmont Regional Library System to ensure that adequate library facilities exist serving the entire regional population.

Need: Local support for the planned expansion of the West Jackson Library.

Chapter 6: Housing

Introduction

Federal legislation declared, in the National Housing Act of 1949, that it is a national goal to attain "...a decent home and a suitable living environment for every American family." The difficulty lies in interpreting what constitutes a decent home and a suitable living environment. There are no easy answers to these questions and attempts to achieve this national goal at the local level have proven difficult.

There are a variety of aspects involved in planning for housing, including physical, economic, social, and environmental. Each of these are interrelated and planning for housing, in collaboration with the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan, attempts to mitigate negative impacts of the physical structure of housing on the economic, social and environmental conditions of the community.

Purpose

The purpose of the housing section is to inventory and assess the existing housing stock and to formulate a set of goals and policies to ensure the adequate provision of housing for future populations. The city acknowledges that the private sector will continue to play the major role in providing an adequate supply of quality housing. However, the local government hopes to assist the private sector in meeting the challenges and demands of providing a suitable housing supply for existing and future populations.

The overall goals of the housing element are to:

- Encourage a variety of housing types (price, location, and structure considerations);
- Preserve the existing housing stock (rehabilitation, revitalization, and historic preservation considerations);
- Decrease negative environmental impacts of new housing construction; and
- Coordinate new housing construction with the Future Land Use map and sound growth management principles ensuring the availability of adequate utilities and facilities.

Organization

The outline of this element follows the minimum planning standards set forth by DCA. The first section examines the housing types. The second section examines the age and condition of the existing housing stock. The third section looks at occupancy and tenure statistics for the existing housing stock. The fourth section analyzes the costs of both owner and renter occupied housing. The fifth section uses population forecasts to establish the future demand for housing, and the last section assesses the housing needs and formulates a set of goals and policies for future housing development.

Housing Types

Table 1 analyzes the existing housing stock and includes historical data for comparison for the city and state. Over the past decade housing construction has occurred at an incredible rate in Hoschton. The majority of this expansion has been an increase in single-family residential construction.

The number of single-family homes increased by 96.1% from 1990 to 2000 and currently represents 75.2% of the total housing stock. The majority of new construction has occurred in the southwestern and eastern portions of the city. Hoschton data displays a reliance on single-family residential development that is typical of many metro suburban areas. However, this reliance is not as dominant as in other suburban markets. The city is much closer to

state averages in both single-family and multi-family units than other similarly sized municipalities in the region. This indicates that Hoschton does have a relatively high number of affordable rental units within its borders.

Currently multi-family housing represents 16.6% of the total housing stock, which has actually decreased since 1990 because of the rapid increase in single-family residential construction. However, the actual number of units has increased from 53 in 1990 to 67 in 2000. The number and percentage share of mobile homes has decreased significantly since 1990, and this trend projects to continue as the majority of new residential development is expected to be single-family units.

**Table 1
Housing Units: Types and Trends**

Jurisdiction	1980		1990		2000		%Change 80-90	%Change 90-00
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent	Total	Percent		
Hoschton	168	100%	251	100%	404	100%	44.3%	60.9%
Single-Family	100	59.5	155	61.7	304	75.2	55.0	96.1
Multi-Family	43	25.6	53	21.1	67	16.6	23.3	26.4
Mobile Home	25	14.9	43	17.2	33	8.2	72.0	-23.3
Georgia	2,012,640	100%	2,638,418	100%	3,281,737	100%	31.1%	24.4%
Single-Family	1,525,070	75.8	1,712,259	64.9%	2,201,467	67.1	12.3	28.6
Multi-Family	334,622	16.6	598,271	22.7%	681,019	20.8	78.8	13.8
Mobile Home	152,948	7.6	327,888	12.4%	399,251	12.1	114.4	21.8

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; 1980, 1990, 2000

*Total represents the total number of housing units reported during the identified census year.

*Percent represents the percentage of total housing units for each housing category.

*Percent Change reflects the increase in both total housing units, and each of the individual categories over the previous two decades.

Hoschton was among the top ten fastest growing communities in the region over the past decade. Its location within proximity to metro Atlanta employment opportunities, has led to its rapid expansion. The majority of the housing increase is attributed to single-family residential development, as urban residents moved outward to take advantage of the rural characteristics that Hoschton provides.

Age and Condition of Housing

Age of Housing Stock

Table 2 examines the age of the housing stock and compares it with state characteristics. The age of the housing stock is a general indicator of the maintenance costs that can be expected. Overall, Hoschton's housing stock is quite new. Over 45% of the stock has been built since 1990, and over 61% of those houses have been built since 1995.

Table 2
Age of Housing Stock

Jurisdiction	99-00*		95-98		90-94		80-89		70-79		60-69		40-59		Pre-39	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Hoschton	2	0.5	111	27.2	71	17.4	70	17.2	38	9.3	41	10.0	45	11.0	30	7.4
Georgia*	1306	4.0	4135	12.6	3708	11.3	7212	22.0	6089	18.6	4160	12.7	4274	13.0	1929	5.9

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; 2000

*Column 99-00 reports on new construction from 1999 through to March of 2000.

*Georgia data is reported in 000's.

*No. refers to the total number of units constructed during that time period.

*% refers to the percentage of total units represented by each time period.

The housing age data reflects the rapid population increase that Hoschton has experienced. Nearly one-third of the total housing units have been constructed since 1995, illustrating the youth of the housing stock. In addition, an estimated 130 single-family units have been constructed since 2000 illustrating the continuing trend of residential expansion. Hoschton does have a number of historic homes, most of which are clustered in, and around, the downtown district. This is illustrated in the relatively high percentage of homes built Pre-1939.

Condition of Housing Stock

The only way to gauge the condition of the housing stock is through the use of federal standards that report on the number of homes built prior to 1939, the number that lack complete plumbing facilities, and the number that house more than one resident per room (anything greater than one is considered overcrowded by federal standards). Table 3 illustrates housing condition data for the city and compares them with state levels.

Table 3
Condition of Housing Stock

Jurisdiction	Lack of Plumbing			Pre-1939			Overcrowded		
	80	90	00	80	90	00	80	90	00
Hoschton	13	3.9	0.0	52	18.5	7.4	NA	2.4	3.1
Georgia	2.0	8.0	0.5	15.0	8.0	5.9	NA	4.0	4.9

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; 1980, 1990, 2000

*Data is reported as a percentage of the total housing stock for each category.

*Lack of plumbing refers to all units lacking complete plumbing facilities.

*Pre-1939 refers to housing units constructed prior to 1939.

*Overcrowded refers to occupied housing units that have 1.01 or more occupants per room

Overall the housing condition throughout the city is adequate and well below state levels, except in the existence of Pre-1939 homes, which indicates a high concentration of historic structures.

The number of units lacking plumbing facilities has decreased to zero, as reflected by the dominance of newly constructed homes and the decrease in usage of houses built prior to 1939.

The percentage of overcrowded units actually increased between 1990 and 2000, which may indicate that larger families have begun to occupy some of the smaller multi-family units located in the city.

Occupancy and Tenure of Housing

This section addresses the occupancy and tenure characteristics of housing units. Vacancy rates are an important variable for determining the adequacy of the existing housing stock. Vacant houses and apartments are necessary to provide a choice of location and price for housing consumers. A healthy vacancy rate is between, approximately, four and five percent and fluctuates according to the housing market. Too few vacant units may drive up prices and limit housing choices, while too many reduces the demand for new units, limiting available options. The tenure of a housing unit refers to whether or not it is occupied by its owner or a renter. Table 3 illustrates the occupancy and tenure characteristics for the housing stock and provides a state comparison.

The table reflects the increased single-family construction. The percentage of owner-occupied housing has increased to 70.9%, above the state average, and the ratio of owners to renters is also above the state level. In turn, the percentage of renter-occupied housing is lower than the state average but as previously mentioned, the differences between city and state levels is not as disparate as other jurisdictions in the region.

The overall vacancy rate is relatively low at 4.0%. The owner vacancy rate was well below the overall rate, at 0.4%, indicating that the demand for housing is keeping pace with new construction. The rental is much higher than the owner vacancy rate, at 3.4%, but both are much lower than the corresponding state averages and reflect significant decreases from 1990 rates.

The owner to renter ratio illustrates the overall trend of increased home ownership over the last decade. The trend has increased dramatically over the past ten years increasing from 1.4:1 in 1990 to a ratio of 2.4:1 in 2000. This indicates that for every renter-occupied unit, there are 2.4 owner-occupied units.

**Table 3
Occupancy and Tenure of Housing**

	Census Year	Hoschton	Georgia*
Total Units	1980	174	20,126
	1990	251	26,384
	2000	404	32,817
Occupied Units	1980	168	18,717
	1990	228	23,666
	2000	388	30,064
Vacancy Rate (%)	1980	3.4	7.0
	1990	9.2	8.3
	2000	4.0	10.4
Owner-Occupied (%)	1980	74.4	60.4
	1990	58.8	58.2
	2000	70.9	67.5
Owner Vacancy Rate (%)	1980	NA	NA
	1990	2.9	2.5
	2000	0.4	1.9
Renter-Occupied (%)	1980	25.6	32.6
	1990	41.2	31.5
	2000	29.1	32.5

	Census Year	Hoschton	Georgia*
Renter Vacancy Rate (%)	1980	NA	NA
	1990	9.6	12.2
	2000	3.4	8.2
Owner: Renter Ratio	1980	2.9:1	1.9:1
	1990	1.4:1	1.9:1
	2000	2.4:1	2.1:1

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

*Georgia Totals are reported in 000's.

*All decimal values represent percentage totals.

*1980 data is not available for owner and renter vacancy rates.

*The Owner: Renter ratio is calculated by dividing the number of owner-occupied units by the number of renter-occupied units.

Cost of Housing

There are many factors that contribute to the overall cost of housing including the price of land, construction costs, availability of financing options, and land regulation policies governing development and construction. All of these factors combine with the supply and demand of housing to determine its price. It is important that the price of housing within a jurisdiction is compatible with the earned income of its residents. Analyzing the cost structure of the housing market can help determine if there is an adequate supply of affordable housing options in the community.

Table 5 analyzes the median cost for both owner and renter occupied housing, and compares the values with state data. All dollar figures are converted to 2000 dollars for comparison.

Table 5
Cost of Housing

Jurisdiction	Owner Median Value (\$)			Renter Median Value(\$)			Owner %	Renter %	Owner %	Renter %
	80	90	00	80	90	00	Change 80-90	Change 80-90	Change 90-00	Change 90-00
Hoschton	54,126	80,369	153,100	403	551	513	48.5	36.7	90.5	-6.9
Georgia	48,275	93,939	111,200	320	453	613	94.6	41.6	18.4	35.3

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; 1990, 2000
Calculations by NEGRDC

*All dollar values are expressed in 2000 constant dollars to eliminate inflation from the comparison.

The median cost of housing in Hoschton has increased tremendously since 1990 and is now considerably higher than the state median value. This can be attributed to the demand for high-end, large, single-family housing created by the in-migration of population creating a demand for new construction.

The renter-occupied median rent is the state the state value, and actually decreased in real value since 1990. The majority of multi-family units are targeted for low-moderate-income tenants and there is currently no high-value condominium or town-home type of multi-family developments.

Future Housing Demand

The forecast of future housing demand is based primarily on the expected population increase in Hoschton, the amount of available land designated for residential use, and the trends established in previous sections of this chapter, and elsewhere in the plan. Currently the majority of the housing inventory is single-family residences with a relatively high percentage of the housing stock in multi-family development.

The previous sections of this chapter have revealed the following trends:

1. The percentage of homeownership has increased over the past ten years and outpaces state rates.
2. The corresponding rate of renter-occupied housing has decreased.
3. Multi-family housing is targeted for low-moderate-income households.
4. The supply of multi-family housing adequately serves the city population.
5. The total percentage of mobile/manufactured homes is decreasing.
6. The overall condition of the housing stock is improving with the increase in new construction.
7. The cost of housing is increasing but residents are becoming wealthier on average.
8. The supply of residential designated land will run out by the year 2010.

The following forecasts are merely guidelines of what to expect if existing trends continue to hold true. To calculate the forecasts, the following assumptions were made:

1. Demand for housing shall keep pace with population increase.
2. The population will be able to afford housing.
3. The percentage rate of owner-occupied housing shall increase throughout the planning horizon due to the increase in single-family residential construction.
4. Average household size shall decrease throughout the planning horizon.
5. An average vacancy rate of 5% shall be maintained throughout the planning horizon.
6. The percentage share of mobile/manufactured homes shall decrease throughout the planning horizon reflecting the existing trends.
7. The majority of new construction will be in the form of single-family residential development, decreasing the percentage share of multi-family housing.
8. The city will have built out in 2010 and cannot accommodate any further residential development without annexation or major increases in development densities.

Table 6 illustrates the housing forecast throughout the planning horizon in five-year increments from 2000 through to 2025.

In 2000 the baseline data consisted of 75.2% single-family, 16.6% multi-family, and 8.2% mobile/manufactured homes. The owner and renter occupied rates are 70.9% and 29.1% respectively.

**Table 6
Housing Demands**

Year	Total Units	New Units	Single-Family	New Units	Multi-Family	New Units	Mobile Home	New Units
2000	404	-	304	-	70	-	30	-
2005	562	158	462	158	70	0	30	0
2010	1,182	620	1,062	600	90	20	30	0
2015	1,182	0	1,062	0	90	0	30	0
2020	1,182	0	1,062	0	90	0	30	0
2023	1,182	0	1,062	0	90	0	30	0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000
Calculations by NEGRDC

The figures represent the total housing stock in Hoschton, including vacant units. Using the standard 5.0% vacancy rate for all units produces a total of 1,126 total households.

Using the baseline assumption that owner-occupied percentage rates shall increase due to the increase in single-family residential construction derives an owner-occupied total of 1,033 units and a renter-occupied total of 133 units in 2010, and beyond. The increases in multi-family housing relate to the increase in apartment units in the revitalized downtown in the form of loft apartments and above business residential uses.

Needs, Goals, and Local Assessment

Housing Choice Assessment

In order to meet the diverse needs of the population a variety of housing options need to be available. As Table 1 indicated, the majority of housing units are single-family (75.2%) and the percentage total they represent is increasing.

This trend is merely a reflection of the composition of the existing population. The demographics of households indicate that the majority are traditional, married couple types (64.2% of households) who tend to be the primary occupants of single-family residential units. Over the past decade the proportion of family to non-family households has remained relatively constant, with family households decreasing from 79.4% in 1990 to 78.6% in 2000. Despite the decrease in percentage the number of family households increased by over 68% from 181 in 1990 to 305 in 2000.

The existing housing stock seemingly matches the composition of the population. However, as the population continues to expand, economic development initiatives look to match that expansion through increased commercial and industrial activity. Increases in the retail and service industries are generally correlated with population expansion and they also support the majority of the low-wage employment opportunities. As the labor force increases in the low-wage sectors a need for affordable housing options arises and is generally met by multi-family housing. Currently the majority of multi-family housing is targeted for low-to-moderate income tenants and is generally considered to adequately meet the city's current needs. However, the lack of affordable multi-family housing options elsewhere in the surrounding area may create an unnecessary burden on Hoschton to provide the affordable housing for regional residents.

Housing Condition Assessment

Overall the condition of the housing stock is adequate due to the very recent construction of the housing stock. Over 27% of housing has been constructed since 1995 and the demand for new housing is projected to remain constant throughout the planning horizon. There are no significant issues relating to overcrowding, or lack of adequate plumbing within the existing stock, with no major increases in either category anticipated.

The only foreseeable problems may occur if Hoschton begins to house a disproportionate share of low-to-moderate income priced multi-family development. This could lead to further increases in the overcrowding statistics as families within that demographic seek affordable rental options and are willing to live in smaller units.

Housing Affordability

The definition of affordable housing is one of the most difficult to relay because of the negative stigma attached to the term. Affordable housing relates to the supply of housing available for the residents of the jurisdiction, whether they are highly educated professionals, minimum wage retail employees, or retired senior citizens.

Assessing affordability is a measure of the housing cost burden that is placed on households. More specifically, federal standards consider a household to be cost-burdened if it pays more than 30% of its gross income on housing.

Table 7 illustrates the percentages of households that are considered cost burdened by their household expense for both owner and renter-occupied units. The data indicates the percentage of total households that spend greater than 30% of their gross income on housing expenses.

**Table 7
Percentage of Cost-Burdened Households**

Jurisdiction	Owner-Occupied		Renter-Occupied	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Hoschton	22.6%	20.5%	36.1%	40.4%
Georgia	19.3%	21.0%	37.0%	35.4%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; 1990, 2000

Overall the city is comparable to state averages in both categories but the high percentage of cost burdened renters reflects a statewide concern. The higher percentages of cost-burdened households in the renter-occupied category are an indication that the city's low-to-moderate income population largely occupies them. The percentage of cost-burdened owner-occupied households decreased between census years and is now below state rates. This can be attributed to the increase in affluence of the local population since the 1990 census due to the in-migration of a highly educated, professional workforce (as discussed in Chapter 2). Although the costs of housing have increased tremendously it would appear that the majority of owner-occupied households are able to afford the increased costs.

To determine whether or not the housing stock is affordable to the population, increases in income levels must be analyzed. Increases in housing costs must correlate to increases in income to ensure that there are affordable housing options available to the entire population.

The median cost of housing in Hoschton increased to \$153,100 in 2000. Using a generally accepted lending standard that a household can qualify to purchase a home valued at 2.5 times its annual income, households in Hoschton must earn \$61,240 per year to afford a median priced home. The median income is reported as \$57,917. This illustrates that the median housing costs are slightly above the median household accounting for the 20.5% of households experiencing a financial burden.

The increase in contract rent between census years was below the state average. However, this does not necessarily mean that rental housing is affordable to all who need it. As previously mentioned, this is a problem statewide and it is becoming increasingly difficult for lower wage employees (typically retail workers) to find adequate, affordable housing. Many of these types of jobs are paying minimum (\$5.15/hour) or comparable wages. In order to afford the median contract rent without becoming cost burdened an employee must earn \$9.62/hour. Since the majority of rental units are single occupant households, or single earner families, this represents the only source of income. The average weekly wage for retail employees in Jackson County (as reported in Chapter 3) was \$309, which equates to \$7.73/hour, well below the rate required to afford median priced rental housing.

The high percentage of renter-occupied cost burdened households may be more a function of the lack of regional, affordable rental housing in the area. This draws residents to Hoschton to take advantage of the lower rental rates and the availability of adequate, affordable rental housing raising the percentages of renter-occupied cost burdened households.

Table 8 illustrates the compatibility between owner-occupied housing values and household income levels.

Table 8
Housing: Population Compatibility Owner Occupied

Housing Units in Range (%)	Housing Value Range (\$)	Households Able to Afford Housing Units (%)
6.3	< 50,000	17.7
30.4	50,000-99,999	17.7
12.5	100,000-149,999	14.5
15.8	150,000-199,999	21.9
32.9	200,000-299,999	13.2
2.1	300,000-499,999	11.6
0.0	500,000+	3.4

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; NEGRDC Calculations

Table 8 illustrates how well the existing owner-occupied housing stock serves the existing population. Overall the price of housing is compatible with the earning levels of the population, which has led to the lower percentages of owner-occupied cost burdened households. The largest discrepancies are at the two extremes of the housing value range. At the low end there are very few units available with a relatively high corresponding population. This may indicate that the majority of this population occupies rental housing. At the high end there are very few units available above \$300,000 indicating those that are able to afford that type of housing are living below their means and occupying homes in the \$200,000-\$299,999 range.

The percentage of renter-occupied cost burdened households is a much greater problem than owner-occupied and exceeds state rates. The majority of this problem stems from the lack of affordable housing options for the lower income households. Overall, the city has an adequate supply to meet the moderate-income households but has a deficit in rental units priced to meet the lowest income level's demand. According to 2000 census figures there are only six rental units that are priced between the ranges of \$200 and \$299, while there are 45 households that require units within that price range according to their household income levels.

This is an issue that is not easily solved because of the private sector's major influence on housing supplies. However, it is a situation that requires monitoring at the local level because of the large influence housing availability has on economic development. Without a strong supply of affordable, adequate housing units the town cannot fully house the projected workforce and may struggle attracting new commercial and industrial employers.

Needs, Goals, and Policies

Goal: Promote the provision of safe, sanitary, and affordable housing to all residents and support the preservation of the environment and historic buildings through sound development practices that minimize the negative impacts of housing construction.

Need: Promote the availability of housing options throughout the city for residents of all income levels.

Policy: Encourage the renovation of substandard housing and vacant units for use as affordable housing and identify opportunities for residential development within the downtown district.

Policy: Encourage the inclusion of locally compatible and affordable options within new developments decreasing the segregation of housing types.

Need: Minimize negative environmental impacts associated with increased residential development.

Policy: Coordinate future housing development with supporting infrastructure such as roads, schools, emergency services, water and sewer.

Policy: Encourage infill and re-development wherever suitable to maximize the use of undeveloped land and to take advantage of existing infrastructure.

Policy: Preserve, conserve and enhance historic structures and sites wherever possible.

Policy: Prohibit residential development in environmentally sensitive areas.

Policy: Improve quality of residential development.

Need: Utilize the Future Land Use map to determine suitable locations for residential development.

Policy: Avoid scattered development patterns maximizing the efficient use of available land.

Policy: Focus residential growth in appropriate locations as determined on the future land use map.

Policy: Regulate densities within designated areas to ensure adequate availability of land to support the projected development increases.

Chapter 7: Land Use

Existing Land Use

An existing land use map categorizes every parcel by its predominate land use. This plan represents the second update to the initial land use map created in 1991. The Department of Community Affairs Minimum Planning Standards state that the overall goal of the land use element is to “Ensure that land resources are allocated for uses that will accommodate and enhance economic development, natural and historic resources, community facilities, and housing; and to protect and improve residents quality of life.”

This element is divided into four major sections. The first discusses the existing land use map and breaks down the acreage within each of the land use categories. The second section provides an assessment of the existing land use patterns and how they have formed over the years, as well as the acreage requirements for each of the categories based on earlier analysis in the previous chapters. The third section illustrates the future land use map and outlines the community’s preferences for the general location of land uses. Finally, a set of needs goals and policies are presented to help guide the community in land development decisions.

Existing Land Use Acreages

The Existing Land Use map illustrates the type of development that exists in the town and outlines those areas that have yet to be developed. Every parcel of land is assessed according to its use and this information is transferred to a parcel coverage map of the entire town to produce the existing land use map.

Table 1 presents the total acreage according to the following land use categories; Single-Family Residential, Multi-Family Residential, Commercial, Industrial, Government, Public/Institutional, Parks/Recreation/Conservation, Transportation/Communication/Utilities, and Undeveloped/Unused.

Figure 1 illustrates the changes in developed land since the 1997 Comprehensive Plan land use inventory. The most significant difference is the change in residential acreage. The 1997 plan reported that 422.4 total acres were utilized for residential purposes, or 26.9%. This figure has grown to 743.7 total acres, or 47.1%, representing a 76% increase. The majority of this difference can be accounted for in the corresponding decrease in both Agriculture (representing a 49.2% decrease) and Undeveloped/Unused (representing a 21.5% decrease) land use categories.

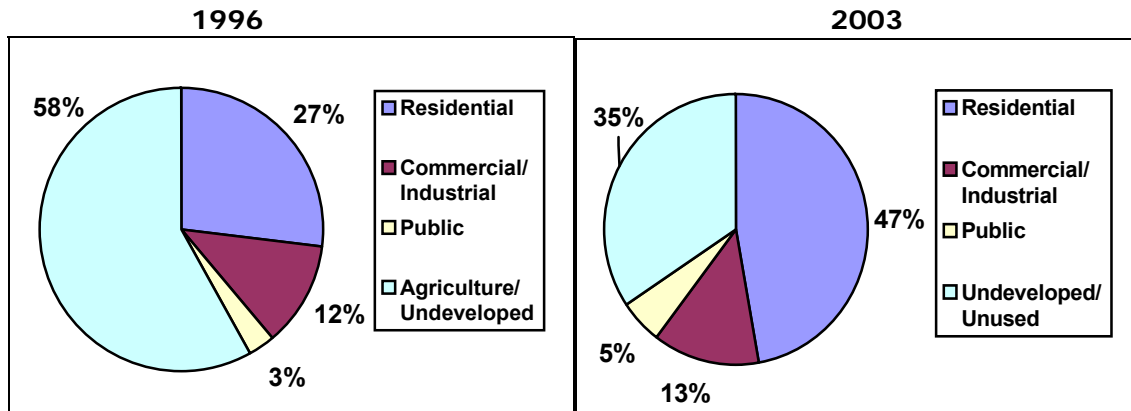
Table 1
2003 Existing Land Use Acreage

Land Use	Acres	% of Total
Total Residential	743.7	47.1
<i>Single-Family</i>	<i>721.6</i>	<i>45.7</i>
<i>Multi-Family</i>	<i>12.6</i>	<i>0.8</i>
<i>Mobile Home</i>	<i>9.5</i>	<i>0.6</i>
Commercial	32.5	2.0
Industrial	177.6	11.3
Government	18.7	1.2
Public/Institutional	61.5	3.9
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	18.5	1.2
Transportation/Communication/Utilities	0	0
Agriculture	343.5	21.8

Land Use	Acres	% of Total
Undeveloped/Unused	182.2	11.5
Totals	1,578.2	100.0%

Source: City of Hoschton; calculations by NEGRDC

**Figure 1
1996-2002 Comparison**



Source: NEGRDC

*Public includes government, public institutional, and transportation/communication/utilities and Agriculture/Undeveloped includes agriculture/crop forest, undeveloped/unused, and parks/recreation/conservation.

Land Use Trends

There has been very little annexation that has taken place since the 1997 Comprehensive Plan. A total of 11.8 acres have been added, with nearly all shifts in land use taking place within the original city boundary.

Hoschton has seen a tremendous increase in residential development, as illustrated in Figure 1 and in the previous discussion on housing in Chapter 6. The majority of this development has occurred at the expense of land previously considered Agriculture or Undeveloped/Unused. Low-Density Single Family Residential development continues to dominate the residential totals (representing 63% of the total residential acreage), however there has been a sharp increase in the amount of medium and high-density development occur over the past 6 years. This has been the main trend in residential development as subdivisions are increasingly connecting to the sewer system allowing higher overall densities.

Land Use Assessment

Historical Factors

Hoschton was considered a vibrant community, with a strong local economy in the early-to-mid 1900's but suffered a similar fate of many other towns its size with the loss of the railroad. Remnants of the once vibrant local economy remain in the downtown historic district, but it is apparent that the majority of new investment has occurred in the fringe areas of the city, in industrial parks and subdivisions, over the past decade.

Existing land development patterns can be largely attributed to the increased suburbanization of metropolitan Atlanta. As the City of Atlanta has grown, urban residents have continued to seek housing further away from the city center. The location of Hoschton, within proximity to a major transportation route and employment centers,

has created an ideal small town environment that appeals to urban dwellers. The dominance of single-family households and the increasing median housing values further illustrate the demographic that is moving into the area.

Land Use Patterns and Infrastructure Availability

Infrastructure is an umbrella term that relates to many of the community facilities and services referred to in Chapter 5. Certain types of infrastructure, such as water, sewer, and roads influence where and how much development occurs. Other types, such as police, fire, ambulance, and education are influenced by where and how much development occurs. Two of the most influential infrastructure networks on the town's development patterns have been the proximity of a major transportation network and the availability of a sewer system.

Transportation is one of the strongest influences on land use patterns. Travel behavior and the existence of roads have a direct impact on the location of new development. As previously mentioned, the availability of an efficient transportation network was one of the largest contributing factors to existing development patterns. The existing land use map illustrates that growth has occurred along, and within proximity to the major thoroughfare, GA Highway 53. The increased residential development can be largely attributed to Hoschton's proximity to the Interstate 85 corridor.

The improved efficiency of road networks has led to increased reliance on automobile travel, which is reflected in the way we develop our neighborhoods. The most prominent features of subdivisions are garages, driveways, wide roads, and a lack of sidewalks. The increased mobility of the population, in general, has led to a drastic decrease in mixed-use and neighborhood commercial development and has decreased mobility options through a forced reliance on the automobile, even for the shortest of trips.

The unavailability of sewer throughout unincorporated areas surrounding Hoschton has not allowed for the construction of higher density residential developments. This has led to an increase in higher density developments within Hoschton to take advantage of the sewer system.

Local Development Policies

The town has updated its Future Land Use map since the completion of the 1997 Comprehensive Plan (in 2001) and continues to utilize the map closely in all development decisions. This has helped both planning commissioners and government officials in the decision making process concerning the appropriate locations of new development. The city chose to develop an entire comprehensive plan in 2003 to direct future development and allow them to make informed decisions based on the city's best interests.

The traditional zoning code has led to an increased separation of uses and reinforced the notion of sprawling development throughout the suburbs. The primary focus of zoning and land use controls is to ensure a quality development that is compatible with its surrounding area. Another common theme in traditional zoning is the protection of adjacent and surrounding property values. This is not an inherently harmful notion but has increased the separation of uses. It has gone so far as to separate different styles of the same use. This is particularly apparent in the siting of residential development, and the trend has been to create a homogeneous development of similarly priced home that does not have direct access to any surrounding subdivisions. It has created an exclusionary housing environment that can severely limit options for a low-to-moderate income family.

This is not solely a reflection on Hoschton, but an illustration of how traditional zoning has evolved. The city has expressed an interest in developing a downtown overlay zoning district to increase the amount of mixed-use development in the downtown trying to bring employment and shopping closer to the population.

Environmental Issues

The ability to develop a parcel of land is directly related to the environmental constraints present on that parcel. Environmental constraints vary widely from the presence of wetlands to the inability of soil to absorb septic wastewater. Refer to Chapter 4A, Natural Resources, for a more detailed discussion on the environmental features present throughout Hoschton.

Some of the most obvious environmental constraints are the presence of floodplains, wetlands, or steep slopes. Some of the less obvious environmental constraints are much more difficult to regulate and have the potential to pose greater development restrictions in the future if they are mismanaged now. One of the largest issues, not only in Hoschton but also throughout the state, is the protection of water quality. Water quality is affected by a multitude of variables including raw sewage, urban runoff, poorly maintained septic systems, farm-animal wastes, and in a single phrase, sprawling development.

Another of the less obvious environmental constraints relates to the air quality of the region. According to the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) air quality standards, the 13-county Atlanta region is considered a non-attainment area. Sprawling development patterns have increased the reliance on the automobile and forced people to drive greater distances to their workplace. The increased road traffic has led to increased vehicular emissions to the point that air quality in the metro area does not meet the EPA's standards.

This is no longer solely a Metro Atlanta problem as the level of traffic has continually increased in the surrounding counties. The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) is currently undergoing Phase II of a suburban county study identifying areas outside of the 13-county region that are approaching non-attainment status. Barrow County is included in Phase II, and has recently been added to the Metropolitan Atlanta Urbanized Area. Jackson County did not meet the thresholds required for consideration as part of the Atlanta Urbanized Area, but increased traffic congestion and vehicular travel is cause for concern.

These are problems that do not know political boundaries and cannot be solved by a single jurisdiction. In order to fully combat these problems full cooperation is needed on a regional scale.

Opportunities for Infill Development

The notion of infill development is quite simple and refers to maximizing development in areas already served by infrastructure before developing in areas requiring infrastructure expansion. Traditionally this requires urban areas that have experienced disinvestment within traditional downtown commercial. Generally, there is already water, sewer, transportation, and in many cases the actual physical infrastructure present. Downtown revitalization projects can generate a more vibrant downtown district through mixed-use residential and commercial projects.

The majority of Hoschton's economic growth has occurred in the southeastern portion of town, along GA Highway 53, in the designated commercial and industrial parks. This has reduced investment in the historic downtown district. The city has targeted the downtown for appropriate, architecturally compatible mixed-use, infill development in the hopes of revitalizing the area and creating a greater downtown identity.

Future Land Use

Assessment of Needs

Throughout this document each of the elements has provided a set of needs, goals or policies that relate to the future development of the town. Each of the elements is highlighted here in terms of how their needs affect the development of the future land use plan.

Economic Development

The major issue stemming from the economic development section is creating a better match between the local labor force and local employment opportunities. The percentage of the labor force that commutes is over 90% (as documented in Chapter 3). The city must increase its ability to attract quality employers to take advantage of the increasingly educated labor force that has migrated into Hoschton. Maximizing employment opportunities will help to reduce traffic flow, generate greater tax revenues needed for increased service provision, and rejuvenate the communities' downtown business district.

The success of the economic development initiatives is necessary not only from a local revenue perspective, but also with regards to environmental preservation, and reducing the impacts of sprawling development. In order to significantly reduce the amount of automobile emissions and mitigate the impacts of sprawl, commuting trips must be dramatically reduced through increased local employment.

While this is an important aspect of the future development of Hoschton, residents feel strongly that economic development should not occur at the expense of the natural or historic environment. These local features are very important to the citizens and contribute to the high quality of life experienced in Hoschton.

Natural and Historic Resources

The preservation of existing resources, both natural and historical, is a key element of future development within Hoschton. As mentioned in earlier chapters, the downtown core represents the history of Hoschton as well as future opportunity for economic and community growth. The reuse and rehabilitation of historic structures within the downtown core provide opportunity to invest in the revitalization of the downtown historic district, increasing its economic viability.

New development generally leads to loss of vegetative cover, which in turn can create water quality issues. The city hopes to encourage the preservation of undisturbed vegetative buffers along all waterways and increase the amount of land available for open space. The availability of open/green space and the preservation of existing natural features of Hoschton are important in preserving the rural character of the town. Similarly to historic resources, residents feel that development should not take priority over natural resource preservation.

Community Facilities and Services

The timing and location of facility and service expansion is a major contributor to the city's ability to manage growth. Focusing new developments into those areas that can accommodate them with the necessary infrastructure is the key to the successful management of future growth.

The ability to develop in a compact fashion decreases the costs associated with providing the required infrastructure and creates population clusters that are easier to service. Compact development that preserves greenspace also increases recreational opportunities without the need to drive. It facilitates the implementation of a sidewalk or trail network minimizing unnecessary automobile trips.

Housing

Suburban development creates a homogeneous environment dominated by single-family residential development. The dominance of a single type of housing limits options and segregates populations based on socioeconomic characteristics. The stigmas attached to "affordable" homes prevent their inclusion in a typical subdivision forcing low-to-moderate wage earners elsewhere to locate housing. The city feels that it has an appropriate mix of housing types and housing values to meet the population's demands. As the city population grows and the amount of developable land decreases decisions on the type and density of residential development must be made to maximize the efficient use of available land.

The analysis of housing affordability in Chapter 6, illustrates that many of the low-moderate income families are occupy the multi-family residential developments in the city. Overall, it appears that the owner-occupied housing adequately matches the existing demographics. It is important that Hoschton continue to monitor the housing and demographic conditions to identify potential deficiencies in the housing market that they may be able to help adjust through regulation.

Projections of Required Acreage by Land Use Category

To ensure that adequate land is dedicated to each land use according to future needs acreage must be projected throughout the planning horizon to ensure the future land use map meets the minimum requirements to support the anticipated growth.

To do this the Per Capita Use Rate method is used. This method extrapolates the rate of population per acre for each land use and calculates the projected acreage requirements based on the estimates established in the population element. To provide a more accurate indication of commercial and industrial requirements the Per Capita Use Rate is done using employment per acre as opposed to population.

The problem with this method is that it uses existing patterns and densities of development and reflects what will be required twenty years from now using today's standards. It is likely that residential densities will increase over time, as more compact forms of development are utilized.

What it does is point out the future impacts generated from today's development patterns and helps to visualize the urban form twenty years into the future if existing trends continue. Table 2 illustrates the projections by land use groupings.

The Use Ratio reflects how much acreage of a given land use is dedicated to each resident. It is merely an estimate and a reflection of the prevailing development patterns. As previously mentioned, the calculations for the 2023 acreage needs assume that prevailing development patterns will remain constant throughout the planning horizon, which is an unlikely scenario.

**Table 2
2023 Land Area Projections**

Land Use Category	Existing Acreage	Use Ratio	2023 Acreage
Total Residential	743.7	0.695	2,003
Public/Institutional*	80.2	0.075	216
Commercial/Industrial	210.1	0.436	614
Total Acreage	1578.3		2,833
Total Developed Acreage	1034.1		-
Total Undeveloped Acreage	544.2		-

Source: Calculations by NEGRDC

*Public/Institutional includes all Government uses and Transportation/Communication/Utilities.

*The Use Ratio for Commercial/Industrial uses a comparison ratio of employees per acre, as opposed to population per acre. Data is derived from Chapter 2 and reports on those employees actually working in Hoschton, as illustrated in the sections on economic base assessment and labor force assessment.

This table illustrates that existing development patterns are not sustainable and current development densities, in terms of per capita use rates, will devour what remains of the undeveloped landmass within the existing city limits. However, this does merely illustrate potential acreages based on existing development patterns. The fact that the majority of the Deer Creek and Quail Crossing developments consist of low-density housing, generally on lots at or exceeding one acre, inflates these numbers and there should not be an abundance of this type of development in the future.

As the city develops more compact neighborhoods and begins to implement mixed-use style development in the downtown, the remaining land can be used much more efficiently than what is shown. However, that does not change the notion that projected development will exceed available residential land by the year 2010. Without boundary expansion through annexation the city is likely to be built out for residential purposes within the next ten years.

Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use map is an important tool used in implementing the Comprehensive Plan. The map does not represent an exact pattern of development but identifies appropriate areas of opportunity for each land use category to accommodate the expected growth.

Throughout the planning horizon, real estate markets and the availability of infrastructure and services will determine the exact location and timing of development. The map is intended as a guideline for planning commissioners, staff, and elected officials to use in making development decisions. As local economics and demographics change over time, so too should the Future Land Use map. It requires periodic monitoring to ensure that development decisions are being made using the most accurate illustration of the desired future growth patterns.

Future Land Use Categories

Multi-Family Residential: Characteristically urban environment typically containing attached residential development, whether rental or owner-occupied units, of one to three stories. Typical densities are 8 units per acre, or greater. The provision of public sewerage is required for any development of this nature.

High-Density Residential: Defined as those areas capable of accommodating the expected growth throughout the planning horizon. Designed to accommodate residential uses, both attached and detached structures, with a density of greater than 2 units per acre. Other uses may include, but are not limited too, community and/or neighborhood parks, or any other use that is compatible with the surrounding residential community. It is the intent to promote and encourage development to occur within this district to take full advantage of existing and planned infrastructure.

Medium Density Residential: Generally refers to areas lacking the infrastructure necessary to accommodate high-density growth. Designated for single-family residential housing with a density of 1.01 to 2 units per acre, or any other use compatible with the residential environment.

Low-Density Residential: Defined as areas more suitable for lower development densities based on environmental factors or infrastructure constraints. Designated for single-family residential housing with a density of 1 unit, or less, per acre.

Commercial: Includes all retail and commercial service activities ranging from convenience stores to shopping malls. Businesses may be stand alone or clustered into commercial nodes. Actual uses may include, but are not limited too, hotels, restaurants, entertainment facilities, repair shops, or any other use that is compatible with a commercial/retail district.

Industrial: Includes light industrial uses. Light industrial includes, but is not limited too, warehousing and distribution, trucking, and small-scale manufacturing.

Public/Institutional: Includes certain state, federal or local institutional land uses, including but not limited too, colleges, schools, churches, cemeteries, and hospitals.

Government: Includes certain, state, federal or local government land uses, including but not limited too, city halls and government building complexes, police, fire and emergency medical services stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, and military installations.

Parks/Recreation/Conservation: This category is for land dedicated to passive or active recreational uses, or to preserving the natural features, scenic qualities, or environmental value of the designated lands. These areas may be either publicly or privately owned and include, but are not limited too, playgrounds, public parks, golf courses, recreation centers, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, or river and stream corridors.

Transportation/Communication/Utility: This category may include, but is not limited too, such uses as power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, public transit stations, telephone switching stations, airports, and port facilities.

There are development concepts that are difficult to illustrate on a map, including clustered residential development and mixed-use development. The clustered developments are encouraged because of their ability to minimize

impervious surfaces and preserve greenspace. They are appropriate in all residential areas, provided there are sufficient infrastructures in place to accommodate the development.

Mixed-use development is not reflected on the map it generally refers to the combination of 2 or more land use categories, generally some form of commercial and residential, reflecting compact community concepts minimizing the reliance on the automobile for transportation. It is intended to allow for a mix of commercial, office, and residential development in the downtown core increasing the economic and community viability of the downtown historic district.

Future Land Use Acreages

Table 3 displays the total acreage figures for each land use category on the 2023 City of Hoschton Future Land Use map.

Hoschton uses the following parameters:

High-Density: Gross density of greater than 2 dwelling units per acre.

Medium-Density: Gross density of 1.01 to 2 dwelling units per acre.

Low-Density: Gross density of 1, or fewer, dwelling unit per acre.

Multi-Family: Includes duplexes and apartments.

**Table 3
2023 Future Land Use Acreage**

Land Use	Acres	% of Total
Total Residential	989	62.7
<i>High Density (H/D)</i>	31	3.1
<i>Medium Density (M/D)</i>	469	47.4
<i>Low-Density (L/D)</i>	478	48.4
<i>Multi-Family (M/F)</i>	11	1.1
Commercial	242	15.3
Industrial	224	14.2
Government	3	0.2
Public/Institutional (P/I)	61	3.9
Parks/Recreation/ Conservation (P/R/C)	59	3.7
Transportation/Communication/Utilities (T/C/U)	0	0.0
Totals	1,578	100.0%

Source: NEGRDC

Despite the need for more residential land the city cannot accommodate an overabundance of high-density residential development because of community facilities and infrastructure limitations. As the city invests in community facility and infrastructure expansions it is imperative that it revisit the future land use map to identify areas appropriate for increased density based on infrastructure availability. Coordination between the two elements is crucial to increasing the ability of Hoschton to accommodate future population growth without the need to physically expand the borders and unnecessarily extend utility networks.

Potential Implementation Strategies

Downtown Overlay Zoning District

In order to diversify the development of the downtown and truly create an active central business district the city intends to create a downtown overlay zone that allows for mixed-use development and promotes design flexibility. A key component of downtown revitalization is incorporating residential development into the area, ensuring that downtown businesses are accessible to pedestrian traffic. Allowing mixed-use developments will increase the amount of residents living within the downtown and will also alleviate some of the demands on existing residential designated lands.

The streetscape project, upon completion, increases the accessibility and pedestrian safety of downtown. The creation of a more flexible development environment through the implementation of a downtown overlay zone, in conjunction with the streetscape improvements, stimulates positive economic growth, increases the efficiency of land use, and strengthens the community identity.

Barriers to Growth Management

The main obstacle to effectively managing growth is public perception. The public generally views regulations as “downzoning” their land and reducing its value. The public is also generally opposed to higher densities of development, which is necessary in any growth management plan as a tradeoff to preserving greater amounts of open space and efficiently utilizing available space.

The only way to enact positive change in development patterns is through continued cooperation within, and among, local governments on a regional scale and to ensure that the public is fully aware of the planning efforts and their intended benefits.

Needs, Goals, and Policies

Goal: *Promote the orderly development of land to accommodate the anticipated growth through the protection of environmental and historic characteristics and the coordination of available public facilities.*

Need: Coordinate new development with the presence of adequate public facilities.

Policy: Expend public resources on expansion and construction of facilities and services in areas designated for growth on the Future Land Use Map.

Policy: Base development approval process on the ability of the existing or planned public facilities to accommodate increased use.

Need: Coordinate all new development with the Comprehensive Plan and ensure that land use and future land use information reflect current development patterns.

Policy: Ensure that sufficient acreage has been designated on the Future Land Use map to accommodate projected growth.

Policy: Ensure that development creates minimal impacts in environmentally sensitive areas.

Policy: Maintain a cooperative relationship within, and among local governments to ensure the orderly development of the entire region.

Policy: Protect the quality and integrity of existing neighborhoods through the maintenance of vegetative buffers adjacent to incompatible uses.

Policy: Locate all industrial development in existing industrial parks and concentrate commercial development within downtown and along identified corridors.

Need: Develop a downtown overlay zone that encompasses the downtown historic district.

Policy: Encourage creativity in development design and allow for mixed-use development within the downtown to maximize the efficient use of available land.

Need: Update Future Land Use map every two years to ensure it adequately reflects prevailing development patterns.