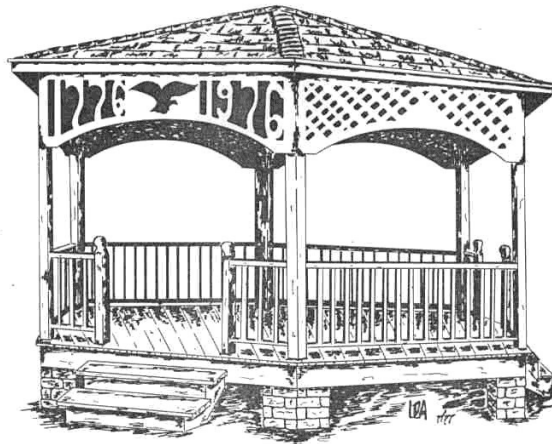


**THE CITY OF HOSCHTON**  
**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2010-2030**  
**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT**



April 2010

Prepared by the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission





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## **1. Community Assessment Overview**

### **Purpose**

This report lays the foundation for the revision of the Comprehensive Plan for the City of Hoschton that will create an agenda to manage growth over the next twenty years. Specifically, the report outlines a set of issues and opportunities, as well as supporting information, related to each of the Comprehensive Plan's elements and based on an analysis of existing conditions and historical trends.

The report is designed to meet the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and effective May 1, 2005.

### **Scope**

The report is written in executive summary format to provide an overview of the major findings. Detailed information on existing conditions, historical trends, and future forecasts are included in the Technical Addendum.

The report contains four key components addressing the findings in the Technical Addendum including a description of issues and opportunities resulting from an analysis of the available data; an analysis of existing development patterns; an evaluation of the community's existing policies and development patterns for consistency with DCA's Quality Community Objectives; and an analysis of supportive data and information illustrating conformance with the Department of Natural Resources' Environmental Planning Criteria and the local Service Delivery Strategy.

### **Methodology**

This part of the Comprehensive Plan constitutes a review of the community's plans, policies, regulations, and development patterns by the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission and encompasses solely the City of Hoschton.

The Community Assessment is the first step in the revision of the Comprehensive Plan. The Assessment will be submitted to the Georgia DCA for review and approval and will form the basis for developing the Community Agenda. The Community Agenda represents the community's vision, goals, policies, key issues, and opportunities that the community chooses to address, and an action plan highlighting the necessary tools for implementing the plan.

## **2. Identification of Potential Issues and Opportunities**

### **Population**

**Growth Rate** - The population of the City of Hoschton, much like Jackson County and the State of Georgia in general, is projected to increase over the next 20 years. Between 1990 and 2000, however, the rate of this increase was significantly higher in the City of Hoschton (66.7%) versus Jackson County (38.6%) and the state (26.4%). This trend is projected to continue through the year 2030, with the City of Hoschton's population increasing at a higher rate than both the county and the state.



	<b>2000 Actual</b>	<b>2005 Estimate</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>2030</b>
Hoschton	1,070	1,215	1,360	1,505	1,650	1,795	1,940
Jackson County	41,589	45,651	49,712	53,774	57,835	61,897	65,958
Georgia	8,186,453	8,868,675	9,550,897	10,233,118	10,915,340	11,597,562	12,279,784

Source: Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Planning & Quality Growth

This phenomenon is likely due to Hoschton’s proximity to Gwinnett County and the outer boundaries of the Atlanta metropolitan area, lying as it does at the western edge of Jackson County. As the economy recovers from the current recession over the next few years, Hoschton will need to be prepared to handle the effects of population growth on its land, housing stock, infrastructure, and community facilities.

Age Distribution Shifts - Hoschton is projected to witness an increase in the proportion of 25- to 44-year-olds and of children aged 13 and younger by 2030. This indicates that Hoschton is likely to remain an attractive option for families with young children in the next twenty years. In addition, the percentage of teenagers and young adults is projected to decrease, indicating a lack in variety of post-high school education and career opportunities in the immediate vicinity. The percentage of residents over 65 years of age is also projected to decrease. In order to capture these age groups in the future, additional amenities and opportunities will need to be made available.

<b>Age</b>	<b>2000 Population</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>2030 Projected Population</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
0 - 4 years	77	7.2	160	8.25
5 - 13 years	182	17.01	335	17.27
14 - 17 years	44	4.11	29	1.49
18 - 20 years	43	4.02	75	3.87
21 - 24 years	43	4.02	60	3.09
25 - 34 years	155	14.49	314	16.19
35 - 44 years	171	15.98	338	17.42
45 - 54 years	131	12.24	238	12.27
55 - 64 years	111	10.37	200	10.31
65 years and over	113	10.56	194	10.00

Source: Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Planning & Quality Growth

### **Workforce Development**

Employment – Between 1990 and 2000, the percentage of employed citizens working in the manufacturing industry decreased by nearly 6%. During this same period, the incidence of workers in the professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services sector and the educational, health, and social services sector increased by over 6% and 11%, respectively. This is reflective of a national trend away from manufacturing and toward new job



creation in services-related industries. To impart the knowledge and skills needed for jobs in these sectors, the City should seek out focused workforce training opportunities for residents.

**Education** - The percentage of Hoschton residents with college degrees (Associate, Bachelor's, and Graduate/Professional) is roughly 21.3%, significantly lower than the State of Georgia (29.5%). To be competitive with other communities or band with nearby communities for certain types of businesses, the City should work with area schools and colleges to encourage residents of all ages to seek a college education.

**Development Process** - In order to encourage new small business development, the City should document and publicize the development process in both printed and web-based resources. For new entrepreneurs, this process can potentially be overwhelming or confusing; clear instructions about requirements for starting a business in the City will help to foster a healthy and vibrant community. Such a project might be accomplished jointly with the Hoschton Business Alliance.

## **Housing**

**Housing Type and Tenure** - In comparison with the State of Georgia and the U.S., a higher percentage of Hoschton's housing stock is of the detached single-family variety. In 2000, Hoschton also showed a higher incidence of homeownership (68.4%) than Georgia (61.9%) and the U.S. (60.24%). While this is usually considered a positive attribute, the City should ensure that an adequate supply of high-quality rental housing is available in order to attract and retain the young professionals and retired individuals for whom ownership is either not feasible or undesirable. The City is in a good position to be competitive here, as its median rent in 2000 was \$513, while the median rent at the State level was \$613. One way to create new rental housing within existing neighborhoods is to allow for accessory dwelling units such as garage apartments or "mother-in-law" units within the zoning ordinance.

**Special Needs Households** - Hoschton does not currently have a program focusing on households with special needs, such as low-income or homeless families or individuals. The City should regularly evaluate its population to ensure that all citizens have the opportunity to reside in a safe and healthy environment. Should city staff and officials determine that such a program is necessary, there are many programs and several funding sources administered by through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

## **Natural & Cultural Resources**

**Trees** - The City does not have a tree protection ordinance. While the zoning ordinance requires landscaping to be included in new developments, this does not provide protection for the mature trees within the community that support air and water quality.

**Wetlands** - The City does not have a wetlands ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance, under General Design Standards, does identify that developments should maintain or create a minimum 100-foot buffer adjacent to wetlands. Federal and state regulations also offer some protection to Hoschton's wetlands. However, Georgia requires all jurisdictions with such resources to adopt a local protection ordinance, and 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.

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.

Historic District - While a Downtown Development Overlay District has been established that contains Architectural Design Standards, there are no designated historic districts within the City. A total of 27 commercial and residential properties have been identified as historic, however, and with further research, these may warrant the local, state, and/or national designation of a district. This would presumably contain standards for infill development that would complement the character of the surrounding buildings.

### **Community Facilities and Services**

Public Space Maintenance - The City of Hoschton lacks an organized program for ensuring that parks and other public areas are well-maintained and free of litter and safety hazards. In order for these places to best serve Hoschton residents and visitors, the City should consider developing a “Keep Hoschton Beautiful” campaign.

### **Transportation**

Transportation Choices – Little infrastructure for non-automobile transportation currently exists in the City of Hoschton. Opportunities for incorporating non-automobile modes into the transportation system should be addressed, such as a comprehensive sidewalk network and on-street bicycle lanes where appropriate. City staff have noted that there is significant interest in establishing pedestrian connections between the two Developing Traditional Neighborhoods (see Recommended Character Areas map) and Downtown Hoschton. Additionally, the City should examine a potential partnership with Jackson County Transit, which would be useful to the transportation disadvantaged, including seniors, lower-income residents, and people with disabilities, as well as residents who would prefer not to drive.

Highway 332 Realignment - The City will be working with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to realign Highway 332 to intersect with Highway 53 via Town Center Parkway, as this particular intersection meets requirements to support a traffic light. This realignment will likely include a widening of Town Center Parkway and increase traffic volumes in the corridor. With this development, the City of Hoschton should take care to ensure that pedestrian and bicycle access is provided between the existing and future businesses along this roadway.

### **Land Use, Planning, & Development**

Farmland Protection - The City does not currently have a plan to protect farmland. The percentage of agricultural/forestry land has decreased between 2003 and 2010 (see Table 4, Chapter 3), indicating a need to protect what remains from future development pressures. According to City staff, there are at least two working farms still in existence within city limits.

Administration and Enforcement – While Hoschton does have a Planning and Zoning Commission, the City does not currently have a planner on staff. Staff and elected officials have indicated a need to obtain assistance with the more complex planning administration issues and the enforcement of ordinances. Hoschton should work with other communities in Northeast Georgia to share services of this type.





### **3. Analysis of Existing Development Patterns**

#### **Existing Land Use**

The City of Hoschton Existing Land Use Map was developed by the Jackson County Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Department.

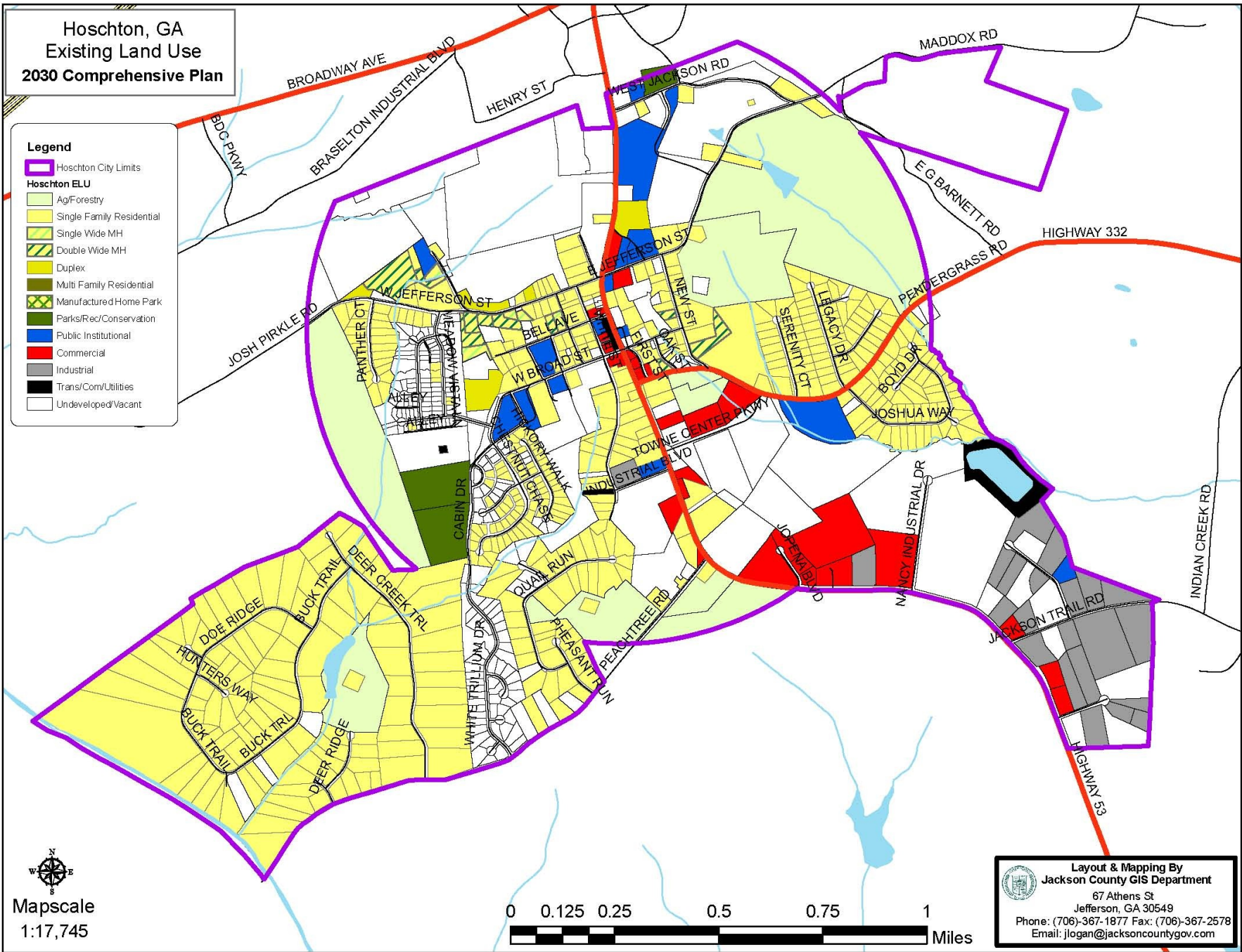
The Existing Land Use map is the best available illustration of current development patterns, helping to identify issues and opportunities in relation to the physical attributes of the City, both manmade and natural. Analyzing the Existing Land Use map in conjunction with historical trends can help identify how these development patterns were formed.

Table 3 broadly defines the types of land uses found in the City of Hoschton, while Table 4 denotes the existing land use by category and total acreage.

Hoschton, GA  
Existing Land Use  
2030 Comprehensive Plan

Legend

-  Hoschton City Limits
- Hoschton ELU**
-  Ag/Forestry
-  Single Family Residential
-  Single Wide MH
-  Double Wide MH
-  Duplex
-  Multi Family Residential
-  Manufactured Home Park
-  Parks/Rec/Conservation
-  Public Institutional
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Trans/Com/Utilities
-  Undeveloped/Vacant



Layout & Mapping By  
Jackson County GIS Department  
67 Athens St  
Jefferson, GA 30549  
Phone: (706)-367-1877 Fax: (706)-367-2578  
Email: jlogan@jacksoncountygov.com

<b>Table 3: Land Use Definitions</b>	
<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Agriculture/Forestry	These establishments grow crops, raise animals, harvest timber, and harvest fish and other animals from a farm, ranch, or their natural habitats.
Commercial	Comprise the vast majority of establishments typically associated with commercial land use.
Industrial	Includes light industrial uses. Light industrial includes, but is not limited too, warehousing and distribution, trucking, and small-scale manufacturing.
Multi-Family Residential	This category is identified as characteristically urban environment typically containing attached residential development, whether rental or owner-occupied units, of one to three stories.
Park/Recreation/Conservation	This category is for land dedicated for passive and active recreational uses, whether publicly or privately owned.
Public/Institutional	This category includes certain governmental and institutional land uses such as city or county buildings, schools, colleges, churches, cemeteries, and hospitals.
Single-Family Residential	Comprised of urban, suburban, and rural establishments offering residence or accommodation, typically in a detached style, including manufactured housing.
Transportation/Community/Utility	Establishments that serve passengers and cargo movements, produce or distribute information, or provide utility services.
Undeveloped/Vacant	Land that is not programmed with any use.

Source: NEGRC

<b>Table 4: City of Hoschton Existing Land Use, 2010</b>				
<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>2003</b>		<b>2010</b>	
	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Share (%)</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Share (%)</b>
Agriculture/Forestry	343.5	21.8	230.6	13.9
Commercial	32.5	2.0	55.1	3.3
Industrial	177.6	11.3	62.9	3.8
Multi-Family Residential	12.6	0.8	11.2	0.6
Park/Recreation/Conservation	18.5	1.2	21.9	1.3
Public/Institutional	80.2	5.1	38.6	2.3
Single-Family Residential	731.1	46.3	578.5	34.8
Transportation/Communication/Utility	0	0	16.2	0.9
Undeveloped/Vacant	182.2	11.5	545.1	32.8
Other/Right-of-Way	Unavailable	Unavailable	103.8	6.2
<b>Total</b>	<b>1578.2</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1663.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Jackson County GIS; calculations by NEGRC

Land use acreage is not always calculated in the same manner from year to year or agency to agency, as is evident in the above table. The 2003 data for Public/Institutional land use includes Transportation/Communication/Utility land use, explaining the lack of acreage shown in that category. In addition, the Other/Right-of-Way category was not separated out in 2003; this acreage was likely spread amongst several other categories that year.

Even with the discrepancies between the 2003 and 2010 land use calculations, there are some observable trends. The City of Hoschton gained 85.7 acres of land due to annexation during this time period, most of which is accounted for in the northeast corner of the city along Maddox Road. This property is zoned as Single-Family, but is not yet developed.



Another observation is the decrease in Agriculture/Forestry land use. In comparing the 2003 land use map with 2010, one can determine that this decrease is attributed to the conversion of land into residential use. These areas, though re-zoned to Single-Family, are not yet fully developed, and are therefore included in the Undeveloped/Vacant land use category.

The increase in Commercial acreage can be attributed to the Town Center Parkway development as well as the conversion from Industrial to Commercial land use in the southeastern part of the City along Highway 53. The significant decrease in Industrial land use in this area can be explained by the increase in Undeveloped/Vacant land. Previously-occupied parcels are not in use at this time, perhaps due to the current economic recession or as representative of the national decrease in manufacturing.

#### **4. Areas Requiring Special Attention**

As growth continues, whether in Hoschton or in surrounding communities, it impacts the existing natural and cultural environment as well as the community facilities, services, and infrastructure that are required to support existing and future development. This section outlines areas where growth should be avoided or strictly controlled, where growth might best occur, and where growth could potentially be stimulated. The Special Attention Areas map illustrates these locales.

##### **Areas of Significant Natural or Cultural Resources**

Environmental areas typically include wetlands, floodplains, streams, groundwater recharge areas, steep slopes, and small water supply watersheds for existing intakes and reservoirs. Of these, only wetlands and streams are present in Hoschton, as shown on the Areas Requiring Special Attention map. The most prominent water body is the Mulberry River, which serves as the municipal boundary in the southwest section of the city.

Included in this category also are community park space (Hoschton Ballfield), greenspace and historic areas such as the City Square and the Allen House, and ~~and~~ two historical cemeteries: Bethlehem Cemetery and an historic African-American cemetery in the northwest section of the city.

##### **Areas Where Rapid Development or Change of Land Uses Is Likely to Occur**

The major growth areas in the City of Hoschton lie along major corridors (Highway 53 and Jefferson Street), and within the Town Center area. The future realignment of Highway 332 to Town Center Parkway, including the widening of the road and installation of a traffic light at Highway 53, will likely encourage more development. Additional future development is also expected in the Hoschton Industrial Park.

Though land previously zoned for Agriculture/Forestry has been developed into Single-Family Residential in the recent past, much of the remaining agricultural land is comprised of working farms and is not expected to be re-zoned.

##### **Areas Where the Pace of Development Has Outpaced or May Outpace the Availability of Community Facilities and Services, Including Transportation**

The Highway 332 realignment will result in impacts to community service delivery and infrastructure networks, including law enforcement and emergency services, potentially requiring additional investments in personnel, facilities, and equipment in the future. In addition, this project presents an opportunity for the City of Hoschton to integrate nonmotorized transportation facilities into the transportation system, creating a more bicycle- and pedestrian-friendly environment within this growth area.



### **Areas in Need of Redevelopment And/or Significant Improvements to Aesthetics or Attractiveness**

City representatives have identified the need to improve the attractiveness of the residential and vacant land along Jefferson Street west of Highway 53, as indicated on the following map.

### **Large Abandoned Structures or Sites, Including Those That May Be Environmentally Contaminated**

The stricter enforcement of building codes and nuisance laws in the City of Hoschton is an initiative supported by elected officials and staff. It is hoped that this effort will address the few abandoned buildings to ensure they do not negatively impact the surrounding neighborhood. The City has not identified any sites within the community that qualify as brownfields in need of remediation.

### **Areas with Infill And/or Redevelopment Opportunities**

Several sites are identified as potential infill opportunities on the following map. This includes a large site directly across the street from the existing Town Center development; this property has been identified by city officials as a possible location for a grocery store in the future. The remaining infill opportunities are to be found in predominantly residential areas.

### **Areas of Significant Disinvestment, Levels of Poverty, And/or Unemployment**

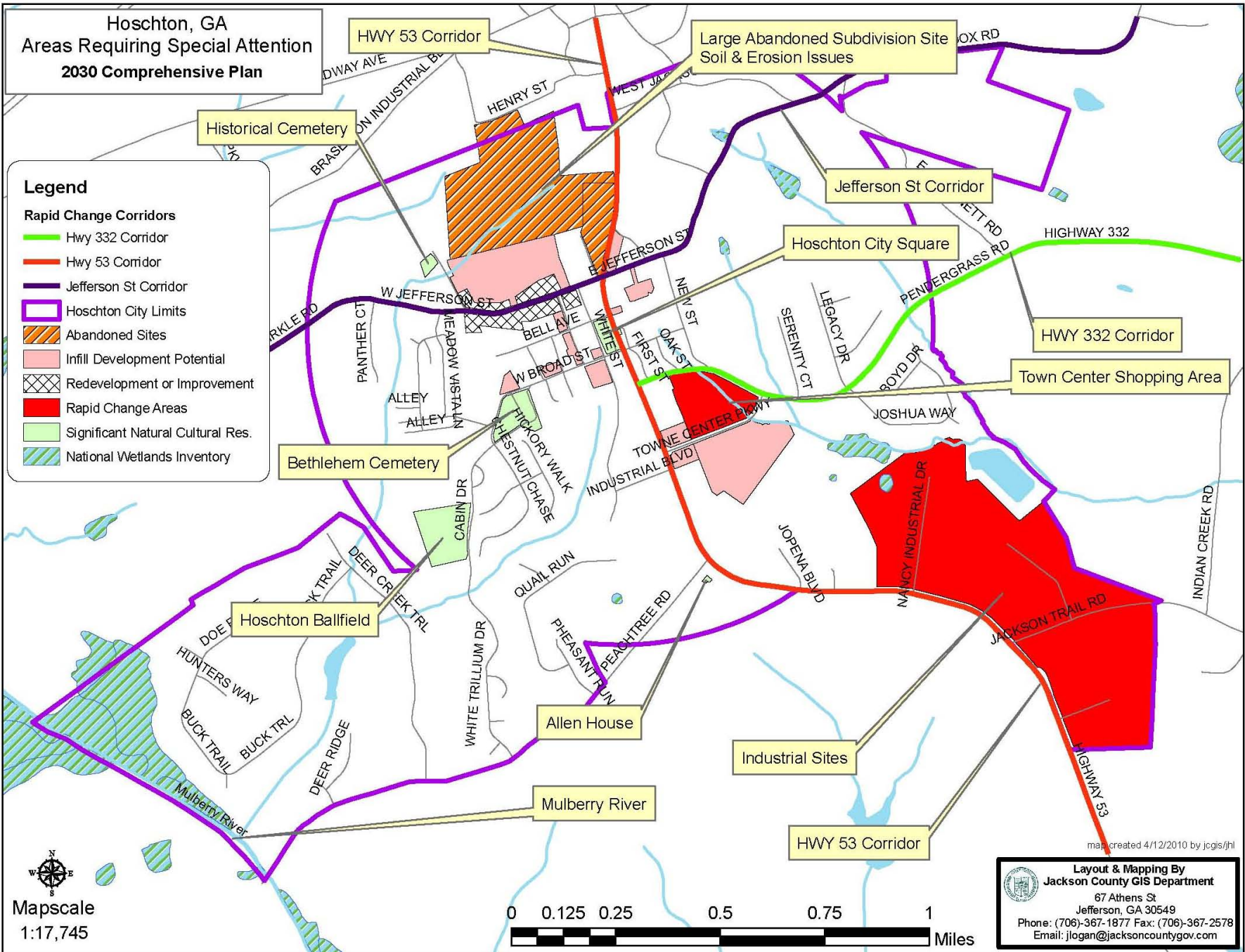
There have been no areas of significant disinvestment, poverty, or unemployment identified by officials in the City of Hoschton.


**Hoschton, GA  
Areas Requiring Special Attention  
2030 Comprehensive Plan**

**Legend**

**Rapid Change Corridors**

- Hwy 332 Corridor
- Hwy 53 Corridor
- Jefferson St Corridor
- Hoschton City Limits
- Abandoned Sites
- Infill Development Potential
- Redevelopment or Improvement
- Rapid Change Areas
- Significant Natural Cultural Res.
- National Wetlands Inventory



  
**Mapscale**  
 1:17,745



map created 4/12/2010 by jcgis/jhl  
**Layout & Mapping By**  
**Jackson County GIS Department**  
 67 Athens St  
 Jefferson, GA 30549  
 Phone: (706)-367-1877 Fax: (706)-367-2578  
 Email: jlogan@jacksoncountygov.com



## 5. Recommended Character Areas

Character areas are defined as geographic areas of a community that share unique characteristics or have the potential to evolve as a unique area. Character areas can be used to illustrate existing patterns of development and also as guidelines for desired development patterns based on a community vision.

Hoschton’s character areas are based on the Existing Land Use map, local knowledge, and the information contained in the section on Areas Requiring Special Attention.

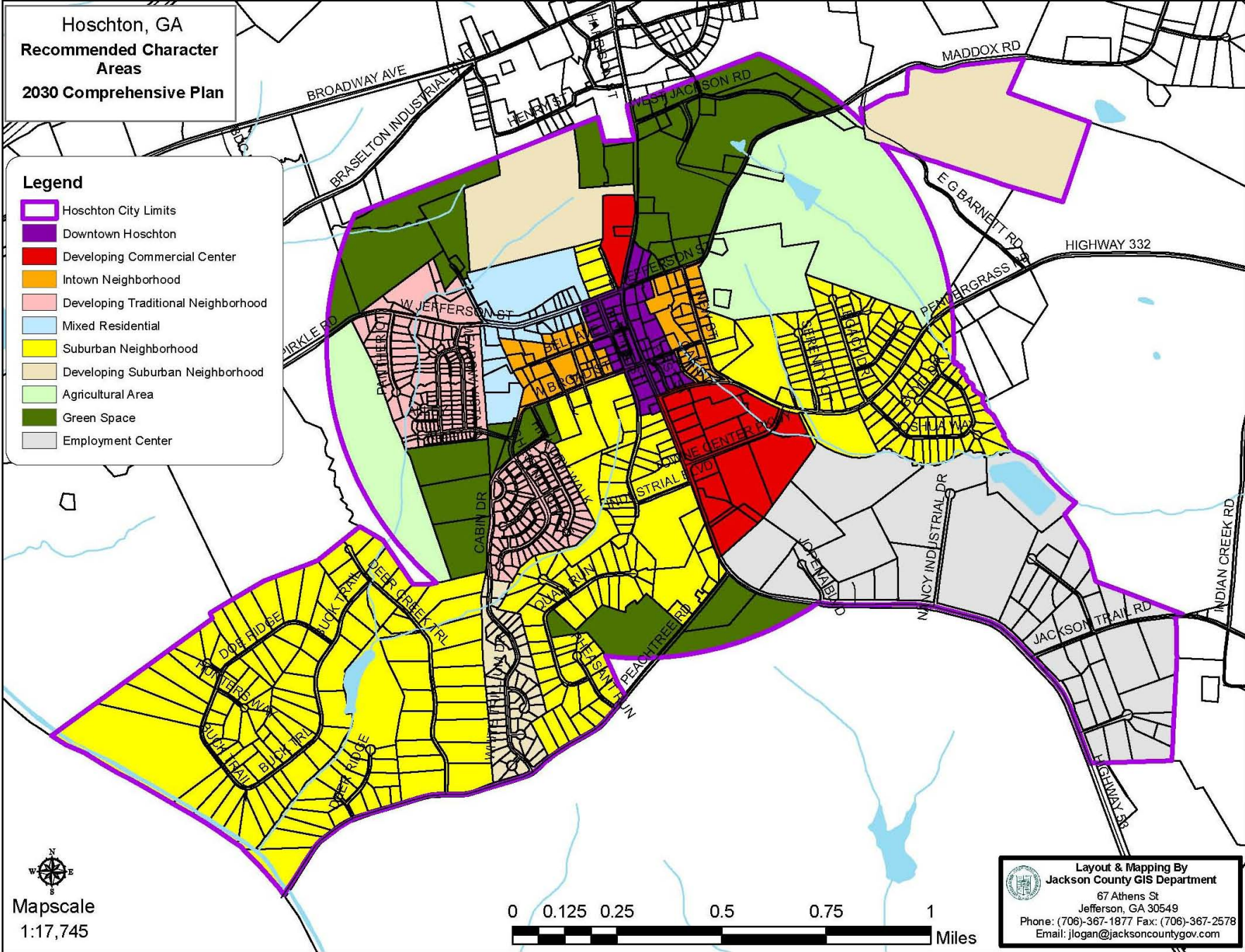
As the public participation process evolves and a community vision emerges, these character areas will be revisited to make the map compatible with the vision, goals, and objectives of the community. Table 5 and the associated Recommended Character Areas map represent an preliminary assessment of Hoschton’s existing development patterns.


<b>Table 5: Recommended Character Areas</b>	
<b>Character Area</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Downtown Hoschton</b>	Traditional central business district and immediately surrounding area, including all property fronting or immediately adjacent to the street boundaries of Bell Avenue to the north, White Street to the west, Broad Street to the south, and State Highway 53 to the east, as per the 2005 Hoschton Business District Overlay design standards.
<b>Developing Commercial Center</b>	An area planned for a concentration of activities such as general retail, service commercial, professional office, and appropriate public and open space to serve surrounding neighborhoods.
<b>Intown Neighborhood</b>	Neighborhood with relatively well-maintained housing, perhaps of an historic nature or possessing a distinct architectural style. Directly adjacent to Downtown Hoschton.
<b>Developing Traditional Neighborhood</b>	Planned community neighborhood with characteristics such as a high degree of pedestrian orientation, buildings close to or at the front of the property line, and the predominance of alleys. Infrastructure is complete, but building construction is halted as a result of the housing market decline.
<b>Mixed Residential</b>	Higher-density residential area with potential for the integration of mixed-use development on available vacant sites. Some structures and sites within this area may be in need of aesthetic improvements.
<b>Suburban Neighborhood</b>	Area in which typical types of suburban residential subdivision development have occurred or are likely to occur. Scattered commercial developments may exist in these areas along major corridors.
<b>Developing Suburban Neighborhood</b>	Area that is planned for suburban residential subdivision development, but not completed as a result of the housing market decline.
<b>Employment Center</b>	Area characterized by a high degree of vehicular traffic, corridor- and auto-related commercial, and industrial activities. Includes the Hoschton Industrial Park.
<b>Green Space</b>	Predominantly natural or scenic rural areas which may contain community historic or cultural resources.
<b>Agricultural Area</b>	Cultivated and working farm lands with few residences.

Hoschton, GA  
 Recommended Character  
 Areas  
 2030 Comprehensive Plan


**Legend**

-  Hoschton City Limits
-  Downtown Hoschton
-  Developing Commercial Center
-  Intown Neighborhood
-  Developing Traditional Neighborhood
-  Mixed Residential
-  Suburban Neighborhood
-  Developing Suburban Neighborhood
-  Agricultural Area
-  Green Space
-  Employment Center



  
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 Layout & Mapping By  
 Jackson County GIS Department  
 67 Athens St  
 Jefferson, GA 30549  
 Phone: (706)-367-1877 Fax: (706)-367-2578  
 Email: jlogan@jacksoncountygov.com





## 6. Compliance with Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria

The City of Hoschton has not adopted a wetland protection ordinance to adequately address the Environmental Planning Criteria developed by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, as certified by the Department of Community Affairs in 1999. This will be a necessary component of the Short Term Work Program portion of the Community Agenda.

## 7. Analysis of Consistency with Quality Community Objectives

The following is an evaluation of the City of Hoschton’s current policies, activities, and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives developed by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. This tool was used, with data from the Technical Addendum, to develop the Issues and Opportunities.

### Quality Community Objectives

Development Patterns					
<b>Traditional Neighborhoods</b>					
Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.					
		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1	If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.		✓		Our Zoning Ordinance has discrete districts that segregate uses, but we also have a provision for mixed use developments.
2	Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development “by right” so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process.	✓			
3	We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.	✓			
4	Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer		✓		
5	We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.		✓		
6	Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.	✓			
7	In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.	✓			
8	Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.	✓			



<b>Traditional Neighborhoods</b>					
Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.					
		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
9	Some of our children can and do bike to school safely.		✓		
10	Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community	✓			
<b>Infill Development</b>					
Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.					
		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1	Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.	✓			Currently being created
2	Our community is actively working to promote brownfield redevelopment.		✓		There are no designated brownfields in the city.
3	Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment.		✓		There are no greyfields in the city.
4	We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road).	✓			
5	Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses.	✓			
<b>Sense of Place</b>					
Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.					
		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1	If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics.		✓		
2	We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage, and have taken steps to protect those areas.	✓			Business District Overlay
3	We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.	✓			
4	We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.	✓			
5	We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.	✓			Business District Overlay



6	If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.		✓		There is interest in developing a plan for protection if deemed necessary upon further study of local conditions.
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**Transportation Alternatives**  
 Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.

		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1	We have public transportation in our community.		✓		
2	We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.	✓			
3	We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.		✓		
4	We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.	✓			We would like to develop a plan for streetscapes/ sidewalks
5	We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.	✓			
6	We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.		✓		
7	We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.	✓			

**Regional Identity**  
 Each region should promote and preserve a regional "identity," or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.

		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1	Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.	✓			
2	Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.		✓		
3	Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.).		✓		
4	Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development's regional tourism partnership.	✓			The Jackson County area Chamber of Commerce has developed a Tourism Council and we hope to participate
5	Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.	✓			
6	Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.	✓			



## Resource Conservation

<b>Heritage Preservation</b>					
The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.					
		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1	We have designated historic districts in our community.		✓		
2	We have an active historic preservation commission.	✓			The Historic Preservation Commission meets on a monthly basis to discuss relevant initiatives, policies, and standards for preserving historic structures in the City.
3	We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure this.	✓			OR (Office Residential) and the Business District Overlay guidelines contain Architectural Design Standards
<b>Open Space Preservation</b>					
New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.					
		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1	Our community has a greenspace plan.	✓			
2	Our community is actively preserving greenspace, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.	✓			
3	We have a local land conservation program, or we work with state or national land conservation programs, to preserve environmentally important areas in our community.		✓		
4	We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.	✓			Our Planned Unit Development Regulations require that developers provide open space



<b>Environmental Protection</b>					
Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.					
		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1	Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.	✓			
2	We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.	✓			
3	We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.		✓		The City has not adopted a wetland protection ordinance.
4	Our community has passed the necessary "Part V" environmental ordinances, and we enforce them.		✓		The City has not adopted a wetland protection ordinance.
5	Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced.		✓		
6	Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.	✓			
7	We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development.	✓			
8	We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).	✓			

## Social and Economic Development

<b>Growth Preparedness</b>					
Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.					
		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1	We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.	✓			Currently being updated
2	Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.	✓			
3	Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.	✓			
4	We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.		✓		The City plans to update their ordinances in FY2011.
5	We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.		✓		
6	We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth, and these areas are based on a natural resources inventory of our community.	✓			



7	We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.	✓			
8	We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.		✓		
9	We have procedures in place that make it easy for the public to stay informed about land use issues, zoning decisions, and proposed new development.	✓			
10	We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.	✓			

**Appropriate Businesses**

The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities

		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1	Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets and weaknesses, and has created a business development strategy based on them.	✓			
2	Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit businesses and/or industries that will be compatible.	✓			
3	We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products.		✓		
4	We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy.	✓			

**Employment Options**

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

		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1	Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.	✓			
2	Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	✓			There are limited positions available, and there is a need to make efforts toward bringing more skilled opportunities to the City.
3	Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	✓			
4	Our community has professional and managerial jobs.	✓			



<b>Housing Choices</b>					
A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.					
		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1	Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.		✓		
2	People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.	✓			
3	Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average).	✓			
4	We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks.	✓			
5	We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or “neo-traditional” development.	✓			
6	We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.	✓			
7	We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.	✓			
8	We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.		✓		
9	We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.		✓		
10	We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.	✓			



<b>Educational Opportunities</b>					
Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.					
		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1	Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens.		✓		
2	Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.		✓		
3	Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	✓			Lanier Technical College has a campus in Commerce. Other higher education opportunities are located in Clarke and Gwinnett Counties, roughly 30 and 20 miles from Hoschton, respectively.
4	Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.	✓			The increase in professional employment in Hoschton is a good sign; however, additional opportunities should be sought to attract and retain recent college graduates.

## Governmental Relations

<b>Regional Solutions</b>					
Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.					
		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1	We participate in regional economic development organizations.	✓			
2	We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.	✓			
3	We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services, such as public transit, libraries, special education, tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security, etc.	✓			
4	Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.	✓			





<b>Regional Cooperation</b>					
Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.					
		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1	We plan jointly with our cities and county for comprehensive planning purposes.		✓		The City is currently developing its comprehensive plan separately from Jackson County and the other cities.
2	We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.		✓		
3	We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft regionwide strategies.	✓			
4	We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.	✓			

### 8. Analysis of Consistency with Service Delivery Strategy

Jackson County is currently in the process of updating its Service Delivery Strategy, which encompasses both municipalities and unincorporated areas, to coincide with the development of the county comprehensive plan. The City of Hoschton will be included in this process. This city-county Service Delivery Strategy is due for completion by October 31, 2010.

# RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED that the City of Hoschton hereby resolves to forward the Community Assessment and Community Participation Program of the Comprehensive Plan update for the City of Hoschton, Georgia to the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission (NEGRC) and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for review, comment, and recommendation.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City of Hoschton does hereby certify that the minimum public participation requirements of the Comprehensive Plan update met with the holding of a public hearing on May 3, 2010.

In order to coordinate the review process, the City of Hoschton further resolves that this Community Assessment and Community Participation Program of the Comprehensive Plan update will be submitted to the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission for review and comment on or about May 3, 2010.

Adopted the 4 day of MAY, 2010.

City of Hoschton

  
Erma Denney, Mayor

  
Clerk