



**Newton County 2006-2028 Comprehensive Plan:
Community Assessment**

February 20, 2006



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Technical Addendum (Found on the compact disc included at the end of this document)

Section I: Supporting Analysis of Data and Information

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4. Housing
5. Natural and Cultural Resources
6. Community Facilities and Services
7. Intergovernmental Coordination
8. Transportation System

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Section III: Atlas of Supportive Maps

I Introduction

Purpose

The primary purpose of this report is to lay the foundation for the update of the Newton County Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan that is being used by the County today was adopted in 1993. This original 1993 plan was a joint plan that included the unincorporated County and local municipalities. Since then, however, the County has experienced large increases in population; in fact Newton County is one of the fastest growing counties for its size in the nation. In the face of this growth, the Newton County Board of Commissioners decided it was time to update the plan to better prepare for challenges that this growth has brought with it and will bring in the future. Unlike the original plan, this update is solely for the unincorporated portions of Newton County, and is not intended to serve as an update for the city plans.

This report provides a comprehensive review of the issues and opportunities that will affect the future growth of the community. This analysis is based on a review and inventory of existing conditions, land use patterns, public policies, and planned improvements. Community leaders recognize that this planning effort can play a critical role in directing future development in a manner that is consistent with the community's vision for the future.

Another purpose of this report is to meet the intent of the "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning" as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) on May 1, 2005. Preparation of a Comprehensive Plan in accordance with these standards is an essential requirement in maintaining the county's status as a Qualified Local Government.

Scope

As required in the DCA Standards, this report includes four basic components:

1. List of issues and opportunities that the community wants to address
2. Analysis of existing development patterns
3. Evaluation of current community policies, actions, and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives
4. Analysis of supportive data and information

In its coverage of these four components, this report is written in an executive summary-like fashion so that citizens and decision makers can quickly review the essential elements and major findings of this planning effort. Most of the detailed findings of this assessment are included in a "Technical Addendum." A digital copy of this "Technical Addendum" is provided on compact disc attached to the back of this report.

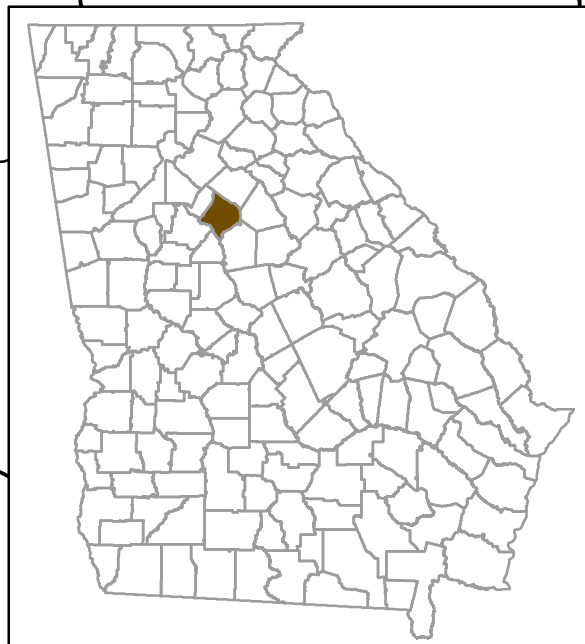
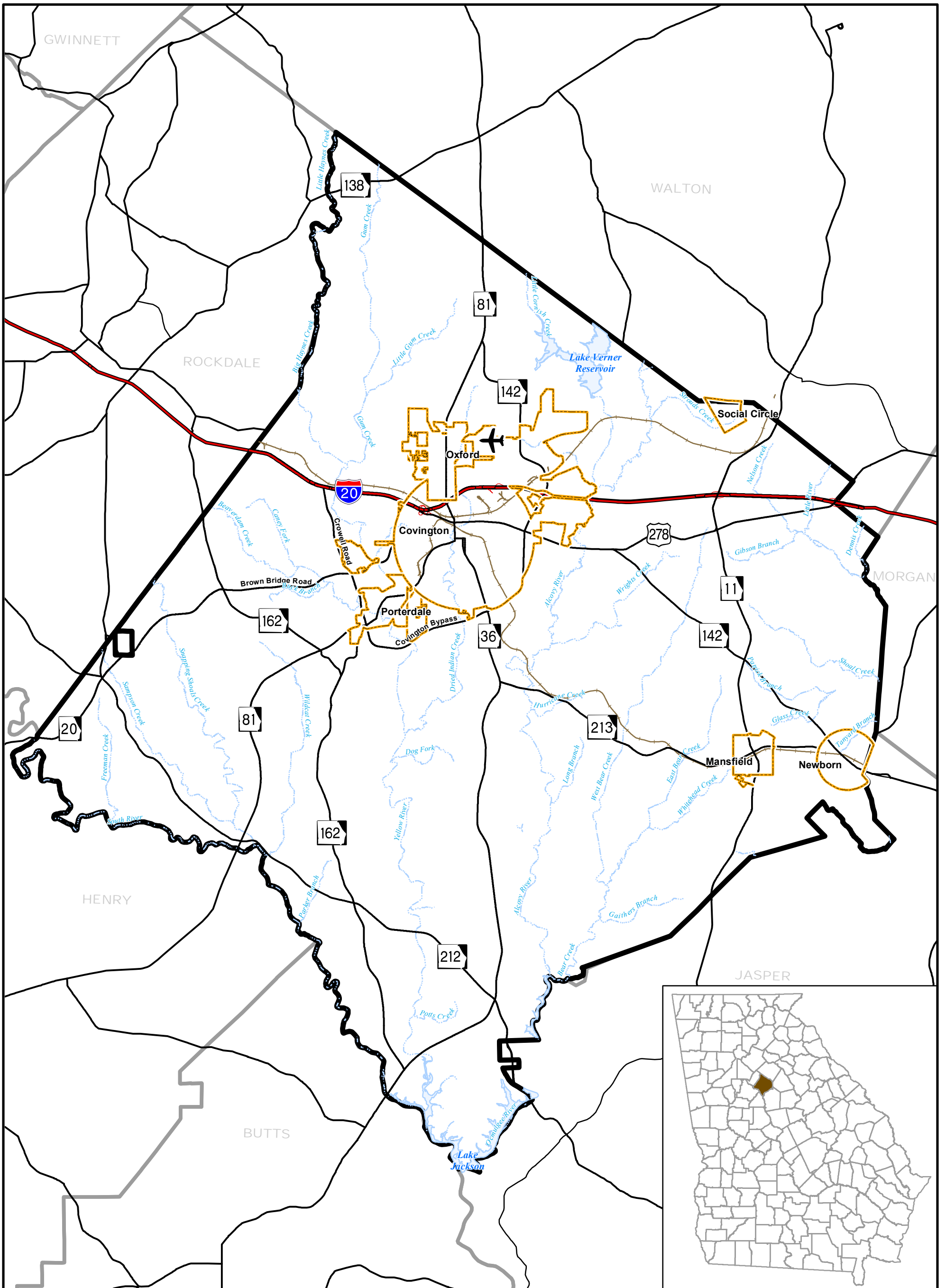
The data included in this document and in the Technical Addendum covers the unincorporated portions of the County. Some municipal data is included to provide a complete picture of the community and highlight the different issues and opportunities that it faces. The County government does provide some services to the local municipalities, so the review of municipal data helps to better define the current and projected demands for those services.

Methodology and Schedule

As required by the DCA Standards, this Community Assessment is primarily the product of a review of policies, plans, regulations, and development patterns. The study area for this Assessment is the unincorporated area of the county, an area of approximately 164,716 acres. Approximately 8% of the county is incorporated covering approximately 14,020 acres. All together Newton County covers 179,647 acres. **Figure 1** on the following page is a location map of the county, and the location of the county's six municipalities: Covington, Mansfield, Newborn, Oxford, Porterdale, and Social Circle.

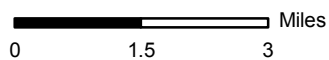
This Community Assessment document is the first major step in preparation of County's Comprehensive Plan. This document and the Community Participation Program will be submitted to the DCA for approval. This will be followed by a 30-day comment and review period by the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center (RDC) and the DCA.

Upon approval of both documents, work on the Community Agenda will commence. The Community Agenda is the most important part of the plan; it includes the community's vision for the future, key issues and opportunities it chooses to address during the planning period, and its implementation program for achieving this vision and addressing the identified issues and opportunities. To kick off the effort, a series of six Community Visioning Workshops will be held in February, March, and April 2006. This will be followed a month later by a Strategic Framework Workshop in May 2006. These community involvement events will provide the public support and input critical to a successful Comprehensive Plan. The Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners are scheduled to transmit a final draft of the Community Agenda to the RDC and DCA in August and September 2006. After this, a 3-month review and adoption process begins. This is scheduled to take place between October and December of 2006.



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

Location



- Covington Municipal Airport
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Ramp
- Railroad
- River/Stream
- Lake/Pond
- City Boundary
- County Boundary



Figure 1

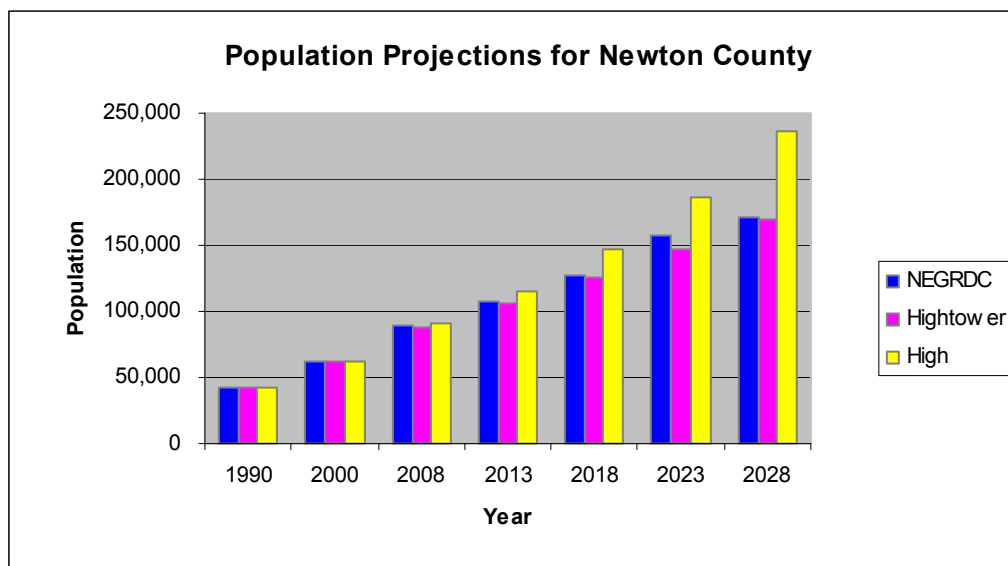
2 Issues and Opportunities

The following issues and opportunities were identified from a review of “Quality Community Objectives” and the “Analysis of Supportive Data and Information;” the documentation of which can be found in the **Technical Addendum** to this report. An Adobe PDF version of the Technical Addendum can be found on a CD located in the binder of this document. The following issues and opportunities are organized under major topics are defined in the DCA Local Planning Requirements. These assessment topics are:

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

Population Issues

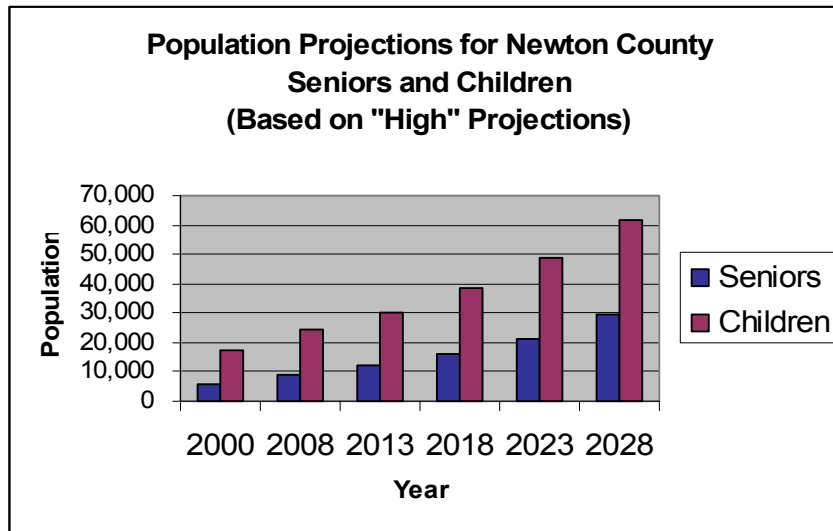
1. **Rapid Population Growth.** The county’s population is projected to increase at an average annual rate of somewhere between 3.7 to 4.9%. The 3.7% growth rate was produced by the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center (NEGRDC) and Hightower Consulting Engineers, whereas the 4.9% is a continuation of the most recent trends (1990-2004). The 2004 estimate of population for the county is 81,524, so by 2028 the population is projected to more than double to somewhere between 171,000 and 236,653. As can be seen from this wide range of values, future population in Newton County is somewhat unpredictable due to uncertainties regarding the county’s future land



Source: Ackerman & Co., November 2005

use and growth management policies. Other factors influencing future growth include the land-use and growth management coordination between the County and its cities, local housing market conditions, and economic conditions in metro Atlanta and the nation.

2. **Significant Increase in Seniors.** Between 2000 and 2028 Newton County’s senior population is expected to increase from 9.9% to 12.4% of the total population. This equates to 29,345 seniors in 2028 based on the “high” population projection, which is 4.8 times the 2000 senior population of 6,129. This increase in seniors will challenge the community in providing housing choices, as well as health care, transportation and other services to older citizens.
3. **Significant Increase in Children.** An increase in children will also have an impact on County schools, recreation facilities, and other services. Children under 18 as a share of total population is expected to *decrease* from 2000 (27.5%) to 2028 (26.1%); however, the absolute increase in children is notable. Based on the “high” population projection, the number of youth for Newton County could reach 61,766 in 2028 compared to 17,157



in 2000 – an increase of 44,609 children.

Economic Development Issues

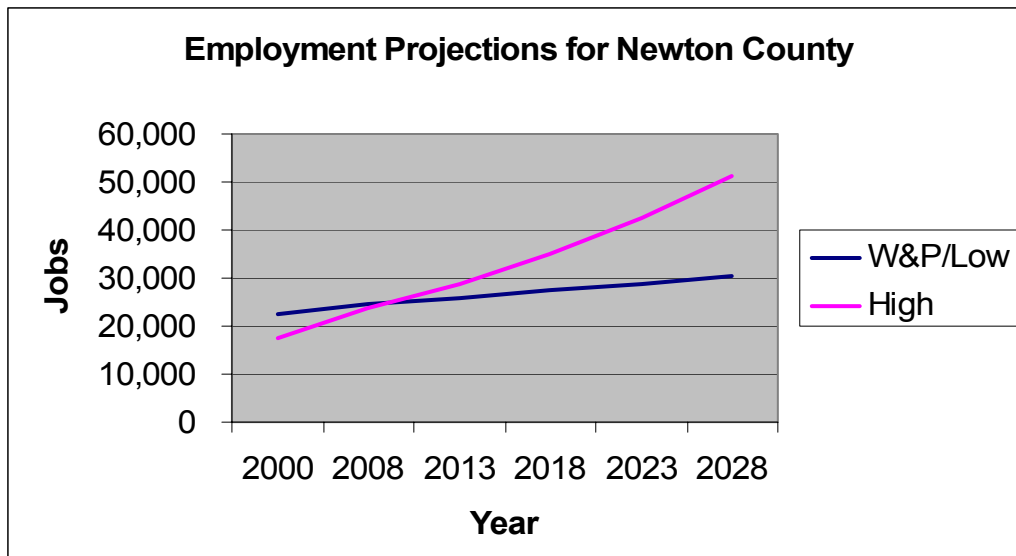
1. **Slower job growth than population growth.** Jobs are not growing as fast as the population, so the County is becoming more of a bedroom community of metro Atlanta.
2. **Lack of a Strategic Economic Development Plan.** The County also lacks a strategic economic development plan. The local Chamber of Commerce provides the administrative services for the Industrial Development Authority and neither the City of Covington nor Newton County has a staffed economic development office. Providing a consistent pro-active approach to business marketing, recruitment and retention is vitally important for developing new jobs in the County.

3. **Provision of adequate infrastructure to support future economic development.**

Other potential challenges are ensuring there is adequate land for industrial and commercial development (particularly in the Covington area) and providing the appropriate infrastructure – roads, water, and sewer – to support this type of development.

Economic Development Opportunities

1. **Growing Economic Base.** Similar to population, future economic growth in Newton County is partially based on policy decisions made today, particularly related to roads, water, and sewer improvements. Maintaining the County’s high quality of life and attracting a high-quality workforce are other important factors. Currently, the County is projected to grow at a slightly lower rate than metro Atlanta, Georgia, and the nation, according to Woods and Poole Economics, Inc. Metro Atlanta, which includes Newton County, is forecasted to out-perform the state and the nation, but at a slower rate than its recent performance of 3.1% between 1990 and 2004. Metro Atlanta’s economy, however, is maturing, so it is likely going to grow at a slower rate in the future. By comparison, Newton County is in an expansion mode, so the projected annual growth rate of 1.1% annually appears low. A “high” projection scenario was prepared based on the 1990-2003 annual employment growth rate of 3.9%. If the County continues to growth at this rate, the employment base would expand to 51,251 jobs by 2028, compared to 30,350 jobs for the “low” projection. These two projections create a spread of 20,911 jobs. The City of Covington currently comprises 56% of the jobs in Newton County. The City’s job base as a portion of the County’s will likely erode in the future as new employment centers, such as Stanton Springs, emerge in unincorporated areas of the County.
2. **Diversified Economy.** One of Newton County’s advantages is its diversified economy. Newton County has a 2003 employment base of 18,584 jobs, according to the Georgia Department of Labor, but it is not dominated by a single sector. Major industry sectors include services, manufacturing, government and retail trade, all of which comprise 83%

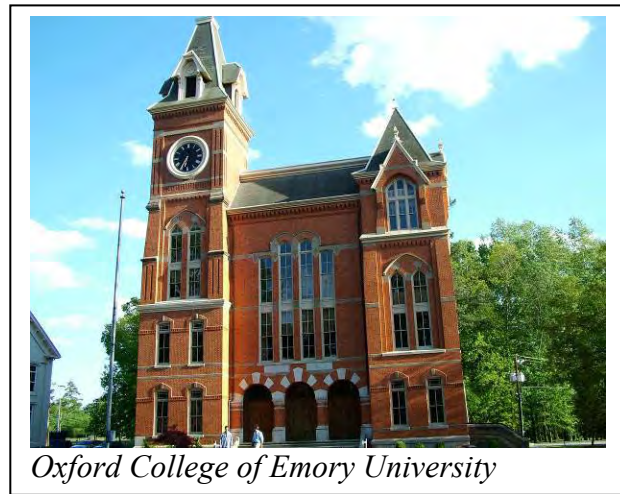


Note: The High Projection was based on U.S. Census data which estimated a lower 2000 Employment figure than Woods & Poole.

Source: Ackerman & Co.. November 2005

of local jobs. Manufacturing is the most significant basic or export-oriented industry. Although manufacturing is an industry in decline nationally, it offers potential growth in Newton County, particularly among firms requiring advanced technologies and a highly skilled labor force. Other high-growth employment sectors are professional and business services, education and health services, trade, transportation and utilities, and government. All of these sectors offer excellent future growth potential. Maintaining a diversified economic base, while expanding the local economy, is critical to the future of the County for several reasons. A broad-based economy mitigates downward turns in the national and local economies. In addition, a variety of employment opportunities and wages creates opportunities for County residents to work inside the County.

3. **Geographic Advantages for Economic Development.** Newton County offers several *strengths* for economic growth and development including its location on the Interstate 20 corridor close to Atlanta and its small-town lifestyle, offering a high quality of life.
4. **Strong education system.** The County offers an excellent education system. It has one of the top primary education systems in the State of Georgia, as well as a variety of secondary education opportunities, including Oxford College of Emory University, DeKalb Tech, and Georgia Perimeter College (planned).



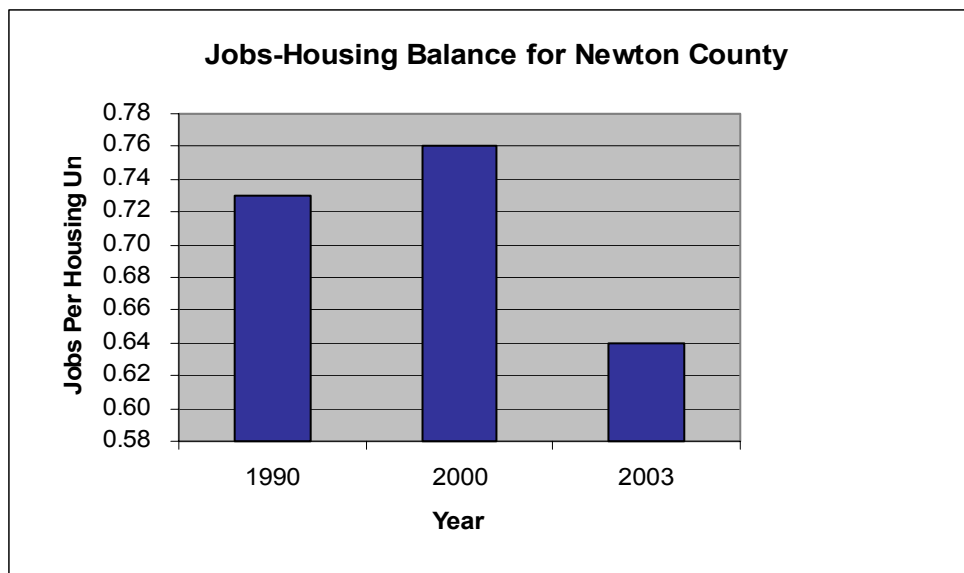
Housing Issues

1. **Demographic Changes Affect Housing Demand.** There are several demographic factors shaping the local housing market for Newton County. These include:

- The market is dominated by family households, representing 77.3% of total households. Nearly half of family households have children that will likely require a more traditional single-family neighborhood.
- Non-family households are increasing at a faster rate than family households and people living alone represent a significant number (18.7%) of households. These non-family households will create demand for smaller, higher-density housing units.
- The majority of householders are white, but minority races, particularly Hispanics, are increasing at a faster rate.
- The largest age cohorts, representing nearly half of householders, are in their child-raising years – 25 to 44 years old – again, creating demand for traditional single-family houses.
- Householders are solidly middle class with a median household income of \$50,033 annually, according to Claritas. Just over one-quarter of householders have incomes exceeding \$75,000; and these higher-income groups are growing at

a significantly higher rate, which creates a need for executive-level housing in the County (e.g., \$300,000+). Conversely, 20% of householders earn less than \$25,000 and are in need of low-cost housing.

- Continuing Need for Workforce Housing.** Although housing prices, or costs, in Newton County are considered relatively affordable compared to more urban counties of metro Atlanta, costs are rising more rapidly than incomes. Median house values in Newton County have increased at an average annual growth rate of 5.1% since 2000. Median sales prices are also on the rise, increasing at an average rate of 5.9% per year. By contrast, median household incomes have increased by 1.9% annually, and average weekly wages have increased at an annual rate of 3.3%. During 2003, annual wages for all industries in the Newton County were approximately \$31,500, which would support a house price of approximately \$124,900. This is higher than the 2003 estimated median house values for the County (\$118,500), based on Claritas data. However, median household income for the County would actually support significantly higher housing prices of approximately \$190,800. This trend indicates that current housing is generally affordable to people who work in the County, but the balance of affordable housing is changing, because new high-income households are relocating to the County pushing housing prices higher than local wages can support. County officials need to ensure that workforce housing continues to be available in the future.



Source: Ackerman & Co., November 2005

- Jobs-Housing Imbalance.** Jobs-housing balance seeks a geographic equilibrium between housing and jobs. The underlying theory is that as jobs and housing are more evenly distributed and mixed, people will be able to live closer to their jobs, and traffic congestion and vehicular traffic will be reduced. A balanced community generally has a jobs-housing ratio of 1.25 to 1.75, with 1.4 considered ideal. Newton County has a low jobs-housing ratio of 0.64, as of 2003. This ratio has fallen from 0.73 in 1990, which

indicates that the County serves as a bedroom community more than a balanced community.

Housing Opportunities

1. **Encourage traditional neighborhood developments.** There are several excellent examples of TND developments in Covington, such as Clark's Grove, that can serve as a model for future developments. These TND developments offer a variety of housing types in a dynamic mixed-use environment that helps to reduce auto trips and create a strong sense of place that can help to make Newton unique.

Natural and Cultural Resource Issues

1. **Declining Water Quality.** Four of Newton County's significant streams and rivers do not meet federal water quality standards. Lake Jackson in south Newton County is also in violation of clean water standards, in large part due to these impaired streams and rivers. None of these streams originate in Newton County, and all are impaired by the time they reach the County. Several large urban areas are upstream of Newton County, as are a number of active agricultural areas. Much of the pollution generated is due to urban and rural non-point source runoff, but wastewater from industrial and municipal uses also contribute to substandard water quality.



Lake Jackson

2. **Poor Air Quality.** Newton County is one of 21 metropolitan Atlanta counties with poor air quality. The County along with the region does not meet federal clean air standards for particulate matter or ground-level ozone. Regionally, the bulk of the problem originates with high traffic volumes, often traveling relatively long distances in congested operating conditions. Several ongoing trends will likely exacerbate Newton County's air quality problem. These include:
 - Increased development – commercial and residential
 - New developments continue to focus on travel by motor vehicle
 - Segregation of land uses
 - Poor street connectivity/cul-de-sac and dead-end streets
 - Lack of pedestrian or bicycle facilities
 - Lack of adequate job opportunities in the County
 - Loss of tree canopy

Stemming these trends will require a multi-faceted campaign of zoning and land development regulation reform, public education, and intergovernmental coordination between all government entities in the region.

3. **Preservation of prime agricultural and open space conservation.**

Newton County contains many areas of large, undeveloped land, particularly in its eastern and southern sections. It also retains thousands of acres of active, productive farms. Large expanses of open space are generally attractive to the development community, and development pressure on these valuable resources is growing. At this time the County lacks a

comprehensive strategy for preservation and retention of these open spaces and farmlands, though it does have a greenspace plan which identifies areas for trails and greenways.



4. **Preservation of Historic Resources.** There is a need for design guidelines in areas of redevelopment and infill, but at present the County's historic resources, districts, and sites lack local protection from demolition, inappropriate modification, or encroachment of incompatible development. Very few of the many historic sites located throughout the County are federally-protected through listing on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP), and this places a large majority of the County's historic resources at risk. To protect its historic integrity, the County should adopt both historic preservation districts and architectural and design guidelines to be overseen by a historic preservation commission.

Natural and Cultural Resource Opportunities

1. **Greenspace and open space preservation.** A greenspace plan, which identified opportune areas for trails and greenways, was created shortly after the County's April 2000 Comprehensive Plan Update. This plan has stimulated greater levels of interest in trails and greenspaces as both community assets and tools for natural resources preservation. Further efforts should be made to implement the plan and keep it up-to-date. The County has purchased several tracts of land for preservation, but more can be done. By developing a protective ordinance/overlay district, the County could demonstrate its commitment to protecting these resources from inappropriate development.
2. **Protect water quality.** A regional solution which is carried out in cooperation with the surrounding counties will be the optimal approach for addressing this problem. Consistent enforcement of existing erosion and sedimentation control regulations is also

needed, and revisions to development standards could include limits on impervious surfaces, additional conservation subdivision options, requirements for pervious parking areas, or incentives for green roofs.

3. **Protect air quality.** Currently, Newton County does not have a specific strategy for addressing air quality. Standards that help reduce driving, promote walking and bicycling, or preserve trees and tree canopy help improve air quality. Many aspects of the existing regulatory environment promote air quality-friendly development including:
 - Zoning districts that allow for mixed land uses
 - Requirements for pedestrian facilities
 - Conservation subdivision and tree saving standards
 - Standards to limit impervious surfaces and shared parking
4. **State and Federal Historic Preservation Program.** The preservation of historic and cultural sites within the County presents an opportunity to create an unique sense of place that can help to attract residents, business, and tourism. There are numerous state- and federally-funded programs that support the goal of historic preservation and that could be utilized to help in this effort.

Community Facilities and Services Issues

1. **Meeting the service demands of explosive population growth.** The County has witnessed and is expected to experience rapid population growth over the planning horizon, and with that growth has come increasing demands for public services. Careful planning is required to ensure adequate services are available over the next 20 years.
2. **Anticipated failure of individual septic tank systems.** The majority of county residents use septic tanks and, over the planning horizon, many of these tanks will fail.
3. **Diminishing supply of regional water.** Septic and land application systems are consumptive uses of water. As a result, there may be future political pressure to develop sewer systems with surface water discharges, as opposed to continued use of septic systems or land application systems.



Community Facilities and Services Opportunities

1. **Expanding sewer capacity.** The County has plans to expand sewer service and make it available to more customers.

Intergovernmental Coordination Issues

1. **Regional transportation planning.** To ensure that proper coordination and execution of much needed transportation improvements, County officials need to be actively involved in transportation planning activities at the Atlanta Regional Commission, the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center, Georgia Regional Transportation Authority, and Georgia Department of Transportation.
2. **Land use conflicts that result from annexation.** Newton County and its cities have not established future annexation areas and service agreements that could serve as a basis for its extraterritorial jurisdiction.
3. **Regular County-Municipal Coordination.** The county does not have a regular meeting process with the county and neighboring cities to discuss regional issues

Intergovernmental Coordination Opportunities

1. **Shared Services.** The County and City governments cooperate to provide or share services (parks and recreation, E911, Emergency Services, Police or Sheriff's Office, schools, water, sewer, other). There are opportunities to do more.
2. **Impact Fees.** The recent adoption of impact fees by the County presents a good opportunity for mutual cooperation with the City governments in the collection and funding of needed capital improvements related to new construction.
3. **Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax.** County officials need to continue to work closely with the cities to help ensure that this important source of capital improvements funding is used effectively.

Transportation Issues

1. **No County Transit System.** There is not a public transit system in Newton County. The community should study the opportunities for express bus routes and vanpooling.
2. **Lack of adequate traffic signals.** There are many all-way stops in the community that need to be signalized and existing signals should be synchronized. This would help to reduce queuing.
3. **Mitigating increasing traffic congestion.** Traffic congestion is going to get worse as the county grows. Steps need to be implemented to slow the increase in congestion including requiring street connectivity and conducting traffic studies.
4. **Poorly connected or incomplete pedestrian network.** There are ordinances in place to promote sidewalk construction as a part of new development, but the network is disconnected. The County should identify future collector streets to be built as development occurs

Transportation Opportunities

1. **Improving street connectivity within and between developments.** By requiring adjacent developments to provide stub streets, and to connect to any existing stub streets on adjacent property, a secondary network of roadways that can serve more than just the new development may be established.
2. **More mixed-use developments.** Additional employment and retail opportunities close to housing would reduce driving time for residents
3. **Greenway and Bicycle Plan.** Though the County has a bicycle plan, the need remains for more multi-use trails for walking and biking.
4. **Transportation Plan.** The County is currently undertaking a Countywide Transportation Plan.

Land Use Issues

1. **Suburban Sprawl.** Most of the recent development in the County over the past 10 years has occurred in a typical suburban land use pattern. Most of the new development associated with this pattern is single-family residential spread out in a leap-frog fashion. Retail and employment opportunities are primarily relegated to Covington, and surrounding counties, such as Rockdale, forcing more and more residents to drive longer distances.
2. **Strip Commercial Development.** The land uses along some highway corridors form stereotypical commercial strips that detract from the rural character and regional identity.

Land Use Opportunities

1. **Reserve land for industrial and commercial growth.** Within the Future Land Use Plan, include adequate space for the growth of employment-related uses. Proposed developments such as Stanton Springs, can help nurture the need for an expanded employment base.
2. **Interstate Gateways.** New developments like Stanton Springs and the new campus of Perimeter College offer an opportunity to improve the gateways to the community from I-20 through proper land use controls.
3. **Encourage traditional neighborhood development.** Traditional neighborhoods developments can be viable in any context, but they should be encouraged in crossroad communities where appropriate supportive infrastructure is in place.
4. **Protect natural resources within developments.** Promote the use of the conservation subdivision ordinance, adopt a stream buffer ordinance and create an incentive to create greenway connections.

3 Analysis of Existing Development Patterns

The purpose of this analysis is to gain a clear understanding of the geographic setting within which unincorporated Newton County is growing and to explore further those issues and opportunities that relate directly to the physical environment. The following analysis looks at three aspects of the existing development patterns: Existing Land Use, Areas Requiring Special Attention, and Character Areas.

Existing Land Use

An existing land use map is a representation of what is on the ground at a given point in time. For purposes of this analysis, the Newton County Existing Land Use Map (**Figure 3**) shows what is on the ground as of October 2005. The map is based on a number of field surveys undertaken in the Fall of 2005, an analysis aerial photography, and tax assessor data. The map illustrates uses found throughout the unincorporated portions of the County. These uses were categorized using a variation of the standard category system prescribed by the Georgia DCA. **Figure 2** shows the amount of land categorized under each use.

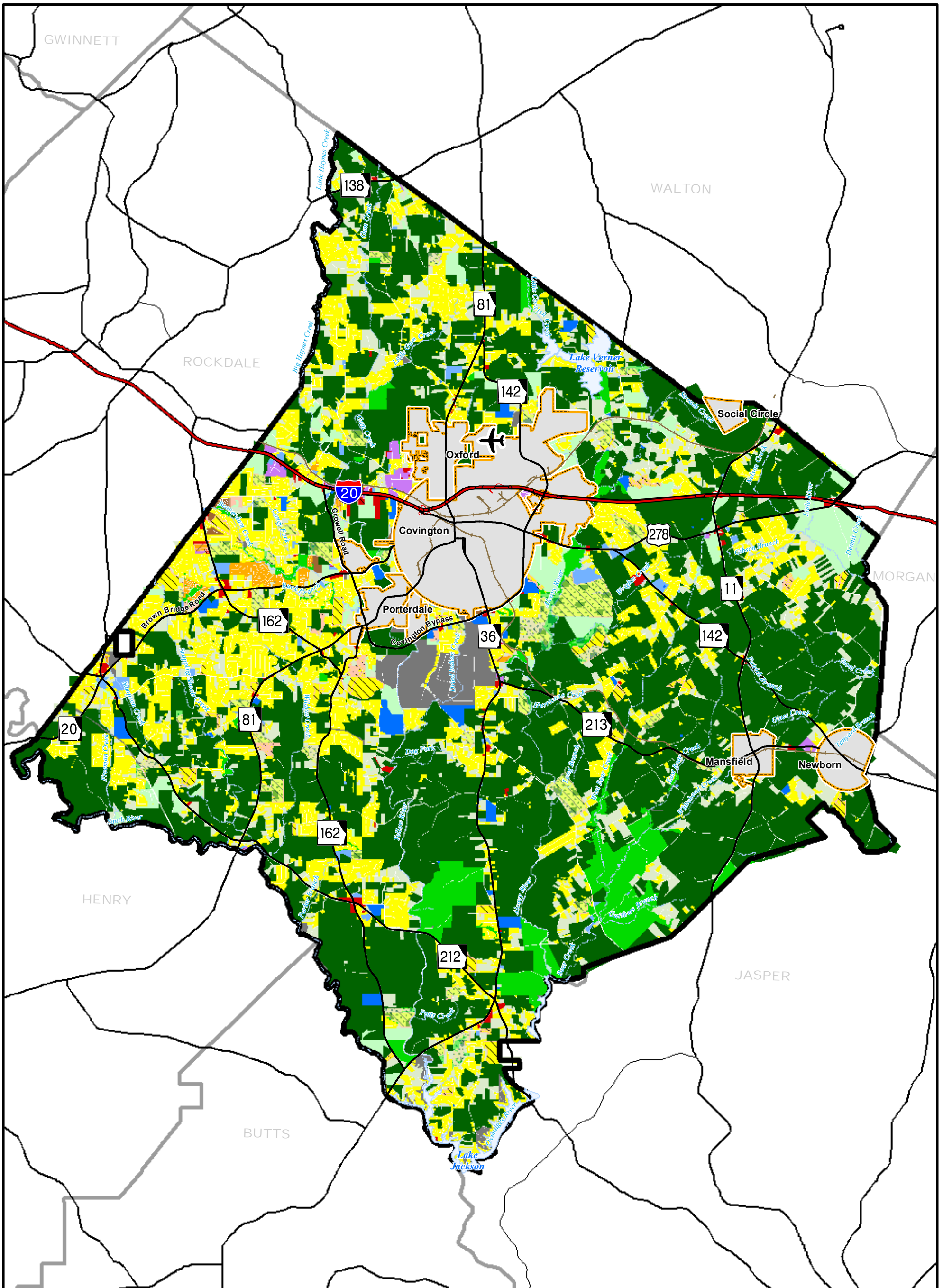
Most of Newton County may be classified agriculture/forestry, just over 46%. Most of this land lies in the eastern part of the county, though it is scattered throughout giving most of the county a rural character and a sense of open space that many residents cherish.

The second largest land use category is residential, just over 25%. The most predominate form of residential is single-family or low density, 0.2 to 2.5 units per acre. Most of this form of development can be found throughout the western half of the county.

Commercial land use, while visible along the community's roadways comprises less than 1% of the total land area. Similarly industrial utilizes less than 1% of the total land as well. Most of the commercial and industrial uses in the County lie within municipal boundaries, particularly Covington. Clearly, there is an opportunity for expanding the county's commercial and industrial base. Promoting commercial and industrial economic development will improve the area's jobs-housing balance, fiscal situation and tax base, as well as provide the goods, services, and restaurants residents are leaving the County to find.

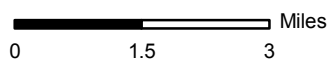
Figure 2: Existing Land Use, Unincorporated Newton County, October 2005

Existing Land Use Category		Acres	% of County Total
Standard Category	Sub-Category		
Agriculture/Forestry		83,348.08	46.63%
Residential		52,264.08	29.24%
	Estate Residential	15,901.83	8.90%
	Low Density Residential	29,514.02	16.51%
	<i>Conservation Subdivision (overlay*)</i>	4,290.63	2.40%
	Medium Density Residential	551.94	0.31%
	High Density Residential	228.27	0.13%
	Mobile Home Park	117.21	0.07%
	Under Construction Residential	5,950.81	3.33%
Transportation/Communication/Utilities		10,473.16	5.86%
	Road Right-of-Way	7,462.97	4.18%
	Other Transportation/Communication/Utilities	3,010.19	1.68%
Parks/Recreation/Conservation		7,273.62	4.07%
Undeveloped/Vacant		7,006.12	3.92%
Public/Institutional		2,702.36	1.51%
	Public	1,579.30	0.88%
	Private Institutional	1,123.06	0.63%
Industrial		634.72	0.36%
Commercial		1,009.16	0.56%
	Commercial	947.25	0.53%
	Under Construction Commercial	61.91	0.03%
Mixed Use		5.09	<0.01%
Total in the Unincorporated areas		164,716.39	92.16%
Total in Incorporated Areas		14,019.91	7.84%
Total Countywide		178,736.30	100.00%
<p><i>* Note: Conservation Subdivision is an overlay on top of Low Density Residential, Under Construction Residential, and Parks/Recreation/Conservation. These numbers are double counted. Source: Jordan, Jones & Goulding, Inc</i></p>			



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

Existing Land Use



Existing Land Use

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Estate Residential | Industrial |
| Low Density Residential | Under Construction Industrial |
| Medium Density Residential | Private Institutional |
| High Density Residential | Public |
| Mobile Home Park | Parks/Recreation/Conservation |
| Under Construction Residential | Agricultural/Forestry |
| Mixed-Use | Transportation/Communication/Utilities |
| Commercial | Undeveloped/Vacant |
| Under Construction Commercial | Conservation Subdivision (overlay) |

- | |
|-----------------------------|
| Covington Municipal Airport |
| Interstate |
| Major Road |
| Ramp |
| Railroad |
| River/Stream |
| Lake/Pond |
| City Boundary |
| County Boundary |



Figure 3

The following table presents the definitions of each of the land use categories.

Figure 4: Existing Land Use Definitions

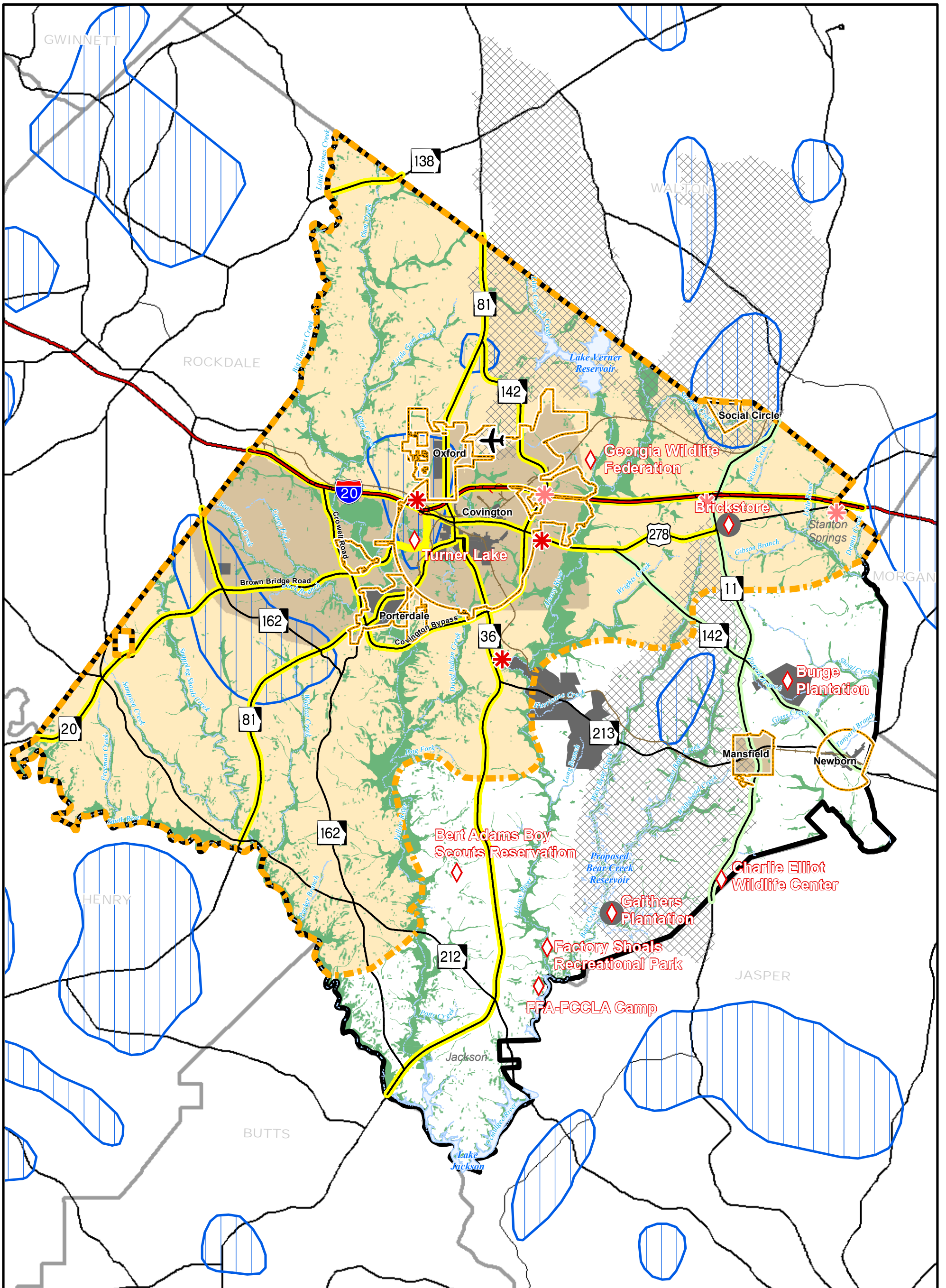
Existing Land Use Category	Definition
Estate Residential	Single-family residential uses up to 0.2 units per acre (5-acre to 15 acre residential lots). Residential uses on more than 15 acres are classified as Agricultural/Forestry.
Low Density Residential	Single-family residential uses at a density of 0.2 to 2.5 units per acre.
Medium Density Residential	Single and multi-family residential uses of more than 2.5 up to 4 units per acre.
High Density Residential	Multi-family residential uses at a density of 4 to 12 units per acres.
Conservation Subdivision	Low density residential subdivisions designed to preserve more than 33% Open Space.
Mobile Home Park	Land used for mobile home communities.
Under Construction Residential	Single-family or multi-family developments that are under construction at the time of the survey. Some lots may be occupied.
Agricultural/Forestry	Land used for agricultural purposes such as cropland or livestock production and all land used or potentially used for commercial timber production. Also includes residential uses on 15 acres or more.
Commercial	Commercial and office uses; including strip malls, big-box retail, auto-related businesses, restaurants, convenience stores, and office buildings.
Under Construction Commercial	Property on which construction activity for future commercial uses was evident at the time of the survey.
Mixed-Use	Mixture of land uses typically found in the town center. Includes a variety of uses in one structure, such as loft apartments over office or retail.
Industrial	Industrial uses including small warehouses, light assembly operations, manufacturing plants and quarries.
Under Construction Industrial	Property on which construction activity for future industrial uses was evident at the time of the survey.
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	Active and passive recreation areas, parks, and protected lands. Includes land owned by a land trust or public agency and preserved from future development as maintained as open space.
Public	Community facilities (except utilities), owned by the local, state and federal government. Examples include public schools, public safety stations, city halls, courthouses, jails, and libraries.
Private Institutional	Institutional facilities owned private entities. Examples include private schools, health facilities, private clubs, and churches.
Transportation/Communication /Utilities (TCU)	Land used by transportation, communication or utility facilities; such as airports, cell towers, power stations, sewer plants, water towers, and water treatment facilities.
Road Right-Of-Way	A subcategory of TCU that includes land dedicated to road right-of-way.
Undeveloped/Vacant	No active use on the property, includes property improved for real estate sale (cleared and graded but on structure) and property with vacant or abandoned structures with which no employment or residence can be associated. Property with recently constructed structures will fall under one of the under construction categories or the use for which it is intended.

Areas Requiring Special Attention

As the County continues to grow and develop, it will have significant impacts on the existing residents, natural and cultural resources, community services and facilities, and infrastructure. This section summarizes the locations of some of the likely impacts of growth, including areas where growth should be avoided. Also included are areas in need of additional investment because of aesthetics, pollution, or disinvestment. The following table presents the definitions of each of the special attention areas, **Figure 5**. **Figure 6** maps the locations of these various areas.

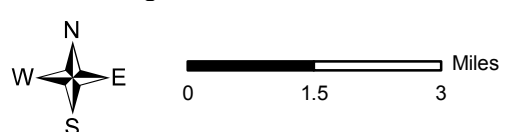
Figure 5: Areas Requiring Special Attention Definitions

Areas Requiring Special Attention	Definition
Areas where rapid land use change has occurred or is likely to occur	Within the County, new development will challenge the community's ability to provide the same level of service for infrastructure, community facilities, and services. Among the services requiring the most attention are highways and roads, schools, water and sewer. Particular areas where special attention should be given include Stanton Springs and the Hwy 11/I-20 interchange where Perimeter College is building a new campus.
Conservation Focus Area	Critical natural resources such as wetlands, streams, and floodplains are located throughout the county.
Areas with Potential Infill Development Opportunities	There are many significant infill development opportunities within the county, particularly in rapidly growing portions of the county, where public sewer is available.
Reinvestment Opportunities	There are a few locations in the community where redevelopment is a viable option. Since most of the development in Newton is relatively new, most of these opportunities are really located within the municipalities.
Corridors Requiring Special Attention	There are several corridors in the county that for one reason or another, including traffic congestion and safety may want to be considered for special land use controls or the focus of new transportation investment.
Scenic Corridors	Transportation corridors with scenic views that may want to be considered for special land use controls.
Water supply Watersheds	There are several large and small water supply watersheds in the County, that under state regulations and local zoning code have special land use controls to help protect the quality of community drinking water.
Groundwater Recharge Areas	Pursuant to state regulations, Newton County has adopted a Groundwater Recharge Area Protection Overlay District ordinance. This ordinance restricts some types of development in areas that may function as significant groundwater recharge areas. This includes restrictions on septic tanks, drain fields, and spray fields; minimum sizes for lots requiring septic systems; and controls on landfills, above-ground chemical or petroleum tanks, agricultural waste lagoons, and certain other hazardous waste land uses
Historic Districts and sites	There are many historic sites and districts in Newton County. The County needs to create a policy-regulatory framework for ensuring the long-term integrity of valuable resource.



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

*Areas Requiring
Special Attention*



- | | | |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Proposed Major Development * Reinvestment Opportunity Corridor Requiring Special Attention Scenic Corridor Water Supply Watershed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groundwater Recharge Area Historic District/Site Area Where Rapid Land Use Change has Occurred or has the Potential to Occur Area with Potential Infill Opportunities Conservation Focus Area | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✈ Covington Municipal Airport ◆ Point of Interest Interstate Highway Major Road Road Railroad River/Stream Proposed Reservoir Lake/Pond Parcel Boundary City Boundary Newton County Boundary |
|---|--|--|



Figure 6

Recommended Character Areas

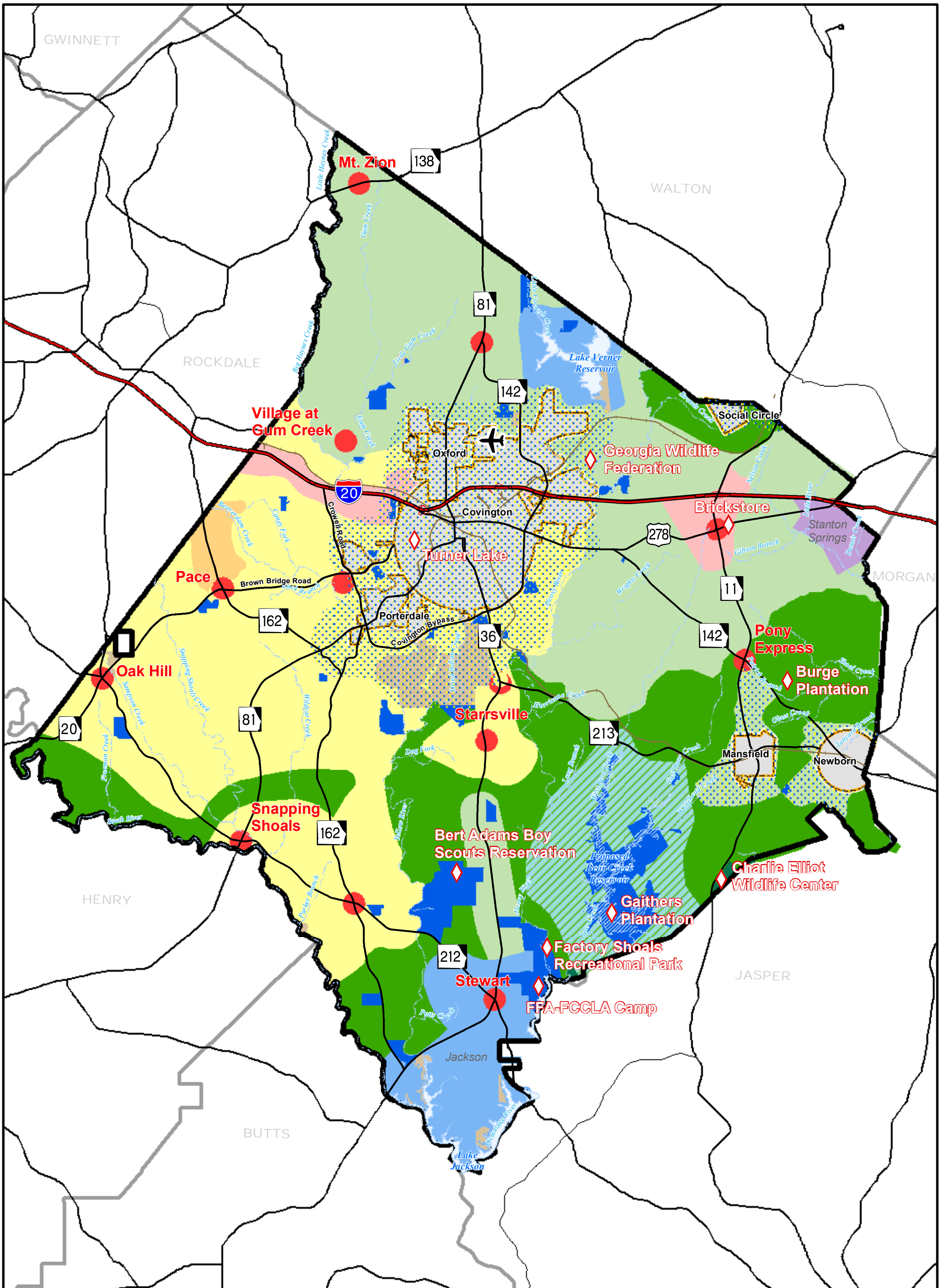
The use of character areas in planning acknowledges the visual and functional differences that exist today among the districts and neighborhoods of the county. They help guide future development through policies and implementation strategies that are tailored to each situation. These recommended character areas can be used to define areas that (1) presently have unique or special characteristics that need to be preserved; (2) have potential to evolve into unique areas; or (3) require special attention because of unique development issues. In some cases, different character areas are defined for existing land use and future land use in order to highlight appropriate transitions as the community evolves. The County's character areas are mapped in figure defined and described in the following table, **Figure 7**, and mapped in **Figure 8**.

Figure 7: Character Area Definitions

Character Area	Description/ Location	Development Strategy
Crossroads Community	A community typically centered around a rural crossroads. Crossroads communities include a nucleus of small-scale commercial uses, civic facilities, religious institutions, and schools surrounded by single-family and estate residential.	The Crossroads Community serves as a convenient center for public activities. Its land use consists of a mix of retail, public/institutional, services, and residential. The village character of the Crossroads Community is set by a combination of rehabilitated historic houses and compatible new infill development targeted to a broad range of income levels. Design standards for the Crossroads Community encourage pedestrian-oriented, walkable connections between different uses. There are direct connections with the greenspace and trail networks linking the center of the community to neighborhoods and major community facilities such as parks, schools, libraries, neighborhood centers, health facilities, and commercial clusters.
Agriculture	Consisting primarily of pastures, woodlands, and farmlands in open or cultivated state.	Maintain rural character by protecting viewsheds to natural areas from clear cutting, and prohibiting junk yards or outdoor storage of heavy equipment.
Conservation	Areas of protected open space including wetlands, floodplains, stream corridors, conservation areas, and natural buffers.	Preservation of more greenspace should be encouraged. Conservation areas should be as connected as possible.

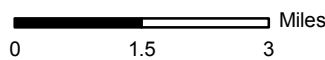
Character Area	Description/ Location	Development Strategy
Future Employment Center	Consisting of industries, warehouses, and distribution facilities on level sites having good interstate access, railroads, and utilities, and with space for expansion.	Provide adequate infrastructure capacity and maintain designated truck routes to the interstate that are safe and maneuverable for heavy vehicles and minimize noise, vibration, and intrusion of trucks in residential areas. Provide adequate room for expansion and the development of ancillary business and employee services. Encourage attractive, landscaped entrances and grounds. Protect environmentally sensitive areas and buffer surrounding neighborhoods. Screen truck docks and waste handling areas from public view. Avoid intrusion of obnoxious uses into industrial parks.
Interstate Gateway	A visitor's impression of the County is often set by what they see and experience when they get off of the interstate. These character areas are defined by a mix of uses that surround each of the interstate interchanges.	Streetscaping enhancements and strong design standards should be in place to help ensure that the aesthetic qualities of the built environment around each of the interchanges is reflective of the community's vision for the future and the image they want to portray to visitors. In particular, there should be strong signage controls to direct visitors to local activity centers, reflect a sense of community pride and local architectural styles, and still promote local businesses.
Lakeside Residential	Residential developments surrounding local reservoirs and large lakes.	Appropriate land use regulations should be in place to serve the intended use of the lake or reservoir and protect water quality.
Suburban Residential	Residential subdivisions developed since 1960. These areas are characterized by automobile orientation, high degree of building separation, exclusively, residential and disconnected street patterns.	Promote new developments that emulate the positive aspects of community. Promote moderate density, traditional development (TND) style residential subdivisions. New development should be master planned with mixed uses, blending residential development with schools, parks, recreation, retail businesses and services, linked in a compact pattern that encourages walking and minimizes the need for auto trips. There should be connectivity and continuity between master planned developments. There should be good vehicular and pedestrian/bike connections to retail/commercial services as well as internal street connectivity, connectivity to adjacent properties/subdivisions, and multiple site access points. Foster the establishment of a regional network of greenspace and trails, available to pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians for both tourism and recreational purposes.

Character Area	Description/ Location	Development Strategy
Suburban Corridor	Auto-oriented corridor comprised of a mix of land uses.	Complete and integrate pedestrian improvements and crosswalks throughout. Connect commercial areas to nearby residential areas. The areas should be required to promote pedestrian comfort, safety and convenience; promote high standards of landscape and sign controls to improve corridor appearance and maintain traffic speeds and capacity through access management and inter-parcel access.
Municipal Gateway	Surrounding each of the local municipalities are areas within the unincorporated County that are more reflective of the character of the municipality than the surrounding unincorporated County. These transition areas include those properties likely to be considered for future annexation.	Development within these areas should be consistent with the character of the adjacent municipality. There should also be in place a formal procedure for the notification of development and annexation plans between the County and the municipality to mitigate the potentially negative impact of land use decisions.
Public Institutional (PI) and Transportation/Communication/Utilities (TCU)	Large public land uses.	PI and TCU uses should be integrated into the character surrounding area and should be properly screened where appropriate.



Newton County 2028 Comprehensive Plan

Character Areas



- | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|-----------------------------|------------------------|
| Municipal Gateway | Lakeside Residential | Covington Municipal Airport | Proposed Reservoir |
| Community Crossroads | Public Institutional | Point of Interest | Lake/Pond |
| Agricultural | Rural Residential to Lakeside Residential | Interstate Highway | Parcel Boundary |
| Conservation | Rural Residential | Major Road | City Boundary |
| Future Employment Center | Suburban | Road | Newton County Boundary |
| Interstate Gateway | Transportation/Communication/Utilities | Railroad | |
| Suburban Corridor | | River/Stream | |



Figure 8



**Newton County 2006-2028 Comprehensive Plan:
Technical Addendum to the Community Assessment**

February 20, 2006

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Section I: Supporting Analysis of Data and Information

1 Introduction

This “Technical Addendum” was prepared following the guidelines of the Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Chapter 110-12-1, Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, effective May 1, 2005. It is an extension of the “Analysis of Supportive Data and Information” in the *Community Assessment*. All of the maps associated with this document can be found at the end in the “Atlas of Supportive Maps.” It should be noted that the study area for this plan is the unincorporated portions of Newton County, only.

2 Population

2.1 Total Population

Figure 2.1: Historic Population Trends in Newton County, Georgia and U.S.

Year	Newton County	State of Georgia	United States
1960	20,999	3,943,116	179,323,175
1970	26,282	4,589,575	203,302,031
1980	34,666	5,463,105	226,542,199
1990	41,808	6,478,216	248,709,873
2000	62,001	8,186,453	281,421,906
2004	81,524	8,829,383	293,655,404

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Figure 2.2: Historic Population Growth Rate in Newton County, Georgia, and U.S.

Year	Newton County	State of Georgia	United States
1960-1970	2.3%	1.5%	1.3%
1970-1980	2.8%	1.8%	1.1%
1980-1990	1.9%	1.7%	0.9%
1990-2000	4.0%	2.4%	1.2%
2000-2004	7.1%	1.9%	1.1%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Newton County is the 27th most populous county in Georgia with a 2004 population of 81,524. The county has consistently grown at a faster rate than Georgia and the nation. However, its population growth rate has increased dramatically since 1990 with an average annual growth rate of 4.9% (1990 to 2004); and since 2000, the population has exploded with a growth rate in excess of 7%.

There are six government jurisdictions in Newton County, including the County and five incorporated cities; a portion of Social Circle is also located in the County. The cities in Newton County represent 22.4% of the County’s population with a combined 2004 population of 18,275. The most significant is the City of Covington, the County Seat – representing 74% of municipal population and 16.5% of County population. The cities have generally experienced inconsistent and slower population growth compared to the County, Georgia and the nation; but similar to the County, the population growth among cities has been more dramatic since 2000.

The reason for this recent swell in population is that Newton County is in the growth path of metropolitan Atlanta along the Interstate 20 east corridor. This presents a myriad of issues for Newton County regarding services, environment, infrastructure, and quality of life. Growth in the cities also presents some issues related to coordination of any growth management policy.

Figure 2.3: Population Trends in Surrounding Counties

County	1970	1980	1990	2000	2004	Annual % Change
Newton	26,282	34,666	41,808	62,001	81,524	3.4%
Barrow	16,859	21,354	29,721	46,144	56,418	3.6%
Clarke	65,117	74,498	87,594	101,489	103,951	1.4%
Elbert	17,262	18,758	18,940	20,511	20,908	0.6%
Greene	10,212	11,391	11,793	14,406	15,652	1.3%
Jackson	21,093	25,343	30,005	41,589	49,540	2.5%
Jasper	5,760	7,553	8,453	11,426	12,866	2.4%
Madison	13,517	17,747	21,050	25,730	27,312	2.1%
Morgan	9,904	11,572	12,883	15,457	17,012	1.6%
Oconee	7,915	12,427	17,618	26,225	28,940	3.9%
Oglethorpe	7,598	8,929	9,763	12,635	13,557	1.7%
Walton	23,404	31,211	38,586	60,687	71,941	3.4%
Northeast Georgia RDC	224,923	275,449	328,214	438,300	499,621	2.4%
Atlanta MSA (28 Counties)	1,845,281	2,326,635	3,069,425	4,247,981	4,708,297	2.8%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Newton County is part of the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center (RDC), which assists cities and counties in their planning efforts. It is the second most populous county in the RDC and one of the fastest growing, including other counties in metro-Atlanta.

2.1.1 Population Projections

Figure 2.4: Population Projections for Newton County, Georgia and U.S.

Year	Newton County			Georgia	United States
	Hightower	NEGRDC	High		
2000	62,001	62,001	62,001	8,186,453	281,421,906
2008	88,152	89,464	90,908	9,275,650	305,947,882
2013	106,087	107,940	115,473	9,885,898	321,117,648
2018	125,082	127,290	146,675	10,517,132	337,003,980
2023	146,816	158,198	186,309	11,170,628	353,608,302
2028	170,376	171,673	236,653	11,857,768	371,278,148

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000), Newton County, Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center, Hightower Consulting Engineers, and Ackerman/JJG (Based on 1990-2004 growth rate).

Figure 2.5: Population Projection Growth Rates for Newton County, Georgia, and U.S.

Year	Newton County			Georgia	United States
	Hightower	NEGRDC	High		
2000-2008	4.5%	4.7%	4.9%	1.6%	1.0%
2008-2013	3.8%	3.8%	4.9%	1.3%	1.0%
2013-2018	3.3%	3.4%	4.9%	1.2%	1.0%
2018-2023	3.3%	4.4%	4.9%	1.2%	1.0%
2023-2028	3.0%	1.6%	4.9%	1.2%	1.0%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000), Newton County, Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center, Hightower Consulting Engineers, and Ackerman/JJG (Based on 1990-2004 growth rate).

A range of population projections are presented for Newton County because many factors for predicting population growth are somewhat unpredictable. The County’s growth strategy over the near-term is a major factor. Other factors influencing future growth include the land-use and growth management coordination between the County and its cities, local housing market conditions, and economic conditions in metro Atlanta and the nation.

The projections are based on estimates from Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center (RDC) and Hightower Consulting Engineers, who prepared a water demand analysis for the County. As shown, the projections from these two sources are similar and provide a consensus among two sources – averaging 3.7% growth rate per year. The result is a 2028 population of approximately 171,000. Another scenario is a “high” projection based on the most recent population growth rate of 4.9% (1990-2004), which results in a 2028 population of 236,653. The three projections create a spread of approximately 65,600 people.

2.1.2 Seasonal Population

According to the 2000 Census only 148 housing units in Newton County were classified as for seasonal, recreational, or occasional use, representing 0.6% of total housing units. A total of 18 of these units were located in the City of Covington. It is unknown how many of those units are seasonal.

2.1.3 Daytime Population

In 2000, the daytime population of Newton County is slightly lower than its resident population. In 2000:

- 17,561 people worked in Newton County
- 17,157 residents were under the age of 18 and presumably at school within the County
- 15,809 residents were not in the labor force

The total daytime population is estimated at approximately 50,527, compared to a total resident population of 62,001.

2.1.4 Households

Figure 2.6: Total Households and Household Size for Newton County and Georgia

Total Households		
Year	Newton County	Georgia
1990	14,401	2,366,615
2000	21,997	3,006,369
2005	29,611	N/A
Average Household Size		
Year	Newton County	Georgia
1990	2.85	2.66
2000	2.77	2.65
2005	2.75	2.65

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Claritas (2005 Estimate).

The average household size in Newton County has fallen steadily over the decades from 3.38 in 1970 to an estimated 2.75 in 2005. According to Woods & Poole Economics Inc. the County's average household size is expected to stabilize in the 2.64 range from 2015 to 2030. The County has a larger household size compared Georgia due to a significant number of families in the County as shown below.

2.7: Distribution of Household Types for Newton County, and Georgia (2000)

Category	Newton County		Georgia	
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total
Total Households	21,997	100%	3,006,369	100%
Family Households	17,113	77.8%	2,111,647	70.2%
Married-Couple Family	13,026	59.2%	1,548,800	51.5%
Married-Couple Family w/Children	6,018	27.4%	732,734	24.4%
Female Householder w/Children	1,775	8.1%	258,006	8.6%
Householder Living Alone	4,023	18.3%	710,523	23.6%
Householder Living Alone 65+ Years Old	1,460	6.6%	210,409	7.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

A total of 77.8% of Newton County households are classified as family households. The County also has a high number of traditional families with children, 27.4%, compared to 24.4% in the State of Georgia. This high incidence of family householders could create some fiscal challenges to the County's public school system. The County also has a lower incidence of female-headed households with children and householders living alone compared to Georgia.

2.2 Age

Figure 2.8: Population Trends by Age for Newton County

Category	Newton County			Annual
	1990	2000	2005	% Change
0-4 years old	3,400	4,916	6,531	4.4%
5-9 years old	3,195	4,912	6,290	4.6%
10-14 years old	3,186	4,781	6,317	4.7%
15-19 years old	3,463	4,330	6,041	3.8%
20-24 years old	3,371	3,716	5,715	3.6%
25-34 years old	6,906	10,080	13,948	4.8%
35-44 years old	5,985	9,821	13,042	5.3%
45-54 years old	4,509	7,878	9,921	5.4%
55-59 years old	1,787	3,039	3,982	5.5%
60-64 years old	1,595	2,399	3,115	4.6%
65-74 years old	2,539	3,535	4,357	3.7%
75-84 years old	1,511	1,943	2,434	3.2%
85+ years old	361	651	844	5.8%
Total	41,808	62,001	82,537	4.6%
Total under 18	11,676	17,157	22,734	4.5%
Total 65+	4,411	6,129	7,635	3.7%
Median Age	31.1	33.3	32.4	0.3%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Claritas (2005 Estimate)

Figure 1.9: Population Composition by Age for Newton County

Category	Newton County		
	1990	2000	2005
0-4 years old	8.1%	7.9%	7.9%
5-9 years old	7.6%	7.9%	7.6%
10-14 years old	7.6%	7.7%	7.7%
15-19 years old	8.3%	7.0%	7.3%
20-24 years old	8.1%	6.0%	6.9%
25-34 years old	16.5%	16.3%	16.9%
35-44 years old	14.3%	15.8%	15.8%
45-54 years old	10.8%	12.7%	12.0%
55-59 years old	4.3%	4.9%	4.8%
60-64 years old	3.8%	3.9%	3.8%
65-74 years old	6.1%	5.7%	5.3%
75-84 years old	3.6%	3.1%	2.9%
85+ years old	0.9%	1.0%	1.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total under 18	27.9%	27.7%	27.5%
Total 65+	10.6%	9.9%	9.3%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Claritas (2005 Estimate)

Newton County has a significant number of children under the age of 18, totaling 27.5% in 2000, due to the high number of family households. This is higher than the Georgia average of 26.5%. There is a general downward trend for children under 18 as a percentage of the population for the

County, but the absolute increase in children is notable. Based on the “high” population projection, the number of youth for Newton County could reach 61,766 in 2028 compared to 17,157 in 2000 – an increase of 44,609 children. This trend, again, presents fiscal challenges for the school system, as well as parks and recreation and other youth services.

The growing senior population is an important future trend. In 2000, the senior population was higher for Newton County (9.9%) than the State of Georgia (9.6%). By 2028, the senior population for Newton County is expected to comprise 12.4%, 2.5 percentage points higher than 2000. This equates to 29,345 seniors in 2028 using the “high” population projection, which is 4.8 times the 2000 senior population of 6,129. This increase in seniors will challenge the community in providing housing choices, as well as health care, transportation and other services to older citizens.

The population projections provided by Woods and Poole Economics Inc. significantly undercount future population for Newton County in our opinion. However, the age composition of the future population appears realistic.

Figure 2.10: Population Projections by Age for Newton County

Category	2000	2008	2013	2018	2023	2028	Annual % Change
0-4 years old	5,050	6,042	6,524	6,788	6,962	7,240	1.3%
5-9 years old	5,000	5,576	6,032	6,492	6,786	6,984	1.2%
10-14 years old	4,910	5,270	5,510	5,934	6,426	6,754	1.1%
15-19 years old	4,380	5,420	5,650	5,810	6,284	6,826	1.6%
20-24 years old	3,770	5,546	6,008	6,014	6,226	6,730	2.1%
25-29 years old	4,800	5,880	6,468	6,680	6,710	7,000	1.4%
30-34 years old	5,360	5,784	6,208	6,768	7,024	7,064	1.0%
35-39 years old	5,220	5,900	5,896	6,128	6,732	7,028	1.1%
40-44 years old	4,700	5,820	5,992	5,764	6,008	6,630	1.2%
45-49 years old	4,080	5,240	5,794	5,874	5,648	5,894	1.3%
50-54 years old	3,950	4,526	5,012	5,516	5,628	5,400	1.1%
55-59 years old	3,080	3,640	4,134	4,706	5,200	5,332	2.0%
60-64 years old	2,430	3,310	3,524	3,856	4,398	4,868	2.5%
65-69 years old	1,970	2,394	2,842	3,076	3,380	3,874	2.4%
70-74 years old	1,590	1,814	2,062	2,514	2,736	3,004	2.3%
75-79 years old	1,190	1,374	1,468	1,668	2,026	2,202	2.2%
80-84 years old	760	896	978	1,046	1,190	1,450	2.3%
85+ years old	660	868	974	1,040	1,120	1,286	2.4%
Total	62,900	75,300	81,076	85,674	90,484	95,566	1.5%
Total under 18	17,540	19,980	21,304	22,560	23,818	24,940	1.3%
Total 65+	6,160	7,344	8,336	9,346	10,448	11,810	2.4%
Median Age	33.27	33.34	33.52	33.76	34.15	34.42	0.1%

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

Figure 2.11: Projected Age Composition for Newton County

Category	2000	2008	2013	2018	2023	2028
0-4 years old	8.0%	8.0%	8.0%	7.9%	7.7%	7.6%
5-9 years old	7.9%	7.4%	7.4%	7.6%	7.5%	7.3%
10-14 years old	7.8%	7.0%	6.8%	6.9%	7.1%	7.1%
15-19 years old	7.0%	7.2%	7.0%	6.8%	6.9%	7.1%
20-24 years old	6.0%	7.4%	7.4%	7.0%	6.9%	7.0%
25-29 years old	7.6%	7.8%	8.0%	7.8%	7.4%	7.3%
30-34 years old	8.5%	7.7%	7.7%	7.9%	7.8%	7.4%
35-39 years old	8.3%	7.8%	7.3%	7.2%	7.4%	7.4%
40-44 years old	7.5%	7.7%	7.4%	6.7%	6.6%	6.9%
45-49 years old	6.5%	7.0%	7.1%	6.9%	6.2%	6.2%
50-54 years old	6.3%	6.0%	6.2%	6.4%	6.2%	5.7%
55-59 years old	4.9%	4.8%	5.1%	5.5%	5.7%	5.6%
60-64 years old	3.9%	4.4%	4.3%	4.5%	4.9%	5.1%
65-69 years old	3.1%	3.2%	3.5%	3.6%	3.7%	4.1%
70-74 years old	2.5%	2.4%	2.5%	2.9%	3.0%	3.1%
75-79 years old	1.9%	1.8%	1.8%	1.9%	2.2%	2.3%
80-84 years old	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%	1.5%
85+ years old	1.0%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.3%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Total under 18	27.9%	26.5%	26.3%	26.3%	26.3%	26.1%
Total 65+	9.8%	9.8%	10.3%	10.9%	11.5%	12.4%

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

2.3 Race and Hispanic Origin

Figure 2.12: Population by Race and Hispanic Origin for Newton County

Category	1990	2000	2005	Annual % Change
Total Population	41,808	62,001	82,537	4.6%
Population by Race				
White	32,171	46,666	55,629	3.7%
African-American	9,357	13,771	23,985	6.5%
Asian	107	459	974	15.9%
Other	173	1,105	1,949	17.5%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	390	1,157	2,482	13.1%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Claritas (2005 Estimate)

Figure 2.13: Population Composition by Race and Hispanic Origin for Newton County

Category	1990	2000	2005
Population by Race			
White	76.9%	75.3%	67.4%
African-American	22.4%	22.2%	29.1%
Asian	0.3%	0.7%	1.2%
Other	0.4%	1.8%	2.4%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	0.9%	1.9%	3.0%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Claritas (2005 Estimate)

Figure 2.14: Regional Trends with Race and Hispanic Origin

County	White		African-American		Hispanic Origin	
	2000	1990-2000	2000	1990-2000	2000	1990-2000
	Share	Growth Rate	Share	Growth Rate	Share	Growth Rate
Newton	75.3%	45.1%	22.2%	47.2%	1.9%	196.7%
Barrow	84.8%	50.8%	9.7%	33.7%	3.2%	477.1%
Clarke	64.9%	6.3%	27.3%	20.6%	7.9%	331.7%
Elbert	66.9%	4.4%	30.9%	10.7%	2.4%	264.9%
Greene	53.0%	30.2%	44.5%	8.8%	2.9%	337.5%
Jackson	89.0%	37.4%	7.8%	11.4%	3.0%	680.6%
Jasper	71.0%	47.9%	27.3%	6.0%	2.1%	314.0%
Madison	89.0%	20.2%	8.5%	17.7%	2.0%	178.6%
Morgan	69.7%	28.9%	28.5%	-1.1%	1.6%	112.0%
Oconee	89.6%	45.4%	6.4%	28.0%	3.2%	368.0%
Oglethorpe	71.1%	35.6%	19.8%	3.2%	1.4%	163.6%
Walton	83.0%	61.6%	14.4%	23.1%	1.9%	244.1%
Northeast Georgia RDC	77.5%	21.2%	18.2%	2.6%	3.5%	393.5%
Georgia	65.1%	15.8%	28.7%	34.5%	5.3%	299.6%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Newton County is predominately white. Although the Hispanic and Asian populations represent a small portion of the total, these groups are growing at a sharply more rapid rate than other races. Providing bilingual services and education for these minority groups could present a community challenge in the future. The “other” race category, which is primarily persons of two races, is also growing rapidly. Newton County has fewer minorities than Georgia. The County is on par with its peer group (the Northeast Georgia RDC) with the exception of Hispanics, which account for less than 2% of the County total population.

Figure 2.15: Population Projections by Race for Newton County

Category	2000	2008	2013	2018	2023	2028	Annual % Change
White	46,940	53,460	56,818	59,824	62,980	66,234	1.2%
Black	14,150	19,182	21,316	22,764	24,234	25,826	2.2%
Native American	140	180	190	190	184	168	0.7%
Asian/Pacific Islander	490	746	870	970	1,094	1,258	3.4%
Hispanic	1,170	1,722	1,884	1,924	1,982	2,076	2.1%
Total	62,890	75,290	81,078	85,672	90,474	95,562	1.5%

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

Figure 2.16: Projected Racial Composition for Newton County

Category	2000	2008	2013	2018	2023	2028
White	74.6%	71.0%	70.1%	69.8%	69.6%	69.3%
Black	22.5%	25.5%	26.3%	26.6%	26.8%	27.0%
Native American	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%	0.2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.8%	1.0%	1.1%	1.1%	1.2%	1.3%
Hispanic	1.9%	2.3%	2.3%	2.2%	2.2%	2.2%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

Figure 2.15 and 2.16 show the projections by race for Newton County, according to Woods & Poole Economic, Inc. Once again it should be stated that Woods & Poole significantly undercount population projections for Newton County in our opinion. The projected racial composition, however, shows that the County’s minority population is growing at a slightly faster rate than the County’s white population, which is in line with State and national trends.

2.4 Income

2.4.1 Household Income

Figure 2.17: Household Income Trends for Newton County

Income	1990	2000	2005	Annual % Change
Less Than \$15,000	3,515	2,529	3,114	-0.8%
\$15,000-24,999	2,709	2,477	2,840	0.3%
\$25,000-34,999	2,800	2,788	3,171	0.8%
\$35,000-49,999	2,516	4,551	5,697	5.6%
\$50,000-74,999	1,947	5,257	6,905	8.8%
\$75,000-99,999	537	2,356	3,821	14.0%
\$100,000-149,999	243	1,464	2,946	18.1%
\$150,000+	98	567	1,167	18.0%
Total Households	14,365	21,989	29,661	5.0%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Claritas (2005 Estimate)

Figure 2.18: Household Income Distribution for Newton County

Category	1990	2000	2005
Less Than \$15,000	24.5%	11.5%	10.5%
\$15,000-24,999	18.9%	11.3%	9.6%
\$25,000-34,999	19.5%	12.7%	10.7%
\$35,000-49,999	17.5%	20.7%	19.2%
\$50,000-74,999	13.6%	23.9%	23.3%
\$75,000-99,999	3.7%	10.7%	12.9%
\$100,000-149,999	1.7%	6.7%	9.9%
\$150,000+	0.7%	2.6%	3.9%
Total Households	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Claritas (2005 Estimate)

Figure 2.19: Median Household Income Trends for Newton County, Atlanta, MSA, and Georgia

Median Household Income	1990	2000	2005	Annual % Change
Newton County	\$27,992	\$44,875	\$50,033	3.9%
Atlanta MSA	\$35,051	\$52,195	\$59,127	3.5%
Georgia	\$29,021	\$42,433	\$48,441	3.5%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Claritas (2005 Estimate)

Newton County is a middle-class county with a median household income of just under \$45,000 in 2000. Its median income is lower than the Atlanta MSA by a wide margin (\$7,320), but higher than Georgia. The County's income is also growing at a faster rate than the MSA and the State; this is a trend that is expected to continue as Newton County becomes absorbed into metro Atlanta.

Figure 2.20: Per Capita Income Trends for Newton County

Income	1990	2000	2005	Annual
				% Change
Newton County	\$11,641	\$19,317	\$22,353	4.4%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Claritas (2005 est.)

Per capita income trends also illustrate a general rise in income levels over the past 15 years.

2.4.2 Poverty

Figure 2.21: Poverty Status for Newton County, Atlanta MSA, and Georgia (1999)

Category	Newton County		Atlanta MSA	Georgia
Total Families	11,476	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Families in Poverty	1,264	11.0%	7.7%	11.5%
With Children	955	8.3%	6.0%	8.7%
With Female Householder, With Children	525	4.6%	4.0%	6.4%
Total Individuals	40,910	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Individuals in Poverty	5,873	14.4%	10.0%	14.7%
Under 18	3,539	8.7%	6.4%	9.2%
65 and over	847	2.1%	1.1%	2.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Newton County is generally on par with the State but higher than metro Atlanta regarding poverty. In 1999, the County had nearly 11,500 families and 40,910 individuals in poverty, including 3,539 children (**Figure 2.21**). According to local officials, the highest concentrations of poverty in the County can be found in the municipalities, particularly Porterdale and Covington.

3 Economic Development

It should be noted that the economic development data included in this section is for the whole county, including the cities. Also, the information collected for his analysis came from a variety of sources, including the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Georgia Department of Labor, the Atlanta Regional Commission, and Woods & Poole. As a result, there are inconsistencies in the way data is categorized and in the projections. For example in some data tables employees of the Newton Public School System are categorized under Education Services and in other table they are categorized under Local Government. Also note, that the term “employment” describes people that work in the County, whereas the term “labor force” describes residents of the county that work.

3.1 Economic Base

3.1.1 Historic Employment

Figure 3.1: Employment Trends by Sector in Newton County, 1990-2003

Industry Sector	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	Annual % Change
Agriculture	89	119	142	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mining	N/A	29	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Construction	542	673	1,307	1,380	1,389	1,420	7.7%
Manufacturing	3,269	4,634	4,638	4,525	4,318	4,363	2.2%
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	458	655	779	345	210	176	-7.1%
Wholesale Trade	664	788	801	570	530	554	-1.4%
Retail Trade	2,259	2,717	3,200	2,360	2,200	2,195	-0.2%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	345	403	515	486	457	645	4.9%
Services	1,506	1,986	3,224	4,361	4,731	5,265	10.1%
Government	2,174	2,539	2,922	3,179	3,429	3,636	4.0%
Other/Unclassified	42	0	33	373	387	330	17.2%
Total	11,348	14,543	17,561	17,579	17,651	18,584	3.9%
Note: Industries were reclassified in 2001 to conform to new federal standards.							
Source: Georgia Department of Labor							

Figure 3.2: Percent of Total Employment Trends by Sector in Newton County

Industry Sector	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003
Agriculture	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mining	N/A	0.2%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Construction	4.8%	4.6%	7.4%	7.9%	7.9%	7.6%
Manufacturing	28.8%	31.9%	26.4%	25.7%	24.5%	23.5%
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	4.0%	4.5%	4.4%	2.0%	1.2%	0.9%
Wholesale Trade	5.9%	5.4%	4.6%	3.2%	3.0%	3.0%
Retail Trade	19.9%	18.7%	18.2%	13.4%	12.5%	11.8%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	3.0%	2.8%	2.9%	2.8%	2.6%	3.5%
Services	13.3%	13.7%	18.4%	24.8%	26.8%	28.3%
Government	19.2%	17.5%	16.6%	18.1%	19.4%	19.6%
Other/Unclassified	0.4%	0.0%	0.2%	2.1%	2.2%	1.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

Newton County, including the City of Covington, had a 2003 employment base of 18,584 jobs, according to the Georgia Department of Labor. The economy has grown at a solid annual rate of 3.9% since 1990. Four economic sectors account for 83% of employment – services (28.3%), manufacturing (23.5%), government (19.6%), and retail trade (11.8%). Current trends related to these four dominant sectors are:

- **Services:** Services is the fastest growing sector, increasing at a robust average annual rate of 10.1%. Healthcare is the dominant services sector employer accounting for 31% of service sector jobs. Newton Health Systems is one of the county’s top employers (545 jobs), anchoring physician practices and other health-related services. Other important services include administration, accommodations, and food services.
- **Manufacturing:** Newton County has three primary existing industrial parks that are home to some of its largest employers: Covington-Newton County Industrial Park, Lochridge Industrial Park, and Sagl Technology Park. These parks have several manufacturing plants such as Bridgestone, General Mills, Bard Urological, Pactiv, and Saint Gobian. These parks are located along Interstate 20 in the Covington area. The County’s manufacturing base has expanded from its textile roots into a diversified group of manufacturing products, including plastics, cereal, automotive, and metal products. A handful of textile firms remain, including Dan River, Fibervisions, and Beaver. A new industrial park, Stanton Springs, is planned at Interstate 20 and US 278, which will facilitates industrial job growth in the western-most portion of the County.
- **Government:** The School system in Newton County is the largest employer in the County (1,600 jobs). The system has a good K-12 program and ranks 6th in Georgia’s top 10 school systems for combined SAT scores in 2004. Covington is the county seat and the location of the majority of local government employees, including City and County officials.
- **Retail Trade:** A total of 21 shopping centers, comprising nearly 1.4 million square feet are located in Newton County. Much of this retail space is concentrated along the US 278 corridor in Covington. Five centers have been developed since 1990 (273,900 SF). Only two of these centers were developed in the last five years (since 2000), but they are

small strip centers. Thus, the majority of the county's retail is in older shopping centers, despite rapid population growth. In addition, the County averages 16.8 square feet of retail space per capita, compared to 36.6 for metro Atlanta. This means that many local residents are going outside the county to shop, to places in Rockdale, DeKalb and other areas of Atlanta. These trends are illustrative of an immature retail market that is poised for significant future expansion. Two major retailers have announced plans for a new location in Covington – Wal-Mart Supercenter and Home Depot – at Interstate 20 and Georgia 142.

Figure 3.3: Percent of Total Employment by Sector for Newton County, Atlanta MSA, and Georgia (2003)

Industry Sector	Newton County	Atlanta MSA	State of Georgia
Agriculture	N/A	0.1%	0.7%
Mining	N/A	0.1%	0.2%
Construction	7.6%	5.4%	5.2%
Manufacturing	23.5%	8.1%	11.9%
Wholesale Trade	3.0%	6.5%	5.4%
Retail Trade	11.8%	11.5%	11.8%
Transportation & Warehousing	1.0%	4.8%	3.9%
Utilities	N/A	0.5%	0.5%
Information	0.6%	4.4%	3.2%
Finance & Insurance	1.9%	4.9%	4.1%
Real Estate	1.6%	1.9%	1.5%
Professional & Tech. Services	2.0%	6.8%	5.1%
Management	N/A	1.7%	1.4%
Adminst. & Waste Services	6.3%	7.6%	6.5%
Education Services	1.5%	1.5%	1.3%
Health Care & Social Services	8.9%	8.0%	8.6%
Arts, Ent., & Rec. Svc.	0.5%	1.1%	1.0%
Accommodation & Food Serv.	6.5%	8.4%	8.2%
Other Services	2.0%	2.8%	2.6%
Government - Federal	0.8%	2.2%	2.5%
Government - State	2.1%	2.6%	3.9%
Government - Local	16.8%	8.7%	10.1%
Other/Unclassified	1.6%	0.4%	0.4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<i>Source: Georgia Department of Labor</i>			

Newton County's employment base is diverse for a community of its size. However, it tends to have a higher reliance on manufacturing and local government jobs compared to metro Atlanta and Georgia. Conversely, it has fewer higher-paying white-collar jobs in such areas as professional and technical services, financial services, and insurance, which will change as the County matures. Another potential growth area for the County is wholesale trade, associated with the distribution industry.

Figure 3.4: Employment Composition for Covington and Newton County (2005)

Industry Sector	City of Covington	Newton County	% City/ County
Agriculture	36	245	14.7%
Mining	0	20	0.0%
Construction	575	2,068	27.8%
Manufacturing	4,091	4,973	82.3%
Transportation, Communication, Public Util.	293	991	29.6%
Wholesale Trade	676	1,037	65.2%
Retail Trade	3,053	6,017	50.7%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	696	1,057	65.8%
Services	3,978	7,943	50.1%
Public Administration	870	1,284	67.8%
Total	14,268	25,635	55.7%

Source: Claritas, Inc.

According to Claritas, 56% of the County’s jobs are located in the City of Covington. This includes the majority of manufacturing, wholesale trade, finance, insurance, real estate, and public administrative jobs. On the flip side, construction, transportation, communications, and utilities jobs tend to be located outside the City. Retail trade and service jobs are evenly split between the City and County. The City’s job base as a portion of the County’s will likely erode in the future as newer employment centers, such as Stanton Springs, emerge in unincorporated areas of the County. Still, the City should maintain a healthy job base.

3.1.2 Projected Employment

Figure 3.5: Employment Projections for Newton County, Atlanta MSA, Georgia, and U.S.

Year	Newton County		Atlanta MSA	Georgia	US
	Low/W&P	High*			
2000	22,560	17,561	2,789,760	4,918,110	167,283,780
2008	24,444	23,849	3,151,380	5,429,376	182,763,214
2013	25,934	28,877	3,419,248	5,822,666	194,324,004
2018	27,418	34,965	3,710,564	6,245,888	206,686,736
2023	28,892	42,336	4,023,408	6,697,380	219,905,086
2028	30,350	51,261	4,356,066	7,175,928	234,036,066
Annual % Change					
2000-2008	1.0%	3.9%	1.5%	1.2%	1.1%
2008-2013	1.2%	3.9%	1.6%	1.4%	1.2%
2013-2018	1.1%	3.9%	1.6%	1.4%	1.2%
2018-2023	1.1%	3.9%	1.6%	1.4%	1.2%
2023-2028	1.0%	3.9%	1.6%	1.4%	1.3%

* High projection based on 1990-2003 average annual growth.

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

Newton County is officially projected to grow at a slightly lower rate than metro Atlanta, Georgia, and the nation, according to Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. Metro Atlanta, which

includes Newton County, is forecasted to out-perform the state and the nation, but at a slower rate than its recent performance of 3.1% between 1990 and 2004. Atlanta's economy is maturing; therefore we can expect lower growth rates in the future. By comparison, Newton County is in an expansion mode, so the projected annual growth rate of 1.1% annually appears low. A "high" projection scenario was prepared based on the 1990-2003 employment annual growth rate of 3.9%. If the County continues to grow at the actual current rate, the employment base can be expected to expand to 51,251 jobs by 2028, compared to 30,350 jobs for the "low" projection. These two projections create a spread of 20,911 jobs. Future economic growth in Newton County is partially based on policy decisions made today, particularly related to roads, water, and sewer improvements. Maintaining the County's high quality of life and attracting a high-quality workforce are other important factors.

3.1.3 Location Quotient Analysis

Figure 3.6: Location Quotient Analysis for Newton County (2002)

Industry Sector	Newton Emp.	% of Total	U.S. Emp.	% of Total	Location Quotient*	LQ > 1	(LQ-1)/LQ	Basic Emp.	Non-Basic Emp.
Agriculture	N/A	N/A	1,155,890	0.009	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mining	N/A	N/A	505,979	0.004	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Construction	1,420	0.051	6,683,553	0.052	0.97	No	N/A	0	1,420
Manufacturing	4,363	0.156	15,209,192	0.119	1.31	Yes	0.238	1,040	3,323
Chemical	349	0.012	924,737	0.007	1.73	Yes	0.421	147	202
Plastics & Rubber	345	0.012	846,766	0.007	1.86	Yes	0.464	160	185
Nonmetallic Mineral Prod.	247	0.009	517,217	0.004	2.19	Yes	0.543	134	113
Fabricated Metal	367	0.013	1,540,867	0.012	1.09	Yes	0.083	30	337
Machinery	213	0.008	1,221,816	0.010	0.80	No	N/A	0	213
Wholesale Trade	777	0.028	5,617,456	0.044	0.63	No	N/A	0	777
Retail Trade	4,661	0.166	15,018,588	0.117	1.42	Yes	0.296	1,380	3,281
Transportation & Warehousing	880	0.031	3,989,116	0.031	1.01	Yes	0.010	8	872
Utilities	495	0.018	592,152	0.005	3.83	Yes	0.739	366	129
Information	590	0.021	3,364,485	0.026	0.80	No	N/A	0	590
Finance & Insurance	549	0.020	5,678,156	0.044	0.44	No	N/A	0	549
Real Estate	232	0.008	2,028,109	0.016	0.52	No	N/A	0	232
Professional & Tech. Services	653	0.023	6,654,743	0.052	0.45	No	N/A	0	653
Management	188	0.007	1,695,554	0.013	0.51	No	N/A	0	188
Adminst. & Waste Services	1,541	0.055	7,589,300	0.059	0.93	No	N/A	0	1,541
Education Services	156	0.006	1,951,003	0.015	0.37	No	N/A	0	156
Health Care & Social Services	2,609	0.093	13,395,715	0.104	0.89	No	N/A	0	2,609
Arts, Ent., & Rec. Svc.	344	0.012	1,798,621	0.014	0.88	No	N/A	0	344
Accommodation & Food Serv.	2,706	0.097	10,197,329	0.080	1.21	Yes	0.177	478	2,228
Other Services	497	0.018	4,246,011	0.033	0.54	No	N/A	0	497
Government - Federal	220	0.008	2,758,627	0.022	0.37	No	N/A	0	220
Government - State	407	0.015	4,485,071	0.035	0.42	No	N/A	0	407
Government - Local	3,812	0.136	13,412,941	0.105	1.30	Yes	0.231	882	2,930
Other/Unclassified	192	0.007	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	192
Total	28,016	1.000	128,233,919	1.000	1.00	N/A	N/A	4,154	23,862
* The Location Quotient is derived by dividing the % of local employment by the % of U.S. employment.									
Sources: Georgia Department of Labor and U.S. Department of Labor									

The location quotient analysis is used to identify basic jobs, or export-oriented businesses and industry, in the local economy. It assumes that basic industries are the primary source of a community's income. It examines the extent to which production for export activities and the inflow of income stimulates the internal growth – population and jobs – of a local economy. This is accomplished by comparing basic employment to non-basic employment. As shown in the previous table, basic employment in Newton County totaled 4,154 jobs in 2002, compared to 23,862 non-basic jobs. Each basic job supports, or creates, opportunities for 5.74 non-basic jobs in the community. Basic industries in Newton County (location quotient exceeding 1.0) include manufacturing, retail trade, transportation and warehousing, utilities, accommodation and food service, and local government. Within the manufacturing sector, major basic industries are chemicals, plastics, non-metallic mineral production, plastics and rubber, and fabricated metals.

3.1.3 Shift-Share Analysis

Figure 3.7: Employment Changes in Newton County (1993-2003)

Industry Sector	1993 Employment	2003 Employment	Change in Employment	% Change 1993-2003
Manufacturing	4,089	4,363	274	6.7%
Trade, Transp. & Utilities	2,550	3,294	744	29.2%
Education & Health Services	1,020	2,242	1,222	119.8%
Professional & Bus. Services	451	1,552	1,101	244.1%
Construction	N/A	1,425	N/A	N/A
Leisure & Hospitality	980	1,297	317	32.3%
Public Administration	679	999	320	47.1%
Financial Activities	368	644	276	75.0%
Other Services	285	371	86	30.2%
Information	222	118	(104)	-46.8%
Natural Resources & Mining	N/A	46	N/A	N/A
Total	10,644	16,351	4,236	N/A
<i>Source: University of Georgia Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development</i>				

Figure 3.8: Shift-Share Analysis for Newton County (1993-2003)

Industry Sector	National Growth Component (Percent)	National Growth Component (Jobs)	Industrial Mix Component (Percent)	Industrial Mix Component (Jobs)	Competitive Share Component (Percent)	Competitive Share Component (Jobs)
Education & Health Services	16.8%	172	9.5%	97	93.5%	954
Professional & Bus. Services	16.8%	76	20.6%	93	206.7%	932
Manufacturing	16.8%	688	-30.5%	(1,247)	20.4%	833
Trade, Transp. & Utilities	16.8%	429	-3.8%	(97)	16.2%	413
Public Administration	16.8%	114	-6.6%	(45)	36.9%	251
Financial Activities	16.8%	62	0.3%	1	57.9%	213
Leisure & Hospitality	16.8%	165	9.0%	88	6.5%	64
Other Services	16.8%	48	3.4%	10	9.9%	28
Information	16.8%	37	0.6%	1	-64.3%	(143)
Construction	16.8%	N/A	24.6%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Natural Resources & Mining	16.8%	N/A	-18.6%	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total		1,791		(1,099)		3,545

Source: University of Georgia Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development

The purpose of a shift-share analysis is to assess the change in employment for an area – in this case, Newton County – and to break it down into three sources that generated the change. Its underlying premise is that the local economy is affected by national cycles and trends, as shown:

- National growth component – During the time period shown (1993-2003), the nation’s employment grew at an overall rate of 16.8%. The national growth component contributed 1,791 Newton County jobs, primarily in the manufacturing and trade, transportation and utilities sectors.
- Industrial mix component – This component calculates the difference between the national growth for a specific industry sector and the overall national growth rate. The purpose is to measure industry growth net of business cycle effects. As shown, the industrial mix component *decreased* the county’s employment by 1,099 jobs that were mostly attributed to the manufacturing sector.
- Competitive share – The last component assesses the remaining employment change after the national and industrial mix components. If the sector’s competitive share is positive, it has a local advantage in promoting employment growth. The major sectors in competitive share were education and health services, professional and business services, and manufacturing.

3.2 Labor Force

3.2.1 Labor Force Participation

Figure 3.9: Labor Force Participation for Newton County

Class of Worker	1990	2000	Annual % Change
Total Employed	19,166	29,136	4.3%
Private Wage or Salary Workers	15,492	23,149	4.1%
Government Workers	2,312	4,088	5.9%
Self-Employed Workers	1,217	1,859	4.3%
Unpaid Family Workers	145	40	-12.1%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Figure 3.10: Employment by Occupation for Newton County

Occupation	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total	Annual % Change
Management, Professional & Related Occupations	3,297	17.2%	7,623	26.2%	8.7%
Service Occupations	2,232	11.6%	3,646	12.5%	5.0%
Sales and Office Occupations	5,599	29.2%	7,569	26.0%	3.1%
Farming, Fishing & Forestry Occupations	307	1.6%	101	0.3%	-10.5%
Production, Repair, Operators, Fabricators, Laborers	7,731	40.3%	10,197	35.0%	2.8%
Total	19,166	100.0%	29,136	100.0%	4.3%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

According to the 2000 Census, Newton County has an employed labor force of 29,136 people, which has increased at an average annual growth rate of 4.3%. Growth in private wage and salary workers has lagged behind government and self-employed workers. The fastest growing occupations are white-collar occupations, including management and professional occupations, as well as service occupations. Not surprisingly, agricultural occupations decreased significantly between 1990 and 2000 as the county became more urbanized.

3.2.2 Unemployment

Figure 3.11: Unemployment Rate for Newton County, Georgia and United States

Year	Newton County		Georgia	U.S
	Labor Force	Unemp. Rate		
1990	20,820	6.6%	5.5%	5.6%
1991	20,816	5.6%	5.0%	6.8%
1992	21,565	7.2%	6.7%	7.5%
1993	22,346	6.0%	5.9%	6.9%
1994	23,407	4.5%	5.1%	6.1%
1995	24,530	4.3%	4.8%	5.6%
1996	26,116	4.4%	4.6%	5.4%
1997	27,603	4.6%	4.5%	4.9%
1998	29,094	3.9%	4.2%	4.5%
1999	30,347	3.2%	3.8%	4.2%
2000	32,361	3.3%	3.5%	4.0%
2001	32,112	3.5%	4.0%	4.7%
2002	33,815	5.1%	4.8%	5.8%
2003	34,147	5.8%	4.7%	6.0%
2004	34,662	5.8%	4.6%	5.5%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Georgia Dept. of Labor

As of 2004, the County's unemployment rate at 5.8% is higher than Georgia (4.6%) and the nation (5.5%). As the County replaces lost jobs from the economic recession of the early 2000s, the unemployment rate will fall. The County has experienced notable deviations in its unemployment rate over the years, illustrating that the local economy is vulnerable to national cycles and recessions.

3.2.3 Earnings

Figure 3.12: Earnings by Sector for Newton County (in Millions)

Industry Sector	1970	1980	1990	2000	2004
Farm Earnings	\$5.39	\$4.15	\$3.59	\$0.87	\$1.39
Agriculture Services	\$0.47	\$0.61	\$2.43	\$3.89	\$3.80
Mining	\$0.04	\$1.16	\$1.13	\$1.60	\$1.88
Construction	\$13.06	\$20.25	\$37.02	\$58.14	\$58.32
Manufacturing	\$80.37	\$99.34	\$143.24	\$190.16	\$197.05
Transportation & Public Utilities	\$10.48	\$17.60	\$20.89	\$36.94	\$45.71
Wholesale Trade	\$2.09	\$4.85	\$19.14	\$29.80	\$26.58
Retail Trade	\$20.45	\$26.31	\$36.15	\$55.11	\$59.03
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	\$2.66	\$5.34	\$10.12	\$19.93	\$21.31
Services	\$18.62	\$26.35	\$48.16	\$122.86	\$141.02
Federal Government - Civilian	\$2.13	\$3.09	\$4.25	\$6.11	\$6.49
Federal Government - Military	\$0.92	\$1.06	\$2.08	\$2.80	\$3.32
State & Local Government	\$16.77	\$30.85	\$58.59	\$82.10	\$104.11
Total - All Sectors	\$173.46	\$240.96	\$386.79	\$610.29	\$670.00

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. (2004)

Figure 3.13: Personal Income by Type for Newton County (in Million; in 1996 Dollars)

Type of Income	1970	1980	1990	2000	2004
Wages & Salaries	\$136.33	\$182.92	\$298.92	\$501.28	\$538.66
Other Labor Income	\$9.27	\$22.60	\$41.51	\$56.13	\$59.02
Proprietors Income	\$27.85	\$35.43	\$46.36	\$52.88	\$72.32
Dividends, Interest & Rent	\$23.47	\$52.48	\$110.27	\$182.47	\$206.60
Transfer Payments to Persons	\$26.12	\$67.38	\$101.76	\$185.28	\$234.99
Less Social Insurance Contributions	\$6.21	\$11.40	\$23.29	\$37.15	\$42.05
Residence Adjustment	\$71.22	\$142.92	\$138.54	\$371.77	\$438.05
Total Personal Income	\$288.07	\$492.34	\$714.08	\$1,312.65	\$1,507.59
Income Per Capita (1996 \$)	\$10,873	\$14,080	\$16,984	\$20,868	\$20,577
Income Per Capita (Current \$)	\$3,045	\$7,774	\$14,543	\$22,410	\$23,755
W&P Wealth Index (U.S. = 100)	75.23	76.37	75.64	76.58	73.41

Source: Woods & Pool Economics, Inc. (2004)

Figure 3.14: Average Weekly Wages for Newton County

Industry	1990	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003	Annual % Change
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	\$271	\$281	\$433	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mining	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Construction	\$380	\$456	\$554	\$576	\$586	\$595	3.5%
Manufacturing	\$463	\$582	\$730	\$757	\$795	\$796	4.3%
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	\$558	\$686	\$712	\$716	\$511	\$597	0.5%
Wholesale Trade	\$380	\$515	\$657	\$681	\$747	\$802	5.9%
Retail Trade	\$200	\$229	\$301	\$368	\$388	\$400	5.5%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	\$365	\$502	\$602	\$576	\$618	\$754	5.7%
Services	\$261	\$360	\$512	\$462	\$511	\$505	5.2%
Federal Government	\$487	\$621	\$624	\$696	\$750	\$769	3.6%
State Government	\$418	\$464	\$480	\$516	\$526	\$536	1.9%
Local Government	\$385	\$411	\$500	\$533	\$561	\$573	3.1%
All Industries	\$361	\$449	\$551	\$569	\$599	\$607	4.1%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Georgia Department of Labor

Figure 3.15: Average Weekly Wages for All Industries for Newton County, Atlanta MSA & Georgia

Year	Newton County	Atlanta MSA	% of MSA	Georgia	% of State
1990	\$361	\$482	74.9%	\$424	85.1%
1995	\$449	\$576	78.0%	\$509	88.2%
2000	\$551	\$764	72.1%	\$658	83.7%
2001	\$569	\$780	72.9%	\$676	84.2%
2002	\$599	\$791	75.7%	\$687	87.2%
2003	\$607	\$812	74.8%	\$704	86.2%
Annual % Change	4.1%	4.1%	---	4.0%	---

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Georgia Department of Labor

Newton County has an average weekly wage of \$607, which is significantly lower than the Atlanta MSA (\$812) and the State (\$704). The County's average wages have increased 4.1% per year since 1990. The highest wages are in the wholesale trade, manufacturing, Federal government, and finance, insurance, and real estate industries. The lowest are in the retail trade and services sectors. Total earnings have grown at a rate of 4.1% per year from 1970 to 2004, and personal income has increased by 5.0% annually for this same period. Personal income for the County is approximately 27% lower than the national index.

3.2.4 Commuting Patterns

Figure 3.16: Commuting Patterns for Newton County

Year	Residents Working Inside the County		Residents Working Outside the County	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
1990	9,212	48.7%	9,715	51.3%
2000	11,545	40.4%	17,023	59.6%
Annual % Change	2.3%	---	5.8%	---

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Figure 3.17: Commuting Patterns for Newton County Residents

Place of Work	1990		2000	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Newton	9,212	48.7%	11,545	40.4%
Rockdale	3,723	19.7%	6,513	22.8%
DeKalb	2,712	14.3%	3,567	12.5%
Fulton	1,391	7.3%	2,399	8.4%
Gwinnett	436	2.3%	1,320	4.6%
Walton	327	1.7%	755	2.6%
Clayton	232	1.2%	480	1.7%
Cobb	205	1.1%	411	1.4%
Henry	96	0.5%	387	1.4%
Morgan	111	0.6%	206	0.7%
Other	482	2.5%	985	3.4%
Total	18,927	100.0%	28,568	100.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Residents commuting to jobs outside the county have outpaced the residents working within the County by a wide margin. By comparison, in 1980, 53.4% of county residents worked within the county, but by 2000 only 40.4% of county residents remained working within the county. The majority of residents working outside the county commuted to jobs within metro Atlanta, particularly Rockdale, DeKalb, and Fulton counties. This trend is expected to increase unless more jobs are created within the community.

3.3 Economic Development Resources

Economic development for Newton County and the City of Covington is currently promoted through the Newton County Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber is a nonprofit member-driven organization that focuses on representing and servicing the local business community. It is a full-service chamber that provides economic development and tourism services. The Chamber has several committees that are focused on economic development, including the Economic Development Roundtable and the Existing Industry Council. The Roundtable directs and plans recruitment and retention efforts for the County; and the Council develops strategies for workforce development and builds relationships among the local plant managers.

The Chamber is also paid by Newton County and the City of Covington to staff its Industrial Development Authority. The Authority offers revenue bond financing and other tax incentives to qualified applicants. The Authority also banks land for industrial development, including some sites in two industrial parks: Covington-Newton County Industrial Park and Sagl Technology Park. The Chamber markets all available sites and buildings in the County, including the two public parks, through its web site. The Chamber currently does not have a strategic economic development plan for the County, and its primary focus is on maintaining existing businesses versus new business recruitment.

There are several other agencies that assist Newton County in their economic development efforts. Georgia Power Company's Community and Economic Development Department assists local communities in such areas as research and information, demographic and labor market analysis, business retention and expansion and industrial location. Georgia Power Company maintains a district office in Covington. Their main office is located in Atlanta at the Georgia Resource Center in conjunction with the Georgia Economic Development, Georgia Department of Labor, and Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education. The Georgia Department of Economic Development is the State's main economic development agency and is responsible for facilitating State education and economic incentive programs. Newton County is also a member of the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center (RDC), which provides assistance in the areas of community and economic development.

Numerous incentive programs are offered for businesses locating in Newton County. These include tax credits, tax exemptions, low cost financing, and workforce training programs. The County also offers 100% property tax exemption on Freeport inventory destined for shipment outside Georgia. Among the most popular incentives are:

- **Job Tax Credits:** Job tax credits of \$1,750 per job are available to businesses creating a minimum of 15 jobs in the areas of manufacturing, telecommunications, warehouse distribution, research and development, processing, and tourism.
- **Georgia QuickStart Training:** QuickStart is a customized, comprehensive training program designed to meet specific company needs. It is funded by the State and geared to both existing and prospective companies.
- **Industrial Revenue Bonds:** Taxable and tax-exempt IRB's are offered through the Industrial Development Authority. These bonds finance new or expanding manufacturing facilities up to 100% of the cost of acquiring, constructing, and equipping a facility, including site preparation, at favorable interest rates.

One of Newton County's biggest advantages is its education system. The County has one of the top school systems in Georgia, ranking 6th for combined SAT scores in 2004. Workforce training is available in the primary and secondary education system within the County. Major programs include:

- ***Newton County Schools:*** The County School System has a Vocational/Technical program that offers traditional and innovative programs and on-the-job placement of students. A Youth Apprenticeship Program is also offered that mixes training with academic and technical instruction at the secondary and post-secondary levels.
- ***DeKalb Tech:*** DeKalb Technical College is a unit of the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education. It is an accredited program that provides affordable and flexible learning opportunities for students. The local campus serves a location for the State of Georgia's highly-acclaimed QuickStart program.
- ***Oxford College:*** Founded in 1836, Oxford College is part of Emory University, one of the leading universities in the nation. Oxford is a two-year liberal arts college offering courses in humanities, natural sciences, mathematics, physical education, dance, history, and social studies.
- ***Georgia Perimeter College:*** A 100-acre site at the interchange of Interstate 20 and Georgia 11 has been secured for development of a campus for Georgia Perimeter College, a regional multi-campus unit of the University System of Georgia. It is a two-year college offering associate degrees in art, science, applied science, and college prep.

3.4 Economic Trends

Newton County offers a growing and diversified economy that is atypical of a suburban county in a large metropolitan area and an advantage for achieving quality growth. Industrial sectors offering the best growth potential for Newton County include:

- **Service industries** are a strong future growth contender, due to an expanding population and business base to support this activity. The healthcare sector, anchored by Newton Health Systems, has the potential of becoming a regional medical center for East Georgia, drawing physician offices and healthcare-related services to the area. Other services, particularly professional, technical, hospitality, and educational services, as well as real estate and financial services also have significant future potential.
- **Retail trade**, which is concentrated in the City of Covington, has been an active sector; however, a large portion of retail sales from local residents are lost to outside counties, particularly Rockdale and DeKalb. These counties offer a wider selection of retail offering that are lacking in Newton County. There is enormous future retail potential in Newton County to support its growing population.
- **Manufacturing** is an important basic industry for the County, now and in the future. This industry is in decline nationally due to assembly line automation and overseas competition; however, Newton County has a strong and diversified manufacturing base and a local workforce to support new manufacturing operations, particularly if the appropriate marketing, education and economic incentives are in place. A key is to focus on developing manufacturing jobs requiring advanced technologies and a highly skilled labor force.

- **Wholesale trade and transportation, warehousing and utilities** offer growth potential, due to the Interstate 20 corridor, proximity to Atlanta, and proximity to Interstate highways 85, 77 and 95, which are major trucking highways. The County has already attracted several distribution operations, such as Stanley Proto Industrial Tools, Kenco Group, Maxell, and Hill Phoenix (National Cooler).
- Other potential growth industries include **local government** and **construction**, due to population growth and housing development activity.

Figure 3.18: Major Employers in Newton County (300+ Jobs)

Employer	Industry	Jobs
Newton County Board of Education	Government	1,600
Pactiv Corporation	Manufacturing	720
Newton Health Systems	Healthcare Services	545
Bard Urological Division	Manufacturing	502
Dan River, Inc.	Manufacturing	375
Newton County	Government	339
Guardian Automotive	Manufacturing	338
Fibervisions	Manufacturing	335
General Mills, Inc.	Manufacturing	332
City of Covington	Government	315

Source: Newton County Chamber of Commerce

Figure 3.19: Major Manufacturers and Distributors in Newton County

Company	Product	Year Est.	Jobs
Pactiv Corporation	Rigid & flexible packaging prod.	1984	720
Bard Urological Division	Medical supplies	1967	502
Dan River, Inc.	Engineered textiles	1917	375
Guardian Automotive	Decorative automobile trim	1969	338
Fibervisions	Olefin fiber	1967	335
General Mills, Inc.	Dry cereals	1989	332
International Storage	Wire shelving systems	1986	288
Stanley Proto Industrial Tools	Industrial tools (Distribution)	1984	275
Komatsu Forklift, USA	Forklift manufacturer	1995	200
SKC, Inc.	Polymer & polyester film	1996	200
Clarion Metals, Inc.	Metal stamping tools and die	1989	165
Bridgestone Sports USA	Golf ball manufacturing	1989	162
Beaver Manufacturing	Hose reinforcing yarns	1972	152
Tyco Plastics & Adhesives	Plastics & adhesives	2001	150
SGD Glass	Luxury glass	1996	120
Nisshinbo Automotive	Automotive brake pads & linings	1997	120
Smurfit-Stone Containers	Corrugated boxes	1972	102

Source: Newton County Chamber of Commerce

Figure 3.20: Recent New Industry Recruitment and Expansion in Newton County

Employer	New Jobs	Year	Activity
Nisshinbo	15	2003	Exp.
Nyloboard	35	2003	New
Bard	100	2003	Exp.
Michelin	25	2004	New
General Mills	33	2005	Exp.
Guardian	100	2005	Exp.
Komatsu	10	2005	Exp.
Total	318		

Source: Newton County Chamber of Commerce

There are three large private-sector employers with at least 500 jobs, including Newton Health Systems and two manufacturers: Pactiv and Bard. Manufacturing is the largest basic employment sector in the County with a diversified group of industries. Despite this broad base of manufacturers, the County has been vulnerable to plant downsizings and closings, affecting 275 manufacturing jobs since 2000. Since 2003, seven manufacturers have expanded or relocated to the County, creating 318 jobs, indicating the economy is growing once again.

Figure 3.21: Industrial Parks in Newton County

	Covington-Newton County Ind. Park	Lochridge Industrial Park	Sagl Technology Park	Stanton Springs
Location	I-20 & Ga 142	I-20 & Lochridge	I-20 & Ga 81	I-20 & US 278
Developer	Ind. Dev. Authority & Private Dev.	Pattillo Construction	Various Private Owners/Developers	Technology Park/ Atlanta
Year Started	Early 1980s	1980s	1980s	2005
Utilities				
Water	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sewer	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Power	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Gas	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Fiber Optic Cable	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Rail Served	CSX	No	No	No
Acres				
Total	620	450	320	1,500
Developed/Sold	509	408	128	0
Undeveloped/Unsold	111	42	192	1,500
Largest Tract	97	22	45	100+
Land Price Per Acre	\$35,000	\$55,000-60,000	\$35,000-40,000	N/A
Major Users	Bridgestone	Bard Urological	DeKalb Tech.	None
	General Mills	Guardian Automotive	Klume Forest Prod.	
	Nisshinbo	Komatsu	Saint Gobian	
	SKC	Pactiv		

Sources: Newton County Chamber of Commerce, Georgia Power Company and Ackerman & Co.

Figure 3.22: Major Shopping Centers in Newton County

Project	Location	Year Built	Square Feet	Anchor Tenants
Covington Corners	Elm Street	1968	90,400	Food Depot, Farmer's, Citi Trend, Dollar Plus
Elm Street (2174)	Elm Street	1983	56,300	Antiques & Stuff (Former Wal-Mart)
Church Shopping Ctr.	Salem Road	2005	13,000	None
Covington Crossings	US 278	1986	106,000	Save Rite, Dollar General
Covington Gallery	Turner Lake Rd.	1991	174,800	K-Mart, Ingles, Cato, Our Dollar Store
Covington Plaza	US 278	1974	27,000	Parts America
Covington Village	I-20 Access Rd.	2002	8,800	Sunset Grill, Nagoya, Domino's
Martin's Crossing I	US 278	1988	146,600	Wal-Mart, Ingles, Dollar Tree
Martin's Crossing II	US 278	1997	10,000	Movie Gallery, GG's Pizza
Millstone Place	US 278	1980s	20,000	Covington One Medical, The Imaging Center
Morgan Plaza	Pace Street	1979	12,000	Pharmacy, Pet Shop
Newton Crossroads	Browns Bridge	1997	79,000	Kroger
Newton Plaza	US 278	1974	270,000	Kroger, Belk, Badcock, Goody's, Big Lots
Price Cutter Plaza	US 278	1979	93,400	Skate Park, Budget Self Storage, Esquire
Hendricks St. (1100)	Hendricks Street	N/A	26,000	None
Newton Station	Georgia 20	N/A	8,400	None
Covington Plaza	US 278	1974	27,000	None
Salem Rd. (2503)	Salem Road	1975	25,000	Bailey's Grocery Store
Salem Square I & II	Salem Road	1987	53,500	Floors & More, Medical offices
Salem (3277-3315)	Salem Road	N/A	56,000	Pizza Place
Salem Road Station	Salem Road	1990s	67,300	Publix
Total			1,370,500	

Sources: CoStar Group, Dorey's Retail Guide and Ackerman & Co.

Historically, the vast majority of industrial and commercial growth in the County has taken place in the Covington Area. There is currently one major planned development that will shape the County in the near future: Stanton Springs. Located in the eastern-most portion of the County at I-20 and US 278, Stanton Springs is a development of Technology Park/Atlanta, a notable private developer. A joint development authority, including Newton, Walton, Morgan, and Jasper counties, has been formed to facilitate development of the project by purchasing the land and entering into an agreement with the private developer. This development will be a mixed-use project offering high-end industrial and commercial sites, as well as residential and service industry properties. It represents the first significant development outside of the Covington area of the County, and it should enhance the County's tax base and employment base. The other three industrial parks in the County are nearly out of developable land and have no sites greater than 100 acres available to large industrial users.

There are 21 notable shopping centers in Newton County, representing nearly 1.4 million square feet of space. More than 1,000,000 square feet of this space is located within the City of

Covington. Most of the County's (and the City's) retail base is located in older, deteriorating centers. Only five centers have been developed since 1990, despite rapid population growth, which indicates that good commercial sites are difficult to find. Two large retailers, however, have plans to open stores on redevelopment sites in Covington at the Interchange of Interstate 20 and Georgia 142: Wal-Mart Supercenter and Home Depot. The retail market is clearly poised for future expansion. The largest concentration will likely remain in the City of Covington, but retail growth will also occur in the unincorporated County where residential growth is taking place.

Newton County offers several *strengths* for economic growth and development including:

- Interstate 20 location close to Atlanta.
- Small-town lifestyle, offering a high quality of life.
- Primary education system, offering one of the best school systems in Georgia.
- Secondary education opportunities, including Oxford College of Emory University, DeKalb Tech, and Georgia Perimeter College (planned), among others.
- Diversified manufacturing base.
- Growing middle-income workforce.
- Availability of land and buildings to accommodate some new businesses, including the new Stanton Springs project.

The County also has several *challenges* for economic development:

- Jobs are not growing as fast as the population.
- Lack of local strategic economic development plan.
- Absence of strong local identity.
- Providing a consistent pro-active approach to business marketing, recruitment and retention.
- Providing the infrastructure – roads, water, and sewer – to support business development in the future.
- Providing adequate land for business development, including industrial and commercial, particularly in the Covington area.

4 Housing

4.1 Housing Types and Mix

Figure 4.1: Trends by Type of Housing Unit for Newton County

Year	Single-Family	Multi-Family	Mobile Home	Other	Total
Total					
1980	9,663	964	1,185	0	11,812
1990	11,441	1,962	2,091	0	15,494
2000	18,884	2,127	2,000	22	23,033
2005	25,430	2,887	2,710	26	31,053
% of Total					
1980	81.8%	8.2%	10.0%	0.0%	100.0%
1990	73.8%	12.7%	13.5%	0.0%	100.0%
2000	82.0%	9.2%	8.7%	0.1%	100.0%
2005	81.9%	9.3%	8.7%	0.1%	100.0%
Annual % Change					
1980-1990	1.7%	7.4%	5.8%	N/A	2.8%
1990-2000	5.1%	0.8%	-0.4%	N/A	4.0%
2000-2005	6.1%	6.3%	6.3%	3.4%	6.2%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Claritas (2005 Estimate)

Newton County has a 2005 inventory of 31,053 housing units. The housing market has increased by 163% since 1980 resulting in a rapid average annual growth rate of 3.9%. The vast majority of the county's housing stock is single-family (detached and attached) units, comprising 81.9% of total units. The other primary components are multi-family units (9.3%) and mobile homes (8.7%). Newton County's housing composition has remained fairly consistent since 1980 with single-family units accounting for approximately 82% of total. This trend is approximately 10 percentage points *above* the national average.

Figure 4.2: Housing Permit Trends for Newton County

Year	Single-Family	Multi-Family	Mobile Home	Total
2000	1,336	250	67	1,653
2001	1,699	332	59	2,090
2002	1,981	76	50	2,107
2003	1,983	1	16	2,000
2004	1,813	0	20	1,833
Total	8,812	659	212	9,683
Annual Avg.	1,762	132	42	1,937

Source: Newton County

Housing permit activity in Newton County is increasing, particularly among single-family units. Between 2000 and 2004, the County permitted nearly 9,700 housing units, of which 91% were single-family units. Multi-family permitting activity was more active in 2000 and 2001, prior to the national economic recession.

4.2 Housing Condition and Occupancy

Figure 4.3: Age of Housing for Newton County (2005)

Year Unit Built	Newton County	
	2005	% of Total
1999-Present	9,689	31.2%
1995-1998	3,977	12.8%
1990-1994	3,588	11.6%
1980-1989	4,354	14.0%
1970-1979	4,059	13.1%
1960-1969	2,029	6.5%
1950-1959	1,395	4.5%
1940-1949	691	2.2%
1939 or Earlier	1,271	4.1%
Median Year Unit Built	1992	---

Source: Claritas (Based on US Census data)

Figure 4.4: Percent of Houses Built Before 1939 for Newton County vs. Georgia and the U.S.

Area	1990	2000
Newton County	11.0%	5.6%
State of Georgia	8.0%	5.9%
United States	18.3%	15.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Figure 4.5: Condition of Housing for Newton County

	Lacking Complete Plumbing Fixtures			Lacking Complete Kitchen Facilities		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
Total	291	173	-40.5%	239	79	-66.9%
% of All Housing Units	1.9%	0.8%	---	1.5%	0.3%	---

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

The median year built for housing units in Newton County is 1992, as of 2005. Approximately one-third of the County's housing units have been built since the 2000 Census and more than two-thirds since the 1990 Census. The County's housing stock is generally in good condition. Less than 1.0% lack plumbing fixtures and complete kitchen facilities.

Figure 4.6: Tenure of Housing Units for Newton County

Category	1980	1990	2000	2005
Total Housing Units	11,812	15,494	23,033	31,053
Total Households	10,976	14,401	21,997	29,661
% Owner Occupied	74.7%	70.9%	77.7%	78.3%
% Renter Occupied	25.3%	29.1%	22.3%	21.7%
Vacant Units	836	1,093	1,036	1,392
Vacancy Rate	7.1%	7.1%	4.5%	4.5%
Seasonal Units	N/A	118	148	N/A

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Claritas (2005 Estimate)

Figure 4.7: Tenure of Housing Units for Georgia

Category	1980	1990	2000	2005
Total Housing Units	N/A	2,638,418	3,281,737	3,569,458
Total Households	1,869,754	2,366,615	3,006,369	3,274,782
% Owner Occupied	65.0%	64.9%	67.5%	68.5%
% Renter Occupied	35.0%	35.1%	32.5%	31.5%
Vacant Units	N/A	271,803	275,368	294,676
Vacancy Rate	N/A	10.30%	8.40%	8.26%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Claritas (2005 Estimate)

Newton County has 29,661 households as of 2005 resulting in a housing occupancy rate of 95.5%, and a housing vacancy rate of 4.5%. The vacancy rate for County is significantly lower than the Georgia average. Other housing tenure trends include:

- **Increase in Ownership for County:** Owner-occupied housing in Newton County has increased from 74.7% in 1980 to 78.3% in 2005. The County’s ownership rate is significantly higher than the Georgia average by approximately 10 percentage points. It is also higher than the national average of just over 70%. This suggests that the County is a very stable community.
- **Nominal Seasonal Units:** Seasonal units represent less than 10% of vacant housing units and less than 1% of total housing units for the County.

4.3 Cost of Housing

Figure 4.8: Trends in Median Housing Costs for Newton County

	1970	1980	1990	2000	Annual % Change
Owner-Occupied Units	4,992	8,199	10,210	14,673	2.7%
Median House Value	\$11,300	\$32,800	\$65,400	\$101,300	5.6%
Renter-Occupied Units	2,611	2,777	4,191	4,790	1.5%
Median Monthly Rent	\$44	\$107	\$315	\$597	6.7%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Figure 4.9: Owner-Occupied Housing Units by Value for Newton County (2000)

Value	Total	% of Total
Less than \$50,000	904	6.2%
\$50,000-99,999	6,273	42.8%
\$100,000-149,999	5,021	34.2%
\$150,000-199,999	1,268	8.6%
\$200,000-299,999	879	6.0%
\$300,000-499,999	293	2.0%
\$500,000+	35	0.2%
Total	14,673	100.0%
Median House Value	\$101,300	---

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Figure 4.10: Renter-Occupied Housing Units by Rent for Newton County (2000)

Rent	Total	% of Total
Less Than \$200	346	7.2%
\$200-299	243	5.1%
\$300-499	838	17.5%
\$500-749	2,134	44.6%
\$750-999	787	16.4%
\$1,000-1,499	129	2.7%
\$1,500+	15	0.3%
Total-With Cash Rent	4,492	93.8%
Total-Without Cash Rent	298	6.2%
Total Renter-Occupied Units	4,790	100.0%
Median Rent	\$597	---

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

According to the 2000 Census, Newton County has a median owner-occupied house value of \$101,300 and a median rent of \$597 per month. The County's house values are on par with the State of Georgia (\$100,600), but monthly rents are lower (\$613 versus \$597). Between 1990 and 2000, median house values increased by 55% and median rents nearly doubled. Future house values and rents will likely rise at a faster pace due to the influence of metro Atlanta.

Figure 4.11: Household Characteristics for Newton County

Characteristic	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total	2005	% of Total	Annual % Change	
							90-00	00-05
Total Households	14,401	100.0%	21,997	100.0%	29,661	100.0%	4.3%	6.2%
Family Households	11,337	78.7%	17,113	77.8%	22,928	77.3%	4.2%	6.0%
Married Couple Families	8,908	61.9%	13,026	59.2%	17,549	59.2%	3.9%	6.1%
Nonfamily Households	3,064	21.3%	4,884	22.2%	6,733	22.7%	4.8%	6.6%
Householder Living Alone	2,633	18.3%	4,023	18.3%	5,561	18.7%	4.3%	6.7%
Average Household Size	2.85	N/A	2.77	N/A	2.75	N/A	-0.3%	-0.1%
Race of Householder								
White	11,519	80.0%	17,280	78.6%	N/A	N/A	4.1%	N/A
Black	2,821	19.6%	4,363	19.8%	N/A	N/A	4.5%	N/A
Other	61	0.4%	354	1.6%	N/A	N/A	19.2%	N/A
Hispanic (Any Race)	101	0.7%	268	1.2%	589	2.0%	10.3%	17.1%
Age of Householder								
Under 25	884	6.1%	957	4.4%	1,434	4.8%	0.8%	8.4%
25-34	3,071	21.3%	4,626	21.0%	6,566	22.1%	4.2%	7.3%
35-44	3,091	21.5%	5,234	23.8%	7,129	24.0%	5.4%	6.4%
45-54	2,511	17.4%	4,280	19.5%	5,528	18.6%	5.5%	5.3%
55-64	1,996	13.9%	3,136	14.3%	4,197	14.1%	4.6%	6.0%
65-74	1,664	11.6%	2,205	10.0%	2,787	9.4%	2.9%	4.8%
75+	1,184	8.2%	1,559	7.1%	2,020	6.8%	2.8%	5.3%
Income of Householder								
Less than \$15,000	3,515	24.4%	2,529	11.5%	3,114	10.5%	-3.2%	4.2%
\$15,000-24,999	2,909	20.2%	2,477	11.3%	2,840	9.6%	-1.6%	2.8%
\$25,000-34,999	2,800	19.4%	2,788	12.7%	3,171	10.7%	0.0%	2.6%
\$35,000-49,999	2,516	17.5%	4,551	20.7%	5,697	19.2%	6.1%	4.6%
\$50,000-74,999	1,947	13.5%	5,257	23.9%	6,905	23.3%	10.4%	5.6%
\$75,000-99,999	537	3.7%	2,356	10.7%	3,821	12.9%	15.9%	10.2%
\$100,000-149,999	243	1.7%	1,464	6.7%	2,946	9.9%	19.7%	15.0%
\$150,000+	98	0.7%	567	2.6%	1,167	3.9%	19.2%	15.5%
Average Household Income	\$33,540	N/A	\$53,922	N/A	\$61,776	N/A	4.9%	2.8%
Median Household Income	\$27,992	N/A	\$45,548	N/A	\$50,033	N/A	5.0%	1.9%
Median House Value	\$65,400	N/A	\$101,300	N/A	\$129,955	N/A	4.5%	5.1%
Median Contract Rent	\$315	N/A	\$597	N/A	N/A	N/A	6.6%	N/A
<i>Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Claritas (2005 Estimates)</i>								

The household characteristics of Newton County provide important indicators for housing demand, including affordability and costs. The previous table summarizes relevant household information for the County, including the type, race, age, and income of householders. There are several demographic factors shaping the local housing market, including:

- The market is dominated by family households, representing 77.3% of total households. Nearly half of family households have children that will likely require a more traditional single-family neighborhood.

- Non-family households are increasing at a faster rate than family households and people living along represent a significant number (18.7%) of households.
- The majority of householders are white, but minority races, particularly Hispanics, are increasing at a faster rate.
- The largest age cohorts, representing nearly half of householders, are in their child-raising years – 25 to 44 years old – again, creating demand for traditional single-family houses.
- Householders are solidly middle class with a median household income of \$50,033 annually, according to Claritas. Just over one-quarter of householders have incomes exceeding \$75,000; and these higher-income groups are growing at a significantly higher rate, which creates a need for executive-level housing in the County (e.g., \$300,000+). Conversely, 20% of householders earn less than \$25,000 and are in need of low-cost housing.

Figure 4.12: House Sales Trends by Zip Code for Newton County

Zip Code	City	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Total
30013	N/A	51	44	56	44	48	40	283
30014	Covington	509	507	536	501	656	480	3,189
30016	Covington	1,481	1,397	1,625	1,789	1,892	1,817	10,001
30025	Social Circle	50	37	43	59	74	35	298
30054	Oxford	170	173	163	182	204	147	1,039
30055	Mansfield	16	20	26	22	11	16	111
30056	Newborn	16	18	27	19	9	14	103
30070	Porterdale	0	0	0	0	19	21	40
Total	Newton County	2,293	2,196	2,476	2,616	2,913	2,570	15,064

Source: Atlanta-Journal-Constitution Home Sales Report

Figure 4.13: House Sales Price Trends by Zip Code for Newton County

Zip Code	City	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	Annual %Change
30013	N/A	\$129,250	\$131,950	\$138,500	\$128,500	\$138,700	\$147,125	2.6%
30014	Covington	\$94,000	\$92,900	\$111,300	\$115,000	\$124,550	\$131,950	7.0%
30016	Covington	\$104,500	\$110,000	\$115,350	\$121,500	\$129,000	\$134,900	5.2%
30025	Social Circle	\$122,900	\$165,000	\$160,900	\$154,900	\$146,500	\$206,000	10.9%
30054	Oxford	\$110,000	\$129,000	\$147,000	\$165,000	\$164,750	\$186,500	11.1%
30055	Mansfield	\$85,000	\$66,150	\$70,500	\$143,500	\$144,500	\$146,100	11.4%
30056	Newborn	\$82,900	\$83,850	\$77,000	\$108,000	\$94,500	\$85,500	0.6%
30070	Porterdale	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$53,000	\$54,500	N/A
Total	Newton Co.	\$103,242	\$108,302	\$116,982	\$124,240	\$130,562	\$137,603	5.9%

Source: Atlanta-Journal-Constitution Home Sales Report

Sales prices are another way to gauge housing costs. As shown on the previous table, average median homes sales prices in Newton County were approximately \$138,000 in 2004, up from just over \$103,000 in 2000. Median prices are in the low to mid-\$130,000s in Covington, the County seat. The highest prices are in Social Circle and Oxford, while the lowest are in Porterdale and Newborn. Housing prices have increased at an average annual rate of 5.9%

between 2000 and 2004. Overall, Newton County is considered an affordable place to live, compared to other areas of metro Atlanta.

4.4 Cost-Burdened Households

Figure 4.14: Affordability Mismatch Output for All Households for Newton County (2000)

Housing Units by Affordability	Renter Units by Bedrooms				Owner Units by Bedrooms			
	1	2	3+	Total	1	2	3+	Total
	Rent <=30%*							
Occupied Units	365	455	495	1,315	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
% Occupants	61.6%	54.9%	38.4%	50.6%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
% Built Before 1970	31.5%	54.9%	43.4%	44.1%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
% Some Problem	28.8%	48.4%	20.2%	32.3%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Vacant for Rent/Sale	105	15	10	130	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Rent >30% to <50%				Value <=50%**			
Occupied Units	260	1,290	805	2,355	143	1,165	5,125	6,433
% Occupants	61.5%	39.9%	43.5%	43.5%	44.8%	42.1%	25.1%	28.6%
% Built Before 1970	65.4%	30.6%	37.9%	36.9%	51.7%	57.5%	26.0%	32.3%
% Some Problem	48.1%	38.8%	37.3%	39.3%	10.5%	10.3%	2.7%	4.3%
Vacant for Rent/Sale	0	140	70	210	0	35	85	120
	Value >50% to <80%				Value >50% to <80%			
Occupied Units	235	415	490	1,140	114	515	6,670	7,299
% Occupants	72.3%	59.0%	53.1%	59.2%	56.1%	48.5%	25.8%	28.8%
% Built Before 1970	4.3%	31.3%	18.4%	20.2%	39.5%	38.8%	9.3%	11.9%
% Some Problem	61.7%	49.4%	44.9%	50.0%	3.5%	6.8%	0.8%	1.3%
Vacant for Rent/Sale	0	0	0	0	0	15	95	110
	Rent >80%				Value >80%			
Occupied Units	35	10	43	88	120	395	2,849	3,364
Vacant for Rent/Sale	0	0	0	0	10	10	40	60

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

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

Source: Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Data Book

Cost-burdened households are those paying 30% or more of net income on housing costs. The previous table shows renters and owners in Newton County broken down by incomes related to the percentage of U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) median income for the area – metro Atlanta. It is based on 2000 Census data. At that time, the Atlanta MSA had a median income of \$59,127, compared to \$45,548 for Newton County.

As shown, 1,315 occupied rental units, representing 26.9% of renter-occupied households, are affordable to households earning less than 30% of HUD Area Median Income (AMI). These rental units tend to be older (more than 44% built before 1970), particularly one-bedroom units; and they tend to have some problems, particularly two-bedroom units. Another 2,355 rental units are affordable to households earning 30-50% of HUD AMI. Additionally, 6,433 owner-

occupied units, representing 37.6% of total owner-occupied units, are affordable to households at or below 50% of HUD AMI. Thus, a total of 8,788 occupied housing units in the County are affordable to households earning 50% or less of HUD AMI – representing 40% of total households. By comparison, the County has 5,006 households earning less than \$25,000 per year, and 7,794 households earning less than \$35,000 per year, based on 2000 Census data. This assessment indicates that the County generally has an adequate inventory of affordable housing units. The challenge is to ensure that these existing affordable homes are in suitable condition for occupancy and that new affordable homes continue to be developed in the County.

Figure 4.15: Poverty Status in 1999 for Newton County

Poverty Status	#	% Below Poverty Line
Families Below Poverty Line	1,244	7.2%
With Related Children Under 18	964	10.4%
With Related Children Under 5	421	11.4%
Householder 65 Years and Older	84	3.8%
Received Supplemental Security Income	225	22.0%
Received Social Security Income	251	6.9%
Married-Couple Families Below Poverty Line	433	3.3%
With Related Children Under 18	285	4.4%
With Related Children Under 5	144	5.1%
Householder 65 Years and Older	38	2.1%
Received Supplemental Security Income	16	3.7%
Received Social Security Income	113	4.1%
Families with Female Householder Below Poverty Line	701	22.8%
With Related Children Under 18	606	28.3%
With Related Children Under 5	257	35.5%
Householder 65 Years and Older	28	7.6%
Received Supplemental Security Income	201	39.9%
Received Social Security Income	111	16.7%
Individuals Below Poverty Line	6,079	10.0%
18 Years and Under	2,590	15.3%
65 Years and Over	515	8.8%
Not a US Citizen	37	4.6%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Poverty status is another method to gauge cost-burdened households. The previous table shows that 1,244 families in Newton County fell below the poverty line in 1999, representing 7.2% of total families in the County. More than three-quarters of these low-income families have children under 18 years old and 22% of them receive supplemental security or social security income. The majority of low-income families – 56.4% - are headed by female householders. Claritas estimates 1,668 families below the poverty line in 2005 (7.3% of total families), which indicates an increase of 424 new low-income families since the 2000 Census. In addition, there were 6,079 individuals, representing 10.0% of Newton County population that lived below the poverty line in 1999. This includes a significant number of children (2,590 – 42.6% of low-income individuals), people over 65 (515 – 8.5%) and foreign-born people (37 – 0.6%).

Figure 4.16: Residents Using Public Assistance in Newton County

Category	FY	FY	FY	Annual
	2001	2002	2003	% Change 2001-2003
Food Stamps				
Avg. Households/Month	1,828	2,244	2,751	22.7%
Avg. Recipients/Month	4,141	5,136	6,624	26.5%
% of Population	6.1%	7.2%	8.7%	---
Medicaid				
Recipients	13,067	15,221	14,897	6.8%
% of Population	19.2%	12.3%	9.6%	---
Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)				
Avg. Families/Month	332	444	575	31.6%
Avg. Recipients/Month	763	1,034	1,424	36.6%
% of Population	1.1%	1.4%	1.8%	---
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)				
Aged Adults	203	193	196	-1.7%
Blind/Disabled Adults	1,556	1,858	1,813	7.9%
Total SSI Recipients	1,759	2,051	2,009	6.9%
% 65+	21.7%	20.7%	19.7%	---
% Also Receiving OASDI	36.7%	35.3%	33.4%	---
% of Population	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%	---
OASDI (Social Security)				
Total Beneficiaries	9,650	10,075	10,550	4.6%
% 65+	64.9%	64.2%	63.5%	---
% of Population	16.7%	14.1%	13.9%	---

Source: University of Georgia Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development

Newton County residents receiving public assistance is on the rise, particularly Food Stamps and Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, which are geared to families in need. Social Security income is also increasing, a trend that is expected to continue as the population ages. The number of Supplemental Security Income recipients has stabilized; however, the vast majority (90%) of these recipients are blind or disabled adults.

4.5 Special Housing Needs

Figure 4.17: Special Needs Housing in Newton County

Project	Location	No. of Units/ Beds	Target Population
Public Housing			
Alcovy	Covington	180	Individuals & Families
Fowler's Court	Covington	44	Elderly
Jackson Highway	Covington	24	Individuals & Families
Homes Court	Covington	32	Individuals & Families
Total - Public Housing		280	
Emergency Shelters			
Project Renewal	Covington	20	Domestic Violence
Rainbow Covenant Church	Porterdale	35	Homeless
Total - Emergency Shelters		55	
<i>Sources: Covington Housing Authority and Project Renewal</i>			

Interviews with local service providers furnished valuable information for assessing the special needs of Newton County, including a list of housing options available for low-income and homeless people in the local community. As shown in the previous table, Newton County has an inventory of 280 public-subsidized housing units managed by the Covington Housing Authority. The community also offers two emergency shelters totaling 55 beds. In addition, there are several privately-owned rental projects that provide affordable units, including three newer tax-credit apartment projects – Leafstone (232 units), Orchard Cove (188 units), and Wellington Ridge (220 units). Some mobile home parks and limited-service hotels also offer weekly rates geared to lower-income people. Interviews with service providers, combined with hard data sources, revealed the following about special housing needs in Newton County:

- Elderly:** A total of 4,807 householders in the County are aged 65+, as of 2005 according to Claritas, representing 16.2% of total households. Of these, 1,116 senior householders (23.2%) earn less than \$15,000 per year and 2,092 (43.5%) earn under \$25,000 per year. A total of 1,189 senior householders are located in the City of Covington, representing one quarter of County householders aged 65+. Newton County offers four senior housing projects (total of 392 beds), including two nursing homes (230 beds), one assisted living facility (48 beds) and one independent living apartment project (114 beds). All are located in the City of Covington. The Covington Housing Authority also accepts low-income elderly householders, but there exists a need for additional housing for low-income households.
- Homeless:** There are no population estimates for homeless people in the County but there one emergency shelter to serve this group (35 beds). The shelter is located in a church in Porterdale. Homeless people get priority for public housing as units become available, but the waiting list is more than 12 months. There is a critical need for an additional shelter or two. More importantly there is a need for short-term transitional housing of approximately 100 beds to support this special needs population, according to local service providers.

- **Domestic Violence Victims:** There are no population estimates for domestic violence victims in the County. They do receive priority for public housing and one homeless shelter serves this population – Project Renewal. There is a need for an additional women’s shelter and transitional housing to serve this group.
- **Migrant Farm Workers:** According to local service providers, there is not a notable population of migrant farm workers in Newton County that require housing assistance.
- **Disabled Persons (Mental and Physical):** According to 2000 Census data, there are 11,734 people (aged 5+) in Newton County with disabilities, representing 20.7% of the County’s total population. This includes 7,639 who are of working age (16 to 64), of which 59.2% are employed. The most common disabilities for working-aged people are physical disability (23.9%), mental disability (12.3%), and sensory disability (9.1%). The County’s disabled population also includes 2,683 seniors (65+ year old). The City of Covington has a disabled population of 2,751, of which 58% are of working age and 28% are seniors. Mental health sufferers can find treatment at GRN Community Service Board in Lawrenceville or at Pathways in Decatur, but there no special housing exists in the County for disabled persons, so there is likely a need.
- **HIV/AIDS Patients:** Between 1981 and 2003 only 69 AIDS cases were reported in Newton County, according to the University of Georgia Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development. This does not create a notable unmet housing need for this group.
- **Persons Recovering from Substance Abuse:** There is not a population estimate for this group and there are currently no facilities in Newton County geared to assisting this population. The closest substance abuse programs are in Rockdale County, including Rockdale House for Women and Rockdale House for Men that offer 90-day and 120-day in-house treatment programs. There is a need for a similar short-term program in the County. There is also a need for a longer-term, more intensive drug treatment program, particularly since many low-income housing providers require drug-testing. The closest is the Pathways facility in Decatur.

4.6 Job-Housing Balance

Figure 4.18: Jobs-Housing Balance for Newton County

Category	1990	2000	2003
Population	41,808	62,001	76,144
Average Household Size	2.85	2.77	2.75
Number of Households	14,401	21,997	27,689
Housing Units	15,494	23,033	28,994
Employment	11,348	17,561	18,584
Employment/Population Ratio	0.27	0.28	0.24
Employment/Housing Unit Ratio	0.73	0.76	0.64

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census and Georgia Department of Labor.

Jobs-housing balance seeks a geographic equilibrium between housing and jobs. The underlying theory is that as jobs and housing are more evenly distributed and mixed, people will be able to live closer to their jobs, and traffic congestion and vehicular traffic will be reduced. A balanced community generally has a jobs-housing ratio of 1.25 to 1.75, with 1.4 considered ideal. Newton County has a low jobs-housing ratio of 0.64, as of 2003. This ratio has fallen from 0.73 in 1990, which indicates that the County serves as a bedroom community more than a balanced community. This is further indicated by the fact that nearly 59.6% of residents worked outside the County in 2000, compared to nearly 46.6% in 1980.

Figure 4.19: Assessment of Housing Affordability for Newton Residents

Annual Household Income	Maximum Annual Income	Max. Monthly Income for Housing (30%)	Equivalent House Price*
Less Than \$15,000	\$15,000	\$375	\$59,332
\$15,000-24,999	\$25,000	\$625	\$98,887
\$25,000-34,999	\$35,000	\$875	\$138,441
\$35,000-49,999	\$50,000	\$1,250	\$197,773
\$50,000-74,999	\$75,000	\$1,875	\$296,660
\$75,000-99,999	\$100,000	\$2,500	\$395,546
\$100,000-149,999	\$150,000	\$3,750	\$593,319
\$150,000-249,999	\$250,000	\$6,250	\$988,866
\$250,000-499,999	\$500,000	\$12,500	\$1,977,731
\$500,000+	N/A	N/A	N/A
Median Household Income - Newton County			
2000	\$45,548	\$1,139	\$180,163
2005	\$50,033	\$1,251	\$197,904

* Based on a 95% loan at 7% interest for 30 years.

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census (2000 Household Income), Claritas (2005 Household Income), and Ackerman & Co.

Figure 4.20: Assessment of Housing Affordability for Newton County Workers (2000)

Industry	Average Weekly Wage	Average Monthly Income	Monthly Income Available for Housing (30%)	Equivalent House Price*
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	\$433	\$1,876	\$563	\$89,061
Mining	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Construction	\$554	\$2,401	\$720	\$113,949
Manufacturing	\$730	\$3,163	\$949	\$150,149
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	\$712	\$3,085	\$926	\$146,447
Wholesale Trade	\$657	\$2,847	\$854	\$135,134
Retail Trade	\$301	\$1,304	\$391	\$61,911
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	\$602	\$2,609	\$783	\$123,822
Services	\$512	\$2,219	\$666	\$105,310
Federal Government	\$624	\$2,704	\$811	\$128,347
State Government	\$480	\$2,080	\$624	\$98,728
Local Government	\$500	\$2,167	\$650	\$102,842
All Industries - Newton County	\$551	\$2,388	\$716	\$113,332
All Industries - Atlanta MSA	\$764	\$3,311	\$993	\$157,143
All Industries - State of Georgia	\$658	\$2,851	\$855	\$135,340
* Based on a 95% loan at 7% interest for 30 years.				
Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Georgia Department of Labor, and Ackerman & Co.				

Figure 4.21: Assessment of Housing Affordability for Newton County Workers (2003)

Industry	Average Weekly Wage	Average Monthly Income	Monthly Income Available for Housing (30%)	Equivalent House Price*
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mining	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Construction	\$595	\$2,578	\$774	\$122,382
Manufacturing	\$796	\$3,449	\$1,035	\$163,724
Transportation, Warehousing & Utilities	\$597	\$2,587	\$776	\$122,793
Wholesale Trade	\$802	\$3,475	\$1,043	\$164,959
Retail Trade	\$400	\$1,733	\$520	\$82,274
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	\$754	\$3,267	\$980	\$155,086
Services	\$505	\$2,188	\$657	\$103,870
Federal Government	\$769	\$3,332	\$1,000	\$158,171
State Government	\$536	\$2,323	\$697	\$110,247
Local Government	\$573	\$2,483	\$745	\$117,857
All Industries- Newton County	\$607	\$2,630	\$789	\$124,850
All Industries - Atlanta MSA	\$812	\$3,519	\$1,056	\$167,015
All Industries - State of Georgia	\$704	\$3,051	\$915	\$144,802
* Based on a 95% loan at 7% interest for 30 years.				
Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Georgia Department of Labor, and Ackerman & Co.				

The previous three tables illustrate supportable housing prices based on income of County residents and wages for workers in Newton County. Workers in Newton County are slightly less affluent than residents by a significant margin. In 2000, County residents had a median household income of \$45,548, which can support a house price of approximately \$180,000. By comparison, average county wage in 2000 was \$551 per week (\$28,652 per year), which would support a house price of about \$113,000, based on a single-income household. As previously indicated, median house values for Newton County were \$101,300 in 2000 and average median sales prices were \$103,200 for the same year. County housing costs are essentially in line with what local workers can afford to pay for housing, but this is rapidly changing as higher-income households relocate to the County, pushing housing prices higher than local wages can support. The County's wages are also significantly lower than metro Atlanta (by 28%) and the State (by 16%). As a result, many local residents are working outside the County in higher wage areas of metro.

County commuting patterns also help to support this latter point. As shown in **Figures 3.16 and 3.17 from the Economic Development Assessment** and reproduced below as **Figures 4.22 and 4.23**, more and more county residents are working outside the county. Residents commuting to jobs outside the county have outpaced the residents working within the County by a wide margin. By comparison, in 1980, 53.4% of county residents worked within the county, but by 2000 only 40.4% of county residents remained working within the county. The majority of residents working outside the county commuted to jobs within metro Atlanta, particularly Rockdale, DeKalb, and Fulton counties. This trend is expected to increase unless more jobs are created within the community.

Figure 4.22: Commuting Patterns for Newton County

Year	Residents Working Inside the County		Residents Working Outside the County	
1990	9,212	48.7%	9,715	51.3%
2000	11,545	40.4%	17,023	59.6%
Annual % Change	2.3%	---	5.8%	---

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Figure 4.23: Commuting Patterns for Newton County Residents

Place of Work	1990		2000	
	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total
Newton	9,212	48.7%	11,545	40.4%
Rockdale	3,723	19.7%	6,513	22.8%
DeKalb	2,712	14.3%	3,567	12.5%
Fulton	1,391	7.3%	2,399	8.4%
Gwinnett	436	2.3%	1,320	4.6%
Walton	327	1.7%	755	2.6%
Clayton	232	1.2%	480	1.7%
Cobb	205	1.1%	411	1.4%
Henry	96	0.5%	387	1.4%
Morgan	111	0.6%	206	0.7%
Other	482	2.5%	985	3.4%
Total	18,927	100.0%	28,568	100.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Although housing prices, or costs, in Newton County are considered relatively affordable compared to more urban counties of metro Atlanta, costs are rising more rapidly than incomes. Median house values in Newton County have increased at an average annual growth rate of 5.1% since 2000. Median sales prices are also on the rise, increasing at an average rate of 5.9% per year. By contrast, median household incomes have increased by 1.9% annually, and average weekly wages have increased at an annual rate of 3.3%. This analysis points to a need for housing at both ends of the spectrum. First, there is a continuing need for workforce housing in the County, but there is also a need for higher-priced, executive-level housing (homes priced from \$300,000+), which is a fast-growing segment of local households. A variety of housing choices and price points is recommended to create a balanced community.

5 Natural and Cultural Resources

Maps illustrating the location of resources described in this analysis can be found at the end of this report in the “Atlas of Supportive Maps” (**Atlas**).

5.1 Environmental Planning Criteria

5.1.1 Wetlands

5.1.1.1 Regulatory and Policy Assessment

In Newton County, as in most rapidly growing areas, developers often seek to drain or fill wetlands to create developable property. Unlike other states, Georgia has no law protecting wetlands, other than those found along the coast. Freshwater wetland protection rests with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE). Section 404 of the Clean Water Act gives the ACOE authority to regulate the discharge of dredge or fill material into navigable waters (including wetlands) of the United States. Until recently, Section 404 applied to all wetlands. In January 2001, however, the United States Supreme Court ruled that the ACOE has jurisdiction over only those wetlands that are adjacent to navigable waterways (*Solid Waste Agency of Northern Cook County [SWANCC] v. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, et al. No. 99-1178*). As a result, “isolated” wetlands – those that are not adjacent to or connected via surface water to a navigable water body – are no longer protected under federal law. This ruling, known as the *Swank Decision*, places many of Newton County’s (County) wetlands at increased risk.

Disturbing federally-protected wetlands through drainage or discharge of fill material is prohibited, unless there is “no practicable alternative,” and a permit still must be obtained from the ACOE. Practicable alternatives can consider cost, existing technology, and logistics and can include the possibility of acquiring other suitable property. If it is deemed that a development will result in an unavoidable loss of wetland, the developer may be allowed to compensate for the loss by creating wetlands elsewhere in the state. This process is known as *mitigation banking*, and it is becoming a fairly common practice throughout Georgia. Numerous other forms of creative mitigation techniques are available for developers and landowners.

In its Zoning Ordinance (adopted 04/29/03; rev. 06/08/05), Newton County has developed a Wetlands Protection Overlay District in which all County wetlands, as illustrated in the Overlay District Map, are protected from most types of development. Forestry and normal agricultural activities, subject to state-approved Best Management Practices (BMPs), are allowed in this district; as are outdoor passive recreation activities, natural water quality treatment, and conservation or preservation of soil, water, vegetation, fish, or other wildlife. Other types of uses may be approved, but local development permits are approved only if the proposed use is in compliance with all state, local, and federal regulations and the appropriate permits have been obtained.

5.1.1.2 Wetlands in Newton County

Figure NC-1 in the Atlas illustrates the locations of wetlands within Newton County. Of the approximately 10,585 acres of wetlands in the County, some are at greater risk of impact from

new development than others. The following areas contain wetlands of special significance, in part for their wildlife habitat and wildlife corridor value:

- Alcovy River (entire river corridor)
- South River (entire river corridor)
- Yellow River (entire river corridor)
- Little River (entire river corridor)

Newton County's wetlands have not been severely affected yet by development patterns. But, these areas may be negatively impacted in the future if consumptive land development patterns continue. Wetlands along the Yellow River (west and south of Covington), the Alcovy River (east and south of Covington), and Dried Indian Creek (south of Covington) are considered to be at risk in the next 20 years as development continues in the County.

Newton County, Covington, Mansfield, Newborn, Porterdale, and Oxford have jurisdiction over identified wetlands within their areas. Because of the value of wetlands, generally, and their specific value to Newton County's water quality; adoption of the Wetlands Protection Overlay District will be a valuable tool in protecting this important resource as the County's population and developed land acreage continue to increase.

5.1.2 Groundwater Recharge Areas

5.1.2.1 Regulatory and Policy Assessment

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. 12-2-8 and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Environmental Protection Division's (EPD) Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria Chapter 391-3-16, Newton County has adopted a Groundwater Recharge Area Protection Overlay District ordinance. This ordinance restricts some types of development in areas that may function as significant groundwater recharge areas. This includes restrictions on septic tanks, drain fields, and spray fields; minimum sizes for lots requiring septic systems; and controls on landfills, above-ground chemical or petroleum tanks, agricultural waste lagoons, and certain other hazardous waste land uses.

The overlay district map is delineated according to the DNR *Significant Recharge Areas, Hydrological Atlas 18* (1989 Edition) and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources *Pollution Susceptibility Map*, which categorizes Newton County by areas of high, medium, and low groundwater pollution potential.

5.1.2.2 Recharge Areas in Newton County

Figure NC-2 in the Atlas illustrates probable groundwater recharge in the County. The largest area is located between Beaverdam Creek and Snapping Shoals Creek, along Highway 162 from the County line southeast to Highway 81. Another significant area is located between West Bear Creek and East Bear Creek, south of Highway 142, and another is in the northwest Covington/west Oxford area, part of which is in the I-20 corridor. The vast majority of the County's drinking water comes from surface sources, primarily Lake Varner and the Alcovy River; but the 10 private community systems in Newton County obtain their water from groundwater wells. These systems provide water service within subdivisions and mobile home parks.

5.1.3 Protected Rivers

5.1.3.1 Policy and Regulatory Assessment

A protected river has been defined by Georgia's General Assembly as any river that has an average flow rate of at least 400 cubic feet per second (cfs). In addition to the rivers themselves, the state has required protection of a minimum 100-foot (ft) buffer on both sides of each protected river. Pursuant to O.C.G.A. 12-2-8 and the DNR, EPD's Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria Chapter 391-3-16, Newton County has adopted a River Corridor Protection Overlay District ordinance. This ordinance regulates permitted uses along the Alcovy, South, and Yellow Rivers in the County. Generally, state-mandated minimum buffer standards apply in all cases, the permitted residential density is 0.5 DU/acre, and residential septic systems are not allowed in the buffer. Industrial and commercial uses are permitted; as are timber and agricultural production, wildlife and fisheries management, wastewater treatment, natural water quality treatment, and passive recreational uses. These uses are conditional upon the use of state-approved BMPs where applicable and there being no impairment of the drinking quality of the river water from the permitted use. Issues specific to each of the protected rivers are discussed below.

5.1.3.2 The Alcovy River in Newton County

In 1976, the DNR included the Alcovy River in the proposed Alcovy/Ocmulgee Environmental Corridor. DNR noted special features of the river; including the Ulcoufahatchee Natural Area (Alcovy River Swamp), river shoals and outcrops, the Alcovy Mountain, and the Alcovy River Swamp (located in Newton County, 1 mile east of Covington, south of U.S. 78). This swamp forest is the northernmost extensive stand of coastal bottomland hardwoods in the Piedmont region.

The Alcovy River serves as a water source for the Newton County Water Authority, which in turn supplies water to all of the County's incorporated areas, as well as to some rural residents. According to DNR's 2004 Water Quality report, the Alcovy River fully supports its designated uses of fishing, recreation, and drinking water. The only water quality monitoring station on the Alcovy River is located in the vicinity of Jackson Lake in southern Newton County.

The predominate land uses adjacent to the Alcovy River were agriculture and residential development. Northeast of Covington, the Alcovy River passes through a rapidly developing

commercial and industrial area. The current future land use map shows that adjacent land uses should be primarily agricultural. Since 1992, the Alcovy River has continued to witness increased residential development. The Alcovy River's major threat is continued urbanization within the watershed and the resultant loss of floodplain and wetlands, as well as the increase in stormwater runoff.

5.1.3.3 The South River in Newton County

The South River begins in the southern portion of the City of Atlanta near Lakewood Park. The river flows through residential and industrial sections of Atlanta and grows in size through the addition of urban runoff, wastewater treatment facility discharges, and combined sewer overflows. Natural streamflow in the South River is characterized by higher peak flows and lower base (low) flows because of the high degree of urbanization on the Atlanta area. However, the streamflow is altered significantly by flow diversions (interbasin transfers) from the Chattahoochee River Basin to the Ocmulgee River Basin via the South River. The City of Atlanta and DeKalb County divert water from the Chattahoochee River for drinking water, and this water is subsequently discharged as wastewater into the South River. During dry weather conditions in the South River, the amount of diverted wastewater often exceeds natural flow.

The only water quality monitoring station on the South River is located upstream from Jackson Lake on the Henry County-Newton County line.

Within Newton County, the predominate land use adjacent to the South River is agriculture/forestry, with limited residential development. The current future land use map shows that adjacent land uses should be primarily agricultural. The issues facing the Alcovy River are more complex than the South River. The interbasin transfers and combined sewer overflows occurring upstream from Newton County are quite serious. There is also the problem of ongoing urbanization upstream. Within Newton County, the South River's major threat, like the Alcovy, is continued urbanization within the watershed and the resultant loss of floodplain and wetlands, as well as the increase in stormwater runoff.

5.1.3.4 The Yellow River in Newton County

The Yellow River has its headwaters in northern Gwinnett County, near Buford, and flows in a southerly direction through a densely developed residential area. It flows through Rockdale County and enters Newton County just south of Highway 138, as it proceeds to its confluence with the Alcovy and South Rivers at Jackson Lake. Of Newton County's three major rivers, the Yellow River has the most extensively developed watershed, including much of the City of Covington and its western suburbs and the City of Oxford.

The natural hydrology of the upper part of the Yellow River is significantly altered by interbasin transfers. The Gwinnett County water system diverts water from the Chattahoochee River to the Yellow River for municipal water supplies. Most of this water is treated by wastewater treatment facilities and is then discharged into the river and its tributaries, but more and more of it is being treated by septic tanks. During periods of dry weather, the amount of wastewater entering some tributaries of the Yellow River may exceed natural streamflow.

5.1.4 Water Supply Watersheds and Water Supply Sources

5.1.4.1 Regulatory and Policy Assessment

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. 12-2-8 and the DNR, EPD's Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria Chapter 391-3-16, the Newton County Zoning Ordinance (adopted 04/29/03; rev. 06/08/05) includes Watershed Protection Overlay Districts for Water Supply Watersheds. Different criteria apply to small water supply watersheds and large water supply watersheds, and the large water supply watershed criteria are further defined in two separate overlay districts. All of these districts are discussed below.

5.1.4.1.1 Small Water Supply Watersheds

The purpose of this ordinance is to protect watersheds and drinking water supplies from activities that can degrade water quality and to protect water supply reservoirs from sedimentation. This ordinance establishes standards and procedures that apply to any development or use within the boundaries of the Watershed Protection Overlay District. The procedures, standards, and criteria apply to the portion of the subject property within the boundaries of the Watershed Protection Overlay District for Small Water Supply Watersheds. Small watershed protection areas include the Cornish Creek Reservoir (Lake Varner), the proposed Bear Creek Reservoir, the Big Haynes Creek Watershed, and City Pond. The ordinance requires a Conditional Use Permit for new landfills; confined animal feeding operations; truck or railroad terminals or repair shops; and the sale, distribution, and/or storage of fuels, chemicals, or hazardous materials. All impervious surfaces, structures, and septic tanks and drain fields must have a 150-ft setback from the shoreline. Within riparian buffers, wetlands, the 100-year floodplain, areas of steep slopes, or soils with severe limitations, uses are limited to perpendicular roadway crossings, drainage ways, trails, paths and utility easements. All site plans for these permitted uses must be approved by the County Planning Director

The Watershed Protection Overlay District for Large Water Supply Watersheds also was adopted in the 06/08/05 zoning ordinance revision. This overlay district has two parts: the Alcovy River/Little River District, and the South River/Yellow River District. These are discussed in detail below.

5.1.4.1.2 Large Water Supply Watersheds

Alcovy River/Little River Watershed Protection District

The purpose of this ordinance is to preserve water quality, protect wildlife, and preserve the aesthetic beauty of the river corridor. The ordinance for this district requires a Conditional Use Permit for new landfills; confined animal feeding operations; truck or railroad terminals or repair shops; and the sale, distribution, and/or storage of fuels, chemicals, or hazardous materials. Within riparian buffers, wetlands, the 100-year floodplain, or soils with severe limitations; uses are limited to perpendicular roadway crossings, drainage ways, trails, paths, and utility easements. Development is not permitted in areas of steep slopes, unless the area is within an approved Development Node or a Multi-county Mixed-use Business Park as designated on the Newton County Future Land Use Map. All site plans for these permitted uses must be approved by the County Planning Director.

This district requires the maintenance of a natural and undisturbed 100-ft riparian buffer in all areas other than designated Development Nodes. Within a Development Node, a 50-ft natural and undisturbed riparian buffer and a 50-ft minimally disturbed buffer (no impervious surfaces allowed) are required. All impervious surfaces, structures, and septic tanks and drain fields must have a 150-ft setback from the shoreline. This district has limitations on the amount of impervious surface allowed, ranging from 15 percent for residential property outside of the Development Nodes to 50 percent for non-residential property within a designated Development Node. The total impervious surface allowed in the entire district is limited to 25 percent, which includes the “footprint” of all structures. Minimum lot size is 2 acres; this minimum does not apply within a designated Development Node. Exemptions within this district include conservation easements, utilities, mining activities, land uses that existed prior to establishment of the district, and forestry and agricultural activities using state-approved BMPs. Mining activities and pre-existing land uses cannot impair or degrade the water quality.

South River/Yellow River Watershed Protection District

The purpose of this ordinance is to preserve water quality, protect wildlife, and preserve the aesthetic beauty of the river corridor. The ordinance for this district requires the maintenance of a natural and undisturbed 100-ft riparian buffer in all areas other than designated Development Nodes. Within a Development Node, a 50-ft natural and undisturbed riparian buffer and a 50-ft minimally disturbed buffer (no impervious surfaces allowed) are required. All impervious surfaces, structures, and septic tanks and drain fields must have a 150-ft setback from the shoreline. Exemptions within this district include conservation easements, utilities, mining activities, land uses that existed prior to establishment of the district, and forestry and agricultural activities using state-approved BMPs. Mining activities and pre-existing land uses cannot impair or degrade the water quality.

5.1.4.2 Water Supply Sources in Newton County

Figure 6 in the Community Assessment illustrates the locations of the water supply watersheds within Newton County. The County’s only surface water intake is located on Cornish Creek, just northeast of Covington. As discussed in Section 5.2, many individuals and small, private water systems throughout the County obtain water from groundwater sources. Groundwater recharge areas are shown in **Figure NC-2 in the Atlas**.

5.2 Other Environmentally Sensitive Areas

5.2.1 Steep Slopes

Areas with steep slopes typically require substantial alteration for building development and pose severe limitations to septic tank drain fields. Alterations to steep slopes change the natural character of an area and can create serious erosion problems. Development activities on steep slopes should utilize appropriate erosion control measures.

5.2.1.1 Regulatory and Policy Assessment

The Watershed Protection Overlay Districts created in the Newton County Zoning Ordinance (adopted 04/29/03; rev. 06/08/05) prohibit development on natural slopes in excess of 15 percent. This restriction is in effect for all small water supply watersheds and the Alcovy

River/Little River large water supply watershed. An exemption is made for steep-slope development in a designated Development Node or in property zoned Multi-county Mixed-use Business Park. There are no steep slope restrictions in the South or Yellow River watersheds. The Open Space Conservation Residential Overlay District encourages conservation for areas where slopes exceed 25 percent.

5.2.1.2 Steep Slopes in Newton County

Figure NC-3 in the Atlas illustrates the locations of all slopes greater than ten percent within the County. The greatest concentrations of steep slopes are found in the southwestern quadrant of the County, particularly along the Yellow River and its tributaries and the South River, where the concentrations are highest. Smaller, but still significant, areas of steep slopes are found along Gum Creek and its tributaries, Big Haynes Creek, Little Haynes Creek, Cornish Creek/Lake Varner, the Alcovy River at its confluence with Bear Creek, and the Little River and some of its tributaries.

5.2.2 Soils - Septic Tank Suitability

5.2.2.1 Regulatory and Policy Assessment

Septic tanks and drain fields are regulated through the County zoning code. The County restricts septic systems in the Groundwater Recharge Area Protection Overlay District (Section 5.2.1), the River Corridor Protection Overlay District (Section 5.3.1), the Water Supply Watershed Protection Overlay District (Section 5.4.1), and the Open Space Conservation Residential Overlay District. Specifics are discussed in the related sections of this document.

The zoning code allows for individual septic systems throughout the County. The land use classifications allowing these systems are as follows:

- R-1 Single-Family Residential
- R-2 Single-Family Residential
- R-3 Single-Family Residential
- MSR Mixed-Use Single-Family Residential
- DR Single and Two-Family Residential
- RMF Multi-Family Residential
- MHS Manufactured Home Subdivision Residential
- MHP Manufactured Home Park

Each of these zoning classifications requires a minimum lot size, depending on the use of some combination private well, public water, septic tank, community well, and community septic system. Generally, the minimum lot size allowed is between 20,000 and 25,500 ft² for single-family residential areas and between 7,500 and 12,000 ft² for multi-family and manufactured home classifications.

5.2.2.2 Septic Suitability

Newton County's soils are moderately suited to septic tank usage (**Table 5.1**). Just over 45,000 acres of the County are classified as "very limited" in their septic tank suitability. New development on septic tank within these 45,000 acres should be avoided

Table 5.1: Septic Tank Suitability of Newton County's Soils

Septic Capability	Acres	Share
Very Limited	45,346	25.4%
Somewhat Limited	128,117	71.8%
Other*	5,091	2.9%
Total	178,554	100.0%

Source: US Natural Resources Conservation Commission, 1980

**Other includes urbanized areas, water, and exposed rock.*

5.2.3 Floodplain

5.2.3.1 Regulatory and Policy Assessment

Newton County protects property from flood damage through its Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance. This district applies to all areas within the 100-year floodplain. This ordinance provides an adequate level of protection to minimize property damage and human harm from floods.

5.2.3.2 Floodplains in Newton County

Figure NC-5 in the Atlas indicates the locations of the 100-year floodplain within Newton County. Not surprisingly, the floodplains and the wetlands are closely aligned throughout the County.

5.2.4 Air Quality

5.2.4.1 Regulatory and Policy Assessment

Because of Newton County's non-attainment status in regard to federal air quality standards, the County falls under the jurisdiction of the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA). This regional agency is working to improve regional transit service and lessen the impact of Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs). GRTA also has influence over some aspects of new transportation investments.

Newton County does not have an identifiable strategy for addressing air quality. Standards that help reduce driving, promote walking and bicycling, or preserve trees and tree canopy help improve air quality. Many aspects of the existing regulatory environment promote air quality-friendly development including:

- Overlay districts that allow mixing land uses.
- Requirements for pedestrian facilities.
- Conservation subdivision and tree saving standards.
- Standards to limit impervious surfaces and shared parking.

5.2.4.2 Air Quality in Newton County

Metropolitan Atlanta's air quality is among the worst in the United States, and Newton County is part of a 21-county air quality non-attainment basin. The County is in violation of the Clean Air

Act standards for ground-level ozone and particulate matter. Because of federal regulations, non-attainment designation directly impacts the County's road improvement program and its ability to add additional travel capacity to regionally significant roads, as automobile emissions are directly linked to these high levels of air pollution. Therefore, this non-attainment status directly affects the County's ability to expand its system of regionally significant roadways.

Despite many innovative ordinance standards, much of the County's recent development trends likely will exacerbate air quality problems in the County. With rare exception, recent developments have been entirely auto-centric either effectively or by design. Contributing factors include the segregation of uses, low-density residential patterns, extensive commercial and industrial patterns, lack of street connectivity and preponderance of dead-end streets, and lack of local employment opportunities.

The Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR), issued by U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) in March 2005, is expected to reduce the amount of air pollution that travels across state boundaries. This rule will improve particulate and ground-level ozone levels in Georgia by reducing these air pollutants in other states. Particulate levels in Newton County are expected to decline through this program, and ground-level ozone is expected to decline through the application of other existing programs within the Clean Air Act.

5.2.5 Water Quality

Four of Newton County's significant rivers and streams, along with Lake Jackson, are identified by the EPA, via the EPD, as not fully supporting the water quality standards mandated by the Clean Water Act. The list of waterways not meeting federal water quality standards is referred to as the 303(d) list, referring to the section of the Clean Water Act, which requires that these waters be identified by the appropriate state regulatory agency. **Table 5.2** below summarizes the 303(d) listed streams and rivers in Newton County, and **Figure NC-6 in the Atlas** illustrates the locations of those streams in the county. The sources of pollution are identified in the table. The clear, overwhelming sources of contamination are non-point source pollution and urban runoff.

**Table 5.2: State Listed Impaired Waterways
2002 Rivers/Streams Not Supporting Designated Uses**

Basin/Stream	Location	Water Use Classification	Criterion Violated	Potential Causes	Action to alleviate	Miles	305(b)	303(d)	Priority	TMDL Approved?
Snapping Shoals Creek	Almand Branch to South River (Rockdale/Newton Co.)	Fishing	FC	UR	Impairment will be addressed by implementing a locally developed plan that includes the remedial actions necessary for problem resolution.	10		3	3	Yes
Yellow River	Big Haynes Creek to Jackson Lake (Newton Co.)	Fishing/Drinking Water	FC	UR	Impairment will be addressed by implementing a locally developed plan that includes the remedial actions necessary for problem resolution.	25	X	3	3	Yes
Little River	Social Circle to Nelson Creek (Walton/Newton Co.)	Fishing	FC	UR	Impairment will be addressed by implementing a locally developed plan that includes the remedial actions necessary for problem resolution.	3	X	3	3	Yes

Source: US EPA, GA EPD

2002 Rivers/Streams Partially Supporting Designated Uses

Basin/Stream	Location	Water Use Classification	Criterion Violated	Potential Causes	Action to alleviate	Miles	305(b)	303(d)	Priority	TMDL Approved?
South River	Hwy 20 to Snapping Shoals Creek (Henry/Newton Co.)	Fishing	FC, FCG	NP	Impairment will be addressed by implementing a locally developed plan that includes the remedial actions necessary for problem resolution. Fish Consumption Guidelines due to PCBs in fish tissue. PCBs have been banned in the U.S. and levels have been declining.	11	X	3	3	Yes
South River	Snapping Shoals to Jackson Lake (Newton Co.)	Fishing	FC	NP	Impairment will be addressed by implementing a locally developed plan that includes the remedial actions necessary for problem resolution.	7	X	3	3	Yes

Source: US EPA, GA EPD

2002 Lakes/Reservoirs Not Fully Supporting Designated Uses

Lake Name	Location	Water Use Classification	Criterion Violated	Potential Causes	Support Category	Acres Affected	305(b)	303(d)	Priority	TMDL Approved?
Jackson	Newton, Butts and Jasper Counties	Recreation	FCG (PCBs)	UR, NP	Partial Support	4,102	X	3	3	Yes
Jackson	Newton, Butts and Jasper Counties	Recreation	FCG (PCBs), FC	UR, NP	Partial Support	650	X	3,4	3	Yes

Source: US EPA, GA EPD

5.2.5.1 Regulatory and Policy Assessment

Newton County now is required by federal law to improve its stormwater management program (SWMP) because of high population density in certain areas of the County. The County currently spends approximately \$500,000 annually on its stormwater program. Engineering consultants hired by the County have estimated that the current budget will be adequate for at least the next 2 years. After that time, more funding may be needed in order to meet requirements under the law for a more formal and complex SWMP.

The County has several items within its existing ordinances that contribute to protecting water quality. Newton County and the City of Covington have enacted a number of regulations for stormwater management and watershed protection, including:

- Stormwater Conveyance and Management
- Watershed Overlay Zoning
- Agriculture Waste Impoundment
- Erosion and Sedimentation Control
- Groundwater Protection
- Groundwater Recharge Protection

The County also has adopted a number of overlay zoning ordinances, including policies for protecting wetlands and floodplains.

5.2.5.2 River Inventory

The Alcovy, Yellow, and South Rivers comprise the group of major rivers within or bordering the County. These three rivers converge at the southern tip of the County to create Lake Jackson.

5.2.5.3 River Corridor Protection

A *protected river* has been defined by Georgia's General Assembly as any river that has an average flow rate of at least 400 cfs. In addition to the rivers themselves, the state has required protection of at least a 100-ft buffer on both sides of each protected river. In Newton County, the Yellow and South Rivers meet the criterion necessary to be considered protected rivers. Protection of the Alcovy River can be ultimately accomplished through the proposed greenway.

O.C.G.A. §12-2-8 requires the DNR to develop minimum planning standards and procedures for the protection of river corridors in the state and requires local governments to use these minimum standards in developing and implementing local comprehensive plans. Newton County emplaced the River Corridor Protection Overlay District, an overlay zoning district, to protect and preserve its three vital rivers resources. Development requirements for the district establish a minimum residential lot size of 2 acres and provide some additional requirements for industrial and other non-residential uses. Additionally, Newton County has adopted special overlay districts for the Alcovy and Little Rivers and the South and Yellow Rivers. Both overlay districts establish a 100-ft wide undisturbed riparian buffer and a 150-ft wide stream buffer prohibiting impervious surfaces. The Alcovy River/Little River Watershed Protection District provides additional protections by limiting impervious surface coverage and minimum lot sizes.

It is important to identify the resources within the Alcovy, South and Yellow Rivers and their tributaries. These resources include wildlife, wetlands, scenic views, and archaeological and historic resources; and all are discussed in other parts of this chapter.

5.2.6 Plant and Animal Habitats

5.2.6.1 Regulatory and Policy Assessment

State and federal regulations currently provide adequate protection for these species.

5.2.6.2 Threatened, Endangered, and Special Concern Species

Newton County hosts three plant species and two animal species that are listed as either Threatened or Endangered at the Federal or State level. Additionally, three animal and four plant species are listed as Species of Special Concern by the DNR. The County is also home to two rare natural communities. The following species known to exist in Newton County are listed on either the Federal Endangered Species List or Georgia's Protected Species List. Species on the federal list are protected automatically at the state level.

5.2.6.2.1 Animals

Federally Protected under the U.S. Endangered Species Act

Southern Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*

Georgia Protected Species

Altamaha Shiner *Cyprinella xaenura*

Species of Special Concern

Ocmulgee Shiner *Cyprinella callisema*

Four-toed Salamander *Hemidactylium scutatum*

Eastern Silvery Minnow *Hybognathus regius*

5.2.6.2.2 Plants

Federally Protected under the U.S. Endangered Species Act

Black-spored Quillwort *Isoetes melanospora*

Pool Sprite *Amphianthus pusillus*

Dwarf Sumac *Rhus michauxii*

Georgia Protected Species

There are no Georgia Protected Plant Species in Newton County (other than those qualifying for federal protection).

Species of Special Concern

Alexander Rock Aster *Aster avitus*

Dwarf Pipewort *Eriocaulon koernickianum*

Wingpod Purslane *Portulaca umbraticola ssp. coronata*

Dwarf Chinkapin Oak *Quercus prinoides*

5.2.6.2.3 Natural Communities

Alluvial River Swamp
Piedmont Xeric Hardwood-Pine Forest

Brownwater Stream Floodplain Forest
PD Xeric Broadleaf Decid.-Needleleaf-Ever.
Forest

5.3 Significant Natural Resources

5.3.1 Agricultural Land

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.

Prime agricultural soils in Newton County account for 27 percent of all land or 48,150 acres and are located throughout the County (see **Figure NC-4 in the Atlas**). Most of this prime agricultural land is located in one of the following three concentrations:

- Much of the eastern half of the County including the Highway 11 corridor and the land between Covington and Newborn.
- The 82/142 corridor north of Covington.
- The far western corner of the County between Rockdale County and Highway 81.

In determining the future growth patterns of the County, protection of both prime soils and active agricultural areas is an issue. In 2002, the last year for which information is available, farmland made up 25.3 percent of Newton County’s total land area. Between 1997 and 2002, agricultural land, in production, declined by 740 acres to 44,839 acres. As development pressures increase, many families will divest their agricultural holdings because of increased property taxes or because of a desire to realize the economic value of the property. While it is inconceivable that all agricultural land will remain in production, there are mechanisms to limit agricultural land conversion if there is a desire to protect these lands.

5.3.2 Forest Land

According to the *2005 Georgia County Guide*¹ 59% of the land area of Newton County is forest land, or 85,200 acres. Since 1984 as the county has become more urbanized, the amount of forest land has steadily decreased, as indicated in **Table 5.3**. Of this 85,270 acres of forest land, 80,100 acres or 94% are private.

¹ The University of Georgia, Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development

Table 5.3: Forest Land in Newton County, 1984-2004

Year	% Forest Land	Total Acres
1984	61.4	108,620
1989	59.0	104,370
1997	55.8	98,710
2004	48.2	85,270

Source: 2005 Georgia County Guide, University of Georgia Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development

5.3.2 Conservation Areas

Newton County is an active participant in the Georgia Greenspace Program. According to the Newton County Recreation Commission, through the year 2002, approximately 1813 acres of greenspace has been protected. In addition to protecting easements or linear parcels that can be developed as trails that will afford linkages between parks, facilities and activity centers such as downtown Covington. Newton County has received a total of \$55,792 in greenspace funds and has spent \$572,196 to date to purchase 111 acres of property to be permanently protected.²

According to the existing land use survey conducted as part of this assessment over 7,200 acres of land (4% of the county total) can be categorized as either parks, recreation or conservation areas. Only 329 acres of this land is part of the Newton County Recreation System and is being used for active and passive recreation. The remainder of this land primarily includes the major parks and recreation described in the next section, as well as private land trust holding. Most of these lands are located around the county's protected water resources.

Newton County has an organizational structure in place that is planning for conservation of county's greenspace that consists of three groups: the Newton County Land Trust, the Greenspace Committee and The Center (a foundation for community planning and preservation.)

5.3.3 Major Parks and Recreation

Major federal, state, or regional parks and recreation areas are identified because of their significant contribution to quality of life. However, no state or national parks are located in Newton County (local parks and recreation areas are identified in the Community Facilities section of this plan). There are, however, four facilities in Newton County that may be classified as regional recreational facilities.

- The Bert Adams Boy Scout Reservation, located just off Highway 36 in the southern part of the County, is part of the Atlanta Area Boy Scout Council and is used by Boy Scout troops from all over the state.
- The FFA/FHA Camp also is located off Highway 36 in southern Newton County and serves as a representative camp for the Northeast Georgia Region, also hosting participants from all parts of Georgia.

² 2005-2010 Newton County Recreation Commission Comprehensive Plan, p.22.

- The Lake Varner/Cornish Creek Reservoir Recreation Area is considered a regional recreation area because of its close proximity to neighboring Walton County, as well as its potential for drawing visitors from other nearby areas.
- The Charlie Elliott Wildlife Center, located in Newton and Jasper Counties, is open for hunting and fishing. This resource is operated by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and covers over 6,400 acres, including 22 ponds and a five-acre granite outcrop. Its primary goal is wildlife education and programs for students, teachers, and the public. The Center has recently added a conference center and banquet hall, which will offer wildlife education programs to school-age children as well as natural resources training for formal and informal educators.
- The Alcovy Conservation Center, located northeast of Covington on Hazelbrand Road and the Alcovy River. The Center is situated on 115-acres along the Alcovy River and is operated by the Georgia Wildlife Federation. The site contains a 15,000 square foot building complex that includes office, lecture, classroom and library space surrounded by a native plant gardens. Trails at the site lead past the most northern example of a tupelo gum river swamp in Georgia.

5.3.4 Greenspace and Trails

Newton County, along with local organizations, has become more active in planning for trails, pedestrian access, and greenspace within the County. The Newton County Trails-Path Foundation, Inc. (“Newton Trails”) is planning a number of multi-use trails around the county. This organization envisions the creation of a network of trails connecting cities, neighborhoods, parks, and schools within Newton County and linking to trail networks in adjacent counties. The core trail network will link Oxford, Covington and Porterdale, and Phase 1 of the Oxford Loop was recently completed.

Covington has completed Phase 1 of a county-wide plan to create a system of multi-use trails, sidewalks, and bicycle lanes. Phase 1 included the construction of sidewalks and bike lanes from the Newton County Library along Floyd Street, past the square in downtown Covington, and down Clark Street to Turner Lake Park.

Phase 2 of the County’s trail plan will go through the Park and is expected to continue west along Turkey Creek down to the Yellow River, ending at Porterdale Elementary School and Newton County High School.

Future County trail plans (Phase 3) include a linear park or greenway through downtown Covington along Dried Indian Creek. It is envisioned that this park/greenway would connect neighborhoods to shopping districts and also connect to the loop trail around the City of Oxford. Newton Trails then plans to extend the County trail from the high school to Porterdale, thereby completing a trails network connecting Newton County’s three central cities. It is envisioned that the Porterdale Trail will follow the Yellow River to Cedar Shoals alongside the historic mill. Just north of the mill, across Hwy. 81, the City of Porterdale owns 27 acres slated for a park. The Porterdale Trail will loop around the new park.

The Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) draft plan (October 2005) for the Highway 278 corridor in Covington proposes an extensive system of greenways and bike paths throughout the City. This

plan recommends preserving the open space along the Dried Indian Creek and Alcovy River floodplains, as well as protecting portions of the existing Faulkner Horse Farm. The plan also recommends other large and small open spaces along the corridor, ranging from farmland, forests, and orchards to parks, squares, and playgrounds.

5.3.5 Scenic Views

Scenic corridors are roadways of any functional type that are characterized by specific attributes, are officially designated by the County through the Comprehensive Plan, and whose abutting properties receive special regulations regarding roadway access and appearance. Scenic corridors may:

- Exhibit aesthetic or environmental qualities of countywide significance.
- Move through large open areas.
- Contain an abundant landscape.
- Control access points.
- Limit non-residential uses along the corridor.

Designated scenic corridors may not be scenic today; however, they are intended to provide a valuable link in the overall system and should be enhanced. Scenic corridors may connect different areas of the County, improving the appearance of areas through which they pass. The Natural Resources Committee for the last comprehensive plan update had identified the following scenic views and sites in Newton County:

1. View of Stone Mountain.
2. Cornish Mountain
3. Yellow, Alcovy, and South Rivers
4. White Shoals
5. Snapping Shoals
6. Costley Mill
7. Hightower Road
8. Brickstore Community

To reinforce, enhance, and create the attractive features of scenic corridors, development regulations must be revised to:

- Provide and preserve views to particular scenic or unique features such as water bodies, farms, or views.
- Prohibit billboards and limit signs.
- Require a wide buffer zone along roadways to be kept in a natural or agrarian state.

5.4 Significant Cultural Resources

5.4.1 A Brief History of Newton County

Newton County is located approximately thirty miles east of Atlanta along Interstate 20. The county is located in the Piedmont region of north-central Georgia and was originally occupied by the Creek and Cherokee Indians. Newton County was formed on December 24, 1821 from three portions of Jasper, Walton, and Henry counties. It is named for Sergeant John Newton, a Revolutionary War soldier.

When Newton County was formed, the center of activity occurred at Brick Store, which was a general store and a stage coach stop. The first session of Newton County Superior Court was held at Martin Kolb's residence located at the Brick Store. Brick Store was deeded to the Newton County Historical Society by the late Charles M. Jordan in May 1971.

Later in 1821, a central site was selected for the County seat in what is now Covington. It was laid out in a grid plan with a central public square, surrounded by commercial and public lots. A variation of the Savannah model, it was a typical plan for a county seat settlement in the northeast region of Georgia. The current Newton County courthouse was built in 1884-85, after the earlier brick courthouse build on the same site had burned on New Year's Eve in 1883. The clock in the tower was paid for by the citizens of Covington.

The growth of many of the towns in Newton County focused on the development of transportation links. Several early rural communities developed around the crossroads and intersections of well-traveled roads and stagecoach routes. These communities are often scattered and difficult to define geographically. Their center is often a church, school, store, depot, or combination thereof. The Brick Store Community, located in the easternmost part of Newton County, is one of the oldest crossroad communities in the County. Other examples are the Bethany community on Highway 81; the Springhill community (named for the large spring at the Methodist church); the Pine Grove community (also called Shoal Creek), located 3 miles north of Newborn; the Flint Hill community near Oxford; and the Salem community in the northwest part of Newton County. Flat Rock and Hub Junction are other rural crossroad communities. Typically, plats for these towns were drawn and the land surveyed by the railroad. The streets were laid out on both sides of the railroad and lined with trees and street lights. Many railroad towns were originally old rural crossroad communities and were later laid out in linear grid lots around the railroad tracks. Mansfield, Newborn, Starrsville, and Hayston are good examples of this type of development pattern. Other railroad communities developed because of depot location.

Other early towns developed around early industrial operations. Porterdale, known as Cedar Shoals until the early 20th century, is an industrial community that developed on the Yellow River. Porterdale is a "Model Textile Town" with mill houses, stores, churches, schools, and mill buildings. Covington Mills, in north Covington, is another mill village.

Several African-American communities formed in the latter half of the 19th century and into the early 20th century. Petty's Hill, off Jackson Highway on Petty Street, is a small rural agricultural family community. Pratt's Quarters is a black industrial community that developed near a saw mill. Echols' Quarters, off Highway 142 on Elks Club Road, is described in the Newton County History as an "old styled plantation black community" – and was named for the white farmer Charlie Echols. Poplar Hill, also known as Jerusalem, is a small black community near Mansfield. Another African-American community lies just north of Porterdale. Weaver's Corner, named for the Bob Weaver family, is located on North Brown Street in Covington. Stone Mountain, also known as Short Street, is a large African-American neighborhood in Covington. Harristown, the area around Lee, South, and Brown Streets in Covington, is an intact historic black district. Texas is an African-American community in northwest Oxford.

Shakerag, in the middle of Oxford, is so named because of the billowing clotheslines of the African-American women whose occupation was to “take in washing” from the surrounding community.

5.4.2 Archaeological Resources of Newton County

The earliest known human inhabitants of the region now known as Newton County came into the area approximately 11,500 years ago, towards the end of the last Ice Age. European settlers began to enter the area in the early eighteenth century. Over the 11,500 years, humans have left a substantial material record of their lives. The study of this material record forms the basis of *archaeology* and the basic unit of this record is the *archaeological site*. To date, there have been 225 archaeological sites recorded in Newton County. Archaeological sites in Newton County range from locations where hunters manufactured stone tools 11,500 years ago to small late nineteenth/early twentieth century farmsteads. The number of sites recorded does not necessarily represent all archaeological sites present in Newton County, as no archaeological survey covering the entire county has been conducted.

Archaeological sites, like historic buildings, are considered *cultural resources* and, if they meet eligibility requirements set forth in the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), *historic properties*. Unlike historic buildings, however, archaeological sites are not always evident to the untrained eye. While some archaeological sites have obvious above ground indicators such as earth mounds, or chimney remnants, most consist of *artifacts* (object made or modified by humans such as stone tool, pottery, bottle glass) and *features* (post holes, trash pits, stone hearths, human burials, etc.) that are *underground*.

How do you know if an area contains an archaeological site? The only sure way to know is to have a professional archaeologist sample, or *survey*, the area. There are, however, some general criteria you can apply to help prioritize areas. Prehistoric (Indian) sites are most commonly located near water sources such as streams, springs, or lime sinks. Historic (Euro/Afro-American) sites are commonly located close to old/historic roads. Both prehistoric and historic sites are generally located on level to gently sloping ground and on well-drained soils. Previous disturbance can also affect a location’s potential to contain archaeological sites. For example, road/utilities right-of-way has usually been subjected to heavy disturbance and is not likely to contain any intact archaeological deposits. Cultivation, however, does not necessarily destroy archaeological sites and does not, by itself, indicate a low potential area. Such criteria, even when developed into a formal predictive model, should only be used as a tool at the most basic planning level. Hiring a professional archaeologist/consultant is an effective way of streamlining the compliance process and insuring that archaeological resources are being treated according to the law.

While cultural resources work is most often done in response to Section 106 of the NHPA, meaning that there is some federal involvement (i.e., federal funds, permits, etc.), it is important to remember that there are also state laws to consider. Official Code of Georgia Annotated (OCGA) 12-3-621 states that a person who is **not** operating under Section 106 must have written landowner permission to conduct archaeology on private property and must provide written notification to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) at least five (5) business days prior to excavation. Other code sections apply more generally to human remains, but are

relevant because of the possibility of discovering such remains at archaeological sites. OCGA 31-21-6 requires notification of local law enforcement upon the disturbance of human remains. If law enforcement determines that it is not a crime scene, DNR is notified of the discovery.

Key points to remember when considering archaeology in development and compliance:

- Humans have been in the area now known as Newton County for at least 11,500 years, so the potential for finding evidence of past human activity (i.e., archaeological sites) is generally high.
- Unlike historic buildings, archaeological sites often have no above ground components that would indicate their presence.
- While factors such as distance to water and/or old roads, slope, soil drainage, and previous disturbance can help prioritize areas of archaeological concern, the only sure way to know whether an area contains archaeological sites is to conduct an archaeological survey.
- Most archaeology is done in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and regulations implementing that act (36 CFR Part 800). These laws insure that projects receiving federal funds (CDBG/EIP grants, FDIC loans, etc) or requiring federal permits (e.g., Section 404 of Clean Water Act) take affects to archaeological resources into account.
- In addition to federal laws, there are state laws to consider as well. Official Code of Georgia Annotated (OCGA) 12-3-621 requires written landowner permission and DNR notification of intent to conduct **non**-Section 106 archaeology on private property. OCGA 31-21-6 requires notification of local law enforcement upon discovery or disturbance of human remains.

5.4.3 Historic Towns, Communities, and Structures of Newton County

The following lists other significant communities that developed throughout Newton County:

Alcovy (Olcufauhatchee) River Station Community: This community is located in the northeast section of Newton County. This early farming community was purchased from the Cherokee Indians by the U.S. Government through treaty in 1819. The Georgia Railroad, extending from Madison to Atlanta, came through this community. During the Civil War, the original railroad trestle was burned by the Stoneman Raiders during Sherman's "March to the Sea." The original stone abutments are still standing under the current railroad trestle. Nearby is the old road bridge which was originally a covered bridge. This community supported a large railroad depot, store, post office, church, cotton gin, grist mill, and school.

Almon: Established sometime in the mid-19th century, the Almon Community has continued to grow since it was first settled. By 1917, the community supported two schools, Fairview School and Almon School, but these later merged with a school in Oxford. Almon had a post office from 1886 to 1931 with only one postmaster, Thomas Hicks. Almon has had several general stores, with the Rock Store serving as a pharmacy and office for Dr. S.W. Everett. Almon is located along Sherman's "march to the Sea."

Bethany Community: This area acquired its name after Alfred Livingston, the area's first settler, founded the Bethany Presbyterian Church here in 1842. The community had a cotton gin operated by Paul and Otis Hardeman, and a grist mill, called "Little Mill," on Covered Bridge Road, operated by Dan Wilson. Near the grist mill was a covered bridge that was destroyed by fire in January 1967.

Brick Store: Located in eastern Newton County, Brick Store is the site of one of the oldest settlements in the County, centering around the first brick structure build in Newton County (c. 1921). In 1818, the town of Winton was established here. For a short time, the area was known as "Sun Up," and in 1837, Sherwood's Gazetteer of Georgia listed the community as Mt. Pleasant, but over the years the area has consistently been referred to as Brick Store. In addition to the brick Store building itself, the community had several churches and a local school. The Harris Spring (1914) and Mt. Pleasant (c. 1883) churches are historically significant structures. Also, one of the earliest rural telephone systems was installed in the Brick Store district in 1897 by G.C. and H.B. Adams.

Broughton, Newborn, and Mansfield: Originally a part of Jasper County in 1807, these communities became a part of Newton County when it was formed in 1821. In 1827, the area was divided again and parts were distributed between Newton, Jasper, and Morgan counties. In 1837, the dispute was finally settled when the County line was placed on the ridge between Little River and Murder Creek. During the Civil War, Broughton and Newborn were staging areas for Confederate Army wagon trains.

Covington: The country village of Newtonsboro changed its name to Covington shortly after the creation of Newton County in 1822. Named after Gen. Leonard Covington, a Revolutionary War officer, Covington was already showing signs of growth 2 years after incorporation, and

was a legitimate town by the time the Georgia Railroad arrived in 1845. During this early period, one of Covington's most celebrated residents, L.Q.C. Lamar, came to prominence, eventually serving in the U.S. House and Senate, as Secretary of the Interior, and Supreme Court Justice.

The Southern Masonic Female College: This brick building, with two elevated quadrangular towers flanking either side, began in 1833 as the Newton County Female Seminary. It stood on the site of the present City Hall, and existed there until it was replaced by the Covington Public School in 1893.

Covington and Oxford Street Railway: Began service in July 1888. The mule-drawn street cars continued to operate until November 1917, when service was discontinued and the rails removed. The only remaining rails are those embedded in the concrete floor of the Emory Street Bridge over Dried Indian Creek.

Porterdale Mills: Although not within the incorporated limits of Covington, they were established in July 1890, and were a vital part of the town's economy. Eventually, there were three mills in Porterdale: the Welaunee, the Porterdale Mill, the largest twine mill in the world, and the Osprey Mill. The Covington Mills were established in April 1900, and operated through the Depression years and World War II, sustaining the economy of the small town.

Other noteworthy historic local manufacturers include the Georgia Remedy Co., chartered in 1895, which produced "Kill Germ," a treatment for scabies, into the 1940s; and the Covington Chero-Cola Co., incorporated in 1914, which produced the local soft drink through the 1920s in a building on the south side of the public square, later occupied by the Consolidated Five & Ten and later still by Harper's.

Smaller, predominantly African-American communities developed in areas presently within the Covington city limits. Noteworthy settlements of this type include: Green Acres, Happy Holland (Harlem), and Harristown.

Green Acres: This is a largely African-American subdivision in Covington recognized during the early 1970s. The community's name was inspired by the television show "Green Acres."

Happy Holland (Harlem): Named for the friendly demeanor of its residents, this predominantly African-American community is located off Emory Street in Covington and has also been referred to as Lunsford Circle.

Harristown: Located near the square in Covington, this community was named for Bob Harris, an African-American resident. This area can trace its history back to the mid-1800s and has historically been an African-American community from the beginning. Several significant landmarks are located here, including New Hope Baptist Church, Stokes Café, the Anna Malone House and Jefferson Inn.

Petty's Hill: Located in Covington on Petty Street off Jackson Highway, this community has been referred to as Petty's Hill since the early 20th century due to the number of hills in the neighborhood. Traditionally an African-American community, this area developed quickly and

eventually had its own neighborhood store, Thompson's Store, and its own school, Washington Street School, an all-black institution for grades one through eleven. Today the home of Mrs. Pearl Glass is the only remaining residence from the original community. The area has been absorbed within the Covington city limits and is now a part of the larger Nelson Heights neighborhood.

Floyd Street: The Floyd Street area is a residential neighborhood that is listed in the National Register. Several houses in the district are very distinctive in the architecture and considered community landmarks. The district is also contained in the Covington Historic District.

Dixie: Settled as part of Walton County in 1820 and included as part of Newton County at the time of its creation in 1822, Dixie is generally considered to be the area along west Bear Creek where the road from Starrsville to Brick Store crosses Highway 142 east. The name "Dixie" was given to the area by D.J. Adams in honor of the familiar Civil War-period anthem. Early on, the community was known as Cross Roads and then Terrell Town. One of the first schools was a log structure named Jefferson Academy that opened before 1828. It was later absorbed into the Newton County School system and known as the Dixie School, and then demolished in 1919. Early settlers of Dixie worshipped at the Lane Meeting House built in 1825 on the west side of Dixie to Starrsville Road. The first known store was constructed in 1890 by D.J. Adams across from the present East Newton Volunteer Fire Department, and was used as a store until it was demolished in the mid-1950s. In April 1922, the Betty Lunsford Golf Club, located three-fourths of a mile west of Dixie on the Covington highway became the first golf club on this side of Atlanta.

Echols' Quarters: This community of plantation workers, located off Highway 142 on Elks Club Road, was named for the plantation's owner, Charlie Echols. The residents had their own cemetery and attended three nearby churches: Union Grove Methodist, James Paschal Missionary Baptist, and Montgomery Primitive Baptist.

Flat Rock Community: Located 4 miles east of Covington on the Jersey Road. On one side of the road there is a large rock where a log cabin school known as Flat Rock once stood. The Baker Cemetery located there is more than 100 years old, and other cemeteries include the Moon and Cook Cemeteries (white), and the Moore Cemetery (African-American).

Georgetown (Flint Hill Community): Initially named for its first inhabitant, Joseph George, and his descendants, this community was founded in the mid-1850s. After the rural Flint Hill School located here was consolidated with Palmer in Oxford in 1924, the community became commonly referred to as Flint Hill community. Business ventures here were primarily agricultural, with the largest single enterprise being the cotton gin, sawmill, and a small country store.

Frogtown: According to older residents, the town got its name from the considerable number of frogs on the ground after a big rain. This community is located between Elm Street and Covington Mill Village, and was the early location of P.W. Pratt's sawmill and the Newton County Prison Camp.

Hayston Community: Settled in the early 1800s by Robert Luther Hays, the community grew around the farmstead he built in the 1820s. The original log cabin, which has been altered and expanded significantly, still stands near the present home of Emory Hays, a great-grandson. One of the town's early stores, built in 1883 by Alexander Stephen Hays, still stands. There are several cemeteries, the largest one being the Hays cemetery, located within sight of the Luther Hays Church. The Central of Georgia Railroad line was constructed through town in the mid-1850s. The railroad is still in operation, but the trestle over East Bear Creek washed away in 1921, and the depot near the store and railroad crossing was torn down in the 1930s. A tanyard was established here in the 1860s by George Floyd and Silas Hays. Portions of the bricks and stones from the tanyard are still visible on the upper side of Greer's Lake near Highway 213 and the railroad. A gin and sawmill were also located in this area.

Leguinn District #1513: This community is located south of the Covington city limits. The Leguinn District had four schools: Leguinn White, Leguinn Black, Community White, and Community Black. The cotton gin at Holly Springs, behind Leguinn School, operated from the late 1800s until about 1920. It was later moved to the intersection of Starrsville and Covington Roads.

Mansfield: This town was established c. 1896 and was named in honor of the only member of the Carmel Land Improvement Company (which received the charter for the new settlement) who exercised temperance. At the time of founding, Mansfield had a blacksmith's shop, a little school, and a mail station, commonly known as "Bob Lee" on the Star Route from Social Circle to Monticello. The new town's first brick building was built by Lee Adams in 1898 and used as a post office, and still stands next to the present day post office. The town's first large school was an elementary school built in 1908, which was subsequently razed in 1957 and replaced with the present building. Mansfield's new city hall was built in 1960, and the new post office was dedicated in 1965.

Newborn: First known as Cross Road or Sandtown, Newborn was settled around 1819 by Rufus Broome. Originally a part of Jasper County, Newborn became a part of Newton County after its creation in 1822. Newborn's first and only church, Newborn Methodist Church, was first built in 1820, replaced in 1847, and the present building was constructed in 1903. The present parsonage was built in 1898 or 1899. Between 1859 and 1866, Palmyra Institute was established. The Institute enjoyed great success, but was closed in 1909 and reopened as Newborn High School. This building was moved closer to the road and a new building built behind it in 1923, at which time the older building was demolished. Today, the new building is home to the Newborn Community Center. Newborn was nominated to the National Register in 1997.

North Covington (Midway): In the late 19th century, this community developed near the railway depot midway between Covington and Oxford, and as a result it was commonly known as Midway. This community had its own depot along the Central Georgia Railroad, and many large homes of prominent residents were located nearby, including the existing turn-of-the-century William C. Clark home on Emory Street. An early cotton gin was located where Campbell Lumber Co. is presently, and the Godfrey-Candler Warehouse and Wholesale Co. were located on North Emory Street across from the Central Georgia Railroad depot. A number of other warehouses, dry goods and grocery stores, restaurants, and other businesses were located near

the depot, and catered to the rail traffic, both passenger and & freight, moving between Covington and Oxford.

Oxford: The town, named Oxford in honor of John and Charles Wesley's alma mater in England, was chartered in 1839. The town was designed by Edward Lloyd Thomas, a Methodist minister and surveyor. The town plan of Oxford was arranged around a central avenue leading to the campus, with the college buildings constructed around a quadrangle. Its 125 original lots were offered on a 999-year lease with the provision that "no intoxicating liquors shall be sold nor any game of hazard be allowed on the lots under penalty of forfeiture." The original streets were all named for notable Methodists. The entire town, including Oxford College, was designated a Shrine of the United Methodist Church in 1972, the first town in the country to be so designated. The Oxford Historic District was listed in the National Register in 1975, and Orna Villa in Oxford was individually listed in 1973.

Oxford, African-American Community: The town of Oxford was divided into sections. Blacks lived in all sections joined by whites except the section called Texas, which was in the northwestern part and all black. East Oxford toward Turkey Creek was called Peasville. In the middle of Oxford, blacks lived in the upper section called Shakerag, so named for its billowing clothes lines of wash taken in by the women of the neighborhood. West is a hilly section and was referred to as The Hill. The community has two churches, Methodist and Baptist.

"Old Church": Central section built in 1841 (two wings added in 1878), more than any other building represents the ties between Oxford, Emory and Methodism. Commencement exercises were first held here in 1843 and, thereafter, this was the scene of the great commencements, orations and sermons. Here during the great religious awakening of the 1850s, Young J. Allen, Class of 1858, whom the Chinese called Li Lo Chih and the Church called "The Man Who Seeded China," decided to become a foreign missionary. During the Civil War it served as a hospital for the wounded. On Thanksgiving Day 1880, Dr. Atticus G. Haygood delivered his famous sermon, "The New South." It is currently leased to the Oxford Historical Shrine Society and is used by the College and community for special occasions.

Phi Gamma Hall: Built in 1851 to house the first of the literary and debating societies, this building is an outstanding example of the Greek Revival literary society-temple. George W.W. Stone, later distinguished professor of mathematics, presided over inaugural meetings held prior to 1840. Literary societies were almost important semi-formal part of the antebellum, classically-oriented college curriculum.

Few Hall: Built in 1852 to house the Few Society, an outgrowth of Phi Gamma, organized August 10, 1839, is an outstanding Greek Revival structure. Few and Phi Gamma rivals both in debate and for members, were intellectual fraternities which helped to educate students and improve the college.

Soldiers' Cemetery: Located 150 yards beyond the Williams Gymnasium on the Oxford campus, Soldiers' Cemetery is an unexpected reminder of Oxford's participation in the Civil War. The entire area is untouched, and at the end of the path is a clearing dominated by a granite shaft marking the cemetery. The central marker bears only the words "Our Soldiers." During the Civil

War, the literary society buildings served as hospitals where both Confederate and Union soldiers were cared for. Twenty-five Confederate soldiers were buried here.

The Oxford Historical Cemetery: located on North Emory Street, the cemetery was a part of the original town plan laid out in 1837. It has been referred to as the “Westminster” of Georgia Methodism; buried here are eight presidents of Emory College, three of whom became bishops in the Methodist Church, as well as a number of Methodist ministers and college faculty members. The bishops buried here include: James O. Andrew, Atticus G. Haygood and Warren A. Candler. Maximillian Kendall, the first student to die at the college, is buried here. Ignatius Few, the first President of Emory College, was buried in Athens, Georgia until early in this century when his remains were brought to Oxford. Kitty Andrew Shell is buried in Bishop Andrew's family plot and remembered with a memorial marker. Both Confederate and Union soldiers are buried in separate areas of the cemetery. There is one monument dedicated for all the Union dead and individually marked grave sites for the Confederate dead. Both are located in the southeastern portion of the cemetery.

Seney Hall: This three-story, Victorian Gothic brick structure was built in 1881 and housed the Administration Building. It was built over the foundations of the original Administration Building, a Greek Revival structure erected during 1852-53 and torn down in 1872. Seney Hall was constructed during the progressive post-Civil War administration of Atticus G. Haygood from 1875 to 1884. His liberal New South philosophy was expressed in numerous sermons, lectures, and books. His 1880 Thanksgiving Day sermon, which came to the attention of George I. Seney, a Methodist layman of New York City, resulted in Seney's giving Emory College \$130,000, of which \$50,000 built Seney Hall. The Seney Hall tower bell was given to the college by Dr. Alexander Means to whom it had been presented about 1855 by Queen Victoria of England.

Language Hall: Built in 1874, this was one of several buildings constructed during President Osborn L. Smith's administration (1871-75) with funds raised by Bishop George Foster Pierce, President of Emory College from 1848 to 1854.

Science Building: Built in 1875 under President Smith's administration

Prayer Chapel: Built in 1875 under President Smith's administration.

Few Monument: A marble shaft erected about 1855 by the Grand Masonic Lodge of Georgia in memory of Ignatius A. Few (1789-1845), first president of Emory College.

Old Gym: Built in 1885 during Dr. Isaac Stiles Hopkins (1841-1914) presidency to house his pioneering technological department. Because of his interest in technological training, Dr. Hopkins was chosen in 1888 to be the first president of Georgia Institute of Technology. With his departure from Emory College, this shop became a gymnasium.

Candler Hall: Built as a library in 1897 in the Neo-Roman style made popular by the 1893 Chicago Exposition. Against his wishes, it was named in honor of Warren Akin Candler (1857-1941), president of Emory College from 1888 until the spring of 1898 when he was elected a

bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. As Chairman of the commission created in 1914 to consider making a new Methodist university east of the Mississippi, Bishop Candler was one of the founders of Emory University.

The President's Home: Once described as "Greek Revival with Victorian trimming," is especially historic. Many Emory College presidents have lived here since it was built in 1836 by Ignatius Few, first president (1837-39) of Emory College and a founder of both the College and the town. Successive owners have enlarged the original small structure. Dr. Few, as President of the Manual Labor School near Covington, was one of those responsible for Oxford's being the site of the expansion of the labor school into a liberal arts college.

Augustus Baldwin Longstreet (1790- 1870), Emory's second president (1840-48) purchased the house from Dr. Few in 1839. Judge Longstreet added the two projecting front rooms which give the front porch, with its trellised columns, the effect of a recessed entry portico. Previously active in Georgia politics (1821-25) and author, Longstreet became a Methodist minister in 1838. His popularity and well-known abilities lent prestige to young Emory College during his presidency. Later when Judge Longstreet was President of the University of Mississippi, his son-in-law, Lucius Quintus Cincinnatus Lamar, Jr., the most distinguished Emory graduate (1845) of the early years, began a Mississippi political career which eventually led to his appointment to the United States Supreme Court. The Lamar School of Law was named for him.

In 1889 Young L. G. Harris, member of the Board of Trustees for whom Young Harris College is named, presented the house to the college as its official President's home. The last three presidents before Emory College moved to Atlanta lived here: Warren A. Candler (1888-1898), Charles E. Dowman (1898-1902), and James Edward Dickey (1902-1915).

The Alexander Means House: Owned by Dr. Alexander Means (1801-1883) when Oxford was laid out in 1837, the house was built by a Virginian in the early 1820s. It is the oldest house in Oxford. Dr. Means, a Methodist minister, physician, professor of natural science, and Emory College president, probably acquired and remodeled the house at some point between 1834, when he began serving as superintendent of the Manual Labor School near Covington, and 1837, when he helped to found Emory College and Oxford. Dr. Means, who called his porticoed Greek Revival house, "Orna Villa" (which means "House of Birds") is one of the most famous personalities associated with the town and college he helped to establish. As professor of natural science from 1838 until 1855, he was a pioneer in scientific education; during those years in his spare time, he lectured on chemistry at the Augusta Medical College; he preached; he served as president of Southern Masonic College at Covington; and in 1854-55 was President of Emory College. Dr. Means was fascinated by electricity, which he called "God's vice-regent." Some believe that in the 1850s in the old Emory laboratory he made the first American demonstration of electric light. Undoubtedly abreast of the latest scientific knowledge of his time, he was a member of many learned societies. He died in Oxford at the age of eighty-two and is buried in the Oxford Cemetery. This house is featured in "Haunted Houses of Georgia" due to the alleged presence of the ghost of Toby Means.

The Stone House or Thomas/Stone/Eady House: Built on the highest point in Oxford by Edward Lloyd Thomas, the surveyor and Methodist minister, soon after he had planned Oxford in 1837.

It is a Queen Anne style cottage that features a large wraparound porch. In 1854, two years after Thomas' death, the house was purchased by Professor George W. W. Stone who was graduated from Emory College in 1842 and made a member of the faculty, serving, with only a brief interruption, from that time until shortly before his death in 1889. From 1905 to 1925 the house was owned by Susan (Tudie) Stone Robison, eldest daughter of Professor Stone. The Stone House with the Means' House, the Branham House, the President's Home, and the Dickson House are the outstanding examples of private homes where Emory College students were boarded. Until the Haygood Dormitory was built in 1912, dormitories were considered to be "facilities for mischief."

The Branham House or Branham/Sitton House: This Greek Revival residence, built c. 1845, was home for 130 years to one of Oxford's early and most prominent families, the Branhams. The house is a "4 over 4" with wide central halls and has had extensive restoration to return it to its 1840s configuration.

Capers/Dickson/Branham House: This Greek Revival residence, built c. 1838, was first owned by William H. Mell. Under Judge Dickson's ownership, the first improved strain of long staple cotton was propagated on this property.

The Hopkins House or Hopkins/Bryan House: Built c. 1847. Dr. Isaac Hopkins lived here from 1884-1888, and was the ninth president of Emory College. In a workshop behind his house, Dr. I. S. Hopkins began experiments in technological education, and he later went on to become the first president of the Georgia Institute of Technology in 1888. This Greek Revival house is currently operating as a bed and breakfast inn.

"Kitty's Cottage" Site: Kitty Andrew Shell was a mulatto slave girl willed to Bishop James O. Andrew, President of the Board of Trustees of Emory College, with the stipulation that at age nineteen she was either to go to Liberia or to remain as free as the law and society of Georgia would permit. Under church law, Bishop Andrew could not own a slave, but under state law he could not set her free. Her decision to remain in Oxford, technically the slave of Bishop Andrew, was partly responsible for the 1844. split between the Methodist Church, North and South. "Kitty's Cottage" was moved in 1938 to Salem Campground near Covington.

"Zora Fair's Cottage" or the Gaither/Payne House: Built c. 1840 by Dr. Henry Gaither. In November 1864, Miss Izora M. Fair refuging from Charleston, S.C. in Oxford, disguised herself as a country Negress and attempted to sneak into besieged Atlanta. Penetrating Sherman's headquarters in Atlanta, she hid in the attic of his house. She was fired on by Sherman's pickets, taken to guard's quarters, questioned, and sent back to Oxford. She is Oxford's "Confederate Girl Spy."

The Henderson Store-U.S. Post Office/McGiboney Building: This stone structure was originally built c. 1885 as a combination general store and post office, a common practice in that era. It has recently been renovated into an upstairs private residence and business shops downstairs.

The Dearing House: Built c. 1880, this cottage was extensively remodeled in 1990.

The Harris/Williams/Adams House: Built c. 1850, Corra Harris (1869- 1935), author of A Circuit Rider's Wife' on which the movie "I'd Climb the Highest Mountain" was based, lived in this house during the 1890s.

The Ellis House: Built c. 1900, this Victorian era residence had a later addition built in 1957

Allen Memorial United Methodist Church: This Greek Revival church, built c. 1910, was named Allen Memorial United Methodist Church: This Greek Revival church, built c. 1910, was named for Young J. Allen, the first Methodist Missionary to China. It was built, and is still owned, by the College and serves both the community and college for regular Methodist worship.

The Stephens/Forney House: A two-story southern farmhouse, built c. 1880, that has had remodeling and additions since the 1970s. The extensive flower gardens throughout the property feature several fish ponds.

The Bonnell/Cowan/ Turner House: Built c. 1900, this building underwent extensive remodeling several decades ago.

The Mabry/Dickey/Izen House: A federal style house built c. 1900 has a private residence; it has since been divided into several separate apartment units within the structure.

The Ficquett/Milligan House: Built c. 1910, this building served as an ATO fraternity house for Emory College.

The Turner/Budd/Phillips House: This stone home was built c. 1909 by Emory College professor, E. K Turner whose wife, an artist, designed it. The current owner was one of many students and faculty members who had boarded in this house during Mrs. (Mother) Budd's ownership,

The Cobb House or Cobb's Cottage: Built c. 1900, this cottage featured a clapboard exterior, and the front porch was once a loading dock at the Porterdale Mill.

The Haygood/Wearing House or the Haygood House: This Greek Revival house was built c. 1894 by Atticus G. Haygood, eighth president of Emory College and later bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

The Starr/Park/Gebhart House: Originally a one-story cottage built c. 1915, the dormered second story was added in 1982.

The Paine/McCanless House: The original two-story structure built c. 1885 had several rooms added to both floors around 1915. This home features 12 fireplaces and is currently under restoration

The Carr/Corley/Watterson House or "High Point at Chestnut Grove": This late federal style house was built c. 1830, and moved from Covington to Oxford in 1975. The house features

delicate ionic columns, detailed balconies, and fan-lighted doors on both floors. The house was included in the Historic American Buildings Survey of 1935 as a structure of outstanding merit.

The Giles/Whitsitt House or Fierol Place: This Victorian era home was built c. 1900, and extensively remodeled in 1968 at which time the large Victorian porch was removed. The name "Fierol Place" is Olde English for "Oak-Covered Ground."

The Thompson House: This Arts and Craft style structure was built c. 1908 by the Decatur-Oxford District of the Methodist Church as the residence for its district superintendent and is now privately owned.

The Worsham/Cline/Smith House: This two-story frame house built c. 1875 has Victorian features. Its 1979 restoration and addition used old beams and bricks from the Turner Cotton Warehouse which once stood on Emory Street in Covington.

The Galloway/Oliver House or Florida Hall: This house was built c. 1845 by William Galloway, who also built the first Administration Building and the two debating halls of Emory College. The house was used to board Oxford College students and later was a "helping hall" primarily for students from Florida, thus the name. The house was extensively restored starting in 1973.

The Jensen House or The Old Parsonage: Built c. 1890, this Folk Victorian house served as the parsonage for Allen Memorial (United) Methodist Church. It continued to do so until 1966.

The Sherwood/Johnston House: This Arts and Crafts style house was built c. 1908 for a Sigma Nu fraternity. It was purchased by the Sherwood family in 1917.

The Giles/Coker House: An early Arts and Crafts house built c. 1905.

Rust Chapel United Methodist Church: The Rust family donated land for an African Methodist Episcopal Church to be built on this site. In 1908, Emory College moved the present structure from the campus to replace the original church building.

The Yarbrough Oak: This large, old White Oak, also known as the "Prince of the Forest," owns itself. In the 1870s the Rev. John W. Yarbrough, Dr. Atticus G. Haygood's father-in-law, began a Yarbrough family tradition of devotion to this magnificent tree, which inspired the commissioners of Oxford to deed the tree to itself on September 30, 1929.

Pine Grove Community: Originally known as Shoal Creek, this community is in eastern Newton County about three miles north of Newborn. Shoal Creek Primitive Baptist Church was established in 1837, and still meets biweekly. A community school, known as Pine Grove, was built in 1880, and was replaced in 1896 for a new building on another site. This second structure burned in 1926 and was never rebuilt. The area continued to be called Pine Grove, and the Shoal Creek name has been all but forgotten.

Poplar Hill: Named for the grove of poplar trees grown in this area. Many original families from this community moved into the Jerusalem Community when mill jobs came to Mansfield. These

residents built a church named Jerusalem, which was later renamed Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church in Mansfield.

Porterdale: With the founding of the Cedar Shoals Manufacturing Company here by Noah Phillips in June 1831, the groundwork for the development of Porterdale was laid. In 1859, Charles Camp of Covington bought one-half interest in the Cedar Shoals Manufacturing Company and some nearby land. In 1863, he bought the other half of the company, which limited Noah Phillips' property to non-industrial real estate outside the immediate Cedar Shoals area. In 1863, Enoch Steadman, grandfather of the late Chancellor Steadman V. Sanford of the University of Georgia, purchased one-half interest in 500 non-industrial acres owned by Noah Phillips. The other half belonged to Charles Camp. It was because Enoch Steadman was a Masonic brother and friend of Sherman that Cedar Shoals was not harmed during Sherman's march through Newton County. Some of Sherman's soldiers camped on the south side of the river where Oliver Porter eventually built his home. The mill at Cedar Shoals continued to operate and grew steadily through the end of the Civil War. Oliver Porter, a native of Penfield, Georgia, came to Covington to teach, which he did for several years, and he became a good friend of Enoch Steadman. Through this friendship, he met the widow of Charles Camp and married her in 1869. As a result of this marriage, Oliver Porter became the guardian of Miss Charley Camp, and with his wife, inherited the shares in Cedar Shoals Manufacturing Company owned by Charles Camp. In 1871, he built Cedar Shoals Place, later known as Porter Place, on the south side of the river overlooking the mill. It was a two-story home with a wide veranda completely encircling the structure. Servants' quarters were built behind the house and the carriage house was to the lee of the front veranda.

Later in 1871, Oliver Porter and David W. Spence bought from Enoch Steadman land, water power machinery privileges and a brick building used as a chair factory. This was to help with the growing needs of the mill. Houses were also built as families moved into town looking for jobs in the mill. By 1887, there were eighteen houses on mill property. Noah Phillips gave land for a schoolhouse and a church to be built on Rocky Plains Road. The structures were known as Liberty School and Liberty Methodist Church. Later, he gave land to the Baptist congregation to build a church on the Salem Road, now Hwy. 81. The Porterdale Mills, as they were called in 1890, switched to yarn and twine production and were purchased by Bibb Manufacturing of Macon in 1898. In 1889, the Bibb Manufacturing Company built a twine mill on the north side of the river and it was named Porterdale Mill. The mill on the south side was changed from Cedar Shoals Manufacturing Company to Welaunee Mill. All machinery was moved from Welaunee Mill to Porterdale Mill. Welaunee Mill was used for storage for supplies until 1922, when it was started up as a waste mill. This building was torn down and rebuilt in 1925. Porterdale Mill was recognized as the largest twine mill in the world at that time.

After the Bibb Co. purchased the mills, they persuaded the railroad to extend tracks from Covington to Porterdale, and Oliver Porter deeded land to the Central of Georgia in 1899 to run the back into town.

The size of Porterdale Mill was increased in 1910, 1918, 1936, and 1941. A storage plant, known as the Line Walk, was built on the hill overlooking the mill. During WW II, machinery was placed in this plant to help carry the demand for goods.

The Brannen family built a large two-story house to take in boarders around 1894, on the south side of the river. W. J. Kiser and his wife ran the hotel until 1921, when Mrs. Effie King assumed control. Most of the young couples in the community spent their honeymoons in this hotel.

In 1900, Oliver's son John Porter built a two-story community school behind the company store, which proved to be so successful that a schoolhouse specifically for Kindergarten was built on the south side of the river at the base of the Porter lawn. The main school house was expanded in 1914 to include three new classrooms and a kitchen. A new brick school, named the John Porter Building, was built in 1917 on the north side of the river across from where the company store complex would be built six years later. Bricks left over from this building were used to build an indoor swimming pool. The building also had a large auditorium that served as a community hall as well. This school was eventually razed, and the two buildings housing the Porterdale City Hall and the Police Department were built on the site. The wide steps that lead up to the school on the southwest corner of the property are all that remains of the building. An additional school was built in 1923 to hold grades five through nine, as well as a home economics department and a band room.

In 1937, a brick building was built at the north entrance to the village to be used as a school and church for the African-American community. The Bibb Co. hired a teacher and secured the services of a minister to lead services in the structure.

As houses were added to the north side of the river, the company store was moved over there with the blacksmith shop. This became the center of the village. Later, the mill office was moved into the company store and the room attached for the doctors was made into a post office to the rear of the store. One hundred and fifty six-room houses were built in 1920, which increased the number of houses to 587. The majority of these structures are still standing.

In 1922, the Bibb Co. began construction of two large buildings separated by a wide driveway. The first building was to house the general store, bank, barbershop, shoe shop, and post office. The second building was to house the company store, drugstore, dentist's office, funeral home, and Bibb Co. offices. The general store was opened in October 1923, by Mr. and Mrs. T. G. Callaway of Covington. The bank never materialized, and the space designated for it was used as a ladies' ready-to-wear department.

The Presbyterians built their first church in town in 1923, and the Methodists followed with another church building in 1925. The Baptists also built an additional church in 1930, and the Church of Our Lord Jesus Christ was built in 1948.

In November 1938, the Oliver S. Porter gymnasium was dedicated by James Porter to honor his father. The first basketball game was played here on December 3, 1938, between Porterdale and Livingston Schools. Commencement exercises for the school were also held here for the first time in May 1939. In 1942, a new activities building was constructed on the site of the old community house. The building was named for William D. Anderson, Chairman of Bibb Manufacturing's Board. It housed the men's clubs, band, Kindergarten, dentist's office, beauty salon, and Masons.

A new bridge was built across the Yellow River and dedicated on July 30, 1943. The new bridge was needed to replace the old wooden bridge which was so low that, when the river rose from heavy rains, people could not get to work.

During the height of its production (between 1940 and 1970), 2,500 people were employed and Porterdale was recognized within the industry as a "Model Textile Town." With this promise, the Bibb Co. decided to allow their employees to purchase their homes which were owned by the company. These transactions took place in 1964.

Salem Community: Salem is located in the northwestern part of Newton County. Salem Church and Salem Camp Ground were vital institutions, and each resident took an active part in each one. The first school was on the site of the Salem Club House, which now houses the Salem Fire Station. After 1900, the school was moved down Salem Road and called Oakland; this building still stands and is the private residence of the Kenneth Young family. Another notable private residence is the home of Ramsey Hollingsworth, built in 1848 by Presley Christian. The Salem Campground was listed in the National Register in 1998.

Starrsville: Located about six miles southeast of Covington, the first settlers in this area came in the Land Lotteries of 1820-21. The community got its name from the Starr family, one of the earliest groups of settlers. The Starr Store building, built in the early 1830s on what is now Dixie Road and Hwy. 213, is one of the oldest remaining structures in the area. Near the store is the oldest remaining residence, built by Silas Starr and presently the home of W. H. Corley. When the Central Georgia Railroad was built through town in 1893, the Starrsville Post Office moved out to the new station and became the center of a satellite community known as New Starrsville. Shortly after 1893, a mercantile store was built trackside by Rufus Franklin. When the station closed in 1931, the Post Office moved into the store and operated there until 1976. The store closed in 1979 after the death of its last owner, D.B. Dixon. Starrsville Historic District was nominated to the National Register in 1997.

5.4.4 National Register of Historic Places

The National Register of Historic Places is the official list of the nation's historic and cultural resources worthy of preservation. The National Register was authorized by the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 and is part of the national effort to identify, evaluate, and protect our architectural and archaeological resources. The program is administered by the National Park Service under the Secretary of Interior. Properties listed in the National Register include buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts significant in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture.

The National Register of Historic Places' listing of a property is a federal recognition of its significance, but it does not offer protection for the site. To protect historic structures and sites, Newton County can create historic overlay zoning districts to protect them from future changes. The districts should include structure standards and guidelines to maintain the character and integrity of a district or historic area.

The creation of Design Guidelines for historic resources located in Newton County would act as a guide for both appropriate maintenance, and for new construction of structures within historic districts. The Design Guidelines could also act as a guide for maintenance for existing resources. They are meant to do the following:

- Reinforce the historic character of properties within Newton County
- Protect its visual aspects
- Serve as a tool for designers and clients in making design decisions
- Increase public awareness
- Discourage inappropriate new construction
- Deal with exterior only
- Guarantee “high quality” construction
- Be specific but not restrictive

The listing, however, is not without numerous benefits, including the following:

1. Recognition that a property is of significance to the nation, state, or community.
2. Consideration in the planning for federally assisted projects, including review by the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.
3. Eligibility for certain federal tax benefits, such as the investment tax credit for rehabilitation of income-producing buildings and the charitable deductions for donation of easements.
4. Qualification for federal preservation grants when funding is available.
5. Consideration in the issuance of surface coal mining permits

To be listed in the National Register, a property must meet the National Register criteria for evaluation. These criteria require that a property be old enough to be considered historic (generally at least 50 years old) and that it still look and appear as it did in the past. In addition, the property must (a) be associated with events, activities, or developments that were important in the past; or (b) be associated with the lives of people who were important in the past; or (c) be significant in the areas of architectural history, landscape history, or engineering; or (d) have the ability to yield information through archaeological investigation that would answer questions about our past.

National Register listing does not place obligations or restrictions on the use or disposition of an individual property. National Register listing is not the same as local historic district zoning or local landmark designation that protects listed properties with design review. Properties listed in, or eligible for, the National Register are subject to an environmental review for projects using federal funds regardless of the amount. National Register listing does not encourage public acquisition of or access to property.

In Newton County, 12 historic resources are currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places (**Figure NC-7 in the Atlas** illustrates the locations). These properties include:

Floyd Street Historic District. The district comprises approximately 30 acres of residential buildings from the Greek Revival and Neoclassical architectural styles. The buildings are located along Floyd Street in Covington from Elm to just west of Sockwell

Street. Several of the historic houses in the district include the Floyd House, the Adams-Clark house, the Floyd-Neal-Patterson house, the Travis house, and the Williams-Adams-Cook house. The district was listed on December 4, 1974.

Newton County Courthouse. The courthouse was constructed in 1884 and designed by the architectural firm of Bruce and Morgan. It reflects the Second Empire architectural style and is one of only six in the state executed in this style. The nomination was part of a thematic nomination for Georgia's courthouses that were listed on September 9, 1980.

Orna Villa. This individual property dates to c. 1820s and is the home of Dr. Alexander Means, founder of Emory College. It is a Greek Revival-styled building constructed in stages and altered during the early 19th century to include a two-story portico and side wings. The property was listed on January 29, 1973.

Oxford Historic District. The district comprises approximately 146 acres located in Oxford and includes Oxford College of Emory University, "Old Church," two cemeteries, two commercial establishments, and numerous residential buildings constructed by those associated with Emory College. The town was designed around a rectangular central-park plan and the district retains this formal arrangement. The district was listed on June 5, 1975.

Salem Camp Ground. This property includes a tabernacle c. 1854 that is open on three sides, approximately 25 small buildings that housed worshipers during retreats. A hotel, constructed in 1940, is also located on the property. The property includes 63 acres. Listed on March 5, 1998.

North Covington District. The mostly residential district is located between Oxford and downtown Covington. The district includes representative architecture from the period 1855 to 1948, covering 32 acres.

Covington Mills District. Covering approximately 60 acres northeast of Covington, the district consists of the intact mill village associated with Covington Mills. While the Covington Mills building was destroyed by a fire in 1986, the district includes nearly 100 historic homes, several churches, a school and small brick mill store. The district is laid out with both straight and broad avenues and curvilinear roads.

Newborn Historic District. The district consists of residential buildings, community buildings, and a commercial block located near the Central of Georgia Railroad. The town was planned in a gridiron pattern in 1839 and developed with the railroad's introduction in 1893 that continued through 1947. The district comprises approximately 175 acres. Pending 1997.

Starrsville Rural Historic District. The district is located in a large rural area between the Alcovy River to the west and Bear Creek to the east that includes approximately 1,720 acres. The buildings in the district were historically used for residential, commercial,

communal, and agricultural uses and developed in two periods, as two parts of Starrsville; known as "Old Starrsville" and "New Starrsville." Pending 1997.

Covington Historic District. The Covington Historic District includes "greater" Covington and its historic neighborhoods, totaling approximately 800 buildings on 200 acres of land. The district also includes the Floyd Street Historic District and Newton County Courthouse previously listed in the National Register. The Covington Historic District contains historic African-American neighborhoods located south and west of the commercial downtown, several community landmark buildings, six churches, and various public buildings.

Burge Plantation. This historic property is an early 19th century house that is noted for the home of the author of memoirs of the Civil War. It includes two separate historic buildings that are included in the nomination.

Porterdale Historic District. Located along the Yellow River in central Newton County, the district consists of three mill complexes and the surrounding mill village. Covering approximately 525 acres and the period 1871 to 1951, the district includes roughly 300 historic homes and a host of community buildings. The district is laid out on a grid-iron plan on both sides of a wide boulevard.

Various committees and surveys have recommended the following historic resources for nomination to the National Register of Historic Places:

- Thematic nomination for religious buildings in Newton County
- Mansfield
- Flint Hill Academy
- "Bolton House"
- Gaither Plantation
- Mansfield
- Gum Creek Community
- Dial Mill
- Mt. Pleasant Church
- Henderson Mill
- Almon Community
- McDonalds' Academy
- Carmel Baptist Church (Mansfield)
- Additional properties in Oxford

The completion and submittal of either a Historic Property Information Form or Historic District Information Form for these historic resources is appropriate. It should be undertaken by the property owner that may either include: cities, individual property owners, governmental agencies, or nonprofit organizations. The properties identified by the task force by and large, indicate significant historic resources for Newton County.

6 Community Facilities and Services

Following the requirements of the “Local Planning Requirements,” this review of community services and facilities covers several key aspects of community services that impact future development, including:

- Water supply and treatment
- Sewerage system and wastewater treatment
- Other community facilities
 - Fire protection
 - Public safety
 - Recreation
 - General Government
- Consistency with the Service Delivery Strategy

Maps related to this analysis can be found in the “Atlas of Supportive Maps” (**Atlas**) at the end of this document.

6.1 *Water Supply and Treatment*

6.1.1 Water Service Area

Water services are provided to the citizens of Newton County and its cities through a number of entities. **Figure CF-1** shows the water service areas in Newton County. The Newton County Board of Commissioners (BoC) sells water to the following entities through arrangements with the NCWSA on use of their distribution system:

- Newton County Water and Sewerage Authority (NCWSA)
- Covington/Oxford
- Mansfield
- Newborn
- Porterdale

The NCWSA provides water service to the majority of the customers in the unincorporated County while the other entities provide water service primarily within their City limits. There are also 10 private, community systems in Newton County that provide water service within subdivisions and mobile home parks; these systems obtain their water from groundwater wells.

6.1.2 Water Supply

The Newton County BoC owns a 75 percent share of the Cornish Creek (Lake Varner) reservoir located in the northeastern part of the County; Walton County owns the remaining 25 percent. The Newton County BoC also owns the City Pond Reservoir. A third water supply source is the Alcovy River which is used to replenish and fill the reservoirs. All water supply sources are located in the Ocmulgee River Basin.

The estimated safe yield of Lake Varner is 24 million gallons per day (MGD). The combined permitted withdrawal for Newton County BoC and Walton County is 11.0 MGD on a monthly average basis and 12.1 MGD on a maximum day of the year.

The Newton County BoC has two permits to withdraw water from the Alcovy River totaling a monthly average potential withdraw of 39.0 MGD. One permit is to replenish Lake Varner and is not to exceed a monthly average of 35.0 MGD. The second permit is to refill the City Pond Reservoir and is not to exceed 4.0 MGD. Water from the Alcovy River is pumped into these reservoirs allowing greater effective withdrawals from these reservoirs. During drought conditions, the minimum in-stream flow requirements for the Alcovy River cannot be maintained while obtaining this withdrawal levels. Therefore, during drought periods, the Lake Varner reservoir is relied upon as the primary water supply source.

6.1.3 Water Treatment

Newton County is served from two water treatment plants (WTPs) both of which are operated by the City of Covington. The Newton County BoC owns a 75 percent share of the Cornish Creek WTP, and the Williams Street WTP. Walton County owns the other 25 percent of the Cornish Creek WTP and hence 25 percent of the water it produces. Water produced from these WTPs is sold to the NCWSA, cities of Newton County, and Jasper County through metered connections.

The Williams Street WTP was upgraded in 1995 and has a treatment capacity of 4 MGD. This WTP uses conventional treatment technology consisting of chemical mixing, flocculation, sedimentation, filtration and disinfection.

The Cornish Creek WTP was constructed in 1991 and has a permitted treatment capacity of 11 MGD; the design capacity is 15 MGD. The WTP can ultimately be expanded to 24 MGD. The WTP is a conventional facility consisting of chemical mixing, flocculation, sedimentation, filtration and disinfection. Plans for expansion are currently being developed by the BoC through their consultant.

6.1.4 Water Distribution

The distribution system for Newton County consists of approximately 560 miles of water distribution system piping ranging in size from 2-inches to 30-inches in diameter.

The distribution system serving Newton County also consists of sixteen storage tanks; twelve active elevated storage tanks, three inactive elevated storage tanks, and one ground storage tank.

The NCWSA owns six of the fifteen elevated storage tanks with a combined storage volume of 4.5 million gallons. The NCWSA also owns 5 booster pump stations to circulate water throughout the County limits.

The City of Covington owns 5 tanks with a combined storage volume of 3.75 million gallons.

The Town of Oxford has one elevated storage tank with a storage volume of 0.25 million gallons.

The City of Mansfield has two elevated that are inactive due to system hydraulic grade lines preventing them from contributing to system distribution.

The City of Newborn also has one elevated storage tank that is inactive due to the system hydraulic grade line.

The Newton County BoC has a 3 million gallon ground storage tank located on Cornish Mountain.

As of July 2005, this network of facilities provides water service to an estimated 19,860 customers.

6.1.5 Future Water Supply, Treatment, and Distribution Assessment

According to the 2002-2022 Water Infrastructure System Evaluation Report (Report) prepared by Welker & Associates, the anticipated water demands for Newton County is estimated to be 22 MGD. The Report also indicates that the Lake Varner WTP should be expanded to 24 MGD by 2008. This expansion would enable the BoC to have necessary treated water capacity to meet the needs of all entities within the County through 2017. The Report recommends beginning construction of a new water supply reservoir, Bear Creek, located in southeastern Newton County at the convergence of the East and West Bear Creeks in 2013. The project also calls for supplemental withdrawal and of raw water from the Alcovy River, and subsequent transmission of the water approximately 5 miles to the Bear Creek impoundment, to build storage in the Bear Creek impoundment during the wet months before summer conditions set in. A new 4-MGD WTP located at the proposed reservoir is also recommended for construction beginning in 2013 to be operational by 2017. This will provide water supply through year 2022. Additional water supplies and treatment plant capacity will need to be developed prior to 2022 to maintain water service through the planning year 2026.

The Report prepared by Welker & Associates also recommends a number of distribution system improvements to increase the capacity of the system in order to meet projected demands. The majority of these improvements are larger diameter pipes located in the southern portion of the County, as well as additional water storage facilities throughout the County.

6.2 Wastewater Collection and Treatment

6.2.1 Service Area

Newton County's wastewater collection system is served by Water Reclamation Facilities (WRF), a Land Application System Facility (LAS), and a Wastewater Package Plant (WPP). **Figure CF-2** shows the sewer service areas in Newton County. These facilities provide wastewater service to the Cities of Covington, Oxford, Porterdale, and Mansfield. A small

portion of unincorporated Newton County are also served by these facilities, however, a majority of the county is served through private septic systems.

6.2.2 Wastewater Collection

Wastewater collection for Newton County consists of gravity sewers ranging in size from 4-inch to 24-inch. The collection system also includes a series of force mains and lift stations to convey flow to the treatment facilities from outlying areas.

6.2.3 Wastewater Treatment

The City of Covington and the NCWSA jointly own a land application facility with an existing capacity of 4.8 MGD.

The City of Covington WRF, located on the Covington By-Pass Road at Dried Indian Creek, is owned and operated by the City of Covington, has an existing capacity of 3.0 MGD and discharges its effluent to the LAS. This WRF serves areas of unincorporated Newton County, as well as the City of Covington. City Personnel have reported average wastewater flows of 2.4 MGD, and maximum month average daily flows at 3.00 MGD.

NCWSA owns and operates a 1.8 MGD located along the Yellow River just north of Covington Bypass Road off of State Route 81 (Washington Street). The treatment facility, called the Yellow River WWTP, serves the residents of western Newton County including Porterdale and Oxford. Wastewater flow data from NCWSA personnel from June 2004 through June 2005 indicate average wastewater flows of 1.51 MGD, and maximum month average daily flows at 1.73 MGD

The City of Mansfield owns and operates a 0.09 MGD wastewater package treatment plant. The plant discharges into Pittman Branch which eventually flows into Lake Sinclair.

6.2.4 Future Wastewater Collection and Treatment Assessment

Based on existing wastewater flow data both WRFs are at capacity. A Wastewater Treatment Study was completed in May of 1996 for Covington and Newton County to assess the wastewater treatment plant needs. The Study indicated through flow projections that expansion of the Covington WRF and the LAS were recommended.

The Covington WRF was recommended to be expanded to 7.5 MGD based on projected growth within Covington

To accommodate rapid growth in the NCWSA service area effort should also be made to expand the existing facilities operated by the NCWSA. The Authority's plant is currently being expanded from 1.8 to 3.2 MGD and will provide secondary treatment. Also, design is commencing to expand the plant by another 1 MGD to 4.2 MGD.

The LAS was also recommended in the Welker Report to be expanded to 9.3 MGD. Currently no plan has been developed for this expansion as the NCWSA is also reviewing alternatives that would discharge into the Yellow River and potentially lower their operations costs.

To date, no actual plan has been outlined for future wastewater collection.

6.3 Other community facilities

Figure CF-1 in the Atlas provides a map of public safety facilities related to the following analysis of fire and police protection.

6.3.1 Fire protection

Fire protection in Newton County is provided by the Newton County Fire Service (NCFS) and the Covington and Oxford municipal fire departments. The Covington and Oxford fire departments serve only their respective municipal boundaries, and they do not come under the NCFS but the County does have an automatic mutual aid agreement with them. Surrounding Counties such as Rockdale and Jasper also have a mutual aid agreement with Newton County. The NCFS provides fire protection to residents in unincorporated areas of the county and to the towns of Mansfield, Newborn, and Porterdale through a consolidation of fire services agreement. Operating costs are funded through the county's general fund and a county fire tax.

The NCFS is under the leadership of Chief Rebie Johnson who has worked as a firefighter for over 19 years and has served as chief for the past 6 years. Currently the NCFS has approximately 61 full time paid staff with five paid 24 hour/7 days a week stations and eight volunteer stations. The NCFS has 2 ladder trucks, 7 tankers, 22 pumpers, and 8 rescue trucks. The fire service has experienced rapid growth and expansion along with the growth in the county. An example of this is, 20 years ago, there were three paid employees, and in 1996, the Newton County Fire Service had ten paid staff members and one paid station. The stations currently in operation in the County are:

The paid stations are:

- Newton County Fire Service Station #1 that also serves as the Headquarters, 11545 Covington Bypass Road, Covington, GA 30014
- NCFS Station #3, 15393 HWY 36, Covington, GA 30014
- NCFS Station #9, 176 Mt. Zion Road, Oxford, GA 30054
- NCFS Station # 14, 6169 HWY 212, Covington, GA 30016.
- NCFS Station #15, 44 Harris Springs Church Rd., Social Circle, GA 30025

The volunteer stations are:

- Rocky Plains Volunteer Fire Station #2, 3687 HWY 162, Covington, GA 30016;
- East Newton Volunteer Fire Station #4, 1025 HWY 142E, Covington, GA 30014;
- Salem Volunteer Fire Station #5, 3935 Salem Road, Covington, GA 30016;
- Mansfield Volunteer Fire Stations #6, 21 Main Street, Mansfield, GA 30055;
- Newborn Volunteer Fire Station #7, 4346 HWY 142, Newborn, GA 30056;
- North Newton Volunteer Fire Station #8, 3163 HWY 81N, Oxford, GA 30054;
- Central Newton Volunteer Fire Station #10, 11240 HWY 36, Covington, GA 30014; and
- Porterdale Volunteer Fire Station #11, 2 Main Street, Porterdale, GA 30070.

In 2004, the Newton County Fire Service responded to 4,598 calls. From January through October 2005, the NCFS had responded to 4042 calls and had participated in 3 mutual aid calls with Rockdale County, 3 with the City of Oxford, one with Jasper County and had received assistance from Rockdale County and from the City of Covington.

Providing a high level of service to all county and municipal residents is a goal that Newton County is striving to accomplish. Planning for future fire safety needs include additional stations, availability of firefighting equipment, location of fire departments, fire hydrants, access to sites and structures, and the availability of an adequate water supply. Currently, the department has plans to add 2 more paid stations with additional staff to operate these stations. Eventually, the department would like to have stations situated where there would be a 3-mile response from each station. According to a recent audit, with the projected growth of the county, 20 paid stations are needed within 10 years throughout the county (see **Figure CF-3**). Moreover, with additional stations, an increase in staff is needed. The department hopes to have 150 employees in 5 years and over 200 in 10 years.

Short term needs include a mechanic whose only responsibility is to maintain fire equipment. Having a fire equipment mechanic could save the County money by keeping all equipment operational. Another need would be the addition of a supply officer to maintain inventory and a supply storage area to keep the items needed on hand. A chain of command is needed and the department is working on establishing that now. There is a need for additional Battalion Chiefs; specifically, if two Battalion Chiefs were on duty each day, there would be a better response time and more coverage for the County. The Newton County Fire Department plans to continue updating and expanding its service in order to meet the needs of a growing population.

6.3.2 Public safety

Newton County is served by six law-enforcement offices: the Newton County Sheriff's Department, the Covington Police Department, the Mansfield Police Department, the Oxford Police Department, the Porterdales Police Department, and the Georgia State Patrol. The Newton County Sheriff's Department provides police protection for unincorporated Newton County, and the City of Newborn, as well as assisting with the law enforcement needs of all other municipalities in the county as necessary. The Sheriff's Department operates the county detention center, which houses inmates from all jurisdictions within Newton County. The Covington Police Department has a formal mutual aid agreement with the Newton County Sheriff's Department, although it also provides law enforcement services to other jurisdictions as well, under terms of the state's mutual aid law.

Table 6.1: Dispatch Calls for the Newton County Sheriff's Department

Year	Number of calls
1995	17,564
2000	18,302
2004	36,667
2005 (January – November 1)	38,549

Source: Sheriff Joe Nichols, December 2005

The Newton County Sheriff's Department is located at 15151 Alcovy-Jersey Road. The newly constructed Law Enforcement Center was completed in 2003 and functions as both the

headquarters for the department and the detention center. The Sheriff's Department is a full service law enforcement agency that provides 24-hour per day coverage to unincorporated areas of the county and assists individual municipalities in meeting their law enforcement needs. There are currently 217 employees working for the Department in several different divisions.



The department is responsible for serving all warrants and civil processes throughout the county and transporting inmates. It also operates the County's K-9 unit and cooperates with the City of Covington in maintaining a S.W.A.T. team, and a Drug Abuse Resistance Education program (D.A.R.E.). Heard Mixon Elementary School was the first school in the state of Georgia to have the D.A.R.E. program.

The Department has 90 vehicles including 60 patrol cars, 1 coroners van, SWAT vehicles, special purpose vehicles, and transport vehicles. According to Sheriff Nichols, the vehicles are in good shape and there is a plan in place to rotate them out in the future.

Table 6.2: Sheriff's Department Staffing

Newton County Sheriff's Department Staff			
Patrol		Criminal Investigation Division	
1	Captain	1	Captain
3	Lieutenants	2	Lieutenants
2	Sergeants	7	Investigators
62	Deputy Sheriff's	1	Clerk
Jail		1	Evidence Technician
Jail		Administrative/Operations	
1	Captain	1	Captain
1	Lieutenant	1	Lieutenant
5	Sergeants	2	Sergeants
9	Corporals	3	Deputy Sheriff's
75	Detention Officers	6	Clerks
5	Detention Technicians	1	Office Manager
9	Administrative Technicians	1	Financial Officer
2	Deputy Sheriff's		
2 PT	Deputy Sheriff's		
Court			
1	Captain		
1	Sergeant		
8	Deputy Sheriff's		

Source: Sheriff Joe Nichols – December 2005

The Newton County Sheriff's Department also cooperates with the Rockdale and Walton County Sheriff's Departments in maintaining the East Metro Drug Enforcement Team (EMDET). The team conducts overt and covert operations in all three counties in a joint effort to reduce as much illegal drug traffic as was feasible with their limited resources. The Sheriff's Department also maintains a Criminal Investigation Division is responsible for investigating all types of criminal activity in Newton County.

Calls for service are dispatched through the county's 911 Dispatch Center, which dispatches all public safety calls. This is an enhanced 911 communications center, which uses an 800 MHz and VHF communication system. Newton's 911 facilities, serve as a central dispatch for law enforcement, fire and emergency medical calls. The entire communication system is slated to be upgraded with SPLOST funds in the near future.

The Sheriff's Department operates the County Detention Center and houses inmates for all municipalities in the county. Housing of inmates for the cities is done by contract. Additional inmates are housed through contractual arrangements with law enforcement agencies in neighboring counties. The Newton County Detention Center has 109 employees both officers and civil employees. The jail currently can house a total of 696 inmates and has the capabilities to expand to 1,200 inmates through expansions. Currently, the jail has 514 inmates. The jail operates on 12-hour shifts.

Law enforcement services throughout Newton County have a goal to maintain a high level of law enforcement for the citizens of the County. In general, the most pressing issue concerns planning for future growth. The number of officers, equipment, storage facilities, and support staff will have to increase with the population. Approximately 50 people are needed presently to keep up with the growing population. In addition, in the near future, many of the experienced officers will be retiring and the Department will need to attract new qualified officers and supervisors. The Department will need to be able to offer competitive salaries for the needed positions. A command center for the Sheriff's Department is desired in the future to maintain the high level of law enforcement needed for a county that will continue to increase its population.

6.3.3 Recreation

The public recreational facilities in Newton County are operated by the Newton County Recreation Commission. The Recreation Commission recently updated its strategic plan for the next years and much of the information included here is from that report. Entitled "2005-2010 Newton County Recreation Commission Comprehensive Master Plan", this short-range plan for the county includes detailed information on existing facilities, a needs assessment, and detailed recommendations for improvements over the next five years. Following is a summary of its findings.

6.3.3.1 Inventory of Existing Recreation Facilities

The Newton County recreation system consists of 16 parks and one undeveloped site. The parks together occupy a land area of 329 acres. Recreational program offerings are geared to all age groups and include both indoor and outdoor athletics and non-athletic programs. To plan for,

operate and maintain these facilities, the Recreation Commission has a full-time staff of 13, supplemented by 11 part-time positions. The maintenance staff presently consists of seven persons. The Recreation Commission offers a wide variety of recreational opportunities to the general public. All recreational facilities are maintained by in-house personnel. Funds used for recreation are collected from the Newton County and Covington City Governments and from fees paid by various program participants.

The Recreation Commission classifies its recreational resources into eight categories:

1. Small Urban Parks,
2. Neighborhood Parks,
3. Community Parks,
4. Regional Parks,
5. Special Use Areas,
6. Indoor Facilities,
7. Other Recreation Sites, and
8. Undeveloped Sites

Below is a listing of the resources under each category:

Small Urban Parks

A small urban park is mini-park generally located within an urban setting, consisting of limited facilities serving a discrete area within a neighborhood. There are four small urban parks within the Newton County Recreation System: B.C. Crowell Park, Louise Fowler Park, South Street Park, and Trailblazers Park. All are located with the Covington/Porterdale area and serve portions of residential neighborhoods. **Table 6-2** presents a summary of these facilities in each of these parks.

Table 6-2: Newton County Recreation Commission Small Urban Parks

	B.C. Crowell	Louse Fowler	South Street	Trailblazers
Acreage	2.0	1.0	0.5	2.0
Active acres	2.0	1.0	0.5	1.5
Passive acres	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5
Active Facilities				
Practice Ball Fields	1 Unlighted			1 Covered
Basketball Courts	½ Unlighted	1 Unlighted		
Tennis Courts		1 Unlighted		
Playfields				1
Playgrounds	1		1	1
Walking Trails		1		
Passive Facilities				
Pavilions	1			1
Picnic Areas	Yes	Yes		
Benches				Yes
Garden				Yes
Support Facilities				

Table 6-2: Newton County Recreation Commission Small Urban Parks

	B.C. Crowell	Louse Fowler	South Street	Trailblazers
Restroom Buildings				1
Portoilets	1	1		

Source: "2005-2010 Newton County Recreation Commission Comprehensive Master Plan," Table 2, p. 14.

Neighborhood Parks

A neighborhood park is intended to meet the informal active and passive recreation needs of nearby users. There are four neighborhood parks within the Newton County Recreation System: Beaver Park, Cousins Property, Spillers Park, and Stone Road Park. Only two of these facilities are located within the city limits of Covington: Cousins Property and Spillers Park. Beaver Park is located in Mansfield, and Stone Road Park is located north of Covington. **Table 6-3** presents a summary of these facilities in each of these parks.

Table 6-3: Newton County Recreation Commission Neighborhood Parks

	Beaver	Cousins	Spillers	Stone Road
Acreeage	16.0	15.0	12.0	14.5
Active acres	11.0	12.0	3.0	14.5
Passive acres	5.0	2.0	9.0	0.0
Active Facilities				
Ball Fields				3 Lighted
Practice Ball Fields	1 Unlighted	1 Unlighted		
Football Fields		2 Unlighted		
Playfields	1		1	
Tennis Courts	1 Unlighted			
Playgrounds	1 Handicapped Accessbile		1	1
Gymnasium		1		
Walking Trails	0.44 mile		1	
Passive Facilities				
Pavilions	1			
Picnic Areas	Yes		Yes	
Benches	Yes			
Barbecue Pits			1	
Support Facilities				
Offices		1		
Concessions/RR/Office/Scorers Bldgs				1
Restroom Buildings				1
Portoilets	1		1	
Storage Buildings				1

Source: "2005-2010 Newton County Recreation Commission Comprehensive Master Plan," Table 3, p. 16.

Community Parks

A community park meets broad range of both active and passive recreation needs, serving multiple neighborhoods. There is only one community park in the Newton County System, City

Pond Park. City Pond Park is located in the northern portion of Covington just south of the airport. **Table 6-4** presents a summary of the facilities at this location.

Table 6-4: Newton County Recreation Commission Community Park

		City Pond
Acreage		80.0
	Active acres	40.0
	Passive acres	40.0
Active Facilities		
	Ball Fields	6 Lighted (4 with adjustable fencing)
	Batting Cages	9
	Football Fields	1 Lighted
	Tennis Courts	4 Lighted
	Playfields	1
	Playgrounds	1
	Walking Trails	1
Passive Facilities		
	Lakes	1 (40 acre)
	Pavilions	1
	Pavilions with restrooms	1
Support Facilities		
	Concessions/RR/Meeting Room/ Scorers Bldg	1
	Concession/Scorers Bldg	1
	Umpires Buildings	1
	Change/Restroom Buildings	1
	Full Service Maintenance Facility	1
	Maintenance Shed	1

Source: "2005-2010 Newton County Recreation Commission Comprehensive Master Plan," Table 4, p. 17.

Regional Parks

Much like a community park, a regional park meets wide range of both active and passive recreation needs. A regional park, however, is intended to serve an entire community or a large segment of the population within the system. There is only one regional park in the Newton County System, Turner Lake Park. Turner Lake is located in Covington and includes the Nat S. Turner Jr. Recreation/Senior Citizen Center, which is discussed under the category of indoor facilities. **Table 6-5** presents a summary of the facilities at this location.

Table 6-5: Newton County Recreation Commission Regional Park

		Turner Lake
Acreage		158.0
	Active acres	108.0
	Passive acres	50.0
Active Facilities		
	Ball Fields	4 Lighted
	Batting Cages	3
	Football Fields	1 Lighted

Table 6-5: Newton County Recreation Commission Regional Park

	Turner Lake
Playgrounds	1
Trail System	3 miles
Passive Facilities	
Lake	1 (26 acre)
Fishing Pier	1 Handicapped Accessible
Community Pavilion	1
Picnic Areas	Yes
Grills	Yes
Boardwalk	1
Nature Trail	1 with Interpretive Signage
Outdoor Learning Center	1
Wetlands Area	1 Disconnected
Benches	Yes
Swings	Yes
Support Facilities	
Concessions/RR/Scorers Bldg	1
Scorers/ Restroom Bldg	1
Restroom Buildings	1
Umpires Buildings	1
Emergency Call Box	1 Disconnected
Storage Building/Pumphouse	1

Source: "2005-2010 Newton County Recreation Commission Comprehensive Master Plan," Table 5, p.18.

Special Use Areas

There are four special use areas in the Newton County Recreation System. All of these are ball fields, three of which are within the City of Covington. The fourth is located just south of the city. **Table 6-6** presents a summary of these facilities in each of these parks.

Table 6-6: Newton County Recreation Commission Special Use Areas

	Anderson Field	Baker Field	Pactiv Field	Rota-Dyne Field
Acreage	2.0	2.5	2.5	1.0
Active acres	2.0	2.5	2.5	1.0
Passive acres	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Active Facilities				
Ball Fields	2 Unlighted	1 Lighted	1 Lighted	1 Lighted
Support Facilities				
Concession/Storage Bldgs				1
Concessions/RR Bldgs			1	
Scorers Shed		1		
Portolets		2		2

Source: "2005-2010 Newton County Recreation Commission Comprehensive Master Plan," Table 6, p.20.

Indoor Facilities

There are two indoor facilities in the Newton County Recreation system. One is a single-use gymnasium, the Conyers Street Gym, and the other is multi-purpose recreation/senior citizen center, the Nat S. Turner Jr. Recreation/Senior Center. Both are located in Covington.

Other Recreation Sites

There are two additional parks in Newton County are open to Covington residents but are operated by the county, Lake Varner and Factory Shoals. Neither park is located in the city. Lake Varner occupies 635 acres northeast of the city and is used for passive recreational uses. Factory Shoals is a historic site covering 776 acres in the southeastern portion of the county.

Undeveloped Sites

At present there is only one undeveloped recreation site in the county that could be developed as a new park, Oak Hill. Oak Hill is owned by Newton County and is located in the southwest portion of the county. It covers 65 acres, but portions of the site will be used for a fire station and library, only about 20 acres of the site are reserved for future recreation.

6.3.3.2 Needs Assessment

The seventeen recreation sites that together comprise the Newton County recreation system contain a total of 329.0 acres of active and passive recreation facilities. Applying this acreage to the 2004 estimated Newton County population of 75,730 results in approximately 4.34 acres of recreation land for each 1,000 residents of the county. The National Recreation and Parks Association (NRPA) guidelines suggest that governments endeavor to provide between 6.25 and 10.5 acres of recreation land per 1,000 residents. Given this Newton County and the City of Covington are underserved, though considering the majority of the Newton County recreation facilities are located in and around Covington, city residents have better access to recreational facilities than county residents in general.

Given the NRPA guidelines, the county needed 163 additional acres of parkland in 2004. Taking the NEGRDC population projection of 171,000 for 2028, the County Recreation Commission will need 1,111.5 acres of parkland in 2028 or an additional 781.5 acres of new parkland over the next 20 years.

The Recreation Master Plan provided standards governing the provision of specific recreation facilities and identified the following needs as outlined in Table 6-7.

Table 6-7: Newton County Recreation Commission Facility Needs

Facility Type	Newton County Guidelines	2004 Supply	2004 Need	2010 Need	2028 Need*
Ball Fields	1 per 2,500	21	30	40	68
Football Fields	1 per 15,000	4	5	6	10
Tennis Courts	1 per 5,000	5	15	20	34
Basketball/Volleyball	1 per 10,000	2.5	8	10	17
BMX Tracks	1 per 100,000	0	0	1	1
Swimming Pools	1 per 100,000	0	0	1	1

Table 6-7: Newton County Recreation Commission Facility Needs

Facility Type	Newton County Guidelines	2004 Supply	2004 Need	2010 Need	2028 Need*
Playfields	2 per Community Park or Regional Park	2	4	10	17
Playgrounds	1 per Neighborhood Park, 2 per Community Park or Regional Park	9	8	16	27
Horseshoe Courts	1 per 15,000	0	5	6	10
Shuffleboard Courts	1 per 15,000	0	5	6	10
Pavilions	1 per Neighborhood Park, 2 per Community Park or Regional Park	6	8	16	27
Multi-purpose Trail System	1 per County	0	1	1	1
Park Walking Trails	1 per Community Park or Regional Park	4	2	5	8
Skate Parks	1 per 100,000	0	1	1	1
Dog Parks	1 per 100,000	0	1	1	1
Group/RV Campsites	1 area per passive park	0	0	2	3
Nature Trails	1 per passive park	1	1	3	4
Recreation Centers	1 per 50,000	1	2	2	3
Restroom buildings	1 per Neighborhood Park, 2 per Community Park, Regional Park or Passive Park	3	8	20	34
Concession/RR Bldgs	1 per 4 Athletic Fields	3	9	12	20
Maintenance Facilities	1 per Community Park, Regional Park or Passive Park	1	2	7	12
Parking Spaces	75 per Athletic Field	N/A	2,625	3,450	5,900

Source: "2005-2010 Newton County Recreation Commission Comprehensive Master Plan," Table 6, p.20.
 * Note: 2028 numbers prepared by JYG based on the Newton County Standards

In addition, the public involvement effort in 2004 associated with the Recreation Master Plan identified a desire for some facilities not presently available in Newton County. These included:

- Handicapped accessible facilities
- Dog parks
- Spraygrounds
- Skate parks.

6.3.3.3 Recommendations

The 2005-2010 Newton County Recreation Master Plan made recommendations for the acquisition of land to meet existing and future acreage deficits, suggests improvements to existing county parks, provides recommendations for the development of new parks and facilities, and advances recommendations for greenways, trails and linkages.

The following recommendations were made to address the need for additional parkland:

- Utilize the 20 +/- acres at Oak Hill for a school-in-a-park
- Acquire two, five acre parcels within the City of Covington for a neighborhood park and performing arts center

- Acquire 50 acres adjacent to Beaver Park for expansion
- Acquire 40 to 60 acres proximate to the City of Oxford for a community park
- Acquire 80 to 100 acres in west central Newton County for a community park
- Acquire 80 to 100 acres in south central Newton County for a community park
- Acquire 60 to 80 acres in western Newton County for a community park that can be dedicated for use as a Gathering Place for events, festivals and community-wide activities

In addition, the plan recommended that both Lake Varner and Factory Shoals come under the jurisdiction of the Recreation Commission for purposes of further development as passive-use parks. If successful, these land acquisition recommendations would result in 340 to 430 new acres of parkland by 2010. This would still leave a need for an additional 350 acre by 2028.

The Master Plan also identified staffing needs, which included hiring a Programs Director and at least one assistant, two additional recreation coordinators under the Athletic Coordinator, a Director of Aquatics and two additional clerical personnel.

6.3.4 Stormwater Management

The pollution of our waters prevents these resources from meeting water quality standards and designated uses regulated under the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) administers the NPDES regulations for the state of Georgia. The first phase of the NPDES issued in 1990 was aimed at medium and large Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s) with populations of 100,000 or more. The second phase issued in 1999 requires that MS4s with populations of between 10,000 and 100,000, like Newton County, prepare and implement stormwater management plans to control and mitigate pollution.

The stormwater management system in Newton County consists of conveyance, storage, and treatment facilities, as well as the existing procedures for proper design, permitting, construction, enforcement and management of new facilities to control the quantity and quality of non-point discharges into streams and other waterbodies. The management of these facilities are subject to the Clean Water Act and a long list of related federal and state regulations.

Under the requirements of the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), all development sites that disturb greater than one acre are required to receive a permit before they can begin land disturbance. Larger development sites (those with more than 5 disturbed acres) must prepare an approved erosion sedimentation and pollution control plan with Best Management Practices to control soil erosion and sedimentation at the site, and maintain onsite water quality monitoring during construction.

Also under this NPDES Phase II permit, Newton County is required to inventory their stormwater management facilities and discharges, and create a monitoring database that maintains and evaluates samples of water quality for the discharges. The vast majority of stormwater management facilities in Newton are privately owned and maintained. Most publicly owned and maintained stormwater management facilities have been constructed in conjunction with the construction of highway and utility projects.

The Clean Water Act also includes monitoring of the quality of fresh water rivers, streams, and lakes. The Clean Water Act provides water quality standards and guidelines, that EPD implements with Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for various waterbodies based on certain designated uses. All stream segments in Newton County are given designated uses, such as fishing, swimming, and potable water withdrawal, and then divided into three categories based on ambient levels of water quality: fully supporting designated uses, partially supporting designated uses, and not supporting designated uses. In Newton County, there are a number of rivers and streams that do not support their designated uses. The County will need to work with Georgia EPD to refine and implement special management plans for stormwater and other discharges in these sub-basins.

Newton County and the City of Covington have enacted a number of regulations for stormwater management and watershed protection, including:

- Stormwater Conveyance and Management
- Watershed Overlay Zoning
- Agriculture Waste Impoundment
- Erosion and Sedimentation Control
- Groundwater Protection
- Groundwater Recharge Protection

Newton County is now required by federal law to improve its stormwater management program (SWMP) because of high population density in certain areas of the county. The County currently spends approximately \$500,000 annually on its stormwater program. Engineering consultants hired by the County have estimated that the current budget will be adequate for at least the next two years. After that timeframe, more funding may be needed in order to meet requirements under the law for a more formal and complex SWMP.

Some of the issues related to stormwater management in Newton County include:

- Administration and staffing of the new procedures for plan review, engineering, permitting and enforcement of stormwater management ordinances
- Public education and developer training regarding the new development procedures related to stormwater management
- Enforcement of new stormwater management and erosion/ sedimentation control ordinances
- Updating FIRM maps of floodplain
- Identifying and financing the retrofit of failing or inadequate stormwater management facilities such as existing culverts and ponds that pose a risk to public health and property
- Consideration of cost effective stormwater management methods such as areawide stormwater storage and treatment
- Coordination of stormwater management implementation strategies and funding with municipalities
- Implementing Best Management Practices in support of TMDL's in sub-basins of streams that do not fully support designated uses.

All these issues are made more urgent by the current rate of growth in the County.

6.3.5 Solid Waste Management Facilities

Newton County maintains a landfill located at 205 Lower River Road south of the City of Covington. County wide, approximately 250 tons of waste are collected per day. Of this amount, about 20 to 25% percent is recyclable material. Newton's solid waste collection system consists of 11 drop-off sites known as Neighborhood Recycling Centers, formerly known as "compactor sites", scattered throughout the County's unincorporated areas. All drop-off sites are fenced and staffed and offer specific hours of operation. Recycling boxes are located at each of these collection centers. These Neighborhood Recycling Centers allow Newton residents to deposit glass, aluminum, plastic, Styrofoam, tin, newspapers, cardboard, paper, oil, tires, scrap metal, yard waste, and bulk waste at no charge. Hazardous waste and liquids are prohibited. All recyclables are shipped directly to market except for aluminum, cardboard and plastics, which are processed through the County's recycling center.

The Neighborhood Recycling Center locations are:

1. Piper Road/ Hwy 36
2. Bypass/ Flat Shoals
3. Stewart VFD
4. Stone Rd
5. Hwy 212/ Hwy 162
6. Hazelbrand Road
7. McGiboney Road
8. Oak Hill
9. Adams Road
10. Dial Mill
11. Cook Road

The County recently expanded its landfill capacity and is currently working on permitting for a Subtitle D Phase II expansion on the current site that will extend the capacity to 2007. The County will then develop Phase III, in early 2007 to be complete by the end 2007. At the projected rate of growth for the County and with an increasing amount of collected waste, the current landfill area, not all developed, has another 15 years. However, the County is working with a consultant to develop a piggyback approach to extend the landfill operations 40 years.

Newton County Clean and Beautiful participates in educational, programming and recycling efforts. Like other Clean and Beautiful programs in the region, Newton County Clean and Beautiful works with civic organizations, businesses and schools to promote waste reduction and recycling. All municipalities in the county participate in this effort. Recycling promotion and education is being done via articles in local papers, public forums, school awards programs, environmental publications and information mailers. Due in part to its efforts, Newton County has reduced waste going into the landfill by 37.9% since 1990.

6.4 Consistency with the Service Delivery Strategy

The Newton County Service Delivery Strategy agreement was last updated in 1999. The following table outlines the general provisions of the SDS.

Services Provided	Newton County Service Delivery Strategy	Areas served
Airport	The City of Covington owns and operates a general aviation airport just north of the city.	Entire county.
Animal Control	Newton County provides animal control to all county residents	Entire county.
Building Permits and Inspections	Covington, Social Circle and Newton County issue building permits and conduct building inspections for construction in their respective jurisdictions. The other cities contract with Newton County	Entire County. Newton County serves the entire county with the exception of Covington and Social Circle who provide their own service
Cemeteries	Each city in the county except Mansfield maintains and operates city cemeteries. The county does not provide this service..	Covington, Oxford, Newborn, Porterdale, Social Circle.
Code Enforcement	Each government entity provides services	Newton County and all cities
Court Services	Newton provides Superior Court, State Court, Juvenile Court, and Magistrate Court for entire County; Cities provide City Court for municipal code violations	Newton County and all cities, except Newborn.
Economic Development/ Tourism	Newton County and the City of Covington contract with the Newton County Chamber of Commerce for this service. The COC operates the Covington/Newton County Welcome Center. The other cities receive indirect benefits through COC participation.	Entire County.
Elections	Each jurisdiction with the exception of Covington administers their own elections. Covington contracts with t Newton County.	Newton County and all cities
Extension Service	Provided by Newnan County Extension Service.	Entire County.
Geographic Information Systems	Newton County, Covington and the Water & Sewer Authority have a cooperative agreement to implement a countywide GIS system	Entire County.
Hospital	Newton County Hospital Authority owns and operates the public hospital which is open to all county residents.	Entire County
Industrial Development	Newton County and Covington are equal partners in an industrial development authority which owns and is developing an industrial park in Covington. Newton County is also a 40% partner in a jointly-funded regional development authority which owns and developing Stanton Springs a four-county industrial park with Jasper, Morgan, and Walton Counties.	Entire County.
Library	Newton County Library Board oversees and provides library services for all County residents.	Entire county.
Parks & Recreation	Newton County Board of Recreation provides recreation programming countywide.	Entire county

Services Provided	Newton County Service Delivery Strategy	Areas served
Planning and Zoning	Covington, Oxford, Social Circle and Newton County provides their own services. Mansfield and Porterdale contract with Newton County.	Countywide except Newborn.
Public Utilities – Wastewater Collection	Newton County Water and Sewer Authority, Covington, Mansfield, Oxford and Porterdale each provide this service.	The cities of Covington, Mansfield, Oxford and Porterdale. Approximately 10% of the unincorporated county.
Public Utilities – Wastewater Treatment	Covington and Mansfield own and operate their own plants. A third plant is joint operated by Newton County Water and Sewer Authority, Covington, Mansfield, Oxford, Oxford College, and Porterdale. Covington and Newton County Water and Sewer Authority jointly operate a land application system.	Same geographic areas as above.
Public Utilities – Water Distribution	Newton County Water and Sewer Authority, Covington, Mansfield, Newborn, Oxford, Porterdale, and Social Circle each provide this service.	Entire County.
Public Utilities – Water Supply and Treatment	Newton and Walton Counties own and operate the Cornish Creek Reservoir. Newton County is building a second in the southeast portion of the county. Water is wholesaled to each of the cities.	Entire County.
Public Works – Engineering Services	Covington and Newton County provide in-house engineering services for respective jurisdictions	Covington and unincorporated Newton County.
Public Works – Fleet Maintenance	Each jurisdiction provides for its own maintenance and upkeep of vehicles and equipment	Entire County
Public Health	Newton County Board of Health provides these services	Entire County.
Public Safety – Emergency Communications/ Dispatch	Newton County 911 Center provides this service to all public safety agencies. The Center is owned by the county but operated by the Covington under contract	Entire County.
Public Safety – Emergency Management	Newton County provides these services to all public safety agencies	Entire County.
Public Safety – Emergency Medical Services	Newton County Hospital Authority provides EMS services throughout the county	Entire County.
Public Safety – Fire Services	Covington, Oxford, and Social Circle provide fire protection for their respective jurisdictions. Newton County Fire Services provide service to Mansfield, Newborn, Porterdale and the unincorporated areas of the county.	Entire County

Services Provided	Newton County Service Delivery Strategy	Areas served
Public Safety – Jail/Detention	Newton County Sheriff’s Department provides this service to all jurisdictions	Entire County.
Public Safety – Law Enforcement	Each jurisdiction provides its own law enforcement.	Entire County
Public Utilities – Cable Television	Cable is available throughout the county by Covington and multiple private companies.	Most of the county.
Public Utilities – Electric	Covington, Mansfield, and Oxford provide electrical utilities in their respective areas. The rest of the county is served by Georgia Power, Snapping Shoals EMC and Middle GA EMC	Entire County.
Public Utilities – Natural Gas	Covington provide natural gas service to the residents of Covington, Oxford and Mansfield as well as the unincorporated area east of the Yellow River and a small portion of Walton County Atlanta Gas Light provides services elsewhere	Entire County.
Public Works – Rights-of-Way Maintenance	Each jurisdiction provides this service within their respective boundaries	Entire County.
Public Works – Road Construction and Maintenance	Each jurisdiction provides this service within their respective boundaries or contracts with private engineering and construction firms	Entire County.
Public Works – Storm Water Management	Covington, Mansfield, Social Circle and Newton County provide storm water management services.	Covington, Mansfield, Social Circle and unincorporated Newton County, only.
Social Services – DFACS Programs	The Department of Family and Children Services contracts with Newton County to provide these services or all residents.	Entire County.
Social Services – Public Housing	Covington and Social Circle Housing Authorities provide public housing within their jurisdictions	Covington and Social Circle
Social Services – Senior Citizens	Newton County provides this service countywide.	Entire County
Solid Waste Mgmt. – Clean and Beautiful (education)	Newton Clean & Beautiful provides this service county wide	Entire County
Solid Waste Mgmt. – Collection	Covington, Mansfield, Oxford, Porterdale & Social Circle provide curbside solid waste collection. Residents in the unincorporated County have access to compactors located at the neighborhood recycling centers.	Entire County
Solid Waste Mgmt. – Landfill/Disposal	Newton County owns and operates the county landfill, which collects solid waste from Covington, Mansfield, Newborn, Oxford, the	Entire County

Services Provided	Newton County Service Delivery Strategy	Areas served
	recycling compactors and private haulers.	
Solid Waste Mgmt. – Recycling	Covington, Mansfield, Oxford, Porterdale & Social Circle provide curbside recycling. Residents in the unincorporated County have access to neighborhood recycling centers..	Entire County
Tax Collection	Mansfield, Oxford, Social Circle, and Newton County all provide billing and collection services for ad valorem taxes levied by their respective jurisdictions. Covington contracts with Newton County for this service. The Town of Newborn does not levy taxes on its citizens.	Countywide except Newborn.

As work on the Comprehensive Plan continues, work will also continue to update the SDS to be consistent with the recommendations of the plan and recent changes in service delivery in the county.

7 Intergovernmental Coordination

7.1 Purpose

According to the State Planning Goals and Objectives of *the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, Chapter 110-12-1-.06*, local governments must evaluate the consistency of their policies, activities, and development patterns with the following goal for Intergovernmental Coordination:

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

The Community Assessment is intended to evaluate the community’s current policies, activities, and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives, identify potential issues and opportunities for further study, and use supportive data and information to check the validity of potential issues and opportunities.

According to the *Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, Chapter 110-12-1-.07*, this is to be done by identifying existing coordination mechanisms and processes with adjacent local governments, independent special authorities and districts, Independent development authorities and districts, school boards, and federal, state, or regional programs and activities that relate to local planning.

7.2 Coordination Partners

Intergovernmental coordination in Newton County concerns the on-going communication, and cooperation of Newton County’s general purpose government with six municipalities:

- Covington
- Mansfield
- Newborn
- Oxford
- Porterdale
- Social Circle

In addition, Newton County government coordinates with the School Board and several authorities that serve the county. The authorities include:

- Newton County Water and Sewer Authority
- Covington-Newton County Development Authority
- Four-County Regional Development Authority
- Newton County Hospital Authority
- Newton County Board of Recreation
- Covington Housing Authority

Primary responsibility for intergovernmental coordination within county government lies with the Board of Commissioners and the Office of the Administrative Assistant.

Newton County is located within the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center (NEGRDC). NEGRDC has been active in Newton County by providing information and planning services.

7.3 Existing Policy and activities

Some of on-going forms of intergovernmental cooperation in Newton County include:

- The joint industrial development authorities and recent efforts to develop Stanton Springs
- Joint use of the Chamber of Commerce for economic development efforts
- Mutual aid for public safety and fire protection
- Newton County Fire Services provide service to Mansfield, Newborn, Porterdale
- Joint provisions for emergency management and E-911 services
- A countywide Recreation Board and countywide park system
- Newton and Walton Counties own and operate the Cornish Creek Reservoir
- Coordination of on Metropolitan- Atlanta transportation issues with the Atlanta Regional Commission
- Covington and Newton County co-sponsored the US 278 Livable Centers Initiative (LCI)

7.4 Intergovernmental Coordination Opportunities

As the county continues to grow and particularly as demands on county staff grow, maintaining strong and productive coordination efforts will be more difficult. Potential intergovernmental opportunities for later consideration in the Community Agenda include:

- Coordinating planning for growth with transportation improvements
- Implementation of the US 278 LCI
- Implementation of impact fees
- NPDES/ Stormwater management implementation and coordination
- Economic and industrial development and further development of Stanton Springs
- Annexation and land use coordination issues
- SPLOST renewal and how funding and projects will be coordinated.

8 Transportation

8.1 Introduction

Newton County's transportation system consists of highways as well as other modes of transportation. An inventory of existing conditions was performed based on available data and a windshield survey of the county. A discussion of the following transportation elements is included in this document:

- Traffic Signal Locations
- Functional Classifications of Roadways
- Traffic Volumes
- Level of Service
- Freight Conditions
- Bridges
- Bicycle Facilities
- Pedestrian Facilities
- Parking Facilities
- Public Transportation and Services
- Freight Movements
- Railroads
- Airports

The inventory of existing conditions was developed with information (field verified, where appropriate) from Newton County, the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), and the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC).

8.2 Road Network

Interstate 20 passes east to west through Newton County with six interchanges in the County, three of which are in unincorporated Newton County. Other significant roadways include:

- US 278
- SR 142
- SR 11
- SR 36
- SR 81
- SR 138
- SR 212
- SR 162
- SR 20

The existing roadway inventory with the number of lanes for each facility is shown in **Figure T-1 in the Atlas**.

8.2.1 Traffic Signal Locations

There are nine traffic signals and eight intersection control beacons (red or yellow flashing lights) in unincorporated Newton County. **Figure T-2 in the Atlas** shows the locations of the existing traffic signals in the County.

Nine traffic signals are located in unincorporated Newton County.

- SR 11 and I-20 EB Off-Ramp
- Crowell Road and Brown Bridge Road
- Crowell Road and I-20 EB Off-Ramp
- Crowell Road and Access Road
- Almon Road and I-20 WB Off-Ramp
- Salem Road and Old Salem Road
- Salem Road and Old Concord Drive/Kirkland Road
- Salem Road and Brown Bridge Road
- Covington Highway and Jackson Highway (SR 36)

In addition to these signals, there is one traffic signal located in Oxford, one traffic signal located in Porterdale and 17 traffic signals located in Covington.

Eight intersection control beacons are located in unincorporated Newton County.

- SR 36 and Flat Shoals/Henderson Mill Road/Steele Road
- SR 81 and Salem Road/Lover's Lane
- SR 81 and Crowell Road
- Brown Bridge Road and SR 212/McDonough Highway
- SR 212 and Oak Hill Road
- SR 212 and SR 81
- SR 212 and SR 162
- SR 212 and SR 36

In addition, there is one intersection control beacon located in Newborn and six intersection control beacons located in Covington.

8.2.2 Functional Classifications

Roadways can be classified according to the function they serve with respect to access and movement of vehicles. Freeways generally serve through traffic, and have very limited accessibility. Local roads, on the other hand, have as their primary purpose to provide access to adjacent properties, but they move very little through traffic. **Figure T-3 in the Atlas** shows the functional classifications for the roadways in Newton County.

8.2.3 Traffic Conditions

Traffic conditions were determined using the regional travel demand model. This model was developed by ARC and did not originally include Newton County, but Newton County was subsequently added into the model by GDOT. This model was used to determine the daily traffic volume on roadways in Newton County. **Figure T-4** shows the daily traffic volumes for all roadways in Newton County that are included in the model network (many local roads are not included in the network due to their low traffic volumes). These data are for 2000, the most recent year for which model data were available.

The level of service of a roadway segment can be determined by dividing the traffic volume on the roadway by the theoretical capacity of that roadway to calculate the volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratio. If the V/C ratio is greater than 1.0 then the roadway is considered to be over capacity. Based on the regional travel demand model, in 2000 there were no roadways in Newton County that were over capacity on a daily basis. Very few segments had V/C ratios of greater than 0.7.

Several areas in the County do experience peak hour congestion. This occurs primarily in the western part of the county, which has experienced the most development in recent years. Two intersections in particular were noted:

- SR 20 & SR 212
- SR 81 & SR 162 (Salem Road)

These facilities are slated for upgrade in the regional transportation plan, which will be described in more detail later in this document.

8.2.4 Overview of the Road Freight Conditions

Several national and state highways serve Newton County. A number of these are suitable for over the road freight movement. Interstate 20 (SR 402) serves as the primary freight route through the County and is designated as an oversized truck route by GDOT. Other facilities in the County designated as oversized truck routes include the following:

- SR 11 from the northern County line to the southern County line
- SR 138 along the northern tip of the County
- SR 20 along the western tip of the County

8.2.5 Bridge Inventory and Conditions

Bridge inventory data were obtained from GDOT for Newton County. The overall bridge rating is indicated by its sufficiency rating, where a sufficiency rating greater than 50 is considered satisfactory and a rating less than 50 is considered unsatisfactory (i.e. needing replacement). A total of 98 bridge reports were reviewed. This review indicated that 13 percent of the bridges are considered to be in unsatisfactory condition. Thirty-one percent of the bridges are 50 years old or older. **Table 8.1** shows the location and condition of bridges that are considered to be in unsatisfactory condition. These bridges may need to be reconstructed or replaced. For the bridges in satisfactory condition, some routine maintenance will still be needed to preserve their condition. **Figure T-5 in the Atlas** shows all bridges rated as unsatisfactory in Newton County.

Table 8.1: Newton County Bridges in Unsatisfactory Condition

Structure ID	Facility Carried	Location ID	Sufficiency Rating	Year Constructed
217-0008-0	SR 36	1.31 Miles E of Butts County Line	48.38	1952
217-0014-0	SR 81	11.22 Miles N of Henry County Line	47.30	1914
217-0046-0	FAS 1246	3.55 Miles E of SR 36	41.69	1956
217-0054-0	Brown Bridge Road	8.20 Miles E of SR 212	44.54	1961
217-0056-0	Henderson Mill Road	4.88 Miles N of Jasper County Line	46.79	1965
217-0058-0	SR 20	3.33 Miles E of Henry County Line	40.45	1957
217-5002-0	Bethany Road	4.04 Miles N of Henry County Line	49.27	1959
217-5010-0	Edwards Road	0.62 Miles W of Gum Creek Road	25.82	1974
217-5011-0	Old Alcovy Road	0.01 Miles W of Walton County Line	48.38	1985
217-5012-0	Alcovy Road	1.11 Miles S of Old Alcovy Road	49.00	1962
217-5015-0	Hightower Trail Road	1.02 Miles E of Rockdale County Line	15.46	1950
217-5016-0	Sewell Road	0.01 Miles S of Morgan County Line	17.73	1960
217-5029-0	Bentons Road	2.78 Miles N of Henderson Mill Road	37.04	1950

Source: GDOT

8.3 Alternative Modes

8.3.1 Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

There are bicycle facilities in the form of bike lanes on several roadways near the City of Covington, including Floyd Road and Clark Street. There are very few sidewalks in unincorporated Newton County; most of the sidewalks in the county are within the municipalities. The locations of sidewalk facilities were determined during the field review and are shown in **Figure T-6 in the Atlas**.

8.3.2 Public Transportation and Services

Newton County has no urban or rural public transportation services that are available to the general public. However, the Department of Human Resources offers funding to the GRN Community Services Board (a government supported agency) which coordinates transportation for those with special needs living in Gwinnett, Rockdale, and Newton Counties. Newton County Senior Services, Inc., a non-profit organization, provides transportation for individuals 60 years of age and older for no fee (although they do welcome cash donations). Transportation is provided to and from the Newton County Senior Center, shopping areas, health services, and other needs.

As Newton County continues to grow, there may be opportunities to partner with other agencies, such as the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA), to provide express bus service to downtown Atlanta.

8.4 Parking

In the unincorporated portions of Newton County, parking has not been a significant issue. Most of the local commercial areas are located within the cities, and there is free on-street parking located within these areas. Due to parking requirements in the county zoning regulations, local businesses and public facilities are currently adequately served.

8.5 Railroads and Airports

8.5.1 Freight Railroads

One major freight line and one shortline railroad operate in the County. A CSX local line travels in an east-west direction from Atlanta and passes through the Covington area. The line continues to the east toward Augusta, Georgia. The Great Walton Railroad shortline begins at its intersection with the CSX line in Covington and travels southeast until it terminates in Machen, Georgia.

Most of the railroad crossings in the County are at-grade with the roadways. At locations with high traffic volumes, flashing light signals and gates are provided, but at many crossings the only traffic control is a stop sign.

8.5.2 Passenger Railroads

There is currently no passenger railroad service in Newton County.

8.5.3 Airports

The Covington Municipal Airport, located approximately three miles north of the City of Covington, was established in 1966 and is the only airport in the County. The facility is owned by the City of Covington and operated by Dixie Jet Services. The airport accommodates a variety of aviation-related activities and equipment including recreational flying, corporate business jets, ultra-light aircraft, helicopters, general aviation, charter aviation, maintenance, and flight school training. The airport currently has one runway that is 4,200 feet long with lighting and navigation aids. There are plans to lengthen the runway from 4,200 ft to a length of 5,500 ft and 100 ft wide, however, these expansion plans are currently being challenged in the Federal Court of Appeals. Services for fixed base operations include fuel facilities, an administration building, office space available for leasing, maintenance facilities, flight school, etc. The airport currently experiences approximately 11,000 annual aircraft takeoffs and landings and has 80 based aircraft.

8.6 Transportation and Land Use Connection

As described in section 8.2.3, “Traffic Conditions” and as illustrated in **Figure T4 in the Atlas of Supportive Maps** most of the congested roadways in Newton County are located in the

western half of the county where significant land use changes have occurred over the past ten years. Most of this growth has primarily been related to the development of single-family subdivisions. The suburban land form that this new development has taken and its large scale have outpaced the investment in local road improvements, thus resulting in growing traffic congestion.

As a result of the rapid growth in the community few if any transportation facilities could be considered underutilized. Only in the eastern edges of the county were agricultural and forestry land uses are more prevalent are traffic volumes consistently below capacity; however, these facilities still provide necessary access to individual properties.

Following is description of the transportation improvements programmed to address the capacity issues that have resulted from these land use changes. As a result of prior and ongoing transportation planning efforts, several transportation projects within Newton County are included in local plans, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) 2005 – 2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the ARC 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), and the Fast Forward Congestion Relief Program. These planned improvements are detailed in this section.

8.6.1 Local Projects

There are currently 18 local projects planned within Newton County. These projects are funded by two funding sources. The first group of projects is funded by a Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) and the second group is funded by Newton County's capital budget.

SPLOST Funded Projects

- Dearing Street
Location: At Covington Bypass
Project Description: New Intersection

- SR 20 & 212
Location: From Brown Bridge to SR 212
Project Description: Intersection Operations

- Smith Store Road
Location: At Salem Road
Project Description: Intersection Operations

- Crowell Road
Location: From Interstate 20 to Harold Dobbs Road

- Dial Mill Road
Location: From Mt. Zion Road to Gum Creek
Project Description: Improve Box Culvert

- Gaither Road
Location: At Speers Road

- Henderson Mill Road
Location: At GASR 36
- Brown Bridge Road
Location: From SR 20 & 212 to Covington
Project Description: Widen and repave
- Cook Road/Mt. Zion Road
Location: From Marble Drive to Edwards Road
Project Description: Intersection improvements
- Oak Hill Road
Location: From SR 81 to SR 212
- Miscellaneous Guardrail Projects
- Hightower Trail
Location: At Gum Creek
- Bailey Creek Road
Location: From Bullock Road to Rockdale County Line
- Flat Shoals Road
Location: At Covington Bypass
Project Description: Traffic Signal and Turn Lanes
- Sewell Road
Location: At Little River

Capital Budget Funded Projects (2005)

- River Cove Road
Location: River Cove Road to SR 11
Project Description: Extension of River Cove Road
- Alcovy Road
Location: At Cornish Creek
Project Description: Bridge improvements
- Edwards Road
Location: At Gum Creek
Project Description: Bridge improvements

8.6.2 Transportation Improvement Program Projects

Eleven projects are included in the 2005 – 2010 TIP, which cover the time period from 2005 to 2010. They include transit funding, roadway widening projects, bridge upgrades, intersection improvements, and interchange improvements.

- 5307 Allocation for Newton County – FY 2005-2007
Project #: AR-NE-5307A
Project Description: Transit Facilities
Funding: Transit Urbanized Area Formula Program
Project Sponsor: Newton County
- 5307 Allocation For Newton County – FY 2008-2010
Project #: AR-NE-5307B
Project Description: Transit Facilities
Funding: Transit Urbanized Area Formula Program
Project Sponsor: Newton County
- Placeholder For Newton County Project (Not Yet Defined)
Project #: NE-001
Project Description: Roadway Operational Upgrades
Funding: Q23-Surface Transportation Program
Project Sponsor: Newton County
- US 278 from Covington Bypass to SR 142
Project #: NE-007
Project Description: Roadway Capacity – widen to 4 lanes
Funding: Q24-Surface Transportation Program
Project Sponsor: GDOT
- US 278 at the Alcovy River
Project #: NE-008
Project Description: Bridge Upgrade
Funding: Q24-Surface Transportation Program
Project Sponsor: GDOT
- SR 212 from Bethany Road to Oak Hill Road
Project #: NE-011
Project Description: Roadway Operational Upgrades
Funding: Q24-Surface Transportation Program
Project Sponsor: GDOT
- SR 20 at the South River (Newton/Henry County Line)
Project #: NE-012
Project Description: Bridge Upgrade
Funding: Q10-Bridge (On-System)
Project Sponsor: GDOT

- I-20 East at SR 142
Project #: NE-AR-001A
Project Description: Interchange Upgrade
Funding: Q05-National Highway System
Project Sponsor: GDOT
- I-20 East at SR 142
Project #: NE-AR-001B
Project Description: Interchange Upgrade
Funding: GRV Bonds (GARVEE Bond Program)
Project Sponsor: GDOT
- I-20 East from Alcovy Road to SR 142
Project #: NE-AR-002A
Project Description: Roadway Capacity – widen to 6 lanes
Funding: Q05-National Highway System
Project Sponsor: GDOT
- I-20 East from Alcovy Road to SR 142
Project #: NE-AR-002B
Project Description: Roadway Capacity – widen to 6 lanes
Funding: GRV Bonds (GARVEE Bond Program)
Project Sponsor: GDOT

8.6.3 Regional Transportation Plan Projects

Twelve projects within Newton County are included in the ARC 2030 RTP that covers the period from 2011 to 2030. Projects include mainly roadway widening improvements.

- East Covington Bypass from SR 36 to SR 12
Project #: NE-003
Project Description: Roadway Capacity – widen to 4 lanes
Funding: Fedaid-2011-2030
Project Sponsor: GDOT
- SR 162 (Salem Road) from Old Salem Road to Brown Bridge Road
Project #: NE-004
Project Description: Roadway Capacity – widen to 4 lanes
Funding: Q24-Surface Transportation Program
Project Sponsor: GDOT
- SR 142 from south of US 278 to north of CR 275/Hazelbrand Road
Project #: NE-005A
Project Description: Roadway Capacity – widen to 4 lanes

Funding: Fedaid-2011-2030
Project Sponsor: GDOT

- SR 142 from Alcovy Road to north of I-20 East
Project #: NE-005B
Project Description: Roadway Capacity – widen to 4 lanes
Funding: Q24-Surface Transportation Program
Project Sponsor: GDOT
- Crowell Road from Brown Bridge Road to I-20 East
Project #: NE-021
Project Description: Roadway Capacity – widen to 4 lanes
Funding: Fedaid-2011-2030
Project Sponsor: GDOT
- West Covington Bypass/Oxford Bypass from I-20 East to SR 81
Project #: NE-022
Project Description: Roadway Capacity – new 4-lane facility
Funding: Fedaid-2011-2030
Project Sponsor: GDOT
- SR 162 (Salem Road) from Brown Bridge Road to SR 81
Project #: NE-033A
Project Description: Roadway Capacity – widen to 4 lanes
Funding: Fedaid-2011-2030
Project Sponsor: Newton County
- SR 162/Lover's Lane from SR 162 Connector to Flat Shoals Road
Project #: NE-033C
Project Description: Roadway Capacity – new 4-lane facility
Funding: Fedaid-2011-2030
Project Sponsor: GDOT
- SR 212 from Rockdale County Line to SR 162
Project #: NE-059
Project Description: Roadway Capacity – widen to 4 lanes
Funding: Fedaid-2011-2030
Project Sponsor: GDOT
- Almon Road from Rockdale County Line to I-20 East
Project #: NE-069
Project Description: Roadway Capacity – widen to 4 lanes
Funding: Fedaid-2011-2030
Project Sponsor: Newton County

- Frontage Road South from Rockdale County Line to US 278 at I-20 East
Project #: NE-074
Project Description: Roadway Capacity – widen to 4 lanes
Funding: Fedaid-2011-2030
Project Sponsor: Newton County
- SR 162 Connector from SR 162 to SR 81
Project #: NE-083
Project Description: Roadway Capacity – widen to 4 lanes
Funding: Fedaid-2011-2030
Project Sponsor: GDOT

8.6.4 State Transportation Improvement Program Projects

Projects that have been incorporated into the Atlanta Regional Commission's TIP are sent to the state government for approval. Once a project on the TIP list is approved and guaranteed funding from the state, the project obtains status on the STIP list of projects that covers the period from 2005 to 2007. Nineteen projects within Newton County are included in the STIP. These projects are shown in **Figure T-7 in the Atlas**.

*Projects also on the ARC 2005-2010 TIP

**Projects also on the ARC 2030 RTP

- SR 162/Salem Road at CR 33/Spring Road
Project #: 0000842
Project Description: Intersection Improvement
- SR 81 at CR 309/653 & SR 162 Connector; CR 574 Porterdale
Project #: 0004146
Project Description: Intersection Improvement
- SR 212 over Lake Jackson – guardrail at approaches
Project #: 0004444
Project Description: Guardrail
- Yellow River/Brown's Bridge Road multi-use trail
Project #: 0004709
Project Description: Bicycle/Ped. Facility
- SR 11/I-20 Relocate Close Frontage Road – River Road Extension
Project #: 0006022
Project Description: Roadway Project
- Pace & Elm Street Sidewalk
Project #: 0006648
Projected Description: Sidewalks

- Historic Train Depot-Porterdale's Trail & Riverside Community
 Project #: 0006649
 Project Description: Historic Facilities
- *I-20 @ SR 142-12/Covington (including relocation of Frontage Rd/CR 72)
 Project #: 210530
 TIP #: NE-AR-001A&B
 Project Description: Interchange
- *I-20 FM Alcovy Road including interchange to SR 142 in Covington
 Project #: 210810
 TIP #: AR-002A&B
 Project Description: Widening to 6 lanes
- **SR 162/Salem Rd from Brown Bridge Rd/Newton to south of Flat Shoals/Rockdale
 Project #: 231210
 TIP #: NE-004
 Project Description: Widening to 6 lanes
- SR 142 from S of SR 12/US 278 North to N of CR 75 in Covington
 Project #: 231220
 Project Description: Widening to 4 lanes
- *SR 12/US 278 from Covington Bypass/CR 653 East to SR 142
 Project #: 231630
 TIP #: NE-007
 Project Description: Widening to 4 lanes
- SR 36 at Flat Shoals/Steele Rd/CR 181 & Henderson Mill/CR 508
 Project #: 232330
 Project Description: Intersection Improvement
- SR 142 from I-20 to Alcovy Rd in Covington
 Project #: 242230
 Project Description: Widening to 4 lanes
- *SR 212 from Bethany Road to Oak Hill Road
 Project #: 245190
 TIP #: NE-011
 Project Description: Intersection Improvement
- *SR 20 @ South River Newton-Henry Co. Line
 Project #: 245380
 TIP #: NE-012
 Project Description: Bridges

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- SR 36 @ South River at Butts-Newton Co. Line
Project #: 333172
Project Description: Bridges

Two Newton County projects have been selected for the Governor's Fast Forward Congestion Relief Program. The program provides additional funding to certain planned STIP projects in order to speed up the construction process and be completed by the year 2010. Two of Newton County's STIP projects are included in the Governor's Fast Forward Program.

- *I-20 @ SR 142-12/Covington (including relocation of Frontage Rd/CR 72)
Project #: 210530
TIP #: NE-AR-001A&B
Project Description: Interchange
- *I-20 FM Alcovy Road Including Interchange to SR 142 in Covington
Project #: 210810
TIP #: AR-002A&B
Project Description: Widening

II. Analysis of Consistency with Quality Community Objectives

This section is intended to meet the Minimum Standards for Local Comprehensive Planning requirement that the Community Assessment include an evaluation of the community's current policies, activities and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives contained in the State Planning Goals and Objectives. Each of the 15 Quality Community Objectives is listed below with a brief summary of Newton County's strengths and needs for improvement with respect to the objective.

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

Newton County's Strengths

1. Our county has areas with distinct historic character that help to establish a strong identity for the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.
2. Our county has regional centers for manufacturing employment, post-secondary education, and economic development.
3. Our county participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development's regional tourism partnership.
4. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment, education.
5. Our county has an attractive setting that is visible from the principal gateways into our community.

Newton County's Needs for Improvement

The land uses along some highway corridors form stereotypical commercial strips that detract from our rural character and regional identity.

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

Newton County's Strengths

1. The County has population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.
2. We are preparing for growth in our future water needs with regional reservoirs.
3. Our land use plan establishes a hierarchy of planned centers in accessible areas with infrastructure that can accommodate future growth.
4. We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.
5. We have initiated a Comprehensive Transportation Plan to establish the need for specific transportation improvements needed to prepare for our continued growth.

6. Our Comprehensive Plan includes a community facilities policy to ensure that the level of service and protection does not diminish due to increased growth. Another policy is to plan for adequate water and sewer proactively by establishing infrastructure prior to increased development.

Newton County's Need for Improvement

1. The County does not have specific statistical targets for the magnitude and timing of its future growth and development.
2. Many of our residents commute to other counties, and our Comprehensive Plan has not established policies to assist us in balancing growth of housing with new jobs.
3. Newton County and its cities have not established future annexation areas and service agreements that could serve as a basis for its extraterritorial jurisdiction.

(c) **Appropriate Business Objective:** The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.

Newton County's Strengths

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 ED organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit business/industry that will be compatible.
3. Our land use plan and zoning map sets aside large areas near I-20 for future industrial expansion.
4. We recruit businesses that provide or create sustainable products.
5. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple us.

Newton County's Need for Improvement

1. More analysis is needed to determine what types of businesses will be appropriate for Newton County's future population.
2. Our retail and services sector has not kept pace with local residents' needs.

(d) **Educational Opportunities Objective:** 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.

Newton County's Strengths

1. Our community provides work-force training options for our 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 at Georgia Perimeter College and Oxford College is nearby.
4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.

- (e) **Employment Options Objective:** A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.

Newton County's Strengths

1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.
2. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.
3. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.
4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs.

Newton County's Need for Improvement

1. More analysis is needed to determine what types of employment opportunities will be needed for Newton County's future labor force.

- (f) **Heritage Preservation Objective:** 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.

Newton County's Strengths

1. Our Comprehensive Plan has many policies that support the preservation of historic resources.
2. We have well-recognized and well protected historic districts in our community.
3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we are preparing ordinances to encourage this.

Newton County's Need for Improvement

1. We need design guidelines for redevelopment and infill to ensure that it will be compatible with the historic character of some of our neighborhoods.

- (g) **Open Space Objective:** 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.

Newton County's Strengths

1. Our Comprehensive Plan includes a Natural Resources policy to utilize open space/ conservation design to promote natural resource protection and a Land Use policy to encourage development in planned clusters that will provide for mixed uses, open space and protect the rural/agricultural character.
2. Our community has a greenspace plan.
3. Our community's zoning ordinance provides incentives for open space conservation subdivisions in which developers are encouraged to preserve greenspace in new development.
4. 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.

- (h) **Environmental Protection Objective:** Air quality and environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development. Environmentally sensitive areas deserve special protection particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.

Newton County's Strengths

1. Our Comprehensive Plan includes Natural Resources policies to protect groundwater recharge areas and wetlands and to place a high value on the protection, preservation and appropriate use of natural resources and to formulate policies and regulations to guide development decisions.
2. Our community has passed the necessary Part V Environmental Ordinances, and we enforce them.
3. We have a natural resources inventory.
4. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.
5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance.
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.)

- (i) **Regional Cooperation Objective:** 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.

Newton County's Strengths

1. We participate actively in the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Council and the Atlanta Regional Commission.
2. We plan jointly with our cities for transportation planning purposes.
3. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategies.
4. We cooperate with at least one local government to provide or share services (parks and recreation, E911, Emergency Services, Police or Sheriff's Office, schools, water, sewer, other).

Newton County's Need for Improvement

1. We do not have a regular meeting process with the county and neighboring cities to discuss regional issues.

- (j) **Transportations Alternatives Objective:** 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.

Newton County's Strengths

1. Our Comprehensive Plan includes a policy to support the creation of a more balanced multi-modal transportation system that is less reliant on the automobile and another policy to support the State's efforts to develop a commuter rail system.
2. Our Comprehensive Plan has a policy to provide safe access to commercial centers by pedestrians and bicyclists and to designate more bike lanes as an alternative to automobile transportation.
3. We are in the process of preparing a County-wide Comprehensive Transportation Plan that will identify transportation alternatives.
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community.
5. We have a plan for bicycle routes and greenways through our community.

Newton County's Needs to Improve

1. We do not have a public transportation system in our community.
2. We do not require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.

(k) Regional Solutions Objective: 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.

Newton County's Strengths

1. We plan jointly with our cities for transportation planning purposes.
2. We cooperate with at least one local government to provide or share services (parks and recreation, E911, Emergency Services, Police or Sheriff's Office, schools, water, sewer, other).
3. We are discussing the potential of adopting a joint program of impact fees with our cities.

Newton County's Need for Improvement

1. We do not have a regular meeting process with the county and neighboring cities to discuss solutions to regional issues.

(l) Housing Opportunities Objectives: Quality housing and a range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community, to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community.

Newton County's Strengths

1. Our Comprehensive Plan includes Housing policies to promote and make available a wide range of housing types and designs for all income groups.
2. Our Zoning Ordinance allows small lot single family detached and attached housing.
3. Most people who work in our community can afford to live here, too.
4. Our community has enough housing for low and moderate income households.

Newton County's Needs for Improvement

1. Our community does not allow accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.

2. Our community has a sufficient supply of housing for people of moderate means, but we need to develop more housing to attract corporate management.

(m) Traditional Neighborhood Objective: Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including the use of more human scale development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.

Newton County's Strengths

1. The Comprehensive Plan has policies that promote renovation of older homes, the adaptive use of vacant buildings, and cluster residential development that provides for open space and landscape preservation.
2. The County has an historic downtown and several original neighborhoods that embody many of the principles of Traditional Neighborhood Design.
3. The County has several zoning districts in its Zoning Ordinance that allow mixed use development, including the Community Oriented Residential Development District.
4. We have a tree preservation and replacement ordinance that requires new development to protect existing trees and to plant indigenous shade trees.
5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts) 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.

Newton County's Needs for Improvement

1. The adopted Comprehensive Plan does not define or encourage Traditional Neighborhood Design, as such.
2. Our zoning ordinances lack design guidelines for traditional neighborhoods.
3. The C.O.R.D. district does not allow mixed use or neo-traditional development "by right" so that developers have to go through a public hearing for plan approval.

(n) Infill Development Objective: 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.

Newton County's Strengths

1. Newton County's adopted Comprehensive Plan has a policy to promote and create incentives for infill development, older home renovation and the adaptive use of vacant buildings for affordable housing. Another policy supports infill development in areas with adequate infrastructure. Another policy says to avoid scattered residential development.
2. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment.
3. We have areas of our community that are being planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road.)
4. Our community allows small lot development (5000 SF or less) for some uses.

Newton County's Needs for Improvement

1. Our community has not identified specific areas that are appropriate for infill development.
2. Our community does not have specific incentives for encouraging infill development.
3. Our community does not have an overlay district with compatibility guidelines for infill development.
4. Our community has not prepared an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.

(o) Sense of Place Objective: 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.

Newton County's Strengths

1. We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage and have taken steps to protect those areas.
2. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.

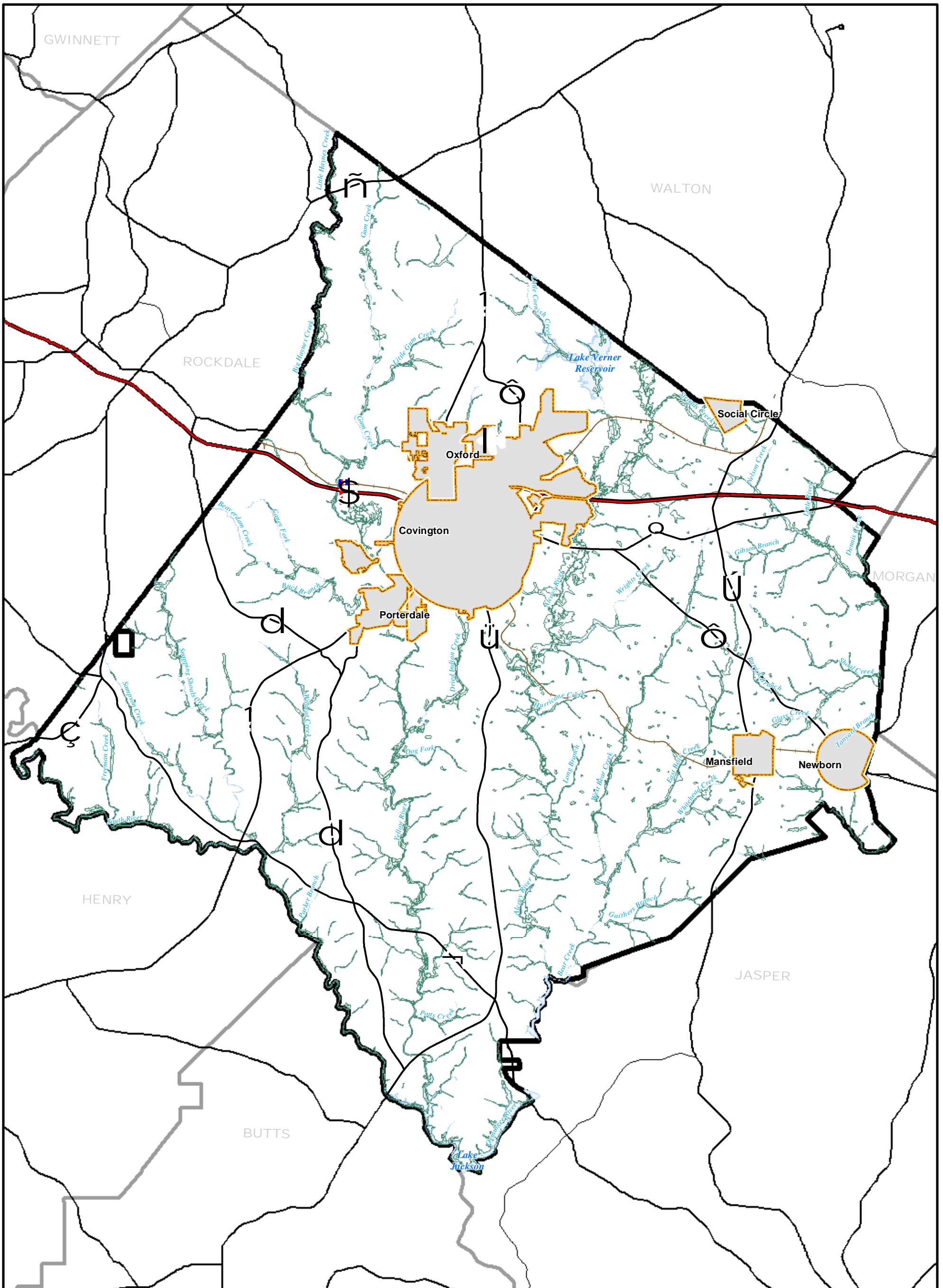
Newton County's Needs for Improvement

1. Some of the highway entrances to our community is typical of most commercial strips and lacks a distinct character or attractive visual quality. We need a better gateway.
2. We do not have ordinances to regulate building materials in our highly visible areas.

III. Atlas of Supportive Maps

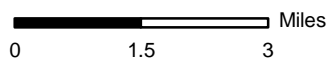
Following are a series of maps that were described and referenced in the previous analysis.

- Figure NC-1: Wetlands
- Figure NC-2: Groundwater Recharge Areas
- Figure NC-3: Steep Slopes
- Figure NC-4: Significant Soils
- Figure NC-5: Floodplains
- Figure NC-6: Impaired Waterways
- Figure NC-7: Historic Districts
- Figure CF-1: Water Service Areas
- Figure CF-2: Sewer Service Areas
- Figure CF-3: Public Safety Facilities
- Figure CF-4: Community Facilities
- Figure T-1: Existing Roadway Lanes
- Figure T-2: Traffic Signal Locations
- Figure T-3: Roadway Functional Classification
- Figure T-4: Existing Daily Traffic Volumes
- Figure T-5: Bridges in Unsatisfactory Condition
- Figure T-6: Existing Sidewalks
- Figure T-7: Planned Improvement Projects



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

Wetlands



 Wetland










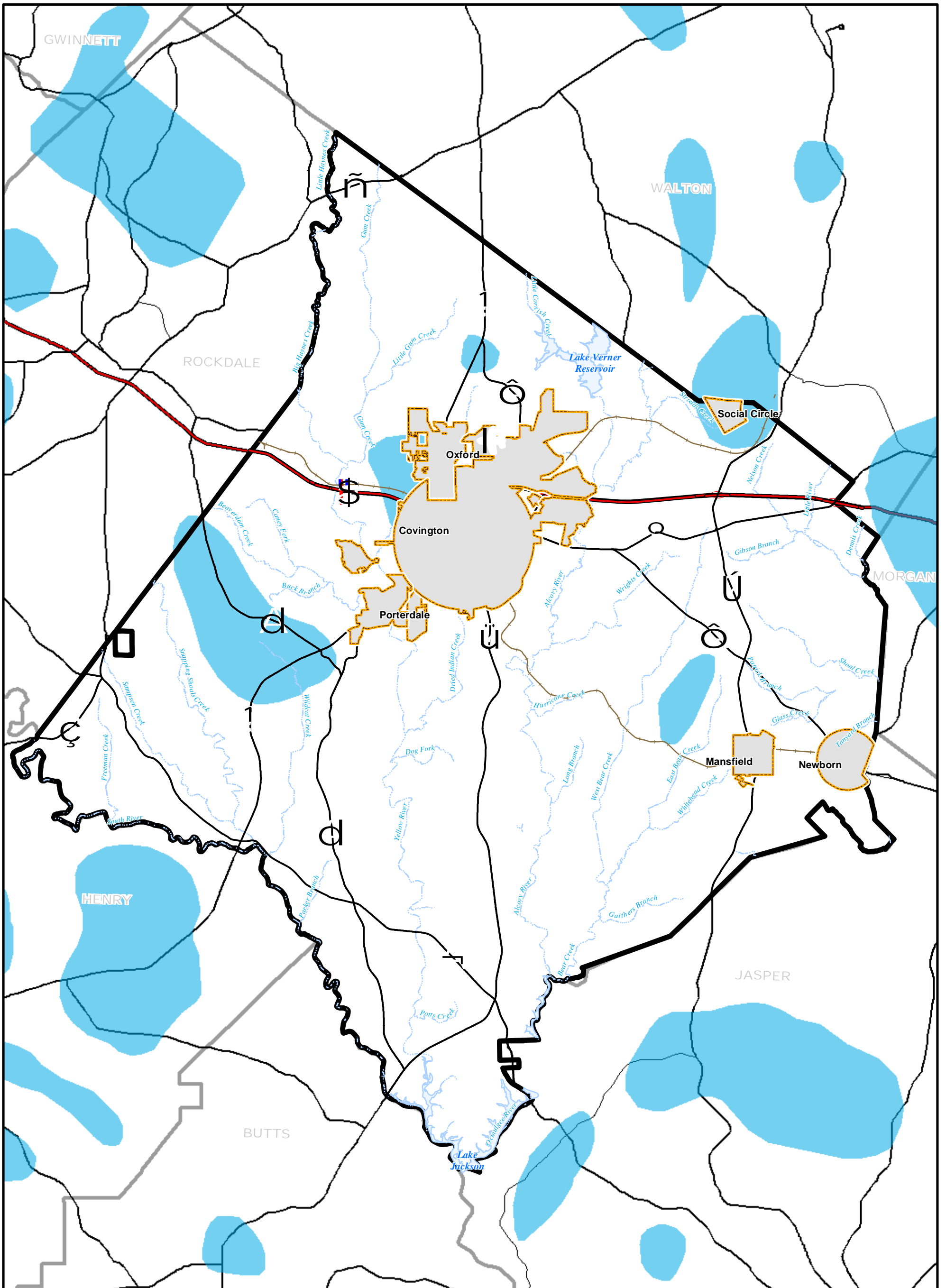
-  Covington Municipal Airport
-  Interstate
-  Major Road
-  Ramp
-  Railroad
-  River/Stream
-  Lake/Pond
-  City Boundary
-  County Boundary



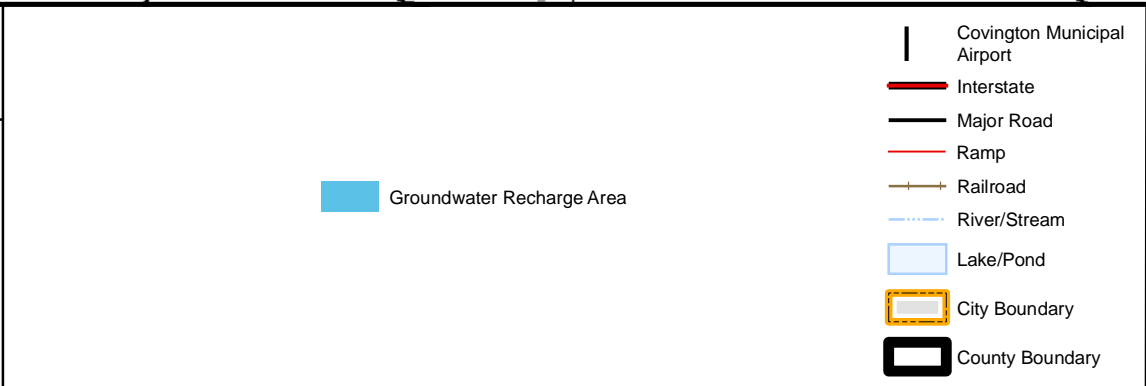
Figure NC-1



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

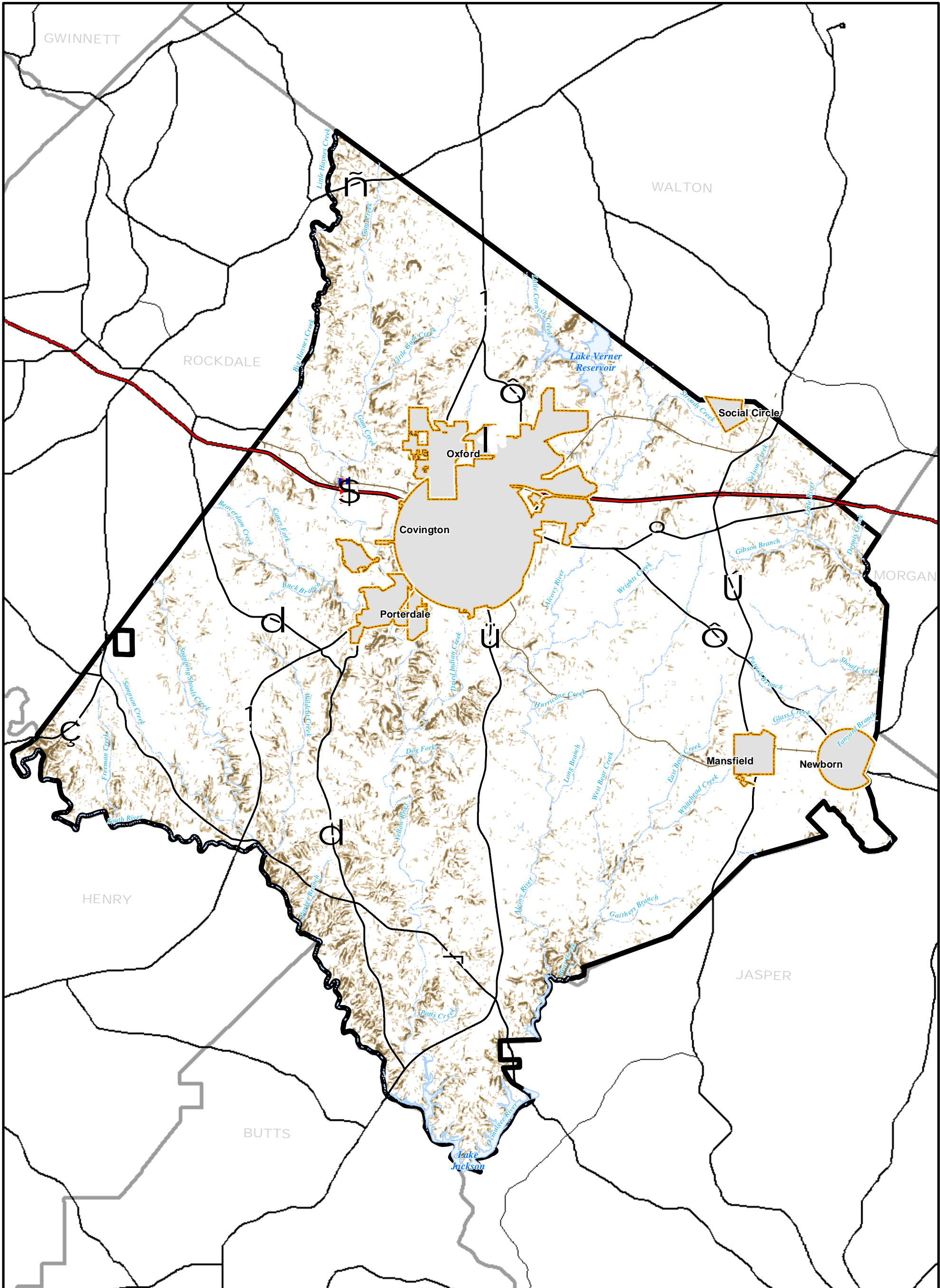
Groundwater Recharge Area

Miles
0 1.5 3



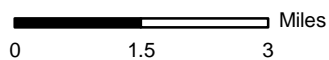
JORDAN JONES & GOULDING

Figure NC-2



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

Slopes

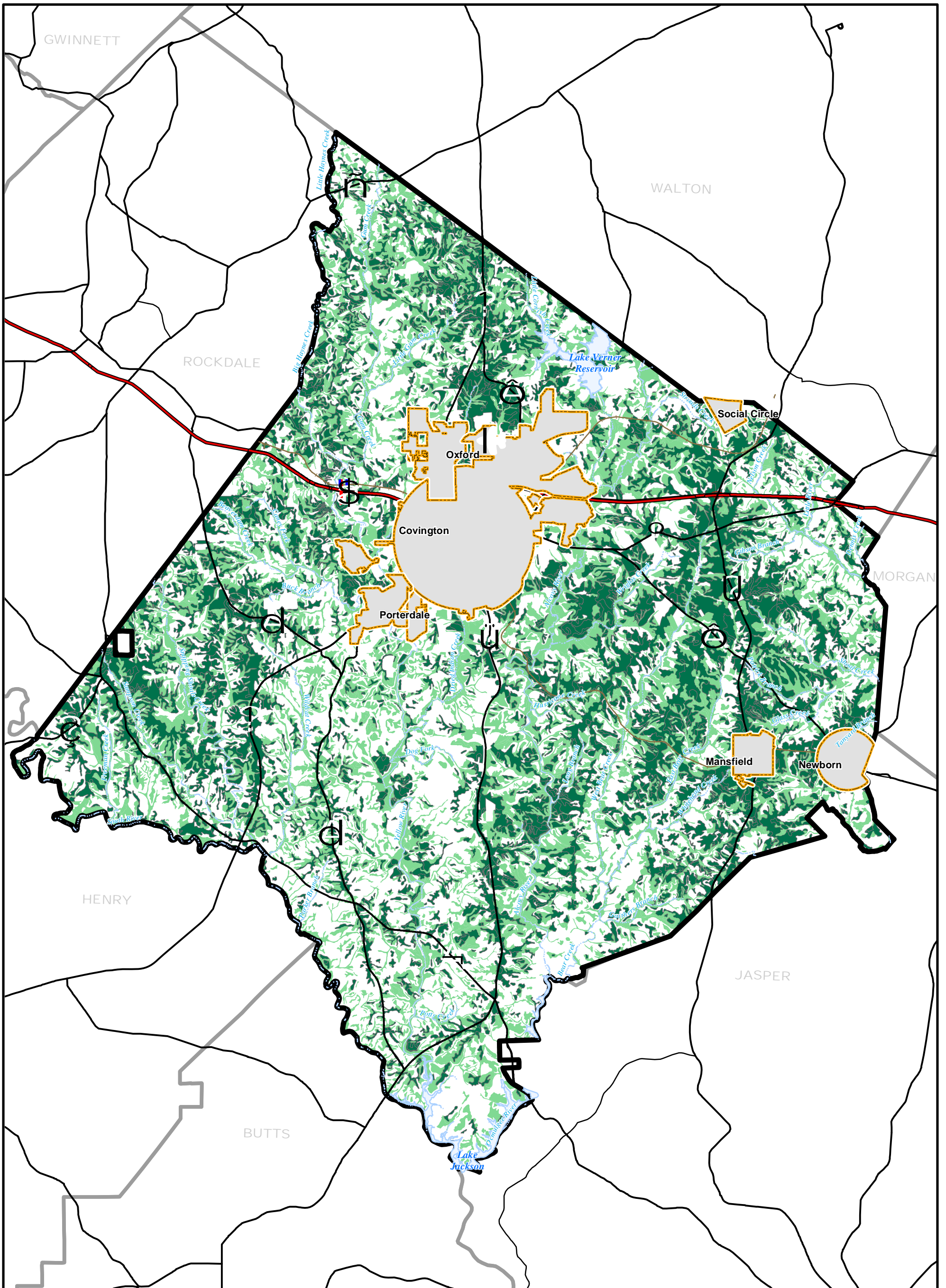


- Slopes Between 10% and 15%
- Slopes Greater than 15%

- Covington Municipal Airport
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Ramp
- Railroad
- River/Stream
- Lake/Pond
- City Boundary
- County Boundary

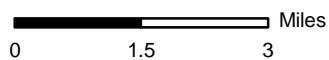


Figure NC-3



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

Prime Agricultural Land

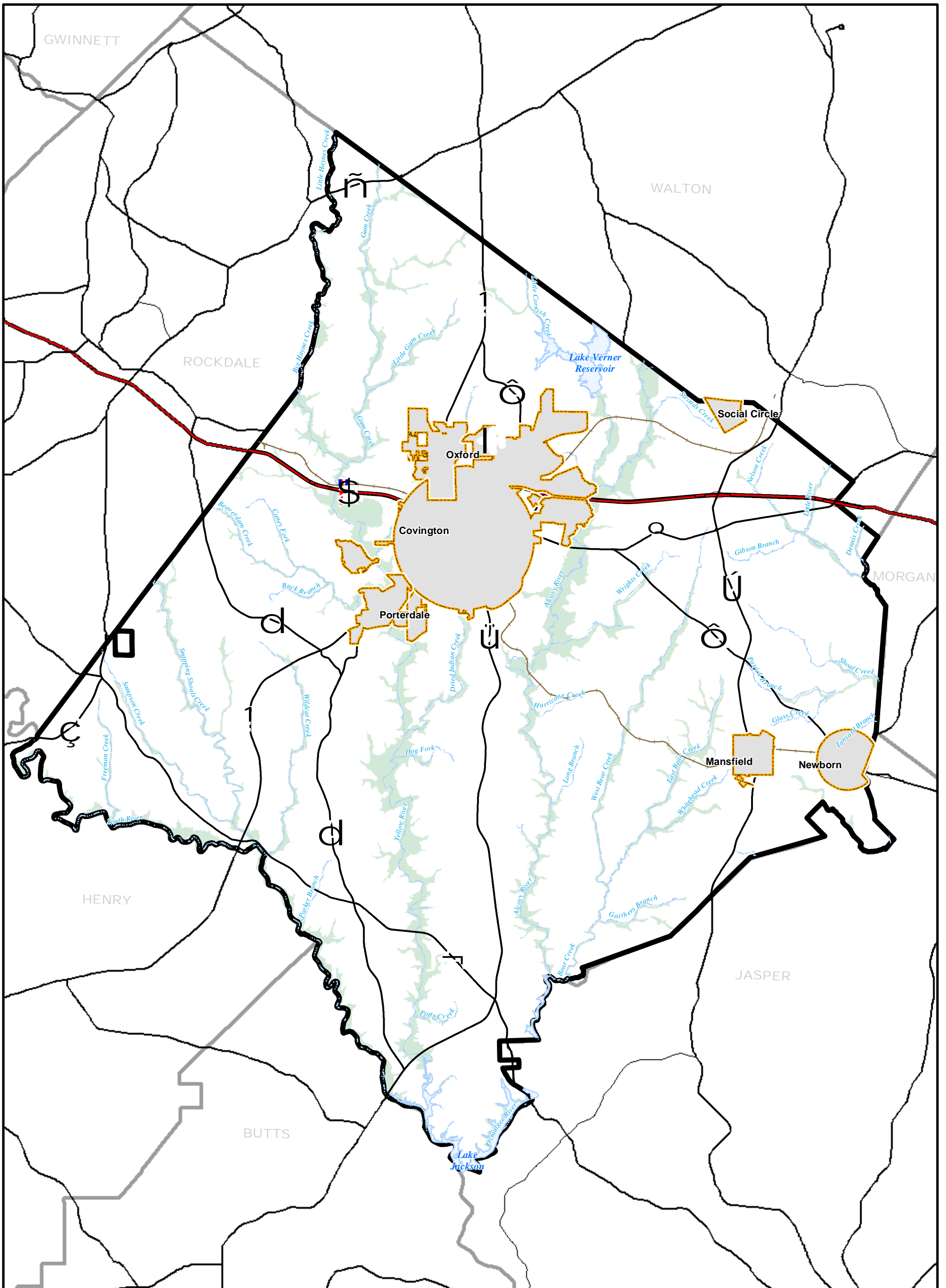


- Soils of Statewide Importance
- All Areas are Prime Farmland

- Covington Municipal Airport
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Ramp
- Railroad
- River/Stream
- Lake/Pond
- City Boundary
- County Boundary

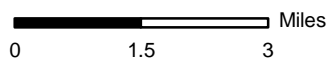


Figure NC-4



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

Floodplains

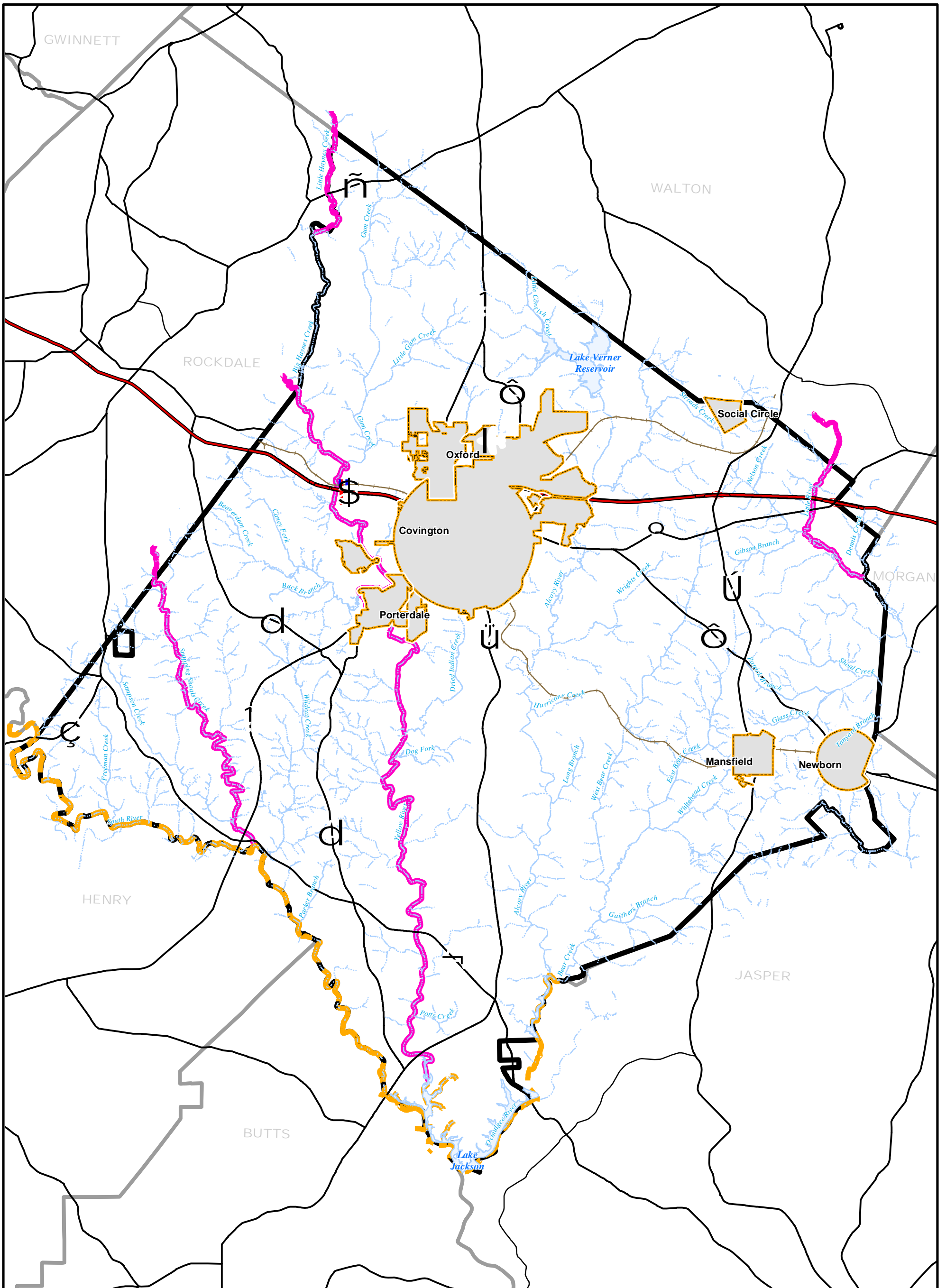


100-Year Floodplain

- Covington Municipal Airport
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Ramp
- Railroad
- River/Stream
- Lake/Pond
- City Boundary
- County Boundary

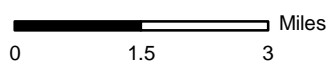


Figure NC-5



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

Impaired Waterways

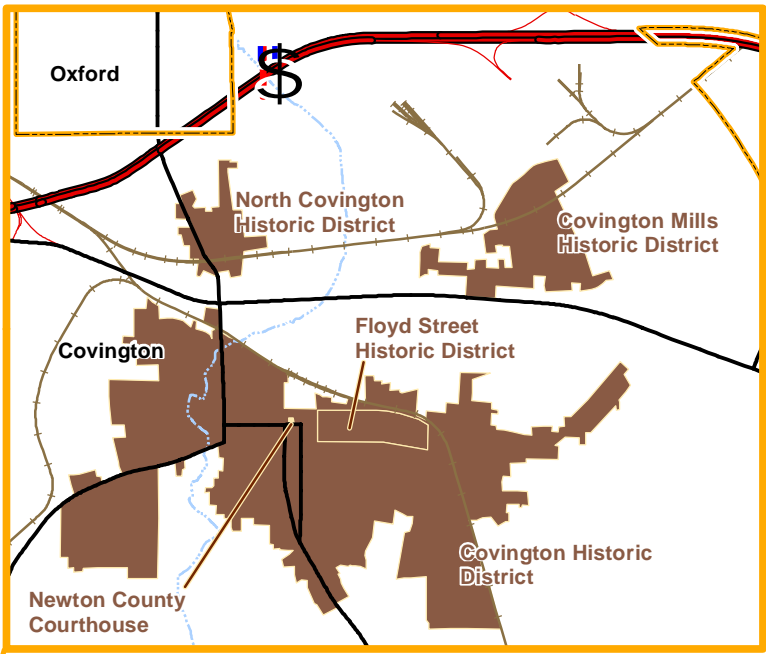
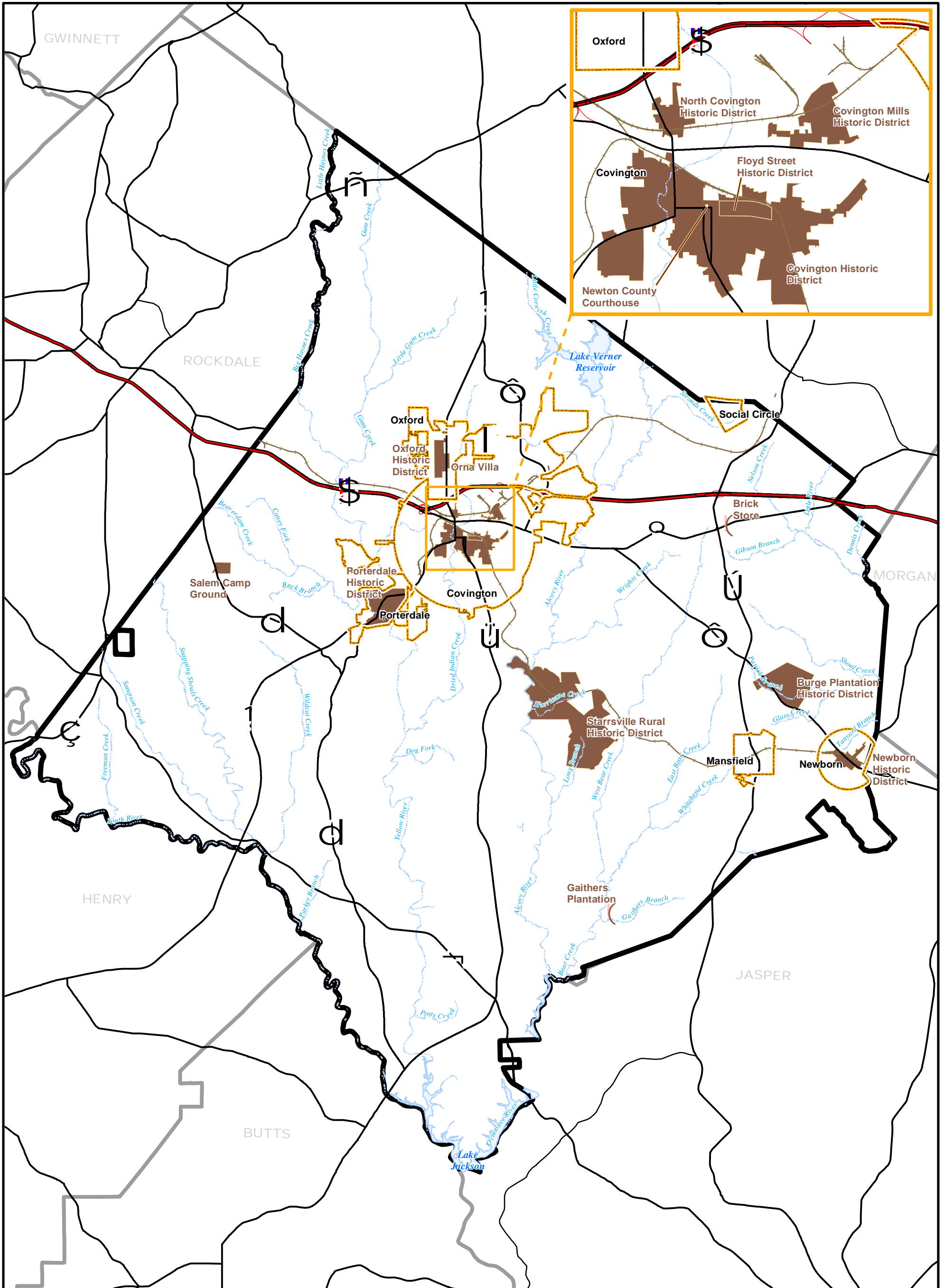


- Partially Supporting Designated Use
- Not Supporting Designated Use

- Covington Municipal Airport
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Ramp
- Railroad
- River/Stream
- Lake/Pond
- City Boundary
- County Boundary

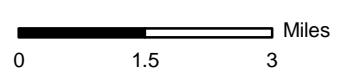


Figure NC-6



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

Historic Resources

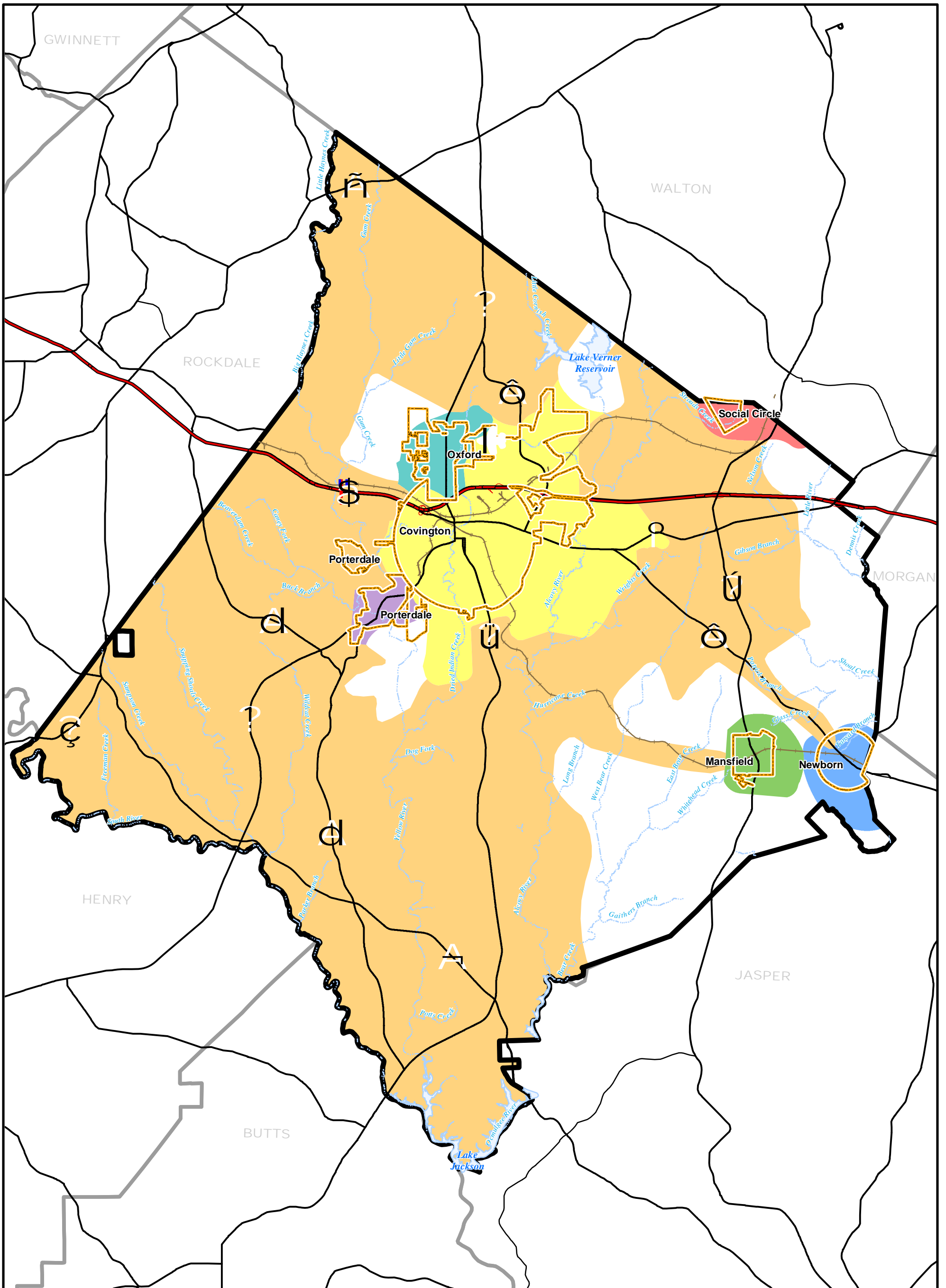


- Recognized Historic Site (Not included in National Register)
- National Register Districts and Sites

- Covington Municipal Airport
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Ramp
- Railroad
- River/Stream
- Lake/Pond
- City Boundary
- County Boundary

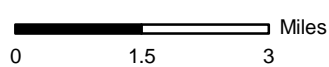


Figure NC-7



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

Water Service Areas



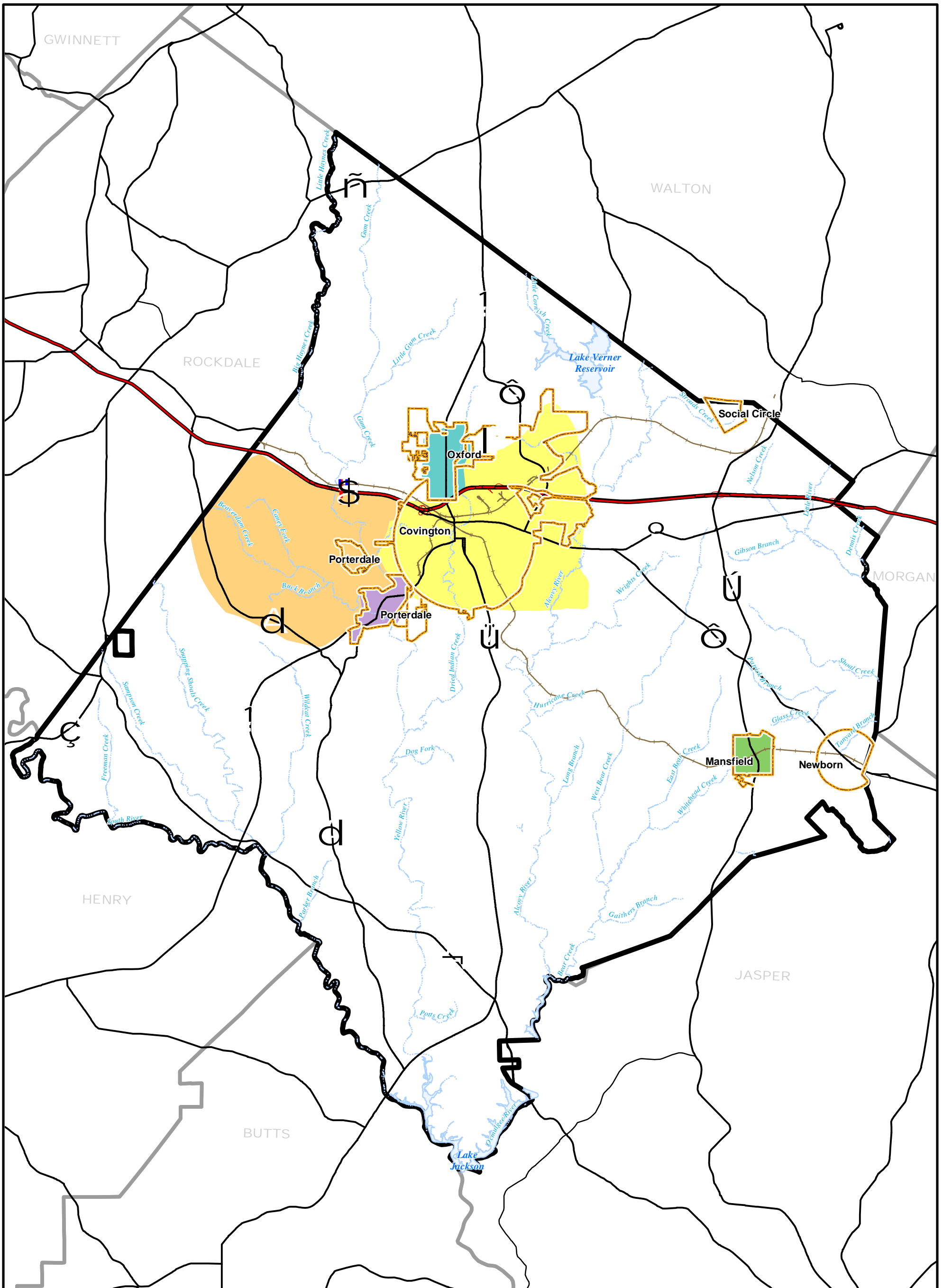
Water Service Areas

- Covington
- NCWSA
- Oxford
- Porterdale
- Social Circle
- Mansfield
- Newborn

- Covington Municipal Airport
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Ramp
- Railroad
- River/Stream
- Lake/Pond
- City Boundary
- County Boundary

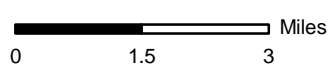


Figure CF-1



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

Sewer Service Areas



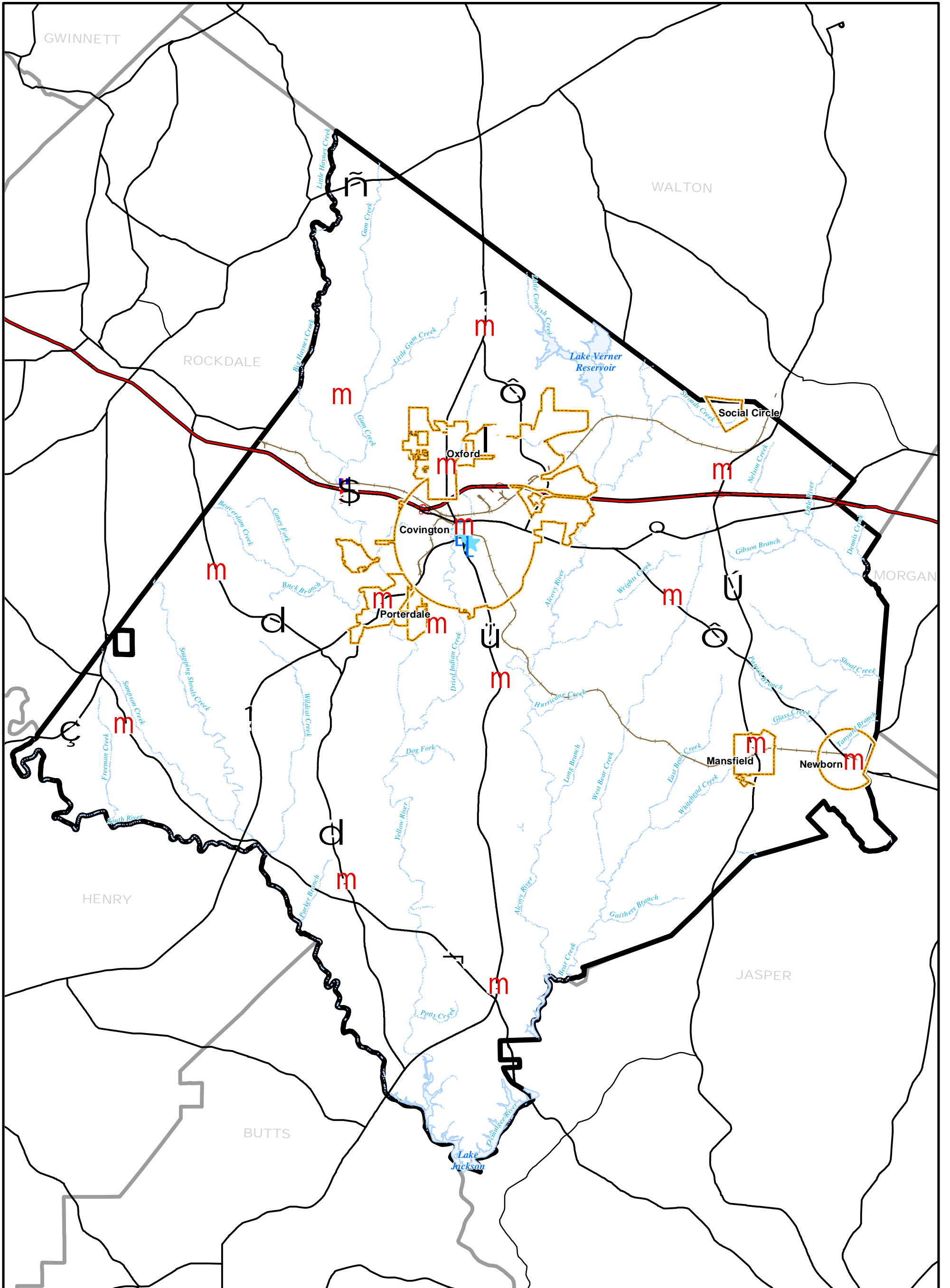
Sewer Service Areas

- Covington
- Mansfield
- NCWSA
- Oxford
- Porterdale

- Covington Municipal Airport
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Ramp
- Railroad
- River/Stream
- Lake/Pond
- City Boundary
- County Boundary

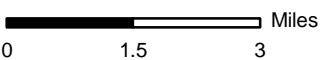




Figure CF-2



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

Public Safety



-  Police Station/Sheriff's Office
-  Firestation










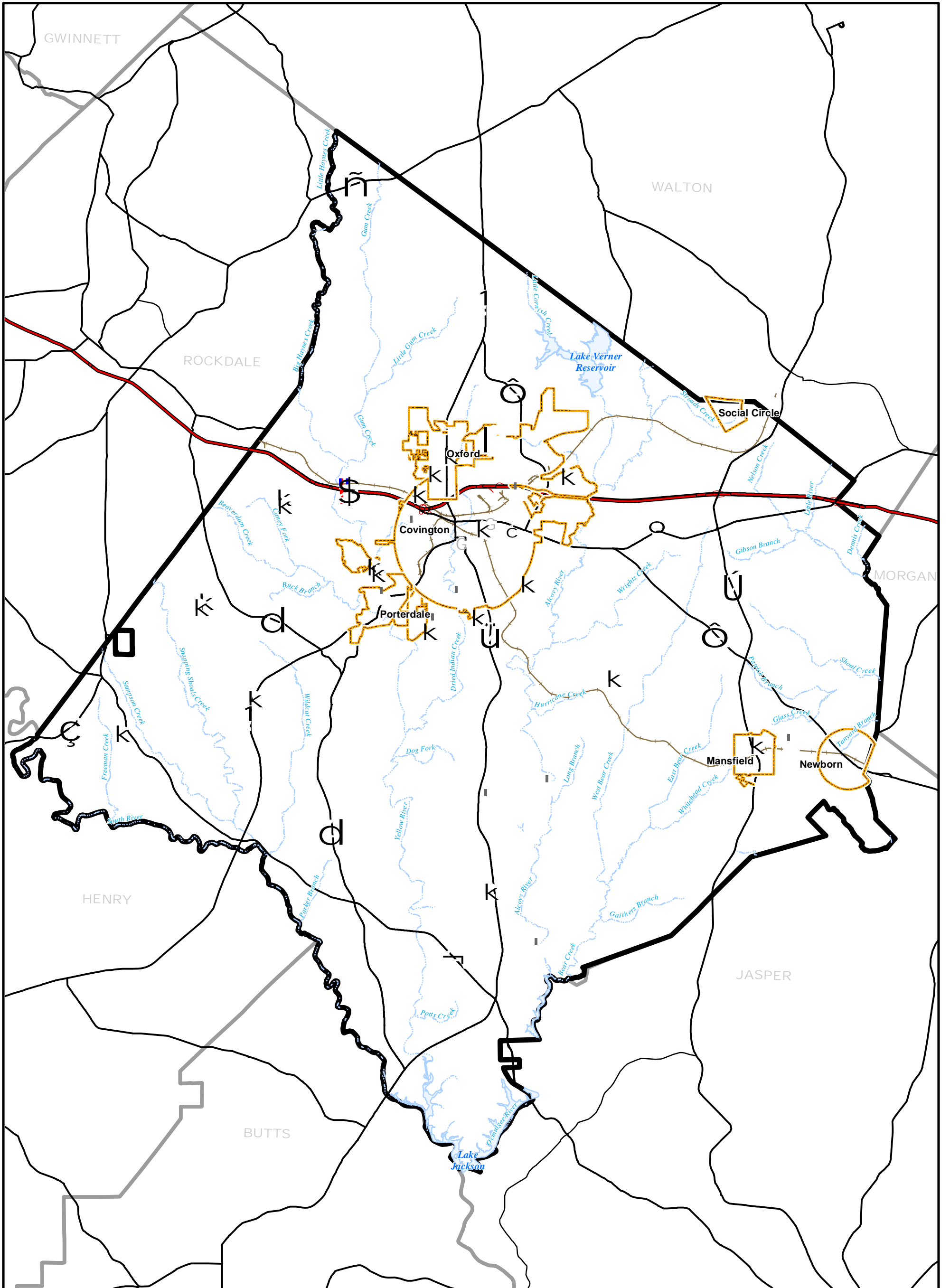
-  Covington Municipal Airport
-  Interstate
-  Major Road
-  Ramp
-  Railroad
-  River/Stream
-  Lake/Pond
-  City Boundary
-  County Boundary

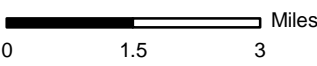


Figure CF-3



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

Community Facilities

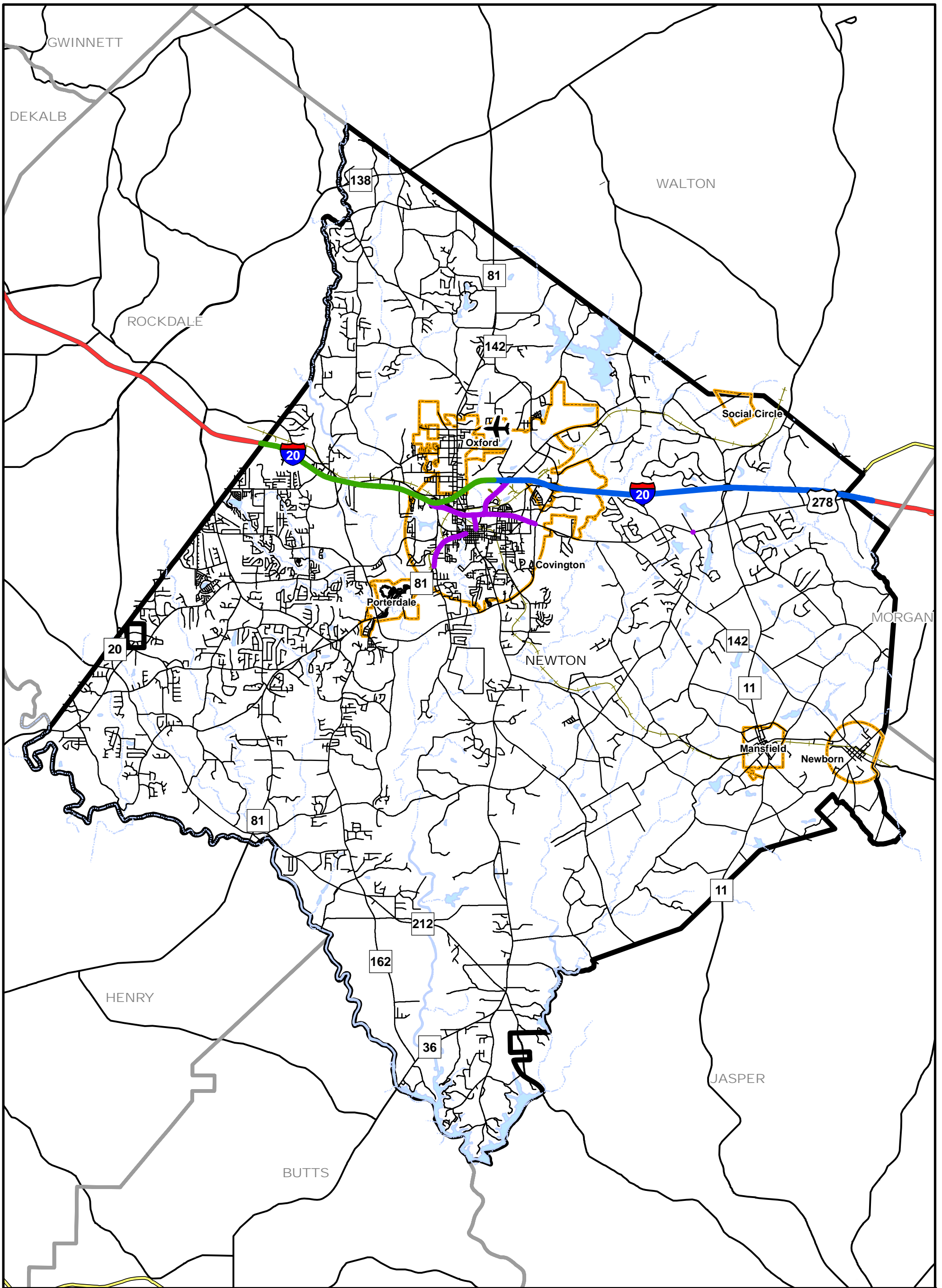


- G Hospital
- I Park
- C Library
- K School

- Covington Municipal Airport
- Interstate
- Major Road
- Ramp
- Railroad
- River/Stream
- Lake/Pond
- City Boundary
- County Boundary



Figure CF-4



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

Existing Roadway Lanes

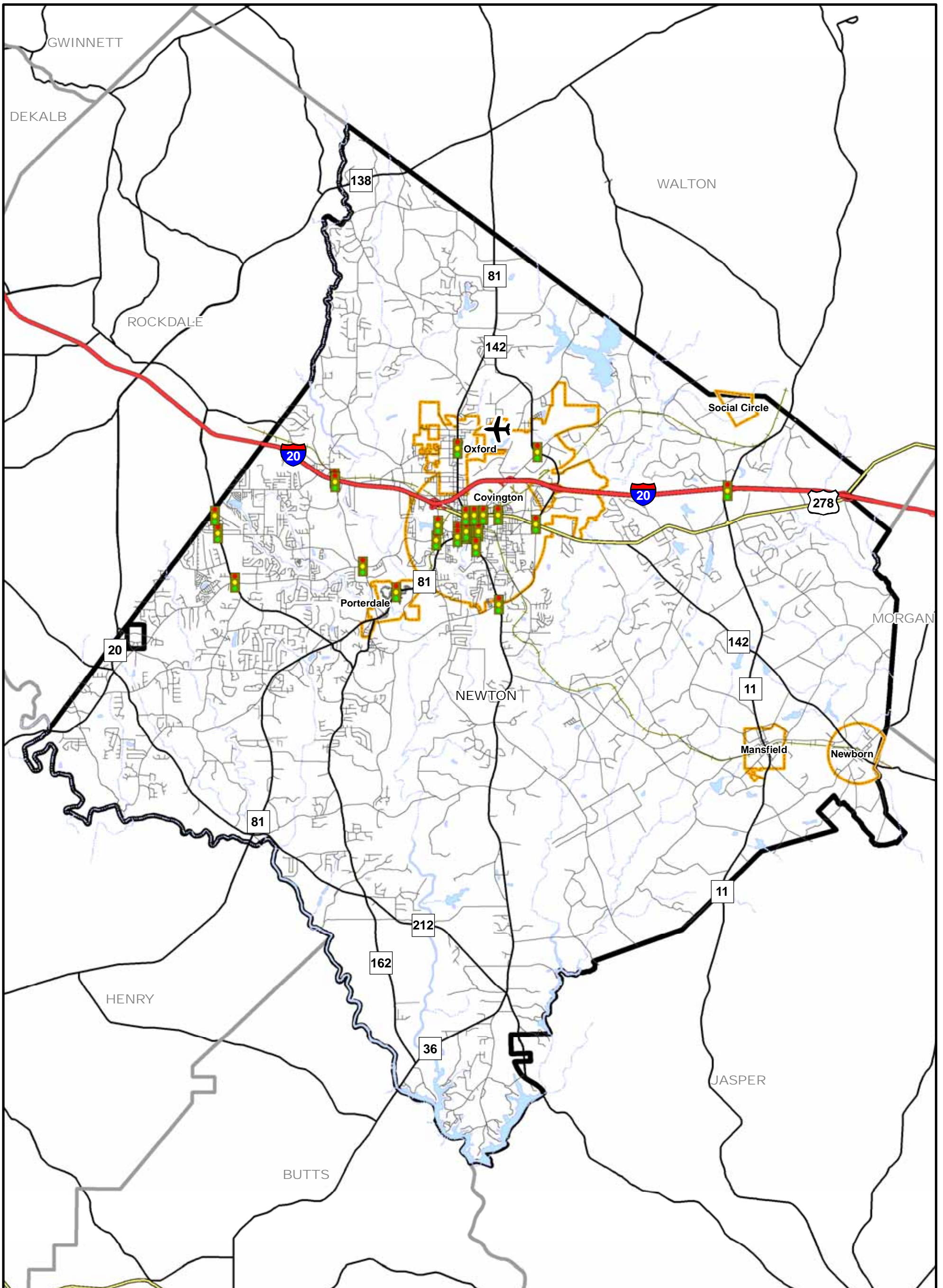


- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Six Lanes Divided | Airport |
| Four Lanes Divided | River/Stream |
| Four Lanes | Lake/Pond |
| Two Lanes | City Boundary |
| | County Boundary |
| | Railroad |



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Figure T1



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

Traffic Signal Locations

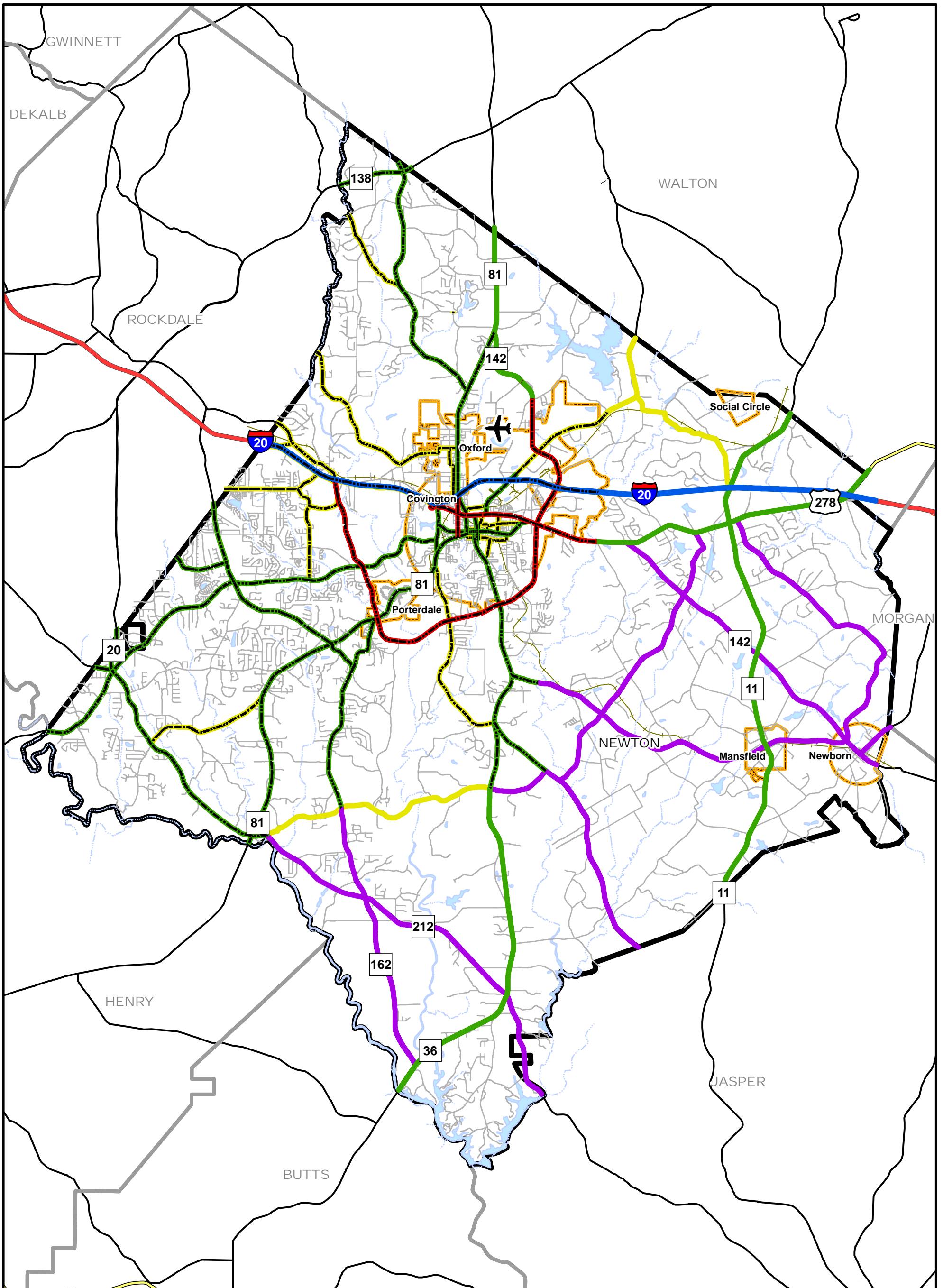


- | | | | |
|--|-----------------|--|------------------------|
| | Traffic Signal | | Interstate Highway |
| | Airport | | Interstate Access Ramp |
| | River/Stream | | U.S. Route |
| | Lake/Pond | | State Route |
| | City Boundary | | Collector/Local Road |
| | County Boundary | | Railroad |

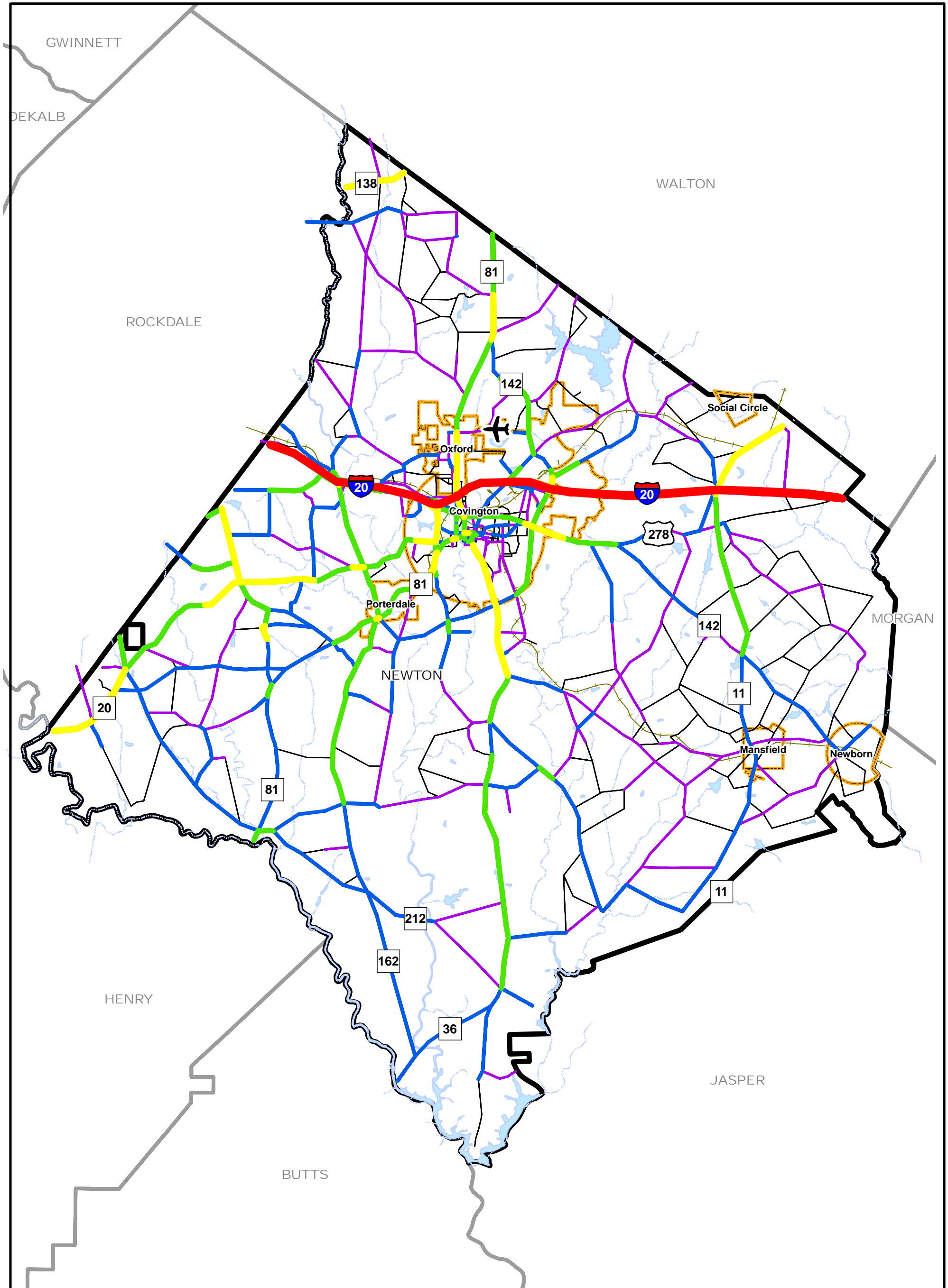


Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.

Figure T2

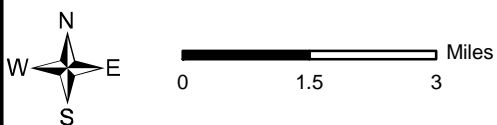


<h3>Newton County 2028 Comprehensive Plan</h3>		Airport	
<h3>Roadway Functional Classification</h3>		<h3>Functional Classification</h3>	
River/Stream	Lake/Pond	Rural Interstate	Urban Interstate
City Boundary	County Boundary	Rural Principal Arterial	Urban Freeway
Railroad	0 1.5 3 Miles	Rural Minor Arterial	Urban Principal Arterial
		Rural Major Collector	Urban Minor Arterial
		Rural Minor Collector	Urban Collector
			<h3>Space</h3>
		<h3>Figure T3</h3>	



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

*Existing Daily Traffic Volume
(2000 Model)*

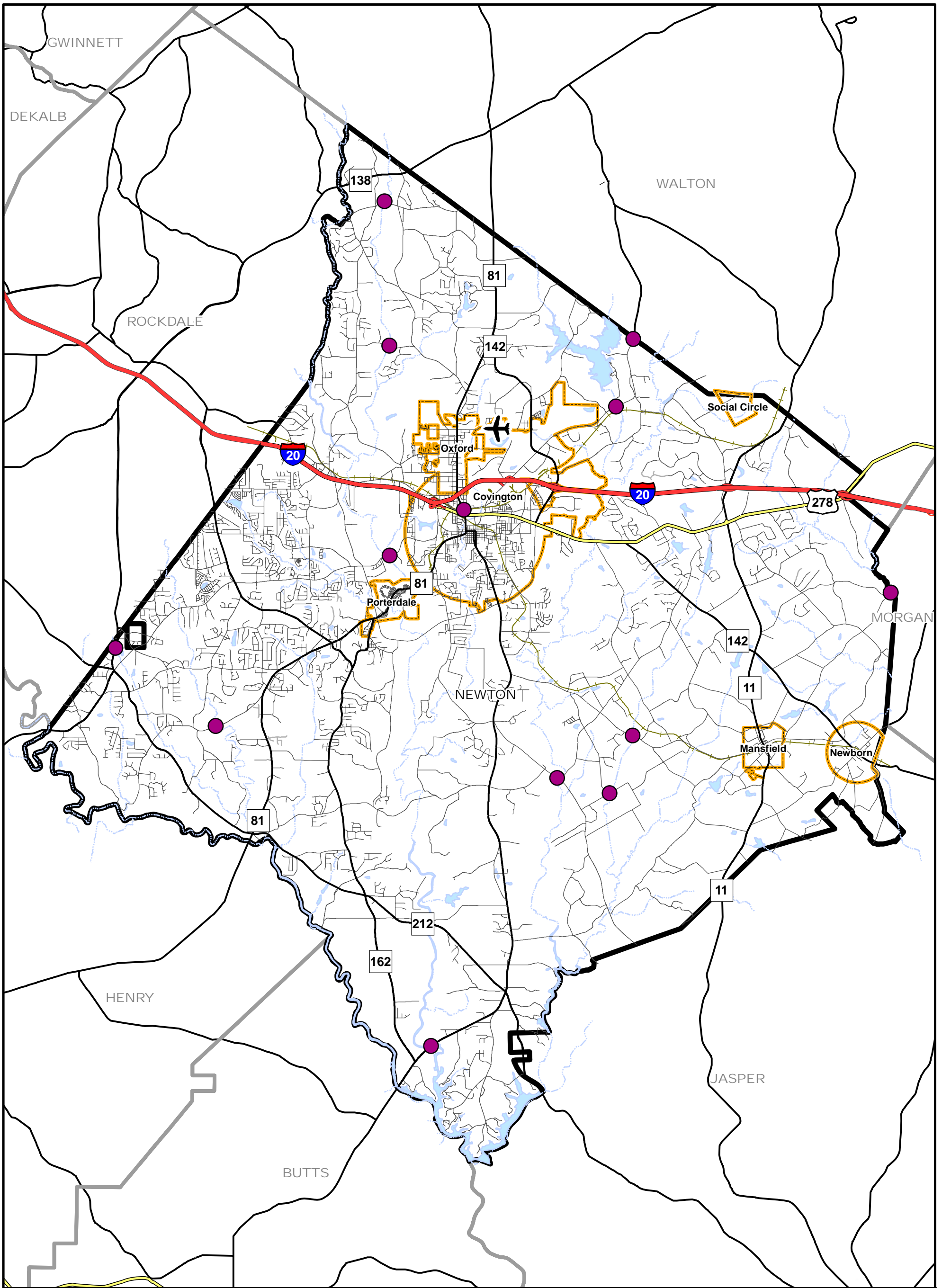


- 500 or less
- 500 to 2,000
- 2,000 to 5,000
- 5,000 to 10,000
- 10,000 to 20,000
- More than 20,000
- Airport
- River/Stream
- Lake/Pond
- City Boundary
- County Boundary
- +— Railroad



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Figure T4



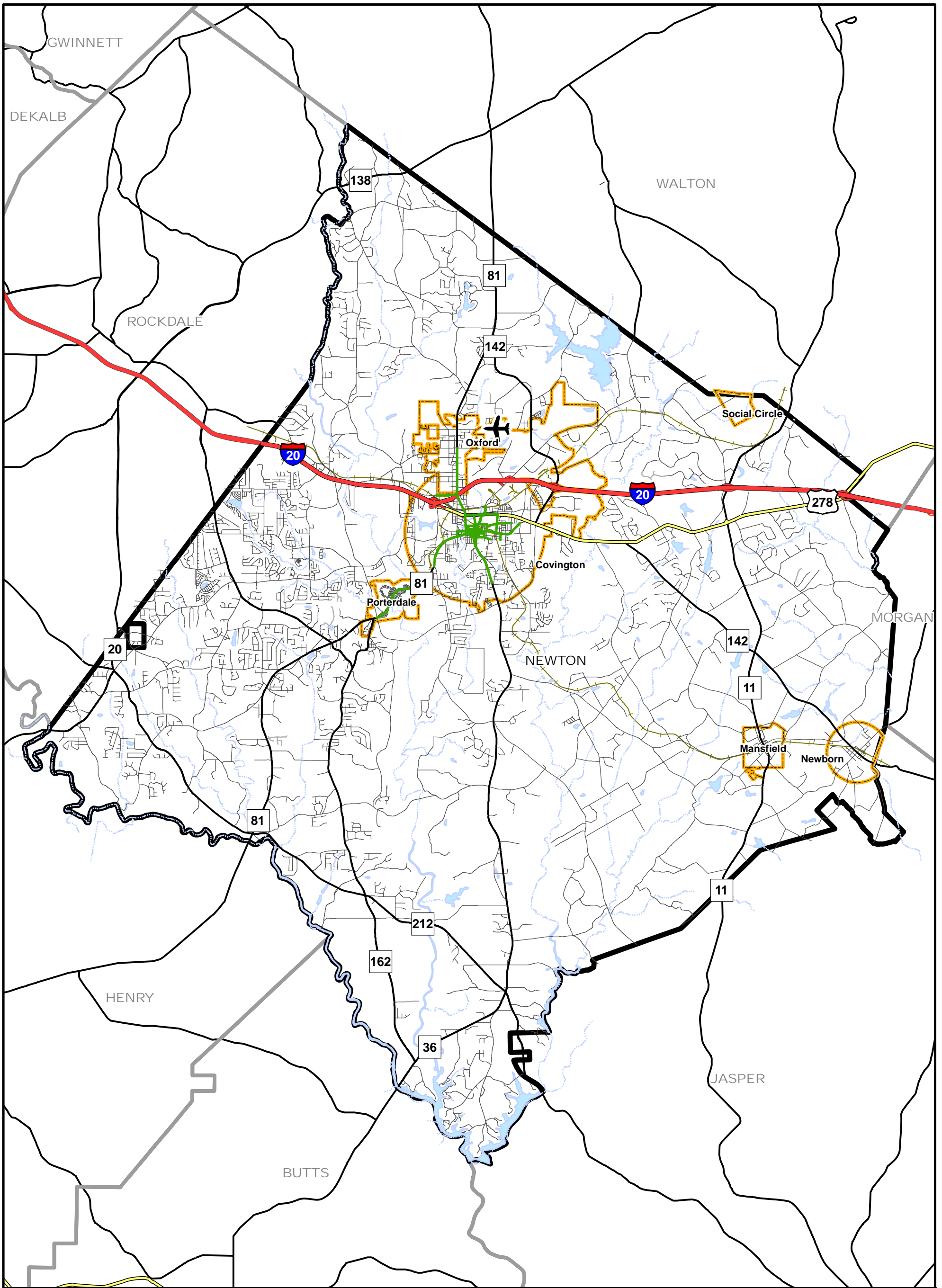
**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

Bridges in Unsatisfactory Condition

	Unsatisfactory Bridges		Interstate Highway
	Airport		Interstate Access Ramp
	River/Stream		U.S. Route
	Lake/Pond		State Route
	City Boundary		Collector/Local Road
	County Boundary		Railroad

Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.

Figure T5



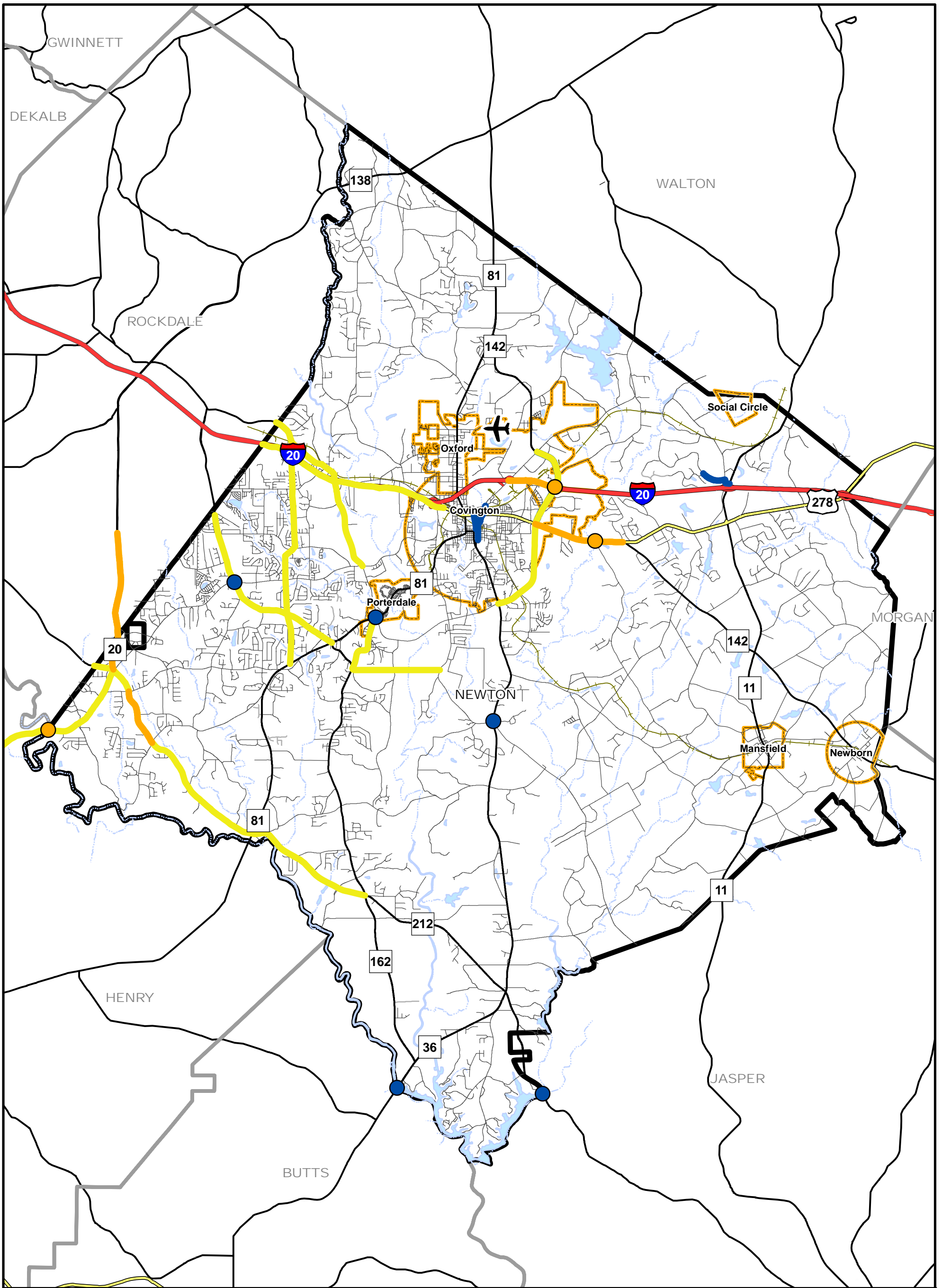
Newton County 2028 Comprehensive Plan

Existing Sidewalks

Sidewalk	Interstate Highway
Airport	Interstate Access Ramp
River/Stream	U.S. Route
Lake/Pond	State Route
City Boundary	Collector/Local Road
County Boundary	Railroad

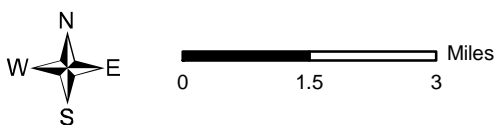
Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.

Figure T6



**Newton County 2028
Comprehensive Plan**

Planned Improvement Projects



- | | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Airport | Interstate Highway | TIP Corridors |
| River/Stream | Interstate Access Ramp | RTP Corridors |
| Lake/Pond | U.S. Route | STIP Corridors |
| City Boundary | State Route | TIP Intersections/Bridges |
| County Boundary | Collector/Local Road | STIP Intersections/Bridges |
| | Railroad | |



Figure T7