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November 17, 2008

Randal S. Mills
MAYOR

Mr. Mike Beatty, Commissioner
Georgia Department of Community Affairs
60 Executive Park South, NE
Atlanta, Georgia 30329



Chris Bowen
CITY COUNCIL

Re: Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update

Dear Mr. Beatty:

Vince Evans
CITY COUNCIL

In order to comply with the Georgia Minimum Planning Standards, the City of Conyers recently approved Resolution #562, Partial Plan Update of the Comprehensive Plan. Enclosed for your file is a copy of the approved resolution, Comprehensive Land Use Plan, and the Comprehensive Land Use Map.

Gerald Hinesley
CITY COUNCIL

If you have any questions concerning this correspondence, please call me at 770-929-4280.

Martin Jones
CITY COUNCIL

Sincerely,

Marvin Flanigan
Director, Planning & Inspection Services

Cleveland Stroud
CITY COUNCIL

Antony J. Lucas
CITY MANAGER

RESOLUTION NO. 562

A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY OF CONYERS TO APPROVE THE PARTIAL PLAN UPDATE OF THE CITY OF CONYERS' COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, the City of Conyers (hereinafter "City") prepared a comprehensive plan under the 1999 Minimum Planning Standards of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (hereinafter "DCA");

WHEREAS, the DCA required the City to provide a partial update of said comprehensive plan in order to maintain the City's Qualified Local Government Status;

WHEREAS, the City prepared a partial update of said comprehensive plan in accordance with the "Requirements for a Partial Update to the Local Government Comprehensive Plan March 2007", which is promulgated by the DCA Office of Planning and Quality Growth;

WHEREAS, the City submitted such Partial Plan Update of the City of Conyers' Comprehensive Plan (hereinafter "Partial Plan Update") for review to both the Atlanta Regional Commission (hereinafter "ARC") and to the DCA for a regional and state review, respectively;

WHEREAS, both the ARC and the DCA have reviewed and approved said Partial Plan Update; and

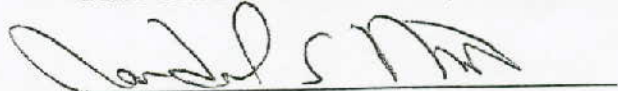
WHEREAS, it has been more than sixty (60) days since the ARC has certified such Partial Plan Update as being complete.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council of Conyers, Georgia, as follows:

The City, by and through its Mayor and City Council, hereby approves and adopts the Partial Plan Update of the City of Conyers' Comprehensive Plan, dated July 15, 2008.

IT IS SO RESOLVED this 5th day of November, 2008.

THE CITY OF CONYERS, GEORGIA



Randal S. Mills, Mayor

ATTEST:



Patricia I. Smith, City Clerk

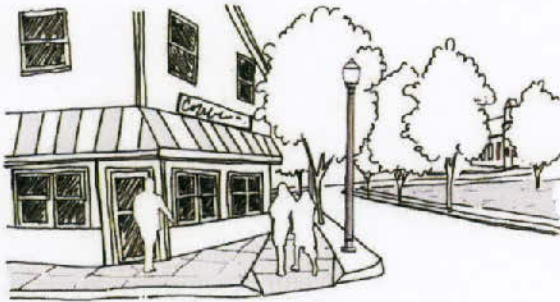
APPROVED:



Michael S. Waldrop, City Attorney

**PARTIAL UPDATE OF THE
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
CITY OF CONYERS, GEORGIA**

Revised Based on Regional and State Review
September 19, 2008



Prepared Under Contract By:

Jerry Weitz & Associates, Inc.
Planning and Development Consultants
1225 Rucker Road
Alpharetta, Georgia 30004

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CHAPTER 1 ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

INTRODUCTION

This chapter includes an assessment of the 15 quality community objectives (QCOs) promulgated by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The partial update of the comprehensive plan is required to provide an assessment as to how policies and development patterns of the local government either meet, or do not meet, these objectives. This assessment lists a particular QCO, and then an assessment of each objective follows. Where applicable, the assessment describes existing policies adopted in the comprehensive plan, regulations (City of Conyers Code), and existing development patterns based on some analysis in the field.

The assessment is useful in terms of identifying additional issues and opportunities that need to be addressed in the city's implementation program. In some cases, similar QCOs are grouped and discussed together.

GROWTH PREPAREDNESS

“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.”

Past Population Trends

Table 1 shows population estimates for July 1 of each year from 2000 to 2006, which are official estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau. These figures suggest that Conyers' population increased by 1,146 during a six year period, or about 191 persons annually.

Table 1
Population Estimates, July 1, 2000-2006
City of Conyers

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Total Population	11,383	11,247	11,682	12,039	12,086	12,161	12,529

Source: Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau. Annual Estimates of the Population for Incorporated Places in Georgia, Listed Alphabetically: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2006. Release Date: June 28, 2007. Figures are July 1st of the year.

The Atlanta Regional Commission estimates Conyers' population in 2007 at 13,294, an increase of 2,605 during the seven-year period from 2000 to 2007, or approximately 372 persons annually.¹

¹ Atlanta Regional Commission. February 2008. ARC's 2007 Population and Housing Report: A Primer.

Population of municipalities can increase through natural increase (births minus deaths), immigration (new people moving into new and existing housing units minus people moving out), and through municipal annexation (i.e., expansion of the city's boundary to include additional housing units and/or population). Annexation is usually undertaken only after application by property owners, and so the future impact on populations of municipalities is generally difficult to predict. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs keeps a record of municipal annexations; based on those records, Conyers annexed approximately 92 acres in the year 2003, 46 acres in 2005, and approximately 62 acres in the year 2006.² Several annexations are pending in 2008 at the time this report was written. While the land uses annexed by Conyers are not shown in the report, it is safe to conclude that some of Conyers' population gain in past years can be attributed to the annexation of existing residential properties.

Population and Housing Projections

In order to prepare for growth, the City of Conyers must have some notion of its expected future growth potential. Population projections were prepared as a part of the comprehensive plan adopted May 19, 2004. Adopted population projections indicate Conyers' population will increase to 13,684 in the year 2010, 14,863 in the year 2015, and 16,386 in the year 2020 (Comprehensive Plan, Table 10). It was assumed in the adopted plan that Conyers would remain fairly constant as a percentage of Rockdale County's population and would constitute about 15 percent of county population in 2020. The plan also suggests that residential growth within the City will be stimulated by implementation of the Livable Center Initiative, revitalization of the downtown, and through residential infill and mixed use opportunities (Conyers Comprehensive Plan, Population Element).

Projections of housing units indicate that, during a 15-year period between 2005 and 2020, Conyers is expected to add approximately 1,500 new housing units, about 500 from 2005 to 2010 and another 1,000 between 2010 to 2020 (Comprehensive Plan, Table 11). This represents an increase of approximately 100 housing units annually.

Employment

With regard to employment, a special tabulation of the Census Bureau showed total employment in Conyers in the year 2000 was 13,627.³

Quality of Growth Desired

According to the Comprehensive Plan, a Conyers-Rockdale County future vision was articulated for the 2004 comprehensive plan. According to that vision, Conyers desires to retain the traditional values of a small town, while continuing to grow and prosper. It also notes that Conyers will provide the infrastructure needed to support its strategic plans (Comprehensive Plan,

² <http://www.georgiaplanning.com/boundary/annexations/showCounty.asp?FIPS=13247&CountyNAME=Rockdale>

³ Census 2000 PHC-T-40. Estimated Daytime Population and Employment-Residence Ratios: 2000.

Public Input). Therefore, Conyers' existing comprehensive plan embraces the Growth Preparedness Quality Community Objective.

Infrastructure

Conyers is generally prepared with water and sewer infrastructure, provided throughout the city, to meet its anticipated population growth and economic development needs.

APPROPRIATE BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

“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.”

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

Conyers' comprehensive plan establishes goals to “attract a broader base of desirable businesses and industry to the City,” and to improve the diversity of employment opportunities available throughout the City.” These economic development goals are considered consistent with the “appropriate business” and “employment options” QCOs.

According to questionnaire results which were completed as part of a survey for the May 2004 Conyers Comprehensive Plan, the most desirable types of new businesses were professional offices, followed by technology and specialty retail shops. Respondents also suggested that, to stimulate the local economy and to increase employment, additional management positions and office labor positions should be created (Conyers Comprehensive Plan, Public Input).



Recent Medical Office Development

The Economic Development Element of the Conyers Comprehensive Plan has an objective to recruit the following types of industries (as identified in the Conyers-Rockdale County future vision): medical, computer technology, professional service businesses, biotechnology, and telecommunications. Clearly, the growth of medical offices around Rockdale Medical Center suggests that Conyers is achieving its desired growth in terms of office development.

Employing Industries of Conyers' Labor Force

In order to fully evaluate employment options, one has to look closer at the characteristics of the city's resident labor force. Table 2 shows the industries in which Conyers' working residents

were employed in 2000. Table 2 also provides a comparison of percentages in each sector with Rockdale County. Manufacturing (16.5%) was the leading industry for Conyers' labor force in 2000, followed by construction (13.6%) and retail trade (12.6%), and a greater percent of residents of Conyers are employed in these three sectors than Rockdale County as a whole.

Table 2
Employment by Industry by Sex, 2000
Civilian Population 16 Years and Over, City of Conyers

Industry	City of Conyers			Percent Comparisons	
	Male	Female	Total	City Percent of Total	County Percent of Total
Total All Industries	2,711	2,402	5,113	--	--
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	4	0	4	--	2.6%
Construction	639	54	693	13.6%	10.2%
Manufacturing	530	313	843	16.5%	15.7%
Wholesale trade	209	68	277	5.4%	3.7%
Retail trade	282	363	645	12.6%	10.8%
Transportation and warehousing	184	86	270	5.3%	5.4%
Utilities	12	22	34	0.7%	0.9%
Information	60	103	163	3.2%	4.8%
Finance and insurance	73	141	214	4.2%	4.2%
Real estate and rental and leasing	29	57	86	1.7%	1.7%
Professional, scientific, and technical services	35	59	94	1.8%	4.4%
Management of companies and enterprises	0	0	0	--	0.1%
Administrative and support and waste management services	125	53	178	3.4%	2.9%
Educational services	146	260	406	7.9%	8.9%
Health care and social assistance	37	270	307	6.0%	8.8%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	0	26	26	0.5%	1.1%
Accommodation and food services	186	271	457	8.9%	5.0%
Other services (except public administration)	89	158	247	4.8%	5.0%
Public administration	83	98	181	3.5%	6.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census. Summary File 3, Table P49.

Organizations, Programs and Tools

The Conyers-Rockdale Economic Development Council, Inc. is the major entity responsible for economic development activities. The Council seeks to promote and enhance the economic vitality of the community through the retention and/or expansion of existing businesses and the

County Public Schools

The City of Conyers looks to Rockdale County to provide the primary and secondary school system, post-secondary education and job training, and other educational services and facilities for city residents. The city comprehensive plan references the educational assessments completed in the Rockdale County Comprehensive Plan as meeting the need for future city populations regarding education.



Rockdale County High School

Workforce Training

Workforce training is particularly important to the city's resident labor force. There are two major training opportunities available for current and prospective employees of industries and businesses in Conyers and Rockdale County. Georgia's Quick Start Program, active since 1967, provides customized training for employees of businesses and industries throughout the state. At company locations or at the college campus, DeKalb Technical College provides customized training and workforce development programs for business, industry and non-profit organizations that are seeking to increase the skill levels of their existing employees. The Georgia Department of Labor also partners with other organizations to provide education and training programs.⁶ Conyers and Rockdale County recently earned the designation of a "Certified Work Ready Community." This designation means that the community has earned certification with regard to this state program, which is designed to improve the job training and marketability of Georgia's workforce and stimulate future economic growth in the state.⁷

Colleges, Universities, and Technical Schools

Because Conyers and Rockdale County are a part of the Atlanta metropolitan region, they have access to numerous colleges and universities. The Georgia Department of Labor in its Area Labor Profile for Rockdale County⁸ lists, in neighboring DeKalb County alone, 17 colleges and universities, including DeKalb Technical College, Georgia Perimeter College, DeVry University-Georgia, and Emory University. Satellite campuses of DeKalb Technical College and Georgia Perimeter College are located in neighboring Covington-Newton County. DeKalb Technical College currently has more than 4,500 students in Clarkston and Covington, and Georgia Perimeter College has over 17,500 students (Conyers-Rockdale Economic Development Council website, under "Education."). The state's major universities are within 60 miles in

⁶ Conyers-Rockdale Economic Development Council. Workforce Training. On Website. Accessed May 14, 2008.

⁷ Conyers-Rockdale Economic Development Council. Work Ready Certification Overview. On Website. Accessed May 14, 2008.

⁸ Georgia Department of Labor. *Rockdale County, Georgia, Area Labor Profile*. Version 2.0, Updated May 1, 2008. <http://explorer.dol.state.ga.us/mis/profiles/Counties/rockdale.pdf>

Atlanta (Georgia State University and Georgia Institute of Technology) and Athens (University of Georgia).

HERITAGE PRESERVATION

“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.”

The City of Conyers is fortunate to have significant concentrations of intact historic resources. Many of these resources are locally designated for their architectural and historic significance by means of a local historic district (see map) and a historic district overlay. The city also contains a large number of properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places, including two districts and two individual listings. Other historic resources include the Old Milstead Railroad bed, also known as the “Dinky Trail.”



Historic Home in Conyers

Clearly, Conyers has made strides to implement the objective of heritage preservation. In both its comprehensive plan policies and its regulatory actions, the City of Conyers has been an active steward of its historic resources and has made great strides in building a functional local historic preservation program.

Comprehensive Plan

The comprehensive plan lists the following strategies to preserve Conyers’ historic resources: implement provisions of the existing local historic district overlay zone, including the creation of design standards; update the city’s Historic Preservation Ordinance; complete easement acquisition for the Dinky Trail corridor; complete streetscape revitalization in downtown Conyers; and prepare a walking tour of the city’s historic resources.

Zoning

The City of Conyers revised and readopted its historic preservation ordinance and its local historic district regulations in 2006. Part of the revision effort included the designation of a local historic district (Olde Town Historic District) as well as a larger overlay district (Olde Town Overlay District) within which the city can encourage development that is compatible with the historic character of historic Conyers. The revision also included the creation of a design review process for alterations and new construction in the historic district and overlay zone. That effort included the drafting of new Design Guidelines for Olde Town Conyers.

Properties Listed on the National Register of Historic Places

The National Register-listed properties include the Conyers Commercial Historic District (listed in 1988) and the Conyers Residential Historic District (listed in 1990). The commercial district is located in the heart of the central business district of the city and is roughly bounded by N. Main Street, Warehouse Street, Georgia Railroad and Center Street. The residential district is located northwest of the central business district and extends roughly along Main Street, Milstead Avenue and Railroad Street.

The first Rockdale County Jail, located at 967 Milstead Avenue, and the Almand-O’Kelly-Walker House at 981 Green Street are both individually listed on the National Register.

Other Historic Resources

Other historic resources include the Old Milstead Railroad bed, which is located in the northern part of the city near Irwin Bridge Road. It is a locally significant cultural site. Although not formally designated as a historic site, the corridor has been identified as an area to be preserved through easement acquisition.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND OPEN SPACE

“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.”

“Open Space Preservation 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.”

The City of Conyers has adopted several regulations in its Code of Ordinances that address environmental protection and open space. It has done an above average job in the assessor’s opinion of putting into place all the regulations needed to protect the environment and facilitate the preservation of open space.

Environmental Protection in the Comprehensive Plan

The comprehensive plan outlines a series of strategies to meet its goals of requiring a land potential analysis for large-scale development projects; implementing measures that will result in open space preservation and protect environmentally sensitive lands; implementing regulations made in the 2002 Watershed Management Plan; implementing measures that will contribute towards improving air quality; and modifying and expanding local ordinances and regulations as necessary.

The city's goals and strategies as stated in the plan indicate a strong commitment on the part of the city toward protecting and preserving its environmental resources. Further, the city to date has followed through with many of its stated strategies, including the modification and expansion of local ordinances and regulations to address environmentally sensitive areas and other environmental concerns.

Open Space Preservation in the Comprehensive Plan

The city's plan for ensuring preservation of open space includes a strategy to expand the local greenspace program and its focus on linking parks and activity generators, as well as implementing the concept of conservation subdivisions (Conyers has adopted a Conservation Subdivision Overlay District). In further support of this QCO, the plan establishes a level of service standard of 7.0 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents by 2020, significant portions of which should include open space.

Zoning

The City of Conyers has established zoning categories for the purpose of environmental protection, including a river corridor protection overlay district, a groundwater recharge area protection district, a wetlands protection overlay district, a watershed protection overlay district and a conservation subdivision overlay district.

River Corridor Protection Overlay District. The preservation of rivers as sources of clean drinking water, recreation sites and wildlife habitat is the purpose of establishing a river corridor protection overlay district for those parcels within a designated protected river corridor (Sec. 8-7-61).

Groundwater Recharge Area Protection Overlay District. The groundwater recharge area protection district aims to protect designated groundwater recharge areas⁹ from pollution through the establishment of development standards. Although there are no groundwater recharge areas in the city, the ordinance provides standards related to potential pollutants and contaminants within the city (Sec. 8-7-62).

⁹ The comprehensive plan indicates that no groundwater recharge areas exist within the City of Conyers. However, as the city annexes, if annexed land includes groundwater recharge areas, Conyers will have already addressed its regulatory responsibilities in that regard.

Wetlands Protection Overlay

District. The wetlands protection overlay district establishes regulations to promote the wise use of wetlands and protect them from alterations that will significantly affect or reduce their primary functions for water quality, floodplain and erosion control, groundwater recharge, aesthetic natural areas and wildlife habitat areas (Sec. 8-7-63).



Wetland, Almand Creek

Watershed Protection Overlay District. The watershed protection overlay district is intended to protect the water quality of the Big Haynes Creek, its tributaries and reservoir that provide drinking water for the city through the application of development standards, setbacks, and buffers, etc. (Sec. 8-7-64).

Conservation Subdivision Overlay District. The purpose of the conservation subdivision overlay district (Sec. 8-7-65) is, among others, to preserve in perpetuity sensitive natural resources, such as creeks, steep slopes, woodlands, lakes, groundwater, streams, floodplains, wetlands, and wildlife habitat. The conservation subdivision overlay is allowed by right in RS-20, RS-14, TH and RM, and in other zoning districts as appropriate. The minimum required open space is 25 percent of the gross parcel and as further specified in Sec. 8-7-65.

Subdivision and Site Development

The City of Conyers' subdivision regulations require that "land physically unsuitable for subdivision or development because of flooding, poor drainage, topographic, geological, or other features that may endanger the health, life, or property, aggravate erosion, increase flood hazard, or necessitate excessive expenditures of public funds for supply and maintenance of services shall not be approved for subdivision or development unless adequate methods are implemented in the site design for solving these problems." (Sec. 8-6-10).

Environmental Planning Criteria

The City of Conyers has adopted the state's Environmental Protection Criteria in Chapter 7, Zoning, of the City of Conyers Code of Ordinances (Ord. No. 693). Those code provisions address groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, and protected river corridors.¹⁰

Tree Protection

Chapter 10, "Tree Preservation and Landscape Ordinance" contains provisions for tree protection and tree replacement. Formally the ordinance is titled "Conyers Tree Preservation and Landscape Ordinance." One of the purposes of this ordinance is to "prevent massive grading of land, both developed and undeveloped, without provision for replacement of trees" (Sec. 8-10-4).



Preserved Trees

Stormwater Management

Title 12, "Water Quality" of the City of Conyers code provides the city's adopted version of model ordinances required by the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District, including Illicit Discharge and Illegal Connections, Post-Development Stormwater Management, and Riparian Buffer Protection. Significantly, Conyers has also adopted a Stormwater Utility via Sec. 8-11-3 of Chapter 11 of the City of Conyers Code of Ordinances (Ord. No. 664).

Flood Damage Prevention

Chapter 4, Floodplain Management and Flood Damage Prevention, addresses pertinent issues.

¹⁰ Sec. 8-7 of the City of Conyers code, "River Corridor Protection Overlay District," does not specifically indicate which rivers, if any, are protected. The comprehensive plan (p. 34) indicates that "there are no state-designated protected river corridors within either the City of Conyers or Rockdale County."

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

“Transportation Alternatives Objective: Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes and pedestrian facilities, should be made available. Greater use of alternative transportation should be encouraged.”

Explaining Traffic Congestion in Conyers

Generally, commute (work) trips actually only make up about 15 to 25 percent of all vehicle trips made, the others being for other trip purposes such as school, shopping, and visiting friends and relatives. Nonetheless, part of the traffic congestion problem in Conyers and Rockdale County can be explained by looking at the work location of Conyers’ resident labor force. As noted in the comprehensive plan (see Table 28), Conyers had a resident labor force of 4,980 in the year 2000, but only 1,543 (31 percent) actually worked inside the city limits. This means that the vast majority of Conyers’ resident workers in 2000 commuted outside the city limits for work.

Also, consider that the employment estimate for Conyers in 2000, as previously noted, was 13,627 persons. This means that only about 11 percent of the jobs in 2000 in Conyers were filled by Conyers’ resident labor force, and the other 89 percent commuted into and out of the city every work day from the unincorporated areas of Rockdale County or from other counties. An influx and exodus of some 12,000 workers from Conyers’ employment establishments to their homes outside the city is bound to contribute to traffic congestion problems. To the extent that these non-city-resident workers travel by auto for lunch and other errands during the day, traffic congestion occurs not only during a.m. and p.m. peak hours but also during lunch hours and other parts of the day, as well.

2001 Livable Centers Initiative

In June of 2001 the City completed a Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) plan (formerly Activity Center/Town Center Investment Policy Studies, or ACTIPS) for four separate and distinct activity centers. This plan focused on recommending improvements that reflected smart growth principles, and incorporated provisions for mixed-use projects, pedestrian improvements, and modifications to the thoroughfare system to facilitate traffic flow and pedestrian-vehicular linkages between activity centers (Comprehensive Plan, Introduction).

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

The comprehensive plan indicates that there are at present no officially designated bikeways within the City of Conyers. It also notes that the primary sidewalk network includes Main Street and Green Street in the downtown area, Irwin Bridge Road in the northern portion of the City, Milstead Avenue near the hospital, and along Renaissance Drive close to Sigman Road. Designated trails that are accessible to pedestrians include the Boar’s Tusk Creek Trail and the Dinky Trail.

Figure 12 in the report titled “Long-Term Recommendations” (City-County Comprehensive Transportation Plan) shows one recommended project, including bicycle routes, bicycle lanes and/or multi-use facilities, for the Main Street corridor north of Interstate 20 from county line to county line, through the City of Conyers. Typical roadway sections in Appendix B of the Long-Term Recommendations do not show any cross-sections that involve bicycle lanes or paths, or multi-use paths.



Bicyclist Without Bike Lane



**Mountain Bike Path Crossing at
Centennial Olympic Boulevard**

A Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) was prepared by URS Corporation for Rockdale County and the City of Conyers at the same time the county and city were developing their comprehensive plans. The “Long-Term Recommendations” of the Rockdale County and City of Conyers Comprehensive Transportation Plan, August 2003, re-printed May 2004) provides a recommended bike plan. The plan is proposed to be implemented on an incremental basis with facilities “systematically provided as a small incremental cost of roadway construction as corridors are reconstructed or upgraded.”



**Pedestrians with Narrow Sidewalk
Perilously Close to Travel Way**

Master Plan for Olde Town Conyers Trail

In March 2007, the PATH Foundation Completed a master plan for a multi-use trail connecting Rockdale River Trail and Olde Town Conyers.¹¹ The master plan identifies a nine-mile route, primarily along a Trans Continental Pipeline easement, that will connect the biking and jogging

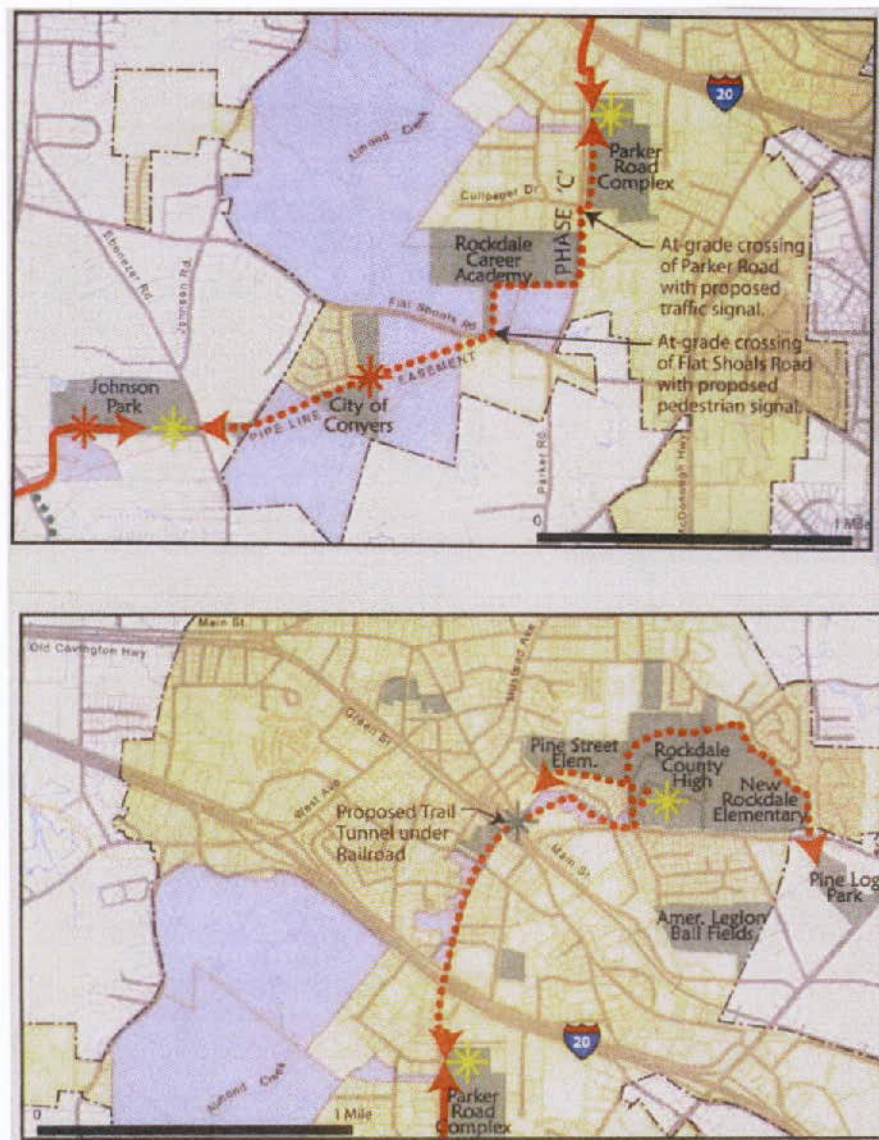
¹¹ The PATH Foundation. March 2007. *Old Towne Conyers Trail: Multi-use Trail Connecting the Rockdale River Trail to Olde Town Conyers*. Prepared for Downtown Development Authority of Conyers and the Mayor and City Council of Conyers. Atlanta, GA: PATH Foundation.

trails along the South River, in unincorporated Rockdale County to Olde Towne Conyers. Upon completion it would give residents of Conyers access to additional recreation opportunities. While the trail plan would maximize use of public properties and easements in the path, it would also traverse some private lands.

The Olde Town Conyers Trail master plan divides the project into four phases. Of the four phases, two (Phases “C” and “D” are especially relevant to Conyers (see Table 3 below and the figure on the following page). Phase C would begin at Johnson Park and extend to Parker Road Park, crossing Almand Creek on property owned by the City of Conyers and through the property now developed for the Rockdale Career Academy. Pedestrian crossing signals would be required at two locations where the trail crosses Flat Shoals Road and Parker Road.

Table 3
Olde Town Conyers Trail Phases

Master Plan Phase	Length (Miles)	Cost (Dollars)
Phase A	2.29	\$2,105,202
Phase B	2.51	\$1,565,962
Phase C	2.12	\$1,272,199
Phase D	2.13	\$2,195,682



Phases “C” and “D” of PATH Foundation’s Master Plan for Olde Town Conyers Trail

Phase D would cross Interstate 20 along Parker Road to Oakland Avenue and continue into Olde Town Conyers. The trail will ultimately end at Pine Log Park.

The master plan also provides design standards for surfacing, trailheads, creek culverts and drainage channels, bridges, rest areas, boardwalks, benches, signs and trail markings.

This Partial Plan Update formally adopts the Olde Town Conyers Trail Master Plan as if fully set forth herein. Implementation measures, in addition to helping with the design and funding of trail improvements, include developing a public-private partnership to spearhead trail development efforts, adoption of an ordinance addressing trail safety and etiquette, maintenance programs, and public involvement.

Public Transportation

Public transit service is currently not available in Rockdale County or the City of Conyers (Rockdale County and City of Conyers Comprehensive Transportation Plan, Existing Condition Technical Report, URS Corporation, August 2003). The Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) provides express bus service from the Sigman Road Park and Ride Lot in Rockdale County to downtown Atlanta.

Express bus service provides a lower cost alternative to the automobile for commuting to downtown Atlanta. Additionally, express bus service will result in other benefits to Rockdale County and the region, including improved air quality and decreased auto emissions/ improved air quality (Rockdale County and City of Conyers Comprehensive Transportation Plan, Short Term Needs Analysis, URS Corporation, August 2003, re-printed May 2004).

Commuter Rail Possibilities

Studies and planning by the Georgia Department of Transportation have identified six feasible routes for commuter rail, one of which would pass through the City of Conyers. While these six commuter rail routes continue to be studied, and funding for routes has not been secured, the implementation of commuter rail through Rockdale County would help to implement the Quality Community Objective, “transportation alternatives.”

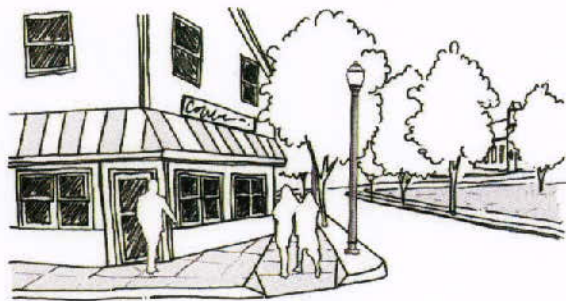
Transportation Goals, Policies and Regulations

The Rockdale County/City of Conyers Comprehensive Transportation Plan, Evaluation Framework Technical Report, URS Corporation, August 2003), articulates certain transportation policy objectives. In addition, the city’s comprehensive plan articulates the following goal: “Endeavor to provide additional bikeways and sidewalks throughout the City as a means of providing improved connectivity between local traffic generators.” The city’s plan policies also suggest that it should “develop a regional multi-use trail system, incorporating proposed bikeways, sidewalks, the Dinky Trail and the Boar’s Tusk Trail.”

HOUSING OPPORTUNITIES AND TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS

“Housing Opportunities Objective: 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.”

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



 Jerry Weitz & Associates, Inc.
Planning & Development Consultants

There is evidence of increasing market support for traditional neighborhood development in the metropolitan Atlanta area. About one in three current residents of a conventional subdivision would actually prefer to be living in a mixed-use neighborhood where they had the option to walk to stores, restaurants, work or other places, such as libraries or post offices. All indications are that that proportion has risen since the survey was completed in 2002.¹²



Downtown Residential Neighborhoods in Conyers are Characteristic of Traditional Neighborhood Development

Survey results summarized in the Conyers Comprehensive Plan indicate support for these two QCOs. Residents recognize that affordable housing will be needed to support the future population. The comprehensive plan also indicates that traditional neighborhood developments are a desirable way to meet future housing needs (Comprehensive Plan, Public Input).

Prior statistical analyses in the city's comprehensive plan, and in the Rockdale County Comprehensive Plan, both make note that there are fewer married couples with children and more single-person households in the City of Conyers than in Rockdale County as a whole. This finding is significant in that it suggests much different housing needs in the incorporated area than in unincorporated areas.

¹² Atlanta Neighborhood Development Partnership, Inc. *Making the Case for Housing Choices and Complete Communities: The Next Generation*. Citing Sinartraq Summary Report 2007.

Plan Policies

The comprehensive plan establishes a policy of encouraging “new residential development for all income levels,” and the city has followed up with a revised zoning ordinance that provides several mixed-use zoning classifications. However, the regulations have not clearly provided for affordable housing at the levels expressed in the comprehensive plan, such as strategies aiming to provide 10 percent low income units in new mixed-use residential developments in the city’s activity centers.



Townhouses, Village at Travers Creek



Small Housing Unit, Pleasant Circle

Conyers has a significant mix of housing units. The land use inventory, prepared as a part of the May 2004 comprehensive plan, indicates that 687 acres, or 9.5 percent of the city’s land area at that time, was devoted to multi-family residential development. The city has updated its zoning code to encourage the development of traditional neighborhoods, as well as the preservation of existing traditional neighborhoods.



Apartments Along Pine Log Road

Zoning

The zoning ordinance provides for a variety of housing types, including single-family, townhomes, two-family duplexes, multi-family, and manufactured homes. The zoning classifications below elaborate on provisions for housing types other than single-family.

Traditional Neighborhood Design District. The city’s TND, or Traditional Neighborhood Design District (Sec. 8-7-34), was established partly to allow “more diversity in residential patterns.” The TND district allows for two-family dwellings (duplexes).

Townhouse Residential District. Conyers’ zoning code also contains a “Townhouse Residential District (TH)” in Sec. 8-7-35. One purpose of the district is to provide “well-designed and human-scaled attached residential structures that are compatible with other residential neighborhoods.” Single-family, townhomes, and two family dwellings (duplexes) are allowed in this district.

Residential Multi-Family District. The City of Conyers’ zoning code contains a RM, “Residential Multi-family District” (Sec. 8-7-36). Multi-family dwellings are permitted, and the RM zoning district allows up to 6 units per acre.

Mixed-Use Development District. Conyers’ “Mixed-use Development District (MxD)” (Sec. 8-7-39) was adopted with the purpose of improving land use and transportation efficiency through the provision of compact, walkable developments with interrelated uses. Multi-family dwellings are permitted at a maximum density of 6 units per net acre.

Mixed-Use Village Overlay District. Sec. 8-7-67 of the Conyers’ zoning code, Mixed-Use Village Overlay District, provides for townhomes and two-family dwelling units (duplexes) in Tier I and multifamily dwelling units at 8.7 units per net acre in Tier 2.

Manufactured Homes. Chapter 8 of the Conyers’ zoning code elaborates on the local regulations regarding manufactured homes. All conforming manufactured homes are to be located in mobile home parks, as defined in the ordinance.

Conyers Housing Authority

The Housing Authority of the City of Conyers provides public housing (290 apartments) at scattered sites mostly in Conyers. The authority has offered safe, affordable housing for low to moderate income households since 1956 (www.conyershousing.com).



Public Housing Off Travis Street

INFILL DEVELOPMENT

“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.”

As of 2004, approximately 12 percent of the land within the City of Conyers was vacant. The comprehensive plan notes that “Within the original one-mile radius corporate limit are several vacant lots that are suitable for infill residential development.” There are opportunities for residential infill and redevelopment within the urban core of the City of Conyers, at least on a limited basis. (see map in Chapter 2)

The comprehensive plan notes that two downtown areas have infill potential: the area bounded by Rosser Street, Elm Street and Irwin Bridge Road; and the area bounded by the railroad, Oakland Avenue, Dogwood Drive and West Avenue. With the city’s design review mechanism in place as well as the Olde Town Overlay District, whatever infill development that is likely to occur in the core of the city will be compatible with the existing traditional character of the city. There are also significant opportunities for industrial infill development, and to a lesser degree, commercial development, within the city limits.



**Residential Infill Development
Sensitive to Historic Conyers**

SENSE OF PLACE

“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.”

The Olde Town area, which is the original central business district, has been revitalized to accommodate new retail shops, offices and restaurants. These improvements have turned the historic part of the City into a pedestrian-friendly area (Comprehensive Plan, Introduction). Olde Town Conyers has a very distinct sense of place that is supported by its historic commercial area along the railroad, surrounded by traditional residential neighborhoods. The local historic preservation program put into place by the city encourages the preservation of this historic sense of place, in both redevelopment and new development.



Olde Town Conyers

Beyond the historic core of Conyers, the city has less of an identifiable sense of place. Commercial centers, in particular, are in need of attention and character enhancement features. However, the city has adopted several new zoning classifications and overlay districts that attempt to foster a notable sense of place. Overall, the city is making great efforts to maintain and create a distinct community with its own notable character.

Comprehensive Plan

The comprehensive plan addresses the protection and enrichment of natural and cultural resources within the city limits, both of which strongly contribute to a community's sense of place. Some of the city's new zoning classifications and zoning districts strive to protect environmentally sensitive lands and encourage the increase of greenspace and its interconnectedness with other open space (see Environmental Protection and Open Space).

The city's historic urban core sets the tone for the overriding character of the city. The city has taken great effort to preserve and maintain Historic Olde Town Conyers even as it encourages physical and economic growth. Revising the local design review process for the local historic district and its wider historic overlay district has been a key component of this effort.

Further, the city has created zoning classifications and overlay districts (see below) that accommodate new mixed-use and traditional neighborhood development that can help define community character beyond the historic urban core.

Zoning

Traditional Neighborhood Design District (TND). Sec. 8-7-34 of the City of Conyers' code is "Traditional Neighborhood Design District." Generally, the purpose and intent of the district is to allow greater flexibility in designing neighborhoods within a unified plan of development instead of a parcel by parcel development. The TND district encourages residential development near an urban core, diversity and creativity in land planning and residential options,

and the preservation of open space and natural/environmental resources. The district requires at least 20% open space within each unified development.

Mixed-Use Development District (MxD). Sec 8-7-39 of the City of Conyers' code is "Mixed-Use Development District." A purpose of this district, among others, is to encourage appropriate development of compact, mixed-use parcels with high standards for design and aesthetics.

Livable Centers Initiative Overlay District (LCI). Sec. 8-7-66 of the City of Conyers' code is "Livable Centers Initiative Overlay District." The overlay district is intended to implement adopted policies from the comprehensive plan and the Livable Centers Initiative for activity centers 2, 3, and 4. Adopted in 2004, this ordinance (Ord. No. 693), among other things, strives to introduce appropriate and compatible development and redevelopment that is also walkable, attractive and environmentally responsible. The overlay district introduces high standards for site design, landscaping and green space, and architectural design. There are also minimum requirements for open space conservation depending on the land use.

Mixed-Use Village Overlay District (MxVOD). Sec. 8-7-67 of the City of Conyers' code is "Mixed-Use Village Overlay District." The mixed-use village overlay district provides flexibility in developing commercial and residential property within certain designated areas of the city. The overlay district provides greater flexibility and applicability to potential developments than the Mixed-Use Development District (A purpose of the overlay district, among others, is to allow compact developments with multiple land uses in proximity to one another that support multi-modal transportation opportunities. Extensive attention is given to required public and private improvements within the overlay district based on established tiers.

Olde Town Overlay District. Sec. 8-7-68 of the City of Conyers' code is "Olde Town Overlay District." The overlay district includes both the local historic district (Olde Town Historic District and the two National-Register listed historic districts). The intent of this overlay district is to maintain the historic character, cultural heritage, economic health, and sense of place of Conyers through the protection of historic buildings and sites and their surrounding areas. The overlay district establishes a design review process that ensures new public and private development is compatible with existing town character.

REGIONAL QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

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."

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."

“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.”

Rockdale County and the City of Conyers appear to have exercised virtually every opportunity to plan and deliver services in a way that is cooperative and efficient. The many examples of countywide service delivery, particularly with regard to water and sewer services, demonstrate that the two governments have acted consistently with the regional solutions objective. A prime example of intergovernmental coordination and cooperation is the multi-government agreement to protect the Big Haynes Creek water supply watershed. That agreement has been cited as a model for other local governments to follow, and it demonstrates consistency with the regional cooperation objective. The “regional identity” objective appears to have little applicability.

Planning

The comprehensive plan for Rockdale County and the City of Conyers (1991) was a joint city-county plan. Conyers and Rockdale County have a combined City-County Planning Commission. When the last update of the comprehensive plan was due, the City of Conyers elected to proceed individually rather than collectively with that planning effort. With regard to the partial updates of the comprehensive plan, the city and county are proceeding separately and individually, although they have both hired the same planning consultant to prepare the partial updates. Conyers participated in the countywide transportation planning process sponsored by Rockdale County.

Provision of Facilities and Services

Service responsibilities are set forth in the *Comprehensive Service Delivery Strategy for the City of Conyers and Rockdale County*. The strategy was completed almost ten years ago now.

Rockdale County and Conyers are served with water and sewer facilities by the Rockdale County Water and Sewer Authority. The authority purchased the City of Conyers water and sewer systems on November 12, 1996. Schools are provided by one countywide system, as are libraries. Similarly, emergency medical services and fire protection are also delivered by Rockdale County on a countywide basis including the City of Conyers. The consolidation of fire services dates back to June 28, 1990. Other facilities and services that are provided on a countywide basis include but are not limited to voter registration and elections, tax assessment, detention (jail) services, tourism, senior services, health and social services (Hospital Authority of Rockdale County), and animal control.

Rockdale County and the City of Conyers maintain separate planning and building inspection departments. Conyers also provides its own police/public safety, security alert (residential and commercial alarm service), E911 communications (part of Police Department), public works, municipal court, economic development, and solid waste collection services. With regard to parks and recreation, the adopted Service Delivery Strategy indicates that the city will provide its own passive parks and recreation services within its incorporated boundaries, as well as cemeteries.

Dispute Resolution

As a part of the process of preparing the service delivery strategy, Conyers and Rockdale County evaluated the land use plans of the city and county and found that there were no incompatibilities. Furthermore, a dispute resolution process was jointly agreed to and effectuated July 1, 1998.

CHAPTER 2 ANALYSIS OF AREAS REQUIRING SPECIAL ATTENTION

This chapter constitutes a second required component of the partial update of the comprehensive plan for the City of Conyers. It consists of a narrative description of “areas requiring special attention” per the partial plan update requirements of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Generally, this component is an assessment of existing land use conditions and trends, with attention toward identifying specific areas that deserve additional policy formulation or regulation. The discussion in this chapter is divided into the categories of areas of special attention as outlined in the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (Local Planning Requirements). Prior to discussing possible areas requiring special attention, however, an overview of existing land use patterns and trends is provided.

OVERVIEW OF EXISTING LAND USE PATTERNS AND TRENDS

This description of existing land use patterns is drawn largely from the 2004 comprehensive plan. In 2003, Conyers’ city limits consisted of 7,226 acres. Of the total area in the city at that time, 19 percent consisted of industrial land uses, 17 percent was commercial, almost 21 percent was residential, and about 12 percent was vacant. The land area and the composition of land uses in Conyers have changed since then, with additional annexations. The percentages of industrial and commercial development, expressed in terms of total city land area, are substantially higher than typically found in Georgia municipalities – this reflects Conyers’ position as the only urban place in Rockdale County, as well as its central location in the county along Interstate 20.

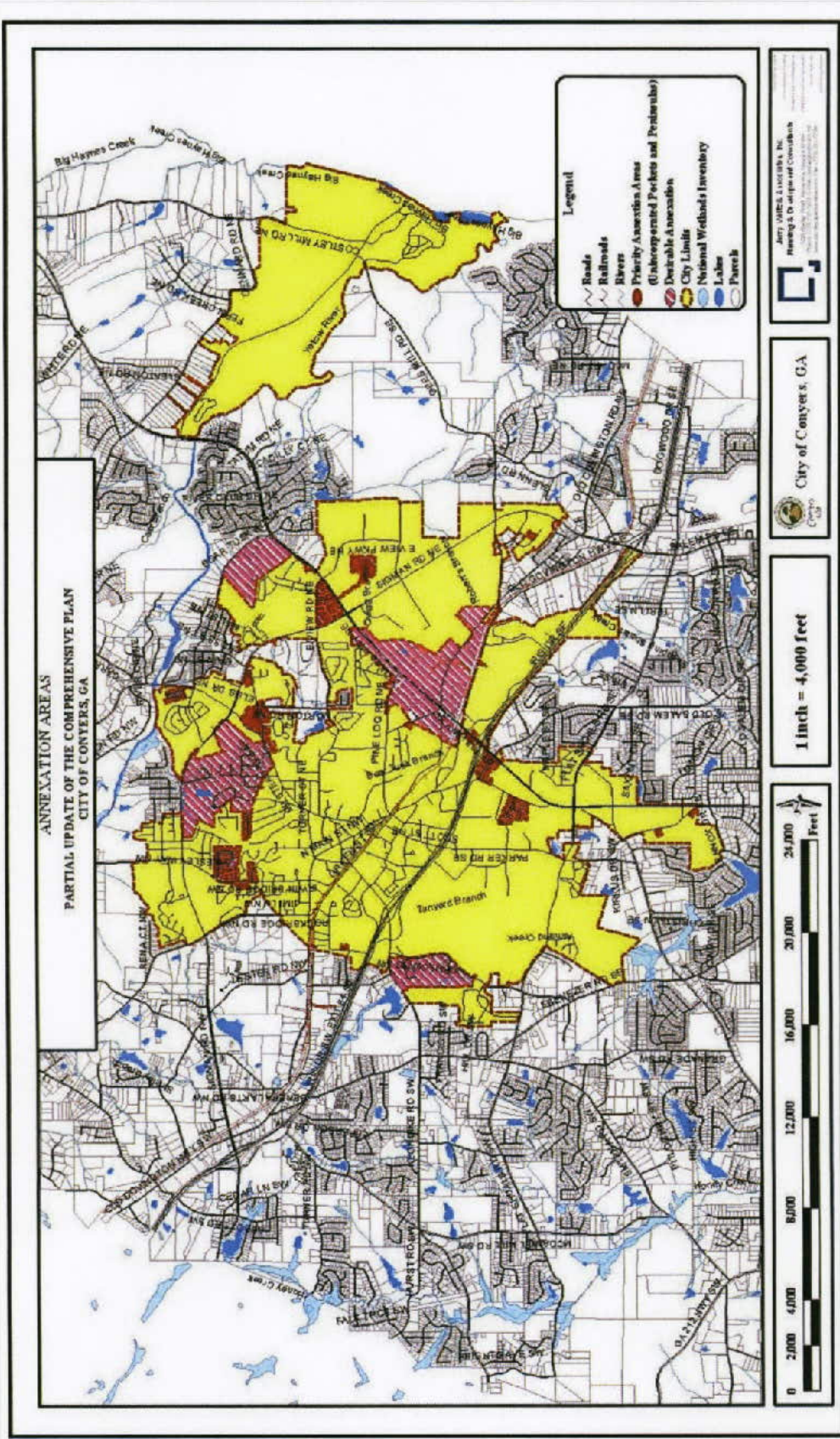
The city limits are now an estimated 11.8 square miles, or approximately 7,552 acres.¹³ Conyers has a variety of residential housing types, including single-family, multi-family and manufactured dwelling units. In fact, it is significant to note that Conyers contained nearly as much land devoted to multi-family residences as single-family residences (805 and 687 acres in 2003, respectively).

Development outside the original corporate limits has followed major thoroughfare corridors such as I-20, West Avenue, and State Highways 138 and 20. In recent years, the Olde Town area, which is the original central business district, has been revitalized to accommodate new retail shops, offices and restaurants.

AREAS LIKELY TO BE ANNEXED

The rules for Partial Plan Updates suggest that areas likely to be annexed during the planning horizon be included in the analysis of areas of special attention. This Partial Plan Update provides a map of possible future annexation areas. There are two sets of suggested annexation areas. The first is “priority” annexations (202 acres), which consist of unincorporated islands, or pockets or peninsulas, which should be annexed because they are mostly or completely surrounded by the Conyers city limits now. The other is labeled “desirable” annexations (726 acres), as they would tend to “round out” or “square off” the city limits.

¹³ Calculation by Jerry Weitz & Associates, Inc. in GIS, July 2008.



SIGNIFICANT NATURAL OR CULTURAL RESOURCES

Wetlands

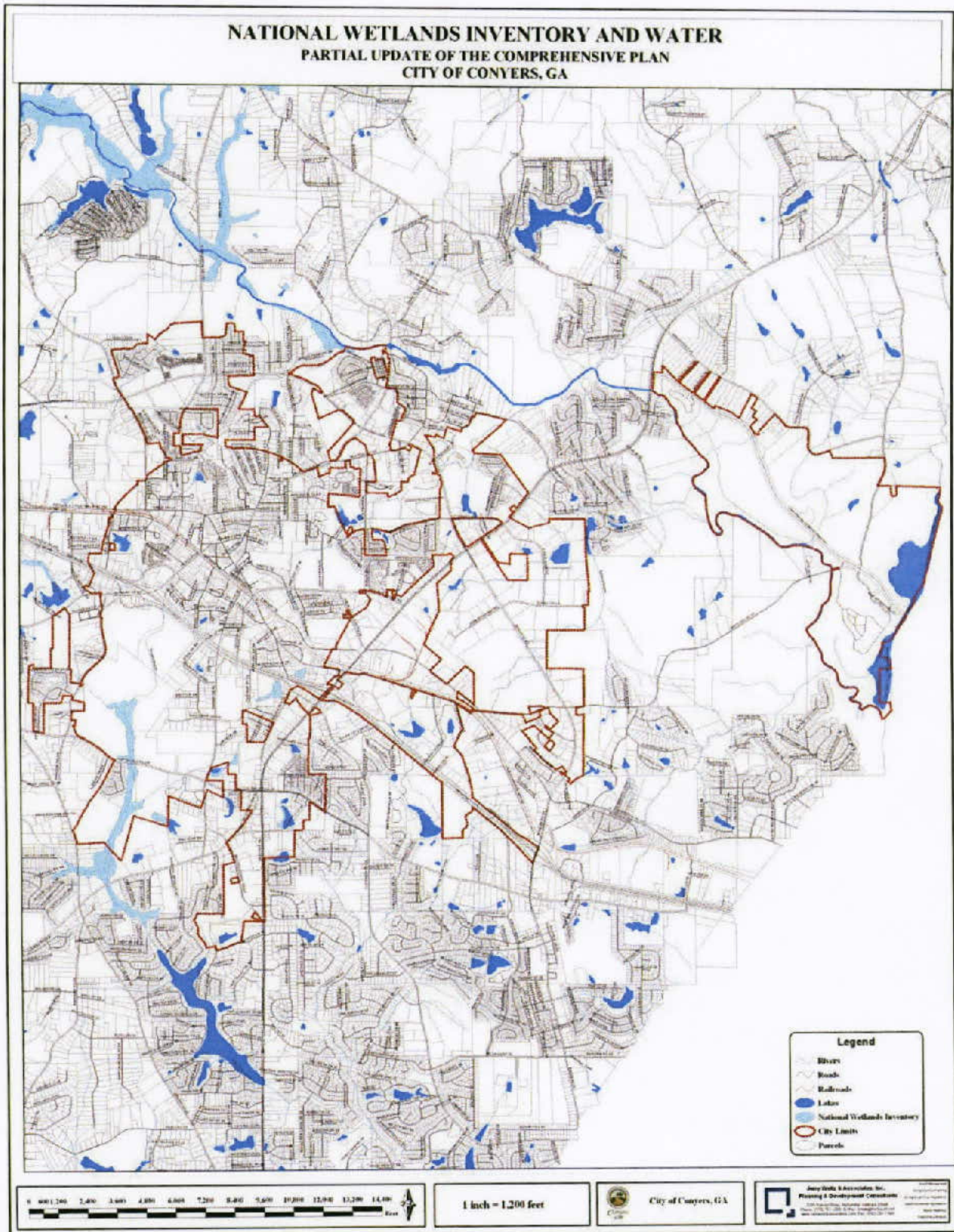
According to the city's comprehensive plan, wetlands occur sporadically within the City of Conyers but typically do not exceed three to four acres in area. The largest occurrence of wetlands is within the Georgia International Horse Park. In the northern part of the city, wetlands that exist are primarily associated with tributary streams of the Yellow River. There are also some wetlands along Tanyard Branch of Almand Creek and Snapping Shoals Creek. Small wetlands also occur within floodplains and proximate to ponds and small water impoundments, according to the comprehensive plan. Overall, wetlands do not pose major limitations on development in Conyers, but they are shown on a map in this partial plan update and the city's regulations already address wetland protection.

"303(d)" List of Impaired Waters

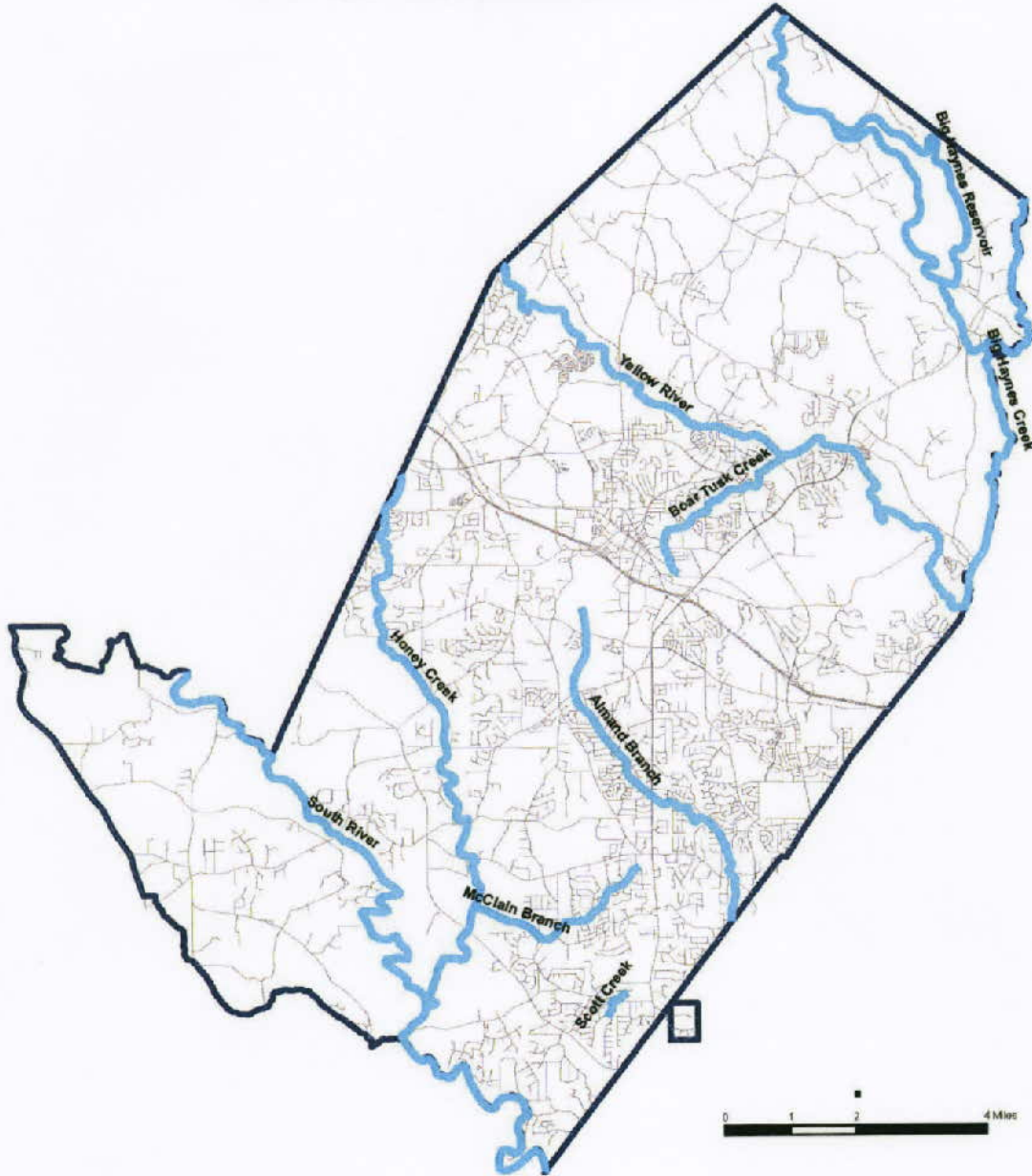
The "303(d) list of impaired waters is prepared by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and includes rivers and streams that are "not supporting" or "partially supporting" the Clean Water Act mandate of being "fishable or swimmable" (Rockdale County Comprehensive Plan, p. IV-7;). In the Conyers area, there are two waterways that are on the 303(d) list: The Yellow River, which generally runs just north of the city limits, and Boar Tusk Creek, which runs from south to north into the Yellow River in the eastern part of the original Conyers city limits, paralleling the west side of SR 20/SR 138. Additional mandates have been established by Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District to protect watersheds and enhance water quality, and federal and state mandates will continue to govern local efforts to improve the status of impaired waters. These higher levels of government will dictate the specific regulations needed to improve impaired water quality. Rivers and streams on the "303(d) list" are shown on a map in this chapter.

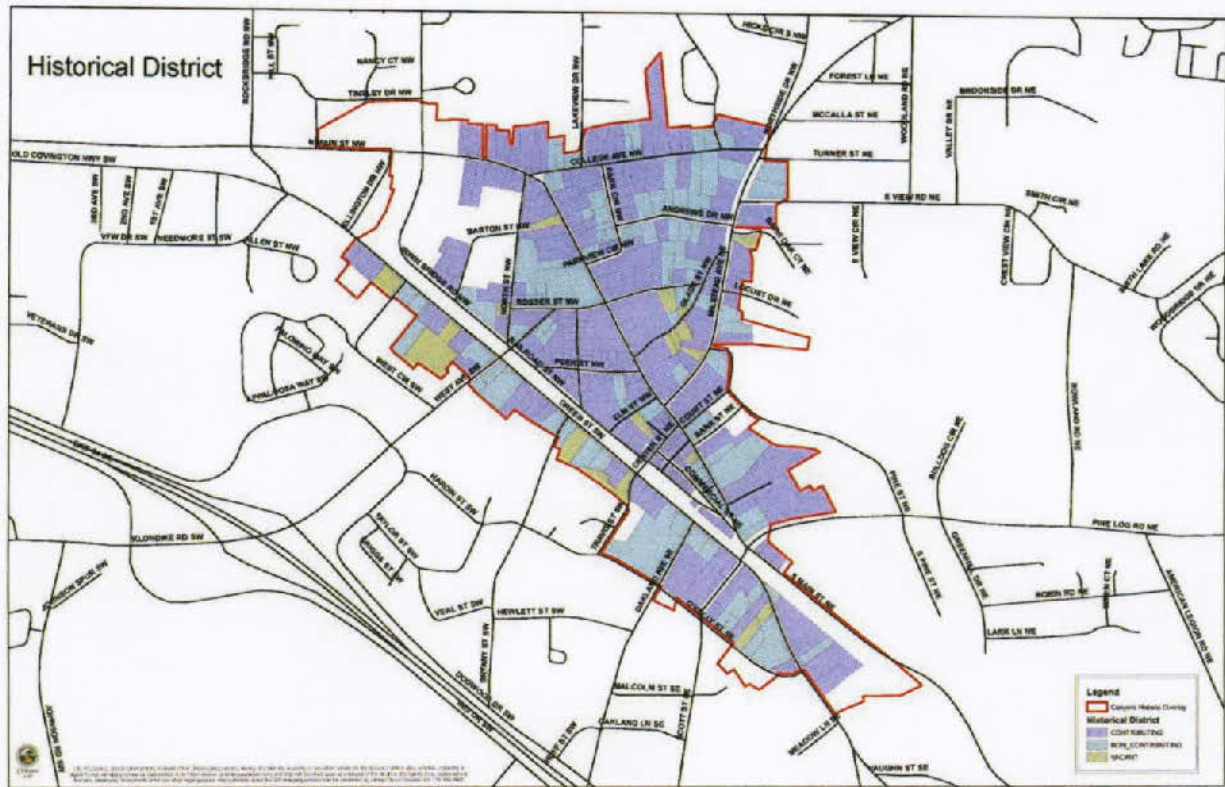
Conyers Historic District

Conyers has a locally designated historic district in its downtown core area (see map), which consists of two National Register Historic Districts: the Conyers Commercial Historic District and the Conyers Residential District. It is shown in a map in this chapter.



303(d) Impaired Waters





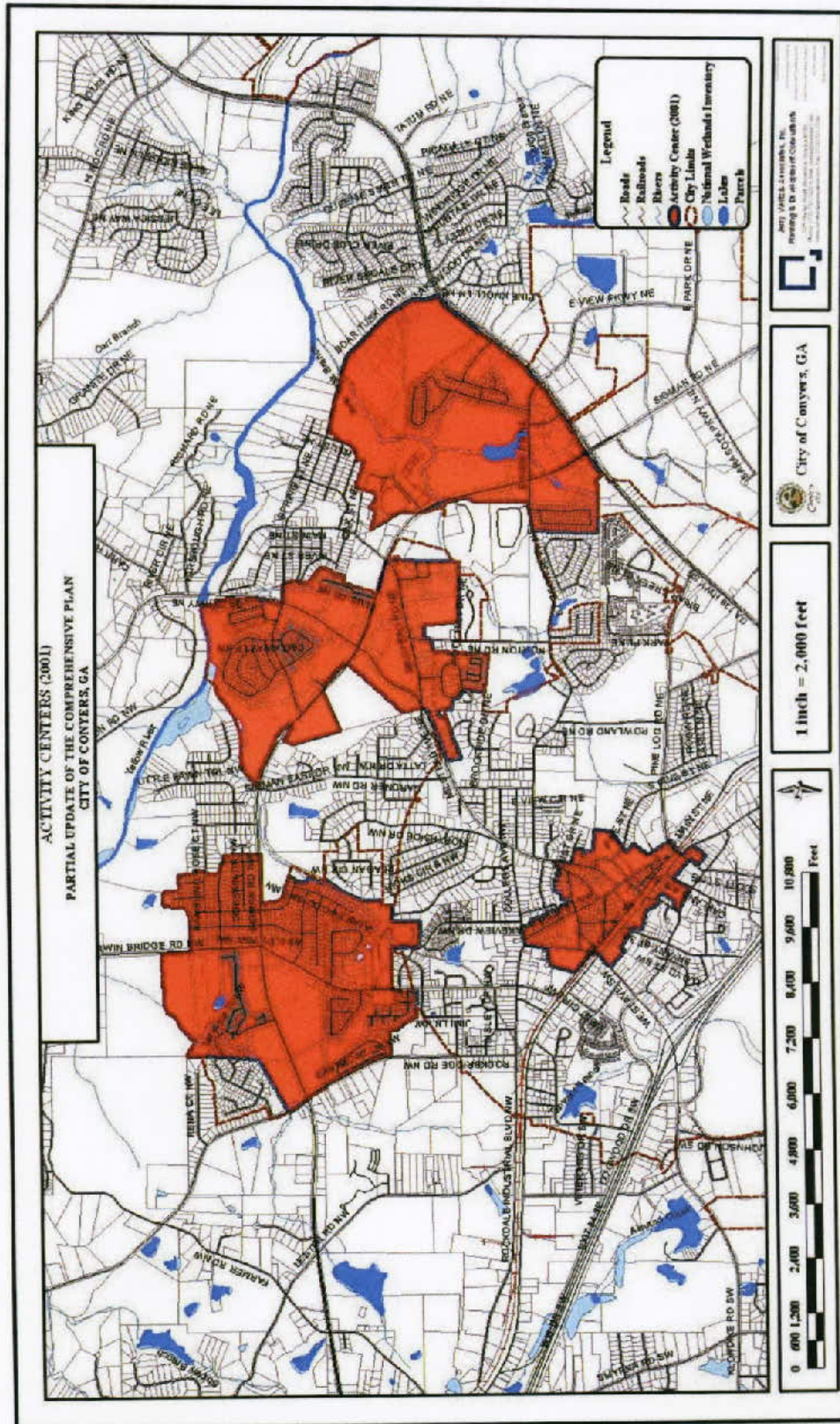
Conyers Historic District and Overlay

AREAS WHERE RAPID DEVELOPMENT OR CHANGE IN LAND USES IS LIKELY TO OCCUR

Activity Centers #2, #3, and #4, as designated in the Activity Center/Town Center Policy Investment Study (2001) (also referred to as an Livable Centers Initiative or “LCI study or plan) are the primary areas where Conyers can anticipate rapid development or change of land uses to occur. These areas are mapped in this Partial Plan Update and are also indicated on the city’s future land use map.



Commercial Development Under Construction, Sigman Road



AREAS OUTPACING AVAILABILITY OF COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

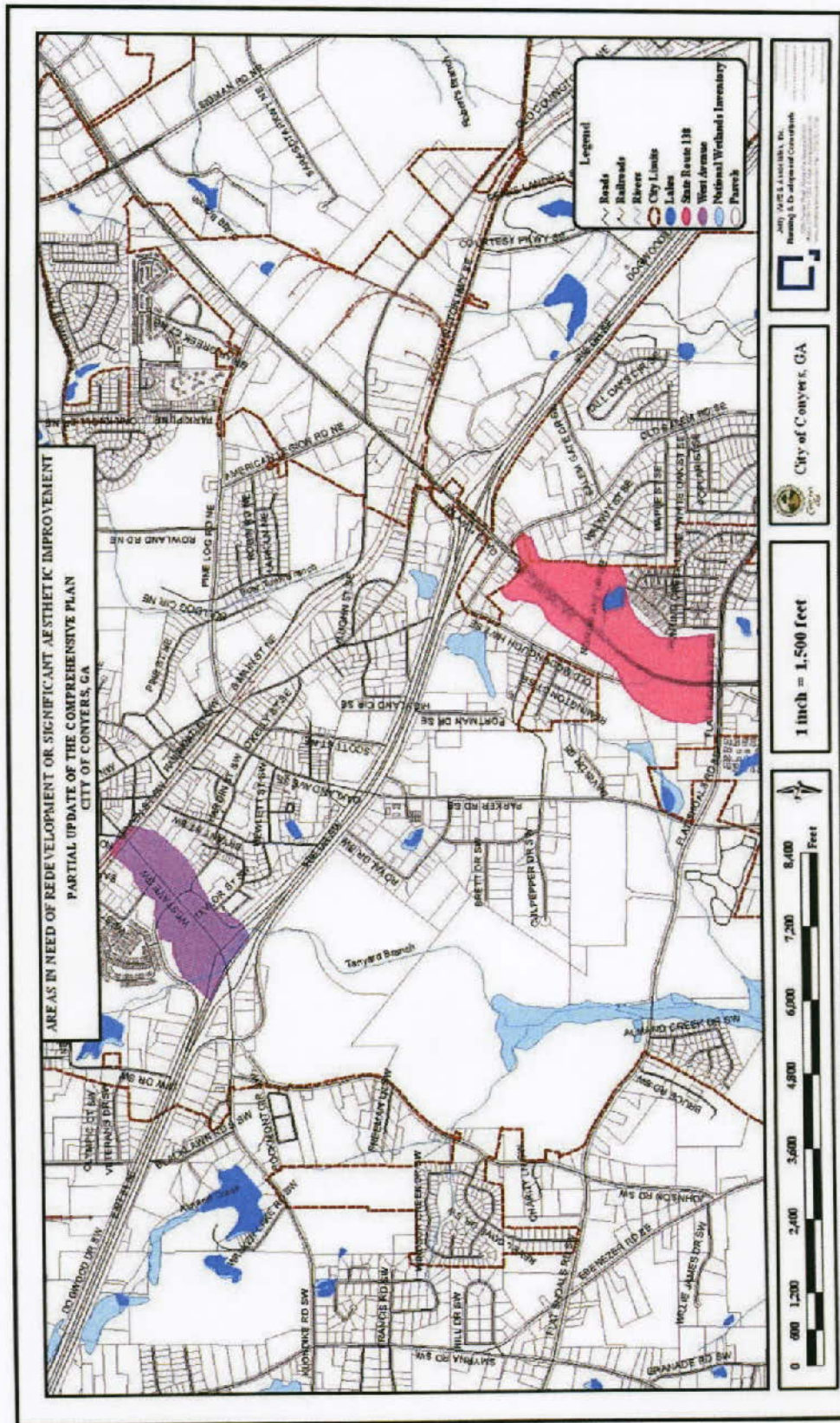
Generally, Conyers is adequately served with all of the community facilities and services needed to serve additional growth and development, including water, sewer, schools, and so forth. There are, as noted in the prior chapter, congested arterials. There are no areas that have been identified where development threatens to outpace community facilities and services.

AREAS IN NEED OF REDEVELOPMENT OR SIGNIFICANT AESTHETIC IMPROVEMENT

The city continues to encourage historically compatible redevelopment in Olde Town Conyers. To help with that objective, the city has mapped a Tax Allocation District (TAD) and is pursuing its approval. The City of Conyers has also identified a desire to adopt an overlay district along West Avenue to encourage redevelopment and improve aesthetics of the corridor. The city has identified the SR 138 corridor as also appropriate for additional aesthetic improvements. These two road corridors are shown on a map included here.



Redevelopment Potential in Olde Town

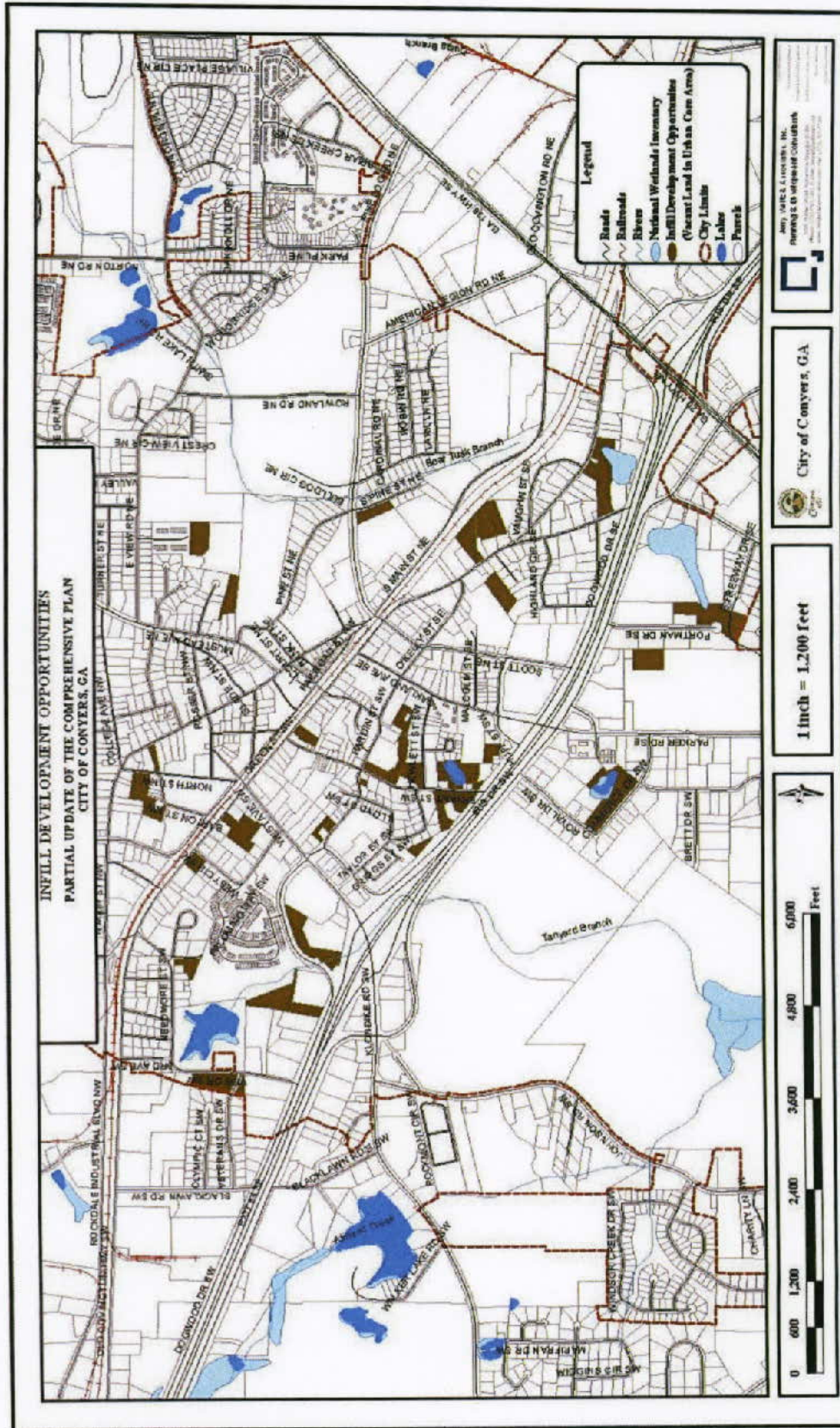


LARGE ABANDONED SITES OR STRUCTURES

Like other jurisdictions, there are scattered commercial sites that have been abandoned. However, there are no large sites that are significant enough to be mapped here.

AREAS WITH SIGNIFICANT INFILL DEVELOPMENT POTENTIAL

This issue of infill development potential is also discussed in Chapters 1 and 3 of this Partial Plan Update. A map of significant infill development opportunities is provided in this Partial Plan Update. It indicates significant vacant lands within the original one-mile city limits that are available for infill development.



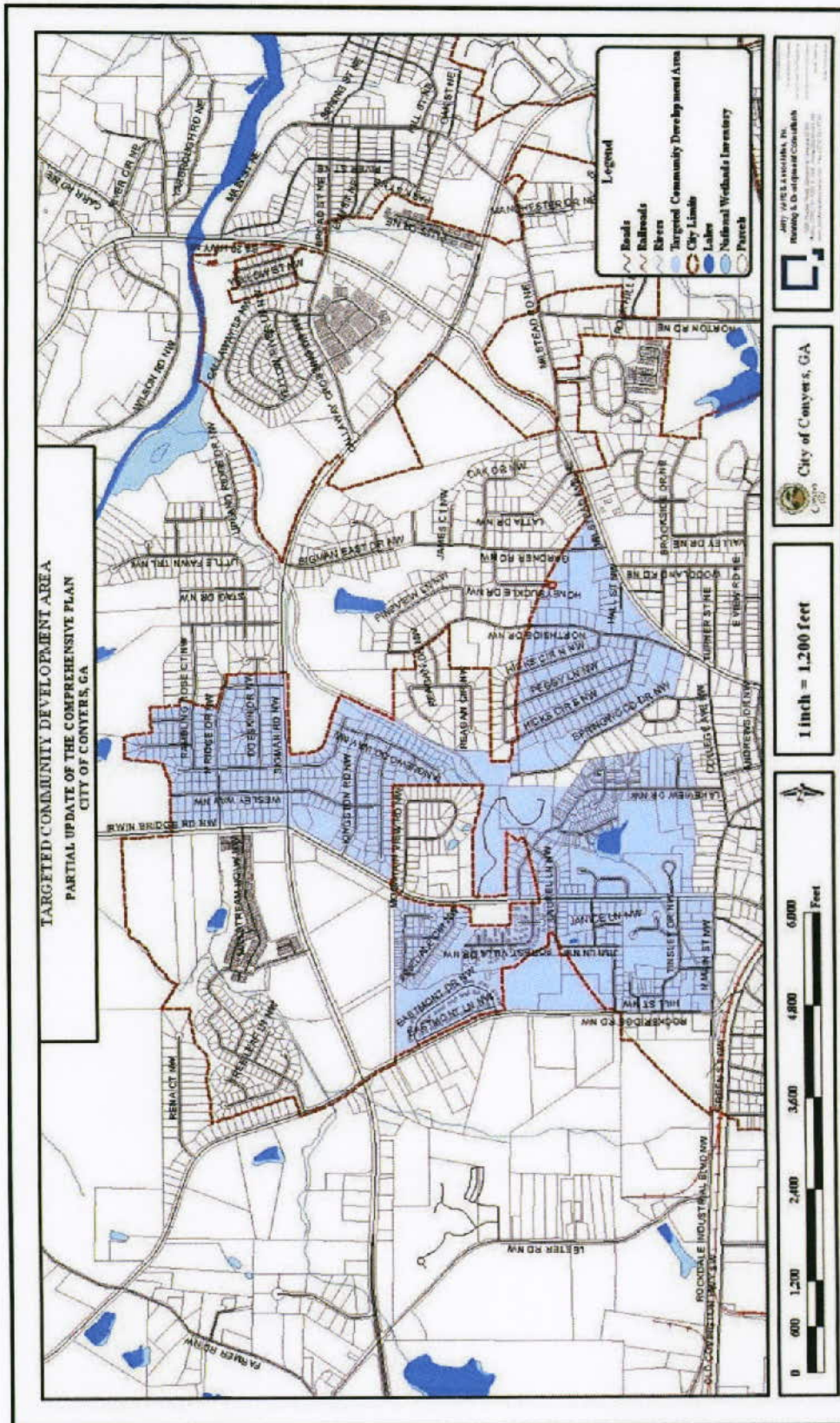
AREAS OF SIGNIFICANT DISINVESTMENT, LEVELS OF POVERTY, OR UNEMPLOYMENT

Of the 15 census tracts in Rockdale County, two stand out with regard to poverty and low incomes. Census Tract 602.1, which is in western Rockdale County abutting DeKalb County and north of Interstate 20 (with a small portion south of I-20), and 603.09, which includes most of north-central Conyers and which abuts Census Tract 602.1 to the east. Conyers is contained primarily within three census tracts: 603.04, 603.08, and 603.09. Table 4 provides selected statistics with regard to unemployment, poverty status, and income for those three census tracts. Also, further detail is provided by “block group.” Unemployment is not significantly different in terms of total numbers among the three census tracts. Block Group 2 of Census Tract 603.08 and Block Group 3 of Census Tract 603.09 contained significant concentrations of unemployed persons in 2000, compared with the others in Table 4. Block Groups 2 and 3 in Census Tract 603.09 had 445 and 446 persons, respectively, with incomes below poverty level in 1999; this represented a significant concentration of poverty in 2000, as the numbers constituted approximately 40 percent or more of the total population in those block groups. Block Group 2 of Census Tract 603.09 appears to have suffered the greatest hardship, with a per capita income of only \$8,857 and a family income of only \$20,481 in 1999. Families receiving public assistance income in 1999 were also significant in number, in Block Groups 2 and 3 of Census Tract 603.09. A modified version of these two block groups (amended to exclude stable and higher end neighborhoods), is mapped in this Partial Plan Update, titled “Targeted Community Development Area.” It is within this mapped area that Conyers is expected to target any available community development block grant funds and increased code enforcement efforts.

Table 4
Unemployment, Poverty, and Income Statistics
Census Tracts and Block Groups
Within or Partially Within Conyers, Georgia, 2000

Census Tract	Block Group (BG)	Male Unemployed 2000	Female Unemployed 2000	Total Unemployed 2000	Income in 1999 Below Poverty Level	Median Family Income in 1999 (Dollars)	Per Capita Income in 1999 (Dollars)	Households With Public Assistance Income in 1999
603.04	Total	62	54	116	584	48,558	19,145	45
	BG 4	13	12	25	187	37,917	14,386	0
	BG 5	22	10	32	212	28,603	14,266	26
	BG 6	14	29	43	167	44,500	18,182	11
	BG 7	13	3	16	18	74,598	27,954	8
603.08	Total	35	77	112	437	40,858	17,375	24
	BG 1	0	8	8	56	31,250	13,636	8
	BG 2	8	55	63	275	40,583	18,307	7
	BG 3	27	14	41	106	50,900	18,519	9
603.09	Total	49	49	98	996	40,050	15,228	78
	BG 1	13	13	26	105	54,141	15,920	12
	BG 2	6	6	12	445	20,481	8,857	36
	BG 3	30	30	60	446	45,139	17,325	30

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000. Summary File 3 (SF 3) - Sample Data. Rockdale County Census Tracts. Table P43. Sex by Employment Status for the Population 16 Years and Over; Table P87. Poverty Status in 1999 by Age; Table P82. Per Capita Income on 1999 (Dollars); Table P77. Median Family Income in 1999 (Dollars); and Table P64. Public Assistance Income in 1999 for Households



CHAPTER 3 ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The purpose of this chapter is to identify the issues and opportunities that result from the assessment of Quality Community Objectives (QCOs) (Chapter 1) and the Areas Requiring Special Attention (Chapter 2). The issues and opportunities are divided into functional areas similar to the substantive components or elements of the comprehensive plan (housing, economic development, etc.). As each issue or opportunity is discussed, the prospects for implementation are also explored. This narrative alludes to likely implementation strategies, but it does not definitively state what the implementation will be (see Chapter 5 for adopted implementation strategies). In some cases, the most appropriate implementation measure is to adopt a policy statement; additional policy statements are provided in Chapter 4. Adopted implementation strategies and work program components are provided in Chapter 5 of this partial plan update.

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

HCD- 1. Pursuing Community Development

Problem or Issue Statement. As described in Chapter 2, of the 15 census tracts in Rockdale County, two stand out with regard to poverty and low incomes. One of these, Census Tract 603.09, includes most of north-central Conyers. Table 3 in Chapter 2 shows that there are some significant concentrations of poverty in Blocks 2 and 3 of the Census Tract.

Rationale for Addressing the Problem or Issue. Care must be taken to ensure that residential neighborhoods with high concentrations of poverty do not experience disinvestment and blight conditions. If they do, the consequences are predictable – the units become renter occupied, owners decrease or discontinue maintenance, property values fall, and the neighborhoods become “affordable” for low and moderate income residents. While the filtering down of housing could be considered an unavoidable market process, and could be viewed as a positive in terms of providing necessary housing for the lower income segments of the community, the blighting of residential neighborhoods could have some terrible consequences. The areas cited are close to the county’s primary industrial and manufacturing areas – and they provide convenient housing opportunities via these older neighborhoods, if they are preserved and blighting conditions averted.

Implementation Prospects. The adopted comprehensive plan is basically silent on the issue of pursuing city community development. Community development efforts have long relied on federal assistance via the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Pursuing CDBG funds from the state is one small step that could be taken to help reverse the decline of certain residential neighborhoods and avert blighting conditions. Rigorous housing code enforcement programs can force property owners to reinvest toward the maintenance of structures that might otherwise not occur, absent public intervention.

HCD-2. Meeting Affordable Housing Needs

Problem or Issue Statement. The Conyers Housing Authority has operated for some time (more than three decades) and provides much needed affordable housing. In an age of fewer and fewer federal and state housing assistance programs, the authority may have a difficult time meeting future housing needs and maintaining its existing problems.

Rationale for Addressing the Problem or Issue. The housing authority and Conyers city government, generally, has an important role in facilitating affordable housing. Left to the private market, a number of households will struggle with maintaining adequate housing.

Implementation Prospects. It may be difficult given a lack of capital funds for the Conyers Housing Authority to provide additional, affordable housing units. Indeed, the trend in terms of federal housing policy has been to use vouchers for households to live in private housing complexes as opposed to the direct provision of housing. Habitat for Humanity and other private providers can respond to some extent, but their effectiveness in terms of meeting overall needs or keeping up with demands is probably negligible. Nonetheless, Conyers will need to rely on private sector initiatives such as community-based housing organizations and Habitat for Humanity to help meet future affordable housing needs. Additionally, Conyers' comprehensive plan supports the provision of low income housing units in mixed use developments, and overall Conyers' housing mix is more supportive than most with regard to promoting a diverse and affordable housing stock

NATURAL RESOURCES

NR-1. Protecting the "303(d)" List of Impaired Waters

Problem or Issue Statement. Two streams and rivers in Conyers have been identified by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as "not supporting" or "partially supporting" the Clean Water Act mandate of being "fishable or swimmable." A number of mandates are given by the federal and state governments to reverse the degradation of streams and rivers.

Rationale for Addressing the Problem or Issue. The federal and state governments mandate that surface water quality be maintained and improved where it is degraded. Water quality maintenance is important for purposes of drinking water, as well as the maintenance of diverse species habitat.

Implementation Prospects. Conyers considers the rivers and streams on the "303(d) list" as areas requiring special attention (see Chapter 2). Federal and state regulations will continue to establish the framework for responding to the problem of degrading water quality in streams and rivers. Local regulatory programs in Conyers will follow suit. The city has done virtually everything it has been required to do with regard to environmental protection, including adoption of all mandatory model ordinances of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District.

One of the few tasks that might address this problem/issue is to increasingly emphasize “Low Impact Development Practices and Guidelines” in future regulatory efforts.¹⁴

LAND USE

LU-1. Promoting Residential Infill Development

Problem or Issue Statement. As noted in Chapters 1 and 2 of this partial plan update, there are significant opportunities for promoting residential infill development in the one-mile circle that was the original city limits of Conyers. Except within the city’s residential historic district, there are no design controls over the compatibility of new residential development. On the one hand, Conyers would like to see higher property values with an infusion of investment via building larger homes on vacant lots. However, such “gentrification” (which occurs when people buy “fixer upper” homes and spend money on them, thus increasing property values in the neighborhood), works against affordable housing policies since it can result generally in the displacement of lower income renter households from the neighborhood.

Rationale for Addressing the Problem or Issue. The provision of new housing in existing neighborhoods can have a significant revitalization benefit. But gentrification can result in an inattention to affordable housing objectives. It is well accepted in the planning literature that residential infill development in existing neighborhoods is an efficient use of public infrastructure. Infill housing has many obstacles and thus residential infill development may not occur absent special policies, incentives, and/or regulations.

Implementation Prospects. Policies of the comprehensive plan and this partial plan update support residential infill development objectives. However, the city does not have a formal plan or specific provisions to promote infill development, although one should recognize the significant role of the historic district in promoting compatible infill development. Regulations can be adopted to facilitate infill development, including those that: allow flexibility in housing type, location, lot width and vehicle access to facilitate infill development; provide development standards and guidelines to promote compatibility between existing and new development; and that eliminate regulatory constraints (e.g., restrictive zoning) and establish public processes and regulations that will reduce neighborhood resistance to infill and redevelopment. Specific techniques include allowances for duplexes in single-family areas, an averaging of lot sizes rather than strict adherence to lot size minimums of the zoning district, reductions of minimum lot widths, and allowances for “flag” or “panhandle” lots.¹⁵ Some of these techniques are described in the Georgia Department of Community Affairs’ Model Land Use Management Code (2007 version). The map of areas requiring special attention specifically identifies the areas that should be targeted for residential infill development, and Conyers should proceed with a more formal program and regulatory provisions to make infill development happen in its inner-city neighborhoods.

¹⁴ For instance, see Richard Krier with Julie Westerlund, “The Art of Planning and Low Impact Development to Reduce Pollution and Improve Sustainable Neighborhood Character.” *Practicing Planner*, Vol. 5, No. 4 (2007).

¹⁵ The Conyers Zoning Ordinance currently prohibits “flag” lots.

LU-2. LCI Study Implementation

Problem or Issue Statement. The 2001 ACTIPS study (LCI plan) identified four activity centers within which Conyers will promote mixed-use, pedestrian friendly development patterns. Although Olde Town Conyers (the first activity center) has been successful, the other three activity centers have generally not yet developed as planned.

Rationale for Addressing the Problem or Issue. Development according to the LCI plan provides numerous benefits, including a more discernible quality of place, the opportunities to use modes of travel other than the automobile, more efficient development patterns, and possibly more affordable and diverse housing options.

Implementation Prospects. Since the LCI activity centers are already identified and recognized in the Conyers zoning ordinance, implementation is facilitated through regulation. However, the three outlying activity centers generally do not have much additional potential to develop according to the LCI study. The city notes that the implementation measures were put into place shortly after the LCI study was prepared, but development had begun to take place according to the current zoning designations. This casts some doubt on implementation according to the specifics of the LCI study.

LU-3. Update of the Future Land Use Map

Problem or Issue Statement. The comprehensive plan's future land use map has not been formally updated recently. Conyers has annexed additional lands since the plan map was produced. The future land use map does not provide much specificity with regard to certain areas, such as the Georgia International Horse Park and within the three outlying activity centers specified in the LCI study. The detailed land use schematics provided in the LCI study are available but not reflected on the future land use map.

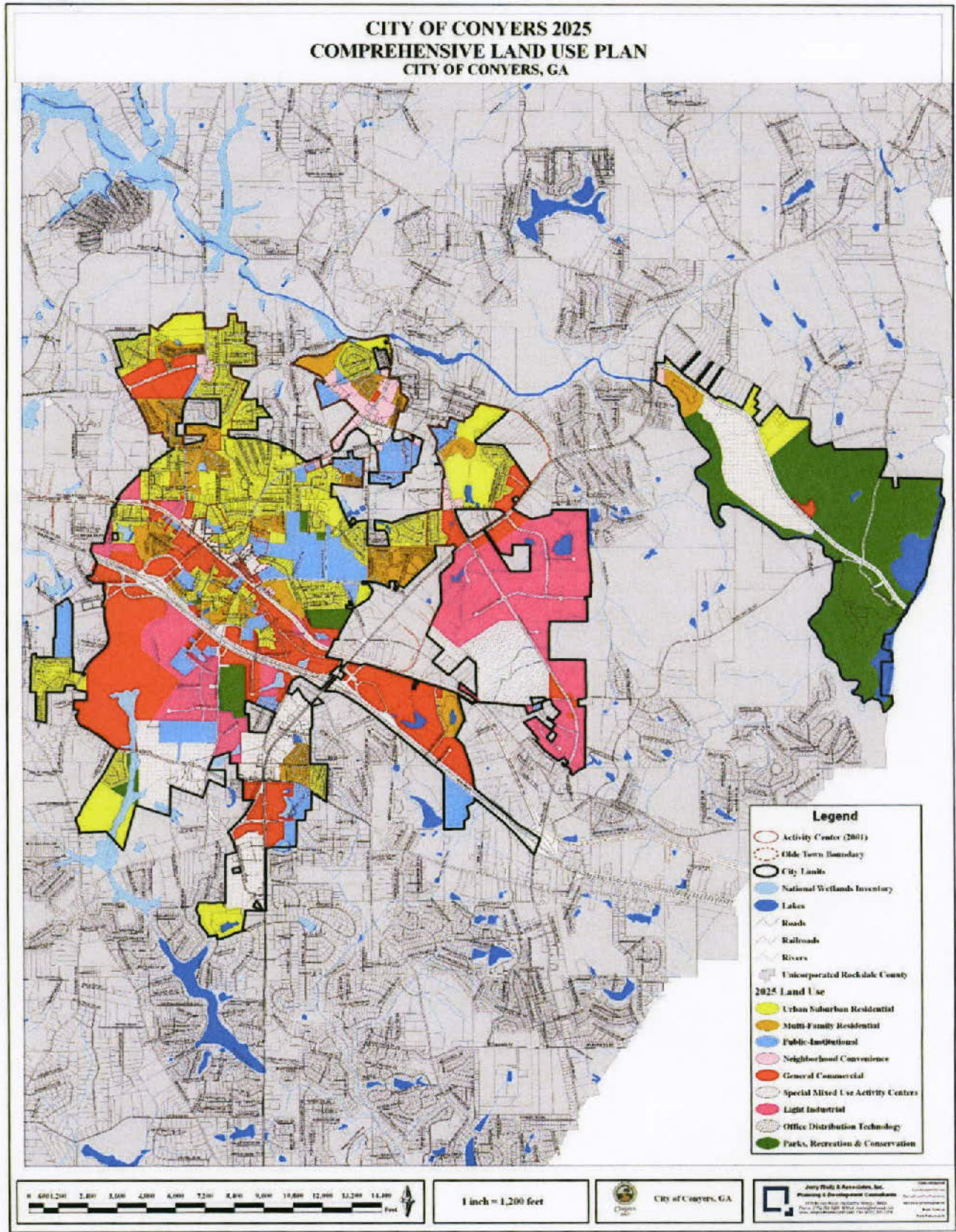
Rationale for Addressing the Problem or Issue. Greater specificity on the future land use map can help the city provide the most appropriate mix of uses as additional development occurs.

Implementation Prospects. Through this partial plan update, Conyers prepared and adopted a comprehensive revision of the city's future land use map (see map).

LU-4. Georgia International Horse Park

Problem or Issue Statement. There is an opportunity to provide more detailed master planning for the Georgia International Horse Park, as there is substantial vacant land remaining within the boundaries of the park.

Rationale for Addressing the Problem or Issue. The importance of developing the Georgia International Horse Park as a destination cannot be overemphasized. The city has control over the land and should strive to ensure that it develops in a way that is complimentary to its economic, tourism, and recreation objectives as well as its general policies.



Implementation Prospects. Through the update of the city's future land use map, there is an opportunity to assign the most desirable land uses for the remaining vacant lands in the boundaries of the Georgia International Horse Park. Also, Conyers could take more proactive steps to develop a master plan for the remaining vacant lands within the park.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

CF-1. Establishing a Park and Recreation Department

Problem or Issue Statement. Conyers has approximately a dozen parks and plans call for the city to add significant amounts of additional parklands by 2020. The comprehensive plan calls for the city to establish a professional park and recreation department. Currently, the city maintains park lands through the Public Works and Transportation Department.

Rationale for Addressing the Problem or Issue. Cities such as Roswell and Gainesville have proven themselves to be high quality places to live, due in part to their commitment to fund park improvements and have the staffing in place to provide recreational programs. Conyers' overall quality of life could improve with the provision of formal recreation programs organized by a municipal department, as called for in the 2004 comprehensive plan.

Implementation Prospects. Establishing a new department involves significant additional operating expenses for salaries and benefits, and capital expenditures in the form of additional office space. Conyers has been aware for some time of the plan's recommendation to establish a parks and recreation department. However, budget constraints are always a limiting factor, and the city has to weigh the advantage of having a professional recreation staff with other competing demands that can at times have equal if not greater urgency.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

IC-1. Coordinating Parks and Recreation Master Planning

Problem or Issue Statement. Community participation during the county's comprehensive planning process in 2003 revealed the opportunity for Conyers and Rockdale County to provide a greenway linking Randy Poynter Lake (county owned) with the International Horse Park (city owned) (p. 1-4, Rockdale County Comprehensive Plan).

Rationale for Addressing the Problem or Issue. Given the current configuration of the City limits and prospects for countywide connectivity, it is important that both the city and county jointly plan and provide trails and greenways that link between each others' jurisdictions. Another reason why joint park planning is needed is the precedent for multi-jurisdictional trail and greenway planning has been set with the Path Foundation's recent trail plan to connect Olde Town Conyers with the Rockdale River Trail.

Implementation Prospects. The prospects for jointly planning of greenways and trails is very good, given that the county's comprehensive plan already calls for this task to be

undertaken. The county's portion of funding might involve use of impact fee proceeds since planning is an eligible expenditure. The county should take the lead but the City of Conyers should contribute a share (to be equitably determined) of the cost of preparing this component of the recreation and parks master plan.

IC-2. Continuing the Functional Consolidation of Services

Problem or Issue Statement. The assessment of Quality Community Objectives (Chapter 1) contains an analysis of how service responsibilities are distributed between Rockdale County and Conyers. Though much functional consolidation of facilities and services has already occurred, there are other, additional opportunities that could be explored.

Rationale for Addressing the Problem or Issue. It is in the best interests of city and county residents to consider different arrangements for delivering services and providing facilities, if they are more efficiently provided by one rather than two service or facility providers. Continued functional consolidation of facilities and services is a more feasible alternative to full-scale consolidation of city and county governments, something that most cities including Conyers are most apt to question or oppose altogether.

Implementation Prospects. The implementation prospects are very good, as Conyers and Rockdale County have had a history of coordinating services and the joint provision of many different facilities and services. Such prospects are easier in Rockdale County than elsewhere because the county is small geographically, and because there is only one municipality in the county.

CHAPTER 4 POLICIES

The partial update of the comprehensive plan is intended to provide a guide to everyday decision-making for use by local government officials and other community leaders. The requirements for partial plan updates specify that the local government will include any policies the local government will adopt to provide ongoing guidance and direction to local government officials for making decisions consistent with addressing the identified issues and opportunities. The state's standards also suggest that local governments refer to recommended policies listed in the State Planning Recommendations for suggestions.

Conyers' adopted comprehensive plan provides "goals" and bulleted lists of policy or action statements under each of those goals. This update to the comprehensive plan incorporates the major goals and policy statements – with selected revisions, in this document. Therefore, this plan update goes beyond the minimum requirements of a Partial Plan Update to include a comprehensive synthesis and readoption of the city's comprehensive plan goals, policies, objectives, and implementation strategies.

NATURAL RESOURCES

1. 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 (Quality Community Objective, Environmental Protection).
2. 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 (Quality Community Objective, Open Space Preservation).
3. Preserve wetlands where they exist, or as a last resort if they cannot be preserved on-site, mitigate wetland loss by increasing ecologically equivalent wetlands on other appropriate sites (i.e., wetland mitigation through wetland banking). Any proposal for development involving the alteration of, or an impact on, wetlands should be evaluated according to Ga. DNR Rule 391-3-16-.03 (i.e., environmental planning criteria for wetlands).
4. Prohibit development within floodways and restrict or prohibit development in flood plains. If development within flood plains is allowed, flood plain storage should not be decreased from its present state. In no event shall development be permitted that inhibits the flow of floodwaters.
5. Manage city-owned properties that include wetlands and floodplains in a way that sets a high standard for protection.

6. Encourage or require land suitability analyses for land development proposals for projects exceeding 20 acres in size.
7. Encourage conservation subdivisions over conventional suburban subdivision designs, where appropriate or feasible.
8. Continue to implement measures that will result in the preservation of open space and the protection of environmentally sensitive lands.
9. Modify and expand as necessary local ordinances and regulations governing the use of the City's land resources.
10. Preserve trees, prevent unnecessary grading, protect trees during the land development process, and maintain tree density and diversity of tree species, through a landscaping and tree protection ordinance.
11. Encourage or require the planting of street trees in subdivisions and new land developments.
12. Support watershed education programs such as Adopt-A-Stream.
13. Emphasize "low impact" development to improve stormwater management practices in land development.
14. Allow for and encourage the use of permeable surfaces for parking lots in non-residential developments, if appropriate.
15. Pursue additional federal and state funding for acquisition of green spaces and open spaces.
16. Promote sustainable and energy-efficient development (2006 Regional Development Plan Policy #10).
17. Implement the Olde Town Conyers Trail Master Plan (March 2007).

HISTORIC RESOURCES

1. 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 (Quality Community Objective, Heritage Preservation).
2. Encourage the continued preservation of historic resources and restoration of locally important historic structures.

3. Encourage owners to list eligible properties on the National Register of Historic Places.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. 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 (Quality Community Objective, Growth Preparedness).
2. 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 (Quality Community Objective, Appropriate Business).
3. A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce (Quality Community Objective, Employment Options).
4. 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 (Quality Community Objective, Educational Opportunities).
5. Continue to revitalize Olde Town, and continue to cooperate with the Olde Town Business Council to pursue programs of downtown revitalization and to address concerns of local businesses, promotes improvements.
6. Continue to support the Conyers-Rockdale County Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Council, Inc. as primary entities supporting countywide economic development activities, including Conyers.
7. Maintain the City’s Department of Tourism and Public Affairs and the Conyers Convention and Visitor’s Bureau to promote the Georgia International Horse Park, other tourism efforts and convention activities, and improve the image of the City.
8. Diversify the city’s economic base, so that employment is not as highly concentrated among the services, retail and manufacturing sectors. In particular, attract businesses that provide jobs for management personnel, medical, computer technology, professional service businesses, biotechnology, and telecommunications.
9. Encourage public-private partnerships for redevelopment of older shopping centers.

HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

1. 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 (Quality Community Objective, Housing Opportunities).
2. Encourage a variety of home styles, densities and price ranges in locations that are accessible to jobs and services to ensure housing for individuals and families of all incomes and age groups (2006 Regional Development Plan Policy #8).
3. Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity (Quality Community Objective, Traditional Neighborhood).
4. Facilitate the provision of moderate income housing, through private or public means, or both. Encourage the creation of, and cooperate with, community-based housing organizations in the pursuit of more affordable workforce housing.
5. New, mixed-use residential developments should contain approximately 10 percent lower income units.
6. Encourage the use of upper floors above commercial uses in Olde Town for loft apartments.
7. Prevent the expansion of isolated pockets of substandard housing in the City, through appropriate means.
8. Monitor housing and community conditions in Census Tract 603.09, to avoid blighting influences, and declines in property values. Target housing code enforcement and community development block grant funds, where available, in block groups 2 and 3 of Census Tract 603.09.
9. Encourage the Conyers Housing Authority to maintain and upgrade existing housing units, and to expand the supply of affordable housing where feasible.

LAND USE

1. 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 (Quality Community Objective, Infill Development).
2. Target formal residential infill development efforts at locations within the original one-mile radius corporate limits.

3. 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 (Quality Community Objective, Sense of Place).
4. Use the future land use map as a guide to land use decision-making.
5. Maintain the integrity and stability of Conyers' established neighborhoods, which typically consist of smaller residences located on moderately sized lots.
6. Insure that adequate infrastructure will be in place to support new development, so that city and county services will not be adversely impacted.
7. Continue to require that buffers be provided, to soften impacts and to reduce incompatibilities where residential and commercial and other incompatible land uses abut one another.
8. Provide for the expansion of Rockdale Hospital and medical system as necessary to meet regional needs for medical services.
9. Discourage the abandonment of older shopping centers within the City and encourage their revitalization and redevelopment of them as mixed use developments.
10. Consider, and if appropriate implement, ways to expedite the process of reviewing and approving redevelopment projects that are consistent with adopted redevelopment policies, objectives, and plans.
11. Future development should focus on "smart growth" principles, including traditional neighborhoods and mixed-use developments where feasible.
12. New mixed-use residential developments should include neighborhood shopping areas and small office developments as a means to promote accessibility and increase employment opportunities.
13. Development within the Georgia International Horse Park should be designed to attract more residents and visitors.
14. Coordinate with Rockdale County in the implementation of the ACTIPS (Activity Center/Town Center Investment Policy Strategy) (now Livable Centers Initiative) plan, for those portions of activity centers not presently within the city limits.
15. Development within activity centers should incorporate residential uses, neighborhood shopping nodes, limited office uses, and recreational amenities.

16. Where feasible, recreational uses and open space should be an integral part of new, larger scale developments.
17. Encourage industrial, manufacturing, and storage uses to locate within existing industrial parks.
18. In the event that new vacant land is annexed into the City it should be zoned in a manner consistent or compatible with the recommended land use(s) on the Rockdale County future land use map.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

1. Plan and program improvements to the municipal complex (general government) and other municipal departments (police, planning, etc.), prior to the occurrence of critical shortages of office space.
2. Utilize nationally accepted standards in determining future needs for uniform officers in the Conyers Police Department.
3. Provide a decentralized method of police facilities (precincts) and place future locations of police precincts, if needed, in high crime areas.
4. Continue to provide solid waste collection services with municipal personnel and equipment, as well as composting and recycling programs.
5. Coordinate with Rockdale County to identify additional alternative landfill sites for solid waste disposal, through joint participation in a city-county comprehensive solid waste management plan.
6. Implement goals, policies, and work programs of the Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan.
7. Strive to meet a park and recreation level of service standard of 7.0 acres per 1,000 persons by the year 2020. This includes acquisition of an additional 100 acres or more of park land by 2020.
8. Implement the Olde Town Conyers Trail Master Plan (March 2007).
9. Maintain and upgrade existing municipal parks, according to master plans.
10. Focus park capital improvements on eliminating or reducing the current deficit in level of service for trails.
11. Establish and maintain a Parks & Recreation Department staffed by recreation professionals.

12. Participate in Library Board efforts to expand the countywide library system.
13. Maintain municipal cemeteries.
14. Participate in preparation of disaster preparedness and emergency management plans in conjunction with Rockdale County.
15. Continue to prepare and annually update the city's capital improvement program.
16. Make the best possible use of technology, and embrace the concept of "e-governance."

TRANSPORTATION

1. Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes and pedestrian facilities, should be made available. Greater use of alternative transportation should be encouraged (Quality Community Objective, Transportation Alternatives).
2. Strive for consistency with the Atlanta Regional Commission's Atlanta Region Bicycle Transportation and Pedestrian Walkways Plan, which includes recommended policies for local governments that, when implemented, can increase mobility, safety, accessibility, and connectivity region wide for bicyclists and pedestrians.
3. Coordinate with Rockdale County to implement Comprehensive Transportation Plan recommendations for roadway capacity and operational improvements.
4. Improve geometrics of local street intersections, where they pose traffic safety problems.
5. Apply state and local standards for access management along arterial and collector streets, including but not limited to specifications for curb cut location and separation and installation of deceleration lanes.
6. During site plan and development permit review, measures should be made to ensure that compatible land developments connect with one another, with regard to pedestrian and vehicular access.
7. Require sidewalks within all new subdivisions.
8. Consider the installation of traffic calming measures, where warranted.
9. New planned business parks and industrial parks should contain recreation amenities and walking trails for workers to use.
10. Consider ways to expand express bus service to best serve the city's residents.

11. Continue to monitor, and participate, in efforts to provide commuter rail through Conyers and Rockdale County.
12. Encourage implementation of pedestrian-friendly transportation, including but not limited to those recommended in the City's Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) Plan.
13. Encourage improved connectivity through the development of trails, greenways, additional sidewalks and bikeways within the City to afford alternate means of short-trip travel.
14. Encourage car-pooling and vanpooling.
15. Encourage utilization of transit systems, where they exist, as a means of commuting to work.
16. Ensure adequate off-street parking facilities in Olde Town, including public parking.
17. Designate routes for truck prohibition where needed.
18. Maintain safe railroad crossings for drivers, bicyclists, and pedestrians, and consider opportunities and where feasible implement projects that separate at-grade road and railroad intersections.

URBAN DESIGN AND BEAUTIFICATION

1. Retain a sense of "community" and a small town flavor. Require new development to respect the scale and character of nearby structures and minimize or mitigate abrupt and excessive differences.
2. Develop and implement architectural standards to address development projects in a manner that will result in beautification and area enhancement.
3. Develop standards for revitalization of existing businesses and older shopping centers that will encourage specific architectural treatments and appropriate color combinations.
4. Develop "entryway" treatments that call attention to Olde Town and other activity centers throughout the City.
5. Seek cooperation of the CSX Railroad to beautify the railroad right of way, where opportunities exist.
6. Support community-based partnerships for streetscape beautification.
7. Relocate utilities underground, where financially feasible opportunities exist.
8. Support activities that are consistent with the Keep America Beautiful initiative.

9. Balance the need to regulate the design and appearance of commercial and other properties with a positive regulatory environment that is sensitive to the need for businesses to be competitive in the marketplace.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

1. 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 (Quality Community Objective, Regional Identity).
2. Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to the success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources (Quality Community Objective, Regional Cooperation).
3. 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 (Quality Community Objective, Regional Solutions).
4. Coordinate local policies and regulations to support regional policies (2006 Regional Development Plan Policy #17). Ensure that goals and implementation programs of the Comprehensive Plan are consistent with adopted coordination mechanisms and consistent with applicable Regional and State programs.
5. Continue participation in the Intergovernmental Planning Committee and seek its guidance as to ways to coordinate transportation, land use, and facility and service decisions among adjacent local governments.
6. Participate in the update of Rockdale County’s Service Delivery Strategy.
7. Periodically assess existing intergovernmental agreements and develop new agreements as appropriate.
8. Share resources and information with all government entities.
9. Cooperate with Rockdale County in terms of planning and providing trail systems.
10. Cooperate with Rockdale County in the development of an annexation plan or designation of an annexation sphere of influence.
11. Resolve conflicts with other local governments through established mediation processes or other informal or formal means.

CHAPTER 5 SHORT-TERM WORK PROGRAM

Table 5 provides the specific actions needed to implement the City of Conyers Comprehensive Plan, including the implementation measures called for in this Partial Plan Update. The work program includes those implementation activities that are called for in prior chapters of this Partial Plan Update, as well as those related to policies of the adopted (2004) comprehensive plan.

**Table 5
 Short-Term Work Program
 City of Conyers, 2009-2013**

Description	Year(s) To Be Implemented	Estimated Cost (\$)	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Sources
NATURAL RESOURCES				
Revise regulations as necessary to protect integrity of "303(d)" List of Impaired Waters	2009 - 2013	NA	Dept. of Environmental Services	Staff Function
Prepare and implement guidelines or regulations for low impact development	2009 - 2010	NA	Dept. of Environmental Services	Staff Function
Continue to implement the 2002 stormwater management plan	2009 - 2013	NA	Dept. of Environmental Services	Staff Function; Rockdale Water Resources
Monitor flooding and request updated floodplain boundary maps from the Federal Emergency Management Agency for areas experiencing 100-year flooding events	As appropriate	NA	Dept. of Planning and Inspection Services	Staff Function
Maintain, and periodically update as appropriate, the city's landscape and tree protection ordinance	2009 - 2013	NA	Dept. of Planning and Inspection Services	Staff Function
HISTORIC RESOURCES				
Continue to evaluate and modify, if appropriate, the city's existing historic district regulations and guidelines	2009 - 2013	NA	Dept. of Planning and Inspection Services	Staff Function
Complete acquisition of an easement that will allow for complete restoration of the Dinky Trail.	2010	Unknown	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	Staff Function
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES				
Continue to monitor and report crime statistics	2009-2013	NA	Police Chief	Staff Function
Annually review staffing and equipment needs of the Police Department and add new positions commensurate with population growth and incidences of crime	2009-2013	NA (personnel costs as determined)	Police Chief; City Council	Operating Budget; fees and fines
Complete a comprehensive review of office space and personnel needs	2010	To be Determined	City Manager	Operating Budget
Participate in updating of a joint city-county comprehensive solid waste management plan	Per Recertification Schedule	To be Determined	City Council and Board of Commissioners	Operating Budget
Complete development of (implement master plan for) the Big Haynes Creek Nature Center	Per Master Plan	Per Master Plan	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	Per Master Plan

**Partial Update of the Comprehensive Plan
City of Conyers, Georgia (September 19, 2008, Revised Draft Based on Regional and State Review)**

Description	Year(s) To Be Implemented	Estimated Cost (\$)	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Sources
Participate in countywide stormwater utility	2009-2013		Dept. of Environmental Services	General Fund
Establish a Municipal Parks and Recreation Department	2010		City Manager	General Fund
Implement the Olde Town Conyers Trail Master Plan (March 2007)	2009-2013	City Share to be Determined	City of Conyers and Rockdale County; Downtown Development Authority	To be Determined
Participate in county-sponsored Greenway Master Plan as component to Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan	2009 - 2011	City Share to be Determined	City Council	County Operating Budget; Conyers
Evaluate and if appropriate implement the following additional (potential) recreation funding mechanisms: dedicated millage rate, bond referendums, SPLOST participation and development impact fees	2009 - 2011	NA	City Manager; City Council	Staff Function
Pursue additional federal and state funding for open space acquisition and park and greenway improvements	2009 - 2013	NA	City Manager	Staff Function
Continue to prepare and annually update the city's capital improvement program	2009 - 2013	NA	City Manager; All Depts.	Staff Function
URBAN DESIGN AND AESTHETIC IMPROVEMENT				
SR 138 Beautification and Economic Initiative (including Conyers)	2004 - 2010	\$1,000,000	Rockdale Co. Board of Commissioners	Congressional Appropriations; County Capital Fund
Prepare overlay district for the West Avenue Corridor	2009	NA	Dept. of Planning and Inspection Services	Staff Function
Seek grants and funding assistance from private foundations and Fortune 500 corporations	2009-2013	NA	Department of Tourism and Public Affairs	Staff Function
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT				
Continue to pursue efforts to establish a Tax Allocation District in Olde Town	2009-2010	Unknown	City Manager	Operating Budget
Attract desirable businesses and industries to Rockdale County through active recruitment efforts and business assistance programs	2009-2013	NA	Chamber; Economic Development Council, Inc.; Department of Tourism and Public Affairs	Operating Budget Staff Function
Maintain an inventory of vacant industrial and commercial building spaces and market vacant spaces to new users (implement industrial marketing plan)	2009-2013	NA	Economic Development Council, Inc.; Department of Tourism and Public Affairs	Council Operating Budget
Formalize more detailed strategies for the redevelopment of aging and obsolete commercial strip centers	2009-2013	NA	Chamber; Economic Development Council, Inc.; Department of Tourism and Public Affairs	Operating Budget Staff Function
Continue pursuit of a new technology park area emphasizes office-distribution-technology	2009-2013	NA	Chamber; Economic Development Council, Inc.; Department of Tourism and Public Affairs	Operating Budget Staff Function

**Partial Update of the Comprehensive Plan
City of Conyers, Georgia (September 19, 2008, Revised Draft Based on Regional and State Review)**

Description	Year(s) To Be Implemented	Estimated Cost (\$)	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Sources
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT				
Monitor housing and neighborhood conditions in Census Tract 603.09	2011; 2013	NA	Dept. of Planning and Inspection Services	Staff Function
Apply for Community Development Block Funds (CDBG) for improvement of low- and moderate income areas	2009 - 2013	NA	Dept. of Planning and Inspection Services	Staff Function
Evaluate the need and if necessary implement housing code enforcement programs targeted in Census Tract 603.09	2009 - 2013	NA	Dept. of Planning and Inspection Services	Staff Function
LAND USE				
Monitor and report on efforts to implement the ACTIPS (2001) (now LCI) study for four activity centers in Conyers	2009 - 2013	NA	Dept. of Planning and Inspection Services	Staff Function
Monitor the balance of residential and non-residential development in the city by regularly updating the existing land use map	2009 - 2013	NA	Dept. of Planning and Inspection Services	Staff Function (GIS)
Develop a marketing program that can be distributed to Atlanta area developers having prior experience with "smart growth" and LCI type projects	2009	NA	Dept. of Planning and Inspection Services	Staff Function; Technical assistance ARC
Prepare a strategy and regulations to promote residential infill development on lots within the original 1-mile circular limits of the city	2010	\$15,000 or Staff	Dept. of Planning and Inspection Services or Consultant	Operating Budget
Annually update future land use plan map	2009 - 2013	NA	Dept. of Planning and Inspection Services	Staff Function
Prepare New Comprehensive Plan	By Recertification Deadline	\$60,000 (Consultant)	Dept. of Planning and Inspection Services	Operating Budget
Prepare amendments to land use regulations after five year comprehensive review	2013 or Long Range	Unknown	Dept. of Planning and Inspection Services	Staff Function or Consultant
TRANSPORTATION				
Participate in preparation of five-year update of Comprehensive Transportation Plan	2009	City Share to be determined	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	Operating Budget
Complete regional and local road and intersection improvements per Comprehensive Transportation Plan and Regional Plans	2009 - 2013	Per Adopted Plans	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	Federal, State, and Local Funding Sources Per Adopted Plans
Coordinate with Georgia DOT to secure additional traffic signals and crossing enhancements for those intersections identified in the LCI Plan as posing crossing problems for pedestrian traffic	2009 - 2013	See LCI Plan	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	Staff Function
Develop bikeways along Main Street, Oakland Avenue and Sigman Road to link with bikeways planned by Rockdale County	Per Transportation Plan	Per Transportation Plan	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	
Consider implementing the bus shuttle system recommended in the LCI Plan that would provide linkage between the City's four activity centers.			Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	
Continue to monitor studies of the Georgia Department of Transportation with regard to implementing commuter rail	2009 - 2013	NA	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	Staff Function

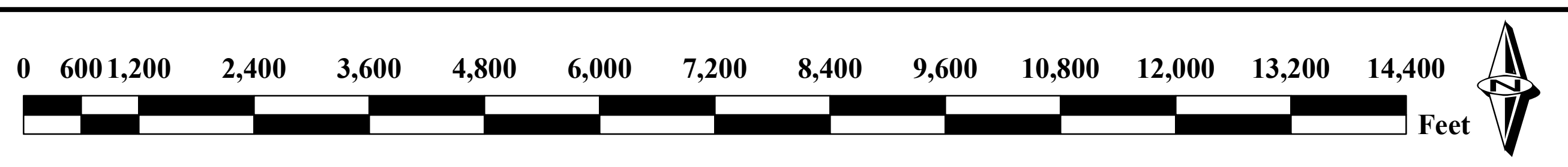
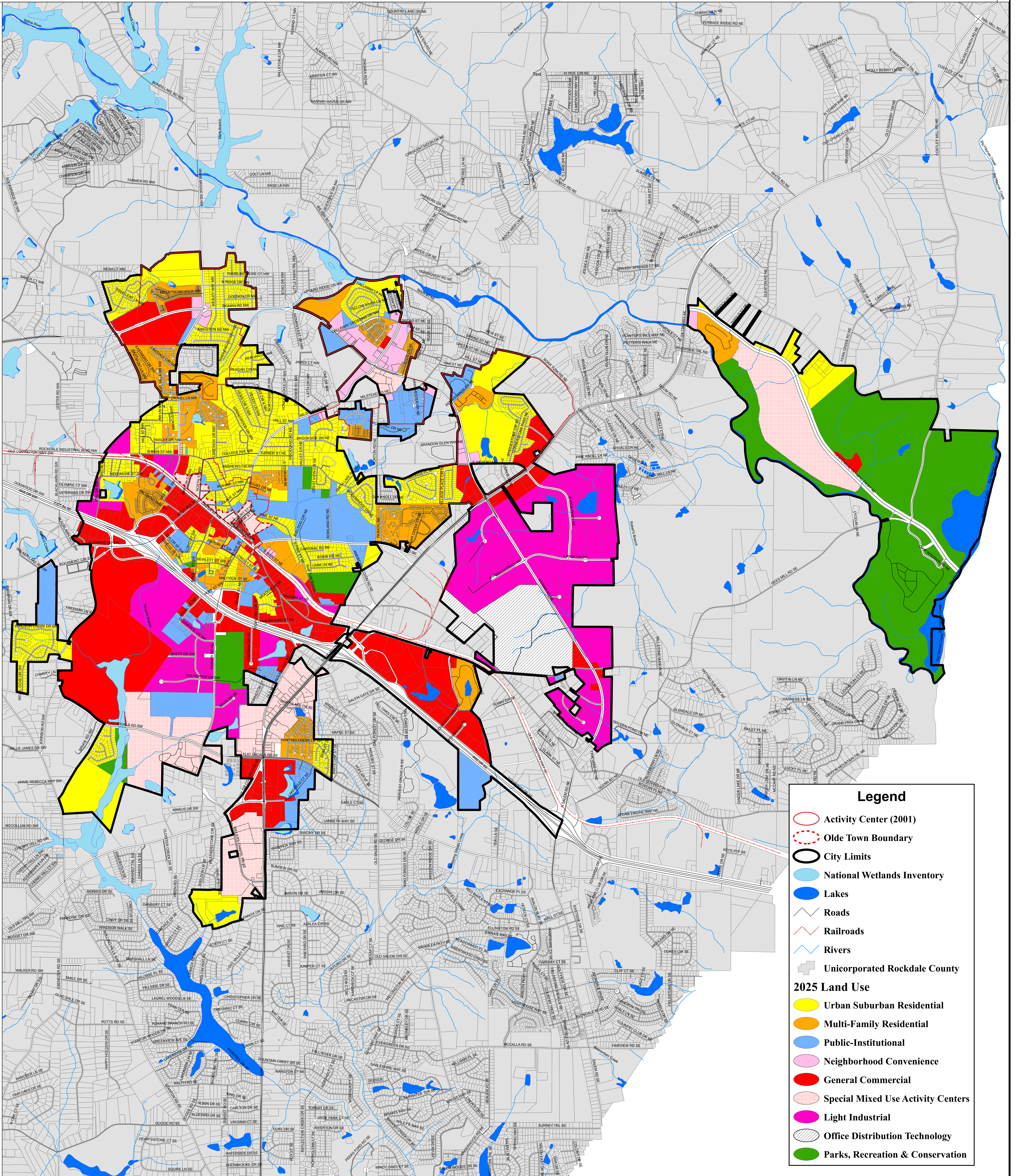
**Partial Update of the Comprehensive Plan
City of Conyers, Georgia (September 19, 2008, Revised Draft Based on Regional and State Review)**

Description	Year(s) To Be Implemented	Estimated Cost (\$)	Responsible Party	Possible Funding Sources
Monitor operation of traffic signals in the city limits and improve where possible	2009 - 2013	NA	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	Staff Function
Evaluate incidences of speeding in the city and reduce speed limits where warranted	2009 - 2013	NA	Police Department	Staff Function
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION				
Continue to participate in the Intergovernmental Planning Committee	2009 - 2013	NA	Dept. of Planning and Inspection Services	Staff Function
Monitor plan amendment efforts and continue to comply with all mandates of the Metro North Georgia Water Planning District	2009 - 2013	Unknown	Dept. of Environmental Services	Staff Function
Work with Rockdale County to agree upon a future annexation plan or sphere of influence for the City of Conyers	2009 - 2010	NA	City Council; City Manager	Staff Function
Participate in the Update of the Rockdale County Service Delivery Strategy	2009 - 2013	Unknown	City Council; City Manager	Staff Function
ACTIVITY CENTERS				
AC1 Intersection Improvements	2009 - 2013	Unknown	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	To Be Determined
AC1 Off-Street Parking Modifications	2009 - 2013	Unknown	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	To Be Determined
AC1 Main Street Streetscape Project	2009 - 2013	Unknown	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	To Be Determined
AC2 Complete Landscaping/Aesthetic Improvements	2009 - 2013	Unknown	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	To Be Determined
AC2 Multi-Use Path/Dinky Trail	2009 - 2013	Unknown	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	To Be Determined
AC3 Complete Landscaping/Aesthetic Improvements	2009 - 2013	Unknown	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	To Be Determined
AC3 Dinky Trail Connections	2009 - 2013	Unknown	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	To Be Determined
AC4 Multi-Use Path/Boar Tusk Greenway Development	2009 - 2013	Unknown	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	To Be Determined
AC4 Landscaping/Aesthetic Improvements	2009 - 2013	Unknown	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	To Be Determined
AC4 Intersection Improvements	2009	Unknown	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	To Be Determined
AC1-4 Sidewalk/Crosswalk Improvements	2009 - 2013	Unknown	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	To Be Determined
AC1-4 Bikeway Development	2009 - 2013	Unknown	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	To Be Determined
AC1-4 Signage/Landscaping	2009 - 2013	Unknown	Dept. of Public Works and Transportation	To Be Determined

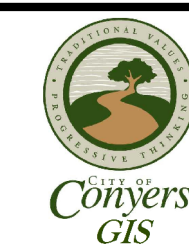
APPENDIX A
REPORT OF SHORT-TERM WORK PROGRAM ACCOMPLISHMENTS
(Status of Short-Term Work Program, 2002-2006)

Category	Item	Description	Status
LU	001	Revise Subdivision Regulations	Completed June 2007
LU	002	Produce Standard Drawings Manual for Development	Completed June 2007
LU	003	Concept Plan for Activity Center #4	Not completed due to lack of funding; no longer a priority
LU	004	Update Zoning Ordinance	Completed August 2004
LU	005	Modify Development Regulations	Completed June 2007
LU	006	Develop Architectural and Landscape Standards	Completed August 2004
LU	007	Update Site Plan Requirements	Completed June 2007
CF	001	Build Motor Vehicle Maintenance Facility	Completed December 2006
CF	002	System Wide Recreation Master Plan	Completed by Rockdale County June 2006
AC1	001	Intersection Improvements	Traffic Study completed in June 2008. Future schedule for intersection improvement construction has not been determined at this time
AC1	002	Relocate Utilities Underground	Completed December 2003
AC1	003	Off-Street Parking Modifications	Not completed. Project deferred to future work program
AC1	004	Main Street Streetscape Project	Not completed. Project deferred to future work program
AC1	005	Landscaping/Aesthetic Improvement	Not completed. Project deferred to future work program
AC1	006	Multi-Use Path Development	Not completed. Project deferred to future work program
AC2	001	Park Acquisition/Development	Not completed due to lack of funding. No longer a priority
AC2	002	Multi-Use Path/Dinky Trail	Not completed due to lack of funds; Project deferred to future work program
AC2	003	Landscaping/Aesthetic Improvements	Partially Completed. Remaining project deferred to future work program
AC3	001	Landscaping/Aesthetic Improvements	Partially completed. Remaining project deferred to future work program
AC3	002	Dinky Trail Connections	Not completed due to lack of funding. Deferred to future work program
AC4	001	Park Acquisition/Development	Not completed due to lack of funding. No longer a priority
AC4	002	Multi-Use Path/Boar Tusk Greenway Development	Not completed due to lack of funding. Deferred to future work program
AC4	003	Landscaping/Aesthetic Improvements	Partially completed. Remaining project deferred to future work program
AC4	004	Intersection Improvements	Currently obtaining rights-of way. Construction to start in the Spring of 2009
AC1-4	001	Shuttle Bus	Not completed due to lack of funds; no longer a priority
AC1-4	002	Transit System Operations (Shuttle Bus)	Not completed due to lack of funding; no longer a priority
AC1-4	003	Bus Shelters	Not completed due to lack of funding; no longer a priority
AC1-4	004	Sidewalk/Crosswalk Improvements	Partially Completed. Remaining project deferred to future work program
AC1-4	005	Bikeway Development	Deferred to future work program
AC1-4	006	Signage/Landscaping	Partially Completed. Remaining project deferred to future work program

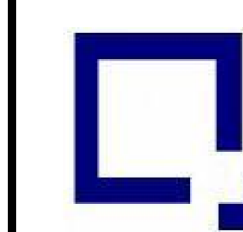
CITY OF CONYERS 2025 COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN CITY OF CONYERS, GA



1 inch = 1,200 feet



City of Conyers, GA



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