



CITY OF GAINESVILLE

DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING AND
DEVELOPMENT

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VIA HAND DELIVERY

June 18, 2009

Mr. Adam Hazell, AICP
Planning Director
Georgia Mountains Regional Development Center
1310 West Ridge Road
Gainesville, GA 30501

RE: City of Gainesville's Partial Update to the Comprehensive Plan

Dear Mr. Hazell:

During their regular meeting held Tuesday, June 16, 2009; the Gainesville City Council conducted a public hearing. After which, the City Council voted to approve Business Resolution BR-2009-35 Partial Update to the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, as per the requirements of the Georgia Minimum Planning Standards – Partial Plan Update of the Comprehensive Plan.

As such, enclosed please find a certified copy of the original adoption resolution and Gainesville Partial Update.

Should you have any questions in this regard, please feel free to contact me or Jessica Tullar, AICP; Special Projects Manager, by calling 770-531-6570, or by notifying us in writing or via fax. Also, upon receipt, please forward a copy of the Qualified Local Government (QLG) status extension letter from the Department of Community Affairs. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Rusty Ligon, Director
Department of Planning and Development

Encl. Adoption Resolution
2009 Partial Update

A GEORGIA TRENDSETTER CITY

RESOLUTION BR-2009 - 35

ADOPTION OF THE PARTIAL UPDATE TO THE
2004 GAINESVILLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, the City of Gainesville, Georgia (hereinafter "City") prepared a Comprehensive Plan under the 1999 Minimum Planning Standards of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (hereinafter "DCA") and adopted said Comprehensive Plan on June 24, 2004; and

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; and

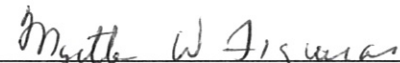
WHEREAS, the City prepared a partial update of said Comprehensive Plan in accordance with the "Requirements for a Partial Update to the Local Government Comprehensive Plan March 2007", which is promulgated by the DCA Office of Planning and Quality Growth; and

WHEREAS, both the Georgia Mountains Regional Development Commission (GMRDC) and DCA have reviewed and approved said Partial Update; and

WHEREAS, a public hearing on the adoption of the Partial Update was held on Tuesday, June 16, 2009 at the Georgia Mountains Center in Gainesville, Hall County, Georgia; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Mayor and City Council, hereby approve and adopt the Partial Update of the Gainesville Comprehensive Plan (dated April 7, 2009), with an effective date of June 30, 2009 or on such date not less than sixty (60) days after the GMRDC certified the transmittal document as complete as per the DCA guidelines.


Adopted this 16th day of June, 2009.




Mayor Myrtle W. Figueras

Absent

Mayor Pro Tem Ruth H. Bruner



Council Member George Wangemann

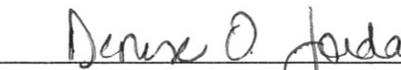


Council Member C. Danny Dunagan, Jr.



Council Member Robert L. Hamrick

ATTEST:



Denise O. Jordan, City Clerk





CITY OF GAINESVILLE
CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

Denise Jordan
City Clerk

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CERTIFIED RESOLUTION

STATE OF GEORGIA
COUNTY OF HALL

This is to certify that I am City Clerk of the City Council of the City of Gainesville. As such, I keep its official records, including its minutes, and in that capacity do certify that attached Resolution Number BR-2009-35 was approved during the June 16, 2009 Council Meeting.

Witness of my official signature and seal this 16th day of June, 2009.

Denise O. Jordan

Denise O. Jordan
City Clerk



2009

Partial Update to the Gainesville Comprehensive Plan



Prepared By:
City of Gainesville
Department of Planning & Development

June 16, 2009



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I. Partial Update Purpose and Procedures

The following procedures for this process are taken from the Georgia DCA website:

**Georgia Department of Community Affairs
Office of Planning and Quality Growth**

***Requirements for a Partial Update to the
Local Government Comprehensive Plan
March 2007***

A. Purpose

The purpose of this Partial Update to the Comprehensive Plan is to provide a document for use as a policy guide for local governments in the interim period between Comprehensive Plan Updates. Partial Updates should:

- generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of the community;
- engage the interest of citizens in implementing the plan; and
- provide a guide to everyday decision-making for use by local government officials and other community leaders.

When implemented, the resulting plan will help the community address critical issues and opportunities during the interim, transitional period between Comprehensive Plan Updates resulting from a shift in the statewide Comprehensive Plan Recertification Schedule.

B. Required Components

For local governments updating comprehensive plans prepared under the 2004 and prior Minimum Planning Standards a partial update will require:

1. A Quality Community Objectives (QCO) assessment

- a. Evaluate the community's current policies, activities, and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives (see section 110-12-1-.06(3) of the Local Planning Requirements). An assessment tool useful for this purpose is provided on the Department's website. Use this analysis to identify issues and opportunities for adapting local activities, development patterns and implementation practices to the Quality Community Objectives applicable to your community.

2. An analysis of Areas Requiring Special Attention

- a. Evaluate the existing land use patterns and trends within the jurisdiction of the local government (including areas that are likely to be annexed within the planning period) to identify any areas requiring special attention, including:
 - i. Areas of significant natural or cultural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon or otherwise impacted by development;
 - ii. Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur;

- iii. Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation;
 - iv. Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors);
 - v. Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated;
 - vi. Areas with significant infill development opportunities (scattered vacant sites);
 - vii. Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the community as a whole.
- b. Indicate the Identified Areas Requiring Special Attention on a map of the community.
3. **Identification of Issues and Opportunities** resulting from the QCO assessment and analysis of Areas Requiring Special Attention. Each of these issues or opportunities must be followed up with corresponding implementation measures in the Implementation Program.
4. **An updated Implementation Program** with revisions as necessary to address the additional Issues and Opportunities identified above. The updated Implementation Program should include:
- a. A **Short Term Work Program (required)** that identifies specific implementation actions the local government, or other entities, intends to take during the interim planning period. This program should include any ordinances, administrative systems (such as site plan review, design review, etc.), community improvements or investments, financing arrangements, or other programs or initiatives to be put in place to implement the plan. The Short Term Work Program must include the following information for each listed activity:
 - i. Brief description of the activity
 - ii. Timeframe for undertaking the activity
 - iii. Responsible party for implementing the activity
 - iv. Estimated cost (if any) of implementing the activity
 - v. Funding source(s), if applicable
 - b. **Long-Term and Ongoing Activities (optional):** Identify specific long term or ongoing implementation activities to be undertaken beyond the interim planning period.
 - c. **Policies (required):** 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. Refer to recommended policies listed in the State Planning Recommendations for suggestions.
 - d. **A Report of Accomplishments (required)** that must identify the current status of each activity in the previous STWP. At a minimum, local governments must indicate activities that:

- Have been completed;
- Are currently underway (including a projected completion date);
- Have been postponed (explaining why); or
- Have not been accomplished and are no longer activities the local government intends to undertake (explaining why).

C. Procedural Requirements

1. **Transmittal and Review of the Partial Update.** Upon completion, the local government must submit its Partial Update to the regional development center for review. The update must be completed well in advance of the local government's recertification date, in order to allow adequate time for review prior to adoption.
 - a. **Required Public Hearing.** The required public hearing must be held once the draft Partial Update has been made available for public review, but prior to its transmittal to the regional development center. The purpose of this hearing is to brief the community on the identified issues and opportunities (based on the QCO analysis and the Identified Areas Requiring Special Attention) that will be addressed through the updated Implementation Program, allow the community an opportunity to comment, and notify the community of when these plan components will be transmitted to the regional development center. Once public comments have been addressed, the Partial Update must be transmitted to the regional development center by resolution of the governing body.
 - b. **Completeness Check.** The regional development center shall determine whether the Partial Update is complete, within seven days of receipt. A Partial Update that does not meet the standard for completeness (as determined by the Department) shall be deemed incomplete and shall not be accepted for further review by the regional development center or be forwarded to the Department for review. The regional development center shall notify the local government of its findings regarding the completeness of the submittal and identify items that must be submitted, if any, prior to further processing. The regional development center shall forward a complete submittal to the Department immediately upon making the completeness finding.
 - c. **Notification of Interested Parties.** Once the regional development center has determined that the Partial Update is complete, it shall immediately notify any interested parties of the availability of the submittal for review and comment, providing the name of the local government, the general nature of the submittal and a deadline by which comments must be received. At a minimum, interested parties shall include:
 - i. Local governments inside or outside the regional development center's region that are contiguous to the submitting local government, and other local governments that are likely to be affected by the Partial Update
 - ii. Any local authorities, special districts, or other entities identified in evaluating intergovernmental coordination mechanisms and processes (if applicable)
 - iii. Regional development centers that are contiguous to the local government or that are likely to be affected by the Partial Update

- iv. Affected state agencies (including the Department of Transportation, the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority, etc.) and the Department.
- d. **Regional Hearing:** Within 25 days after certification of the completeness of the Partial Update the regional development center may (at its sole discretion) conduct a hearing at which any local government, regional development center or other local, regional, or state agency may present its views on the Community Agenda. The rules for conducting such hearings must be adopted by the board of directors of the regional development center and approved by the Department.
- e. **Regional Development Center Review:** The regional development center shall review the Partial Update for potential conflicts with plans of neighboring jurisdictions, opportunities for inter-jurisdictional/regional solutions to common issues, and consistency with the adopted Regional Agenda for the regional development center's region.
- f. **Department Review:** The Department shall review the Partial Update for compliance with the planning requirements. This review may result in identification of deficiencies that must be satisfactorily resolved by the community in order for the Community Agenda to be found "in compliance" with the planning requirements. The Department may also offer advisory comments for improving the Partial Update for consideration by the local government. The Department's findings and recommendations resulting from its review, including advisory comments, shall be transmitted to the regional development center for inclusion in the final report within 35 days after certification of the completeness of the Partial Update.
- g. **Final Report of Findings and Recommendations:** Within 40 days after certification of the completeness of the Partial Update, the regional development center must transmit a final report of its findings and recommendations to the local government and to the Department. The report must include:
 - i. Comments submitted by interested parties that reviewed the Partial Update and (if applicable) a summary of the regional review hearing, detailing any significant issues raised at the hearing
 - ii. The regional development center's findings from its Intergovernmental and Consistency review of the Partial Update and its recommendations for addressing such findings
 - iii. A copy of the Department's findings and recommendations resulting from its review of the Partial Update.
- h. **Petition for Reconsideration:** Within ten days after the regional development center's findings and recommendations are made public, a submitting local government that disagrees with the recommendations may petition the regional development center for a "reconsideration hearing." This hearing shall be scheduled and held by the regional development center within 15 days after receipt of such a request. Within 10 days after the reconsideration hearing, the Department and the regional development center shall either continue or modify the original findings and recommendations and provide written notice of the decision to the submitting local government.

- i. **Conflict Mediation:** Informal or formal mediation of conflicts relating to the Partial Update may be initiated in accordance with the Rules for Mediation of Interjurisdictional Conflicts adopted by the Board of Community Affairs.
- j. **Adoption of the Partial Update.** Once the Partial Update has been found by the Department to be in compliance with the planning requirements, the governing body may adopt the Partial Update with or without any recommendations for improvement included in the Final Report of Findings and Recommendations. However, in no event shall a local government take any official action to adopt a Partial Update prepared in accordance with the planning requirements until 60 days after the Partial Update has been certified by the regional development center as complete. If the local government has petitioned for reconsideration, this mandatory review period shall be 90 days. In order to maintain Qualified Local Government certification, the local government must adopt the approved Partial Update prior to its recertification date, but in no case later than one year after completion of the mandatory review period for the Partial Update.
- k. **Notification of Local Adoption:** Within seven days of local adoption of a Partial Update that has been found by the Department to comply with planning requirements, the local government shall notify the regional development center in writing. Within seven days of receipt of this written notice, the regional development center shall notify the Department that the Partial Update found in compliance with planning requirements has been adopted by the local government.
- l. **Qualified Local Government Certification:** Once the Department has been notified by the regional development center that a local government has adopted a Partial Update that complies with the planning requirements, the Department may issue a letter certifying this local government as a Qualified Local Government. Qualified Local Government certification shall automatically expire approximately five years from the previous recertification date, unless otherwise specified. To retain Qualified Local Government certification, a local government must remain in compliance with the requirements outlined in these planning requirements and O.C.G.A. 50-8-2(a)(18).
- m. **Publicizing the Partial Update.** Once adopted by the local government, the availability of the Partial Update must be publicized by the local government for public information. This requirement may be met by providing notice in a local newspaper of general circulation identifying where a complete copy of the Partial Update may be reviewed.

A public hearing was held on Tuesday, April 7, 2009 and was intended to brief the community on the identified issues and opportunities that were to be addressed through the updated Implementation Program, allow citizens to comment, and notify the community of when these plan components will be transmitted to the Georgia Mountains Regional Development Center (GMRDC). A public hearing was held on Tuesday, June 16, 2009 to adopt the final document.

This Partial Update includes all the required components for local governments updating comprehensive plans prepared under the 2004 and prior Minimum Planning Standards. The Partial Update will be transmitted to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) upon a completeness finding by the GMRDC. Upon acceptance by DCA, the Partial Update will then be adopted by the City of Gainesville, Georgia by resolution.

II. Consistency with Quality Community Objectives

In 1999 the Board of the Department of Community Affairs adopted 17 Quality Community Objectives (QCOs) as a statement of the development patterns and options that will help Georgia preserve her unique cultural, natural and historic resources while looking to the future and developing to her fullest potential. This assessment is meant as a tool to give a community a comparison of how it is progressing toward these objectives set by the Department, but no community will be judged on progress. The questions focus on local ordinances, policies, and organizational strategies intended to create and expand quality growth principles. A majority of positive responses for a particular objective may indicate that the community has in place many of the governmental options for managing development patterns. Negative responses may provide guidance as to how to focus planning and implementation efforts for those governments seeking to achieve these QCOs. Should a community decide to pursue a particular objective it may consider this assessment as a means of monitoring progress towards achievement.

The following assessment was conducted to address the Quality Community Objectives requirement of Chapter 110-12-1: Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, Local Planning Requirements. The analysis below uses the Quality Community Objectives Local Assessment Tool created by the DCA Office of Planning and Quality Growth, and is intended to identify issues and opportunities for adapting local activities, development patterns and implementation practices to the QCOs applicable to the City of Gainesville. In most cases, the City of Gainesville already has begun to address the QCOs, and will continue to work towards achieving fully the quality growth goals set forth by the DCA.

A. Development Patterns

- 1. Traditional Neighborhoods:** *Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human-scale development, compact development, mixing uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.*

(Land Use Element)

Assessment:

- The City adopted a new Unified Land Development Code (ULDC) on July 19, 2005, which allows mixed-use buildings within the City's *Residential and Office (R-O)* residential zoning classification and within the City's flexible zoning district.
- While one must seek rezoning for a Planned Unit Development (PUD), the City's PUD zoning provides maximum flexibility in the mixture and arrangement of land uses. The new ULDC provides general design principles and guidelines for specific uses, including live-work units and mixed-use buildings. The City's PUD zoning allows for mixed-dwelling unit developments that also include nonresidential, neighborhood-serving activities; as well as allows for mixed-use developments with no parameters on percentage of each use.
- The 2005 ULDC incorporates an *Infill Residential Development Projects* ordinance, which applies to existing vacant tracts or proposed subdivided property with the

City's *Residential-I (R-I)* and *Neighborhood Conservation (N-C)* zoning districts, incorporates: "Build-to" lines in lieu of front setbacks, average lot widths as opposed to a minimum width, a minimum floor area, and architectural building materials standard that requires at least 50% of the front façade be of brick, stone or split-face block masonry and other facades be of these same materials or wood clapboards or weather boarding. This section explicitly prohibits standing-seam or corrugated metal walls and vinyl siding; and outlines allowable roof materials among other site and architectural standards.

- Gainesville also has established a design review process in its historic districts (both of which were designated locally in 2005) which serves to protect existing traditional, residential-style neighborhoods.
- Gainesville initiated the creation of Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU) in May 2007, as a means for continual micro-level land planning. The first of the two existing NPUs was established in May 2007 in the historically African-American community of Gainesville, while the second NPU was established in September 2008 in one of the City's most historic intown neighborhoods located just off the Downtown Square to its north.
- The City's tree ordinance, which has been amended to require the retention of at least 10% of the existing tree canopy, does require developments to include shade-bearing trees.
- The City requires sidewalks within new development but also evaluated the existing network to see where it is lacking. The City adopted a sidewalk plan and has been working diligently to implement the plan in order to improve connectivity and to provide adequate safe access for pedestrians.

Recommendations:

- The Gainesville Unified Land Development Code, which was adopted in 2005 to implement the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, addresses traditional neighborhood development and pedestrian activity, but could be improved in areas related to residential site design (i.e. minimum setbacks), street and landscape designs within new developments, and density bonuses to encourage new residential development in the Midtown area and to improve quality of development. Continue to monitor new, infill development and redevelopment under the new ULDC and amend as necessary as growth occurs.
- The City's ULDC contains an improved, comprehensive tree ordinance, but the ordinance should be improved to better address tree planting requirements for residential subdivisions, whether developed by way of annexation or by way of infill or redevelopment.

- 2. Infill Development:** *Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging*

development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.

(Land Use Element and Economic Element)

Assessment:

- The 2005 ULDC incorporates an *Infill Residential Development Projects* ordinance, which is intended to prevent incompatible residential infill development, to protect the integrity of neighborhoods, and to balance the desire to preserve neighborhood character with the importance of good, quality reinvestment.
- Gainesville's Midtown Overlay Zone, which is intended to promote economic prosperity in a manner consistent with the City's Comprehensive Plan and the *Redevelopment Plan – The Renaissance of Midtown Gainesville*, sets higher standards for the appearance and functionality of land uses and encourages mixed-use developments and the creation of more housing, employment and recreational opportunities in the Midtown Redevelopment Area. These standards impose site design and architectural standards, including parking and connectivity standards, signage regulations and landscaping requirements which are intended to help create an extension of the City's Central Business (C-B) district.
- The City is actively pursuing the acquisition of abandoned CSX Rail right-of-way, its cleanup and protection under the Georgia Brownfields Program, and redevelopment of a portion into a multi-use greenway with trail heads. As well, the City is actively encouraging redevelopment in the City's Midtown Redevelopment Area (an area comprised of blight and brownfields), which is evident by the City's adoption of a Tax Allocation District (TAD).
- Some neighborhoods are declining, especially in areas where there are a large number of rentals and overcrowding conditions.
- Pockets of reinvestment are visible, particularly near the heart of the City, as the City experiences a slow correction of nonconforming situations with changes in ownership. Yet, less promotion of reinvestment or correction of nonconforming situations is occurring at the outer fringes of the City where the City/County limits interweave, as each jurisdiction has differing standards in place. Similarly, potential new development on the outskirts of the City has been hindered slightly by the lack of sanitary sewer.

Recommendations:

- Continue to study the feasibility of establishing Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) in the City. Similarly, implement studies to research (1) possible incentives related to the redevelopment of greyfields, and (2) the use of density bonuses in the Midtown Redevelopment Area and greenfields at the fringes of the City.
- Seek additional forms of incentives the City can adopt to encourage quality infill development and redevelopment.

- 3. Sense of Place:** *Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.*

(Land Use Element)

Assessment

- The City participates in the Main Street Cities program under the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and uses both the local government and Main Street websites to promote Downtown.
- The City has been participating in the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce's VISION 2030 initiative, which is a community visioning effort intended to create a common vision for Gainesville/Hall County.

Recommendations

- Continue to promote Downtown through the Main Street Program and both the City government and Main Street websites.
 - Continue to promote and actively participate in the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce VISION 2030 effort.
 - Incorporate into the full update to the Comprehensive Plan the vision, goals and policies of VISION 2030, where applicable.
- 4. Transportation Alternatives:** *Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.*

(Community Facilities Element)

Assessment:

- The City continues to build and expand its existing network of sidewalks and trails. The acquisition of abandoned CSX Rail right-of-way for the development of a multi-use trail will serve as an integral connector between the existing Downtown trail system that leads from Downtown to Lake Lanier and the planned Central Hall Trail that will connect to Gainesville State College.
- The City also continues to acquire and add property to the existing Rock Creek/Wilshire Trail system, which is a trails system that meanders alongside an established, intown neighborhood just north of the Downtown Square leading users from the commercial activity of Downtown to homes to Gainesville City Schools to a park at Lake Lanier.

- The Unified Land Development Code requires sidewalks in new developments, while the City has adopted a sidewalk plan to complete and add to the existing sidewalk network.
- The Hall Area Transit currently serves citizens of Gainesville, mainly through its “Red Rabbit” scheduled bus service.

Recommendations:

- Continue to implement the priority recommendations noted in the adopted sidewalk plan to enhance pedestrian safety and connectivity.
- Efforts should be made to enhance walkability of existing sidewalks.
- Study the feasibility of acquiring additional property to provide the final connection between the planned Midtown Greenway and Central Hall Trail.
- Implement any priority recommendations noted in the recent Hall Area Transit study, where possible.
- Add a regular Hall Area Transit – “Red Rabbit” route from Downtown Gainesville (or other more centralized location) to transport Atlanta commuters to one of the pick-up locations for the Gwinnett Transit express lines.

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

(Economic Element)

Assessment:

- The City of Gainesville is the economic center for the Georgia Mountains region, and continues to grow in its role as the medical hub for Northeast Georgia.
- Lake Lanier continues to contribute to Gainesville being a regional destination for recreational tourism.
- Gainesville has continued to promote its history and identity as the “Poultry Capital of the World” with the promotion of the Phoenix Society’s “Struttin’ with the Rooster” project that was intended to highlight local artists but did so using a natural icon of Gainesville.
- Gainesville’s “Green Street” attracts many visitors with its stately Greek Revivals and other significant historic homes, as does the Alta Vista Cemetery which is the preeminent burial place that has been in operation nearly 140 years.

Recommendations:

- Promote convention and tourism by promoting the development of a convention hotel in the Downtown area.
- Coordinate efforts with the CVB, Main Street, Hall County Historical Society, and the Northeast Georgia History Center to build a heritage tourism program.
- Continue to work the CVB, the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce, and other agencies to promote Gainesville as a destination for recreational tourism.

B. Resource Conservation

1. **Heritage Preservation:** *The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining local character.*

(Natural and Historic Resources Element)

Assessment:

- Gainesville locally designated its first historic resource in January 2004. In 2005, the City designated two residential-style districts, one along Ridgewood Avenue and the other along Green Street.
- A Design Review procedure is in place for any exterior material changes to the one locally designated landmark or within either of the two districts. Model design and construction guidelines were adopted for the residential-style districts, while the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* would be applied to any exterior work on the locally designated commercial landmark.
- The City participates in the Main Street Cities program under the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.
- There are a number of properties within the City that are listed in the National Register of Historic Places, including Green Street, the Brenau University campus, and the Downtown commercial district.
- A multi-phased community-wide historic resources structural survey was initiated in August 2006 with Phase I, continued with Phase II in September 2007, continues with Phase III that is currently underway, and will continue with the initiation of Phase IV in July of this year. This detailed architectural survey was initiated upon the completion of a windshield survey, from which recommendations were used as the premise for the multi-phased approach.
- Gainesville is a Certified Local Government (CLG).

- The City of Gainesville is pursuing National Register listing of Alta Vista Cemetery.

Recommendations:

- A “Heritage Tour of Gainesville”, including Green Street, Brenau University and Alta Vista Cemetery (among other sites), should be established and promoted to generate interest in local history and preservation, but also to capitalize on the economic gains from having a heritage tourism program.
- Existing National Register districts should be amended, while new districts should be nominated – including the Ridgewood Neighborhood Local Historic District and the eligible parts of the Fair Street/Newtown/Southside community.
- Additional local designations of the potential districts identified in the historic resources structural survey should be considered.

- 2. Open Space Preservation:** *New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.*

(Natural and Historic Resources Element)

Assessment:

- Gainesville’s Unified Land Development Code provides minimum percentages of open space/greenspace in all zoning districts, with areas falling under several of the overlay zones being required to have more. As well, minimum buffers are required in most of the nonresidential zoning districts and in some cases the multi-family Residential-II (R-II) and Residential and Office (R-O) zoning districts.
- Currently, the City’s development code does not require or explicitly encourage the use of Conservation Subdivisions (or similar concept), and the use of flexible zoning to accommodate such a concept is hindered under current regulations which require rezoning.

Recommendations:

- Explore the possibility of incorporating a density bonus as a mechanism to encourage additional open space/greenspace.
- Study what, if any, areas within the City could be designated with a flexible zoning classification and associated design standards.

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

(Natural and Historic Resources Element)

Assessment:

- The Gainesville Unified Land Development Code includes provisions for the protection of environmentally sensitive areas, including Lake Lanier, rivers and streams, flood plain, and wetlands. Minimum buffers and/or specified building requirements are outlined.
- The City also has a tree ordinance which requires the retention and protection of at least 10% of existing trees as a means for encouraging the protection of the existing tree canopy.
- The City has protections in place for stormwater management and water quality.
- A restoration plan for Flat Creek, a major water source in Gainesville, has been developed and is beginning to be implemented with the restoration of a segment in the Midtown area.

Recommendations:

- Continue to enforce existing environmental regulations.
- Consider building setbacks against Lake Lanier.
- Consider the maintenance of Lake Lanier at full pool.
- Provide appropriate training for an existing staff member to become a Certified Arborist.

C. Social and Economic Development

1. **Growth Preparedness:** *Each community should identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.*

(Land Use Element)

Assessment:

- The City's current Comprehensive Plan includes population projections for its 20-year planning perspective, to which the City often refers when making decisions about infrastructure improvements.
- The City adopts, and updates as required, a Capital Improvements Program that is intended to support current and expected growth. Also, the City adopted an Impact

Fee program for Public Safety (Police and Fire) and Parks and Recreation in August 2006, as a means for providing facilities to serve new growth.

- The City adopted a service delivery strategy in 2004, and has proposed an urban growth boundary.

Recommendations:

- Continue to review current regulations on a periodic basis to ensure that they continue to meet the needs of the City as it grows.
- Review the current service delivery strategy and amend as necessary.
- Review and update population projections given recent economic conditions and significant reduction in building permits being issued.

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

(Economic Element)

Assessment:

- Various agencies, including the Downtown Development Authority, Main Street, and the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce; provide prospective industries with the information necessary to make informed decisions on locating their business in the City.
- Numerous industrial parks (like Industrial Parks North and South, Airport Industrial Park, Atlas Business Park, and Gainesville Business Park) throughout the City are promoted through the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce to attract appropriate industry, although vacant parcels still remain undeveloped.
- The City offers various incentives for businesses considering location in Gainesville, and has adopted a Tax Allocation District which includes the Midtown area and Downtown as a mechanism for encouraging redevelopment.

Recommendations:

- Continue to promote appropriate business and industry through the various organizations named above.
- Continue to explore incentive programs for new development and redevelopment.

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

(Economic Element)

Assessment:

- Gainesville has a rich diversification of businesses, including retail, office, educational and medical institutions, industrial, agricultural and manufacturing, that provide a range of job types.
- An *Employment Opportunities* listing is provided through various sources, including the City's website, a notebook kept in the lobby of the Human Resources Department, the local government channel, and websites of other agencies (i.e. Georgia Municipal Association, applicable professional organizations, etc.).
- The City has a community learning center known as Featherbone Communiversity. Founding members include Brenau University Department of Nursing, the Interactive Neighborhood for Kids, and the Lanier Technical College Manufacturing Development Center. The Communiversity provides a communitywide forum for people to explore their diversity, discover their commonalities and together imagine a better future for their families and their environment. It is also the home for the Gainesville offices of the University of Georgia Small Business Development Center and the Georgia Tech Enterprise Innovation Institute.

Recommendations:

- Continue to support and enhance the economic viability of the City's hallmark industries while being flexible enough to respond to market forces.
- Continue to support the Featherbone Communiversity community learning center.

4. Housing Choices: *A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.*

(Housing Element)

Assessment:

- The current Unified Land Development Code has created an opportunity for compatible infill development.
- There is adequate infrastructure in the City for the development of additional high density single-family or multi-family housing; however, with Lake Lanier levels continuing to stay below (or drop farther below) full pool, water capacity may continue to hinder such development.

- Currently underway is a housing study intended to assess the existing housing stock and the availability of affordable housing.

Recommendations:

- Amend the current Unified Land Development Code to allow residential uses by right in certain nonresidential districts to encourage mixed-uses and neo-traditional uses for a range of housing types.
- Study the feasibility of density bonuses in exchange for a mixture of housing types (and price ranges) within single developments.
- An overall housing strategy premised on income should be pursued.
- Prepare an inventory and assessment of available land for housing as infill development.

5. Educational Opportunities: *Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.*

(Community Facilities Element)

Assessment:

- Located near the heart of Gainesville is Brenau University, which provides for higher education locally as do Gainesville State College and Lanier Technical College, both of which are located south of Gainesville in the Oakwood area.
- Gainesville has a community learning center, Featherbone Communiversity, which provides a communitywide forum for people to explore their diversity, discover their commonalities and together imagine a better future for their families and their environment.
- The Georgia Department of Labor Gainesville Career Center offers a wide range of services to both job seekers and employers, including training and education information and referral.

Recommendations:

- Continue to support the Featherbone Communiversity community learning center.
- Recruitment of businesses that could hire local graduates should be expanded.

D. Governmental Relations

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

Assessment:

- The City offers various citizen-focused academies, including the Citizen Government Academy through which residents learn about the various services provided by the City – including Planning and Development which is a program designed to place participants in the roles of Planning Commission members conducting a public hearing on annexation and rezoning requests.
- City employees, elected officials, and board members attend Georgia Municipal Association training; among other comparable training workshops. The City provides individual training on planning and zoning matters, and historic preservation matters.
- The public is kept informed of land use and zoning decisions as required by State law, but the City goes above the minimum notice requirements by sending notice letters to owners within a 500-foot radius of the subject property, by including notices on the City's website, official calendar/annual report and newsletter, and by including the notice on the local government channel.

Recommendations:

- Staff as well as elected and appointed officials should continue attending training workshops and continuing education courses offered by the Georgia Municipal Association and other organizations to stay abreast of current social and economic development issues.
- 2. Regional Cooperation:** *Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.*

Assessment:

- The 2004 Comprehensive Plan was a joint Gainesville-Hall County effort.
- The City is generally satisfied with the current Service Delivery Strategy (SDS), which incorporates shared services within Hall County.

- Gainesville and Hall County have entered into “First Responder”/“Automatic Aid” and “Mutual Aid” agreements, given the jurisdictional boundaries interweave throughout the City.
- There is a ride-sharing program for residents of the City and the surrounding area, and it includes 13 different carpools that either originate in or lead to Gainesville.
- There is limited interaction with the other jurisdictions within and adjoining Hall County (i.e. Gwinnett County).

Recommendations:

- Continue to maintain the cooperative aid agreements between the City and County public safety agencies.
- Coordinate with Gwinnett County Transit to add a regular Hall Area Transit – “Red Rabbit” route from Downtown Gainesville (or other more centralized location) to transport Atlanta commuters to one of the pick-up locations for the Gwinnett Transit express lines.
- Continue to include Flowery Branch, Oakwood and the other municipalities in interactions with Hall County, as appropriate.

III. Analysis of Areas Requiring Special Attention

Analysis of the prevailing trends will assist in the identification of preferred patterns of growth for the future. More specifically such analyses can identify those areas requiring special attention with regard to management policies, such as natural or cultural resources likely to be intruded upon or otherwise impacted by development. Evaluate the existing land use patterns and trends within the jurisdiction of the local government (including areas that are likely to be annexed within the planning period) to identify any areas requiring special attention.

Areas Requiring Special Attention are denoted on **Figure 1: Map of Areas Requiring Special Attention**, which is included as Appendix I of this report.

A. Areas of significant natural, historic or cultural resources:

Lake Sidney Lanier not only contributes to the municipal water supply but also is a source of natural and scenic beauty. The natural and aesthetic qualities of Lake Lanier have lent themselves toward the area becoming a prime location for recreational tourism. The lake has been designated on the map as an “Areas of Significant Natural Resources”.

Green Street (and other local and National Register districts), the Brenau University campus, and Alta Vista Cemetery are notable historically-significant resources that contribute to the City’s sense of place. These areas which are worthy of preservation and protection are noted on the map as “Areas of Significant Historic/Cultural Resources”.

B. Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur:

Given that the City of Gainesville is a thriving community with infrastructure in place (or in close proximity), annexation at the fringes or closer to the urban core is always a possibility. However, because of annexations along Dawsonville Highway (GA Hwy 53), Old Cornelia Highway, Athens Highway and White Sulphur Road; significant amounts of land could become eligible for annexation. These areas are designated on the map as “Areas of Potential Rapid Development”.

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

Not applicable.

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

There are several residential areas scattered about the City that are in decline and need significant improvements to aesthetics to spur reinvestment. Said residential areas include the Newtown community as well as properties along Hillcrest Avenue, Banks and Armour Streets, and Beechwood Boulevard. Gainesville’s Midtown has been designated a redevelopment area, for which a redevelopment plan and TAD have been adopted. Other nonresidential properties in need of improvements include the Browns Bridge and Atlanta Highway corridors and properties along E. E. Butler Parkway between Monroe Drive and Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. These areas are noted on the map as “Declining Areas with Redevelopment or Improvement Potential”.

E. Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated:

The former Gainesville Iron Works and Gainesville Mill building in the Midtown area are vacant/underutilized, large-size buildings which could be redeveloped. Remaining sections of Gainesville Iron Works should be demolished and the site redeveloped; while the Gainesville Mill building has the potential to be redeveloped as a mixed-use building. These properties are located within Gainesville's Midtown and are noted on the map as "Sites or Buildings with Redevelopment Potential".

F. Areas with significant infill development opportunities (scattered vacant sites):

Two areas for the potential for significant infill opportunities include Limestone Parkway and White Sulphur Road. These areas are shown on the map as "Areas with Significant Infill Development Opportunities".

G. Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the community as a whole:

Not applicable

IV. Identification of Issues and Opportunities

Identify issues and opportunities resulting from the Quality Community Objectives (QCOs) assessment and analysis of Areas Requiring Special Attention. Each of these issues or opportunities must be followed up with corresponding implementation measures in the Implementation Program.

A. Economic Development

Issues

- There are vacant properties suitable for residential and nonresidential development.
- There are vacant properties available for industrial development, both within the City's industrial parks and scattered about in Midtown and farther south and east toward I-985 and along Athens Highway (GA Hwy 129).
- The City contains hotels but does not have a high-end convention hotel.
- Utility improvements and infrastructure are needed within some of the fringe areas to facilitate infill development.
- There are job opportunities in the City, particularly for skilled labor.

Opportunities

- Study the feasibility of establishing Community Improvement Districts (CIDs) in the City, particularly along Browns Bridge Road and Atlanta Highway.
- Expand upon incentives, particularly those related to the redevelopment of greyfields, to attract businesses.
- Seek additional forms of incentives the City can adopt to encourage quality infill development and redevelopment.
- Coordinate with Northeast Georgia Medical Center and the impacted residential property owners to determine the hospital's long-term plan and to brainstorm possible solutions to strike a balance of both interests.
- Establish a heritage tourism program in order to enhance the City's tourism industry.
- Continue to support and enhance the economic viability of the City's hallmark industries while being flexible enough to respond to market forces.
- Continue to support the Featherbone Communiversy community learning center.
- Recruitment of businesses that could hire local graduates should be expanded.

B. Natural and Historic Resources

Issues

- Maintenance of Lake Lanier at full pool level should be addressed.
- Architectural character of modern infill development within the historic, intown neighborhoods should be addressed.
- Assess how much of the City's tree canopy exists and determine what percentage should be kept.

Opportunities

- Continue to enforce existing environmental regulations.
- Consider building setbacks against Lake Lanier.
- Consider the maintenance of Lake Lanier at full pool.
- Provide proper training opportunity for existing staff to become a Certified Arborist, or hire an outside firm, to review the current tree ordinance and amend as necessary to achieve create a community forest program that strikes a better balance between development and maintaining an adequate tree canopy.
- Consider density bonuses to promote the conservation and incorporation of permanent open space/greenspace.

C. Community Facilities and Transportation

Issues

- Connectivity and walkability should be addressed.
- Alternatives should be explored for residents who commute to Atlanta.

Opportunities

- Implement Neighborhood Watch programs to aid in patrolling the community while simultaneously creating a sense of ownership of neighborhoods among citizens.
- Implementation of "Safe Routes to Schools" programs should be considered.
- Continue to implement the priority recommendations noted in the adopted sidewalk plan to enhance pedestrian safety and connectivity.
- Seek opportunities to establish more neighborhood "pocket" parks.

- Study the feasibility of acquiring additional property to provide the final connection between the planned Midtown Greenway and Central Hall Trail.
- Implement any priority recommendations noted in the recent Hall Area Transit study, where possible.
- Add a regular Hall Area Transit – “Red Rabbit” route from Downtown Gainesville (or other more centralized location) to transport Atlanta commuters to one of the pick-up locations for the Gwinnett Transit express lines.

D. Housing

Issues

- There is no current inventory of vacant land available for housing or infill development.
- Consideration should be given to incentives to construct developments comprised of a mixture of dwelling types within different price points.
- Support continued efforts to preserve historic and intown neighborhoods, and ensure compatible infill development.

Opportunities

- Amend the current Unified Land Development Code to allow residential uses by right in certain nonresidential districts to encourage mixed-uses and neo-traditional uses for a range of housing types.
- Study the feasibility of density bonuses in exchange for a mixture of housing types (and price ranges) within single developments.
- An overall housing strategy premised on income should be pursued.
- Prepare an inventory and assessment of available land for housing as infill development.

E. Land Use

Issues

- Infill development should be carefully guided, especially in historic neighborhoods, in order to preserve the historic integrity and character of the City.
- New residential subdivision development should be guided to encourage neo-traditional development patterns (i.e. traditional, walkable neighborhoods) in a compact, non-cul-de-sac manner.

Opportunities

- Ensure that buffers continue to separate residential neighborhoods from commercial and industrial land uses.
- Consider amendments to the City's noise and air pollution ordinances to improve quality of life for residents who live near industry.

V. Updated Implementation Program

A. **Short Term Work Program:** This program identifies specific implementation actions the local government, or other entities, intends to take during the interim planning period. This program should include any ordinances. Administrative systems (such as site plan review, design review, etc.), community improvements or investments, financing arrangements, or other programs or initiatives to be put in place to implement the plan. The Short Term Work Program must include the following information for each listed activity:

- i. *Brief description of the activity*
- ii. *Timeframe for undertaking the activity*
- iii. *Responsible party for implementing the activity*
- iv. *Estimated cost (if any) of implementing the activity*
- v. *Funding source(s), if applicable*

The City's 2009 – 2013 Short Term Work Program Update is shown in the table below. Please note that funding source(s), which are denoted as indicated below, are not all inclusive but include at a minimum:

- i. *GF – General Fund*
- ii. *IG – Intergovernmental Transfer (Local, State and/or Federal)*
- iii. *IF – Impact Fees*
- iv. *SPLOST – Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax*
- v. *Grants – Historic Preservation Fund Grant and Georgia Recreational Trails Grant (at a minimum)*

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)
Economic Development								
Continue to promote development in Downtown through Main Street program	X	X	X	X	X	Main Street, City, DDA	-	-
Continue development and marketing of industrial parks within the City limits	X	X	X	X	X	City, Chamber of Commerce	-	-
Continue to recruit business and industry into the area	X	X	X	X	X	City, Chamber of Commerce	-	-
Continue to focus on tourism as a viable means of economic development	X	X	X	X	X	City, Main Street, CVB, Chamber	-	-
Continue support of Economic Development Council & Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce Vision 2030	X	X	X	X	X	City	-	-
Improve regional marketing	X	X	X	X	X	Chamber of Commerce	-	-
Natural and Historic Resources								
Complete the Historic Resources Structural Survey	X	X	X			City + Consultant	\$45,000	GF, Grant
Draft city preservation plan with implementation tools				X		City + Consultant	\$50,000	GF, Grant
Implement recommendations for local designation in the Historic Resources Structural Survey report					X	City	-	-
Continue participation in Upper Chattahoochee River Basin Group/MNGWPD	X	X	X	X	X	City	-	-
Continue participation in Lake Lanier Watershed Regional Committee meetings	X	X	X	X	X	City	-	-
Incorporate into plans for Fair Street Area and Bradford-Ridgewood NPU's protection and integration of natural and historic resources	X	X				City	-	-
Update Vision 2014 Strategic Parks & Recreation Plan adopted in late 2004		X	X			City + Consultant	\$30,000	Park Fund
Develop a greenway along the CSX rail line in Midtown	X	X				City	\$130,000	GF, Grant
Study the feasibility of implementing density bonuses to encourage tree canopy and open space preservation		X				City	-	-
Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)

Community Facilities								
Extend water/sewer to targeted development locations	X	X	X	X	X	City/County	\$15 million	SPLOST, Grants/Loans
Construct new Police Department training & outdoor firing range facility			X	X		City	\$1 million	GF, IG, IF, SPLOST,
Construct Fire Stations #5 and #6			X	X	X	City	\$6 million	GF, IF, SPLOST
Construct Frances Meadows Center Park (a new trails system around new aquatic and community center)		X	X	X		City	\$385,548	GF, IF, SPLOST, Grants
Midtown Greenway trailhead and park				X	X	City	\$650,000	GF, IF, SPLOST, Grants
Rock Creek Greenway expansion/continuation		X				City	\$150,000	GF, IF
Youth Athletic Complex/Park		X	X	X	X	City	\$6,358,000	GF, IF, SPLOST, Grants
Update Vision 2014 Strategic Parks & Recreation Plan adopted in late 2004		X	X			City + Consultant	\$30,000	Park Fund
Draft storm drain improvement plan		X				City	\$100,000	GF, SPLOST
Storm drain improvements	X	X	X	X	X	City	\$2,075,000	GF
Downtown streetscape		X				City	\$168,000	GF
Midtown transportation and drain improvements		X	X			City	\$600,000	GF, SPLOST
Regional detention/drainage ponds		X	X			City	\$265,000	GF, StW, SPLOST
Sidewalk program	X	X	X	X	X	City	\$850,000	SPLOST
Continue traffic calming program		X	X	X	X	City	\$220,000	GF
Continue intersection/safety improvements program	X	X	X	X	X	City	\$1,284,000	GF

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)
Community Facilities (Continued)								
Continue collection of residential garbage, yard waste, and recyclable waste at single-family residences	X	X	X	X	X	City	-	-
Continue and expand solid waste reduction and recycling education	X	X	X	X	X	City/Keep Hall Beautiful/Hall Resource Recovery	-	-
Housing								
Update the 2004 HUD Consolidated Plan	X					Consultant + City	\$40,000	Grants
Complete county-wide housing study	X					City/County + Consultant + Gainesville Nonprofit Foundation, Inc.	\$100,000	Grants
Continue rehabilitation, demolition, and down-payment assistance programs	X	X	X	X	X	City, Gainesville Nonprofit Foundation, Inc.	\$2,000,000	Grants
Prepare inventory and assessment of available land for housing as infill development		X				City	-	-
Study feasibility of incorporating into the Unified Land Development Code incentives and provisions for affordable housing (e.g. inclusionary zoning) and revise accordingly				X		City + Consultant	-	GF
Land Use								
Complete full Comprehensive Plan Update mandated by DCA (06/30/2011 deadline)			X			City + Consultant	\$150,000	GF
Update the Unified Land Development Code to implement the recommendations of the full Comprehensive Plan				X		City + Consultant	\$50,000	GF
Complete NPU plans		X				City	-	-

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)
Land Use (Continued)								
Rezone Residential-II (R-II)/multi-family properties in the Fair Street Area and Bradford-Ridgewood NPUs to Neighborhood Conservation (N-C)/single-family to stabilize the established single-family neighborhoods		X	X			City	-	-
Amend ULDC to revise lot standards for the Neighborhood Conservation (N-C) zoning to better reflect existing conditions				X		City	-	-
Locally designate as historic the Newtown Community and various individual landmarks in the Fair Street Area NPU (historically African-American community)		X				City	-	-
Locally designate those districts recommended in the Historic Resources Structural Survey report					X	City	-	-
General Planning								
GIS Mapping	X	X				City	\$188,000	GF
ISA Certified Arborist/Municipal Specialist certification of current staff member to function as City Arborist		X				City	-	GF, Grant
Website		X	X			City + Consultant	-	GF

- B. Long Term and Ongoing Activities (optional):** Identify specific long term or ongoing implementation activities to be undertaken beyond the interim planning period.

No Long Term or Ongoing Activities identified, except those noted in the Short Term Work Program or List of Accomplishments included in this Partial Update.

- C. Policies:** The Partial Update to the Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide a guide to everyday decision-making for use by the local government officials and community leaders. The requirements for Partial 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 making decisions consistent with addressing the identified Issues and Opportunities.

Gainesville's adopted 2004 Comprehensive Plan provides goals and bulleted lists of policy or action statements under each of those goals. This Partial Update to the Comprehensive Plan incorporates the major goals and policies – with selected revisions, in this document. Thus, this Partial Update includes a readoption of Gainesville's Comprehensive Plan goals, policies, objectives, and implementation strategies.

Economic Development Element

1. Goal: Balanced Economy.

- 1.1. Policy Objective: The City will work together with Hall County and other agencies to attract new job-generating businesses with above-average wages. Such efforts will include initiatives such as marketing, infrastructure investment, and making adequate land available for commercial and industrial development.
- 1.2. Policy Objective: The City will remove unnecessary regulatory and other impediments to the retention and expansion of existing businesses while ensuring that infill and redevelopment are compatible with surrounding neighborhoods.
- 1.3. Policy Objective: The City will protect natural and cultural resources that provide an essential foundation for tourism, and work with the Convention and Visitors Bureau to identify and provide needed infrastructure to support tourism.

2. Goal: Balance of Housing and Jobs.

- 2.1. Policy Objective: The City will target capital investments in infrastructure for uses and locations that will provide a better fiscal balance for the City and County.
- 2.2. Policy Objective: The City will make adequate land available in appropriate locations for commercial, industrial, and other business developments that are significant local tax generators.
- 2.3. Policy Objective: The City will revise Unified Development Code to ensure that zoning districts are available that can accommodate modern commercial and industrial uses in a quality environment.

- 2.4. Policy Objective: The City will continue their tradition of making available a wide range of housing to accommodate workers in local businesses.
- 2.5. Policy Objective: The City will maintain moderate residential densities throughout its jurisdiction to ensure a better balance between residential and nonresidential uses.

Natural and Historic Resources Element

1. Goal: Conserve and protect the natural environment, open spaces, and historic resources.

- 1.1. Policy Objective: The City will review and upgrade, as necessary, resource protection standards in their development codes, including but not limited to floodplain management, watershed protection, soil erosion, tree protection, and riparian areas.
- 1.2. Policy Objective: The City will extend public infrastructure and services to areas targeted for development in the Comprehensive Plan and refrain from providing services in areas such as sensitive natural areas that should be protected from intense development.
- 1.3. Policy Objective: The City will consider alternative transportation policies that reduce the amount of vehicle trips and require more detailed traffic impact analysis/mitigation for major projects.

2. Goal: Promote the preservation of open space systems throughout the City.

- 2.1. Policy Objective: The City will complete the parks plan and identify future park sites and base land acquisition on this plan.
- 2.2. Policy Objective: The City will continue to use development code standards to require a minimum open space set-aside in all developments.

3. Goal: Promote the preservation of historic resources within the City.

- 3.1. Policy Objective: Based upon a comprehensive preservation plan, the City will consider and put into place tools to protect historic resources from demolition or incompatible development.
- 3.2. Policy Objective: The City will promote the use of economic incentives for historic preservation projects to complement protective regulations.

Community Facilities Element

1. Goal: Encourage development to occur in a more compact form, with growth oriented in and around existing and planned service areas.

- 1.1. Policy Objective: Development will be targeted to areas with adequate public facilities and services through zoning code and map revisions.

- 1.2. Policy Objective: Infrastructure investment will be focused in identified growth corridors and zoning districts appropriate for commercial, industrial, and suburban/urban density residential uses.
2. **Goal: Ensure that the public facilities have the capacity, and are in place when needed, to support and attract growth and development and maintain quality of life.**
 - 2.1. Policy Objective: The City will explore standards for ensuring that public facilities and services are available concurrently with development that requires such facilities.
 - 2.2. Policy Objective: The City will explore adding fiscal impact analysis requirements to their development codes to establish a solid foundation for fairly allocating infrastructure costs.
 - 2.3. Policy Objective: The City will continue to maintain and upgrade existing infrastructure to accommodate and encourage infill and redevelopment within its boundaries.
3. **Goal: Provide safe and adequate utilities that are coordinated with the future land use plan and that support economically productive growth.**
 - 3.1. Policy Objective: The City and County will cooperate to extend sanitary sewer service to areas targeted for commercial growth, such as along the Highway 365 Corridor. The County will continue to pursue the extension of sanitary sewer to areas targeted for commercial growth in south Hall.
 - 3.2. Policy Objective: Low-density rural residential uses will not be served with sanitary sewer services except in unusual circumstances. Such services will be focused in areas planned for medium- and high-density residential development in the County and City.
4. **Goal: Provide recreational and cultural opportunities for citizens of all ages and socioeconomic backgrounds.**
 - 4.1. Policy 1: The City will complete its park plan and identify future park sites necessary to meet or exceed acceptable Level of Service standards for parks and recreation facilities.
 - 4.2. Policy 2: The City parks plans will promote a linked system of parks and open spaces.
5. **Goal: Provide public safety services to all citizens.**
 - 5.1. Policy Objective: Gainesville will explore financing mechanisms such as impact fees, adequate public facility ordinances, and general funds to ensure that adequate levels of service are maintained for fire and police protection and emergency services.

6. Goal: Provide adequate and accessible government facilities, health care facilities, and educational facilities to all citizens.

- 6.1. Policy Objective: The City and County will work closely with the Hall County and Gainesville School systems to provide adequate funding for projected school expansion, including the use of the Special Local Option Sales Tax, which have been utilized to fund school construction in the past.
- 6.2. Policy Objective: The City and County will cooperate with public and private health care providers to ensure that there is adequate land suitably zoned in appropriate locations for expanded and new health care facilities.

Transportation Element

1. Goal: Provide an adequate transportation system to move people and goods with a level of service that supports economic development goals and maintains a high quality of life.

- 1.1. Policy Objective: Gainesville will establish a goal for arterial and collector roads in all urban and suburban areas of an “E” Level of Service.
- 1.2. Policy Objective: Gainesville will develop a land use plan and review development approvals based on the goal of exceeding or maintaining the above level of service on all roads that currently meet this standard.
- 1.3. Policy Objective: Gainesville will take actions to alleviate congestion on those roads that do not currently meet this standard.
- 1.4. Policy Objective: Gainesville will place a priority on transportation projects that directly support economic development goals.

2. Goal: Continue to explore and promote mechanisms to alleviate traffic congestion through use of alternative modes of transportation, and better management of the existing road network.

- 2.1. Policy Objective: Gainesville will develop standards to ensure that sidewalks are developed along urban and suburban roadways.
- 2.2. Policy Objective: Gainesville will continue to work with Hall County and the Hall Area Transit Authority to provide an appropriate transit system to serve the community.
- 2.3. Policy Objective: Gainesville will explore transportation demand programs to alleviate congestion in major employment areas, and continue to support carpooling activities in the City and in Hall County.

Housing Element

1. Goal: Promote a balanced range of adequate and affordable housing, making it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community.

- 1.1. Policy Objective: The City and County will undertake necessary studies and implementing actions to ensure a full range of housing is available to workers, including both affordable units and homes for higher-end wage earners.
- 1.2. Policy Objective: Both jurisdictions will review and revise their development codes as appropriate to address special housing needs and opportunities such as elderly housing and accessory dwelling units. They will also review existing regulations and remove any unnecessary impediments to affordable housing.
- 1.3. Policy Objective: The City and County will consider standards to improve the quality of residential development to maintain community character and ensure stable long-term property values and neighborhoods.

2. Goal: Existing neighborhoods will be maintained as stable and desirable places to live and raise families.

- 2.1. Policy Objective: The City will pursue more aggressive building and housing code enforcement to prevent neighborhood deterioration.
- 2.2. Policy Objective: The City will consider revisions to their development code to better ensure that new commercial and industrial development is compatible with residential areas, focusing on issues such as lighting, buffering, signage, and landscaping.
- 2.3. Policy Objective: The City will work with local organizations and other interested agencies to initiate maintenance educational programs for first-time homeowners.

Land Use Element

1. Goals:

- 1.1. Gainesville and Hall County will ensure that land resources are allocated for uses that will accommodate and enhance economic development, protect natural and historic resources, ensure adequate community facilities, and provide a range of housing - resulting in the preservation of a high quality of life.
- 1.2. Gainesville and Hall County will grow and develop efficiently relative to the cost and timing of providing infrastructure and public services.
- 1.3. Gainesville and Hall County will grow and develop with a fiscally responsible land use pattern consisting of a balance of housing and jobs that supports the economic health and vitality of residents and businesses.
- 1.4. Existing and planned urban and suburban areas will be stable, vibrant, and well defined; development in rural areas will reflect low density that maintains true rural character.

2. Policy Objectives: The Land Development Policies for the various residential and nonresidential future land use categories shall be readopted as presented in the

adopted 2004 Gainesville Comprehensive Plan. Said policies are included as Appendix II of this Partial Update document.

Intergovernmental Coordination

- 1. Goal: Regional coordination will be emphasized that sets regional priorities, identifies shared needs, and finds collaborative solutions, particularly related to problems that transcend local jurisdiction boundaries.**
 - 1.1. Policy Objective: The City will work with Hall County to consult with adjacent local governments and other governmental units (e.g., school boards) on any major projects or activities that have potential spillover effects. The City and County will also seek reciprocal treatment from these entities for their projects that have potential impacts on the City/County. The City and County will seek to institutionalize such referral procedures.

- 2. Goal: Growth planning and management will be coordinated between the City of Gainesville and Hall County government.**
 - 2.1. Policy Objective: The City and County will develop a joint Comprehensive Plan and annexation policies that are mutually acceptable.
 - 2.2. Policy Objective: The City and County will develop a process for reviewing development of regional impact that can be used as a model for other jurisdictions in the County.
 - 2.3. Policy Objective: Both jurisdictions will continue work on their park master plans and coordinate these efforts to ensure that they are complementary in terms of types of facilities, location of trails, and other regional aspects.

D. Report of Accomplishments: *Identify the current status of each activity in the previous STWP. At a minimum, local governments must indicate activities that:*

- i. Have been completed;*
- ii. Are currently underway (including a projected completion date);*
- iii. Have been postponed (explaining why); or*
- iv. Have not been accomplished and are no longer activities the local government intends to undertake (explaining why).*

Economic Development

<i>Major Actions</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Draft city preservation plan with implementation tools and seek CLG certification	2005-2012	N/A	City staff + consultant	Completed: CLG certification received May 2006.
	2006-2011	\$130,000		In progress: Surveying of historic resources. Initiated project with windshield survey completed June 2006, followed by a multi-phased community structural survey of which two phases have been completed (2007 & 2008), the third is in progress, & the fourth is awaiting grant approval.
	2011-2012	\$50,000		Postponed: Preservation Plan to be drafted upon completing architectural surveying.
2. Undertake targeted revisions to city zoning ordinance to implement comprehensive plan; revise standards to encourage infill and reduce unnecessary processing delays	2004-2005	\$35,000	City staff + consultant	Completed: Revised <u>Unified Land Development Code</u> , adopted July 2005.
				In progress: Review & amendments to ULDC, 2007-2009.
3. Implement Midtown and Downtown Plans. Step up code enforcement in Midtown.	2004-2010	\$1.2 million	City staff + consultant	In Progress: Continue to work with owners to revitalize properties and have increased code enforcement in Midtown and have been successful.
				Adopted Tax Allocation District to encourage redevelopment and adopted application procedures, appointed TAD Advisory Committee, and received first application request in 2009.
				City is under contract to purchase CSX right-of-way, which has been entered into the Georgia Brownfields Program (following months of environmental assessment) & has an EPD-approved Corrective Action Plan for cleanup. City has a "Rails-to-Trails" grant to curb costs of construction, & has hired consultant to complete greenway design work and landscape plan.
4. Finish city parks plan.	2004	\$35,000	City staff + consultant	Completed: City of Gainesville <i>Vision 2014 Strategic Parks & Recreation Plan</i> adopted in late 2004.

Economic Development

<i>Major Actions</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Comments</i>
5. Extend water/sewer to targeted development locations	2004+	\$15 million	City/County staffs	In progress: Ongoing effort but extreme drought conditions & economic recession have slowed development. Gainesville Public Utilities works with Planning staff to determine Future Land Use for development in planning sanitary sewer lines. Seek financial assistance from Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority
6. Improve regional marketing	Ongoing	N/A	Greater Hall Chamber with assistance from city and county	In progress: Ongoing effort with City, County & Chamber of Commerce meet monthly as Economic Development Council to strategize on marketing to industry. Chamber initiated Vision 2030, visioning for all of Hall County.
7. Work with Convention and Visitors Bureau re tourism infrastructure support	Ongoing	NA	Convention and Visitors Bureau with county/city staffs	In progress: Ongoing work with the Gainesville-Hall County CVB & Chamber
8. Cooperate with business/ educational community to create closer education/job training ties	Ongoing	NA	Greater Hall Chamber, local colleges, city/county staffs	In progress: Ongoing City involvement with local schools through Junior Achievement and other programs like "If I Were Mayor For a Day"
9. Initiate housing study tied to economic development objectives	2007-2010	NA	Gainesville Nonprofit Development Foundation, city/ county staffs	In progress: Gainesville Non-Profit Development Foundation, Inc. with the Gainesville Housing & Neighborhood Development Department initiated county-wide housing study in 2007.

Housing

<i>Major Actions</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Undertake targeted revisions to city zoning ordinance to implement housing goals; revise standards to encourage infill and reduce unnecessary processing delays	2004+	\$35,000	City staff + consultant	Completed: Adopted revised <u>Unified Land Development Code</u> in July 2005, including standards to preserve single-family neighborhoods and require compatible infill development. In progress: Review & amendments to ULDC, 2007-2009.
2. Implement Midtown Plan. Step up code enforcement in Midtown	2004-2010	\$1.2 million	City staff + consultant	In Progress: Continue to work with owners to revitalize properties and have increased code enforcement in Midtown and have been successful. Adopted Tax Allocation District to encourage redevelopment and adopted application procedures, appointed TAD Advisory Committee, and received first application request in 2009. City is under contract to purchase CSX right-of-way, which has been entered into the Georgia Brownfields Program (following months of environmental assessment) & has an EPD-approved Corrective Action Plan for cleanup. City has a "Rails-to-Trails" grant to curb costs of construction, & has hired consultant to complete greenway design work and landscape plan.
3. Undertake housing study tied to economic development goals	2007-2010	NA	Gainesville Nonprofit Development Foundation, city/ county staffs	In progress: Gainesville Non-Profit Development Foundation, Inc. with the Gainesville Housing & Neighborhood Development Department initiated county-wide housing study in 2007.
4. Draft Coordinated Housing Plan and neighborhood plans.	2007-2010	N/A	City staff and Gainesville Nonprofit Development Foundation	In progress: City has initiated neighborhood planning unit in Fair Street & Bradford Street areas; county-wide housing study initiated in 2007.

Natural and Cultural Resources

<i>Major Actions</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Draft county/city preservation plan with implementation tools and seek CLG status.*	2005-2012	N/A	City staff	Completed: CLG certification received May 2006.
	2006-2011	\$130,000	Consultant	In progress: Surveying of historic resources. Initiated project with windshield survey completed June 2006, followed by a multi-phased community structural survey of which two phases have been completed (2007 & 2008), the third is in progress, & the fourth is awaiting grant approval.
	2011-2012	\$50,000	City staff + consultant	Postponed: Preservation Plan to be drafted upon completing architectural surveying.
2. Begin work on neighborhood plans; protect cultural resources in plans.	2007-2011	NA	City staff	In progress: City initiated first Neighborhood Planning Unit (NPU) in May 2007, with expected completion in July 2009. Evaluated approach & have initiated second NPU in the Bradford-Ridgewood neighborhood area. Postponed: Preservation Plan to be drafted upon completing architectural surveying.
3. Finish city parks plan. Identify key natural and cultural resources and consider for acquisition.	2004-2010	NA	City staff	Completed: Vision 2014 Strategic Parks & Recreation Plan adopted in late 2004.
				In progress: City Parks/Recreation continually identifying resources to improve, preserve, and/or to acquire. Acquired land using Impact Fees funds in 2007, to aid in the continuation of existing Downtown trails system.
4. Develop a greenway along the CSX rail lines in Midtown.	2004-2009	\$1.7 million	City	In progress: City is under contract to purchase CSX right-of-way, which has been entered into the GA Brownfields Program (following months of environmental assessment) & has an EPD-approved Corrective Action Plan for cleanup. City has a "Rails-to-Trails" grant to curb costs of construction, & has hired consultant to complete greenway design work & tree plan.
5. Extend water/sewer to targeted development locations in comprehensive plan; avoid service in sensitive natural areas.*	2004+	\$15 million	County and city	In progress: Ongoing effort but extreme drought conditions & economic recession have slowed development. Gainesville Public Utilities works with Planning staff to determine Future Land Use for development in planning sanitary sewer lines.

Natural and Cultural Resources

<i>Major Actions</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Comments</i>
6. Consider open space impact fees in county and city.*	2004-2006	NA	City/County staffs	Completed: City adopted Impact Fees Program in August 2006, including a fund for Parks and Recreation. The original CIE, adopted July 2006, outlined various expansion and new projects. Impact Fees funds used in 2007 to acquire land to aid the continuation of existing trails system.
7. Adopt coordinated intergovernmental annexation policy that includes resource protection provisions.*	2004-5	NA	County and city staffs	Canceled: City and County defer to House Bill 709 regarding annexations

(*) Indicates joint action listed the tables for both the city and county.

Community Facilities

<i>Major Actions</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Undertake targeted revisions to city zoning ordinance to encourage infill and reduce unnecessary processing delays	2004-2005	\$35,000	City staff + consultant	Completed: Adopted revised <u>Unified Land Development Code</u> in July 2005, including standards to preserve single-family neighborhoods and require compatible infill development. In progress: Review & amendments to ULDC, 2007-2009.
2. Extend water/sewer to targeted development locations.*	2004+	\$15 million	City and county	In progress: Ongoing effort but extreme drought conditions & economic recession have slowed development. Gainesville Public Utilities works with Planning staff to determine Future Land Use for development in planning sanitary sewer lines. Seek financial assistance from Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority.
3. Review additional impact fees in county; consider in city. Work to ensure financing tools are complementary and not competitive.*	2004-2006	NA	City/County staffs	Completed: City adopted Impact Fees Program in August 2006, including funds for Public Safety (Police and Fire) and Parks/Recreation
4. Consider adequate public facility standards in both county and city.*	2005-2011	NA	City/County staffs	Completed: Impact Fees Program study (CIE) indicated the City currently lacked adequate public facilities for Police, Fire and Parks/Recreation. City adopted CIE and Impact Fees Program to address issue.

Community Facilities

<i>Major Actions</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Comments</i>
				In progress: Gainesville Non-Profit Development Foundation, Inc. with the Gainesville Housing & Neighborhood Development Department initiated county-wide housing study in 2007.
5. Adopt coordinated intergovernmental annexation policy and agreement.*	2004-5	NA	City and county	Canceled: City and County defer to House Bill 709 regarding annexations
6. Finish city parks plan. Identify key parcels for acquisition.*	2004-2010	NA	City staff + consultant	Completed: Vision 2014 Strategic Parks & Recreation Plan adopted in late 2004.
				In progress: City Parks/Recreation continually identifying resources to improve, preserve, and/or to acquire. Acquired land using Impact Fees funds in 2007, to aid in the continuation of existing Downtown trails system.
7. Continue and expand solid waste reduction and recycling education by involving other service organizations	Ongoing	NA		In progress: Ongoing effort...Solid Waste currently partners with keep Hall Beautiful, Hall Resource Recovery and BFI waste Collection Services with its educational and outreach efforts
8. Continue Collection of residential garbage, yard waste, and recyclable waste at single-family residences	Ongoing	NA		In progress: City continues its long standing tradition of back-yard garbage pick-up two times a week and once a week recycling and refuse pick-up.

Land Use

<i>Major Actions</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Draft county/city preservation plan with implementation tools and seek CLG status*	2005-2012	N/A	City staff + consultant	Completed: CLG certification received May 2006.
	2006-2011	\$130,000		In progress: Surveying of historic resources. Initiated project with windshield survey completed June 2006, followed by a multi-phased community structural survey of which two phases have been completed (2007 & 2008), the third is in progress, & the fourth is awaiting grant approval.
	2011-2012	\$50,000		Postponed: Preservation Plan to be drafted upon

Land Use

<i>Major Actions</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Comments</i>
				completing architectural surveying.
2. Undertake targeted revisions to city zoning ordinance to implement comprehensive plan; revise standards to encourage infill and reduce unnecessary processing delays	2004-2005	\$35,000	City staff + consultant	Completed: Revised <u>Unified Land Development Code</u> , adopted July 2005. In progress: Review & amendments to ULDC, 2007-2009.
3. Implement Midtown and Downtown Plans. Step up code enforcement in Midtown	2004-2010	\$1.2 million	City staff + consultant	In Progress: Continue to work with owners to revitalize properties and have increased code enforcement in Midtown and have been successful. Adopted Tax Allocation District to encourage redevelopment and adopted application procedures, appointed TAD Advisory Committee, and received first application request in 2009. City is under contract to purchase CSX right-of-way, which has been entered into the Georgia Brownfields Program (following months of environmental assessment) & has an EPD-approved Corrective Action Plan for cleanup. City has a "Rails-to-Trails" grant to curb costs of construction, & has hired consultant to complete greenway design work and landscape plan.
4. Begin work on neighborhood plans to include designation of boundaries and guidelines	2007-2011	NA	City staff	In progress: City initiated first Neighborhood Planning Unit (NPU) in May 2007, with expected completion in July 2009. Evaluated approach & have initiated second NPU in the Bradford-Ridgewood neighborhood area. Postponed: Preservation Plan to be drafted upon completing architectural surveying.
5. Finish city parks plan.	2004-2005	NA	City staff	Completed: Vision 2014 Strategic Parks & Recreation Plan adopted in late 2004.
6. Extend water/sewer to targeted development locations. *	2004+	\$15 million	County and city	In progress: Ongoing effort but extreme drought conditions & economic recession have slowed development. Gainesville Public Utilities works with Planning staff to determine Future Land Use for development in planning sanitary sewer lines. Seek financial assistance from Georgia Environmental

Land Use

<i>Major Actions</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Comments</i>
				Facilities Authority.
7. Review additional development impact fees in county; consider fees in city*	2004-2006	NA	City/County staffs	Completed: City adopted Impact Fees Program in August 2006, including funds for Public Safety (Police and Fire) & Parks/Recreation
8. Improve regional marketing.*	Ongoing	N/A	Greater Hall Chamber with assistance from city and county	In progress: Ongoing effort with City, County & Chamber of Commerce meet monthly as Economic Development Council to strategize on marketing to industry. Chamber initiated Vision 2030, visioning for all of Hall County.
9. Adopt coordinated intergovernmental annexation policy and agreement.*	2004-5	NA	City/County staffs	Canceled: City and County defer to House Bill 709 regarding annexations

* Indicates joint action listed in both the city and county tables.

Joint City/County Major Intergovernmental Actions

<i>Major Actions</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>	<i>Estimated Cost</i>	<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Revise city and county development codes/consider complementary design and other standards.	2004	\$150,000 (county)	Staff + consultants	
	2004-2005	\$35,000 (city)	City staff + consultant	Completed: City Adopted revised <u>Unified Land Development Code</u> in July 2005
2. Draft joint comprehensive plan for city/county; satisfy DCA requirements	2004	\$245,000	City/County staff + consultants	Completed: Original joint Comprehensive Plan adopted June 2004.
3. Draft county/city preservation plan with implementation tools and seek CLG status	2007	\$50,000	County staff	County plan "In Progress"
	2005-2012	\$50,000	City staff + consultant	Completed: City obtained CLG certification received May 2006 Postponed: City Preservation Plan to be drafted upon completing architectural surveying
4. Finish city parks plan. Continue work on county parks plan. Identify key natural and cultural resources and consider for acquisition.	2004-5	NA	City/County staffs	Completed: Completed and adopted late 2004.
5. Extend water/sewer to targeted development locations in comprehensive plan; avoid service in sensitive natural areas.	2004+	\$15 million	County and city	In progress: Ongoing effort but extreme drought conditions have slowed development. Gainesville Public Utilities works with Planning staff to determine Future Land Use for development in planning sanitary sewer lines. Seek financial assistance from Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority.
				County currently has impact fees.
6. Consider complementary fiscal impact assessment tools and impact fees in city and county.	2003	NA	County staff + consultant	
	2004-2006	\$35,000	City staff + consultant	Completed: City adopted Impact Fees Program in August 2006.
7. Draft and adopt coordinated intergovernmental annexation policy. Use as countywide model.	2004-5	NA	City/County staffs	Canceled: City and County defer to House Bill 709 regarding annexations

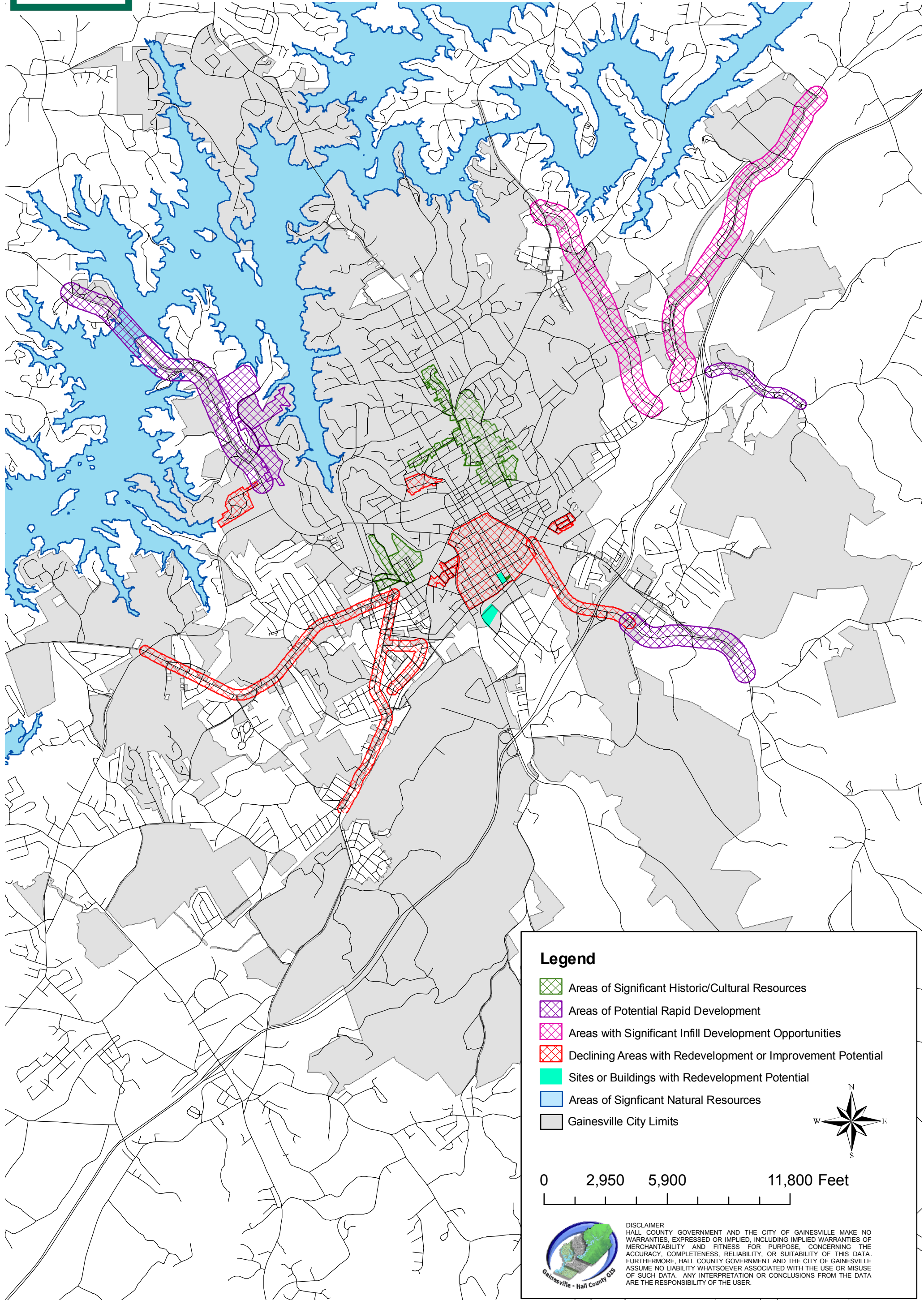
Appendix I

Figure 1— Map of Areas Requiring Special Attention



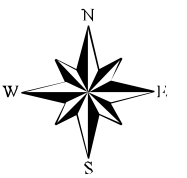
City of Gainesville - 2009 Partial Update

Figure 1: Areas Requiring Special Attention



Legend

- Areas of Significant Historic/Cultural Resources
- Areas of Potential Rapid Development
- Areas with Significant Infill Development Opportunities
- Declining Areas with Redevelopment or Improvement Potential
- Sites or Buildings with Redevelopment Potential
- Areas of Significant Natural Resources
- Gainesville City Limits



0 2,950 5,900 11,800 Feet



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Appendix II
Development Policies for Future Land Use Categories

V. FUTURE LAND USE PLAN

OVERVIEW

The Future Land Use Map for the City of Gainesville reflects an urban development pattern that seeks to address the challenges of infill and redevelopment, while accommodating the City's need to grow. Medium density, suburban residential land uses are reflected around the established neighborhoods in Gainesville, such as Ridgewood Terrace, Longstreet Hills, and Dixon Drive. Mixed-use areas are reflected along Park Hill Drive and Enota Drive to allow for the compatible transition and necessary balance between neighborhoods and retail uses. Urban densities are reflected in areas where multi-family development has been planned or constructed. Retail and Industrial development continue to be a key focus of the City, which furthers Gainesville's place as the economic center of Northeast Georgia.

A more detailed discussion of the land use plan and policy follows by geographic area:

South Gainesville

This area is generally defined as the area south of Jesse Jewell Parkway lying between Queen City Parkway and eastward toward the 1,000± acre tract known as Shawshank. A key feature of this area is the section known as "Midtown". Midtown has been a focal point of redevelopment efforts over the past few years and continues to receive attention through the redevelopment efforts of the City. This area is planned for a mixture of uses as outlined in the *Midtown Redevelopment Plan* adopted by the City in 2001. Mixed-use and retail areas surround Midtown in anticipation of Midtown being the catalyst for redeveloping this part of Gainesville.

South Gainesville is also defined by existing residential neighborhoods, such as Newtown, surrounded by retail and industrial uses. Suburban medium densities are planned for this area to help prevent incompatible infill from occurring. Mixed-use areas surround parts of the residential area to allow for a mix of residential and neighborhood retail uses. The Shawshank property located at the far eastern boundary of South Gainesville is identified for Suburban High Residential densities in accordance with the master plan proposed for that area.

Northeast Gainesville

Northeast Gainesville is defined as the area north of Jesse Jewell Parkway lying between Green Street/Thompson Bridge Road and I-985/SR 365. A key feature of this area is the Limestone Corridor and the existing neighborhoods along Park Hill and Enota Drives. Both of these heavily traveled corridors are experiencing development pressures to convert existing residences to business uses. Suburban medium densities have been identified in these exiting neighborhoods to help provide stabilization for those areas, while mixed-use has been proposed for the areas where commercial or retail intrusion has occurred. The mixed-use category in this area will set parameters for non-residential development to allow for a better balance between the neighborhood and retail-type uses.

Another significant area of Northeast Gainesville is the Northeast Georgia Medical Center. Due to its significance as a regional medical center and employer, land uses have been

identified in areas surrounding the hospital that will allow for further infill and redevelopment of medial uses to support the hospital and nearby medical community. Green Street and its rich history have undergone a transition from residential uses to more professional/office uses. Land uses for this area are identified as mixed-use to allow for the transition to continue to occur if market forces permit, but to also allow a balance to occur between the office uses and residential neighborhoods surrounding Green Street.

Brenau University is another important asset of this area. Its position as an academic facility within the community draws a mixture of uses surrounding it including single-family and multi-family residential, as well as office and retail uses. Mixed-use is designated for this area to foster community balance between uses.

Northwest Gainesville

Northwest Gainesville is generally defined as the area north of Jesse Jewell Parkway lying between Green Street/Thompson Bridge Road and Dawsonville Highway/Washington Street. Key features of this area include Lake Lanier, the Country Club, and Downtown. Downtown Gainesville has been designated its own land use category based on its successful Main Street program and redevelopment efforts. The mixed-use for Downtown will allow for the continued development of the Downtown area with shops and restaurants, as well as more loft-type dwelling units. Mixed-use areas immediately adjacent to Downtown are shown similar to the Midtown area, in that the development of the Downtown area will further define the development of these areas.

In northwest Gainesville, there is a large concentration of residential neighborhoods on both sides of the lake up to the City limits near the County Club. These areas have been designated Suburban Medium Residential to help preserve the area as residential and to help prevent incompatible infill. Multi-family developments are also a characteristic of this section of Gainesville and these are designated Urban High Residential.

West Gainesville

West Gainesville is generally defined as the area south of Jesse Jewell Parkway/Browns Bridge Road lying between Queen City Parkway and McEver Road. A key feature of this area is the Lee Gilmer Airport and the surrounding industrial areas. Residential areas in this section of Gainesville are identified as Suburban Medium Residential to help protect them from incompatible infill. Retail/Commercial is predominate in this section of Gainesville in areas such as Lakeshore Mall and the McEver Road/Dawsonville Highway vicinity, which is a regional activity center drawing people from outside Hall County. It is anticipated that this area will grow in size to encompass the Skelton Road Area.

Multi-family developments, such as Caswyck Lanier, are located in this area and are identified as Urban High Residential. Other areas along the major corridors of this section are identified as mixed-use due to the anticipated transition from residential to retail.

NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING UNIT APPROACH

Every area of Gainesville is unique. The four areas described above have their own character, some of which is contained within the specific area and some of it spills over into other areas. There are common issues facing the City that are identifiable in every area and some that are unique to a particular part of Gainesville. In order to identify these areas and to make the process of land use planning continual, the City will begin the process of setting up Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU). These NPUs will be a continuation of the land use plan, but provides for more detailed planning in the areas of design guidelines and parcel specific land uses in key areas. These NPUs will be a citizen-based effort that utilizes citizens from within the NPUs to develop plans and designs and present those to the City for consideration.

The purpose of the NPU will be a micro-level planning function that will look at specific areas of the City that have a unique character. While all of the NPUs will have common elements, each of them will have their own distinct issues. The initial outcome of these NPUs will be to identify the commonalties within the City while integrating the different characters of the individual NPUs.

It is envisioned that the NPUs will be established by the City of Gainesville based on factors such as geography, census tract and block characteristics, similar issues regarding traffic and growth, as well as recommendations received through a series of public meetings to gather input on how the community believes the NPUs should be organized. Each NPU will have its own Steering Committee composed of residents, property owners, business owners, and government officials. While the Steering Committee will be manageable, it should represent a cross section of the planning area. The final decision on the size and boundary of each NPU, as well as the Steering Committee organization, will be determined by the City Council. The NPU will be a function of the Planning Department, but it is expected that each department within the City will participate with this effort depending on the prevalent issues that could impact them.

After formation of the NPUs, a Steering Committee appointed by the City will hold public meetings to discuss issues and/or concerns contained within that area. From this series of meetings, a vision or character of the NPU will be developed. After this character has been identified, design guidelines will be drafted and meetings held to gain consensus on the requirements for development within the NPU. Specific parcels of land will be identified as priorities, based on the need to develop or protect those areas. At this point, a formal recommendation will be made to the City for acceptance and codification of the design guidelines.

While the establishment of these NPUs will be an ongoing process, Gainesville is at a point in its growth and development where it becomes necessary to maintain and/or establish character-type areas within geographic boundaries to shape the City as it enters a build-out phase. Careful consideration, through public input and analysis, should be carried out before NPU priorities are established.

LAND USE DEFINITIONS, AND POLICIES

The following are the specific land use categories depicted in the Future Land Use Plan, along with development policies that apply to those land use categories. The Development Policies are intended to define the circumstances under which the land use is considered appropriate.

Suburban Medium and High-Density

The suburban medium and high-density categories are characterized primarily by single-family residential development and related uses. The following definitions apply to Suburban Medium Density Residential and Suburban High-Density Residential depicted on the Future Land Use map.

Suburban Medium Density

Suburban Medium Density in the City of Gainesville includes areas containing or planned for suburban residential development at a density not to exceed 2 dwelling units per acre.

Suburban High-Density

Suburban High-Density in the City of Gainesville includes areas containing or planned for suburban residential development at a density range of 2-4 dwelling units per acre.

Suburban Development Policies

1. The appropriate land uses within the Suburban Medium Density category include single-family, limited neighborhood commercial, and appropriately scaled institutional uses. In the Suburban High-Density category, attached housing is also appropriate subject to the development policies below.
2. A mix of the land uses should be encouraged to reduce the dependency on the automobile. Uses such as parks, schools, churches, and senior housing should be considered as appropriate ancillary uses when part of an integrated site design and when located and designed to minimize negative impacts.
3. Neighborhood commercial may be appropriate in areas not designated on the future land use plans only when consistent with the development policies contained in the retail commercial section.
4. More street connections should be encouraged in residential subdivision designs. Rather than focusing traffic on a few collector streets or arterials – which tends to create bottlenecks of congestion – more “through streets” should be encouraged to better disperse traffic and to reduce its impacts at certain points.
5. When new development occurs, it should be designed around and connected to any open space corridors or networks existing or planned.
6. Pedestrian facilities should be included in new developments, unless circumstances make this unrealistic. Improved connections between key destination areas should be developed, such as between residential and commercial areas and connecting to parks and schools.
7. Well-designed and integrated open space is encouraged as part of suburban development. Residential development should be designed around active neighborhood open spaces where practical, which in turn should connect to adjacent open space networks or regional systems.
8. Environmental quality standards should be incorporated in the development review process, particularly related to storm water runoff, stream protection, and tree protection.

Suburban Development Policies (cont.)

9. New development should be timed and coordinated relative to infrastructure. Infrastructure, particularly sewer and water service, should be available concurrently with new development.
10. New infrastructure should be planned to be adequate for both existing and planned growth. Level of service standards should be developed to ensure that adequate public facilities are provided in both the short term and long term.
11. Infill development, while typically considered an issue in urban neighborhoods (see below), can also be a factor in suburban neighborhoods. When new development is proposed within existing suburban areas, it should be reviewed for compatibility with surrounding residential properties. Compatibility can be achieved by ensuring that the overall scale and design of infill development does not overwhelm or otherwise detract from the established character of existing neighborhoods.

Urban Residential

The following definitions apply to Urban Residential uses as depicted on the Future Land Use map.

Urban Residential Low

Urban Residential Low includes areas containing or planned for urban residential development at a density range of 4 - 5 dwelling units per acre.

Urban Residential Medium

Urban Residential Medium includes areas containing or planned for urban residential development at a density range of 5 - 10 dwelling units per acre.

Urban Residential High

Urban Residential High includes areas containing or planned for urban residential development at a density range of 10 - 12 dwelling units per acre.

Urban Residential Development Policies:

1. The preservation and enhancement of existing residential neighborhoods is of paramount importance.
2. Infill development can be an effective means of ensuring the continued vitality and integrity of urban residential neighborhoods. Encouraging infill development on targeted sites provides an opportunity to incorporate housing alternatives into the urban area, while reducing the need for outward expansion of the community.
3. While recognizing the potential advantages of infill development, the need to ensure its compatibility with the surrounding residential context must be addressed. Compatibility can be achieved by ensuring that the overall scale and design of infill development does not overwhelm or otherwise detract from the established character of existing neighborhoods. Compatibility can be achieved through the development of targeted development standards that address:
 - Scale of development (building height and mass)
 - Neighborhood character
 - Lot coverage
 - Setbacks
 - Relationship to surrounding development
 - Neighborhood specific design characteristics
 - Relationship to historic properties
4. Historic preservation is a valuable tool to promote the protection of neighborhood character and can also be a valuable economic development tool by encouraging reinvestment and new investment in historic properties.
5. The preservation or creation of neighborhood identity is a high priority. In particular, gateways into neighborhoods and corridors through neighborhoods are important features that can reinforce neighborhood identity.

Retail Commercial

The retail commercial land use category generally includes commercial service activities such as grocery stores, banks, restaurants, theaters, hotels, and automotive related businesses. This land use category is intended to provide retail and related uses at three levels including neighborhood retail, community retail, and regional retail.

The following standards are used to define policy and guide retail land use decisions:

Neighborhood Commercial

Neighborhood Commercial is a node of development containing a total of 10,000-50,000 square feet of small scale buildings on sites totaling 2-5 acres, serving a population of approximately 2,500-5,000 living within a 1-2 mile radius. Such areas are typically made up of small shops and offices, possibly anchored by a small neighborhood grocery or drug store.

Community Commercial

Community Commercial is a node of development containing 50,000-250,000 square feet of buildings on sites totaling 5-25 acres, serving a population of approximately 10,000-50,000 living within a 2-5 mile radius. Such areas are typically anchored by a major grocery store, major drug store, or large-scale retailer.

Regional Commercial

Regional Commercial is a node of development containing from 250,000 to over 1,000,000 square feet of buildings on sites totaling 25 – to over 100 acres, serving a population of 150,000 or more living within a 5-10 mile radius. Such areas are typically anchored by a number of large-scale retailers.

These categories of retail development are intended to provide a hierarchy of retail locations that are designated based upon infrastructure, suitability, and access. These sites are identified on the Future Land Use Map.

The intent of the plan for this land use category is to provide adequate land to serve the anticipated future population. An excess of retail land is illustrated on the Future Land Use Map in order to provide market flexibility; the amount of land and number of sites proposed on the Future Land Use Map exceeds the amount of land needed to support the anticipated future population by approximately 50% in order to create this market flexibility.

The following definitions apply to the Retail Commercial land use categories depicted on the Future Land Use map.

Retail Commercial

Retail Commercial includes areas containing or planned for focused retail activity, and specifically designated to provide for neighborhood, community, or regional retail needs as defined within the Comprehensive Plan.

Retail is planned at a number of locations on the Future Land Use Map. Illustrative examples of retail locations include:

- Neighborhood Commercial - Riverside Drive near City Park
- Community Commercial - Limestone Parkway; Atlanta Highway; Browns Bridge Road; Thompson Bridge Road and Enota Drive
- Regional Commercial - Dawsonville Highway and McEver Road; Lakeshore Mall Area; and Shallowford Road.

Commercial Development Policies:

Neighborhood Retail

1. Neighborhood retail is intended to serve nearby residential areas with basic personal and retail services. Such uses are generally located in stand-alone buildings or in small commercial centers and they include uses such as convenience stores, beauty salons, specialty shops, smaller restaurants, grocery stores, and drug stores. These uses are appropriate in many areas and can help to minimize traffic by providing services near homes. On the other hand, they can also be obtrusive and have negative impacts on homes if they do not respect the neighborhood scale or are not properly located and designed.
2. Neighborhood retail should be located at a significant intersection along a collector street or arterial street, easily accessible from the area it is intended to serve.
3. Neighborhood retail clusters should be adequately spaced so as to avoid an over concentration in individual neighborhoods. The amount of neighborhood retail in a given neighborhood should be generally proportional to the needs of the surrounding area.
4. Adequate landscape buffering should be provided adjacent to any residential areas.
5. Building design should be compatible with surrounding residential areas with regard to materials, building scale, building massing, and relationships to streets.
6. Connections should be provided to any adjoining sidewalk or trail system that exists.
7. Parking facilities should be carefully designed to minimize visual impacts on surrounding residential areas and on the neighborhood as a whole.
8. Access should be limited to minimize impacts on surrounding residential areas.
9. Signage and lighting should be limited to avoid visual impacts on homes.

Community Retail

1. While community retail serves a larger area, it often serves a neighborhood retail function for immediately surrounding areas. For this reason, community retail should maintain a pedestrian scale that connects to surrounding residential areas.
2. Other related but smaller uses may also occur as part of community retail, such as restaurants and smaller specialty stores. These smaller uses must be carefully coordinated from a site-planning standpoint with the larger retail uses, particularly related to traffic access and circulation.

Community Retail (cont.)

3. Community retail uses should meet quality standards related to site layout, building configuration, materials, massing, shape, height, landscaping, signage, parking lot aesthetic and functional design, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, trash removal, lighting, storm water management, environmental protection, and others as discussed below. Community retail should be subject for land use impact review and mitigation for such issues.
4. Community retail should be approved only upon a demonstration that adequate public facilities exist or will be established by the time of opening.
5. Circulation systems should be designed to efficiently facilitate traffic flow, yet designed to discourage speeds in volumes that impede pedestrian activity and safety. Common or shared access points are encouraged. Access management principles and techniques should be incorporated in the site plan design and development phase.
6. Adequate parking should be provided, but excessive parking is discouraged. The visual impacts of parking should be minimized through the use of interior landscape islands, and through dividing parking areas into groupings. The edges of parking lots should be screened through landscaping or other methods.
7. The location of service areas and mechanical equipment should be considered as part of the overall site design. Service areas and mechanical equipment should be screened from public view.
8. A master sign plan should be prepared illustrating the location, type, size, and material of signage.
9. Lighting should be designed to avoid spill over onto adjacent properties, including the use of cut off shields or similar features.

Regional Retail

1. Regional retail is intended to serve larger areas, and include uses such as retail/grocery superstores, large discount stores, warehouse clubs, large specialty retailers, manufacturers' outlet stores, and department stores.
2. Other related but smaller uses may also occur as part of regional retail, such as restaurants and smaller specialty stores. These smaller uses must be carefully coordinated from a site planning standpoint with the larger retail uses, particularly related to traffic access and circulation.
3. Regional retail uses should meet quality standards related to site layout, building configuration, materials, massing, shape, height, landscaping, signage, parking lot aesthetic and functional design, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, trash removal, lighting, storm water management, environmental protection, and others as discussed below. Regional retail should be subject for land use impact review and mitigation for such issues.
4. Regional retail should be encouraged only where they have a strong network of interstate or arterial roadways to provide access.
5. Regional and community retail should be approved only upon a demonstration that adequate public facilities exist or will be established by the time of opening.

Regional Retail (cont.)

6. Circulation systems should be designed to efficiently facilitate traffic flow, yet designed to discourage speeds in volumes that impede pedestrian activity and safety. Common or shared access points are encouraged. Access management principles and techniques should be incorporated in the site plan design and development phase.
7. Adequate parking should be provided, but excessive parking is discouraged. The visual impacts of parking should be minimized through the use of interior landscape islands, and through dividing parking areas into groupings. The edges of parking lots should be screened through landscaping or other methods.
8. The location of service areas and mechanical equipment should be considered as part of the overall site design. Service areas and mechanical equipment should be screened from public view.
9. A master sign plan should be prepared illustrating the location, type, size, and material of signage.
10. Lighting should be designed to avoid spill over onto adjacent properties, including the use of cut off shields or similar features.

Industrial

The industrial land use category includes a wide range of office, business, light industrial, manufacturing, research and development uses, and support commercial uses. Industrial uses involve a significant number of vehicle trips, particularly in the morning and evening peak hours. They also involve a mixture of automobile and truck traffic. Industrial uses may have need for rail access and are typically located near major highway facilities in areas naturally buffered or away from residential areas.

Industrial uses in the City are generally planned for the five City industrial parks. Industrial development will be directed to these established parks, including:

- Industrial Park West, which is a 242 acre industrial park
- Airport Industrial Park, which is a 16 acre industrial park
- Atlas Circle Business Park, which is a 62 acre industrial park
- Industrial Park North, which is a 216 acre industrial park
- Industrial Park South, which is a 171 acre industrial park

The following definition applies to Industrial depicted on the Future Land Use map.

Industrial

Industrial includes areas containing or planned for industrial activity including manufacturing, processing, mining, and major warehousing and distribution facilities.

Industrial Development Policies:

1. The appropriate land uses in this category include manufacturing, processing, mining, and major warehousing and distribution facilities.
2. Industrial uses should meet quality standards designed to mitigate negative impacts on any surrounding non-industrial uses.
3. The most desired form of industrial uses is that of an "employment campus" with an integration and coordination of uses, although freestanding industrial uses are also anticipated.
4. Industrial uses should be located within easy access to an arterial roadway and the interstate highway system, and take advantage of rail locations that are compatible with surrounding development.
5. Employer transportation programs are encouraged to reduce the percentage of trips made by single-occupancy vehicles.
6. Vehicular access should be designed to maximize efficiency and minimize negative impacts on the level of service of adjacent roads.
7. On-site amenities such as walking trails and eating areas are encouraged.
8. Accessory uses designed to serve on-site employees, such as restaurants, day care centers, and personal services are also encouraged but only when integrated with and subordinate to the primary business uses.

Mixed-Use

The category of mixed-use is intended to create a land use environment where compatible land uses can be located in close proximity to each other. This can be desirable for several reasons. First, allowing compatible and mutually supportive uses in close proximity to each other can reduce the length and amount of automobile trips on the road system, thereby helping to reduce congestion and negative environmental impacts caused by automobile traffic. Second, a well-planned mixture of land uses helps to create a positive transition of land uses, with less intensive uses serving as a transition between more intensive uses and single-family neighborhoods. At the same time, the idea of mixed-uses should not be interpreted as allowing for the intrusion of incompatible land uses into single-family neighborhoods that create negative land use impacts. On the contrary, mixed-use is intended, in part, as a tool to help protect neighborhoods.

The following definition applies to Mixed-Use depicted on the Future Land Use map:

Mixed-Use

Mixed-Use includes areas containing or planned for a mixture of land uses including office, neighborhood retail, and residential. The types of uses that are desirable in this area would be restaurants, specialty retail, and low-intensity offices (e.g. accountant or real estate office). The mixture of land uses in this area is anticipated as follows:

June 24, 2004

Office – Anticipated making up approximately 40 percent of the mixed-use area, providing high quality employment areas such as professional offices including medical, law, accounting, real estate, and similar uses.



Retail – Anticipated to make up approximately 30 percent of the mixed-use area, providing support retail for neighborhood offices, service uses, and specialty retail for surrounding land uses.



Residential – Anticipated to make up approximately 30 percent of the mixed-use area, providing a range of single-family and multi-family housing accessible to employment and shopping areas.



Mixed-Use Downtown

Mixed-Use Downtown includes areas containing predominately retail uses in conjunction with the Main Street Gainesville program. Residential units located above the retail uses will be encouraged such as loft-style residences.

For planning and management purposes, Downtown Gainesville generally comprises 20 square blocks bounded by Jesse Jewell Parkway, E. E. Butler Parkway, Academy and West Academy Streets. The City of Gainesville has been participating in the hugely successful National Main Street Program since 1995, which prescribes a managed approach to economic revitalization in the context of historic preservation. The redevelopment of Downtown is a true public-private partnership with the public sector providing financial incentives and strategic public investments to encourage private redevelopment of property within and surrounding the district.

The City government has invested in public utility infrastructure, streetscape, public building renovations, and a greenway. The City, through the Redevelopment Authority and the Main Street office, established a low-interest loan program and nominated the district to the National Register of Historic Places. The City is currently in the process of expanding public parking, intersection improvements, and an expansion of streetscape improvements.

The vision for Downtown includes the continued renovation of private property to enhance its visual and utilitarian value while encouraging appropriately designed mixed-use infill development. The vision focuses on a vibrant retail core surrounding the Square with adequate parking opportunities, pedestrian amenities, and served by appropriate public transit. The remaining land use strategy involves a mixture of office, residential, lodging/meeting, and government uses in a mid-rise configuration with adequate off-street, structured parking. The strategy is to enhance, reinforce, and expand the urban fabric and urban life experience to serve a growing and diverse community.

Mixed-Use Midtown

Mixed-Use Midtown includes area to be developed in accordance with the Midtown Redevelopment Plan that has been adopted by the City of Gainesville.

The Midtown area is comprised of approximately 300 acres bounded by Jesse Jewell Parkway, Queen City Parkway, E.E. Butler Parkway, and the Norfolk-Southern rail line. Midtown was once a vibrant part of Gainesville, centered around the railroad and its associated businesses. Today, Midtown is characterized by blighted housing, incompatible land uses, unscreened outdoor storage for businesses, traffic, crime, and a lack of green space. Despite these drawbacks, the community believes that Midtown has the potential for significant change. Citizens envision a thriving mixed-use area with tree-lined streets, trails, and parks that would attract residents and visitors to the area. Possible opportunities include renovating the railroad depot, establishing an entertainment district, converting the CSX rail lines into a greenway, installing streetscaping along key streets, providing mixed-income housing, and protecting some of the area's valuable historic resources.

It is important to note that the City's method of redeveloping Midtown is to make strategic public investments in order to attract private redevelopment of property. The City does not plan to get in the business of redeveloping property.

The first public investment the City plans to make in Midtown is converting the CSX rail line into a greenway and building a park in the area. The creation of a greenway would not only have a positive impact on Midtown, but would benefit the entire City. A greenway in Midtown would greatly improve the aesthetic character of the area and would provide an alternative mode of transportation, recreational opportunities, and pedestrian connections to the downtown square, the Elachee trail system, and the Rock Creek greenway.

Mixed-Use Development Policies:

1. Because this land use category is intended in part as a transition between more intensive uses and single-family uses, all sides of a building open to view to the public should display a similar level of architectural quality. Building materials should be limited to brick, masonry, stucco, wood, fiber cement siding, wood shingle, wood siding, cultured stone, or similar materials.
2. Buildings and sites should be designed to emphasize pedestrian orientation. A coordinated pedestrian system should be provided throughout the development including connections between uses on the site, in between the site, adjacent properties, and rights-of-way where appropriate.
3. Circulation systems should be designed to efficiently facilitate traffic flow, yet designed to discourage speeds in volumes that impede pedestrian activity and safety. Common or shared access points are encouraged.
4. Adequate parking should be provided, but excessive parking is discouraged.
5. The visual impacts of parking should be minimized through the use of interior landscape islands, and through dividing parking areas into groupings. The edges of parking lots should be screened through landscaping or other methods.
6. The location of service areas and mechanical equipment should be considered as part of the overall site design. Service areas and mechanical equipment should be screened from public view. Service areas and dumpster pad areas should be limited to daytime operation hours only.
7. A master sign plan should be prepared illustrating the location, type, size, and material of signage.
8. Lighting should be designed to avoid spill over onto adjacent properties, including the use of cut off shields or similar features.
9. In the Mixed-Use Downtown category, uses and development should be guided by the Main Street Gainesville Program. Residential units located above retail are encouraged.
10. In the Mixed-Use Midtown category, uses and development should be guided by the **Midtown Redevelopment Plan** adopted by the City of Gainesville.

Public/Institutional

Public/Institutional includes areas containing or planned for public and institutional uses including governmental, educational and medical facilities, houses of worship, and similar institutional facilities. Specific areas are not identified for most future institutional uses, but appropriate criteria for their location are specified in other land use designations. Once institutional uses are established, extra care should be used to insure that surrounding development is compatible with the institutional uses function.

Public/Institutional Development Policies:

1. Institutional uses should be located at a significant intersection along a collector street or arterial street, easily accessible from the area it is intended to serve.
2. Adequate landscape buffering should be provided adjacent to any residential areas.
3. Building design should be compatible with surrounding residential areas with regards to materials, building scale, building massing, and relationships to streets.
4. Parking facilities should be carefully designed to minimize visual impacts on surrounding residential areas and on the neighborhood as a whole.

Transportation/Communications/Utilities

Transportation/Communications/Utilities include areas containing or planned for major transportation, utilities, or communications facilities.

Parks/Recreation/Conservation

Parks/Recreation/Conservation include areas containing or planned for parks and recreation facilities permanently designated open space, and conservation areas, including buffers along waterways and other environmental features.

MISCELLANEOUS DEVELOPMENT POLICES

Conservation Subdivision

While conservation subdivisions are often viewed as options in rural areas, there may be opportunities for such uses in suburban areas that are annexed into the City in the future. Unlike conventional suburban residential subdivisions, which typically consume an entire development parcel, conservation subdivisions rearrange and cluster housing lots and roadways to set aside a substantial amount of property as permanently protected, quality open space. This open space is retained in perpetuity as green ways, trails, woodlands, pastures, or other uses that maintain scenic character, protect environmental features, and contribute to the quality of life for residents. When properly planned, open space and conservation developments can become part of an interconnected regional open space network.

Benefits of conservation subdivisions include the ability to:

- Preserve open space, particularly environmentally sensitive areas, while yielding the same or more development potential on a piece of land, resulting in no loss of tax revenue.

- Use less linear feet of roads, water lines, and sewers (if available) to serve the same number of homes, resulting in lower development costs for the developer, and lower maintenance costs.
- Preserve rural character (which can be valuable even in suburban areas) by protecting significant views and setting development off of existing rural roads.
- Allow residents a lower density neighborhood feel without having to personally maintain a large lot.
- Allow continued agricultural use of much of the common open space while still getting development value from property.
- Design subdivisions to provide the best views, best building sites, and best soils for septic systems, because less suitable land can be left as open space.

Conservation Subdivision Development Policies:

1. Conservation subdivisions are encouraged in the suburban land use categories, subject to the development policies.
2. Flexible design that maximizes open space preservation should be promoted within the overall density constraints. A wide range of lot dimensions is possible based upon net density/yield rather than minimum lot size/width.
3. Open space should be designed to form an interconnected network, with provisions for linkages to existing or potential open space on adjoining properties. Where dedicated open space exists on an adjacent parcel, the lots should be situated such that the open space areas connect with similar areas on adjacent parcels.
4. Specific design requirements such as project layout, clustering, amount and configuration of open space, road design, private road considerations, setbacks and buffers, and landscaping should be implemented through the land development regulations.
5. Environmental considerations such as flood plains, slopes, soils, and others should be incorporated within the development standards.
6. A variety of tools can be appropriate to ensure permanent protection of open space, such as conservation easements, deed restrictions, homeowner associations, and dedication to public entities and land trusts.
7. Lots should be situated in locations least likely to block scenic vistas or views as seen from public roadways. The view of the developments from the public right-of-way should be minimized through buffering or through the use of existing topography and vegetation or the creation of such with grading and landscaping.

Gateway Corridors

One of the key goals established in this planning process is the improvement of community quality, especially in the form of improved development quality. The perceived quality of new growth and development is an important element of community character and livability. An important element of quality of growth is the recognition of the importance of community “gateways”. Gateways refer to key points of entry into a community. In the case of Gainesville, there are several gateway corridors that are important both from a functional transportation and a symbolic perspective. These include:

- Browns Bridge Road and Atlanta Highway from the west;
- Thompson Bridge Road from the northwest;
- Cleveland Highway from the north;
- E.E. Butler Parkway from I-985 to the east; and
- Queen City Parkway from I-985 to the southeast.

Gateway Corridors Development Policies

1. The City recognizes the importance of gateway corridors, both from a functional and symbolic perspective.
2. The functional needs of the corridors include both efficiency and safety of traffic flow.
3. The symbolic importance of the corridors means that the design quality of new development should be held to a high standard. Site plan standards should be designed to create a quality of development befitting a “front door” into the community.
4. The design quality of the public realm must also be held to a high standard. The aesthetic appearance of the corridors should be improved through streetscape improvements.
5. The City will explore incentives that encourage the coordinated development or redevelopment of multiple parcels of property in order to discourage a piecemeal appearance.

City of Gainesville Annexation Areas

Through the joint planning process of the City and County in this plan, the land uses in most areas of future annexation by the City have been agreed to by both jurisdictions. Over the years, voluntary annexation of land into the City of Gainesville has created small pockets of County land that are surrounded by or significantly influenced by lands within the City limits. While this situation can happen along any boundary, City and unincorporated areas are particularly intermingled along the southern and western edges of Gainesville. Because of the potential for infill and redevelopment, and fine grain of uses in many of these areas, well conceived projects may be proposed for annexation that are not in specific conformance with the land use designation for that area. In order to protect the interests of area residents and landowners, while allowing for some flexibility in such situations, specific policies are offered to help manage such requests.

Annexation Policies:

1. Where an annexation request is made in clear non-conformance with the County land use designation for the property, the City and County staffs will work together to try and develop a program to make the proposal compatible with City and County development goals prior to formal submittal of the application for County Land Use review.
2. When the area proposed to be annexed is surrounded by City land and no impact on County territory is identified, it is the intent of the County to defer to the City on land use impact related issues, excluding instances subject to extraordinary circumstances that dictate otherwise.

In addition to the Future Land Use Plan for the City, there are additional planning elements with goals and policies that will influence the future of the City. The elements are summarized in the following sections of this document and additional information can be found in the complete plan element as part of the Gainesville Hall County Comprehensive Plan.