

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2025

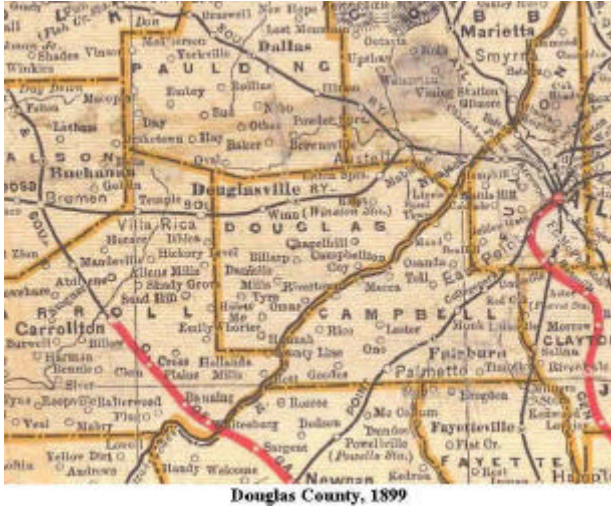
Comprehensive Plan Elements:

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



Douglas County Comprehensive Plan 2004 to 2025

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Douglas County, 1899



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Introduction

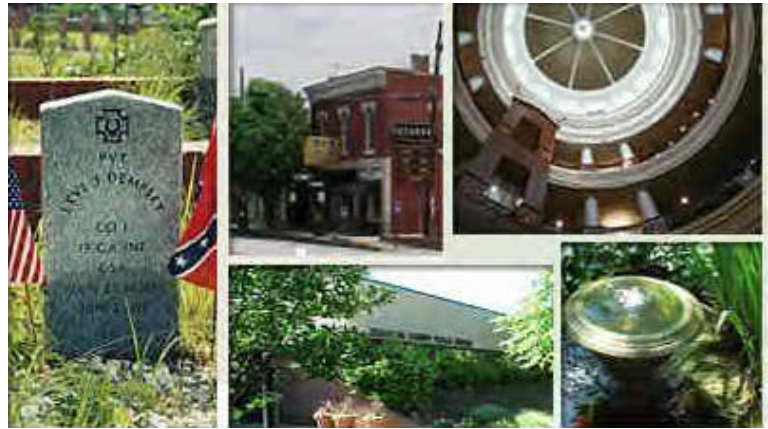
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1. Introduction

■ Overview of the Plan

The Douglas Comprehensive Plan is a long-range plan for guiding growth and development in the County for the next twenty years. The overall goal of the plan is to accommodate growth in a timely, orderly, and efficient arrangement of land uses, public facilities, infrastructure and services that meet the needs of the present and future residents and businesses of Douglas.



The County has been on the forefront of planning for over two decades. The original Comprehensive Plan for the County was developed in 1994. Since that time the County has experienced an extraordinary amount of growth and development activity. Since the last update, numerous small area-planning studies have been completed to address specific area issues. These studies, along with input from other agencies and the public have been incorporated into this 10th year Update.

This update has been undertaken for several reasons. During the last 6 years the County has once again experienced explosive growth, and therefore population and employment projections are greater than projected in the 1994 plan. Only eleven years remain in the last plan's planning horizon—2014. Thus, this 10th year update brings the database up to the 2000 benchmark, and extends the planning horizon to 2025.

■ Public Participation

Utilization of typical and non-typical public participation tools were used extensively during this 18-month update process to gain feedback from the public regarding the 10th year update. The Public Involvement Plan (PIP) used innovative mixed media, such as stakeholder meetings, facilitated public meetings, brochures, citizens surveys, email blast lists, county wide mailings and web access to enhance the public's involvement in the process, and to reach as many citizens and businesses as possible. Full documentation of the process can be reviewed in the "Comprehensive Plan 2025 Public Involvement Plan (PIP)".

Public meetings were held as follows:

Kick-off Public Hearing, January 2003

District Meetings (5), October 2003;

Board of Commissioners/Planning Commission all day Workshop-October 2003;

Stakeholder Meetings—twice monthly September 2003 through May 2004;
Board of Commissioners/Planning Commission all day Workshop—May 2004;
District Meetings (6), June 2004; and
Transmittal Public Hearing, July 2004

District Meetings

The County held two sets of district meetings. The first set of 5 meetings was held in the beginning of the process throughout the county in October of 2003. These meetings focused on the initial vision statement, goals and objectives, assessment of each plan element and initial issues, concerns and general citizen comments. Survey sheets were distributed and written comments were recorded from these meetings. These original meetings formed the basis for a revised vision statement, current issues and general goals for the County.

The second set of 6 District meetings were held in June 2004 throughout the County. These meetings focused on the actual plan document, including the community vision, goals & objectives, guiding principles and the actual Future Land Use Plan map. Again a written comment form was distributed and written comments were recorded.

Stakeholder Committee

In order ensure that all aspects of the citizens and business of the County were represented in the creation of this plan, a 45 member Stakeholder Committee was appointed by the Board of Commissioners representing the diverse interests of the county, such as long time residents, new residents, builders, developers, environmentalists, an historian, business owners, and agencies heads.

This committee met twice monthly from September through May to review and make comments to both the Unified Development Code (UDC) and the Comprehensive Plan. They also received educational briefings from the City of Douglasville, the School Board, The Water and Sewer Authority and the County Commission. Their participation formed the background of this Plan Update.

■ Growth Management Desires

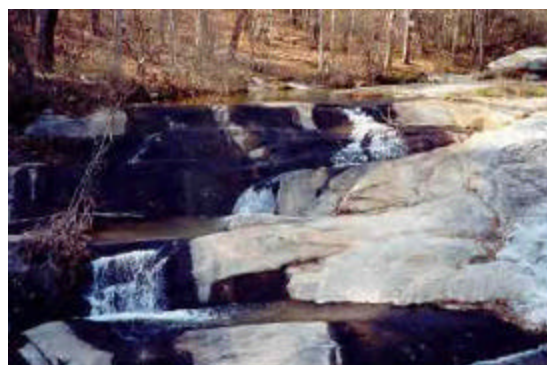
During the public review process and planning process several major theses emerged that were incorporated into this plan. These themes were consolidated into for areas as follows:

Quality Growth

Douglas County’s “small town” feel should not be sacrificed as the County grows.

Economic and fiscal benefits should be maximized, and the negative aspects of growth should be minimized (traffic, environmental).

The quality of new development should be significantly improved. High standards for residential and commercial development quality should be implemented and enforced



– i.e. land use compatibility, landscaping, signage, lighting, access management, traffic impact, and environmental impact.

The protection of natural resources and the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas should be a priority. Bear Creek and Dog River Basins need to be protected and enhanced.

Lower “gross” densities should be preserved in the environmentally sensitive areas of the Dog River and Bear Creek Basins. Innovative development techniques that support “smart growth” such as master planned and open space developments should be encouraged.

Efficient Growth

Growth should be managed on the basis of available or planned public services and infrastructure. Infrastructure should be planned according to desired land use patterns on the future land use plan map and not simply in reaction to market forces.

Public investment should be made in areas of more compact development, which therefore would help reduce development pressures in environmentally sensitive areas.

Sewer services should be targeted to areas with commercial and higher density potential as outlined on the future land use plan map.

New development should occur in or around existing and proposed activity areas at densities that promote an efficient utilization of land while being compatible with existing neighborhoods.

Fiscally Sound Growth

There should be an appropriate balance between the growth of housing and business in order to assure long-term fiscal health. Land that is suitable for commercial or industrial uses is a valuable resource that should be discouraged from developing as residential.

The provision of sewer service in areas with potential for commercial, industrial development and higher density residential is a high priority relative to new low-density residential sewer service.

There should be a full and balanced range of housing opportunities provided to avoid an over-concentration of any one housing type such as “starter” housing. A true balance of housing will require more distinction between residential densities and unit types as well as a balance of price points.

Coordinated Growth

Douglas County and its cities should continue to work towards mutually agree upon land uses and provision of services around city boundaries.

Douglas County and its cities should continue to work towards a resolution of annexation issues.

The County and its cities should continue to plan for a coordinated system of Greenspace.

■ The Vision

This plan update has been prepared within the context of an overall vision and a series of guiding principles for the County that emerged during plan development. This vision guides the goals and strategies created under each of the plan elements, as well as overall implementation of the plan's recommendations. The vision is simply stated as:



Douglas County will greet the future, while at the same time preserving its small town feel, its safe and rural environment, its valued historic and natural resources, and the continued creation of a quality built environment, while maintaining and developing a reasonable, balanced tax base.

Results of this vision will be:

Maintenance of the ***small town feel*** and sense of community, while providing exceptional and responsive public services and schools

Managed growth at a ***human scale*** in balance with the ***rural environment***, available Greenspace and existing development.

Development occurring in a ***fair and balanced*** manner guided by ***quality development standards***, resulting in a built environment with pedestrian amenities, a connected street network, and a mix of commercial and residential land uses.

A ***diversity of people and life opportunities***, including a diverse selection of housing and employment opportunities so that residents can stay in the community as their lifestyles change.

A ***cooperative, positive and progressive*** government and community that work to preserve and strengthen those qualities that makes Douglas County unique.



■ Principles Guiding the Land Use Plan

The following is a number of basic planning principles that guide designation of specific uses on specific properties on the Future Land Use map. These are discussed below in preparation for presentation of the Plan itself.

Guiding Principle: Respect and maintain prevailing land use patterns

Because of the availability of water and sewer within the municipalities, land use surrounding the cities is more notably urban in character in contrast to the rural portions of the county. Prevailing land use and zoning patterns are well established by existing development throughout the county and clearly indicate appropriate use of nearby vacant lands. In-fill development is therefore encouraged that would be compatible with surrounding existing development. This guiding principle interacts with the County's policies on corridor and village center development to protect stable residential neighborhoods while encouraging economic development in appropriate locations.



Guiding Principle: Place medium density housing near village centers or integrated into mixed-use developments.



Higher density, such as townhouses, duplexes, lofts, quadplexes and small lot single family housing, fills an economic need for affordable and less-permanent accommodations, and offers an opportunity for transitions in land use intensities between commercial centers and surrounding single-family neighborhoods. Extensive areas that contain over 100 units at high densities can have negative effects, however. To avoid potential negative impacts, this plan disperses high-density developments to small-scattered sites and to mixed-use developments

where appropriate infrastructure can be provided. As a policy, Douglas County intends to encourage medium density housing to be incorporated into mixed-use developments instead of stand-alone projects or within small stand-alone in-fill sites that have access to sewer and water. Attention to site design that will create more livable communities in the future has been included within the Unified Development Code.

Guiding Principle: Coordinate infrastructure and land use

Because of unplanned growth over the last few decades and the limited capacity of current water, sewer and transportation infrastructure, it is extremely important that future land use decisions are coordinated with current and proposed infrastructure to provide the most efficient and cost effective use of the County budget. Character areas are based on existing and proposed availability of major Infrastructure and levels of service.



Infrastructure planning is a two-step process. First, the Future Land Use Plan has taken current and future infrastructure availability into consideration, and therefore has designated higher residential densities, commercial and industrial uses in areas where current services exist or are planned. Secondly, the Future Land Use Map will be used as a guide for planning and programming future infrastructure.

Guiding Principle: Protect Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Douglas County's water supply, tree cover, natural habitats, open space and other environmentally sensitive areas are important to our future. As the region grows and develops it will become increasingly important to accelerate efforts to protect environmentally sensitive areas such as small water supply watersheds, waterway corridors, wetlands, and aquifer recharge areas and other natural areas. The recently proposed Unified Development Code and Greenspace Plan provide strong regulations for the protection of sensitive areas.

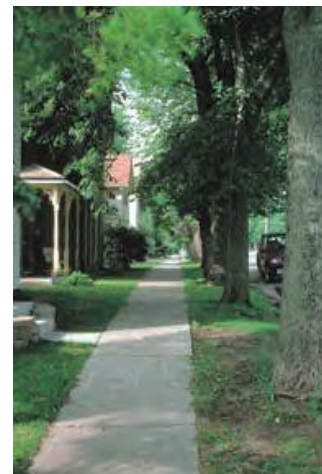


Guiding Principle: Encourage industrial, office and commercial employment opportunities in appropriate locations

Douglas County's industrial and employment areas have excellent access to the State highway system (limiting traffic impacts on county residents) and other infrastructure. Within the non-residential character areas include business parks, office campuses, high tech and research facilities, wholesale companies and showrooms, assembly or fabrication operations, business equipment supply or repair, and distribution facilities for local or regional deliveries. The County should continue to develop and program the appropriate infrastructure to support these uses.

Guiding Principle: Protect the capacity of major thoroughfares through nodal development techniques

New commercial areas should be focused in nodes around major intersections, rather than spread out lineally along roadways. Intervening areas along major thoroughfares between nodes should be developed or planned with residential subdivisions having reverse frontage lots that back up to the thoroughfare. The demand for "big box" development (uses similar to Home Depot, Sam's Warehouse and Target that have a regional draw) should be integrated into character areas, which have been identified along major thoroughfares where traffic accessibility is optimized.



Guiding principle: Connectivity and Linkages

Require linkages between and internal to communities in order to promote the use of alternative modes of transportation and commu-

nity interaction. All new communities built within Douglas County will be built with sidewalks and potentially trail systems that connect residents to amenities within the community and to the larger world outside their community. Non-residential character areas are designed to promote “village” and integrated “centers” that will act as mini “town centers” for the residents of Douglas County.

Guiding Principle: Encourage innovative development techniques

Master Planned Developments, conservation style open space subdivisions, “village commercial centers,” mixed use development and other innovative development techniques are encouraged throughout the County within the recently proposed Unified Development Code, and through the use of Character Areas within this Plan.

Where appropriate to a property's surroundings and infrastructure availability, a mixing of use or housing types may be appropriate, as outlined in the Unified Development Code. Mixed-use development allows compatible land uses, such as shops, offices, and housing, to locate closer together and thus decreases travel distances between them. Mixed-use developments should be at an appropriate scale for the location.



Guiding Principle: Encourage redevelopment of obsolete, transitional or economically deteriorating areas

Obsolete or heavily impacted areas can devolve into slums unless viable alternatives are available that can generate economically sound reuse of the area. Transitional residential areas (such as those impacted by major transportation improvements) have been designated as a transitional corridor in order to encourage their transition or redevelopment to appropriate uses that will not disrupt the fabric of the neighborhood or the county. To prevent further deterioration in the future, all new subdivisions are required to have reverse frontage and adequate buffers along all arterials, or roads planned for expansion.



This principle also has specific and unique application to suburban-style commercial developments that are being passed over by retailers seeking more modern facilities or better competitive locations, discussed below. Older commercial areas should also be upgraded coordinated and protected and redeveloped along the “Main Street” village design concept. An important strategy to encourage redevelopment over excessive expansion is to discourage any new commercial rezoning that is not consistent with the Land Use Plan Map, particularly for non-neighborhood type commercial nodes and corridors.

■ Interjurisdictional Cooperation

One of the keys to the success of the comprehensive planning process in Douglas County stems from the cooperative effort between the County, the region, the State, the Cities of Douglasville and Villa Rica, and other active agencies within the county. An outline of this process is more fully described within the “Intergovernmental Coordination Element” of this plan.

Consistency

In taking on the major task of rewriting both its Comprehensive Plan and creating a UDC, the county wished to achieve consistency between various ordinances, and between ordinances and comprehensive plan goals and objectives. This joint effort looked at current development patterns and rates of growth, and investigated methods to achieve a balance between the natural and built environment of the county. Overall goals of the Regional Development Policies (RDP) and Community Quality Objectives (CQO) were incorporated into the plan and implementation tools created within the UDO. In addition, the timing, location and planning of capital facilities was reviewed in terms of expected land use patterns.

Regional Development Policies

Within a regional context, the County realized that its current plan utilized traditional comprehensive and land use methods and was inconsistent with ARC's Regional Development Plan Policies. During the RDP Update in 2002 it became apparent that a major rewrite of both its comprehensive plan and development ordinances was necessary. ARC RDP Policies formed the foundation for many of the guiding principles and goals and objectives used to develop policy within the county.

In proceeding with the rewrite of both the Comprehensive Plan and its development ordinances, the county seeks to achieve several major goals that relate to the intent of ARC's Regional Development Policies:

Provide development strategies and infrastructure investments to efficiently accommodate forecasted population and employment growth.

A land demand analysis was performed to verify required land uses to meet the needs of forecasted population and employment growth for the County over the next 20 years. The Future Land Use Plan Map was created using existing and planned infrastructure and the land demand analysis to ensure that residential, commercial and industrial land was available to meet these needs.

Guide an increased share of new development to the Central Business District, transportation corridors, activity centers and town centers.

Douglas County does not have a central business district so this would not apply to the County, although land use character areas have been designed to require non-residential development to be concentrated within "villages" and "centers." New requirements within the newly adopted UDC and quality standards within this Plan also encourage more "community" type development.

A main objective of this plan was to review the existing development within the county, and to determine appropriate and best uses of land for the future. A feature that the county would like to explore is mixed use development and revitalization within aging corridors. There are several areas within the county, such as Thornton Road and Bankhead Highway that present potential redevelopment opportunities. The plan and related ordinances looks at the use of innovative techniques that encourage self-supporting mixed-use communities that are less dependent on the automobile for minor trips.

Increase opportunities for mixed-use development, infill and redevelopment.

The previous comprehensive plan and development ordinances were based upon historic land use planning techniques. Unfortunately most of these techniques encourage separation of uses

and the promotion of the automobile. One of the primary objectives during this update was to examine various innovative land use practices, such as mixed-use centers, traditional neighborhood development and village centers. The comprehensive plan sets the tone for innovation, while the UDC provides regulations in order to implement this goal.

This Plan includes several categories that specifically allow mixed uses, such as the transitional corridor and mixed-use corridor. In addition, all villages and centers allow and encourage the mixing of uses and the formation of mini “town centers.” Master Planned Developments were created within the new UDC that allows a non-residential and residential mix within all new zoning districts.

Increase transportation choices and transit-oriented development (TOD).

Douglas County is very committed to promoting alternative modes of transportation. The Douglas County Ride Share Department has been very active in organizing vanpool routes, implementing and staffing a multi-modal facility, and converting municipal vehicles to natural gas. This organization will continue to market and promote ridesharing to residents through its involvement in the regional organizations such as with GRTA and ARC, and participation in the Clean Air Campaign & Commute Connections.

The transportation element included transit and non-motorized transportation. The new UDC requires that all newly created public streets have sidewalks to provide pedestrian connections. Linkages, both internal and external are required within all villages and centers. Through this plan and related ordinances the County is encouraging land use patterns that coordinate transportation accessibility and provide linkages.

Additional transportation choices will be more fully addressed in the proposed Comprehensive Transportation Plan in 2005-2006.

Provide a variety of housing choices throughout the region.

An intense analysis of housing needs was completed as part of the Housing Element of this Plan. Based on these findings, the County provided for varied housing types as outlined within that Element. In addition, the City of Douglasville provides a wide variety of housing types for Douglas County residents.

Preserve and enhance the stability of existing residential neighborhoods.

Appropriate land use transitions, buffers, landscaping and tree preservation and site design were all included within this Plan. Character areas and land use locations were specifically designed to protect existing neighborhoods.

Advance sustainable Greenfield development.

Master Planned and Open Space subdivisions were introduced within the new UDC. These development options were streamlined and will be highly encouraged within the County.

Protect environmentally sensitive areas.

The County goes beyond the State’s recommended minimums in terms of stream buffers and local permitting of non-jurisdictional wetlands. A Watershed Protection Overlay within the Dog River Basin and portions of the Bear Creek Basins was created within the new UDC to address this environmentally sensitive area that the County gets their drinking water.

Create a regional network of Greenspace that connects across jurisdictional boundaries.

The County is actively working with the Chattahoochee Hill County alliance to develop a multi-county greenway and trail system, and has set up several subcommittees to define property acquisition and locational needs.

Preserve existing rural character.

Preserving the exiting rural character and small town feel of Douglas County is the overriding theme of the County’s Vision, Guiding Principles and Goals and Objectives. The “Rural Places” character area was designed to achieve this objective, in addition to encouraging master planned developments throughout the county.

Quality Community Objectives

The primarily goal within the New Minimum Standards is to promote coordinated and comprehensive planning between a community and its municipalities, a community and its regional and a community and the overall state goals and priorities. To further this goal, DCA developed and adopted “Quality Community Objectives” within each plan element as a refinement of the interim statewide goals. The Quality Community Objectives must be considered in the planning process undertaken by each local government. Goals developed in local government plans shall be consistent with these initial statewide goals. The Douglas County Comprehensive Plan has incorporated these Quality Community Objectives throughout this plan.

■ **The Planning Process**

Georgia’s Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures require that all local government Comprehensive Plans follow a specific planning process in their development. This process consists of the following three steps, as described by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The results of these steps are interwoven into the plan elements that follow.

Step 1: Inventory and Assessment

In order to plan for the future, a community must know about its existing conditions. This step answers the questions “what do we have as a community?” and “What is good or bad about our community?” Once completed, this step provides a picture of the existing conditions within a community.

Step 2: Statement of Needs and Goals

Based upon the inventory and assessment, existing community needs are identified and goals for future growth and development are prepared. These goals provide guidance for the community and the framework from which detailed policies and recommendations are developed. This step of the planning process answers the question “where do we want to go?”

Step 3: Implementation Strategy

This step combines all of the plan’s recommendations and describes how they will be implemented. This step answers the question “How are we going to get there?” The Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures also require that a Short-Term Work Program be prepared as part of the Implementation Strategy. The Short-Term Work Program is a listing of specific actions that a local government

anticipates taking over the next five years to implement its plan. The Implementation Strategy and its Short-Term Work Program is to ensure that the plan will become a working tool which will be used to guide decision-making rather than being just another unused report on the shelf.

Two major fundamentals of the new DCA minimum standards are the incorporation of active public participation throughout the process and increased interjurisdictional cooperation. How the County achieved these state goals was outlined earlier.

■ Plan Elements

The basic planning process is applied to each of the planning elements required in the State's Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures. The following briefly describes the elements of Douglas's Comprehensive Plan—2025.

Population

This element provides the foundation for the plan. In order to plan for the future, the County must have a general idea of approximately how many people to plan for. The Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures require that all local plans contain an analysis of historical population, estimated population and projected population. Only Step 1, Inventory and Assessment, of the planning process is applied to the Population element.

Economic Development

This element provides an inventory and assessment of the County's economic base and its labor force. An analysis of the past trends of the County's economic base and its labor force, as well as an analysis of regional comparisons in these areas, will provide insight into the County's economic health. An understanding of the County's economy is necessary in order to develop goals and strategies for the County's future economic development.

Housing

This element provides an inventory and assessment of the County's housing. The inventory includes the age, type, condition, and location of housing units within the County. Based upon population projections, a rough estimate of the number of additional housing units needed to house the County's future population can be made. Goals and strategies are developed to address existing needs and the future provision of housing in the community.

Natural Resources

This element provides an inventory and assessment of the County's natural features (topography, wetlands, prime agricultural and forest land, plant and animal habitats, etc.) and water features. Goals, objectives, and policies are developed to address the impact that future population growth and its related development could have on these resources, as well as what role they could play in economic development.

Historic and Cultural Resources

This element provides an inventory of historic resources and cultural resources, such as historic homes, landmark buildings, and archeological resources. Goals, objectives, and policies are developed to address the impact that future population growth and its related development could have on these resources, as well as what role they could play in economic development.

Community Facilities and Services

This element provides an inventory and assessment of the various services that are provided by the County, Fulton County or others. Existing needs are identified. The impact of future population growth on public services such as police protection, water and sewer service, schools, and garbage disposal is addressed. Goals and strategies are developed to address the future provision of community facilities. This element formed a major foundation for the Future Land Use Plan Map to determine land use and infrastructure concurrency.

Transportation

Although roads, transit, sidewalks and bikeways are technically “community facilities,” their importance is recognized as a separate element of the plan. Extensive inventories, capacity analyses and Level of Service assessment were performed to assess the quality of the existing network. Existing needs and the improvements needed to serve future growth are identified, leading to goals and strategies for future system expansion. The County considers the work done to complete this element as Phase I of a Comprehensive Transportation Plan that will begin in 2005.

Intergovernmental Cooperation

This element provides an inventory and assessment of intergovernmental coordination mechanisms, and identifies binding document and process that the county follows.

Land Use

This element provides an inventory and assessment of how land is used in the County. The estimated acreage of each land use type is calculated and projections are made of the amount of land required for each land use type. Goals and strategies are developed to address existing land use problems and to address how the County’s land should be used in future years.

Implementation

This element provides a wrap up to the entire comprehensive plan, and the ways in which the plan will be implemented. A listing of implementation tools, goals and strategies and how to manage the plan are included in this element, in addition to an updated 5 Year Short Term Work Program and Accomplishments Report.

2. _____ Population

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2. Population

■ Introduction

This chapter provides basic information about Douglas County’s residents, including trends over the past several decades, the population’s characteristics as of 2000, and forecasts of the future. When combined with development opportunities and constraints contained in the Historic and Natural Resources Chapter, this Chapter provides a basis for the Community Facilities, Housing and Land Use Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. Future population and household data, along with future employment forecasts contained in the Economic Development Chapter, help determine demand for housing and employment opportunities, infrastructure improvements, and land development patterns that are consistent with the goals and policies established in the other Chapter of the Plan.

Located 28 miles west of downtown Atlanta, for the past decade Douglas County has been increasing in population and housing growth. Growth in the southwestern portion of the Region will continue and Douglas County will share in this continued pace of development, particularly as growth appears to be shifting from the central portions of the region to the more rural counties to the southwest and north. The demography of this growth in terms of population and household characteristics is discussed below.

■ Population and Household Trends and Forecasts

Between 1980 and 2000, the population of Douglas County almost doubled from 54,570 persons to 92,174 persons. Historically, the population growth during each decade between 1980 and 2000 was fairly consistent at approximately 30 percent per decade. Although numerically population growth was higher in the unincorporated County areas between 1990 and 2000, overall population increase was the highest in the incorporated cities, with the population in the cities increasing by 72 percent, as compared to a 21 percent increase in the population of the unincorporated area.

Year	Total County	Unincorporated County	Incorporated Areas
1980	54,886	45,730	9,156
1985	62,270	51,882	10,388
1990	71,120	59,256	11,864
1995	78,642	63,436	15,206
2000	92,174	71,717	20,457
2008	124,698	93,032	31,666
2009	129,766	96,367	33,399
2010	135,089	99,855	35,234
2015	164,832	119,572	45,260
2020	200,054	143,087	56,967
2025	240,758	170,398	70,360
Total population for 1980 and 1985 from Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.; unincorporated population for 1980 and 1985 based on observed percentage for 1990.			

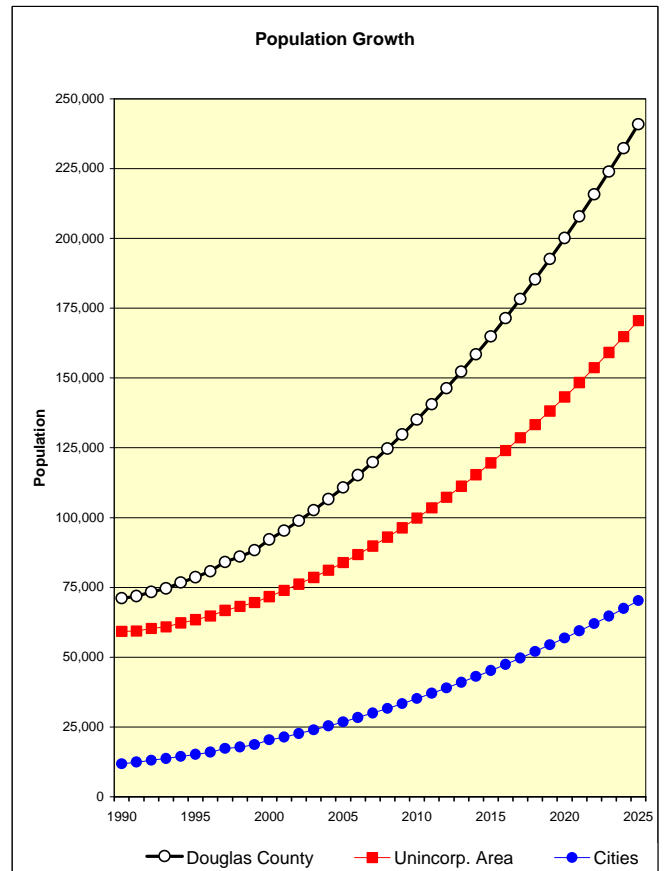
Table 2			
Households			
Historic, Current and Future Forecasted			
Year	Total County	Unincorporated County	Incorporated Areas
1980	21,742		
1985			
1990	29,633		
1995			
2000	32,822	25,383	7,439
2005	40,160	30,228	9,932
Figures for the years 1980, 1990 and 2000 taken from the U.S. Census.			

Based on commuting patterns, it is estimated that daytime population in the County is lower than the base population. Of the 46,176 employed persons in the County, only 16,924 remain in the County during the day. The remaining 29,252 persons residing in Douglas County commute to jobs in surrounding counties or out of state. An additional 15,491 persons who live in another county are estimated to commute into the County for employment, resulting in a daytime population which is 13,761 persons lower than the residential population.

The number of households doubled between 1980 and 2000 reflecting

the population increase combined with increasing household sizes. The past trends in household growth for the unincorporated County and incorporated areas from 1980 to 2000, and forecasts to 2025 beyond. As seen in Table 2-1, population and housing growth between 1995 and 2000 continues the consistent rate of increase established during the past 2 decades, but at a slightly higher pace. This same period of the 1990s has seen an increase in average household size, particularly in the unincorporated County areas.

Population forecasts were made for the County based on historic trends and second and third order regressions. Regressions were carried out on a ten-year and thirty-year base. From the resulting projections, the forecasts that had the highest likelihood, based on a comparison of regressions as well as the thirty-year base, were selected. Annual future growth was allocated to areas of the county based on census tract data, including land suitability and availability.



Year	Total County	Unincorporated County	Incorporated Areas
1980	2.51		
1985			
1990	2.40		
1995			
2000	2.78	2.81	2.67
2005	2.73	2.76	2.63
Figures for the years 1980, 1990 and 2000 taken from the U.S. Census.			

Population on a countywide basis is forecast to almost triple by 2025, from 92,174 in 2000 to 240,758. Population is expected to increase to 170,398 in the unincorporated area and 70,360 in the cities by the year 2025. Although population within the unincorporated areas of the county will continue to grow and more than double, and numerically continues to hold the majority of the population, the incorporated cities are expected to proportionally capture an even greater percentage of the total county population, more than tripling their current population. Household size within the County is projected to slightly decrease between 2000 and 2025, from 2.78 to 2.72. Similarly, the

household size in the incorporated areas (including Douglasville and portions of Villa Rica and Austell), which are smaller than in the unincorporated County, are projected to decrease slightly in the future. The trend of larger households in the unincorporated County is forecast to continue through 2025, with the overall household size reducing slightly to 2.77 persons per household.

■ Comparison in Rates of Growth

The unincorporated portions of Douglas County have outpaced the State of Georgia in its rate of growth in every five-year increment since 1980, except for the period between 1990 and 1995. Unincorporated Douglas County experienced a fairly constant rate of growth between 1980 and 1990, which was approximately 150% of the State growth rate. Growth is anticipated to increase between 2004 and 2010 on an average of 3.36% to 3.59% per year, which is over 250% of the growth rate projected for the State. Between 2010 and 2025, the

County and State					
Year	Unincorporated County	Growth Rate*	State Population**	Growth Rate*	County Rate as % of State Rate
1980	45,730		5,484,436		
1985	51,882	13.45%	5,962,716	8.72%	154.27%
1990	59,256	14.21%	6,512,602	9.22%	154.11%
1995	63,436	7.05%	7,328,413	12.53%	56.31%
2000	71,717	13.05%	8,234,373	12.36%	105.60%
2008	93,032	3.54%	9,202,394	1.27%	279.55%
2009	96,367	3.59%	9,316,015	1.23%	290.41%
2010	99,855	18.97%	9,430,937	6.44%	294.32%
2015	119,572	19.75%	10,024,612	6.29%	313.67%
2020	143,087	19.67%	10,636,675	6.11%	322.09%
2025	170,398	19.09%	11,273,522	5.99%	318.80%
*Growth rate is for five-year intervals except for the years 2005 through 2009.					
**State population is from Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.					

growth rate is anticipated to exceed that of the previous years, at around 19%, which is approximately 300% that of the State.

The development and growth outlook are positive for Douglas, growth is expected to increase at a faster rate than was experienced during the 1980-2000 years, as land prices in the surrounding, more urban counties continues to climb as developable land becomes more scarce. Reflecting this growth trend, Douglas’s population will continue to grow during the 25-year period at a higher rate than the State.

In order to compare the future rate of growth in Douglas to its neighboring jurisdictions, forecasts for the other jurisdictions were obtained from the Department of Community Affairs Plan Builder (DCA). The methodology used by DCA for execution of the forecasts for the counties may take into account different variables than the methodology used in the above tables to forecast the population and household information for Douglas County. However, although the forecast is significantly lower than that presented in Table 1-1, for purposes of consistency within the above comparison table, the population forecast information for Douglas County reflects the methodology used by DCA, not the forecast methodology presented in Table 1-1. As a result, general comparisons in terms of rates of growth will be discussed, as opposed to actual population numbers.

Douglas County is located in the middle of the area that comprises the western and southern portion of the Atlanta Region - Henry, Fayette, Rockdale and Clayton counties, and Paulding County (outside of the ARC region). Table 5 shows the forecast population growth in the ARC region’s southern, central and northern counties. Compared to the region as a whole, Douglas County is

Table 5						
Population Growth						
Douglas County and the Atlanta Region						
						% Increase
County	1990	2000	2010	2020	2025	2000-2025
Cherokee	91,393	143,232	191,579	240,922	266,340	86.0%
Cobb	450,812	612,150	771,011	935,128	1,019,940	66.6%
Gwinnett	356,609	594,742	756,999	924,138	1,010,520	69.9%
Fulton	649,309	820,788	867,960	924,918	956,717	16.6%
DeKalb	548,227	669,306	714,858	768,326	797,766	19.2%
Henry	59,892	120,863	159,268	198,561	218,813	81.0%
Rockdale	56,648	70,533	91,455	112,928	124,000	75.8%
Paulding	42,028	82,716	110,331	138,531	153,014	85.0%
Source: Woods and Poole						
*Region is 10-county ARC region, plus Paulding County.						

expected to grow at a rate slightly higher that of the region as a whole, and over the next ten years is expected to be a moderate growth area within the region. DeKalb, Fulton and Clayton counties are forecast to have significantly lower rates of increase; Cobb and Gwinnett counties are forecast to

have comparable rates of increase; and Cherokee, Paulding, Fayette, Rockdale and Henry counties are forecast with higher rates of increase.

■ Age Distribution

Age distribution trends for the years 1980 to 2000 show that the age cohorts of 0-24 and 25 to 44 have contained the majority of residents of Douglas County. In 1980 the population under 45 was 77.9%; in 2000 it had decreased slightly to 69.9%. From 1980 to 2000 a proportional decrease has been seen in the 0 to 24 cohort from 45.0% of the population to 36.5%. Over the same time period, very minor increases are seen in the 25 to 44 age cohort from 33.0% in 1980 to 33.3% in 2000. While the elderly increased in number between 1980 and 2000, the proportion of the population above 65 has increased only from 6.3% to 7.5%. The age cohort with the greatest proportional increase between 1980 and 2000 is the 45 to 64 age cohort, reflecting either an aging of families already residing in the County, or an in-migration of families during the 1980s and 1990s.

Age distribution projections, shown on Table 6, indicate the natural aging of the population over the coming 20 years with slight decreases in the lower age cohorts and slight increases in the older cohorts. Although Douglas County's population under the age of 45 will continue to dominate, the projections show that in 2025 this age group will comprise 59.2% of the population, as opposed to 69.9% of the population currently. By 2025, the "middle age" cohort is anticipated to have increased from 22.6% to 24.6% of the population, while the over 65 age cohort is forecast to comprise 16.2%

Age Group	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
<5 years	8.68%	8.45%	8.05%	7.88%	7.32%	7.03%	7.08%	7.10%	7.01%	6.98%
5 to 9	9.62%	8.27%	7.83%	7.76%	7.80%	7.12%	6.87%	6.97%	7.02%	6.95%
10 to 14	9.97%	8.44%	7.90%	7.87%	7.91%	7.59%	7.00%	6.81%	6.93%	7.00%
15 to 19	9.13%	8.10%	7.67%	7.18%	7.22%	7.27%	7.02%	6.57%	6.45%	6.61%
20 to 24	7.60%	7.98%	7.50%	6.80%	6.31%	6.68%	6.82%	6.64%	6.28%	6.23%
25 to 29	8.98%	9.57%	9.01%	7.77%	7.20%	6.45%	6.50%	6.61%	6.48%	6.18%
50 to 54	4.30%	4.29%	4.73%	5.77%	6.82%	6.91%	7.28%	7.50%	6.65%	6.06%
55 to 59	3.52%	3.71%	3.70%	3.94%	4.88%	6.23%	6.42%	6.81%	7.07%	6.30%
60 to 64	2.84%	3.13%	3.04%	2.99%	3.35%	4.38%	5.49%	5.68%	6.03%	6.30%
65 to 69	2.30%	2.38%	2.45%	2.40%	2.46%	2.89%	3.83%	4.83%	5.04%	5.38%
70 to 74	1.74%	1.81%	1.81%	1.85%	2.00%	2.04%	2.41%	3.22%	4.11%	4.32%
75 to 79	1.20%	1.30%	1.36%	1.39%	1.42%	1.66%	1.70%	2.04%	2.76%	3.54%
80 to 84	0.61%	0.70%	0.79%	0.87%	0.92%	0.98%	1.16%	1.21%	1.47%	2.01%
> 84 years	0.48%	0.54%	0.58%	0.66%	0.74%	0.83%	0.97%	1.00%	0.92%	0.95%

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

of the population. When combined, the increase indicates an aging of the population.

Within individual categories, the projections suggest a continuing proportional decrease in school-aged children (5 to 14) a decrease in young adults (15 to 29), and a decrease in family age adults (30

to 45) while Douglas’s population continues to move into advanced middle age (45 to 65). Some of the County’s families will stay and grow older, their children themselves moving into adulthood and moving away from home, while other families will defer having children until later in life..

The actual number of elementary/middle school aged children is expected to increase by almost 50% over the coming twenty years. At the other end of the spectrum, Douglas County is not viewed as a “retirement community,” although a greater number of older residents are expected to call Douglas County home in the future. This is due in part to the lower cost of housing in the County as compared to other areas of the ARC region. In addition, many older people are attracted and will continue to be attracted to the County in order to relocate close to their grandchildren and other family members.

A comparison to the age distribution for the State of Georgia and the ARC region in 2000 helps illustrate the population characteristics of Douglas County. The chart shows the percentage of the population in Douglas County, the ARC region and the State by age category (from Table 2). Douglas County clearly has a higher proportion of school age children than the State overall, and a slightly lower proportion of adults in the “traditional family” ages—25 to 44. On the other hand, the “middle age” groups (45 to 64) are overrepresented in Douglas County compared to the State and ARC region. The County has a slightly higher proportional representation of the elderly than the ARC region, but is well below that of the State.

Age Group	County	Region*	State	County as % of	
				Region*	State
0-4	7.31%	7.37%	7.27%	99.12%	100.51%
5-14	15.75%	14.88%	14.94%	105.81%	105.37%
15-19	7.23%	6.81%	7.28%	106.09%	99.26%
30-34	8.34%	9.08%	8.03%	91.85%	103.78%
35-44	17.86%	17.96%	16.53%	99.45%	108.00%
45-54	14.24%	13.61%	13.19%	104.69%	107.97%
55-64	8.20%	7.16%	8.08%	114.48%	101.50%
65+	7.55%	7.27%	9.59%	103.77%	78.70%

Source: Year 2000 U.S. Census. County figures are for all of Douglas County.
*Region is 10-county ARC region.

■ Racial Composition

Racial composition trends in Douglas County suggest a clear proportional decrease in the White population between the years 1990 and 2000 from 91.3% to 78.9%, and clear increases in the Black racial categories. During the 1990s, while total population increased by almost 30%, the Black or African American population more than doubled its proportion of the population from 7.9% to 19.4%. Simultaneously, people of the Asian and Pacific Islander races grew proportionally from less than 1% in 1990 to 1.4% of the population in 2000. The racial categories were modified somewhat for the 2000 Census, allowing people to select either a single racial category (such as “White” or “Black,” etc.) or a combination of two or more racial categories to more accurately reflect their heritage. Persons of Hispanic descent are counted in one of the primary race classifications, such as white or black. The proportion of persons in the County classifying themselves as of Hispanic origin

is increasing slowly, yet almost tripled over the past decade, from only 1.05% in 1990 to 2.92% in 2000.

Table 8
Race Distribution
Historic, Current and Future Forecasted

Race	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
White	91.29%	85.13%	78.89%	76.71%	74.36%	72.03%	69.64%	67.09%
Black	7.93%	13.70%	19.40%	21.43%	23.54%	25.63%	27.73%	29.91%
Native American	0.25%	0.27%	0.36%	0.34%	0.31%	0.29%	0.27%	0.25%
Asian & Pacific Islander	0.53%	0.91%	1.35%	1.52%	1.78%	2.05%	2.37%	2.75%
Hispanic	1.05%	1.79%	2.92%	3.07%	3.17%	3.32%	3.60%	3.94%

The population is expected to continue the current trends in the next 25 years. The White population is forecast to further reduce in proportional representation from 78.9% in 2000 to 67.1% in 2025, with a subsequent increase in proportional representation in the Black category from 19.4% in 2000 to almost 30% in 2025. The Asian & Pacific Islander population is expected to double, yet remain only a small proportion of the total at less than 2.8%. Those persons classifying themselves as of Hispanic origin will slowly continue to increase proportionally, increasing to almost 4% of the population.

Table 9
Comparison of Race Distribution
Distribution by County, Region & State

Category	County	Region*	State	County as % of	
				Region*	State
White	77.30%	67.76%	65.07%	114.08%	118.79%
Black	18.50%	24.79%	28.70%	74.63%	64.46%
American Indian	0.40%	0.28%	0.27%	142.86%	150.65%
Persons of Hispanic Origin	2.90%	5.93%	5.32%	48.90%	54.55%

Source: Year 2000 U.S. Census. County figures are for all of Douglas County.

*Region is 10-county ARC region.

***"Other" includes multiple-race categories.

There appear to be two major racial concentrations in Douglas County – White and Black, which, although they are coming closer together proportionally in the County, the White population will remain predominant. However, people of all races and ethnic backgrounds are fully integrated into the Douglas community. As shown in Table 9, the County is less ethnically or racially integrated than the ARC region as a whole, or the State, with the proportional representation of the White classification over 114% of the ARC region and 188% of the State, while the Black composition is less than 75% of the region and under 64% of the State. Representation of all other ethnic groups, with the exception of American Indian, are also well under the region and state representation.

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000
TOTAL Adult Population 25 & Over	29,909	36,658	43,407	51,047	58,687
Less than 9th Grade	6,194	5,180	4,165	3,704	3,242
9th to 12th Grade (No Diploma)	6,560	7,201	7,842	7,833	7,824
High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency)	10,953	13,718	16,483	18,400	20,316
Some College (No Degree)	3,490	5,546	7,601	10,270	12,939
Associate Degree	n/a	n/a	2,092	2,587	3,081

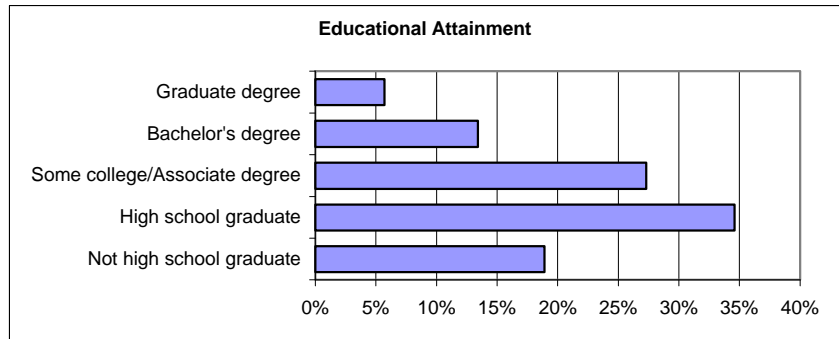
Source: 1980, 1990 and 2000 figures from U.S. Bureau of the Census.
Note: Figures for 1985 and 1995 are interpolated from decennial data.

■ **Educational Attainment**

Douglas County has a moderately educated work force that made significant increases between 1980 and 2000. In 1990, 34.4% of the adult population had some college education and above and 16.9% of the population were college graduates, as compared to 1980 when 20.7% of the adult population

Category	Douglas County	Surrounding Counties				State of Georgia
		Carroll County	Cobb County	Fulton County	Paulding County	
Less than 9th Grade	5.52%	10.08%	3.87%	5.14%	5.11%	7.58%
9th to 12th Grade (No Diploma)	13.33%	18.87%	7.34%	10.85%	14.10%	13.85%
High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency)	34.62%	34.21%	20.75%	19.37%	39.07%	28.65%
Some College (No Degree)	22.05%	16.78%	22.43%	18.55%	21.90%	20.41%
Associate Degree	5.25%	3.55%	5.85%	4.70%	4.62%	5.20%
Bachelor's Degree	13.45%	9.79%	28.02%	26.65%	11.60%	16.00%

had some college education and 9.1% were college graduates. By 2000, almost 50% of the population had completed some college and above, and 24.5% had a college degree. In numerical terms, the number of adults with less than a high school education actually went down, while the number of college graduates increased five-fold during the two decades.



Douglas's working age population is less educated than in many of the surrounding counties, and the State. In terms of the

proportion of college graduates in 2000, Douglas County ranked number four out of six when compared with four surrounding counties and the State. Considering the proportion of adults with at least some college education, Douglas also ranked number four at 46.6% compared to Fulton overall

Table 12
Educational Statistics
1995-2001

Category	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
H.S. Graduation Test Scores (All Components)	88.00%	86.00%	71.00%	72.00%	72.00%	73.00%	66.00%
H.S. Dropout Rate	9.00%	3.30%	5.70%	5.70%	4.00%	4.70%	4.80%
Grads Attending Georgia Public Colleges	29.60%	28.40%	36.30%	35.80%	35.40%	n/a	32.60%
Grads Attending Georgia Public Technical Schools	13.30%	11.40%	4.40%	4.40%	8.30%	7.90%	8.30%

(64.6%), Cobb (68%), Paulding (41.7%), and Carroll (36.9%), as well as the State of Georgia (49.6%).

Educational attainment indicators such as drop out rate and standard achievement test scores are

Table 13
Educational Attainment Indicators
Comparison with Selected ARC Counties and State 2001

Category	Douglas	State	Cobb	Fulton	DeKalb	Clayton	Fayette	Henry	Rockdale	Paulding
H.S. Graduation Test Scores (All Components)	66.0%	65.0%	76.0%	77.0%	62.0%	59.0%	84.0%	71.0%	69.0%	65.0%
H.S. Dropout Rate	4.8%	6.4%	3.5%	4.2%	6.4%	8.1%	2.0%	4.2%	3.5%	6.9%
Grads Attending Georgia Public Colleges	32.6%	36.1%	45.4%	40.8%	33.6%	35.3%	45.7%	43.9%	38.9%	29.0%
Grads Attending GA Public Technical Schools	8.3%	8.8%	6.3%	2.4%	3.5%	5.5%	4.6%	6.7%	5.9%	11.6%

Note: Paulding County is not included in the 10 county ARC region
Source: Ga. Department of Education.

available for Douglas County. Over the past five years, it appears as though SAT scores in Douglas County have dropped significantly, although the high school drop out rate has decreased by 50% since 1995. As well, the number of graduates attending Georgia public colleges appears to be holding fairly steady at slightly over 35%, while the number of students attending Georgia technical colleges is decreasing since 1995, yet higher than the low in the 1997-1998 time period.

Comparable data is available for all of the counties within the ARC region, and adjacent jurisdictions not within the 10 county region as well. For the latest full school year reported (2000-2001), the Douglas County system was generally fairly comparable to the State as a whole. Although the Douglas County system had a much lower dropout rate, and average SAT scores were marginally above the State average, the percentage of grads attending state public colleges and public technical schools was lower. Statistics are not available to determine what proportion of graduates were attending private or out-of-state colleges in order to ascertain if less grads were attending college, or if a higher proportion of grads from Douglas County were attending non-public Georgia schools.

Compared to selected other counties within the ARC region, Douglas County is at the lower middle end of ranking for SAT scores, exceeding only Clayton, DeKalb and Paulding counties. In terms of high school drop out rate, again Douglas County is at the lower middle end of ranking, exceeding Clayton, DeKalb and Paulding counties. With the exception of Paulding County, Douglas County ranks lowest for the proportion of graduates attending Georgia public colleges, but is one of the highest for grads attending public technical schools. Overall, for a combined proportion of grads attending Georgia public colleges or technical schools, Douglas County ranked fourth from the lowest. Statistics were not collected to determine what proportion of graduates were attending private or out-of-state colleges in order to ascertain if a lower proportion of Douglas County grads were attending college, or if a higher proportion of grads from Douglas County were attending non-public Georgia schools.

One of the most important factors in employment development is the ability to provide an adequate labor force. The data collected indicates that although there are adequate numbers of potential employees available, skills and education levels lag below surrounding counties. Continued economic growth and stability in attracting long-term industry investment within the County will depend on increased educational levels for all age groups and degree levels.

■ **Income**

The economic well being of families and households rose slowly for the residents of Douglas County between 1980 and 2000. With a primarily service and retail oriented work force and the continued attraction of lower and middle income households due to affordable housing prices compared to

Table 14
Per Capita Income
Historic and Current

Year	Average Per Capita Income	Median Per Capita Income**
1980	\$15,565	\$6,520
1985	\$17,822	N/A
1990	\$18,753	\$14,096
1995	\$20,502	N/A
2000	\$23,485	\$21,172

Source: * Woods and Poole Economics, Inc. 2003
** Source: 1980, 1990 and 2000 Census

Table 15
Household Income
Historic and Current

Year	Average Household Income*	Median Household Income**
1980	\$49,744	\$16,802
1985	\$52,243	N/A
1990	\$54,505	\$37,138
1995	\$58,418	N/A
2000	\$65,440	\$50,108

Source: * Woods and Poole Economics, Inc. 2003
** Source: 1980, 1990 and 2000 Census

other counties in the ARC region, in 2000 the residents of Douglas County were generally less prosperous than the State and region as a whole. Tables 14 and 15 show both per capita income and average household income, for those years where data is available. Recent income

estimates for Douglas County by Woods and Poole Economics indicate that per capita income has risen each year over the past decade. From \$18,753 in 1990, it increased by 9.3% to \$20,502 in 1995,

Table 16
2000 Household Income Estimates
Douglas County and State

Income Category	Douglas County		State	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0-\$14,999	3,160	9.6%	480,875	16.2%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	3,042	9.3%	369,279	12.3%
\$25,000 - \$39,999	6,235	19.0%	555,305	18.4%
\$40,000 - \$59,999	7,706	23.4%	604,362	20.0%
\$60,000 +	12,736	38.7%	997,857	33.1%
Total Units	32,879	100.0%	3,007,678	100.0%

Source: 2000 Census

the city of Douglasville, which increased from \$30,275 in 1990 to \$45,289 in 2000. Household income estimates from Woods and Poole cite an increase in annual household income (assuming a household size of 4 persons) from \$54,505 in 1990 to \$65,440 in 2000. The Census numbers appear to more accurately reflect the income characteristics of the population in Douglas County, whereas the numbers from the other data source appear to closely approximate the median family income of \$65,000 assigned to the Atlanta ARC region as a whole by HUD for purposes of program administration. (Refer to Housing chapter).

In comparing income distribution for households, in 2000 almost 70% of Douglas County's households earned between \$25,000 and \$100,000 as compared to about 60%

and another 14.5% from between 1995 and 2000 up to \$23,485. Data provided by the 1980, 1990 and 2000 Census indicates a slightly different picture, reflecting a slightly lower per capita income and household income than the Woods and Poole Economics data. According to the Census, per capita income of \$14,096 in 1990 increased by 50% to \$21,172 in 2000. The median household income in Douglas County, according to the 2000 Census, increased from \$37,414 in 1990 to \$50,108 in 2000. The County income was higher than the median income in

Table 17
Median and Per Capita Income
Comparison of Selected ARC Counties

County	Median Per Capita Income	Median Household Income
Carroll	\$17,656	\$38,799
Clayton	\$18,079	\$42,697
Cobb	\$27,863	\$58,289
DeKalb	\$23,968	\$49,117
Douglas	\$21,172	\$50,108
Fayette	\$29,464	\$71,227
Fulton	\$30,003	\$47,321
Gwinnett	\$25,006	\$60,537
Henry	\$22,945	\$57,309
Paulding*	\$19,974	\$52,161
Rockdale	\$22,300	\$53,599

* Paulding is not included in the 10 county ARC region
Source: 2000 Census

of the households in the State of Georgia. Approximately 50% of Douglas County households had incomes over \$50,000, compared to 42% in the State of Georgia. At the lower end of the scale, only 9.6% of the households in Douglas County had incomes less than \$15,000 in 2000, as compared to 16.2% in the State.

Douglas County median household and per capita income per the 2000 Census can be compared with surrounding counties in the ARC region, including Paulding County. Data indicates that Douglas County falls within the middle of the income range, with four counties (Carroll, Clayton, DeKalb and Fulton) having lower incomes, and the remaining six counties having higher median incomes. However, Douglas County median household income is closely comparable to the median household income of Paulding and Rockdale counties. In terms of median per capita income, Douglas County is within the mid to lower end of the range, with three counties (Carroll, Clayton and Paulding) with lower median per capita incomes. The remainder of the counties have per capita incomes which exceed that of Douglas County, although the median per capita income in Henry and Rockdale counties is fairly comparable. When compared to the State, the median per capita income in the State is almost identical to Douglas County, at \$21,154, although the median household income in the State is lower, at \$42,433.

■ **Assessment — Population**

Overall, Douglas's citizens are somewhat more affluent than the State overall, yet lower than most of the counties in the ARC region, reflecting a slow movement of middle and upper income families to the County in recent years. Over these past 20 years, some 17,079 housing units have been built in the County, including almost 8,330 units in the past decade alone. The following summarizes the findings regarding the County's present and future population.

Douglas's population doubled between 1980 and 2000, and is forecast to add another 57,872 units by the year 2025, almost tripling the current stock to accommodate an additional 148,600 persons.

The development and growth outlook are positive for Douglas, therefore growth is expected to increase at a comparable, if not somewhat increased rate, to that experienced during the 1980-2000 years.

The number of households will grow at a slightly higher rate than the population, based partly on a slight decrease in the projected household size, and a higher proportion of single or two person households as the population ages. By the year 2025, the ratio of occupied dwellings to population will be greater than in 2000.

Age distribution trends for the years 1980 to 2000 show that the age cohorts of 0-24 and 25 to 44 have contained the majority of residents of Douglas County, from 77.9% in 1980 to 69.9% in 2000. The age group 35 to 54 years old comprises the largest percentage of the population (32%). This group statistically is usually single family homeowners with school age children.

While the elderly increased in number between 1980 and 2000, the proportion of the population above 65 has increased only from 6.3% to 7.5%. The age cohort with the greatest proportional increase between 1980 and 2000 is the 45 to 64 age cohort, reflecting either a trend toward maturing families that moved to Douglas County and have stayed as their children grow up and move away from home, or an in-migration of families during the 1980s and 1990s.

While forecasts reflect a maturing population overall, with a proportional shift toward the 45 to 60 age group, Douglas County's population under the age of 45 will continue to dominate. However, the projections show that in 2025 this age group will comprise 59.2% of the population, as opposed to 69.9% of the population currently. By 2025, the "middle age" cohort

is anticipated to have increased from 22.6% to 24.6% of the population, while the over 65 age cohort is forecast to comprise 16.2% of the population. When combined, the increase indicates an aging of the population.

As the County's age characteristics continue to diversify, community facility improvements and housing should also diversify to meet the wide range of ages and lifestyles.

Non-white families are also being attracted to Douglas. During the 1990s, while total population increased by almost 30%, the Black or African American population more than doubled its proportion of the population from 7.9% to 19.4%. Non-white families are fully integrated into the community, and are expected to continue to be drawn to the County's many neighborhoods.

Overall income levels and educational attainment levels are below regional levels. Douglas's working age population is less educated than in many of the surrounding counties, and the State. The lower education level may be associated with a slightly lower median income. The predominance of entry level housing at lower prices than surrounding metro counties may contribute to the attraction of households with these characteristics to the County.

The County will continue to grow and experience demand pressures due to its location within metro Atlanta. Over the next twenty years, Douglas County will continue to experience a high rate of growth as a part of the fastest growing area in the Atlanta Region. According to the ARC 2025 Regional Transportation Plan, Cherokee, Douglas, Henry and Rockdale Counties are projected to experience growth rates of over 70%. Douglas County's objective to expand the move-up and executive housing opportunities will begin to attract upper-middle and upper income families. Its continuing economic growth, combined with an objective to expand the employment base to high tech and professional level occupations, will begin to attract upper and middle management families that want to be close to work. Pressure will continue on the school system to accommodate more children, while citizen demands on parks, roads, water, fire, police and other community facilities will more than double.

3. _____ Economic Development

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3. Economic Development Element

■ Introduction

This chapter provides an inventory and assessment of Douglas's economic base, labor force characteristics, and local opportunities and resources for economic development. This data provides a basis for economic needs and goals for the County that, in combination with information from other chapters of this Comprehensive Plan, lead to strategies for the economic well-being of Douglas and the designation of appropriate future land use plan categories.

Several factors will contribute to Douglas's positive growth outlook. The Douglas County population is becoming more highly educated, providing skilled workers for high tech companies. Major infrastructure improvements have been made or are planned to the water and sewer system and transportation system. Douglas County has a favorable image with a small town atmosphere conveniently located near a major city and international airport. The lower cost of land in comparison to surrounding counties in the ARC region makes it an attractive location for new businesses and has kept the housing market reasonably priced. The County has begun to attract a range of technological and research facilities, business parks, office campuses and other professional and/or higher wage employment resources, in addition to the wholesale companies and showrooms, assembly or fabrication operations, business equipment supply or repair, distribution facilities for local and regional deliveries, and retail, service and commercial uses which serve as the foundation of the County's economic base. Douglas County's industrial and employment areas have excellent access to the State highway system. Combined with an increasingly diverse housing stock providing a wealth of well priced market rate housing, an expanding move-up market and new executive housing opportunities, preserved natural resources, and an abundance of land to accommodate employment growth, the County is well poised to undertake a transformation from a commuter community to a well balanced and fiscally sound community.

A strong and diverse economy is important because it creates jobs, increases income and provides a more stable tax base, and thereby provides a better quality of life. Although the County continues to grow economically, it continues to remain primarily a bedroom community for the Atlanta Metro area. For Douglas County to provide for the necessary services to meet the needs of its population, the County will have to continue to diversify its economic base.

Setting—The Region

During the early 1990s, the Atlanta Region experienced a period of slow growth mirroring the national recession as compared to the tremendous boom period from 1983 to 1988 when employment grew by over 400,000 jobs and 500,000 new residents. By the mid 1990s the Atlanta Region was once again experiencing strong growth in both population and employment, particularly in the northern sector. During the past 20 years population and employment growth has extended outward from the center of the region, particularly to the north. By 2025 however, the northern counties will continue to experience large absolute numeric increases, although their percent change is anticipated to be modest compared to western and southern counties. Much of the forecast growth is predicted to be in Henry, Rockdale and Douglas County, as well as Cherokee County to the north, indicative of a continuing trend of rapid suburbanization in formerly rural areas far from the urban core.

Several factors contribute to the Atlanta Region's continued growth. The region has an excellent transportation system of roads, public transportation and Hartsfield International Airport allowing convenient travel within the region, providing a central distribution location, and access to a diversity of housing choices. The extension of GA 400 directly to the Central Atlanta area has opened faster channels to the Buckhead and Midtown business district. The region has a very positive housing market, leading the nation in permits and starts over the last ten years. The Atlanta Region remains a top choice in corporate relocations and in-migration. In fact, ARC projects that in-migration will account for almost half of the region's increase between 1990 and 2025.

The Atlanta Regional Commission forecasts that growth will continue to be strong in the region, although at a slower rate than the past decade. The Services and Retail Trade sectors will account for more than one-half of the region's job growth. The Services industry will claim one of every three new jobs created between 2000 and 2025 and Retail Trade employment will nearly double to be the region's second fastest growing industry between 2000 and 2025. Strong growth is also forecast in the Wholesale Trade and the Transportation, Communications and Utilities (TCU) sectors, both major users of office space and business centers.

Because of its status as a “bedroom community” in the western quadrant of the Atlanta metro area, and its proximity to major employment centers such as Vinings, Smyrna and Marietta in Cobb County, and the Downtown, Midtown and Buckhead areas of Atlanta, residents of Douglas County have unlimited access to employment within the region. Douglas County is located approximately 20 miles west of Atlanta’s central business district and 20 minutes from Hartsfield International Airport directly via Camp Creek Parkway. Douglas County’s business future is closely allied with that of the Metro area, although the County is striving to become a balanced community that offers a range of residential lifestyles, employment options, and recreational opportunities.

Setting—The Douglas County Area

The beginning of European settlement, in what is now known as Douglas County, began in the 1820’s, primarily from Virginia, the Carolina’s, and the eastern portions of Georgia. Land grants increased the rate of settlement. Rural farming was the major source of income until the development of mills in the 1840’s and the incurrence of railroads in the 1880’s.

In 1828, Campbell County was created, with the seat of government being Campbellton or the Chattahoochee River. To reduce the size of the County, the Legislature created Douglas County out of parts of Cobb, Campbell, and Carroll Counties in 1870. An election was held to choose officials and select the new County seat. Although the largest group of voters chose a location at the center of the County, the newly elected leaders chose Skink Chestnut near the railroad right-of-way. After a four-year stalemate, the State Supreme Court ordered that another election be held and the Skink Chestnut location was upheld. The town of Douglasville was established at this location by the Georgia General Assembly in 1875.

Douglas County is strategically located in the region's western growth path, linked to the metro Atlanta area and Hartsfield International Airport by the Westside I-20. Because of its proximity to Atlanta, and abundance of availability of affordable housing stock, Douglas County has undergone a transformation over the last decade from a totally rural county to a bedroom community within the Atlanta metropolitan area. A full two-thirds of those who reside in Douglas County are employed elsewhere in the region. Over the last 30 years the County has been urbanizing rapidly, with a large portion of growth over the last 10 years. Thirty-two percent of all dwelling units were constructed over this 10-year period. Downtown Douglasville has served as a central economic core of the Douglas County community for many years. While the downtown continues to host a diversity of professional, retail and government functions, the construction of I-20 through the City of Douglasville several miles south of the downtown drew much of the retail shopping activity to corridors per-

pendicular to the interstate highway at the location of exits for state highways 92 and 5. Arbor Place, a million square foot regional mall at the intersection of I-20 and Chapel Hill Road, has further diminished the central downtown's role in meeting residents primary shopping needs, but has served as an impetus for continued ancillary commercial and services, as well as support for move-up and executive housing opportunities. Development activity in the County has concentrated around the incorporated area of Douglasville, and more recently outward along major transportation corridors in the form of golf/tennis/swim master planned residential subdivisions and commercial centers.

There are many reasons attributable to Douglas County's recent growth:

Residential Growth: Between 1980 and 2000, the population of Douglas County almost doubled from 54,570 persons to 92,174 persons. Although numerically population growth was higher in the unincorporated County areas between 1990 and 2000, overall population increase was the highest in the incorporated cities, with the population in the cities increasing by 72 percent, as compared to a 21 percent increase in the population of the unincorporated area.

From 1990 to 2000, the total number of households increased almost 85% from 21,742 to 32,822. The median house value in Douglas County in 2000 was \$99,600, approximately 68.9% of the Atlanta Region's median of \$144,600, with over 50% of Douglas's housing valued at \$100,000 or less. In addition, approximately 79% of the County's households consist of married couples, with over 50% of that number having children living at home.

Buying Power: During the last two decades, Douglas County has served as a commuter community to the Atlanta metro area and a resource for households seeking reasonably priced "starter" homes. In recent years, the economic composition of the community has begun to change. The County's median household income increased from \$37,414 in 1990 to \$50,108 in 2000. The County's median income of \$50,108 is below the median family income of \$69,000 (as utilized by HUD in the determination of housing assistance) for the Atlanta metro area. This may partially be attributed to the fact that the large supply of affordable starter homes has attracted households with comparable incomes, thereby reducing the median. As the stock of move-up and executive level housing expands, it is anticipated that the proportion of households with above moderate incomes will increase as they move into the new stock, and subsequently raise the median income. In Douglas County, 52.5% of all households have an income over \$50,000, and almost 39% of the households have incomes over \$60,000. Only 3.6% of the population in the unincorporated County area was below the poverty line in 2000.

Work Force: Education levels in Douglas County lag below surrounding counties. The percentage of persons 25 years of age and older without a high school diploma was 18.9% in 2000. The percentage of persons 25 years of age and older with some college (inclusive of persons with college degrees and above) was 46.5% in 2000. The County's labor force increased from 37,431 in 1990 to 46,176 in 2000 and up to 48,208 in the year 2004. The unemployment rate in 2002 was 4.9%, which was lower than both the State and Atlanta metro area. Continued economic growth and stability will depend on increased educational levels for all age groups and degree levels.

Quality of Life: Douglas County is still primarily a bedroom county to the Metro area, with 63% of residents commuting outside the county in 2000. In addition, commuter patterns suggest that there are limited employment opportunities for upper management, professional and skilled employees living within the county.

However, quality of life in Douglas County has been steadily improving over the past decade, due to implementation of more stringent development controls, the use of the master planned development, careful monitoring and expansion of infrastructure support systems, and focused efforts to attract viable business into the area. Previous economic development efforts have been aimed at attracting industrial employment to the area; greater efforts are being made to accommodate projected office and

retail commercial to support residential growth. Based on growth, economic and employment forecasts, upwards of 600 acres of additional office and commercially zoned land is needed to accommodate future retail and service uses, both of which will be attracted to the county by its population growth and resulting increase in disposable income.

There are currently 27,300 jobs among all economic sectors outside of the City of Douglasville. By the year 2025 the number of jobs could more than double to 67,500, a 148% increase.

The western extension of the I-20 has provided Douglas County with rapid, convenient access to Atlanta employment centers. Douglas County is well positioned for accessibility to employees, clients and shoppers alike. Convenient access, planned development areas and a central location in the area of the Atlanta Region forecast to experience rapid growth through 2025 will continue to fuel Douglas County's growth to the year 2025.

■ **Economic Base Inventory**

Much of the following analysis uses the term “economic sector.” The federal government classifies local industries and businesses into the following nine major “sectors”:

- Agriculture, forestry, fishing & mining;
- Construction;
- Manufacturing;
- Transportation, Communications, Utilities (TCU);
- Wholesale Trade;
- Retail Trade;
- Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate (FIRE);
- Services; and
- Public Administration (government).

■ **Employment by Sector**

Douglas County's economy is generally based on a service and retail sector to support the residential population, followed by government and manufacturing/construction. According to the Census, there were 2,036 non-farm businesses in 1999. The Georgia Department of Labor reports 2,241 businesses located in Douglas County in 2002. Of these businesses, the largest sectors of the County economy are services, retail, government and goods production, inclusive of construction and manufacturing. Major employers include: Inner Harbour Hospital, Kroger Co., Silver



Line Building, Wal-Mart Associates, and Wellstar Health Systems.

Employment refers to the number of people employed by local businesses and industries, sole proprietors and those that are self-employed. This includes people living in surrounding areas coming into the County to work, but does not include residents of the County who commute to jobs outside of the County limits. The data does not determine if a worker is also a resident of the County. Table 3-1 “Employment Trends by Sector” examines employment opportunities and trends within only the Unincorporated County areas from 1980 to 2000 and projections to 2025.

Table 1
Employment by Sector - Unincorporated Douglas County
Historic, Current and Future Forecasted

Sector	Employment									
	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Construction	1,252	2,159	1,951	2,080	2,725	3,277	3,963	4,733	5,559	6,394
Manufacturing	853	1,174	1,055	1,241	1,955	2,346	2,876	3,481	4,123	4,759
T.C.U.*	646	855	723	801	936	1,183	1,502	1,877	2,294	2,734
Wholesale Trade	374	884	983	1,231	1,487	1,880	2,400	3,033	3,783	4,651
Retail Trade	2,335	4,015	2,670	3,338	4,899	5,806	7,358	9,292	11,530	13,939
F.I.R.E.**	910	1,180	637	697	1,075	1,218	1,464	1,761	2,094	2,445
Services	3,008	4,784	4,069	5,731	7,565	9,762	12,653	16,225	20,580	25,817
Government	2,534	2,852	1,817	1,738	2,287	2,891	3,667	4,590	5,644	6,789
Total	11,912	17,903	13,905	16,857	22,930	28,362	35,885	44,993	55,607	67,528

Employment figures for 1980 and 1985 are from Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

*Transportation, Communications and Utilities

**Finance, Insurance and Real Estate.

The unincorporated portion of Douglas County has seen a slow but steady rate of growth in employment over the last decade. In 1990 it is estimated that the County had a little over 13,905 employees. Predominate sectors were retail trade, construction and services. Within a 10-year period, employment has almost doubled to just fewer than 23,000 persons. The distribution of employment opportunities remain predominantly unchanged; construction, government and wholesale trade decreased slightly as an overall percentage of employment opportunities, as service and retail trade continued as the two predominant sectors within the economy. The majority of office employment is included within the service sector. Employment projections to 2025 show employment growth continuing in the future, with the number of jobs more than tripling to over 67,500. It is expected that the unincorporated County will see an increase of almost 44,600 employees over this 25-year period for a total of 67,528 employees in the year 2025. The dominance of retail trade and services sectors will continue into the future, although as the service sector continues to grow from 33% in 2000 to 38% by 2025, the retail sector will decrease slightly from 21.4% in 2000 to 20.6% in 2025. Due to the overwhelming service sector capture of the market, construction and manufacturing will capture a smaller percentage of the market, although they will increase numerically.

As noted above, employment growth is expected to continue in the unincorporated County, at a somewhat faster pace than the past decades. It is expected that between 2000 and 2025 the County will attract 44,600 new jobs, or an increase of 194%. Although it is expected that overall (national) economy has seen boom development over the last 10 years, and is expected to slow down, although the unincorporated areas of Douglas County are not anticipated to follow these national trends. First, there is abundant land available in the unincorporated portions of the County, and master planned developments are just beginning to be implemented as a major planning tool.

Table 2
Comparison of Employment by Sector
Unincorporated Douglas County and State Percentages

Sector	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Construction										
County	10.51%	12.06%	14.03%	12.34%	11.89%	11.55%	11.04%	10.52%	10.00%	9.47%
State	5.30%	6.34%	5.94%	5.75%	6.41%	6.40%	6.38%	6.33%	6.25%	6.12%
Manufacturing										
County	7.16%	6.56%	7.59%	7.36%	8.53%	8.27%	8.02%	7.74%	7.41%	7.05%
State	20.14%	18.19%	16.02%	14.69%	12.58%	11.99%	11.41%	10.86%	10.32%	9.80%
T.C.U.*										
County	5.42%	4.78%	5.20%	4.75%	4.08%	4.17%	4.19%	4.17%	4.12%	4.05%
State	5.81%	5.72%	6.05%	5.89%	6.34%	6.46%	6.54%	6.56%	6.50%	6.37%
Wholesale Trade										
County	3.14%	4.94%	7.07%	7.30%	6.48%	6.63%	6.69%	6.74%	6.80%	6.89%
State	6.63%	6.90%	6.38%	5.91%	5.77%	5.85%	5.86%	5.86%	5.85%	5.83%
Retail Trade										
County	19.60%	22.43%	19.20%	19.80%	21.37%	20.47%	20.51%	20.65%	20.73%	20.64%
State	15.53%	16.74%	16.97%	17.65%	17.18%	16.96%	16.88%	16.78%	16.66%	16.53%
Services										
County	25.25%	26.72%	29.26%	34.00%	32.99%	34.42%	35.26%	36.06%	37.01%	38.23%
State	19.15%	21.39%	24.53%	27.40%	29.89%	30.79%	31.69%	32.74%	33.92%	35.22%
Government										
County	21.27%	15.93%	13.07%	10.31%	9.97%	10.19%	10.22%	10.20%	10.15%	10.05%
State	19.82%	17.48%	17.25%	16.15%	14.53%	14.32%	14.04%	13.76%	13.47%	13.19%

*Transportation, Communications and Utilities

**Finance, Insurance and Real Estate.

Although historically the industry mix in Douglas County has not been based on high technology and specifically the telecomm sector, which has been seriously impacted by the national economy, it is anticipating attracting growth in the technology sectors. As indicated by the forecasts, as residents adjust their disposable income spending habits, retail trade growth is expected proportionally reduce, although numerically the sector will experience growth to support the expanding population.

Table 3
Earnings by Sector - Total County
 Historic, Current and Future Forecasted

Sector	Earnings (in millions)									
	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Farm Employment	0.10	0.49	0.81	0.02	(0.05)	0.48	0.48	0.47	0.47	0.46
Agricultural Services	0.90	1.31	1.01	2.06	3.47	3.43	3.91	4.45	5.02	5.60
Mining	2.05	2.93	3.93	3.42	4.84	5.60	5.82	6.06	6.31	6.57
Construction	31.11	53.87	80.70	86.40	115.71	136.65	152.22	165.23	175.78	183.59
Manufacturing	20.31	26.50	35.64	55.52	103.55	102.86	120.84	137.98	153.31	165.88
T.C.U.*	19.30	25.86	36.13	48.75	56.46	71.38	85.11	98.11	109.99	120.34
Wholesale Trade	9.38	22.21	41.14	54.31	75.85	93.35	110.44	127.56	144.85	162.51
Retail Trade	39.20	70.13	88.46	122.70	176.72	199.60	228.52	257.17	283.51	305.67
F.I.R.E.**	7.65	9.14	20.15	25.63	38.39	43.60	49.58	55.42	60.89	65.78
Services	55.42	85.87	134.08	189.57	264.34	343.71	423.46	507.46	598.26	698.24
Government	50.24	71.37	100.33	102.10	151.58	186.89	218.50	248.20	275.73	300.29
Total	232.59	364.96	536.62	684.96	982.59	1,178.03	1,388.67	1,597.11	1,802.30	2,002.28

**Finance, Insurance and Real Estate.

In comparing employment in Douglas County to statewide percentages, in 2000, the unincorporated County followed state trends for higher employment distribution among the services and retail trade sectors. The County had notably above average concentrations in the construction, services and wholesale trade sectors. Both the County and State showed services as the top sector, followed by retail, although the proportional representation of both within the sector mix was higher than in the State in the unincorporated County. Within the County, employment within offices is primarily categorized as part of the service sector. The third largest sector in the unincorporated County in 2000 was construction, which was the smallest sector on a statewide basis.

Both the State and County see these trends continuing into 2025 with services and retail becoming the top two sectors, again exceeding the forecast State mix. Within the County, by 2025, government will be the third largest sector, comparable to that of the State although in a lower proportion, followed by construction, which well exceeds the State representation.

■ Sector Earnings

Earnings represent the total of wages, salaries, and other earned income paid to persons working for the businesses or industries in a given geographic area. In 1990, the highest earning sector was ser-

Table 4
Comparison of Earnings by Sector
Douglas County and State Percentages

Sector	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Farm Employment										
County	0.04%	0.13%	0.15%	0.00%	0.00%	0.04%	0.03%	0.03%	0.03%	0.02%
State	0.16%	1.29%	1.39%	1.44%	1.11%	1.04%	1.01%	0.98%	0.96%	0.95%
Agricultural Services										
County	0.39%	0.36%	0.19%	0.30%	0.35%	0.29%	0.28%	0.28%	0.28%	0.28%
State	0.37%	0.42%	0.47%	0.55%	0.60%	0.61%	0.62%	0.63%	0.63%	0.63%
Mining										
County	0.88%	0.80%	0.73%	0.50%	0.49%	0.48%	0.42%	0.38%	0.35%	0.33%
State	0.65%	0.49%	0.37%	0.30%	0.25%	0.24%	0.22%	0.20%	0.19%	0.17%
Construction										
County	13.37%	14.76%	15.04%	12.61%	11.78%	11.60%	10.96%	10.35%	9.75%	9.17%
State	5.73%	6.72%	5.95%	5.52%	6.08%	5.98%	5.87%	5.74%	5.57%	5.38%
Manufacturing										
County	8.73%	7.26%	6.64%	8.10%	10.54%	8.73%	8.70%	8.64%	8.51%	8.28%
State	22.81%	20.47%	17.90%	17.23%	14.64%	14.19%	13.71%	13.20%	12.68%	12.13%
Wholesale Trade										
County	4.03%	6.09%	7.67%	7.93%	7.72%	7.92%	7.95%	7.99%	8.04%	8.12%
State	8.97%	9.24%	9.05%	8.35%	8.72%	8.66%	8.50%	8.33%	8.16%	7.99%
Retail Trade										
County	16.85%	19.22%	16.48%	17.91%	17.99%	16.94%	16.46%	16.10%	15.73%	15.27%
State	10.45%	10.87%	9.38%	9.29%	9.01%	8.68%	8.46%	8.24%	8.03%	7.81%
F.I.R.E.**										
County	3.29%	2.50%	3.76%	3.74%	3.91%	3.70%	3.57%	3.47%	3.38%	3.29%
State	5.50%	5.71%	6.57%	7.02%	7.76%	7.81%	7.88%	7.93%	7.95%	7.95%
Services										
County	23.83%	23.53%	24.99%	27.68%	26.90%	29.18%	30.49%	31.77%	33.19%	34.87%
State	15.82%	17.74%	22.44%	24.88%	27.60%	28.85%	30.16%	31.64%	33.30%	35.12%
Government										
County	21.60%	19.56%	18.70%	14.91%	15.43%	15.86%	15.73%	15.54%	15.30%	15.00%
State	21.28%	20.19%	19.75%	18.08%	15.76%	15.22%	14.70%	14.20%	13.72%	13.27%

Figures are from Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.

*Transportation, Communications and Utilities

**Finance, Insurance and Real Estate.

vices, followed by retail trade, government and construction. By 2000, services and retail trade remained the highest earning sectors, with earnings in both sectors doubling. Government and construction remained third and fourth, respectively. The earnings gap between construction and manufacturing diminished significantly, with earnings in the manufacturing sector almost tripling.

The earnings in the service and retail sectors are forecast to remain predominant in the County through 2025, with earnings in the Service sector more than doubling. Growth in the Retail sector between 2000 and 2025 is forecast to be 75%, which, although increasing significantly in numeric terms, slows in comparison to some other sectors. By 2025 the earnings position of the Retail sector will almost be met by the Government sector, which will double from \$151.58 million in 2000 to \$300.29 million by 2025. Earnings in the Manufacturing sector are forecast to triple over the forecast period, and the Transportation, Communications and Utilities sector is anticipated to double in the next 25 years.

Douglas County as a whole compares favorably with the state in every economic sector except: Farming and Agricultural Services (which have little role to Douglas County); Finance, Insurance and Real Estate; and Manufacturing. Earnings in Retail Trade and Construction far exceeded that of the state. The county and state were fairly comparable in the sectors of Wholesale Trade, Government and Services.

Overall, wages in Douglas County in 2000 were lower than in Georgia as a whole. Since 1990, the County has fallen behind the State in weekly wages for the Agricultural and Construction sectors. By 2000, the County exceeded State wages on a very slight basis only in Retail Trade and Government (State and Local). As was shown in Table 4, many of the weekly wages in the County are significantly lower than the State average, particularly within: the Finance, Insurance and Real Estate sector, at \$536 as compared to \$900 per week; Transportation, Communication and Utilities sector at \$652 as compared to \$895 per week; Wholesale Trade at \$932 per week as compared to \$650; and Services, at \$399 as compared to \$611 per week. The

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

Sector	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000*
Agricultural Services					
County	\$0	\$0	\$295	\$300	\$330
State	\$0	\$0	\$276	\$322	\$390
Mining					
County	\$0	\$0	n/a	n/a	n/a
State	\$0	\$0	\$589	\$734	\$866
Construction					
County	\$0	\$0	\$436	\$506	\$585
State	\$0	\$0	\$434	\$508	\$623
Manufacturing					
County	\$0	\$0	\$357	\$482	\$522
State	\$0	\$0	\$450	\$555	\$684
T.C.U.					
County	\$0	\$0	\$441	\$622	\$652
State	\$0	\$0	\$603	\$737	\$895
Retail Trade					
County	\$0	\$0	\$232	\$291	\$343
State	\$0	\$0	\$236	\$275	\$335
F.I.R.E.					
County	\$0	\$0	\$405	\$475	\$536
State	\$0	\$0	\$544	\$693	\$900
Services					
County	\$0	\$0	\$355	\$378	\$399
State	\$0	\$0	\$414	\$501	\$611
Government					
County	\$0	\$0	\$402	\$453	\$562
State	\$0	\$0	\$460	\$533	\$551
Wholesale Trade					
County	\$0	\$0	\$468	\$529	\$650
State	\$0	\$0	\$603	\$729	\$932

* 2000 figures actually represent 1999 wages.
In construction, manufacturing and services, data is available only for 1998 and 1997 for Douglas County

two sectors with the highest weekly earning potential are Transportation, Communication and Utilities and Wholesale Trade.

■ Sources of Personal Income

The sources of personal income are indicators of how a community receives its income. The State of Georgia Department of Community Affairs, with

the assistance of Woods & Pool Economics, Inc., has developed categories and numbers for the analysis of sources of personal income. These five categories of personal income include the following:

Table 6 and 7 present personal income estimates for Douglas County and the State. In 2000, total personal income for Douglas County was \$1,455,440,000, up from \$1,061,380,000 in 1990. This increase was due to substantial gains between 1995 and 2000, with a 37% increase over the five-year period. Whereas personal income increased four-fold over the 20 year period between 1980 and 2000, forecasts indicate that it will double by 2025, up to \$3,086,760,000. During the same time periods, personal income in the State tripled between 1980 and 2000, with a 30% increase in the five-year period of 1995 to 2000. Growth in personal income between 2000 and 2025 is not anticipated to be as great for the State, increasing by 79% as compared to 112% for Douglas County.

As in the State, Douglas County receives the majority of its personal income through wage and salary collection, although the County receives a slightly lower proportion in wages and salaries than the state, at 54.99% as compared to 58.82%. This proportion is forecast to fall slightly over the next twenty years to 53.28% while the proportion statewide increases slightly up to 59.29%. As the second largest source of personal income for both the County and State, the County receives a larger proportion of personal income from Interest, Dividends and Rents, at 17.13% compared to 15.90%. While the proportion of personal interest from this source for the County is forecast to rise slightly by 2025, the proportion for the State is anticipated to drop slightly. The third largest source of personal income,

transfer payments, is also higher at the County level than the State, at 14.79% as compared to 10.55%. Transfer payments are forecast to increase pro-

Table 6
Sources of Personal Income - Total County
Historic, Current and Future Forecasted

Source	Personal Income (in millions)									
	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Wages and Salaries	175.58	277.43	425.45	545.60	800.37	960.59	1,134.03	1,306.54	1,477.26	1,644.61
Other Labor Income	20.30	34.56	55.20	68.27	80.53	95.87	111.68	126.95	141.62	155.52
Proprietors Income	39.76	57.69	61.73	76.58	109.95	131.10	153.17	174.61	195.22	214.79
Dividend, Interest, Rent	72.38	118.13	156.39	190.06	249.35	299.14	349.92	406.22	468.97	539.25
Transfer Payments	72.66	91.40	118.65	180.86	215.24	265.62	319.82	381.55	452.02	532.60
Total	380.68	579.20	817.41	1,061.38	1,455.44	1,752.30	2,068.62	2,395.87	2,735.09	3,086.76

Figures are from Woods & Poole Economics, Inc, and are shown in 1996 dollars.

Table 7
Sources of Personal Income - State of Georgia
Historic, Current and Future Forecasted

Source	Personal Income (in millions)									
	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Wages and Salaries	53,972.93	68,598.80	81,355.57	96,422.82	131,084.77	148,691.83	167,887.56	188,855.14	211,572.07	236,032.81
Other Labor Income	7,079.35	9,626.20	11,702.32	14,092.00	15,009.73	16,123.74	17,914.23	19,832.98	21,871.49	24,023.48
Proprietors Income	5,484.85	7,694.69	9,584.28	12,998.89	17,814.86	20,001.86	22,369.19	24,930.98	27,673.70	30,591.02
Dividend, Interest, Rent	10,986.97	17,428.33	23,366.94	26,625.05	35,435.80	39,703.36	44,270.10	49,381.37	55,118.92	61,576.58
Transfer Payments	9,867.38	11,841.27	14,749.82	20,606.71	23,504.54	26,996.14	30,845.43	35,221.15	40,201.65	45,877.07
Total	87,391.48	115,189.29	140,758.91	170,745.46	222,849.69	251,516.92	283,286.51	318,221.61	356,437.84	398,100.97

Figures are from Woods & Poole Economics, Inc, and are shown in 1996 dollars.

portionally in the County by 2025, as well as the State, but at a higher rate, from 14.79% to 17.25% as compared to 10.55% to 11.52%. This may correspond to the forecast aging of the population as discussed in the Population chapter.

Median household income distribution for the County, as well as per capita income, with comparison to the State, is discussed in the Population chapter.

Table 8
Comparison of Sources of Personal Income
 Douglas County and State Percentages

Sector	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Wages and Salaries										
County	46.12%	47.90%	52.05%	51.41%	54.99%	54.82%	54.82%	54.53%	54.01%	53.28%
State	61.76%	59.55%	57.80%	56.47%	58.82%	59.12%	59.26%	59.35%	59.36%	59.29%
Other Labor Income										
County	5.33%	5.97%	6.75%	6.43%	5.53%	5.47%	5.40%	5.30%	5.18%	5.04%
State	8.10%	8.36%	8.31%	8.25%	6.74%	6.41%	6.32%	6.23%	6.14%	6.03%
Proprietors Income										
County	10.45%	9.96%	7.55%	7.22%	7.55%	7.48%	7.40%	7.29%	7.14%	6.96%
State	6.28%	6.68%	6.81%	7.61%	7.99%	7.95%	7.90%	7.83%	7.76%	7.68%
Dividend, Interest, Rent										
County	19.01%	20.40%	19.13%	17.91%	17.13%	17.07%	16.92%	16.96%	17.15%	17.47%
State	12.57%	15.13%	16.60%	15.59%	15.90%	15.79%	15.63%	15.52%	15.46%	15.47%
Transfer Payments										
County	19.09%	15.78%	14.51%	17.04%	14.79%	15.16%	15.46%	15.93%	16.53%	17.25%
State	11.29%	10.28%	10.48%	12.07%	10.55%	10.73%	10.89%	11.07%	11.28%	11.52%

■ **Major Development Trends**

Over the past decade Douglas County began a growth and development trend that is carrying through the end of the millennium. Between January 2003 and the end of the April 2004, 202 new commercial building permits (including 59 commercial structures and 143 structures other than buildings) and 224 new business licenses have been issued. The number of business licenses issued for at-home businesses was 721 in the same period. There were 22 notifications of a commercial business operation, which were exempt from license fees. An additional 52 permits for alterations, additions and conversion of non-residential buildings were issued at a valuation of almost 3.5 million. Based on the valuation of the building permits alone, business interests have invested in excess of \$19.2 million in the community since January 1, 2003. This figure encompasses new construction, additions, alterations and conversions, and demolitions (primarily of residential structures).

Between January 1, 2003 and May 1, 2004, over \$181 million in new private investment was initiated including 2,139 new single-family homes, 32 attached single family homes, and 59 non-residential projects including primarily offices, banks and professional offices, retail and customer services, schools, amusement/recreational structures, and churches over the course of the 16 months. The non-residential projects added an estimated 3 million square feet of commercial space to the County. The most notable recent trends in Douglas County include its emergence as the retail/commercial hub of western Georgia, including the new Arbor Place Mall, the Landing at Arbor Place, and ancillary retail centers, new restaurants and hotels, and the emergence of a number of business parks housing manufacturing and technology companies.

There is nearly @@ million square feet of business park, office and retail space being built or planned in the County. Demand is high for this space, in part because of Douglas's favorable location, the reasonable lease rates, and the quality of developments. Several thousand acres of land are available for commercial development.

Retail Trade and Services

The most notable recent trends in Douglas County include the addition of major new retailers and shopping centers, with associated hotels and restaurants, and business park expansion.

Hotels. The I-20 corridor, particularly the commercial areas along the corridors perpendicular to the interstate highway at the locations of exits for state highways 92 and 5, support a sizeable hotel market, focused primarily in the vicinity of Arbor Place Mall, which accommodates a number of visitors, and provides supplemental accommodations for Six Flags in neighboring Cobb County as well. There are currently 21 hotels containing over 1,600 rooms in the City of Douglasville, and @@ in the unincorporated areas of Douglas County.

Retail Expansion. Douglas County supports a number of neighborhood level shopping centers, most of which are anchored by a supermarket. The majority of regional serving and large "big box" shopping opportunities are located within the city limits of Douglasville, along the corridors perpendicular to the interstate highway at the locations of exits for state highways 92 and 5, and Chapel Hill Rd., including: the 1 million square foot Arbor Place Mall; the Landing at Arbor Place; Market Square; the Super-Walmart and Sam's Club Center; and the Douglasville Pavilion, including the anchors of Target, Ross, Marshalls and Goody's; as well as ancillary strip centers.

In addition the strength of the economy in Douglas County relies in its large diversified small business community. Making up the majority of the Douglas County Chamber of Commerce's membership base, most new jobs are created from this sector. The retail/commercial market in unincorporated Douglas County continues to grow, and growth is anticipated to be at a faster rate than during the last decade.

Business Park/Office. Douglas County is beginning to develop a portion of its economy in the manufacturing, office and technology sectors. The County, inclusive of the City, is fortunate to offer some of the finest business parks in the region. Such companies as AT&T, Nioxin, Silver Line Building Products, Circuit City, Steelcase, Maytag, and Stairhouse, among others, are realizing the competitive advantage of location in this area, and have chosen to locate in the Douglas County and City of Douglasville area.

Business parks in the County include the following:

Industrial Developments International (IDI) has two business parks – Westfork and the Camp creek Distribution center. These parks comprise 600 acres and offer a variety of amenities. Both have direct access to I-20 and the Jackson-Hartfield International Airport via Camp creek Parkway. Douglas County's largest employer, Silver Line Building products, is located in Westfork along with industries such as Nioxin, Formica, Circuit City and Revest/Steelcase. Westfork has approximately 4.5 million square feet of space.

Riverside Business Park straddles the Douglas and Cobb border. The park is owned by Crescent Resources and covers 800 acres. The park is home to industries such as AT&T and Amoco Fibers. The Douglas County portion has approximately 500,000 square feet of space with plans to construct 1 million more.

First Industrial Real Estate opened the Terminus West Business Park in 2002. The park encompasses 200 acres and is already home to industries such as Maytag, Stairhouse and Standard

Register. Terminus West has 750,000 square feet and plans for an additional 750,000 square feet.

Carter and Associates is developing the New Manchester Business Park. The first building was completed in 2003 and leased to JVC of America. The second building is under construction and upon completion will encompass 200 acres. In addition, the American Red Cross has recently announced plans to relocate the Southern Regional headquarters and blood processing center to New Manchester. Plans call for 180,000 square feet on 19 acres.

Thornton Road Business Park, developed by Catellus Development Corporation, currently has three buildings under construction for APL Logistics. Plans call for the park to build out at approximately 170 acres.

Douglas County and the City of Douglasville have other small business parks and commercial/industrial sites available through out the community.

Construction

Residential growth over the past decade, and particularly since 2000, has been strong in the County and areas surrounding the incorporated cities, ending with 2,171 residential permits issued on projects valued at just over \$137 million from January 2003 to May 2004. Over the next 25 years the construction industry will take a slightly smaller percentage of overall employment due to the slowing in population growth, and the buildout of available land near the end of the horizon period in the County, as well as shifts in the economic make-up of the County to primarily service and retail oriented.

Manufacturing and Wholesale Trade

Manufacturing and Wholesale Trade play a small but significant role in the economy of Douglas County. The location of industrial development is primarily located off the Thornton Road Corridor. In the last 10 years, the number of manufacturing firms in the county has increased, particularly in the type of light manufacturing with up-front office space well suited to business parks. Although the manufacturing sector is anticipated to continue to grow in the future, it is anticipated that it will decline as a proportion of the economy, and most likely will include only extremely limited heavy manufacturing endeavors.



■ **Unique Economic Activities**

With the completion of Arbor Place Mall and the Landing at Arbor Place, as well as surrounding retail centers, Douglas County has become a shopping and employment hub for its sector of the region. Arbor Place Mall and its nearby supporting commercial facilities, serves an east-west sector focused on I-20 on the state routes 92 and 5, and the Chapel Hill area. At the same time, the County is beginning to experience growth in corporate and executive offices, sometimes associated with manufacturing or distribution functions. The business center market (front office activities coupled with storage, transfer or distribution space) is also strong in the County, and expected to remain so.

Downtown Enhancement

The City of Douglasville is fortunate to have a traditional historic downtown shopping district. The Office of Commerce “Shop Douglas” program, has been aggressively marketing and enhancing the overall appearance and make-up of this traditional shopping street. Programs to enhance the downtown include:



nate to have a traditional historic City, in coordination with the Chamber First” program, has been aggressively overall appearance and make-up of this Programs to enhance the downtown

- Encouraging the development of the traditional downtown shopping district, restaurant, entertainment and cultural destination point;
- Developing special events and ongoing activities in the downtown area;
- Providing the necessary infrastructure such as utilities, parking, streetscape, and pedestrian amenities;
- Enhancing the appearance and identifying the boundaries of downtown through the use of distinctive elements such as light poles, flags, flower baskets, planters, signage and landscaping;
- Providing financial incentives and design services to encourage private property enhancement;
- Consideration of construction of a downtown commuter rail station as a cornerstone of the revitalization effort.

Master Planned Developments

Some of the recent development in the County has been PUDs, specifically, Chapel Hill and Annawakkee. This area has been aided by proper infrastructure of fiber optic cable, sewer, water, fire protection, etc. Recent attention to detail and amenities has aided Douglas County in beginning to attract both quality residential and commercial developments. The County has begun to implement regulations intending to attract high quality companies, while at the same time protecting the quality of life that is sought after in Douglas County.

■ Labor Force Analysis

Residents Jobs as shown in Table 9 shows the percentages of total employment by occupation classifications for 2000 in Douglas County, the State of Georgia and the Nation. The analysis looks at the occupations of the residents of the County, regardless of where they worked in the region.

As shown on the “Occupation of Residents,” 13.8% of the County's working residents in 2000 were employed in executive, administrative and managerial professions and 15.7% were employed in professional and technical specialty occupations, with an additional 18.7% of the workforce in clerical and administrative support, for a total of 48.2% of the workforce. Another 23.4% held jobs in the service and retail sectors, and 28.2% held jobs in production or other labor-intensive occupations. These figures reflect a very slight change from 1990, when approximately 46.5% of the labor force fell into the executive, professional and technical categories, 23.4% were employed in sales and services, and over 31% were “blue collar” workers. However, a significant change occurred within the individual occupation group of machine operators, assemblers and inspectors, which changed from 6.1% in 1990 to 13.4% in 2000. This may be partially attributed to the fact that in 2000 the Census removed the handlers, equipment cleaners and laborer category, and combined it with other non-skilled labor categories, most probably the machine operators employment category. This overall limited change underscores the predominance of affordable “starter” homes which have been constructed over the past decade, and a shortfall of move up and executive level homes which would

draw more persons with executive and managerial, professional, technical and related support to the community.

The number of white-collar employees living in Douglas County is lower in comparison to the state and the nation, as shown on Tables 9 and 10. In 1990, executive, professional, and technical support made up 28.2% and 30.1% of the state and national population, respectively, compared to Douglas County's 25.7%. Clerical support represented a higher proportion in the County than at the state and national levels, at 20.8% compared to 16% and 16.3% respectively. Service and sales were also lower in proportional representation than the state and nation. At the other end of the scale, Douglas's proportion of skilled laborers (Precision Production, Craft and Repair) was around 15% com-

Table 9
Comparison of Employment by Occupation - 1990
 Douglas County, State, and Nation

Occupation	Employment (1990)			Percentage of Total Employment		
	County	State	Nation	County	State	Nation
Executive, Administrative and Managerial (not Farm)	5,113	378,984	14,227,916	13.66%	12.26%	12.32%
Professional and Technical Specialty	3,325	383,012	16,287,187	8.88%	12.39%	14.11%
Technicians & Related Support	1,196	110,766	4,251,007	3.20%	3.58%	3.68%
Sales	4,157	379,746	13,606,870	11.11%	12.28%	11.79%
Clerical and Administrative Support	7,783	494,823	18,769,526	20.79%	16.00%	16.26%
Private Household Services	57	15,882	520,183	0.15%	0.51%	0.45%
Protective Services	715	52,596	1,981,723	1.91%	1.70%	1.72%
Service Occupations (not Protective & Household)	3,131	302,084	12,746,927	8.36%	9.77%	11.04%
Farming, Fishing and Forestry	371	68,111	2,835,950	0.99%	2.20%	2.46%
Precision Production, Craft, and Repair	5,607	366,819	13,077,829	14.98%	11.86%	11.33%
Machine Operators, Assemblers & Inspectors	2,270	262,930	7,886,595	6.06%	8.50%	6.83%
Transportation & Material Moving	2,158	142,189	4,715,847	5.77%	4.60%	4.08%
Handlers, Equipment Cleaners, helpers & Laborers	1,548	134,115	4,545,345	4.14%	4.34%	3.94%

Employment figures from Georgia Department of Labor.

pared to 11.9% for the state and 11.3% for the nation, while the County's proportion of unskilled and semi-skilled working residents (Operators, Fabricators, Transportation and Laborers) was 15.5% compared to 17.5% of the state and 24.8% of the U.S.

By 2000, the proportion of white collar employees living in the County remained below that of the state and nation. Executive, professional, and technical support made up 33.3% and 34.6% of the state and national population, respectively, compared to Douglas County's 29.6%. The gap between the proportions of clerical and administrative support had nearly disappeared, at 12.1% in the County, compared to 11.9% for the state and 11.6% for the nation. The County remained below the state and nation in proportional representation of skilled labor, at 6.9% compared to 9.2% and 8.7% respectively, and again exceed the state and nation in semi- and unskilled labor categories.

If Douglas County's businesses have to rely solely on the County's labor pool to operate, there would be an excess of employees and an insufficient match of employment options to labor skills. While many people who work in the County live outside of the County itself, many residents of the County should not have to commute outside of the County. As traffic congestion and commuting time increases access to employment opportunities may become a problem for business in the future. It is important to address continued availability of quality, move-up and executive housing within the area, and increased transportation options for production workers and laborers, including public transportation.

Table 10
Comparison of Employment by Occupation - 2000
 Douglas County, State, and Nation

Occupation	Employment (2000)			Percentage of Total Employment		
	County	State	Nation	County	State	Nation
Executive, Administrative and Managerial (not Farm)	6,489	538,647	17,448,038	13.84%	14.29%	13.85%
Professional and Technical Specialty	7,367	717,312	26,198,693	15.72%	19.03%	20.79%
Technicians & Related Support	n/a	n/a	n/a			
Sales	5,672	446,876	14,592,699	12.10%	11.85%	11.58%
Clerical and Administrative Support	8,769	581,364	20,028,691	18.71%	15.42%	15.89%
Private Household Services	n/a	n/a	n/a			
Protective Services	n/a	n/a	n/a			
Service Occupations (not Protective & Household)	5,285	444,077	15,575,101	11.28%	11.78%	12.36%
Farming, Fishing and Forestry	82	24,489	951,810	0.17%	0.65%	0.76%
Precision Production, Craft, and Repair	3,235	346,326	11,008,625	6.90%	9.19%	8.74%
Machine Operators, Assemblers & Inspectors	6,290	415,849	12,256,138	13.42%	11.03%	9.73%
Transportation & Material Moving	3,680	254,652	7,959,871	7.85%	6.76%	6.32%
Handlers, Equipment Cleaners, Helpers & Laborers	n/a	n/a	n/a			

Employment figures from Georgia Department of Labor.

Education

There are 19 elementary schools, 6 middle schools and 4 high schools in the public school system within the County, as well as seven private facilities (in the cities of Douglasville, Lithia Springs and Villa Rica) and a special education school. As analyzed in the Population chapter, Douglas County has a moderately educated work force that made significant increases between 1980 and 2000. In 1990, 34.4% of the adult population had some college education and above and 16.9% of the population were college graduates, as compared to 1980 when 20.7% of the adult population had some college education and 9.1% were college graduates. By 2000, almost 50% of the population had completed some college and above, and 24.5% had a college degree. In numerical terms, the number of adults with less than a high school education actually went down, while the number of college graduates increased five-fold during the two decades.

Douglas's working age population is less educated than in many of the surrounding counties, and the State. In terms of the proportion of college graduates in 2000, Douglas County ranked number four out of six when compared with four surrounding counties and the State. Considering the proportion of adults with at least some college education, Douglas also ranked number four at 46.6% compared to Fulton overall (64.6%), Cobb (68%), Paulding (41.7%), and Carroll (36.9%), as well as the State of Georgia (49.6%).

Residents also have access to higher education and training opportunities close to home at the Douglas County campus of the West Central Technical College. In addition, there are 3 higher education facilities in the vicinity: Mercer University in Lithia Springs; and State University of West Georgia and West Central Technical College in Carrollton. There are also numerous colleges and universities in the Metro Atlanta area, including the world famous Georgia Institute of Technology.

Labor Force Participation

"Labor Force participation 1990 and 2000" presents data on the employment status of the labor force in Douglas County and compares it to the state and the nation. The tables also reflect the major changes that occurred in the County during the growth of the last decade.

Table 11
Comparison of Employment Status - 1990
 Douglas County, State, and Nation

Status	Employment (1990)			Percentage of Total Employment		
	County	State	Nation	County	State	Nation
Males						
Civilian Employed	20,346	1,652,016	62,639,048	38.21%	33.44%	32.75%
Civilian Unemployed	862	89,593	4,257,993	1.62%	1.81%	2.23%
In Armed Forces	88	65,444	1,520,812	0.17%	1.32%	0.80%
Not in Labor Force	4,666	550,527	23,448,976	8.76%	11.14%	12.26%
Females						
Civilian Employed	17,085	1,440,358	52,792,388	32.09%	29.16%	27.60%
Civilian Unemployed	1,108	98,347	3,487,207	2.08%	1.99%	1.82%
In Armed Forces	12	7,614	184,961	0.02%	0.15%	0.10%
Not in Labor Force	9,080	1,035,875	42,961,952	17.05%	20.97%	22.46%
Total	53,247	4,939,774	191,293,337			

In 1990, 74% of the County's population over 16 was working or seeking employment. By 2000, this figure had dropped to 70.6% of the population working or seeking employment. To some extent, the difference is attributable to the larger proportion of children in 2000 over 16 but not working, and the increase in women of workforce age choosing not to enter the workforce to raise families. The percentage of males in the civilian labor force in 1990 was 78.4%, which dropped to 74.9% in 2000.

Table 12
Comparison of Employment Status - 2000
 Douglas County, State, and Nation

Status	Employment (2000)			Percentage of Total Employment		
	County	State	Nation	County	State	Nation
Males						
Civilian Employed	25,216	2,051,523	69,091,443	36.37%	32.82%	31.81%
Civilian Unemployed	916	107,652	4,193,862	1.32%	1.72%	1.93%
In Armed Forces	67	57,840	987,898	0.10%	0.93%	0.45%
Not in Labor Force	7,449	815,427	30,709,079	10.74%	13.05%	14.14%
Females						
Civilian Employed	21,728	1,788,233	60,630,069	31.34%	28.61%	27.92%
Civilian Unemployed	962	115,400	3,753,424	1.39%	1.85%	1.73%
In Armed Forces	32	9,018	164,239	0.05%	0.14%	0.08%
Not in Labor Force	12,964	1,305,594	47,638,063	18.70%	20.89%	21.94%
Total	69,334	6,250,687	217,168,077			

The change in the percentage of females 16 or older who were working or seeking employment in 1990 and 2000 is slight—decreasing from 62.6% to 60.9%, respectively.

Comparisons to the state and the U.S. are equally enlightening. Trends between 1990 and 2000 for the County, state and nation indicate a drop in active labor force participants and increase in the number and proportion of persons not in the labor force. However, in 1990, the participation of males and females 16 and older in Douglas's labor force far exceeded state and national averages. This trend continued to 2000, when state and national labor force participation rates were less than two-thirds for Georgia and the U.S., Douglas County's was almost three-quarters. Although the County's participation in the labor force is proportionately greater than the state or nation, the increase of persons not in the labor force between 1990 and 2000 is greater than that experienced by the state and nation. In 2000, 10.7% of the males were not in the labor force, representing a 1.9% increase, and the proportion of females not in the labor force was 18.7%, a 1.7% increase, for a total of a 3.6% increase. During the same period, state and U.S. non-participation increased only 1.9 and 1.4 percentage points, respectively, although the total non-participation still exceeded that of the County. In both the state and the nation, the proportion of women not participating in the workforce actually decreased, as compared to an increase in the County. Conversely, the proportion of men not in the workforce increased on a state and national basis, comparable to the increase experienced in the County.

It is possible that the percentage of the total labor force will continue to decrease, as young persons continue their education and remain out of the labor force, the population ages, or young families move into the area with one parent remaining out of the labor force to raise children. However, as income and education levels increase, business opportunities in the professional and high tech occupations are attracted to the area, and types of housing production expand to include more move-up and executive options, more employees may be attracted to reside in the County. Second, in 2000 there was a high proportion of the age cohort of "traditional family age," 25 to 44 who would be entering the labor force. This trend is expected to continue to 2025 as the population continues to grow and age. These figures suggest several different concurrent trends—a movement toward the one

wage-earner family as young families with small children locate in the County, an increasing proportion of middle age families with fewer children in the County, an increase in the educational status of persons over the age of 16, and an aging of the population.

Unemployment

Employment data for the Douglas County for 1993 through 2002 indicates that unemployment rates fell between 1993 from a high of 4.5% to a low of 2.8%, rising again in 2002 higher (4.9%) than they had been previously 10 years before. This trend occurred in surrounding jurisdictions as well. In 2002, the County ranked in the middle out of 5 counties, with Paulding County having the lowest unemployment rate, and Fulton County having the highest.

Statistics comparing Douglas County to the state and nation indicate that Douglas County has had a lower unemployment rate than both the state and the nation every year over the past decade, ranging around an average of 72% of the state's

Table 13
Comparison of Unemployment Rate
Douglas and Surrounding Counties, 1993-2002

Year	Unemployment Rate				
	Douglas*	Carroll	Cobb	Fulton	Paulding
1993	4.5	5.7	4.6	6.2	4.8
1994	4.0	4.7	4.2	5.8	3.6
1995	3.6	5.2	3.6	5.4	3.5
1996	3.2	5.1	3.0	5.0	2.6
1997	3.1	5.0	3.0	4.6	2.7
1998	3.0	4.5	2.7	4.1	2.3
1999	2.9	4.5	2.6	3.9	2.1
2000	2.8	4.2	2.5	3.6	2.2
2001	2.9	5.1	3.0	4.3	2.4
2002	4.9	5.7	4.7	6.4	4.1

Source: *The Georgia County Guide, 2003*, University of Georgia.
*Douglas County figures are for the entire county.

Table 14
Comparison of Unemployment Rate
County, State and Nation

Year	Unemployment Rate			County as % of	
	Douglas	State	Nation	State	Nation
1993	4.5	5.8	6.9	77.59%	65.22%
1994	4.0	5.2	6.1	76.71%	65.27%
1995	3.6	4.9	5.6	73.80%	64.27%
1996	3.2	4.6	5.4	68.94%	58.81%
1997	3.1	4.5	4.9	68.88%	63.21%
1998	3.0	4.2	4.5	72.41%	67.51%
1999	2.9	4.0	4.2	72.98%	68.78%
2000	2.8	3.7	4.0	75.68%	70.00%
2001	2.9	4.0	4.7	72.50%	61.70%
2002	4.9	5.1	5.8	96.08%	84.48%

Source: *The Georgia County Guide, 2003*, University of Georgia.
County figures are for all of Douglas County.

rate for all years except 2002, and comprising around an average of 64% of the nation's rate for every year except 2002. The same trend of a decrease in unemployment between 1993 and 2000 applies to the state and nation, where unemployment decreased from 5.8% and 6.9% respectively in 1990 to 3.7% and 4.0% respectively in 2000, as compared to 4.5% in 1993 to 2.8% in 2000 for the County. In the most recent year available, the difference in unemployment rate has decreased significantly, particularly between the state and County, where the unemployment rates are fairly comparable. Douglas County's unemployment rate remains below the nation in 2002, although the gap has reduced from 70% in 2000 to 84.8% in 2002.

Commuting Patterns

In 1990, Douglas County had a resident labor force of almost 36,493 and an employment base of over 15,215. However, in that year, only 12,081 workers who lived in the County, comprising 33.1% of the employed workforce, actually worked there. By 2000, the County had a

Table 15
Commuting Patterns
Historic and Current

Category	Count		Percentage	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Worked in County of Residence	12,081	16,924	33.10%	36.92%
Worked outside County of Residence	24,412	28,916	66.90%	63.08%

Figures from U.S. Bureau of the Census.

resident workforce of 45,840, of which 36.9% commuted elsewhere for employment, indicating a slight expansion of employment opportunities appropriate for residents of the County. Data on commuting patterns for 2000, presented on Table 15, indicate that 98% of the County's employed residents commuted outside of the County to work. Conversely, almost 8,000 of the County's employees, or 84%, commuted into the County every day to work.

Over 62 percent still commute to employment outside of the county as of 2000, down slightly from over 66 percent in 1990. In addition to over 36 percent of the commuters working within Douglas County, almost 31 percent of persons residing in Douglas County commute to Fulton County, 16.1 percent commute to Cobb County, 4.8 percent commute to DeKalb County, and 2.6 and 2.3 percent

Table 16
Commuting Patterns

Employed Residents of Douglas			Persons Working in Douglas		
County Where Employed	Employees	Percent of Total	County of Residence	Employees	Percent of Total
Carroll	1,057	2.29%	Carroll	3,438	10.61%
Clayton	1,196	2.59%	Clayton	567	1.75%
Cobb	7,450	16.13%	Cobb	4,011	12.37%
DeKalb	2,211	4.79%	DeKalb	674	2.08%
Douglas	16,924	36.65%	Douglas	16,924	52.21%
Fulton	14,253	30.87%	Fulton	1,192	3.68%
Gwinnett	747	1.62%	Haralson	562	1.73%
Paulding	596	1.29%	Paulding	2,865	8.84%
Other	1,742	3.77%	Other	2,182	6.73%
Total			Total		
46,176			32,415		

Source: Georgia Department of Labor/2000 U.S. Census.

commute to Clayton and Carroll Counties respectively. The remaining 6.7 percent commute to Paulding and Gwinnett counties, other locations in the state, or outside of the state. Out of state employment remains below 1 percent.

In 1980 there were 12,259 persons employed in Douglas County. By 2000 employment had doubled to 32,415. Over 52 percent of the persons employed in Douglas County reside in the county, with: 12.4 percent residing in Cobb County; 10.6 percent residing in Carroll County; 8.8 percent residing in Paulding County; 3.7 percent residing in Fulton County; 2.1 percent residing in DeKalb County; 1.7 percent residing in both Clayton and Haralson Counties; and 6.7 percent living in other counties or states. Almost 45% of the employment opportunities in 2000 are located within the incorporated city portions of the county.

If the labor force participation rate remains the same, in 2025 the potential 43,000 residents in the labor force residing in the unincorporated portions of Douglas County will be matched to an employment base of 63,538 or just less than 1.5 jobs for every working resident in the unincorporated County. As traffic congestion increases in the region and internal circulation is improved, it is anticipated that a much higher percentage of residents will work in the County than now. A major goal of the County is to increase live, work and play opportunities by providing the necessary housing opportunities and infrastructure, and expanding the base of employment opportunities. Adequate land is available to achieve this objective. As Douglas County moves closer to this goal, it is anticipated that a much higher percentage of the residential population will actually work within the County.

■ **Local Economic Development Resources**

Development Agencies

Effective economic development programs are a group effort, involving not only local government staff but also the cooperation of and resources available from other potential partners that have programs underway at various levels.

Development Authority of Douglas County

In February 1981 the Douglas County Board of Commissioners adopted a resolution creating the Development Authority of Douglas County. The body was activated in 1997 and has since held the primary role of financing targeted development projects through the issuance of revenue bonds. The Development Authority is the central point of contact for businesses looking to expand or locate operations in Douglasville and Douglas County. The office maintains a database of available buildings and sites, tracks business financing programs and assists entrepreneurs in starting businesses in the County. Additionally, it is the center of economic development planning and marketing and is responsible for assisting and building relationships with existing businesses and industries. The Development Authority provides services designed to assist these businesses with every facet of the location process. Services provided include:

- Confidential site selection services for commercial and industrial;
- Program Financing and Incentives;
- Demographic and Consumer Information

Douglas County Chamber of Commerce

The Chamber has an economic development program and offers an excellent resource to the County for coordinating activities. The Chamber works closely with the Development Authority of Douglas County in coordinating with other agencies and resources, as well as with State Industry, Tourism and Trade, and can act as a go-between to these agencies on behalf of the County. The Chamber develops a Local Policy Agenda, based on a semi-annual survey of the Chamber membership, to inform members of the local governing bodies of the business community's position on pertinent issues. The Chamber staff attends meetings at the City of Douglasville and its working committees and well as meetings of the Douglas County Board of Commissioners. The Chamber also meets frequently with officials on matters of interest to the business community. During 2003-2004, the Chamber has acted on issues of stormwater management, sales tax, property taxes, land use, zoning and tourism.

Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce

The Metro Atlanta Chamber is involved in a wide range of economic development and regional improvement programs, some of which have particular significance for Douglas County. The Metro Atlanta Chamber's overall goal is regional in scope and addresses the attraction, creation and retention of business in metro Atlanta, which includes particular attention to the maintenance and provision of the physical infrastructure needed to support and expand the business base. The Metro Atlanta Chamber provides a coordinated program of business promotion at the national and international level, promoting the entire metro area, including Douglas County. The Chamber's promotional activities emphasize the biomedical fields, telecommunications and software, all of which are important parts of Douglas County's desired future employment base.

Resources—Programs and Tools

Douglas County Chamber of Commerce Entrepreneurial Initiatives

The Douglas County Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to making businesses achieve success with a variety of services geared toward small and growing businesses. A few of the services offered include:

Small Business Development Center – Access to technical and financial assistance specifically for small business. Business strategy, finance and accounting assistance and market analysis and planning are a few of the topics available for assistance.

Entrepreneur's Tool Kit – The "Who's Who" of starting a business in Douglas County. The kit provides contacts, what forms to fill out, permits required, where to go, the phone numbers and addresses needed to get the business started.

Entrepreneur Roundtables – Business owners are brought together to discuss best practices, business issues, success stories and offer networking opportunities.

Small Business Needs Survey – Business needs are assessed and match with resources.

Networking/Advertising Opportunities – Links business owners to business owners, and to potential customers through word of mouth advertising.

Other promotional activities sponsored by the Chamber include a Business to Business Trade Expo, Ribbon Cutting/Open House service, networking events, a member to member directory and a community web portal.

Douglas County Chamber of Commerce Community Development Initiatives

Strengthening and expanding partnerships throughout the community is a cornerstone of the Douglas County Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber works in a collaborative fashion, channeling the business community's support to social and community focused organization.

Board of Education – Mentoring students, partnering business and schools and matching internship/apprenticeship opportunities are a few of the ways that the Douglas Chamber works to enhance the public education system with private sector.

Literacy Council – Provides every citizen of the County the opportunity to enjoy the rewards of education. The Chamber is a participant of the certified Literate Community program, dedicated to stamping out illiteracy in the community.

Workforce Development Council – Made up of area educators and employers, the Council assesses employment challenges and seeks innovative solutions.

Community Visioning (Douglas Blueprint) – This 10 year vision for the future of the County serves as a roadmap for strategic growth, land use, planning and zoning, greenspace, workforce and leadership and civic infrastructure issues. A Steering Committee of community leaders meets regularly to keep this plan dynamic.

Social Services – The Chamber and its volunteers are involved in virtually every community service, including United Way, Women's Shelter, Children's Advocacy, and many others.

Quick Start

The Quick Start Training Program provides high quality, tailored training at no cost to area business. Both manufacturing training and service training are available to manufacturing operations, warehouse and distribution centers, national and international corporate headquarters, information technologies and customer service operations. The program includes a training needs analysis, a detailed training program, high quality training and expert training staff.

Georgia Center for Advanced Telecommunications Technology (GCATT)

GCATT is an initiative of real virtual clusters of excellence in advanced telecommunications. GCATT supports development of the latest technologies and applications in communications, computing and content processing. Formed in 1991, GCATT is a program of the Georgia Research Alliance, a public/private partnership fostering technology-based economic development across the state. Although GCATT is based at Georgia Tech, it supports research programs in advanced telecommunications at the Georgia Research Alliance's six research universities.

The GCATT partnership of industry, government and universities works together in a three-pronged strategy of Technology, Policy and Commercialization for high-tech economic development in Georgia. There are approximately 20 different research centers that fall under the GCATT umbrella. The research programs of the centers are funded by the industry and government through grants, industry consortia and directed research projects. GCATT staff provides support by promoting collaboration across the various research centers, leveraging the knowledge and resources that already exists.

Yamacraw

Yamacraw is an economic development initiative to make Georgia a world leader in the design of broadband communications systems, devices and chips—thus creating in Georgia both high-paying design jobs and support and supply-chain jobs. Yamacraw research is grouped in three targeted areas of broadband technology: Embedded Software, Broadband Access Devices and System Prototyping. At its core, Yamacraw is made up of 200-300 world-class researchers who take the best of

technologies one step further by integrating them to patent a new generation of compatible infrastructure products.

Georgia Power Company, Economic Development Division

Georgia Power is the oldest economic developer in Georgia, and has an Economic Development Division whose primary role is to attract businesses to the state. The Economic Development Division of Georgia Power has two sections, a domestic section and an international section. Each section is responsible for marketing Georgia as a positive place to do business. There are 130 local offices statewide with a primary concern of job development. Although Georgia Power has offices throughout the state, it does not provide any specialized programs for any particular city or county. Georgia Power's primary local contact for economic development issues are generally with the Chamber's of Commerce. Alternative points of contact are with the various levels of government in Georgia Power's service area. Georgia Power has in the past formed different alliances with other organizations and agencies for the purpose of attracting businesses to an area.

Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism

The Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism (GDITT) is a state funded agency mandated to serve as agent for all the cities and counties in the state of Georgia. GDITT's primary purpose is to assist potential businesses considering locating in the state of Georgia in identifying an optimal location for their operational needs. The Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism also assist the movie industry in locating appropriate movie sets throughout the state of Georgia. The identification of international markets for the export of Georgia goods and services is another duty of GDITT.

Because GDITT is a statewide agency, there are no specific programs or projects tailored to the needs of Douglas. In the event that a potential business client is interested in the Douglas area, GDITT policy is to work with both the Chamber of Commerce and the local governmental entity. GDITT has a working relationship with the utility companies, rail systems, banks, universities, and other agencies with resources to facilitate economic development. GDITT maintains a substantial computer based inventory of commercial and industrial sites throughout Georgia.

Oglethorpe Power

Oglethorpe Power maintains a robust economic development program that works in concert with the local communities, the Georgia Department of Industry, Trade & Tourism and other statewide economic development programs to bring industry into Georgia. Over the past 20 years, these efforts have resulted in numerous commercial and industrial firms locating or expanding in the state. Oglethorpe Power is a founding member of the Georgia Allies, a public-private economic development partnership of ten private companies with statewide economic development interests and the Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism. The Georgia Center for Site Selection was established to help businesses, both large and small, establish or expand operations in Georgia. Information on how to find the most appropriate community in Georgia, and information regarding available industrial buildings and sites to statistical information on communities across Georgia is provide free of charge.

Georgia Business Expansion Support Act

In 1994, the State passed legislation for tax credits against state income taxes to encourage economic development in Georgia. Some of the programs are targeted to specific industry groups manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, processing, telecommunications, tourism, or research and development, but does not include retail business).

Job tax credits and investment tax credits are available to the targeted industry groups at different levels, depending on the relative need of the area for economic development. Some credits are

available to specific industry groups, while others apply to all employers. Overall, Douglas County and its cities are categorized, as “Tier 4” communities within the plan and qualifying companies are eligible for associated credits. The following is a summary of the various provisions of the Act as they relate to Douglas County:

Special Tax Programs

There are several special tax programs in place in other jurisdictions that are not currently utilized in Douglas County:

Urban Enterprise Zone. Under an Urban Enterprise Zone, specific areas are delineated where deteriorating physical or market conditions have resulted in little or no investment in property improvements or development. Within an Urban Enterprise Zone, if a property owner renovates or develops a site, the County's property taxes can be frozen at the pre-improvement level for a specified time period, then rising in annual steps to full value taxation at the end of the period. This approach is useful in encouraging investment that would otherwise not occur, and in eventually increasing the tax base where taxes would otherwise continue to fall through depreciation.

Urban Enterprise Zones can be set up for commercial, industrial or housing investment, but should be used only where development would not otherwise occur.

Tax Increment Financing. This approach allows property taxes to rise as sites are developed or improved, but directs all or some of the increase over and above the pre-improvement tax level into public facilities that have been built to support the area's revitalization. In effect, the government takes the risk through provision of public improvements up front, and then pays itself back through the higher tax collection increment while assuring that the pre-improvement tax collections continue to go into the general fund. Once the improvements are paid for, all of the taxes will go into the general fund. This approach can be very useful in a carefully controlled revitalization effort for a deteriorating area, where future renovations and development can be reasonably anticipated but are dependent on a general improvement to the area.

Community Improvement Districts: The Georgia Constitution provides for a special kind of tax district called a Community Improvement District (CID). This type of district can be created only upon the petition of the property owners themselves, and is managed by a board that includes representatives of the property owners and the County. Under a CID, only nonresidential property is subject to the special tax, and the funds must be used only for certain public facilities, such as roads and water and sewer utilities. The funds can be used for both capital and operating expenditures, and the special nature of the Act allows the basis of taxation to be the development density or impact of a property as well as its assessed value. The Act also allows debt financing without referendum since a majority of the property owners (who must own at least 75% of the properties by value) must request the CID designation. A plus for the County is that debts of a CID are not debts of the government and do not affect the County's debt limit, while the CID can enjoy a lower interest rate due to its quasi-governmental structure.

■ **Assessment—Economic Development**

Over the last two decades Douglas County has seen changes and growth both in its residential population and its employment opportunities. Currently it is estimated that nearly 32,415 people work in the County, primarily in the services and retail sectors. These sectors have grown as a response to Douglas County's location, growing amenities, reasonably priced housing market, available land, slowly increasing potential buying power of the residential population and an improving quality of life. Employment growth is expected to continue over the next 25 years, but at a much faster rate de-

spite the potential trend of the national economy slowing down, particularly as the availability of land for new non-residential development is absorbed. Several issues have emerged during this economic development analysis:

Services and retail sales are the primary sectors in the Douglas County market, encompassing over 54.4% of the total employment market. The services sector includes the majority of employment activity that is done within an office building or business park.

Manufacturing, Technology and Warehousing will continue to increase numerically over the next 25 years, but will encompass less than 8% of the entire employment market by 2025 due to the overwhelming growth of the service and retail sectors.

It is expected that between 2000 and 2025 the County will attract 44,600 new jobs, or an increase of 194%.

Infrastructure and available land will play a critical role in attracting the appropriate mix of employment opportunities. The County must assure that there is adequately zoned land with appropriate infrastructure to service the expected growth in employment within the County. Over the 2004 to 2025 planning period, over 18 million square feet of occupied non-residential space will be needed to accommodate employment growth for the unincorporated area of the County. Based on a standard floor area per acre ratio, this equates to almost 2,000 acres of land needed for development of the increased need for non-residential space. Overall, approximately 24.6 million square feet of new floor area could be accommodated by current zoning, the clear majority of which is zoned in the industrial districts (79%). However, the distribution of vacant land by zoning category does not match the future demand by land use type appropriately. The current zoning provides far more land than needed for industrial uses, while only about one-half of the retail commercial demand can be accommodated on commercially zoned land. Land specifically zoned for office uses will be in particularly short supply; and although offices can be allowed in commercial zoning districts, there is insufficient land zoned commercial to accommodate the retail development alone.

Previous economic development efforts have been aimed at attracting industrial employment to the area. Greater efforts should be made to accommodate projected office and retail commercial to support residential growth.

Industrially zoned land can be used for certain professional and administrative office uses, and limited commercial use, which could absorb some of the excess industrial zoning. While mid-rise office parks are often found in and around the kind and quality of industrial development light industrial uses require, industrial zoning is often unattractive to commercial and office development oriented to retail sales and personal services. While the County contains many more acres of industrial land than 2025 forecasts would absorb, retaining an excess of land for development beyond 2025 is not inappropriate. While some vacant industrially zoned land may not be well located for non-industrial uses, some should be considered for re-zoning to commercial and office uses.

Upwards of 600 acres of additional office and commercially zoned land is needed to accommodate future retail and service uses, both of which will be attracted to the County by its population growth and resulting increase in disposable income. The potential for rezoning some of the available industrial acreage, where it can best accommodate commercial and office uses, should be considered.

Commuter patterns suggest that there are limited employment opportunities for upper management, professional and skilled employees living in the County.

The local economy is heavily dependent on the service and retail sectors operations, with a deficit in high tech and management/professional sectors. The County should look at ways to further diversify the local economy to reduce its heavy reliance on these sectors.

Education levels lag behind a number of surrounding communities. Continued economic growth and stability will depend on increased educational levels for all age groups and degree levels.

Retail sales will continue to grow in response to the population growth and increasing incomes in the Douglas County area. Appropriate land and infrastructure should be provided to meet this need.

The City of Douglasville has invested substantially in the initial redevelopment of historic downtown Douglasville. Due to these efforts the downtown area is planned to become a destination for area residents for shopping, recreating and eating. The historic character of this area has been emphasized through several events. The City in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce will continue to promote this area.

Legitimate start up businesses cannot afford even the low commercial lease rates that Douglas County has to offer. The County needs to develop mechanisms for fledgling companies to effectively do business and get off the ground.

4. _____ Housing

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4. Housing

■ Introduction

The characteristics and trends within a community are important indicators of future housing needs and policies..

The purpose of assessing Douglas County's housing stock is to:

1. Assess the current housing stock in terms of overall population demographics, special needs populations, economic development and affordability characteristics.
2. Determine the County's future housing needs in conjunction with population projections, economic development and community goals and policies.
3. Discover and investigate any local housing problems such as substandard housing, over building, infrastructure and land use suitability.
4. Assess whether an adequate, appropriate, affordable and varied supply of housing is being offered in Douglas County to meet the future needs of its citizens.
5. Develop an implementation plan to promote the County s vision and to provide the adequate provision of housing for all sectors of the population in the future.

Due to the desirability of the region, Douglas County faces increasing development pressures as both a bedroom community to the metropolitan area and as a potential employment center. The Housing Element promotes a mix and balance of residential development options available to existing and future residents of the County, in the spirit of maintaining the small town low-density character as desired by county residents.



■ Residential Growth in Douglas County

The beginning of European settlement, in what is now known as Douglas County, began in the 1820 s, primarily from Virginia, the Carolina s, and the eastern portions of Georgia. Land grants increased the rate of settlement. Rural farming was the major source of income until the development of mills in the 1840 s and the incurrence of railroads in the 1880 s.



Because of its proximity to Atlanta, abundance of vacant land, and the availability of affordable housing stock, Douglas County has undergone a transformation over the last decade from a totally rural county to a bedroom community within the Atlanta metropolitan area.

Over the last 30 years the County has been urbanizing rapidly, with a large portion of growth over the last 10 years. Thirty-two percent of all dwelling units were constructed over this 10-year period.



A full two-thirds of those who reside in Douglas County are employed elsewhere in the region. In 1990 the County had an estimated 26,495 housing units, up from 17,746 in 1980. By the year 2000 the United States Census identified 34,825 housing units in Douglas County, a 31.4% increase during the 10-year period. Following current trends the County is expected to contain 92,697 housing units by the year 2025. A predominate theme within the Douglas County Vision statement is the preservation of the County s rural and small town character. Therefore, large acreage estates, and single family residential currently is the predominant housing type within Douglas County; and it is expected that this trend will continue.

■ Types of Housing Units

Current Housing Stock

The predominate housing type within Douglas County, both in the 1990 census and the 2000 census was overwhelmingly single-family houses. The single-family house category includes stick built attached and detached single-family units in addition to manufactured housing. Stick built single-family housing predominated the housing market in both 1990 and 2000, capturing 74.8% of the market in 1990 and 76.7% in the 2000 census. In the year 2000 single-family housing comprised 84.6% of the total housing market, inclusive of mobile homes, detached and attached single-family units. This is a decrease from 1980, where single-family units, inclusive of mobile homes, constituted over 95% of the housing stock. Numerically, there are 26,717 single family detached and attached units as of the 2000 census versus 19,819 in the 1990 census, an increase of 6,898 units or 34.8 percent. Proportionally, however, the representation of stick built single-family attached and detached units within the total housing stock has remained fairly constant between 1990 and 2000. The primary difference occurs in the proportion and numerical representation of manufactured homes.

Data indicates that within the third component of single-family housing, manufactured

housing, both the actual numbers and percentage of manufactured housing in Douglas County is decreasing. Numerically, there were 2,756 mobile home units as of the 2000 census versus 2,933 in the 1990 census, a decrease of 177 units or 6%.

Table 1
Dwelling Units - Percentage by Type
 Historic and Current

	1980	1990	2000
Single-Family Detached	83.32%	73.27%	74.71%
Single-Family Attached		1.53%	2.01%
Multi-Family	4.42%	14.13%	15.37%
Mobile Home	12.26%	11.07%	7.91%

Multi-family housing units totaled

3,743 in 1990, or 14.1% of the market, and 5,352 in 2000 or 15.4% of the market. This clearly has been one of the fastest growing housing sectors in Douglas County during the 1990s in numerical terms, reflecting a 43% increase in total number of multi-family units over the decade.

Data pertaining to type of unit can be tracked for both incorporated and unincorporated portions of the County, although slight discrepancies in the numerical counts for 1990 from STF 1 and STF 3 are noted. In 1990, there were 4,796 total units in the incorporated areas of the county, inclusive of Douglasville and small portions of Austell and Villa Rica, constituting 18.1% of the total County housing stock. Of this, almost 98% of the units were located within the city of Douglasville. In 2000, the number of housing units within the incorporated areas totaled 8,174, comprising 23.5% of the total housing stock in the county.

The percentage of single-family units to the total units in the incorporated area was also significantly lower than in the remaining unincorporated county, at 67.7% of the total (inclusive of single family detached and attached units, and mobile homes) in comparison to 90% of the total units for the unincorporated county. By 2000, the proportion of single-family units to the total in the incorporated area had slightly reduced to 66.4%, partly due to the numerical drop in the number of mobile home units and a large increase in the number of multi-family units. In comparison, the proportion of single-family units to total units in the unincorporated county in 1990 was 90.2%, remaining constant in 2000.



Table 2
Trends in Housing Type
 1990 - 2000

	1990		2000		Percent Change
	Units	%	Units	%	
Douglas County - Total					
Single-Family					
<i>SF Detached</i>	19,414	73.3%	26,017	74.7%	1.43%
<i>SF Attached</i>	405	1.5%	700	2.0%	0.48%
<i>Manufactured Home</i>	2,933	11.1%	2,756	7.9%	-3.16%
Total Single Family	22,752	85.9%	29,473	84.6%	-1.24%
Multi-Family (over 9 units)	1,368	5.2%	2,205	6.3%	1.17%
Duplex	588	2.2%	833	2.4%	0.17%
3 to 9 units/building	1,678	6.3%	2,310	6.6%	0.30%
Other*	109	0.4%	4	0.0%	-0.40%
Total--All Units	26,495	100.0%	34,825	100.0%	
Douglas County - Unincorporated					
Single-Family					
<i>SF Detached</i>	16,841	77.6%	21,379	80.2%	2.60%
<i>SF Attached</i>	241	1.1%	342	1.3%	0.20%
<i>Manufactured Home</i>	2,484	11.4%	2,322	8.7%	-2.70%
Total Single Family	19,566	90.1%	24,043	90.2%	0.10%
Multi-Family (over 9 units)	1,145	5.3%	1,340	5.0%	-0.30%
Duplex	354	1.6%	381	1.4%	-0.20%
3 to 9 units/building	505	2.3%	883	3.3%	1.00%
Total Multi-Family	2,004	9.3%	2,604	9.8%	0.50%
Other*	129	0.6%	4	0.0%	-0.58%
Total--All Units	21,699	100.0%	26,651	100.0%	

Source: 2000 Census, STF1 Database

Conversely, 33.5% of the housing stock in the incorporated area was multi-family in 2000, increasing slightly from 31.0% in 1990. Within the unincorporated county, 9.2% of the housing stock was comprised of multi-family units in 1990, increasing to 9.8% by 2000.

Numerically a significant change has occurred between the incorporated and unincorporated areas in terms of multi-family units. In 1990, there were 1,486 multi-family units in the incorporated areas and 2,004 in the unincorporated area. By 2000, there were more multi-family units in the in-



incorporated area than the unincorporated area at 2,733 and 2,604 respectively. This represents a numerical increase in the incorporated area of 84%, as compared to a 29.9% increase numerically in the unincorporated area. By 2000, multifamily units in the incorporated area comprised 7.8% of the total county stock as compared to 7.5% in the unincorporated area, although over 76% of all housing units in the county are located in the unincorporated area. This data suggests that the majority of new multi-family housing has been occurring within the city of Douglasville. As one might suspect, as the urban area of Douglas County, the City of Douglasville provides a much greater density and variety of housing types for the county as a whole.

The most noticeable change occurred in the distribution of manufactured housing units within the incorporated and unincorporated areas. In 1990, mobile homes constituted 10% of the housing stock within incorporated areas and 11% of the housing stock within unincorporated areas respectively. By 2000, these proportions had decreased to 4.7% of the housing stock within incorporated areas and 8.7% of the housing stock within unincorporated areas respectively. Statistics indicate that the majority of mobile home units are located within the unincorporated county.



Projected housing unit trends

Future housing-type demand will depend on a number of variables from availability and economics, to the changes in demographics in Douglas County and Douglasville. The demand analysis for the county (including Douglasville) shows the demand for 92,697 units by 2025, based on a progression of the same breakdown in units by type as existed in 2000. The forecast indicates that by 2025 the number of multi-family units in the incorporated areas will be almost double that of the unincorporated area - at approximately 10,581 multi-family units (inclusive of duplex units) within the incorporated areas, as compared to 5,517 multi-family units in the unincorporated county.

A recent trend in residential development in the County has been the master planned development, where residential uses are combined with amenities and open space. Although an overall general per acre density applies, natural resources can be protected through clustering of units or subdivision into smaller lots to allow for preservation of natural resources, Greenspace, open space and provision of amenities such as swimming pools, nature trails, parkland or passive open space areas, playfields, ponds or lakes, golf courses and putting greens, and other such activity sites. The county has streamlined this process and will strongly encourage all future development to utilize this process.

Review of building permit activity during the period from 1995 to 2000 indicates that slightly over one-third of the development has been for multi-family housing products. The remainder of the development, over 61%, has been single-family units, with almost 55% being single family detached. Approximately 6.4% of the permitted development has been for single-family attached projects, which were processed as two development projects. There have been no new mobile homes approved. Actually, the number of mobile homes in the



County is decreasing, both numerically and proportionally, from over 12 percent of the total stock in 1980, to 11.1 percent of the total in 1990, decreasing to 7.9 percent in 2000. Based on past development trends and objectives of the County, it is anticipated that single-family detached units will continue to be the prevalent form of residential development in the next decade in the unincorporated county area. Based on the new master planned development parameters, higher density single-family products may be targeted to mixed-use developments.

■ Age and condition of housing

While the County's housing stock is relatively new and contains most modern conveniences, some older subdivisions exhibit early signs of deterioration and lack of maintenance. Age and condition of housing are primary indicators of neighborhood decline and potential housing intervention programs. It would be to the County's advantage to implement a proactive inspection program coupled with some form of maintenance incentives and perhaps targeted financial assistance. A number of housing programs at the State and Federal level could be utilized to assist in funding. The elderly would be a positive target group to begin with and programs could be later expanded to include low and moderate-income households.

Age

Housing age is a potential factor for determining the need for rehabilitation. Without proper maintenance, housing units deteriorate over time. In construction terms, 30 years generally serves as a standard for the initial life of a house. After 30 years, most housing units require some form of rehabilitation, such as roof repair or replacement, new plumbing, concrete repair, paint, wood trim repair or replacement, heating and cooling system upgrades, and in some cases interior renovation (appliances primarily in kitchen and bath). Also, older housing units may not be built to current housing standards for fire or other safety factors

Douglas County's residential growth has been relatively recent in nature, which is reflected in the age of its housing stock. A total of 20,069 housing units, or 58 percent of the total stock, were built in Douglas County between 1980 and March 2000. Within the City of Douglasville, 70 percent of the units were constructed between 1980 and March 2000. This compares to only 50 percent for the State of Georgia. Although numerically the amount of growth experienced in the unincorporated county was greater than in the city of Douglasville, the statistics reflect a higher rate of growth in the vicinity of Douglasville over the past two decades.



Only 800 housing units currently exist in Douglas County (or 2.3 percent) which were built before 1939, and 609 (1.7 percent) built between 1940 and 1949, bringing the total for homes over 50 years of age to 4.0 percent of the housing stock. Proportionately, a greater number of older homes (pre-1950) are found within the incorporated area of Douglasville, with 6.8% of the units over 50 years in age as compared to 3.3% for the unincorporated county area. As of 2000, the State of Georgia had 192,972 housing units, or 5.9 percent, which were built before 1939, a reduction from 213,712 units reported in 1990. Even con-

sidering the demolition of units between 1950 and today, it is apparent that the bulk of residential development has occurred only recently (Table 3).

Condition

Housing is considered substandard when conditions are found to be below the minimum standards defined by Section 1001 of the Uniform Housing Code. Households living in substandard conditions are considered in being in need of housing assistance even if they are not seeking alternative housing arrangements.

In addition to visible structural deficiency, the lack of certain infrastructure and utilities often serves as an indicator of substandard conditions. The lack of plumbing, the type of heat source used, and the presence (or absence) of complete kitchen facilities are often used as indicators of housing condition. As of 2000, less than one-half of one percent (0.3%) of housing units in Douglas County lack complete plumbing and less than one-half of one percent (0.4%) of housing units lack complete kitchen facilities (Table 4). Similar statistics apply to those units within the city of Douglasville. The State of Georgia had 0.9 percent of units lacking complete plumbing facilities and 1.0 percent of units lacking complete kitchen facilities as of 2000.

The incidence of persons living in structures with no plumbing facilities may be partially attributed to the fact that persons are residing in structures that are not intended as dwelling units, for example the conversion of garages, basements or sheds to a residence although they do not contain plumbing or kitchen facilities. As well, such units may not incorporate heating mechanisms and may depend on space heaters, or have no source of heating. There appears to be a correlation between the number of units with no plumbing facilities (112) and the number, which do not utilize fuel (117). It is interesting to note that 14 percent of those units lacking complete plumbing facilities were built prior to 1960. The majority of units lacking plumbing facilities appear to have been built in the periods between 1995 and 1998, and 1970 to 1979, perhaps reflecting the conversion of garages or basements to apartments with no plumbing or cooking facilities.

Douglas County's housing stock is relatively well maintained, yet there is a core of lower cost houses and manufactured homes that exhibit signs of moderate to significant deterioration. While this has no official documentation and no data on these structures currently exists, a visual survey of the County is sufficient to form this conclusion. Housing and property conditions may affect property values, internal and external perceptions, health and safety concerns. Problem areas include deteriorated siding roofing, and paved areas, lack of or insufficient landscaping, and litter and debris-filled yards. Additional data should be collected through housing surveys, inspections, and market studies in targeted areas resulting in an adequate County-wide housing, data base tied in with the eventual development of a Geographic Information System.

Presently, there is no data at the parcel level and no data on structural integrity. The problem of deteriorated housing should be met by programs, which offer incentives for compliance with developed standards and penalties for non-compliance. These programs should make use of grant funds, as available, from the Federal Government, State Government, ARC RDC if available, and private foundations.

Table 3
Housing Type, Age and Condition
Douglas County, Douglasville, Region and State Comparisons

	1980		1990		2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Single-Family	14,786	83.32%	19,819	74.80%	26,717	76.72%
SF Detached			19,414	73.27%	26,017	74.71%
SF Attached			405	1.53%	700	2.01%
Multi-Family	785	4.42%	3,743	14.13%	5,352	15.37%
Mobile Home	2,175	12.26%	2,933	11.07%	2,756	7.91%
Total Units	17,746		26,495		34,825	
Total Units						
ARC RDC			1,052,430		1,331,264	
Unincorporated Co			21,813		26,651	
Built Before 1939:						
Douglas County	1,223	6.89%	742	2.80%	800	2.30%
Douglasville			315	6.70%	239	3.02%
Unincorporated Co			427	1.96%	561	2.10%
Georgia	29,662		212,294	8.05%	192,972	5.88%
ARC RDC			56,329	5.35%	52,960	3.98%
Lacking Complete Plumbing:						
Douglas County	295	1.66%	112	0.42%	112	0.32%
Douglasville			11	0.23%	28	0.35%
Unincorporated Co			101	0.46%	84	0.32%
ARC RDC			4,367	0.41%	6,465	0.49%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

■ **Tenure and Vacancy in Douglas County’s Housing Supply**

Owner-Occupied and Renter-Occupied Housing

Owner-occupied units made up 74.8 percent of all occupied housing units in 2000, whereas renter-occupied units made up 25.2 percent of occupied units. Owner-occupancy has slightly decreased since 1990 when figures were 77.8 percent owner-occupied and 22.2

percent renter-occupied respectively. Conversely, renter-occupancy has slightly increased since 1990.

Following the above trend, the owner to renter ratio in the county in 2000 is 2.97, down from 3.50 in 1990 and 4.95 percent on 1980. In comparison, the owner to renter ratio in the State has been steadily increasing over the past 2 decades, yet still is well below the ratio in the county at 2.08. (Table 5). In comparison, 92.0 percent of the units in the city of Douglasville are occupied, with a vacancy rate of 8.0 percent. This differential may be attributed to a number of new units, which were completed but not yet occupied, or a higher turn-over in occupancy due to a higher proportion of rental units. As well, owner occupied units constituted 56.9 percent of the occupied housing stock, and 43.1 percent of the occupied units were renter occupied. This trend corresponds to the higher incidence of multi-family type units in the city.

Vacancy Rates

Of the total of 34,825 housing units in Douglas County, 32,822 units or 94.2 percent are occupied units with only 2,003 units, or 5.8 percent unoccupied. This figure is down from the 1990 figure of 9.2 percent. (Table 4).

The 2000 Census reports that approximately 2.3 percent of the ownership units in the county are vacant, with 8.7 percent of the rental units vacant. This closely compares to vacancy rates in the state, at 2.2 and 8.5 percent respectively. Mirroring the occupancy factors within the County, 39.1 percent of the vacant units are for rent, compared to over 50 percent in the city of Douglasville. An additional 29.0 percent of the units are for sale only, with approximately 10.0 percent of the units rented or sold, but not yet occupied. Of the vacant units in the county, 5.8 percent are held for vacation or seasonal use, comprising a very small percentage of the total housing stock.

Analysis of characteristics of vacant units on a countywide basis indicates that 47.6 percent of the vacant units are detached single family units, 16.3 percent are mobile homes, 25.8 percent are multi-family with 3 or more units, and 10.3 percent are either single family at-

Table 4
Housing Occupancy Characteristics
 Douglas County, Region and State Comparisons

	1980		1990		2000	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Owner Occupied Units	14,067	83.19%	18,880	77.77%	24,555	74.81%
Renter Occupied Units	2843	16.81%	5,397	22.23%	8,267	25.19%
Total Occupied Units	16,910	100.00%	24,277	100.00%	32,822	100.00%
Total Occupied Units						
Georgia	1,215,206		1,536,759		2,029,293	
ARC RDC	408,918		577,226		810,955	
Douglasville	n/a		4,162		7,275	
Unincorporated County	n/a		20,029		25,416	
Vacancy Rate						
Douglasville			520	11.10%	635	8.00%
Unincorporated County			1,670	7.70%	1,236	4.60%
Douglas County Total			2,218	8.40%	2,003	5.60%
Owner Vacancy Rate*						
Douglas County	n/a		n/a		2.31%	
Georgia	n/a		2.36%		2.24%	
ARC RDC	n/a		n/a		1.96%	
Renter Vacancy Rate*						
Douglas County	n/a		n/a		8.66%	
Georgia	n/a		12.36%		8.46%	
ARC RDC	n/a		n/a		7.14%	
Owner to Renter Ratio						
Douglas County	4.95		3.50		2.97	
Georgia	1.86		1.85		2.08	
ARC RDC	1.53		1.57		1.80	

* Vacancy rate data for 1980 is not consistent with 1990 due to changes in Census methodology.

NOTE: Figures for 1980 show Year-Round units only, while 1990 and 2000 show All Units.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

tached or duplex units. When broken down into city of Douglasville and remainder of unincorporated county area, (small portions of Austell and Villa Rica are included in this data), the characteristics change. Of the vacant units in the unincorporated area, 54.8 percent are single-family detached units, 3.2 percent are attached or duplex units, 22 percent are multi-family, and 20 percent are mobile homes. In comparison, 32.1 percent of the vacant units are single family detached, 25.7 percent are single family attached or duplex, 44.9 percent are multi-family, and only 8.3 percent are mobile homes. The characteristic of vacant properties again reflects trends in types of units being built in the incorporated and unincorporated areas of the county.

■ Cost of Housing

Existing Housing

Table 6
Comparison of Property Values and Rent
Region and State Comparisons

Category	1980		1990		2000	
	County as % of		County as % of		County as % of	
	ARC	RDC State	ARC	RDC State	ARC	RDC State
Median Property Value						
New Units	80.50%	166.23%	79.52%	102.95%	68.90%	99.00%
Existing Units					68.90%	99.00%
Median Monthly Rent	97.25%	162.09%	105.45%	129.36%	93.80%	122.77%

Within the Atlanta region, surrounding counties and the state, Douglas County is a comparably affordable place to live. Average home values and average rents are below that of the region in general. Median home values are comparable to those on a state-wide basis, but rents are higher than the statewide median, although costs in 2000 are becoming more

Table 5
Property Values and Rent
Douglas County, Region and State

Category	1980			1990			2000		
	Douglas	Region	State	Douglas	Region	State	Douglas	ARC RDC	State
Median Property Value	\$38,400	\$47,700	\$23,100	\$73,400	\$92,300	\$71,300	\$99,600	\$144,504	\$100,600
Median Monthly Rent	\$248	\$255	\$153	\$445	\$422	\$344	\$620	\$661	\$505

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

consistent than those of 10 years ago.

The median purchase cost of a home in Douglas County rose from \$73,400 in 1990 to \$99,600 in 2000 (the 2000 Census reports \$99,600 for all owner occupied housing, and a slightly higher figure of \$102,700 for specified owner occupied housing units, which may not include mobile homes), representing an increase of over 35%. Housing values in Douglas County were lower than housing values in the city of Douglasville, where the median housing price was \$114,400, as well as the surrounding Paulding and Cobb counties at \$103,600 and \$142,790 respectively.

**Table 7
Comparison of Housing Costs 2000
Douglas County and Surrounding Counties**

	<u>Douglas</u>	<u>Cobb</u>	<u>Paulding</u>
Owner Housing Value			
25th Percentile	\$84,600	\$109,900	\$88,800
Median	\$102,700	\$147,600	\$106,100
75th Percentile	\$141,500	\$206,200	\$136,000
Rental Housing Rents			
25th Percentile	\$499	\$593	\$371
Median	\$620	\$698	\$519
75th Percentile	\$726	\$831	\$641
Median Mobile Home	\$27,400	\$15,500	\$49,300

NOTE: In actual dollars for year reported. All figures are as reported by resident households.
Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

In comparison to the regional 10 county ARC ADC median figure of \$144,000, Douglas County housing costs are significantly lower representing an affordable place to live in the metropolitan Atlanta Area (Table 6). This disparity can be explained by examining specified housing units by value classification.

Over 16 percent of the Douglas County (inclusive of the city of Douglasville) housing stock is valued below \$79,999 and a little over half (50.6 percent) of its housing cost below \$100,000. The city of Douglasville had the highest number of units valued under \$79,999, equivalent to 22.3 percent of its housing stock. The high representation of homes valued at \$79,999 or less possibly reflects the 2,756 mobile homes in the county, to which the Census assigns a median value of \$27,400, and the high per-

centage of such housing within the City of Douglasville.

Comparatively, Cobb County had only 8.1 percent of its housing stock valued below \$79,999, and only 21.4 percent below \$100,000, whereas Paulding County had over 19 percent of its housing stock valued under \$79,999 and 46.9 percent below \$100,000.

The city of Douglasville had the highest number of units valued under \$79,999, equivalent to 22.3 percent of its housing stock. At the high range, only 32.4 percent of Douglas County's housing stock was valued over \$125,000 and only 10 percent over \$200,000. Douglas County is comparable to Paulding County where 31.1 percent of the housing stock was valued over



\$125,000. In contrast, Cobb County had over 63.6 percent of its housing stock valued over \$125,000 and 25.7 percent over \$200,000. As well, the city of Douglasville had 44.3 percent of its housing stock valued over \$125,000 and 19.2 percent valued over \$200,000, reflecting the new residential subdivisions targeted toward move-up and executive level housing within the city.

New Housing

Analysis of new home prices in the county and Douglasville reflect a number of new home communities at various price ranges. Data reported through the Multiple Listing Service tracking price listings of new homes, and listing price compared to sales price for existing homes for 2003 and the first quarter of 2004 provides a picture of the current housing market. General findings are as follows:

- As of 1/1/04, the average listing price of a sample of 2,920 new homes was \$184,108.
- Out of 1,308 resales, the average list price was \$166,014, with the average sales price slightly lower at \$164,765.
- A snapshot of homes sold in March 2004 yields the following information: 21 homes out of a sample of 113 properties (18.6%) sold for less than \$100,000; 50 (44.2%) homes sold for \$100,100 to \$149,999; 21 homes sold for \$150,000 to \$224,999 (18.6%); and the remaining 18.6% sold for over \$225,000. The majority of the homes listing over \$250,000 were located in one of three master planned developments and/or golf course subdivisions. Only one home sold for over \$400,000.

Table 8
Value for Owner-Occupied Housing Units
Douglas County, Douglasville and Unincorporated Area

Housing Value	Douglas County		Douglasville		Unincorporated	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Less than \$50,000	1,924	7.8%	376	9.1%	1,548	7.6%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	10,490	42.7%	1,373	33.2%	9,117	44.7%
\$100,000 to \$174,999	8,541	34.8%	1,288	31.1%	7,253	35.5%
\$175,000 - \$249,999	2,139	8.7%	625	15.1%	1,514	7.4%
\$250,000 +	1,461	6.0%	475	11.5%	986	4.8%
Total	24,555	100.0%	4,137	100.0%	20,418	100.0%

Source: 2000 Census

- Price per acre of raw land and farmland ranged from \$11,000 per acre to \$35,000 per acre.

Out of a sample of 141 new homes available as of 4/2004 from an internet listing service: 36.2 percent were selling for between \$117,900 and \$199,999; 46.8 percent were selling for between \$200,000 and \$299,999; 7.1 percent were selling for between \$300,000 and \$400,000; and 9.9 percent were selling for over \$400,000. A survey of 7 new residential subdivisions indicated that five of the subdivisions offered start up homes for \$200,000 and below, one



offered mid-priced move-up homes from \$200,000 to \$400,000 and one offered executive homes between \$300,000 to \$500,000. The data indicates that although the market is changing in the Douglas County area to include move-up and executive housing, it remains comprised of predominantly entry level and moderate priced single-family subdivisions.

Rental Costs

A summary of rent structures in the County, derived from Census information and internet real estate listings reflects the following information. The median contract rent in the County, including the city of Douglasville is \$620 per month, as compared to \$549 in 1990 and \$189 in 1980. Within the unincorporated area, only 3.3 percent of the total rental units were available for rents below \$350 per month, as compared to 11.5 percent in the city of Douglasville. A larger proportion, 21.2 percent, were available for rents between \$350 and \$600 per month. Proportionately, the city of Douglasville offered more rental units in the lower rental range than the unincorporated County. The largest proportion of units (64.0%) fell within the \$600 to \$999 per month range, with only 11.5 percent renting for over \$1,000 per month.

Table 9
Rental Structure for All Rental Units
Douglas County, Douglasville and Unincorporated Area

	<u>Douglas County</u>		<u>Douglasville</u>		<u>Unincorporated</u>	
Monthly Cash Rent	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Less than \$349	501	6.5%	346	11.5%	155	3.3%
\$350 to \$599	1,518	19.6%	512	16.9%	1,006	21.2%
\$600 to \$999	4,860	62.6%	1,827	60.5%	3,033	64.0%
\$1,000 - \$1,499	832	10.7%	336	11.1%	496	10.5%
Above \$1,500	47	0.6%	0	0.0%	47	1.0%
Total	7,758	100.0%	3,021	100.0%	4,737	100.0%

Source: 2000 Census

Among specified vacant units, the median rent asked was slightly higher, at \$668 in the County and \$675 in the city of Douglasville.

- Approximately 14.4 percent of the total vacant rental units asked rents below \$400 per month. Of these units, over 42 percent were located in the city of Douglasville.
- Almost 45 percent of the vacant units were asking rents below \$600 per month, of which 39 percent were located in the city.
- Over half of the available vacant rental units (51.6 percent) rented for between \$600 and \$1,000 per month, of which 39 percent were located in Douglasville.
- Only 3.5 percent of the vacant units rented for more than \$1,000 per month.

Of the rental units available in the unincorporated county: 3 percent were studios; 20.9 percent 1 bedroom; 36.7 percent two-bedroom; and 39.4 percent 3 bedroom. Over one-half of

the studios rented for less than \$750 per month, with 49 percent at rents over \$750 per month; 79 percent of the one-bedrooms rented for between \$500 to \$1,000 per month; 76.4 percent of the two-bedrooms rented for between \$500 to \$1,000 per month; and 58.3 percent of the three bedrooms rented for \$500 to \$1,000 per month.

The majority of units renting at the lower end of the price range for all size units (less than \$300 per month) were located in the city of Douglasville. Single-family units comprised 43 percent of the rental units, which may relate to the high proportion of 3 bedroom rental units in the unincorporated county.

In early 2004, there were approximately 1,500 lease opportunities available on a monthly basis. A sample of 10 rental units available through real estate agency internet listings were all single family units, primarily detached with one duplex unit, with generally higher asking rents than reflected by the Census, ranging from \$600 to \$1,295 per month. The average rent asked was \$993 per month. There were no units asking rents below \$600 per month. Out of a sample of 10 units listed, six were asking rents between \$600 and 1,000 per month. The remaining units, all three-bedroom and built within the past 5 years, were listed at over \$1,000 per month.

With 100% financing available, and the low interest rates of the early 2000 s, home ownership is becoming a more attainable goal, particularly in the first time homebuyers housing market. Although statistics for 2004 are not available, it is possible that the rental vacancy rate may be increasing as it becomes more feasible for households that traditionally would be limited to rental housing are able to purchase entry level units. As well, the favorable interest rates and 0% financing options are allowing a greater number of households to enter the move-up and executive housing market, particularly in Douglas County where home prices are still reasonable in comparison to other counties in the region.

■ Housing and Community Characteristics

This section of the housing chapter addresses the relationship between characteristics of the population and the existing housing stock, and the county s expectations and future goals. The following analysis of current county household and housing conditions presents housing needs and concerns relative to various segments of the population. Several factors will influence the degree of demand, or need for new housing in the county in coming years:

- housing needs resulting from population growth;
- housing needs resulting from the overcrowding of units;
- housing needs that result from the overpayment of housing costs; and
- housing needs of special needs groups such as elderly, large families, female headed households, the homeless and the disabled.

These aspects of the community, when compared with existing housing stock, are good measures of how well current housing stock is meeting the residents needs.

Households Reporting Problems

The State Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has compiled information on households reporting some kind of housing problem. These include persons with AIDS, persons having sustained family violence, the elderly, persons with a disability, and persons encountering substance abuse.

The characteristics of persons with housing problems are further evaluated by size of household, tenure, income, household type, age and race. 7,284 persons, or 7.9% of the total County population reported a housing problem.

- **Ownership Information**

- 66 per cent were owners and 44 percent were renters.
- There were 594 owner households (1.8% of total households) and 368 renter households (1.1% of total households) reporting multiple problems.

- **Household Size and Composition**

- The majority of owners with problems (73 percent) lived in 2, 3 and 4 person households;
- The majority of renters with problems (57.7 percent) lived in 1 and 2 person households, potentially reflecting a relationship to age;
- The average household size for owners with problems was 2.8 persons per household; the average household size for renters with problems was slightly smaller at 2.5 persons per household;
- Married couple households comprised 63.2 percent of owner households;
- Female headed households constituting 17.1 percent of owner households;
- Householders living alone comprising 13.2 percent of owners of households;
- householders living alone constituting the largest group at 32.3 percent of renters;
- Married couple households comprised only 28.8 percent of renter households; and
- Female headed households constituting 24.5 percent of renter households.

- **Income**

- Almost 62 percent of the owners with problems reported an income between \$25,000 and \$50,000 per year, which is equivalent to an income between 50% and 100% of the county median income;
- 28.5 percent of the renters with problems reported an income between \$25,000 and \$50,000 per year;
- The majority of renters with housing problems (71.5%) earned less than \$25,000 per year, which corresponds to the very low-income group per HUD income limits classifications.
- 9.5 percent of the persons reporting a housing problem relied on social security as their primary source of income, again indicating a relationship of housing problems to age.

- The relationship between income and overpayment (cost burden) is further discussed in a subsequent section.

Overall, persons with housing problems were overwhelmingly white, and non-hispanic in origin, at 75 percent of persons with problems, correlating closely with the racial distribution within the county, indicating that housing problems in Douglas County are not particularly attributed to a changing ethnic population. Among persons over the age of 16 reporting housing problems, over 80 percent in each tenure category was employed.

Table 11						
Households Reporting Problems						
Douglas County						
AIDS Cases 1981-2000*	Family Violence, # of Police Actions Taken, 2000**	Total, # Age 62+, 2000***	Total, % Age 62+, 2000****	Disability (Any) % Age 16+, 1990*****	Adult Substance Abuse Treatment Need, 2001*****	Adult Substance Abuse Treatment Need, % of Total Population, 2001
89	757	8,688	9.43%	21.39%	5,722	6.21%
*Aids Cases Reported by Year of Diagnosis (3 = <5), 1981-2000. Retrieved June 14, 2002, from the University of Georgia, Georgia Statistics System web site: http://www.georgiastats.uga.edu						
Investigation Family Violence Statistics Search Page web site: http://www.state.ga.us/gbi/famv.cgi						
***Total, # Age 62+, 2000. Retrieved June 14, 2002, from the University of Georgia, Georgia Statistics System web site: http://www.georgiastats.uga.edu						
****Total, % Age 62+, 2000. Retrieved August 19, 2002, from the University of Georgia, Georgia Statistics System web site: http://www.georgiastats.uga.edu						
*****Disability, % Age 16+ with any disability, 1990. Retrieved June 14, 2002, from the University of Georgia, Georgia Statistics System web site: http://www.georgiastats.uga.edu						
*****Marsteller, F.A. (2001, November 3). 2001 Estimates of the Georgia Adult and Juvenile Populations Needing Substance Abuse Treatment.						
Census Estimate, July 1994. Retrieved August 19, 2002, from the University of Georgia, Georgia Statistics System web site: http://www.georgiastats.uga.edu						

Over 91 percent of owners reporting a housing problem lived in single-family detached units, with 7 percent in mobile homes. In comparison, less than 32 percent of renters experiencing housing problems resided in a single family detached unit, with over 56 percent living in multi-family housing and 7.8 percent in mobile homes. This is further expanded in subsequent analyses of overpayment by tenure and income by incorporated city of Douglasville and unincorporated county.

Income Characteristics

The median household income in Douglas County, according to the 2000 Census, increased from \$37,414 in 1990 to \$50,108. The County income was higher than the median income in the city of Douglasville, which increased from \$30,275 in 1990 to \$45,289 in 2000.

The HUD median family income for the Atlanta Metropolitan Statistical Area in 2004 was \$69,000. HUD utilizes four income categories for housing affordability analysis: Very Low income (50% of the median income); Low income (51% to 80% of the median income); Moderate income (81% to 120% of the median income); and Above Moderate income (above 120% of the median). The higher \$69,000 median figure is consistent with definitions of low and moderate income households used in various Federal and State housing programs, e.g. Housing Choice Vouchers (formerly Section 8), and use of HOME or other Federal funding programs based on income. However, for purposes of analyzing affordability of the housing market within Douglas County itself, the lower median income is used, and the definitions of affordability applied, which would reflect more realistic economic conditions than utilizing the higher median. Under the scenario that the higher median is used, as for application for Federal funding, the income limits would subsequently increase as follows: Very Low income (50% of the median income) to \$34,500; Low income (51% to 80% of the median income) to \$55,200; Moderate income (81% to 120% of the median income) to \$82,800; and Above Moderate income (above 120% of the median) to incomes above \$82,800. Although use of these income limits based on the Atlanta MSA as established by HUD as threshold in-

come limits would theoretically allow households to afford a rental unit with a higher rent, or purchase a home with a higher cost as compared to the use of income limits based on the County's median income, it does not accurately reflect the conditions in the County.

Although the Census classifications for income are not the same as the household income categories used by HUD and DCA in housing affordability analyses and award of grants and other forms of assistance, general comparisons can be made. Subsequently, application of the HUD definitions to the 2000

Table 12
2000 Household Income Estimates
Douglasville and Unincorporated County

Income Category	Douglasville		Unincorporated		Douglas County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0-\$14,999	1,040	14.20%	2,120	8.30%	3,160	9.60%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	771	10.50%	2,271	8.90%	3,042	9.30%
\$25,000 - \$39,999	1,403	19.20%	4,832	18.90%	6,235	19.00%
\$40,000 - \$59,999	1,509	20.60%	6,197	24.20%	7,706	23.40%
\$60,000 +	2,599	35.50%	10,137	39.70%	12,736	38.70%
Total Units	7,322	100.00%	25,537	100.00%	32,879	100.00%

Source: 2000 Census

Census data estimates for the County result in the following income classifications: Very Low income households range from less than \$25,055; Low income households range from \$25,056 to \$40,086; Moderate income households range from \$40,089 to \$60,130; and Above Moderate income households exceed \$60,131. As shown in Table 12, approximately 38 percent of the households in the County are lower income, with 18.9 percent classified as very low income and 19 percent as Low-income households. Above Moderate income households constitute almost 39 percent of the County total, with the remaining 23.4 percent as Moderate-income households. These data indicate that there is a need for housing affordable to the Very Low and Low income households, as well as a strong market for housing that serves the needs of Moderate and Above Moderate income households.

The national average poverty threshold for a family of four persons was \$17,960 in 2001 (census). The 2000 census reports that 5.7 percent of households in the County were living below the poverty level, with 2.1 percent of the households residing in the city of Douglasville, and the remaining 3.6 percent on the unincorporated county. Proportionally, the incidence of poverty in the city of Douglasville is greater than in the unincorporated areas, at 10.1 percent of the city population in poverty as compared to 4.5 percent of the unincorporated county in poverty. Almost 45 percent of households in poverty were female-headed households with children, followed by married couples at 36.8 percent of households in poverty, of which almost one-half had children. The remaining 18.2 percent were male-headed households, of which 73 percent had children. Even though the cost of housing in Douglas County is generally lower than in surrounding counties in the Atlanta region, lower income households may require housing with rents or payments lower than payments associated with market rate housing. Often, payment assistance is needed from local, state or federal government agencies to assist these households in getting adequate housing. Available programs should be used by the County to increase opportunities for affordable housing for special needs groups. This indicates a particular need for affordable housing for female-headed households with children, and family units for households with incomes below the poverty level.

Housing Cost Burden

Overpayment refers to renters and owners who must pay more than 30 percent of their gross income for shelter. A high cost of housing eventually causes fixed income, elderly, and lower income families to use a disproportionate share of their income for housing. This may cause a series of related financial problems which may result in deterioration of housing stock, because costs associated with maintenance must be sacrificed for more immediate expenses (e.g. food, medical care, clothing, and utilities), or inappropriate housing types or sizes to suit the needs of the households.

Table 13
Percentage of Homeowners Paying More than 30% of Income by Income Bracket
Douglas County, Douglasville and Unincorporated Area

	City of Douglasville		Unincorporated County		Total Douglas County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total with a Mortgage	3,677		17,436		21,113	
Less than \$10,000	79		527		606	
30% or more	57	1.55%	346	2.00%	400	4.00%
\$10,000 to \$19,999	281		829		1,110	
30% or more	152	4.10%	428	2.50%	580	2.70%
\$20,000 to \$34,999	427		2,433		2,860	
30% or more	232	6.30%	1,086	6.20%	1,318	6.20%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	615		3,317		3,932	
30% or more	168	4.60%	882	5.10%	1,050	5.00%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	874		4,900		5,774	
30% or more	97	2.60%	341	2.00%	438	2.10%
\$75,000 to \$99,000	689		3,030		3,719	
30% or more	31	0.80%	66	0.40%	97	0.50%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	496		1,933		2,429	
30% or more	6	0.20%	31	0.20%	37	0.20%
\$150,000 and above	216		467		683	
30% or more	0	0%	0	0%	8	0.00%
Total Paying Over 30%		20.15%		18.40%		20.70%

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000

Table 13 compiles the number of households within the county whose housing costs are considered a burden. Using income guidelines as provided by the Department of Community Affairs, households paying between 30% and 49% of their income are considered cost-burdened and households paying over 50% are severely cost-burdened. Approximately 23 percent of the households are considered cost burdened within the total county and 8.4 percent of the county is considered severely cost burdened. While this includes approximately 6,903 households, of which 56.9 percent are homeowners and 43 percent are renters, it is still relatively low. By comparison, in the Atlanta MSA ___% of households were spending over 30% of their income on housing compared with 23.0% in Douglas County.

Table 14
Percentage of Renters Paying More than 30% of Income by Income Bracket
Douglas County, Douglasville and Unincorporated Area

	City of Douglasville		Unincorporated County		Total Douglas County	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total Paying Rent	3,132		5,013		8,145	
Less than \$10,000	458		415		873	
30% or more	345	11.00%	235	4.70%	580	7.10%
\$10,000 to \$19,999	550		710		1,260	
30% or more	452	14.40%	623	12.40%	1,077	13.20%
\$20,000 to \$34,999	769		1,292		2,061	
30% or more	440	14.00%	699	13.90%	1,139	14.00%
\$35,000 to \$49,999	586		1,136		1,722	
30% or more	37	1.20%	142	2.80%	179	2.20%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	511		898		1,409	
30% or more	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
\$75,000 to \$99,000	136		436		572	
30% or more	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	122		126		248	
30% or more	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
\$150,000 and above	216		0		0	
30% or more	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Total Paying Over 30%		40.60%		33.80%		36.50%

Source: US Bureau of the Census, 2000

From the 2000 Census, cost burden can be broken down further into the incorporated city of Douglasville and the remaining unincorporated county (inclusive of small portions of the cities of Villa Rica and Austell). Of the 6,903 total households reporting a cost burden,

2,197 (7.5 percent of the total county households) are located within the city of Douglasville, with 4,706 (16.1 percent of the total county households) residing in the remainder of the county. Within the city of Douglasville, 32.3 percent of the households reported a cost burden of 30% or more, with 46.3 percent of the renters reporting a cost burden, as compared to 20.3 percent of the owners. In the remainder of the County, 18.2 percent of the owners experienced a cost burden, as compared to 30.4 percent of the renters. In numerical terms, however, the number of owners experiencing a cost burden exceeds the number of renters in both jurisdictions. Approximately 44.9 percent of the cost burdened renters had incomes under \$20,000 (less than 50% of the median county income), and 45.9 percent of the renters had incomes of less than \$35,000 (between 50% and 80% of the county median). Comparatively, 24.3 percent of the cost burdened owners had incomes under \$20,000 (less than 50% of the median county income), 34.0 percent of the owners had incomes of less than \$35,000 (between 50% and 80% of the county median), and 27.7 percent had incomes between \$35,000 and \$50,000 (between 80% and 100% of county median).

In the unincorporated county, 18.2 percent of the owners experienced a cost burden, as compared to 30.4 percent of the renters. In numerical terms, however, the number of owners experiencing a cost burden exceeds the number of renters in both jurisdictions. Approximately 44.9 percent of the cost burdened renters had incomes under \$20,000 (less than 50% of the median county income), and 45.9 percent of the renters had incomes of less than \$35,000 (between 50% and 80% of the county median). Comparatively, 24.3 percent of the cost burdened owners had incomes under \$20,000 (less than 50% of the median county income), 34.0 percent of the owners had incomes of less than \$35,000 (between 50% and 80% of the county median), and 27.7 percent had incomes between \$35,000 and \$50,000 (between 80% and 100% of county median).

A distinction between owner and renter housing overpayment is important because, while homeowners may overextend themselves financially to afford a home purchase, the owner maintains the option of selling the home and may realize tax benefits or appreciation in value. In addition, some owner households choose to allocate a higher percentage of their disposable monthly income on housing costs because this allocation is justified in light of the financial benefits of ownership. Renters on the other hand, are limited to the rental market, and are generally required to pay the rent established by the market. The discrepancy between owner and renter households is largely reflective of the tendency for year round renter households to have lower incomes than owner households. While efforts to reduce the cost burden of housing should be considered, particularly lower income rental households, this is not among the county's most pressing problems, as this segment of the population represents only 3 percent of the total households in the unincorporated county area.

Table 15
Affordable Rent/Purchase by Annual Income
Douglas County

Classification	Annual Income	Maximum Affordable Rent Payment	Maximum Affordable Purchase Price
Very Low	\$0 - \$25,055	\$626	\$105,000
Low	\$25,056 - \$40,086	\$1,002	\$172,000
Moderate	\$40,087 - \$60,130	\$1,503	\$250,000
Above Moderate	Above \$60,131	\$1,503+	\$250,100
Median	\$50,108	\$1,253	\$207,000

Rent Based on 30% of income
 Classifications based on HUD income limits
 Purchase Price based on 10% down, 5% interest and 1.2% taxes and insurance

Table 15 identifies the affordable rents and purchase price by income category for a family of four based on 30 percent of income expended. In the case of rent, the 30 percent does not include allowance for utilities which may impose additional costs to the renter between \$50 and \$100 per month, depending on what utilities the renter is responsible for paying, and make rental of a unit which otherwise might be affordable to become a condition of overpayment.

Affordability of Home Ownership

A summary of home prices in the County, derived from the Census, a sample of real estate sales during the period of January 2003 through March 2004, and internet marketing web-sites reflects the following information, as previously presented in detail:

- According to the Census, a variety of housing types at a range of prices are offered in the unincorporated county, from homes with values less than \$10,000 to over \$1,000,000 or more.
- According to the Census, slightly over 50 percent of the units were valued at \$100,000 or less, with 23.3 percent valued at less than \$80,000. This indicates that there appears to be adequate stock of homes to accommodate the 18.9 percent of the county households with incomes less than 50% of the County median, which can afford a monthly payment not exceeding \$626.
- An additional 29 percent of the existing units in the County were valued between \$100,000 and \$150,000. It appears as if adequate stock is available to house the 19 percent of the total County households which are considered lower income (at 50% to 80% of County median income), and can theoretically afford a payment which does not exceed \$1,002 per month.
- The census reports only 6.0 percent of the housing units with values over \$250,000, although over 38 percent of the households could theoretically afford to purchase a home at that price point. Although in the past four years a large number of new move-up and executive level housing has been constructed which is not reflected in the Census counts, it is clear that there is a need for more expensive housing catering to households with incomes over 120% of the County median.
- Only 8.9 percent of the units had a mortgage and/or monthly cost that was less than \$600 per month, which is comparable to the \$626 monthly amount a household with an income of 50% of the County median can afford based on expenditure of 30% of monthly income. Of those units without a mortgage (units which may have their mortgages already paid off or other circumstances), 97 percent of the units had a monthly cost of less than \$600.
- However, over 53 percent of the housing stock with a mortgage was reported to have a monthly payment of less than \$1,000, which is the amount affordable to lower income households with incomes between 50% and 80% of the County median.

Affordability of Rental Units

A summary of rent structures in the County, derived from Census information and April 2004 real estate company internet listing surveys, as previously discussed, reflects the following information for renters:

- Within the unincorporated area, only 3.3 percent of the total rental units were available for rents below \$350 per month, which is affordable to households with extremely very low incomes (earning 25% of the county median), which comprise over 8 percent of the

rental households, indicating a shortfall in the number of units with rents affordable to the lowest income households in the unincorporated county.

- A larger proportion, 21.2 percent, rented between \$350 and \$600 per month, which is affordable to households at the upper ranges of the very low income category (50% of the County median income), which constitutes over 14 percent of the households in the unincorporated county.
- The largest proportion of units (64.0%) fell within the \$600 to \$999 per month range, which is affordable to households within the low-income range (50-80% of County median income) which constitute almost 26 percent of the households.
- Only 11.5 percent rented for over \$1,000 per month, which is generally affordable to households earning over 80% of the median income.
- A sample of 10 rental units available through real estate agency internet listings were all single family units, primarily detached with one duplex unit, with generally higher asking rents than reflected by the Census, ranging from \$600 to \$1,295 per month. The average rent asked was \$993 per month. There were no units asking rents below \$600 per month. Out of a sample of 10 units listed, six were asking rents between \$600 and 1,000 per month. The remaining units, all three-bedroom and built within the past 5 years, were listed at over \$1,000 per month. This indicates that there are generally two bedroom single family rental units available to households earning between 50 and 80% of the County median income, and three-bedroom units available at rents affordable to households with incomes over 80% of the County median.
- The above analysis of current market conditions suggests that while there may be an adequate number of rental units available for lower income households, there may not be an adequate number providing the size needed by the lower income households.

Overcrowding

In response to higher housing prices, lower income households must often be satisfied with smaller, less adequate housing for available money. This may result in overcrowding. Overcrowding places a strain on physical facilities, does not provide a satisfying environment, and eventually may cause conditions which contribute both to deterioration of the housing stock and neighborhoods in general.

The Bureau of Census defines overcrowded housing units as those in excess of one person per room average. Overcrowding is often reflective of one of three conditions: 1) either a family or household is living in too small a dwelling; 2) a family is required to house extended family members (i.e. grandparents or grown children and their families living with parents, termed doubling); 3) a family is renting inadequate living space to non-family members, also representing doubling.

The number of rooms available in a residence, and the proportion of larger or smaller units in a jurisdiction influences the incidence of overcrowding. Since 1990, housing units have been getting larger on a countywide basis. The proportion of large units (7, 8, and 9 rooms) has increased from 25 percent to almost 33 percent of the total housing stock. Conversely, the proportion of smaller units has decreased since 1990 from 22.4 percent to 20.4 percent, as well as the proportion of average sized homes with 5 and 6 rooms, from 52 percent in 1990 to 47 percent in 2000. This same trend applies to both the city of Douglasville and the unincorporated county.

Table 16 shows the number of rooms per unit, by tenure. Generally, owner-occupied hous-

**Table 16
Rooms In Housing Unit 2000
Douglas County, Douglasville and Unincorporated Area**

Size	Douglas County		Unincorporated County		Incorporated Areas	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Owner Occupied						
1-Room	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
2-Rooms	102	0.3%	78	0.3%	24	0.3%
3-Rooms	719	2.2%	581	2.3%	138	1.9%
4-Rooms	1,107	3.4%	877	3.4%	230	3.2%
5-Rooms	4,976	15.2%	4226	16.5%	750	10.3%
6-Rooms	7,390	22.5%	6476	25.3%	914	12.6%
7-Rooms	4,639	14.1%	3958	15.5%	681	9.4%
8-Rooms	2,905	8.9%	2351	9.2%	554	7.6%
9+ Rooms	2,717	8.3%	1871	7.3%	846	11.6%
Total Owner Occupied	24,555	74.9%	20418	79.9%	4137	56.9%
Renter Occupied						
1-Room	212	0.6%	119	0.5%	93	1.3%
2-Rooms	640	1.9%	461	1.8%	179	2.5%
3-Rooms	1,345	4.1%	691	2.7%	654	8.9%
4-Rooms	2,275	6.9%	1251	4.9%	1024	14.1%
5-Rooms	1,802	5.5%	1144	4.5%	658	9.0%
6-Rooms	1,294	3.9%	888	3.5%	406	5.6%
7-Rooms	357	1.1%	306	1.2%	51	0.7%
8-Rooms	222	0.7%	165	0.6%	57	0.8%
9+ Rooms	120	0.4%	104	0.4%	16	0.2%
Total Renter Occupied	8,267	25.1%	5129	20.1%	3138	43.1%
Total	32,822	100.0%	25548	100.0%	7275	100.0%

Source: 2000 Census

ing tends to be larger. Over 50 percent of the units in the unincorporated county are owner-occupied with 5, 6 and 7 rooms, which would generally correspond to 2, 3 and some 4 bedroom units. These size units constitute over 70 percent of the owner-occupied housing stock, with 6 room units comprising the largest proportion. Among renter-occupied housing, the majority of units, 68.9 percent of the rental stock, are comprised of 4, 5 and 6 room units, with 5 room units as the largest proportion. The number of small rental units

(1, 2, 3 and 4 rooms) exceeds the number of small owner-occupied units of the same size,

Table 17
Occupants Per Room by Tenure
Douglas County, Douglasville and Unincorporated Area

Occupants/Room	Douglas County		Unincorporated County		Incorporated Areas	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Owner Occupied						
0.50 or less	17,030	69.3%	14,062	68.9%	2,968	71.7%
0.51 to 1.00	6,917	28.2%	5,861	28.7%	1,056	25.5%
1.01 to 1.50	483	2.0%	390	1.9%	93	2.3%
1.51 to 2.00	97	0.4%	81	0.4%	16	0.4%
2.01 or more	28	0.1%	24	0.1%	4	0.1%
Total	24,555	100.0%	20,418	100.0%	4,137	100.0%
Renter Occupied						
0.50 or less	4,630	56.0%	2,899	56.5%	1,731	55.2%
0.51 to 1.00	3,037	36.8%	1,817	35.4%	1,220	38.9%
1.01 to 1.50	426	5.2%	309	6.0%	117	3.7%
1.51 to 2.00	116	1.4%	86	1.7%	30	1.0%
2.01 or more	58	0.7%	18	0.4%	40	1.3%
Total	8,267	100.1%	5,129	100.0%	3,138	100.1%
Total Households	32,822	100.0%	25,547	100.0%	7,275	100.0%

Source: 2000 Census

at 9.9 percent of the total stock for renters as compared to 6 percent for owner-occupied units.

Information provided by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs relating to persons or households reporting housing problems indicates that 319 owner households and 397 renter households experienced overcrowding conditions. Data from the Census differs slightly. According to the Census, approximately 3.5 percent of all households (903) in the unincorporated county area reported overcrowded housing conditions, of which 54.8 percent were owner occupied units and 45.2 percent were renter occupied units. Proportionately, renters experienced overcrowding at a higher rate than owners with 8.0 percent of renters living in overcrowded units as compared to 2.4 percent of owners. This is reflected in the fact that within the total unincorporated county area, owners experiencing overcrowding comprised 1.9 percent of the total households, while renters experiencing overcrowding comprised 1.6 percent of the total households, although proportionately renters represented only 20 percent of the total households. Within the city of Douglasville, 4.1 percent of the households experienced overcrowded conditions, whereby overcrowding among owners represented 1.6 percent of the total households, and overcrowding among renters represented 2.6 percent of the total households.

The 2000 Census reports the average household size of owner-occupied units at 2.87 persons, and the average size of renter-occupied units at 2.52 persons per unit. Within the unincorporated county areas, 3 and 4 person households comprised 38.3 percent of the total, with 2 person households comprising 33 percent of the total. Larger households with 5 or more persons constituted 11.5 percent of the total households, and single person house-

holds comprised 17.1 percent of the households. Distribution in the city of Douglasville was comparable with one difference the proportion of single person households constituted 23 percent of total households with a slightly lower representation of 3 and 4 person households at 34.7 percent of the total.

Special Needs Populations

A variety of populations within Douglas County have special housing needs. Within the county as a whole, 15,562 persons, or 18.4 percent of the population over age 5 were reported as having a disability. By jurisdiction, 3,287 (18.3 percent of the city population over 5) reside in the city of Douglasville, and 12,275 (18.4 percent of remaining county population over age 5) persons resided in the remaining unincorporated county (inclusive of portions of Austell and Villa Rica). Within the unincorporated county, persons between the ages of 21 and 65 represented 66.1 percent of the total population over age 5. Proportionally, 64.5 percent of all disabled persons are between age 21 and 65. Persons over 65 constituted over 21 percent of all persons reporting a disability in the unincorporated area, although persons over 65 represent 8.2 percent of the population over age 5. In other terms, 49 percent of seniors reported a disability.

Table 19 includes an inventory of some disabilities accounted for by the Census Bureau. According to the Census, there were 28,558 disabilities reported in the county, of which 21 percent (5,997) disabilities were reported within the city of Douglasville. It should be noted that the reporting of a disability does not equate to the actual number of persons reporting disabilities. A single person may have reported more than one kind of disability. For example, a person may report a physical disability that in turn results in a self care disability and an inability to work, resulting in being counted in three categories. Within the unincorporated county area, seniors accounted for 25.3 percent of the disabilities, persons between 16 and 65 accounted for 69.9 percent of the disabilities, and persons under 15 represented the remaining 4.8 percent. Almost 25 percent of all disabilities reported were an employment disability.

Many of these disabilities simply require design modification to existing residences. Other populations, such as individuals with extreme mental disabilities, or self care limitations, require long-term residential care. Within the county, specialty housing, such as residential group homes and shelters exist to meet the needs of this group. There are shelters for victims of domestic violence and their families, rehabilitation centers for individuals recovering from drug addiction or mental illness, and transitional housing for homeless families.

Table 18
Average Household Size
Douglas County, Douglasville and Unincorporated Area

Size	Douglas County	Unincorporated Area	Incorporated Area
Owner Occupied			
1-Person	3,566	2,867	699
2-Person	8,369	7,027	1,342
3-Person	5,128	4,282	846
4-person	4,584	3,858	727
5-Person	1,947	1,607	340
6-Person	621	515	106
7+ Person	340	263	77
TOTAL	24,555	20,419	4,137
Renter Occupied			
1-Person	2,474	1,497	977
2-Person	2,309	1,395	914
3-Person	1,512	880	632
4-person	1,109	788	321
5-Person	531	339	192
6-Person	222	157	65
7+ Person	110	73	37
	8,267	5,129	3,138
Total	32,822	25,548	7,275

Source: 2000 Census

A less visible component of special needs populations are the homeless. Based on a 2001 study conducted by the Metro Atlanta Task Force for the Homeless, 25 calls were received

Table 19
Special Needs Populations
Douglas County

Age Group	Tallied	Sensory	Physical	Mental	Self-Care	Go-Outside	Employer
Douglas County							
5 to 15	1,403	211	184	869	139	0	0
16 to 64	20,141	1,671	4,256	2,262	1,093	3,864	6,995
65 and older	7,104	1,127	2,573	875	751	1,688	0
Total	28,648	3,009	7,013	4,006	1,983	5,552	6,995
Douglasville							
5 to 15	318	56	49	177	36	0	0
16 to 64	4,464	373	954	535	286	859	1,457
65 and older	1,345	237	570	151	128	259	0
Total	6,127	666	1,573	863	450	1,118	1,457
Unincorporated County							
5 to 15	1,085	155	135	692	103	0	0
16 to 64	15,677	1,298	3,302	1,727	807	3,005	5,538
65 and older	5,759	890	2,003	724	623	1,429	0
Total	22,521	2,343	5,440	3,143	1,533	4,434	5,538

Source: 2000 Census

for placement of 39 individuals from Douglas County in shelters. There are two homeless shelters in Douglas County: SHARE House, a 50 bed facility for female victims of domestic abuse; and the Douglas County Homeless Shelter. The Homeless Shelter is a single structure with an 18-bed capacity for intact families and single women with children, funded through a non-profit organization and supplemented by grants through DCA. Residents may stay for a period up to 6 months, or longer if necessary. The nonprofit organization operating the Homeless Shelter indicates that additional shelter facilities, for a total of 40 beds, are needed in the County. Single men are referred to the Metro Atlanta Task Force for placement in Jefferson's Place in Atlanta, or other shelter facilities in the Atlanta metropolitan region. The County should consider assisting the non-profit organization in working with DCA to apply for additional potential funding for expansion of available facilities with up to 22 additional beds.

In addition, Travelers Aid operates a transitional housing program providing four 2-bedroom units (each providing up to 6 beds) in Douglas County (currently within the unincorporated area but slated for a relocation to Douglasville in 2004) for households which are: currently residing in a shelter; have been evicted from their current residence; are living in extremely overcrowded conditions; or facing homelessness. Occupants are recruited from the Homeless Shelter or SHARE house, or are referred by organizations, churches, or social services. Other resources serving the homeless, or nearly homeless in the County are the Douglas County Continuum of Care, and the Douglas County Food Bank.

Age and Housing Needs

Residents require different accommodations throughout their lifecycle. The needs of a single person are very different to that of a family and again to someone we would consider an empty nester. According to Census data, median age in Douglas County has increased from 30.9 in 1990, to 32.5 in the year 2000. Between the years 1990 and 2000, the age groups that increased the most were the 45 to 55 year old group at a 64% increase, followed by the over 55 years old category at a 47% increase. This indicates an aging of the baby boom generation and presumably a portion of their children in the 5 to 13 year old age cohort. The age group of 20-34 year olds reflects persons of marriageable age, at 20.6% of the population, who are potential single-family homeowners. Currently 24% of children are of school age, with an additional 7.3% under the age of 5. The age group of 0 to 4 year olds remained almost constant.

Table ?

Comparison of Age Distribution Distribution by County, Region & State

Age Group	County	Region*	State	County as % of	
				Region*	State
0-4	7.31%	7.37%	7.27%	99.12%	100.51%
5-14	15.75%	14.88%	14.94%	105.81%	105.37%
15-19	7.23%	6.81%	7.28%	106.09%	99.26%
20-24	6.25%	7.03%	7.23%	89.01%	86.46%
25-29	7.28%	8.83%	7.84%	82.41%	92.84%
30-34	8.34%	9.08%	8.03%	91.85%	103.78%
35-44	17.86%	17.96%	16.53%	99.45%	108.00%
45-54	14.24%	13.61%	13.19%	104.69%	107.97%
55-64	8.20%	7.16%	8.08%	114.48%	101.50%
65+	7.55%	7.27%	9.59%	103.77%	78.70%

Source: Year 2000 U.S. Census. County figures are for all of Douglas County.

There are a total of 14,517 persons over the age of 65, comprising 16% of the total population. The 35 to 54 year old age group comprises the largest percentage of the population, at 32%. While almost half of the population may be comprised of young families with children, it appears as if the mature population with older children is steadily increasing. By the year 2025 an even greater number of residents will move into the 65 over age range, with a projected 15% of the population at age 65 and above. As the County's age characteristics continue to diversify, special planning attention should be aimed towards community facility improvements, live, work, play environments, linkages and housing to meet the needs of a wide range of ages and lifestyles.

Various housing types will be required to meet the lifestyle characteristics of the area. Master planned developments that incorporate a non-residential component and special considerations to linkages, and mixed uses within village centers will enable people of all ages to remain within the County. Not only will diversified housing stock (such as duplex, multi-family, townhouse, etc.) be important to younger families, single persons and empty nesters as affordable housing alternatives, they will provide construction jobs and available housing for an increasing labor market.

To meet the needs of this diversified population, the above population statistics reflect the need for an increased attention to public facilities such as schools, recreation, health facilities and a continued emphasis on youth oriented and elderly programs countywide.

Employment and Commuting Patterns

A strong and diverse economy is important because it creates jobs, increases income and provides a more stable tax base, and thereby provides a better quality of life. Although the county continues to grow economically, it continues to remain primarily a bedroom community for the Atlanta Metro area, based on analyses of commuting patterns. For Douglas County to provide for the necessary services to meet the needs of its population, the County will have to continue to diversify its economic base. Table 21 summarizes the changes in commuting patterns between 1990 and 2000. The number of persons living and working within Douglas County is increasing slightly from 32.8 percent in 1990, to 36.7 percent in 2000. Over 62 percent still commute to employment outside of the county as of 2000, down slightly from over 66 percent in 1990. In addition to over 36 percent of the commuters working within Douglas County, almost 31 percent of persons residing in Douglas County commute to Fulton County, 16.1 percent commute to Cobb County, 4.8 percent commute to DeKalb County, and 2.6 and 2.3 percent commute to Clayton and Carroll Counties respectively. The remaining 6.7 percent commute to Paulding and Gwinnett counties, other locations in the state, or outside of the state. Out of state employment remains below 1 percent. As seen in the Economic Development Chapter job growth within the county increased from 26,048 in 1990 to 31,818 in 2002.

Table ?
Commuting Patterns
 Historic and Current

Category	Count		Percentage	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Worked in County of Residence	12,081	16,924	33.10%	36.92%
Worked outside County of Residence	24,412	28,916	66.90%	63.08%

Figures from U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Table 21 summarizes the changes in commuting patterns between 1990 and 2000. The number of persons living and working within Douglas County is increasing slightly from 32.8 percent in 1990, to 36.7 percent in 2000. Over 62 percent still commute to employment outside of the county as of 2000, down slightly from over 66 percent in 1990. In addition to over 36 percent of the commuters working within Douglas County, almost 31 percent of persons residing in Douglas County commute to Fulton County, 16.1 percent commute to Cobb County, 4.8 percent commute to DeKalb County, and 2.6 and 2.3 percent commute to Clayton and Carroll Counties respectively. The remaining 6.7 percent commute to Paulding and Gwinnett counties, other locations in the state, or outside of the state. Out of state employment remains below 1 percent. As seen in the Economic Development Chapter job growth within the county increased from 26,048 in 1990 to 31,818 in 2002.

Table ?
Commuting Patterns

Employed Residents of Douglas			Persons Working in Douglas		
County Where Employed	Employees	Percent of Total	County of Residence	Employees	Percent of Total
Carroll	1,057	2.29%	Carroll	3,438	10.61%
Clayton	1,196	2.59%	Clayton	567	1.75%
Cobb	7,450	16.13%	Cobb	4,011	12.37%
DeKalb	2,211	4.79%	DeKalb	674	2.08%
Douglas	16,924	36.65%	Douglas	16,924	52.21%
Fulton	14,253	30.87%	Fulton	1,192	3.68%
Gwinnett	747	1.62%	Haralson	562	1.73%
Paulding	596	1.29%	Paulding	2,865	8.84%
Other	1,742	3.77%	Other	2,182	6.73%
Total			Total		
46,176			32,415		

Source: Georgia Department of Labor/2000 U.S. Census.

In 1980 there were 12,259 persons employed in Douglas County. By 2000 employment had doubled to 32,415. Over 52 percent of the persons employed in Douglas County reside in the county, with: 12.4 percent residing in Cobb County; 10.6 percent residing in Carroll County; 8.8 percent residing in Paulding County; 3.7 percent residing in Fulton County; 2.1 percent residing in DeKalb County; 1.7 percent residing in both Clayton and Haralson Counties; and 6.7 percent living in other counties or states. Almost 45% of the employment opportunities in 2000 are located within the incorporated city portions of the county. According to the available data for the industry mix in Douglas County, the top sector within the county was services, capturing 30.5% of the workforce; followed by retail trade at 24%. Construction and government/public administration constitute approximately 11% each. Agriculture, forestry and mining is the smallest sector at less than 2% of the total employment market.

Affordable Housing Options and Housing Programs

It appears from statistics that housing affordability in Douglas County is on par with surrounding counties and lower than some adjacent counties and the 10 county ARC region in general. Approximately 50 percent of the existing housing is valued at less than \$100,000, which theoretically provides ownership opportunities for persons with income of 50% or less than the county median, although homes valued at the lower end of the range are scarce. The median price of a new home is significantly higher, at around \$180,000 to \$188,000, which indicates that the move-up and executive level housing market is expanding, although still limited. The median rent is \$620, which also theoretically accommodates housing affordable to persons with incomes less than 50% of the median income. However, a housing affordability problem does exist in the County, within both the City of Douglasville and unincorporated areas, particularly among very low income renters. A majority of households are currently paying less than 30% of their monthly income for housing related expenses. The correlation between income deficiencies and housing problems (affordability and maintenance) indicates the need to develop the means to assist a small contingent of lower income renters (6.9% of the total households in the unincorporated County), homeowners and potential homeowners with both attaining and/or improving their current hous-

ing. Government subsidized programs will continue to be instrumental in improving the living conditions of these households. In general, it is reasonable to expect that housing needs of low income households will, in many cases, continue to be unsatisfied through market rate inventory, even though the County is extremely well stocked in lower cost housing stock, making government assisted housing programs essential.

The Douglas County Housing Authority provides 229 units of public housing with rents affordable to low income households, based on the HUD Median Family Income of \$69,000 for the Atlanta MSA. (as discussed previously). All of the public housing units are located within the City of Douglasville. There are 110 family units, 100 units for the elderly and handicapped, and 19 new handicapped wheelchair accessible units funded through a HUD Grant. In 1998, the Douglas County Housing Authority was authorized to issue a bond for \$8,360,000 for one of their public housing projects.

Douglas County works with the State Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for award of grants or funding for housing assistance through a number of DCA s housing assistance programs. In addition, grants for assistance to the two homeless facilities in the County, S.H.A.R.E. House and the Douglas County Shelter, has also been awarded utilizing funds from the Federal Emergency Shelter Grant and State Housing Trust Fund. The principle programs utilized over the past decade include:

- **Housing Choice Vouchers:** Formerly the Section 8 Rental Assistance program, Housing Choice Vouchers is a program funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The program helps low and very low income households pay rent in the private rental housing market. DCA determines if a person is eligible to participate in the program. People who participate in the program normally pay 30 percent of their income as their portion of monthly rent and utilities. DCA pays the remainder of the rent to the landlord. There are program requirements regarding the maximum rent allowable and the quality of the rental unit. In some special cases, rental assistance vouchers may be tied to a particular apartment complex (project based section 8) although this is not the case in Douglas County. In 2003, the Housing Choice Voucher Program assisted 345 renter households throughout Douglas County.
- **OwnHOME Down Payment Loan Program:** This program provides 0% interest loans to help first time home-buyers with down payment, closing costs and pre-paid items associated with owning a home. Generally Own HOME loans are available in only conjunction with the Home Buyer Mortgage Program. Own HOME loans are made as delayed repayment second mortgage loans of \$5,000. Delayed repayment means that the loan is repaid when the home is sold, transferred or refinanced or if the home is no longer the borrower s primary residence. Own HOME borrowers must provide a portion of their own funds, with a contribution of one percent of the sale price of the home, for the down payment, closing costs or prepaid items. Own HOME loans are available from local lenders participating in the Home Buyer Program. Since 1996, 203 loans have been completed to Douglas County residents.
- **Home Buyer Mortgage Program:** The Home Buyer Mortgage Program provides low interest rate mortgage loans for borrowers with moderate incomes and modest assets. Borrowers generally must be first time homebuyers. The loans are 30 year fixed rate mortgages with interest rates that are below the market rate. Loans are originated under FHA, VA, conventional or USDA/Rural Development Guidelines. Homes purchased under the program cannot exceed maximum sales price limits. Application for these loans is made through a network of participating local lenders in the community. The required down payment is a minimum of 1 percent of the sales price, and the home must be the borrower s primary residence.
- **Emergency Shelter Grant Program:** This program provides funds to non-profit organizations and local governments from the State Housing Trust Fund for the Homeless

Commission and Emergency Shelter Grants Program funds allocated to the State by HUD. Grant funds must be used to provide shelter and essential services to homeless persons. Eligible activities include emergency shelter and essential services to the homeless, transitional housing, homeless prevention programs, acquisition, construction and/or renovation of facilities that serve the homeless, and technical assistance. General funding limits are set for each of these activities. A 25 percent matching share is expected for participation in the facility development program. Since 1996, \$264,546 has been awarded to S.H.A.R.E. House, the Douglas County Shelter, or the Douglas County Food Bank for assistance to the homeless.

- **Bond Allocation Program:** Federal law allows for tax-exempt government bonds to be issued for certain types of private activities. In Georgia, DCA is responsible for the administration of the Georgia Allocation System, through which eligible authorities receive authorization to issue bonds. Bonds used for multi-family rental housing must set aside a portion of the funds for low to moderate-income households. Rental developments financed with these bonds are also eligible for state and federal housing credits without having to compete in the annual tax application cycle.

DCA offers a number of programs which the County has not participated in which serve as potential resources for housing redevelopment activities through the Home Again Program, CBDG and Community HOME Investment Program. As well, DCA offers the HOME Rental Housing Loan Program and Housing Tax Credit Program to help develop affordable rental housing. The County should consider application for such funding resources in the future, particularly for implementation of a targeted housing rehabilitation and maintenance program.

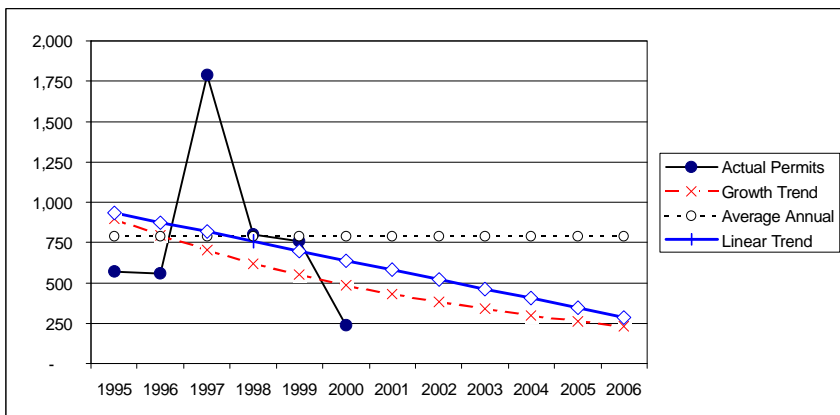
In addition to the government funded programs described above, the County will need to plan for meeting additional needs of the lower income households utilizing the remaining vacant land zoned to accommodate higher density housing types. The integration of carefully planned and design monitored residential components into commercial mixed-use centers, which may cater, for example: to the elderly; small or large households; or quality rental complexes with a proportion of units reserved at rents affordable to lower income households, will reinforce the concepts reflected by the Future Land Use Map for focusing growth into nodes and along existing transportation corridors. While the Future Land Use Plan provides for a full range of housing types and densities, future decisions of the County regarding public improvements, zoning and development standards will determine the extent to which limited multi-family and creative housing products, as well as fostering increased numbers of move-up and executive level housing, will successfully be utilized in meeting anticipated housing needs.



■ Housing Forecasts

Since 1980, dwelling unit construction in the County has steadily grown from 14,752 units in 1980 to 34,825 units in 2000. The growth in the County in the 1990s coincides with the growth and suburbanization of the Atlanta area. It is anticipated this trend will continue into the future. Recent trends in dwelling unit construction are anticipated to continue, at least in the short term. Maintaining adequate transportation access, continued growth of employment opportunities and a diversified housing stock will be key factors in the continuation of residential growth.

In general, the average number of persons per household for Douglas County (2.6) is used to forecast future dwelling units, with refinements and adjustments for changing population characteristics, vacancy characteristics, and the aging of the baby boomer population. By 2025, the number of dwelling units is expected to almost triple to 92,697 units, in



close correlation to the increase in population. This forecast can be broken down further into the city of Douglasville

with a forecast unit count of 27,880, and by unincorporated county, with a forecast of 64,817 units by 2025. This indicates a potential growth in the housing stock of 33,888 new units. The distribution of units among housing types in the unincorporated county area is provided in Table 23.

**Table 23
Forecasted Units by Type
Unincorporated Douglas County**

	Distribution	2004	2025	Increase
Single Family	88.93%	27,596	59,289	31,693
Two Family (Duplex)	1.43%	428	675	247
Multi-family	9.62%	2,901	4,842	1,941
Other	0.02%	5	11	6
Total	100.00%	30,930	64,817	33,887

Source: Distribution based on housing units by type, 2000 Census

Development Capacity

The County currently has capacity to accommodate additional residential growth in the years ahead, embodied by its supply of vacant, developable land. Actual development capacity, based on: the current zoning; net acres of vacant land available for development; realistic minimum land required per lot within each zone, and applicable development densities, appears to be adequate, for the most part, to serve the projected housing needs. Overall, current zoning in the unincorporated area could support, at most, about 32,400 new housing units (assuming no redevelopment of currently existing land uses), the vast majority of which



**Table 24
Demand/Capacity Comparison
Unincorporated Douglas County**

	Demand 2025	Development Capacity	Unmet Demand	Excess Capacity	% Unmet	% Excess
Residential Growth (in Housing Units)	33888	32419	1489	0	4%	0
Single Family	31,693	30,130	1,563	0	5%	0%
Two-Family	247	28	219	0	89%	0%
Multi-Family	1,941	2,261	0	320	0%	14%

Source: Demographic Trends and Development Demand Analysis for Douglas County (92.9%) would be single family homes on individual lots. The remaining 7 percent of the total future capacity falls under the multi-family zoning districts.

Overall, projected residential growth is very close to the capacity available, exceeding it by only 4 percent. This would represent a complete build out of the residential areas by, or before, 2025 as currently zoned. The same can be said for the single-family detached category, with demand at 5 percent over current capacity. There is a clear but very small lack of land designated for duplexes, while the multi-family zoning districts can accommodate 14 percent more units than demanded in 2025. This indicates that the demand for multi-family housing, although low in the County, should be focused on providing units which accommodate particular households types with housing problems, such as large person households (3 bedroom rental units); the elderly and/or disabled; single person households; and units with rents or purchase prices affordable to lower income households.

■ **Governmental Influence on Housing**

Historically, the provision of housing affordable to very low-income individuals has been almost exclusively a function of the public sector. However, market rate housing in the county has been available to meet the housing needs of the majority of the population, particularly with its abundance of starter units and resales at prices affordable to households with incomes from 80% of the median income and above, particularly with the recent low interest rates and 100% financing options. Approximately one-half of the housing stock is available on the market for less than \$100,000. Although the median house value is expected to rise, but to remain low in the context of the metropolitan area, a segment of the population may be eliminated from the housing market, as a home purchase still typically requires a sizeable down payment and cash closing costs, even with favorable interest rates. The implementation of governmental policies may add to the cost of housing that in turn is passed on to the buyer.

Governmental constraints include policies, development regulations and standards, requirements or other actions imposed by the various levels of government on development. Although Federal and State agencies play a role on the imposition of governmental constraints, the actions of these agencies, are, for the most part, beyond the influence of local government and are therefore not addressed in this analysis. Apart from federally determined interest rates, most governmental constraints are local. The following factors may influence the maintenance, improvement and/or development in Douglas County: land use controls; building codes; processing procedures; and development fees.

Comprehensive Plan

In implementing the Comprehensive Plan, the County utilizes a number of planning tools including the Unified Development Code (UDC). Zoning, which must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan as established by the UDC, provides specific development, allowable uses, and limitations.

It is an objective of the County to foster a community character of high design standards and low densities for new development, including housing catering to more income constrained residents. In theory, density is considered a factor in the development of housing to persons with limited income resources, and maintaining low densities typically increases the cost of construction per unit, which subsequently is passed on to the buyer or renter. Higher density improves housing affordability because it lowers the per unit land cost (although the overall cost for infill land or land served by existing infrastructure may be higher than for lower density uses) and facilitates effective construction. More intense residential development that is consistent with the County's character can be achieved through a number of mechanisms, including: clustering of residential units; mixed-use development; and zero lot line/small lot development within its urbanized cities.

The Comprehensive Plan establishes Guiding Principles that foster managed planned development and will help ensure that residents have access to adequate and affordable housing. These basic planning principles will guide designation of specific uses on specific properties on the Future Land Use Map. Under the overarching objective for maintaining a low density character within the County while simultaneously addressing the need to provide the opportunity for accommodations for residents of all incomes and housing type needs, two of the County's Guiding Principles, which will be used as policy guidelines during zoning and development decisions, relate directly to the County's housing goal.

Guiding Principle: Place medium density housing near village centers or integrate into mixed-use developments to assure transitional land use compatibility.

Higher density, such as townhouses, duplexes, lofts, quadplexes and small lot single family housing, fills an economic need for affordable and less-permanent accommodations, and offers an opportunity for transitions in land use intensities between higher densities within the incorporated areas of the county, major commercial centers and surrounding single-family neighborhoods. Extensive higher density areas can have negative effects; therefore, this plan disperses high-density developments to small-scattered sites and to mixed-use developments where appropriate infrastructure can be provided. Medium density housing in Douglas County should continue to be primarily clustered within major transportation corridors where access can be maximized, and should be located near commercial areas where pedestrian access can be encouraged. Mixed use and integrated centers fill a important need for families with young children and the growing senior population of the county.

As a policy, Douglas County intends to encourage medium density housing to be incorporated into mixed-use developments instead of stand-alone projects or within small stand-alone in-fill sites that have access to sewer and water. Attention to site design that will create more livable communities in the future has been included within the Unified Development Code.

Guiding Principle: Encourage innovative development techniques

Master Planned Developments, conservation style open space subdivisions, village commercial centers, mixed use development and other innovative development techniques are encouraged throughout the County within the recently proposed Unified Development Code.

Land use categories shown on the Future Land Use Map should be interpreted as reflecting the predominant use of a property. Where appropriate to a property's surroundings and infrastructure availability, a mixing of use or housing types may be appropriate, as outlined in the Unified Development Code. Mixed-use development allows compatible land uses, such as shops, offices, and affordable housing, to locate closer together and thus decreases travel distances between them. Mixed-use developments should be at an appropriate scale for the location. Alternately, uses other than the one shown on the Future Land Use Map may be appropriate if the impact of the alternate use will be the same or less than the designated use, considering the property's surroundings and prevailing land use patterns.

The mechanisms established in the above Guiding Principle are subject to design parameters in the Unified Development Code and are reflected in the Community Character Areas concept integrated into the Future Land Use Plan. Clustering of housing can produce higher densities on a portion of land, while retaining the overall density assignment of the entire property. This method is effective when portions of the property not utilized for residential development can be developed with compatible uses, such as open space/recreation, parks, schools, and public facilities. In the case of mixed-use, residential uses may be clustered with office, commercial, retail, hotel, Business Park or public facilities for residential uses in proximity to employment and transportation nodes.

The Community Character Areas of the recommended Future Land Use Map define the overall land use characteristics in generalized areas of the County, including the land use and character of a permitted development. Each character area identifies associated zoning districts for implementation, which define the minimum lot sizes and subsequent densities. The Comprehensive Plan establishes 3 classifications of land use that are primarily residential in nature:

- Rural Places
- Suburban Living
- Urban Residential

Character areas and subsequent design standards and policy guides have been developed to move towards the achievement of another county need: move up and executive housing. As stated earlier within this chapter, there is a growing need for housing on the other end of the cost spectrum housing costing over \$200,000. If Douglas County is to achieve their economic goals of creating a balanced tax base by increasing higher end employment options to its residents, amenities and a higher level housing product should be encouraged to encourage executives, professionals and managers to live where they work.

Based upon the Future Land Use Element and current zoning categories, it is estimated that 32,419 new homes will be

Table 25			
Residential Zoning Categories			
Douglas County			
	Classification	Density	Lot Size
Outside Watershed Protection Areas			
	AG Rural Residential	0.9830	435,600
	R-1 Residential Agricultural		
	Not Sewered	0.4604	87,120
	Sewered	0.8531	43,560
	Not Sewered	1.6266	21,780
	Sewered	2.2926	15,000
	R-3 Two Family Residential	3.4848	10,000
	R-4 Single Family Townhouse	8.0000	2,400
	R-5 Condominium Residential	8.0000	5,445
	R-6 Multi-Family Residential	8.0000	5,445
	R-7 Mobile Home Residential	2.2926	15,000
	R-8 Mobile Home Park	6.2229	4,500
	R-9 Medium Density Single Family	3.2267	10,000
	R-10 High Density Single Family	4.8400	6,000
	PUD Planned Unit Development	2.2960	15,000
Inside Watershed Protection Areas			
	AG Rural Residential	0.0983	435,600
	All Other Zones	0.3152	130,680

needed in the remainder of the unincorporated county. When combined with the existing housing stock, it is estimated that the county at build-out will reach approximately 60,000 dwelling units. The Land Use designations provide for new development at a range of densities and product types and are not considered to be a constraint to the provision of housing for all income levels. Keeping the County's objective to increase the volume of move-up and executive level housing, the best source of housing affordable to lower income households includes the existing stock of homes found in older subdivisions, mobile homes, and newer starter home stock which has been the prevalent type of housing constructed over the past decade, and potential medium density housing within village and mixed use centers.

The Unified Development Code

The County's zoning, subdivision, development and environmental codes have been rewritten during the planning process and combined into a Unified Development Code (UDC). As a concurrent process during the plan update the UDC was modified as part of the Comprehensive Plan update for consistency and ease in implementation of the Community Character area land use categories. Two new types of subdivisions, Open Space and Master Planned Developments, have been added to the existing conventional subdivision, private estate subdivision and PUD. A summary of applicable subdivision requirements is provided in Table 25. The two new types of subdivisions are summarized as follows:

- **Open Space Subdivision:** Maximum density allowed for the zoning district determines the total number of lots in the subdivision, but the minimum lot size is reduced to a certain extent to create open space and recreation amenities for the residents.
- **Master Planned Development:** Zoning district density limitation controls, but the minimum lot size is reduced in order to create open space and recreational amenities for the residents. Depending on the zoning district in which a master planned development is located, flexibility in lot sizes, mixed-use projects and certain commercial uses are allowed.

There are 11 residential zoning districts under the current Development Code. Net densities range from .09 units per acre (du/ac) in the AG district to 8.0 du/ac in the R-10 district. Maximum densities for the multi-family districts (R-4, R-5 and R-6) are set by the zoning districts themselves at 8.0 units per acre. The R-4 Single Family Townhouse district itself requires open space to be provided on a per-unit basis. Residential zoning districts, minimum lot sizes and practical residential densities are summarized in Table 25.

Infrastructure Availability

The primary concern with the location of housing is the availability of utilities and the efficiency with which they can be provided. It is likely that development will be market driven due to the cost of providing new infrastructure service lines and transportation networks. The Douglas County Water and Sewerage Authority (WSA) exclusively provides water and sewer services to Douglas County, with the exception of the portions of Villa Rica and Austell within the county's jurisdiction. WSA's water and sewer system served approximately 90-95% of the residential population of the County for fiscal year 2003. The WSA is implementing capacity improvements that are projected to meet the Authority's needs through 2025. Sewer limitations and the availability of raw water will influence residential patterns significantly within the county over the future. Character area designations were developed in part according to future infrastructure availability.

Although expansion of existing infrastructure systems is not feasible to all areas of the county where development is anticipated to occur, the policies of the Comprehensive Plan

to direct growth toward existing and planned service areas and away from rural areas dependent on septic systems, especially sensitive watershed areas; and to target some higher density development in areas currently designated for lower densities within the unincorporated areas will contribute toward removal of constraints to the development of housing as a result of unavailability of infrastructure. The UDC has been modified to include regulations and restrictions as to where higher density residential products may be built within a conventional subdivision, limiting locations to areas where both public water and sewer systems are available.

■ Housing Assessment

Key Findings

Areas of concern relate to a perceived overabundance and the continued development of starter homes and low cost housing, lack of housing maintenance and upkeep, adequate neighborhood preservation, shortage of available rental options for extremely low income households within the incorporated area, and the shortage of executive housing options.. Recent trends in dwelling unit construction are anticipated to continue, at least in the short term. Maintaining adequate transportation access, continued growth of employment opportunities and a diversified housing stock will be key factors in the continuation of residential growth. In general, the average number of persons per household for Douglas County (2.6) is used to forecast future dwelling units, with refinements and adjustments for changing population characteristics, vacancy characteristics, and the aging of the baby boomer population. By 2025, the number of dwelling units county-wide is expected to almost triple to 92,697 units, with 64,817 units in the unincorporated county area, in close correlation to the increase in population. Analysis of demand in relation to development capacity yield the following implications for planning:

- By 2025, the residential areas of unincorporated Douglas County will be completely built out.
- The amount of available vacant or underutilized low-density residential land appears to generally be sufficient to accommodate the projected housing need through 2025.
- The projected need for housing units by type, available land, current zoning and identification of such needs on the future land use plan map will provide for anticipated housing needs as identified in the Land Demand Analysis.
- Outside of the 3-acre lot watershed protection areas, pressures to bring sanitary sewer to all portions of the unincorporated area will mount. Given the market pressures generating demand, rezoning requests to R-2 for subdivisions on sewer will increase accordingly.
- There is a small but unmet need for two family residential development (duplexes) which comprise less than 1% of future residential demand. Rather than focus on new R-3 rezonings, the inclusion of duplexes as one type of housing within a mixed-use villages.
- There is currently more than adequate land already zoned and available for multi-family development. Unless a particular location would be notably advantageous to the County for multi-family zoning, no additional land zoned for multi-family use is needed.
- Medium densities and more urban urban types of development have been identified on the future land use plan map within areas that currently (or are proposed in the near fu-

ture) provide adequate infrastructure and adjacently to the County's more urbanized areas (around the cities of Douglasville and Villa Rica for instance).

- Douglas County is not an island unto itself. Analysis of surrounding counties and the cities within Douglas County have shown that affordable starter ownership housing and rental housing are abundant within the incorporated areas of Douglas County and in surrounding counties. Much of the higher residential areas and rental property, including housing that fits the affordable housing definition, within the County are located within the City of Douglasville. Due to Douglasville's urban nature, higher density zoning patterns and existence and planned multi-family housing growth, it is expected that much of the affordable housing needs of Douglas County will be met within its urbanized municipalities.

Summary and Needs Assessment

Low-density single-family housing represents over 84.6 percent of the total housing stock in Douglas County. Of dwelling units classified as single family, 74.7 percent were traditional single-family homes, 2.0 percent were single-family attached units, and 7.9 percent were manufactured homes. Most homes built more than 10 years ago are situated on large lots in the rural areas and traditional homes within subdivisions. Since 1990, new detached single family subdivisions and master planned developments have emerged as public sewer was extended. The predominant type of single-family unit has been in the starter and first move-up level categories. As reflected in analysis of 2004 real estate market conditions, the number of executive level and move-up housing subdivisions is increasing, typically offering large homes on ½ to 1 acre lots within golf course and swim /tennis communities.

Multi-family housing has had numerical increases over the last 10 years, but has remained stable at about 15.4 percent of the housing stock in 2000, while townhouses have increased from less than 1.5 to 2.0 percent of the total even though a surplus of multi-family zoned land remains undeveloped and vacant. Multi-family and other non-traditional types of housing are expected in the future to accommodate a more diverse population within the County and be used to meet some of the needs of the special populations or households experiencing problems (such as overcrowding, overpayment, inaccessibility, etc), or life style needs, such as senior residents of the county.

The cost of buying a new home in Douglas County remains relatively low in comparison to the Atlanta MSA and some of the surrounding counties. This cost can be attributed to the lower median incomes in Douglas County (at \$50,108 as compared to \$69,000 for the Atlanta MSA) and the relatively low cost of raw (or largely undeveloped farm) land which supports the potential for development of high quality housing and amenity packages in newly developing subdivisions to meet the desires and needs of the many professionals and executives that are moving to the County.

Overall, housing conditions in the County are good, but a handful of substandard homes or homes requiring rehabilitation may exist, particularly among individual homes, mobile homes, and subdivisions over 30 years in age. Douglas County currently does not have a program in place to provide financial assistance with the maintenance of housing in the unincorporated areas of the County. These homes should be identified as part of a housing conditions survey and must be targeted for modernization assistance.

Based on a series of public involvement sessions, county residents feel that attracting higher wage employment, particularly high tech industries, would be a better strategy for reducing the cost burden of housing, rather than increasing the stock of affordable housing. By all conventional measures, Douglas County is already an affordable place to live. Also during the public involvement process, residents stated they would like to see greater diversity in housing types within the county. Most feel that the starter home market is well rep-

resented within the county presently and that the executive and move up markets are not adequately represented.

As part of this Comprehensive Plan, the County created a vision of future growth focused on identified development nodes in strategic locations throughout the County to accommodate anticipated growth. Individual nodes are intended to act as community centers where inevitable growth is managed at a human scale and where new development integrates living, working, shopping and playing in close proximity to one another. It is anticipated that various levels of nodes, including neighborhood and town centers, will provide a variety of housing types to accommodate an increasingly diverse population within Douglas County.

5. Natural Resources

■ Introduction

An important element of land use planning is the assessment of how natural resources are responsibly utilized, managed, developed and preserved within a community. This chapter provides an inventory and assessment of locally significant and unique natural resources and presents a determination of natural resource vulnerability to the impact of growth and development. This assessment also identifies opportunities and developed. Natural resources sources, soils, water and native fauna.



Douglas County has taken a of its natural and sensitive continues to develop, more finding a balance between

and water, the availability of water, retaining areas of natural significance for animal and plant habitats, and those of development and growing population. As part of the implementation of this plan, the County has revised its Codes and Regulations to guide development away from sensitive areas. Increased education of the general public and developers with regard to environmental issues will bring about increased awareness of the importance of maintaining a proper balance between people and their environment.

constraints on the way land is inventoried include: mineral re-water supply, native vegetation,

proactive stance on the protection resources. As Douglas County and more effort is being put into environmental needs of clean air

■ The Natural Environment of Douglas County

Douglas County comprises 128,146.7 acres or 200.2 square miles. The Chattahoochee River comprises the Southeastern boundary with Fulton County, Cobb and Paulding Counties the northern boundary, and Carroll County the western boundary.

Climate

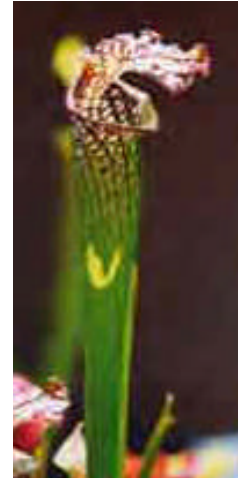
Douglas County has a moderate climate due to its geographic location. Summers are warm and humid, but not to an excessive degree. Maximum summer temperatures average around ninety (90) degrees. Minimum summer temperatures range in the low seventies. Nighttime temperatures tend to be very pleasant.

Like most southern regions, winters in Douglas County are mild. Freezing occurs on an average of about forty-five times per winter. No month has an average temperature below freezing. This climate is suitable to agriculture because the ground seldom freezes to a depth of more than three inches and rarely stays frozen more than four days. Because of this mild climate, outdoor related activities and natural amenities are an integrated part of the Douglas County lifestyle.



Topography and Steep Slopes

Douglas County is located primarily within the Northern or Upland Piedmont Province with the eastern edge of the County along the Chattahoochee River located in the Gainesville Ridges. The Upland Piedmont Province is a broad plain that is dissected by streams. Average elevation is 500 to 1500 feet above sea level. The Chattahoochee River drains the entire Piedmont Province, which includes Douglas County. Most of the county slopes southeast to the Chattahoochee River, but approximately twenty percent of the county slopes northwest and drains into Sweetwater Creek and then into the Chattahoochee River. Almost all of the upland areas of Douglas County are well drained by one of the many branching creeks or intermittent streams. These areas are gently sloping or rolling, but some of the areas along drainageways have steep slopes.



Protected Mountains

There are no mountains categorized as “protected mountains” by DNR within Douglas County.

Soils

As part of the Upland Piedmont Province, Douglas County is an old land surface with rounded slopes, which are underlain by acid crystalline and metamorphic rock. Schist, biotite gneiss, and other metamorphic rock underlie approximately seventy to seventy-five percent of Douglas County. The remaining underlying rock structure is composed of igneous rock, such as Augen gneiss, hornblende gneiss, granite gneiss, and granite intrusions. Elevations range from 500 to 1500 feet above sea level. Steep relief tends to have shallow and weakly developed soils. Flat relief has deeply weathered soils with deep clay subsoils.

Soil type and distribution are important attribute during the development process. Because the majority of new development utilizes septic systems for sewerage disposal, soil capabilities such as percolation capability are important to land use patterns. In addition, as will be outlined later in greater detail, soils associated with groundwater recharge areas require special protection.

Mineralogy

Many parts of the Atlanta Regions, including Douglas County, have been prospected and mined for their mineral resources. Twenty-eight variant mineral types were historically mined in the Greater Atlanta Region. Currently barite, ocher, sand, granite, and granite gneiss, limestone, structural clays, and marble are still being mined. Douglas County is home to one of the most famous gold mines in the area; the Stockmar Gold Mine near Villa Rica was once a busy and productive facility.

Douglas County Mineral Mines

Asbestos, Talc, Soapstone, Sericite, and Chlorite: The J.L. Walton & T.J. Carnes Properties in Winston;

Clay: Siskey Hauling Inc., property in Campbellton areas and on the Jenkins Brick Company Property in Ben Hill area;

Gold: Triglone Mine, the Thomas Roach property, the Carnes property, the John Baggett property, and the Villa Rica mine on the Durgy property,

Granite, Crushed and Dimension: The Consolidated Quarries in Winston and at the Lithia Springs Quarry in Austell

Pyrite: The Hancock Prospect and the Villa Rica Mine on the Durgy property.

Sand & Gravel: The Anneewakee Creek in the Campbellton area.

Mining operations can be disruptive and harmful to the natural environment if not regulated properly. Unfortunately much of the potential damage occurred before environmental damage and resource destruction were recognized. Douglas County has taken steps through its regulations to prevent any further damage.

Prime Forest and Agricultural Land

Douglas County was once covered almost entirely by trees, although by the early 1900's, most of the original virgin forests had been cleared. The remaining forests consist mainly of three major forest types: Oak and Hickory, Loblolly or Slash Pine and Mixed Oak and Pine. About seventy-five percent of the total forested acreage is of the mixed type. Currently, 79,300 acres in Douglas County are forested. There are 4,870.13 acres classified as timbered land on the 2004 existing land use plan map. Of the agriculturally and timber land use categories 5,587 acres is included within the County's Conservation Program. The timber industry is the highest valued commodity harvested in the County.



The Georgia County Guide classified approximately 3,362.89 acres as agricultural in 2004. In 1997 there were 107 farms in the County, the average size being 91 acres, although the median farm size was approximately 36 acres. Crops include corn, soybeans and wheat. Commodities include forestry, dairy, beef cows and greenhouse production. Hogs and chickens are not raised commercially in the County. The average growing season is 228 days. The County ranked 131 within the state for commodity production. Both harvested cropland and livestock production have been steadily decreasing. In 1997 harvested cropland was approximately 1,465 acres. In 1997, 1,848 heads of cattle were reported.

As the County continues to develop, it is anticipated that farm, timbering and livestock production will continue to decrease as agricultural uses are converted into residential and commercial uses. Currently, two of the largest farms within the county are located in the southwestern portions of the county, and identified on the Future Land Use Plan Map. In order to balance development pressures with the need to preserve both the rural character and sensitive environmental resources, the County has taken pro-active measures within this plan and it's UDC and on the Future Land Use Plan. The "Rural Places" character area not only features conservation, agricultural land and prime forestland, but also goes one step further in Greenspace conservation within the sensitive watersheds of the County. The use of the watershed protection overlay, the conservation program, the County's tree conservation regulation and the "rural places" character area will ensure the protection of these important features within the County.

Major Parks, Recreation and Conservation Areas

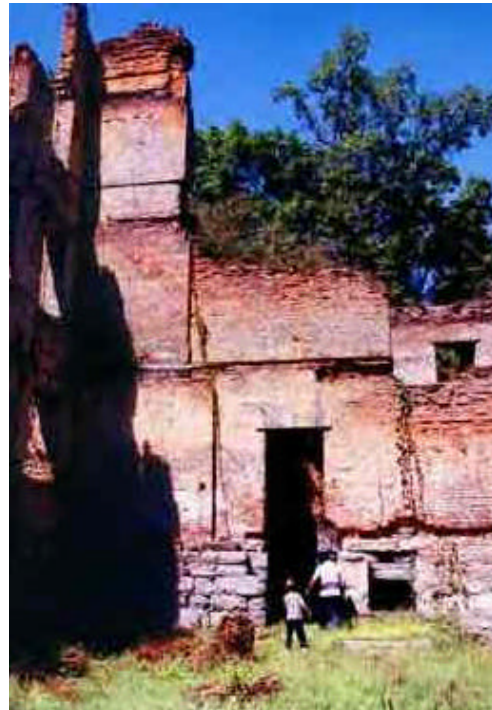
Douglas County is fortunate to have many conservation, recreation and natural areas. As mentioned earlier the county's mild climate is very conducive to outdoor activities. This section identifies con-

ervation areas and State Parks within the County. Additional information regarding parks and recreation facilities is located in the Community Facilities and Services Chapter of this plan.

Clinton Farm: A large tract of land originally belonging to John Clinton, a Revolutionary War soldier, which was given to Douglas County for recreational use. It is also the site of the Carnes Cabin, the second oldest existing home in Douglas County.



Sweetwater Creek State Conservation Park: This 2,000-acre park was developed for the restoration and preservation of the New Manchester Mill and New Manchester town. General William T. Sherman destroyed the town and mill during the Civil War. The factory began production 1849 and manufactured cotton and wool textiles. It was sold to New Manchester Manufacturing Company in 1857, and its post office opened in 1859. By 1862, the mill was supplying cloth and leather goods to the Confederate war effort. The cloth was used for tents, clothing, powder bags and blankets. The leather was used for shoes, straps and belts. It was destroyed by order of General Sherman on July 9, 1864. Factory employees were sent north of the Ohio River for the duration of the war. The Friends of Sweetwater Creek Park are currently engaged in a \$3 million fund drive to build an interpretation center. Friends of Sweetwater Creek State Park sponsor three annual festivals, Native American Festival and New Manchester Days. The 215-acre George Sparks Reservoir is located within this park. This water source is well used and is a pretty setting for viewing ducks, canoeing, and fishing for area residents.



Buzzard Roost Island—This Island in the Chattahoochee River identified the starting point for the Indian Nation Boundary line and was a major Civil War site. Today it is the corner point of Douglas, Cobb and Fulton Counties.

The Geltner-Aubun Wildlife Sanctuary—A 187-acre tract on Annewakee Creek north of Annewakee Road that serves as a natural habitat for area wildlife. Working with the Chattawah Open Land Trust, a conservation easement has been placed on the tract that will forever prohibit development of the property.

Greenspace Program

The County is currently participating in the newly adopted Governor’s Greenspace Program. The intent of the program is to assist localities with the preservation and creation of passive open space. Utilizing resources from this program and others, the County has recently adopted a plan to develop a system of greenways to interconnect recreation, living and working areas throughout

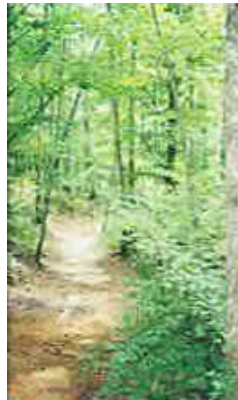


the County that include scenic corridors and sensitive natural resources, such as wetland areas

To accomplish this long-range goal of greenspace preservation, the County will utilize several tools such as:

- Obtaining conservation easements on privately owned land to protect natural, historic, or recreational resources, or to protect agricultural or forestry uses,
- Acquiring land in fee simple to ensure its permanent protection as greenspace, and
- Entering into contractual arrangements to ensure that, if the protected status is discontinued, such land will be replaced by other greenspace of equal or greater monetary and resource protection value.

Thus, the Douglas County from the state in order to leverage permanent protection of valuable program will develop a spaces that interconnect throughout the County. The protect sensitive natural re-county. The objectives of this guiding principles for protecting the rural character alternatives and linkages. program include:



Greenspace Program will utilize resources age the additional funds needed to achieve able greenspace in the County. Ultimately, system of greenways and protected open recreation, living and working areas program will preserve scenic corridors and sources, such as the wetland areas of the program are closely tied to this plans protecting natural and scenic resource, of the county and to provide transportation Highlights of the counties Greenspace

Cooperative efforts with the Chattahoochee Hill Country Alliance to develop a regional mixed use (non-motorized) 98 mile trail connecting 4 counties;

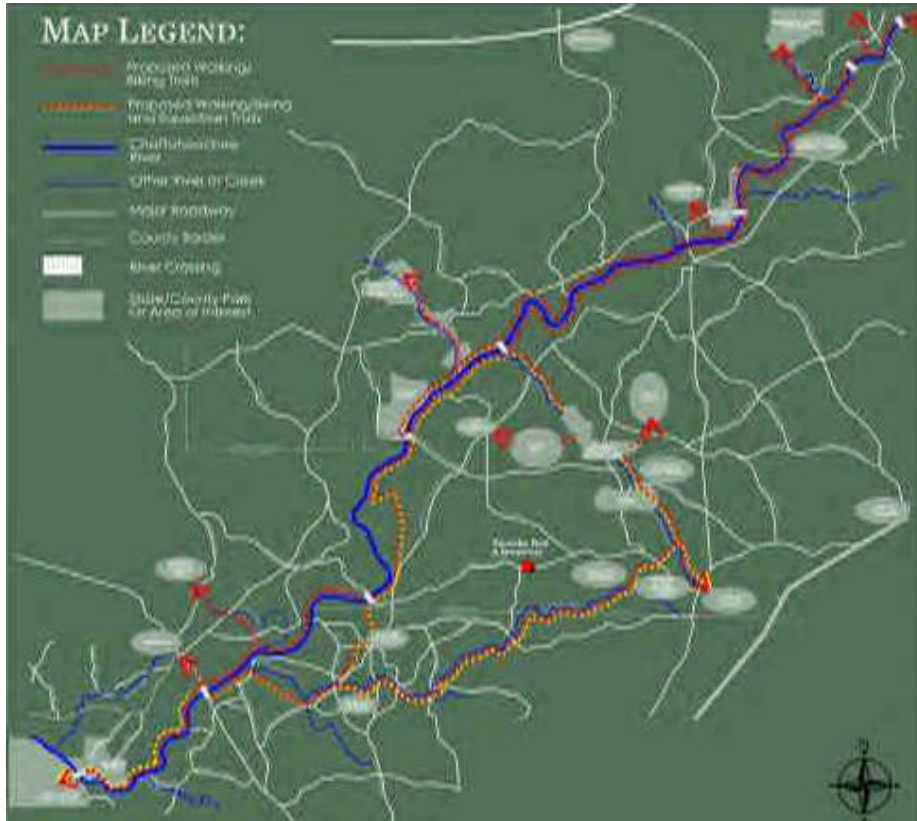
The purchase of over 1,3000 acres of Greenspace on the Dog River and Chattahoochee;

The recent conveyance of 802 acres of pristine land along the Dog River for Greenspace protection; and

Continued acquisition of greenspace through SPLOST and other county funds.

Chattahoochee Hill County Regional Greenway Trail Master Plan

The Path Foundation, working with the Chattahoochee Hill Country, representatives of Coweta, Carroll, Fulton and Douglas county governments, local landowners and outdoor enthusiasts, completed the Chattahoochee Hill County Regional Greenway Trail Master Plan in September of 2003. The commissions of Carroll, Coweta and Douglas counties have adopted the Master Plan. The four county governments jointly funded the master plan to determine if a four-county recreational trail system could be deigned connecting existing greenspaces.

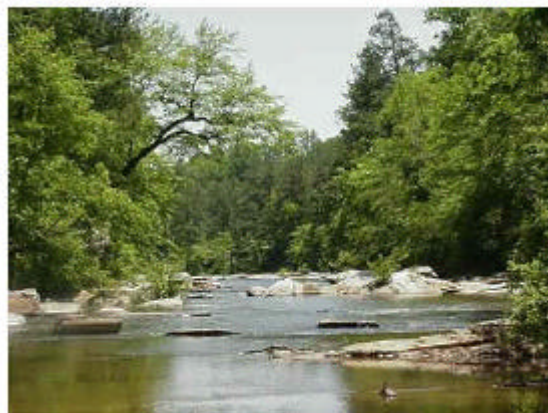


Connecting the desired destinations throughout 60,000 acres and portions of Carroll, Coweta and Douglas counties while preserving and even enhancing the natural environment became a fundamental goal of the plan. The Chattahoochee River corridor serves as the spine of the proposed trail system. The plan envisions the trail criss-crossing the River on four new bridges, two pedestrian-scale ferries, and two existing highway bridges.

Dog River Land Trust

In 2002 the Trust for Public Lands conveyed 802 acres of pristine land along the Dog River to Douglas County – the funding for the government’s purchase generated by SPLOST voters approved earlier that year. The county acquired the land to protect the quality of its drinking water and to provide recreational opportunities for county residents. This property is adjacent to a 470-acre tract along the Chattahoochee River that will also be the site of a future park. The project will protect 2.13 miles of Dog River buffer and approximately 1 mile of Flyblow Creek, a tributary of the Dog River.

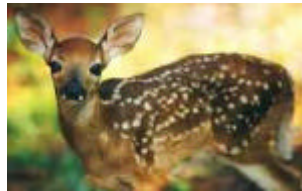
THE DOG RIVER UPSTREAM



Environmentally Sensitive and Ecologically Significant Areas

Plant and Animal Habitats

Before western settlers arrived around in the early 1800s forests and wetlands dominated the uplands of Douglas County. These forests consisted of a combination of hardwoods and evergreens. Both wetlands and forest areas provided natural habitats to wildlife and animals. Due to growth and development of the century, hundreds of acres of wetlands have been lost to development, flooding by dams throughout the county. Wetlands provide habitat areas for fish, wildlife and



vegetations that provide opportunities for study and education. While many of the county's remaining wetlands are well buffered with natural vegetation, there are several areas where development is encroaching. Several habitat protection measures are available through the State of Georgia.



Conservation tax credit

A conservation tax credit reduces property taxes on properties declared to be under conservation use. Although these properties are not permanently protected, the tax rate reduction allows an owner to maintain natural areas at a reduced tax rate even as these properties experience increased development pressure.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources has created the Georgia Natural Heritage Program to focus on natural elements of concern within the states. Elements of the program include plant species, animal species, or natural community types that are especially rare or threatened.

Douglas County is home to several species of plants and animals that are classified as

Threatened or Endangered Species within Douglas County		
Common Name	Biological Name	Details
Animals		
Bald eagle	Haliaeetus leucocephalus	Inland waterways & estuaries
Red-cockadade Woodpecker	Picoides borealis	Nest in mature pine with low understory veg.
Bluestripe Shiner	Cyprinella calitaenia	Brownwater streams
Highscale Shiner	Notropis hypsilepis	Sandy runs and pools of creeks & small rivers
Plants		
Little Amphianthus	Amphianthus pusillus	Shallow pools on granite outcrops.
Bay Star-vine	Schisandra	Twining on subcanopy & understory trees/shrubs in rich alluvial woods
Piedmont Barren Strawberry	Waldsteinia lobata	Rocky acidic woods along streams with mountain laurel

Animals and Plants of Special Concern	
Common Name	Biological Name
Plants	
Pink Lady Slipper	Cypripedium acaule
Large-flowered Yellow Lady Slipper	Cypripedium parviflorum var. pubescens
American Ginseng	Panax quinquefolius

endangered, threatened, or rare. State and Federal legislation relating to endangered plants and animals include the Endangered Species Act of 1973, the State Wildflower Preservation Act of 1973, and the Endangered Wildlife Act of 1973. The following list includes all plant and animal species that have been found in Douglas County, which are classified as protected by the State of Georgia and/or the Federal Government. Classifications are as follows: Threatened and/or Endangered. A third category is species of management concern. The Fish and Wildlife Service

are currently evaluating plants and animals within this category for population threats and trends. Plants and animals include:

The Georgia Natural Heritage Program (GNHP) is organized to collect information on rare species gathered throughout the state. Properties using federal funds, applying for federal permits or State public agencies using federal funds must survey their properties for endangered species and prepare plans to reduce or avoid impact. As part of the County’s Tree Ordinance, developments must retain certain existing mature trees and replant additional trees. Native vegetation is suggested to provide habitats for indigenous birds and animals.

Protected Greenspace areas, such as those along the Dog River provide sanctuary to protected species. The following are two major wildlife sanctuaries within the county:

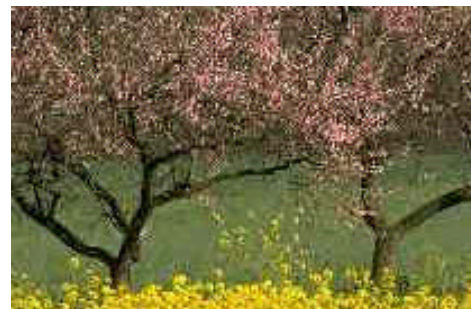
Sweetwater Creek State Park’s Interpretation Center & Museum

Sweetwater Creek State Conservation Park is home to many unique plants. This area is greatly influenced by the presence of the Bevard Fault zone, which runs directly through the Sweetwater Creek basin. This fault created rising elevations giving the park a more mountainous environment than the surrounding area. The Interpretative Center and Museum will serve as a gateway to the parks trails and the historic New Manchester Manufacturing Company mill ruins. Conceived as a site-integrated building, the design derives its form from program requirements, site topography, climate and solar orientation.



Geltner-Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary

The Geltner-Audubon Wildlife Sanctuary is a 186-acre tract located on Annewakee Creek was donated to the Atlanta Audubon Society in 1997. Annewakee Creek and Crooked Creek run through the property and form Lake Monroe. Industrious beavers have created their own huge lake with a dam that spans 200 feet. This “lake” has created an undisturbed habitat that is a sanctuary to the ducks, geese, blue heron and other wildlife that live there. The land features gently rolling hills covered with mature hardwoods, wetlands, creeks and lakes.



■ **Air Quality**

Air quality has a direct and far reaching impact on public health and well-being. Young children, the elderly, and people with asthma and other respiratory ailments are especially vulnerable to polluted air conditions.

Air quality is affected by a number of factors including dust, pollen, temperature, humidity, smoke and chemical emissions. Natural sources of air pollution, such as weather conditions and seasonal changes (pollen) are difficult to control. However, the greatest amount of polluting emissions released into the atmosphere comes from man-made sources.

Ground level ozone is the most serious threat to ambient air quality in Douglas County. Ground level ozone is the principal component of smog, which is a major irritant to the mucous membranes and causes burning and irritation of the eyes, nose and throat. As much as half of the ground level ozone found in urban areas can be traced to mobile sources of air pollution, such as automobiles, trucks and buses.

Another important air pollutant is carbon monoxide (CO), an odorless and colorless gas that in high enough concentrations can cause brain damage. Approximately 90% of carbon monoxide emissions in the atmosphere come from motor vehicle exhaust.

Douglas County is part of the Atlanta metro area’s urban air quality basin. As part of the overall growth management plan of the County, several policy goals are aimed, in part, on promoting cleaner air, including the promotion of a compact urban form, the development of the greenspace plan and the careful prioritization of infrastructure improvements to discourage sprawl. In addition, the proposed comprehensive transportation plan will further study ways to reduce automobile dependency in the County. Air quality conditions will continue to be monitored in the future.

■ **Hazardous Site Inventory**

There are currently 8 companies that are listed on the Hazardous Site Inventory:

Arivec Chemicals	Wallace Lake Road Dump	Basket Creek Drum Disposal
Young Refining	Dry Cleaners-5998 Fairburn	SNG-Yates Junction Meter Station
CR&A Battery Company	Douglas County Landfill	

■ **Water Resources**

Douglas County is characterized by a series of broad to narrow, gently sloping ridge tops and moderately steep hillsides adjacent to numerous, small drainage ways that dissect the areas.

Availability of water and water quality are major issues for the Douglas County area. Maintaining high standards for water quality results in public health benefits that are advanta-



geous to all Georgians. Land-disturbing activities associated with development can increase erosion and sedimentation, stormwater runoff, and the loss of animal and plant habitats. The transport and storage of hazardous or toxic waste materials pose a potential risk of contamination groundwater and surface water public drinking water supplies. Water resources are considered state assets that we all share in; and, therefore it is essential that the quality of public drinking water be ensured. For this reason it is necessary to protect the water resources that Douglas County and the surrounding communities rely on as sources of public water. The county has taken several steps to protect its water resources:

- The development of the Greenspace Plan. In conjunction with State funding, the County aims to set aside 20% of its land mass in permanent open space. A large percentage of open space will be along waterways in order to promote higher water quality standards.
- Septic tanks are restricted to areas of low density, and are subject to additional requirements within groundwater recharge areas.
- The County has adopted a River Corridor Protection Plan for the Chattahoochee River Corridor that meets the requirements of the Mountain and River Corridor Protection Act of 1991.
- Environmental over-lay districts for Groundwater Recharge Areas, Wetlands, and Watersheds have been adopted in the County's UDC.
- Larger stream buffer than required by the State have been adopted for all watershed districts.
- Larger lot zoning districts and land use patterns on the FLU map has been developed to protect environmentally sensitive areas.

In 2001, the Georgia general assembly created the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning district to help address the need for long-range water planning. The goal of regional water plans is to protect water quality, provide for water supply, protect recreational values and minimize the potential for impact from development on rivers, lakes, and streams in and downstream of the district. A full discussion of water planning issues is presented in the Community Facilities and Services Chapter of this plan. Specific environmental measures are presented here.

Douglas County has a relatively self-contained water supply, which must maintain its quality to serve existing and future residents. Development pressures encroach on sensitive water supply watersheds and the County must be resolute about enforcing the adopted standards of development in these areas.

As part of the requirements of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' Minimum Planning Standards, communities must adopt at least the minimum DNR's "Part 5 Minimum Environmental Standards," these statewide standards were developed by DNR pursuant to Code Section 12-2-8 and address three basic concerns:

- Aquifers and groundwater recharge areas;
- Water supply watersheds; and
- Wetlands.

Douglas County has adopted environmental protection standards within the County's UDC that exceed DCA's Part 5 standards.

Stream and Watercourses

All watercourses that appear as a solid or broken line on the U.G.S. Quadrangle maps are considered regulated streams. Other natural watercourses may be classified as regulated streams.

All watercourses, whether “regulated” according to the U.G.S. Quadrangle map, are protected within Douglas County. The state requires a minimum of a 25-foot buffer on any stream. The Douglas County UDC outlines buffer requirements within each watershed.

Of the significant rivers and streams in Douglas County, the US Environmental Protection Agency, via the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD), identifies many of them as not supporting the Clean Water Act (CWA) mandate of being “fishable and swimmable.” The list of waterways not meeting the CWA mandate is referred to as the 303d list. Additional information on non-point source pollution can be found later in this chapter.

Public Water Supply Sources

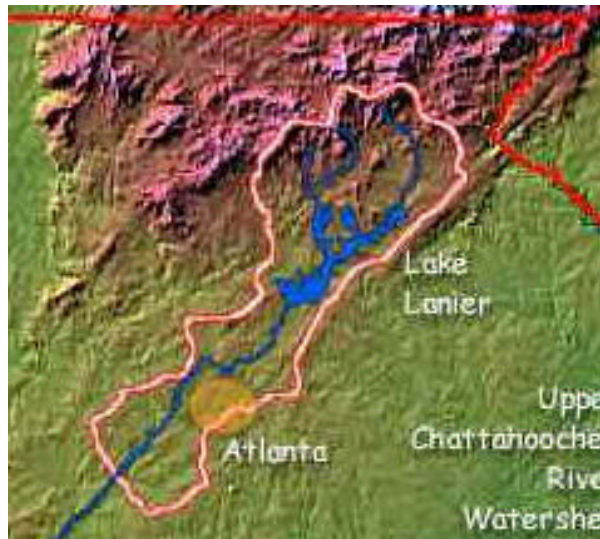
Land disturbance and development can increase erosion and sedimentation that decrease the storage capacity of reservoirs. In addition stormwater runoff, particularly from impervious surfaces, can introduce toxins, nutrients and sediment into drinking water supplies.

Water Supply Watersheds

A water supply watershed is the area of land upstream of a public drinking water intake. *The Wetlands Heritage of Georgia*, defines a watershed as an area of land drained by the same brook, stream, creek or river. Precipitation that is not immediately absorbed by the soil, detained by lakes or ponds, or siphoned off for into streams, rivers, area of the drainage basin is the total area surface water formation (i.e. stream). The State legislation setting requirements and limitations to reduce impacts of storm erosion. Watershed have been adopted as County UDO that than DNR’s mini-

Protection of water helps keep drinking contamination. By of pollution that gets governments can purification and guarantee improved public health. DNR categorizes watersheds as either large or small. More stringent watershed protection criteria are applied to water supply watersheds less than 100 square miles in size due to their increased vulnerability to contamination, additional protection requirements are instituted for Reservoirs.

Although DNR Criteria only requires large watersheds with reservoirs and small watersheds (with or without reservoirs) to institute buffer and impervious surface restrictions, Douglas County requires a measure of protection to all watersheds in the County. All land within unincorporated Douglas County is regulated by one of the water protection districts. Components of the plan for watershed protection include setbacks, buffer and density requirements as strict, or in many cases significantly more restrictive than the state. The county has regulations regarding:



man-made uses drains or lakes at the lowest basin. A drainage drained by a major tion (i.e. river, of Georgia has passed minimum buffer impervious surface the environment water runoff and soil protection measures part of the Douglas are more restrictive mum standards.

supply watersheds water free of limiting the amount into the water supply, reduce the cost of

- Septic tank absorption fields;
- Erosion and sedimentation control;
- Overland and flow/non-point source discharges;
- Development densities, setbacks, & buffers;
- Impervious surface limitations;
- Public education; and
- Water conservation.

All land within unincorporated Douglas County is regulated by one of the watershed protection districts. In 2003 the County adopted the Dog River Basin overlay to specifically regulate portions of this basin. The districts are established and designated on the Official Zoning Map of Douglas County and the natural features map corresponding to the topographical features that delimit the drainage basins of the respective creeks, rivers, and reservoirs. Grandfathered uses, DNR permitted mining activities outside of stream buffers, special forestry and agricultural activities consistent with Best Management Practices (BMPs) are exempt from watershed restrictions.

The following are limited within any watershed protection district:

Primary conservation areas, such as regulated streams, wetlands, 100 year floodplains and required stream buffers shall not be included as minimum lot area required by the zoning ordinance. Required stream buffers (but not regulated streams or wetlands) may be included in the gross land area for purposes of calculation of the percentage of a site's impervious surface area.

All property within watershed protection districts may be developed or redeveloped as permitted by its base zoning, provided the development is also in compliance with these watershed protection regulations of if within a district overlay.

New hazardous waste treatment or disposal facilities are prohibited.

New sanitary landfills, if permitted by DNR, shall have synthetic liners and leachate collection systems.

Any new facility that handles hazardous materials of the types listed in Section 312 of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (excluding underground storage tanks) and in amounts of 10,000 pounds or more on any one day, shall perform their operations on impermeable surfaces having spill and leak collection systems as prescribed by DNR.

The application of animal waste on land must follow guidelines established by the United States Department of Agriculture, Natural Resource Conservation Service, *Agricultural Best Management Practices*.

Utilities that cannot be feasibly located outside the greenway or setback area must be located as far from the stream bank as reasonably possible; installed and maintained to protect the integrity of the greenway and setback area as best as reasonably possible and must not impair the quality of the drinking water system.

New streets that cross perennial streams shall be designed in such a way as to avoid direct runoff from the paved surface into the streams they cross. Such design features shall be shown on the site plan.

Douglas County has one large watershed with a reservoir and 4 small watersheds, 2 of which contain reservoirs. The following watershed protection areas are located within the County: Dog River, Bear Creek Anneewakee Creek, Sweetwater Creek, Beaver Run Creek, Gothers Creek, Hurricane Creek and the Chattahoochee River Direct Drainage Basin.

Reservoirs

Buffers around public water supply reservoirs shall be maintained as required in the Watershed management Plan for the respective reservoirs. In no case shall the required buffer be less than 150 feet in width. Vegetation, land disturbance and land uses shall be controlled by provisions of the applicable Reservoir Management Plan, as approved by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Private Artificial Reservoirs

Reservoirs created on private property by either building a dam across or diverting flow from a regulator stream are only permitted with the approval of Douglas County and all relevant and state federal agencies. In order for a private artificial reservoir to be approved, engineering documentation that demonstrates that the project will be adequately designed and safe; will not diminish the flow of water to the public water supply reservoirs; and demonstrating documentation that the project will have a net positive impact on water quality within the regulated stream and its watershed when compared with a no-build alternative must be provided. A management plan for the reservoir showing the type and size of the vegetative buffer is also required.

Large Watershed

Sweetwater Creek: Large water supply watershed with an existing water intake facility and the Sparks River Reservoir is located in the northeastern portion of the County. It has a surface area of approximately 256 square miles. The City of East Point, withdraws fifteen (15) million gallons per day (MGD) from Sweetwater Creek. The Sweetwater Creek Basin contains Sweetwater Creek State Park, which serves as an invaluable recreational and natural resource for Douglas County and the region. A watershed management plan has been established to protect the reservoir. The following restrictions have been established:

Stream buffers as established in the UDC, widths and setbacks from streams shall be regulated as specified within the Environmental Chapter.

No impervious surface shall be constructed within the protected stream corridor.

Septic tanks and septic tank drain fields are prohibited within the protected stream corridor.

New facilities located with seven (7) miles of a water supply intake or reservoir, which handle hazardous materials of the types listed in Section 312, of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (excluding underground storage tanks) and amounts of 10,000 pounds or more on any one day, shall perform their operations on impervious surfaces and in conformance with applicable federal spill prevention requirements or the requirements of the Standard Fire Prevention code.

A natural greenway shall be established and maintained within 150 feet of the banks of the reservoir boundary. Vegetation, land disturbance and land uses shall be controlled by the provisions of the Reservoir Management Plan, as approved by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Small Watersheds

Anneewakee Creek: Its drainage basin is approximately 29.72 square miles, and located within the central part of the county. A reservoir is located within this watershed.

The Chapel Hill Water Treatment Plant currently takes in One-Million MGD, from Anneewakee Creek. This basin is the most heavily developed basin in the County with more than 70% of the land area currently developed. Considerable growth in this area is projected in the future due to its water and sewer amenities.

Bear Creek: The Bear Creek and Dog River Watersheds are both contain reservoirs. Watershed Management Plans for both the Bear Creek and Dog River Reservoirs have been established. Both have an intake for WSA on the reservoir.

Bear Creek is located in the west central portion of Douglas County. The Bear Creek reservoir withdraws Six (6) MGD. The Bear Creek reservoir was discontinued as a water source for Douglas County. Because of water source reallocation issues as a result of the North Georgia Water District Plan, Bear Creek may once again be considered as a primary water source. Unfortunately, water quality within this reservoir is poor due to septic tank leakage. The County is seriously studying ways to regulate land use to prevent further damage, and has designated portions of this basin as part of the Dog River Overlay District. Approximately 40 percent of the land and upstream of the reservoir are developed.



Dog River is located in the western portion of Douglas County. Its basin is approximately 76 square miles in area. Less than ten (10) percent of the land in the Dog River Basin is developed. The 300-acre Dog River Reservoir holds approximately 1.2 billion gallons, and is the primary water source for Douglas County. Due to its water resource importance the County has developed an overlay to his area restricting impervious surface and a minimum lot size to 3 acres or greater.

Beaver Run Creek Watershed—intake of Sweetwater 23.03. 5% developed.

Limitations within the 7-mile protection area:

Stream buffers, impervious surface limits, development setbacks and maximum residential density as specified in the UDC within the Environmental Protection Chapter.

Industrial land use classifications within the basins are prohibited.

The impervious surface area, including all public and private structures, utilities or facilities, of the entire watershed protection area shall be limited to 25%, or the area covered by existing uses, whichever is greater. Any individual development that will result in more impervious surface than 25% of the total area of the property must be specifically approved.

New hazardous waste treatment or disposal facilities are prohibited.

New sanitary landfills, if permitted by DNR, shall have synthetic liners and leachate collection systems.

Reservoir protection. A natural greenway shall be established and maintained within 150 feet of the banks of any public water supply reservoir boundary within the protected watershed area. Vegetation, land disturbance and land uses shall be controlled by the provisions of the _____ Reservoir Management Plan, as approved by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR).

Any new facility that handles hazardous materials of the types listed in Section 312 of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (excluding underground storage tanks) and in amounts of 10,000 pounds or more on any one day, shall perform their operations on impermeable surfaces having spill and leak collection systems as prescribed by DNR.

Secondary protection areas:

Stream buffers, impervious surface limits, development setbacks and maximum residential density as specified in the UDC within the Environmental Protection Chapter.

Other Watersheds:

Streams within areas of the County which are not classified as small or large water supply watersheds (such as the Chattahoochee River direct drainage basin, the Hurricane Creek watershed and Gothards Creek) are also worthy of protection. Stream buffers, as established in the UDC) widths and setbacks from streams shall be regulated as specified in the table located in subsection (1)(e).

Stream buffers, impervious surface limits, development setbacks and maximum residential density as specified in the UDC within the Environmental Protection Chapter.

Coordination among adjacent jurisdictions is necessary in order to ensure the protection of water supply watersheds. The Dog River Watershed occupies Douglas and Carroll County, and the Sweetwater watershed occupies major portions of Cobb and Paulding Counties. Currently there are no interjurisdictional protection policies for the Dog River Watershed, in addition to state law. All applicable jurisdictions will be under the guidance of the North Georgia Water District Plan regulations in the future.

River and Stream Corridors

All watercourses that appear as a solid or broken line on the U.S.G.S Quadrangle Maps are considered regulated streams. Other natural watercourses may be classified as regulated streams if they possess one or more of the following characteristics, as determined by County staff based on data analysis and/or field review.

Evidence of significant water flow along the channel or bed of the watercourse, characterized by one or more of the following: hydraulically sorted sediments; scouring of vegetation and vegetative litter; loosely rotted vegetation caused by the action of moving water.

Evidence of hydric soils, hydrophytic vegetation, or wetlands in or around the channel or bed of the watercourse.

Stream buffers from the banks and setbacks for regulated activities differs by watershed and ranges from 200 feet in the Dog River Watershed, to a minimum of 25 feet for any stream. A table outlining requirements can be found in the UDC. All stream buffers must be maintained with appropriate indigenous plant spaces and groundcover to limit erosion. Construction, grading, cleaning, grubbing, excavating, filling or other land development activities are prohibited outside the minimum setbacks of the regulated buffers.

Other Major Perennial Streams within the County include:

Tanyard Creek	Baldwin Creek	Fly Blow Creek
Little Bear Creek	Bluff Creek	Ayers Creek
Mobley Creek	Long Creek	Little Baby Bear Creek
Billy Creek	Big Branch Creek	Cain Creek
Keaton Creek	Nancy Long Creek	Poole Creek
Crawfish Creek	Yellow Rock Creek	

Protected River Corridor

The Metro River Protection Act, requires local governments to include a river corridor protection plan as part of the comprehensive planning process. The Chattahoochee River bounding Douglas County to the southeast is a protected River Corridor. Although not a direct water source for Douglas County, the Chattahoochee River is the largest source of water for municipalities upstream of the County.

The Chattahoochee River is located adjacent to the southeastern border of Douglas County. The river begins to flow by Douglas County at a point near Buzzard's Roost Island, where Douglas County, Cobb County, and South Fulton County meet. The River continues past Douglas County until it reaches a point where Douglas County, Carroll County, and South Fulton meet. Thus, the Chattahoochee River makes up a significant boundary of Douglas County. The boundary line on the Douglas County side is made up of only one governmental jurisdiction, unincorporated Douglas County.

Following the requirements as established by the Georgia Planning Act and the Mountain and River corridor Protection Act has developed the Douglas County River Corridor Protection Plan. Similar to the comprehensive plan, this plan includes an inventory of existing conditions, an assessment of these conditions and a statement of needs and goals consistent with the inventory and assessment. Goals, policy statements, and action statements, were developed based on perceived needs and general goals. In addition, a strategy for the implementation of goals, policy statements, and action statements, was developed including a short-term and long-term work program.

Public participation was considered for the River corridor Protection Plan, as part of the overall comprehensive planning process. As this plan was part of the overall plan document, the public had an opportunity to review and comment on this plan during the second public hearing for the comprehensive plan.

Land Uses:

Land uses in Douglas County adjacent to the Chattahoochee River include agricultural uses such as pastureland and crops, low-density residential uses, dredging operations, vacant forested and cleared lands, old private landfill sites, junkyards, a private airstrip, and a variety of small commercial operations.

Current Protective Mechanisms:

Douglas County utilizes several protective mechanisms that apply to lands adjacent to the Chattahoochee River a natural vegetative greenway of 100 feet is required along the river banks. Flood hazard districts as depicted on the FEMA Flood Plain Maps govern all flood plains. Also, the County administers a soil erosion and sedimentation control Ordinance through the WSA. All land disturbances and the ARC as required by the MRPA must renew development within the CRP. Development permits are not issued by the County prior to this review. The CRP area is shown on the natural resource map. See also the section on Greenspace to see further descriptions of river protection.

Floodplains

In the majority of the County, floodplains tend to be narrow, except in the southern part of the County where they are moderately wide. The upland soils are generally well drained. The bottomlands waterways drain off slowly and remain wet for long periods. Much of this area is contained in the flood plain areas, and is usable to some extent for non-intensive uses such as agriculture, recreation, etc.

Unwise development within flood plains and general development elsewhere reduces the amount of land, which absorbs runoff. Runoff over greater areas of impervious surfaces increases the amount of water that reaches rivers and streams, as well as, backyards and other areas never before experiencing floodwaters. Flood plains control floodwater, silt overflow and recharge groundwater. This increased flow extends the boundaries of 100 Year Flood Zones, and increases the possibilities of general flooding. Douglas County must take steps to more comprehensively deal with storm water runoff as a system; versus lot by lot, or strictly subdivision oriented storm water runoff consideration.

Floodplain management is required under the National Flood Insurance Act of 1963 and the Flood Disaster Protection Act of 1973. The County has incorporated Flood Damage Prevention within the UDC. Additional restrictions regarding lots containing floodplain areas include a required natural resource easement for additional protection.

Aquifers and Groundwater Recharge Areas

Recharge areas are portions of the earth's surface where water infiltrates the ground to replenish an aquifer, which is any stratum or zone of rock beneath the surface of the earth capable of containing or producing water from a well. The water in the fully saturated portion of the aquifer is called groundwater. Groundwater comprises more than thirty times the amount of water, than do all of the rivers, lakes, and streams of the world. The surface region over which an aquifer collects is called a groundwater recharge area. Groundwater recharge areas are areas where the slope is less than 8%, and two or more rock types contact each other within a four square mile area. Recharging of groundwater occurs by the seeping of precipitation through porous rock and openings in exposed rock. Geologic conditions determine the size and amount of recharge in a particular area.

In order to avoid toxic and hazardous waste contamination to drinking water supplies, groundwater recharge areas must be protected. While recharge takes place throughout practically all of Georgia's land area, the rate or amount of recharge reaching underground aquifers varies from place to place depending on geologic conditions.

Areas with thick soils and gentle slopes are ideal development sites, but they are also the most susceptible to groundwater pollution. Therefore, areas that are the most desirable for development are also the most susceptible to groundwater pollution. Measures to reduce groundwater recharge area pollution include reducing impervious surfaces, controlling hazardous spills, and dumping. Currently subsurface water supplies account for a small percentage of Douglas County's water use.

Due to the non-porous underlying rock structure in Douglas County, groundwater recharge areas have been identified as having "low-pollution susceptibility" by DNR. According to data provided by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources on the Ground-Water Pollution Susceptibility Map of Georgia, Hydrologic Atlas 18, 1999 Edition, Douglas County contains several significant groundwater recharge areas. The 4 groundwater recharge areas designated by the Hydrologic Atlas 18, 1999 Edition, are as follows:

- Area 1: In District 3 between Dog and South River
- Area 2: On the Douglas/Carroll County border off Ephesus Church Road
- Area 3: Parallel to Interstate 20 from Villa Rica to Winston
- Area 4: The largest groundwater recharge area underlies the most developed region of Douglas County. This recharge area parallels Interstate 20 from Highway 5 to Lithia Springs.

Both the state and federal government regulate land uses within groundwater recharge areas. A Groundwater Recharge Area Protection District (GW) has been established to protect the quality of groundwater by regulating land uses within significant groundwater recharge areas. Groundwater recharge areas in Douglas County are mapped on the Official Zoning Map of Douglas County and the natural features map, corresponding to the areas mapped as significant recharge areas by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). Requirements from the Environmental Protection Division, (EPD), include restrictions and regulations on sanitary landfills, land disposal of hazardous wastes, spray irrigation of wastewater and wastewater treatment basins.

As stated above, groundwater recharge areas in Douglas County have low pollution susceptibility. The County within the Unified Development Ordinance has adopted the following protection restrictions:

- Protect groundwater quality by restricting land uses that generate, use or store dangerous pollutants in recharge areas;
- Protect groundwater quality by limited density of development; and
- Protect groundwater quality by ensuring that any development that occurs within the recharge area shall have no adverse effect on groundwater quality.
- Sanitary sewer shall serve new manufactured home parks.

Overall additional requirements of significant recharge areas with low pollution susceptibility, as defined and delineated by DNR, are as follows:

- New hazardous waste treatment or disposal facilities are prohibited.
- New sanitary landfills, if permitted by DNR and the zoning district, shall have synthetic liners and leachate collection systems.
- Any new facility that handles hazardous materials of the types listed in Section 312 of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act of 1976 (excluding underground storage tanks) in amounts of 10,000 pounds or more on any one day shall perform their operations on impermeable surfaces having spill and leak collection systems as prescribed by DNR.
- Any new above-ground chemical or petroleum storage tanks, having a minimum volume of 660 gallons, shall have a secondary containment for 110% of the volume of such tanks or 110% of the volume of the largest tank, in a cluster of tanks. Such tanks used for agricultural purposes are exempt, provided they comply with all federal requirements.
- New agricultural waste impoundment sites larger than 50 acre-feet must be lined as described by the Soil Conservation Service (SCS).
- Any new home served by septic tank/drain field system must be approved by the County Health Department and must have a lot that is at least 110% of the minimum lot size required by Table MT-1 of the Department of Human Resources' Manual for On-site Sewage Management Systems.
- See above restrictions on new manufactured home parks.

The Douglas County Environmental Health Department approves all septic tank permits. This department will ensure the minimum lot sizes are met and the requirements of the Department of Human Resources "Manual for On-site Sewerage Management Systems" are met for all groundwater recharge areas.

Wetlands

Wetlands serve as important fish and wildlife habitats and breeding ground, and are an integral factor in food chain production. Numerous plant and animal species have adapted to the special conditions of freshwater wetlands and cannot survive elsewhere. Wetlands serve as storage areas for flood protection/control, erosion control, water quality maintenance, and groundwater recharge, supply and recreation opportunities. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs and similar areas. Douglas County's wetlands can be found along major creeks, rivers, and lakes, usually within their respective flood plains. Wetlands serve as:

- Recharge areas for groundwater;
- Habitats for fish, plants, and other wildlife;
- Flood control devices;
- Water purifiers by filtering and trapping pollutants and sediment;
- Transition zones between terrestrial and aquatic environments; and
- Buffers between developed and undeveloped areas.

Wetlands can be classified into two groups, open or closed. Closed wetlands exchange relatively little material with other environments. Conversely, open systems exchange significant amounts of material and energy with other environments. However, no wetland is exclusively closed or open. Wetlands protection comprises the following two categories:

- All lands mapped as wetlands areas by the U.S. fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory Maps (Generalized Wetlands Map); and
- All lands that, in the course of development review are determined by Douglas County to have significant evidence of wetlands.

In common terms, wetlands refer to bogs, marshes, swamps, floodplain areas, ponds, and lakes. A less clear definition includes areas meeting certain criteria as wetlands. These criteria are: "vegetation, similar to that of traditional wetlands; soils heavily influenced during some portion of the year by water; and complete ground of surface water saturation during a portion of the growing season."

The Generalized Wetlands Map is adopted by reference and declared to be part of the UDC. This map is to serve as a guide during the wetlands permitting process. The Generalized Wetlands Map cannot serve as a substitute for a delineation of jurisdictional wetland boundaries by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, as required by Section 404 of the *Clean Water Act, as amended*. Any action by Douglas County under this ordinance does not relieve the landowner from federal or state permitting requirements.



Wetlands are threatened by a number of human and natural actions. Some of these are direct human threats such as drainage of the wetlands for land reclamation, construction of dikes, dams and levees which alter wetlands, and discharge of toxic materials such as oils, pesticides or other pollutants which destroy plants and wildlife within the wetlands. Other human threats are indirect such as sediment diversion by dams and channels, and subsidence due to extraction of groundwater, oil and other minerals. Finally, some other threats are natural such as storms, droughts, and destruction by animals. No activity which will, or which may reasonably be expected to result in the discharge of dredge or fill material in the Waters of the US will be permitted within the wetland protection district without written permission or a permit from Douglas County.

The Clean Water Act of 1990 requires entities to obtain a permit if land disturbing activities are to be performed on the wetland. The Corps of Engineers has specified the possible development uses of wetlands.

Local Wetland Protection Criteria

A land disturbance permit is required for all development activities in Douglas County. The County's Engineering Department issues land disturbance permits and has been supplied with a copy of the National Wetlands Inventory Maps (U.S. Department of the Interior) which by adoption of this plan, become the official reference maps for the identification of wetlands within Douglas County. The Engineering Department will determine whether a given development will fall within a wetlands area as shown on the map, and whether the wetlands area has been designated as a significant wetland. If so, the following evaluative criteria will be used to determine the impact of the activity on the wetland area:

Will the land use lead to permanent alteration of the wetland that will negatively affect its natural functions (including water quality maintenance, erosion control, etc.)?

If yes, the activity in question should be restricted.

Will the use cause permanent alteration of the wetland that will negatively affect its recreational or fishing use, if any?

If yes, the activity in question should be restricted.

Will the impact of the land use be temporary or permanent?

If permanent, the activity in question should be restricted.

All jurisdictional wetlands will be referred to the Corps. Of Engineers for a designated 40 Permit or Letter of Permission. No local permit will be issued until this requirement is fulfilled.

Section 404 Permits

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for restoring and maintaining the environmental integrity of the nation's wetland resources. The major federal regulatory tool for achieving this is "Section 404" of the *Clean Water Act*. Section 404 establishes a permit program to regulate the discharge of dredge or fill material into waters of the United States, including most wetlands. To protect these environmentally sensitive areas, the EPA's goal is to allow no long-term degradation and no net loss of wetlands. A 404 permit may be required for any discharge of dredge or fill material in wetlands of over .1 acre in size; penalties for beginning work without a permit are severe. The Clean Water Act requires that a determination of jurisdiction for any work that would result in altering over one-acre wetlands.

The County amended its Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to clearly require Section 404 review by the Corps of Engineers of any land disturbance proposed in a wetland area. Hazardous or toxic waste receiving, treatment or disposal facilities and sanitary landfills are prohibited within wetland areas.

All development proposals in wetlands, whether significant or non-significant wetlands, will be referred by the Engineering Department and the Permit Department to the Army Corps of Engineers, who will determine whether a Section 404 Permit will be required for the project.

Utilizing the Georgia Planning Act of 1990 criteria for wetlands protection, land uses that are deemed acceptable within wetland and flood prone areas include:

Conservation or preservation of soil, water, vegetation, fish and other wildlife, provided it does not affect waters of Georgia or of the United States in such a way that would require an individual 404 Permit.

Outdoors passive recreational activities, including fishing, bird watching, hiking, boating, horseback riding, and canoeing.

Forestry practices applied in accordance with best management practices approved by the Georgia Forestry Commission and as specified in Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.

The pasturing of livestock, provided that riparian wetlands are protected, that soil profiles are not disturbed and that approved agricultural Best Management Practices are followed.

Education, scientific research and nature trails.

Other uses permitted under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. In addition, as outlined elsewhere in this chapter, the County is working towards developing a greenway system to further protect sensitive areas.

As Douglas County grows, it must consider the natural habitats of all species. Wetland protection is required by the Wetland Protection Act of 1990. Economic incentives can be obtained from the Federal Government, if wetland conservation is practiced (Wetland Reserve Program).

Water Quality and Pollution

The 1997 Amendments to the Federal Safe Drinking Water Act brought about new pollution prevention and protection measures that help ensure clean and safe drinking water. As a first step, the USEPA requires all states to perform Source Water Assessments for each drinking water intake. The Georgia Environmental Protection Division contract with ARC to coordinate and facilitate the implementation of the State's Source Water Assessment Plan for 28 metro Atlanta public drinking water intakes. The Douglasville-Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority and the Atlanta Regional Commission have completed a source water assessment itemizing potential sources of surface water pollution to the drinking water supply. Two types of water pollution generators have been identified: Point Source Pollution and Non-point Source Pollution.

Dog River –Water Supply Watershed	
Inventory of Potential Point Sources of Pollution	Facilities
Agriculture	1
Asphalt Plants	2
Electric Substations	3
Fuel Facilities	11
Garbage Transfer Stations	1
Hazardous Waste Facilities	4
Landfills	1
Large Industries--Federal Categorical Standards	2
Land Application Site (LAS) Permit Holders	31
Large Industries-utilize hazardous chemicals	3
Lift Stations	1
Mines	4
NPDES Permit Holders	3
Wastewater Treatment Facilities	3
Oil/Gas Pipelines Crossing Streams	17
Total	57

Bear Creek--Water Supply Watershed	
Fuel Facilities	1
Hazardous Waste Facilities	1
Large Industries which Utilize Hazardous	1
Land Application Site (LAS) Permit Holders	2
Lift Stations	1
NPDES Permit Holders	2
Total	8

Point Source Pollution

Individual Source Pollution involves actual facilities, which have contaminants on site, which can pose a potential health risk if humans consume those contaminants. Currently 57 facilities have been identified within the Dog River Water Supply Water shed, and 8 within the Bear Creek Watershed.

Non-Point Source Pollution

Non-point source pollution is caused by development and everyday activities that take place in residential, commercial and rural areas and is carried by rainfall to streams and lakes. Non-point source pollution is the most significant source of water pollution within Douglas County, as is in the entire metropolitan Atlanta Region. Nonpoint source pollution, which comes from an array of sources such as farms, cars, fertilizers, construction sites and atmospheric deposition, is carried by stormwater into local streams. Each time it rains, the resulting runoff from rooftops, lawns, streets and parking lots pick up debris such as:

- Dust and Dirt;
- Oil and other vehicle leaks;
- Pet waste;
- Lawn pesticides and fertilizers
- Leaves and grass clipping

Leaky septic tanks and sewer lines, construction sites and bare ground areas are other sources of non-point source pollution.

The EPD has indicated its intention to develop stormwater and watershed plans for basins affected by nonpoint source pollution. The county should encourage the planning process to occur within a timely manner and work to achieve its implementation at both the state and local level. Non-point pollution levels will continue to be monitored within the County.

Douglas County is very proactive towards the protection of its water sources. WSA is now administering the stormwater protection program and monitoring soil erosion in order to coordinate new development and potential impacts within the county. There are several protection mechanisms in place through the UDC that contribute to improved water quality. Extra protection through strict impervious surface limitations and large lot configurations within the Dog River Basin add further protection. In addition the county has adopted a strong tree ordinance, landscape and buffer standards and is encouraging environmentally friendly master planned development.

■ **Scenic Views and Sites**

Douglas County is a county of natural beauty. Although the County has experienced rapid growth within the last decade, its rural heritage is still greatly intact. Several specific scenic views and sites have been identified and specifically conserved such portions of the Chattahoochee and Dog River. Several others have been identified in the Historic Resources of this Plan. The County will continue to work through its future land use plan to conserve additional scenic views and sites.

■ Potential Non-Regulatory Programs

Non-regulatory programs include incentive programs, citizen involvement efforts, and technical assistance and education.

Conservation Use Program

Tax benefits for land conservation are provided through the Conservation Use Program. Under this program, the State of Georgia offers a tax incentive to qualifying property owners who wish to enter into a conservation covenant. Owners of qualified property must enter into a covenant with the state stipulating that the land will be maintained in its current condition for a period of 10 years. In exchange for the covenant, ad valorem tax will be assessed on the value of the property's current use rather than the fair market value. Strict penalties are enforced if the covenant is broken before the 10-year agreement expires. Covenants can be re-established after each 10-year period.

Property eligible for the Conservation Use Program includes environmentally sensitive land, residential transitional property, and certain agricultural and forestry property. Environmentally sensitive land includes steep slopes, mountain slopes and mountain tops, wetlands, floodplains, habitats which contain endangered or threatened species and provide a significant portion of the species' biological requirements, significant groundwater recharge areas, and undeveloped barrier islands. Residential transitional property is defined as property that includes a maximum of five acres surrounding the residence of a single-family homeowner, or is located in transitional developing areas as evidenced by recent zoning changes, the purchase of adjacent property by a developer, or the close proximity to property, which has undergone a change from single-family residential use. Agricultural and forestry property includes land used for a variety of row crops, aquaculture, horticulture, floriculture, forestry, dairy, livestock, poultry, and apiarian products.

Conservation Easements

Under the Georgia Uniform Conservation Easement Act, conservation easements are non-possessory, in-perpetuity interests in real property created for any of the following purposes:

- Retaining or protecting natural, scenic, or open-space use;
- Assuring the availability of land for agricultural, forest, recreational, or open-space use;
- Protecting natural resources;
- Maintaining or enhancing air or water quality; or
- Preserving historical, architectural, archeological, or cultural aspects of real property.

A Conservation Easement is a legal agreement a property owner makes to restrict the type and amount of development that may take place on the property. Each conservation easement's restrictions are tailored to the particular property and to the interests of the individual landowner.

Georgia Adopt-A Stream

Georgia Adopt-A-Stream is a citizen involvement and water quality-monitoring program focusing on nonpoint source pollution. Volunteers adopt a section of stream, river, lake or wetland for one year. During that time, they evaluate water quality and habitat conditions, pick-up litter, and increase community awareness of these resources. Georgia Adopt-A-Stream provides education on nonpoint source pollution and protection of stream and river corridors. Currently more than 5,000 volunteers participate in individual and community sponsored Adopt-A-Stream Programs.

River Care 2000 Program

River Care 2000 is a conservation program established by Governor Zell Miller in September 1995. One key objective of this program is acquisition of river corridor lands for purposes of protection and to forestall unwise development in flooding prone areas. The Coordinating Committee has approved procedures for three types of projects—Riverway Demonstration Projects, which improve public access to a river with scenic and recreation uses and protect natural and historic resources by acquiring and managing land in the river corridor; Significant Sites, tracts of land the DNR will acquire and operate as traditional state public-use facilities and Restoration Sites, which are tracts of land the state will identify, acquire, and manage to reduce nonpoint source pollution.

Wildlife Resources Division (WRD) Land Acquisition

DNR's Wildlife Resources Division began a land acquisition program in 1987 to acquire 60,000 acres of additional lands for Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs) and Public Fishing Areas (PFAs). This initiative was funded by a \$30 million 20-year obligation bonds to be paid off by hunting and fishing license increases and WMA permit fees.

Nonpoint Source Education: Project WET (Water Education for Teachers)

A report outlining a plan for nonpoint source education in Georgia was completed in 1994. Titled Georgia Urban Waterbody Education Plan and Program, the report laid out nonpoint education strategies for seven target audiences—general public, environmental interest organizations, civic associations, educators, business associations, local government officials and state government officials. EPD initially targeted its education efforts towards educators and students in grades K to 12. Covering impacts on ground water and surface water, the curriculum addresses the following nonpoint sources: agriculture, forestry, urban and construction. EPD began implementing Project WET in December 1996. In 1997 WET Facilitator Training Workshops were successfully completed in Alpharetta, Macon and Savannah, Georgia. Currently there are 86 Project WET Facilitators in Georgia.

Greenprint Georgia

The Greenprint Georgia program is an innovative way to help local governments protect their critical natural and cultural resources and build enduring, prosperous communities. The Trust for Public Lands is helping Georgia communities create practical greenprints that not only protect important natural resources—like drinking water, watersheds, wetlands, parks and other open space, but also the special places that define an area's history and unique character.

Chattahoochee Riverway

The Trust for Public Land has launched a campaign to transform the Chattahoochee River from one of the nation's most threatened rivers into a vital center of community life for metro-Atlanta. This 180-mile ribbon of green would stretch from the North Georgia Mountains to Columbus, protecting safe drinking water and enhancing communities with recreational and natural lands.

■ **Summary and Needs Assessment**

Douglas County has an abundance of natural resources that warrant attention because of their sensitive nature and valuable contribution to the community. The County has taken several specific steps for the protection of water resources and conservation of the natural environment. Overall the county is more stringent than the State's minimum environmental requirements. Protection measures include larger required stream buffers, more stringent impervious surface requirements, Watershed protection overlay within the Bear Creek and Dog River (portions) watershed, strong tree conservation, landscape and buffer requirements, required primary resource conservation easement protection, and

local non-jurisdiction wetlands permitting. In addition to direct protection of the natural environment, the County will continue to educate its citizens about local threatened or endangered species and environmental impacts through the County web page. The County's vision, guiding principles, goals and objectives and the Future Land Use Plan have all been developed with natural resource protection in mind. A lower land use impact has been planned in environmentally sensitive areas.

Responsibility for the protection of the natural environment is regulated under several agencies and regulations: through the County—Chattahoochee River Corridor Protection Plan, the newly adopted UDC which contains sections on tree protection, soil & erosion practices, flood protection regulations, environmental overlay areas and septic tank restrictions; "greenway" stream corridors, site plan/engineering review, land disturbance and building permits and construction permits; through the Georgia DNR—Water resource and soil erosion regulations and inspections; and through the US EPA/Corps of Engineers—wetland (404) permits. Due to the anticipated growth of the County, the County will continue to enforce current regulations with regards to floodplains, wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, Chattahoochee River Protection Act, and UDC and to develop additional regulations and requirements as necessary in the future.

Not only is the County strong on protecting its existing natural and sensitive resources, the County is also proactive in acquiring new open space with the goal of protecting Douglas County's rural heritage. The new SPLOST program emphasized parks, recreation and Greenspace. The land component is almost \$20 million and will allow the purchase of about 2,000 acres of parklands and Greenspace.

The County will continue to control development location and practices so that unsuitable soils are not built on, erosion is minimized, wetlands are not disturbed and floodplains are avoided. The County currently enforces responsible development practices through land disturbance and building permits, inspection and review process. This process adequately mitigates negative development practices and will remain intact in the future.

6. _____ Historic and Cultural Resources

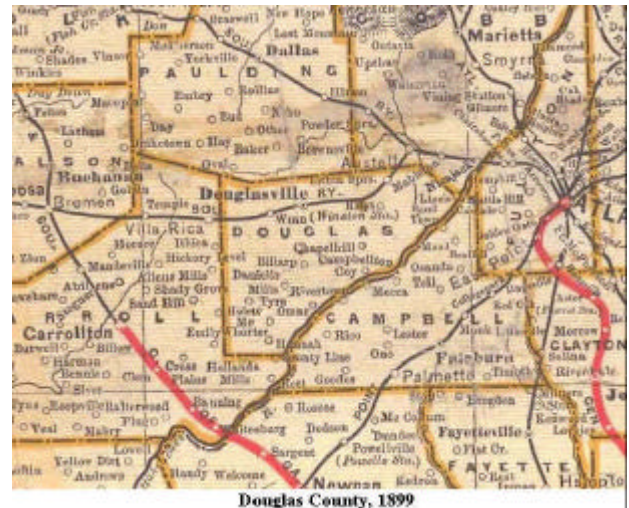
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6. Historic and Cultural Resources

■ Introduction

Historic resources include landmark buildings, historic structures and sites, commercial and residential districts, historic rural resources, archaeological and cultural sites, and the historic environment in which they exist. Historic Resources serve as visual reminders of a community's past, providing a link to its cultural heritage and a better understanding of the people and events that shaped the patterns of its development. Preservation of these important resources makes it possible for them to continue to play an integral, vital role in the community. Currently the County has five properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places; the John Thomas Carnes Family Log House at Clinton Nature Preserve; the old Douglas County Courthouse; the Douglasville Commercial Historic District; the Col. William T. Roberts House; and the Sweetwater Manufacturing Site at Sweetwater Creek State Park.

As in many Georgia counties, distinct periods of building activity are apparent. Main building period in the County was between 1880 and 1919, better known as the period of the New South. Other major historical time periods represented include Ante-bellum, Reconstruction, Roaring Twenties, Great Depression, and World War II/pre-Cold War. For Douglas County, this was a period of growth and expansion brought on by the construction of the Georgia Pacific Railroad. Varying styles of architecture include examples of Victorian, Queen Anne, Craftsman, Minimal Traditional, Colonial Revival, Romanesque, Italianate, Beaux Arts Classicism, and Tudor Revival. Craftsman and Minimal Traditional are the most common architectural styles found in Douglas County.



■ Cultural and Historic Organizations

Douglas County has an active and informed Historic Preservation Commission as well as a city/county historical society. The Douglas County Historic Preservation Commission and the Douglas County Historical Society have created several informational pamphlets and booklets on the history of the county.

■ Historic and Cultural Programs

The Cultural Arts Center of Douglasville/Douglas County brings to the residents of Douglas and surrounding counties a wide variety of performing arts including concerts, plays, lectures, recitals, and

cultural festivals at the Center and various other locations throughout the community. Events such as Pioneer Days at Clinton Farm and Nature Preserve, held in the fall, offer a whole day of festive and educational fun through demonstrations of quilting and candle making to exhibitions of old farm equipment and tools. The Friends of Sweetwater Creek State Park hold an annual Native American Festival each year at the Park. Demonstrations such as the “Ama Kanasta” village represent how a Native American chief lived along the banks of Sweetwater Creek 300 years ago.

■ A Brief History of Douglas County

Early History

The earliest documentation of human habitation in Douglas County is approximately 10,000 BCE (before current era). More recently, two distinct Native American groups, the Lower Creek and the Cherokee, inhabited Douglas County. The Lower Creek Nation is a Muskogean language family, while the Cherokee are Iroquoian language speakers, associated with northern groups such as Mohawk. The Lower Creek settled along the Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers in North Georgia. The northern boundaries of the Lower Creek Nation were in what was to later become Douglas County. This settlement numbered approximately 22,000 at the time of first contact with Europeans, in the form of Spanish explorers. Due to the unpleasant nature of these early contacts with the Spanish, the Creeks thereafter aligned themselves with the British. The Cherokee Nation numbered approximately 29,000 at the time of their first European contacts. The southernmost settlements of the Cherokee Nation were also in what was to become Douglas County.

The first known settlement in Douglas County was called Skint Chestnut. This point in the landscape rises to an elevation two hundred feet higher than the surrounding countryside. The Indians used a large Chestnut tree as a landmark for years prior to European occupation. In order for the tree to be more conspicuous, the Indians removed the bark from top to bottom. Here, over time, the roads to this site began to converge this early settlement was later incorporated as the City of Douglasville.

In 1821, due to ongoing conflict between the two groups, the Federal Government established a line separating the Creek and Cherokee Nations. This line began at Buzzard’s Roost, an island in the Chattahoochee River, dividing modern day Douglas, Fulton and Cobb Counties. The Government subsequently removed the Creeks in 1828 due to hostilities between this group and the European settlers. President Andrew Jackson signed the Indian Removal Act in 1830, which required all tribes located east of the Mississippi River to be removed and relocated west of the Mississippi. Due to this Act, and the fact gold was discovered in North Georgia soon thereafter, the last of the Cherokee were forcibly removed in 1838, in what would later be known as the “Trail of Tears”.

Early Development

Early European settlers in what is now Douglas County arrived in the 1820’s from Virginia, the Carolina’s and the eastern portions of Georgia. These settlers received land grants from a state lottery system designed to increase settlement into the western portion of the State. Early farming operations, the primary trade at this time, were geared to growing corn, wheat, and barley, or raising livestock, such as, cattle, hogs, chickens, and sheep. This type of farming was for home use and local trade, and was primarily subsistence in nature. Settlers usually lived in log cabins, using logs hewn from the abundant local hardwood. Gold was discovered in the northwest section of the County and scarred earth from these operations is



still visible. While no major strikes occurred, the mere presence of the ore made for some interesting times. This area of Douglas County was established as part of Campbell County in 1828.

Douglas County was created by an Act of the State Legislature, on October 17, 1870, as the 131st Georgia County. The name “Douglas” was derived from Senator Stephen A. Douglas, of Illinois, prominent for his role in the Lincoln-Douglas debates, which took place before the Civil War.

A number of local industries were established, and by the 1840’s cotton mills, rope factories, sawmills, and grain mills dotted the landscape. The best known was the Manchester Mills, at a settlement called New Manchester. Union soldiers burned this settlement, located on Sweetwater Creek, in what is today part of Sweetwater Creek State Park, in 1863. Women from the mills were captured and exiled to Indiana.



Old Douglas County Courthouse -- Early 1900s

The idea for a railroad from Atlanta to Birmingham was conceived well before the Civil War, yet it was many years after the war before the idea became a reality. Work was begun on the railroad as track laying commenced in November of 1881, and track was laid to the City of Douglasville by April of 1882. Villa Rica was reached in July of 1882, and the line was completed between Atlanta and Birmingham by November of 1883. The line was eventually connected to the Texas and Pacific Railroad in Columbus, Mississippi. As the primary long-distance freight and passenger mode of transportation at the time, railroads breathed life into small communities, as they became local centers of commercial and social activity. Bankhead Highway paralleled the railroad and this corridor served as the commercial backbone of Douglas County until Interstate 20 opened new areas for development.

Four areas were incorporated within the County:

Douglasville

Douglas County was created by an Act of the State Legislature on October 17, 1870, as the 131st Georgia County. The name Douglas was derived from Senator Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, prominent for his role in the Lincoln-Douglas debates that took place before the civil War. The site known as Skint Chestnut was chosen for the origin of the Town of Douglasville. The act to incorporate Douglasville was approved on February 25, 1875. Douglasville was granted a city charter by the State Legislature in 1895 and was designated as the Douglas County Seat.



Lithia Springs

Lithia Springs was originally known as Deer Lick and Sweetwater Town during the time of the Cherokee, and later as Salt Springs. Lithia Springs had a glorious, yet fleeting history as a resort town. Spring water, rich in minerals, including lithium bicarbonate, emanated from the ground in the area. Businessmen latched on to the idea of bottling the waters and developing a health resort, which led to the commercialization of the area. Salt Springs was incorporated as a town by the State legislature on December 12, 1882. This resort town became quite fashionable to the elite both regionally and along the eastern seaboard as a place for rest and recover from “nervous ailments”, given the claimed restorative powers of the spring water. The railroad helped spur growth for the area, which eventually developed a grand hotel known as the Sweetwater Park Hotel and the Piedmont Chautauqua, a Victorian institution aimed at self-improvement. The new century brought decline to the resort as the Chautauqua failed financially and was discontinued. The resort hotel burned to the ground. The town now known as Lithia Springs had fewer than 150 citizens by 1933. A referendum for the revocation of the charter was held. There is no record of the results of this election and its current status is unclear. In 1992, a strong movement to re-establish the official status of Lithia Springs had emerged and has culminated in a 1993 ruling in Douglas County Superior Court that stated the City of Lithia Springs has officially existed throughout the sixty (60) year period. The State Legislature would have to officially establish the current boundaries of the City of Lithia Springs. An election requested citizens of Lithia Springs to decide whether to accept their charter or dissolved was taken in January of 1994. The vote was in favor of remaining a city. Although Lithia Springs was formally re-chartered, the city was dissolved in 2001.

Villa Rica

The City of Villa Rica is located in Carroll and Douglas Counties. The City has annexed approximately 2900 acres within Douglas County. The Douglas County portion of the City of Villa Rica is largely suburban in character with medium-density subdivisions. The population of the Douglas County portion of the City is estimated to be 2,267.

Austell

The City of Austell is located in Cobb and Douglas Counties. The City has annexed approximately 37 acres within Douglas County. The Douglas County portion of the Austell is largely suburban in character with medium-density subdivisions. The population of the Douglas County portion of the City is estimated to be 97

■ Historic Resources

The following sections discuss the commercial, residential, institutional and archeological resources of Douglas County. The county’s rich history is made evident by the numerous historic buildings dispersed throughout the area. A survey of historic and cultural resources was completed in September 1999. The Douglas County Historic Resources Survey was performed as part of a countywide effort initiated by the Douglas County Board of Commissioners to identify and survey all historically significant properties, communities, and towns in Douglas County, excluding the City of Douglasville.



The survey was funded by a contract from the Historic Preservation Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and matched in part by the Douglas County Board of Commissioners. The County has a total of 17 identified properties that are eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Federally Registered Sites

Currently, the County has five properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places:

DO-338 and DO-345 The John Thomas Carnes Family Log House at Clinton Nature Preserve. The Carnes Cabin and the home of Christopher Columbus Clinton located here are thought to be the oldest “still standing” structures in Douglas County;



The old Douglas County Courthouse. Completed in 1956, it is just one of four buildings still standing in the United States that was designed in the international style of the 1950's'



The Douglasville Commercial Historic District. This district was built between the late 1880's and early 1920's with a wide variety of building styles including Italianate and Beaux Arts;



The Col. William T. Roberts House, also known as the Roberts Mosley House is a late-Victorian style house and is currently home to the Douglasville/Douglas County Cultural Arts Council;



DO-298 The Sweetwater Manufacturing Site at Sweetwater Creek State Park. The mill went into operation on December 21, 1849, and its products rapidly became known throughout the south. In addition to the textile operations, there was a flour and gristmill to the south and water powered saw mill one mile north.



Historic Residential Resources

A majority of the historic resources identified in the 1999 Historic Resources Survey were residential in nature. Examples of sites that could be eligible include:

DO-L-039 Sweetwater Cottage at 6660 s. Sweetwater Road. The date of construction is approximately 1900-1909 with no specific academic style.

DO-L-016 Maxwell House at 6655 Marsh Avenue built in 1888 in the Folk Victorian style.

DO-L-082 Summerlin-Bowden House at 3126 Bankhead Highway. The date of construction is approximately 1840-1849 with no specific academic style.

DO-157 Bullard/Hendley/Sprayberry House at 5135 Highway 92 built circa 1835-1839 in the Greek Revival/Folk Victorian style.



Historic Commercial Resources

Only a small handful of possible historic commercial resources exist. One site that could be eligible is:

DO-016 Good Hunt/Bill Arp/Banks Grocery at 4991 Highway 5 built circa 1905-1924 with no specific academic style.

Historic Industrial Resources

Only a small handful of possible historic industrial resources exist. Two sites that could be eligible are:

DO-294 Fouts Mill built circa 1936 with no specific academic style.

DO-278 Stockmar Goldmine built circa the 1880's with no specific academic style.

Historic Rural Resources

None.

Historic Institutional Resources

Several historic institutional resources exist. Examples of sites that could be eligible include:

DO-052 Middle Courthouse District 1271 built circa 1905-1914 with no specific academic style.

DO-077 Chapel Hill Courthouse, District 736 built circa 1905-1914 with no specific academic style.

DO-165 Pleasant Grove Baptist Church built circa 1900-1909 with no specific academic style.

DO-216 Beulah Baptist Church on Bankhead Highway built in 1947 in the English Vernacular Revival style.



Transportation Resources

The Chattahoochee River line begins at the intersection of Riverside Parkway and Camp Creek Parkway. The Buzzard’s Roost is perhaps the most well known landmark in Northwest Georgia. The island is about ¼ mile north of the Camp Creek Parkway Bridge. When Cobb, Paulding and the northern portion of Campbell counties were originally surveyed, the engineers began at Buzzard’s Roost Island. All early maps indicate that the Sandtown Road, which leads from Tennessee and Alabama, east, crosses at Buzzard’s Roost. The Sandtown Road, Perhaps as old as any road in the south, links with old routes to the east coast of Georgia.

■ Archaeological and Cultural Sites

There are _____ recorded archeological sites in Douglas County on file at UGA, including _____ cemeteries. There are 14 Civil War military sites in the County as well.

Cemeteries and Burial Grounds

The Chattahoochee River line area near Buzzard’s Roost has been noted as an area of importance to the Indians along the river. Woodland and Mississippian village and mound centers run along both sides of the river for some distance. Sandtown burials were excavated and noted the presence of an earth lodge on the Douglas County side of the river. Later work indicated a conical “Hopewell” type burial mound on a bluff overlooking the Buzzard’s Roost crossing.

Near the intersection of Highways 5 and 166 is the Flint Hill Methodist Church. Two of General Hood’s troops died near the arbor of this church and were subsequently interred and are two of the many graves in the church cemetery.

Historic Campbellton is located in and around a site on Highway 92 three miles from Highway 166. In the floodplains in this area were settled by Indians who built ceremonial mounds and great villages. Cherokee and Creeks also inhabited this area. The last group of Indians recorded in this area was the “Anawaki”. A conical mound was excavated in the area that had been built as early as 600 AD.

Civil War Military Sites

At the intersection of Rockhouse Road and Riverside Parkway is a two-story rock house built of flagstone and mortar, with a chimney on the southeast end and the front facing the southeast on the old road. It is adjacent to a hill near the River. The hill included a trenchline held by the State Militia and the 3rd Texas Calvary on July 3rd and 4th, 1864. The house was owned by Lawyer Edge. When federal troops reached the river opposite Sandtown in early July, they commandeered Edge’s home, his crops and stock.

Riverside Parkway at the bridge over Sweetwater Creek is adjacent to the site of Aderhold's Ferry. The ferry had two stops on the west bank of the Chattahoochee River. July 3, 1864 it was the site of the battle at Sweetwater Bridge.

Historic Campbellton is also the site of the Bullard-Henley-Sprayberry house. It was built by Thomas and Susan Bullard in the 1840's and was the site of several Civil War skirmishes and used as headquarters by General McCook before the raid on Newnan.

A dirt road near the intersection of Highway 166 and West Chapel Hill Road leads to the site of Smith's Ferry. Smith's Ferry is noted as the point of crossing used by General McCook in his raid on the West Point railroad in late July, 1864.

Highway 166 at the Chattahoochee River bridge is the site of Gorman's and Austell's Ferries. Both sites were visited several times during the war, but saw little action.

Phillips Ferry is located 15 miles from Buzzard's Roost. The first settlers at Phillips Ferry settled in what was known as Rivertown. After the raid on Newnan, Phillips Ferry would become a large camp of Confederate Cavalry and Infantry, preparing to cross the river and march on Sherman's rear position. The Jones house in Rivertown is one of the few remaining structures in Rivertown. Trenchlines are still visible on both sides of the road all the way to Palmetto.

Generalized Archaeological Areas

Many of the areas along the banks of creeks, streams and rivers throughout and bordering Douglas County are the sites of prehistoric archaeological resources. Along the Chattahoochee River alone 12 Indian Mounds are noted and many are referenced in earlier parts of this chapter.

■ Historic Markers

The following historic markers are located in Douglas County (the marker number, as assigned, is given): In front of the Old Douglas County Courthouse due to the fact it is the location of the original Courthouse.

■ Adequacy of Current Preservation Efforts

Douglas County does not have an active Cemetery Commission and no quasi-governmental entity to keep track of historic sites and their preservation. It is suggested that either a Cultural Resource Manager or planner handle cemetery and historic site issues. The overall level of integrity of the properties analyzed in the 1999 survey ranged from fair to good. A considerable number of resources exhibited a moderate degree of integrity loss. The physical conditions of about 20% of the historic resources surveyed are in poor or deteriorated condition. A majority of these structures are located in the rural, unincorporated areas. Given the extraordinary amount of development that Douglas County is experiencing, it would be wise to adequately map historic sites relative to the Future Land Use Map.

■ Coordination of Land Future Land Use and Preservation Efforts

As a result of the Historic Resources Survey of 1999, the County should overlay known historic and archaeological sites on the new Future Land Use Map in order to protect those valuable resources in future development decisions.

■ Summary and Needs Assessment

Douglas County recognizes that the preservation and maintenance of archaeological sites and historic structures contribute to the cultural heritage of the county and are in the long-term best interest of the county. The Historic Resources Survey of 1999 involved the identification and documentation of all buildings, structures and sites, which contribute to the historic character of the area. The survey also identified potential threats to their survival. In response to this concern, Douglas County should adopt regulations concerning the demolition of historic structures. Decisions should also be made on how historic structures should be protected. The county should take action to protect these sites before they are destroyed.

While the county has begun work toward the goal of preserving the county's historic resources, there are additional steps that should be taken. These include:

Adoption of a countywide historic preservation ordinance in compliance with the Georgia Historic Preservation act of 1980.

Seek certification as a Certified Local Government under the Historic Preservation Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

Investigate preservation incentives.

Utilize current state and federal programs, which provide funding, staff and services in the area of historic preservation.

Potential financing mechanisms

Several financing mechanisms are available to assist in preservation planning:

State Tax Incentives—a state income tax incentive to encourage the rehabilitation of historic properties that includes a 25% credit for income-producing properties; a 30% credit for residential properties; a mortgage certificate program; and a pass-through provision;

The Georgia Land, Water and Wildlife and Recreation Heritage Fund

Heritage tourism grants;

Georgia Heritage Program grants;

HPD Georgia Historic Resources Survey Contracts

7.

Community Facilities

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1. Community Facilities and Services

■ Introduction

A community's public facilities and services define a government's commitment to excellence in providing a framework in which the community functions. Services such as public safety, education, solid waste disposal, general government, and a variety of other services play a vital role in how a community functions, perceives itself, and how it is perceived by outsiders. Often, communities provide a competitive edge in attracting outside investment and residents by providing high quality and efficient public services for the lowest cost possible. This chapter will provide summary descriptions of all major public facilities and all major public services currently provided and proposed in the future. The county's guiding principles regarding community facilities include the following:

- Plan and program infrastructure on the basis of land use patterns as outlined on the future land use plan map.
- Target and program infrastructure to areas of proposed higher density and designated commercial and industrial nodal areas.
- Require infrastructure concurrency within zoning and the land development process.

■ General Government Services

Government Facilities Inventory

The following table lists the general government facilities in Douglas County.

**Table CF-1
General Government Facilities**

Facility	Address	Square Feet	Acres
County Court House	Hospital Drive	n/a	n/a
Transportation Center	Doris Road	n/a	n/a
County Court House (old)	6754 Broad Street	38,144	0.88
Vehicle Maintenance	8251 Chicago Avenue	18,840	0.43
Vehicle Maint. Storage Garage	8251 Chicago Avenue	961	0.02
Caretaker's House	8251 Chicago Avenue	n/a	n/a
Landfill Offices	1730 Humane Society Blvd.	2,079	0.05

Government Structure

Douglas County is governed by a five-member Board of Commissioners, which is elected to staggered terms to ensure continuity. The Chairman of the Board of Commissioners serves full time while the four District Commissioners serve on a part-time basis. County policy is set by the Board of Commissioners who meets for two work sessions on the first and third Mondays of the month and for two commission meetings on the first and third Tuesdays of the month. County administrative and operational duties are handled by a full time County Manager.

Board of Commissioners, which is elected to



Assessment and projection of need for government services

The County has recently reorganized to provide a better quality of service to its residents. Currently office space is sufficient to meet county needs, but will continue to be monitored during the budget update process.

■ **Public Safety**

Public safety is one of the primary elements of public service that has a profound effect on the quality of life in a community. Douglas County is well known for its quality public safety efforts. The following table lists the public safety facilities operated by Douglas County.

**Table CF-2
Public Safety Facilities**

Facility	Address	Square Feet	Acres
County Sheriff's Office	6840 W. Church Street	59,568	1.37
Jail Annex (under construction)	W. Church Street	n/a	n/a
Fire Station #1	Sweetwater Street	4,634	0.05
Fire Station #2	Connors Road	7,850	0.23
Fire Station #3	Kilroy Lane	3,764	0.08
Fire Station #4	S.R. 166	2,988	0.07
Fire/EMS Admin Station #5	Chapel Hill Road	10,540	0.24
Fire Station #6	Lower River Road	3,956	0.09
Fire Station #7	U.S. 78/Bankhead Highway	3,114	0.07
Fire Station #10	Pray Street	5,055	0.12
Fire Station #11	S.R. 92/Fairburn Road	4,332	0.10
Animal Shelter	1755 Humane Society Blvd.	3,440	0.08
E-911/Safety Bldg.	n/a	4,508	0.10
Storage Building	6704-B E. Church Street	n/a	n/a
Storage Building	Kilroy Lane	816	0.02

Fire/EMS Department

The joint Douglasville/Douglas County Fire/EMS Department has 9 stations strategically located throughout the City and County. Current level of staffing is 157 including those assigned to fire

**Table CF-3
Fire Department Personnel**

Uniformed Firefighters	Management & Administration	Total Fire Department Personnel
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suppression apparatus, EMS equipment, and management and supervision, clerical, supply and maintenance, training, and fire prevention. The department provides border-to-border fire protection for the entire county, incorporated and unincorporated areas alike.

The following table lists the size of each fire station, as well as the apparatus (heavy vehicles) at each location.

**Table CF-4
Fire Stations and Apparatus**

Station	Square Footage	Apparatus (Heavy Vehicles)
Fire Station #1	4,634	1 Engine; 1 Ambulance
Fire Station #2	2,544	1 Engine; 2 Ladder Truck; 1 Ambulance
Fire Station #3	3,764	1 Engine; 1 Ambulance
Fire Station #4	2,988	1 Engine; 1 Ambulance
Fire/EMS Admin Station #5	10,540	1 Engine; 1 Ambulance; 3 Reserve Ambulance; 1 Mini Pumper
Fire Station #6	3,956	1 Engine; 1 Ladder Truck; 1 Trench Truck; 1 Reserve Engine
Fire Station #7	3,114	1 Engine; 1 Ladder Truck; 1 Support Truck; 2 Reserve Engine
Fire Station #10	5,055	1 Engine; 1 Quick Response Vehicle
Fire Station #11	4,332	1 Engine; 1 Ambulance
Total:		40,927

Current LOS and Projection of Need

The current level of service, in terms of capital facilities, can be determined by dividing the current facility space (46,233 square feet) by the population served. The population served by the county fire and EMS department is the residents and employees in the county (154,787 persons in 2004). This translates to a facility level of service of 0.299 square feet per person. The department has stated that the addition of two new stations will serve the entire county for the foreseeable future. This will maintain and enhance current service in terms of response time and insurance ratings. Adding two stations to the system, assuming an average size of 5,000 square feet each, translates to a year 2025 level of service of 0.161 square feet per person. In addition to the construction of these two stations, replacement of aging equipment, additional equipment and personnel to outfit the new stations, and the renovation of Stations 5, 6, and 11 will be critical over the next few years. Current plans also call for Station 1 to be relocated.



Sheriffs Department

The Sheriffs Department, located at 6840 W. Church Street, is responsible for all phases of law enforcement in unincorporated Douglas County. The Department includes both uniformed officers and administrative personnel.

**Table CF-6
Sheriff's Office Personnel**

Civilians	Deputy Sheriffs	Jailers	Total Sheriff's Department Personnel
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The following table summarizes crime statistics for the County for the period 1998 through 2002. According to these statistics violent crime has increased over this period, while non-violent crime rates have generally decreased.

**Table CF-7
Crime Statistics**

Offense	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	% change, 1998-2002
Murder	4	3	0	2	9	125%
Rape	10	11	14	28	11	10%
Robbery	50	60	53	70	75	50%
Assault	191	235	176	211	200	4%
Burglary	651	623	455	578	577	-11%
Larceny	2774	3293	2604	3014	2849	3%
Vehicle Theft	409	468	278	372	328	-20%

Source: Georgia Department of Public Safety.

The 5.05 acre site housing departmental operations contains three (3) buildings. The main building containing 46,376 square feet houses administrative offices and jail operations. A smaller (11,560 sq. ft.) building to the rear houses patrol operations, communications, the Special Investigation Division, training, and storage. A third small building (1632 sq. ft.) to the rear houses shop operations.

LOS, Capacity and Future Demand



The current level of service, in terms of capital facilities, can be determined by dividing the current facility space by the population served. The population served by the county jail (46,376 square feet) is the residents and employees in the entire county (154,787 persons in 2004). This translates to a facility level of service of 0.3 square feet per person. In order to maintain this level of service, 58,506 square feet of detention space would need to be added by 2025. Separate from jail, the population served by the Sheriff's Patrol facility (11,560 square feet) is the residents and employee of the unincorporated portions of the county (108,446 persons in 2004). This is a current level of service of 0.11 square feet per person. In order to maintain this level of service to the planning horizon, 14,382 new square feet of Sheriff's Patrol facility space would be required.

Georgia State Patrol

The Georgia State Patrol maintains a post in Villa Rica that serves the Douglas County area. The State Patrol handles law enforcement activities along State and Federal highways, which include the enforcement of traffic laws.

Safety/Emergency Management

The Safety/Emergency Department, located in a building at 8595 Club Drive in Douglasville, is responsible for occupational safety in County government and for emergency management including civil preparedness. The safety function of this department includes inspections and assessment of all facets of County operations including buildings, land, and motor vehicles. Emergency management includes civil preparedness and emergency operation plans for Douglasville and Douglas County. This department has two (2) full-time staffers in approximately 1000 square feet of space. Staff has identified the need for an additional employee. In addition, there is a need for additional space for storage and the additional employee.

Animal Control

The Animal Control Department, located at 1755 Humane Society Boulevard, is responsible for services related to animals including adoption, community education, removal of dead animals, quarantining of bite cases, and the overall administration and enforcement of all Douglas County animal control ordinances. Until recently the animal control the Humane Society on behalf of the county operated facility and services. The County has taken over animal control operations and intends to bring about a change in practices. The Humane Society provided a staffing level of seventeen persons; the County is operating with a staffing level of ten and one-half personnel. The following table presents statistics related to the last year of Humane Society operation of animal control services.

**Table CF-8
Animal Control Statistics**

Disposition	Number of Animals	Percent of Total
Adopted	803	13%
Euthanized	4,547	76%
Reclaimed	658	11%
Total	6,008	100%

While the current facility is adequate to serve the county at present, the Department is planning some changes in the disposition of animals that will necessitate some changes in facility configuration. The County intends to reduce the number of citations issued, which are considerably higher than citations issued by other similar agencies in the area. In the last reported annual period the Department issued 1,221 citations; the goal is to reduce this number to about 300 annually. In addition the County intends to increase the number of animals adopted out of the animal control facility, aiming for adoptions to make up about 18% of all animals handled. This would also have the effect of reducing euthanized animals to roughly 70%. In order to meet these goals—increased adoptions and a decrease in animals that must be put down—the Department plans to expand the current facility by adding outdoor kennel and walking areas, as well as septic system upgrades.

Emergency Communications

Enhanced 911 (E911) services are provided to the entire county through a single emergency communications facility. The E911 center is currently housed in a 4,508 square foot facility previously shared with other public safety offices. The current facility is adequate to serve the county, though maintaining an adequate staffing level is an on-going challenge.

While the current facility is adequate to serve the county at present there is no additional capacity, in terms of facility space, available at the location. Continuing development of Douglas County will require more facility space over time. Also, the current building was not constructed to specifically withstand severe weather conditions (e.g. high winds, micro-bursts, tornadoes), creating a potential service delivery problem during a time when critical demand would naturally be increased. Taken together, these factors point to the need for E911 services to be housed in a different facility, either new or existing, where additional space and a more secure building type will provide for service into the future.

■ Public Utilities

Public utilities are the lifeblood of a community providing residents and businesses with vital services necessary to their quality of life and productivity. The availability, the programming and implementation of these facilities provide one of the guidelines in the development of overall land use patterns within the county. The following is a summary of those public utilities serving the Douglas County area.

Douglasville/Douglas County Water & Sewer Authority

In 1985, merging the City of Douglasville's water and sewage facilities with Douglas County's facilities created the Douglasville-Douglas County Water & Sewer Authority (WSA). Prior to this merger, water and sewerage service were provided independently by the City and the County. The independent service was not efficient and, often, redundant in terms of service provision. The Authority purchased all the facilities and capital of the independent entities. It is a quasi-governmental agency funded through user fees and new connections to the system. No tax dollars are received. The WSA Board of Trustees is made up of eight members including the Commission Chairman of Douglas County and the Mayor of Douglasville. The WSA is a member of the Metro North Georgia Water Planning District.

The Authority exclusively provides water and sanitary sewer services to Douglas County, with the exception of Villa Rica and Austell, Georgia. The Authority supports various types of customers, including residential, commercial, industrial, multi-family, mobile home parks and governmental accounts. The Authority operates and maintains a water and sanitary sewer system consisting of water reservoirs, water and wastewater treatment plants, water distribution and sewerage collections lines, and the use of meters to bill consumption. As of June 30, 2003, the net property, plan and equipment value of the combined System was \$184,572,874.

Historically, growth has had a positive impact on Douglas County; however, the current and projected growth patterns will strain the capacity of water and sewerage infrastructure of the County. This recent growth has led the authority to develop a five-year capital improvement plan to guide system growth. They are currently expanding this plan to encompass the next 25 years. WSA has identified needed system improvements, upgrades, and new construction to meet the increased demand in water and wastewater service.

Water Supply and Treatment

The WSA currently supplies 70% of the county with public water. The city of Villa Rica supplies customers in the unincorporated area.

The WSA system consists of a countywide network of water lines ranging in size to support residential to industrial customers. TWSA obtains water from four sources. Two of these sources, Bear Creek and Dog River provide raw water to the Authorities Bear Creek Water Treatment Plant. Raw water flows from Bear Creek into a 40-acre man-made reservoir prior to treatment, where withdrawals of up to 6.0 MGD are permitted by the State of Georgia. The Authority is currently permitted to withdraw up to 15.89 MGD of raw water directly from the 215-acre Dog River Reservoir. The Bear Creek Water Treatment Plant has a maximum treatment capacity of 16.4 MGD.

The third source of water to the System is a wholesale connection to the Cobb-Marietta Water Authority, which extends to the year 2026 and permits WSA to purchase an average of 2.30 MGD of treated water. The fourth source of water to the System includes up to an estimated 2MGD provided through a retail connection to the Cobb County Water System.

The Bear Creek Water Treatment Plant has been in operation since 1978. It has been expanded three times to its present day capacity of 16 MGD. The plant is located in the southern portion of the county, approximately 6 miles from the Dog River Reservoir and 4 miles from the Bear Creek Reservoir. The potable water storage of the water system consist of clear wells at the plant totaling 3.775 million gallons and six elevated storage tanks throughout the county totaling 8 million gallons. The total combined storage of potable water is 11.775 million gallons, slightly more than 100% of one day's annual average system wide usage. The system is served by approximately 771 miles of distribution lines in various diameter sizes throughout the County.

Water is consistently treated to meet state and federal water quality guidelines. Water studies are underway in the Gunther's and Anawakee creek watershed, and the Authority plans to conduct water quality studies on the remaining four watersheds—Sweetwater Creek, Bear Creek, Dog River, and Hurricane Creek.

Assessment

The mission of the Douglasville-Douglas County Water & Sewer Authority has developed a system-wide plan to serve the expected population base in the City of Douglasville and unincorporated Douglas County. Expansion of the water system is based primarily on fire service needs and the protection of groundwater within the County. To meet the demands of the rapidly growing population of Douglas County, WSA is continually upgrading and expanding its water distribution system.

The Water and Sewer Authority plans to consolidate many of the smaller water treatment plants that serve limited portions of the county with larger treatment facilities. The following table outlines the Authority's water treatment capital facilities plans for the next five years. At completion these projects will provide a system capacity of 23 WSA believes that its source of raw and potable water are currently adequate. In sum, this organization provides a cost effective solution to the County's present and future water and sewerage needs.

**Table CF-9
Capital Facility Improvements**

Project	Start Year	Estimated Local Cost (2004-2009)
Land and Improvements		
Western tank booster pump station site	2004	\$10,000
Chapel Hill water tank	2004	\$150,000
10' vertical easement, Dog River	2004	\$500,000
Wet lands mitigation	2005	\$115,000
Sweetwater property purchase	2009	\$1,000,000
Easement acquisitions	2006	\$60,000
Water Line Extensions		
Hwy. 166 East	2004	\$3,500,000
Thornton Road	2004	\$600,000
Hwy. 5 Loop	2004	\$750,000
Mann Road	2004	\$340,000
Willoughby Road	2004	\$70,000
Route 61	2004	\$120,000
166 Cross Bridge	2006	\$300,000
166 Carroll County	2008	\$540,000
Water Tanks		
Tank repairs	2004	\$1,500,000
Chapel Hill (new tank)	2006	\$2,000,000
Cut Grady down	2004	\$50,000
Water Plant Improvements		
Bear Creek expansion (to 24 mgd)	2009	\$2,000,000
Emergency Power		
Bear Creek modifications	2004	\$800,000
Dog River intake, generator	2006	\$2,500,000
Reservoir		
Dog River expansion	2005	\$11,000,000

Wastewater Treatment

WSA is also the provider for a countywide sewerage system and wastewater treatment. The system collects sewerage through approximately 257 miles of sanitary sewer collection lines and force mains which lead to four major wastewater treatment plants and three smaller plants. In addition WSA is under contract with Cobb County to provide limited sewerage treatment services to fewer than 50 customers in certain areas of the county.

The combined treatment capacity of the Authority's sewerage treatment plants is 7.49 MGD. As of June 2003, the average total sanitary sewer flow at all plants was 1,633 MG, which is an average of approximately 4.47 MGD, 60% of the design capacity of the plants.

**Table CF-10
Wastewater Treatment Capacity**

Facility	Capacity (MGD)
Sweetwater Creek	3.00
Northside	0.60
Southside	3.52
Beaver Estates	0.08
Rebel Trails	0.04
St. Andrews	0.02
Total Capacity (MGD)	7.26

The Authority’s South Central Urban Water Reuse Facility came on line in August 1999 to serve a new sanitary sewer service area and to meet the needs of a new golf course. This is a 500,000 gallon per day Unitank “Zero Emission System.” Public input influenced the need to provide a bio filter for odor control and enclose the facility with architectural treatment to complement houses to be built in the adjacent upscale golf course community.

WSA currently has a 5 capital improvements program, and is drafting a 25-year capital improvement to outline the future of wastewater management within the County. The 5-year plan was prepared in order to estimate future needs and provide general guidance in the development of a countywide wastewater management system.

The Authority installs all major sanitary sewer lines, by contract. These lines will generally be 10” diameter or larger. The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District’s Draft Long-Term Wastewater Management calls for the Authority to consolidate all of its wastewater treatment facilities into two major plants by the year 2010. All wastewater will eventually be treated at either the Sweetwater Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant with an ultimate planned capacity of 6.0 mgd, or the South Central Urban Water Reuse Facility with an ultimate planned capacity of 12.0 mgd.

**Table CF-11
Wastewater System Performance**

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Average Treatment (MGD)					
System Capacity (MGD)	7.26	7.26	7.26	7.26	7.26
Average Unused Capacity	7.26	7.26	7.26	7.26	7.26

Assessment

Sewer expansion is strongly influenced by the topography of the area, and land use policies. WSA has begun to look toward providing wastewater service to enhance economic development opportunities and serve residential development where appropriate. The Future Land Use Plan Map has been designed to concentrate higher densities and non-residential development in areas that already have connections or are planned within the near future.

The following table provides a schedule of capital improvements for the next five years.

Table CF-12
Capital Facility Improvements
 Sewer System

Project	Start Year	Estimated Local Cost (2004-2009)
Sewer Line Extensions		
Douglas Blvd., I-20	2005	\$79,000
Hwy. 92, I-20	2005	\$1,000,000
Sewer Line Replacements		
	2004	\$310,000
Sewer Plants		
Northside abandonment	2004	\$7,000,000
Sweetwater (to 6 mgd)	2008	\$18,000,000
St. Andrews abandonment	2004	\$4,000,000
Southside abandonment	2008	\$5,000,000
South Central expansion	2004	\$52,000,000

Solid Waste & Landfill Operations

Below is a brief description of the County’s Solid Waste Program. A complete and detailed description can be found in the “Douglas County Solid Waste Management Plan” as amended in 2004. The Solid Waste Management Plan meets all requirements of the Georgia Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act.

The landfill operations, located at 1730 Humane Society Boulevard, oversee operation of the Douglas County Landfill located at Cedar Mountain Road and recycling efforts.

Table CF-13
Solid Waste Generation

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Total Tons					
Population					
Per Capita Rate (tons/year)					

Household waste accounted for the largest share of the waste generated with 45 percent. Commercial uses accounted for 30 percent of the waste produced. Construction debris, yard waste, and sludge accounted for twelve, nine, and four percent respectively. A major goal in the solid waste management plan is to reduce the amount of waste that enters the landfill. Composting and recycling are ways in which the county can achieve this goal. In addition, the county sponsors several educational opportunities for solid waste reduction including, a solid waste educational program in the Douglas County school system and backyard composting demonstrations at the landfill.

Douglas County does not provide any type of solid waste collection service. Collection service in unincorporated Douglas County is provided by approximately twenty-six private haulers. However, private haulers do not serve some areas of unincorporated Douglas County because these areas have been deemed uneconomical. Douglas County and Douglasville participate in a waste reduction program. There is a recyclables drop off center in Fairplay and a recyclables drop off center at the Cedar Mountain Landfill for all residents. The county has programmed the establishment and operation of 3 additional convenience centers in its current STWP.

Natural Gas

Two companies provide natural gas to Douglas County residents. Atlanta Gas Light is the primary supplier with approximately 69,000 customers throughout the county.

Austell Gas Company serves a minor portion of the county providing natural gas to approximately 4480 residents, located east of Highway 92 along Thornton Road.

Electricity

The Buford Dam Plant on the Chattahoochee River provides the raw source of electricity for the Douglas County area. Douglas County has many substations that are fed by this plant through transmission lines. Douglas County substations include the Douglasville Primary, Douglasville #2, Arbor Station, and the Cedar Mountain Substation. Each has a maximum load capacity of approximately six hundred amps. Two new substations may be installed in the future to provide adequate electricity provision for our area; however, the current substations are capable of providing adequate service for the immediate and intermediate future.

■ Parks and Recreation

Providing recreational opportunities for residents to play, exercise, relax, and enjoy the natural environment is necessary for a vibrant community and for attracting and retaining residents and businesses, and vital to the social, psychological, and physical well-being of a community. Additionally, tourism related facilities provide opportunities for residents and visitors to experience leisure-related activities and bring in needed dollars to the local economy in a far more environmentally sensitive manner than would heavy industry.



The county strives to provide a balance of passive opportunities, i.e., bird watching, camping, and hiking and picnicking, and active recreation, athletic fields, gymnasiums, tennis and basketball courts, and community centers in various levels of parks and facilities. Recreation planning must include both kinds, active and passive, when assessing the needs of Douglas County. Although this section deals with both passive and active parks, the Greenspace plan, as defined by DCA will be discussed more fully in the natural resources chapter of this plan.

Recreation standards, as suggested by the National Park & Recreation Association (NRPA), help communities determine their needs by analyzing current facilities and comparing their size, number, type and facilities to population size and density figures. These figures provide a basic measure by which a community can systematically plan to develop facilities and obtain the necessary land for recreational activities. Levels of Service and Planning Standards provide the county with overall programming requirements as their population increases.

NRPA provides overall planning standards for park classification according to acreage, primary use and the geographical area it serves. A good park system will contain a mixture of these types according to the needs of its population:

- **Neighborhood Park:** Parks within walking distance, typically less than 25 acres with facilities for spontaneous recreation including playgrounds, picnicking, multi-purpose courts, athletic fields for unorganized, pickup type games, etc. Generally provided at a level of service of 1 acre per 1,000 residents.
- **Community Park:** Parks within a 2-mile radius or 10 minute drive of the target neighborhood and that are typically 25 acres and larger. These parks accommodate organized sports and large intensively used facilities such as swimming pools, lighted ballfields, tennis courts, gymnasiums, restrooms, etc. Level of service is typically 5 acres per 1,000 residents.
- **Regional Park:** Parks within a one-hour drive that are typically 50 acres or more, perhaps a natural resource location. Special facilities can be accommodated at this type of park such as equestrian facilities, golf courses, amphitheaters, softball complexes, aquatic centers, etc. Typical facilities include hiking trails, picnic areas, restrooms, etc. Generally provided at a level of service of 4 acres per 1,000 residents.

- **Natural Resource Area/Preserve**—protected lands, lands unsuitable for development but offering natural resource potential, individual sites exhibiting natural resources.
- **School Parks**—provide a mechanism of combining resources and provide accessible amenities to the community

Inventory

Douglas County's public parkland totals 352 improved acres with 1,302 additional acres of unimproved area, for a grand total of 1,656 park and recreational acres. This translates into a level of service of 15.5 acres per 1,000 residents. Most facilities function as community parks, although only 1 improved park (Deer Lick) contains the minimum required acreage to be classified as such.



**Table CF-14
Park Facilities**

	Bill Arp	Deer Lick	Mt. Carmel	Beulah Ruritan	Fairplay	Lithia Springs	Winston
Acre(s)	14	40	14	20	15	8	15
Baseball/Softball Fields (Lighted)	6	3	5	5	5	2	3
Basketball Court (indoor)		1					
Basketball Court (outdoor)	2		2		2		2
Batting Station	2		2	1	1	1	1
Community Building	1	1	1	1	1		1
Concession Building	2	2	2	2	2	1	1
Fishing Area		1				1	
Football Field (Lighted)	2	1	1				
Jogging Trail		1					
Lake/Stream/River		1				1	
Midget/Junior Field (Lighted)							
Picnic Area							
Picnic Shelter	1	3		1	1		
Playground	1	2	1		2	1	1
Practice Field (Unlighted)							
Restroom	2	5	2	2	2	1	1
Soccer/Football Field (Lighted)							
Special Use Facility							
T-Ball Field (Lighted)							
Tennis Courts (Lighted)	2	5				2	2

	Post Road	Woodrow Wilson	Cedar Mtn.	Boundary Waters	Dog River	Clinton Farm	Totals
Acre(s)	15	11	2	500	802	200	1656
Baseball/Softball Fields (Lighted)	2	4					35
Basketball Court (indoor)							1
Basketball Court (outdoor)		1					9
Batting Station		3					11
Community Building	1	1					8
Concession Building	1	1					14
Fishing Area		1		1	1	1	6
Football Field (Lighted)	1						5
Jogging Trail						1	2
Lake/Stream/River		1		1	1	1	6
Midget/Junior Field (Lighted)							0
Picnic Area							0
Picnic Shelter		2	1			3	12
Playground		1				1	10
Practice Field (Unlighted)		1					1
Restroom	1	1				1	18
Soccer/Football Field (Lighted)							0
Special Use Facility	1						1
T-Ball Field (Lighted)							0
Tennis Courts (Lighted)							11

In Douglas County many school facilities are utilized in conjunction with the County parks to provide recreation opportunities.

**Table CF-15
School System Facilities**

Component Type	Number
Soccer/Football Field	4
Softball Field	3
Baseball Field	3
Multi-Purpose Court	3
Gymnasium	29
Playground	19
Multi-Purpose Field	10
Running Track	4
Activity Building	2

In the following table the current level of service is compared to NRPA guidelines. The current level of service is calculated (including both county parks and school facilities), and the suggested level of service is also shown. In the final column the number of components that would be demanded under the NRPA guidelines is shown. In many categories Douglas County has current levels of service that exceed the suggested guidelines, demonstrating that the County is providing service above the national standard. If Sweetwater Creek State Conservation Park is factored in the level of service for parks acres, the LOS for the county is actually quite high. In several categories, however, the components provided in the county run behind the NRPA guidelines. For example, more soccer fields and tennis courts would be demanded under the NRPA guidelines than are currently available in the county. Facility type levels of service guidelines are very subjective community by community. Whereas ballfields may be very important in one community, running tracks may be more important to another community.

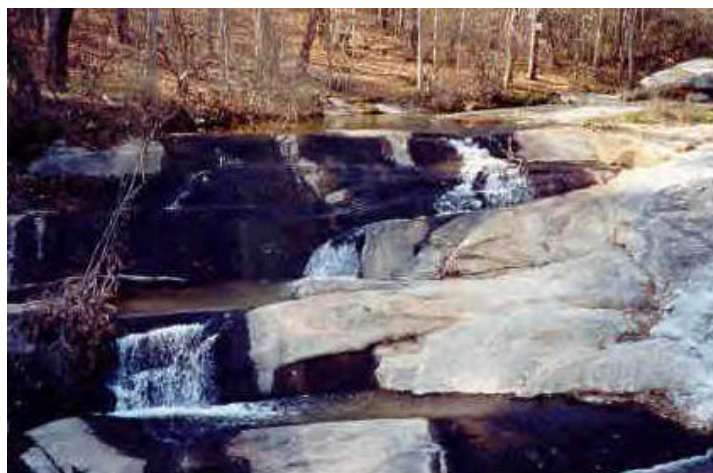


Table CF-16
Parks Level of Service Assessment
 Based on NRPA Guidelines

Component	Current Inventory	Current Level of Service	NRPA Guidelines	Demanded Components
Acres	0	0.00 per 1,000 persons	3 per 1,000 persons	320
Ballfields	9	0.42 per 5,000 persons	1 per 5,000 persons	12
Football Fields	0	0.00 per 75,000 persons	1 per 75,000 persons	1
Soccer Fields	3	0.21 per 7,500 persons	1 per 7,500 persons	11
Tennis Courts	0	0.00 per 5,000 persons	1 per 5,000 persons	21
Basketball Courts	11	1.03 per 10,000 persons	1 per 10,000 persons	
Running Track	2	0.94 per 50,000 persons	1 per 50,000 persons	0
Volleyball Court	11	2.06 per 20,000 persons	1 per 20,000 persons	
Multi-Purpose Trail	1	1.00 system per region	1 system per region	
Pavillions	0	0.00 per 1,000 persons	n/a	
Playgrounds	16	0.15 per 1,000 persons	n/a	
Walking/Jogging Trail	0	0.00 per park	1 per park	10
Gymnasium	8	0.67 per community	1 per community	8

The NRPA guidelines are just one element in parks facility planning. The County also weighs demand for certain facility types, as well as specific needs that may be more regional than national. In the next table the future demand for park acreage and developed components is shown. The LOS used is a locally refined version of the NRPA guidelines, combining suggested standards and local demands.

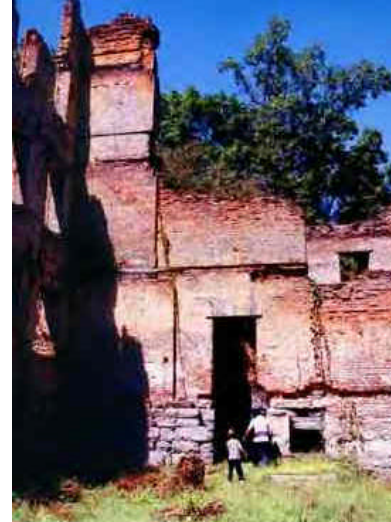
Table CF-17
Parks Level of Service
 Future Demanded Components

Component	Desired Level of Service	Demanded ADDITIONAL Components
Acres	3.00 per 1,000 persons	403
Ballfields	1.00 per 5,000 persons	27
Football Fields	1.00 per 75,000 persons	2
Soccer Fields	0.21 per 7,500 persons	4
Tennis Courts	0.00 per 5,000 persons	0
Basketball Courts	1.00 per 10,000 persons	13
Running Track	1.00 per 50,000 persons	3
Volleyball Court	1.00 per 20,000 persons	7
Multi-Purpose Trail	2.00 system per region	1
Pavillions	0.00 per 1,000 persons	0
Playgrounds	0.15 per 1,000 persons	20
Walking/Jogging Trail	1.00 per park	4
Gymnasium	0.67 per community	4

Sweetwater Creek State Conservation Park

Sweetwater Creek State Park is a 1,986-acre area located in the southeastern section of Douglas County. It offers many cultural and natural activities such as an arts and crafts festival, a five-mile nature trail, educational and naturalist programs, recreational water activities on the George Sparks Reservoir, as well as many other activities. A major attraction is the ruins of the New Manchester Manufacturing Company, a Civil War era textile mill. Other facilities include:

- A group shelter and BBQ pit.
- Playground
- Eleven picnic shelters
- Two fishing docks
- Lake and stream fishing
- Bait shop and boats rentals



■ Douglas County Public School System

The Douglas County public school system has four high schools, six middle schools, and eighteen elementary schools. These facilities and their addresses are shown below.

The Douglas County school system is the 17th largest in the State of Georgia and is part of the Atlanta Metropolitan Regional Educational Service Area. Student enrollment as of 2001-2002 is approximately 18,101. The system operates an alternative school program, pre-kindergarten programs, and evening adult education programs. The Southern Association of Colleges and Schools accredit all Douglas County schools. A number of schools in the system have been named State and National Schools of Excellence.



The Douglas County school system receives community support through many business partners, at least one partner per school. The newly formed Public Education Trust (PET) fund provides a variety of services in support of public education.

The Douglas County Board of Education consists of five (5) elected board members who set policy for the superintendent and staff. Local, State, and Federal funding contribute approximately \$70 million toward the operating budget. The Board of Education establishes the millage rate needed each year to support the school system.

Comprehensive programs at the kindergarten, elementary, middle, and high school levels are complemented by programs adapted to meet the special needs of students. Student support teams offer guidance and assistance to all students. The student support program exceeds all State requirements.

Special education provides opportunities tailored to meet individual student needs. Programs for exceptional students include: learning programs, physical impairments, speech and language disorders, visual and hearing-impaired programs, and other health-related impairments. Program Challenge is a program for gifted students.

Table CF-18
Douglas County Schools

Public Schools	Address
Annette Winn Elementary	3536 Bankhead Highway
Arbor Station Elementary	9999 Parkway South
Beulah Elementary	1150 Burnt Hickory Road
Bill Arp Elementary	4841 Highway 5
Bright Star Elementary	6300 John West Road
Burnett Elementary	8277 Connally Drive
Chapel Hill Elementary	3989 Chapel Hill Road
Dorsett Shoals Elementary	5688 Dorset Shoals Road
Eastside Elementary	8266 Connally Drive
Factory Shoals Elementary	2444 Highway 92
Holly Springs Elementary	4909 W. Chapel Hill Road
Lithia Springs Elementary	6946 Florence Drive
Mirror Lake Elementary	2613 Tyson Road
Mount Carmel Elementary	2356 Fairburn Road
New Manchester Elementary	2242 Old Lower River Road
South Douglas Elementary	8299 Highway 166
Sweetwater Elementary	2505 East County Line Road
Winston Elementary	7465 Highway 78
Chapel Hill Middle School	3989 Chapel Hill Road
Chestnut Log Middle School	2544 Pope Road
Fairplay Middle School	8311 Highway 166
Stewart Middle School	8138 Malone Street
Turner Middle School	7101 Junior High Drive
Yeager Middle School	4000 Kings Highway
Alexander High School	6500 Alexander Parkway
Chapel Hill High School	4899 Chapel Hill Road
Douglas County High School	8705 Campbelton Street
Lithia Springs High School	2520 East County Line Road
Private Schools	
Colonial Hills Christian School	7131 Mt. Vernon Road
Douglasville SDA	2836 Bright Star Road
Harvester Christian Academy	4241 Central Church Road
Heirway Christian Academy	6758 Spring Street
Inner Harbor Hospitals, Ltd.	4685 Dorsett Shoals Road
Kings Way Christian	6456 The Kings Way
Lithia Christian Academy	2548 Vulcan Drive
Montessori School of Douglas County	8014 Durelee Lane

The Douglas County school system has developed a mission statement as part of an overall strategic plan for education. The mission of the Douglas County school system is to provide a quality education for all students in a safe and supportive environment. In order for students to meet the challenges of a changing world, the system will offer opportunities and experiences for them to become responsible individuals, independent thinkers, productive citizens, and life-long learners. Douglas County, through the 2004 Douglas County Comprehensive Plan, shall refer to the strategic plan for goals and action statements related to education as a matter of policy.



Table CF-19
Capacity Assessment

School	Enrollment (2002)	Design Capacity	Over/Under (2002)	Faculty*	Students per Faculty
Annette Winn Elementary	489			34	14.4
Arbor Station Elementary	565			41	13.8
Beulah Elementary	419			31	13.5
Bill Arp Elementary	446			32	13.9
Bright Star Elementary	567			38	14.9
Burnett Elementary	606			52	11.7
Chapel Hill Elementary	555			39	14.2
Dorsett Shoals Elementary	453			34	13.3
Eastside Elementary	601			56	10.7
Factory Shoals Elementary	532			37	14.4
Holly Springs Elementary	561			40	14.0
Lithia Springs Elementary	480			36	13.3
Mirror Lake Elementary	n/a				
Mount Carmel Elementary	523			35	14.9
New Manchester Elementary	n/a				
South Douglas Elementary	514			35	14.7
Sweetwater Elementary	626			44	14.2
Winston Elementary	534			37	14.4
Chapel Hill Middle School	978			55	17.8
Chestnut Log Middle School	935			51	18.3
Fairplay Middle School	805			47	17.1
Stewart Middle School	817			49	16.7
Turner Middle School	795			46	17.3
Yeager Middle School	n/a				
Alexander High School	1,373			78	17.6
Chapel Hill High School	1,158			62	18.7
Douglas County High School	1,351			78	17.3
Lithia Springs High School	1,418			82	17.3

*Includes full and part-time faculty.

**Table CF-20
Test Scores (CRTC)**

Test	School Year	Percentage of Douglas Co. Students			Percentage of All Georgia Students		
		Did Not Meet Standards	Met Standards	Exceeded Standards	Did Not Meet Standards	Met Standards	Exceeded Standards
Grade 4 English	1999-2000	23%	62%	15%	29%	55%	16%
	2000-2001	20%	62%	19%	26%	58%	16%
	2001-2002	19%	65%	16%	23%	62%	15%
	Three Year Average:	21%	63%	17%	26%	58%	16%
Grade 4 Reading	1999-2000	30%	42%	28%	35%	37%	28%
	2000-2001	19%	41%	40%	26%	42%	32%
	2001-2002	16%	41%	43%	20%	41%	38%
	Three Year Average:	22%	41%	37%	27%	40%	33%
Grade 4 Mathematics	1999-2000	32%	57%	10%	38%	51%	11%
	2000-2001	33%	53%	14%	38%	51%	12%
	2001-2002	29%	57%	14%	34%	53%	13%
	Three Year Average:	31%	56%	13%	37%	52%	12%
Grade 6 English	1999-2000	35%	50%	14%	39%	45%	16%
	2000-2001	34%	50%	17%	36%	47%	17%
	2001-2002	29%	48%	23%	34%	45%	21%
	Three Year Average:	33%	49%	18%	36%	46%	18%
Grade 6 Reading	1999-2000	25%	40%	35%	29%	39%	32%
	2000-2001	21%	40%	39%	24%	42%	35%
	2001-2002	17%	38%	45%	20%	39%	41%
	Three Year Average:	21%	39%	40%	24%	40%	36%
Grade 6 Mathematics	1999-2000	34%	50%	16%	34%	49%	17%
	2000-2001	31%	53%	15%	31%	52%	17%
	2001-2002	32%	49%	20%	31%	48%	21%
	Three Year Average:	32%	51%	17%	32%	50%	18%
Grade 8 English	1999-2000	33%	53%	13%	34%	49%	16%
	2000-2001	28%	51%	21%	32%	47%	21%
	2001-2002	25%	50%	25%	28%	48%	24%
	Three Year Average:	29%	51%	20%	31%	48%	20%
Grade 8 Reading	1999-2000	22%	38%	40%	25%	37%	38%
	2000-2001	14%	31%	55%	18%	32%	50%
	2001-2002	17%	38%	45%	20%	37%	43%
	Three Year Average:	18%	36%	47%	21%	35%	44%
Grade 8 Mathematics	1999-2000	45%	44%	11%	46%	43%	11%
	2000-2001	35%	54%	11%	41%	48%	10%
	2001-2002	35%	52%	14%	34%	50%	15%
	Three Year Average:	38%	50%	12%	40%	47%	12%

Table CF-21
Graduation Test
Percent of 11th Graders Passing Graduation Test on First Administration

Component	School Year	Comparison		
		Douglas County	Group	State
English	1999-2000	93%	95%	94%
	2000-2001	94%	95%	94%
	2001-2002	95%	96%	95%
	Three Year Trend (Change):	1%	0%	0%
Mathematics	1999-2000	90%	92%	90%
	2000-2001	91%	92%	91%
	2001-2002	90%	92%	91%
	Three Year Trend (Change):	0%	0%	1%
Social Studies	1999-2000	80%	86%	83%
	2000-2001	78%	83%	80%
	2001-2002	83%	86%	82%
	Three Year Trend (Change):	0%	-1%	-1%
Science	1999-2000	72%	76%	71%
	2000-2001	69%	72%	68%
	2001-2002	73%	75%	72%
	Three Year Trend (Change):	-1%	-2%	-1%
All Components Above	1999-2000	69%	73%	68%
	2000-2001	66%	69%	65%
	2001-2002	69%	73%	69%
	Three Year Trend (Change):	-1%	-1%	-1%
Writing	1999-2000	88%	92%	90%
	2000-2001	93%	94%	92%
	2001-2002	87%	89%	87%
	Three Year Trend (Change):	1%	0%	0%

CRTC testing provides a measure of the level of proficiency of students in key subject areas in grades 4, 6 and 8. In evaluating the three-year average CRTC test scores it can be seen that Douglas County students scored at or above the state average in the “met standards” and “exceeded standards” categories for all test components except in grade 6 reading (less than the state average for “met standards”) and in grade 6 mathematics (less than the state average for “exceeded standards”). Graduation testing provides a final evaluation of competence in five key categories: English, math, social studies, science, and writing. Looking at the three-year trend, students in Douglas County taking the State graduation test have performed at averages that correspond closely with state averages, but below the averages for the state-identified comparable group. In general, the annual averages for the county students show little variation over the three-year period.

Private Schools

There are eight private schools in Douglas County; in 1999 there was one private secondary school in Douglas County, The King's Way Christian School. There are no un-affiliated secondary schools closer than Atlanta.

Secondary Education Institutions

There are three post secondary institutions offer classes in the Douglas County area:

Carroll Technical Institute

Carroll Technical Institute currently operates out of leased space in Douglas County on Highway 5 and offers technical training. Carroll Tech is expected to build a full-time facility in Douglas County to be completed in the Fall of 1994.

Mercer University

Mercer University-Atlanta offers night classes in Douglas County in its leased space on Thomton Road and Skyview Drive. Mercer offers miscellaneous non-degreed courses at this location.

Georgia State University

Georgia State University offers night classes in Douglas County in various locations including local High Schools. Georgia State offers miscellaneous non-degreed courses at these locations.

Libraries and Other Cultural Opportunities

Douglas County has two facilities or branch libraries containing more than 148,000 volumes. These facilities are both members of the West Georgia Regional Library System, headquartered in Carrolton, Ga. In addition to the Library System, input on library operations is provided by the Douglas County Library Board. The libraries are very popular; between 1990 and 2000 circulation increased by 54%, from 136,840 to 210,149 volumes. Most recently, genealogical studies have been the fastest growing area of interest at the libraries.

**Table CF-22
Library Facilities - Current Inventory**

Facility	Square Feet	Collection Materials
Douglasville Library	20,827	84,188
Lithia Springs Library	15,000	60,070
	35,827	144,258

Douglasville Branch

Located at 6810 Selman Drive in Douglasville, the Douglasville Branch Library contains more than 86,000 volumes, including reference books. There are more than 300,000 volumes available through the West Georgia Regional Library System. The Douglasville Branch Library offers a wide variety of programs for patrons and area residents including story hours and other programs for children, tutoring and academic and professional training sessions, seminars, club and organizational meetings, voter registration, and arts and crafts shows and fairs. There are nine (9) full-time and seven (7) part-time staff working out of the Douglasville Branch Library.

The Douglasville Branch Library building contains approximately 20,400 square feet including main display area, staff area and offices, meeting rooms, and one conference room. The facility is in need of renovation.

Lithia Springs Branch

In 2001, the Lithia Springs and Douglasville Libraries were combined into one county system, still a part of the West Georgia Regional Library System. The Lithia Springs Branch, located at 7100 Junior High Drive, contains more than 62,000 volumes, including reference books. The Lithia Springs Branch offers a wide variety of programs for patrons and area residents including meetings, story hours and other programs for children, group tours, demonstrations, voter registration, and workshops. There are seven (7) full-time employees and two (2) part-time employees working out of the Lithia Springs Branch.



The Lithia Springs branch building contains 18,000 square feet including all facilities.

Library Level of Service

Library facility level of service is measured in terms of facility space, divided by the population served. For facility space the total square footage of the county libraries is divided by the number of dwelling units the county to yield a level of service of in terms of square feet per dwelling unit. This same procedure is repeated to determine the level of service in terms of collection volumes.

Table CF-23
Level of Service Calculation

Existing Square Feet	Number of Existing Dwelling Units	SF/dwelling unit
35,827	40,839	0.8773

Existing Collection Materials	Number of Existing Dwelling Units	Collection Materials/ dwelling unit
144,258	40,839	3.5324

The current level of service, determined to be adequate to serve the current population, is then used to calculate the future demand for library facility space and collection materials. In order to maintain the current level of service to the planning horizon, over 45,000 square feet of library facility space, and over 183,000 volumes, would be required.

**Table CF-24
Future Demand Calculation**

SF/dwelling unit	Number of New Dwelling Units (2004-25)	SF Demanded
0.8773	51,893	45,524

Collection Materials/dwelling unit	Number of New Dwelling Units (2004-25)	Collection Materials Demanded
3.5324	51,893	183,305

These calculations suggest that at least one more major library facility, or several smaller facilities, will be required in order to maintain the library LOS. In terms of future library sites, the lack of any library facility south of I-20 would suggest that the area be the primary focus for future facility location.

When the Douglasville branch of the West Georgia Regional Library System Carroll County was a faster growing, higher population county than Douglas. Over the years this situation has changed, until now Douglas County is experiencing great growth. Over time it may make sense for the Douglas County libraries to become a stand-alone library system

Cultural Arts Center

The Cultural Arts Center of Douglasville/Douglas County is a non-profit organization dedicated to the appreciation of the arts in Douglas County. Located at 8652 Campbellton Road, Douglasville, in the historic Roberts-Mozley House, the Center's 4183 square feet contain five galleries, Museum of the Historical Society, gift shop, offices, conference rooms, kitchen, and restroom facilities. The Center has permanent and revolving exhibits and several focus groups meet at the Center including the Douglas Poets in Focus, the Sweetwater Camera Club, the Douglas County Art Guild, the Douglas County Writer's Group, the Community Alliance of Stage & Theater, and the Douglas County Historical Society. The Douglas County Commission, the City of Douglasville, and the Georgia Council for the Arts support the CAC.

Cherokee Indian Museum

This museum operates the historic Cherokee springs, and contains collections of Cherokee tools, carved arrowheads, bits of pottery, Civil Ware artifacts 1890's bottles and photographs. The museum provides guided tours, and educational activities related to medicinal waters, and Cherokee Indian history. Galleries feature pottery, civil war artifacts, bottles and photographs.

Satellite Arts Organizations

Several arts organizations are active in Douglas County, providing a wide range of actives for all age groups.

C.A.S.T. (Theatre Group)

- Cowboy Poets
- Curators' Club (Arts Center volunteers)
- Douglas County Art Guild
- Douglas County Connection
- Douglas County Cultural Exchange
- Douglas County Writers Group
- Friends for Arts and Music Education (FAME) of Douglas County
- Historical Society of Douglas County
- Sweetwater Camera Club
- Douglas County Children's Theater.
- Douglas County Poetry Writers
- CAC Men's Chorale

■ **Social Services**

Table CF-25
Social Services Facilities

Facility	Address	Square Feet	Acres
Senior Citizen's Building	6287 Fairburn Road	21,644	0.50
Health Department	6770 Selman Drive	6,887	0.16

Douglas County Family & Children's Services

This department, located at 6218 Hospital Drive, is responsible for rendering required social services to needy county residents. Family & Children's Services has two (2) main units:

Service Unit

Child and adult maltreatment is handled through referrals and investigations. The goal is to reduce risks or remove and place in custody (Foster Care Unit). Adult abuse is targeted toward adults unable to care for themselves.

Eligibility Unit

This unit is responsible for the administration of public assistance, food stamps, AFDC, and employment programs. Family & Children's Services has approximately 65 staffers.

United Way of Douglas County

The United Way of Douglas County, located at 6299 Fairburn Road, funds a number of charitable associations. The following United Way funded agencies have programs and/or services operating in Douglas County: the American Cancer Society, American Red Cross, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Boy

Scouts of America, Boys & Girls Club, Camp Fire, Council on Battered Women, The Diabetes Association, Douglas County Retardation Association, Douglas Senior Services, Epilepsy Foundation, Families First, Girl Scouts, Metropolitan Atlanta Council on Alcohol & Drugs, The Salvation Army, Sheltering Arms Child Care Services, and the Visiting Nurse Association. The United Way is currently addressing five of the seven critical needs identified by the Douglas County Action Plan including counseling and psychiatric care, parenting issues, substance abuse prevention and treatment, employment training and literacy, and emergency financial assistance. The United Way currently has two full-time staff persons who work with Douglas County, Paulding County, and Fayette County.

Senior Citizens

Douglas Senior Services, a United Way agency, has a facility located at 6287 Fairburn Road. Services are provided to citizens of Douglas County who are 60 years of age and older. The goal of the agency is to enhance the quality of life and promote independence among older County residents. Some of the services provided include nutrition services, home delivered and congregate meals, a senior center which provides opportunities for socialization and leisure activities, case management, and community care information and referral connecting clients and their families with a network of available services. Douglas Senior Services also assists seniors in finding employment. In-home services, which include homemaker services and chore and repair services, are also available. Transportation for seniors to and from key destinations is available through Douglas Senior Services. There is one (1) full-time staff member and 25 part-time staff members who are primarily volunteers.

Health Department

The joint Cobb/Douglas Health Department is responsible for providing out-patient health care to those unable to afford private care. The 6887 square foot Douglas Branch is located at 6770 Selman Drive. The Selman Drive Health Center has twenty-nine full-time employees and five part-time employees. This includes sixteen full time nurses and two part-time nurses in the Health Center and the Primary Care Center. These facilities do not have any full time doctors on staff; however, a primary care physician visits the Health Center four times a week and an OBGYN (obstetrician/gynecologist) visits the Primary Care Center twice a month.

There is a secondary health facility located at 6640-B S. Sweetwater Rd. in Lithia Springs. This facility is also in critical need of expansion. The Lithia Springs facility provides immunizations, maternal health care, child health including physicals, and pre-natal case management. This facility has five (5) full-time and two (2) part-time staff persons.

The Cobb/Douglas Board of Health has identified two (2) primary problems facing Douglas County in the immediate future. These problems are as follows:

1. Access to affordable comprehensive health care for all citizens is lacking.
2. The role of public health will dramatically shift in the current environment of health care reform and the public health community does not currently have the required capacity to adapt to this changing direction.

The Health Department also includes the Department of Environmental Health, located in the County Annex and responsible for providing information on and inspecting septic systems, and the Mental Health Department, located at 8378 James Street in Douglasville, responsible for the assessment of mental health behaviors, evaluation of de-toxification needs, crisis intervention services, out-patient counseling, group therapy, pharmaceutical services, day treatment progress, care

management, and supportive employee management. The facility is operated by one (1) full-time and three (3) part-time staff persons.

Hospitals

Douglas County has two hospitals providing a full range of health care services. The Douglas General Hospital (100 beds), a member of the Northwest Georgia Health System, is located at 8954 Hospital Drive in Douglasville. Parkway Medical Center (322 beds), a Hospital Corporation of America (HCA) facility, is located at 1000 Thornton Road in Lithia Springs.

■ **Assessment**

Community facilities in Douglas County have been expanded and increased services have been provided to the county residents and employees in a timely manner. However, the increased rate of growth experienced by the county in the 1990s is forecast to continue into the first decade of the twenty-first century. In order to remain at the current level of service, this additional growth will require continuing expansions of current services. Facilities found to be adequate today—such as the libraries, fire stations, parks, and general government offices—will have to be expanded, or new facilities added to the system, to maintain that same adequate service delivery level. Where the County has determined that a level of service greater than that currently seen should be adopted, an even greater expansion of facilities will be required. In some situations the service in question is wholly or partially provided through facilities or organizations that are not directly controlled by the County. In these instances, maintaining the level of service can be carried out in partnership with those providers, or could be replaced with a public or private provider in the event of a cessation of services. In either scenario, the County must take a proactive role in the continued delivery of services, however provided, once a desired level of service has been identified.

In the area of public safety, the current facilities for fire, sheriff, and EMS are deemed to be adequate for today's population. In order to remain at this level, additional fire stations, heavy vehicles, administrative facilities, and personnel will be required. In terms of parks, specific acreage and developed component needs have been identified that would be required in order to maintain today's level of service. The libraries in Douglas County are currently below the State recommended standards for square footage and collection volumes for communities of this size. To meet those standards, the county will have to invest in certain expansion or new facility projects, as well as purchase new collection volumes. To maintain those standards, future facility space and collection materials will be demanded.

In terms of schools, the public system in Douglas has consistently scored above the average on State-mandated tests. In all areas but the science component of the graduation test, county students have scored better than the average of comparable counties, and at above the level of students statewide. Test scores are affected by many factors, including classroom size. In order to maintain the current classroom sizes in the county, new schools will be demanded as growth continues. However, schools may be the one type of government facility that is not constantly needed once put in place. Unlike a fire station, for example, that will always be needed to cover a certain geographic area; a school serves both a geographic and a demographic element. Changes in demographics—such as smaller average household sizes—will result in a changing level of demand. For this reason, certain flexibility can be expected and designed for with public schools. At a point in the future some schools could be used to meet level of service demands in other service categories, such as parks, cultural centers, libraries, and sheriff's precincts.

8. _____ Transportation Element

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8. Transportation

■ Introduction

Background

Transportation is a critical element of the comprehensive planning process, recognizing that transportation facilities greatly impact growth patterns and that in turn, development can influence traffic congestion and accessibility. To be effective, the planning process must consider all modes of transportation, including vehicles, pedestrian, bicyclists, and transit/ridesharing services.

The Transportation Element addresses mobility needs in unincorporated areas of Douglas County. Envisioned as a data collection and initial planning phase, the study encompasses thoroughfares, public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian needs.

During the past 15 years, the population growth in Douglas County has outpaced that of the state and much of the region. The total county population as of April 2003 was 101,900 (Atlanta Regional Commission). As indicated in the Population and Land Use Elements, the projected growth in population could double over the next 20 years. While growth provides many positive outcomes for citizens, it has promulgated problems ranging from traffic congestion to lost open space.

The average travel time to work in Douglas County has increased to more than 32 minutes according to the 2000 Census journey-to-work survey. Overall, the Atlanta region had one of the highest increases in average commute travel times across the nation from 1990 to 2000.

A successful strategy used by many local governments is to diversify their transportation investments to provide choices for citizens and visitors to travel within the region. This Transportation Element takes an important step toward identifying a diversified multimodal transportation investment program to provide safe, efficient, and effective mobility for all citizens and visitors.

Scope

The Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), in cooperation with the County, currently undertake the majority of Douglas County's transportation planning. With the recent formation of its own DOT, Douglas County has begun taking initiatives to recognize its importance as a link in regional transportation. The tremendous growth patterns over the past 15 years have outpaced the local improvements in roadway capacity and other modal choices. By assessing the existing conditions and future needs, Douglas County will prepare for longer range growth within its boundaries and the region overall.

This Transportation Element primarily addresses mobility needs in unincorporated areas of the County. Some of the data and future improvements are shown on a countywide basis and include Villa Rica and the City of Douglasville. However, the City of Douglasville has addressed its transportation needs through a separate planning process. The inventory and assessment have been conducted in coordination with the ARC, GDOT, DCA, and other local and state agencies. While the planning horizon is generally the year 2025, the element also reflects projects and policies included in *Mobility 2030*, the draft Atlanta Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The 2030 RTP has been introduced to the public in draft form and is expected to be adopted in December 2004. As part of the new RTP, the regional model has been updated with a draft 2030 scenario that is based on 2000 Census data, providing a more accurate snapshot of conditions than the 2025 model, which is based on 1990 data.

Planning Level Criteria and Thresholds

The minimum local planning standards for the Transportation Element are identified in Chapter 110-12-1-.04, Section 6(h) of the Rules of *Georgia Department of Community Affairs*. As described in previous sections of the Douglas County Comprehensive Plan update, the DCA has established thresholds of standards by population total and/or growth rate. With a population greater than 50,000 and with a growth rate greater than 1.5% over the past decade, Douglas County meets the threshold for Advanced Planning Level. Accordingly, the minimum standards for transportation include specific requirements for the Advanced Planning Level. To better define the new transportation requirements that became effective on January 1, 2004, the ARC prepared *A Practical Guide for Fulfilling the Transportation Element for Cities and Counties in the Atlanta Region*. All 10 counties within the region meet the Advanced Planning Level threshold.

The scope for the Douglas County Transportation Element was prepared and undertaken based on consultation with transportation planning, modeling, and coordinated planning staff at the ARC, as well as assigned review staff with the DCA. The minimum standards and the ARC guidelines offer general advice and data sources. Each transportation element is tailored to address the unique characteristics of its respective local jurisdiction in terms of land use, growth, available data, facilities, and services.

In the case of Douglas County, this Transportation Element comes at a time of great transition. A new DOT has formed and become actively involved in county and regional transportation initiatives. Yet, there is no current transportation plan in place from which to draw the findings and recommendations. Accordingly, data collection and assessment have been conducted with a two-fold purpose: to address the minimum planning standards and to serve as Phase 1 of a Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). With funding from the ARC, Douglas County will continue the CTP process after adoption of the comprehensive plan update. The next phase of the CTP will enable more rigorous analysis of conditions and alternatives, additional public input, longer-range policy decisions, and use of the final 2030 RTP model.

Section I Inventory of Existing Conditions

The intent of the transportation inventory is to establish a baseline understanding of the existing roadway network, transit program and other services, available modes, and safety or capacity needs. From the inventory, determinations of future needs can be made based on the growth projected in the Land Use Element.

The scope for the transportation inventory included the following steps:

- Researching and downloading of files from ARC, GDOT, and the U.S. Bureau of the Census.
- Coordination with Douglas County and Douglasville representatives to discuss transportation and land use issues.
- Telephone interviews with representatives of GDOT other state agencies including the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA).
- Field reconnaissance throughout unincorporated Douglas County, consisting of a team of transportation professionals who drove along major routes to record locations and/or conditions of sidewalks, signals, signage, parking, and other features. Particular attention was given to conditions at school locations as a major trip generator with unique safety and traffic concerns. In addition, land uses and traffic conditions were observed on arterials just outside county limits to review their influence on the roadway network.
- Downloading and set-up of the ARC's 2030 model, which has been developed in TP+ software for use by local jurisdictions to assist in transportation planning. The model includes existing (2004) conditions for the roadway network and other modes where applicable.
- Review of current and recent transportation studies within the county, including the 1990 transportation plan and ongoing corridor studies.

The inventory results were developed into spreadsheet files and GIS layers, providing a basis for both the assessment of needs in the Transportation Element and more detailed analysis in the next phase of the CTP. For this purpose, some categories of inventory included countywide data; however, the assessment of existing and future needs within the City of Douglasville has been conducted in a separate Transportation Element. The summary of existing conditions follows by subsection.

■ Roadway Classifications and Inventory

A network of streets and highways provides access to/through or circulation within Douglas County. A road's function is an important parameter in planning for improvements to the roadway network. Function translates into appropriate design features such as right-of-way needs and the maximum density for curb cuts or at-grade intersections.

Roads are designated into one of the following four classifications: freeway, arterial, collector or local. These classifications are described in subsequent sections, and a detailed inventory is included as Table TA-1 in the Transportation Appendix (TA). The inventory data include name, functional classification, lanes, and jurisdiction.

Freeways

Freeways are limited access, multi-lane, divided roadways, permitting high speed traffic. Douglas County is served by one freeway, I-20. I-20 spans the entire east-west length of the County, approximately 18 miles, with access at the following seven interchanges.

- Exit 44 — SR 6 (Thornton Road)
- Exit 41 — Lee Road
- Exit 37 — SR 92 (Fairburn Road)
- Exit 36 — Chapel Hill Road / Campbellton Street
- Exit 34 — SR 5 (Bill Arp Road)
- Exit 30 — Post Road
- Exit 26 — Liberty Road

Additional regional access is provided via US 78 (Bankhead Highway), which runs generally parallel to and north of I-20.

Arterials

The principal function of arterial roads is to move traffic through an area, although they also provide access to and from cross streets and private driveways. Most of the County's arterial roads interchange directly or indirectly with I-20.

In evaluating and planning a local transportation system, it is advantageous to split arterial roads into two subgroups: major and minor arterials. Major arterials serve longer distance trips, offer slightly higher average travel speeds and generally accommodate higher volumes of traffic in comparison with minor arterials. Minor arterials typically have cross streets and driveways spaced closer together than their major arterial counterparts. Average travel speeds are lower and they generally carry lower volumes of traffic. In this classification, the facilities provide for through traffic but the function begins to include more collection and distribution to local collector roads.

Major arterials include the following State Routes:

- SR 92/Dallas Highway
- SR 5/Bill Arp Road
- SR 6/C.H. James Parkway
- SR 166

These major routes within Douglas County run in the east-west direction with many connections to major and minor thoroughfares that facilitate movement and provide access throughout the entire region. In addition, major and minor arterials connect collectors and local roads to the state, US, and interstate routes. Among the other arterials are the following:

- Chapel Hill Road
- Central Church Road
- Liberty Road
- Post Road
- Tyree Road

- Big A Road
- Cedar Mountain Road/Chicago Avenue
- Main Road
- Bright Star Road
- Campbellton Street
- Lee Road
- Burnt Hickory Road
- Sweetwater/Mt. Vernon Road
- Pool Road
- Ephesus Church
- S. Flat Rock
- Dorris Road
- Kings Highway

Collectors

The primary purpose of collector streets is to provide access to adjacent properties and circulation within residential, commercial and industrial areas. A collector street system collects traffic from local streets in residential areas, major activity centers, and central business districts (CBD) and carries the traffic to an arterial highway system. Moreover, collector streets provide access to private property and abutting land. Average travel speeds in urban areas are typically in the 25 to 35 miles per hour range. Outside the urbanized portion of the County, average travel speeds may be much higher as the intensity of land use diminishes and intersection conflicts drop.

Outside of the urbanized area, collectors typically are not broken into major and minor facilities. There are a large number of collectors serving the rural areas of the County.

Local Roads

The main purpose of a local road is to provide access to abutting land and connection to collector streets. These streets provide direct access to properties, both residential and commercial/industrial. They are two-lane facilities that may permit parking on one or both sides, and are characterized by frequent driveway cuts and slow speeds. All roads not classified as collectors or arterials are considered to be local streets.

■ Traffic Volumes

The volume of traffic on a given roadway is an important indicator to determine traffic patterns, growth, and the degree to which the facility is accommodating the vehicles. Common methods to consider the volumes are peak hour or an average 24-hour period. For purposes of the Transportation Element, volumes are shown as annual average daily traffic (ADT) on a given roadway segment. While traffic counts by electronic devices or personal recording are useful in a more detailed, micro-scale analysis, the volumes throughout the network are estimated in the ARC model. The draft RTP model provides the ADT estimates for 2004, as shown in the *Existing Model Volumes* figure. The design volume capacity is an indicator of a road's ability to carry traffic and is a combination

laneage, speed limit, and other factors. There are average or “rule of thumb” capacities such as 8,000 vehicles per lane for major arterials. Design volume capacity also is from the RTP model, as listed in Table TA-2 (see figure titled *Existing Model Roadway Capacity and Number of Lanes*). In addition, the GDOT Traffic Count program includes annual ADT estimates based on counts. Table TA-2 includes 2002 ADT volumes for state and federal routes.



■ Programmed Improvements

As one of 10 member counties within the Atlanta Regional Commission, Douglas County participates in the project development process through the ARC’s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Updated annually, the currently adopted TIP is for 2003-2005. A January 2004 report from ARC, *Breaking Ground 2003*, provides an update on the status of the 2003-2005 TIP. The status was defined as one of the following categories: a Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) implementation phase or projects underway, delayed, or dropped from the current program. Most of the listed projects in the county are sponsored by the City of Douglasville and are listed here for informational purposes. Within Douglas County, the following projects are identified:

LCI Implementation

- City of Douglasville Pedestrian Enhancement—plan of sidewalk improvements in downtown Douglasville; design and construction currently funded.

Projects Underway (during FY 2003-2004)

- Transportation Center—construction of the County’s new multi-modal Transportation Center and park-and-ride lot.
- Transit Support—funding for the Georgia Department of Human Resources for elderly transit services and for the City of Douglasville for the purchase of alternative fuel vans.
- Chapel Hill Road Bicycle/Pedestrian facility—design and construction for a segment within Douglasville from I-20 to Reservoir Drive.
- Projects Delayed (funds to be reallocated during FY 2004-2005)
- Right-of-way phase—acquisition of right-of-way for GDOT improvements on Liberty Road and SR 166; the extension of Douglas Boulevard and realignment of SR 92.

- Bicycle/Pedestrian projects—design and construction for facilities along Fairburn Road, Malone Street, Rose Avenue, and Douglas Boulevard.

Projects Dropped

- None

The TIP projects are funded by a combination of federal, state, and local commitments.

■ Safety and Maintenance

Accident History

Based on statistics provided by the GDOT Office of Traffic Safety and Design, 12,816 crashes were recorded within Douglas County during the three-year period from January 1, 2000 through December 31, 2002. As a result, two fatalities and 5,228 injuries occurred. The top twenty Douglas County accident locations were ranked by crash frequency. These locations are identified in the *Existing Safety and Maintenance Conditions* figure and listed in Table 8-1. In general, most intersections with higher crash frequencies did not have traffic signals. Locations identified with traffic signals and high crash frequency also were locations where congestion often exists. A direct relationship exists between traffic congestion and crash rates, providing impetus to ongoing efforts to provide adequate funding for transportation projects that minimize traffic congestion.

**Table 8-1
Crash Frequency Data
Douglas County**

Rank	Route	Mile Post	# of Crashes	Manner of Collision ¹						3-Year Ave
				1	2	3	4	5	6	
1	SR 5	12.82	219	80	3	105	27	1	3	73
2	SR 6	3.01	212	45	6	138	18	0	5	70.7
3	CR 153	0.73	177	62	1	87	23	2	2	59
4	SR 6	2.15	173	55	8	78	22	1	9	57.7
5	I-20 (SR 402)	9.06	167	37	1	106	14	1	8	55.7
6	SR 5	23.53	159	39	7	101	9	1	2	53
7	I-20 (SR 402)	12.36	155	44	2	95	12	0	2	51.7
8	I-20 (SR 402)	9.52	155	25	1	117	8	0	4	51.7
9	SR 92	10.25	134	58	5	55	9	1	6	44.7
10	SR 6	3.3	113	40	1	53	18	0	1	37.7
11	SR 92	9.97	101	37	2	49	9	1	3	33.7
12	SR 92	9.61	92	56	1	25	6	2	2	30.7
13	SR 6	3.84	88	29	1	41	15	0	2	29.3
14	I-20 (SR 402)	18.99	86	8	0	41	25	0	12	28.7
15	I-20 (SR 402)	11.9	85	37	2	35	7	2	2	28.3
16	SR 5	12.66	78	29	0	40	7	0	2	26
17	I-20 (SR 402)	18.6	76	3	1	42	22	0	8	25.3
18	SR 8	8.33	72	28	1	41	0	0	2	24
19	I-20 (SR 402)	12.02	71	11	0	56	1	0	3	23.7
20	SR 92	9.17	70	49	0	13	6	0	2	23.3

¹Manner of Collision: 1 = Angle, 2 = Head On, 3 = Rear End, 4 = Sideswipe Same Direction, 5 = Sideswipe Opposite Direction, 6 = Not With Motor Vehicle

As would be expected, I-20 accounts for a substantial percentage of the top 20 accident locations, due primarily to the much higher total volume and the congested conditions that have occurred on the freeway and its interchanges. Excluding the I-20 segments, all but four of the top 20 crash frequency locations are within the Douglasville city limits and thus would be evaluated separately. The highest crash frequency locations in unincorporated Douglas County are highlighted in gray and described below.

SR 6 (Thornton Road) — Of the four mileposts identified along this route, two of them are approaching I-20 at Exit 44. One milepost is just south of Factory Shoals Road, while the fourth is the intersection with Bankhead Highway. In all four cases, the prevailing manners of collision have been rear end and angle. Rear end accidents are indicative of stop-and-go conditions and sight distance problems at driveways and unsignalized intersections. Similarly, angle collisions typically are indicative of attempted turns into unsignalized intersections and sight-distance problems.

Ranking intersections by crash frequency is one method of identifying high crash locations, yet it is also important to consider crash rates (number of crashes per 100 million entering vehicles) when searching for high crash locations. Such a comparison would likely reduce the apparent severity of I-20 conditions. More rigorous analysis of crash data countywide will be part of the scope in Phase 2 of the CTP. By taking into account the volume of vehicles in the time surveyed, a rate can be calculated. By using rates, new locations can be identified as high crash locations.

Evacuation Routes

Evacuation routes are designated to carry traffic from Douglas County to an incident-specific destination in the event that the entire county or region is evacuated due to severe weather, hazardous materials leak, or other large-scale emergency. Such an event, though not on record as occurring in recent years, would require clear signage and adequate facilities to handle the extremely high volumes of traffic. Evacuation routes and procedures are set by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA).

According to GEMA representatives, the primary evacuation route in Douglas County is I-20, which also would serve the same role for other counties. In addition, SR 166, Chapel Hill Road, and Bill Arp Road (SR 5) are designated as evacuation routes (shown on *Existing Safety and Maintenance Conditions*). One route includes leaving Cobb County, traveling into Douglas County to SR 5. From SR 5, one route follows Bankhead Highway (US 78) into Carroll County. The other routes leave Fulton and Douglas by traveling I-20. Exits at Chapel Hill Road or SR 5 will lead to SR 166 and into Carroll County.



Bridge Inventory

Bridges are critical links in the roadway network and in the consideration of safety and capacity. The GDOT Bridge Maintenance Office conducts periodic inspections on structures and prepares a Bridge Conditions Report every two years. The report includes a National Bridge Inspection rating known as the sufficiency rating. On a range of 0 to 100, a bridge is considered deficient and in need of rehabilitation/replacement when its score is 50 or below. Another indicator is the age of a structure. While the age alone does not determine a bridge's condition, most structures are designed for a 50-year life. The bridge inventory was obtained from GDOT for Douglas County, as shown in Table TA-3. The inventory includes location, facility type, size, length, year built, and sufficiency rating.

Table 8-2 summarizes the structures (countywide) that either have a sufficiency rating at 50 or below, those structures approaching or exceeding 50 years in age, and those structures located on a designated evacuation route (for informational purposes regardless of rating).

Three bridges, highlighted in bold text, are considered deficient: Annewakee Creek Road at Annewakee Creek, West Tyson Road at Keaton Creek Tributary, and Stockmar Road at Mud Creek (see *Existing Safety and Maintenance Conditions* figure). Post Road at Dog River has a score of 52.4 and is currently 53 years old. Eight additional structures are approaching or exceeding 50 years in age. Three of those eight structures are located on segments SR 5 or SR 166 that are designated evacuation routes.

**Table 8-2
Existing Bridges of Concern
Douglas County**

Facility Carried	Feature Intersected	Year Built	Sufficiency Rating
Bill Arp Road	Hurricane Creek	1956	98.20
Bill Arp Road	Hurricane Creek Tributary	1956	98.20
Bill Arp Road	Dog River	1998 1964/	96.40
State Route 5	Interstate 20	1974	71.77
State Route 61	Mud Creek	1937	90.62
State Route 166	Dog River	1956	75.67
State Route 166	Bear Creek	1957	66.26
State Route 166	Anneewakee Creek	1957	73.90
State Route 166	Chattahoochee River	1984	82.03
Interstate 20 (East)	Keaton Creek	1974	93.10
Interstate 20 (West)	Keaton Creek	1974	93.10
Interstate 20	Keaton Creek Tributary	1974	88.19
Interstate 20 (East)	Mobley Creek	1974	92.29
Interstate 20 (West)	Mobley Creek	1974	92.29
Interstate 20	Beaver Run Creek	1962 1962/19	85.00
Interstate 20	Sweetwater Creek	79	67.10
Anneewakee Creek Road	Anneewakee Creek	1963	49.57
Bridge Road	Sweetwater Creek Tributary	1958	64.40
Lee Road	Beaver Run Creek	1958	87.52
Chapel Hill Road	Anneewakee Creek	1949	85.49
Chapel Hill Road	Interstate 20 & I-20 Ramp	1995	91.30
Mason Creek Road	Mobley Creek Tributary	1936	65.73
West Tyson Road	Keaton Creek Tributary	1956	6.57
Stockmar Road	Mud Creek	1950	16.04
Post Road	Dog River	1951	52.40

Source: GDOT Bridge Maintenance Office, April 2004.

Local Maintenance Activities

Preservation of the County’s existing system of roads and bridges is an integral part of the transportation plan. The current maintenance program includes such activities as: road repairs; signal repairs; sign up-keep and visibility, drainage repair, and even minor improvements for traffic control at intersections. Recently, a traffic calming program was added to the list of transportation services provided by the County under its maintenance program. Douglas County has implemented local maintenance activities and other transportation initiatives through its Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) program. The approximate SPLOST budget is \$41,055,000, to be divided among Douglas County, Douglasville, and Villa Rica.

The SPLOST program has enabled the County to make progress on some of the highest maintenance priorities. Overall, the existing pavement conditions have been the primary funding priority, with 86 miles

of resurfacing completed or underway. Remaining funds have been available to undertake seven intersection projects, drainage projects, and a study of short-term (operational) and longer-term (enhancement/capacity) improvements on Chapel Hill and Stewart Mill Roads.

In addition, GDOT maintains an inventory of pavement conditions that classifies state routes according to a trigger value. A “project rating” of 70 or below is the trigger value to indicate a maintenance need. Roads that have a project rating less than 71 are identified as pavement problem areas or poor pavement conditions. The data collection period extends from September of 1986 to October of 2002. After a thorough analysis, five roads were identified with low project ratings for several sections of the road. Below is a list of the five roads:

- Bankhead Highway/Interstate 78
- Bill Arp Road
- Dallas Highway/Willoughby Road
- Dallas Road/Fairburn Road
- SR 166/Campbellton Road
- Thornton Road

Among the five roads, Bill Arp Road has the longest section of pavement that is classified with a project rating of less than 71.

■ **Signalization and Signage**

Signage

Efficient travel can be affected significantly by the adequacy of signs and traffic signals. A physical inventory was conducted in Spring 2004 to determine the types and locations of signs and the locations of traffic signals throughout Douglas County.

The inventory of signage is not intended to serve as an exhaustive list, but rather as a comprehensive review of the types of signs, their typical locations and features, and observed deficiencies. The results of the inventory are shown in Table 8-3.



**Table 8-3
Sign Inventory
Douglas County**

Route Name	Side Street	Sign Function	Problem Description
SR 5 (Bill Arp Rd)	Bill Arp E.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	Limited use and visibility of school zone signs
Dorsett Shoals Rd	Dorsett Shoals E.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	Limited use and visibility of school zone signs
Kings Hwy	Yeager M.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	Limited use and visibility of school zone signs
Parkway South	Arbor Station E.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	Limited use and visibility of school zone signs
Pope Rd	Chestnut Log M.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	Limited use of school zone signs
Duralee Ln	Eastside E.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	Poor use and visibility of school signs and school zone signs
Connally Dr	Burnett E.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	No use of school signs or school zone signs
SR 8 / US 78	Burnt Hickory Rd	Guide Signs	No use of street name signs
Burnt Hickory Rd	Railroad Crossing	Warning Sign	Limited use and visibility of RR crossing signs
Florence Dr	Lithia Springs E.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	Poor use and visibility of school signs and school zone signs
Skyview Dr	Maxham Rd	Guide Signs	Limited use and poor visibility of street name signs
Lee Rd	Ride Share Facility	Guide Signs	Limited use and poor visibility of Ride Share Facility signs
Duralee Ln	Crossroads M.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	Poor use and visibility of school signs and school zone signs
Old Lower River Rd	New Manchester E.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	No use of school zone signs and limited visibility of school signs
Post Rd	Ride Share Facility	Guide Signs	Limited use and poor visibility of Ride Share Facility signs
Thornton Rd	Ride Share Facility Douglas County Transportation Center	Guide Signs	Limited use and poor visibility of Transportation Center signs
Dorris Rd	Bill Arp E.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	Limited use and visibility of school zone signs
SR 5 (Bill Arp Rd)	Bill Arp E.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	Limited use and visibility of school zone signs
Dorsett Shoals Rd	Dorsett Shoals E.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	Limited use and visibility of school zone signs
Kings Hwy	Yeager M.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	Limited use and visibility of school zone signs
Parkway South	Arbor Station E.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	Limited use and visibility of school zone signs
Pope Rd	Chestnut Log M.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	Limited use of school zone signs
Duralee Ln	Eastside E.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	Poor use and visibility of school signs and school zone signs
Connally Dr	Burnett E.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	No use of school signs or school zone signs
SR 8 / US 78	Burnt Hickory Rd	Guide Signs	No use of street name signs
Burnt Hickory Rd	Railroad Crossing	Warning Sign	Limited use and visibility of RR crossing signs
Florence Dr	Lithia Springs E.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	Poor use and visibility of school signs and school zone signs
Skyview Dr	Maxham Rd	Guide Signs	Limited use and poor visibility of street name signs
Lee Rd	Ride Share Facility	Guide Signs	Limited use and poor visibility of Ride Share Facility signs
Duralee Ln	Crossroads M.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	Poor use and visibility of school signs and school zone signs
Old Lower River Rd	New Manchester E.S.	Regulatory & Guide Signs	No use of school zone signs and limited visibility of school signs
Post Rd	Ride Share Facility	Guide Signs	Limited use and poor visibility of Ride Share Facility signs
Thornton Rd	Ride Share Facility	Guide Signs	Limited use and poor visibility of Ride Share Facility signs
Dorris Rd	Douglas County Transportation Center	Guide Signs	Limited use and poor visibility of Transportation Center signs

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004.

Overall, the guide signs for I-20 access and major arterials are efficient and highly visible. However, guide signs and street signs on arterials and collectors are in some locations too small, obscured, or missing, limiting a driver's ability to make safe and efficient decisions. Some school zones have inadequate signs, and existing railroad crossing signs have limited visibility.

Signalization

Traffic signals are crucial to maintaining efficiency and safety in an urban road network. The GDOT Traffic Operations and Maintenance Office has responsibility for signals on state routes, including a database of existing signal locations. Countywide database records of state signal locations were obtained and supplemented with a physical inventory of signals throughout unincorporated areas. Douglas County has more than 75 signals, most of which are located within the City of Douglasville limits. The signals are illustrated on the *Signal Locations* figure and listed in Table TA-4.



Intelligent Transportation System (ITS)

Intelligent transportation systems (ITS) are the application of a vast array of technologically advanced systems that impact the existing surface transportation system. Some of the technology used in ITS include communications, sensors, and computers. Ultimately, the goal of ITS is to maximize the performance of the existing transportation infrastructure to facilitate safer, quicker travel and enhanced mobility for the public. Potential benefits of ITS include improved traffic flow, traveler information, air quality, faster delivery of goods, and reduced travel times.

The drive to implement an ITS in Atlanta was motivated by the 1996 Summer Olympics which began planning in 1991 on a statewide Intelligent Transportation System. Today this system is known as the "NAVIGATOR". The NAVIGATOR uses cameras and video detection to detect traffic incidents and report real time data to the traveling public that enables informed choices about transportation options. The NAVIGATOR links to a Transportation Management Center (TMC) in order to properly manage this system. Other such systems include the Highway Emergency Response Operators (HEROs), camera surveillance, information kiosks, demonstration hand-held navigation devices, demonstration of on-board navigation, and automated vehicle locators on transit buses. Currently the key elements of ITS in the Atlanta region (10-county metro area) include: Traffic signal control, Freeway management, major arterial management, Transit management, Incident management, Traveler information, Electronic toll collection and emergency response. Currently, Douglas County does not have any Intelligent Transportation Systems with the exception of fiber optic loops utilized by the school board.

■ Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

Currently there are no dedicated on-road or off-road bicycle facilities or multi-use trails in unincorporated Douglas County. Some of the newer subdivisions are including sidewalks as amenities to enhance circulation and community ambiance. While sidewalks are a concern and a transportation goal, local funding has not been available due to the enormous task of addressing the pavement deficiencies throughout the county. In the newly adopted Unified Development Code (UDC), sidewalks are required along any public right-of-way. In addition, non-residential character areas require internal connections and linkages, and emphasize the integration of the development into the overall circulation pattern of the county. Greater emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle circulation is expected in the county in the future.

Existing land-use practices contribute to why sidewalks are not considered to be a legitimate means for trip making purposes. Buildings that house many of the County's service businesses, large employers and shopping centers are set-back a lengthy distance from the street such that individuals are discouraged from walking between places, even when they are located in neighboring parcels. Moreover, there are busy driveways and parking lots that pedestrians frequently navigate through or maneuver around to avoid conflicts with motorists. Both the building set-backs and the degree to which property layouts acquiesce to motor vehicle access present obstacles for pedestrians. This problem also has been addressed within the Land Use Element of this Plan and the new UDC. As mentioned earlier, sidewalks and/or other non-motorized linkages will be required as part any new development within Douglas County. Land use patterns have also been greatly modified to facilitate more compact development in "village" or "center" configurations. In many character areas, public gathering spaces, a "street-side" orientation and parking to the side or rear of a facility are encouraged.

An inventory of sidewalks was conducted at public schools, town and activity centers, and transit stations/stops. Overall, those specific uses have very little in the way of existing sidewalks. In particular, sidewalks are an important component of school transportation, if the facilities are safe and accessible from residential areas in the same school zone. A review of conditions at 32 public schools in Douglas County indicates that 13 of the 32 have sidewalks, ranging in length from 70 feet to half a mile. A common problem is that the sidewalks extend only along the school property for the most part, leaving gaps to reach the nearby students (depending on age/grade) who otherwise could walk. Only Douglas County High School has a bike trail, located along Selman Avenue. The results of the inventory are shown in Table TA-5.

Based on coordination with the Douglas County Parks and Recreation Department, none of the county's parks yet have recreational trails or a defined greenway corridor. Douglas County has created a Greenspace and Trail Alliance to begin planning for corridor locations and passive recreational trails, including the Dog River Park area. The organizational meeting was held in June 2004.

The Georgia Department of Transportation has designated a network of on-street bicycle routes (BIKE GA 2002). Within this network, Route 15 crosses through Douglas County. Named the Central Route Corridor, it extends north-south from Acworth to Florida for a total length of 327 miles. As shown on the *Multi-Modal Improvements* figure, Route 15 includes 10.8 miles through Douglas County. As part of the state's overall bicycle plan, the network provides a reference for cyclists (i.e., share the road) but is not indicative of designated bicycle lanes. In the case of Douglas County, Route 15 consists of segments of the following roads: North Sweetwater Road, Sweetwater Road South, Mt. Vernon Road, and SR 92 / SR 166. While this route is suitable for bicyclists and is near features such as Sweetwater Creek, the existing pavement conditions along portions are not ideal. Some segments need rehabilitation, while rumble strips are evident along shoulders or intersections.

■ Parking Facilities

In coordination with the Douglas County DOT, a review of significant parking facilities was conducted. The inventory of spaces at park-and-ride lots is shown in Table 8-4. The lots are located primarily along I-20 and at the new Transportation Center off Hospital Drive.

Table 8-4 Park-and-Ride Lots Douglas County	
Location	Number of Spaces
I-20 & Lee Road	145
I-20 & Thornton Road	116
I-20 & Post Road	79
8800 Dorris Road (Douglas County Transportation Center)	300
Total	640

Source: Obtained from 2003 *Georgia Transit Programs Fact Book*

The County has identified three other significant parking facilities, as shown in Table 8-5.

Table 8-5 Significant Parking Facilities Douglas County	
Location	# of Spaces
Arbor Place Mall	6,500
Douglas County Courthouse	585
Douglas County Transportation Center	600
Total	7,685

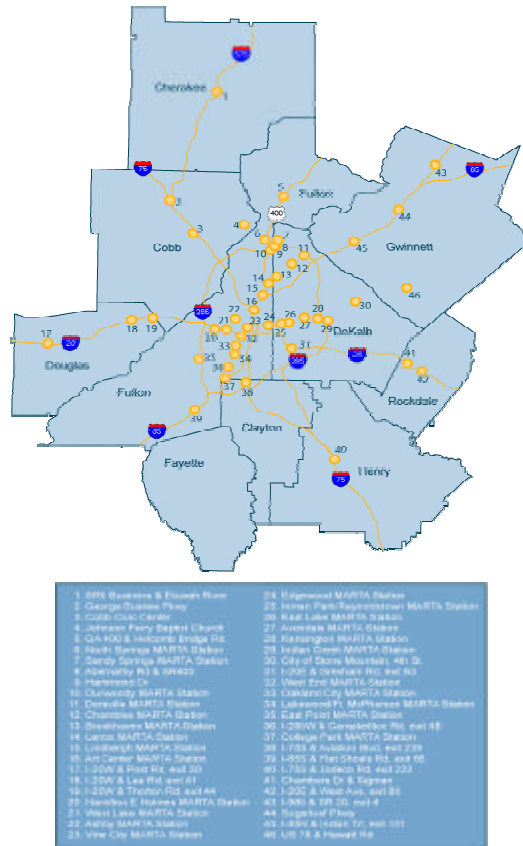
Source: Douglas County DOT, 2004.

■ Public Transportation

No mass transit system currently exists in Douglas County, as of spring 2004. The existing paratransit services primarily consist of a Rideshare Program established in 1986. The Rideshare program is a commuter based program that consists of vanpools and carpool-matching, using the park-and-ride lots previously described. The vanpool service operates Monday through Friday from 6:00 am to 7:00 am and 3:45 pm to 5:00 pm. A published schedule online indicates 24 routes that cover major employment destinations.

Douglas County Rideshare Program

Rideshare is a commute alternative program that facilitates the operation and provision of commuting options to the residents of Douglas County. Specifically, Rideshare provides alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle by operating work-trip vanpools, providing carpool matching assistance, and building and maintaining commuter facilities. Rideshare is a department of the Douglas County Government, and is governed by the Douglas County Board of Commissioners.



Currently, Rideshare operates 24 daily vanpools to work locations within the Atlanta metropolitan area. Vanpool participants meet at a designated point in Douglas County in the morning and are driven to or near their work location. In the afternoon, participants are picked up at or near their work location and driven back to the designated point. Van drivers are volunteers who drive in lieu of paying the monthly vanpooling fare. The average current monthly fare is approximately \$58.

Bus Service

There is no regularly scheduled, fixed-route bus service operating in Douglas County. Douglas County is working with the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) to begin an express bus service in the summer of 2004 from Douglasville to Atlanta. According to GRTA's Regional Transit Action Plan, the express bus route (XPRESS) will start July 6, 2004 and will be known as Route 460. The route will run starting from the Park and Ride lot at the Douglas Transportation Center (Multi-Modal Center) to Downtown. GRTA has defined three total stops, two of which are in the downtown Atlanta area. The fourth stop, which is the year 2 extension at Arbor Place Mall, will be the starting point once it is completed. The route schedule will be designated at a later date. Tentatively, the schedule will include a 30

minute gap between buses which will run Monday – Friday from 5:30 am to 9:30 pm. Moreover, GRTA has planned two additional routes for Douglas County. These two routes include Douglasville to Cumberland and Douglasville to the Hartsfield- Jackson Atlanta International Airport

■ Railroads and Airports

There is no rail passenger service in Douglas County. Inter-city rail passenger service in the Atlanta area is operated by Amtrak. The Amtrak line passes through the County, but does not stop. Norfolk Southern operates freight service through one corridor in the County, parallel to US 78. This line connects downtown Atlanta to Birmingham, Alabama and serves both freight and passenger movement. There are no stations located within the County for either of the uses. Norfolk Southern's freight service has a major intermodal hub in the Cobb County portion of Austell, which includes a major railroad switching yard and truck terminals for transfers of freight for regional truck deliveries.



The only air facility in Douglas County is a small, private airfield located in the north part of the County. Stockmar Airfield is nominal and accommodates only small aircraft. This airfield is not part of the Georgia Airport System Plan. Fulton County Airport is located approximately 15 – 20 minutes outside of Douglas County, with access from I-20 and Bankhead Highway. From I-20 and I-285, Douglas County also is located within approximately 30 – 40 minutes of Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport.

Section II. Assessment of Current and Future Transportation Needs

■ Assessment of the Road Network

Adequacy of Transportation Facilities and Services

In a detailed corridor or sub-area transportation study, a number of factors determine the level-of-service on a particular section of road. These include: accident experience; driver maneuverability; sight distance; pavement condition; and the amount of delay. In the comprehensive plan, however, the evaluation process is simplified. In this study, the County's road system was evaluated to determine if the number of through-lanes on a specific facility is sufficient to accommodate the amount of traffic on the road at an acceptable level-of-service.

Levels-of-service (LOS) were calculated for segments by calculating the ratio of daily traffic volume to the segment's equivalent daily capacity. Levels-of-service are indicated by letter grades, A-F, which are assigned to each link in accordance with its computed volume to capacity ratio.

At one extreme, LOS "A" signifies that motorists travel with little or no delay and have room to maneuver as they approach an intersection at the downstream end of a segment. At the other extreme, LOS "E" denotes that the volume of traffic is approaching the capacity threshold. LOS "E" is characterized by low average speeds, delay at intersections and little room to maneuver. Below LOS "E" is LOS "F". LOS "F" conditions occur when more traffic attempts to pass through an intersection or section of road than the intersection or segment are designed to accommodate. These points or short sections are referred to as bottlenecks. LOS "F" conditions are characterized by long delays between intersections, low average speeds and little room to maneuver.

For purposes this Transportation Element, Douglas County has followed the thresholds used in the draft RTP model, which are calculated as the ratio of volume to capacity (V/C) for a given roadway segment. A roadway is considered saturated when the volumes equals the road's capacity to handle traffic, shown as 1.0 or greater. In the RTP model, the following V/C thresholds apply: .00 to .55 is LOS A/B, .55 to .77 is LOS C, .77 to .93 is LOS D, .93 to 1.0 is LOS E, and 1.0 or greater is LOS F. Proposed improvements are intended to provide LOS D or better conditions in their design year (usually 20 years). During Phase 2 of the CTP, Douglas County will further evaluate levels of service and appropriate thresholds for improvements.

Based on the modeled 2004 conditions from ARC (see figure, *Existing Model Volume/Capacity Ratios*), levels-of-service for major roadway segments in Douglas County are indicated in Table TA-6. Those links with an LOS of E or F are shown in Table 8-6.

**Table 8-6
2004 Level of Service – Congested Segments
Douglas County**

Roadway Name	From/ To	2004 LOS
Dorris Road	To Cedar Mountain Road	0.97 (E)
GA Highway 5 (Rose Ave.)	From I-20 to Douglas Blvd.	0.99 (E)
US 78 (Bankhead Highway)	From Rose Ave. to Chapel Hill Road	1.03 (F)
GA Highway 92 (Dallas Highway)	From Brown Street to Forrest Ave.	0.97-1.24 (E or F)
GA Highway 92 (Dallas Highway)	From I-20 to Chapel Hill Road	0.97-1.05 (E or F)
Interstate 20	Parallel to Timberland Drive	1.02 (F)
GA Highway 92 and 166 (Fairburn Rd.)	From Cochran Mill to Cascade Palmetto HWY	1.01-1.21 (F)
Sweetwater Road	From I-20 to US Highway 78 or Bankhead Highway	1.02-1.58 (F)
US Highway 78 (Bankhead Highway)	From Cedar Mountain Road to Bearden Road	0.96-1.25 (F)
Mount Vernon Road	From Park Drive to Skyview Drive	1.23 (F)
Skyview Drive	From Crestmark Blvd. To Westford Drive	0.95 (E)
Thornton Road	From Interstate West Parkway to Six Flags Parkway	0.93 (E)
Interstate-20	From GA Highway 92 or 166 (Fairburn Road) to Thornton Road	1.02-1.09 (F)

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004

Modal Split and Vehicle Occupancy

Based on the journey-to-work survey conducted as part of the 2000 Census, 95.9 percent of the 46,176 employees in Douglas County relied on personal vehicles for commuting, with 81.6 percent driving alone. Of the remainder, 14.3 percent carpooled. Less than 2.0 percent used transit, walked, or rode bicycles—an indication of the lack of available facilities. These driving trends have remained fairly constant since the 1990 journey-to-work survey, despite tremendous growth: 96.1 percent of employees drove vehicles, with 81.6 percent driving alone.

While ridesharing has been promoted with several programs and a growing vanpool program in the county, single occupancy vehicles (SOV) continue to dominate the transportation modes. Based on outputs from the draft RTP model, the average occupancy within Douglas County in 2004 is 1.08 persons per vehicle for home-based work trips (commutes) and 1.36 persons per vehicle for home-based non-work trips.

Safety Concerns and Evacuation Routes

As identified through the inventory of existing conditions, accident records have been reviewed over a three-year history. Among the 20 highest frequency accidents within Douglas County, most are located within Douglasville or along I-20. During Phase 2 of the CTP, the accident data will be reviewed more vigorously including a comparison with rates. The priority locations will be assessed, with recommenda-

tions for improvements. Typical safety improvements include intersection geometrics, better signage, removal of obstructions from the driver's view, and correcting problematic curves in the road.

The evacuation routes for Douglas County include aging structures. Of those structures, the SR 166 crossing of Dog Creek is currently being replaced. Two structures (dating to 1956) on SR 5 should be monitored, but both have good sufficiency ratings presently. Improvements are currently programmed or proposed along several critical segments of the evacuation routes, which will increase capacity and efficiency of traffic flow.

■ Public Transportation

With the introduction of GRTA's Regional Express Bus system into Douglas County later this year, local residents will have a crucial new choice for daily commutes. As shown in the *Multi-Modal Improvements* figure, the bus system will extend along I-20 with stops planned for downtown Atlanta, the Arbor Place Mall, Cumberland mall, and Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. This service will prove to be a valuable alternative to commuters into these activity centers, particularly in light of the peak-hour congestion on the interstate system.

A considerable amount of research within the region has focused on the feasibility of commuter rail. With the introduction of the *Mobility 2030 RTP*, the ARC has demonstrated a commitment to long-term transit solutions. During the course of the research for the Douglas County Transportation Element, regional transit alternatives have continued to evolve. As of July 2004, the aspirations scenario (i.e., the regional wish list with no financial constraints) includes both high-capacity and medium-capacity transit through Douglas County. The high-capacity alternative is described as either a bus rapid transit (BRT) or heavy rail system with dedicated right-of-way and fixed transit stations. By contrast, the medium-capacity alternative would be a BRT system using non-dedicated right-of-way and standard bus stops.

Indications are that the financially constrained RTP would need to limit commuter rail funding to the higher priority north-south corridor before extending with east-west service. Commuter rail development often takes decades for full implementation and typically is the most expensive transit option. While commuter rail and a proposed station in Douglasville were under consideration in the aspirations scenario of the plan, a BRT system along the I-20 corridor was determined to be the most feasible approach to expanding regional transit to Douglas County. Other options, including commuter rail, will continue to be discussed in future years in light of changing funding scenarios at the federal level. Douglas County remains encouraged by the regional commitment to transit and will support both the introduction of BRT and the prospect of leveraging the existing rail line through the county for commuter rail. Much planning, inter-jurisdictional cooperation, and financial investment will be necessary over the next 20 years to implement mass transit in the county.

Projected Overall Transportation System Levels of Service and System Needs

The major arterials through the county are experiencing increased congestion, as evidenced by these modeled LOS levels. In the future, continued growth will worsen the degree of congestion unless multi-modal options are implemented along with major capacity improvements. By coordinating assumptions with the Land Use Element, the future growth was added to the transportation model adapted from the RTP 2030 model. The model divides the county (region) into subareas called traffic analysis zones or TAZs. Households, population, and employment by sector are among the primary variables in the regional model used to simulate travel patterns and demand. Those variables were adjusted to match the projections in the Land Use Element, based on the recommended uses in each TAZ. The TAZs are shown in the *Future Land Use within Traffic Analysis Zones* figure and listed with land uses in Table 8-7.



**Table 8-7
Land Use Assumptions in Future Transportation Network
Douglas County**

TAZ	Acres	Future Land Use
13001	1,599	Urban Residential / Workplace Center
13002	2,048	Commerce Center / Urban Residential
13003	2,521	Commerce Center / Urban Residential
13004	3,890	Commerce Center / Parks / Intensive Industrial
13005	4,684	Suburban Living / Urban Residential
13006	3,757	Urban Residential / Community Village Center
13007	3,060	Incorporated / Urban Residential
13008	2,469	Incorporated / Urban Residential
13009	907	Incorporated
13010	722	Incorporated
13011	727	Incorporated
13012	1,448	Incorporated / Urban Residential
13013	17,798	Suburban Living / Community Village Center / Intensive Industrial
13014	7,048	Rural Places / Parks
13015	15,772	Rural Places / Parks
13016	12,009	Suburban Living / Rural Places / Parks
13017	1,972	Incorporated / Suburban Living
13018	1,816	Incorporated / Suburban Living
13019	8,070	Suburban Living / Rural Places / Public Institutions
13020	6,189	Suburban Living / Rural Places
13021	2,454	Suburban Living / Rural Places
13022	4,563	Suburban Living / Rural / Community Village Center
13023	6,181	Rural Places / Parks / Suburban Living
13024	3,499	Incorporated / Urban Residential / Workplace / Mixed Use
13025	6,892	Suburban Living / Community Village Center / Rural Places
13026	2,274	Suburban Living / Community Village
13027	3,784	Incorporated / Suburban Living / Community Village Center

Source: Ross Associates and Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004

The model increased the trips throughout the county based on the new land use assumptions. Growth within Douglasville was adjusted to assumptions available from the Douglasville Comprehensive Plan Update. The modeled results can be considered a worst case scenario for potential traffic growth by the end of the planning horizon, 2025. The primary issues within the transportation network are major loads on north-south corridors. The growth in population and employment will continue to transform Douglas County into a major urban area, with several heavy concentrations of development where little exists today. The projected traffic volumes are shown in the *Future Model Volumes* figure.

As the most appropriate model at the time of this Transportation Element, the draft 2030 aspirations scenario served as a base. Therefore, a separate model scenario for future No Build was not included in the scope of this Transportation Element. Many of the draft assumptions are being updated by the ARC during the second half of 2004. As such, the modeled results for Douglas County assume many transportation improvements in place by 2030. In Phase 2 of the CTP, the approved RTP will be available, along with an updated model scenario. The CTP will include a rigorous comparison of potential improvements to further determine the relative costs and benefits. In summary, the primary system deficiencies in the future from a roadway perspective are congested north-south corridors, and to a lesser extent, east-west corridors to reach other alternatives for north-south flow.

■ Means of Optimizing Existing Facilities

Douglas County has placed a priority on optimizing use of existing facilities. As described previously, the primary emphasis of the current SPLOST program is maintenance and paving of existing streets. On local roads throughout the county, capacity and safety can be enhanced through improved shoulders and intersection geometrics.

Of particular note is the current *Chapel Hill Road and Stewart Mill Road Transportation Corridor Study* (Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004). The study focuses on two phases: short-term improvements for operational and safety benefits, and long-term improvements to increase capacity and introduce pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The interim report on short-term improvements has identified a series of priority project to optimize use of the existing roads, totaling approximately \$4.25 million based on preliminary cost estimates. This Transportation Element has included a review of the study's short-term recommendations and likely long-term recommendations for typical sections on both corridors.

From a multi-modal perspective, Douglas County does not yet have adequate facilities to provide a full range of alternatives to the single-occupant vehicle. The increasing demand for park-and-ride lots and the Rideshare program are indications of overall growth and better choices for commuters. With implementation of the proposed sidewalk projects, HOV lanes, ITS strategies, and potential BRT corridor, Douglas County will be able to balance choices for travel and extend the life and level of service for its roadway network.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

TDM refers to a wide range of approaches to optimize use of the existing transportation system. Among policies and techniques that have been used in the Atlanta region are staggered work hours, flexible work hours, telecommuting, shuttles, netmeeting, and parking management. Within Douglas County, two approaches have proven effective with increasing demand: the Rideshare Vanpool program and park-and-ride lots.

The Douglas County Vanpool program continues to see growth. Ridership data for the past 3 years, and anticipated numbers for years 2004 and 2005, are shown below in Table 8-8.

**Table 8-8
Rideshare Vanpool Ridership and Operational Statistics
Douglas County**

Operational Categories	Year				
	2001	2002	2003	2004(Est)	2005(Est)
Vans in Service	18	20	22	28	34
One-way passenger trips	52,907	56,325	57,150	64,000	71,000
Total revenue miles	266,283	269,254	300,228	400,000	500,000
Passenger revenue miles	1,417,530	1,467,007	1,485,900	2,000,000	3,000,000

Source: Douglas County Transportation Center, 2004

The areas with the greatest concentration of Rideshare vanpool service and demand are downtown Atlanta in the Five Points / Peachtree Center area, Midtown Atlanta around Colony Square and Bell South Campanille, and in the Clifton Corridor where Emory University and the VA Medical center are located. The Douglas County Transportation center anticipates growth for their vanpool program around the areas of Perimeter Mall, the Cumberland Mall / Galleria complex in Cobb County, and in the New Manchester mixed use development in the eastern portion of the county.

In areas not serviced by the vanpools, Rideshare offers a carpool matching program. Rideshare maintains a list of commuters who have expressed a desire to carpool and tries to match other individuals who have expressed an interest in carpooling, based on work location and hours. Additionally, Rideshare participates in the 1-87 Ridefind program operated by the Atlanta Regional Council. This program serves as a referral service for carpoolers and vanpoolers.

Douglas County has actively participated in regional measures to optimize the efficiency and capacity of existing roadways. While the existing pavement conditions have necessitated a substantial commitment of funding, other measures offer an opportunity for Douglas County to benefit from regional approaches in new technologies. One of the critical issues is traffic congestion on I-20. As such, the regional initiatives with Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) are a priority for the county.

Intelligent Transportation Systems

The Atlanta Regional Commission has compiled the updated 2030 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which defines the long-range multimodal and financial plan for addressing mobility and accessibility needs for a designated region. In the Atlanta region, The I-20 West Corridor passes through the Atlanta region in the westbound direction. This corridor is defined as the 31 mile long portion between I-75/85 and the Douglas/Carroll County line. The corridor is located within the City of Atlanta, a small portion of unincorporated Fulton County, a small portion of Cobb County, and Douglas County. The corridor provides access to the following areas (from east to west): Downtown Atlanta, the West End community, the West Lake community, the Hightower Community, Fulton County Airport, numerous areas in the vicinity of Fulton Industrial Boulevard and the Chattahoochee River, Six Flags Over Georgia, the City of Douglasville, the Arbor Place Mall activity center, and the City of Villa Rica. This corridor has been identified by ARC as a high peak hour traffic area and in need for major transportation improvements to accommodate this traffic. Moreover, *Mobility 2030* identifies I-20 as a Smart Corridor in Douglas County. Smart Corridors are proposed to have at least two forms of ITS (e.g., variable message signs, incident management, video surveillance).

Intermodal Terminals and Connections

Douglas County has invested in commuter facilities throughout Douglas County, including the park-and-ride lots described in the inventory section. A major new success in addressing long-range transportation needs is the Multimodal Transportation Center. The initial phase of this facility, which was recently constructed, includes 300 commuter parking spaces, as well as a 6,500-square-foot customer service building for Rideshare, and a compressed natural gas fueling station for Rideshare vans. Two more phases of the Transportation Center are expected to be constructed within the next three to four years. Phase Two, which will be completed in August 2004, will include a loading platform for the new express bus service the offered by the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA). Phase Three, which is expected to be completed in 2005, will include another additional 300 parking spaces for commuters.

The cost of Phase One, which includes land acquisition, design, engineering and construction, was \$3 million. The total cost of the Transportation Center is approximately \$5 million. Funding sources for the Transportation Center include the Federal Transit Administration, the Georgia Department of Transportation, and the Douglas County Board of Commissioners.

The Transportation Center will be a hub for the new Regional Express Bus service being introduced into Douglas County. This level of intermodal connectivity has never been provided within Douglas County, and its success will be a vital part of the overall quality of life in sustaining the projected growth. Along with the implementation of the express route and expanded Transportation Center, additional capacity will be needed at the park-and-ride facilities. Some of the existing lots appear to be land-locked, while others have room for expansion. Important measures will include the continued marketing of alternative transportation modes and the available interconnectivity of the Transportation Center.

High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes

HOV lanes have become an important priority for the region and for Douglas County. The draft *Mobility 2030 RTP* features a system of HOV lanes that extend the current reach from the I-85/I-75 corridor and add HOV lanes to I-20, SR 400, I-285, and SR 316. Within Douglas County, HOV projects are identified in two phases. The first phase is scheduled to be completed within the 2005-2010 TIP and actually is made up of three connecting HOV projects. Those projects begin outside the boundaries of the county and extend along I-20 West from SR 6/Thornton Road to SR 5/Bill Arp Road. The second phase, with a long-range status, will continue from Bill Arp Road to Liberty Road, which is near the western boundary of the county.

The RTP has listed several improvements to the I-20 West corridor from increased capacity to HOV lanes and interchange upgrades. All of these modifications to the existing highway system will aid in reducing congestion and improving the level of service of this corridor.

To address a potential gap in efficiency, Douglas County has identified the need to upgrade the interchange at the Transportation Center to accommodate HOV lane exit and entrance ramps. This improvement would facilitate not only vehicular traffic using the HOV lanes along the I-20 West corridor, but also the efficient operation and movement of the Regional Express bus service.

Growth Trends and Patterns

In conjunction with the recommended future land uses, Douglas County recognizes the need to establish standards for street design, levels of service, and multi-modal elements. In particular, bicycle and pedestrian facilities need to be constructed in conjunction with future development of the proposed character areas of the Neighborhood Village Center, Community Village Center, and Workplace Center. While transit-oriented design (TOD) elements will have limited applicability in the absence of rail transit, there will be opportunities to accommodate higher density development with enhanced options for mobility.

Given the critical timing of Douglas County's transportation planning efforts, several important policies and standards need to be developed as part of Phase 2 of the CTP. Among the important decisions will be

- Standards and typical sections for local streets
- Sidewalk policies for new development
- Minimum levels of service for new development
- Plans for enhanced signage related to modal choices

It is the County's intent to evaluate and adopt appropriate measures through the CTP process. Adopted policies will be submitted as Minor Amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, as appropriate.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Concurrent with other planning initiatives, the ARC has prepared the 2002 Bicycle Transportation and Pedestrian Walkways Plan. For the Douglas County area, ARC has proposed 10 projects related to bike facilities. Table 8-9 shows the list of projects that were proposed in the 2002 Regional Bicycle Transportation and Pedestrian Walkways Plan. This plan is also included in the draft 2030 RTP.

In order for projects to be included in the RTP and the Bicycle and Pedestrian plan, ARC has to first identify deficiencies in a pedestrian facility inventory that is underway as of spring 2004. Upon completion of this inventory, projects can be further evaluated and included for funding in future updates of the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. Until that time, a lump sum amount is being recommended for inclusion in the 2030 RTP update, to implement projects resulting from the study. Table 8-9 represents recommendations of projects to be added into the 2030 RTP as a result of the evaluation performed in the 2002 Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update.

**Table 8-9
Pedestrian and Bicycle Project Descriptions
Douglas County**

Network Year	Project Name & Type	From	To	Length	Cost in 1,000's	Gap Closure ¹	Priority ⁵	Low Bicycle Suitability Rating ⁶
2010	Skyview Dr Bike Lane	South Sweetwater Road	Douglas County	4.18	993	X	5	
2010	Douglas Blvd Bike Lane Bankhead	Bright Star Road	Chapel Hill Road	2.75	653	X	3	X
2020	Highway Bike Lane Bankhead	Bright Star Road	Carroll County limits	15	3397	X	3	X
2030	Highway Bike Lane	Sweetwater Road	Burnt Hickory Road	15	3397	X	3	X
2030	Georgia Hwy 5 Bike Lane	SR 166	Douglas County limits	6	1425	X		
2030	Pool Road Bike Lane	at Berea		0.5	118	X		
2030	Bright Star Bike Lane	I-20	Central Church	1	237	X		
2030	Rose Avenue Bike Lane Ch James	Broad Street	Plaza Parkway	1	237	X		
2030	Pkway Bike Lane	Douglas County limits	Thornton Rd	1	237	X		
2030	Thornton Rd Bike Lane	Douglas County limits	Factory Shoals Road	2	475	X		

¹ "gap closure"- whether the project closed a gap between two existing or proposed facilities or whether it closed cross jurisdictional gaps.

² "along transit"- whether the project was along a transit bus or rail line.

³ "1 mile of transit station"- whether the project was within 1 mile of a transit station.

⁴ "low suitability rating"- whether the proposed project had a low bicycle suitability rating in the bicycle suitability mapping process.

⁵ "priority"- when written comments were submitted, participants were asked to rate the sense of priority for the project from 1 to 5. Five was the highest priority. In many instances written comment forms were not submitted and therefore, there would be no priority indication.

⁶ "in local plan"- whether the project was added to a local plan since the 1995 ARC Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan adoption.

*None of the projects are within along any transit lines, are within 1 mile of a transit station, and have not been added to the local plan since the 1995 ARC Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan adoption.

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004

In addition to further evaluating these potential pedestrian and bicycle facilities, the CTP will enable a closer look at local gaps and ways to enhance connectivity and safety. The previously identified Route 15 through Douglas County includes several segments of road that are not conducive to heavy bicycle use. However, much of this route also is included in proposed roadway improvements, presenting the opportunity to coordinate design in future years to allow for a bicycle lane or widened shoulder access.

Section III. Community Vision, Goals, and Implementation Program

The Transportation Element has been coordinated closely with the Land Use Element to define transportation goals and objectives that accommodate projected growth. As stated in public meetings and in the Comprehensive Plan, the transportation goal identifies several key words: *multi-modal, safe, convenient, environmentally friendly, and efficient*. To recognize this goal fully, Douglas County must commit to an increased level of transportation investment over the next 20 years and well beyond.

The inventory of existing conditions indicates a lack of modal choices, a roadway network with pavement and maintenance needs, and growing congestion due to rapid growth over the past decade. Continued analysis, public involvement, agency coordination, consensus building, and funding must take place to address the short-term needs and accommodate longer term growth in Douglas County.

■ Preparation of Long-Range Comprehensive Transportation Plan

As emphasized throughout the Transportation Element, many transportation decisions need to be made to prepare for successful growth in Douglas County. While some improvements and regional initiatives are underway in 2004 or programmed in the next five years, others remain to be defined. With new growth and roadway expansions, there will be more requests to provide fixed-route public transit service along with the road improvements. A growing demand will occur for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, prompting the need for a priority funding plan. Prior to endorsing future transportation improvements, more detailed study will be required, particularly within the context of improvements that are already planned or under construction.

The draft *Mobility 2030* RTP is ambitious for both the Atlanta region and Douglas County. Its final approval and adoption will closely follow adoption of the Comprehensive Plan Update. As a result, Douglas County will have access to more definitive data, an updated regional model, and the benefit of seeing regional transit introduced. Through the long-range Comprehensive Transportation Plan, which is included in the Short Term Work Plan (STWP), a wide range of important policies and priorities can be determined. Among the intended scope items are more detailed assessments and recommendations for safety, signage, local road standards, typical sections, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, transit, roadway alternatives, priority funding, and policies to support future land uses.

Programmed and Recommended Projects

A summary of programmed capacity, operational, and transit projects is included in Table 8-10. Combined with the local priorities in the SPLOST program, these projects make up the short-term components of the transportation work plan. Beyond 2010, the County and ARC have identified long-range improvements through the 2025 planning year for this Comprehensive Plan Update and beyond. The long-range recommendations are listed in Table 8-11. Together, the lists represent a transportation investment of more than \$500,000,000 by 2030—approximately 10 percent of the *Mobility 2030* budget.

**Table 8-10
Short Range Transportation Improvements
Douglas County**

Project ID	ARC ID	Short Title	Total Cost	Completion Date
Roadway /Bridge Capacity				
1	DO-275A-B	Anneewakee Rd at Anneewakee Creek (Split Funded)	\$757,000	2008
2	DO-009	Duralee Ln extension from end of Duralee Ln to Dorris Rd	\$2,100,000	2008
3	DO-AR-057	I-20 West (includes 6-lane collector/distributor) from SR 70/Fulton Industrial Blvd to SR 6/Thornton Rd	\$29,000,000	2021
4	DO-022A	Lee Rd/South Sweetwater Rd, Phase 1 from US 78/SR 5/SR 8-Bankhead Hwy to I-20 West	\$6,659,000	2008
5	DO-220	Lee Rd Phase 2 from I-20 West to SR 92/Fairburn Rd	\$10,335,000	2008
6	DO-225	Lee Rd Bridge at I-20 West	\$2,010,000	2008
7	DO-274	Post Rd Bridge at Dog River	\$1,340,000	2008
8	DO-283	SR 166 Bridge at Dog River	Under Contract	
9	DO-028	SR 92/Fairburn Rd from Lake Monroe Rd to SR 166 (east)	\$9,300,000	2006
10	DO-282A	SR 92 Overpass/Realignment Phase I at US 78/SR 5/SR 8-Bankhead Hwy and Railroad	\$16,700,000	2021
11	DO-282B	SR 92 realignment Phase II from Bankhead Hwy to SR 92 at Hospital Dr	\$26,600,000	2021
12	DO-282C	SR 92 realignment Phase III from SR 92 (Dallas Hwy) to Bankhead Hwy	\$34,500,000	2021
13	DO-029A	US 78/SR 5/SR 8-Bankhead Hwy from SR 92 (Fairburn Rd) to South Sweetwater Rd	\$49,339,000	2021
14	DO-016	US 78/SR 5/SR 8-Bankhead Hwy from Sweetwater Rd to Thornton Rd	\$8,899,000	2008
15	DO-AR-208A-B	Fairburn Rd/SR 92 at I-20 West (Split Funded)	\$6,835,000	2007
16	DO-AR-221	Thornton Rd truck lanes from I-20 West to Chattahoochee River	\$11,810,000	2030
Multimodal				
1	AR-330C	I-20 West HOV, Phase 3 from SR 6/Thornton Rd to SR 5/Bill Arp Rd	\$107,600,000	2008
2	DO-211C	Capital Projects: Park/Ride and Multimodal Terminal: Construction	\$1,406,141	2005
3	DO-AR-BP017	SR 92/Fairburn Rd from US 78/Bankhead Hwy to Hospital Dr - Pedestrian Facility	\$80,000	2006
4	DO-AR-BP053	Malone St from Strickland St to Brown St-Pedestrian Facility	\$69,000	2006
5	DO-AR-BP054	Rose Ave from Selman Dr to Concourse Pkwy-Pedestrian Facility	\$272,000	2007
6	DO-AR-BP061	Douglas Blvd from SR 5/Bill Arp Rd to Bright Star Rd-Pedestrian Facility	\$108,000	2006
7	DO-AR-BP-062	Chapel Hill Rd from I-20 West Reservoir Dr-Pedestrian Facility	\$37,000	2006
8	DO-AR-BP072	Douglasville Sidewalks	\$1,336,690	2009
		Countywide Comprehensive Transportation Plan	\$450,000	2006
Operations Maintenance				
	DO-280	SR-92-Dallas Hwy at Malone Road	\$290,000	2009
	DO-281	Realign Thompson St to Forrest Ave at SR 92	\$315,000	2008
	DO-243	Blairs Bridge Rd. from Monier Boulevard to SR 6-Thornton Road	\$1,800,000	2011
	DO-262	Central Church Rd. at Kings Hwy	\$1,700,000	2007
	DO-266	Chapel Hill Rd at West Chapel Hill Rd	\$590,000	2007
	DO-284	Chapel Hill Rd from I-20 West to SR 166	\$3,400,000	2008
	Total		\$323,585,831	

¹ Project ID refers to the project location on their respective figure in the transportation element (Future Road Improvements or Multi-Modal Improvements).

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission, Draft Mobility 2030 Plan, June 2004; Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004

**Table 8-11
Long Range Transportation Improvements
Douglas County**

Project ID	ARC ID	Short Title	Total Cost	Completion E
Roadway /Bridge Capacity				
17	DO-019	Cambellton Rd/SR 166 from Riverside Dr/SR 92 to SR 70	\$14,200,000	2030
18	DO-252A	Chapel Hill Rd from Stewart Mill Rd to Central Church Rd	\$11,266,000	2030
19	DO-252B	Chapel Hill Rd from Central Church Rd to Dorsett Shoals Rd	\$5,000,000	2030
20	DO-253A	Chapel Hill Rd from Dorsett Shoals Rd to SR 166	\$13,000,000	2030
21	DO-031	Douglas Blvd Ext from Prestley Mill Rd to Midway Rd	\$5,500,000	2030
22	DO-032	Douglas Blvd Ext from Midway Rd to North County Line Rd	\$7,330,000	2030
23	DO-030	SR 5/Bill Arp Rd from Kings Hwy to Dorsett Shoals Rd	\$24,135,000	2030
24	DO-230	Mason Creek Rd at Mobley Creek	\$3,600,000	2030
25	DO-247	Ragen Rd at Mud Creek	\$660,000	2020
25	DO-021	Riverside Pkwy from SR 6/Thornton Rd to SR 92/Fairburn Rd	\$22,215,000	2030
Multimodal				
9	AR-330D	I-20 West HOV, Phase 4 from SR 5/Bill Arp Rd to Liberty Rd	\$70,000,000	2023
	DO-236	Mini Bus Routes, Douglasville	\$1,800,000	2020
	DO-237	Transit Studies	\$300,000	2020
	DO-210B	Program, Rideshare Operating Assistance	18000	2020
Operations and Maintenance				
	DO-248	Douglas County ATMS, Phase 1	\$385,000	2030
	DO-242	SR 5/Bill Arp Rd at SR 166	\$130,000	2020
	DO-265	Fairburn Road-SR 92 and US 78/SR 5-Bankhead Hwy	\$798,000	2020
	DO-278	Stewarts Mill Rd at Reynolds Rd and Anneewakee Creek	\$1,025,000	2010
	DO-AR-210	Bus Service, Douglas County	\$10,000,000	2020
Total			\$179,964,000	

¹ Project ID refers to the project location on their respective figure in the transportation element (Future Road Improvements or Multi-Modal Improvements).
Source: Atlanta Regional Commission, Draft Mobility 2030 Plan, June 2004; Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004.

Potential Projects for Future Planning Studies

Even with the investment indicated through 2030, capacity and multi-modal needs will remain in Douglas County, particularly to keep pace with the projected growth. Several proposed projects did not remain in the 2030 RTP after financial constraints were considered. While funding availability will affect decisions beyond the STWP, many longer range projects need to be evaluated in context with other improvements that will precede them. Future modeling, environmental studies, and transit trends will shape much of the future in terms of Douglas County transportation beyond the next 20 years.

Douglas County has identified several potential projects to be addressed in detail in Phase 2 of the Comprehensive Transportation Plan. Most of these projects were removed from the draft 2030 RTP due to funding constraints. While cost estimates are not yet available for all of the projects listed in Table 8-12, the total without regional commuter rail is likely to exceed \$50,000,000. With the regional and statewide challenges in funding, pursuing additional roadway projects will require careful planning and decision-making. The CTP will use the updated regional model scenarios to compare the benefits of each potential project and weigh those benefits against the individual project and total costs as well as environmental issues. Examples of these potential projects (shown in green as Future Planning projects in the *Future Road Improvements* figure) are listed in Table 8-12.

Even with the roadway capacity increased through short-range, long-

**Table 8-12
Potential Projects for Future Planning Studies
Douglas County**

Project ID	Short Title
Roadway/Bridge Capacity	
27	Bomar Connector, from existing Bomar Road to the east on new alignment to the southern terminus of Lee Road
28	Widen North County Line Road Bridge from two to four lanes at I-20
29	Realignment of the Dorsett Shoals Connector
30	Extension of Capps Ferry Road from SR 5 to SR 166
31	Widen Capps Ferry Road from two to four lanes from SR 166 to the Fulton County Line
32	Widen West Douglasville Loop – SR 92 from two to four lanes
33	Improve I-20 interchange at SR 5
34	Douglas Blvd extension from North County Line Road to Lee Road
Multi-Modal	
8	Stewart Mill Road – Enhancements including bicycle/pedestrian facilities
	Regional Transit – Continued Planning and Future Implementation of BRT and/or Commuter Rail System

¹ Project ID refers to the project location on their respective figure in the transportation element.

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission, Draft Mobility 2030 Plan, June 2004; Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004

range, and future planning projects, the future network could face pressures from the anticipated growth. The remaining congestion would occur in several areas, primarily with north-south movements for regional access. With the assumed capacity projects, the modeled results are illustrated in the figures *Future Model Roadway Capacity and Number of Lanes* and *Future Model Volume/Capacity Ratios*. Table 8-13 summarizes the roadway segments with LOS E or F with all potential roadway projects assumed in place. A complete listing of future LOS is included in the Transportation Appendix as Table TA-7. As the implementation of BRT or commuter rail is not assumed in the model, mass transit may alleviate more of the traffic by commuters into other parts of the Atlanta region.

Table 8-13
2030 Level of Service—Remaining Areas of Potential Congestion
Douglas County

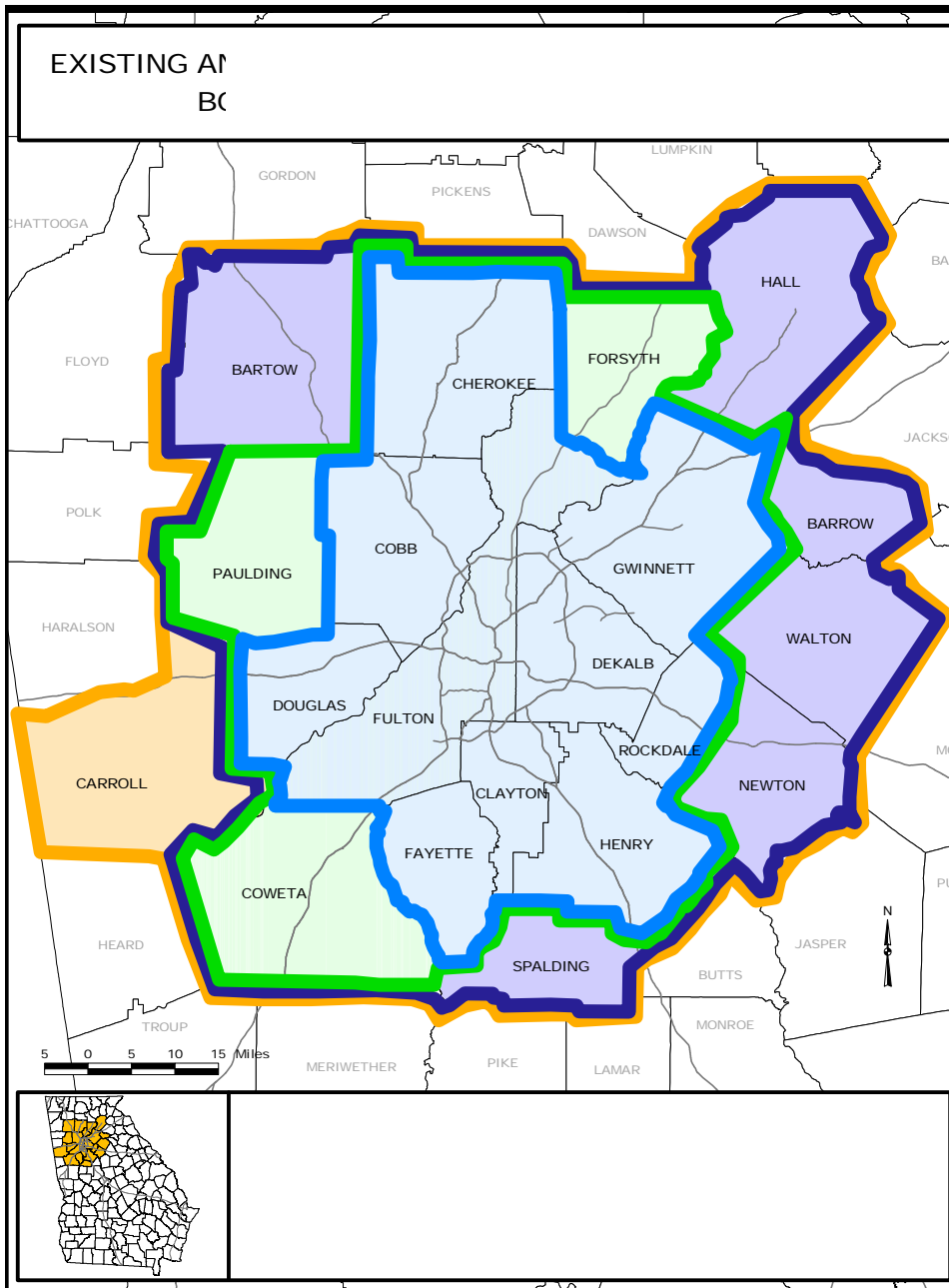
Roadway Name	From/ To	2030 LOS
Interstate-20	From Mirror Lake Blvd. to Tyson Road	E
Post Road	From Pool Road to Payne Road	F
Post Road	From Payne Road to I-20	F
Post Road	From I-20 to Mason Creek Rd.	E
Mason Creek Road	From Mann Rd. to Richardson Rd.	E
Interstate-20	From Mason Creek Rd. to Ward Dr.	F
Dorris Road	From Dorris Rd. to Chicago Ave.	F
Chicago Ave.	From Cedar Mountain Rd. to Powell Lane	F
South Flat Rock Road	From Chicago Ave. to Bankhead Highway	F
King's Highway	From Ridgeway Rd. to Queens Rd.	F
Anneewakee Road	From King's Highway to Chapel Hill Rd.	F
Rose Avenue (GA Highway 5)	From Stewart Parkway to I-20 Ramp	F
Anneewakee Road	From Chapel Hill Rd. to Fairburn Rd.	F
Chapel Hill Road	From Elk Run Rd. to Willow Ridge Rod.	F
Chapel Hill Road	From Golf Ridge Blvd. to Forest Trail	E
Mount Vernon Road	From I-20 to Causey Rd.	F
Mount Vernon Road	From Factory Shoals Rd. to I-20	F
Interstate-20	From Blair's Bridge Rd. to Chapel Hill Rd.	F
Sweetwater Road	From Union Grove Rd. to Monier Av.	F
Thornton Road	From Causey Rd. to Six Flags Rd.	F
Skyview Drive	From Sweetwater Road to Thornton Road	F
Old Alabama Road	From Maxham Rd to Thornton Rd.	E
Bankhead Highway	From Mount Vernon Rd. to Sweetwater Rd.	F
Bankhead Highway	From Sweetwater Rd. to Brownsville Rd.	F
Brownsville Road	From Old Douglas Ave. to Bankhead Hwy.	E
Silver Creek Road South	From Sweetwater Rd. to Mount Vernon Rd.	F
Blairs Bridge Road	From I-20 to Thornton Rd.	F
Douglas Hill Road	From Factory Shoals Rd. to Thornton Rd.	F
Burnt Hickory Road	From Bankhead Hwy. to I-20	F
Huey Road	From Bankhead Hwy. to Malone Rd.	E
Anneewakee Road	From North River Rd. to King's Dr.	E
Campbellton Road	From Hunt Drive to Amber Creek Dr.	E
Fairburn Avenue	From Anneewakee Rd. to Lee Rd.	F
Interstate-20	From Rose Av. to Prestley Mill Rd.	F
GA Highway 5 (Dallas Highway)	From Brown St. to Chapel Hill Rd.	F
Prestley Mill Road	From I-20 to Campbellton St.	F
Stewart's Mill Road	From Reynolds Road to Yancey Road	F
GA Highway 166	From GA Highway 5 to Cantrell Rd.	F
Post Road	From Liberty Ave. to GA Highway 166	E
GA Highway 92 and 166	From Lazy Acres Dr. to Oak Hills Rd.	F

Source: Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc., 2004

Recognizing the challenges of balancing modal choices with the high demand for increased roadway capacity, Douglas County has proposed an ambitious plan of transportation improvements. New transit, pedestrian, and bicycle options will be introduced in coming years. If the projected growth occurs during the next 20 years, many new commitments will be needed to meet the transportation goals set forth in this Comprehensive Plan Update. The next phase of the CTP will enable to the County to apply adopted land use policies from this Update, an adopted regional transportation plan, and detailed analysis to refine specific goals, policies, and project priorities. Based on the short-range projects (included in the overall STWP), and long-range improvements, Douglas County is confident that it is taking the appropriate steps to address current needs and prepare for future growth. Recent regional initiatives have enabled Douglas County to become a more active voice on transportation issues, a commitment that will continue throughout the planning horizon of this Transportation Element.

■ Transportation Requirements for Non-Attainment Areas

Local governments located within a nationally designated ambient air quality standards non-attainment area must include three elements in their comprehensive plan: a map of the area designated as a non-attainment area for ozone, carbon monoxide, and/or particulate matter, a discussion of the severity of any violations contributed by transportation-related sources that are contributing to air quality non-attainment, and identification of measures, activities, programs, regulations, etc., the local government will implement consistent with the state implementation plan for air quality. The non-attainment area for the region is shown below.



Ozone

The only counties currently designated as non-attainment in Georgia are 13 counties in the Atlanta area, including Douglas County. The non-attainment designation is for the 1-hour ozone National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS). A new NAAQS for ozone, the 8-hour standard, is pending. The Georgia Environmental Protection Division made recommendations on behalf of the State of Georgia for 8-hour non-attainment counties in the State of Georgia on July 15, 2003. For the Atlanta area, this means that it is likely that the ozone non-attainment area will increase from the current 13 counties to 20 counties. The US Environmental Protection Agency will officially designate the 8-hour ozone non-attainment area in April of 2004; this designation could be different than the State recommendation. Conformity to the new 8-hour standard will be required 1 year from the effective designation by the EPA, at the earliest April 2005. Until EPA releases their effective designation, the only NAAQS in place for ozone is the 1-hour ozone standard which, in Georgia, only affects the Atlanta area (including Douglas County).

PM2.5

The 8-hour standard is not the only new pending NAAQS that will affect the Atlanta region. The other standard is referred to as fine particulate matter or PM2.5. State PM2.5 non-attainment boundary recommendations will be made (again by GA EPD on behalf of the State of Georgia) by February 15, 2004. It is anticipated that counties in Atlanta will be designated non-attainment for PM2.5 but determinations as to what counties are still under way by EPD. The US EPA will issue official PM2.5 non-attainment designations in December 2004; again, these designations could be different from the State recommendation. Conformity to the new PM2.5 NAAQS will be required 1 year from the effective designation by US EPA, at the earliest December 2005.

The Ozone Non-Attainment Boundary Designation Process

Ground-level ozone is a regional problem that requires regional controls on both non-point (mobile) and point (commercial and industrial) sources that contribute to the ozone problem. In addition, ground level ozone (and/or the precursors to ground level ozone) can be transported over a significant geographical area, making non-attainment boundary determinations difficult, especially for a county by county determination. In recognition of the difficulty in designating an area as attainment or non-attainment, the Environmental Protection Agency identified 11 factors that should be considered by States when making recommendations of attainment or non-attainment in the presence of an ozone monitor that records a ground-level ozone presence above or exceeding the NAAQS. These factors are as follows:

- Location of emission sources
 - Large point or industrial sources such as power plants and chemical plants.
 - State Environmental Divisions will have information on the types and amounts of pollutants released by individual firms.
 - Can also consider mobile sources such as high residential density or vehicle ownership.
- Emissions and air quality in adjacent areas, including adjacent cities or metro areas
 - For example, Macon and Athens would take into account the potential transport of ozone from Atlanta.
- Monitoring data representing the ozone concentrations in local areas as well as larger areas
 - State Environmental Divisions do have ozone monitors in various locations throughout the States. However, monitors are expensive to purchase, as well as to maintain, so it is not practical or feasible to have a monitor in every county.

- If a monitor records a violation of an ozone standard, then that county is designated as non-attainment for that standard.
- Traffic and commuting patterns
 - Large commutes into an ozone non-attainment area may be enough to qualify a county as non-attainment (due to the contribution level through increased vehicle emissions).
- Population Density
 - Higher population densities are an indication of a more urbanized area, which would indicate a higher likelihood of producing ground-level ozone.
- Expected growth
 - Forecasted population densities as well as forecasted industrial growth
- Meteorology
 - Wind patterns and proximity to ocean
- Geography and/or Topography
 - Mountain and valley regions
- Level of control existing for emission sources
 - Some States have the ability to implement pollution control measures independent of Federal requirements.
- Regional emission reductions
 - For example: lowering the speed limit (with adequate enforcement), selling low sulfur diesel sooner than required, etc.
 - Ozone modeling indications
- Jurisdictional boundaries
 - Jurisdictional boundaries are an important consideration due to the degree of interaction and cooperation among areas; a regional problem requires a coordinated regional solution. While this alone would not impact whether a county is in attainment or non-attainment based on contributions to the ozone problem, it is at least an important consideration when looking at regional controls and implementation.

The current ozone standard is the 1-hour standard of 0.12 ppm, defined in 1979. A new standard, defined in 1997, is referred to as the 8-hour standard and measures violations over an average of 8-hours, as opposed to 1 hour. This new measure is more stringent (the standard is 0.08 ppm) and is aimed at protecting citizens from high ozone levels throughout the day as opposed to daily high peak levels. EPA revised the standard due to “many new health studies [showing] that healthy effects occur at levels lower than the previous standard [1-hour standard] and that exposure times longer than one hour (reflected in the previous standard) are of concern.” 8-hour non-attainment areas will be designated by the US Environmental Protection Agency by April 15, 2005. The Atlanta 8-hour non-attainment area is expected to comprise of 20 counties: the existing 13-county 1-hour non-attainment area plus, Carroll, Spalding, Newton, Barrow, Walton, and Hall counties.

Although the above discussion is specifically focused on ozone, the guidelines issued by EPA for PM_{2.5} non-attainment boundary determinations are very similar. In short, most of the factors or considerations listed remain the same. The pending fine particulate (PM_{2.5}) standard was promulgated in 1997. The annual standard (annual average) was set at 15 micrograms per cubic meter and the daily standard (24-hour average) was set at 65 micrograms per cubic meter. Currently, California is the only state violating the daily standard. Public health effects for fine particulates are similar to those of ozone. The Georgia

Environmental Protection Division will recommend Atlanta counties for non-attainment of the fine particulate annual average standard by February 15, 2004.

Consistency with State Implementation Plan

The Clean Air Act requires that every state meet health-based National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). If one or more of the NAAQS are not met, the State Environmental Protection Division must develop a State Implementation Plan (SIP) that defines a plan to attain the air quality standard by a particular year. The SIP provides measures, activities, programs, and regulations used by a state to reduce air pollution. Local governments in non-attainment areas are required to describe the actions each is taking to promote better air quality such as programs like a clean air campaign, automobile emissions testing or measures used to encourage efficient land use to reduce pollution.

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9. Intergovernmental Coordination

■ Introduction

The Intergovernmental Coordination Element provides local governments an opportunity to inventory existing intergovernmental coordination mechanisms and processes with other local governments and governmental entities that can have profound impacts on the success of implementing the local government's comprehensive plan. The purpose of this element is to assess the adequacy and suitability of existing coordination mechanisms to serve the current and future needs of the community and articulate goals and formulate a strategy for effective implementation of community policies and objectives that, in many cases, involve multiple local governmental entities.

Although Douglas County does not have the ability to require coordination efforts, through attempts to further open channels through communication it mutually mechanisms can only does seek to develop a planning process mutual sharing of information is a the process. County's efforts it consistent forecasts are used throughout the area in the development of services, land use policies and infrastructure planning. Whatever the outcome of this effort, this is the first step for truly coordinated planning.



coordination improved is hoped that beneficial be developed. Not Douglas County coordinated and policy, the available valuable part of Through the is hoped that

The inventory portion of this chapter describes the relationships that exist between Douglas County and other local governments, agencies and programs. The inventory also reviews the County's relationship to independent organizations that have an impact on land use policy within the county, such as the local school board. The purpose of this section is to provide an inventory of both agencies and current coordination mechanisms, or lack thereof, within the county.

The assessment of current and future needs articulates the outcome of the inventory review. This section identifies whether current mechanisms will achieve the county's goals or potential solutions to better achieve these goals over the next 20 years.

The last section of the chapter includes an articulation of intergovernmental coordination goals. An associated implementation program to address those identified coordination needs can be found in the Implementation Plan.

■ Inventory of Existing Coordinating Mechanisms

This section identifies existing relationships and coordination mechanisms between Douglas County and other government entities. This section will identify the nature of the entity's relationship to aspects within Douglas County's comprehensive plan and any existing coordination mechanisms. Formal coordination mechanisms may include intergovernmental agreements, joint planning, and

service agreements, special legislation, or joint meetings, committees or work groups for the purpose of coordination.

Service Delivery Coordination

During the 1997 legislative session, the Georgia General Assembly passed House Bill 489 (The Service Delivery Strategy Act); this required each county and its municipalities to adopt a Service Delivery Strategy by July 1, 1999. This legislation, developed following several months of negotiation between the Association County Commissioners of Georgia and the Georgia Municipal Association, was the major recommendation of the Georgia Future Communities Commission.



The intent of the legislation is that local governments take a careful look at the services they provide in order to identify overlap or gaps in service provision and develop a more rational and coordinated approach to allocating delivery and funding of services among local governments and authorities in each county. The legislation also asks local governments to look at their land use plans in order to minimize conflicts between the city and county plans.

The Service Delivery Strategy (SDS) addresses the following:

Coordination

- Identification of all services presently provided in the county by cities, counties and authorities;
- Assignment of which local government will be responsible for providing which service in what area of the county;
- Strategy should provide for the elimination of duplication of services, or an explanation for its existence;
- Conflicts in land use plans within a county, between the county and its cities, must be eliminated.

Funding and Implementation Strategy

- Description of how all services will be funded and by whom;
- Identification of intergovernmental contracts, ordinances, resolutions, etc. to be used in implementing the Strategy, including existing contracts;
- Jurisdictions charging water and sewer rate differentials to customers outside their boundaries must be able to justify such differentials;
- Services provided primarily for unincorporated areas must be funded by

- revenues derived exclusively from the unincorporated areas;
- A process must be agreed upon for resolving land use classification disputes between a county and city over property to be annexed.

The SDS for Cities of Austell, Douglasville, and Villa Rica were adopted in 1999 and have provided Douglas County and the Cities of Austell, Douglasville, and Villa Rica with opportunities to reach agreements to deliver services in an effective and cost efficient manner.

The SDS serves an important role in the local land use coordination among Douglas County and its cities. This document is one of the many issues that that has been discussed during this comprehensive plan update. The SDS has been the starting point for Douglas County and its cities to discuss and coordinate adjacent land uses. Specific policies relating to annexation are included in the document.

After considerable review during this comprehensive plan update, Douglas County feels that the current SDS is consistent with current and future policies, goals, and objectives of this comprehensive plan; and, therefore, there are no changes or new intergovernmental agreements that are needed for the coordination of the current SDS.

Individual programs, intergovernmental agreements and coordination efforts are specifically listed by each city in the next section of this chapter.

■ **Adjacent Local Governments**

Douglas County is adjacent to a number of local governments including Carroll County to the south and west, the City of Villa Rica to the west, Paulding County to the north, Cobb County to the north and east and including the City of Austell to the east, and Fulton County to the south and east. The City of Douglasville is contained entirely within Douglas County.

City of Douglasville

One of the most critical relationships among these various governments is the county's relationship with the City of Douglasville. Not only is Douglasville the largest municipality within the county borders, it is also the county seat. Douglas County and the City of Douglasville are preparing individual comprehensive plans concurrently. During the comprehensive planning process, the City and County have met on a weekly basis to review and coordinate their respective plans in terms of service delivery strategy, capital facilities, land use patterns, and potential annexation areas. Proactive planning for the next twenty years has been the hallmark of this process. Land use categories, transitional uses, and compatibility standards have been discussed to ease coordination of services, develop overall preferred land use patterns and to prepare for future annexations. Both jurisdictions had extensive public participation during this process and utilized diverse stakeholder groups to represent the varied interests within Douglas County. Many public meetings were overlapping between the jurisdictions and several community members were on both Stakeholder Committees. This overlap enabled ideas among the citizens to be shared with both jurisdictions making the comprehensive planning process, although separate, seamless between county and city. Through enhanced coordination during this long term planning process, it is believed that a better quality of life will be provided for all citizens within Douglas County regardless of whether they reside within the City of Douglasville, or within the unincorporated area. As a part of this coordination effort, the elements of the SDS relating to coordination between Douglas County and the City of Douglasville were extensively reviewed as part of an overall coordination strategy between the County and the City. As stated earlier in this chapter, the County does not see any changes to this agreement in order to provide continued coordinated services and to provide for

comprehensive plan consistency. Specific areas covered in the Service Delivery Strategy for Douglas County and the City of Douglasville include:

Agriculture Extension	Jail
Animal Control	Law Enforcement
Building Inspection	Library
Cemetery	Planning and Zoning
Coroner	Parks and Recreation
Courts (Superior, etc.)	Property Tax Assessing/Collection
Court (Municipal)	Public Housing
Downtown Development	Public Works (Roads)
Economic Development	Social Services
Elections	Solid Waste Collection
Emergency Management	Solid Waste Disposal
Engineering	Tourism
E-911	Transportation
Fire and Emergency Medical Svc	Wastewater Collection
Health	Water Supply
Hospital	

Many of the elements of the Service Delivery Strategy are addressed by Douglas County wholly. However, Douglas County and Douglasville address the elements articulated below individually. In some cases an overlap does exist, but it provides a much higher level of service to residents.

Economic Development

Douglas County provides Economic Development Services and the City of Douglasville operates its own Community Development Department. Services are coordinated to an extent and sometimes overlap, but there is a higher level of service in this area.

Engineering

Douglas County and Douglasville each provide their own engineering services however, Douglasville does utilize some services for issues arising from development related problems that take place in the City, but also affect the adjoining unincorporated areas of the County. Otherwise no overlap of service exists.

Jail Services

A formal agreement exists whereby Douglasville utilizes the Douglas County Jail for cases tried in Municipal Recorders Court.

Law Enforcement

Douglas County is the primary service provider in the unincorporated areas. In Douglasville, the County patrol services are less intensive as the City of Douglasville has its own police force. The service is overlapping, but there is a higher level of service.

Parks and Recreation

Douglas County and Douglasville each provide full time organized Parks and Recreation services and deliver programs to residents of the unincorporated areas, municipalities and other jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction is committed to providing this service and efforts are coordinated to an extent. The service is overlapping, but a higher level of service exists.

Public Works (Roads)

Douglas County and Douglasville each provide for their own public works (roads). The service is overlapping, but there is a higher level of service.

Solid Waste Collection/Disposal

Douglasville provides its own solid waste collection for residential and business properties. This service is not provided by Douglas County; therefore no overlap in service exists. Douglas County does have a solid waste disposal operation and through the collection of user fees this disposal operation serves the unincorporated areas of Douglas County as well as the municipalities located within Douglas County.

The County also participates through ARC on any development project that qualifies as a Development of Regional Impact (DRI) and the Regional Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). The DRI is designed to improve communication between affected governments and to provide a means of revealing and assessing potential impacts of large-scale developments before conflicts relating to them arise. At the same time, local government autonomy is preserved since the host government maintains the authority to make the final decision on whether a proposed development will or will not go forward. As discussed later in this chapter, the City of Douglasville and Douglas County will be joint venturing on a comprehensive transportation plan in early 2005 to identify a multi-modal solution to the unique transportation issues within the County.

City of Villa Rica and City of Austell

Although the majority of both the City of Villa Rica and the City of Austell are located in other counties, it is essential to continue coordination efforts with these jurisdictions during the planning process. Through the Atlanta Regional Commission, these two cities actively participate in the review process for any development project that qualifies as a Development of Regional Impact (DRI). The DRI is designed to improve communication between affected governments and to provide a means of revealing and assessing potential impacts of large-scale developments before conflicts relating to them arise. At the same time, local government autonomy is preserved since the host government maintains the authority to make the final decision on whether a proposed development will or will not go forward. Coordination within the DRI process is typically focused on the planning staff. Specific areas also covered in the Service Delivery Strategy for Douglas County and the Cities of Villa Rica and Austell include:

Agriculture Extension	Jail
Animal Control	Law Enforcement
Building Inspection	Library
Cemetery	Planning and Zoning
Coroner	Parks and Recreation
Courts (Superior, etc.)	Property Tax Assessing/Collection
Court (Municipal)	Public Housing
Downtown Development	Public Works (Roads)
Economic Development	Social Services
Elections	Solid Waste Collection
Emergency Management	Solid Waste Disposal
Engineering	Tourism
E-911	Transportation
Fire and Emergency Medical Svc	Wastewater Collection

Health
Hospital

Water Supply

Many of the elements of the Service Delivery Strategy are addressed by Douglas County wholly. However, Douglas County, Villa Rica, and/or Austell address the elements articulated below individually. In some cases an overlap does exist, but it provides a much higher level of service to residents.

Economic Development

Douglas County provides Economic Development Services and the City of Villa Rica operates its own Economic Development Department. Services are overlapping and some efforts coordinated, but there is a higher level of service.

Engineering

Douglas County, the City of Villa Rica and the City of Austell each provide their own engineering services however, each municipality does utilize some services for issues arising from development related problems that take place in the City, but also affect the adjoining unincorporated areas of the County. Otherwise no overlap of service exists.

Fire and EMS Services

Villa Rica and Austell utilize the Fire and EMS services of Douglas County though they provide or utilize other fire protection services. Automatic Aid agreements exist with Austell, Villa Rica and Douglas County. An overlap exists, but a higher level of service is provided.

Jail Services

The City of Villa Rica and the City of Austell each utilize the Douglas County Jail for some charges bound over to State or Superior Court.

Law Enforcement

Douglas County is the primary service provider in the unincorporated areas. In Douglasville, the County patrol services are less intensive as the City of Austell and the City of Villa Rica have their own police force. The service is overlapping, but there is a higher level of service.

Parks and Recreation

Douglas County, the City of Villa Rica and the City of Austell each provide full time organized Parks and Recreation services and deliver programs to residents of the unincorporated areas, municipalities and other jurisdictions. Each jurisdiction is committed to providing this service to its residents and efforts are coordinated. The service is overlapping, but there is a higher level of service.

Public Works (Roads)

Douglas County, the City of Villa Rica and the City of Austell each provide for their own public works (roads). The service is overlapping, but there is a higher level of service.

Carroll County, Cobb County, Fulton County and Paulding County

Coordination with Carroll County, Cobb County, Fulton County, and Paulding County is essential to the planning process. Through the Atlanta Regional Commission, Coosa Valley RDC, and Chattahoochee Flint RDC, all three local governments actively participate in the review process for any development project that qualifies as a Development of Regional Impact (DRI). The DRI is

designed to improve communication between affected governments and to provide a means of revealing and assessing potential impacts of large-scale developments before conflicts relating to them arise. At the same time, local government autonomy is preserved since the host government maintains the authority to make the final decision on whether a proposed development will or will not go forward. Coordination within the DRI process is typically focused on the planning staff. Automatic Aid agreements exist between Douglas, Paulding, Carroll and Cobb Counties with respect to Fire and EMS services.

■ **Local Agencies**

Douglas County Board Of Education

The Douglas County Board of Education is the governing body of the Douglas County School System. The primary role of the Board is the legislation of the school system politics, which are executed under the direction of the school Superintendent. The provision of quality educational opportunities is an essential service provided in Douglas County. Joint planning efforts include Board of Education involvement in the review of all rezoning requests and involvement with the County's Technical Review Committee process. These processes are carried out through the Planning and Zoning Department and the Board of Education. Through active participation on the Douglas 2025 Steering Committee, the County has also shared current population and employment data and forecast data. A representative from the Douglas County Board of Education also actively participated in the formation of future land use policy. Continued cooperation and coordination with the School Board is expected throughout the planning horizon.

■ **Independent Special Districts**

Douglasville-Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority (WSA)

The Douglasville-Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority is an independent entity that was created by the state legislature. WSA is the identified provider of public water and sewer services within incorporated and unincorporated Douglas County. Therefore, no formal agreement exists for the delivery of water and sewer services to Douglas County. A representative from WSA was active in the Douglas 2025 Steering Committee and provided valuable land use coordination data for both the City and County, and was an active participant in the development of future land use pattern policy and the drafting of the future land use plan map. WSA also provides coordination with the Villa Rica Water and Sewer Authority and the Cobb County/Marietta Water Sewer Authority for water and sewer provisions within limited portions of the county. WSA also represents the County during the North Georgia Water District activities. The exchange of data on land use and other planning related issues provide adequate coordination regarding the WSA service area.

As part of the County's water quality initiative, WSA took over storm water management activities, including the administration of the soil and sediment control ordinance within Douglas County in the beginning of 2004 through a formal agreement between Douglas County and WSA. As WSA takes on this responsibility, rules and regulations are being evaluated to improve water quality and reduce the adverse environmental impact of development, in close coordination with both the City and County.

Joint planning efforts include WSA involvement in the review of all rezoning requests and involvement with the County's Technical Review Committee process. These processes are carried out through the Planning and Zoning Department and the WSA. Through active participation on the Douglas 2025 Steering Committee, the County has also shared current population and employment

and forecast data. A representative from the WSA also actively participated in the formation of future land use policy. Continued cooperation and coordination with the WSA is expected throughout the planning horizon.

Villa Rica Water and Sewer

As identified by the Service Delivery Strategy for Douglas County and the City of Villa Rica, the water and sewer district for the City of Villa Rica extends into the City of Villa Rica inside of Douglas County. WSA coordinates with this authority on the provision of water and sewer service in this portion of the county and is currently under agreement by the North Georgia Water District to take over these independent systems within the main WSA system at two treatment plants. This exchange of data on land use and other planning related issues provides adequate coordination regarding the City of Villa Rica service area.

Cobb County/Marietta Water and Sewer Authority

As identified by the Service Delivery Strategy for Douglas County and the City of Austell, the water and sewer district for the Cobb County/Marietta Water and Sewer Authority inside of Douglas County. WSA coordinates with this authority on the provision of water and sewer service in this portion of the county. The exchange of data on land use and other planning related issues provides adequate coordination regarding the City of Austell service area.

■ **Independent Development Authorities**

Development Authority of Douglas County

The Development Authority of Douglas County is the central point of contact for businesses looking to expand or locate operations in Douglasville and Douglas County. The Development Authority provides services designed to assist these businesses with every facet of the location process. Services provided include: confidential site selection services (commercial & industrial), program financing and incentives, and demographic and consumer information. A representative of the Development Authority of Douglas County was also an active participant on Douglas 2025, and provided valuable insight on future land use patterns and policy.

Douglas County Chamber of Commerce

A Local Policy Agenda is developed, based on a semi-annual survey of the Chamber's membership, to inform members of the local governing bodies of the business community's position on pertinent issues. The Chamber staff attends the working and voting session of the Douglas County Board of Commissioners. The Chamber also meets frequently with officials on matters of interest to the business community. During the past year, the Chamber has acted on issues of stormwater management, sales tax, property taxes, land use and zoning and tourism. A representative of the Douglas County Chamber of Commerce was also an active participant on Douglas 2025, and provided valuable insight on future land use patterns and policy. Continued cooperation with the Chamber of Commerce is expected throughout the planning horizon.

■ **Other Units of Local Government and Utility Companies**

Douglas County Sheriff's Office

The Douglas County Sheriff's Office is charged with the responsibility of serving and protecting citizens and visitors. In relation to the planning process, continued coordination of information and resources will be required to achieve the long-term vision of the community. Joint planning efforts include a detailed assessment of current and future facility needs and level of service statistics during the writing of the capital facilities element of this plan. The Sheriff's Office is involved in the review of all rezoning requests and involvement with the County's Technical Review Committee process. These processes are carried out through the Planning and Zoning Department and the Sheriff's Office. Continued cooperation and coordination with the Sheriff's Office is expected throughout the planning horizon.

Greystone Power Electric Membership Corporation (EMC) and Georgia Power Company

Greystone Power EMC and Georgia Power provide service within Douglas County, and was involved with the creation of utility line placement during the development of the County's Unified Development Code. Continued coordination with the county's permitting staff will be required.

■ **Other Organizations**

Atlanta Regional Commission

The Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) performs regional planning and coordination for the metropolitan Atlanta area. There are currently ten counties included in the ARC. The commission is dedicated to unifying the region's collective resources to prepare the metropolitan Atlanta area for a prosperous future. It does so through professional planning initiatives, the provision of objective information, and the involvement of the community in collaborative partnerships that encourage healthy economic growth compatible with the environment, improve the regions quality of life, and foster leadership development.

The ARC fulfills the particular need of the metropolitan Atlanta area by advocating wise resource management and planning, analyzing both current and potential growth problems, and providing professional technical assistance in developing local and regional objectives, plans, and programs. Work items include both regional and local planning projects. These projects range from transportation, recreation, historic preservation, environmental resource assessment, population, economic analysis and water resources, to comprehensive local and regional plans, reviews of Developments of Regional Impact (DRI), and large-scale development reviews as authorized by the Georgia Land Sales Act and the Metropolitan River Protection Act (MRPA).

ARC works with its planning partners to develop the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), a process which can take anywhere from one to three years based on numerous factors such as the complexity of issues being addressed and the amount of effort required to reach regional consensus. The RTP development process consists of the following major steps:

- Developing a clear and measurable set of RTP goals.
- Understanding and quantifying short and long-range transportation system needs.
- Organizing transportation policies, programs and projects into logical scenarios that address system needs.

- Testing those scenarios.
- Evaluating these scenarios against the RTP goals.
- Cycling through this preferred scenario and evaluation process until a set of transportation polices, programs and projects are developed that would best serve the identified needs.
- Developing and using financial forecasts based on the latest available data and information.
- In air quality non-attainment regions, demonstrating conformity to the applicable motor vehicle emissions budget developed to show attainment to the National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

Each step of the process outlined above involves a significant amount of coordination and outreach to planning partners and the general public.

As the Area Agency on Aging, ARC plans and provides comprehensive services to address the key needs of the region's older population. The Atlanta Region's Area Plan on Aging is carried out through contracts with 10 county-based aging programs, to provide a continuum of home and community-based services. Older citizens and their families are offered many options, including information and referral services, case management, transportation, home-delivered meals, senior centers, legal services and more through this network of care.

Douglas County is a member of the Atlanta Regional Commission and membership in the ARC is comprised of 10 member counties and 63 municipalities. Georgia law stipulates a local funding formula and local membership funds are used to match federal and state funding to support the ARC in its mission. An agreement exists between Douglas County and ARC regarding local funding and membership.

Georgia Regional Transportation Authority

The role of the Georgia Transportation Authority (GRTA) is to approve the region's short-range programs, implement transportation strategies and review Developments of Regional Impact (DRI). More specifically, GRTA works with those counties in Georgia that have been designated non-attainment under the Federal Clean Air Act standards. Currently, there are thirteen counties in the metropolitan Atlanta area that are non-attainment. Those counties are Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas, Fayette, Forsyth, Fulton, Gwinnett, Henry, Paulding, and Rockdale. GRTA can assist local governments in financing mass transit or other projects to alleviate air pollution. GRTA board approval is also required for land transportation plans in the region, and for use of federal or state funds for transportation projects associated with major developments such as large subdivisions or commercial buildings, that affect the transportation system in the metro Atlanta region. As with the DOT, formal agreements are made on a project-by-project basis.

Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs) are large-scale developments likely to have effects outside of the local government jurisdiction in which they are located. The Georgia Planning Act of 1989 authorizes the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to establish procedures for intergovernmental review of these large-scale projects. These procedures are designed to improve communication between affected governments and to provide a means of revealing and assessing potential impacts of large-scale developments before conflicts relating to them arise.

GRTAs legislation also requires that it review DRIs within its jurisdiction. The purpose of GRTAs review is to approve or disapprove the use of state and federal funds to create transportation services and access that may be required as a result of the DRI. The goals of the review are: protecting and efficiently allocating limited state and federal resources, promoting compliance with regional transportation plans and air quality standards, and furthering GRTAs mission and goals. In the last ten years, Douglas County has commented on or initiated the review of the following DRIs (note: items in bold are DRI reviews initiated or co-initiated by Douglas County):

Terminus West

Austin Ridge

Chapel Ridge

Phoenix Townhouse Development

Arbor Place Mall

Riverwalk PUD

Touchet Industrial Development

Woodside

Camp Creek Business Park

Connors Road Development

Douglas Hill Campus

Liberty Park/Lake Val-Do-Mar

Douglas Waste Service Center

New Manchester

Anneewakee Trails

In instances where Douglas County has approved the rezoning or development of a DRI, GRTA conditions are conditions of zoning or approval of the project. GRTA's vision statement includes the following items:

Work to plan and implement a transportation system that is multi-modal, seamless, and accessible to all citizens;

Encourage land use policies that promote efficient use of infrastructure investments;

Operate within a decision-making framework that values public participation and connects transportation choices, land use and the overall Quality of Life;

Serve the best interests of the region by working in cooperation with other agencies and governments that are involved in planning and transportation; and

Measure its effectiveness in improving air quality, traffic, accessibility and land use.

One of the guiding principles of GRTA is that it will advocate and implement a transportation system that is multi-modal, seamless, and accessible to all. Given the fact that the County's current transportation plan is outdated and needs to be updated to reflect changes in growth trends, land use, population and travel demand, the County will address preliminary transportation issues and develop guiding principles for the full Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). The Transportation element will provide initial policy direction to the CTP. The CTP will be multi-modal, multi-level and comprehensive. The initial inventory will include pedestrian, bicycle facilities and trail systems as well as transit and other public transportation. The first of these options will be express bus service to downtown Atlanta beginning in the summer of 2004. This is the result of an agreement between Douglas County and GRTA. The CTO is scheduled to begin in the first quarter 2005 and is expected to be a 15 to 18 month joint effort with the City of Douglasville. It will establish technical and policy guidelines for plan implementation. The result will be a 25-year plan in five year planning horizons. Therefore, close coordination with GRTA is required. Douglas County plans to work cooperatively with GRTA and the City of Douglasville throughout the planning horizon via its newly created County Department of Transportation.

Georgia Department of Transportation

The Georgia Department of Transportation plans, constructs, maintains, and improves the state's roads and bridges. Duties also include the provision of planning and financial support for other modes of transportation such as mass transit and airports. Legislative mandates exist that require the DOT to provide funding to counties based on population and vehicle miles traveled. Formal agreements are arranged on a project-by-project basis though no standing formal agreements exist. Close coordination with the Department of Transportation is required. Douglas County plans to

work cooperatively with the Department of Transportation throughout the planning horizon via its newly created County Department of Transportation.

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

The mission of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources is to sustain, enhance, protect and conserve Georgia's natural, historic, and cultural resources for present and future generations, while recognizing the importance of promoting the development of commerce and industry that utilize sound environmental practices. Douglas County plans to work cooperatively with the Department of Natural Resources throughout the planning horizon to protect all natural, cultural, and historical resources located within the County.

Georgia Department of Community Affairs

The Department of Community Affairs operates a host of state and federal grant programs; serves as the State's lead agency in housing finance and development; promulgates building codes to be adopted by local governments; provides comprehensive planning, technical and research assistance to local governments; and serves as the lead agency for the state's solid waste reduction efforts. In addition, the Department of Community Affairs also manages the State's coordinated planning program. Douglas County plans to work cooperatively with the Department of Community Affairs throughout the planning horizon.

■ **Other Programs and Activities**

Annexation

City of Douglasville

The Comprehensive Plan pertaining to Service Delivery Strategy for Land Use Compatibility and Provisions for Dispute Resolution between Douglasville and Douglas County provides for a method of communication regarding zoning and annexation and a procedural guide to resolve land use classification conflicts that may arise between the two governmental entities resulting from proposed rezoning or annexation of those lands which serve as boundaries between the two. The process is comprised of notification via certified mail and a corresponding response of objection. Absence of said objection notification by the County within the said time frame shall be construed to mean the City of Douglasville can proceed with the annexation. Receipt of a formal objection will result in the call for either formal or informal mediation. If mediators reach an agreement in favor of the City's proposed new land use classification, the County shall not object further to said annexation. If no agreement is reached, the City, if it proceeds with annexation, shall do so at the County land use classification and accept no rezoning applications for all or a portion of the annexed property for at least 90 days from the effective date of annexation.

City of Villa Rica

The Comprehensive Plan pertaining to Service Delivery Strategy for Land Use Compatibility and Provisions for Dispute Resolution between Villa Rica and Douglas County provides for a method of communication regarding zoning and annexation and a procedural guide to resolve land use classification conflicts that may arise between the two governmental entities resulting from proposed rezoning or annexation of those lands which serve as boundaries between the two. The process is comprised of notification via certified mail and a corresponding response of consent or objection. If Villa Rica receives no response, the County shall be deemed to have no objection. Receipt of a formal objection will result in the call for either formal or informal mediation. The mediation panel shall issue a written report, which shall make recommendations as to the land use classification of

the subject property, or state that no agreement could be reached. If the City and County cannot reach an agreement and the property proposed for annexation is north of Highway 78, the City may do so at the County land use classification and accept no rezoning applications for all or a portion of the annexed property for at least 90 days from the effective date of annexation. If no agreement is reached and the property proposed for annexation is south of Highway 78, the City agrees not to annex the proposed property. The City of Villa Rica also has adopted and follows the Douglas County Watershed Protection Ordinance south of Highway 78.

City of Austell

The Comprehensive Plan pertaining to Service Delivery Strategy for Land Use Compatibility and Provisions for Dispute Resolution between Austell and Douglas County provides for a method of communication regarding zoning and annexation and a procedural guide to resolve land use classification conflicts that may arise between the two governmental entities resulting from proposed rezoning or annexation of those lands which serve as boundaries between the two. The process is comprised of notification via certified mail and a corresponding response of objection. Absence of said objection notification by the County within the said time frame shall be construed to mean the City of Austell can proceed with the annexation. Receipt of a formal objection will result in the call for either formal or informal mediation. If mediators reach an agreement in favor of the City's proposed new land use classification, the County shall not object further to said annexation. If no agreement is reached the City, if it proceeds with annexation, shall do so at the County land use classification and accept no rezoning applications for all or a portion of the annexed property for at least 60 days from the effective date of annexation.

■ **Land Use Compatibility**

The planning staffs as well as consultants in the comprehensive plan update process for both the City of Douglasville and Douglas County have held several meetings to discuss future land use plans and are working toward making the plans more compatible in areas where local boundaries meet.

The services to be provided by Douglas County, as identified in the Douglas County Comprehensive Plan, do not exceed those identified in the Service Delivery Strategy. Additionally, the service areas identified for individual services that will be provided by Douglas County and the City of Douglasville are consistent between the Douglas County Comprehensive Plan and the Service Delivery Strategy.

■ **The Georgia Community Greenspace Program**

The Georgia General Assembly created the Georgia Greenspace Program during the 2000 legislative session. The statute assigns responsibility for program administration to the Department of Natural Resources and creates a five-member Georgia Greenspace Commission, which reviews and approves community greenspace programs submitted by eligible counties. The statute defines "greenspace" as permanently protected land and water, including agricultural and forestry land, that is in its undeveloped, natural state or that has been developed only to the extent consistent with, or is restored to be consistent with, one or more listed goals for natural resource protection or informal recreation.

The statute also creates a Georgia Greenspace Trust Fund, which is funded annually by the Georgia General Assembly. Such funds are granted to each participating local government with an approved community greenspace program and which has established a Community Greenspace Trust Fund as specified by the statute. Greenspace grant funds are provided to assist local governments in carrying out their strategies for acquiring and permanently protecting land.

While Douglas County is rapidly growing, it still contains substantially less urban, industrial and/or concentrated suburban development than neighboring Cobb and Fulton Counties. The County will continue to prioritize the acquisition of lands that primarily serve to protect and preserve water quality and natural resources. Lands that contain cultural resources and provide opportunities for connection through greenways will be considered as well. The County will continue to prioritize land acquisitions in areas where protection will achieve multiple goals and/or that occur in the most rapidly developing areas. The County will continue to implement the short-term goals of the Douglas County Greenspace Program through fee simple acquisition, conservation easement, and partnering with the local development community. Douglas County has several funding agreements with the DNR that facilitate the purchase and protection of greenspace throughout the County. Douglas County will also continue to participate in Regional Greenspace Coordinating meetings facilitated by the Atlanta Regional Commission.

Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Act was signed into law in 2001. This Act created a planning entity dedicated to developing comprehensive regional and watershed-specific plans to be implemented by local governments in the District. These plans will protect water quality and public water supplies in and downstream of the region, protect recreational values of the waters in and downstream of the region, and minimize potential adverse impacts of development on waters in and downstream of the region.

The general purposes of the District are to establish policy, create plans, and promote intergovernmental coordination for all water issues in the district; to facilitate multijurisdictional water related projects; and to enhance access to funding for water related projects among local governments in the district area. It is the primary purpose of the District to develop regional and watershed-specific plans for storm-water management, wastewater treatment, water supply, water conservation, and the general protection of water quality, which plans will be implemented by local governments in the District.

The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District is required to prepare three long-term plans: watershed management, wastewater, and water supply/water conservation. The statute includes specific requirements for each plan. The statute also provides for EPD to develop standards for each plan, receiving input from basin advisory councils.

The District's Draft Long-Term Wastewater Management Plan already calls for WSA to consolidate all of its wastewater treatment facilities into two major plants by 2010. Douglas County is a member of the North Georgia Water Planning District and will continue to work with the North Georgia Water Planning District and the Douglasville-Douglas County Water and Sewer Authority on issues that affect water quality throughout the planning horizon.

■ **Assessment of Current and Future Needs**

This section provides information to assess whether current coordination mechanisms are adequate to serve the community's current and future needs. Better coordination on a number of issues would benefit the county as a whole and help to further the implementation of mutual long-range goals.

From time to time, issues arise from growth and development proposed in the comprehensive plans of nearby local governments and land use conflicts arise at jurisdictional borders due to a lack of information about the plans and policies of adjacent communities. During this comprehensive planning process, the door to communication has been opened, specifically with the City of Douglasville, to further coordinate future land use plans and policies to reduce the number of land

use conflicts at jurisdictional borders. Maintaining this newfound communication is a key to resolving future land use disputes.

A concerted effort should also be made to work with Douglasville, Villa Rica, the Douglas County Board of Education, WSA, and other local entities to examine the feasibility of establishing a joint process for collaborative planning and decision-making on population projections, the location and extension of public facilities, and the location of facilities with countywide significance, such as water supply reservoirs, water and wastewater treatment facilities, solid waste disposal facilities, and schools.

Intergovernmental Coordination Goals

- Serve the best interests of the County and the region by working in cooperation with other agencies and governments and developing a shared vision for the community's future and to implement that vision through mutually beneficial agreements.
- Follow the county land use plan in making capital investment decisions.
- Improve the efficiency of local service delivery through close coordination with other entities and identify further opportunities for joint service delivery.
- Work with Douglasville, Villa Rica, the Douglas County Board of Education, WSA, and other local entities to examine the feasibility of establishing a joint process for collaborative planning and decision-making on population projections, the location and extension of public facilities, and the location of facilities with countywide significance, such as water supply reservoirs, water and wastewater treatment facilities, solid waste disposal facilities, and schools.
- Work with local jurisdictions to coordinate future land use policy to reduce the number of jurisdictional border land-use disputes.
- Work toward more informal means of resolving outstanding jurisdictional border land use disputes.
- Work to plan and implement a transportation system that is multi-modal, seamless, and accessible to all citizens.
- Encourage land use policies that promote efficient use of infrastructure investment.
- The Implementation Program provides the overall strategy for the comprehensive plan implementation. The policy recommendations articulated above are merged and coordinated with the policies articulated in other elements to form the implementation program.

10. Land Use

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10. Land Use Element

Section I. Desired Land Use Patterns

■ Introduction

Land, and the uses to which it is put, constitute the base scale on which all other aspects of development are founded. Land use and development patterns establish the foundation for the Comprehensive Plan. Consequently, the principal objective of the Land Use Element is to determine the most suitable and efficient use of the land and the pattern in which these uses will occur.



The integration of existing development patterns, growth trends and the analysis of land development capacity (the ability of the land resource to support development) form the basis for preparing the Future Land Use Plan. This element also determines future patterns of growth, based on community needs and desires, and presents strategies for land use that strike a balance between effective and efficient delivery of public services, protection and preservation of valuable natural and historic resources, and respect for individual property rights. This chapter includes

- A description of current land use patterns and historic patterns of growth;
- Influences on future land use;
- Desirable land use patterns, including quality applications;
- Future land use descriptions and the development of character areas; and

- Development policies that are intended to guide the establishment of the individual uses.

The Future Land Use Plan for Douglas County reflects a cross between a rural and urbanizing development pattern. The vision of accommodating growth, while at the same time preserving the existing character and feel of Douglas County have been fully integrated into land use patterns and policies. Douglas County will strive to maintain this balance while utilizing character areas and development policies to fully coordinate infrastructure patterns and desirable land use patterns.

This Comprehensive Plan integrates the following Smart Growth Principles:

- Mix land uses;
- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices;
- Create walkable neighborhoods;
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place;
- Preserve opens space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas;
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities;
- Provide a variety of transportation choices;
- Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective; and
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.



■ Historic Patterns of Growth

Douglas County can trace its early prosperity to its location along the Chattahoochee River, the establishment of a rail link and numerous natural resources, such as gold and the Lithia Spring. Douglas County's character remained more rural and "small town" than urban. These early growth patterns have continued to influence land use patterns in modern Douglas County.

Located 17 miles west-southwest of downtown Atlanta, Douglas County is well known for its natural beauty consisting of a typical Piedmont landscape of rolling hills, abundant pine and hardwood forests, and scenic rivers and streams. The image of Douglas County as expressed through the County's vision is that of a small town that holds deeply onto its roots as a rural and scenic area.



Improved economic conditions and changing land use patterns in the decades since World War II have reshaped the character of the county's incorporated cities as well as the surrounding countryside. The opening of Interstate 20 through Douglas County in 1962 influenced a development boom, as did the railroad in 1882. No longer isolated from the City of Atlanta, Douglas County became a destination for residential, commercial and industrial development seeking easy access to work, residences and markets.

The same attractions, easy access, abundant land, rural and "small town" environment and scenic and natural beauty offer the same attraction as they did 50 years ago, although now they are occurring within a much larger regional context. Douglas County is no longer isolated from the metropolitan area, but a significant part; and therefore, is the recipient of outside urban growth pressures.

■ The Land Use Vision

There were for specific areas that were expressed over and over through meetings with staff, elected officials, the general public and the Douglas Stakeholders Committee. These issues provided the basis for initial land use planning within the County, and are paramount in meeting the community's desired vision of the future:

Douglas County will greet the future, while at the same time preserving its small town feel, its safe and rural environment, its valued historic and natural resources, and the continued creation of a quality built environment, while maintaining and developing a reasonable, balanced tax base.

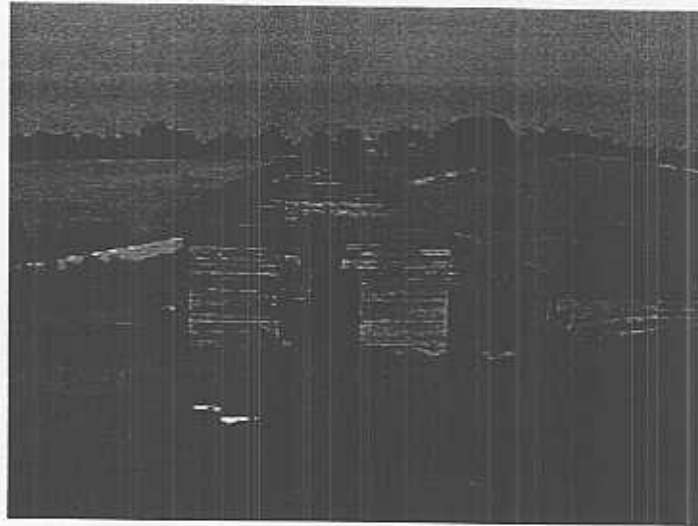
Opportunities

Opportunities for future development in the County of Douglas include the following:

- As part of the Atlanta Region, Douglas County has been a magnet for new jobs and residents over the last few decades. Douglas County's location within the region will continue to ensure that growth and prosperity will be part of Douglas County's outlook for the future.
- Continued and sustained growth in the area will maintain a healthy market demand for new development—a "buyer's" market in which Douglas can afford to be selective.
- Douglas enjoys the amenities of the metropolitan area, while at the same time enjoying a "small town" feel. Public attitudes about "neighborhood" and "community" have notably shifted in the Metro area in recent years, with new purchasers looking for more traditional settings in which to raise their children and to put down more permanent roots.
- Direct access to the Atlanta Region by I-20.

- A proactive comprehensive plan that identifies suitable areas and amenities to accommodate projected growth and development over the next 20 years.

A challenge that Douglas County, and all of the metropolitan Atlanta Region counties will face over the next 20 years is how to accommodate continued growth in a positive way that maintains and enhances the quality of life and economic opportunities of its citizens. As stated in the Atlanta Regional Commissions "Towards a More Livable Atlanta Region" accommodating change.... "will require unprecedented cooperation, coordination and planning. It will require thoughtful, deliberate decisions about how we use our land and develop our communities."



The citizens and elected officials feel that this Comprehensive Plan will provide the roadmap to Douglas County to make the most appropriate decisions for its future.

Section II. Development Patterns Today

■ Overall growth trends

Influence of Existing Land Use Patterns

A survey of existing land use was conducted to establish the type, spatial distribution and intensity of development within the County. A comprehensive survey of existing land use required a field inventory of each parcel of property within Douglas. Data collected as a result of the survey was classified by primary use and transferred to a map depicting existing land uses.

Douglas County is primarily a bedroom community for the metropolitan Atlanta Region. The citizens of Douglas County, as clearly detailed within their Vision Statement, see the County's current rural and small town nature as central to the quality of life they enjoy. The majority of the developed land uses within the county (excluding agricultural and public institutional) is residential, over 90%, and of that total, over 90% of all housing units within the county are single-family residences. The cities of Douglasville, Villa Rica and Austell contain a large portion of the multi-family units within the county as is appropriate within a more urban setting. Although master planned developments and village retail areas are planned, unincorporated Douglas County will continue to be predominately single family residential in nature.



Over the last 10 years, new non-residential development in Douglas has clustered largely within two areas, the unincorporated area adjacent to the City of Douglasville and the Western end of the County along the Thornton Road Area. Arbor Place Mall within the City of Douglasville and the Chapel Hill Corridor are the center of the County's retail growth. As residences age and traffic becomes heavier, the Highway 5 corridor has seen some transition from residential to small retail establishments. Careful transportation, land use planning and transitional compatible growth within these corridors area are extremely important in ensuring the County's livability in the future.

During the overall review of existing land use several problem land use patterns emerged:

- Extensive single-use districts;
- Strip commercial development; and
- Incompatible districts adjacent to the City of Douglasville.

Extensive single-use districts

As part of this 10th Year Comprehensive Plan Update, the County also re wrote and combined its zoning and subdivision regulations into a Unified Development Code process, many of the County's numerous zoning districts were merged. The workable master plan and open space developments replaced a number of master planned developments allow a percentage of non-residential uses as a transitional and mixed-use corridor allows a mix of residential and the workplace and commerce centers allow mixed commercial, residential and commercial uses.



Although residential districts are still primarily single-use districts, the use of character areas within this plan adds a further dimension of land use flexibility. Non-residential uses have been categorized into villages, centers and corridors, including a mixed use corridor to allow even greater land use flexibility, while protecting and ensuring compatibility with existing single-family residential, as outlined within the County's overall vision. The integration of public and institutional uses is encouraged within all character areas.

Strip commercial development

A major concern is the spread of strip commercial along any arterial highway, or "retail creep." Although the County has experienced a limited amount of this type of development, there is still an opportunity to guide expected non-residential growth into appropriate village and corridor settings. Appropriate transitional land uses, such as reverse frontage residential development will help contain commercial villages within appropriate nodes.

■ **Areas in decline**

Douglas County's housing stock is relatively well maintained, yet there is a core of lower cost houses and manufactured homes that exhibit signs of moderate to significant deterioration. Housing and property conditions may affect property values, internal and external perceptions, health and safety concerns. Problem areas include deteriorated siding roofing, and paved areas, lack of or insufficient landscaping, and litter and debris-filled yards. As outlined within the "House Cost Burden" section of the Housing Element, 18.40% of the homeowners in Douglas County are paying more than 30% of their income for housing and 33.80% of renters are paying more than 30% of their income. Another indication of neighborhood stability is the percentage of owner occupied units, especially within single-family units. Owner occupancy rates have decreased from 1990 to 2000. The owner to renter ratio within the county is 2.97, substantially higher than the state ratio at 2.08.

Many existing residential neighborhoods have excellent locations in terms of access to jobs and services. Often these neighborhoods have mature trees or close proximity to neighborhood schools. These assets make our County's existing residential neighborhoods very valuable.

Redevelopment Opportunities

As strip retail centers and strip commercial development districts become obsolete, communities can explore ways to reuse or reinvent the image of the area as mixed-use developments. Left untouched, these areas not only represent an enormous loss of potential tax revenue, but they may also signal the disinvestments and decline of the surrounding community. Recycling these valuable sites helps a community maximize the value of its resources and capitalize on their advantages: access to a ready market, working water, sewer and road infrastructure, and transportation networks. Two such areas within Douglas County are:

- Bankhead Highway Redevelopment Corridor; and
- Lithia Springs Community Village Redevelopment Center.

Not only is there the opportunity to revitalize the business within these areas, but also the County has the opportunity to create vibrant, mixed use communities that can become a community focus by ensuring public investment and integrating complimentary uses into the site. The addition of residential, civic, retail, office, education, or hotel can facilitate more of a focal point and create a walkable community.

Areas of Transitional Land Use

The vast majority of Douglas is so relatively new, and the County was able to apply modern land use planning concepts to so much of the development before it occurred, that areas of blight and transitional land use are very limited. Where they occur is in the older parts of town.

Transitional land use pressures tend to be composed of older single-family homes that have come face to face with incompatible development or other changes to their residential environment. Two such areas are the homes located along Hwy 5 and Hwy 92. Some of the homes have been redeveloped as office and small retail type uses. Higher traffic volumes and ensuing road improvements have made the properties undesirable for residential purposes, but excellent opportunities for adaptive reuse as offices. Spot commercial zoning has been granted along these corridors to accommodate area changes; some conversions have been appropriate, while others have not. By keeping the uses low intensity both in use (offices) and density, the traffic capacity and remaining single-family residential uses can be preserved while offering a reasonable reuse of the properties. Further reuse of the remaining residences is expected, and eventual assembly and redevelopment for new office construction is encouraged.

Community Character areas and design guidelines are another essential tool in this process and have recently been refined and expanded as discussed below. The community character areas foster a distinct visual identity and "feel" for the area. Locations in transition are categorized as "transitional corridors." This special character area provides for conversional uses, while at the same time protecting residents that choose to remain and adjacent and surrounding established single-family neighborhoods.

■ Incompatible Land Use Relationships

Properties within the unincorporated county have been developed with strong compatibility standards in the past, and will continue to be developed with appropriate mechanisms, such as transitional and step-down zoning and buffering in the future to ensure compatibility. The main issue of incompatible land use relationships concerns properties that boarder municipal boundaries within the County. The County and its municipalities, especially the largest, the City of Douglasville, have worked together in coordinating future land use plans, densities and area designations with each of their respective plans throughout this process. Although adjacent land uses are much more compatible than in the last Comprehensive Land Use Plans, there are still compatibility issues between the unincorporated sections of the County and specifically the City of Douglasville. There areas, primarily concerning established single-family communities adjacent to the City, are expected to remain unstable areas. As the City of Douglasville continues to increase their non-residential tax base through annexation, these areas will continue to be under development pressure to rezone commercial. Douglas County feels very strong about protecting its established single-family communities and will continue to work with the City of Douglasville to stop any incompatible zoning pressures in these areas, in addition to discouraging strip corridor commercial especially in the Chapel Hill Corridor.

■ Existing Land Use Categories

For planning purposes, land uses are identified under the following categories and grouped by major category in accordance with State DCA guidelines. Several categories are further broken down for a more thorough understanding of development trends and patterns in the County. The following categories are shown on the Existing Land Use Map.

AG Rural Agricultural.

The AG Rural Agricultural District is established to protect rural areas of Douglas County in which agriculture, farm operations, conservation lands and timber stands on parcels of 10 acres or more are the established land use pattern, and to provide an environment which encourages residents to continue to live and practice agricultural operations without adverse impact arising from more dense development.

Residential

Single-family residences consisting of individual houses, either attached or detached usually on separate lots, and often developed in subdivisions, as well as multi-family uses. There are three designations of single-family dwellings within the County. Multi-family residential contains two or more dwelling units, and is broken down into duplexes, buildings of 3 to 9 units and apartments.

Residential development played a significant role in Douglas during the decade of the 90's. As the predominate land use within the County, Single-Family residential is distributed throughout the county in all areas, except for the Thornton Road Corridor.

- **Large Lot Single Family Detached.** This category includes individual homes on lots of three acres or greater and to promote a suitable environment for rural or "large lot suburban" family life, agriculture including the raising of livestock and poultry, and the development of natural resources and other uses requiring extensive areas of land. The homes are often in a "rural" setting, and the properties may include horse barns and riding areas or other types of personal (as opposed to commercial) agricultural uses. The Dog River Basin and a portion of the Bear Creek Basin are considered natural resource protection areas and feature this type of development.
- **Single-Family Detached** covers all other single-family home sites, many of which are located within organized subdivisions, and are more "suburban" in character than the Large Lot category.
- **Single-Family Attached** includes all forms of attached housing (i.e., no dwellings located above others), such as duplexes and townhouses. Residential developments of this kind include a provision for useable open space and recreational areas and provide a transition between single-family areas and higher density dwellings and/or commercial areas.
- **Multi-Family/Apartments** includes all multi-family residential buildings in which some dwellings are located above others, such as garden apartments.

Commercial

Commercial developments predominately occupied by establishments that offer goods or merchandise for sale, or rent, and other commercial uses that do not operate in "office" settings. Such uses include stores, shopping centers, hotels, restaurants, gasoline stations, automobile body shops; physical fitness centers, markets, hotels and building supply centers. These uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center.

Major commercial concentrations are located along Thornton Road and I-20, Highway 5, West Stewart Mill Road Extension, Chapel Hill and Highway 92/Fairburn Road. The City of Douglasville contains the primary regional commercial areas in addition to the majority of small shopping and free standing commercial areas. These concentrations contain large and small strip shopping centers and freestanding single-tenant commercial buildings. Although still primarily residential, the High-

way 5 corridor has seen increasing conversion of single family residences to retail and service establishments as traffic has increased.

The commercial category is broken into 5 categories by intensity levels:

- **Neighborhood Commercial** includes commercial uses that sell goods and services purchased frequently and generally in small amounts by the public in an intimate, pedestrian-oriented scale. Small convenience retail and service establishments, bakeries and fresh food markets, pharmacies and barber/beauty shops characterize neighborhood commercial areas.
- **Community Commercial** includes commercial uses that sell goods and services purchased frequently by the public in a shopping and personal service setting. Grocery stores, drug stores, and small retail and service establishments characterize community commercial areas. Commercial uses commonly found in neighborhood commercial areas are also found in community commercial areas.
- **General Commercial** includes commercial uses that benefit from close proximity to each other. These areas provide for the location of regional and sub-regional centers for retailing and finance. Its primary purpose is to group their uses together in a compact area designed to accommodate pedestrian movement. General commercial areas are characterized by shopping centers containing department stores, big box retailers such as Home Depot and PetSmarts, discount clubs and retail and service establishments serving a wide market area. Commercial uses commonly found in neighborhood and community commercial areas also are found in general commercial areas.
- **Heavy Commercial** includes those commercial uses that benefit from direct access to major streets or are located on major streets and thoroughfares that are classified as major arterial roads or interstate highways. Such uses commonly which generate loud noises and require large areas for open storage, or generate substantial motor vehicle traffic.
- **Regional Commercial** includes commercial uses that provide amusement for the public and/or have bright lights and noise.

Offices

This category encompasses uses that are employment based, such as administrative operations and corporate offices, as well as traditional "office" uses such as doctor's offices, insurance and real estate brokers, and businesses that offer their services away from the site.

Office commercial development in the County ranges from major corporate office buildings to small professional offices. Although a number of the industrial parks contain "headquarter and regional" offices, these concentrations will be discussed in greater length in the "industrial" land use category. Small professional offices within commercial areas are not necessarily broken out on the existing land use plan map. There are primarily two types of office categories:

- **Low Density Office** contains office uses with some semi-commercial uses including very limited retail sale of goods. Low intensity offices are intended as a transitional zone from commercial use to less intensive uses such as residential uses.
- **High Density Office** areas are a more dense office environment allowing mid-rise and high-rise office buildings and accessory retail uses. High-density offices should be located in or adjacent to heavy concentrations of commercial or light industrial uses such as major nodes, interchange areas, or industrial or office parks.

Industrial

This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction activities, or other similar uses. Douglas has a limited range of such uses.

Industrial development is reflected in three types of development: Business center uses, standalone industrial uses, and intensive industrial uses such as quarries and landfills. There is a mix of both types within the county. Current industrial parks include, Douglasville, Interstate West Business Park, McKay Industrial Park, Odessa Industrial Park, Sweetwater Industrial Park and Westford Business Park. Industrial corridors that are more intensive manufacturing/warehousing/wholesaling operations are concentrated on Thornton Road and Bankhead Highway. There is also a quarry and landfill located within the county.

- **Light Industrial** areas including accessibility to major transportation facilities, availability of adequate utilities and other public services, and availability of large quantities of suitable land. Uses compatible with light industrial development are to be encouraged insofar as they are in accordance with comprehensive development plans for the county. This category includes industrial uses with limited negative impacts such as limited manufacturing, warehousing and wholesale operations.
- **Restricted Light Industrial** are light industrial developments that are characterized by office and administrative operations in the front and storage space in the rear, usually served with loading docks, where merchandise is stored for distribution, repair assembly or otherwise handled in transit to the user. The use of campus type business centers is encouraged to promote a suitable environment for high quality, visually attractive, stable, light industrial, research and administrative offices.
- **Heavy Industrial** including industrial uses that require accessibility to major transportation facilities, availability of adequate utilities and other public services, and availability of sufficient quantities of land to adequately support such establishments. Heavy industrial uses tend to have major impacts, such as noise, traffic, odor and maybe utilizing chemicals or process that require strong separation from other types of uses such as residential or retail development.

Transportation Communication Utilities

This category includes such uses as power generation plants, railroad facilities, transmission towers, public transit stations, telephone switching stations streets and highways.

Uses classified as "TCU" are almost exclusively streets and highways. Other uses within this category are within the light industrial district category.

Public Institutional

State, federal or local government uses, and quasi-public institutions. Governmental uses include City Hall, fire stations, libraries, post offices and public schools (but not parks). Institutional uses include churches, cemeteries and other private non-profit uses.

Public and institutional uses are typically not concentrated in specific locales. The main government center for Douglas County is located within the City of Douglasville. The government center offers the public many services within a public a one-stop shop for government services and contains the "citizens hall," the primary location of public governmental meetings and public hearings within the county. Other public buildings are scattered throughout the county to serve localized needs, such as libraries and fire stations. Facilities that are publicly owned, but would be classified more accu-

rately in another land use category, are not included in this category. For example, publicly owned parks and/or recreational facilities are placed in the Park/Recreation/Conservation category, and general office buildings containing government offices are placed in the Offices category.

Parks/Recreation/Conservation

Land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. These lands may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers, etc. Stream buffers and the Chattahoochee Corridor are also included in this category.

Agriculture Forestry

Land being actively farmed, including crop cultivation or livestock operations, or set aside for commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting as an agricultural pursuit.

There are currently several tracts within the County that have been identified as "agricultural or timbering" within the county, primarily within the southern portion of the county. Small agricultural sites are also scattered throughout the county. These properties are often in a "rural" setting and the properties may include horse barns and riding areas or other types of personal (as opposed to commercial) agricultural uses. These properties are therefore classified Residential, since that is the primary use of those properties.

Undeveloped

Land not developed or not being used for a specific purpose, and lands where development has been abandoned or where deteriorated, vacant buildings are located. This category includes woodlands or pastureland (not in agricultural crop, livestock or commercial timber production), undeveloped portions of residential subdivisions and industrial parks, water bodies (lakes, rivers, etc.), and locations of structures that have been vacant for some time.

As is further indicated by the Existing Land Use Map, a small portion of the land within the County limits is either undeveloped or underdeveloped. The underdeveloped designation is for large tracts with only one or two residences or where a small portion of the tract is being utilized.

■ Existing Land Use Acreages

There are currently 104,777.21 acres within the unincorporated areas of Douglas County.

The Current Land Use by Acreages shows the amount of land being used under the various land use categories in the County. Of the total acres, almost 72 % of the land within the current county limits is currently developed with residences or businesses, schools and other facilities, churches, cemeteries or parks. Of the developed acreage, the clear majority is

Land Use by Acres Douglas County, GA

Existing Land Use	
Land Use Category	Net Acres
Agricultural	3,362.89
Agriculture / Timber	4,870.13
Single Family Residential (<5 ac tracts)	17,167.88
Single Family Residential (5 to 25 ac tracts)	16,713.73
Single Family Residential (>25 ac tracts)	7,840.26
Townhouse	9.82
Commercial	1,711.25
Industrial	1,682.21
TCU	297.86
Public / Institutional	2,286.50
Parks / Recreation / Conservation	15,820.01
Vacant	33,014.68
Total Acreages	104,777.21

residential, and of the residential acreage, the overwhelming majority, is single-family detached houses. The second largest land use category is undeveloped and vacant parcels at over 31%. Currently 33,014.68 acres are considered vacant within the county. This figure does not include the many large parcels that are underdeveloped, and will soon change uses.

The last influence on future development is the availability of land to accommodate future growth. The Population Element and Economic Development Elements of this Plan presents the population and employment forecasts for the County in detail. The relationship to land absorption and population and employment growth is presented within the Land Demand Analysis later in this Chapter.

Section III. Influences on Future Land Use

■ Environmentally Sensitive Areas

A major goal is to protect the natural and sensitive environment of Douglas County and the areas that contribute to its unique character by ensuring a balance between the natural and the built environment. Douglas County, and the Atlanta region's water supply, tree cover, natural habitats, open space and other environmentally sensitive areas are vital to sustaining our quality of life. Protection of these natural resources provides current and future economic benefits to the region.



Douglas has long had strong environmental regulations in place, such as effective flood plain restrictions, watershed protection areas and has enforced erosion control regulations for many years. As outlined more fully in the Natural Resource Element of this Plan, the WSA is now in charge of enforcing both stormwater and the soil erosion and sedimentation control regulations within the county to ensure greater protection and coordination. The newly adopted UDC will further coordinate and help enforce environmental issues within the county through a user-friendlier format.

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The Future Land use Map and corresponding character areas were developed with environmental sensitivity in mind. A watershed overlay district of a 3-acre density has been instituted in Bear Creek Basin and a portion of the Dog River Basin. The Future Land Use Plan and Map directly acknowledge environmentally sensitive areas through a rural character area designation. Higher infrastructure investment and planned location for medium density residential areas and non-residential areas have been identified outside of these sensitive areas. Infrastructure and level of services standards have purposely been kept lower in sensitive areas.

An aim to create more walkable communities and "village" and "main-street" centers is also highly encouraged through quality design standards and character areas within this plan. Walkable communities are integral to achieving the goals of smart growth because they enhance mobility, reduce negative environmental consequences, strengthen economies and support stronger communities through improved social interactions. Greenspace linkages and required sidewalks within all subdivisions and along all public right of way is a new requirement of the UDC.

The County's newly adopted Unified Development Code (UDC) advances sustainable Greenfield development. The UDC provides for master planned and open space subdivision development that protects the integrity of the land and environment, while creating a quality product. All primary resources whether in a master planned, open space or conventional subdivision within the county must

be protected with a natural resource conservation easement to ensure their sustainability. Better growth can occur when governments create incentives for developing better projects.

WSA has evaluated several alternative methods to determine the most environmentally sound means of ultimate biosolids disposal to ensure pollution prevention. The present method of composting the biosolids generated at its wastewater treatment facilities serves to minimize pollution while at the same time proving to be a cost effective ultimate disposal measure. Biosolids are mixed with peanut shells, converted to compost and then made available to nurseries in bagged and bulk form. The benefits include:

- The relationship between the use and return of water to the system is an important element in the provision of water and the quality of the environment.
- Stormwater runoff is also returned to the system, the quality of this runoff affects the quality of the overall system.
- North Georgia Metropolitan Water District Plan anticipates that as density increases sewers will account for a greater percentage of wastewater treatment.
- Given the nature of the water cycle and the relationship between water quality and wastewater treatment, responsible regional water planning suggests maximizing sanitary sewer connections and minimizing septic systems.

■ Land Use and Infrastructure Patterns

The continuous residential development without proper land use management throughout the county during the past twenty years has had a tremendous impact on infrastructure and public services. Of primary concern is the lack of water and sewerage in many portions of the unincorporated areas of the county and the subsequent reliance on septic systems. The transportation network is inadequate both in capacity and condition to support unconstrained growth. Infrastructure system improvements should be planned to address projected needs, and to be used as a tool to guide land use patterns. Other community facilities and services that are based more on demand should be funded and planned in conjunction with projected land use patterns on the Future Land Use Plan Map. Principles on the Future Land Use Plan Map include:

- Growth follows major community facilities (transportation, utilities); so therefore, these facilities are a strong determinant of growth and land use patterns.
- Demand based services (public safety, parks, schools, libraries), should be planned and financed in concert with projected growth and land use patterns in order to maintain quality of life.
- Community facilities shape the form of the community—urban densities and commercial uses require transportation and public utilities and rural densities can utilize rural street and septic systems.
- Growth and density should be concentrated in areas of the county, which are served by public water and sewerage systems, or in areas that are easily accessed by existing systems, and therefore leaving the rural unsewered areas in a lower density use.

Public Water and Sewerage

The timing and development of the public water and sewerage infrastructure is a major influence on land use patterns. In addition, because of limited funding, the strategic placement of this infrastructure it is essential to achieve land use goals and policies as set out in the Comprehensive Plan. Linking land use and community facilities requires strong planning and coordination. Land use and in-

Infrastructure planning can work together to maximize the return on investment through policies encouraging smart growth, and a strong requirement for planning, such as infrastructure concurrency.

- Coordinate, plan and construct public facilities to service expected land use patterns as established on the Future Land Use Plan Map.
- Require infrastructure concurrency during the rezoning and development process utilizing the criteria as outlined within this plan.
- Growth should generally be directed towards existing or planned service areas and away from rural area with expected lower levels of service and dependence on septic systems.
- Infrastructure will be targeted as priorities to areas suitable for commercial and medium density residential to most efficiently and effectively provide these services.
- Funding sources and water may ultimately constrain the growth in Douglas County.

The Future Land Use Map shows that the County will expand its wastewater treatment to target commercial, industrial areas and medium density residential areas. The Comprehensive Plan policies will guide the location of wastewater infrastructure. As well, the intergovernmental agreements for wastewater per House Bill 489 will be continued into the future as the County and cities grow.

Transportation

It is imperative that the proposed Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CPT) supports the Comprehensive Plan to assure coordination and consistency in population and housing forecasts, natural and cultural resource protection, economic development policies and land use policy and plans. In some cases transportation demand and the lack of adequate systems may very well influence significant change in land use character and patterns. Likewise, land use changes will dictate needs for expansion of the transportation infrastructure. Preliminary transportation improvements have been tested against alternative land use scenarios:

- Transportation Network;
- Quality of Life (level of service vs. cost);
- Evaluate environmental impacts;
- Support economic development;
- Anticipate future demand (population, employment and new development); and
- Evaluate the impacts of current and proposed policies.



Impact and influence of the region on the transportation network

Douglas County is primarily a bedroom community to the metropolitan Atlanta, and also on the edge of a major tourist generation for the region (Six Flags). The county is significantly affected by external growth of Paulding County and lack of options to move traffic across the railroad barrier. This barrier also has caused negative impact to mobility in northern unincorporated areas of the county as external growth increases.

Douglasville is the urban core area/activity center in the county. The impact of the City lessens on the south side of I-20 except in areas of commercial centers around the interstate interchanges. (Arbor Place Mall, Chapel Hill and Highway 5 Commercial Area). During the Comprehensive Plan Process the County coordinated extensively with the City of Douglas-



ville on transportation and land use issues. The proposed CTP will also be Countywide to include the impacts of Douglasville within the entire county network.

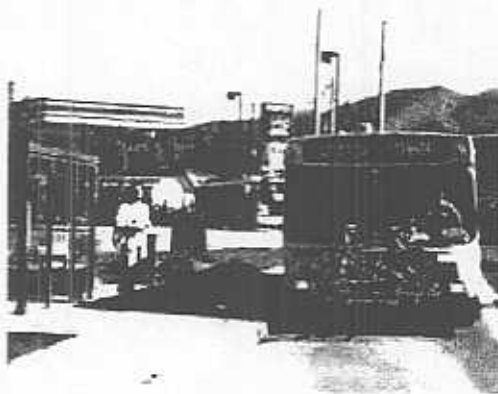
For land use purposes, the impact of commuting patterns into and out of Douglas County has been analyzed to reflect the influence of these travel patterns. In addition, pass through traffic, especially from Paulding County has been examined for transportation impacts. The role of Douglas County in Regional Transportation, GRTA and other initiatives will be fully incorporated into the transportation network.

Position on I-20 and the number of interchanges

I-20 is both a blessing and a burden for the County. It acts as a barrier to north south mobility in the county but also serves the county well for access to the rest of the region. The impact of the interstate has certainly influenced jobs, population growth and the local economy of the county. It is unlikely that additional interchanges will be approved in the county other than HOV access interchanges. Interstate short-trips are a common occurrence within the county and is a function of inadequate surface street connectivity for east west movements. The long-range transportation plan may need to address this issue with some type of CD system along the freeway.

Provide a variety of Transportation Options

Providing people with more choices in housing, shopping, communities and transportation is a key aim of smart growth. In response to predicted worsening traffic congestion and a diversity of non-dependent automobile users (especially seniors and children), transportation choices will be a very



important element of the CTP; the county is coupling a multimode approach to transportation with supportive land-use patterns that create a wider range of transportation options such as concentrated villages and centers that provide a high level of land use interaction and internal and external linkages. Multi-modal systems offering options to the Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV) must be incorporated into future plans. Transit, Transportation Demand Management, and walkable and pedestrian friendly communities will become increasingly more important as the county's population grows and opportunities and funds to expand conventional transportation systems diminish due to air quality issues and related federal, state and regional mandates.

■ Housing

Future housing-type demand will depend on a number of variables from availability and economics, to the changes in demographics in Douglas County and Douglasville. The demand analysis for the county (including Douglasville) shows the demand for 92,697 units by 2025, with the predominate type continuing to be single-family detached units. The forecast indicates that by 2025 the number of multi-family units in the incorporated areas will be almost double that of the unincorporated area - at approximately 10,581 multi-family units (inclusive of duplex units) within the incorporated areas, as compared to 5,517 multi-family units in the unincorporated county. Based on past development trends and objectives of the County, it is anticipated that single-family detached units will continue to be the prevalent form of residential development in the next decade in the unincorporated area.

A recent trend in residential development in the County has been the master planned development, where residential uses are combined with amenities and open space. Although an overall general per acre density applies, natural resource protection through clustering of units or subdivision into smaller lots to allow for preservation of natural resources, open space and provision of amenities such as swimming pools, nature trails, parkland or passive open space areas, playfields, ponds or lakes, golf courses and putting greens, and other such activity sites. Development under the master plan concept is expected to continue in the future. The Zoning Code has been revised to reflect the use of the master plan concept as the predominant type of residential subdivision.

■ Market Forces and Development Policies

The market forces affecting land use development in Douglas are fully discussed in the Economic Development Element. Douglas's Comprehensive Plan policies are aimed to direct growth that the market generates into appropriate locations that will strengthen the County's quality of life as an exceptional place to live, work and do business. As stated earlier, Douglas will continue to be impacted by growth pressures from the Atlanta Region, and will also continue to hold its own attraction as a "small" town in close proximity to big city amenities without the big city problems. Demographic analysis and the Land Demand Analysis have also shown that there are clear and unmet needs for retail uses, higher-level employment opportunities and "executive" housing.



The Future Land Use Plan Map and its use of Character Areas were based on these market forces and various analyses. Appropriate amounts of land for each type of development is clearly defined on the Future Land Use Plan Map, as is appropriate planned infrastructure and compatibility measures. The character area concept and design standards will ensure that the County will provide managed and quality growth over the next 20 years.

Density Policies

Some uses are not considered appropriate for unincorporated Douglas County's within the Communities overall vision, such as heavy industry that generates air or water pollution, very high-density housing and intensive regional commercial development. Environmental regulations and the UDC will ensure that all industrial development attracted to Douglas County is also environmentally friendly, as not to infringe upon the overall single-family environment of the County. As for very high-density residential and commercial developments, analysis has shown that the commerce and urban core of the County, the City of Douglasville, currently contains a much higher density in both commercial and residential development. This type of density is appropriate within an urban setting such as the City of Douglasville, but would not be appropriate with the more unincorporated rural county. As a transition from higher residential and commercial densities, the county has provided for appropriate locations for medium density residential and higher intensity commercial locations on its Future Land Use Plan Map. The Urban Residential, Work Place Center, and Commerce Center Character Areas provide a good transition for higher and medium density development.

Infill Development

The State Department of Community Affairs requires, in their guidelines, an “evaluation of the options of encouraging infill development in areas where infrastructure and services are available versus expanding infrastructure and services into new areas.” For Douglas, these are not mutually exclusive options. As seen on the Future Land Use by Acreage Table, the County is expected to be substantially built out by the year 2025. Thus, all infill areas where infrastructure is available will have been developed by that time, as well as new areas to which infrastructure had to be extended or its capacity expanded.

Character areas have been developed that promote a more dense residential community adjacent to the exiting urban core of Douglasville and existing higher density centers. This land use organization promotes land use efficiency by utilizing existing infrastructure. To encourage compact and compatible development within infill areas, this plan encourages creative urban design solutions, and a mix of residential and non-residential types to accommodate projected growth

To encourage compact and compatible development within infill areas, this plan encourages creative urban design solutions, and a mix of residential and nonresidential types to accommodate projected growth.

Regulations influencing development

This Comprehensive Plan and the Unified Development Code have been developed simultaneously, allowing the County to develop appropriate regulations to implement the County’s Vision, Guiding Principles and goals and objectives. The Character Area descriptions and design guidelines further allows the County to accept development that meets the intent of the overall vision. We believe that by developing the long range plan and UDC together, the County will be able to achieve its goals and vision both through policy and regulation. Greater detail regarding regulatory influences is discussed in the Implementation Element.

■ Outlook For Development

Douglas County can look to the future with optimism, but as in the past should be proactive in guiding development. Douglasville is currently a “bedroom” community, and will continue to carry this identity into the future, with a twist. Thought of as a “*small town within reach of the city*” the community would like to enhance and add to this image in the future. Douglas County citizens are well aware of their proximity to the Atlanta Region, and the opportunities and growth pressures that this proximity brings. The Community does not choose to isolate itself from these opportunities, but at the same time will be proactive in attracting the type of growth that it deems desirable in appropriate location. At the same time, the community would like to strengthen its character as a small town and its rural heritage image, while at the same time strengthening its amenities, such as Greenspace, recreational opportunities, retail sales and employment opportunities. The Douglas County Vision speaks of a more balanced community, a “live, work, play” community with a small town feel. The community feels that this can be accomplished through proactive land use policy and strategies.

The County performed an intensive land demand analysis to determine the appropriate mix of residential, retail, and employment opportunities within the County. The Future Land Use Plan Map reflects these realities and provides sufficient developable land for each use. Compatibility, appropriate transitional land use and quality standards will allow this to happen

Development opportunities outweigh constraints by a comfortable margin. However, rapid growth in neighboring counties and the City of Douglasville may continue to strain the infrastructure and

present the County with incompatibility issues within the unincorporated areas of Douglas County. The planned Countywide Comprehensive Transportation Plan and the WSA may help to coordinate many of these future issues.

■ Future Land Use Available for Development

The last influence on future development to be discussed is the availability of land to accommodate future growth. The population and economic development elements of this Plan presents the population and employment forecasts for the County in detail, and their relationship to land absorption. A full land demand analysis was completed to order to match projections and land capacity, and as the basis of the Future Land Use Plan Map. As an innovative step, the County has decided to use "character areas" instead of general land use categories. Within the non-residential character areas, the mixing of uses is a major component of these areas, and therefore although it is impossible and undesirable to determine specific uses within each character area, the following offers predominate land uses within each of the character areas. In order to translate these character areas into distinct land use categories for this analysis, the following categories shall be applicable:

- Residential: Rural places, suburban living, urban residential;
- Retail Commercial: Transitional Corridor, Neighborhood Village Center and Community Village Center;
- Employment (office): Mixed Use Corridor, Workplace Center; and
- Industrial: Commerce Center and Intensive Industrial.

The Future Land Use by Acreage Table shows the number of acres by land use category that are expected to be developed by 2025. There is expected to be 1,337.60 acres vacant; but this land will be within water sources. It is expected that Douglas County will be completely built out by 2025. According to this analysis the County will need 74,693.97 acres for residential development, 2,205.86 for retail development, 5,522.22 for office development, 2,145.99 for industrial development and 25,186.62 for "other" development (including TCU, Public Institutional and Parks/Recreation and Conservation). Given the sustained growth projections in the Metro Atlanta Region over the next twenty years, the growth and development that can be anticipated within

Future Land Use		
Land Use Category	Net Acres	Square Miles
Agricultural	1,719.80	2.69
Rural Places	30,834.54	48.18
Suburban Living	35,520.27	55.50
Urban Residential	8,339.17	13.03
Transition Corridor	610.04	0.95
Neighborhood Village Center	444.33	0.69
Community Village Center	1,151.48	1.80
Mixed Use Corridor	2,155.42	3.37
Workplace Center	3,366.80	5.26
Commerce Center	1,128.19	1.76
Intensive Industrial	1,017.80	1.59
TCU--Property	298.74	0.47
TCU--Roads	6,528.00	10.20
Public / Institutional	2,525.05	3.95
Parks / Recreation / Conservation	15,834.82	24.74
Vacant--Land	0.00	0.00
Vacant--Water	1,337.60	2.09
Subtotal--Unincorporated County	112,812.06	176.27
Incorporated Areas	15,380.66	24.03
TOTAL--ALL COUNTY	128,192.71	200.30

Douglas County is more a function of its capacity to accept growth and the quality expect than a paucity of market demand.

Land Capacity to Demand Analysis

The County currently has capacity to accommodate additional residential growth in the years ahead, embodied by its supply of vacant, developable land. Actual development capacity, based on: the current zoning; net acres of vacant land available for development; realistic minimum land required per lot within each zone, and applicable development densities; appears to be adequate, for the most part, to serve the projected housing needs. Altogether, there are some 37,900 acres in the unincorporated area that are vacant, 3,900 of which are within the 100-year flood plain, leaving a net of 34,000 acres. Of these, 31,400 are residentially zoned and 2,600 are zoned in the office, commercial or industrial districts. As currently zoned, the unincorporated area could accommodate, at most, about 32,400 new housing units and 24.6 million square feet of nonresidential development. Among the residential zoning districts, the vast majority of new units that could be accommodated (93%) are zoned for single-family detached use. Among the nonresidential districts, the clear majority (almost 80%) is zoned for industrial development.

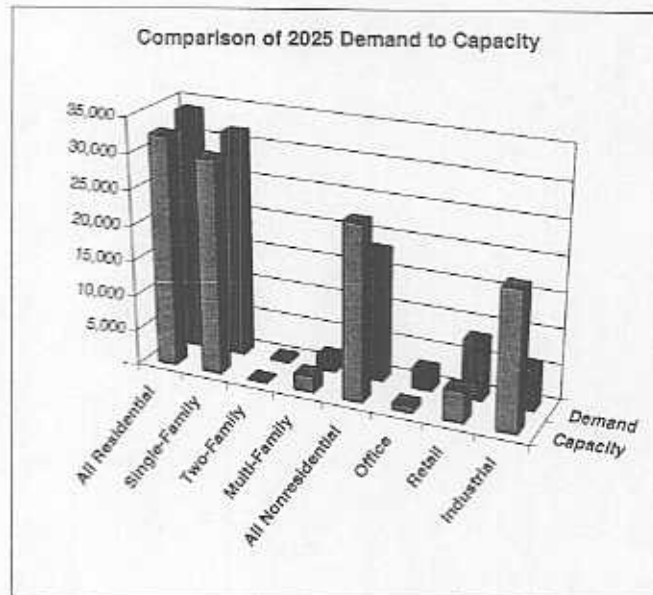
The following table and graph compare the “unconstrained” growth forecasts to the maximum amount of development that could be accommodated under current zoning patterns.

Overall, projected residential growth is very close to the capacity available, exceeding it by only 4%. Given the approximations in the methodology used in this report, this would represent a complete build out of the residential areas by (or before) 2025 as currently zoned. The same can be said for the single-family detached category, with demand at 5% over current capacity. There is a clear but very small lack of land designated for duplexes, while the multi-family zoning districts can accommodate 14% more units than demanded in 2025.

Growth Capacity and Demand Unincorporated Area

	Capacity	Demand
All Residential	32,419	33,888
Single-Family	30,130	31,693
Two-Family	28	247
Multi-Family	2,261	1,941
All Nonresidential	24,590	18,298
Office	616	2,746
Retail	4,337	8,204
Industrial	19,437	5,918

Residential figures show number of housing units.
Nonresidential in 1,000s of square feet of floor area.



On paper, nonresidential zoning, overall, can accommodate a comfortable 26% more development than the 2025 demand. This “overhead” of excess capacity could easily disappear by 2025, however, absorbed by developed but vacant sites, excess land bought by companies for future expansion, and

inefficiencies in land development. The distribution of the vacant land by zoning category, however, does not match the future demand by land use type very well. For instance, there would appear to be far more land zoned for industrial development than needed, at least by 2025, while only about one-half of the retail commercial demand can be accommodated on commercially zoned land. Land specifically zoned for office uses is particularly in short supply; although office uses are allowed in the commercial zoning districts, there is already too little land zoned commercial to accommodate retail development alone. Together, future demand for office and retail development will amount to almost 11 million square feet of floor area, while only 5.2 million of that can be accommodated by existing office and commercially zoned land. Providing the new office and retail zoning for the additional 5.8 million square feet could involve as many as 625 acres of land.

Industrially zoned land can also be used for certain professional and administrative office uses, and limited commercial use, which would absorb some of the excess industrial zoning. While mid-rise office parks are often found in and around the kind and quality of industrial development that M-1R requires, industrial zoning is often unattractive to commercial and office development oriented to retail sales and personal services.

Implications for Planning

The demand/capacity analysis has several implications for preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, including specifically the Future Land Use Map.

- By 2025, the residential areas of unincorporated Douglas County will be completely built out.
- Outside of the 3-acre lot watershed protection areas, pressures to bring sanitary sewer to all portions of the unincorporated area will mount. Given the market pressures generating demand, rezoning requests to R-2 for subdivisions on sewer will increase accordingly.
- There appears to be more than adequate land already zoned and available for multi-family development. Unless a particular location would be notably advantageous to the county for multi-family zoning, no additional land zoned for multi-family use is needed.
- There is a small but unmet market for two-family residential development (duplexes compose less than 1% of future residential demand). Rather than focus on new R-3 rezonings, the inclusion of duplexes as one type of housing in a mixed-use master planned development could be encouraged.
- Upwards of 600 acres of additional office and commercially zoned land is needed to accommodate future retail and service uses, both of which will be attracted to the county by its population growth and resulting increase in disposable income.
- While the county contains many more acres of industrial land than 2025 forecasts would absorb, retaining an excess of land for development beyond 2025 would not be inappropriate. While some vacant industrially zoned land may not be well located for non-industrial uses, some should be considered for commercial and/or higher density/smaller lot residential development (particularly in a planned development setting).

Section IV. Desirable Land Use Patterns

■ Urban Design

Overview

Urban design refers to the dynamic relationship of land uses and how they are connected within the built environment. More specifically, urban design strategies determine the configuration of buildings, massing and density, the appearance and character of places, open spaces, parks and plazas, transportation networks (pedestrian and automotive), as well as the relationships among land uses and the linkages within the community as a whole. Ultimately, urban design is about creating a sense of place that achieves the community's desired vision.

At the scale of "the village or center," urban design elements such as lighting, signage, landscaping, street furniture and architectural guidelines, create the visual character and identity of a place, making it recognizable and distinct from other areas. When applied within a comprehensive system of connected streets, sidewalks, greenways, and open space, urban design has the power to transform intersections into walkable districts, and subdivisions into neighborhoods.

At the scale of "the county," urban design focuses on the linkages between communities and their relationships to one another. Thus, at the level of a comprehensive plan, urban design strategies focus less on the visual appearance of buildings and streets and more on the organization of neighborhoods, commercial areas and open spaces and their connectivity to one another within a larger framework.

Architectural Themes

A carefully developed set of design guidelines can be an ideal tool for bringing visual and spatial unity to an existing or developing area. Design guidelines should respond both to the conditions of the built environment and to the expressed goals of the community. In areas featuring a well-defined concentration of mostly historic structures, design guidelines can focus on restoring the buildings to a dominant or common period of their past. In new communities, or in communities whose historic character is not a priority, design guidelines can foster a particular atmosphere or image by creating an entirely new look. Communities that have adopted this rather extreme approach, such as Helen, Georgia, often feature an architectural style that has no historic precedent but creates visual unity. The building stock of many communities—including Douglas—falls somewhere in the middle, combining traditional storefronts and residences with later construction which may differ considerably in terms of form and function. These conditions present a challenge to the development of comprehensive design guidelines, but the task is not an impossible one.

Douglas is typical of communities that possess a diminished stock of historic structures, but have expressed a desire to project an image that respects the community's overall desire to preserve its small town feel. Situations vary, but a common approach is to research, identify, and restore the area's remaining landmarks to their original appearance or to their appearance during a unifying, influential period. The materials, proportions, and character-defining details of this influential period then become the basis for design standards for the area as a whole. New construction is then executed in forms and materials that are compatible with an overall theme in order to create a visually unified area "signature."

Comprehensive Plan Context

There are a variety of ways to achieve the County's vision for the future. From an urban design standpoint, the key is to avoid dispersed development projects that are unrelated to one another and exist in isolation at random locations. Instead, by focusing appropriate development within distinct character areas, corridors and centers and arranging these areas within a comprehensive circulation system that incorporates multiple modes of transportation, the County will achieve a sustainable development pattern that will carry them through to the year 2020.

As a first step in creating an appropriate development atmosphere, the County has developed "Community Character Areas." In the context of the Comprehensive Plan, urban design through distinct character areas describes a classification of development patterns, their distinct differences and their relationship to one another as the County continues to grow over the next 20-years.

■ Quality of New Development

All new public buildings, institutional buildings, residential and non-residential private developments should be characterized by high-quality architectural design and construction and should reflect Douglas County's unique community image and character. These types of improvements help us create an identity or sense of place for the business community and will ultimately set Douglas County apart from other communities and provide our residents and businesses a reason for investing in Douglas County.

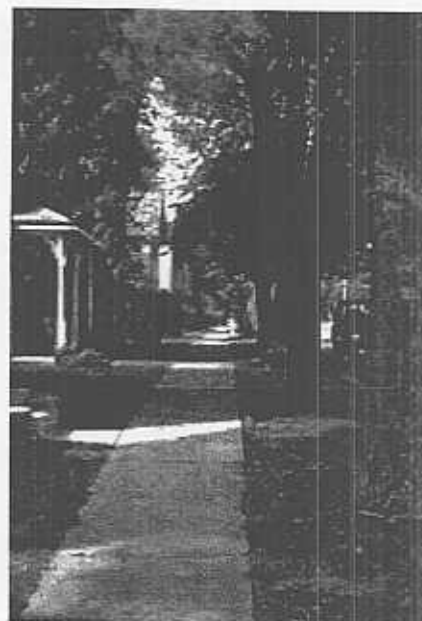
Residential Development

The Comprehensive Plan anticipates that Douglas County will continue to be primarily a single-family low-density residential community, and that its neighborhoods and subdivisions be enhanced as important community assets. To address diversity and special housing needs within the county, transitional areas have been designated to accommodate and incorporate medium density and mixed housing types. New residential development should reflect the overall quality and character of the Douglas County community vision, and compatibility as an integral part of the surrounding neighborhoods and character areas.

Considerations in evaluating new residential development should include:

- Compatibility with adjacent and nearby uses;
- The availability of public services and facilities;
- The character of the landscape;
- The continuity of local roads, walkways, pathways and opens spaces; and
- Protection from traffic and other undesirable impacts.

The County's newly adopted Unified Development Code outlines several quality enhancements for new



residential construction, such as the developments of open space, recreational amenities and sidewalks in every subdivision over 25 units, landscaping requirements and a minimum house size. The UDC also encourages master planned and open spaced subdivisions whenever possible. These developments would utilize innovative techniques such as traditional neighborhood design, human scale development and pedestrian linkages. All quality objectives within the plan aim to create a "sense of place" within communities.

The following additional enhancements that would further the development of communities should be added whenever possible:

- Internal multi-use trail system should be incorporated into the design of large residential developments to increase bicycle and pedestrian accessibility to schools, public facilities, employment and shopping areas and parks and open spaces, and connected where possible to the County's Planned Trail System.
- Site planning within new residential development should include the use of effective and attractive buffers to protect residential areas from adjacent arterial roadways and non-residential developments.
- An "anti-monotony" code should be considered for major subdivisions to promote diversity among housing products, densities and site development characteristics.

The designation of land for residential uses recognizes the need to provide land for support services to the individuals living in the area. Uses such as schools, parks and churches are compatible with the residential designations. However, in introducing such additional related uses into these residential environments, it is intended that they be designed, located and maintained with full and complete regard for the surrounding residential environment. In addition, to ensure that quality is an integral component in residential development, infrastructure should be adequate to support residents' needs.

Non-Residential Development

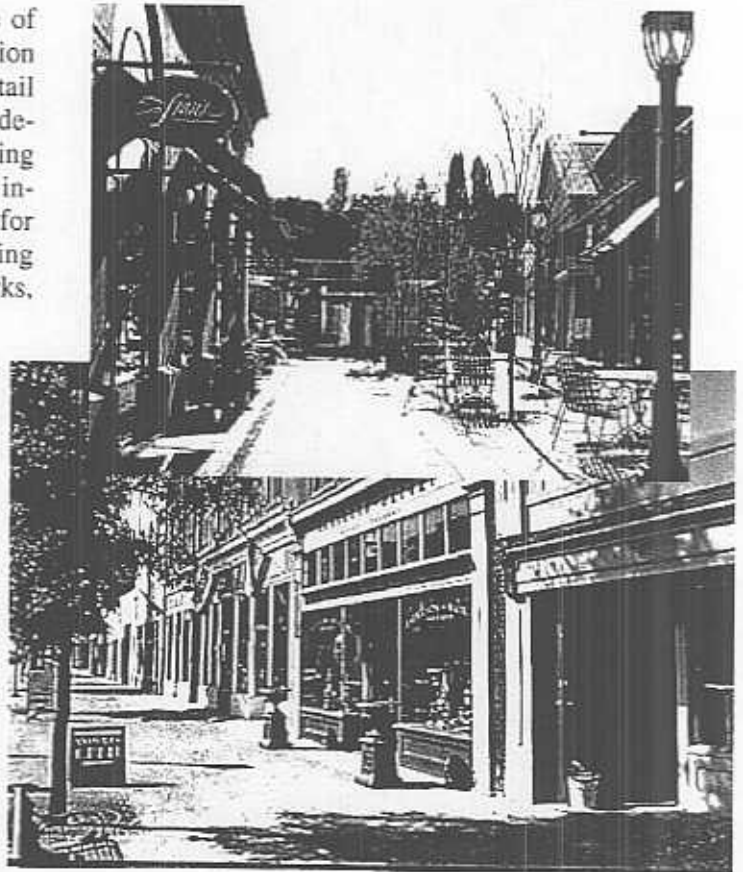
The Comprehensive Plan promotes high quality commercial and business development with Douglas County during the next 20 years emphasizing non-residential in order to enhance the County's tax base, create new jobs, and provide convenient shopping opportunities for local residents. Commercial and other non-residential uses have been separated into several character areas according to intensity, locational requirements and land use compatibility.

By establishing these guidelines the County proposes to encourage several important public and private objectives:

- Improve the quality of physical alterations to commercial corridors and village centers.
- Enhance the quality of the pedestrian experience along a commercial corridor and within a village by providing a pleasant shopping experience for business patrons.
- Enhance economic investment for business and property owners.
- Protect, preserve or create neighborhood communities and architectural character.
- Promote community awareness of the physical environment.
- Encourage flexible and individual creativity rather than anonymous uniformity.

Commercial corridors often lack a sense of organizational structure, and this confusion reflects poorly on the community. Retail and service establishments should be designed to resemble town squares of varying intensities. The "Main Street" concepts incorporating internal circulation patterns for both automobiles and people surrounding public spaces such as small pocket parks, squares, and plazas should be encouraged. "Main Streets" are envisioned as a collection of retail shops, specialty shops and private offices along tree-lined sidewalks that promote and a sense of identify. Villages should become centers for community interaction where you would "usually run into someone you know, or the friends of someone you know while hanging around there." Commercial strip development is discouraged in all areas of the county.

Workplace and Commerce Centers should be developed as self-sustainable town centers that provide multi-services to its residents and employees. A sense of entry or arrive should be created at primary entryways into the development. Building placement, landscaping, gates, entry monuments, specialty lighting and other design elements can be used to create this design effect. These are large-scaled employment generators that should be designed to create pleasant work and play environments with an integrated design and circulation plan.



■ Design Guidelines

The guidelines presented in this section are intended to enhance the value of public and private properties by promoting a distinctive architectural design quality and to help ensure that new buildings blend in with the natural character of the landscape, the semi-rural character of Douglas County, and the overall intent of the designated character areas.

Site Design

Site design of commercial development is one of the most critical aspects of a successful project. Development proposals will be reviewed with respect to their response to physical characteristics of the site and to the contextual influences of the surrounding area. Both the physical site characteristics and contextual influences should be considered early and throughout design development:

- Environmental—existing vegetation, topographic features, minimally undisturbed natural areas, and drainage.
- Visual—view sheds, view corridors and primary views from on-site and off-site.

- The patterns, character and scale of existing and planned development in the immediate area.
- Potential connections and other relationships with adjoining development—i.e., pedestrian access points, shared driveways, off street vehicular connections, open space systems and landscape buffers and service corridors.
- Perimeter open spaces and buffer zones to provide for a smooth transition to lower intensity uses.
- All building frontages and sides of buildings oriented to the street or other public areas should incorporate a combination of arcades, pedestrian level display windows, storefronts, and entrances.
- Linear “strip” development must incorporate variation in building height, building mass, roof pitch, and changes in wall planes in order to mitigate the linear effect of a development. Particular attention should be made to building design when the building is adjacent to residential property or within any public view.



Materials

- Materials such as brick, stone, glass and clapboard should be encouraged as the dominant exterior cladding. These materials should be used on all four sides of new public and non-residential buildings.
- Concrete block, sheet metal and stucco may be considered as accent features; however, these should not be used as predominate building materials.
- Earthtones in red, buff, cream, white, and gray color ranges should be encouraged on the exteriors of new buildings.
- A single building or development or multiple buildings within a development must maintain a consistent style/architectural theme. Architectural design, building materials, colors; forms, roof style and detailing should all work together to express a harmonious and consistent design. This includes all “pads” within retail development as well as gasoline pump canopies or other accessory structures.
- Accessory buildings or structures, which are not compatible and consistent with the materials and design of the main building, are discouraged.

Public Spaces

- Development of a project of greater than 5 acres should include a publicly accessible outdoor space, such as a pedestrian plaza, pavilion or courtyard. A water feature, fountain, sculpture, or other art features may be considered in lieu of a larger outdoor space. Amenities such as specialty paving, specialty lighting and street furniture are required throughout the development.

Infrastructure

- All developments should provide safe and pleasant vehicle and pedestrian circulation patterns. The County

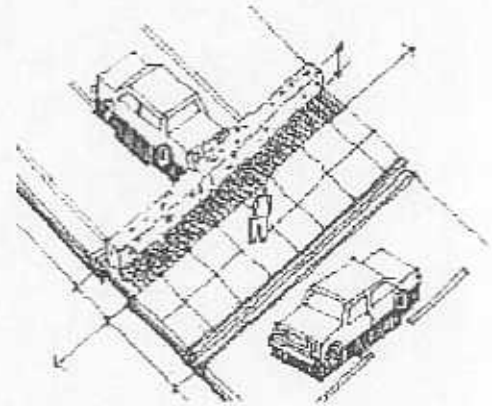


requires sidewalks along all rights of way to encourage interconnectivity between land uses.

- Shared driveways, internal vehicular circulation system linking properties and linkages of interior pedestrian systems to adjoining sites are encouraged.
- Trees can define the character of a roadway corridor and unify the diverse elements that make up the corridor's visual experience. Trees and natural vegetation should be used extensively throughout the development.
- Ensure that at least some part of the development of a site contributes to the liveliness of the street.
- Buildings placed along sidewalks shall have windows and doors facing the street, and should incorporate other architectural features.

Parking

- Parking should not only be provided between buildings and the street. In shopping centers, buildings shall be placed along the sidewalk so that at least 15% of the building has "street" presence.
- While off-street parking is essential for all but the smallest commercial projects, screening and buffering techniques can be used to effectively hide such areas and soften the visual effects associated with vast wastelands of asphalt.
- By delineating the edge of a project, landscaping actually serve to increase a projects visibility and hence its viability in the competitive setting of the corridor.
- Commercial developments are encouraged not to exceed parking requirements within the UDC and to seek opportunities and incorporate features intended too reduce the dependence on the automobile (i.e. enhanced accessibility to transit and pedestrian connectivity).



Section V. Future Land Use

■ Development Patterns

As stated in The Vision for Douglas County, the County's vision for the future is based on a pattern of continued growth focused on identified development nodes, corridors and character areas that discourage urban sprawl, inefficient use of infrastructure, and land use incompatibility, while maintaining and creating viable residential areas. It is the County's intent through their community character areas to address the overall vision of Douglas County as a vibrant live, work and play center on the outskirts of the metro-Atlanta area, while maintaining the County's small town feel.

These "Community Character Areas" are intended to ensure compatible and unified development within specified areas of the county. The Future Land Use Map is broken into the following Community Character Areas:

- Rural Places
- Suburban Living
- Urban Residential
- Transitional Corridor
- Neighborhood Village Center
- Community Village Center
- Mixed Use Corridor
- Workplace Center
- Commerce Corridor
- Intensive Industrial



As described in the next section, these Community Character Areas define the overall land use characteristics in generalized areas of the County, such as density, land use, economic development, natural and historic resources and types of community facilities. In addition, as outlined on the land use table, each character area identifies associated zoning districts for each character area. Character area designations and characteristics are designed to guide zoning decisions.

The outlined "Quality of Development Guidelines" and "Character Area Standards" should be used by Douglas County staff, the Planning Commission, the Board of Commissioners, and other boards in reviewing specific proposals for new development and major renovation proposals. Architects, property owners, and developers should also use the guidelines as a reference as they prepare plans for projects for the Douglas community. These guidelines cannot predict the unique potential and/or constraints for each project. Thus, the following guidelines are intended to establish a general direction and a base level of development quality and compatibility with surrounding areas.

It is recommended that Douglas County adopt a two-step growth management strategy that begins with the effort to define the character of a place (Community Character Areas) and ends with establishing the regulatory measures (such as adopted design guidelines by area, zoning districts or overlays) required to protect that character.

In order to get to step 2 the County should engage in developing urban design plans for individual nodes and corridors within the county. Typically, a natural outcome of an urban design plan is the recommendation to formulate design guidelines and implement regulatory controls to speak to specific development characteristics such as site planning, massing, scale, and density. This can be achieved several ways, one of which is to add the requirement for a concept plan for all applications during the rezoning process. Another method is the use of zoning overlay districts that supplement current zoning provisions and safeguard the designated area from development patterns that perpetuate sprawl. By implementing this type of control measure, Douglas County can continue to support Community Character Areas and Development Patterns

This Plan provides pro-growth policies while remaining confident about maintaining its desired character and pride of place. At a later time the County might consider an Architectural Review Committee to review, monitor and work with developers, architects and builders in implementing the guidelines.

It is initially recommended that the following areas be studied for detailed design standards and plans:

- Bankhead Highway Redevelopment Corridor
- Lithia Springs Community Village Redevelopment Center
- The Post Road Community Village

■ Future Land Use Plan Categories

The intent of the Land Use Element is to identify the most desirable pattern of land use in Douglas. This pattern is represented on the Future Land Use Plan map, which indicates areas appropriate to the various land use categories. These use categories are defined in this Section. The plan map is a representation of the Comprehensive Plan's goals and policies and, to a great extent, reflects current development patterns and trends, as well as current zoning approvals. The map designations indicate the predominant type of land use in the general areas identified. Guiding concepts for future land use in Douglas include:

- Ensure that future land use and development decisions are consistent with long range planning goals and policies and that such decisions promote social and economic well-being.
- Implement a land use plan that articulates a physical policy for a compact urban area and assures the availability of infrastructure concurrent with development that achieves the desires of the community's vision;
- Encourage and promote clean, high tech industrial development that strengthens the economic base of the community and minimizes air and water pollution.
- Promote development that is pedestrian-oriented, community centered and minimizes vehicular trips.

Future Land Use Plan Map

The Future Land Use map is a representation of the plan's goals and policies and indicates where various types of land uses are permitted. The plan map designations indicate predominant types of land uses, which are described below.

The Future Land Use Plan map was developed to illustrate the most desirable pattern of land use in Douglas. The Future Land Use Plan map was developed taking into consideration the land use pat-

terns illustrated on the County's Existing Land Use Plan Map, the Current Zoning Map, approved PUDs and other developments, topographic characteristics, natural resource sensitivity, the availability of infrastructure, and needs demonstrated by residential and employment forecasts. The needs and goals for each of the other chapters within the Comprehensive Plan were also used in development of the Future Land Use Plan map.

Interpretation

The plan is developed with the concept that the Future Land Use Plan map and the text are to be used as an integrated whole, with the map being a graphic representation of the text.

Interpretation of the Future Land Use Plan map is a process, which rests on the goals and policies expressed in the text. The land use designations on the map, both in terms of overall definition and intensity of land use types, require that policies and intent statements regulating the development and location of each land use type be evaluated and applied in the process of plan implementation.

Plan implementation is carried out through the application of regulations such as the Unified Development Code and through projects and programs outlined in the STWP. The Board of Commissioners administers it with input from the Planning Commission and planning staff. The procedure, once the plan is adopted, will involve checks for plan and ordinance consistency as part of the review for issuance of subdivision approvals and development and building permits.

If a specific land use or development project is proposed for an area but is not consistent with the designated use or density on the Future Land Use Plan map, it cannot be approved. The initial contact for plan interpretation begins with the Douglas Development Services Department. It is at this point that the proposal is evaluated for its conformity and compliance with the Comprehensive Plan and functional plans. In the event a use or development proposal is inconsistent with the Future Land Use Plan map or Comprehensive Plan policies, an applicant may file for a Comprehensive Plan Amendment in accordance with the amendment procedures contained in the UDC.

Future Land Use Categories

The following Table presents the land use categories, "Character Areas," as shown on the Future Land Use Plan map, and indicates those zoning districts that are most commonly compatible with the use designation. In addition, designations are shown as most commonly used in a Master Planned Development project. Specific requirements of the Unified Development Code, master plan site plan approval and other conditions control in all cases.

Future Land Use Categories				
Character Area	Description of Character and Pre-dominate Land Uses	Community Facilities	Zoning Districts	Master Planned Developments (MPDs)
Residential Character Areas				
Rural Places	Outlying rural areas with active farming and scattered single-family housing on large lots. Preservation of sensitive natural resources. Commercial Activity Centers within this area will be designated as Cross-river Villages Centers. Commercial development	Typically lacks public water and sewer is not planned. Very low level of services planned due to low	AG, RA, Designated Dog River Basin Area, and RR	Single-family, equestrian oriented and open space and master planned developments. Small interstad.com

<p>Country Crossroads*</p>	<p>should only be developed as designated on the FLUPM and within master planned developments.</p> <p>A Country Crossroads is a small, restricted commercial node located at existing "crossroads" within the rural places character area. Due to the sensitive residential orientation of the area, existing crossroads and limited future crossroads development will not be shown on the FLU map.</p>	<p>density nature of the area.</p> <p>Located with the Rural Places Character Area. Use of existing commercial areas.</p>	<p>Creek Overlay, Country Crossroads*</p> <p>C-N, OI-L Max 3,000 SF</p>	<p>mercial (see "crossroads") as designated.</p> <p>N/a</p>
<p>Suburban Living</p>	<p>Areas located outside identified centers that are experiencing a high volume of residential growth, primarily single-family houses. All non-residential development will be within designated corridors or master planned developments. Commercial Activity Centers will be designated as or NVCs.</p>	<p>Public water available, public sewerage available or planned; local public facilities</p>	<p>RLD, R-MD.</p>	<p>Single-family and duplex, MPD with limited institutional uses & neighborhood commercial. Limited Community Commercial with a special use permit.</p>
<p>Urban Residential</p>	<p>Urbanized and growth oriented areas experiencing growth pressures and potential compatibility issues. This character area is a transition from potential commercial and high-density pressure from growing activity centers. Various types of residential dwellings, mixed-use developments and transitional corridors. Commercial activity centers would include NVC, CVC, and Transitional Corridors.</p>	<p>Public water & sewer; regional public facilities.</p>	<p>R-LD, R-MD, R-D, R-TC, R-MF, R-MH</p>	<p>MPD featuring mixed housing uses, neighborhood commercial. Community Commercial with a special use permit.</p>

Future Land Use Categories				
Character Area	Description of Character and Pre-dominate Land Uses	Community Facilities	Zoning Districts	Master Planned Developments (MPDs)
Transitional Corridor	This corridor is designed to allow for transition from residential uses to compatible non-residential uses along major arterials or along roadways where major transportation improvements are planned. This corridor is restrictive in order to allow a smooth transition to surrounding residential. Size, parking and appearance standards apply to this district.	Linear transitional areas along major transportation corridors.	OI-L, C-N, C-C (limited)	Due to the linear nature of this corridor, and the potential abutment to single-family residential neighborhoods, master planned developments are not typically appropriate.
Neighborhood Village Center	Located at key crossroad intersections. Small-scaled neighborhood commercial with access and size restrictions.	Public water & sewer may be available. Good transportation Access.	C-N, OI-L	Mixed-use MPD Encouraged. "Main Street" style mixed use encouraged.
Community Village Center	Higher intensity of commercial activity intended to serve more than one neighborhood, uses such as retail, office and services.	Public water & sewer may be available. Arterial access. Regional public facilities	OI-L, C-N, C-C, C-G (limited)	Mixed-use MPD Encouraged. "Main Street" style mixed use encouraged.
Mixed Use Corridor	Designed as a redevelopment corridor for existing commercial/light industrial corridors, or new emerging corridors. Light industrial and heavy highway commercial uses are allowed only within the Bankhead Highway Redevelopment Area.	Public water & sewer may be available. Arterial access. Potential rail corridor access. Regional public facilities	OI-L, C-N, C-C, C-G, C-H*, LI*, LI-R, RMD, RTC	Mixed use and master planned developments are highly encouraged within this district. Additional design and site restrictions apply.
Workplace Centers	Intensive commercial retail and services, office and high tech development along major highway corridors that are considered major employment generators with an emphasis on landscaping and aesthetics. Integrated office parks are highly encouraged. Residential developments are also encouraged to be integrated into the overall design.	Public water & sewer available or planned in the near future. Arterial access. Rail Access. Regional public facilities	OI-L, OI-H, C-C, C-G, C-R, LI-R, RMD, RTC	Urban design characteristics and unity are major characteristics within planned developments.
Commerce Center	Industrial/Office Park development, employment generators and interstate-oriented commercial development.	Public water & sewer. Major transportation Access.	OI-L, OI-H, C-C, C-G, C-H, C-R, LI, LI-R	Mixed commercial and industrial uses are the preferred method of development.
Intensive Industrial	Large scaled and high intensity users that have potential negative impacts on residential uses.	Major transportation access.	HI	Usually stand alone use, but could be incorporated within an industrial park.

■ Residential Character Areas

Rural Places

Much of Douglas County's identity is tied to its rural and small town heritage. Although large-scale farms are not a major use within the county, many smaller homestead and "estate farms" still exist. In addition, areas of sensitive natural resources require additional protection. The intent of the Rural Places Character Area is to provide a residential-agricultural community, which benefits from its scenic rural landscape with much of its identity based on its agrarian past while accommodating residential growth and very limited "Country Crossroads" type commercial. A Country Crossroad is a small commercial area that provides very limited services to the adjacent population at existing crossroads locations. This character area encompasses outlying areas of the county where public water may or may not be available; but sewer is not available or planned.

Transition
from Rural to
Residential

- To retain and conserve the rural character in the area;
- To protect sensitive natural resources areas;
- To encourage and accommodate the further development of estates and mini farms that is consistent with growth policies of the County and that blend into the overall fabric of the County.
- The adoption of a policy to provide a lower level of service to these areas, in terms of transportation and sewer improvements in order to maintain and protect the rural character.



Primary Land Uses



Overlay area);

- Active farming, timbering and conservation uses;
- Large homesteads on individual lots;
- Large Lot Single Family Home Subdivisions;
- Equestrian and Golf Club Communities;
- Master Planned Developments with an overall density of 1 unit per 3 acres (except within the Dog River Watershed

Country Crossroads

Country Crossroads are very small commercial areas that currently exist along historic crossroads in the county that



have developed over the years to serve local needs. These areas are located in the rural area of the county. Due to the rural nature and single-family orientation of the surrounding area, crossroad hamlets are envisioned to be localized service providers that provide limited local convenience goods and services to the adjacent single-family rural environment. This character designation is not shown on the future land use plan map in order to limit these Country crossroads to existing locations, and to provide for limited expansion to prevent these small commercial uses from growing into neighborhood village centers. If the location merits larger expansion, a future land use map change should be applied for as a neighborhood village center.

- Existing retail/service providers within the rural places character area.
- Limited expansion within existing crossroads areas at existing intersections within the character area on a case-by-case basis.
- Convenience retailers and service providers under 3,000 square feet that shall be no more intense than neighborhood commercial zoning (NC);
- Primary guideline is that any commercial development should be compatible with surrounding residential properties and developed to serve a very limited immediate service area.

Suburban Living

As Douglas County continues to experience growth in both residential and commercial development, areas meant for traditional subdivision and commercial growth to serve nearby residents are necessary. The intent of this character area is to channel growth pressures to areas that are suitable in terms of land



use patterns and infrastructure investment, and to areas that have a more "suburban" feel. This character area also includes older established neighborhoods, and could include appropriate senior housing. Commercial nodes within this character area include existing country crossroads and neighborhood village centers. Neighborhood commercial villages, as described under "commercial character areas," are located at the intersections of major roads, and should be compatible with existing land uses through size, appearance and buffering. Special care should be taken to elimi-

nate any negative impacts, such as lighting, parking, and traffic. Large-scale commercial development is not appropriate within this character area. Public services and facilities are offered at a higher level of service to accommodate a denser population. Water and sewer are either existing or planned within this character area.

The purpose of the Suburban Living Character is:

- To retain and conserve the existing sound housing stock.
- To promote residential development that fosters a sense of community and provides essential mobility, recreation and open space.
- Accommodate upscale executive housing to meet the market demand.
- To provide for areas of innovative development, such as golf, master planned and traditional communities in appropriate locations.

Traditional
Subdivisions

- To stabilize and protect the essential characteristics of residential environments, including natural features.

Primary Land Uses

- Single Family Homes on individual lots;
- Traditional Single Family Home Subdivisions;
- Equestrian and Golf Club Communities;
- Master Planned and Open Space Developments;
- Senior Housing Developments; and
- Commercial Development
 - Country Crossroads;
 - Neighborhood Village Centers.



Urban Residential

Areas designated as Urban Residential are located primarily within areas that are currently experiencing growth pressures, such as outside of Douglasville and within areas that public water & sewer



and major transportation investment exists or are planned. This character area will serve as a transitional area from the higher density and commercial uses as planned by the City of Douglasville, while protecting existing and planned single-family neighborhoods. Compatibility issues of the surrounding area, and specifically established neighborhoods should be a primary policy determination of the type of new development that is approved. Minimum lot size varies by type of unit and whether public water and sewer serves the lot. Commercial activity centers that are appropriate include neighborhood and community villages and transitional corridors that are designed to serve the adjacent population. Master Planned developments of mixed housing and integrated development are highly encouraged within this area to further the transition from the City of Douglasville. Public Services and Facilities are provided to serve a denser population.

The purpose of the Urban Residential Character area is:

- To accommodate a variety of housing types suit the variety of Douglas County lifestyles and income levels.
- To allow for the conversion of sites to more intensive residential use when appropriate.

- To ensure compatibility between established single family and newer medium density development;
- To provide and maintain a supply of developable land throughout the urban area for residential and other supportive urban uses, as demand warrants and service capabilities permit;
- To encourage locating residential development where full urban services, public facilities, and routes of public transportation are available; and
- To permit, in certain sections of the County, multi-family housing developments which are consistent with growth policies of the County and which blend into the overall fabric of the County
- Develop residential areas that utilize innovative urban design principles that encourage community, pedestrian linkages and mixed-use environments.



Primary Land Uses

- All housing types; and
- Commercial:
 - Neighborhood Village Centers;
 - Community Village Centers; and
 - Transitional Corridors.

■ Commercial Districts

As growth continues, and changes occur in the infrastructure system, potential locations are created for commercial development businesses and residents within the area. Increase in through traffic volumes along a road generates a demand for increased goods and services. Major shopping centers often locate at interstate highway interchanges. Other shopping centers locate at major road intersections while highway-oriented stores, such as car dealerships and fast food establishments tend to concentrate along multi-laned roads. Small convenience stores typically locate at intersections near population concentrations.

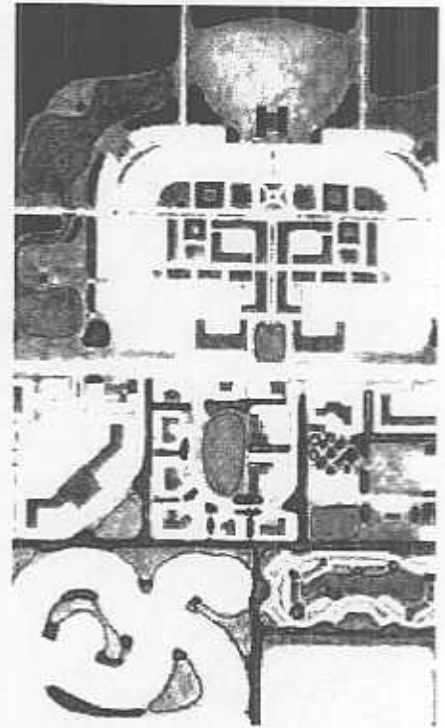


Offices are specifically addressed by two categories: Professional Offices and Office Centers. The Professional Office category allows for business and professional office uses with limited supportive commercial activity. This category is appropriate for small office complexes and in transition areas where existing residences are often converted into office use. The Retail Sales and Services category provides for a wide range of shopping and customer service facilities in the County. The category embraces neighborhood and community level shopping and service facilities as well as regional facilities such as North Point Mall. Developments in this category may be an individual store, restaurant or service business, a hotel or a shopping center. Individual office uses may also be found in this designation. Retail sales and service nodes have been developed at appropriate locations within the County to avoid "retail creep."

The second category, Office Center, provides flexibility for large developments and is intended to allow for an environment often referred to as a corporate campus. Office Centers often include limited convenience retail and business services establishments, as well as hotels and conference centers that are oriented to the employees and clients in the center.

The commercial designation indicates areas throughout Douglas that provide shopping and service opportunities of the following types:

- Regional retail facilities provide for the shopping and service requirements of the County and region.
- Community shopping and service facilities offer a wide variety of goods and services, including both convenience goods for neighborhood residents and shopping goods for a market area consisting of several neighborhoods.
- Neighborhood shopping and services facilities include: only those stores and services establishments that is easily accessible and is used frequently by neighborhood residents.
- Convenience stores are limited to food-oriented stores and personal services establishments close to residential uses.



In addition to considering the potential demand for increased commercial development, the Plan must also evaluate the desirability of commercial development at a given location. Concerns such as safety, traffic carrying capacity and compatibility with existing development need to be considered. Major principles of commercial development include concentrating commercial development at major intersections, restricting commercial activities which conflict with residential areas or impede the flow of traffic, and encourage shopping center type design standards for commercial development. The following criteria were developed to determine whether a location is desirable or undesirable for commercial development:

Commercial Land Use Evaluation Criteria				
Criteria	Very Desirable	Desirable	Marginal	Undesirable
Remaining Distance between intersections	<. 25 Miles	.25 - .50 Miles	.50 -1. Miles	>1.0 Mile
Service Area Populations	10,000	5,000-10,000	3,000-5,000	<3,000
Traffic Volume	>30,000	10,000-30,000	5,000-10,000	<5,000
Roadway Classifications	Interchange; Major Arterial	Arterial	Collector	Local Road
Intersection Type	Arterial W/Arterial	Arterial W/Collector	Collector W/Local	Local Road
Parcel Size	20 acres +	10-20 acres	5-10 acres	<5 acres
Current Land Use	Commercial Vacant	Vacant	Mixed Residential, Commercial, Vacant	Vacant and Single Family residential
Current Zoning	Commercial or Industrial	Commercial	High Density Residential.	Low Density Residential
Utilities Available	Water & Sewer	Water; Planned Sewer	Water	None
Future Land Use Map	Neighborhood or Community Village	Transitional mixed use corridor	Adjacent to village center or corridor	Rural or Residential Character Area

For example a very desirable corridor location would be less than ¼ mile from a major intersection, have a service population of more than 10,000, a traffic volume greater than 30,000 vehicles a day, be classified as a major arterial road, have a parcel size of more than 20 acres, have surrounding land uses being either commercial activities or vacant land and have water and sewer service.

The physical design of a commercial corridor or village contributes greatly to the overall image of the community; each has its own unique cultural qualities to attract residents, customers and visitors. The distinctive characteristics of buildings of varying ages make commercial corridors assets and are often one of the most interesting and satisfying aspects of the street. Thoughtful design improvements reinforce the positive identity of a community's retail area and create a "sense of place" that is distinct to the neighborhood.

Transitional Corridors

Small Businesses and services at your door

Areas suitable for designation as Transitional Corridors are those originally developed for single-family homes that have or will become impacted by adjacent multi-laned thoroughfares and commercial encroachment and may no longer be suitable primarily for residential use. In the past, individual properties have been rezoned and converted in a way that has often been disruptive from an urban design sense: parking lots have replaced front lawns; houses have been remodeled unprofessionally, resulting in structures with incoherent design elements; signage has often been out of proportion to the structure and use advertised.

In order to propose an orderly, safe and aesthetic transition, properties within designated transitional corridors can be considered for nonresidential use at intensity compatible with surrounding residential areas that maintain the essential residential "look" and feel of the area. Designation of this corridor is meant to encourage public and private investment that will promote vitality, activity and safety in the area, by controlling aesthetics, site planning and limiting non residential uses that will not overly impact existing residential neighborhoods adjacent to the site.

Transitional Corridors are located along a number of major thoroughfares that have been or are scheduled for widening, notably including portions of Highway 5.

Predominate Land Uses

- Existing residential dwelling units.
- Commercial services within converted residential dwelling units.
- Limited mix of selected retail uses that are considered "low impact."
- Infill commercial and residential that is compatible in look, density and mass to surrounding development.
- Senior Living Facilities.
- Small churches and community facilities.

Character Area Guidelines

Conversions and infill development should be evaluated as followed:

Site Design

- The new use should be compatible with the residential structure and the adjoining neighborhood and should not pose nuisance problems with nearby residential and/or office uses. Generally, light office use and small neighborhood services are compatible with houses.
- The new use should be compatible with the adjoining neighborhood and should not pose nuisance problems with nearby residential and/or office uses.
- The conversion's remodeling should be architecturally compatible with the neighborhood and must upgrade or at least be consistent with the basic architecture of the structure.

- Business hours should be limited to normal daytime hours.
- New building design should take into consideration the unique qualities and the dominant character of the surrounding area.
- New occupancies in converted houses should be limited to one business enterprise (with one business entrance) for structures under 2,000 square feet of gross leasable area. This will help eliminate overcrowding, proliferation of signs, elimination of landscaping, excessive on-site parking and parking overflow onto the street.
- The building must be compatible with the location, design, landscaping and other significant characteristics of public and private open space in relation to the site and adjacent properties.
- The architectural integrity and compatibility with surrounding properties, including siting, massing, proportion, scale, materials, colors, details, façade treatment, lighting and signage.
- Signs should be consistent with the form and materials of the building. Illuminated signs are not permitted when adjacent to existing residential uses.
- Mechanical equipment must be screened from public view and sited so as not to cause noise impacts on adjacent properties.
- Trash and garbage enclosures must be provided in rear yard areas.

Parking and Circulation

- The location and adequacy of off-street parking requirements. Vehicular circulation must take place on site; backing into the street is not allowed.
- When possible, parking should be placed in the rear or side of the structure. When parking must be placed in the front of the structure, parking areas should be kept out of the minimum setback if possible and screened from view.
- Landscaping must be installed in areas not designated for parking and circulation. Parking areas must have landscaping and be screened from public view.

Neighborhood Village Center

Neighborhood Village Centers are places where small-scaled commercial uses, such as a bank, grocery store, drug store, cleaner, and gas station, are arranged in a village-like setting that might include a neighborhood park, pedestrian circulation and public spaces. Thus, a neighborhood village center is envisioned as a compact assortment of convenience-oriented retail stores and services to address the demands of nearby residents in less urbanized parts of the county. From an urban design perspective, sidewalks are important circulation features in Neighborhood Centers, but even more important is the scale of the roads that serve these areas. Given its small scale and emphasis on small stores, a Neighborhood Center would be overwhelmed by wide thoroughfares carrying high-speed traffic and instead should rely on more modestly scaled roadways and tree-lined streets.

Adaptive re-use of existing structures and buildings is encouraged as a focal point.

Predominate Land Use

The
neighborhood
butcher, baker,
candlestick
maker

- Small-scaled grocery stores, bakeries, cafes and small retail shops.
- Personal services, such as laundromats, dry cleaners, barber/beauty shops, and video rental.
- Professional services such as lawyers, accountants, physicians and dentists
- Small churches.
- Community services.

Character Area Guidelines

A neighborhood village center should utilize the “Main Street” feel featuring specialty retail and personal services within a walkable and intimate environment.

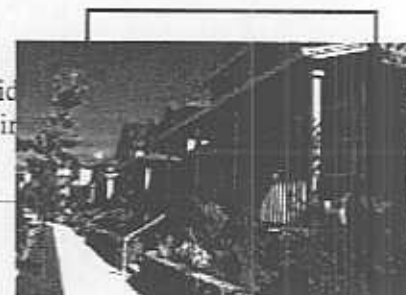
Site Design

- **Mix of Uses**—The use of low intensity office, services, retail, and integrated residential are all part of the integrated village center. Residential use is seen as utilizing vertical portions other parts of the integrated site, and should not occupy more than 20% of the overall village.
- Convenience Grocery Stores with gasoline sales or any other business with gasoline sales should meet the following locational standards, unless specifically approved by the BOC.
 - Only one such business within a commercial development;
 - No more than two such businesses within a ¼ mile proximity to any 4-way intersection (measured from edge of right-of-way; and
- Buildings should be **clustered** one and two stories and should respect the predominate scale of development in the surrounding area by designing with elements of similar scale and providing a gradual transition to any larger scaled masses proposed.
- **Building Design**—centers of up to 10,000 square feet, featuring small retail, services and professional offices up to 6,000 square feet.
- Similarly, **urban design elements** such as pedestrian lights, consistent signage, and landscaping contribute to the quaint character of Neighborhood Centers and create a sense of place in what may have once been little more than a crossroads.
- The use of coordinated and identified elements such as awnings, varying shingle styles or other natural materials, archways and façade landscaping.



Community Village Center

Typically located at the convergence of major transportation corridors, these centers are envisioned, as places where a compatible mixture of higher intensity uses



larger scaled shopping centers, professional offices and services. Mixed-use developments that combine residential, commercial, service and recreational uses integrated and linked together by a comprehensive circulation system are encouraged in these nodes. Community village centers include shopping and service facilities that offer a wide variety of goods and services, including both convenience goods for neighborhood residents and shopping goods for a market area consisting of several neighborhoods. Whereas someone might live near a neighborhood village center but work outside the county, the commercial village concept includes a variety of housing options, employment opportunities, businesses, office, retail shops, services, well-placed parks, plazas and open spaces that create a community where it is possible to live, work and play. Land use components co-exist as part of a collective approach to creating communities that are safe, attractive, and convenient for pedestrians and motorists alike. Natural and historic resources within community village centers should be enhanced and preserved as a means of defining a distinct identity or sense of place. Improved connections to natural assets, both pedestrian and vehicular, particularly from existing and developing higher density residential communities tie the village together. A Community village center should create a focal point for its surrounding neighborhoods.

Predominate Land Uses

- Shopping Centers containing an anchor such as a grocery or large drug store.
- Small office complexes such as “office condominiums”, financial institutions with drive-thru facilities, places of worship, full service restaurants and medical/dental clinics.
- Small residential component, such as lofts, or residences above ground level office or retail.
- Community gathering spaces and institutional uses, such as libraries, churches and community centers.
- Entertainment and cultural arts should be a major focus of investment in the village.



Character Area Design Guidelines

Building Design

- Buildings should be designed to conform to architectural standards and oriented in close proximity to each other to facilitate walking instead of driving.
- The design of a building that occupies a pad or portion of a building within a planned project or shopping center should share similar design characteristics and design vocabulary. Precise replication is not desirable, instead utilizing similar colors, materials and textures as well as repeating patterns; rhythms and proportions found within the architecture of other build-



ings in the center can be utilized to achieve unity.

- **Building Type.** It is encouraged that buildings be two level connected spaces and a mix of over-all uses.
- Taller buildings or portions of a building should be located internally to a site with buildings stepping down in height as they reach the edges of the site that are adjoined by smaller scaled development.
- Mix of uses, including integrated residential. The residential portion of the development should not be more than 35% of the overall development and should be totally integrated into the design in materials and circulation matters. Mixed use projects that feature vertical integration (such as ground floor retail with living units above), with an emphasis on greater street presence.

Site Design

- The development of urban public parks, plazas and other open space should be integrated into the overall design.
- Community facilities such as schools, branch libraries, and government services, pocket parks and plazas serve as anchors for community village centers and help to create identity.
- Outdoor dining areas are encouraged and when part of the development program, should be used to activate plazas, the edges of open space, building frontages and street frontages. Outdoor dining areas should be oriented away from off-site uses that are sensitive to noise or nighttime activity.

Access and Parking

- Access is provided through a comprehensive system of streets, sidewalks and greenways that intersect at key locations and connect residential areas to commercial uses.
- Parking should be conveniently located with the same pull-right-up, walk-in and walkout convenience of traditional shopping centers, while at the same allowing for the buildings and design features to be in the forefront.
- Ground floor pedestrian traffic patterns, compatibility with adjacent street front uses and compatibility with any proposed residential uses or residential uses within the vicinity.
- Parking should be located to the rear or sides of the development whenever possible.
- **Transportation Circulation.** Whereas transportation efforts in a neighborhood village center might focus on traffic calming measures along "Main Street," a community village center presents greater challenges related to coordinating a variety of alternative transportation opportunities.

Mixed Use Corridor

The mixed-use corridor is a special designated corridor to encom-



Doug

Auto Driven
Power
Shopping

pass an existing working commercial and light industrial corridor that will be going through transitional use and continued development as transportation improvements are made. Mixed-use developments incorporating commercial and office uses fronting major commercial corridors of the community, and light industrial along the Bankhead Highway Corridor.

This corridor relies on major transportation access, particularly from interstates or major arterials, including rail access. Similarly, the provision of adequate public services in the form of water, sewer, and power are critical to the functionality of these areas. This corridor is intended to create a pleasant, hazard-and-nuisance-free environment and does not create either appreciable nuisance or hazard to other property, individuals, or the public in general. The purpose of this corridor is the creation of an inviting commercial and mixed-use area. "How does my particular building work in the street, and what elements can I add to create an inviting and pleasant environment."

These corridors are envisioned as destinations for expanded interstate trade opportunities, small business opportunities and would accommodate higher densities in order to create a synergy between retail, office, industry, other commercial uses and medium density residential. Development of a wide range of housing choices can be important to ensuring the viability of these corridors. Such a mix would enable people to live in close proximity to their workplace. The intent of the mixed-use corridor designation is to provide a variety of tracts for heavy commercial uses, light industrial and employment uses that are limited to office and business parks, distribution/service, light industrial, high-technology and research, wholesaling companies and similar businesses that have no significant impacts on the environment. When located at the perimeter of a Future Land Use Map Commerce Corridor area, uses that are lower in intensity and scale to ensure minimal impact to adjacent properties is required.

From an urban design standpoint, the most critical element in creating a visually appealing mixed-use corridor is the enforcement of appropriate development standards to ensure adequate site plans and landscaping. Buffers are critical between incompatible uses and guidelines that address signage and lighting will help to mitigate the negative impacts of a high concentration of commercial uses

Primary Land Uses

- Light industrial (only within the Bankhead Highway Corridor).
- Hotels and mixed residential uses.
- Medical and dental offices.
- Auto oriented services and repair shops.
- Highway type commercial, except for large land consumers such as car dealerships and mini warehouses

Character Area Guidelines

Site Design

- **Mix of Uses:** Corridors are suitable for office buildings, research and development, research and development activities, restrictive industrial, warehousing, and light manufacturing which will not have an adverse impact upon the environmental quality of the village. Mixed use projects that feature vertical integration (such as ground floor retail with living units above), with an emphasis on greater street presence.
- Make entrances obvious and welcoming. Main entrances should be oriented to the street or internal plaza and pedestrian ways.
- Restricted light industrial should be located off of secondary roads or industrial park developments whenever possible.

- The number of restaurants with a drive through, car washes, automobile repair/service, or gasoline sales (combined or not combined with another business) is limited in number to a total of one per 10 acres or portions thereof.
- Drive through windows, menu boards, equipment and associated stacking lanes should be located to minimize impacts on adjacent residential areas and should be adequately screened from public view and view of adjacent sites.

Parking, Circulation and Access

- **Parking:** Decks should be “wrapped” by retail or residential uses”. The providing of parking in an adjoining development manner among owners and developers of adjoining properties should be encouraged.
- **Roadway & Streetscapes**—the use of street trees, landscaped medians and improved lighting for safety and aesthetics.
- The parking or storage of trucks, trailers, or containers is prohibited within the minimum front setback.
- Accessory, temporary, outdoor storage of retail goods in containers may be considered in limited applications, and only when the following items are addressed:
 - Landscape setbacks are maintained;
 - Parking is maintained;
 - Views are blocked with walls or other acceptable method to the County;
 - Noise and fire concerns are addressed;
 - Access is maintained; and
 - The type of container is acceptable to the County.

Workplace Center

Considered major employment centers utilizing a mixture of commercial, office and some residential uses, these character areas are located primarily along major transportation connections. Corridor housing would provide a customer base for offices, café, restaurants, and retail uses located on the corridor, and also enhance the safety of the corridors by maintaining a continuous population base in a location that is

Shop, Work &
Play in a
Great
Environment



typically unpopulated in the evening hours.

From an urban design standpoint, the most critical element in creating a visually appealing workplace center is the enforcement of appropriate development standards to ensure adequate site plans and landscaping. Buffers are critical between incompatible uses and guidelines that address signage and lighting will help to mitigate the negative impacts of a high concentration of commercial uses. Vast amounts of parking and loading/unloading areas should be screened from view. Where possible the parking areas should be distributed to two or more sides of the business to “visually scale down” the size of the parking lot. Inter-parcel access between sites should be used whenever possible. Grouping or “clustering” of shops with co-mingled parking, landscaping and pedestrian areas is encouraged



Primary Land Uses

- “Showplace” operations such as offices and research facilities, sales and show rooms, medical complexes.
- Comprehensive and cohesive unified projects that integrate commercial, office and residential uses.
- High rise office buildings.
- Retail, dining, personal business and professional services that support the employment base and local residents.
- Major Commercial shopping, including department stores and “big box” uses that is integrated into the overall design of the complex.
- Warehouse, distribution and wholesaling businesses when transportation facilities are sufficient.
- Light industrial uses within planned centers.
- Convention hotels, motels.

Character Area Guidelines

Center Design

- Workplace centers should be designed as a coordinated whole, and integrated into surrounding character of the center. Office and industrial parks are encouraged
- A sense of entry or arrive must be created at primary entryways into the development. Building placement, landscaping, gates, entry monuments, specialty lighting and other design elements can be used to create this design effect.
- Buildings should be designed to conform to architectural standards and oriented in close proximity to each other to facilitate walking instead of driving.
- The design of a building that occupies a pad or portion of a building within a planned project or shopping center should share similar design characteristics and design vocabulary. Precise rep-

lication is not desirable, instead utilizing similar colors materials and textures as well as repeating patterns, and rhythms and proportions found within the architecture of other buildings in the center can be utilized to achieve unity.

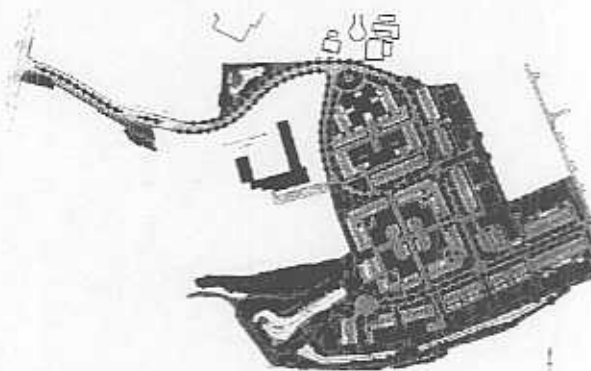
- A transition from low buildings at the site perimeter to larger and taller structures on the interior of the site is encouraged.
- Use lighting to draw attention to window displays, signs, and store information and buildings architectural details.
- Signage should be consistent in scale with other signs within the corridor/center, and that complement a building's architecture.
- Pedestrian scaled signs should be used with fonts and colors that are legible.

Access, Parking and Circulation

- Where parking structures have a strong relationship to the street or other pedestrian areas, the lower level of the structure should be activated with pedestrian related improvements, and store-fronts or alternative uses and enhanced landscape treatment to soften the structure. Other sides of parking structures should also be landscaped with increasing intensity the more visible the parking structure is from surrounding uses.
- Workplace centers should include pedestrian spaces scaled with respect to the size and demands of the particular use. The space should incorporate landscaping, shaded areas and seating opportunities for customers and employees.

Commerce Center

Under normal circumstances, certain types of industrial uses and major employment generators may place heavy demands on public facilities or cause significant impacts on the environment. The industrial uses allowed within the County are not intended to create such problems or demands. The intent of the Commerce Center is to provide a variety of tracts for industrial and employment uses that are limited to office and business parks, warehouse centers, distribution/service, large scaled commercial, light industrial, high-technology and research, wholesaling companies and similar businesses that have no significant impacts on the environment. Developments using planned development concepts are encouraged, such as business parks, campus settings and commercial/industrial mixed-use projects. When located at the perimeter of a Future Land Use Map Commerce Center area, uses that are lower in intensity and scale to ensure minimal impact to adjacent properties is required. In addition, certain commercial uses such as car dealerships, truck terminals and car washes require careful site planning to minimize curb cuts and reduce the perception of parking as the primary use.



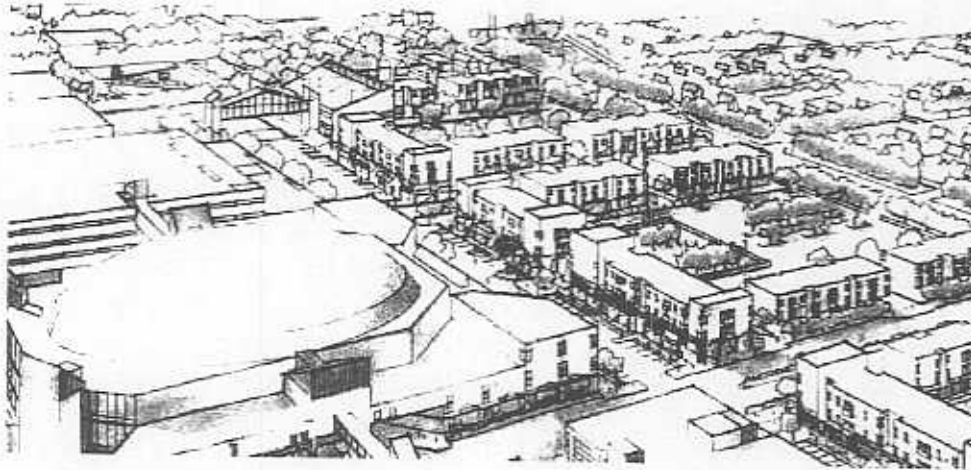
Primary Land Uses:

- "Highway Commercial" type uses that are integrated into an overall design, such as sales and show rooms, storage garages, car and mobile home dealers.
- Large scaled light and general industrial uses, office buildings and parks.

Character Area Guidelines

Related Design to Site and Surroundings

- The building design and landscaping of any new development should be of a high quality and of an appearance that will enhance and be compatible with the character of the surrounding area.



Internal Circulation

- All developments should be designed with internal pedestrian circulation patterns. Sidewalks are required and should be identified in the design phase and provided for the design process. These include linkages to individual buildings, neighboring properties and parking. Inter-parcel site access and shared driveways are desirable between similar uses.

■ Intensive Industrial

This area is established to provide for intensive industrial uses such as landfills, quarries, and other industrial uses that are potential public nuisances, are identified as environmentally hazardous or are potentially dangerous to health, safety or general welfare of the county. These manufacturing and industrial uses impact the surrounding environment differently than other industrial uses due to transportation requirements, waste storage and disposal, and chemical byproducts from production and processing. Such uses require a special consideration in order to be located anywhere in the County.

The Bad,
the Ugly,
but
Necessary

■ Other Land Use Categories

Transportation/Communications/Utilities

This category designates existing electric substations, telephone facilities, cable TV, transmission towers and satellite downlink operations in the County. There are no known plans for future locations for such facilities, which will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The category also includes all streets and highways in the County.

Parks/Recreation/Open Space



The Parks/Recreation/Open Space land use classification is for those areas within the County that has been developed for park or recreation use or is designated open space. The recreation and park areas illustrated on the map include neighborhood, community and regional parks, recreation facilities and golf courses. Not all developed or needed open space areas are indicated on the Future Land Use Plan map. Open space is required in all zoning Master Plans submitted

to the County and is required in other developments when necessary to address recreational and aesthetic concerns, or to create a buffer between different land uses, or as required by the Unified Development Code.

Public/Institutional

This designation includes sites and facilities in public ownership for such uses as medical, educational, cultural, governmental, administrative and protective services, and cemeteries. Churches, though institutional in character, are not singled out in this category; rather, they are included within the categories of surrounding properties.



Agriculture/Forestry

Two major farms have been identified in the south end of the county

Undeveloped

There are no areas are designated to be Undeveloped on the Future Land Use Plan map. As shown on the Future Land Use Table, the County will be built out by the year 2025. Although some lands may remain vacant and undeveloped by that time, their locations cannot be anticipated.



Section VI. Land Use Assessment

Through careful planning, Douglas has positioned itself toward becoming a "Signature City" of well-designed residential and non-residential projects. Although growth is projected to continue, the County is maturing. Demand for both residential and non-residential development will continue to be high, in fact, without changes in land use policy and annexation the County will not be able to accommodate projected growth. Over the next few years Douglas will review innovative development techniques and land use policies that can potentially accommodate growth. The challenge for the County over the next few decades will be to balance the built and non-built environment, while at the same time continuing to offer amenities such as Greenspace that have created the high quality of life within the County.

- Since 1980, unincorporated Douglas County's population has more than doubled, increasing by 105% to an estimated 81,200 today.
- Past trends suggest that the population in the unincorporated area could double again, increasing 110% to 170,400 by the year 2025.
- The age group 35 to 54 years old comprises the largest percentage of the population (32%). This group statistically is usually single-family homeowners that have school age children.
- Although currently more than half of the population is comprised of young families with children, the mature population with older children is steadily increasing.
- As the county's age characteristics continue to diversify, community facility improvements and housing should also diversify to meet the wide range of ages and lifestyles.
- Overall income levels and educational levels are below regional levels.
- The County will continue to growth and experience demand pressures due to its location within metro Atlanta.
- The population chapter should serve as the background for other chapters, and provides the demographic basis for an overall assessment of needs for the county, infrastructure expansion and investment, determination of residential mix and density, determination of residential and non-residential mix, and sets the stage for designing the future land use plan map.

■ Assessment

- There are currently 27,300 jobs among all economic sectors outside of the City of Douglasville. By the year 2025 the number of jobs could more than double to 67,500, a 148% increase.
- Douglas County is still primarily a bedroom county to the Metro area. 63% of residents commuted outside the county in 2000.
- A strong and diverse economy is important to provide a stable and balanced tax base.
- Commuter patterns suggest that there are limited employment opportunities for upper management, professional and skilled employees living within the county.
- Education levels lag below surrounding counties. Continued economic growth and stability will depend on increased educational levels for all age groups and degree levels.

- Legitimate start up businesses cannot afford even the low commercial lease rates that Douglas County has to offer. County needs to develop mechanisms for fledgling companies to effectively do business and get off the ground.
- Infrastructure and available land will play a critical role in attracting the appropriate mix of employment opportunities.
- Upwards of 600 acres of additional office and commercially zoned land is needed to accommodate future retail and service uses, both of which will be attracted to the county by its population growth and resulting increase in disposable income.

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11. Plan Implementation

■ Introduction

The previous chapters provided a basic inventory and an assessment of needs related to the eight elements of the Douglas County's Comprehensive Plan: population; economic development; housing, natural resources, historic and cultural resources; community facilities and services; transportation; intergovernmental coordination, land use and implementation. However, without an overall strategy for implementation, the Plan's goals and strategies will not be realized. This element merges and coordinates the goals and strategies arising from the separate plan elements into an overall implementation strategy to direct the Plan over the next 20-years. Complementing this long-term implementation strategy is the Five-Year Short Term Work Program. The Short Term Work Program sets out specific actions and time frames for the next five years to implement the Plan—who is suppose to do what, when and where the money is coming from.

Lastly, this chapter sets out provisions for annual review, amendment and updating the Plan as time goes by and changes occur, whether or not anticipated in the forecasts of future development or in the County's vision for the future.

■ Implementation Process

Communication: The first step in the implementation process is communication. However, to fully communicate the values of the planning process, the Board of Commissioners and Planning Commission have been fully apprised of the Plan's overall goals, facility needs and the strategies necessary to address these needs. This communication step is not limited to the policy makers but has been extended to the citizens and businesspersons in the community as well. The public is aware of the processes involved to create the Comprehensive Plan, how they can contribute to the process, and how the plan will be implemented.

Formal Adoption: The second step was formal adoption by the Board of Commissioners and Planning Commission after two public hearings were held. The Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners will then use the Comprehensive Plan as a guide for making decisions that will affect future growth in Douglas County. Unless the goals and strategies are accepted and embraced by the Board of Commissioners, the planning commission, residents, and business interests, the Comprehensive Plan will have little value.

Continuous Monitoring: To ensure that the Comprehensive Plan remains a useful tool for guiding growth, it will be monitored for its impact and modified periodically to reflect changing community conditions. As part of plan implementation, the Plan's Five-Year Short Term Work Program is to be updated annually and extended into another year to maintain the five-year horizon.

■ Implementation Tools

Management and Regulatory

Unified Development Code

Douglas County recently transformed the County's zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations and other land use regulatory controls into a Unified Development Code (UDC). The UDC combines and consolidates all phases of the land development process from the zoning of a piece of property to the actual development of this property. Like its predecessor (the zoning ordinance), the UDC will continue to regulate the use of the lot, lot size, building bulk and height, and setbacks. In addition, it will regulate the manner in which land may be subdivided to ensure that each subdivision meets standards as to minimum block and lot sizes, streets, relationship to existing streets, and provisions for open space, schools, and other public facilities and the protection of natural resources. The UDC is a valuable and necessary tool for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and for the creation of quality developments within Douglas County.

Water Quality

The Douglasville/Douglas County Water & Sewer Authority (WSA) has recently taken over the responsibility of monitoring both soil & erosion control and stormwater facilities within Douglas County, including the City of Douglasville. WSA will continue to work on protecting water quality by implementing its Stormwater Management Plan. WSA will also continue to act as Douglas County's representative in the ongoing North Georgia Water Planning District Plan.

Detailed Planning Studies

Detailed plans, such as a Solid Waste Management Plan, Park and Recreation Plan, Greenspace Plan, Capital Facilities Plan or a Comprehensive Transportation Plan, are adopted as implementing measures of the Comprehensive Plan. In addition the County will advance on several small area studies within the county as outlined in the STWP, such as the Lithia Springs Town Center Study, The Bankhead Highway Redevelopment Corridor, and the Post Road Interchange Study. These are more detailed planning studies for specific elements within the Plan. However, all facility improvements recommended by these plans will conform to the overall Comprehensive Plan.

Incentives

The County can implement incentives to encourage certain types of private development that will contribute significantly to the public good. Several development options that promote good design and protection of natural resources and an overall streamlining of the regulatory process has been one of the focuses of the new UDC.

Fiscal

Capital Improvements Program

The Douglas County Capital Improvements Program (CIP) provides the link between the planning effort and the operational budget of the County. Capital improvement programming is the scheduling of selected physical plans and facilities over a five-year period. These improvements are based on level of service needs, stated priorities, and the present and expected financial capabilities of the County.

Fiscal Programs

The County will continue to investigate a range of tools to deal with the fiscal impacts of development, including impact fees, adequate public facility standards, and fiscal impact assessment requirements. The Capital Improvements Plan and Level of Service standards could provide the basis for substantiating impact fees in the community when and if the County chooses to develop a program. Other financial tools may include continued SPLOST funding and available state and federal grants.

These tools will help to ensure that new development is of a type and quality that does not undermine the fiscal health of the city and county.

Capital Investment

The county is committed to providing infrastructure and services in areas targeted for development in the comprehensive plan. Major transportation improvements, public water and sewer investment will be aimed at providing services to areas of medium density and commercial and industrial development.

■ **Public Awareness and Cooperation**

Interagency/intergovernmental Cooperation

The County's 10th Year Comprehensive Plan Update paved the way for an increase in cooperation among internal departments, outside agencies and the municipalities within the county limits. During this process the County met with other governing bodies to develop a cooperative working relationship and the sharing of mutual information. Agency heads from the Board of Education, The Development Authority, and the Water and Sewer Authority were members of the Citizen Stakeholder Committee that participated extensively on both the County's UDC and Comprehensive Plan Development. Monthly meetings were held throughout the planning process with the City of Douglasville to discuss coordination of land use, annexation policy, infrastructure investment and service delivery. Continued coordination efforts between the City of Douglasville and Douglas County will result in a Countywide Comprehensive Transportation Plan and the Expansion of public Water and Sewer through WSA.

Citizen Involvement

Citizen involvement was critical in the development of this comprehensive plan Update. A comprehensive plan that is written in a vacuum will not accurately identify the goals and needs of the citizens of the community. The Douglas County Board of Commissioners, Planning Commission and Development Services Staff all recognize that citizen involvement would be important in the planning process. This Plan and its related UDC were developed utilizing open public forums, a diverse stakeholders committee and media outlets to gather input, comments and an understanding of the issues. The development of a countywide Vision has been integrated throughout individual elements, and provides the foundation for the land use element and future land use plan map and this implementation strategy. Douglas County's long history of involving its citizens within the planning process is expected to continue with the creation of a development review committee, DERK and the initiation of the Countywide Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

■ Goals and Strategies

The following goals reflect the assessment of existing conditions and desired future results discussed in the various chapters of this Plan, coupled with the advice and guidance generated through the intensive public participation program. The underlying principle of the goals is to reach the vision of Douglas County as addressed in the Introduction Chapter of this Comprehensive Plan.

Economic Development Goal ... strengthen and sustain the economic base of Douglas County.

Strategies that will address these needs include...

Continue to coordinate with, provide vital economic information to, and support the Douglas County Chamber of Commerce and Development Authority, its existing Industries Committee and local businesses and industries towards the retention of existing businesses and the attraction of new businesses.

Enhance overall quality and attractiveness of Douglas County by increasing cultural amenities, striving to strengthen services, improving the education system, maintaining the physical integrity of structures and the physical environment and to provide districts for executive housing options.

Maintain and periodically update a commercial area database linked to a GIS system that would utilize primary data and secondary data collected from business licenses, appraisal data and local real estate data.

Coordinate transportation planning efforts with land use planning so that efficient and ordered linkages are developed and access to such facilities is available to those with and without private transportation.

Review proposals for industrial development based on potential tax revenues, service expenditures, and quality of worker, infrastructure availability and environmental effects.

Require developers to perform a fiscal and environmental impact analysis on each large development.

Establish an education roundtable to discuss ways to maintain and improve the quality of the public education system.

Encourage the development of a local apprenticeship program that provides technical, mechanical, and crafts experience to local children.

Establish a tourism committee of the County, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Development Authority, which, as part of its mandate, will establish and maintain contacts with key members of the tourism industry, the Georgia Department of Tourism and Trade, and others, and make recommendations for incentives to attract tourism-related industries to the County.

Natural and Scenic Resources Goal ... Preserve, protect and nurture the qualities of the natural and historic environment of the County.

Strategies that will address these needs include...

Encourage development patterns and land use, which enables the County to protect, enhance and preserve sensitive areas, through identification of sensitive areas on the Future Land Use Plan Map, and the appropriate development regulations to ensure such protection.

Promote best management practices that limit soil erosion from agricultural operations, commercial and residential development sites, and the promotion of tree protection.

Protect water quality including those sources used for drinking water, recreational activities, and other water bodies such as Non-watershed Rivers; streams and creeks by meeting or exceeding minimum state standards for water supply watersheds and groundwater recharge areas.

Protect and preserve viable agricultural lands, wetlands, steep slopes and ridgelines, and other environmentally sensitive areas from incompatible activities and development, and mature trees during the development process and other land disturbance activities.

Develop an overall countywide environmental improvement and maintenance effort coordinated with efforts at the regional level, state and federal levels.

Actively reduce the solid waste stream within the county.

Ensure the integrity of those historic and archaeological resources found in Douglas County to ensure that they are not removed from the County without permission.

Enhance the County's Greenspace plan so that sensitive natural areas are identified and acquire land with the intent of developing public parks or preserves. Encourage the protection of sensitive areas through innovative land use techniques and conservation easements.

Continue the actions of the Open Space Committee/Task Force to advance the open space goals of the County, including increasing the awareness of County residents of the codes and ordinances in place to maintain and protect open space, mature trees and natural areas.

Review and evaluate local government codes and ordinances, and enforcement procedures targeted to the prevention and enforcement of illegal waste disposal activities.

Survey locations of point source pollution outfalls emptying into local water resources in order to target these locations for control or elimination

Historic Resources Strategies...Preserve and protect historic and cultural resources within the county.

As part of the development process provide for the protection for historic and archaeological sites and structures considered important to the community.

Establish guidelines for the excavation of historically and archaeologically important sites within the County.

Encourage and promote educational efforts designed to enlighten the public concerning the value and importance of local historic and archaeological resources.

Public Facilities and Services Goal ... provide for efficient, effective and high quality public facilities and services for the citizens and businesses of Douglas County.

Develop a capital facilities plan according to existing capacity, preferred level of service and projection of need calculated within the Capital Facilities Chapter of this Comprehensive Plan.

Implement the 20-year Capital Improvement Plan through the annual STWP and budget process.

New development will be served with public facilities that meet or exceed established level of service standards.

Fair and predictable standards will be developed for allocating infrastructure costs between areas of the county.

Sanitary sewer services will be target as a priority to areas with business and industry potential, such as areas along major transportation routes.

Sanitary sewer services will generally be provided to new residential development other than low-density rural residential uses, in support of land use goals related to efficient growth and in furtherance of water conservation goals.

The County will complete a master parks plan and identify future park sites and facilities will meet or exceed acceptable levels of service standards for parks and recreation facilities.

The county will that promote a linked system of parks and open spaces.

The County will ensure that all residents have access to cultural opportunities, facilities and programs.

Optimize efficiency and effectiveness of services through the coordination of land use planning and infrastructure financing.

To ensure a variety of passive and active park, open space and recreational facilities and opportunities are available and accessible to all residents of the County.

Continue to utilize and update as necessary design and construction criteria for all new public and private facilities, additions and modifications to existing facilities, and require compliance with or exceed all local, state, and federal standards including the Americans with Disabilities Act.

Implement and update the maintenance action plan for all County facilities to ensure maximum utilization of existing facilities.

Evaluate the delivery of public services in relation to current and projected demand as part of a 20-Year Public Service Action Plan.

Work with WSA to coordinate future land use, population and employment projections and the location and capacity of line extensions.

Use water conservation techniques to conserve and wisely utilize water resources through the establishment of educational and public relations mechanisms focusing on the conservation and efficient utilization of local water resources.

The County will explore standards for ensuring that public facilities and services are available concurrently with development that require such facilities.

The county will explore adding fiscal impact analysis requirements to their development codes to establish a solid foundation for fairly allocating infrastructure costs.

The county will continue to maintain and upgrade existing infrastructure to accommodate and encourage infill and redevelopment within its boundaries.

The county will explore a maintenance and enforcement program for septic systems to ensure that such systems adequately function in a fashion that protects public health and water quality.

Solid Waste

Promote recycling activities concurrent with the Douglasville/Douglas County Solid Waste Plan and regional, State and Federal guidelines, continue to identify additional markets for recycled products, and target recycled products as a percentage of total purchases.

Maintain and enhance current efforts by private citizens and governmental agencies to clean up litter.

Continue to utilize inmate and community service labor to clean up trash and litter

Continue to emphasize education and public relations activities to increase awareness of current programs to reduce the solid waste stream even further, including source reduction, composting, recycling and personal waste reduction programs, as well as the implications of non-compliance.

The County shall continue to promote solid waste reduction through the purchase of recycled materials where feasible.

Public Safety Strategies...

Develop a comprehensive public safety plan for the County based on existing capacity, preferred level of service and future demand.

Require inclusion of public safety infrastructure (such as fire hydrants, adequate fire flow pressure, and emergency access routes) in development plans.

Update, and revise where necessary the Board of Health Strategic Plan to meet projected needs as identified in the Community Facilities Chapter of this Comprehensive Plan. Continue to implement the Board of Health Strategic Plan.

Update as necessary the Parks and Recreation Master Plan based on the current assessment and statement of needs as identified within this plan, for active parks, recreational facilities and passive open space.

Utilize the Greenspace program to target lands within small water supply watersheds such as the Dog River, Bear Creek, and Anneewakee Creek watersheds, and other environmentally sensitive areas as potential locations for passive recreation.

Continue to integrate pedestrian and bicycle trail linkages from residential and commercial areas to parks, open space and other recreational facilities through the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan component of the Comprehensive Plan's Transportation and Thoroughfare Plan.

Cultural and Library Strategies...

Increase the offering of, and participation in cultural events, programs, and organizations. Consider the development of cultural institutions in Douglas County such as a performing arts center, art museum, concert hall, history museum, and other institutions.

Complete a master parks plan to identify the amount and type of parkland that will meet or exceed the acceptable level of service standards as established in the Community Facilities Chapter of this plan.

Promote a linked and accessible system of parks, recreational areas and open spaces that will provide connectivity throughout the county.

Educational Strategies...

Communicate and coordinate with Board of Education concerning future growth areas and the County's plans for provision of public schools to meet future capacities. Identify future school districts on the Future Land Use Plan.

Coordinate development and forecast information to promote coordinated timing of infrastructure, growth and educational needs.

Continue to promote local opportunities for human resource development and employee training.

Transportation Goal ... provide a comprehensive and coordinated multi-modal transportation system which will provide multiple options for safe, convenient, environmentally friendly, and efficient inter-County and intra-County mobility to all residents and employees within the county.

Actively plan for improvements to the local transportation system through a regional, collaborative context involving other cities and counties, the GA DOT and the Atlanta Regional Commission.

Develop and implement alternative modes of transportation in addition to the auto that will better serve the public and achieve regional, state and federally established transportation goals and air quality standards.

Proactively increase transportation infrastructure capacity, safety, accessibility, efficiency and mobility in the context of the Future Land Use Plan Map.

Minimize negative social and environmental impacts due to transportation facilities on residential neighborhoods, adjacent land uses, the County as a whole, and the region in general.

Address the need for aviation facilities.

Budget annually for transportation projects and develop new and innovative sources of funds for both locally programmed projects and use as leverage to obtain state and federal funding.

Implement a street beautification program to improve and enhance the aesthetic environment of the roadway network in residential, commercial and industrial areas.

Continue to encourage transit, high occupancy vehicle lane development, and ridesharing programs with express bus service to key employment destinations on a local and regional level.

Housing Goal ... Achieve an appropriate mix of housing opportunities for current and future residents.

Based on the inventory and assessment presented above, the County needs to...

Foster a variety of housing options including a variety of housing type, size, price, density and site conditions to meet every market niche through the use of innovative development techniques, such as mixed-use villages, loft development and master planned developments.

Maintain, protect and enhance the viability, character and identity of established neighborhoods, communities and rural settlements.

Carefully consider appropriate types of redevelopment and infill land uses to ensure compatibility.

Perform a comprehensive housing market analysis to determine housing need and types of homes in demand.

Develop a residential district that would include a minimum unit size, and quality design standards appropriate for move-up and executive housing options.

Utilize innovative, state-of-the art residential construction techniques that will achieve economies of scale maintain or lower costs, yet not compromise quality.

Include additional requirements such as sidewalks, parks and open space, common area improvements, and other features that add to the quality of the residential development. Establish minimum requirements for sidewalks, parks and community amenities within large-scale subdivisions and master planned developments.

Develop loan, grant, incentive and educational programs for home maintenance and repair targeted toward the elderly and blighted areas of the county.

Maintain code enforcement efforts in areas of low and moderate-income housing. Establish target areas for implementation of maintenance and rehabilitation strategies.

Land Use Goal ... coordinate land use patterns and infrastructure planning in order to provide an efficient, equitable, and compatible distribution of land uses in Douglas County.

Based on the inventory and assessment presented above, the County needs to...

Ensure that future land use and development decisions are consistent with long range planning goals and policies and that such decisions promote social and economic well-being.

Growth will generally be directed toward existing or planned service areas and away from rural areas with planned lower levels of services and a dependence on public wells and/or septic systems. Allowable densities will be reduced in rural areas that cannot be efficiently serviced.

Infrastructure will be target as priorities to areas suitable for commercial, industry and business uses, but new residential uses (other than low density rural residential) will also be directed to areas that can be efficiently served with sanitary sewers.

Require comprehensive plan consistency and infrastructure concurrency during the rezoning and development review process.

Encourage innovative development techniques to provide for a mix of uses in appropriate locations.

Ensure compatibility between differing land uses and protect existing development from incompatible uses when making land use decisions.

Develop an effective strategy for the gradual elimination of non-conforming land uses.

Encourage the reuse and revitalization of obsolete or underutilized commercial or industrial facilities that is in conformance with local land use regulations.

Accommodate the year 2025 population and employment projections.

Ensure consistency of the Zoning Map with the Future Land Use Map designations through rezoning.

Establish an urban growth boundary beyond which no additional dense or urban scale development can occur, with the exception of neighborhood serving commercial.

Seek and maintain urban growth boundaries agreements with adjacent governments.

Use infrastructure as a tool to guide development into locations where the land is most cost effectively serviced (i.e., accessible to police, fire, water, sewer and the urban road network).

Adopt public service and facility standards that ensure new development will only be approved when the facilities to serve it will be concurrently available.

Monitor development's (including undeveloped areas zoned and / or platted) impact on existing or future infrastructure and public facilities capacities.

Encourage creative urban design solutions for development within the County, such as mixed-use projects, village oriented centers and other innovative site planning techniques, such as TNDs, conservation subdivisions and TODs.

Target higher density residential development in areas where adequate transportation facilities and commercial or public facilities exist or are planned.

Limit development in environmentally sensitive or unsuitable areas.

Provide transitions in intensity, scale, density and land use between high and low-density land uses as a key tool in decision-making.

Develop subdivisions that foster a sense of community and promote pedestrian mobility, community recreation and an abundance of public open space.

Support a cohesive approach to providing retail sales and service nodes within the County thereby avoiding strip commercial patterns along arterial routes; these nodes would be developed near existing and planned transportation routes and connections on a scale that is compatible with residential development and pedestrian access.

Encourage the establishment of community oriented activity or village centers as focal points for the various communities within Douglas County.

■ Short Term Work Program

The Short Term Work Program (or STWP) is attached at the end of this chapter. The STWP presents a schedule of specific actions that the County intends to take during each of the coming five years to address its needs and to implement its strategies for Douglas County. The STWP includes the following:

A description of initiatives and programs to be put in place over each of the next five years, including cost estimates and alternative funding sources where applicable.

A description of major capital improvements or infrastructure expansions proposed by the County over each of the next five years, including cost estimates and alternative funding sources where applicable.

A description of administrative systems, regulatory measures or land development regulations to be adopted or amended over each of the next five years.

■ Managing the Plan

To be a useful and influential tool in guiding growth and development in the future, and in ultimately realizing Douglas County's vision for the future, the Plan must be kept current. Over time, changes will occur in the county that may not have been anticipated and over which the County may have no

control—changing lifestyles, national or regional economic shifts, the impact of telecommuting or internet access on working and shopping patterns, etc. Annually monitoring these shifts against progress in Plan implementation may lead to the need for amendments to the Plan. In addition, the State has certain requirements for amendments and updates that must be followed. All of these issues are addressed below.

Annual Plan Review

The annual review is to be accomplished in coordination with the annual budgeting process. At a minimum, the annual review will consider:

Apparent changes in the pace of growth, in terms of housing units built and land absorbed by nonresidential development.

Land development approvals over the past year in light of realization of the Comprehensive Plan Design Guidelines (as applicable).

Zoning approvals over the past year in relation to the Future Land Use Map.

Planned Short Term Work Program activities compared to actual accomplishments.

The plan outlines recommendations to cope with anticipated changes in Douglas County. The adopted plan serves as a policy guide for local growth and development. To be carried out, the following steps need to be taken:

Review current development regulations

Annually review the Unified Development Code and other county regulations to ensure that the plan is being properly implemented.

Administer and Enforce Regulations

Continue to enforce the Unified Development Code, the Capital Facilities Plan and the Future Land Use Plan Map as the roadmap to the county's desired land use patterns.

Update the Capital Improvements Plan and Budget

A part of the Capital Improvements Plan and Budget process, it is very important to identify future sites or at least general locations for community facilities such as parks, libraries, etc. as early as possible using the guidelines in the Plan. Early acquisition of sites minimizes ultimate land costs and permits the best sites for community facilities to be obtained before other development occurs. Capital facilities programming should be in conjunction with outlined land use patterns on the Future Land Use Plan Map and policies within this plan. The Capital Improvement Planning and budgeting process should include:

- Preparation of a detailed capital improvements plan and budget including the following elements:
 - Detailed Project descriptions.
 - Location of desirable sites.
 - Schematic Layouts of buildings and sites
 - Construction cost estimates
- Prepare a schedule, program and budget including the following elements:
 - Design and construction schedule
 - Possible grant funding

- Staff operation and maintenance costs
- Five-year capital budget

Obtain Funds for needed improvements.

In addition to local funds, state and federal grants can be used to help pay for local projects. On the average, all grant programs require some local participation for capital expenses as well as a commitment for local staffing, maintenance and operational expenses. Alternative funding sources should be identified during the update to the five-year capital budget program. Alternative sources that can be utilized include such programs as impact fees, SLOST, bonding and special improvement districts a complete funding plan should be included in the capital facilities plan.

■ **Updates to the Comprehensive Plan**

Short Term Work Program

The STWP will be updated annually, reflecting the results of the Annual Plan Review. The STWP will be extended one year into the future in order to maintain a full five years of future activity, and any changes appropriate to the other years will be included. No later than 30 days after the end of the year just completed, the updated STWP will be forwarded to the ARC for their files.

Minor Plan Amendments

As a result of the Annual Plan Review, amendments to the Plan may be appropriate. If the needed changes are strictly local and not considered to have an effect on another local government, the changes may be adopted as a minor amendment to the Plan at any time during the year by Board action. At the end of each year, along with the annual update to the STWP, a summary of all minor amendments is to be sent to the ARC with a statement that the individual and cumulative effects of the minor amendments do not significantly alter the basic tenets of the approved Plan.

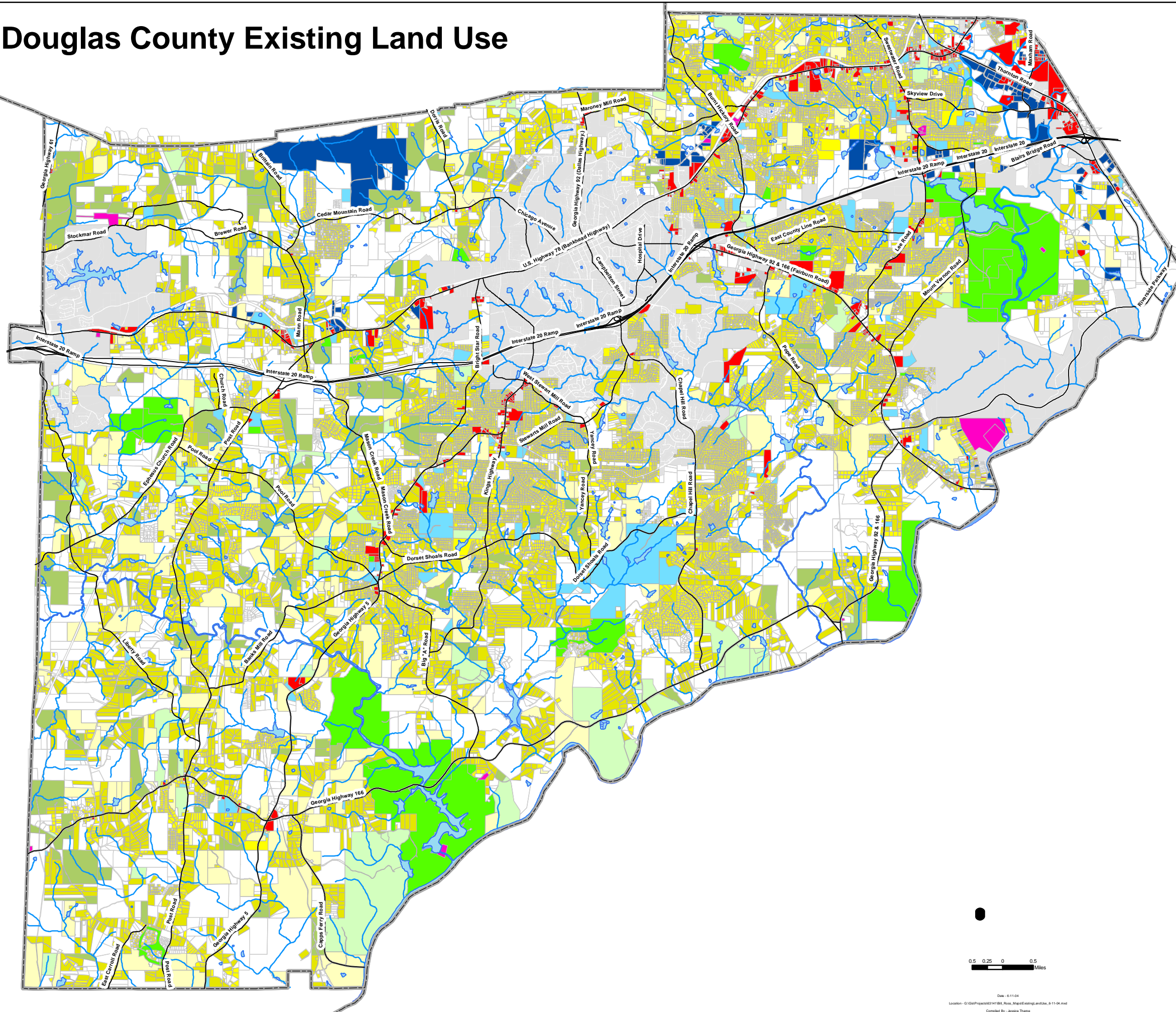
Major Plan Amendments

If, as a result of the Annual Plan Review, conditions or policies on which the Plan is based have changed significantly so as to alter the basic tenets of the Plan, the County will initiate a major Plan amendment. The public will be involved in preparation of the Plan amendment to the extent warranted by the degree of change that has occurred. Following State procedural guidelines, a public hearing will be held to inform the public of the County's intent to amend the Plan, and to seek public participation. The major Plan amendment will be submitted to Fulton County and near-by cities for review in accordance with our agreement under HB 489, and to the ARC for review under the State's requirements, prior to adoption.

Fifth-Year Review and Tenth-Year Plan Update

In accordance with State requirements, the Comprehensive Plan will be given a full update, at a minimum, in ten years (2011). After five years, however, in 2007, the County will determine if the Comprehensive Plan needs a major update based on the degree of change in the county that has occurred by that time. If major changes have taken place that have not been incorporated into the Plan through past amendments, a complete update will be initiated following State procedural guidelines (which are the same as for adoption of a new Plan).

Douglas County Existing Land Use



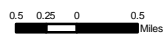
Legend

- Roads
- Streams
- Lakes
- County Boundary

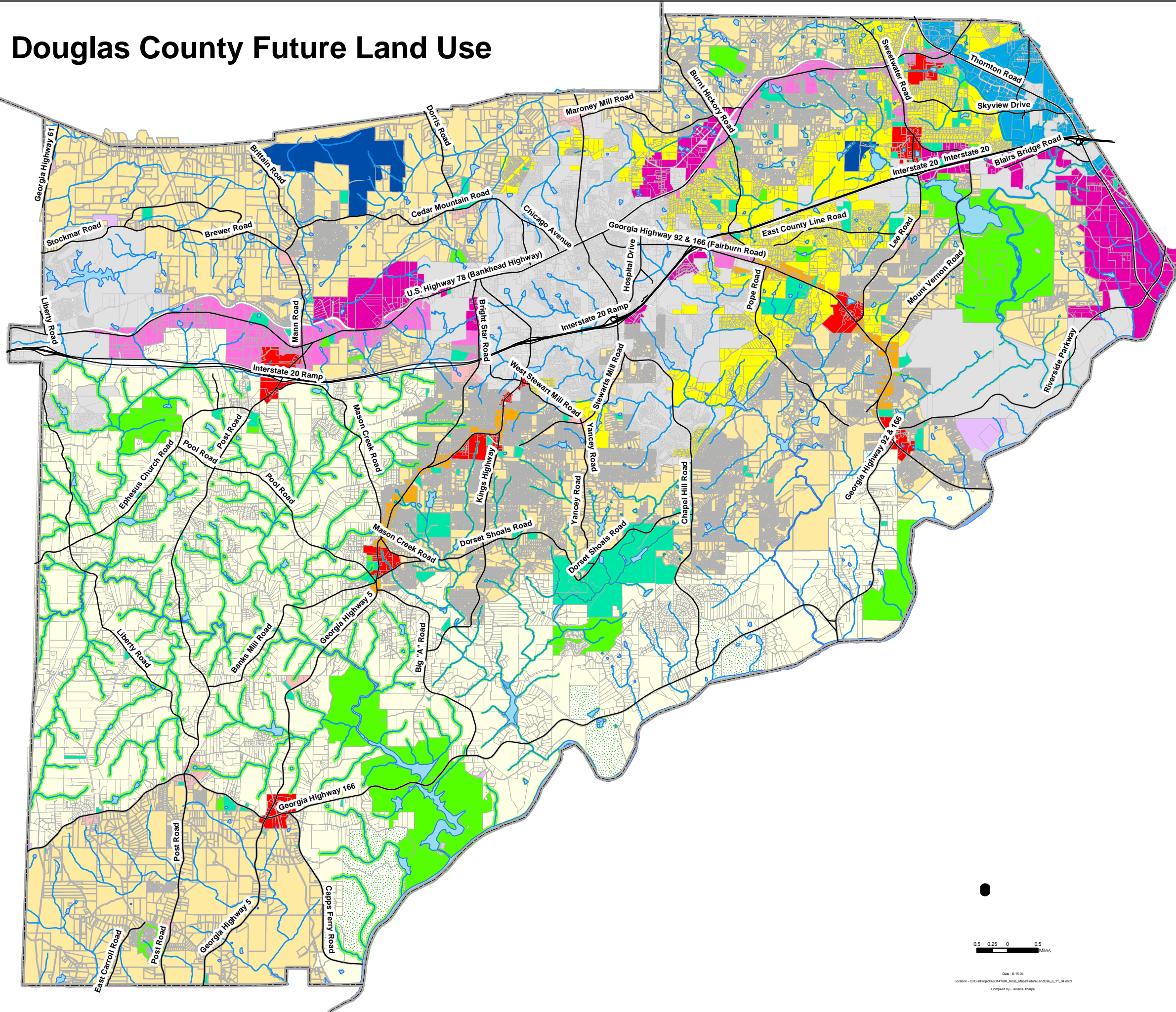
LUCODE

- Agriculture
- Agriculture / Timber
- Single Family Residential (<5 ac tracts)
- Single Family Residential (5 to 25 ac tracts)
- Single Family Residential (>25 ac tracts)
- Townhouse
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Transportation / Communication / Utilitie
- Public / Institutional
- Parks / Recreation / Conservation
- Vacant
- Water
- Incorporated

row

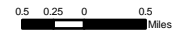


Douglas County Future Land Use



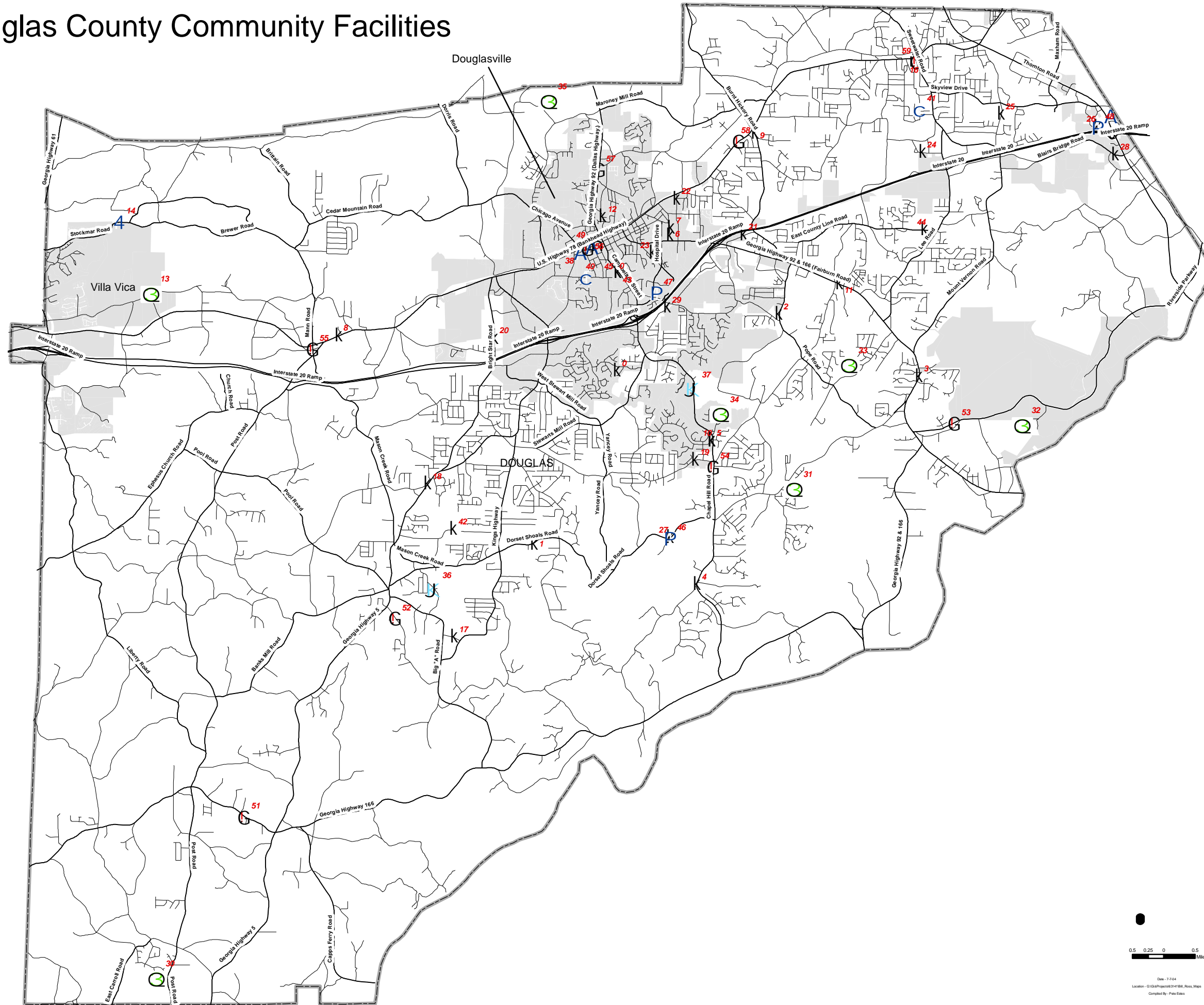
Legend

- Roads
- Streams
- Lakes
- County Boundary
- Future Land Use**
- Agricultural
- Rural Places
- Suburban Living
- Urban Residential
- Transitional Corridor
- Neighborhood Village Center
- Community Village Center
- Mixed Use Corridor
- Workplace Center
- Commerce Center
- Intensive Industrial
- Transportation / Communication / Utilities
- Public / Institutional
- Parks / Recreation / Conservation
- Incorporated Area
- r o w
- water



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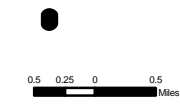
Douglas County Community Facilities



ID	Name
0	Arbor Station Elementary School
1	Dorsett Shoals Elementary School
2	Chestnut Log Middle School
3	Factory Shoals Elementary School
4	Holly Springs Elementary
5	Chapel Hill Elementary School
6	Burnett Elementary School
7	Eastside Elementary School
8	Winston Elementary School
9	Beulah Elementary School
10	Chapel Hill Middle School
11	Mount Carmel Elementary School
12	Stewart Middle School
13	Villa Rica (North WPCP)
14	Stockmar Aviation
15	Douglasville City Hall
16	Lithia Springs City Hall
17	Kings Way Christian
18	Water of Life Christian Academy
19	Harvester Christian Academy
20	Douglasville Seventh Day Adventist Church School
21	International Academy
22	Montessori School of Douglas County
23	Army of the Lord Christian
24	Lithia Christian Academy
25	Colonial Hills Christian
26	Parkway Medical Center Adolescent Services
27	Inner Harbour School
28	Mercer University - Douglas
29	Carroll Tech - Douglas
30	Douglas County (St. Andrews)
31	Douglas County Rebel Trails WPCP
32	Douglasville (Sweet water)
33	Douglas County Beaver Estates WPCP
34	Douglasville South WPCP
35	Douglasville North WPCP
36	Douglasville/Douglas County-Bear Creek
37	Douglasville/Douglas County-Chapel Hill
38	Douglas County Sheriff's Office
39	Douglas Co - Lithia Precinct
40	Douglas County Public Library
41	Lithia Springs Public Library
42	Alexander Comprehensive High
43	Douglas County Comprehensive High
44	Lithia Springs Comprehensive High
45	CrossRoads Evening High
46	Inner Harbour Hospital
47	Promina Douglas Hospital
48	Columbia Parkway Medical Center
49	Douglas County Courthouse
50	Douglasville Police Department
51	Douglas County Fire Department Station 04
52	Douglas County Fire Department Station 03
53	Douglas County Fire Department Station 06
54	Douglas County Fire Department Station 05
55	Douglas County Fire Department Station 02
56	Douglas County Fire Department Station 10
57	Douglas County Fire Department Station 11
58	Douglas County Fire Department Station 07
59	Douglas County Fire Department Station 01

Legend

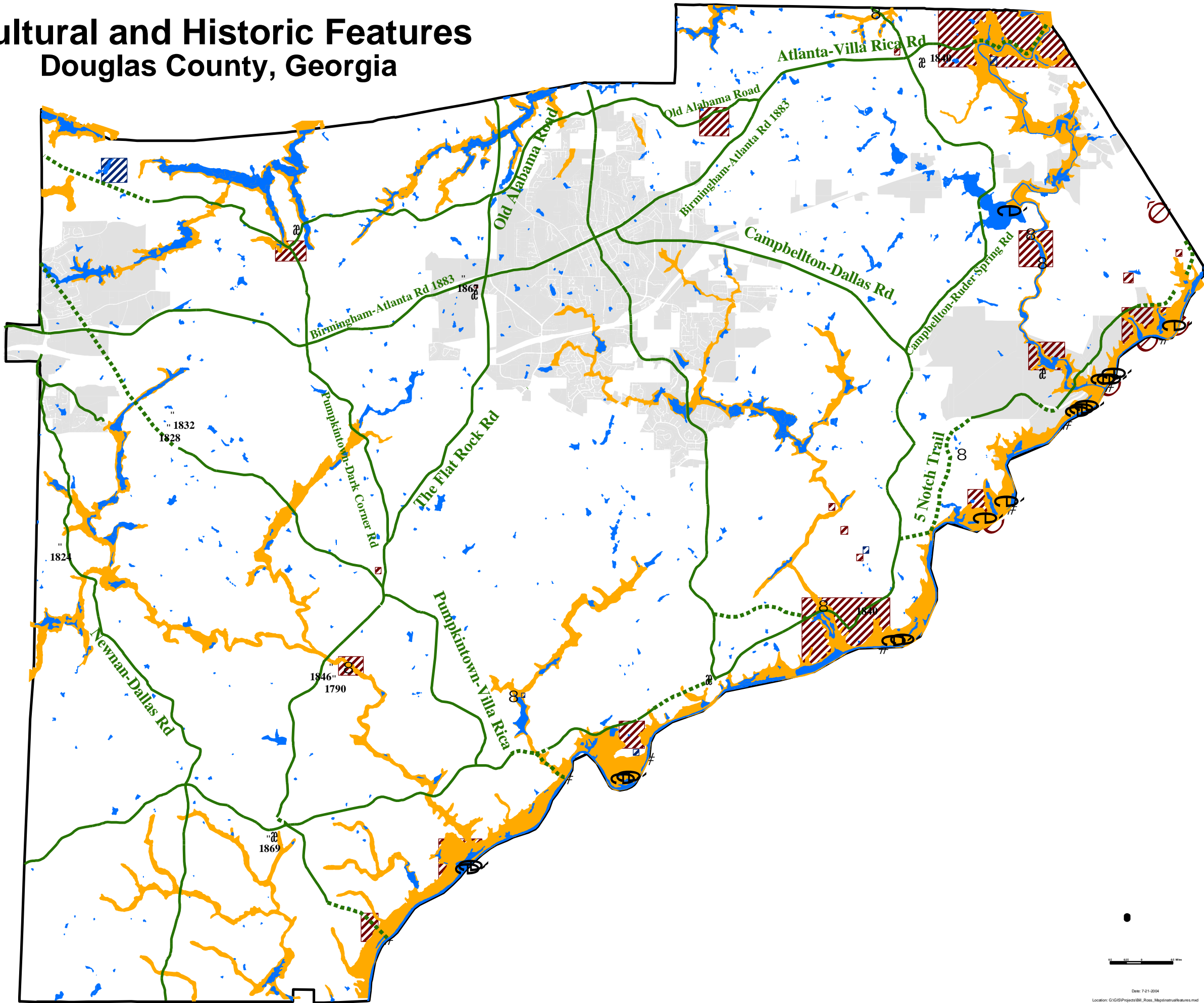
- Roads
- Incorporated Area
- Douglas County Boundary
- ✈ Airport
- ñ City Hall
- ù Jail
- m Courthouse
- k School
- G Fire Station
- P Hospital
- C Library
- A Police Station
- ⊕ Wastewater Treatment Plant
- J Water System



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Cultural and Historic Features

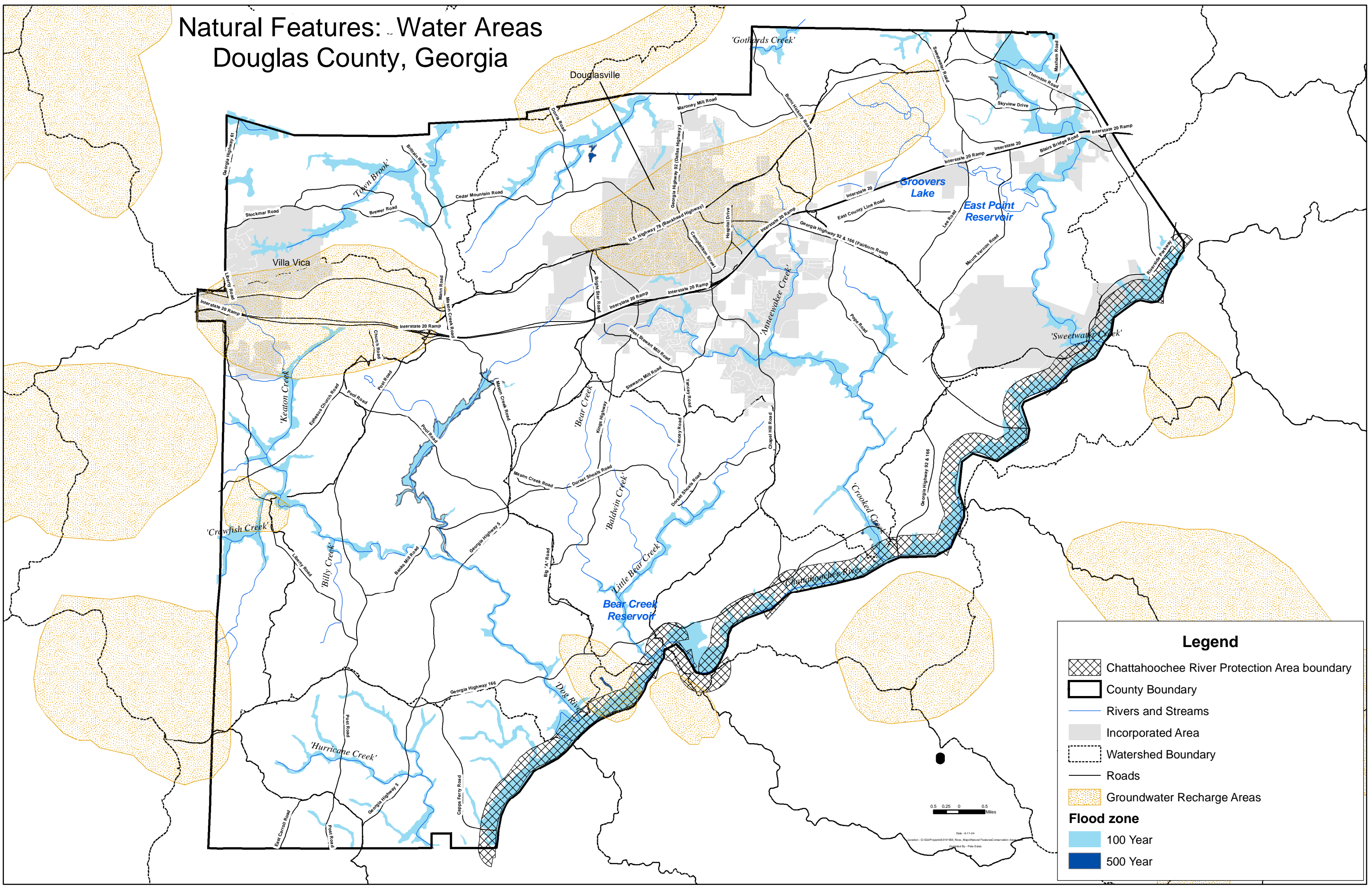
Douglas County, Georgia










Legend

- ☪ Cemeteries
- Ⓚ Mounds
- " Houses
- Ⓢ Mills
- # Ferries
- Road
- ⋯ Trail
- ⓧ Trenches_and_Works
- ▨ Spanish
- Prehistoric
- ▨ Civil War
- countyline
- Wetlands
- Incorporated Area



Natural Features: Water Areas Douglas County, Georgia



Legend

-  Chattahoochee River Protection Area boundary
-  County Boundary
-  Rivers and Streams
-  Incorporated Area
-  Watershed Boundary
-  Roads
-  Groundwater Recharge Areas

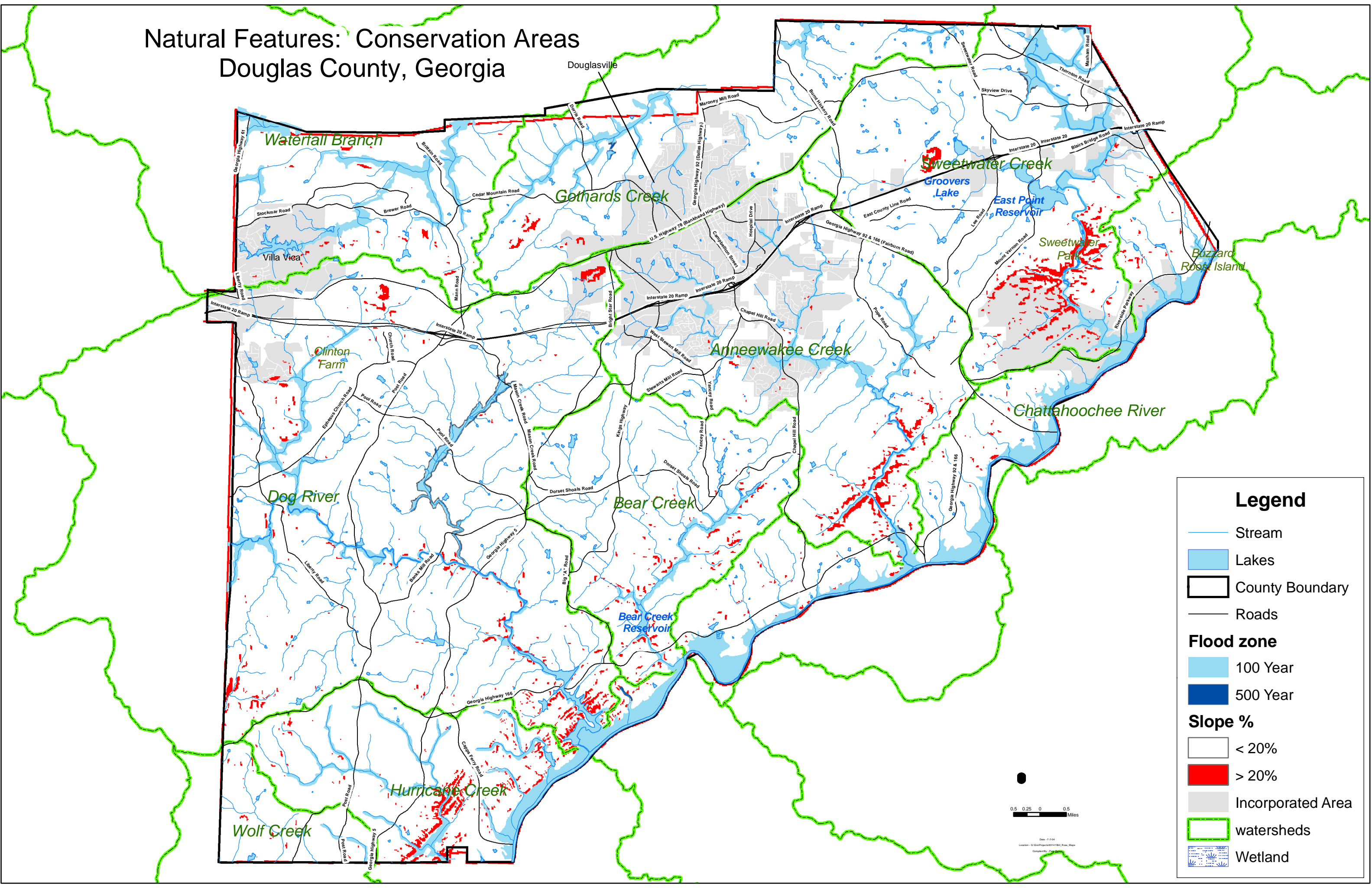
Flood zone

-  100 Year
-  500 Year



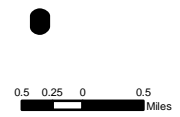
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 Created By: Pat Eason

Natural Features: Conservation Areas Douglas County, Georgia



Legend

- Stream
- Lakes
- County Boundary
- Roads
- Flood zone**
- 100 Year
- 500 Year
- Slope %**
- < 20%
- > 20%
- Incorporated Area
- watersheds
- Wetland



Date: 7-7-04
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