

**CITY OF ROME  
AND  
FLOYD COUNTY**

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**INCLUDING  
THE CITY OF CAVE SPRING**

**ADOPTED  
APRIL 8, 2008**

PREPARED BY:

**PLANNING WORKS**

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CITY OF ROME, CITY OF CAVE SPRING, FLOYD COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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## Department of Community Affairs Approval Letter

## Floyd County Resolution of Adoption

## City of Rome Resolution of Adoption

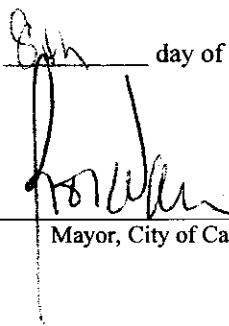
**JOINT RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF CAVE SPRING,  
THE CITY OF ROME, AND FLOYD COUNTY, GEORGIA  
RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE COMMUNITY AGENDA**

WHEREAS, pursuant to O.C.G.A. 50-8-1 et seq the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established minimum standards and procedures for coordinated and comprehensive local government planning, and

WHEREAS, the City of Cave Spring, the City of Rome, and Floyd County, Georgia have compiled, reviewed, modified, and finalized a document in compliance with the State of Georgia Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning,

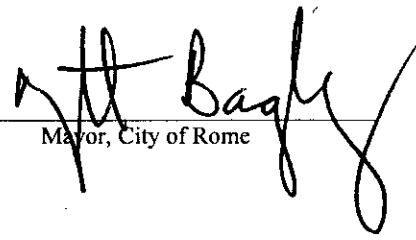
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the City of Cave Spring, the City of Rome, and Floyd County, Georgia that the City of Rome and Floyd County Comprehensive Plan (October 2007) is hereby officially approved and adopted.

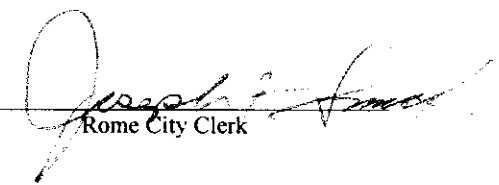
Adopted this 8th day of April 2008.

  
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Mayor, City of Cave Spring

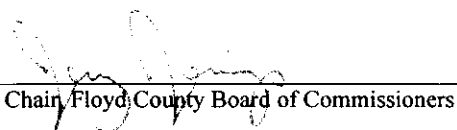
  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Cave Spring City Clerk

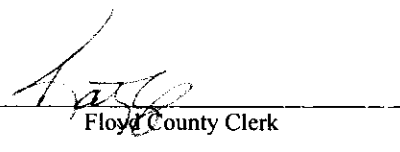
Adopted this 7<sup>th</sup> day of APRIL 2008.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor, City of Rome

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Rome City Clerk

Adopted this 8th day of April 2008.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Chair, Floyd County Board of Commissioners

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Floyd County Clerk

## City of Cave Spring Resolution of Adoption

## COMMUNITY AGENDA

### I. *Plan Overview*

#### A. Purpose and Scope

The Comprehensive Plan (the Plan) envisions the future of this community and suggests a course of action for achieving this vision. The Plan is a guide for cooperation and coordination between Floyd County, the cities of Rome and Cave Spring, other service providers, and private property owners as each anticipates and responds to new development and changing conditions. The goals, policies, and strategies contained in this Plan have been carefully crafted to support new development and redevelopment that is beneficial to the community. The Plan should be used to support decisions regarding the timing and location of growth, the provision of community facilities and services, and the community's quality of life over the next twenty years.

#### B. Planning Area

This Plan encompasses growth and development happening within the City of Rome as well as Floyd County. The City of Rome and County have managed development through a joint City/County Planning Commission since 1947. Cave Spring, while not a party to the City/County agreement, is referenced throughout this Plan because it is located within Floyd County and will be directly affected by the Plan's implementation.

#### **Growth Management Defined**

Growth management is not growth control or a limit on the amount of growth. It is the coordination of many decisions needed to accommodate projected growth in ways that achieve the goals stated in this Plan. These decisions include:

- Establishing minimum standards for the quality of development;
- Scheduling the timing and location of adequate public infrastructure investments;
- Defining appropriate levels of service for essential public facilities and services.; and
- Coordinating the timing and location of growth with our ability to provide/fund adequate public facilities.

#### C. Context for the Plan Update

The planning process began in 2005. The City/County Planning Department, knowing that a required Comprehensive Plan update would be necessary in 2008, decided to begin the process early in order to address ongoing growth issues in a proactive manner. These issues included:

- Contentious industrial rezoning cases;
- Increasing traffic congestion;
- Concerns about the appearance and function of the highway corridors leading into and throughout the County;
- Concerns about the impact of sprawl on the rural and scenic character of unincorporated areas; and
- The challenges of managing growth without diminishing personal property rights.



## D. Planning Process

The planning process has involved citizen input, as detailed in the Citizen Participation Plan (see **Appendix A**). Specific components of the planning process included:

- **Plan Kick-off Workshops.** Styled as a community ice cream social, the Kick-off Workshops invited community residents to discuss the needs and opportunities facing Rome and Floyd County, to share their concerns, and to identify their vision for the community. The Kick-off Workshops were held in October, 2005.
- **Focus Groups.** A variety of focus group conversations were held. Each focus group was centered on a particular topic, from farming to economic development, environmental concerns to the Hispanic community. Focus groups were conducted in the fall of 2005.
- **Questionnaires.** Questionnaires asking for feedback regarding issues facing the City and County were distributed at the Kick-off Workshops, focus group meetings, and by the Planning Department to gather feedback at the beginning of the planning process.
- **Steering Committee.** Composed of a variety of stakeholder representatives, including elected and appointed officials, property owners, school district representatives, developers, realtors, homebuilders, other business owners and neighborhood activists, the Steering Committee guided the development of the Plan goals and policies and the refinement of the Future Development and Future Land Use maps.
- **Development Allocation Workshops.** These community workshops, held in March, 2006, invited community residents to participate in an exercise to locate projected growth on a map of the County. Participants decided which growth patterns were most appropriate. The resulting maps were used to discuss the impacts of varied growth alternatives and to develop the preferred alternative that is reflected in the Future Land Use map and the policies of this Plan.
- **Joint City/County Workshops.** Workshops with the City and County Commissions were held to generate consensus on Plan goals and policies and to ensure that Commissioners for both jurisdictions were both comfortable with the direction of the Plan.
- **Plan Presentation Workshops.** In February, 2007, as the planning process was coming to a close, community workshops were held to present the Plan to the community and provide an opportunity for community residents to see the identified future for the community and to critique the Plan.

## II. Issue & Opportunities

The following issues reflect the challenges that Rome, Cave Spring and Floyd County will face over the next 25 years. The issues were identified by participants in the October, 2005 focus group meetings and community workshops, as well as in responses to questionnaires distributed at the workshops. While no effort has been made to resolve conflicting opinions, those opinions have been grouped to highlight the range of perspectives from citizens, business owners, service providers and other

participants in the meetings. The issues and opportunities identified below are also discussed in the Community Assessment (**Appendix B**).

## **A. Community Identity**

When asked to describe the character of Rome and Floyd County, residents give very similar responses: an excellent place to live and to raise kids; wonderful small town character. Downtown Rome is also seen a major asset to the area's character.

### **Retain Small Town and Rural Character**

One common theme was that residents don't want to become part of Atlanta. Many people praised the small town character of Rome and the rural atmosphere of Floyd County. They worried that this character will be lost if the community becomes a bedroom community or suburb of Atlanta.

### **Retain Diversity**

As housing prices in the region continue to escalate, there is increasing concern that rising prices will preclude young families from home ownership. To retain a balanced community with a cross-section of ages and incomes, a diversity of residence types are needed.

### **Embrace Inclusiveness and Diversity**

Workshop participants cited the growth of the Hispanic community as an important change in the area and encouraged greater participation by and outreach to this segment of the population.

### **Remain Cognizant of Safety and Security**

In response to the events of September 11, 2001, the community is much more aware of the potential of both man-made and natural hazards and desirous of doing all it can to protect the drinking water and food supplies, schools and hospitals, industrial and agricultural sites where potentially dangerous substances are stored, and the homes that form the backbone of our community. Encouraging safe, crime-free environments has always been a goal of the City of Rome and Floyd County and both governments continue to work to ensure that area citizens enjoy a safe and secure community.

## **B. Land Use**

Land use concerns in the County cover a wide range, from the protection of agricultural operations to the responsible development and redevelopment of Rome and its environs.

**Promote Infill and Redevelopment.** The practice of infill and redevelopment maximizes efficient use of existing public infrastructure, such as water, sewer, and roads, and helps accomplish other goals, such as retaining rural character, alleviating pressures on agricultural land, and promoting evolving diversity within

the urban areas of Floyd County. The City of Rome and Cave Spring offer much of the infrastructure needed to support a variety of residential, non-residential and mixed use neighborhoods. By encouraging infill development and redevelopment, the cities and the County can capitalize on existing infrastructure such as utilities, schools, parks and other community services. In addition, promoting private investment within developed areas will strengthen these communities' abilities to fund services that improve the quality of life and reduce burdens on rural taxpayers.

#### **Retain Agriculture by Reducing Encroachment of Incompatible Uses**

Agriculture is still a desired use in Floyd County. Viable agricultural operations are threatened by residential encroachment. Noises, dust and odors from normal agricultural operations can be nuisances to rural residences. To protect existing agricultural operations, the County should minimize potential conflicts between agricultural operations and rural residences. Where rural residential development is appropriate, conservation subdivision design and other strategies can be used to buffer homes from agricultural and timber operations, thereby protecting each use.

#### **Allow Greater Flexibility to Capitalize on Agriculture-Related Businesses**

A new development in the County's agricultural scene is the emergence of agri-tourism. This type of tourism ranges from working farms that accept guests who participate in farm activities to farms that offer seasonal activities such as apple-picking. Agri-tourism can provide a new income stream that does not require the sale of any property, preserving the many intangible benefits of agriculture. In other areas, greater flexibility for cottage industries and home-based businesses can provide the economic support to retain agriculture. While not all farmers will choose to undertake these activities, they offer important options for economic development in the rural areas of the County.

#### **Find ways to address agricultural operators' concerns about trails**

While many residents desire more trails throughout the County, many agricultural operators are concerned that the risks may outweigh the benefits. Rural landowners are concerned about damage to their land, crops, and animals. Farm animals and agricultural practices create a risk for trail users and potential liability problems for the land owner. Fences, indemnification of agricultural operations and guarantees for protection from damages by trail users might help with the acceptance of trails in rural areas, but concerns remain about the loss of security that might result from increased public access to private lands. There are several opportunities for rails to trails conversions within the County, but this opportunity could be lost without a complete inventory of inactive rail lines, good communications with the railroads currently controlling the right-of-way and a coordinated effort to address the concerns of those with property abutting potential trails.

**Retain meaningful wildlife habitat and buffer areas**

To retain wildlife diversity in Floyd County, adequate interconnected open space and buffer areas will be needed. Additional coordination with Department of Wildlife and other applicable agencies is essential to define the ideal locations, corridor widths and buffer dimensions to meet the needs of local wildlife.

**Coordinate with Large Landowners**

Large landowners are important players in questions of land use due to their large land holdings. Rome and Floyd County will need to continue to work closely with large landowners on land use and transportation matters.

**Retain the housing mix needed for Floyd County workers**

County residents are watching the development of affordable housing spreading up Highway 101 towards Rome with some trepidation. They don't want Floyd County to be dominated by starter homes. While there is a desire to see adequate affordable housing developed to provide for the needs of residents working within Floyd County, residents understand the fiscal and social costs associated with becoming a commuter county.

**Protect Private Property Rights**

Floyd County residents place a high value on private property rights. Development regulations and land use planning necessarily place some limits on private property rights. There is a desire to use incentives rather than mandates when possible to encourage desired development, foster an environment of trust through fair and predictable regulations, and equitably balance the rights of property owners with responsibilities to adjacent property owners and the community at large.

**C. Transportation**

Transportation system affects most residents' lives on a daily basis, which makes it a significant determinant of their quality of life. This plan addresses the following

**Preserve attractive gateways and efficient travel routes**

The highway corridors leading into Floyd County are vital conduits for goods and people. As gateways, they define local character and values, providing visitors' first impressions. Residents want attractive entryways that retain the natural rural character in rural areas and higher quality design within urban areas. Residents also understand the importance of limiting traffic congestion in these corridors. Stringent access control will be needed to avoid the proliferation of stop lights that snarls traffic in much of the Atlanta metropolitan area.

**Address major corridor issues before a development boom**

Several new transportation projects are on the horizon that will potentially result in increased development opportunities along several of the County's gateway corridors. These projects add some urgency to the concerns about retaining the form and function of these roads.

**Providing for travel choices**

With the exception of downtown Rome, Cave Spring and a few scattered neighborhoods, residents are heavily dependent on their cars. To conserve energy, reduce air pollutants and increase mobility for all residents, development patterns and improvements should support transit, bicycles and pedestrians. By establishing more developments that include a mix of uses and residential densities, the County will place itself in a much better position to weather rising energy costs and provide residents of all ages with a broader choice of safe ways to get to school, work, goods and services.

**D. Water & Wastewater**

Water was a concern both in the preservation of the river heritage of the area and in the provision of adequate water services into the future. The Service Providers Focus Group indicated that water supplies are judged to be adequate for the next 10 years and there are few concerns about providing additional water beyond that point.

County water is in good supply, especially in the southern part of the County. However, the water table is very shallow around Cave Spring and the use of septic systems could eventually create a water contamination problem.

While the City of Rome has access to ample water supplies, inter-basin water transfers without the return of highly treated wastewater to the basin of origin threaten to limit future water rights needed to support long-term growth.

Judicious use and planning involving capital improvement programs is necessary with respect to water and wastewater infrastructure. There is a further need to communicate the intended areas of expansion as well as those areas not slated for immediate expansion to the development community.

**Address sediment issues**

Sediment is a major water quality concern. The City and County should continue to monitor new development, dirt roads and driveways to limit erosion into waterways. Sediment is also a problem with water coming into the County from the east, especially in the Etowah River.

**Support best agricultural management practices**

Agricultural operations can be as great a threat to water quality as urban development. Support of state efforts to get the agriculture and timber industry to employ best management practices will help ensure that agriculture's environmental contributions are as positive as its contributions to local culture and the economy.

**Monitor proliferation of septic systems**

While properly designed and maintained public and private on-site wastewater systems can safely treat and dispose of effluent, local soils and terrain limit the density of systems that can be accommodated. Ongoing efforts to expand centralized collection and treatment systems in the Urbanizing Area will be

needed to reduce the risks of septic systems to surface and ground water supplies. Outside the Urbanizing Area, continued coordination with the State Department of Health, building future septic systems to community standards, as well as the observation of other Best Management Practices will assist in accomplishing the same goals.

**Address stormwater issues**

Stormwater management is a regional concern. In addition to affecting the potential for flooding, stormwater management is a key to improving surface water quality. The use of best management practices is one means to improve stormwater quality. Incentives that encourage developers to utilize innovative pervious surface paving techniques should be considered as well. To fund both efforts, the City and County should explore the option of establishing a stormwater utility, particularly for more urban areas.

**E. Economic Development**

The local economy is built on a strong foundation –four colleges and three hospitals. While the community has experienced ups and downs, such as the GE plant closing several years ago, there has been significant job growth along Technology Parkway and in other industrial areas. The Old Riverbend Mall, which was vacant for several years, has been redeveloped with Barnes and Noble, Kroger, and a variety of other shops. Continue collaboration between the public and private sector is necessary to keep the local economy in the best position to respond to the ever-changing economy.

**Maintain spirit of cooperation with economic development efforts**

Local governments and the Chamber consistently endeavor to maintain a high level of cooperation in efforts to promote economic development and attract new industries to Floyd County. The County has everything industry needs – transportation, resources, and culture – and desirable options for small town and rural lifestyles. Local economic efforts are based on the understanding that new industry must fit local values and resources. Efforts are focused on clean, stable industries that pay well and use the capabilities of the local labor force.

**Prepare residents for the job market**

Economic development efforts also focus on the capabilities of the local labor force. At a minimum, efforts must be made to ensure that students graduate from high school with basic work skills. After high school, residents should be encouraged to capitalize on opportunities to prepare for technical and other professional positions that foster economic and personal success.

**Expand job opportunities**

Both community workshops emphasized that residents would like to expand the job opportunities available to entice young people to return to or stay in Floyd County.

## F. Planning & Zoning

The relatively new land development regulations have created challenges related to public education. Members of development community generally view the ULDC as a big step in the right direction, but cite the importance of consistent application of the rules to public and private sector development projects.

### **Improve communication between service providers and developers**

The Service Providers Focus Group identified improved communication between utilities and developers as an important need. This group felt the ULDC provides a good foundation for development, but service providers should be more involved at the start of the development process to be informed about potential new demands and to better coordinate development and utility system improvements. Utility company representatives voiced concerns that adequate right-of-way should be provided to accommodate the full range of utilities (e.g., water, sewer, electric and telecommunications)

### **Streamline the development process**

There is a clear desire for the development process to be streamlined. The lack of adequately zoned land is a key source of delays. Developers of any product other than large lot single family residents generally must go through the rezoning process before initiating development. Particularly in the industrial sector, the lack of adequately zoned land lowers the perception of the County as a good place to do business.

### **Enforce the ULDC strictly and fairly**

Many focus group participants cited a concern that there is a lack of uniform enforcement of the ULDC. Much of this is due to a lack of clarity and the inclusion of unintended loopholes. Community workshop participants cited a desire for stricter enforcement of the ULDC and a stricter sign ordinance to reduce visual clutter.

### **Define the relationship between Cave Spring and Rome/Floyd County Plan**

While Cave Spring residents have participated in the development of this Plan, they retain independence from the application of the plan or actions of the Rome/Floyd County Planning Commission. Cave Spring residents desire to retain the historic character of the community and surrounding rural and agricultural lands. Residents wish to retain their autonomy, while having a greater voice in the destiny of the rural areas that help establish their quality of life.

### **Continue public participation efforts**

Participants in this planning process stressed the critical importance of public participation and public buy-in. This plan is an attempt to chart a course based on the priorities established by the community through the public participation process. It is incumbent on City and County officials to achieve and to maintain the highest degree of credibility by listening to and following through on public input.





### **III. Community Vision**

#### **A. Vision Statement**

This vision for the future of Rome and Floyd County was based on input received from the community through focus groups, community workshops, and questionnaires. It is a statement of community values as well as a description of the desired future of Rome, Cave Spring, and Floyd County.

Rome, Cave Spring, and the many communities and neighborhoods within Floyd County reflect the values and aspirations of our residents.

Our diverse backgrounds are reflected in our diversity of housing and commercial areas.

Our appreciation for rich natural resources is reflected in our high quality and well managed rivers, forests and fields.

Our pride in our community is reflected in the attractiveness of the developed environment.

Our respect for those who came before us is reflected in our retention of valuable cultural and historic resources

Our desire to leave a better community for future generations is reflected in our active participation in community initiatives.

#### **B. Future Development Map**

The Future Development Map is an outgrowth of two different maps developed during the planning process: the Character Areas Map in the Community Assessment and the Growth Tiers Map developed with the project Steering Committee regarding infrastructure extensions. Those maps are synthesized in the Future Development Map, which addresses two main issues surrounding new development and redevelopment: the timing of growth with regard to the availability of public facilities and compatibility between development types.

Development, infill, and redevelopment should be focused where appropriate based on the existing levels of public facilities and services availability and the City's ability to efficiently provide additional facilities and services to support development. In some areas, the extension of facilities is planned but capital funds are not yet available to pay for the extension. In these areas, development may be delayed or the developer may choose to participate financially in the facility extension in order to expedite development.

Compatibility is an important component of development and has an impact on the long-term stability of an area. Compatibility issues are often most obvious in already developed neighborhoods, where infill and redevelopment lies close to established uses. However, compatibility issues are also important in rural and undeveloped areas, where development has incremental impacts on rural character.

The Community Assessment identified ten character areas for the County; the Growth Tiers Map divided the County into three main areas based on infrastructure availability. The Future Development Map synthesizes those maps into seven character areas that encompass the entire County, from Town Center to Conservation Area. **Exhibit 1** summarizes these areas by describing typical uses in each area, the public facilities and services available to serve development, and the compatibility issues to be addressed to ensure the long-term stability of each area.

The Future Development Map (**Map 1, Appendix D**) is to be used in conjunction with the Future Land Use Map to provide guidance for land use and development decision-making. The Future Land Use Map indicates

The policies in Chapter IV provide further guidance for each character area, including:

- Applicable infrastructure and growth coordination policies; and
- Implementation measures that will be used in the area to achieve stated goals.

**Exhibit 1: Character Areas**

Character Area	Typical Uses	Public Facilities & Services	Compatibility Issues
Town Center	Mixed uses typical of a downtown or traditional neighborhood, including low to high density residential, neighborhood services, office and commercial uses, generally characterized by pedestrian orientation, including sidewalks and street trees; on-street parking; small, regular lots; and buildings close to or at the front property line	The full range of public facilities and services is available.	Retaining the historic character that is a cultural and economic resource through compatible design.
Urban Area	Uses that provide a wide range of options for housing, employment, and recreation, with the greatest opportunities for infill and redevelopment.	The full range of public facilities and services is available.	Connectivity to other uses (work, play, and shopping) in these predominantly single-use neighborhoods; re-use and redevelopment of existing buildings should be context-sensitive.
Urban Growth Area	Uses that provide a wide range of options for housing, employment, and recreation, expected to develop over the next twenty years. While some opportunities for infill and redevelopment may be available, most development in this area is likely involve the development of previously undeveloped or agricultural land.	The full range of public facilities and services is available or planned during the next 20 years.	Balanced land uses, including a mix of housing types, that provide connectivity to other uses (work, play, and shopping) and encourage high quality development.
Activity Corridor	Corridors extending from the cities to the County line, providing for the safe and convenient movement of goods and people through the region, providing opportunities for commercial and industrial development with easy access to major transportation routes and generally characterized by traffic congestion, high vehicular traffic, and auto-oriented development.	Roads, water, centralized wastewater and fire protection services are available or planned for extension.	Appropriate access standards, setbacks, landscaping and signage requirements that result in safe and attractive corridors that serve the traveling public and nearby businesses while maintaining road capacity.
Rural Commercial Corridor	Corridors extending from the cities to the County line, providing for the safe and convenient movement of goods and people through the region and an attractive gateway to the County and Cities	Roads, water, and centralized wastewater services may be available or planned for extension in the next 20 years. Services are limited in areas further from the cities. Response times may be longer.	Appropriate access standards, setbacks, landscaping and signage requirements that minimize interruptions to continuous traffic flow and reflect the rural character of the surrounding area.

Character Area	Typical Uses	Public Facilities & Services	Compatibility Issues
Rural Area	Land in an open or cultivated state, including agricultural and timber operations and rural residential uses, characterized by low population density, very large lots, open space and a high degree of building separation.	Limited public facilities and services are available.	Protect viable agriculture from incompatible development; maintain rural character through use of landscaping and setbacks.
Conservation Area	Undeveloped natural lands and environmentally sensitive areas not suitable for development, including riparian buffers along rivers and streams, wetlands, flood plains, hills and mountains with steep slopes, scenic areas, and wildlife management areas.	Limited public facilities and services are available.	Best practices to ensure that changes result in appropriate resource protection.

**C. Character Areas**

The following pages contain the defining narrative for each character area found on the Future Development Map. These narratives delineate the vision and plan for action for guiding future development in each area.

# Town Center

## Land Uses

Mixed uses typical of a downtown or traditional neighborhood, including low to high density residential, neighborhood services, office and commercial uses, generally characterized by pedestrian orientation, including sidewalks and street trees; on-street parking; small, regular lots; and buildings close to or at the front property line. Land Uses (as described in Exhibit 2 and the Future Land Use Map) include:

- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Commercial
- Mixed Use

## Compatibility Issues

- Retaining the historic character that is a cultural and economic resource through compatible design.

## Public Facilities & Services

The full range of public facilities and services is available.

## Characteristic Development Pattern:

- Homes, shops, small business, and institutions grouped together in attractive mixed use centers that service adjacent neighborhoods. Centers are very pedestrian friendly and include pleasant community gathering spaces. Residences bring round-the-clock activity to the area.
- Buildings in centers developed at a scale sufficient in size, bulk, and height to provide image identification for the center and the surrounding community.
- Commercial structures located near street front, with parking in rear of buildings, making community more attractive and more pedestrian friendly.
- New development matching typical densities of older community center.
- Residential development that offers a mix of housing types (single family, town home, live/work units, lofts, apartments), densities, and prices in the same neighborhood.



*Downtown Rome contains a strong stock of well maintained historic buildings and new development that supports activity in the area.*

## Anticipated Implementation Measures:

- Development regulations
- Compatibility standards
- Redevelopment and infill incentives
- Access control measures
- Adequate public facilities ordinance
- Land bank
- Facility oversizing

## Applicable Goals and Policies

While all of the Plan goals and policies are important and apply to development within the City and County, these policies are of particular interest and relevance to development within this character area:

- Goal 4, all associated policies
- Goal 5, all associated policies
- Policy 10.5, 10.7, 10.9, 10.10
- Policy 11.2, 11.3, 11.8
- Policy 14.1
- Policy 15.2, 15.3



# Urban Area

## Land Uses

Uses that provide a wide range of options for housing, employment, and recreation, with the greatest opportunities for infill and redevelopment. Land Uses (as described in Exhibit 2 and the Future Land Use Map) include:

- **Suburban Residential**
- **Low Density Residential**
- **Medium Density Residential**
- **High Density Residential**
- **Commercial**
- **Office Park**
- **Industrial**
- **Mixed Use**

## Compatibility Issues

- Connectivity to other uses (work, play, and shopping) in these predominantly single-use neighborhoods; re-use and redevelopment of existing buildings should be context-sensitive.

## Public Facilities & Services

The full range of public facilities and services is available.

## Characteristic Development Pattern:

- Infill development on vacant sites or under-utilized sites closer in to the center of the community, matching the character of the surrounding neighborhood.
- Distribution of affordably-priced homes throughout region.
- Residential development that offers a mix of housing types (single family, town home, live/work units, lofts, apartments), densities, and prices in the same neighborhood.
- Residential development with a healthy mix of uses within easy walking distance of residences.



*Rome's Urban Areas contain existing neighborhoods offering a variety of housing types as well as infill and redevelopment opportunities.*

## Anticipated Implementation Measures:

- Development regulations
- Compatibility standards
- Redevelopment and infill incentives
- Access control measures
- Adequate public facilities ordinance
- Land bank
- Facility oversizing

## Applicable Goals and Policies

While all of the Plan goals and policies are important and apply to development within the City and County, these policies are of particular interest and relevance to development within this character area:

- Goal 4, all associated policies
- Goal 5, all associated policies
- Policy 10.5, 10.7, 10.9, 10.10
- Policy 11.2, 11.3, 11.8
- Policy 14.1
- Policy 15.2, 15.3





# Urban Growth Area

## Land Uses

Uses that provide a wide range of options for housing, employment, and recreation, expected to develop over the next twenty years. While some opportunities for infill and redevelopment may be available, most development in this area is likely to involve the development of previously undeveloped or agricultural land. Land Uses (as described in Exhibit 2 and the Future Land Use Map) include:

- **Agriculture**
- **Suburban Residential**
- **Low Density Residential**
- **Medium Density Residential**
- **High Density Residential**
- **Commercial**
- **Office Park**
- **Industrial**
- **Mixed Use**

## Compatibility Issues

- Balanced land uses, including a mix of housing types, that provide connectivity to other uses (work, play, and shopping) and encourage high quality development.

## Public Facilities & Services

The full range of public facilities and services is available or planned during the next 20 years.

## Characteristic Development Pattern:

- Use of village centers in new developments that accommodate residents' commercial and service needs.
- Street layouts that match those in older parts of the community and connect to the existing street network at many points.
- Developments that have easy access to nearby transit, shopping, schools, and other areas where residents travel daily.
- Distribution of affordably-priced homes throughout the area.
- Residential development that offers a mix of housing types (single family, town home, live/work units, lofts, apartments), densities, and prices in the same neighborhood.
- Residential development with a healthy mix of uses within easy walking distance of residences.



*Growth continues on the outskirts of Rome, where new subdivisions are being built to accommodate new residents to the area.*

## Anticipated Implementation Measures:

- Development regulations
- Compatibility standards
- Access control measures
- Adequate public facilities ordinance
- Facility oversizing

## Applicable Goals and Policies

While all of the Plan goals and policies are important and apply to development within the City and County, these policies are of particular interest and relevance to development within this character area:

- Goal 4, all associated policies
- Policy 10.1, 10.2, 10.3, 10.10
- Policy 11.3, 11.8
- Policy 12.1, 12.8
- Policy 14.1, 14.5
- Policy 15.3



# Activity Corridor

## Land Uses

Corridors extending from the cities to the County line, providing for the safe and convenient movement of goods and people through the region, providing opportunities for commercial and industrial development with easy access to major transportation routes and generally characterized by traffic congestion, high vehicular traffic, and auto-oriented development. Land Uses (as described in Exhibit 2 and the Future Land Use Map) include:

- **Agriculture**
- **Suburban Residential**
- **Low Density Residential**
- **Medium Density Residential**
- **High Density Residential**
- **Commercial**
- **Industrial**
- **Mixed Use**

## Compatibility Issues

- Appropriate access standards, setbacks, landscaping and signage requirements that result in safe and attractive corridors that serve the traveling public and nearby businesses while maintaining road capacity.

## Public Facilities & Services

Roads, water, centralized wastewater and fire protection services are available or planned for extension.

## Characteristic Development Pattern:

- Improvement of sidewalk and street appearance and amenities of commercial centers.
- New industry or other major employers located close in to town, making jobs accessible to all residents.
- Driveway consolidation and inter-parcel connections between parking lots.
- New developments at transportation nodes that contain a mix of residential, commercial uses, and community facilities.
- Use of infrastructure availability to steer development away from areas of natural, cultural, and environmentally sensitive resources.



Concept for proposed activity nodes at Norton/Nichols Roads and Alford Road

The concept plan for the 411 Corridor shows increased retail and employment activity along this key gateway into Floyd County.

## Anticipated Implementation Measures:

- Design standards
- Landscaped buffers
- Adequate public facilities ordinance
- Access management

## Applicable Goals and Policies

While all of the Plan goals and policies are important and apply to development within the City and County, these policies are of particular interest and relevance to development within this character area:

- Goal 3, all associated policies
- Policy 11.2
- Goal 12, all associated policies
- Policy 14.1
- Policies affecting Urban and Urban Growth Areas



# Rural Commercial Corridor

## Land Uses

Corridors extending from the cities to the County line, providing for the safe and convenient movement of goods and people through the region and an attractive gateway to the County and Cities. Land Uses (as described in Exhibit 2 and the Future Land Use Map) include:

- **Agriculture**
- **Suburban Residential**
- **Commercial**
- **Industrial**
- **Mixed Use**

## Compatibility Issues

- Appropriate access standards, setbacks, landscaping and signage requirements that minimize interruptions to continuous traffic flow and reflect the rural character of the surrounding area.

## Public Facilities & Services

Roads, water, and centralized wastewater services may be available or planned for extension in the next 20 years. Services are limited in areas further from the cities. Response times may be longer.

## Characteristic Development Pattern:

- Clustering high-density development at nodes along major corridors, separated by areas of open space or attractive rural residential development.
- Driveway consolidation and inter-parcel connections between parking lots.
- Landscaped medians separating traffic lanes.
- Restrictions on the number and size of signs and billboards.



*Rural Commercial Corridors provide some services, but mainly serve to provide safe and convenient travel through the County.*

## Anticipated Implementation Measures:

- Design standards
- Landscaped buffers
- Adequate public facilities ordinance
- Access management

## Applicable Goals and Policies

While all of the Plan goals and policies are important and apply to development within the City and County, these policies are of particular interest and relevance to development within this character area:

- Goal 3, all associated policies
- Policy 11.2
- Goal 12, all associated policies
- Policies affecting Rural Areas



# Rural Area

## Land Uses

This character area includes land in an open or cultivated state, including agricultural and timber operations and rural residential uses, characterized by low population density, very large lots, open space and a high degree of building separation. Land Uses (as described in Exhibit 2 and the Future Land Use Map) include:

- **Agriculture**
- **Suburban Residential**
- **Commercial**
- **Industrial**

## Compatibility Issues

- Protect viable agriculture from incompatible development.
- Maintain rural character through use of landscaping and setbacks.

## Public Facilities & Services

Limited public facilities and services are available.

## Characteristic Development Pattern:

- Use of significant site features, such as wetlands, streamways, viewsheds, and topography, as amenities that shape identity and character of the area.
- Very large lot sizes limit development density and protect farmland and rural character.
- Site plans, building design, and landscaping are sensitive to natural features, including topography and views.



Rural Areas in Floyd County offer opportunities for agricultural operations as well as rural living.

## Anticipated Implementation Measures:

- Agricultural buffering
- Agricultural use notices
- Right-to-farm protections
- Conservation subdivisions
- Rural design guidelines
- Development regulations
- Adequate public facilities ordinance

## Applicable Goals and Policies

While all of the Plan goals and policies are important and apply to development within the City and County, these policies are of particular interest and relevance to development within this character area:

- Goal 2, all associated policies
- Goal 7, all associated policies
- Policy 11.2 and 11.4
- Policy 12.7, 12.8, 12.11, & 12.14
- Policy 14.3 & 14.4
- Policy 15.2



## Conservation Area

### Land Uses

Undeveloped natural lands and environmentally sensitive areas not suitable for development, including riparian buffers along rivers and streams, wetlands, flood plains, hills and mountains with steep slopes, scenic areas, and wildlife management areas. Land Uses (as described in Exhibit 2 and the Future Land Use Map) include:

- Agriculture
- Suburban Residential
- Industrial

### Compatibility Issues

- Best practices to ensure that changes result in appropriate resource protection.

### Public Facilities & Services

Limited public facilities and services are available.

### Characteristic Development Pattern:

- Very large lot sizes limit development density and protect farmland and rural character.
- Urban growth or service boundary that discourages growth in this area.



*Floyd County's Conservation Areas include significant riparian buffers along the County's rivers and streams.*

### Anticipated Implementation Measures:

- Agricultural buffering
- Agricultural use notices
- Right-to-farm protections
- Conservation subdivisions
- Rural design guidelines
- Development regulations

### Applicable Goals and Policies

While all of the Plan goals and policies are important and apply to development within the City and County, these policies are of particular interest and relevance to development within this character area:

- Goal 2, all associated policies
- Policy 11.2
- Policy 15.2
- Policy 17.2



## D. Future Land Use Map

The future land use map identifies the type and intensity of land uses for future development. This map (**Map 2, Appendix D**) should be used as a guideline for providing future services and evaluating future zoning and development requests.

The Future Land Use Map was based on the maps generated by participants at the Development Allocation Workshops. The workshop maps were distilled into three alternative scenarios which were analyzed to examine the impacts each scenario would have on City and County facilities and services (**Appendix C**). The Steering Committee then selected components from each scenario to develop a preferred scenario that formed the basis for the Future Land Use Map.

The Future Land Use Map includes nine categories of land uses, shown in **Exhibit 2**. These land uses are not zoning districts; the Future Land Use Map is a guideline to future zoning for the City of Rome and Floyd County. **Exhibit 2** specifies which zoning districts are anticipated for use within each Future Land Use category.

**Exhibit 2: Future Land Use Table**

Future Land Use Category	Typical Uses	Density/ Intensity Range	Applicable Zoning
Agriculture	Agriculture, forestry, and agricultural-related activities on large parcels of land. Some large-lot residential uses may occur, ranging from farmhouses to clustered subdivisions that preserve agricultural or open space.	Less than 1 DU/Acre	Agricultural Residential, Suburban Residential
Suburban Residential	Suburban residential provides space for one home every 2 acres, on average. The land is generally held in private ownership and residents are not served by municipal utilities.	Up to 1 DU/Acre	Agricultural Residential, Suburban Residential
Low Density Residential	Low density residential uses may include conventional subdivisions which are typically low density neighborhoods that include design components such as segregated uses, streets designed primarily for cars, cul-de-sacs, private open space, and large lots.	1-4 DUs/Acre	Low Density Traditional Residential
Medium Density Residential	Townhomes and condominiums at moderate density are 2-3 stories tall. This type of development is generally be located on the busier streets of lower density residential neighborhoods.	4-9 DUs/Acre	High Density Traditional Residential
High Density Residential	Tri-plexes, apartment buildings, condominiums, and townhomes at higher densities are included in this category. Buildings may be as tall as 4-5 stories.	10 to 14 DUs/Acre	Duplex Residential, Multifamily Residential

Future Land Use Category	Typical Uses	Density/ Intensity Range	Applicable Zoning
Commercial	Commercial uses include a wide variety of retail uses, including restaurants, movie theaters, car dealerships, and stores. Commercial uses range from small boutiques to large "big box" centers.		Community Commercial, General Heavy Commercial, Central Business Commercial
Office Park	Office parks include buildings from 1 to 3 stories in height, and cover approximately a third of the site. Although office uses are predominant, small retail components may be included in these developments to serve on-site employees.		Neighborhood Office Commercial, Office Institutional
Industrial	Industrial uses sometimes require open space in order to buffer them from adjacent uses, and might include light industrial uses such as shipping & warehousing, technology industries and assembly plants, or more intense heavy industrial uses.		Light Industrial, Heavy Industrial
Mixed Use	Permits a mix of residential and non-residential development. Typical combines multi-family dwelling units with commercial and office uses. Uses may be mixed within a building (such as apartments above retail shops) or within a development site.	10-14 DUs/acre;	Planned Development, Urban Mixed Use



## **IV. Goals and Policies**

The following goals and policies are intended for use by elected and appointed officials and the development community in making decisions on future development in the City and County. These goals and policies were developed by the citizens of Floyd County through the public participation plan described in **Appendix A**.

### **A. Growth Coordination**

**GOAL 1 – Land Use: To maintain a balanced, sustainable land use pattern that accommodates projected growth while fostering community vitality, improving the quality of the developed environment and protecting the integrity of the natural environment.**

Policy 1.1: Use the Future Development Map (**Map 1**) to coordinate infrastructure investment with City and County growth goals.

Policy 1.2: Use the Future Development Map (**Map 1**), Future Land Use Map (**Map 2**) and the Character Areas and Future Land Use Table (**Exhibits 1 & 2**) to guide land use and development decisions. The maps illustrate public facility needs and compatibility issues and the general distribution and type of future land uses. The City and County shall establish a mechanism that allows interpretations and minor boundary adjustments in the Future Land Use Map without requiring formal plan amendments.

Policy 1.3: Prior to amending the Official Zoning Map, the City Commission and Board of County Commissioners should consider whether the proposed amendment:

- a. Is consistent with adopted goals and policies (including referenced maps);
- b. Is or will be compatible<sup>1</sup> with the Future Development Map and future land use as shown in the Future Land Use Map; and
- c. Will enhance the overall quality of life in the County.

Policy 1.4 The Rome/Floyd County Planning Commission shall make recommendations on proposed annexation or de-annexation issues, including identifying applicable state laws and assessing potential effects on land use, zoning, schools, service and facility needs.

**GOAL 2 – Rural Area: Preserve and protect important natural resources and agricultural and forestry areas from the undue encroachment of other land uses.**

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<sup>1</sup> Compatibility is the ability of adjacent land uses to coexist without reducing each other's long-term viability. Different land uses can be considered compatible if they are adequately buffered and other measures have been taken to mitigate incompatible noise, odors, traffic and other nuisances that may be generated. Responsibilities for mitigation are described in the policies of the plan and will be enacted through the Unified Land Development Code (ULDC).

- Policy 2.1: Promote land use compatibility and sustainability in Rural Areas and Conservation Areas shown in **Map 1** as follows:
- a. Support and protect agricultural operations<sup>2</sup> from potential nuisance complaints through buffering, agricultural use notices, right-to-farm protections and nuisance easements.
  - b. Provide greater flexibility for operation of home occupations, cottage industries and agricultural support activities within rural areas rather than within suburban and urban areas.
  - c. Encourage retail and service development at intersections of arterial streets.
- Policy 2.2: Ensure that rural residential development is located and designed to minimize conflicts with adjacent agricultural and forestry operations.
- Policy 2.3: Encourage the use of conservation subdivisions in the unincorporated County to allow residential development that retains the rural character of rural area roadways and preserves agricultural land and/or open space.
- Policy 2.4: Encourage the preservation of the rural character through the establishment and use of rural design guidelines that:
- a. Preserve mature trees and vegetation screening the project;
  - b. Protect view corridors to maintain views of prominent scenic features; and
  - c. Locate perimeter fences gates, pillars, monuments, and other entry structures back from the roadway.
- Policy 2.5: Consider the establishment of a land evaluation and assessment system to determine the suitability of land conversion.

**GOAL 3 –Corridors: To maintain the major highway corridors through the County as attractive and functional gateways to Rome and Floyd County.**

- Policy 3.1: Ensure that new development and redevelopment are designed to be compatible with the function of the corridors designated in **Map 1**, and maintain an attractive environment for users of corridors. Design standards in corridors should address landscaping, screening, building form and materials, parking area design, signs and other site design factors. For rural commercial corridors a combination of existing and

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<sup>2</sup> Agricultural Operations are defined in the ULDC as “the raising, harvesting, marketing, or storing of products of the field or orchard; feeding, breeding, or managing livestock (including but not limited to cattle, swine, equine, goats, sheep and rabbits) or poultry (including but not limited to chickens, ducks, turkeys and ratites); producing and/or storing feed for use in the production of livestock or poultry; the production of aquacultural, horticultural, dairy, livestock, poultry, eggs and apiarian products; forestry land management practices including harvesting trees; and constructing farm buildings and farm ponds. These activities may also involve the application of pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers, and animal wastes and irrigation, tillage of the soil and harvesting of crops. Execution of these activities may create noise, odors and dust at any time of any day of the week.”

new landscaping should be used to reinforce the desired scenic character of these portions of the highway corridor.

- Policy 3.2: Facilitate property access from a system of collector or side streets that are generally parallel to the highway corridor and minimize the number of access points to highway corridor.
- Policy 3.3: Encourage nodal development patterns and avoid shallow strip development along corridors where commercial uses interconnect with each other and adjacent residential neighborhoods through common access points along highway corridors.
- Policy 3.4: Ensure that adequate public facilities are available concurrently with development in these corridors. Participate in the development costs of these public facilities when consistent with available funding and adopted economic development objectives and policies.
- Policy 3.5: In addition to the preceding policies, Corridors are subject to the policies of the Rural, Urban, or Urban Growth Area to which they are adjacent.

**GOAL 4 – Urbanizing Areas: To promote and sustain the vitality of developed areas of the County, including the cities of Rome and Cave Spring, and the urbanizing areas surrounding these cities.**

- Policy 4.1: Coordinate with the cities of Rome and Cave Spring to develop a long-range sewer extension plan and ensure that future development decisions in these areas are consistent with the efficient extension of the full range of urban services
- Policy 4.2: Collaboratively develop consistent land use and improvement standards and procedures for development within Town Centers, Urban Areas, and Urban Growth Areas designated in the Future Development Map (**Map 1**) to:
- a. facilitate efficient long-term urban service provision;
  - b. ensure that land uses are consistent with adopted growth plans;
  - c. ensure that densities/intensities are consistent with plans to provide centralized water, sewer and other public facilities;
  - d. require all development to be served by essential public or equivalent private facilities at adopted levels of service;
  - e. ensure that public improvements are consistent with applicable plans and design standards;
  - f. coordinate the installation of private on-site facilities (e.g., septic tanks and water wells) with potential infrastructure extensions to avoid creating barriers to urban growth and the efficient extension of centralized facilities;
  - g. establish consistent and rational urban street cross-sections;
  - h. streamline development review processes to encourage planned development and minimize procedural redundancy;



- i. clearly assign regulatory and enforcement responsibilities to the appropriate jurisdiction;
  - j. coordinate residential, commercial and industrial development with the efficient extension of centralized wastewater service, water service and transportation system improvements; and
  - k. protect the rights of property owners.
- Policy 4.3 Limit rural development in planned urban areas that will interfere with the efficient extension of urban infrastructure or the establishment of sustainable urban land use patterns.
- Policy 4.4 Ensure that residential and commercial development pays its proportionate share of the costs of extending essential public facilities<sup>3</sup> (see policies under **Goal 11** for more details).
- Policy 4.5: Ensure that dissimilar adjacent land uses are compatible through standards that buffer or otherwise mitigate negative impacts.
- Policy 4.6: Preclude new residential development within planned industrial areas, airport approach zones, and identified environmental hazard areas.
- Policy 4.7: Facilitate mixed-use development that compatibly incorporates and integrates a variety of housing unit types, support services, recreational and educational facilities, and employment opportunities.
- Policy 4.8: Ensure that extensions of municipal services into the Urbanizing Area are located, designed and timed to facilitate planned urban growth at appropriate densities through a coordinated Capital Improvements Program.<sup>4</sup>
- Policy 4.9: Permit interim development within the Urbanizing Area provided that:
- a. Development is designed to be compatible with planned land uses;
  - b. Residential lots are clustered and do not exceed 1 acre, except as necessitated by environmental constraints;
  - c. Centralized water service meeting adopted fire protection standards is available; and
  - d. Funding and design provisions are made for future connection to centralized water and sewer facilities for development at densities of one or more dwellings per acre.
- Policy 4.10: Coordinate the expansion of the Urbanizing Area with plans for the extension of centralized water and sewer service. Avoid premature expansions that would promote sprawl development patterns.

**GOAL 5 – Redevelopment and Infill Development: To promote compatible and sustainable redevelopment and infill development within the City of Rome, Cave Spring and Floyd County.**

<sup>3</sup> Essential public facilities include centralized water and sewer systems, transportation, stormwater, schools and emergency service facilities. See policies under Goal 11 for more explanation of the application of this policy.

<sup>4</sup> See the Implementation section of this Plan for more discussion of the Capital Improvements Program.

- Policy 5.1 Encourage the adaptive re-use of vacant or under-used buildings for residential, commercial, or mixed-use projects where such buildings are in a prominent location, have historic significance, or have the potential to revitalize a neighborhood.
- Policy 5.2 Provide greater flexibility for site design and building code requirements applied to the rehabilitation of older buildings that include standards appropriate to the renovation of older buildings.
- Policy 5.3 Cooperate with redevelopment organizations such as the South Rome Redevelopment Corporation to seek State and Federal funds for revitalization projects.
- Policy 5.4 Develop criteria for the application of the full range of redevelopment and infill incentives that may be available to qualified projects, including but not limited to:
- a. State Enterprise Zones;
  - b. Local Development Fund;
  - c. Redevelopment Fund Program;
  - d. Housing Tax Credit Program; and
  - e. Local funding or incentive programs that may be developed by the Rome, Cave Spring or Floyd County.

## **B. Economic Development**

**GOAL 6 – Local Economy: Maintain a strong local economy that provides a stable economic base, employment opportunities for all segments of the local population and the fiscal resources to provide high quality public services to all residents.**

- Policy 6.1 Coordinate land use decisions to ensure that residential development does not create negative impacts on the viable operation of agricultural, commercial and industrial uses.
- Policy 6.2 Support the Greater Rome Chamber of Commerce in its efforts to promote entrepreneurial development and small business expansion.
- Policy 6.3 Support local efforts to provide job training, placement services, night day care and other services.
- Policy 6.4 Identify and support opportunities for regular and continuing communication between the local governments, the Greater Rome Chamber of Commerce, other local economic development interests, and the State Department of Economic Development.
- Policy 6.5 Ensure that financial incentives are linked to specific performance criteria, such as specified numbers of jobs, wage rate targets,

redevelopment objectives and/or other measurable economic development objectives.

- Policy 6.6 Integrate land use planning, economic development and infrastructure planning decisions, including the development of a coordinated countywide capital improvement plan that addresses short- and long-term infrastructure needs.
- Policy 6.7 Identify key economic development activity centers and corridors and help develop area and sub-area plans for development of land and public facilities.
- Policy 6.8 Support appropriate commercial development areas within Floyd County by identifying areas with available and planned infrastructure, limiting intensive commercial uses to areas served by adequate public facilities and services, and ensuring that sufficient land is allocated for future commercial, industrial and office space to allow for a growing, viable economy.
- Policy 6.9 Develop area plans to coordinate infrastructure investment in targeted industrial development areas while maintaining an inventory of industrial development sites that have access to adequate public facilities.
- Policy 6.10 Plan infrastructure and service improvements designed to serve industrial uses within existing and potential industrial areas.

**GOAL 7 - Agriculture: Support the stability of agricultural and forestry uses by protecting their operations from nuisance complaints and by promoting agricultural entrepreneurship.**

- Policy 7.1 Promote the use of conservation subdivision design to facilitate retention of meaningful green space in rural areas.
- Policy 7.2 Allow non-agricultural land uses that directly support the economic viability of agriculture within agriculturally zoned areas. Such uses may include: agri-tourism, ecotourism, home occupations, country inns, the processing, packaging, and direct marketing of agriculture products, farm related cottage industries, equipment repair and feed/seed dealers.
- Policy 7.3 Support economic development initiatives that promote value added activities and the direct marketing of agriculture products that allow local producers to capture a greater share of the consumer's food and product expenditures. Direct marketing ventures include: farmer's markets, internet sales, sales to local institutions, "pick-your-own" operations, farm stands and community supported agriculture.

- Policy 7.4 Encourage the consumption of locally produced agricultural products by local businesses and institutions, such as meal preparation in public schools, prisons, senior centers and local colleges and universities.

**GOAL 8 – Education: Improve the job readiness and skill level of the local workforce to maintain high employment levels and attract new businesses to the County.**

- Policy 8.1 Facilitate discussions between all schools and educational institutions in the County to increase the efficiency of operations and the educational opportunities for students in both districts
- Policy 8.2 Assist the Floyd County School System and the Rome City School System with the coordination of long-term facility plans with projected County and City growth.
- Policy 8.3 Encourage private sector and local government internships and work study opportunities for secondary and post secondary students.
- Policy 8.4 Improve the value of the local workforce by supporting programs and businesses which provide skills assessment, job training and worker retraining, and coordinating with the public schools, and local post-secondary educational institutions to develop programs for training in communication and interpersonal skills through links to employers and private institutions.
- Policy 8.5 Encourage appropriate educational and training programs to help unemployed and underemployed local residents take advantage of business expansion and new development.

**GOAL 9 – Tourism: Develop a sustainable tourism economy based on the promotion of natural, arts and cultural, recreational and commercial resources within the Rome/Floyd County community.**

- Policy 9.1 Work with tourism-related entities within the community, including the Chamber of Commerce, Convention and Visitor’s Bureau, the Downtown Development Authority, and the Rome Area Council on the Arts to determine goals for tourist attraction.
- Policy 9.2 Participate in State and regional forums that relate to tourism development that may affect the community resources and character that attract visitors to the area.
- Policy 9.3 Protect and interpret cultural resources in the region, including the human and natural history of the area.

- Policy 9.4 Pursue a branding program for the area on which to base marketing materials and signage.

### **C. Housing**

**GOAL 10: Preserve a housing stock that provides adequate and attainable housing in diverse types that creates stable, viable neighborhoods.**

- Policy 10.1 Encourage new suburban residential neighborhoods to provide for ongoing maintenance of green-space unless the City, County or some other approved entity accepts responsibility for ongoing maintenance.
- Policy 10.2 Allow the creation of private internal subdivision streets provided that construction and long-term maintenance is the responsibility of the subdivision residents. Private streets must be constructed to the applicable minimum standard and must provide access for public service provision.
- Policy 10.3 Require assurances that private, community water and wastewater facilities will meet City/County standards, be accepted for operation and maintenance by a public agency, and be fully funded by the new development being served.
- Policy 10.4 Create and maintain a housing stock inventory, which includes substantial data on the condition, value and characteristics of residential structures.
- Policy 10.5 Examine potential tax, development fee, or other fiscal incentives to promote private investment in the existing housing stock.
- Policy 10.6 Disseminate information to rental housing property owners regarding the HOME Rental Housing Tax Credit Programs to promote substantial rehabilitation.
- Policy 10.7 Proactively identify dilapidated structures and take appropriate measures to compel or encourage property owners to demolish or rehabilitate unsafe structures, such as through fee waiver for building or demolition permits. Consider the establishment of a land bank.
- Policy 10.8 Collaborate with non-profits and other community-based organizations to identify community needs for affordable housing and to develop joint strategies to meet those needs.
- Policy 10.9 Protect existing residential neighborhoods from incompatible encroachment of commercial and industrial uses.

- Policy 10.10 Encourage the development of a mix of housing types to meet the needs of residents throughout their lives (e.g., starter homes through nursing facilities).
- Policy 10.11 Support the study of increased homestead exemptions in lieu of ongoing property tax assessment freeze.

#### **D. Public Facilities & Services**

**GOAL 11: Provide adequate public facilities and services for existing and future residents and businesses in an equitable and cost-effective manner.**

- Policy 11.1 Target development in those areas where public facilities (including water, wastewater, roads, and schools) can be provided efficiently without compromising service or increasing costs to existing citizens and businesses.
- Policy 11.2 Define acceptable levels of service for the purposes of facility planning and subdivision review that are consistent with **Exhibit 3**. Development of levels of service should be coordinated with the cities and rural service providers in the County.
- Policy 11.3 Require development within Town Center, Urban and Urban Growth Areas to receive an urban level of service as defined by the adjacent City.
- Policy 11.4 Ensure that residential development proposals in the Rural Area have access to adequate public facilities.
- Policy 11.5 In areas that are not planned to be served by capital facilities within the next two years in the adopted Capital Improvements Program, allow developers to advance construction of needed facilities. Require subsequent development using the advanced facilities to pay their proportionate share of infrastructure and service capacity to reimburse the developer who funded the facilities.

**Exhibit 3: Public Facility Standards**

Facility	Growth Tier		
	Town Center, Urban, and Urban Growth	Activity Corridor, Rural Commercial Corridor	Conservation, Rural
Roads	LOS D <sup>5</sup> except along designated constrained segments	LOS C	LOS C Unpaved roads are not to exceed 250 vehicles per day
Water	Centralized service with adequate fire flow	Centralized service with adequate fire flow	Wells or rural water
Wastewater	Centralized Service	Centralized Service	On-site systems
Parks	Neighborhood park access required in accordance with NRPA recommendations. Private facilities may be counted toward park dedication requirements	Not required	Community park access required in accordance with NRPA recommendations. Private facilities may be counted toward park dedication requirements
Fire Protection / EMS	4 minute response time or LOS standard of applicable city	8 minute response time	Varies
Schools	To be developed in coordination with the City of Rome and Floyd County School Districts.		

- Policy 11.6 Develop a coordinated, County-wide capital improvements program (CIP) involving all service providers that is linked to anticipated growth.
- Policy 11.7 Evaluate annual CIP projects for potential state, federal, or other funding sources.
- Policy 11.8 Target funding for significant infrastructure improvements related to:
- Providing appropriate infrastructure and service capacity to identified industrial development areas. (See Policies 6.7, 6.9, and 6.10); and
  - Urban infrastructure and service improvements within the Town Centers, Urban, and Urban Growth Areas (See Policy 4.1).

**GOAL 12 – Transportation: Provide a convenient and cost effective transportation system that emphasizes connectivity, safety, choices of modes, and harmony between transportation modes and land uses.**

<sup>5</sup> Level of Service (LOS) shall be defined in the ULDC in a manner that is consistent with the Institute for Transportation Engineers (ITE) standards.

- Policy 12.1 Adopt road level of service standards consistent with those listed in **Exhibit 3**.
- Policy 12.2 For the constrained roadway corridors shown in **Map 3 (Appendix D)**,
- Conduct periodic reviews of road segment and intersection levels of service (LOS) that account for existing traffic and approved, but unbuilt development;
  - Coordinate with GDOT to manage traffic in these constrained corridors.
- Policy 12.3 Minimize individual property access directly from arterial roads.
- Policy 12.4 Adopt property access design standards that:
- Establish connectivity between adjacent commercial or industrial properties;
  - Allow or encourage shared driveway access for adjacent properties; and
  - Establish appropriate driveway separation.
- Policy 12.5 Coordinate development of frontage roads or parallel collector streets along highway corridors to enhance property access (See Policy 3.2).
- Policy 12.6 Promote the use of traffic demand management techniques among governmental entities, institutions and within large employment centers. Appropriate techniques include:
- Incentives for carpooling;
  - Staggered work shifts;
  - Use of company shuttles and public transportation;
  - Preferential parking for carpoolers; and
  - Other techniques that reduce peak hour trips.
- Policy 12.7 Evaluate development proposals in rural areas to ensure that development occurs along roads that are designed to handle additional traffic.
- Policy 12.8 Require new residential subdivisions to have direct access to a hard surfaced road.
- Policy 12.9 **Map 4 (Appendix D)** shows the functional classification system of existing and planned roadways. Use this map to apply access standards, identify need rights-of-way and ensure that abutting development is consistent with the long term transportation needs of Floyd County.
- Policy 12.10 Coordinate with the Cities to maintain a County-wide existing and proposed primary road plan that:



- a. Establishes a functional road classification system that identifies a hierarchy of roads (e.g. arterial, collector and local roads);
- b. Sets forth basic design standards for right-of-way widths, roadway widths, design speeds, trip capacities, surface types and property access limitations for public and private roads; and
- c. Includes a thoroughfare map showing general location of arterial and major collector roads along with priority capital improvement areas.

Policy 12.11 Develop an interconnected trail system from the central urbanized areas into the unincorporated county ultimately seeking a coordinated Northwest Georgia trail system, through the implementation of the Rome Floyd County Trail Facilities Plan.

Policy 12.12 Where feasible, coordinate trail extensions as part of transportation projects.

Policy 12.13 Identify and pursue the opportunities for rails to trails conversions.

Policy 12.14 Prior to the establishment of a trail adjacent to an active agricultural operation, the governing body shall hold a public hearing to evaluate any adverse effects on that agricultural property and its security. The USDA Pre-Harvest Security Checklist shall be used to measure the impact of any proposed trail adjacent to an agricultural operation.

**GOAL 13 – Airport Facilities: Protect the function of the airport and related economic development opportunities from incompatible uses and development.**

Policy 13.1 Protect the function of Richard B. Russell Regional Airport and opportunities for its expansion by limiting residential encroachment into approach zones.

Policy 13.2 Establish an Airport Overlay zoning district in which land uses, intensities and structural heights are regulated to protect the functionality and safety of long-term airport operations.

Policy 13.3 Provide the Airport Commission and Airport Manager direct notification and the opportunity to comment on development proposals that may influence facility operations.

**GOAL 14 – Wastewater: Ensure that wastewater facilities and services are provided to adequately service the long-term needs of existing and proposed development.**

Policy 14.1 Require connection to a centralized wastewater system for all new development in the Town Center, Urban, and Urban Growth Areas and the Activity Corridor unless an alternative wastewater treatment

system does not pose a barrier to future extension of centralized wastewater service or a hazard to natural resources.

- Policy 14.2 Where alternative wastewater facilities are allowed, require that such facilities will meet local and state standards and be fully funded by the new development being served.
- Policy 14.3 Allow development within the Rural Area to be served by on-site wastewater treatment systems designed in accordance with County standards.
- Policy 14.4 Ensure that on-site wastewater systems do not threaten the quality of stream and river corridors, waterways, and wetlands.
- Policy 14.5 Participate in the oversizing of wastewater facilities for development projects in the Urban Growth Area if the projects support Comprehensive Plan goals and policies and sufficient funding is available.
- Policy 14.6 Establish a wastewater extension plan that identifies future wastewater service areas and prioritizes service areas for future improvements. Correspondingly, areas that are not slated for immediate infrastructure extension should also be generally identified.

**GOAL 15 – Water Supply: Maintain the high quality of surface and groundwater and all public water supplies and ensure that water systems are adequately designed and constructed to meet the basic and emergency needs of the community.**

- Policy 15.1 Work with the local USDA Service Center to promote best agriculture management practices proposed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).
- Policy 15.2 Require the provision of adequate water in accordance with Policy 11.2. Adequacy standards shall be implemented through the ULDC.
- Policy 15.3 Participate in the oversizing of water facilities for development projects in the Town Center, Urban, and Urban Growth Area if the projects support Comprehensive Plan goals and policies and sufficient funding is available.
- Policy 15.4 Support water conservation programs aimed at reducing demands from new and existing development through public education efforts and requirements for water conserving fixtures in new or remodeled buildings. If water is taken by other communities, it should be restored to the point of origin, properly treated.

- Policy 15.5 Recognizing the potential for future growth in Floyd County and the surrounding areas, the community should support the development of a regional water storage facility.

**GOAL 16 – Solid Waste: Promote the safe, efficient, and environmentally-sensitive management of solid waste in a manner that minimizes negative impacts on County residents.**

- Policy 16.1 Actively participate in regional and state planning efforts to help provide for the safe and efficient disposal of solid wastes at appropriate locations
- Policy 16.2 Adopt locational standards for solid waste facilities. Such standards should address proximity to neighborhoods and other activity centers, hydrology, accessibility, and development trends. Facilities should be located so that they do not cause adverse impacts and to eliminate the risks of short and long term contamination of surface or groundwater resources. Solid waste facilities should not be located in growth corridors or other areas with a high potential for urbanization during the planned life of the facility.
- Policy 16.3 Support the provision of recycling facilities at appropriate locations, assist operators of recycling facilities in locating market for recycled goods, and provide information on recycling to the public.

**E. Natural & Cultural Resources**

**GOAL 17 – Natural Resources: Preserve and protect resources essential to sustain a healthy environment, including the County’s river and stream corridors, and woodland habitats.**

- Policy 17.1 Coordinate with state and federal agencies to protect wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes or land within stream and river corridors.
- Policy 17.2 Explore the feasibility of collecting funds for conservation acquisition. Such exploration should consider the use of such funds as leverage for State and Federal open space retention funding programs. Regional partnerships to pool funding should be examined. A local and updated Greenspace Plan is a useful tool to identify future properties for acquisition and conservation.
- Policy 17.3 Adopt and enforce site plan, construction standards and erosion mitigation measures as part of the zoning, subdivision and/or site development regulations.

- Policy 17.4 Create incentives to maximize buffers and greenspace to augment wildlife corridors and water quality, among other goals.
- Policy 17.5 Work with agricultural operators to communicate and attract state and federal resources to promote stream preservation and limit soil erosion, creating solutions to assist the viability of agricultural operations.

**GOAL 18 – Cultural Resources:** Retain Floyd County’s historic, archaeological, artistic and cultural assets for future generations of residents and visitors.

- Policy 18.1 Maintain a GIS-based inventory of historic, archaeological and cultural resources.
- Policy 18.2 Prepare and disseminate factual materials regarding historic assets in Floyd County.
- Policy 18.3 Coordinate with property owners to identify, and where feasible, protect historic and archeological assets prior to development of a site.
- Policy 18.4 Consider the creation of local tax incentives for the preservation and restoration of designated historic resources.
- Policy 18.5 Develop a Comprehensive Cultural Plan for Floyd County that includes an inventory of existing organizations, facilities, programs and resources; identification of community cultural needs to be addressed over the next twenty years; and strategies to implement the cultural plan. This plan should include the arts (visual, performing and literary), historical museums, festivals and heritage-related organizations and events in Floyd County.
- Policy 18.6 Support the development of a designated Arts District in coordination with area non-profit and redevelopment organizations.
- Policy 18.7 Explore possible public-private partnerships for arts and culture funding.

## **V. Implementation Program**

### **A. Overview**

In Georgia, Comprehensive Plans are not law. They are policy documents that require a strong local commitment to achieve the Plan's vision. Community change occurs through a series of incremental decisions and investments that are made by the public and private sectors. Development decisions made by private property owners, staff and the appointed and elected officials will cumulatively determine Rome's and Floyd County's successes in achieving their goals. While the Plan's goals, objectives and policies provide guidance for many decisions, effective implementation of the plan will require the adoption of a variety of regulatory, budgetary and administrative tasks. In addition, as the community changes, the Plan may need to be altered to effectively respond to these changes. This element provides for the implementation and ongoing administration of the Comprehensive Plan by:

- Describing specific implementation tools and techniques to achieve the Plan's goals;
- Describing the processes for monitoring and amending the plan over time; and
- Establishing an Implementation Work Program that specifies attributes of tasks to implement the Plan.

### **B. Implementation Tools and Techniques**

The Plan Implementation Work Program includes specific actions, tools, techniques and documents to be used by Rome, Cave Spring, and Floyd County to achieve Plan goals. The key implementation tools and techniques alluded to in the work program are described below.

#### **Development Regulations**

On a day-to-day basis, the development regulations (zoning and subdivision regulations) are the most important tools for Plan implementation. Local land use, transportation, public facility, housing, environmental and community services goals and objectives are achieved through a myriad of incremental public and private development decisions. Amendments to the ULDC should be consistent with the Plan to ensure that incremental actions on development requests support the Plan's goals, policies and recommendations.

#### **Capital Improvements Program**

The Capital Improvements Program (CIP) should ensure that the local governments have planned the most cost effective facilities and have determined whether they will have the capability to fund needed public facilities. The CIP consists of short-term (5-year) and long-term (10- to 20-year) components. The 5-year CIP should list short-term projects needed to maintain existing levels of service, with each project being assigned a responsible party, cost estimate, funding sources and a time frame for completion. The CIP also should delineate the proportion of project costs that is designed to provide new capacity and the proportion that is required to fund existing deficiencies. This delineation will enable local governments to quantify the capital costs associated with new development and to monitor the expenditure of development fees. The five-year CIP should be updated annually to reflect the city and county budgetary decisions.

The long-range CIP should reflect the size, approximate location and estimated costs of improvements needed to serve anticipated growth for the next 10 to 20 years. This program is not an engineering document, but should provide enough specificity to determine which costs are required to remedy existing deficiencies and which costs provide new capacity that will be demanded by new development. The long-range CIP should be updated at least once every five (5) years or when significant changes to the base systems modify the long-term capital investment strategies (*e.g.*, changes in service areas, significant changes in the Future Land Use Plan, changes in service demand or delivery patterns).

### **Budget**

The annual budget is one of the most potent tools for plan implementation because it sets priorities for action each year. Capital and operational funding decisions should directly reflect the goals, objectives and policies of this Plan. The Plan should serve as the basis for the staff's recommended work programs and a focus for the Board's discussion of priorities from year to year. Staff and Planning Commission should review the Plan's Short Term Work Program as well as the Cave Spring Short Term Work Program and recommend appropriate strategies to achieve the Plan goals in a manner that is consistent with Plan policies. If specific work program tasks are not funded, the City Commission or Board of County Commissioners should evaluate whether they should be omitted from the Plan. When there is a conflict between budget priorities and Plan policies, decision-makers should consider whether the specific goals, objectives or policies remain valid. If they are valid, then they should reevaluate budget priorities.

### **Inter-governmental Agreements**

Since public challenges do not start or stop at jurisdictional boundaries, responses to those challenges will require inter-governmental coordination. Inter-governmental agreements (IGAs) are treaties between two or more units of government for the mutual benefit of all parties. Within the context of this plan, legal agreements between Floyd County, Rome, Cave Spring, the school districts and/or other service providers could address compatible growth and infrastructure issues throughout the County. Such agreements should establish each party's rights, responsibilities and recourse within a cooperative growth management process designed to implement the policies of this Plan, notably the Urban Service Area policies. Items typically addressed in local government IGAs include: development review authority, annexation processes, site development standards, infrastructure projects, building and related codes, public safety mutual aid agreements, impact fees and IGA administrative procedures.

### **Adequate Public Facilities**

An Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) or requirement requires public facilities and services to be available when needed to serve new development at an adopted Level of Service (LOS). APFOs can require availability and adequacy for any type of public facility (roads, water, wastewater, public safety, schools, etc.) prior to development or make development conditional upon public facilities, even if the local governments does not own or operate the facilities. If development is contingent upon meeting APFO requirements, the local jurisdiction may provide for the payment of an impact fee or other

financial surety to make necessary improvements to comply with the adopted level of service.

### **Area and Facility Plans**

To guide land use transitions and ensure that development is consistent with the Plan, compatible with existing and planned land uses in the area and sustainable from a market perspective, a variety of detailed land use and facility plans that should address the timing, land use transitions and other standards for development and redevelopment. Facility plans are similar in concept to area land use plans, but the primary focus is on the development of new capacity to serve anticipated growth.

## **C. Plan Maintenance**

This Comprehensive Plan Update is intended to be a dynamic document -- one that responds to changing needs and conditions. To assess the Plan's effectiveness in responding to changing conditions, the Cities of Rome and Cave Spring and Floyd County will need to monitor actions affecting the Plan. As a result of these monitoring efforts or private development requests, the Plan will need to be amended periodically. However, amendments should not be made lightly. The Rome City Commission, Cave Spring City Council, County Board of Commissioners and Planning Commission members should consider each proposed amendment carefully to determine whether or not it is consistent with the Plan's goals and policies. In addition, the cumulative effect of several minor changes may be a change in policy direction. For this reason, amendments must be evaluated in terms of their significance to overall policy.

### **Annual Monitoring**

Prior to development of each budget, the Planning Commission should:

- evaluate the City's and County's successes in achieving plan goals through the recommended strategies of the Short Term Work Program discussed at the end of this Chapter;
- propose strategies to be pursued under the coming year's budget;
- identify unlisted strategies that will achieve Plan goals;
- evaluate growth trends and compare those trends to Plan projections; and
- summarize development actions that affect the Plan's provisions.

This annual review should include statements identifying the County's progress in achieving the goals of the Plan, the impact of the Plan on service provision, and proposed programs to help achieve the goals. The annual review should be used as a tool to help set budgetary priorities.

**Land Use Plan Amendments**

The Future Land Use Plan is intended to guide public and private development and land use decisions. The City and County should adopt a formal amendment process that will be codified in the ULDC. Future Land Use Plan amendments are anticipated as growth occurs and market conditions change. While land use amendments may occur more frequently than policy changes, they should not occur more than twice per year unless the Board finds that such changes are needed for public health, safety or economic development purposes. By limiting opportunities to amend the Future Land Use Plan, the potential for incremental land use changes to result in unintended policy shifts will be reduced.

**Policy Changes**

The Goals, Objectives and Policies of this Plan establish the framework for the Implementation Program. To ensure that the Plan remains an effective guideline for decision-makers, the Planning Commission should conduct periodic major evaluations of the Plan goals, objectives and policies. These evaluations should be conducted every three to five years, depending on the rate of change, and should consider the following:

- Progress in implementing the Plan;
- Changes in conditions that form the basis of the Plan;
- Fiscal conditions and the ability to finance public investments recommended by the Plan;
- Community support for the Plan's goals, objectives and policies; and
- Changes in State or federal laws that affect the County's tools for Plan implementation.

The major review process should encourage input from businesses, neighborhood groups, developers, local governments and other community interests through the Planning Commission. Comprehensive Plan amendments that appear appropriate as a result of this review would be processed according to the adopted Plan amendment process.

**Short Term Work Program Update**

The Implementation Program should be reviewed on an annual basis to identify the previous years accomplishments and to modify the work program tasks establishing a reasonable timeline for key plan implementation tasks. The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) planning standards require that either an annual work program review or 5-year review must be submitted to the DCA to ensure consistency statewide planning goals and the adopted local Comprehensive Plan.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Supra note 8. at Chapter 110-12-1.04(7).



## Appendix A. Citizen Participation Plan

## **Appendix B. Community Assessment**

## Appendix C. Scenarios Analysis

## Appendix D. Community Agenda Maps

## Appendix B. Community Assessment

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### ***Introduction***

The Community Assessment is the initial step in the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan of Floyd County and the Cities of Rome and Cave Spring. The standards and procedures for local comprehensive planning established by the rules for the Georgia Department of Community Affairs describes the Community Assessment in chapter 110-12-1.02 (1)(a) as:

...an objective and professional assessment of data and information about the community that is intended to be prepared without extensive direct public participation. The Community Assessment includes: (1) a list of potential issues and opportunities the community may wish to take action to address, (2) analysis of existing development patterns, including a map of recommended character areas for consideration in developing an overall vision for future development of the community; (3) evaluation of current community policies, activities, and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives; and (4) analysis of data and information to check the validity of the above evaluations and the potential issues and opportunities. The product of the community assessment must be a concise and informative report (such as an executive summary), for it will be used to inform decision-making by stakeholders during development of the Community Agenda portion of the plan.

The Assessment serves as a starting point for community discussions. The issues and opportunities listed in the Assessment will evolve, over the course of the planning process, into a list of goals and objectives that will be included in the Community Agenda. The Agenda is the final document produced by the planning process, and will be a locally agreed upon and adopted document.

### ***Community Profile***

Floyd County is located in northwest Georgia, on the southern edge of the Appalachian Mountains. The County was formed from part of the Cherokee Territory in 1832, and was the 82nd county formed in the state of Georgia. The Cities of Rome, the county seat, and Cave Spring are the only incorporated areas within the county. The location of Rome, Cave Springs, and Floyd County as they relate to the region is shown on the enclosed location map.

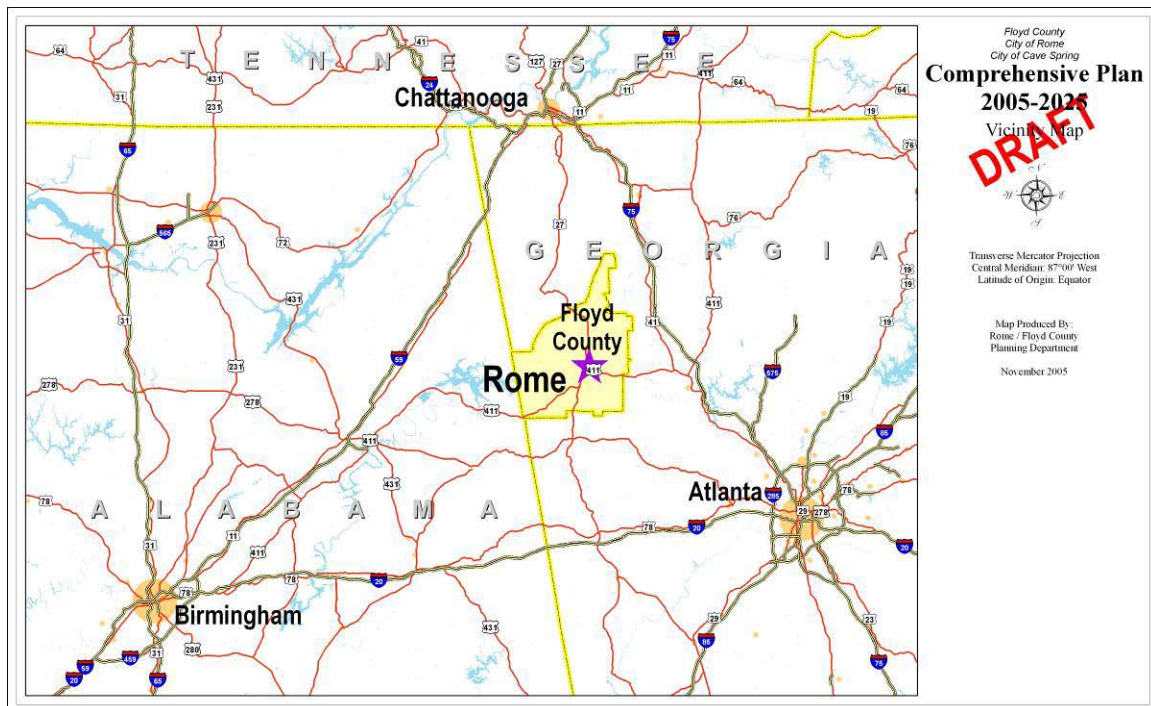
The City of Rome was founded in 1834 by three travelers who stopped to water their horses at a spring near the point where the Etowah and Oostanula Rivers met to form the Coosa River, and was named the county seat in 1835.

Rome, which is centrally located within the County, is nearly equidistance from Chattanooga, Tennessee; Birmingham, Alabama; and Atlanta, Georgia; although it does not have direct interstate highway connection with any one of the three.

The area of the County is 519 square miles. The City of Rome's corporate limits encompass 31 square miles, and the City of Cave Spring covers 3.47 square miles.

The 2000 Census showed a population for the entire county of 90,565, for the City of Rome of 34,980 and for the City of Cave Spring of 975. Population growth over the last 50 years has been generally steady. So far, the area has not experienced rapid growth, as nearby communities that are closer to the Atlanta metropolitan area have.

Historically, Floyd County relied on cotton, transportation, and later, textile industries for most employment. Today, manufacturing is diverse and includes both food processing and auto parts manufacturing; while the medical, service, retail and public sectors now rank among the top ten employers.



## Identification of Potential Issues and Opportunities

### Population Change

- Population growth may become more rapid in the next 20 years, as the influence of Atlanta and Chattanooga Metro areas expands. Growth for the entire county was 1.8% for the decade from 1980 to 1990, and 11.5 for the decade from 1990 to 2000.
- Ethnic diversity has increased over the last 5-10 years; most significantly, there has been an increase in Spanish speaking immigrants. The community appears to be adapting and assimilating these populations, although some communication and cultural difference issues remain. Increased ethnic diversity will impact the types of products and services provided by both the public and private sectors; and will impact how products and services are delivered.
- The proportion of the population that is over 65 years of age will continue to increase and will require specialized housing and services. This issue may be particularly appropriate for Rome and Floyd County because of the medical services offered (DCA 2004 report shows 3 physicians per 100 persons and 5.9 hospital beds per 1000 for Floyd County in 2000; at the same time state average was 1.9 physicians per 100 persons and 3.1 beds per 1000).
- Educational attainment in Floyd County, Rome, and Cave Spring continues to lag behind the state of Georgia. A higher percent of the population fails to complete at least a high school education, a higher percent graduates from high school but does not go on to attain a higher education, and a lower percent complete at least an associates degree. Although statistics for 1990 and 2000 indicate that educational attainment is improving throughout the county, the fact that the county lags behind the state in workforce training will continue to impact economic development efforts.
- Household income levels and per capita income have lagged behind state and federal levels since at least 1970, and the percent of the population living in poverty exceeds the state and national levels. As long as this trend persists, the demand for services related to poverty will also increase.

### Economic Development

#### Existing Businesses

- Economic Development agencies in the community recognize the importance of retaining and expanding existing employment opportunities, and support the existing business community through various support and incentive based programs.

- Although per capita income and household income lag behind the state average, unemployment rates are comparable to the state rates. The need for full-time jobs with benefits will continue to be an issue for the community.

#### Prospective Businesses

- Economic Development agencies working in the county should continue their efforts to increase workforce training and education, including partnerships with local schools and colleges. These efforts should focus on encouraging young people to stay in the community.
- Speculative rezoning of industrial tracts supports recruitment efforts. Economic Development agencies should continue to be responsive to public concerns about the impact on surrounding properties of future development on industrial sites.

#### Tools/Methods

- Economic Development agencies should work to involve the public in the recruiting process as much as possible.
- Floyd County, Rome and Cave Spring should maintain an atmosphere of cooperation in regards to economic development, recognizing that quality of life is an important recruitment tool and that not all industries are a good fit for the community.

#### Land Use Interaction

- Existing codes should facilitate attractive, functional growth that does not tax the available infrastructure or the ability of the local governments to provide infrastructure.
- Infill development has occurred in the last few years, and it appears that this trend will continue in the form of redevelopment of abandoned sites. However, many businesses still prefer to develop in greenfield areas where infrastructure may not be available or easy to provide.
- Some abandoned properties, such as textile mills and the former GE plant property, may have limited potential for redevelopment because of identified or potential contamination by past uses. The community should continue to work with the Georgia Environmental Protection Department to facilitate appropriate re-use of such sites.

#### Workforce

- Employment is not in short supply, but the household and individual income statistics indicate a need for higher paying jobs with benefits.



- Housing statistics indicate that local workers may not find safe affordable housing in their price ranges; promoting a mix of housing types and price ranges without creating an imbalanced tax base will continue to be a challenge.

## Natural and Cultural Resources

### Resource Awareness

- Cultural resources within the cities of Rome and Cave Spring have been identified through historic resource surveys and national register nominations; however, resources within unincorporated areas of Floyd County remain unidentified and should be inventoried.
- Environmental services, enforcement, and historic preservation staff continuously seek and utilize education opportunities to provide training for staff and for the general public. Continued and adequate funding will ensure that these educational programs continue.
- Better communication and coordination among staff, elected officials, and the development community are needed; as is acceptance by all that economic development and resource preservation are not mutually exclusive; in order to promote balanced development and land use decisions.
- Access to public and private natural and cultural resources is generally adequate, although not formalized.
- In some cases, resources such as local cemeteries are unprotected, and unmaintained, and in danger from neglect, vandalism, and pollution. In recognition of the importance of such resources, staff, elected officials and volunteers should continue to work together to creatively address this issue.
- Farmland, forestland, wetlands, and natural corridors are not monitored or protected under current ordinances which do not discourage encroachment by new development; a balance between development and preservation of rural resources is important.
- Development is encroaching on the rural scenery in and around our community, especially along major transportation corridors.
- The community has some abandoned and/or contaminated properties, such as the GE Plant on Redmond Circle and former textile mills that may have limited potential for reuse.
- In April 2005, Floyd County was designated as a non-attainment community for particulate matter under the Clean Air Act, and is currently in the process of preparing a conformity determination report. Designation may direct the allocation of future transportation funding to projects that will support attainment of air quality standards.

- Light, noise, water, and air pollution problems are especially critical where new commercial, industrial, and multi-family development is built adjacent to existing single family residential neighborhoods. Existing buffers may not be adequate.
- Ordinances for erosion, sedimentation, and storm water control need to be reviewed and revised to discourage excessive impervious surfaces, such as parking lots. Erosion from large areas of unvegetated soil, dirt roads, etc. should be controlled.
- Stormwater management efforts, while generally effective, should continue to be enforced to protect water quality in local waters.
- Disfunctional septic systems should be identified and corrected; parameters for new septic tanks should be based on best available technology to prevent future malfunctions.

#### Implementation Enforcement

- Some cultural resources in the community are endangered by neglect and redevelopment. Public private partnerships have successfully protected some resources, particularly in downtown Rome, and should be encouraged by public staff and elected officials.
- More awareness and consideration to environmental and cultural resources is needed to ensure adequate protection. Local staff and elected officials should continue efforts to educate the development community about the economic, environmental and societal benefits of protecting such resources.
- New development is not being guided away from resources. Some new development, infill development, and redevelopment projects, especially in urban areas, are in conflict with resource preservation.
- Enforcement of existing preservation ordinances should be a high priority for staff.
- Environmentally sensitive areas of the community, such as floodplains and steep hillsides, are not set aside from development by state or local rules. Continued efforts to encourage preservation of such areas is important.
- There are no specific appropriate site design guidelines in place for developing on sensitive areas (such as steep slopes, wetlands, and floodplains).
- A county-wide trail plan exists, but securing and protecting potential routes and corridors has not always been an element of land use decisions in the past; in addition, significant opposition exists from some landowners.

- Although infill development continues to occur, codes should be reviewed to favor infill over sprawling greenfield development.

## Facilities and Services

### Fiscal

- The relative costs of community services have not been considered or compared for different development types, nor has there been adequate analyses assessing the costs of new uses. This information would help the elected officials make appropriate land use decisions and should be compiled.
- Cost of services and utility provision is generally not a significant factor in land use decisions.
- A developing trend toward construction of lower income housing may not balance the costs of such development versus the tax revenue generated.
- Development is not “directed” toward existing utilities and services; instead utilities and services are extended to development, which is not a viable long term solution.
- Codes do not encourage (or discourage) infill and compact development. Incentives should be developed to encourage such development while preserving quality of life amenities and environmental resources.
- There is a need to identify areas where soils are not conducive to septic tank use and topography makes future sewerage unlikely. Such areas should be designated as conservation areas.

### Physical

- Infrastructure is built almost exclusively in response to need, regardless of location.
- Current trends favor moving recreation facilities away from centralized neighborhood locations and in to less developed areas, where large enough parcels are available to accommodate playing fields and competitive events but accessibility is generally limited to automobile use.
- Planning and zoning are in place but should be more proactive and less reactive.

## Housing

### Housing Mix and Future Demand

- There is resistance to mixing housing types in neighborhoods and new development. Current ordinances don’t encourage mixed density or mixed income housing.

- Provision of housing facilities for the elderly may become an issue during the next 10-20 years, as the population ages.
- High schools and middle schools are not located within local neighborhoods. Some schools are not adequately served by safe, convenient pedestrian/bicycle routes to residential areas. High traffic volumes during drop-off and pick-up times contributes to air quality degradation and congestion on streets and roads.
- Some service providers feel that special needs housing is inadequate; however, statistics supporting this view are not available.
- Recent conversions of historic buildings tend to be marketable only to upper income persons. There may be opportunities to provide low cost housing in some un-used or under-used historic buildings.

#### Workforce/Affordable Housing

- According to U.S. Census Bureau figures, over 20% of Floyd County's population is cost burdened by housing (spending over 30% of their income on housing), indicating that there is a lack of affordable housing in the community. However, there is a growing trend toward construction of low cost, high density housing, including single-family attached dwellings.

#### Land Use Interaction

- Current zoning codes generally prohibit walkable, neighborhood scale service and retail uses in predominantly residential areas.
- Current codes do not encourage or require inclusionary housing (low-income housing within mid- to high- income developments).
- Public support has not favored well designed multi-family development over poorly designed multi-family developments; local codes do not generally provide adequate design review or standards.

#### Housing Programs

- Although multiple housing programs exist for low-income families throughout the community, many have extensive waiting lists.
- Although Rome and Floyd County have a joint full service building inspection and enforcement agency, some housing in the community is substandard.

### **Transportation**

#### Current and Future Conditions

- Safe convenient routes for bicycle and pedestrian travel are non-existent or in poor quality in some areas. Connectivity from residential development to destinations should be inventoried and gaps in the routes should be corrected to facilitate bicycle and pedestrian travel as an alternative to automobile travel.
- The community needs better bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure and more roadway routes around semi-congested urban areas to minimize idling and stop/start driving.
- New roads and streets do not always interconnect, or connect with existing roads and streets – “spoke” (sprawl) development predominates over “web” (infill) development. This type development is partly due to natural constraints of the region (rivers, mountains, etc.), but is partly due to the trend of building cul-de-sac developments rather than grid developments.
- Highway corridors are the gateway into the community and should be protected from unattractive development; buffers and vegetation preservation should be preserved.
- Our community’s current transportation systems do not create redundancy, resiliency and connectivity within road networks. Lack of river crossings limits route alternatives. New development rarely provides interconnectivity.
- Generally, interconnectivity of transportation facilities is lacking. There is little connectivity between pedestrian, bike, transit, and road facilities.
- Recent street projects in urban areas provide multiple lanes; such multi-lane roadways are not conducive to bicycle and pedestrian movement.
- Due to budgetary constraints, transit routes are limited and may not be convenient to all destinations for target populations (poor, disabled).
- There are currently no regional transit connections in Floyd County. The community is not served by regular route inter-city bus service or commuter rail.
- Local transportation planning is not actively coordinated with the adjacent counties and may not adequately consider regional needs and opportunities.
- Recent road projects aimed at congestion add lanes but do not provide alternate routes to avoid congested areas; hence, their effectiveness is low.
- New and expanded roads in undeveloped areas attract new housing, shopping, and business centers limiting the road’s effectiveness as a transportation route. Limited access to thoroughfares should be supported at the local level.

- Streets are not designed according to their use in order to assure appropriate travel speeds, and enforcement of existing speed limits is not visible enough to be a deterrent to inappropriate driving speeds.
- Inter-parcel access is supported by local development codes, but does not appear to be supported by local practice or preference.
- Major corridors are not protected by code from congestion, excessive signage, clutter, and unattractive development. Congestion is intensified by the number of individual driveways; development codes favoring shared driveways and inter-parcel connectivity would facilitate traffic movement and safety.

#### Alternatives/Amenities

- The community has limited alternatives to using a car to get to places to eliminate traffic congestion. Public perception appears to favor traffic related improvements over alternative (transit, bike/ped) improvements
- There is an imbalance between auto-dependent transportation projects and alternative transportation projects. Awareness of the need for transit service and bike/ped routes is increasing.
- Although the cities of Rome and Cave Spring have sidewalk networks, gaps in the network, lack of marked bike lanes, trails, and amenities such as bicycle parking areas make the community as a whole inconvenient for bicyclists and pedestrians.
- Bicycle and pedestrian paths lack connectivity and do not link to major destinations. Routes have been developed as a recreational amenity and many are not designed to serve as transportation routes by those who do not, for whatever reason, drive automobiles.
- Community streets do not encourage pedestrian and bicycle use by incorporating traffic calming measures or discouraging high speed traffic. Streetscape improvements are not geared toward traffic calming and pedestrian/bicycle friendliness.

#### Land use Interaction

- New developments generally do not diffuse traffic by providing access to the existing street network at multiple points.

#### Parking

- Local development codes include a minimum number of parking spaces for various uses, but do not include a maximum number. In some cases, this results in unnecessarily large, unbroken expanses of pavement.

- The parking lot design guidelines do not provide for permeable surfaces such as pavers and gravel, tree islands that are recessed below the pavement level with discontinuous curbing, or bio-retention structures that would reduce the amount of surface runoff.
- Generally, parking lot design does not provide safe, convenient access for pedestrians and bicyclists from public sidewalks and transit stops to facilities.
- Shared parking is allowed by local development codes, but is not utilized as often as it could be. Code revisions offering incentives for shared parking should be adopted.

### **Intergovernmental Coordination**

- The local governments should continue to investigate areas where shared services could increase service delivery efficiency, and avoid costly and unnecessary overlap.
- A spirit of cooperation between all three local governments has supported successful economic development in the past, and should continue to be a priority.

### **Land Use**

- The quiet, small town character of the community may be lost if development rates increase too rapidly. Residential development should be balanced by commercial and industrial development, in order to provide employment and a strong tax base and avoid the costs associated with becoming a bedroom community.
- Land use decisions should be coordinated with large land owners such as the Inland Corporation and Berry College.
- Wildlife habitat and buffers are important, and should be maintained at a meaningful width and size. This is an issue especially where new development abuts established residential development.
- Housing diversity should meet the needs of all ages and income groups; however, the diversity should be balanced between lower cost homes, for the elderly and for young families; and mid-and upper income homes.
- The Hispanic community is a growing force in the community and should be included in land use and other political decision making.
- Agriculture as a land use, employer, business and life-style should be valued and protected by tax structure, local ordinances, and land use decisions from residential encroachment and other development pressures.

- Local leaders should work with rural land owners, as well as urban land owners, to locate trails and other recreational facilities in such a way that agricultural operations are not negatively impacted.
- The land use code and rules should be reviewed and revised to ensure that appropriate agri-tourism uses are permitted by right in the agricultural district.
- Developers in the community sometimes feel that local service providers and the staff of planning and building inspection department's are not supportive. Continued efforts should be taken to encourage open and early communication about projects among all involved parties.
- Although many permits are issued on the same day they are applied for, some developers feel that the process is too long and involves too many steps. Planning and building inspection staff should continue their efforts to provide service quickly and efficiently within the parameters of the applicable codes and ordinances.



## Analysis of Existing Development Patterns

### Introduction

Land use in Floyd County covers a broad range; from urban (City of Rome), to small town (Cave Spring) and rural. Intense uses such as heavy industrial and high density residential exist, as well as very low intensity uses such as rural residential and forestry. The maps entitled **Land Use** and **Land Use Urban Area** show the locations of the various land use types.

### Land Use and Development Patterns

Existing land use data was extracted from parcel based GIS information that includes the zoning designation as well as the tax code classification and building types. The actual area and the proportions for each of eight general land use types are shown in the following table. The land use patterns are shown on the maps entitled **Land Use** and **Land Use Urban Area**.

LAND USE STATISTICS			
Land Use	Area (square miles)	Area (acres)	Percent of Total
SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	168.6	107,902	32.5
MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL	1.5	983	0.3
COMMERCIAL	7.0	3,932	1.2
INDUSTRIAL	15.9	10,182	3.1
PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL	49.9	31,904	9.6
TRANSPORTATION/COMMUNICATION/UTILITIES	14.0	8,984	2.7
PARKS/RECREATION/CONSERVATION	6.0	3,926	1.2
AGRICULTURAL/FORESTRY	168.4	107,800	32.4
UNDEVELOPED	87.9	56,777	17.1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>519</b>	<b>332,390</b>	<b>100</b>

SOURCE: Rome - Floyd County GIS, Floyd County Ad Valorem Tax Rolls, The Georgia County Guide (UGA 2005)

The largest land use type within the county is **single-family residential**, which is concentrated in the following general location types:

- in traditional neighborhoods within the two incorporated cities, such as Oakdene, Summerville Park, College Heights, Hillsdale, Mt. Aventine, East Rome, and Between the Rivers;
- along the major transportation corridors (Highway 411 East, Highway 20 West, Highway 27 North, Kingston Highway, Old Dalton Road, Old Summerville Road, Horseleg Creek Road, and Burnett Ferry Road, for example) where suburban, cul-de-sac neighborhoods have sprung up since the early to mid 20<sup>th</sup> century; and
- within historic mill villages in the unincorporated areas but peripheral to the city boundaries of Rome, such as Riverside, Lindale, Shannon, and along Silver Street, South McLin Street and North McLin Street in South Rome.

Single-family dwellings on large lots, many of which are also used for agricultural, are scattered throughout the rural portions of the county.

By contrast, the percent of land that is used for **multi-family residential** is quite small. Multi-family uses are concentrated within the two incorporated cities but are also found in the unincorporated area, especially where sewer service is available. Multi-family use includes apartments, duplexes, triplexes and quadriplexes; most of which are renter occupied. The percent of housing that is renter occupied is 30.2 % in Cave Spring, 47 % in Rome, and 33.2 % in Floyd County; the renter occupied rate for the state is 32.5. This level of renter occupancy for the community is not necessarily an indication that multi-family residential areas have a high unit density. Based on rezoning cases within the last five year period, duplex units make up a significant amount of the rental property. Further, some neighborhoods such as Hillsdale in South Rome have a high percentage of renter occupied single-family dwellings.

The second largest land use is **agricultural and forestry uses**. This use is located almost entirely in the unincorporated parts of the county. There is an unknown percent of overlap between this category and the single-family residential category; there is also overlap between this category and the undeveloped land category, particularly within the unincorporated area.

**Commercial uses** account overall for a small percent of the total land area of Floyd County. However, such uses likely account for a significantly higher percent of the total land area within the incorporated cities of Rome and Cave Spring. Commercial use is found in the downtown areas, in large shopping centers (Mount Berry Mall on Highway 27 North, Riverbend Mall/Hicks Drive area on Turner McCall Boulevard east of downtown Rome); and in concentrations within major transportation corridors in and adjacent the incorporated areas. A recent trend has seen the redevelopment of vacated residential properties, most notably along Turner McCall Boulevard north of downtown Rome. Vacant commercial land is scattered throughout the county; however, significant areas include land adjacent the Braves Mutual Stadium and large tracts located along Highway 411 East.

**Industrial uses** within the unincorporated area include the former mill sites at Shannon, Lindale, and Riverside. These are no longer in use as textile mills, but have largely been reclaimed for diverse other industrial uses. Southeastern Mills, which produces grain products, is located in downtown Rome. The former GE plant property is located within the Rome city limits, but is currently unused. There is little undeveloped industrial land within the Rome city limits.

Older industrial development in the unincorporated area includes Inland Container and Georgia Power, both located in the Highway 20 West corridor west of Rome; and scattered manufacturing sites and lumber yards. Newer industrial development has generally been located in the unincorporated area, where large tracts of greenfield land are available close enough to Rome to have both water and sewer service available. These areas include the Highway 53 North corridor, the Highway 27 South corridor, and tracts on both sides of Technology Boulevard.

Industrial uses account for a negligible percent of the land area in Cave Spring.

**Public and institutional uses** include churches, cemeteries, schools and colleges, and hospitals. The largest institutional tract belongs to Berry College and is located north of the City of Rome in the unincorporated area of Floyd County. Although the developed campus is located within this large tract, by far the largest part of it is undeveloped and some is designated as Wildlife Management area. Other significant tracts belong to the Darlington School, Shorter College, Coosa Valley Technical College, Georgia Highlands College, and the Georgia School for the Deaf (near Cave Spring).

**Transportation, communication and utility land** uses include public right-of-way and land on which communication or utility structures are located. With the exception of right-of-way, these tracts tend to be small and scattered throughout the entire county.

**Parks, recreation and conservation land** are found throughout the county. Within the cities of Rome and Cave Spring these tracts are relatively small, but park and recreation tracts in the unincorporated area are generally larger. Included in this category are lands purchased by Floyd County with Greenspace Program funds, the Marshall Forest, land held by the Nature Conservancy, and a large tract owned by power companies with dual use for power generation and recreation (Rocky Mountain project in northwestern Floyd County).

**Undeveloped land** accounts for approximately 17% of the land throughout the entire county, although most is located within the unincorporated areas. Undeveloped land is shown on two maps entitled Land Use and Land Use Urban Area.

### Areas Requiring Special Consideration

The following table lists types of areas of special concern in the planning process and corresponding areas identified in the community.

Special Concern	Areas Identified
Areas of Significant Natural or Cultural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Corridors along the Etowah, Oostanaula, and Coosa Rivers</li> <li>• Wetlands, Flood Plains, and Steep Slopes</li> <li>• Prime Agricultural Lands in unincorporated areas</li> <li>• Cave Spring</li> <li>• Local and National Historic Districts</li> </ul>
Areas of Rapid Development or Changes in Land Uses are Likely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rapid development in Floyd County may be predominately concentrated along major commercial corridors (Hwy 411, 27, &amp; 53)</li> </ul>
Areas Where the Pace of Development may outpace available community facilities and services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Rapid development in major commercial corridors has the potential to outpace current community facilities and services.</li> <li>• Although developing at a slightly slower pace, some rural areas developing before water and sewer facilities can be extended into them.</li> <li>• Provision of fire and police protection may also be a concern in more remote areas.</li> </ul>

Special Concern	Areas Identified
Areas in Need of Revitalization and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Rome</li> <li>• Desoto Neighborhood or “Old Fourth Ward” Area</li> <li>• North Rome centered around North Broad Street</li> <li>• Areas in West Rome between Division Street and Lavender Road</li> <li>• Traditional neighborhoods around abandoned textile mills; including the Lindale and Shannon Areas</li> </ul>
Large Abandoned Structures or Sites (including Brownfields)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General Electric Plant on Redmond Road</li> <li>• Galey and Lord Plant in Shannon</li> <li>• Celanese Plant on Riverside Parkway</li> <li>• Pepperell Mill in Lindale</li> <li>• Large Retail Areas on Redmond Circle</li> </ul>
Areas with Significant Infill Development Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Traditional Residential Areas, particularly where deteriorated structures have been removed (South Rome is a good example of these areas).</li> <li>• Commercial Areas along major transportation routes.</li> </ul>
Areas of Significant Disinvestment, Levels of Poverty, and/or high unemployment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• South Rome Neighborhood</li> <li>• North Rome Neighborhood</li> <li>• Lavender / Division Street Area</li> <li>• Maple Street Area in Rome</li> </ul>

## Character Areas

The following is a list of area and corridor types that have distinct characteristics, issues, and opportunities that differentiate the areas from the rest of the community. These areas are shown on the **Character Areas** map.

**Conservation Areas.** Conservation areas are primarily undeveloped natural lands and environmentally sensitive areas not suitable for development. These areas include riparian buffers along rivers and streams, wetlands, flood plains, hills and mountains with steep slopes, scenic areas, and wildlife management areas.

**Historic Downtown.** Downtown Rome and downtown Cave Spring serve as the traditional commercial, professional, and residential heart of Rome, Cave Spring, and Floyd County. The areas have a number of mixed uses and a high concentration of heritage resources. The downtowns enjoy a high rate of occupancy and generally buildings are well maintained.

**Traditional Residential Areas.** These neighborhoods were built along the grid pattern and are interspersed with churches, schools, parks, and neighborhood scale businesses. Traditional neighborhoods were typically developed prior to WWII. They are generally characterized by pedestrian orientation, including sidewalks, street trees, and street furniture; on-street parking; small, regular lots; and buildings close to or at the front property line. Housing within traditional residential areas ranges in scale from modest to quite large; often in the same neighborhoods. Current conditions in these areas range from well maintained to deteriorated. Traditional residential neighborhoods include the local historic districts, Summerville Park, South Rome, the City of Cave Spring, Lindale, the Riverside Community, and Division Street south.

**Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century Residential Developments.** Generally, Late 20<sup>th</sup> Century Residential Developments are solely residential areas that lack schools, parks, and churches within the development. The areas are characterized by separation of uses and cul-de-sack streets; many without sidewalks or traffic calming measures to ensure safe, convenient pedestrian travel. Originally, these developments provided affordable housing to the increasing number of suburban residents during the post-war years. Examples of this type development are Garden Lakes, Maplewood, Woodfin, and developments along transportation routes including Horseleg Creek and Burnett Ferry roads.

**Agricultural Areas.** Agricultural areas are characterized by the predominance of land in open or cultivated state, including woodlands, pastures, and other farm lands. Undeveloped land is likely to face development pressures for generally lower density residential developments, especially along transportation corridors. These areas typically have low pedestrian orientation and access, very large lots, open space and a high degree of building separation. Agriculture land can be found throughout unincorporated Floyd County.

**Scenic Corridors.** Scenic corridors are developed or undeveloped land paralleling a transportation route that has significant natural, historic, or cultural features and scenic or pastoral views. Scenic Corridors include US Highway 27 north of Highway 140, US Highway 411 between the urban area and Bartow County, Big Texas Valley Road, Cave Springs Road in Vann's Valley, GA Highway 20 west of the Georgia Power facilities, and GA Highway 100.

**Urban Commercial Corridors.** The urban commercial corridors include property on each side of major transportation routes in urbanized areas. The corridors are auto-oriented, commercial areas characterized by congestion and high vehicular traffic. Streets are typically wide, multi-lane highways. Due to high traffic speeds and development patterns, urban commercial corridors generally are not pedestrian and bicycle friendly. Urban commercial corridors include Turner-McCall Boulevard, Second Avenue from Shorter to East 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Martha Berry Highway from Shorter to Old Dalton Road, and Shorter Avenue west to Woods Road.

**Rural Commercial Corridors.** Rural commercial corridors include property on each side of major transportation routes in rural areas. These corridors contain a number of mixed uses with little or no separation of use. Development on rural commercial corridors is generally auto-oriented and lack pedestrian and bicycle facilities. These corridors include Rockmart Highway, Martha Berry between Old Dalton Road and GA Highway 140, GA Highway 20 between Woods Road and the Georgia Power facilities, US Highway 411 east of Veterans Memorial Highway, and Kingston Highway north of Rome.

**Industrial Highway Corridors.** Industrial highway corridors include property on each side of major transportation routes which have significant property developed as or zoned for industrial uses. These corridors have a relatively high volume of truck traffic. Industrial highway corridors include GA Highway 53 and US Highway 27 in the Six Mile area.

**Regional Sports and Recreation Complex.** Regional Sports and Recreation Complex is characterized by a concentration of regionally-marketed sports or recreation facilities (generally hosting professional sports). Regional complexes are generally located on major transportation routes and contribute to high traffic values immediately before and after major events.

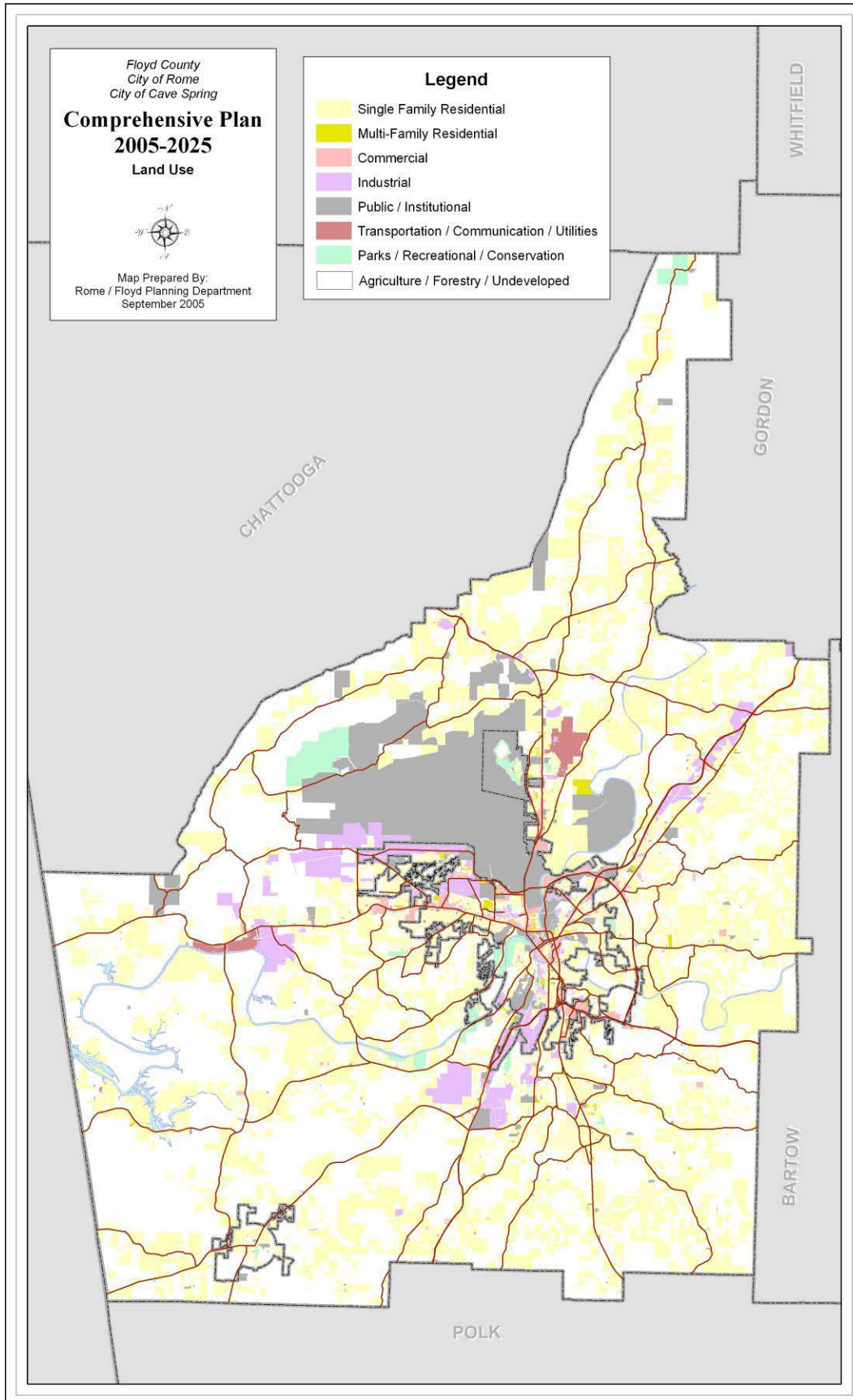
**Consistency with Quality Community Objectives**

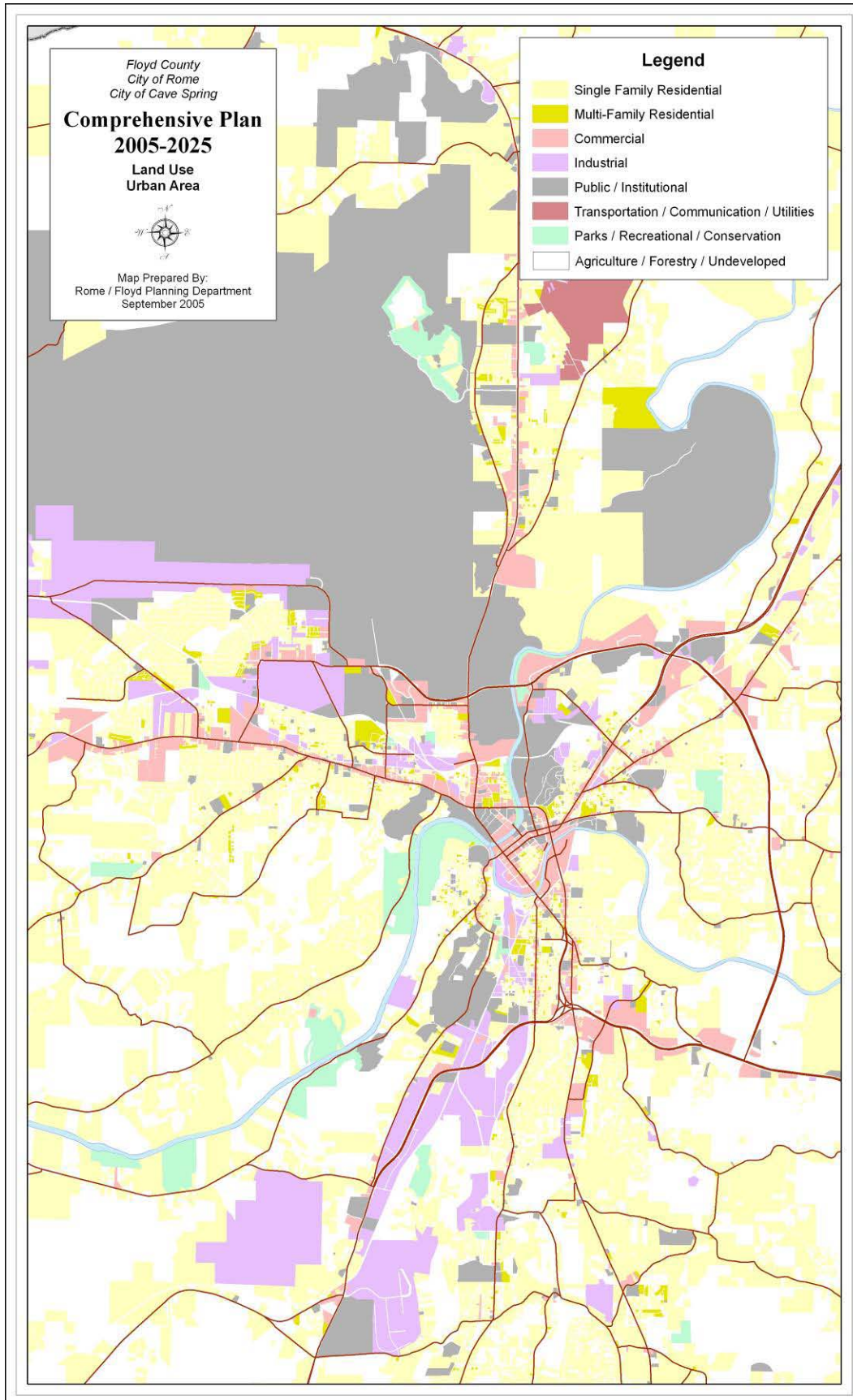
Quality Community Objective	Consistency with Objective
<p><b>Traditional Neighborhoods.</b> Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.</p>	<p>Some codes do not appropriately address existing traditional neighborhoods in terms of uses or development standards nor do they promote neo-traditional neighborhoods.</p>
<p><b>Infill Development.</b> Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.</p>	<p>Within Rome, infill development and redevelopment utilizes existing infrastructure. This is also the case in some areas of the unincorporated county, including abandoned textile mills. However, sprawl, particularly residential and commercial development, continues to spread along transportation corridors into areas where services may not exist or be adequate for new development.</p>
<p><b>Sense of Place.</b> Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment</p>	<p>Traditional areas, especially downtown Rome, have been maintained as the focal point of the community; however, some major uses are planning to leave the downtown area – Barron Stadium, the tennis complex, and the post office.</p>
<p><b>Transportation Alternatives.</b> Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.</p>	<p>Alternative transportation facilities (including transit, pedestrian, and bicycle) are available in urban areas. However, pedestrian and bike facilities are not always well maintained, often do not adequately connect residential areas with commercial and institutional destinations, and at times are fragmented and lack interconnectivity.</p>
<p><b>Regional Identity.</b> Each region should promote and preserve a regional "identity," or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.</p>	<p>Some regional heritage resources exist but are not highly visible. These resources are generally related to Native Americans heritage, Civil War activities, and Appalachian culture.</p>

Quality Community Objective	Consistency with Objective
<p><b>Heritage Preservation.</b> The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.</p>	<p>Both Rome and Cave Spring have active historical societies that encourage the preservation of traditional community character. Additionally, Rome has one of the oldest preservation programs in Georgia that protects the character and heritage resources of local historic districts. Education programs are needed to bring staff, elected officials, and developers together to realize economic development and heritage preservation are not mutually exclusive.</p>
<p><b>Open Space Preservation.</b> New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.</p>	<p>Current codes in Rome and Floyd County allow for two compact development options – planned development and cluster residential. Additionally, the local governments do from time to time purchase open space / environmentally important land as funding is available.</p>
<p><b>Environmental Protection.</b> Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.</p>	<p>Local ordinances do not encourage maintenance of natural terrain, drainage, or vegetation. These resources are typically obliterated by devilment activities.</p>
<p><b>Growth Preparedness.</b> Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.</p>	<p>Infrastructure is generally supplied due to demand. However there is a growing awareness and concern that this may not be efficient and may not promote sustainable development decisions.</p>
<p><b>Appropriate Businesses.</b> The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.</p>	<p>The community has encouraged appropriate businesses to develop or expand in the area. This has led to a diverse economic base that has allowed the community to prosper even as some segments of the national economy decline. Generally, local efforts to recruit new businesses tend to focus on business and industry types that will improve the overall quality of the local job market and provide linkages with existing regional economic activities.</p>
<p><b>Employment Options.</b> A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.</p>	<p>The needs of the very diverse local workforce are being met by a range of job types. The local communities should continue to focus recruitment on employers who provide stable, well paid jobs that can support families and encourage young people to remain in the community.</p>

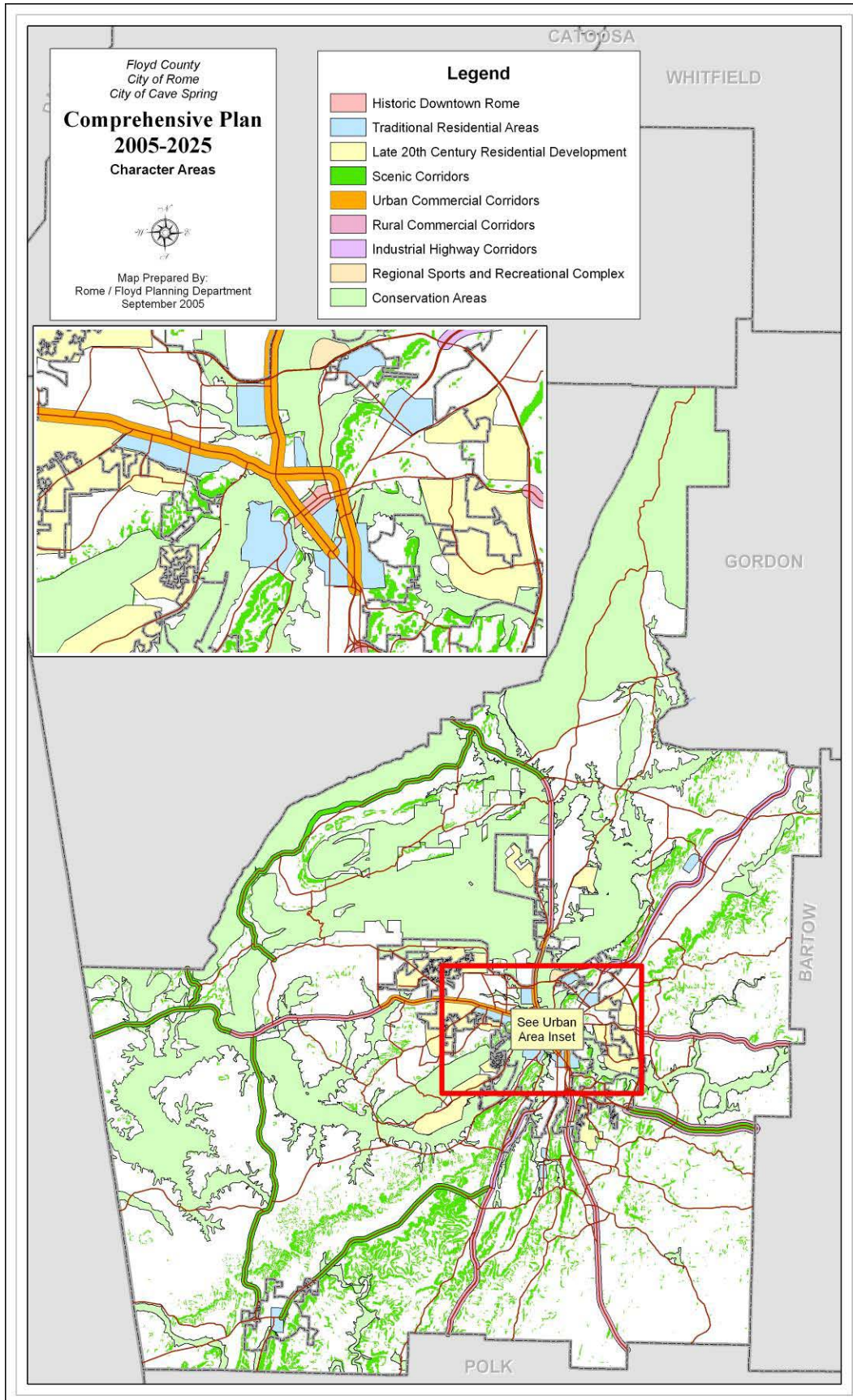
Quality Community Objective	Consistency with Objective
<p><b>Housing Choices.</b> A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.</p>	<p>A range of housing size, cost, and density is provided in the community, which allows persons working in the community to live in the community. However, much of the affordable housing stock is of poor quality, forcing lower-income families to pay a large percentage of household income on lodging in order to provide adequate housing conditions.</p>
<p><b>Educational Opportunities.</b> Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.</p>	<p>There is a strong awareness of the need to provide educational and training opportunities in the community and efforts to meet these needs. Many options exist in the area; however, not at the advanced degree level.</p>
<p><b>Local Self-determination.</b> Communities should be allowed to develop and work toward achieving their own vision for the future. Where the state seeks to achieve particular objectives, state financial and technical assistance should be used as the incentive to encourage local government conformance to those objectives.</p>	<p>The local governments exercise a high level of self-determination as provided for in the Georgia Constitution.</p>
<p><b>Regional Cooperation.</b> Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.</p>	<p>There is a growing awareness of the need to work and cooperate regionally on issues such as transportation, air quality, water quality and availability, economic development, quality growth, and quality of life.</p>











## Population

### Floyd County

**Population Growth Patterns.** Historic population growth information for Floyd County (incorporated and unincorporated) is shown on the following table.

<b>Floyd County: Population</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Total population</b>	79,800	81,251	90,565
<b>Male population</b>	NA	38,648	43,823
<b>Female population</b>	NA	42,603	46,742

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1)

In the years since 1970, Floyd County's population has increased at varying rates. The rates have generally been lower than the growth rate for the state of Georgia overall. Floyd County has not grown as rapidly as have those surrounding counties that are closer to, and more strongly influenced by, the growth of the Atlanta metropolitan area and the Chattanooga metropolitan area; or as rapidly as have the adjacent counties that have direct access to Interstate 75. During each year between 1970 and 1990, the population grew at an average annual rate of under one percent, and growth dropped as low as .18% annually in the decade from 1980 to 1990. In the decade from 1990 to 2000, the average annual growth rate increased to 1.15 and between 2000 and 2004, the growth rate has been, on average, 0.95 percent annually. This upward trend may indicate that the County is beginning to feel the influence of rapid growth pressure from both the south (Atlanta) and the north (Chattanooga).

In the decade from 1980 to 1990, growth in Floyd County was mainly influenced by the birth rate because the County experienced a net out-migration. From 1990 to 2000, the birth rate and the migration rate were both positive, but births still outnumbered in-migrations. In the three year period from 2000 to 2003, however, migration has accounted for a larger percent of the growth than the birth rate has. This trend reflects a period of in-migration of Hispanic or Latino people, and may also support the theory that the spread of the Atlanta and Chattanooga metropolitan areas are beginning to impact population growth in Floyd County.

**Population Projections.** Table 2 shows population projections for Floyd County. The projections come from various sources, and vary depending on the method used and assumptions made.

Predicting population trends is not an exact science, particularly when the predominant component of growth is in-migration which depends on many factors including job market, housing market, local policies, immigration law, school quality, etc. not only in the subject county but in adjacent counties, states, and even foreign countries.

These projections are shown in the following table.

Source	Rome-Floyd County Planning Department		Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. 2003		University of Georgia 2003		North Georgia Reg. Dev. Center 2004		U.S Bureau of the Census (SF1)	
	NUMBER *	% CHANGE (ANNUAL)	NUMBER **	% CHANGE (ANNUAL)	NUMBER ***	% CHANGE (ANNUAL)	NUMBER	% CHANGE (ANNUAL)	NUMBER *****	% CHANGE (ANNUAL)
2000	90565	NA	90565	NA	90565	NA	90565	NA	90565	NA
2010	96640	6.7 (.67)	96120	6.13 (.61)	99768	10.16 (1.02)	103516	14.3 (1.43)	95,948	5.9 (.59)
2020	103099	6.69 (.67)	102400	6.53 (.65)	<i>110064</i>	<i>10.32 (1.03)</i>	123953	19.74 (1.97)	101330	5.3 (.53)
2025	<i>106326</i>	<i>3.13 (.63)</i>	105940	3.46 (.69)	<i>115743</i>	<i>5.16 (1.03)</i>	<i>139100</i>	<i>12.22 (2.44)</i>	104021	3.37 (.67)
2030	109557	6.26 (.63)	<i>109486</i>	<i>6.92 (.69)</i>	<i>121423</i>	<i>10.32 (1.03)</i>	154239	24.43 (2.44)	108160	6.74 (.67)

Italicized numbers are linear interpolations from the projections and growth rates provided by the source, and do not take into account other factors that may influence growth rates.

Sources: \*Rome - Floyd County Planning Department, based on Woods & Poole, 2003

\*\*Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2003 Data Pamphlet

\*\*\* The Georgia County Guide, 2004. College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, the University

The projections made by Woods and Poole in 2003 are based on continuation of trends over past decades. The Woods and Poole projections were used by the Rome – Floyd County Planning Department staff for preparation of the Long Range Transportation Plan during 2004-05, but were amended to reflect up-to-date information about development and growth patterns. The Department of Agriculture of University of Georgia figures were based on estimated actual population in the years 2000 to 2004, since the last U.S. Census; these projections indicate that the growth rate experienced in the decade from 1990 to 2000 would continue, but would not accelerate significantly. The projections prepared by North Georgia Regional Development Center were prepared in 2004, and indicate that the accelerated growth that occurred in the decade from 1990 to 2000 would continue to accelerate rapidly through 2025; which does not appear to be realistic considering that the growth rate appeared to slow again between the years 2000 to 2004. The U.S. Census Bureau figures, as published by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, are based on past growth (1980 through 2000) and assume that those trends will continue.

The purpose for making population projections is to allow the local government to plan ahead to provide housing, services, and utilities for old and new residents without decreasing the quality of life or creating financial hardship. Therefore, it is appropriate to provide a range within which the actual population growth is reasonably expected to fall. In the case of Floyd County, projections (excluding the figures prepared by the North Georgia Regional Development Center) indicate that the population of Floyd County in 2025 should range from 104,021 to 115,743; representing a gain of 13,456 to 25,178 persons and a growth rate since the 2000 U.S. Census of 14.86 % (.59% average annual) to 27.8% (1.11%) for the 25 year period.

**Age and Racial/Ethnic Components.** In 1980, less than 12% of the total population was aged 65 and over. In 2000, the percentage had risen to 13.93 percent. This trend reflects the nation-wide trend of an aging population, as well as improved medical care that allows people to live longer. Because Floyd County is now and will likely continue to be a regional medical center, the growth of a senior population will likely be greater than in many parts of Georgia. In any case, decisions and planning for future growth should consider the needs of residents who have 1-2 person households, may have

physical conditions that define appropriate housing, whose transportation preference may not be private automobiles, and who may require service from the medical community.

Floyd County: Population by Age										
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
0 – 4 Years Old	5,242	5,334	5,426	5,698	5,970	6,152	6,334	6,516	6,698	6,880
5 – 13 Years Old	11,325	10,967	10,608	11,648	12,688	13,029	13,370	13,710	14,051	14,392
14 – 17 Years Old	5,757	4,596	3,435	3,507	3,578	3,033	2,489	1,944	1,399	854
18 – 20 Years Old	4,506	4,481	4,456	4,601	4,746	4,806	4,866	4,926	4,986	5,046
21 – 24 Years Old	5,454	5,131	4,807	4,936	5,065	4,968	4,871	4,773	4,676	4,579
25 – 34 Years Old	11,986	12,245	12,504	12,406	12,307	12,387	12,468	12,548	12,628	12,708
35 – 44 Years Old	9,286	10,390	11,494	12,499	13,504	14,559	15,613	16,668	17,722	18,777
45 – 54 Years Old	8,667	8,689	8,711	10,168	11,625	12,365	13,104	13,844	14,583	15,323
55 – 64 Years Old	8,067	8,016	7,965	8,216	8,467	8,567	8,667	8,767	8,867	8,967
65 and over	9,510	10,678	11,845	12,230	12,615	13,391	14,168	14,944	15,720	16,496

Original Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1)

The U.S Bureau of the Census (SF1) predicts that by the year 2025, the proportion of people under the age of 18 will have decreased to 21.27%, while the proportion of people over the age of 65 will have increased to 15.86%. Woods and Poole (2003) project that by 2025 the percentage of the population aged 65 and over will be over 19%.

From 1980 to 2000, the percent of the total population that was African American alone has remained relatively steady, with a low of 12.85% in 1980 and a high of 13.67% in 1990. The percent of the total population that was white alone declined steadily, ranging from 86.70% in 1980 to 81.34% in 2000. Approximately 5.40% of the total population of Floyd County in 2000 was Asian, American Indian, Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, up from .45% in 1980.

Floyd County: Racial Composition										
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
White alone	69,186	69,262	69,338	71,503	73,668	74,789	75,909	77,030	78,150	79,271
Black or African American alone	10,253	10,680	11,106	11,578	12,050	12,499	12,949	13,398	13,847	14,296
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	52	95	138	211	283	341	399	456	514	572
Asian or Pacific Islander	211	310	409	669	928	1,107	1,287	1,466	1,645	1,824
other race	98	179	260	1,948	3,636	4,521	5,405	6,290	7,174	8,059

Original Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1)

Floyd County: Hispanic Ethnic Composition										
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Persons of Hispanic origin	545	688	831	2,907	4,983	6,093	7,202	8,312	9,421	10,531

Original Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1)

Another significant change in the character of the population has been the increased number of persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, which rose from less than 1% in 1980 to 5.35% in 2000. In-migration from South and Central American countries, as well as from Asian and Pacific Rim countries, may have peaked; however, the continued

presence of a non-English speaking, ethnic population will continue to present a need for more diverse services and products within both the public and private sectors. This population may also impact the political climate of the community.

Based on U.S. Bureau of the Census projections for the year 2025, the proportion of white people will continue to decline slowly to 76.21 %, the proportion of African American people will remain relatively steady at 13.73 %, and the proportion of people of all other races will increase to 10.05%. During the same time, the proportion of the population that is Hispanic or Latino will nearly double, to 10.12 %.

**Households.** The average household size in Floyd County was 2.73 in 1980, but was steady at 2.55 for 1990 and 2000 (U.S. Census (SF1)). U.S. Census Projections indicate that average household size may drop to 2.33 by 2025. As the population increases, and the size of the average household drops, the total number of households increases. The following table shows the number of households for the years 1980, 1985, 1990, 1995 and 2000 did, in fact, increase. The projections indicate that this trend will continue.

Floyd County: Number of Households										
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total households	28,477	29,498	30,518	32,273	34,028	35,416	36,804	38,191	39,579	40,967
Avg. Annual Increase			0.72		1.15		0.82		0.76	0.70

Original Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1)

## City of Rome

**Population Growth Patterns.** The City of Rome lost population in the decade from 1970 to 1980, and grew slowly (at an average annual rate of .2%) during the decade from 1980-1990. From 1990 to 2000 the City's growth accelerated to an average annual rate of 1.28%. During this decade, Floyd County and the State of Georgia also experienced accelerated growth. Based on 2003 population estimates published in the Georgia County Guide (College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, 2004), and 2000-2004 estimates of population prepared by the U.S. Census Bureau the growth rate in Rome slowed to an average annual rate of .42% (which translates to a decade growth rate of 4.2%) between the years from 2000 to 2004. U.S. Census Bureau estimates indicate that the average annual growth rate for Floyd County was 0.95 and the growth rate for the state of Georgia dropped only slightly to an average annual rate of 2.03% during the same period. The population loss of the period from 1970-1980, and the slow growth of the period from 1980-1990 were at least partly due to the closing of a General Electric Plant and down-sizing in more than one of the textile mills in the area. In the decade from 1990 to 2000, accelerated growth was due in part to a large in-migration of Hispanic or Latino people. The City carried out several large annexations during this decade as well, bringing county residents into the city. The City and County each, and jointly, carried on an aggressive program to attract new industry, and new jobs, during this decade.

Rome City: Population			
Category	1980	1990	2000
Total population	29,654	30,326	34,980
Male population	NA	13,834	16,586
Female population	NA	16,492	18,394

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1)

**Population Projections.** In cities, population growth is typically made up from three components. These are in-migration, births, and annexation. It is difficult to predict the impact these components may have on population growth in any one community. The following table shows the U.S. Bureau of the Census projections, which are based on continuation of the trends shown in the years from 1980 to 2000. These figures indicate that the population of the City of Rome will increase by 6,658 persons to a population of 41,638 by the year 2025, a growth rate for the 25 year period from 2000 to 2025 of 18.26 (.73% average annual).

Year	U.S. Census Bureau		Planning Department	
	Number	% Change for the Decade Preceding (Annual)	Number	% Change for the Decade Preceding (Annual)
2000	34,980	NA	34,980	NA
2010	37,643	7.62 (.76)	39,209	12.09 (1.21)
2020	40,306	7.07 (.71)	44,024	12.28 (1.23)
2025	41,638	3.30 (.66)	46,727	6.14 (1.23)

Determination of an upper range for population growth is more difficult, because other population projections were not available. Historically, population growth within the City of Rome has been slightly higher than that of Floyd County, but has followed the same general upward trend. Based on that premise and on the projections prepared by the College of Agriculture at the University of Georgia, the second set of population projections shown on the table were prepared by Planning Department staff. These figures project a population figure for 2025 of 11,747 people, for a 25 year growth rate of 33.58% (1.34% average annual) and a total population of 46,727 people.

**Age and Racial/Ethnic Components.** The proportion of African American people in Rome remained relatively constant between the census decades of 1980 to 2000, ranging from 27.72% of the population in 1980 to 27.66% in 2000. The highest percent for that 20 year period was 29.7% in 1990. In the meantime, the proportion of white people ranged from 71.59% in 1980 to 63.1 % in 2000, and showed a generally downward trend. Population projections prepared by the U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1) predict that in 2025 the proportion of African American people will be 27.61%, and the proportion of white people will be 55.59%. The proportion of people of all other races also increased, from .69 % in 1980 (204 persons) to 9.21 % in 2000 (3,222 persons). The U.S. Census Bureau (SF1) predicts that in 2025, the proportion of people of all other races will be 16.8%.



<b>Rome City: Racial Composition</b>										
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
White alone	21,230	21,045	20,860	21,471	22,081	22,294	22,507	22,719	22,932	23,145
Black or African American alone	8,220	8,615	9,010	9,344	9,677	10,041	10,406	10,770	11,134	11,498
American Indian and Alaska Native alone	15	35	55	95	135	165	195	225	255	285
Asian or Pacific Islander	139	183	226	389	552	655	759	862	965	1,068
other race	50	113	175	1,355	2,535	3,156	3,778	4,399	5,020	5,641

Original Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1)

The proportion of Hispanic or Latino people of any race increased from .99% (284 people) in 1980 to 10.35% (3,620 people) in 2000. The proportion of Hispanic or Latino people is expected to continue to increase and reach 18.68 by 2025 (U.S. Census (SF1)). The presence of a large group of racially and culturally diverse residents, many of whom are non-English speaking, has significantly increased the diversity of the population, and will continue to have a significant impact on the need for services and products. This diversity will continue to influence how the local government, school district, and businesses operate. This group may also influence the local political climate.

<b>Rome City: Hispanic Ethnic Composition</b>										
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Persons of Hispanic origin	293	397	501	2,061	3,620	4,452	5,284	6,115	6,947	7,779

Original Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1)

The City of Rome has experienced an aging of its population, but less dramatically than the rest of Floyd County, the State of Georgia, or the nation. In 1980, people over the age of 65 accounted for 15.52% of the total population, while people under the age of 18 accounted for 26.78%. Census 2000 figures showed people over the age of 65 accounted for 15.91% of the total population, while people under the age of 18 accounted for 24.23%.

By 2025, the U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1) predicts that people over the age of 65 will account for 16.25 % of the population, while people under the age of 18 will account for 21.95 % of the population.

<b>Rome City: Population by Age</b>										
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
0 – 4 Years Old	1,995	2,031	2,066	2,211	2,355	2,445	2,535	2,625	2,715	2,805
5 – 13 Years Old	3,945	3,931	3,917	4,336	4,754	4,956	5,159	5,361	5,563	5,765
14 – 17 Years Old	2,002	1,648	1,293	1,329	1,365	1,206	1,047	887	728	569
18 – 20 Years Old	1,691	1,606	1,521	1,710	1,898	1,950	2,002	2,053	2,105	2,157
21 – 24 Years Old	2,130	1,967	1,804	2,070	2,335	2,386	2,438	2,489	2,540	2,591
25 – 34 Years Old	4,233	4,380	4,526	4,745	4,964	5,147	5,330	5,512	5,695	5,878
35 – 44 Years Old	2,859	3,436	4,013	4,363	4,712	5,175	5,639	6,102	6,565	7,028
45 – 54 Years Old	2,979	2,916	2,853	3,497	4,140	4,430	4,721	5,011	5,301	5,591
55 – 64 Years Old	3,218	3,064	2,909	2,901	2,893	2,812	2,731	2,649	2,568	2,487
65 and over	4,602	5,013	5,424	5,494	5,564	5,805	6,045	6,286	6,526	6,767

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1)

**Households.** The average household size in the City of Rome was 2.54 in 1980. It declined to 2.39 in 1990. However, in 2000, the size had risen to 2.47, likely as the result of a net in-migration of families. U.S. Census figures indicate that the rise in 2000 was not indicative of a trend, as the size is projected to be 2.38 by the year 2025. Predictably, as the population increases and the household size decreases, the number of households will continue to rise.

Rome city: Number of Households										
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total households	11,191	11,600	12,008	12,664	13,320	13,852	14,385	14,917	15,449	15,981
Avg. Annual Increase			0.73		1.09		0.80		0.74	0.69

Original Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1)

### City of Cave Spring

**Population Growth Patterns.** The City of Cave Spring experienced a decade of relatively rapid growth from 1970 to 1980. During that period, the average annual growth rate was 1.61, which exceeded the growth rates for the City of Rome, Floyd County and the State of Georgia for the same period. However, during the decades from 1980 to 2000 the growth rate was slower and lagged behind the growth rates for the City of Rome, the County, and the State. U.S. Census estimates for the years since the 2000 Census indicate a continued steady growth rate, likely in the range of .4-.6%, for the decade from 2000 to 2010. Cave Spring has been moderately aggressive about annexations in the past two decades. Annexation has contributed to the existing population, and provided undeveloped land for future growth.

Cave Spring City: Population			
Category	1980	1990	2000
Total population	883	950	975
Male population	NA	433	443
Female population	NA	517	532

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1)

**Population Projections.** The following table shows population projections made by the U.S. Bureau of the Census, based on actual population growth trends for the years from 1980 to 2000.

Cave Spring City: Population										
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total population	883	917	950	963	975	998	1,021	1,044	1,067	1,090

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1)

These figures indicate that the 25 year growth rate would be 11.79% for the years from 2000 to 2025, for an average annual rate of .47 %. At this rate of growth, Cave Spring would add 115 people over the 25 year period. Based on an average household size of 2.36 (U.S. Census 2000), 115 people could create 49 new households. These figures may be significantly higher if Cave Spring pursues economic development and job creation; or if a major employer were added within a reasonable daily commuting distance from the City. However, given

**Age and Racial/Ethnic Components.** The proportion of white people in Cave Spring has gradually increased, from 79.39 % in 1980 to 84.82 in 2000; the number of African American people has decreased from 21.34% of the total population in 1980, to 12.4% in 2000; the proportion of Asian, American Indian and all other races increased from 0% in 1980 to 2.77% in 2000. The Hispanic or Latino population increased from 0% in 1980 to 2.15% in 2000. These changes signal an increase in diversity for the community, but have generally had little socio-economic impact on Cave Spring because the city does not maintain a school system (the City is served by the Floyd County school system) and because services are largely provided by public and private entities located outside of the City.

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
<b>White alone</b>	701	747	792	810	827	859	890	922	953	985
<b>Black or African American alone</b>	182	170	158	140	121	106	91	75	60	45
<b>American Indian and Alaska Native alone</b>	0	0	0	3	6	8	9	11	12	14
<b>Asian or Pacific Islander</b>	0	0	0	1	1	1	2	2	2	2
<b>other race</b>	0	0	0	10	20	25	30	35	40	45

Original Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1)

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
<b>Persons of Hispanic origin</b>	0	3	6	14	21	26	32	37	42	47

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1)

According to population projections prepared by the U.S. Bureau of the Census for the year 2025, the proportion of white people will increase to 90.37%, the proportion of African American people will decrease to 4.13%, and the proportion of people of all other races will increase to 5.6%. During the same period, the proportion of Hispanic or Latino people will increase to 4.31%.

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
0 – 4 Years Old	41	55	69	64	59	64	68	73	77	82
5 – 13 Years Old	113	116	118	129	140	147	154	160	167	174
14 – 17 Years Old	68	58	48	40	32	23	14	5	0	0
18 – 20 Years Old	103	73	43	35	27	8	0	0	0	0
21 – 24 Years Old	79	63	46	35	23	9	0	0	0	0
25 – 34 Years Old	113	132	151	131	110	109	109	108	107	106
35 – 44 Years Old	87	108	128	125	122	131	140	148	157	166
45 – 54 Years Old	81	87	92	111	129	141	153	165	177	189
55 – 64 Years Old	88	93	97	104	110	116	121	127	132	138
65 and over	110	134	158	191	223	251	280	308	336	364

Original Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1)

According to Census 2000 reports, the age distribution of the population within the City of Cave Spring has followed the national, state and county trend of an increase in the number of people over the age of 65 (12.46 % in 1980, 22.87 % in 2000), and a decrease in the number of people under the age of 18 (25.14 in 1980, 23.69 in 2000).

These trends are likely to continue, with a projection that the proportion of people under 18 will reach 23.49 % by 2025, while the proportion of people over the age of 65 will increase to 33.4 %.

**Households.** According to U.S. Census figures, the number of households in Cave Spring would increase by over 1% per year for the period from 2000 through 2025. This figure is based on a slow population growth rate (.47% annual average), and on a significant decline in the average household size. Indeed, the average household size has fallen steadily since 1980, when the figure was 2.56, to 2.46 in 1990 and 2.36 in 2000. The figure is expected to continue to decline to 2.11 by the year 2025.

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total households	302	344	386	395	404	430	455	481	506	532
Avg. Annual Increase			2.78		0.47		1.26		1.12	1.03

Original Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF1)

### Income and Poverty Levels

The following table shows per capita income for Floyd County, the City of Rome, the City of Cave Spring, and Georgia. Floyd County had a slightly higher per capita income than either Rome or Cave Spring until 2000, when Cave Spring pulled ahead of the County and the City of Rome. The per capita income of residents throughout Floyd County was lower than the per capita income of residents in the State of Georgia and in the nation in 2000. Projections for per capita income for the two cities and the county are shown in the following table; however, projections for the state and nation are not available.

<b>Per Capita Income</b>					
<b>YEAR</b>	<b>Rome</b>	<b>Cave Spring</b>	<b>Floyd County</b>	<b>Georgia</b>	<b>United States</b>
1980	5,964	5,320	6,175	NA	NA
1990	11,973	11,997	12,121	13,631	NA
2000	17,327	17,850	17,808	21,154	21,587
2025 (projected)	31,531	33,513	32,349	NA	NA

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS (SF1)

The per cent of families living in poverty (income below the poverty level) is shown on the following table. These figures also indicate that, in general, the lowest income levels and the greatest number of families living in poverty are in the urban areas. The Cities of Rome and Cave Spring, and Floyd County, had higher per cents of families living in poverty than the state of Georgia and the nation in 2000.

<b>Poverty Status*</b>					
<b>2000</b>	<b>Rome</b>	<b>Cave Spring</b>	<b>Floyd County</b>	<b>Georgia</b>	<b>United States</b>
	15.3	14.0	10.8	9.9	9.2

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS (SF1)

\*Per cent of Families with income below the poverty level

<b>Household Income</b>					
	<b>Rome</b>	<b>Cave Spring</b>	<b>Floyd County</b>	<b>Georgia</b>	<b>United States</b>
<b>1990</b>	28,907	29,253	31,531	36,810	30,056
<b>2000</b>	43,925	39,871	46,498	42,433	41,994

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS (SF1)

Finally, the above table shows the average household incomes for Rome, Cave Spring, Floyd County, Georgia, and the nation. Within the City of Rome and throughout Floyd County the average household income was higher than the state or national averages. However, Cave Spring had a lower average household income.

### **Educational Attainment**

Floyd County had a higher percent of the total population that did not graduate from high school than the state of Georgia did in 1990 and 2000; as did the Cities of Rome and Cave Spring. Floyd County has historically had a slightly lower percent of the total population that did not graduate from high school than either Rome or Cave Spring, a slightly higher percent of the total population that graduated from high school but did not go on to get a college degree, and a slightly lower percent of the total population that attained at minimum an associate degree.

<b>Educational Attainment: Percent of Total Population</b>				
	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>GEORGIA</b>				
<High School Graduation	NA	18.1	13.4	NA
High School Graduation	NA	18.4	18.0	NA
>Associate Degree	NA	15.1	18.5	NA
<b>FLOYD COUNTY</b>				
<High School Graduation	30.5	23.4	18.3	8.8
High School Graduation	16.3	20.7	21.4	26.2
>Associate Degree	7.0	11.5	12.7	13.2
<b>CAVE SPRING</b>				
<High School Graduation	30.0	25.6	18.9	9.7
High School Graduation	12.0	18.7	22.9	33.9
>Associate Degree	7.8	14.1	13.9	13.6
<b>ROME</b>				
<High School Graduation	31.5	23.9	20.0	9.9
High School Graduation	13.0	18.5	18.2	22.9
>Associate Degree	9.3	13.8	14.3	14.6

SOURCE: U.S. CENSUS BUREAU (SF1)

In all three jurisdictions, the percent of those who did not graduate from high school has decreased since 1980.

At the same time, the percent of those who attained at least an associates degree increased for all three jurisdictions. U.S. Census projections indicate that those trends will continue through the year 2025. Floyd County is home to two four year colleges, Shorter College and Berry College; one two year college that is part of the Georgia State system, Georgia Highlands College; and a vocational school, Coosa Valley Technical College.

## ***Economic Development***

Historically, Rome and Floyd County relied on agriculture and textile industries for employment. During the mid 1900's, a large General Electric Plant located within the City of Rome was a major employer. In the 1990's and early 2000's, employment has shifted to medical and other service providers, retail, and a more diverse industrial base.

In the years from 1996 to 2000 Floyd County's unemployment rate averaged 4.5%, compared to the state average of 4.2% and the national average of 4.8%. The 2000 Census listed an unemployment rate of 4.1%. In 2004, the unemployment rate averaged 4.6, compared to the state average of 4.6% and the national average of 5.5%. The first nine months of 2005 ended with Floyd County averaging 5.2%, lower than the state average of 5.4% but higher than the national average of 5.1%.

The unemployment rate for the City of Rome was listed as 4.4% by the 2000 census. The Georgia Department of Labor listed the average unemployment rate for the City as 6.0% at the end of September 2004, and 5.4% at the end of September 2005. The City of Cave Spring had an average unemployment rate of 3.5% in 2000; interim figures are not available.

According to the 2000 Census, the industries employing the most workers were manufacturing (23.2% for Floyd County, 24.5% for Rome, and 15.9% for Cave Spring) and education, health, and social services (23.9% for Floyd County, 25.5% for Rome, and 26.6% for Cave Spring). That trend is expected to continue through the year 2025. It is also likely that workers employed in agriculture and forestry related fields will continue to decline, while the number of workers in the construction fields will continue to increase. Tables summarizing past trends and projections are shown on the following two pages.

Tourism is a strong factor in the economy of the County as a whole. In 2004, tourism employed 1,160 persons and generated \$6.40M in state and local sales taxes. Floyd County ranked 26<sup>th</sup> in the state for dollars spent by tourists (source: Greater Rome Convention and Visitors Bureau).

The top ten employers in Floyd County include three healthcare providers, public education institutions, a paper producer, and three companies that process or produce food products. The top ten manufacturing employers produce paper, food, carpet, tires, furniture, and computer software. A chemical testing company is also among the top ten industrial employers. Most service, retail and public service jobs are located within the City of Rome, and include three hospitals; while industrial employment is located outside of the incorporated area.

Of the population in the work force in 2000 (59,481 for all of Floyd County), approximately 70% worked within the County and less than one percent worked outside of the state.

CATEGORY	Rome		Cave Spring		Floyd County	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Worked in State of Residence	12,666	14,135	418	420	37,376	39,346
Worked in Place of Residence	9,122	8,906	114	62	32,501	32,440
Worked outside of Place of Residence	3,544	5,229	304	358	4,875	6,906
Worked outside of State of Residence	0	0	0	0	284	276

SOURCE: U.S. BUREAU OF THE CENSUS (SF1)

The economies of Floyd County, the City of Rome and the City of Cave Spring are inter-related and inter-dependent. The Rome Area Chamber of Commerce, the Development Authority of Floyd County, and the Rome – Floyd County Development Authority are the dominant economic development agencies (EDA) for all three (a fourth EDA, the Gordon – Floyd Joint Development Authority, works only with the Gordon – Floyd Industrial Park). The Greater Rome Existing Industries Association provides information and support to existing businesses. The role of the Chamber of Commerce and the EDA's is to attract new employers and to retain the existing employers in the county. Their goal has been and will continue to be to provide a diverse employment base that is not reliant on a limited number of types of employers.

In 1998, the Chamber of Commerce, the City of Rome, and Floyd County collaborated to prepare the Rome-Floyd County 20/20 Plan. The plan emphasized the need for a non-competitive, unified, county-wide effort involving stakeholders from public and private entities in order for economic development efforts to be successful. The plan was last updated in 2003.

Economic development efforts are funded by the Floyd County government through the Chamber of Commerce and are supported by Coosa Valley Technical College, which operates a business incubator program and focuses on appropriate labor force training. The Rome Area Visitors and Convention Bureau also supports the Chamber's recruitment and retention activities, along with local financial institutions.

Floyd County has approximately 1,300 acres of greenfield industrial land in four industrial parks that is zoned for heavy industrial use and available for development, most of it with sewer, water and power service already in place. Of these, approximately 1100 acres are in private ownership and approximately 200 are in public ownership; 375 acres of additional land is under option by the two EDA's and will likely be available for industrial development in the near future. The available industrial tracts are all located on arterial roads, and most front on active railroads.

The abandoned textile plants within Floyd County also offer redevelopment and reuse opportunities. All are served with sewer, water and power, and all are adjacent railroad lines. The former General Electric property remains vacant but is not available for redevelopment at this time.



<b>Georgia: Employment by Industry</b>			
<b>Category</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Total Employed Civilian Population</b>	NA	3,090,276	3,839,756
<b>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting &amp; mining</b>	NA	82,537	53,201
<b>Construction</b>	NA	214,359	304,710
<b>Manufacturing</b>	NA	585,423	568,830
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	NA	156,838	148,026
<b>Retail Trade</b>	NA	508,861	459,548
<b>Transportation, warehousing, and utilities</b>	NA	263,419	231,304
<b>Information</b>	NA	NA	135,496
<b>Finance, Insurance, &amp; Real Estate</b>	NA	201,422	251,240
<b>Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services</b>	NA	151,096	362,414
<b>Educational, health and social services</b>	NA	461,307	675,593
<b>Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services</b>	NA	31,911	274,437
<b>Other Services</b>	NA	266,053	181,829
<b>Public Administration</b>	NA	167,050	193,128

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3)

<b>Floyd County: Employment by Industry</b>										
<b>Category</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1985</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2025</b>
<b>Total Employed Civilian Population</b>	35,068	36,688	38,308	39,356	40,403	41,737	43,071	44,404	45,738	47,072
<b>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting &amp; mining</b>	431	475	519	427	334	310	286	261	237	213
<b>Construction</b>	1,980	2,174	2,368	2,703	3,038	3,303	3,567	3,832	4,096	4,361
<b>Manufacturing</b>	11,437	10,689	9,941	9,655	9,369	8,852	8,335	7,818	7,301	6,784
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	1,298	1,266	1,233	1,329	1,424	1,456	1,487	1,519	1,550	1,582
<b>Retail Trade</b>	5,283	5,612	5,941	5,163	4,384	4,159	3,935	3,710	3,485	3,260
<b>Transportation, warehousing, and utilities</b>	2,604	2,652	2,700	2,204	1,708	1,484	1,260	1,036	812	588
<b>Information</b>	NA	NA	NA	NA	777	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
<b>Finance, Insurance, &amp; Real Estate</b>	1,410	1,503	1,595	1,612	1,628	1,683	1,737	1,792	1,846	1,901
<b>Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services</b>	845	1,057	1,269	1,837	2,404	2,794	3,184	3,573	3,963	4,353
<b>Educational, health and social services</b>	6,381	7,309	8,236	8,955	9,673	10,496	11,319	12,142	12,965	13,788
<b>Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services</b>	1,318	821	323	1,455	2,586	2,903	3,220	3,537	3,854	4,171
<b>Other Services</b>	974	1,836	2,697	2,174	1,650	1,819	1,988	2,157	2,326	2,495
<b>Public Administration</b>	1,107	1,297	1,486	1,457	1,428	1,508	1,589	1,669	1,749	1,829

Original Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3)

<b>Cave Spring City: Employment by Industry</b>											
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	
<b>Total Employed Civilian Population</b>	360	391	422	428	433	451	470	488	506	524	
<b>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting &amp; mining</b>	6	8	9	8	7	7	8	8	8	8	
<b>Construction</b>	21	23	24	22	19	19	18	18	17	17	
<b>Manufacturing</b>	101	91	81	75	69	61	53	45	37	29	
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	3	4	5	11	17	21	24	28	31	35	
<b>Retail Trade</b>	34	54	74	67	60	67	73	80	86	93	
<b>Transportation, warehousing, and utilities</b>	19	18	16	20	23	24	25	26	27	28	
<b>Information</b>	NA	NA	NA	NA	25	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
<b>Finance, Insurance, &amp; Real Estate</b>	0	5	9	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	
<b>Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services</b>	7	8	8	18	27	32	37	42	47	52	
<b>Educational, health and social services</b>	132	132	132	124	115	111	107	102	98	94	
<b>Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services</b>	8	5	2	8	14	16	17	19	20	22	
<b>Other Services</b>	0	18	36	24	12	15	18	21	24	27	
<b>Public Administration</b>	29	28	26	36	45	49	53	57	61	65	

Original Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3)

<b>Rome City: Employment by Industry</b>											
Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	
<b>Total Employed Civilian Population</b>	12,029	12,479	12,928	13,690	14,451	15,057	15,662	16,268	16,873	17,479	
<b>Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting &amp; mining</b>	73	103	132	112	92	97	102	106	111	116	
<b>Construction</b>	630	589	548	682	816	863	909	956	1,002	1,049	
<b>Manufacturing</b>	3,550	3,376	3,201	3,368	3,535	3,531	3,528	3,524	3,520	3,516	
<b>Wholesale Trade</b>	492	420	348	429	510	515	519	524	528	533	
<b>Retail Trade</b>	1,815	2,014	2,212	1,873	1,533	1,463	1,392	1,322	1,251	1,181	
<b>Transportation, warehousing, and utilities</b>	807	781	755	581	406	306	206	105	5	0	
<b>Information</b>	NA	NA	NA	NA	210	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	
<b>Finance, Insurance, &amp; Real Estate</b>	547	583	619	610	600	613	627	640	653	666	
<b>Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services</b>	313	349	385	684	983	1,151	1,318	1,486	1,653	1,821	
<b>Educational, health and social services</b>	2,386	2,726	3,066	3,374	3,682	4,006	4,330	4,654	4,978	5,302	
<b>Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services</b>	637	375	113	614	1,114	1,233	1,353	1,472	1,591	1,710	
<b>Other Services</b>	463	763	1,063	802	540	559	579	598	617	636	
<b>Public Administration</b>	316	401	486	458	430	459	487	516	544	573	

Original Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3)

## Revenues

Ad Valorem property taxes and local option sales taxes (LOST) continue to be the basis of the economy for both Rome and Floyd County.

<b>Floyd County Revenues - 2004</b>		
<b>Source</b>	<b>Dollar Amount</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
<b>Ad Valorem Property Tax</b>	\$16,494,954.00	41.5
<b>LOST</b>	\$8,257,240.00	20.8
<b>Other (interest, fines, charges, other taxes)</b>	\$15,009,126.00	37.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$39,761,320.00</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Unaudited Financial Statement

<b>City of Rome Revenues - 2004</b>		
<b>Source</b>	<b>Dollar Amount</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
<b>Ad Valorem Property Tax</b>	\$7,717,384.00	33.3
<b>LOST</b>	\$6,940,281.00	29.9
<b>Other (interest, fines, charges, other taxes)</b>	\$8,517,101.00	36.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$23,174,766.00</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Audited Financial Statement

<b>City of Cave Spring Revenues - 2004</b>		
<b>Source</b>	<b>Dollar Amount</b>	<b>Percent of Total</b>
<b>LOST</b>	\$259,254.00	42.0
<b>OTHER TAXES</b>	\$130,164.00	21.1
<b>Other (interest, fines, charges, etc.)</b>	\$227,989.00	36.9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$617,407.00</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: Audited Financial Statement

SPLOST packages were approved in the years 1995, 1998, 2001, and 2003, and provided a total of \$84.9M for special projects within both cities and throughout the county. Funded projects have included the Rome Braves Baseball Stadium, park and recreation improvements, wastewater treatment plant upgrades, road projects, and construction of new jail, fire stations, Floyd County Health Department building, convention center (Forum), and landfill.

In 2004, the Rome MSA became an entitlement city. For the first year the funding was \$620,000 but by the second year the funding had dropped to approximately \$587,000. Other revenue sources include bond sales and grants. Also in 2005, the voters of Rome approved a referendum allowing the City to designate Tax Allocation Districts (TAD's). TAD's will be used to generate revenue for redevelopment in the downtown area and in other districts as well.

## ***Natural and Cultural Resources***

### **Environmental Planning Criteria**

**Water Supply Watershed.** A water supply watershed is the area of land where rainfall runoff drains into a body of water, river, stream or reservoir used as a source of public drinking water. Runoff and sedimentation from land use in the water supply watershed may have negative impacts and reduce the quality and quantity of available water.

The water supply watersheds in the Rome, Cave Spring, and Floyd County are shown in the map **Water Supply Watershed Etowah River** and **Water Supply Watershed Oostanaula River**. These map shows the existing surface water withdrawal locations for public drinking water and the upstream watershed. Public water intakes are located on the Oostanaula River, the Etowah River, and Armuchee Creek. The Armuchee Creek water supply watershed is entirely located within the larger Oostanaula River watershed; therefore a separate map is not included for this watershed.

The Department of Natural Resources Environmental Protection Division has established Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria. These rules established guidelines for local governments to use in preparing comprehensive plans and local regulations. The Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria treat large drainage basins (water supply watershed of greater than 100 square miles in size) differently than smaller basins. All three surface water withdrawal locations within Floyd county are considered “large drainage basins.” The Unified Land Development Code of Floyd County and the City of Rome, Georgia (ULDC) establishes protected water supply watersheds upstream of the public water supply intakes on the Oostanaula River, the Etowah River, and Armuchee Creek. The protections established in the ULDC meet the minimum requirements as defined in the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria.

**Wetlands.** Wetlands are lowland areas, such as a marsh or swamp that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. To develop the vegetation and soil characteristics that qualify an area as a wetland, the area may only be flooded or saturated for one week of the year. Historically, wetlands were often viewed as wastelands that only provided a breeding ground for insects and disease. However, they provide many benefits to man and the environment. Among these benefits are:

*Flood protection:* Wetlands serve as natural holding areas for flood waters, soaking up large quantities of water and then releasing it slowly, thereby protecting downstream property from flood damage.

*Erosion control:* Wetlands that are located between lakes or streams and land help protect the land from soil erosion because the wetland vegetation acts to reduce the strength of waves and water flow that hit the shoreline while the roots of the wetland vegetation help to bind soil in place. Wetlands also slow the flow of floodwaters and, through, the slow release of stored water, help maintain a more consistent volume of

water in streams, thereby reducing the extreme fluctuations of water bodies and reducing erosion.

*Water quality maintenance:* Wetlands located between land and water bodies or streams serve as natural water filters by slowing runoff before it reaches the water and trapping wastes, sediments, and other impurities that would otherwise pollute the water body.

*Water supply:* During droughts water stored in wetlands becomes a crucial source of supply which augments the base flow of streams.

*Natural habitat:* Wetlands are critical to maintaining important fish and waterfowl populations. Many species spend their entire lives in wetlands while others use wetlands for reproduction and nursery grounds. Wetlands are also required habitat for many threatened, endangered, and rare plant species.

*Natural products:* Among the wealth of natural products produced by wetlands are timber, fish and shellfish, wild rice and berries.

*Recreation:* Wetlands offer a number of recreational opportunities, including hunting and fishing, hiking, nature observation, and boating.

Wetlands are located throughout Rome and Floyd County and many are identified by the national wetland inventory; however, other wetlands exist that are not been mapped. The wetland areas in Rome, Cave Spring, and Floyd County are shown in the map titled **Wetlands**. Given the amount of development occurring in areas with conditions favorable for wetlands, it is likely that, unless protected, some wetlands will be threatened by future growth.

The numerous benefits from wetlands would be lost if not protected from development. The Unified Land Development Code of Floyd County and the City of Rome, Georgia (ULDC) restricts development in protected wetland areas. The ULDC requires the alteration or degradation of a protected wetland be approved by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers under Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act. Additionally, facilities that receive, treat, or dispose of hazardous or toxic waste and sanitary landfills are prohibited in wetland areas.

**Groundwater Recharge Areas.** Groundwater is rainfall that is absorbed by the ground and contained in subsurface formations called aquifers. These aquifers are be accessed by wells and the water used for drinking, irrigation, and other uses. In some cases aquifers are interconnected with our surface water systems (lakes, streams, and wetlands). An aquifer is a zone of rock beneath the surface of the earth capable of containing water. A groundwater recharge area is any portion of the earth's surface, where ground water can seep into and replenish an underground aquifer.

Man-made developments can greatly affect the groundwater recharge areas. Therefore, protection of these areas is an important consideration, which must be addressed through local ordinances and other development controls. Groundwater recharge areas should be protected from both pollution and coverage by impervious surface. Impervious surfaces

impede the grounds ability to absorb rainfall, which hinders recharge of local subsurface aquifers. Additionally, hazardous or toxic substances in a recharge area will likely to be carried into the aquifer by rainfall and contaminate the groundwater, making it unsafe to drink or otherwise use. Once polluted, it is difficult if not impossible for underground aquifers to be decontaminated.

The most significant groundwater recharge areas for Floyd County have been identified by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and the United States Geological Survey. The majority of the areas in Floyd County have been given a pollution susceptibility rating of high as opposed to either medium or low. No significant recharge areas are designated in the City of Rome or Cave Spring city limit boundaries. The significant groundwater recharge areas in Floyd County are shown in the map **Groundwater Recharge Areas**.

The Unified Land Development Code of Floyd County and the City of Rome, Georgia (ULDC) restricts development in protected groundwater recharge areas. In protected groundwater recharge areas, hazardous waste treatment or disposal facilities are prohibited, sanitary landfills must have synthetic liners and leachate collection systems, and new facilities that handle or store hazardous materials, chemicals, or petroleum must perform operations on impermeable surface having spill or leak collection system and/or a secondary containment of 110% of the volume of the largest tank in a cluster of tanks. Additional restrictions apply based on the pollution susceptibility classification of the ground water recharge area. The Floyd County Health Department is responsible for the issuance of septic tank permits. These permits may only be issued if the proposed development meets state standards. Local regulations protecting groundwater recharge areas meet the minimum requirements as defined in the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria. Currently, local ordinances do not restrict the amount of impervious surfaces allowed in a groundwater recharge area.

**Protected Rivers.** In 1991, the Georgia General Assembly passed the Mountain and River Corridor Protection Act that called for the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to develop minimum standards for the protection of certain mountain areas and river corridors. River protection corridors are the strips of land that flank major rivers in Georgia. These corridors are of vital importance to Georgia in that they help preserve those qualities that make a river suitable as a habitat for wildlife, a site for recreation, and a source for clean drinking water. River protection corridors can be managed to help control erosion and river sedimentation, help absorb floodwaters, and allow the free movement of wildlife from area to area within the State.

The Act defines **Protected Rivers** as those perennial watercourses with an average annual flow of at least 400 cubic feet per second as determined by the appropriate U. S. Geological Survey documents. The Coosa, Etowah, and Oostanaula Rivers are identified by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources as Protected Rivers under the Act. The Unified Land Development Code of Floyd County and the City of Rome, Georgia (ULDC) establishes a 100 feet river corridor greenway along the Coosa, Etowah, and Oostanaula Rivers and a 40 feet tributary corridor greenway along Horseleg Creek, Silver Creek, Armuchee Creek, Little Dry Creek, Big Dry Creek, Johns Creek, and Dykes

Creek. This code prohibits disturbing vegetation or using land except under limited conditions. Any development in the corridor must be performed in a manner that maintains the integrity of the buffer area and not impair the long-term functions of the protected river or river corridor. The protections established in the ULDC exceed the minimum requirements for protected rivers as defined in the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria.

The River Committee of the City of Rome and area residents have requested additional protections be adopted by the local governments adding greater protection to the river greenway and encouraging future development to protect views from and of the protected rivers.

**Protected Mountains.** The Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria defines protected mountain as “all land area 2,200 feet or more above mean sea level, that has a percentage slope of 25 percent or greater for a least 500 feet horizontally, and shall include the crests, summits, and ridge tops which lie at elevations higher than any such area.” No land area within Rome, Cave Spring, or Floyd County falls within the definition of a protected mountain.

### **Other Environmentally Sensitive Areas**

**Public Water Supply Sources.** In addition to the current and proposed public water supply intakes on the Oostanaula River, the Etowah River, and Armuchee Creek mentioned in the water supply watershed section of this community assessment, Floyd County has other permitted water supply sources. These include Old Mill Spring, Fulton Road Well, Kingston Road Well, and Cave Spring. Both Old Mill Spring and Cave Spring are considered surface water for permitting purposes; however, the intakes are located at the springs’ sources, so they should be protected similarly as ground water sources. Fulton Road Well and Kingston Road Well are both groundwater sources. These groundwater supply sources are protected through zoning and land use controls and are considered during rezoning actions considered under the Unified Land Development Code of Floyd County and the City of Rome, Georgia (ULDC). Floyd County has recently purchased the water treatment facility and intake on Woodward Creek that once served the water system of Galey and Lord Textile mill. This facility may be used for the public water system in the future. The water supply watershed for this source is located within the greater watershed of one of the City of Rome’s intake and, therefore, is already protected.

**Steep Slopes.** Steep slopes generally have more shallow soil coverings which are more vulnerable to erosion and vegetative loss. Located in the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, Rome, Cave Spring, and Floyd County have numerous hill and mountain formations where steep slopes are likely. Hill and mountain formations in Floyd County which have slopes of greater than 25% include Turnip Mountain, Judy Mountain, Rock Mountain, Simms Mountain, Lavender Mountain, Johns Mountain, Mill Mountain Calbeck Mountain Turkey Mountain, Armstrong Mountain Ward Mountain, Horseleg Mountain, Mount Alto, Walker Mountain, Booze Mountain, Hickory Mountain, Saddle Mountain, and Turnbull Hill. The majority of these formations run northeast to southwest. Slopes of greater than 25% may also exist in areas where a named hill or

mountain does not. Slopes of greater than 10% and 25% in the Rome, Cave Spring, and Floyd County are shown in the **Steep Slopes** map. Hills and mountains with steep slopes are listed in the table titled **Steep Slopes in Floyd County**.

### Steep Slopes in Floyd County

Name	Peak Elevation	State Protected Mt.
Armstrong Mountain	1171	No
Booze Mountain	1034	No
Calbeck Mountain	1540	No
Carr Mountain	784	No
Heath Mountain	1247	No
Hickory Mountain	1073	No
Horseleg Mountain	1358	No
Johns Mountain	1676	No
Judy Mountain	1048	No
Lavender Mountain	1530	No
Mill Mountain	1612	No
Mount Alto	1450	No
Oliver Mountain	750	No
Rock Mountains	1420	No
Saddle Mountain	954	No
Simms Mountain	1312	No
Turkey Mountain	1280	No
Turnip Mountain	NA	No
Walker Mountain	952	No
Ward Mountain	1163	No

Historically, development has occurred within Rome and Floyd County with little regard for erosion control on steep slopes. Unfortunately, steep mountain slopes generally offer scenic vistas and, thus, are often the most desirous sites for home building. Soil destabilization due to the grading of building sites has a detrimental impact upon vegetation and the water quality of small streams and lakes.

The Unified Land Development Code of Floyd County and the City of Rome, Georgia (ULDC) establishes soil erosion and sedimentation controls. These regulations mandate all land-disturbing activities use best management practices to minimize erosion. However, several exemptions to these regulations are allowed including mining, quarrying, and individual single-family dwellings. The City of Cave Spring has no development code addressing erosion on steep slopes. As a minimum it is recommended that the requirements of the Mountain Protection Act be adopted and enforced locally by all local jurisdictions. To minimize the visual and ecological impact on all other steep slopes in the county, responsible grading practices should be addressed through education of the public.

**Flood Plains.** A floodplain is defined as a nearly level alluvial plain that borders a stream and is subject to periodic flooding unless protected artificially. Floodplains have



evolved from natural forces and unwise development can alter and destroy their value. Floods shape the topography and the physical characteristics of the land which helps control the rate of water flow. Floodplains, in their natural or relatively undisturbed state, are an important water resource for several reasons. They provide a broad area to temporarily store the additional waters of a flood. In their natural state, floodplains slow the rate at which the incoming overland flow reaches the main water body. A vegetated floodplain slows surface water runoff causing the surface runoff to drop most of its sediments in the floodplain. Pathogens and toxic substances entering the water body through surface runoff and accompanying sediments are decreased.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has mapped floodplains in Rome, Cave Spring, and Floyd County. These maps indicate several areas which are prone to a 1 % chance of flooding located within unincorporated **Floyd County**. The locations of these 100-year floodplains include areas along the Oostanaula River and its tributaries: Armuchee Creek, Heath Creek, Lavender Creek, Big and Little Dry Creek, Muck Creek and Johns Creek in northern Floyd County. In the eastern part of the county, the floodplain is located along the Etowah River, Spring Creek, and Dykes Creek. To the south of Rome, areas around Silver Creek and Prentis Branch south to Six Mile are also located in the 100-year floodplains. Areas along the Coosa River and its tributaries: Beech Creek, King Creek, Mountain Hope Creek, Cabin Creek, and Cedar Creek, along with Spring Creek, and the Big and Little Cedar Creek in Cave Spring, make up the west and southwestern portion of the county that contains areas of identified floodplain. The 100-year floodplain in the **City of Rome**, as delineated by FEMA, includes the areas along the Oostanaula, Etowah and Coosa Rivers; although the City of Rome has initiated the process to remove some areas along the Coosa River that are behind a levee. Also included within the city limits are Big and Little Dry Creek to the north, Silver Creek to the south, and Horseleg Creek to the west. The 100-year floodplain in the **City of Cave Spring** includes the areas along Little Cedar Creek which runs from the southeast part of the city along Georgia Highway 100, affects an area approximately 1,000 to 1,500 feet wide in the center of the city, and then runs to the northern part of the city near Georgia Highway 53 and US Highway 411. This flood prone area includes all of downtown Cave Spring, Rolator Park, and crosses portions of Love Street, Fannin Street, Mill Street, Broad Street, Fincher Street, River Street, Alabama Street, Georgia Highways 100 and 53, and US Highway 411. These identified areas have been mapped by FEMA and these maps are available for review. The general area of flood plains in Floyd County are shown on the map titled **Flood Plains**.

The Unified Land Development Code of Floyd County and the City of Rome, Georgia (ULDC) incorporates the flood damage prevention ordinances of Rome and Floyd County. These regulations closely follow the model ordinance written on behalf of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The ordinance is enforced by the Building Inspection Department. The City of Cave Spring is enrolled in the Floodplain Insurance Program and is monitored by the State since the City has no inspection department of its own.

**Soils.** The **General Soils** Map for Floyd County shows the patterns of soil, called soil associations, within the county. Each association contains different soil types in a pattern

that are characteristic although not strictly uniform. Certain types of land uses may be more appropriate in areas with specific soil types. The soils map may be a beneficial in determining the best location for future development.

**Plant and Animal Habitats.** The state and federal governments have two classifications for rare plant and animal species. An “endangered species” is any species that is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range. A “threatened species” is any species that is likely to become endangered within the foreseeable future. These species are protected by the Federal Endangered Species Act of 1973 and Georgia’s Rules for the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The Department of Natural Resources is authorized by its rules to acquire and manage land or conservation easements for the preservation of endangered and threatened species and to cooperate with other agencies, including local governments, to accomplish these goals. Destruction of the habitat of endangered or threatened species on public land is prohibited by state law. A list of endangered and threatened species in Floyd County is provided in the table **Listed Species in Floyd County.**

**Listed Species in Floyd County (updated May 2004)**

Species	Federal Status	State Status	Habitat	Threats
<b>Mammal</b>				
<b>Gray bat</b> <i>Myotis grisescens</i>	Endangered	Endangered	Colonies restricted to caves or cave-like habitats; forage primarily over water along rivers or lake shores	Human disturbance and vandalism in caves, pesticides, flooding of caves by impoundments, and loss of insect prey over streams degraded by siltation and pollution
<b>Bird</b>				
<b>Bald eagle</b> <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Threatened	Endangered	Inland waterways and estuarine areas in Georgia	Major factor in initial decline was lowered reproductive success following use of DDT. Current threats include habitat destruction, disturbance at the nest, illegal shooting, electrocution, impact injuries, and lead poisoning.
<b>Invertebrate</b>				
<b>Georgia Rocksnail</b> <i>Leptoxis downei</i>	Candidate Species	Endangered	Shoals, riffles and reefs of small to large rivers. Historically occurred in upper Coosa River. Found in Oostanaula River in Floyd and Gordon Counties	
<b>Cylindrical lioplax</b> Lioplax cyclostoma-formis	Endangered	No State Status	Gill-breathing snail that lives in mud under large rocks in rapid currents over stream and river shoals. Historic population in Armuchee Creek, Floyd County, probably extirpated.	Habitat modification, sedimentation, and water quality degradation
<b>Fish</b>				
<b>Coldwater darter</b> <i>Etheostoma ditrema</i>	No Federal Status	Threatened	Springs and gravelly streams	

Species	Federal Status	State Status	Habitat	Threats
<b>Trispot darter</b> <i>Etheostoma trisella</i>	No Federal Status	Threatened	Mountain streams	
<b>Plant</b>				
<b>Alabama Leather Flower</b> <i>Clematis socialis</i>	Endangered	Endangered	Located in mesic flats near intermittent creeks where plants are rooted in silty-clay soils. Plants occurs in full sun or partial shade in a grass-sedge-rush community.	Impacts from highway rights-of-way maintenance, and potential habitat loss from land use changes.
<b>Coosa Barbara Buttons</b> <i>Marshallia mohrii</i>	Threatened	Threatened	Prairie-like grass-sedge communities over seasonally wet sandy clays; also margins of shale-bedded streams	Agricultural development, routine maintenance of roadside rights-of-way (including herbicide treatment, bulldozing, planting nonnative competitive grasses, and mowing before flowering), and road expansion
<b>Georgia rockcress</b> <i>Arabis georgiana</i>	Candidate Species	Threatened	Rocky (limestone, shale, granite-gneiss) bluffs and slopes along watercourses; also along sandy, eroding riverbanks	
<b>Great Plains ladiestresses</b> <i>Spiranthes magnicamporum</i>	No Federal Status	Endangered	Grassy areas in open or partial shade on flat, limestone outcrops (cedar glades) where the soil is a heavy, sticky clay	
<b>Large-flowered skullcap</b> <i>Scutellaria montana</i>	Endangered	Threatened	Mature oak-pine forests with sparse understory	Logging, wildfires, livestock grazing, residential development, and small populations coupled with limited distribution
<b>Limerock arrowwood</b> <i>Viburnum bracteatum</i>	No Federal Status	Endangered	Calcareous bluffs along the Coosa River and on the escarpment of the Cumberland Plateau	
<b>Purple sedge</b> <i>Carex purpurifera</i>	No Federal Status	Threatened	Mixed mesophytic or cove hardwoods with a wide array of canopy species, rich vernal flora, and calcareous soils	
<b>Tennessee yellow-eyed grass</b> <i>Xyris tennesseensis</i>	Endangered	Endangered	Gravelly open, calcareous, seepy margins and wet meadows along spring-fed headwater streams	
<b>Trailing meadowrue</b> <i>Thalictrum debile</i>	No Federal Status	Threatened	Near streams in rich alluvial soils of forested floodplains over limestone bedrock	
<b>Whorled sunflower</b> <i>Helianthus verticillatus</i>	Candidate Species	Threatened	Moist Prairie-like openings in woodlands and along adjacent creeks.	

In addition to this list from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, four specimens of the Hawthorn shrub *Crataegus tristis* Beadle (common names Minute Hawthorn and Hobo's Hawthorn) have also been discovered within the City of Rome. These are the only known living specimens in existence.

### Significant Natural Resources

**Scenic Areas.** Floyd County, located in the rolling foothills of the Appalachian Mountains, is rich in scenic natural resources including forests, fields, hills, valleys and rivers. Many scenic areas in Rome, Cave Spring, and Floyd County were identified by citizen groups in previous comprehensive plans.

Of those that were previously identified, many are found in existing parks and recreation areas throughout the county, such as the Pocket, Johns Mountain Recreation Area in northern Floyd County, Marshall Forest along Horseleg Creek Road, Mayo's Bar Lock and Dam, Rolator Park in Cave Spring, and many sites on the Berry College campus. Others scenic views and sites that were identified include:

Rockmart Highway (looking toward Rome from Saddle Mountain); Highway 411, east to Floyd County line; the major river corridors along the Coosa, Etowah, and the Oostanaula Rivers as well as along their major tributaries: Armuchee, Big Cedar and Silver Creeks; the Seven Hills of Rome; the Clock Tower in Rome; the Between the Rivers neighborhood; the view of Downtown Rome as seen from the Oostanaula River Bridge on Turner McCall Boulevard; Berry College; the Pocket; Cave Spring and Rolator Park; Wax Lake; the Big and Little Texas Valleys as seen from the Rocky Mountain Pumped Storage Hydroelectric facility; Riverside Parkway; Vann's Valley; Marshall Forest; the Bluffs of the Coosa; "Hobo Canyon" in Rome; Lake Arrowhead; Lake Marvin; the Highway 53 North corridor; Broad Street in Rome; and Chulio Road in Floyd County.

Many of the identified resources are owned and protected by a government entity. Others are protected to some degree by local ordinances, such as Rome's historic preservation ordinance. In addition, the Cities of Rome and Cave Spring have established national historic districts in and around their downtown areas to preserve their character. An inventory of potentially significant historic areas and sites was conducted by the City of Rome in 1998-2001. The Unified Land Development Code of Floyd County and the City of Rome, Georgia (ULDC) establishes regulations to reduce the negative effects of signage. The ULDC limits the placement of signage at river crossings and regulates the distance between off-premise billboards. The City of Cave Spring actively promotes the restoration and maintenance of the facilities within Rolator Park. This park contains the source of water for which the city is named and the site of the Hearn Academy built in 1838.

The principal threats to these sites lies in the lack of public awareness of the vulnerability of these resources. Seven of the 24 resources identified are not protected by zoning or other ordinances designed to protect them. The Unified Land Development Code affords some protection but it does not fully address protection of the visual environment. The City of Cave Spring has no zoning or historic district ordinances in place at the present time.

**Prime Agricultural and Forest Lands.** Floyd County is in the northwestern Georgia with a total land area of approximately 519 square miles, or 328,832 acres. The areas along the Oostanaula, Etowah and Coosa Rivers contain the majority of cropland, with the largest tracts found in the western portion of the county along the Coosa River. Pastureland is found throughout the County. The Soil Conservation Service has identified and mapped those areas with class 1-5 soils. Prime agriculture lands are generally located within the first two classes of soils. Prime agriculture lands in the Rome, Cave Spring, and Floyd County are shown in the map **Farm Lands**.

According to the Georgia County Guide, the number of farms in Floyd County has been increasing since its low in 1992. In 1992, Floyd County had 424 farms. This number increased to 552 farms in 1997 and to 663 farms in 2002. This reversed the trend in decreasing number of farms in Floyd County during the 1970's and 1980's. Total acres of farmland in Floyd County showed a similar increase during this time period. Total farmland in Floyd County increased from 73,659 acres in 1992 to 91,103 acres in 1997, and to 91,317 acres in 2002. However, acres of harvested cropland increased from 16,796 in 1992 to 18,054 in 1997, but decreased to 16,357 in 2002 for a slight net loss over the ten-year period.

Although harvested cropland decreased during the previous decade, the majority of these acres were converted into other agricultural categories rather than removed from agricultural use entirely. These resources are valuable to the community and need to be managed using the Best Management Practices developed by the Soil Conservation Service and the United States Forest Service. Additionally, local development codes and policies should be developed to encourage the continued use of farmland for agricultural purposes and discourage sprawling development into these areas.

**Major Parks, Recreation and Conservation Areas.** Several areas have been identified as major park, recreation, and conservation areas. The Chattahoochee National Forest is managed by the Forest Service of the federal Department of Agriculture. The Wildlife Management Areas are managed by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. In addition, these areas of the county lack adequate utilities and roads and have poor soils for the use of septic systems which limits the development potential. The Pocket Recreation Area is located within the National Forest and managed by the National Forest Service. Ridge Ferry Park is owned by the City of Rome and managed with conservation principles in mind. Land ownership in the area is limited and much of the adjacent land is in wetland habitat. Mayo's Bar Lock and Dam is a regional park owned by Floyd County and operated by the Rome-Floyd Parks and Recreation Authority. The Lock and Dam is on the National Register of Historic Places. Rolator Park, located in the center of the City of Cave Spring, is a regional facility owned and operated by the city government. Dedicated to the use of the public in 1931, the facility is managed and maintained by a board of citizens. The Rocky Mountain Project is a peak-load power generating facility; much of this area is managed for wildlife conservation and is open to public for recreation purposes. Additionally, Rome and Floyd County have been able to preserve several conservation areas utilizing state programs; including the Governor's Greenspace Program and Rivercare 2000. These areas are shown on the map **Major Parks, Recreation, and Conservation Areas**.

## Significant Cultural Resources

**National and Locally Designated Historic Properties.** Rome, Cave Springs and Floyd County have a number of cultural resources, many concentrated in areas designated as local and/or national historic districts. The City of Cave Spring contains one national register district, covering the downtown commercial area, and several individual resources. Several national register properties are located in unincorporated Floyd County, and part of the Etowah Valley District, placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975, is located in unincorporated Floyd County. Cave Spring and Floyd County do not have a local preservation ordinances or locally designated districts. An initial historic resources survey of Floyd County was conducted in 1977; however, this survey did not cover all areas of Rome, Cave Spring, and unincorporated Floyd County, and many resources were not listed. The City of Rome has nine areas listed as historic districts on the National Register of Historic Places; these districts include commercial, residential, and institutional areas. Additionally the City of Rome has designated five areas as local historic districts and qualifies as a Certified Local Government under the National Historic Preservation Act. A city-wide historic resources survey of the City of Rome was completed in 2001. The survey recorded, photographed, and mapped 1,794 historic resources; including businesses, homes, and structures. For each surveyed resource, slides were taken and a survey form was completed. Historic districts and individual properties in Floyd County listed on the National Register of Historic Places are listed in the table titled National Register of Historic Places – Floyd County Properties. Local and national historic districts are shown on the map titled **Local Historic Districts and National Historic Districts.**

### National Register of Historic Places – Floyd County Properties

Resource Name	Address	City
Bathey, Dr. Robert, House	725 E. 2nd Ave.	Rome
Berry Schools	N of Rome on U.S. 27	Rome
Between the Rivers Historic District	Roughly bounded by the Etowah and Oostanaula Rivers, and 7th Ave.	Rome
Between the Rivers Historic District (Boundary Increase)	107 W. Fourth St.	Rome
Carroll, John M., House	Park St.	Cave Spring
Carroll-Harper House	Cedartown St.	Cave Spring
Carroll-Richardson Grist Mill	Mill St.	Cave Spring
Cave Spring Commercial Historic District	Alabama, Rome and Cedartown Rds., Broad and Padlock Sts.	Cave Spring
Cave Spring Female Academy	Rome St.	Cave Spring
Cave Spring High School	Rome St.	Cave Spring
Cave Spring Railroad Station	Alabama St.	Cave Spring
Cave Spring Residential Historic District	U.S. 411 and GA 100	Cave Spring
Chieftains	80 Chatillon Rd.	Rome
Chubb Methodist Episcopal Church	Chubbtown Rd.	Cave Spring
Conner, Wesley O., House	Cedartown St.	Cave Spring
Cowdry, William D., Plantation	Rome Rd.	Cave Spring
East Rome Historic District	Roughly bounded by Walnut Ave., McCall Blvd., E. 8th and 10th Sts.	Rome

Resource Name	Address	City
Etowah Mounds	N bank of Etowah River	Rome
Fannin, Oliver P., House	Cedartown St.	Cave Spring
Floyd County Courthouse	5th Ave., and Tribune St.	Rome
Ford, Joseph, House	Love and Alabama Sts.	Cave Spring
Georgia School for the Deaf Historic District	Padlock St.	Cave Spring
Jackson Hill Historic District	Jackson Hill, between GA 53 and the Oostanaula River	Rome
Lower Avenue A Historic District	Avenue A between N. 5th St. and Turner-McCall Blvd.	Rome
Main High School	41 Washington Dr.	Rome
Mann, John T., House	Rivers St.	Cave Spring
Mayo's Bar Lock and Dam	On the Coosa River, 8 mi. SW of Rome	Rome
McKinney, Dr. W. T., House	Cedartown St.	Cave Spring
Mt. Aventine Historic District	Address Restricted	Rome
Myrtle Hill Cemetery	Bounded by S. Broad, and Myrtle Sts., Pennington, and Branham Aves.	Rome
Oakdene Place	Roughly bounded by the Etowah River, Queen, and E. 6th Sts.	Rome
Old Brick Mill	Park St. at Silver Cr.	Lindale
Rivers Farm	Rome St.	Cave Spring
Robbins, Samuel W., House	Rome St.	Cave Spring
Rolator Park Historic District	Off U.S. 411	Cave Spring
Rome Clock Tower	Off GA 101	Rome
Roving House	Rome St.	Cave Spring
Sardis Presbyterian Church and Cemetery	7104 GA 20 NW	Coosa
Simmons House	Cedartown St.	Cave Spring
Simmons, William S., Plantation	Alabama St.	Cave Spring
South Broad Street Historic District	S. Broad St. and Etowah Terrace	Rome
Sullivan--Hillyer House	309 E. Second Ave.	Rome
Thankful Baptist Church	935 Spiderwebb Dr.	Rome
U.S. Post Office and Courthouse	W. 4th Ave. and E. 1st St.	Rome
Upper Avenue A Historic District	Roughly bounded by Oostanaula River, Turner-McCall Blvd., Avenue B and W. 11th St.	Rome
Watts, George T., House	Love St.	Cave Spring
Wharton-Trout House	Rome St.	Cave Spring

**Archaeological Sites.** Archaeological sites in Floyd County have traditionally been located along the banks of local rivers and major streams and generally, were related to Native American culture. Recently, reflecting the increased interest in underwater archeology, a number of underwater sites have been located and mapped within the river, which are often related to later trade and transportation in the area. The State Archaeological Site File at the University of Georgia constitutes the official inventory of archaeological resources (sites) for Georgia's historic preservation program. Information about archaeological resources, especially their location and content, must be restricted

because of looting and vandalism. Access to the State Archaeological Site File is, therefore, controlled to protect information about these vulnerable resources.



## **Appendix A. Citizen Participation Plan**

The City of Rome, City of Cave Spring, and Floyd County Comprehensive Plan (hereafter referred to as the Plan) was updated last in 1993. Although the State of Georgia, Department of Community Affairs, will not require that the Plan be updated until 2008, the local governments have determined that the existing Plan is out-of-date and no longer adequately reflects the community vision for development and growth. Therefore, the public process to update the Plan will be initiated early in 2005.

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. 50-8-1 et seq., the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has prepared and published Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning (Chapter 110-12-1), which requires each local government to encourage public participation in the Plan updating process. As the agency responsible for carrying out the process, the Rome – Floyd County Planning Department has prepared this Citizen Participation Plan (CPP) to assure that citizens are aware of the planning process; are provided opportunities to comment on the Plan; and have adequate access to the process of defining the community vision, goals, priorities, and implementation strategies. The process outlined in the CPP will meet or exceed the requirements for public involvement outlined in the Minimum Standards for an advanced level community.

### ***Steering Committee***

An oversight and steering committee that may include representation from neighborhood groups, business, agriculture, service providers, local governments, professional staff, and other interested agencies will meet throughout the process to review progress; refine the goals, objectives, policies, maps and strategies that form the basis of the final product; and direct the process toward completion.

Although these work sessions will not provide public comment opportunities, minutes/progress reports from the sessions will be available to the public for review within five working days.

### ***Public Hearings***

The Minimum Standards require the local government to hold at least two public hearings – one at the initiation of the process and one at completion of the draft Plan. The process proposed for Floyd County will include a total of six public hearings.

The **first public hearing** will be held at a central location for the purpose of making the citizens aware of the intent to update the Plan and the rationale for doing so. The CPP will also be presented at the first public hearing.

The **second public hearing**, also held at a central location, will present the draft Plan, as approved by the Steering Committee, and will provide a final opportunity for citizen input. Following this meeting, a final copy of the draft Plan will be prepared that

addresses comments received at the second public hearing, as well as comments received as a result of the 30-day public review opportunity.

**A public hearing will be held by the Rome – Floyd County Planning Commission** at its first regularly scheduled meeting following completion of the final draft Plan. The Planning Commission will make a recommendation concerning approval of the Plan to the Rome City Commission, Cave Spring City Commission and the Floyd County Board of Commissioners.

The Rome City Commission, Cave Spring City Commission, and the Floyd County Board of Commissioners **will each hold a public hearing** on approval of the final draft plan following the Planning Commission recommendation and prior to submittal to the State for approval.

### ***Citizen Workshops***

A series of citizen workshops will be held at various points during the process. These workshops will be designed to encourage citizen input concerning goals, objectives, and preferred implementation methods.

The first set of two workshops will be held early in the process (Months 1-2). The focus will be to identify issues that influence the quality and character of life in the community, to establish a shared knowledge base and vision for the future, and to develop a consensus for specific policies and actions. Input from this set of workshops will be summarized in the Community Assessment report.

The second set of two workshops will be held during Month 4. At these workshops, the Planning Assessment report will be presented. Future growth allocation exercises will form the basis for defining desirable local growth alternatives.

The third set of two workshops will be held in Month 10, to present the draft Plan preferred by the Steering Committee.

### ***Notice***

Public Hearings will be announced in legal ads, published in the local newspaper a minimum of 15 days prior to the date of the public hearing. The legal ad shall include the date, time and place of the public hearing.

Public workshops will also be announced in legal ads a minimum of 15 days prior to the date of the public hearing; in addition, public information announcements will be made on radio and television.

The Plan updating process will comply with the Georgia law on Open and Public Meetings (OCGA §50-14-1, et seq.), and Inspection of Public Records (OCGA §50-18-70, et seq.) Public notices for public meetings will provide that any special needs for

disabled individuals may be requested provided adequate advance notice of the need is provided to the Planning Department staff.

### ***Comment Periods***

The Planning Assessment (Community Assessment) report, which will summarize existing conditions and opportunities, will be made available for citizen review and comment for a period of 30 days following its completion in Month 3-4.

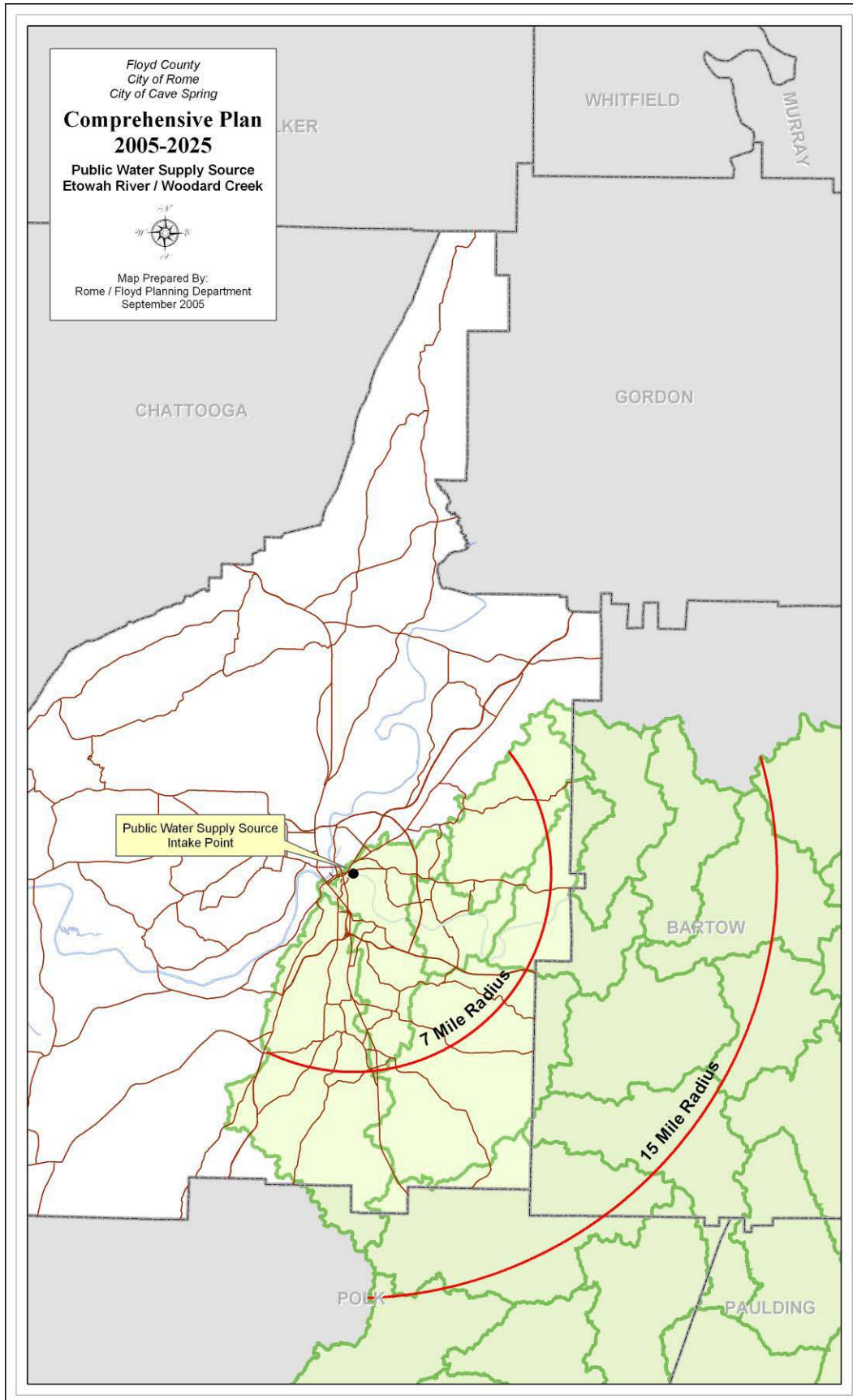
Near the end of the process, the draft Plan (Community Agenda), as approved by the Steering Committee, will be available for citizen review and comment for a period of 30 days prior to adoption by the City and County Commissions. Comments received as a result of the review and comment opportunity will be addressed in the final draft Plan.

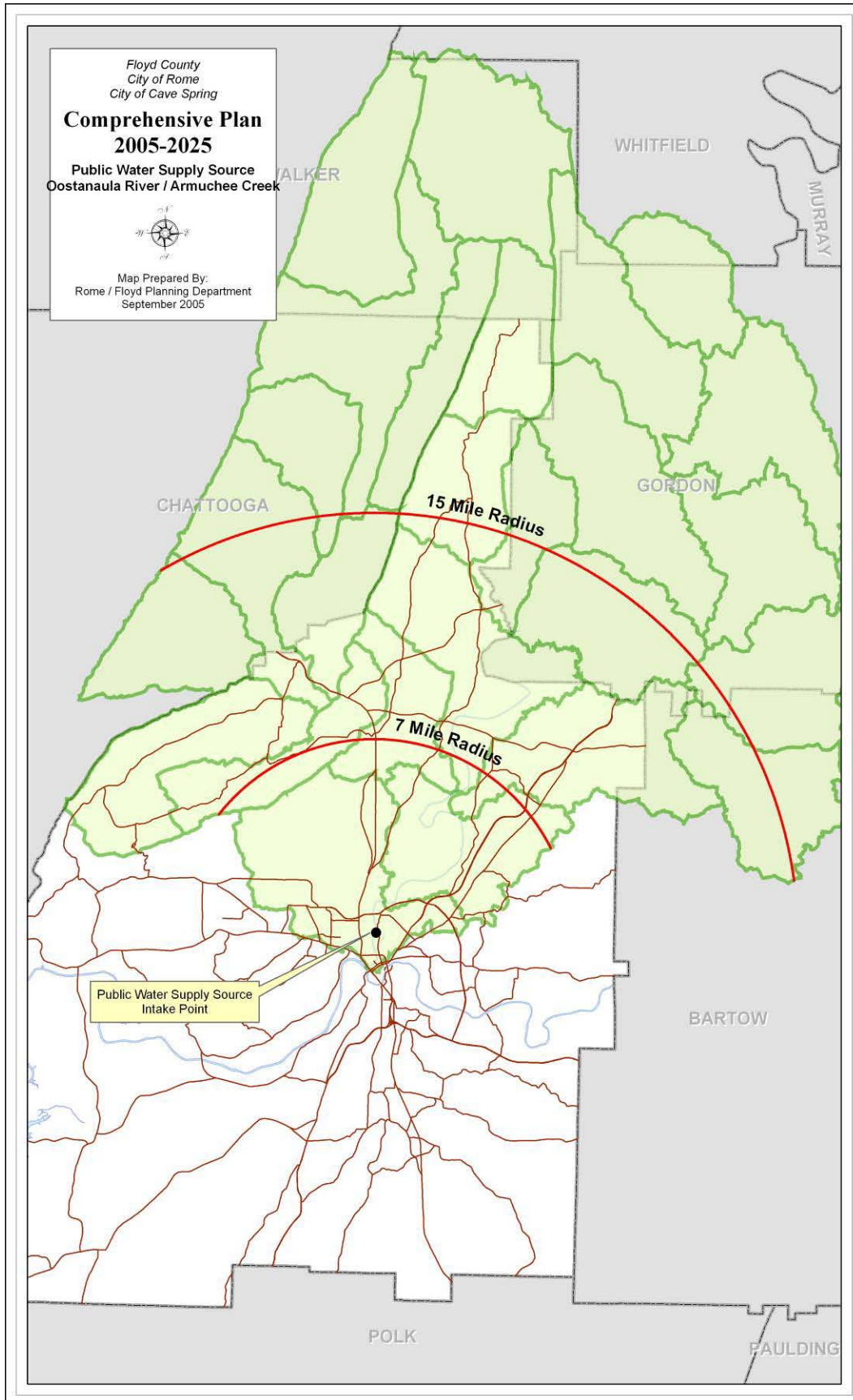
### ***Location of Materials***

Documents created during the process shall be made available for public review at the offices of the Rome-Floyd County Planning Commission, the City of Rome Clerk's Office, the Floyd County Clerk's Office, the City of Cave Spring Clerk's office, and the Rome-Floyd County Library.

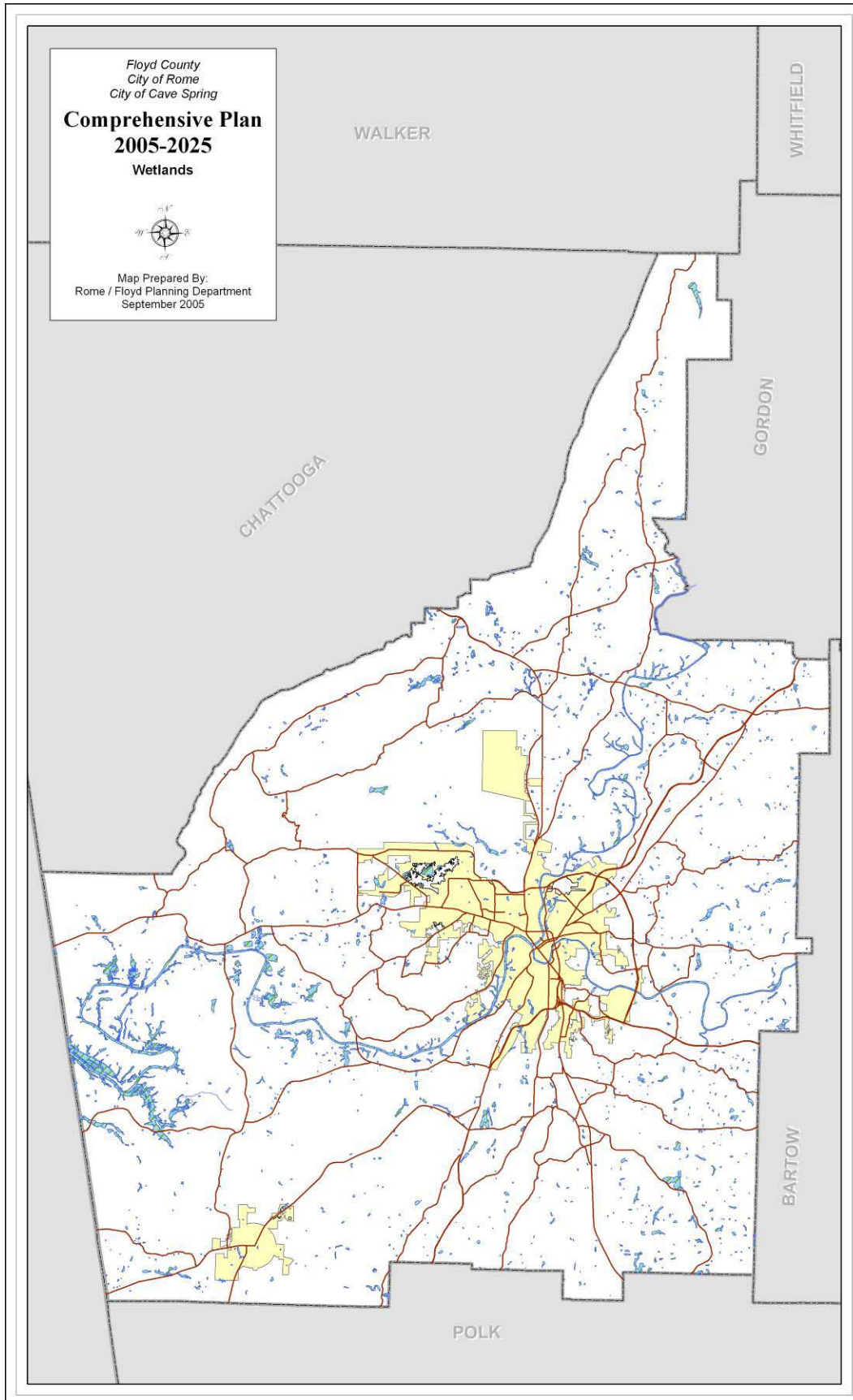
### ***Schedule***

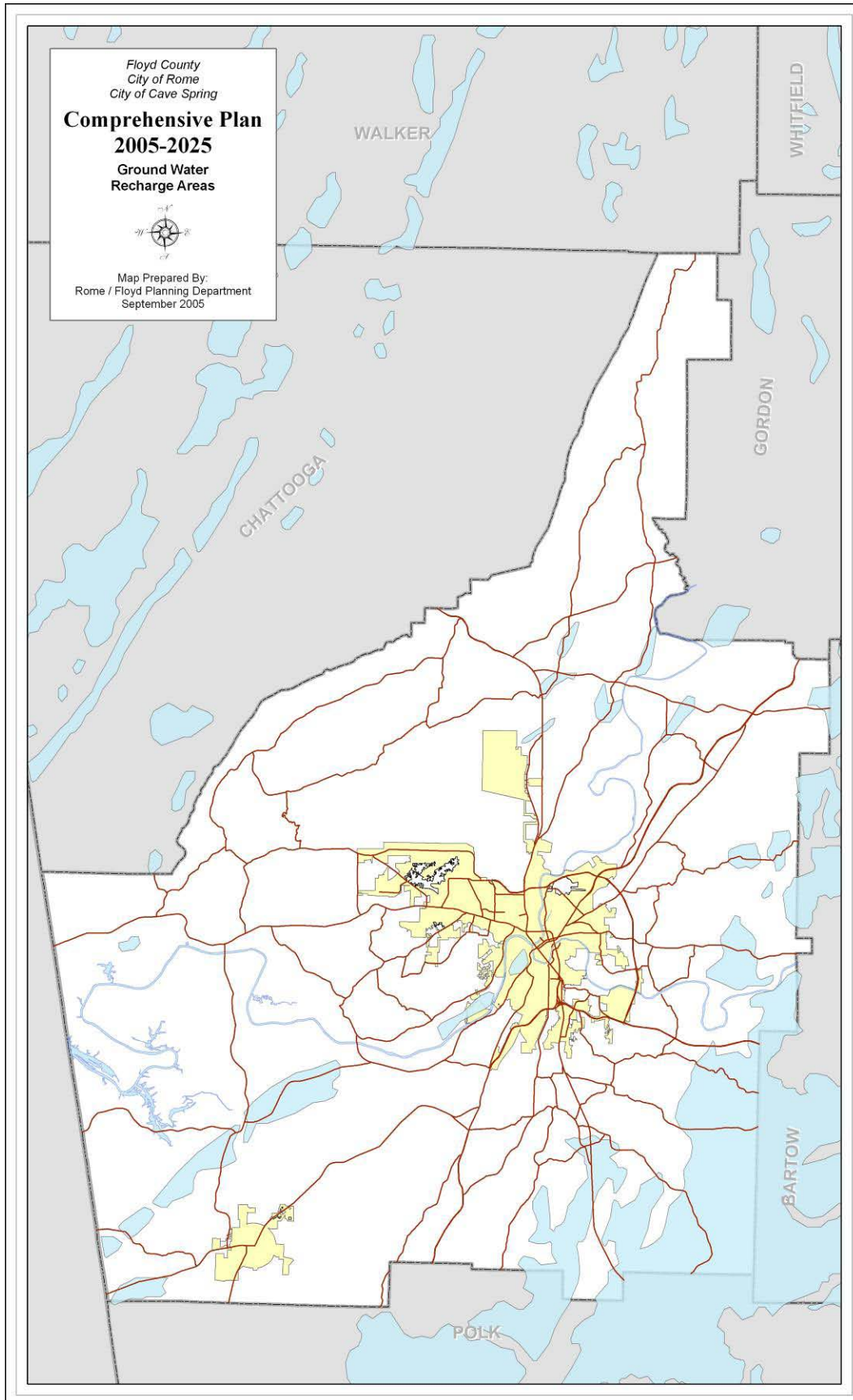
A proposed schedule for the Plan updating process is attached. The schedule will be followed as closely as possible, but in any public process some delays are inevitable, and may be desirable, in order to assure that citizens have the opportunity to be heard and included in the process. Therefore, changes in the schedule will be made by the Steering Committee as needed.

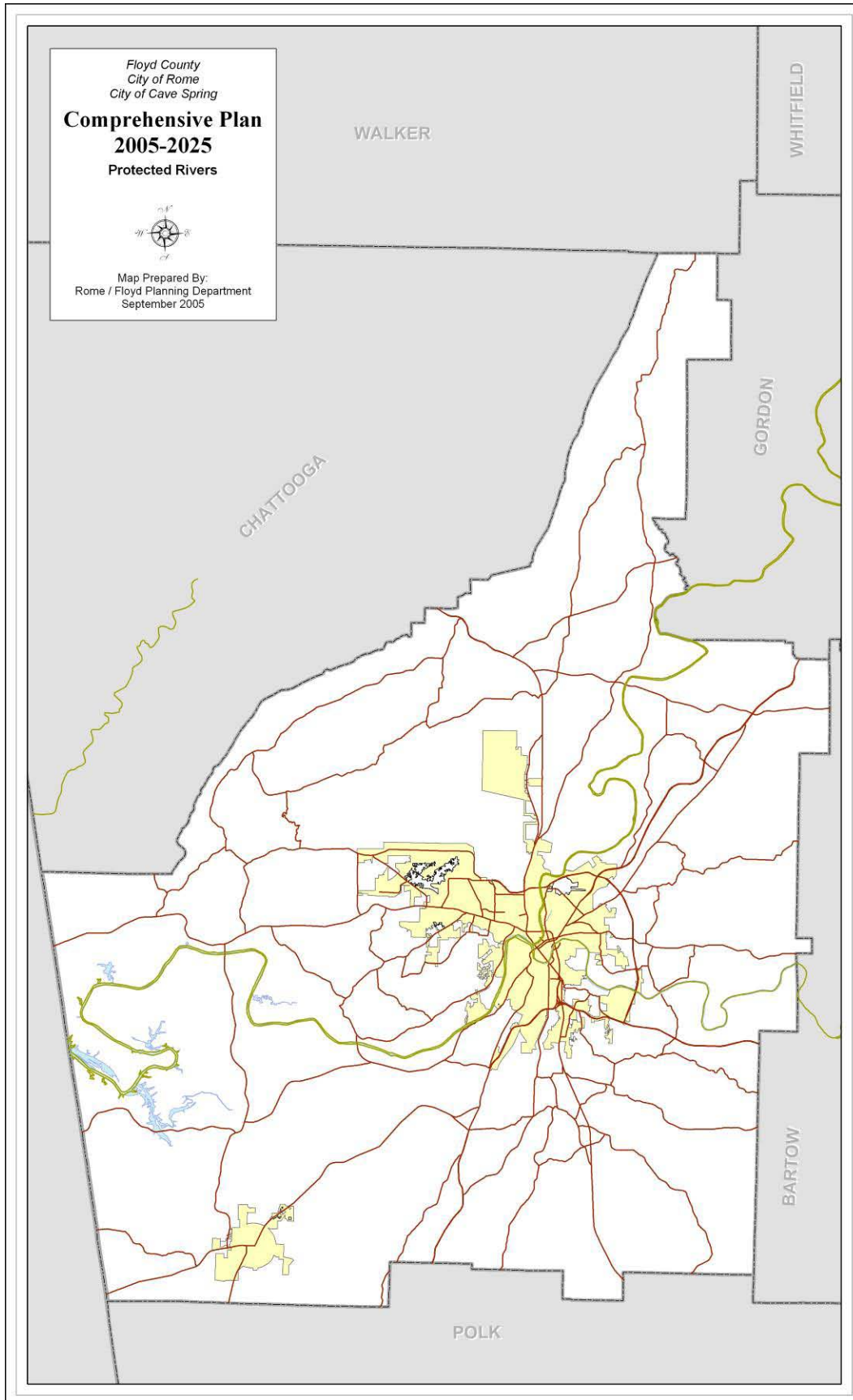




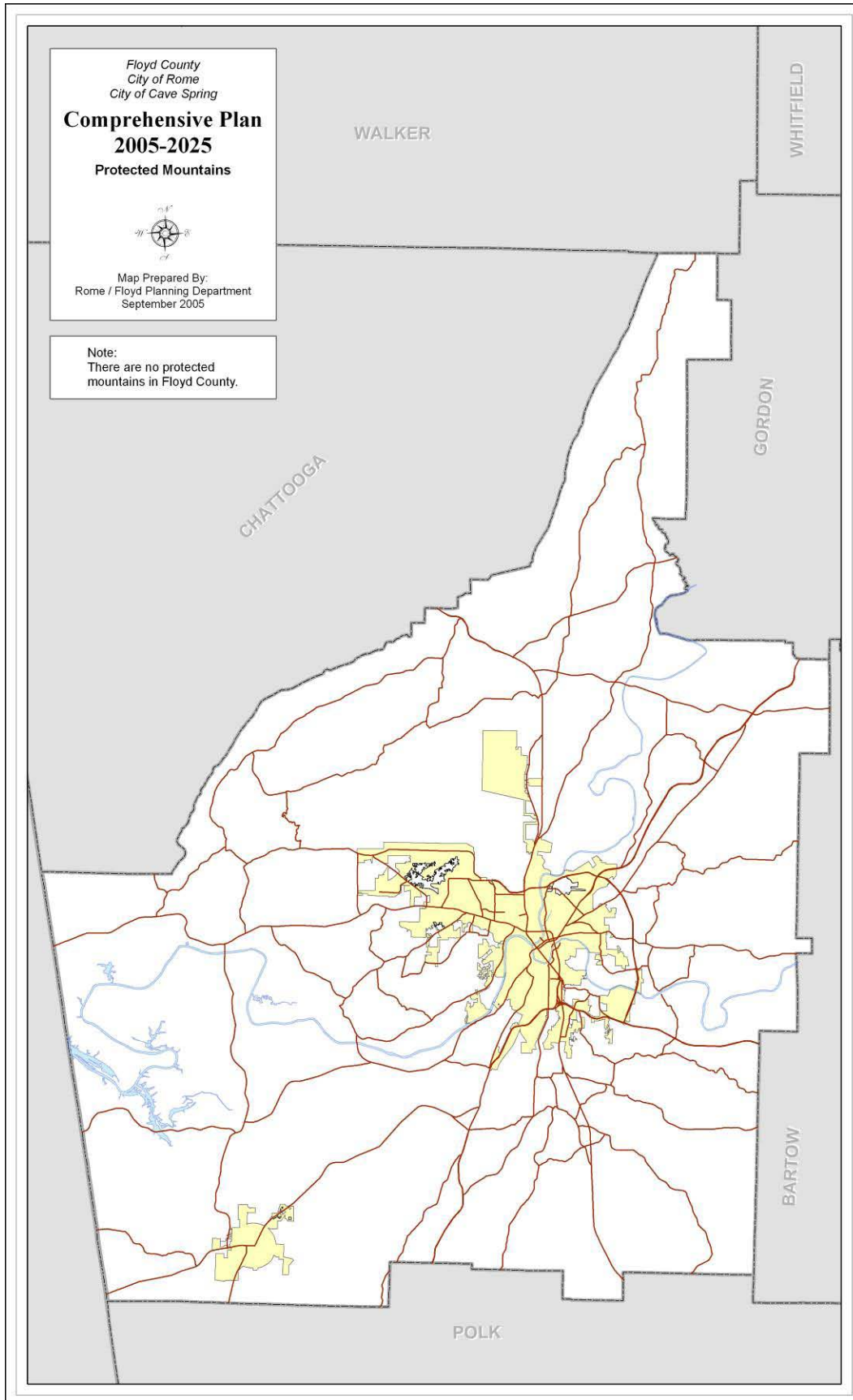


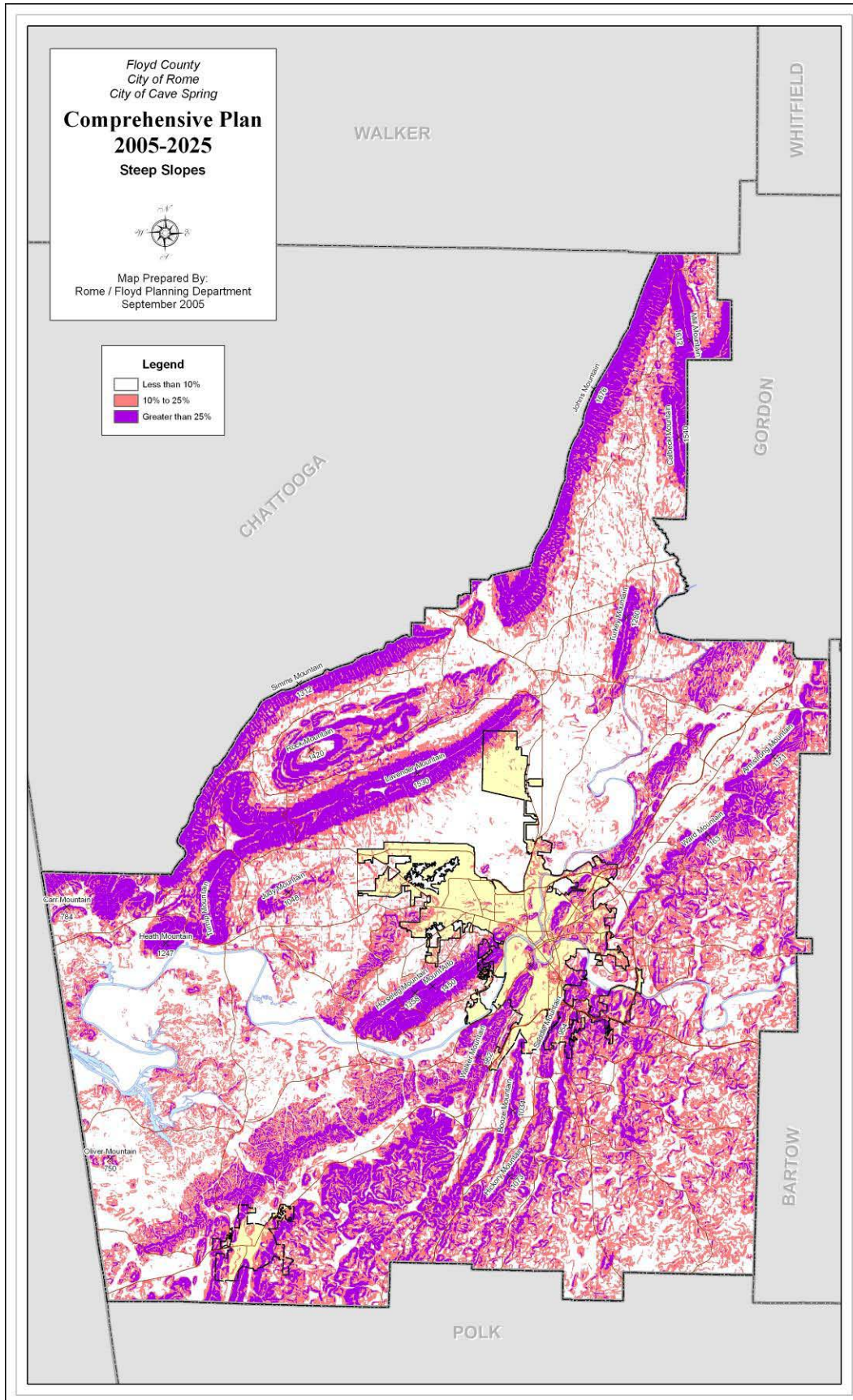


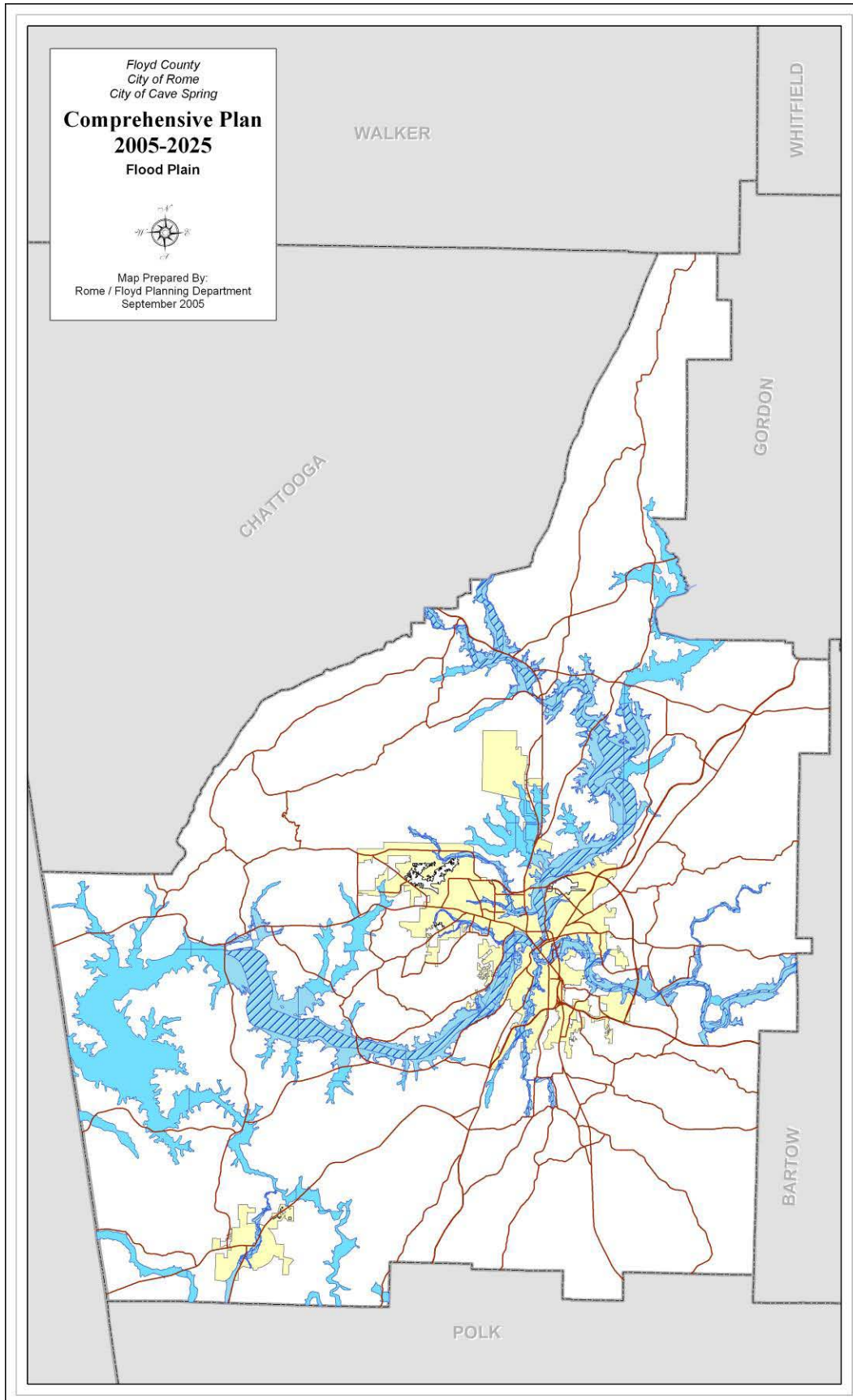




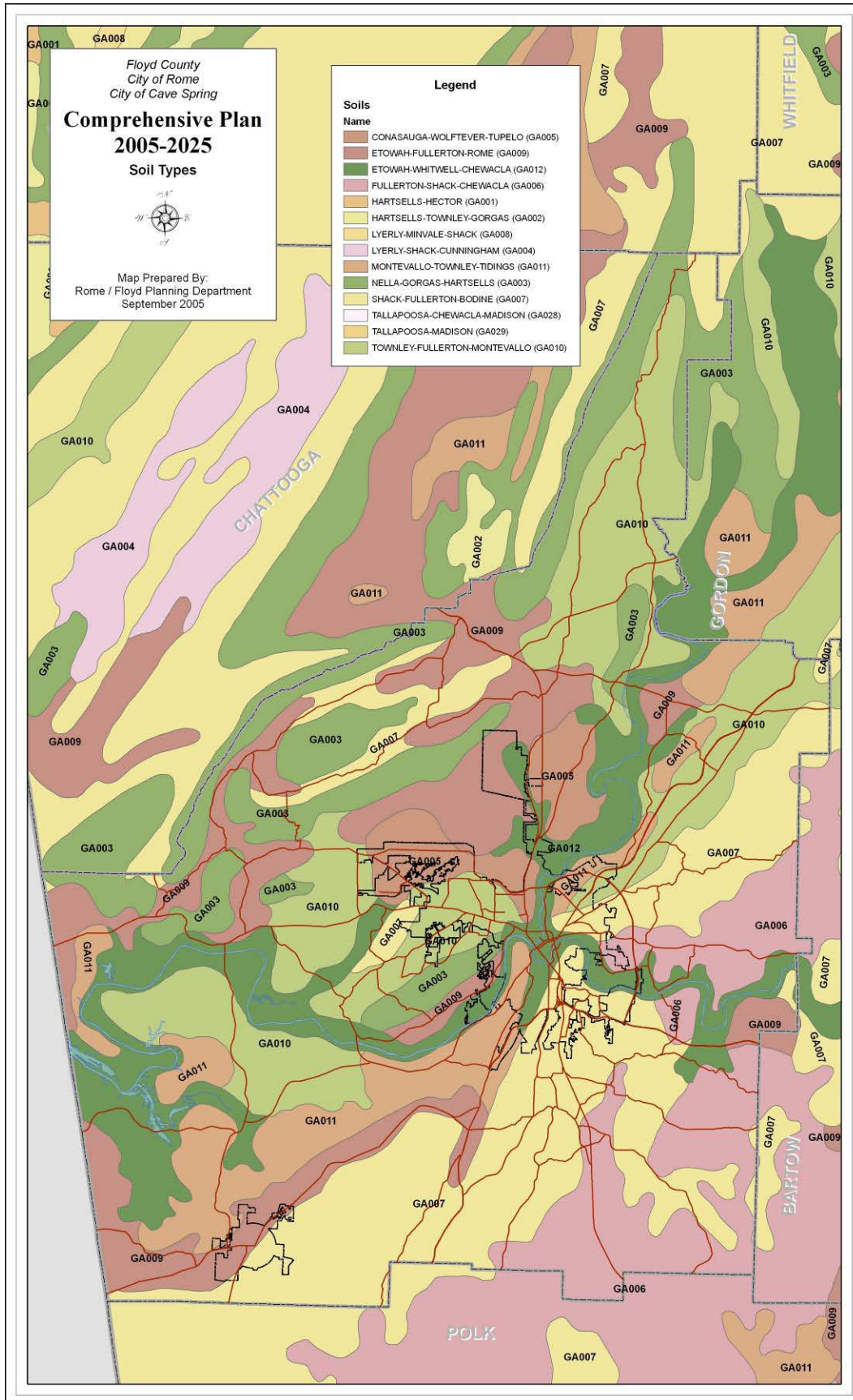


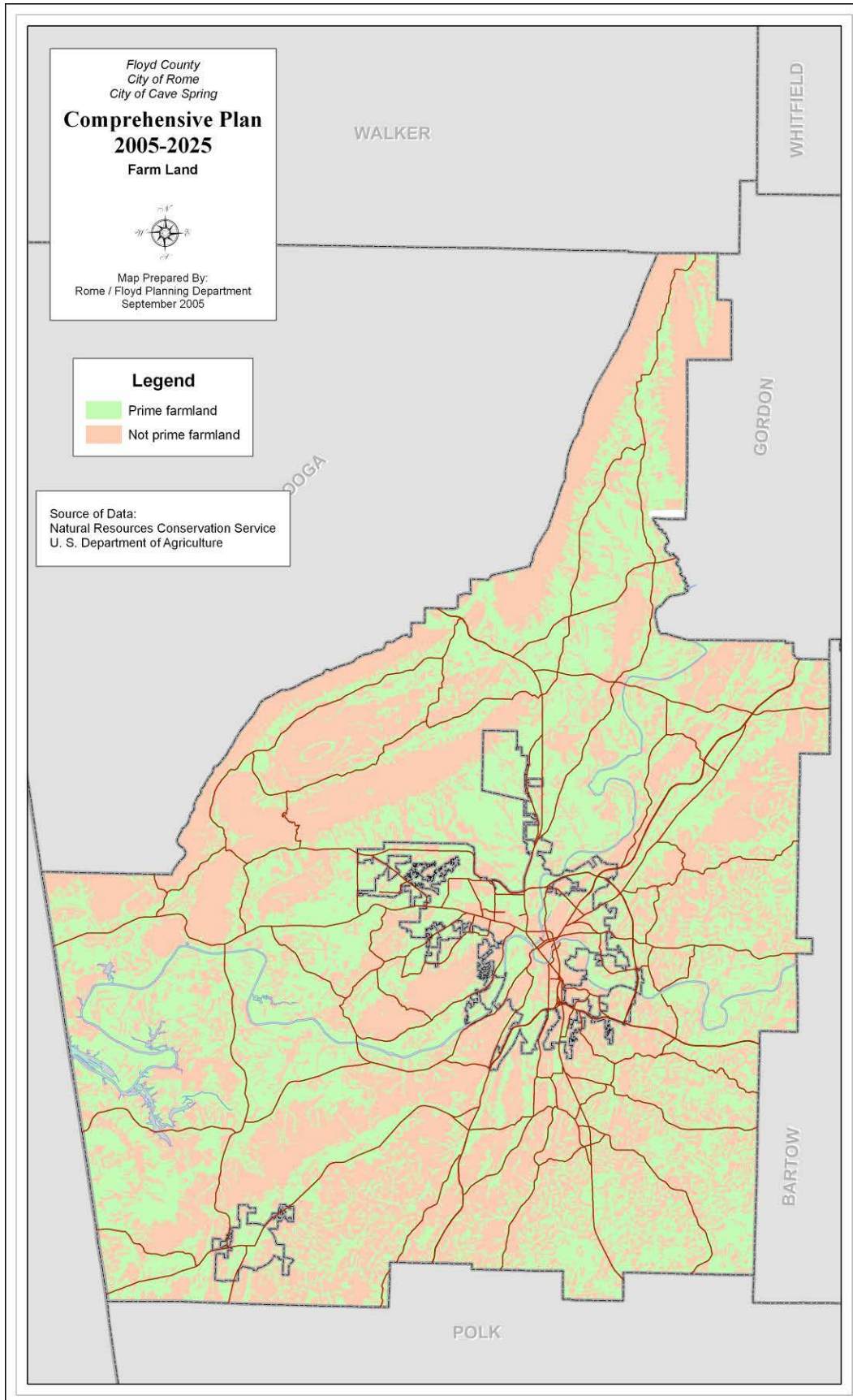




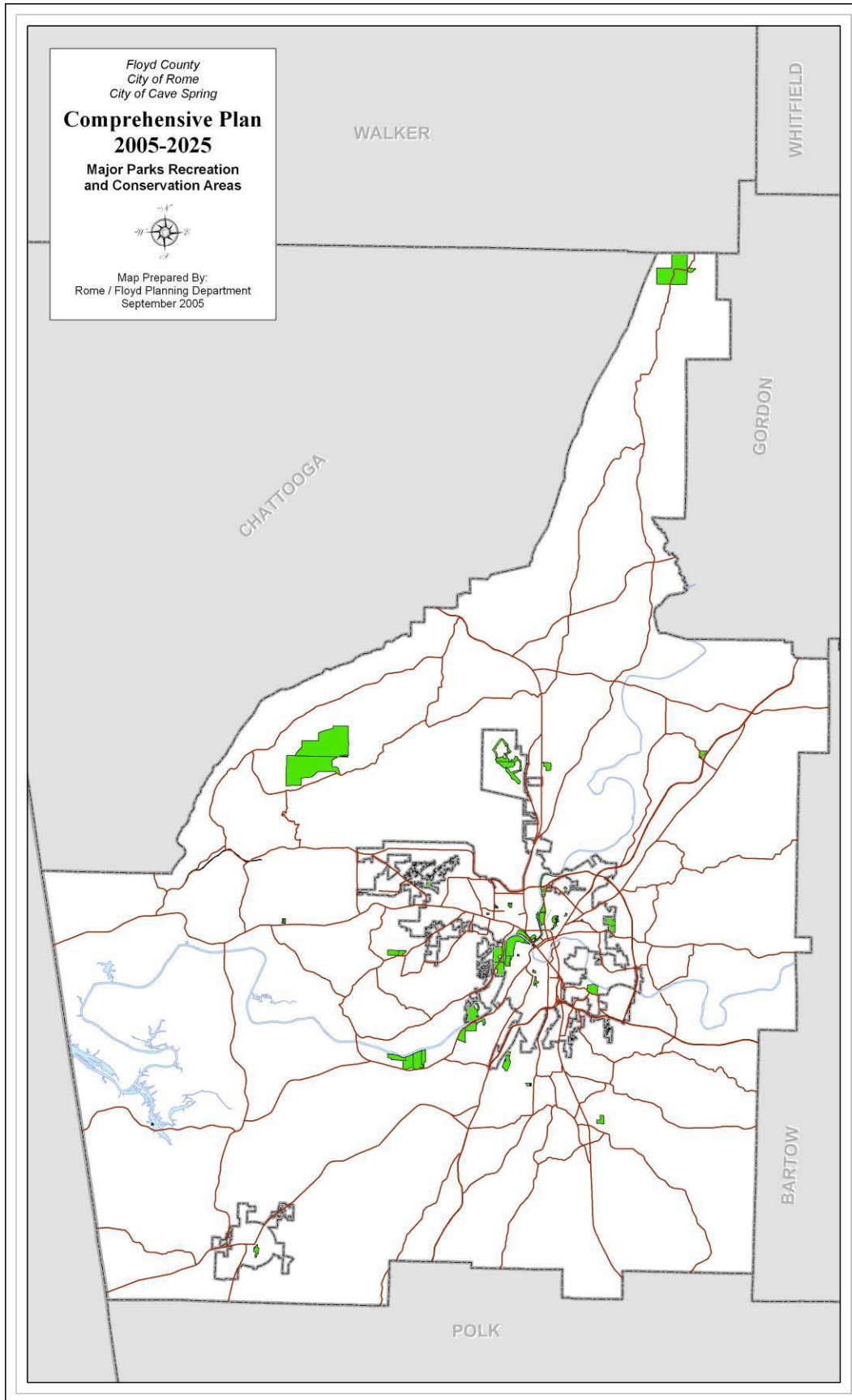


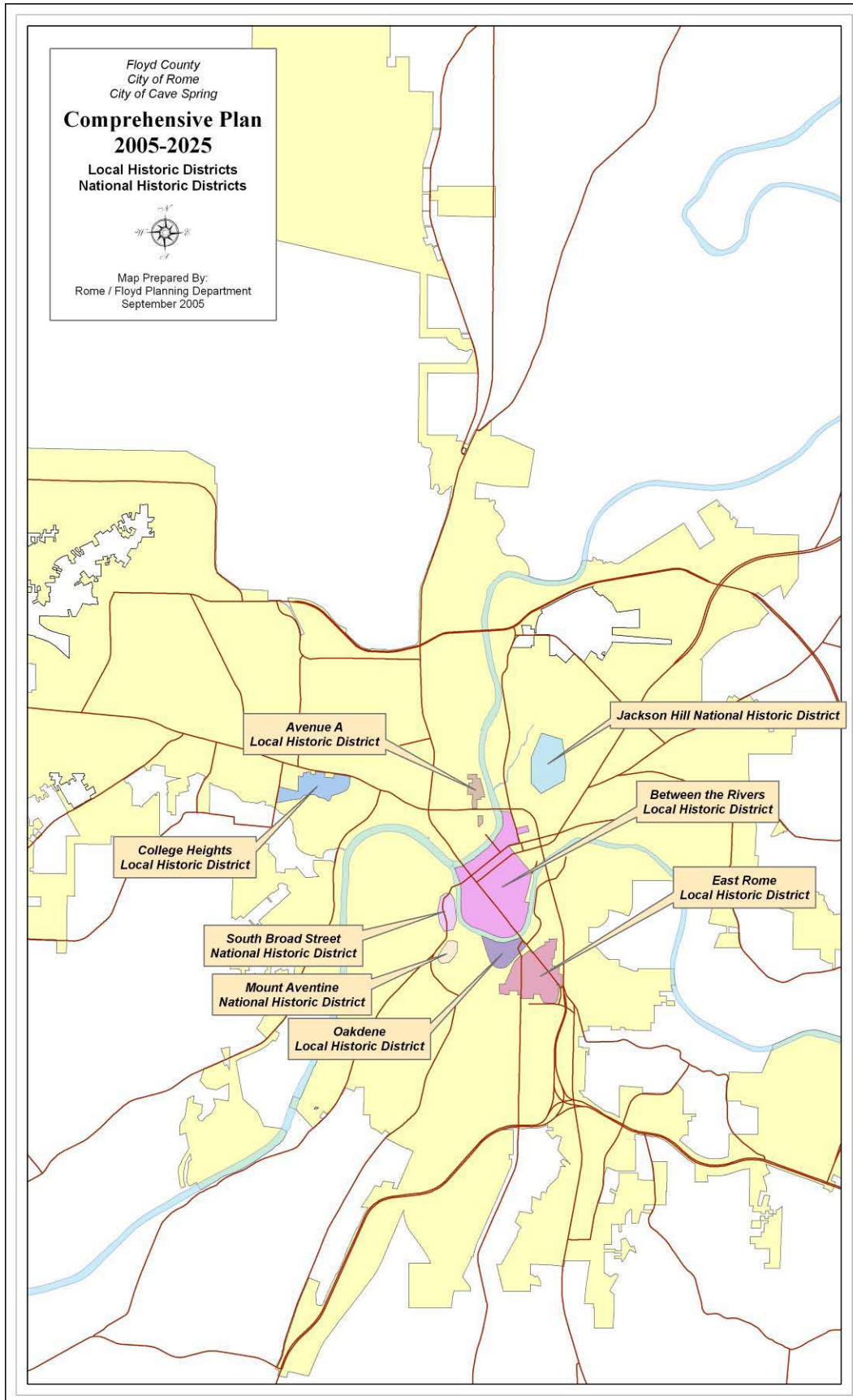












## Community Facilities

### Water Supply and Treatment

The City of Rome, the City of Cave Spring, and Floyd County each operate a separate water system. The City of Rome draws its water from the Etowah and Oostanula Rivers, and treats it at a plant located near downtown. Improvements currently being made to Rome's water treatment plant will make it capable of incremental upgrades to increase capacity as future needs dictate, up to 24 mgd.

The following table, Water Systems, summarizes the current capacities and utilization for each local government water system. The map entitled **Public Water Service Area** shows the service area for each system.

<b>WATER SYSTEMS</b>			
	<b>Cave Spring</b>	<b>Rome</b>	<b>Floyd County</b>
<b>Permitted Capacity</b>	1.5 mgd	16.5 mgd***	4.7 mgd
<b>Used Capacity</b>	.6 mgd	9.7 mgd	3.4 mgd
<b>Customers</b>			
Residential	1,355	17,060	15,659
Commercial	103	2,328	376
Industrial	0	25	115
Total	1,458	19,413	16,150
<b>Storage Capacity</b>			
Number of tanks	2	17*	18**
Storage in tanks	1M gallons	15.7M gallons	13.7M gallons
Storage in line	NA	13.05M gallons	Approx. 20M gallons
<b>Distribution System</b>			
Pipe Diameter, inches	NA	2 to 24	2 to 24
Miles of line	NA	266	Approx. 500

\* An additional tank will be completed in 2006, and the total storage capacity will increase to approximately 16.1M gallons

\*\*Storage in holding areas of treatment plant adds an additional 1.5M gallons

\*\*\*Monthly average permitted, daily maximum permitted is 18.0 mgd

Floyd County obtains water from groundwater wells (Knox Group Aquifer) and from Old Mill Spring; as well as purchasing water from the Cities of Rome and Adairsville. The County recently purchased an abandoned industrial water treatment plant to further its goal of providing water independent of other local governments.

Cave Spring draws its water from an underground, spring fed lake through a cave, located near downtown Cave Spring.

In addition to the three local governments, Berry College operates a water system, and produces 300 to 400 gpd for use on the campus only.

A shared service agreement between Rome and Floyd County specifies that each of the three local governments will continue to operate an independent system, with distinct service areas to prevent conflict or overlap of service. Rates for water bought and sold among the three local governments are renegotiated when necessary.



34,074 households within the county are served by public water. The remaining 3,338 housing units rely on wells. A major concern for property served by wells, and for property served by 6" or less diameter water pipes, is fire protection because the quantity of water available is insufficient to fight fires.

A 50-year water supply analysis for the entire county, including the cities of Rome and Cave Spring, was prepared in 2001 (Brown and Caldwell 2001). The study predicts that the population of Floyd County will triple by 2050, a higher projection than any other source available. The report includes alternatives for supplying additional water once existing capacity has been exceeded. The report's preferred recommendation includes construction of a storage reservoir. Although that option is still under consideration, development of reservoirs typically requires a 15 to 25 year time frame.

At the time the study was being prepared, Alabama, Florida and Georgia were conducting a comprehensive, basin wide water study of the Alabama – Coosa – Tallapoosa (ACT) and Apalachicola – Chattahoochee – Flint (ACF) basins. The completed study led to proposed agreements among the three states that would have regulated dam releases, flow rates, and withdrawals; as well as allowing inter basin transfers of 75 mgd through 2010, 90 mgd through 2020, and 100 mgd through 2030. The agreement, drafted in 2000, has not been adopted by the three states, and is currently awaiting a ruling from the Federal courts. If adopted, the agreement may limit the resources available to Floyd County and the City of Rome.

During 2005, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Department (EPD) initiated a program to assign a total maximum daily load (TMDL) for every identified pollutant in each stream. If a stream shows levels over the TMDL for any pollutant, it may be difficult to increase withdrawal permits, because increased withdrawal reduces water volume, which in turn raises the concentration of the pollution. TMDL may also impact development by making it difficult to obtain new or higher discharge permits.

Currently, raw water resources within Floyd County are adequate for existing development and future growth, even at the accelerated rate of growth predicted by Brown and Caldwell (2001). However, the three local governments will need to continuously evaluate their available infrastructure and their withdrawal permits to ensure that treated water can be delivered to new development. It will be important for the local governments to work together, particularly on treatment, delivery, and storage improvements, so efficient, non-competitive service can be provided.

The adoption of an interstate water agreement and the adoption of TMDL's may significantly change the availability of water within the county.

### **Sewerage System and Treatment**

Floyd County does not provide sewer service or wastewater treatment. The City of Rome has a sewer system, and provides service within the city limits and in some parts of the unincorporated area. Cave Spring maintains a sewer system and wastewater treatment

plant; its service area is the city limits although not all properties within the city limits are connected.

The City operates two treatment plants. The largest of these, the Black Bluff Road plant, is currently being expanded. The improvements being made will allow future capacity increases to be made incrementally, up to 36 mgd (54 mgd peak).

In 2005, the City of Rome completed a sewer service study (Williams, Sweitzer & Barnum, Inc., 2005) that proposed expansion of sewer service into several areas where service has not previously been provided; and proposed major improvement in areas where past and on-going development has resulted in system inadequacies. These improvements and expansions are recommended to occur over the next 0-10 years.

The following table summarizes information about the capacities and infrastructure of the sewer and treatment facilities. The map entitled **Sanitary Sewer Service Area** shows the existing service areas for the two systems, and proposed future expansion areas identified in the 2005 report.

<b>WASTEWATER SYSTEMS</b>			
	<b>Cave Spring</b>	<b>Rome</b>	
		<b>Blacks Bluff Rd***</b>	<b>Ausburn Rd</b>
<b>Permitted Capacity</b>	.22 MGD	18mgd, 24mgd peak*	2mgd, 6mgd peak**
<b>Used Capacity</b>	.15 MGD	12.48	0.88
<b>Customers</b>			
Residential	346	18,115	
Commercial	69	2,220	
Industrial	0	35	
Total	415	20,370	
City	415	16,226	
County	0	4,144	

\* Weekly average not to exceed 22.5 mgd

\*\* Weekly average not to exceed 2.2 mgd

\*\*\* Construction to be complete in 2007 will increase capacity to 36mgd, with a peak of 54 mgd

Prior to 1988, the county owned and managed several small systems. These were purchased by the City of Rome, which is currently the sole owner of the system.

A shared services agreement exists, and rates are re-negotiated as necessary. There are currently no overlaps or conflicts of service provision among the three local governments.

The Floyd County Health Department issues permits for residential, commercial and industrial septic system permits in areas outside of the sewer system service areas. They do not keep a count of how many systems are permitted or operational at any one time. However, there were estimated to be 37,412 housing units in Floyd County in 2002. Currently, the Cities of Rome and Cave Spring bill 18,461 residential customers for sewer service. Therefore, approximately half of the housing units, or 18,951 of them, are not on public sewer systems and rely on septic systems.

Because the Floyd County Health Department does not have accurate, up to date information on existing septic systems, there is no accurate assessment of how many systems may be malfunctioning.

Parts of Floyd County are unlikely to be sewerred in the near future because of topographic constraints; and the soils in some areas are poorly suited for septic system (see mp entitled **Soil Suitability for Septic Tanks**). These areas will be constrained for future development unless an alternative sewer collection and treatment option becomes available, such as a distributed or on-site system. To date, no such systems have been constructed for large development of any kind within the County.

### **Solid Waste**

The City of Rome operates a licensed landfill on Walker Mountain Road. The approximately 1,000 acre facility opened in 1998, and nearly 66 acres have been filled or are currently active. Floyd County owns a half interest in the active portion of the site. Nearly all household waste, demolition debris, and other inert waste generated within the County is disposed of in that landfill, although there are no local laws requiring disposal of waste at that facility. No solid waste is brought in for disposal from other counties.

The current estimated closure date is 2030, based on previous yearly volumes. In 2003, the volume of waste disposed of at the Walker Mountain Landfill was 112,212 tons. In 2004, 135,256 tons were disposed of. Rome and Floyd County jointly operate a recycling center with a collected volume of 5.6 to 6.7 tons annually (based on 2003-2004 figures). The City of Rome operates two sites where yard waste is chipped, composted, and made available as mulch, free of charge.

The City of Rome runs a curb side collection system for household waste, yard waste, and recyclable materials including newsprint, glass, aluminum, and plastic.

The City of Cave Spring also operates a curb side collection system for solid waste and yard waste. Recyclables are not collected. Solid waste collected within the City of Cave Spring is hauled to the Walker Mountain landfill.

Floyd County residents pay for collection, or transport their own solid waste and recyclables to the landfill or to remote collection sites located throughout the county. Material collected at the remote sites is transported to the Walker Mountain Landfill, or to the Recycling Center, for disposal.

In compliance with the Georgia Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act of 1990, The Cities of Rome and Cave Spring and Floyd County prepared a Joint Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan in 1992. The plan continues to serve as a basis for solid waste collection and disposal practices within the entire County. The map titled **Solid Waste Sites** shows the locations of the landfill and remote collection sites.

### **Stormwater**

Stormwater in Floyd County discharges into the Etowah, Oostanaula, and Coosa Rivers either directly or via tributary streams. Both the City of Rome and Floyd County have

had discharge permits since 2003, and file stormwater reports with the Environmental Protection Department in December of each year. Storm water management and erosion and sedimentation control ordinances that comply with State of Georgia regulations were included in the Unified Land Development Code, which was adopted by the City of Rome and Floyd County in August of 2001. Land disturbing activities require review and a permit.

Neither the City of Rome nor Floyd County has completed mapping of their stormwater systems. The City is required to complete mapping by the end of 2006, and is progressing toward that goal. The County is only required to map urbanized (MS4) area, which will be covered by the City maps. The City of Cave Spring does not have a stormwater discharge permit and is not included under the Floyd County permit.

### **Fire and EMS**

The City of Rome and Floyd County jointly fund the Rome Fire Department. The Department is currently fully staffed, with 153 certified personnel stationed at 10 locations throughout the city and county. The current ISO rating within the City limits is Class 3, on a scale of 1-10 where 1 is the highest rating. In the unincorporated areas of the County, ISO ratings range from Class 5 for areas within a 5 mile radius of a fire station, to Class 10.

The map titled **Fire Stations** shows the existing fire stations, with a five mile diameter delineated for each one.

In 2004, the Rome Fire Department responded to 2,234 calls within the City of Rome, and 2,417 calls within unincorporated Floyd County, only 722 of which were fires. The Department also provides emergency rescue response, with a Certified EMT assigned to each station.

The City of Cave Spring operates its own fire department out of one station. There are approximately 35 certified, mostly volunteer fire fighters, with one on duty at all times. Among those volunteers are certified paramedics, first responders, and emergency medical technicians. Within the Cave Spring city limits, the ISO rating is Class 5.

Within all three areas, emergency calls are received at a county operated E911 center. Ambulances are dispatched by both of the two local hospitals, but mostly by Floyd Medical Center.

The City of Rome and Floyd County are served by the Floyd County Emergency Management Agency, with headquarters located in the Rome – Floyd County Law Enforcement Building in downtown Rome. A joint Emergency Operations Plan was last updated in 2004.

### **Police**

Each of the three local governments provides police service within its jurisdiction. Division of responsibility for joint areas, such as parks, is outlined in the City of Rome and Floyd County Shared Services agreement.

The City of Rome Police Department includes 98 certified, full-time police officers and 7 reserve officers, which translates to 2.76 full-time officers per 1,000 residents. To maintain that ratio, the Rome Police Department would, have to increase the number of full-time officers by 16-30, to accommodate the high and low population projections for 2025. The Floyd County Police Department normally employs 77 certified, full-time officers; however, currently only 74 of those positions are filled. At this employment level, there are 1.32 full-time officers for each resident of the county residing outside of the Rome city limits. At that level of service, based on the high and low population projections for the year 2025, the Floyd County Police Department may have to add between 5 and 14 officers, depending on actual population growth.

Police protection is provided around the clock by both agencies. Headquarters for both agencies are located in a shared Law Enforcement Building in downtown Rome.

The following table compares crime statistics (number and rate per 100,000 people) reported by police agencies to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for the year 2004, for Rome, Floyd County, the City of Atlanta, the state of Georgia, and the United States. Comparable crime statistics were not available for the city of Cave Spring.

Homicide rates for the City of Rome are below the averages for the state, nearly the same as the rates for the nation, and significantly lower than the rate for the City of Atlanta; however, rates for forcible rape and robbery were higher than those for the state and the nation. Homicide rates for Floyd County were higher than the rates for the City of Rome, the state of Georgia and the nation as a whole; but still lower than the rate for the City of Atlanta. In terms of property crimes, the rates for the City of Rome are similar to the rates for the City of Atlanta except the rate for auto theft was lower. Property crime rates for the City of Rome were higher than the rates for the state and nation, except for auto theft. Floyd County’s rate for all property crimes was below the rates for the state, the nation, and both Rome or Atlanta.

	<b>Atlanta City PD (pop. 430066)</b>		<b>Rome City PD (pop. 35551)</b>		<b>Floyd County PD (uninc. pop. 57508)</b>		<b>Georgia (pop. 8829383)</b>		<b>United States (pop. 293655404)</b>	
	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate	Number	Rate
Homicide	112.0	26.0	2.0	5.6	6.0	10.4	613.0	6.9	16137.0	5.5
Forcible Rape	267.0	62.1	16.0	45.0	0.0		2387.0	27.0	94635.0	32.2
Robbery	3116.0	724.5	80.0	225.0	14.0	24.3	13656.0	154.7	401326.0	136.7
Aggravated Assault/Battery	4427	1029.4	196.0	551.3	87.0	151.3	23561.0	266.8	854911.0	291.1
Burglary	6726.0	1563.9	553.0	1555.5	386.0	671.2	82992.0	940.0	2143456.0	729.9
Theft (Felony)	20703.0	4813.9	1792.0	5040.6	1147.0	1994.5	249426.0	2825.0	6947685.0	2365.9
Auto Theft	5756.0	1338.4	121.0	340.4	173.0	300.8	44238.0	501.0	1237114.0	421.3
Arson	207.0	48.1	10.0	28.1	NA		NA		NA	

Source: Federal Bureau of Investigation, Uniform Crime Reports, 2004.

The City of Cave Spring has a five officer police force with one station, located at City Hall near downtown Cave Spring. Coverage is provided around the clock.

Under the Shared Services Agreement, Floyd County operates a jail and prison system. The jail houses prisoners for Rome, Cave Spring and the County and is managed by a fourth law enforcement agency, the Floyd County Sheriff's Department. Each local government pays for its own prisoners. The County operates a prison, which houses prisoners for the State of Georgia.

## Recreation and Parks

The Floyd County funds operation of the Rome – Floyd County Parks and Recreation Authority, which manages and maintains the parks and recreation facilities within the City and the unincorporated areas of Floyd County. The city and county each provide capital funding for park and recreation facilities within their jurisdictions. The table entitled **Rome-Floyd Parks and Recreation Authority Facilities Matrix** lists the parks and facilities by type; the facilities are shown on maps entitled **Park and Recreation Facilities**.

Facilities include 6 neighborhood parks located within the City of Rome and offering basketball courts, playing fields, picnic facilities, playgrounds, and in some cases, softball diamonds and tennis courts. These parks range in size from 5 to 11 acres, and provide a total of 48 acres of park space.

Fourteen community parks are located throughout the city and county. Activities vary from park to park, and include basketball courts, golf driving range, gymnastics center, football/soccer fields, baseball diamonds, trails, volleyball courts, camp ground, and skateboarding; as well as picnic and playground areas. The community parks range in size from 8 to 302 acres, for a total area of 731 acres.

Other facilities, including indoor recreation centers, swimming pool, trails, and administration buildings and yards account for 50 additional acres of land devoted to recreation.

The current total acreage of parkland (829) equates to 8.8 acres of parkland per 1,000 people throughout the county, based on 2004 population estimates. To maintain that ratio, the Parks and Recreation Authority will have to obtain 86 to 189 acres of additional park land.

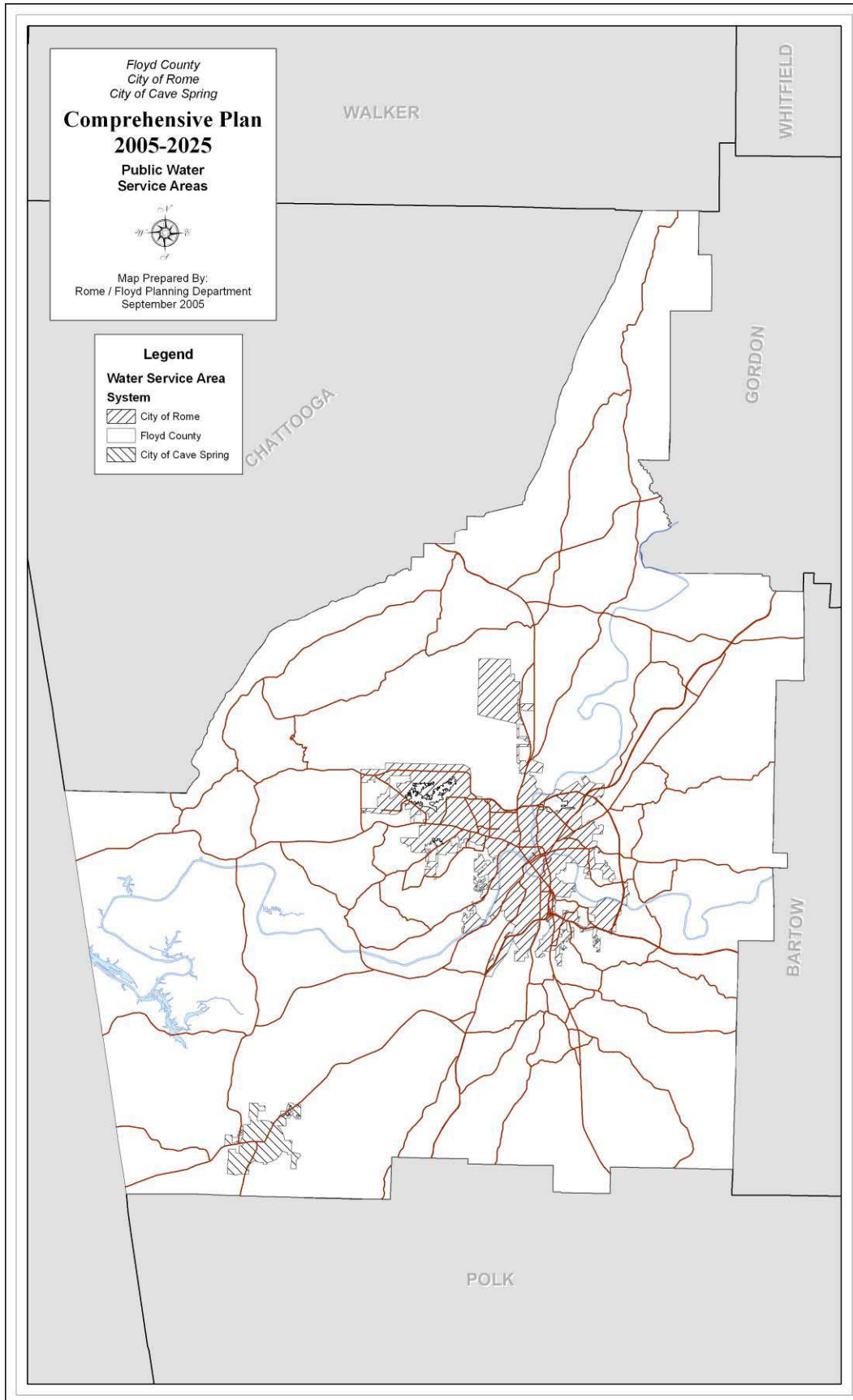
The City of Cave Spring has one park, located near downtown, with picnic tables and shelters, playgrounds, spring-fed swimming pool, and assembly halls. Cave Spring owns and manages its own park.

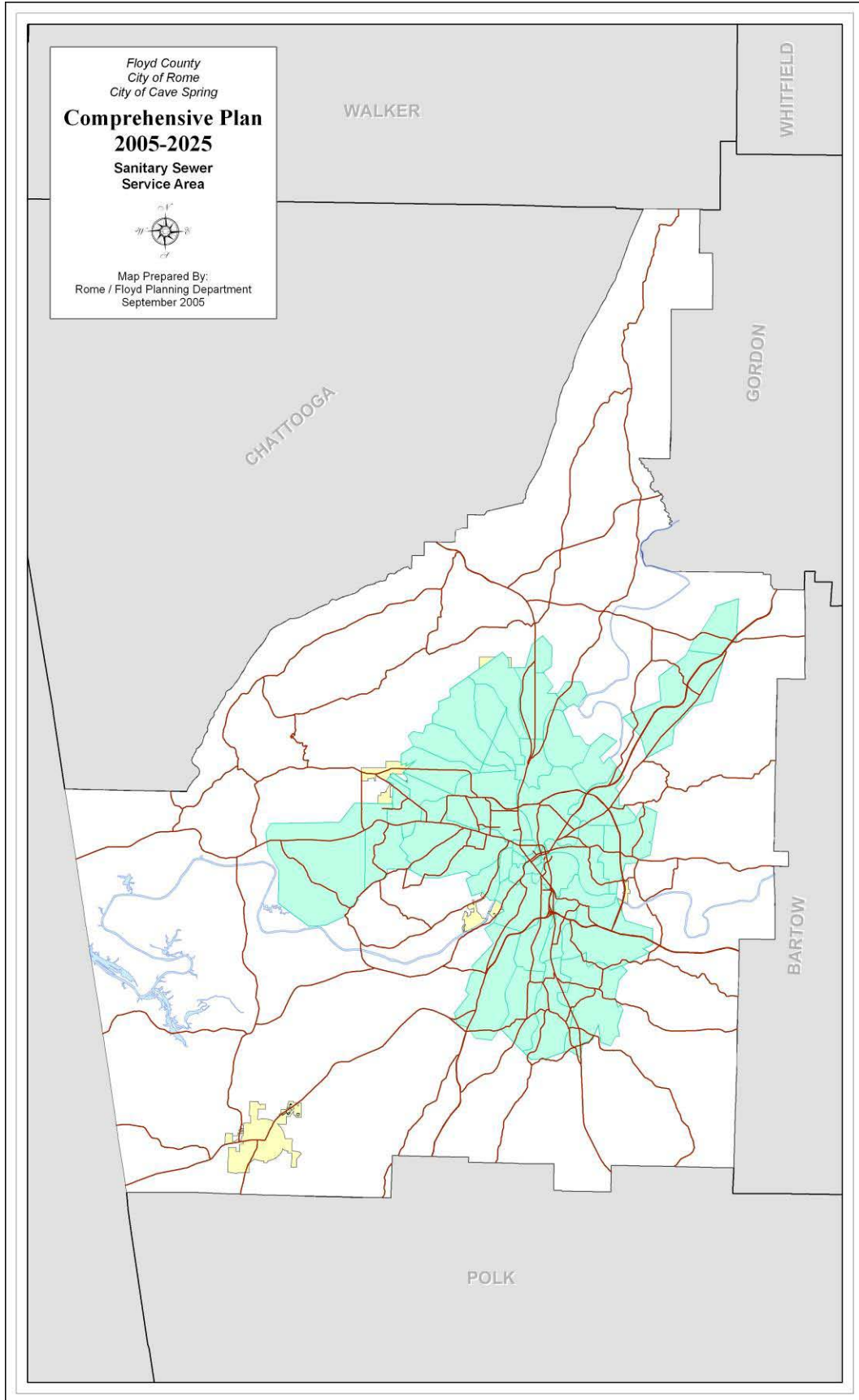
The Rocky Mountain hydroelectric generation area, located in northwestern Floyd County, includes a natural area that is open for fishing, hiking and other outdoor activities. The facility is privately owned by power companies but is administered by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. The Chattahoochee National Forest offers trails and other outdoor recreation opportunities, as does the Pocket Recreation Area. Both are administered by the federal government.

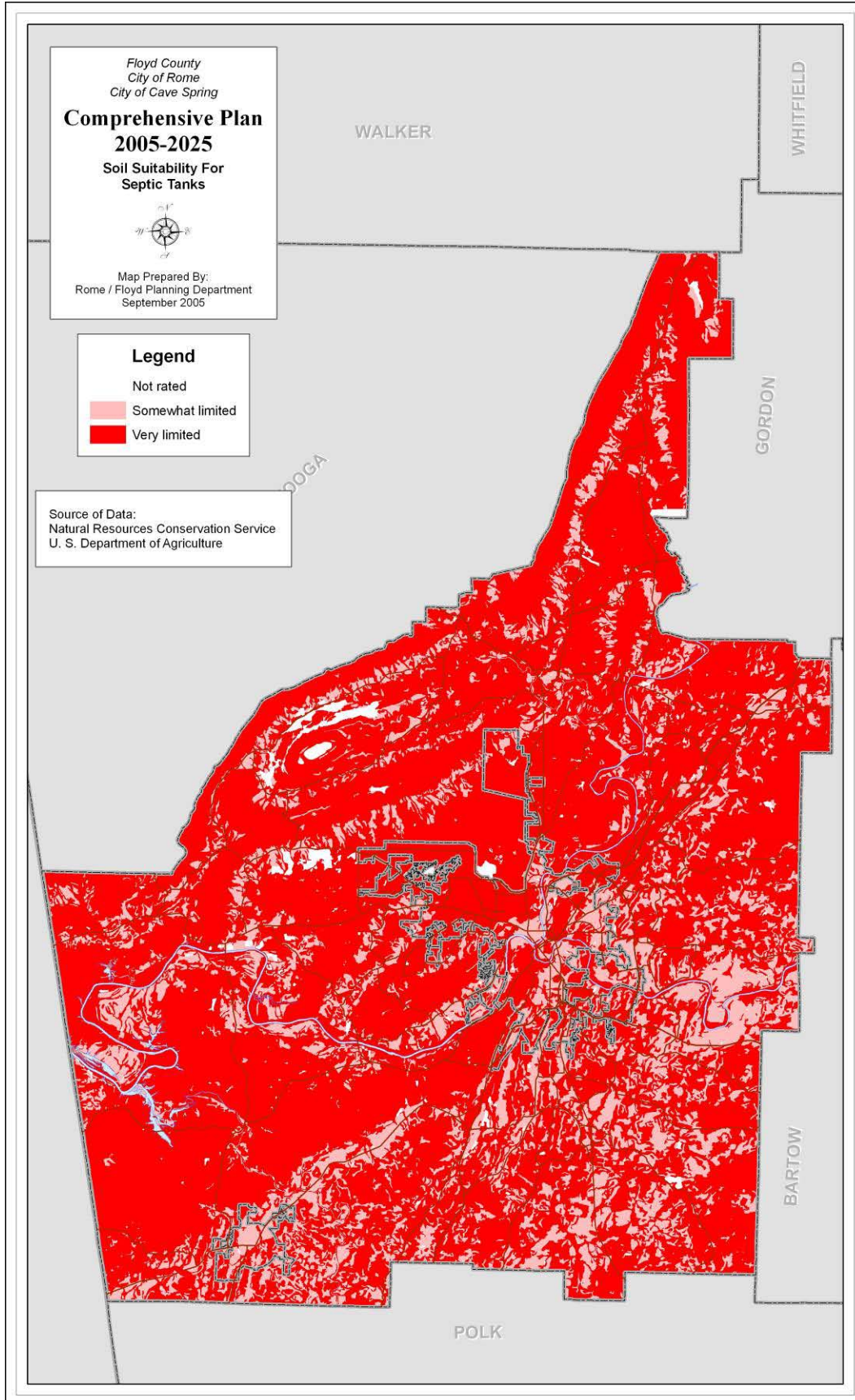
ROME-FLOYD PARKS & RECREATION AUTHORITY FACILITY MATRIX		ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES	EXHIBITS/DISPLAYS	BASKETBALL (OUTSIDE)	CAMPING: RV/TENT/GROUP	GOLF DRIVING RANGE	FISHING/BOATING/RAMPS	FITNESS FACILITIES	FOOTBALL/SOCCER FIELDS	FRISBEE GOLF COURSE	GYMNASIUM	HORSESHOES - H. SHUFFLEBOARD - S	LAKE/POOL/RIVER/CREEK	MULTI-PURPOSE FIELDS	PICNIC AREAS/PICNIC SHELTER	PLAYGROUND	RECREATION CENTER BUILDING	RESTROOMS	SOFTBALL/BASEBALL FIELDS	STADIUM/TRACK	TENNIS COURTS (L-LIT, U-UNLIT)	TRAILS: NATURAL/PAVED/GRAVEL	VOLLEYBALL COURTS (S-SAND)	SKATEBOARDING/INLINE SKATING	IN-LINE HOCKEY	RENTAL OPPORTUNITIES	LEAGUE PLAY: A-ADULT/Y-YOUTH	ACRES (APPROXIMATE)	
<b>COMMUNITY PARKS</b>																													
Alto Park	Burnett Ferry Road	X													S	2		X	8		L10	N	X			X	A/Y	68	
Armuchee Park	Jones Mill Road			X		F							C	X	S	1			3		U2					X		31	
Cave Spring Park	Cave Spring			X											S	1		X	2		L2					X		10	
Coosa Park	Krannert Drive			X											S	1			2							X		11	
Etowah Park	Kingston Hwy.	X				X						H/S	X	S	3	X	X	X	6		L8	N/P	X	X	X	X	Y	107	
Garden Lakes Park	Garden Lakes Blvd.	X		X		F		2		X		L	X	S	1	X	X				U1	P	X			X		38	
Heritage Park	Behind the Levee					F/R							R	S	1		X					P				X		8	
Lock and Dam Park	Walker Mtn. Road	X	X		ALL	F/R						H	R	X	S	1		X				N	X			X		302	
Midway Park	Wax Road			X											S	1		X	3		U2					X		12	
Ridge Ferry Park	Riverside Parkway			X		F/R	X	X					R	X	S	2		X				N/P	2(S)			X		60	
Riverview Park	Behind the Levee	X				F/R		2					R	S	1		X	5				P				X	A/Y	34	
Shannon Park	Hwy. 53			X	X								X	X	1	X	X				L4	P				X		23	
West Third Street Complex	West Third Street	X	X				X	1		X		R			1	X	X		X		L16					X		14	
Wolfe Park	Park Ave./Lindale	X	X	X						X		H	C	X	X	1	X	X	2		U2	P				X		13	
<b>NEIGHBORHOOD PARKS</b>																													
Crane Street Park	Crane Street			X										X	P	X			X										11
Division Street Park	Division Street			X										X		X					U2								7
Eagle Park	O'Neill Street			X										X		X													5
Parks Hoke Park	Hardy Avenue			X										X	P	X													6
Riverside Park	Chattillion Ave.			X													X	1			U1								8
Tolbert Park	Charlton Avenue			X									C	X	X	X					U2								11
<b>RECREATION CENTERS</b>																													
Anthony Center	Garden Lakes Park	X								X							X	X					X			X	A/Y		
Gilbreath Center	Park Ave./Lindale	X	X							X							X	X					X			X	A/Y		
Fielder Center	Crane Street	X								X							X	X					X			X	A/Y	4	
Hamler Center	West Third Street	X	X							X							X	X					X			X	A/Y		
Williams Center	Shannon Park			X													X	X								X			
Senior Adult Center	Kingston Hwy.	X	X														X	X								X			

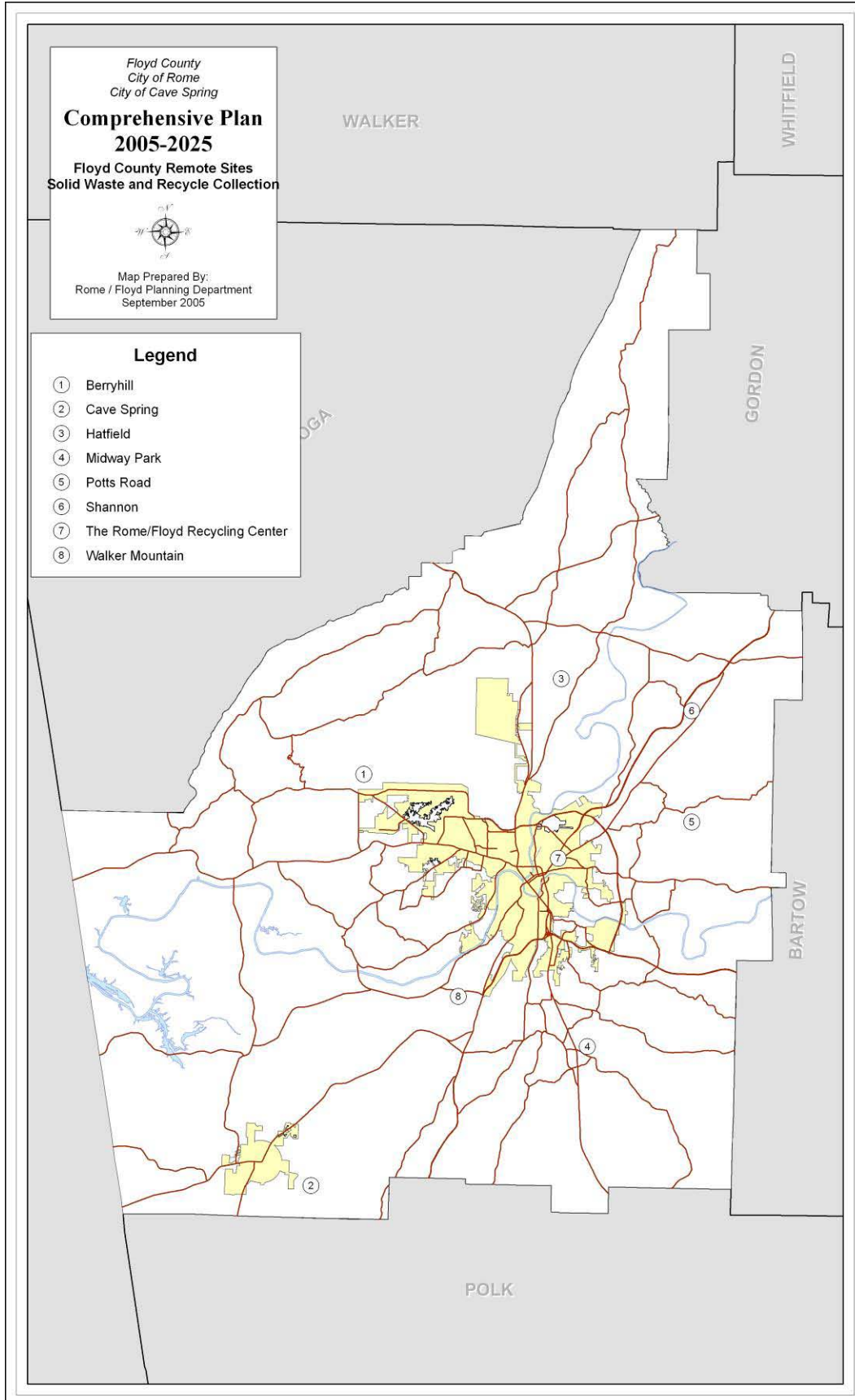




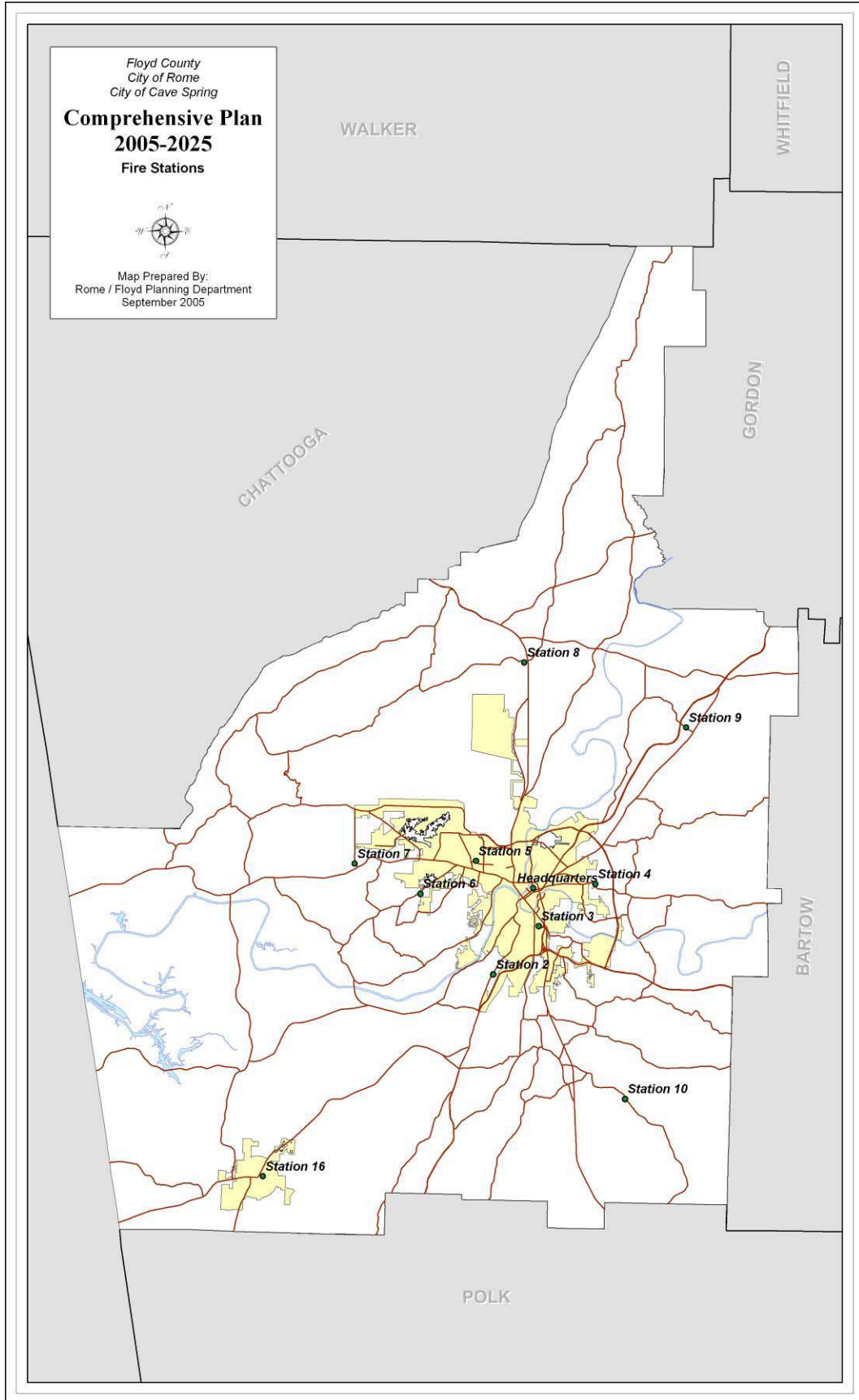


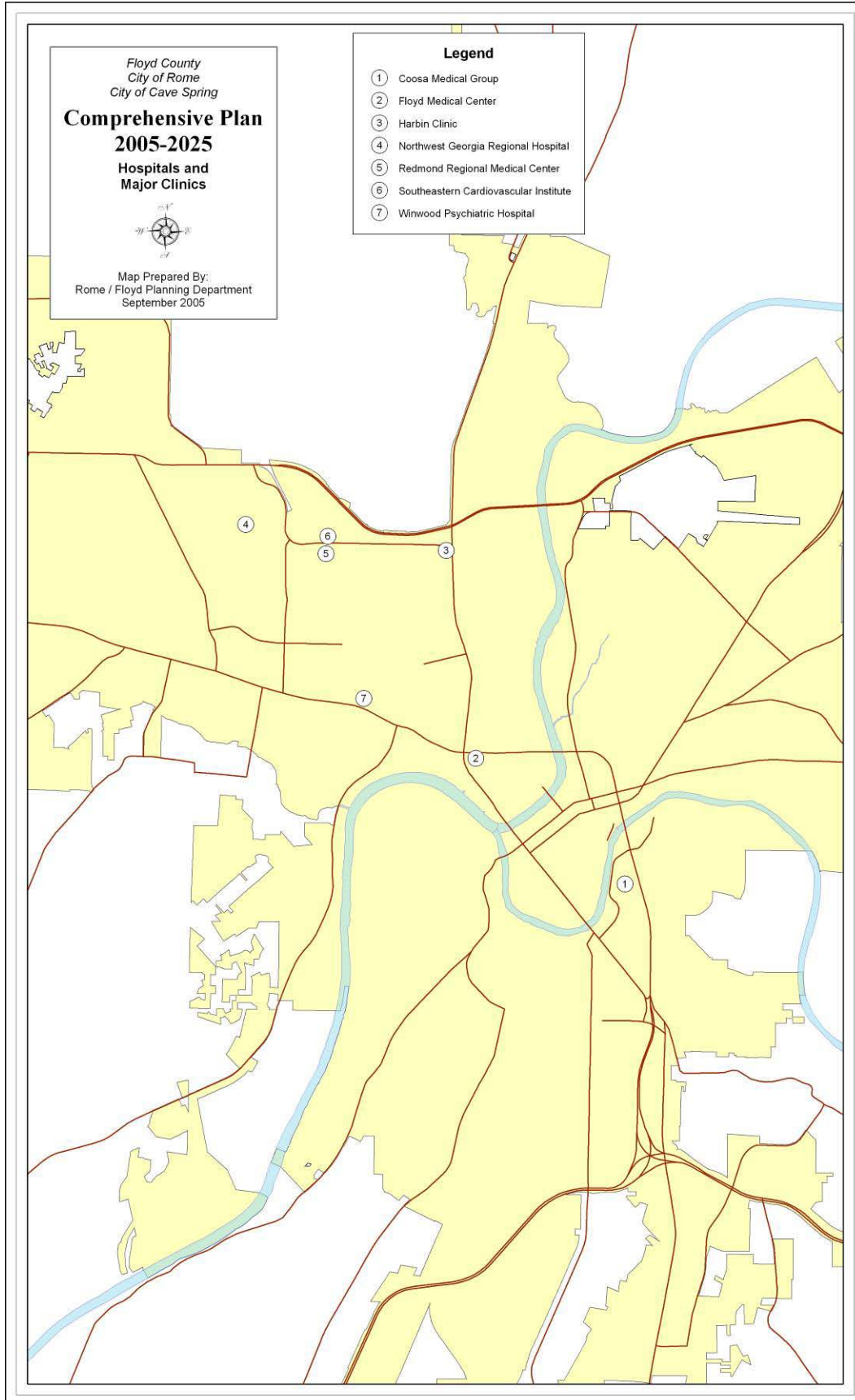


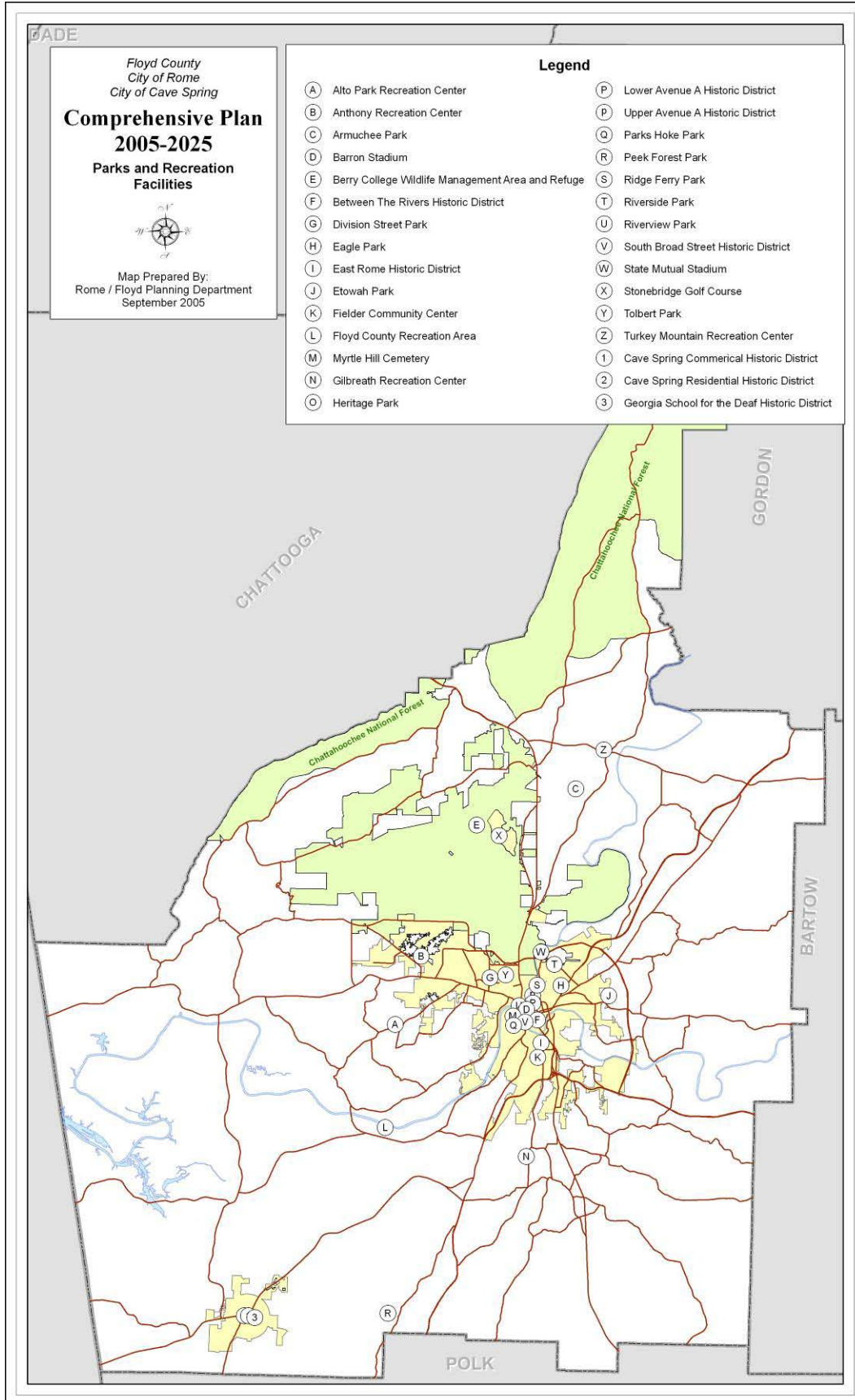


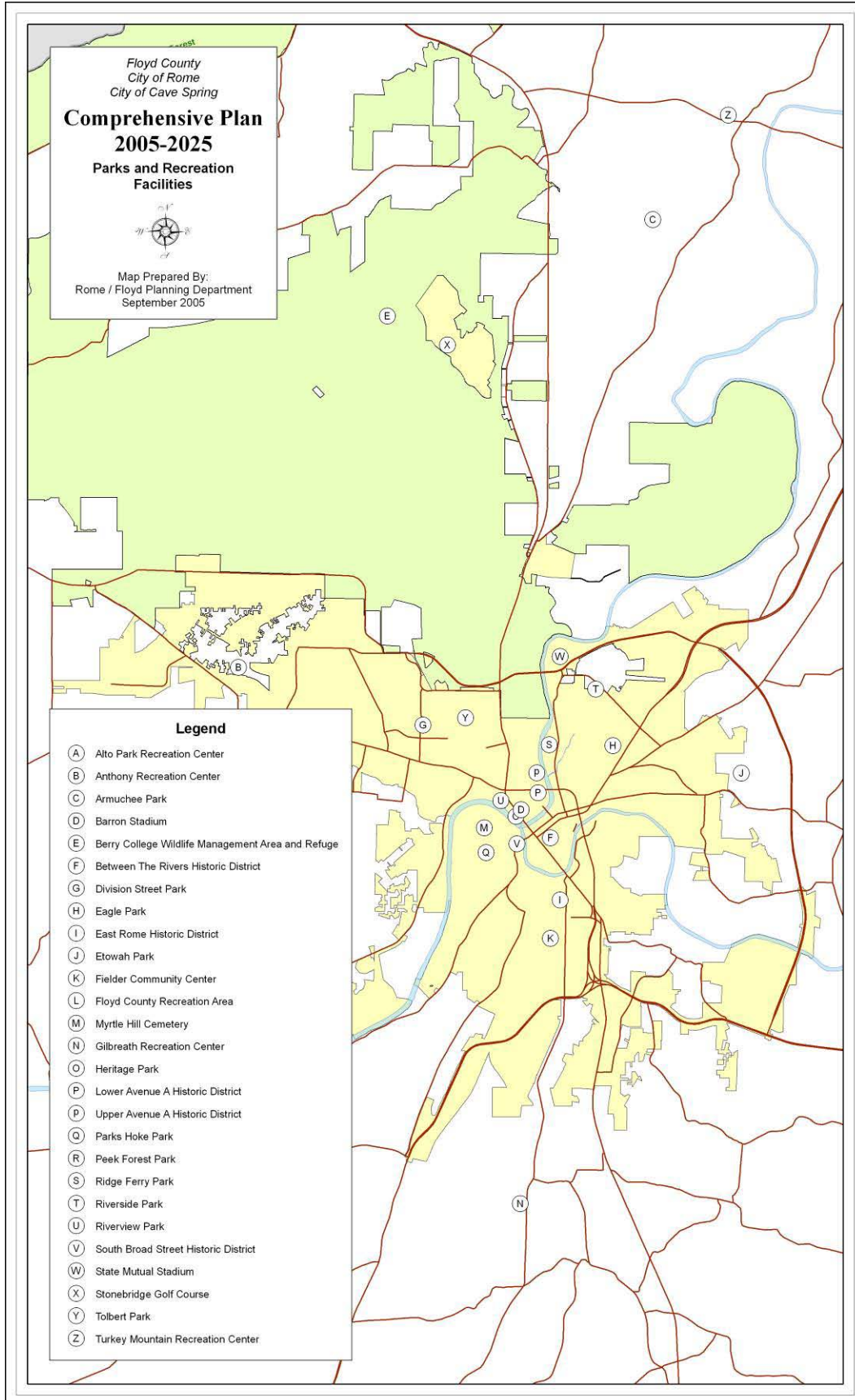




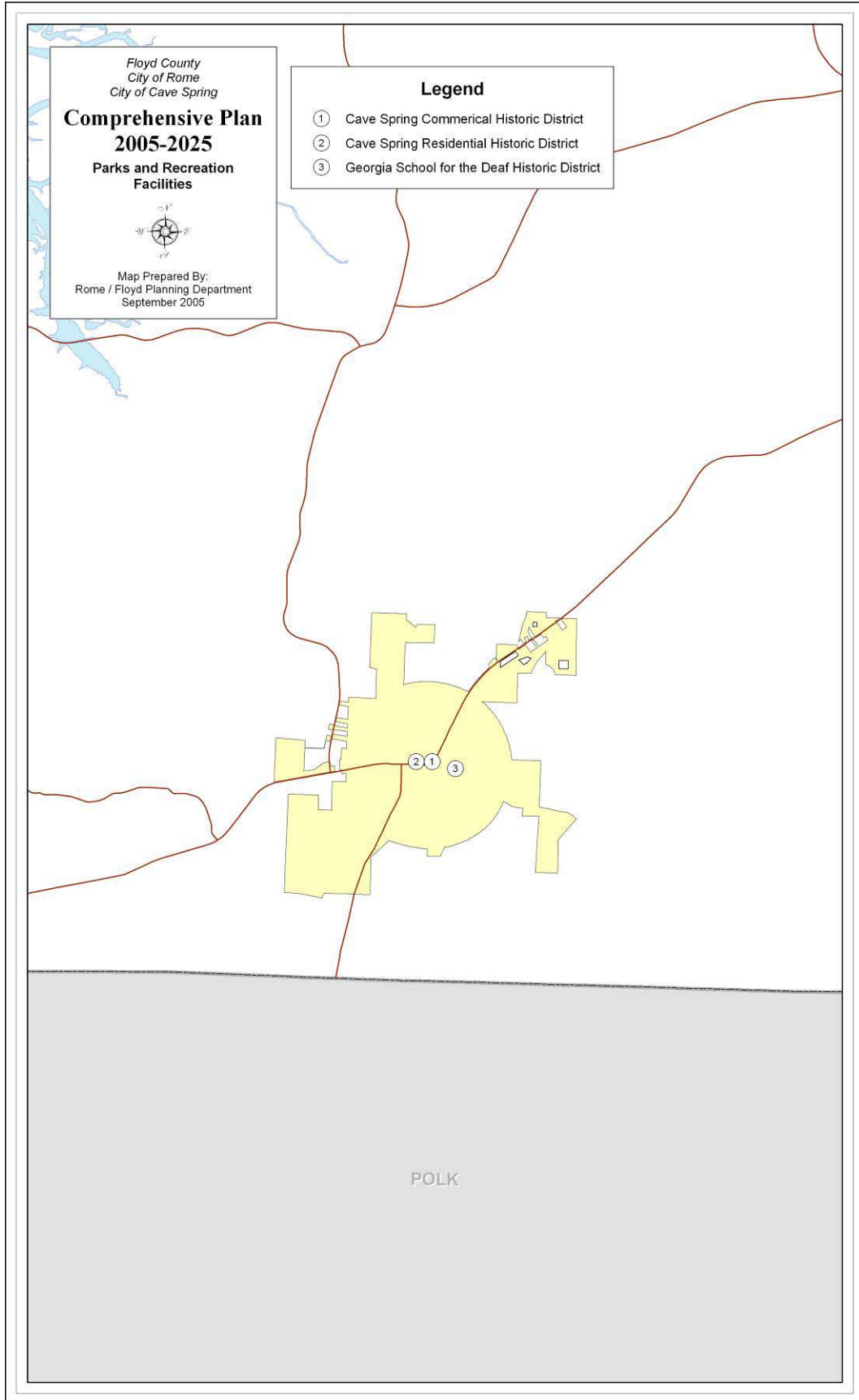












## Housing

### Housing Types and Mix

The primary form of housing in Floyd County and its two cities is the single-family dwelling. The single-family dwelling makes up more than two-thirds of the housing stock in the county and has dominated the housing stock since the 1970 Census in all three jurisdictions. The majority (21,724 or 59.3%) of these units are located in the unincorporated areas of Floyd county. The majority (4,217 or 68.8%) of multi-family units are located within the city limits of Rome and Cave Spring. This is due to State Health Department requirements that apartments have a connection to public sewer service. There are more multi-family units being built now in the unincorporated areas than has been true in the past. This construction is taking place as sewer service is extended to communities in the unincorporated areas of Floyd County. Information on types of housing in Floyd County, City of Rome, and City of Cave Spring is provided in the tables titled *Types of Housing*. This information is presented in housing units and percent of total housing units as reflected in the 1980, 1990, and 2000 censuses. In each jurisdiction, the total number of housing units has shown a steady increase between 1980 and 1990 and between 1990 and 2000. This increase reflects the increase in total population during the same time periods.

In **Floyd County**, the percentage of housing units that were site-built single family residential units showed a decrease of approximately 3% between 1980 and 1990 but remain stable between 1990 and 2000. The percentage of manufactured homes showed a corresponding increase of approximately 3% between 1980 and 1990 but remain stable between 1990 and 2000. During these same time periods, the percentage of housing units that were duplex residential or multi-family residential has remained steady. The decrease in site-built homes in the 1980s and corresponding increase of more affordable manufactured homes may have been caused by the economic recession of that era. This trend seems to have stabilized in the 1990s.

Floyd County: Types of Housing						
Category	1980		1990		2000	
<b>TOTAL Housing Units</b>	30,154	100.0%	32,821	100.0%	36,615	100.0%
<b>Single Units (detached)</b>	22,514	74.7%	23,459	71.5%	26,336	71.9%
<b>Single Units (attached)</b>	396	1.3%	396	1.2%	532	1.5%
<b>Double Units</b>	2,100	7.0%	2,268	6.9%	2,690	7.3%
<b>3 to 9 Units</b>	1,984	6.6%	2,271	6.9%	2,027	5.5%
<b>10 to 19 Units</b>	554	1.8%	556	1.7%	440	1.2%
<b>20 to 49 Units</b>	154	0.5%	112	0.3%	199	0.5%
<b>50 or more Units</b>	410	1.4%	344	1.0%	775	2.1%
<b>Mobile Home or Trailer</b>	2,042	6.8%	3,163	9.6%	3,598	9.8%
<b>All Other</b>	0	0.0%	252	0.8%	18	0.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3)

In the **City of Rome**, the percentage of housing units that were site-built single family residential units showed a slight increase of approximately 1.2% between 1980 and 1990 and an increase of 2.5% between 1990 and 2000. During these same time periods, the percentage of housing units that were duplex residential or multi-family residential has shown a corresponding decline. The percentage of manufactured homes showed a slight increase of less than 1% over the twenty year period. Factors leading to the trend toward more site-built single family homes may include a local interest in promoting homeownership over rental housing, and the city's annexation policies during the time period.

<b>City of Rome: Types of Housing</b>						
<b>Category</b>	<b>1980</b>		<b>1990</b>		<b>2000</b>	
<b>TOTAL Housing Units</b>	11,986	100.0%	13,099	100.0%	14,459	100.0%
<b>Single Units (detached)</b>	7,659	63.9%	8,573	65.4%	9,689	67.0%
<b>Single Units (attached)</b>	234	2.0%	217	1.7%	370	2.6%
<b>Double Units</b>	1,430	11.9%	1,401	10.7%	1,528	10.6%
<b>3 to 9 Units</b>	1,559	13.0%	1,714	13.1%	1,413	9.8%
<b>10 to 19 Units</b>	450	3.8%	412	3.1%	344	2.4%
<b>20 to 49 Units</b>	141	1.2%	112	0.9%	122	0.8%
<b>50 or more Units</b>	410	3.4%	344	2.6%	731	5.1%
<b>Mobile Home or Trailer</b>	103	0.9%	172	1.3%	262	1.8%
<b>All Other</b>	0	0.0%	154	1.2%	0	0.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3)

In the **City of Cave Spring**, the percentage of housing units that were site-built single family residential units was stable between 1980 and 1990 and then showed an increase of 6.6% between 1990 and 2000. The percentage of manufactured homes showed a decrease of approximately 2% between 1980 and 1990 and an increase of less than 1% between 1990 and 2000. During these same time periods, the percentage of housing units that were duplex residential or multi-family residential showed an increase of 1.7% between 1980 and 1990 and a decrease of 6.9% between 1990 and 2000. The fluctuation in types of housing seen in the City of Cave Spring may be caused by statistical problems related to the small sample size than actual housing trends in the area. Housing in Cave Spring should be considered in the larger context of Floyd County for long term planning purposes.

City of Cave Spring: Types of Housing						
Category	1980		1990		2000	
	TOTAL Housing Units	330	100.0%	414	100.0%	432
Single Units (detached)	231	70.0%	285	68.8%	330	76.4%
Single Units (attached)	5	1.5%	12	2.9%	8	1.9%
Double Units	29	8.8%	44	10.6%	27	6.3%
3 to 9 Units	32	9.7%	49	11.8%	43	10.0%
10 to 19 Units	11	3.3%	12	2.9%	9	2.1%
20 to 49 Units	6	1.8%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
50 or more Units	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Mobile Home or Trailer	16	4.8%	11	2.7%	15	3.5%
All Other	0	0.0%	1	0.2%	0	0.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3)

### Condition and Occupancy

Any study of housing within a community is not complete without some assessment of the quality of the existing housing stock. Although units may be available, if they are not in good condition the population remains inadequately housed. Condition of housing can be analyzed using data on age, adequate facilities, and overcrowding.

Much of the communities housing stock is relatively old, especially those homes in lower income neighborhoods. Older housing may result in problems that include: construction that may not meet modern codes; systems that are outdated, inadequate, or not maintained properly; possible environmental hazards such as lead-based paint or asbestos; and decayed materials or termite damage. Therefore, as the housing stock ages, it is reasonable to assume more homes are in poor condition. The age of housing in Rome, Cave Spring, and Floyd County is shown in the table *Age of Housing*. In Floyd County, the number of homes over thirty years old increased from 13,590 in 1990 to 18,007 in 2000. In the City of Rome, the number of homes over thirty years old increased from 7,096 in 1990 to 9,007 in 2000. In the City of Cave Spring, the number of homes over thirty years old increased from 182 in 1990 to 248 in 2000.

Category	Floyd County		City of Rome		City of Cave Spring	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
	Built 1970 - 1979	7,306	6,842	2,209	2,302	74
Built 1960 - 1969	6,085	5,724	2,457	2,522	67	67
Built 1950 - 1959	5,272	5,127	2,356	2,631	74	65
Built 1940 - 1949	3,376	2,790	1,950	1,535	23	21
Built 1939 or earlier	4,942	4,366	2,790	2,319	85	95

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3)

However, age of housing may not be the best way to predict condition of housing. The building inspection staff enforces the Housing and Unsafe Dwelling ordinances within Floyd County and the City of Rome. Through this ordinance, older homes that are abandoned, unsafe, or in a severe state of disrepair, must be removed by the owner or will

be demolished by the local governing body. Additionally, both Rome and Cave Spring have active preservation programs that encourage preservation and maintenance of historic properties; therefore, older buildings in these jurisdictions are often in better condition than newer ones.

Of greater concern than age of housing when considering the condition of a community’s housing stock are the facilities provided in each home. If housing units lack basic amenities, they can be considered neither adequate nor healthy. Housing data gather by the U.S. Bureau of the Census includes information on plumbing facilities and kitchen facilities. This information is shown in the table *Condition of Housing*. The number and percentage of homes without complete plumbing or kitchen facilities has increased in both Floyd County and the City of Rome between 1990 and 2000. In both jurisdictions, approximately 1% of households lack adequate plumbing facilities. Approximately 1% of homes in Floyd County lack adequate kitchen facilities and approximately 2% of homes in the City of Rome lack adequate kitchen facilities. However, the larger number of housing units in Rome without kitchen facilities could reflect an increase in studio apartments in and around the downtown area rather than poor housing. In 2000, the City of Cave Spring had only 2 homes lacking complete plumbing facilities and none lacking complete kitchen facilities.

Condition of Housing												
Category	Floyd County				City of Rome				City of Cave Spring			
	1990		2000		1990		2000		1990		2000	
<b>Total housing units</b>	32,821	100.0%	36,615	100.0%	13,099	100.0%	14,459	100.0%	414	100.0%	432	100.0%
<b>Complete Plumbing Facilities</b>	32,669	99.5%	36,281	99.1%	13,003	99.3%	14,345	99.2%	411	99.3%	430	99.5%
<b>Lacking Plumbing Facilities</b>	152	0.5%	334	0.9%	96	0.7%	114	0.8%	3	0.7%	2	0.5%
<b>Complete kitchen facilities</b>	32,635	99.4%	36,144	98.7%	12,975	99.1%	14,194	98.2%	409	98.8%	432	100.0%
<b>Lacking complete kitchen facilities</b>	186	0.6%	471	1.3%	124	0.9%	265	1.8%	5	1.2%	0	0.0%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3)

Overcrowding of homes has become an increasing problem throughout much of Floyd County. The census collects data on the number of homes that house more than one person per room. For this plan, that definition of overcrowding will be used. However, overcrowding can also be measured in square feet per person. The table titled *Overcrowding* shows census data for Rome, Cave Spring, Floyd County, and the State of Georgia. According to this data the number and percent of overcrowded housing units in Cave Springs declined in the 1990s. This may be due to the overall decline in multi-family units within the city. Overcrowded housing units in Floyd County have increased in both number and percentage, but the percent of units overcrowded in 2000 (4.1%) remains below the state average (4.8%). However, the percentage of housing units overcrowded in Floyd County increased at a much greater rate than the state or national average. In the City of Rome, overcrowded housing units have shown a significant increase between 1990 and 2000 in both number (from 341 to 857) and percentage of total housing units (from 2.8% to 6.5%). This increase in overcrowding in Rome may be

caused by the increase in housing costs and the significant increase in the Hispanic population, who have traditionally lived in more crowded accommodations.

Overcrowding								
Category	Floyd County		City of Rome		City of Cave Spring		State of Georgia	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Total occupied housing units	30,518	34,028	12,008	13,229	386	403	2,366,615	3,006,369
More than 1 person per room	807	1,411	341	857	12	10	95,828	145,235
Percent of occupied units that are overcrowded	2.6%	4.1%	2.8%	6.5%	3.1%	2.5%	4.0%	4.8%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3)

The owner-renter ratios from the 1990 and 2000 censuses indicate that home ownership within the market place has remained fairly stable in Floyd County as a whole. Owner occupied housing in the City of Rome increased by approximately 2% percent during this time period and increased by approximately 12% in the City of Cave Spring. The increase in percentage of owner occupied housing in Rome, may be attributed to the city's participation in housing programs, including Georgia DCA's CHIP Program and the Community Assistance Partner's Downpayment Assistance Program. These assistance programs may be used throughout Floyd County to encourage homeownership. Almost twice as many people in Floyd County and Cave Spring own rather than rent their homes. However, the ratios for the City of Rome indicate that the numbers of owners and renters are almost evenly split within the city's population. In the 2000 census, Cave Spring (65.5%) and Floyd County (62.1%) had a higher percentage of the total housing units that were owner occupied than the state average (61.8%). However, although there was a positive trend in homeownership, the percentage of owner occupied units within the City of Rome (48.95%) was much lower than the state average. Information on occupancy of housing units is shown in the table *Occupancy Characteristics*.

Occupancy Characteristics												
Category	Floyd County				City of Rome				City of Cave Spring			
	1990		2000		1990		2000		1990		2000	
TOTAL Housing Units Built	32,821	100%	36,615	100%	13,099	100%	14,459	100%	414	100%	432	100%
Housing Units Vacant	2,303	7.02%	2,587	7.07%	1,091	8.33%	1,230	8.51%	28	6.76%	29	6.71%
Housing Units Owner Occupied	20,186	61.50%	22,740	62.11%	6,170	47.10%	7,078	48.95%	223	53.86%	283	65.51%
Housing Units Renter Occupied	10,332	31.48%	11,288	30.83%	5,838	44.57%	6,151	42.54%	163	39.37%	120	27.78%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3)

## Cost of Housing

The cost of owner-occupied housing in Floyd County and the Cities of Rome and Cave Spring is much lower than the State figures. Although the cost of housing has increased significantly in each jurisdiction, the median value of owner-occupied housing in Floyd County and its two cities is still well over \$20,000 lower than that of the State of Georgia.

The median contract rents within this area are also considerably lower than for the State as a whole. Information concerning housing cost in Floyd County, Rome, Cave Spring, and Georgia can be found in the table *Housing Costs*.

Housing Cost (in dollars)								
Category	Floyd County		City of Rome		City of Cave Spring		State of Georgia	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Median Property Value	49,000	83,500	50,200	87,100	46,100	75,000	70,700	111,200
Median Rent	325	476	294	443	231	330	433	613

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3)

In recent years, the City of Rome has lost more structures per year than new ones were built. This is due primarily to aggressive enforcement of codes related to housing conditions. Because new structures generally are not built in the same areas where houses are removed, this policy has dramatically affected older neighborhoods. This is particularly true in low income and blighted areas. The result of this policy is the net loss of affordable housing within the community. The City of Rome and Habitat for Humanity have attempted to fill this niche with new affordable single-family dwellings built on existing lots, but have been unable to replace all the housing lost.

### Cost-Burdened Households

Although cost of housing in Floyd County is significantly lower than the state, many families in Floyd County are cost burdened by housing. The U.S. Bureau of the Census defines “cost burdened” as paying more than 30% of income for housing and “severely cost burdened” as paying more than 50% of total household income for housing. Evaluating the number of households that are considered cost burdened by housing helps to quantify the need for affordable housing in the community. According to the 2000 Census, a total of 3,871 households in Floyd County were cost burdened and 2,977 were severely cost burdened. A total of 6,848 families (20.12%) in Floyd County were paying over 30% of household income on housing alone. Of these households, over 45% (3,115) live within the City of Rome. These numbers suggest that adequate affordable housing is not available within the community. Information concerning the cost burden of for households in Rome, Cave Spring, and Floyd County is shown in the table titled *Cost Burdened*.

Cost Burdened						
Category	Floyd County		Rome		Cave Spring	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
30% - 49%	5,641	3,871	1,306	1,707	28	29
50% and greater	NA	2,977	NA	1,408	NA	35
Not computed	789	1,088	317	400	7	19

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3)

### Special Housing Needs

**Public Housing.** In the 1930s, the City of Rome started one of the first public housing agencies in the country. Today, the Rome Housing Authority manages 1,098 rental units

within the City of Rome. The units are rented based on income of tenants. The goal of the Rome Housing Authority is to provide temporary housing for low-income families, while encouraging self-sufficiency and homeownership. Public housing in Rome is regularly upgraded and modernized as funding becomes available. The Cave Spring Housing Authority manages 51 units, and generally has a waiting list of over a year long. There is no public housing in unincorporated Floyd County.

**Assisted Housing.** The Section 8 Program is a HUD-funded housing assistance program. Target income persons are provided with vouchers that pay for a portion of housing costs based on the income level and family size of the client. Some of vouchers stay with properties that are pre-approved as being above standards while most stay with the approved client as they move from location to location. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs controls 109 vouchers in Rome. The Rome Housing Authority control 275 vouchers locally – 175 Mainstream vouchers for the disabled and 100 for the Family Unification Program. Both organizations have long waiting lists for future recipients. Additionally, four apartment complexes in Rome have income restrictions and housing payment assistance. These remain full and usually have waiting lists.

**Group Quarters.** The 2000 Census indicates Floyd County had a total of 3,756 persons living in group quarters. The majority of these located within the City of Rome. With two colleges in the community that offer on campus housing, many (44.5%) living in group quarters in Floyd County reside in college dormitories. An additional 23% of the group quarters' population is in either the Floyd County Jail or Floyd County Prison. Since the private colleges produce their own plans for expansion and the correctional facilities are addressed elsewhere in this plan, these populations will not be addressed in the housing section. Information concerning the group quarters population is shown in the table *Group Quarters*.

- *Elderly:* A number of private nursing homes provide care for the elderly and disabled in the Floyd County area. According to the 2000 Census, 757 persons reside in area nursing homes. Area nursing homes have the capacity to provide for the needs of the elderly population at his time. However, as the Baby Boomers age and life expectancy increases, capacity may need to be increased.
- *AIDS and Chronically Ill Patients:* At this time, no hospice or wards for the chronically ill exist in Rome, Cave Spring, or Floyd County. HIV/AIDS rates are relatively low, and AIDS and other chronically ill patients are either cared for in their home or in hospices located in other communities. Several hospice services provide at home care for the chronically ill in the Floyd County area. Limited group or personal care homes are also available for some chronically ill patients. It is not anticipated that hospitals or wards designated for the chronically ill will be provided in Floyd County in the near future.
- *Mental Hospitals:* Northwest Georgia Regional Hospital is located within the City of Rome and provides short and long-term psychiatric care for patients in this region. In 2000, this hospital was providing care for approximately 125 long-



term patients. The hospital once provided care for a larger population; however, funding cuts have decreased its current capacity.

- *Domestic Violence Victims:* There are no population estimates for domestic violence victims in the County. A new facility for abused women was constructed in Rome in 2002. This facility should serve the needs of the community for the foreseeable future. Additionally, the Open Door Home for abused and neglected children is located adjacent to this facility. The Georgia Department of Family and Children Services and local police departments handle cases of domestic abuse in Floyd County.

<b>Group Quarters</b>						
<b>Category</b>	<b>Number</b>			<b>Percent</b>		
	<b>Both sexes</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>Both sexes</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>Female</b>
<b>Group quarters population</b>	<b>3,756</b>	<b>1,805</b>	<b>1,951</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Institutionalized population	1,903	1,124	779	50.7	62.3	39.9
Correctional institutions	863	752	111	23.0	41.7	5.7
Nursing homes	757	176	581	20.2	9.8	29.8
Hospitals/wards for chronically ill	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Mental (Psychiatric) hospitals or wards	125	80	45	3.3	4.4	2.3
Juvenile institutions	35	27	8	0.9	1.5	0.4
Other institutions	123	89	34	3.3	4.9	1.7
Non-institutionalized population	1,853	681	1,172	49.3	37.7	60.1
College dormitories	1,672	612	1,060	44.5	33.9	54.3
Military quarters	0	0	0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Other non-institutionalized group quarters	181	69	112	4.8	3.8	5.7

**Homeless.** There are no accurate population estimates for homeless victims. Homelessness can be triggered by eviction, loss of job, domestic violence or a number of other reasons and especially affects lower income persons and persons with mental handicaps. In some instances, homelessness is a relatively short-term incident but can be a lifelong problem for others. Two shelters are available for individuals in Rome and one for women and children. These shelters remain full during the colder months and, at times, have been unable to meet the needs of all the homeless. In addition to shelters, there are food banks, access to free clothing, and other services provided by churches and nonprofit agencies for this in need. There are no homeless shelters located in unincorporated Floyd County or the City of Cave Spring.

**Migrant Farm Workers.** According to local service providers, there is not a notable population of migrant farm workers in Floyd County that require housing assistance.

### **Jobs-Housing Balance**

According to the Rome Board of Realtors, the median home sales price in 2003 was \$113,750. Based on a thirty-year mortgage at seven percent interest and financed at 95%, the monthly mortgage payment for the median home would be approximately \$720 per

month. A household making \$30,000 per year could pay up to \$750 a month without exceeding 30% of income on housing. According to the 2000 Census, over 58% of households in Floyd County have an income of \$30,000 or greater. For the same year median rent was \$350 per month for a one-bedroom apartment, \$454 for a two-bedroom apartment, and \$550 for a three-bedroom apartment. Therefore, median rent and median home sales in Floyd County are affordable for well over half of the community's households. Additionally, according to the U.S. Bureau of the Census 81.9% of employed Floyd County residents work in Floyd County. Therefore, it would appear that Floyd County has a healthy job to housing mix.

<b>Household Income Distribution and Ability to Pay for Housing</b>				
<b>Category</b>	<b>Maximum Monthly Income</b>	<b>30% of Monthly Income</b>	<b>Number of Households</b>	<b>Percent of Households</b>
<b>Total</b>			34,030	100.00%
<b>Income less than \$9999</b>	\$833	\$250	4,092	12.00%
<b>Income \$10000 - \$14999</b>	\$1,250	\$375	2,411	7.10%
<b>Income \$15000 - \$19999</b>	\$1,667	\$500	2,546	7.50%
<b>Income \$20000 - \$29999</b>	\$2,500	\$750	5,307	15.60%
<b>Income \$30000 - \$34999</b>	\$2,917	\$875	2,381	7.00%
<b>Income \$35000 - \$39999</b>	\$3,333	\$1,000	2,100	6.20%
<b>Income \$40000 - \$49999</b>	\$4,167	\$1,250	4,028	11.80%
<b>Income \$50000 - \$59999</b>	\$5,000	\$1,500	3,165	9.30%
<b>Income \$60000 - \$74999</b>	\$6,250	\$1,875	2,944	8.70%
<b>Income \$75000 - \$99999</b>	\$8,333	\$2,500	2,583	7.60%
<b>Income \$100000 - \$124999</b>	\$10,417	\$3,125	1,207	3.50%
<b>Income \$125000 - \$149999</b>	\$12,500	\$3,750	451	1.30%
<b>Income \$150000 and above</b>	N/A	N/A	815	2.40%

## **Transportation System**

The transportation system in Floyd County includes a full array of transportation modes: roadways, rail, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, transit, and airport facilities. However, the level of transportation service varies in different portions of the cities and county. A complete analysis of the local transportation system and list of proposed projects can be found in the Floyd-Rome Urban Transportation Study: Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

### **Road Network**

**Roads and Highways.** Although no Interstate highway lies within Floyd County, two federal, and eight state highway routes and numerous local streets/roads traverse the county. Additionally, Floyd County is located within the geographic triangle formed by I-75, I-20 and I-59, which connects Atlanta, Georgia; Birmingham, Alabama; and Chattanooga, Tennessee. Access to these Interstate highways from Floyd County is provided by U.S. Highways 27 and 411 and Georgia Highways 20, 53 and 140. U.S. Highway 27, which serves as northwest Georgia's Governor's Road Improvement Program (GRIP) corridor, was recently widened to four lanes throughout Floyd County.

Due to an increasing population, the transportation system in Floyd County must serve the transportation needs of a growing number of passenger vehicles, transit buses, bicyclists, and freight haulers. At present, these needs are being met by the existing network of city streets, county roads, and federal and state highways. Approximately 1,090 miles of publicly maintained roads are currently located in Floyd County, approximately 725 miles of which are maintained by Floyd County Public Works and 222 miles maintained by the City of Rome Streets Department. The Georgia Department of Transportation maintains state and federal routes, which consist of 143 centerline miles and 434 lane miles of paved roads in Floyd County. However, these roads converge to a limited number of bridges that provide access across the county's three rivers, which create bottlenecks along the transportation system.

The interior travel network is dominated by Second Avenue (SR 101), Shorter Avenue (SR 20), Martha Berry Boulevard (U.S. 27), and Turner McCall Boulevard (U.S. 27, SR 20 and SR 53). Turner McCall Blvd. moves as many as 50,000 vehicles per day through its intersection with Riverbend Drive and has the highest traffic counts of any local road in northwest Georgia. The dominance of these routes is due to the location of the three rivers within Floyd County. Alternative east-west travel routes are seriously limited in the county because there are only 12 bridges provided.

Using Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidelines, the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) classifies roads in the public road system by their geographic location and level of service. The functional classifications for roads in Rome, Cave Spring, and Floyd County are shown on the map titled **Road Network** and are summarized as follows:

*Arterials* - Classified as principal or minor, these roads connect activity centers and carry large volumes of traffic at moderate speeds.

*Collectors* - Typically allow access to activity centers from residential areas. Their purpose is to collect traffic from streets in residential and commercial areas and distribute it to the arterial system.

*Local Roads* - Feed the collector system from low volume residential and commercial areas.

A list of all arterials and collectors is located in the Floyd-Rome Urban Transportation Study: Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

Traffic congestion associated with the local road network may be alleviated with the construction of the planned looped bypass system. The bypass system will provide east-west and north-south travel through Floyd County without passing through the City of Rome. One section of this system has been constructed at this time. The East Rome Bypass, or State Loop 1, is a split four-lane facility that connects several major arteries northeast of the city. This route begins at U.S. 411 and intersects SR 293, Calhoun Road, SR 53, and U.S. 27 via Veterans Memorial Highway. The North Rome Connector, a limited access route, extends across U.S. 27 from Veterans Memorial Highway to Redmond Road providing improved travel in north Rome from U.S. 27 to Shorter Avenue. In order to reduce traffic congestion on Shorter Avenue and Turner McCall Boulevard, commercial vehicles are encouraged to use this route around the city.

**Bridges.** Within Floyd County, only five bridges cross the Oostanaula River, four cross the Etowah River, and two cross the Coosa River. Eight of these bridges are within the city limits of Rome. The topography of Floyd County, including its three rivers, provides a major challenge for the transportation system. The limited number of bridges in the county funnels traffic to a few over-used corridors, creating a bottleneck situation and leading to traffic congestion along these routes.

**Signalized Intersections.** GDOT and the City of Rome maintain all traffic signals located within Floyd County. GDOT maintains the signals at the intersection of SR 53 and SR 140 as well as the signal in the City of Cave Spring. The City of Rome Public Works Department maintains the remaining highway signals for the county and all traffic signals within the city. Rome was recently selected as one of six cities to participate in a state program to evaluate the 2070 Advanced Traffic Control (ATC) System. The City was provided with twenty systems to install along the Shorter Avenue and Turner McCall Boulevard corridor. After successful evaluation, GDOT adopted the 2070 Advanced Traffic Control (ATC) System as the state standard. GDOT has committed to providing 2070 ATC Systems to replace all traffic signals located on state routes within Rome and Floyd County over the next few years. However, the city will continue to use the current signal systems at local and secondary road intersections. The City of Rome has recently installed traffic control cameras at the intersection of Turner McCall Boulevard, Hicks Drive, and Riverside Drive. If these cameras are successful in reducing the number of accidents at this intersection, additional cameras may be installed at other dangerous intersections. Revenue from citations are used for new pedestrian facilities and improvements.

## Alternative Modes of Transportation

**Public Transportation.** The Rome Transit Department (RTD) has operated the public transit system since the early 1960's and maintains a fleet of 35 buses. Transit services provided by RTD includes a five bus fixed route system, para-transit service for disabled passengers, "tripper" service for public school students, and limited special event services. In addition, RTD contracts with Shuttle Tran to provide intra-city charters. Charter services from Floyd County are provided by private agencies including Best Journey Tours and Shuttle Tran. In 2005, Greyhound Bus Lines ended its regular intercity bus service to and from Rome. Rome provides on-call para-transit service for disabled residents within the City of Rome and in the county within a quarter mile of the city limits. Floyd County also provides para-transit services for the elderly, through a funding arrangement with the Tallatoona EDA.

**Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities.** Trails, like roadways and mass transit, are key components in a community's transportation system. They provide alternate means of mobility, which reduces traffic congestion, fossil fuel consumption, noise, and air pollution. Trails also foster more active and healthy lifestyles for residents, enhance quality of life, improve the local environment, and provide additional stimuli for the local economy.

Trails in Rome and Floyd County consist of individual recreation and fitness trails and the Heritage Riverways Trail System. Plans for a county-wide system are a result of recognizing the need for pedestrian and bike trails and greenways for transportation, recreation, pollution control and linking together the cultural and historical heritage of the area. Rome currently has four trail sections which make up the Heritage Riverways Trail System. This trail system consists of approximately five miles of paved multiuse path and is the only off-road trail system in Floyd County that can be used for transportation purposes. Unfortunately, not all of these trails are interconnected at this time. Traveling from one trail to another often requires walking or biking on city streets. The trails in this system are located primarily along the rivers and streams located near the central business district and are used for transportation, fitness, and recreation. A greater description of pedestrian and bicycle trails in Rome and Floyd County is given in the Rome and Floyd County Trail Facilities Plan.

Sidewalks, or on-road trails, serve much of the urban area and are usable transportation routes for pedestrians. However, in many areas the sidewalk system is poorly maintained, provides insufficient width to ensure pedestrian safety, and is otherwise inadequate for pedestrian travel. Furthermore, pedestrians in many neighborhoods, particularly in the unincorporated area, do not have access to the sidewalk system. Rome and Floyd County have no designated bicycle lanes at this time.

**Areas Where Mode Choice is Limited.** Transportation mode choices are limited in many areas of the community, especially in the unincorporated areas. Transit service is provided for most of the City of Rome. However, regularly scheduled public transportation is unavailable in Cave Spring and in unincorporated areas of the county. Multi-use trails that can be used for transportation are concentrated along the rivers near downtown Rome. Other pedestrian facilities, such as sidewalks, are located throughout

the City of Rome and in the City of Cave Spring; however few pedestrian facilities are available in the unincorporated areas.

**Effectiveness of Alternative Modes of Transportation.** Priority trail projects should connect existing trails to one another and to the sidewalk system, in order to provide an interconnected trail system linking residential areas to places of employment, commercial centers, medical facilities, schools, and other important community facilities. The system would provide opportunities for safe, convenient, and accessible travel for transportation and recreational purposes. Not all trails that make up the Rome-Floyd County Trail System are interconnected and, in some case, also do not have adequate connection to the sidewalk system. Rome's sidewalk system provides connectivity to most major developments in the city for pedestrians. Additionally, the City of Rome is one of the smallest cities in the nation to provide public transportation. The frequency of service is such that a public bus arrives at each bus stop at least every hour. The bus service connects all major residential, medical, commercial and industrial developments in the city. Alternative modes of transportation in the City of Rome are such that a person could reasonably expect to travel throughout the city while only walking, biking, or riding public transportation; however, longer commute times may be expected. In the unincorporated areas of Floyd County, sidewalks and trails are not continuous and lack connectivity. Transit service is not provided. Therefore, travel by alternative modes is generally not common.

## **Parking**

The Unified Land Development Code of Floyd County and the City of Rome, Georgia (ULDC) requires a minimum amount of parking for new development. Prior to this code, the City of Rome's zoning ordinance stipulated parking requirements for major developments and major commercial facilities generally were not located in the unincorporated areas. Therefore, the only major areas lacking adequate parking in Floyd County are downtown Rome and Cave Spring. A recent parking study of the downtown area suggests that an adequate number of spaces are currently available; however, in five to ten years more spaces may be needed, depending on the amount and type of development that occurs. The report indicates that major parking facilities may be inconveniently located for some shoppers and for users of the Forum Civic Center.

## **Rail, Trucking, and Airport Facilities**

Freight transportation in the Floyd County area is provided by trucking, air, and rail facilities. The effectiveness and impact of these facilities are examined in the Floyd-Rome Urban Transportation Study: Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The LRTP provides a list of specific needs and projects desired by the community.

**Rail.** Railroad service in Rome and Floyd County is provided exclusively by the Norfolk Southern Railway system. There is no scheduled passenger service; however, the railroad provides freight service to Georgia Power's Plant Hammond, Inland Container Corporation, and other local industries. A commuter rail line from Atlanta to Rome has been under study for some time. Norfolk Southern Railway maintains approximately 71 miles of track in Rome and Floyd County. The regionally most important line is the H

Line, or Main Line, which traverses Rome and Floyd County along a north-south alignment and extends from the northern US to Florida. This line is one of the busiest lines in the United States in respect to the number of freight trains operated and the gross tonnage of freight carried per mile. Lines running along an east-west alignment within Rome and Floyd County link several industrial sites with the Main Line. An average of 40 trains per day passes through Rome and Floyd County on the Main Line.

**Trucking.** Several private trucking companies handle local freight movement and offer limited storage facilities for transported freight. Major freight handling for Floyd County is provided by Roadway Express Inc., who operates a trucking terminal and transfer center in southeast Rome. Regional trucking companies use the federal and state highway systems crossing Floyd County to transfer good to and from destinations in northwest Georgia and northeast Alabama contributing to traffic congestion along these routes. In order to improve traffic operation and safety, the City of Rome adopted truck routes to divert through truck traffic away from interior routes.

**Airport Facilities.** Air transportation service in Floyd County is served by the Richard B. Russell Airport, which is located approximately eight miles from downtown Rome. The airport is owned and operated by Floyd County and is certified by the Federal Aviation Administration. The Richard B. Russell Airport is a regional airport serving general aviation in the ten-county, northwest Georgia area. The current runway length is 6,000 feet. The County intends to extend the runway to 8,000 or 8,500 in the future as funds are available. Average flying time from Rome to the Atlanta metro area is approximately 20-30 minutes for the 65 nautical mile distance. However, the community does not have regularly scheduled air carrier service at this time.

### **Transportation and Land Use Connections**

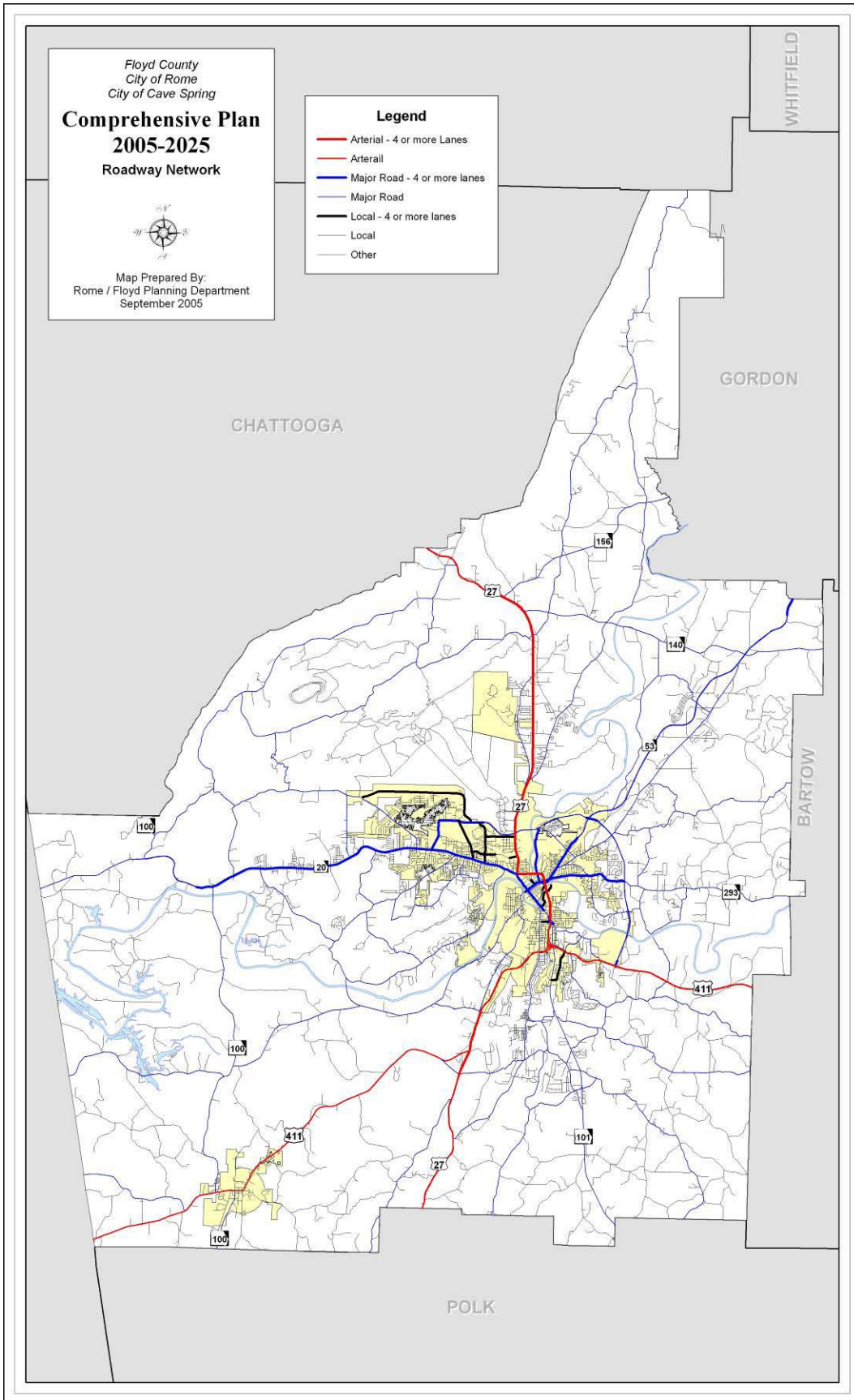
The overall land use policies and current land development patterns of the County favor a vehicle oriented transportation system. Although the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Rome-Floyd County Trail Facilities Plan include consideration of and recommendations for pedestrian and bicycle facilities, few requirements are in place for construction of sidewalks or multi-purpose trails as part of the development process outside the City of Rome. To improve pedestrian movement in commercial areas, some consideration should be given to mandating construction of sidewalks and multi-use trails, orienting building toward the street as opposed to the parking lot, and encouraging parking to be located at the side and rear of the buildings.

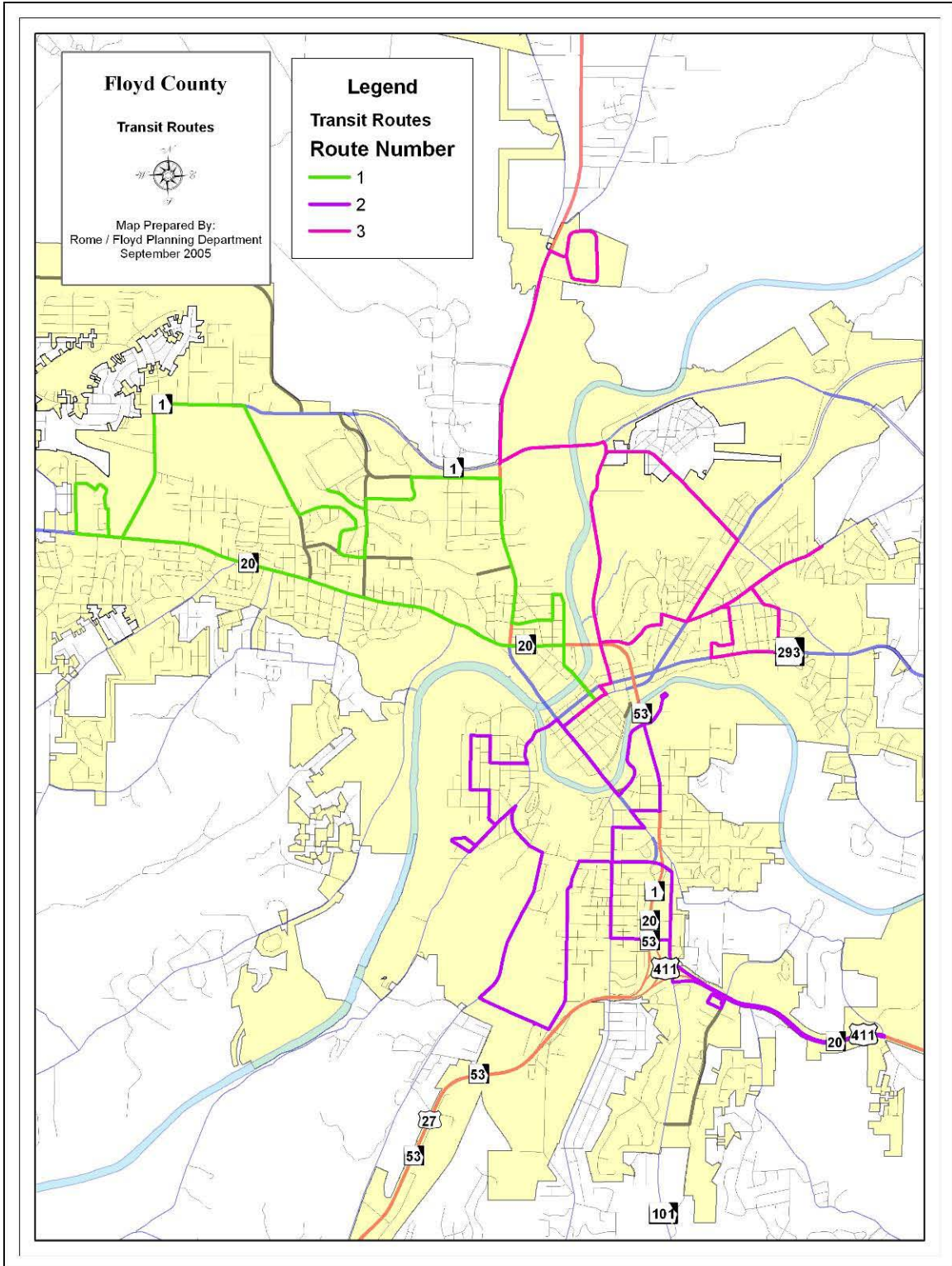
Areas that are experiencing significant traffic congestion include Shorter Avenue, Turner McCall Boulevard, and Martha Berry Highway. Congestion in these areas is caused partly by the limited numbers of crossings on local rivers. However, development patterns in the community, including the increase in residential growth in outlying communities, also greatly contribute to the congestion problem.

Current land use codes do not offer adequate protections for the aesthetic qualities or transportation effectiveness of major transportation corridors in Floyd County (including U.S. Highways 27 and 411 and Georgia Highways 20, 53 and 140). These corridors are experiencing sprawl development to differing degrees. The effectiveness of sections of

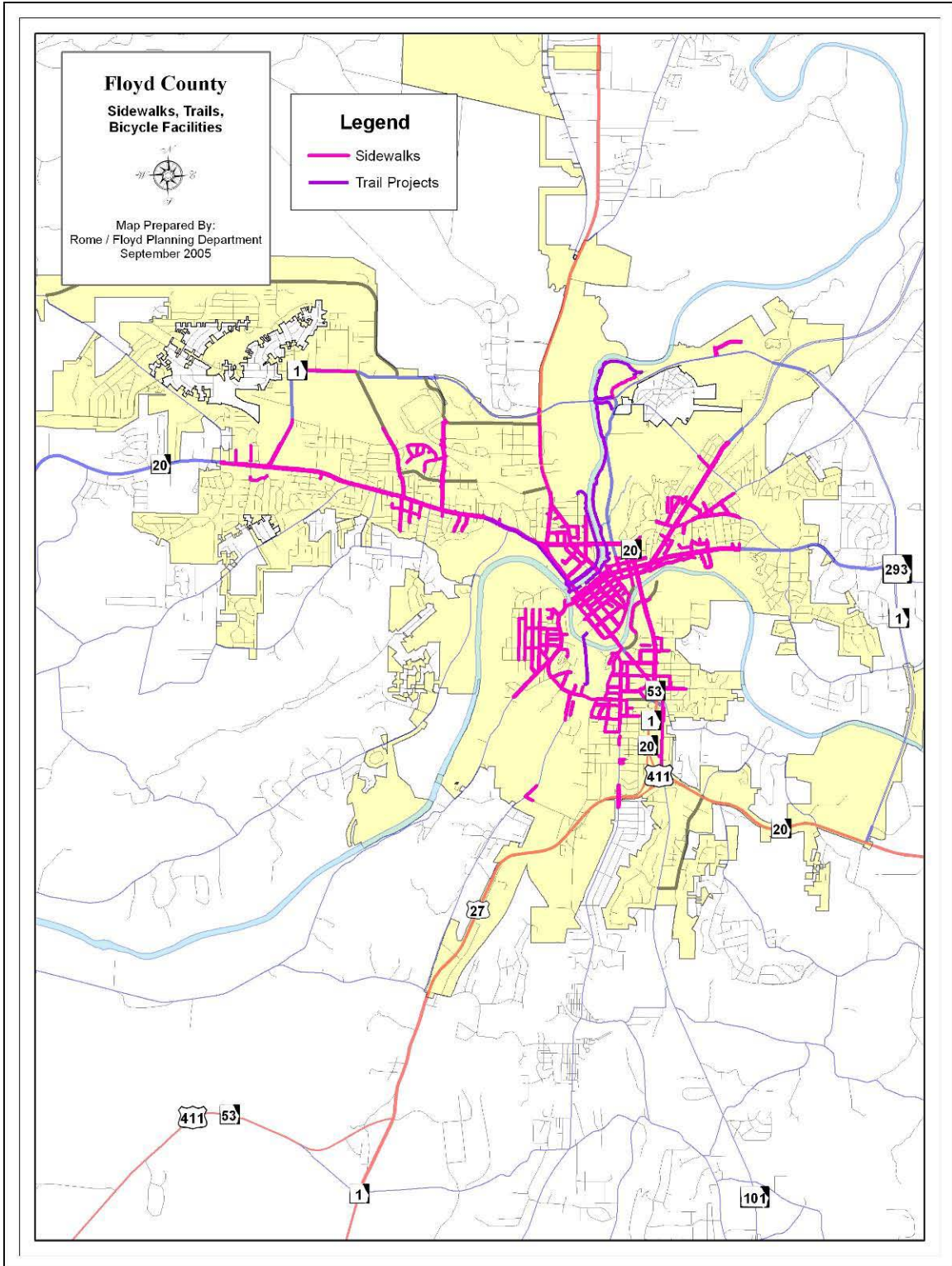
U.S. Highway 27 and GA Highway 53 north of Rome as transportation routes has been seriously degraded due to sprawling development. GA Highway 20 within the city limits of Rome is becoming increasingly congested. Development pressures are beginning to be felt along Highway 411, the community's most direct route to I-75, particularly within the bypass area. If measures are not taken soon to limit and control development along this corridor, the highways effectiveness as a transportation route will be compromised.

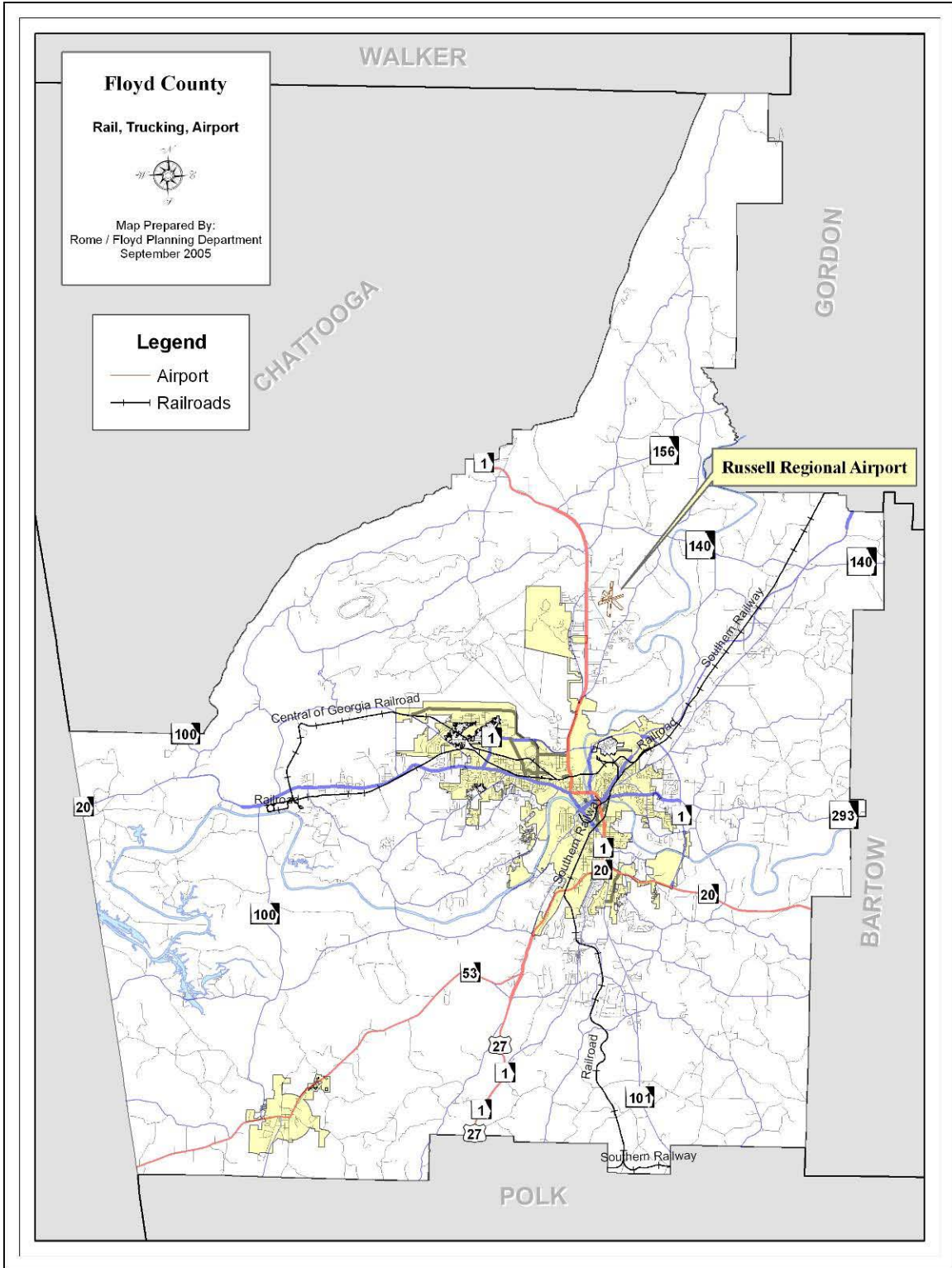












## ***Intergovernmental Coordination***

### **Local Government**

In 1997, the Georgia general assembly passed the Service Deliver Strategy Act (HB489). This act mandates local governments cooperate with regard to service delivery issues and eliminate duplication of services. The service delivery strategy the local governments agreed upon became the basis for local joint agencies and greater intergovernmental coordination.

<b>Services Provided by Contract or Joint Agency and Agency Providing Service</b>	
<b>Service Provided</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>
Animal Control	Floyd County
Building Inspections	City of Rome
E-911	Floyd County
Emergency Management	Floyd County
Fire	City of Rome/City of Cave Spring
Landfill	City of Rome
Paving	Floyd County
Planning	City of Rome
Recycling	Floyd County
Tax Collection	Floyd County

The Cities of Rome and Cave Spring and Floyd County adopted a shared services agreement in 1999. The agreement has not been revised since that time. It will be necessary for the three local governments to review and update the shared services agreement to reflect the goals and objectives of the 2005-2025 Comprehensive Plan once the Plan is completed and adopted, which will likely occur in late 2006 or early 2007.

**Joint City/County General Services Committee.** A joint committee of two county commissioners and two Rome city commissioners has been created to oversee joint agencies and coordinate services. The city and county managers serve as ex officio non-voting members of this committee. The committee meets bimonthly. At this time, the City of Cave Spring does not participate in the joint committee. The committee currently oversees the operation of joint agencies and agencies that serve both incorporated and unincorporated areas.

**Animal Control.** The Floyd County government has full oversight of animal control operations in the county and its two jurisdictions. Floyd County assumed full financial responsibility for this service in 2003. Under the current agreement, adequate animal control services are provided throughout the community.

**Community Development.** Floyd County and the City of Rome have prepared a “Rome-Floyd County Planning Commission and Rome/Floyd County Building Inspections Agreement” that establishes the framework for joint planning, building inspections, and environmental services agencies. This agreement stipulates that these agencies are administered by the City of Rome, but establishes a Joint City-County

Development Oversight Committee of city and county commissioners and managers. Both Rome and Floyd County operate separate community development departments that provide somewhat similar services for their respective governments. Under an agreement approved in 1999, both agreed in principle to combine community development departments, but have not implemented the agreement. However, in the past, these departments have cooperated on several projects including grant applications and administration.

**Economic Development.** Rome, Cave Spring, and Floyd County are active in the area of economic development. The local governments contract with the Greater Rome Chamber of Commerce to provide business recruitment and other economic development services. Floyd County provides all funding. Additionally, there are three industrial development authorities that operate for the benefit of the Floyd County area – Floyd County Development Authority, Rome-Floyd Development Authority, and the Floyd-Gordon County Development Authority. The existing mechanisms of coordination of the various economic development agencies are considered adequate and expected to remain constant through the planning period.

**Emergency Management.** Floyd County handles oversight of the E-911 system and the county-wide emergency management agency. The county has also assumed full financial responsibility for the operation of service. The intergovernmental cooperation in the area of emergency management has allowed better coordination and reduced response time in emergency situations.

**Fire.** The cities of Rome and Cave Spring each have departments that provide fire suppression and prevention services within their jurisdictions. Floyd County contracts with the cities to provide these services in unincorporated areas. Cave Spring covers unincorporated areas in the southern portions of the county. The City of Rome provides fire services in all other areas of the county not covered by Cave Spring.

**Police.** Rome, Cave Spring, and Floyd County each have their own police force in addition to the county's Sheriff's Department. The City of Rome, Floyd County, and the Floyd County Sheriff's Department have interagency agreements to assist one another in times of emergency. The City of Cave Spring currently is not a party to this agreement. County police also provide routine patrol for parks and civic buildings inside the Rome city limits. The intergovernmental cooperation between various police agencies in the county allow for greater coordination and response during emergency situations.

**Jail.** The Floyd County Sheriff's Department oversees the local jail, and Rome and Cave Spring pay a *per diem* for each prisoner based on the current intergovernmental agreement. Through a contract with the State of Georgia Department of Corrections, Floyd County provides a prison to house 320 state inmates. Inmates are used for labor crews for Floyd County and the City of Rome.

**SPLOST.** Rome, Cave Spring, and Floyd County nominally cooperate in designating SPLOST projects. Recently, the Floyd County Board of Commissioners, Rome City Commission and the Cave Spring City Council began forming a joint Citizens' SPLOST

Committee. The committee will meet and review potential projects that might be included in future special purpose, local option sales tax programs. The committee will consist of 11 citizens — six appointed by Floyd County, four selected by City of Rome and one chosen by Cave Spring. A commissioner from each government will also be appointed. This joint committee will facilitate intergovernmental cooperation concerning the selection of SPLOST projects.

**Tax Collection.** The City of Rome contracts with the county Tax Commissioner for the collection of Ad Valorem Tax. This agreement allows for more efficient collection of property tax and simplifies the process for residents. The City of Cave Spring does not collect Ad Valorem Tax.

### **Utilities.**

- *Water* – Rome, Cave Spring, and Floyd County maintain separate water systems. Under current agreements, the City of Rome provides water for a number of county residents. In order to provide efficient service to community residents, specific service areas have been delineated for each jurisdiction. Some residents in unincorporated areas of the county that receive water service from Rome are charged a slightly higher rate than Rome residents, but not more than county residents on the county's system pay. County residents of Horseleg Creek, Garden Lakes, and Riverside pay the same rates as residents of Rome. The current water agreement allows the cities and county to provide efficient water service.
- *Sewer* – Both the City of Rome and City of Cave Spring operate sewer systems. Cave Spring maintains a sewer system inside the city limits, but does not provide service to Floyd County residents. Floyd County does not provide this service to its residents, but has had a formalized agreement with the City of Rome since 1988 to provide sewer to some unincorporated areas.

**Education.** Two public school systems exist in Floyd County – Rome City Schools and Floyd County Schools. The Floyd County School System serves unincorporated Floyd County and the City of Cave Spring. Private Schools and two formal home schooling support networks serve residents of both the incorporated and unincorporated areas.

### **Regional and State Entities**

**Coosa Valley Regional Development Center.** The Coosa Valley Regional Development Center (CVRDC) serves as the regional planning and development agency for the ten county Coosa Valley area of northwest Georgia. The CVRDC provides a variety of services to governments in its region, such as land use and transportation planning coordination, services for the elderly and workforce development. The ARC is responsible for serving the public interest of the state by promoting and implementing the comprehensive planning process among its ten county region and with involvement in local and regional planning related to land use, transportation, recreation, historic preservation, natural resources, and solid waste. The city is represented on the ARC's Board of Directors.

**Georgia Department of Transportation.** The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) maintains and improves state and Federal highways in Floyd County and provides financial assistance for local road improvements. The GDOT coordinates with the local public works department and Rome Metropolitan Planning Organization.

**Georgia Department of Natural Resources.** The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) is available to provide assistance and guidance to the city in a number important areas including; water conservation, environmental protection, wildlife preservation, and historic preservation. The City of Rome has been designated Certified Local Government under the National Preservation Act, which is administered on the state level by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

**Georgia Department of Community Affairs.** The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has overall management responsibilities for the State's coordinated planning program and reviews plans for compliance with minimum planning standards. DCA provides a variety of technical assistance and grant funding opportunities to the cities and county.