

THE DODGE COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

JUNE, 2010

The Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan

Community Assessment

A Comprehensive Plan for Dodge County, the City of Chauncey, the Town of Chester, the City of Eastman, the City of Milan, and the City of Rhine, Georgia
in accordance with the Georgia Planning Act of 1989

Prepared By:

The Dodge County Comprehensive Plan Executive Committee
Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission

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INTRODUCTION

Background

Dodge County is a geographically large county in the Southern Coastal Plain of Georgia, strategically located in south central Georgia along U.S. highways 23, 341, and 280 approximately one hour southeast of Macon. Georgia's 30th largest county in geographic size, Dodge County has an estimated current population of about 20,500 persons. While its landscape remains a rural, verdant paradise of forests predominated by southern yellow pines, livestock, and small grain and vegetable based agriculture, it has a growing industrial base and retail sector offering a diverse economy. The Middle Georgia College Aviation Campus in Eastman is becoming a leading aviation education/instruction program. The City of Eastman, the county seat, has a population of about 5,700 persons. It is located in central Dodge County along U.S. 341 and 23, and is the principal location of county commercial, industrial, governmental and social activity. Other county municipalities include the City of Chauncey (2008 population estimate of 304), the Town of Chester (1,514), and the cities of Milan (1,027) and Rhine (433).

Dodge County was established in 1870 from parts of Pulaski, Telfair, and Montgomery counties. The area had originally been opened for settlement in 1805 following signing of a treaty with the Creek Indians. The presence of the Ocmulgee River, fertile agricultural lands, and abundant yellow pine forests encouraged its early growth. There were numerous, and sometimes infamous, disputes over land ownership through the years. Transportation via railroad development and exploitation of timber resources provided the most explosive growth in Dodge County history. Its population grew to about 14,000 in 1900 and then exploded to 20,000 in 1910. This growth reached a peak of 22,500 in 1920, after which it decreased to less than 21,600 in 1930. The county continued to lose population until the 1970s, when slow, steady growth resumed. Dodge County's Census population was 15,658 in 1970, 16,955 in 1980, 17,607 in 1990, and 19,171 in 2000. Dodge County has not yet reached its 1920 population of 22,500, but is projected to do so sometime in the early 2020s. Location, transportation, much available land for all uses, community facilities, natural and cultural resources, and quality of life, along with economic opportunity, continue to figure prominently in Dodge County's future growth and development as they have in the past.

Purpose

The Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan is a comprehensive plan prepared under the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning (Local Planning Requirements) of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. It is a joint plan for Dodge County and its municipalities of Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine. The plan was designed to meet the legislation's requirements for each local government to have a plan for its future growth and development in accordance with the state standards. It is a full update of the previously joint comprehensive plan first adopted in 1993, but is basically a new plan, prepared under new standards.

As a comprehensive plan, *The Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan* is a critical self-examination of Dodge County and its municipalities in the areas of population, economic development, natural and cultural resources, community facilities and services, housing, land use, intergovernmental cooperation, and service delivery; and a path for the community's future growth and development. The plan is truly a reflection of the community's concerns and desires for the future.

Format

The plan is organized by the two main components required by the Georgia Planning Act and the "Local Planning Requirements:" the *Community Assessment* and the *Community Agenda*. The plan does address the elements recommended for a comprehensive plan, an inventory and assessment to determine where the community is and has been, what are the current trends, and to help delineate and define issues and opportunities facing Dodge County and its municipalities. The first section of the comprehensive plan, the *Community Assessment*, provides foundation and context to decide what the community desires for its future growth and development, and how it plans to achieve its vision.

This *Community Assessment* component and its examination of the community is organized by element and the requirements of the "Local Planning Requirements." It is an objective inventory and analysis to illustrate existing conditions, issues, needs and opportunities. It is written in executive summary format with accompanying detailed addendum to provide an overview of major findings, to illustrate current conditions and trends, and to help frame the context of identified issues and opportunities. It provides a concise and easily reviewed foundation for consideration by the community and its decision-makers as they proceed to

develop the comprehensive plan's second, and truly most important section, the *Community Agenda*.

The *Community Agenda* will delineate an overall community vision as well as specific policies, implementation strategies for the community and its differing character areas. It outlines the implementation program and activities which the community will utilize to achieve its vision and address identified issues and opportunities. It will specify the pathways for achieving the desired patterns of growth and development and realizing the community's vision of a better place to live, work, and recreate.

This *Community Assessment* includes the following:

- An analysis of existing development patterns and land use, including an identification of areas requiring special attention and recommended character areas for consideration in developing the *Community Agenda*;
- An evaluation of current community policies, activities, and development patterns for consistency with DCA's Quality Community Objectives;
- A list of potential issues and opportunities which the community may wish to address; and
- A summary of key findings by planning element, the Summary Needs Analysis, which helps illustrate identified needs, issues and opportunities and provides context for the *Community Assessment*.

A separate *Community Assessment* Technical Addendum and Data Appendix provides supporting data and information uncovered in the staff level inventory and analysis. Most data tables can be found in this more detailed document. It contains more exhaustive background information similar to the detailed inventory and analysis of the old comprehensive plan. This data may be of potential interest to those wanting more specific information about the community and its jurisdictions. The reader can refer to the *Community Assessment* Summary Needs Analysis for a quick glance and summary of major findings and appropriate analysis of existing conditions. It also provides information on potential issues, needs and opportunities which the community may address.

Community Participation Program

A Community Participation Program as required by the Local Planning Requirements to identify the scope and techniques of planned public participation of the plan (most importantly, the *Community Agenda*) is also included. The final components of the plan will include the *Community Agenda* as well as other appendices to address the Dodge County Service Delivery Strategy. The Service Delivery Strategy is being updated concurrently in accordance with Georgia Department of Community Affairs' requirements and to insure consistency and coordination.

Plan Development

As stated, *The Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan* is being developed in accordance with the guidelines of the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning. It is being prepared with considerable community and public involvement, even at the *Community Assessment* stage. The Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan Executive Committee was comprised of elected and appointed members appointed by the Dodge County Board of Commissioners and the municipalities. This Executive Committee was responsible for policy direction and direct local government input and supervision. A Local Plan Coordination Committee will be formed to seek wide community stakeholder input and help develop the *Community Agenda*. It will be comprised of the Executive Committee members and other representatives from public and private agencies, entities, and stakeholders important to the planning process. This process will involve even more citizens. Representatives are planned to include those from the Chamber of Commerce/Industrial Authority, school system, public agencies, environmental and cultural groups, social organizations, and other business and community leaders. This will allow for better coordination and a wider range of community input, both public and private, while insuring direct liaison and representation of a steering committee.

The public hearing required after the draft *Community Assessment* is prepared and prior to its submittal was held on a joint basis February 18, 2010 at the Eastman City Council Chambers. The Joint Plan Executive Committee met a number of times to review and help identify any potential issues and opportunities and to delineate potential character areas. There was extensive interaction. A final meeting to review the entire *Community Assessment* in draft was also held. The Community Participation Program was reviewed and identified additional planned public and community involvement.

Staff from the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission provided general technical assistance, guidance, synthesis, analysis, mapping, writing, and editing assistance in development of this plan. However, ***The Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan*** is a plan being prepared by and for the people of Dodge County and its municipalities in the true spirit and intent of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. Ownership of this plan rests with the citizens and governments of Dodge County. The overriding concern throughout the plan's development is the idea, "What can be done to make our community a better place to live and work in the future?" It is the local citizenry who will benefit from plan implementation, and whose actions are necessary to carry out the plan and bring about their desired future.

EXISTING DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS AND LAND USE

Introduction

Analysis of Dodge County and its cities' existing development patterns and land use is important in planning for the area's future growth and development, including provision of public services and facilities. Such planning can also help facilitate sustainable economic development, natural and cultural resources conservation/protection, rural landscape/character preservation, adequate and affordable housing provision, and other desired community goals.

Existing Land Use

The existing land use patterns of Dodge County and its municipalities, or how the land is presently being used, were examined by the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission's Geographic Information Systems staff in 2009 by analyzing previous land use studies, tax maps, and other available sources. A generalized land use map digitized as a layer to an existing digital base map meeting DCA requirements resulted. Standard land use classifications identified in the "Local Planning Requirements" were utilized as categories, except that "agriculture" and "forestry" were separated because of the dominance of these uses within Dodge County. The descriptions of these land use classifications are defined as follows.

Land Use Category Definitions

Residential: The predominant use of land within the residential category is for single-family and multi-family dwelling units organized into general categories of net densities.

Commercial: This category is for land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities, organized into general categories of intensities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building.

Industrial: This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction activities, or other similar uses.

Public/Institutional: This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Government uses include city halls and government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc. Examples of institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc.

Transportation/Communications/Utilities: This category includes such uses as major transportation routes, public transit stations, power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, telephone switching stations, airports, port facilities or other similar uses.

Park/Recreation/Conservation: This category is for land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. These areas may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers or similar uses.

Agriculture: This category is for land dedicated to farming, such as fields, lots, pastures, farmsteads, specialty farms, livestock/poultry production, etc., or other similar rural uses.

Forestry: Land dedicated to commercial timber or pulpwood production/harvesting or other woodland use.

Undeveloped/Vacant: This category is for lots or tracts of land that are served by

typical urban public services (water, sewer, etc.) but have not been developed for a specific use or were developed for a specific use that has since been abandoned.

The generalized land use maps were provided to the local governments for review and correction. The local governments utilized local knowledge by a number of staff and elected officials to note corrections to the initial GIS maps. RC GIS staff then revised the digital information. The resulting existing land use maps are shown on Map LU-1 for Dodge County; Map LU-2 for the City of Chauncey; Map LU-3 for the Town of Chester; Map LU-4 for the City of Eastman; Map LU-5 for the City of Milan; and Map LU-6 for the City of Rhine.

The GIS system is also able to determine acreages for the various land use classifications in each jurisdiction. Table LU-1 provides the existing land use acreages for Dodge County and each of its municipalities. Combined, agriculture and forestry land uses account for about 89 percent of the land area of the county, with forestry accounting for over two-thirds (67.4 percent) of all land use by itself. Agriculture and forestry land uses also constitute nearly three-fourths (70.3 percent) of all land area land use in the City of Rhine, followed by nearly two-thirds (64.6 percent) in the City of Milan, more than one-half (56.7 percent) in the City of Chauncey, and over two-fifths (42.8 percent) in the City of Chester. The City of Eastman, the county seat, accounts for about 28 percent of total county population, and about 63 percent of the county's incorporated population. Eastman contains over 48 percent of incorporated residential land use, although over 87 percent of county residential land use acreage is in the unincorporated area. As expected, residential land uses are second highest after Agriculture and Forestry combined for Dodge County and all of its municipalities. Transportation/Communications/Utilities ranks next in land use county-wide, except in the cities of Chauncey and Eastman where Public/Institutional land uses are the third most prevalent (followed by Transportation/Communications/Utilities). Public/Institutional is next highest for the county as a whole, although the cities of Chauncey and Milan have more commercial land uses (7.6 and 2.6 percents, respectively) followed by Public/Institutional at just under 2 percent each. Eastman has the most Public/Institutional land use at nearly 21 percent of its incorporated area, followed by Chester at 5.4 percent. Commercial land uses rank

closely behind Public/Institutional county-wide with Eastman, not surprisingly having the largest percentage of land used for commercial purposes in Dodge County with 10.8 percent.

Park/Recreation/Conservation ranks next in terms of county-wide land uses, with a total of more than 600 acres identified. Chester has the largest percentage (2.0 percent), followed by Rhine (1.0 percent), then Chauncey (0.3 percent). Eastman's 0.2 percent is the same as Dodge County's total or overall percentage.

All of Dodge County's Industrial land use is located within the City of Eastman (1.6 percent) or nearby in the unincorporated area of the county (214 acres or 0.07 percent of the unincorporated area). As might be expected, Eastman has the largest concentration of commercial, industrial, and public/institutional land uses in the county. About 23 percent of county industrial land use acreage is in Eastman (more adjacent), as is 28 percent of county commercial and 41 percent of county public/institutional land use.

TABLE LU-1
Existing Land Use Distribution, 2010
 (Acres)
Dodge County, Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine

Land Use Category	Total County	% of Total County	Unincorporated County	% of Unincorporated County	Chauncey	% of Chauncey	Chester	% of Chester
Agriculture	69,838	21.6	68,053	21.7	150	13.6	9	1.9
Forestry	217,878	67.4	215,273	68.6	475	43.1	209	40.9
Residential	21,616	6.7	18,924	6.0	298	27.1	177	34.7
Commercial	1,488	0.5	915	0.29	83	7.5	9	1.7
Industrial	278	0.1	214	0.07	0	0	0	0.00
Public/Institutional	1,994	0.6	1,077	0.34	20	1.8	28	5.4
Park/Recreation/Conservation	610	0.2	566	0.18	3	0.3	10	2.0
Transportation/Communications/Utilities	9,484	2.9	8,607	2.74	72	6.5	69	13.4
Total	323,186	100	313,629	99.9	1,101	99.9	510	100

Land Use Category	Eastman	% of Eastman	Milan	% of Milan	Rhine	% of Rhine
Agriculture	749	19.2	260	12.9	617	30.4
Forestry	69	1.8	1,041	51.7	811	39.9
Residential	1,301	33.4	510	25.3	406	20.0
Commercial	422	10.8	53	2.6	6	0.3
Industrial	64	1.6	0	0	0	0
Public/Institutional	811	20.8	38	1.9	20	1.0
Park/Recreation/Conservation	8	0.2	2	0.1	21	1.0
Transportation/Communications/Utilities	477	12.2	109	5.4	150	7.4
Total	3,901	100	2,013	99.9	2,031	100

NOTE: Percentages may not add to 100.0 because of rounding. These are only estimates, and are not 100 percent accurate because of data assumptions (see text) and computer system peculiarities.

Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC Geographic Information System, 2010.

Growth Patterns (Existing and Future Growth)

Most current growth is concentrated in Eastman and in the area surrounding the City of Eastman, which together are identified as the Greater Eastman Growth Area proposed character area. More intense development, especially general commercial, industrial, and multi-family residential growth, are expected to continue within the City of Eastman as infill development primarily near existing such uses. These areas include near the old Walmart/Cochran Highway, the Walmart Supercenter on U.S. 341/Eastman Bypass, Pearl Bates Avenue, and the airport for commercial infill and the airport and industrial park for industrial growth. Additional commercial and industrial growth is projected along the major highways (U.S. 341 Bypass, U.S. 341 West and East, U.S. 23, GA 46 East) and near the airport and existing industrial park, as well as the planned new industrial park west of the airport, all of which is located in the Greater Eastman Growth Area. Residential growth is occurring primarily in the rural transitioning area outside the city limits in all directions, but many of the more recent and planned subdivisions are located west of Eastman toward Hawkinsville and Cochran. This Greater Eastman Growth Area is expected to be the principal growth area for intense land uses because of the availability of water/sewer infrastructure and because it is the existing location of most facilities, services, and economic development.

Dodge County's smaller municipalities (Chauncey, Chester, Milan, and Rhine) all currently have large percentages of agriculture/forestry lands (ranging from about 43 to 70 percent) within their jurisdictions. This means that they have ample room for desired growth within their existing city limits. Milan, in particular, foresees future industrial growth adjacent to the existing tire recycling facility and development of a new industrial park area along U.S. 280.

Current growth momentum in Dodge County can trace its life to location along U.S. 23 and U.S. 341; proximity to Macon and Warner Robins and I-75 and 16; ongoing economic and job growth, including Middle Georgia College's Aviation Campus; availability of services and infrastructure; existing population base; quality of life; and land availability. These same factors will continue to spur future growth, as well as additional opportunities for growth. The Heart of Georgia Regional Airport; vibrant downtowns/available cultural resources; rail service; abundant

natural resources and the Ocmulgee River; and the many historic buildings/areas that provide remembrances of the heritage of Dodge County are important assets for desired growth. Future growth will likely continue to concentrate in the Greater Eastman Growth Area, and to a lesser extent around the county's small towns, and western Dodge County as it has recently.

Areas Requiring Special Attention

Development can cause a substantial impact in the economy and the community that it directly affects. It is imperative that projected developments or significant areas are noted in order to provide guidance for future development. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), has termed these areas of significant change, “areas requiring special attention.” These areas are categorized by evaluating the existing land use patterns and trends within the jurisdiction of the local government to identify any areas requiring special attention. The areas are categorized into one of seven areas, with the exception of resources that may contribute to more than one area.

The areas requiring special attention are defined by DCA as:

- Areas of significant natural or cultural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon or otherwise impacted by development;
- Areas where rapid development or change of land use is likely to occur;
- Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation;
- Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors);
- Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated;
- Areas with significant infill development opportunities (scattered vacant sites);
- Areas of significant disinvestments, level of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the community as a whole.

The evaluation of the existing land use patterns and trends within Dodge County and its cities resulted in the following identification and analysis of areas requiring special attention in accordance with state guidelines. These areas were identified by the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan Executive Committee. The committee consisted of the County Commission Chairman, County Manager, Eastman City Manager, Eastman City Council Chair, several city clerks, and other local officials. Committee members attended several meetings to decide what resources in the community were of significant importance and to determine to what area the

resources contributed. It is possible for an entry to be categorized into two areas. Not all jurisdictions have listings in every category. This may be attributed to Dodge County and its cities working cooperatively, and to properly managing and planning for existing and expected growth and development, but also may be a testament to limited growth in the smaller municipalities.

Natural/Cultural Resources

Natural resources are any scenic areas, prime agricultural or forest lands, major parks, recreation and conservation areas that are of significance to the community. Cultural resources are identified as rural, residential, commercial, industrial, institutional or transportation resources, and community landmarks of historic, cultural or archeological significance. The community works to conserve and protect designated natural and cultural resources.

Dodge County

Ocmulgee River Corridor. The Ocmulgee River forms the southwest boundary of Dodge County. It is somewhat protected under Dodge County's Part V Environmental ordinance passed in 1999. The Ocmulgee joins with the Oconee River in nearby Jeff Davis County to form the Altamaha River. The Ocmulgee River is significant in Georgia history as an early transportation route for Spanish explorers, Native American Indians, and European settlers, and later for shipping cotton and naval stores and rafting timber. The river remains popular for recreation as two public boat landings (Dodge County and McCranie) are both located along it in Dodge County.

Dodge County Public Fishing Area. Located off U.S. 23/341 about 3.6 miles south of Eastman, this popular state public fishing area features a 104-acre lake stocked with largemouth bass, bluegill, redear sunfish, and channel catfish. It opened to the public in 1992. Facilities include concrete boat ramps, fishing pier, restrooms, picnic tables, and nature trail.

Jaybird Springs. Jaybird Springs is a natural springs located near Chauncey in the eastern part of Dodge County which was popular in the early 20th century for its healing mineral waters. Its

spring fed swimming pool is said to be one of the oldest public pools in Georgia. Additional features include a skating rink, miniature golf course, lodging, campground, and picnic area. The privately owned and operated historic resource most recently closed in 2009.

Devil's Den. This is a unique geologic and natural feature located on private property in southwest Dodge County off Rocky Springs Road. It appears to be an old sinkhole that has revegetated with unique vegetation. It is almost a "mini-canyon" in appearance, longer than wide, and has water running through part of it, before disappearing back underground.

Old Dodge County Jail. The historic Italianate style jail in Eastman dates from 1897 and was designed by the architectural firm of Golucke and Stewart. The building originally had a three-story central tower, which was removed when the roof was replaced, but the interior is largely intact, including the "hanging room." The jail closed in 1973 when it was replaced by an adjacent new facility. The structure is on the Georgia Trust for Historic Preservation's 2010 list of Places in Peril due to its continuing deterioration from the County's lack of funds to stabilize and maintain it. Listing in the National Register of Historic Places is currently being pursued with future restoration and/or rehabilitation desired.

Dodge County Courthouse (NR). Listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 1980, the Dodge County Courthouse was built in Eastman in 1908. Eastman-born architect Edward Columbus Hosford designed the Neoclassical style building, the first of many courthouses he designed throughout Georgia and several other states. It continues to be used for court and various County government functions.

Orphans Cemetery. Dodge County businessman, Albert G. Williamson donated the land off U.S. 23 North just outside present-day Eastman for the cemetery in 1887 after the death of a neighbor's infant. The area around the cemetery was originally known as "Orphans" for Williamson and his five orphaned brothers who moved to Dodge County from North Carolina. Still an active cemetery, it is the home of the 1912 Williamson Mausoleum, a life-like Italian marble sculpture of the land's donor, and his wife and their nephew, which is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

City of Chauncey

Chauncey School (City Hall). Completed in 1914, the two-story Neoclassical Chauncey School was designed by architect Ed Hosford, who also designed the Dodge County Courthouse. At one time, there were as many as 500 students and 21 teachers at the school. It closed in 1990 and was deeded to the City of Chauncey, which currently uses it for its City Hall. The original auditorium remains on the second floor.

Town of Chester

Chester School and Gym. The historic Chester School was built in 1927 to replace the classrooms being used on the second floor of the Dr. Massey building downtown. Two years later the school was repaired after a tornado blew it from its foundation. In 1932 Chester area citizens built the school's gymnasium. The school closed in 1990 when Dodge County schools consolidated. The local Lions Club has worked to renovate portions of the building, which the City owns, for community use.

Downtown Chester. Several extant commercial buildings along Main Street comprise the remains of Chester's historic downtown. These include Sawyer's Grocery and the old Bank of Dodge building.

Pleasant Olive and Sweet Home Church cemeteries. Two historic cemeteries in Chester maintained by local churches.

City of Eastman

Downtown Eastman Historic District. Several block area located on both sides of railroad tracks in the heart of Eastman. The buildings include primarily one and two-story masonry structures dating from the early to mid-20th century used for various commercial purposes. Two late 19th century banks, the Merchants and Farmer Bank and Citizens Bank (Old Bank of Eastman) are

among the extant landmark buildings. The City has undertaken streetscape improvements with Transportation Enhancement funds from the Georgia Department of Transportation in recent years.

Eastman Bus Station (NR). Listed in the National Register of Historic Places in 2002 at the state level of significance for its importance in 20th century transportation history and architecture, the former Eastman Bus Station was built about 1925 and later enlarged. The City of Eastman owns the 2-story brick structure located near downtown at 305 College Street. It is currently vacant and in need of rehabilitation. The City has been awarded grant funds to assist with the cost.

Eastman Depot. The privately owned depot dates from 1906 when it was constructed by the Southern Railway to replace the original 1869 Macon and Brunswick depot. It is located adjacent to downtown.

Cong. Billy Stuckey House. Early 20th century historic landmark home of former Congressman and Chairman of Stuckey's.

W.S. Stuckey House. Early 20th century historic landmark home of founder of Stuckey's and father of former Congressman Billy Stuckey, located at 5005 Fifth Avenue at Oak Street. Currently being used for Boys and Girls Clubs of the Middle Georgia Region Administrative Office.

Eastman House (NR). Listed in the National Register, the home of William Pitt Eastman, for whom the city was named, was built in 1872. The Dodge Historical Society owns, restored, and maintains the property, which is open by appointment for tours.

Peabody School. A historic African-American school listed in the National Register in 2004, the Peabody School was built in 1925. The Colonial Revival style main building was also the work of E.C. Hosford, the architect who designed the Dodge County Courthouse. A non-profit community group owns the school, which it has been working to rehabilitate for local use as funds permit.

Historic Residential Areas. Three large concentrations of historic houses dating from the late 19th through the early 20th centuries are located generally north/west and east/south of downtown Eastman. They have been identified as the 1st to 5th Avenue East, Main Street, and 5th to 9th Avenue West residential historic districts.

City of Milan

Milan Depot. Built in 1889 as Milan began its development with the coming of the Savannah, Americus, and Montgomery Railroad, the historic depot operated for nearly 100 years before closing in the early 1980s. The City of Milan has been awarded Transportation Enhancement funds from GDOT for the Phase I rehabilitation of the depot as a museum.

Downtown Milan. The historic central core of Milan is generally bounded by U.S. 280 on the south, east of the Telfair/Dodge County line on the west, north of Southeast Railroad Street to the north, and east of Cobb Street to the east. The late 19th/early 20th century commercial buildings which remain in Milan's historic downtown are located within this area.

City of Rhine

Rhine Historic District. A large area of Rhine was identified in 2009 as a potentially National Register eligible historic district in conjunction with required Section 106 environmental review for GDOT's planned traffic signal upgrades. Located in downtown Rhine with the highest concentration of historic resources primarily along Central and East streets and 4th Avenue, the area is roughly bounded by Railroad Street to the south, Old Eastman Road to the west, 2nd Avenue to the north, and properties along 4th Avenue to the east. The district is comprised of late 19th and early to mid-20th century commercial and residential structures, a church, a school, and the railroad tracks, all of which are typical of a small southern railroad town of the period.

Rapid Development/Change Likely

Designated locations where development or disturbance of land is expected. The development can be categorized as residential, commercial, industrial, public/institutional, agriculture/forestry, mixed use, transportation/communication/utilities, and/or park/recreation/conservation.

Dodge County

U.S. 341/Eastman Bypass. Also known as Terry Coleman Parkway, this area is located southwest of the Eastman city limits along U.S. 341/GA 27 and extends nearly 4 miles from the Eastman/Dodge Chamber of Commerce/Welcome Center to northwest of Fish Road where it intersects with the Hawkinsville Highway (U.S. 341/GA 27 Business). The new Walmart Supercenter shopping center is located along this corridor. Most of the land adjacent to the bypass is currently used primarily for scattered residences, subdivision development, and agriculture/timber, but the availability of land in close proximity to Eastman makes this area likely to develop for primarily commercial and residential uses.

Airport Area. The unincorporated area adjacent to the Heart of Georgia Regional Airport and the Georgia Aviation Campus of Middle Georgia College located off GA 46 East, primarily south of Glyen Hickman Road and east and west of Airport Road, is expected to experience industrial and related growth largely due to its proximity to the airport. The community also plans to develop a new industrial park west of the airport. Widening of GA 46 East, at least to the airport, and relocation of Airport Road to accommodate the planned industrial park would help support the Aviation College, encourage further economic development, and support/accommodate airport improvements.

Orphans Cemetery Rd. The portion of Orphans Cemetery Road located between Cochran Highway (U.S. 23/GA 87) and U.S. 341/GA 27 is currently undergoing growth, which is expected to continue, due primarily to the location of North Dodge Elementary School at 167 Orphans Cemetery Road and the school's annexation into the city of Eastman. Pecan Ridge subdivision at the corner of U.S. 341 and Orphans Cemetery Road began development within the last several years.

Rocky Springs Rd. Located southwest of Eastman, there have been several new subdivision developments along or near Rocky Springs Road in recent years, including Legacy Woods and Rocky Springs Estates. Residential growth is expected to continue as the local economy improves.

Pine Bluff Golf Course/Development. Planned development of this 100 to 200 acre area off U.S. 341 south of Eastman has not yet occurred given the current economic downturn, but is expected in the future as the economy improves.

Ben Giddens Road. Area north of Eastman where land is being sold for residential development.

City of Chauncey

No areas of rapid development or change likely were noted during the planning process.

Town of Chester

No areas within Chester are expected to undergo rapid development or change.

City of Eastman

Airport. The Heart of Georgia Regional Airport and Georgia Aviation Campus of Middle Georgia College located off GA 46 East is an area of anticipated economic development growth given the proximity to the Level III airport and existing industries. The approximate 405-acre airport facility has been annexed into the City of Eastman and has city water and sewer service; however, the adjacent area does not. Extensions to the unserved area would help stimulate further desired economic development, including that of the planned airport industrial park west of the airport.

Hawkinsville Road and Pearl Bates Avenue. Pearl Bates Avenue is in the western part of Eastman, linking U.S. 23/GA 87 (Cochran Highway) and U.S. 341/GA 27 (Hawkinsville Highway). Both Dodge County Middle and High Schools are located along Pearl Bates Avenue. Residential development has already taken place south of the intersection of these two roads, while additional growth is expected on the north side as well.

Ward Street/Dodge Avenue. This area is located in southeast Eastman and currently has a combination of various land uses, including residential, public/institutional, commercial, and agriculture/forestry. Because of its proximity to existing development and infrastructure, this area is likely to continue growing. There is approximately 40 acres behind an existing subdivision that has development potential.

College/Oak streets corridors. This commercial and residential corridor runs through the heart of Eastman and will continue to be an area likely to experience development and/or change of land uses. One-way pairing of Oak and College streets to tie in with U.S. 23 would also further enhance the corridors' growth.

City of Milan

U.S. 280. Also known locally as the Milan-Rhine Highway, U.S. 280 passes through Milan forming the southern boundary of the downtown area. Four-laning is planned for U.S. 280 across Georgia to Columbus as a developmental highway as funds permit. Although there is residential and commercial development currently along the route, there is potential for development of adjacent existing agriculture/forestry lands.

City of Rhine

No such areas were noted in Rhine during the planning process.

Development Outpace Infrastructure

These are areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, such as water, sewer, transportation, and other infrastructure.

Dodge County

U.S. 341/Eastman Bypass. Much of this approximately 4 mile stretch of U.S. 341 southwest of Eastman is not currently served by water and sewer, which would be needed for any large scale development.

Airport Rd. Area. This previously described area is destined for growth, but it is currently hampered due to limited water and sewer infrastructure. Located within the City of Eastman, the airport has public water/sewer service, but the adjacent area does not. The relocation of Airport Road and additional annexation may also be needed.

Jimmy Pruitt Rd. Located north of Eastman, extensive residential development has occurred primarily on the west side of Jimmy Pruitt Road despite the lack of public water or sewer.

Dublin Rd. GA 117 North, otherwise known as Dublin Road, runs northeast of Eastman toward Cadwell and Dublin in Laurens County. There is concentrated residential development close to Eastman, while scattered residential uses exist elsewhere along Dublin Road interspersed with agriculture/forestry land uses. Additional residential development is anticipated along this important corridor, most of which is not served with public water or sewer.

Dodge Co. Golf Course Rd. This road runs generally north of U.S. 23/GA 87 (Cochran Highway) before winding around to both the west and east. In addition to the Dodge County Golf Club, extensive commercial and residential development has occurred adjacent to the Eastman city limits with more expected on existing agriculture/forestry lands. Only that portion located in Eastman has city water available, while there is currently no public sewer service provided.

Gerald Estates/Warren Way. Area of residential development located northeast of Eastman between GA Highways 117 and 46. Infrastructure extension could help encourage further development along Warren Way.

Pine Bluff Area. Area off U.S. 341 South southeast of Eastman and near the Pine Bluff Golf and Country Club and Dodge County Public Fishing Area. Commercial and some residential development has taken place in the area, but there is additional land with potential for growth. Plans for development of 100 to 200 acres have been on hold.

Constitution Avenue. Area adjacent to southwest Eastman that lacks sewer service.

City of Chauncey

The City of Chauncey has no such areas where development is outpacing infrastructure.

Town of Chester

There were no such areas noted in Chester.

City of Eastman

Airport. The previously addressed Level III Heart of Georgia Regional Airport and Georgia Aviation Campus of Middle Georgia College and adjacent area need additional water and sewer infrastructure and relocation of Airport Road to aid further growth and accommodate future economic development and a planned industrial park.

Existing Industrial Park. The existing Eastman/Dodge County Industrial Park is located in the southeastern area of Eastman on the northeast side of U.S. 341. While there have been some closings, Alcoa is one of the major industries currently operating in the park. The Eastman Regional Youth Detention Center is also located there, and the new Dodge County Jail is under

construction. Water and sewer service needs to be fully extended to the industrial park to help encourage further compatible economic development.

Morgan Creek, Minter Ridge, Greenwood Heights, Northlakes, and 9th Avenue (out to Jimmy Pruitt Road) are subdivisions or areas of Eastman that lack sewer service.

City of Milan

U.S. 280 West. Public water and sewer extensions are needed along U.S. 280 West in and near Milan to help encourage growth along this important corridor. The planned widening of the route would also enhance its attractiveness for development.

City of Rhine

There were no such areas noted in Rhine or near the city limits.

Areas Needing Redevelopment

These areas are generally in need of treatment/rehabilitation to help restore structures/area back to a former state or to a better condition by means of repairs, remodeling, or demolishing the structure and building a new one. Redevelopment of these structures improves the aesthetics and appearance of the area, increasing the chances of growth.

Dodge County

Cotton Mill Area. This area is located in north central Eastman (within Northeast Eastman Neighborhood Redevelopment Area) and the adjacent unincorporated area. It developed originally as worker housing for a cotton mill. Today the historic mill structure houses Wholesale Builders, a lumber/hardware business. Much of the low-to-moderate income housing in the area needs improvement and would benefit from CDBG assistance.

Shady Acres. Comprised of older manufactured homes, many of which need remodeling, this residential development is located on WPA Road east of Eastman. Only a small area is furnished with city water, while there is no sewer service available.

Constitution Ave. Neighborhood. Located in unincorporated Dodge County adjacent to southwest Eastman, this low income neighborhood is roughly bounded by Congo Lane to the north, Philadelphia Avenue to the east, Independence Street to the south, and Oak Grove Lane to the west. The residences in the neighborhood are in need of renovations.

City of Chauncey

Scattered houses. Only scattered residences, rather than specific areas, in Chauncey appear to need major repairs and/or residential redevelopment.

Downtown. The appearance of downtown Chauncey's core, roughly bounded to the south by the McRae Highway (U.S. 280) and continuing north along both sides of Mullin Street and across North Railroad Avenue, could be improved through rehabilitation of its commercial structures.

Town of Chester

Scattered houses. There were no concentrations of residences noted that needed substantial rehabilitation; however, scattered houses are in need.

City of Eastman

College Street Corridor. The College Street corridor runs along U.S. 23 on the south to about 5th Avenue (GA 46) in central Eastman. This area contains primarily commercial properties, some of which have been abandoned, in need of rehabilitation or redevelopment. The corridor's appearance is of particular importance as it is a frequently used gateway into downtown Eastman, and a main entrance into the Eastman/Dodge County Industrial Park is located along it.

Bacon Heights; Bethel Street; Northeast, Southeast, and Southwest Eastman Neighborhood Redevelopment Areas. These are all areas of Eastman with housing in need of rehabilitation or redevelopment. The three large multi-block redevelopment areas near Eastman's historic core are all CDBG target areas.

City of Milan

Downtown. The City of Milan developed as a station along the Savannah, Americus, and Montgomery Railway and was incorporated in 1891. Named for the large city in Northern Italy, Milan is located on the Telfair/Dodge County line. Downtown Milan encompasses the central business district, all of which is in Telfair County. The historic commercial structures in the downtown are in need of rehabilitation. The Milan Depot is being rehabilitated as a local history museum using DOT Transportation Enhancement grant funds.

City of Rhine

Downtown. Rhine's historic downtown commercial core is primarily located in a several block area between 1st and 2nd streets and along Central Street extending just north and south of 2nd street. Many of the mostly single-story brick structures dating from the late 19th through early to mid 20th centuries need rehabilitation to improve their appearance and for their future preservation.

Scattered houses. Rhine has a large collection of historic late 19th through early to mid 20th century residences, some of which need rehabilitation. There were no specific areas noted that needed special attention.

Large Abandoned Structures/Sites

These are areas with large structures/sites that have been deserted; due to the abandonment it is common for beautification treatment to be needed to improve appearance and aesthetics of the structures/sites. This includes sites that may be environmentally contaminated.

Dodge County

Rayonier Pulpwood Yard. Located off Golf Course Road, this former pulpwood yard is no longer in use and has redevelopment potential.

City of Chauncey

There were no large abandoned structures or sites noted in Chauncey.

Town of Chester

No such properties were identified in Chester.

City of Eastman

Standard Candy. Standard Candy closed its Eastman plant in 2009, sending 250 jobs to its Nashville, TN headquarters. Located on Oak Street (U.S. 23/GA 87), the facility, was built in the 1950s for Stuckey's Candy. Standard Candy purchased Stuckey's in 1985. Major upgrades are needed to the facility.

Old Chevrolet Dealership Building. Although vacant for some years, the old Chevrolet Dealership building remains in reasonably good condition. It is located on Oak Street (U.S. 23/GA 87).

Old KFC and Dodge Plaza are both located along Oak Street (U.S. 23/GA 87). A commercial shopping strip, Dodge Plaza currently has several tenants, including Hibbett Sports and Chinese and Mexican restaurants, but there are some available spaces.

Old Walmart Shopping Center. The old Walmart Shopping Center on Oak Street (northwest of Pearl Bates Avenue and the Dodge County Middle School) was abandoned several years ago

when the new Walmart Superstore was opened at the intersection of the Eastman Bypass and Griffin Avenue/Rhine Highway (GA 117/87). The former Walmart currently houses a ChasMart lawn and garden supply business. A Harvey's Supermarket, a factory clothing outlet, and a nail salon are also in the complex. Several vacancies exist, such as where Subway was previously located.

Old Sara Lee Building, DB Microfilm, Dempsey Electric Building, and Optima are all vacant industrial or commercial properties located at the Eastman/Dodge County Industrial Park.

City of Milan

No large abandoned structures or sites were noted in Milan. The abandoned Milan State Prison facility is slated to reopen as a private correctional facility.

City of Rhine

No such properties were identified in Rhine.

Infill Opportunities

These areas have existing infrastructure in place and help to reduce the disturbance of undeveloped land. Development of sites close to infill opportunities is strongly encouraged throughout the community; existing infrastructure may be available depending on proximity.

Dodge County

Stuckey Timber area. This area of new residential subdivision development is located on former timberland owned by members of the Stuckey family. It is located northwest of North Dodge Elementary. There may be public infrastructure needs to properly guide and encourage desired growth.

City of Chauncey

No specific infill opportunities were identified in Chauncey, although there is ample vacant, undeveloped land.

Town of Chester

There were no specific sites or areas noted in Chester that might provide opportunity for infill, although there is ample vacant, undeveloped land.

City of Eastman

Existing Industrial Park. As previously addressed, the existing Eastman/Dodge County Industrial Park is located in the southeastern part of Eastman. Infill opportunities exist in vacant industrial or commercial structures located within the park, including the old Sara Lee building, DB Microfilm, Dempsey Electric Building, and Optima. There is also acreage available for new development.

Dodge Plaza. Several vacant storefronts are available in this strip commercial development located along Oak Street.

Old Walmart Shopping Center. There are several vacancies in the former Walmart Shopping Center, which would provide space for commercial infill (abandoned Subway restaurant), but the major anchor structures are occupied by a lawn/garden shop and grocery store.

Sara Lee at Industrial Park. The former Sara Lee Knit Products building at the Eastman-Dodge County Industrial Park is available for new industrial infill use.

Morgan Creek Subdivision. Located off McRae Road/U.S. 341 South adjacent to South Dodge Elementary School, Morgan Creek subdivision is comprised of manufactured housing. There are vacant sites/lots which provide opportunities for additional infill development.

Dodge Avenue and Ward Street. This area in east central Eastman has some undeveloped land located adjacent to existing residential, industrial, and commercial land uses, which is already served by public water and sewer, making it attractive for infill development.

Coffee Insurance, College and Oak streets. This commercial property in the center of downtown Eastman has tremendous potential for infill development primarily due to its prominent location on one of the city's major thoroughfares.

Downtown vacancies. Downtown Eastman is a thriving commercial area consisting of structures located on either side of the central railroad tracks. While a number of businesses, such as restaurants, retail shops, a theatre, and personal grooming services, are located downtown, there are scattered vacancies which need to be filled with other complementary commercial uses. Recent downtown streetscape improvements, private renovations, and various promotions make the historic downtown an attractive place to visit.

City of Milan

Downtown hotel site. The former, now vacant, site of a historic hotel that burned in downtown Milan provides a commercial infill opportunity served by City water and sewer. There are undeveloped lands within the city limits which could be utilized for development.

City of Rhine

No specific potential infill opportunities were identified in Rhine, although there is ample vacant undeveloped land.

Concentration of Housing/Income Need

These locations are defined as significant areas of blight where low income or unemployment causes a higher level of poverty than the community as a whole. This results in a lack of investment and property maintenance.

Dodge County

Cotton Mill Area. Much of the housing in this area of unincorporated Dodge County adjacent to the Northeast Eastman Neighborhood Redevelopment Area needs renovations and is eligible for CDBG funding assistance. The area developed originally in the early 20th century as worker housing for the nearby cotton mill.

Shady Acres. As previously noted, this residential area on WPA Road east of Eastman is comprised of older manufactured homes, many of which are in need of major repairs or remodeling.

Constitution Avenue. This previously described neighborhood adjacent to southwest Eastman consists of many run down homes in need of renovations due, in part, to the residents' low incomes. This may be an eligible CDBG target area for low-to-moderate income housing rehabilitation.

City of Chauncey

There are no large concentrations of income/housing needs reported in Chauncey.

Town of Chester

While there were no large areas of income/housing needs noted in Chester, there are scattered residences throughout the town which need major renovations.

City of Eastman

Northeast Eastman Neighborhood Redevelopment Area. This is a large CDBG target area located northeast of U.S. 23. Major streets include Park, Leitch, Neese, Ada, and Dorrough. Many of the houses need rehabilitation.

Southeast Eastman Neighborhood Redevelopment Area. Located southeast of downtown, this large area consists of many older residences along Moriah, Beulah, Smith, Callahan, and other adjacent streets. This neighborhood is also a CDBG housing rehabilitation target area.

Southwest Eastman Neighborhood Redevelopment Area. This neighborhood is another of Eastman's CDBG target areas. It is located southwest of downtown and west of GA 117. Residences needing rehabilitation are found principally along Plum, Duhart, and Burch streets.

City of Milan

No large concentrations of income/housing needs were identified in Milan.

City of Rhine

There were likewise no such areas noted in Rhine at this time.

Recommended Character Areas

The preliminarily identified and recommended character areas (and subareas) include the following parts of the county and its municipalities because of special areas of concern, their uniqueness, as well as differing expectations of, and stimuli for, growth and development. They are shown graphically on Map LU-7 for Dodge County. Each municipality is considered a separate character area on its own. The City of Eastman and the Greater Eastman Growth Area are shown in more detail on Map LU-8, and have a number of character areas/subareas of the City of Eastman and its environs. Milan and its three recommended character areas are shown on Map LU-9. The county's remaining small municipalities, Chauncey, Chester, and Rhine, are not separately mapped because no subareas were noted.

Dodge County

Natural Resources.

Ocmulgee River Corridor. This recommended character area encompasses the 100 foot natural vegetative buffer required by the 1991 River Corridor Protection Act and adopted by Dodge County in 1999 under its Part V Environmental Ordinance, plus the remaining flood plain/zone which is bounded generally by Adam Spring Road to the east. It includes two public boat landings, Dodge County and McCranie. Principal land uses allowed in this character area should be conservation, forestry, and recreation with limited low density residential, commercial, public, and transportation/compatible utility uses.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Enforce Dodge County's Environmental Conservation Ordinance to conserve and protect Ocmulgee River Corridor
- Continue to maintain/upgrade as needed Dodge County and McCranie public boat landings, including consideration of possible relocation of Dodge County Landing

- Seek compatible land uses which are respective of the corridor's natural environment
- Practice management/guidance/direction of growth and development to protect natural and cultural resources and rural landscape

Dodge County Public Fishing Area. Located within the Greater Eastman Growth Area southeast of the Eastman city limits, this popular state-owned recreation facility is utilized by local residents and visitors alike. Continued park/recreation/conservation land use is desired and appropriate.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Support continued state ownership, management, maintenance, and improvements, as needed to the PFA
- Work to promote increased usage of PFA as important to local nature-based tourism/economic development efforts
- Seek compatible land uses surrounding the PFA which support/enhance its usage and help protect its rural setting and natural environment

Jaybird Springs. The naturally and culturally significant Jaybird Springs property near Chauncey in southeastern Dodge County has tremendous potential to once again operate as a tourism destination. Park/recreation/conservation land uses should be maintained to help protect and preserve this important historic site.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Seek ownership/management (private, public, or joint) committed and able to rehabilitate historic facilities in an appropriate manner and operate as an economically viable tourism attraction
- Pursue listing in National Register of Historic Places
- Market property extensively throughout Georgia and Southeastern US

Rural Dodge County. The vast majority of Dodge County, with its predominant forestry/agriculture/rural land uses, will be the largest character area. It is attractive for residential growth due to its many natural and cultural assets, including pine forests, agricultural fields, the Ocmulgee River, major creeks, vernacular architecture, open spaces, and the like which enhance the quality of life. These very same qualities offer advantages and potential for economic development through forestry, agriculture, recreation, tourism, and value added concerns.

Scattered residential and transportation/communications/utilities uses also exist in this rural setting. While most residential subdivision development is occurring west of Eastman, but within the Greater Eastman Growth Area, additional more intense residential growth is expected in pockets particularly near crossroad communities, water bodies, and existing residential developments.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Pursue supporting county-wide land use regulations
- Practice management/guidance/direction of growth and development to protect rural landscape and natural/cultural resources
- Encourage infill development where infrastructure already exists
- Extend infrastructure as needed to guide location of future development
- Support compatible development of natural/cultural resources
- Address beautification/litter control issues

Greater Eastman Growth Area. The City of Eastman is the largest municipality, the seat of county government, and the site of most of Dodge County's commercial, industrial, and other economic activity. As such, the City of Eastman will continue to be the focus for intense development, particularly general commercial, industrial, and multi-family residential growth. The expected growth and character area will include the surrounding environs, extending out U.S. 23/GA 87 to the northwest toward Cochran; GA 117 toward Cadwell/Dublin on the northeast; GA 46 toward Soperton on the east; U.S. 341 west and southeast to include the Dodge County Public Fishing Area and Pine Bluff Golf and Country Club; and U.S. 341 Bypass/Terry

Coleman Parkway and the area to the south. Residential growth is expected to continue throughout this area, but many of the more recent and planned subdivision developments are located west of Eastman toward Hawkinsville and Cochran. Additional commercial and industrial growth is anticipated along the major highways and near the airport and industrial park. This Greater Eastman Growth Area is the likely principal growth area for intense land uses because of the current or potential availability of water/sewer services and because it is the existing location of facilities, services, and economic development.

A number of subarea character areas within the Greater Eastman Growth Area and located within and adjacent to the Eastman city limits have been delineated. These include Downtown Eastman, the industrial park and airport industrial areas, a number of entranceways and corridors, and several historic districts and redevelopment areas. These recommended character areas/subareas result because of the need for differing policies, implementation strategies, public investment, and regulation. They will be addressed more specifically under the City of Eastman.

Overall, the Greater Eastman Growth Area is and would be characterized by a mixture of all land use types, but at a higher density and intensity customary for small urban areas. Subdivision developments, apartment complexes, shopping centers, industrial parks, hospitality businesses, office complexes, governmental buildings, schools, and large community recreation facilities are examples of uses that are primarily found or more concentrated within this area.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Develop county-wide land use regulations to encourage compatible land utilization
- Seek infill development to utilize existing infrastructure or where such infrastructure can reasonably be extended or provided
- Extend infrastructure to control/direct/support growth as desired
- Support compatible development of natural/cultural resources
- Practice management/guidance/direction of growth and development to protect natural/cultural resources and rural landscape

- Explore feasibility of annexation into the City of Eastman where appropriate and desired

City of Chauncey

The City of Chauncey is considered a character area in and of itself. Incorporated in 1883 at the site of Station Number 21 along the Macon and Brunswick Railway, it was named for a New Hampshire lumber dealer, William Chauncey, who settled there. Chauncey is a historic community with a rural village character, but incorporated with a public water system. It once boasted a school and a thriving downtown commercial area near the railroad. Chauncey does not have a true downtown in the traditional sense remaining, but does have several vacant commercial storefronts and some historic homes and churches. The old school serves as city hall and as a community center, with an adjacent gymnasium and ballfields. A cotton gin remains in operation. U.S. 341/Golden Isles Highway traverses the center of Chauncey, while GA 165 runs generally north/south. Most commercial development is located in the northwest quadrant, while residential uses predominate in the other developed sections of town. The lack of public sewerage in the city limits the type and intensity of future growth.

Land uses within the City of Chauncey are likely to continue to be predominantly low-density residential with some limited small business. Supportive public/institutional, recreational, and transportation/communications/utility uses may possibly expand as well. The City of Chauncey would be helped with additional public infrastructure, including a new water system, and land use regulation.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Serve/protect existing small town atmosphere, development, and quality of life
- Encourage additional compatible growth and development
- Seek new public water system and other infrastructure, as needed
- Pursue supporting, coordinating land use or other appropriate regulations to encourage compatible, desired growth and development

- Consider possible National Register recognition for local historic landmarks, such as Chauncey School, and/or historic district

Town of Chester

Located in northern Dodge County, the Town of Chester is also a separate character area. It was incorporated in 1916. The Central of Georgia Railroad's extended service through Wrightsville and Tennille (known as the W and T train) passed through Chester several times daily in the early 1900s, which contributed to the town's rapid growth during that period. Several extant commercial buildings along Main Street comprise the remains of Chester's historic downtown. There are also scattered historic residences as well as two historic cemeteries. The former Chester School and Gym have been renovated for community use.

Chester remains a historic community with a rural village character, although it is an incorporated town with both public water and sewer service. Dodge State Prison opened in Chester in 1983 bringing with it employment opportunities for local and area residents. The existing water and sewer systems, however, will not accommodate possible future prison expansion.

Anticipated land uses within the Town of Chester are expected to continue to be primarily low-density residential with some small businesses, as well as public/institutional (prison, churches, etc.), recreation, and transportation/communications/utility uses.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Work to protect existing small town atmosphere, development, and quality of life
- Encourage additional compatible growth and development
- Upgrade existing water and sewer infrastructure to accommodate prison expansion or other development, as needed
- Pursue supporting, coordinating land use or other appropriate regulations to encourage compatible, desired growth and development

- Consider possible National Register recognition for local historic landmarks, such as Chester School

City of Milan

Milan's development dates from the 1880s and the coming of the Savannah, Americus, and Montgomery (SAM) Railroad. The wife of one of the railroad's executives suggested the city be named for the Italian city, Milan. The community grew to be a thriving trade center for naval stores, timber, cotton, and livestock by the early 20th century. The Dodge/Telfair county line passes from southwest to northeast through the heart of Milan. The City of Milan has been subdivided into the following three subareas or character areas: Downtown; U.S. 280 Corridor; and Milan Remainder.

Downtown. As previously described, the historic central core of Milan is located on either side of the railroad track in the Telfair County side of the city. Late 19th and early to mid 20th century commercial buildings and residences remain, including the original depot built in 1889, which is to be rehabilitated for a museum. The historic hotel burned in recent years, presenting an opportunity for infill development. Commercial and residential uses are expected to continue in downtown Milan in the future.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Encourage rehabilitation of historic properties and use of historic preservation tax incentives
- Complete rehabilitation of Milan Depot for museum use
- Consider possible historic district designation
- Seek compatible infill development for hotel site and others
- Work to protect existing small town atmosphere, development, and quality of life

U.S. 280 Corridor. This corridor runs generally east-west through Milan and forms the southern boundary of downtown. Currently there are commercial uses concentrated more in the central one-third of the route, some on both the north and south sides of U.S. 280. There are also

residential uses along the corridor, primarily east of downtown to the city limits. Ample undeveloped land exists adjacent to U.S. 280, particularly in Milan's southwest quadrant. Growth is anticipated in this area, especially in conjunction with planned future 4-laning of U.S. 280 throughout Georgia; however, public water and sewer will need to be extended to serve all of U.S. 280 West in Milan.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Pursue public water and sewer service extensions along U.S. 280 West to promote growth
- Work to attract compatible development (commercial, industrial, residential, institutional, recreation) along U.S. 280 corridor
- Support 4-laning of U.S. 280 through Dodge and Telfair counties and all of Georgia
- Pursue supporting, coordinating land use or other appropriate regulations to encourage compatible, desired growth and development

Milan Remainder. This is comprised of the area within the Milan city limits not previously encompassed in downtown or along the U.S. 280 corridor. A mixture of land uses currently exist, with residential and agriculture/forestry (undeveloped) predominating, but also some commercial and institutional uses. Additional growth is desired which is compatible with Milan's small town atmosphere and quality of life.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Maintain existing small town quality of life
- Seek compatible growth and development
- Utilize infrastructure extensions to guide/direct/support future growth as desired
- Pursue supporting, coordinating land use or other appropriate regulations to encourage compatible, desired growth and development

City of Rhine

Rhine was chartered in 1891. It developed largely due to construction of the SAM Railroad through the area in 1889. A number of settlers in the community were of German descent, hence the city was named after the Rhine River in Germany. The entire city is considered a character area. As previously noted, much of Rhine was identified in 2009 as a potential historic district due to its large concentration of extant historic properties dating from the late 19th and early to mid 20th centuries.

In terms of present land use, commercial uses in Rhine are primarily clustered within and near the four block area bounded on the north by Second Street (U.S. 280); the intersection of Old Milan Road/U.S. 280/First Street on the east; First Street to the south; and Pine Street on the west. Residential development is located in all areas of Rhine, most often along or adjacent to the major roads which continue beyond the city limits in nearly all directions. These include Sycamore Street, Fair Haven Road, Central Street/Rhine Highway, Milan-Rhine Highway (U.S. 280 East), Oak Grove Church Road, Central Street South, Pittman Farm Road, Reeves Street, and Will Reeves Road. Scattered public/institutional uses exist as well, along with ample undeveloped land. Rhine is currently seeking USDA Rural Development funds to provide the city's first public sewer system, which will make the community more attractive for compatible development, especially along the U.S. 280 West (Abbeville) and East (Milan) corridors slated for future widening.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Install public sewer system and upgrade other existing infrastructure, as needed and funds are available
- Consider nominating Rhine Historic District for National Register of Historic Places to help encourage its preservation and possible heritage tourism attraction
- Pursue compatible growth and development consistent with small town values and quality of life
- Maintain existing small town quality of life

- Pursue supporting, coordinating land use or other appropriate regulations to encourage compatible, desired growth and development

City of Eastman

Eastman Urban Area (City Limits). This general character area includes all portions of Eastman within the current city limits that are not otherwise identified as being in a more specific subarea. A wide range of urban land uses are found throughout this area, such as residential, commercial, public/institutional, and undeveloped (agriculture/forestry). Most of the area has public water and sewer service available currently or has potential access by extension of existing lines. The availability of basic infrastructure will help encourage infill development.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Encourage compatible infill development
- Extend and upgrade infrastructure as needed to provide desired level of service appropriate for a small to mid-sized urban area
- Pursue supporting, coordinating land use or other appropriate regulations to encourage compatible, desired growth and development

Greater Eastman Growth Area. See previous description under Dodge County. Includes Eastman Urban Area and all subareas/character areas of Eastman as well as surrounding portions of unincorporated Dodge County.

Downtown. Downtown consists of a several block linear area encompassing primarily commercial properties on both sides of the railroad tracks through the heart of Eastman (east of U.S. 341/23). Many of the buildings are historic, dating from the late 19th to early to mid 20th centuries, and collectively comprise a potentially eligible National Register Historic District. While some vacancies exist, such as in the landmark Eastman Depot, the overall appearance of downtown has improved and continues to improve as a result of DOT Transportation Enhancement streetscape projects and private investment.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Continue revitalization efforts to attract businesses and people to downtown
- Complete current Transportation Enhancement streetscape improvement project
- Work to fill existing vacant properties with compatible businesses
- Pursue National Register Historic District listing and encourage use of historic preservation rehabilitation tax incentives
- Encourage rehabilitation of historic Eastman Depot and Eastman Bus Station

College/Eastman and Oak streets/U.S. 23 Corridor. This commercial and residential corridor runs through the center of Eastman. Because of its prominent location, it is expected to experience growth and/or land use changes, such as conversions of historic houses from residential to professional office/business uses. Proposed one-way pairing of Oak and College streets which ties in with U.S. 23 toward Cochran would help alleviate traffic along this busy corridor and possibly enhance growth.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Advocate for one-way pairing of Oak and College streets
- Utilize local zoning ordinance or other appropriate regulations to guide corridor's growth and acceptable/compatible land uses
- Pursue National Register listing for individual historic landmarks and/or possible historic district and encourage use of historic preservation rehabilitation tax incentives

1st to 5th Avenue East, Main Street, and 5th to 9th Avenue West Residential Historic Districts. These three character areas are large concentrations of extant historic late 19th to early to mid 20th century homes located generally north/west and east/south of downtown Eastman. They appear potentially eligible for National Register historic district listing. While many of the structures remain in residential use, others are transitioning to commercial uses (offices, small businesses).

Suggested Development Strategies

- Work to preserve historic neighborhoods and residential uses to the extent possible, allowing compatible commercial uses as appropriate
- Nominate historic districts for listing in the National Register of Historic Places
- Encourage utilization of historic preservation rehabilitation tax incentives
- Utilize local codes enforcement to help monitor neighborhood/building appearance/condition
- Encourage development of compatible infill, in terms of size, scale, materials, design, and the like when possible

U.S. 341/U.S. 23 South, U.S. 341 North, U.S. 23 North, GA 117 North and South, and GA 46 East Entranceways. The above listed entranceways into Eastman are each considered character areas as they provide gateways from the city limits into the community from all directions, including Hawkinsville to the west; Cochran to the northwest; Cadwell/Dublin to the northeast; Soperton to the east; Chauncey/Helena/McRae to the southeast; and Rhine to the south. The U.S. 341/U.S. 23 South Entranceway specifically links the Eastman/Dodge County Industrial Park Area with the rest of Eastman proper, primarily to the northwest, while the GA 46 East Entranceway provides connectivity with the Heart of Georgia Regional Airport Industrial Area to the east and north. Various land uses exist along these corridors, such as residential, commercial, industrial, public/institutional, and agriculture/forestry or undeveloped. Given the available land, there are opportunities to facilitate new quality growth/infill development in these character areas, most of which are furnished with public water and sewer service. Although there are some appearance issues related to past development, these also present opportunities for increased code enforcement and/or beautification efforts.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Encourage quality infill development compatible with existing development and land use
- Utilize codes enforcement, beautification efforts, and other measures to improve and maintain the appearance of these community gateways

- Extend public infrastructure as needed to support quality growth and development
- Utilize zoning ordinance and other appropriate regulations to guide new quality growth and development

Terry Coleman Parkway/U.S. 341 Bypass. The Terry Coleman Parkway character area is located southwest of the Eastman city limits, linking U.S. 341 South from the Welcome Center and Chamber of Commerce to U.S. 341 North Business. While there are mixed land uses currently along the bypass, consisting of residential (scattered and subdivisions), commercial (new Walmart Supercenter shopping center), and public/institutional, there is ample undeveloped land (agriculture/forestry) available for possible development, especially on the south side. A small portion of the bypass area is presently served by public water and sewer, which would need to be extended to support and encourage quality growth. Highway-oriented commercial development and possible additional subdivisions are the expected primary uses within this character area.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Extend water and sewer infrastructure as needed to support/encourage quality growth and development along the bypass
- Work to attract compatible commercial development to serve residents living in the area as well as travelers choosing to bypass downtown Eastman
- Explore feasibility of annexation into the City of Eastman where appropriate and desired
- Utilize zoning ordinance and other appropriate regulations to guide new quality growth and development
- Address beautification/litter control issues

Eastman/Dodge County Industrial Park Area. This character area encompasses the industrial park located along U.S. 341/U.S. 23 South, as well as the adjacent acreage bounded generally on the northeast by WPA Road and Barney Sapp and Ag Best roads to the east. Alcoa, Altivity, the Eastman Regional Youth Detention Center, and Eastman Youth Detention Center

are among the current occupants of the industrial park. There are some vacant commercial/industrial buildings available which provide opportunities for economic development attraction. The new county jail is being constructed in the park as well. While City water and sewer service is provided to some portions of this character area, it needs to be fully extended to the industrial park to help encourage additional growth and infill development.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Extend water and sewer infrastructure to fully serve industrial park and to the surrounding area, as needed
- Market existing available commercial and industrial structures located in the park
- Seek compatible infill growth and development
- Utilize beautification measures to enhance the industrial park area's appearance
- Support existing industries and occupants of the industrial park and work to retain them
- Seek the nearby location of compatible commercial businesses which would support existing industry

Heart of Georgia Regional Airport Industrial Area. This airport industrial area consists of the Heart of Georgia Regional Airport and the Georgia Aviation Campus of Middle Georgia College located off GA 46 East, which have been annexed into the City of Eastman, along with the adjacent area north to Glyen Hickman Road and north and east of Airport Road. As expected, most of the land within the Eastman city limits is currently in public/institutional use with some industrial, commercial, agriculture/forestry (undeveloped), and even residential uses. Public/institutional and residential uses are located in the adjacent area outside the city, along with considerable undeveloped land to the north and particularly east of Airport Road. Only limited public water and sewer service is currently available within this character area along GA 46 East in the southeastern section. Provision of additional infrastructure would make the available undeveloped land more attractive for growth. Its proximity to the airport also makes it likely to attract supportive business and industry or that which relies on air transportation. The community plans to develop a new industrial park west of the airport. Widening GA 46 East, at

least to the airport, and possible relocation of Airport Road to accommodate the planned industrial park would also improve access to the Aviation College, encourage further economic development, and support additional airport improvements.

Suggested Development Strategies

- Extend water and sewer infrastructure, as needed
- Seek commercial and/or industrial development, particularly that which is complementary to existing businesses
- Advocate widening of GA 46 East and possible relocation of Airport Road
- Develop new industrial park west of airport
- Utilize zoning ordinance and other appropriate regulations to guide new quality growth and development

Southeast, Southwest, and Northeast Eastman Neighborhood Redevelopment Areas.

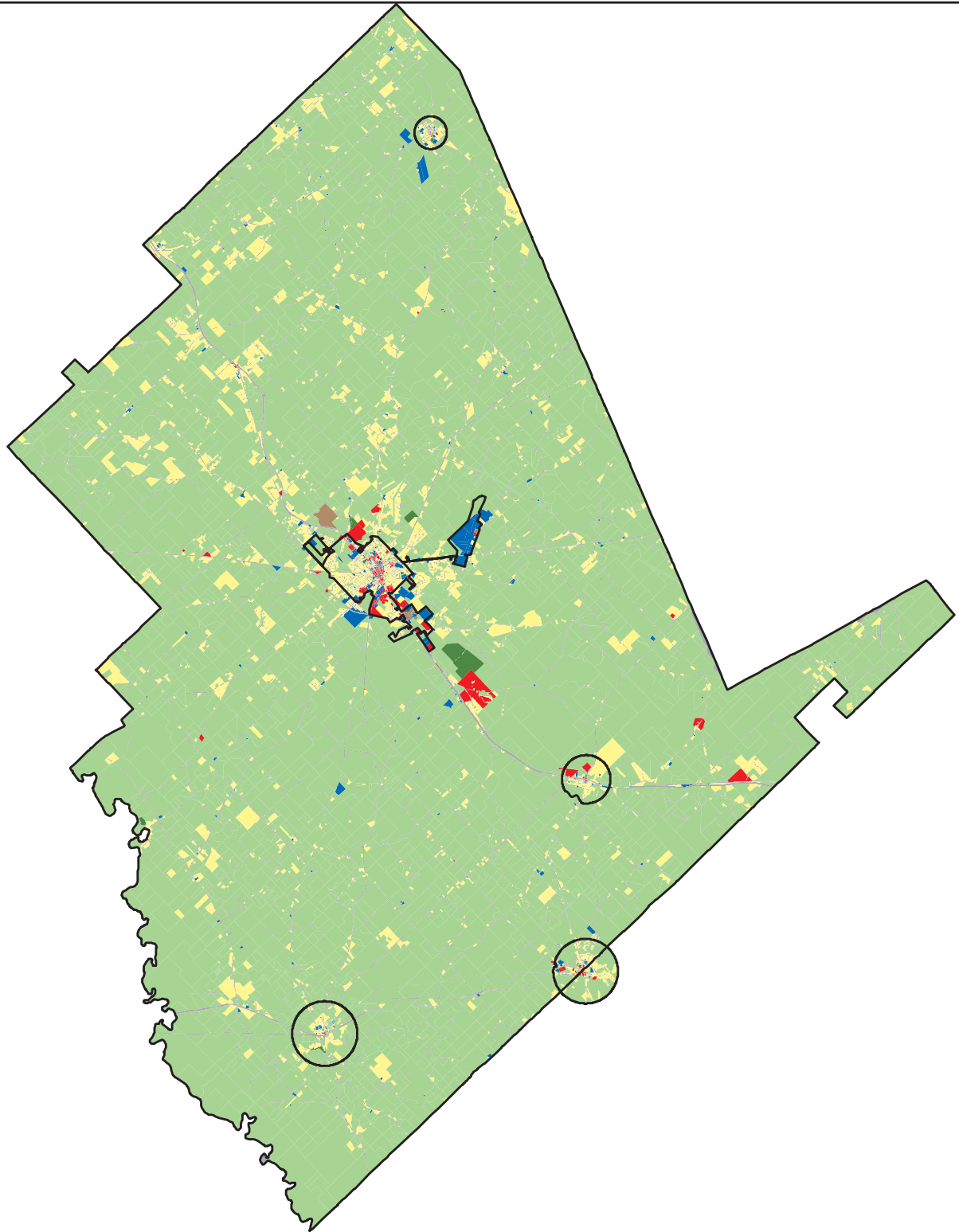
Concentrated in three different geographic areas of Eastman as previously described under Areas Requiring Special Attention, these character areas are all CDBG target areas which are in need of housing rehabilitation. Many of the residences date from the early to mid 20th century and are showing their age due to lack of or deferred maintenance often resulting from low incomes and/or aging occupants.

Suggested Development Strategies








- Continue to pursue and utilize CDBG and other funding sources for housing rehabilitation as available
- Support local community and faith-based volunteer efforts to help repair homes of eligible residents
- Utilize codes enforcement to help monitor for safe and sanitary housing for neighborhood residents
- Support compatible infill development, as needed
- Encourage neighborhood beautification/blight removal
- Work to preserve historic neighborhoods and residential uses to the extent possible, allowing compatible commercial uses as appropriate

- Upgrade existing infrastructure as needed to provide improved water/sewer service, enhanced fire protection, adequate drainage, street repairs, and the like, as needed

MAP LU-1
Dodge County
Existing Land Use



Land Use

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
|  Agriculture/Forestry |  Industrial |  Transportation/Communications/Utilities |
|  Residential |  Park/Recreation/Conservation | |
|  Commercial |  Public/Institutional | |



"The data sets represented here-in are presented to the user with the understanding that, because of the nature of some GIS datasets, there is no guarantee of completeness or accuracy. Conclusions drawn from, or actions taken on the basis of this data are the sole responsibility of the user."

MAP LU-2 City of Chauncey Existing Land Use



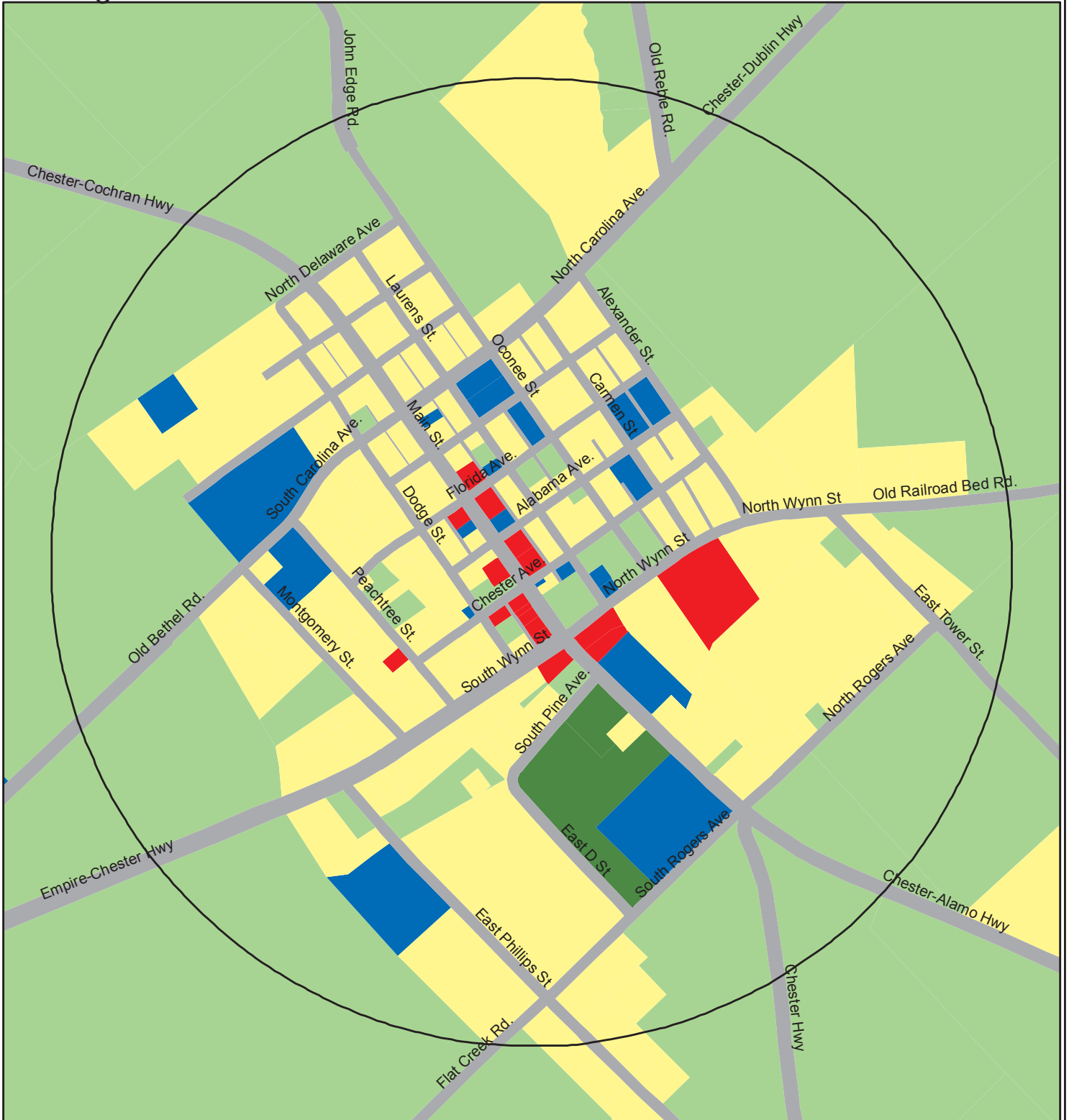
Land Use

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Agriculture/Forestry | Industrial | Transportation/Communications/Utilities |
| Residential | Park/Recreation/Conservation | |
| Commercial | Public/Institutional | |



"The data sets represented here-in are presented to the user with the understanding that, because of the nature of some GIS datasets, there is no guarantee of completeness or accuracy. Conclusions drawn from, or actions taken on the basis of this data are the sole responsibility of the user."

MAP LU-3 City of Chester Existing Land Use



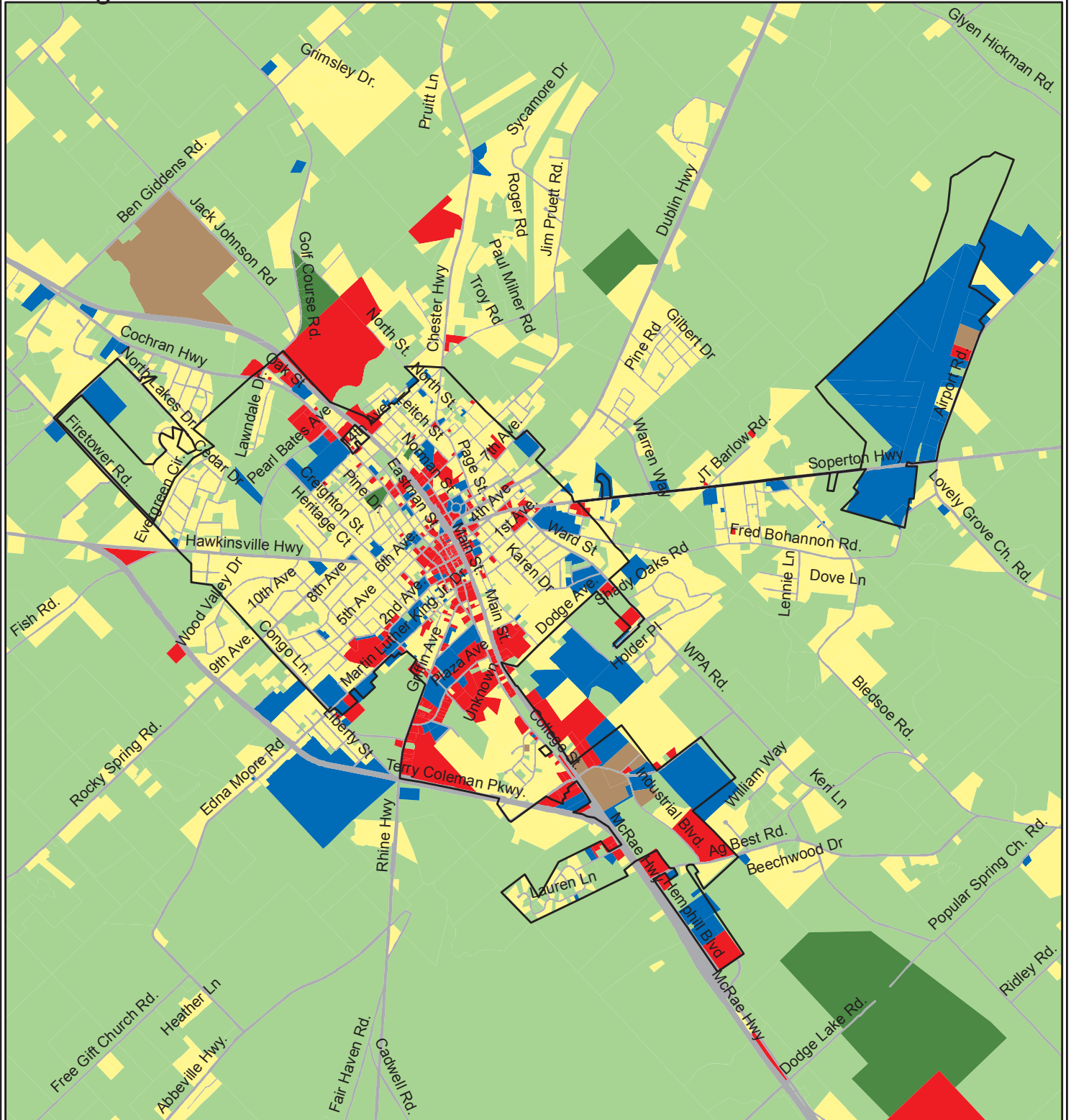
Land Use

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Agriculture/Forestry | Industrial | Transportation/Communications/Utilities |
| Residential | Park/Recreation/Conservation | |
| Commercial | Public/Institutional | |










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MAP LU-4 City of Eastman Existing Land Use



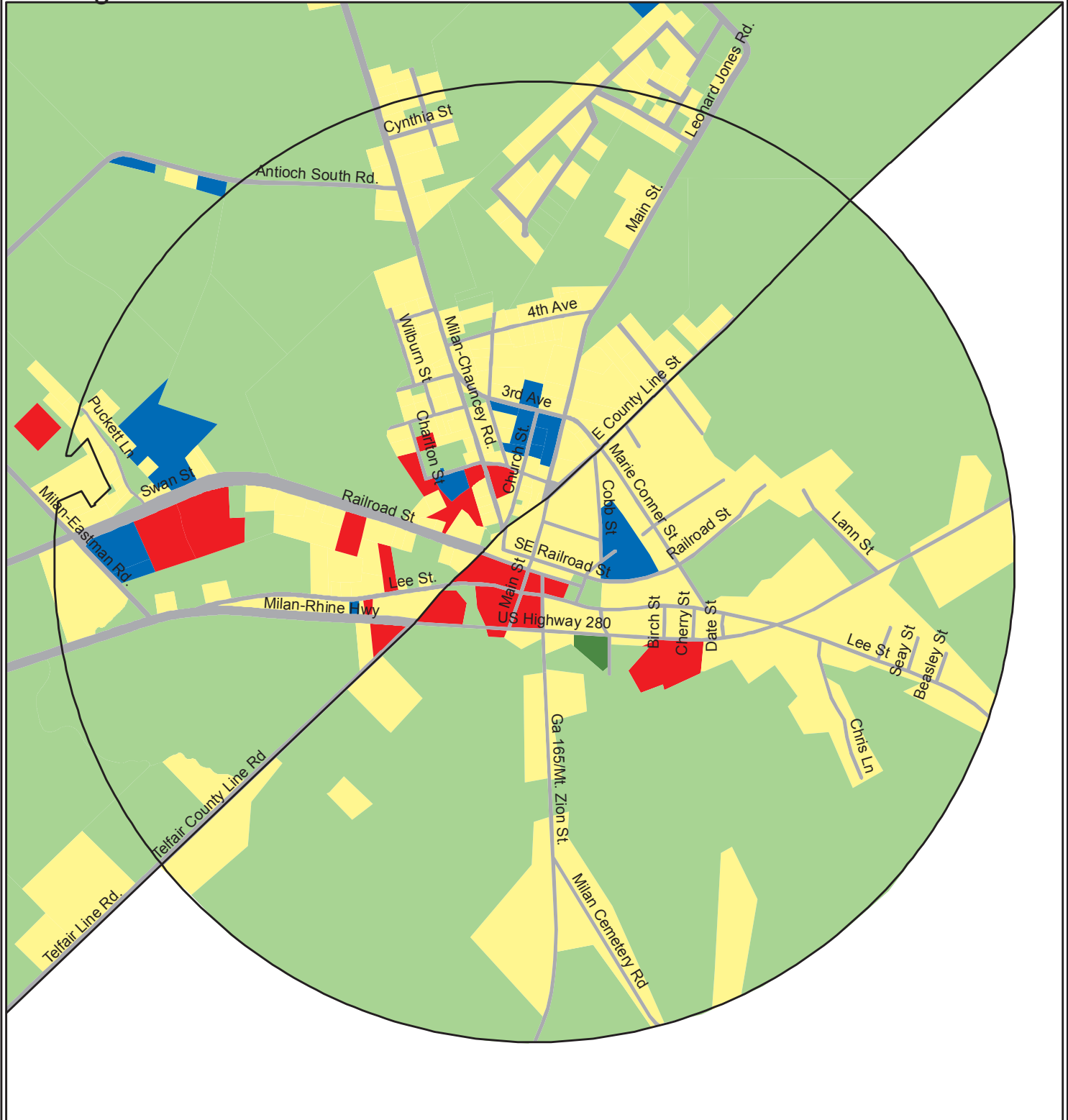
Land Use

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
|  Agriculture/Forestry |  Industrial |  Transportation/Communications/Utilities |
|  Residential |  Park/Recreation/Conservation | |
|  Commercial |  Public/Institutional | |










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MAP LU-5 City of Milan Existing Land Use



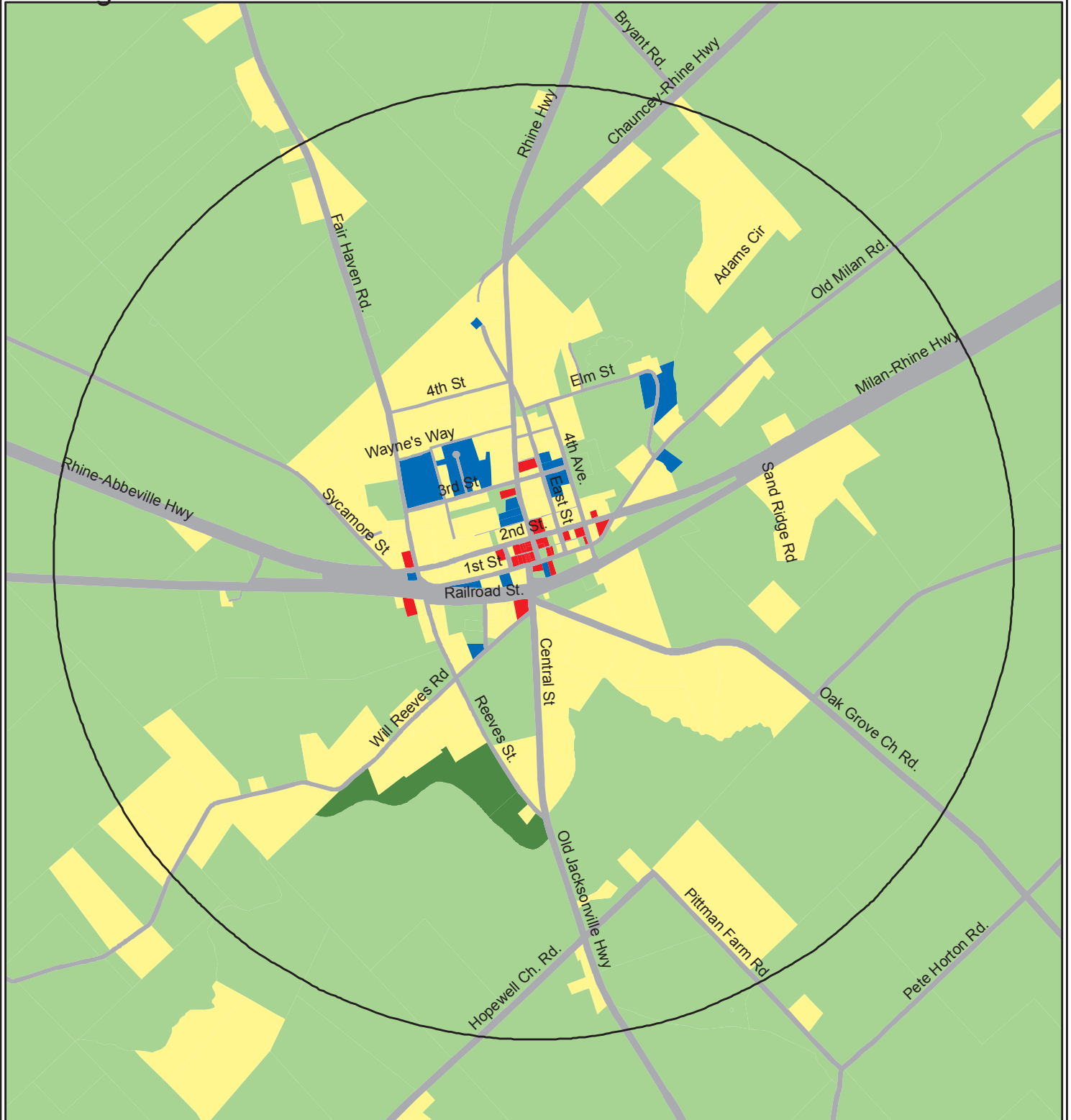
Land Use

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
|  Agriculture/Forestry |  Industrial |  Transportation/Communications/Utilities |
|  Residential |  Park/Recreation/Conservation | |
|  Commercial |  Public/Institutional | |



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MAP LU-6 City of Rhine Existing Land Use



Land Use

- | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|---|
| Agriculture/Forestry | Industrial | Transportation/Communications/Utilities |
| Residential | Park/Recreation/Conservation | |
| Commercial | Public/Institutional | |

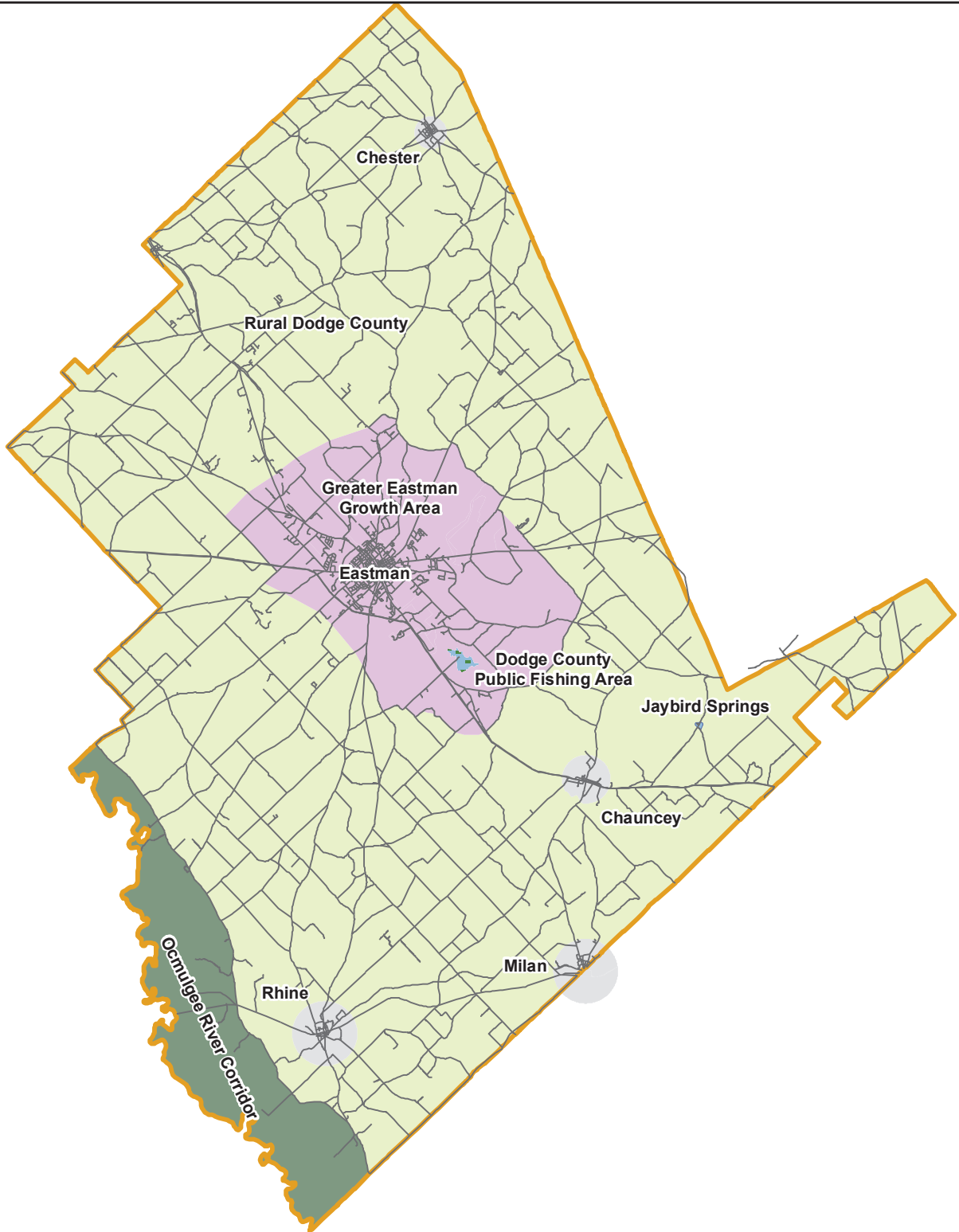


"The data sets represented here-in are presented to the user with the understanding that, because of the nature of some GIS datasets, there is no guarantee of completeness or accuracy. Conclusions drawn from, or actions taken on the basis of this data are the sole responsibility of the user."

MAP LU-7

Dodge County

Recommended Character Areas



Legend

- | | | | |
|-----------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------|
| — Roads | Dodge Character Areas | Natural Resources | Small Cities |
| County Boundary | Greater Eastman Growth Area | Dodge County Public Fishing Area | Chauncey |
| | Rural Dodge County | Jaybird Springs | Milan |
| | | Ocmulgee River Corridor | Chester |
| | | | Rhine |



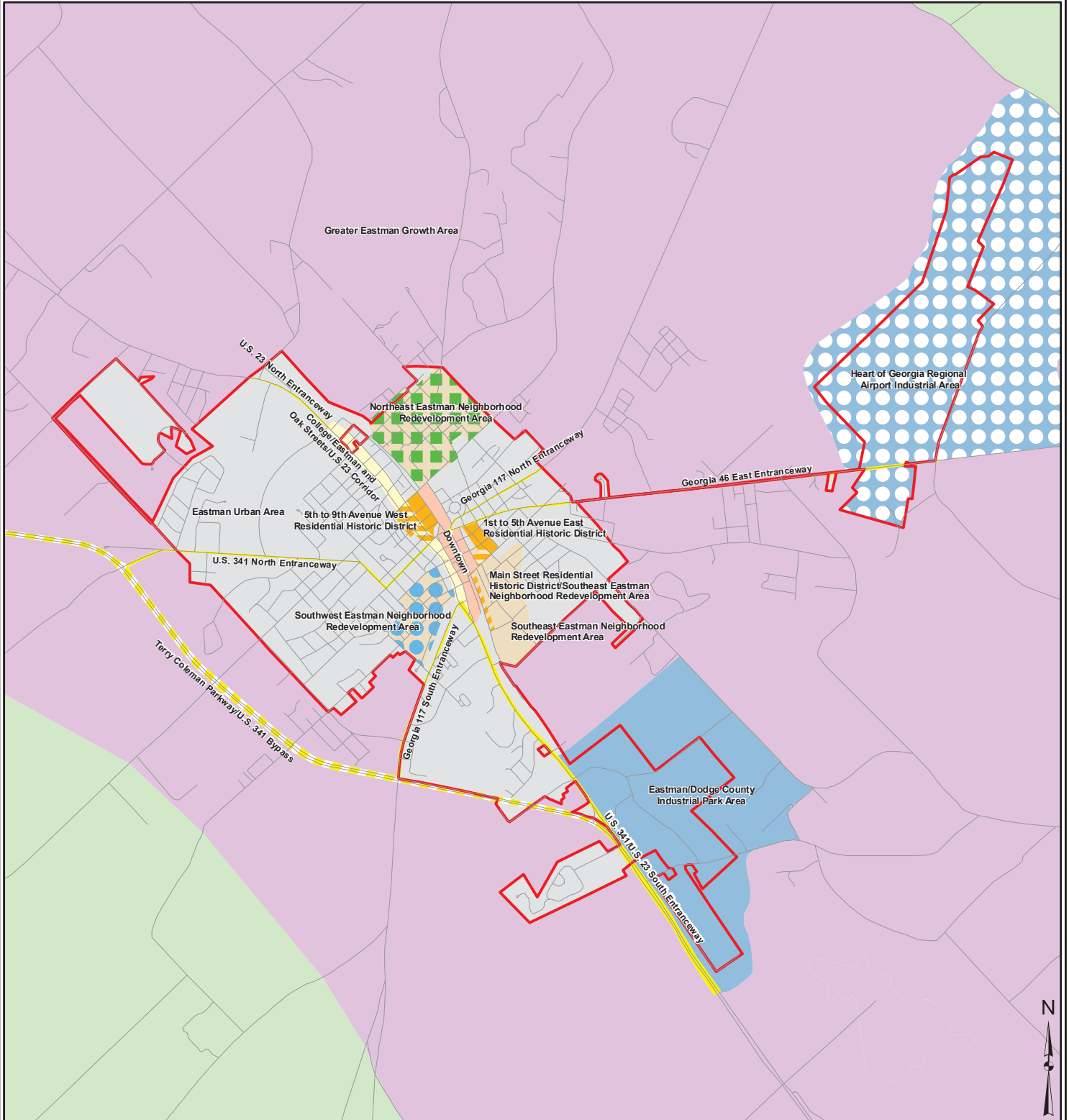
Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC, 2010



MAP LU-8

City of Eastman

Recommended Character Areas



Legend

<p>Roads</p> <p>Eastman City Limits</p>	<p>Eastman Character Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Downtown Eastman Urban Area Greater Eastman Growth Area Rural Dodge County <p>Corridors</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> College/Eastman and Oak Streets/U.S. 23 Corridor College/Eastman and Oak Streets/U.S. 23 Corridor/Downtown 	<p>Historic Districts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1st to 5th Ave East Residential Historic District/Southeast Eastman Neighborhood Redevelopment Area 5th to 9th Avenue West Residential Historic District Main Street Residential Historic District/Southeast Eastman Neighborhood Redevelopment Area College/Eastman and Oak Streets/U.S. 23 Corridor/5th to 9th Avenue West Residential Historic District 1st to 5th Avenue East Residential Historic District 	<p>Entranceways</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Terry Coleman Parkway/U.S. 341 Bypass U.S. 23 North Entranceway Georgia 117 North Entranceway U.S. 341 North Entranceway Georgia 46 East Entranceway U.S. 341/U.S. 23 South Entranceway Georgia 117 South Entranceway 	<p>Industrial Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eastman/Dodge County Industrial Park Area Heart of Georgia Regional Airport Industrial Area <p>Redevelopment Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southeast Eastman Neighborhood Redevelopment Area Southwest Eastman Neighborhood Redevelopment Area Northeast Eastman Neighborhood Redevelopment Area
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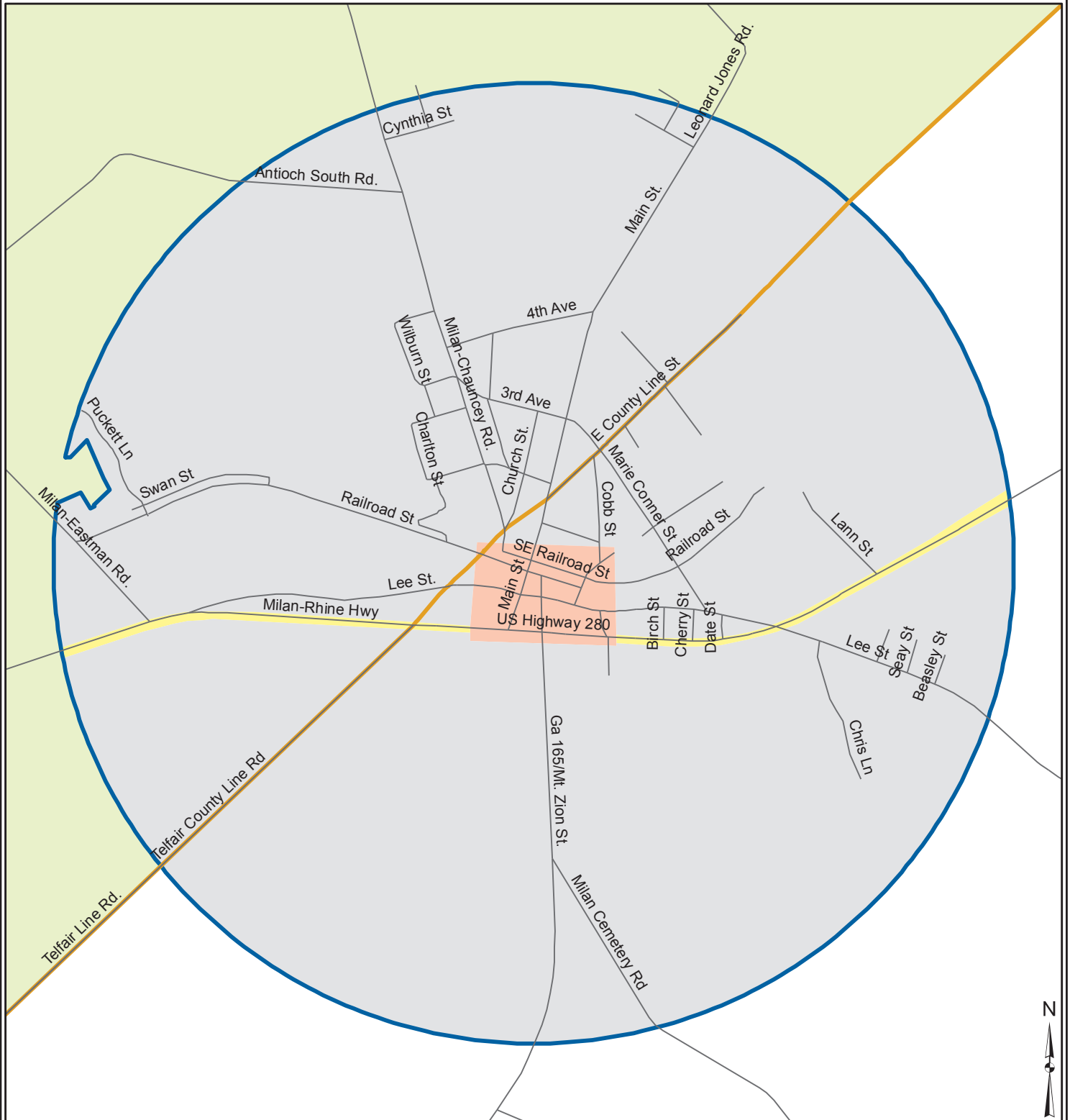
Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC, 2010



MAP LU-9

City of Milan

Recommended Character Areas



Legend

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| — Roads | Milan Character Areas |
| County Boundary | Downtown |
| Milan City Limits | Milan Remainder |
| | Rural Dodge County |
| | U.S. 280 Corridor |

Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC, 2010



ANALYSIS OF CONSISTENCY WITH QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

Introduction

The Quality Community Objectives are guidance targets established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs in the “Local Planning Requirements” in preparation and implementation of a local comprehensive plan. They further elaborate the identified Statewide Planning Goals. A local government is required to evaluate the consistency of their policies, activities, and development patterns with these goals and objectives.

In general, Dodge County and its municipalities’ policies, activities, and development patterns are supportive of and consistent with the Statewide Planning Goals. Variation of the statewide goals were all espoused in the currently adopted joint comprehensive plan. Some of this consistency, however, is due to a lack of growth pressure in the small towns or outside the Greater Eastman area, and the large geographic size of the county with its abundant forest and agricultural lands. The high incidence of poverty and low incomes, the fact that population levels have not yet reattained the peaks of the early 20th century, and the abundance of forest lands have resulted in quality environments without much development threat. The lack of comprehensive, existing land use regulation, the fragmentation of the forest industry, and the existing quality of life and location could pose threats and conflicts to continuation of desired growth patterns as more growth and development, including residential, is attracted to Dodge County.

Consistency with the Quality Community Objectives (QCOs), which are elaborations of the Statewide Planning Goals, is more problematic since many do not seem to be applicable to a rural county, and since many also assume the existence of local land use regulation. DCA’s local assessment tool survey was utilized to evaluate Dodge County and its municipalities in terms of progress toward achieving those QCOs which are applicable to them. The survey can also be utilized to stimulate discussion about the character and quality of growth desired. The responses to the survey follow.

*Quality Community Objectives
Local Assessment
Dodge County, Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine*

Development Patterns			
Traditional Neighborhoods			
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.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.	X	X	Eastman and Chester have zoning, but uses are separate. County and other cities do not have zoning.
2. Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development "by right" so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process.		X	
3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade bearing trees appropriate to our climate.		X	Eastman has a tree ordinance applicable only to public land in conjunction with its Tree City designation.
4. Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer.	X		Eastman celebrates Arbor Day and city cemeteries have tree-planting efforts.
5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.	X		Prison details, community service workers, and/or public works staff take care of this.
6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.	X		Sidewalks in all cities.
7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.	X		
8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.	X		Eastman only (middle and high schools).
9. Some of our children can and do bike to school safely.	X		Eastman only (middle and high schools).
10. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community.	X		Some are.

*Quality Community Objectives
Local Assessment
Dodge County, Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine*

Infill Development			
Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.		X	Only informally known.
2. Our community is actively working to promote brownfield redevelopment.	X		Working to fill abandoned industrial sites. No known contaminated sites.
3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment.	X		
4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road).	X	X	Walmart/Eastman Bypass Area.
5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses.	X	X	Eastman does, but only for produce stands, ice vendors, etc. (no residences).
Sense of Place			
Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics.	X		Dodge County Courthouse Circle and other landmark structures.
2. We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage, and have taken steps to protect those areas.		X	There are 4 National Register-listed properties county-wide (all in Eastman) and downtown revitalization efforts underway in Eastman's historic downtown.
3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.		X	Limited – only through zoning in Eastman.
4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.	X		Eastman has through its zoning ordinance but needs updating.
5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.		X	

*Quality Community Objectives
Local Assessment
Dodge County, Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine*

6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.		X	County has agriculture ordinance, which provides limited protection of existing agricultural practices and uses.
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Transportation Alternatives

Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.

	Yes	No	Comments
1. We have public transportation in our community.	X		County-wide 5311 and 5310 public transportation programs.
2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.		X	
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.	X		
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.		X	
5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.	X		
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.	X		Regional Bike Plan.
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.	X		

*Quality Community Objectives
Local Assessment
Dodge County, Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine*

Regional Identity			
Each region should promote and preserve a regional "identity," or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.	X		
2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.	X		Forestry primarily.
3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.).	X		
4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development's regional tourism partnership.	X		
5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.	X		
6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.	X		
Resource Conservation			
Heritage Preservation			
The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. We have designated historic districts in our community.		X	Known historic district areas, but none listed in National Register nor locally designated.
2. We have an active historic preservation commission.		X	There is a Dodge Co. Historical Society.

*Quality Community Objectives
Local Assessment
Dodge County, Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine*

3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure this.		X	
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Open Space Preservation

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

	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community has a greenspace plan.		X	
2. Our community is actively preserving greenspace, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.		X	
3. We have a local land conservation program, or we work with state or national land conservation programs, to preserve environmentally important areas in our community.		X	The County does have a state public fishing area.
4. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.		X	

Environmental Protection

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

	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.		X	Limited to information in comp plan.
2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.		X	
3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.		X	Identified.
4. Our community has passed the necessary "Part V" environmental ordinances, and we enforce them.	X		

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5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced.		X	Only applicable to public property in Eastman.
6. Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.		X	Only applicable to public property in Eastman.
7. We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development.	X		
8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).	X		Eastman zoning, Part V Environmental ordinances, floodplains.

Social and Economic Development

Growth Preparedness

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.

	Yes	No	Comments
1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.	X		Comp Plan.
2. Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.		X	
3. Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.	X		
4. We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.	X	X	Eastman only to achieve local goals.
5. We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.		X	Only through SPLOST/budget.
6. We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth, and these areas are based on a natural resources inventory of our community.	X	X	Only through Future Land Use in comp plan.
7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.	X		

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8. We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.		X	
9. We have procedures in place that make it easy for the public to stay informed about land use issues, zoning decisions, and proposed new development.	X		
10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.	X		

Appropriate Businesses

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.

	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets and weaknesses, and has created a business development strategy based on them.	X	X	Forward Dodge is working toward creation of a business development strategy to be completed in 2010.
2. Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit businesses and/or industries that will be compatible.	X		Informal currently, but to be included within business development strategy in progress.
3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products.	X		
4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy.	X		But there are risks if prison(s), Alcoa, etc. were to close. Standard Candy closed in 2009 resulting in the loss of 250 jobs, which had a major impact on the local economy.

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Employment Options			
A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.		X	
2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	X		
3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	X		
4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs.	X		
Housing Choices			
A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (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.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in law units.	X		
2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.	X		
3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average).	X		
4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks.		X	
5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or "neo-traditional" development.	X		Eastman only.
6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.	X	X	Chester does not have available land.

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7. We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.	X		
8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.	X		
9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.	X		Eastman Housing Authority, local Habitat for Humanity chapter; Lions Club builds wheelchair ramps.
10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.		X	

Educational Opportunities

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

	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens.	X		
2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.	X		
3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	X		Middle GA College Aviation College in Eastman; Middle Georgia College in Cochran.
4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.	X		

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Governmental Relations			
Regional Solutions			
Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.	X		
2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.	X		Regional Water Planning Council.
3. We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services, such as public transit, libraries, special education, tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security, etc.	X		E-911, Joint Development Authority, etc.
4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.	X		
Regional Cooperation			
Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. We plan jointly with our cities and county for comprehensive planning purposes.	X		
2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.	X		Somewhat, although there are some issues to be discussed.
3. We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft regionwide strategies.	X		
4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.	X		HOGARC

SUMMARY NEEDS ANALYSIS

Introduction

Dodge County is a rural, progressive community located in South Central Georgia. U.S. Highways 23, 341, and 280 traverse the county, which is located about one hour southeast of Macon. Its estimated current population is 20,500, including the cities of Chauncey (304), Chester (1,514), Eastman (5,675), Milan (1,027), and Rhine (433). Dodge County's location, transportation, natural and cultural resources, education and economic opportunities, available land, and overall excellent quality of life are important assets that will help contribute to the community's ongoing future growth and development.

Dodge County is a rural area dominated by forestry and agriculture with many assets, including abundant groundwater and other natural resources, improving infrastructure, Middle Georgia College Aviation Campus, and a growing industrial base and retail sector. MGC's Aviation Campus in Eastman is becoming a leader in aviation education and instruction in Georgia and the Southeast. Protecting valuable farmland and other special natural and cultural resources, preservation of rural character, and enhancing the quality of life for all are needed in conjunction with quality, balanced growth. Summary findings and needs for each plan area are briefly highlighted below.

Population

Slow, but steady population growth has occurred in Dodge County since the 1970s, although it is now only about one-third that of Georgia and several percentage points less than the U.S. A significant portion of the county's population growth since 1980 is likely due to the location of two state correctional facilities in Chester and Eastman. If current trends continue, Dodge County would gain approximately 2,000 persons per decade. Most of this growth is expected in or near Eastman. Successful economic growth planning could accelerate this change.

Dodge County's white population of 69 percent in 2000 is significantly lower than that of the U.S. (75 percent), but higher than Georgia's 65 percent. The county's black population increased by nearly 16 percent from 1990 to 2000, and grew slightly as a percentage of the total to over 29 percent. This percentage is slightly greater than the state (28.7 percent), while much greater than the U.S. (12.3 percent).

Although persons of Hispanic origin now represent only about 1.3 percent of Dodge County's total population, the percentage increase of Hispanic origin population county-wide during the 1990s was nearly 68 percent, significantly less than many Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region counties. Dodge County's percentage of Hispanic population is considerably lower than that of Georgia (5.3%) or the U.S. (12.6%). Like much of rural Georgia, per capita and household incomes in the county remain significantly less than those of the state and nation. Also as expected for a rural county, Dodge's age structure is older than the U.S. and significantly older than that of Georgia.

Economic Development

Dodge County has a fairly diverse economy. Manufacturing in the county still has a significant base, although whereas it was the leading employment sector in 1990, it fell to second place behind the Educational, Health, and Social Services sector in 2000. The economic downturn of the last several years and related local industry closings have resulted in further loss of employment in Dodge County's manufacturing sector. Despite this, manufacturing continues to be important to Dodge County, with several relatively large employers, including Alcoa and Altivity, and a number of smaller concerns. While the local labor force has continued to grow, unemployment remains higher than the state and nation. There continues to be a need for educational/skill level enhancement despite ongoing efforts in this area. In the retail trade area, there appears to be some growth, especially with construction of the new Walmart Supercenter on the U.S. 341 Bypass. Downtown Eastman has experienced some commercial decline, however, efforts are underway to revitalize the historic community core.

Dodge County does have an abundance of opportunities for improvement, including building on the success of Middle Georgia College's Aviation Campus and development of the Airport Industrial Park with infrastructure, the Eastman-Dodge County Industrial Park, the new welcome center and future civic center, and the Eastman (U.S. 341) Bypass. Current and future economic development needs include promotion/enhancement of existing industries; attraction of desired compatible industries; labor force education/skills improvement; entrepreneurship support; retail trade growth; provision of needed infrastructure; nature-based, agricultural, and heritage tourism development/promotion; and generally support for an even more diversified local economy.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Dodge County has an abundance of natural and cultural resources, including valuable agricultural and timberlands, ample groundwater, the Ocmulgee River corridor and a number of cultural landmarks. The community's principal need in this area is to protect its natural/cultural resources as the community develops primarily through public education and awareness efforts, encouragement of the private sector, and county-wide planning and land use regulation which is not overly restrictive and seeks balance between protection/conservation of resources and compatible utilization/development, as appropriate.

Community Facilities

Dodge County and its municipalities offer a wide variety of public facilities and infrastructure. There are needs, however, to provide or upgrade facilities and services to enhance services and provide capacity for growth and development. While the U.S. 341 Bypass around Eastman has been completed, there are still needs for completion of several additional major road widening and other improvement projects (U.S. 23, U.S. 280, GA 117, and GA 46, at least to the airport) to connect the county with four lane roads and developmental highways and otherwise improve transportation. There are continuing needs to extend water service within the Eastman growth area and to accommodate proposed future growth of Dodge State Prison at Chester, while Chauncey needs a new water system, Rhine needs upgrades, and Milan has a

CDBG grant for improvements in the Pine Acres Drive area. In terms of sewerage and wastewater treatment, Eastman has made recent upgrades at its Sugar Creek Plant, but other lift station and line upgrades and extensions are needed. Neither Chauncey nor Rhine currently provide public sewer service, although Rhine is awaiting final funding approval to begin construction of its first system. Chester and Milan's existing sewerage systems are adequate, but upgrades and/or line extensions may be needed if adjacent prisons plan to expand or to accommodate additional community growth. Solid waste from all Dodge County jurisdictions is being disposed of in nearby county landfills that have ample future capacity. The County is currently working to eliminate green boxes, and all county governments need to increase their recycling efforts. In addition to ongoing needs for vehicles, staff, and equipment for public safety agencies county-wide, the County needs a new EMS facility and an Emergency Operations Center. A new Dodge County jail is currently under construction as is a new regional community mental health center. Upgrades are further needed to the Dodge County Hospital, originally constructed in 1963, for it to continue providing quality medical care. Recreation facility upgrades and/or additions are needed county-wide, most especially in the smaller municipalities. The cities of Eastman, Milan, and Rhine and Dodge County all need more space and/or improved local government facilities. More community education opportunities and enhanced cultural facilities, including funding to complete the civic center, would contribute to an improved quality of life for all.

Housing

Although there is ample land available for residential development and housing costs are relatively affordable in the Dodge County area, there is a perceived need for more diversified quality housing, and especially low income housing. Manufactured housing (mobile homes) increased 47 percent from 1990 to 2000 and accounted for nearly two (2) out of three (3) new housing units added to the county supply in the 1990s. Single-family (7.5 percent increase) and multi-family (6.5 percent increase) housing units accounted for the remaining new housing units in the 1990s, with single-family (site-built) housing actually declining everywhere, but Chauncey, Rhine, and the unincorporated county. The lack of county-wide code enforcement, manufactured housing regulations, and other land use ordinances is seen as contributing to

housing trends in the community. Coordinated, county-wide construction codes and ordinance adoption and enforcement, neighborhood revitalization efforts, and partnering with the local Habitat for Humanity chapter are needed to help address local housing needs and related issues.

Land Use

Dodge County is a rural county with about 89 percent of its land in forest/agriculture use. Recent residential growth has been primarily west of Eastman. Most commercial/industrial development has taken place along the U.S. 341 Bypass, in the Eastman-Dodge County Industrial Park area, and near the airport, all within or near Eastman. Projected population growth and planned economic growth are not likely to change current patterns and trends of land use. There are needs for coordinated, county-wide land use regulations; improved beautification/litter control; housing/building codes adoption; downtown/central business district revitalization in municipalities; and natural and cultural resources and rural landscape/character preservation/compatible development to enhance local land use and improve the quality of life.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Dodge County and its cities participate locally, regionally, and on the state level with other governments to address common issues, such as provision of much needed services and infrastructure, economic development attraction, and coordinated planning/growth management. The governments need to continue such efforts and seek opportunities to enhance and expand them as necessary in the future.

LIST OF POTENTIAL ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Economic Development

- Promote/enhance/assist existing industry
- Develop/implement economic development incentives/marketing strategy
- Utilize Chamber of Commerce to assist small cities in enlarging economic base
- Extend infrastructure to guide future development
- Encourage the diversification of economic development activities
- Target economic development activities to desired compatible industries
- Encourage entrepreneurship activities
- Education level/job skills improvement
- Improve the adult literacy rate in the county
- Expand post-secondary education opportunities in the county
- Support/expand Middle Georgia College, Aviation Campus
- Support/develop Family Connection/Communities in Schools programs
- Move Airport Road to support Aviation College and support economic development
- Develop Airport Industrial Park with infrastructure
- Develop/expand tourism promotion
- Support downtown revitalization efforts in Eastman and other municipalities
- Seek reopening of Jaybird Springs Resort
- Reserve industrial site near river for future energy plant development
- Complete widening of U.S. 23
- Support widening of GA 46, at least to Airport
- New private prison in Milan
- U.S. 280 widening
- GA 117 improvements
- 1-way pairing of U.S. 341

Natural and Cultural Resources

- Encourage Part V protection measures for groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, and Ocmulgee River corridor
- Adopt/enforce an amended county wide floodplain management control ordinance
- Conserve existing prime farmland and forest areas
- County-wide land use planning and regulations
- Identify and encourage protection of important and unique plant and animal habitats and natural areas
- Utilize/protect the Dodge County Public Fishing Area
- Increase access to the Ocmulgee River through local and/or state park/natural development initiatives
- Identify/nominate sites/districts to the National Register of Historic Places
- Promote, protect and enhance other historic sites and districts county-wide

- Utilize historic/natural/agricultural sites and venues for tourism development
- Seek protection/utilization of natural sites, such as Devil's Den, Stuckey's Mill Pond, and Jaybird Springs
- Increase public awareness/education about natural resources of county and identified needs

Housing

- Improve low income housing opportunities in the county
- Diversify housing types
- Regulate manufactured housing within the county
- Neighborhood revitalization
- Utilize partnership with local Habitat for Humanity Chapter
- Vacant, dilapidated buildings ordinance

Land Use

- Provide plan for future growth with reservation of lands as necessary
- Develop county-wide land use regulations
- Adopt housing and building codes
- Downtown Eastman/central business district revitalization in municipalities
- Eastman annexation
- Natural and cultural resources conservation/protection
- Rural landscape/character preservation
- Compatible development of natural/cultural resources
- Beautification/litter control

Community Facilities and Services

- Maintain and improve county-wide recreation facilities
- Support continued development of Boys and Girls Club facilities and programs
- Continue development and possible relocation of Dodge County landing
- New Chamber of Commerce building
- Promote/utilize new convention center
- Improve Eastman Bypass landscaping and development
- Increased paving/resurfacing of county roads and city streets
- Widen U.S. 23
- Widen GA 46 at least to airport
- Complete widening and promote U.S. 280 as east/west Georgia route
- GA 117 improvements
- Oak and College one-way pairing desired (tie in with U.S. 23)
- Improve the level of service of fire and police protection
- Maintain adequate and well-trained personnel for fire and police protection
- Develop improved mutual aid agreements for fire and police protection
- Reduce average emergency response times
- Continue to improve hospital facilities and medical services
- New regional community mental health center construction

- New 911 Building
- Courthouse
- New government complex for Eastman
- Community Center in Milan
- Provide upgraded facilities/equipment at each county fire station
- Sewer extensions to unserved areas of Eastman
- Infrastructure and street improvements in Rhine, including possible sewer system
- Complete new County Jail
- Establish county-wide solid waste convenience centers
- Utilization of county landmark structures
- Code Red or other emergency alert system

Intergovernmental Coordination

- Dodge-Wilcox E-911
- Local, regional, and state cooperation
- Services sharing/cooperation/consolidation/joint delivery
- Utilization/participation of regional partnerships
- Coordinated planning/growth management
- Bleckley-Dodge Joint Development Authority
- Ocmulgee Regional Joint Development Authority (Bleckley, Dodge, Telfair, Wilcox)