FINAL DRAFT

Whitfield County
Comprehensive Plan 2008-2018

Joint Comprehensive Plan Update for
Whitfield County and the
municipalities of Dalton, Tunnel Hill and Varnell

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Introduction to the Community Assessment for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnel Hill and Varnell

Located in the North Georgia Region and part of the Dalton Metropolitan Statistical Area, Whitfield County covers approximately 291 square miles of predominantly rural, yet increasingly suburban landscape. Whitfield County includes four municipalities: Cohutta, Dalton, Tunnel Hill and Varnell. The largest of the municipalities is Dalton with a population estimated by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2006 at more than 32,000 residents.

Purpose

The Community Assessment is the first step in the planning process for the Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan 2008-2018. It provides a factual and conceptual foundation for the remaining work involved in preparing the Comprehensive Plan update. Production of the Community Assessment involved the collection and analysis of community data and information. This report represents the final product of that analysis and is intended to be a concise, informative report that will form the basis for developing the Community Agenda. The Community Agenda expresses the community's vision, goals, policies, key issues and opportunities that the community chooses to address, and includes an action plan highlighting the necessary tools for implementing the plan.

The Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan 2008-2018 updates the Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan 2000-2025 that was adopted in 2002 by the Whitfield County Board of Commissioners and the Dalton, Cohutta, Tunnel Hill and Varnell city councils. Like the 2002 plan, this 2008 update will serve as the official Comprehensive Plan for unincorporated Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnel Hill and Varnell. However, the 2008 plan does not include the town of Cohutta.

The Community Assessment will be submitted to the North Georgia Regional Development Center (NGRDC) and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) for review and approval. The Community Assessment serves the purpose of meeting the intent of the DCA "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," as established on May 1, 2005. Preparation in accordance with these standards is an essential requirement in maintaining the County's status as a Qualified Local Government.

Scope

The Community Assessment encompasses unincorporated Whitfield County and the cities of Dalton, Tunnel Hill and Varnell. The Community Assessment includes the following information, as required by the DCA Standards:

- Listing of issues and opportunities that the community wants to address
- Analysis of existing development patterns
- Analysis of consistency with the Quality Community Objectives (QCO)

The Community Assessment provides an executive summary of community analyses in order to provide an easy reference for stakeholders who will need to refer to the information throughout the planning process. More detailed data and analysis can be found in the attached Analysis of Supporting Data.

Aging population – Whitfield County's aging population will increasingly have special needs in terms of residential choices and community services and facilities.

Poverty rates increased – In 2004 it was estimated that 11.9% of the County's residents lived at or below the Federal poverty level, which represented a significant increase from 2000. Persons living at or below the poverty level included 16.8% of all children 17 and under and 16.2% of children between the ages of 5 and 17.

Growing Hispanic community – The persons of Hispanic origin population increased significantly from 1990 to 2006. Hispanics made up 29.3% of the County population in 2006. The net increase of this population was almost three times that of adjacent counties. This population is projected to increase from 29.3% of the population in 2006 to 41.4% of the population in 2030. There will be an growing need in the County for education and other services to assist non-English speaking residents.

Opportunities

Population growth projections – Projections for continued strong and steady rates of population growth in Whitfield County present the opportunity for continued economic growth and expansion.

Young population – While segments of Whitfield County's population age, as expressed above, the County's median age is increasingly younger than that of its neighbors due to the growing Hispanic population.

Steady income levels – Whitfield County's per capita personal income (PCPI) level ranked 16th in the state and was 96% of the state average and 86% of the national average.

Economic Development

Issues

Lagging wages in County— Average weekly wage and annual pay for most industries trailed the state and nation. Whitfield County residents who were part of the labor force were less likely than residents of the state as a whole to hold management, professional and related occupations and more likely to hold positions in production, transportation and material moving occupations.

Dependence on few industries – The County is largely dependent on a few industry super-sectors – Manufacturing; Trade, Transportation & Utilities; and Professional & Business. These three sectors account for 80% of all jobs in the County. One in 10 textile product mill jobs in the United States is located within Whitfield County.

Employing educated young workers – There is limited diversity of the local economy and college educated young residents often seek job opportunities outside of Whitfield County. New industry and professional job opportunities are needed to attract and keep young workers in the area.

Educational Attainment – The County suffers from significantly low levels of educational attainment. On every level of educational attainment, the County lags behind the state and other nearby Metropolitan Statistical Areas.

Downtown Dalton evenings – There is too limited activity in downtown Dalton after 5:00 pm. More evening entertainment and restaurant activity is needed to invigorate downtown's economy.

Limited entertainment and shopping options – Compared to nearby areas, the community suffers from a proportional lack of entertainment establishments as well as big box and upscale retailers.

Projected manufacturing sector declines – The manufacturing supersector grew modestly from 1990 to 2006 and maintained the largest share of employment in Whitfield County at 38.1% (down from 41.2% in 2000 and 51.4% in 1990. However, textile mills in the Northwest Georgia Region are projected by the Georgia Department of Labor to see employment losses in their respective sectors of 1,580 jobs between 2004 and 2014.

Opportunities

Strong Manufacturing base – Manufacturing accounts for nearly one in two jobs in Whitfield County. Manufacturing's share of employment in Whitfield County is more than three times the national average.

Local employment available for local residents - Approximately 87% of the Whitfield County labor force worked inside the County in 2000, leaving only 13% commuting to jobs outside of the County. Whitfield County residents held 60% of the jobs available in the county.

Carpet Capital of the World – Dalton-Whitfield County produces the majority of the world's carpeting, in addition to many other types of floor covering. The County is headquarters for the world's carpet industry. The importance of the floor covering industry in the County extends beyond direct employment. Several other important clusters in the area are largely supported by the floor covering industry (e.g. chemicals and plastics firms and wholesaling firms).

Major corporate economic influences – Dalton/Whitfield County has maintained its status as home of the world's carpet mill industry, including the headquarters of a Fortune 500 companies (Shaw), which has a major positive impact on the local economy. In recent years, industry leaders have progressively improved their technology, innovation and sustainability to remain competitive in the global marketplace.

Access to transportation – Whitfield County businesses have ready access to a major interstate corridor, state highways, rail corridors and airports in Chattanooga and Atlanta.

Local education and job training resources – Whitfield County has strong local institutions that provide higher education and job training, including Dalton State College which has a large student population and good diversity of degree programs.

Low unemployment – County unemployment rates have consistently trended lower than the rates for the state and nation.

Growing labor force — The County labor force has grown at a steady average annual rate of approximately 1.1% between 1990 and 2006, compared to 1.6% for the County's population. Over the next 20+ years, the labor force is projected to grow at a 1.5% per year rate.

Housing

Issues

Aging in place – As large segments of the population age, the need continues to grow and demand will be created to address residential needs of the Baby Boomers and empty nesters, including providing for "aging in place" with associated services and reasonable accommodation for those that are handicapped or disabled.

Limited housing mix outside of Dalton – Most of Whitfield County's multi-family housing is located in Dalton. Large-acre lot, single-family residential products dominate the housing market outside of Dalton. Few multi-family products have come on line to meet the growing demand for housing to support the workforce in areas outside of Dalton.

Affordable workforce housing – Many employees of Whitfield County businesses have limited affordable housing choices within the County at their income levels. Mobile homes/trailers and manufactured housing are currently providing many with affordable housing in Whitfield and adjacent counties.

Additional housing need relative to employment - The 2006 employment-to-housing ratio of 1.85 fell well above the standard target of 1.5. The 2006 employment-to-labor force ratio of 1.36 fell well above the standard target of 1.0. These ratios show the continued strength of the Whitfield County employment base, but outline the need for additional housing within the County for local employees.

High density and rental rates in Dalton — Due to the fact that Dalton has historically developed as a major industrial-based economy, there is a relatively high density of housing in the city limits that includes a high proportion of renter-occupied housing. There are more rental housing units than owner-occupied housing units in Dalton.

High foreclosure rate – Foreclosures require alternative housing options for property owners, and resulting vacant homes contribute to declining neighborhood property values and local tax revenue.

Deteriorating housing – Poor housing conditions can be found throughout the County, and in some cases entire neighborhoods are in need of repair.

Opportunities

High rate of home ownership in the county – Home ownership rates in unincorporated Whitfield County remained higher than the state averages.

Affordable County housing – Housing in unincorporated Whitfield County is affordable relative to larger metropolitan areas.

Steady home value increases - Both the number of sales and the value of homes in Whitfield County showed a steady increase from 1997 to 2004. Average home sale prices increased 23.7% from 1997 to 2004, and 15.7% from 2000 to 2004. The average home sales price was $124,430 in 2004.

Large lot residential options – There is adequate land in unincorporated Whitfield County to provide the option for large lot, rural character residential environments for many residents.

New housing stock - 13.6% of the housing units recorded in 2006 were built after 2000 and 52.6% were built after 1980, which is a reflection of the rate of growth taking place in Whitfield County. Less than 6% of Whitfield County's housing units were built prior to 1939.

Local assistance - The Dalton-Whitfield Community Development Corporation offers comprehensive services for residents, helping to increase home ownership, improve the physical condition of housing and the quality of affordable housing, decreasing the foreclosure rate and decreasing the number of homeless and unstably housed residents.

Infill housing - Infill housing opportunities can contribute to affordable housing stock and help stabilize and enhance established neighborhoods. Implementation of infill-related studies, guidelines and recommendations can facilitate the addition of infill housing.

Natural and Cultural Resources

Issues

Water quality – Stormwater runoff from developed and developing areas increases the pollution of the watershed and increases flooding as water moves more quickly.

Maintaining historic and rural character – Development in rural areas can contribute to the disappearance of farm land and the rural scenery of the county. As demand increases for suburban development, preservation planning and actions will be required to protect historic resources and rural character.

Protecting mountain and valley views – The views created by the topography of certain areas in Whitfield County are of great value. Protecting these assets is important in order to continue to attract quality development in addition to preserving the historic rural character of the County.

Protecting Civil War sites – Civil War sites/land areas are in need of protection. The National Park Service has identified Whitfield County as having the largest intact collection of Civil War defenses in the nation. Some are located on steep terrain (such as behind the State Patrol barracks where fortification remains need protection).

Protecting Trail of Tears sites – Trail of Tears and other sites important to the County's Native American history are in need of protection.

Protecting Old Federal Road sites – The Old Federal road is in need of protection.

Protecting of County economic and cultural history artifacts – Efforts to promote the preservation of artifacts of the County's textile roots and culture currently receive limited funding. More funding is needed to ensure preservation of these connections to the County's past.

Historic resource inventory – There is a need for an updated historic resource survey to identify and assess buildings, sites, features and districts that may have attained historic value since the 1994 survey (based on minimum criteria that a resource is at least 50 years old).

Lacking environmental regulations – Whitfield County lacks needed regulations for protection of steep slopes; protection of areas of prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance; protection of Federal and State Endangered and Threatened Species; and protection of water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands and protected rivers.

Greenspace and parks – There is a need for more land for active and passive parks and greenspace in Whitfield County. Existing and future parks should provide for outdoor recreation opportunities for all age groups of the population, including many more trails.

Environmental planning with future land use and development – Environmental considerations are needed in the context of future land use planning and development to protect and preserve eco-systems and watersheds.

Opportunities

Abundance of resources – The County has an abundance of hydrologic natural resources.

Promotion of historic sites as tourist destinations – Civil War, Trail of Tears and Old Federal Road sites could be promoted more directly as tourist destinations. Interpretive trails, for example, could be developed to educate and preserve, attracting among others, visitors to Chickamauga.

County museum of cultural and economic history – A County museum of history and culture funded by a public-private partnership of local, state and federal government agencies in cooperation with local private and non-profit organizations could serve as a center for storage and preservation of the County's historic artifacts and provide a venue to promote the County's rise as the world's leading producer of carpet and floor coverings.

Appreciation of history – County's residents and elected officials have a strong appreciation for the history and culture of the County and understand the importance of protecting these assets as new development occurs.

Conasauga River – The river is a "hidden resource" with potential for enhanced access to provide recreation opportunities and educational opportunities to Whitfield County residents.

Environmental leadership – Local industries are interested in environmental innovation and can help lead the way to environmental stewardship and sustainability.

Farmland protection – Protection of farmland can also help protect historic or natural areas. Tools to this end include federal Farmland Protection Program funds, Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs), recognition by the Georgia Centennial Farm Program, and conservation easements and tax credits.

Available preservation tools - Tools exist that can assist with protection and acquisition of historic buildings and sites, including revolving funds for repair and acquisition of properties, façade or conservation easement negotiation, utilization of federal funds, promotion of conservation tax credits, the DCA Regionally Important Resource (RIR) Program for historic and natural resources, and designation of Whitfield County as a Certified Local Government (CLG).

Community Facilities and Services

Issues

Limited sewer service area – Growth in Whitfield County is limited due to lack of sewer infrastructure. Planned sewer expansion should be coordinated with land use planning.

Water pressure for fire flow – Where industrial uses have been introduced into some former agricultural areas, there is insufficient water pressure for fire protection.

Shortage of after-school youth-oriented activities/facilities – There are insufficient after-school options for youth. Needed youth-oriented activities/facilities include YMCAs, and transportation options are also needed for youth after school.

Opportunities

Sewer expansion - Limited sewer creates the need for large residential lots. As planned sewer services expand, the opportunity exists to use the expansion as a way to direct growth to locations the county outlines in the land use plan and to manage the timing of new growth.

Opportunities for families and children – There are many recreation and learning opportunities for families and children, including history-oriented resources and activities.

High-tech infrastructure – Dalton and Whitfield County have adequate high-tech infrastructure in place to support business recruitment and expansion.

Future water needs – Substantial water resources are available in Whitfield County that can support long term growth with proactive planning and resource management.

Transportation

Issues

Limitations to local street network – It is easy to get to Dalton/Whitfield via I-75 and state highways, but limited connectivity in certain areas of the local street network and some local points of congestion can make it difficult to move around the community.

Traffic light coordination – Traffic lights in Dalton are not optimized to move traffic at highest efficiency.

Limited public transit – There are sizable numbers of low-income, elderly, disabled, and minority persons within the county who need non-automobile options to access jobs, medical care, and shopping needs.

Limited bicycle/pedestrian facilities – Though downtown Dalton has an adequate sidewalk network, connectivity between the downtown and residential uses is limited, and sidewalk/bicycle provisions outside of Dalton in general are not extensive.

Opportunities

Coordinated planning – As the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) update is upcoming (per the MPO), there is a good current opportunity for coordination of land use and transportation planning.

Railroad access – Presence of rail provides additional opportunity to move goods to and from the County and attract new industry.

Streetscape – Opportunity exists to continue downtown Dalton revitalization with continuation of streetscape improvements efforts.

Atlanta and Chattanooga connections – Interstate 75 serves the community well currently, and longer term potential for high speed or commuter rail connections to Atlanta and Chattanooga would greatly benefit Dalton and Whitfield County.

Public transportation opportunities – There is the potential to enhance public transportation, especially for special needs population, building on the currently underutilized on-call bus system or implementing a fixed-route system.

Implementation of bike/pedestrian recommendations – Projects have already been identified in previous studies, including the 2005 Regional Bike and Pedestrian Facilities Plan, that identify needed improvements. In addition, roadway improvement projects present an opportunity to incorporate pedestrian and/or bicycle provisions, and the County's waterways provide potential greenway/trail alignments.

Land Use

Issues

Agricultural/residential conflicts – Agricultural-residential land use conflicts can emerge when new residents move to areas with intensive farming.

Industrial and commercial encroachment – Encroachment of industrial and commercial development into established residential areas contributes to neighborhood decline.

"Greyfield" sites and strip commercial development – Some older commercial centers are on the verge of becoming greyfield conditions (old Kroger site). These areas and other strip commercial areas will require special attention to prevent underutilization and blight as market and economic conditions change.

Commercial services imbalance – There is a lack of commercial services and providers of goods in the northern part of the county where there is a growing population. The southern end of the county is also lacking in business and shopping opportunities. Almost all commercial activity is concentrated in Dalton.

Scenic Corridors – New development along scenic rural routes could alter the character of the county dramatically if development occurs without an emphasis on protecting scenic views

Preservation of agricultural property – As new development increases property values throughout the County, pressure to convert from agricultural uses to residential and commercial uses increases. Preservation of agricultural property is considered important for the long-term sustainability of the County.

Intensive agricultural uses – While it is not necessary to encourage more intensive agricultural uses in all areas of the county, it will be important for this to be accommodated in order for agriculture to be sustainable in the long term.

Code enforcement and maintenance standards – There is a need to better protect the image and attractiveness of the community by requiring more consistent property maintenance and design standards.

Downtown poultry processing – The continued presence of a major poultry processing facility in downtown Dalton is a land use issue and hindrance to revitalization and business expansion.

Limited entertainment – Local ordinances contribute to the lack of local entertainment and dining options.

Property access for emergency services – Private access easements that exist in certain areas may not permit fire truck access due to lack of width, obstructions and inadequate development standards.

Opportunities

Mixed use development – Most development in the County is suburban residential development that separates residential from commercial. Mixed use developments that are clustered or in nodes could provide the County with the opportunity to provide jobs and services within walking distance of residences and also preserve open space.

Traditional Neighborhood Development – Traditional neighborhood development can provide a wide range of housing types in newly developing areas with a connected pedestrian-friendly street system and ample open space. The cities and county can encourage clustering of community facilities including schools, fire stations, libraries and parks in order to create a sense of place.

Greenspace preservation – In additional to public purchase of land for greenspace and parks, greenspace can be permanently protected through private initiatives such as new residential development where incentives are provided for greenspace preservation (i.e. conservation subdivision practices).

Redevelopment incentives – There are opportunities in Dalton to use Tax Allocation Districts to provide incentives for needed redevelopment projects.

Intergovernmental Coordination

Issues

Coordination with schools **–** Coordination between the school systems, city councils and the BOC ensures that new facilities keep up with growth.

Unincorporated islands and municipal boundaries **–** Whitfield County's cities include multiple areas of unincorporated islands. In addition, municipal boundaries have been expanded over time in such a way as to create confusing service delivery areas surrounding each municipality.

Opportunities

Municipal boundaries coordination **–** Whitfield County and its municipalities should coordinate to correct the annexation islands and other city boundary-related issues.

CHAPTER 3

Analysis of Existing Development Patterns

Analysis of the existing land use, areas requiring special attention and the recommended character areas

The purpose of this analysis is to understand the development conditions and growth patterns currently occurring on the ground in Whitfield County. The analysis allows the further exploration of issues and opportunities related to the physical environment. The following analysis considers three aspects of the existing development patterns: existing land use, areas requiring special attention, and recommended character areas.

Existing Land Use

An existing land-use map displays the development on the ground categorized into groups of similar types of development at a given point in time. For purposes of this analysis, the Existing Land Use Map is based on a tax digest data provided by Whitfield County and supplemented by aerial photography and windshield surveys conducted by MACTEC planning team members. Descriptions of the Existing Land Use Classification are as follows:

Agricultural/Rural/Undeveloped – Properties devoted predominantly to agricultural production, private forest lands, rural residential.

Commercial – Properties dedicated to non-industrial business uses including retail sales, office, services, and entertainment facilities; may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office park.

Industrial – Land dedicated primarily to industrial land uses that include warehousing, wholesale trade and manufacturing facilities; also includes private landfills.

Parks/ Recreation/ Conservation – Properties dedicated to uses that require significant amounts of open space such as public and private parks, golf courses, National Forests, and WMAs.

Public/Institutional – Properties that include state, federal or local government uses including city halls and government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, schools, etc. Facilities that are publicly owned, but would be classified more accurately in another land-use classification, are not included in this category. For example, publicly owned parks and/or recreation facilities are placed in the Park/Recreation/Conservation category.

Right of Way – Properties include city, state and county right-of-way for roads and other public infrastructure.

Residential – Less than 0.5 acres – Single-family and two-family dwellings including site-built, detached and attached single-family homes and duplexes and manufactured homes on single lots with an area of 0.5 acres or less.

Residential – 0.5-to-1.0 acres – Single-family and two-family dwellings including site-built, detached and attached single-family homes and duplexes and manufactured homes on single lots with an area of 0.5 to 1.0 acres.

Residential – 1.0 to 5.0 acres – Single-family and two-family dwellings including site-built, detached and attached single-family homes and duplexes and manufactured homes on single lots with an area of 1.0 to 5.0 acres. Residential uses on lots larger than 5 acres are classified as Agriculture/Rural/Undeveloped. .

Residential – Multi-Family – Apartments, condominiums and attached single-family housing (more than two on lot); includes manufactured homes in manufactured home parks.

Public Utilities – Includes such uses as public transit stations, power generation plants, radio towers, telephone switching stations, electric utility substations, airports, and other similar uses.

The subsections that follow describe the existing land use for Whitfield County, Dalton, Tunnel Hill, and Varnell. Each description includes a land use classification table, map, and brief narrative that highlight important land use characteristics for each area.

Whitfield County

Unincorporated areas make up roughly 90.9% of the County's 291.5 square miles. Table 1 compares the existing land use for the total County (includes cities) with the unincorporated areas. The Whitfield County Existing Land Use Map, found at this end of this chapter, shows existing land use for unincorporated Whitfield County.

Table 1 Existing Land Use – Whitfield County

Land Use Classification	Unincorporated Whitfield County		Whitfield County	
	Acres	% of Total	Acres	% of Total
Unknown	3,698.9	2.3%	4,181.0	2.3%
Agricultural/Rural/Undeveloped	108,575.9	66.3%	111,567.1	62.1%
Commercial	3,948.4	2.4%	6,103.2	3.4%
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	13,545.2	8.3%	14,744.8	8.2%
Public/Institutional	5,748.2	3.5%	7,793.6	4.3%
Historical	0.0	0.0%	6.4	0.0%
Industrial	3,838.7	2.3%	5,878.2	3.3%
Public Utility	460.1	0.3%	527.7	0.3%
Residential - Multi-Family	288.2	0.2%	811.9	0.5%
Residential Less than 0.5 Acres	2,035.4	1.2%	3,561.0	2.0%
Residential 0.5-to-1 acre	5,384.7	3.3%	6,502.2	3.6%
Residential 1-to-5 acres	16,225.6	9.9%	17,892.2	10.0%
Total	163,749.3	100.0%	179569.2	100.0%

Land classified as Agricultural/Rural/Undeveloped makes up the largest portion of both the County as a whole and the unincorporated areas. More than 62.1% of the total County and 66.3% of the unincorporated areas of the County are categorized as Agricultural/Rural/Undeveloped areas.

Land classified as Residential (combination of less than 0.5 acre, 0.5-to-1.0 acre and 1.0-to-5.0 acres) makes up 16.1% of the County and 15.6% of the unincorporated areas of the County. The bulk of these residential classifications are represented by the 1-to-5 acre category.

Land classified as Parks, Recreation, and Conservation makes up almost 8.2% of the County's total area. In addition to conservation land, this category includes golf courses, public and private ball fields as well as public parks. Properties classified as Public/Institutional account for approximately 4.3% of the total county and 3.5% of the unincorporated area. Public/Institutional uses include schools and places of worship.

Commercial classification properties make up only 3.4% of the total County area. Commercial land uses are primarily within the cities. Commercial properties account for 2.4% of the unincorporated area of the County. Properties classified as Industrial account for approximately 3.3% of the total County and 2.3% of the unincorporated area. Industrial uses include light and heavy manufacturing and warehousing/distribution.

Dalton

The incorporated city of Dalton includes roughly 6.9% of the County's 291 square miles. Table 4 presents the existing land use distribution and the Dalton Existing Land Use Map, found at this end of this chapter, shows existing land use for the city of Dalton.

Table 2 Existing Land Use – Dalton

Land Use Classification	Acres	% of Total
Unknown	417.3	3.6%
Agricultural	860.2	7.4%
Commercial	1,909.9	16.4%
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	1,058.7	9.1%
Public/Institutional	1,732.2	14.9%
Historical	6.4	0.1%
Industrial	1,975.8	17.0%
Public Utility	61.5	0.5%
Residential - Multi-Family	517.3	4.4%
Residential Less than 0.5 Acres	1,355.8	11.6%
Residential 0.5 acre to 1 acre	830.4	7.1%
Residential 1 to 5 acres	912.8	7.8%
Total	11,638.3	100.0%

Land classified as Residential (combination of less than 0.5 acre, 0.5 to 1.0 acre and 1.0 to 5.0 acres) makes up the largest portion of the city at 26.5%. More than 40% of this residential classification falls into the less than 0.5 acres classification. Multifamily Development makes up 4.4%. Agricultural/Rural/Undeveloped land represents 7.4% of the city. Properties classified as Industrial account for 17.0%. Industrial includes light and heavy manufacturing and warehousing/distribution. Commercial classification properties make up 16.4% of the city.

Land classified as Parks, Recreation, and Conservation equates to almost 9.1% of the city's total area. In addition to conservation land, this category includes golf courses, public and private ball fields as well as public parks. Properties classified as Public/Institutional account for approximately 14.9%. Public/Institutional areas include schools and places of worship.

Tunnel Hill

The incorporated city of Tunnel Hill makes up roughly one percent of the County's 291 square miles. Table 5 presents the existing land use for the city. The Tunnel Hill Existing Land Use Map, found at this end of this chapter, shows existing land use for unincorporated Tunnel Hill.

Table 3 Existing Land Use – Tunnel Hill

Land Use Classification	Acres	% of Total
Unknown	12.0	1.3%
Agricultural/Rural/Undeveloped	424.0	48.2%
Commercial	90.2	10.0%
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	99.2	11.0%
Public/Institutional	32.8	3.6%
Industrial	2.7	0.3%
Residential - Multi-Family	0.3	0.0%
Residential Less than 0.5 Acres	79.1	8.7%
Residential 0.5 acre to 1 acre	70.3	7.8%
Residential 1 to 5 acres	94.7	10.5%
Total	905.4	100.0%

Agricultural/Rural/Undeveloped land makes up the largest portion of the city. Roughly 48.2% of the city is categorized as Agricultural/Rural/Undeveloped areas. Land classified as Residential makes up 27% of the city, including 10.5% in the Residential 1-to-5 acres category. Properties classified as Industrial account for approximately 0.3% of the city. Industrial includes light and heavy manufacturing and warehousing/distribution. Commercial classification properties made up 10.0% of the city.

Land classified as Parks, Recreation, and Conservation makes up almost 11.0% of the city's total area. In addition to conservation land, this category includes areas such as golf courses, public and private ball fields, public parks and includes the historic tunnel. Properties classified as Public/Institutional account for approximately 3.6%. Public/Institutional areas include schools and places of worship.

Varnell

The incorporated city of Varnell makes up roughly one percent of the County's 291 square miles. Table 5 presents the existing land use for the city. The Varnell Existing Land Use Map, found at this end of this chapter, shows existing land use for Varnell.

Table 4 Existing Land Use – Varnell

Land Use Classification	Area	% of Total
Unknown	35.9	2.0%
Agricultural/Rural/Undeveloped	787.8	44.9%
Commercial	79.0	4.5%
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	15.7	0.9%
Public/Institutional	161.7	9.2%
Industrial	6.5	0.4%
Public Utility	1.8	0.1%
Residential - Multi-Family	3.2	0.2%
Residential Less than 0.5 Acres	71.8	4.1%
Residential 0.5 acre to 1 acre	166.8	9.5%
Residential 1 to 5 acres	425.4	24.2%
Total	1,755.7	100.0%

Agricultural/Rural/Undeveloped land makes up the largest portion of the city. Roughly 44.9% of the city is categorized as Agricultural/Rural/Undeveloped areas. Land classified as Residential (1 to 5 acres) makes up the second largest portion of the city at 24.2% and Multifamily Development makes up 0.2%. Properties classified as Industrial accounts for approximately 0.4% of the city. Industrial includes light and heavy manufacturing and warehousing/distribution. Commercial classification properties make up 4.5% of the city.

Land classified as Parks, Recreation, and Conservation makes up almost 0.9% of the city's total area. In addition to conservation land, this category includes areas such as golf courses, public and private ball fields as well as public parks. Properties classified as Public/Institutional account for approximately 9.2%. Public/Institutional areas include schools and places of worship.

Areas Requiring Special Attention

Growth inevitably impacts natural and cultural environments as well as the community facilities, services, and infrastructure required to service an area. Table 5 and the Areas of Special Concern Map, found at this end of this section, describe areas where the real estate market has and continues to produce development that is dominated by single-function land uses, where aging commercial areas are in need of functional and aesthetic revitalization, where growth should be carefully managed due to the environmentally-sensitive nature of the land, or where historical districts and resources should be maintained as they contribute significantly to the identity of the County.

Table 5 Areas of Special Concern

Area of Special Concern	Description
River and Creek Corridors	Protected river corridors
Groundwater Recharge Areas	Large groundwater recharge areas throughout the county
Strip Commercial Corridors	U.S. 41, U.S. 76, SR 71, SR 52, etc.
Historic Areas	Most significant or recognized historic areas and structures will likely be threatened by encroaching development or incompatible land uses at some point in time. Proper land use planning and guidelines are needed to protect viable historic and cultural resources. Among the historic areas of concern are individual historic sites throughout the County.
Natural Resources	Natural resources, particularly water resources, are of special concern as Whitfield County experiences population growth and associated housing and commercial development. Greenspace planning and preservation will also be important to achieve preservation of natural resources and provision of recreation facilities and transportation alternatives for residents.
Agriculture/Rural Preservation	Many areas of Whitfield County that historically were dedicated to agricultural production have seen intense pressure to convert to suburban residential land uses as property values have increased due to market demand.
Annexation Islands	Within Dalton are parcels of land that are islands of unincorporated Whitfield County within the city limits. To simplify logistics for fire, police, and other public services, attention should be focused to eliminate these unincorporated islands that have resulted from annexation.
Corridors and interchange areas	Major transportation corridors provide direct, four-lane highway transportation links between communities. As such, development has moved quickly outwards from cities along the corridors. Interchange areas
Water and Sewer Infrastructure Development	Areas for water and sewer development have been identified and infrastructure expansion projects are planned. It is important to encourage development in the areas planned for infrastructure expansion. Additionally, planning for future infrastructure expansions should be coordinated with and guided by land use planning that is consistent with a comprehensive vision for growth and development.

Recommended Character Areas

Character area planning focuses attention on the character of the various components of the overall community, including the way different areas look and how they function. Applying development strategies to character areas in Whitfield County can preserve existing areas and help other areas to function better and become more attractive. This technique helps to guide future development through policies and implementation strategies that are tailored to each situation. The character areas recommended for unincorporated Whitfield County include the following traits:

- Presently have unique or special characteristics that need to be preserved
- Have the potential to evolve into unique areas
- Require special attention because of unique development issues

The Recommended Character Areas shown in the Community Assessment are intended to represent a starting point in the discussion to create the Future Development Map that is a key component of the Community Agenda. General areas shown in the Community Assessment Recommended Character Area map will be refined through the Community Participation Program and continued planning analysis. Boundaries, descriptions and vision statements for future development in these areas may be revised significantly during this planning process.

The Recommended Character Areas for Whitfield County, Dalton, Tunnel Hill and Varnell are listed below. Maps 6-9 present the countywide Character Areas map and individual Character Area maps for Dalton, Tunnel Hill and Varnell.

Preserve **–** Undeveloped, natural land areas with significant environmental features including steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, watersheds, wildlife management areas, conservation areas, and other environmentally sensitive areas not suitable for development of any kind; also includes park and recreation areas.

Town Neighborhood **–** Residential areas in older parts of the community typically developed prior to World War II; characteristics include pedestrian-friendly streets with sidewalks, street trees, on-street parking, small, regular lots, shallow yards (relative to newer suburban counterparts), less space between buildings, and some mixed-use elements such as small neighborhood businesses.

Suburban Neighborhood **–** Areas where conventional patterns of post-World War II suburban residential subdivision development has been the dominant pattern; characterized by few sidewalks, wide residential lots, buffers separating residential from other uses; varied street pattern that includes curvilinear roadways, a lower degree of street connectivity, and cul-de-sacs.

Rural Corridor **–** Sparsely developed or undeveloped land on both sides of a designated high-capacity rural arterial with significant natural areas, scenic or pastoral views. Conventional suburban residential development is not common along these corridors due to distance from supportive infrastructure. Rural Corridors have similar character as Rural/Agricultural Reserve Areas, but typically have greater pressure for development due to accessibility along the corridor.

Commercial Corridor **–** Developed land on both sides of a high-volume street or highway that is primarily made up of automobile-oriented strip commercial and office development; characterized by single-use, generally one-story buildings that are separated from the street and sidewalk (though they often do not have sidewalks) by parking lots with few shade trees; generally have high degree of traffic congestion.

Downtown – Traditional central business district and immediately surrounding commercial, industrial or mixed use areas. Generally urban, pedestrian-friendly, a mix of single and multi-story buildings, on-street parking. Typically include public spaces and government buildings

Transitional Corridor – Corridors originally developed with single-family residences that have been impacted by increased traffic volume and associated impacts (e.g., noise, increased trash, street widening, etc.) that may no longer be suitable for single-family residential use. Zoning changes have started to occur along these corridors one request at a time which has resulted in front yard conversions to parking lots, unsightly home to business building additions and conversions, and signage out of proportion to the structures. Without a coordinated plan to guide the development or redevelopment of property with a long-range vision and consistent standards, problems associated with these transitional corridors will continue to occur.

I-75 Corridor – Represents the I-75 corridor as it travels through the County. Issues related to this character area include billboards and other signage and the scenic views of the ridges.

Interchange – Represents interchange locations along I-75 characterized by suburban, auto-oriented commercial and industrial uses that cater to travelers along I-75 and the nearby industrial workforce.

Dalton State/College Drive – Represents the Dalton State College and ancillary college uses that are found on-site in a campus-type development or within walking distance or a short drive from the college. Examples include commercial, multi-family residential, dormitories, athletic facilities, lodging, restaurants and office.

West Walnut Avenue – Commercial corridor along West Walnut Avenue that includes land east and west of Interstate 75. Currently this area includes developed land on both sides of the street and is primarily made up of automobile-oriented strip commercial and office development; characterized by single-use, generally one-story buildings that are separated from the street and sidewalk (though they often do not have sidewalks) by parking lots with few shade trees; generally have high degree of traffic congestion.

Industrial – Land used in low and high intensity manufacturing, wholesale trade, distribution, assembly, processing, and similar uses that may or may not generate excessive noise, particulate matter, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors, radiation, or other nuisance characteristics; zoning typically separates uses with these characteristics from residential areas and industrial areas are generally not appropriate for residential uses.

Medical District – Represents the Hamilton Medical Center and ancillary medical center uses that are found on-site in a campus-type development or within walking distance or a short drive from the medical center. Examples include professional medical and dental offices, nursing home facilities, retail pharmacies and restaurants. Supporting uses are intended to provide easily accessible services for hospitals employees, patients and visitors.

Emerging Suburban *(Mill Creek, Five Springs, Phelps, Mt. Vernon, Keiths Mill, Cedar Ridge, Rocky Face (portions also in Rural Reserve) Pleasant Grove, Waring (portions also in Rural Reserve), Plainview)* – Areas where pressure for conventional suburban residential subdivision development and associated strip commercial development along arterials and major roads is greatest. Without intervention, these areas are likely to evolve in a way that is not pedestrian -friendly, with larger lot sizes and a high to moderate degree of building separation. These areas are predominantly residential with scattered civic buildings, and have varied street patterns (often curvilinear) that include cul-de-sacs.

Rural Reserve *(Gordon Springs, River Bend, Carbondale, Tilton, Nance Springs, Cedar Valley, Trickum, Dawnville, Tooneville, Norton, Cohutta Ridge, Hopewell, Beaverdale, Prater's Mill)* – Predominantly rural, undeveloped land areas in open or cultivated state that are still sparsely settled, including woodlands and farm lands. These areas typically include very large lot single family residential uses, though some also

include small-scale suburban subdivisions. In some cases, these areas include small commercial properties at prominent intersections that are typically automobile-focused and include a mixture of uses to serve highway passers-by in rural and agricultural areas. These long-standing communities or well-known places are grouped together because they are currently similar in character. They are identified individually, however, because the desired future character and development pattern for each area may or may not be the same. An in-depth review of each community, informed by local stakeholder input, will be required to determine the extent and location of development. The resulting, "final" character areas will be reflected in the Community Development Map in the Community Agenda phase of the comprehensive plan.

Prepared By:
Checked By:

Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan Update 2008 - 2018

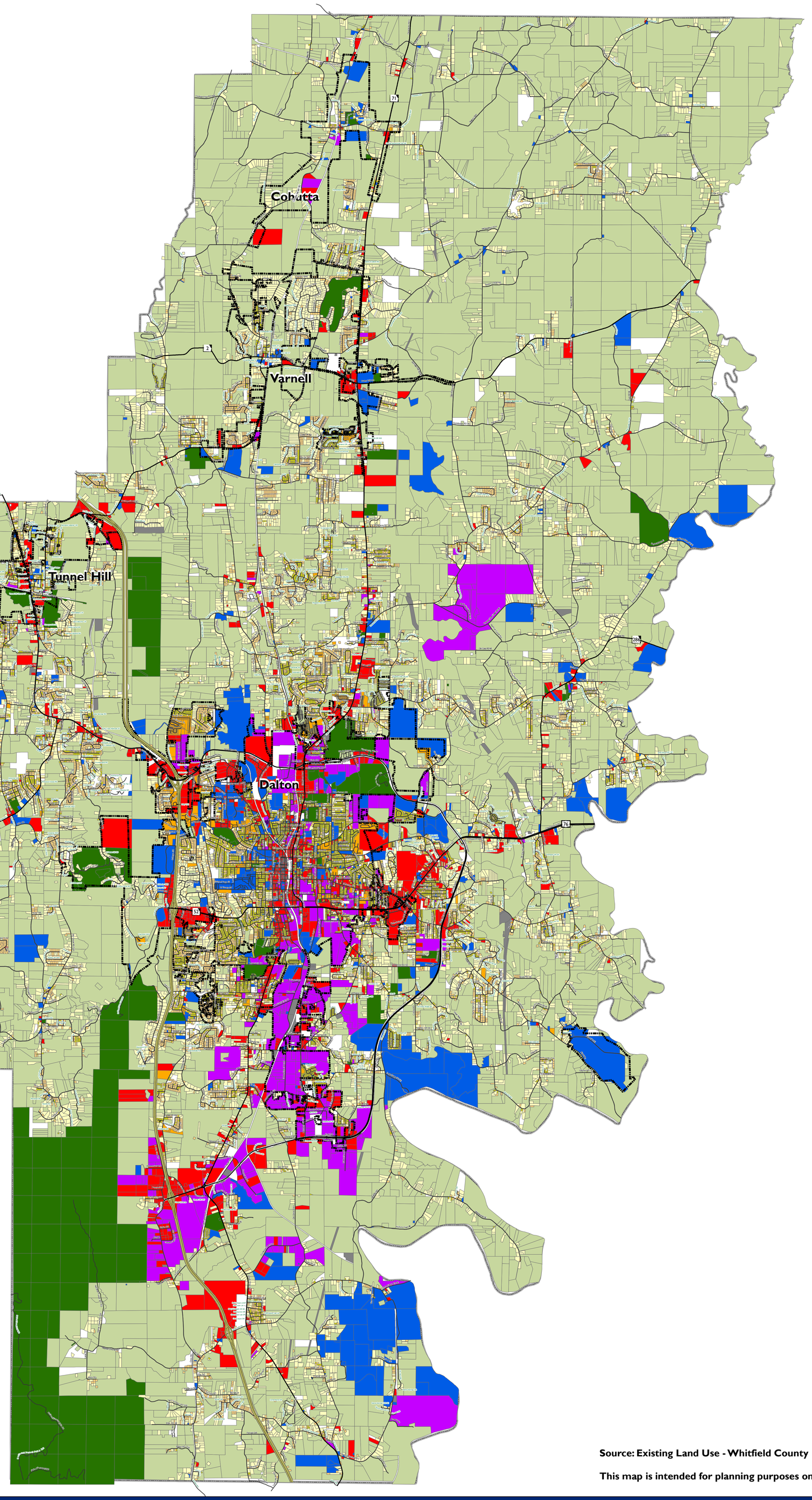
Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell

Legend

- Railroads
- Major Roads
- Interstates
- Roads
- City Boundaries
- County Boundary

Existing Land Use

- Unknown
- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Historical
- Industrial
- Public Utility
- Residential - Multi-Family
- Residential < 0.5 acres
- Residential 0.5 acre - 1 acre
- Residential 1 - 5 acres



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Source: Existing Land Use - Whitfield County

This map is intended for planning purposes only.

Prepared by:
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Existing Land Use Map

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Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell

Tunnel Hill

Dalton

71

286

52

41

Legend

- Railroads
- Major Roads
- Interstates
- Roads
- City Boundaries
- County Boundary

Existing Land Use

- Unknown
- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Historical
- Industrial
- Public Utility
- Residential - Multi-Family
- Residential < 0.5 acres
- Residential 0.5 acre - 1 acre
- Residential 1 - 5 acres

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Source: 2005 Existing Land Use - North Georgia RDC
This map is intended for planning purposes only.

Prepared by:
MACTEC

City of Dalton Existing Land Use Map

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Prepared By:
Checked By:

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Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell

Legend

- Railroads
- Major Roads
- Interstates
- Roads
- City Boundaries

Existing Land Use

- Unknown
- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Historical
- Industrial
- Public Utility
- Residential - Multi-Family
- Residential < 0.5 acres
- Residential 0.5 acre - 1 acre
- Residential 1 - 5 acres
- County Boundary

Tunnel Hill

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Source: 2005 Existing Land Use - North Georgia RDC
This map is intended for planning purposes only.

Prepared by:
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City of Tunnel Hill Existing Land Use Map

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Prepared By:
Checked By:

Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan Update 2008 - 2018

Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell

Varnell

Legend

- Railroads
- Major Roads
- Interstates
- Roads
- City Boundaries
- County Boundary

Existing Land Use

- Unknown
- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Historical
- Industrial
- Public Utility
- Residential - Multi-Family
- Residential < 0.5 acres
- Residential 0.5 acre - 1 acre
- Residential 1 - 5 acres

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Source: 2005 Existing Land Use - North Georgia RDC
This map is intended for planning purposes only.

Prepared by:
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City of Varnell Existing Land Use Map

Map Document: (G:\Whitfield\mxd\Varnell\Varnell_ELandUse.mxd)
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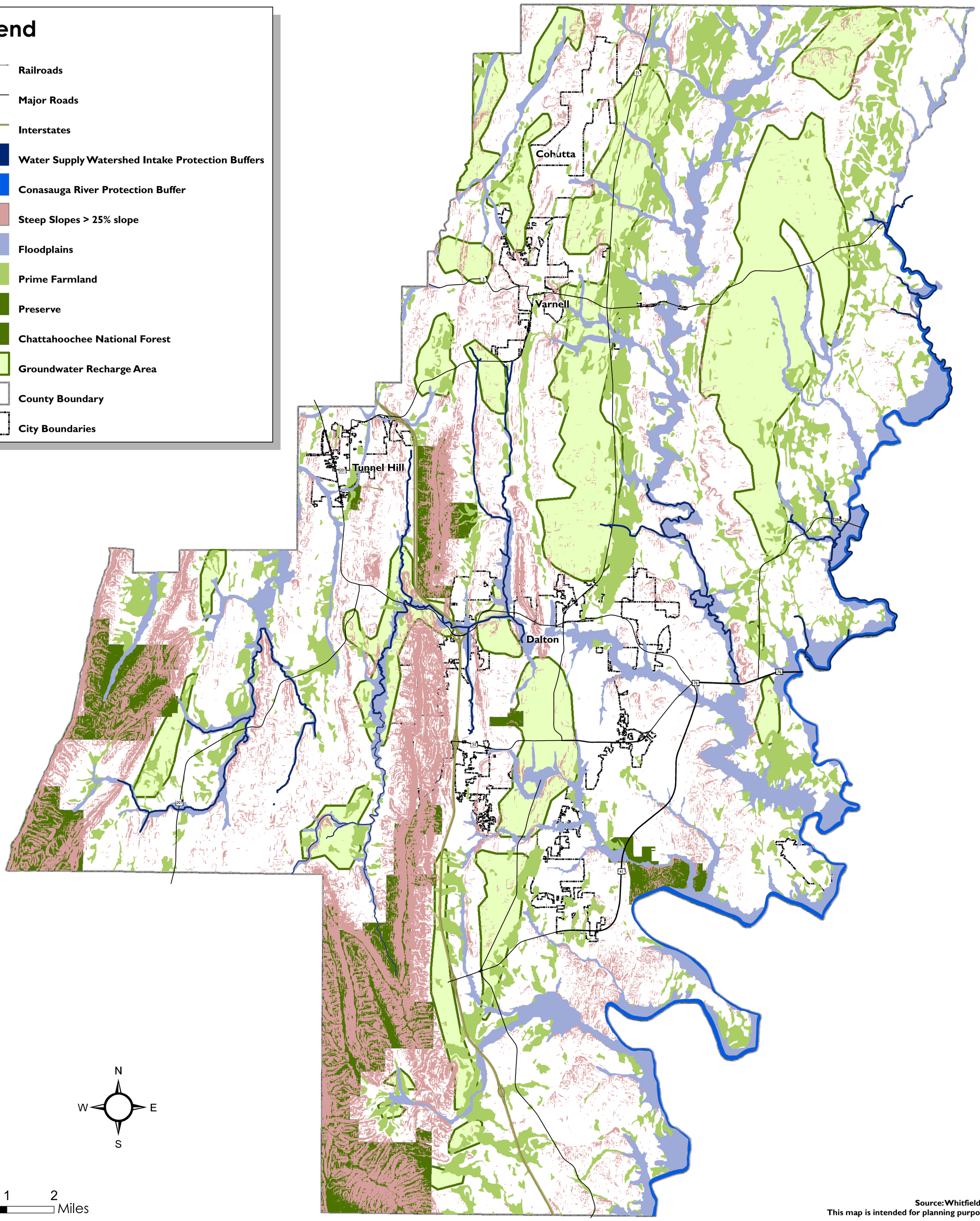
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Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan Update 2008 - 2018

Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell

Legend

- Railroads
- Major Roads
- Interstates
- Water Supply Watershed Intake Protection Buffers
- Conasauga River Protection Buffer
- Steep Slopes > 25% slope
- Floodplains
- Prime Farmland
- Preserve
- Chattahoochee National Forest
- Groundwater Recharge Area
- County Boundary
- City Boundaries



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Source: Whitfield County
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Areas of Special Concern Map

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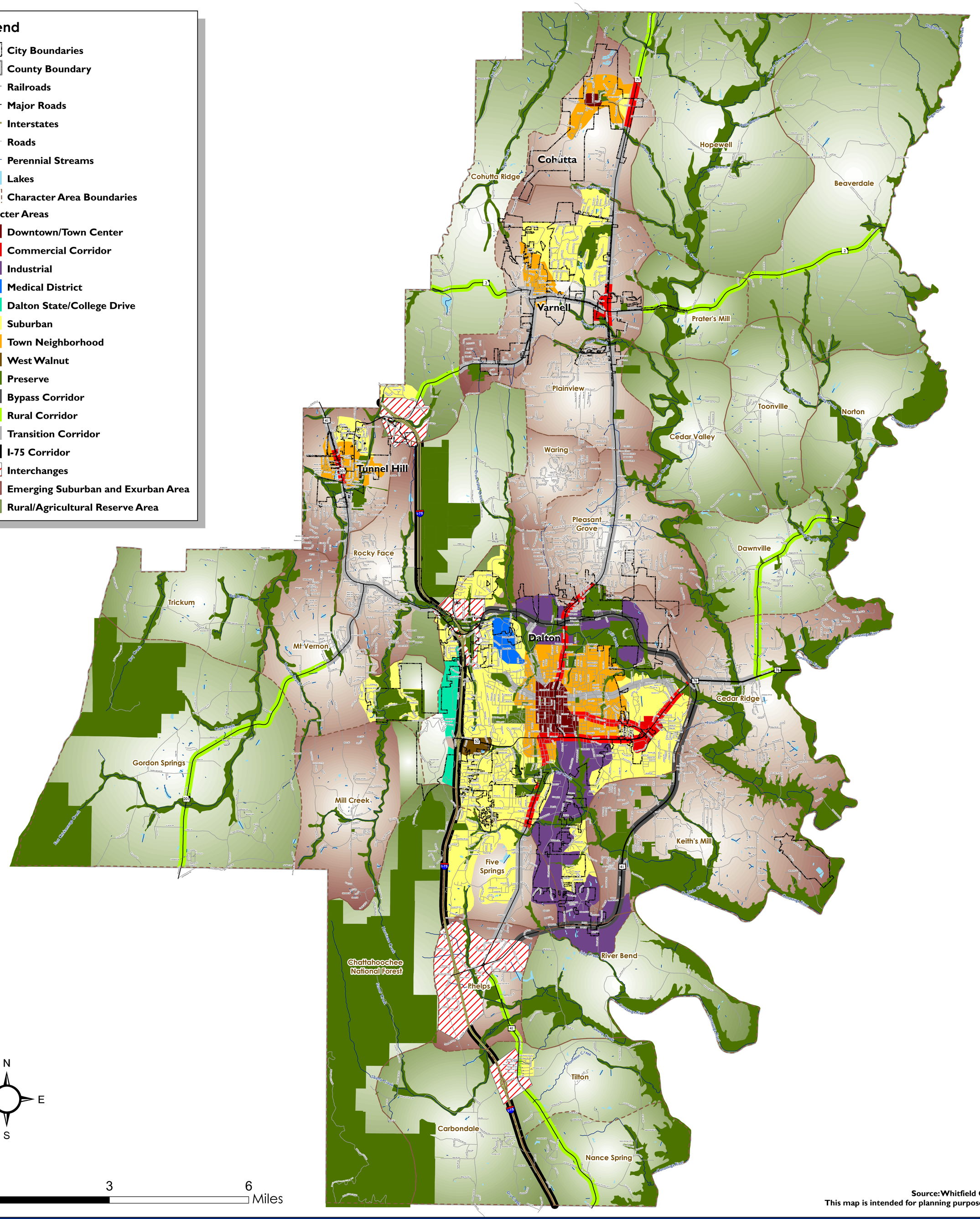
Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell

Legend

- City Boundaries
- County Boundary
- Railroads
- Major Roads
- Interstates
- Roads
- Perennial Streams
- Lakes
- Character Area Boundaries

Character Areas

- Downtown/Town Center
- Commercial Corridor
- Industrial
- Medical District
- Dalton State/College Drive
- Suburban
- Town Neighborhood
- West Walnut
- Preserve
- Bypass Corridor
- Rural Corridor
- Transition Corridor
- I-75 Corridor
- Interchanges
- Emerging Suburban and Exurban Area
- Rural/Agricultural Reserve Area



Source: Whitfield County
This map is intended for planning purposes only.

Prepared by:
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Recommended Character Areas

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Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan Update 2008 - 2018

Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell

Tunnel Hill

Dalton

Legend

- City Boundaries
- County Boundary
- Railroads
- Major Roads
- Interstates
- Roads
- Perennial Streams
- Lakes
- Character Area Boundaries

Character Areas

- Downtown/Town Center
- Commercial Corridor
- Industrial
- Medical District
- Dalton State/College Drive
- Suburban
- Town Neighborhood
- West Walnut
- Preserve
- Interchanges
- Bypass Corridor
- Rural Corridor
- Transition Corridor
- I-75 Corridor
- Emerging Suburban and Exurban Area
- Rural/Agricultural Reserve Area

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Source: Whitfield County
This map is intended for planning purposes only.

Prepared by:
MACTEC

DRAFT

City of Dalton Recommended Character Areas

Map Document: (G:\Whitfield\mxd\Dalton\Dalton_CharacterAreas.mxd)
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Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan Update 2008 - 2018

Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell

Tunnel Hill

Legend

- City Boundaries
- County Boundary
- Railroads
- Major Roads
- Interstates
- Roads
- Perennial Streams
- Lakes
- Character Area Boundaries

Character Areas

- Downtown/Town Center
- Commercial Corridor
- Industrial
- Medical District
- Suburban
- Town Neighborhood
- Preserve
- Interchanges
- Bypass Corridor
- Rural Corridor
- Transition Corridor
- I-75 Corridor
- Emerging Suburban and Exurban Area
- Rural/Agricultural Reserve Area

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Source: Whitfield County
This map is intended for planning purposes only.

Prepared by:
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City of Tunnel Hill Recommended Character Areas

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Prepared By:
Checked By:

Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan Update 2008 - 2018

Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell

Legend

- City Boundaries
- County Boundary
- Railroads
- Major Roads
- Interstates
- Roads
- Perennial Streams
- Lakes
- Character Area Boundaries

Character Areas

- Downtown/Town Center
- Commercial Corridor
- Industrial
- Medical District
- Suburban
- Town Neighborhood
- Preserve
- Interchanges
- Bypass Corridor
- Rural Corridor
- Transition Corridor
- I-75 Corridor
- Emerging Suburban and Exurban Area
- Rural/Agricultural Reserve Area

Varnell

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Source: Whitfield County
This map is intended for planning purposes only.

Prepared by:
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City of Varnell Recommended Character Areas

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CHAPTER 2

Identification of Potential Issues & Opportunities

Identification of issues and opportunities based on an analysis of supporting data and initial stakeholder input

The issues and opportunities described below have been identified from a review of the Analysis of Supporting Data for the Community Assessment, discussions with government staff, review of recently completed plans, review of plans currently under development, and other initiatives. This analysis included an examination of the QCO. This section organizes the issues and opportunities by the major topics defined in the DCA Local Planning Requirements. The assessment topics include the following areas:

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

Population

Issues

Continued high population growth – Estimates show that Whitfield County's population grew by nearly 9,500 between 2000 and 2006, which was the greatest net population increase among northwest Georgia counties. Projections are for continued significant population growth which will require Whitfield County and its municipalities to accommodate in the range of 30,000 new residents over the next twenty years.

High population density in Dalton — Due to the fact that Dalton has historically developed as a major industrial-based economy, there is a relatively high density population in the city limits that includes a high proportion of renter-occupied housing. Local concerns about community stability and crime can be aggravated by high rates of rental housing and high population densities.

Growth in unincorporated areas — Growth and residential development is increasingly occurring in unincorporated Whitfield County. For this trend to continue, significant infrastructure expansion will be required into County areas currently not served,

CHAPTER 4

Analysis of Consistency with Quality Community Objectives

Evaluation of the community's current policies, activities and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives established by Georgia DCA

This section is intended to meet the Minimum Standards for Local Comprehensive Planning requirement so that the Community Assessment includes an evaluation of the community's current policies, activities, and development patterns for consistency with the QCO contained in the State Planning Goals and Objectives. The DCA Office of Planning and Quality Growth created the QCO Local Assessment to assist local governments in evaluating their progress towards sustainable and livable communities. The assessment is meant to give the community an idea of how it is progressing toward reaching these objectives. The Objectives are listed below. The tables in the following pages function as a guide for assessing the current status of QCO in Whitfield County.

Traditional Neighborhood

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

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.

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.

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.

Regional Identity

Regions should promote and preserve an "identity," defined in terms of traditional regional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.

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.

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.

Environmental Protection

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

Growth Preparedness

Each community should identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These may include housing and infrastructure (roads, water, sewer and telecommunications) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances to direct growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities.

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, 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.

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.

Employment Options

A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.

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.

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.

Housing Opportunities

Quality housing and a range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community, to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community.

Whitfield County - DCA Quality Community Objectives Analysis

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.

Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.	N	Y	Y	N	WC: D: TH: Have Zoning ordinance that separates commercial and residential uses V:
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.	Y	N	N	N	WC: PUD zoning district D: Would be unable to TH: Variances and special permits would be required V:
3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.	N	Y	N	N	WC: Written in 2007 but not adopted as yet D: Commercial/industrial only; could be strengthened. TH: No tree ordinance V:
4. Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer.	N	Y	N	N	WC: D: Tree ordinance and Tree Board TH: V:
5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: D: TH: V:
6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.	N	Y	Y	Y	WC: D: TH: V:
7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.	N	Y	Y	Y	WC: Difficult in the rural areas of the county D: Not enough TH: V: Limited

Whitfield County - DCA Quality Community Objectives Analysis

Traditional Neighborhoods (cont.)					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.	N	Y	Y	Y	WC: Difficult in the rural areas of the county D: Very few TC: However, very few walk V: Few
9. Some of our children can and do bike to school safely.	N	N	N	Y	WC: Difficult in the rural areas of the county D: TH: V: Few
10. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community.	N	Y	Y	Y	WC: Difficult in the rural areas of the county D: A great opportunity for safe routes to school TH: We're part of the Whitfield Co. School System; no separate city school system in TH V:
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.					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.	N	Y	Y	N	WC: D: Infill Development Plan TH: V:
2. Our community is actively working to promote Brownfield redevelopment.	N	N	N	N	WC: D: TH: V:
3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment.	N	N	N	N	WC: D: TH: V:

Whitfield County - DCA Quality Community Objectives Analysis

Infill Development (cont.)					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road).	Y	N	N	N	WC: C-1, Neighborhood Commercial D: TH: V:
5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses.	Y	N	Y	N	WC: R-4 zoning D: Not adopted TH: As long as it meets septic requirments V:
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.					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*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.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: North Georgia Mountains D: Need more "identity" TH: V:
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.	Y	Y	Y	N	WC: Archeological Study performed; Historic Preservation Committee established; Many acres of Greenspace purchased by or donated to county D: TH: Historic Tunnel, Heritage Center, Deopt property V:
3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.	N	N	N	N	WC: Steep Slope Ordinance written in 2007 but not adopted as yet D: Very poor here TH: V:

Whitfield County - DCA Quality Community Objectives Analysis

Sense of Place (cont.)					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: Article VII of the Zoning Ordinance D: Limited by courts TH: V:
5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.	N	N	N	N	WC: D: Only in historic areas TH: V:
6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.	Y	NA	N	N	WC: Tax Assessor assigns Agricultural Covenants D: TH: V:

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.					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
1. We have public transportation in our community.	Y	Y	N	N	WC: Whitfield Transportation, though limited in scope D: Whitfield Transportation, though limited in scope TH: V:
2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.	N	N	N	N	WC: Efforts are made to multiple entrance subdivisions, but it is not required D: TH: V:
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.	N	Y/N	Y	N	WC: D: TH: Somewhat true; we need more sidewalks

Whitfield County - DCA Quality Community Objectives Analysis

Transportation Alternatives (cont.)					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.	N	Y	N	N	WC: D: TH: V:
5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.	N	N	N	N	WC: D: TH: V:
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: MPO Long-Range Transportation Plan includes this D: MPO Long Range Transportation Plan includes this TH: MPO Long Range Transportation Plan includes this V: MPO Long Range Transportation Plan includes this
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.	Y	Y	N	N	WC: D: TH: No gov't plan; but we would certainly encourage developers V:

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.					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.	Y	N	Y	Y	WC: D: We're the largest and most diverse TH: V:
2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.	Y	Y/N	N	N	WC: D: Pilgrim's Pride TH: We were once an agricultural community; now we're basically a bedroom community V:

Whitfield County - DCA Quality Community Objectives Analysis

Regional Identity (cont.)					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.).	Y	N	N	N	WC: D: TH: V:
4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development's regional tourism partnership.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: D: TH: V:
5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: D: Excellent CVB TH: V:
6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: D: TH: Education - Whitfield Co.; Culture - Reenactment, Tunnel, Historic area; Commerce - Ties to carpet industry V:

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.					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
1. We have designated historic districts in our community.	N	Y	N	N	WC: National Register district, but no locally-designated and protected D: TH: National Register district, but no locally-designated and protected V:

Whitfield County - DCA Quality Community Objectives Analysis

Heritage Preservation (cont.)					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
2. We have an active historic preservation commission.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: D: TH: But not part of the gov't V:
3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure this.	Y	Y	N	N	WC: D: Within the districts TH: V:

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.

Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
1. Our community is actively preserving greenspace, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.	Y	Y	N	N	WC: PUD zoning district requires a minimum of 3 acres (at least 20%) greenspace D: TH: Not as written in Ord. However, we've aquired acreage beow the Depto property (as well as the Depot property) and we've arranged with GDOT to keep some property along U.S. 41; kept clean and will possibly add a small park of some kind there in the future. V:

Open Space Preservation (cont.)					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
2. 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.	Y	Y	N	N	WC: NRCS is very active in the community D: TH: V:
3. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.	N	N	N	N	WC: D: TH: V:

Whitfield County - DCA Quality Community Objectives Analysis

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.					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.	Y	N	N	N	WC: D: TH: V:
2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.	N	N	N	N	WC: Soil erosion and sedimentation ordinances and flood plain ordinances in place, but regs generall outline compliance rather than steering development away from these areas D: See WC comments TH: See WC comments V: See WC comments
3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.	Y	Y	N	N	WC: D: It needs improvements TH: V:
4. Our community has passed the necessary "Part V" environmental ordinances, and we enforce them. These ordinances, called the Environmental Planning Criteria, inlcude Water Supply Watersheds, Protection of Groundwater Recharge Areas, Wetlands Protection, River Corridor Protection and Mountain Protection (Chapter 391-3-16). Please indicate which of these have been adopted.	N	N	N	N	WC: Stormwater regs or soil erosion regs in place, but do not meet the requirements of Part V D: Stormwater regs or soil erosion regs in place, but do not meet the requirements of Part V TH: We have stormwater and soil erosion and sedimentation ordinances V:
5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced.	N	Y	N	N	WC: D: TH: V:

Whitfield County - DCA Quality Community Objectives Analysis

Environmental Protection (cont.)					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
6. Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.	***N***	***Y***	***N***	***N***	WC: Landscaping Ord. written in 2007 but not adopted D: TH: V:
7. We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development.	***Y***	***Y***	***N***	***N***	WC: D: Not strongly enough TH:
8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).	***Y***	***Y/N***	***N***	***N***	WC: Floodplain Ord. adopted; Steep Slope written 2007 but not adopted D: Not strongly enough TH: V:

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.					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.	***Y***	***Y***	***N***	***N***	WC: D: TH: V:
2. Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.	***Y***	***?***	***Y***	***Y***	WC: D: TH: Unsure - a weakness is our coordination efforts V:
3. Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.	***Y***	***Y***	***Y***	***Y***	WC: D: TH: Probably limited though V:

Whitfield County - DCA Quality Community Objectives Analysis

Growth Preparedness (Cont.)					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
4. We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.	Y	N	N	N	WC: D: TH: Another weakness; we don't have stated QCG goals V:
5. We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.	Y	N	N	N	WC: D: TH: V:
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.	Y	Y/N	N	Y	WC: D: One of the criteria TH: We have areas - but not a Natrual Resources V:
7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.	Y	Y	Y	N	WC: D: TH: V:
8. We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.	N	N	Y	N	WC: D: TH: Through brochures available at City Hall V:
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.	Y	Y	Y	N	WC: D: TH: Through brochures available at City Hall and the county website V:
10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.	Y	Y	Y	N	WC: D: TH: V:

Whitfield County - DCA Quality Community Objectives Analysis

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.

Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*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.		Y	N	N	WC: D: Work left to be done TH: No ECO in Tunnel Hill V:
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.		Y	N	N	WC: D: Our incentives package is built around this strategy TH: V:
3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products.		Y	N	N	WC: D: TH: V:
4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy.		N	N	N	WC: D: We need and seek diversity TH: V:

Employment Options

A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.

Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.	?	?	N	N	WC: D: TH: V:
2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	Y	Y	Y	N	WC: D: We need more educated/skilled workers TH: Very small community; Very few jobs V:

Whitfield County - DCA Quality Community Objectives Analysis

Employment Options (cont.)					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: D: TH: Very small community; Very few jobs V:
4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs.	Y	Y	Y	N	WC: D: TH: Very small community; Very few jobs V:

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.					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: Only allows this scenario in General Agriculture zone and not in suburban residential zoning districts D: With guidelines; Ordinances do not allow such uses in standing zone districts that allow only SF detatched homes; amendments would be necessary; these would need to include guidelines that would help avoid over use of small lots already allowed by the ordinance. TH: V:
2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: D: TH: V:
3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average).	N	Y	Y	Y	WC: More low income housing is a goal of the CDC D: Workforce housing needs improved TH: V:

Whitfield County - DCA Quality Community Objectives Analysis

Housing Choices (Cont.)					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks.	Y	N	N	N	WC: D: TH: V:
5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or "neo-traditional" development.	N	Y	N	N	WC: D: Not enough inventory TH: V:
6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.	Y	N	N	Y	WC: D: TH: V:
7. We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: Multi-Family allowed in R-3, R-5, R-6 zoning districts D: It is discouraged in existing low-density neighborhoods TH: Allowed by ordinance, but must meet septic requirements V:
8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.	Y	Y	N		WC: D: In part TH: We might, but the opportunity hasn't presented itself V:
9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.	Y	Y	N	N	WC: Joint county/city CDC - Comm. Development Corp. D: TH: V:
10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.	Y	N	Y		WC: R-4, Small Lot Development zoning district D: TH: Must meet septic requirements V:

Whitfield County - DCA Quality Community Objectives Analysis

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.

Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
1. Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens.	Y	Y	N	N	WC: D: Too limited TH: V:
2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.	Y	Y	N	N	WC: D: TH: V:
3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: Dalton State College D: Dalton State College should be a focus TH: Dalton State College V:
4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.	Y	Y	Y	N	WC: D: TH: We're near Dalton and Chattanooga; We're primarily a bedroom community V:

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.

Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.	Y	Y	N	Y	WC: D: TH: V:
2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.	Y	Y	N	N	WC: Participating member of the Regional Water Authority D: TH: V:

Whitfield County - DCA Quality Community Objectives Analysis

Regional Solutions					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
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.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: D: 21 joint services with Whitfield County TH: V:
4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: D: We're improving TH: V:
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.					
Question	Whitfield Co.	Dalton	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	*Comments*
1. We plan jointly with our cities and county for comprehensive planning purposes.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: D: TH: V:
2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.		Y	Y	Y	WC: D: TH: V:
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.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: D: TH: V:
4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.	Y	Y	Y	Y	WC: D: TH: V:

FINAL DRAFT

Whitfield County
Comprehensive Plan 2008-2018

Joint Comprehensive Plan Update for
Whitfield County and the
municipalities of Dalton, Tunnel Hill and Varnell

ANALYSIS OF SUPPORTING DATA

Prepared for:
Whitfield County
Dalton, Georgia

By:

MACTEC, Inc. – Planning & Design Group
Atlanta, Georgia

February 28, 2008

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CHAPTER 1

1. Introduction

Introduction to the Analysis of Supporting Data for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Varnell and Tunnel Hill

The "Analysis of Supporting Data" follows the guidelines of the Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Chapter 110-12-1, Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, effective May 1, 2005. This document presents the full collection of analysis and supporting data that provides the backbone of the Community Assessment. Maps associated with this document can be found in Appendix A: Atlas of Supportive Maps.

Located in the North Georgia Region and part of the Dalton Metropolitan Statistical Area, Whitfield County covers approximately 291 square miles of predominantly rural, yet increasingly suburban landscape. Whitfield County includes four municipalities: Cohutta, Dalton, Tunnel Hill and Varnell. The largest of the municipalities is Dalton with a population estimated by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2006 at more than 32,000 residents.

CHAPTER 2

2. Population

Identification of trends and issues in population growth and significant changes in the demographic characteristics of the community

2.1. Total Population

2.1.1. Historic Population

Whitfield County's population has grown steadily since it's creation by an act of the General Assembly in 1851 to a population of 92,299 in 2006, which ranks as Georgia's 25th most populated county. Whitfield County, along with Murray County, makes up the Dalton Metropolitan Statistical Area (Dalton MSA).

The 1930 Census reported the population of the County at 20,808. By 1960, the reported population grew to 42,109. After reporting a population of 55,108 in 1970, the County began to experience an increased rate of growth, as shown in Tables 2-1 and 2-2. The population grew 19.3% in the 1970s, 10.2% in the 1980s, and 15.3% in the 1990s. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates a population increase of 9,474 from 2000 to 2006, making Whitfield County the 60th-fastest growing county in the state with a growth rate of 11.3%, as shown in Tables 2-1 and 2-2.

Unincorporated Whitfield County population grew 31.9% between 1980 and 2006. The increase occurred in spite of municipal annexation of areas that developed on the periphery of the County's cities. Unincorporated areas made up 61.3% of Whitfield County's total population in 2006. Dalton experienced a 57.8% population increase from 1980 to 2006 as population increased from 20,939 in 1980 to 33,045 in 2006. Dalton's 2006 population made up 35.5% of the County's total population. Cohutta grew by 49.9% during the same period increasing its total population from 407 to 610. After losing population in the 1970s, Tunnel Hill has since experienced population growth of 16.3% moving from a population of 936 to 1,089 between 1980 and 2006. Varnell, which also lost population in the 1970s and saw only slight gains in the 1980s, experienced significant growth in the 1990s (316.5%). Varnell grew from a 1990 population of 358 to a 2000 population of 1,491. Varnell lost population between 2000 and 2006, according to Census estimates. From 1980 to 2006, however, the city grew by 356.7%.

Table 2-1 Historic Population

Area	1970		1980		1990		2000		2006	
	Total Pop.	% of County Pop.	Total Pop.	% of County Pop.	Total Pop.	% of County Pop.	Total Pop.	% of County Pop.	Total Pop.	% of County Pop.
Whitfield County	55,108	100.0%	65,755	100.0%	72,462	100.0%	83,525	100.0%	92,999	100.0%
Dalton	18,872	34.2%	20,939	31.8%	22,218	30.7%	27,912	33.4%	33,045	35.5%
Cohutta	393	0.7%	407	0.6%	529	0.7%	582	0.7%	610	0.7%
Tunnel Hill	1,147	2.1%	936	1.4%	970	1.3%	1,209	1.4%	1,089	1.2%
Varnell	314	0.6%	282	0.4%	358	0.5%	1,491	1.8%	1,288	1.4%
Unincorporated	34,382	62.4%	43,191	65.7%	48,387	66.8%	52,331	62.7%	56,967	61.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ,Annual Estimates of the Population for Counties of Georgia: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2006

Table 2-2 Historic Population Growth Rates

Area	1970-1980		1980-1990		1990-2000		2000-2006		1980-2006	
	% Change	Ave. Annual Rate	% Change	Ave. Annual Rate	% Change	Ave. Annual Rate	% Change	Ave. Annual Rate	% Change	Ave. Annual Rate
Whitfield County	19.3%	1.8%	10.2%	1.0%	15.3%	1.4%	11.3%	1.8%	68.8%	1.3%
Dalton	11.0%	1.0%	6.1%	0.6%	25.6%	2.3%	18.4%	2.9%	75.1%	2.2%
Cohutta	3.6%	0.4%	30.0%	2.7%	10.0%	1.0%	4.8%	0.8%	55.2%	1.7%
Tunnel Hill	-18.4%	-2.0%	3.6%	0.4%	24.6%	2.2%	-9.9%	-1.7%	-5.1%	-0.2%
Varnell	-10.2%	-1.1%	27.0%	2.4%	316.5%	15.3%	-13.6%	-2.4%	310.2%	5.6%
Unincorporated	25.6%	2.3%	12.0%	1.1%	8.2%	0.8%	8.9%	1.4%	65.7%	2.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ,Annual Estimates of the Population for Counties of Georgia: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2005

2.1.2. Population Growth in Surrounding Counties

Whitfield County's net population increase of 9,474 topped that of all of its neighboring counties, though the neighbors have also experienced significant growth. As shown in Table 2-3, Gordon County, Catoosa County and Murray County each saw double digit growth rates from 2000 to 2006. Bradley and Hamilton counties in Tennessee, while not posting double-digit growth rates, each had net population increases of more than 5,000 during this time period. The Dalton MSA and North Georgia Region each grew by 12.0% and 15.2%, respectively, from 2000 to 2006. The state population grew by 14.4% during this time period.

Table 2-3 Population Trends in Surrounding Counties

County	Total Population				% Change		
	1980	1990	2000	2006	1980-90	1990-00	2000-06
Whitfield	65,755	72,462	83,525	92,999	10.2%	15.3%	11.3%
Catoosa	36,991	42,646	53,282	62,016	15.3%	24.9%	16.4%
Gordon	30,070	35,067	44,104	51,419	16.6%	25.8%	16.6%
Murray	19,685	26,147	36,506	41,398	32.8%	39.6%	13.4%
Walker	56,470	58,310	61,053	64,606	3.3%	4.7%	5.8%
Bradley, Tennessee	67,547	73,712	87,965	93,538	9.1%	19.3%	6.3%
Hamilton, Tennessee	287,740	285,536	307,896	312,905	-0.8%	7.8%	1.6%
Dalton MSA	85,440	98,609	120,031	134,397	15.4%	21.7%	12.0%
North Georgia Region	122,970	142,401	186,268	214,531	15.8%	30.8%	15.2%
State of Georgia	5,463,105	6,478,216	8,186,453	9,363,941	18.6%	26.4%	14.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau ,Annual Estimates of the Population for Counties of Georgia: 4/1/00 to 9/1/20

2.1.3. Population Projections – Multiple Sources

MACTEC Engineering and Consulting, Inc. (MACTEC) examined a variety of published population projections including those prepared by the North Georgia Regional Development Center (NGRDC), DCA and the Georgia Office of Budget and Planning estimates prepared in 2005. For the DCA projections, MACTEC used the data spreadsheet created by the DCA to present a range of projections for 2010, 2015, 2020, 2025 and 2030, as shown in Table 2-4. Overall, the projections range from a 2030 population of 110,129 (average annual growth rate of 0.7%) and 162,136 (average annual growth rate of 2.2%). NGRDC projections show a 2030 population of 126,185, which represents an average annual growth rate of 1.2%.

Table 2-4 Population Projections – Multiple Sources

Year	North Ga. RDC	Dalton MPO[1]	DCA Low[2]	DCA High[3]	OPB[4]	Exponential [5]
2000	83,525	83,525	83,525	83,525	83,525	83,525
2006	93,980	92,999	92,999	92,999	92,999	92,999
2010	98,578	98,234	92,393	98,157	96,930	97,992
2015	105,731	105,146	96,827	110,229	104,359	104,233
2020	112,216	112,544	101,261	122,300	112,165	110,474
2025	118,982	120,462	105,695	142,218	120,555	116,716
2030	126,185	127,023	110,129	162,136	129,573	122,957
Growth Rate 2005-2030	34.3%	36.6%	18.4%	74.3%	39.3%	32.2%
Ave. Annual Growth Rate 2006-2030	1.2%	1.4%	0.7%	2.2%	1.3%	1.1%

[1]MPO projected 2030 population of 127,023 as shown; population for 2010-2025 shown above extrapolated using average annual growth rate from 2000-2030 projected by the MPO. [2]DCA projections based on the average increment of change from 1980 and 2000. [3]DCA projections based on the average increment of change from 1980 and 2000. The multiplier was selected because it created the growth rate necessary to accommodate the U.S. Bureau of Census estimated population of 90,889 in 2005. [4]OPB projected 1.496% average annual growth rate for 2000 to 2015, but did not publish projections past 2015; projections shown for 2015 to 2030 calculated with 1.496 average annual growth rate. [5] Exponential Growth Rate based on percent 1.3% average annual growth rate recorded between 1980 and 2006.

2.1.4. Population Projections – For Planning

Population projections, shown in Table 2-5, are the projections selected based on a review of the projections presented in Table 2-4. Based on these projections, Whitfield County population will increase approximately 34.3% between 2007 and 2030 and increase from the year 2007 population of 93,980 to a year 2030 population of 126,185. This represents an average annual growth rate of 1.2%. Long-range population projections for the cities and unincorporated Whitfield County will likely be statistically impacted by annexation (*i.e.*, when a city annexes population that was previously included in unincorporated Whitfield County the population for the city increases and the population for the unincorporated area decreases). Projections shown for the cities are based on maintaining the existing proportion of the total population made up by each city.

Unincorporated Whitfield County's population is projected to reach 77,295 by 2030. Dalton's population is projected to increase to 44,837. Cohutta, Tunnel Hill and Varnell are projected to increase to 828, 1,478 and 1,748 by 2030, respectively.

Table 2-5 Population Projections – For Planning

Year	Whitfield County	Dalton	Cohutta	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	Unincorporated
2007	93,980	33,394	616	1,100	1,302	57,568
2010	98,578	35,027	647	1,154	1,365	60,384
2015	105,731	37,569	694	1,238	1,464	64,766
2020	112,216	39,873	736	1,314	1,554	68,738
2025	118,982	42,277	780	1,393	1,648	72,883
2030	126,185	44,837	828	1,478	1,748	77,295
Growth Rate 2007-2030	34.3%	34.3%	34.3%	34.3%	34.3%	34.3%
Annual Average Growth Rate 2005-2030	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%	1.2%

Source: MACTEC, NEGRDC.

2.1.5. Household Size

Average household size dropped to 2.91 in 2000 and remained steady based on Census estimates through 2005 for the County and the municipalities. Projections provided in Table 2-6 show that the household size will continue to shrink in Whitfield County. The smaller household size reflects both state and national trends. Data from the American Community Survey show a household size increase to 2.95 in 2006. More data is needed to better understand if there's been a reversal in the household size decline. The Census 2010, based on an actual count of households rather than the sample data used to prepare the American Community Survey, will provide those answers. The 2010 Census data, however, will not be available until at least 2011.

Dalton experienced an increase in average household size from 1990 to 2000 and 2005. Dalton average household size is expected to continue to grow through 2030. Among the cities exhibiting a decline in average household size from 1980 to 2000, Varnell saw the least decline, while Cohutta and Tunnel Hill saw the most significant decline. Varnell recorded the largest average household size in 2005 with 2.92 persons per household. Dalton is expected to record the largest average household size (3.07) in 2030.

Table 2-6 Average Household Size Historical and Projections

Year	Whitfield County	Dalton	Cohutta	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	State of Georgia
1980	2.91	2.64	2.83	3.15	2.94	2.84
1990	2.67	2.42	2.61	2.82	2.84	2.66
2000	2.82	2.81	2.62	2.68	2.92	2.65
2005	2.8	2.85	2.57	2.56	2.92	2.64
2006*	**2.95**					**2.69**
2010	2.78	2.9	2.52	2.45	2.91	2.63
2015	2.75	2.94	2.46	2.33	2.91	2.62
2020	2.73	2.98	2.41	2.21	2.9	2.61
2025	2.71	3.02	2.36	2.09	2.9	
2030	2.69	3.07	2.31	1.98	2.98	
Growth Rate 1980-2000	-3.1%	6.4%	-7.4%	-14.9%	-0.7%	-6.7%
Growth Rate 2000-2030	-4.6%	9.3%	-11.8%	-26.1%	2.1%	-100.0%
Average Annual Growth Rate 1980-2000	-0.2%	0.3%	-0.4%	-0.8%	0.0%	-0.3%
Average Annual Growth Rate 2000-2030	-0.2%	0.3%	-0.4%	-1.0%	0.1%	-100.0%
** American Community Survey 2006 estimate for State and Whitfield County only (estimates for cities not available)*						

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2000 Census; DCA 2006

2.2. *Age Distribution*

Age distribution affects a variety of needs and services as the County plans for future housing, commercial, public institutions, and recreational facilities. Table 2-7 shows the historical age distribution for Whitfield County. With the exception of the 20-to-24-years age group, all other groups shown increased from 1980 to 2006. The drop in the 20-to-24-years age group occurred after 2000. From 2000 to 2006 the 25-to-34 years and the 60-to-64-years age groups saw modest decreases, while the remaining age groups saw continued increases. The 55-to-59-years group grew by 42.4% since 2000, the under 5 years by 30.9%, the 10-to-14-years by 31.7% and the 85-plus-years group by 24.6%. Increases in those in age groups below age 19 impacts county and city services aimed at children (e.g. schools, parks and recreation, social services, etc.). The increase in those over 85, which follows state and national trends, also has implications on social services provided for seniors and the health care industry.

Table 2-7 Historical Age Distribution in Whitfield County

Age Group	1980		1990		2000		2006		% Change 1980-2006
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	
Under 5 years	5,191	7.9%	5,151	7.1%	6,810	8.2%	8,913	9.6%	71.7%
5 to 9 years	5,727	8.7%	5,067	7.0%	6,344	7.6%	7,130	7.7%	24.5%
10 to 14 years	5,842	8.9%	5,333	7.4%	6,049	7.2%	7,969	8.6%	36.4%
15 to 19 years	6,081	9.2%	5,780	8.0%	6,071	7.3%	6,632	7.1%	9.1%
20 to 24 years	5,783	8.8%	5,858	8.1%	5,949	7.1%	4,944	5.3%	-14.5%
25 to 34 years	10,947	16.6%	12,438	17.2%	13,130	15.7%	12,797	13.8%	16.9%
35 to 44 years	8,562	13.0%	11,130	15.4%	12,607	15.1%	14,142	15.2%	65.2%
45 to 54 years	6,700	10.2%	8,344	11.5%	10,597	12.7%	12,038	12.9%	79.7%
55 to 59 years	2,851	4.3%	3,291	4.5%	4,113	4.9%	5,858	6.3%	105.5%
60 to 64 years	2,453	3.7%	2,868	4.0%	3,279	3.9%	3,179	3.4%	29.6%
65 to 74 years	3,712	5.6%	4,344	6.0%	4,901	5.9%	5,373	5.8%	44.7%
75 to 84 years	1,553	2.4%	2,252	3.1%	2,756	3.3%	2,879	3.1%	85.4%
85 years and over	387	0.6%	606	0.8%	919	1.1%	1,145	1.2%	195.9%
Median Age	29		32		33		34		17.0%
Total	65,789	91.4%	72,462	90.1%	83,525	89.7%	92,999	89.9%	41.4%
Note: Age groups shown differently than in Table 2-11 to match groupings used in the ACS.									

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 1980, 1990, 2000; American Community Survey 2006

As shown in Table 2-8, Whitfield County's population is younger than the population of the state, nation and surrounding area Metropolitan Statistical Areas. The County's larger immigrant population is younger than the general population, which in turn leads to a lower median age and higher proportion of the population in the younger age groups than surrounding areas. The median age of 33.8 is significantly lower than the median age of the Cleveland, TN MSA, the Chattanooga, TN-GA MSA, the Rome, GA MSA and the state of Georgia. Whitfield County's proportion of the population age 19 and under is 5% higher than the proportion for the nation. The proportion of the population under five years old is 2.8% higher than the proportion for the nation.

Table 2-8 Historical Age Distribution Comparison

Group	Whitfield County	Dalton MSA	Cleveland, TN MSA	Chattano-oga MSA	Rome MSA	Atlanta MSA	State of Georgia	United States
Under 5 years	9.6%	9.0%	6.4%	6.2%	7.8%	7.6%	7.5%	6.8%
5 to 9 years	7.7%	8.3%	6.8%	6.0%	5.5%	7.2%	7.2%	6.6%
10 to 14 years	8.6%	7.7%	6.4%	6.4%	7.8%	7.4%	7.1%	6.9%
15 to 19 years	7.1%	7.1%	6.9%	6.7%	8.1%	7.0%	7.5%	7.2%
20 to 24 years	5.3%	5.6%	5.9%	6.5%	5.8%	6.4%	7.0%	7.0%
25 to 34 years	13.8%	14.1%	14.1%	13.4%	13.1%	15.0%	14.3%	13.3%
35 to 44 years	15.2%	16.1%	14.7%	14.0%	13.2%	17.1%	15.7%	14.7%
45 to 54 years	12.9%	12.9%	13.8%	15.1%	13.9%	14.6%	14.1%	14.5%
55 to 59 years	6.3%	5.8%	4.9%	7.1%	5.2%	5.8%	5.7%	6.0%
60 to 64 years	3.4%	3.8%	6.6%	5.1%	5.7%	4.0%	4.2%	4.5%
65 to 74 years	5.8%	5.7%	7.5%	7.2%	7.3%	4.6%	5.4%	6.3%
75 to 84 years	3.1%	2.7%	4.5%	4.6%	5.0%	2.5%	3.1%	4.4%
85 years and over	1.2%	1.1%	1.4%	1.7%	1.5%	0.9%	1.1%	1.7%
Median age (years)	33.8	33.8	37.4	38.4	36.4	34.6	34.6	36.4
19 years and under	33.0%	32.0%	26.6%	25.3%	29.2%	29.2%	29.3%	27.6%
18 years and over	69.8%	70.7%	76.6%	77.2%	75.2%	73.3%	73.8%	75.4%
21 years and over	66.0%	66.6%	71.9%	73.1%	69.6%	69.4%	69.1%	70.9%
62 years and over	12.4%	12.3%	17.7%	16.4%	16.7%	10.3%	12.2%	15.1%
65 years and over	10.1%	9.6%	13.5%	13.5%	13.8%	7.9%	9.7%	12.4%

Source: American Community Survey 2006- Demographics and Housing Estimates

Tables 2-9 and 2-10 show the age distribution projections through the year 2030. The projections base the growth on trends experienced from 1980 to 2000. As a result, these projections show the share of the population in each age group remaining fairly constant over the next 25 years. National projections, however, anticipate that the senior citizen share of the population will increase significantly during this time period. For example, the number of Americans aged 45 to 65 (who will reach age 65 over the next two decades) increased by 39% from 1994 to 2004, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration on Aging. The 25 to 54 age groups are projected to increase from 55% to 59% between 2005 and 2030.

Table 2-9 Age Distribution Projections

Age Groups	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% Change 2005-200
Under 5 years	7,215	7,620	8,024	8,429	8,834	9,239	28.1%
5 to 13 years	12,878	13,363	13,848	14,333	14,818	15,303	18.8%
14 to 17 years	3,326	3,021	2,715	2,410	2,105	1,800	-45.9%
18 to 20 years	3,646	3,669	3,693	3,716	3,740	3,763	3.2%
21 to 24 years	4,809	4,851	4,892	4,934	4,976	5,018	4.3%
25 to 34 years	13,676	14,222	14,767	15,313	15,859	16,405	20.0%
35 to 44 years	13,618	14,630	15,641	16,652	17,663	18,675	37.1%
45 to 54 years	11,571	12,546	13,520	14,494	15,468	16,443	42.1%
55 to 64 years	7,914	8,436	8,958	9,480	10,002	10,524	33.0%
65 years and older	9,307	10,038	10,769	11,500	12,231	12,962	39.3%
Total	87,960	92,396	96,827	101,261	105,696	110,132	25.2%

Source: DCA

Table 2-10 Age Distribution Projections – Share of Population

Age Groups	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Under 5 years	8.2%	8.2%	8.3%	8.3%	8.4%	8.4%
5 to 13 years	14.6%	14.5%	14.3%	14.2%	14.0%	13.9%
14 to 17 years	3.8%	3.3%	2.8%	2.4%	2.0%	1.6%
18 to 20 years	4.1%	4.0%	3.8%	3.7%	3.5%	3.4%
21 to 24 years	5.5%	5.3%	5.1%	4.9%	4.7%	4.6%
25 to 34 years	15.5%	15.4%	15.3%	15.1%	15.0%	14.9%
35 to 44 years	15.5%	15.8%	16.2%	16.4%	16.7%	17.0%
45 to 54 years	13.2%	13.6%	14.0%	14.3%	14.6%	14.9%
55 to 64 years	9.0%	9.1%	9.3%	9.4%	9.5%	9.6%
65 years and older	10.6%	10.9%	11.1%	11.4%	11.6%	11.8%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: DCA

The anticipated shifts in the overall age distribution of residents in Whitfield County are not predicted to change significantly in the next 20 years. The population in each age group is projected to see continued growth, increasing significantly the number of retirement-age and school-age residents. Therefore, changes in the age distribution alone are not significant enough to warrant major policy changes or County improvements. While the proportion may remain relatively constant, the tremendous rate of growth in total population for Whitfield County will lead to significant growth in the real population number for each age group and these increases will drastically impact the service demands for each group.

The 18.8% projected increase for the 5-to-13 age group equates to an increase of roughly 2,024 elementary and middle school-aged children (from 12,978 in 2005 to 15,303 in 2030). The increase

creates challenges for the County school system and other services provided in the County for children. Likewise, the projected increase in persons 65 and older from 9,307 to 12,962 will greatly increase the demand for services related to senior citizens. Whether or not these statistics remain consistent depends on the availability of housing allowing seniors the opportunity to age in their current community. The changing age structure of a population can affect Whitfield County. Issues that Whitfield County may need to face as a result of the changing population include the need for services, healthcare, changes in markets, participation in the labor force, and public policy decisions.

2.3. *Race and Ethnicity*

2.3.1. Racial and Ethnic makeup

White residents made up the largest share of the population in the County with an estimated 93.3% in 2006, as shown in Table 2-11 and Table 2-12. The percentage of non-white population, with the exception of Asian or Pacific Island, remained relatively stable from 1990 to 2006. Asian or Pacific Islander increased by 152.3% from 1990 to 2006.

The racial group category "other and multi-racial" recorded an unexplained population decrease from 1,533 in 1990 to 953 in 2006, according to the American Community Survey. The data is shown more significantly when reviewing Dalton's portion of this group in Table 2-10. Between 1990 and 2000, this group experienced an increase from 1,004 to 6,675, which represents a 564.8% increase. It's unclear from the data available what caused this change. One possibility is that with the increase in the population of persons of Hispanic origin that some groups represented within this population were identifying with racial groups other than the more typical White or African American group.

The Census does not include Hispanic as a race, but accounts for this population under ethnicity. As a result, people of Hispanic origin generally make up portions of more than one racial group. The figures included with this analysis include persons of Hispanic origin with the various racial groups for comparison purposes. As a group, the number of persons of Hispanic origin increased significantly from 2,321 in 1990 to 18,419 in 2000 and to 27,205 in 2006, which represents 29.3% of the County residents. In 2000, the Dalton Hispanic population represented 40.2% of all residents. Providing bilingual services and education present a service challenge for the community.

Table 2-11 Race and Hispanic Origin Total Population

Area	Category	Total Population	*Population By Race*					Persons of Hispanic origin
			White	African American	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian or Pacific Islander	Other and Multi-Racial	
Whitfield County	1990	72,462	67,533	3,214	172	323	1,533	2,321
	2000	83,525	78,240	3,399	352	815	719	18,419
	2006	92,999	86,799	3,569	430	1,248	953	27,205
	% Change 1990-2000	15.3%	15.9%	5.8%	104.7%	152.3%	-53.1%	693.6%
	% Change 2000-2006	11.3%	10.9%	5.0%	22.2%	53.1%	32.5%	47.7%
Dalton	1990	22,213	18,607	2,317	62	233	1,004	1,422
	2000	27,912	18,468	2,153	123	493	6,675	11,219
	% Change 1990-2000	25.7%	-0.7%	-7.1%	98.4%	111.6%	564.8%	689.0%
Cohutta	1990	529	510	15	1	0	3	4
	2000	582	553	10	1	1	17	5
	% Change 1990-2000	10.0%	8.4%	-33.3%	0.0%	NA	466.7%	25.0%
Tunnel Hill	1990	970	950	16	0	1	3	4
	2000	1,209	1,142	31	2	4	30	48
	% Change 1990-2000	24.6%	20.2%	93.8%	NA	300.0%	900.0%	1100.0%
Varnell	1990	358	354	3	0	0	1	1
	2000	1,491	1,323	71	1	6	90	78
	% Change 1990-2000	316.5%	273.7%	2266.7%	NA	NA	5.0%	7700.0%

* Race categories are for that particular race "alone" and do not include combinations; combined races are included in "other and multi-racial" category

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Annual County Resident Population Estimates by Age, Sex, Race and Hispanic Origin: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2006

Table 2-12 Race and Hispanic Origin Share of Population

Category	Year	White	African American	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Asian or Pacific Islander	Other and Multi-Racial	Persons of Hispanic origin
Whitfield County	1990	93.2%	4.4%	0.2%	0.4%	2.1%	3.2%
	2000	93.7%	4.1%	0.4%	1.0%	0.9%	22.1%
	2006	93.3%	3.8%	0.5%	1.3%	1.0%	29.3%
Dalton	1990	83.8%	10.4%	0.3%	1.0%	4.5%	6.4%
	2000	66.2%	7.7%	0.4%	1.8%	23.9%	40.2%
Cohutta	1990	96.4%	2.8%	0.2%	0.0%	0.6%	0.8%
	2000	95.0%	1.7%	0.2%	0.2%	2.9%	0.9%
Tunnel Hill	1990	97.9%	1.6%	0.0%	0.1%	0.3%	0.4%
	2000	94.5%	2.6%	0.2%	0.3%	2.5%	4.0%
Varnell	1990	98.9%	0.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%
	2000	88.7%	4.8%	0.1%	0.4%	6.0%	5.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF1); Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin for Counties: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2006

2.3.2. Race and Ethnicity in Surrounding Counties

As indicated in Tables 2-13 and 2-14, Whitfield County's net population increase of 9,056 from 2000 to 2006 among the of persons of Hispanic origin was almost three times that of the adjacent counties, though the rate of growth was smaller than all but Walker County and Hamilton County, Tennessee. The state population of persons of Hispanic origin increased 60.0% from 2000 to 2006. The population share of the persons of Hispanic origin in surrounding counties range from 1.2% to 13.1% compared to Whitfield County's rate of 29.3%.

Table 2-13 Race and Hispanic Origin of Surrounding Counties 2006

Category	Whitfield County	Catoosa County	Gordon County	Murray County	Walker County	Bradley County, TN	Hamilton County, TN	State of Georgia
Population By Race	92,999	62,016	51,419	41,398	64,606	93,538	312,905	9,363,941
White	86,799	59,169	48,475	40,231	60,917	87,424	236,649	5,816,513
African American	3,569	1,420	1,726	593	2,581	4,022	63,220	2,794,300
Other race	2,631	1,427	1,218	574	1,108	2,092	12,660	753,128
Persons of Hispanic origin 2000	18,149	621	3,268	2,006	565	1,822	5,481	435,227
Persons of Hispanic origin 2006	27,205	1,056	6,741	5,238	759	2,870	8,067	696,146
Persons of Hispanic origin change 2000-2006	9,056	435	3,473	3,232	194	1,048	2,586	260,919

Table 2-14 Race and Hispanic Origin of Surrounding Counties 2006 – By Share of Total Population

Category	Whitfield County	Catoosa County	Gordon County	Murray County	Walker County	Bradley County, TN	Hamilton County, TN	State of Georgia
Population By Race								
White	93.3%	95.4%	94.3%	97.2%	94.3%	93.5%	75.6%	62.1%
African American	3.8%	2.3%	3.4%	1.4%	4.0%	4.3%	20.2%	29.8%
Other race	2.8%	2.3%	2.4%	1.4%	1.7%	2.2%	4.0%	8.0%
Persons of Hispanic origin	29.3%	1.7%	13.1%	12.7%	1.2%	3.1%	2.6%	7.4%
Persons of Hispanic origin % change (2000 to 2006)	49.9%	70.0%	106.3%	161.1%	34.3%	57.5%	47.2%	60.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF1), Annual Estimates of the Resident Population by Sex, Race and Hispanic or Latino Origin for Counties: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2006

2.3.3. Race and Hispanic Origin Projections

Based on the trends established from 2000 to 2006, the share of population of persons of Hispanic origin should continue to grow over the next 25 years in Whitfield County, as shown in Table 2-15 (note that Table 2-15 uses a 2005 estimate with a different source than the 2006 estimate used in Table 2-13.).While there are no major shifts in the racial make up of the County projected, the growth of each group is likely to have implications for the types of goods and services demanded in the County's commercial developments, as well as for publicly-provided services in schools and in the community. As the Hispanic population continues to rise, and it is projected to increase from 26.1% of the population in 2005 to 41.4% of the population in 2030. There will be an on-going need in the County for educating and providing accommodations for non-English speaking residents. In accordance with these statistics, it is reasonable for Whitfield County to anticipate gradual changes in the County's overall make-up and for future services to be catered to a wider range of cultures.

Table 2-15 Race and Hispanic Origin Total Population Projections

Category	2005		2010		2015		2025		2030	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
White	68,722	78.2%	70,042	75.8%	71,262	73.6%	73,702	69.8%	74,922	68.0%
African American	3,388	3.9%	3,562	3.9%	3,736	3.9%	4,048	3.8%	4,258	3.9%
American Indian/Alaska Native	333	0.4%	374	0.4%	414	0.4%	494	0.5%	535	0.5%
Asian or Pacific Islander	957	1.1%	1,119	1.2%	1,282	1.3%	1,607	1.5%	1,769	1.6%
Other race	14,459	16.5%	17,297	18.7%	20,134	20.8%	25,808	24.4%	28,646	26.0%
Persons of Hispanic origin	22,892	26.1%	27,366	29.6%	31,839	32.9%	40,785	38.6%	45,259	41.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF1); DCA Projections based on growth rates recorded 1980-2000

2.4. Income

2.4.1. Household Income

Household income distribution changes between 1990 and 2000 shifted a larger share of the County's total households to higher income brackets as evidenced by a 32% drop in households earning under $10,000 and large percentage increases in households earning over $40,000 (shown in Tables 2-16, 2-17 2-18 and 2-19). Inflation and rising incomes both contributed to these shifts. Numbers of households within income categories of $50,000 or more all increased by 254% or more. The largest percentage increase occurred in the $125,000 to $149,999 bracket where the number of households increased 803% – from 30 to 271 households.

Table 2-16 Household Income Distribution 1990-2006 – County and State

Household Median Income Category	Whitfield County							State of Georgia			
	1990		2000		2006		% Change 1990-2006	% of Total 1990	% of Total 2000	% of Total 2006	% Change 1990-2006
	Total	% of Total	Total	% f Total	Total	% f Total					
Less than $10,000	3,955	14.7%	2,750	9.4%	2,729	8.8%	-31.0%	12.6%	10.1%	8.8%	-25.7%
$10,000 - $14,999	2,499	9.3%	1,879	6.4%	1,979	6.4%	-20.8%	10.1%	5.9%	6.0%	-36.6%
$15,000 - $24,999	5,499	20.4%	3,888	13.2%	3,972	12.8%	-27.8%	13.0%	12.3%	11.4%	-6.4%
$25,000 - $34,999	4,649	17.2%	4,641	15.8%	4,696	15.1%	1.0%	13.0%	12.6%	11.5%	-5.4%
$35,000 - $49,999	5,058	18.8%	5,272	18.0%	5,347	17.2%	5.7%	19.3%	16.7%	15.1%	-16.1%
$50,000 - $74,999	3,486	12.9%	5,760	19.6%	6,158	19.8%	76.6%	12.1%	19.7%	19.0%	68.1%
$75,000 - $99,999	1,019	3.8%	2,562	8.7%	2,834	9.1%	178.1%	5.4%	10.4%	11.5%	127.1%
$100,000 - $149,999	438	1.6%	1,568	5.3%	2,430	7.8%	454.8%	9.9%	7.8%	10.3%	11.3%
$150,000 plus	350	1.3%	1,042	3.5%	992	3.2%	183.4%	4.6%	4.6%	6.4%	50.8%
Total Households	26,953	100.0%	29,362	100.0%	31,137	100.0%	15.5%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	7.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF1) 2000 and 1990; American Community Survey 2006

Table 2-17 Household Income Distribution 1990-2000 – County and State

Household Median Income Category	*Whitfield County*					*State of Georgia*		
	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000	% of Total 1990	% of Total 2000	% Change 1990-2000
	Total	% of Total	Total	% f Total				
Total Households	26,953	100.0%	29,362	100.0%	8.9%	100.0%	100.0%	27.1%
Less than $10,000	3,955	14.7%	2,750	9.4%	0.0%	16.8%	10.1%	-23.4%
$10,000 - $14,999	2,499	9.3%	1,879	6.4%	-24.8%	8.6%	5.9%	-13.8%
$15,000 - $24,999	2,642	9.8%	1,686	5.7%	-36.2%	8.9%	5.9%	-15.4%
$20,000 - $29,999	5,327	19.8%	4,588	15.6%	-13.9%	17.1%	12.7%	-5.5%
$30,000 - $34,999	2,179	8.1%	2,255	7.7%	3.5%	7.9%	6.2%	0.2%
$35,000 - $39,999	2,107	7.8%	1,715	5.8%	-18.6%	6.8%	5.9%	10.2%
$40,000 - $49,999	2,951	10.9%	3,557	12.1%	20.5%	11.0%	10.9%	25.2%
$50,000 - $59,999	2,115	7.8%	2,909	9.9%	37.5%	7.6%	9.2%	54.5%
$60,000 - $74,999	1,371	5.1%	2,851	9.7%	108.0%	6.8%	10.5%	94.9%
$75,000 - $99,999	1,019	3.8%	2,562	8.7%	151.4%	4.6%	10.4%	185.0%
$100,000 - $124,999	271	1.0%	1,056	3.6%	289.7%	1.7%	5.2%	286.1%
$125,000 - $149,999	167	0.6%	512	1.7%	206.6%	0.7%	2.5%	373.9%
$150,000 +	350	1.3%	1,042	3.5%	197.7%	1.4%	4.6%	313.2%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 2-18 Household Income Distribution 1990-2000 – Dalton and Cohutta

Household Median Income Category	Dalton					Cohutta				
	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total		Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	
Total Households	8,836	100.0%	9,850	100.0%	11.5%	194	100.0%	230	100.0%	18.6%
Less than $10,000	1,713	19.4%	1,132	11.5%	-33.9%	38	19.6%	19	8.3%	16.8%
$10,000 - $14,999	977	11.1%	718	7.3%	-26.5%	21	10.8%	11	4.8%	8.6%
$15,000 - $19,999	893	10.1%	696	7.1%	-22.1%	46	23.7%	7	3.0%	8.9%
$20,000 - $29,999	1,667	18.9%	1,684	17.1%	1.0%	42	21.6%	28	12.2%	17.1%
$30,000 - $34,999	554	6.3%	807	8.2%	45.7%	20	10.3%	16	7.0%	7.9%
$35,000 - $39,999	563	6.4%	439	4.5%	-22.0%	5	2.6%	29	12.6%	6.8%
$40,000 - $49,999	700	7.9%	1,068	10.8%	52.6%	8	4.1%	31	13.5%	11.0%
$50,000 - $59,999	550	6.2%	752	7.6%	36.7%	11	5.7%	24	10.4%	7.6%
$60,000 - $74,999	371	4.2%	588	6.0%	58.5%	-	0.0%	22	9.6%	6.8%
$75,000 - $99,999	448	5.1%	818	8.3%	82.6%	3	1.5%	27	11.7%	4.6%
$100,000 - $124,999	106	1.2%	347	3.5%	227.4%	-	0.0%	11	4.8%	1.7%
$125,000 - $149,999	103	1.2%	191	1.9%	85.4%	-	0.0%	3	1.3%	0.7%
$150,000 +	191	2.2%	610	6.2%	219.4%	-	0.0%	2	0.9%	1.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 2-19 Household Income Distribution 1990-2000 – Tunnel Hill and Varnell

Household Median Income Category	Tunnel Hill					Varnell				
	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total		Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	
Total Households	341	100.0%	437	100.0%	28.2%	150	100.0%	491	100.0%	227.3%
Less than $10,000	17	5.0%	30	6.9%	76.5%	34	22.7%	8	1.6%	-76.5%
$10,000 - $14,999	25	7.3%	25	5.7%	0.0%	11	7.3%	17	3.5%	54.5%
$15,000 - $19,999	39	11.4%	21	4.8%	-46.2%	29	19.3%	23	4.7%	-20.7%
$20,000 - $29,999	68	19.9%	71	16.2%	4.4%	18	12.0%	69	14.1%	283.3%
$30,000 - $34,999	27	7.9%	28	6.4%	3.7%	11	7.3%	29	5.9%	163.6%
$35,000 - $39,999	36	10.6%	24	5.5%	-33.3%	13	8.7%	34	6.9%	161.5%
$40,000 - $49,999	54	15.8%	53	12.1%	-1.9%	10	6.7%	104	21.2%	940.0%
$50,000 - $59,999	45	13.2%	50	11.4%	11.1%	10	6.7%	45	9.2%	350.0%
$60,000 - $74,999	13	3.8%	45	10.3%	246.2%	7	4.7%	78	15.9%	1014.3%
$75,000 - $99,999	10	2.9%	49	11.2%	390.0%	-	0.0%	37	7.5%	#DIV/0!
$100,000 - $124,999	3	0.9%	20	4.6%	566.7%	7	4.7%	40	8.1%	471.4%
$125,000 - $149,999	-	0.0%	13	3.0%	#DIV/0!	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	#DIV/0!
$150,000 +	4	1.2%	8	1.8%	100.0%	-	0.0%	7	1.4%	#DIV/0!

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

2.4.2. Median Household Income

Median household income fell slightly from 5.8% from $42,867 in 1990 to $40,375 in 2006 (in 2006 dollars) compared to a state increase of 4.6% to $46,832 in 2006. As shown in Table 2-20, the median income climbed to $46,100 in 2000 (in 2006 dollars) before dipping during the 2000-2006 period. Whitfield County fared slightly worse than the state between 2000 and 2006 with a rate of change of -3.2% compared to the statewide rate of -5.7% and the national rate of -1.5%.

Table 2-20 Median Household Income

Area	1990	2000	2006	% Change 2000-2006	% Change 1990-2006
Whitfield County	$42,867	$46,100	$40,375	-12.4%	-5.8%
State of Georgia	$44,764	$49,678	$46,832	-5.7%	4.6%
United States	$46,360	$49,164	$48,451	-1.5%	4.5%
Note: Values shown for 1990 and 2000 are adjusted for inflation to year 2006 dollars based on the Consumer Price Index					

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3 1990, 2000); 2006 American Community Survey; Dollar adjustments provided by U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator

2.4.3. Per Capita Income

Per capita income declined, when adjusted for inflation to 2006 dollars, from $22,405 1999 to $17,920 in 2006, as captured in Table 2-21. State and national per capita income declined during this period as well, though not as dramatically. From 1989 to 1999 the County per capita income increased 3.4%, compared to state and national growth of 15.5% and 11.4%, respectively. Data for the cities is not available for 2006. The trends for each city also showed significant increases from 1989 to 1999. Dalton per capita income increased 0.2% to $24,897, Cohutta 38.8% to $21,178, Tunnel Hill 22.9% to $25,867 and Varnell 33.1% to $25,267.

Table 2-21 Per Capita Income

Area	1989	1999	2006	% Change 1990-2000	% Change 2000-2006
Whitfield County	$21,662	$22,405	$17,920	3.4%	-20.0%
Dalton	$24,849	$24,897	Not Available	0.2%	Not Applicable
Cohutta	$15,263	$21,178	Not Available	38.8%	Not Applicable
Tunnel Hill	$21,054	$25,874	Not Available	22.9%	Not Applicable
Varnell	$16,559	$22,040	Not Available	33.1%	Not Applicable
State of Georgia	$22,161	$25,598	$23,716	15.5%	-7.4%
United States	$23,444	$26,122	$25,267	11.4%	-3.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3 1990, 2000); 2006 American Community Survey

Per capita income is the mean money income received in 1999 computed for every man, woman, and child in a geographic area. It is derived by dividing the total income of all people 15 years old and over in a geographic area by the total population in that area. Income is not collected for people under 15 years old even though those people are included in the denominator of per capita income. Money income includes amounts reported separately for wage or salary income; net self-employment income; interest, dividends, or net rental or royalty income or income from estates and trusts; Social Security or Railroad Retirement income; Supplemental Security Income (SSI); public assistance or welfare payments; retirement, survivor, or disability pensions; and all other income.

2.4.4. Per Capita Personal Income

Personal Income is the income that is received by all persons from all sources. It is calculated as the sum of wage and salary disbursements, supplements to wages and salaries, proprietors' income with inventory valuation and capital consumption adjustments, rental income of persons with capital

consumption adjustment, personal dividend income, personal interest income, and personal current transfer receipts, less contributions for government social insurance. The personal income of an area is the income that is received by, or on behalf of, all the individuals who live in the area; therefore, the estimates of personal income are presented by the place of residence of the income recipients. Personal per capita income is presented in Table 2-22 for Whitfield County, the Dalton MSA, the state and nation.

Table 2-22 Per Capita Personal Income

Area	1989	1999	2005	% Change 1989-1998	% Change 1999-2005	Ave. Annual Growth 1999-2005
Whitfield County	$26,151	$28,364	$29,747	8.5%	4.9%	13.8%
Dalton MSA	$24,413	$26,425	$28,150	8.2%	6.5%	15.3%
State of Georgia	$26,304	$30,900	$30,914	17.5%	0.0%	17.5%
United States	$29,169	$32,752	$34,471	12.3%	5.2%	18.2%
Note: Values shown for 1989 and 1999 are adjusted for inflation to year 2005 dollars based on the Consumer Price Index						

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (2007) BEA Regional Facts (BEARFACTS); Dollar adjustments provided by U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index Inflation Calculator

In 2005 Whitfield had a per capita personal income (PCPI) of $29,747. This PCPI ranked 16th in the state and was 96% of the state average, $30,914, and 86% of the national average, $34,471. When adjusted for inflation to 2005 dollars, the 2005 PCPI reflected an increase of 4.9% from 1999, slightly less than the MSA and the nation, while significantly ahead of the state. In 1999 the PCPI of Whitfield County was $26,151 (2005 dollars). The 1999-2005 average annual growth rate of PCPI was 3.5%. The average annual growth rate for the state was 2.7% and for the nation was 3.6%.

Table 2-23 Per Capita Personal Income by Income Type

Area	Type of Income	1989		1999		2005		% of Change 1989-2005
		Income	% of Total	Income	% of Total	Income	% of Total	
Whitfield County	Net earnings	$18,829	72.0%	$19,798	69.8%	$20,347	68.4%	8.1%
	Personal current transfer receipts	$2,563	9.8%	$3,546	12.5%	$4,373	14.7%	70.6%
	Dividend, interest and rent income	$4,759	18.2%	$5,020	17.7%	$5,027	16.9%	5.6%
Dalton MSA	Net earnings	$17,870	73.2%	$18,894	71.5%	$19,705	70.0%	10.3%
	Personal current transfer receipts	$2,417	9.9%	$3,356	12.7%	$4,307	15.3%	78.2%
	Dividend, interest and rent income	$4,126	16.9%	$4,175	15.8%	$4,138	14.7%	0.3%
State of Georgia	Net earnings	$18,965	72.1%	$22,557	73.0%	$22,382	72.4%	18.0%
	Personal current transfer receipts	$2,788	10.6%	$3,461	11.2%	$4,173	13.5%	49.7%
	Dividend, interest and rent income	$4,551	17.3%	$5,037	16.3%	$4,359	14.1%	-4.2%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (2007) BEA Regional Facts (BEARFACTS)

Total personal income includes net earnings by place of residence; dividends, interest, and rent; and personal current transfer receipts received by the residents of Whitfield. In 2005 net earnings accounted for 68.4% of TPI (compared with 72.0% in 1999); dividends, interest, and rent were 16.9% (compared with 17.7% in 1999 and 18.2% in 1989); and personal current transfer receipts were 14.7% (compared with 12.5% in 1999 and 9.8% in 1989). From 1999 to 2005 net earnings increased 8.1%; dividends,

interest, and rent increased 5.6%; and personal current transfer receipts increased 70.6%.Table 2-17 presents the per capita personal Income by income type.

Per capita income presented in Table 2-23 exhibited a significant reduction, when adjusted for inflation, between 1989 and 2006. While the drop in per capita income is recorded for per capita income, the drop was not exhibited in the per capita personal income data generated by the Bureau of Economic Analysis (BEA). The definitions of income are different for these two datasets. The BEA income series includes some items not included in the income data shown in ACS publications, such as income "in kind," income received by nonprofit institutions, the value of services of banks and other financial intermediaries rendered to people without the assessment of specific charges, and Medicare payments.

2.4.5. Poverty

The total number and percent of all Whitfield County residents living in households considered below the poverty thresholds set by U.S. Census Bureau dropped between 1995 and 2000 according to USCB estimates, as shown in Table 2-24 However, numbers for the County followed state and national trends and rose significantly between 2000 and 2004. The U.S. Census Bureau estimated in 2004 that 11.9% of the County's residents lived in poverty, which represented a 22.2% increase from 2000. The 2004 estimates also showed that 16.8% of all children 17 and under, and 16.2% of children between the ages of 5 and 17 also lived in poverty.

Table 2-24 Poverty - Percent of Specified Age Groups in Poverty

Area	1995		2000		2004 Estimates		% Change 2000-04	% Change 1995-2004
All Ages in Poverty								
Whitfield County	10,378	12.8%	8,796	10.3%	10,749	11.9%	22.2%	3.6%
Georgia	1,136,374	15.6%	1,006,329	12.3%	1,217,686	13.7%	21.0%	7.2%
United States	36,424,609	13.8%	31,581,086	11.3%	37,039,804	12.7%	17.3%	1.7%
Ages 0-17 in Poverty								
Whitfield County	3,869	18.0%	3,737	15.8%	4,445	16.8%	18.9%	14.9%
Georgia	470,855	23.5%	386,095	17.5%	457,793	19.4%	18.6%	-2.8%
United States	14,665,019	20.8%	11,587,118	16.2%	13,041,492	17.8%	12.6%	-11.1%
Ages 5-17 in Poverty								
Whitfield County	2,482	16.4%	2,473	15.4%	2,811	16.2%	13.7%	13.3%
Georgia	308,614	22.1%	252,326	16.1%	296,706	18.1%	17.6%	-3.9%
United States	9,306,018	18.7%	7,536,575	14.6%	8,430,886	16.2%	11.9%	-9.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates 1995, 2000 and 2003; Model-based Estimates for States, Counties and School Districts

2.5. Educational Attainment

Educational attainment in Whitfield County in 1990 and 2000 lagged behind rates for the state and nation, as shown in Table 2-25 for both the 18-to-24-year age group and the 25-years-and-older age groups. In 2000, 49.4% of the 18-to-24-year age group had less than high school diploma, compared to 23.5% for the state and 25.3% for the nation. Only 12.0% of the Whitfield County population of those over 25-years old held college degrees in 2000, compared to 20.3% for the state and 24.4% for the nation. Dalton's rate of those 18-to-24 with less than a high school diploma was 60.8% in 2000.

Table 2-25 Educational Attainment 1990-2000

Age Group	Educational Attainment	Whitfield County		Dalton		Tunnel Hill		Varnell		State of Georgia		United States	
		1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
18 to 24 years old	Less than high school graduate	44.7%	49.4%	44.7%	60.8%	35.3%	39.0%	43.1%	50.6%	26.6%	30.0%	23.5%	25.3%
	High school graduate (incl. equivalency)	30.2%	29.4%	59.8%	19.3%	42.4%	34.7%	7.8%	23.6%	33.6%	29.6%	31.0%	28.6%
	Some college or associate degree	21.0%	18.2%	83.9%	16.2%	21.2%	23.7%	49.0%	23.6%	32.9%	33.2%	37.9%	38.4%
	Bachelor's degree or higher	4.1%	3.0%	27.6%	3.7%	1.2%	2.5%	0.0%	2.2%	6.9%	7.2%	7.6%	7.8%
25 years and older	Less than 9th grade	19.6%	18.2%	20.6%	23.5%	12.2%	9.4%	31.9%	6.8%	12.0%	7.6%	10.4%	7.5%
	9th to 12th grade, no diploma	20.6%	18.8%	17.5%	17.5%	14.6%	18.0%	21.3%	17.5%	17.1%	13.8%	14.4%	12.1%
	High school graduate (incl. equivalency)	28.2%	29.0%	20.0%	22.0%	39.7%	35.5%	22.4%	31.7%	29.6%	28.7%	30.0%	28.6%
	Some college , no degree	14.9%	17.2%	16.8%	15.7%	21.3%	20.9%	19.0%	24.7%	17.0%	20.4%	18.7%	21.0%
	Associate's degree	4.7%	3.9%	5.0%	3.0%	2.7%	3.9%	1.9%	5.1%	5.0%	5.2%	6.2%	6.3%
	Bachelor's degree	8.0%	8.0%	13.5%	11.5%	2.7%	6.5%	3.4%	8.8%	12.9%	16.0%	13.1%	15.5%
	Graduate or professional degree	4.0%	4.9%	6.5%	6.8%	6.7%	5.9%	0.0%	5.4%	6.4%	8.3%	7.2%	8.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF-3: P3, P4, H3, and H4); 1990 (STF-3: P057 and P060)

As shown in Table 2-26, gains were made between 2000 and 2006 in educational attainment for the County. For the 18-to-24 age cohort, improvement occurred in the proportion of the population with high school diplomas, while the rate of those with a bachelor's degree doubled. The 25-and-over age cohort also experienced gains in educational attainment from 2000 to 2006. With these gains, however, the County still lags far behind the state, nation and surrounding metropolitan areas.

Table 2-26 Educational Attainment 2006

Age Group	Educational Attainment	Whitfield County	Dalton MSA	Chattanooga., TN-GA MSA	Cleveland, TN MSA	Rome, GA MSA	Atlanta MSA	State of Georgia	United States
Population 18 to 24 years	Less than high school graduate	46.2%	41.7%	22.4%	15.8%	24.7%	21.8%	22.2%	18.0%
	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	29.8%	32.5%	28.7%	31.5%	20.1%	33.7%	36.1%	33.9%
	Some college or associate's degree	17.3%	20.9%	40.5%	49.5%	54.4%	34.6%	34.2%	39.5%
	Bachelor's degree or higher	6.8%	5.0%	8.4%	3.3%	0.8%	9.9%	7.6%	8.6%
Population 25 years and over	Less than 9th grade	16.2%	14.8%	5.8%	11.0%	9.8%	5.0%	6.4%	6.5%
	9th to 12th grade, no diploma	17.9%	19.2%	13.1%	12.9%	14.8%	9.1%	11.4%	9.4%
	High school graduate (includes equivalency)	30.1%	34.6%	33.2%	29.2%	31.5%	27.0%	30.4%	30.2%
	Some college, no degree	15.1%	15.1%	20.6%	21.4%	20.0%	19.0%	18.8%	19.5%
	Associate's degree	5.0%	4.3%	6.8%	5.5%	5.1%	6.5%	6.5%	7.4%
	Bachelor's degree	9.9%	7.7%	13.7%	12.6%	10.9%	22.2%	17.3%	17.1%
	Graduate or professional degree	5.8%	4.3%	6.8%	7.5%	8.0%	11.1%	9.2%	9.9%
	Percent high school graduate or higher	65.9%	66.1%	81.2%	76.1%	75.4%	85.8%	82.2%	84.1%
	Percent bachelor's degree or higher	15.8%	12.0%	20.5%	20.1%	18.8%	33.3%	26.6%	27.0%
Population 25 to 34 years	High school graduate or higher	62.3%	65.6%	86.0%	84.9%	76.1%	85.0%	83.5%	85.9%
	Bachelor's degree or higher	17.2%	12.0%	21.0%	25.2%	24.4%	33.1%	27.0%	28.8%
Population 35 to 44 years	High school graduate or higher	72.4%	68.4%	88.4%	83.0%	84.5%	88.6%	86.3%	87.1%
	Bachelor's degree or higher	13.3%	9.5%	23.5%	21.9%	23.0%	36.1%	29.1%	29.6%
Population 45 to 64 years	High school graduate or higher	68.0%	70.3%	83.9%	76.9%	79.7%	88.5%	84.9%	86.9%
	Bachelor's degree or higher	19.2%	15.3%	22.4%	20.6%	17.9%	35.0%	28.3%	28.6%
Population 65 years and over	High school graduate or higher	56.3%	52.7%	63.4%	58.0%	58.2%	73.0%	66.8%	72.8%
	Bachelor's degree or higher	10.0%	8.5%	12.9%	11.7%	11.2%	22.3%	17.7%	18.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2006

2.6. *Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Treats Analysis*

2.6.1. Strengths

- Population increase of 9,474 from 2000 to 2006, making Whitfield County the 60th-fastest growing county in the state with a growth rate of 11.3%.
- Unincorporated Whitfield County population grew 31.9% between 1980 and 2006. Unincorporated areas made up 61.3% of Whitfield County's total population in 2006.

- County's cities grew significantly from 1990 to 2006.
- Whitfield County's net population increase of 9,474 between 2000 and 2006 topped that of all of its neighboring counties.
- Household income distribution changes between 1990 and 2000 shifted a larger share of the County's total households to higher income brackets.
- Dalton experienced an increase in average household size from 1990 to 2000 and 2005. Dalton average household size is expected to continue to grow through 2030.
- Whitfield County is significantly younger than neighboring communities. The median age in the County of 33.8 in 2006 was lower than the median age of residents in Georgia, the nation and other nearby Metropolitan Statistical Areas. This median age has risen roughly 10% since 1990, an increase that is far below that of the state and nation. A large youth population may help the County avoid future labor shortages.

2.6.2. Weaknesses

- The 25-to-44 age cohort has declined as a share of total population by more than 3% since 2000.
- Median household income fell slightly from 1990 to 2006, while the state and nation experienced modest increases.
- Per capita income fell slightly in Whitfield County from 2000 to 2006, compared to growth rates of significant increases for the state and nation. Per capita income rose dramatically 1990 to 2000, though the increases were less dramatic that those experienced by the state and nation.
- County's per capita personal income (PCPI) ranked 16th in the state and was 96% of the state average and 86% of the national average.

2.6.3. Opportunities

- Dalton MSA created after the 2000 Census (includes Murray and Whitfield County).
- County population projections range from a 2030 population of 110,129 (average annual growth rate of 0.7%) and 162,136 (average annual growth rate of 2.2%).
- Projections selected for planning show the County population will increase from a 2007 population of 93,980 to a 2030 population of 126,185.
- Average household size dropped to 2.91 in 2000 and remained steady based on Census estimates through 2005 for the County and the municipalities. Projections show that the household size will continue to shrink in Whitfield County.
- The 55-to-59-years age group grew by 42.4% between 2000 and 2006.
- Persons of Hispanic origin population increased significantly from 1990 to 2006. Hispanics made up 29.3% of the County population in 2006. The net increase of this population was almost three times that of the adjacent counties. This population is projected to increase from 29.3% of the population in 2006 to 41.4% of the population in 2030. There will be an on-growing need in the County for educating and providing accommodations non-English speaking residents. Without the influx of Hispanics into the area, the County would have posted negative population growth in both 1990 and 2000.

2.6.4. Threats

- The under-5-years age group population increased by 30.9% and the 10-to-14-years by 31.7% from 2000 to 2006. Increases in these in age groups below age 19 impacts county and city services aimed at children (e.g. schools, parks and recreation, social services, etc.).
- The 85-plus-years group population increased by 24.6% from 2000 to 2006. The increase in those over 85, which follows state and national trends, also has implications on social services provided for seniors and the health care industry.
- The 18.8% projected increase for the 5-to-13 age group equates to an increase of roughly 2,024 elementary and middle school-aged children, which could create creates challenges for the public school systems and other services provided for children.
- Projected increase in persons 65 and older will greatly increase the demand for services related to senior citizens.
- In 2004 that 11.9% of the County's residents lived in poverty, which represented a significant increase from 2000 and include 16.8% of all children 17 and under, and 16.2% of children between the ages of 5 and 17.

CHAPTER 3

3. Economic Development

Identification of trends and issues related to the economic characteristics of Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnel Hill and Varnell

3.1. Introduction

Data collected for and analyzed in this section comes from a variety of sources that include the Georgia Bureau of Labor, Georgia Department of Economic Development, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the University of Georgia Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development.

3.2. Economic Base

The economic base section defines employment and labor force as follows:

- *Employment* (Section 3.1.1) represents the jobs located in Whitfield County with no concern for where the employees live.
- *Labor force* (Section 3.2.1)represents the eligible working population of Whitfield County with no concern for the location of the job.

3.2.1. Employment

Whitfield County employment, or average annual number of jobs, grew at an average annual rate of 1.7% from 1990 to 2006, according to the Georgia Department of Labor, as shown in Table 3-1. The state grew at an average annual rate of 2.0% during the same period. Employment growth occurred from 1990 to 1998, 1999 to 2000 and again from 2002 to 2006.

Table 3-1 Number of Employees 1990-2006 – County and State

Year	Whitfield County	State of Georgia
1990	48,970	2,944,426
1991	47,774	2,886,812
1992	50,709	2,941,006
1993	53,842	3,066,127
1994	56,338	3,222,556
1995	56,564	3,358,052
1996	58,017	3,477,974
1997	59,371	3,563,237
1998	60,041	3,685,199
1999	59,783	3,788,068
2000	62,173	3,871,763
2001	60,027	3,871,763
2002	61,189	3,807,915
2003	61,826	3,783,232
2004	62,463	3,840,663
2005	62,863	3,932,315
2006	64,148	4,024,699
% Change 1990-2006	31.0%	36.7%
Annual % of Change 1990-2006	1.7%	2.0%

Source: Georgia Department of Labor 2006

The annual average number of jobs in Whitfield County rose more significantly from 2001 to 2006 than the Dalton Metropolitan Area (Dalton MSA), state and nation, as shown in Table 3-1. The 6.9.% overall growth rate and 1.1% average annual growth rate between 2001 and 2006 allowed for an estimated net 64,148 jobs in Whitfield County, in contrast to the state and national employment gains of only 0.6% and 0.5% respectively. Average monthly employment in Tables 3-2 and 3-3 represent jobs covered by unemployment insurance legislation.

Table 3-2 Number of Employees 2001-2006 – County, MSA, State and Nation

Year	Whitfield County	Dalton MSA	State of Georgia	United States
2001	60,027	72,759	3,871,763	129,635,800
2002	61,189	73,453	3,807,915	128,233,919
2003	61,826	73,774	3,783,232	127,795,827
2004	62,463	74,124	3,840,663	129,278,176
2005	62,863	75,158	3,932,315	131,571,623
2006	64,148	76,626	4,024,699	133,833,834
% Change 2001-2006	6.9%	5.3%	-1.9%	-0.5%
Annual % of Change 2000-2006	1.1%	0.9%	0.6%	0.5%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages 2006; Georgia Department of Labor (Whitfield, Dalton MSA and State of Georgia data)

The Education and Health Services supersector experienced the most significant growth from 1990 to 2006 growing by a rate of 207.3%, followed by Professional and Business Services at 131.9% and Trade, Transportation and Utilities at 70.4%. Trade, Transportation and Utilities also experienced the most significant growth from 2000 to 2006, increasing the number of positions by 24.3%. The Other Services supersector experienced the most significant decline from 1990 to 2006, while Information and Financial Activities supersectors experienced the most decline from 2000 to 2006 at -50.3% and -23.3%, respectively. Manufacturing supersector grew modestly from 1990 to 2006 and maintained the largest share of employment in Whitfield County at 38.1% (down from 41.2% in 2000 and 51.4% in 1990.

Table 3-3 Historic County Average Monthly Employment

NAICS Supersector	1990		1995		2000		2006		% Change 1990-2006	%Change 2000-2006
Manufacturing	23,682	51.5%	23,312	41.4%	25,646	41.2%	24,423	38.1%	3.1%	-4.8%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	7,826	17.0%	10,389	18.4%	10,729	17.2%	13,335	20.8%	70.4%	24.3%
Professional and Business Services	4,155	9.0%	8,724	15.5%	9,391	15.1%	9,636	15.0%	131.9%	2.6%
Education and Health Services	2,445	5.3%	5,793	10.3%	6,933	11.1%	7,513	11.7%	207.3%	8.4%
Leisure and Hospitality	2,145	4.7%	2,500	4.4%	3,077	4.9%	3,301	5.2%	53.9%	7.3%
Public Administration	1,242	2.7%	1,339	2.4%	1,536	2.5%	1,730	2.7%	39.3%	12.6%
Construction	1,086	2.4%	1,258	2.2%	1,215	2.0%	1,231	1.9%	13.4%	1.3%
Financial Activities	941	2.0%	1,279	2.3%	1,575	2.5%	1,208	1.9%	28.4%	-23.3%
Other Services	1,592	3.5%	689	1.2%	740	1.2%	767	1.2%	-51.8%	3.6%
Information	589	1.3%	704	1.2%	1,130	1.8%	562	0.9%	-4.6%	-50.3%
Natural Resources and Mining	248	0.5%	377	0.7%	303	0.5%	329	0.5%	32.7%	8.6%
All Industries	**45,951**	**100.0%**	**56,364**	**100.0%**	**62,275**	**100.0%**	**64,035**	**100.0%**	**39.4%**	**2.8%**

Source: Georgia Statistics System: Analysis of Employment Changes

Table 3-4 compares the County's 2006 average monthly employment by industrial sector to that of the Dalton MSA, state and nation. Goods Producing, Manufacturing, make up a much larger proportion of the employment in Whitfield County and the Dalton MSA (40.5% and 42.3%) than that of the state and nation (17.4% and 17.6% respectively).

Table 3-4 County, MSA, State and Federal Comparison of Average Monthly Employment

NAICS Sector	Whitfield County		Dalton MSA		State of Georgia	United States
	2006	%	2006	%	2006	2006
Goods Producing	**25,985**	**40.5%**	**32,432**	**42.3%**	**17.4%**	**17.6%**
Agriculture, forestry and fishing	208	0.3%	235	0.3%	0.6%	0.9%
Mining	120	0.2%	193	0.3%	0.2%	0.5%
Construction	1,231	1.9%	1,464	1.9%	5.4%	5.7%
Manufacturing	24,426	38.1%	30,540	39.9%	11.1%	10.5%
Service Producing	**32,596**	**50.8%**	**36,911**	**48.2%**	**65.9%**	**66.5%**
Wholesale Trade	3,465	5.4%	3,992	5.2%	5.4%	4.4%
Retail Trade	6,586	10.3%	7,666	10.0%	11.7%	11.5%
Transportation and warehousing	3,005	4.7%	3,727	4.9%	3.9%	3.1%
Utilities	145	0.2%	155	0.2%	0.5%	0.4%
Information	562	0.9%	563	0.7%	2.9%	2.3%
Finance and insurance	791	1.2%	962	1.3%	4.0%	4.5%
Real estate and rental and leasing	416	0.6%	510	0.7%	1.6%	1.6%
Professional, scientific/tech services	5,095	7.9%	5,172	6.7%	5.2%	5.5%
Management: companies/enterprises	113	0.2%	144	0.2%	1.3%	1.3%
Administrative & Waste Services	4,428	6.9%	4,838	6.3%	7.1%	6.2%
Educational services	81	0.1%	88	0.1%	1.3%	1.6%
Health care and social assistance	3,826	6.0%	4,262	5.6%	9.0%	11.0%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	234	0.4%	254	0.3%	1.0%	1.4%
Accommodation and food services	3,078	4.8%	3,673	4.8%	8.5%	8.3%
Other services (except government)	771	1.2%	905	1.2%	2.5%	3.3%
Unclassified	**16**	**0.0%**	**23**	**0.0%**	**0.4%**	**0.2%**
Total - Private Sector	**58,597**	**91.3%**	**69,366**	**90.5%**	**83.7%**	**84.2%**
Total Government	**5,550**	**8.7%**	**7,263**	**9.5%**	**16.3%**	**15.8%**
Federal	184	0.3%	288	0.4%	2.4%	2.0%
State	1039	1.6%	1,108	1.4%	3.8%	3.4%
Local	4,327	6.7%	5,867	7.7%	10.2%	10.3%
All Industries	**64,147**	**100.0%**	**76,629**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**	**100.0%**

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

3.2.2. Employment Projections

Whitfield County's total employment is also expected to increase significantly. As shown in Table 3-5, the employment is projected by MACTEC to increase from 64,148 jobs in 2006 to 93,913 jobs in 2030, an increase of 46.4% and an average annual growth rate of 1.5%. This employment growth was projected based on the observed average annual growth rate of 1.7% that occurred from 1990 to 2006. Annual growth rate estimates for population over this same period ranged from 0.7% to 2.2%. Projections developed by the Dalton Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) are also provided in Table 3-5. The MPO projection shows an average annual increase of 1.8% resulting in a 2030 employment total of 96,685. The MPO is a federally-designated area for regional transportation planning. The projected job growth appears to be well matched with forecasted population growth. It is expected that the current trend of residents from other counties commuting to work inside the County will continue.

Table 3-5 Employment Projections

Year	Number of Jobs	
	MACTEC	MPO
2000	62,173	62,173
2006	64,148	64,148
2010	72,753	73,251
2015	78,043	78,790
2020	83,333	84,329
2025	88,623	89,869
2030	93,913	96,685
Growth Rate 2005-2030	46.4%	50.7%
Ave. Annual Growth Rate	1.5%	1.8%

MACTEC employment projection based on average annual growth rate observed between 1990 and 2006.

3.2.3. Wages

With the exception of Agricultural, Forestry & Fishing and Health Care & Social Services, the average weekly wages and annual pay offered by employers located in Whitfield County and the Dalton MSA was lower than the state, and the national figures, as shown in Table 3-6.

Table 3-6 Weekly Wages by Industry 2006

NAICS Sector	Whitfield County	Dalton MSA	Northwest Georgia WIA	State of Georgia	United States	Whitfield % of Georgia	Whitfield % of USA
Agriculture, forestry, & fishing	$616	$608	$549	$491	$464	125.5%	132.8%
Mining	$1,012	$929	$919	$1,048	$1,504	96.6%	67.3%
Construction	$628	$593	$652	$804	$856	78.1%	73.4%
Manufacturing	$686	$672	$706	$849	$989	80.8%	69.4%
Wholesale trade	$808	$798	$787	$1,183	$1,116	68.3%	72.4%
Retail trade	$452	$472	$428	$486	$492	93.0%	91.9%
Transportation and warehousing	$682	$655	$672	$805	$786	84.7%	86.8%
Utilities	NA	$1,154	NA	$1,404	$1,507	NA	NA
Information	$676	$676	$787	$1,322	$1,269	51.1%	53.3%
Finance and insurance	$783	$762	$787	$1,268	$1,511	61.8%	51.8%
Real estate and rental and leasing	$575	$590	$535	$883	$807	65.1%	71.3%
Professional, scientific/tech services	$925	$919	$829	$1,237	$1,317	74.8%	70.2%
Management: companies/enterprises	$1,644	$1,495	$1,327	$1,574	$1,708	104.4%	96.3%
Administrative and waste services	$397	$391	$369	$567	$564	70.0%	70.4%
Educational services	$378	$369	$614	$800	$728	47.3%	51.9%
Health care and social services	$819	$800	$706	$764	$756	107.2%	108.3%
Arts, entertainment and recreation	$374	$376	$317	$549	$576	68.1%	64.9%
Accommodation and food services	$245	$239	$228	$288	$302	85.1%	81.1%
Other services (except government)	$513	$546	$476	$537	$518	95.5%	99.0%
Unclassified	$627	$602	$582	$898	$772	69.8%	81.2%
Total - Private Sector	$654	$639	$624	$785	$816	83.3%	80.1%
Total - Government	$739	$645	$698	$732	$830	101.0%	89.0%
All industries	$652	$640	$609	$776	$818	84.0%	79.7%

Source: Georgia Department of Labor, Workforce Information and Analysis Division.

Average weekly wage and annual pay for all industries, shown in Table 3-7, trailed the state and nation, but led those for the Dalton MSA. The average weekly wage of $652 in the County was 85.9% of the average state wage of $776, and 83.3% of the national average weekly wage of $818 in 2006, as shown in Table 3-8. In addition, the annual rate of change in pay was slightly lower for Whitfield County than for the Dalton MSA, the state, and the nation, indicating that this imbalance did not improve over the short term.

Table 3-7 Average Employment Wages for All Industries

Year	Average Weekly Pay				Average Annual Pay			
	Whitfield County	Dalton MSA	State of Georgia	United States	Whtifield County	Dalton MSA	State of Georgia	United States
2001	$581	$564	$676	$697	$30,189	$29,321	$35,136	$36,219
2002	$587	$573	$687	$707	$30,506	$29,793	$35,734	$36,764
2003	$606	$591	$704	$726	$31,495	$30,721	$36,626	$37,765
2004	$626	$615	$728	$757	$32,531	$31,972	$37,866	$39,354
2005	$645	$632	$752	$782	$33,514	$32,848	$39,096	$40,677
2006	$652	$640	$776	$818	$33,907	$33,266	$40,370	$42,535
% Change 2001-2006	12.3%	13.5%	14.8%	17.4%	12.3%	13.5%	14.9%	17.4%
% Annual Change 2001-2006	2.0%	2.1%	2.3%	2.7%	2.0%	2.1%	2.3%	2.7%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages 2006

Table 3-8 Average Pay as Percentage of MSA, State and Nation

Pay Period	Dalton MSA	State of Georgia	United States
Average Annual Pay (2006)	103.0%	85.9%	83.3%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics - Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages 2006

3.3. Labor Force

3.3.1. Participation

The Whitfield County labor force grew by 14.9% between 1990 and 2006 (as shown in Table 3-9), which amounts to an average annual growth rate of 1.1%. This figure is lower than the County resident population's 1.6% average annual growth rate experienced during the same period.

Table 3-9 Historical Labor Force Size

Labor Force	Whitfield County	Dalton MSA	North Georgia Region	Northwest WIA	State of Georgia	United States
1990	39,636	54,181	75,920	282,690	3,300,136	125,840,000
2000	41,088	61,363	96,544	362,493	4,242,889	142,583,000
2006	47,226	65,958	108,817	418,709	4,741,860	151,428,000
Growth Rate 1990-2000	3.7%	13.3%	27.2%	28.2%	28.6%	13.3%
Average Annual Growth Rate 1990-2000	0.4%	1.3%	2.4%	2.5%	2.5%	1.3%
Growth Rate 2000-2006	14.9%	7.5%	12.7%	15.5%	11.8%	6.2%
Average Annual Growth Rate 2000-2006	2.3%	1.2%	2.0%	2.4%	1.9%	1.0%
Growth Rate 1990-2006	19.1%	21.7%	43.3%	48.1%	43.7%	20.3%
Average Annual Growth Rate 1990-2006	1.1%	1.2%	2.3%	2.5%	2.3%	1.2%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Georgia Department of Labor; 2006

3.3.2. Employment Status

Table 3-10 presents characteristics of the Whitfield County labor force. In 2006, 67.9% of all persons 16 years and over participated in the County labor force, including 78.0% of males and 58.2% of females.

Table 3-10 Labor Force Employment Status

Category	Total		Male		Female	
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total
Population 16 years and over	67,460	100.0%	33,111	100.0%	34,349	100.0%
In labor force	45,816	67.9%	25,819	78.0%	19,997	58.2%
Armed forces	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Civilian labor force	45,816	67.9%	25,819	78.0%	19,997	58.2%
Employed	43,348	64.3%	24,474	73.9%	18,874	54.9%
Unemployed	2,468	3.7%	1,345	4.1%	1,123	3.3%
Unemployment rate		5.4%		5.2%		5.6%
Not in labor force	21,644	32.1%	7,292	22.0%	14,352	41.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Amercian Community Survey 2006

3.3.3. Occupations

The share of Whitfield County residents in occupation categories, shown in Table 3-11, differed significantly from the state. For example, 21.4% of the County labor force held management, professional and related occupations, compared to 33.2% of the state. Also, 36.1% of the County's labor force held production, transportation and material moving occupations compared to only 14% of the state.

Table 3-11 Labor Force Employment by Occupation 2006 – County and State

Occupation	Whitfield County		State of Georgia	
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total
Total Civilian Labor Force	43,348	100.0%	4,366,243	100.0%
Management, professional, and related occupations	9,257	21.4%	1,447,551	33.2%
Service occupations	4,827	11.1%	650,326	14.9%
Sales and office occupations	10,282	23.7%	1,144,457	26.2%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	36	0.1%	26,485	0.6%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	3,281	7.6%	487,156	11.2%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	15,665	36.1%	610,268	14.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - American Community Survey 2006

Data for the year 2006 is not available for the County's individual cities, but in 2000 the cities of Tunnel Hill and Varnell more closely matched the state for the number of management, professional and related occupations. Table 3-12 presents the 2000 labor force employment by occupation for the county and its municipalities.

Table 3-12 Labor Force Employment by Occupation 2000 – Cities, County and State

Occupation	Whitfield County	Dalton	Cohutta	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	State of Georgia
Management, professional, and related occupations	22.5%	23.5%	14.6%	30.9%	30.6%	30.6%
Service occupations	11.3%	9.9%	13.8%	8.1%	12.7%	12.7%
Sales and office occupations	28.1%	29.0%	35.0%	23.6%	26.7%	26.7%
Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations	0.4%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.4%	0.4%
Construction, extraction, and maintenance occupations	16.3%	17.7%	21.2%	19.5%	11.8%	11.8%
Production, transportation, and material moving occupations	21.4%	19.9%	14.9%	17.9%	17.7%	17.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SPF 3) 2000, Table P50

3.3.4. Personal Income

County residents received 78.0% of their personal income from wages and salaries in 2000, compared to 78.7% for the state, as shown in Table 3-13. County residents received 7.1% of their personal income from interest, dividends or net rental, while the state as a whole received 5.3% of its personal income by that means. Approximately 5.3% of the County's personal income came from self employment, a higher percentage than that of the state (5.6%). Retirement income made up 2.3% of the personal income in the county, a lower percentage than that of the state. A higher percentage of Varnell (85.7%) and Tunnel Hill (79.4%) income was received from wages and salaries compared to Dalton (78.0%). Meanhwile, a higher percentage of Dalton's income (10.8%) came from interests, dividends or net rental compared to the other cities.

Table 3-13 Personal Income

Category	Whitfield County		Dalton		Tunnel Hill		Varnell		State of Georgia	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Wages and/or Salaries	80.8%	78.0%	75.8%	72.3%	81.4%	79.4%	88.9%	85.7%	78.5%	78.7%
Other types	0.9%	1.6%	1.1%	1.5%	1.0%	2.0%	1.8%	2.5%	1.1%	1.7%
Self employment	5.6%	5.3%	6.7%	7.8%	5.5%	5.1%	3.2%	6.0%	6.3%	5.6%
Interest, dividends, or net rental	5.9%	7.1%	8.8%	10.8%	4.3%	6.1%	0.9%	1.5%	5.6%	5.3%
Social Security	4.4%	5.1%	4.9%	4.8%	4.6%	4.9%	4.5%	3.2%	4.3%	4.1%
Public assistance	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%	0.5%	0.2%	0.4%	0.8%	0.3%	0.7%	0.0%
Retirement	1.9%	2.3%	2.2%	2.4%	3.1%	2.0%	0.0%	0.8%	3.4%	4.6%

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

3.3.5. Unemployment

As shown in Table 3-14, the unemployment rate for Whitfield County experienced improvement between 1990 and 2006. The level of unemployment rose to 4.7 percent in 2005, but rebounded in 2006. Whitfield County unemployment rates have trended lower than the rates for the state and nation.

Table 3-14 Historical Labor Force Unemployment Rates

Year	Whitfield County	Dalton MSA	North Georgia RDC	State of Georgia	United States
1990	5.1%	5.5%	No Data	5.5%	5.6%
2000	3.5%	3.4%	3.4%	3.5%	4.0%
2001	4.4%	4.3%	4.1%	4.0%	4.7%
2002	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.9%	5.8%
2003	4.2%	4.1%	4.4%	4.8%	6.0%
2004	4.2%	4.1%	4.2%	4.7%	5.5%
2005	4.7%	4.3%	4.6%	5.2%	
2006	4.5%	4.4%	4.2%	4.6%	4.6%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

3.3.6. Labor Force Employment by Industry

As the County's labor force grows the number of residents over the age of 16 in each industry will also grow. Table 3-17 shows the projections for the industries that will absorb the new growth. It is important to keep in mind that this information reflects the labor force of Whitfield County, and does not reflect the jobs that will actually locate in the County over the next 25 years. Ideally, the County would attract jobs in the high growth industries in order to provide opportunities for new residents to live near their jobs.

Table 3-15 Labor Force Employment by Industry – County, Dalton, State

Category	Whitfield County			Dalton			State of Georgia		
	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000
Total Employed Civilian Population	37,932	39,593	4.4%	11,132	12,354	11.0%	3,090,276	3,839,756	24.3%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting and mining	569	492	-13.5%	203	197	-3.0%	82,537	53,201	-35.5%
Construction	1,703	2,139	25.6%	304	647	112.8%	214,359	304,710	42.1%
Manufacturing	17,650	17,429	-1.3%	4804	5849	21.8%	585,423	568,830	-2.8%
Wholesale Trade	1931	1,450	-24.9%	552	452	-18.1%	156,838	148,026	-5.6%
Retail Trade	4,898	3,984	-18.7%	1535	1053	-31.4%	508,861	459,548	-9.7%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	1,790	1,507	-15.8%	375	261	-30.4%	263,419	231,304	-12.2%
Information	NA	544	NA	NA	97	NA	NA	135,496	NA
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	1257	1,385	10.2%	544	535	-1.7%	201,422	251,240	24.7%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	1155	1,570	35.9%	312	462	48.1%	151,096	362,414	139.9%
Educational, health and social services	3,877	4,801	23.8%	1281	1362	6.3%	461,307	675,593	46.5%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	196	1,914	876.5%	110	751	582.7%	31,911	274,437	760.0%
Other Services	2059	1,550	-24.7%	820	443	-46.0%	266,053	181,829	-31.7%
Public Administration	847	828	-2.2%	292	245	-16.1%	167,050	193,128	15.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3)

Labor Force Employment by Industry- Tunnel Hill, Varnell and Cohutta

Category	*Tunnel Hill*			*Varnell*			*Cohutta*		
	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000	1990	2000	% Change 1990-2000
Total Employed Civilian Population	550	634	15.3%	218	728	233.9%	208	287	38.0%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting and mining	4	-	-100.0%	3	1	-66.7%	4	13	225.0%
Construction	21	35	66.7%	13	40	207.7%	17	43	152.9%
Manufacturing	190	207	8.9%	86	281	226.7%	79	96	21.5%
Wholesale Trade	33	36	9.1%	10	17	70.0%	8	0	-100.0%
Retail Trade	91	63	-30.8%	42	74	76.2%	25	25	0.0%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	35	33	-5.7%	15	24	60.0%	15	20	33.3%
Information	NA	2	#VALUE!	NA	17	#VALUE!	NA	6	#VALUE!
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	23	47	104.3%	0	32	#DIV/0!	2	14	600.0%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	24	18	-25.0%	8	48	500.0%	9	16	77.8%
Educational, health and social services	73	96	31.5%	18	111	516.7%	36	30	-16.7%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	2	43	2050.0%	0	24	#DIV/0!	2	13	550.0%
Other Services	38	26	-31.6%	20	32	60.0%	11	2	-81.8%
Public Administration	16	28	75.0%	3	27	800.0%	0	9	#DIV/0!

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3)

Table 3-16 Share of Labor Force Employment by Industry

Category	Whitfield County		Dalton		State of Georgia	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting and mining	1.5%	1.2%	1.8%	1.6%	2.7%	1.4%
Construction	4.5%	5.4%	2.7%	5.2%	6.9%	7.9%
Manufacturing	46.5%	44.0%	43.2%	47.3%	18.9%	14.8%
Wholesale Trade	5.1%	3.7%	5.0%	3.7%	5.1%	3.9%
Retail Trade	12.9%	10.1%	13.8%	8.5%	16.5%	12.0%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	4.7%	3.8%	3.4%	2.1%	8.5%	6.0%
Information	na	1.4%	#VALUE!	0.8%	#VALUE!	3.5%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	3.3%	3.5%	4.9%	4.3%	6.5%	6.5%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	3.0%	4.0%	2.8%	3.7%	4.9%	9.4%
Educational, health, and social services	10.2%	12.1%	11.5%	11.0%	14.9%	17.6%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	0.5%	4.8%	1.0%	6.1%	1.0%	7.1%
Other Services	5.4%	3.9%	7.4%	3.6%	8.6%	4.7%
Public Administration	2.2%	2.1%	2.6%	2.0%	5.4%	5.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3)

Share of Labor Force Employment by Industry

Category	Cohutta		Tunnel Hill		Varnell	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting and mining	1.9%	4.5%	0.7%	0.0%	1.4%	0.1%
Construction	8.2%	15.0%	3.8%	5.5%	6.0%	5.5%
Manufacturing	38.0%	33.4%	34.5%	32.6%	39.4%	38.6%
Wholesale Trade	3.8%	0.0%	6.0%	5.7%	4.6%	2.3%
Retail Trade	12.0%	8.7%	16.5%	9.9%	19.3%	10.2%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	7.2%	7.0%	6.4%	5.2%	6.9%	3.3%
Information	#VALUE!	2.1%	#VALUE!	0.3%	#VALUE!	2.3%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	1.0%	4.9%	4.2%	7.4%	0.0%	4.4%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	4.3%	5.6%	4.4%	2.8%	3.7%	6.6%
Educational, health, and social services	17.3%	10.5%	13.3%	15.1%	8.3%	15.2%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation, and food services	1.0%	4.5%	0.4%	6.8%	0.0%	3.3%
Other Services	5.3%	0.7%	6.9%	4.1%	9.2%	4.4%
Public Administration	0.0%	3.1%	2.9%	4.4%	1.4%	3.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3)

Table 3-17 Labor Force Employment by Industry Projections

Category	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% Change 2000-2030
Total Employed Civilian Population	39,593	41,533	43,473	45,412	47,352	49,292	51,232	29.4%
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, hunting & mining	492	482	471	461	450	440	429	-12.8%
Construction	2,139	2,322	2,505	2,688	2,871	3,054	3,237	51.3%
Manufacturing	17,429	17,635	17,840	18,046	18,251	18,457	18,662	7.1%
Wholesale Trade	1450	1504	1558	1611	1665	1719	1773	22.3%
Retail Trade	3,984	4,081	4,179	4,276	4,373	4,470	4,568	14.7%
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	1507	1569	1631	1693	1755	1817	1879	24.7%
Information	544	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	#VALUE!
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	1385	1496	1607	1718	1829	1940	2,051	48.1%
Professional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management services	1570	1771	1972	2,173	2,374	2,575	2,776	76.8%
Educational, health and social services	4,801	5,190	5,578	5,967	6,355	6,744	7,132	48.6%
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services	1914	2148	2383	2617	2851	3085	3320	73.5%
Other Services	1550	1768	1985	2203	2420	2638	2855	84.2%
Public Administration	828	889	949	1010	1070	1131	1191	43.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3); DCA projections

3.3.7. Commuting Patterns

As shown in Table 3-18 and 3-19, 86.9% of the Whitfield County labor force worked in the County in 2000, while 10.2% worked outside of the County.

Table 3-18 Commuting Patterns – Inside/Outside County

Category	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000
Total Civilian Workforce	37,308	100.0%	38,909	100.0%	4.3%
Worked in State of Georgia	36,565	98.0%	37,764	97.1%	3.3%
In Whitfield County	33,657	90.2%	33,796	86.9%	0.4%
Outside of Whitfield County	2,908	7.8%	3,968	10.2%	36.5%
Worked outside of State of Georgia	743	2.0%	1145	2.9%	54.1%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF1)

For those working outside of the County, 5.0% worked in Murray County, 2.2% in Gordon County and 21% worked in Hamilton County, Tennessee. Table 3-20 shows that 59.6% Whitfield County jobs were held by Whitfield County residents, 14.0% held by Murray County residents and the remaining 26.4% were residents of Gordon, Walker, Gilmer, Hamilton (Tennessee), Bradley (Tennessee) counties.

Table 3-19 County Labor Force Commuter Patterns

County Where Employed	Number	% of Total
Whitfield	33,796	86.9%
Murray	1,955	5.0%
Gordon	867	2.2%
Hamilton, TN	807	2.1%
Catoosa	306	0.8%
Walker	140	0.4%
Cobb	130	0.3%
Bartow	107	0.3%
Other	792	2.0%
Total Employees	38,900	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000, Georgia Department of Labor

Table 3-20 County Employees Commuter Patterns

County of Residence	Number	% of Total
Whitfield	33,796	59.6%
Murray	7,927	14.0%
Catoosa	3,760	6.6%
Gordon	2,909	5.1%
Hamilton, TN	2,133	3.8%
Walker	2,067	3.6%
Bradley, TN	1,240	2.2%
Gilmer	362	0.6%
Other	2,517	4.4%
Total Employees	56,711	100.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000, Georgia Department of Labor

3.4. Economic Resources

3.4.1. Development Agencies

Dalton-Whitfield Chamber of Commerce

The Dalton-Whitfield Chamber of Commerce is a membership organization that serves over 900 businesses. Our Executive Board consists of volunteers from a variety of the area's businesses. The mission of the Chamber is to serve as the unified voice of business, to ensure the economic prosperity of the region and to build partnerships and leadership that improve the quality of life while delivering superior member services.

Dalton-Whitfield Economic Development Authority

The Dalton Whitfield Economic Development Authority (DWEDA) was created in 2005 by the Georgia General Assembly. The primary mission of DWEDA promotes economic development in Dalton and Whitfield County. DWEDA provides county-wide economic development as a single entity with a primary focus on value added jobs through a balanced approach to expansion and retention of existing industry, new enterprise creation, and business relocation.

Other Agencies

- Georgia Tech Economic Development Institute – Dalton Regional Office
- University of Georgia Business Outreach Services/Small Businesses Development Center – Dalton Regional office
- Dalton Downtown Development Authority
- Development Authority of Whitfield County
- Development Authority of Dalton

3.4.2. Programs

Several agencies provide economic development assistance to Whitfield County including Georgia Power, the Georgia Department of Economic Development and the University of Georgia's Small Business Development Center.

Georgia Power offers assistance through its community Development Department and its Resource Center. The Community Development Department offers development assistance in six program areas: research and information, business retention and expansion, leadership development, downtown revitalization, board governance, industrial location and demographic and labor market analysis. The Resource Center maintains a database of industrial parks and sites located throughout the State and serves as an *entrée* to the State's economic development resources for prospective out-of-state and international industries.

The University of Georgia's Small Business Development Center (SBDC) provides management consulting for entrepreneurs and conducts marketing analyses and surveys designed to evaluate a community's economic development potential.

Georgia's "Quick Start" program is designed to train workers for specific, clearly designed jobs in a new or expanding company. Employees learn new skills and receive the opportunity to earn higher pay. Additionally, the company realizes one of its primary goals: increase production with minimum expenditures of time and money.

The local office of the Georgia Department of Labor/State Employment Agency in Dalton recruits, tests and screens applicants in accordance with company specifications.

3.4.3. Tools

Under the Georgia Business Expansion Support Team (BEST) Act of 1994, qualified companies that locate or expand in Georgia may be eligible for incentives to reduce costs and improve a company's bottom line. Qualified companies in Whitfield County can receive a $500 tax credit for every job created in Whitfield County in excess of 25 jobs. Credits are also available for investment, retraining employees, and child care expenses. Qualified companies may also receive exemptions for manufacturing machinery sales, primary material handling sales and electricity sales.

The Dalton-Whitfield Economic Development Authority (DWEDA) is authorized to issue both tax exempt and taxable industrial revenue bonds for projects that meet state and federal laws. It is a means of conduit financing that often provides the user with lower interest rates and allows for a negotiated investment payment in lieu of taxes. Technically, the DWEDA retains title to the property and improvements for the life of the bond and leases the project to the user. Current tax rates for investment grade projects are as low as 1.48% tax-exempt floater; taxable rates are 1.86%.

This credit applies to businesses or headquarters of a business engaged in manufacturing, warehousing and distribution, processing, tourism, or research and development industries: it does not include retail businesses. When your company creates 15 or more new jobs, you can receive a $1,750 tax credit for 5 years for each new job created. To be eligible, the company must also:

- Provide an average wage that is 10% higher than the average wage in the lowest Georgia County ($356 in 2003)
- Make comparable health insurance available to new employees

Credits are allowed for each full-time employee job for five years beginning with years two through six after the creation of the job. Each credit cannot be more than 50% of the taxpayer's total state income tax liability for that taxable year. A credit claimed but not used in any taxable year may be carried forward for 10 years from the close of the taxable year in which the qualified jobs were established.

The Special Headquarters Tax Credit provides a special job tax credit for new corporate headquarters facilities that employ 50 or more persons in new full-time jobs and incur, within one year, a minimum of $1 million in the state in construction, renovation, leasing or other costs related to such establishment or relocation. "Headquarters" means the principal central administrative office of any taxpayer or their subsidiary. The tax credit will be:

- $3,000 per new full-time job when the average wages of these jobs are at least 10% over the current average wage of the county in which the job is located (Chatham wage average was $588 in 2001).
- $5,000 when the average wages of these jobs are 200% or more of the average wage of the county

This credit may be taken for the first five years of the new job, and is available for jobs created in the first seven years from the close of the taxable year in which the taxpayer first becomes eligible. Where the credit exceeds a taxpayer's liability for such taxes, the excess may be taken as a credit against the taxpayer's quarterly or monthly payments. Unused tax credits may be carried forward for 10 years.

3.4.4. Education and Training

There are numerous comprehensive education and training opportunities available to Whitfield County. With its proximity to Atlanta and Chattanooga, Tennessee, the County is located in the nucleus of boundless research and technological advancements.

Dalton State College

Dalton State College is the only facility for higher learning within a 40 mile radius of Whitfield County. The college occupies a campus consisting of approximately 141 acres and nine buildings. The college offers associate, certificate, and targeted baccalaureate programs, as well as a wide variety of public service and continuing education activities. The University System of Georgia's Board of Regents chartered Dalton Junior College in 1963. It opened in 1967 and was renamed Dalton College in 1987. It was then renamed Dalton State College in 1998.

Other Education and Training Options

Other post-secondary education opportunities exist adjacent counties. Covenant College and Northwestern Technical College are located in Walker County. The Gordon County campus of the Coosa Valley Technical College is located in Calhoun. The University of Tennessee-Chattanooga is located in Chattanooga in Hamilton County, Tennessee.

The Intellectual Capital Partnership Program (ICAPP) provides one-stop entry to the intellectual capital of the University System of Georgia - its education programs, faculty expertise, and research and development facilities. ICAPP Advantage is a direct economic development incentive that helps companies meet immediate human resources needs. Through this program, Georgia's public colleges and universities can expedite the education of highly skilled workers to meet specific work force needs. Companies specify the knowledge areas to be taught, then recruit and select the participants they will sponsor to be educated in those skills. These programs can be funded through the HOPE Scholarship program (http://www.peachnet.edu).

Through the HOPE Scholarship, Georgia provides tuition, mandatory fees, and a $100 book allowance at a Georgia public college, technical school, or university for students who are residents of Georgia and who have completed high school since 1993 with a "B" average or better. Students must maintain the "B" average in college. HOPE also provides $3,000 per academic school year for eligible students attending a private college or university and an additional $1,000 in Tuition Equalizations Grants per year.

Through the HOPE Grant, any Georgia resident is eligible for 95 quarter hours of tuition-paid diploma and certificate programs at a state technical college. This also includes the payment of Hope-approved mandatory fees and a book allowance of up to $100 per quarter directly to the technical college. Georgia residents may receive a Hope Grant regardless of high school graduation date or grade average. Full-time enrollment is not required, but the student must be making "satisfactory academic progress" to maintain eligibility. If a student's basic skills (math, writing, and reading) are not up to a 10th grade level, the program automatically enters them into a county-sponsored program to upgrade those skills.

3.4.5. Other economic resources

Appalachian Regional Commission

The Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) is a federal-state partnership that works with the people of Appalachia to create opportunities for self-sustaining economic development and improved quality of life. ARC provides funding limited to 30-50% of total project cost; eligible for projects that follow in accordance with one of four ARC strategic goals and include infrastructure, tourism, health care, education, etc.

Economic Development Administration

The EDA provides funding for public facility expansion essential to industrial and commercial growth. Typical projects include industrial parks, access roads, water transmission and sewer collection lines; and airport terminal developments

OneGeorgia Authority

The OneGeorgia Authority uses the State's tobacco settlement to invest in the most economically disadvantaged areas of Georgia. OneGeorgia focuses on rural communities like Whitfield County. The agency has a 25-year lifespan – contiguous with the term of the settlement. Various funds, ranging from AirGeorgia, BRIDGE, and EDGE to the Equity Fund and the Strategic Industries Loan Fund, are available for cities, counties, government authorities, and multi-county or multi-jurisdictional authorities.

3.5. Economic Trends

3.5.1. Sector Trends

As shown in Table 3-21, the following industries in the Northwest Georgia Region are projected by the Georgia Department of Labor to see employment increases in their respective sectors by more than 2,000 jobs between 2004 and 2014: educational services; merchant wholesalers; durable goods; food services and drinking places; administrative and support services; and general merchandise stores. The Northwest Georgia Region includes Bartow, Catoosa, Chattooga, Dade, Fannin, Floyd, Gilmer, Gordon, Harrison, Murray, Paulding, Pickens, Polk and Walker and Whitfield counties.

Table 3-21 Northeast Georgia Region Largest Job Growth Industries

Industry Title (NAICS Code)	2004 Base Year Employment	2014 Projected Year Employment	Total Change in Employment	Percent Change in Employment	Projected Annual Growth Rate
Educational Services (611000)	24,350	28,920	3,820	18.8%	1.7%
Merchant Wholesalers, Durable Goods (423000)	7,410	11,900	3,650	60.6%	4.9%
Food Services & Drinking Places (722000)	16,350	20,750	2,740	26.9%	2.4%
Administrative & Support Services (561000)	9,780	13,600	2,710	39.1%	3.4%
General Merchandise Stores (452000)	7,630	11,280	2,080	47.8%	4.0%
Ambulatory Health Care Services (621000)	7,020	9,760	1,640	39.0%	3.4%
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services (541000)	9,450	12,160	1,410	28.7%	2.6%
Local Government, Exc Education & Hospitals (999300)	10,200	12,280	0	20.4%	1.9%
Self-Employed & Unpaid Fam Wkrs (006010)	26,960	28,600	0	6.1%	0.6%
Specialty Trade Contractors (238000)	7,050	8,460	0	20.0%	1.8%

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

As shown in Table 3-22, the following industries in the Northwest Georgia Region are projected by the Georgia Department of Labor to see employment losses in their respective sectors of more than 500 jobs between 2002 and 2012: textile mills; food and beverage stores; and printing and related support activities.

Table 3-22 Northeast Georgia Regional Industries with Most Job Decline

Industry Title	2004 Base Year Employment	2014 Projected Year Employment	Total Change in Employment	Percent Change in Employment	Projected Annual Growth Rate
Textile Mills (31000)	12,770	11,190	-1,580	-12.4%	-1.3%
Food and Beverage Stores (445000)	5,450	4,680	-770	-14.1%	-1.5%
Printing and Related Support Activities (323000)	2,370	1,710	-660	-27.8%	-3.2%
Wood Product Manufacturing (321000)	1,700	1,260	-440	-25.9%	-3.0%
Personal and Laundry Services (812000)	1,960	1,560	-400	-20.4%	-2.3%
Machinery Manufacturing (333000)	1,810	1,470	-340	-18.8%	-2.1%
Management of Companies and Enterprises (551000)	490	220	-270	-55.1%	-7.7%
Construction of Buildings (236000)	2,120	1,870	-250	-11.8%	-1.2%
Warehousing and Storage (493000)	3,160	2,950	-210	-6.6%	-0.7%
Federal Government, Excluding Post Office (999100)	410	210	-200	-48.8%	-6.5%
Paper Manufacturing (322000)	1630	1490	-140	-8.6%	-0.9%
Rail Transportation (482000)	610	500	-110	-18.0%	-2.0%
Broadcasting (except Internet) (515000)	310	220	-90	-29.0%	-3.4%
Waste Management and Remediation Service (562000)	610	520	-90	-14.8%	-1.6%
Telecommunications (517000)	2280	2200	-80	-3.5%	-0.4%
Real Estate (531000)	1150	1090	-60	-0.052173913	-0.005344094

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

3.5.2. Major Employers

Major employers in Whitfield County are shown in Table 3-23. The largest employers in the County are tufted carpet mills. The largest three floor covering manufactures, Shaw, Mohawk and Beaulieu Group, account for nearly one in three jobs in the County. Shaw is the largest employer with more than 10,000 employees. Hamilton Health Care System, with 1,075 employees, is the largest private non-textile employer in the County.

Table 3-23 Major Employers in Whitfield County

Employer Name	Location	Number of Employees in 2007
Shaw Industries, Inc.		10,493
Mohawk		6,015
Beaulieu Group, LLC	Dalton	2,606
Whitfield County Schools		1,500
Hamilton Medical Center	Dalton	1,075
Tandus	Dalton	914

Dalton Public Schools	Dalton	800
J & J Industries	Dalton	738
Wal-Mart	Dalton	700

Source: Dalton-Whitfield Economic Development Authority report "Whitfield County Situational Analysis and Strategic Implications" prepared by Angelou Economics

3.5.3. Important new developments

Whitfield County and the City of Dalton adopted the area's first local economic development incentives policy in December 2006. The policy allowed expanding or newly-located companies who meet specific criteria to be eligible for tiered and weighted incentives that reduce their new property taxes over a period of four years. Incentives are offered with clawback clauses that require the company to meet and document annual criteria related to number of new job created, amount of new capital investment and wage rates paid for new jobs, among others. School taxes are not abated.

During the first year of availability, the incentives helped Whitfield County secure an expansion project for Shiroki USA. Shiroki, a company producing automobile door parts for clients such as Toyota, Mitsubishi and Nissan, had existing plants in Pikeville, Tennessee and Whitfield County, but planned to expand in only one. Local government's passage of the new incentives policy was a key factor in the company's decision-making process, and also led to the offer of $200,000 in State REBA grant funds for the project. These grant funds would not have been available without the new local incentives policy. As a direct result, Dalton and Whitfield County retained 505 jobs for Dalton and Whitfield County, added 100 new jobs and realized $25.6 million in new capital investment. As a result of the expansion, community coffers will also benefit from new revenue that includes more than $3 million in personal property, real property and payroll taxes from Shiroki, over the next ten years.

New companies that, with the DWEDA's assistance, located in Dalton/Whitfield County in 2007 include Marktec, Inc. Markec is a Korean firm that opened its first US operation in Dalton. Marktec manufactures glues and resins for countertops. The company's capital investment was approximately $13 million

Primetex Technology, which provides machinery, technology and technicians for the global fiber industry, considered sites in Chattanooga and Whitfield County. Primetex eventually chose Dalton for their base of operation, locating in renovated warehouse space with the historic Crown Mill property. The company now employs approximately five skilled employees, including sales technicians, technical engineers, a warehouse manager and bookkeeper. Long-term plans for PrimeTex include the training of a technology specialist who will be based in Dalton and who will provide highly-technical assistance to companies throughout North, Central and South America.

The DWEDA also met with and assisted Power-Heat-Set of America, the first US subsidiary of Resch Maschinenbau, a German company specializing in heat-setting equipment. Power-Heat-Set of America opened in Whitfield County in July, 2007.

The DWEDA also created a new "How to Start a Business" book offering assistance with permitting, business plan writing and marketing for entrepreneurs and small businesses and was certified by the state as an Entrepreneur-Friendly Community. New plans for small businesses include mentoring programs, youth entrepreneur programs and the consolidation of City and County permitting and zoning offices.

Included in the community's new economic development tool chest in addition to the local incentives policy, are a new economic development website, online access to available commercial and industrial properties, consolidated demographic information, marketing outreach to targeted site-selection media

outlets and a detailed target industry report that outlines specific challenges and opportunities for attracting new investors.

Whitfield County voters in 2007 approved a SPLOST, agreeing to pay one percent more on all goods to ensure better/improved roadways. This commitment by the County's voters will lead to improved roads should help the County lure more business. In addition, there is renewed interest in providing incentives to encourage downtown development and make it easier to locate in Dalton's historic core.

3.5.4. Unique economic situations

The Dalton-Whitfield Economic Development Authority commissioned two reports in 2007 that highlight the assets and challenges of the County and outlines target industries for future growth and a roadmap that is intended to enable community leadership to build on the area's assets and find solutions to the challenges faced. The two reports, "Whitfield County Situational Analysis and Strategic Implications," and "Target Industry Plan for Whitfield County" were prepared by Angelou Economics and cited multiple times in the following paragraphs.

Access and Infrastructure

Whitfield County benefits from tremendously competitive utility rates, immediate access to a busy interstate highway, proximity to growing metropolitan areas and relative proximity to two international airports (including the world's busiest airport) and one of American's most important ports. Few communities enjoy such advantages.

Carpet Capital of the World

Whitfield County has a proud history of remarkable entrepreneurship. From the humble beginnings of its cottage textile industry, Dalton has grown into the "Carpet Capital of the World." Today the region continues to produce the majority of the world's carpeting, in addition to many other types of floor covering. Whitfield County has become the headquarters for the world's carpet industry in part due to the community providing the industry with the infrastructure and work force needed to prosper and grow. As a result of the strength of this industry, Whitfield County has become an ideal location for supporting services, distribution, shipping, retail and diversification.

Manufacturing Powerhouse

The manufacturing industry employs more than 25,000 workers without the presence of labor unions. Skilled labor is available in a broad range skills due to the ever-increasing technological demands of local industry and the readily available training in the local colleges and technical schools. Dalton State College is a delivery point for Georgia's highly successful Quick Start training program where a training program is established for employees, free of charge.

Land Availability

The lack of adequate sites for potential firms is the single greatest obstacle preventing the successful attraction of outside firms to the area, according to the DWEDA report. The County lacks available commercial and office sites for potential expanding and relocating firms. Infrastructure is concentrated in the city. There is limited sewer capacity for anything outside of limited light commercial and no sewer service provided in a vast majority of unincorporated Whitfield County. Dalton Utilities is currently working to expand sewer service. Chapter 6 of this report outlines long-range plans for sewer expansion in Whitfield County. Without proper sites, the County will find it difficult to lure a variety of

industries to the area, the report says. The report states that the County enjoys also must develop more buildings suitable for a host of commercial and industrial purposes.

Unskilled Workforce and Educational Attainment

The County's largely unskilled workforce precludes the recruitment of high-growth, high-tech industries. The workforce quality is further strained by the economic growth occurring in surrounding counties that can erode the employment base. The County's low educational attainment levels must be addressed. Tackling this obstacle will require a long-term approach aimed at improving the skill set of the community's workforce, the report states. The county must address the high level of residents without a high school education. High school graduation is even more potentially important in Georgia due to the Hope scholarship system. Unless the County can increase its number of high school graduates, the community will face difficulties in business recruitment, the report states.

Demographic changes

Whitfield County has also experienced profound demographic changes over the past two decades. Since 1990, the Hispanic population of Whitfield County has grown tenfold, as described in the DWEDA report and in Chapter 2 of this report. The influx of immigrants has produced significant changes in the community while preserving the region's historic economic base. Without the inflow of immigrants, the report states, the carpet industry in Whitfield County could not prosper. At the same time, the presence of a large non-English speaking population in the area creates challenges for regional organizations.

Quality of Life and Entertainment

The DWEDA report states that the proportion of entertainment outlets in Whitfield County is slightly below the national average and slightly above the state average. The County, however, is dwarfed, the report states, by the Chattanooga metropolitan area, which proportionally features nearly 10 times the number of arts, entertainment, recreation and accommodation outlets. The report says that the County must aggressively promote the development of lifestyle amenities, especially in areas such as entertainment and shopping. While there are many retail establishments in absolute terms, the area does suffer from a dearth of distinctive, high-end retail outlets. The County could benefit from additional amenities such as coffee shops and restaurants. As opposed to the community's primary retail corridor, Walnut Avenue, distinctive retail outlets thrive best in areas that are both pedestrian friendly and historically interesting, the report concludes. The report says that a properly redeveloped downtown would provide the ideal location for these businesses and encourages the use of more demanding zoning requirements in downtown Dalton.

Evolving Economic Model

Despite the many successes of Whitfield County, the DWEDA report states, the community has reached a critical juncture in its development. Although the community has benefited tremendously from the presence of the flooring industry, the scale of the industry has precluded economic diversification, according to the DWEDA report. Whitfield County largely lives and dies by the fortunes of major floor and covering producers and their suppliers.

The report continues that the County has over the years relied on an economic development model that is disappearing from the American landscape. For the past 50 years, the County's economy has relied on low- to moderate-skilled manufacturing jobs. Most of these jobs were homegrown, the report states, and as a result the County was never forced to incentiveize economic development to the extent of other communities. The County instead, the report states, primarily relied on its status as the most developed manufacturing town in the immediate region, which ensured a plentiful workforce as residents of neighboring counties commuted to Whitfield County.

Today, the DWEDA report states, the County has lost many of its early advantages. While remaining strong in the immediate area, manufacturing is hemorrhaging jobs, there has to date been little immediate threat to the County's economic base. Traditional manufacturing, however, is unlikely to propel significant future growth, according to the report.

Community leaders in Whitfield County are increasingly recognizing the need for concerted, proactive effort to counter negative industry trends, build the County's site selection assets, and ensure the continued growth and prosperity of the region. Ultimately, the report states, the County must adopt a new economic development model that will include many of the same strengths that currently benefit existing industries. By conceptualizing existing assets in a new light, the report states, the County can extend the benefits of these assets to burgeoning industries that currently lack a presence in the area.

Target Industries

Apparel and Textiles, Chemicals and Plastics, Wholesale Trade, and General Services are currently the leading sectors in the County. Of these leading industries in the County, only General Services is growing nationally. As a result, the County has few industry clusters that can immediately fuel economic diversification. In addition, the report states that nearly all of the County's strongest clusters are considered "dislocating industries," meaning they are shrinking at a national level and undergoing a basic restructuring in geography, technology or markets.

Due to these constraints, the report recommends that the County target three key industries: Distribution and Warehousing, Business Services, Advanced Manufacturing, and Information Technology Services. The report also presented auxiliary target of retail. Attracting these industries will require a commitment to addressing the lack of facilities/sites for development, educational attainment and skill level of the workforce, the loss of young professionals, and the lack of entertainment options available in the County.

3.6. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Treats Analysis

3.6.1. Strengths

- Trade, Transportation and Utilities sector experienced the most significant growth from 2000 to 2006, increasing the number of positions by 24.3%.
- Whitfield County retains a strong manufacturing base. Manufacturing supersector grew modestly from 1990 to 2006 and maintained the largest share of employment in Whitfield County at 38.1% (down from 41.2% in 2000 and 51.4% in 1990). Manufacturing accounts for nearly one in two jobs in Whitfield County. Manufacturing's share of employment in Whitfield County is more than three times the national average.
- County labor force grew by an average annual growth rate of 1.1% between 1990 and 2006, which is slightly lower than County resident population's 1.6% average annual growth rate.
- Approximately 87% of the County labor force worked inside the County in 2000, leaving only 13% working outside of the County. In addition, County residents held 60% of the jobs available in the County with 14% held by Murray County residents and the remaining held by residents of Gordon, Walker, Gilmer, Hamilton (Tennessee) and Bradley (Tennessee) counties.
- Dalton State College provides higher education opportunities.
- County is the headquarters of the world's carpet mill industry including the headquarters of Fortune 500 Shaw.

- Access to rail and Interstate 75 provide economic development opportunities.
- County proximity to the Atlanta and Chattanooga international airports and amenities provide opportunities for economic development.
- General services is the only industry sector in Whitfield County that is growing both nationally and locally.
- The number of Whitfield County residents with a bachelor's degree has increased by more than 36% since 1990.
- Dalton and Whitfield County recently adopted an incentive strategy that has already provided a return on investment in creating new jobs in the County.
- Importance of the floor covering industry in Whitfield County extends beyond direct employment. Several other important clusters in the area are largely supported by the floor covering industry. The high concentration of chemicals and plastics firms and wholesaling firms are closely linked to the omnipresence of the floor covering industry.

3.6.2. Weaknesses

- Whitfield County is largely dependent on a few industry super-sectors – Manufacturing; Trade, Transportation & Utilities; and Professional & Business. These three sectors account for 80% of all jobs in the County. One in 10 textile product mill jobs in the United States is located within Whitfield County.
- The County has one of the lowest rates of sole proprietors in the state, in part due to the presence of the area's large corporations.
- Whitfield County suffers from significantly low levels of educational attainment. On every level of educational attainment, Whitfield County lags behind the state and other nearby Metropolitan Statistical Areas (e.g. Cleveland, TN MSA, Rome, GA MSA, Chattanooga, TN-GA MSA, Atlanta-Marietta-Sandy Springs, GA MSA).
- Low unemployment coupled with a relatively small total population means that site selectors will be cautions in recommending the area.
- County's job inventory grew at a rate slightly lower than the state from 1990 to 2006, though the annual average number of jobs in the County rose more significantly from 2001 to 2006 than for the MSA, state and nation.
- Information and Financial Activities supersectors experienced the most decline from 2000 to 2006
- With the exception of Agricultural, Forestry & Fishing and Health Care & Social Services, the average weekly wages and annual pay offered by employers located in the County and MSA were lower than the state, and the national figures.
- The inventory tax is a significant competitive disadvantage for certain industries.
- Average weekly wage and annual pay for all industries trailed the state and nation. Manufacturing wages in particular are considerably lower than the state and national averages (20% lower than the state and 30% lower than the nation).
- County residents who were part of the labor force were less likely than residents of the state as a whole to hold management, professional and related occupations and more likely to hold positions in production, transportation and material moving occupations.

- Compared to nearby areas, the community suffers from a proportional lack of entertainment establishments.
- Lack of big box retailers and upscale retailers.

3.6.3. Opportunities

- County's total employment is also expected to increase significantly from 64,148 jobs in 2006 to 93,913 jobs in 2030, an increase of 46.4% and an average annual growth rate of 1.5%.
- County experienced unemployment rate improvement between 1990 and 2006. The level of unemployment rose to 4.7 percent in 2005, but rebounded in 2006. Whitfield County unemployment rates have trended lower than the rates for the state and nation.
- Educational services and Merchant wholesalers in the Northwest Georgia Region are projected to see employment increases of more than 3,600 jobs between 2004 and 2014.
- Increased relationships between Dalton State College and other four-year programs provide for more training and educational opportunities.
- Increased promotion of tourism, a funded downtown redevelopment plan and better selection of local retail all could work together to increase the amenities present in Whitfield County.

3.6.4. Threats

- Textile mills in Northwest Georgia Region are projected by the Georgia Department of Labor to see employment losses in their respective sectors of 1,580 jobs between 2004 and 2014.
- Outsourcing in the years ahead may threaten the carpet industry.
- Job creation in neighboring counties erodes the available workforce for Dalton and Whitfield County. The County has depended upon workers from other counties to fill positions in Whitfield County.
- Graduation rates are poor which could make transitioning the community's economic more difficult.

CHAPTER 4

4. Housing

Evaluation of adequacy and suitability of the existing housing stock to serve current and future community needs

4.1. Housing Types and Trends

4.1.1. Composition of Housing Stock

Whitfield County increased its inventory of housing units from 23,817 to 34,684 between 1980 and 2006, as shown in Table 4-1, an increase of 45.6% with an average annual growth of 1.5%. Single-family homes led all housing type categories with a share of 63.5%, down from 69.8% in 1980. As shown in Table 4-2, in 2000, Dalton included the County's most diverse housing stock with 53.4% single-family detached and 40.9% being multi-family with 3 or more units. Dalton had the County's lowest proportion of mobile homes. As shown in Table 4-3, Tunnel Hill's housing stock consisted of 84.7% single-family detached. More than 13% of Tunnel Hill's housing stock was made up of mobile homes. Varnell's housing stock consisted of 84.9% single-family detached and included 8.5% mobile homes, as shown in Table 4-4. Cohutta housing mix is shown in Table 4-5.

Table 4-1 Types of Housing and Mix – Whitfield County

Category	1980		1990		2000		2006		% Change 2000-2006	% Change 1980-2006	Ave. Annual Rate
Total Housing Units	23,817	100.0%	28,832	100.0%	30,722	100.0%	34,684	100.0%	6.6%	45.6%	1.5%
Single Family (1 unit, detached)	16,629	69.8%	18,364	63.7%	19,693	64.1%	22,023	63.5%	7.2%	32.4%	1.1%
Single Family (1 unit, attached)	331	1.4%	450	1.6%	587	1.9%	926	2.7%	30.4%	179.8%	4.0%
Double Units (2 units)	854	3.6%	1,025	3.6%	1,130	3.7%	1,053	3.0%	10.2%	23.3%	0.8%
3 or 9 units	1,601	6.7%	2,343	8.1%	2,181	7.1%	1,651	4.8%	-6.9%	3.1%	0.1%
10 to 19 units	1,013	4.3%	1,250	4.3%	684	2.2%	715	2.1%	-45.3%	-29.4%	-1.3%
20+e units	601	2.5%	522	1.8%	1,091	3.6%	1,039	3.0%	109.0%	72.9%	2.1%
Mobile home	2,788	11.7%	4,671	16.2%	5,345	17.4%	1,551	4.5%	14.4%	-44.4%	-2.2%
All Other	0	0.0%	207	0.7%	11	0.0%	5,726	16.5%	-94.7%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3); Selected Housing Characteristics: 2006 - American Community Survey

Table 4-2 Types of Housing and Mix – Dalton

Category	1980		1990		2000		% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1990-2000
Total Housing Units	7,982	100.0%	9,555	100.0%	10,309	100.0%	19.7%	7.9%
Single Family (1 unit, detached)	4,735	59.3%	4,895	51.2%	5,506	53.4%	3.4%	12.5%
Single Family (1 unit, attached)	267	3.3%	297	3.1%	410	4.0%	11.2%	38.0%
Double Units (2 units)	530	6.6%	606	6.3%	687	6.7%	14.3%	13.4%
3 or 9 units	1,114	14.0%	1,800	18.8%	1,807	17.5%	61.6%	0.4%
10 to 19 units	763	9.6%	1,157	12.1%	663	6.4%	51.6%	-42.7%
20 or more units	520	6.5%	520	5.4%	1,060	10.3%	0.0%	103.8%
Mobile home	53	0.7%	194	2.0%	176	1.7%	266.0%	-9.3%
All Other	-	0.0%	86	0.9%	-	0.0%	#DIV/0!	-100.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3)

Table 4-3 Types of Housing and Mix – Tunnel Hill

Category	1980		1990		2000		% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1990-2000
Total Housing Units	324	100.0%	360	100.0%	472	100.0%	11.1%	31.1%
Single Family (1 unit, detached)	293	90.4%	317	88.1%	400	84.7%	8.2%	26.2%
Single Family (1 unit, attached)	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	3	0.6%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Double Units (2 units)	-	0.0%	2	0.6%	2	0.4%	#DIV/0!	0.0%
3 or 9 units	9	2.8%	4	1.1%	4	0.8%	-55.6%	0.0%
10 to 19 units	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
20 or more units	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Mobile home	22	6.8%	35	9.7%	63	13.3%	59.1%	80.0%
All Other	-	0.0%	2	0.6%	-	0.0%	#DIV/0!	-100.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3)

Table 4-4 Types of Housing and Mix – Varnell

Category	1980		1990		2000		% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1990-2000
Total Housing Units	111	100.0%	137	100.0%	497	100.0%	23.4%	262.8%
Single Family (1 unit, detached)	100	90.1%	120	87.6%	422	84.9%	20.0%	251.7%
Single Family (1 unit, attached)	-	0.0%	4	2.9%	-	0.0%	#DIV/0!	-100.0%
Double Units (2 units)	-	0.0%	1	0.7%	24	4.8%	#DIV/0!	2300.0%
3 or 9 units	2	1.8%	1	0.7%	9	1.8%	-50.0%	800.0%
10 to 19 units	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
20 or more units	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Mobile home	9	8.1%	9	6.6%	42	8.5%	0.0%	366.7%
All Other	-	0.0%	2	1.5%	-	0.0%	#DIV/0!	-100.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3)

Table 4-5 Types of Housing and Mix – Cohutta

Category	1980		1990		2000		% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1990-2000
Total Housing Units	166	2.1%	227	2.4%	265	2.6%	36.7%	16.7%
Single Family (1 unit, detached)	117	1.5%	162	1.7%	211	2.0%	38.5%	30.2%
Single Family (1 unit, attached)	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	7	0.1%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Double Units (2 units)	11	0.1%	-	0.0%	5	0.0%	-100.0%	#DIV/0!
3 or 9 units	4	0.1%	19	0.2%	6	0.1%	375.0%	-68.4%
10 to 19 units	4	0.1%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-100.0%	#DIV/0!
20 or more units	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	#DIV/0!	#DIV/0!
Mobile home	30	0.4%	44	0.5%	36	0.3%	46.7%	-18.2%
All Other	-	0.0%	2	0.0%	-	0.0%	#DIV/0!	-100.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3)

4.1.2. Recent Trends in Types of Housing Provided

For the year 2000 through the end of 2006, Whitfield County issued permits for an additional 3,182 housing units, as shown in Table 4-6. It is important to note that the issuance of a building permit does not always translate into construction of new housing units, since plans for construction plans often change. The number of permits issued by the County increased every year since 2000, from 855 to 1,416 in 2005.

Table 4-6 Housing Permit Trends

Category	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	Total 2000-2006	Ave. Annual Increase
Number of Structures Permitted	433	405	391	421	486	576	470	3,182	4.2%
Number of Units Permitted	876	663	487	627	610	713	590	4,566	-2.9%
Value of Permitted Structures	$41,432,975	$35,320,299	$42,714,904	$58,415,591	$61,667,666	$62,860,669	$61,390,469	$363,802,573	6.1%

Source: Selig Center for Economic Growth, based on U.S. Census Bureau, Construction Statistics Division: Housing Units Authorized by Building Permits (C-40).

According to the 2006 American Community Survey estimates, shown in Table 4-7, the County increased its number of housing units 12.9%, from 30,722 units in 2000 to 34,678 units in 2006. This increase was middle of the pack compared with surrounding counties. Gordon County, located south of Whitfield County, experienced the fastest growth rate among the surrounding counties followed by Catoosa County. Hamilton County, Tennessee experienced the largest real number increase with 10,250 new units.

Table 4-7 Housing Unit Trends in Surrounding Counties

Category	Whitfield County	Catoosa County	Gordon County	Murray County	Walker County	Bradley County, TN	Hamilton County, TN
Housing Units 2000	30,722	21,794	17,145	14,320	25,577	36,820	134,692
Housing Units 2006	34,676	25,539	20,439	15,756	28,111	40,399	144,942
Ave. Annual Growth Rate	1.7%	2.3%	2.5%	1.4%	1.4%	1.3%	1.1%
% Change 2000-2006	12.9%	17.2%	19.2%	10.0%	9.9%	9.7%	7.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - Annual Estimates of Housing Units for Counties in Georgia: April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2006

4.2. Housing Unit Projections

Housing Unit Projections for Whitfield County and each municipality are shown in Table 4-8. These projections are based on the population projections for planning presented previously. The County is projected to have 41,080 housing units in 2030, 32,263 of which located in unincorporated areas of the County.

Table 4-8 Housing Unit Projections

Area	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Whitfield County	32,448	34,175	35,901	37,627	39,353	41,080
Dalton	5,699	5,892	6,084	6,277	6,470	6,633
Cohutta	290	315	339	364	389	414
Tunnel Hill	509	546	583	620	657	694
Varnell	594	690	787	883	980	1,076
Unincorporated	25,356	26,732	28,108	29,483	30,857	32,263

Source: DCA

4.3. Condition and Occupancy

4.3.1. Housing Age

As shown in Table 4-9, 13.6% of the housing units recorded in 2006 were built after 2000 and 52.6% were built after 1980, which is a reflection of the rate of growth taking place in Whitfield County. Less than 6% of Whitfield County's housing units were built prior to 1939. Housing age information for cities for 2006 was not available, however data from the 2000 Census, shown in Table 4-10, shows that in 2000, 19.5% of Dalton's housing stock has been built since 1990 and 63.5% were built before 1980. More than 77% of Tunnel Hill's housing stock was built before 1980, while only 34.2% of Varnell's housing stock was built before 1980.

Table 4-9 Housing Age 2006 – County, State and Nation

Category	Whitfield Coumty		State of Georgia		United States	
	Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total	Units	% of Total
Total Housing Units 2006	34,684	100.0%	3,873,405	100.0%	126,311,823	100.0%
Built 2005 or later	474	1.4%	107,599	2.8%	2,230,916	1.8%
Built 2000 to 2004	4,218	12.2%	521,660	13.5%	10,890,683	8.6%
Built 1990 to 1999	6,852	19.8%	873,041	22.5%	18,101,683	14.3%
Built 1980 to 1989	6,698	19.3%	719,088	18.6%	18,311,803	14.5%
Built 1970 to 1979	5,697	16.4%	615,138	15.9%	21,264,894	16.8%
Built 1960 to 1969	4,618	13.3%	408,958	10.6%	14,812,548	11.7%
Built 1950 to 1959	2,464	7.1%	283,978	7.3%	14,600,528	11.6%
Built 1940 to 1949	1,619	4.7%	137,375	3.5%	7,602,544	6.0%
Built 1939 or earlier	2,044	5.9%	206,568	5.3%	18,496,224	14.6%
Note: American Community Survey provided produced estimates for Whitfield County, but not for the municipalities						

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 2006 American Community Survey

Table 4-10 Housing Age 2000 – Cities, County, State and Nation

Category	Whitfield County	Dalton	Cohutta	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	State of Georgia
Total Housing Units 2000	30,722	10,309	256	472	497	3,281,737
Built 1990-2000	7,351	2,015	83	36	177	915,130
Built 1990-2000 (% of total units in 2000)	23.9%	19.5%	32.4%	7.6%	35.6%	27.9%
Built 1980-1989	6,098	1,751	70	69	150	721,174
Built 1980-1990 (% of total units in 2000)	19.8%	17.0%	27.3%	14.6%	30.2%	22.0%
Built before 1980	17,273	6,543	112	367	170	1,645,433
Built before 1980 (% of total units in 2000)	56.2%	63.5%	43.8%	77.8%	34.2%	50.1%
Built 1970 – 1979	6,568	2,228	24	156	85	608,926
% Built 1970 - 1979	21.4%	21.6%	9.4%	33.1%	17.1%	18.6%
Built 1960 - 1969	4,816	1,599	33	86	54	416,047
% Built 1960-1969	15.7%	15.5%	12.9%	18.2%	10.9%	12.7%
Built 1950 - 1959	3,040	1,496	14	52	17	283,424
% Built 1950 - 1959	9.9%	14.5%	5.5%	11.0%	3.4%	8.6%
Built 1940 - 1949	1,457	589	21	24	4	144,064
% Built 1940 - 1949	4.7%	5.7%	8.2%	5.1%	0.8%	4.4%
Built 1939 or earlier	1,392	631	20	49	10	192,972
% Built 1939 or earlier	4.5%	6.1%	7.8%	10.4%	2.0%	5.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3), Table H34

4.3.2. Housing Condition

The age of the housing stock greatly contributes to the housing conditions shown in Table 4-11. In each category, Whitfield County mirrors the figures for the state. The cities within the County also mirror the figures for the County overall.

Table 4-11 Housing Condition

Area	Complete Plumbing Facilities	Complete Plumbing Facilities	Lacking Plumbing Facilities	Lacking Plumbing Facilities	Complete kitchen facilities	Complete kitchen facilities	Lacking complete kitchen facilities	Lacking complete kitchen facilities	Total Housing Units
Whitfield County	30,593	99.6%	129	0.4%	99.1%	30,435	0.9%	287	30,722
Dalton	10,265	99.6%	44	0.4%	98.5%	10,155	1.5%	154	10,309
Cohutta	420	100.0%	-	0.0%	97.9%	411	2.1%	9	420
Tunnel Hill	470	99.6%	2	0.4%	99.6%	470	0.4%	2	472
Varnell	492	99.0%	5	1.1%	99.0%	492	1.1%	5	497
State of Georgia	3,252,197	99.1%	29,540	0.9%	99.0%	3,250,020	1.0%	31,717	3,281,737

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3) 2000 Tables H47 and H50, 1990 Tables H042, H064.

The Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan 2000-2025 adopted in 2002 identified the need to develop data for housing conditions throughout the County in order to target specific neighborhoods for housing improvement. The North Georgia Regional Development Center, in conjunction with the Dalton-Whitfield Community Development Corporation, prepared the Whitfield County Housing Conditions Study. Released in January 2007, the study analyzed the results of a housing survey of 1,927 structures. These studied structures had lost 50% or more of their value and likely in a state of deterioration, according to the Tax Assessor database.

Of the 1,927 structures studied, the study data summarized as follows:

- 14.7% had experienced serious structural problems to both the roof and foundation and experienced serious deteriorating conditions to other features of the house; these constituted a danger to the health, safety and welfare of the occupants or significantly affected the basic functionality of the home.
- 16.9% required at least one major structural repair and required repair of a variety of other minor problems. These structures may be habitable, but serious repairs were needed to improve living conditions and to avoid further deterioration in the near future.
- 11.3% required a major repair to the siding or walls, or required minor repairs to a variety of other features of the house. While habitable, these housing units needed repairs in order to enhance functionality and appearance.
- 26.2% required only minor repairs.
- 30.7% required no visible repairs

The units that experienced the most severe problems were located throughout the County, but a majority was concentrated in Dalton and adjacent unincorporated neighborhoods. Measured with the lesser problems, the maps produced for the study show concentrations of needed repairs indicating that entire neighborhoods may have a preponderance of deteriorating structures. The study results are being used to develop projects to improve housing conditions in the County and cities. The Dalton-Whitfield

Community Development Corporation is well equipped to pursue housing rehabilitation projects identified from the study.

4.3.3. Housing Tenure

Whitfield County recorded a vacancy rate of 4.4% in 2000, somewhat lower than the state figure of 8.4%, as shown in Table 4-12. The rate dropped from 9.6% in 1990. Owner-occupied housing increased from 62.3% in 1990 to 64.7% in 2000. The County's ownership rate was higher in 2000 than the state. Renter-occupied housing increased from a share of 30.9% of all units to 31.0% between 1990 and 2000. The number of renters is lower than the state averages. Renter-occupied housing outnumbered owner-occupied housing in Dalton (48.8% and 46.4% respectively) with a vacancy rate of 4.8%. Housing stocks of Tunnel Hill and Varnell were both primarily owner-occupied with rates of 77.5% and 81.7% respectively.

Table 4-12 Housing Tenure

Category	Whitfield County					State of Georgia				
	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000
	# of Units	% of Total	# of Units	% of Total		# of Units	% of Total	# of Units	% of Total	
Total Housing Units	28,832	100.0%	30,722	100.0%	6.6%	2,638,418	100.0%	3,281,737	100.0%	24.4%
Owner Occupied	17,960	62.3%	19,862	64.7%	10.6%	1,536,829	58.2%	2,029,293	61.8%	32.0%
Renter Occupied	8,899	30.9%	9,523	31.0%	7.0%	829,786	31.5%	977,076	29.8%	17.8%
Vacant	1,973	6.8%	1,337	4.4%	-32.2%	271,803	10.3%	275,368	8.4%	1.3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

Housing Tenure (cont.)

Category	Dalton					Tunnel Hill				
	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000
	# of Units	% of Total	# of Units	% of Total		# of Units	% of Total	# of Units	% of Total	
Total Housing Units	9,555	4209.3%	10,309	100.0%	7.9%	360	100.0%	472	100.0%	31.1%
Owner Occupied	3,988	1756.8%	4,781	46.4%	19.9%	279	77.5%	367	77.8%	31.5%
Renter Occupied	4,745	2090.3%	5,030	48.8%	6.0%	65	18.1%	78	16.5%	20.0%
Vacant	822	362.1%	498	4.8%	-39.4%	16	4.4%	27	5.7%	68.8%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

Housing Tenure (cont.)

Category	Varnell					Cohutta				
	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000	1990		2000		% Change 1990-2000
	Number of Units	% of Total Units	Number of Units	% of Total Units		Number of Units	% of Total Units	Number of Units	% of Total Units	
Total Housing Units	137	38.1%	497	100.0%	262.8%	227	100.0%	265	100.0%	16.7%
Owner Occupied	123	34.2%	406	81.7%	230.1%	144	63.4%	195	73.6%	35.4%
Renter Occupied	27	7.5%	84	16.9%	211.1%	64	28.2%	47	17.7%	-26.6%
Vacant	23	6.4%	7	1.4%	-69.6%	29	12.8%	23	8.7%	-20.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2000

4.4. Housing Costs

4.4.1. Median Property Values and Rent

Median property values and median rent trailed the state from 1990 to 2006, as shown in Table 4-13 and Table 4-14. The median rents are also less costly than the state average. Data for the cities for the year 2006 was not available. In 2000, however, the median property values for the entire County were higher than the median property values for each of the cities. Of the cities, median property values were highest in Cohutta ($107,824). Median rents were highest in Varnell at $562, even though that was a drop from $624 in 1990 (in dollars adjusted for inflation to 2006 dollars). The most significant median property values change occurred in Cohutta where values grew by 69.3%. The most significant median rent increases occurred in Dalton where values grew by 10.8%.

Table 4-13 Median Property Value Median Rent

Area	Median Property Value				
	1990	2000	2006	% Change 1990-2000	% Change 1990-2006
Whitfield County	$60,800	$91,800	$125,700	51.0%	36.9%
Dalton	$49,600	$92,100	NA	85.7%	NA
Cohutta	$41,300	$92,900	NA	124.9%	NA
Tunnel Hill	$42,300	$86,400	NA	104.3%	NA
Varnell	$45,600	$ 88,100	NA	93.2%	NA
State of Georgia	$93,939	$11,200	$156,800	18.4%	41.0%
[1] 1990 values shown for Georgia have been adjusted to 2006 dollars for comparison; Data for cities for 2006 is not available					

Table 4-14 Median Rent

Area	1990	2000	2006	% Change 1990-2000	% Change 2000-2006
Whitfield County	$563	$567	$544	0.7%	-4.1%
Dalton	$502	$556	NA	10.8%	NA
Cohutta	$474	$485	NA	2.3%	NA
Tunnel Hill	$622	$439	NA	-29.4%	NA
Varnell	$624	$562	NA	-9.9%	NA
State of Georgia	$879	$718	$738	-18.3%	2.8%
[1] 1990 values shown for Georgia have been adjusted to 2006 dollars for comparison; Data for cities for 2006 is not available					

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3) 2000; American Community Survey 2006

Fair Housing Rents (issued by HUD) for 2005 in Whitfield County are $475, $525, $703, and $724 for a one-, two-, three-, or four-bedroom housing unit, respectively), compared to metro Chattanooga area at $482, $569, $701 and $820 and metro Atlanta area tat $750, $824, $1024, $1,164.

4.4.2. Home Sale Prices

Annual home sales in the County during the period from 1997 to 2004 ranged from a low of 1,003 units in 2001 to a high of 2,213 units in 2000, according to the Center for Agribusiness and Economic Development at the University of Georgia (shown in Table 4-15). Both the number of sales and the

value of homes in the County showed a steady increase. Average home sale prices increased, when adjusted for inflation, 23.7% from 1997 to 2004, and 15.7% from 2000 to 2004. The average home sales price was $124,430 in 2004.

Table 4-15 Number of Annual Home Sales and Annual Average Prices

Sales Year	Number of Sales	Average Sale Price	Ave. Sale Price (2004 Dollars)
1997	1,076	$85,498	$100,627
1998	1,058	$91,043	$105,509
1999	1,104	$100,309	$113,736
2000	1,213	$98,031	$107,538
2001	1,003	$105,401	$112,424
2002	1,116	$112,183	$117,795
2003	1,211	$118,835	$122,000
2004	1,018	$124,430	$124,430
Rate of Change 1997-2004		45.5%	23.7%
Rate of Change 2000-2004		26.9%	15.7%
Ave. Annual Rate of Change 1997-2004		4.8%	2.7%

Source: University of Georgia Center for Agribusiness & Economic Development 2005

4.4.3. Affordability for Residents and Workers

As demonstrated in the Tables 4-12, 4-13 and 4-14, housing costs for residents and workers of Whitfield County increased during the 1990-2000 period. Data for home sales collected 2000-2004 showed a continued rise in home value as new homes were constructed throughout the County. Increased costs, generally speaking, can be attributed to increased land valuations, construction of homes with larger square footage floor plans and increased building costs. Owner-occupied housing costs were higher for the County as a whole than for the municipalities. Costs have continued to increase since 2000, as demonstrated by Table 4-14 in sale of new homes.

4.5. Cost-Burdened Households

Whitfield County households considered by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) to be cost-burdened (monthly housing costs exceed 30% of the household income) and severely cost-burdened (monthly housing costs exceed 50% of the household income) in 2000 varies significantly from mirrors data for the state, as shown in Table 4-16. The cities of Dalton, Cohutta and Varnell are more similar to the County as a whole than the state. Tunnel Hill, however, closely mirrors that of the state. Table 4-16 also shows that Whitfield County saw a 14.2% increase in the 30% and greater category from 1990 to 2000, half of the rate of increase experienced by the state. Increases in Dalton and Varnell, however were especially high (164.2% and 200.0% respectively). In addition, each city also saw increases.

Table 4-16 Cost-Burdened Households

Area	1990			2000							% Change 1990-00 for 30% and Greater
	Total Units	30% and Greater		Total Units	30% to 49%		50% and Greater		30% and Greater		
		Number	% of Total		Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	Number	% of Total	
Whitfield County	28,832	3,910	13.6%	30,722	2,800	9.1%	1,665	5.4%	4,465	14.5%	14.2%
Dalton	9,555	709	7.4%	10,309	1,142	11.1%	731	7.1%	1,873	18.2%	164.2%
Cohutta	227	31	13.7%	265	24	9.1%	10	3.8%	34	12.8%	9.7%
Tunnel Hill	24	34	141.7%	195	28	14.4%	20	10.3%	48	24.6%	41.2%
Varnell	360	13	3.6%	472	23	4.9%	16	3.4%	39	8.3%	200.0%
State of Georgia	1,961,474	521,113	26.6%	2,560,854	397,964	15.5%	278,401	10.9%	676,365	26.4%	29.8%

* Rent 0-30% = Units with gross rent (rent and utilities) that are affordable to households with incomes below 30%of HUD Area Median Family Income. Affordable is defined as gross rent less than or equal to 30% of a household's gross income.

** Value 0-50% = Homes with values affordable to households with incomes at or below 50% of HUD Area Median Income. Affordable is defined as annual owner costs less than or equal to 30% of annual gross income. Annual costs are estimated assuming the cost of purchasing a home at the time of the Census based on reported value of the home. Assuming a 7.9% interest rate and national averages for utility costs, taxes, and hazard and mortgage insurance, multiplying income times 2.9 represents the value of a home a person can afford to purchase. For example, a household with an annual gross income of $30,000 is estimated to be able to afford an $87,000 home without having total costs exceed 30% of their annual household income.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3), 2000 Tables H69, H94 and 1990 Tables H050, H058; Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS) Data Book

According to the Dalton-Whitfield Community Development Corporation (DWCDC), there were 123 foreclosures between May and November, 2007 in Whitfield and Murray Counties. Almost all foreclosures (97%) affect those in the community with the least assets. In April 2008, one-third of the DWCDC clients were receiving foreclosure-related assistance. Of those, 50% of those were persons of Hispanic origin, which was higher than their proportion of the general population in Whitfield County.

4.6. Special Housing Needs

4.6.1. Elderly

Several housing options for elderly citizens in need of health assistance are available in Whitfield County. These options are summarized in the Health Care subsection of Chapter 6 of this document. In addition, the Dalton Housing Authority provides some subsidized rental housing for elderly citizens.

4.6.2. Homeless

The DWCDC conducted a survey of the homeless in Murray and Whitfield counties in January 2007. The survey found 40 men, 28 women and 77 children in the County who were considered homeless, but sheltered. The survey identified 59 men, 34 women and 39 children who were considered homeless and unsheltered. A much more comprehensive count was underway for 2008. The 2008 data compiled as of April 2008, identified 1,411 homeless individuals. The 2008 data includes counts from the public school systems, Whitfield County jail, the County's Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS) and local social service organizations.

Additional information gathered by the DWCDC shows an increase in the number of applications for Dalton Habitat for Humanity homes in the past 18 months, from 18 to 43 applications. Two of the applicants identified themselves as homeless and eight indicated that they live with families, some for several years. In addition, at each of four Hispanic churches that supplied information to the DWCDC, approximately 30 church members house people who are not family members due to homelessness, resulting in approximately 75 males, 125 females and 200 children.

Two homeless shelters operate in Whitfield County:

- Harvest Outreach Men's Facility – Dalton
- Providence Ministries, Inc (homeless shelter and Drug & Alcohol Recovery program) – Dalton

The DWCDC also administers a transitional housing program and an emergency shelter for families with children. The transitional housing program, funded through a federal Emergency Shelter Grant, allows families to become eligible for temporary shelter. The emergency shelter program provides lodging at a local motel for up to two weeks.

4.6.3. Victims of Domestic Violence

Georgia Bureau of Investigation data, shown below in Table 4-17, indicate police actions related to domestic violence have increased along with the population increases since 1996, with the latest figures from 2006. This rise may indicate a need for more support and housing shelters for those impacted by domestic violence in Whitfield County.

Police and Sheriff Actions Related to Domestic Violence

Action Type	1996	2000	2006
Arrested	119	147	292
Citation	0	0	3
Separation	46	35	79
Mediation	20	12	8
Other	65	157	272
No Action	96	88	130
Total	346	439	784

Source: Georgia Bureau of Investigation, Family Violence Statistics, 1996, 2000, 2006

Two domestic violence shelters operate in Whitfield County:

- Northwest Georgia Family Crisis Center – Dalton
- Harvest Outreach Women's Facility – Dalton

4.6.4. Table 4-17 Migrant Farm Workers

Based on the 2002 Census of Agriculture, there is not a significant enough population of migrant farm workers to warrant special housing in Whitfield County.

4.6.5. Persons with Disabilities

The percentage of County residents with a disability in the 21 to 65 age group (23.2%) is slightly lower than the state, as shown in Table 4-18. Of this population, 57.6% had employment in 2000 compared to

80.1% in the state. The three most frequent disabilities recorded in 2000 were employment, physical, mental and go-outside-home, as shown in Table 4-19. Treatment for individuals suffering from mental illness and developmental disabilities can be sought at Highlands River Center in Dalton, which provides rehabilitative treatment and support services.

Table 4-18 Population with a Disability

Classification	Whitfield County	Dalton	Cohutta	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	State of Georgia
Percent Age 21 to 64 with a Disability	11,303	4,191	458	150	200	940,344
Employed	6,515	2,518	181	80	122	539,195
Not employed	4,788	1,673	277	70	78	401,149
Percent Age 21 to 64 with no Disability	37,357	11,630	1,615	543	645	3,792,568
Not employed	28,944	8,351	1,280	462	556	2,942,874
Employed	8,413	3,279	335	81	89	849,694
Total	48,660	15,821	2,073	693	845	4,732,912

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3) 2000 Table P42

Population with a Disability (percentage)

Classification	Whitfield County	Dalton	Cohutta	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	State of Georgia
Percent Age 21 to 64 with a Disability	23.2%	26.5%	22.1%	21.6%	23.7%	19.9%
Employed	57.6%	60.1%	39.5%	61.0%	57.3%	57.3%
Not employed	42.4%	39.9%	60.5%	39.0%	42.7%	42.7%
Percent Age 21 to 64 with no Disability	76.8%	73.5%	77.9%	76.3%	80.1%	80.1%
Not employed	77.5%	71.8%	79.3%	86.2%	77.6%	77.6%
Employed	22.5%	28.2%	20.7%	13.8%	22.4%	22.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3) 2000 Table P42

Table 4-19 Type of Disabilities

Type of Disability		Whitfield County	Dalton	Cohutta	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	State of Georgia
Total disabilities tallied	Total	30,912	10,648	2,056	470	465	2,638,739
	Sensory	3,121	889	294	41	40	255,072
	Physical	6,747	1,987	575	102	100	606,215
	Mental	4,020	1,089	326	62	65	358,052
	Self-care	2,027	663	191	32	39	194,854
	Go-outside home	6,688	2,570	372	107	92	558,551
	Employment	8,309	3,450	298	126	129	665,995
Disabilities tallied for people 5-15 years	Total	1,075	168	116	14	20	99,511
	Sensory	195	29	5	2	5	12,885
	Physical	137	16	27	4	4	13,471
	Mental	668	123	62	8	11	60,819
	Self-care	75	0	22	0	0	12,336
Disabilities tallied for people 16-64 years	Total	21,843	7,963	0	341	339	1,784,544
	Sensory	1,764	557	135	20	24	122,519
	Physical	3,759	1,000	268	51	57	336,687
	Mental	2,134	655	170	41	39	190,182
	Self-care	1,008	333	91	23	23	93,199
	Go-outside home	4,869	1,968	199	80	67	375,962
	Employment	8,309	3,450	298	126	129	665,995
Disabilities tallied for people 65 years and over	Total	7,994	2,517	779	115	106	754,684
	Sensory	1,162	303	154	19	11	119,668
	Physical	2,851	971	280	47	39	256,057
	Mental	1,218	311	94	13	15	107,051
	Self-care	944	330	78	9	16	89,319
	Go-outside home	1,819	602	173	27	25	182,589

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (SF3) 2000, Table P41.

4.6.6. Persons with HIV/AIDS

Between 1981 and 2005, 82 AIDS cases were reported in Whitfield County, according to the University of Georgia Center for Agribusiness and Economic development. Of Georgia's 159 counties, Whitfield County ranked 35th overall in number of AIDS cases reported during this time period. Whitfield County does not have special housing options for HIV/AIDS patients. Due to the number of cases in the County, there does seem to be an unmet housing need for this group.

According to the six-county North Georgia Health District (NGHD) HIV/AIDS program, the only housing opportunities for persons with HIV/AIDS in Whitfield County are those of the general population provided by Dalton-Whitfield Community Development Corporation (DWCDC). NGHD works with the DWCDC in their efforts to provide housing assistance to the general population

through DCA and HUD. NGHD has partnered with DWCDC to provide valuable assistance to their HIV+ patients who reside in Dalton. DWCDC has awarded grant funding to NGHD for emergency housing in addition to awarding grants to some Shelter Plus HIV+ recipients. Shelter Plus is a program to assist homeless persons with disabilities into assisted rental housing and supportive services.

NGHD has expressed a desire to receive Housing Opportunities for Persons With AIDS (HOPWA) funding for the region. The HOPWA Program was established by HUD to address the specific needs of persons living with HIV/AIDS and their families. HOPWA makes grants to local communities, states, and nonprofit organizations for projects that benefit low income persons medically diagnosed with HIV/AIDS and their families. NGHD recognizes the benefit such funding has brought to other regions of Georgia. NGHD's services for person with HIV/AIDS are dictated by state and federal funding and focus on core medical services with much more of a medical/clinical response to HIV – not the psychosocial focus of the early days. Stable and safe housing continues to be a huge indicator of an HIV+ patient having the ability to be adherent with medical care and treatment, according to NGHD.

4.6.7. Persons Recovering from Substance Abuse

While reliable numbers of those persons recovering from substance abuse are not attainable, the University of Georgia's Georgia Statistics System estimated a need to provide substance abuse treatment for approximately 5,799 residents or 6.9% of the County population in 2001. Four facilities operate in Whitfield County for persons recovering from substance abuse:

- Carter Hope Center – Dalton
- Providence Ministries, Inc – Dalton
- Highland Rivers Center – Dalton
- Westcott Center (Hamilton Medical) – Dalton

4.7. Job-Housing Balance

The jobs-to-housing ratio compares the number of jobs to the number of people living in an area. The ratio is a useful analysis tool because housing location decisions, in relation to workplace, affect commute times, costs, and congestion. An ideal community would provide housing for the labor force near employment centers that give the workers transportation choices (*e.g.*, walking, biking, driving, public transit, etc.). Bedroom community suburbs often develop without such balance and require the labor force to commute to work in private automobiles along major arterials resulting in congestion and other quality of life challenges.

Governments can use two jobs/housing balance ratios to monitor their community's ability to achieve a balance of jobs and housing: employment (jobs)/housing unit ratio and employment/labor force ratio. According to the *Jobs/Housing Balance Community Choices Quality Growth Toolkit,* prepared by the Atlanta Regional Commission, an employment (jobs)-to-housing ratio of between 1.3 and 1.7 implies an ideal balance with 1.5 as the standard target. An employment (jobs)-to-labor force (employed residents) ratio of between 0.8 and 1.25 implies a balance for that ratio with 1:1 as the standard target.

Table 4-20 shows the employment-to-housing ratio and employment-to-labor force ratio for Whitfield County. The 2006 employment-to-housing ratio of 1.85 falls well above the standard target of 1.5. Table 4-20 also shows the employment-to-labor force ratio for the County. The 2006 ratio of 1.36 falls well above the standard target of 1.0. These ratios show the continued strength of the Whitfield County employment base, but outline the need for additional housing within the County.

Table 4-20 Jobs-Housing Balance

Category	1990	2000	2006
Population	72,462	83,525	90,889
Average Household Size	2.67	2.82	2.95
Number of Households	26,953	29,362	31,137
Housing Units	28,832	30,722	34,684
Labor Force	39,636	41,088	47,226
Employment	48,970	62,173	64,148
Employment/Population Ratio	0.68	0.74	0.71
Employment/Housing Unit Ratio	1.70	2.02	1.85
Employment/Labor Force Ratio	1.24	1.51	1.36

Source: U.S. Census Bureau , American Community Survey 2006; and Georgia Department of Labor

According to the 2006 Infill Housing Site Inventory and Plan commissioned by the City of Dalton, Dalton and Whitfield County experienced a 15,000 unit gap between the number of area employees and the number of housing options available to them. The factors cited for this gap include the lack of an adequate labor force to fill an expanding economic base, lack of affordable housing for a culturally-diverse population, and a declining stock in existing housing. The study identified sites that were candidates for infill housing development inside the city limits of Dalton, including "historic infill" opportunities in the Crown Mill, Fort Hill, East Dalton and Thread Mill neighborhoods.

4.7.1. Supply of Affordable Housing

Table 4-21 relates the average weekly wages received by employees who work in Whitfield County to the housing values afforded by their wages. Table 4-22 relates the income of the Whitfield County labor force (those who live in Whitfield County) and those who actually work in Whitfield County in 2006. As displayed Table 3-18, 13.1% of the County labor force in 2000 commuted to jobs in other counties, while 40.4% of the jobs in the County were filled by non-Whitfield County residents who lived in County's with lower median property values and median rents such as Murray (14.0%) and Gordon (5.1%). The County residents overall earn much higher incomes and can afford more easily the housing available on the market. The County's workers have fewer housing choices.

Prior to the 2006 Infill Housing Site Inventory and Plan, the City of Dalton adopted an Urban Redevelopment Plan for the Crown Mill and East Dalton Neighborhoods in 2003. Recommended projects or policies related to increasing available housing included the following:

- Protect buildings built before 1950 from demolition; develop infill housing on vacant land
- Limit future rezonings of residential properties to commercial or industrial uses
- Rehabilitate historic homes to eliminate blight.

The plan also included infill concept plans for East Dalton, Thread Mill and Main Street. Subsequent to the 2003 adoption of the plan, neighborhood infill guidelines were prepared for the Crown Mill, East Dalton, Fort Hill and Thread Mill, and supporting requirements for historic infill districts are in draft form.

Table 4-21 Correlation of Average Weekly Wages to Housing Prices for Workers (2004)

Sector	Average Weekly Wage	Average Annual Wage	Average Monthly Wage	Monthly Income Available for Housing	Equivalent House Price (2.5 multiplier)	Equivalent House Price (3.5 multiplier)
Agriculture, forestry, & fishing	$616	$32,032	NA	NA	$80,080	$112,112
Mining	$1,012	$52,624	$4,385	$1,316	$131,560	$184,184
Construction	$628	$32,656	$2,721	$816	$81,640	$114,296
Manufacturing	$686	$35,672	$2,973	$892	$89,180	$124,852
Wholesale trade	$808	$42,016	$3,501	$1,050	$105,040	$147,056
Retail trade	$452	$23,504	$1,959	$588	$58,760	$82,264
Transportation and warehousing	$682	$35,464	$2,955	$887	$88,660	$124,124
Information	$676	$35,152	$2,929	$879	$87,880	$123,032
Finance and insurance	$783	$40,716	$3,393	$1,018	$101,790	$142,506
Real estate and rental and leasing	$575	$29,900	$2,492	$748	$74,750	$104,650
Professional, scientific/tech services	$925	$48,100	$4,008	$1,203	$120,250	$168,350
Mgt companies/enterprises	$1,644	$85,488	$7,124	$2,137	$213,720	$299,208
Administrative and waste services	$397	$20,644	$1,720	$516	$51,610	$72,254
Educational services	$378	$19,656	$1,638	$491	$49,140	$68,796
Health care and social services	$819	$42,588	$3,549	$1,065	$106,470	$149,058
Arts, entertainment and recreation	$374	$19,448	$1,621	$486	$48,620	$68,068
Accommodation and food services	$245	$12,740	$1,062	$319	$31,850	$44,590
Other services (except government)	$513	$26,676	$2,223	$667	$66,690	$93,366
Government	$672	$34,944	$2,912	$874	$87,360	$122,304
All industries - Whitfield 2000 (2006 dollars)	$659	$34,268	$2,856	$857	$85,670	$119,938
All industries - Whitfield County 2006	$652	$33,904	$2,825	$848	$84,760	$118,664
All industries - State of Georgia 2006	$776	$40,352	$3,363	$1,009	$100,880	$141,232

*Multipliers are applied to the Average Annual Wage - 2.5 and 3.5 are used widely to calculate affordable housing prices; Adjusted 2000 dollars to 2006 via the BOL Inflation Calculator

Source: Georgia Department of Labor (these data represent jobs that are covered by unemployment insurance laws), U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

As shown previously in Table 4-15 the average sale price of homes in Whitfield County was $107,538 in 2000 (adjusted for inflation and shown in 2004 dollars) and climbed to $124,430 in 2004. The house price supported by the County's average annual wage in 2000 was only between 129% and 181% of the total value of the average sale price. The house price supported by the County's median household income in 2006 was 112% to 157% of the total value of the average sale price in 2006.

In 2000, County residents had an average household income of $55,693, which could support a house price of roughly $139,233 to $194,926, as shown in Table 4-22. The County median household income of $46,100 could support a house price of $114,250 to $161,350. Meanwhile, people who worked in Whitfield County in 2000 earned an average annual wage of $34,268 (shown as weekly wage of $659 in Table 4-22).

Table 4-22 Correlation of Household Income to Housing Prices for County Residents

Annual Household Income	Maximum Annual Income	Maximum Monthly Income	Maximum Monthly Income for Housing (30 %)	Equivalent House Price (2.5 multiplier)*	Equivalent House Price (3.5 multiplier)*
Less than $15,000	$15,000	$1,250	$375	$37,500	$52,500
$15,000-24,999	$25,000	$2,083	$625	$62,500	$87,500
$25,000-$34,999	$35,000	$2,917	$875	$87,500	$122,500
$35,000-$49,999	$50,000	$4,167	$1,250	$125,000	$175,000
$50,000-$74,999	$75,000	$6,250	$1,875	$187,500	$262,500
$75,000-$99,999	$100,000	$8,333	$2,500	$250,000	$350,000
$100,000-$149,999	$150,000	$12,500	$3,750	$375,000	$525,000
$150,000-$249,999	$250,000	$20,833	$6,250	$625,000	$875,000
$250,000-$499,999	$500,000	$41,667	$12,500	$1,250,000	$1,750,000
$500,000 or more	NA	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!	#VALUE!
Average Household Income (in 2006 dollars)					
2000	$55,693	$4,641	$1,392	$139,233	$194,926
2006	$50,579	$4,215	$1,264	$126,448	$177,027
Median Household Income (in 2006 dollars)					
2000	$46,100	$3,842	$1,153	$115,250	$161,350
2006	$40,375	$3,365	$1,009	$100,938	$141,313
**Multipliers are applied to the Average Annual Wage - 2.5 and 3.5 are used widely to calculate affordable housing prices					

Source: Georgia Department of Labor, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Census Bureau: Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates 1995, 2000 and 2003; Model-based Estimates for States, Counties and School Districts

Median household income in 2006 decreased to $40,375, which could support a house price of $100,938 to $141,313. The average annual wage in 2006 decreased slightly to $33,904 (or an average weekly wage of $652 as shown in 4-21, which can support a house price of $84,750 to $118,664.

To add more perspective to the challenges faced by those who work in Whitfield County, the County median income of $40,375 in 2006 supported a home price of $100,938 to $141,313. The 2006 average weekly wage would allow for a home priced at $84,760 to $118,664 (or a monthly rent and other housing costs of $857). Again, the average home price in 2006 was $132,796 (in 2006 dollars), and the average rent in 2006 was $544.

The County's largest job sector in 2006, Manufacturing (38% of the jobs in the County) only paid an average weekly wage of $686, which translates into a home of $89,180 to $124,852, (or a monthly rent of $892).

Retail Trade, the second largest sector (10% of the jobs in the County) only paid an average weekly wage of $452, which translates into a home of $58,760 to $82,264 (or a monthly rent of $588).

4.7.2. Barriers to Affordability

Whitfield County average weekly wages exceed those for most sectors in the Dalton MSA, but fall below the state and national average weekly wage for all but a hand full of sectors. Overall, the Whitfield County average weekly wages are 84% of the average weekly wages for the state and 79.7% of the same for the nation. Theses differences are offset, however, by median property values t in 2006 were considerably lower than the statewide median, as shown in Table 4-12. County median property values were 80.2% of the state median property value and 73.7% of the state median rent.

The availability of housing for the median and/or average income households does not mean the County has met the housing needs of those employed within its boundaries, however. The lower-paid workers do face challenges in finding quality, affordable close to their place of work.

A large percentage of Whitfield County residents are able to live and work in the County. While a large percentage of County workers also in Whitfield County, approximately 60% of those employed in the County, many (40%) commute to Whitfield County from other counties (the largest group commuting from Murray County).

Most of the County's multi-family housing is located in Dalton. Most of the County's mobile homes are located in unincorporated areas of the County. Large-acre lot, single-family residential products dominate the Whitfield County housing market outside of Dalton. Few multi-family products have come on line to meet the growing demand for housing to support the workforce in areas outside of Dalton.

In 2000, 871 residents of Whitfield County 871 (2.1%) commuted to jobs in Chattanooga, however this number increased from 1990 to 2000 and it most likely increased since. Updated data is not available.

The DWCDC provides services to assist the Dalton area workforce in acquiring and maintaining safe and decent housing. The DWCDC is certified by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and works to achieve its stated goal of increasing the local government tax base while improving the quality of life for citizens through housing. The DWCDC's services include homebuyer education and counseling, home purchase, homeowner services (refinancing or repairs), foreclosure prevention, rental counseling and homeless services. The DWDC is also a DCA designated Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO), which increases its eligibility to access additional resources for very low and low income residents.

4.8. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Treats Analysis

4.8.1. Strengths

- County inventory of housing units grew by an average annual rate of 1.5% from 1980 to 2006.
- Dalton included the County's most diverse housing stock with 53.4% single-family detached and 40.9% being multi-family with 3 or more units.
- County increased its number of housing units 12.9%, from 30,722 units in 2000 to 34,678 units in 2006. This increase was middle of the pack compared with surrounding counties. Gordon County, located south of Whitfield County, experienced the fastest growth rate among the surrounding counties.
- 13.6% of the housing units recorded in 2006 were built after 2000 and 52.6% were built after 1980, which is a reflection of the rate of growth taking place in Whitfield County. Less than 6% of Whitfield County's housing units were built prior to 1939.
- County's ownership rate was higher in 2000 than the state.

- Both the number of sales and the value of homes in the County showed a steady increase from 1997 to 2004. Average home sale prices increased 23.7% from 1997 to 2004, and 15.7% from 2000 to 2004. The average home sales price was $124,430 in 2004.
- Single-family homes led all housing type categories with a share of 63.5%, down from 69.8% in 1980.
- Median property values in the cities was highest in Cohutta in 2000, which represented the largest percent change from 1990 to 2000 as well. Median rents were highest in Varnell. The most significant median rent increases occurred in Dalton.
- The Dalton-Whitfield Community Development Corporation offers comprehensive services for residents, helping to increase home ownership, improve the physical condition of housing and the quality of affordable housing, decreasing the foreclosure rate and decreasing the number of homeless and unstably housed residents.

4.8.2. Weaknesses

- Renter-occupied housing outnumbered owner-occupied housing in Dalton.
- Median property values and median rent trailed the state from 1990 to 2006. In 2000, however, the median property values for the entire County were higher than the median property values for each of the cities.
- The availability of housing for the median and/or average income households does not mean the County has met the housing needs of those employed within its boundaries. The lower-paid workers do face challenges in finding quality, affordable close to their place of work.
- Most of the County's multi-family housing is located in Dalton. Most of the County's mobile homes are located in unincorporated areas of the County. Large-acre lot, single-family residential products dominate the Whitfield County housing market outside of Dalton. Few multi-family products have come on line to meet the growing demand for housing to support the workforce in areas outside of Dalton.
- There is a gap between the number of area employees and the number of housing options available to them, due in part to a lack of affordable housing for a culturally diverse population and a declining stock in existing housing.

4.8.3. Opportunities

- County is projected to have 41,080 housing units in 2030, 32,263 of which located in unincorporated areas of the County.
- For the year 2000 through the end of 2006, the County and its cities issued permits for an additional 3,182 housing units. During this time, the number of permits issued increased every year except 2006. It's anticipated that 2007 also experienced a decline.
- Infill housing opportunities can contribute to affordable housing stock and help stabilize and enhance established neighborhoods. Implementation of infill-related studies, guidelines and recommendations can facilitate the addition of infill housing.

4.8.4. Threats

- The 2006 employment-to-housing ratio of 1.85 fell well above the standard target of 1.5. The 2006 employment-to-labor force ratio of 1.36 fell well above the standard target of 1.0. These ratios show the continued strength of the Whitfield County employment base, but outline the need for additional housing within the County.
- County residents overall earn much higher incomes and can afford more easily the housing available on the market. The County's workers have fewer housing choices.
- Foreclosures require alternative housing options for property owners, and resulting vacant homes contribute to declining neighborhood property values and local tax revenue.
- Deteriorating housing can be found throughout the County, and in some cases entire neighborhoods are in need of repair.

CHAPTER 5

5. Natural & Cultural Resources

Evaluation of how new development is likely to impact Natural and Cultural Resources along with an identification of needed regulations and policies

5.1. Physiography

Whitfield County divides into two districts of the Ridge and Valley Province of the Appalachian Highlands: the Armuchee Ridge District in the west, and the Great Valley District in the east. The Armuchee Ridge District consists of a series of prominent, narrow ridges that rise abruptly above the floor of the Great Valley. These ridges reach elevations as much as 1,800 feet above sea level, and are capped predominantly by Red Mountain sandstone. Floors of intervening valleys are generally underlain by shales and limestone. The Great Valley District tends to be broad and open, with a few scattered ridges and hills. Elevations throughout the area range from 700 to 800 feet above sea level. The valley floor is underlain by shales, dolomites, and limestones.

5.2. Environmental Planning Criteria

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) requires counties and municipalities to establish five environmental protection districts: water supply watersheds, protection of groundwater recharge areas, river corridor protection, wetlands protection, and mountain protection. The sections below provide a brief analysis of the Whitfield County regulations relating to these districts in addition to an inventory of the location of these districts in the County. Water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, river corridor protection and mountain protection are each shown on the Environmental Planning Criteria Map found in Chapter 9 Atlas of Maps, Wetlands are shown on the Wetlands Map in the Atlas of Maps.

5.2.1. Water Supply Watersheds

DNR defines water supply watershed as the land area upstream of a governmentally-owned public drinking water intake. In response to Official Code of Georgia Annotated (OCGA) 12-2-8, the DNR, and Environmental Projection Division's (EPD) Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria Chapter 391-3-16, all counties and municipalities are required to adopt protection ordinances for water supply watersheds. Currently, Whitfield County and the municipalities of Cohutta, Dalton, Tunnel Hill and Varnell have not adopted regulations protecting water supply watersheds.

DNR differentiates between large watersheds (greater than 100 square miles) and small watersheds (less than 100 square miles). In large water supply watersheds, the perennial streams seven miles upstream of a reservoir are protected through maintenance of a 100-foot vegetative buffer, limitation of imperious surfaces, and restricted location of septic tanks and drain fields. Within small water supply

watersheds, the criteria require maintenance of a 100-foot vegetative buffer, a prohibition on impervious surfaces within 150 feet of the streams, and septic tank drain fields. Beyond the seven-mile limit, a 50-foot vegetative buffer is required and impervious surfaces and septic tank drainfields area prohibited within 75 feet of the streams.

Whitfield County contains portions of five large water supply watersheds and one small water supply watersheds. Large water supply watersheds in Whitfield County include the Conasauga River Watershed (Dalton Utilities), Oostanaula River Watershed (City of Rome), Oostanaula River Watershed (City of Calhoun), Coahulla Creek Watershed (Dalton Utilities) and South Chickamauga Creek Watershed (City of Ringgold). The small water supply watershed includes the Mill Creek Watershed (Dalton Utilities).

Conasauga River

The water supply watershed for the intake located on the Conasauga River at Dalton Utilities' Riverwater Water Treatment Plant is approximately 307 square miles and includes parts of Whitfield, Murray, Fannin, and Gilmer Counties in Georgia and parts of Polk and Bradley Counties in Tennessee. As such, this water supply watershed is considered a large water supply watershed according to the states Criteria for Water Supply Watersheds (i.e. it is greater than 100 square miles). Dalton Utilities has three off-stream reservoirs supplied from intakes on the Conasauga River. None of the reservoirs are fed directly by any perennial streams. Per the rules, stream corridors of large water supply watersheds tributary to the water supply intake have no specified minimum criteria for protection unless there is a reservoir fed by one of those perennial streams. As noted above, none of Dalton Utilities' reservoirs meet this criteria in this particular watershed.

Still Dalton Utilities encourages the protection of the watershed through the setting of minimum buffers along any perennial streams in the watershed, setbacks preventing construction of impervious surfaces, and the prohibition of septic tanks within the setback area. The maps in Chapter 9 provide a scaled drawing of the seven mile radius from intakes (inner management zone [IMZ]) in this watershed where it is particularly recommended that minimum buffers and setbacks be implemented by local jurisdictional authorities and property owners.

Coahulla Creek

The water supply watershed for the intake located on Coahulla Creek for Dalton Utilities' Riverwater Water Treatment Plant is approximately 119 square miles and is primarily in Whitfield County, Georgia. This water supply watershed is also considered a large water supply watershed according to the states Criteria for Water Supply Watersheds (i.e. it is greater than 100 square miles). Dalton Utilities has two off-stream reservoirs that can be supplied from the intake on Coahulla Creek. Neither of these reservoirs is fed directly by any perennial streams. Per the rules, stream corridors of large water supply watersheds tributary to the water supply intake have no specified minimum criteria for protection unless there is a reservoir fed by one of those perennial streams. As noted above, none of Dalton Utilities' reservoirs meet this criteria in this particular watershed.

Still Dalton Utilities encourages the protection of the watershed through the setting of minimum buffers along any perennial streams in the watershed, setbacks preventing construction of impervious surfaces, and the prohibition of septic tanks within the setback area. The maps in Chapter 9 provide a scaled drawing of the seven mile radius from the intake where it is particularly recommended that minimum buffers and setbacks be implemented by local jurisdictional authorities and property owners.

Mill Creek Intake and Haig Mill Reservoir

The water supply watershed for the intake located on Mill Creek for Dalton Utilities' Mill Creek Water Treatment Plant is approximately 38 square miles and is primarily in Whitfield County, Georgia. This

water supply watershed is considered a small water supply watershed according to the states Criteria for Water Supply Watersheds (i.e. it is less than 100 square miles). Dalton Utilities has one reservoir that is fed by Poplar Springs Creek. Per the rules, perennial stream corridors within a seven mile radius and upstream of public water intakes or water supply reservoirs should be protected using the following criteria:

- Maintenance of 100 linear foot buffer on both sides of the stream as measured from the stream banks
- No impervious surface shall be constructed within 150 foot setback on both sides of the stream as measured from the stream banks
- Septic tanks and septic tank drain fields are prohibited in the setback area

Outside of the seven mile radius protections are as follows:

- Maintenance of 50 linear foot buffer on both sides of the stream as measured from the stream banks
- No impervious surface shall be constructed within 75 foot setback on both sides of the stream as measured from the stream banks
- Septic tanks and septic tank drain fields are prohibited in the setback area

The maps in Chapter 9 provide scaled drawing of the seven mile radius from this intake and reservoir where the more stringent protections are required.

Freeman Springs

The water supply watershed for the intake located at Freeman Springs for Dalton Utilities' Freeman Springs Water Treatment Plant is approximately 7.5 square miles and is in Whitfield County, Georgia. This water supply watershed is considered a small water supply watershed according to the states Criteria for Water Supply Watersheds (i.e. it is less than 100 square miles). Per the rules, perennial stream corridors within a seven mile radius and upstream of public water intakes or water supply reservoirs should be protected using the following criteria:

- Maintenance of 100 linear foot buffer on both sides of the stream as measured from the stream banks
- No impervious surface shall be constructed within 150 foot setback on both sides of the stream as measured from the stream banks
- Septic tanks and septic tank drain fields are prohibited in the setback area

Outside of the seven mile radius protections are as follows:

- Maintenance of 50 linear foot buffer on both sides of the stream as measured from the stream banks
- No impervious surface shall be constructed within 75 foot setback on both sides of the stream as measured from the stream banks
- Septic tanks and septic tank drain fields are prohibited in the setback area

The maps in Chapter 9 provide a scaled drawing of the seven mile radius from this intake where the more stringent protections are required.

5.2.2. Groundwater Recharge Areas

As described in Georgia Geologic Survey Hydrologic Atlas 18: "Most Significant Ground-water Recharge Areas of Georgia," published in 1989, mapping of the recharge areas was based on outcrop area, lithology, soil type and thickness, slope, density of lithologic contacts, geologic structure, the presence of karst, and potentiometric surfaces.

In response to OCGA 12-2-8, the DNR, and EPD's Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria Chapter 391-3-16, counties and municipalities are required to adopt regulations to implement the state planning criteria as it pertains to the protection of groundwater recharge areas. These criteria would place restrictions on new sanitary landfills, use of hazardous wastes, use of above ground storage tanks, agricultural activities, and a minimum lot size for those areas requiring septic tank systems. These criteria would allow for development in a groundwater recharge area while maintaining the integrity of the water source to a point where it can be treated to meet drinking water standards. Unincorporated Whitfield County, Dalton, Cohutta and Varnell are all include groundwater recharge areas within their jurisdictional boundaries. Tunnel Hill does not and therefore is not required to adopt groundwater recharge protection regulations. Currently, Whitfield County and the municipalities of Cohutta, Dalton, and Varnell have not adopted regulations protecting groundwater recharge areas.

Likely areas of significant groundwater recharge have been generally mapped by DNR in Whitfield County. These areas occur at twenty-three sites and encompass approximately 18% of the county. The largest groundwater recharge area is located north of the City of Dalton along Cleveland Highway and is 14.6 square miles. The second largest groundwater recharge area is located in the northeast portion of the county and is bisected by Prater Mill Road. This area is 12.2 square miles. The other groundwater recharge areas are between one and four square miles each and are scattered throughout the county. All groundwater recharge areas are shown on the Environmental Planning Criteria Map found in the Atlas of Maps. Like water supply watersheds, it is advisable to limit the development of impervious surfaces in these areas of significant groundwater recharge.

5.2.3. Wetlands

Wetlands provide flood and storm damage protection, erosion control, water supply, and groundwater recharge. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Wetlands Inventory provides general mapping of wetland areas, which makes general wetland areas easy to locate and protect. Wetland areas in Whitfield County are usually contiguous with streams and rivers as shown on the Environmental Planning Criteria Map located in the Atlas of Maps. Approximately 2% of Whitfield County is classified as wetlands.

In accordance with EPD's Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria Chapter 391-3-16, counties and municipalities are required to adopt regulations to protect areas designated as wetlands. While Whitfield County site design requirements protect wetlands by providing guidelines for development (though they do not prevent development outright), no other ordinance or protection methods for wetlands exist within the county or cities of Cohutta, Dalton, Tunnel Hill or Varnell.

The State of Georgia does not currently have laws in place protecting freshwater wetlands located in the interior of the state. Only coastal wetlands have such protection. State criteria do not specify regulations to be adopted, but they require local governments to identify wetlands within their jurisdiction and assess the impacts of the land-use plan on these areas. The U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (USACE) does have limited authority to regulate the discharge of dredge or fill material into freshwater wetlands in the U.S. under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act; however, the Supreme Court ruled in 2001 that the USACE jurisdiction is limited only to those wetlands connected to a navigable water body. As a result, isolated wetlands are no longer federally protected areas.

5.2.4. Protected Rivers

River corridors are strips of land that flank major rivers. These corridors are important due to their role as wildlife habitat, recreational areas, and buffers that protect the quality of river water. River corridors also help to control erosion and river sedimentation. The Conasauga River that forms the eastern boundary between Whitfield and Murray Counties currently meets the DNR river protection criteria as shown on the Environmental Planning Criteria Map located in the Atlas of Maps. The Conasauga River originates in the Cohuttas in Fannin County and merges with the Coosawattee River as it approaches the southern boundary of Whitfield County to become the Oostanaula River in Gordon County.

In response to OCGA 12-2-8, the DNR, and EPD's Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria Chapter 391-3-16, counties and municipalities are required to adopt regulations to implement the state planning criteria as it pertains to the protection of protected rivers. These criteria would provide a natural vegetative buffer surrounding the protected river and limit the type and amount of land uses adjacent to the river. The Conasauga River protected river buffer only impacts unincorporated Whitfield County. Whitfield County has not adopted regulations protecting the Conasauga River.

5.2.5. Coastal Resources

Coastal resources include beaches, coastal marches, and estuaries. No land in Whitfield County meets these criteria. As a result neither the County nor the municipalities of Cohutta, Dalton, Tunnel Hill or Varnell have adopted protection ordinances.

5.2.6. Mountain Protection

Mountain protection applies to land areas with an elevation of 2,200 or more, and with slopes of 25%. No land in Whitfield County meets these criteria. As a result neither the County nor the municipalities of Cohutta, Dalton, Tunnel Hill or Varnell will adopt the ordinance that results from the Part V regulations. Whitfield County is considering, however, their own regulations for hillside and tree protection applicable to any development upon slopes of 25 percent or more, and above an elevation of 1,000 feet.

5.3. Other Environmentally Sensitive Areas

Whitfield County lies in the upper fringes of the Appalachian Highlands Valley and Ridge physiographic province of Georgia.

5.3.1. Air Quality

In recent years, the environmental concern for air quality has become increasingly important. Whitfield County is located between two non-attainment areas, Atlanta and Chattanooga. Currently, Whitfield County and the municipalities of Cohutta, Dalton, Tunnel Hill and Varnell have not adopted any regulations regarding air quality nor are they required to by state or federal legislation. However, as the cities of Atlanta and Chattanooga continue to grow and develop, Whitfield County may have to adopt air quality regulation in the future. As a result, the county may want to conduct additional research regarding air quality standards and review such regulation to ensure the protection of air quality.

5.3.2. Steep Slopes

Steep slopes (15% or greater) are concentrated in two areas. The first is found in the western portion of the County along the boundary between Whitfield, Catoosa and Walker Counties. The second begins just west of the City of Dalton and extends southward to the County line. Overall, approximately 25% of the entire county is considered to be steep slopes of 15% or greater.

While Whitfield County site design requirements protect steep slopes from development, no other ordinance or protection methods for steep slopes exist within the county or cities of Cohutta, Dalton, Tunnel Hill or Varnell.

5.3.3. Floodplains

Flooding is the temporary covering of soil with water from overflowing streams and by runoff from adjacent slopes. Water standing for short periods after rainfalls is not considered flooding, nor is water in swamps. Whitfield County's 100 and 500-year floodplains are shown on the Floodplains Map located in the Atlas of Maps.

Floodplains in their natural or relatively undisturbed state are important water resource areas. The floodplains serve three major purposes: natural water storage and conveyance, water quality maintenance, and groundwater recharge. Unsuitable development can destroy their value. For example, any fill material placed in the floodplain eliminates essential water storage capacity causing water elevation to rise, resulting in the flooding of previously dry land.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has identified and mapped the areas of Whitfield County prone to flooding in order to establish actuarial flood insurance rates and promote a sound floodplains management plan. Dalton's flood insurance rate maps include details concerning the floodplain and the floodway, plus elevation data (Zone AE). Flood maps for Whitfield County, Tunnel Hill, and Varnell are limited to showing the areas of special flood hazard without base flood elevations (Zone A) on those streams, creeks, and rivers with the greatest chance to affect lives or property. Each government has adopted the necessary flood prevention ordinance to provide guidance regarding land development in or near the designated flood hazard areas. The most significant flood areas involve Mill Creek, Coahulla Creek, and the Conasauga River, along with their tributaries.

5.3.4. Soils

Soil is the product of parent material (underlying geology), topography, climate, plant and animal life, and time. The nature of the soil at any given place depends on the combination of these five factors. Each factor acts on the soil and each modifies the effect of the other four. Because of this interaction, knowledge of soil types in an area provides a good indication of topography (slope), erosion patterns, the presence and depth of rock, and the presence of water, as in wetland or floodplain areas. Soil types are also useful in estimating runoff from precipitation, which is essential in developing stormwater management programs.

Prime Agricultural Soils

Table 5-2 lists the map units in Whitfield County that are considered important farmlands. Important farmlands consist of prime farmland, unique farmland, and farmland of statewide or local importance. This list does not constitute a recommendation for a particular land use. These areas are shown in Prime Farmland Map located in the Atlas of Maps.

Table 5-1 Important Farmland Soils

Map Symbol	Map Unit Name	Farmland Classification
AbB	Albertville silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland
AnB	Allen loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland
CaA	Capshaw silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland
CaB	Capshaw silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland
CxB	Cunningham silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland
DeB	Dewey silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland
DoA	Docena silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	All areas are prime farmland
DsB	Docena-Conasauga complex, 2 to 6 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland
EnB	Enders silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland
FtB	Fullerton gravelly silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland
HcB	Hanceville loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland
HsB	Holston fine sandy loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland
NeB	Nella gravelly fine sandy loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland
SaA	Sequatchie loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	All areas are prime farmland
SaB	Sequatchie loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland
ScB	Shack gravelly silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland
SeA	Shellbluff silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	All areas are prime farmland
SxA	Suches loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	All areas are prime farmland
WnB	Waynesboro sandy loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland
WtA	Whitwell silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	All areas are prime farmland
WtB	Whitwell silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	All areas are prime farmland
AuA	Arkabutla silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	Farmland of statewide importance
CnA	Chenneby silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	Farmland of statewide importance
CsC	Conasauga silt loam, 6 to 10 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance
GrA	Guthrie silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	Farmland of statewide importance
KtA	Ketona silt loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, frequently flooded	Farmland of statewide importance
SuB	Subligna extremely gravelly sandy loam, 0 to 5 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	Farmland of statewide importance
TnB	Townley silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance
WaA	Wax fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes, occasionally flooded	Farmland of statewide importance
WaB	Wax fine sandy loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	Farmland of statewide importance

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service

In an effort to identify the extent and location of important farmlands, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, in cooperation with other interested federal, state, and local government organizations, has inventoried land that can be used for the production of the nation's food supply.

Prime farmland, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is

available for these uses. It could be cultivated land, pastureland, forestland, or other land, but it is not urban or built-up land or water areas. The soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply are those needed for the soil to economically produce sustained high yields of crops when proper management, including water management, and acceptable farming methods are applied. In general, prime farmland has an adequate and dependable supply of moisture from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, an acceptable salt and sodium content, and few or no rocks. The water supply is dependable and of adequate quality. Prime farmland is permeable to water and air. It is not excessively erodible or saturated with water for long periods, and it either is not frequently flooded during the growing season or protected from flooding. Slopes mainly range from 0 to 6%.

For some of the soils identified in the table as prime farmland, measures that overcome a hazard or limitation, such as flooding, wetness, and drought, are needed. On-site evaluation is needed to determine whether or not the hazard or limitation is negated by corrective measures.

A recent trend in land use in some areas is the loss of some prime farmland to industrial and urban uses. The loss of prime farmland to other uses puts pressure on marginal lands, which generally are more erodible, droughty, and less productive and cannot be easily cultivated.

Land that does not meet the criteria for prime or unique farmland is "farmland of statewide importance" for the production of food, feed, fiber, forage, and oilseed crops. The criteria for defining and delineating farmland of statewide importance are determined by the appropriate state agencies. Generally, this land includes areas of soils that nearly meet the requirements for prime farmland and that economically produce high yields of crops when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. Some areas may produce as high a yield as prime farmland, if conditions are favorable. Farmland of statewide importance may include tracts of land that have been designated for agriculture by state law.

5.3.5. Plant and Animal Habitats

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources maintains an inventory of plants and animals that are rare enough to warrant state and federal protection. The 56 species identified, all of which are designated unusual, endangered, or threatened, are vulnerable to the impacts of rapid land use changes and population growth and should be protected by Whitfield County to the extent possible. Federal and State Listed Endangered and Threatened Species plant and animal data for Whitfield County is shown in Table 5-3 and Table 5-4.

Table 5-2 Federal- & State-Listed Endangered and Threatened Species – Animals, Fish & Birds

Species		Federal Status	State Status	Habitat
Chickamauga Crayfish	*Cambarus extraneus*	No Federal Status	Threatened	Small to medium shallow rocky streams with moderate current
Blue Shiner	*Cyprinella caerulea*	Threatened	Endangered	Flowing runs and pools in streams with cool water and firm substrates
Spotfin Shiner	*Cyprinella spiloptera*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Imperiled because of rarity (6 to 20 occurences)	Medium-sized rivers to large streams in flowing runs with substrate of gravel to bedrock
Upland Combshell	*Epioblasma metastriata*	Endangered	Endangered	Sand and gravel substrate in riffles of small to medium-sized rivers
Southern Acornshell	*Epioblasma othcaloogensis*	Endangered	Endangered	Fine gravel substrate; typically in less that 3 feet of water in moderate current.

Species		Federal Status	State Status	Habitat
Holiday Darter	*Etheostoma brevirostrum*	No Federal Status	Endangered	Small creeks to moderate sized rivers in gravel and bedrock pools
Coosa Darter	*Etheostoma coosae*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Imperiled because of rarity (6 to 20 occurences)	Medium-sized streams to rivers in flowing runs or riffles over gravel to cobble substrate
Coldwater Darter	*Etheostoma ditrema*	No Federal Status	Endangered	Vegetated springs and spring runs or small streams with spring influence
Blueside Darter	*Etheostoma jessiae*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Imperiled because of rarity (6 to 20 occurences) and rare or uncommon in state (on the order of 21 to 100 occurrences)	Sluggish to moderate current over silty or fine substrates
Greenbreast Darter	*Etheostoma jordani*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Imperiled because of rarity (6 to 20 occurences)	Medium-sized creeks to rivers in riffle areas over gravel to bedrock substrate
Redline Darter	*Etheostoma rufilineatum*	No Federal Status	Critically imperiled in state because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer occurrences) and imperiled in state because of rarity (6 to 20 occurrences).	Swift shallow riffles of rocky streams
Rock Darter	*Etheostoma rupestre*	No Federal Status	Rare	Swift rocky riffles often associated with attached vegetation such as Podostemum
Trispot Darter	*Etheostoma trisella*	No Federal Status	Endangered	Breeding: vegetated spring seepage areas. Nonbreeding: clear streams in vegetated shallow slackwater areas
Map Turtle	*Graptemys geographica*	No Federal Status	Rare	Large streams and rivers
Alabama Map Turtle	*Graptemys pulchra*	No Federal Status	Rare	Rivers and large streams
Finelined Pocketbook	*Hamiota altilis*	Threatened	Threatened	Gravelly medium to large rivers
Flame Chub	*Hemitremia flammea*	No Federal Status	Endangered	Springs and springfed streams
Lined Chub	*Hybopsis lineapunctata*	No Federal Status	Rare	Upland creeks over sandy substrate with gentle current
Tennessee Heelsplitter	*Lasmigona holstonia*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Critically imperiled in state because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer occurrences).	Shallow, sandy/muddy creeks and springs
Cylindrical Lioplax	*Lioplax cyclostomaformis*	Endangered	No State Status - apparently extirpated from state. GXC is known only in cultivation / captivity	Coosa River System
Scarlet Shiner	*Lynthrurus fasciolaris*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Imperiled in state because of rarity (6 to 20 occurrences).	Small to medium-sized streams in moderate current over rocky substrates

Species		Federal Status	State Status	Habitat
Mountain Shiner	*Lynthrurus lirus*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Rare or uncommon in state (on the order of 21 to 100 occurrences).	Cool, clear streams in flowing water over sandy to rocky substrates
Coosa Chub	*Macrhybopsis sp. 1*	No Federal Status	Endangered	Swift currents over gravel substrates
Silver Chub	*Macrhybopsis storeriana*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Imperiled in state because of rarity (6 to 20 occurrences).	Large rivers over sandy or silty substrate
Alabama Moccasinshell	*Medionidus acutissimus*	Threatened	Threatened	Gravel-cobble shoals in moderately strong current in medium-sized rivers
Coosa Moccasinshell	*Medionidus parvulus*	Endangered	Endangered	Gravelly creeks and medium to large rivers
River Redhorse	*Moxostoma carinatum*	No Federal Status	Rare	Swift waters of medium to large rivers
Burrhead Shiner	*Notropsis asperifrons*	No Federal Status	Threatened	Small streams to medium-sized rivers in pools, riffles, and midwater areas
Frecklebelly Madtom	*Noturus munitus*	No Federal Status	Endangered	Shoals and riffles of moderate to large streams and rivers
Amber Darter	*Percina antesella*	Endangered	Endangered	Riffles and runs of medium-sized rivers
Conasauga Logperch	*Percina jenkinsi*	Endangered	Endangered	Deep, fast-flowing chutes and pools over clean substrates of gravel or cobbles
Freckled Darter	*Percina lenticula*	No Federal Status	Endangered	Swift deep runs of main river channels probably over a rocky substrate
Dusky Darter	*Percina sciera*	No Federal Status	Rare	Large creeks and rivers in moderate current associated with woody debris, undercut banks, or vegetation
Upland Bridled Darter	*Percina sp. 9*	No Federal Status	Endangered	Flowing pools and runs in large streams and small to medium sized rivers with clear water
Painted Clubshell	*Pleurobema chattanoogaense*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Critically imperiled in state because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer occurrences).	Coarse gravel and sand riffles in medium sized rivers
Southern Clubshell	*Pleurobema decisum*	Endangered	Endangered	Sand, gravel, cobble substrate of small rivers and large streams
Southern Pigtoe	*Pleurobema georgianun*	Endangered	Endangered	Gravelly creeks and medium to large rivers
Georgia Pigtoe	*Pleurogema hanleyianum*	No Federal Status	Endangered	Medium-sized rivers in coarse sand and gravel with moderately strong current
Triangular Kidneyshell	*Ptychobranchus greenii*	Endangered	Endangered	Gravelly creeks and medium to large rivers
Pygmy Shrew	*Sorex hoyi*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Imperiled in state because of rarity (6 to 20 occurrences).	Mountain bogs; grassy openings in high elevation forests
Alabama Creekmussell	*Strophitus connasaugaensis*	No Federal Status	Endangered	Small to medium-sized rivers in some current and substrate of fine gravel, sand, and silt.
Bewick's Wren	*Thryomanes bewickii*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Of historical occurrence in the state, perhaps not verified in the past 20 years, but suspected to be still extant.	Thickets; brushy areas; open woods

Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources - Updated 07/02/2007

Table 5-3 Federal- & State-Listed Endangered and Threatened Species – Plants

Species		Federal Status	State Status	Habitat
Spreading Chervil	*Chaerophyllum procumbens*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Imperiled in state because of rarity (6 to 20 occurrences).	Low rich woods in circumneutral soil
Pink Ladyslipper	*Cypripedium acaule*	No Federal Status	Unusual	Upland oak-hickory-pine forests; piney woods
Large-flowered Yellow Ladyslipper	*Cypripedium parviforum var. pubescens*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Rare or uncommon in state (on the order of 21 to 100 occurrences).	Upland oak-hickory-pine forests; mixed hardwood forests
Largeleaf Waterleaf	*Hydrophyllum macrophyllum*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Critically imperiled in state because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer occurrences).	Rich woods in circumnetral soil
Bigspore Engelmann's Quillwort	*Isoetes appalachiana*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Critically imperiled in state because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer occurrences).	Bogs, seeps, marshy shores and floodplains; often hidden in taller vegetation due to its low stature
Fraser's Loosestrife	*Lysimachia fraseri*	No Federal Status	Rare	Moist, open, bouldery gravel bars and streambanks; edges of sandstone and granite outcrops
Virginia Bluebells	*Mertensia virginica*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Critically imperiled in state because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer occurrences) and imperiled in state because of rarity (6 to 20 occurrences).	Floodplain forests in limestone valleys
American Ginseng	*Panax quinquefolius*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Rare or uncommon in state (on the order of 21 to 100 occurrences).	Mesic hardwood forests; cove hardwood forests
Broadleaf Phlox	*Phlox amplifolia*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Critically imperiled in state because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer occurrences).	Mesic hardwood forests over basic soils
Jacob's Ladder	*Polemonium reptans*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Critically imperiled in state because of extreme rarity (5 or fewer occurrences).	Mesic hardwood forests over basic soils
Large-flowered Skullcap	*Scutellaria montana*	Threatened	Threatened	Mesic hardwood-shortleaf pine forests; usually mature forest with open understory, sometimes without a pine component
Lanceleaf Trillium	*Trillium lancifolium*	No Federal Status	No State Status - Rare or uncommon in state (on the order of 21 to 100 occurrences).	Floodplain forests; also lower rocky slopes over basic soils
Dwarf Trillium	*Trillium pusillum*	No Federal Status	Endangered	Red maple-blackgum swampy woods in sticky clay soils
Tennessee Yellow-eyed Grass	*Xyris tennesseensis*	Endangered	Endangered	Seepy margins of limestone spring runs

Source: Georgia Department of Natural Resources - Updated 07/02/2007

Currently, Whitfield County and the municipalities of Cohutta, Dalton, Tunnel Hill and Varnell have not adopted regulations protecting Federal and State Listed Endangered and Threatened Species.

5.4. Significant Natural Resources

5.4.1. Scenic Areas

Significant natural areas are identified from the records of the Department of Natural Resources' Heritage Inventory Program. Natural areas may include a broad range of sites including wildlife management areas, and other areas of interest under DNR's Heritage Inventory Program. In Whitfield County, the areas listed by DNR are characterized by a large number of rare species occurrences and/or special landforms or water features and include:

- Conasauga River
- Hurricane Valley/Hurricane Creek
- Johns Mountain Wildlife Management Area
- Taylor Ridge
- Dick Ridge

Other natural areas identified as significant are:

- Mill Creek Lake
- Varnell Springs (located in City of Varnell)
- Deep Springs
- Gordon Springs
- Redwine Cove

5.4.2. Forests, Parks, Recreation and Conservation

Approximately 11,830 acres of the Chattahoochee National Forest is located in Whitfield County. Several recreational opportunities exist within the parts of the Chattahoochee National Forest that is located in Whitfield County. The Chestnut Mountain Shooting Range offers recreational shooting (accessed through Walker or Gordon counties) while the Houston Valley OHV Trailhead and Trail System offers recreational OHV trails for motorcycles, ATV's and mountain bikes. In addition, the Pinhoti Trail, located atop Dug Gap Mountain, proceeds southward for about 15 miles inside Whitfield Counting offering free trail use for horses, hiking and mountain biking. Another mountain bike opportunity is offered by Raisin Wood Mountain Bike Park, located on city property in northeast Dalton, with a parking lot and numerous off-road trails of varying difficulty.

Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton and Varnell have elected to participate in the Georgia Greenspace Program, which provides funds to the largest, fastest growing counties in the state for the acquisition and protection of greenspace. Recently, the county was able to preserve over 700 acres of Civil War battlefield land, atop Rocky Face Ridge in Tunnel Hill, as a result of the combination of Greenspace Program funds and other sources.

5.5. Significant Cultural Resources

On the state level, authority in matters of historic preservation is delegated to the Historic Preservation Division (HPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, who is also the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) mandated by the Historic Preservation Act of 1966. HPD takes both an advocacy and administrative role in state government. It is responsible for coordinating statewide and local preservation initiatives, including survey of historic resources and the allocation of federal funding for local preservation-oriented projects.

The real protection of historic resources is best accomplished on the local level with historic preservation planning, creation of appropriate growth strategies, comprehensive planning, the adoption of local protective ordinances, and coordination between all groups – those appointed by the local government and those organized by concerned private individuals – interested in preserving and promoting the community's history.

5.5.1. Local History

Founded in 1851, Whitfield County was named after one of the first settlers of Georgia, George Whitfield, a minister in the Church of England who was an early settler of the colony of Georgia. There are five major forces in history that have guided the County's development: the removal of the Cherokee from North Georgia, the development of the Western and Atlantic Railroad and tunnel, the Civil War, the development of the tufting industry, and the advent of the nation's road transportation system.

During the Civil War, the Atlanta Campaign began in Whitfield County, where Sherman caused massive destruction. The Confederates had heavily fortified strategic areas at Tunnel Hill, Dug Gap and Rocky Face Ridge. Whitfield County has one of the largest intact collections of Civil War defense works in the nation. The surviving network of stone and earthworks is among County's most important and endangered historic resources. In addition, nearly twenty other structures associated with the Civil War still stand, including Prater's Mill and the Dalton Depot Restaurant.

With established rail through Whitfield County by the mid-1800s and a strong road network, Dalton recovered from the scars of the Civil War and based its economy on distribution, industry, foundries, and textiles. The remainder of the county was founded on small farms and cash crops of tobacco, cotton, grains and livestock.

In 1900, US Highway 41 was constructed through the County and the shift from rail to road transportation began. Some of the County's railroad towns, such as Tilton, began a slow decline, while other towns connected to the new highway prospered, such as Tunnel Hill and Dalton. Many of the historic resources that define the County's character date from roughly between 1920 and 1945, a period sometimes referred to as "Early Automobile."

During the Depression much of the County's population was busy tufting bedspreads to meet a growing demand that increased and soon they were shipped all over the country. In the 1950's and 1960's the industry began to expand into other products: bathrobes, bath mats and bath accessories, rugs and eventually carpets. By the 1970's Dalton had a carpet industry that was supplying an international market.

Construction started in 1956 on Interstate 75 from Atlanta to Chattanooga, and was completed in the 1970s. Interstate 75 runs through Mill Creek Gap, over the site of much of the Battle of Rocky Face. The bypassing of downtown Dalton did not hinder the city from creating a major center of shopping and locating the Dalton Convention Center around the Walnut Avenue interchange. Major hotel and restaurant chains have continued to locate in Dalton around this interchange.

Towns

Dalton

Dalton was founded as Cross Plains in 1837, and served as a trading center for the Cherokee and early white settlers. In the mid-1840's, a New England real estate syndicate bought up land in and around Cross Plains and laid out a town centered on the site of the railroad depot with industrial use predominating. After the Western and Atlantic Railroad arrived in 1847, Cross Plains was incorporated as the City of Dalton, and its population steadily increased. When Whitfield County was formed in 1851, Dalton became the county seat.

At the time of the Civil War, Dalton, still a small town, suffered the destruction of most of its built environment, with the exception of those buildings used as headquarters, hospitals, or commissaries by one or both armies. The Blunt House, Hamilton House, and the Dalton Depot are prominent among Dalton's surviving ante-bellum historic resources. By the turn of the century, Dalton had become a regional transportation hub known for fine hotels and restaurants.

In 1911, a fire destroyed much of the downtown. This event, along with the Civil War, left its impact on the character of the City, and helps to explain why so little of the original fabric remains. Dalton rebuilt, and today the historic downtown is a National Register District. Some of Dalton's earliest remaining housing is represented in the City's National Register Historic Districts. The 1880's Crown Cotton Mill, the owner's house (Hamilton House), and the associated mill store, school, and village constitute one such district just north of downtown. Part of Thornton Avenue, an early residential street, is included in the Thornton Avenue-Murray Hill Historic District.

Industrial development contributed to Dalton's built environment, as did the housing constructed to accommodate a growing workforce and managerial class. The Murray Hill area (included in the Thornton Avenue-Murray Hill Historic District) and the McCarty Subdivision, an early to mid-twentieth century residential neighborhood recently nominated as a National Register district, are examples of housing development resulting from growing industrialization.

Tunnel Hill

The settlement of Tunnel Hill began in the 1820's as a small farm community. The history and development of Tunnel Hill are closely linked to the construction of the Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel. A small railroad town soon began to develop with a general store, several churches, a drugstore, post office, a school, and several large homes. In 1848, Clisby Austin built a three-story summer resort hotel near the tunnel to accommodate rail travelers. Tunnel Hill has a number of ante-bellum structures remaining, though most have been altered to reflect a later period. Much of the city's residential area has retained a degree of historic integrity and may qualify as a potential National Register Historic District.

During the Civil War, many houses and other buildings were turned into hospitals for the wounded, and William Sherman set up his headquarters in the Clisby Austin House during the Battle of Dalton, where it has been speculated that he made his plans to March to Atlanta and on to the sea. In 1926 a second, larger tunnel was built, and the town experienced a small boom, which brought about a flourish of house remodeling and some new construction including retail stores, a lumber mill and a cotton gin.

In 1994, a Senate Resolution deeded the "Old Tunnel" to the City of Tunnel Hill. The tunnel was stabilized and opened to the public in 2000, which was followed in 2002 by its listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Tunnel Hill Heritage Center promotes the history of the area and is operated in partnership with Dalton Convention and Visitors Bureau, Tunnel Hill Historical Foundation, City of Tunnel Hill and Whitfield County. Displays in the museum include a timeline of the 1850 Western and Atlantic Railroad

Tunnel restoration, Civil War artifacts from local family ancestry, and Chenille bedspreads associated with the "glory days" of the Old Dixie Highway that came through Tunnel Hill in the mid-1900's.

Cohutta

The town of Cohutta developed in 1886 when the Eastern Tennessee, Virginia and Georgia Railroad built a junction from what is now Cohutta to Ooltewah, Tennessee. From the 1880's to the 1920's the community grew into a prosperous town with a wide variety of businesses and services. During this time the town had a large hotel, a restaurant, cotton warehouse and gin, livery stables, blacksmith shops, a bank, a butter and cheese company, peach canning factory, gas station, hardware stores, a dance hall, post office, a three-room school house, a power plant, Masonic Lodge, several churches, an Odd Fellows Club, and a railroad depot with passenger train service. Cohutta is now a small residential village with historic houses and commercial buildings.

Varnell

Varnell dates from the Cherokee purchase in 1835 and began as a stagecoach stop on the Old Federal Road. The stagecoach stop building, probably dating from between the mid-1830's and the mid-1840's, is still standing. The Varnell House, an early residence built by "Dry Dan Dold" for M.P. Varnell using local Indian labor and made of bricks made of clay from the property, still stands near the Varnell Big Springs, a major water source for the early community.

During the 1840's the Southern Railroad and the Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis Railroad brought prosperity and growth to Varnell. Soon, businesses began to develop, including nearby Prater's Mill, a large mill complex that served much of the surrounding area. Now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Prater's Mill's heritage extends to 1855, when the water-powered mill was constructed. During the Civil War, the mill was used as a campsite by soldiers from both sides. The Prater family operated the Mill until the 1950's. A succession of millers ran it until the 1960's. In 1971, the not-for-profit Prater's Mill Foundation took over the Mill and began its extensive restoration and preservation efforts. Today, the mill is best known for the arts and crafts festivals held twice each year, which have contributed to its inclusion to the Local Legacies Project. The Local Legacies Project was initiated by the Library of Congress developed the project to celebrate America's richly diverse culture by documenting the creative arts, crafts, and customs representing traditional community life across the country. Projects sponsored in 2008 by Prater's Mill Foundation include interpretive site assessment services and the development of an interpretive master plan.

Varnell's history is also reflected in the Cohutta-Chattahoochee Scenic Byway, which extends from Fort Mountain State Park in Murray County to the Cohutta Fishery in Whitfield County, with a spur to Prater's Mill. The National Scenic Byways Program is part of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration. The program is a grass-roots collaborative effort established to help recognize, preserve and enhance selected roads throughout the United States.

5.5.2. Centennial Farms

Throughout the state of Georgia, farms that contribute to the state's agricultural heritage are recognized by the Georgia Centennial Farm Program. This program is administered by the Historic Preservation office. There are no Centennial Farms currently in Whitfield County.

5.5.3. Past Historic Survey Efforts

The last survey of Whitfield County historic resources was completed in 1994 and provides basic information on the location and number of resources in this county as well as an assessment of their

condition. Approximately 917 resources were identified with potential eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places.

The survey provides a working base for citizens interested in devising a local preservation strategy. Historic resources are limited in number and once destroyed can never be replaced. Their preservation depends upon public awareness and commitment, continued or renewed use, and planning for the future.

5.5.4. Historic Markers

Historical markers serve to educate citizens and visitors alike about the people and events that have shaped Georgia's past and present. Table 5-4 is a list of State Historic Markers that are located throughout Whitfield County.

Table 5-4 List of Historic Markers

Commemorative History	Marker Number	Sign Location
Ascent to Dug Gap	GHM 155-12	Dug Gap & E. Dug Gap Mtn Roads, S of Walnut & just E of I-75
Atlanta Campaign Rocky Face Ridge May 7-12, 1864	NA	USDI At State Patrol office on U.S. 41 north of I75, Rocky Face
Babb's Settlement	GHM 155-9	Mill Creek Road at Masters Drive
Battle of Dug Gap	GHM 155-10	Mill Creek Road at Babb's Cemetery
Battle of Resaca	GHM 155-2	U.S. 41 immediately north of Whitfield County Line
Battle of Resaca	GHM 155-4	Private side road S from E. Nance Spring Rd, .4 mi E of US41
Battles of Tilton	GHM 155-33	U.S. 41 at Tilton Road
"Callaway Place"-1814	GHM 155-29A	Ga 201 at Gordon Springs Road
Campaign for Atlanta: Johnston's Review	GHM 155-2	Ridge and Cuyler Streets, Dalton
Clisby Austin House	GHM 155-25	At the railroad tracks at Oak St in Tunnel Hill
Confederate Cemetery	GHM 155-31	Near old Chapel in cemetery at Cuyler & Ridge Sts, Dalton
Confederate Defense of Mill Creek Gap	GHM 155-14	Across RR tracks from Dalton Alumina Co on Rocky Face RR St
Crow Valley	GHM 155-21	Reed Pond Rd & Crow Valley Rd, due west of Waring
Dr. Anderson's House	GHM 155-6	Dunnagan Rd W of Ga 201, 3.7 mi from U.S. 41, near Liberty Church
Dug Gap	GHM 155-34	41/Ga 3 1/4 mi. N of mile marker 10, south edge of Dalton
Dug Gap	GHM 155-11	Old Dalton-LaFayette Rd at the summit of Dug Gap-Rocky Face
Geary's Division to Dug Gap	GHM 155-8	Ga 201 at the Walker County line
George Disney's Grave	GHM 155-16	U.S. 41 just east of Mill Creek Gap
George Whitefield	GHM 155-28	Courthouse in Dalton
Hamilton House	GHM 155-17	Chattanooga Avenue and Matilda Street, Dalton
Harris' Gap	GHM 155-26	New Hope Rd just east of Crow Valley Rd
Historic Red Clay	GHM 155-34A	Ga 71 at the road to Red Clay
Historic Varnell Home	GHM 155-32	Ga 201 in the south edge of Varnell
Johnny Marcus Memorial Loop		bank on Tibbs at Walnut E of I-75, Dalton
Military Operations in Crow Valley	GHM 155-23	Reed Rd 1.6 miles north of Reed Pond Rd
Mill Creek Gap	GHM 155-13	Mill Creek Gap on Old U.S. 41 between U.S. 41 & Rocky Face RR St
North Line Dalton's Defenses	GHM 155-19	100 yds S of Poplar Church Rd .1 mile E of Willowdale Rd
Old Federal Road	GHM 155-29B	Ga 71 at junction with Ga 2 near Varnell
R.R. Wood Station	GHM 155-5	E. Nance Spring Rd and Gracie Rd, east of U.S. 41
Schofield's 23d Corps in Crow Valley	GHM 155-22	Reed Pond Rd and Reed Rd, about 0.5 mile west of Waring
Ault's Mill	GHM 155-18	Southwest of Waring, 0.8 mile west of the Varnell Rd
Stevenson's Line	GHM 155-20	Crow Valley Rd north of Willowdale Road
The Blunt House	GHM 155-30	U.S. 41 in Dalton
The Flooded Gap	GHM 155-15	On abandoned strip of old U.S. 41 at Mill Creek
The McCarty Subdivision	GHS	Willow Park Dr. and Walnut Ave, Dalton
Tristram Dalton	GHM 155-29	At City Hall, Pentz and King Sts, Dalton
Tunnel Hill	GHM 155-24	At the railroad tracks at Oak St in Tunnel Hill
Twentieth Corps in Dogwood Valley	GHM 155-7	Ga 201 at Gordon Springs Road
Western & Atlantic Railroad Tunnel	GHM 155-36	At railroad crossing at Oak St in Tunnel Hill

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service

5.5.5. Historic Resources in Whitfield County

Historic resources in rural counties usually include farmhouses and outbuildings, churches, cemeteries, crossroads stores, isolated rural housing, farmland, mature timber stands, streams and river valleys, the larger landscapes in which these occur and which their interaction produces, as well as downtown commercial and residential areas. In 1994 a survey of Whitfield County's historic resources was conducted, providing basic information on the location and number of resources as well as an assessment of their condition. The *Whitfield County Historic Resource Survey* was sponsored by the County Board of Commissioners, the Whitfield-Murray Historical Society, and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. The survey identified over 900 historic resources. Since the survey's completion, additional resources may also be considered due to their age (50 years or older). Table 5-4 identifies housing that may have historic value based on 2000 Census data.

Table 5-5 Housing Units 50 Years or Older

Category	Whitfield County	Dalton	Cohutta	Tunnel Hill	Varnell	State of Georgia
Total Housing Units 2000	30,722	10,309	256	472	497	3,281,737
Built 1950 - 1959	3,040	1,496	14	52	17	283,424
Built 1940 - 1949	1,457	589	21	24	4	144,064
Built 1939 or earlier	1,392	631	20	49	10	192,972
Total 50 years or older	5889	2716	55	125	31	620,460
% 50 years or older	19%	26%	21%	27%	6%	19%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau (2000)

National Register Listings

The National Register of Historic Places (National Register) is a list maintained by the federal government as testimony to the significant contribution that districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects have had to our country's history and heritage. It is a national honor and places no obligations or restrictions on private owners. Properties listed do, however, become eligible for certain rehabilitation tax incentive programs.

In addition to historic value, National Register-listed sites and districts can have real economic value. In a 2002 study done for the Whitfield Comprehensive Plan it was found that neighboring Murray County, the Vann House alone has drawn approximately 15,000 first-comer tourists per year in recent years. Fort Mountain, in the same county, draws between 130,000 and 150,000 visitors each year, representing some $300,000 in revenue. It is estimated that each tourist dollar coming into the state of Georgia is turned over seven times in the local community economy.

To date, the following resources and their locations are listed on the National Register (See Table 5-5).

Table 5-6 National Register Sites

Resource Name	Location/Address	City	Year Added
Thomas A Barry House (1882)	506 Hawthorne Street	Dalton	1984
Ainsworth E. Blunt House (1848)	506 S. Thornton Ave.	Dalton	1980
William C. Martin House	NE Corner Cleveland St. & Gordon St.	Dalton	1982
Masonic Lodge No. 238 (1915)	600 S. Hamilton Street	Dalton	1996
Prater's Mill	GA 2 at Prater Mill Rd./ Coahulla Creek	Dalton	1978
A.D. Strickland Store (1878)	1385 Dawnville Rd. (GA 286)	Whitfield Co. 30721	2005
Western & Atlantic Depot	110 Depot St. W. end of King St.	Dalton	1978
Western & Atlantic Railroad Tunnel	Railroad at Tunnel Hill	Tunnel Hill	2002
Dalton Commercial Historic District	Boundary Map Scanned	Dalton	1988
Dalton Commercial Historic District Boundary Increase	Boundary Map Scanned	Dalton	2006
Crown Mill Historic District	Boundary Map Scanned - U.S. 41	Dalton	1979
McCarty Subdivision Historic District	Boundary Map Scanned	Dalton	2002
Thornton Ave. - Murray Hill Historic District	Jct. GA 51 & GA 59 - Boundary Map Scanned	Whitfield Co.	1992

Source: National Trust for Historic Preservation 2008

Potential National Register districts include:

- Portions of the City of Tunnel Hill
- Portions of the City of Cohutta
- Redwine Cove
- Rocky Face Ridge Civil War defenses
- Crow Valley Civil War defenses
- Multiple Listing of "Dixie Highway" resources, sites & roadside architecture

On the basis of visual inspection, the author of the *Whitfield County Historic Resource Survey* estimated that Tunnel Hill has 22 individually eligible National Register properties, Cohutta 32, Varnell 10, and the unincorporated towns and rural areas as many as 200.

Locally Designated Historic Districts

A local historic district is a district designated by a local ordinance, which falls under the jurisdiction of an appointed citizen-board called a historic preservation commission. A local historic district is generally "overlaid" on the existing zoning classifications for an area. As such, the use of a property is not regulated, just the appearance through the implementation of design guidelines that address proposed alterations, additions, demolitions or new construction is compatible with the existing character of a district. This design review process requires review and approval of proposed work by the historic preservation commission, which is responsible for issuing a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) that in turn permits a property owner to apply for a building permit or otherwise commence work. The City of Dalton has two locally designed historic districts:

- Downtown Dalton (adopted 1987)
- Thornton Avenue/Murray Hill Subdivision (adopted 1996)

5.5.6. Historic Markers

Historical markers serve to educate citizens and visitors alike about the people and events that have shaped Georgia's past and present. Table 5-5 is a list of State Historic Markers that are located throughout Whitfield County.

Table 5-7 List of Historic Markers

Commemorative History	Marker Number	Sign Location
Ascent to Dug Gap	GHM 155-12	Dug Gap & E. Dug Gap Mtn Roads, S of Walnut & just E of I-75
Atlanta Campaign Rocky Face Ridge May 7-12, 1864	NA	USDI at State Patrol office on U.S. 41 north of I-75, Rocky Face
Babb's Settlement	GHM 155-9	Mill Creek Road at Masters Drive
Battle of Dug Gap	GHM 155-10	Mill Creek Road at Babb's Cemetery
Battle of Resaca	GHM 155-2	U.S. 41 immediately north of Whitfield/Gordon boundary
Battle of Resaca	GHM 155-4	Private side road S from E. Nance Spring Rd, .4 mi E of U.S. 41
Battles of Tilton	GHM 155-33	U.S. 41 at Tilton Road
"Callaway Place"-1814	GHM 155-29A	SR 201 at Gordon Springs Road
Campaign for Atlanta: Johnston's Review	GHM 155-2	Ridge and Cuyler Streets, Dalton
Clisby Austin House	GHM 155-25	At the railroad tracks at Oak St. in Tunnel Hill
Confederate Cemetery	GHM 155-31	Near old Chapel in cemetery at Cuyler & Ridge Sts, Dalton
Confederate Defense of Mill Creek Gap	GHM 155-14	Across RR tracks from Dalton Alumina Co. on Rocky Face RR St.
Crow Valley	GHM 155-21	Reed Pond Rd. & Crow Valley Rd. due west of Waring
Dr. Anderson's House	GHM 155-6	Dunnagan Rd. W of SR 201, 3.7 mi. from U.S. 41, near Liberty Church
Dug Gap	GHM 155-34	U.S. 41/SR 3 1/4 mi. N of mile marker 10, south edge of Dalton
Dug Gap	GHM 155-11	Old Dalton-LaFayette Rd. at the summit of Dug Gap-Rocky Face
Geary's Division to Dug Gap	GHM 155-8	SR 201 at the Walker County line
George Disney's Grave	GHM 155-16	U.S. 41 just east of Mill Creek Gap
George Whitefield	GHM 155-28	Courthouse in Dalton
Hamilton House	GHM 155-17	Chattanooga Avenue and Matilda Street, Dalton
Harris' Gap	GHM 155-26	New Hope Rd just east of Crow Valley Rd.
Historic Red Clay	GHM 155-34A	SR 71 at the road to Red Clay
Historic Varnell Home	GHM 155-32	SR 201 in the south edge of Varnell
Johnny Marcus Memorial Loop		Bank on Tibbs at Walnut E of I-75, Dalton
Military Operations in Crow Valley	GHM 155-23	Reed Rd. 1.6 miles north of Reed Pond Rd.
Mill Creek Gap	GHM 155-13	Mill Creek Gap on Old U.S. 41 between U.S. 41 & Rocky Face RR St
North Line Dalton's Defenses	GHM 155-19	100 yds. S of Poplar Church Rd. .1 mile E of Willowdale Rd.
Old Federal Road	GHM 155-29B	SR 71 at junction with SR 2 near Varnell
R.R. Wood Station	GHM 155-5	E. Nance Spring Rd. and Gracie Rd., east of U.S. 41
Schofield's 23d Corps in Crow Valley	GHM 155-22	Reed Pond Rd and Reed Rd, about 0.5 mile west of Waring
Ault's Mill	GHM 155-18	Southwest of Waring, 0.8 mile west of the Varnell Rd.
Stevenson's Line	GHM 155-20	Crow Valley Rd. north of Willowdale Rd.
The Blunt House	GHM 155-30	U.S. 41 in Dalton
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The McCarty Subdivision	GHS	Willow Park Dr. and Walnut Ave., Dalton
Tristram Dalton	GHM 155-29	At City Hall, Pentz and King Sts., Dalton
Tunnel Hill	GHM 155-24	At the railroad tracks at Oak St. in Tunnel Hill
Twentieth Corps in Dogwood Valley	GHM 155-7	SR 201 at Gordon Springs Rd.
Western & Atlantic Railroad Tunnel	GHM 155-36	At railroad crossing at Oak St. in Tunnel Hill

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service

5.5.7. Georgia Main Street Designation

The City of Dalton is a designated Georgia Main Street City. The Main Street Program is an initiative of the National Trust for Historic Preservation that is administered at the state level by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) Office of Downtown Development. This nationally recognized program combines historic preservation with economic development and focuses on the "4-Point Approach" of design, organization, economic restructuring, and promotion to restore prosperity and vitality to downtowns and neighborhood business districts. Cities accepted for participation in the Georgia Main Street Program are eligible to receive assistance in the form of technical services, networking, training and information. Dalton's program is managed by the Dalton Downtown Development Authority (DDDA), a public corporation created in 1981 by the General Assembly of Georgia for the purpose of revitalizing Dalton's downtown area. The DDDA is responsible for the development and promotion of trade, commerce, industry, and employment opportunities within the central business district.

5.5.8. Certified Local Government Program

The CLG Program is a federal program administered at the state level by the Historic Preservation Division (HPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Any city, town, or county that has enacted a historic preservation ordinance and enforces that ordinance through a local preservation commission, is eligible to become a CLG. The benefits of becoming a CLG include eligibility for federal historic preservation grant funds, the opportunity to review local nominations for the National Register of Historic Places prior to consideration by the Georgia National Register Review Board, opportunities for technical assistance, and improved communication and coordination among local, state, and federal preservation activities. In 1985 Dalton was designated as a Certified Local Government (CLG).

5.5.9. Historic Preservation Organizations

Historic Preservation Commissions

Both Whitfield County and Dalton have appointed historic preservation commissions. The Dalton Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) is responsible for administering the design review process required for the Downtown Dalton and Thornton Avenue/Murray Hill Subdivision locally designated historic districts and for the DDDA's Façade Improvement Grant Program. Both HPCs have the authority to undertake numerous preservation-related activities, including but not limited to recommending local historic districts, maintaining an inventory of historic resources, promoting historic preservation through community/school education initiatives, restoring publically-owned historic properties, promoting the acquisition of conservation and façade eastments, and seeking outside funding sources for historic preservation.

Whitfield-Murray Historical Society

The Whitfield-Murray Historical Society is a not-for-profit organization which seeks to preserve and document the history of Whitfield and Murray County, Georgia. A key function of the historical society is to support or help maintain historic properties, including the Hamilton House, the Blunt House, and Dug Gap Battle Park in Whitfield County. The society also maintains Crown Gardens and Archives in Dalton. The archives' holdings include historic documents, memorabilia and photos relating to the old Crown Cotton Mill, the history of the local chenille and carpet textile industry, local genealogy, county history, as well as regional marriage and cemetery indexes\ and other research material. In addition to the archives' research room, the historical society maintains a collection of historical antiques, artifacts and documents, including a chenille bedspread collection and a collection of Civil War artifacts. The

historical society also promotes historic preservation by awarding scholarships to local high school students and annual Historic Preservation Awards to recognize individuals or organizations who have made outstanding contributions to the preservation of the history of Whitfield or Murray County.

Tunnel Hill Historical Foundation

The Tunnel Hill Historical Foundation was established in the early 1990's to preserve and promote the heritage of Tunnel Hill and Northwest Georgia. The foundation provides and maintains displays in the Tunnel Hill Heritage Center and is responsible for the annual Battle of Tunnel Hill Civil War Reenactment, which first began as an effort to raise funds and awareness in order to save and restore the historic Western and Atlantic Railroad Tunnel.

5.6. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats Analysis

5.6.1. Strengths

- The county has an abundance of hydrologic natural resources.
- The county has an abundance of forests, parks, recreation and conservation areas.
- Lack of widespread development in the County (outside of Dalton and major highways), to date, has helped protect historic resources.
- Public and private sector commitment to preservation is evident, with the presence of government-appointed historic preservation commissions for Dalton and Whitfield County and numerous citizen-led groups.
- The county is an attraction for Civil War and train enthusiasts, which provides a good foundation for county-wide and regional heritage tourism efforts.

5.6.2. Weaknesses

- The County lacks the adoption of regulations for steep slopes.
- The County has not adopted regulation to protect areas of prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance.
- The County does not have regulations adopted for the protection of Federal and State Endangered and Threatened Species.
- The County does not have regulations adopted for the protection of water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands or protected rivers.
- Need for an updated historic resource survey to identify and assess buildings, sites, features and districts that may have attained historic value since the last survey (based on minimum criteria that a resource is at least 50 years old).
- With some exceptions, the majority of the buildings in the county are vernacular both in design and type, but often, these buildings, especially rural buildings, are endangered due to poor condition.
- Though various groups and individuals throughout the county work to restore and protect individual properties, there appears to be no strong public organization focused on supporting and encouraging preservation on a larger scale.

5.6.3. Opportunities

- The county could begin to plan for Air Quality regulations and control before growth.
- The County could work with farmers to consider applying for Centennial Farm status.
- A renewed interest in Native American sites and constant interest in Civil War heritage tourism may keep enough interest in retaining viewsheds of the cultural landscape and foothills character of rural Whitfield County. This protection is minimal and only related to impacts of federally funded projects. Negative impact is lessened, but mitigation does not hinder demolition if the resources are judged expendable.
- Municipalities in Whitfield County have the potential to be designated as "Better Hometown" communities (population is less than 5,000) in the Georgia Main Street Program.
- Whitfield County, along with neighboring counties and other "Dixie Highway" counties throughout Georgia can pursue a Multiple Property National Historic Listing of sites and districts associated with the "Dixie" with a period of significance that can run from 1900 through the 1960s, thereby increasing the opportunities for grants and tax incentives on a wide range of structures and tourism-based sites.
- Tools exist that can assist with protection and acquisition of historic buildings and sites. Consideration can be given to numerous mechanisms, including the creation of revolving funds for repair and acquisition of properties, façade or conservation easement negotiation, utilization of federal funds (e.g. Land and Water Conservation Fund, Transportation Enhancement Program,) promotion of conservation tax credits for use by private land owners holding portions of battlefield sites, and the DCA Regionally Important Resource (RIR) Program for historic and natural resources.
- Farmland protection efforts can help protect historic or natural areas. Tools to this end include federal Farmland Protection Program funds, Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs), recognition by the Georgia Centennial Farm Program, and conservation easements and tax credits.
- Coordination among the various preservation-related groups in the County can assist with preservation and heritage tourism efforts.
- Zoning overlay districts can be used to augment locally designated historic districts as a regulatory tool; they can address the design of new development and also prohibit inappropriate land uses.
- Whitfield County is eligible to apply to the Certified Local Government (CLG) Program, which would make the county eligible to receive federal historic preservation grant funds.

5.6.4. Threats

- Currently, outside of designated local districts in Dalton, County-owned property, and managed sites, historic resources in Whitfield County have very little protection.
- Lack of control over historic areas, including Civil War sites such as Dug Gap.
- Potential development, including along slopes, on existing farmland and along the Cohutta-Chattahoochee Scenic Byway

CHAPTER 6

6. Community Facilities & Services

Service areas and levels of services of public facilities and services with an evaluation of the adequacy and useful life

This chapter provides an assessment of the community facilities and services in Whitfield County, including those for unincorporated Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnel Hill and Varnell. Community facilities and services assessed were organized into the following major categories shown in the sections that follow: water supply and treatment, sewerage system and wastewater treatment, other facilities and services

6.1. Water Supply and Treatment

6.1.1. Water Service Area and Distribution

In 1887, the Dalton Water Works (which later became Dalton Utilities) was built at the site of the Crown Cotton Mill spring. Since that time, Dalton Utilities' water system has grown to serve over 35,000 customers in the City of Dalton, throughout Whitfield County and in portions of Murray and Catoosa counties. Dalton Utilities has signed service delivery agreements with Whitfield County, Tunnel Hill, and Varnell, and as such, Dalton Utilities is the water provider for these areas. Dalton Utilities also has signed a Water Delegation Authority Agreement with the Georgia Environment Protection Division which gives Dalton Utilities the authority to review and approve expansions of the distribution system without EPD review and approval of individual projects. Water service includes potable water service and fire protection throughout Whitfield County. Daily water consumption is approximately 37.25 million gallons per day, based on a five year daily average, with a significant portion of that number being used by local industry. Water service areas for Whitfield County are shown in the Water Service Area Map found in Chapter 9 Atlas of Maps.

6.1.2. Water Supply and Treatment

Water supplies for Dalton Utilities include surface water from the Conasauga River, Coahulla Creek, Mill Creek and Freeman Springs. Overall, Dalton Utilities is permitted to withdraw between 42 and 64.6 million gallons per day (MGD) from the Conasauga River, Coahulla Creek, Mill Creek and Freeman Springs based on current stream flows. The system has a permitted production capacity of 56 MGD daily maximum. The systems drought contingency total capacity from four reservoirs is 2.69 billion gallons, adequate for approximately a 60-day supply in drought conditions.

Dalton Utilities' owns and operates 3 water treatment plants. The water distribution system is made up of 22 water tanks, 42 booster pump stations, 1,400 miles of distribution piping, and over 4950 fire

hydrants, Dalton Utilities also has connections to and can purchase wholesale water from Eastside Utilities, Catoosa Utility District, and the City of Calhoun.

6.1.3. Future Water Demand Projections

Dalton Utilities performs water demand projections in order to develop the capital implementation plans. Projections are updated every five years and utilize long term trends in carpet manufacturing, water use in carpet manufacturing, water use in other manufacturing, population growth in Whitfield County, residential water use, commercial water use, governmental water use, and internal water use in order to develop an updated 20-year forecast. The 2003 projections are provided in Table 6-1.

Table 6-1 Projected Water Demand

Year	Residential	Commercial	Industrial	Government	Intra-company	Unaccounted For	Total
2003	7.4	8.7	15.8	0.5	0.2	4.9	37.6
2004	7.5	9	16.1	0.5	0.2	5	38.4
2005	7.6	9.4	16.4	0.6	0.2	5.1	39.2
2006	7.7	9.7	16.7	0.6	0.2	5.2	40.1
2007	7.7	10.1	17	0.6	0.2	5.3	41
2008	7.8	10.4	17.4	0.6	0.2	5.5	41.8
2009	7.9	10.8	17.7	0.6	0.2	5.6	42.7
2010	8	11.1	18	0.6	0.2	5.7	43.6
2011	8.1	11.5	18.3	0.6	0.1	5.8	44.5
2012	8.2	11.9	18.6	0.6	0.1	5.9	45.4
2013	8.3	12.3	18.9	0.6	0.1	6	46.3
2014	8.4	12.7	19.2	0.6	0.1	6.2	47.2
2015	8.5	13	19.5	0.7	0.1	6.3	48.1
2016	8.6	13.4	19.8	0.7	0.1	6.4	49
2017	8.7	13.9	20.1	0.7	0.1	6.5	49.9
2018	8.8	14.3	20.4	0.7	0.1	6.6	50.9
2019	8.9	14.7	20.7	0.7	0.1	6.8	51.8
2020	9	15.1	21	0.7	0.1	6.9	52.7
2021	9.1	15.5	21.3	0.7	0.1	7	53.6
2022	9.2	16	21.5	0.7	0.1	7.1	54.6
2023	9.3	16.4	21.8	0.7	0.1	7.2	55.5

Source: Dalton Utilities

6.1.4. Improvement Plans

Dalton Utilities has a 20-year capital implementation plan as well as a five-year capital implantation plan. The five-year capital implementation plan is updated annually and details the infrastructure upgrades and rehabilitation of existing infrastructure necessary to keep up with expected growth in all of the areas served by Dalton Utilities.

6.2. Sewerage System and Wastewater Treatment

6.2.1. System and Service Area

Dalton Utilities has signed service delivery agreements with Whitfield County, Tunnel Hill, and Varnell and as such Dalton Utilities is the sewer service provider for these areas. Dalton Utilities also has signed a Sewer Delegation Authority Agreement with the Georgia Environmental Protection Devision which gives Dalton Utilities the authority to review and approve expansions of the collection system without EPD review and approval of individual projects. Sewerage and wastewater treatment services are provided to residents of Dalton and some customers in unincorporated Whitfield County by Dalton Utilities. In 2007, Dalton Utilities served more than 12,000 wastewater customers. Over the last 5 years, Dalton Utilities treated a daily average of 33.6 MGD of wastewater. Current total wastewater treatment capacity is a monthly average of 40 MGD, with a maximum daily flow of 66.3 MGD. Since January 1997, Dalton Utilities has increased its investment in wastewater assets by 90%, with capital expenditures approaching $110 million, resulting in operational performance improvements. The system service area is displayed in the Sewer Service Area Map found in Chapter 9 Atlas of Maps.

6.2.2. Collection and Treatment

Much of the collection system is gravity flow (the wastewater merely runs downhill to a lower part of the system). In areas where gravity drain is not possible, Dalton Utilities operates lift stations that move the wastewater to the treatment plants. In all, the system includes over 220 miles of pipe, 30 sewer lift stations, four wastewater treatment facilities, one 9,200-acre Land Application System (LAS) facility, a sludge processing facility, a composting facility, four pump stations, 2.9 miles of effluent canal, 320 miles of LAS piping and over 19,000 sprayheads on the LAS.

Dalton Utilities uses a biological process to treat the raw sewage. The system includes three state-of-the-art treatment facilities that use diffused air to oxygenate the raw sewage. This environment allows aerobic organisms to live in the water and feed on the waste particles, naturally cleansing the wastewater. Once treated, Dalton Utilities wastewater flows into the system's 9,200-acre LAS where it is pumped to thousands of sprayheads that apply the water to the landscape, allowing the soil and plant life to further cleanse the water. The facility, the largest of its kind in Georgia, is located in near the Riverbend Road Treatment Facility, but across the Conasauga River in southwestern Murray County and sprays treated wastewater over plant life and soils for further treatment and cleansing. This method is in contrast to traditional wastewater treatment that releases treated wastewater back to surface waters. The LAS is beneficial to the environment because wastewater is being filtered through the soil and plant matrix. In addition to treating and recycling wastewater, the LAS also creates a superb wildlife habitat.

Solids removed from the wastewater are sent to the Dalton Utilities Biosolids Handling Facility. At this facility, any remaining liquid is spun out of the solids in large centrifuges specially developed to serve the needs of the facility. This solid waste matter is then mixed with organic material to make compost.

6.2.3. Future Sewer Demand Projections

Dalton Utilities develops sewer demand projections utilizing the water demand projections summarized in Section 6.1.3 and the percentage of customers served by sewer. Expansion of the sewer service area is done only when capacity is available in both the collection system and treatment system. Capacity is evaluated for every new proposed development/project.

6.2.4. Improvement Plans

Dalton Utilities has a 20-year capital implementation plan as well as a five-year capital implantation plan. The five-year capital implementation plan is updated annually and details the infrastructure upgrades and rehabilitation of existing infrastructure necessary to keep up with expected growth in all of the areas served by Dalton Utilities.

The Water, Light and Sinking Fund Commissioners of Dalton Utilities agreed in 2006 on a $23-million plan to bring sewer service to the northern and western parts of the county. The plan requires separate approval in accordance with Dalton Utilities By Laws for each project by the Water, Light and Sinking Fund Commissioners The expansion plan calls for three regional package plants and primary collectors described below in the following paragraphs.

Mill Creek

A package plant in the Mill Creek area is planned as the first of three wastewater treatment plants. The Mill Creek plant will be located off Crow Valley Road east of I-75. The plans for the Mill Creek area call for two trunk lines. The first line would run from the plant down Mill Creek Road. The second would parallel U.S. 41 to Tunnel Hill.

Coahulla Creek

A package plant in the Prater's Mill area along Coahulla Creek area (north of Edwards Park) is the second planned site. The trunk lines planned for Coahulla Creek would run north towards Cohutta and west towards Varnell.

Conasauga River

A third plant is planned along the Conasauga River in northeastern Whitfield County. This site, located on the old Simms Dairy site, awaits approval from the state until completion of the total maximum daily load study for the river in order to determine the acceptable discharge volumes. The Conasauga River site will likely have a short trunk line that runs up SR 2 and another line that runs south to serve Dawnville.

Developers will be responsible for the costs to build sewer collection lines off the main trunk lines and pay tap fees to defray the cost of building the plants and trunk lines. In addition, new developments will likely be required to connect to the sewer when and where it is available. As a result of the improvements, residential development will likely gravitate towards the areas where sewers are available since much of the County's land cannot handle septic tanks. The new infrastructure should also help Tunnel Hill and Varnell attract new commercial development, including restaurants.

The new package plants will be designed to handle residential and commercial waste, but not industrial waste, which means new industry would likely remain limited to the South Dalton Bypass area where capacity for industrial waste remains.

6.2.5. Septic Systems

Technology has transformed the septic system from a temporary method of disposal to a permanent fixture. As with any tool of continuous operation, a septic system must have ongoing repair, maintenance, and sensible use in order to function properly and not cause adverse environmental concerns. Most of the County's soils are ranked as poor in suitability for septic tanks. The most severe issues are on the east side of the county, creating the necessity for large minimum lot sizes where municipal wastewater treatment is not available. All subdivision lots approved currently are to have an area reserved for a full conventional length repair area as per the Georgia On-Site Sewage Management

Manual, according the health department. The health department requires a Level III soil analysis for all new on-site sewage disposal systems and test pits or Level III soil analysis of all failing sewage systems. Follow up and inspections are implemented for all installations or repairs. Along with an existing inventory and condition assessment of individual septic systems, a mandatory septic tank maintenance program needs to be in place countywide.

6.3. Other Facilities and Services

6.3.1. Fire Protection

The Whitfield County Fire Department provides fire protection for unincorporated areas as well as the municipalities of Varnell and Tunnel Hill. The City of Dalton Fire Department provides fire protection service for their residents. The Town of Cohutta provides fire protection services for their residents. Facilities are shown in the Community Facilities Map found in the Atlas of Maps.

Whitfield County Fire Department

The Whitfield County Fire Department (WCFD) conducts plan reviews and inspections as well as responds to emergency calls in unincorporated Whitfield County and the cities of Varnell and Tunnel Hill. The department operates 10 stations in Whitfield County with a total of 56 full-time firefighters and 84 volunteer firefighters. The department includes 65 medical first repsonders, 10 EMTs and two paramedics. WCFD headquarters are located at 804 Professional Boulevard in Dalton.

Dalton Fire Department

The Dalton Fire Department (DFD) provides fire protection services for the City of Dalton. The DFD operates six fire stations that employ 81 career firefighters.

6.3.2. Emergency Medical Services

Whitfield County EMS

Whitfield Emergency Medical Service is part of the Hamilton Health Care System. Whitfield EMS (WEMS) contracts with Whitfield County to manage its emergency ambulance system. WEMS is designated by the State of Georgia as an Advanced Cardiac Life Support service which serves the residents of Whitfield County and the many others that commute through the area handling approximately 15,000 calls for service per year. WEMS provides the community's other health care providers with a trusted source of both pre-hospital emergency care as well as non-emergency transportation. WEMS also provides the community with a seamless transition of medical care by cooperating with other public safety agencies and community resources.

6.3.3. Public Safety

The Whitfield County Sheriff's Office provides law enforcement services for unincorporated areas of Whitfield County. Each city in the County operates a police department. Public safety facilities are shown in the Community Facilities Map found in the Atlas of Maps. Whitfield County Office of Emergency Management and Whitfield County E-911 provide countywide services described below.

Whitfield County Sheriff's Office

Whitfield County Sheriff's Office provides public safety services to the residents of unincorporated Whitfield County. The Sheriff's Office provides detention and court services for all residents of Whitfield County. The department operates the Whitfield County Correctional Center, which serves as a jail for the County and the cities. The 146,000-square-foot facility has a 540 inmate capacity.

Whitfield County Office of Emergency Management

The Office of Emergency Management is responsible for planning, response, mitigation and recovery during emergency situations including fires, heavy storms that cause flooding and chemical spills. Whitfield County recently created the position of emergency management director, a move considered necessary since Whitfield County has a large number of industrial plants that deal with hazardous chemicals, continuous development of emergency management plans is required. The office includes a 38-foot mobile command unit received in April 2005 from a Homeland Security grant. The trailer is used as a second emergency operations center and is manned by 911 operators.

Whitfield County E-911

Whitfield County 911/Emergency Management Center provides the emergency communications for the citizens and visitors of Whitfield County. Whitfield County 911 was consolidated and enhanced in 1999. WC911 takes all emergency and non-emergency calls for service for Whitfield County. Currently WC911 dispatches the following agencies: Whitfield County Fire Department, Dalton Fire Department, Cohutta Fire Department, Whitfield County Sheriffs Office, Dalton Police Department, Tunnel Hill Police Department, Varnell Police Department, Cohutta Police Department, and Whitfield County Emergency Medical Service. Currently Whitfield County E911 has 24 full-time Telecommunicators (Dispatchers), four part-time Telecommunicators, and four personnel in the administration including 911 Director, Assistant Director, Training Officer, and Administrative Assistant. Whitfield County E911 has four, 12-hour shifts that rotate with five Telecommunicators and a Supervisor on each shift. Each Telecommunicator is trained in every area of emergency communications, including fire dispatch, law enforcement dispatch, medical dispatch and call taking.

Dalton Police Department

The Dalton Police Department employs approximately 101 officers providing neighborhood and business patrol, crime prevention programs, school resource officers, bicycle patrols, D.U.I. and accident-reduction patrols.

Varnell Police Department

The Varnell Police Department employs approximately 11 officers.

Tunnel Hill Police Department

The Tunnel Hill Police Department employs approximately eight officers, which includes one chief, two full-time officers and five part-time officers.

Cohutta Police Department

The Cohutta Police Department employs two officers.

6.3.4. Parks and Recreation

Whitfield County, Dalton, Varnell and Tunnel Hill operate recreation departments responsible for some level of park and recreation services. The facilities and services provided by each are generally described

in the following section. Park and recreation facilities are shown in the Community Facilities Map found in the Atlas of Maps.

Whitfield County Recreation Department

The department administers and manages 10 community parks and associated recreation facilities and programs in the County. The Recreation Commission has an agreement with the Whitfield County School System to allow the public use of school facilities for both general and organized recreational purposes. Including school facilities, there are approximately 206 acres devoted to recreation facilities.

The department offers recreation programs for baseball, basketball, cheerleading, football and softball located throughout the County that include some of the County school system facilities and parks owned by the municipalities of Cohutta, Tunnel Hill and Varnell. The department employs a staff of eight full-time staff members. The department operates under the jurisdiction of the Whitfield County Recreation Commission. Table 6-1 provides a list of the recreation sites available for use in by the department. Park and recreation facilities are shown on the Community Facilities Map located in the Atlas of Maps.

Table 6-2 Parks and Recreation – Whitfield County

Parks & Recreation Area	Facility	Activities/Facilities
Edwards Park	Cleveland Highway (SR 71); Plainview area	8 lighted baseball/softball fields and maintenance shop
Westside Park	SR 201; Mt. Vernon area; near Westside Elementary and Westside Middle	2 lighted baseball/softball fields, lighted football/soccer field, playground
Pleasant Grove Park	Pleasant Grove Drive (near SR 71) Pleasant Grove community	3 lighted baseball/softball fields, walking track, picnic shelter, playground
Dawnville Park	Richardson Road. near Lower Dawnville Road (SR 286)	3 lighted baseball/softball fields, walking track, picnic shelter, playground
Eastbrook Park	Eastbrook Road near (near Eastbrook Middle)	4 lighted baseball/softball fields, lighted football/soccer field, picnic shelter, walking track
Dug Gap Park	Dug Gap Road (adjacent to Dug Gap Elem.)	3 lighted baseball/softball fields, tennis court, walking track, outdoor basketball, playground
Valley Point Park	U.S. 41(adjacent to Valley Ponit Elementary and Middle)	3 lighted baseball/softball fields, tennis court, picnic shelter, walking track, outdoor basketball
Varnell Park	Prater's Mill Road in Varnell (near Varnell Elementary School)	3 lighted baseball/softball fields, tennis court, gymnasium, 2 playgrounds, outdoor basketball
Tunnel Hill Park	G. Vaughn Parkway in Varnell	3 lighted baseball/softball fields, tennis court, outdoor basketball and volleyball, walking track, playground and a picnic area with three sheds
Cohutta Park	Windwalker Drive in Cohutta (adjacent to Cohutta Elementary School)	3 lighted baseball/softball fields, playground, walking track

Source: Whitfield County Recreation Department

The department completed a recreation master plan in 1996. The County also has a Greenspace Plan that identified approximately 40,000 acres of floodplains, ridge lines and other unique natural areas in the county for permanent greenspace preservation. The County plans to prepare an updated parks and

recreation master plan in 2008-2009 that will outline the County's long-range park and recreation needs in addition to providing a plan for meeting the established needs.

Dalton Parks and Recreation Department

The department employs a staff of 50 full-time staff members. The department is governed a five-member Recreation Commission and funded by a city charter dictated property tax that allows up to two mills. The department maintains 644 acres of land, 12 parks, 23 athletic fields, 18 tennis courts and nine playgrounds. In 2004, the department completed phase one of a long-range Strategic Parks Recreation Plan by constructing a 10-field softball complex with two five-field paddle wheel designed pods side-by-side. The department completed a parks master plan in 1994. The department has identified the need for more passive parks and facilities. A master plan for Lakeshore Park was completed in 2005. A master plan for the Community Center and James Brown Park was completed in 2008. Table 6-1 provides a list of the recreation sites available for use in by the department.

Table 6-3 Parks and Recreation – Dalton

Parks & Recreation Area	Facility	Activities/Facilities
Dalton Green Park (2.5 acres)	Downtown Dalton	Playground and gazebo
Joan Lewis Park (2 acres)	5th Ave.	Playground, soccer fields, stage, picnic shelters
Nob North Golf Course (160 acres)	298 Nob North Dr. (Cohutta)	Public golf
Community Center Park (10.5 acres)	1234 Fredrick St.	Rooms, pool, gym, ball field, computer lab, playground
Brookwood Park (3 acres)	Walnut Ave.	Tennis courts, playground, gazebo
City Park School Gym	Thornton Ave.	Summer recreation
Dalton High School	1500 Manly St.	6 tennis courts
Park Creek Gym	Hale-Bowen Dr.	Summer recreation
Al Rollins Baseball Complex (55 acres)	Threadmill Rd.	Youth baseball, picnic shelters, playground, lake
Lakeshore Park (45 acres)	Cedar St.	Recreation, softball, baseball, soccer, tennis courts (10) and club house, picnic shelters, lake, track
James Brown Park/John Davis Recreation Center (36 acres)	904 Civic Dr.	Rooms, gym, pool, picnic shelters, ball fields, outdoor basketball court
Heritage Point Park (regional) (260 acres)	Cross Plains Trail	10 softball fields, corporate pavilion for 500, soccer fields/football fields, artificial turf soccer fields
Dalton-Whitfield Senior Citizens Center	Cappes St.	Senior adult activities

Source: City of Dalton Parks and Recreation Department

Varnell Recreation Department

The Varnell Recreation Department maintains the Varnell Park located on Prater's Mill Road near Varnell Elementary School. The 18-acre facility was renovated in the 1990s. Facilities for this park are described in Table 6-1. The park is managed by a five-person Recreation Commission. The Commission administers the Youth Recreation Program in conjunction with the Varnell Athletic Department and the Whitfield County Recreation Department.

Tunnel Hill Parks

Recreation facilities in Tunnel Hill consist of Harry Griffin Park, which contains 18 acres and is managed by the Park Commission in coordination with the Whitfield County Recreation Department. The park facilities are described in Table 6-1. In addition, the Tunnel Hill Golf Club, a nine-hole course, is located along the west right of way of on U.S. 41 and south of the railroad.

Cohutta Parks

The town of Cohutta has a five-person Recreation Board that manages Cohutta Park and organizes recreational activities for residents in association with the Whitfield County Recreation Department. The park was expanded in the 1990s from five to 18 acres and is described in detail in Table 6-1. Cohutta Park is located along Windwalker Drive adjacent to Cohutta Elementary School.

6.3.5. Stormwater Management

Water pollution degrades surface waters making them unsafe for drinking, fishing, swimming and other activities. As authorized by the Clean Water Act, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) permit program controls water pollution by regulating point sources that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States. The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) administers the NPDES regulations for Georgia. The first phase of the NPDES issues in 1990 was aimed at medium and large Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4s) with populations of 100,000 or more. The second phase issued in 1999 required that MS4s with populations of between 10,000 and 100,000, like Whitfield County and the city of Dalton, prepare and implement stormwater management plans to control and mitigate pollution, which the County and city have done.

Whitfield County and the cities of Dalton, Tunnel Hill and Varnell were in 2002 required to develop stormwater management plans under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination Systems (NPDES) Phase II Storm Water Management Program. Each community adopted the required plans. In addition, Whitfield County and the city of Dalton created separate departments for the purpose of administering.

Total Maximum Daily Loads

The Clean Water Act also includes monitoring of the quality of fresh water rivers, streams and lakes. The Clean Water Act provides water quality standards and guidelines that EPD implements with Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) for various water bodies based on certain designated uses as outlined in the Georgia 2006 305(b)/303(d) draft list of waters prepared as a part of the Georgia 2004-2005 assessment of water quality and prepared in accordance with Sections 305(b) and 303(d) of the Federal Clean Water Act and guidance from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The assessed waterbodies are classified according to a comparison of water quality monitoring results to water quality standards and other pertinent information.

All stream segments in Whitfield County are given designated uses, such as fishing, swimming and potable water withdrawal, and then divided into three categories based on ambient levels of water quality: fully supporting designated uses, partially supporting designated uses, and not supporting designated uses. The EPD reported the 13 river and stream segments in Whitfield County as either "partially supporting" or "not supporting" their designated uses in 2006.

Coahulla Creek

Coahulla Creek, below 728 Road to Mill Creek, in 2006 was reported by EPD as "not supporting" the designated use of fishing due to a violation of the criterion for fecal coliform bacteria caused by non-point sources/unknown sources for an extent of five miles.

Conasuga River

Conasuga River, from the Georgia/Tennessee state line to SR 286, in 2006 was reported by EPD as "partially supporting" the designated uses of fishing and drinking water due to a violation of the criterion for fecal coliform bacteria and fish consumption guidance caused by non-point sources/unknown sources for an extent of 18 miles.

Drowning Bear Creek

Drowning Bear Creek, from Tar Creek to Little Creek, in 2006 was reported by EPD as "partially supporting" the designated use of fishing due to a violation of the criterion for biota impacted caused by non-point sources/unknown sources for an extent of four miles.

Haig Mill Creek

Haig Mill Creek, from Haig Mill Lake to Mill Creek, in 2006 was reported by EPD as "partially supporting" the designated use of fishing due to a violation of the criterion for biota impacted caused by non-point sources/unknown sources for an extent of one mile.

Mill Creek

Mill Creek, from Haig Mill Creek to Coahulla Creek, in 2006 was reported by EPD as "partially supporting" the designated use of fishing due to a violation of the criterion for biota impacted caused by non-point sources/unknown sources for an extent of seven miles.

Stover Creek

Stover Creek, from headwaters to Swamp Creek, in 2006 was reported by EPD as "partially supporting" the designated use of fishing due to a violation of the criterion for biota impacted caused by non-point sources/unknown sources for an extent of four miles.

Unnamed tributary to Conasauga River

The unnamed tributary to Conasauga River, from Dow Chemical Company to the Conasauga River, in 2006 was reported by EPD as "not supporting" the designated use of fishing due to a violation of the criterion for carbon tetrachloride caused by residual from industrial sites for an extent of one mile.

Cat Creek

Cat Creek, from the Georgia/Tennessee state line to Little Creek, in 2006 was reported by EPD as "partially supporting" the designated use of fishing due to a violation of the criterion for biota impacted caused by non-point sources/unknown sources for an extent of four miles.

Cove Branch

Cove Branch, from headwaters to East Chickamauga Creek, in 2006 was reported by EPD as "partially supporting" the designated use of fishing due to a violation of the criterion for biota impacted caused by non-point sources/unknown sources for an extent of four miles.

Dry Branch

Dry Branch, from Georgia/Tennessee state line to Tiger Creek, in 2006 was reported by EPD as "partially supporting" the designated use of fishing due to a violation of the criterion for biota impacted caused by non-point sources/unknown sources for an extent of three miles.

Dry Creek

Dry Branch, headwaters to East Chickamauga Creek, in 2006 was reported by EPD as "partially supporting" the designated use of fishing due to a violation of the criterion for biota impacted and fecal coliform bacteria caused by non-point sources/unknown sources for an extent of 10 miles.

Tanyard Creek

Tanyard Creek, from SR 201 to Chickamauga Creek, in 2006 was reported by EPD as "partially supporting" the designated use of fishing due to a violation of the criterion for biota impacted caused by non-point sources/unknown sources for an extent of three miles.

Tiger Creek

Tiger Creek, from Dry Branch to East Chickamauga Creek, in 2006 was reported by EPD as "not supporting" the designated use of fishing due to a violation of the criterion for biota impacted caused by non-point sources/unknown sources for an extent of 4 miles.

6.3.6. Solid Waste Management

Solid waste management and handling in Whitfield County and incorporated cities is done jointly through the Dalton-Whitfield County Solid Waste Management Authority, which has 40 employees and operates three transfer stations, and one sanitary landfill with residential drop off at each facility. Each location has full facilities for receiving recyclable materials. The sanitary landfill has an expected 25-year reserve capacity. Dalton, Cohutta and Varnell operate residential curb side waste collection, with Dalton also providing collection of recyclables at the curb. Authority facilities are as follows.

- Old Dixie Landfill – accepts commercial waste, brush, bulky and bagged residential waste, and many recycling opportunities.
- McGaughey Chapel Transfer Station – serves residents of northern Whitfield County
- Martin Luther King, Jr. Transfer Station – serves citizens of the Downtown Dalton area.
- Westside Transfer Station – serves citizens of the Westside community.
- Household Hazardous Waste Facility – located at the Old Dixie Landfill.

6.3.7. Education

Public Schools

Two public school systems operate in Whitfield County. Dalton City Schools provide public school services for the City of Dalton residents. Whitfield County Schools provide public school services for unincorporated Whitfield County and the residents of Varnell, Tunnel Hill and Cohutta.

Whitfield County Schools

The Whitfield County School System enrolled 13,561 students for the 2007-2008 school year on campuses located throughout the County, including three high schools, five middle schools, 12 elementary schools, one alternative school and one career academy. Of the 21 schools, 14 operated at more than 100% of their capacity during the 2007-2008 school year, as shown in Table 6-4. Whitfield County Schools plans to construct one new elementary school (open fall 2010) and a new high school (open fall 2011). Both new schools are a top priority. In addition, renovations and expansions are planned at three elementary schools and one middle school, as shown in Table 6-4.

Table 6-4 Whitfield County School System (2007-2008 School Year)

School Name	Address	# of Students	# of Teachers	Capacity	% of Capacity in 2005	Future Plans (expansions, renovations, etc.)
Antioch Elem.	1819 Riverbend Rd.	631	30	525	120%	Renovation and Expansion 2008-2009
Beaverdale Elem.	1350 Prater Mill Rd.	433	21	625	69%	
Cohutta Elem.	254 Wolfe St.	336	15	425	79%	
Dawnville Elem.	1380 Dawnville Rd NE	700	35	600	116%	
Dug Gap Elem.	2032 Dug Gap Rd.	508	24	450	113%	Renovation 2008-2009
Eastside Elem.	102 Hill Rd. Dalton	588	29	625	94%	
New Hope Elem.	1175 New Hope Rd.	627	30	575	109%	
Pleasant Grove Elem.	2725 Cleveland Rd.	632	31	450	140%	
Tunnel Hill Elem.	203 E. School St.	352	19	400	88%	
Varnell Elem.	3900 Cleveland Rd.	541	25	525	103%	Renovation 2008-2009
Valley Point Elem.	3798 Dixie Highway	524	26	525	100%	
Westside Elem.	1815 Utility Rd.	759	37	650	117%	
Eastbrook Middle	700 Hill Rd.	775	41	575	135%	Expansion 2009-2010
New Hope Middle	1325 New Hope Rd.	525	29	650	81%	
North Whitfield Middle	3264 Cleveland Rd.	651	31	519	125%	
Valley Point Middle	3796 Dixie Highway	501	26	400	125%	
Westside Middle	580 Lafayette Rd.	574	30	475	121%	
Whitfield Career Academy	2300 Maddox Chapel Rd.	745	38.5	400	186%	
Northwest Whitfield High	1651 Tunnel Hill-Varnell Rd.	1,743	81	1,450	120%	
Phoenix High	2818 Airport Rd.	142	7.5	150	95%	
Southeast Whitfield Co. High	1954 Riverbend Rd. SE	1,274	62	1,425	89%	
Total		13,561	474	12,419	109.2%	

Source: Whitfield County School System, 2008

Dalton City Schools

The Dalton City School System enrolled 6,450 students in December 2006 on campuses located throughout the City, including one high school, one middle school, six elementary schools, one pre-kindergarten, and one International Academy. Each school currently operates below capacity, as shown in Table 6-5. Dalton City Schools plans to add 84 classrooms to its system. Allocation of these classrooms to specific schools is shown in Table 6-5. No new schools are planned.

Table 6-5 Dalton City School System (2005-2006 School Year)

School Name	Address	# of Students	# of Teachers	Capacity	% of Capacity in 2005	Future Plans (expansions, renovations, etc.)
Blue Ridge School (PK-5)	100 S. Bogle St.	550	41	652	84%	16 classrooms
Brookwood Elem. School (PK-5)	501 Central Ave.	600	42	652	92%	12 classrooms
City Park School (PK-5)	405 School St. Dalton	800	56	1062	75%	
Park Creek School (PK-5)	1500 Hale Bowen Dr.	550	43	722	76%	16 classrooms
Roan School (PK-5)	1116 Roan St.	550	38	611	90%	
Westwood Elem. School (PK-5)	708 Trammell St.	500	37	631	79%	
Dalton Middle (6-8)	1250 Cross Plains Trail	1,250	88	2186	57%	10 classrooms
Dalton High (9-12)	1500 Manly St.	1,600	105	2386	67%	30 classrooms
International Academy at Blue Ridge (4-12)	803 E. Morris. St.	50	3	200	25%	
Total		6,450	6,450	9,102	70%	84 classrooms

Source: Dalton City Schools

Private Schools

Seven private schools operate in Whitfield County. Table 6-5 presents the detailed list of private schools in Whitfield County. Christian Heritage School, a non-denominational day school in Dalton, is the largest of the private schools in Whitfield County with more than 300 students in pre-kindergarten through 12th grade. In addition to the schools listed in Table 6-5 the Mountain Brook Comprehensive Academy also operates in Dalton. A Member of the Georgia Psychoeducational Network, Mountain Brook is a comprehensive treatment program which serves children with severe Emotional/Behavioral disorders from birth through 21 years of age who live in Northwest Georgia School Systems, including Dalton City Schools, and Whitfield County School.

Table 6-6 Private Schools in Whitfield County

School Name	Address	Range	# of Students
Cedar Valley Academy	2744 Cleveland Hwy. Dalton	PK-12	55
Christian Heritage School	1600 MLK Dalton	PK-12	308
Dogwood Christian Academy	5296 Dogwood Valley Rd. Tunnel Hill	PK-12	79
Learning Tree School	300 South Tibbs Rd. Dalton	NS-8	50
Pathway Christian Academy	1007 Underwood St. Dalton	PK-12	152
Rock Hill School	506 Highland Dr. Dalton	PK-K5	5

Source: privateschoolreview.com

Post-Secondary Education

Dalton State College is the only facility for higher learning within a 40-mile radius of Whitfield County. The college occupies a campus consisting of approximately 141 acres and nine buildings. The college offers associate, certificate, and targeted baccalaureate programs, as well as a wide variety of public service and continuing education activities. The University System of Georgia's Board of Regents chartered Dalton Junior College in 1963. It opened in 1967 and was renamed Dalton College in 1987. It was then renamed Dalton State College in 1998.

Other post-secondary education opportunities exist in adjacent counties. Covenant College and Northwestern Technical College are located in Walker County. The Gordon County campus of the Coosa Valley Technical College is located in Calhoun. The University of Tennessee-Chattanooga is located in Chattanooga in Hamilton County, Tennessee.

6.3.8. Libraries

Whitfield County has two primary library facilities, which are available to the public. The Dalton-Whitfield Regional Library is located on Cappes Street in Dalton. The Derrell C. Roberts Library, is located on the Dalton State College campus on Holiday Drive. In addition, the Varnell Library provides local service to citizens of Varnell. The library is located on City Hall Drive.

6.3.9. Health Care

Hamilton Medical Center, a 282-bed full-service hospital in Dalton, provides Whitfield County with hospital services. The hospital's centers for excellence include psychiatry and substance abuse, diabetes treatment, cancer care and maternal and infant care. The Level II trauma center, among the state's busiest, provides immediate and ambulatory emergency care. Hamilton's technologically advanced diagnostic facility includes a fully-accredited laboratory, a magnetic resonance imaging center and outpatient neurodiagnostic center. The medical center is also home to an advanced computer radiology system and outpatient women's pavilion featuring mammography, ultrasound and bone densitometry capabilities.

Five nursing homes also operate in Whitfield County: Quinton Memorial Health Care and Rehabilitation Center, Ridgeway Manor Nursing Home, Wooddale Health Care Center, Regency Park Health Care Center and Shady Oaks.

6.4. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats Analysis

6.4.1. Strengths

- There are many recreation and learning opportunities for families and children, including history-oriented resources and activities.
- Dalton and Whitfield County have adequate high-tech infrastructure in place to support business recruitment and expansion.

6.4.2. Weaknesses

- Growth in Whitfield County is limited due to lack of sewer infrastructure. Planned sewer expansion should be coordinated with land use planning.

- There are insufficient after-school options for youth. Needed youth-oriented activities/facilities include YMCAs, and transportation options are also needed for youth after school.

6.4.3. Opportunities

- Substantial water resources are available in Whitfield County that can support long term growth with proactive planning and resource management.
- Limited sewer creates the need for large residential lots. As planned sewer services expand, the opportunity exists to use the expansion as a way to direct growth to locations the county outlines in the land use plan and to manage the timing of new growth.
- Along with an existing inventory and condition assessment of individual septic systems, a mandatory septic tank maintenance program needs to be in place countywide.

6.4.4. Threats

- Where industrial uses have been introduced into some former agricultural areas, there is insufficient water pressure for fire protection.

CHAPTER 7

7. Intergovernmental Coordination

Identification of existing coordination mechanisms and process with adjacent local governments, independent special authorities and districts, independent development authorities and districts, school boards, and programs

This chapter identifies existing coordination mechanisms and processes in Whitfield County. These include intergovernmental agreements, service delivery, joint planning and service agreements, special legislation or joint meetings or work groups for the purpose of coordination. Sections below outline the independent agencies, boards and authorities, regional programs, and consistency with the Whitfield County Service Delivery Strategy. The purpose of this element is to assess the adequacy and suitability of existing coordination mechanisms to serve the current and future needs of the community and articulate goals and formulate a strategy for effective implementation of community policies and objectives that, in many cases, involve multiple governmental entities.

7.1. Adjacent Local Governments

A substantial portion of intergovernmental coordination is achieved through informal processes, such as the exchange of data between City and County government agencies. These informal processes are useful and effective, but formal mechanisms for intergovernmental coordination are also necessary to address some issues that cannot always be resolved through informal methods. The following sections will detail some of the many formal and informal coordination mechanisms that exist between Whitfield County and local adjacent governments.

Whitfield County includes all or part of four municipalities: Dalton, Cohutta, Tunnel Hill and Varnell. Whitfield County is surrounded by the Georgia county governments of Catoosa, Gordon, Murray and Walker counties. Whitfield County also shares a boundary with Bradley County, Tennessee.

7.2. Independent Agencies, Boards and Authorities

- Dalton-Whitfield Economic Development Authority
- Dalton-Whitfield Joint Development Authority
- Dalton-Whitfield Regional Solid Waste Management Authority
- Development Authority of Whitfield County
- Residential Care Facilities for the Elderly Authority of Whitfield County
- Dalton-Whitfield County Hospital Authority
- Development Authority of the City of Dalton
- Dalton Airport Authority
- Dalton Building Authority
- Dalton Downtown Development Authority

7.3. School Boards

- Whitfield County Schools Board of Education
- Dalton City Schools Board of Education

7.4. Regional and State Programs

7.4.1. North Georgia Regional Development Center (NGRDC)

NGRDC provides support to counties and municipalities in the areas of local government planning, economic development, grant preparation and administration, job training, and aging services. Its board members represent the North Georgia region's counties, municipalities and private sector. NGRDC also coordinates regional planning efforts in the areas of comprehensive planning, bicycle/pedestrian planning, and water resource/assessment planning. NGRDC is also the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for Whitfield County. The Dalton-Whitfield County MPO is federally-designated organization that provides for regional transportation planning to meet air quality standards and for programming projects to implement the adopted Long Range Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program.

7.4.2. Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)

GDOT maintains and improves state and Federal highways in Whitfield County and provides financial assistance for local road improvements.

7.4.3. Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA)

The Georgia DCA has several management responsibilities for the State's coordinated planning program and reviews plans for compliance with minimum planning standards. DCA provides a variety of technical assistance and grant funding to the County and cities.

7.4.4. Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

The Georgia DNR is available to provide assistance and guidance to the County and cities in a number of important areas including: water conservation, environmental protection, wildlife preservation and historic preservation. It is the mission of the DNR to sustain, enhance, protect and conserve Georgia's historic and cultural resources for present and future generations, while recognizing the importance of promoting the development of commerce and utilize sound environmental practices. The department has 9 divisions working to accomplish this mission: Environmental Protection Division, the Coastal Resources Division, Pollution Prevention Assistance Division, Wildlife Resources Division, Water Conservation Program, and the Program Support Division.

The Environmental Protection Division (EPD) of the Georgia DNR is a state agency charged with protection of Georgia's air, land and water resources through the authority of state and federal env8iironmentatl statues. These laws regulate public and private facilities in areas of air quality, water quality, hazardous waste, water supply, solid waste, surface mining, underground storage tanks and others. EPD issues and enforces all state permits in these areas and has full delegation for federal environmental permits except Section 404 (wetland) permits.

7.5. Consistency with Service Delivery Strategy

In 1997, the state passed the Service Delivery Strategy Act (HB489). This law mandates the cooperation of local governments with regard to service deliver issues. The act required each county to adopt a Service Delivery Strategy (SDS). The Whitfield County Board of Commissioners and councils of each the County's municipalities adopted the Whitfield County SDS in 2002 summarized in Table 7-1. However, as part of the Comprehensive Plan Update, the SDS is being examined and evaluated.The SDS includes an identification of services provided by various entities, assignment of responsibility for provision of services and the location of service areas, a description of funding sources, and an identification of contracts, ordinances, and other measures necessary to implement the SDS.

Table 7-1 Whitfield County Service Delivery Strategy Summary

Services Provided	Whitfield County Service Delivery Strategy	Adoption Date	Service Area
First Responder Services	The City of Dalton provides first responder services solely within corporate limits of Dalton, while Whitfield County provides services to the unincorporated areas of Whitfield County, to the City of Tunnel Hill and Varnell. The City of Cohutta provides first responder services within corporate limits of Cohutta and within unincorporated Whitfield County by 911 referral and/or request of Whitfield County.	29-Oct-02	
Workforce Housing Development	The City of Dalton and Whitfield County jointly provide Workforce Housing Development through the Dalton/Whitfield County Non-profit Development Foundation, Inc. The Foundation meets the Community Housing Development Organization requirements to provide opportunities for developers to provide Workforce Housing in both the City of Dalton and Whitfield County.	29-Oct-02	Countywide
Senior Citizen Recreation & Social	Whitfield County and City of Dalton executed agreement to provide Senior Center, a multi-purpose building to house activities of the Seniors Program. Two governments fund the Center 50-50 including senior transportation. The City of Dalton's Parks and Recreation Commission receives and manages joint funding, while overseeing operation. The City of Cohutta will compliment and assist through its renovation of a community facility.	29-Oct-02	Countywide
Public Buildings & Grounds	Properties owned by each municipality are maintained solely by the municipality. Such properties owned by Whitfield County and used in conjunction with the provision of basic county-wide services, regardless of the physical, geographic location within Whitfield County, are maintained solely by Whitfield County.	29-Oct-02	Countywide
GIS	Whitfield County provides and maintains a GIS platform, including database and mapping information.	29-Oct-02	Countywide
Airport Facilities	The City of Dalton is the sole provider of airport service within Whitfield County. Dalton provides service through Dalton Airport Authority, established in January 1987.	29-Oct-02	Countywide
Ambulance Services	Whitfield County provides this service on a county-wide basis, through an agreement with Hamilton Emergency Medical Services.	29-Oct-02	Countywide
Animal Control	Whitfield County is sole provider of animal control services within Whitfield County.	29-Oct-02	Countywide
Coroner	Whitfield County is sole provider of coroner services in within Whitfield County.	29-Oct-02	Countywide
Court Services	Whitfield County maintains Superior Court, Magistrate Court, Probate Court and Juvenile Court. The City of Dalton, Tunnel Hill, Varnell and Cohutta maintain Municipal Courts.	29-Oct-02	Countywide
E-911	On November 8, 1988 a majority of voters agreed to a county-wide referendum to support an E-911 enhanced telephone system. Enhanced 911 service is provided throughout Whitfield County (both within and without the incorporated areas of the county) with Whitfield County being designated as the answering center for all 911 calls.	29-Oct-02	Countywide

Source: Whitfield County Service Delivery Strategy 2002

7.6. Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Treats Analysis

7.6.1. Strengths

- Service delivery strategy adopted in 2002 remains relevant to all parities in 2008

7.6.2. Weaknesses

- Whitfield County's cities include multiple areas of unincorporated islands. In addition, municipal boundaries have been expanded over time in such a way as to create confusing service delivery areas surrounding each municipality.

7.6.3. Opportunities

- Whitfield County and its municipalities should coordinate to correct the annexation islands and other city boundary-related issues.
- Coordination between the school systems, city councils and the BOC ensures that new facilities keep up with growth.

7.6.4. Threats

- A common vision for growth and development is needed that includes buy-in from the Board of Commissioners, city councils, boards of education, utility providers and other agencies responsible for providing services to citizens of Whitfield County could see efforts. Without coordination conflicting growth patterns emerge throughout the County.

CHAPTER 8

8. Transportation System

Identification and evaluation of the adequacy of the road network, alternative modes, railroads, trucking, airports and the transportation-land use connection

8.1. Introduction

Several trends affect transportation planning for Whitfield County and understanding these trends is crucial to successfully identifying both transportation impacts and the appropriate mix of strategies and projects necessary to address transportation and land use needs. An inventory of the County's existing transportation infrastructure was compiled to ensure that facilities are properly identified and that the basis for future analyses is accurate and complete.

Information collected for this section comes from several sources. The primary resource is the *2030 Long Range Transportation Plan* (LRTP) for the Dalton and Whitfield County Urban Area. Prepared by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Dalton and Whitfield County in 2005, the LRTP identifies the goals, objectives, policies, and improvements needed to maintain a safe and efficient multimodal transportation system. The LRTP incorporates recommendations of the *Whitfield County/City of Dalton Multimodal Transportation Study* (2003, Greenhorne & O'Mara, Inc.) that was prepared for the Georgia Department of Transportation in partnership with Whitfield County and the City of Dalton and the *City of Dalton Multimodal Transportation Study* (2003, Tunnell-Spangler-Walsh & Associates). Additional information for this section comes from the *Regional Bike and Pedestrian Facilities Plan for the North Georgia Region* (2005, North Georgia Regional Development Center) and from the *Dalton-Whitfield County Transit Needs Study* (2006, Dovetail Consulting).

More detailed information related to methodology and other statistics presented here can be found in the respective transportation plans.

8.2. Road Network

The Whitfield County roadway network is comprised of a system of arterials, collectors, and local streets Table 8-1. The following is a listing of the major roads that serve Whitfield County.

- I-75 serves as the gateway into Whitfield County from the major urban areas of Atlanta, Georgia and Chattanooga, Tennessee. This major corridor serves the major goods movements in the county and provides a major entrance for tourists into the county and the surrounding region. Five interchanges provide access from I-75 to Whitfield County.
- The North Dalton Bypass (US 76/U.S. 41/SR 3), the South Dalton Bypass (U.S. 41/SR 3), and SR 3 Connector provide a multi-lane circumferential route north, east, and south of Dalton. Due to the mountainous terrain, the bypass does not extend west of I-75.

- SR 71/Cleveland Highway begins at the North Dalton Bypass and extends north to the Tennessee state line.
- SR 201 enters Whitfield County on the east at the Walker County line, extends through Tunnel Hill, and terminates in Varnell at SR 2.
- SR 2 enters Whitfield County on the east at the Catoosa County line and extends through Varnell and into Murray County.
- SR 3/U.S. 41 enters Whitfield County on the south at the Gordon County line and extends north to the South Dalton Bypass/SR 3 Connector. SR 3/U.S. 41 then traverses north through Tunnel Hill and into Catoosa County.
- SR 52/Walnut Avenue begins at I-75 and extends east and west through Dalton.
- SR 52/US 76/Chatsworth Highway extends east and west through Dalton into Murray County.
- SR 286 begins at SR 52/US 76 in Dalton and extends north –south into Murray County.

In addition to the traditional road network is a state-designated scenic byway. The Cohutta-Chattahoochee Scenic Byway extends from Fort Mountain State Park in Murray County to the Cohutta Fishery in Whitfield County, with a spur to Prater's Mill.

Table 8-1 Road Classifications

Road Classification	State Routes Mileage	County Roads Mileage	City Streets Mileage	Total
Urban Interstate	5.71	0.00	0.00	5.71
Urban Principal Arterial	16.53	5.17	2.59	24.29
Urban Minor Arterial	4.59	23.38	5.56	33.53
Urban Collector	0.04	34.01	9.81	43.86
Urban Local	0.00	116.46	116.69	233.15
Urban Total	***26.87***	***179.02***	***134.65***	***340.54***
Rural Interstate	12.87	0.00	0.00	12.87
Rural Principal Arterial	7.18	0.00	0.00	7.18
Rural Minor Arterial	37.49	0.00	0.00	37.49
Rural Major Collector	15.06	39.62	0.00	54.68
Rural Minor Collector	0.00	52.84	0.00	52.84
Rural Local	1.79	424.62	10.18	436.59
Rural Total	***74.39***	***517.08***	***10.18***	***601.65***
Grand Totals	**101.26**	**696.1**	**144.83**	**942.19**

Source: 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan

The *2030 Long Range Transportation Plan* identified road improvement projects based on a review and evaluation of their impact on the reduction of traffic congestion, enhancement of safety, impact on land use, local support and available funds. Proposed improvements are classified as Short Term (1-5 years), Mid Term (6-10 years), and Long Term (11 years to the Horizon Year 2030) and are provided in Tables 8-2, 8-3 and 8-4. Each table lists proposed improvements in priority order. Approximately half of the projects are road widening projects.

Table 8-2 Road Improvement Plan 2005-2030: Short-Term Recommendations (1-5 years)

Project	Location	Description	City/County
N. Dalton Bypass/SR 71	Intersection of Bypass and SR 71	Intersection Improvement	Whitfield/Dalton
New Interchange at N. Dalton Bypass	Intersection with SR 71/Cleveland Hwy		Whitfield/Dalton
Lakeland Rd.	Brook Hollow to Leslie Dr.	Realign and Geometrics	Whitfield/Dalton
Reed Rd(Implement N. Whitfield Traffic Study)	Rauschenberg to SR 71	Intersection Improvements	Whitfield
Veterans Drive	Walnut Ave to Underwood Drive	Widening and geometrics	Dalton
Flemming St.	N. Dalton Bypass to SR 71	Realign to SR 71, N. Oaks	Whitfield
South Dixie Highway	SR 3 Connector to Walnut Ave.	Widening	Whitfield/Dalton
Airport Rd./CR 664	Tibbs Bridge Rd. to Murray Co. Line	Reconstruction	Whitfield
Riverbend Rd.	S. Dalton Bypass to Walnut Ave.	Widen to 4 lanes	Whitfield/Dalton
E. Morris/Murray St.	SR 52 to Glenwood	Widen to 4 lanes	Dalton
Underwood Rd.	N. Dalton Bypass to Veterans	Widen to 4 lanes	Dalton
I-75/Rocky Face Exit	SR 3/U.S. 41	Interchange Reconst (row)	Dalton
I-75/Carbondale Exit	Carbondale Rd./CR 665	Interchange Reconstruction	Whitfield
I-75 at SR 201		Widening I-75	Whitfield
ATMS-GDOT Regional TCC-ITS		Construction of Center-	Whitfield
CR 3/Henry Owens Rd. at NS R/R		Railroad Crossing Safety	Whitfield
CR 290/Beaver Rd. at CSX R/R		Railroad Crossing Safety	Whitfield
March to the Sea Bikeway		Signage and misc improv.	Whitfield
Upgrade Signals	Along SR 52 & SR 2		Whitfield/Dalton
Water Pollution Mitigation			
NS RR Depot Area Renovation			Dalton

Source: 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan

Table 8-3 Road Improvement Plan 2005-2030: Mid-Term Recommendations (6-10 years)

Project	Location	Description	City or County
Underwood Rd.	Dawnville to N. Dalton Bypass	Widen to 4 lanes	Whitfield/Dalton
Thornton Ave./Hospital Access	N. Dalton Bypass to E. Waugh St.	Widen to 4 lanes	Dalton
SR 3/U.S. 41	Campbell Rd. to Catoosa Co. Line	Widening	Whitfield
I-75/Carbondale Exit	Carbondale Rd/CR 665	Interchange Reconstruct	Whitfield
I-75 at SR 201		Widening I-75	Whitfield
SR 201 at I-75		Widening SR 201	Whitfield
SR 3	SR 136/Resaca N. Gordon to SR3 Conn.	Widen	Whitfield

Source: 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan

Table 8-4 Road Improvement Plan 2005-2030: Long-Term Recommendations (10+ years)

Project	Location	Description	City or County
Reed Road	N. Dalton Bypass to SR 201	Widen to 3 lanes	Whitfield
Dawnville Rd.	Underwood Rd. to SR 286	Widen to 4 lanes	Whitfield
Brickyard Ext to I-75	Extend Brickyard to New I-75 Intersection		Whitfield
I-75 at Waugh St/College Dr.	I-75 to Waugh St/College Dr.	Extension and New Interchange	Dalton
SR 52	SR 52 Bus. To CR 112	Widen to 6 lanes and	Whitfield
Glenwood Ave.	Morris St. to Morningside	Continuous Turn Lane	Dalton
SR 201	Mt. Vernon Rd. to SR3/U.S. 41	Widen to 4 lanes	Whitfield
U.S. 41	At Old Chattanooga& Old Lafayette	Intersection Improvements	Whitfield
Antioch/Brickyard	S. Dixie Hwy. To Riverbend Rd.	Widen to 4 lanes	Whitfield
Beaverdale	SR 71/Cleveland Hwy. to Lake Francis Rd.	Widen to 4 lanes	Whitfield
Cedar Ridge Rd.	SR 52/Chatsworth to Tibbs Bridge Rd.	Widen to 4 lanes	Whitfield
Mill Creek Rd	Hurricane Rd. to SR 3	Upgrade, Widen, Geometrics	Whitfield
E. Dug Gap Rd./Treadmill	Dug Gap Rd. to S. Dixie Highway	Upgrade, Widen, Geometrics	Whit./Dalton
Dug Gap Battle/Dug Gap Rd.	Trade Center Dr. to Hurricane Rd	Upgrade, Widen, Geometrics	Whitfield
Lower Dawnville Rd.(SR 286)	SR 52 to County Line	Widen to 4 lanes	Whitfield
Tyler St.	Tyler to Waugh St.	Extend to Waugh, RR Separations	Dalton
Mill Creek Rd	SR 201 to Hurricane Rd.	Add lane, Geometrics	Whitfield
Tibbs Bridge Rd.	Cedar Ridge to Keith Mill Rd.	Reconstruct/Burgess Intersect	Whitfield
SR 52/Chatsworth Hwy.	Dalton Bypass to County Line	Widen to 6 lanes	Whitfield
SR 2	SR 201 to Old Praters Mill Rd.	Widen to 4 lanes	Whit./Varnell
Dug Gap Rd.	S. Dalton Bypass to E. Dug Gap Mtn. Rd	Upgrade, Widen, Geometrics	Whitfield
S. Dalton Bypass	I-75 to Lakeland Rd.	Widen to 6 lanes	Whitfield
I-75/Rocky Face Exit	SR 3/U.S. 41	Interchange Reconst (const.)	Dalton
SR 3/U.S. 41	SR 136/Resaca N. Gordon to SR 3 Conn.	Widening	Whitfield
SR 2 at Conasauga River		Bridge Widening	Whitfield
I-75	Gordon Co. Line to Catoosa Co. Line	Widen to 8 lanes	Whit./Dalton

Source: 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan

8.3. Bridges

The 2030 LRTP utilized bridge condition reports provided by GDOT as a general measure of the condition of the County's bridges. A "sufficiency rating" was identified for each bridge; the rating is used to determine the need for maintenance, rehabilitation or reconstruction of a bridge structure. GDOT's Office of Bridge Maintenance suggests that any structure with a sufficiency rating less than 50 should be replaced rather than improved. This rating was used in estimating when the bridge would possibly need rehabilitation or reconstruction. Under a 30-year planning horizon, bridge structures with a rating above

70 should be in acceptable condition as long as routine maintenance is provided to the structures. Based upon daily traffic volumes, bridge structures with a sufficiency rating between 60 and 70 may be a candidate for rehabilitation or reconstruction by 2015, and structures between 50 and 60 may be a candidate for reconstruction by 2010. The following statistics were provided in the *2030 Long Range Transportation Plan*:

- Eleven (11) bridges have a sufficiency rating less than 50
- Thirteen (13) bridges have a sufficiency rating between 50 and 60
- Five (5) bridges have a sufficiency rating between 60 and 70

8.4. Railroads

There are two freight rail systems that operate in Whitfield County. The Norfolk Southern rail service connects Dalton, Varnell, and Cohutta with Cleveland, Tennessee and Rome, Georgia. CSX rail service connects Dalton with Chattanooga, Tennessee and Cartersville, Georgia and operates a piggyback service. There is a rail yard in Dalton that serves both CSX and Norfolk Southern lines. These rail lines run north and south through downtown Dalton and cross one another, contributing to delays at railroad crossings to the north due to trains having to wait on one another. There are currently three grade separations at railroad crossings in Dalton at SR 52/Walnut Avenue, Gordon Street, and Waugh Street/MLK Blvd. These connections over the railroad provide adequate east-west access to travelers in the mid and southern business districts of Dalton. However, the northern business district of Dalton does not have any grade separations, which cause frequent delays.

Norfolk Southern Railroad and CSX Railroad have no long-range plans for the addition of new railroad tracks in Whitfield County. Maintenance of existing rail and replacement of railroad ties are the major activities of Norfolk Southern and CSX in providing quality infrastructure for the operation of rail freight movement. The 2030 Whitfield County Road Improvement Plan includes improvements at railroad crossings, two of which are the installation of safety equipment (County Road 3/Henry Adams Road at Norfolk R/R and at County Road 290/Beaver Road at CSX R/R). The third project is the Tyler Street Extension from Clark Street to W. Waugh Street with two railroad grade separations. The Tyler Street Extension would improve connectivity to downtown and reduce delays that motorists often experience at at-grade railroad crossings.

The LRTP recommends the following strategies to improve rail service in the County:

- Establish a Goods Movement Task Force composed of representatives of major trucking firms, organizations related to the transportation of carpet goods, Norfolk Southern Railroad, and CSX Railroad to work toward enhancing the movement of goods
- Encourage local governments to work with Norfolk Southern and CSX railroads to reduce the amount of time of switching operations that cause motorist to wait long periods of times at railroad crossings
- Explore possible locations for additional grade separations south of Dalton at the switching station
- Explore ways to correct the downtown crossing (overlap) of CSX and Norfolk Southern lines
- Review the level of warning devices for at-grade crossings
- Encourage and support the planning and construction of the high speed Magnetic Levitation Train from Chattanooga to Atlanta, to run parallel to I-75 through Whitfield County

8.5. Trucking

The five I-75 interchanges in Whitfield County (Tunnel Hill, Rocky Face, Walnut Avenue, Connector 3 and Carbondale) accommodate a large volume of truck traffic that serves the needs of the carpet industry and its manufacturing process. These highway facilities link local businesses to economic markets in the United States and to ocean ports for international connections. In the 2005, Whitfield County had approximately 46 motor freight carriers, which included interstate freight haulers, intrastate freight haulers, liquid/dry bulk carriers, heavy haulers, and local cartage. There were 1,337 trucks over 18,000 pounds registered in Whitfield County, though the number of heavy trucks traveling through the County was likely higher due to some trucks being registered with industries outside of Whitfield. A survey of freight terminals conducted in 2003 by the North Georgia Regional Development Center (NGRDC) showed that 158 freight terminals are located in Whitfield County.

The 2030 LRTP recommends the following trucking improvement strategies for the County:

- Establish a Goods Movement Task Force
- Improve linkages of truck operations to the street and highway system in the Dalton-Whitfield County area
- Explore operational and regulatory solutions to provide for efficient flow of trucks to and from terminal sites Whitfield County, while reducing traffic congestion in residential, educational, and recreational areas through restrictions of truck traffic during certain hours of the day

8.6. Airports

The nearest commercial air carrier (jet) service to Whitfield County is in Chattanooga, Tennessee. The Dalton Municipal Airport, situated on 360 acres, is located southeast of the Central Business District and is classified as a Level III airport. Level III airports are defined as air carrier airports and general aviation airports that have a regional business impact and are capable of accommodating a variety of business/corporate jet aircraft including the Boeing Business Jet and Gulfstream IV and V. The airport can accommodate aircraft up to the size of a Gulfstream IV. There are 28 hangars and four corporate/multiple use hangars that provide space for the storage of two jets, four turbo prop twins, eight piston twins, and 40 single engine aircraft currently based at the airport. The airport accommodates a variety of aviation related activities including recreational flying, police/law enforcement, corporate/business jets, ultra lights, and experimental aircraft. Based on an evaluation of current and forecasted demand levels as part of the LRTP process, the Dalton Municipal Airport is expected to reach 12% of its available annual operational capacity by 2021.

Future improvements at the Dalton Municipal Airport include the following:

- Installation of security fencing at critical locations around the airport property
- Relocation of the existing parallel taxiway. The present taxiway is located 200 feet from the centerline of the runway, and to upgrade the airport a 300 feet offset is required. This project would require a new taxiway lighting system to be installed
- 2 additional hangar spaces
- 1 additional apron parking space
- 26 additional auto parking spaces

Additional actions or projects required for the Dalton Municipal Airport to maintain a Level III status include:

- Update the Master Plan/Airport Layout Plan in 2010 and 2020.
- Adopt Land Use/Zoning Controls

8.7. Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Whitfield County has a relatively good sidewalk network within downtown Dalton and along SR 71/ Cleveland Highway. A sufficient portion of the existing sidewalk system covers most of the major activity centers along SR 52/Walnut Avenue, Thornton Avenue, and Glenwood Avenue. Dalton recently completed the implementation of its Downtown Streetscape Master Plan, which added sidewalks, decorative streetlamps and landscaping to the existing downtown sidewalk network. Given the rural character of much of the County, pedestrian facilities are not widespread outside of downtown or activity centers.

There are two GDOT State Bicycle Routes that travel through the County: SR 35 –March to the Sea and SR 90 – Mountain Crossing. Designation as State Bike Routes means that as road improvements occur, signage designating them as bike routes will be installed and bike lanes and other facilities will be added in areas as needed for safe bicycle travel.

The portion of the March to the Sea route that traverses Whitfield County is 11.7 miles in length, entering the County from the north on U.S. 41 & 76 and exiting on Lower Mill Creek Road at the Walker County line. The route includes short segments of bike lanes and a few signs at Exit 341 in Tunnel Hill. These facilities were put into place when improvements were made to that interchange and do not connect to any other facilities. The Mountain Crossing route includes 21.4 miles in Whitfield County. It enters the County on Lower Mill Creek Road on the same stretch of road that is part March to the Sea route. From there, the route travels secondary roads north to SR 41 and then east along SR 52. The route is not marked with "Share the Road" signs or bike lanes.

Both the *Whitfield County/City of Dalton Multimodal Transportation Study* and the *City of Dalton Multimodal Transportation Study* identified deficiencies in bike and pedestrian facilities, especially in light of the need for such facilities by the growing Hispanic population who require non-automobile means for commuting to work. Subsequent to these studies Dalton installed 30 "Share the Road" signs.

The *Regional Bike and Pedestrian Facilities Plan for the North Georgia Region* assessed whether there were sidewalk deficiencies within a half-mile radius of major activity centers including schools, parks, shopping facilities and major employment centers. In addition, the proximity of these centers to concentrated residential areas was examined. The plan recommended new sidewalks for the Dalton area outside of the downtown, as well as for Tunnel Hill and the southern portion of Varnell primarily along SR 2.

8.8. Public Transit

Local transit service is provided by a federally-funded public transportation service for non-urbanized areas that is administered by GDOT. The "Section 5311" grant program facilitates a dial-a-ride bus service that is available to residents for various trip purposes from their home to their desired location. Trip purposes include medical, nutrition, shopping, education, and recreation. This demand responsive transit service within Whitfield County is provided by Mountain Area Transportation Services (MATS), which is operated by the non-profit North Georgia Community Action Program through a Third Party Operator agreement Whitfield County.

MATS' major client groups are senior citizens and those with physical or mental disabilities that inhibit them from using private transportation. MATS operates a total of eight vehicles, including three ambulatory vehicles and five ADA-capable vehicles from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday

with 24 hours notice generally required. Service is provided primarily to shopping centers and doctors' offices.

Within Whitfield County about 150 trips per day are made by members of the general public (not sponsored by a social service agency). The fare for the general public is 30 cents per mile with a minimum one-way trip fare of $1.50 or a minimum round-trip fare of $3.00. Wheelchair services costs $3.85 for the first ten miles plus 42 cents per mile. The small number of general public customers is due to the lack of frequent service, the limited service area, and its short span of service. Due to its relatively short operating schedule, MATS services are not suitable for work trips. MATS is presently unable to expand its service in Whitfield County due to lack of funds.

Several private taxi companies operate in the City of Dalton and Whitfield County including American Cab, Dalton Taxi, Mary's Taxi, Express Taxi, and Servi-Taxi LLC. Service is also available to the Chattanooga Airport and Hartsfield-Atlanta International Airport. Typical rates from taxi companies are $1.50-$2.00 for a pull-up fee and each additional mile costs $1.00-2.00. Taxi fleet sizes in the Dalton area vary from 4-10 taxis.

The *Dalton-Whitfield County Transit Needs Study* (2006) examined the viability of a public transit service (other than Section 5311 rural transportation). The study concluded that although Whitfield County does not have the population and population density commonly found in other areas with fixed route public transit service, there is a significant transportation disadvantaged population, particularly in the City of Dalton, that would benefit from public transit. Additional findings are as follows:

- Despite the low overall population and population density, there are moderately dense areas in the City of Dalton and in the Cleveland Highway corridor that may be sufficient to support fixed route public transit.
- The analysis of transportation disadvantaged populations indicated that there are sizable numbers of low-income, elderly, disabled, and minority persons within the county that would likely use a public transit system to access jobs, medical care, and shopping needs. The transportation disadvantaged population is largely focused in the City of Dalton.
- There are a number of large employers (more than 250 employees at an employment site) in Whitfield County in the manufacturing, medical care, and educational fields. Many of these employers are located in the City of Dalton, although the work sites are dispersed.
- Whitfield County is projected to continue to grow at a steady pace. As the population ages and the local manufacturing base grows, the need for public transit services will also increase.

8.9. Private Transit System

Greyhound provides inter-city bus service to Whitfield County. There are also eleven taxicab services operating within the county, several of which are Hispanic owned and operated.

8.10. Transportation and Land Use Connection

Interstate 75 has a significant impact on development patterns and opportunities. It has stimulated industrial and commercial development and has provided Whitfield County with accessibility to both Chattanooga and Atlanta. The growth of major employers around the interstate has also resulted in associated residential growth in the County, and almost 90% of the eligible County labor force also worked in the County according to the 2000 U.S. Census. As additional employment and shopping/service provision opportunities locate in Whitfield County, it is important to consider the

proximity of residential uses and their accessibility to local employers and shopping needs. The closer uses are to one another, the easier it is to institute expanded public transit and bike/ped facilities.

Road corridors outside of I-75 also have the potential to encourage development. Segments of SR 3/U.S. 41 on the north and south ends of the County, for example, are identified in the 2030 LRTP as road widening projects. When complete, the now two-lane corridors will be four lanes, which may contribute to further development along the roadways. The appropriate type of use and the desired placement, scale and design of development should be evaluated, as should the relationship between the use and the functionality of the corridor. Linear, "strip" development versus concentrated development at major intersections or activity nodes can hinder traffic flow with numerous curb cuts; encouraging the concept of "cluster or nodal development" is a policy included in the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan. Other key land use-related policies in the LRTP are:

- Promote the development of the following four basic commercial development patterns:
- Continuation and expansion of the Central Business Districts of the municipalities within the County;
- General commercial nodes located at the intersections of arterial highways, and/or the intersections of arterial and major collector thoroughfares;
- Infilling of existing commercial corridors where a commercial development pattern is evident; and,
- Neighborhood commercial nodes in appropriate locations along or at the intersections of collector thoroughfares convenient to population concentrations.
- Encourage the development of industrial uses in locations that have convenient access to the
- Interstate, arterials and major collector roads.
- Encourage high-density residential development to locate in areas where adequate transportation, utilities, and other public services exist or are planned.

8.10.1. Strengths

- Interstate access.
- Rail access.
- Airport access.
- Downtown (Dalton) pedestrian connectivity.
- Adoption of multi-modal studies that provide a policy framework and project recommendations.

8.10.2. Weaknesses

- Limited public transit opportunities.
- Limited bike/ped facilities outside of downtown Dalton.
- Local congestion, including Walnut Avenue.
- At-grade rail crossings .

- Development regulations do not require construction of sidewalks to connect to existing sidewalks or in neighborhoods.

8.10.3. Opportunities

- Improvements to airport can better serve existing carpet industry and attract other industries to the area.
- A high speed rail corridor can alleviate congestion on I-75 and improve integration of various modes of travel (especially air) on a regional level.
- Implementation of a local fixed route transit system can accommodate work trips by low-income persons who do not have automobile access and non-work trips to shopping, medical or personal business destinations made by residents who do not have automobile access.
- Implementation of bike/ped recommendations from previous study can enhance connectivity and mode choice.
- LRTP will be updated soon by the Dalton-Whitfield County MPO.

8.10.4. Threats

- Planned widening of some corridors has the potential to increase adjacent development and congestion and to alter existing character.
- Potential development along Cohutta-Chattahoochee Scenic Byway.
- Inability to provide suitable transportation alternatives for growing segments of the population that require them.

CHAPTER
9

9. Atlas of Maps

Environmental Planning Criteria
Floodplains
Slope
Prime Farmland
Water Supply Watershed
Historic Landmarks
Community Facilities
Water and Sewer Service Area
Proposed Sewer Service Area

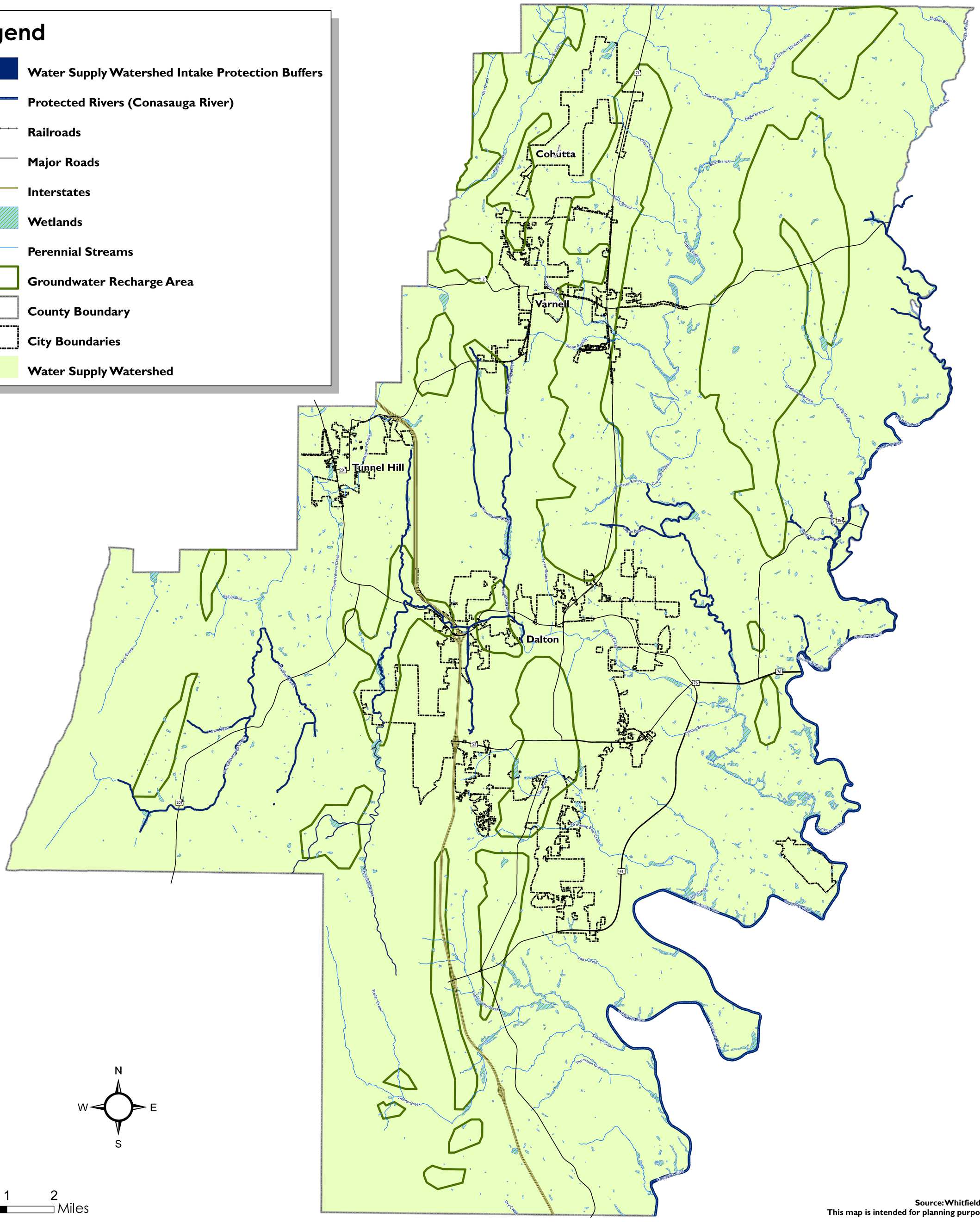
Prepared By:
Checked By:

Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan Update 2008 - 2018

Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell

Legend

- Water Supply Watershed Intake Protection Buffers
- Protected Rivers (Conasauga River)
- Railroads
- Major Roads
- Interstates
- Wetlands
- Perennial Streams
- Groundwater Recharge Area
- County Boundary
- City Boundaries
- Water Supply Watershed



Source: Whitfield County
This map is intended for planning purposes only.

Prepared by:
MACTEC

Environmental Criteria Map

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Checked By:

Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan Update 2008 - 2018

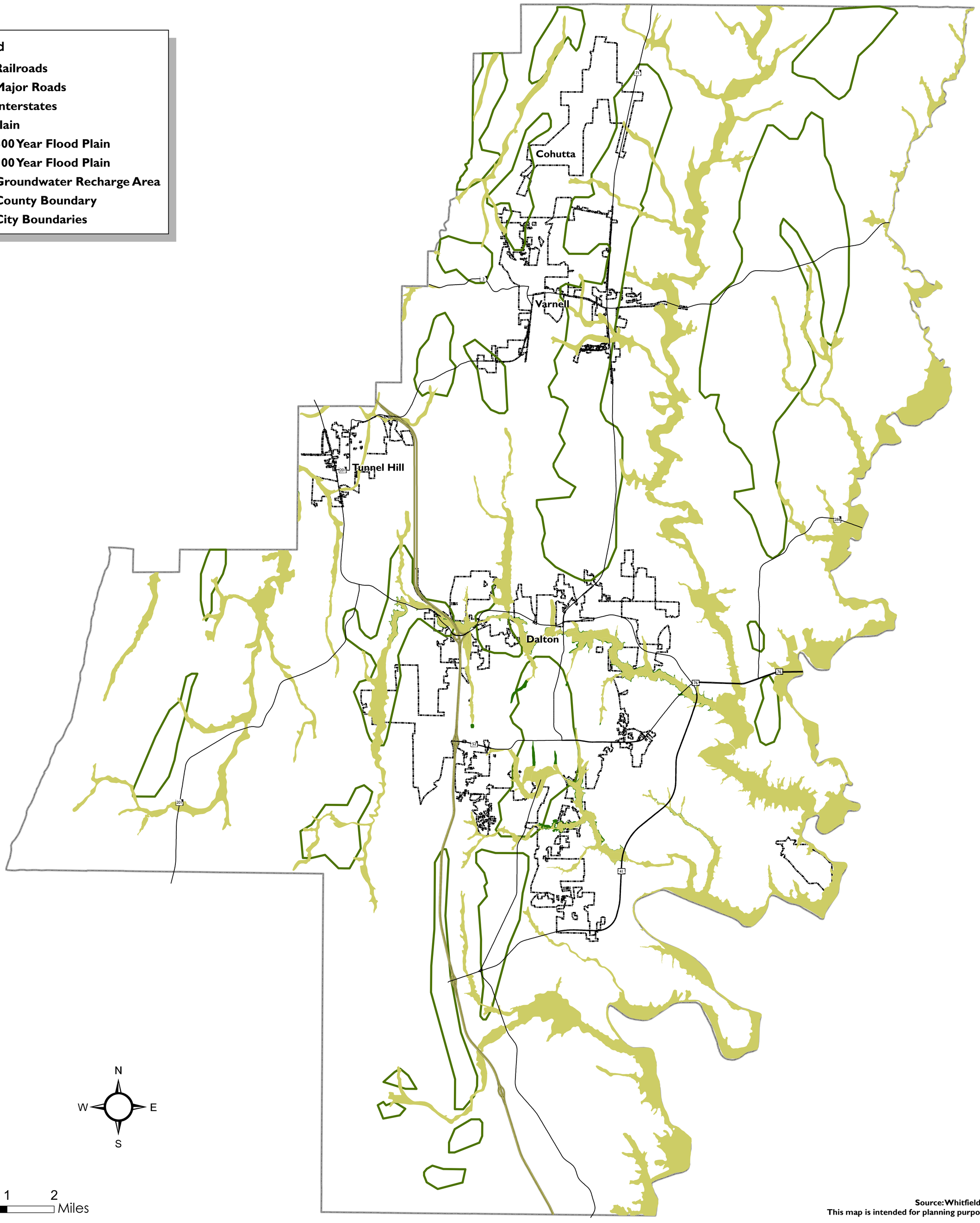
Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell

Legend

- Railroads
- Major Roads
- Interstates

Floodplain

- 500 Year Flood Plain
- 100 Year Flood Plain
- Groundwater Recharge Area
- County Boundary
- City Boundaries



Source: Whitfield County
This map is intended for planning purposes only.

Prepared by:
MACTEC

Floodplain Map

Map Document: (G:\Whitfield\mxd\floodplains.mxd)
12/7/2007 -- 1:19:43 PM

Prepared By:
Checked By:

Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan Update 2008 - 2018

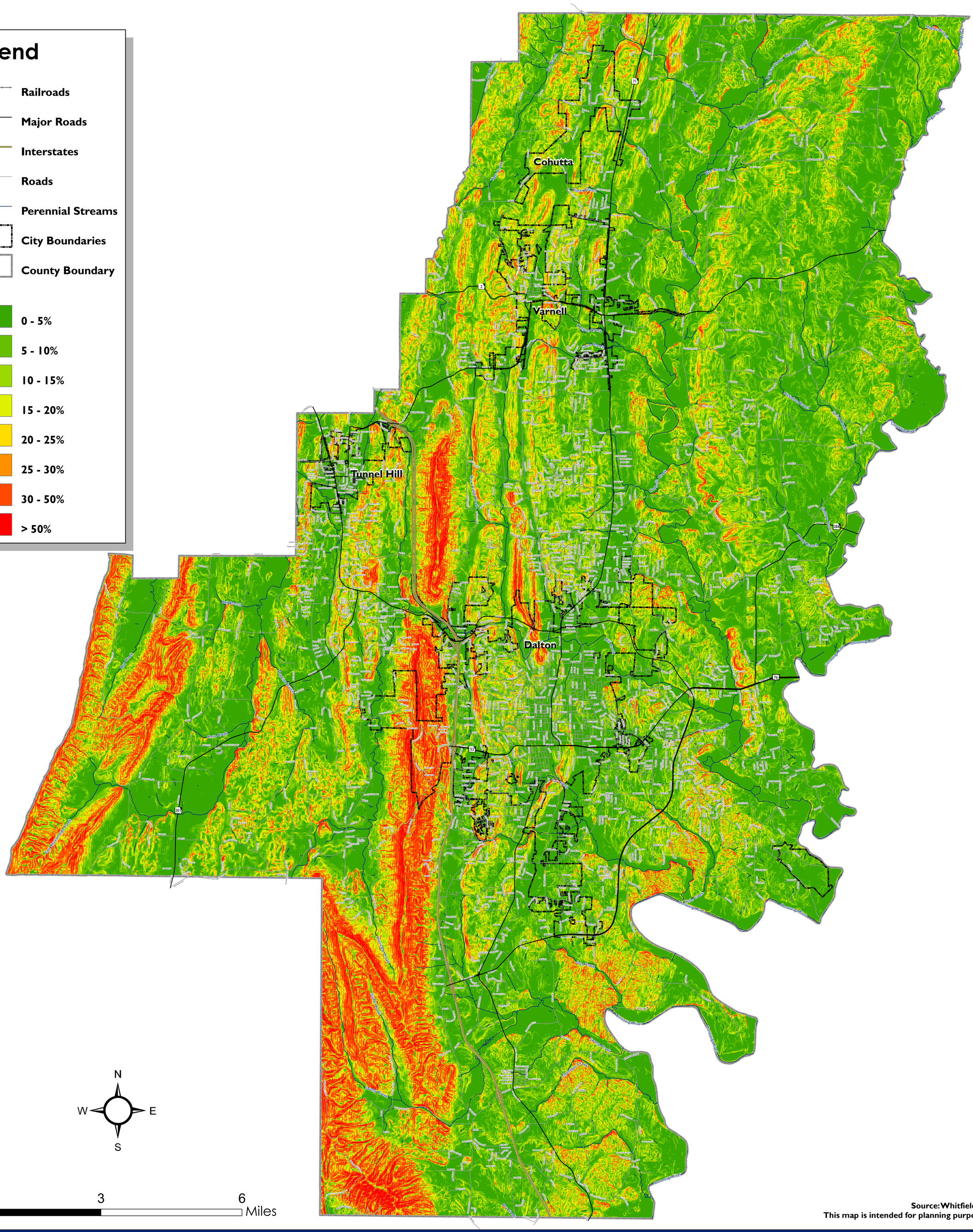
Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell

Legend

- Railroads
- Major Roads
- Interstates
- Roads
- Perennial Streams
- City Boundaries
- County Boundary

Slope

- 0 - 5%
- 5 - 10%
- 10 - 15%
- 15 - 20%
- 20 - 25%
- 25 - 30%
- 30 - 50%
- > 50%



Source: Whitfield County
This map is intended for planning purposes only.

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Slope Map

Map Document: (G:\Whitfield\mxd\Slope.mxd)
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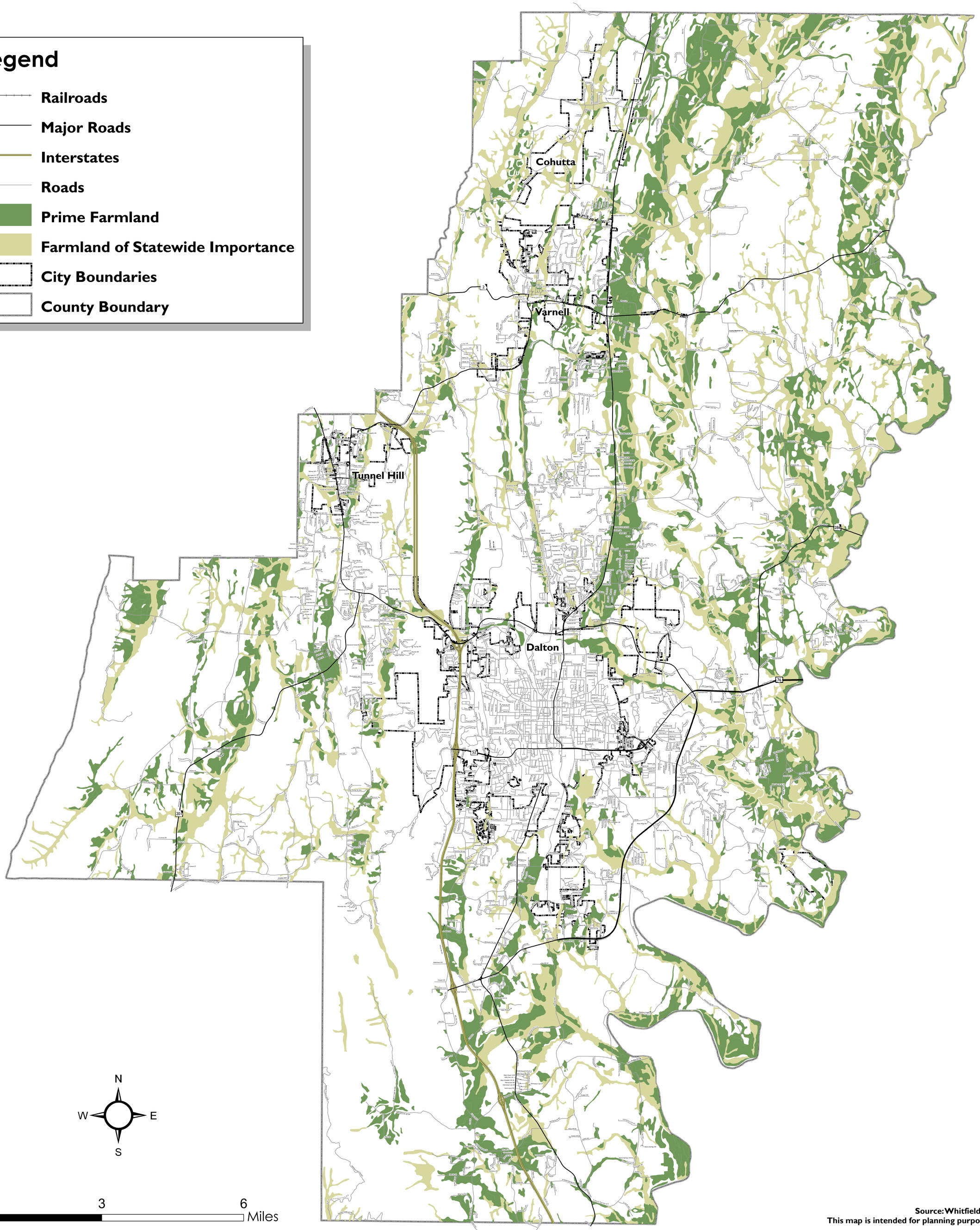
Prepared By:
Checked By:

Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan Update 2008 - 2018

Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell

Legend

- Railroads
- Major Roads
- Interstates
- Roads
- Prime Farmland
- Farmland of Statewide Importance
- City Boundaries
- County Boundary



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0 3 6 Miles

Source: Whitfield County
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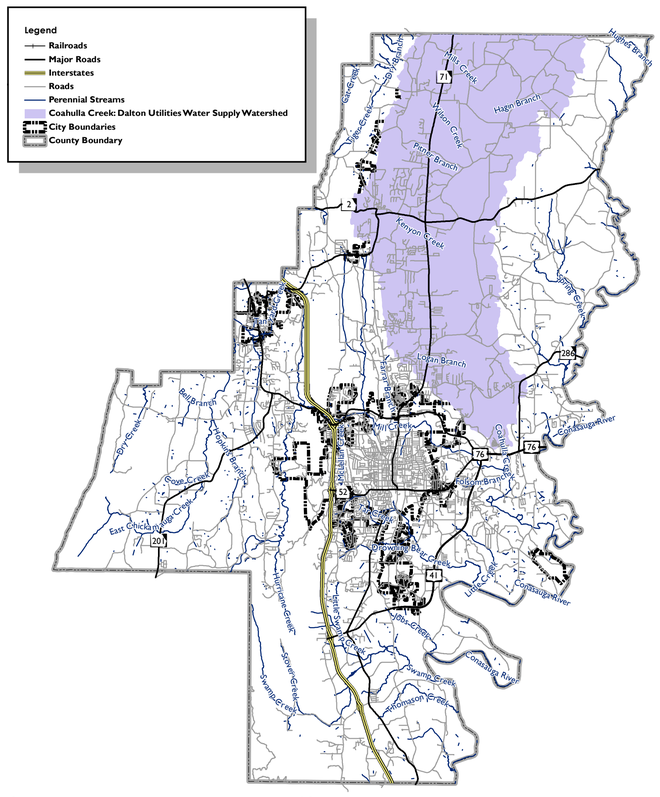
Prime Farmland Map

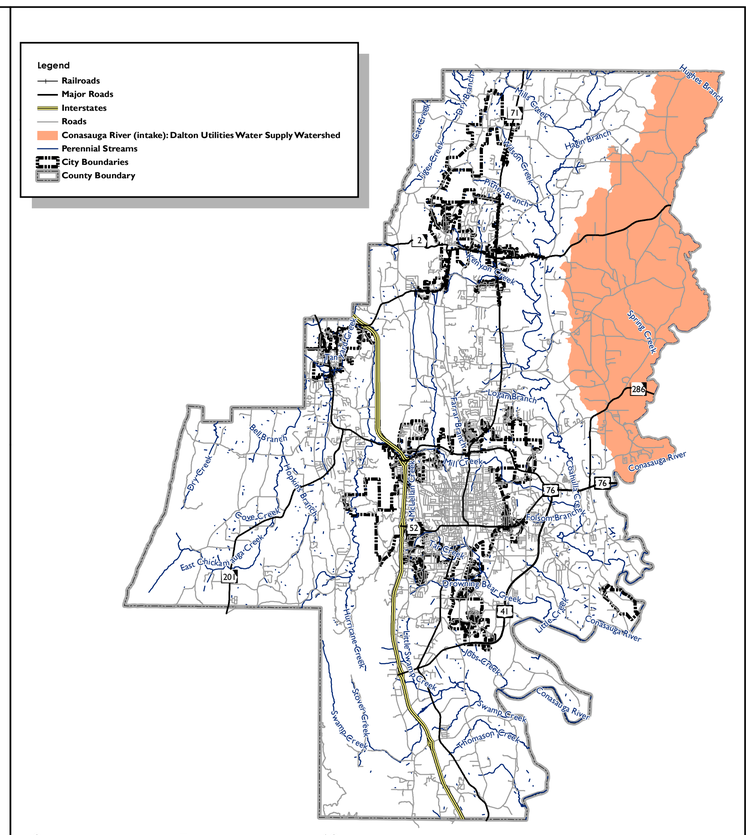
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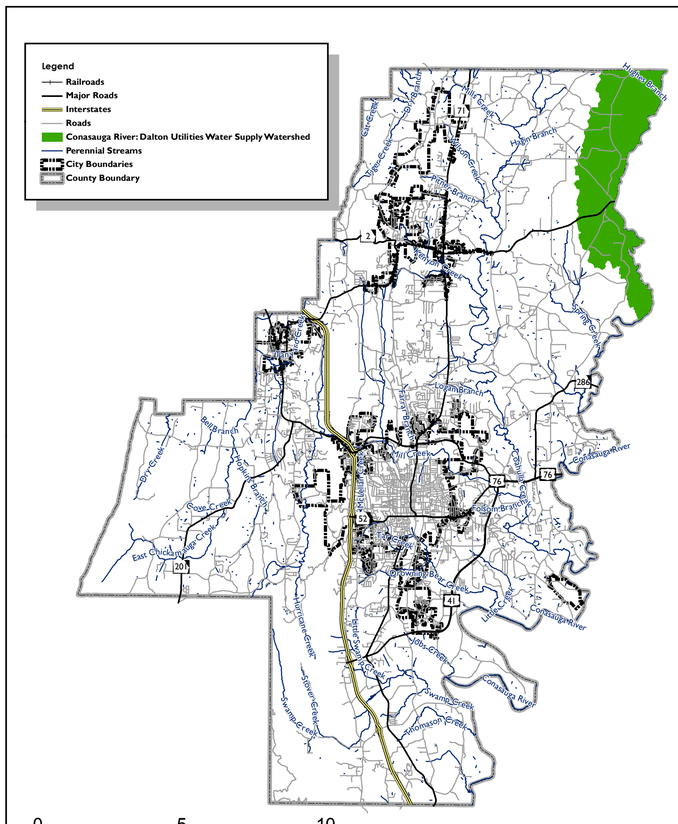
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Checked By:

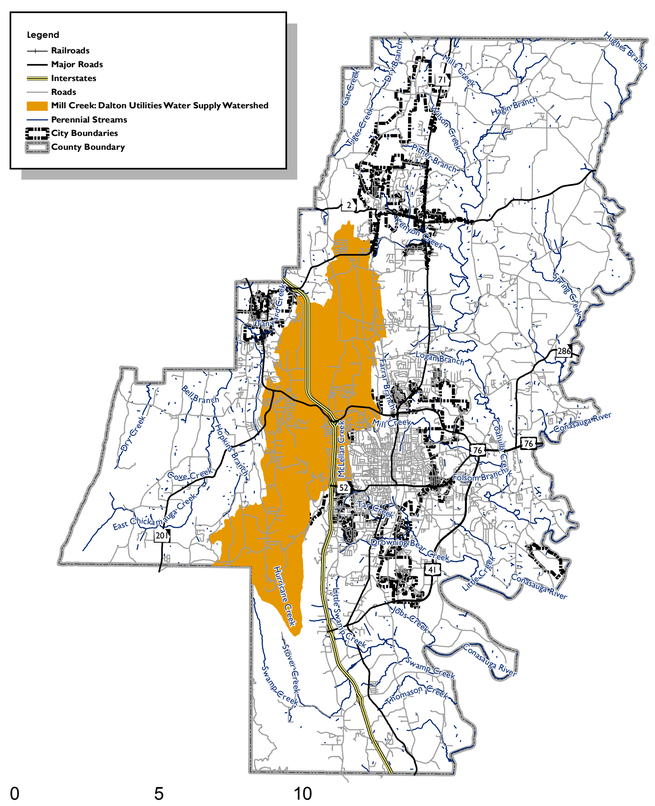
Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan Update 2008 - 2018

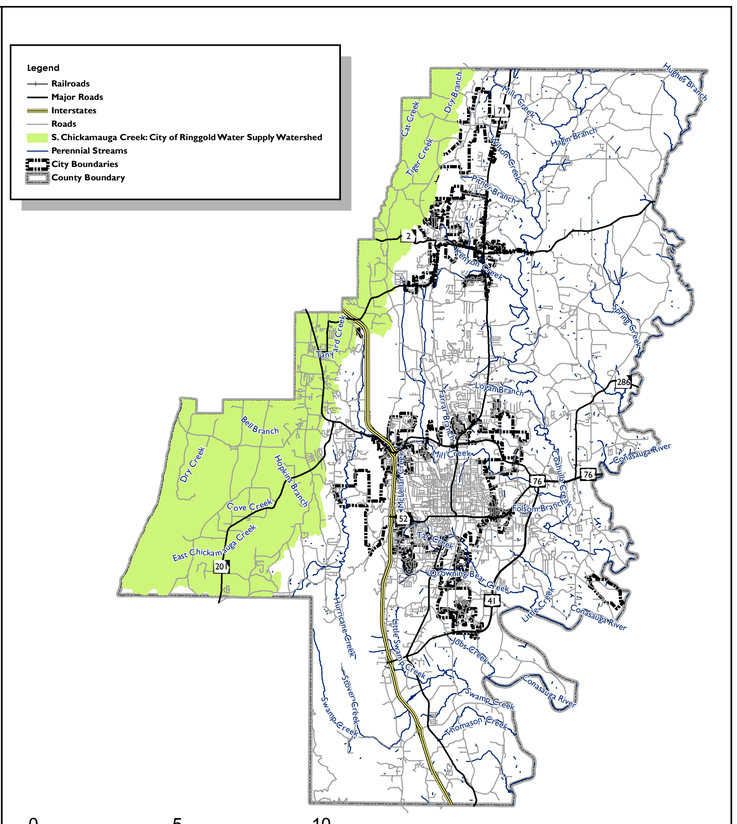
Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell

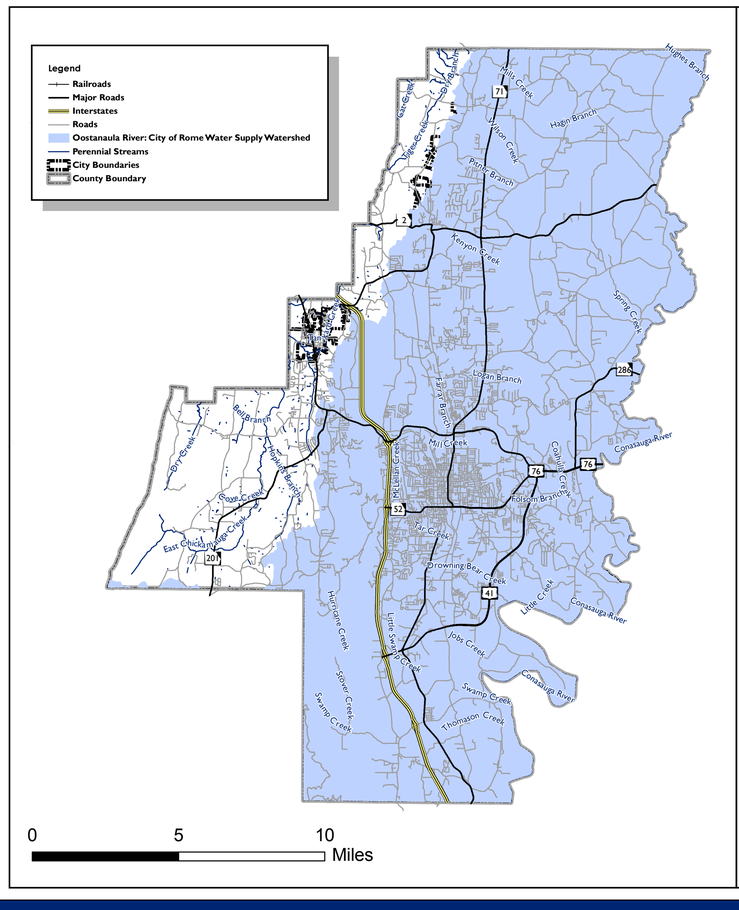


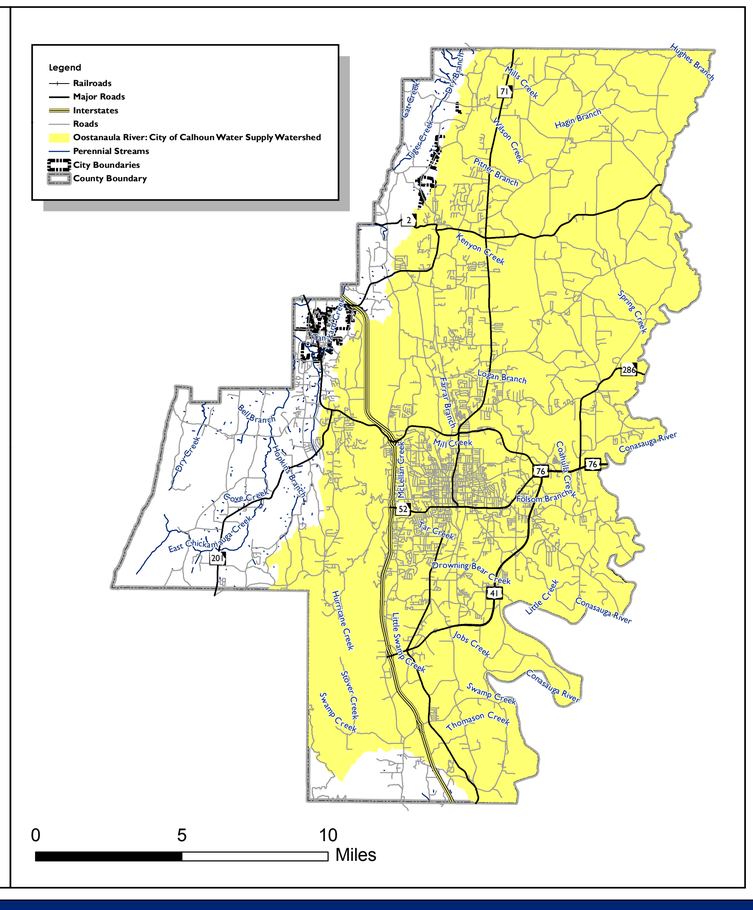












Source: Whitfield County
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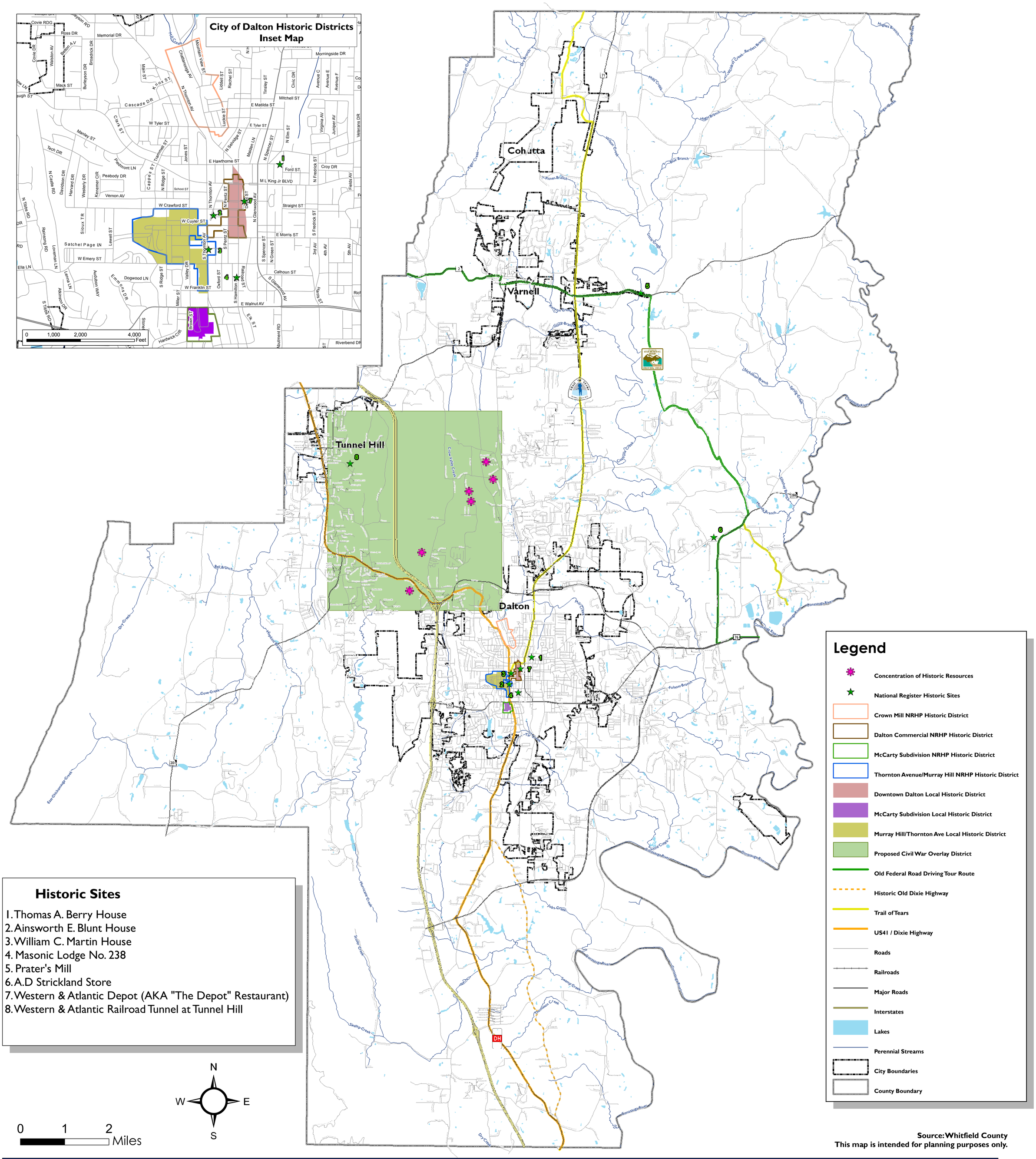
Water Supply Watershed Map

Map Document: (G:\Whitfield\mxd\WaterSupplyWatershed.mxd)
12/7/2007 -- 3:37:35 PM

Prepared By:
Checked By:

Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan Update 2008 - 2018

Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell



Historic Sites

1. Thomas A. Berry House
2. Ainsworth E. Blunt House
3. William C. Martin House
4. Masonic Lodge No. 238
5. Prater's Mill
6. A.D Strickland Store
7. Western & Atlantic Depot (AKA "The Depot" Restaurant)
8. Western & Atlantic Railroad Tunnel at Tunnel Hill

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Legend

- Concentration of Historic Resources
- National Register Historic Sites
- Crown Mill NRHP Historic District
- Dalton Commercial NRHP Historic District
- McCarty Subdivision NRHP Historic District
- Thornton Avenue/Murray Hill NRHP Historic District
- Downtown Dalton Local Historic District
- McCarty Subdivision Local Historic District
- Murray Hill/Thornton Ave Local Historic District
- Proposed Civil War Overlay District
- Old Federal Road Driving Tour Route
- Historic Old Dixie Highway
- Trail of Tears
- US41 / Dixie Highway
- Roads
- Railroads
- Major Roads
- Interstates
- Lakes
- Perennial Streams
- City Boundaries
- County Boundary

Source: Whitfield County
This map is intended for planning purposes only.

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Historic Landmarks Map

Map Document: (G:\Whitfield\mxd\Historic.mxd)
4/17/2008 -- 9:28:43 AM

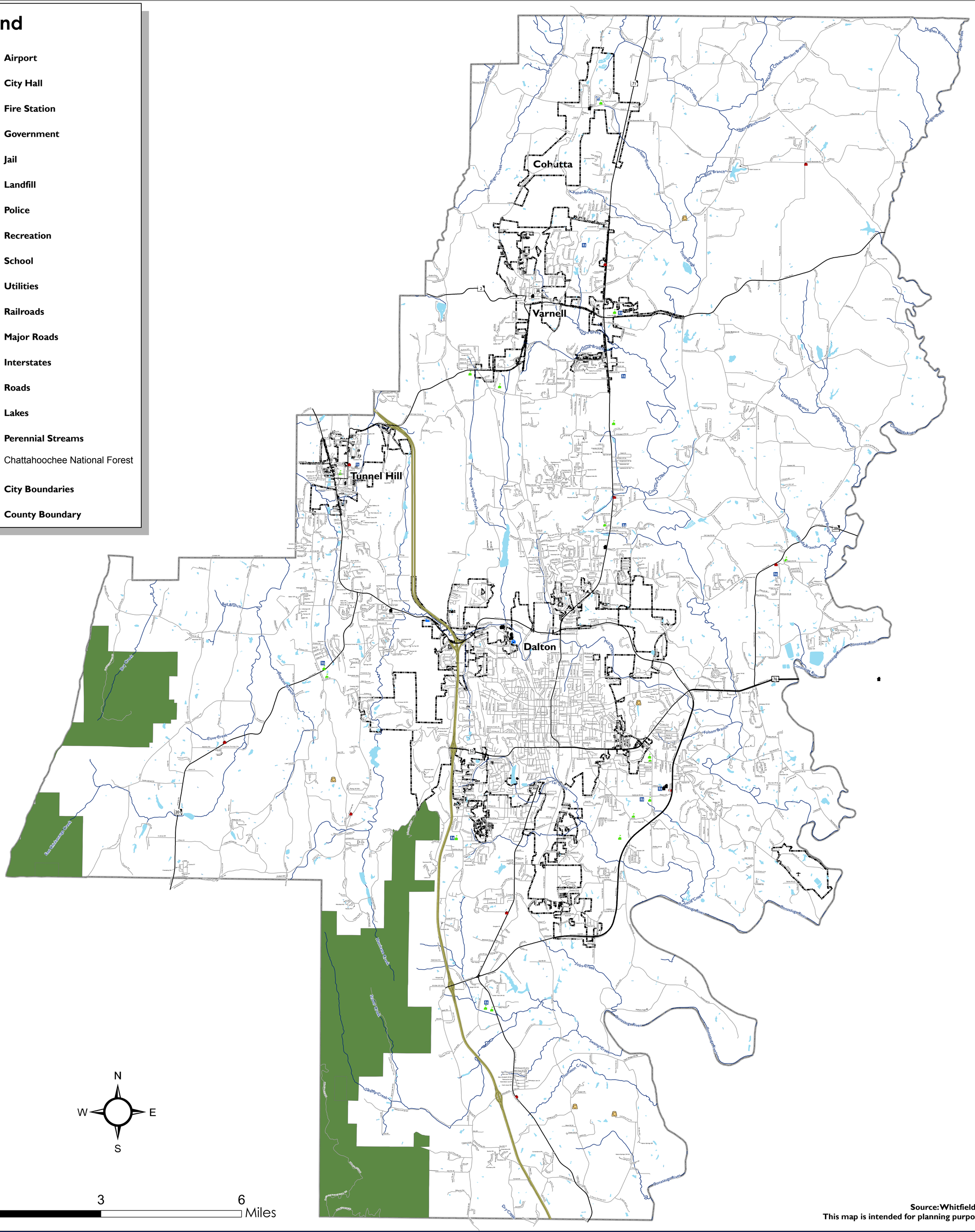
Prepared By:
Checked By:

Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan Update 2008 - 2018

Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell

Legend

- Airport
- City Hall
- Fire Station
- Government
- Jail
- Landfill
- Police
- Recreation
- School
- Utilities
- Railroads
- Major Roads
- Interstates
- Roads
- Lakes
- Perennial Streams
- Chattahoochee National Forest
- City Boundaries
- County Boundary



Source: Whitfield County
This map is intended for planning purposes only.

Prepared by:
MACTEC

DRAFT

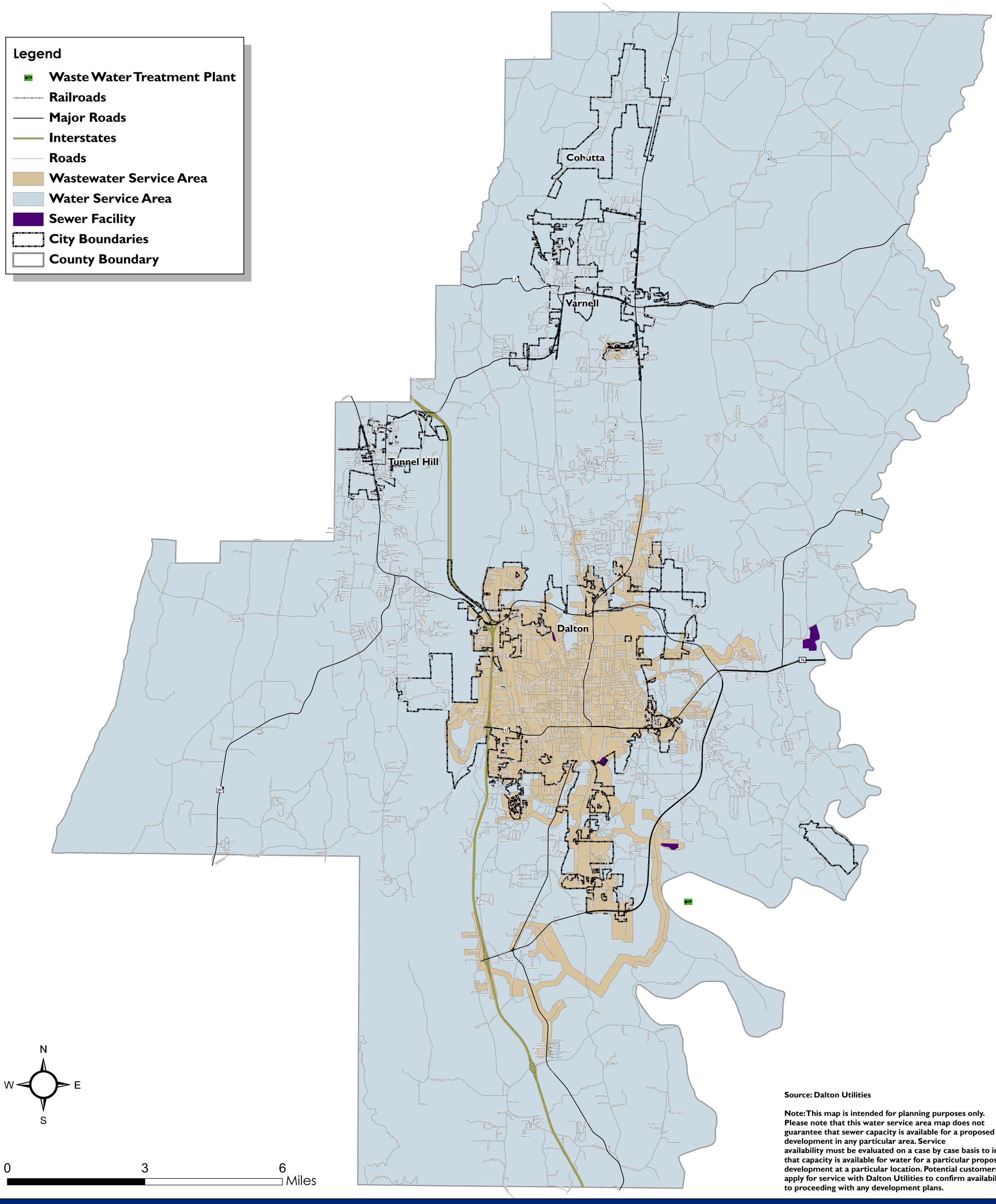
Community Facilities Map

Map Document: (G:\Whitfield\mxd\CommunityFacilities.mxd)
2/28/2008 -- 1:09:07 PM

Prepared By:
Checked By:

Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan Update 2008 - 2018

Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell



Source: Dalton Utilities

Note: This map is intended for planning purposes only. Please note that this water service area map does not guarantee that sewer capacity is available for a proposed development in any particular area. Service availability must be evaluated on a case by case basis to insure that capacity is available for water for a particular proposed development at a particular location. Potential customers should apply for service with Dalton Utilities to confirm availability prior to proceeding with any development plans.

Prepared by:
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Water Service / Sewer Service Areas

Map Document: (G:\Whitfield\mxd\WaterService_SewerService.mxd)
2/22/2008 -- 9:57:25 AM

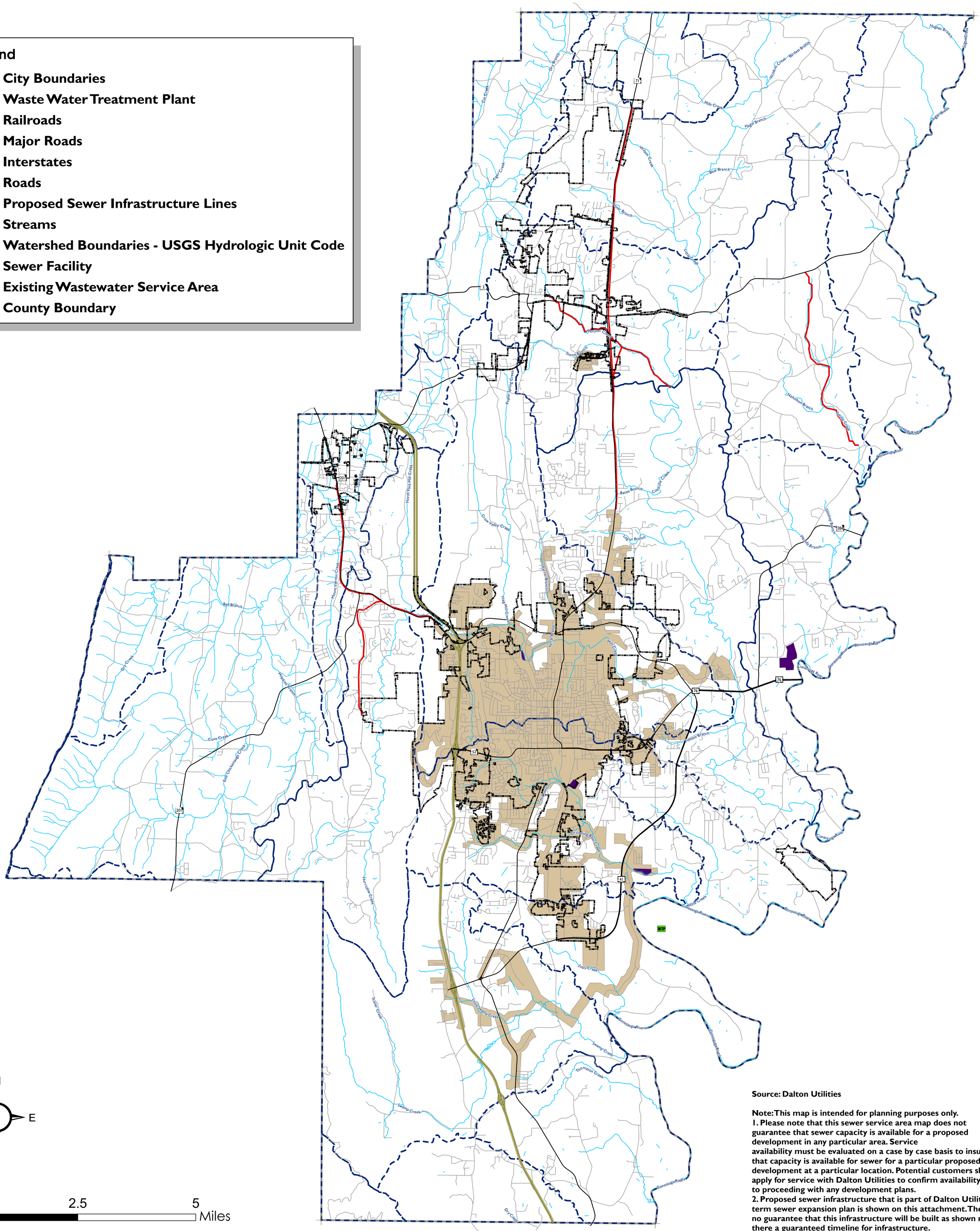
Prepared By:
Checked By:

Whitfield County Comprehensive Plan Update 2008 - 2018

Joint Comprehensive Plan for Whitfield County and the municipalities of Dalton, Tunnell Hill and Varnell

Legend

- City Boundaries
- Waste Water Treatment Plant
- Railroads
- Major Roads
- Interstates
- Roads
- Proposed Sewer Infrastructure Lines
- Streams
- Watershed Boundaries - USGS Hydrologic Unit Code
- Sewer Facility
- Existing Wastewater Service Area
- County Boundary



N
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0 2.5 5 Miles

Source: Dalton Utilities

Note: This map is intended for planning purposes only.
1. Please note that this sewer service area map does not guarantee that sewer capacity is available for a proposed development in any particular area. Service availability must be evaluated on a case by case basis to insure that capacity is available for sewer for a particular proposed development at a particular location. Potential customers should apply for service with Dalton Utilities to confirm availability prior to proceeding with any development plans.
2. Proposed sewer infrastructure that is part of Dalton Utilities long term sewer expansion plan is shown on this attachment. There is no guarantee that this infrastructure will be built as shown nor is there a guaranteed timeline for infrastructure.

Prepared by:
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Existing / Proposed Sewer Service Areas

Map Document: (G:\Whitfield\mxd\Proposed_SewerService.mxd)
2/29/2008 -- 11:06:33 AM