

2003 Update of the 2020 Gwinnett County Comprehensive Plan



**Approved by the Gwinnett County
Board of Commissioners
Public Hearing: February 24, 2004
Effective: _____**

**Gwinnett County
Department of Planning & Development
Planning Division
75 Langley Drive
Lawrenceville, Georgia 30045
770-822-7600**

2003 Update
of the
Gwinnett County
2020 Comprehensive Plan

Planning Division
Gwinnett County Department of Planning & Development
75 Langley Drive
Lawrenceville, GA 30045
770-822-7600

Approved by the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners
Public hearing - February 24, 2004
Effective -

A RESOLUTION OF
THE GWINNETT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
ADOPTING THE
2003 UPDATE TO THE GWINNETT 2020 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, the Gwinnett County 2020 Comprehensive Plan, hereinafter referred to as "the Comprehensive Plan," provides a coordinated and comprehensive plan of the long-term goals, objectives, and priorities for Gwinnett County; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan supports five goals established by the state of Georgia pursuant to Official Code of Georgia Annotated 50-8-1 et seq, as follows:

- (a) **Economic Development:** To achieve a growing and balanced economy, consistent with all resources of this state and its various regions, that equitably benefits all sections of the state and all segments of the population.
- (b) **Natural and Historic Resources:** To conserve and protect the environmental, natural and historic resources of Georgia's communities, regions and the state.
- (c) **Community Facilities:** To ensure that public infrastructure facilities serving local governments, the region and the state have the capacity and are in place when needed to support and attract growth and development and/or maintain and enhance the quality of life of the residents of the state.
- (d) **Housing:** To ensure that all people within the state and its various regions and communities have access to adequate and affordable housing.
- (e) **Land Use:** To ensure that the land resources of the state are allocated for uses required to facilitate the topical areas of economic development, natural and historic resources, community facilities, and housing as outlined above, and to protect and promote the quality of life of the people of Georgia's communities, regions, and the state.

WHEREAS, in order for the Comprehensive Plan to remain responsive and relevant to changing conditions, the Implementation Strategies Element calls for an annual review of growth indicators and the preparation of an annual report of findings and recommendations for changes to the Comprehensive Plan; and

G:\PROGRAMS\WP51\Plan\ADVANCE\COMPLAN\2003 Update\resolution.doc

WHEREAS, the public hearing requirements prescribed by the Comprehensive Plan and state law have been met and exceeded; and

WHEREAS, the Gwinnett County Government has completed a Five Year Short Term Work Program for the period 2003 to 2007, and

WHEREAS, an annual report titled *2003 Update of Gwinnett County 2020 Comprehensive Plan* has been prepared following a duly advertised public hearing before the Municipal-Gwinnett County Planning Commission on February 17, 2004 and the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners on February 24, 2004, at which Gwinnett County solicited community input on community needs and issues, as required by the state's Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures; and

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners finds that the proposed amendments to the Gwinnett County 2020 Comprehensive Plan further the purposes of promoting the health, safety, morals, convenience, order, prosperity, aesthetics and general welfare of the present and future residents of Gwinnett County;

BE IT RESOLVED by the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners that the *2003 Update of the Gwinnett 2020 Comprehensive Plan*, dated February 24, 2004, shall be transmitted to the Atlanta Regional Commission for regional and state review for compliance with the minimum state requirements for Comprehensive Plans and coordination with the Regional Development Plan: and

BE IT RESOLVED by the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners that the *2003 Update of the Gwinnett 2020 Comprehensive Plan*, dated February 24, 2004, shall be utilized by the Board of Commissioners, the Municipal-Gwinnett County Planning Commission and all Gwinnett County departments, agencies and officials as a guide in making decisions concerning the growth and development of Gwinnett County.

ADOPTED this 24th day of February, 2004

GWINNETT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

By: _____



F. Wayne Hill, Chairman

Date Signed: 2/27/04

ATTEST: Brenda Maddox
Brenda Maddox, County Clerk
(Seal)

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Van Stephens
Van Stephens, Chief Assistant County Attorney



2003 Update of the 2020 Gwinnett County Comprehensive Plan

Executive Summary

- This document is the sixth update of the *Gwinnett County 2020 Comprehensive Plan* since its original adoption on October 28, 1997.
- The update revises the comprehensive plan by amending the 2020 Land Use Plan Map, the Natural and Cultural Resources Element, and the Land Use Element which includes the county's land use policies.
- This report includes in the Appendix, a "Table of Recommended Changes" to the 2020 Land Use Plan Map. The table includes all the recommended changes including consistency and municipal changes. Consistency changes reflect rezoning decisions, County land purchases and land development consistent with existing zoning.
- Three Map Change Requests (MCRs) were submitted for consideration for this update. One was later withdrawn. MCRs are applications from property owners to revise the land use designation shown on the Land Use Plan Map for their property. Legal notices were published in the *Gwinnett Daily Post* announcing a four (4) month window for filing MCR applications.

Drafts of the update which include lists of all changes to the 2020 Land Use Plan Map and the proposed 2020 Land Use Plan Map itself, were made available for public viewing at all branches of the Gwinnett County Public Library and were posted on the county's web site.

Table of Contents

I. Introduction	1
A. Purpose	1
B. Scope of Report	1
II. Public Participation and Notification	2
III. Completed and On-Going Special Studies	4
A. Revitalization Task Force (RTF)	4
B. Gwinnett County & Gwinnett Public Schools Joint Study Task Force	5
IV. Update of the Natural and Cultural Resources Element	8
A. Introduction	8
B. Inventory of Existing Conditions	8
1. Natural Resources	8
a. Public Water Supply Sources	8
b. Water supply Watersheds	10
c. Groundwater Recharge Areas	19
d. Wetlands	23
e. Protected Mountains	26
f. Protected River corridors	26
g. Flood Plains	27
h. Soil Types	30
i. Steep Slopes	33
j. Prime Agricultural and Forest Land	34
k. Plant and Animal Habitats	39
l. Major Park and Conservation Areas	39
m. Scenic Views and Sites	43
2. Cultural Resources	45
a. Introduction & Brief History	45
b. Inventory	47
1. Residential Resources	50
2. Commercial Resources	52
3. Industrial Resources	54
4. Institutional Resources	54
5. Transportation Resources	56
6. Rural Resources	58
7. Other Historic Resources	59
8. Sources of Historical Information	62
C. Assessment of Current and Future Needs	62
D. Community Goals & an Implementation Program	64
1. Greenspace initiatives	64
2. Tools to Encourage Compact Development	68

V. Update of Land Use Element	73
A. Annexation Update	73
B. Changes to the 2020 Land Use Plan Map	75
1. Consistency Changes	75
C. Map Change Requests	76

Appendices

A. Spreadsheet of Changes to the Land Use Plan Map	A-1
B. Revitalization Task Force Resolution (Phase II)	B-1
C. List of Endangered Plant and Wildlife Species	C-1
D. Report of the Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Schools Joint Task Force, 2003.	D-1

I. Introduction

A. Purpose

This document is the sixth update of the Gwinnett County 2020 Comprehensive Plan since its adoption on October 28, 1997. The *Gwinnett County 2020 Comprehensive Plan* calls for an annual update with the intent of keeping the plan current to changing conditions. This practice of preparing annual updates is formally stated in the Short Term Work Program of the Comprehensive Plan. This update revises the comprehensive plan by amending the Natural & Cultural Resources Element, the Land Use Element, which sets forth the county's land use policies, and the Gwinnett County 2020 Land Use Plan Map. In addition, this update reports on recent special studies and citizen participation opportunities undertaken by the county that further clarify the county's progress in meeting its Short Term Work Program.

B. Scope of Report

This 2003 Update of the Comprehensive Plan includes the following major sections:

1. Natural & Cultural Resources Update

- This section reports on updating the inventory of the natural and cultural resources in the county. Following the inventory, an assessment of current and future needs will be addressed. This next step is a requirement of the new minimum standards for local comprehensive planning that the county must meet by 2008.

2. Land Use Policies

- In the past year, Gwinnett County staff provided support to the Revitalization Task Force as it developed policy recommendations for the Board of Commissioners. The committee's findings and minutes are available to the public.



3. Consistency Issues - Consistency changes are revisions recommended to bring the 2020 Land Use Plan Map into compliance with other statements of county policy and recent development activity. These changes include property developed under existing zoning in conflict with the plan, the dedication of recreation areas and open space in private developments, rezoning cases approved throughout the past year that changed a 2020 Land Use designation, and the acquisition of public lands. This report describes these changes, and a detailed list of these changes is presented in the Appendix.

II. Public Participation and Notification

The 2003 Update of the Gwinnett 2020 Comprehensive Plan had several public participation components. These are described below:

August 2003 - A public announcement was made before the Planning commission and a public hearing was held before the Board of Commissioners to announce the opening of the Map Change Request (MCR) process.

November 7, 2003 - Deadline for submission of MCR applications. Three were submitted for this update, and one was later withdrawn.



January 2004 - Draft copies of the report were made available for viewing at all branches of the Gwinnett County Public Library, in the office of the Department of Planning & Development at the Gwinnett Justice and Administration Center, and on the county's web site.

February 2004 - Legal notices were published

in the Gwinnett Daily Post advertising the update of the Comprehensive Plan and the opening of the Map Change Request application period.

February 17 & 24, 2004 - Public hearings were held before the Planning Commission (February 17, 2004) and the Board of Commissioners (February 24, 2004) to complete the 2003 Comprehensive Plan Update.

III. Completed and On-going Special Studies

A. Revitalization Task Force

In 2001, the Revitalization Task Force was created by resolution from the Board of Commissioners. The Board was concerned about the beginning signs of decay in some areas of the county. A final report was released in July 2002 with recommendations including one to continue the work of the Task Force further and to conduct pilot area studies.

The Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners supported the further expansion of the revitalization strategies with a proactive approach. The Task Force was continued and three pilot area studies were approved in January 2003 by a second resolution. A copy of the resolution and meeting summaries can be seen on the county website at www.gwinnettcountry.com.

These pilot studies are now underway and will focus on ways to improve the physical characteristics of the areas and improve the quality of life of the residents. A report with specific recommendations for the three pilot areas is scheduled to be completed in Fall 2004. A consultant team, led by the HOK Planning Group, was hired to conduct the three studies and submit final recommendation to the Revitalization Task Force.

The Resolution states specific goals for the Pilot Studies and are as follows:

- Develop a vision for the redevelopment of each individual Pilot area based upon the input of its residents and property owners,
- Evaluate the existing capacity of the County's infrastructure including water, sewer, parks, open space and transportation and identify the capital improvements and estimated cost thereof required to achieve each revitalization vision,
- Provide an economic cost to benefit assessment of providing these improvements under various scenarios of public and/or private funding, and
- Identify additional tasks tailored to the needs of the three individual pilot Study areas as determined by the Revitalization Task Force.

The three pilot areas are the Stone Mountain Highway corridor from the Dekalb County line to the City limits of Snellville,

the Beaver Ruin Road area around its intersection with and south of I-85, and the Gwinnett Place Mall area.

This study supports several of the policies stated in the 2020 Comprehensive Plan and the ARC Regional Development Plan.

Stone Mountain Highway Pilot Area

This pilot area study was the first and began in August 2003 with several citizen meetings. The first had an attendance of 100 interested persons. Opinions were solicited individually and as a group, and a pilot team then formulated these interview results into recommendations. The pilot team participated in a ½ day long charrette to formulate land use proposals along the Stone Mountain corridor.



The recommendations were forwarded onto the Revitalization Task Force for review and discussion. They will be incorporated into the final report that will be presented to the Board of Commissioners in Fall 2004.

Beaver Ruin Pilot Area

At the time of this writing, the Beaver Ruin Pilot area study is underway. Public opinion sessions were held soliciting the opinions of the area residents and community leaders. When formulated, these recommendations will be forwarded to the Revitalization Task Force.

B. Board of Education/Board of Commissioners Coordination Committee

The Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners and Board of Education, along with a representative from the Chamber of Commerce, formed a joint citizen committee to discuss and find ways to improve communication and planning. The group met for about a year and completed its work in October 2003.

The Task Force heard presentations from legislators, developers, staff, attorneys, consultants, and educators about growth and planning issues in Gwinnett County. They were also interested in how similar sized jurisdictions in other parts of the country

dealt with similar issues. An electronic questionnaire was submitted to approximately 15 other counties and school districts but only five responses were received.

An informal telephone poll was also taken of county citizens. Interested persons could phone and answer a series of questions. The responses were to aid the joint commission to make recommendations about improving relations between the two boards. Questions about school overcrowding, tax increases, and effectiveness were included in the questionnaire.

On October 21 a presentation was made to a joint meeting of the Board of Commissioners and Board of Education members on the findings and recommendations of the committee.

The Executive Summary stated a commendation. It reads:

"The level of collaboration between Gwinnett and Gwinnett County Public Schools is the unrecognized benchmark for county-school system cooperation and coordination in Georgia and the nation. There are more than 100 existing cooperative efforts between the two governing bodies. Many of these efforts are significant and ongoing. Gwinnett should be recognized as a model of collaboration and cooperation, two factors that continue to make this community a desirable place in which people want to reside, raise families, and operate businesses, and enjoy life."

The final eight (8) recommendations from the Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools Joint Study Task Force follow. A copy of their complete final report is located in **Appendix D** of this update.

In brief, the recommendations call for the two governing bodies to:

1. Jointly lobby the local delegation to the General Assembly to support legislation that would allow school overcrowding to be the sole criterion for denying rezoning requests, when certain conditions are met.
2. Evaluate using greenspace and conservation easements as measures to manage school growth and protect greenspace.

3. Promote mandatory training in the planning process for county commissioners, school board members, and planning commission appointees.
4. Expand on-going discussions among planning staff from the county, the school system, and various other community entities and the representatives of land owners and developers.
5. Support the formation of "functional councils" in human resources, information management, and facilities maintenance that would be able to share best practices, develop preferred vendor lists, and engage in benchmarking.
6. Collaborate on cost saving ventures such as a joint vendor/purchasing network, an on-line catalog, and reverse auctions.
7. Appoint a group of individuals to track progress on the recommendations and communicate that to citizens and stakeholders.
8. Invite municipal officials and economic development staff of the local Chamber of Commerce to participate in the recommendations above.

IV. Natural and Cultural Resources Element

A. Introduction

Public concern has grown in recent years over the quality of the county's natural environment and the threatened loss of some of its historic resources. The rapid pace of land development in the county notably impacts these resources and threatens their preservation. The intention of this element of the *Comprehensive Plan* is to (1) inventory the existing natural and cultural resources and review the measures being taken to preserve them, (2) make an assessment of current and future needs, and if there are any resources in need of attention by the local government, and (3) articulate community goals and an associated implementation program.

B. Inventory of Existing Conditions

1. Natural Resources Inventory

A portion of O.C.G.A. 12-2-8, the *Georgia Growth Strategies Planning Act*, authorized the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) to develop a set of criteria for local governments to use regarding preservation and protection of certain natural and historic resources. The DNR subsequently developed the *Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria*. When applicable these standards have been incorporated into this section of the *Comprehensive Plan*.

a. Public Water Supply Sources

Gwinnett County receives its surface water supply from Lake Sidney Lanier located just north of Buford. The water intake, located in a protected cove three miles from Buford Dam, provides a uniform raw water supply that is low in suspended materials, bacteria, dissolved organics, and metals. Lake Lanier, formed by Buford Dam holding the Chattahoochee and Chestatee Rivers from north Georgia, is a major recreation area in North Georgia. In fact it is one of the most visited Corps of Engineers projects in the United States, offering opportunities for boating, fishing and other water pastimes. People throughout the region enjoy Lake Lanier and the plentiful recreation opportunities it offers.

Shoal Creek Filter Plant and Reservoir

Gwinnett is currently developing water supply and treatment projects to meet the county's future needs. The water projects include the new Shoal Creek Filter Plant and its associated intake facility, water lines and reservoir. The Shoal Creek plant will work in unison with the existing Lanier Filter Plant to expand the county's water treatment capacity from 150 million gallons per day (mgd) to 300 mgd. These projects will add significant redundancy to the existing water system, ensuring that water will keep flowing in the event of an unforeseen outage at the existing facilities. They will also help meet the County's projected demand for drinking water through the year 2050.

Included in this project is the construction of a 230-acre, 1.5 billion-gallon raw water reservoir with a transfer pumping station, and pipelines connecting to the existing Lanier Filter Plant. The reservoir will be about 60 feet at its deepest point and located in the cities of Buford and Rest Haven, Georgia. The reservoir is bounded on the northwest side by the Norfolk and Southern Railway which runs parallel to Peachtree Industrial Boulevard, and to the southeast by Buford Highway.

The design of the project was completed in Spring 2003. Construction is expected to begin in 2008, and be completed in 2010.

Source Water Assessment Plan (SWAP)

All communities in Georgia are required to have a Source Water Assessment Plan (SWAP) completed by December 2003. Gwinnett County is working with the Georgia Mountains Regional Development Center and other water utilities who use Lake Lanier as their water source to complete this plan. The SWAP identifies potential sources of water contamination within the watershed. Utilities can then use this information to develop contingency plans to address specific contamination scenarios.

Water Conservation Efforts

In June 2000, the Georgia EPD imposed outdoor watering restrictions for the entire State of Georgia due to an ongoing

drought. Citizens of Gwinnett County exhibited a great spirit of cooperation abiding by outdoor water restrictions. In spite of the fact that the County population grew by more than 20,000 persons, water use during 2002 was less than the previous year. Gwinnett County continues to promote wise water use to ensure this valuable resource for future generations.

In January 2003, State climatologists declared the five-year drought ended, and the EPD lifted the statewide water use restrictions imposed three years earlier. However, the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources began a set of year round conservation-based outdoor water use restrictions beginning June 1, 2003. Included in these measures is a restriction on outdoor watering to three days per week based on an odd/even numbered address system. After a period of voluntary implementation of the measures, the restrictions will become mandatory and Gwinnett County will monitor water customers for compliance.

Gwinnett County is also active in the management of "unaccounted for water"(UFW). Unaccounted for water is water lost through the distribution process through leaks, overflows and excess in-plant potable water use. Approximately 16% of the water produced by Gwinnett County is lost as UFW. Gwinnett County has implemented system management measures to limit UFW including leak detection, improved meter maintenance, system mapping, and tank overflow prevention.

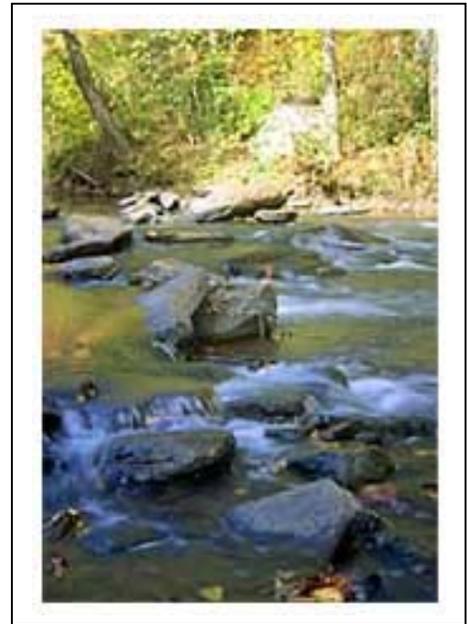
Other conservation measures include a seasonal surcharge on water, xeriscaping, and educational programs. Gwinnett County believes that it is very important for everyone to recognize the environmental and economic benefits derived from the wise and conservative use of our shared water resources in the state of Georgia.

b. Water Supply Watersheds

A watershed is defined as "the total drainage basis of a river or a stream." A water supply watershed is "a watershed that is also used to provide water as a public water source" (Georgia Department of Community Affairs, *Landowners' Guide to Wetlands and Watersheds*, p.24). The *Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria* apply only to water supply watersheds for government owned public drinking water intakes.

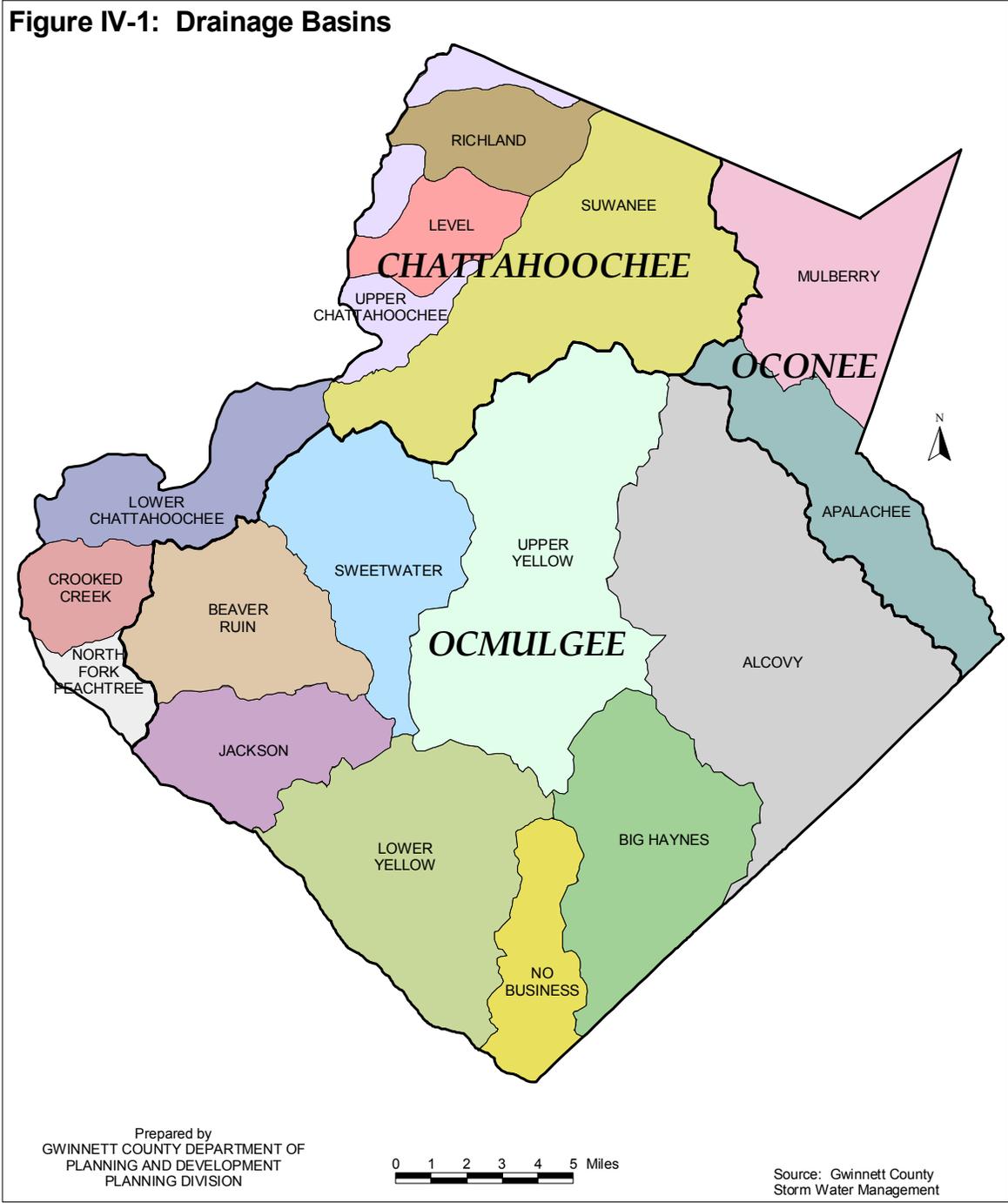
There are five existing or future public water supply watersheds in Gwinnett County. These are the Chattahoochee River, the Alcovy River, the Apalachee River, the Mulberry River and the Big Haynes Creek watersheds. None of the watersheds lie completely within Gwinnett County, and little of the land area of Gwinnett actually drains into the county's own water source Lake Lanier. However, most jurisdictions in the state receive their water from upstream sources which are outside their boundaries. Therefore, it is an obligation of each community to help to preserve and protect water quality for the downstream communities. A total of approximately 105 square miles of the Chattahoochee watershed, 65 square miles of the Alcovy watershed, 25 square miles of the Apalachee watershed, 22 square miles of the Mulberry watershed and 33 square miles of the big Haynes watershed lie within the county. **Figure IV-1**, on the following page, shows the general location of these watersheds and drainage basins.

Under the *Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria*, the size of the entire watershed dictates the protection criteria. Since large watersheds are assumed to be less vulnerable to contamination than smaller ones, their level of required protection is less. Large water supply watersheds are those which cover at least 100 square miles of land area, whereas a small water supply watershed are those which cover less than 100 square miles. The Chattahoochee, Apalachee, Mulberry and Alcovy watersheds are categorized as large watersheds. Whereas, only the Big Haynes watershed is less than 100 square miles in area and thus is classified as a small supply watershed. Environmental planning criteria require that local governments *"...identify existing and future water supply watersheds and shall adopt water supply watershed protection plans as part of their planning process."*



In a large watershed containing a reservoir, buffers and setbacks must be maintained along perennial streams in all of the watershed area within a seven-mile radius of the reservoir. There are no impervious surface limits within a large watershed. However, additional standards apply pertaining to the handling

Figure IV-1: Drainage Basins



Prepared by
GWINNETT COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT
PLANNING DIVISION

Source: Gwinnett County
Storm Water Management

of hazardous materials within a seven mile radius of a reservoir or intake.

For small watersheds, less than 100 square miles in area, such as the Big Haynes Creek watershed, additional buffers and setbacks also apply. Within seven miles of a reservoir or intake, a 100-foot vegetative buffer and 150-foot setback for impervious surface or septic tanks and drain fields are required along both sides of perennial streams. For the remainder of the watershed, 50-foot buffers and 75-foot setbacks are required.

In addition, there are additional requirements for the handling of hazardous materials and a limitation of 25% impervious surface for the total watershed land area. Because only a portion of the Big Haynes Creek watershed lies within Gwinnett County, the allocation of impervious surface is an issue that must be addressed by all jurisdictions involved. The land use scenario recommended by the Gwinnett 2020 Land Use Plan would not be expected to produce build-out development approaching the 25% impervious surface limitation.

To codify the required protection of surface water quality in the Big Haynes Creek watershed, the Department of Planning and Development amended the 1985 Zoning Resolution on October 28, 1997. Among the regulations added were requirements for larger buffers and building setbacks for properties adjacent to the Big Haynes Creek and its tributaries. On November 28, 2000 the Zoning Resolution was amended to provide a unified set of strengthened regulations for both the Big Haynes Creek and Alcovy River watersheds.

In another effort to protect water quality and satisfy the *Environmental Planning Criteria*, the Department of Public Utilities completed a countywide water quality baseline assessment. This assessment established the ambient water quality measurements during wet and dry weather. With this baseline water quality assessment established, each major stream in the county, except the Chattahoochee River, now has a water quality model established for it. The water quality model will be used to predict future water quality with different development scenarios and different non-point source controls in place. This watershed assessment is discussed in greater detail in the following section.

Watershed Assessment

The waterways of Gwinnett County are affected by a variety of natural and human-induced factors. These factors include the natural processes of rainfall, vegetation, flooding, and erosion. However our everyday activities can have significant impacts that result from development, traffic, littering and illegal dumping, landscaping and lawn care, septic tanks, release of non-native aquatic organisms, and others.

The Gwinnett County Department of Public Utilities (DPU), in partnership with the County's Planning and Development Department, and the County's Department of Transportation, is studying the County's watersheds to develop a better understanding of what affects the waterways and how water quality and habitat can be protected. The overall goal of the watershed assessment was to determine the current condition of the major streams, assess the size and effects of the different pollution sources, and evaluate options for improving and protecting Gwinnett County's water quality. The Gwinnett County Watershed Assessment and Modeling Project consisted of three basic components:

Watershed Characterization - Characterizing a watershed allowed Gwinnett County to determine the "health of the streams." Several methods of characterization are used to get the most accurate "snapshot" of the current conditions. Samples of water from selected stations along major streams are collected and studied at a laboratory. Aquatic insects and fish are also collected, analyzed, and documented. The appearance of the stream banks and wildlife habitat is also analyzed and documented. These quantitative and qualitative data are compared and evaluated, providing the County with accurate information about the current conditions of Gwinnett's watersheds.

Watershed Modeling - A watershed model is a computer program that uses rainfall, soil, land use, and water quality data to simulate the amount of stormwater (and the pollution carried by it) that enters a stream during a rain event. The Gwinnett County Watershed Assessment study used watershed modeling to predict future changes in water quality under various land uses in accordance with the Gwinnett 2020 Land Use Plan and other land use scenarios. The model also allowed estimation of the overall effectiveness of watershed protection measures (as discussed in the following component).

Watershed Protection- The results of watershed modeling have been evaluated and new recommendations developed on ways to protect and improve water resources in the County now and in the future. These recommendations were compiled and approved by the Board of Commissioners.

Watershed Protection Plan

Using findings in the Assessment and Modeling Project, the Watershed Protection Plan, completed in May 2000, further developed watershed protection goals and outlined a strategy to protect and improve water quality. The Assessment results clearly showed that the Watershed Protection Plan must:

- Mitigate changes in runoff due to development.
- Protect stream riparian areas and buffer zones.
- Reduce pollutants released to stream.

Strategies or Key Components included:

- New Development Requirements to address water quality and quantity.
- Improving affected/developed areas of the County by retrofitting or redevelopment in a low impact manner.
- Related activities in the watersheds (i.e. education, outreach, smart growth, etc...) to improve water quality.

Watershed Master Planning/Watershed Improvement Planning

To improve affected/developed areas, Watershed Master Planning/Watershed Improvement Planning will be performed throughout the County to develop a Capital Improvement Plan for improving and protecting water quality. Key elements of the planning effort include:

- Stream Reconnaissance and Evaluation
- Best Management Practices Identification and Evaluation (retrofits and new facilities)

- Drainage System Infrastructure Evaluation
- Capital Improvements Plans-Needs Evaluation / Project Development (Stream restoration / protection, BMPs, system improvements, etc...)

In January 2001 the first Master Planning/Watershed Improvement Planning project was initiated in the Crooked Creek Watershed. Crooked Creek was chosen because it was identified in the Watershed Assessment as the most adversely impacted. In 2002 Watershed Improvement Planning projects were initiated for the Beaver Run Creek, Jackson Creek, Sweetwater Creek, and the Upper Yellow River Watersheds. In 2003 Watershed Improvement Planning projects were initiated for all remaining watersheds tributary to the Chattahoochee River and the Lower Yellow River and No Business Creek watersheds. This totals approximately 262 square miles of the County where the Watershed Capital Improvements Plans have either been completed or are underway. A detailed description of the Watershed Master Plan can be obtained at the Department of Public Utilities website at www.gwinnettcountry.com.

Improved Storm Water Management Practices

Improved storm water management practices constitute a key component in Gwinnett County's watershed protection efforts. The mission of Storm Water Management Division of the Department of Public Utilities is to promote and protect the health, safety, and welfare of the public, by providing programs and services to prevent flooding, provide adequate drainage, and protect and enhance water quality in streams and lakes in unincorporated Gwinnett County. The division is divided into eight programmatic sections:

1) Water Quality Protection - Addresses locating and inspecting the storm water conveyance system, inspection of industries, and stopping pollutants from reaching our streams. Included in this program is administration of the Storm Water Management Ordinance and the mapping and inventory of the storm drain System. Inspections are also conducted to ensure Best Management Practices are used to mitigate the effects of development on water quantity and quality. Industrial inspections are done for certain Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) codes, along with all municipally owned and/or operated facilities. The inspection process surveys for direct connections to the storm drain system, exposed material that could be washed into the storm drain system, and situations that could cause of release of a substance into the storm drain system. Efforts are also made to

educate the facility staff on what non-point source pollution is and how to prevent it.

2) Public Education - Recognizing that one of the most effective ways to protect water quality is through pollution prevention, Gwinnett County has a variety of information and education programs designed to encourage environmentally responsible behavior at home, school, and work. Information can be found on the Public Utilities website at www.gwinnettcountry.com.

3) Public Participation - Several opportunities exist for citizens to participate in the planning process with citizen advisory groups. Current committees that have input into the development of storm water regulations and planning efforts include the Development Advisory Committee, Tree Advisory Committee, Growth Issues Steering Committee, and the Revitalization Task Force.



4) Construction Site Pollution Control -

Erosion control during construction is a vital part of water quality protection. Storm Water Management has five (5) engineers reviewing erosion control plans, and the Planning and Development Department has 52 inspectors who perform

construction site development inspections as part of their duties. In addition to private development, Gwinnett County Departments of Public Utilities, Transportation, and Community Services have programs with 16 inspectors to insure that County projects address sediment and erosion control.

5) Post Construction Storm Water Management - Begins in the development process with a Plan Review and Construction Inspection to ensure compliance with the development regulations, to BMP Maintenance Requirements. Plan review ensures that sufficient post-construction structural controls will be implemented to protect water quality and mitigate the impacts of development on stream flows after construction is complete. Storm water Management regulations are found in the following documents:

- Development Regulations

- Storm Water Design Manual
- Floodplain Management Ordinance
- Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance
- Zoning Resolution
- Buffer, Landscape and Tree Ordinance

6) Operation and Maintenance - Project Management is completed for system improvement and maintenance engineering systems to improve drainage and protect water quality.

7) Planning - Development of a comprehensive process and plan for the implementation of improvements to protect and improve water quality and to identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas throughout the county.



8) Monitoring - Three different sampling programs are used to monitor water quality within the County. Dry weather sampling is one method used to identify illicit discharges to the streams. The County also has 12 long-term trend monitoring sites to monitor the effectiveness of the storm water management program in addressing

non-point source pollution. The final sampling program is part of Gwinnett County's Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Program. This program is used to address streams within the County that do not meet water quality standards.

Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District

With finite water resource and a regional population of nearly four million and growing, the need to carefully and cooperatively manage and protect Metropolitan Atlanta's rivers and streams has become a priority. The Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District was signed into law on April 5, 2001 (2001 S.B. 130) and is developing regional and watershed specific plans for storm water management, wastewater management, and water supply and conservation in a 16-county area: Bartow, Cherokee, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, DeKalb, Douglas,

Fayette, Fulton, Forsyth, Gwinnett, Hall, Henry, Paulding, Rockdale and Walton Counties. Gwinnett County is working with this agency and Gwinnett municipalities to develop or refine the following ordinances to meet the storm water management standards established by the District:

1. Post Development Storm Water Management for New Development and Redevelopment
2. Floodplain Management/Flood Damage Prevention Ordinance
3. Conservation Subdivision/ Open Space Development
4. Illicit Discharge and Illegal Connection Ordinance
5. Litter Control Ordinance
6. Stream Buffer Ordinance

c. Groundwater Recharge Areas

Groundwater recharge areas are portions of the earth's surface where water infiltrates into the ground to replenish an aquifer. Aquifers are underground "reservoirs" of porous rock and soil from which we get our groundwater supply. If hazardous or toxic substances seep into the ground and pollute the groundwater, drinking water can be made unsafe to drink. An estimated 55,000 acres or 20% of Gwinnett County is located within the potential groundwater recharge areas. According to the U.S. Bureau of Census, in 1990 approximately 2,300 households in Gwinnett County received drinking water from groundwater reservoirs through the use of wells. The 2000 Census did not survey for well usage. With little commercial agriculture in operation and public water service generally ubiquitous in the County, only a slight increase in the usage of groundwater resources is expected in the future. However, protection of groundwater recharge areas is an important safety consideration that Gwinnett County has taken measures to address.

The *Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria*, authorized the DNR to establish minimum protection criteria for "significant" groundwater recharge areas throughout the state. The rules require local governments to adopt, implement, and enforce ordinances for recharge area protection at least as stringent as the standards set forth. The DNR subsequently defined "significant recharge areas" as those areas mapped by the DNR in Hydrologic Atlas 18, *Most Significant Groundwater Recharge Areas of Georgia* (1989 edition).

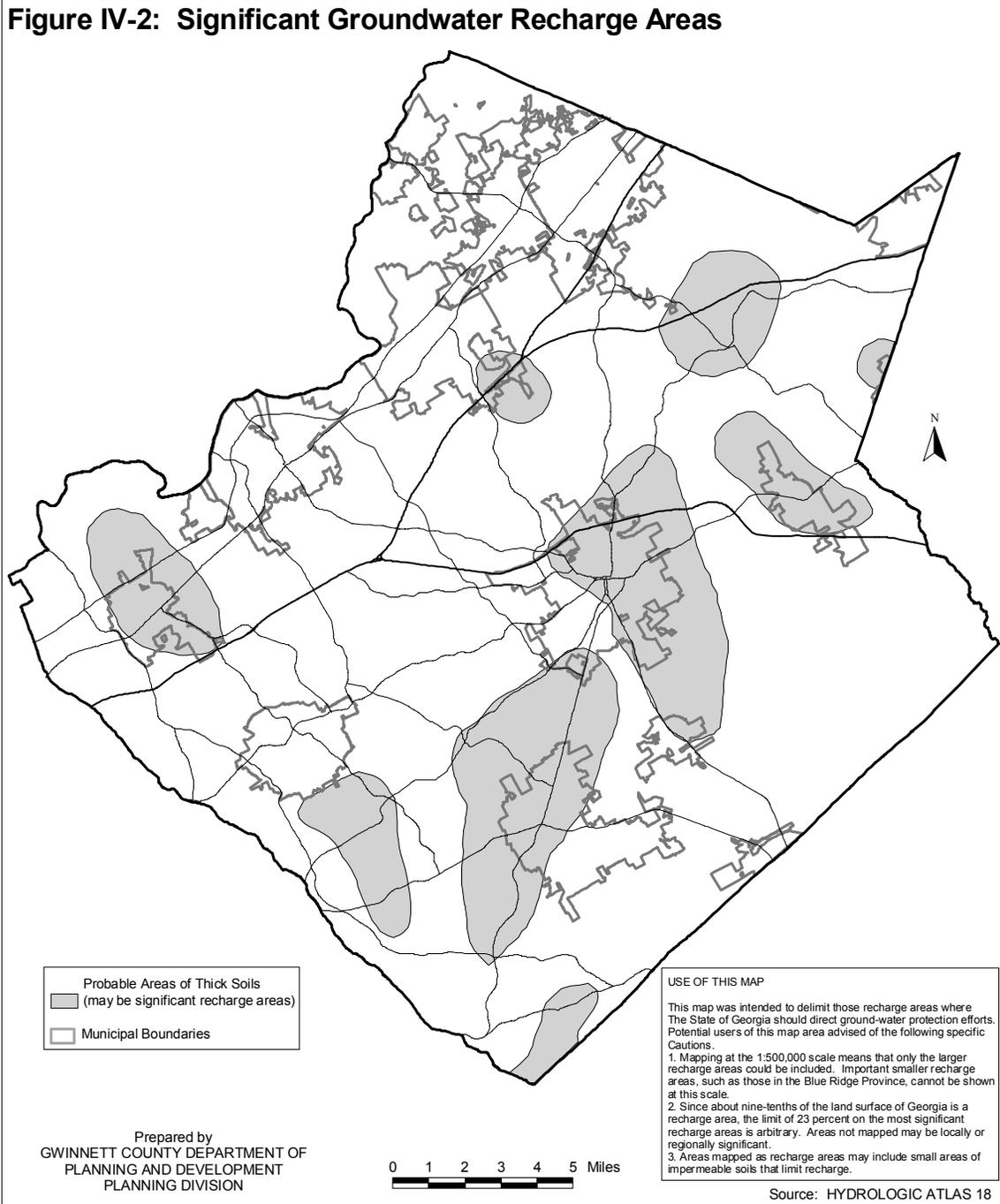
Hydrologic Atlas 18 identifies possible "significant groundwater recharge areas" and is reproduced on the following map, **Figure IV-2**. Mapping of these areas is based on "outcrop area, lithology, soil type and thickness, slope, density of lithologic contacts, geologic structure, the presence of karst, and potentiometric surfaces," Hydrologic Atlas 18 indicates that the largest identified potential groundwater recharge areas in Gwinnett are located near Snellville, Lawrenceville, Norcross, and Lilburn. In addition, the map indicates that smaller, minor recharge areas exist in the northern and eastern portions of the county near Suwanee, Hog Mountain, and Dacula. This map has been digitized and is now available as a layer in the GIS system.

Throughout the state, recharge areas are categorized as having a high, medium, or low pollution susceptibility. Pollution susceptibility is the relative vulnerability of an aquifer to being polluted from spills, discharges, leaks, impoundments, applications of chemicals, injections and other human activities. Pollution susceptibility is determined using a standardized system for evaluating groundwater pollution potential called the DRASTIC system. The planning criteria for groundwater protection developed by DNR varies depending on the identified pollution susceptibility of an area. According to the "Hydrologic Atlas 20: Georgia Pollution Susceptibility Map," all of the groundwater recharge areas in Gwinnett County are considered to have low pollution susceptibility.

New Groundwater Protection Measures

Gwinnett County has implemented several new regulations and policies to protect groundwater. On January 23, 2001 the Board of Commissioners approved a resolution increasing the minimum size of lots served by septic tanks from 18,000 square feet to 25,500 square feet. Further, larger lots are required for septic tank lots within designated groundwater recharge areas. Revisions have also been made to the development and stormwater regulations to help prevent spillage and runoff of pollutants from businesses.

In response to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources *Environmental Planning Criteria*, additional measures have been taken to ensure containment of hazardous materials. Owners or operators of facilities that have hazardous chemicals on hand must submit the forms to each of the following: 1) State Emergency Response Commission, 2) Local emergency planning agency, and 3) the Fire Department with jurisdiction over the facility. This requirement is to enhance community awareness of



chemical hazards and to facilitate the development of state and local emergency plans. Under this process, the applicant for a building permit or a business license is notified of the reporting requirement at the time of submittal.

Concentration of Septic Tanks

Gwinnett County currently has a significant number of septic systems. When properly installed and maintained, septic systems are considered to be environmentally benign. The Environmental Health Department of the State Department of Human Resources plays a critical role by insuring that these on-site sewage disposal systems are built to code and are repaired promptly when they fail.

Regulatory services performed by the agency include:

- Client consultation for determining feasibility of septic system use,
- Site evaluation for septic system placement,
- Permitting and inspections of system construction,
- Certification of existing systems for lending institutions,
- Complaint investigations, and
- Licensing of septic system contractors and septic tank cleaning services

Gwinnett County government has also taken a proactive approach in addressing the long-term impacts of septic systems in the County. With the assistance of an Environmental Protection Agency grant, the Department of Public utilities has commissioned an aerial infrared mapping project to be conducted over the next two years. This infrared technology can detect failing septic systems through an analysis of vegetation patterns. With this information, the county can map out new sewer lines to troubled areas or alert homeowners to the problem.

d. Wetlands

Wetlands can be classified as either tidal wetlands (coastal wetlands) or non-tidal wetlands (primarily freshwater wetlands). Since Gwinnett County does not have any coastline, only non-tidal freshwater wetlands will be discussed. It is estimated that Gwinnett County contains approximately 8,900 acres of wetlands.

The federal government's definition of freshwater wetlands is: "those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas. The ecological parameters for designating wetlands include hydric soils, hydrophytic vegetation, and hydrological conditions that involve a temporary or permanent source of water to cause soil saturation."

Wetlands serve a variety of important aesthetic, ecological, and economic functions. Significant functions include, but are not limited to, flood protection/control, erosion control, water quality maintenance, groundwater recharge and supply natural habitats, natural resources, and recreation. Wetlands range widely in size and type. Some are flooded year-round such as swamps and marshes; whereas others may be flooded for only part of the year such as intermittent streams, bogs, springs, bottomland forests, pine flatwoods, wet meadows and sinkholes.

Wetlands are threatened by a number of human and natural actions. Some of these are direct human threats such as drainage of the wetlands for land reclamation, construction of dikes, dams and levees which alter wetlands, and discharge of toxic materials such as oils, pesticides or other pollutants which destroy plants and wildlife within the wetlands. Other human threats are indirect such as sediment diversion by dams and channels and subsidence due to extraction of groundwater, oil and other minerals. Finally, some threats are natural such as storms, droughts, and animal destruction.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is responsible for restoring and maintaining the environmental integrity of the nation's wetland resources. The major federal regulatory tool for achieving this is "Section 404" of the *Clean Water Act*,

which is jointly administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the EPA. Section 404 establishes a permit program to regulate the discharge of dredged or fill materials into waters of the United States, including most wetlands. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the national marine Fisheries Service also have important advisory roles in the permit review process.

Currently, the best available inventory of wetlands is the *National Wetlands Inventory* (N.W.I.) produced by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. These maps were produced based on aerial photography conducted from 1979 to 1994. In addition to maintaining a hardcopy collection of these maps, Gwinnett County now has them in digital form in the Geographic Information System. Having the maps in the GIS system enables county agencies to better inventory and protect wetlands. It is also possible with the GIS system to conduct quantitative analysis of wetlands and evaluate them spatially relative to other geographic features such as streams and drainage basins.

While the NWI maps are useful for locating and analyzing major wetland areas, they are too general to identify jurisdictional wetlands for regulatory purposes. Jurisdictional wetlands are those as defined and regulated by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of 1977. Site-specific surveys are generally required to precisely delineate jurisdictional wetlands.

As part of the Watershed Master Planning Process, Gwinnett is using field and Geographical Information System reconnaissance to better identify wetlands in the County. This inventory will assist the County in protecting wetlands from sedimentation and other damage and help maintain their vital role in the ecological and storm water management systems.

While Gwinnett County government does not play a direct role in the protection of wetlands, measures have been taken to improve coordination with the State EPD and Corps of Engineers. Developers are made aware of the Section 404 regulations through the development permit application process. However, the Development Regulations were revised in 2002 to require that civil engineers place a statement on plans certifying that appropriate permits have been obtained from the Corps for any wetlands disturbance. This requirement was implemented to further safeguard wetlands and satisfy the State's *Environmental Planning Criteria*.

It is Gwinnett County's intent to be proactive in the protection and restoration of wetland areas. Two initiatives toward that objective are the Big Haynes Creek Wetlands Demonstration Project and the Stream and Wetlands Mitigation Bank.

Big Haynes Creek Wetlands Demonstration Project

In addition to master planning efforts, the Big Haynes Creek Watershed Wetlands Demonstration Project was also initiated in 2001. This project will demonstrate the concept of using manmade wetlands to remove pollutants from urban storm water runoff. These wetlands will be located in or adjacent to the flood plain and will be planted with plants that will remove contaminants from urban runoff prior to entering the main stream.

Included in this project is site selection, land acquisition, wetlands design, permitting, construction, and four years of water quality monitoring. Funding for the project is in the amount of \$3,091,091 with \$1,700,100 from an EPA Special Congressional Appropriations Grant and a local match of \$1,390,991.

As with Gwinnett County's other watershed planning efforts, this project is being coordinated with other County departments and programs, federal and state agencies, and community groups in efforts to construct multi-purpose facilities that meet our water quality goals, are integrated into the community landscape and values, protect our natural resources, and improve our urban and natural environment.

Stream and Wetlands Mitigation Bank

To assist in planning and implementing a comprehensive watershed management program, Gwinnett County is now in the planning stage for development of a credit system (Stream and Wetlands Mitigation Bank) to provide incentives for implementing local restoration projects. The bank could be use by various County Departments, the County School Board, Georgia Department of Transportation, or private developers and would provide incentives/credits for improvements in degraded watersheds in Gwinnett County. Using the Capital Improvement Projects developed in our Watershed Master Planning efforts, a list of areas in need of varying levels

of restoration will be available to satisfy permit/credit requirements. Key element of the bank will include:

- Identification and prioritization of restoration projects in each watershed.
- Assurance that any mitigation project done would have the greatest impact on improving stream habitat and enhancing water quality in the watershed.
- Provide incentives to implement projects and develop flexibility to encourage non-governmental stream bank stabilization or stream channel restoration projects.
- Expedite the process for County or other governmental agency permits for stream bank stabilization or stream channel restoration projects.

e. Protected Mountains

Although portions of the County near Hall County and Lake Lanier can be considered "foothills" of the Appalachian Mountains, no protected mountains are located in Gwinnett County.

f. Protected River Corridors

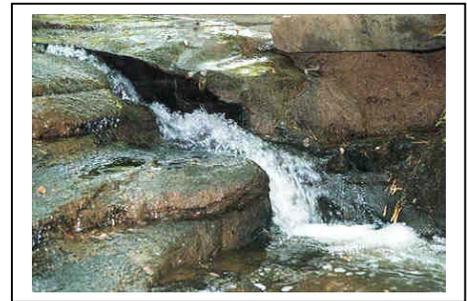
Following a study by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) in 1972, the Georgia General Assembly enacted the *Metropolitan River Protection Act* (MRPA) in 1973. This legislation authorized the ARC to develop a plan for protecting the water quality of the Chattahoochee River above the City of Atlanta's water intake to Buford Dam. The act also required local governments to implement and enforce the plan. In Gwinnett County, the MRPA applies to a 2000-foot corridor along the east bank of the Chattahoochee River (the county line) from Buford Dam southward to Holcomb Bridge Road. This corridor is identified on Gwinnett County's zoning maps pursuant to O.C.G.A. 12-5-444 (d) and the county requires that all permits issued within the corridor follow the established review procedure.

Within the corridor, a 50-foot natural, undisturbed, vegetative buffer and 150-foot setback for impervious surface is required along the river bank. In addition, 35-foot natural, undisturbed vegetative buffers are required on both sides of flowing tributaries. Standards also address treatment of flood plain and limit the amount of allowable land disturbance and impervious surface based on mapped land vulnerability

categories. These categories are derived from such factors as soil type, slope and vegetation. The land disturbance and impervious surface standards apply regardless of land use.

In response to 1984 amendments to the MRPA, Gwinnett adopted Chattahoochee River Tributary Protection provisions to the *Zoning Resolution of Gwinnett County*. These provisions require 35-foot buffers along flowing tributaries of the Chattahoochee River outside the 2000-foot corridor.

Additionally, the "Land Use Element" of the *Comprehensive Plan* suggests that uses in proximity to the river be restricted to Agricultural/Estate, Low Density Residential and Institutional/Public except where other uses may already exist. Also, in areas where additional land is desired to meet the passive recreational needs of county residents riverfront land will take a high priority.



As discussed under *Water Supply Watersheds*, the Alcovy River and Big Haynes Creek are now also subject to increased regulatory protection. The county feels that these measures, coupled with the current erosion control and sedimentation regulations, offer adequate protections of our river corridors.

g. Floodplains

The Gwinnett County *Floodplain Management Ordinance* adopted on January 19, 1996 defines floodplain as those areas subject to flooding, which have at least a 1% probability of flooding occurrence in any calendar year. Approximately 23,000 acres of Gwinnett County lie within the 100-year floodplain. This represents roughly 8% of the county's total acreage.

The county primarily relies on the "Floodway Boundary and Floodway Maps" as well as the "Flood Insurance Rate Maps" (FIRM) prepared by the Federal Emergency management Agency (FEMA) for locations of flood hazard areas in unincorporated portions of the county. The county also uses flood and flood related studies conducted by the United States Corps of Engineers, United States Geological Survey, and base flood studies authored by registered Professional Engineers in the State of Georgia.

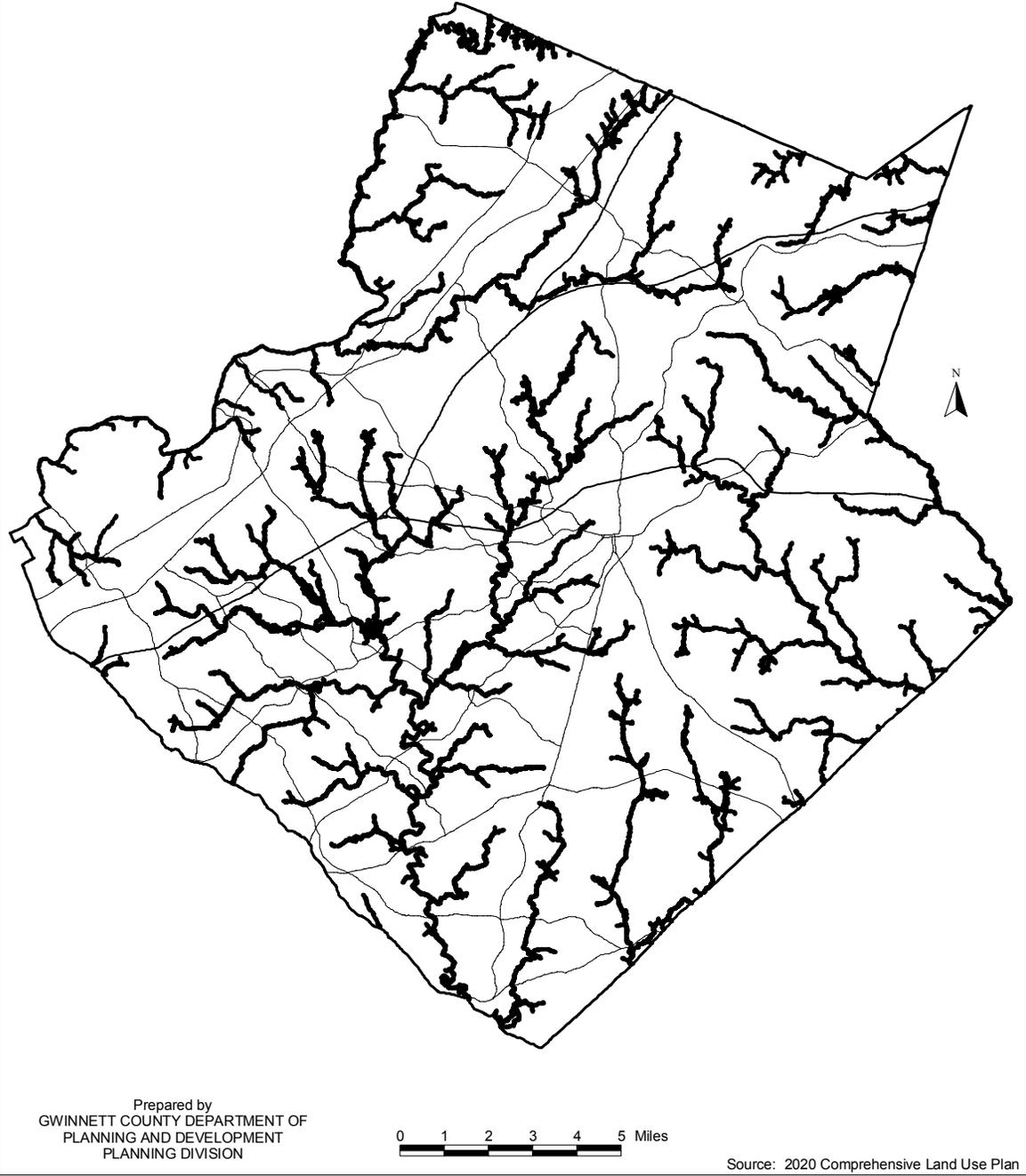
The following map, **Figure IV-3** depicts the generalized locations of 100-year floodplains in the county.

Floodplain Management Ordinance

Gwinnett County's *Floodplain Management Ordinance* is the primary regulatory tool in the county for floodplain protection. In addition to limiting the allowed uses within floodplains, it also limits and regulates construction activities within these areas. The following uses may be permitted subject to the requirements of the *Floodplain Management Ordinance* and the requirements of the *Development Regulations*:

1. Agriculture, including forestry and livestock raising, requiring no structure within the floodplain except structures for temporary shelter;
2. Dams, provided they are designed and constructed in accordance with specifications of the state *Safe Dam Act's* latest revision and the *Development Regulations*;
3. Public parks and recreation areas and facilities requiring no structures within the floodplain, except structures for temporary shelter;
4. Bridges, culverts and the roadway fill related to these structures;
5. Parking Areas - All required parking areas shall be located at an elevation higher than the calculated five-year storm, and shall not be located within any floodway;
6. Outdoor Storage; and/or accessory buildings not exceeding 550 square feet;
7. Fences having sufficient open area to permit the free flow of water and debris;
8. Public utility poles, towers, pipelines, sewer; and other similar public and semi-public utilities and facilities; and semi-public utilities and facilities;
9. Signs and sign structures, provided they permit the free flow of water and debris; and
10. Swimming pools and tennis courts.

Figure IV-3: Generalized Location of the 100-year Floodplains



A detailed description of permitted uses and activities permitted within flood hazard areas is discussed in the *Floodplain Management Ordinance*. The county feels that these measures are sufficient to protect flood hazard areas.

Improved Floodplain Delineation

Most of the flood plain maps in Gwinnett County are based on old studies and there are many areas where the flood plain has not been identified. Therefore, the Department of Public Utilities has implemented a program to study and identify the floodplain in the county. The study will use modeling based on land use and topography to identify the floodplain. Because of efforts to update the maps, Gwinnett is the second county in Georgia to become a Cooperating Technical Partner (CTP) with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). The partnership will allow the county to have digital FIRMs (DFIRM) that will be integrated with our GIS system. These maps will be combined with city flood maps to produce seamless maps across the county. The Department of Public Utilities is currently working with FEMA to produce the new DFIRMs and are on schedule to have preliminary Countywide DFIRMs by the end of 2003.

h. Soil Types

In 1967 a comprehensive soil survey of Gwinnett County was conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture. This in-depth survey identified 26 separate soil series and eleven different soil associations. These associations have been grouped into four classifications which are described below. A Flooding Frequency map and the general locations of the corresponding soil types are shown as part of the map on **Figure IV-4**.

Level Soils on Floodplain: These soils are characterized by soils subject to overflow. These soils show a wide range of drainage capabilities and are located almost completely within the 100-year floodplain. These soils are generally unfit for most permanent development. These areas serve as a good habitat for wildlife and with proper management can be used for pasture and limited farming. These areas would not be suitable for septic tank usage or landfills. The soils occupy 12% of the total area of the county. Level Soils on Floodplain include the Chewacia-Congaree-Wehadkee Association.

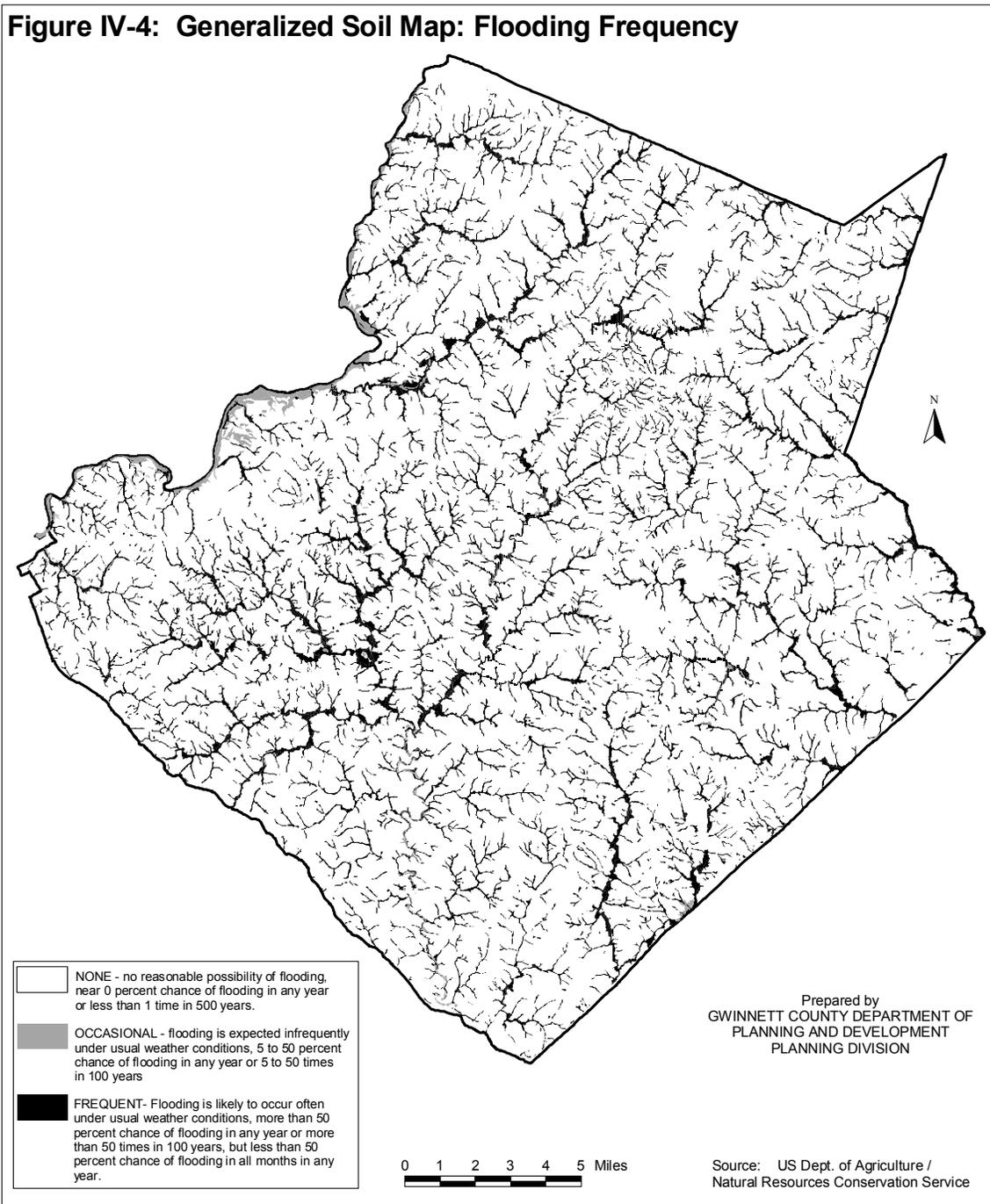
Soils on Broad Stream Terraces: These soils are well-drained or moderately well-drained on nearly level or gentle sloping terrain. The soils are deep with a clayey or loamy subsoil, and they only occupy less than 1% of the total area of the county. Slight adjustments must be made in these areas to allow residential or industrial use. Slight adjustments must also be made for septic tanks. These areas are very well suited for agricultural uses. These soils include the Wickham-Altavista-Red Bay Association.

Deep Upland Soils: Nearly half of the total area of the county (48%) is occupied by deep upland soils, which are dominantly well-drained, very gently sloping soils that are deep over hard rock. These soils have a clayey to loamy subsoil on ridgetops and interstream divides. The soils are appropriate for almost all uses with very slight adjustments to the area and few limitations. Major problems in this classification arise only in regard to slope. These soils include the Appling-Pacolet-Louisberg, Madison-Pacolet-Appling, Gwinnett-Cecil-Davidson and Appling-Pacolet-Gwinnett Associations.

Shallow upland Soils: Shallow upland soils are the second most common soil type in the county, occupying 38% of the county's total area. These soils are dominantly well-drained, moderately steep to steep soils that are less than 40 inches to weathered or shattered rock. These areas are most suitable for residential development due to the shallow soils. Septic tank use is possible. The land requires much adaptation to be conducive to industrial uses. These soils include the Madison-Pacolet-Louisburg, Wedowee-Pacolet-Louisberg, Gwinnett-Musella-Pacolet, Gwinnett-Pacolet-Louisburg and Louisberg-Pacolet-Wedowee Associations.

As noted in the Protected Watersheds section, Gwinnett County supports that protection of soil through effective soil erosion and sediment control measures. On March 28, 1972, the County adopted the *Gwinnett County Soil Erosion and Sediment Control Ordinance*. Most recently amended on August 2002 to comply with state guidelines, this ordinance requires, among other things, development to be in accordance with "best management practices" to prevent and minimize soil erosion and sedimentation in accordance with the *Manual for Erosion and Sediment Control in Georgia*. Additionally, the ordinance outlines other

Figure IV-4: Generalized Soil Map: Flooding Frequency



requirements and measures that are further intended to prevent soil erosion and sedimentation. Further revisions are planned to be adopted by July 2004 to satisfy the requirements of the Federal Clean Water Act's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). These strengthened regulations combined with the existing storm water management programs will provide adequate measures to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation.

As a component of the GIS system, Gwinnett County now has the Soil Data Viewer developed by the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service. The Soil Data Viewer provides access to a soil database for processing and displaying soil information through a list of interpretations, soil interpretative groups, and physical and chemical soil properties that may be selected for analysis. The Soils Data Viewer can process soil data and information and display the results as a map or as tabular reports. Analysis can be conducted and maps produced to address such issues as soil suitability for building construction, agriculture, or waste disposal. **Figure IV-4** on the proceeding page was compiled using the dataviewer.

i. Steep Slopes

Gwinnett County does not have any large land areas that contain steep slopes. The topography of the county does contain small ridge lines and some bluffs along the Chattahoochee River. Development regulation in regard to slope is handled on a case-by-case basis. Developments depending upon type begin being restricted at a 12% slope in Gwinnett County. Site grading for cut or fill has a maximum slope of 2:1. Most soils in Gwinnett can be safely stabilized at this ratio.

Gwinnett County requires that areas of steep slope (greater than 25%) be delineated on plans for conservation subdivisions. Conservation Subdivisions allow reduced lot size for preservation of 40-50% of the site in open space. The Development Advisory Committee is considering recommending that any areas of steep slope in conservation subdivisions be included in the protected open space. Within the protected Chattahoochee River corridor, slope is a factor in the assignment of vulnerability categories to land. These categories are used to help regulate the size and location of new development.

Analysis of topography in the County is also enhanced by recent improvements to the GIS system. Steeply sloped areas can now be identified and evaluated by a topographic map layer with a two-foot contour interval.

j. Prime Agricultural and Forestland

Forest Land

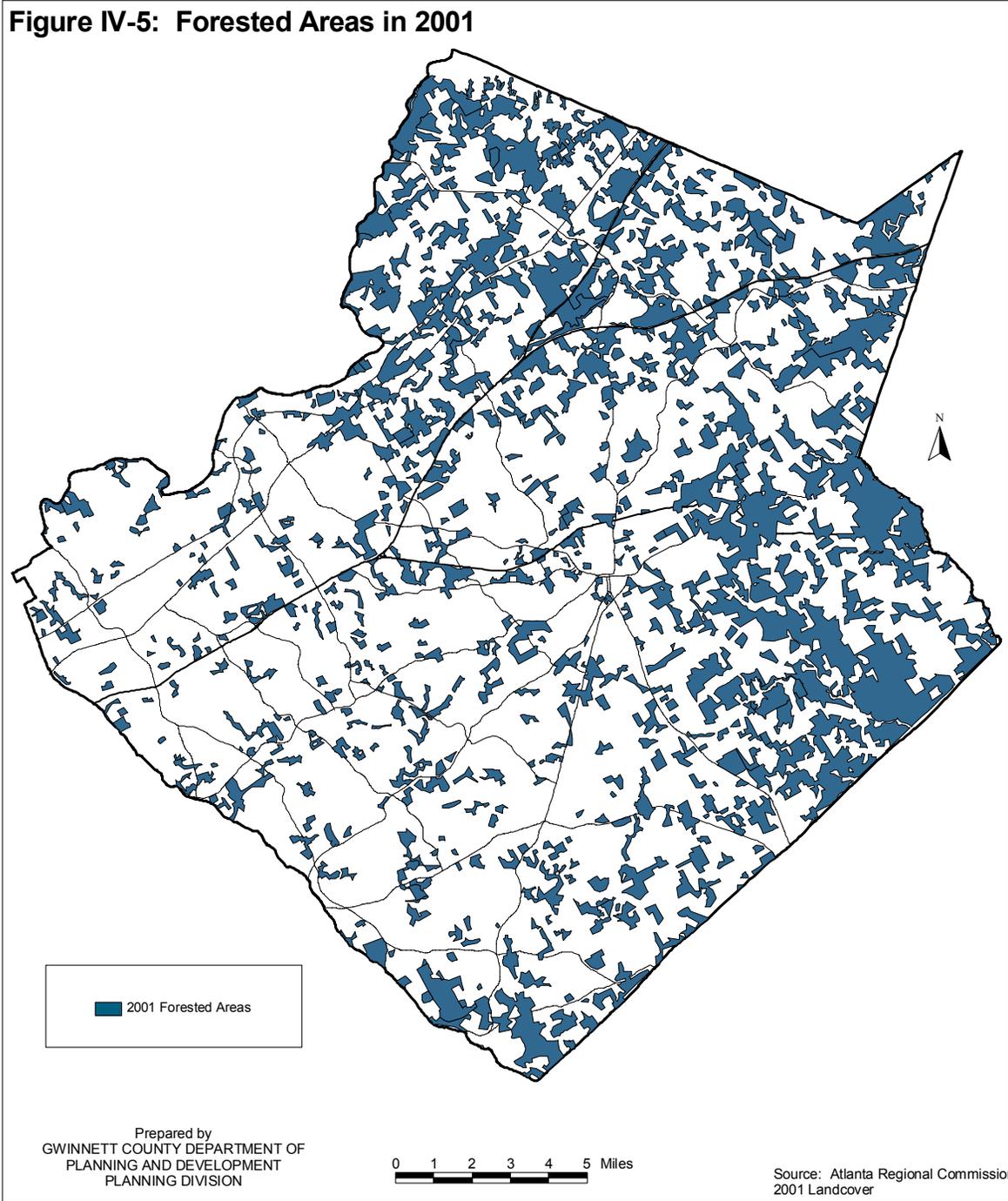
Over time the forested land in Gwinnett County has undergone several significant changes. The original forest was a climax forest, dominated by Oaks, Hickory and Chestnut trees. Since the time of settlement, the forest has undergone repeated harvesting and clearing to make way for agriculture. At the height of the County's cotton growing period in the late nineteenth century, much of the forest had given way to major cotton growing operations, with the end of the cotton period, much of the County converted to dairy farming to support the growing demands of Atlanta. Both of these agricultural practices required the removal of trees. Where agriculture ceased, many tracts reverted to a forested state. Several agencies including the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Forest Service periodically conduct forest surveys of the county gathering information regarding forested areas of the county.

The Forest Service defines forested land as property that is at least 16.7% stocked by forest trees of any size, or formerly having had such tree cover, and not currently developed for non-forest use. In 1997 the Forest Service estimated that Gwinnett County contained approximately 130,799 acres of forested land. The 2003 estimate from the Gwinnett County Agricultural Extension Service estimates 114,000 acres of the Gwinnett's 178,458 unincorporated acres are forestland. This represents approximately 41% of the county. Estimates of forestland vary somewhat from survey to survey depending on the definition of forested land and the method of analysis.

While still containing many wooded areas, a loss in forested land has occurred as Gwinnett County has transformed from a primarily rural county to part of the suburbanized Atlanta metropolitan area. As in the past, the forestland continues to cycle with different land patterns and development activities.

In an effort to preserve and protect the remaining forested areas, in 1992 Gwinnett County adopted and currently enforces a *Buffer, Landscape and Tree Ordinance* to preserve and enhance

Figure IV-5: Forested Areas in 2001



Gwinnett County's natural environment. The ordinance is intended to further the county's policy that all development sites where trees are most commonly removed will achieve upon project completion a uniform standard related to tree coverage. These standards refer to a minimum required tree density. This ordinance has been amended and strengthened in 1999, 2000, and 2003.

In another effort to preserve and protect forested areas, the Georgia Forestry Commission currently administers a Stewardship Program in the county. This program began in 1993 and recognizes property owners who undertake good multiple use management practices regarding forested land. The Georgia Forestry Commission works with property owners to develop a comprehensive land management plan that recognizes and protects the natural environment. It addresses not only forest management and protection, but also wildlife, soil and water conservation.

Another initiative that will help preserve forested areas is Gwinnett County's aggressive parks and green space acquisition efforts. In 2002 Gwinnett County adopted the Open Space and Greenways Master Plan. Since 1996 the amount of open space and parkland in the County has grown from just over 1,800 acres to over 8,000 acres. In the past three years alone approximately 3,800 acres have been acquired for parks and open space. The greenway concept calls for many forested areas along rivers and streams to remain in a natural forested state.

Of the land purchased over 5,300 acres have been targeted for passive recreation use. Much of these areas will remain forested for scenic, recreational, and natural benefits. Funding for this acquisition has come from the General Fund, a Special Local Option Sales Tax, and the Georgia Community Green Space program.

Agricultural Land

According to the National Agricultural Statistics Service, Gwinnett County had approximately 31,360 acres of farmland in 1997. **Figure IV-6** shows the general locations of agricultural areas in Gwinnett County in 2002. These clusters of actively producing farms are all that remains of the county's once vibrant agrarian economy. There is little crop production remaining, as most of the present farming practices involve the raising of cattle, horses and chickens. The nodes indicated on the map represent only 26,000 acres or roughly 9.1% of the

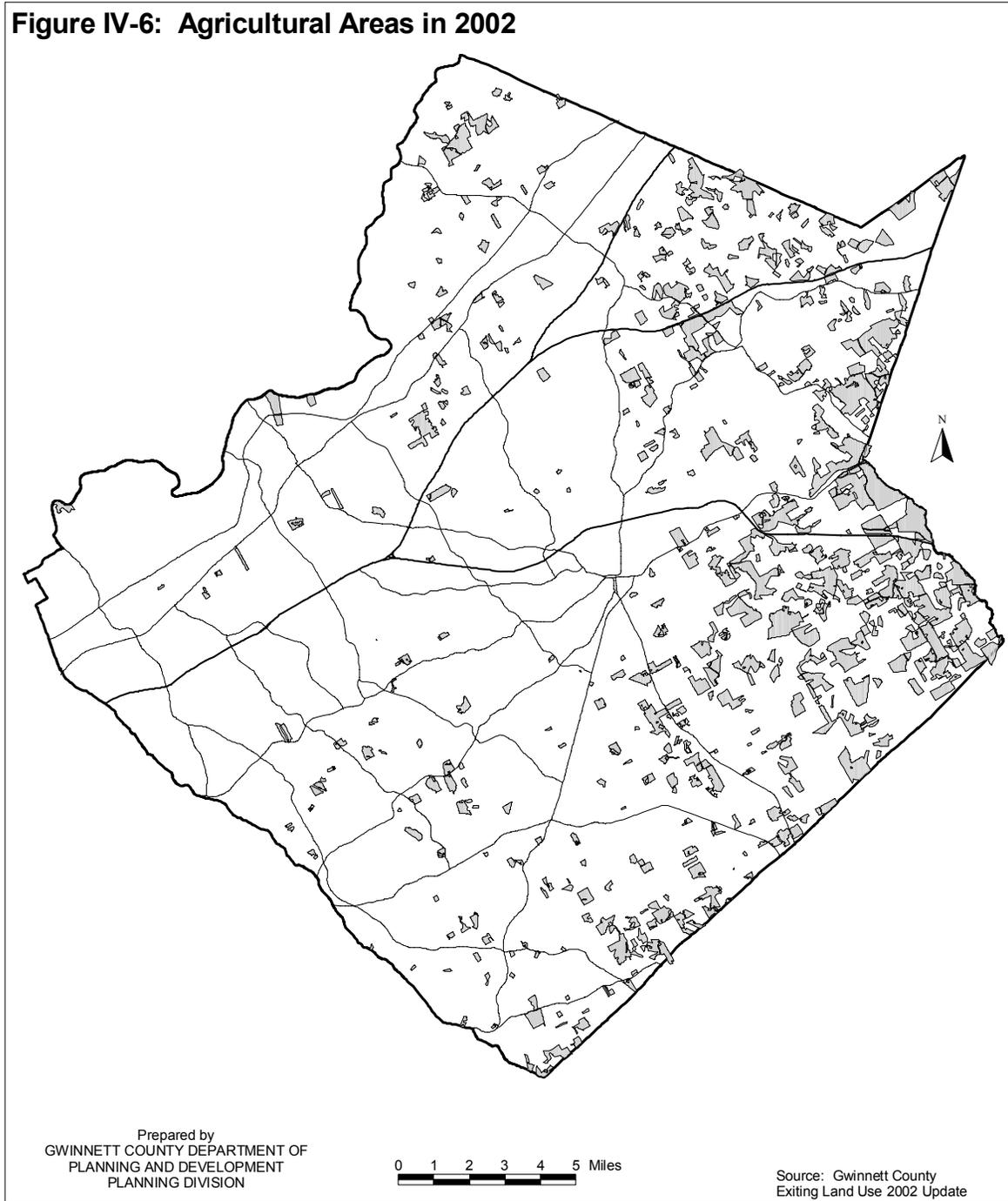
county. Existing agricultural properties are also shown on the "Existing Land Use Map" in the "Land Use Element." This map was updated in 2002 and is shown in detail in the 2002 Update.

Historically, it has not been the policy of the county to preserve a rural environment anywhere in the county. In fact, the Board of Commissioners removed the purely agricultural designation from the Land Use Plan map in 1992. Only lands for which preferential tax assessment has been requested are now considered as "agricultural" for land use purposes. Currently approximately 1,400 parcels are included in the Conservation Use Value Assessment program. These tracts are in agricultural usage, including ranching, forestry, and the raising of crops.

In 1998, there was a flurry of interest in preserving the rural character of the county. Through the Update of the Comprehensive Plan a number of property owners in the county requested a Rural/Residential or Agricultural designation on the land use plan. Eleven properties totaling 290 acres were granted the Agriculture classification. A total of 33 property owners representing approximately 500 acres were granted the Rural/Residential classification. However, the adopting language made it clear that the designation applied only to the wishes of the property owners, and would not establish a precedent for land use and zoning decisions on surrounding property.

Many citizens have indicated that the rural character of certain areas was a major attraction of Gwinnett County when they moved here. The increase in demand for residential subdivisions in the rural outlying areas is evidence of this desire. However, increased demand for residential development in rural areas ultimately destroys the rural character that drew people to those areas in the first place.

Figure IV-6: Agricultural Areas in 2002



k. Plant and Animal Habitats

Within Gwinnett County there are a vast array of plant and animal species. Soils, existing vegetation, presence of water and manmade development are among the many factors that affect the type and abundance of plant and wildlife in the county. In general wildlife is most present in forested and agricultural areas, however, some wildlife has successfully adapted to areas with residential development.

Many of the species of plants that are known to exist within Gwinnett County are classified as endangered, threatened, rare, or unusual. The exact locations of these species are not mapped due to their sensitive nature and may be subject to seasonal change. The official list of special concern plant and animal species potentially occurring in Gwinnett County is maintained by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. The list is a component of the Georgia National Heritage Program and is considered a working list. For the latest changes, acknowledgment of numerous sources, interpretation of data, or other information connected with this list, please contact: Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Georgia National Heritage Program, 2117 Hwy. 278 SE, Social Circle, GA 30279, 706-557-3032. The web site is www.georgiawildlife.com.

The latest information from the Georgia Department of Natural Resources is summarized in a table in the **Appendix**. This list was last updated by the state in June 2003. Additional information concerning the GIS data file is also in the Appendix.

I. Major Parks, Recreation and Conservation Areas

Since 1996, Gwinnett County has more than quadrupled the amount of park acreage it owns, from 1,800 acres to over 8,000 acres. During the past five years, the Board of Commissioners has approved the purchase of more than 4,650 acres of passive parkland at a cost of approximately \$87 million dollars. The county purchased 1,365 acres of parkland in 2001 and 2,134 acres in 2002.

In addition to phenomenal parkland acquisition during the past five years, new facilities have been constructed. This includes three community centers, three aquatic centers, two tennis centers, a roller hockey rink, a dog park, and a free-skate

bowl. A map (**Figure IV-7**) indicating locations of all the county parks follows this page.

A few significant new parks and conservation areas are featured below.

Lake Lanier and the Chattahoochee River

The most significant regional recreational area in the Gwinnett County is the portion of Lake Sidney Lanier that lies within the county. Lake Lanier is located in the northwestern portion of the County near Forsyth and Hall Counties. The lake is used extensively for numerous recreation purposes such as fishing, boating and other lake related uses throughout the year. Associated with the lake are several sites of federally owned parkland which make up the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Lake Lanier Recreation Area.

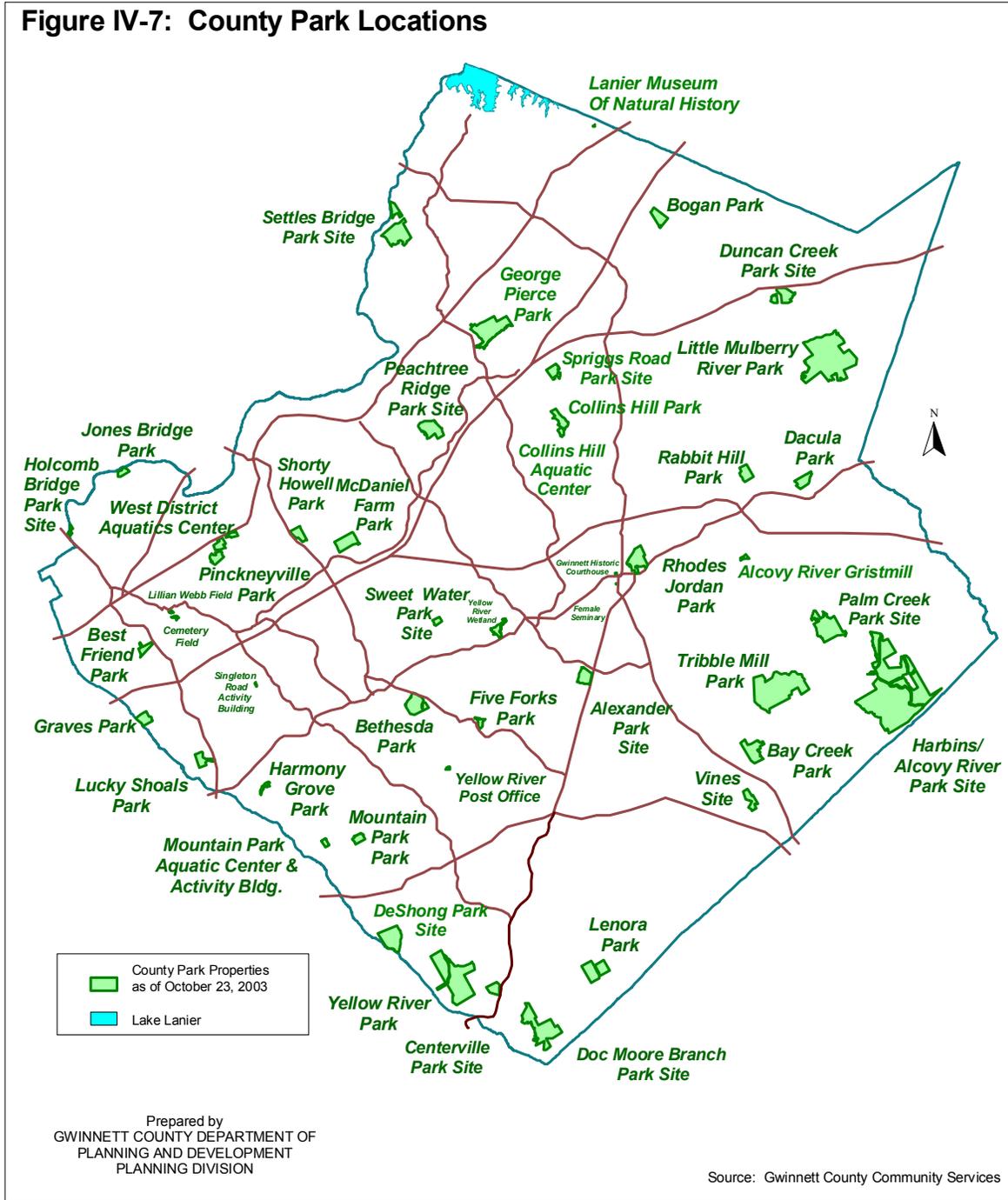
In association with managing Buford Dam on Lake Lanier, the Corps of Engineers also manages four public parks/recreation facilities in the area. The parks, Lower Overlook Park, Upper Overlook Park, Buford Dam Park and East Bank Park are all located in the northwestern portion of the county within approximately 2.0 miles of one another. They total roughly 173 acres and include amenities such as natural wooded areas, parking areas, picnic areas, camping, hiking trails and access to Lake Lanier.

Additionally, there are several public sites along the Chattahoochee River managed by the National Park Service. These sites include properties along the river. These sites all serve as river parks and river access points. In 1996, with assistance from the Trust for Public Lands, approximately 90 acres along the river was acquired and donated to the National Park Service. This acquisition of river front land has continued from City of Buford to City of Duluth.

Environmental and Heritage Center

The Gwinnett County Environmental and Heritage Center is a collaboration of the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners, the Gwinnett County Board of Education, and The University of Georgia. It will focus on the general topic of water, be a model of ecological design as expressed in the building and associated site improvements, and serve as an educational and

Figure IV-7: County Park Locations



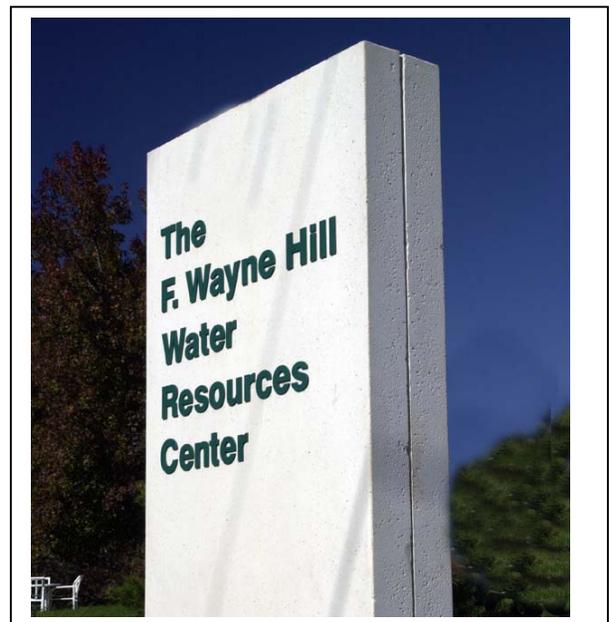
cultural asset for citizens in Gwinnett County and the State of Georgia.

More than 200 acres have been preserved for the environmental and heritage center and surrounding area. Plans include use of the site's natural areas for passive recreation opportunities. Pedestrian and bikeway trails will connect the environmental and heritage center's building to overlooks, outdoor classrooms, interpretive points, and an outdoor amphitheater.

The center will use a blend of indoor and outdoor classroom space, exterior landscapes and exhibits, a museum-like collection of permanent and rotating displays, and interactive and hands-on learning opportunities to teach K-12 and adult audiences about Gwinnett County and the state of Georgia's environmental heritage. Specifically, these programs will explore the use and importance of water by past, present, and future inhabitants.

Displays, for example, may show the county's system of rivers and their relationship to Lake Lanier and to Georgia's long-term water management options. Other exhibits may focus on Native American settlements along the rivers of the region and the impacts on water quality and quantity of European settlement with the advent of modern agriculture, industry, and transportation.

Developed on the site of the F. Wayne Hill Water Resources Center, the property also houses one of the nation's premier water treatment facilities. The treatment facility draws visitors from around the United States and the world who want to learn about successes in clean water initiatives. The original site master plan for the F. Wayne Hill Water Resources Center included an associated educational facility.



Recently, on August 15, 2003, a \$1.3 million contract was signed to design the center's building and exhibits. The Gwinnett County Environmental and Heritage Center's design will use ecological materials and methods to allow the project to serve

as a model of sustainable design, while innovative techniques will minimize disturbance to the surrounding site and enhance energy efficiency. The goal is to achieve LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification. The U.S. Green Building Council's LEED Green Building Rating System is a voluntary, consensus-based national standard for developing high-performance, sustainable buildings. The development also will employ ecological approaches to storm water management.

The first phase of the development of the Gwinnett County Environmental and Heritage Center is scheduled to begin in late 2004.

m. Scenic Views and Sites

Gwinnett County has a number of scenic or potentially scenic areas throughout the county. Unfortunately, as development occurs in the county, visual blight along corridors associated with cell towers, billboards, and other structures has become an increasing problem

Following is a listing of scenic views and sites of natural features that could be protected through the county's land use controls. These views and sites listed below were identified by the Citizen Review Committee in 1997 as part of the major update of this *Comprehensive Plan*. During the upcoming visioning process of the major update in 2005, this list will be reviewed and possibly expanded.

Stone Mountain - viewed from Centerville Highway (GA Highway 124), south of its intersection with Johnson Drive. Parkland was purchased along Centerville Highway (GA Highway 124) to help preserve this scenic view.

Lake Lanier - viewed from the east side of the dam. The lake and valley below are in this view.

Chattahoochee River - numerous views of the river along this important waterway are considered to be scenic.

Berkeley Lake - viewed from several places around this lake in the northwestern part of the county.

Norris Lake - viewed from Hightower Road.

Mountains and lake - viewed from Mineral Springs Road within a mile of its intersection with Hog Mountain Road.

Additional sites, submitted by citizens, were recommended in the Greenway and Open Space Master Plan. These will also be considered in the upcoming update process.

2. CULTURAL RESOURCES INVENTORY

A. Introduction

Gwinnett County is a rapidly changing suburban county. A large portion of Gwinnett's population has lived here only a few years. As a result, many people are not aware of Gwinnett history or its rich stock of historic resources. In fact, this rapid pace of development and the lack of public awareness often threaten the preservation of these resources. Preservation of these resources is beneficial toward maintaining a sense of place and community character.

The preservation of historic resources provides cultural, educational, and economic benefits for a community. Historic sites are among the top destinations for Georgia's tourists, and tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing industries in the state. Two million visitors to Gwinnett County in 2002 provided jobs and generated \$964 million dollars in revenue, according to the Convention and Visitors Bureau.

Property values adjacent to restored historic properties tend to be higher. Historic properties such as the Lawrenceville Female Seminary and the historic Gwinnett County Courthouse are used for educational and cultural functions. Preservation of irreplaceable assets such as these have immeasurable benefits in maintaining Gwinnett as a unique community in the face of increasingly rapid suburbanization.

Gwinnett County continues to have a growing convention business, owing to the completion of the Gwinnett Civic Center and the new Gwinnett Arena. Thus, the potential for a tourism business in Gwinnett is growing. The historical resources preserved in Gwinnett, along with natural features in its parks, could aid in the development of increased tourism. If information on these resources was available at Gwinnett's hotels and other places frequented by visitors, their visits could be enhanced by tours of historic sites, hiking opportunities, and other recreational activities throughout the county.

Brief History of Gwinnett County

The history of Gwinnett County is a varied and colorful one. Prehistoric Native Americans were the earliest inhabitants, and their history is mostly lost in antiquity. The era of Native

American domination in Gwinnett ended near the close of the eighteenth century. There are archeological sites known in the county, and anecdotal accounts of Indian activity prior to the period of white settlement, but most knowledge of the time is vague. However, there have been some excellent efforts made to document this time, particularly with reports on archaeological sites.

Early settlers, with land cessions by the Creeks and Cherokees until about 1840, were followed by a time when the business of the county was mainly agricultural. This era of large scale agricultural activity has been well documented by written accounts, identified and preserved historical sites and structures, and gathered informational resources. The Gwinnett County Commissioners published *History of Gwinnett County Georgia, Volume I*, by Marvin Nash Worthy, in 1991. This book has detailed accounts of Creek and Cherokee land cessions up until 1839, and lotteries that were held to distribute the land to early white settlers. Many descendants of people from this time remain in the county. Volume III was recently published in 2003.

The work of the **Gwinnett Historical Society**, headquartered in the Gwinnett Historic Courthouse in Lawrenceville, has been essential in gathering information on this era. They continue to expand historical resources, such as gatherings of Census data and information on Gwinnett families, and they oversee the care-taking of historical sites such as the Elisha Winn house.

Gwinnett County's expansive growth began in the mid 1970's. Installation of water and sewer service in large areas of the county, more housing and commercial activity, and improvement of road capacity set in motion an expansion that went far beyond what anyone at the time envisioned. That expansion continues to this day, and promises to continue until the County is completely transformed from rural to urban form. A large number of newcomers now call Gwinnett home, and it is fair to estimate that very few current residents of the county were here in 1970. The events of this time are too fresh for most people to think of them as "history". The reasons for Gwinnett's growth, matched by only a few counties in the country, are a story to tell. Records of this time are in the files of the county government, city governments, newspapers, and development professionals.

Just over the past few years, there has been yet another change in historical currents affecting the County. Gwinnett has become a place of opportunity for new generations of immigrants. These groups are now putting their stamp on the County. According to

1990 and 2000 census figures, the African-American population grew from 18,046 in 1990 to 78,224 in 2000, the Hispanic population grew from 8,076 to 64,137, and the Asian population grew from 9,882 to 42,360. This shift brings a host of economic and cultural changes to the county, which could be considered historic in their impact.

The transformations undergone by Gwinnett County, prehistoric to Native American, to early settlers, to the present day expansion of population with large scale ethnic change, combine to give it a history that is extraordinary, and American.

B. Inventory of Existing Cultural Resources

The Gwinnett County Historical Society has begun an inventory of historic sites, but it remains a work in progress. Their effort is valuable in gathering in-depth information on each site.

In the 1990s, county government created and mapped an inventory of historic sites. It currently shows 297 churches, schools, bridges, cemeteries, old towns, and Native American trails at the southwestern border of the county known as the Hightower Trail. Another Native American trail roughly follows the route of Highway 124 and Centerville Highway.

Besides these recognized resources, there are many other sites and buildings in the county that are not officially recognized. Their presence provides an opportunity enhance knowledge of this historic legacy for future generations.

The *National Register of Historic Places* is the nation's official list of historic buildings, structures, sites, objects, and districts worthy of preservation. The list is maintained by the U.S. Department of the Interior. In Georgia, the *NRHP* program is administered by the Historic Preservation Section of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (the State Historic Preservation Office).

Being listed on the *National Register* not only provides recognition of a property's architectural, historical, or archaeological significance, it also makes it eligible for federal grant assistance for preservation purposes. *National Register* listing does not place obligations or restrictions on the use or disposition of property.

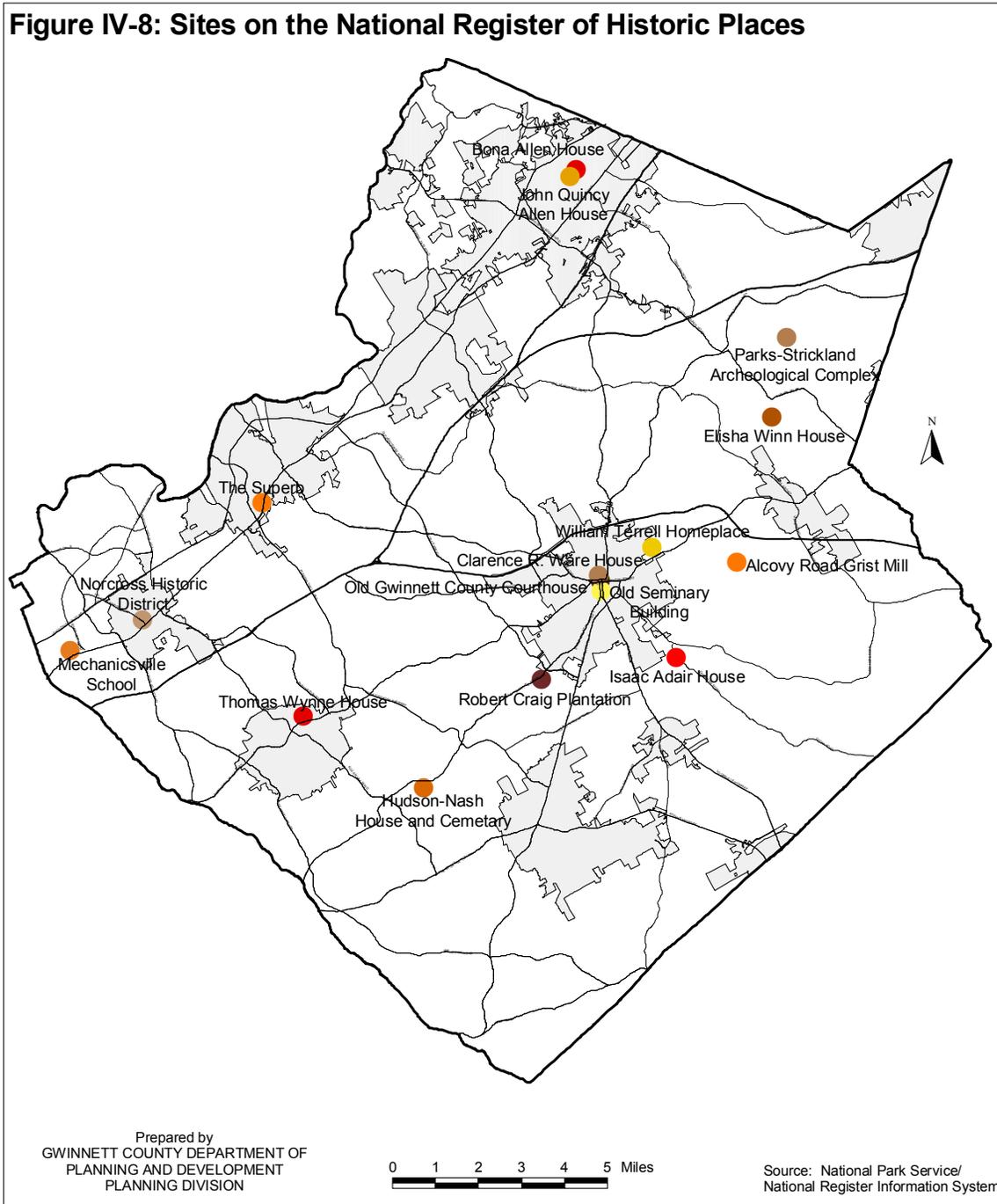
In 1978 the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) conducted a survey of historic properties in Gwinnett County. This material is housed at the Gwinnett Historical Society. The survey identified over 450 sites that at the time might have been eligible for *National Register* nomination. Not all of these sites necessarily qualify for listing on the Register, and many of these sites may have already been destroyed or altered since the time of the survey. The document does not address scenic vistas or Native American sites. The survey could serve as a starting point for local organizations and governments in conducting a new survey of historic resources.

Since 1978, the Historic Preservation Division of the DNR has created a statewide computerized database of historic sites, available in GIS. This computerized database has yet to include Gwinnett County. The state entered into a collaboration with the Georgia Transmission Corp (a not-for-profit electrical cooperative) and the University of Georgia Public Service & Outreach Program to expand the historical sites database. They have indicated that Gwinnett County is scheduled for a historical inventory update in 2004. This program, referred to as the FINDIT Program, presents an opportunity to compile all the information on historic sites and transfer it into a form usable for both tourists and for keeping track of the effects of development.

The county is also currently developing a new GIS record-keeping geodatabase. This database records parcels of property and provide a way to integrate a historical resource inventory into general property records. The inventory and protection of gravesites is a special case, and this proposed new historical site inventory is an opportunity to integrate that data with other historical data.

There are 16 sites and buildings in Gwinnett County listed on the *National Register of Historic Places*. The three most recent additions are the Swann-Freemans Mill, now called the **Alcovy Grist Mill**, which was added to the National Register in 1996; **the Superb**, a railcar kept at the Southeastern Railroad Museum and added in 1999; and the **Isaac Adair House**, added in 2001. Below is a description of each of the National Register sites, and **Figure IV-8** on the following page shows their locations.

Figure IV-8: Sites on the National Register of Historic Places



Other sites are described in seven major categories: Residential Resources, Commercial Resources, Industrial Resources, Institutional Resources, Transportation Resources, Rural Resources, and Cultural and Archaeological Resources. Each is described in the sections below. Historical efforts by Gwinnett's municipalities are referred to in Commercial Resources, and early Native American research in Cultural and Archeological Resources.

1. Residential Resources

The Bona Allen House - This seventeen-room Italian Renaissance mansion was completed in 1912 for Bona Allen, Sr. He started a tannery in Buford in the mid 1870s that grew to be quite successful, employing about 2,200 people at its peak. Bona Allen, Jr. willed the property to the city of Buford, which later quitclaimed its interest. The estate was restored, used for a time as a private residence and now serves as a Bed and Breakfast Inn. It was named to the *National Register of Historic Places* in 1983.

The Thomas Hudson House or Hudson-Nash House - This house was built by Thomas Hudson around 1846 and is thought to be the only home in the county with its detached kitchen still intact. Hudson served as postmaster from 1846 to 1865 and operated the **Yellow River Post Office** and General Store in a small structure across the road from this house. The Yellow River Post Office was restored in 2003, in a county project described in detail later in this chapter. The family cemetery is on the land behind the house. It was named to the *National Register of Historic Places* in 1990.

The Robert Craig House- This homestead in the Plantation Plain style, nicknamed "Little Egypt", was built around 1820. The nickname came about when its owner, Robert Craig, sensed hard times ahead and began to store his grain like Joseph, the Biblical figure in the Old Testament. In this case he hid his grain by the creek to conceal it from Yankee foraging parties. When the Civil War was over, people came from as far away as Tennessee to buy Craig's grain and cottonseed, to help rebuild their lives. The Craig House was named to the *National Register of Historic Places* in 1990.

The Thomas Wynn House - By 1826 when Thomas Wynn and his wife moved to Gwinnett County and built this house, they had seven children all under the age of nine. Seven more children were

born in this house. When Thomas Wynn died in 1839, his widow had nine children under the age of 18 to raise on a 500-600 acre plantation. The Wynn-Russell House as it is now known, has been restored by the Lilburn Women's Club. It is owned by the City of Lilburn and is used for special events. The house was named to the *National Register of Historic Places* in 1977.

The Clarence R. Ware House - Clarence R. Ware was a prominent citizen of Lawrenceville who served as the superintendent of local schools from 1907 to 1920. The Clarence R. Ware house, built in 1910, is significant architecturally and historically. It is one of only two neo-Classical style residences remaining in Lawrenceville. This two-story home is located on Perry Street. It was named to the *National Register of Historic Places* in 1982.

The William Terrell Home Place- This home located on U.S. 29 east of Lawrenceville was destroyed by fire in 1989. Very little remains of this early Gwinnett homeplace. The Terrell home was a two-story Plantation Plain-style house built around 1827. The site was of archaeological significance because of the many outbuildings that existed on the property. These outbuildings were used in the daily operation of the plantation which produced corn and cotton throughout the 1800s. It was named to the *National Register of Historic Places* in 1982.

The John Quincy Allen House - This two-story, Georgia Revival-styled house located in downtown Buford was built in the years 1911-1912. This residence features a Palladian portico-entrance, a circular brick driveway, a coach house, a tennis court, and the remains of a formal garden. The house is significant in local history as the home of John Quincy Allen. Allen was the son of Bona Allen Sr., the founder of the Bona Allen Tannery. Allen is especially remembered for starting the Bona Allen Shoemakers, a semi-professional baseball team that played all over the country. The John Quincy Allen House was named to the *National Register of Historic Places* in 1984.

The Isaac Adair House - This two-story, Georgian-styled house located on Candler Road in Lawrenceville was built in 1827 by Isaac Adair. Adair was one of the early settlers of the county. The house was added to the *National Register of Historic Places* in 2001 and is Gwinnett County's most recent addition to the list.

Several other homes that do not appear on the *National Register of Historic Places* have been recognized by the Gwinnett County Historical Society. Some of these include the Flowers-Webb House, the David Anderson house, the Chesser-Williams House, the Charles Livsey House, the Promised Land Plantation, the Goodwin House, the Eli Landers House, and the Bowman-Pirkle House. The Bowman-Pirkle House was being used as part of the Lanier Museum of Natural History when the construction of a radio tower rendered the cabin unsafe. Cabin ownership has reverted to descendants of John Bowman, who moved the cabin to a site on a portion of John Bowman's original 7,200-acre plantation. Private tours can be arranged with the owners, who live nearby.

The Eli Landers House was saved by the Sons of Confederate Veterans when they moved the house from its original location on Pleasant Hill Road, because of threat of road widening project. It was transferred to a location behind the Sweetwater Church and cemetery. Plans are pending to turn the home into a museum. This is by no means a complete listing of all residences in Gwinnett with historical interest. Some others are described in more detail on websites sponsored by the various municipalities.

2. Commercial Resources

Norcross Historic District - Norcross was built along the railroad in 1871. The city was built around the Norcross Depot and many original structures still remain in this area. This area totaling 180 acres of the downtown business and residential district is included on the *National Register of Historic Places*. The downtown business district serves as a reminder of the role of small towns in Georgia history. Downtown Norcross is a vital center with a thriving retail and restaurant district. Designated as a commercial historic district, these areas still possess a valuable stock of old commercial or institutional structures. Given enough civic support, these areas could be renovated and revitalized providing a boost to the local economy and a focal point for community activities. The county is now sponsoring a Revitalization Task Force pilot area study for the area surrounding southern Norcross.

A recent development has been the formation of historical societies in the cities of Snellville, Suwanee, Lilburn, and Duluth. The adoption of a countywide historic preservation ordinance would help in providing guidelines for their efforts.

Though Norcross is the only city that has actually sought designation of its old downtown as a historic district, there have been several local movements and efforts at revitalizing these other old downtown areas. Of particular note is the city of **Lawrenceville**, which completed a downtown revitalization project in 1992. The focal point of this project was the renovation of the old county courthouse that is discussed in the next section, "Institutional Resources".

Duluth has established a Festival Center and Town Green to serve as a focal point for the town. Enough publicly owned land has been assembled to create an appealing public space. Live music



and free outdoor movies have successfully to draw people to Duluth's downtown. The Duluth History Museum, established in 2000, adds to the downtown ambiance.

The Historic **Buford** Art & Antiques Market is located in downtown Buford. It is located in the Bona Allen Shoe and Horse Collar Factory,

built in 1911, which has been restored with the addition of shops, galleries, and restaurants. The shops specialize in woodworking, traditional paintings, pottery, and stained glass, and are considered locally to be an artist's colony.

Suwanee passed a large bond referendum in 2001 to acquire green space, and it is constructing a 10-acre Town Center Park. It has divided the town into six "character areas", each of which have their own architectural guidelines for new mixed use zoning districts. The Old Town area is noted for its historic structures.



Snellville is planning an inventory of its historic sites and a compilation of historic material.

Lilburn has an Old Town district, and on its website (www.cityoflilburn.com) provides particularly thorough historic information. **Grayson** has established a Downtown Overlay District to encourage preservation of earlier architectural styles. The small towns of Gwinnett are natural locations for developments of this nature, which themselves are a good fit with the unique nature of each city.

Alcovy Grist Mill (also known as **Swann's or Freeman's Mill**) - This old grist mill was placed on the *National Register of Historic Places* list in 1996. The mill was built sometime between 1868 and 1879 on the Alcovy River, and the workings of the mill are still intact today. The original dam at the mill was wooden and was later replaced in the early 20th century by the present rock dam. Adjacent to the mill on an adjoining property is a house that several of the millers lived in. In the 1870s, a sawmill and cotton gin were added to the property. Little of these other structures still remain. In 1876 it was estimated that there were 1,262 water powered grain mills in Georgia. This mill was in operation as recently as 1986. Freeman's Mill is the last remaining grist mill in Gwinnett County and one of only 15 working mills in the state.



In the spring of 2001, Gwinnett County Government purchased the property from the Swann family with funds from the Georgia Greenspace Program. Current considerations for the mill include plans for a Historical Interpretation Center.

The Yellow River Post Office - This small wooden structure has had several functions over the past 160 years. It is across Five Forks Trickum Road from the Thomas Hudson House (see page 52), and dates from the 1840s. It was placed on the *National Register of Historic Places* in 1990. In 2003, a \$242,000 project was completed to restore the deteriorated structure, using as much of the original lumber as possible, and moving it back in anticipation of a future widening of the road. In addition, a slave cottage and a nearby barn were restored. All of these structures were originally owned by Thomas Hudson, and this site was donated to the County in 1996 by developer Scott Hudgens. Plans include a parking area and displays to allow self-guided tours.

3. Industrial Resources

There are few remaining historic industrial resources in Gwinnett County. The aforementioned Alcovy Grist Mill is one. Another is the remnant of the Bona Allen Tannery in Buford. There are railroad-serviced warehouses in extreme western Gwinnett, and two large granite quarries, one off of Interstate

85, and the other near Grayson. These were established in 1956 and 1973, respectively, and are notable for their size.

4. Institutional Resources

Lawrenceville Female Seminary - This Greek Revival structure was built around 1854 and was in use until 1886. The second story was used for meetings of the Lawrenceville Lodge 131, Free and Accepted Masons for more than a century. The Seminary building now houses the office of the County Preservation Planner and the **Gwinnett History Museum**; the lower level is used for functions held by private and civic groups. The Gwinnett History Museum has exhibits on churches, agricultural life, schools, significant structures that are now lost, and other aspects of life in nineteenth and early twentieth century Gwinnett. There is also information on the Graves Soapstone Quarry archaeological site.

The Gwinnett County Historic Courthouse - The courthouse on the square was built in 1885. This building was home to county offices until the completion of the new Gwinnett County Justice and Administration building in 1988. Gwinnett County is committed to preserving this landmark. A 3-year, \$8 million restoration project was completed in 1992. The Gwinnett County Historical Society maintains its headquarters on the second story and is open daily for historical and genealogical research. It serves as an extensive and growing repository of records on life in the county since the eighteenth century. The rest of the building, under the direction of the Department of Parks and Recreation, is rented for meetings and receptions. The courthouse square is unique in that it is a burial site for 8 men killed in the Creek Indian War in 1836.



The Mechanicsville School- The Mechanicsville School built in 1911 is significant to the architectural and educational history of Mechanicsville. It is the oldest principal structure in the Mechanicsville community and is architecturally representative of the early twentieth century one-room schoolhouse. The Mechanicsville School served the elementary school children of this rural community for twenty-eight years until the consolidation of Gwinnett County schools in 1939. The schoolhouse is currently owned by Mechanicsville Community Association, which preserves the school as a community center.

Elisha Winn House - This home was built around 1812 and is often referred to as the birthplace of Gwinnett County. When the Georgia Legislature created the county in 1818, it ordered that elections and court sessions be held at the home of Elisha Winn. The house and grounds are owned by Gwinnett County and operated by the Gwinnett Historical Society, and the house is listed on the *National Register of Historic Places*. The Gwinnett Historical Society holds the annual Elisha Winn Fair at the house each summer.

There are also many historic churches located in Gwinnett County. These institutions have been a mainstay of life for Gwinnett County citizens since the earliest days when the Sunday worship services were not only a time to worship together, but also for neighbors to share time together. Several churches were founded in the early pioneer days when there were very few families living in the county.

The Existing Land Use Map database published by the county in 2002 has a separate category for property owned by religious institutions and lists more than 400 such parcels in the county. Many of these parcels also have cemeteries. This category could form the basis of a valuable inventory of historic churches.

5. Transportation Resources

a) Roads

Many of Gwinnett's existing roads date from the pre Civil War era. The approximate routes of Georgia Highway 20, Georgia Highway 124, Grayson Highway (Georgia Highway 20 southeast of Lawrenceville, Duluth Highway (Georgia Highway 120), and others can be discerned on Merrill maps dating from the 1860's. The route of the present day U.S. Highway 29 from the DeKalb County line through Lilburn and into Lawrenceville was ordered to be marked by the Gwinnett Inferior Court in September 1823. Some of these roads may follow Native American trails dating from antiquity, notably the surviving remnants of the Hightower Trail.

Five Forks Trickum Road is a two-lane blacktop that may adhere fairly closely to its original route, and has some historic sites along it. Other roads in the eastern portion of the county may look much as they once did, with the addition of a layer of asphalt. Most roads that are in present day use, however, have been considerably altered in recent years. Bridges, embankments,

scenic vistas, structures, and other remnants from past times have mostly disappeared. One exception is **Roger's Bridge**, a metal bridge across the Chattahoochee River in Duluth, which is being preserved for future pedestrian use.

b) Railroads

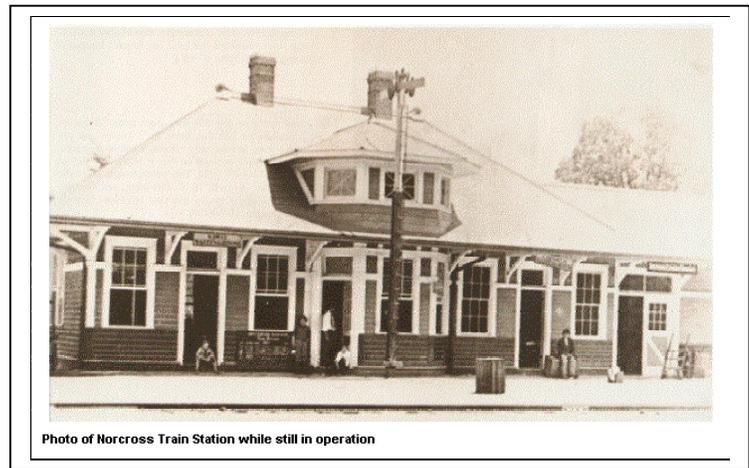
There are two historic railroads that traverse Gwinnett. The oldest existing railroad was established in the late 1870s as the Atlanta-Charlotte Airline Railway. It roughly parallels Buford Highway (U.S. Highway 23) from Buford to Norcross and continues on to Atlanta. Since 1982, it has been part of the Norfolk-Southern Railway system. The railway still carries twenty-five to thirty trains a day, including the Southern Crescent, the last remaining passenger service to cross Gwinnett. Some spurs to this line still exist, servicing industrial buildings in western Gwinnett.

The other functioning railroad route was built in 1892 as part of the Georgia-Carolina &

Northern railroad, owned by the Seaboard Airline Railway. It was controlled for many years by Seaboard until it was taken over in 1986 by the CSX Railway. It remains today as a freight carrying railroad running roughly east-west through Dacula and Lilburn.

Other railroads that existed in Gwinnett include a Suwanee to Lawrenceville line that operated from the 1880s to about 1920, and a Lawrenceville to Loganville line abandoned in the 1970s. The railroads have little of the original structures remaining after many decades of use and improvements.

The **Southeastern Railway Museum**, now known as the **Transportation Museum**, is located in Duluth, Georgia. It is operated by the Atlanta Chapter of the National Railway Historical Society on a 30-acre site within the Norfolk-Southern right-of-way, and displays over 80 pieces of historic railway equipment. It houses the "**Superb**", an early 20th-century luxury railcar that was used in president Warren G. Harding's political campaigning and also in his funeral. It is a unique, movable entrant in the *National Register of Historic Places*. Recently the museum has acquired



historic buses, steam tractors, and even a "people mover" retired by the airport. The first train arrived in Atlanta in 1845, and this museum showcases innovation in transportation since that time.

c) Mass Transit



Historically, Gwinnett has lacked any form of mass transit. That changed in November 2001 with the implementation of express bus service with six routes using the HOV lanes on I-85. Now, in addition to the express service Gwinnett County buses travel two local routes. As demand grows, this service will expand.

Paratransit service for the disabled began in November 2002. This is a specialized mode of travel providing curb-to-curb bus service for eligible persons. Service is centered along the local routes in Gwinnett County only, extending three-quarters of a mile on either side of the bus routes.

6. Rural Resources



McDaniel's Farm Park

The agricultural sector in Gwinnett County has shrunk in scope and extent over the past several decades. In times past, Gwinnett was known as a producer of cotton. After the arrival of the boll weevil, agricultural production shifted to dairy products and to a lesser extent poultry. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has a Centennial Farm and Centennial Family Farm program to recognize farms in

production that are over a century old, but there are no known candidates in Gwinnett.

Many structures such as barns and silos remain from this time, but there is no comprehensive inventory of them. However,

agricultural activity is by no means gone, but takes the form of tree farming and cattle and horse pasturage, and often occupies land that was once under more intense cultivation. These less intense agricultural uses can still take up considerable acreage. Along with Rockdale County, Gwinnett County conducts significant business in horse pasturage and horse boarding with over 4,000 horses in residence, according to a recent article in the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

There are a number of rural hamlets located at crossroads in the county. A hamlet is defined as an actual settlement with a group of houses and perhaps a church and some stores. The Promised Land and the Rabbit Hill communities in south and eastern Gwinnett are old and historically African-American. Other hamlets include the Gloster community along the railroad, and Luxomni, both near Lilburn. Another is Centerville, located on the Centerville Highway a few miles north of Norris Lake.

Another hamlet, Hog Mountain, located about two miles south of Interstate 85 in eastern Gwinnett, was the site of Fort Daniel. This military outpost was established in 1812 to protect white settlers from the Creeks and Cherokees. Hog Mountain grew around the fort, and was among the earliest if not the earliest white settlements in the county. If new commercial development occurs in these hamlets, at some point they will lose their unique character. This has arguably occurred in Hog Mountain. There is some documentation on the rural hamlets and crossroads in Gwinnett, much of it found in *History of Gwinnett County, 1818-1960, Volume II*, by James C. Flanigan. The Gwinnett Historical Society has expressed interest in inventorying the hamlets and crossroads.

7. Historic, Archaeological and Cultural Sites

With the great amount of development that has occurred in Gwinnett County over the past several years, many archaeological sites have been discovered and surveyed. The largest concentration of sites is in the Hog Mountain-Dacula area where prehistoric mounds have been located (Parks-Strickland Archeological Complex).

Other sites have been located along the Chattahoochee River, Little Mulberry River, Yellow River, Beaver Ruin Creek, Stone Mountain Creek, Big Haynes Creek, Suwanee Creek and some are scattered throughout the Norcross area. One historic site is Fort Daniel. There is a State historic marker at the site of Fort Daniel, located west of the intersection of Georgia

Highways 124 and 324. There is a house on top of the hill where the fort stood. Fort Daniel was erected in the early 1800s to protect the settlers from the Indians. There is a little information about Fort Daniel in the book History of Gwinnett County 1818 - 1943, by James C. Flanigan.

a) Archeological Sites

The only archeological site in Gwinnett County on the *National Register of Historic Places* is the **Parks-Strickland Archaeological Complex** in eastern Gwinnett, added in 1989. This site includes over 100 stone mounds believed to have been constructed about 1,500 years ago. Very little is known of the Native Americans who constructed these mounds, and the purpose of the mounds is a matter of conjecture. Little is known of the tribal structure of the time. The tribes of Georgia that most of us are familiar with, the Cherokee and the Creeks, occupied Gwinnett for only the last several hundred years. These sites are of a sensitive nature and are a valuable, and fragile, historic resource of Gwinnett County.

The **Graves Road Park Project** has uncovered evidence of a soapstone quarry used by Native Americans of the Late Archaic period (2200-1000 B.C.). Before ceramics were widely used, bowls were carved out from veins of soapstone by very early inhabitants of the county. A report submitted by a consultant to Gwinnett County Parks and Recreation in September 2003 discusses the artifacts found at the site and gives historical background on the county's early Native American history. The report recommends the site for inclusion in the *National Register of Historic Places*.

Research was also done on the location of the Hightower Trail, which runs roughly down Gwinnett's western border, next to DeKalb County. The Hightower Trail is of unknown age, but is thought also to date from the Late Archaic period. The Yellow River, at the Rock bridge, was on the original trail, which was used by most of the early settlers of the region. Native Americans and early pioneer families tended to settle in areas with water availability.

The **River Moore Farm** site, near the Chattahoochee River in Gwinnett, is another example of recently documented Native American activity. This site was discovered during a survey of wetlands mandated by the Corps of Engineers prior to development of the site. The remains of several structures and waste pits

were excavated. Analysis of the findings from this undisturbed site showed the types of wild plants used for food, as well as an early example of cultivated maize, carbon dated to 700 A.D. The date placed the site as an example of Woodland culture, and the presence of maize, and thus of agriculture, indicated the possibility of larger political units than the groups of hunter-gatherers thought to characterize that time.

b) Cemeteries and Gravesites

Cemeteries have been mentioned earlier in this report in a section on historic churches, but their importance is such that they should be discussed in more detail. Through the cooperative efforts of the Gwinnett Historical Society, the Gwinnett County Government, and private citizens, over 410 cemeteries are included in a cemetery and gravesite inventory. The identities and locations of those buried there portray the county's history. The Gwinnett Historical Society now has a database of over 42,000 Gwinnett citizens buried in the county and immediate surrounding counties. Knowing the location of such sites helps to ensure that they are not destroyed by future developments and/or neglect. In the past many gravesites have been disturbed by development simply because the authorities or developer were not aware of the gravesite's location.

To help prevent disturbance of gravesites, the County Department of Planning & Development several years ago adopted a policy of referring to the gravesite inventory before the issuance of a building permit. This inventory is currently a computerized list of the grave sites keyed to a map showing the approximate location of each site. The Development Division and Gwinnett Historical Society each get a copy of the monthly zoning agenda and check the subject property against this list and a map of known cemeteries.

As mentioned previously, an historic site inventory was last updated in 1997. This inventory is based on information from the Gwinnett Historical Society, but it lacks detailed annotation, and it does not interface specifically with the Department of Natural Resources inventory of 1978. By tying it to a computerized geographic information system, access to the information would be more readily available to county departments, and easier to update and use. The Gwinnett Historical Society has taken a first step toward this by recording the location of some cemeteries by Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinates, which can be downloaded into a map in the future. The inventory of property owned by religious

institutions, obtainable in GIS from existing land use data, may also be of help in compiling a gravesite inventory.

The Gwinnett Historical Society also investigates reports of previously unknown cemeteries. Two or three are found each year, usually unmarked except for fieldstones. The Society attempts to determine who is buried there by checking land ownership records. When cemeteries are located on property about to be developed, space is set aside according to certain guidelines.

The county adopted formal procedures to handle these situations and to be in compliance with the Georgia *Abandoned Cemeteries and Burial Grounds Law*, "Chapter 72 of Title 36" of the *Official Code of Georgia Annotated*. This law gives local governments the authority to use a board or commission to hear and review applications for the relocation of gravesites. The law also lists what steps are to be taken such as an archaeological survey, a genealogy report, and a letter of intent before an area around burial places can be disturbed. The penalty for noncompliance includes fines and imprisonment.

8. Sources of Historical Information

The internet now serves as a source of historical information, to a much greater degree than in 1997, when this section of the comprehensive plan was last updated. Internet sources of information include: <http://patsabin.com/gwinnett/index.htm>, a good source on Gwinnett hamlets and towns, and <http://roadsidegeorgia.com/county/gwinnett.html>, a good source for local history. A source of links to other Gwinnett-related subjects is <http://www.gwinnettchamber.org/home/Gwinnett/gwinnett.asp>. All of these websites have links to information on the history of the towns, the history of the Creeks and Cherokees, and many historic sites throughout the county.

C. Assessment of Current & Future Needs

One of the challenges of preparing this major update of the Comprehensive Plan is to determine whether or not this is the time for the county government to take a more proactive role in conservation issues. Historically, Gwinnett County has not restricted growth in order to promote conservation of its historic and natural resources. Part of the reason for this is that no War Between the States battles took place in Gwinnett.

Additionally prior to the 20th century, Gwinnett was primarily a rural farm community with few inhabitants. When compared with historic resources elsewhere in the Atlanta region or to natural resources available in other Georgia communities, fewer of Gwinnett's unique natural and historic resources have survived. The remaining resources are worthy of special protection, since they must serve as the historic and natural context for Gwinnett's large population. If the remaining resources in Gwinnett are handled with care and imagination, a historic narrative and a connection to the natural world will be created that can be shared by Gwinnett County's citizens.

There is a changing attitude towards historic preservation, as the county continues to develop and the few resources that the community does have are being threatened. It has become apparent that preservation of such resources is connected with perceived quality of life in the county. This can be linked in dollars and cents terms to the development of tourism and the strength of property values, while providing an increased "sense of place" to residents of the county. A 1999 publication by the Historic Preservation Department at the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, called "Profiting from the Past- The Economic Impact of Historic Preservation in Georgia" says that in a four-year span from 1992 to 1996, projects participating in state and federal preservation programs created 7,550 jobs, \$201 million in earnings, and \$559 million total impact on the state's economy, primarily from building activity. Several local community groups have organized around conservation issues, including the Gwinnett Historical Society, the Gwinnett chapter of the Sierra Club, the Georgia Conservancy, local Native American interests, the Gwinnett Open Land Trust, and others.

In preparing this update of the plan, the community needs to assess which of its resources are worthy of local government protection. This process is encouraged when local government creates inventories of natural and historic resources. It is hard to say when we have "enough" historic resources preserved. There are no standards or benchmarks. Gwinnett has made excellent progress in parkland acquisition in recent years, however a September 2003 Benchmark Study and Analysis done for the Department of Community Services suggests that more needs to be done. Gwinnett lags behind the five other similar jurisdictions surveyed in acres-per-person measures. These were chosen for their similarities to Gwinnett County. The county has 12.5 acres of parkland, under all levels of government ownership, per 1000 residents. This compares to an average of 23.6 acres for the other jurisdictions surveyed. According to

this report, the gap widens further when extra-jurisdictional parkland nearby the surveyed jurisdictions is taken into account. When Gwinnett County's projected population is considered, more parkland is needed to retain even current service levels. A case can be made that parkland acquisition should remain a priority.

Specific recommendations for cultural resources protection include:

1. Put Graves Road Park (site of soapstone quarry excavation) on the *National Historic Register*, in coordination with the Gwinnett Historical Society.
2. Coordinate with the upcoming FINDIT update of Gwinnett County's historical resource inventory to create a countywide database of historic sites in GIS. This should be a collaborative effort of the Gwinnett Historical Society, the Department of Community Services, and the Department of Planning & Development. The Historical Society is the custodian of the 1978 survey data, which will be used for comparison purposes when a new survey is available.
3. Continue effort to inventory the county's cemeteries and gravesites with GPS coordinates, which give precise locations, and integrate that effort with the Gwinnett Historical Society's tabulations of who is buried on these sites.
4. Increase marketing of historical sites for tourism. The Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce and the Gwinnett Convention and Visitors Bureau should be enlisted for collaboration in this effort.

D. Community Goals & an Associated Implementation Program

1. Greenspace Initiatives

a. Open Space and Greenway Master Plan

The Open Space and Greenway Master Plan is a multi-departmental plan that outlines procedures for open space and greenway acquisition, protection, and utilization for Gwinnett County's green future. The Master Plan is a policy document. It

includes specific tasks to be carried out in the coming years to achieve the goal of maintaining the quality of life for Gwinnett County residents by preserving a green legacy for future generations and balancing livability and natural values with future development. The goal of additional green space can be fulfilled by purchase, donation, conservation agreement, or other protective measures.

Preservation of open space and greenways will help satisfy county goals and RDP policies that include but are not limited to the following:

- Opportunities for passive recreation,
- Conserving land,
- Conserving wildlife and botanical habitat,
- Protection of historic sites,
- Stream buffers and water quality protection, and
- Reducing the effects of heat islands.

In October 2000, the process for the Open Space and Greenways Master Plan began. During 2000 and 2001, numerous meetings were held throughout the county. The final document and its accompanying maps were approved by the Board of Commissioners in May 2002. The plan included recommendations for acquisition and preservation of open space. Detailed maps with suggested locations for trails and bike paths were also adopted. As developments are permitted & constructed, the land for these trails is being preserved. In some cases, the developer is constructing the trails on the subject property.



The plan supports the Regional Development Plan Policies by supporting a network of greenspace throughout the county. It crosses jurisdictional boundaries and helps to protect environmentally sensitive areas.

Two pilot projects for greenways are detailed in the Greenway Master Plan. The first will connect Tribble Mill Park, Palm Creek Park and Harbins Park by trails. The second will connect George Pierce Park, Wayne Hill Water Resources Center, and the

Mall of Georgia open space area. This trail primarily follows Ivy Creek.

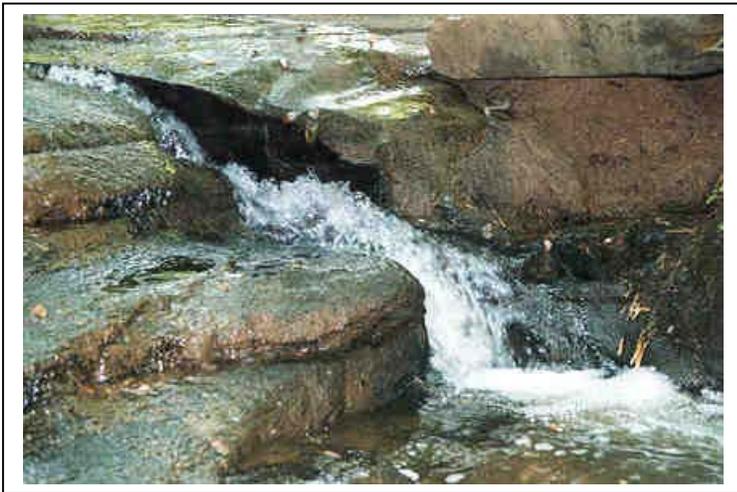
b. Georgia Greenspace Program

Created by the Georgia General Assembly in 2000, Gwinnett County has participated every year in the Greenspace Program. To receive funding the county developed and implemented plans to permanently protect at least 20 percent of the county's geographic area as natural, undeveloped greenspace. Participating each year, Gwinnett County has received just over five million dollars to purchase passive open space. Approximately, 283 acres have been purchased at 3 sites. Water quality and passive recreation opportunities are the emphasis of these purchases.

In addition to funding from the State of Georgia, Gwinnett County has dedicated monies from its SPLOST revenues to greenspace acquisition allowing the county to purchase additional acreage.

c. Parks Comprehensive Master Plan

Begun in 2002 and due to be completed in 2004, the Comprehensive Master Plan is an update of the county's 1996 Master Plan and the 2000 Capital Improvement Plan. The Master Plan will provide Gwinnett County with a roadmap for addressing its parks and recreation issues and needs by providing solutions for improving the provision, quality and quantity of parks, facilities, and services. The Plan will guide the delivery of parks and recreation services in Gwinnett County for a period of five to ten years.



A number of factors have necessitated the need for an update to the plan. These include a rapidly growing population that is becoming more culturally diverse and a need to acquire parkland before available land is lost to development. There is also a need to coordinate the Master Plan with the Open Space

and Greenway Master Plan.

Recreation plays a vital role in Gwinnett County and the county is willing to consider and support the quality of life through improvements to the parks and recreation system. Long term planning is a priority and the county has a history of being proactive in addressing its parks and recreation needs.

2. Tools to Encourage Compact Development

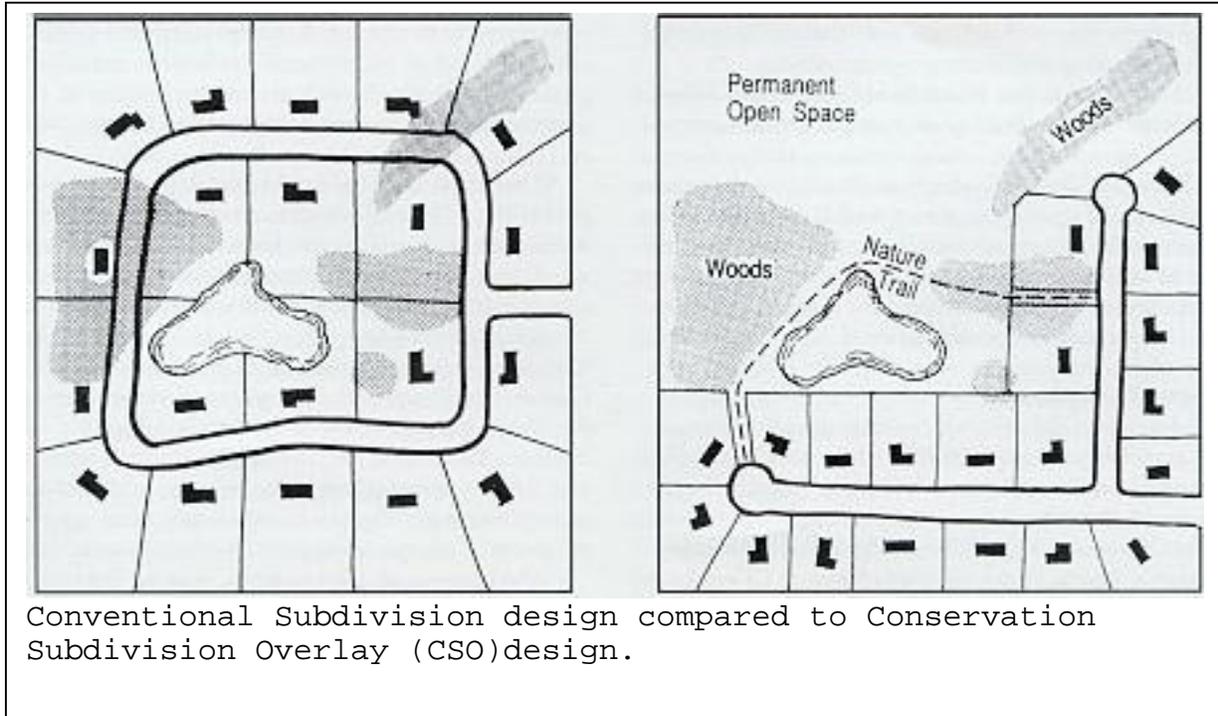
& Preserve Open Space

a. Conservation Subdivision Overlay District

The Conservation Subdivision Overlay District was approved in 2001 by the Board of Commissioners. Its purpose is to encourage the development of residential communities that are designed to preserve and protect the environmental resources, scenic vistas, and natural landscapes of the county. The resources of land, water, air, and trees are enhanced, and land disturbance, impervious surfaces, and erosion are reduced. Infrastructure maintenance costs are reduced as a result of efficient design and tree cover and contiguous undeveloped areas are preserved. Minimum lot sizes are reduced and the developer has more flexibility in designing the subdivision.

Key features of the Conservation Subdivision Overlay regulations are listed below:

- It is a "Use-by-Right" in the R-100 & R-75 zoning districts. No public hearing is required,
- 40% - 50% (depending on the zoning district) of the subdivision must be preserved as open space,
- Existing Features Site Analysis Plan is required,
- At least 90% of the open space must remain natural and undisturbed,
- No minimum lot area requirement, but average lot width is 60 feet,
- Reduced right-of-way is 24 feet for entrance streets and 22 feet for internal street (including curb & gutter),
- Sidewalks are required, and
- Street trees are required.



Gwinnett County was one of the first in Georgia to permit conservation subdivisions without a rezoning of the property. This innovative program is one tool that can help the county deal with growth and preserve open space. This was featured in the Regional Development Plan Land Use Policies publication.

In 2003, approximately 1,405 acres of open space were preserved through this method. Total open space acreage preserved through Conservation Subdivisions is 2,137.12 acres since 2001.

b. Buffer, Landscape & Tree Ordinance Amendments

On August 26, 2003, the Board of Commissioners approved the recommendations of the Tree Advisory Committee. They had discussed and recommended several amendments to the Buffer, Landscape, & Tree Ordinance. These included adding a list of recommended species to be used for parking lots and for street trees. The result will be that all trees within parking lots and one used for street trees will be canopy type trees and provide shade. Another change to the ordinance increased the diversity of tree species on a site. It requires that no more than 33 percent of a single genus of canopy trees is allowed on a single site.

These changes are being initiated in order to increase the overall tree canopy and tree diversity in the county and to thereby yield many benefits including reducing the heat island effect and reduction of stormwater runoff.

A handbook with graphics was created to help explain the specifics of the Buffer, Landscape & Tree Ordinance. The Department of Planning & Development prepared the document to assist with the administration of the ordinance. The legal text is found on the left side of the page and the interpretive text is found on the right side. Its purpose is to provide the user with the legal interpretive language in a plain, easy to understand comparative format. This document has been well received by the public and was nominated for an award by the Georgia Urban Forestry Council.

c. Mixed Use Redevelopment Overlay Ordinance

On October 22, 2002, the Board of Commissioners approved an amendment to the Zoning Resolution creating a Mixed Use Redevelopment Overlay (MUR Overlay). This marked the first time mixing land uses had been permitted in Gwinnett County. The overlay encourages redevelopment; its can only be used on already developed property and the area must be designated by the Board of Commissioners. It allows flexibility of mixing residential units with commercial uses and offices. A housing density of up to 32 units per acre is allowed. However, no single use can cover more than 70% of the site.

As stated in the Zoning Resolution, the purpose of the Mixed Use Redevelopment Overlay District is to promote the redevelopment of properties in a manner that integrates commercial and/or office with residential land uses, promotes pedestrian accessibility among uses, reduces automobile trips, provides a livable environment for residents, and enhances the value and aesthetics of the surrounding community. The Mixed Use Redevelopment overlay seeks to utilize connective streetscapes to promote an environment conducive to human activity through the provision of landscaping, street trees, and sidewalks to unify and interconnect various uses. Architectural and landscaping guidelines are part of the ordinance.

Open space is an important component of the MUR district. Twenty percent (20%) of the site must be in common space and there are specifications for buffering from existing residential

properties, landscaping, and parking reduction incentives. Street trees (canopy) are required on both sides of all internal and external streets.

Plans have been submitted for a 77-acre site long Buford Highway in western Gwinnett County. Formerly a retreat center for the North Georgia Church of God, a mix of apartments, townhomes, and approximately 120,000 square feet of retail space is planned for the site.

d. Activity Center/Corridor Overlay District

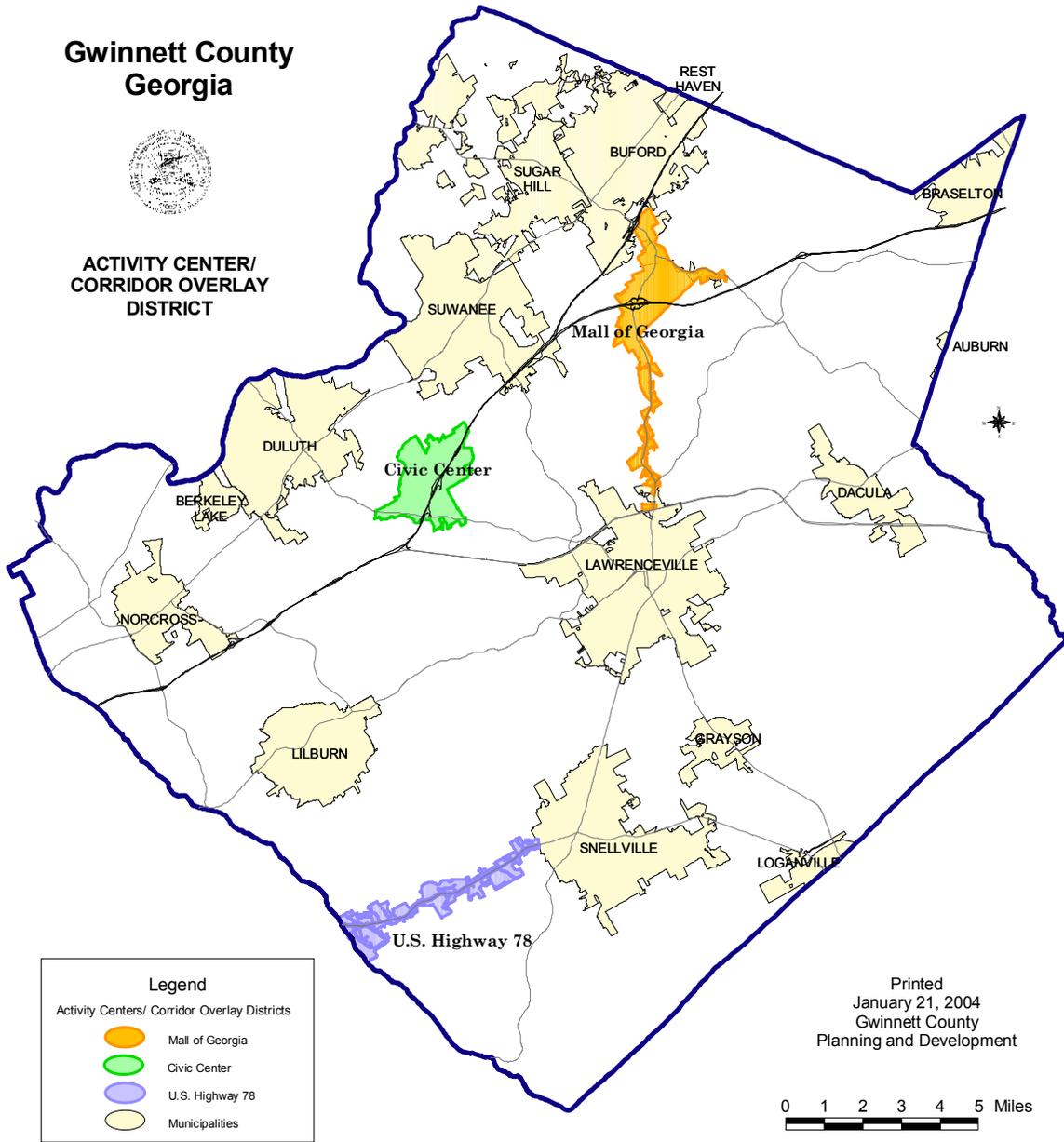
With the success of the Mall of Georgia Overlay District, the Board of Commissioners approved a second overlay area for new, non-residential development. On December 16, 2003, Mall of Georgia Overlay was renamed to the Activity Center/Corridor Overlay District. This overlay may be applied by the Board in designated areas of the county. Its purpose is to provide enhanced aesthetic design for non-residential and attached residential development projects through the use of increased architectural design standards, increased landscaping, signage controls, streetscape design, and to promote alternative modes of transportation within the district through the provision of pedestrian and local public transit.

On December 16, 2003, the overlay was approved to be applied to a geographic area surrounding the Gwinnett Arena & Civic Center and Discover Mills areas. On January 27, 2004, it was approved for the Stone Mountain Highway 78 corridor from the Dekalb County line to City limits of Snellville. The map on the following page shows the areas in more detail.

Gwinnett County Georgia



ACTIVITY CENTER/ CORRIDOR OVERLAY DISTRICT



V. Update of Land Use Element

A Annexation Update

To identify potential land use conflicts and keep accurate city boundary and land use data, the County monitors the annexation activities of Gwinnett's municipalities. The proposed zoning and land use after annexation are reviewed for consistency with the *Gwinnett 2020 Comprehensive Plan*. If the proposed land use is inconsistent with the Gwinnett 2020 Land Use Plan and considered by the County to constitute a significant land use conflict, a negotiation and conflict resolution process will be initiated through the County Administrator's office.

City	Annexations	Acreage
Braselton	1	4
Buford	14	104.6
Dacula	2	51.2
Duluth	7	220.5
Grayson	5	21.9
Lawrenceville	2	23.3
Loganville	5	33.7
Norcross	1	.71
Snellville	1	5
Sugar Hill	3	118.2
Suwanee	4	27.1
Total	45	610.2
Source: Department of Planning and Development Gwinnett Municipalities		

Table V-1 presents the number of annexations and acres annexed by Gwinnett's municipalities in 2003.

Annexation activity in Gwinnett County increased in 2003 after declining during the two previous years. In 2003, eleven Gwinnett municipalities annexed a total of 610 acres through 45 annexation proposals. In 2002, eight Gwinnett municipalities annexed a total of 198 acres through 20 annexation proposals. This compares to 745 acres annexed in 2001 through 30 annexation proposals and 1,399 acres in 2000 through 55 different annexation actions. It appears that the County's moratorium on the acceptance of rezoning cases that extended from May 16, 2000 to January 2, 2001 led a number of property owners to seek annexation and rezoning through Gwinnett's cities in the year 2000. Gwinnett's approximately one-year backlog on rezoning cases may be contributing to the increase in annexation in 2003.

Duluth added the most acreage in 2003 through seven annexations. The most notable of these annexations was the 100-acre McDaniels Enterprises property at Buford Highway and Old Peachtree Road. This property was annexed and zoned for single-family,

townhouse, and commercial development. Sugar Hill added the second most property including the annexation of an unincorporated island approximately 68 acres in size. Buford also added over 100 acres through several small annexations. A 50.4 acre annexation proposed by Lawrenceville adjacent to Grayson Highway was denied and the property subsequently purchased by Gwinnett County to allow a future extension of Sugarloaf Parkway.

On August 10, 2001 the Gwinnett County Superior Court issued an order dissolving the city of Rest Haven. Representatives of Rest Haven requested the dissolution after acknowledging that the city did not provide at least three of the services required by Georgia code 36-30-7.1 (b) (1). With the dissolution of Rest Haven, approximately 250 acres were "de-annexed" into unincorporated Gwinnett County. The Gwinnett County Department of Planning and Development began a study to help assign appropriate land use plan designations and zoning categories for properties formerly in the city. To prevent potentially unsuitable land use and allow time for this planning and zoning process, Gwinnett County instituted a six-month moratorium on new development in this area.

The dissolution of Rest Haven and subsequent development moratorium by Gwinnett County halted the construction plans of some property owners whose land was formerly in the city. Seeking to have their projects go forward, these property owners filed suit with the Gwinnett County Superior Court contending that the city did not have the right to dissolve and should be reinstated. The property owners prevailed in this lawsuit and the city of Rest Haven was effectively reinstated in 2002. Since that time a 37-acre tract was deannexed from Rest Haven and annexed into Buford. The County has suspended further study of land use plan classifications and zoning for the area. The court order reinstating the city left open the possibility that the city may again be dissolved at a future date, at which time Gwinnett County will address the zoning and land use plan for the de-annexed area.

B. Changes to the 2020 Land Use Plan Map

1. Consistency Changes & Public Facilities

Consistency changes are changes recommended to bring the plan into consistency with other statements of county policy and recent development activity. These changes include rezoning cases and development projects already under construction, and the recent acquisitions of public property. **Appendix A** is a listing of all the changes recommended to the Land Use Plan Map as part of the 2003 Update of the Gwinnett County Comprehensive Plan. In addition, a copy of the 2003 Update of the 2020 Land Use Plan Map is located in the back pocket of the document.

Public Facilities

In recent years, Gwinnett County and other local governmental bodies have acquired a number of tracts for a wide variety of public uses including school sites, road rights-of-way, new park lands, administrative offices, and public safety facilities. To make sure that these properties are accurately reflected on the Land Use Plan Map, staff annually contacts each of the county departments and representatives of other local governments to acquire information and maps of the recently acquired lands. Based on the 2003 public acquisitions, 306 acres of additional land has been designated on the 2003 Update of the Land Use Plan Map as Institutional/Public (IP), Transportation/Communications/Utilities (TCU), or Parks, Recreation, and Conservation Areas (PRC).

The 306 acres acquired for public purposes in 2003 is substantially less than the 2,500 acres acquired in 2002 and 1,400 acres purchased in 2001. The surge in land purchases in 2001 and 2002 was largely fueled by an aggressive parks and green space acquisition program and the need for new and expanded school sites. With major tracts of needed land acquired, funding is now primarily directed toward the planning and construction of these new park and school facilities.

While less than in previous years, significant purchases were made in 2003 for parks and green space. Highlights include a 22.5-acre tract on Peachtree Industrial Boulevard at South Berkeley Lake Road for a new aquatics center and a new 63.7-acre community park site at Old Peachtree Road and Rock Springs Road. Also acquired for a new community park is the 156-acre Lake Louella tract between Peachtree Ridge High School and Suwanee

Creek Road. The land use plan map has also been revised to reflect the new 61-acre park site purchased by the city of Suwanee on Suwanee-Dam Road.

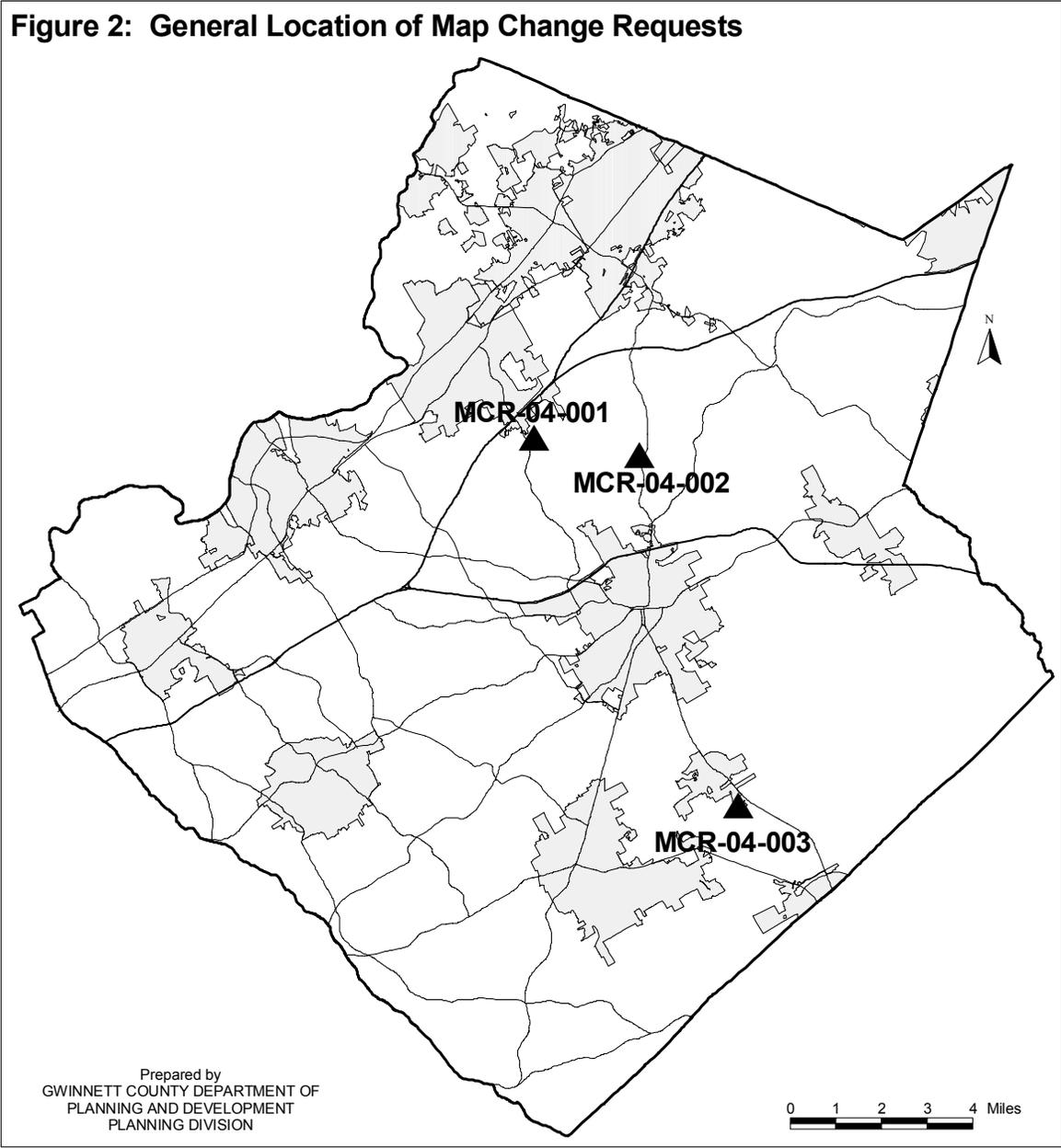
In 2003, the Gwinnett School system made minimal new land purchases and turned its efforts toward facility construction on recently acquired sites. This construction is currently focused in western and central Gwinnett County to help relieve overcrowding in existing school clusters. Previously, new school development was concentrated in northern and eastern Gwinnett County in response to rapid residential development.

The Department of Public Utilities made some minor land purchases in 2003 for planned expansions of the water and sewer system. Gwinnett County also purchased 8.45 acres on Lenora Church Road for a multi-use center including the relocated Fire Station #12, a fueling station, and tag office.

C. Map Change Requests (MCRs)

With each annual update of the comprehensive plan, private property owners are given the opportunity to request changes to the land use plan designation governing their property. There were three Map Change Requests (MCR) submitted. Of the three, one was withdrawn and two are included in this update. When a Map Change Request is submitted by an individual property owner, then a report is generated, a sign is posted on the property, and letters are mailed. On the following pages are the staff reports on both of the map change requests reviewed. A map indicating their general location is on the next page.

Figure 2: General Location of Map Change Requests



**GWINNETT COUNTY LAND USE PLAN
MAP CHANGE REQUEST (MCR)**

MCR NUMBER: MCR-04-002

CURRENT LAND USE DESIGNATION: LDR (Low Density Residential)

PROPOSED LAND USE DESIGNATION: C/R (Commercial/Retail)

MAP REFERENCE NUMBER: 7-065-011, 7-056-020,
7-065-021, 7-065-179, & 7-065-180

SIZE: 8.4 Acres

LOCATION: 1700 Block Buford Drive

CURRENT ZONING: R-100 (Single-Family Residence)

COMMISSION DISTRICT: (4) Kenerly

APPLICANT/OWNER:

Larry Roberts
1740 Buford Drive
Lawrenceville GA 30043
770-963-9314

OTHER PROPERTY OWNERS:

Opal Paden	Estate of Audrey Adams	Dene Roberts
1726 Buford Dr	1736 Buford Dr	1746 Buford Drive
L'ville GA 30043	L'ville GA 30043	L'ville GA 30043

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: DENIAL

ZONING HISTORY:

The subject property has been zoned R-100 since 1970. The subject property is included within the Mall of Georgia Overlay District per amendment A-02-001 on July 15, 2002.

LONG RANGE ROAD CLASSIFICATION DESIGNATION:

Buford Drive is classified as a principal arterial.

PLANNING DIVISION ANALYSIS:

The applicant is requesting to change the land use designation on 8.4 acres from Low Density Residential (LDR) to Commercial/Retail (C/R). The property is currently zoned R-100 and is located on the west side of Buford Drive just south of the intersection of Azalea Drive and Buford Drive. Access to the site would be provided from Buford Drive.

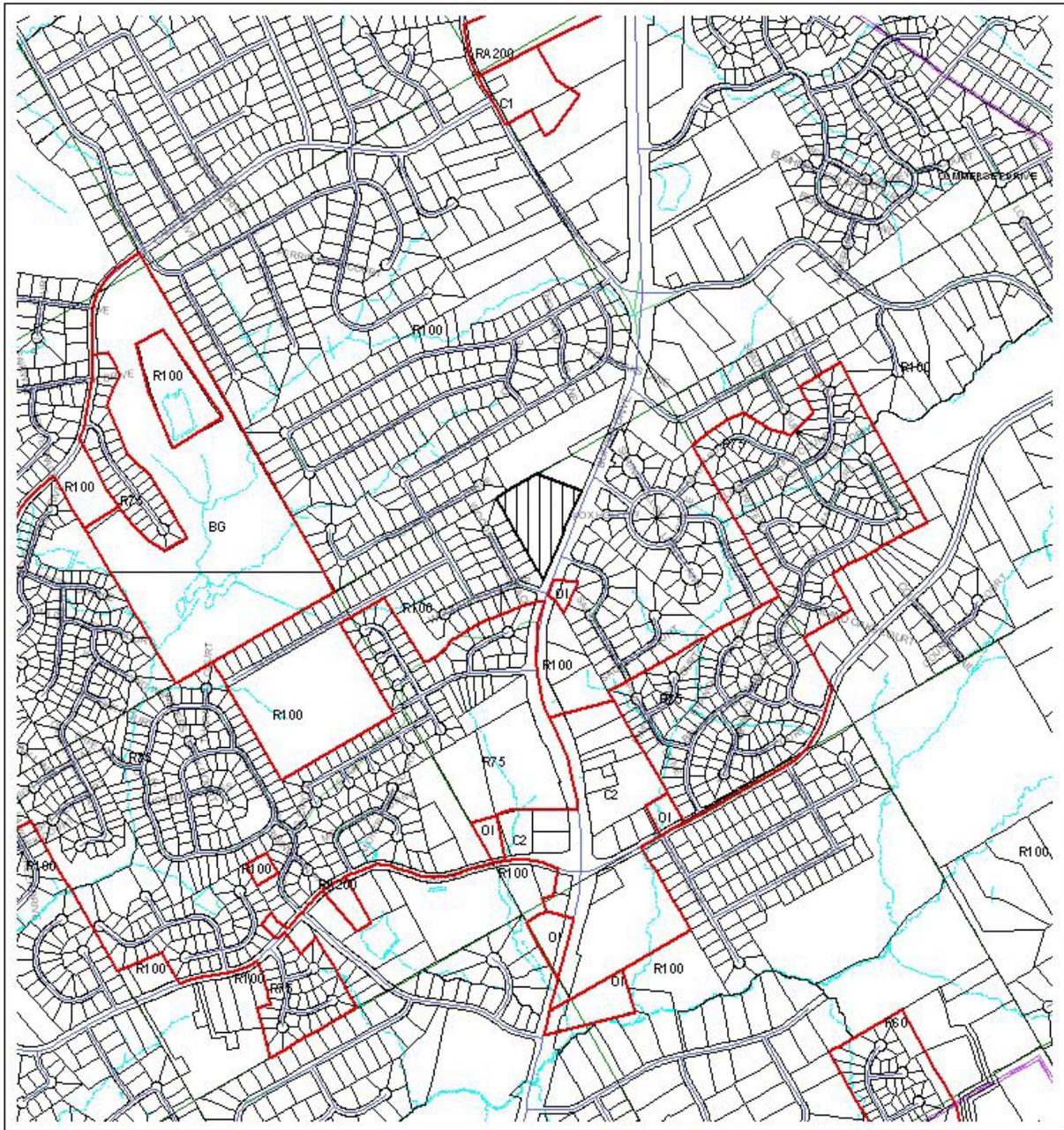
Land uses in the area are characterized by residential uses along Buford Drive with commercial uses located at many intersections. Approximately one and one-half miles to the north there is an existing commercial node, zoned C-1 and C-2, at the intersection of Old Peachtree Road and Buford Drive. Approximately a mile to the south, another commercial node is located at the intersection of Russell Road, Ridge Road, and Buford Drive, zoned C-2 and O-I. Residential subdivisions Sackett's Point and The Circles are directly to the east across Buford Drive, with Woodhaven Downs to the southwest of the subject properties. Adjacent to the subject property to the northwest are two single family residential properties and a church. All of these are accessed from Buford Drive, and all are zoned R-100. A small property across Buford Drive from the subject property is zoned O-I.

A similar map change request, to change a 2-acre parcel on the east side of Buford Drive at the intersection of Ridgedale Drive from LDR to C/R, was denied by the Board of Commissioners pursuant to MCR-91-037. This parcel is less than half a mile northeast of the subject property on Buford Drive. The reasons cited for denial were inconsistency with the land use plan, the residential character of the surrounding area, and the possible establishment of a precedent for commercial development along this stretch of Buford Drive.

The concern remains over establishing commercial nodes on Buford Drive at points other than where they already exist, at the intersections described above. Therefore, the Department recommends **DENIAL** of the request.

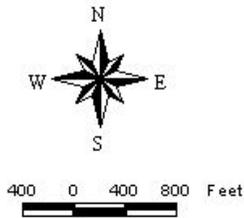
PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION: DENIAL DATE: 2/17/2004

BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ACTION: DENIAL DATE: 2/24/2004



Scheduled Hearing For: February 2004.

Existing Zoning Map



Gwinnett County, Georgia

 **MCR-04-002**



Map Reference Number: 7-065-011, 020, 021, 179, 180,
Commission District: (4) Kenerly
Current Land Use Designation: LDR (Low Density Residential)
Current Zoning: R-100 (Single-Family Residence)

**GWINNETT COUNTY LAND USE PLAN
MAP CHANGE REQUEST (MCR)**

MCR NUMBER: MCR-04-003

CURRENT LAND USE DESIGNATION: LDR (Low Density Residential)

PROPOSED LAND USE DESIGNATION: C/R (Commercial/Retail) 8.0
AC
O/P (Office Professional)
12.2 AC

MAP REFERENCE NUMBER: 5-134-001

SIZE: 20.2 Acres (Approx.)

LOCATION: Cooper Road & Moon Road

CURRENT ZONING: R-100 (Single-Family
Residence)

COMMISSION DISTRICT: (3) Dunn

APPLICANT:

Rob Johnson
Ultima Real Estate Services, LLC
270 Carpenter Drive Suite 200
Atlanta, GA 30328
678-325-2029

OWNER:

Elizabeth Nix
595 Hope Hollow Road
Loganville GA 30052
770-466-4262

DEPARTMENT RECOMMENDATION: DENIAL

ZONING HISTORY:

The subject property was zoned RA-200 in 1970, and was rezoned to R-100 in the areawide rezoning of Sept. 13, 1973.

LONG RANGE ROAD CLASSIFICATION DESIGNATION:

Cooper Road is classified as a major collector. Moon Road is classified as a local street.

PLANNING DIVISION ANALYSIS:

The applicant is requesting to change the land use designation of a 20-acre tract from Low Density Residential (LDR) to Commercial/Retail (C/R) and Office Professional (O/P). The subject property is currently zoned R-100 and is located on the northeast corner of the intersection of Cooper Road and Moon Road.

The applicant requests a land use plan map change to C/R for the Cooper Road frontage of the tract for a depth of 300 feet (8 acres) and the granting of the O/P classification on the balance of the property, approximately 12.2 acres. The northern (O/P) section would be accessed from Moon Road, with the southern (C/R) section accessed from Cooper Road.

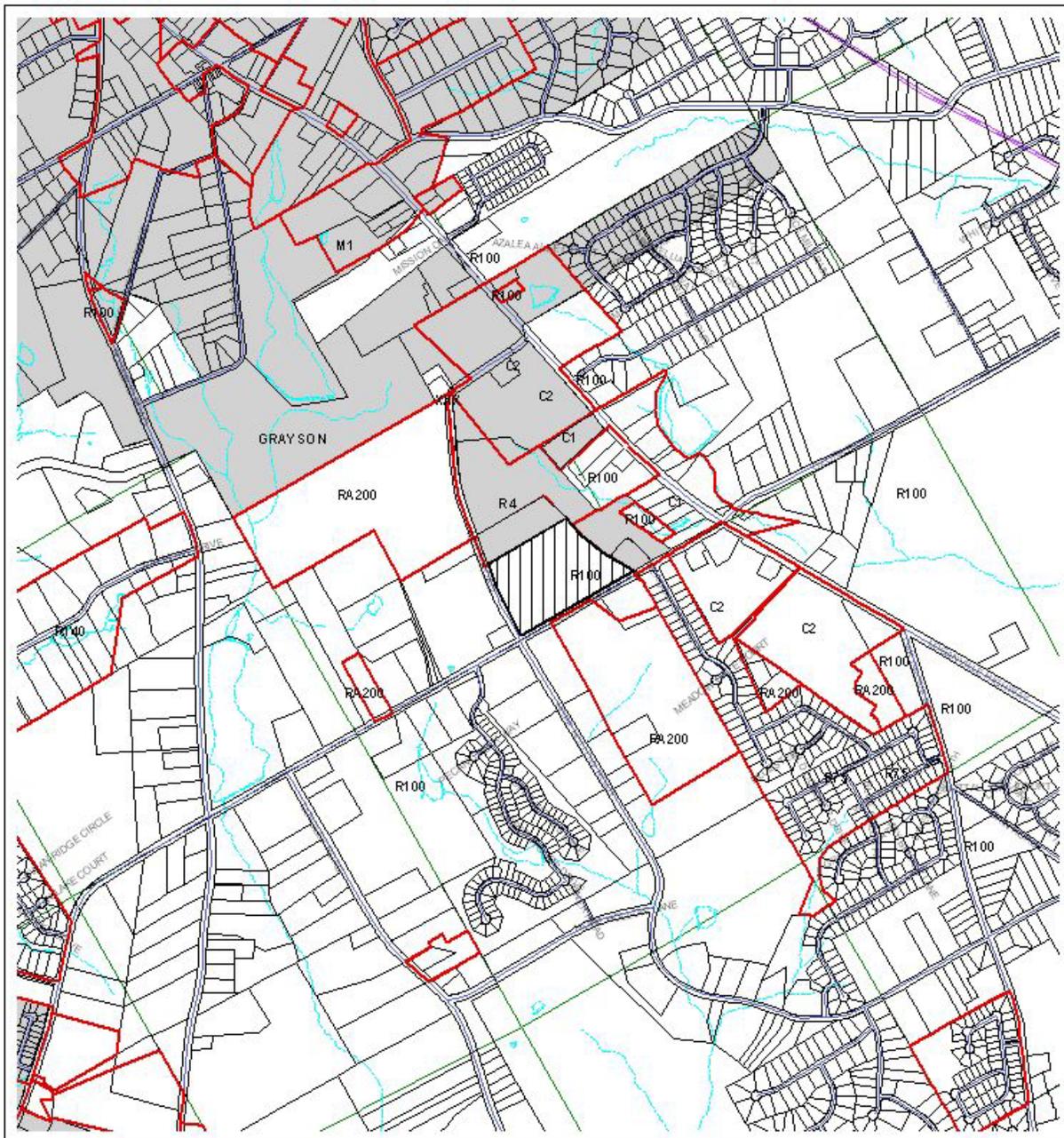
The subject property is in an area of transition from commercial and medium density residential uses in the city of Grayson to low density residential and rural/residential uses to the south and west. The adjacent property to the north, approximately six acres, was recently annexed into to Grayson and zoned R-4 (four units to the acre). The adjacent property to the east was recently developed with an office complex in the City of Grayson. The west side of the intersection of Cooper Road and Loganville Highway, a short distance east of the subject property, forms a commercial node. A church property is located to the southwest corner of the Cooper Road-Hope Hollow Road intersection. The remainder of the surrounding property is characterized by low intensity use such as agriculture, estate residential, or is considered undeveloped.

Policies of the land use plan encourage commercial and office uses in this area to be located in the municipal center (Grayson) or at designated intersections along Loganville Highway. Commercial and office uses along Cooper Road would not be consistent with these policies. The approval of the request could also establish a precedent that leads to pressures for additional non-residential or higher density residential uses along Cooper Road. The Department considers the existing office complex to the east to provide the appropriate transition from business to residential uses.

The Area Plan Policy Map designates the area containing the subject property as an Emerging Residential Area. Policies of the Area Plan Policy Map state that neighborhood and community level commercial development in emerging residential areas should be located on arterial roads within identified commercial nodes. The proposed map amendment is not consistent with this policy.

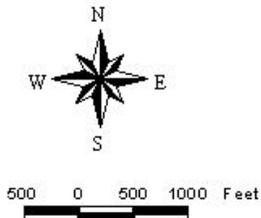
In summation, the proposed map amendment is not considered consistent with surrounding development or policies for emerging residential areas and could establish a precedent for additional commercial development. The Department of Planning and Development therefore recommends **Denial** of this request.

PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION: DENIAL	DATE: 2/17/2004
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS ACTION: DENIAL	DATE: 2/24/2004



Scheduled Hearing For: February 2004.

Existing Zoning Map

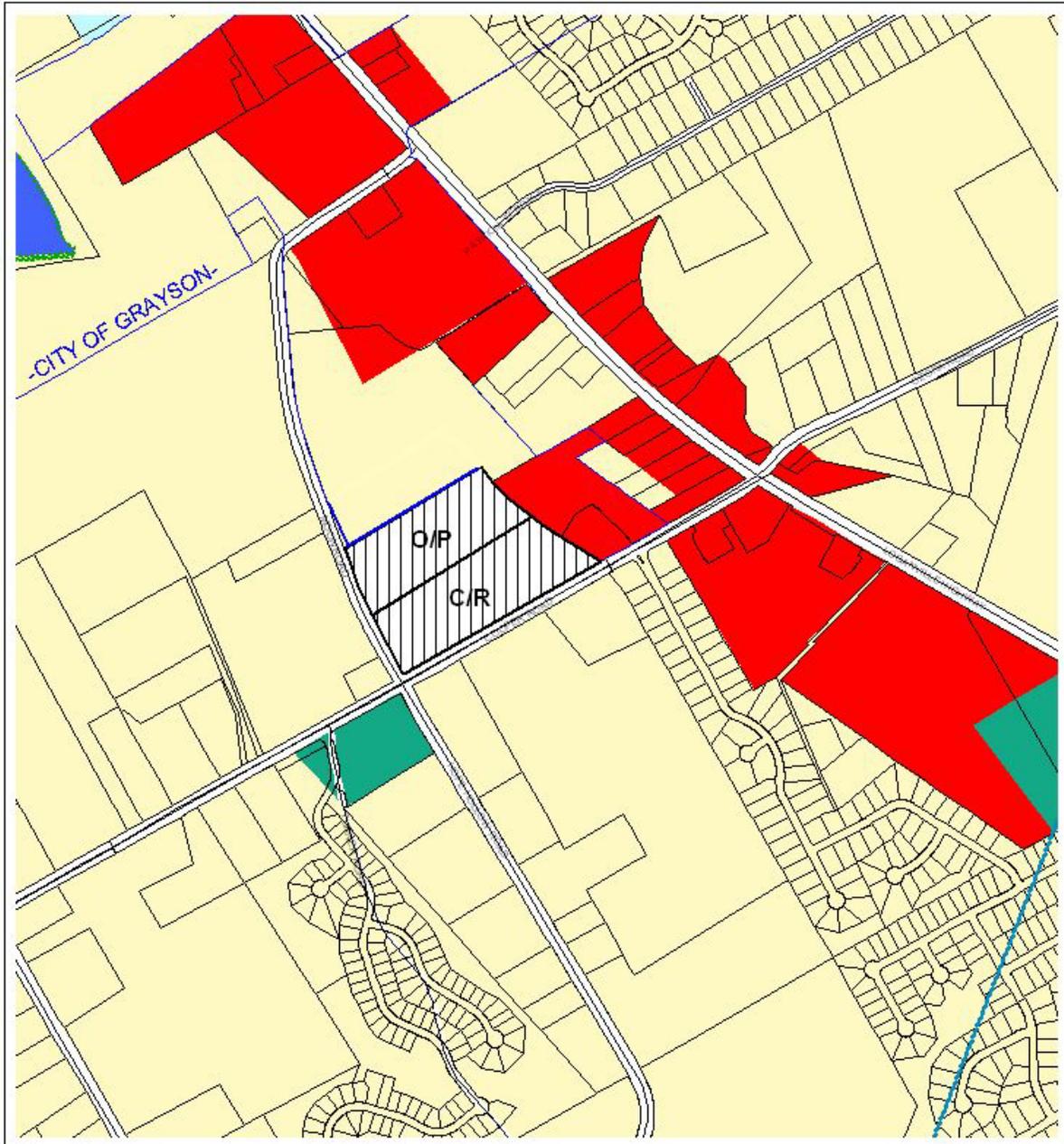


Gwinnett County, Georgia

 **MCR-04-003**

Map Reference Number:	5-134-001
Commission District:	(3) Dunn
Current Land Use Designation:	LDR (Low Density Residential)
Current Zoning:	R-100 (Single-Family Residence)





Scheduled Hearing For: February 2004.

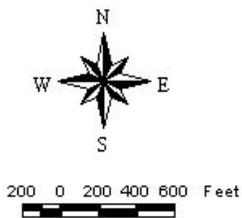
2020 Land Use Plan (2002 Update)

Gwinnett County, Georgia

 **MCR-04-003**

Proposed Land Use Plan Designations for Subject Property.

Map Reference Number:	5-134-001
Commission District:	(3) Dunn
Current Land Use Designation:	LDR (Low Density Residential)
Current Zoning:	R-100 (Single-Family Residence)



Appendices

A. Spreadsheet of Changes to the Land Use Plan Map	A-1
B. Revitalization Task Force Resolution (Phase II)	B-1
C. List of Endangered Plant and Wildlife Species	C-1
D. Report of the Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Schools Joint Task Force, 2003.	D-1

Appendix A - List of Changes for the 2003 Update of the 2020 Land Use Plan Map									
Parcel	Owner/ Applicant	Acreeage	Location	Former LUP	Recom LUP	Type of Change	Current (New) Zoning	Comm. District	Comment
2-001F703, and 63 others	various owners	26.77	Apalachee Farms	PRC	LDR	Consistency	R-100, R-75	3	Admin3
3-002-001, and 76 others	various owners	240.21	Interstate 85	LI	LDR	Consistency	RA-200, R-100, R-100 MOD	4	Admin2
5-014-004D, 5-014-005, 5-014-006, 5-014-008, 5-014-009, 5-014-010, 5-014-011	S.R. Development Services, Inc.	5.11	Gloster Road & Jordan Drive	LDR	MDR	Consistency	R-ZT	4	Rezoning, RZR-03-007
5-014-052, 6-128-002	Olde Bridge, LLC	115.16	Ronald Reagan Parkway, Oak Road	LI	MDR	Consistency	R-ZT	4	Rezoning, RZR-03-048
5-028-009	Fire Services	8.45	Lenora Church Road	LDR	I/P	Public Use	RS-180	3	New Fire Station
5-040-006, and 25 others	various owners	14.92	Dogwood Court	CR	LDR	Consistency	RS-180	3	Admin7 In Snellville
5-047-003	Richardson Housing Group Inc.	19.41	Arnold Road	LDR	MDR	Consistency	R-ZT	4	Rezoning, RZM-03-006
5-047-004	Premier Planning & Development Grp, LLC	10.31	Lawrenceville Highway, Clearwater Place	CR	MDR	Consistency	R-ZT	4	Rezoning, RZM-03-038
5-079-019	Precision Design & Development Co. Inc.	3.96	Lawrenceville Highway, Lamancha Drive	LDR	MDR	Consistency	R-ZT	4	Rezoning, RZR-03-032
5-082-002, 5-082-016, 5-083-003, 5-083-009	Ultima Real Estate Services, LLC	25.42	Lawrenceville Highway & Johnson Road	LDR	MDR	Consistency	R-ZT	4	Rezoning, RZM-03-053
5-082-009	Bagco. Inc.	15.9	Lawrenceville Higway	OP	C/R	Consistency	C-2	4	Lawrenceville Annex.
5-086-013	Homer M. & Mary Louise Stark	9.54	Scenic Highway	LDR	MDR	Consistency	RM-6	4	Rezoning, RZM-03-068
5-101-002, and 196 others	various owners	57.80	Cooper Road	CR	MDR	Consistency	PRC	3	Admin8 In Snellville
5-131-004	Karen Nasworthy	16.11	Athens Highway (Highway 78)	LDR	CR	Consistency	C-2	3	Rezoning, RZC-03-043
5-134-001	Madison Park	6	Moon Road	LDR	MDR	Consistency	R-4	3	Grayson Annexation
5-138-004	Dale Carico (DBA Kids R Kids)	2.89	Grayson Highway	LDR	OP	Consistency	O-I	3	Rezoning, RZC-03-028
5-154-02A	BKJ Investments	2.4	Loganville Highway	LDR	LI	Consistency	M-1	3	Grayson Annexation
5-154-136	David Glaze	4	Loganville Highway	LDR	LI	Consistency	M-1	3	Grayson Annexation
5-160-023	L.Carter Development	11.5	Athens Highway (Highway 78)	LDR	C/R	Consistency	C-2	3	Loganville Annexation

Parcel	Owner/ Applicant	Acreage	Location	Former LUP	Recom LUP	Type of Change	Current (New) Zoning	Comm. District	Comment
5-160-049, 5-160-050, 5-160-051, 5-160-052, 5-160-053	Lance Carter	6.2	Athens Highway (Highway 78)	LDR	C/R	Consistency	CH	3	Loganville Annexation
5-182-007	S.L. Ventures, Inc.	15.90	Simonton Road	LDR	MDR	Consistency	R-60	3	Rezoning, RZR-03-031
5-242-023	Lawrenceville Alcovy Investments, LLC	6.76	Winder Highway & Alcovy Industrial Road	LI	C/R	Consistency	C-2	4	Rezoning, RZC-03-007
5-242-026	Lawrenceville Alcovy Investments, LLC	5.29	Winder Highway & Alcovy Industrial Road	LI	C/R	Consistency	C-2	4	Rezoning, RZC-03-008
5-242-026	Alcovy Winder Investments, LLC	26.77	Alcovy Industrial Blvd.	LI	HI	Consistency	M-2	4	Rezoning, RZM-03-050
5-272-022	BHC Properties, Inc.	19.15	Rabbit Hill Road	LI	MDR	Consistency	R-ZT	4	Rezoning, RZM-03-045
5-275-004	Stanley Group	46.7	Stanley Road	ODT	LDR	Consistency	TRD	3	Dacula Annexation
5-295-061, 5-295-063	Diversified Technical Group, LLC	38.27	Masters Road, New Hope Road, Cammie Wages Road	AGL	LDR	Consistency	R-100	3	Rezoning, RZR-03-030
5-303-010	Maude Development Co.	4.51	Dacula Road & Fence Road	LDR	C/R	Consistency	C-2	3	Dacula Annexation
6-058-004	Lakeside Development Inc.	18.68	Rockbridge Road	LDR	MDR	Consistency	RM-6	3	Rezoning, RZM-03-019
6-058-011	Maxie Price	4.30	Rockbridge Road	LDR	MDR	Consistency	RM-6	3	Rezoning, RZM-03-041
6-138-008	AFCO Equities Partners, II L.P.	2.74	Mimosa Drive	OP & CR	CR	Consistency	C-2	2	Rezoning, RZM-03-023
6-139-006	Precision Design & Development	5.28	Pounds Drive	LDR	MDR	Consistency	R-ZT	2	Rezoning, RZM-03-028
6-150-013J, 6-150-013K, 6-150-013L	Richardson Housing Group, Inc.	10.09	Burns Road	LDR	MDR	Consistency	R-60	2	Rezoning, RZM-03-047
6-156-004	Diversified Technical Group, LLC	7.89	Pleasant Hill Road	LDR	MDR	Consistency	R-ZT	2	Rezoning, RZM-03-043
6-156-042	Barry W. Coker	0.34	Pleasant Hill Road	LDR	CR	Consistency	C-2	2	Rezoning, RZC-03-039
6-177-001	Richardson Housing Group, Inc.	5.00	Pleasant Hill Road	LDR	MDR	Consistency	RM-8	1	Rezoning, RZM-03-024
6-184-006, 6-184-006A, 6-184-006B, 6-184-006D, 6-184-029, 6-184-030	Precision Design & Development Co. Inc.	5.56	Beaver Ruin Road	MDR & CR	HDR	Consistency	RM-10	1	Rezoning, RZM-03-061
6-195-022	Carlos Perez Blanco	0.35	Singleton Road	LDR	OP	Consistency	O-I	1	Rezoning, RZC-03-032
6-196-005	Carlos Perez Blanco	0.70	Singleton Road	LDR	OP	Consistency	O-I	1	Rezoning, RZC-03-031
6-203-038	United General Investment Inc.	10.20	Club Drive & Crestwood Parkway	OP	MDR	Consistency	R-ZT	1	Rezoning, RZM-03-005
6-204-006	Liberty Development Corporation	14.47	Centerview Drive	CR	HDR	Consistency	RM-10	1	Rezoning, RZM-03-057
6-205-014, 6-206-004, 6-206-005	DMT, Inc.	29.88	Breckenridge Blvd., Executive Drive N., & Old Norcross Rd.	OP	MDR	Consistency	R-ZT	1	Rezoning, RZM-02-056
6-205-014, 6-206-004, 6-206-005	DMT, Inc.	22.63	Breckenridge Blvd., Executive Drive N., & Old Norcross Rd.	OP	HDR	Consistency	RM-10	1	Rezoning, RZM-02-057
6-206-005	DMT, Inc.	3.64	Breckenridge Blvd	OP	C/R	Consistency	C-2	1	Rezoning, RZC-03-010

Parcel	Owner/ Applicant	Acreege	Location	Former LUP	Recom LUP	Type of Change	Current (New) Zoning	Comm. District	Comment
6-225-176	Mitchell Road Partners, LLC	1.78	Everglades Trail & Mitchell Street	LDR	C/R	Consistency	C-2	2	Rezoning, RZC-03-001
6-235-209	Amlı Residential Properties	0.78	Pleasant Hill Road	HDR	CR	Consistency	C-2	1	Rezoning, RZC-02-036
6-235-214, 6-236-242	Amlı Residential Properties	0.01	Pleasant Hill Road	CR	HDR	Consistency	RM-13	1	Rezoning, RZM-03-002
6-236-240, 6-235-214	Amlı Residential Properties	0.77	Pleasant Hill Road	CR	HDR	Consistency	RM-13	1	Rezoning, RZM-03-003
6-242-034	Farhang Sioushansian	0.71	Beaver Ruin Road	LDR	OP	Consistency	O-I	2	Norcross Annexation
6-245-366, 6-252-029, 6-252-029A	Valiant Steel & Equipment, Inc.	28.27	Corley Road & Peachtree Street	LI	HI	Consistency	M-2	2	Rezoning, RZM-03-025
6-247-183, 6-247-183X, 6-247-184, 6-247-232	Gwinnett Partners	69.4 (In Gwinnett)	Buford Highway	IP	MUR (Mixed Use Redevelopment)	Consistency	MUR <i>New County zoning district</i>	2	Rezoning, MUR-02-001
6-252-049	Carl E. Westmoreland, Jr., Esq.	11.18	Corley Road	LI	HI	Consistency	M-2	2	Rezoning, RZM-03-046
6-255-261, and 284 others	various owners	32.66	Miller St., Medlock Bridge Road, Langford Road	ODT	HDR	Consistency	RM, RM-10, R65	2	Admin6 In Norcross
6-256-030, 6-256-031	Liberty Development Corporation	12.03	Buford Highway	LI	MDR	Consistency	R-ZT	2	Rezoning, RZM-03-059
6-265-064	EMCO Communities LLC	6.6	Pittard Road	LDR	MDR	Consistency	RM	1	Duluth Annexation
6-268-053, 6-269-018	Department of Community Services	22.5	Peachtree Industrial Blvd.	MDR,LI	PRC	Public Use	R-ZT, M-1	2	New Aquatic Park Site
6-269-114	Hermant & Mita Parikh	1.43	Peachtree Industrial Blvd.	OP	LI	Consistency	M-1	2	Rezoning, RZC-03-033
6-283-073	Cowart Family, LLC	18.93	Woodhill Drive & The Corners Parkway	C/R	MDR	Consistency	RM-8	2	Rezoning, RZM-02-054
6-286-086, 6-286-138	Premier Planning & Development Grp, LLC	25.84	Medlock Bridge Road	LDR & CR	HDR	Consistency	RM-13	2	Rezoning, RZM-03-011
7-005-004A, 7-005-005, 7-005-137, 7-005-138, 7-005-140	Donny Chi Keung Mui, ET AL	4.83	Old Norcross Road	LDR	C/R	Consistency	C-2	4	Rezoning, RZC-03-005
7-005-095	Randle L. Griffin	0.84	Sugarloaf Parkway	LDR	CR	Consistency	C-2	4	Rezoning, RZC-03-034
7-018-028	A&P Partners, LLC	12.38	Hurricane Shoals Road	LDR	MDR	Consistency	R-ZT	3	Rezoning, RZR-03-004
7-044-015, and 150 others	various owners	62.56	Purcell Road	ODT	LDR	Consistency	MH	1	Admin4
7-046-005, 7-046-144, 7-046-544	McKendree Properties, L.P.	2.23	Christiana Drive	MDR	LDR	Consistency	R-100 CSO	1	Rezoning, RZR-03-046
7-052-002, 7-065-003A, 7-065-286, 7-065-400	various owners	6.38	Russell Road, Georgia Highway 20	LDR, CR	OP	Consistency	O-I	4	Admin10

Parcel	Owner/ Applicant	Acreege	Location	Former LUP	Recom LUP	Type of Change	Current (New) Zoning	Comm. District	Comment
7-065-016, 7-065-140, 7-065-142, 7-065-143, 7-065-325	various owners	8.34	Russell Road, Georgia Highway 20	LDR, OP	C/R	Consistency	C-2	4	Admin9
7-070-111	Riverside Management	1.00	McKendree Church Road & Bob Maddox Road	LDR	OP	Consistency	O-I	1	Rezoning, RZM-03-040
7-074-005, 7-074-017, 7-074-019	South Richland, Inc.	7.12	Atkinson Road, Sugarloaf Parkway	OP	MDR	Consistency	RM-8	1	Rezoning, RZM-03-067
7-081-007A, 7-081-007B, 7-081-018, 7-081-021, 7-081-030, 7-081-114	Perimeter Properties	4.72	Herrington Lane, Atkinson Road	CR & OP	CR	Consistency	C-2	1	Rezoning, RZC-03-041
7-117-023, 7-117-042, 7-117-043	Evans Real Estate Services, LLC	8.65	Duluth Highway	LDR	OP	Consistency	O-I	1	Rezoning, RZM-03-016
7-122-005C	Seibert and Son, Inc.	16.70	Satellite Boulevard & Pruett Road	LDR	OP	Consistency	O-I	1	Rezoning, RZC-03-024
7-137-020	324 - 85 Investment, LLC	20.81	Gravel Springs Road	OI & LI	MDR	Consistency	R-ZT	4	Rezoning, RZM-03-062
7-137-020, 7-138-020	324 - 85 Investment, LLC	27.42	South Puckett Road	OI & LDR	MDR	Consistency	R-ZT	4	Rezoning, RZM-03-063
7-137-020, 7-138-020	324 - 85 Investment, LLC	20.85	Gravel Springs Road	OI & LI	MDR	Consistency	RM-8	4	Rezoning, RZC-03-044
7-137-020, 7-138-020	324 - 85 Investment, LLC	33.97	Gravel Springs Road	LI	CR	Consistency	C-2	4	Rezoning, RZC-03-045
7-147-001, 7-147-001A, 7-147-022	Falling Water, Inc.	14.10	Laurel Drive	LDR & CR	MDR	Consistency	RM-8	4	Rezoning, RZM-03-029
7-149-005	Collins Hill Associates, LLC	10.31	Collins Hill Road, Old Peachtree Road	LDR	MDR	Consistency	R-60	4	Rezoning, RZR-03-038
7-149-006	Corridor Development, Inc.	5.07	Collins Hill Rd.	LDR	MDR	Consistency	R-60	1	Rezoning, RZR-02-049
7-149-010A	Department of Community Services	63.8	Rock Springs Road	LI & OP	PRC	Public Use	M-1, O-I	1	New Park Site
7-166-001, and 9 others	Department of Community Services	155.7	Suwanee Creek Road	LDR	PRC	Public Use	R-100	1	New Park Site
7-168-001	Henry Van Os	5.38	Burnette Road	LDR	LI	Consistency	M-1	1	Rezoning, RZC-03-049
7-177-007, 7-177-012	A. James Hill	1.53	Gravel Springs Road	HDR	C/R	Consistency	C-2	4	Buford Annexation
7-177-02A, 7-177-02B, 7-177-005, 7-177-006, 7-177-008, 7-177-025	Broadwell, Puckett, Gravel Springs Assoc.	12.14	Gravel Springs Road	HDR	C/R	Consistency	C-2	4	Buford Annexation

Parcel	Owner/ Applicant	Acreage	Location	Former LUP	Recom LUP	Type of Change	Current (New) Zoning	Comm. District	Comment
7-177-037, 7-178-004, 7-178-007, 7-178-008	John H. Barrett	31.00	Gravel Springs Road	LDR	HDR	Consistency	RM-10	4	Rezoning, RZM-03-044
7-181-027, 7-181-028, 7-182-005	Sentinel Properties, Inc.	37.49	Hamilton Mill Road	RUR, LDR	LDR	Consistency	R-75 CSO	4	Rezoning, RZR-03-029
7-185-011	Premier Planning & Development Grp, LLC	4.40	Cross Road	LDR	MDR	Consistency	R-60	4	Rezoning, RZM-03-017
7-190-003, 7-191-002, 7-191-453	BHC Properties, Inc.	25.11	Ridge Road	LDR	MDR	Consistency	R-60	1	Rezoning, RZR-03-017
7-195-066	Shawnee Ridge Joint Venture	14.3	Satellite Boulevard & Burnette Road	OP	LI, C/R	Consistency	M-1,C-2	1	Suwanee Annexation
7-201-005	Liberty Development Corporation	40.3	Buford Highway	LDR	MDR, LDR	Consistency	PRD, R-100	1	Duluth Annexation
7-206-001	McDaniel Enterprises	99.7	Buford Highway & Sugarloaf Pkwy	LI, MDR, I/P	MDR,C/R	Consistency	PUD	1	Duluth Annexation
7-226-025A	Billy Titshaw	0.68	S.Bogan Road	LDR	C/R	Consistency	C-2	4	Buford Annexation
7-233-020, 7-233-021	Sue Tatum	10.05	Westbrook Road	LDR	MDR	Consistency	R-ZT	1	Rezoning, RZM-03-042
7-243-310, and 287 others	various owners	63.75	Peachtree Industrial Blvd.	CR, PRC	MDR	Consistency	PRD, RA-200	1	Admin5 In Duluth
7-257-084, 7-257-097	Elwen Company, LLC	3.40	Buford Highway & Old Suwanee Road	LDR	C/R	Consistency	C-1	4	Rezoning, RZC-03-006
7-260-007, 7-260-008	Parker, Bailey Cabinet Co.	1	South Lee Street	MDR	C/R	Consistency	C-2	4	Buford Annexation
7-274-027, and 100 others	various owners	32.13	Level Creek Road	CR	LDR	Consistency	RS-100	4	Admin1 In Sugar Hill
7-276-008	City of Suwanee	61	Suwanee-Dam Road	LDR	PRC	Public Use	R-100	1	New Park Site
7-297-007, 7-297-017	Jones Property	36.7	Jones Road	LDR	LI	Consistency	M-1	4	Buford Annexation
7-320-010, 7-320-011, 7-320-012, 7320-013, 7320-013A, 7-339-075	Georgia 20 Ventures LLC	15	Cumming Highway	LDR	C/R	Consistency	C-2	4	Sugar Hill Annexation
7-322-012, 7-322-013	Mike Britt	12.25	Sycamore Road	LDR	MDR	Consistency	R-ZT	4	Rezoning, RZM-03-048

APPENDIX B

**A RESOLUTION EXTENDING THE TERM OF THE
REVITALIZATION TASK FORCE FOR TWO ADDITIONAL YEARS**

WHEREAS, Gwinnett County has been among the fastest growing counties in the United States for nearly three decades, increasing its population from 72,000 in 1970 to an estimated 638,000 by 2002; and

WHEREAS, the Revitalization Task Force and County staff have identified areas that are beginning to experience indications of physical decline in older neighborhoods and commercial areas; and,

WHEREAS, it is a goal of the Board of Commissioners to develop a program to evaluate and identify solutions to revitalize declining areas in Gwinnett County; and,

WHEREAS, the Board of Commissioners created the Revitalization Task Force to evaluate areas which need revitalization assistance and to develop recommendations for a comprehensive program which will promote economic opportunity and vitality in those areas experiencing decline; and,

WHEREAS, the Gwinnett County Revitalization Task Force has met regularly for a period of one year and developed a document of analysis and recommendations entitled "Report to the Board of Commissioners"; and,

WHEREAS, the Revitalization Task Force finds that disinvestments and decline in older areas of the County threaten the County's leadership in business, education, and quality of life; and,

WHEREAS, the Revitalization Task Force has identified a number of root causes for decline including lack of a sense of community, residential and corporate disinvestments, and physical deterioration of aging building stock; and,

WHEREAS, the Board in general supports the further exploration of revitalization strategies recommended by the Revitalization Task Force including building consensus and creating incentives for reinvestment, promoting mixed-use and other sustainable land use patterns, fostering champions of revitalization, undertaking three pilot studies and marketing the advantages of reinvestment; and,

WHEREAS, implementation of the revitalization strategies will require a proactive approach that should include launching pilot study areas and building a network of partners with cities, developers, the Chamber of Commerce, non-profit organizations, civic groups and leaders; and,

WHEREAS, an additional period of time would be beneficial for the Revitalization Task Force to help implement, monitor, and refine revitalization strategies; and,

WHEREAS, there is a general agreement among the members of the Board of Commissioners that continued oversight and input by the Revitalization Task Force is needed to launch pilot studies, identify criteria for determining areas suitable for redevelopment, and to build the coalition needed for a comprehensive revitalization program.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE TERM OF THE REVITALIZATION TASK FORCE IS HEREBY EXTENDED FOR TWO YEARS.

SAID TASK FORCE membership shall be reconfirmed or replaced based upon the desires of the original appointing bodies;

SAID TASK FORCE shall establish sub-committees to work with and participate in the creation of PILOT AREA FOCUS TEAMS that will become the backbone of a community outreach and involvement effort. The PILOT AREA FOCUS TEAMS shall be made up of residents, property owners, and business owners drawn from each PILOT STUDY AREA recommended in the Revitalization Task Force Report to Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners, dated July 31, 2002 as well as others deemed appropriate by the TASK FORCE.

SAID TASK FORCE shall continue to focus on the role of private investment and initiative in reducing or responding to commercial and neighborhood decline and shall recommend incentives that could be offered in Gwinnett County to encourage private investment in declining areas.

SAID TASK FORCE with the assistance of the staff of the Planning Division of the Department of Planning & Development, the Department of Financial Services, and an independent facilitator shall meet on a schedule of its own choosing for an additional period of two years commencing in January, 2003;

SAID TASK FORCE, with the assistance of the staff of the Planning Division of the Department of Planning & Development, shall develop and recommend to the Board of Commissioners criteria for determining eligibility for redevelopment programs;

SAID TASK FORCE shall recommend a program for coordinating redevelopment and revitalization efforts between the county, cities and other entities, and shall take such steps to implement such program as may be authorized by the Board of Commissioners;

SAID TASK FORCE shall recommend to the Board of Commissioners the boundaries of the "study areas" to be established for the PILOT STUDIES; prior to beginning the studies, the Board of Commissioners shall approve the final boundaries for the PILOT STUDY AREAS;

SAID TASK FORCE shall, with the assistance of the staff of the Planning Division of the Department of Planning & Development, the Department of Financial Services and consultants, oversee the progress of the three designated PILOT STUDIES to be undertaken by consultants and shall consolidate the findings of those studies into

recommendations for consideration by the Board of Commissioners that, in the opinion of the Committee, will revitalize and improve the physical character of the areas and improve the quality of life for residents of the PILOT STUDY AREAS;

SAID PILOT STUDIES shall, at a minimum, (1) develop a vision for the redevelopment of each individual PILOT STUDY AREA based upon the input of its residents and property owners, (2) evaluate the existing capacity of the COUNTY'S water, sewer and transportation infrastructure and identify the capital improvements and the estimated cost thereof required to achieve each revitalization vision; (3) provide an economic cost to benefit assessment of providing those improvements under various scenarios of public and/or private funding, and, (4) identify additional tasks tailored to the needs of the three individual PILOT STUDY AREAS as determined by the Revitalization Task Force; and,

SAID TASK FORCE shall be supported by funds allocated by the Board of Commissioners in the amount of \$25,000 for a facilitator, refreshments, and contingency in 2003, and,

SAID TASK FORCE shall present two annual reports of its findings and recommendations to the Board of Commissioners and interim reports, as the COMMITTEE deems appropriate.

GWINNETT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

By: *F. Wayne Hill*
F. Wayne Hill, Chairman

Date Signed: January 14, 2003

ATTEST:
Brida Maddox
County Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:
Van Stephens
CHIEF ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY

APPENDIX C

Locations of Special Concern Animals, Plants and Natural Communities in Gwinnett County, Georgia

"US" indicates species with federal status (Protected, Candidate or Partial Status). Species that are federally protected in Georgia are also state protected.

"GA" indicates Georgia protected species.

Find details for the species below on our special concern lists for [animals](#) and [plants](#).

Date of information - 6/11/2003

Animals

No animals listed in Gwinnett county.

Plants

Aesculus glabra Ohio Buckeye

US *Amphianthus pusillus* Pool Sprite

Amsonia ludoviciana Louisiana Blue Star

Aster avitus Alexander Rock Aster

GA *Cypripedium acaule* Pink Ladyslipper

GA *Cypripedium parviflorum* var. *pubescens* Large-flowered Yellow Ladyslipper

Eriocaulon koernickianum Dwarf Pipewort

Fimbristylis brevivaginata Flatrock Fimbry

GA *Hydrastis canadensis* Goldenseal

US *Isoetes melanospora* Black-spored Quillwort

GA *Melanthium woodii* Ozark Bunchflower

Panax quinquefolius American Ginseng

GA *Schisandra glabra* Bay Starvine

GA *Sedum pusillum* Granite Stonecrop

GA *Waldsteinia lobata* Piedmont Barren Strawberry

Natural Communities

No natural communities listed in Gwinnett county.

NOTE: This is a working list and is constantly revised (see [element occurrence data disclaimer](#)). For the latest changes, acknowledgment of numerous sources, interpretation of data, or other information connected with this list, please contact:

Greg Krakow - Data Manager
Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Wildlife Resources Division
Georgia Natural Heritage Program
2117 U.S. Highway 278 S.E.
Social Circle, Georgia 30025-4714
Phone: (770)918-6411
Fax: (706)557-3033
Click [here](#) to send e-mail

C-1

APPENDIX D

**Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools
Joint Study Task Force
County-Schools Cooperation and Collaboration**

**Cooperation and Collaboration
Between
Gwinnett County and
Gwinnett County Public Schools**

October 21, 2003

**Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools
Joint Study Task Force
County-Schools Cooperation and Collaboration
*Executive Summary***

Issue for Study:

To examine ways Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools can enhance their cooperation in areas of mutual interest, specifically planning, operations, and infrastructure.

Joint Study Task Force Members:

Facilitator:

- ♦ Dr. James A. Feldt, Consensus Builders, Inc.

Members Appointed By the Gwinnett County Board of Commissioners:

- ♦ Tony Arakawa, Former Councilman, City of Berkeley Lake
- ♦ Keith Barker, Management Consultant, University of Georgia's Carl Vinson Institute of Government
- ♦ Bill McCargo, Vice President, Scientific Atlanta

Members Appointed By the Gwinnett County Board of Education:

- ♦ David Barker, Director of Real Estate, Gwinnett Housing Resource Partnership
- ♦ Joel Taylor, Senior Vice President, Main Street Bank
- ♦ B.E. "Woody" Woodruff, Captain, Delta Airlines

Member Appointed By the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce:

- ♦ Joanne Taylor, President, Advanced Computing Technologies, Inc.

Staff Liaison:

- ♦ Jock Connell, Deputy County Administrator/Chief Operations Officer, Gwinnett Board of Commissioners
- ♦ Dr. Cindy Loe, Associate Superintendent, Division of Organizational Advancement, Gwinnett County Public Schools

Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools Joint Study Task Force County-Schools Cooperation and Collaboration Executive Summary

Commendations:

The level of collaboration between Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools is the unrecognized benchmark for county-school system cooperation and coordination in Georgia and in the nation. There are more than 100 existing cooperative efforts between the two governing bodies. Many of these efforts are significant and on going. Gwinnett should be recognized as a model of collaboration and cooperation, two factors that continue to make this community a desirable place in which people want to reside, raise families, operate businesses, and enjoy life.

Recommendations:

1. Engage in a collaborative effort to lobby the local delegation to the General Assembly to support introduction of legislation with the purpose of establishing school overcrowding as a sole criterion to be used to deny or delay requests of rezoning only when specified individual school systems triggers are reached. For example, if the Gwinnett County Public Schools determined that a proposed rezoning would push a school in a cluster to over 35% to 50% of capacity without plans for relief within three to five years, such information as provided by the Schools may be used by the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Board of Commissioners to deny or delay the requested rezoning.
2. Evaluate the feasibility of strategically expanding greenspace and conservation easements as one of the strategies for helping to manage school growth while reaping the other benefits of protecting greenspace.
3. The Planning Commission appointees, elected members of the Board of Education (BoE), and elected members of the Board of Commissioners (BoC) should be trained in the planning process. Standardized and consistent training should be based upon that offered by the Atlanta Regional Commission. In the short-term the BoC and the BoE should adopt policies requiring such training. In the long-term work for state legislation and regulation that would add training in planning to the list of required training for these officials.

**Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools
Joint Study Task Force
County-Schools Cooperation and Collaboration
Executive Summary**

Recommendations: (cont.)

4. Expand ongoing discussions among planning staff from GCPS, County, Chamber of Commerce, libraries, health and human services, parks and recreation, and from municipalities and representatives of landowners and developers to address land use plans, development, redevelopment, transportation connectivity, related facilities of each of the groups and issues arising there from.
5. Support the formation of functional councils of practitioners and professionals from among the public and private sectors' top ten employers to share best practices, develop preferred vendor lists, study centers of excellence among participants, engage in benchmarking, etc. In particular, establish these three functional councils: a Human Resources Council, a Chief Information Officers Council, and a Facilities and Maintenance Council.
6. Collaborate on a joint vendor/purchasing network, a joint on-line catalog, and reverse auctions to the extent to which these may offer more competitive pricing. Tap into private sector expertise in the County on how best to pursue these additional means to procure products most cost-effectively without giving up the current benefits of government and/or education pricing.
7. Establish a jointly appointed working group to track what has been recommended regarding collaboration and management of growth and redevelopment, make explicit any common themes, track what has been accomplished, maintain a database, and communicate to the citizens and stakeholders. The membership of this group could be comprised of representatives of the Board of Commissioners, the Board of Education, the Joint Study Task Force, the Growth Strategies Cross Functional Action Team, the Revitalization Task Force, and the Growth Issues Steering Committee.
8. Invite all appropriate municipal officials and the economic development staff of the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce to participate in all the above recommendations.

Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools Joint Study Task Force County-Schools Cooperation and Collaboration Findings

Current Status:

The following describes the status of county-schools cooperation and collaboration prior to the work of the task force:

- ♦ There is a Joint Use Agreement for Parks and Recreation and School Facilities, which is something that many counties in the state have not been able to execute
- ♦ There is a successful joint fuel purchasing agreement and joint utilization of the fueling system
- ♦ County and Public Schools routinely share planning information, including Geographic Information System data, growth projections, construction scheduling, facilities siting, road widening, transportation safety improvements
- ♦ Both the County and the Public Schools have contributed to the Open Space and Greenways Plan
- ♦ The Gwinnett Coalition for Health and Human Services serves as a forum for county-schools collaboration
- ♦ The County and Public Schools cooperate to identify human resources best practices
- ♦ The County Department of Public Utilities reviews plans for all Board of Education projects
- ♦ The Gwinnett Public Libraries cooperate with the Public Schools, including Libraries displaying curriculum materials for citizens to review, the homework hotline, reading lists, and allowing for materials turn-in at libraries or media centers
- ♦ Financial staffs share data, coordinate the tax digest, and share information on revenue projections
- ♦ The County apprises the Board of Education of rezoning requests and the Public Schools staff provides as assessment of the impact on school capacity
- ♦ The County and Public Schools coordinate monitoring of legislation and jointly communicate with the members of the local legislative delegation

**Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools
Joint Study Task Force
County-Schools Cooperation and Collaboration
Findings**

Research Findings – Background Materials:

The following summarizes the background material provided and results of additional research received relating to growth issues and schools:

- ♦ Background briefing presented by Steve Logan and Greg Stanfield at the September 17, 2002 meeting
- ♦ SAT scores by high school cluster at the October 8, 2002 meeting
- ♦ Map showing the public school boundaries at the October 8, 2002 meeting
- ♦ 2002 Education Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) building program at the October 8, 2002 meeting
- ♦ Gwinnett County Public Schools ethnic summary at the October 8, 2002 meeting
- ♦ Lessons from schools achieving world-class results for all at the October 8, 2002 meeting
- ♦ Current Gwinnett County budget and budget in brief and the comprehensive annual report for 2001 at the October 8, 2002 meeting
- ♦ 2020 land use plan at the October 8, 2002 meeting
- ♦ Organization charts for Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools at the October 8, 2002 meeting and the November 13, 2002 meeting
- ♦ Briefing on the challenges facing the County by Mike Comer at the October 8, 2002 meeting
- ♦ A compendium of existing cooperative efforts, including the Joint Agreement for Parks and Recreation and Community Schools at the October 8, 2002 meeting
- ♦ A presentation on the Gwinnett zoning process at the November 13, 2002 meeting
- ♦ A presentation by Van Stephens and Glenn Stephens on the legal basis for zoning in Georgia at the November 13, 2002 meeting
- ♦ Gwinnett's future public school sites with current zoning of land within one mile of the sites at the November 13, 2002 meeting
- ♦ Zoning case histories for 2001 and part of 2002 at the November 13, 2002 meeting
- ♦ Report of the Gwinnett Revitalization Task Force at the November 13, 2002 meeting
- ♦ Gwinnett County employee separation and turnover rates for 1995 to 2001 at the November 13, 2002 meeting

**Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools
Joint Study Task Force
County-Schools Cooperation and Collaboration
Findings**

Research Findings – Background Materials: (cont.)

- ♦ Report of the Growth Strategies Cross Functional Action Team at the November 13, 2002 meeting
- ♦ A presentation by State Senator Balfour and State Representative on the state climate for zoning and changes to zoning processes within Georgia at the December 17, 2002 meeting
- ♦ A presentation by Rob Lebeau of ARC and Stan Harvey on community-school planning at the December 17, 2002 meeting
- ♦ A presentation by Debbie Green and Jeff Weiler on the County's and School's procurement processes at the January 14, 2003 meeting
- ♦ Interviews with human resources, information technology, purchasing, and facilities management staff of the County and Public Schools conducted during the months of January through July
- ♦ A presentation made by Jim Braden, Steve Gaultney, and Rick Porter on the thought processes of developers at the February 11, 2003 meeting
- ♦ A survey was conducted of a selected sample of similar counties and school systems from across the country to assess their cooperation and collaboration over the months of February through April, 2003
- ♦ A presentation by Dr. Glen I. Earthman from Virginia Tech on integrated community and school planning and examples of some of the best collaborative planning from around the country at the March 11, 2003 meeting
- ♦ Attended a meeting of the Gwinnett Municipal Association to share some of the deliberations of the task force and to seek their input at their March 11, 2003 meeting
- ♦ A presentation by Steve Logan on the key findings of the Growth Issues Steering Committee and the Revitalization Task Force at the March 11, 2003 meeting
- ♦ A voice poll survey was conducted to determine residents' perceptions on the extent of and need for additional county-schools cooperation during May 2003
- ♦ A presentation on public safety, School Resource Officers, and on the County's Police Department by Dr. Donald Fielder and Colonel Walters at the June 10, 2003 meeting
- ♦ A presentation by Carol Hassel of the Gwinnett Open Land Trust on greenspace and conservation easements at the July 8, 2003 meeting

Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools Joint Study Task Force County-Schools Cooperation and Collaboration Findings

Research Findings:

- ♦ Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools are the unrecognized benchmark for county-schools cooperation and coordination within Georgia and in the nation—relatively few of the surveyed counties and school systems from across the country were motivated to respond and those that did reported minimal cooperation—only Cobb and Fulton Counties reported any substantive cooperation and those were both notably less than what is happening in Gwinnett
- ♦ Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools currently are engaged in over 100 specific instances of cooperation and collaboration—the extent of ongoing cooperation and collaboration was not recognized until County and Public Schools staff were surveyed to determine any and all specific cooperative efforts
- ♦ Developers recognize that the quality of the schools and the livability of a community affect people’s choices about where they want to live—Gwinnett has been and continues to be a place where people want to live
- ♦ There is deliberate coordination and sharing of information between the County and School’s police departments and the District Attorney’s Office within legal constraints
- ♦ While residents who responded to the voice poll survey did not perceive much cooperation and coordination, they were most familiar with and perceived the greatest degree of cooperation and collaboration on recreation
- ♦ Respondents on the voice poll survey reported that they thought that it is important for the two Boards and the staffs to work together and a willingness to support additional local taxes dedicated to school construction
- ♦ Most other school districts, with their focus on a single purpose, are insulated from the larger community planning process
- ♦ Land use planning and zoning in Georgia are guided by the so-called Steinberg principles and school capacity concerns can have little effect on decisions
- ♦ There appears to be little support at the state level for changing the way in which land use planning and zoning is done—any changes will likely be both time consuming and difficult to achieve and must respect the strong commitment to property rights within Georgia

**Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools
Joint Study Task Force
County-Schools Cooperation and Collaboration
*Findings***

Research Findings: (cont.)

- ♦ The local legislative delegation is open to hearing from the County and Public Schools about recommended changes to the planning and zoning processes
 - ♦ Integrating school siting and land use planning has the potential to positively affect the sense of community by creating “community centers” to which people can feel attached.
-

Desired Status:

Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools should be recognized as the benchmark for county-public school system cooperation and collaboration. This cooperation and collaboration should be a factor contributing to ensuring that this community continues to be a place, in which people want to reside, raise families, operate businesses, and enjoy life.

**Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools
Joint Study Task Force
County-Schools Cooperation and Collaboration
Recommendations**

Recommendation 1:

Engage in a collaborative effort to lobby the local delegation to the General Assembly to support introduction of legislation with the purpose of establishing school overcrowding as a sole criterion to be used to deny or delay requests of rezoning only when specified individual school systems triggers are reached. For example, if the Gwinnett County Public Schools determined that a proposed rezoning would push a school in a cluster to over 35% to 50% of capacity without plans for relief within three to five years, such information as provided by the Schools may be used by the Zoning Board of Appeals and the Board of Commissioners to deny or delay the requested rezoning.

Priority:

1 of 8 total recommendations

Rationale:

Changing state law and/or amending the constitution so as to allow for school overcrowding as a sole criterion to be used to deny or delay requests of rezoning will be a long-term effort at best. However, there was a time when something such as SPLOST funding was considered to be politically impossible. Support the introduction of this concept with the understanding that it will take time to achieve passage. Additionally, it is our intent for any such change in the constitution or law not to have an adverse impact upon any particular socio-economic group.

Costs:

Minimal.

Potential Funding:

NA

Measurement/Evaluation:

Whether the legislation is introduced within the next three years and whether it is enacted.

**Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools
Joint Study Task Force
County-Schools Cooperation and Collaboration
Recommendations**

Recommendation 2:

Evaluate the feasibility of strategically expanding greenspace and conservation easements as one of the strategies for helping to manage school growth while reaping the other benefits of protecting greenspace.

Priority:

2 of 8 total recommendations

Rationale:

The County has received state funding and is already acquiring and protecting greenspace. The citizens of Gwinnett County expressed their support for the acquisition of greenspace with their passage of the last SPLOT referendum. This recommendation proposed that specific parcels be selected as greenspace or for conservation easements so as to prohibit those parcels of land from being further developed, thereby keeping selected school clusters from being overwhelmed with additional students. To the extent that funding is made available, the cost of this strategy is subsidized.

Costs:

Costs could be considerable. It should be noted that the provision of conservation easements are less expensive.

Potential Funding:

SPLOST funding and general funds, with support of state funding.

Measurement/Evaluation:

Acres of land that are acquired as greenspace or that are protected from further development through conservation easements in identified school clusters.

**Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools
Joint Study Task Force
County-Schools Cooperation and Collaboration
*Recommendations***

Recommendation 3:

The Planning Commission appointees, elected members of the Board of Education (BoE), and elected members of the Board of Commissioners (BoC) should be trained in the planning process. Standardized and consistent training should be based upon that offered by the Atlanta Regional Commission. In the short-term the BoC and the BoE should adopt policies requiring such training, while in the long-term work for state legislation and regulation that would add training to the list of required training for these officials.

Priority:

3 of 8 total recommendations

Rationale:

Train these officials so that they have a better understanding of and appreciation for planning processes. This will help to ensure there are consistent processes, that officials are familiar with the language used, be aware of potential unintended consequences that arise from poor planning, and they are knowledgeable of each other's community development and redevelopment issues.

Costs:

Costs for periodically providing the training is minimal.

Potential Funding:

General Funds

Measurement/Evaluation:

Monitor the percentage of targeted officials who complete the training.

**Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools
Joint Study Task Force
County-Schools Cooperation and Collaboration
Recommendations**

Recommendation 4:

Expand ongoing discussions among planning staff from GCPS, County, Chamber of Commerce, libraries, health and human services, parks and recreation, and from municipalities and representatives of landowners and developers to address land use plans, development, redevelopment, transportation connectivity, related facilities of each of the groups and issues arising there from.

Priority:

4 of 8 total recommendations

Rationale:

There are already discussions that occur among County and Public School planning staff. By expanding the involvement in these discussions, the scope of the discussions can be extended to address concerns related to community betterment. In particular, for the undeveloped portions of the county, the group could discuss the potential placement of various programmed facilities and consider alternative placement of facilities to foster a greater sense of community. And, for the redeveloping areas, this group could seek to educate one another about these areas, gain consensus on the definition of these areas, discuss the placement of facilities within these areas, and consider how higher density development will impact services and the sense of community.

Costs:

An additional responsibility of existing staff devoted to planning and coordination

Potential Funding:

NA

Measurement/Evaluation:

Whether the numbers of planners involved in these discussions increases and whether the expanded discussions occur periodically. Define a minimum of two community outcome measures, such as land use, facilities siting, and transportation connectivity, and assess the extent to which there are measurable improvements in two specified communities, one developing and one redeveloping, over the defined period of time.

**Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools
Joint Study Task Force
County-Schools Cooperation and Collaboration
Recommendations**

Recommendation 5:

Support the formation of functional councils of practitioners and professionals from among the public and private sectors' top ten employers to share best practices, develop preferred vendor lists, study centers of excellence among participants, engage in benchmarking, etc. In particular, establish these three functional councils: a Human Resources Council, a Chief Information Officers Council, and a Facilities and Maintenance Council.

Priority:

5 of 8 total recommendations

Rationale:

Staff from the leading employers in the County can learn from one another, share expertise, help with benchmarking, and help one another avoid costly mistakes.

Costs:

No additional cost, an additional responsibility of existing staff

Potential Funding:

NA

Measurement/Evaluation:

The formation of councils and the cost savings, operational efficiencies, and improvements that result from the implementation of ideas learned from one another.

**Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools
Joint Study Task Force
County-Schools Cooperation and Collaboration
Recommendations**

Recommendation 6:

Collaborate on a joint vendor/purchasing network, a joint on-line catalog, and reverse auctions to the extent to which these may offer more competitive pricing. Tap into private sector expertise in the County on how best to pursue these additional means to procure products most cost-effectively without giving up the current benefits of government and/or education pricing.

Priority:

6 of 8 total recommendations

Rationale:

Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools are already using state contracts, cooperating on purchase of fuel, etc. This recommendation proposes that strategies that have proven to be effective in the private sector for lowering costs be explored. Existing private sector expertise that resides in the County can be tapped for implementing any strategies that are found to be promising.

Costs:

Minimal - some software may need to be acquired to facilitate the reverse auction

Potential Funding:

NA

Measurement/Evaluation:

Implementation of any additional procurement strategies and the cost savings that accrue.

**Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools
Joint Study Task Force
County-Schools Cooperation and Collaboration
Recommendations**

Recommendation 7:

Establish a jointly appointed working group to track what has been recommended regarding collaboration and management of growth and redevelopment, make explicit any common themes, track what has been accomplished, maintain a database, and communicate to the citizens and stakeholders. The membership of this group could be comprised of representatives of the Board of Commissioners, the Board of Education, the Joint Study Task Force, the Growth Strategies Cross Functional Action Team, the Revitalization Task Force, and the Growth Issues Steering Committee.

Priority:

7 of 8 total recommendations

Rationale:

This jointly appointed cross-functional entity would be in a better position to track efforts to enhance cooperation and collaboration. This group could also propose modifications to recommendations, offer new suggestions, or close out obsolete recommendations. This group's report on progress may also be better received by the citizenry and to stakeholders.

Costs:

To be determined based on a proposed plan.

Potential Funding:

General Funds.

Measurement/Evaluation:

Whether the group is established in the next year, the evaluation of recommendations in a database of over the next few years, and the issuance of progress reports on the recommendations.

**Gwinnett County and Gwinnett County Public Schools
Joint Study Task Force
County-Schools Cooperation and Collaboration
Recommendations**

Recommendation 8:

Invite all appropriate municipal officials and the economic development staff of the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce to participate in all the above recommendations.

Priority:

8 of 8 total recommendations

Rationale:

Cooperation and collaboration should extend throughout the County and not stop at municipal boundaries.

Costs:

NA

Potential Funding:

NA

Measurement/Evaluation:

The number municipalities that participate in efforts at intergovernmental cooperation and collaboration.