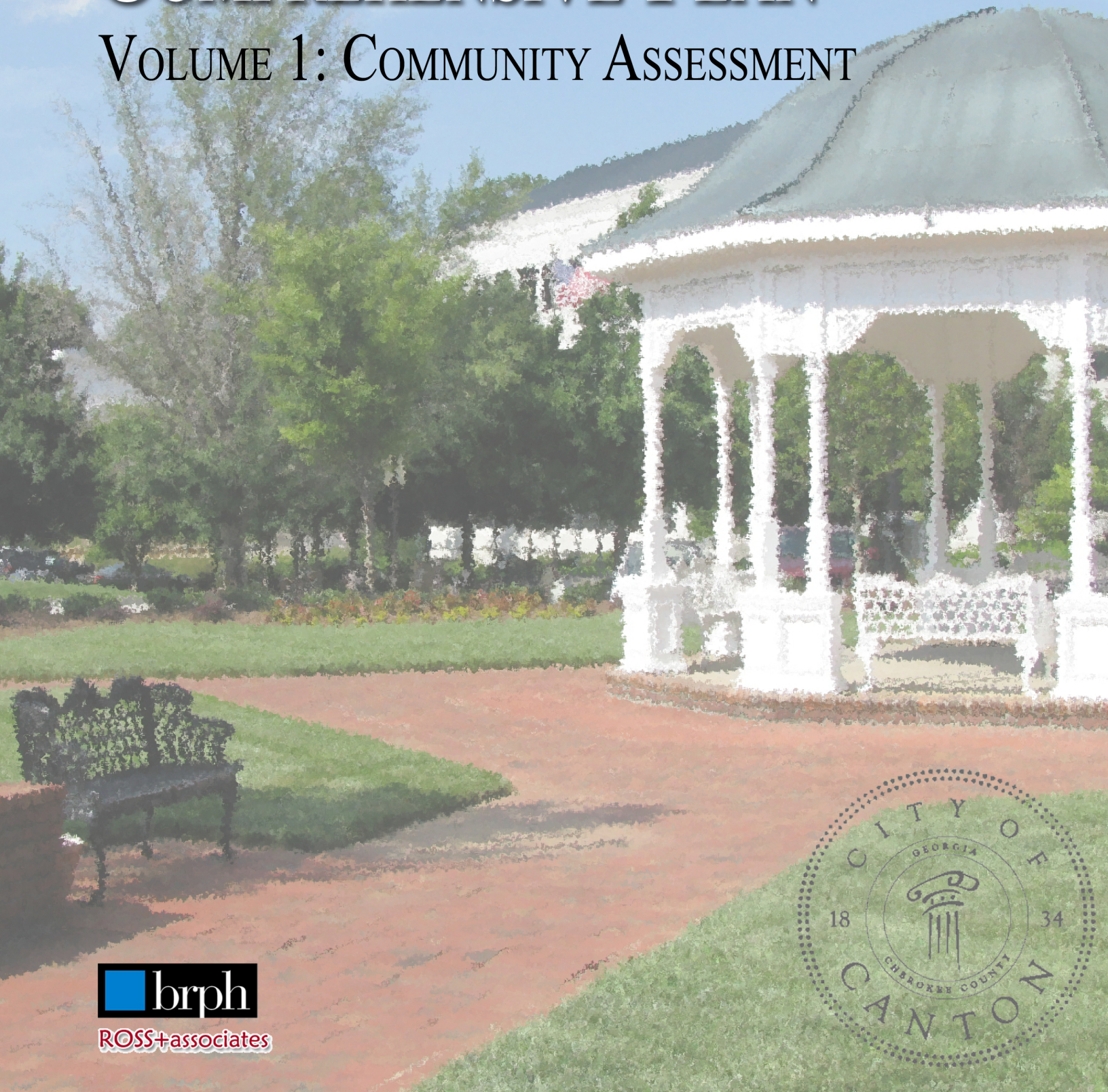


CITY OF CANTON

HORIZON 2030

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

VOLUME 1: COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT



CITY OF CANTON, GEORGIA
RESOLUTION 2008-0821

RESOLUTION TO TRANSMIT

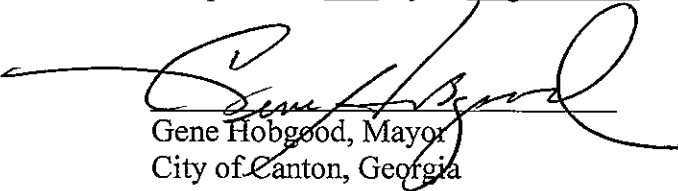
WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of the City of Canton, Georgia has completed the Community Participation and Community Assessment documents as part of the 20-year Comprehensive Plan update,

WHEREAS, these documents were prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for local Comprehensive Planning effective May 1, 2005 and established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and required public hearing was held on August 21, 2008,

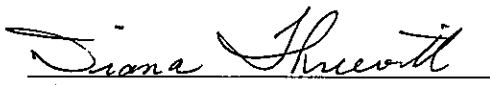
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the City of Canton, Georgia certify that the minimum public participation and other procedural requirements, as identified in the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, have been met or exceeded in preparing these draft documents of the 20-year Comprehensive Plan Update; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the City of Canton, Georgia hereby authorizes these draft documents of the 20-year Comprehensive Plan Update to be submitted the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review.

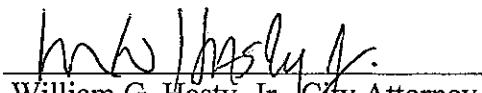
Adopted this 21st day of August, 2008.


Gene Hobgood, Mayor
City of Canton, Georgia

ATTEST:


Diana Threewitt, City Clerk
City of Canton, Georgia

APPROVED AS TO FORM AND CONTENT:


William G. Hasty, Jr., City Attorney
City of Canton, Georgia

Horizon 2030: City of Canton Comprehensive Plan

Community Assessment Volume 1: Issues and Opportunities

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City of Canton Comprehensive Plan

Community Assessment Volume 1: Issues and Opportunities

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1 Introduction and Executive Summary

Comprehensive Planning Requirements in Georgia

The mission of a Comprehensive Plan for a local community in Georgia is to provide the identification and assessment of existing conditions and future needs, and to consider the anticipated growth and changes that will affect the health, safety, and welfare of present and future community residents, workers, and visitors.

The Comprehensive Plan should serve as a policy guide regarding the future needs, issues, and opportunities facing the community. The Plan also should address and advance the coordination of land use with sustainable economic development, transportation and community infrastructure planning, and protection of natural and cultural resources, including provision of adequate housing for the entire community.

In Georgia, a local community must adopt a Comprehensive Plan meeting the State's standards and update the plan on a regular basis in order to maintain Qualified Local Government (QLG) status and remain eligible for a wide range of State grants, assistance and permitting programs. Planning requirements for the preparation and adoption of Comprehensive Plans are adopted by the State's Board of Community Affairs pursuant to the Georgia Planning Act, and administered and supplemented by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The most recently applicable planning standards took effect May 1, 2005, and establish the minimum standards that must be met for DCA approval.

For Canton, Cherokee County and its other cities, the current update is required by the end of October 2008. This update is characterized as the "tenth-year" update by the State, and the complete re-evaluation, reorganization and rewrite of the Plan elements are required by the State to address the significant changes that have occurred in Canton over the past decade, and satisfy the new planning standards adopted by the State. The City of Canton desires to meet and exceed the State's standards for planning required for an Urban, Tier-One community.



A location map (Figure 1.1) is located on a following page.

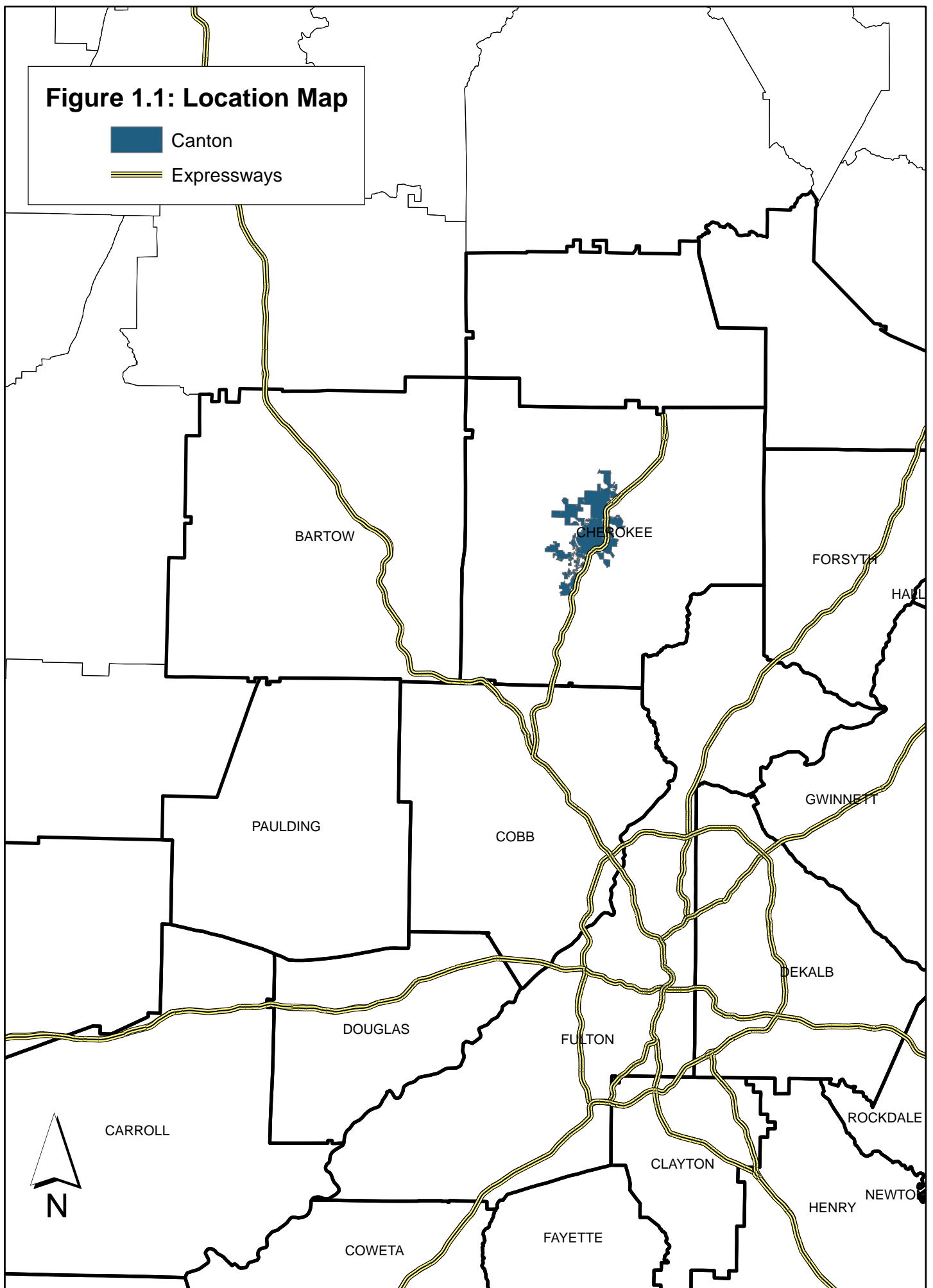
1.02 Purpose of the Community Assessment Report

The Community Assessment is one of three required elements for a comprehensive plan as required by the Georgia DC) under the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, Chapter 110-12-1, Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (effective May 1, 2005). The three components of a comprehensive plan meeting the quality growth requirements of DCA are (1) the Community Assessment, (2) the Community Participation Program, and (3) the Community Agenda.

The Community Assessment provides a baseline of information regarding existing and projected conditions in the subject city or county. The Community Participation Program (CPP) provides the program for engaging public input and participation. The Community Agenda provides the action plan, short-term work program, future development map, and implementation programs for the city or county.

Figure 1.1: Location Map

-  Canton
-  Expressways



The purpose of the Community Assessment is to present a factual and conceptual foundation upon which the rest of the comprehensive plan is built. In the view of the Georgia DCA, preparing the Community Assessment is largely an effort by planners to collect and analyze information about the community, and present the information in a concise, easily understood format. The Community Assessment serves as a basis for consideration by decision-makers and the public involved in the subsequent development of the Community Agenda (i.e., the “Plan”). The Community Assessment for the City of Canton is comprised of two volumes:

- This Volume 1 is focused on issues and opportunities facing the Comprehensive Plan participants now and anticipated in the future that result from growth and development.
- Volume 2 is an ‘addendum’ to the Community Assessment, containing detailed data and analyses that relate to the issues and opportunities discussed in Volume 1.

1.03 Planning Overview

A comprehensive plan meeting the planning requirements of the Georgia DCA must include the following three components:

Community Participation

The first part of the comprehensive plan is the Horizon 2030 Public Participation Plan to encourage and coordinate ongoing citizen participation activities throughout the preparation of the plan. The Public Participation Program describes the strategy for ensuring adequate public and stakeholder involvement in the preparation of the Community Agenda portion of the plan.

Community Assessment

This part of the comprehensive plan is an objective and professional assessment of data and information about the City of Canton. The following are included in the Community Assessment’s two volumes:

- A list of potential issues and opportunities the Comprehensive Plan participants may wish to take action to address;
- Analysis of existing development patterns, including a map of recommended character areas for consideration in developing an overall vision for future development;
- Evaluation of current community policies, activities, and development patterns for consistency with DCA’s Quality Community Objectives; and
- Analysis of data and information to check the validity of the above evaluations and the potential issues and opportunities.

Community Agenda

The third part of the comprehensive plan is the most important, for it includes the community's vision for the future as well as its strategy for achieving this vision. The Community Agenda will include three major components:

- A vision for the future physical development for the City of Canton Comprehensive Plan, expressed in map form indicating unique character areas, each with its own strategy for guiding future development patterns;
- A list of issues and opportunities identified by the City of Canton Comprehensive Plan participants for further action; and
- An implementation program to achieve the City of Canton's vision for the future and to address the identified issues and opportunities.

In addition to the three components above, and in concert with preparation of the Cherokee County Joint Comprehensive Plan, the City of Canton must review and possibly amend and recertify its previously adopted **Services Delivery Strategy**, and update the State-mandated **Solid Waste Management Plan**.

1.04 Executive Summary

The Comprehensive Plan for the City of Canton has been named "Horizon 2030, the Canton Vision." The Community Assessment provides the baseline for considering existing conditions and past trends that may be assumed to continue or be altered by external circumstances and by the actions of the Comprehensive Plan for the city.

Land Use

The existing land use map identifies twelve (12) types of existing land uses including woodlands and open fields that were not developed (herein classified as vacant land). Table 1.1 illustrates the breakout of the various land uses by the number of parcels and the acreage of each type of use:

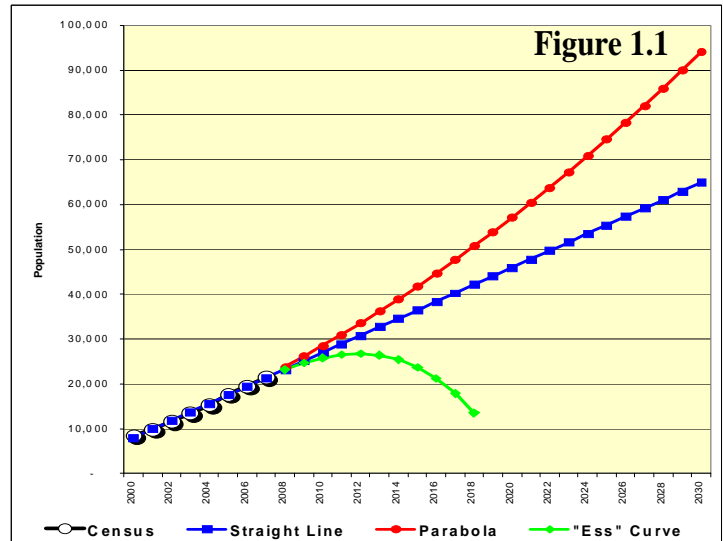
Table 1.1: Existing Land Uses

Land Use	Total Parcels	Total Acres	Average Acres/Parcel
Commercial	284	625.95	2.20
Government	102	870.62	8.54
Industrial	29	189.52	6.54
Institutional	34	179.35	5.28
Multi-Family	1052	227.98	2.37
Natural/Open Space	236	1692.91	7.63
Office	146	120.55	0.83
Single Family Attached	956	159.17	0.17
Single Family Detached	6105	2430.52	0.40
Vacant	1763	3935.55	2.23
TCU	-	675.00	-
County	190	501.38	2.64
Total (Not including county)	10,707	11,107.13	3.62

Approximately 25.3% of the city was used as residential land, 3.7% was commercial retail, office and industrial, and nearly 14% of the city was used for institutional uses including city and county government purposes. Approximately 15.2% of the land area was used for natural and open space uses including parks, recreation, and properties within the floodplain. Transportation, communications and utilities consumed another 6.1% of the city and more than 35.4% of the city's land area was reserved for future use as "vacant" land covered by woods, vegetation, or graded earth.

Demographic and Socio-logical Resources

Canton is one of the fastest growing areas in the metropolitan Atlanta Region. The population of Canton per the 2000 census was 8,185, and current estimates place the 2007 population at 21,464 (153% in only seven years! A regression analysis was performed to identify the prospective population for the year 2030. One projection used straight line trends for the period of 2000-2007. Another used a forecast for Cherokee County based on ARC's average annual growth rates.

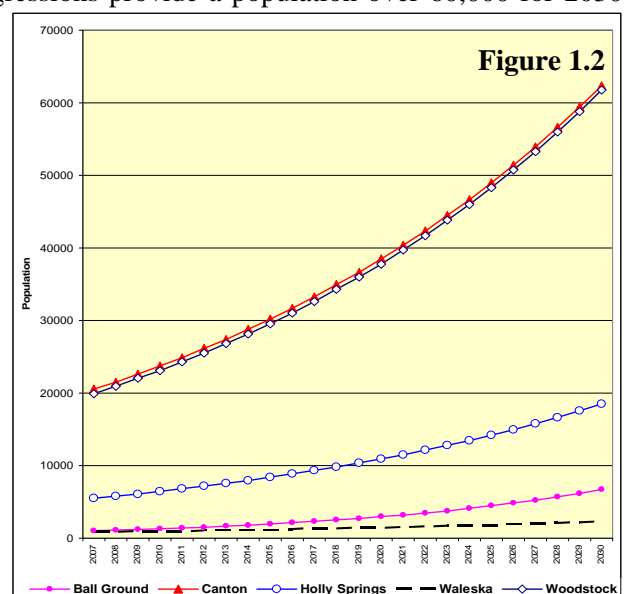


The third projection assumed that if the rate for development of new housing is declining, it would essentially change the growth to a peak period and then result in a decline for housing and population as shown on the adjacent figure. Figure 1.2 provides the accepted projections of Canton and other communities within Cherokee County. Table 1.2 compares the two projections of population in the City of Canton. Both regressions provide a population over 60,000 for 2030.

	Ball Ground	Canton	Holly Springs	Mt. Park (pt)	Nelson (pt)	Waleska	Woodstock	County Total
Rate:	8.561%	4.927%	5.417%	n/a	4.288%	4.405%	5.038%	n/a
2007	1,013	21,464	5,505	13	354	826	19,949	200,979
2008	1,100	22,522	5,803	13	369	862	20,954	210,044
2009	1,194	23,632	6,117	13	385	900	22,010	219,283
2010	1,296	24,796	6,448	13	402	940	23,119	228,675
2011	1,407	26,018	6,797	13	420	981	24,284	238,200
2012	1,527	27,300	7,165	13	440	1,024	25,507	247,838
2013	1,658	28,645	7,553	13	461	1,069	26,792	257,569
2014	1,800	30,056	7,962	13	483	1,116	28,142	267,372
2015	1,954	31,537	8,393	13	507	1,165	29,560	277,228
2016	2,121	33,091	8,848	13	532	1,216	31,049	287,116
2017	2,303	34,721	9,327	13	558	1,270	32,613	297,017
2018	2,500	36,432	9,832	13	585	1,326	34,256	306,909
2019	2,714	38,227	10,365	13	614	1,384	35,982	316,773
2020	2,946	40,110	10,926	13	644	1,445	37,795	326,589
2021	3,198	42,086	11,518	13	675	1,509	39,699	336,336
2022	3,472	44,160	12,142	13	708	1,575	41,699	345,995
2023	3,769	46,336	12,800	13	742	1,644	43,800	355,545
2024	4,092	48,619	13,493	13	777	1,716	46,006	364,966
2025	4,442	51,014	14,224	13	813	1,792	48,324	374,238
2026	4,822	53,527	14,995	13	851	1,871	50,758	383,340
2027	5,235	56,164	15,807	13	890	1,953	53,315	392,253
2028	5,683	58,931	16,663	13	930	2,039	56,001	400,957
2029	6,170	61,835	17,566	13	972	2,129	58,822	409,430
2030	6,698	64,882	18,518	13	1,015	2,223	61,785	417,654

Forecasts for City of Canton prepared by ROSS+associates reflecting Census Bureau estimates through 2007.

Forecasts for all other cities and County total taken from Cherokee County Forecasts Technical Report: Population, January 2006, prepared by ROSS+associates.



This sets up a starting point for the consideration of how different policies and investments may affect the future development and growth of the city.

Table 1.2: Canton Population Forecasts to 2030

Year	Cherokee CP *		Canton Update	
	2000-04 Regression	2005-30 Forecast	2000-06 Regression	2007-30 Forecast
2000	8,185		8,472	
2005	16,744	15,937	17,654	
2008	21,995	18,759	23,195	22,522
2010	25,495	20,912	26,984	24,796
2015	34,247	27,440	36,458	31,537
2020	42,998	36,005	45,932	40,110
2025	51,750	47,243	55,407	51,014
2030	60,501	61,990	64,881	64,882

Cherokee County Forecasts Technical Report: Population, January 2006, prepared by ROSS+associates.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Annual Population Estimates, 2004 and 2007. All regressions and forecasts by ROSS+associates.

Housing

The inventory of housing in the city increased from 2,026 in 1990 to approximately 8,021 units in 2007, an increase of almost 300%. Building permits and Metrostudy *ATLANTA* Residential Survey data compiled from 2000-2007, allowed the break down in the number of units added to the housing stock by general categories as shown in Figure 1.3 and summarized in Table 1.3 below:

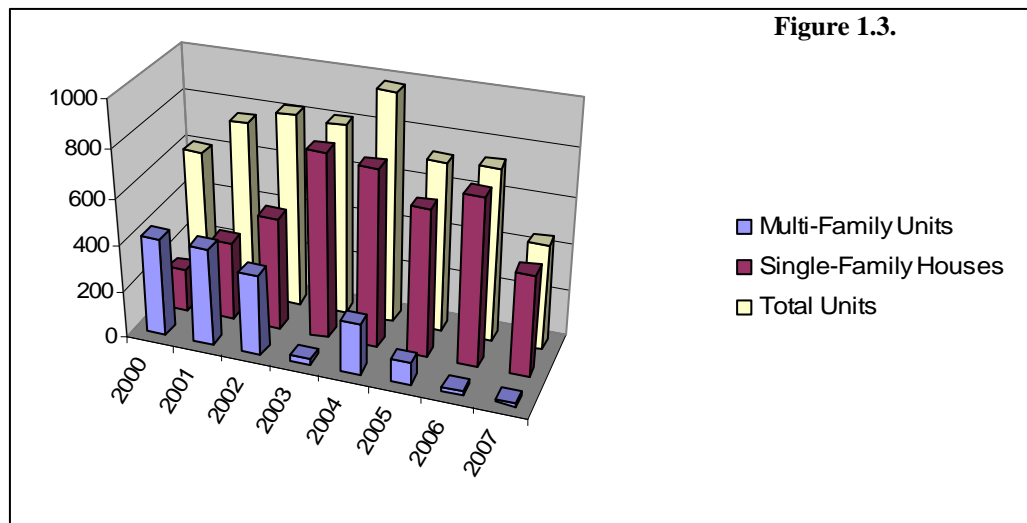


Table 1.3: City of Canton Housing Unit Inventory 1990-2007			
	1990	2000	2007
Total Housing Units	2,026	2,885	8,021
Single-Family Detached	1,366	1,979	5,587
Single-Family Attached	24	56	450
Multi-family	611	815	1,949
Mobile Home or Trailer	25	35	35
Source: U.S. Census STF-3; Metrostudy Residential Survey 2007. Canton Building Permits for Multi-family.			

Building permit data available from the city does not distinguish between new stick-built homes and manufactured homes, nor identify demolitions of manufactured homes, so the number of manufactured homes was assumed to remain in the inventory through 2007.

There is plenty of land within the City of Canton for the expansion of residential land uses. In order to accommodate the expected growth, maintain affordability, accommodate jobs, respond to aging of the population and accommodate the growth in one- and two-person households, a continuation in the provision of attached product (townhomes and condominiums) and small-lot single-family is expected. Current market trends are driving higher density development. These include:

- The cost of homebuilding is increasing significantly (land and construction costs) which is forcing higher density in order to deliver homes in line with market affordability.
- The market is demanding lower maintenance, higher density product. The rapid growth in one- and two-person households of all ages and the aging of the population is changing the types of homes the market demands.

However, the majority of all new growth will still be accommodated through single-family home construction. According to projections provided by DCA DataViews based on 2000 Census data, the proportional mix of housing units by 2030 is expected to remain nearly constant with the distribution reported in 2000, with a slight increase in the proportion of multi-family units as the proportion of single family detached and manufactured homes decreases.

The stock of manufactured homes is projected to continue its decline from 1.2% of the total stock to 0.9% of the stock by 2030, although numerically approximately 13 manufactured homes will be added to the stock. Multi-family housing, inclusive of projects from 3 to over 50 units, is forecast to increase proportionately from 28.2% to almost 32% of the housing stock.

Table 1.4. illustrates the existing types of housing units in Canton in 2000 and 2005, and projections of the projected types of units in Canton in 2015, 2025, and 2030.

Table 1.4: Projected Types of Units in Canton 2000-2030					
	2000	2005	2015	2025	2030
Single-Family Detached	68.6%	67.7%	66.4%	65.5%	65.2%
Single-Family Attached	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%	1.9%
Multi-Family	28.2%	29.3%	30.7%	31.6%	32.0%
Mobile Home or Trailer	1.2%	1.1%	1.0%	1.0%	0.9%
Source: DataViews, Georgia Department of Community Affairs.					
Note: "Single attached units" includes townhomes and duplex units.					

Table 1.5 illustrates the housing forecasts through 2030. These forecasts assume that the population per household will remain very close to the current 2.68 declining only 0.023% per year.

Table 1.5: Canton Housing Forecasts to 2030							
Year	Population Forecast	Households Pop in Group Quarters*	Pop in Households		Avg. HH Size*	Housing Units # of Households	# Housing Units
2008	22,522	638	21,884		2.6746	8,182	8,440
2010	24,796	711	24,085		2.6604	9,053	9,338
2015	31,537	933	30,604		2.6357	11,611	11,977
2020	40,110	1,224	38,886		2.6272	14,802	15,268
2025	51,014	1,606	49,408		2.6350	18,751	19,342
2030	64,882	2,107	62,775		2.6596	23,603	24,347
* Cherokee County Forecasts Technical Report: Housing, February 2006, prepared by ROSS+associates.							

Economic Development

Employment data for the City of Canton shows that the largest segment of the population (more than 25%) works in providing "services." The second largest sector was 18% in "retail" employment. Manufacturing ranked third with 13.8% and construction accounted for 10.5%.

Employment forecasts indicated a projected increase of 15.23% from 12,660 jobs to 27,919 jobs in 2030.

Table 1.6 illustrates the characteristics of employment in 1990 and 2000 identifying a trend of substantive growth and a strong employment performance by the City of Canton compared to the State of Georgia.

Table 1.6: Labor Force Characteristics of Canton, Cherokee County and Georgia 1990-2000

	Cherokee County		Canton		State of Georgia	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Total:	67,286	105,713	3,797	5,911	4,938,381	6,250,687
Male:	33,324	52,864	1,637	2,992	2,353,659	3,032,442
In Civilian Labor Force	28,149	43,580	1,204	2,390	1,738,488	2,159,175
Employed	27,089	42,513	1,144	2,328	1,648,895	2,051,523
Unemployed	1,060	1,067	60	62	89,593	107,652
Not in labor force	5,009	9,172	433	593	549,607	815,427
Female:	33,962	52,849	2,160	2,919	2,584,722	3,218,245
In Civilian Labor Force	22,024	33,835	1,062	1,636	1,539,890	1,903,633
Employed	21,148	32,803	1,026	1,565	1,441,381	1,788,233
Unemployed	876	1,032	36	71	98,509	115,400
Not in Labor Force	11,916	19,007	1,098	1,283	1,037,261	1,305,594
Total Civilian Labor Force	50,173	77,415	2,266	4,026	3,278,378	4,062,808
Unemployment Rate	3.9%	2.6%	4.2%	3.3%	5.7%	5.5%

Source: DCA DataViews, 2000 Census STF 3.

Table 1.7 presents the Employment Forecasts for Canton from 2007 to 2030:

Table 1.7: Canton Employment Forecasts to 2030

	Farm Employment	Construction	Manufacturing	TCU	Wholesale	Retail	FIRE	Services	Government	Total Employment
2007	65	1,324	1,743	357	268	2,285	817	3,280	2,521	12,660
2008	59	1,351	1,768	364	273	2,330	833	3,364	2,571	12,912
2009	52	1,390	1,794	374	281	2,398	857	3,494	2,645	13,285
2010	46	1,431	1,820	385	289	2,468	882	3,633	2,723	13,676
2011	39	1,473	1,846	397	298	2,542	909	3,777	2,805	14,086
2012	33	1,519	1,873	409	307	2,620	936	3,930	2,891	14,517
2013	26	1,566	1,900	422	316	2,702	965	4,091	2,981	14,969
2014	20	1,615	1,928	435	326	2,787	996	4,262	3,075	15,443
2015	13	1,668	1,956	449	337	2,877	1,028	4,439	3,174	15,941
2016	7	1,722	1,984	464	348	2,972	1,062	4,627	3,279	16,464
2017	-	1,780	2,013	479	360	3,070	1,097	4,825	3,388	17,012
2018	-	1,840	2,042	496	372	3,174	1,134	5,028	3,502	17,588
2019	-	1,903	2,072	513	385	3,283	1,173	5,240	3,623	18,192
2020	-	1,969	2,102	531	398	3,398	1,214	5,465	3,749	18,826
2021	-	2,039	2,132	549	412	3,518	1,257	5,703	3,881	19,491
2022	-	2,112	2,163	569	427	3,644	1,302	5,952	4,020	20,189
2023	-	2,189	2,194	590	442	3,776	1,349	6,216	4,166	20,922
2024	-	2,269	2,226	611	459	3,915	1,399	6,493	4,319	21,691
2025	-	2,353	2,258	634	476	4,061	1,451	6,785	4,480	22,498
2026	-	2,442	2,291	658	493	4,213	1,506	7,093	4,649	23,345
2027	-	2,535	2,324	683	512	4,374	1,563	7,417	4,826	24,234
2028	-	2,633	2,358	709	532	4,542	1,623	7,758	5,012	25,167
2029	-	2,735	2,392	737	553	4,719	1,686	8,117	5,207	26,146
2030	-	2,921	2,427	787	590	5,039	1,801	8,794	5,560	27,919
TCU--Transportation, Communications and Utilities. FIRE--Finance, Real Estate and Insurance.										

Natural Resources

The most significant natural resource of the City of Canton is the Etowah River, its adjacent floodplains, and the low mountains surrounding the city! Mountaintop vistas provide numerous scenic opportunities and the Etowah brings water as a resource for scenic, recreation, and other leisure opportunities, and for the use by the city to serve the public's water needs. The Watershed above Canton supports a watershed from parts of five counties.

Canton has limited groundwater recharge areas, and the city must rely on surface water in order to fulfill its demands. Downstream, the Etowah River flows into the Lake Allatoona Reservoir, a major water source for both Cherokee County and the Atlanta Region. A 100-foot buffer along the Etowah River provides protection to ensure the River is maintained as a clean water source for residents and as a habitat for wildlife.

In 2001 the city launched the Etowah River Greenway, a \$25 million project to create an environmentally-friendly area for recreation incorporating the Etowah River as a more integral part of city life. The Etowah Basin Habitat Conservation Plan was drafted to ensure the continuing health of the Etowah Darter, a fish species within the Etowah River Basin under the protection of the Endangered Species Act of 1973. A number of environmental groups, local governments, and other agencies and entities coordinated efforts to develop this plan which is in public review at the Federal level.

Eighteen (18) wetlands areas totaling approximately 28 acres are located in Canton, and most of them are adjacent to the Etowah River or its tributaries. The city should take measures to protect these areas.

Groundwater recharge areas in Canton are located primarily south of Bells Ferry Road and Univer Road in the southern extremes of the city. The ground-water aquifer in Canton has a fairly low storage capacity. Therefore, the bulk of the public water supply must come from surface water (streams, rivers, reservoirs, or lakes), and since groundwater recharge areas are a source of drinking water for the public and are limited within the city, precautions should be taken to protect groundwater recharge areas.

Trees and forests are important to the City of Canton within its urban and natural areas. In urban areas, trees provide shade for sidewalks, parking lots, parks, and other areas as well as improving air quality and appearance. A healthy stock of trees will improve the environment within a city greatly, so it is imperative that Canton maintain the stock of trees it has within its borders.

Areas with a 25% or greater grade are classified as significant steep slopes because of the threat of erosion and difficulty of development. Whereas runoff from storm water or spills is more likely in areas of steep slopes, potential issues of contamination or erosion may become more severe, and it is important to protect steep topographical areas to keep erosion and runoff problems to a minimum.

Historic and Cultural Resources

The Cherokee Nation occupied the northwestern corner of Georgia until they were forcibly removed by the Federal government. The Canton area has a significant heritage as “Etalwah” or Hightower River Town lying at a crossing point of the river. Although there were little efforts to remove the Cherokee until gold was discovered near Dahlonega in 1829, prospectors with gold fever began to pour into the area to seek their fortune even though the area had a reputation as “Indian Country”.

The non-profit Cherokee County Historical Society was formed in 1975 with the goal of protecting and creating awareness of Cherokee County’s historic and cultural landmarks. According to the society’s website, its membership is currently over 400. The society maintains a list of historical sites including several within the City of Canton. The sites from the National Register and the County Historical Society include the following examples:

- Canton Commercial Historic District (bounded by Main, Church, Archer, & Marietta Streets)
- Canton Cotton Mills No. 2 on Riverstone Parkway
- Canton Wholesale Company Building on Main St.

- Cherokee County Courthouse at 100 North Street
- Old Cherokee County Courthouse
- Crescent Farm on Georgia SR 5, just north of Cherokee High School
- Canton High School/Grammar School Bldg. on the west side of Academy St. between Archer St. and Hill Street Cr.
- Coker Hospital (now the Brian Center) on Hospital Circle
- First Baptist Church on Elizabeth Street
- Edgar M. McCanless House on E. Main St.
- Grisham-Galt House on E. Marietta St.
- Don & Sharon Stafford House on E. Main St.
- Odian W. Putnam House on E. Marietta St.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources maintains data regarding known archaeological sites throughout the state. Information on these sites is kept by the University of Georgia in the Georgia Archaeological Site File. There are over one thousand archaeological sites within Cherokee County, many of which are within the City of Canton. This information is not published to help maintain these resources for our future.

Transportation

Approximately 138.3 centerline miles of existing roadway network are located in Canton (as of July 2008). Most of this mileage is maintained by the City of Canton (94.6 centerline miles). The remainder is the responsibility of the Georgia Department of Transportation.

Roadways are classified by how they function and accessibility and mobility they provide as follows:

- **Interstate Principal Arterial/Urban Freeway and Expressways** (9.6 miles) - Provide high speed movement of larger traffic volumes, preferably with limited intersections with the remaining road network at defined grade-separated interchanges. The Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes were approximately 52,000 to 54,000 vehicles per day (vpd) on the I-575 corridor in 2006.
- **Urban Principal Arterial** (None inside the City) - SR 92 is the only principal arterial in the county.
- **Minor Arterial Streets** (14.1 miles) - Provide connections to activity centers and carry large traffic volumes at moderate speeds, and include SR 5/Riverstone Parkway, SR 20, Waleska Road, and SR 140 are classified. The AADT on these minor arterial roadways in Canton ranges from 12,760 vpd on SR 20 at the western edge of the city to 27,000 vpd on Riverstone Parkway between the SR 140 intersection and the Etowah River.
- **Collector Streets** (19.5 miles) - Collect traffic from local streets in residential and commercial areas and distribute it to the arterial system. AADT on collector roadways in Canton averages 5,911 vpd.

- **Local Streets (94.6 miles)** - feed the collector system from low volume residential and commercial areas at low speeds. The AADT on local streets in Cherokee County averages 1,074 vpd and is consistent with the traffic generated by approximately 60 to 120 residential homes.

Between 1990 and 2000, the number of commuters in Canton grew by 33.8% (22% less than within the county). In 2000, approximately 86.7% of Canton commuters drove alone or in car-pools comparing favorably with the county, Region or State. Canton residents also reported shorter average travel times reflecting closer between home and work.

Table 1.8: Commute Characteristics – 2000								
Area	No. of Commuters (Age 16+)	Drove Alone	Car-Pooled	Public Transport	Walked	Other	Worked at Home	Minutes to work (mean)
Georgia	3,832,803	77.5%	14.5%	2.3%	1.7%	1.1%	2.8%	27.7
ARC Region	1,733,135	76.4%	13.4%	4.3%	1.3%	1.0%	3.6%	n/a
Cherokee Co.	74,075	81.2%	11.8%	0.4%	0.6%	1.1%	4.9%	34.4
Canton	3,762	67.2%	19.5%	1.2%	1.4%	6.7%	4.0%	26.9
Source: Cherokee County Community Assessment Report, Volume 2								

The three census tracts that include Canton employed more than 6,800 persons in 2000, and the growth of employment in Canton has been strong throughout the first seven years of the decade since 2000. These statistics indicate that Canton provides a strong connection between employment and residence that helps to reduce commuting distances when compared to the rest of the Atlanta Region.

Maps illustrating afternoon peak period congestion levels for 2000, 2010, 2020 and 2030 were prepared based on the ARC regional transportation model. These congestion maps show some existing portions of Canton's roadway system on the southern and western edges are operating at poor levels of service (LOS D, E or F). These included Riverstone Parkway, John Pettit, and Knox Bridge Roads and the portion of I-575 south of the South Canton Connector. The Congestion Map for 2030 identified potential problems are likely to occur on Waleska Highway, John Pettit, Highway, SR 5 through South Canton, SR 20 east of I-575, and along Canton/Ball Ground Highway to the east of I-575.

The Regional Transportation Plan is comprised of two parts. One is the Transportation Improvements Program (the TIP) that provides proposed improvements over the next five years. These projects are constrained by the limits of known funding through that period. Specific improvements within Canton include the following projects in Table 1.9:

Table 1.9: Planned TIP Projects for FY 2008-2013				
ARC Project Number	Description	Type	Year	Cost
CH-206	Marietta Road at Hickory Flat Road	Road Capacity Improvements	2010	\$555,000
CH-207	SR 5 Business (Marietta Highway/Riverstone Pkwy) Signal Coordination at SR 140 (at Waleska Road), Canton Mill Lane, and Old Ball Ground Highway	ITS Improvements	2009	\$1,230,000
CH-217	SR 108 / SR 5 Connector (Canton West Parkway) from SR 108 (Fincher Rd) in vicinity of Lake Arrowhead Pkwy to SR 5 (Marietta Hwy) in vicinity of North Etowah Drive	Road Capacity Improvements	2011	\$32,700,000
CH-AR-240	Hickory Flat Road Pedestrian Facility from I-575 to Marietta Road	Pedestrian Facility	2009	\$1,200,000
CH-AR-241	Waleska Street Trail/Pedestrian Facility from Main Street/North Street to SR 5	Bicycle/Pedestrian Facility	2009	\$1,540,000
CH-AR-261	Canton Intermodal facility Cherokee County Funds	Transit Facilities	2010	\$425,000
CH-AR-BP011	Marietta Road Sidewalks from Marietta Highway to East Marietta Street	Pedestrian Facility	2010	\$1,269,000
AR-5307-CH	FTA Section 5037/5340 Formula Funds for Cherokee County	Transit Facilities	Annual	N/A
Source: ARC Breaking Ground 2007 Envision6 Regional Transportation Plan				

Long term projects are identified by the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) for the Atlanta Regional Commission. There are three projects identified including the proposed widening of SR140 (Reinhardt College Pkwy) from Lower Burris Rd. to Riverstone Parkway and SR140 (Hickory Flat Rd) from I-575 to East Cherokee Drive. A proposed extension of Hickory Flat Road from Marietta Road to Waleska Street is also identified by the RTP. These projects also are constrained by the limitations of funds anticipated to be available between 2013 and 2030.

2 Potential Issues and Opportunities

2.01 Overview

The discovery of gold in 1929 at Dahlonega created a rush into northern Georgia and the demise of the Cherokee Nation as Georgia created Cherokee County in December 1831. The modern Cherokee County was first surveyed in 1832 and the County Seat, originally named Etowah, was established in 1833. When it was determined that there was no gold on many of the 40-acre lots created by the survey, a silk production venture came to the area, and the county seat was re-named Canton in 1834.

When silk production proved a failure, cotton and tobacco became the primary crops for the area until the railroad was extended to Canton from Marietta and Atlanta in 1879. The advent of rail access allowed cotton and the small but thriving marble industry to ship their goods south to Atlanta and Marietta in the 1880s, and Canton was transformed into an industrial city when R.T. Jones and other investors established the Canton Cotton Mill in 1899. The mill quickly became the largest employer in the county, and the center of economic and social life in the city. The mill built two villages to house its employees, established schools, sponsored festivals, operated stores and built a church. In 1924, Canton Cotton Mill No. 2 was constructed, and Canton became a major center for the manufacture of denim cloth. The City became famous worldwide for the high-quality denim produced by Canton Cotton Mills.

The growth of chicken production replaced cotton as the number one agricultural product, and with the marble finishing business in the northern end of the county, and the construction of the Bell Bomber Plant, now Lockheed-Martin in Marietta, numerous opportunities for gainful employment became available by the middle of the twentieth century. In 1963, workers at the canton Cotton Mills voted in a labor union for the first time, and the mills began a slow decline with years of conflict between the workers and the mill owners (still led by members of the Jones family as majority stockholders). This conflict and other changes in society quickly eroded the familial tradition of the mill community, and the Canton Cotton Mill closed in 1981.

Canton and Cherokee County have continued to grow and thrive as the county became a bedroom community for the northern Atlanta Region. The City of Canton has been able to capture a significant amount of the regional growth in Cherokee County providing a center for government, finance, business, health care, education and local cultural resources as the county grew. The construction of Interstate 575 provided easy, albeit at some peak times congested, accessibility to the rest of the Atlanta Region. By the first decade of the 21st Century, Canton offered a combination of accessible and attractive employment opportunities, small town charm, and family-oriented services that spurred very rapid growth and development.

The following issues have been identified from the city's previous Comprehensive Plan, from the analysis of data contained in the Volume 2 data analysis of this Community Assessment, and through discussions with several members of the city staff, City Council, and the County Planning Department. These issues are preliminary and will be refined and addressed in the Community Agenda of the City of Canton Comprehensive Plan Update.

Economic Development

- Local residents need jobs and economic opportunities that are close to where they live.
- It is important that we consider the locations of employers and available housing in Canton and close to Canto to balance homes and jobs.
- The city can become more economically self sufficient through a better balance of residential, employment, and retail development
- How do we accommodate the unmet economic development demands for higher paying jobs and loss of retail sales dollars?
- Is the community ready to accept the issues that would be required to accomplish this?
 - Diversity in the work force and access to affordable housing to serve local workers.
 - Diversity of housing choices for a mix of young, old, worker, middle class, and executives.
 - Implications of the diversity of products and densities
 - Rental housing demands
- A number of older structures in Downtown and South Canton are poorly maintained and in disrepair, and ways to approach absentee landlords and develop appropriate assistance programs and tools are needed.
- Most local employers are small and provide lower-paying jobs.
- The downtown center has not been attractive although it is improving as some rehabilitation has been completed and other projects have been announced.
- The city needs additional attractive public spaces including areas designed for gathering and social interaction.
- The City should work with Cherokee County to determine if the County should become a more mature bedroom community with additional quantities and wider varieties of housing, retail and local office? ...or, should Cherokee County (and Canton) develop a more dynamic economy by attracting a major employer or employment sector?

Natural and Cultural Resources

- Open space preservation requires dedicated funding sources to acquire key parcels and expand the character beyond what can be gained through a development review process.
- Community character includes natural areas, terrain features (hills, rock outcrops, steep slopes, shade/sun angles), neighborhoods, churches, schools, commercial areas, historic buildings, and their context to define the extent and the limits of the natural and cultural resources. As an example, the Etowah River has been alternately used as a front door for early travelers and a power and waste removal system for industry. What are the possibilities for future use of the river?

- Local history formed the current character of the city to provide a sense of the past. How can different preservation techniques be used to enhance local quality of life and create opportunities for local residents?
- Protective ordinances to support the use and re-use of existing cultural and historic resources are needed
- Historic and cultural resources should be mapped for added protection.
- The topographical relief of the city and the combination of the river, floodplain, steep slopes, and other natural features provide the opportunity to embrace and work within the environmental limitations rather than changing the landscape in order to achieve long term sustainability in the development of the city.

Facilities and Services

- The city provides appropriate areas for the development of new housing, commercial, and employment centers that can be efficiently serviced.
- The downtown area of Canton is limited by existing infrastructure (specifically sewer) that may need to be upgraded to encourage reinvestment.
- Several recent development projects have been large “greenfield” projects and as the opportunities for large scale projects become fewer, the city and developers need to work together to complete work in smaller infill areas.
- Stormwater flows contain pollutants that are receiving increased attention at State and Federal levels and may need specific attention.

Housing

- There are significant amounts of housing in poor or dilapidated condition in the city.
- Some neighborhoods need revitalization and upgrades to homes, streets, utilities, and community facilities.
- Currently housing is relatively affordable, but the county is a relatively expensive place for renters and the city appears to provide a significant share of the county’s affordable housing stock.
- The city has adequate affordable housing for households that earn over 80% of the median income.
- The majority of persons reporting a housing problem such as: substandard housing, overcrowding and affordability lived in the unincorporated portions of the county.
- Among owners reporting housing needs, a greater proportion are seniors.
- There is opposition to higher density and affordable housing in most neighborhoods
- In order to support economic development there needs to be a greater diversity of housing densities. Density is required to maintain affordability.
- The city needs to consider housing rehabilitation codes as an additional mechanism to reinforce upkeep and care of declining structures.

Land Use

- Many current land use patterns and policies promote sprawl rather than reinvestment and in-fill.
- Annexation implications – can't say both that growth should be concentrated in and around cities and not recognize that will mean more annexation
- Design quality requires consideration of location and natural resource protection
- Quality requires the investment of resources and tightening existing regulatory standards to help the community withstand temporary economic and political pressures to weaken the standards for other reasons.
- Open space and public spaces are key ingredients in creating character. Is the county ready to take on open space preservation beyond what it can get out of the development review process, such as creating a dedicating funding source to acquire open space?
- Recognize other aspects of community character such as vibrant older neighborhoods, downtown Canton, neighborhood and village centers, and green space.
- The City should enforce housing codes, development criteria and other standards addressing land disturbance, construction, building maintenance and appearance, and other development and aesthetic standards to protect the environment and economic well-being of existing communities.
- The City should have local historic resource protective ordinances that can be help maintain historic and cultural resources.
- Historic resources should be mapped for added protection.
- There is too much land devoted to parking lots and paved surfaces in some of the older community centers and along highway corridors, and not enough parking in other areas like downtown Canton.
- There is an inadequate mix of small neighborhood shopping facilities that are accessible to neighborhoods and can reduce vehicular trips.
- Developers complain about the development review and approval process, especially the length of time required to complete the review.
- There is typically opposition to new, innovative, or projects with greater density.
- The boundaries between the City and unincorporated Cherokee County have few indicators other than a City Limits sign to distinguish the character of the City versus the character of the unincorporated areas outside the City limits. In addition, there are several unincorporated islands that exist within the City limits. With only a few exceptions, there are minimal distinctions in to distinguish Canton from other cities or unincorporated areas in the County.

Traffic and Transportation

- Better connectivity is needed between jobs, homes, and services. The Etowah River and the I-575 corridor both create barriers to cross access and bottlenecks occur at bridges and interchanges.

- Several subdivisions have limited alternatives to a single main entrance and egress roadway. Some of these areas need an alternate connection to provide relief when the primary access/egress route is not usable.
- Transportation corridors are congested, especially at peak travel times with a heavy pattern of commuting to and from the city's residential areas.
- Transportation modal choices are limited and there is minimal public transit, bicycle or pedestrian facilities.
- Sidewalks and bikeways are not adequately linked together and may not provide access to where pedestrians and bicyclists want to go.
- Transportation management tools, such as managed access or intelligent transportation technology are limited, and roadway design has not provided contextual solutions that are sensitive to the areas through which they pass.
- More walkable neighborhoods and bicycle facilities would help provide an alternative to driving and encourage better health. Pedestrian safety needs to be increased. All new development should plan for pedestrian connectivity and activity.
- Parking in the downtown area is inadequate and alternatives for meeting the needs for parking need to be considered.
- Is the community ready to recognize that it can not pave its way out of the problem and must look at a range of potential solutions?

Intergovernmental Coordination

- There are potential conflicts with Cherokee County regarding growth and development issues that affect infrastructure, responsibilities for public investments, diverse constituencies, and politics.
- Transportation, water, wastewater, solid waste management, environmental protection, and other services may have significant impacts beyond the city limits that should be addressed through sharing information and providing a coordinated approach of the county's other local governments.

2.02 Growth Management

The city should have a vision for where and how growth should occur and an understanding of the roads, schools, and other public infrastructure required to service the size, location and timing of this growth. Although it is a common perception that local governments should control growth and not allow growth to control the community, there is a balance between external economic conditions and whether or not a community will have the opportunity to manage development. In addition, the community must determine if its goals are to accommodate all that may occur, balance local needs with an appropriate amount (if so, the goals become a determination of how much is appropriate), or if it desires to divert growth away.

The city needs to focus on the revitalization of the downtown core and supporting the development of new job opportunities in the Bluffs and other employment centers. Revitalization of the New Town, Sunnyside, and Crescent Ridge South Corridor character areas are needed elements, as will be the expansion of the city into the remainder of the Canton growth boundaries area. Some of these efforts require coordination with other agencies and groups such as the Downtown

Merchants Association, the Downtown Coordinating Committee, the Downtown Development Authority, the Canton Historical Society, and other organizations that have interests in the Central City Character Area to develop an overarching plan for the City of Canton downtown that addresses the diverse set of local interests.

The answers are not simple and they are not easy to navigate a consistent course as the external economy imposes changes that may need to be addressed. Major issues affecting the development of a consistent, comprehensive growth management plan include the following:

Community Character

The existing character of a neighborhood, a downtown business district, a road corridor, or other area should be identified, protected if desirable, and enhanced when possible. Cities like Canton preserve and enhancing the heritage and nature of their cores, and build “urban” densities close to the nexus of commercial interchanges. While character may vary between different areas within the city, each area seeks to encourage the best quality development for its character. The use of architectural standards for non-residential developments helps integrate acceptable development into the community.

Affordable Housing and Creating a Balanced Land Use Mix

Affordable housing will require significant attention to define what is meant by “affordable” and what would constitute a “balance” in the mix of land uses. The City may be able to accommodate higher density residential areas and mixed use developments with residential components. Potentially, density bonuses and/or incentives may be provided in exchange for inclusion of residential units at a higher density, or they may provide the means to accomplish the inclusion of affordable housing within cost limitations if the social implications of accommodating the potential residents can be met.

Non-residential land uses interact with the ability to provide affordable housing through the generation of local jobs and increases in the tax base providing funds for services, schools and infrastructure improvements. Whereas an employment and retail shortage within the county were identified by a market study, these land uses are critical to achieving a sustainable balance between residential and non-residential land uses through their impacts on attracting new housing and the ability of housing growth to attract new commercial retail and services industries to the area.

Economic Development Opportunities

Major shifts in the national and regional economy and the local real estate market are accepted as a likely scenario for the Atlanta Region. Current trends indicate a shift towards the growth of services including “knowledge-based” services that require high educational achievement and resources to cater to an educated, self-sufficient work force with flexibility in location and mobility lifestyle decisions. The percentage of persons employed in industrial and construction jobs is expected to decline as these jobs move offshore or into more rural areas.

If the City of Canton and Cherokee County are to accommodate new and expanded employment centers, a greater percentage of medium and high quality rental housing may be necessary to support new economic development initiatives to add local housing for the blue collar, pink collar, and white collar work force. The ability to attract major employers and employees is likely to be influenced by the availability of “executive” housing for managers and entrepreneurs, and the

availability of mid-level homes for purchase or rental housing for young employees and services providers. The availability of diverse housing stock or the opportunity to develop diverse product is considered an important element of attracting new development.

The historic downtown and the neighborhood and community level activity centers within the City add to the City's diverse aesthetics and "small town" feel. The historic core of downtown Canton and the surrounding "urban" residential areas need to be supported to secure their focus on new growth and reinvestment and to create lively centers that sponsor additional success. The downtown and community level centers should be active both during the day and in the evening to provide cultural opportunities and to focus the creation of diverse commercial establishments with a mix of retail, entertainment and dining options.

The development of technology employment centers such as the Bluffs or Canton Technology Center establish a 21st century evolution of industrial parks incorporating office distribution, warehousing, clean manufacturing, and support uses. These technology employment centers incorporate campus environments that provide flexibility for growing new industries and allow the community to redevelop "Brownfields" rather than continuing to expand into fresh "Greenfield" sites.

Environmental and Historic Protection/Conservation

Growth needs to be balanced with the need to retain and protect significant natural resources, and it is important to identify and protect historic and cultural sites, steep slopes, and watersheds. Development should be steered away from these important resources. The city also needs to be more proactive in identifying and assisting in protective measures for these areas rather than waiting until a development request requires action.

Community Facilities and Services

The scarcity of public funds has served to delay the proactive expansion of public infrastructure improvements in favor of being "re-active" to development rather than "guiding" development. Sewer mains and transportation facilities are constructed in response to a rapidly changing environment that may not be able to keep up with demand. Libraries, recreation and special needs facilities such as shelters for victims of domestic violence, rehabilitation centers and transitional housing for homeless families may become afterthoughts.

Transportation

The road network and its ability to handle existing traffic volumes is a major issue throughout Canton and Cherokee County. Traffic congestion on I-575 and the increasing traffic counts on SR 20 and other major roads present the concern that the road network cannot keep up with growth and that congestion will increase to inadequate levels of service. Therefore, it may be assumed that the current road improvement plans as provided in the Atlanta Regional Commission's (ARC) Transportation Improvements Program (TIP) and the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) may not be able to fix the existing system. As congestion increases, the existing quality of life is threatened by increases in capital and operating costs, and economic development opportunities are negatively affected.

Other issues involve the creation of more walkable communities and the implementation of appropriate safety buffers and sidewalk widths along high-speed roads, increasing connectivity throughout the road, bicycle, and pedestrian systems of the city, reduction of vehicular trips

through providing alternative modes, and the development of commuter rail access for Canton to Marietta and Atlanta.

Fiscal Responsibility

Future development patterns and infrastructure commitments need to be fiscally sustainable and financing should be sustainable with assurances that the benefits and costs of future development are balanced to maintain desirable levels of quality of life.

Annexation

The city and the county have an established growth boundary that helps both governments deal with this issue in a positive and cooperative way. This cooperative effort should continue.

3 Analysis of Existing Development Patterns

3.01 Land Use Summary

Canton's rich history and dynamic topography have led to a variety of land uses within the city over its history, and as it grows with the rest of Cherokee County and the Atlanta Region, the composition of the city is likely to change somewhat.

In the years since the Canton Comprehensive Plan Update 1996-2016 completed in 1996, the makeup of the city has changed significantly. As the city has grown in population from 4,998 persons in 1996 to 22,522 person forecasted population in 2008, the total area has grown from 8,245 acres to 11,107 acres, or 134 percent of its 1996 area twelve years earlier. Within this time period, vacant land has decreased by 1020.5 acres and is now only 35 percent of the total area of the city, compared with 60 percent in 1996. This decrease in vacant land, plus the addition of over 1,100 acres of residential areas, is a clear indication that Canton has experienced extraordinary growth over the past decade, and the city is expected to continue to grow in upcoming years and decades.

In spite of this rapid growth, however, the city has increased its acreage of Natural/Open Space from 232 acres in 1996 to 1461 acres in 2008, an increase of over 600 percent. These areas now account for 15 percent of the total land area of the city, compared to under 3 percent in 1996. This commitment to natural areas is evidence that the city has essentially doubled its stated goal of 8 percent of total land area in Natural/Open Space in roughly half the life of the 1996-2016 Comprehensive Plan Update.

3.02 Current Land Use

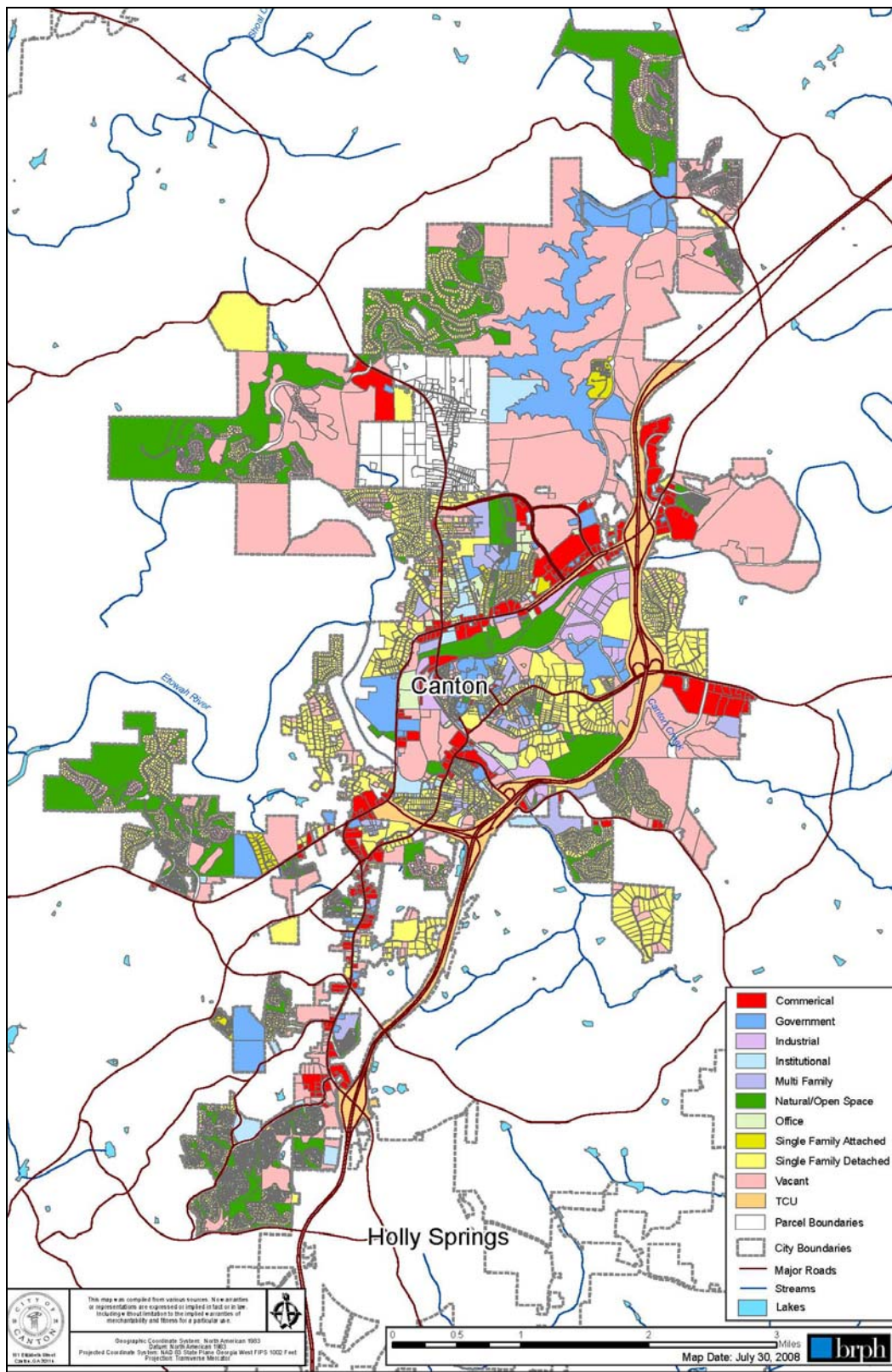
Table 3.1: Current Land Use

Land Use Category	Total Parcels	Total Acres	Avg. Acres/Parcel
Commercial	284	625.95	2.20
Government	102	870.62	8.54
Industrial	29	189.52	6.54
Institutional	34	179.35	5.28
Multi Family	1052	227.98	2.37
Natural/Open Space	236	1692.91	7.63
Office	146	120.55	0.83
Single Family Attached	956	159.17	0.17
Single Family Detached	6105	2430.52	0.40
Vacant	1763	3935.55	2.23
TCU	-	675.00	-
County (Waleska Road County Pocket)	190	501.38	2.64
Total (Excluding County)	10707	11107.13	3.62

Table 3.2: Land Use Comparison, 1996-2008

Land Use Category	Acres, 1996	% 1996 Total Area	Acres, 2008	% 2008 Total Area	Acreage Change, 1996-2008	Change in % of City, 1996-2008
Commercial	300.3	3.6%	626.0	5.6%	325.7	2.0%
Government & Institutional/Quasi-Public	201.6	2.4%	1050.0	9.5%	848.3	7.0%
Industrial	284.6	3.5%	189.5	1.7%	-95.1	-1.7%
Multi Family/High Density Res	75.8	0.9%	228.0	2.1%	152.2	1.1%
Natural/Open Space	231.7	2.8%	1692.9	15.2%	1461.3	12.4%
Office	32.9	0.4%	120.6	1.1%	87.7	0.7%
Single Family Attached/Med Density Res	5.7	0.1%	159.2	1.4%	153.5	1.4%
Single Family Detached	1615.9	19.6%	2430.5	21.9%	814.6	2.3%
Vacant	4956.0	60.1%	3935.6	35.4%	-1020.5	-24.7%
TCU	514.8	6.2%	675.0	6.1%	160.2	-0.2%
Agricultural	25.7	0.3%	0.0	0.0%	-25.7	-0.3%
Total	8245.0	100.0%	11107.1	100.0%	2862.1	0.0%

Figure 3-1: Existing Land Use Map



3.03 Areas Requiring Special Attention

Areas of Significant Natural or Cultural Resources

Groundwater Recharge Areas

Groundwater recharge areas in Canton are located primarily south of Bells Ferry Road and Univer Road in the southern extremes of the city. These are areas in which groundwater is captured in underground aquifers which can be tapped into for public consumption. Because most of the groundwater aquifers in Cherokee County have a fairly low storage capacity, the bulk of the public water supply must be captured from areas with surface water, such as surface streams, rivers, reservoirs, or lakes.¹ Because they are a source of drinking water for the public and are limited within the city, precautions should be taken to protect groundwater recharge areas.

Floodplains

Floodplains in the City of Canton are located primarily along the Etowah River and its tributaries, including Canton Creek and other smaller creeks and streams. Floodplains are important natural areas and should be protected from development both in order to preserve ecosystems associated with bodies of water and to prevent any problems associated with flooding within floodplain areas.

River Corridors

The primary river corridor in the City of Canton is the Etowah River, which is a protected river corridor under the O.C.G.A. 2-12-8. More information on the Etowah River Corridor can be found in the Natural Resources section located in Volume 2, Section 5 of the Community Assessment.

Scenic Views

Canton's dynamic topography lends itself to many scenic views which are important assets to the community because of their aesthetic qualities. Scenic views are spread throughout the city but are especially abundant in the more mountainous northern and eastern areas of Canton.

Areas Where Rapid Development or Change of Land Uses is Likely to Occur

There are numerous approved developments and areas which are currently expecting rapid development throughout the city, primarily located within the Suburban Area Developing portions of the city. It is important that these areas be planned properly in order to ensure that they develop in a manner which will promote a healthy, attractive community according to the City of Canton's vision.

Approved Developments

A number of residential and commercial lots throughout the City have been graded, received utilities, and are ready for construction of homes, retail businesses, offices, and institutional facilities. Other properties have been platted, and are awaiting site development or permitting. Many of these available residential lots are located in the large Planned Unit Developments

¹ *Plan Cherokee: Cherokee County Community Assessment*, Vol. 2, p. 109.

(PUDs) such as Big Sky, Laurel Canyon, River Green, and other, smaller projects located all around the City.

Commercial and industrial development sites are located along many of the arterial and collector streets and in the technology and industrial parks. Specific projects include the development of The Bluffs Technology Center and the Canton Place project being developed by Sembler. These projects can be expected to create ancillary interest in adjacent locations.

Pending Development

Other approved projects may include parcels that have not yet been proposed or are in the “pipeline” for the approval and permitting process. These areas include small subdivisions of 2 to 12 parcels to large mixed use PUD projects with extensive acreage. Although the current economic market has slowed down, these areas are likely candidates for new development when it does occur. New arterial and parkway/collector road improvements provide likely locations for additional development. These projects can be expected to be the most likely to develop when the economy changes. Where the potential to develop remains greatest the area remains likely to and should be addressed in the comprehensive plan.

New Areas

The City may identify some specific new areas for development (or redevelopment) based on the policies and interests of the City in focusing on economic recovery and growth. The Central City area encompassing downtown Canton and adjacent areas along Railroad Street provides a likely location for supporting redevelopment and/or reuse of older structures and achieving more compact (urban) development opportunities.

Areas Where the Pace of Development has Outpaced, or May Soon Outpace the Availability of Community Facilities and Resources, Including Transportation

Greenfields

The rapid growth of the City has been accompanied by significant public and private investments in infrastructure around the City’s perimeter. Whereas this area was within the agreed City of Canton Growth Boundary, the extension of new water, sewer, power, and local street connections has been accomplished through the joint efforts of the City, County, utility providers, and developers. However, the “leapfrog” nature of development has had some impacts on changing the levels of service for roads, water and wastewater treatment and other utilities. The continued expansion of “Greenfield” development around the fringe of the City needs to be addressed as part of the plan and coordinated with the availability of community facilities and transportation infrastructure.

Infill Development

The existing development in the Central City may have implications that require addressing the transportation access through adjacent residential areas. In a similar fashion, the development of the Crescent Ridge South corridor and new mixed use development along the Crescent Ridge corridor should be examined to determine what types of contextual design applications are best for ensuring that these new developments do not add problems to the mobility needed along these corridors.

Transportation Areas

The costs for constructing transportation improvements have risen dramatically as the prices for raw materials (concrete, steel), fuel, and labor have increased. Both steel and fuel have more than doubled in price on international markets in the past five years! The most significant effect of these price increases has been the delay in moving projects from design to completion as higher cost estimates overwhelm local and regional construction budgets. Projects that were anticipated to be in place may lag years behind expectations as existing facilities become crowded and over-used.

Canton's major transportation issues involve congestion created when the rights of way created in the 19th century and the roads designed for the 20th century are asked to carry traffic in the 21st Century. Numerous local streets intersect the arterials and collectors at acute angles making it difficult to see approaching traffic and limiting the time available for a driver to make a safe decision. These design flaws and the addition of new homes and businesses in and close by the city create congestion and limit the average daily trip capacity on the arterial and collector corridors. Specific examples include the added traffic on Waleska Street, Reinhardt College Parkway, and Knox Bridge Highway. Interstate 575 has become congested with the development of southern Cherokee County, and portions of State Route 5 operate at a congested level of service created by the limitations of the existing street network.

The projections of future traffic congestion identified by modeling Cherokee County traffic within the ARC region indicates that Marietta Road, Hickory Flat Road, and State Route 5 through South Canton will become congested; as will Ball Ground Road and State Route 20 to the east of I-575.

Areas in Need of Redevelopment and/or Significant Improvements to Aesthetics or Attractiveness

The area located north of Riverstone Parkway, east of Waleska Road, and southwest of the new Reinhardt College Parkway includes the Northside-Cherokee Hospital, and is dominated by older single family detached and attached housing. A second area of older residential development is the area located south of Canton Creek and north of the Business 5/20/140 Connector to I-575. Both of these areas are primarily made up of affordable rental homes and apartments, many of which need repair or may be considered likely for redevelopment. It is likely that these areas will see infill development or widespread redevelopment because of the declining state of the housing and the changing commercial and institutional land uses along their edges and major roadway corridors.

Areas with Significant Infill Development Opportunities

In addition to areas in need of redevelopment and/or reinvestment, there are currently over 3900 acres of vacant land in the city (see Table 3.1) many of which offer significant redevelopment opportunities within the city. While many of these are located in the northern and eastern areas of Canton, especially in the Bluffs development, there are also many vacant parcels throughout the city. These areas are shown on the Existing Land Use map.

Areas of Significant Disinvestment, Levels of Poverty, and/or Unemployment

River Bend Character Area

The River Bend character area, located just north of downtown, is in a state of decline and is an opportunity for redevelopment. More on this area can be found in the Character Areas section of the Community Assessment, Volume 1, Section 4.

Other Areas Requiring Special Attention

Livable Centers Initiative Area

In June 2001 the City of Canton published a Livable Centers Initiative Plan for the River Mill District. The plan, written by Arcadis G&M, PBS&J, Sizemore Floyd, and Robert Charles Lesser & Co., looked at the area of Canton shown on the Areas Requiring Special Attention map as part of the LCI program developed by the Atlanta Regional Commission and was a project under the first year of the program. The LCI program is “intended to promote greater livability and mobility as well as residential and developmental alternatives in existing employment centers and town centers throughout the Atlanta Region.”²

Environmental Sites

There are eight EPA-permitted release sites within the City of Canton which warrant special attention because of the potential for environmental problems if managed improperly. They are:

Aerosol Packaging, LLC

Cybershield of Georgia, Inc.

Isotec International, Inc.

LaFarge Canton Concrete Plant

Marietta Highway Site near Etowah River

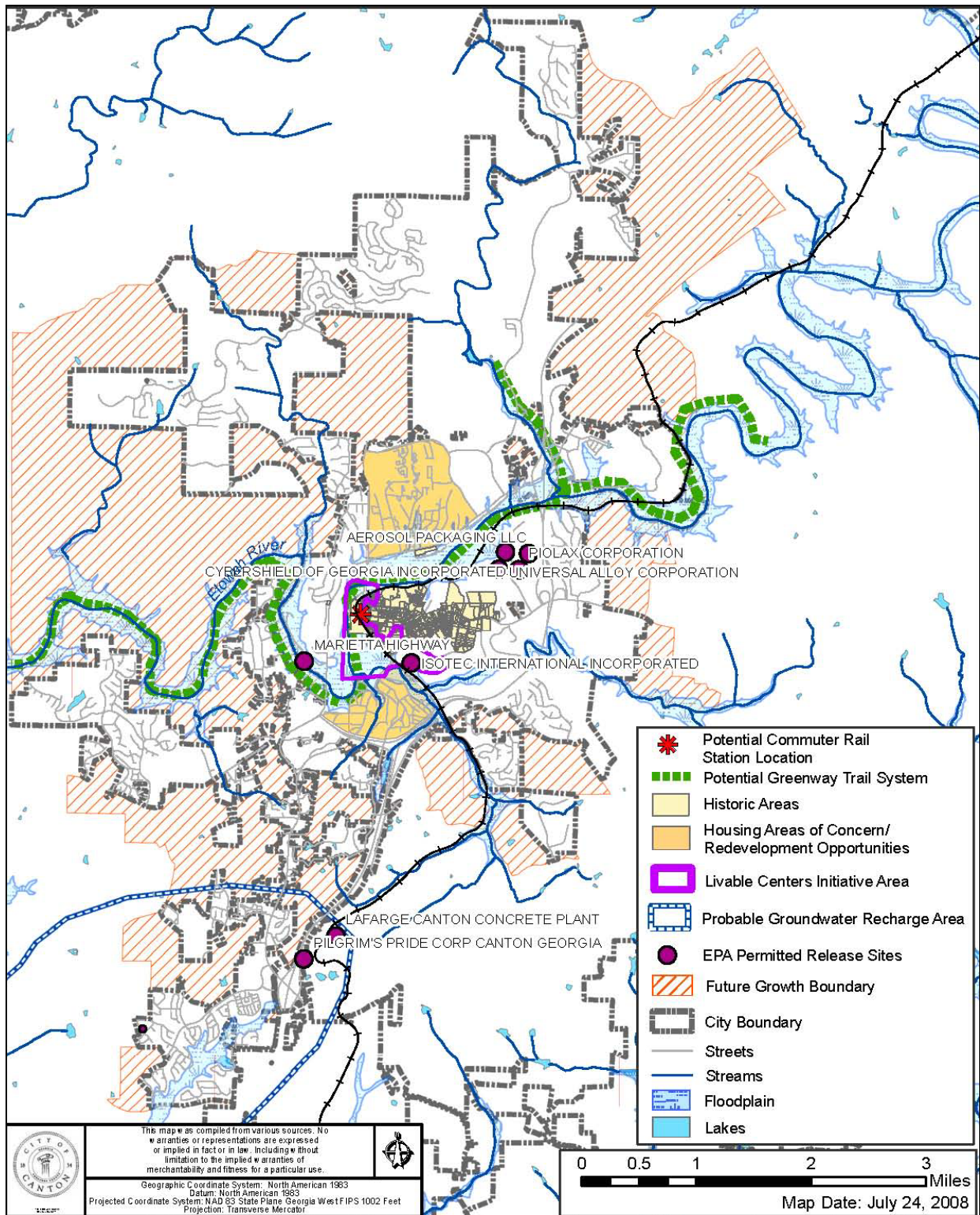
Pilgrim’s Pride Corporation

Piolax Corporation

Universal Alloy Corporation

² City of Canton River Mill District Study, 2001, p. 1

Figure 3-2: Areas Requiring Special Attention Map



4 Recommended Character Areas

4.01 Recommended Character Areas

Character areas are a tool to help identify distinct areas which make up the larger community. By examining the aesthetic and functional characteristics of these areas, planners and officials can gain an understanding of how each area of the community serves to promote a cohesive, healthy community.

Table 4.1: Recommended Character Areas		
Name	Type	Location
Emerald Trail	Natural Area	Natural corridor along the Etowah River floodplain, including Heritage Park and Boling Parks
Technology Bluffs	Employment Center	Area within and around The Bluffs development in the northern portion of the city
Technology Center	Employment Center	Primarily industrial area between East Main Street, I-575, and the Etowah River
Canton Place	Employment Center	Area east of I-575 stretching south from Hwy 20-Cumming Hwy to Hickory Flat Highway
Central City	Downtown/Urban Center	Downtown area centered along West Main Street and bordered by the Etowah River
Riverstone	Community Level Mixed Use/Retail Center	Northern end of Highway 5 corridor adjacent to I-575 interchange providing community retail and mixed use development
Crescent Ridge Corridor	Major Highway Corridor	Developed Highway 5 corridor along Marietta Hwy/Riverstone Pkwy between Riverstone Plaza and the Etowah River
Crescent South Corridor	Major Highway Corridor	Highway 5/Marietta Hwy corridor stretching south from the Etowah River to I-575
Historic Canton	Historic/Traditional Neighborhood Stable	Historic predominantly residential area of Canton west of I-575 to the Central City area
Oakdale	Neighborhood Living	Wooded residential area between two curves of the Etowah River in western Canton
Pine Ridge	Neighborhood Living	Older area of low density residential along Knox Bridge Highway and Bells Ferry Road
Ivey Pocket	Neighborhood Living	Older area of low density residential just west of I-575 stretching south from Historic Canton
Hickory Log	Suburban Area Developing	Northernmost developing residential area of Canton above Fate Conn Road
Great Sky	Suburban Area Developing	Great Sky development north and east of Reinhardt College Parkway/SR 140 adjacent to the Hickory Log Reservoir
Laurel Canyon	Suburban Area Developing	Laurel Canyon development west of Reinhardt College Parkway/SR 140
New Canton	Suburban Area Developing	Developing area west of Bluffs Parkway north of Crescent Ridge Central
Pea Ridge County Pocket	Suburban Area Developing	Pocket of unincorporated land surrounded by city areas in northern Canton
Etowah Shoals	Suburban Area Developing	Developing area east of I-575 along the north side of the Etowah River
Governor's Walk	Suburban Area Developing	Developing area east of I-575 along the south side of the Etowah River
Knox Bridge	Suburban Area Developing	Developing area in western Canton between Knox Bridge Highway and the Etowah River
Mountain Vista Overlook	Suburban Area Developing	Developing residential area southeast of I-575 and Hickory Flat Highway
Prominence	Suburban Area Developing	Southernmost area of Canton along Prominence Point Parkway north to Butterworth and Bells Ferry Roads
New Town	Traditional Neighborhood Redevelopment Area	Declining area composed of residential and other uses just north of the Etowah River
Sunnyside	Traditional Neighborhood Redevelopment Area	Declining area composed of residential and other uses south of Canton Creek and north of South Canton/I-575 State Route 5 Connector Route

4.02 Character Area Types

Natural Area

Areas of Canton defined as Natural Areas are located primarily along the Etowah River and are largely made up of the floodplains and buffers along the river. Named the Emerald Trail, this linear greenspace should remain as a protected open space to provide a natural area for conservation and recreation. The Emerald Trail provides a setting for the river corridor and can provide bicycle and pedestrian trails or other types of recreation suited to a natural area.

Development Strategies:

- Allow no new development.
- Promote conservation easements and covenants.
- Develop opportunities for recreation within these areas in order to provide an amenity to local residents and visitors.

Employment Center

Employment Centers in the City of Canton include primarily light industrial areas but also some office park areas. The three primary Employment Center areas in the city are Technology Bluffs, Technology Center, and Canton Place. These areas are located primarily along I-575 and other major highways in order to provide access for people and goods.

Employment Centers consisting primarily of light industrial are areas used in low intensity manufacturing, wholesale trade, and distribution activities that do not generate excessive noise, particulate matter, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors, radiation, or other nuisance characteristics.¹

Development Strategies:

- Develop strict guidelines for signage, lighting, siting, and landscaping standards in order to ensure quality development within employment areas.
- Separate more intense uses from incompatible adjacent uses with buffers, landscaping, traffic mitigation, and other means in order to minimize negative impacts.
- Encourage some mixing of uses to reduce the need for workers to use their cars while within Employment Center areas.

Downtown/Urban Center

Canton's historic downtown is nestled in a bend in the Etowah River and includes the greatest mix of uses within any one character area type. The downtown core area of Canton is configured in a loose grid system with Main Street and North Street as a one-way pair providing circulation

¹ *State Planning Recommendations: CHARACTER AREAS, p 12.*

through the urban core. This area consists of a primarily commercial and institutional center surrounded by areas with a mixture of residential and commercial. The downtown area, designated as the Central City Character Area also includes industrial uses along the railroad near the Eto-wah River.

Development Strategies:

- Ensure a diversity of uses in order to attract activity in the urban core not only during business hours but also in the evening and on the weekends.
- Improve accessibility in order to allow a broader range of visitors to downtown and to allow them to easily move around (especially on foot) once they are there.
- Encourage on-street parking, landscaping, and other buffers to create a more pedestrian-friendly downtown and provide connections to adjacent areas and uses which could benefit from the amenities provided downtown.
- Place parking lots behind buildings in order to allow human scale, pedestrian-oriented building façades along the sidewalk.
- Promote infill development in order to provide a compact urban core.
- Promote the small-town feel of downtown and use its character to attract businesses, residents, and visitors.

Community Level Mixed Use / Retail Center

The Riverstone Character Area includes the State Route Business 5 Corridor (Riverstone Parkway and Ball Ground Highway) east of Reinhardt College Parkway and including the I-575 interchange. The Character Area provides the site for major auto-oriented retail centers and similar commercial facilities serving the business needs of Canton's north side. Most of the area was developed within the last few years and appears to be heavily vested in automobile access. The Riverstone Character Area also includes the primary access point for the Bluffs Technology Center. Some higher density residential facilities are located nearby and may present opportunities for providing more diverse uses in the future.

Development Strategies:

- Consider including a greater diversity of uses and public facilities including relatively high residential density, mixed uses, offices, employment, and institutional uses to attract more local activities outside normal business hours and to serve a wider market area.
- Improve vehicular accessibility and provide non-vehicle pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities throughout the character area to allow residents and visitors to easily move around without using an automobile for every trip once they are there.
- Encourage sidewalks, landscaping, shade trees, buffers, and other amenities to create a more pedestrian-friendly area and provide connections to adjacent areas and uses which could benefit from the amenities provided.
- Anchor facilities should not exceed 50,000 SF and the entire center should not exceed 200,000 SF unless the design provides exceptional amenities.

- Clearly define parking and separations between the street and the adjacent activity center activities. This extends to way-finding signage and amenities.

Major Highway Corridor/In-Town Corridor

The major highway corridor in the City of Canton is located primarily along Business Highway 5 and is divided into two parts at the Etowah River crossing. The Crescent Ridge Corridor includes the land on both sides of Business Highway 5 (Marietta Highway and Riverstone Parkway) north of the Etowah River to Reinhardt College Parkway. The Crescent Ridge South Corridor is located between the River to and including the I-575 interchange. These areas are primarily auto-oriented and experience high traffic volumes, making them well-suited for relatively larger-scale commercial uses (such as strip development) compared to the downtown core. These auto-oriented uses rely on capturing the high volumes of traffic passing by, and they typically include large parking lots and setbacks in order to accommodate this traffic.

Development Strategies:

- Develop strict guidelines for signage, building design, lighting, siting, and landscaping standards in order to ensure quality development along these corridors.
- Promote connections to adjacent neighborhoods in order to allow access and egress at multiple points.
- Provide accessibility for means of transportation other than automobile by incorporating transit, bicycle, and pedestrian infrastructure wherever possible.
- In areas that are automobile-focused, provide clear signage, slow traffic speeds, and landscaping to establish areas that are both safe and attractive for visitors.

Historic Area/Traditional Neighborhood Stable

Traditional Neighborhood Stable describes areas which have a well-established and maintained stock of housing, a sense of neighborhood identity which may be drawn from architectural style or lot and street design. The Historic Canton Character Area is a relatively stable area of neighborhoods and should be able to thrive based on its location near employment centers and the proximity of the area to the Central City Character Area.

Development Strategies:

- Protect historic structures and promote renovation of any properties which begin to show signs of decline. Encourage the placement of properties on the National Register of Historic Places in order to make them eligible for tax incentives in order to maintain them.
- Promote infill development which blends into the neighborhood in terms of scale and design in order to maintain the historic character of the area.
- Provide parks and pedestrian infrastructure in order to allow mobility throughout the area in order to allow residents to enjoy and gain an appreciation for the area.
- Ensure future stability through the encouragement of home ownership and maintenance of historic properties.

- Establish a neighborhood center in order to provide local residents with a place to shop, enjoy entertainment, and gather.

Neighborhood Living

The three Neighborhood Living areas within the City of Canton are Oakdale, Pine Ridge, and Ivey Pocket. These areas are comprised of neighborhoods which are somewhat denser than rural housing but less dense than the areas directly surrounding the urban core. Residences in the Neighborhood Living character areas are likely to be in relatively good repair and have a somewhat continuous architectural style throughout each neighborhood.

Development Strategies:

- Permit redevelopment in appropriate areas in order to allow for denser housing types and smaller lot sizes.
- Encourage the development of homes near public transportation and shopping areas in order to reduce automobile trips.
- Allow new types of development which have been successfully implemented in other communities in order to promote an attractive and livable community.

Suburban Area Developing

These areas are at the edges of Canton and are experiencing rapid growth, especially those areas to the north. The areas of Canton classified as Suburban Area Developing are Hickory Log, Great Sky, New Canton, Laurel Canyon, Knox Bridge, Prominence, Mountain Vista Overlook, Governor's Walk, Etowah Shoals, and the Pea Ridge County Pocket. These areas are developing as relatively low density residential developments with no connections to transit. Pedestrian accessibility and other street amenities are dependent on project requirements specified in the planning, zoning and permitting process. In Canton, many of these areas have steep topography, making building a challenge and threatening some of the scenic vistas which are a great asset to the city.

Development Strategies:

- Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) with smaller lot sizes, interconnected streets, and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Incorporate traffic calming measures into design in order to slow automobile traffic and encourage bike and pedestrian activity.
- Provide ample greenspace and recreational opportunities to serve residents, and connect these areas to each other through a network of paths, trails, and sidewalks.
- Require master plans for communities which provide for connectivity and good design in terms of architectural style, street- and landscapes, and other elements such as signage where appropriate.
- Encourage neighborhood-level commercial to serve the population in neighborhoods directly adjacent to these areas to reduce the need to make automobile trips in order to purchase goods and services.

Traditional Neighborhood Redevelopment Area

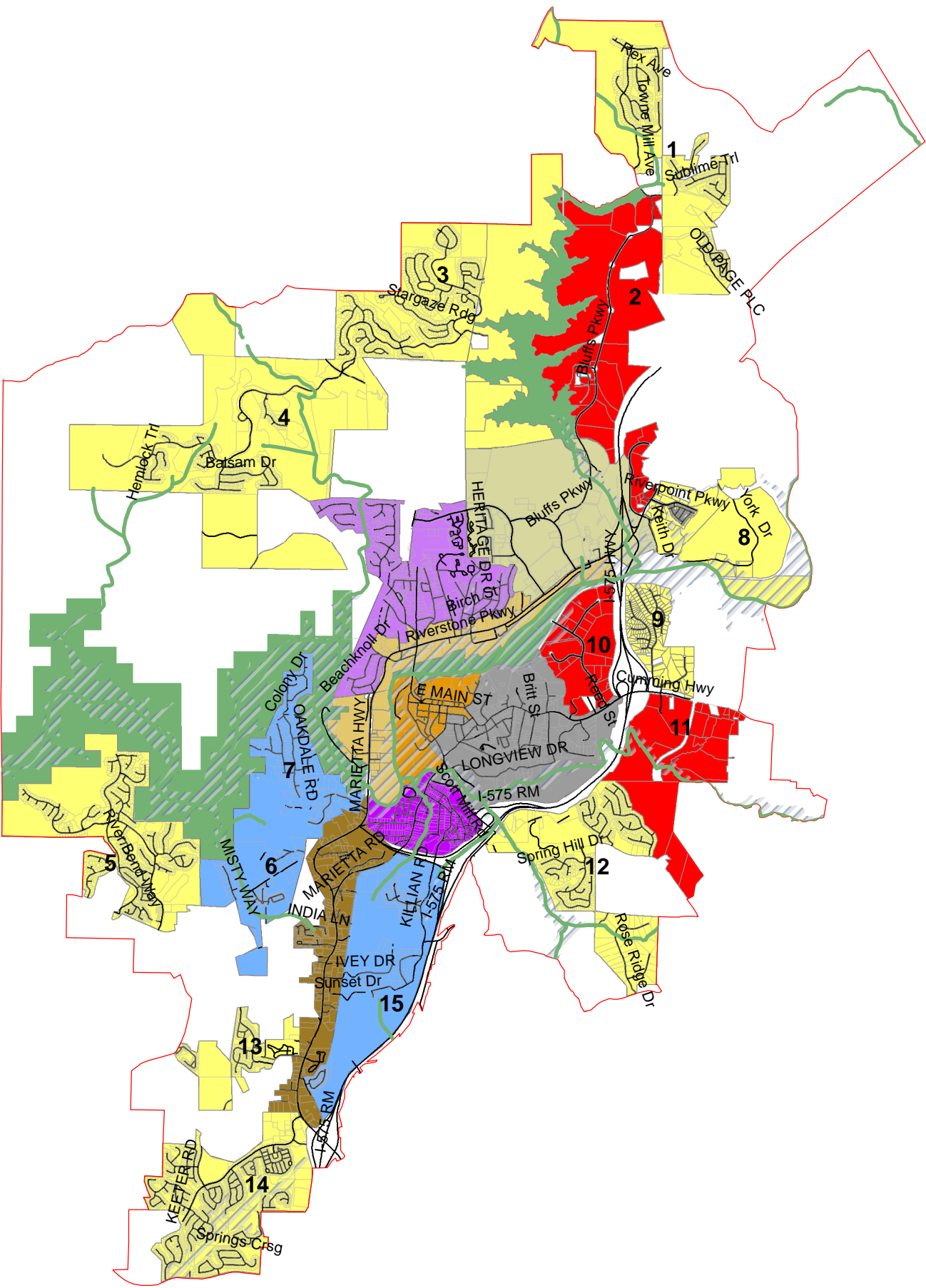
The New Town area north of the Crescent Ridge Corridor and including the area around the existing hospital is comprised of older neighborhoods which have a moderate density and include older houses and community facilities that may be in need of revitalization. The Sunnyside Character Area located south of the Etowah River has similar characteristics including older shopping centers and retail shops with underutilized parking. These areas are designated as Traditional Neighborhood Redevelopment Areas, and represent older neighborhoods with a significant stock of older, worn out homes and other structures that have declined due to lack of investment. Some of the building stock is in poor condition and there may be large areas of vacant land or deteriorating, unoccupied structures.²

Development Strategies:

- Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) with smaller lot sizes, interconnected streets, and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Encourage neighborhood-level commercial to serve the population in neighborhoods directly adjacent to these areas to reduce the need to make automobile trips in order to purchase goods and services.
- Incorporate traffic calming measures into design in order to slow automobile traffic and encourage bike and pedestrian activity.
- Provide ample greenspace and recreational opportunities to serve residents, and connect these areas to each other through a network of paths, trails, and sidewalks.
- Provide incentives for preserving and rehabilitating recoverable structures in order to create an attractive neighborhood with a blend of historic and new housing.

² *State Planning Recommendations: CHARACTER AREAS, p 6.*

City of Canton Existing Character Areas



Legend

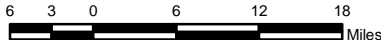
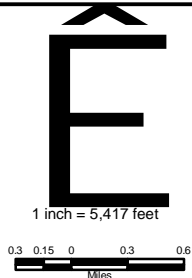
- Central City
- Crescent Ridge Corridor
- Emerald Trail
- Historic Canton
- New Canton
- 1. Hickory Log
- 3. Great Sky
- 4. Laurel Canyon
- 5. Knox Bridge
- 8. Etowah Shoals
- 9. Governors Walk
- 12. Mountain Vista Overlook
- 13. Prominence Point Ridge
- 14. Prominence
- Riverstone
- New Town
- Sunnyside
- South Canton
- 6. Ridge Pine
- 7. Oakdale
- 15. Ivey
- South Crescent Ridge Corridor
- Technology Center
- 2. Technology Bluffs
- 10. Technology Center
- 11. Canton Place
- City of Canton Tax Parcels
- City of Canton Streets
- Flood Zone
- Future Growth Boundary

Site Location



This was compiled from various sources. No warranties or representations are expressed or implied in fact or in law. Including without limitation the implied warranties of merchantability and fitness for a particular use.

Geographic Coordinate System: North American 1983
Datum: North American 1983
Projected Coordinate System: NAD 83 State Plane Georgia West FIPS 1002 Feet
Projection: Transverse Mercator



5 Consistency with Quality Community Objectives

5.01 Quality Community Objectives

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs adopted Quality Community Objectives (QCOs) to help the State preserve its unique cultural, natural and historic resources as it encourages appropriate development patterns and sustainable options for meeting future social and economic demands for public investment.

The Quality Community Objectives Local Assessment provides a means for local governments to evaluate their progress in creating a sustainable and livable community as stated by the objectives created by the Office of Planning and Quality Growth. The assessment is a useful tool in the early stages of a comprehensive plan to establish the status of existing resources to achieve the goals and principles of quality growth and development, and to determine what additional ordinances, policies and organizational strategies the community may want to consider in the planning process.

The “yes” and “no” answers are neither right nor wrong and every community may want to consider what principles are most appropriate to the uniqueness to its own sense of “place.” Local governments also may desire to pursue additional measures as they seek to meet local goals.

The Quality Community Objectives are defined as follows:

✓Regional Identity Objective:

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

✓Growth Preparedness Objective:

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

✓Appropriate Businesses Objective:

The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.

✓**Educational Opportunities Objective:**

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

✓**Employment Options Objective:**

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

✓**Heritage Preservation Objective:**

The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

✓**Open Space Preservation Objective:**

New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors.

✓**Environmental Protection Objective:**

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

✓**Regional Cooperation Objective:**

Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources.

✓**Transportation Alternatives Objective:**

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

✓**Regional Solutions Objective:**

Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.

✓Housing Opportunities Objective:

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

✓Traditional Neighborhood Objective:

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

✓Infill Development Objective:

Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.

✓Sense of Place Objective:

Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.

5.02 Local Assessment

The Local QCO Community Assessment for the City of Canton was completed with the benefit of reviewing the assessments prepared for the County and other cities in Cherokee County. Therefore the document was aligned in the same manner to allow comparisons. The following summary is based on the specific QCO review for the City of Canton

<i>Development Patterns</i>			
<u>Traditional Neighborhoods:</u> Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.			
Quality Growth Objective	Yes	No	Comment
1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.	X		Mixed uses are allowed in the CBD and in PUD and OI zoning categories
2. Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development “by right” so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process.	X		TND is allowed in the CBD and LCI areas, but not in the remainder of the City

3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.	X		Each development must meet the Tree Protection requirements. Specific requirements are in place along the "Corridors of Influence."
4. Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer.	X		Tree City Commission and streetscape projects provide some support along limited corridors.
5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.	X		City has a partnership with WM for trash collection and Street & Parks Maintenance provides maintenance for all public areas.
6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose	X		However, City has numerous sidewalks that need repair or replacement
7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.	X		This is applicable to older parts of the City
8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.	X		However, only in some parts of the City. Cherokee County High School is on a major roadway and is not close to residential neighborhoods.
9. Some of our children can and do bike to school safely.		X	Streets are heavily travelled at peak periods inhibiting travel by bicycle
10. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community.	X		True of Elementary Schools although not true for the High School which is located on a major roadway

Infill Development: Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.

Quality Growth Objective	Yes	No	Comment
1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.	X		Work in progress to add inventory resources specifically for downtown area.
2. Our community is actively working to promote brownfield development.		X	
3. Our community is actively working to promote grey-field development.		X	
4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road.	X		LCI and downtown areas have been identified although this has not been expanded throughout the rest of the City.
5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses.	X		

Sense of Place: Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.

Quality Growth Objective	Yes	No	Comment
1. If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics.		X	However, there are a few landmarks that may help.
2. We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage, and have taken steps to protect those areas.		X	True for the Etowah River Corridor
3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.	X		Yes within the Corridor of Influence Overlay Zones. However, more specific ordinances are needed for areas beyond the Downtown Development and Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) areas.
4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.	X		However, it needs a major rewrite to update language and methods.
5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.		X	
6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.		X	Not applicable to the City

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

Quality Growth Objective	Yes	No	Comment
1. We have public transportation in our community.	X		There is limited public transportation including the Mountain Area Transportation Service, Cherokee Area Transportation System and GDOT Park and Ride Lots.
2. We require that new development connect with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.		X	Some new developments are required to connect at multiple locations.
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.		X	There are needs to connect piecemeal segments of pedestrian pathways to allow free movement among spatial area (i.e. greenway corridors, residential neighborhoods, and commercial sectors),
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.	X		

5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.	X		
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.		X	
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.		X	Parking is currently required to be parcel specific unless part of a master plan.

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

Quality Growth Objective	Yes	No	Comment
1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.	X		The Stakeholder Steering Committee will have opportunities to complement historic and existing quality buildings. These characteristics are similar to other urbanizing counties in the metro Atlanta Region.
2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.	X		Poultry production and processing is still a major industry for the County including facilities that may be within the City’s growth boundary.
3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.).		X	Metropolitan growth may be supplanting some of the agricultural and mountain heritage of the City. However, opportunities are being explored through special events.
4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development’s regional tourism partnership.		X	
5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.	X		City holds a few events that attract limited tourism.
6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.	X		The historical legacy of Cherokee occupation of the area, and the City’s history of agricultural and mill development provide opportunities for unique contributions to the region. The City’s position at the center of the County and at the edge of metro development provides a gateway for exploring the region.

Resource Conservation

Heritage Preservation: The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

Quality Growth Objective	Yes	No	Comment
1. We have designated historic districts in our community.	X		The commercial downtown district is identified on the National register of Historic Places. The residential areas are locally identified, but do not appear to be officially designated at national level.
2. We have an active historic preservation commission.	X		An independent Historic Preservation Group acts on its own, and is not associated with City or County.
3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure this.		X	Existing ordinances are vague and need to be strengthened.

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

Quality Growth Objective	Yes	No	Comment
1. Our community has a greenspace plan.	X		The Etowah Greenway Plan is in effect, but there is not a City-wide Master Plan.
2. Our community is actively preserving greenspace, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.	X		
3. We have a local land conservation program, or we work with state or national land conservation programs, to preserve environmentally important areas in our community.		X	True for the Etowah Greenway only.
4. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.		X	The PUD and OI categories require open space. Great Sky and River Green are providing as part of the terms of their approvals.

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

Quality Growth Objective	Yes	No	Comment
1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.		X	Inventory is not comprehensive.
2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.		X	Only through the Etowah River buffer.
3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.	X		True for the Etowah River Corridor
4. Our community has passed the necessary "Part V" environmental ordinances, and we enforce them.	X		
5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance that is actively enforced.	X		
6. Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.	X		
7. We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development.	X		Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinances are adopted, and the City has created a Stormwater Utility.
8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).		X	City has accepted development in the floodplain and has no steep slope or mass grading ordinances.

Social and Economic Development

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

Quality Growth Objective	Yes	No	Comment
1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.	X		Projections and alternatives will be updated as part of the comprehensive planning process
2. Our local governments, the local school board and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.		X	This is a goal of this plan update.
3. Our elected officials understand the land development process in our community.		X	Newly elected council member and mayor may desire new information
4. We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our or-		X	

finances will help us achieve our QCO goals			
5. We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.	X		Funding is an issue that needs to be addressed over longer periods.
6. We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth, and these areas are based on a natural resources inventory of our community.		X	The City should consider identification of designated growth areas as part of this process.
7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.		X	Specific guidelines may need to be consolidated and clarified
8. We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.		X	
9. We have procedures in place that make it easy for the public to stay informed about land use issues, zoning decisions, and proposed new development.		X	
10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.	X		
<p><u>Appropriate Businesses:</u> The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.</p>			
Quality Growth Objective	Yes	No	Comment
1. Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets and weaknesses, and has created a business development strategy based on them.		X	
2. Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit businesses and/or industries that will be compatible.		X	City is working with the Bluffs and Cherokee County Development Authority
3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products.		X	
4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy	X		
<p><u>Employment Options:</u> A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.</p>			
Quality Growth Objective	Yes	No	Comment
1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.		X	
2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	X		Limited supply of skilled jobs closeby

3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	X		
4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs	X		
Housing Choices: A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.			
Quality Growth Objective	Yes	No	Comment
1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.		X	Some accessory units exist in older areas of the City, but are not allowed in the Zoning Ordinance.
2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.	X		
3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average).		X	Needs to be measured to have better understanding of the status
4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks.		X	Small setbacks may create problems due to various site development constraints and other issues.
5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or “neo-traditional” development.	X		No neo-traditional
6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.	X		
7. We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.	X		
8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.	X		Habitat for Humanity, Canton Housing Authority
9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.		X	
10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.	X		
Educational Opportunities: Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.			
Quality Growth Objective	Yes	No	Comment
1. Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens.		X	Other agencies provide some workforce training services.
2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.		X	Not applicable

3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	X		
4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.	X		Limited

Governmental Relations

Regional Solutions: Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.

Quality Growth Objective	Yes	No	Comment
1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.	X		ARC and GEDA
2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.	X		ARC and Metro North Georgia Water Planning
3. We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services, such as public transit, libraries, special education, tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security, etc	X		Needs to be expanded
4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders	X		City residents are aware that regional transportation and infrastructure issues impacts on the City. Conflicts do exist as information regarding the impacts is sometimes sketchy.

Regional Cooperation: Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.

Quality Growth Objective	Yes	No	Comment
1. We plan jointly with our cities and county for comprehensive planning purposes.		X	
2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.		X	
3. We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft region-wide strategies.	X		Limited to specific projects and needs
4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern	X		Limited