



City of Waleska
8891 Fincher Road
Waleska, Georgia 30183

October 8, 2018

Atlanta Regional Commission
229 Peachtree St NE, Suite 100
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

Waleska has completed an update of its comprehensive plan and is submitting it with this letter for review by the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

I certify that we have held the required public hearings and have involved the public in development of the plan in a manner appropriate to our community's dynamics and resources. Evidence of this has been included with our submittal.

I certify that appropriate staff and decision-makers have reviewed both the Regional Water Plan covering our area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) and taken them into consideration in formulating our plan.

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Margaret Stallings at 678-493-6106 or mstallings@cherokeega.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Doris Jones".

Doris Jones
Mayor of Waleska

Enclosures

RESOLUTION NO. 2018-R-11

**Comprehensive Plan Update
Transmit Resolution**

Waleska

WHEREAS, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 authorizes local governments throughout the State to prepare Comprehensive Plans to be used in guiding their future growth and development;

WHEREAS, **Waleska** has prepared an **Update** to its **Comprehensive Plan** that covers the years 2019 through 2023 that was prepared in accordance with the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning;

WHEREAS, the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning require that certain minimum public participation and other procedural requirements be met as part of updating local Comprehensive Plans; and

WHEREAS, **Waleska** desires that its **Update** to the **Comprehensive Plan** be reviewed in accordance with the procedures outlined in the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that **Waleksa** certifies that the minimum public participation and other procedural requirements, as identified in the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, have been met or exceeded in preparing this draft update to the Comprehensive Plan; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that **Waleska** does hereby authorize the draft **Update** of its **Comprehensive Plan** to be submitted to the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review.

Adopted this 8th day of October, 2018

Waleska

BY: *Davis A. Jones*

ATTEST: *Rolyn Smith*



OCTOBER 8, 2018 DRAFT

2018 Update
Waleska

Comprehensive Plan

Acknowledgements

CITY COUNCIL

Doris Jones, Mayor
Jon Costales, Post 1
Vacant, Post 2
Paul Ice, Post 3
Kristi Bosch, Post 4
Mary Helen Lamb, Post 5
Lee Lamb, Post 6

COUNTY-WIDE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Bob Kovacs, District 3 Commissioner
Ashley Holcomb, Cherokee Office of Economic Development
Bob Whitaker, Planning Commission Chairman
Dr. Rick Whiteside, Planning Commission Vice Chairman
Tom Ware, Planning Commissioner
Thais Escondo, Planning Commissioner
Marla Doss, Planning Commissioner
Richard Weatherby, Planning Commission
Steve Miller, Holly Springs Mayor
Eric Wilmarth, Ball Ground City Manager
Richard Voight, Citizen Representative
Bryan Kovacs, Citizen Representative
Deborah Wallace, Citizen Representative
Adam Dreyer, Citizen Representative
Lisa Tressler, Zoning Board of Appeals

PLANNING AND LAND USE STAFF

Jeff Watkins, Director of Planning and Land Use
Margaret Stallings, Principal Planner - Project Manager
Michael Chapman, Zoning Manager
David Greenberg, Planner

CONSULTANT TEAM—JACOBS

Jim Summerbell, Team Leader
Jonathan Bartlett

THANK YOU TO THE MANY RESIDENTS AND BUSINESS OWNERS WHO GENEROUSLY GAVE OF THEIR TIME TO BE ENGAGED IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS PLAN.

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- Parks, Rec. and Greenspace Plan
- Solid Waste Management Plan

Executive Summary

Checking In

We Have Changed

In the last 10 years, Waleska has changed significantly. The city has seen expansions of Reinhardt University, new businesses and improvements at all of the parks. With these changes, it is critical to check in with the whole community and update our Comprehensive Plan to ensure the City remains a great place to live, learn, do business and enjoy amazing recreation opportunities.

Importance of the Comprehensive Plan

Think of the Comprehensive Plan as a roadmap for the community's future, with the community in the driver's seat. To ensure we reach our desired destination, it is important to 'check the map' periodically. Generally, a comprehensive plan is a document to guide investment, development and the allocation of services within a jurisdiction. But cities, towns and counties are complicated places, and they make decisions about the future every day in response to new opportunities or unexpected problems. A Comprehensive Plan, like this one, is one tool that can help guide these decisions by:

- Looking ahead 5, 10 or 20 years - *Taking the long view.*
- Looking across many different elements of what the City does - *Planning is comprehensive.*
- Looking to residents and business owners to understand the needs and desires of the City - *Everything is thought through and intentional.*



Why Now?

Cherokee County and the cities of Ball Ground and Waleska last updated their Comprehensive Plan in 2008. This document is an update to Waleska's Plan that affirms the big picture vision, describes the core issues including a detailed study of Waleska, lays out a roadmap for future development and provides a list of tasks for city leaders, staff and citizens to complete in order to implement the vision.

In Georgia, cities, towns and counties, are required to update their Comprehensive Plans every five years as required by the new Minimum Standards of Local Comprehensive Planning. The development of a Comprehensive Plan helps a community to:

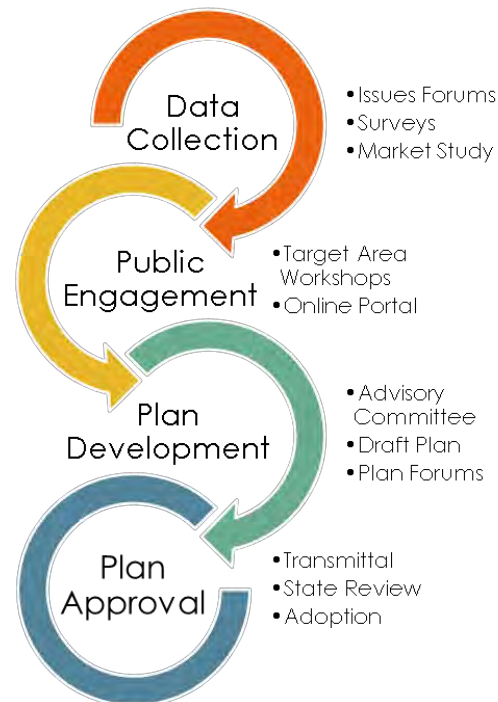
- Develop a vision for what it wants
- Establish priorities
- Encourage dialogue and actions
- Guide decision making
- Determine how to best allocate limited resources

Our Plan In a Nutshell

THE PROCESS

Beginning in early 2017, the development of this plan consisted of four phases; Data Collection, Public Engagement, Plan Development and Plan Approval. Each phase built upon the previous to ensure the final document had significant community input and is thorough in order to support plan implementation.

In the Data Collection phase, we brought together data and projections concerning growth while taking the pulse of the county and Ball Ground and Waleska through surveys and forums. Public Engagement intensified



with the Target Area Workshops with parallel online involvement. Then we moved into the Plan Development phase, which brought in-depth reviews and discussions of the parts of the plan with a 15-person Advisory Committee appointed from the business community, residents, Planning Commission members and elected officials. Finally, the state and regional planners review the plan during the Plan Approval phase.

THE PLAN

Organized into four interrelated sections, this plan focuses on the critical tools to guide the growth of Waleska with targeted policies to enhance our assets and address challenges. The sections are as follows:

- Community Introduction
- Our Vision
- Plan for the Future
- Vision into Action

In the Community Introduction, the stage is set to discuss the demographic trends facing the City in terms of population, housing and employment. Waleska has grown from a population of 605 in 2010 to an estimated population of 622 in 2015 according to the U.S. Census Bureau. This represents a 2.8% growth rate for the city. If growth continues even close to this rate, the population of the City will be around 640 full-time residents by 2020. It is important to note that the population figures for Waleska do not include the students enrolled at Reinhardt University, currently around 1,500.

Meanwhile, the percentage of 65+ age residents in Waleska will increase in the next decade. There will be some demand for new homes, with buyers interested in a wider range of house types. Jobs may grow within the city limits as the University grows.

Waleska's Vision:

An historic small town nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Waleska has the charm, scenic beauty, cultural assets, and strong community bonds that make it one of Georgia's best kept secrets. A mix of housing, small businesses, and community gathering spaces, anchored by the city's cherished relationship with Reinhardt University, will continue to grow the college town energy in the walkable center of the crossroads community.

The needs and opportunities for the City are reviewed in the six Core Issues, which are as follows:

- Promoting Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure
- Preserve and Enhance Sense of Place and Historic Character
- Aging in Place
- Housing Choice and Spirit of Inclusiveness
- Designing With the Environment
- Balanced Tax Base and Diverse Economic Opportunities

Each Core Issue contains implementation steps that inform the tasks listed in the Short Term Work Plan. This section concludes with a brief summary of the results of the Waleska Target Area Workshop. The city was identified as a Target Area because the potential for change merited a closer look, especially with lots of community input.

The Plan for the Future section contains the Future Development Map with the character area descriptions that we often associate with a Comprehensive Plan. In this update process, each of the character area descriptions has been refined and enhanced with pictures that illustrate examples of these areas around the City and the County.

Finally, Vision Into Action describes how this plan will be implemented. It will have an immediate impact on zoning and land use applications that come before the City Council. They will use this updated Plan to evaluate and make zoning decisions.

To provide continuity, the Recent Accomplishments lists the status of implementation tasks from the 2008 plan and subsequent updates. The Short Term Work Plan (STWP) is a comprehensive list of work items (2018 to 2022) to implement the vision of this Plan. This list includes rough cost estimates, if available, as well as those organizations that should be responsible for each item. While Waleska government has a key role to play through the use of regulations, capital spending and programs / staffing, a wide range of partners, including ordinary residents, will be involved in making this vision a reality.



Community Introduction

Community Introduction

Brief History

Incorporated in 1889, Waleska is named after Warluskee, the daughter of a Native American chief who lived in the area. Historically, the town was home to diverse industries, including grist mills, timber businesses, tobacco manufacturing and mineral development. In addition, Waleska was always a college town with the founding of Reinhardt University in 1882.

In the early 1900's, Waleska grew slowly but steadily with the expansions of the university and growth at nearby manufacturing businesses. In the 1950's and 1960's, poultry raising and processing became a major industry in Cherokee County. The rise of the poultry industry created much needed job opportunities for residents in related businesses such as hatcheries, feed stores, rendering plants, processing plants and equipment manufacturers. Some of these businesses were nearby in Canton.

Began in the 1970's, the nearby Lake Arrowhead development has had an impact on the City. These Waleska neighbors have access to all of the cultural opportunities at the University, especially the programs at the Fallany Performing Arts Center. In the last 20 years, Reinhardt College has grown into a university with a diverse range of degree programs, sports teams and on-campus housing options. Today, Waleska is growing with the University while retaining the small town charm that has earned it the reputation of being one of the "best kept secrets" in Cherokee County.



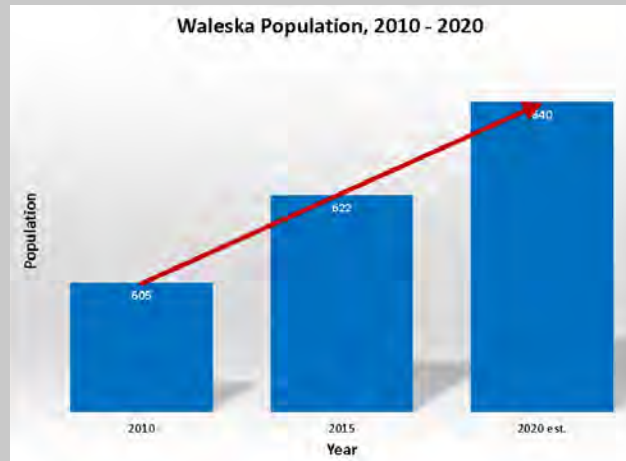
Demographic Snapshot — People

2ND FASTEST GROWTH IN METRO ATLANTA

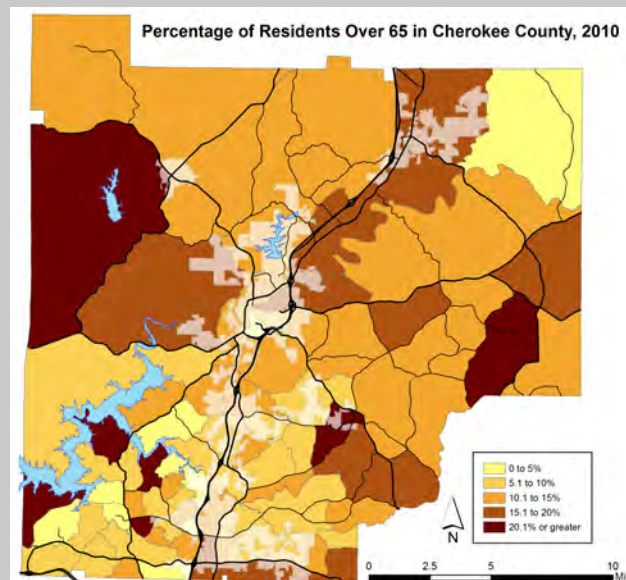
Since 2000, the population of Cherokee County has grown by over 60% from 141,919 people in 2000 to 233,321 people in 2015. This is the 2nd highest growth rate in the 10-county Atlanta metro area. The population of Waleska has grown from 604 people in 2010 to 622 in 2015. Over these 5 years, the City population has grown a modest amount. The City is projected to grow at a steady pace over the next 10 years, ranging from 0.5% to 1% per year with roughly 640 residents in 2020. It is important to note that 1,500 or so Reinhardt students are not counted toward the city population, including the ones that live on-campus.

POPULATION TRENDS

Jurisdiction	2010	2015 est.	2020 proj.
County Total	214,346	233,321	267,877
Ball Ground	1,434	1,729	2,308
Canton	22,958	24,980	27,340
Holly Springs	9,189	10,127	10,902
Waleska	605	622	640
Woodstock	23,911	26,681	28,987
Unincorporated County	156,232	163,945	176,026



Waleska's modest growth has helped the community retain the charm that makes the city so attractive.



INCREASING DIVERSITY

Diversity in the county and its cities has increased since 2000. The proportion of the white population has dipped from 92.3% in 2000 to 84.9% in 2015. Meanwhile, the Black, Asian and multiple race populations have steadily risen and are expected to continue this trend through 2020.

AGING IN PLACE

While Cherokee County has a substantial population of 15-34 year olds, the population is aging. The map to the left shows the distribution of over 65 residents in 2010 with the County. Residents of 65 and over comprised 9.2% of the county in 2010, which is projected to increase to 13% by 2020. Most of the cities are projected to see increases in 65+ residents by 2020, especially Ball Ground (15.8%) and Waleska (16.7%).

ATTRACTIVE TO FAMILIES

Cherokee County continues to be attractive to families. Families comprised 74.8% of the households in 2015, down from 79.2% in 2000, but still the fourth highest percentage of families in the 10-county Atlanta metro area. Ball Ground had the highest percentage of family households with 83.2% in 2015, while Waleska had the lowest (59.1%), primarily due to college students living near Reinhardt University.

Data Sources:

U.S. Census Bureau (2000-2016 statistics)
2017 Atlanta Regional Commission (2015-2040 statistics)

Demographic Snapshot — Homes & Households

INCREASING HOME VALUES AND INCOME

Median home value County-wide has increased over 14.9% between 2010 and 2015 to \$223,200. The 2015 Median Home Value in Ball Ground and Waleska were lower than the County at \$177,000 and \$155,300 respectively. Home Values are projected to continue increasing with an additional gain of 12.4% county-wide by 2020. At the same time, median household incomes have risen 10.1% between 2010 and 2015, to \$73,035. The 2015 Median Household Income for Ball Ground and Waleska are \$65,125 and \$39,250 respectively. In the next 5 years, the median household income county-wide is projected to grow at nearly 12.8% to \$82,370 by 2020.

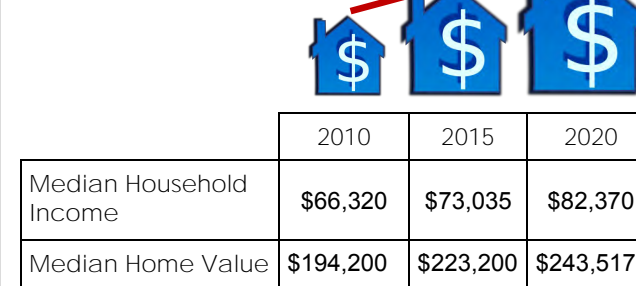
MORE FOR THE MONEY

Many new residents, especially families, come to Cherokee County for the lower cost of housing compared with other metro Atlanta communities. For example, the residents only pay an average of 29.1% of their income on rent. Meanwhile, the median owner costs are roughly 21.7% of household income. By both measures, Cherokee County is one of the more affordable counties in the Metro Atlanta Region. The lower cost of housing contributes to Cherokee County having one of the lowest poverty rates in Metro Atlanta.

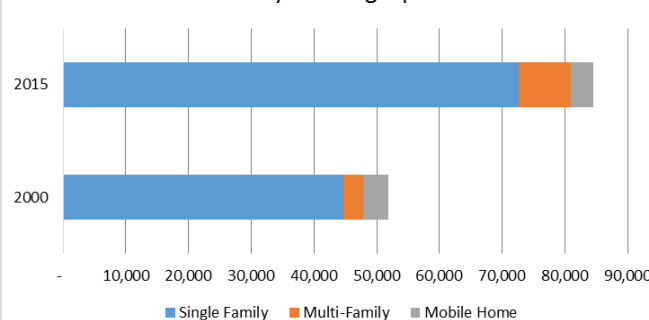
PERMITS INCREASING

Building Permits for new homes in all of the jurisdictions dropped off severely after the 2008 economic downturn. By 2013, there were significant signs of recovery but not all jurisdictions have not gone back to the peak numbers seen between 2002-2006.

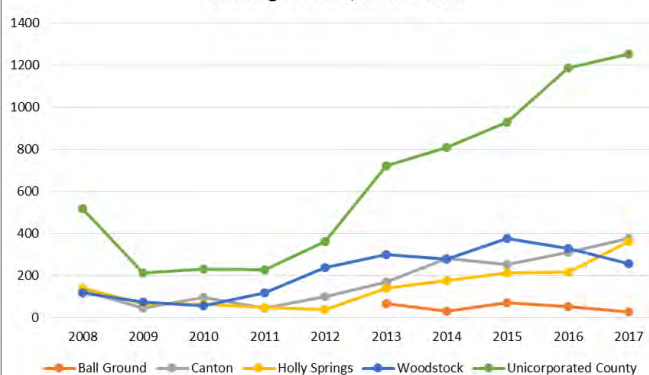
County-wide Household Income and Home Values



County Housing Options



Building Permits, 2008 - 2017



CHANGING HOUSING OPTIONS

Housing in Cherokee County is overwhelmingly single-family homes (86% in 2000 and 85.8% in 2015), with pockets of mobile homes, and multi-family developments. Canton and Woodstock have seen a steady increase in multi-family development since 2000, with the cities adding 3,600 units combined. In the same time period, the percentage of single family housing units in Canton has dropped to 65.1% in 2015. Woodstock has increased all types of housing so the percentages have held generally steady at 78% for single family and 21% multi-family.

Most of the growth in Holly Springs has been in attached/detached single family housing between 2000 and 2015 with an increase of 2,152 new homes in 15 years. Ball Ground and Waleska have maintained the highest percent of single family housing and mobile homes of the 5 cities. Ball Ground has added over 450 new single family homes in that time. Waleska has had no significant growth in housing units but this figure does not count the hundreds of units of student housing added to the campus of Reinhardt University since 2000.

In unincorporated Cherokee County, the percentage of housing units that are mobile homes (8.8% in 2000 and 5.8% in 2015) has declined while single family and multi-family units have increased.

Data Sources:

U.S. Census Bureau (2000-2017 statistics, 2020)
2017 Atlanta Regional Commission (2020 projections)

Demographic Snapshot — Education & Jobs

LOW UNEMPLOYMENT

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor statistics, the January 2018 unemployment rate in Cherokee County was 3.4%. This is almost a whole percentage point lower than the rate for the whole Atlanta metro of 4.3%. Cherokee County has led the Atlanta area with the lowest unemployment rate.

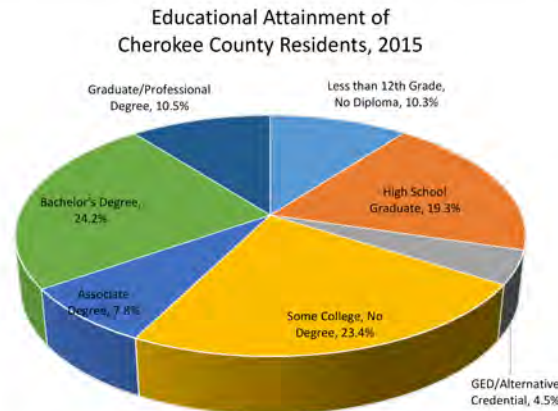
STRONG IN EDUCATION

The Cherokee County School District is one of the top public K-12 school systems in Georgia. These public schools are complemented by a wide range of K-12 private schools.

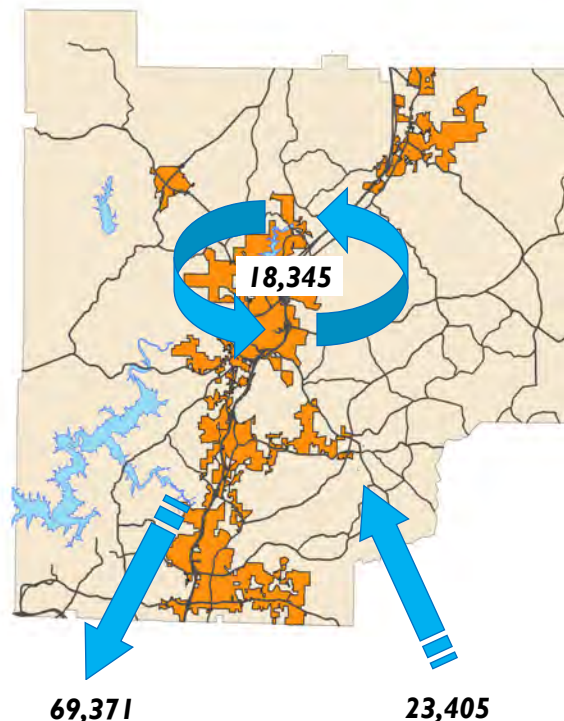
There are also good options for post-secondary education. Cherokee County is home to Reinhardt University and 2 campuses of Chattahoochee Technical College. This focus on education shows in the percentage of residents with at least “some college” has increased from 57.1% in 2000 to 65.9% in 2015. This puts Cherokee county 5th among metro Atlanta counties according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

COMMUTING PATTERNS

Cherokee County remains a bedroom community within Metro Atlanta with roughly 79% of employed residents working outside of the county according to 2015 U.S. Census Estimates. These residents are primarily traveling out of the county for “white collar” employment in the major job centers around Metro Atlanta. Meanwhile, the county has 7.8% of employed residents who work from home, which ranks second behind Fulton County for home-based businesses.



Cherokee County Commuting Patterns, 2015



This flow of residents has significant transportation impacts with 80.1% of work commutes being done in a single-occupancy car, truck or van. Nearly 9% of commutes involve carpooling. Only 1.5% of commutes in Cherokee County are done by walking or public transportation.

GROWING INDUSTRIES

The top five Cherokee County industries in 2015 were Professional / Scientific / Technical Services, Retail Trade, Healthcare / Social Sciences, Administrative Support and Other Services. The Cherokee County Office of Economic Development is leading efforts to expand the following target industries within Cherokee County:

- Advanced Manufacturing
- Information Technology
- Corporate Operations
- Film and Media

Since 2013, Cherokee County has added 1.2 million square feet of new manufacturing and warehouse space to accommodate growth in existing and new companies. With a number of significant projects in the pipeline, the growth in local jobs is expected to continue for the next few years.

Top 5 Private Employers in Cherokee County:

- Pilgrim's Pride: 800 employees
- Chart Industries, Inc: 552 employees
- Inalfa Roof Systems: 345 employees
- Universal Alloy Corp: 260 employees
- Piolax Corp: 250 employees

Source: Cherokee County Office of Economic Development

Putting Together the Plan

ROLE OF COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Just as the previous Plan set the tone for Cherokee County, this update ensures that we remain focused on all of the county's priorities. We crafted guiding principles and character areas based on development patterns, trends, demographic projections, and community concerns. In the 2008 Comprehensive Plan, we introduced the Future Development Map based on Character Areas, which was designed to guide development as well as help with the preservation of rural areas. This update enables us to track the county's progress thus far and will ultimately shape land use decisions. Whether you're a resident, business or property owner, or any combination, these land use decisions affect all of us.

YOUR VOICE

Public engagement has played a significant role in this effort. We sought perspectives from every corner of the county. We consulted with the general public, community leaders, business owners, and elected officials, all of whom make key decisions about the future of the county. To provide feedback at various stages of the update process, we also utilized an Advisory Committee, with elected officials comprised of Board of Commissioners and Planning Commission members, mayors, and several involved citizens. Over the past year and a half, the county held many meetings with the Advisory Committee, the public, business owners, and other interested parties.

GENERAL PUBLIC MEETINGS

Critical Issues Forums

Tuesday, June 27, 2017, 5:30pm-7:30pm
Cherokee County Rec. Center, Woodstock, GA

Thursday, June 29, 2017, 6:00pm-8:00pm
Northside Cherokee Conf. Center, Canton, GA

Target Area Workshops

August 16, 2017, 6:30pm-8:30pm
Ball Ground City Hall, Ball Ground, GA

August 23, 2017, 6:30pm-8:30pm
Freehome Fire Station, Canton, GA

August 24, 2017, 6:30pm-8:30pm
Hickory Flat Fire Station, Canton, GA

August 29, 2017, 6:30pm-8:30pm
Airport Fire Station, Ball Ground, GA

August 31, 2017, 6:30pm-8:30pm
Oak Grove Fire Station, Acworth, GA

September 21, 2017, 6:30pm-8:30pm
Waleska Fire Station, Waleska, GA

Draft Review Forums

July 17, 2018, 6:00pm-8:00pm
Northside Cherokee Conf. Center, Canton, GA

July 19, 2018, 5:30pm-7:30pm
Cherokee County Rec. Center, Woodstock, GA

ONLINE PORTAL

In Summer 2017, we launched our first-ever public engagement portal called Engage Cherokee. Through Engage Cherokee, residents could post their views on everything from how to improve traffic patterns to what they love most about Cherokee County. Engage Cherokee also included a survey with questions pertaining to each core issue addressed in the Comprehensive Plan. The survey allowed us to obtain a more thorough collection of opinions, and enabled the community to conveniently share their views, particularly if they were unable to attend a meeting.

Considering the pace which Cherokee County has grown over the past ten years, many residents are concerned about increased congestion, over-development, and the potential loss of historic and natural resources that make the County serene and attractive to live in. Growth is important for Cherokee's future, but maintaining our community character as we evolve is why a comprehensive plan is essential. Through our community meetings, online portal, and other means, we have heard your concerns and they have been incorporated into the final document of this plan.

Incorporating Related Plans

To maximize impact of the Comprehensive Plan, it is important that we are in sync with other major initiatives/plans in Cherokee County. These related plans, covering areas such as transportation, parks and greenspace, and economic development, play a crucial role in the shaping of our county. Each plan branches off the goals of the comprehensive plan to provide specific strategies/action items to reach those goals.

COMPREHENSIVE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

The 2016 Cherokee County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) addresses multi-modal transportation issues through 2040. The final prioritized list of projects was developed from the ground up with input from citizens, business owners, elected officials, then evaluated for effectiveness. The seven groups of projects include Roadways, Safety, Bridges, Bicycle-Pedestrian-Trails, Transit, Freight and Aviation. The County has already begun to complete these projects as money has become available from federal, state and local sources. Besides the managed lane project on I-575, the two most important projects are the widening of State Route 20 (Cumming Hwy) east to Cumming and the widening / bridge on Bells Ferry. Both projects are slated to begin construction in the next 5 years.

Alternative modes of transportation besides roads are a major focus of the CTP. Sidewalks and multi-use trails were identified by county residents as important as transportation infrastructure. They want other options for making trips in their community. Appendix G - Trails Element identified trails and bike-ped routes that the county should pursue as road improvements are made and funds are available

While the CTP includes construction projects, there are improvements to our ordinances and development regulations that can help to preserve capacity, improve connectivity and support alternative modes of transportation. Likewise, there are changes that can be made to how we build roads to allow them to enhance the character of an area rather than erode it. Working with the County Engineer, we have incorporated these types of projects into the Comprehensive Plan to achieve our goals for Cherokee County

Key Initiatives

- Develop Access Management Standards for major corridors to enhance road safety and preserve capacity
- Create a range of street types to match rural, suburban and urban character areas
- Develop “Complete Streets”, multi-modal facilities that allow for motorists, transit riders, pedestrians, and cyclists to enjoy the road
- Update the county’s Functional Classification Map, which determines street classifications

OPPORTUNITY CHEROKEE 2015

The Cherokee Office of Economic Development (COED) drafted the county’s economic development plan, Opportunity Cherokee in 2015. This plan, which included interviews, surveys, and group discussions with 2,400 participants, highlighted the county’s assets that make it an ideal employment center, along with strategies for creating jobs attracting people to live and work in Cherokee. COED identified five target markets for the county to focus on expanding:- Advanced Manufacturing, Commercial Development, Information Technology, Corporate Operations, and Film & Media. Essentially, Opportunity Cherokee expands on the comprehensive plan to provide a more specific overview of the existing industries and strategies that will grow jobs in the target market, and ultimately keep Cherokee County residents from having to commute outside the county. The plan also emphasizes the importance of education and job training programs to promote a strong workforce, as well as entrepreneurial programs that will cater to potential and current business owners. These elements, along with promoting a sense of place for workers, will help the county’s workplace and regional centers to thrive as planned.

Key Initiatives

- Enhance COED’s organizational capacity
- Advance marketing and communication endeavors
- Continue to expand business retention and recruitment activities
- Create a culture for entrepreneurs
- Establish dynamic quality of place

CONSOLIDATED PLAN

As part of the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program, Cherokee County is required to submit a 5-year Consolidated Plan for 2014-2018, along with an Annual Action Plan. The Consolidated Plan consists of a needs assessment, market analysis, and identification of needs to determine how well the county serves low to moderate income households (households making 50-80 percent of the Area Median Income or “AMI”). This analysis is compiled in part thanks to consultations with community members and local organizations that provide services to low and moderate income households, and helps provide the justification for CDBG grants.

Key Initiatives

- Increase the capacity of public facilities and infrastructure
- Increase the capacity of public services and economic opportunities
- Preserve and expand affordable housing

PARKS, RECREATION AND GREENSPACE PLAN

Cherokee County residents love their parks, and they are vocal about this in community meetings. That’s where the Parks, Recreation, and Greenspace Plan comes into play. Drafted in 2018, the plan prioritizes action items that help improve the location connectivity in the county while developing and improving existing parks. This includes developing a system of linear parks and greenways that connect residents to amenities and services throughout the county, as well as constructing new facilities at existing parks that allow for a wider variety of activities. The plan also seeks to take advantage of the county’s natural resources by advocating for canoe/kayak launch points along the Etowah and Little Rivers. Finally, the plan includes a ‘gap analysis’ which analyzes areas of Cherokee County that lack parks and greenspace. In this capacity, the plan calls for additional parks to be developed north of Highway 20 and in southeastern Cherokee. The county believes that every family have convenient access to a park!

Key Initiatives

- Develop a system of linear parks and greenways
- Develop a multi-generational recreation center at Veterans Park
- Add facilities that allow for a wider range of contemporary activities (pickleball, tennis, skate park, etc.)

SOLID WASTE MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Cherokee County Solid Waste Management Plan was developed in 2010 and provides an overview and goals for the county’s waste disposal policies, along with that of Ball Ground, Canton, Holly Springs, Waleska, and Woodstock. Specifically, the plan addresses waste reduction, collection, disposal, land limitation, and education and public involvement. Cherokee County’s population rapid growth warrants efficient waste disposal procedures that keep the County clean, but also highlights the need for waste reduction in the form of reuse, recycling, and waste preventative measures. This plan established the county’s goal of reducing waste by 10 percent from 2007 to 2018.

Waste collectors in Cherokee County are either privately-owned or contracted by a city--depending on the jurisdiction--and transport the waste to one of the county’s landfills. To ensure the protection of the surrounding environment, the Utilities / Services character area, to be mentioned later, provides guidelines for landfills and other facilities that require significant buffers from other development. Going forward, primary goals highlighted in the Solid Waste Management Plan include promoting waste reduction methods in schools, expanding recycling options, and reducing waste by 10 percent over ten years.



Our Vision

Our Vision

Overall Vision

The future of Waleska depends on having a clear statement of the community's vision for the City. As the Atlanta metropolitan region continues to expand, being the most accessible, the most attractive or even the most affordable does not guarantee a community's success. The Vision for Waleska is based on choices and opportunities. Today, the City is poised to remain a quiet village adjacent to Reinhardt University or become a destination in its own right. This represents the choice to encourage new growth patterns that embrace a variety of land uses and housing choices to build on Waleska's existing strengths.

This strong vision fits into the overall vision for Cherokee County. The County and its Cities are envisioned as a thriving community, where its rural heritage is preserved. Retail services and employment are concentrated in walkable villages that have occupants in every storefront. People ride bicycles or walk in their neighborhoods and stop to chat. Accessibility and transportation choices are provided to all levels of citizens no matter what their economic status or age. Children have the choice to walk to school, and seniors can continue to be active. Shopping and services are neighborhood based. Employment opportunities allow people to make their living within their community. The Vision seeks a healthy community that nurtures a community member's health and spiritual well-being. In addition to wise land use choices, services and institutions are abundant. The mind is challenged and souls are nurtured with schools, theaters, museums and galleries; places to kick back and rest or engage in recreation. Above all the Community Vision is about the desires and values of the people who live there.

City Vision Statement

An historic small town nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Waleska has the charm, scenic beauty, cultural assets, and strong community bonds that make it one of Georgia's best kept secrets. A mix of housing, small businesses, and community gathering spaces, anchored by the city's cherished relationship with Reinhardt University, will continue to grow the college town energy in the walkable center of the crossroads community.



Guiding Principals

- Growth should be guided to preserve and enhance the unique character of our communities.
- New development should not cause undue burden on public services, infrastructure and community facilities.
- The continued economic development of our area depends on a variety of new commercial and industrial development in appropriate locations.
- An array of housing choices is important to address the diverse needs of the population within our communities.
- The county includes natural areas, critical water resources, and animal habitats that should be preserved while respecting the rights of private property owners.



Core Issues

PROMOTING SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Thanks to its rich history, cultural and natural resources, and its location in the Atlanta metro area, Cherokee County, Ball Ground and Waleska continue to attract many new residents and businesses. All of this translates to increased growth pressure. The population of these areas has increased dramatically over the last 20 years and development has boomed along with it, making a rural county more suburban and in some areas even urban. Land development can be a burden on the existing infrastructure, such as roads, parks, public safety, etc. Care must be taken to make sure sufficient capacity exists to support proposed developments.

The road network and planned improvements are not enough to ensure future connectivity and mobility within the community. This problem needs to be addressed from several different angles, through roadway improvements, the development of alternative transportation facilities, and integrated community planning. At the level of a comprehensive plan, community planning strategies focus on the organization of neighborhoods, commercial areas and open spaces and their connectivity to the overall transportation network in order to increase overall capacity and mobility within our community.

Policies

- Encourage growth in areas where it will be the most beneficial to the County and its cities. New development should be consistent with the Future Development Plan Map and the long range planning goals and policies.
- Look at new development proposals comprehensively by considering the benefit to the community overall, the character of the surrounding area, nearby land uses, and the availability and capacity of infrastructure.
- Focus denser levels of growth within existing City boundaries and targeted growth areas within the County where there is adequate infrastructure.
- Public facilities and infrastructure should be designed to support new development and redevelopment efforts, particularly in the areas of circulation, access and linkages.

- Ensure that natural resources are protected and that greenspace is abundant throughout the county.
- Promote the clustering of uses and compact site development in appropriate areas that are pedestrian-oriented, community-centered and minimize vehicular trips with increased internal connectivity.
- Developments should connect with the existing transportation network and adjacent properties.
- All roadways should be designed to match the character of the area and integrated with adjacent land use.

Growth Pressure Areas

Growth pressure typically occurs in areas that are undergoing rapid change. In Cherokee County, this situation happens in the following areas:

- Where new road improvements are built or traffic volumes have increased significantly along major corridors.
- Rural areas of the county where sewer is available, especially around the edges of the cities.
- Areas where property owners want to realize the development value of family farms or large tracts of land.
- Land near new parks and schools.

It is critical to consider new developments as opportunities to plan the best possible new sustainable neighborhoods and communities. At the planning stages, it is important to involve the whole community in order to ensure development that fits the character of the area, addresses potential impacts to infrastructure and community facilities, and maximizes the benefits to the public. By talking about these issues in the early stages, there is an opportunity to consider creative solutions such as public-private partnerships, added road connectivity and dedicated greenspace.

Large Potential Projects

A number of large mixed-use projects were proposed in the last decade. It is reasonable to expect these properties and projects to be revisited in the next 10 years.

The 4,000 acre “Willoughby and Sewell” property on the west side of Cherokee County holds significant potential for creating an example of sustainable growth. In 2006, the “Willoughby and Sewell” property owners

worked closely with a developer to propose rezoning the land for a master-planned community. The team completed an extensive study of the land and sought community input through a series of community meetings. At these meetings, citizens expressed their serious concerns about traffic, school capacity, need for greenspace and compatibility issues with the surrounding development. The key for this project will be planning/phasing the project and addressing the lack of infrastructure in the immediate area.

The Canton West project that extended from the City of Canton west toward Fincher Road (SR 108) from 2007 similarly struggled with infrastructure and compatibility issues. The original proposal was split between Canton and Cherokee County. The developer proposed 3,507 homes on 2,300 acres with a mixed use center. In the future, Canton and Cherokee County need to have a shared vision for this project in order for it to be successful.

During this update process, the possible redevelopment of Dixie Speedway has also been discussed. This racetrack, near Woodstock along Highway 92, was once surrounded by farms and forests. The current owners are looking for a way to redevelop the property into a mixed-use community that honors the legacy of the racetrack and their love of Cherokee County. The location of this property, along a major 4-lane road adjacent to residential and industrial development, offers lots of possibilities that should be explored in order to develop a plan that benefits the whole community.

Improving City/County Coordination

There are potential compatibility issues between the unincorporated sections of the County and the larger southern and central cities. These areas, primarily involving established single-family communities, adjacent to the city boundaries are areas of concern. As the cities grow through annexation and densification, these areas may be exposed to development pressure to be rezoned for more intensive land use, or may require cooperative efforts between the cities and the County to maintain their integrity. Work has been done during this update to align the character area designations with city designations through in-person meetings with each city. There are a few areas that are relatively complex and would merit further study between the County and the Cities.

The first one is the I-575 and Sixes Road interchange, which is located within 3 different jurisdictions—Holly Springs, Woodstock and Cherokee County. This area needs a unified vision to unlock the potential and ensure the best development for the community. This joint planning effort should include land use, transportation and recreation.

Infrastructure and Service Capacity

Cherokee County has experienced phenomenal growth in recent years. This growth will continue to have an impact on our infrastructure and community facilities. In a well-balanced community, infrastructure and services are available to support expected growth. Well planned, well-maintained and efficiently operated infrastructure systems contribute to a beneficial environment for both businesses and residents. As part of the zoning and development process, the County looks closely at infrastructure availability. Proposed developments should be evaluated for their impact on infrastructure in terms of traffic generation, water/sewer capacity and school/parks capacity.

- Traffic Impact Studies

Designed to evaluate the impact of a proposed developed on the adjacent road system, this study may be completed by county staff or by an outside consultant depending on the size of the project. From this information, County and staff can use an overall road network model to evaluate the cumulative effects of multiple development projects on the overall road network.

- Utilities Capacity Analysis

Typically, this analysis covers water and sewer capacity and is completed by the provider, such as CCWSA. The review may consider peak demand, fire flow, 10yr projections, industrial surcharge and pretreatment needs.

- Schools and Parks Capacity

Evaluating the impact of a proposed development on the K-12 public schools and nearby parks is important to ensure sufficient capacity. Schools are currently evaluated during by CCSD staff during the application process. Parks should be added to this evaluation for residential projects.

Capital Improvements Plan and Budget

As part of the Capital Improvements Plan and Budget process, it is very important to identify future sites or at least general locations for community facilities such as parks as early as possible. Early acquisition of sites minimizes ultimate land costs and ensures higher quality sites for community facilities. Capital facilities programming should be in conjunction with outlined land use patterns on the Future Development Map and

policies within this Plan. The Capital Improvement Plan and Budget should include detailed project descriptions, location of desirable sites, cost estimates and any other available information.

Building a Pedestrian-Friendly Environment

Internal and external pedestrian connectivity and linkages should be an integral part of every new project to provide safe and equitable choices for alternative transportation, such as walking or bicycling. New suburban and urban communities developed within the County should be built with sidewalks on all public rights-of-way. Internal pedestrian and bikeway trail systems that connect residents to amenities within the community and to the larger world outside their community are encouraged in large developments. By putting these other modes of transportation on equal footing with automobiles, the community can reap significant transportation, environmental and health benefits.

Not only should the County develop pedestrian infrastructure and require pedestrian connectivity within and between developments, but also this environment should be safe and pedestrian friendly. Elements such as pedestrian entrances, large windows and pedestrian scaled facades adjacent to pedestrian ways will increase the comfort and usability of sidewalks and path systems. Adequate separation of pedestrian infrastructure from on going traffic with such elements as landscaping and on-street parking will greatly increase the safety for pedestrians.

Connections to the Community

Transportation efficiency is enhanced when there are consistent and adequate street connections that allow many routes of travel through the community. Gated communities, private road systems and the introduction of disconnected cul-de-sac systems create barriers and diminish the connectivity of the whole system. Proper street connectivity reduces miles traveled, increases non-motorized trips, and supports transit use.

All properties, except for individual residential dwellings, should be required to provide interconnectivity to the adjacent properties. Streets and sidewalks/paths should be extended to the boundary lines of the tract, unless prevented by topography or other physical conditions. Standards should be set for each Character Area with respect to number and spacing of these connections. These requirements will allow greater flexibility within developments, reduce the need for curb cuts, and create less interference with pedestrian systems.

Implementation Steps

- Revise zoning ordinance and development regulations to ensure consistency with plan Vision, Guiding Principles, policies and Character Areas in order to maximize Comprehensive Plan implementation.
 - Review the Future Development Map, rezonings and other plan data yearly based on changes to actual population, growth and potential adjustments.
 - Develop master plans for growth pressure areas such as the Sixes Road Interchange and Hickory Flat to better coordinate land use with infrastructure.
 - Continue to maintain and update a 5-Year Capital Improvements Plan.
 - Coordinate implementation efforts for the other County-wide plans, such as the Transportation Plan, the Parks, Recreation and Greenspace Plan, and the Economic Strategic Plan.
 - Review and develop a comprehensive infrastructure-financing plan. Ensure that new development pays its fair share of infrastructure costs.
 - Review Service Delivery strategies and level of services, and develop a plan to provide services to accommodate projected new growth.
 - Continue to investigate alternative transportation - Ongoing transit study, airport expansion, sidewalk needs, and bicycle suitability and connectivity to lessen congestion within the County.
 - Adopt requirements that developments connect to any identified pedestrian linkage within the County as part of the development approval. Pedestrian linkages include greenways and existing sidewalks.
 - Revise development ordinances to encourage shared parking and parking maximums in mixed-use areas to promote a pedestrian-friendly environment.
 - Adopt requirements to establish a limit to the number of entrances for arterial roadways. For example, each development should provide inter-parcel vehicle access points between all contiguous commercial, office, or industrial tracts, if feasible.
 - Continue to identify, fund and implement LCI projects.
- Increase pedestrian safety by developing specific roadway types and pedestrian related facilities by character area. Guidelines should include minimum widths, connectivity, and accessories.



PRESERVE AND ENHANCE SENSE OF PLACE AND HISTORIC CHARACTER

Communities that craft a vision and set standards for development and construction will encourage the development of exceptional places with a variety of housing choices and modes of transportation. The environment created from such standards will strengthen and reinforce the sense of community among residents and businesses. The preservation of historic, rural and cultural resources is critical to enhancing the places that are unique to Cherokee County, Ball Ground and Waleska.

Policies

- Protect and preserve unique historical resources within the County and its cities, specifically buildings, structures, neighborhoods, or areas of historical, architectural, or cultural significance.
- The historic downtowns, Regional Centers, Bells Ferry Corridor and Development Corridors need to be developed as lively, interactive mixed-use environments to provide viable live, work, shopping and entertainment choices.
- New development and redevelopment should be of the highest quality and incorporate design and site elements that address the community's Vision and Character Area intent.
- Focus new growth into appropriate character areas, thereby lifting development pressure from farming and rural communities and strengthening the more developed areas of the County.
- Public Services, Infrastructure and Community Facilities should be developed to promote the character of the community in the building form, site design and materials.

Historic Preservation

The protection of historic resources is accomplished on the local level with its inclusion in historic preservation planning, growth strategies, and comprehensive planning. Historic preservation helps to maintain the quality of life within a community while instilling a sense of pride and the familiarity of place. Recognition of significant historic structures encourages their continued use and upkeep. Federal and state programs also provide incentives for renovation and rehabilitation of local historic properties.

Currently historic, archaeological and rural resources in Cherokee County have very little protection. There are National Historic Districts in Ball Ground and Canton that encompass some of their historic downtown areas. Aside from the Historical Society, there is no centralized public or quasi-public organization to support or encourage preservation on a larger scale. Other individuals throughout the county have worked independently to nominate properties to the National Register or to restore individual properties.

Preservation of significant historic resources should become an integral part of land use planning. As such, historic resources should be recorded, mapped, and evaluated in existing land use inventories, and their desirability for preservation should be determined. The Cherokee County Historical Society is very active in collecting information on historic properties throughout the County. The Historical Society periodically updates their historic structures survey for the county. This work shows the potential for enlarging the historic district in Canton and possibly nominating a district in Woodstock and Waleska. Emphasis has been placed on both rural resources and the historic core of the cities, including the conversion of historic buildings for adaptive reuse.

Character Area Specific Roadway Design

Roadways have taken on a much greater role than just transportation corridors; they can greatly affect the overall image of a community, the economic vitality, the recreational potential, the safety and security and our personal outlook on our community. If roadways through a community look bad and function poorly, it affects everything around it. At the same time, if our roadways are attractive and function well, our communities tend to increase in monetary and spiritual value.

Roadways are endowed with two attributes: capacity and character. "Capacity" is the number of vehicles that can move safely through a segment of the roadway within a given time period. It is physically manifested by the number of lanes, their width, by the centerline radius, and the super elevation of the pavement. "Character" is the suitability of a thoroughfare as a setting for pedestrian activities and as a location for a variety of building types. The character of a roadway is shaped by the combination of the surrounding context, traffic speed and design elements beyond the capacity dimensions such as the type of drainage, the presence of sidewalks / paths or traffic calming devices.

Character Area specific design solutions for roadways incorporate the appropriate capacity and character elements for the specific situation. As project decisions and design choices focus more on the surrounding context and how the roadway “fits” within a community, we can better explore new shared-use opportunities for recreation and public transportation, as well as the basic safety factor of kids safely walking to school or people safely crossing busy streets.

Roads in Cherokee County include a broad range of roadway types, from rural lanes where two cars can barely pass to four-lane divided boulevards in suburban areas to urban streets lined with multi-story buildings along broad sidewalks. It is critical that the roadways for new developments be appropriate to the character of the surrounding community.

- Rural Roadways -

These types of roads are usually two lanes with a wide range of posted speeds depending on the functional classification of the road; local, collector or arterial, and the design of the road. Rural roadways usually have asphalt pavement with wide shoulders with grassy swales to manage stormwater runoff.

- Neighborhood Streets -

These are local, slow movement thoroughfares that are suitable for neighborhoods and lower intensity nonresidential. A neighborhood street is suburban in character typically with concrete curbs and sidewalks in denser developments.

- Mixed-Use / Urban Streets -

These streets connect Character Areas and neighborhoods and cater to both intensive pedestrian activity and vehicle movement. These urban streets provide frontage for higher-density, mixed-use buildings such as residential, shops and offices. Where possible a landscaped median or parking bump-out should be incorporated into the overall design. All road improvements shall include a provision for the bicyclist and the pedestrian. A mixed-use/urban street typically includes on-street parking and traffic calming measures.

Implementation Steps

- Coordinate redevelopment of potential National or State historic register properties through the Historic Society prior to the issuance of building permits to facilitate preservation or rehabilitation where possible.

- Offer information and assistance to property owners who may be interested in having their potentially eligible property listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and to the development community regarding redevelopment and adaptive reuse.
- Update the historic resource map and create a database of properties contained in the 2005 Historic Resources Survey inventory, as well as the cemetery location map.
- Investigate preservation incentives and preservation tools such as easements, transfer of development rights, and overlay zoning.
- Design and incorporate appropriate new street and sidewalk design concepts into the development regulations for each character area. All street designs should include provisions for alternative modes of transportation.
- Identify and implement traffic calming measures within all new development and appropriate existing neighborhoods that are experiencing cut-through traffic.
- Develop programs, such as Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs), conservation easements, the use of land trusts and wider use of conservation subdivisions, to promote a balance between preserving "rural" character and the rights of property owners.



AGING IN PLACE

Over the next 20 years, a significant number of the people who already live in the County, Ball Ground and Waleska will begin their retirement. At the same time, the County and the cities will continue to attract people nearing retirement because of our high quality of life. The demand for specialized senior housing, such as lower maintenance housing options and more walkable and mixed-use environments, will greatly increase as these seniors rely less on the automobile as they age within the community.

Policies

- Support innovative public, private and non-profit efforts in the development of housing for seniors with limited incomes.
- Encourage senior housing in areas that have good access to services, medical facilities, nonresidential development, and are walkable
- Promote mixed housing within developments in order to encourage a multi-aged community.
- Encourage senior preferred housing such as cottages, ranch-style, small lot single-family, and attached ranch-style within new developments in existing and future activity centers.
- Rental housing designed specifically for seniors to meet their mobility and accessibility needs should be strongly considered as a residential use within mixed-use developments especially within the cities and in the Bells Ferry Corridor.

Discussion

The 55+ population county-wide is projected to increase from 12.3% of the population in 2015 to 20.1% in 2040. This projected increase indicates a growing need for housing products that will accommodate active adults and seniors in appropriate locations. New residential development, which has primarily consisted of single-family detached housing, will need to adapt to this growing market segment. New housing products could include varied single-family and multi-family units within planned communities, active adult communities featuring small lot single-family and attached homes with amenities at attractive costs. These homes need to be near retail and services to create a senior lifestyle that is convenient and desirable.

Implementation Strategies

- Develop a comprehensive strategy to address the broad range of housing options needed by the growing number of senior residents.
- Consider revising ordinances to encourage appropriate senior housing in existing and future development nodes, where goods and services are easily accessible.
- Encourage non-profit sponsors to make applications for all types of federal and state funding for the construction of rental housing for seniors and the disabled, and take such actions necessary to expedite processing and approval of such projects.
- Take an active role in encouraging a greater medical presence, especially in areas that are "senior" friendly such as development nodes.
- Consider changing ordinances to promote the development of new homes built to the Easy Living Standards, which would make those homes easier to live in with physical disabilities.



HOUSING CHOICE AND SPIRIT OF INCLUSIVENESS

Our Community Vision describes the development of strong neighborhoods providing a range of housing options that give people the opportunity to choose housing that best suits them, while maintaining and enhancing the value of existing neighborhoods. A greater mix of uses and housing choices in neighborhoods focused around human scale, and mixed-use centers that are accessible by multiple transportation modes, provides an atmosphere of inclusiveness of lifestyle, lifecycle and economic realities.

Policies

- As employment opportunities diversify in our communities, ensure adequate amounts, types and densities of housing needed to support desired commercial and industrial growth.
- Encourage a variety of housing stock to serve a range of incomes, age groups and lifestyles to provide choices and opportunities.
- Promote the development of housing for people with modest incomes by supporting such development with information on funding sources, appropriate locations and the zoning and development process.

Discussion

Although there has been a slow increase in the number of attached and multi-family homes, single-family detached homes continue to be the predominate housing type within Cherokee County, Ball Ground and Waleska. The demographic characteristics of those who already live here are changing as they have children, age in place, etc. The living environments that this variety of households will need, such as lower maintenance housing for aging baby boomers, more housing options for the workforce population, increasing single and small households, will help to shape future development.

Smaller Households

The number of persons-per-household has been decreasing slowly over the past years, and is anticipated to continue to decrease moderately. The decreasing household size may be attributed to the attraction of first time homebuyers with no children (either as families or single), empty nesters, and single persons entering the local job market, and is relative to the national trend of smaller household sizes/fewer children. With a trend toward smaller households indicated, the availability of new residential

opportunities at relatively affordable prices as compared to the overall metro Atlanta area will remain the primary draw for new residents. However, as a variety of market pressures increase the price of starter single-family housing, a small but growing share of new housing product is expected to be townhomes or similar attached product.

Workforce Housing Challenges

Within the County and its cities, there is a shortage of workforce housing. This is housing that is intended to meet the needs of “essential workers” in the community, including police officers, firefighters, teachers, medical personal, manufacturing and other service workers. In the single-family market, fewer new, lower priced detached homes are being built in Cherokee County. At the same time, there has been a significant increase in executive and move-up housing opportunities, particularly conservation subdivision developments, and neighborhoods with community amenities. The proportion of manufactured homes in the community, typically a valuable resource for lower-cost housing options, is decreasing, primarily due to aging and/or replacement of these types of housing, especially in the course of redevelopment.

Cherokee County housing costs are slightly lower in comparison to the 10-county Atlanta region. However, there exists a population of households experiencing housing problems, including substandard housing, overcrowding, and lack of affordability. Proportionally, the majority of households experiencing housing problems are renters with incomes below 50 percent of the County median. As well, statistics indicate that senior homeowners are also experiencing overpayment issues. Housing resources within the incorporated areas must also be considered when addressing the needs of households experiencing housing problems. Although housing programs will continue to be instrumental in improving the living conditions in the County, the units associated with these resources are very limited. All of these trends together are making lower cost housing options scarce.

Executive Housing

Within the metropolitan area, Cherokee County maintains a relatively high level of household income, the proportion of which is expected to grow, although representation in the highest income groups is lower than in adjacent counties. Comparatively the proportion of those below the poverty line is also lower than in other surrounding metropolitan counties, suggesting a financially solid, yet not extremely affluent community. The availability of executive and move-up housing is linked to the creation and

attraction of new businesses to an area and the overall economic development of a community. Keeping this in mind, the County and Cities should ensure an adequate supply of high-end housing options to meet this demand.

Overall Housing Outlook

Various housing types will be required to meet the lifestyle characteristics of the area. The majority of residential development in the County has been single-family residential units at a variety of prices and sizes. This housing mix is attracting younger family households with children and first time homebuyers, and opportunities for move-up and executive housing in a suburban setting. There is also a greater range of housing opportunities at the lower end of the price spectrum than in other metro Atlanta communities, particularly comprised of the older housing stock located in the vicinity of the incorporated areas.

Higher density, multi-family or mixed-use type development fills an economic need for quality housing choices, as well as addressing the needs of special residential population groups such as seniors, or single person households. However, the majority of workforce housing and higher density products are found in the incorporated areas, particularly Woodstock and Canton. This trend is anticipated to continue, as these areas are more likely to be served with sewer and water adequate to accommodate higher intensity development. Such housing is easily integrated into the more dense character envisioned for the County's primary activity centers and contributes toward the vibrant, pedestrian-oriented, accessible, and mixed-use environment that is desired.

Housing Programs

Although state and local governments, as well as private industry, have important roles in the provision of workforce housing, federal funding of existing and/or new housing programs is essential for the creation of quality housing choices. Without that resource, the ability of local government to address the needs of all groups is greatly reduced. In the past decade, federal and state policies have shifted costs to local governments on the theory that local governments can raise or create fees to pay for public services. This has added to the costs of housing and diminished resources to assist people with housing challenges.

Since 2008, Cherokee County has become an Entitlement Community with a dedicated annual allocation of HUD Community Development Block Grant

(CDBG) funds. These are currently spread across a variety of community programs with a portion dedicated to the Cherokee County Single Family Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Program, which offers assistance for housing rehabilitation that is specifically targeted toward lower income elderly households.

Implementation Strategies

- Review development regulations to remove constraints to the development of second units (i.e., accessory or granny flats) in appropriate areas in order to provide additional affordable housing opportunities in areas where infrastructure already exists.
- Continue the use of creative planning techniques such as mixed-use development, traditional neighborhood development, small area plans, Downtown Master Plans, Overlay Zones, and Character Areas as a means of enhancing housing diversity and choice.
- Continue to target the use of available CDBG funds for the Single Family Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation program.
- Identify areas with adequate infrastructure for medium density housing developments, designed to meet the needs of singles and young families, such as townhouses, lofts, and small lot single-family homes. These areas should be adjacent or attached to villages or centers to promote access to jobs, goods and services.
- The County and cities should work together in partnership to promote the development of projects with housing financed through the full range of tax credits, and exempt bonds while investigating other federal and state funding assistance resources.
- Encourage the utilization of available first-time homebuyer financing programs.
- Continue to work with Habitat for Humanity in the completion of a number of units suited for average and larger sized families.
- Consider policies and regulations to support the development of quality housing choices. For example, incentives could be added to the zoning ordinance for developments which reserve a proportion of units available for purchase or rent for households at or below 50 percent of the County median income.

DESIGNING WITH THE ENVIRONMENT

The natural resources enjoyed by the residents of Cherokee County, Ball Ground and Waleska are presently abundant and varied but finite. The number of uses and demands on these resources is large, and growing as development pressures increase. The water quality of the Etowah River and its tributaries has been steadily declining. Lands previously available for wildlife management are being developed. The amount of land used for general agriculture and timber is declining. As development continues to spread across the county, the need to preserve our environment has become more pressing.

Policies

- Proactively preserve our rural resources and character by protecting prime agricultural and forestlands with incentives, land use regulation and other means of preservation.
- Adopt policies and practices that create environmentally responsible and sensitive design, development and construction.
- Protect and conserve natural areas, which have important recreational, ecological and aesthetic values, including hydrologically sensitive areas, floodplains, steep slopes, protected mountains, wetlands, stream corridors and watersheds.
- Support wildlife management efforts and the protection of animals and plant species listed as of statewide importance, threatened and endangered.
- Sustainable communities should contain civic spaces to encourage healthy exercise habits and social interaction. Civic spaces include open space/conservation areas; greenways, parks, greens, squares and plazas; as well as special sites reserved for civic buildings.
- Specific conservation areas and greenways should be identified in a county-wide plan so that preserved land in existing and new developments will interconnect to form a network of protected lands.

Discussion

Growth needs to be balanced with the need to retain and protect significant ecological and natural resources, i.e., streams, wooded areas, wildlife habitats and open spaces throughout the county. It is also important to identify and protect historic sites, areas of steep slope, watersheds and

water supplies. Development should be steered away from these valuable resources, including implementing additional measures to assess and protect the natural and historic resources of the County, particularly in the pre-development assessment phase. The local governments should identify targeted areas for conservation proactively, and not just react when faced with a development request.

The County and its cities have begun to initiate pro-active measures to protect natural resources. The use of the Watershed Protection Ordinance, Floodplain Regulation Ordinance, the Stream Buffer Protection Ordinance, the County's Tree Preservation and Replanting Ordinance, the Soil Sedimentation and Control Ordinance, and adoption of the minimum DNR standards will ensure the protection of these important features within the County. The Future Development Map utilizes a designation for Nature Preserve. This designation includes active and passive parkland, dedicated greenspace, forests, lakes, the Little River and the Etowah River. The Rural Places Character Area represents pastures, farming and livestock areas, as well as land used for timber production or pulpwood harvesting. On a parallel course, Ball Ground and Waleska have adopted regulations that mirror the County's ordinances for environmental protection.

To implement this plan, we need to further revise our Codes and Regulations to guide development away from sensitive areas. The creation of greenway connections between passive parks, as well as open space areas in conservation subdivisions, should be sought to ensure habitat for wildlife as well as humans. Sites where species of special concern are located should receive priority for protection and acquisition. Increased education of the general public and developers on environmental issues will bring about increased awareness of the importance of maintaining a proper balance between people and their natural and built environment.

Civic Spaces

All development should provide appropriate private and public civic space. Parks, plazas, squares, recreational areas, trails or greens are all types of Civic Spaces. Formal outdoor spaces will be provided and should serve as a focal point for public interactions. They should not be just unbuildable or left over space after buildings have been sited. Larger developments should include more spaces than smaller developments and should break them up into several smaller spaces, as per the requirements in each character area. Existing trees and vegetation should be preserved wherever possible.

Open Space and Conservation Areas

Open space is essential for protection of wildlife, habitat and water quality, and other critical resources. Open space should accomplish the following;

- Provide for passive recreational opportunities;
- Provide for direct health and safety benefits, such as flood control, protection for water supply and groundwater recharge areas, and improve air quality;
- Provide for the protection of important critical areas and natural systems and wildlife habitats; and
- The utilization of natural features and open space to define the character of an area;

Greenway Trails

Greenway trails are paved or natural (mulch, gravel, etc.) with a minimum of twelve feet and greenspace on either side for use by pedestrians, horses and non-motorized vehicles. These trails provide a variety of recreation opportunities and should be connected to provide a network that is easily accessible. Boardwalks, bridges and pervious paving are permitted within floodplain and stream buffers.

Parks

A park is a large open area available for recreation and gathering. Its landscape comprises paved paths and trails, open lawn, trees, and open shelters, all naturalistically disposed and requiring limited maintenance. At least fifty percent of a park's perimeter should be accessible by streets, paths or other pedestrian ways. A park should have no more than twenty percent of its area covered with impervious surfaces. Tree plantings within parks should be predominately large deciduous trees.

Greens

A medium sized civic open space available for unstructured recreation, its landscape predominantly consisting of grassy areas and trees, naturalistically disposed, and requiring only limited maintenance. Tree plantings within greens should be predominately large, deciduous shade trees. A focal point should be provided within the Green.

Plazas and Squares

These small areas provide an urban oasis for passive activities as well as civic purposes and impromptu commercial and entrainment activities. They often have a focal point, such as a fountain, waterfalls or public art. Shade trees, lush landscaping and pedestrian amenities are features within a square. Plazas are primarily paved with concrete, stone, brick or unit pavers. Plaza and Squares should be at least ¼ acre in size.

Implementation Steps

- Coordinate with cities, adjoining counties, and regional agencies on water supply, wastewater, and stormwater issues to provide efficient services and comprehensive plans for management and expansion.
- Continue to promote conservation subdivisions as a method for preserving private open space and pursue relationships with land trusts to preserve this open space.
- Adopt regulations to require open space to be set-aside and connections to any identified path system with every new development.
- Publicize information to owners of undeveloped property, the farming community, and timber industry on conservation tax program.
- Comprehensively document & map sensitive environmental areas, acquired and planned greenspace and other significant resources. Compile the findings to be consulted during the zoning and development process, especially for the enforcement of the environmental protection requirements.
- Investigate funding sources to provide adequate funding for a new green infrastructure plan. Create a dedicated fund source for yearly greenspace/path acquisition.
- Continue to actively educate the public, local elected officials, developers, economic agencies, etc. about resource conservation and protection through a partnership with Cherokee County Water & Sewerage Authority and environmental non-profit groups.

BALANCED TAX BASE AND DIVERSE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

A balanced tax base is one of the keys to a successful community. As residential development continues, Cherokee County, Ball Ground and Waleska must balance that residential growth with commercial and industrial growth. Economic development goals include encouragement of existing business expansion and new business creation, continued diversification of the types of employment within the whole County, and ensuring the job skills of residents match employers' needs. These economic development strategies are key to creating an economically competitive community.

Policies

- Work towards creating regional job centers with a mix of commercial and industrial uses that leverage the market demand for regional retail, local-serving office and light manufacturing/warehouse space.
- Promote the growth of small-medium size businesses through a coordinated series of programs and support networks for existing and new business owners.
- Work to spur redevelopment along major transportation corridors, such as Bells Ferry, Hwy 5, and Hwy 92, to utilize existing infrastructure.
- Ensure that training and educational needs of employers are being met through a range of programs and partnerships between industry and educators.
- Strive to attract higher paying and professional jobs through the encouragement of executive housing, quality education and area-wide amenities, such as greenspace and the arts.
- Encourage the expansion of agribusiness and tourism opportunities throughout the County.
- Encourage the development of housing for the working population, such as rental opportunities and workforce housing in areas where infrastructure is adequate and available.

Discussion

Jobs in the County have historically been in manufacturing, with this industry accounting for more than 25 percent of the employment in the 1980's. Over the past two decades, there have been major shifts in the

national and regional economy towards a "knowledge"/service economy including professional and administrative services, technology, education, and health and social services. It is important for our economic development policies and strategies to reflect this change.

We recognize the need for economic development to ensure sustained growth. This will most certainly be important to the future of the whole community in creating a broad and diverse economic base for a robust local economy that can withstand the fluctuations in the larger markets. Issues to be addressed include:

- An high percentage of residents commute outside of the county for employment, which is typical for bedroom communities;
- Many of the jobs within the county are in retail or services,
- There is a need for more professional level jobs and career opportunities, and
- Residents' potential sales tax income is being spent outside of the county's borders--We need a broader range of retail to capture more of this spending.

Although the County continues to grow economically, it continues to remain primarily a bedroom community for the Atlanta Metro area, based on analysis of commuting patterns. Cherokee County faces the challenge of not having a sufficient supply of jobs that complement the skills of current county residents. Current employers are small to medium in size and generally produce parts and components for products from larger national companies or offer services to the Northern Metro Atlanta market.

Presently, residents are commuting out of the County to the professional jobs, while others are commuting into the County for the existing industrial and service-oriented jobs. This pattern may be changing as interest in Cherokee County by firms with professional jobs has increased significantly in the last few years. Efforts to "raise the profile" of the community seems to be paying off but this new interest needs to be translated into new offices being opened and operations started. It is critical that local government actions be strongly supportive of this type of economic expansion in order for it to be successful.

Typically, employment growth is lower in places where the housing supply is more constrained. If Cherokee County is to continue on the path toward becoming an employment center, leaders need to be mindful of the wider range of housing required in order to reach this goal. In general, the whole

community will need more workforce and executive housing in order to support these economic goals.

Opportunity Cherokee 2015 proposes strategies to accomplish the ultimate goal of diversifying the economy, including: expansion of identified target business sectors; expansion of tourism opportunities; promotion and support of local entrepreneurs and small business and minority business owners; and tying local incentives to the creation of quality jobs. Successful economic development strategies confront challenges to the business climate, including workforce and education, infrastructure, business costs and environment, housing and quality of life.

Implementation Strategies

- Enhance Cherokee County Airport as an economic development asset by adopting an overlay district that meets FAA requirements and protects the Airport from incompatible land uses.
- Maintain an adequate supply of quality prepared business and manufacturing sites.
- Continue the focused marketing campaign targeting industries identified in Opportunity Cherokee.
- Enhance the entrepreneurship and small business support programs with a comprehensive range of financial assistance, training, networking, professional advice and educational opportunities.
- Continue the Development Authority's Business Expansion & Retention Program including its Existing Industry Incentive Program, Existing Industry Roundtable, Operation Thank You, and advocacy of existing industry.
- Support the newly formed Cherokee Workforce Collaborative as education and industry partners work to develop new pathways to employment for Cherokee residents.
- Coordinate and streamline permitting processes and development regulations across all communities in Cherokee County.
- Encourage the redevelopment of underutilized shopping centers along major transportation corridors to broaden the retail and personal service offerings within Cherokee County.



Target Area

WALESKA

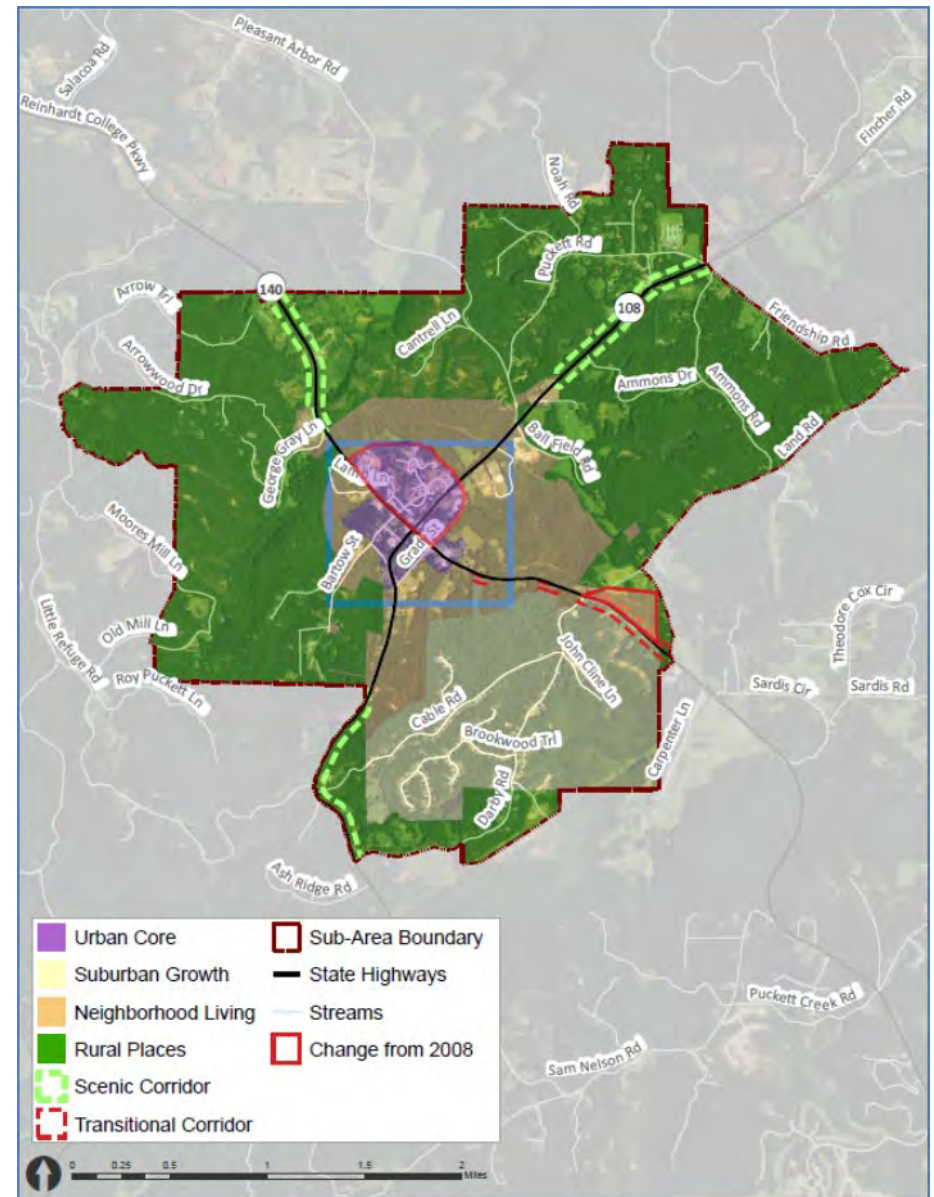
Incorporated in 1889, Waleska is home to Reinhardt University as well as a variety of small businesses. Historically, its industry was comprised of grist mills, timber businesses, tobacco manufacturing, and mineral development. Growth in the city has been modest but steady over the last 20 years. Despite being the smallest incorporated city in Cherokee County, the charm of this historic town and its surrounding area has sparked an growing interest in tourism.

To realize the vision for the future, there are several issues that need to be addressed. They include a lack of commercial and retail amenities, zoning regulations that hinder walkable village-like development, poor connectivity and access, and lack of sewer infrastructure. For the future, Waleska has many strengths including a compact walkable downtown, scenic beauty, a close-knit community of residents, and Reinhardt University as a cultural and employment center. Its location away from major interstates make it a valuable retreat from the busy metro area.

Key implementation policies include:

- Proactively collaborate with Reinhardt University
- Encourage the development of a village center
- Support improvements to Highway 140 and Highway 108 that are compatible with the community vision
- Ensure the connectivity of roads, sidewalks and trails to link new development into the City
- Encourage a broader diversity of housing options
- Strengthen connections with the Lake Arrowhead community
- Preserve the rural and natural character of the surrounding area

A few tweaks to the Waleska Future Development Map came out of the Target Area Workshop that are shown to the right.

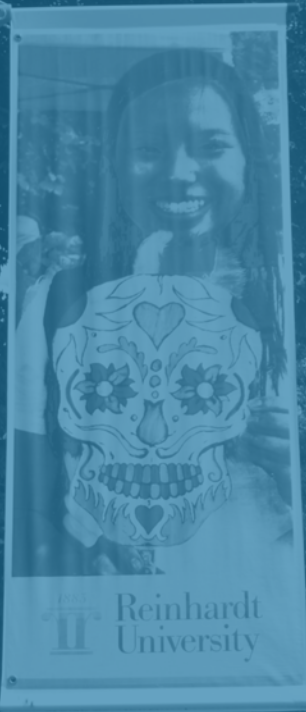


Building on the policies, we have identified six projects that will help achieve the vision for the city. These items were put together in a work plan for 2018 to 2022. They are as follows:

- 1 Establish a community liaison role with Reinhardt University
- 2 Restart hosting weddings at City Hall
- 3 Add a gazebo to City Hall property to support outdoor special events
- 4 Expand recycling program to include shredding twice a year
- 5 Develop plans to build a walking trail adjacent to City Hall
- 6 Update zoning code to allow more compact, village-like development

Plan for the Future

Plan for the Future



The Power of Character Areas

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan introduced Character Areas to Cherokee County, Ball Ground and Waleska. These areas are used to identify places and areas that show a common form of development and land use pattern, lifestyle and “feel,” intensity of use, design elements or other factors that collectively define the character of a place or areas, whether existing or intended in the future. The use of Character Areas provides a much more comprehensive picture of the community vision for a place instead of individual land use categories.

The Character Area designations indicate the primary and secondary types of land uses and the infrastructure necessary for that type of development. These descriptions serve as a guide in the determination of the future development approvals. The design of these distinct Character Areas is based on the classification of development patterns, their distinct differences and their relationship to one another as we grow over the next 20 plus years.

Character Areas:

- Encourage a “holistic” approach to long-range planning by integrating the community’s vision and desires with actual land use patterns;
- Directly link the Comprehensive Plan to regulations and implementation strategies, such as impact fees and development codes;
- Provide solutions “outside the box” by integrating new and exciting concepts in land use planning and community design; and
- Allow the maximum amount of flexibility in land use planning.



Future Development Map

The Future Development Map was developed through the analysis of current and future conditions and land use patterns on the Existing Land Use Plan Map, the Current Zoning Maps, approved developments, an economic market study, topographic characteristics, natural resource sensitivity, the availability of infrastructure, infrastructure programming and needs demonstrated by residential and employment forecasts. These analyses provided an essential base of information for Character Area development. This base was used to provide background data to the public for the development of the Vision and Guiding Principles. Utilizing the communities' Vision and Guiding Principles, distinct areas were outlined and developed into character areas. The Future Development Map:

- Applies the overall Vision, guiding principals and policies to land use patterns of the Comprehensive Plan to the unincorporated areas of the County, the City of Waleska and the City of Ball Ground;
- Visualizes projections within the Market Study for residential, retail, commercial, office and industrial needs to the year 2040;
- Was developed in conjunction with infrastructure planning and availability, land use compatibility and existing zoning;
- Acknowledges projected growth and provides for capacity for this growth in appropriate areas of the county and cities;
- Acknowledges and accommodates corridors currently or proposed to go through residential/commercial transition;
- Identifies specific corridors and areas that are appropriate for redevelopment activities and further study;
- Provides strong emphasis on integrated design, beneficial mixing of uses and connectivity; and
- Utilizes character areas to provide a richer description of how an area should function, look and feel.
- The use of Character Areas instead of standard land use categories strengthens the concepts of attraction, containment, mixed-use communities and compatibility between uses.

Why Use Character Areas?

- Provides a strong link between the a community's Vision, Guiding Principles, Goals and the Future Development Map;
- Provides additional protection, enhancement and clarification for zoning and land development; and
- Provides additional guidance to developers regarding the qualitative issues the County and Cities will consider during the rezoning process.

Benefits of Character Areas

- Provides for strong land use compatibility and transitional standards;
- Looks at an overall area for both internal and external connectedness, with an emphasis on the mixing and integration of appropriate and complimentary uses;
- Identifies intensity levels, compatibility considerations and infrastructure considerations;
- Spells out the overall "feel" of an area in quantitative terms, thereby giving decision makers additional guidance during the rezoning and development review process; and
- Coordinates economic development, natural resource and capital facility policies within land use planning.

How it Works

- Character Area guidelines are intended to establish a general direction and a base level of development quality and compatibility with surrounding areas;
- Character Areas provide an area wide view of how a specific use on a specific property will interact with a larger area;
- Character Areas allow additional qualitative controls while small area and corridor studies are completed.
- A use must still fit the intent of the Character Area and any associated criteria. A potential type of non-residential development may be "allowed," but it may still not be appropriate.

Zoning Decision Process with Character Areas

Step 1: Identify the Character Area, and Node or Corridor where applicable, where the property is located on the Future Development Map.

Step 2: Refer to the Character Area Summary Table for a brief summary.

Step 3: Review the Guiding Principles and the policies under each related Core Issue, for applicability.

Step 4: If located within a Character Area, review the detailed description for the Character Area.

Step 5: If located within a Node or Corridor, review the detailed description for the Node or Corridor and the underlying Character Area.

Step 6: Determine whether the zoning or development proposal is consistent with all elements of this Comprehensive Plan, including:

- A) the Future Development Map,
- B) the applicable policies and design considerations, and
- C) the detailed description of the applicable Character Area, and Node or Corridor where applicable.

Step 7: Evaluate the immediate area (roughly a ¼ mile radius) surrounding the property for evidence of the elements of the Character Area and Node or Corridor, if applicable. If the majority of existing development around the property is more intensely developed or used, then a more intense—but complementary—proposed use may be appropriate. On the other hand, a limited number of dispersed parcels should not be considered as representative of the predominant development intensity of the area. Care should be taken to consider appropriate transitions between areas of different levels of intensity.

Step 8: Present findings concerning Comprehensive Plan consistency as one of the factors in the rezoning or development decision process. Different jurisdictions have varied standards but some generally accepted factors are as follows:

- Suitability of the use for the proposed site
- Adverse affects on adjacent and nearby properties
- Use of property as currently zoned

- Impact of proposed use on existing streets, schools, sewers, water resources, police and fire protection, or other utilities
- Conformity with the policy and intent of the Comprehensive Plan
- Other conditions affecting the use and development of the property

Interpretation

This plan is developed based on the idea that the Future Development Map and the text are to be used as an integrated whole, with the map being a graphic representation of the text.

Interpretation of the Future Development Map is a process, which rests on the guiding principals, goals and policies expressed in the text. The Character Area designations on the map, both in terms of overall definition and intensity of land use types, require that policies and intent statements regulating the development and the location of each land use type, be evaluated and applied in the process of plan implementation.

Plan implementation is carried out through the application of regulations such as the Zoning Ordinance and through projects and programs outlined in the Short Term Work Program. The Board of Commissioners and City Councils administer the Map within their respective jurisdictions, with input from the Planning Commission and planning staff.

The initial contact for plan interpretation begins with the Staff. It is at this point that the proposal is evaluated for its conformity and compliance with the Comprehensive Plan and other functional plans. In the event a use or development proposal is inconsistent with the Future Development Map or Comprehensive Plan policies, that fact is addressed as one of the Standards for Zoning Review already adopted by each jurisdiction in their Zoning Ordinance.

Definition of Terms:

- **Connectivity Index** - Number of street segments divided by the number of intersections adjusted by a factor for the level of connectivity of each type of intersection. The values range from 0 to 12, with 12 being the most connected.

Grid Pattern Example

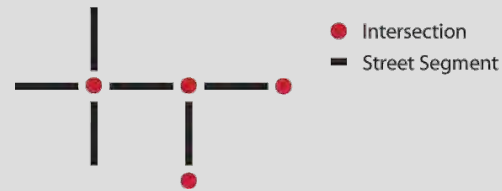
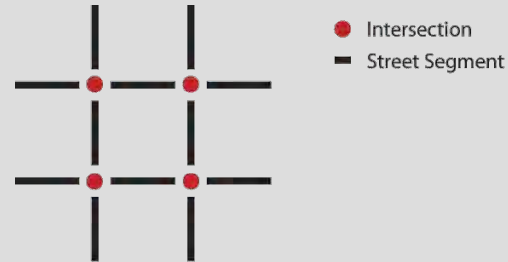
4 4-way intersections with 12 street segments - the Connectivity Index would be calculated as follows:

$$12 \text{ segments} / (4 \text{ intersection} \times 0.25) = 12$$

Cul-de-sac Pattern Example

1 4-way, 1 3-ways, 2 cul-de-sacs with 6 street segments - the Connectivity Index would be calculated as follows:







$$\frac{6 \text{ segments}}{(1 \text{ int.} \times 0.25) + (1 \text{ int.} \times 0.33) + (2 \text{ int.} \times 1)} = 2.32$$



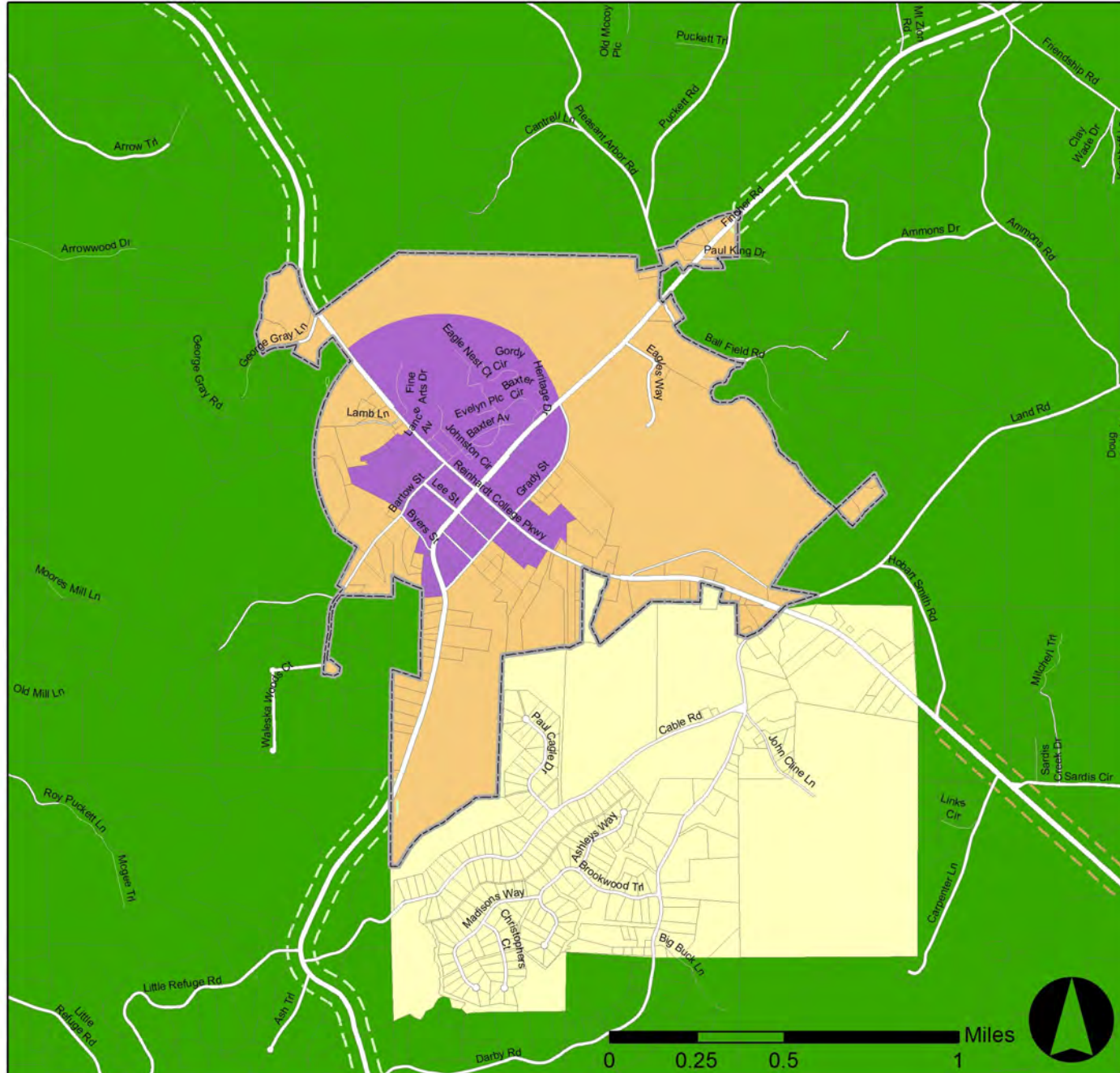
Note: The segments that do not end in a cul-de-sac either make a connection to existing public road or are connection point for future development

- **Density** - Ratio of number of residential units to the total acreage within a neighborhood. This value is used to describe the intensity of the residential use of a development.
- **Floor Area Ratio (FAR)** - Ratio of total floor area of a building to the total lot area. This value is used to describe the intensity of the non-residential use on a property.
- **Intersection Density** - Ratio reflecting the number of intersections divided by the land area. Shown in intersections per square mile.

Character Area Summary Table — Waleska

Future Development Map Symbol	Character Area	Description of Character and Primary Land Uses	Community Facilities & Infrastructure	Suggested Residential Density	Suggested Floor Area Ratio
	Rural Places	Outlying rural areas with active farming and scattered single-family housing on large lots. Preservation of sensitive natural resources is important.	Low level of services and community facilities. Potentially with public water but sewer is not planned.	0.5 dua max.	
	Suburban Growth	Areas located outside identified centers that are experiencing a high volume of residential growth, primarily single-family houses.	Water but not sewer; local public facilities	0.5 – 1.0 dua	
	Neighborhood Living	Urbanized and growth oriented areas, adjacent to identified activity centers with higher densities. Various types of residential dwellings, and mixed-use developments.	Water, sewer planned; regional public facilities.	1.0— 2.0 dua	0.1 – 2.0 FAR
	Urban Core	Traditional downtown area of Waleska including Reinhardt University campus	Water, limited sewer; regional public facilities.	2 – 16 dua	0.5 – 3.0 FAR
<i>Development Nodes and Corridors</i>					
	Scenic Corridor	Scenic corridors have low intensity development parallel to a viewshed.	Very low level of services and community facilities	0.5 dua max.	
	Transitional Corridor	This corridor is designed to allow more intensive compatible residential uses and limited compatible nonresidential uses along major roadways. Limits are parcel-specific, but should allow a smooth transition to surrounding area.	Linear transitional areas along major transportation corridors.	Underlying Character Area plus 1.0 dua	0.1 – 0.5 FAR

Waleska Future Development Map



Waleska Draft Future Development Map

Legend

- Waleska City Limits
- Parcels
- Lakes

Character Areas

- Scenic Corridor
- Transitional Corridor
- Rural Places
- Suburban Growth
- Neighborhood Living
- Urban Core



Date: October 8, 2018

Prepared by:
Cherokee County Planning & Land Use

This map has been compiled from the most up to date and reliable resources available. Cherokee County is not responsible for errors and omissions contained in this map. No warranties or representations are expressed or implied in fact or in law.

Rural Places

Description

Rural Places are characterized by a balance between the natural environment and human uses with low density residential, farms, forests, outdoor recreation and other open space activities. In a sense, Rural Places remains the heart of Cherokee County with its farmland and agricultural industries. Land in Rural Places is typically cultivated as pasture, farmland, or woodlands under forestry management, or sparsely settled homes on individual tracts.

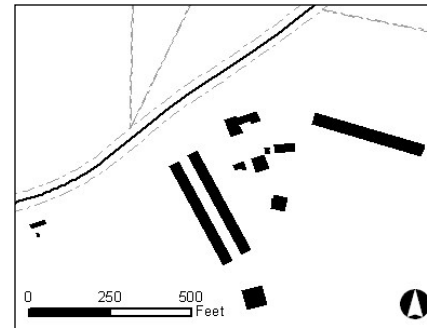
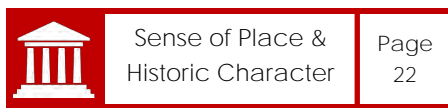
Intent

The Rural Places Character Area is an agricultural-residential community, which benefits from its scenic rural landscape while accommodating limited residential growth. Large-scale suburban development is not compatible within this Character Area due to conflicts such as agricultural smells or other forms of pollution resulting from raising animals and crop production. Focused efforts should be made to encourage and support agricultural businesses, promote flexible site design to fit the land and allow open space / the natural landscape to dominate this character area.

Strategies

- Discourage the conversion of undeveloped land into residential developments
- Utilize appropriate transitions between existing and newer developments to prevent incompatible uses
- Provide services at a level appropriate to the development pattern to help maintain the area's rural character

Core Issues Links



Intensity	Residential Density — 0.5 units per acre maximum Non-Residential FAR — Not Applicable Intersection Density— 4.06 - 13.37 per square mile Connectivity Index— 2.22 - 2.44 (0-12 scale)
Future Development	Primary Land Uses Active farming, timbering and conservation uses Homesteads on individual lots Large lot estate-style single-family residential development Secondary Land Uses Outdoor recreation Semi-public and institutional uses
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easement and private driveway access • Roads have grassy swales and narrow lanes • Public water may be available • Sewer is generally not available or planned
Greenspace	Significant greenspace often on private property

Suburban Growth

Description

The Suburban Growth character area generally consists of single family detached homes situated on lots ranging in size with shallower setbacks than in rural areas. Suburban Growth areas have limited existing development but occur where growth pressure is the greatest due to adjacency with current or proposed community infrastructure (such as sewer and water, and transportation). This is an area in transition from rural types of development to suburban ones, often characterized by pockets of development interspersed among a rural landscape.

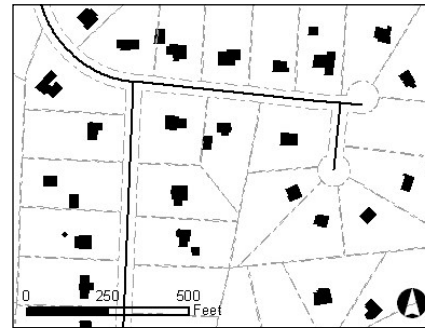
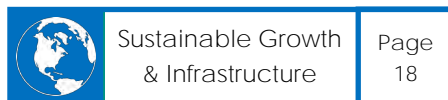
Intent

The primary purpose of this area is to channel growth pressures to areas that are suitable in terms of land use patterns and infrastructure investment to create more sustainable communities. The intent of this Character Area is to preserve the primarily residential nature of these areas while promoting new residential communities that foster a sense of community and provide mobility, recreation and open space. It is critical in Suburban Growth areas to ensure new development is compatible and located where existing infrastructure (i.e. roads, schools, water/sewer, etc.) is available.

Strategies

- Create neighborhood focal points by locating schools, community centers, libraries, and health facilities at suitable locations near homes
- Provide connections to adjacent land uses and future developments
- Encourage innovative development that integrates greenspace within its design such as conservation subdivisions, master planned and traditional communities in appropriate locations

Core Issues Links



Intensity	Residential Density — 0.5 - 1.0 units per acre Non-Residential FAR — Not Applicable Typical Intersection Density —23.9 per square mile Connectivity Index — 1.94 - 2.23 (0 to 12 scale)
Future Development	Primary Land Uses Single-family detached housing Conservation Subdivisions Secondary Land Uses Semi-public and institutional uses
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Roads have a combination of swales and curb / gutter • Public water is available • Sewer not generally available
Greenspace	Open space and conservation areas in neighborhoods Public parks and greenspaces

Neighborhood Living

Description

Neighborhood Living areas are mostly residential in nature but may include small commercial areas. This character area includes townhouses and duplexes, along with single-family homes intended for empty nesters, seniors, singles, small families, and workers employed in the county. The Neighborhood Living Character Area is more dense than suburban areas because it is generally located in and around cities in Cherokee County where there are full urban services and infrastructure.

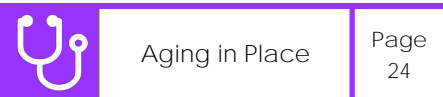
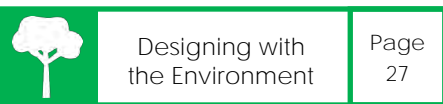
Intent

The intent of this Character Area is to create new moderate-density neighborhoods to accommodate a range of housing types to suit a variety of lifestyles, price points and stages of life while being respectful of existing neighborhoods. Community facilities and commercial uses are common in these areas to provide for close and convenient services with pedestrian and trail connections to encourage the use of walking and bicycling.

Strategies

- Integrate commercial establishments such as corner markets and mixed-use buildings as part of new developments
- Locate parks, squares, and other greenspace close to all new homes
- Locate parking to the sides or rear of residential and non-residential buildings, and screen all parking from the public pedestrian view

Core Issues Links



Intensity	Residential Density — 1.0 - 2.0 units per acre Non-Residential FAR — 0.1- 2.0 Floor Area Ratio Typical Intersection Density — 32.79 per square mile Connectivity Index — 4.72 - 4.97 (0 to 12 scale)
Future Development	Primary Land Uses Small lot single-family homes Attached single-family duplexes & townhouses Secondary Land Uses Public and Institutional Uses Mixed-use buildings
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban streets with sidewalks on both sides • Water available • Sewer planned
Greenspace	Smaller civic spaces (i.e. pocket parks, playgrounds, etc.) within the residential areas

Urban Core

Description

The Urban Core Character Area of Waleska is the heart of the city including the “Main Street” area along Reinhardt College Parkway and Fincher Road, some of the residential areas along Bartow and Grady Streets plus the Reinhardt University Campus. Interspersed within the area are a variety of institutions and community facilities, such as the post office, old elementary school, city hall, fire station, and several churches. This area includes a mixture of commercial, higher education, religious institutions and housing.







Intent

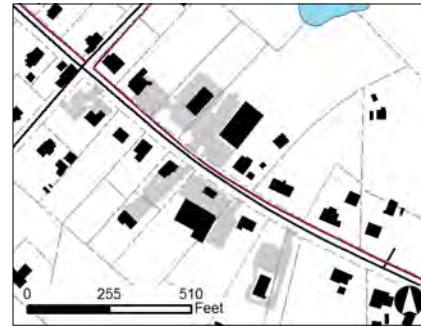
As the center of Waleska, city residents and leaders work diligently to ensure changes to buildings and uses are suitable for the Urban Core. Working with the University leadership, the City wants to make this a vibrant area with the right mix of retail, services and housing that fits this small college town. All development within the Urban Core should bring to life the City by enhancing the existing historic buildings, connecting new neighborhoods to downtown and creating a safe, walkable heart to the city.

Strategies

- Encourage the adaptive use of older buildings into newer uses
- Ensure that new developments connect to existing infrastructure to promote walkability and maintain the urban feel of the area
- Market the historic core to attract additional businesses and ultimately grow the downtown area

Core Issues Links

	Designing with the Environment	Page 27		Housing Choices & Spirit of Inclusiveness	Page 25
	Sustainable Growth & Infrastructure	Page 18		Diverse Economic Opportunities	Page 29
	Aging in Place	Page 24		Sense of Place & Historic Character	Page 22



Intensity	Residential Density — 2.0 - 16.0 units per acre Non-Residential FAR — 0.5 - 3.0 Floor Area Ratio Intersection Density — 56.53 - 94.03 per square mile Connectivity Index — 4.97— 5.22 (0 to 12 scale)
Future Development	Primary Land Uses Single-family detached & duplexes Mixed-use buildings Secondary Land Uses Public and Institutional Uses Single-use commercial
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban streets with sidewalks on both sides • Water available, limited sewer
Greenspace	Smaller civic spaces (i.e. pocket parks, playgrounds, etc.) within the residential areas

Scenic Corridor

Description

Scenic Corridors parallel major transportation routes, and consist of rural lands that have significant natural, historic or cultural features, and scenic or pastoral views. A variety of scenic elements such as a canopy of trees extending over a roadway, a rural landscape or a mountain viewshed help to establish the character of the corridor. A location along the corridor may possess a single element, however along the length of the roadway, several such elements collectively establish the scenic character of the corridor. Because Scenic Corridors may convey several iconic natural features, this character area emphasizes sensitive development, with commercial amenities clustered into small areas and retaining the natural features of the character area within the development site.



Intent

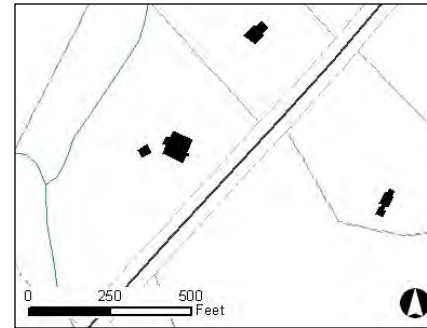
It is the intent of the Scenic Corridor to be conceptual and not be a physical limitation upon any one property within a set distance from a roadway. This corridor recognizes the scenic quality of the roadway. To preserve the scenic quality of a corridor, plans for development within the corridor should be sensitive to and integrate its most distinguishing elements. Commercial development should be encouraged to be clustered within designated Nodes rather than strip development occurring along an entire route.

Strategies

- Organize commercial development within designated Nodes in order to preserve the scenic views and prevent strip development in the corridor.
- Ensure any development plans incorporate existing nature elements, such as retaining a tree canopy that may exist along the road

Core Issues Links

	Designing with the Environment	Page 27
	Sense of Place & Historic Character	Page 22



Intensity	Residential Density — 0.5 unit per acre maximum Non-Residential FAR — Not Applicable Typically Intersection Density— 4.06 per square mile Connectivity Index— 2.44 (0-12 scale)
Future Development	Primary Land Uses Active farming, timbering and conservation uses Homesteads on individual lots Secondary Land Uses Outdoor recreation Semi-public and institutional uses
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local along rural local roads • Very low street connectivity • Public water should be available • Sewer is not always available or planned
Greenspace	Greenways and Greenspace on private property

Transitional Corridor

Description

Transitional Corridors lie along major roadways originally developed with very low intensity agricultural and residential uses that have been impacted by nearby development and adjacent road improvements. Generally, these areas are no longer suitable for very low intensity types of uses fronting directly onto the major road. Cumming Highway (SR 20) and Hickory Flat Highway (SR 140) are prime examples of Transitional Corridors between the established nodes at major intersections.

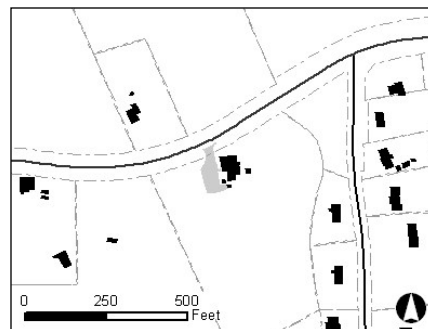
Intent

It is the intent of the Transitional Corridor to allow more intense development immediately adjacent the roadway while transitioning to lower intensity surrounding areas. The depth of the Corridor is dependent upon the configuration of the property, access to the roadway, size of the property and the ability to assemble smaller tracts to create a larger plan of development. The Transitional Corridor designation upon the Future Development Map represents the areas along various roadways where a use that transitions away from the intensity of the roadway may be appropriate.

Guidelines

- Ensure that new residential neighborhoods in the corridor are no more dense than the current character area plus 1 unit per acre if existing infrastructure permits.
- Commercial uses should be located near the road and the utilization of existing structures is encouraged to preserve the sense of place

Core Issues Links



Intensity	Residential Density — Character Area plus 1.0 unit/acre Non-Residential FAR — 0.1 - 0.5 FAR Intersection Density— 13.37 - 23.9 per square mile Connectivity Index— 2.22 (0-12 scale)
Future Development	Primary Land Uses Single-family detached housing Conservation subdivisions Master-planned communities Secondary Land Uses Small-scale shops, & restaurants Personal services—dry cleaners, barbershops Professional services—doctors, lawyer offices Local institutions—churches, schools
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Located along arterial or collector roads • Public water is available
Greenspace	Greenways and conservation areas

Vision Into Action

Vision Into Action

Implementation Process

The adoption of this Comprehensive Plan is not the end but the beginning of the implementation process to translate the community vision into reality. The three-step process outlined here is the best way to ensure effective community planning for Ball Ground. These three points appear simple but require many more detailed steps to be successful. This section will discuss a series of ways to use the Comprehensive Plan to guide growth.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN CONSISTENCY

Each community should use the policies and character area standards outlined within this Comprehensive Plan while reviewing specific proposals for rezoning and development. The character area standards are intended to establish a general direction and a base level of development quality and compatibility with surrounding areas.

New rezonings and developments should be compared against the Comprehensive Plan—policies and character areas for consistency and intent.

- Guiding principles, policies and development strategies are developed from the Vision; all new development should relate and coordinate with policy;
- Review general design considerations for consistency with Character Area descriptions, and Node or Corridor descriptions if applicable;
- Character Areas suggest qualitative controls until small area and corridor studies are completed for specific areas; and
- Character Areas, Nodes and Corridors are not regulations, and therefore will allow flexibility during project review.

Community Planning Three-Step Process:

- 1. Develop and adopt a Comprehensive Plan.*
- 2. Use the Comprehensive Plan to evaluate proposals for rezoning and other approvals.*
- 3. Establish regulatory measures necessary to protect and enhance the character of our communities.*



As the project proceeds through the rezoning or development process it will be judged on how that specific proposal works on that specific site, utilizing Zoning Ordinance review standards already adopted by the jurisdiction.

DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS

Development Regulations should reflect the Character Area guidelines and create a one to one relationship between this Plan and the implementing Codes. Typically, a natural outcome of a character area based Comprehensive Plan is a set of design regulations that speak to specific development characteristics such as site planning, massing, scale and density. This can be achieved in several ways: require detailed concept plans during the zoning and development review process to conform to the character area guidelines, a rewrite of the Codes to reflect a more performance based approach, the use of zoning overlay districts that supplement the current zoning provisions and safeguard the designated area from undesirable development patterns. By implementing these types of control measures, a community can work towards achieving their Vision.

The Waleska Zoning Ordinance and Development Regulations need to be transformed so they can be modernized and calibrated to reflect the community's vision while creating a user-friendly format. Regulations that are not clear and easy to understand are likely to be poorly enforced or even worse, ignored all together. The importance of this implementation effort cannot be overstated. These regulations are valuable and necessary tools for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and for the creation of quality developments within the county.

DETAILED PLANNING STUDIES

Detailed plans, such as the Downtown Master Plans, a Solid Waste Management Plan, Livable Centers Initiatives (LCI) Plans, Parks and Recreation Plan, Capital Facilities Plan, small area studies and design regulations may be adopted as implementing measures of the Comprehensive Plan. The public engagement during the planning process has already identified the need for several small area plans to address areas that need coordination between land use, transportation and other infrastructure.

PLAN REVIEW AND UPDATE

To be a useful and influential tool in guiding growth and development in the future and in ultimately realizing each community's Vision for the future, the Comprehensive Plan must be kept current. Over time, changes will occur in the Community that may not have been anticipated and over which the Community may have no control—changing lifestyles, national or regional economic shifts, the impact of telecommuting or internet access on working and shopping patterns, etc. Annually monitoring these shifts against progress in plan implementation may lead to the need for amendments to the plan. At a minimum, a substantial Update will have to be undertaken every five years as per State requirements.

Annual Plan Review

The annual review should be accomplished in coordination with the annual budgeting and the STWP update process. At a minimum, the annual review should include:

- Pace of growth, in terms of housing units built and land absorbed by nonresidential development.
- Land development approvals over the past year as a score card of the Comprehensive Plan's Vision.
- Zoning approvals over the past year in relation to the Future Development Map.
- Future Development Plan Map changes.
- Planned Short Term Work Program activities compared to actual accomplishments. (Current list found in the next section)
- New Related Plans that should be coordinated with the Comprehensive Plan.

Short Term Work Program (STWP)

The STWP may be updated annually, reflecting the results of the Annual Plan Review, but must be updated at least every 5 years. Any updates to the STWP must be forwarded to the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) for their files. A new STWP for 2019 – 2023 can be found at the end of this document.

Recent Accomplishments from 2013-2017 STWP

Project Description	Implementation				Status
	Complete	Ongoing	Pending	Dropped	
Natural and Historic Resources					
Plan mapping for storm water management and wetlands management when required				X	Included in work done by Cherokee County per intergovernmental agreement
Contact Georgia DCA and obtain information on the various community programs they administer				X	Included in work done by Cherokee County per intergovernmental agreement
Economic Development					
Seek Community Development Block Grants for Downtown Revitalization				X	No projects proposed at this time
Housing					
Encourage local banks and lending institutions to provide information regarding State and Federal Housing Assistance				X	No projects proposed at this time
Encourage revitalization of substandard housing		X			Participate in Senior Home Repair Program & other CDBG funded programs.
Strengthen enforcement of City Ordinances. Consider off-duty Enforcement Officer as needed	X				County Marshal provides code enforcement as needed per intergovernmental agreement.
Community Facilities					
PARKS AND RECREATION					
Coordinate with county to add ball fields, picnic pavilion and jogging track	X				Completed in 2014 through County Parks Bond Program.
Secure a Public Library	X				Joint project with Reinhardt University added community library resources to existing school library and opened to public
DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT					
"Welcome to Waleska" signage and landscaping	X				Completed in xxxx
Secure a new plan for the use of old R.M. Moore School and work cooperatively with the Cherokee County Board of Education				X	Old R.M. Moore School sold to Reinhardt University in 2015. No current plans for development.

Recent Accomplishments from 2013-2017 STWP

Project Description	Implementation				Status
	Complete	Ongoing	Pending	Dropped	
Community Facilities—Continued					
TRANSPORTATION					
Extend existing sidewalks		X			Finished Grady Street—still working on Reinhardt College Parkway, Fincher Road and Bartow Street.
Develop a 5 year and 20 year transportation plan for the city to include streets, bike paths, pedestrian walkways, rail and bus	X				Incorporated into the Cherokee County Transportation Plan.
PUBLIC SAFETY					
Add new fire hydrants	X				Developers required to install hydrants for all new developments per adopted ordinances.
Community Storm Warnings (Sirens)	X				Existing sirens updated in 2015.
WATER					
Apply for State/Federal funding to upgrade water distribution system				X	Not currently eligible.
Institute an aggressive program of water distribution improvements		X			Recently evaluated expansion along Pleasant Arbor Road.
Land Use					
Encourage environmentally sensitive area buffer regulations	X				Adopted Cherokee County Stream buffer regulations
Develop commercial development that is compatible with Waleska's residential districts				X	Incorporated into zoning code update and master plan.
Obtain additional permanent greenspace	X				City purchased 15.59 acre property in 2013

Short Term Work Plan—Waleska

Project Description	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Estimated Total Cost	Funding Sources	Responsible Party
Natural and Historic Resources								
Encourage development of open space for recreation or buffer protection	X	X	X	X	X	Staff time	City	City/County
Expand recycling program to include shredding twice a year	X	X				On-site service cost	City	Mayor/City Manager
Economic Development								
Participate in county-wide economic development efforts	X	X	X	X	X	\$3,000 per year	City	City/County
Develop and implement a strategy to recruit service establishments	X	X	X	X	X	Staff time	City/County	City/County
Draft and implement a business incentives policy to entice businesses and retain current ones	X	X	X	X	X	Staff time	City/County	Mayor/City Council/City Manager
Maintain relationships with the City of Canton and Cherokee County Water and Sewer Authority to ensure the availability of adequate water and sewer capacity	X	X	X	X	X	Staff time	City	Mayor/
Pursue avenues for obtaining additional water and sewer capacity	X	X	X	X	X	TBD	City	Mayor/City Council/City Manager
Establish a community liaison role with Reinhardt University	X					TBD	City	Mayor/City Council/City Manager
Housing								
Encourage revitalization of substandard housing through the CDBG Senior Home Repair Program	X	X	X	X	X	TBD	Federal	County
Community Facilities								
PARKS AND RECREATION								
Annex new city greenspace property into the city limits.	X					Staff time	City	Mayor/City Council/City Manager
Develop plans to build a walking trail behind City Hall					X	\$8,000	City	City/Parks & Recreation

Short Term Work Plan

Project Description	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Estimated Total Cost	Funding Sources	Responsible Party
Community Facilities—continued								
<i>DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT</i>								
Pursue additional funding for streetscape projects	X	X	X	X	X	TBD	City/Joint Partnership with Reinhardt University	Mayor/City Council/City Manager
Restart hosting weddings at City Hall	X	X				Staff Time	City	City Manager
Add a gazebo to City Hall property to support outdoor special events	X	X				\$30,000	City	Mayor/City Manager
<i>TRANSPORTATION</i>								
Extend existing sidewalks	X	X	X	X	X	\$85,000	City	Mayor/City Council
<i>WATER</i>								
Construct additional water storage facility					X	\$800,000	City, GEFA	Mayor/City Council
Secure additional water supply	X	X	X	X	X	\$500,000	City	Mayor/City Council
Land Use								
Develop the master plan for downtown Waleska and consider design guidelines	X	X	X			\$5,000	City, Reinhardt University	County Planning & Zoning, City of Waleska, Reinhardt University
Coordinate planning efforts with all local governments and other public/private agencies within Cherokee County	X	X	X	X	X	TBD	City	Mayor/City Manager
Update zoning code to allow more compact, village-like development				X	X	Staff time	City	City/County



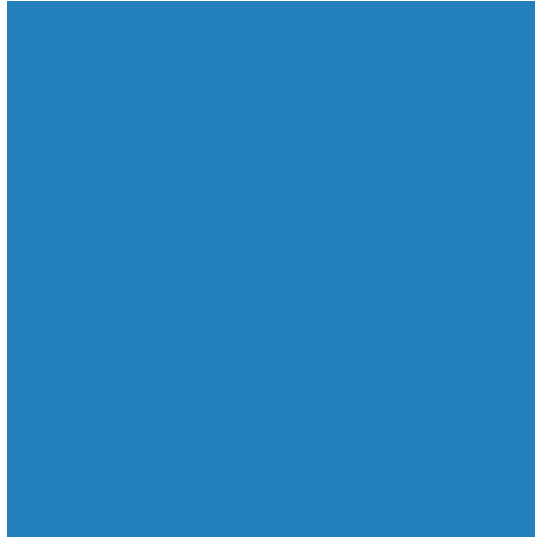
CITY of WALESKA
CITY HALL
WALESKA WATER AUTHORITY
8000 Buckner Road • 770.476.2802

Waleska Appendix

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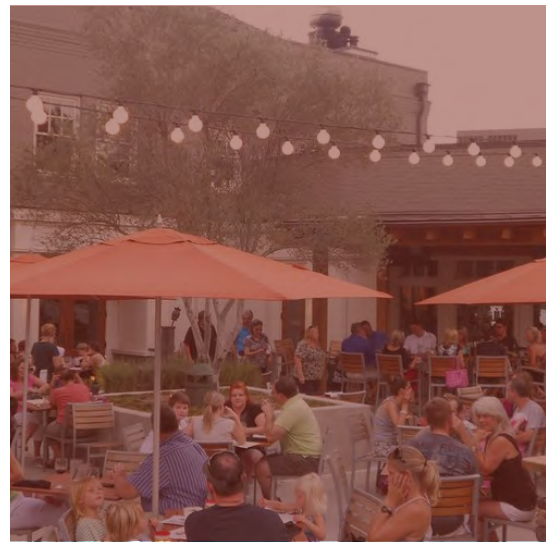
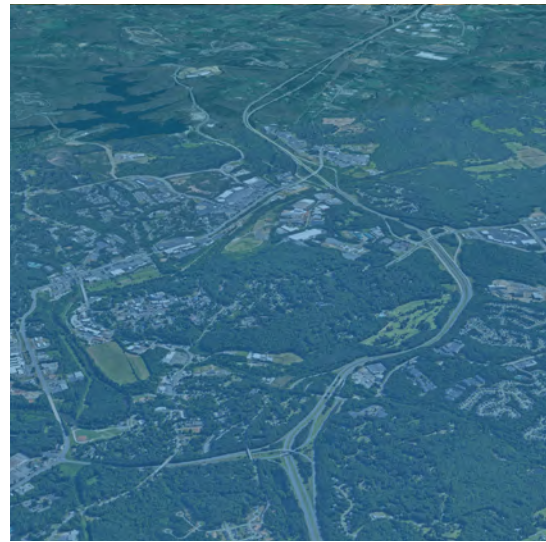
- A Market Study
- B Target Area Reports
- C Public Forums
- D Surveys & Online Engagement
- E Advisory Committee

A - Market Study



CHEROKEE COUNTY MARKET ANALYSIS

CHEROKEE COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SUPPORT
DECEMBER 2017



PLAN CHEROKEE
DIRECTIONS • DIALOGUE DECISIONS • DESTINY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Cherokee County is a collection of thriving communities that are poised for substantial growth over the next 25 years. With approximately 2,500 new households expected per year over this horizon, there is an opportunity to deliver a range of housing options and diverse shopping and employment environments for Cherokee's 233,000 current residents and future neighbors.

This report is intended to provide quantitative and qualitative market context as the County embarks on an update of its 2008 Comprehensive Plan. The County government is responsible for planning and community development in unincorporated areas as well as in the cities of Ball Ground and Waleska. The cities of Canton, Woodstock, and Holly Springs are excluded from the forthcoming Comprehensive Plan however information on those areas is included here in order to provide the most complete understanding of Cherokee's housing and employment dynamics.

This analysis began with a review of the 2008 Comprehensive Plan and its forecasted housing and employment growth. At the time of that plan's preparation, Metro Atlanta and the northern counties in particular were in the midst of a massive housing boom that would later prove to be a bubble. Growth forecasts presented in the 2008 plan were based on trends of that period and proved to be overly optimistic. In fact, actual growth from 2008 to the present fell below even the "low" forecast that was prepared specifically for the plan.

The Great Recession is largely to blame for this shortfall, having Cherokee and other outlying Atlanta counties with tens of thousands of vacant, developed lots. From 2000

to 2006, building permits for construction of new homes averaged 3,851 per year in Cherokee County, including single-family homes and multifamily units. In 2009, just 407 permits were pulled.

As the economy recovered, growth – at a more moderate pace than that of the early 2000s – returned to Cherokee County. In the strongest year since 2006, 2016 saw 2,494 new residential building permits countywide.

PROJECTED GROWTH

As of the 2010 Census, Cherokee County had 214,346 residents and 75,936 existing households. Looking ahead, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) has projected population growth for Cherokee County that is expected to range from 1.7% to 2.8% per year over the next 25 years. This is lower than the 4.2% population growth experienced in Cherokee from 2000-2010 and the 3.4% growth projected in the 2008 plan.

In the short term, ARC projects that growth will increase to an average of just under 2,800 new households per year

through 2020. By 2040, growth is expected to moderate, leading to a long-term average of about 2,500 households per year over the forecast period.

CHANGING POPULATION

Cherokee County will continue to see an influx of young families drawn to its excellent schools, quality housing, and family-friendly lifestyle. From 2016 to 2021, though the share of school age (under 18) residents will decrease slightly from 29% to 28% of the total population, the absolute number of school age children will grow by nearly 5,000, increasing demand for schools and other services.

Despite this growth in young families, the county is aging and will continue to do so. From 2016 to 2021, the fastest growing segment of the Cherokee County population will be residents above age 65, increasing 5% over the five-year period. As of 2016, this demographic made up 11.5% of the total county population. By 2021, 13.4% of residents, 34,726 people, will be age 65 or older. Growth in this age group will exceed the level of growth in the school aged population. This will create demand for housing and services that cater to this population. This includes homes with lower maintenance and ground floor master bedrooms, independent and assisted living facilities, and medical office space. Other concerns will include access to friends, relatives, and daily activities that are less car dependent.

Cherokee County is also becoming more racially diverse. As recently as the 2000 Census, Cherokee County was 92% white. By 2010 that had dropped to 87%, and by 2040 the white population will be just 70% of the county. The Hispanic population will see significant growth during this period, and is projected to increase from 10.7% to 17.6% of the population.

EMPLOYMENT DYNAMICS

Cherokee functions like many high quality commuter suburbs in that the population that lives in the county tends to work elsewhere, while the employees who work in Cherokee mostly commute in. This creates an imbalance wherein the large, educated workforce commutes out for higher paying jobs, while the lower paid manufacturing and retail jobs available in the county are filled by others.

The county has a strategic and effective Economic Development organization and an active, engaged Chamber of Commerce. Together these organizations provide tools

and training to attract businesses and create the conditions for success. Opportunity Zones have been a “home run” for the County according to officials, however three of these are due to expire in 2019.

Protecting areas for employment is critical to maintaining a balanced tax digest and supporting the opportunity for residents to work close to home. From 2011 to 2016, the amount of Industrial classified land in the unincorporated County declined by almost 274 acres, while the amount of Residential land increased by 2,300 acres. Access to regional transportation networks is critical for large scale employers and Cherokee’s limited stretch of Interstate 75 is proving to be a significant draw as land costs and congestion make closer in areas less appealing. The County should therefore be deliberate in providing for a high-density job center in southwest Cherokee, and in protecting potential business and industrial zones near the airport and I-575.

HOUSING MARKET

A review of new home sales in Cherokee County points to a number of important trends. Though the Future Development Map for Cherokee County places the lion’s share of undeveloped land in an “Agricultural” category with minimum lot sizes of 80,000 square feet (just under two acres), the new construction in Cherokee County today is typically on lots that are much smaller, particularly in the southwest portion of the County.

In addition, the number of home builders in Metro Atlanta declined from 3,500 to 700 during the Great Recession¹. Many of the local builders, who could deliver smaller subdivisions or single units on large lots, have not come back. In 2016, nearly 75% of new homes permitted in the County in 2016 were built by production builders. The market today is therefore characterized by large national builders looking for land in areas with water and sewer, access to major roads, and good schools.

ARC forecasts assume that Cherokee County will be able to deliver residential products that meet demand. This will place near-term pressure on southwest Cherokee in particular and on the more urbanized cities of Canton and Woodstock. Areas already marked for suburban growth may see higher densities than currently envisioned as townhomes and small lot single family development feed demand.

¹ Kanell, Michael. “Homebuilding Survivors Control More of Market.” *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, August 14, 2015.

Strong demand in neighboring Forsyth County and Milton will create growth pressure in east and southeast Cherokee County, as families look for affordable alternatives that still offer excellent schools and a high quality of life. Promoting cluster development in conservation subdivisions could further protect rural character in these areas while making more efficient use of infrastructure.

Employment patterns described previously suggest that development will continue to concentrate proximate to the commuter routes that provide access to Cobb and Fulton Counties. However, it is also apparent that a more diverse set of housing choices would allow more people who work in the County to live here as well. Multifamily development has been limited to about 12% of Cherokee and is likely to remain concentrated in cities; however, additional nodes of walkable, multifamily or dense single-family housing will help to preserve affordability and attract critical workers.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Through 2040 the county is projected to add about 8,800 positions in “office using” industries such as finance, professional services, real estate, and administrative services. On the one hand, this could mean 8,800 new jobs filled by additional commuters who live outside of the County. On the other hand, it could mean local employment for about 20% of the Cherokee County residents who currently leave the county for high paying jobs.

At 150 square feet per employee these office-using jobs would demand 1.3 million square feet of professional office space over the next 25 years. In all likelihood this demand will be satisfied primarily within the cities of Canton and Woodstock, and in the burgeoning employment center near I-75 in southwest Cherokee; however, small concentrations of local-serving office space (10,000 to 20,000 square feet) should be encouraged within walkable mixed use environments in southwest Cherokee, Hickory Flat, and Ball Ground. More substantial population growth in southeast Cherokee will create demand for office space in that area, and medical office near the new hospital should also be expected.

As the population of the county increases, there will be increased demand for retail and other services. Historically, most of the large-scale retail development in the County has occurred proximate to I-575. However, it will be important to provide new or enhanced shopping opportunities for residents in growth areas of the County such as Hickory Flat to the east and Ball Ground to the north.

At 20 square feet per person (about half the current retail per capita in the United States), Cherokee County’s projected growth through 2040 would support about 3.4 million square feet of additional retail, which could equate to 15-20 significant shopping centers. Through 2020, the new demand under these assumptions would be about 630,000 square feet county-wide including 300,000 in unincorporated areas. Existing vacancy would absorb some portion of this space provided it meets retailers’ needs. However, in the context of a hyper-competitive retail landscape and continued shift to online shopping, these retail nodes should be focused on grocery stores, dining, “experiential” shops and neighborhood services.

New development of conventional strip commercial or “big box” centers along key roadways or intersections would run counter to industry trends and quickly outstrip demand. These developments, like the former Save Rite on Route 140 south of Hickory Flat, are difficult to repurpose and are disconnected from neighborhoods. Nodes of flexible, mixed-use development that can be densified or reused over time will have a greater chance for long-term market success and community enjoyment.

CONCLUSIONS

Cherokee County faces a number of choices relative to the market conditions and forecasts described herein. While a segment of the market may prefer larger lots (2-acre+), builders may not be in a position to deliver that product at a price that would support the growth levels forecast by ARC. However, demand for high-quality family-oriented neighborhoods remains substantial. Meanwhile, the aging population suggests that compact areas of walkable, low-maintenance housing with nearby services would be very successful. Finally, growth and congestion will create demand for more employment opportunities in the County as well as shopping and dining opportunities beyond what’s presently available close to I-75. This could include everything from niche/specialty districts in places like Ball Ground, to grocery-anchored mixed-use development in Hickory Flat.

The outlook for Cherokee County is extremely positive. Maintaining that which makes the County such a desirable place while accommodating projected growth will require thoughtful planning and careful attention to housing diversity and protecting employment centers.

IMPORTANT NOTE ABOUT YOUR REPORT

This report was prepared as background to the Cherokee County Comprehensive Plan Update that is being undertaken by the Cherokee County Department of Planning and Land Use. No independent projections of population, household, or employment growth were prepared as part of this analysis. Rather, existing projections prepared by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) were reviewed and analyzed, and are presumed accurate. Additional data sources include the U.S. Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, ESRI, REIS, and the Cherokee County Tax Commissioner.

Any conclusions or recommendations based upon those projections are the opinion of the author, and there is no guarantee expressed or implied as to the actual outcomes or implications of these forecasts. This report has been prepared exclusively for Jacobs' client and no liability is accepted for any use or reliance on the report by third parties.

1. DEMOGRAPHIC & ECONOMIC OUTLOOK

1.1 POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

POPULATION

As of the 2010 Census, the population of Cherokee County was 214,346. This was an increase of 72,427 (7,243 per year) since the 2000 count. By 2015, the Atlanta Regional Commission estimated that there were 233,321 people in the County.

Cherokee is one of the fastest growing counties in the Atlanta region. From 2000 to 2010 the County's population grew at a rate of 4.2% per year. By contrast, over the same period the Atlanta Metropolitan Statistical Area grew at a rate of 2.2%.

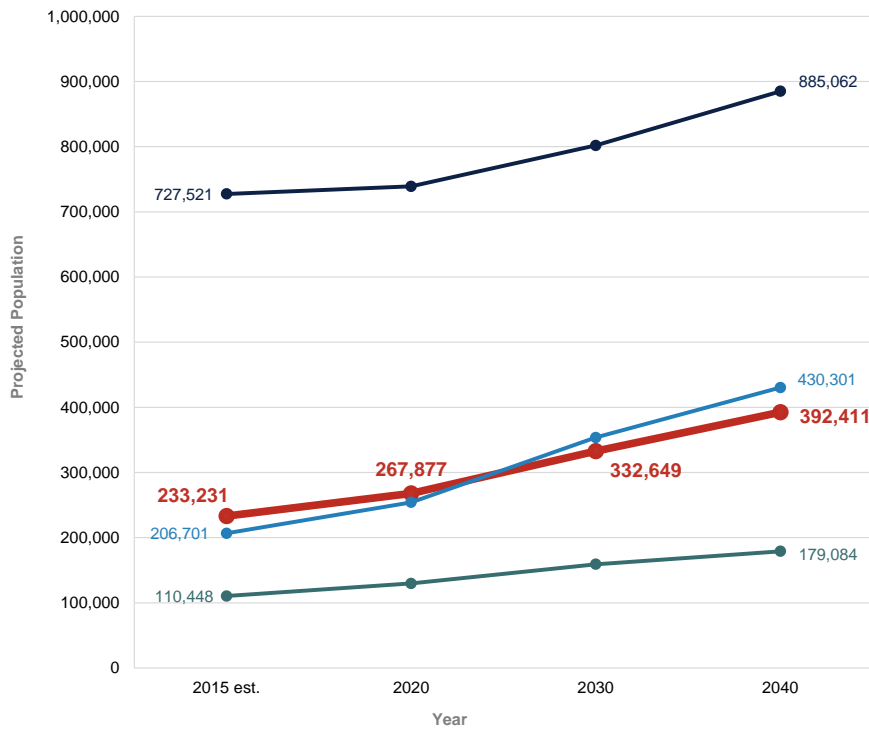
With the onset of the Great Recession toward the end of the decade, growth began to slow throughout the region. From 2010-2015, Cherokee County's population growth slowed to just 1.7% per year. This was still slightly higher than the region, which grew only 1.2% per year from 2010-2015.

From 2000 to 2010 Cherokee County grew significantly faster than Cobb County, its more developed neighbor to the south. Cobb County grew at a rate of 1.2% annually to reach a 2010 population of 688,078, before slowing very slightly to 1.1% annual growth from 2010-2015. Bartow County to the west grew 2.8% per year to reach 100,157 people by 2010, and then grew 2% per year through 2015. Forsyth County saw a significant population increase of 6% per year, reaching 175,511 people in 2010, followed by 3.3% annual growth through 2015.

Finally, the North Fulton County area that is generally west of Georgia 400 saw its population increase to 162,348 in 2010, representing a 2.2% annual growth rate.

Notably, from 2000 to 2015, Cherokee County went from a population that was 44% larger than Forsyth County, to just 13% larger than Forsyth.

Figure 1. ARC Population Projections



Within Cherokee County, Woodstock is the largest municipality with 27,910 people as of 2016. This is followed by Canton with 26,854, Holly Springs with 10,600, Ball Ground with 1,641, and Waleska with 740. The unincorporated area of the County has an estimated 2016 population of 168,750.

Canton grew the fastest among Cherokee's incorporated cities, at an annual rate of 8%. Woodstock followed at 6.4%, then Holly Springs at 5.8%, Ball Ground at 4.8%, and Waleska at 2.7%. The unincorporated area of Cherokee County grew at a 3.4% annual rate.

At the time of the 2008 comprehensive plan, the county's forecast predicted 277,228 people would be living in Cherokee County by 2015. This represented the "medium" forecast prepared for that assessment. With an actual population of 233,321 in 2015, real growth fell short of even the county's "low" forecast (237,872). Of course, this shortfall can be blamed almost entirely on the Great Recession, which took hold just after the completion of the 2008 plan. Nevertheless, the 25 year population forecast upon which the 2008 plan was based was already off by 44,000 people in 2015. The go-forward estimate presented in 2008 called for 2.8% annual growth from 2015 to 2030, and through that lens the 2.1% growth now forecast by ARC reflects a less dramatic moderation.

With that in mind, and considering the likelihood of future (though likely less severe) downturns, a conservative forecast is warranted.

According to the ARC, the population of Cherokee County is forecast to reach 267,877 by 2020 and 392,411 by 2040. This represents growth of 159,180 people, or roughly 6,367 per year. Overall, ARC forecasts annual growth of

Figure 2. ARC Projected Annual Population Growth

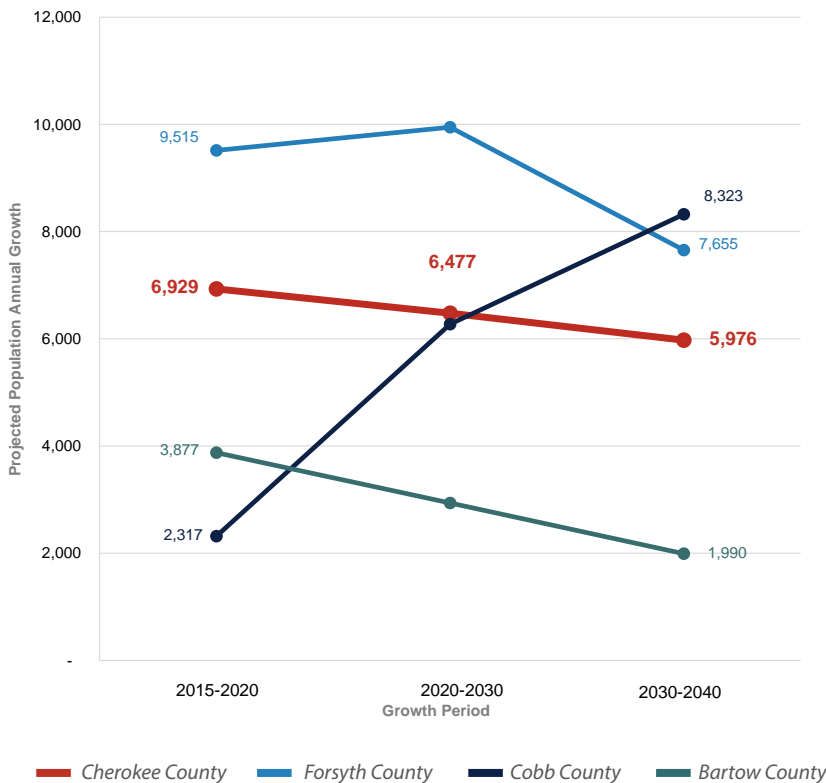


Table 1. 2000-2010 Population and Growth Rate

	2000	2010	Annual Growth	Growth Rate
USA	281,421,906	308,745,538	2,732,363	0.9%
Georgia	8,186,453	9,687,653	150,120	1.7%
20 County Region	4,228,492	5,260,436	103,194	2.2%
Cherokee Co.	141,919	214,346	7,243	4.2%
Forsyth Co.	98,391	175,511	7,712	6.0%
Cobb Co	607,751	688,078	8,033	1.2%
Bartow Co	76,019	100,157	2,414	2.8%
North Fulton Subarea	130,798	162,348	3,155	2.2%
Cherokee Uninc.	111,854	156,197	4,434	3.4%
Woodstock	12,812	23,910	1,110	6.4%
Canton	10,616	22,964	1,235	8.0%
Holly Springs	5,249	9,197	395	5.8%
Ball Ground	896	1,434	54	4.8%
Waleska	492	644	15	2.7%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Individual municipalities were analyzed using 2016 estimates from ESRI.

Table 2. ARC Population Projections

	2015 est.	2020	2030	2040
20 County Region	5,591,573	6,044,655	7,067,772	8,063,017
Cherokee Co.	233,231	267,877	332,649	392,411
Forsyth Co.	206,701	254,275	353,748	430,301
Cobb Co	727,521	739,106	801,831	885,062
Bartow Co	110,448	129,833	159,188	179,084

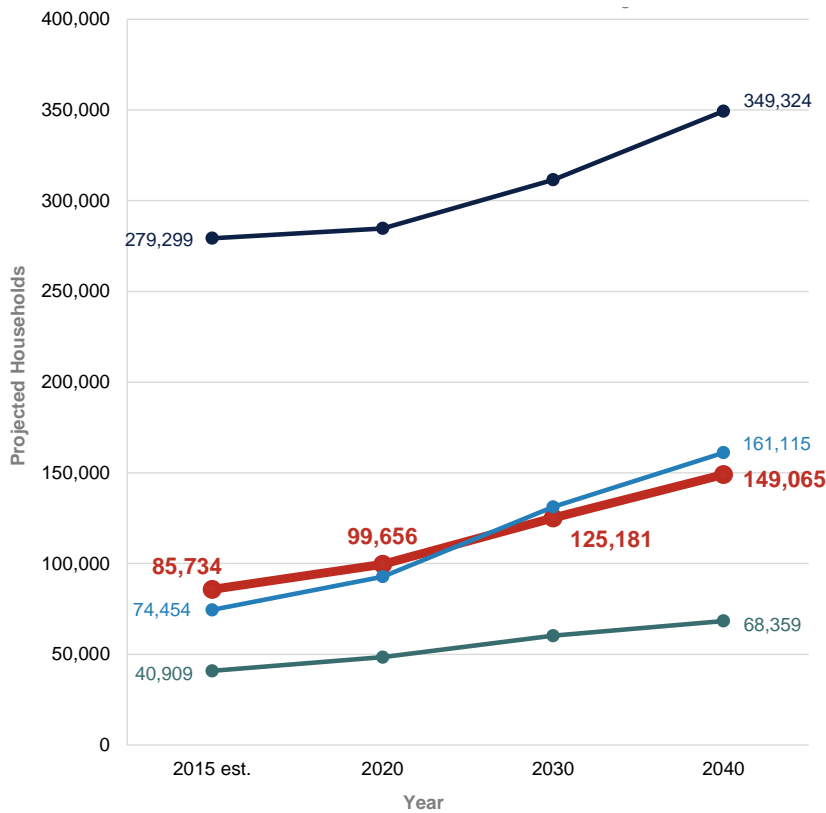
Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

Table 3. ARC Projected Annual Growth

	2015-2020		2020-2030		2030-2040	
	Annual Growth	Growth Rate	Annual Growth	Growth Rate	Annual Growth	Growth Rate
20 County Region	90,616	1.6%	102,312	1.6%	99,525	1.3%
Cherokee Co.	6,929	2.8%	6,477	2.2%	5,976	1.7%
Forsyth Co.	9,515	4.2%	9,947	3.4%	7,655	2.0%
Cobb Co	2,317	0.3%	6,273	0.8%	8,323	1.0%
Bartow Co	3,877	3.3%	2,936	2.1%	1,990	1.2%

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

Figure 3. ARC Household Projections

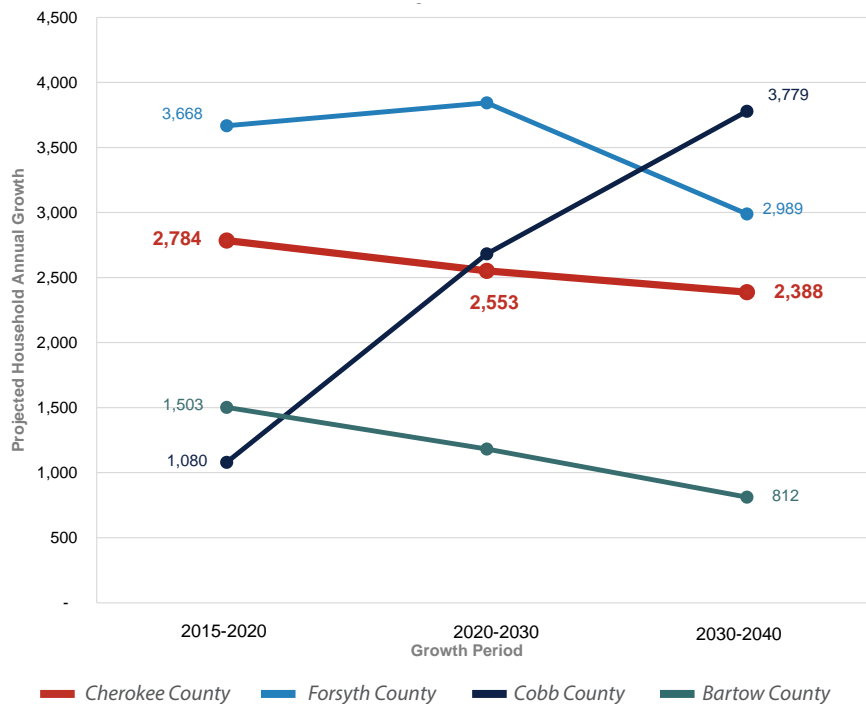


2.1% per year on average through 2040. This compares to a 1.5% annual growth forecast for the 20-county region over the same time frame. ARC's forecasts for the region show annual growth that peaks in 2030 before moderating into 2040.

The forecast growth rate of 2.1% represents a slowdown from the 3.4% annual growth experienced from 2000 to 2016, but is higher than the more recent performance of 1.7% annual growth from 2010 to 2015. In the short term, an uptick in population growth is expected with a projected annual growth rate of 2.8% between 2015 and 2020.

Also from 2015 to 2040, average annual population growth is expected to range from 0.8% in Cobb County, to 3.0% in Forsyth County. Based on these trends, ARC projects that Forsyth County's population will overtake Cherokee County around the year 2025. Cherokee will feel the growth pressure from Forsyth on the east side of the county, particularly as the SR-20 widening gets underway.

Figure 4. ARC Projected Annual Household Growth



Population growth in Cherokee County's incorporated areas will generally exceed the rate of growth in the county overall. Growth is expected to range from a low of 1.2% annually in Waleska, to as high as 2.6% annually in both Canton and Ball Ground. The actual distribution of population growth will depend on a variety of factors, including future land use designations and infrastructure development.

Population and household growth may be slowing.

Projected population growth over the next 25 years (1.7% to 2.8% annual rate of growth) is lower than actual growth was from 2000-2010.

Table 4. 2000-2010 Households and Growth Rate

	2000	2010	Annual Growth	Growth Rate
USA	105,480,101	116,716,292	1,123,619	1.0%
Georgia	3,006,369	3,585,584	57,922	1.8%
20 County Region	1,543,321	1,928,783	38,546	2.3%
Cherokee Co.	49,501	75,936	2,644	4.4%
Forsyth Co.	34,559	59,433	2,487	5.6%
Cobb Co	227,487	260,056	3,257	1.3%
Bartow Co	27,176	35,782	861	2.8%
North Fulton Subarea	48,480	60,886	1,241	2.3%
Cherokee Uninc	38,539	54,180	1,564	3.5%
Woodstock	4,971	9,586	462	6.8%
Canton	3,717	8,207	449	8.2%
Holly Springs	1,876	3,334	146	5.9%
Ball Ground	329	533	20	4.9%
Waleska	69	96	3	3.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 5. ARC Household Projections

	2015 est.	2020	2030	2040
20 County Region	2,114,947	2,299,363	2,713,886	3,130,823
Cherokee Co.	85,734	99,656	125,181	149,065
Forsyth Co.	74,454	92,795	131,228	161,115
Cobb Co.	279,299	284,699	311,530	349,324
Bartow Co.	40,909	48,423	60,235	68,359

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

HOUSEHOLDS

In 2000 there were 49,501 households in Cherokee County. By 2010 the number of households had increased to 75,936. This is an increase of 26,435 households, or 2,644 per year. ARC estimates that Cherokee's household base reached 85,734 in 2015.

Cherokee's household growth rate from 2000 to 2010 was 4.4% per year, compared to a 2.2% growth rate for the MSA. From 2010 to 2015, Cherokee's household growth rate decreased to 2.5%, still above the broader region, which grew 1.9% annually over the same period.

Growth in households relative to neighboring counties was consistent with the population growth trends highlighted above. Cobb County's household growth from 2000-2010 was just 1.3% to reach 260,056, and 1.4% from 2010 to 2015. Bartow County grew 2.8% per year to reach 35,782 households in 2010, and then grew 2.7% annually from 2010 to 2015. Forsyth grew 5.6% per year to reach 59,433 households in 2010, then grew 4.6% per year from 2010 to 2015. The North Fulton area grew households at a 2.3% annual rate to hit 60,886 in 2010.

Table 6. ARC Projected Annual Household Growth

	2015-2020		2020-2030		2030-2040	
	Annual Growth	Growth Rate	Annual Growth	Growth Rate	Annual Growth	Growth Rate
20 County Region	36,883	1.7%	41,452	1.7%	41,694	1.4%
Cherokee Co.	2,784	3.1%	2,553	2.3%	2,388	1.8%
Forsyth Co.	3,668	4.5%	3,843	3.5%	2,989	2.1%
Cobb Co	1,080	0.4%	2,683	0.9%	3,779	1.2%
Bartow Co	1,503	3.4%	1,181	2.2%	812	1.3%

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

Based on 2016 ESRI estimates, Woodstock had 10,980 households; Canton had 9,454; Holly Springs had 3,812; Ball Ground had 606, and Waleska had 105.

ARC household forecasts for Cherokee County show an average annual increase of 2.2% from 2015 to 2040. The highest rate of growth will occur in the near term, with a projected average increase of 3.1%, 2,784 households, per year between 2015 and 2020. The number of households in the county will increase by 63,331 over the 25-year period, or an average of 2,533 new households per year. The 20-County ARC region will increase on average 1.6% per year over the same period. With growth that outpaces the region, Cherokee County will increase from 4.1% of the region's households in 2015, to 4.8% in 2040.

The average growth rate for neighboring counties during the 25 year period will range from 0.9% in Cobb County, to 3.1% in Forsyth County.

Consistent with the population forecasts, Ball Ground and Canton are expected to see the highest household growth rate among Cherokee County municipalities, with average annual growth of 2.8% through 2040. Woodstock and Holly Springs are expected to average 2.4% annual household growth, and Waleska will lag slightly at 2.3%.

HOUSEHOLD SIZE

The average household size in Cherokee County as of the 2000 Census was 2.85. By 2010 that number had decreased slightly to 2.80.

Households in Cherokee County are slightly larger than in the broader MSA, which has an average of 2.68 people per household. This is consistent with Cherokee's strong appeal to families with children.

Neighboring counties saw largely consistent household sizes from 2000 to 2010. Forsyth County saw a notable increase from 2.83 in 2000 to 2.94 in 2010, while Cobb decreased from 2.64 to 2.61; and Bartow increased from 2.76 to 2.77. The 2010 average household size for North Fulton was 2.66.

Among Cherokee's incorporated areas, Holly Springs has the largest household size (2.76) while Woodstock has the smallest (2.48).

HOUSEHOLD COMPOSITION

As of the 2010 Census, 81% of all households in Cherokee County had two or more people, and 76% of all households were families. 41% of all households in the County have children present.

Compared to the broader Atlanta region, Cherokee has a fairly high percentage of families and of households with children. In the MSA, 68% of households are families and only 38% of households have children present. Neighboring Bartow County has 74% families and 40% households with children. Forsyth has a higher share of families at 80%, and a larger percentage of households with children at 47%. More urbanized Cobb County to the south has just 67% family households and 37% of households with children.

The unincorporated areas of Cherokee County have the largest share of families, at 80% of all households. 42% of households in the unincorporated county have children. In general the incorporated cities within the county have a smaller share of families and of households with children. Only 64% of Woodstock households are families, and 37% of Woodstock households have children present. Holly Springs is the most "family oriented" area of the county; 81% of households in Holly Springs are families and 44% have children present.

Table 7. Average Household Size

	2000	2010	2016 (Est.)	2021(Forecast)
USA	2.59	2.58	2.59	2.60
Georgia	2.65	2.63	2.65	2.66
Atlanta MSA	-	2.68	2.70	2.72
20 County Region	-	2.68	2.71	2.72
Cherokee Co.	2.85	2.80	2.84	2.85
Forsyth Co.	2.83	2.94	2.98	3.01
Cobb Co.	2.64	2.61	2.62	2.63
Bartow Co.	2.76	2.77	2.81	2.83
North Fulton Subarea	-	2.66	2.70	2.72
Woodstock	2.55	2.48	2.53	2.55
Canton	2.76	2.77	2.79	2.81
Holly Springs	2.81	2.76	2.78	2.80
Ball Ground	2.71	2.69	2.71	2.72
Waleska	2.43	2.58	6.10	5.93

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ESRI

Table 8. Household Characteristics

	Georgia	Atlanta MSA	Cherokee Co.	Forsyth	Cobb	Bartow	North Fulton Subarea	Woodstock	Canton	Holly Springs	Ball Ground	Waleska
1-person HH	25%	25%	19%	16%	26%	21%	23%	29%	25%	19%	17%	28%
2+person HH	75%	75%	81%	84%	74%	79%	77%	71%	75%	81%	83%	72%
Family	69%	68%	76%	80%	67%	74%	71%	64%	68%	75%	79%	65%
Husband-wife families	70%	70%	81%	85%	74%	74%	82%	76%	71%	79%	82%	68%
with own children	44%	48%	49%	55%	48%	44%	51%	53%	54%	55%	40%	36%
Other family (no spouse present)	30%	30%	19%	15%	26%	26%	18%	24%	29%	21%	18%	32%
With own children	54%	55%	55%	58%	56%	52%	58%	61%	64%	57%	62%	60%
Nonfamily HH	8%	9%	6%	5%	9%	6%	7%	9%	9%	7%	4%	10%
All with children	37%	38%	41%	47%	37%	40%	39%	37%	42%	44%	38%	30%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ESRI

AGE

In 2010 the median age in Cherokee County was 36.2, older than the Atlanta MSA at 34.9. This is up from 34.0 in 2000 and is expected to continue to increase to 37.6 by 2021. While the middle aged population of 25- to 54-year-olds continues to make up the majority of residents (see Table 10), a high rate of growth for residents over age 65 and a growing school aged cohort will have significant impacts on the demand for housing and services in the county.

According to ARC estimates, Cherokee's population in 2015 included 28,790 people over age 65, or 12.3% of the total population. In 2000, only 6.6% of the population was over 65. The population of Cherokee County over age 65 is expected to increase from 12.3% in 2015 to 20.1% in 2040. In the context of the county's overall population growth, this translates to an increase of 52,231 people over age 65. The Baby Boomers (at that point into their 80s) will still make up more than 10% of Cherokee County in 2040, despite accounting for just 2.6% of the region.

While the aging population is consistent with national and regional patterns, its impact on Cherokee County will be significant and will create demand for a range of services and housing types geared toward older residents. This will include everything from age targeted or age restricted housing types to assisted living and higher levels of care, along with medical services. Health and wellness in general will be important themes for both the aging population and the younger families that move in.

The county's aging population is echoed by a substantial school aged cohort. The largest share of Cherokee's population in 2015 was not the stalwart Baby Boomers or the widely touted Millennials, but rather the group known for now as "Generation Z", largely children under 18. Gen Z makes up over 26% of Cherokee's population, which is in line with the larger ARC region.

From 2015 to 2040 the school age (under 18) population will actually decrease as a percentage of the total population; however, the absolute number will increase from 61,875 to 95,609.

Table 9. Median Age of the Population, 2010-2021

	2010	2016	2021
Georgia	35.3	36.2	37.0
Atlanta MSA	34.9	35.8	36.4
Cherokee Co.	36.2	37.2	37.6
Forsyth Co.	36.7	37.4	37.6
Cobb Co.	35.4	36.3	37.0
Bartow Co.	36.2	37.4	38.6
North Fulton Subarea	37.6	38.7	39.7
Woodstock	34.0	35.7	36.2
Canton	30.6	33.4	33.5
Holly Springs	31.2	35.7	35.9
Ball Ground	37.9	39.4	39.3
Waleska	21.9	38.1	40.5

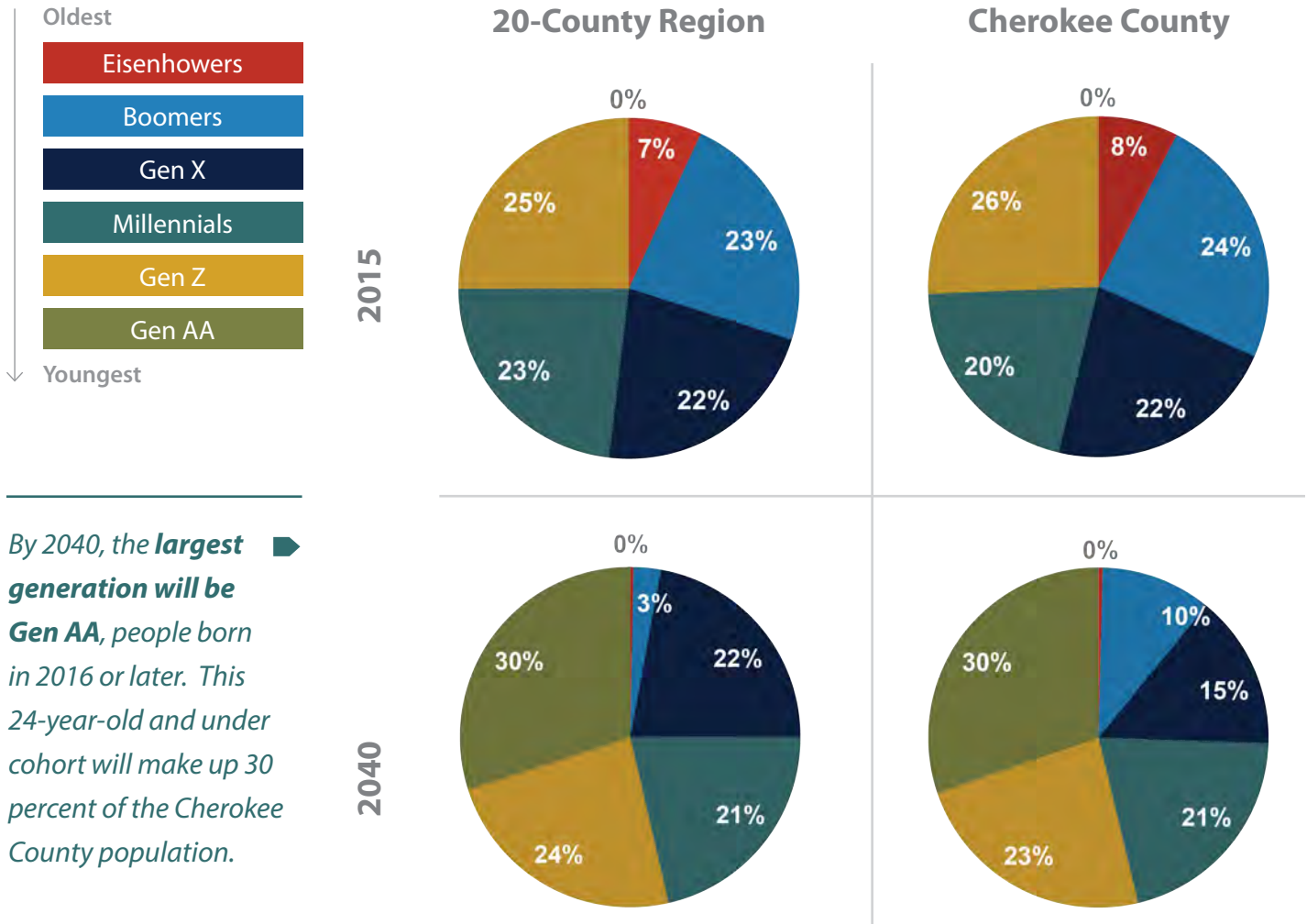
Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ESRI

Table 10. Cherokee County Population by Age Group

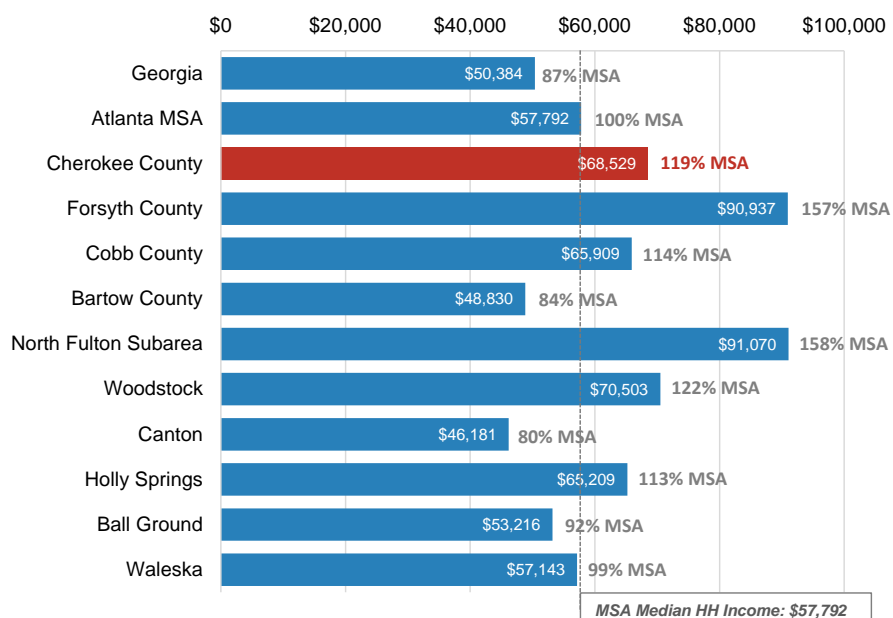
Age	2010	2016	2021	Annual Growth		Growth Rate	
				2010-2016	2016-2021	2010-2016	2016-2021
0-4	15,801	16,180	17,367	63	237	0.4%	1.4%
5-9	17,353	17,538	18,302	31	153	0.2%	0.9%
10-14	16,510	18,380	19,429	312	210	1.8%	1.1%
15-19	14,354	15,583	17,493	205	382	1.4%	2.3%
20-24	11,304	13,179	13,073	313	-21	2.6%	-0.2%
25-34	27,566	30,095	34,007	422	782	1.5%	2.5%
35-44	35,412	34,987	37,568	-71	516	-0.2%	1.4%
45-54	32,916	35,044	35,489	355	89	1.0%	0.3%
55-64	23,432	28,254	32,238	804	797	3.2%	2.7%
65-74	12,633	18,221	22,410	931	838	6.3%	4.2%
75-84	5,293	6,860	9,688	261	566	4.4%	7.1%
85+	1,772	2,174	2,628	67	91	3.5%	3.9%
Under 20	64,018	67,681	72,591	611	982	0.9%	1.4%
35-54	68,328	70,031	73,057	284	605	0.4%	0.8%
Over 65	19,698	27,255	34,726	1,260	1,494	5.6%	5.0%

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

Top 3 Cohorts Bottom 3 Cohorts

Figure 5. Generation Trends**Table 11. Generation Trends**

	2010		2015		2040	
Generation (Birth years)	20-County Region	Cherokee County	20-County Region	Cherokee County	20-County Region	Cherokee County
Eisenhowers (pre-1945)	9%	9%	7%	8%	0%	0%
	65+		70+		95+	
Boomers (1946-1965)	25%	26%	23%	24%	3%	10%
	45-64		50-69		75-94	
GenX (1966-1980)	23%	24%	22%	22%	22%	15%
	30-44		35-49		60-74	
Millennials (1981-1997)	24%	21%	23%	20%	21%	21%
	13-29		18-34		43-59	
GenZ (1998-2015)	19%	20%	25%	26%	24%	23%
	0-12		0-17		25-42	
GenAA (2016+)	0%	0%	0%	0%	30%	30%
	N/A		N/A		0-24	

Figure 6. Median Household Income, 2016**Table 12. Median Household Income, 2016**

	Income (\$)	% of MSA
Georgia	\$50,384	87%
Atlanta MSA	\$57,792	100%
Cherokee Co.	\$68,529	119%
Forsyth Co.	\$90,937	157%
Cobb Co	\$65,909	114%
Bartow Co	\$48,830	84%
North Fulton Subarea	\$91,070	158%
Woodstock	\$70,503	122%
Canton	\$46,181	80%
Holly Springs	\$65,209	113%
Ball Ground	\$53,216	92%
Waleska	\$57,143	99%

Source: ESRI

INCOME

Income statistics were collected using ESRI estimates for 2016. The median household income for 2016 in Cherokee County was estimated to be \$68,529. This is 18.6% higher than the MSA median income of \$57,792 and 36% higher than the state of Georgia's median income of \$50,384.

Among neighboring counties, Forsyth has the highest median income at \$90,937. Cobb County's median income is \$65,909, and Bartow's median income is \$48,830. The median income in the North Fulton area is \$91,070.

15% of households in Cherokee County earn less than \$25,000 per year and 14% earn more than \$150,000 per year. Forsyth skews significantly wealthier, with just 11% earning less than \$25,000 and 21% earning more than \$150,000. North Fulton has an even more affluent distribution, with 11% earning less than \$25,000 and 27% earning more than \$150,000.

The high income households in Forsyth and North Fulton will continue to seek new, upscale housing and Cherokee represents a strong alternative as options dwindle in those areas. This will place upward pressure on prices, raising land values and increasing demand for denser development in eastern Cherokee County.

Among Cherokee County cities, Woodstock has the highest median income at \$70,503, followed by Holly Springs (\$65,209), Waleska (\$57,143), Ball Ground (\$53,216), and Canton (\$46,181). Woodstock has demonstrated the tremendous appeal of walkable, authentic downtowns along with extensive trail networks and recreation options.

Table 13. Cherokee County 2016 Households by Income Range

	Cherokee Co.	Woodstock	Canton	Holly Springs	Ball Ground	Waleska
<\$15,000	5,536	765	1,077	266	35	9
\$15,000 - \$24,999	6,861	718	1,518	307	65	9
\$25,000 - \$34,999	6,932	972	1,059	302	92	10
\$35,000 - \$49,999	10,325	1,412	1,341	492	89	17
\$50,000 - \$74,999	14,611	1,873	1,839	774	119	20
\$75,000 - \$99,999	12,535	1,796	1,116	534	92	16
\$100,000 - \$149,999	14,837	2,344	819	645	84	15
\$150,000 - \$199,999	6,612	698	428	359	18	5
\$200,000+	4,565	402	255	134	12	4

RACE

In 2000, Cherokee County's population was 92% white, with 2% black, and an overall Hispanic population of 5%. By 2010, the white population had declined to 87%, while the black population increased to 6% and the Hispanic population hit 10%.

Despite these changing household characteristics, Cherokee remains less diverse than the MSA overall. Atlanta as a whole is 55% white, 32% black, and 10% Hispanic. Neighboring Forsyth has a similarly high white population (85%) but has a growing Asian population, currently 6% of all residents vs. 1% in Cherokee.

By 2040 the ARC projects that the white population of Cherokee County will make up just over 70% of the County, compared to 87% in 2010. Much of the shift will be toward Hispanics, which are projected to reach 17.6% of the population by 2040 compared to 10.7% today. This is a trend that is prevalent across the Atlanta region and the country as a whole.

EDUCATION

Cherokee County has a well-educated population and is known for its high quality public schools. In 2000, 26% of the population over age 25 had a college degree. By 2015, that had risen to 35%. In this respect Cherokee is becoming more aligned with Forsyth and Cobb counties, while Bartow continues to lag. As the population becomes more educated, demand will increase for higher skilled, professional employment opportunities close to home.

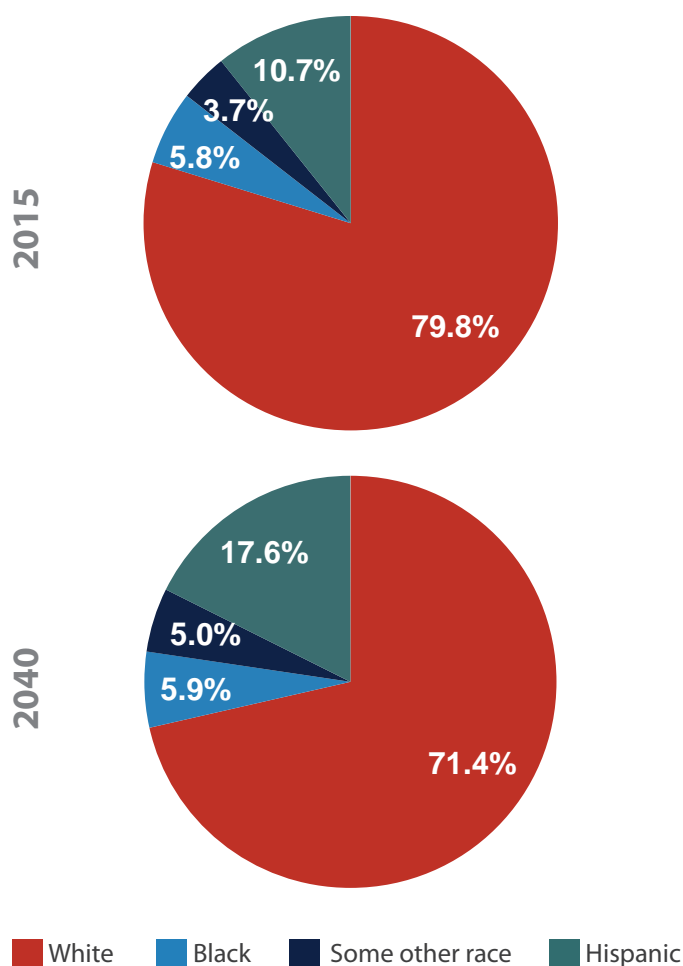
Figure 7. Cherokee County Projected Racial Characteristics

Table 14. Cherokee County Population by Race

	2000	2010
Total	141,919	214,346
Population Reporting One Race	-	209,875
White	131,128	185,536
Black	3,525	12,117
American Indian	534	814
Asian	1,183	3,538
Pacific Islander	-	135
Some other Race	5,533	7,735
Population Reporting Two or More Races	-	4,471
Total Hispanic Population	7,695	20,566

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 15. Cherokee County Projected Racial Characteristics

	2015	2040
White	79.8%	71.4%
Black	5.8%	5.9%
Some other Race	3.7%	5.0%
Hispanic	10.7%	17.6%

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

Table 16. Highest Level of Educational Attainment

	Cherokee Co.		Forsyth Co.		Cobb Co.		Bartow Co.	
Population 25 years and over	148,064		125,848		473,749		66,442	
Less than 9th grade	6,213	4%	4,243	3%	19,668	4%	4,132	6%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	9,423	6%	5,778	5%	22,906	5%	8,037	12%
High school graduate (includes equivalency)	36,756	25%	24,282	19%	92,335	19%	23,249	35%
Some college, no degree	33,747	23%	24,881	20%	96,298	20%	14,428	22%
Associate's degree	10,600	7%	9,251	7%	33,500	7%	4,789	7%
Bachelor's degree	35,078	24%	39,117	31%	138,291	29%	7,690	12%
Graduate or professional degree	16,247	11%	18,296	15%	70,751	15%	4,117	6%
Percent high school graduate or higher		89%		92%		91%		82%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher		35%		46%		44%		18%

Source: U.S. Census ACS 2011-2015

1.2 EMPLOYMENT CHARACTERISTICS

WORKFORCE

The size of the Cherokee County workforce (the population that lives in Cherokee County and is working or would like to work) averaged 124,452 in 2016. This is up 11% since 2010 and up more than 50% since 2000. The employed population of the county meanwhile averaged 119,163 in 2016, which is up 16% from 2010 and up 48% since 2000. The pre-recession high of 106,486 employed residents has therefore been eclipsed by nearly 13,000.

UNEMPLOYMENT

The unemployment rate in Cherokee County was just 4.2% in 2016, the lowest level since 2007. While the labor force in Cherokee continued to grow even through the Great Recession, the unemployment rate peaked at 8.9% in 2009.

INDUSTRIES

The largest single industry in Cherokee County as of 2015 is retail trade, with 11,105 jobs or 15.5% of local employment. Service industry jobs in a range of sectors make up 68.5% of all jobs, while agriculture, mining, manufacturing, and construction combine for 8,327 jobs (11.6%).

Employment within Cherokee County is forecast by ARC to grow by 51.8% as of 2040, representing a total increase of 37,105 positions or 1,484 per year. Industries that are

Table 17. Cherokee County Labor Force and Employment (Annual)

Year	Labor Force	Employment	Unemployment	Unemployment Rate
2000	82,743	80,578	2,165	2.6%
2001	85,741	83,286	2,455	2.9%
2002	88,668	85,028	3,640	4.1%
2003	91,178	87,455	3,723	4.1%
2004	94,256	90,610	3,646	3.9%
2005	99,737	95,569	4,168	4.2%
2006	104,485	100,633	3,852	3.7%
2007	109,716	105,748	3,968	3.6%
2008	112,409	106,486	5,923	5.3%
2009	110,242	100,467	9,775	8.9%
2010	112,578	102,687	9,891	8.8%
2011	113,843	104,542	9,301	8.2%
2012	115,046	106,895	8,151	7.1%
2013	115,720	108,586	7,134	6.2%
2014	118,102	111,619	6,483	5.5%
2015	120,323	114,707	5,616	4.7%
2016	124,452	119,163	5,289	4.2%

Source: BLS; Local Area Unemployment Statistics

Figure 8. Cherokee County Annual Employment

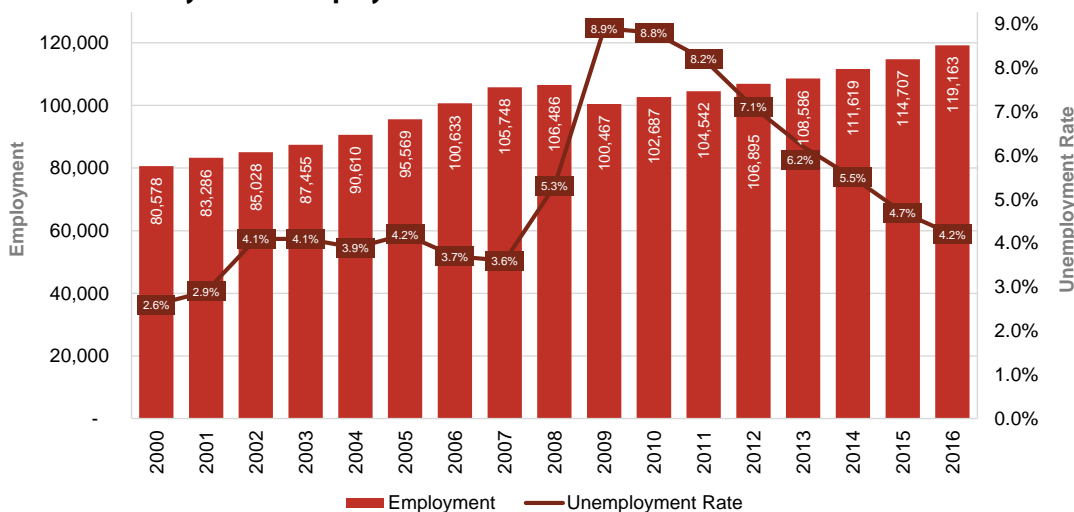


Table 18. Cherokee County Employment by Industry

Year	2015		2020		2030		2040		2015-2040 Growth	
Total	71,655		82,494		96,544		108,760		37,105	52%
Agriculture, Forestry, and Fishing	33	0.0%	33	0.0%	33	0.0%	26	0.0%	(7)	-21%
Mining	163	0.2%	182	0.2%	189	0.2%	195	0.2%	32	20%
Utilities	49	0.1%	49	0.1%	62	0.1%	76	0.1%	27	55%
Construction	4,705	6.6%	6,751	8.2%	8,408	8.7%	11,106	10.2%	6,401	136%
Manufacturing	3,377	4.7%	3,457	4.2%	3,960	4.1%	4,184	3.8%	807	24%
Wholesale Trade	2,171	3.0%	2,368	2.9%	2,642	2.7%	2,824	2.6%	653	30%
Retail Trade	11,105	15.5%	12,257	14.9%	14,321	14.8%	15,582	14.3%	4,477	40%
Transportation and Warehousing	991	1.4%	1,053	1.3%	1,044	1.1%	1,074	1.0%	83	8%
Information	638	0.9%	649	0.8%	657	0.7%	671	0.6%	33	5%
Finance and Insurance	4,284	6.0%	4,937	6.0%	5,398	5.6%	5,713	5.3%	1,429	33%
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	3,589	5.0%	4,161	5.0%	4,880	5.1%	5,496	5.1%	1,907	53%
Professional and Technical Services	4,526	6.3%	5,381	6.5%	6,110	6.3%	7,212	6.6%	2,686	59%
Management of Companies and Enterprises	382	0.5%	395	0.5%	407	0.4%	419	0.4%	37	10%
Administrative and Waste Services	6,023	8.4%	7,107	8.6%	7,377	7.6%	7,812	7.2%	1,789	30%
Educational Services	6,468	9.0%	7,519	9.1%	10,264	10.6%	11,438	10.5%	4,970	77%
Health Care and Social Assistance	4,699	6.6%	5,440	6.6%	6,912	7.2%	9,006	8.3%	4,307	92%
Arts Entertainment and Recreation	1,502	2.1%	1,619	2.0%	1,730	1.8%	1,829	1.7%	327	22%
Accommodation and Food Services	8,395	11.7%	9,877	12.0%	11,214	11.6%	12,017	11.0%	3,622	43%
Other Services Ex Public Admin	3,979	5.6%	4,011	4.9%	4,528	4.7%	4,925	4.5%	946	24%
Public Admin	4,576	6.4%	5,248	6.4%	6,408	6.6%	7,155	6.6%	2,579	56%

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

projected to grow at a faster rate than the County overall include Construction (2.6x), Healthcare and Social Assistance (1.8x), Educational Services (1.5x), and Professional and Technical Services (1.2x). Most other industries are expected to grow somewhat in line with the county overall, though slower growing industries include Information, Transportation and Warehousing, Mining, and Management of Companies.

Only Agriculture is expected to see a decline in employment, from 33 positions to 26 positions by 2040. It is worth noting that poultry processing, a large source of jobs in Cherokee County, is counted among manufacturing positions.

While the largest private employer in the County is Pilgrim's Pride, Cherokee is increasingly attracting higher-tech, higher-skilled jobs as shown in Table 19.

Table 19. Largest Private Employers, Cherokee County

Company	Local Employees	Industry
Pilgrim's Pride	835	Poultry Processing
Chart Industries, Inc.	552	BioMedical
Inalfa Roof Systems	415	Advanced Manufacturing
Universal Alloy Corporation	415	Aerospace
Piolax Corporation	250	Advanced Manufacturing
Belnick, Inc.	250	Distribution
Roytec Industries	250	Electrical Wire Assemblies
Meyn America, Inc.	225	Manufacturing & Distribution
Hydro-Chem	161	BioMedical
L.A.T. Sportswear, Inc.	104	Fashion Apparel
Kirk-Rudy, Inc.	95	Paper Handling Equipment
ERB Industries, Inc.	95	Safety Equipment
Schoen Insulation Services, Inc.	85	Machined Parts
Playnation Play Systems Inc.	85	Playground Equipment
Morrison Products, Inc.	75	Blower Wheels
Pillow Perfect, Inc.	70	Decorative Pillows
Awnex, Inc.	70	Awnings
Nor-Ral Composite Solutions	55	Aerospace

Source: Cherokee County Economic Development

Figure 9. Location of Largest Private Employers, Cherokee County

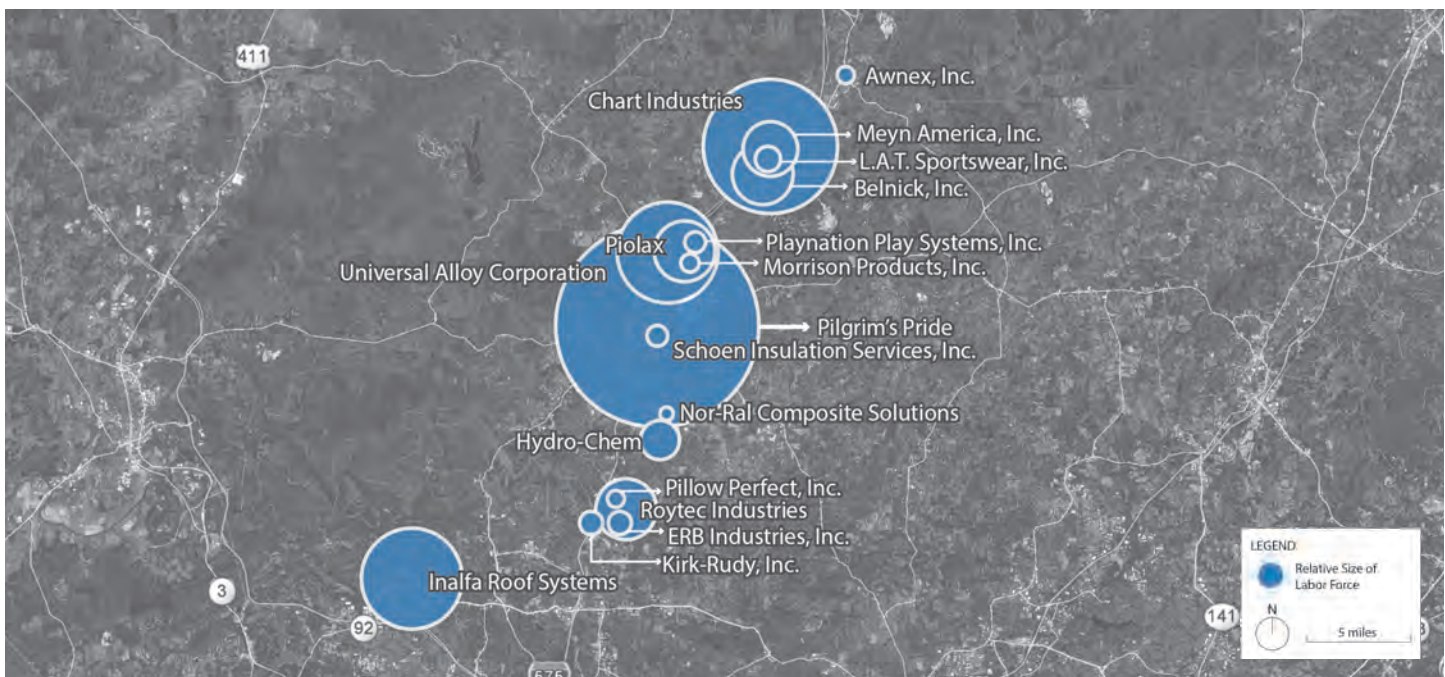


Table 20. Top Occupations, 2015

Occupation	Labor Force
Retail Sales Workers	6,473
Construction Trades	4,614
Food and Beverage Service	4,465
Information and Record Clerks	3,134
Other Office and Admin Support	2,872

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

Table 21. Top Occupations, 2040

Occupation	Labor Force
Construction Trades	9,874
Retail Sales Workers	9,178
Food and Beverage Service	6,597
Information and Record Clerks	4,257
Business Operations Specialists	4,136

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

Table 22. Projected Change in Top Occupations

Occupation	Labor Force Increase
Construction Trades	114%
Retail Sales Workers	42%
Information and Record Clerks	36%

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

OCCUPATIONS

The most prevalent occupation in Cherokee County today is retail sales, with 6,473 positions. This is followed by construction trades at 4,614. By 2040, the construction trades are expected to grow 114% to 9,874, while retail sales positions will grow 42% to 9,178.

These forecasts are logical considering the population growth that is expected over the next 25 years, and the types of jobs that will be required to support and service that larger population.

COMMUTING PATTERNS

Analysis of Census commuting patterns in 2014 demonstrates the relationship of jobs available in Cherokee County to the types of jobs filled by Cherokee County residents.

In 2014 there were 50,784 people employed in Cherokee County and 29,463 of them (57.9%) lived elsewhere. Most of the people commuting into Cherokee County for work have lower paid jobs: 68% earn less than \$40,000 per year and 30% earn less than \$15,000 per year. Those workers are typically commuting from neighboring counties – primarily Cobb and Fulton.

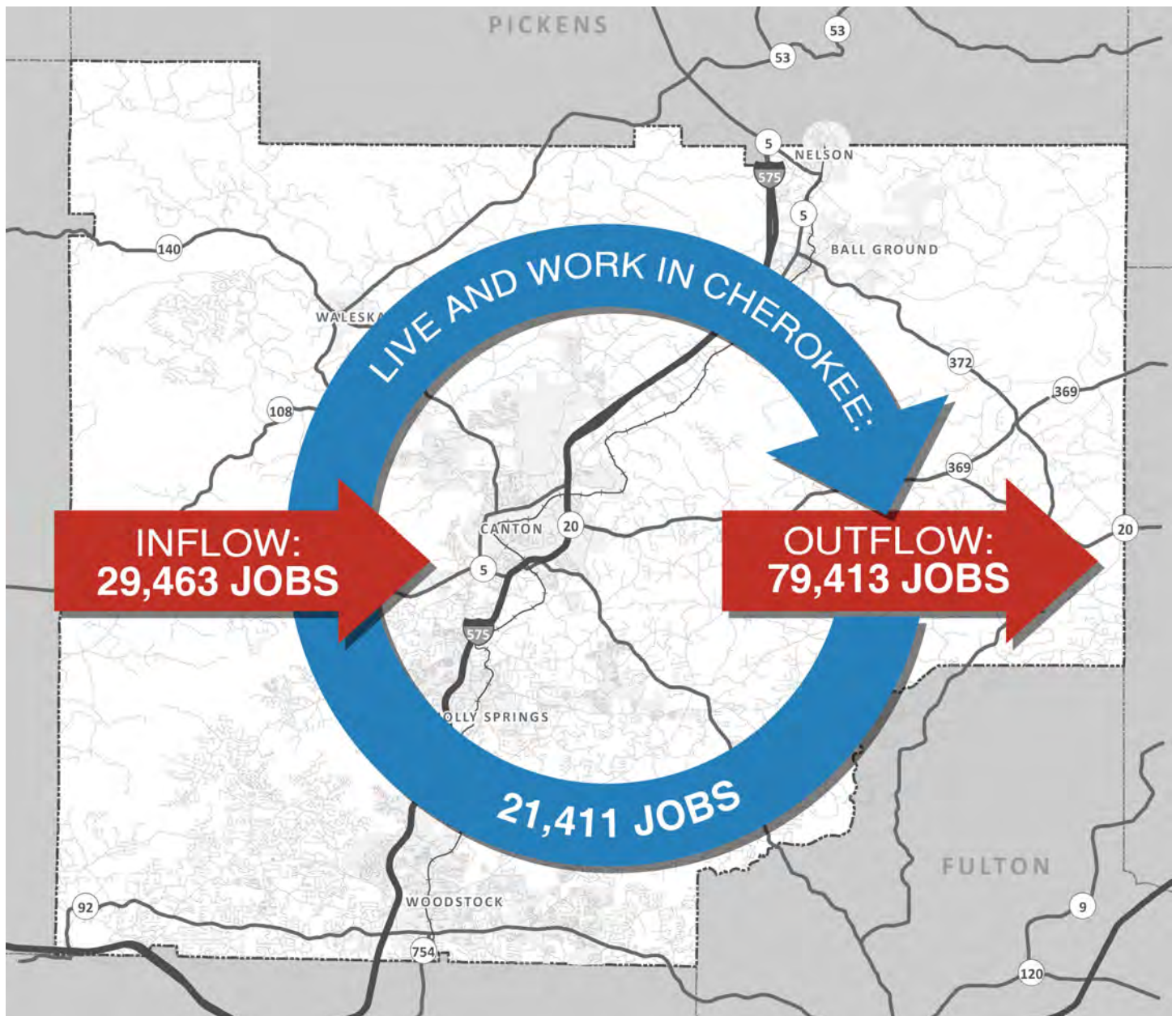
At the same time, there were 79,413 people living in Cherokee County but working elsewhere. The majority of these workers earn more than \$40,000 per year, and they commute primarily to Cobb and Fulton Counties. Just 21,411 (42%) of jobs in Cherokee County are filled by people who live in the County.

The overall dynamic is of a county where roughly 30,000 people commute in for fairly low-paying jobs, passing roughly 80,000 people commuting out for higher paying jobs.

JOB TO HOUSEHOLD RATIO

Based on ARC estimates for 2015, there are 71,655 jobs in Cherokee County and 85,734 households, a ratio of 0.9. In other words, there is less than one job in the county for each household that lives there. By contrast, the ratio of jobs to households for the 20-County ARC region is 1.4. As above, this highlights Cherokee's position as a net-exporter of labor. By 2040, the ratio of jobs to households in Cherokee is forecast to decline, to 0.7. This pattern is consistent with a county that is adding households faster than jobs, requiring an increased dependence on jobs outside the county and fewer opportunities to live and work within Cherokee. This presents the likelihood of increased traffic on major commuter routes like Interstate 575, as well as a continued dependence on the residential tax base.

Figure 10. Cherokee County Job Inflow and Outflow



Many educated, higher paid residents are commuting out of the county, presenting an **opportunity to attract higher end jobs** that match the resident profile.

Table 23. Cherokee County Commute Patterns, 2014 (All Jobs)

	Count	Share
Total Employed in County	50,874	
Live in Cherokee	21,411	42%
Live Elsewhere	29,463	58%
Total Residents Employed	100,824	
Work in Cherokee	79,413	79%
Work Elsewhere	21,411	21%
Outflow Job Characteristics		
External Jobs Filled by Residents	79,413	100.0%
Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	15,622	19.7%
Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	22,773	28.7%
Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	41,018	51.7%
Inflow Job Characteristics		
Internal Jobs Filled by Outside Workers	29,463	100.0%
Workers Earning \$1,250 per month or less	8,716	29.6%
Workers Earning \$1,251 to \$3,333 per month	11,351	38.5%
Workers Earning More than \$3,333 per month	9,396	31.9%

Table 24. Where Cherokee Residents are Employed

	Count	Share
Fulton County, GA	25,464	25.3%
Cobb County, GA	23,696	23.5%
Cherokee County, GA	21,411	21.2%
Gwinnett County, GA	6,197	6.1%
DeKalb County, GA	5,066	5.0%
Forsyth County, GA	4,419	4.4%
Bartow County, GA	1,580	1.6%
Clayton County, GA	864	0.9%
Pickens County, GA	857	0.8%
Hall County, GA	591	0.6%
All Other Locations	10,679	10.6%

Table 25. Where Cherokee Employees Live

	Count	Share
Cherokee County, GA	21,411	42.1%
Cobb County, GA	7,324	14.4%
Fulton County, GA	3,058	6.0%
Pickens County, GA	1,956	3.8%
Gwinnett County, GA	1,926	3.8%
Forsyth County, GA	1,637	3.2%
Bartow County, GA	1,533	3.0%
DeKalb County, GA	1,347	2.6%
Paulding County, GA	1,275	2.5%
Hall County, GA	453	0.9%
All Other Locations	8,954	17.6%

2. HOUSING MARKET OUTLOOK

2.1 CURRENT HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

HOUSING UNITS

As of the 2010 Census, there were 82,360 housing units in Cherokee County. This was up from 51,943 units in 2000, for an increase of 30,417 units or 3,042 per year. During the same period, the net increase in housing units per year averaged 2,755 in Forsyth County, 4,897 in Cobb County, and 1,107 in Bartow County. The North Fulton area averaged 1,447 new units over that timeframe.

From 2000 to 2010, despite accounting for just 3.8% of the region's housing stock, Cherokee accounted for 5.8% of the region's housing growth.

Most of the housing in Cherokee County is located in unincorporated areas. In 2010, 58,299 units were located in the unincorporated county, with 10,304 in Woodstock, 9,344 in Canton, 3,699 in Holly Springs, 603 in Ball Ground and 111 in Waleska.

From 2000 to 2010 the total number of housing units in Cherokee County increased by 59%, however this included substantial growth within the incorporated cities. Canton grew its housing stock 136% from 2000 to 2010. Woodstock increased 95%; Holly Springs increased 88%; Ball Ground grew 67%; and only Waleska lagged, at 44%.

ESRI estimates for 2016 place the total number of units at 89,624, or an increase of 7,264 (1,211 per year) from 2010. The Great Recession can be blamed for this substantial slowdown. The rate of housing production in Cherokee was 60% lower in the 2010-2016 period compared to the 2000-2010 timeframe. During the same period, net production declined just 19% in Forsyth County, 45% in Cobb, 91% in Bartow, and 46% in North Fulton.

TENURE

In 2010, 73% of housing units in the county were owner-occupied. 19% were renter-occupied, and 8% were vacant. The overall Atlanta MSA was 59% owner-occupied, 30% renter-occupied, and 11% vacant. Among neighboring counties, only Forsyth has a higher rate of owner-occupancy, at 79%.

Based on 2016 ESRI estimates, the rate of home-ownership in Cherokee County has declined somewhat since the last Census, to 70%, with rental units increasing to 22% - still well below the 34% of renter-occupied units in the broader region.

Among occupied units, the share of renters is lowest in the unincorporated areas of the county, estimated at 19% in 2016. Within Cherokee's incorporated cities, Waleska has the lowest renter rate at 17%. Conversely, Canton and Woodstock have a much higher percentage of renters at 44% and 32%, respectively. Cherokee is a single-family,

owner-occupied community. While the benefits of home ownership are well understood, there is some risk related to a shortage of rental housing, particularly in the context of today's younger households, who generally have saved less than their parents at the same age, and who may prefer the

flexibility of renting. Especially as housing costs in Cherokee continue to escalate, the mix toward owner-occupied housing makes it challenging to attract and retain critical workers like teachers and first responders.

Table 26. Number of Housing Units

Geography	2000	2010	2016 (Est.)	2021 (Forecast)
USA	115,904,641	131,704,730	137,928,754	143,620,503
Georgia	3,281,737	4,088,801	4,308,790	4,530,292
Atlanta MSA	1,650,700	2,172,967	2,300,363	2,449,974
Cherokee Co.	51,943	82,360	89,624	97,671
Forsyth Co.	36,499	64,052	77,380	92,106
Cobb Co	237,522	286,490	302,697	322,397
Bartow Co	28,751	39,823	40,423	43,486
N Fulton	50,427	64,892	69,561	74,794
Unincorporated Cherokee	40,308	58,299	62,205	67,408
Woodstock	5,280	10,304	11,783	12,951
Canton	3,951	9,344	10,629	11,844
Holly Springs	1,965	3,699	4,202	4,603
Ball Ground	362	603	684	733
Waleska	77	111	121	132

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, ESRI

Table 27. Households by Tenure

	2000		2010		2016		2021	
MSA								
Owner Occupied	-	-	1,285,066	59%	1,282,688	56%	1,365,140	56%
Renter Occupied	-	-	658,819	30%	783,097	34%	836,356	34%
Vacant	-	-	229,082	11%	234,578	10%	248,478	10%
Cherokee County								
Owner Occupied	49,495	53%	60,400	73%	63,063	70%	68,664	70%
Renter Occupied	41,503	44%	15,536	19%	19,751	22%	21,798	22%
Vacant	2,442	3%	6,424	8%	6,810	8%	7,209	7%

"Table 27. Households by Tenure" (Continued)

	2000		2010		2016		2021	
Forsyth								
Owner Occupied	-	-	50,876	79%	59,774	77%	71,578	78%
Renter Occupied	-	-	8,557	13%	12,230	16%	14,789	16%
Vacant	-	-	4,619	7%	5,376	7%	5,739	6%
Cobb								
Owner Occupied	-	-	173,965	61%	173,493	57%	185,189	57%
Renter Occupied	-	-	86,091	30%	103,518	34%	111,640	35%
Vacant	-	-	26,434	9%	25,686	8%	25,568	8%
Bartow								
Owner Occupied	-	-	24,756	62%	23,790	59%	24,817	57%
Renter Occupied	-	-	11,026	28%	12,579	31%	13,161	30%
Vacant	-	-	4,041	10%	4,054	10%	5,508	13%
Unincorporated Cherokee County								
Owner Occupied	-	-	46,002	79%	46,713	75%	50,658	75%
Renter Occupied	-	-	8,178	14%	11,144	18%	12,182	18%
Vacant	-	-	4,119	7%	4,348	7%	4,568	7%
Canton								
Owner Occupied	1,390	48%	4,667	50%	5,275	50%	5,891	50%
Renter Occupied	1,323	46%	3,540	38%	4,179	39%	4,651	39%
Vacant	172	6%	1,137	12%	1,175	11%	1,302	11%
Woodstock								
Owner Occupied	2789	68%	6,628	64%	7,498	64%	8,167	63%
Renter Occupied	1,056	26%	2,958	29%	3,481	30%	3,925	30%
Vacant	233	6%	718	7%	803	7%	859	7%
Holly Springs								
Owner Occupied	877	76%	2,643	71%	3,004	71%	3,312	72%
Renter Occupied	232	20%	691	19%	809	19%	884	19%
Vacant	52	4%	365	10%	390	9%	407	9%
Ball Ground								
Owner Occupied	188	66%	413	68%	486	71%	541	74%
Renter Occupied	59	21%	120	20%	120	18%	136	19%
Vacant	37	13%	70	12%	78	11%	56	8%
Waleska								
Owner Occupied	72	64%	47	42%	87	72%	95	72%
Renter Occupied	40	36%	49	44%	18	15%	20	15%
Vacant	-	0%	15	14%	16	13%	17	13%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ESRI

AGE OF HOUSING

Data from the 2011-2015 American Community Survey characterizes the age of housing in Cherokee County. Not surprisingly given the construction boom in the early 2000s, 36.9% of housing in Cherokee County was built from 2000-2009, with just 2.5% built in the ensuing drop off from 2010-2015. A further 26.1% of housing was built in the 1990s. At least 65% of all housing in the county is therefore less than 20 years old. Only 2.5% of housing in the county was built prior to World War II, or about 2,200 units. This new housing stock is of generally high quality, though neighborhoods may lack the historic charm found elsewhere in the region.

Table 28. Renter Share of Occupied Housing

	2010	2016	2021
Atlanta MSA	34%	38%	38%
Cherokee Co.	20%	24%	24%
Forsyth Co.	14%	17%	17%
Cobb Co.	33%	37%	38%
Bartow Co.	31%	35%	35%
Canton	43%	44%	44%
Woodstock	31%	32%	32%
Holly Springs	21%	21%	21%
Ball Ground	23%	20%	20%
Waleska	51%	17%	17%

Table 29. Housing Units by Year Structure Built, Cherokee County

	Units	Percent
Total housing units	84,607	
Built 2014 or later	254	0.3%
Built 2010 to 2013	1,861	2.2%
Built 2000 to 2009	31,220	36.9%
Built 1990 to 1999	22,082	26.1%
Built 1980 to 1989	15,314	18.1%
Built 1970 to 1979	7,953	9.4%
Built 1960 to 1969	2,369	2.8%
Built 1950 to 1959	1,438	1.7%
Built 1940 to 1949	761	0.9%
Built 1939 or earlier	1,354	1.6%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ACS 2011-2015 Estimates

UNITS PER STRUCTURE

81.7% of housing units in the county are single unit, detached, with another 4.1% of units single-attached (townhomes). More than half of the multifamily stock is in structures with fewer than 20 units. To the extent that there are larger multi-family developments in the county, they are primarily located in more urbanized areas like Canton and Woodstock. There may be opportunities to provide more variety in terms of smaller multifamily duplexes or quads within downtowns or other mixed use nodes, though the lion's share of the county will continue to demand single family detached homes.

Table 30. 2010 Housing Units by Units in Structure, Cherokee County

Total housing units	84,607	
1-unit, detached	69,124	81.7%
1-unit, attached	3,469	4.1%
2 units	508	0.6%
3 or 4 units	1,015	1.2%
5 to 9 units	931	1.1%
10 to 19 units	2,538	3.0%
20 or more units	3,384	4.0%
Mobile home	3,638	4.3%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	-	0.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ACS 2011-2015 Estimates

◀ *Housing in Cherokee County tends to be **high quality, single-family homes**. More than 65 percent of all housing in the county is less than 20 years old and more than 81 percent of units are single-family detached homes.*

2.2 HOUSING MARKET PERFORMANCE

HOME VALUES

According to 2016 ESRI estimates, the median home value in Cherokee County was \$213,207. This is 11% higher than the median value of \$192,312 in the Atlanta MSA. Neighboring Forsyth County has a median value of \$295,812, while Cobb County's median value is just above Cherokee at \$222,740. Bartow County's median value is just \$137,798 – well below Cherokee and the overall MSA.

Among Cherokee's incorporated cities, the highest median value is in Waleska at \$236,667, followed by Holly Springs at \$197,471; Woodstock at \$191,662; Canton at \$190,948; and Ball Ground at \$170,122.

Table 31. Median Home Value, 2016

	Home Value	% of MSA
USA	\$ 198,891	103%
Georgia	\$ 161,440	84%
Atlanta MSA	\$ 192,312	100%
Cherokee Co.	\$ 213,207	111%
Forsyth Co.	\$ 295,812	154%
Cobb Co.	\$ 222,740	116%
Bartow Co.	\$ 137,798	72%
N. Fulton Subarea	\$ 337,483	175%
Canton	\$ 190,948	99%
Woodstock	\$ 191,662	100%
Holly Springs	\$ 197,471	103%
Ball Ground	\$ 170,122	88%
Waleska	\$ 236,667	123%

Source: ESRI

Figure 11. Median Home Value, 2016

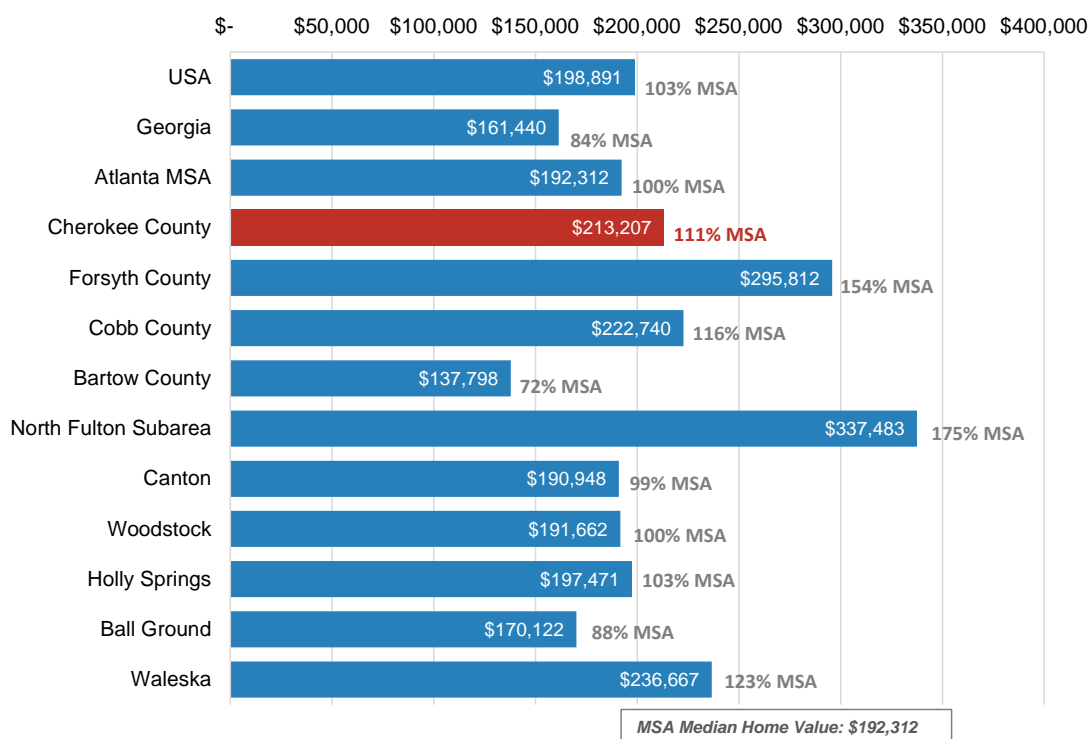
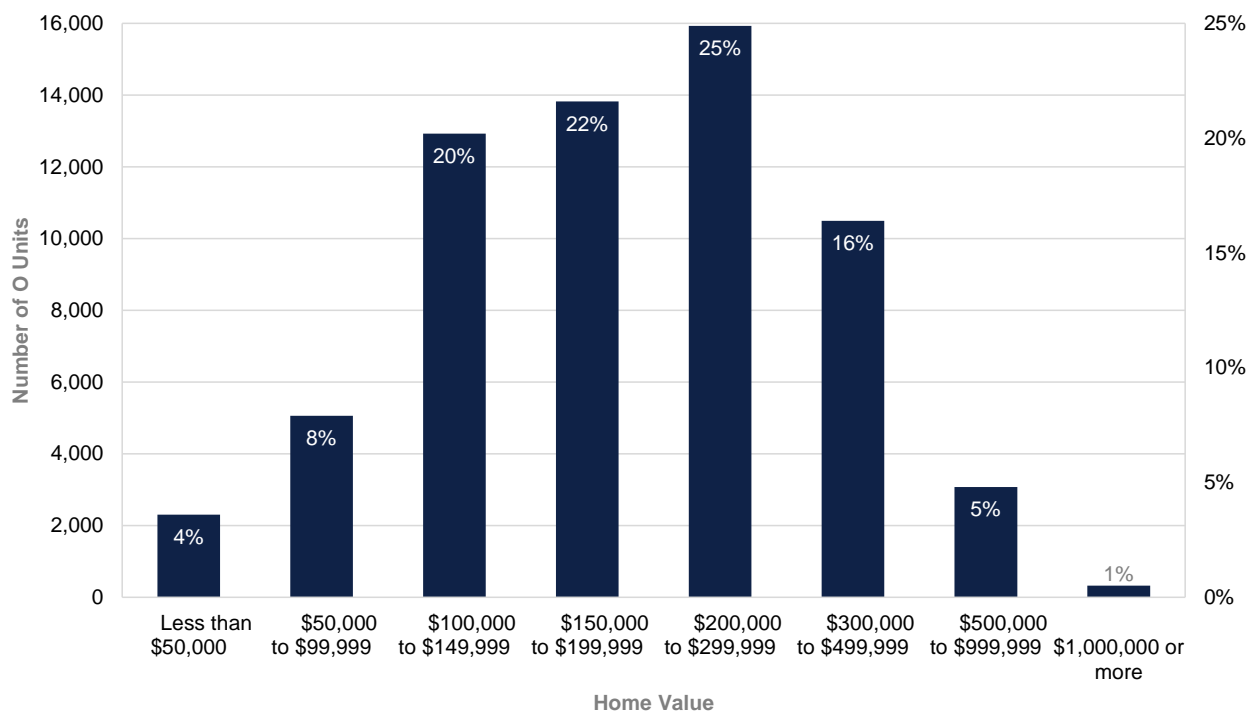


Figure 12. Cherokee County Distribution of Owner-Occupied Home Values**Table 32. Cherokee County Distribution of Owner-Occupied Home Values**

All Units	61,211	
Less than \$50,000	2,204	3.60%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	4,836	7.90%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	12,365	20.20%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	13,222	21.60%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	15,242	24.90%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	10,039	16.40%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	2,938	4.80%
\$1,000,000 or more	306	0.50%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau; ACS 2011-2015 Estimates

RENTS

According to apartment market data provider REIS, the average rent in the County in the first quarter of 2017 was \$1,041, with a vacancy rate of 4.6%. In the last 10 years, Cherokee County has added just 1,611 rental units, leaving Cherokee as the second-smallest apartment submarket in the Atlanta region. Overall rents in Cherokee are 5% below the regional average.

The majority of market rate rental apartments in Cherokee are located in the cities of Canton or Woodstock. A sample of

apartment listings suggests a range from \$755 to \$1,350 per month for one-bedroom apartments that average just below 750 square feet. Two bedroom units range from \$881 to \$1,950 per month and average about 1,100 square feet; and three bedroom units range from \$1,004 to \$1,870 per month at about 1,550 square feet. The average rent per square foot for the sampled units is \$1.03, with the highest rents found at Park 9 Woodstock, which starts at \$1.61 per foot for a one-bedroom apartment.

Table 33. Sample of Rental Apartment Listings, Cherokee County (Including Incorporated Areas)

	Rent	SF	\$/SF
<i>One-Bedroom Units</i>			
261 Woodstock	\$ 1,350	925	\$ 1.46
Lancaster Ridge Canton	\$ 836	850	\$ 0.98
Heights at Town Lake	\$ 1,100	800	\$ 1.38
Park 9 Woodstock	\$ 1,011	627	\$ 1.61
Harbor Creek Canton	\$ 854	806	\$ 1.06
Riverview Canton	\$ 799	560	\$ 1.43
Heritage at Riverstone Canton	\$ 755	725	\$ 1.04
The Crest at Laurel Canyon Canton	\$ 875	657	\$ 1.33
<i>Two-Bedroom Units</i>			
260 Woodstock	\$ 1,950	1562	\$ 1.25
Lancaster Ridge Canton	\$ 984	960	\$ 1.03
Riverstock, Woodstock	\$ 881	1167	\$ 0.75
Heights at Town Lake	\$ 1,125	1029	\$ 1.09
Park 9 Woodstock	\$ 1,478	1113	\$ 1.33
Harbor Creek Canton	\$ 1,080	1143	\$ 0.94
Riverview Canton	\$ 960	768	\$ 1.25
Heritage at Riverstone Canton	\$ 990	1122	\$ 0.88
The Crest at Laurel Canyon Canton	\$ 1,125	1099	\$ 1.02
<i>Three-Bedroom Units</i>			
Lancaster Ridge Canton	\$ 1,149	1140	\$ 1.01
Riverstock, Woodstock	\$ 1,004	1367	\$ 0.73
Heights at Town Lake	\$ 1,475	1417	\$ 1.04
Park 9 Woodstock	\$ 1,558	1439	\$ 1.08
Harbor Creek Canton	\$ 1,231	1435	\$ 0.86
Riverview Canton	\$ 1,870	2755	\$ 0.68
Heritage at Riverstone Canton	\$ 1,170	1326	\$ 0.88

Source: Forrent.com

RESIDENTIAL BUILDING PERMITS

From 2000-2016 Cherokee County has averaged 2,396 building permits per year for new residential construction. Permit issuance peaked in 2005 with 4,162 permits issued, and the most recent recession-driven trough was in 2009, with just 407 permits. 2016 saw 2,494 residential building permits pulled, the highest level since 2006.

Regionally, housing production remains well below pre-recession levels. In 2016, the Atlanta MSA saw 23,100 single-family building permits issued, less than half of the 61,837 permits issued in 2005. Multifamily permits have recovered substantially but are still below peak levels.

The vast majority of permits issued are for single-family homes in the unincorporated areas of the county. Since 2000, only 544 multifamily permits were issued in unincorporated Cherokee, with none since 2002. Overall since 2000, multifamily units have made up just 12.3% of total permits in Cherokee, and less than 3% of permits in the unincorporated county. This compares to 34% of permits in the MSA, 38% in Cobb County, 13% in Bartow, and 9% in Forsyth.

Cherokee's incorporated cities tend to see fairly moderate levels of new construction. Since 2000, Canton has averaged 458 permits per year, Woodstock has averaged 525; Holly Springs 191; and Ball Ground just 13 permits per year. Canton has averaged the highest percentage of multifamily building permits at 34% with Woodstock just behind at 33%.

Table 34. Historic Residential Building Permits (New Construction)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	Average 2000-2016	Average 2011-2016
Atlanta MSA																			
<i>Total</i>	65,767	67,001	68,536	66,611	74,256	73,144	68,495	44,943	19,362	6,567	7,608	8,668	14,395	24,337	26,683	30,342	36,357	41,357	23,464
<i>SF</i>	48,223	50,096	52,056	55,207	57,527	61,837	54,156	31,262	12,057	5,455	6,417	6,248	9,182	14,864	16,984	19,995	23,100	30,863	15,062
<i>MF</i>	17,544	16,905	16,480	11,404	16,729	11,307	14,339	13,681	7,305	1,112	1,191	2,420	5,213	9,473	9,699	10,347	13,257	10,494	8,402
Cherokee County																			
<i>Total</i>	3,776	3,611	3,795	3,804	4,084	4,162	3,723	2,231	912	407	549	439	1,213	1,403	2,123	2,000	2,494	2,396	1,612
<i>SF</i>	2,882	2,769	3,199	3,442	3,812	4,065	3,485	2,212	908	407	449	439	741	1,403	1,576	1,847	2,100	2,102	1,351
<i>MF</i>	894	842	596	362	272	97	238	19	4	0	100	0	472	0	547	153	394	294	261
Forsyth																			
<i>Total</i>	3,389	2,539	2,448	3,147	3,085	4,173	4,770	2,877	1,478	825	1,125	1,174	2,273	2,775	3,194	3,502	3,515	2,723	2,739
<i>SF</i>	3,181	2,539	2,448	3,083	2,943	4,165	4,183	2,877	1,259	825	1,125	1,174	1,862	2,560	2,576	2,984	2,741	2,501	2,316
<i>MF</i>	208	0	0	64	142	8	587	0	219	0	0	0	411	215	618	518	774	221	423
Cobb																			
<i>Total</i>	6,642	5,657	5,556	5,963	6,889	6,142	4,518	2,945	1,068	550	1,013	1,758	2,245	2,676	3,103	2,129	4,017	3,698	2,655
<i>SF</i>	5,455	4,513	4,703	4,993	5,432	5,123	3,346	1,901	727	409	713	886	1,193	1,594	1,391	1,477	1,654	2,677	1,366
<i>MF</i>	1,187	1,144	853	970	1,457	1,019	1,172	1,044	341	141	300	872	1,052	1,082	1,712	652	2,363	1,021	1,289
Bartow																			
<i>Total</i>	1,355	1,418	1,153	1,188	1,099	1,085	1,053	606	360	128	144	77	73	150	221	348	514	645	231
<i>SF</i>	1,222	1,031	981	882	1,023	1,047	1,003	572	351	128	82	77	73	150	221	348	514	571	231
<i>MF</i>	133	387	172	306	76	38	50	34	9	0	62	0	0	0	0	0	0	75	0
Unincorporated Cherokee																			
<i>Total</i>	2,393	2,024	2,028	1,748	1,958	2,185	1,761	1,233	521	216	234	228	362	723	809	928	1,189	1,208	707
<i>SF</i>	2,097	2,024	1,780	1,748	1,954	2,185	1,761	1,233	521	216	234	228	362	723	809	928	1,189	1,176	707
<i>MF</i>	296	0	248	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	0
Canton																			
<i>Total</i>	608	762	829	815	998	725	771	452	136	46	99	46	112	170	282	259	669	458	256
<i>SF</i>	184	342	484	793	781	631	747	437	132	46	99	46	102	170	282	254	311	344	194
<i>MF</i>	424	420	345	22	217	94	24	15	4	0	0	0	10	0	0	5	358	114	62
Woodstock																			
<i>Total</i>	567	768	821	1,109	862	848	571	225	112	75	166	115	701	301	827	526	330	525	467
<i>SF</i>	393	346	821	769	862	848	477	225	112	75	66	115	239	301	280	378	330	390	274
<i>MF</i>	174	422	0	340	0	0	94	0	0	0	100	0	462	0	547	148	0	135	193
Holly Springs																			
<i>Total</i>	208	57	105	132	266	404	620	321	143	70	50	50	38	141	179	213	252	191	146
<i>SF</i>	208	57	102	132	215	401	500	317	143	70	50	50	38	141	179	213	216	178	140
<i>MF</i>	0	0	3	0	51	3	120	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	36	13	6
Ball Ground																			
<i>Total</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	68	26	74	54	13	37
<i>SF</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	68	26	74	54	13	37
<i>MF</i>	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Figure 13. Historic Residential Building Permits (New Construction), Atlanta MSA

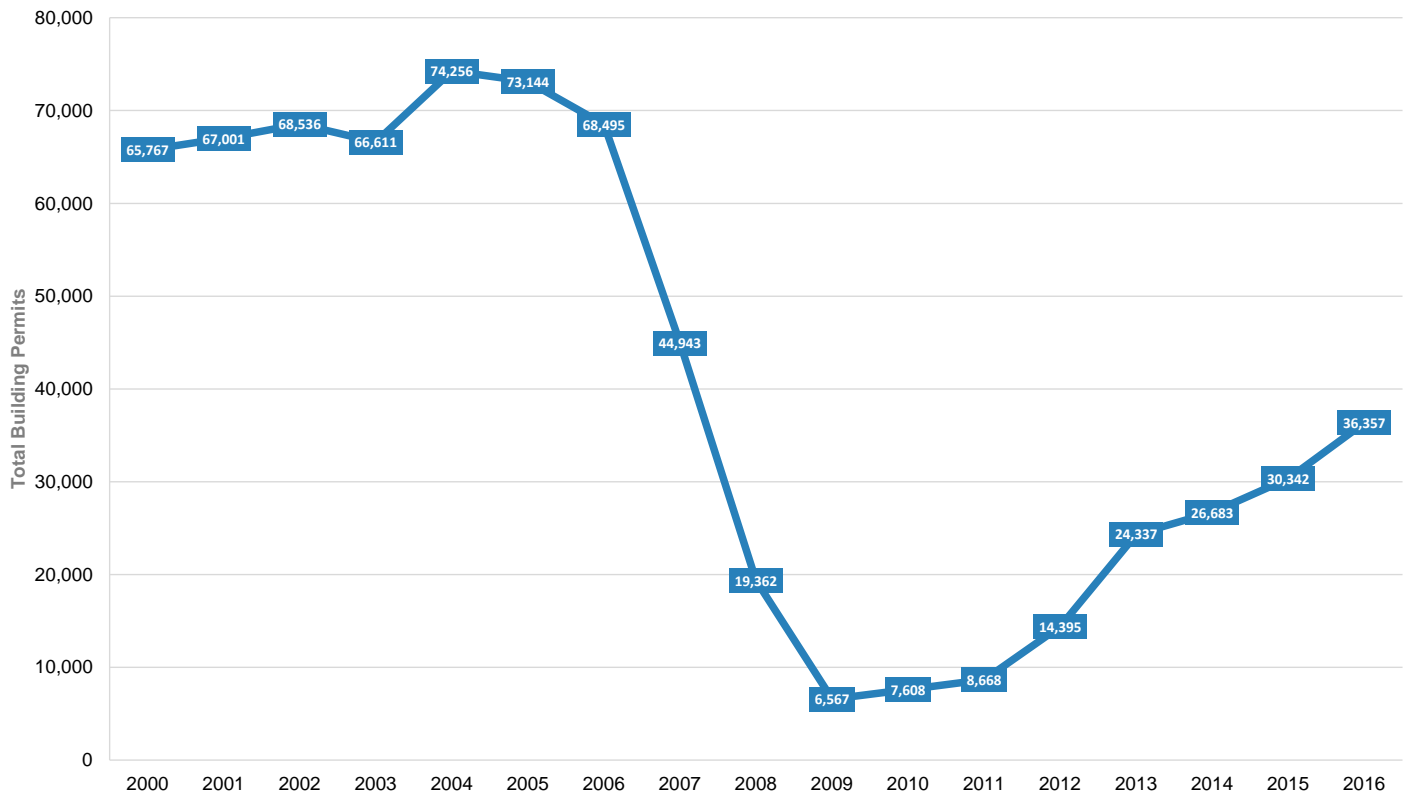


Figure 14. Historic Residential Building Permits (New Construction)

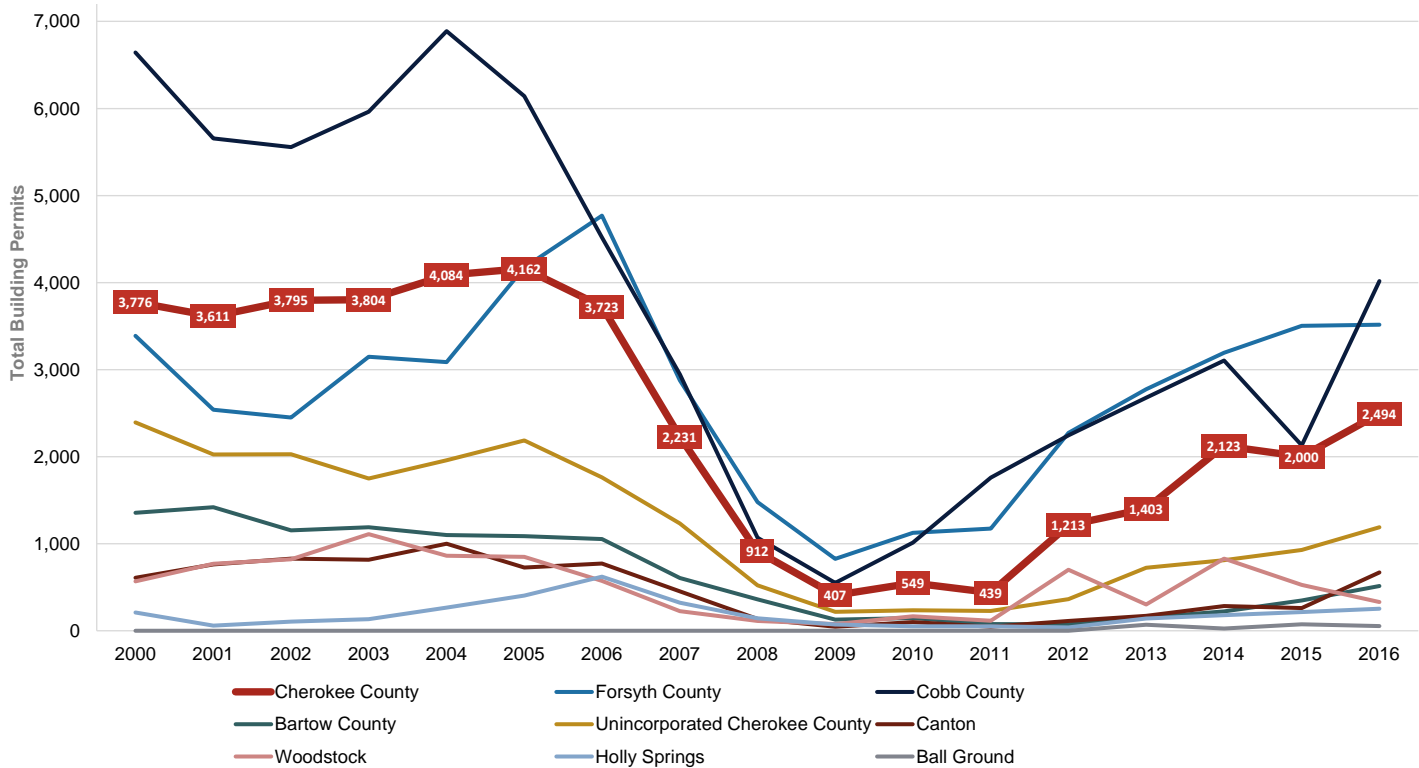


Figure 15. Cherokee County Average Home Sales Price

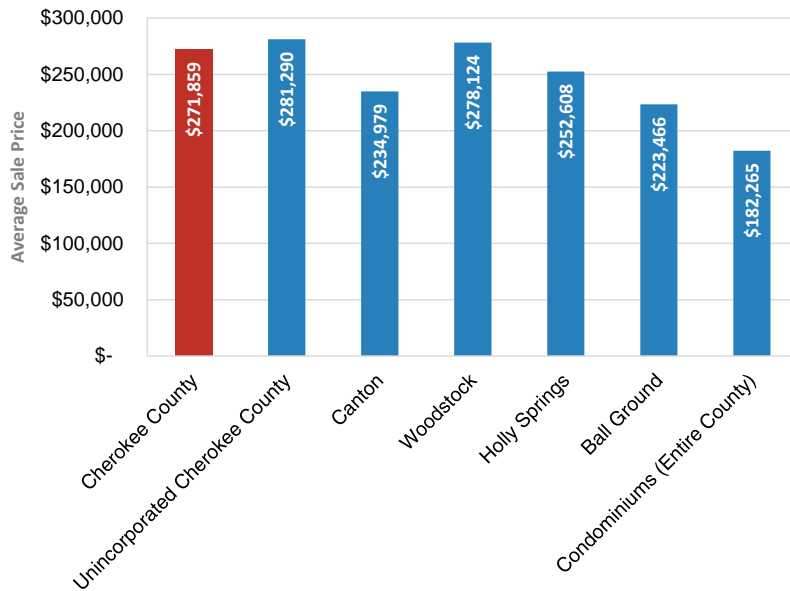
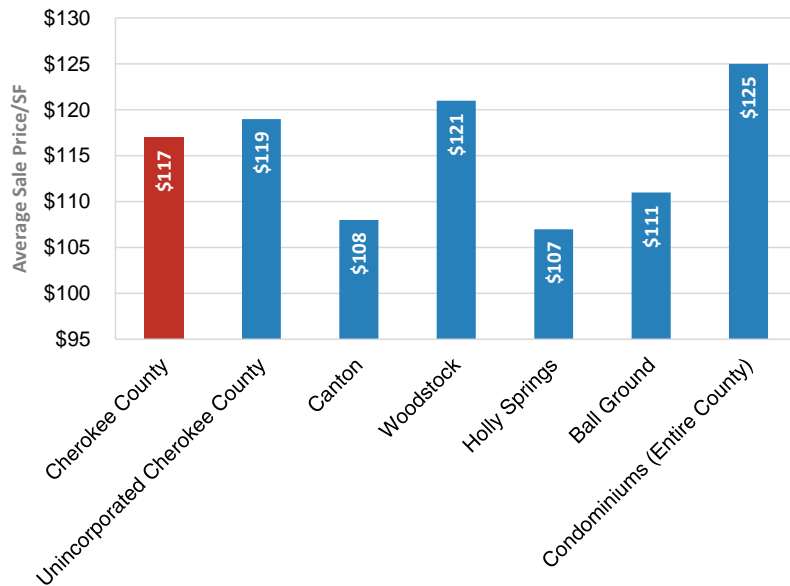


Figure 16. Cherokee County Average Price Per Square Foot



HOME SALES

A detailed analysis of home sales in the year 2016 was conducted using Cherokee County Tax Commissioner data. There were a total of 6,011 residential units sold which were designated “qualified” by the county. This means that they are considered arms-length transactions at a fair market price.

The average price of all homes sold in 2016 was \$271,859. The average size of all homes sold was 2,316 square feet, for an average price per square foot in the county of \$117.

New home sales were specifically analyzed. Of the 6,011 transactions in 2016, 1,553 (25.8%) were for homes built in 2015 or later². The average price of a new home sold in 2016 was \$328,979, which is 21% higher than the average of all sales. The average size of a new home was 2,755, for an average price per square foot of \$119 for new homes. Effectively, new homes were 19% larger but 21% more expensive than all homes.

From the analysis of existing homes, it was established that 71% of all homes in the County are valued at less than \$300,000. In fact, 68% of all homes sold in 2016 were for less than \$300,000. However, only 47% of new homes sold for less than \$300,000. Of note, 40% of all homes sold were less than 2,000 square feet, but only 18% of new homes were less than 2,000 square feet.

The vast majority of home sales occurred in the unincorporated county, with 3,683 transactions averaging \$281,290. The majority of new home sales also occurred in the unincorporated areas, with 795 sales averaging \$328,916.

The most expensive new homes were sold in Woodstock, with 296 transactions averaging \$395,446.

² There is a lag between the issuance of a building permit and a home closing, sometimes well over 12 months, such that the inconsistency between 2016 permits and 2016 transactions is not unreasonable.

Table 35. Cherokee County Home Sales Analysis

All Sales								
All Sales	Count	Avg Price	Avg SF	Avg \$/SF	Sales<2000SF		Sales<\$300,000	
Cherokee County	6,011	\$ 271,859	2,316	\$ 117	2,428	40%	4,087	68%
Cherokee Uninc.	3,683	\$ 281,290	2,354	\$ 119	1,426	39%	2,420	66%
Canton	726	\$ 234,979	2,178	\$ 108	320	44%	563	78%
Woodstock	1,027	\$ 278,124	2,294	\$ 121	461	45%	661	64%
Holly Springs	461	\$ 252,608	2,350	\$ 107	166	36%	331	72%
Ball Ground	114	\$ 223,466	2,007	\$ 111	55	48%	112	98%
Waleska	-	\$ -	-	NA				
Condominiums (Entire County)	71	\$ 182,265	1,459	\$ 125	66	93%	66	93%
New Homes								
New Homes Only	Count	Avg Price	Avg SF	Avg \$/SF	Sales<2000		Sales<\$300,000	
Cherokee County	1,553	\$ 328,979	2,755	\$ 119	272	18%	724	47%
Cherokee Uninc.	795	\$ 328,916	2,770	\$ 119	160	20%	385	48%
Canton	224	\$ 282,757	2,370	\$ 119	46	21%	145	65%
Woodstock	296	\$ 395,446	3,111	\$ 127	17	6%	50	17%
Holly Springs	172	\$ 310,663	2,834	\$ 110	22	13%	79	46%
Ball Ground	66	\$ 236,255	2,007	\$ 118	27	41%	65	98%
Waleska	-	\$ -	-	NA				
Vacant Parcels								
	Count	Avg Price	Avg SF	Avg \$/SF	Sales<2000		Sales<\$300,000	
Cherokee County	418	\$ 93,164	-	-	-	-	-	-
Cherokee Uninc.	349	\$ 97,189	-	-	-	-	-	-
Canton	19	\$ 64,921	-	-	-	-	-	-
Woodstock	30	\$ 95,180	-	-	-	-	-	-
Holly Springs	5	\$ 35,900	-	-	-	-	-	-
Ball Ground	13	\$ 46,615	-	-	-	-	-	-
Waleska	-	\$ -	-	-	-	-	-	-

Source: Cherokee County Tax Commissioner's Office

The analysis above shows 1,553 new home sales in Cherokee County in 2016. However, building permits for new single family homes totaled 2,102 in the same year. The difference of 549 units may be explained in part by the construction of new homes on individual lots purchased by or already owned by the end user. In 2016, there were 418 vacant

parcels less than 20 acres in size that were purchased for assumed residential uses³. 65% of these lots were less than 2 acres.

³ Includes qualified, vacant land transactions less than 20 acres in residential or agricultural land use categories. Some lots may be developed and sold within the same year resulting in double counting.

2.3 FUTURE HOUSING OUTLOOK

Based on ARC projections, demand for new housing in Cherokee County is projected to average 2,784 units per year from 2015 to 2020; 2,552 units per year from 2020-2030; and 2,388 units per year from 2030-2040. The overall average of 2,533 units per year from 2015 to 2040 is consistent with recent trends and allows for the likelihood of periodic higher production levels balanced out by the reality of future downturns that can be expected over such a long study period.

The County's prevailing residential zoning will not support the level of growth projected. Forecast growth on 80,000 square foot lots would consume 115,000 acres of land over 25 years - nearly half the county's land area.

The number of home builders in Metro Atlanta declined from 3,500 to 700 during the Great Recession⁴. Many of the local builders, who could deliver smaller subdivisions or single large lots, have not come back. The market today is therefore characterized by large builders looking for land in areas with water and sewer, access to major roads, and good schools.

For the County to grow in line with ARC forecasts, a continued supply of smaller lots will be required. This will place near-term pressure on southwest Cherokee in particular and on the more urbanized cities of Canton and Woodstock. Areas already marked for suburban growth may see higher densities than currently envisioned as townhomes and small lot single family development feed demand.

It would be possible to accommodate additional growth in southeastern areas of the county by increasing the land available to R-40 single family development (roughly one-acre lots). This would be consistent with Forsyth County and neighboring Milton, where one-acre zoning is permitted in the Birmingham Road Character Area that borders Cherokee County. Promoting cluster development in conservation subdivisions could further protect rural character while making more efficient use of infrastructure.

⁴ Kanell, Michael. "Homebuilding Survivors Control More of Market." *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, August 14, 2015.

3. COMMERCIAL MARKET PERFORMANCE

The commercial real estate market in Cherokee County is characterized by a modest number of largely local-serving retail and office nodes, along with several industrial and office parks.

3.1 DEVELOPMENT TOOLS AND TRENDS

The Cherokee County Office of Economic Development is an active organization that has successfully attracted a number of large businesses to the county, specifically in that southwest area and along state route 92. The County's strategy includes a focus on 5 target sectors: Advanced Manufacturing, Commercial Development, Corporate Operations, Film & Media, and Information Technology.

Cherokee County has approximately 5,022 acres located within the state designated Opportunity Zones, which incentivize businesses to locate in priority areas by offering state job tax credits of \$3,500 per net new job for a period of five years. Within the county, Opportunity Zones are located near major transportation infrastructure: I-75, I-575, and the Cherokee County Regional Airport. (See Figure 17.) These opportunity zones have proven to be very effective in attracting business, though notably they are all due to sunset in the near term. Since 2008, much of the commercial activity in Cherokee County has been concentrated in the southwest corner of the county, near the Cherokee County Opportunity Zone, where the county's single exit on I-75 attracts retail, warehouse, and light industrial uses.

Figure 17. Cherokee County Opportunity Zones, 2016

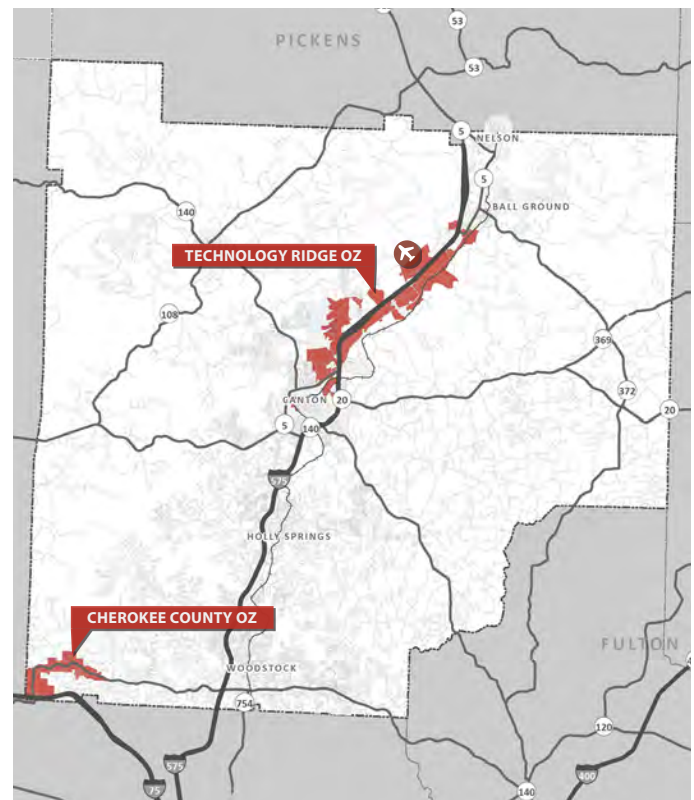


Table 36. New Development Permitted, 2009-2017

	Development Type	Total sf Permitted	Percent
Highest Share ↑	Warehouse	1,568,522	38.7%
	Education	541,462	13.4%
	Manufacturing	398,396	9.8%
	Retail	237,501	5.9%
	Assisted Living	226,869	5.6%
	Independent & Assisted Living	197,827	4.9%
	Religious	154,159	3.8%
	Recreation	127,088	3.1%
	Agriculture	103,448	2.6%
	Medical Office	95,851	2.4%
	Other	66,482	1.6%
	Hotel	48,228	1.2%
	Education/Office	42,723	1.1%
	Public Safety	38,654	1.0%
	Self Storage	30,513	0.8%
	Auto Service	27,678	0.7%
	Renovation	25,137	0.6%
	Dormitory	21,000	0.5%
	Kennel	15,304	0.4%
	Restaurant	14,004	0.3%
Lowest Share ↓	Pharmacy	13,115	0.3%
	Special Event Facility	11,556	0.3%
	Death Care Services	10,829	0.3%
	Transportation	10,563	0.3%
	Death Services	8,153	0.2%
	Retail - Gas Station	5,928	0.1%
	Office	4,627	0.1%
	Storage	4,100	0.1%
	Renovations	4,083	0.1%
	Waste Management	1,200	0.0%
	Business Office	880	0.0%
	Total	4,055,880	100.0%

Source: Cherokee County Land Disturbance Permits, January 2009 - August 2017

The County has seen the development of more than 4 million square feet of commercial space since 2008, about 425,000 square feet per year. 38% of that new development has been warehouse space, located in Southwest Cherokee, along I-575, and near the airport. (See Figure 19.) Much of the development activity has been in scattered buildings less than 5,000 square feet, and overall commercial FAR is .03.

Medical office development has exceeded traditional office development since 2008, and near term development will likely be impacted by Northside Hospital, which opened its \$286 million campus in Canton in May 2017 after 12 years of planning. This is a major win that will drive spinoff demand for additional medical office and related jobs.

By far, the **highest share** of permitted commercial development since 2008 has been **warehouses**, exceeding the next closest sector by more than 25%.

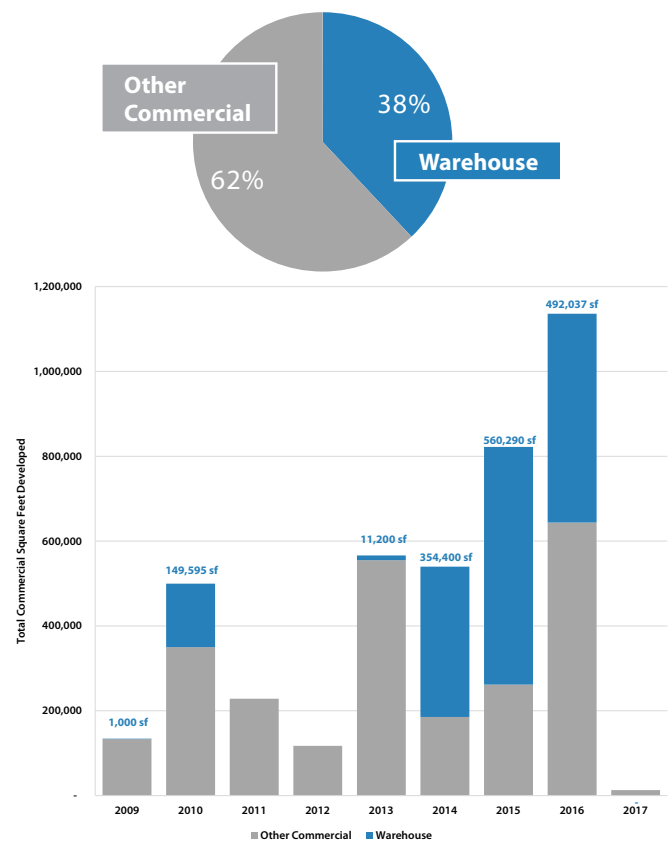
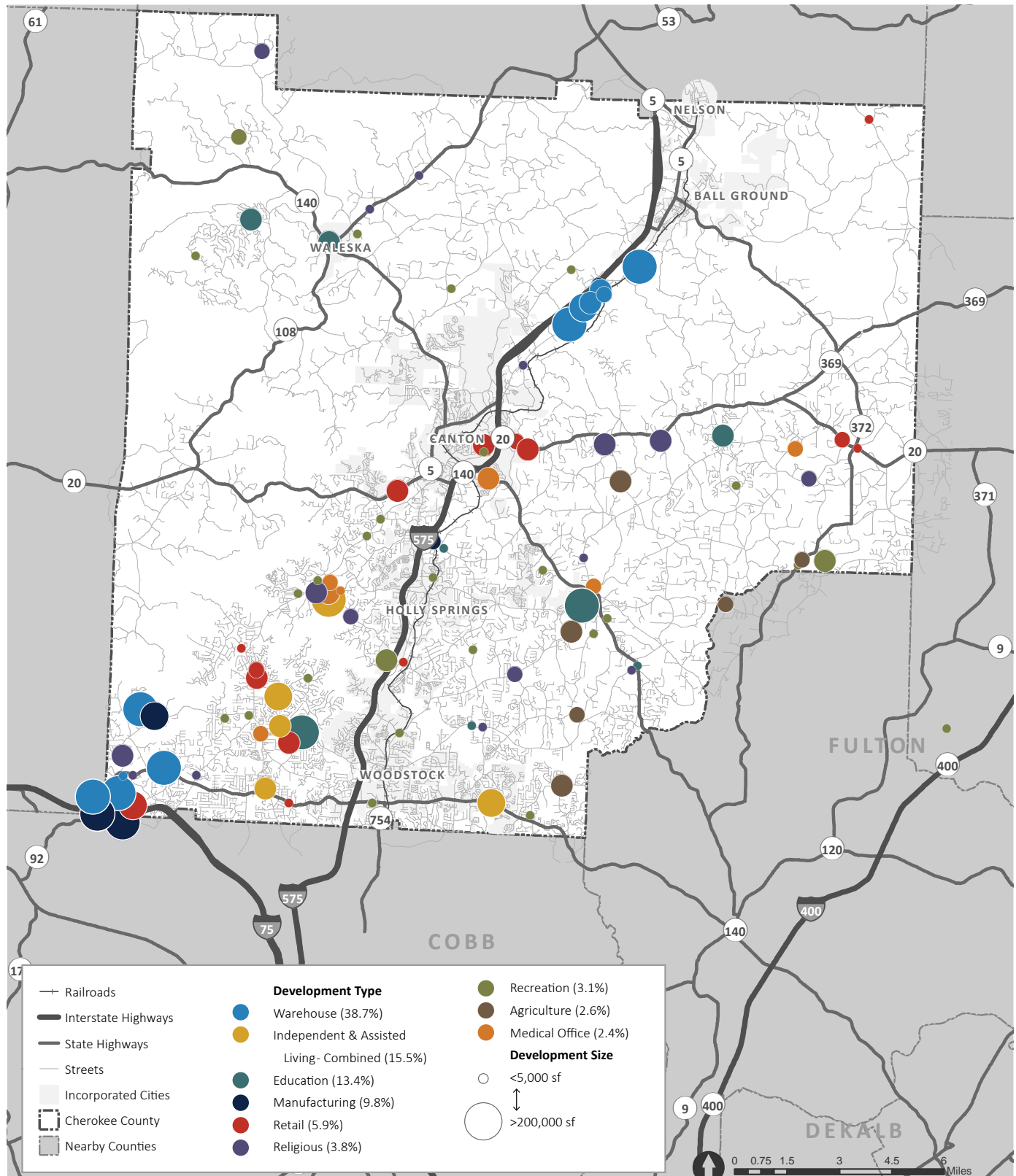
Figure 18. Permitted New Warehouse Development, January 2009 - August 2017

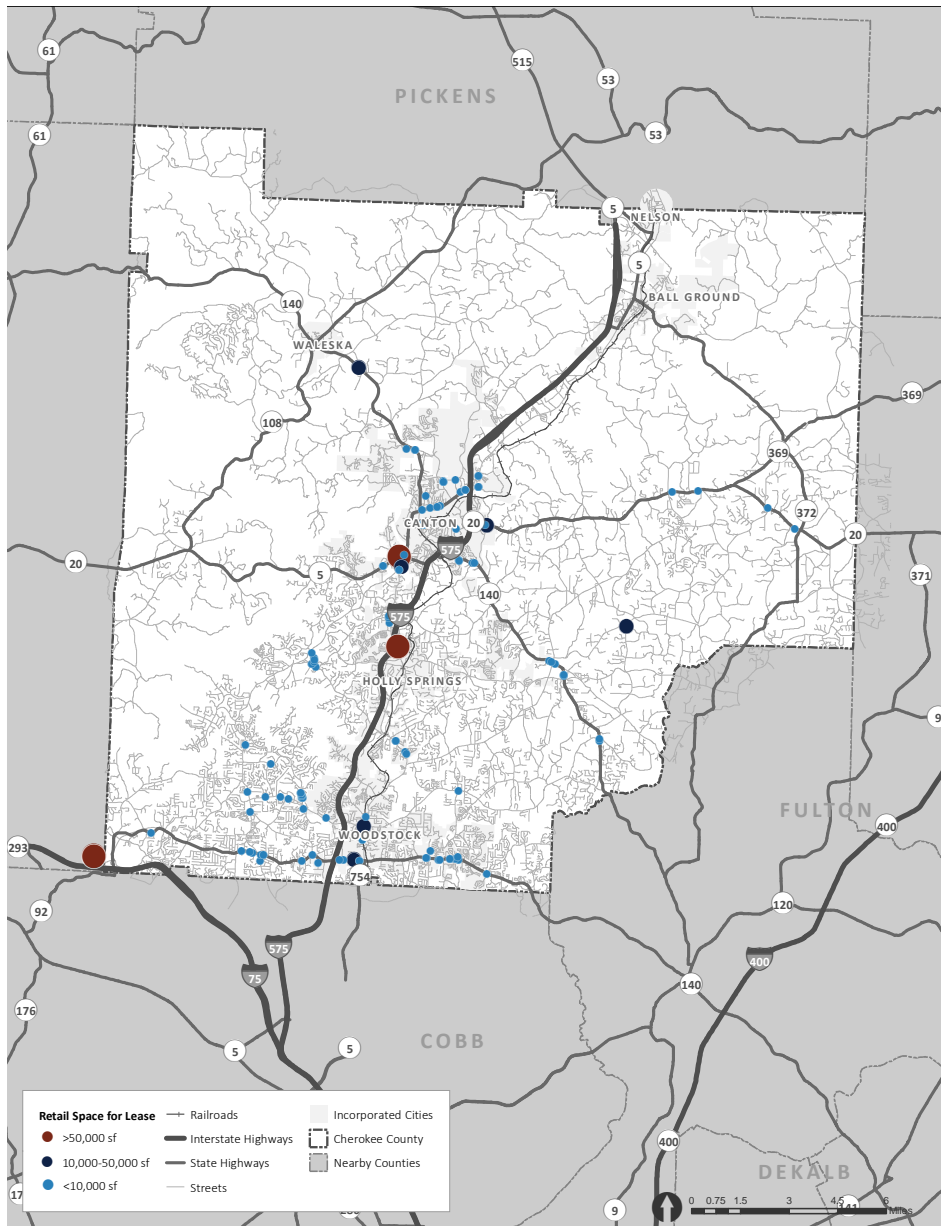
Figure 19. Cherokee County Permitted New Development by Type and Scale, 2009-2017



Source: Cherokee County Land Disturbance Permits, January 2009 - August 2017

Only uses comprising >1% total development sf shown on map.

Figure 20. Cherokee County Retail Space for Lease, August 2017



Source: Cherokee County Office of Economic Development



3.2 RETAIL

Existing retail hubs within Cherokee County include the Outlet Shoppes at Atlanta, a 405,000 square foot center that opened in 2013 and features outlet locations of Saks Fifth Avenue, Under Armour, Vineyard Vines and more than 70 additional retailers. Outdoor retail giant Cabela's has a 100,000 square foot location in Cherokee County that opened in 2014.

Figure 20 and Table 37 illustrate the retail space for lease within Cherokee County as of August 2017. The majority of available retail space is within strip commercial centers near Woodstock and Canton, typically built after 2000 and located along major roads. Some smaller buildings and historic storefronts are also available.

As the population of the county increases, there will be increased demand for retail and other services. Historically, most of the large-scale retail development in the County has occurred proximate to I-575. However, it will be important to provide new or enhanced shopping opportunities for residents in growth areas of the County such as Hickory Flat to the east and Ball Ground to the north.

At 20 square feet per person (about half the current retail per capita in the United States), Cherokee County's projected growth through 2040 would support about 3.4 million square feet of additional retail, which could equate to 15-20 significant shopping centers. However, in the context of a hyper-competitive retail landscape and continued shift to online shopping, these retail nodes should be focused on grocery stores, dining, "experiential" shops and neighborhood services.

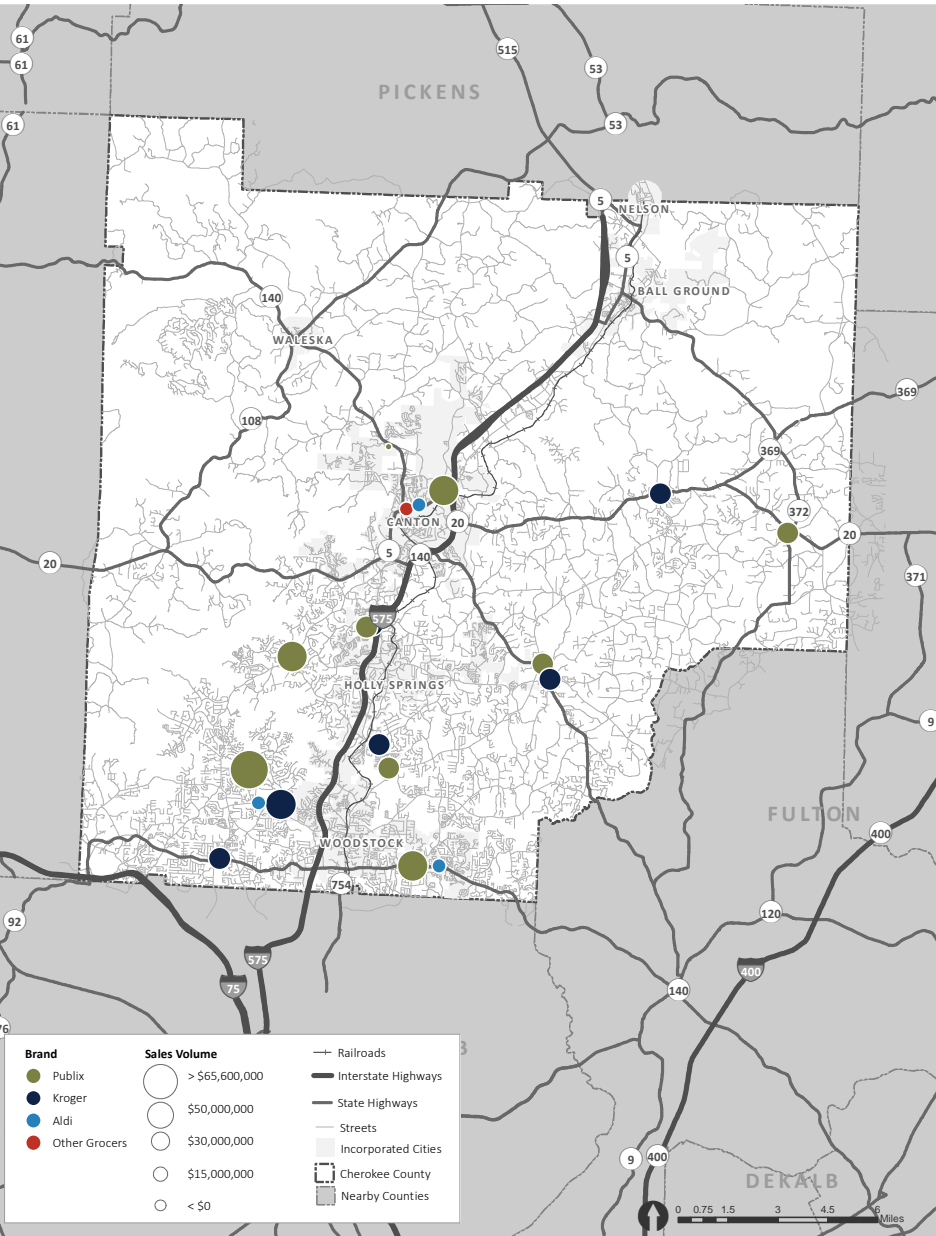
Table 37. Sample Retail Space for Lease (<10,000 sf)

Address	Space Size	Price Per SF	Year Built
6679 Hickory Flat Hwy	1,722 sf	\$6.27	1918
3725 Sixes Rd	4,525 sf	\$17.00	2004
6109 Hickory Flat Hwy	1,037 sf	\$14.00	2006
1850 Marietta Hwy	2,600 sf	\$17.54	1987
182-286 North St	5,000 sf	\$6.00	1936
135-149 Reinhardt College Pkwy	2,545 sf	\$16.50	2008
15 Laurel Canyon Village Cir	1,750 sf	\$10.00	2009
10010 Highway 92	3,512 sf	\$14.00	1988
8265 Highway 92	1,443 sf	\$17.50	2007
300 Village Center Dr	1,600 sf	\$15.00	2004
3333 Trickum Rd	800 sf	\$17.93	2007
1910 Eagle Dr	1,500 sf	\$12.00	2008
		Average	Median
		\$13.65	2005

Source: Cherokee County Office of Economic Development

This data is a sample of the 114 retail spaces <10,000 sf available for lease as of August 2017, according to the Cherokee County Office of Economic Development property database. Price per square foot refers to the asking price for listed properties and was not available for all properties listed. Rent data was not available for any listed retail properties between 10,000 sf and 50,000 sf or for retail properties over 50,000 sf.

Figure 21. Existing Grocery Stores, Cherokee County



Source: Esri Business Analyst

GROCERY STORES

Full service grocers within the county are clustered around population centers in Woodstock, Canton, and Holly Springs. There are no existing grocery stores serving residents in the northern part of the county, a known issue impacting quality of life for residents of Ball Ground, Waleska, and the surrounding areas.

Figure 21 shows the locations and sales volumes of existing grocery stores within Cherokee County. In keeping with statewide trends, the county's market is dominated by Publix, whose highest grossing store in the county is located in Southwest Cherokee. The county has yet to see the full influx of specialty grocers, such as Whole Foods, which have been actively locating throughout Metro Atlanta in the years since the Great Recession.¹



¹ Stafford, Leon. "Grocery chains buck retail tide with wave of new stores." *Atlanta Journal Constitution*, February 25, 2016.

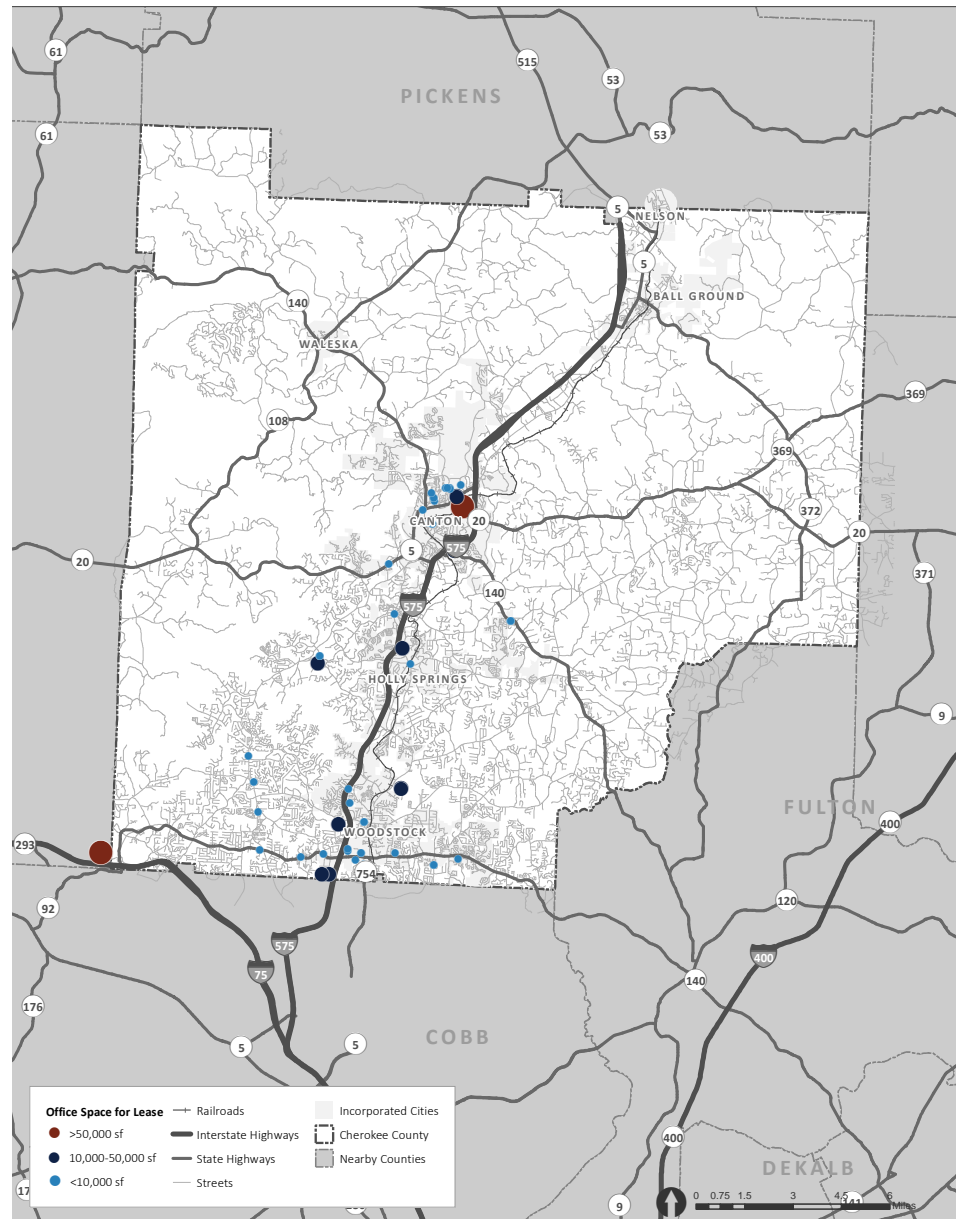
3.3 OFFICE

Existing office space within Cherokee County includes both office parks and smaller office developments, often in and around incorporated areas. Major office parks include the Bluffs at Technology Park, Cherokee 75 Corporate Park, Cherokee Commerce Center West, and Cherokee 75 Business Center. Available office space is concentrated along the I-575 corridor in Canton, Holly Springs, and Woodstock, as shown in Figure 22, Table 38, and Table 39. Most listings were built after 2000 and include a mix of small office buildings, space within strip commercial plazas, three- to four-story executive office centers, and medical office facilities.

Through 2040 the county is projected to add about 8,800 positions in “office using” industries such as finance, professional services, real estate, and administrative services. On the one hand, this could mean 8,800 new jobs filled by additional commuters who live outside of the County. On the other hand, it could mean local employment for about 20% of the Cherokee County residents who currently leave the county for high paying jobs.

At 150 square feet per employee these office-using jobs would demand 1.3 million square feet of professional office space over the next 25 years. In all likelihood this demand will be satisfied primarily within the cities of Canton and Woodstock, and in the burgeoning employment center near I-75 in southwest Cherokee; however, small concentrations of local-serving office space (10,000 to 20,000 square feet) should be encouraged within walkable mixed use environments in southwest Cherokee, Hickory Flat, and Ball Ground. More substantial population growth in southeast Cherokee will create demand for office space in that area, and medical office near the new hospital should also be expected.

Figure 22. Cherokee County Office Space for Lease, August 2017



Source: Cherokee County Office of Economic Development



Table 38. Sample Office Space for Lease (<10,000 sf)

Address	Type	Space Size	Price Per SF	Year Built
1047 Hickory Flat Hwy	Medical Office	18,000 sf	\$23.00	2005
132 Riverstone Terr	Office	1,160 sf	\$16.00	2007
2000 Village Professional Dr	Medical Office	11,353 sf	\$20.00	2008
203 Oakside Ct	Office	2,300 sf	\$13.50	2005
3755 Sixes Rd	Office	5,000 sf	\$8.00	2000
310 Paper Trail Way	Office	1,366 sf	\$14.00	2007
117-119 Mirramont Lake Dr	Office	1,854 sf	\$11.50	2000
1501 Regency Way	Office	1,200 sf	\$9.33	1990
3380 Trickum Rd	Office	1,875 sf	\$11.50	2005
585 Molly Ln	Office	3,542 sf	\$14.50	2001
700 Churchill Ct	Office	1,650 sf	\$13.00	2006
703 Boscomb Commercial Pkwy	Office	1,875 sf	\$6.40	1990
8681 Highway 92	Office	4,550 sf	\$7.91	1987
Average			\$12.97	2001

Source: Cherokee County Office of Economic Development

This data is a sample of the 54 office spaces <10,000 sf available for lease as of August 2017, according to the Cherokee County Office of Economic Development property database. Price per square foot refers to the asking price for listed properties and was not available for all properties listed.

Table 39. Sample Office Space for Lease (10,000-50,000 sf)

Address	Type	Space Size	Price Per sf	Year Built
2000 Village Professional Dr	Medical Office	11,353 sf	\$20.00	2008
1047 Hickory Flat Hwy	Medical Office	18,000 sf	\$26.00	2017
330 Adams Jenkins Memorial Dr	Office	10,000 sf	\$5.50	2001
615 Molly Ln	Office	24,000 sf	\$16.50	2016
625 Molly Ln	Office	16,000 sf	\$16.50	2016
120 Stone Bridge Pkwy	Medical Office	10,065 sf	\$25.50	2001
Average			\$18.33	2010

Source: Cherokee County Office of Economic Development

This data is a sample of the 9 office spaces between 10,000 sf and 50,000 sf available for lease as of August 2017, according to the Cherokee County Office of Economic Development property database. Price per square foot refers to the asking price for listed properties and was not available for all properties listed. Rent data was not available for any listed retail properties over 50,000 sf.

APPENDIX A: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Figure 24. Map of Selected New Home Communities

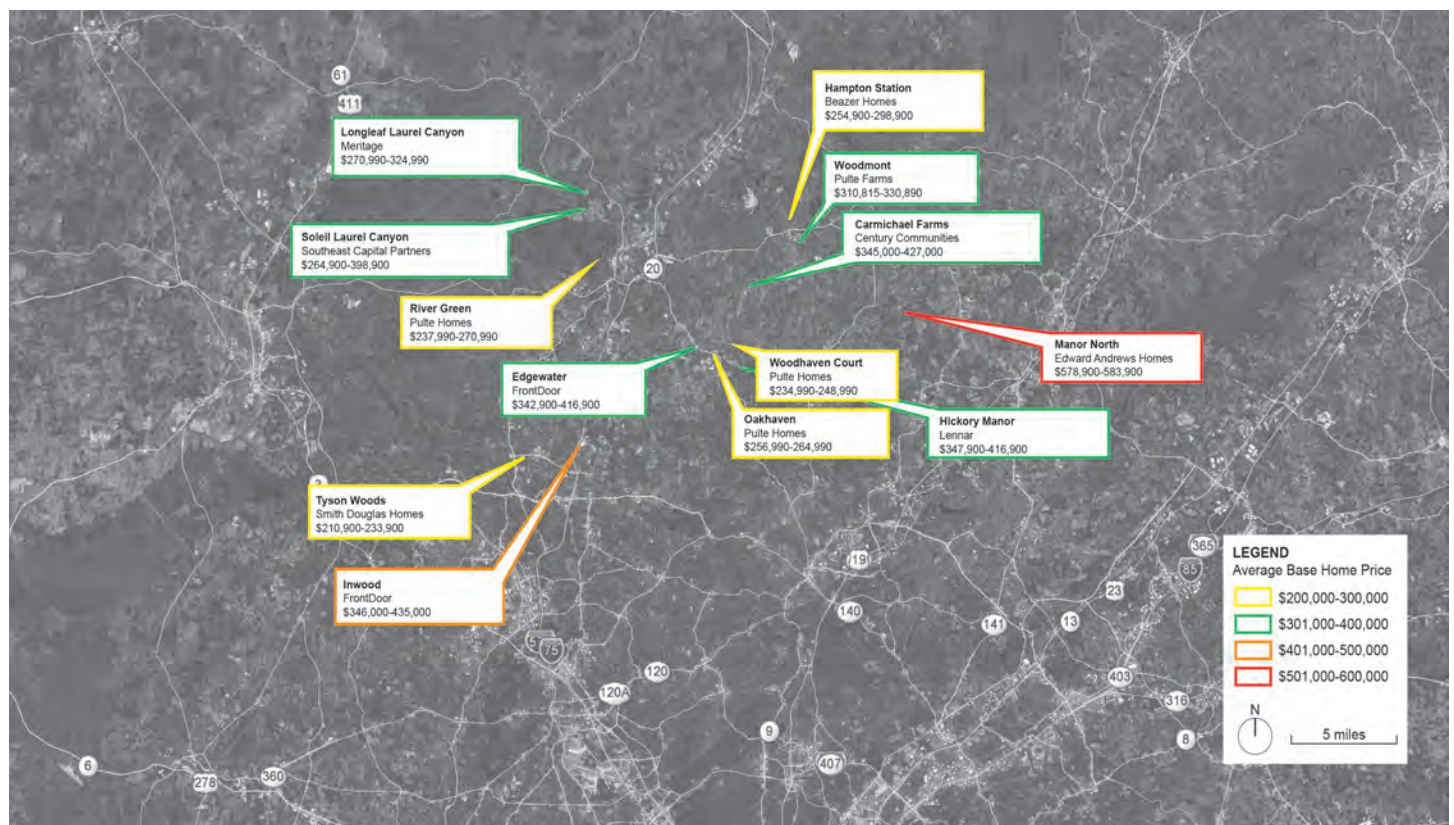


Table 41. Summary of Selected New Home Communities

	Community/Location	Builder/Model	Base Price	Area (SF)	Price/SF
1	Hampton Station	Beazer Homes			
	1008 Creekshire Dr.	Beechwood	\$ 254,900	2,000	\$ 127
	Canton, GA 30115	Driftwood	\$ 272,900	2,480	\$ 110
		Chandler	\$ 274,900	2,800	\$ 98
		Charlotte	\$ 292,900	3,189	\$ 92
		Amelia I	\$ 294,900	3,190	\$ 92
		Amelia II	\$ 298,900	3,205	\$ 93
2	River Green	Pulte Homes			
	977 Woodbury Rd.	Mercer	\$ 237,990	2,602	\$ 91
	Canton, GA 30114	Stonebrook	\$ 243,990	2,744	\$ 89
		Continental	\$ 250,990	2,841	\$ 88
		Furman	\$ 253,990	2,816	\$ 90
		Wingate	\$ 260,990	2,821	\$ 93
		Woodward	\$ 265,990	2,960	\$ 90
		Riverton	\$ 270,990	3,140	\$ 86
3	Woodhaven Court	Pulte Homes			
	4950 Hickory Rd.	Castle Rock	\$ 234,990	1,755	\$ 134
	Holly Springs, GA 30188	Abbeyville	\$ 240,990	1,656	\$ 146
		Martin Ray	\$ 248,990	1,961	\$ 127
4	Woodmont	Pulte Homes			
	3112 Gaddis Rd.	Wingate	\$ 310,815	2,821	\$ 110
	Canton, GA 30115	Furman	\$ 329,015	2,816	\$ 117
		Woodward	\$ 330,515	2,960	\$ 112
		Riverton	\$ 330,890	3,135	\$ 106
5	Oakhaven	Pulte Homes			
	4550 Hickory Rd.	Mercer	\$ 256,990	2,579	\$ 100
	Holly Springs, GA 30115	Stonebrook	\$ 262,990	2,744	\$ 96
		Continental	\$ 264,990	2,869	\$ 92

Table 41. Summary of Selected New Home Communities (Continued)

	Community/Location	Builder/Model	Base Price	Area (SF)	Price/SF
6	Edgewater	FrontDoor			
	4300 Hickory Rd.	Davenport	\$ 342,900	2,768	\$ 124
	Holly Springs, GA 30115	Royden	\$ 342,900	2,505	\$ 137
		Ashford	\$ 344,900	2,576	\$ 134
		Whitaker	\$ 351,900	2,977	\$ 118
		Lockwood	\$ 355,900	3,215	\$ 111
		Pembroke	\$ 355,900	3,122	\$ 114
		Brookdale	\$ 356,900	3,357	\$ 106
		Prescott	\$ 357,900	2,984	\$ 120
		Kendrick	\$ 362,900	3,081	\$ 118
		Chastain	\$ 363,900	3,262	\$ 112
		Glendale	\$ 371,900	3,316	\$ 112
		Farrington	\$ 379,900	3,234	\$ 117
		Brighton	\$ 384,900	3,344	\$ 115
		Laurel	\$ 399,900	3,298	\$ 121
		Camden	\$ 401,900	3,641	\$ 110
		Briarcliff	\$ 416,900	4,043	\$ 103
7	Carmichael Farms	Century Communities			
	725 Paint Horse Dr	Nandina	\$ 345,000	2,757	\$ 125
	Canton, GA	Biltmore	\$ 347,000	2,983	\$ 116
		Oakmonte	\$ 360,000	3,370	\$ 107
		Reynolds	\$ 373,000	3,776	\$ 99
		Willow	\$ 380,000	3,941	\$ 96
		Amherst	\$ 408,000	4,646	\$ 88
		Carrington	\$ 427,000	4,686	\$ 91
8	Manor North	Edward Andrews Homes			
	110 Manor North Dr	Rosewood	\$ 578,900	3,300	\$ 175
	Alpharetta, GA 30004	Woodruff	\$ 568,900	3,700	\$ 154
		Waverly	\$ 593,900	3,721	\$ 160
		Dogwood	\$ 628,900	4,368	\$ 144
		Calhoun	\$ 583,900	3,500	\$ 167

Table 41. Summary of Selected New Home Communities (Continued)

	Community/Location	Builder/Model	Base Price	Area (SF)	Price/SF
9	Tyson Woods	Smith Douglas Homes			
	704 Pineglen Dr.	Benson	\$ 210,900	1,801	\$ 117
	Acworth, GA 30102	Cochran	\$ 221,900	2,099	\$ 106
		McPherson	\$ 222,900	2,254	\$ 99
		Greenbrier	\$ 223,900	2,171	\$ 103
		Wellington	\$ 226,900	2,195	\$ 103
		Carrington	\$ 227,900	2,058	\$ 111
		Macland	\$ 229,900	2,510	\$ 92
		Buffington	\$ 233,900	2,508	\$ 93
10	Inwood	FrontDoor			
	269 Rope Mill Rd	Fowler	\$ 346,000	2,133	\$ 162
	Woodstock, GA	Woodberry	\$ 357,000	2,316	\$ 154
		Westbrook	\$ 416,000	2,931	\$ 142
		Barnesdale	\$ 410,000	2,935	\$ 140
		Ingram	\$ 436,000	3,064	\$ 142
		Bentley	\$ 424,000	3,364	\$ 126
		Westbrook	\$ 435,000	2,931	\$ 148
11	Soleil Laurel Canyon	Southeast Capital Partners			
	215 Aster Ct.	Ambrose	\$ 264,900	1,418	\$ 187
	Canton, GA 30114	Dalton	\$ 274,900	1,678	\$ 164
		Emerson	\$ 291,900	1,825	\$ 160
		Jasper	\$ 320,900	2,091	\$ 153
		Mansfield	\$ 343,900	2,257	\$ 152
		Preston	\$ 363,900	2,389	\$ 152
		Trenton	\$ 384,900	2,642	\$ 146
		Upton	\$ 398,900	2,813	\$ 142
12	Longleaf Laurel Canyon	Meritage			
	106 Laurel Canyon Trail	Yancey	\$ 270,990	2,020	\$ 134
	Canton, GA 30114	Bailey	\$ 296,990	2,358	\$ 126
		Abbeville	\$ 299,990	2,525	\$ 119
		Stratford	\$ 318,990	3,386	\$ 94

Table 41. Summary of Selected New Home Communities (Continued)

	Community/Location	Builder/Model	Base Price	Area (SF)	Price/SF
		Sweetwater	\$ 321,990	3,393	\$ 95
		Peyton	\$ 324,990	3,692	\$ 88
13	Hickory Manor	Lennar			
	7211 Hickory Flat Highway	Camellia	\$ 347,900	2,430	\$ 143
	Woodstock, GA 30188	Forsyth	\$ 361,900	2,618	\$ 138
		Langley	\$ 363,900	2,920	\$ 125
		Fraser	\$ 364,900	2,745	\$ 133
		Dogwood	\$ 368,900	2,805	\$ 132
		Elmwood	\$ 369,900	3,090	\$ 120
		Azalea	\$ 379,900	3,320	\$ 114
		Manchester	\$ 384,900	3,013	\$ 128
		Linden	\$ 385,900	3,418	\$ 113
		Ashworth	\$ 390,900	3,098	\$ 126
		Avalon	\$ 390,900	3,654	\$ 107
		Magnolia	\$ 416,900	4,080	\$ 102

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CHEROKEE COUNTY **MARKET ANALYSIS ADDENDUM**

CHEROKEE COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SUPPORT
JULY 2018



PLAN CHEROKEE
DIRECTIONS - DIALOGUE *GO* DECISIONS - DESTINY

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Cherokee County Market Analysis

2018 Addendum

Role of the Addendum

In December 2017, Jacobs prepared a Market Analysis for Cherokee County to assist in the preparation of its Comprehensive Plan Update. The data used in that analysis came from a variety of data sources including the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), U.S. Census Bureau, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Esri, REIS, and the Cherokee County Tax Commissioner. Shortly after the analysis was complete, the Census Bureau released new American Community Survey (ACS) data for 2016. This addendum reports on that new ACS data and how it impacts the original analysis, in particular the housing market outlook presented in Chapter 2 of the original report.

Understanding the Data Sources

The ACS is an ongoing, annual survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau to provide information about population data, educational attainment, housing occupancy, and other topics between 10-year Census intervals. It provides reports on incorporated places, which may or may not be up to date depending on annexations, and county subdivisions that have not changed since 2012. At the time the report was published, 2015 ACS data was the most recent available.

Several of the housing data tables presented in the original market analysis used Esri as a data source to supplement ACS data with more custom analyses. Esri draws from ACS data for the preceding years; the 2016 Esri data referenced in the report is based on 2011-2015 ACS data. It provides estimates for standard Census geographies, such as counties or block groups, as well as custom, user-defined geographies like ZIP codes, drive time rings, or subareas. For example, the December 2017 Market Analysis included a North Fulton subarea, a custom Esri geography calculated to compare a competitive submarket within the region. Custom geographies like North Fulton are not available for the recently released the 2016 ACS data. Because of the difference in time period and, in some cases, geography, 2016 ACS data and 2016 Esri data cannot be directly compared. More information about data methodology for these sources is available on the U.S. Census Bureau and Esri websites.

Updated Data Points

The tables below compare the results of the original analysis with the new 2016 ACS data. Some of the geographies from the original report are not included, namely the Atlanta metropolitan statistical area (MSA), North Fulton, and Unincorporated Cherokee. These geographies were either not available in the 2016 ACS dataset (MSA) or are custom Esri geographies created by Jacobs for the analysis, and involve the aggregation of ACS estimates with a greater margin of error. In particular, most of the housing unit counts from the newly released 2016 ACS data are lower than that reported in the original analysis. The projected growth rate used for the Esri estimates may have been higher than the actual increase in housing units, leading to a perceived decrease in housing units. This discrepancy highlights the differences in the two sources, and the fact that these are estimates, not actual counts. In summary, other than the increase in rental share of occupied housing in Waleska and the fluctuation in median home values, there was relatively little difference in data presented in the 2016 ACS data from that used in the original market analysis.

The following tables from the original analysis were supplemented to report the new 2016 ACS data. The new data

indicates:

Table 26 – Total Number of Housing Units – The 2016 ACS data reported 3,698 fewer housing units in Cherokee County compared to 2016 Esri data in the original report, a reduction of 4%. There was a similar reduction in all geographies except Ball Ground, which showed an increase of 46 units or 6%.

Table 27 – Housing Tenure – The percentage of owner occupied housing in all the geographies remained relatively unchanged, less than 4%, with the exception of Waleska which saw an increase of 20% in renter occupied housing, jumping from 18 renter-occupied units to 35 units.

Table 28 – Renter Share of Occupied Housing – The renter share of occupied housing also remained relatively consistent, with only Waleska showing a noticeable change. In the original report, Waleska reported 17% of the occupied housing units were renter, whereas the 2016 ACS data shows renters make up 40% of occupied housing units.

Table 29 - Year Housing Built in Cherokee County– There was relatively no change from the original study, aside from the increase in reported units built since 2014, rising from 254 to 1,109 as a natural reflection of the more current dataset and recent housing construction.

Table 30 - Housing Units by Structure Type in Cherokee County – There was relatively no change in structure type from the original study. Detached single family housing still makes up the vast majority of housing in the county, roughly 82%.

Table 31 - Median Home Value – Median home values for Cherokee County overall were 4% lower in the 2016 ACS dataset compared to the 2016 Esri estimate. Three cities showed slight increases in home values in the 2016 ACS dataset, with increases of 1% in Woodstock, 4% in Holly Springs, and 3% in Ball Ground. Two cities showed decreases home values, with Canton decreasing 9% and Waleska decreasing 37%. The significant decrease in Waleska home values may be affected by the city's relatively small sample size and high margin of error (\$58,461).

Table 32 - Distribution of Home Value in Cherokee County – The distribution remained relatively the same, with a reported change of less than 2.5%, though there was a slight increase in the proportion of homes with values over \$200,000 while and a corresponding decrease in the share of homes valued less than \$200,000.

In summary, other than the increase in rental share of occupied housing in Waleska, there was relatively little difference in data presented in the 2016 ACS data from that used in the original market analysis.

Data Comparison

Table 26. Total Number of Housing Units

	ACS - 2016	Esri -2016	Difference
Georgia	4,156,518	4,308,790	-152,272
Cherokee County	85,926	89,624	-3,698
Forsyth County	71,466	77,380	-5,914
Cobb County	293,084	302,697	-9,613
Bartow County	39,935	40,423	-488
Woodstock	11,065	11,783	-718
Canton	9,573	10,629	-1,056
Holly Springs	3,680	4,202	-522
Ball Ground	730	684	46
Waleska	101	121	-20

Table 27. Housing Tenure

	ACS - 2016, Units	ACS - 2016,%	ESRI - 2016, Units	ESRI - 2016, %	% Difference in Estimates
Cherokee County					
Owner Occupied	62,095	72%	63,063	70%	2%
Renter Occupied	18,283	21%	19,751	22%	-1%
Vacant	5,548	6%	6,810	8%	-2%
Forsyth County					
Owner Occupied	56,003	78%	59,774	77%	1%
Renter Occupied	10,497	15%	12,230	13%	2%
Vacant	4,966	7%	5,376	7%	0%
Cobb County					
Owner Occupied	173,718	59%	173,493	57%	2%
Renter Occupied	98,257	34%	103,518	34%	0%
Vacant	21,109	7%	25,686	8%	-1%
Bartow County					
Owner Occupied	23,472	59%	23,790	59%	0%
Renter Occupied	13,018	33%	12,579	31%	2%
Vacant	3,445	9%	4,054	10%	-1%
Canton					
Owner Occupied	4,681	49%	5,275	50%	-1%
Renter Occupied	4,198	44%	4,179	39%	5%
Vacant	694	7%	1,175	11%	-4%
Woodstock					
Owner Occupied	6,741	61%	7,498	64%	-3%
Renter Occupied	3,608	33%	3,481	29%	4%
Vacant	716	6%	803	7%	-1%
Holly Springs					
Owner Occupied	2,749	75%	3,004	71%	4%
Renter Occupied	900	24%	809	19%	5%
Vacant	31	1%	390	9%	-8%
Ball Ground					
Owner Occupied	510	70%	486	71%	-1%
Renter Occupied	159	22%	120	18%	4%
Vacant	61	8%	78	11%	-3%
Waleska					
Owner Occupied	52	51%	87	72%	-21%
Renter Occupied	35	35%	18	15%	20%
Vacant	14	14%	16	13%	1%

Table 28. Renter Share of Occupied Housing

	ACS - 2016, %	ACS, 2011-2015, %	% Difference in Estimates
Cherokee County	23%	24%	-1%
Forsyth County	16%	17%	-1%
Cobb County	36%	37%	-1%
Bartow County	36%	35%	1%
Canton	47%	44%	3%
Woodstock	35%	32%	3%
Holly Springs	25%	21%	4%
Ball Ground	24%	20%	4%
Waleska	40%	17%	23%

Table 29. Year Housing Built in Cherokee County

	ACS 2016, Units	ACS 2016, Percent	ACS 2011-2015 2016, Units	ACS 2011-2015, Percent	% Difference in Estimates
Total Housing Units	85,926		84,607		
Built 2014 or later	1,109	1.3%	254	0.3%	1.0%
Built 2010 to 2013	2,354	2.7%	1,861	2.2%	0.5%
Built 2000 to 2009	31,040	36.1%	31,220	36.9%	-0.8%
Built 1990 to 1999	22,855	26.6%	22,082	26.1%	0.5%
Built 1980 to 1989	14,557	16.9%	15,314	18.1%	-1.2%
Built 1970 to 1979	8,127	9.5%	7,953	9.4%	0.1%
Built 1960 to 1969	2,193	2.6%	2,369	2.8%	-0.2%
Built 1950 to 1959	1,588	1.8%	1,438	1.7%	0.1%
Built 1940 to 1949	774	0.9%	761	0.9%	0.0%
Built 1939 or earlier	1,329	1.5%	1,354	1.6%	-0.1%

Table 30. Housing Units by Structure Type in Cherokee County

	ACS 2016, Units	ACS 2016, Percent	ACS 2011-2015 2016, Units	ACS 2011-2015, Percent	% Difference in Estimates
Total Housing Units	85,926		84,607		
1-unit, detached	70,631	82.2%	69,124	81.7%	0.5%
1-unit, attached	3,304	3.8%	3,469	4.1%	-0.3%
2 units	589	0.7%	508	0.6%	0.1%
3 or 4 units	1,050	1.2%	1,015	1.2%	0.0%
5 to 9 units	916	1.1%	931	1.1%	0.0%
10 to 19 units	2,809	3.3%	2,538	3.0%	0.3%
20 or more units	3,180	3.7%	3,384	4.0%	-0.3%
Mobile home	3,447	4.0%	3,638	4.3%	-0.3%
Boat, RV, van, etc.	-	0.0%	-	0.0%	0.0%

Table 31. Median Home Value

	ACS – 2016	ESRI -2016	Difference	
Georgia	\$152,400	\$161,440	-\$9,040	
Cherokee County	\$204,400	\$213,207	-\$8,807	-4%
Forsyth County	\$281,400	\$295,812	-\$14,412	-5%
Cobb County	\$205,600	\$222,740	-\$17,140	-8%
Bartow County	\$128,200	\$137,798	-\$9,598	-7%
Woodstock	\$192,700	\$191,662	\$1,038	1%
Canton	\$174,500	\$190,948	-\$16,448	-9%
Holly Springs	\$204,400	\$197,471	\$6,929	4%
Ball Ground	\$175,000	\$170,122	\$4,878	3%
Waleska	\$150,000	\$236,667	-\$86,667	-37%

Table 32. Distribution of Home Value in Cherokee County

	ACS - 2016		ACS 2011 -2015		% Difference
All units	62,095		61,211		
Less than \$50,000	1,922	3.10%	2,204	3.60%	-0.51%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	4,376	7.05%	4,836	7.90%	-0.85%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	11,104	17.88%	12,365	20.20%	-2.32%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	12,895	20.77%	13,222	21.60%	-0.83%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	16,187	26.07%	15,242	24.90%	1.17%
\$300,000 to \$499,999	11,720	18.87%	10,039	16.40%	2.47%
\$500,000 to \$999,999	3,372	5.43%	2,938	4.80%	0.63%
\$1,000,000 or more	519	0.84%	306	0.50%	0.34%



B - Target Area Reports

TARGET AREA WORKSHOPS



*Cherokee County
Ball Ground
Waleska*

*2018
Comprehensive
Plan Update*

HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF OUR TARGET AREAS

Please come roll-up your sleeves to develop the vision for each of these areas or visit the website to give 24/7 input.

BALL GROUND

Wednesday, August 16, 2017

6:30pm - 8:30pm

**Ball Ground City Hall - Council Chambers
215 Valley Street, Ball Ground, GA 30107**

WALESKA

NEW DATE DUE TO WEATHER

Thursday, September 21, 2017

6:30pm - 8:30pm

**Waleska Fire Station-Community Room
9081 Fincher Road, Waleska, GA 30183**

HWY 20 EAST CORRIDOR

Wednesday, August 23, 2017

6:30pm - 8:30pm

**Freehome Fire Station-Community Room
9253 Freehome Hwy, Canton, GA 30114**

HICKORY FLAT

Thursday, August 24, 2017

6:30pm - 8:30pm

**Hickory Flat Fire Station-Community Room
7675 Vaughn Road, Canton, GA 30114**

AIRPORT AREA

Tuesday, August 29, 2017

6:30pm - 8:30pm

**Airport Fire Station-Community Room
1190 Evenflo Drive, Ball Ground, GA 30107**

SW CHEROKEE

Thursday, August 31, 2017

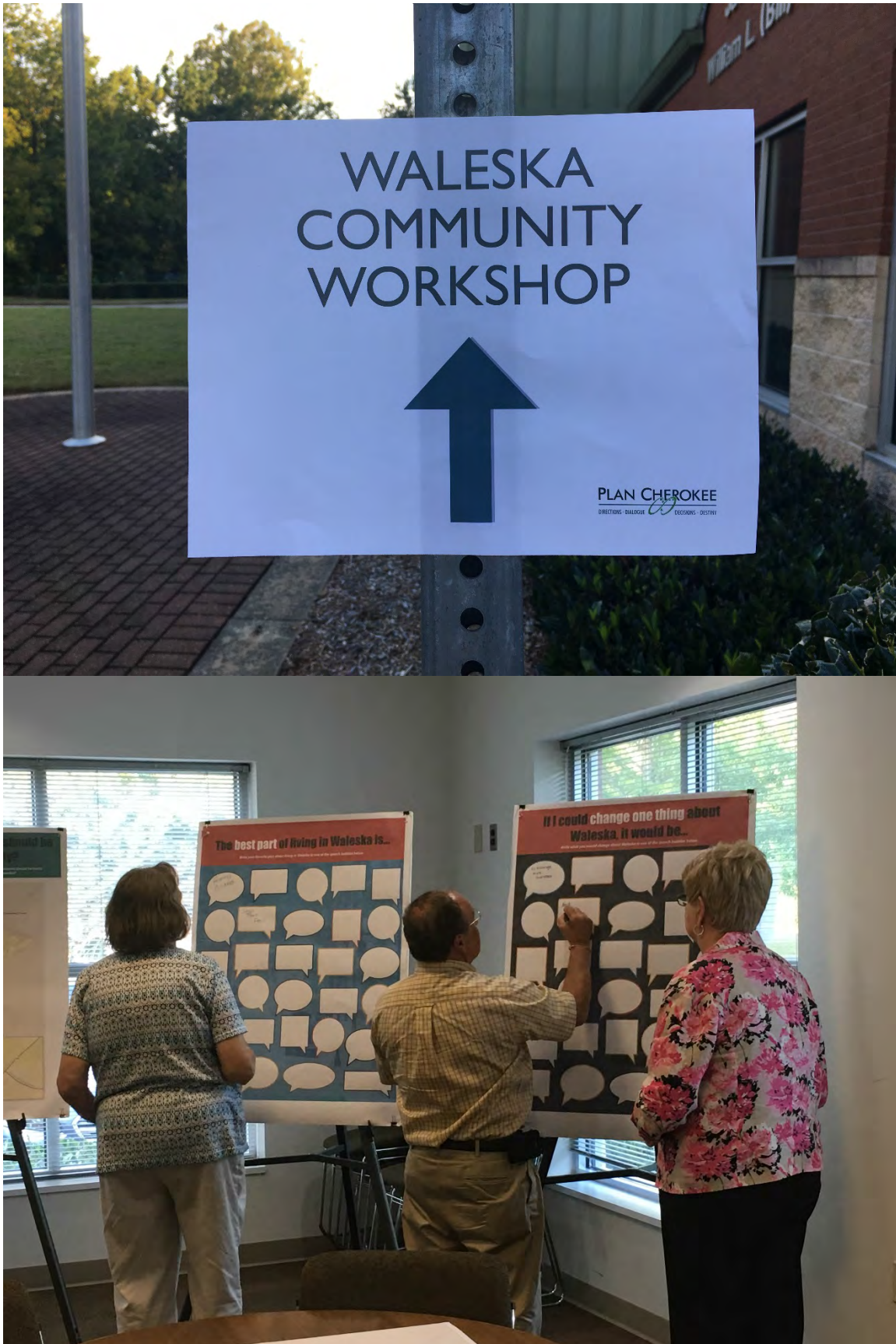
6:30pm - 8:30pm

**Oak Grove Fire Station-Community Room
100 Ridgemill Court, Acworth, GA 30102**

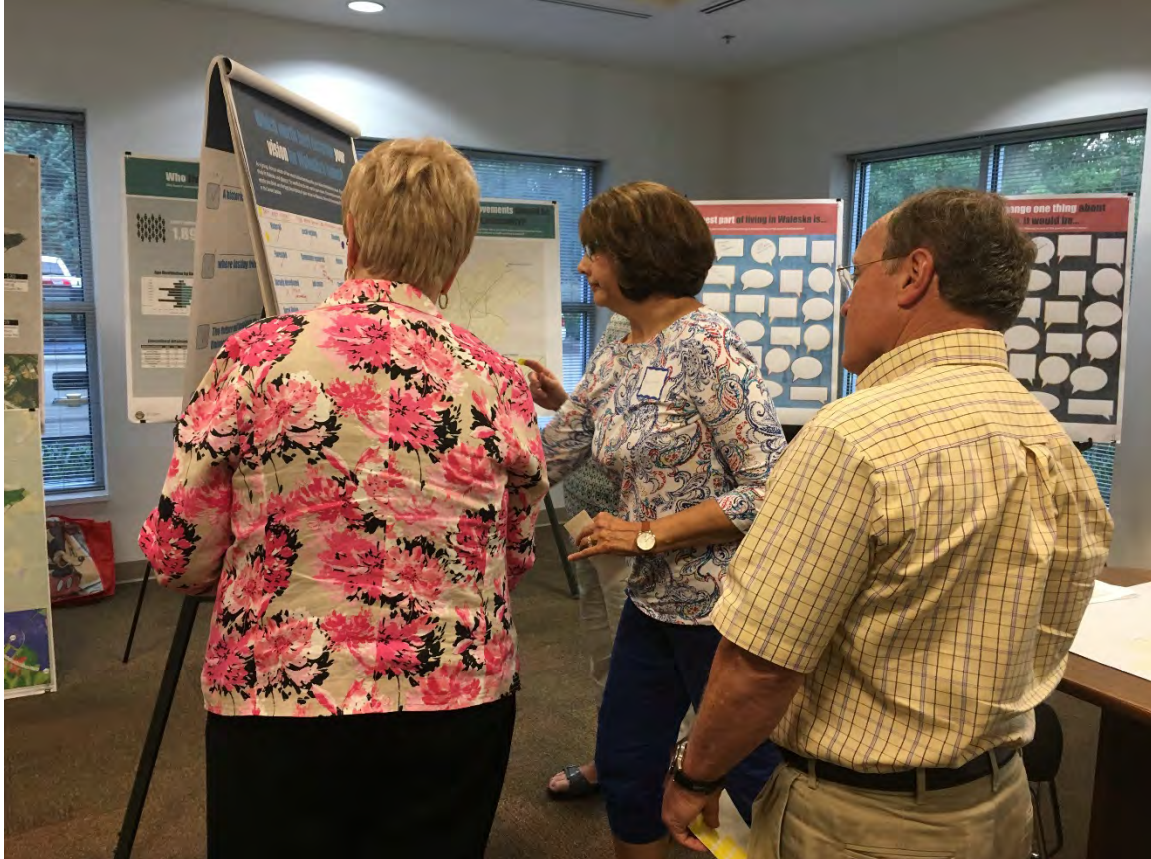
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DIRECTIONS • DIALOGUE DECISIONS • DESTINY

Waleska Target Area Workshop



Waleska Target Area Workshop



CHEROKEE COUNTY WALESKA TARGET AREA REPORT

CHEROKEE COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN SUPPORT
May 2018



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WALESKA

INTRODUCTION

As part of the 2017 Comprehensive Plan Update, Cherokee County identified six target areas for more detailed study: Ball Ground, Waleska, Southwest Cherokee, the Airport Area, Hickory Flat, and Highway 20 East. Each of these six areas was selected for different reasons.

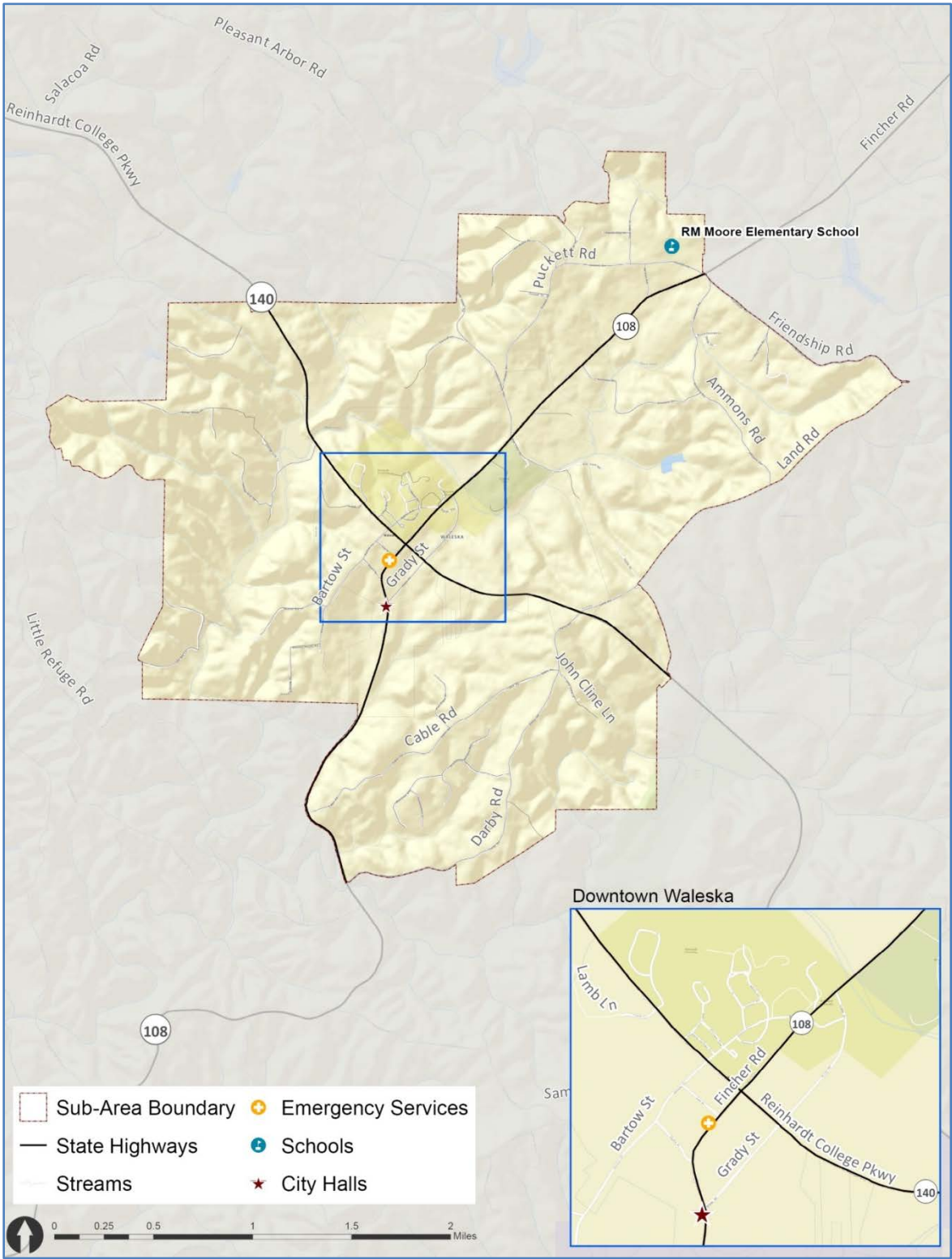
The Waleska target area was selected because it is a distinct place in the county. Although it is an incorporated municipality, Cherokee County serves as planning staff for the City of Waleska. Figure 1 illustrates the target area, which includes all of the incorporated area of Waleska as well as contiguous areas that are likely to see growth over the next 10 to 20 years.

Incorporated in 1889, Waleska is named after Warluskee, the daughter of a Native American chief who lived in the area. Historically, the town was home to diverse industries, including grist mills, timber businesses, tobacco manufacturing, and mineral development. In addition, Waleska was always a college town—Reinhardt University was founded in 1883.

The purpose of the target area detailed study is two-fold: to evaluate existing conditions within the target area, and develop a vision and plan forward for the community. This document is divided into the following sections:

- Introduction
- Who Is In Waleska?
- Land Use
- Transportation
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Quality of Life
- Key Issues and Opportunities
- Community Workshop
- Vision
- Implementation

Figure 1: Waleska Target Area Map



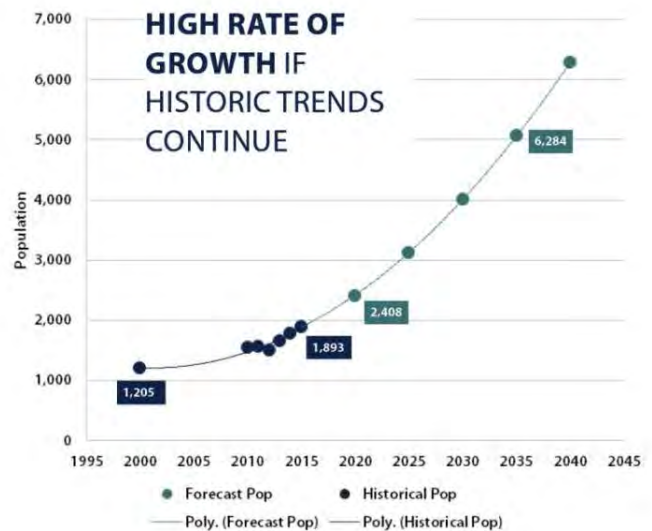
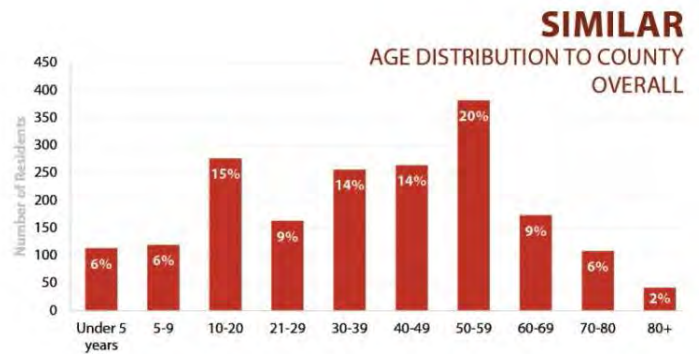
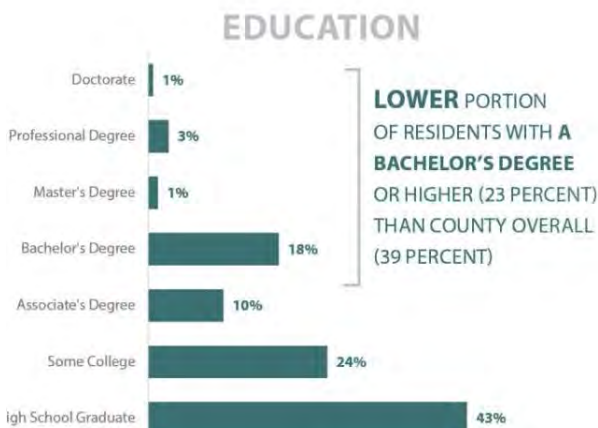
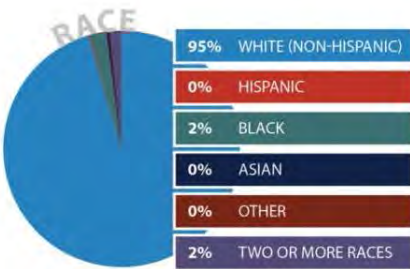
WHO LIVES IN WALESKA?



1,892
TARGET AREA
RESIDENTS
AS OF 2015



73%
OF HOUSEHOLDS
MARRIED-COUPLE
FAMILIES



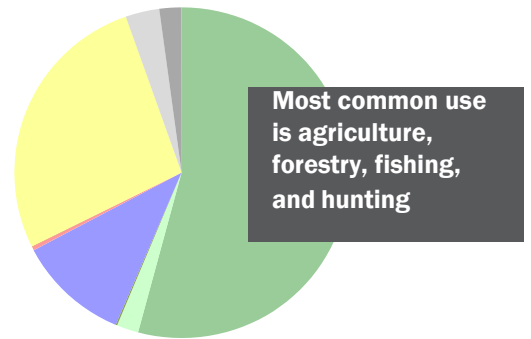
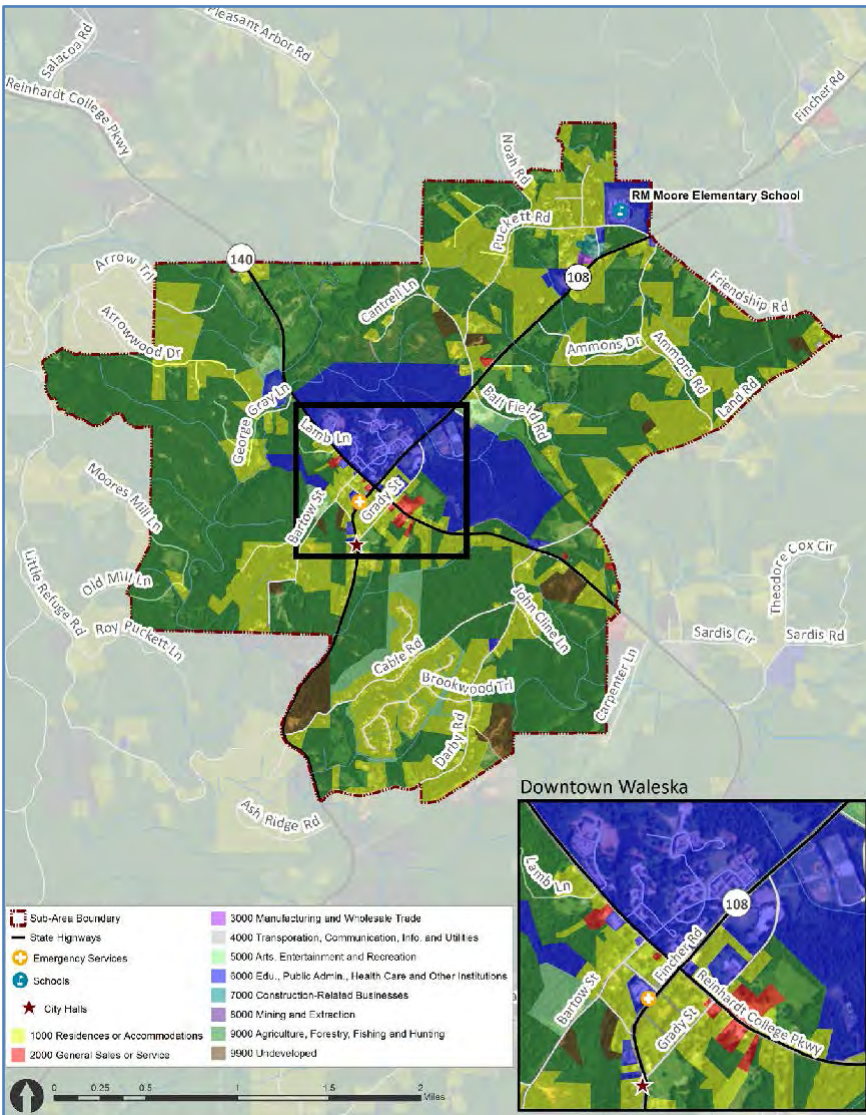
Data Source: 2015 5-year American Community Survey for Census Tract 902 - Block Groups 1, 2, and 3. Historical data from previous ACS surveys.

LAND USE - EXISTING CONDITIONS

The Waleska target area encompasses 5,128 acres (8 square miles) of land, including the 941 acres within the City of Waleska and 4,187 acres in the surrounding area. The principal existing land use within the target area is agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting, accounting for 54 percent total land area. Residences comprise 27 percent of the total land area and are primarily single-family detached homes on large lots, often with

substantial tree buffers between parcels. A higher than typical share of the land within the target area is dedicated to education, public administration, healthcare, and institutional uses (11 percent total land area) due to the presence of Reinhardt University, a major landowner in the core of Waleska. General sales or service uses are sparse and concentrated around SR 140 and SR 108, making up less than one percent of the total land area.

Figure 2: Waleska Existing Land Use Map



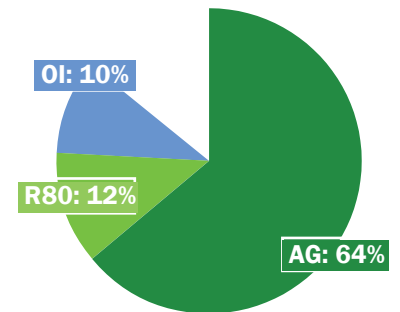
54%	Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, and Hunting
27%	Residences or Accommodations
11%	Education, Public Administration, Healthcare and Institutional
3%	Transportation, Communication and Utilities
2%	Undeveloped
2%	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation
<1%	General Sales or Services

LAND USE - ZONING

Because the target area includes both the City of Waleska and portions of unincorporated Cherokee County, two sets of zoning regulations govern land use within the area. Of the 2,779 acres currently used for agriculture, forestry, fishing, and hunting, 600 acres are zoned for more intensive development.

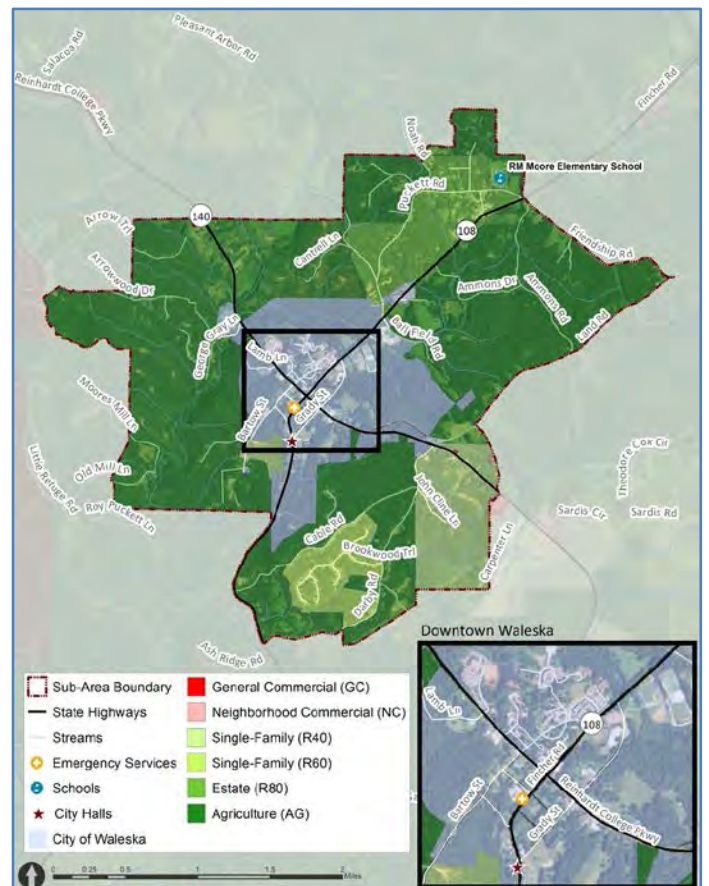
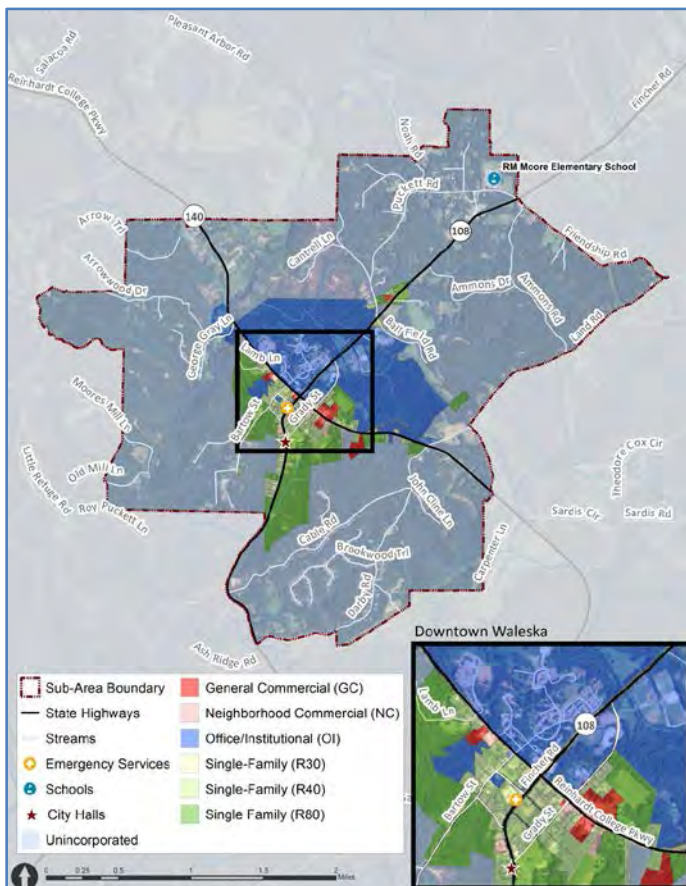
Within the City, the majority of land (56 percent) is zoned Office/Institutional (OI), most of which is Reinhardt University. Estate Residential (R80) is the second most prevalent city zoning category (26 percent of total land area), allowing single-family homes with a maximum density of 1 dwelling units per two acres (du/ac). The development standards for all city zoning districts require deep setbacks (35' to 75' front setbacks) and low lot coverages (25 to 30 percent), discouraging compact development.

Most of the land in the unincorporated area (78 percent) is zoned General Agriculture (AG), promoting rural character, agriculture, and livestock production and discouraging suburban residential or commercial development. Low density residential zoning districts account for most of the remaining unincorporated land (22 percent), including Estate Residential (R80 and R60) and Single-family Residential (R40). Development standards for these residential categories are similar to the equivalent city districts.



▲ **86 percent** of total land area (not including streets) falls under one of **three zoning categories**: AG, R80, and OI

Figure 3: Waleska Zoning Maps: City (Left) and County (Right)



TRANSPORTATION

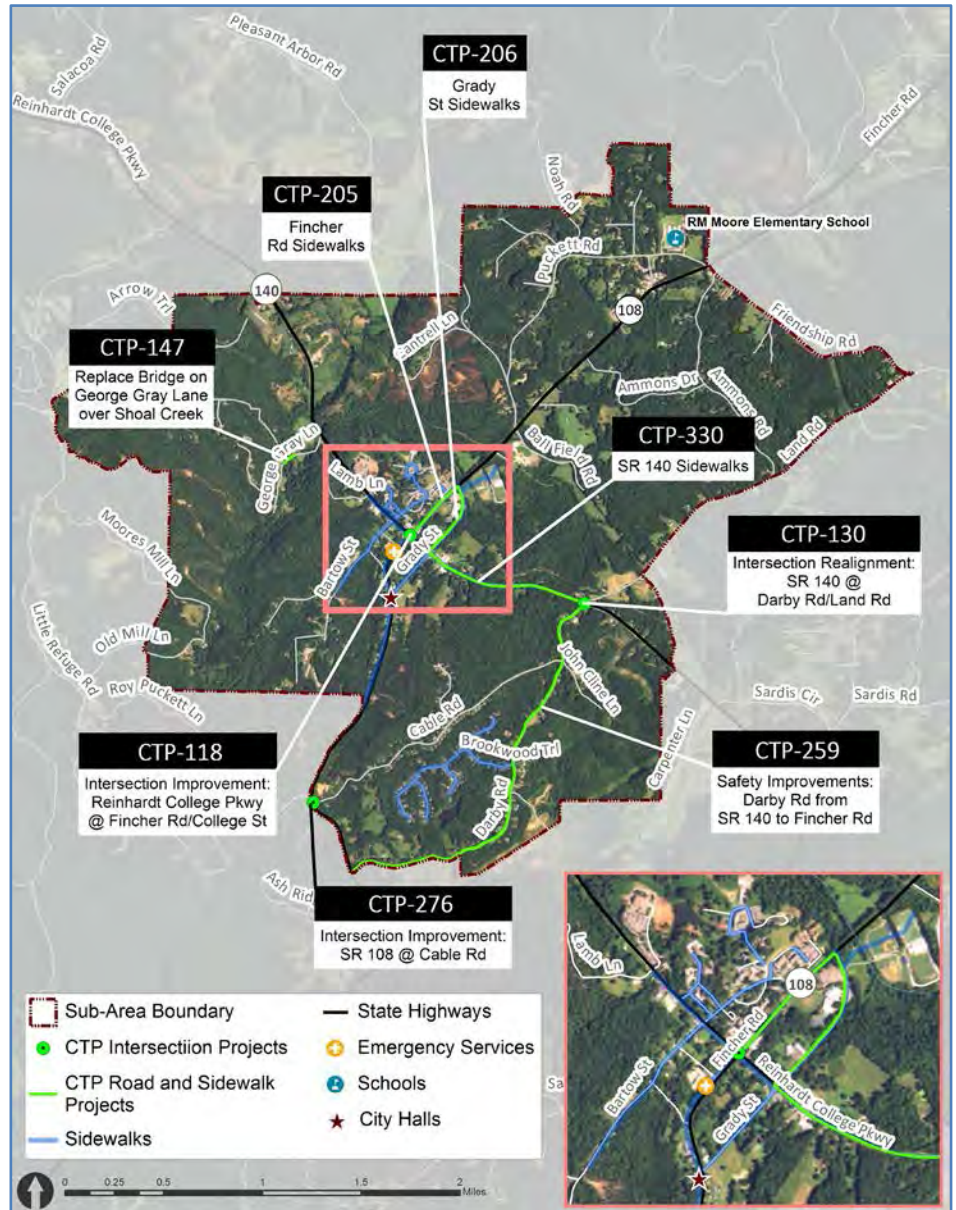
The main thoroughfares in the target area are Reinhardt College Parkway (SR 140) and Fincher Road (SR 108), both two-lane state routes operating below their carrying capacity. Their intersection forms the historic crossroads of the community and continues to be the center of business, civic, and educational activity in Waleska. Beyond the core, most roads are disconnected, branching, residential streets. There are no traffic signals within the target area.

The target area does not have direct access to an interstate, and there are no designated Regional Truck Routes through the area, according to the Atlanta Regional Commission. There are no railroads or airports in or adjacent to Waleska.

Sidewalks are prevalent in Downtown Waleska, around Reinhardt University, and in newer subdivisions, but are typically missing in older and more rural residential areas. There are no dedicated on-road or off-road bicycle facilities in the target area. Fixed route transit does not operate within the target area, but the Cherokee Area Transportation System (CATS) does allow residents to make advance reservations for on-demand transit service.

Several planned transportation improvements have been identified in the recent Cherokee County Comprehensive Transportation Plan and the Regional Transportation Plan, as shown in Figure 4. The majority of planned projects are intersection improvements or realignments, additional sidewalks near the downtown core, and safety improvements. The bridge on George Gray Lane over Shoal Creek is scheduled for replacement.

Figure 4: Waleska Key Comprehensive Transportation Plan Projects

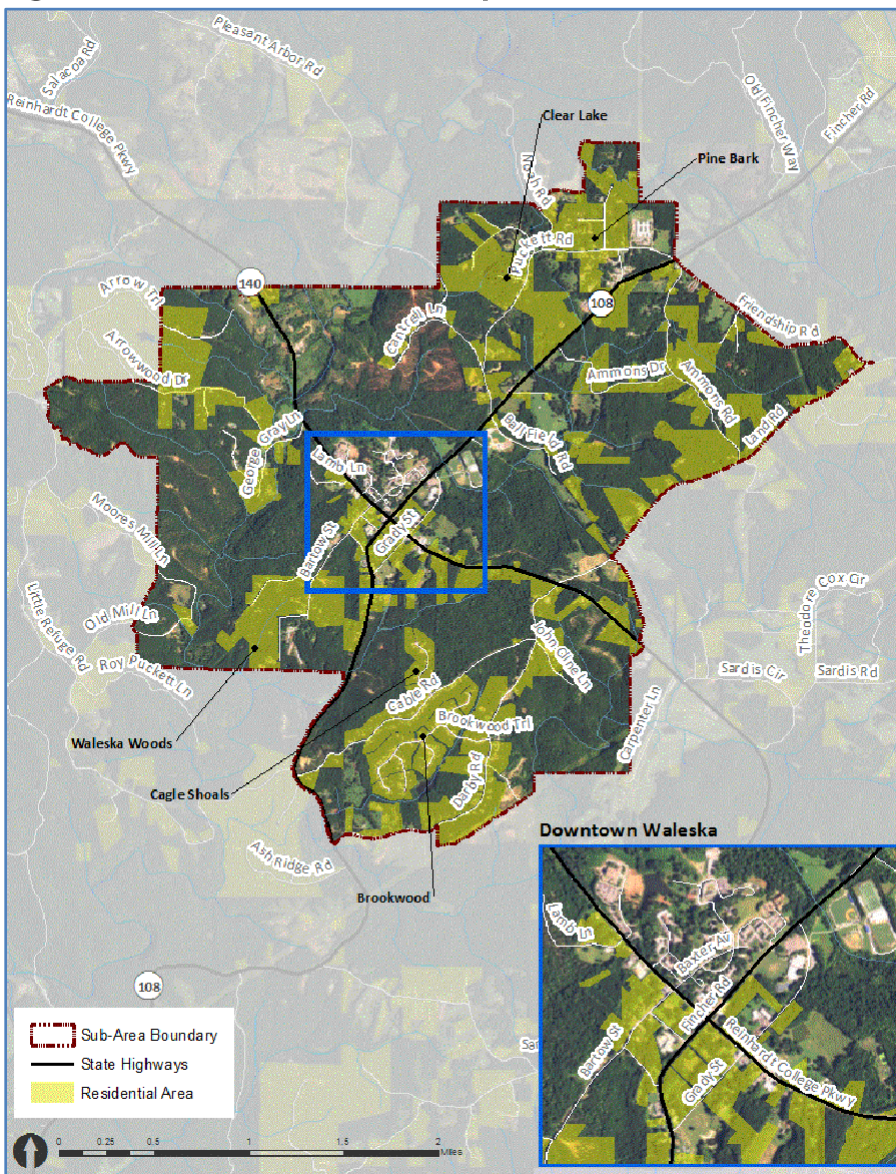


KEY PLANNED PROJECTS

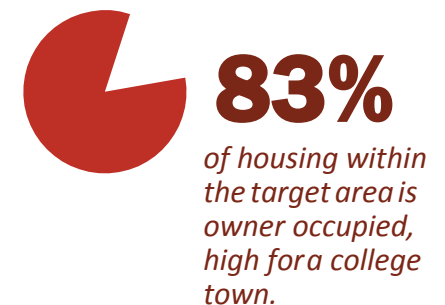
- 1** CTP-118: Intersection Improvement at Reinhardt College Pkwy and Fincher Rd
- 2** CTP-205: Fincher Rd Sidewalks
- 3** CTP-330: Reinhardt College Pkwy Sidewalks

The age of housing units in the target area closely mirrors that of Cherokee County as a whole: almost two-thirds of all units were built between 1990 and 2009, and very few units (1.5 percent) were constructed in 1949 or earlier. Rental costs are lower than the County as a whole, but housing values are slightly higher.

Figure 5: Waleska Residential Areas Map



Examples of housing in the target area, including dorms at Reinhardt College (bottom)



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

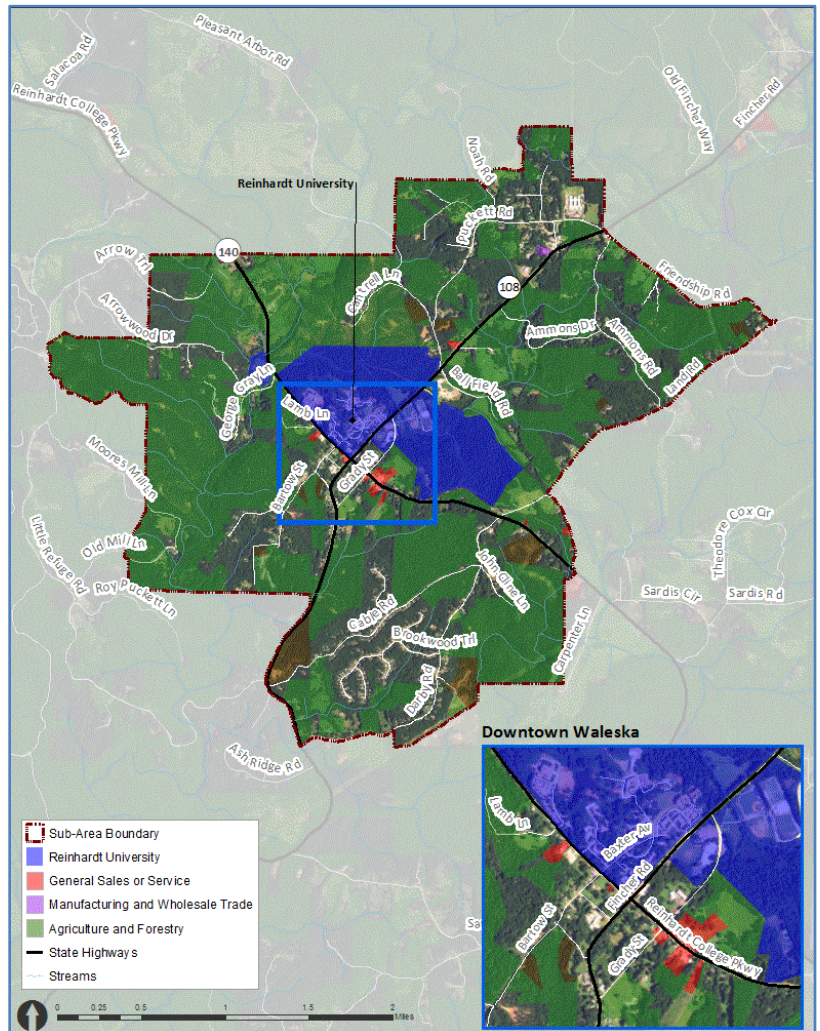
Reinhardt University is the major economic engine of Waleska. The university, founded in 1883, is a private, religious-based undergraduate university of approximately 1,400 students. The university offers over 40 programs of study, and is particularly strong in the arts and humanities. In addition to the economic activity generated through education, the campus also contains a number of destinations for visitors.

As a college town with many students, Waleska's labor force participation is low (60.3 percent). Also expected, there is a high proportion (22.3 percent) of residents working in education and health care.

Other industries with strong representation include arts, entertainment, recreation, and hospitality.

Beyond the university, RM Moore Elementary School is also a significant employer in the target area. In addition, there is a substantial amount of acreage that is in agricultural or timber use.

Figure 6: Waleska Economic Development



QUALITY OF LIFE

Like many aspects of living in Waleska, quality of life is heavily influenced by the presence of Reinhardt University. The campus contains a number of community amenities, including the Funk Heritage Center, the Falany Performing Arts Center, and the Fincher Visual Arts Center. Notably, the Falany Performing Arts Center brings world-class artists to the community. The university's athletics program, particularly baseball and football, also draws many visitors to Waleska every year.

Outside of Reinhardt University, Waleska is served by Cherokee County Fire Station Number 12, RM Moore Elementary School, Waleska Park, and Cline Park.



University-level arts and culture



Access to recreation amenities



In-town public services

Figure 7. Waleska Quality of Life Map



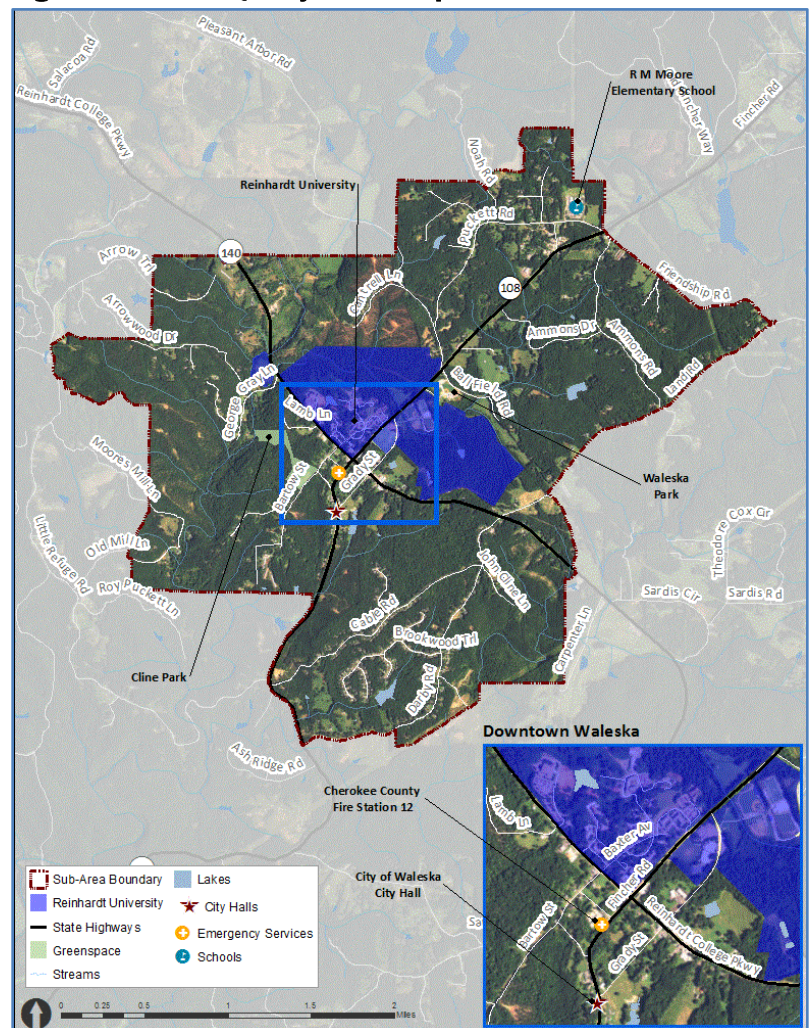
Falany Performing Arts Center



R.M. Moore Elementary School



Reinhardt University Sports



COMMUNITY WORKSHOP



Members of the Waleska community met to develop a shared vision; provide feedback on the Future Development Map; and analyze strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT). Key themes included:

VISION

- **Overall, there is support for the City's existing vision statement:**

"A historic small town in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains where lasting friendships and personal connections are valued. The future will build upon the cherished relationship with Reinhardt University through the spirit of a main street village that has as its heart a college town ambience through a mixture of housing, commercial, and entertainment opportunities."

- **Desires to be a desired location for small businesses, but they have historically had a hard time establishing and sustaining such businesses in Waleska.**
- **Consider themselves the best kept secret in the area and want to continue to grow as a small, charming college town surrounded by nature and full of community resources**
- **Continue to be a walkable, pedestrian-friendly place**

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAP

Participants reviewed the 2030 Future Development Map and character area descriptions. Recommended changes to the map boundaries are shown in Figure 8 on page 13. Recommended modifications to the character area descriptions included:

- **Urban Core:** Add "building on the historic center"; support wide sidewalks and small front setbacks, but limited by utility poles and zoning ordinance
- **Neighborhood Living:** Unsure about higher densities; commercial development only appropriate along SR 140 and SR 108; prefer "mixture of uses" to "mixed-use environments"
- **Suburban Growth:** Support existing description
- **Rural Places:** Support existing description
- **Transitional Corridor:** Fine with existing description, but do not want in Waleska

LOVE

- Friendly neighbors
- Small town feeling
- Rural living with convenient access to Canton

CHANGE

- More businesses, especially small grocery, laundry, and hardware stores
- Create a sign ordinance

PHYSICAL IMPROVEMENT

- Red light at intersection of SR 108 and SR 140, if design would not require the demolition of adjacent buildings
- Add a sewer system

COMMUNITY WORKSHOP

SWOT ANALYSIS



KEY ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Through the existing conditions analysis and public engagement, a number of issues and opportunities were identified.

ISSUES

- **Heavy Reliance on Reinhardt University.** The university is the major economic engine of the town, and houses many of the quality of life amenities. Sewer is limited to school property only.
- **Lack of commercial/retail/local services.** There are very few businesses in town that provide basic local services such as groceries, laundry, and dining.
- **City zoning does not support village-like development.** Current zoning contains deep building setbacks and buffers that hinders village-like development.
- **Poor transportation access.** Waleska is “off the beaten path” of the interstate system.
- **Disconnected transportation network.** Many local roads are dead ends, and neighborhoods do not connect. Also, the sidewalk system is limited and there are no bicycle lanes or trails.
- **Land ownership is concentrated in the hands of a few.** Aside from Reinhardt University, much of the land in the target area is owned by a small number of families.
- **Imbalanced tax base.** The lack of commercial and industrial uses, coupled with Reinhardt University being tax-exempt, has resulted in an imbalanced tax base reliant on residential property taxes.

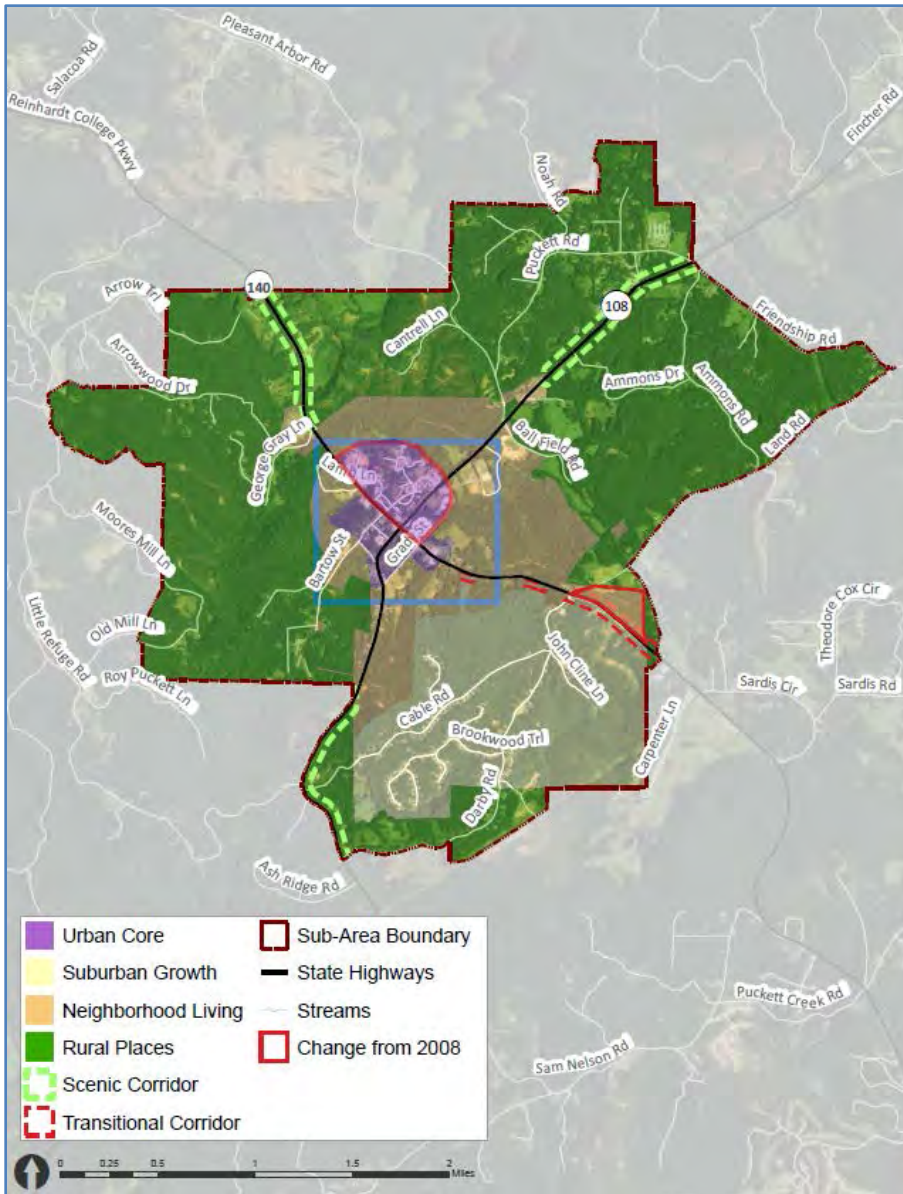
OPPORTUNITIES

- **Improved Integration with Reinhardt University.** The relationship between Waleska and the university could be strengthened, as the two operate fairly independent from one another. There is an opportunity to jointly plan for projects that will improve quality of life for both residents and university students, staff, and faculty.
- **Abundance of undeveloped land.** Much of the land in the target area is used for agricultural or timber purposes. There is still a rural feeling to Waleska. This is an opportunity to ensure that regulations are in place to protect rural character, and that encourages small-town growth that is in-tune with the community.
- **Improvements to SR 108 and 140.** Improving the key intersection of Waleska provides an opportunity to plan for a village center to serve both the university and city residents.
- **Capitalize on visitors to Reinhardt University.** The university draws visitors with its arts institutions and sporting events. There is an opportunity to keep visitors in Waleska longer by connecting them to other experiences in the area.
- **Proximity to Lake Arrowhead.** Waleska is very close to the community of Lake Arrowhead, and could benefit from improved connections.

VISION

Character areas are the physical expression of the community's vision statement. Participants in the engagement process reviewed and provided feedback on the descriptions and boundaries of the six character areas present within the Waleska target area. Figure 8 shows an updated character map based on land use changes since the last Comprehensive Plan, input from the public, and alignment with the revised vision. Changes from 2008 are highlighted in red. The changes mostly reflect an effort to depict existing conditions along SR140.

Figure 8: Revised Future Development Map



Input from community members shaped the revised vision statement for the Waleska target area, shown below.

“An historic small town nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Waleska has the charm, scenic beauty, cultural assets, and strong community bonds that make it one of Georgia’s best kept secrets. A mix of housing, small businesses, and community gathering spaces, anchored by the city’s cherished relationship with Reinhardt University, will continue to grow the college town energy in the walkable center of the crossroads community.”

IMPLEMENTATION

The following policies are recommended to both address the identified issues in the Waleska target area and capitalize on opportunities.

POLICY 1: Proactively collaborate with Reinhardt University.

Town- gown relations need to improve for both the university and Waleska to prosper. More residents need to be actively involved in the university, and students need to feel more connected to the community beyond campus.

POLICY 2: Encourage the development of a village center.

The Waleska target area needs a stronger center of town with a mix of businesses to serve local needs. The village center can be developed with a public space that encourages community interaction and could host local events.

POLICY 3: Support improvements to SR 140 and SR 108 that are compatible with the community vision. Any roadway projects considered for SR 140 and 108 should adhere to the vision of a town center with improved walkability and safety components.

POLICY 4: Ensure the connectivity of roads, sidewalks and trails to link new development into the City. The existing network of sidewalks within Waleska and its compact pattern of development, are a strong foundation for a walkable community. The City and County should work to expand the sidewalk network and develop a system of trails to improve walkability. Streets and sidewalks of new developments should connect into the city to improve pedestrian and vehicular access throughout the area.

POLICY 5: Encourage a broader diversity of housing options.

Despite the proportionately large student community, housing is limited to mostly single-family units. A broader diversity of housing types should be encouraged.

POLICY 6: Strengthen connections with the Lake Arrowhead

community. The Lake Arrowhead community is somewhat self-contained; however, its residents represent a boost to the potential customer base for future businesses in Waleska, and stronger ties—both physical and figurative—should be forged between the two communities.

POLICY 7: Preserve the rural and natural character of the

surrounding area. As development occurs around Waleska, the surrounding rural character needs to be preserved, and sprawl-like patterns of development should be discouraged.

WORK PLAN

No.	Action	Year					Responsibility	Cost
		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022		
W-1	Establish a community liaison role with Reinhardt University	X					City of Waleska	N/A
W-2	Restart hosting weddings at City Hall	X	X				City of Waleska	N/A
W-3	Add a gazebo to City Hall property to support outdoor special events		X	X			City of Waleska	\$30,000
W-4	Expand recycling program to include shredding twice a year	X	X				City of Waleska	Cost for On-Site Service
W-5	Develop plans to build a walking trail adjacent to City Hall					X	City of Waleska / Parks and Recreation	\$8,000
W-6	Update zoning code to allow more compact, village-like development				X	X	City of Waleska / Cherokee County Planning	Staff time



C - Public Forums

CRITICAL ISSUES FORUMS

WOODSTOCK

Tuesday, June 27, 2017 — 5:30pm - 7:30pm

Cherokee County Recreation Center

7545 Main Street, Woodstock, GA 30188

CANTON

Thursday, June 29, 2017 — 6pm - 8pm

Northside Cherokee Conference Center

1130 Bluffs Parkway, Canton, GA 30114

Stop in to give feedback anytime during a forum or visit the website to give 24/7 input.

WHAT ARE THE BIGGEST ISSUES FOR CHEROKEE COUNTY?

WHAT SHOULD THE COUNTY LOOK LIKE IN THE FUTURE?

WWW.ENGAGECHEROKEEGA.COM



HELP SHAPE THE
COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN UPDATE



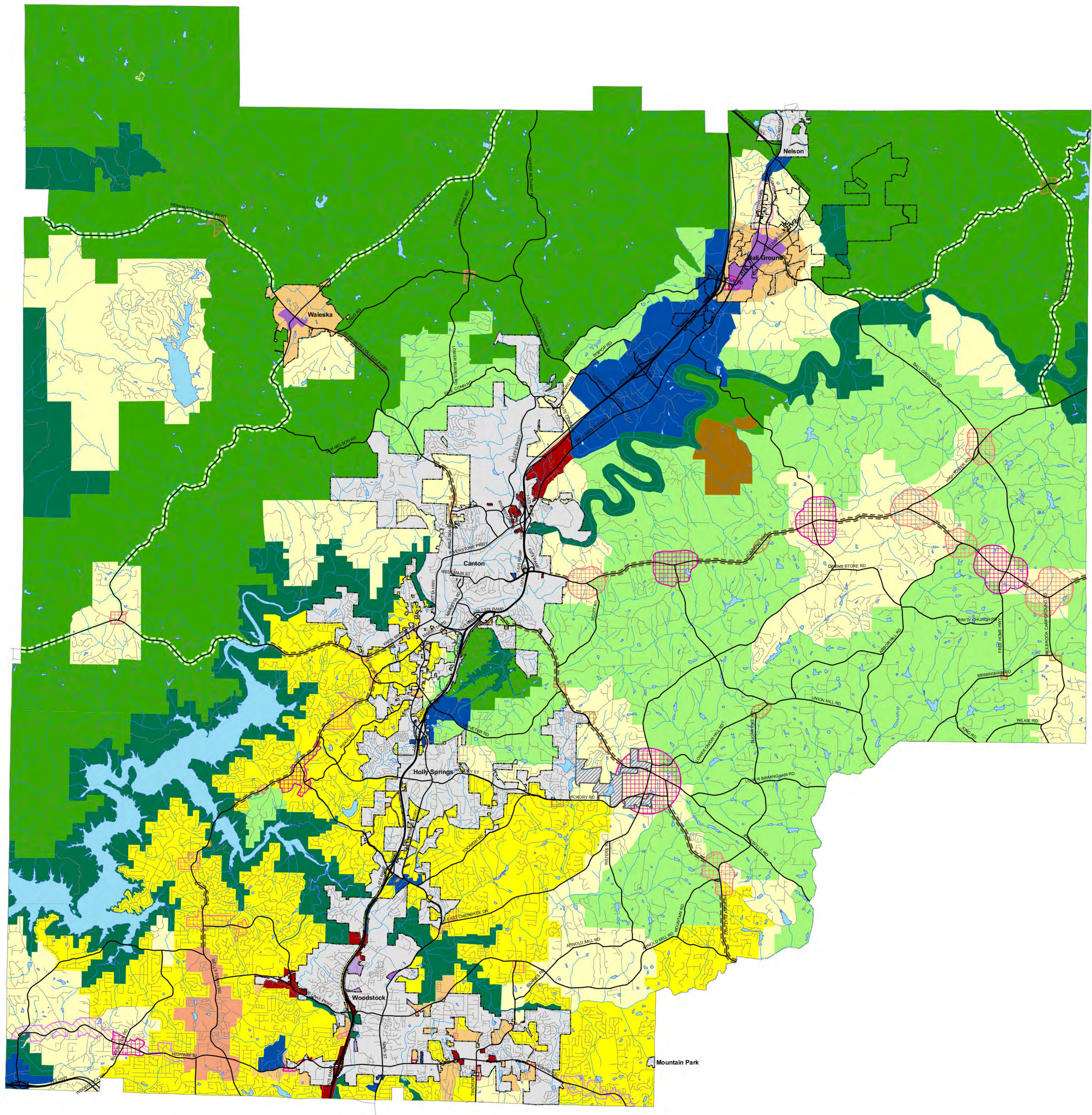
SPONSORS

Cherokee County
City of Ball Ground
City of Waleska

PLAN CHEROKEE
DIRECTIONS • DIALOGUE DECISIONS • DESTINY

Future Development

2008 Comprehensive Plan



Legend

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|
| | Disputed Holly Springs Annexation | Nodes | |
| | Cities Not Included | | Country Crossroads |
| Cherokee Character Areas | | | Hamlet |
| | Natural Preserve | | Neighborhood Village |
| | Rural Places | | Community Village |
| | Country Estates | Corridors | |
| | Suburban Growth | | Scenic |
| | Suburban Living | | Transitional |
| | Neighborhood Living | | Development |
| | Bells Ferry LCI | | |
| | Urban Village* | | |
| | Urban Core | | |
| | Regional Center | | |
| | Workplace Center | | |
| | Waste Management | | |

NOTICE:
THIS MAP 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 PURPOSE.

Drawing Prepared by:
CHEROKEE COUNTY
PLANNING & ZONING DEPT.
CANTON, GEORGIA
DATE: 08/19/2008



0 0.450.9 1.8 2.7 3.6 Miles

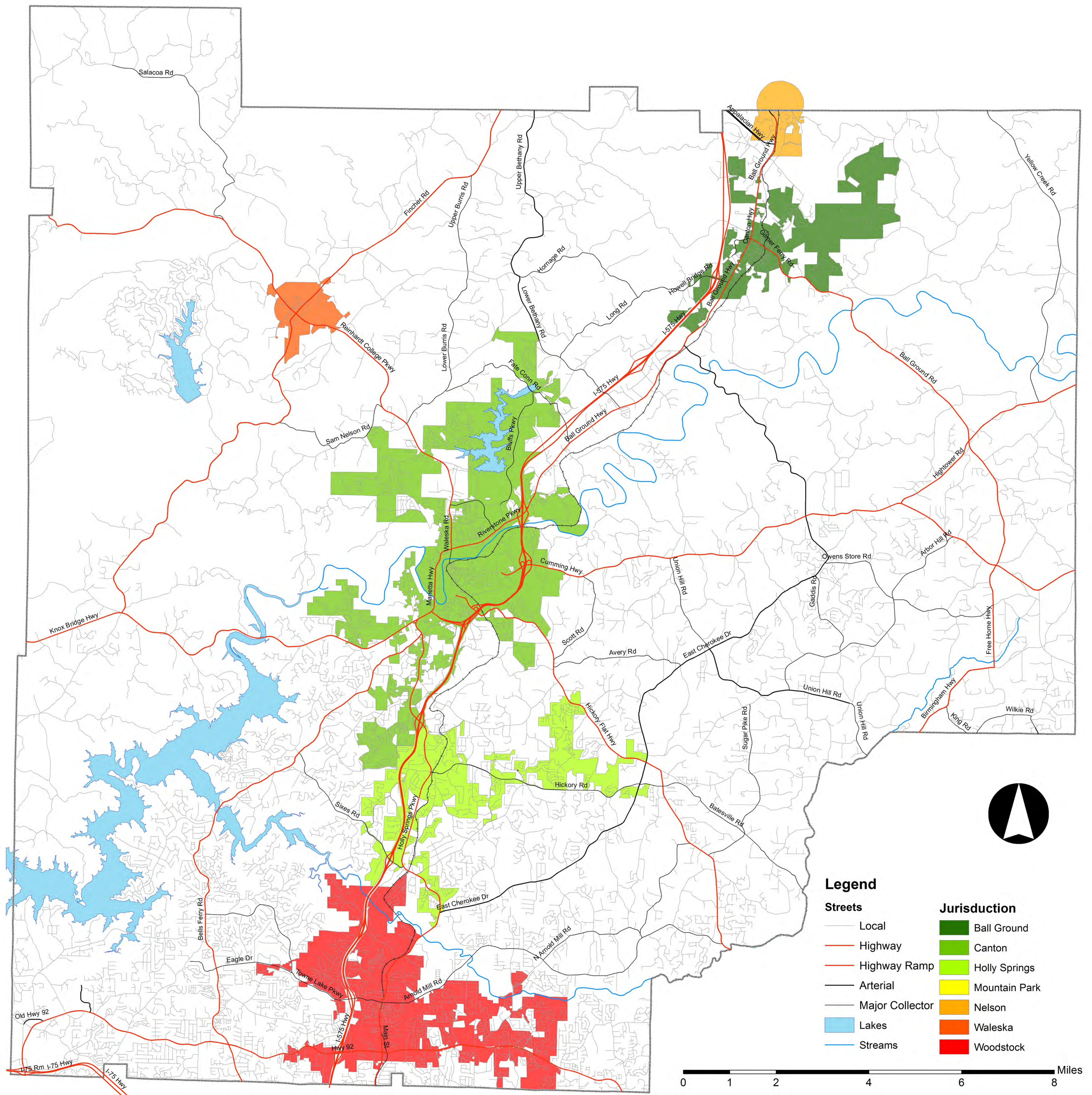


Where do you live/work?

Step 1 — Place a Yellow or Red dot where you live.

Step 2 — Place a Blue or Green dot where you work.

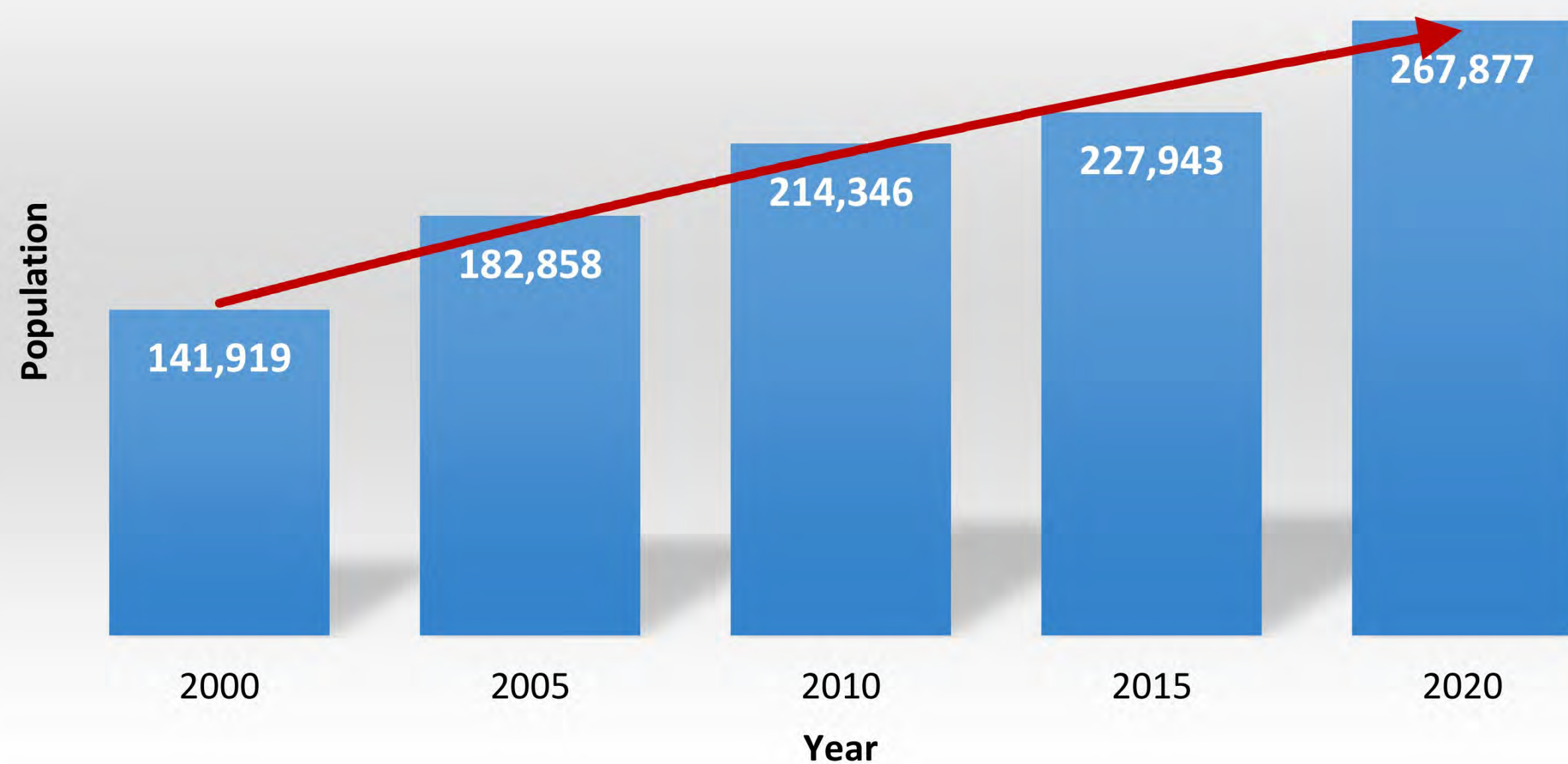
If you work outside the county, put the dot outside the county in the direction you travel to work.



Cherokee at a Glance

How have we changed? Where are we headed?

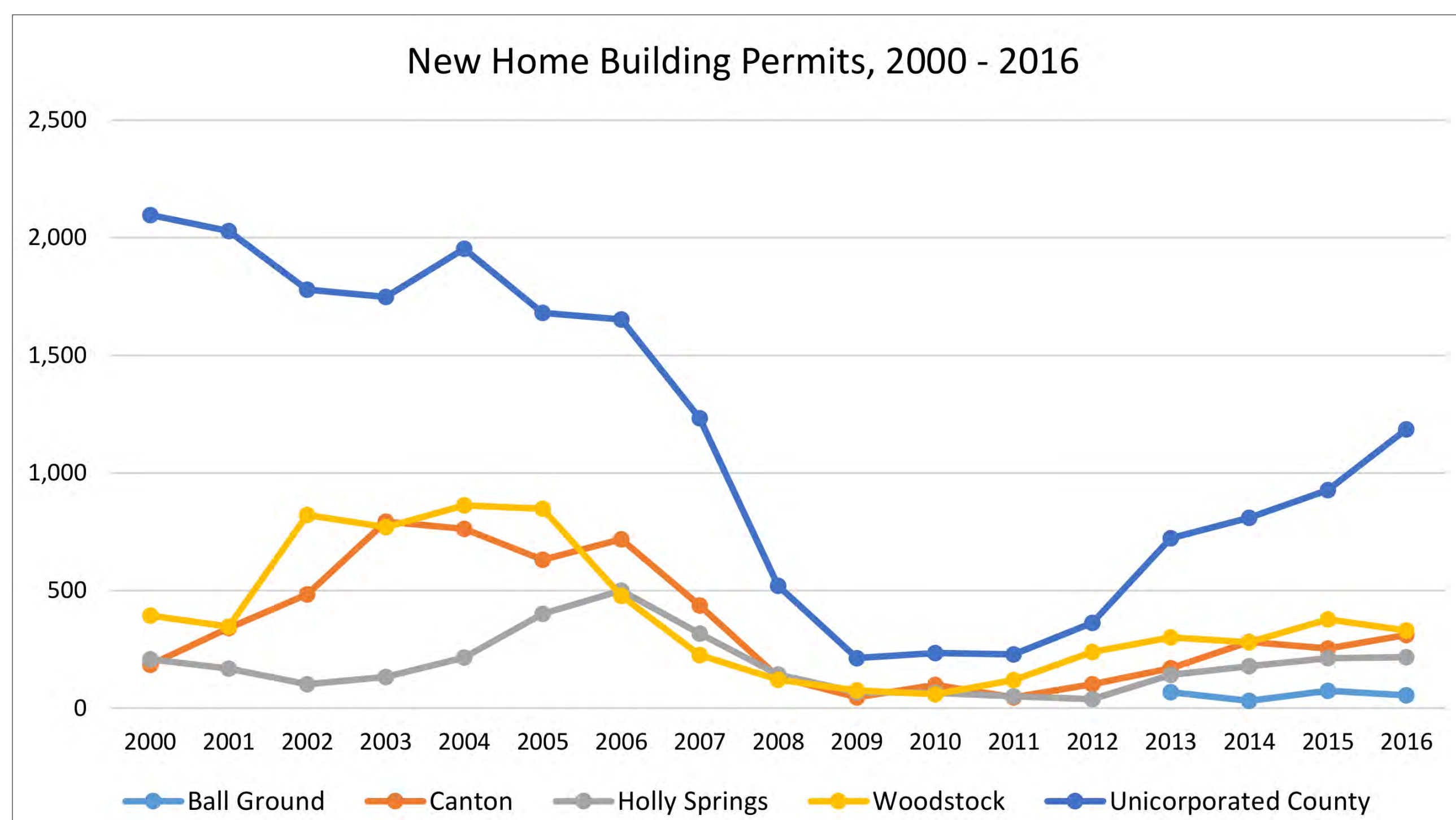
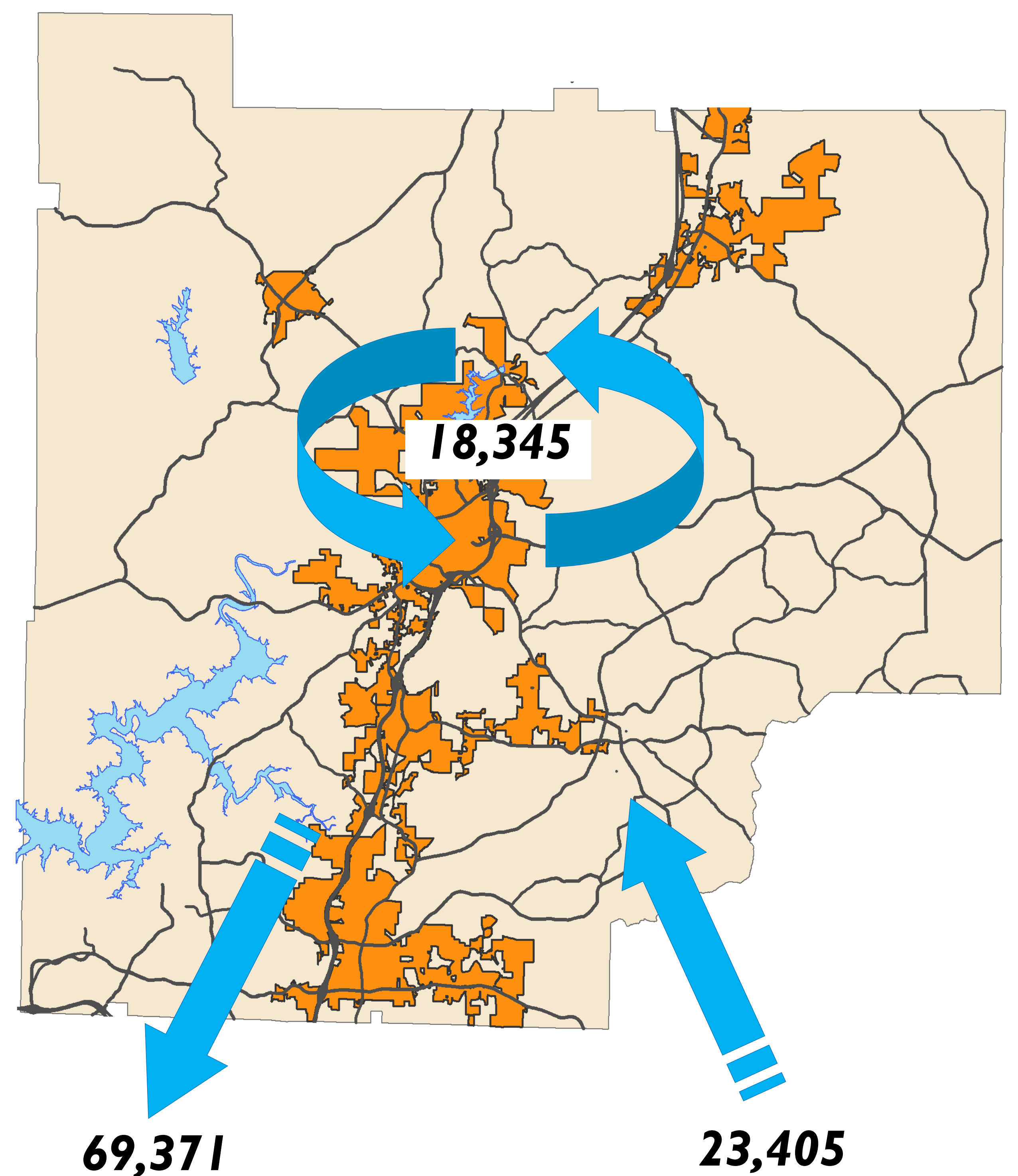
Cherokee County Population, 2000-2020



- Approximately 79% of employed Cherokee County residents commute outside the county for work.
- The county brings in over 20,000 employees from other counties to work in Cherokee.
- More than 18,000 current residents work within the county.

Pick up a copy of Cherokee Snapshot for more interesting statistics.

Cherokee County Commuting Patterns, 2015



- New home permits significantly declined in Unincorporated Cherokee County between 2006 and 2011 with a low of 213 in 2009.
- Since 2011, permits have returned to higher levels with increasing numbers in the county but more stable rates in the cities.

Connected in Cherokee

Connecting people with amenities and services

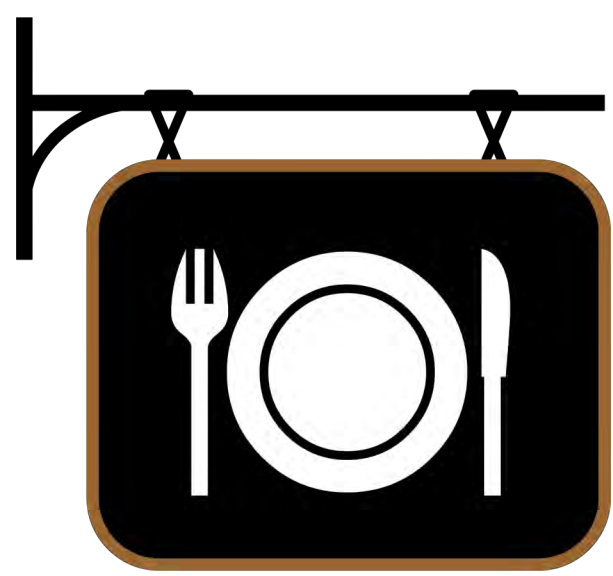
Put dots next to the amenities you want to be close to or the amenities that are farthest away.



Grocery Store



Bank



Restaurant



Doctor's Office



Gas Station



Entertainment



What else? Tell us on an idea card!

Which style of commercial development would you ideally like to see in or near your neighborhood?
Place a dot next to your preferred style.

RURAL	 	
SUBURBAN	 	
MAIN STREET	 	
URBAN	 	

Established in Cherokee

Providing housing to serve all residents

Place dots in the spaces next to housing types needed in Cherokee County.

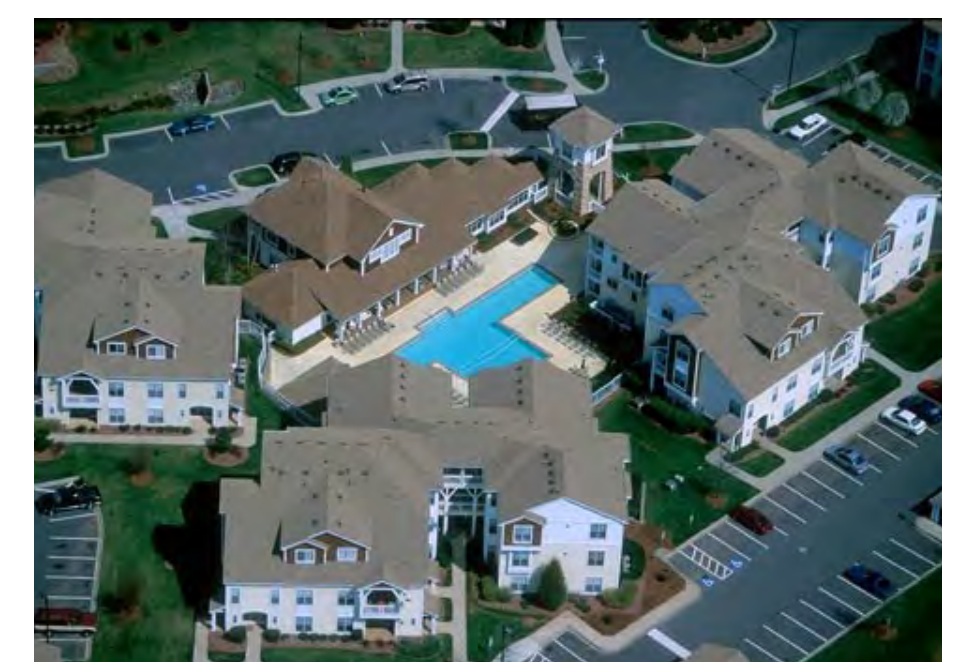


Did you know Cherokee is changing?

- Since 2000, the average household size in Cherokee County has declined to 2.80.
- At the same time, the number of non-family households has increased by nearly 3,000.
- By 2040, the percentage of residents 65+ years old will increase from 12% to 21%.

Changing demographics mean changing housing needs.

Place dots in the spaces below the development patterns we should have in Cherokee County.



Aging in Cherokee

Supporting our senior residents so they thrive



Photo courtesy of Google Maps



<http://www.cherokeega.com/Senior-Services/photos/>

How well do we care for our seniors? How might we improve senior services? Tell us on a post-it note below!

Area for post-it notes and feedback.



Did you know?

Residents 65 and over are projected to make up approximately 20% of Cherokee County's population by 2040!



Heritage in Cherokee

Protecting Cherokee's Past

What are your favorite historic resources in Cherokee? What should be protected? Place a dot under the ones you value most, or tell us your own favorites in the space below.



Downtown Canton



Downtown Ball Ground



Reinhart University Campus



Salacoa Valley



Did you know?

The Ball Ground and Canton National Register Districts boast a combined total of more than 500 historic structures!



Downtown Woodstock

Where else? Tell us on a post-it note below!



Free Home

Nature in Cherokee

Preserving and promoting access to our natural resources

**What are your parks and natural resources in Cherokee? What should be protected?
Place a dot under the ones you value most, or tell us your own favorites in the space below.**



Garland Mountain



Lake Allatoona



Blankets Creek Trail



Long Swamp Creek



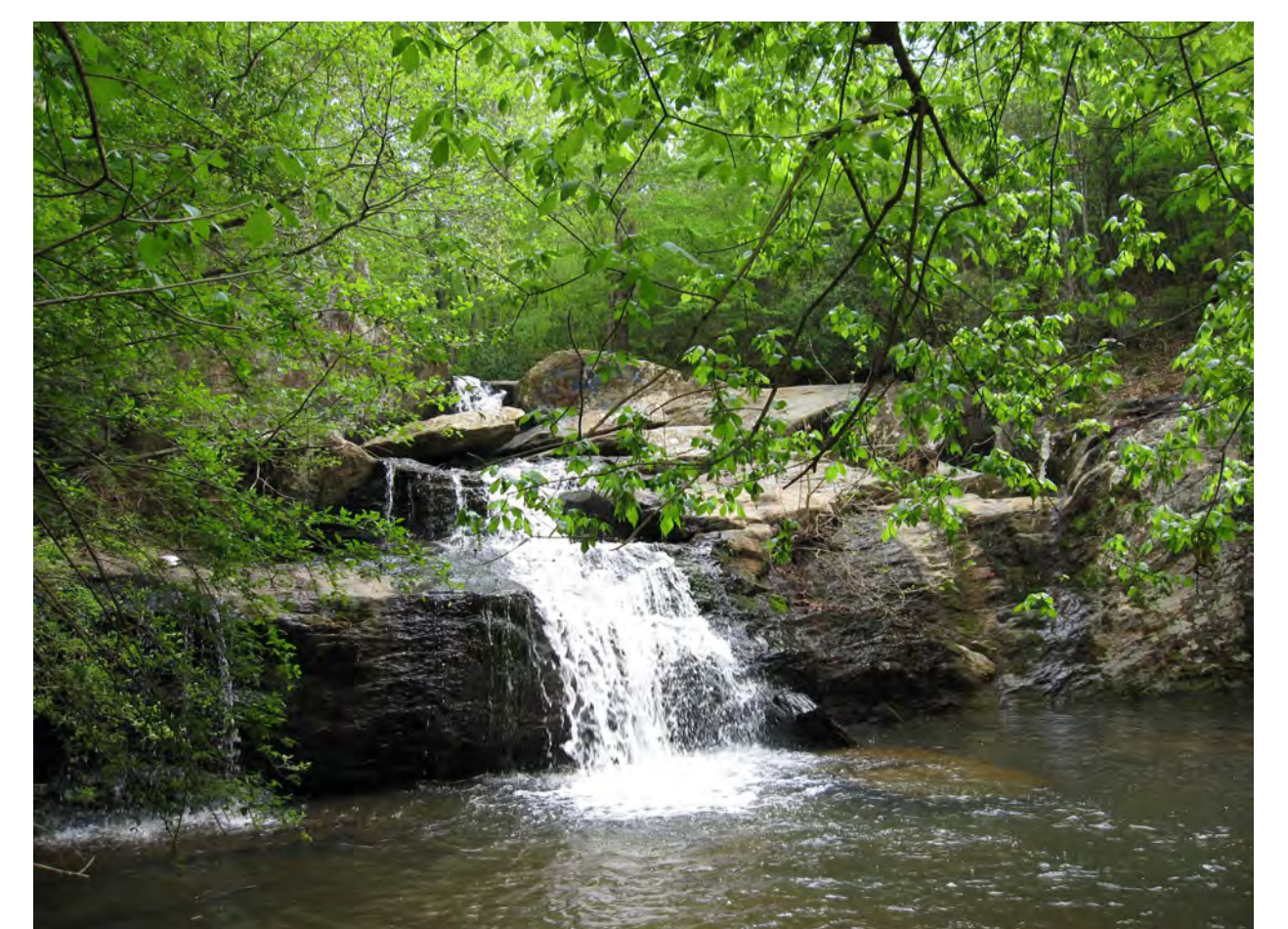
Did you know?

Cherokee County has nearly 2,500 acres of parkland distributed around the county!



Pine Log Mountain

Where else? Tell us on a post-it note below!




Brick Mill Falls

Made in Cherokee

Supporting businesses to ensure opportunities for residents



 **Did you know?**
Nearly 80 % of Cherokee
County residents
commute **outside the**
county for work.

How can we change this?



Building Careers

Cherokee County offers an array of career development programs, such as Mobile Career Lab, Cherokee Career Expo and Pathways to Employment in Cherokee County Schools. How else might we connect Cherokee residents with good local jobs?

Tell us on a post-it in the space below!

Growing Businesses

Cherokee County supports existing businesses and attracts new ones with a range of programs, such as Existing Industry Meetings, Customized Employee Training and The Circuit. How else might we support our business owners in Cherokee?

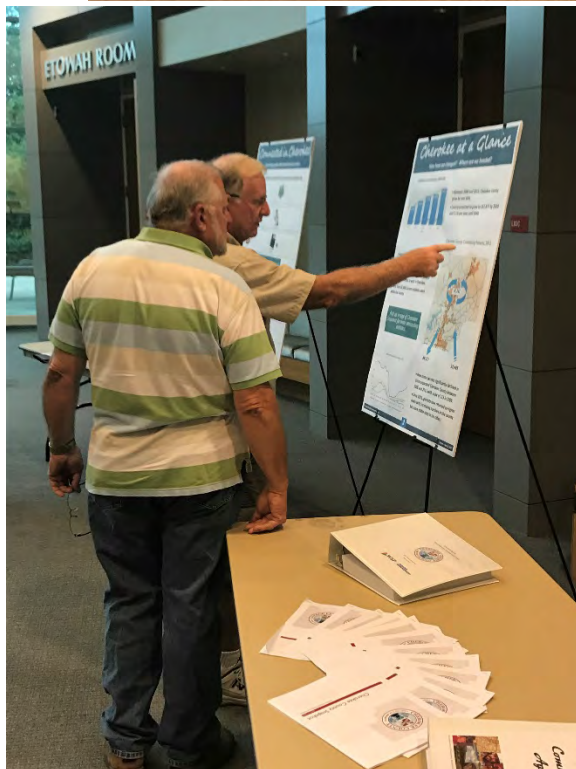
Tell us on a post-it in the space below!

Improving Cherokee

How can we make Cherokee better?

On a post-it note, tell us what we need to do better and place it on the space below!

Canton Critical Issues Form



CHEROKEE TRIBUNE & LEDGER-NEWS

http://www.tribuneledgernews.com/local_news/critical-issues-forum-for-comprehensive-land-use-plan-draws-a/article_005eb2c4-5ece-11e7-beee-dfa87e9055e9.html

Critical issues forum for comprehensive land use plan draws a crowd

Sampson Jenkins Jul 1, 2017



Linda Bell places a colored dot sticker on a board at the critical issues forum representing what she thinks is a historic resource in the county and what needed to be preserved.

Buy Now

Interactive boards and concerned residents were spread across the county administrative building at the Bluffs on Thursday night at the second of two critical issues forums for the update of the county's comprehensive land use plan.

About 30 residents attended to discuss the future of Cherokee and offered ideas of what they would like to see as the county continues to grow.

Steve Epperson, who lives along Highway 20, said he attended Thursday's forum to "see what the future holds."



"There's some things in mind that I don't like to see, including high-density housing in places and a lot of commercial businesses," he said. "I live off of Highway 20 and there's a big issue with 20 being widened and I think the six lanes are unreasonable."

Epperson said the state has not been able to explain why they are widening the road to six lanes and more in some areas.

"I think the state is planning on doing what they want to do and I don't want the county to go with a lot of commercialism along there," he said. "I was trying to get an idea to what the county's plans were for that."

Kendall Jones, program director at MUST Ministries, said he attended the forum to make sure the update to the comprehensive plan "provides affordable housing for all the citizens in Cherokee County."

"I appreciate the fact that they are doing this to have a chance to talk to people and have input," he said. "It's a huge task."

Donna Hillhouse said she wanted the county to keep its rural feel.

"I just want them to try to remember to keep more agricultural areas in the county, she said. "I think it's always good to get the opinion of the public. I go to quite a few information meetings from builders and all and I don't like to see all of the developments going up. Being a rural county is what draws people up here in the first place because of the green, open spaces and farms, but they are getting rid of them all."

Cherokee County principal planner Margaret Stallings said they have gotten great feedback at the forums and hope residents will continue to visit engagecherokeega.com to interact in the discussion forums and take a "brief" survey that will help the county in the planning phase of the update to the plan.

There are many similarities between the interactive boards at the critical issues forums and the questions on the online survey, Stallings said.

"We will be looking at the responses we get, collating that information together and then presenting that information in a report that will be given to the advisory committee and board of commissioners so they get a sense of what people are thinking are our biggest issues," she said. "Once we do that, we can focus our efforts."

Stallings said a kick-off meeting occurred Friday with a consultant for the "target areas" in Cherokee County and the public will be able to interact in August and September for those areas.

Dot Martin said she attended Thursday's forum to "see what the county is thinking."

"I think Cherokee County has made a real effort to engage their citizens and listen," she said.

The county's Director of Planning and Land Use, Jeff Watkins, said he hoped more people would take advantage of the online discussion boards and surveys to "stay involved from the comfort of their home."

"If a resident thinks of something over the weekend or late at night they can hop online and jot down that idea," he said. "It's a great venue for everyone to participate."

Cherokee County commissioners unanimously agreed to partner with the cities of Ball Ground and Waleska at a joint public hearing in April about the update of the comprehensive plan.

The deadline for the final draft of the updated comprehensive plan is Oct. 31, 2018.



Steve Epperson attended Thursday night's forum to see how the county is handling high-density housing.

Buy Now



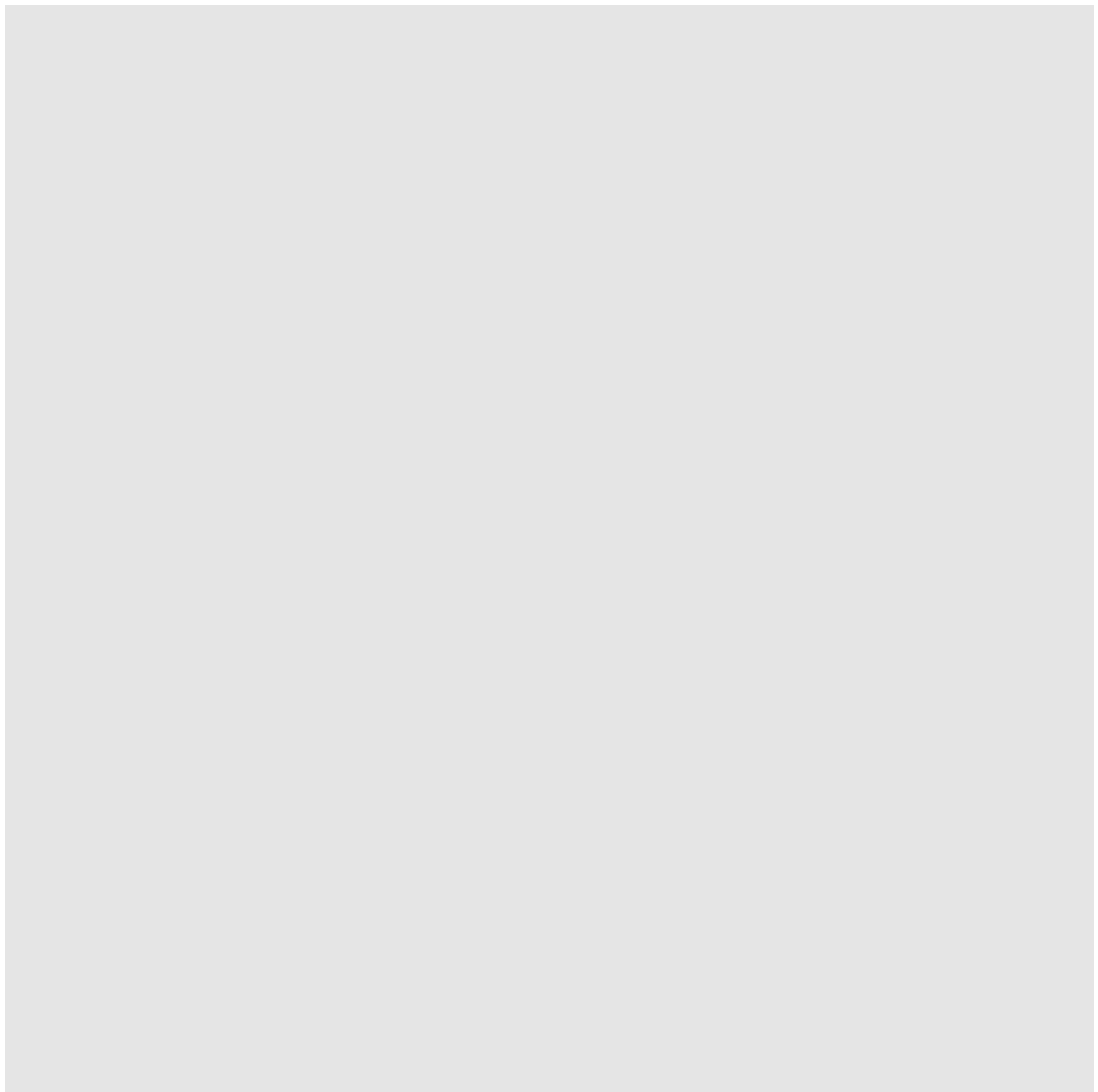
Kendall Jones, program director at MUST Ministries, looks at a 'Cherokee is Changing' board at the critical issues forum to see if the county will have more affordable housing in the future.

Buy Now



Cherokee County principal planner Margaret Stallings discusses the update to the comprehensive plan to Steve Epperson, who was concerned with the widening of Highway 20.

Buy Now



Cherokee County is updating its Comprehensive Land Use Plan and about 30 residents attended the county administration offices at the Bluffs on Thursday night to weigh in on what they want to see in Cherokee moving forward.

Buy Now

You Might Also Like



Cherokee County Critical Issues Forums

Introduction

Critical issues forums for the 2018 Comprehensive Plan were held on June 27 in Woodstock and June 29 in Canton. Both meetings produced different results and had a slightly varying attendance. Using post-it notes and dots, participants expressed their preferences on housing and development types, density levels, senior citizen services, historic and natural resource preservation, and overall improvements on community engagement “posters” that covered core topics of the plan.

Connected in Cherokee

This topic addresses land use and connectivity between residents and their amenities. Residents noted which amenities they would most value being near, as well as whether they would prefer rural, suburban, main street, or urban developments for these amenities. Participants in both meetings wished to be closer to restaurants and various forms of entertainment. In addition, participants generally preferred rural commercial developments (54%), followed by the main street style (21%), suburban, and urban (both 12.5%). The adjacent graphic shows that residents value being near ‘experiences’ rather than necessities.

Participants’ amenity preferences ranked from most desired to least desired

Restaurant	37.5%
Entertainment	25%
Bank	12.5%
Doctor’s Office	12.5%
Grocery Store	12.5%
Gas Station	0%

Established in Cherokee

This section addresses participants’ housing and residential development preferences. Residents used dots to specify their ideal housing type (single-family, townhome, or apartment) and chose their housing density preferences from a selection of five aerial views that showed varying units per acre. A slight majority chose the larger single-family home (53%) as shown in the chart below. The overwhelming majority of attendees generally preferred the least dense housing development. Interestingly, 17% of participants preferred apartments, yet none voted for multi-family type density.



Aging in Cherokee

Senior citizens are valued in Cherokee, and this section enabled residents to provide feedback on county’s services for its senior population, along with potential ideas for improvement. Participants suggested transportation services, such as medical transportation for elderly residents unable to drive. Home visits by doctors was also recommended. Participants also noted the need for affordable housing for older residents on a fixed income, additional senior centers, more handicapped parking spots. Attendees of both meetings stressed having adequate recreation activities for senior residents. Recreation and medical access, along with housing, were primary themes in this section.

Heritage in Cherokee

This poster allowed residents to denote their favorite historic sites and buildings in the county. Using dots and post-it notes, participants recognized places like downtown Canton and Ball Ground, Reinhart University campus, Salacoa Valley, Downtown Woodstock, and Free Home. Downtown Ball Ground received the most votes from participants. Participants also recognized the Hickory Flat area, the Sixes Mine Lake Allatoona, Dowda Bridge, Gresham Mill, and Cagle Farms—to name a few—as additional historic resources the county should value. Overall, participants valued a wide array of historic resources, reflecting diverse opinions on what is considered ‘historic’, as well as areas which residents perceive are threatened with development

Downtown Ball Ground: 25%
Free Home: 24%
Downtown Canton: 18%
Salacoa Valley: 15%
Reinhart University: 11%
Downtown Woodstock: 7%

Lake Allatoona: 23%
Garland Mountain: 19%
Blankets Creek Trail: 16%
Brick Mill Falls: 15%
Long Swamp Creek: 14%
Pine Log Mountain: 11%

Nature in Cherokee

Similar in concept to the *Heritage* poster, this poster highlighted residents’ favorite natural resources in the county. Residents placed dots next to iconic parks and natural resources including Garland Mountain, Lake Allatoona, Blankets Creek Trail, Long Swamp Creek, Pine Log Mountain, and Brick Mill Falls. Support for these resources was evenly spread across the attendees for both meetings. A Woodstock attendee declared that all the county’s natural resources help make it great, and is the reason why they moved here. Residents also mentioned Rope Mill Park, and the Sixes Mine as critical resources to preserve.

Employed in Cherokee

This poster pertains to economic development in the county, particularly relating to attracting new employers, supporting existing employers, and helping county residents in career development. Residents stressed the need for additional evening classes for various trades, and the importance of local businesses to help drive Cherokee’s economy. Canton participants wanted to see additional post offices in East Cherokee and more restaurants in the Macedonia area to increase business activity. Participants also proposed partnerships between businesses and Chattahoochee Tech to provide additional training programs for students.

Use our economic development programs to tie new companies to training programs through Chattahoochee Tech!



Improving Cherokee

Slow growth! Need better roads or transportation plans!

In this section, residents recorded their ideas for improving the county on post-it notes and attached them to the poster. In both meetings, participants emphasized the need to control growth, preserve rural areas and historic buildings, and to promote agritourism while supporting farming—a declining industry in the county. Both meeting participants specified traffic improvements such as roundabouts and deceleration lanes. One Canton participant suggested encouraging young professionals to run for city council.



DRAFT PLAN FORUMS

CANTON

Tuesday, July 17, 2018 — 6pm - 8pm
Northside Cherokee Conference Center
1130 Bluffs Parkway, Canton, GA 30114

WOODSTOCK

Thursday, July 19, 2018 — 5:30pm - 7:30pm
Cherokee County Recreation Center
7545 Main Street, Woodstock, GA 30188

Stop in to give feedback anytime during a forum or visit the website to give 24/7 input.

ANY FINAL TWEAKS TO THE NEW PLAN?

WHAT PROJECTS SHOULD WE WORK ON FIRST?

WWW.ENGAGECHEROKEEGA.COM



HELP SHAPE THE
COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN UPDATE



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Recapping the Core Issues

2018 Comprehensive Plan



Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure

Cherokee County’s increasing development pressure makes it crucial to focus growth where there is adequate infrastructure and promote roadway improvements, alternative transportation modes, and connected communities.

Examples of Policies

- Focus denser levels of growth within existing City boundaries and targeted growth areas within the County where there is adequate infrastructure.
- Public facilities and infrastructure should be designed to support new development and redevelopment efforts, particularly in the areas of circulation, access and linkages.
- Design roadways that match the appropriate character area and land use where they will be developed.

Examples of Implementation Strategies

- Develop master plans for growth pressure areas such as the Sixes Road Interchange and Hickory Flat to better coordinate land use with infrastructure.
- Continue to maintain and update a 5-Year Capital Improvements Plan.
- Increase pedestrian safety by developing specific roadway types and pedestrian related facilities based on character area.



Preserve and Enhance Sense of Place and Historic Character

The preservation of historic, rural, and cultural resources is critical to maintaining Cherokee County’s heritage and enhancing its sense of place.

Examples of Policies

- Preserve the County’s unique historical resources including buildings, structures, neighborhoods, and areas of cultural significance.
- Develop historic downtowns and major corridors s lively, interactive mixed-use environments that allow for live/work/play lifestyles.
- Focus new growth into appropriate character areas, lifting development pressure from farming and rural communities.

Examples of Implementation Strategies

- Coordinate redevelopment of potential National or State historic register properties to encourage rehabilitation of historic buildings.
- Explore preservation incentives and tools such as easements, transfer of development rights, and overlay zoning.
- Design and incorporate appropriate street and sidewalk layout into development regulations for each character area.



Aging in Place

With one-fifth of Cherokee County residents projected to be age 55 or over by 2040, there will be an increasing need for lower-maintenance housing and accessible services for this ever-growing demographic.

Examples of Policies

- Support innovative public, private and non-profit efforts in the development of housing for seniors with limited incomes.
- Encourage senior housing in areas that have walkable access to services, medical facilities, and other commercial areas.
- Consider senior rental housing as part of a mixed-use community, especially within downtown areas and the Bells Ferry Corridor.

Examples of Implementation Strategies

- Develop a comprehensive strategy to address a broad range of housing options needed by the growing number of senior residents.
- Consider revising ordinances to encourage appropriate senior housing in existing and future development nodes, where services are accessible.
- Encourage a greater medical presence in areas that are “senior-friendly,” especially along development nodes.

Take a look at the above core issue descriptions...

Is anything missing or unclear? Tell us on an idea card and place it in the envelope. below.

Recapping the Core Issues

2018 Comprehensive Plan



Housing Choice and Spirit of Inclusiveness

As more people call Cherokee County home, it is crucial that the county contain a variety of housing choices to accommodate people of diverse economic means and households.

Examples of Policies

- Ensure the county has a variety of housing densities and types to support growth, especially as employment opportunities diversify.
- Encourage a variety of housing stock to serve a range of incomes, age groups, and lifestyles to provide choice and opportunity.
- Promote affordable housing development by exploring funding sources, appropriate locations, and analyzing the zoning/development process.

Examples of Implementation Strategies

- Use creative planning techniques such as mixed-use development, master plans, and overlay zones to enhance housing diversity.
- Identify areas that would suit affordable housing targeted at singles and young family households, such as lofts and townhouses.
- Encourage the utilization of first-time homebuyer financing programs.



Designing with the Environment

Natural resources are invaluable to Cherokee County and it is important to be proactive in preserving the county’s rural character by incorporating “green” practices in development.

Examples of Policies

- Proactively preserve Cherokee County’s character by protecting prime agricultural and forestlands with incentives and land use regulation.
- Encourage civic spaces in communities that encourage healthy exercise habits and social interaction.
- Identify conservation areas and greenways so preserved land may interconnect with other protected lands in existing and new developments.

Examples of Implementation Strategies

- Adopt regulations to require open space to be set aside, along with connections to existing trail systems in each new development.
- Document and map sensitive environmental areas, acquired and planned greenspace and other significant resources.
- Through partnerships, educate the public, local elected officials, developers, etc. about resource conservation and protection.



Balanced Tax Base and Diverse Economic Opportunities

Cherokee County’s growing population must be balanced with commercial and industrial growth to continue thriving.

Examples of Policies

- Create regional job centers that contain a mix of commercial and industrial uses.
- Strive to attract higher paying professional jobs through housing diversity, quality education, and amenities such as the arts and greenspace.
- Spur redevelopment along major corridors such as Bells Ferry, Highway 5, and Highway 92 to utilize existing infrastructure.

Examples of Implementation Strategies

- Enhance Cherokee County Regional Airport as an economic development asset and job center.
- Continue marketing campaign that targets industries identified in Opportunity Cherokee.
- Coordinate and streamline permitting processes and development regulations across the county.

Take a look at the above character area description...

Is there anything missing or unclear? Tell us on an idea card and place it in the envelope below.

Grading the Core Issues

2018 Comprehensive Plan

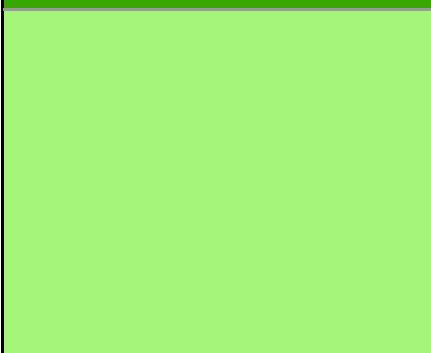
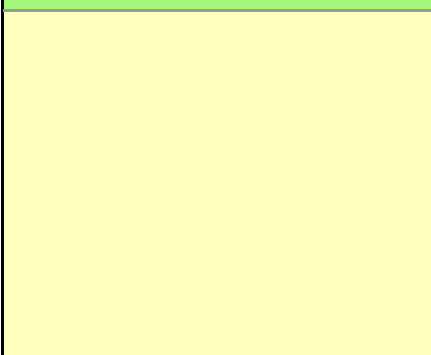




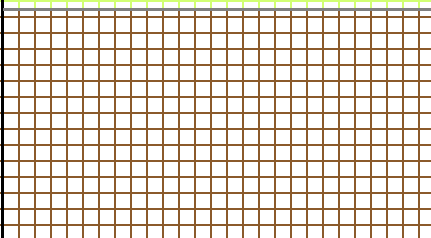

How would you grade the core issues for this year’s plan, in terms of information and conciseness?

Place a dot under the number you feel best represents each core issue’s grade.

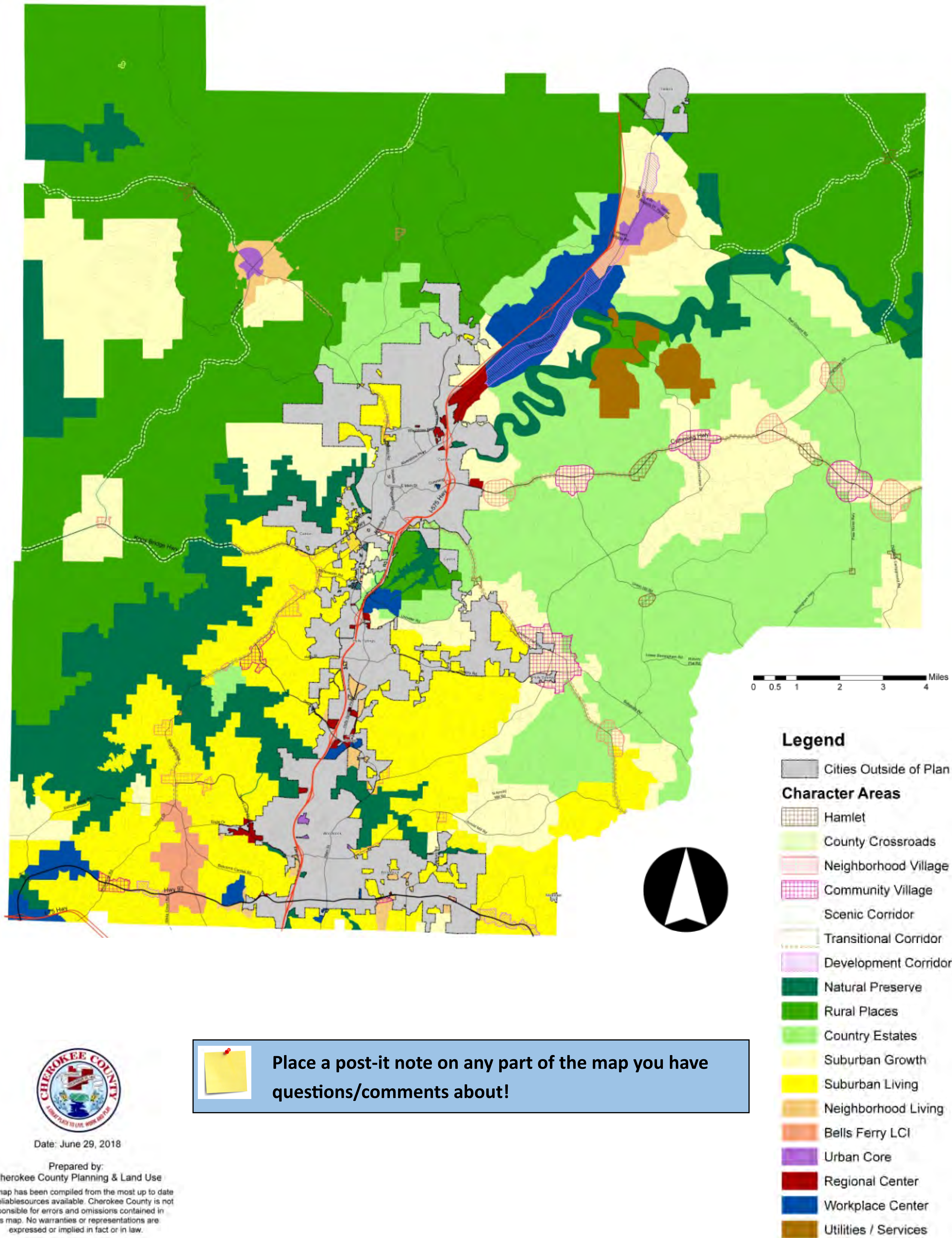
	Needs Work!			Great!	
Core Issue	1	2	3	4	5
Promoting Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure					
Preserve and Enhance Sense of Place and Historic Character					
Aging in Place					
Housing Choice and Spirit of Inclusiveness					
Designing with the Environment					
Balanced Tax Base and Diverse Economic Opportunities					

Overview of the Character Areas

2018 Comprehensive Plan

Future Development Map Symbol	Character Area	Description of Character and Primary Land Uses	Community Facilities & Infrastructure	Suggested Residential Density	Suggested Floor Area Ratio
	Natural Preserve	Undeveloped natural lands with significant natural features that currently have some form of protection from development.	Very low level of services and community facilities	0.5 dua max.	
	Rural Places	Outlying rural areas with active farming and scattered single-family housing on large lots. Preservation of sensitive natural resources is important.	Low level of services and community facilities. Potentially with public water but sewer is not planned.	0.5 dua max.	
	Country Estates	Area of low intensity land use with a mixture of single-family housing on large lots and farms.	Local-serving roads, potentially with public water, typically lacks sewer	0.5 dua max.	
	Suburban Growth	Areas located outside identified centers that are experiencing a high volume of residential growth, primarily single-family houses.	Public water available, public sewerage available or planned; local public facilities	0.5 – 1.0 dua	
	Suburban Living	Established residential neighborhoods with potential infill and redevelopment opportunities.	Public water available, public sewerage available or planned; local public facilities	1.0 – 3 dua	
	Neighborhood Living	Urbanized and growth oriented areas, adjacent to identified activity centers with higher densities. Various types of residential dwellings, and mixed-use developments.	Full urban services; regional public facilities.	3 – 8 dua	0.75 – 2.0 FAR
	Bells Ferry LCI	Area targeted for new development and redevelopment integrating residential, commercial and greenspace per the LCI Plan.	Full urban services; regional public facilities.	4 – 12 dua	0.75 – 2.0 FAR
	Urban Core	Traditional downtown areas with a broad range of uses, primarily in Ball Ground and Waleska.	Full urban services; regional public facilities.	3 – 16 dua	1.0 – 3.0 FAR
	Workplace Center	Major employment centers utilizing a mixture of manufacturing, warehousing, wholesale, commercial and office. Retail and high intensity residential are accessory uses.	Full urban services	3 – 16 dua	0.1 – 1.5 FAR
	Regional Center	Regionally oriented large scale commercial, office, retail, entertainment and recreational development, often with a residential component.	Full urban services	3 – 16 dua	0.5 – 1.5 FAR
	Utilities / Services	Major facilities for utilities or services to Cherokee County.			
	Country Crossroads	This commercial activity node is envisioned as a restricted commercial node located at existing commercial “crossroads” locations within the rural areas. 5,000sf Maximum.	Limited Levels of Service, Based on existing commercial development		0.1 – 0.5 FAR
	Hamlet	Hamlets are places where small-scaled commercial uses are arranged in a village-like setting. 17,500sf Maximum.	Limited Levels of Service		0.1 – 0.5 FAR
	Neighborhood Village	Small-scaled commercial designated to serve a single neighborhood with access and size restrictions. May be part of a residential development. 50,000sf Maximum.	Public water is available & sewer may be available. Good transportation access.	Underlying Character Area plus 1.0 dua	0.1 – 1.0 FAR
	Community Village	Medium-scaled commercial designated to serve several neighborhoods. 80,000sf Maximum.	Public water is available & sewer may be available. Good transportation access.	Underlying Character Area plus 1.0 dua	0.1 – 1.0 FAR
	Scenic Corridor	Scenic corridors have low intensity development parallel to a viewshed.	Very low level of services and community facilities	0.5 dua max.	
	Transitional Corridor	This corridor is designed to allow more intensive compatible residential uses and limited compatible nonresidential uses along major roadways. Limits are parcel-specific, but should allow a smooth transition to	Linear transitional areas along major transportation corridors.	Underlying Character Area plus 1.0 dua	0.1 – 0.5 FAR
	Development Corridor	Areas that extend along a major thoroughfare that have or are experiencing major development of retail, office or industrial land use and associated housing. These areas function as town centers.	Full urban services	3 – 10 dua	0.5 – 1.5 FAR

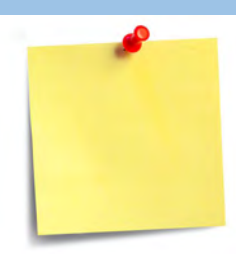
Future Development Map



Date: June 29, 2018

Prepared by:
Cherokee County Planning & Land Use

This map has been compiled from the most up to date and reliable sources available. Cherokee County is not responsible for errors and omissions contained in this map. No warranties or representations are expressed or implied in fact or in law.



Place a post-it note on any part of the map you have questions/comments about!

Short Term Work plan 2019-2024

2018 Comprehensive Plan

Place dots next to the most critical items on the Short Term Work Plan. Use a post-it note at the bottom of the board to add any items you think are missing.

Natural and Historic Resources	
Implement Parks and Rec Master Plan	
Develop Historic Property Resource Kit that includes Tax Credit Basics	
Develop Historic Resources Map	
Continue to update the Cemetary Location Map as needed	
Develop water supply watershed overlay district	
Undertake Architectural survey that documents building types and styles along Highway 20	
Economic Development	
Explore potential for a National Register nomination for the Reinhardt Campus area in Waleska as a historic district	
Continue the focused marketing campaign targeting industries identified in Opportunity Cherokee	
Enhance the entrepreneurship and small business support programs with a comprehensive range of financial assistance, training, networking, professional advice and educational opportunities.	
Continue the Business Expansion and Retention Program and advocacy for existing industries	
Focus resources on supporting and expanding the Cherokee Workforce Collaborative	
Develop Marketing studies for County Target Areas	
Housing	
Continue to evaluate/upgrade dilapidated Housing	
Use CDBG funds for the Cherokee County Home Repair Program targeted for low-income seniors and veterans	

Encourage the construction of affordable housing for a range of residents	
Develop housing guidelines for seniors and disabled persons	
Identify areas with adequate infrastructure to provide workforce housing opportunities.	
Facilitate County-wide meetings to encourage cooperation on workforce housing financing from federal and state sources.	
Organize affordable housing education forums for the public	
Review development ordinances to identify constraints and barriers to providing affordable housing.	
Community Facilities	
Periodically review Service Delivery strategies, level of services, and develop a plan to provide services to accommodate new growth.	
Continue to identify, fund and implement Bells Ferry LCI projects	
Expand Cherokee County Adult Detention Center	
Parks and Recreation	
Build multigenerational Center at Veterans Park	
Evaluate sites for multigenerational park facility in SW Cherokee	
Build Park Maintance Facility	
Connect existing trails and develop linear parks/greenways to connect high priority areas	
Develop additional multipurpose fields for a wider variety of activities	
Develop Thacker Property (Alison Lane)	

Short Term Work plan 2019-2024

2018 Comprehensive Plan

Place dots next to the most critical items on the Short Term Work Plan. Use a post-it note at the bottom of the board to add any items you think are missing.

Transportation	
Roadway Improvements	
Develop character area-specific roadway standards	
Continue support of Ride-Share Program	
Install Park/Ride Lots	
Develop linkages between trails, sidewalks, and amenities/services	
Study alternate route for trucks going through downtown Ball Ground	
Develop access management and interparcel access guidelines/regulations	
Public Safety	
Fire Station 5 Renovation	
Fire Station 13 Replacement Station	
Fire Station 15 Relocation & Replacement Station	
Build new Future Fire Stations	
Purchase property for Future Fire Facilities	
Build New Airport Crash Truck	
Ladder Truck	
Fire Apparatus Replacement Program	
EMS Squad Replacement Program	
Small Fleet Replacement Program	
Consolidate Fire Service into one (1) Agency	
Library Services	
Library Collection Materials	
Water and Sewage	
Expand Sewer Service Area	
Consolidate Water/Sewer Operations into one (1) Agency	
Link county GIS data with CCWS GIS data for easy public use	

School System	
Construct New Schools	
Construct Additions to Existing Schools	
Develop and promote alternative transportation to schools	
Land Use & GIS	
Create small area plans for areas experiencing significant growth pressures or infrastructure issues.	
Revise State Route 92 Corridor standards and regulations.	
Continue to update annually the 5-year Capital Improvements Plan and STWP.	
Conduct annual review of Future Development Map, rezonings and capital projects for plan & map adjustments.	
Create map showing transportation improvements with off-street trails	
Undertake a Comprehensive Plan update five years after adoption of this Plan.	
Update zoning ordinance to add Regional Airport Area District (RAAD) and to allow for more housing variety in growing parts of county	
Develop a joint plan with city of Holly Springs for the Hickory Flat area	

How Have We Done?

Place a dot under “Yes” or “No” to tell us if the draft is ready for final review.

YES	NO



Got something specific? Tell us on an idea card and place it in the envelope below!

Canton Draft Meeting



Canton Draft Meeting Results

Comments on each Core Issue overview

Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure	Preserve and Enhance Sense of Place and Historic Character	Aging in Place
FALSE STATEMENT	This is so important; Implementation should include through assessment of "existing conditions," natural resources, affected terrain, etc. this enhances Cherokee	Seniors walking to medical facilities?
Connect all the four lane roadways	We have destroyed Cherokee's Logo with Development; "Where the City Meets the Mountains," really?	Everyone I know is aging in place--in their home
Mass public transit to ATL and surrounding areas, not buses!	YES PLEASE! We're losing it quickly!	Mass transit to allow seniors access to services that aren't in Cherokee
Mass transit sounds great but who will pay? VERY EXPENSIVE. Buses are cheaper and more flexible	Base all decisions on "sense of place." You can't replicate this with any development.	Need transportation (Uber?) for aging-in-place seniors
Stop Holly Springs		
Need to control large developments in high traffic areas--example Hwy 140 and Hwy 20		

Designing with the Environment	Should have a "Tree Ordinance" and "Green Area" Enforcement (with fines) for no upkeep!	No sewers except in business areas!
Mixed-use developments are not suited for rural areas--all rural and agricultural areas are vanishing	How about saving some trees/and topography?	Promote electric vehicles by making them standard for county vehicles
High density produces big problems	Do away with conservation zoning. All it is is density. The "conversed" land is unbuildable anyway.	Minimum of 3 trees planted (or saved) on property for all new residential development. If that hinders high density housing then... good!
Maintain/promote rural areas	Get rid of "conservation zoning" classification-code word for density	Some areas are being overdeveloped when they are not suited to such growth and development. Please leave some greenspace that is more appealing.
Don't overplan it, part of the character of the country and its cities was created organically	No clear-cutting allowed for residential development	
Save our rural areas; Yes!	Try to work with/around nature/green areas. Don't destroy then replant, or grade then haul in "Artificial Natural Structures or Terrain"	
Strive for further protection of "invasion" of Holly Springs	Not all areas are suitable to develop, much less high density or higher density! Some areas left alone enhance others! Without services required.	
Achieve ARC Green Community Status		

Balanced Tax Base and Diverse Economic Opportunities	Need sewer to all Cherokee especially south of Hwy 20
Don't forget that Agriculture has many, many entrepreneurial opportunities, too! This has a bonus of helping preserve the County's rural character.	Infrastructure cannot support what we have now. What can be done?
Huh? It's the county's job to provide me a job nearby?	Include "passive" greenspace in park development instead of only ball fields. Think Piedmont Park.
No sewer except business areas. Sewers = uncontrolled growth	Protect, maintain, encourage, and incentivize agricultural land usage
No sewer--brings development	

Housing and Inclusiveness
Housing for young adults also
Plan for median \$ homes not just expensive communities
"Affordable Housing" to whom? I can afford mine.
We are in a housing crisis; No affordable houses are being built.
Avg earners need to leave the county
Dense housing needs to be in cities--Agree! Agree!
We should have affordable housing with greenspace. But do not force on inappropriate areas.
Affordable housing does not imply dense housing
"Housing Choice" sounds too much like code for an excuse for high density

Feedback from Idea Cards
Hwy 108 from Waleska to Hwy 20 is designated as Rural Places, yet most of the large land tracts are for sale. How will the plan be enforced?
The Waste Management Plan mentions recycling, yet recycling drop points have closed in Waleska and Canton. I am only aware of one in the south part of the County. Will there be more?
In response to Preserve and Enhance: You state that you want to preserve the "rural" resources, yet none of your policies" address this--you should have a specific policy about this

How would you grade the core issues for this year's plan, in terms of information and conciseness? (totals in each field represent # of votes)

	Needs Work				Great!
Core Issue	1	2	3	4	5
Promoting Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure	8	4	0	2	0
Preserve and Enhance Sense of Place and Historic Character	9	3	2	4	0
Aging in Place	0	2	3	7	0
Housing Choice and Spirit of Inclusiveness	1	4	0	6	0
Designing with the Environment	13	2	0	4	0
Balanced Tax Base and Diverse Economic Opportunities	7	0	2	3	0

Comments from Idea Cards
Lots of discussion of growth and more people. Need more language about maintaining rural areas, natural areas, and low density. Answer is <u>not</u> more people!
Need to support better roads and density (residential and commercial) within Hickory Flat Area
Need sewer/water master plan to support ultimate county build-build-out
Need to develop 4-lane roadway circulation plan fully connected (no gaps) countywide
Need to find areas along Development Corridor that allow much higher densities (20 du+) subject to quality development
Need cleaner picture that helps present quality of life beyond 5 years--to quick a turnaround @ 5 years

Future Development Map Comments
Where is the Transitional Corridor? Hwy 20
Thank God for Brick Mill Rd. and Univeter Rd. area citizens participating in all land use plans
Development Corridor should be able to go to 20 DUA or more
More community parks/greenspace in transitional areas between zonings
So much Hwy 108 land is for sale--please keep this rural!
Keep Univeter Road free from higher (and high) density development. It is a "critical services corridor".
Please keep rural places and natural preserve areas. These areas fit the terrain/nature and enhance the county and don't require as many services
Please encourage developers to have trees
Keep density under R-80 to cities
Please change Old Country Place to Country Estates
Let's have Country Estates here (Hwy 140 at Chadwick Farm Rd), not Conservation. This is not a city area. Allowing conservation in this area is only a way of allowing high density. No conservation in this area.
Please keep Country Estates and Rural Place.
140 @ Arnold Mill should be Suburban Growth not Suburban Living
Please maintain rural spaces
Minimize high density development outside of current city limits (Woodstock, Canton, Ball Ground, etc.)

Is the plan ready for review?	
Yes	No
7	10

Vote tally of which Short Term Work Plan items were most critical to meeting participants

Natural and Historic Resources	# of Votes
Implement Parks and Rec Master Plan	1
Develop Historic Property Resource Kit that includes Tax Credit Basics	5
Develop Historic Resources Map	6
Continue to update the Cemetery Location Map as needed	3
Develop water supply watershed overlay district	5
Undertake Architectural survey that documents building types and styles along Highway 20	1
Economic Development	
Explore potential for a National Register nomination for the Reinhardt Campus area in Waleska as a historic district	1
Continue the focused marketing campaign targeting industries identified in Opportunity Cherokee	3
Enhance the entrepreneurship and small business support programs with a comprehensive range of financial assistance, training, networking, professional advice and educational opportunities.	2
Continue the Business Expansion and Retention Program and advocacy for existing industries	4
Focus resources on supporting and expanding the Cherokee Workforce Collaborative	2
Develop Marketing studies for County Target Areas	1
Housing	
Continue to evaluate/upgrade dilapidated Housing	3
Use CDBG funds for the Cherokee County Home Repair Program targeted for low-income seniors and veterans	1
Encourage the construction of affordable housing for a range of residents	5
Develop housing guidelines for seniors and disabled persons	2
Identify areas with adequate infrastructure to provide workforce housing opportunities.	4
Facilitate County-wide meetings to encourage cooperation on workforce housing financing from federal and state sources.	1
Organize affordable housing education forums for the public	
Review development ordinances to identify constraints and barriers to providing affordable housing.	3
Community Facilities	
Periodically review Service Delivery strategies, level of services, and develop a plan to provide services to accommodate new growth.	
Continue to identify, fund and implement Bells Ferry LCI projects	2
Expand Cherokee County Adult Detention Center	1
Parks and Recreation	
Build multigenerational Center at Veterans Park	1
Evaluate sites for multigenerational park facility in SW Cherokee	
Build Park Maintenance Facility	
Connect existing trails and develop linear parks/greenways to connect high priority areas	5
Develop additional multipurpose fields for a wider variety of activities	3
Develop Thacker Property (Alison Lane)	1

Transportation	# of Votes
Roadway Improvements	12
Develop character area-specific roadway standards	1
Continue support of Ride-Share Program	
Install Park/Ride Lots	2
Develop linkages between trails, sidewalks, and amenities/services	3
Study alternate route for trucks going through downtown Ball Ground	1
Develop access management and interparcel access guidelines/regulations	2
Public Safety	
Fire Station 5 Renovation	1
Fire Station 13 Replacement Station	
Fire Station 15 Relocation & Replacement Station	
Build new Future Fire Stations	1
Purchase property for Future Fire Facilities	2
Build New Airport Crash Truck	
Ladder Truck	
Fire Apparatus Replacement Program	
EMS Squad Replacement Program	
Small Fleet Replacement Program	
Consolidate Fire Service into one (1) Agency	
Library Services	
Library Collection Materials	
Water and Sewage	
Expand Sewer Service Area	6
Consolidate Water/Sewer Operations into one (1) Agency	2
Link county GIS data with CCWS GIS data for easy public use	1

Vote tally of which Short Term Work Plan items were most critical to meeting participants (cont'd)

School System	# of Votes
Construct New Schools	2
Construct Additions to Existing Schools	4
Develop and promote alternative transportation to schools	4
Land Use & GIS	
Create small area plans for areas experiencing significant growth pressures or infrastructure issues.	5
Revise State Route 92 Corridor standards and regulations.	1
Continue to update annually the 5-year Capital Improvements Plan and STWP.	2
Conduct annual review of Future Development Map, rezonings and capital projects for plan & map adjustments.	4
Create map showing transportation improvements with off-street trails	2
Undertake a Comprehensive Plan update five years after adoption of this Plan.	4
Update zoning ordinance to add Regional Airport Area District (RAAD) and to allow for more housing variety in growing parts of county	
Develop a joint plan with city of Holly Springs for the Hickory Flat area	11

Comments from Post-It Notes
Develop architectural standards for Hickory Flat
Want uncontrolled growth? Add sewers, widen roads--look at Hwy 92
Transportation: Encourage and plan for mass transit into Metro ATL. Having mass transit encourages changes/shifts in traffic flow and volume
Need 4-lane road circulation plan that is all connected
Why add sewers? More sewers= more growth=high density

Woodstock Draft Meeting Results

Comments on each Core Issue overview

Housing and Inclusiveness

I would like to see Provisions for "tiny house" accommodations. This is especially good for seniors. Permanent foundations only? Maybe on trailers could be allowed. An area designed way better than senior assisted living!

How would you grade the core issues for this year's plan, in terms of information and conciseness? (totals in each field represent # of votes)

	Needs Work				Great!
Core Issue	1	2	3	4	5
Promoting Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure	1			1	
Preserve and Enhance Sense of Place and Historic Character	3			1	
Aging in Place				1	
Housing Choice and Spirit of Inclusiveness	1				
Designing with the Environment	3				
Balanced Tax Base and Diverse Economic Opportunities	1				

Future Development Map comments

Suburban Living--no redevelopment opportunities in this area; .5-1 dua

Suburban Living--3 units per acre; TOO MANY for Suburban Living! 2 max

Suburban Living should NOT exceed 2 dua

Move southern Community Village node to Holly Springs boundary

Change Old Country Place to Country Estates (presently Suburban Growth)

Is the plan ready for review?

Yes	No
0	2

Vote tally of which Short Term Work Plan items were most critical to meeting participants

Natural and Historic Resources	# of Votes
Implement Parks and Rec Master Plan	
Develop Historic Property Resource Kit that includes Tax Credit Basics	
Develop Historic Resources Map	
Continue to update the Cemetery Location Map as needed	
Develop water supply watershed overlay district	
Undertake Architectural survey that documents building types and styles along Highway 20	
Economic Development	
Explore potential for a National Register nomination for the Reinhardt Campus area in Waleska as a historic district	
Continue the focused marketing campaign targeting industries identified in Opportunity Cherokee	
Enhance the entrepreneurship and small business support programs with a comprehensive range of financial assistance, training, networking, professional advice and educational opportunities.	
Continue the Business Expansion and Retention Program and advocacy for existing industries	
Focus resources on supporting and expanding the Cherokee Workforce Collaborative	
Develop Marketing studies for County Target Areas	
Housing	
Continue to evaluate/upgrade dilapidated Housing	
Use CDBG funds for the Cherokee County Home Repair Program targeted for low-income seniors and veterans	
Encourage the construction of affordable housing for a range of residents	
Develop housing guidelines for seniors and disabled persons	1
Identify areas with adequate infrastructure to provide workforce housing opportunities.	
Facilitate County-wide meetings to encourage cooperation on workforce housing financing from federal and state sources.	
Organize affordable housing education forums for the public	
Review development ordinances to identify constraints and barriers to providing affordable housing.	
Community Facilities	
Periodically review Service Delivery strategies, level of services, and develop a plan to provide services to accommodate new growth.	
Continue to identify, fund and implement Bells Ferry LCI projects	
Expand Cherokee County Adult Detention Center	
Parks and Recreation	
Build multigenerational Center at Veterans Park	
Evaluate sites for multigenerational park facility in SW Cherokee	
Build Park Maintenance Facility	
Connect existing trails and develop linear parks/greenways to connect high priority areas	
Develop additional multipurpose fields for a wider variety of activities	
Develop Thacker Property (Alison Lane)	

Transportation	# of Votes
Roadway Improvements	1
Develop character area-specific roadway standards	
Continue support of Ride-Share Program	2
Install Park/Ride Lots	5
Develop linkages between trails, sidewalks, and amenities/ services	
Study alternate route for trucks going through downtown Ball Ground	
Develop access management and interparcel access guidelines/regulations	
Public Safety	
Fire Station 5 Renovation	
Fire Station 13 Replacement Station	
Fire Station 15 Relocation & Replacement Station	
Build new Future Fire Stations	
Purchase property for Future Fire Facilities	
Build New Airport Crash Truck	
Ladder Truck	
Fire Apparatus Replacement Program	
EMS Squad Replacement Program	
Small Fleet Replacement Program	
Consolidate Fire Service into one (1) Agency	
Library Services	
Library Collection Materials	1
Water and Sewage	
Expand Sewer Service Area	1
Consolidate Water/Sewer Operations into one (1) Agency	
Link county GIS data with CCWS GIS data for easy public use	1

Vote tally of which Short Term Work Plan items were most critical to meeting participants (cont'd)

School System	# of Votes
Construct New Schools	
Construct Additions to Existing Schools	
Develop and promote alternative transportation to schools	
Land Use & GIS	
Create small area plans for areas experiencing significant growth pressures or infrastructure issues.	1
Revise State Route 92 Corridor standards and regulations.	
Continue to update annually the 5-year Capital Improvements Plan and STWP.	
Conduct annual review of Future Development Map, rezonings and capital projects for plan & map adjustments.	3
Create map showing transportation improvements with off-street trails	1
Undertake a Comprehensive Plan update five years after adoption of this Plan.	2
Update zoning ordinance to add Regional Airport Area District (RAAD) and to allow for more housing variety in growing parts of county	
Develop a joint plan with city of Holly Springs for the Hickory Flat area	4

Comments from Post-It Notes
Too many workforce housing conditions
Keep affordable housing out of Suburban Living
Workforce housing=apartments=high density; NO
Federal funding has too many strings attached! Limit
NO MARTA
Holly Springs should NOT be in charge of Hickory Flat
Holly Springs needs to be <u>controlled</u> . HS should stop w/ their greedy annexing!
Holly Springs needs to be controlled. STOP ANNEXING!

Comprehensive plan, land use map updates in final stages

By Thomas Hartwell

thartwell@cherokeetribune.com

Updates to the county's comprehensive plan and future land use map, including Ball Ground and Waleska city limits, are in the final stages of planning and public input. Cherokee County planning staff released a draft of the plan updates earlier this month.

The last comprehensive plan updates for unincorporated Cherokee and the cities of Ball Ground and Waleska was in 2008. The plan updates have been in the

works since early 2017, when county staff began data collection, according to the draft posted on the county website. The 72-page document asserts that the proposed updates and future land use map have gone through phases of public input, advisory committees and workshops, and, before adoption, will be sent to the state's Department of Community Affairs and the Atlanta Regional Commission for final review.

Margaret Stallings of Cherokee County Planning and Land Use said Thursday the plan's imple-

mentation should be within the next few months.

"The County Plan is on the next to last step in the process. The last step is to submit the document to DCA and ARC for review and adopt the plan," Stallings said. She said that submittal will come after the public hearing at the Cherokee County Board of Commissioner's meeting on Aug. 7 and another review by the commissioners on Aug. 21.

Stallings said input from the community has been helpful, and 30 people showed up to the public forum on the draft in Can-

ton on Tuesday. The final public forum was held in Woodstock on Thursday night.

L.B. "Buzz" Ahrens, chairman of the Cherokee County Board of Commissioners said Thursday that the 2018 update will likely roll out more smoothly than 2008's. A decade earlier, he said, the new format including use of character areas had just been introduced, and he inherited changes in terminology and "development status" in the county one year prior.

Ahrens said the 2018 updates provide the first real test of the

new planning concepts, since up until about 2015, "development was practically non-existent."

"In the (economic) rebound, development is busting out all over," Ahrens said. "We are playing catchup, both in potential development areas and scope, as well as infrastructure demands. Thus, the test phase is rapid. Also, we have seen huge positive development in the Southwest (Ga. Highway 92) corridor from Woodstock Road west to Interstate 75 ... These challenge

SEE **PLAN**, A3

PLAN

From A1

us to look forward broadly and deeply.”

He said plans are still not complete, and officials can always use more input from the community throughout the process, even as the plan awaits approval.

“We have lots of flexibility and can basically make ‘minor changes’ whenever we determine,” he said.

Stallings said the changes made so far from the 2008 to 2018 map are just “tweaks” and make up about 10-15 percent of the 2018 land use map.

The comprehensive plan update document, which focuses primarily on “preserving the unique character” of the different regions of the county and ensuring responsible growth, identifies several “core issues” to address to achieve those goals: promoting sustainable growth and infrastructure, preserving and enhancing sense of place and historic character, aging in place, housing choice and spirit of inclusiveness, designing with the environment and balancing tax base and diverse economic opportunities.

The document and future land use map further sections the county into “target areas” and identifies goals for each area:

AIRPORT AREA

County officials said the Cherokee County airport area has been identified as an area that has not developed as much as planned. According to plan documents, the airport area is

a “relatively undeveloped” portion of the county with mainly agricultural uses. Based on public input and stakeholder meetings, county staff indicates that airport target area is an “ideal location for industrial growth that could provide jobs and housing that encourage residents to live and work in the county.”

BALL GROUND

The comprehensive plan indicates that the Ball Ground and airport target areas are interrelated, but identifies the city as an area ripe for continued growth in the coming decades, contingent on the addressing of some of the city’s current challenges.

“(Challenges) include the lack of a grocery store and other daily (retail) needs, the need for more housing options and the challenge of managing truck traffic through downtown,” the document reads. “For the future, Ball Ground has many strengths such as the unique, authentic character of the historic downtown, the growing local tourism and manufacturing industries, and strong transportation connections through I-575 or the nearby Cherokee Airport.”

WALESKA

Like Ball Ground, county plans address several challenges for Waleska, which, if overcome, would lead the city to “realize its vision,” according to the comprehensive plan draft.

“These include their reliance on Reinhardt University, lack of commercial/retail/local services, barriers to village-like devel-

opment in the zoning ordinance and an imbalanced tax base,” the draft reads.

The Waleska section recommends that the city develop around the intersection of Reinhardt College Parkway and Fincher Road and suggests that the proximity to the Lake Arrowhead planned unit development could support business development in the city.

HICKORY FLAT

This target area focuses around the intersection of Hickory Flat Highway (Ga. Highway 140) and East Cherokee Drive at Hickory Road and Batesville Road. The comprehensive plan describes the Hickory Flat character area as “a close-knit community that emphasizes agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, (which) has seen increasing congestion and suburban-style development in recent years, particularly residential subdivisions.”

The document’s identification of the area’s challenges also include that those challenges are compounded by annexations by municipalities in the area and the type of development those cities choose.

According to the plan, primary goals identified by community workshops include creation of a more “connected community that encourages the protection of natural resources, supports agribusinesses and other local amenities, works to fix existing infrastructure prior to approving additional development and increases pedestrian access via sidewalk construction and trails.” The document continues that

realizing those goals will help Hickory Flat grow responsibly and preserve the area’s character.

HIGHWAY 20

This target area includes parts of Canton and the communities of Buffington, Macedonia, Lathemtown and Freehome, up to the Forsyth County line. The 12-mile stretch of the Highway 20 character area highlights the portion of the county expected for increased commercial development connected to the incoming widening of the highway. According to the plan, the area’s communities include a mix of history, some commercial uses and small, suburban shopping centers, as well as mid-density residential uses.

The document identifies the area’s main challenges as traffic congestion, lack of community facilities and potential for uncontrolled, rapid development connected to the highway widening.

“Therefore, it is crucial to maintain the character of the target area’s historic communities, advocate for historic structure reuse, improve transportation access to nearby employment centers and be proactive about planning via target studies,” the plan reads.

SOUTHWEST CHEROKEE

The Southwest character area is identified by the plan as “one of the denser areas of the county,” as well as the sole direct connection to I-75. The region consists of a mix of the

county’s “older neighborhoods,” new residential development and large industry headquarters.

The plan indicates resident concern centers around traffic speeds on Ga. Highway 92 and lack of pedestrian connectivity along the corridor. Other named concerns also include “aging and abandoned housing, congestion and the lack of retail amenities.”

According to the plan draft, the Southwest Cherokee region is a prime area for growth, which also brings the need for “job training, better connectivity and transportation options and greenspace,” (the area currently has no parks).

The future land use map included in the 2018 draft shows a split of proposed development in the county, with the majority of suburban living, community village and other projected areas of more dense development focused on the south end. The map suggests that the north and east remain mostly natural preserve and country estates with small areas of community and neighborhood villages (shops and services) along major roads. The city centers of Waleska and Ball Ground show a suggested urban core center with neighborhood living surrounding the city limits and step-down zoning leading eventually back to more rural land use planning.

For more information on the land use plan, the future development map, target areas and definitions of each land use, visit cherokeega.com or www.engagecherokeega.com.

D - Surveys & Online Engagement

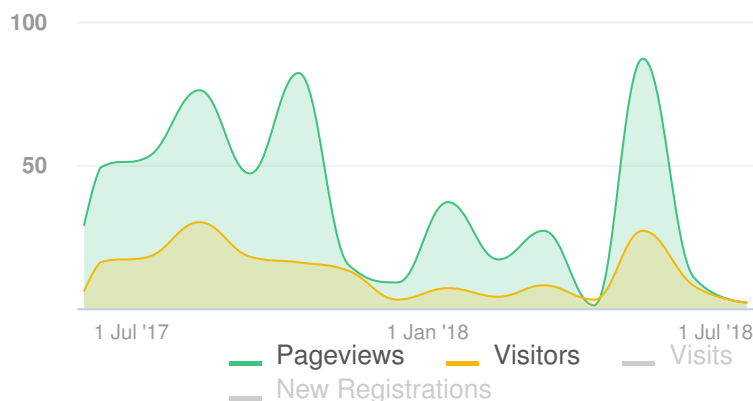
Project Report

22 May 2017 - 04 July 2018

Land Use Plan Waleska



Visitors Summary

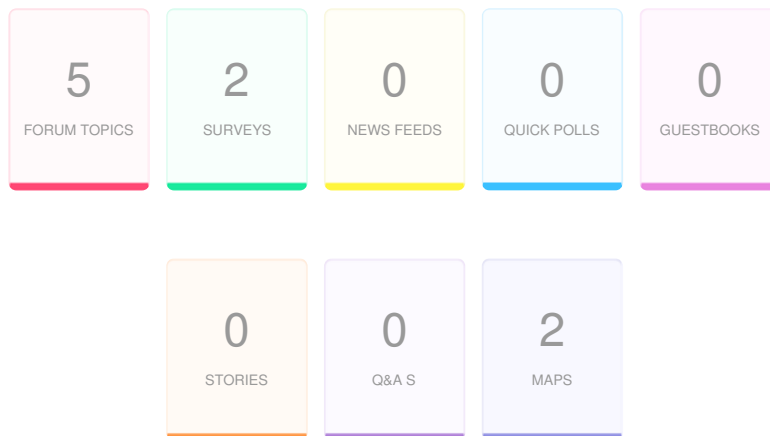


Highlights

TOTAL VISITS	MAX VISITORS PER DAY	
196	5	
NEW REGISTRATIONS		
6		
ENGAGED VISITORS	INFORMED VISITORS	AWARE VISITORS
5	83	151

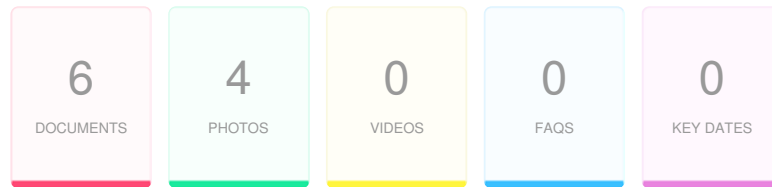
Aware Participants		151	Engaged Participants		5	
Aware Actions Performed		Participants	Engaged Actions Performed	Registered	Unverified	Anonymous
Visited a Project or Tool Page		151				
Informed Participants		83	Contributed on Forums	0	0	0
Informed Actions Performed		Participants	Participated in Surveys	5	0	0
Viewed a video		0	Contributed to Newsfeeds	0	0	0
Viewed a photo		5	Participated in Quick Polls	0	0	0
Downloaded a document		27	Posted on Guestbooks	0	0	0
Visited the Key Dates page		19	Contributed to Stories	0	0	0
Visited an FAQ list Page		0	Asked Questions	0	0	0
Visited Instagram Page		0	Placed Pins on Places	0	0	0
Visited Multiple Project Pages		61	Contributed to Ideas	0	0	0
Contributed to a tool (engaged)		5				

ENGAGEMENT TOOLS SUMMARY



Tool Type	Engagement Tool Name	Tool Status	Visitors	Contributors		
				Registered	Unverified	Anonymous
Forum Topic	Target Area Workshop	Published	3	0	0	0
Forum Topic	Vision for Waleska's Future	Published	3	0	0	0
Forum Topic	Existing Conditions Assessment	Published	2	0	0	0
Forum Topic	Types of Growth	Published	2	0	0	0
Forum Topic	Growth in Waleska	Published	1	0	0	0
Map	Downtown Waleska	Published	14	0	0	0
Map	Reinhardt Campus	Published	4	0	0	0
Survey Tool	Waleska Survey	Archived	18	5	0	0
Survey Tool	Waleska Survey-for preview use only	Draft	1	0	0	0
Ideas	Community Vision	Published	2	0	0	0
Ideas	Implementation Strategies	Published	1	0	0	0
Ideas	Opportunities	Published	1	0	0	0
Ideas	Priority Needs	Published	1	0	0	0

INFORMATION WIDGET SUMMARY



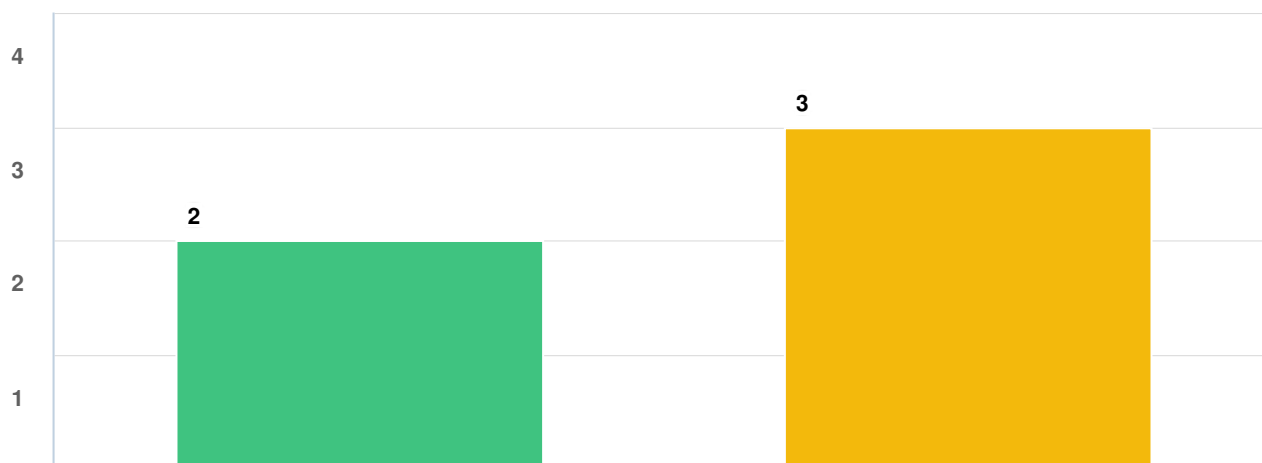
Widget Type	Engagement Tool Name	Visitors	Views/Downloads
Key Dates	Key Date	19	19
Document	Waleska Future Development Map	10	11
Document	Cheorkee Snapshot	10	15
Document	Waleska Workshop Summary	9	11
Document	Kick-off Presentation	8	10
Document	Joint Comprehensive Plan	7	8
Document	Waleska Workshop Presentation	0	0
Photo	Photo Sep 21 7 28 52 Pm	5	5
Photo	Photo Sep 21 7 28 35 Pm	5	5
Photo	Photo Sep 21 6 27 16 Pm	4	4
Photo	Photo Sep 21 6 27 51 Pm	3	3

ENGAGEMENT TOOL: SURVEY TOOL

Waleska Survey

VISITORS	18	CONTRIBUTORS	5	CONTRIBUTIONS	5
----------	----	--------------	---	---------------	---

What is your relationship with Waleska? Select all that apply.

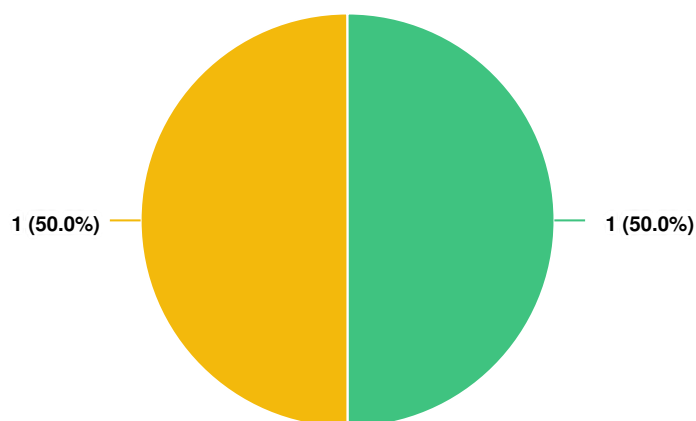


Question options

● I live in Waleska. ● I work in Waleska.

(5 responses, 0 skipped)

How long have you lived in the city of Waleska?

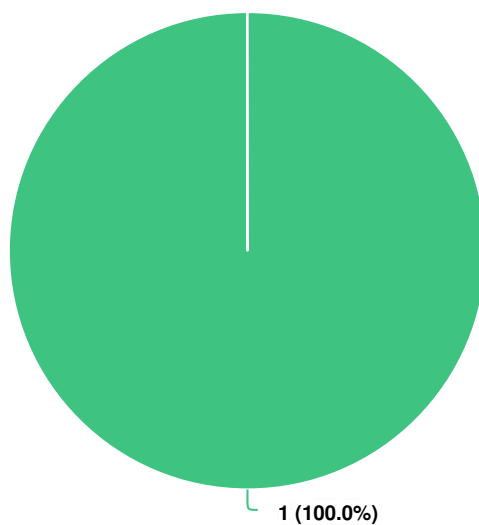


Question options

● Less than 5 years. ● 10 to 20 years.

Optional question (2 responses, 3 skipped)

If you moved to the city from elsewhere, what brought you to Waleska?

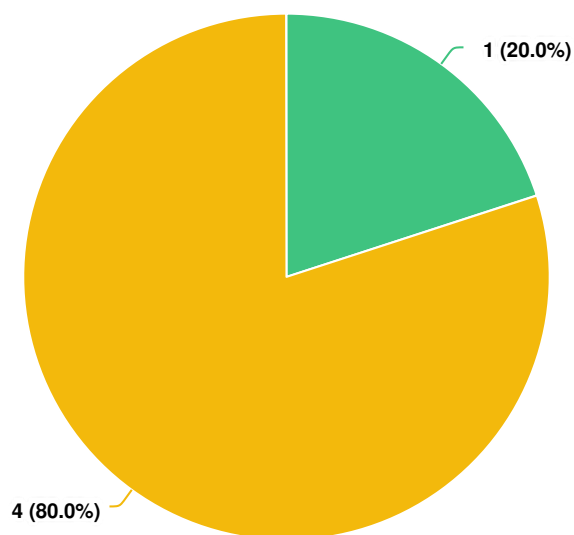


Question options

● Housing affordability and value

Optional question (1 responses, 4 skipped)

Are you familiar with Waleska's Future Development Map?

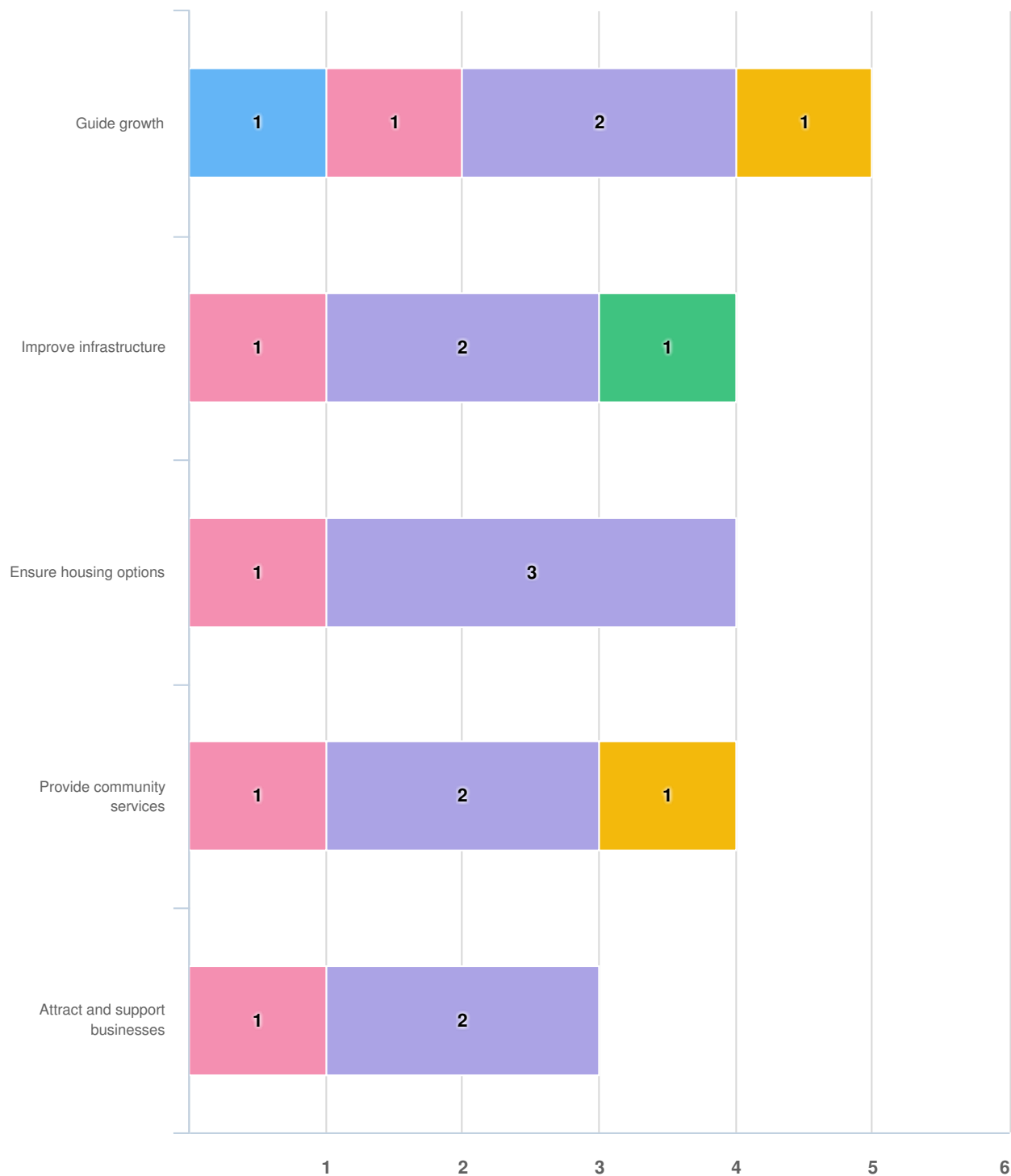


Question options

● Yes ● No

Optional question (5 responses, 0 skipped)

How well does Waleska?

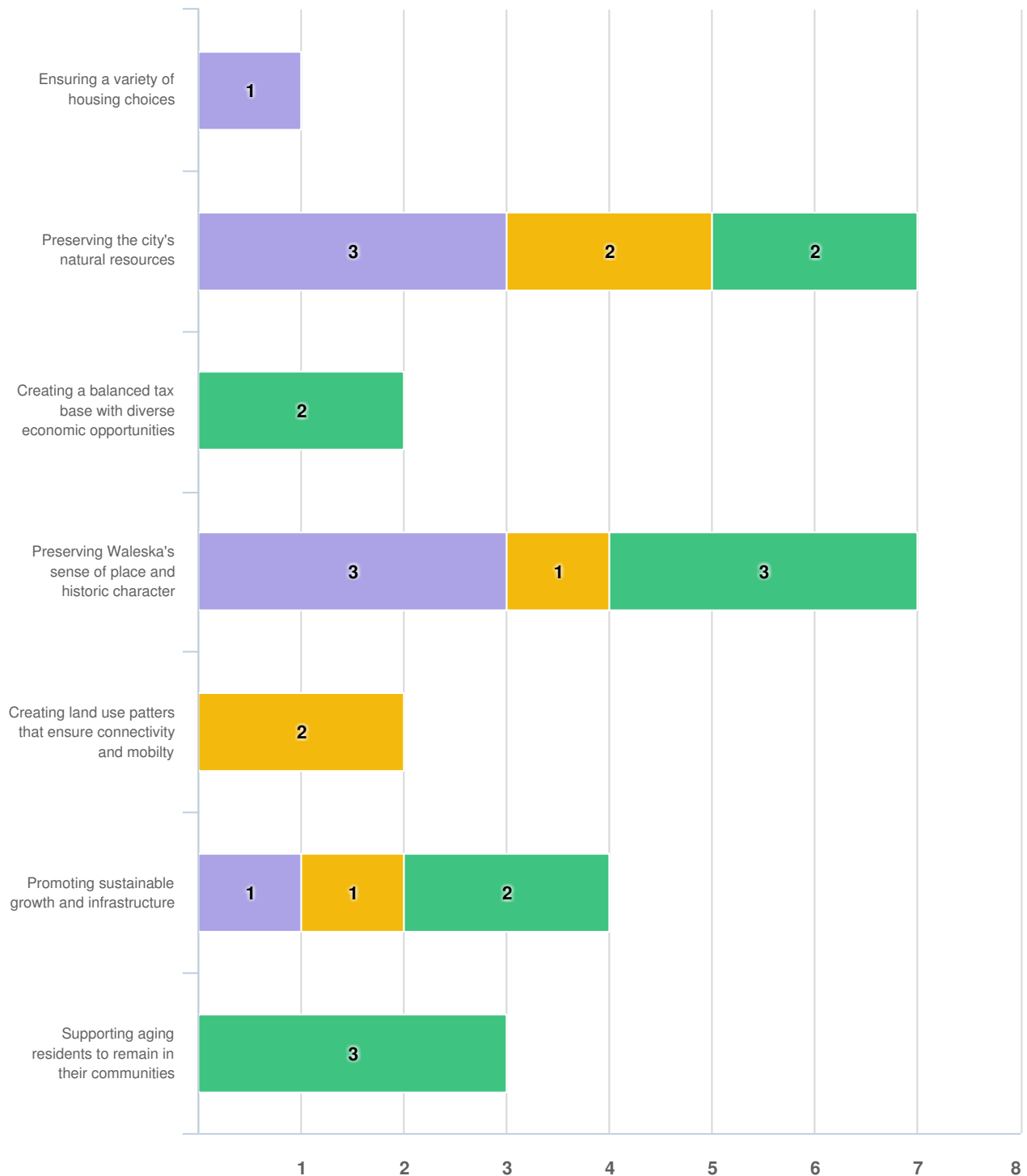


Question options

● Excellent
 ● Very Good
 ● Average
 ● Below Average
 ● Poor

Optional question (5 responses, 0 skipped)

What are the top areas for Waleska to focus on in the future?

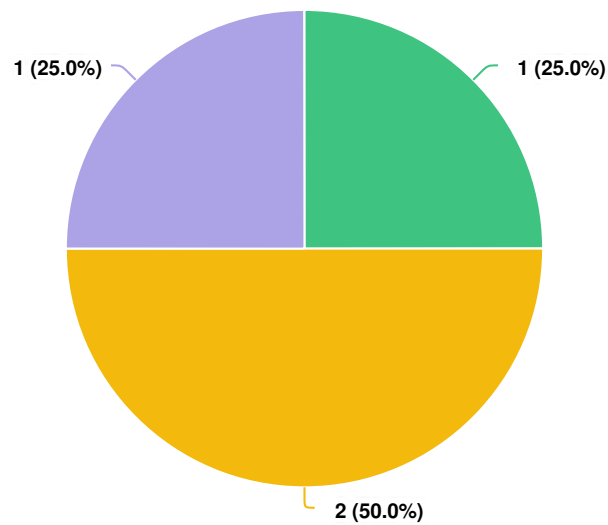


Question options

● Top Priority
 ● 2nd
 ● 3rd

Optional question (5 responses, 0 skipped)

How often do you buy goods and services in the city of Waleska?

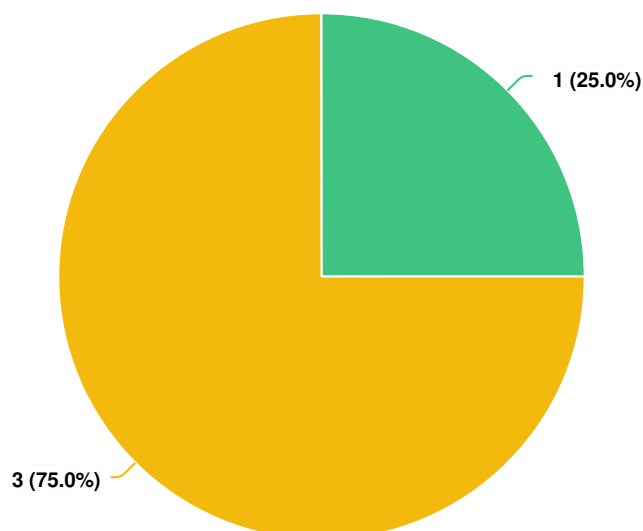


Question options

Often Occasionally Rarely

Optional question (4 responses, 1 skipped)

When you are in Waleska, is your home, business or school located in walking distance to nearby amenities?

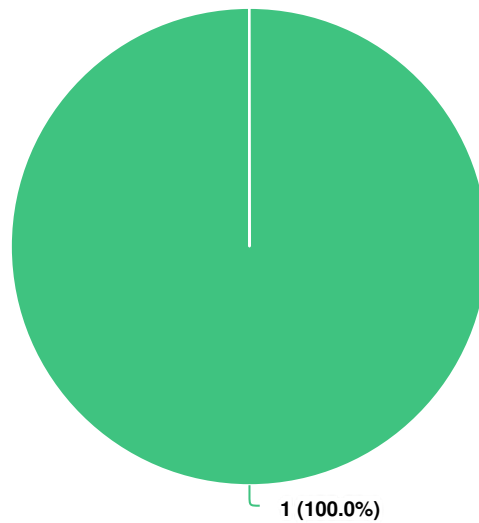


Question options

Yes No

Optional question (4 responses, 1 skipped)

Do you take advantage of this walkability?

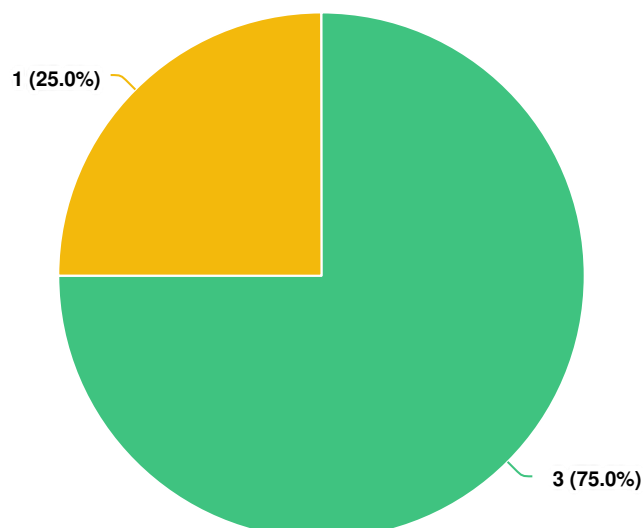


Question options

● No

Optional question (1 responses, 4 skipped)

I am currently a(n):

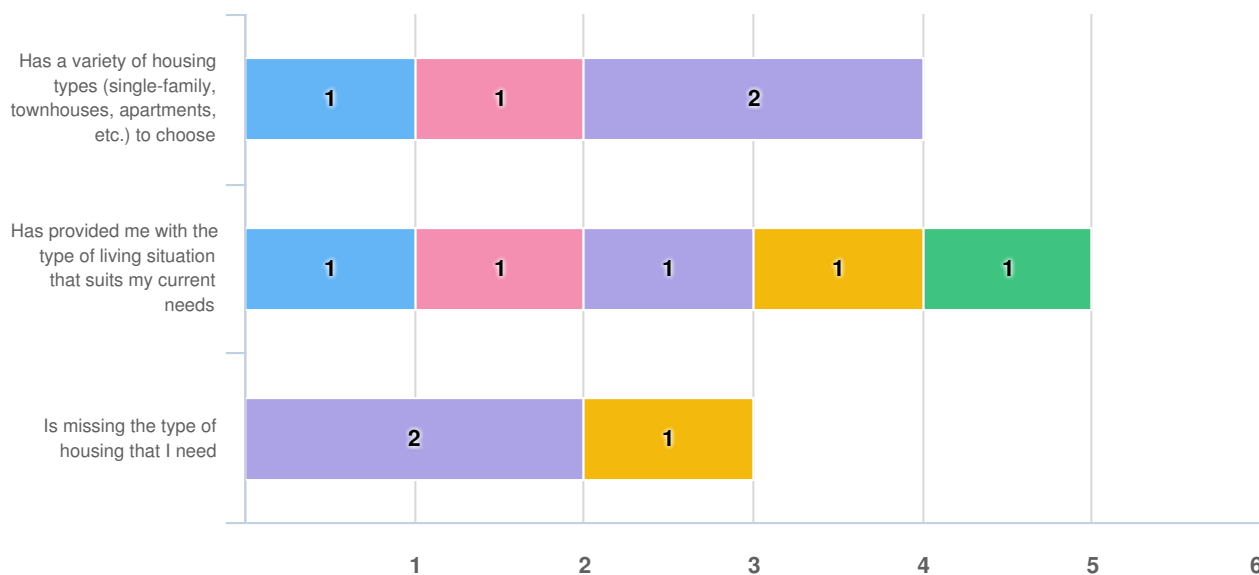


Question options

● Owner ● Other (e.g., live with parent)

Optional question (4 responses, 1 skipped)

I believe that Waleska:

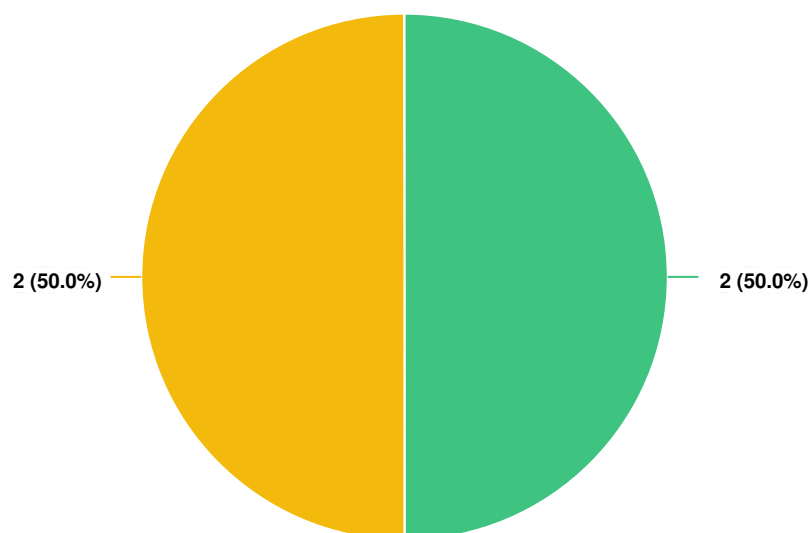


Question options

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral/Unsure Disagree Strongly Disagree

Optional question (5 responses, 0 skipped)

Do you plan to make Waleska your home for at least the next 20 years?

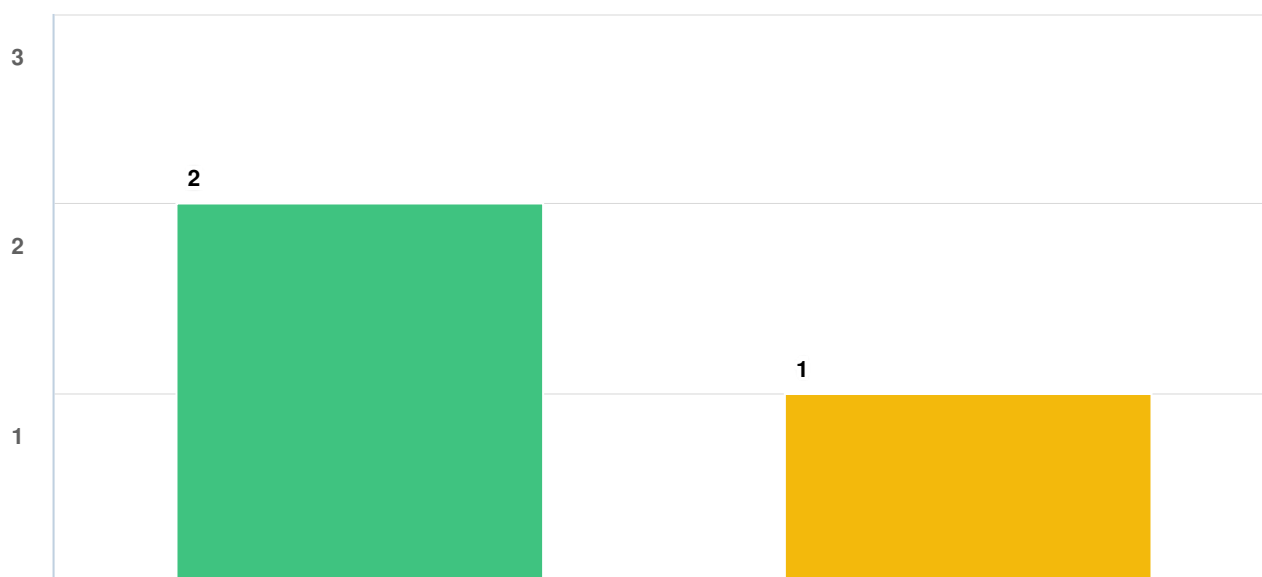


Question options

Yes Unsure

Optional question (4 responses, 1 skipped)

What reasons would push you to leave Waleska? Select all that apply.

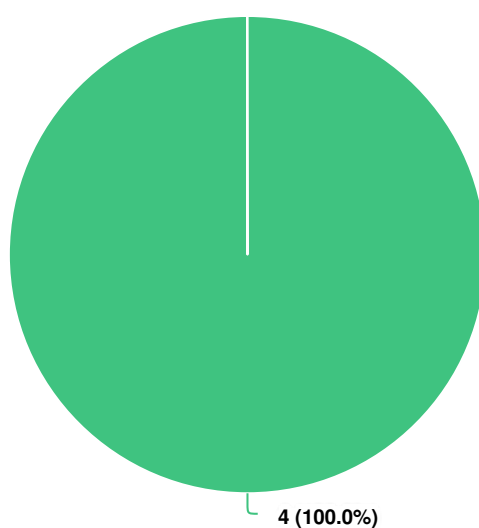


Question options

● Missing services/shopping ● Other

Optional question (5 responses, 0 skipped)

How well does the city of Waleska provide opportunities for seniors to participate in the community? I.e., senior activitie...



Question options

● Neutral

Optional question (4 responses, 1 skipped)

Historic Preservation seeks to retain older structures (homes, commercial buildings, etc.) and sites to maintain the histor...

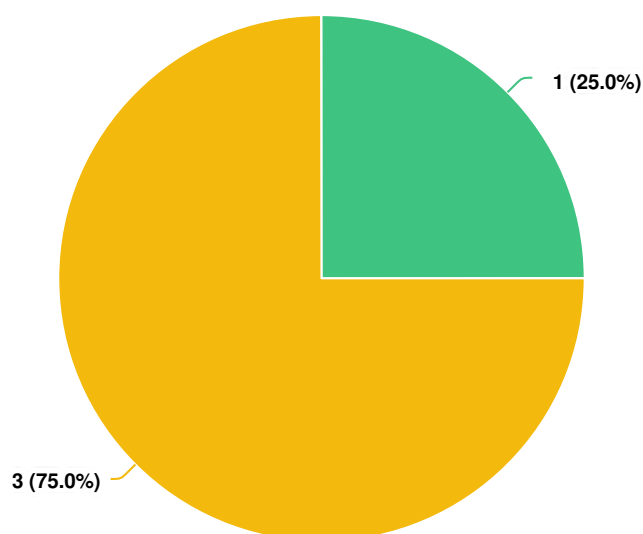


Question options

- ☒ Historic Preservation initiatives are extremely important. ☐ Historic Preservation initiatives are somewhat important.

Optional question (4 responses, 1 skipped)

Civic Spaces include public parks, plazas, squares, recreational areas, trails, or greens. Which statement do you agree wi...

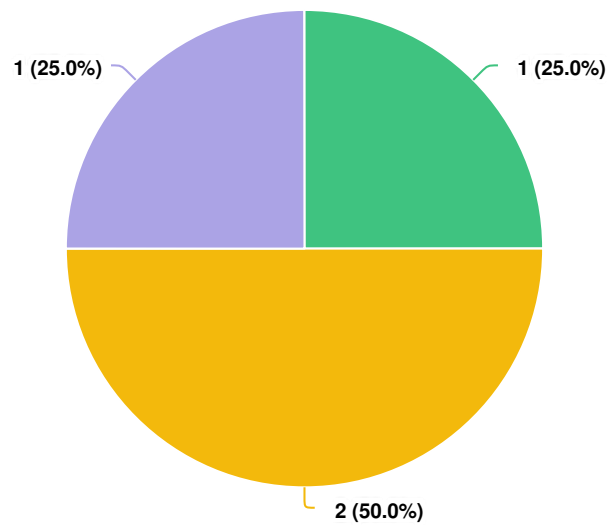


Question options

- ☐ Waleska does not have enough Civic Space. ☒ Waleska has the right amount of Civic Space.

Optional question (4 responses, 1 skipped)

How often do you visit any of the civic spaces within Waleska?

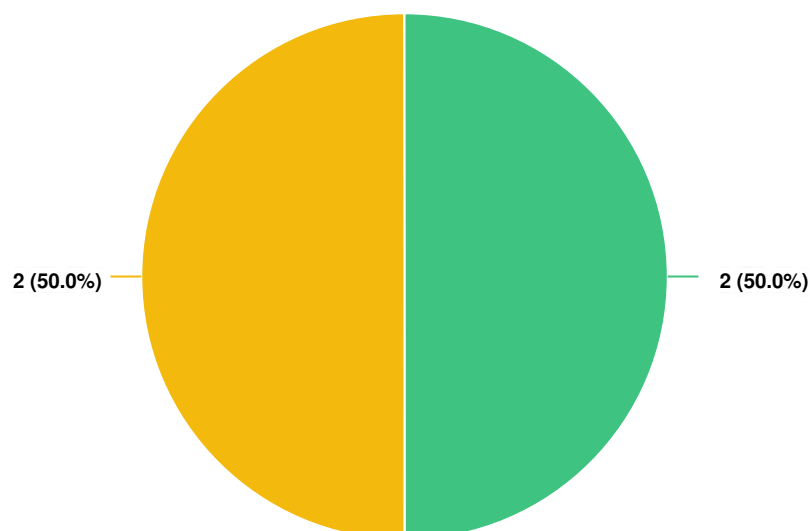


Question options

● Occasionally ● Seldom ● Never

Optional question (4 responses, 1 skipped)

Are you aware of any of the career development programs in Cherokee County, such as Mobile Career Lab, Cherokee Career Expo...

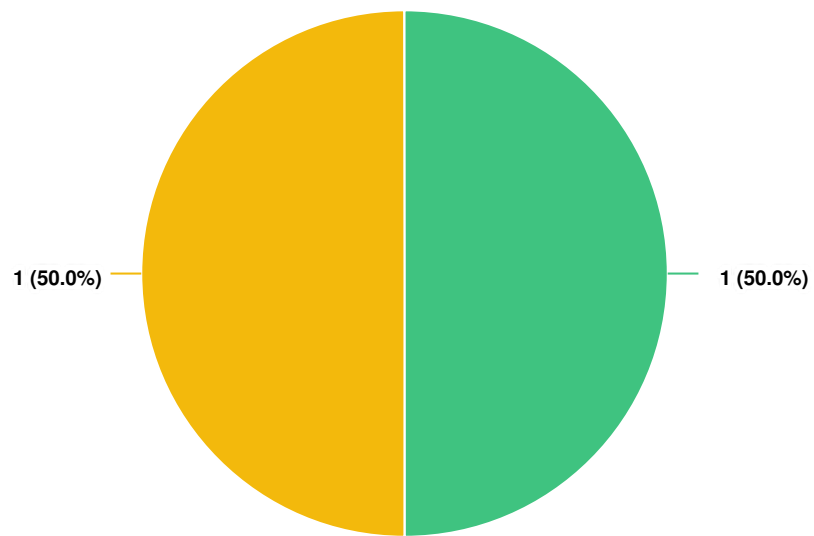


Question options

● Yes ● No

Optional question (4 responses, 1 skipped)

Have you taken advantage of any of these career programs?



Question options

☒ Yes ☐ No

Optional question (2 responses, 3 skipped)

E - Advisory Committee

Comprehensive Plan Update Advisory Committee Meeting #1

August 21, 2017 - 7:30 PM

- 1 Comprehensive Planning Background**
- 2 Our Comprehensive Plan Update Process**
- 3 Role of the Advisory Committee**
- 4 Results from Critical Issues Forums & Online Survey**
- 5 Upcoming Events**
 - **Target Area Meetings (Aug 16 – Sept 12)**
- 6 Discussion**



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use

Comprehensive Plan Update

Advisory Committee Meeting - August 21, 2017

PLAN CHEROKEE
DIRECTIONS · DIALOGUE DECISIONS · DESTINY

Outline

- Comprehensive Planning Background
- Our Comprehensive Plan Update Process
- Role of the Advisory Committee
- Results from Critical Issues Forums & Surveys
- Upcoming Events
- Discussion



What is a Comprehensive Plan?

- Document that describes the community's vision for the future including strategies to address issues and reach desired goals for land use, transportation, housing, economic development, etc.



How Does the Plan Work?

- Plan includes a vision for the physical future of the jurisdiction:
 - Vision and Goals
 - Character Area Descriptions
 - Future Development Map
- Plan identifies strategies and specific steps for implementation:
 - Short Term Work Plan - 5 year prioritized list of projects and initiatives
 - Capital Improvement Element - detailed assessment of needed capital investments in the County for the next 10 years and sources of funding



Georgia Minimum Planning Standards

2008 Requirements

- Public Participation Plan
- Community Assessment
- Community Agenda
 - Vision
 - Character Areas
 - Future Development Map
 - Short Term Work Plan (STWP)

Current Requirements

- Mandatory Elements
 - ❖ Population & Housing
 - ❖ Transportation
 - ❖ Land Use
 - ❖ Economic Development
 - ❖ Capital Improvements (CIE)
 - ❖ Short Term Work Plan (STWP)
- Optional Elements
 - Natural Resources
 - Historic and Cultural Resources
 - Recreation & Greenspace
 - Solid Waste Management
 - Education



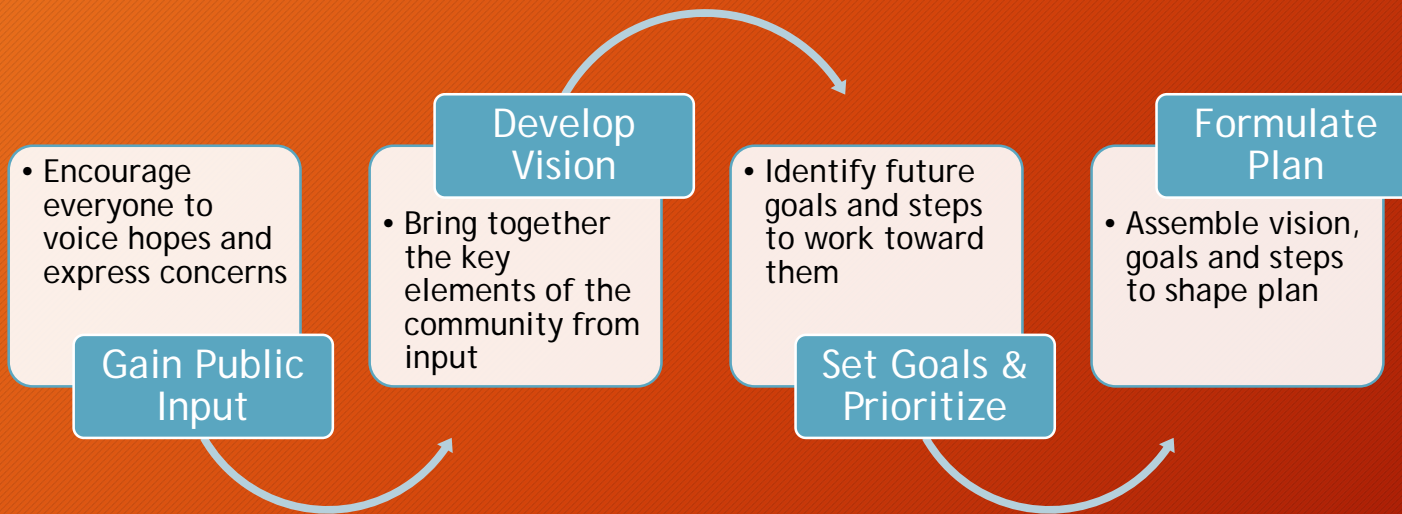
Georgia Minimum Planning Standards

Significant Changes from 2008

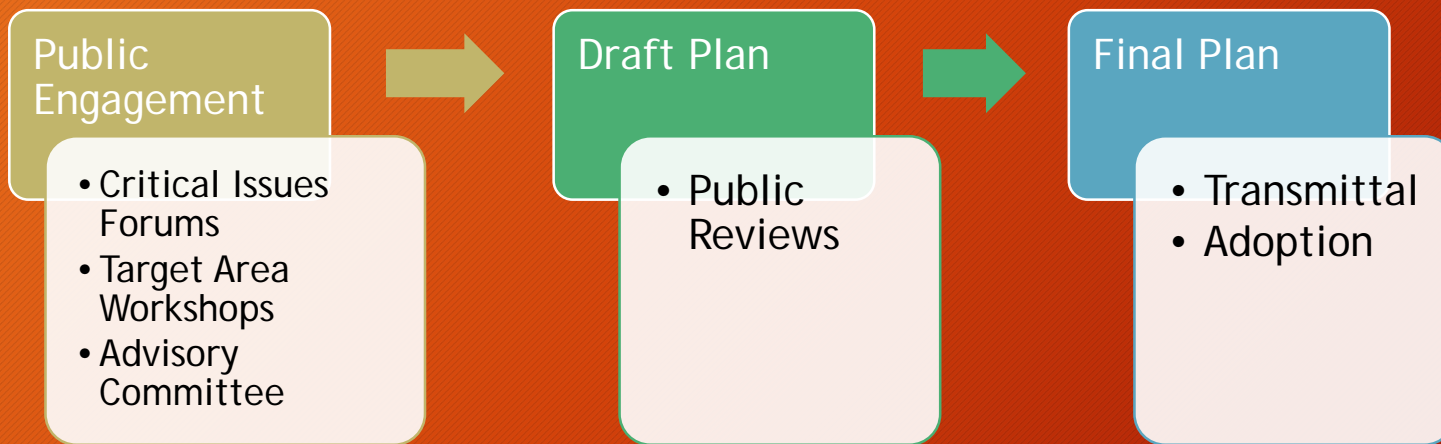
- Major Update Cycle (10 years to 5 years)
- Reduced Data Assessment Requirements
 - Basic data provided by Regional Commission
- More Flexible Format – Optional Elements
- “Design-Your-Own” Public Engagement



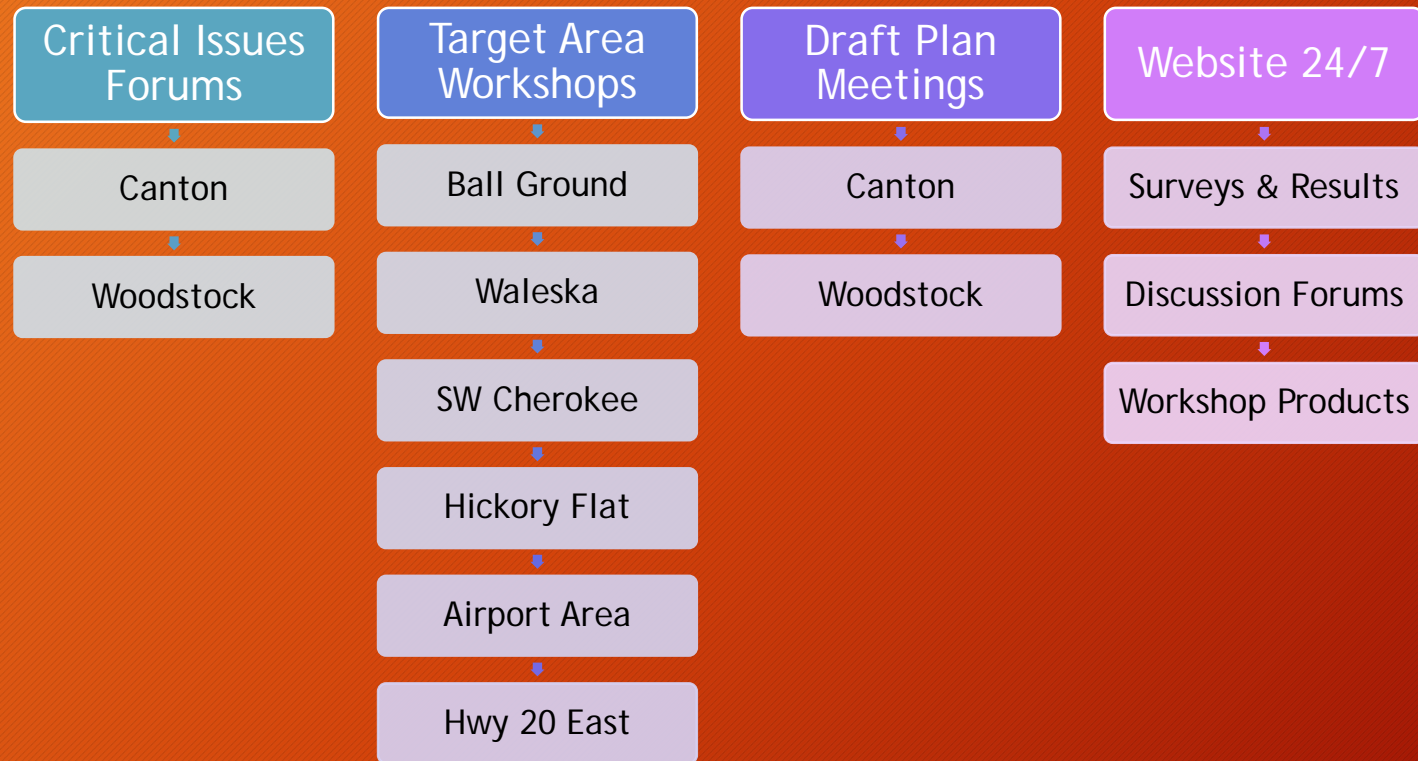
General Planning Process



Our Update Process



Public Engagement Opportunities



Advisory Committee

- Purpose:
 - Build partnerships and share information with stakeholders/community
 - Serve as a check and balance during process
- Role:
 - Help to guide project
 - Provide input
 - Represent the larger community
 - Make a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners



Overall Committee Plan

- August Meeting
 - Introduction
 - Results from Survey / Critical Issues Forums
- October Meeting
 - Market Study
 - Target Areas
- February Meeting - Elements
- April Meeting - Draft Plan



Website

The screenshot shows the 'Engage Cherokee' website. At the top, the title 'Engage Cherokee' is displayed in a white script font on a dark wood-grain background. Below this, there are three small images: a school building, a road sign, and a university entrance. The main content area is titled '2018 Comprehensive Plan Update' and includes a paragraph about the purpose of the website. Below the text are three image-based sections: 'Ball Ground' with a photo of a town entrance, 'Waleska' with a photo of a building, and 'Cherokee County' with a photo of a government building. Each section has a 'Public Engagement' progress bar. On the right side, a 'Lifecycle' section lists four stages: 'Public Engagement' (marked as 'CURRENT'), 'Plan Production', 'Plan Revision', and 'Plan Adoption', each with a brief description.

Engage Cherokee

2018 Comprehensive Plan Update

Engage Cherokee is designed for online public input on the update to our Comprehensive Plan. This is where you can express your opinions, share your ideas, and have your say. We look forward to hearing what's on your mind. Please explore the areas below and provide your feedback. Your voice matters!

Ball Ground
Public Engagement

Waleska
Public Engagement

Cherokee County
Help us shape the future of Cherokee County by giving your thoughts and ideas. Start by taking our quick survey about the critical issues we are facing in the next 20 years.

Lifecycle

- Public Engagement** CURRENT
Shaping the Plan through public meetings, workshops and online engagement.
- Plan Production**
Preparing and releasing the Draft Plan for review by the general public.
- Plan Revision**
Revising Draft Plan based on everyone's input to create the Final Plan.
- Plan Adoption**
Transmitting the Final Plan to State of Georgia and adopting.

- Launched May 30, 2017
- Areas for each jurisdiction
- Visible to general public
- Must register to submit survey and other feedback
- Promotion underway



Website Activity

Engage Cherokee



	All Projects	Cherokee County	Ball Ground	Waleska
Total Visits	871	690	229	67
Max. Visitors Per Day	58	45	22	5
New Registrations	167	83	80	4
Engaged Visitors	130	113	16	5
Informed Visitors	505	399	138	32
Aware Visitors	681	548	191	50

Results from May 22, 2017 to August 21, 2017



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use

PLAN CHEROKEE
 DIRECTIONS · DIALOGUE DECISIONS · DESTINY

Survey Results – Who Responded

Responses

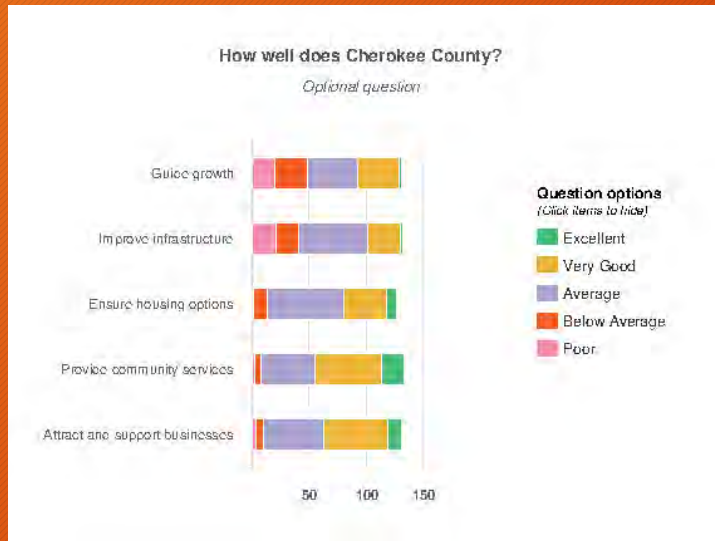
- Cherokee County – 137 total
 - 107 online, 30 paper
- Ball Ground – 16 total
 - 15 online, 1 paper
- Waleska – 5 total

Characteristics

- County Residents (97.8%)
- Work or Own Business in the County?
 - Yes - 46.0%
 - No - 54.0%
- Familiar with FDM?
 - Yes - 28.7%
 - Somewhat - 30.9%
 - No - 40.4%



Survey Results – Priorities

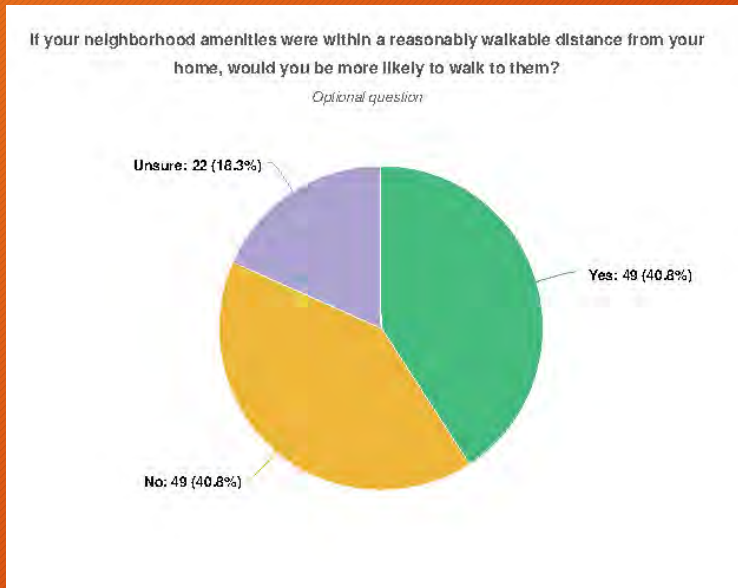


Areas for Future

- Top Priority
 - Preserving the county's natural resources
 - Preserving county's sense of place and historic character
- 2nd Choice
 - Promoting sustainable growth
 - Creating land use patterns that ensure connectivity and mobility



Survey Results – Walkability

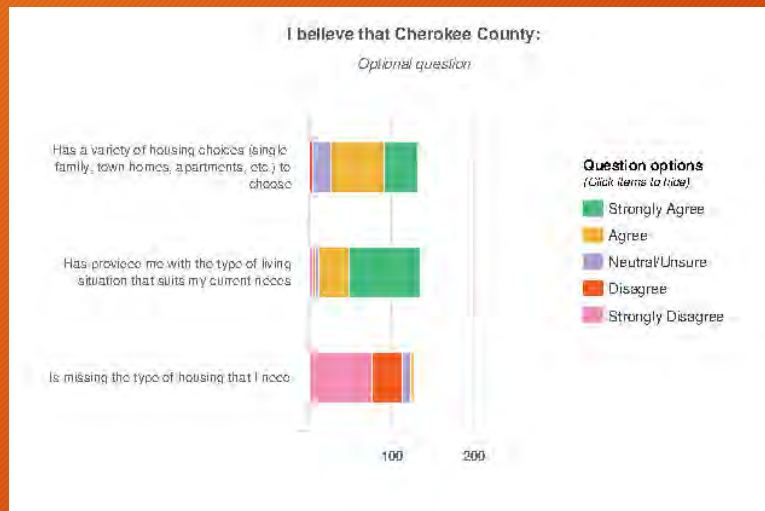


Walk to Amenities?

- Only 10.9% live in area that is walkable to amenities.
- 40.8% would be more likely to walk if amenities were within a reasonable distance.
- Gap between actual and desired environment



Survey Results – Housing Choices



Generally Satisfied

- Agree with housing variety and meeting needs
- Strongly Disagree that county is missing type of housing needed
- 97.0% of responses from homeowners
- Increased Traffic and Loss of Character were top reasons for leaving in the future



Survey Results – Resources

Historic

- 94.7% - Historic Preservation initiatives are extremely or somewhat important

Natural

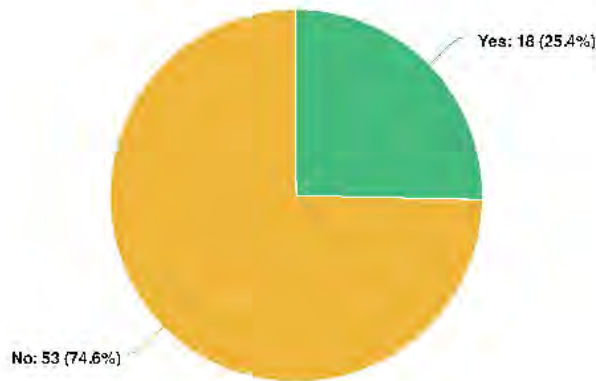
- 71.4% visit parks in the county often or occasionally
- 83.0% would support using public funds to provide access to parks and greenspace



Survey Results – Business

If you are a business owner in Cherokee County, are you aware of the existing business support and employee training programs such as Existing Industry meetings, Existing Industry Incentives, and...

Optional question



Programs

- 25.4% of business owners aware of support and training programs
- Only 11.8% of those aware, have taken advantage of them



Critical Issues Forums

- June 27-Woodstock & June 29-Canton
- 26 people signed-in
- Similar Content to Survey



Critical Issues Results

Connected

- Top amenities desired nearby
 - Restaurants - 37.5%
 - Entertainment - 25%
- Lowest
 - Grocery Store - 12.5%
 - Gas Station - 0%

Established

- Ideal Housing Type
 - Single Family (1acre+) - 53%
 - Single Family (small lot) - 18%
 - Townhouses - 12%
 - Multi-Family - 17%



Critical Issues Results

Aging

- Primary Issues
 - Transportation
 - Medical Access
 - Recreation
 - Affordable Housing

Historical Resources

- Important Places
 - Downtown Ball Ground - 25%
 - Free Home - 24%
 - Downtown Canton - 18%
 - Salacoa Valley - 15%
 - Reinhardt University - 11%
 - Downtown Woodstock - 7%



Critical Issues Results

Natural Resources

- Important Places
 - Lake Allatoona - 23%
 - Garland Mountain - 19%
 - Blankets Creek Trail - 16%
 - Brick Mill Falls - 15%
 - Long Swamp Creek - 14%
 - Pine Log Mountain - 11%

Employment

- Key Themes
 - More evening trade classes - Chat Tech
 - Help local businesses drive local economy
 - Post Offices & Restaurants important to community businesses



Next Steps

- 5 Target Area Workshops
 - Hwy 20 East - August 23
 - Hickory Flat - August 24
 - Airport Area - August 29
 - SW Cherokee - August 31
 - Waleska - September 12



Discussion





Cherokee County Planning and Land Use

Comprehensive Plan Update

Results from Forums & Surveys - August 21, 2017



Outline

- Website Activity
- Survey Results
- Critical Issues Forum Input
- Advisory Committee
- Next Steps



Website Activity

Engage Cherokee



	All Projects	Cherokee County	Ball Ground	Waleska
Total Visits	660	538	145	44
Max. Visitors Per Day	48	45	12	3
New Registrations	150	80	66	4
Engaged Visitors	129	112	16	5
Informed Visitors	383	312	88	23
Aware Visitors	505	419	119	37

Results from May 22, 2017 to August 06, 2017



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use



Survey Participation

- Cherokee County - **137** total
 - 107 online, 30 paper
- Ball Ground - **16** total
 - 15 online, 1 paper
- Waleska - **5** total

Note:



Online Survey

Shape Cherokee

Home > Cherokee County > Cherokee County Survey

Cherokee County Survey

Welcome! Please take a few minutes to voice your opinion on the future of Cherokee County. As you probably know, the county is growing and we need your input so we may guide the county in a direction that benefits all of us. Your input will help us make Cherokee County even better!

Approximate time: 10 - 15 minutes

You need to be logged in to take this survey. [Sign in](#)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7

General

Tell us a little about yourself!

Do you live in Cherokee County? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do you work or own a business within Cherokee County? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

Are you familiar with Cherokee County's Future Development Map?

- Areas for questions:
 - General Information
 - Strengths and Challenges
 - Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure
 - Housing Choice and Aging in Place
 - Preserve Sense of Place and Historic Character
 - Designing with the Environment in Mind
 - Balanced Tax Base and Diverse Economic Opportunities



Critical Issues Forums

- In-person Open House
 - Drop-in any time during time period
- Activities will address same county-wide topics as Surveys/Website
- Dates & Locations
 - Woodstock - June 27, 2017 - 5:30 to 7:30pm - Rec. Center
 - Canton - June 29, 2017 - 6 to 8pm - Conference Center

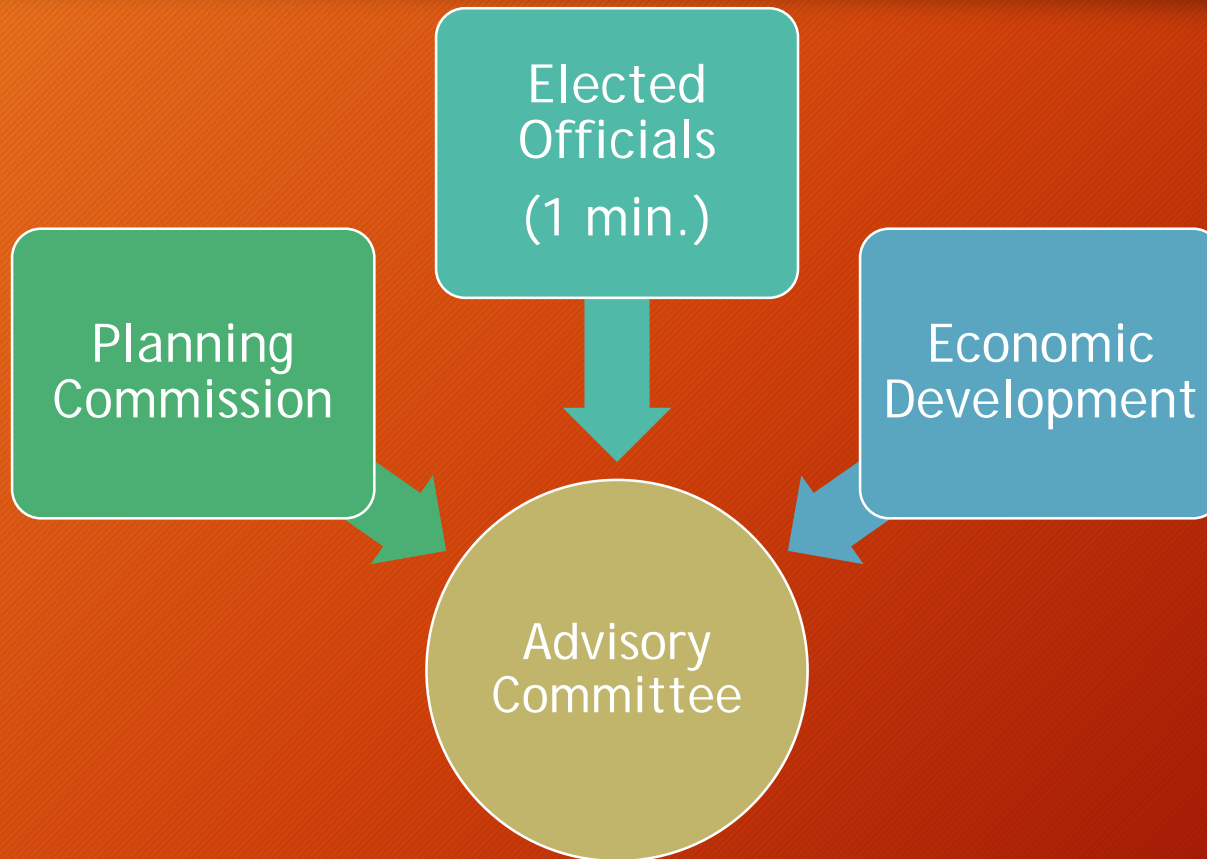


Advisory Committee

- Purpose
 - Help guide the project, provide input and represent the larger community.
- Meeting Focus
 - Consensus building on critical issues, changes to the FDM, and implementation steps.
- 4 to 5 meetings (July to March)



Proposed Members



Next Steps

- Continue to publicize Website
- Finalize Advisory Committee
 - Planning Commission
 - 1 Elected Official Minimum
 - Development Authority Representative
- Prepare for Critical Issues Forums in late-June
- Market Study Development
 - Working with our consultant - Jacobs



DRAFT AGENDA

Comprehensive Plan Update Advisory Committee Meeting #2

October 16, 2017 - 7:30 PM

- 1 Target Area Workshop Results**
- 2 Additional Public Engagement**
- 3 Stakeholder Meetings**
- 5 Upcoming Meeting**
 - Monday, January 22, 2018 (Tentative)
- 6 Discussion**



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use

Comprehensive Plan Update

Advisory Committee Meeting - October 16, 2017

PLAN CHEROKEE
DIRECTIONS · DIALOGUE DECISIONS · DESTINY

Outline

- Target Area Workshops
- Additional Public Engagement
- Stakeholder Meetings
- Upcoming Meeting
- Discussion



Target Area Workshops

August 16 – September 21, 2017



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use



Ball Ground

August 16, 2017

- Sign-in: 40 people (ex. staff & consultants)
- Refined Vision
 - Word association – small town, innovative, safe, environmentally-friendly, healthy, charming & affordable.
- Character Areas
 - Focused on tweaks to Neighborhood Living, Urban Core, Development Corridor & Workplace Center
- Biggest Issues
 - Lack of a grocery store
 - Truck traffic on Gilmer Ferry (SR 372) – Bypass?
 - Continued expansion of sidewalks/trails
 - Digital connectivity (Internet & cell service)



Hwy 20 East Corridor

August 23, 2017

- Sign-in: 40 people (ex. staff & consultants)
- Refined Vision
 - Word association - mixed-use village, industrial center, growth center, crossroads, hamlet, rural living, scenic, community oriented and safe.
- Biggest Issues
 - Significant traffic today
 - Impact of Hwy 20 widening (10-20 years)
 - Lack of retail & services in corridor
 - Preserving and enhancing unique community centers
 - Need for sewer infrastructure
- Character Areas
 - Focused on the location and designation of the existing nodes
 - Not satisfied with Transitional Corridor or Suburban Growth descriptions



Hickory Flat

August 24, 2017

- Sign-in: 65 people (ex. staff & consultants)
- Refined Vision
 - Primary - sparsely developed, natural, natural preservation, forested, rural living, quiet, scenic, undeveloped and pastoral.
 - Secondary - village, aging in place, sustainable, charming, local-serving, family-friendly, ease of mobility, residential (large lot), bedroom community, peaceful, cohesive, automobile-oriented & self-sufficient.
- Biggest Issues
 - Lack of shared vision with City of Holly Springs
 - Traffic on major roads (Hickory Flat Hwy, Hickory Rd & East Cherokee Dr)
 - Need for sidewalks/trails
 - How to maintain rural character with strong suburban growth pressure
 - Concerns about infrastructure and connectivity
- Character Areas
 - Focused on tweaks to Suburban Growth, Community Village and Transitional Corridor



Airport Area

August 29, 2017

- Sign-in: 18 people (ex. staff & consultants)
- Refined Vision
 - Table 1 - industrial center, opportunity and residential
 - Table 2 - natural, forested, agricultural, rural living and residential
- Biggest Issues
 - Excellent access to I-575 & top Airport
 - Lack of retail & services
 - Industrial & residential development conflicts
 - Need for affordable housing
- Character Areas
 - Focused on tweaks to Workplace Center, Rural Places, & Waste Management



SW Cherokee

August 31, 2017

- Sign-in: 11 people (ex. staff & consultants)
- Refined Vision
 - Table 1 - mixed-use village, growth center, economic anchor, entrepreneurial, innovative, community-oriented, environmentally-friendly, sustainable, access to nature, multimodal, diverse and safe.
 - Table 2 - safe, quiet, rural, community-oriented, residential and suburban living.
- Biggest Issues
 - Access to I-75 and Lake Allatoona / Red Top Mountain SP
 - Lack of retail, restaurants & hotels
 - Close to Chatt. Tech and KSU
 - History of Crime & Drugs
- Character Areas
 - Alternate visions of map changes
 - Some areas need to change from Suburban Growth to Living
 - Need to think about use of Community Village and Development Corridor



Waleska

September 21, 2017

- Sign-in: 5 people (ex. staff & consultants)
- Refined Vision
 - Word association - small town, innovative, safe, environmentally-friendly, healthy, charming & affordable.
- Character Areas
 - Focused on tweaks to Neighborhood Living, Urban Core, Development Corridor & Workplace Center
- Biggest Issues
 - Lack of a grocery store
 - Truck traffic on Gilmer Ferry (SR 372) - Bypass?
 - Continued expansion of sidewalks/trails
 - Digital connectivity (Internet & cell service)



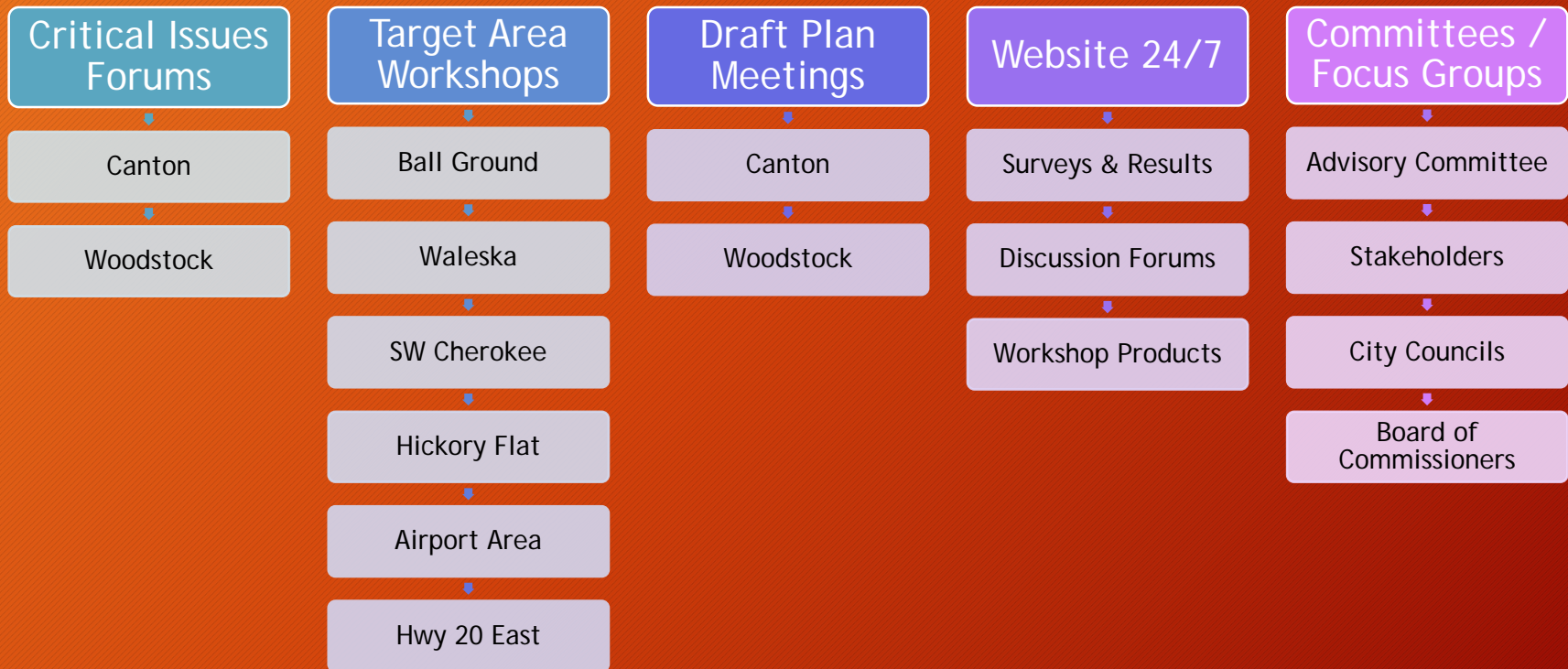
Additional Public Engagement



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use



Public Engagement Opportunities



Online Engagement – Phase 2

- Website Updated
 - New sections for each of the Target Areas
 - Workshop Summaries are posted
 - Open until November 15th for comments
- Reinhardt University
 - Developing surveys for student body & faculty/staff
 - Further information from focus group discussions



Potential Stakeholders

- Major Homeowners Associations
 - Examples: Towne Lake, Bridgemill, Woodmont, Centennial Lakes
- Developers
- Realtors
- Chamber of Commerce
- Cherokee County Water and Sewer
- Cherokee County School District
- Cherokee County Senior Services



Next Meeting

- Advisory Committee
 - January 22, 2018



Discussion



Comprehensive Plan Update Advisory Committee Meeting #3

February 19, 2017 - 7:30 PM

- 1 Market Study**

- 2 Map Analysis**
 - Suburban Living
 - Suburban Growth
 - Country Estates
 - Rural Places

- 3 Upcoming Meetings**
 - Monday, March 19, 2018
 - Monday, April 16, 2018

- 4 Discussion**



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use

Comprehensive Plan Update

Advisory Committee Meeting - February 19, 2018

PLAN CHEROKEE
DIRECTIONS · DIALOGUE DECISIONS · DESTINY

Agenda

- Market Study
- Map Analysis
 - Method
 - Suburban Living
 - Suburban Growth
 - Country Estates
 - Rural Places
- Upcoming Meetings
- Discussion



Market Study

Presented to BOC on December 19, 2017



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use

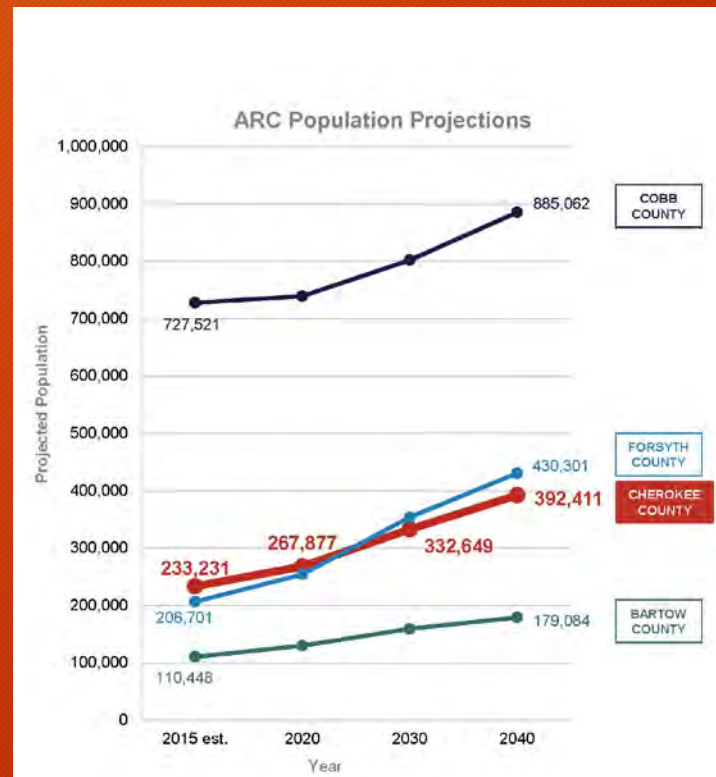


Major Findings

- 2008 Comp. Plan Forecasts
 - Great Recession changed growth trajectory
- Population Changes
 - More Diverse & Aging
- Population / Jobs Mismatched
 - Highly Skilled & Educated Residents
 - Few Jobs Match Residents
- Housing Recovery
 - Back up to 60-70% of peak
 - Demand for Smaller Lots



Projected Population Growth



Changing Population

AGE

Influx of families drawn to schools and lifestyle

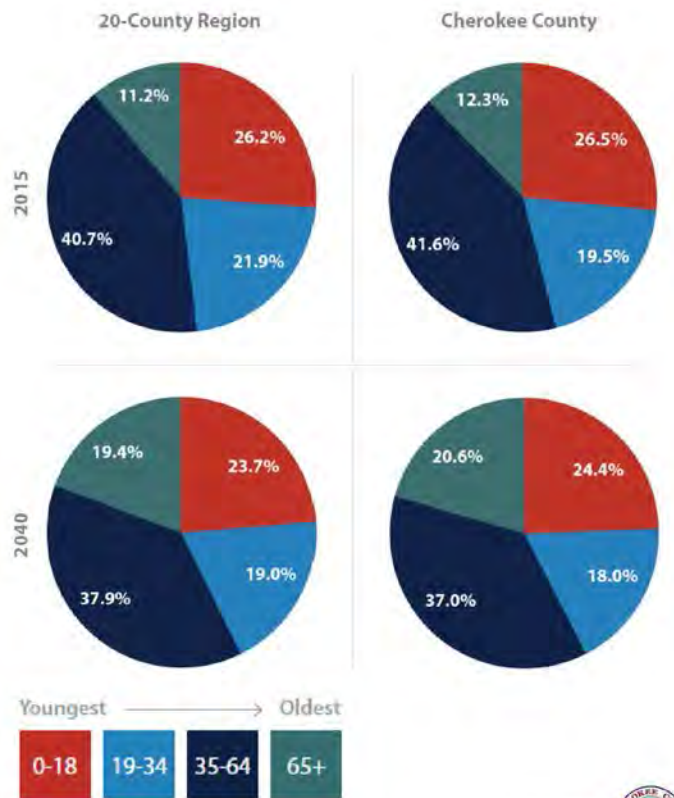
Rise in 65+ population

Highest cohort growth

19,698 residents in 2010 → 34,726 in 2021 (+76%)

12.3% total population in 2015 → 20.6% in 2040

Housing and mobility demands



Source: ARC

JACOBS



Changing Population

RACE AND ETHNICITY

More racially diverse

92% white in 2000 →
87% in 2010 →
71% in 2040

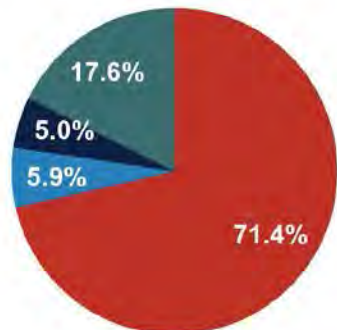
Rising Hispanic population

10.7% in 2015 →
17.6% in 2040

2015



2040



White Black Some other Race Hispanic

Source: ARC

JACOBS



Employment

EMPLOYMENT DYNAMICS

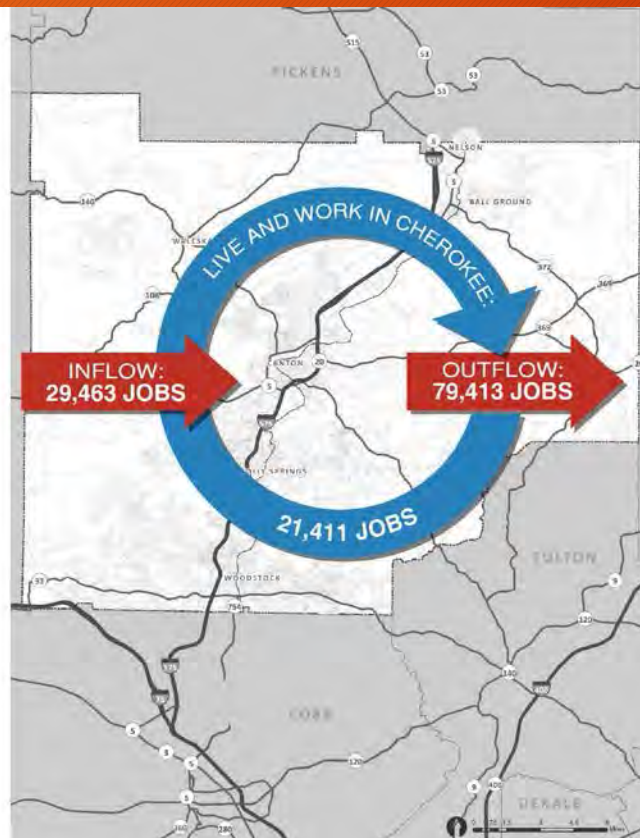
COMMUTE

Educated, higher paid residents **commute out**

Lower wage manufacturing & retail employees **commute in**

Look for opportunities to attract higher-end jobs that match resident profile; SW county and Airport area well suited for this

Source: Census LEDS



Employment

EMPLOYMENT DYNAMICS

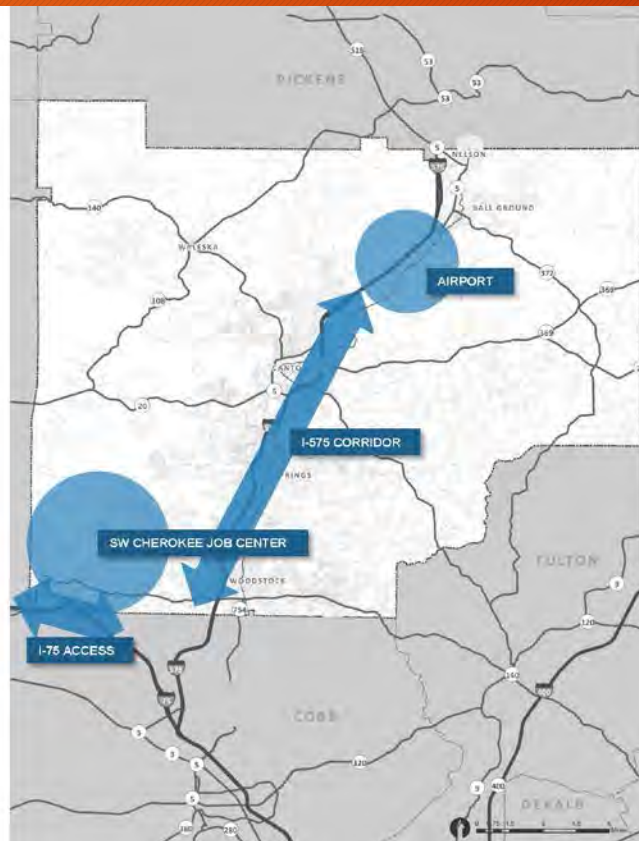
ACCESS

Employers attracted to **I-75 access**

Promote high-density job center in **SW Cherokee**

Protect potential business and industrial zones **near the airport and I-575**

Opportunity Zones have been a successful tool and should be extended if possible



Housing

HOUSING MARKET

PRODUCT SHIFT

2030 FDM **allocates most land to ~2 acre lots** (Agricultural)

Majority of home sales within last 12 months **<1/2 acre**

Post-recession builders want **existing infrastructure** and **dense clusters**



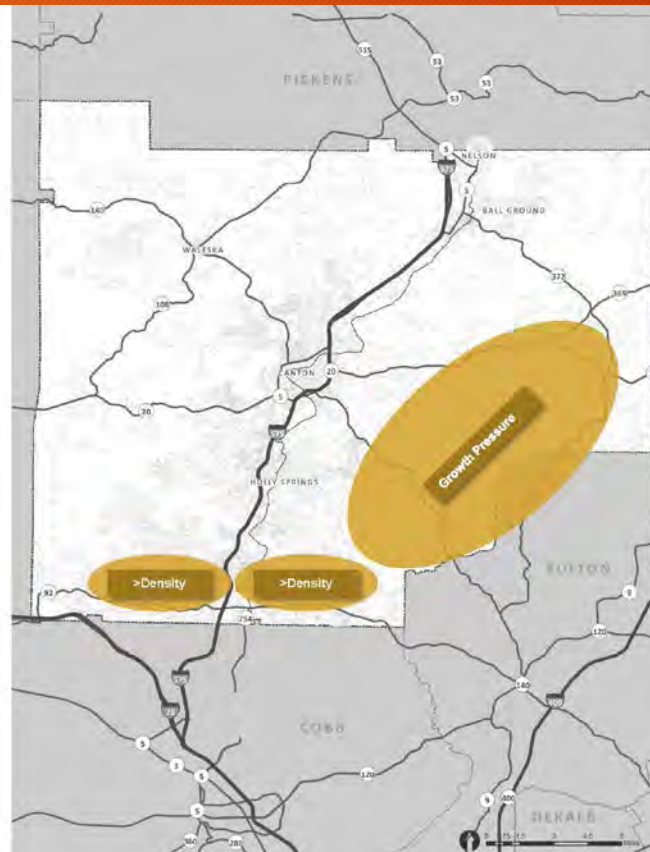
JACOBS



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use

PLAN CHEROKEE
DIRECTIONS · DIALOGUE  DECISIONS · DESTINY

Nodes of walkable, multi-family or dense SF housing popular near commuter routes to Cobb and Fulton Counties



Commercial Development

- Warehouse / Industrial is the top category since 2008.
- Retail
 - Hyper-competitive industry
 - Need interesting places (ie mixed use or main street environment)
 - Lack of grocery stores in the Ball Ground or Waleska areas impacts quality of life
- Office
 - Need local-serving office (10,000 to 20,000 sqft)
 - Most will be located in the cites except HF & SW



Map Analysis



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use



Method

- Isolate residential parcels within each character area
- Identify non-residential uses
 - Parks and Greenspace (including major private areas)
 - Schools, Churches and Institutions
 - Industrial Property
 - Commercial Property
- Color-code the residential parcels and zoning
 - Clearly identify areas within and outside the character of the area

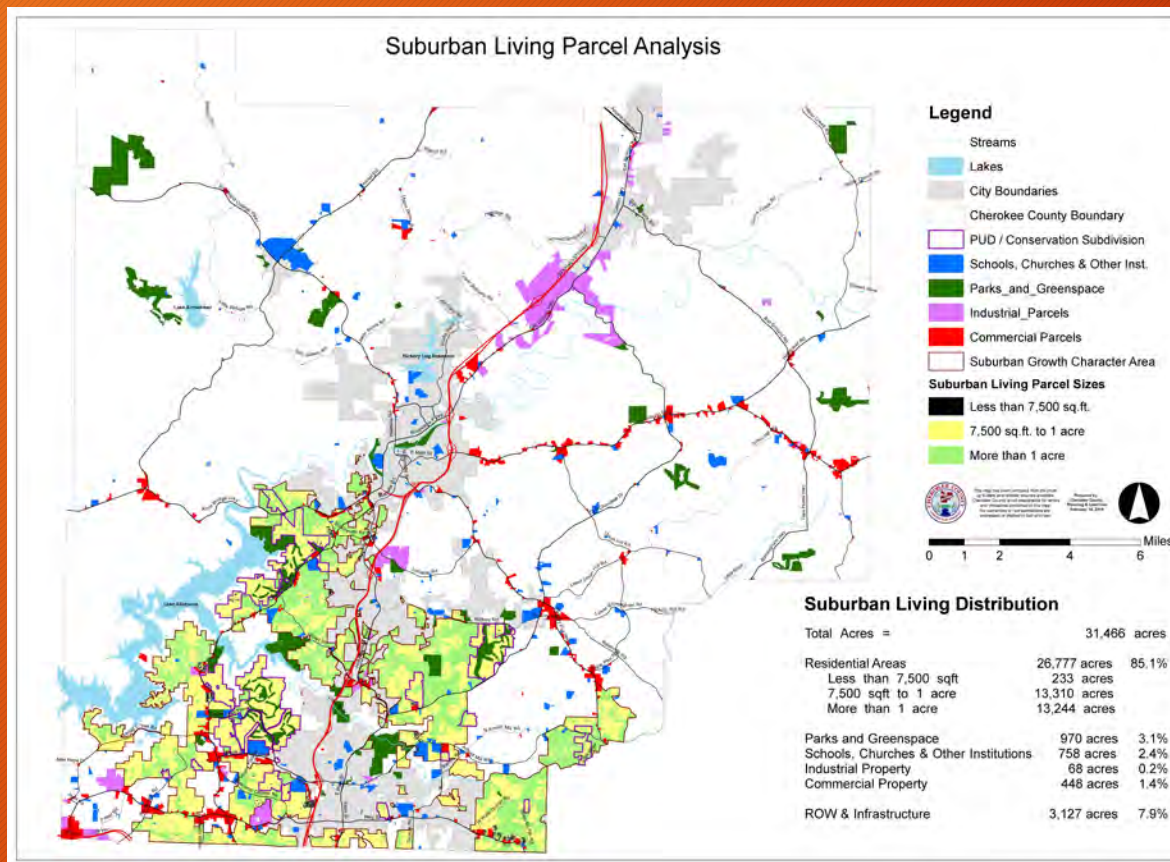


Suburban Living – Key Elements

- Established Residential Neighborhoods
 - Opportunities to fill-in with additional residential
- Includes Complementary Retail, Institutions & Parks as Secondary Land Uses
- Density Range = 1 to 3 units per acre



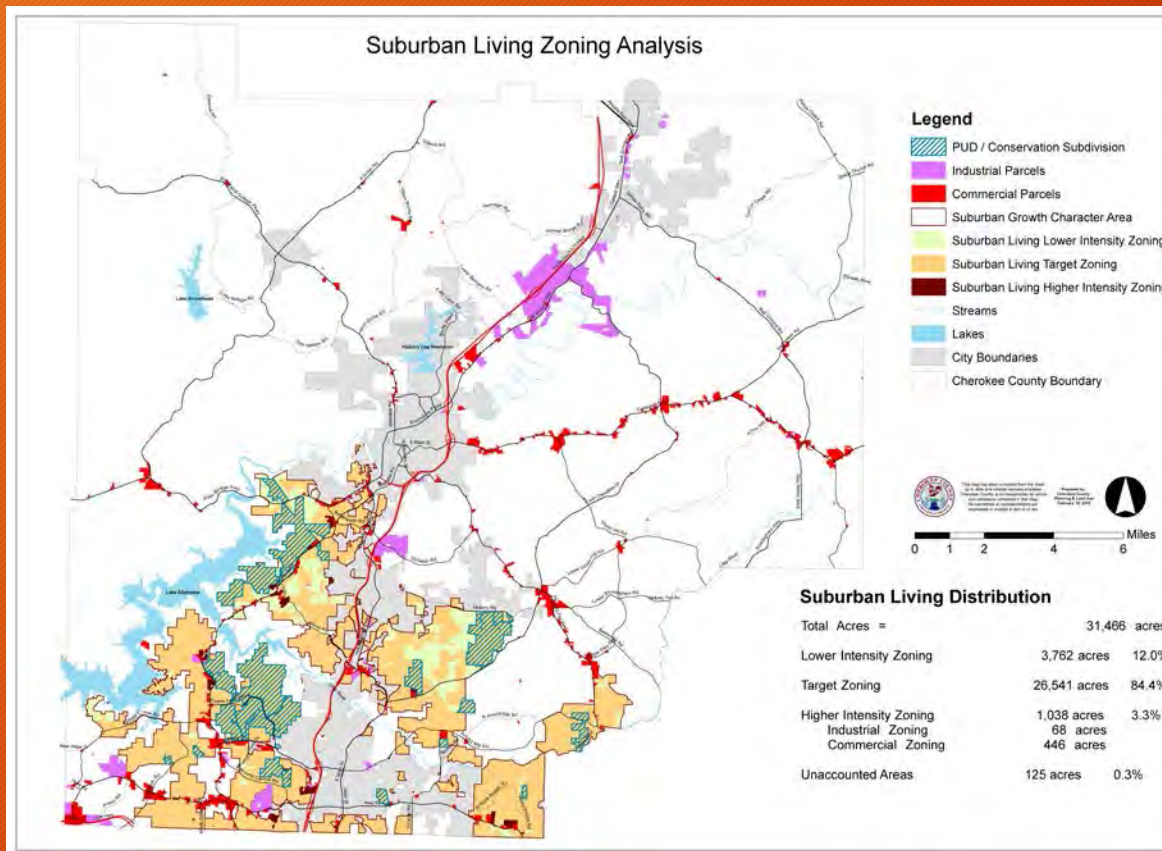
Suburban Living – Lot Size



- Small Lot Clusters
 - Hwy 92 East
 - Bells Ferry
- Target & Larger Lots
 - 50/50 Split



Suburban Living - Zoning



- Lower Intensity - 12%
- Target Zoning - 84.4%
- Higher Intensity - 3%
 - Hwy 92
 - Bells Ferry
 - Sixes Rd
- Unaccounted - City Annexations



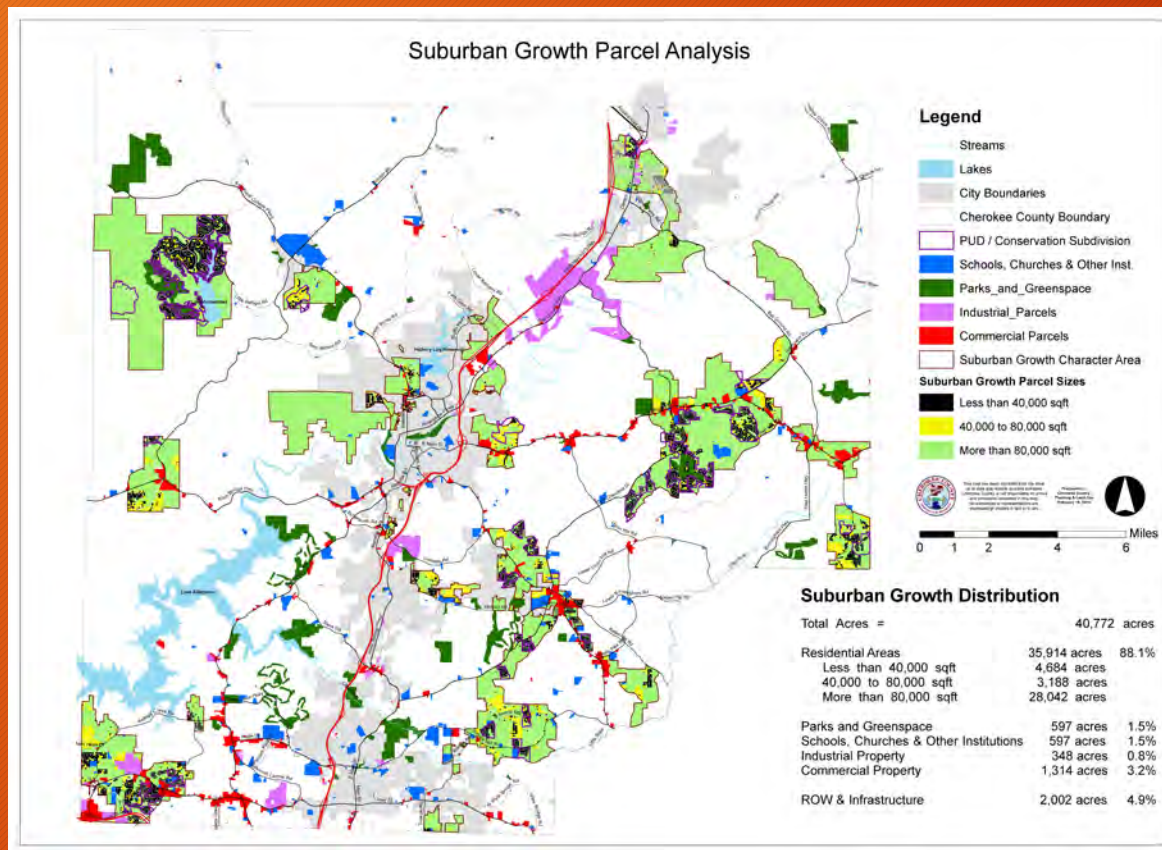
Suburban Growth – Key Elements

- Pockets of Existing Development
 - Area in transition from rural to suburban
 - Greatest growth pressure due to available infrastructure
- Includes Complementary Retail, Institutions & Parks as Secondary Land Uses
- Density Range = 0.5 to 1 unit per acre

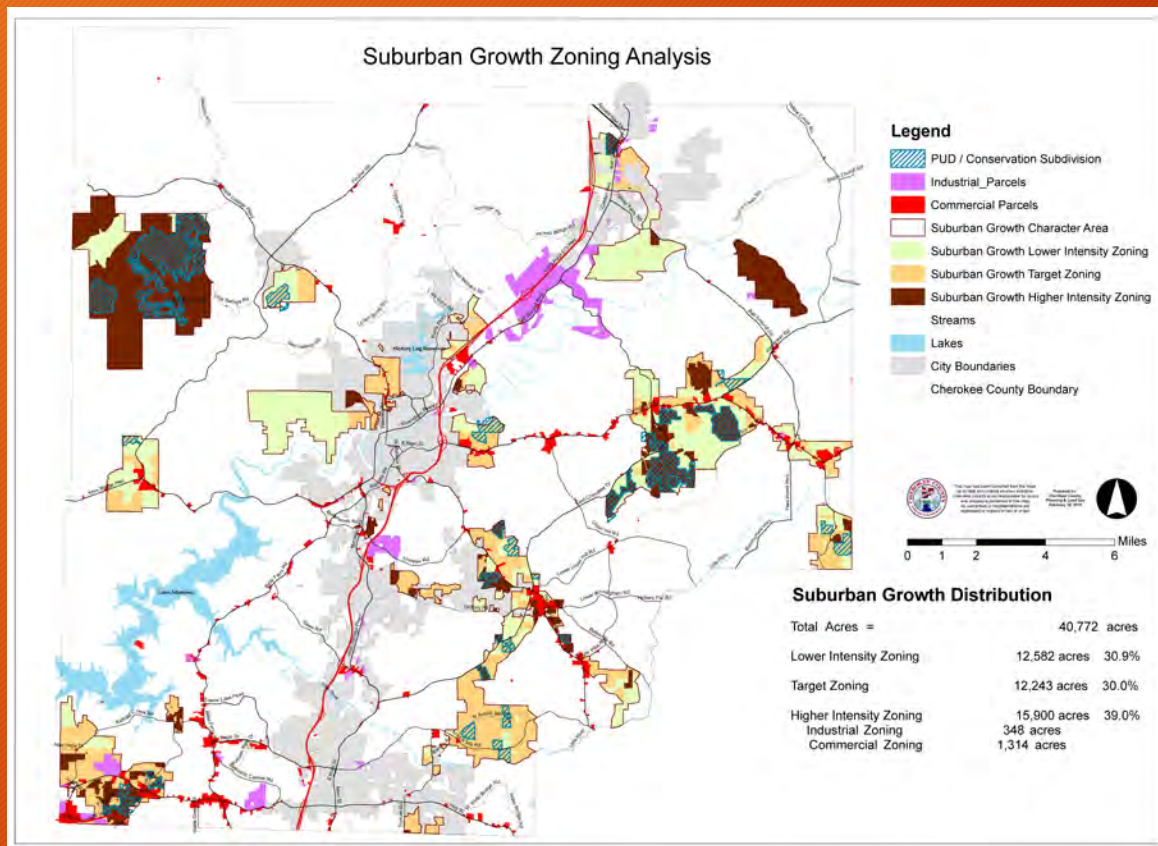


Suburban Growth - Lot Size

- Small Lot Clusters
 - SW Cherokee
 - Hickory Flat
 - Woodmont & Mill Creek
 - Lake Arrowhead
- Majority Larger Lots



Suburban Growth - Zoning



- Lower Intensity - 31%
- Target Zoning - 30%
- Higher Intensity - 39%
 - SW Cherokee
 - Hickory Flat
 - Woodmont / Mill Creek
 - Lake Arrowhead
 - Belmont Downs
 - Etowah



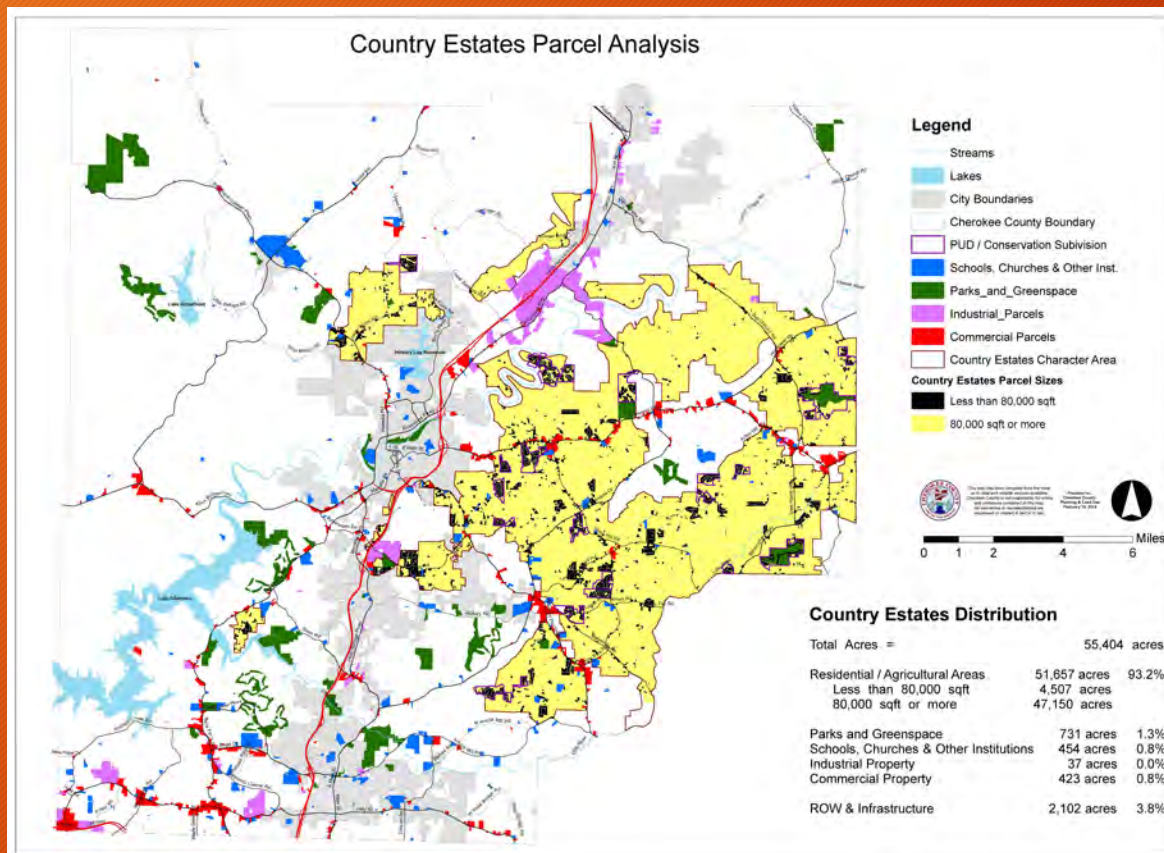
Country Estates – Key Elements

- Sparsely Developed & Containing
 - Active Agricultural Production
 - “Estate Farms”
 - Large-lot Subdivisions
- Includes Institutions & Passive Recreation Areas as Secondary Land Uses
- Density Range = min. 0.5 unit per acre

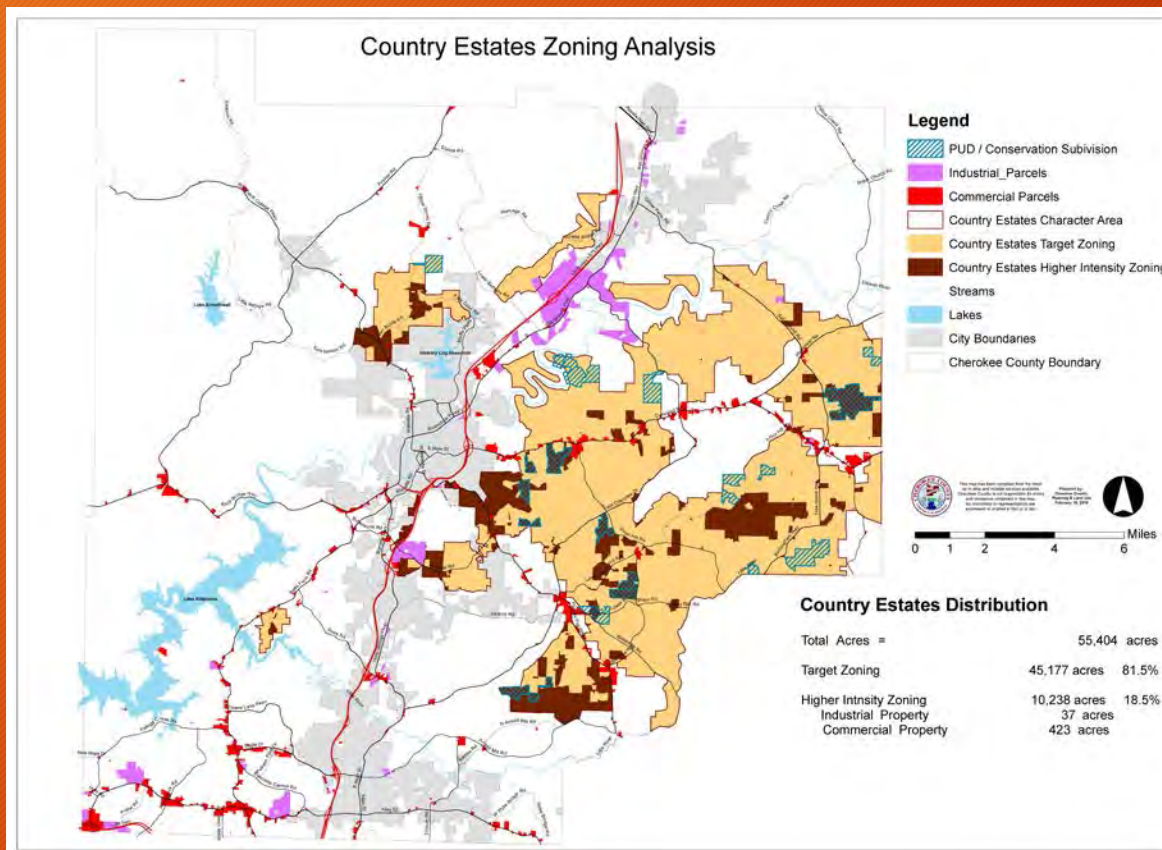


Country Estates – Lot Size

- Small Lot Clusters
 - Conservation Subs
 - PUDs
- Majority Larger Lots



Country Estates - Zoning



- Target Zoning - 81.5%
- Higher Intensity - 18.5%
 - Near Cities
 - Mitchell Farms
 - Union Hill @ East Cherokee
 - Arnold Mill



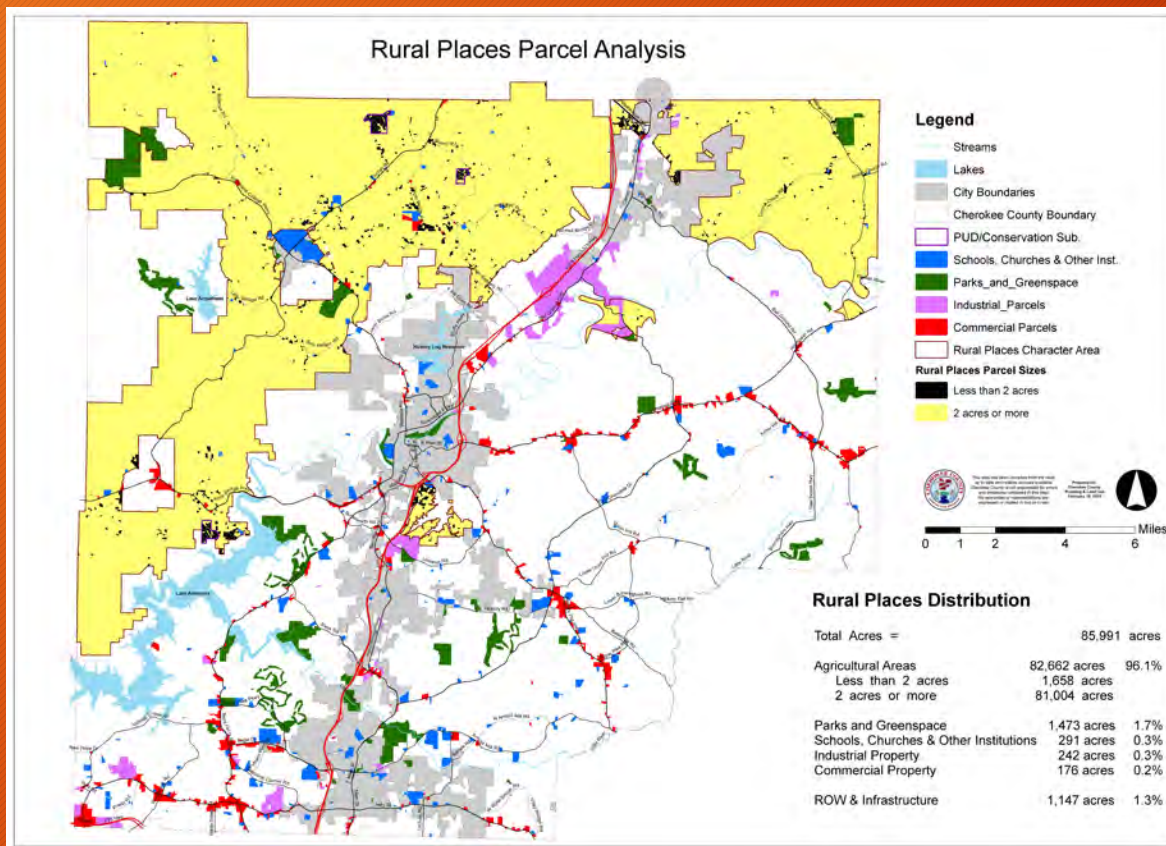
Rural Places – Key Elements

- Balance between Nature and Human Uses
 - Low Density Residential
 - Farms
 - Managed Forests
- Includes Institutions, Outdoor Recreation, Small-Scale Commercial and AG-related Industrial as Secondary Land Uses
- Density Range = min. 0.5 unit per acre

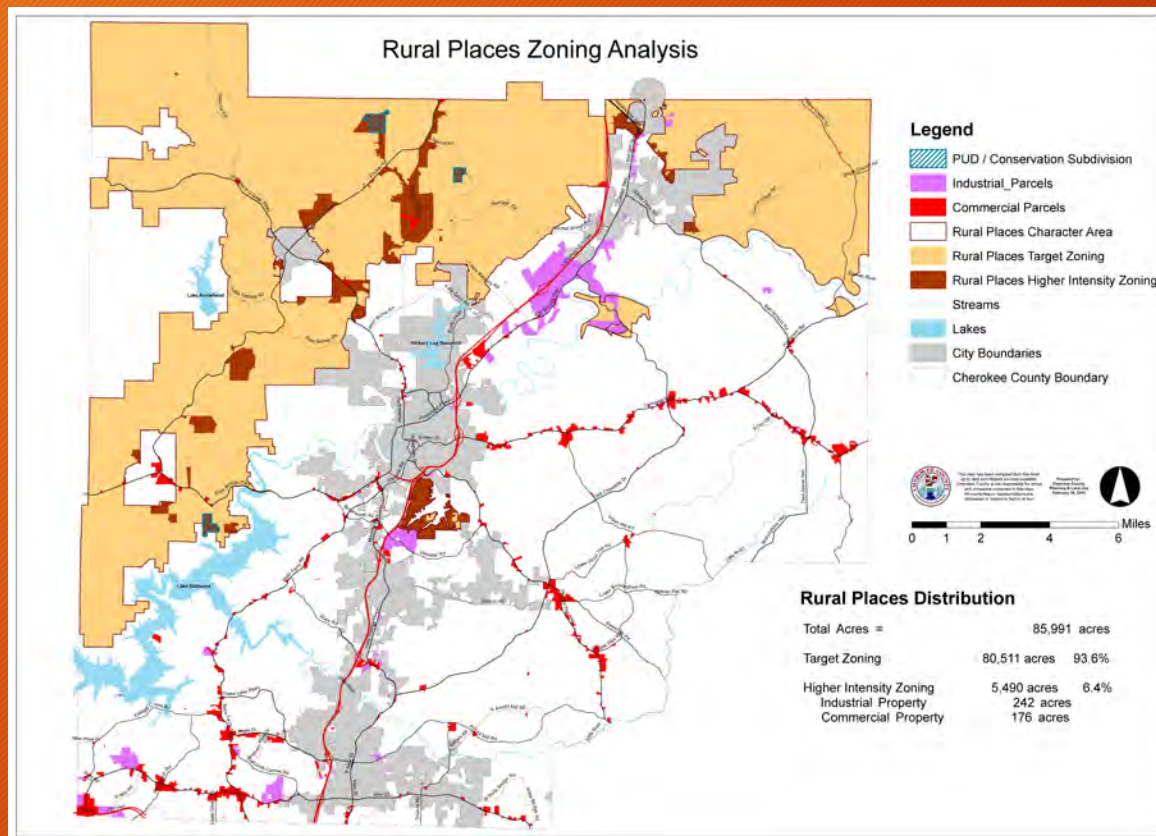


Rural Places – Lot Size

- Small Lot Clusters
 - Conservation Subs
 - Near Cities
- Majority Larger Lots



Rural Places - Zoning



- Target Zoning – 93.6%
- Higher Intensity – 6.4%
 - Near Cities
 - Clayton
 - Brickmill
 - Fincher Road



Upcoming Meetings

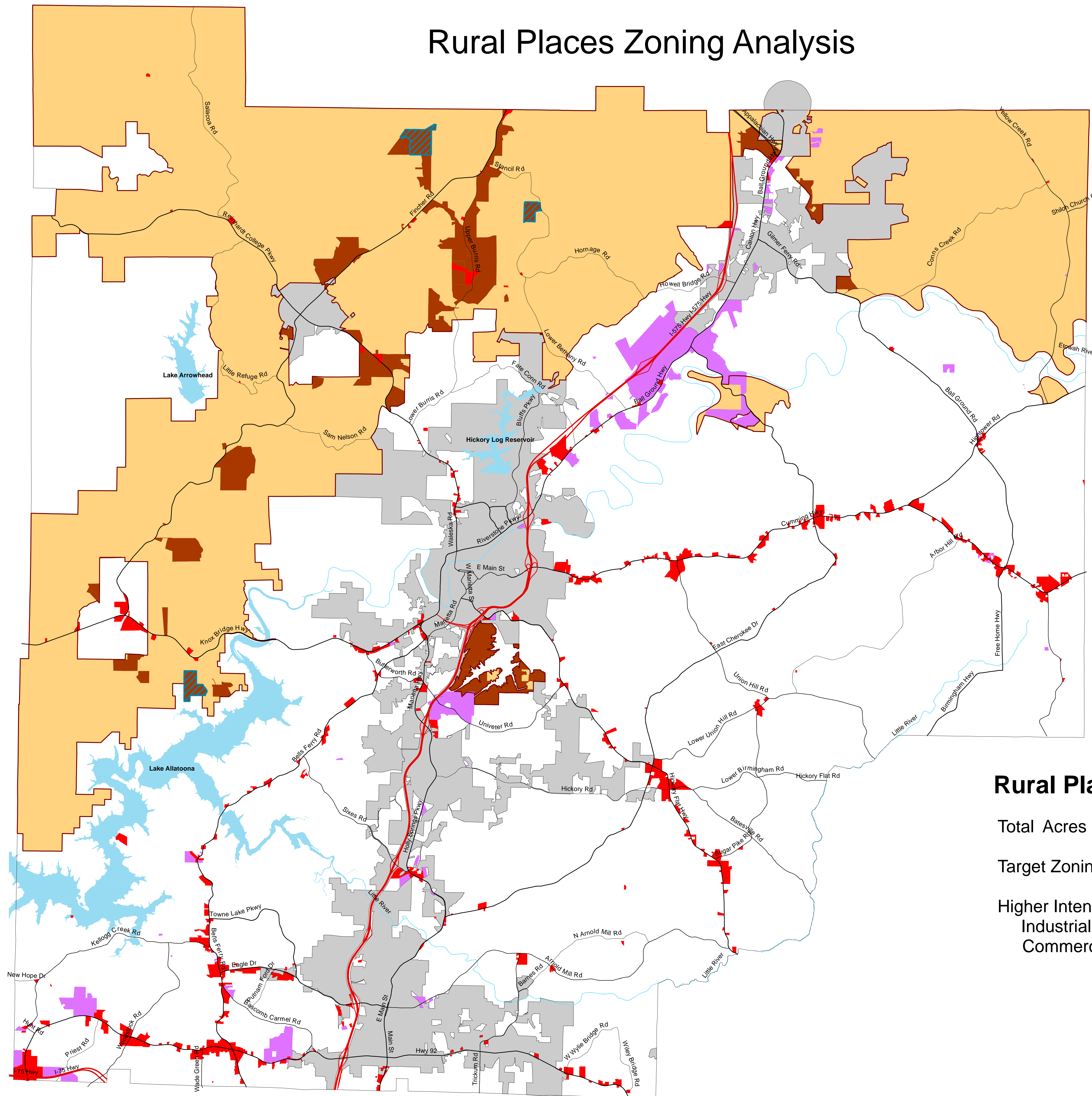
- Advisory Committee
 - March 19, 2018
 - April 16, 2018




Discussion



Rural Places Zoning Analysis



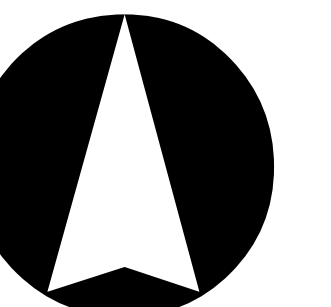
Legend

- 
- Legend:
- PUD / Conservation Subdivision
 - Industrial_Parcel
 - Commercial_Parcel
 - Rural_Places_Character_Area
 - Rural_Places_Target_Zoning
 - Rural_Places_Higher_Intensity_Zoning
 - Streams
 - Lakes
 - City_Boundaries
 - Cherokee_County_Boundary



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February 23, 2018



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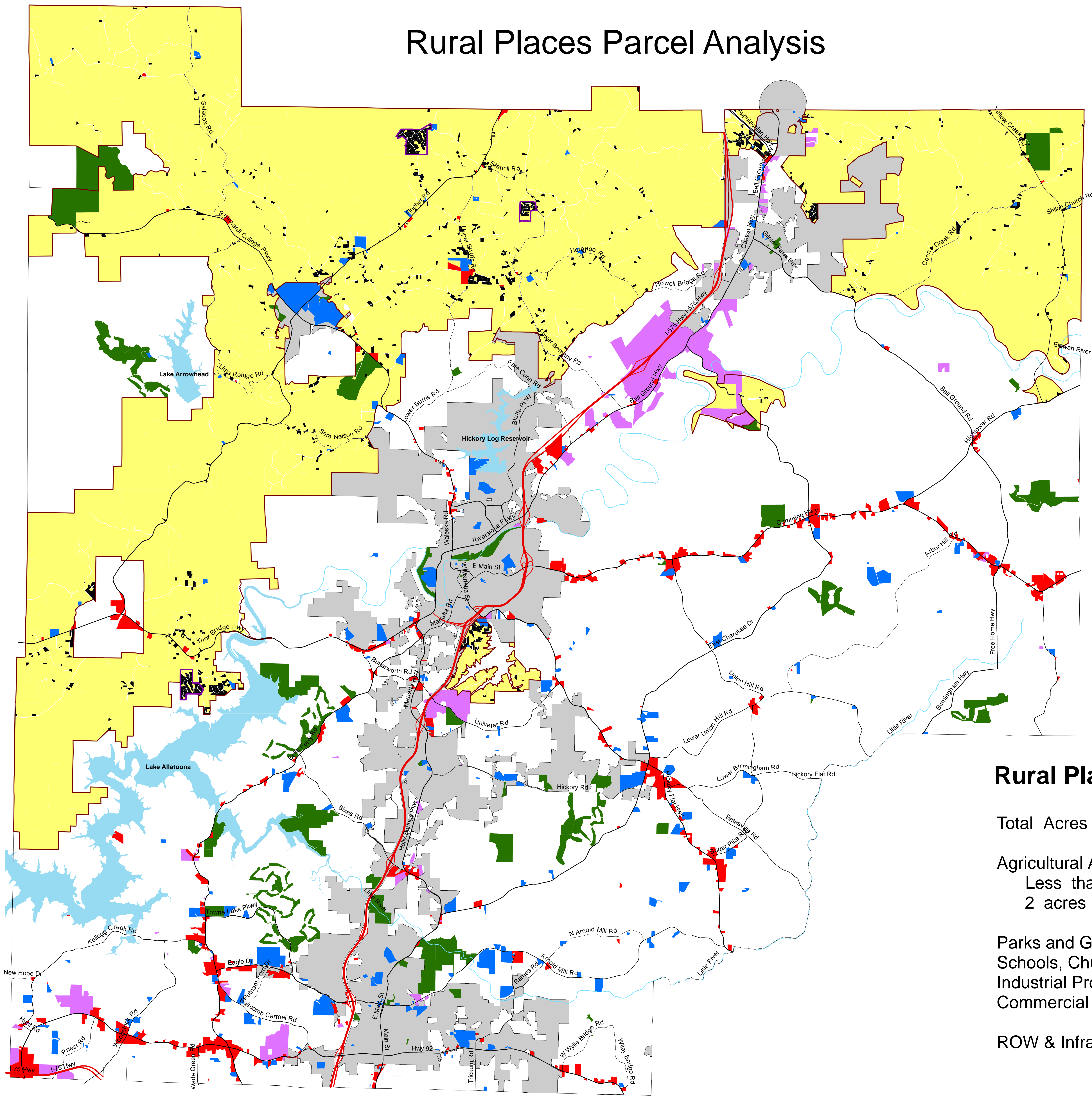
Rural Places Distribution

Total Acres = 85,991 acres

Target Zoning	80,511 acres	93.6%
---------------	--------------	-------

Higher Intensity Zoning	5,490 acres	6.4%
Industrial Property	242 acres	
Commercial Property	176 acres	

Rural Places Parcel Analysis



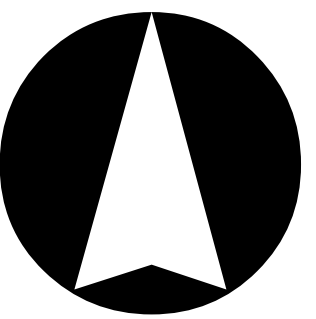
Legend

- Streams
 - Lakes
 - City Boundaries
 - Cherokee County Boundary
 - PUD/Conservation Sub.
 - Schools, Churches & Other Inst.
 - Parks_and_Greenspace
 - Industrial_Parcels
 - Commercial Parcels
 - Rural Places Character Area
- Rural Places Parcel Sizes**
- Less than 2 acres
 - 2 acres or more



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Rural Places Distribution

Total Acres =	85,991 acres	
Agricultural Areas	82,662 acres	96.1%
Less than 2 acres	1,658 acres	
2 acres or more	81,004 acres	
Parks and Greenspace	1,473 acres	1.7%
Schools, Churches & Other Institutions	291 acres	0.3%
Industrial Property	242 acres	0.3%
Commercial Property	176 acres	0.2%
ROW & Infrastructure	1,147 acres	1.3%

Country Estates Zoning Analysis

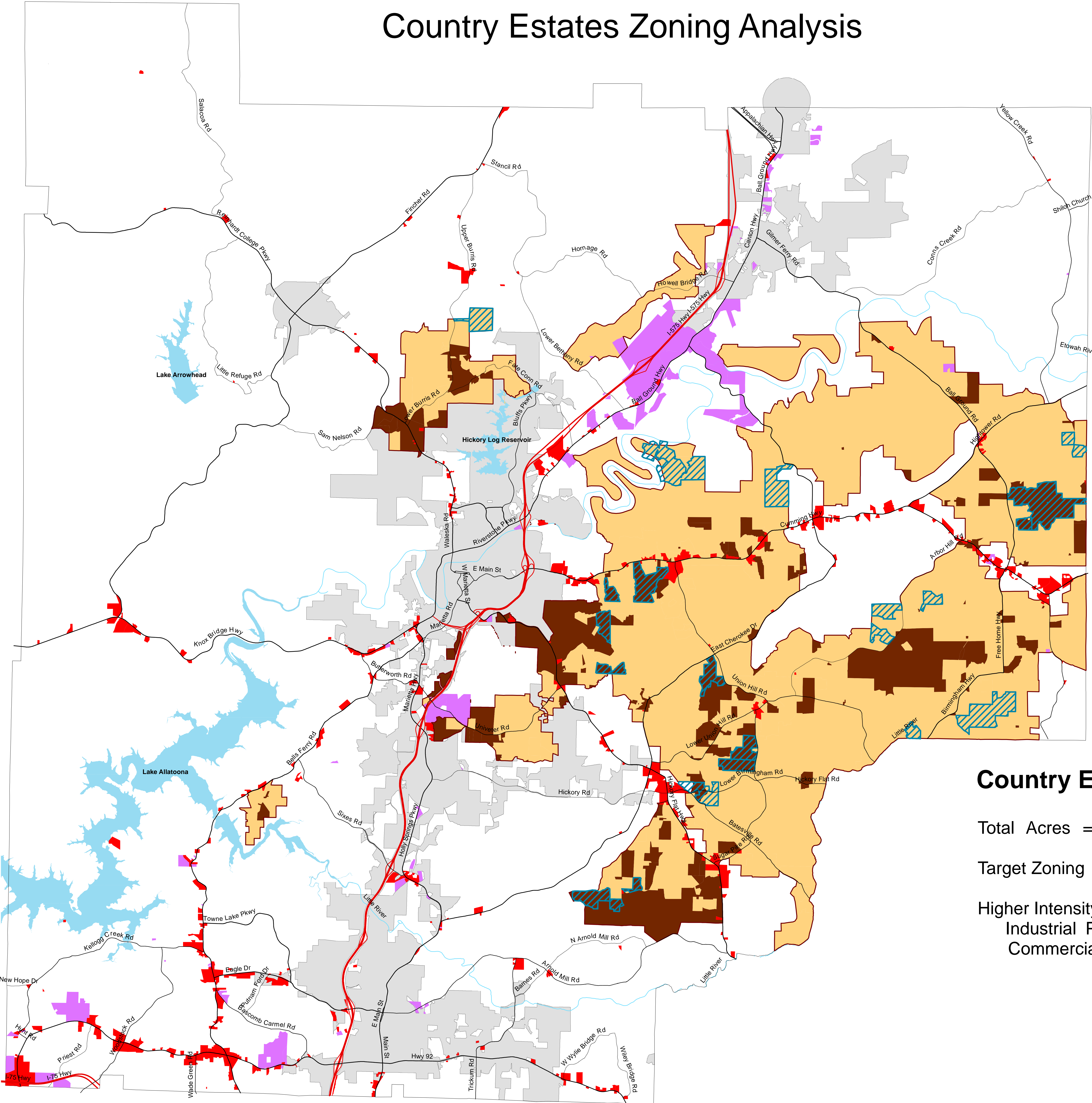
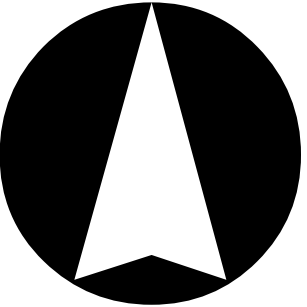
Legend

-  PUD / Conservation Subivision
-  Industrial_Parcels
-  Commercial Parcels
-  Country Estates Character Area
-  Country Estates Target Zoning
-  Country Estates Higher Intensity Zoning
-  Streams
-  Lakes
-  City Boundaries
-  Cherokee County Boundary



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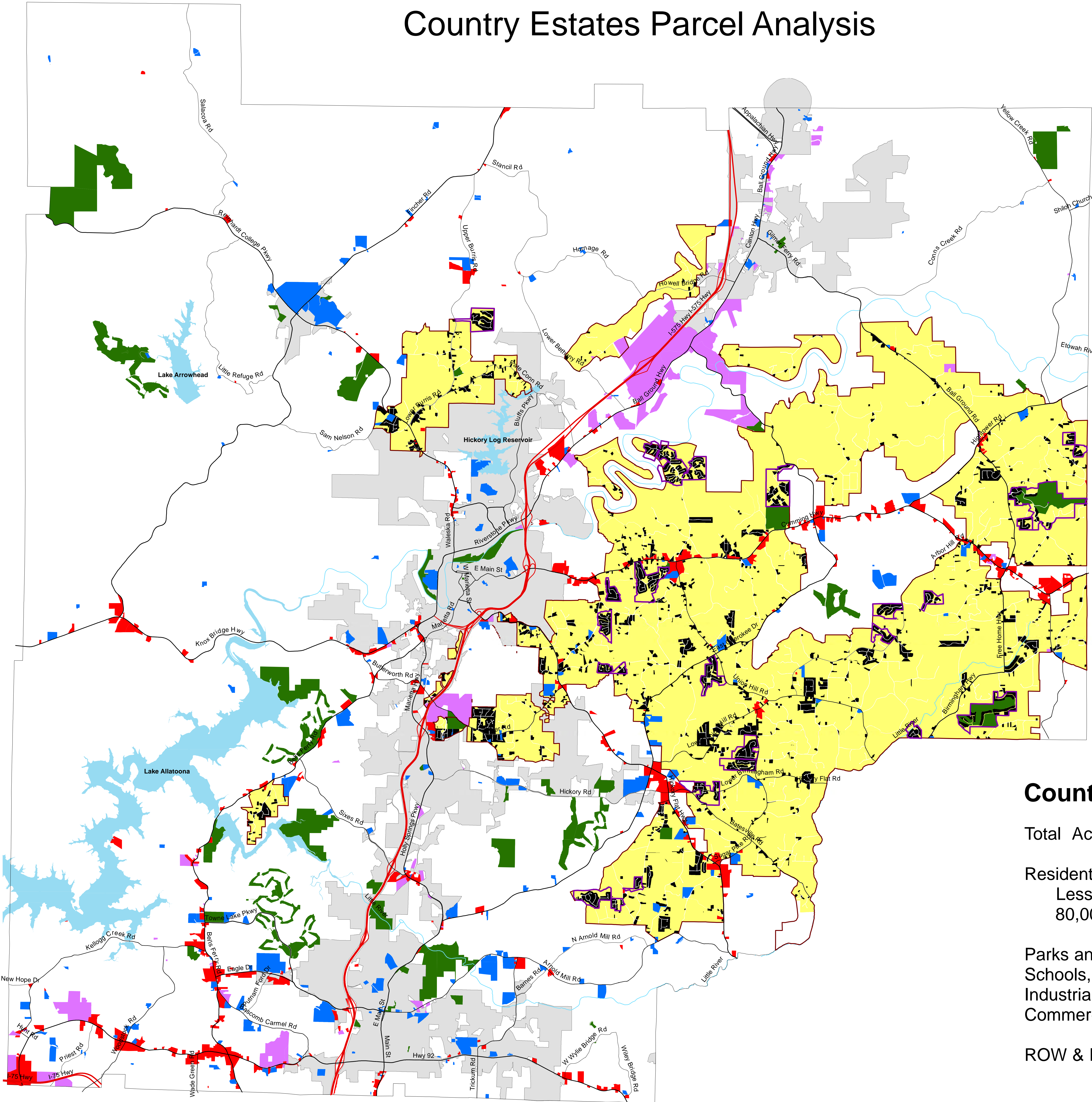
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February 23, 2018



Country Estates Distribution

Total Acres =	55,404 acres	
Target Zoning	45,177 acres	81.5%
Higher Intensity Zoning	10,238 acres	18.5%
Industrial Property	37 acres	
Commercial Property	423 acres	

Country Estates Parcel Analysis



Legend

- Streams
- Lakes
- City Boundaries
- Cherokee County Boundary
- PUD / Conservation Subdivision
- Schools, Churches & Other Inst.
- Parks_and_Greenspace
- Industrial_Parcels
- Commercial Parcels
- Country Estates Character Area

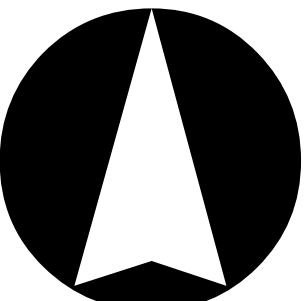
Country Estates Parcel Sizes

- Less than 80,000 sqft
- 80,000 sqft or more



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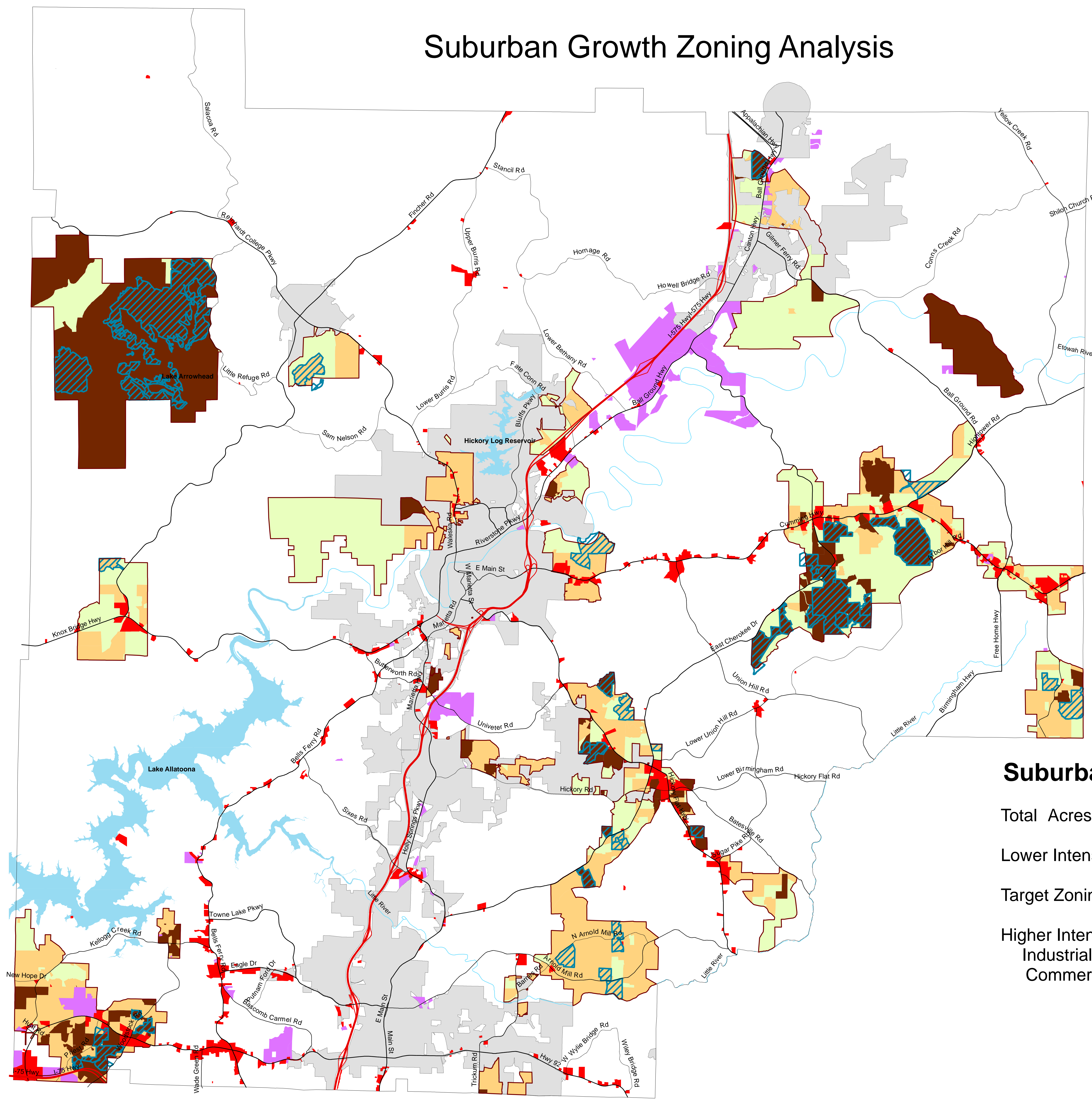
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Planning & Land Use
February 23, 2018



Country Estates Distribution

Total Acres =	55,404	acres
Residential / Agricultural Areas	51,657	acres 93.2%
Less than 80,000 sqft	4,507	acres
80,000 sqft or more	47,150	acres
Parks and Greenspace	731	acres 1.3%
Schools, Churches & Other Institutions	454	acres 0.8%
Industrial Property	37	acres 0.0%
Commercial Property	423	acres 0.8%
ROW & Infrastructure	2,102	acres 3.8%

Suburban Growth Zoning Analysis



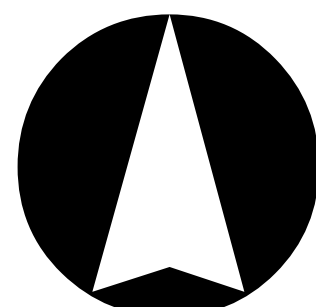
Legend

- PUD / Conservation Subdivision
- Industrial Parcels
- Commercial Parcels
- Suburban Growth Character Area
- Suburban Growth Lower Intensity Zoning
- Suburban Growth Target Zoning
- Suburban Growth Higher Intensity Zoning
- Streams
- Lakes
- City Boundaries
- Cherokee County Boundary



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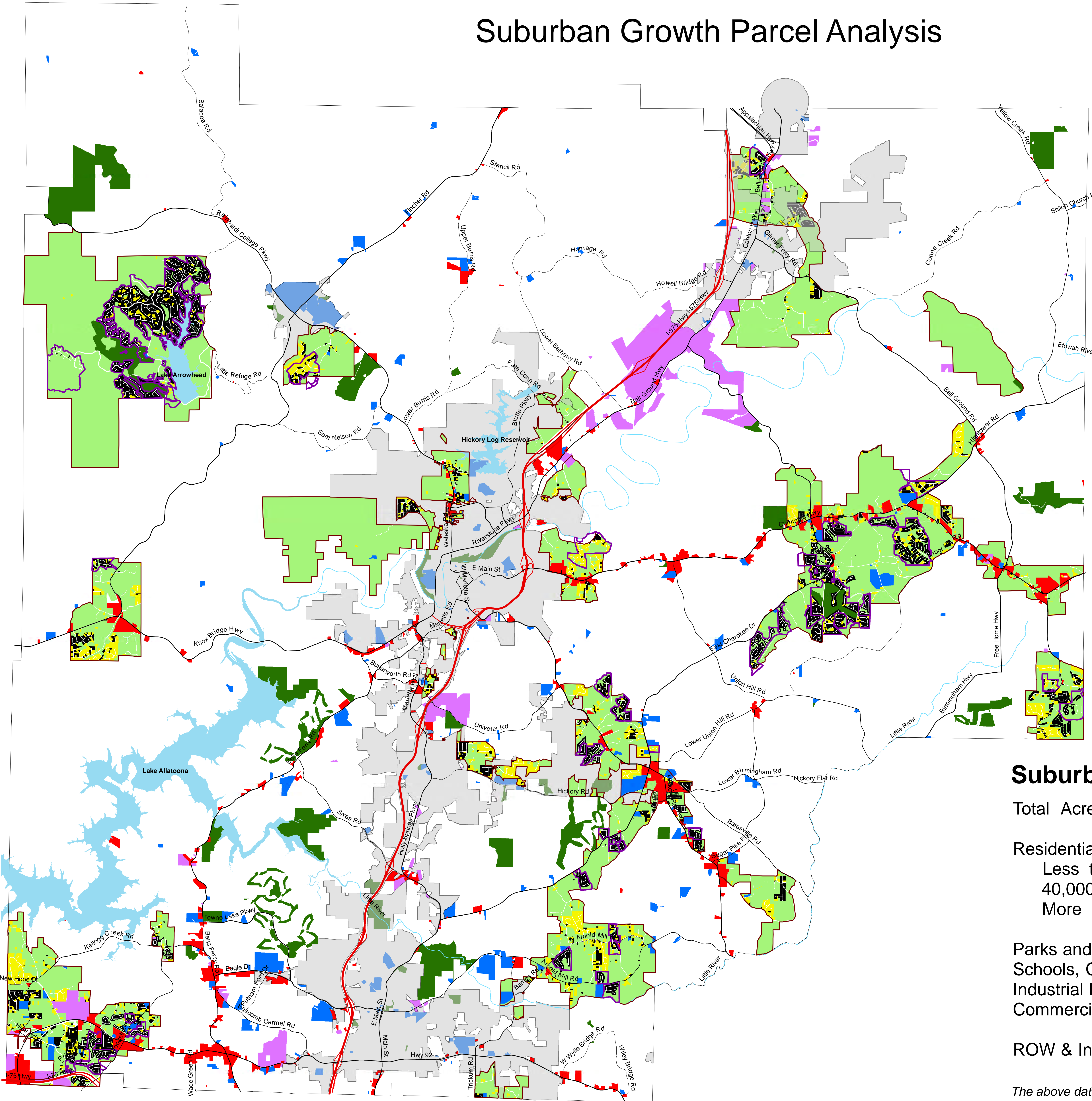
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February 23, 2018



Suburban Growth Distribution

Total Acres =	40,772 acres	
Lower Intensity Zoning	12,582 acres	30.9%
Target Zoning	12,243 acres	30.0%
Higher Intensity Zoning	15,900 acres	39.0%
Industrial Zoning	348 acres	
Commercial Zoning	1,314 acres	

Suburban Growth Parcel Analysis



Legend

- Streams
- Lakes
- City Boundaries
- Cherokee County Boundary
- PUD / Conservation Subdivision
- Schools, Churches & Other Inst.
- Parks and Greenspace
- Industrial Parcels
- Commercial Parcels
- Suburban Growth Character Area

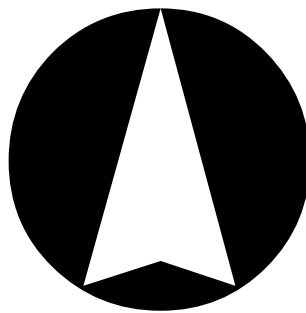
Suburban Growth Parcel Sizes

- Less than 40,000 sqft
- 40,000 to 80,000 sqft
- More than 80,000 sqft



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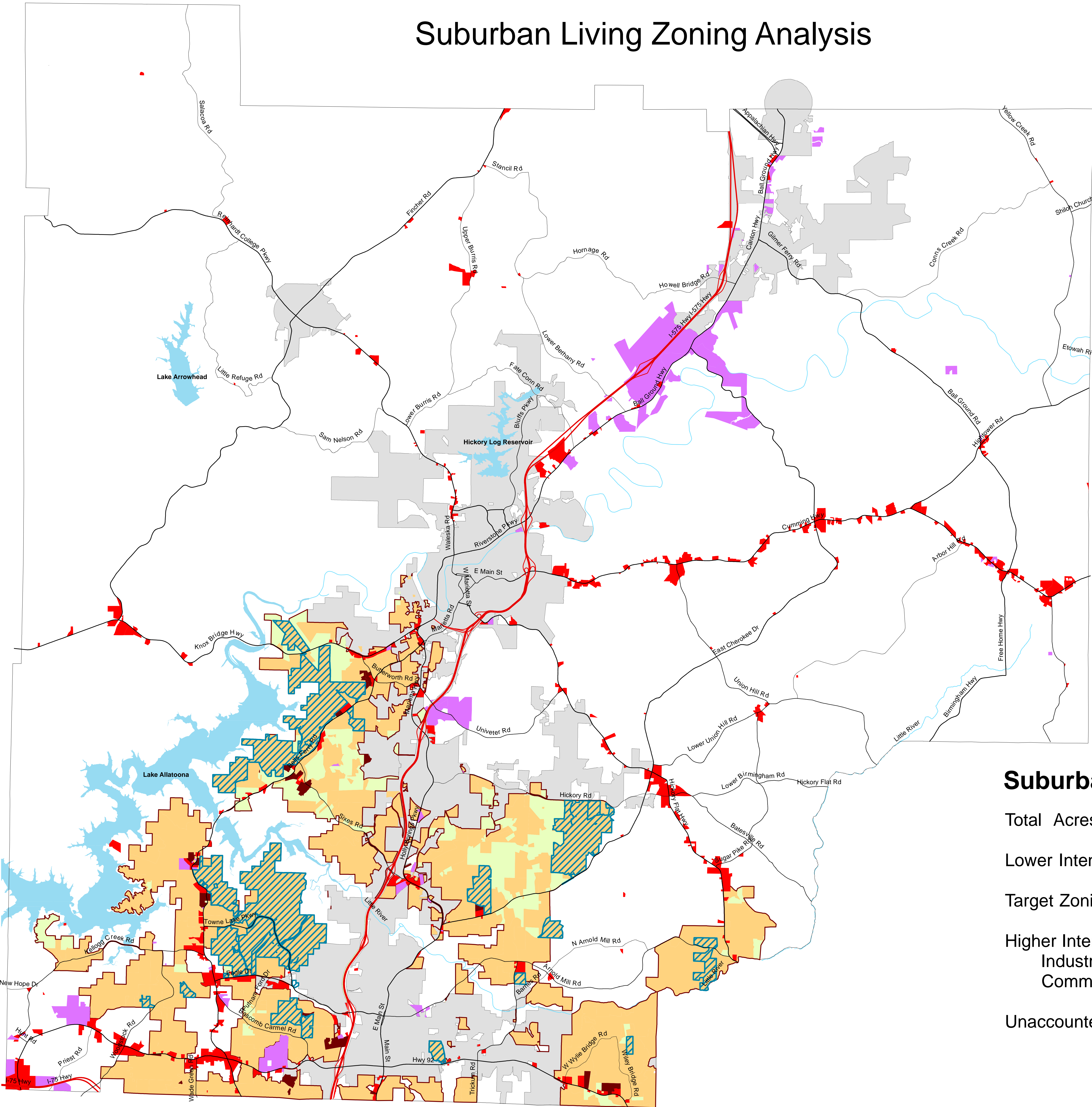
0 1 2 4 6 Miles

Suburban Growth Distribution

Total Acres =	40,772 acres	
Residential Areas	35,914 acres	88.1%
Less than 40,000 sqft	4,684 acres	
40,000 to 80,000 sqft	3,188 acres	
More than 80,000 sqft	28,042 acres	
Parks and Greenspace	597 acres	1.5%
Schools, Churches & Other Institutions	597 acres	1.5%
Industrial Property	348 acres	0.8%
Commercial Property	1,314 acres	3.2%
ROW & Infrastructure	2,002 acres	4.9%

The above data reflects acreage within unincorporated Cherokee County.

Suburban Living Zoning Analysis



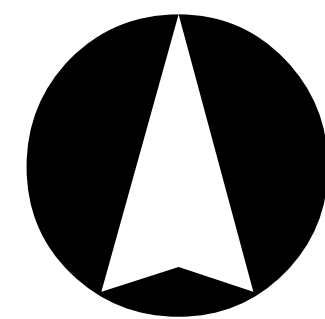
Legend

- PUD / Conservation Subdivision
- Industrial Parcels
- Commercial Parcels
- Suburban Growth Character Area
- Suburban Living Lower Intensity Zoning
- Suburban Living Target Zoning
- Suburban Living Higher Intensity Zoning
- Streams
- Lakes
- City Boundaries
- Cherokee County Boundary



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Prepared by:
Cherokee County
Planning & Land Use
February 23, 2018



Suburban Living Distribution

Total Acres =	31,466 acres	
Lower Intensity Zoning	3,762 acres	12.0%
Target Zoning	26,541 acres	84.4%
Higher Intensity Zoning	1,038 acres	3.3%
Industrial Zoning	68 acres	
Commercial Zoning	446 acres	
Unaccounted Areas	125 acres	0.3%

Suburban Living Parcel Analysis

Legend

- Streams
- Lakes
- City Boundaries
- Cherokee County Boundary
- PUD / Conservation Subdivision
- Schools, Churches & Other Inst.
- Parks and Greenspace
- Industrial Parcels
- Commercial Parcels
- Suburban Growth Character Area

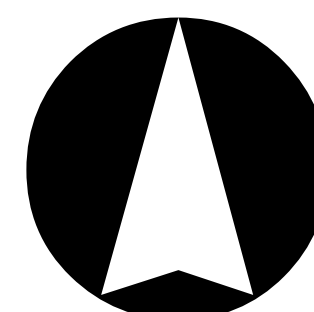
Suburban Living Parcel Sizes

- Less than 7,500 sq.ft.
- 7,500 sq.ft. to 1 acre
- More than 1 acre



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February 23, 2018



Suburban Living Distribution

Total Acres =	31,466	acres
Residential Areas	26,777	acres 85.1%
Less than 7,500 sqft	233	acres
7,500 sqft to 1 acre	13,310	acres
More than 1 acre	13,244	acres
Parks and Greenspace	970	acres 3.1%
Schools, Churches & Other Institutions	758	acres 2.4%
Industrial Property	68	acres 0.2%
Commercial Property	448	acres 1.4%

ROW & Infrastructure 3,127 acres 7.9%

The above data reflects acreage within unincorporated Cherokee County.

Comprehensive Plan Update Advisory Committee Meeting #4

April 16, 2018 - 7:30 PM

- 1 Stakeholder Meetings**
- 2 Target Areas**
 - Airport Area
 - Hickory Flat
 - Hwy 20 East
 - SW Cherokee
- 3 Discussion**
- 4 Upcoming Meetings**
 - Monday, May 21, 2018



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use

Comprehensive Plan Update

Advisory Committee Meeting - April 16, 2018

PLAN CHEROKEE
DIRECTIONS · DIALOGUE DECISIONS · DESTINY

Agenda

- Stakeholder Meetings
- 4 Target Areas
 - Airport Area
 - Hickory Flat
 - Hwy 20
 - SW Cherokee
- Discussion
- Upcoming Meeting



Stakeholder Meetings

Held between March 9 to 23, 2018



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use



City of Holly Springs – March 9

- Hickory Flat
 - Need to coordinate vision & maps
 - New HS character area compatible with Suburban Growth
- Sixes Road Interchange
 - County map should be updated to show compatible development
 - Possible joint planning effort with County & 2 cities
- Other City Initiatives
 - Update zoning ordinance and development regulations
 - Downtown Pedestrian Master Plan



City of Canton – March 13

- Annexations

- Checking City Boundaries with Annexation Records
- Focus on unincorporated islands in future

- Residential Growth

- 20 years of residential development already zoned
- Trying to attract “Class A” Apartments

- Other City Initiatives

- LCI studies & updates
- Riverwalk Study



Senior Services – March 14

- New Centers

- Studying new centers in Ball Ground, Waleska and Bells Ferry
- Looking into separate senior recreation needs

- Affordable Housing

- Increasing rents and closing of mobile home parks
- Need to increase supply for both independent and assisted living

- Transportation

- Limits on CATS affect Seniors
 - Can't leave Cherokee County
 - Wait list and 2-week lead time for trips



Chamber of Commerce – March 15

- Legislative Survey of Business Owners
 - Key Issues: public safety, quality education, health insurance options, and transportation.
 - County should continue to expand services to be convenient to business and residents
 - Need to keep rural feel / natural landscape
 - Concerns about housing density
- Roadway Beautification
 - Set Cherokee County apart
 - Should work with GDOT to keep more trees or treat I-575 walls
- Housing
 - Missing Entry-Level Options
 - Needed to attract new businesses



School District – March 16

- Trends
 - Boom in students as economy recovers
 - Higher price housing attracting families with older children
- Challenges
 - Growth in SW Cherokee surprising
 - No new schools in current SPLOST due to debt service
- Opportunities
 - Improve pedestrian connections to schools
 - Hickory Road planning underway
 - Encourage entry-level homes
 - School needs easier to predict (5 year delay)



City of Woodstock – March 20

- Hwy 92 Corridor
 - Feels segmented, “three different Highway 92s”
 - Need for a plan – possibly including Roswell, Cobb & County
- Focus on Downtown
 - Variety of spaces need to foster small business development
 - Transportation, vehicles and pedestrian, is important
- Affordable Housing
 - Concerns about displacement
 - Need for public education
 - Common understanding of issues
- Land Use Coordination
 - Should continue to ensure “united front”



CCWSA – March 21

- Planning for the future
 - Plenty of capacity – both water and sewer
 - Lines only extended for customers – not speculative
 - Zoning still dictates development
- New Riverbend Wastewater Plant
 - East Cherokee Drive at Etowah River
 - Will be complete in the next few months
 - Ball Ground will be switching to be served by this plant
- Opportunities
 - Easements could be used for trails – Examples in Woodstock as example



COED – March 22

- SW Cherokee
 - Will continue to support development in this area
 - Need to add mixed-use development, diversify housing options and quality of life improvements
- Emerging Areas
 - Highway 20 East & West
 - Highway 92 East
- Opportunities to Partner
 - SW Cherokee FDM changes
 - More detailed study for Quality of Life
 - Parks & Greenspace
 - Retail & Restaurants
 - Lodging



Parks and Recreation – March 23

- Needs
 - Funding for park development, i.e. fields, playgrounds, etc.
 - Land in certain areas of the County, SW Cherokee & Airport Area
- Changing Preferences
 - Strong support for trails from all county residents
 - Millennials seeking disk golf and volleyball
 - Seniors looking for pickleball
- Opportunities
 - Building neighborhoods that are ready to connect to a trail system



4 Target Areas



Airport Area

- Implementation

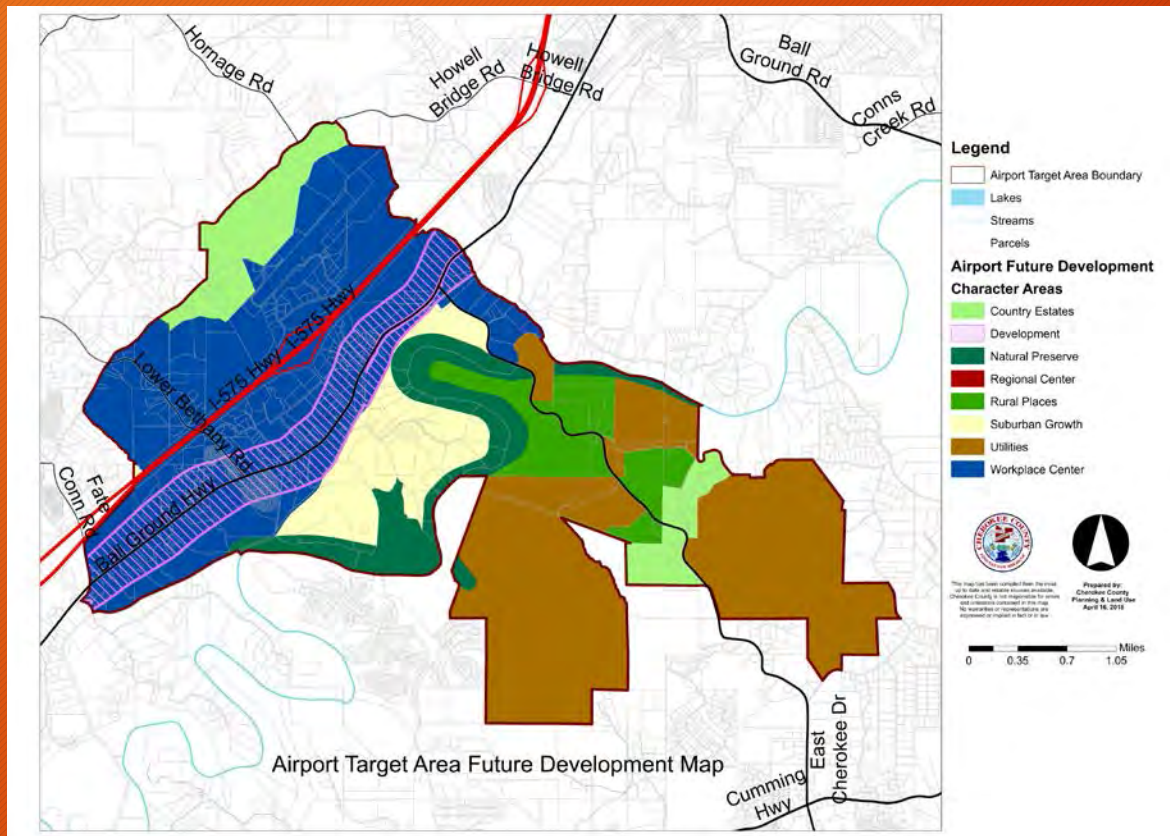
- Encourage more local retail and services
- Preserve rural and natural character
- Encourage mixed-use village center
- Invest in parks and greenspaces
- Job training
- Housing options

- 5-year Work Plan

- Create RAAD overlay
- Airport Area Market Study
- Gateways & wayfinding
- Cohesive Marketing Strategy
- Bike / Ped plan
- Develop a park



Airport Area Map Changes



- Suburban Growth along Etowah River
- Alison Lane Property added to Natural Preserve
- Development Corridor added to encourage retail & services
- Utilities Character Area



Hickory Flat

- Implementation

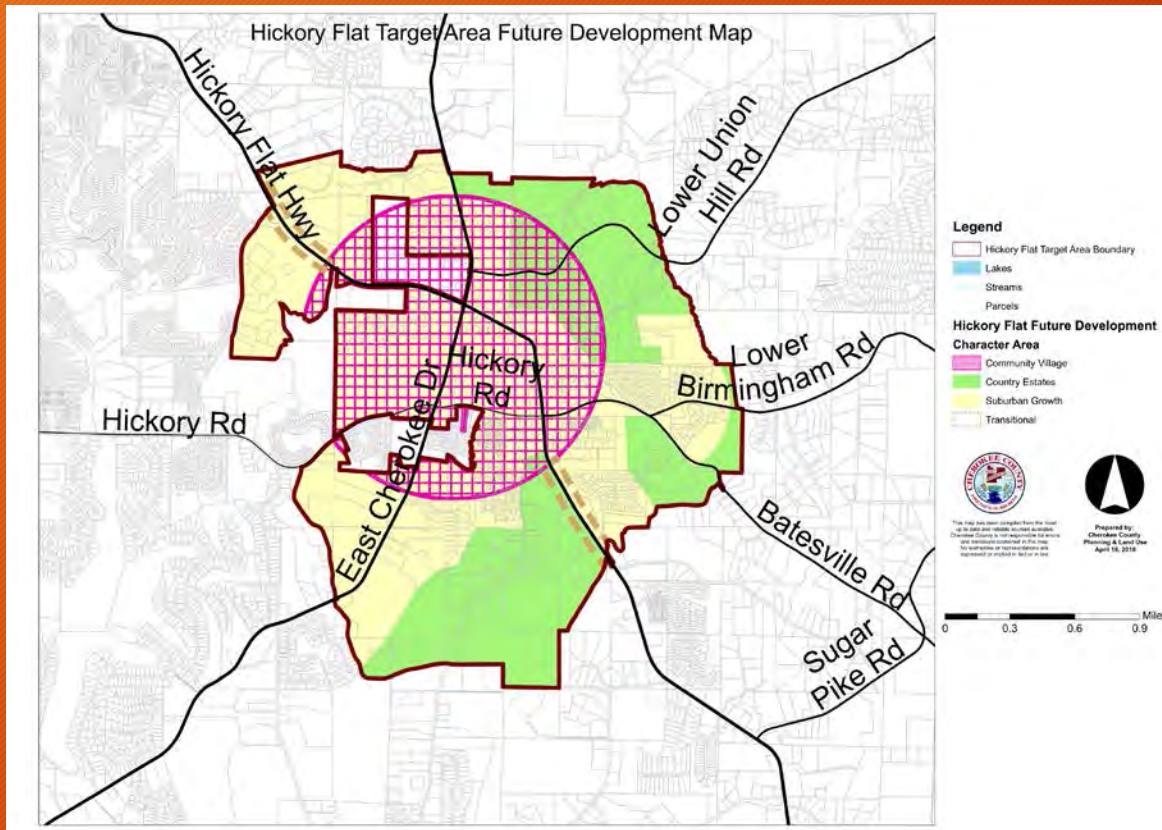
- Collaborate with HS
- Preserved prime Industrial land
- Create a stronger sense of place
- Develop more parks & recreation options
- Implement transportation projects
- Add Sidewalks and trails

- 5-year Work Plan

- Land use agreement with HS
- Transportation improvements
- Joint LCI with HS?
- Transfer of development rights program
- Purchase land for nature park
- Bike / Ped plan



Hickory Flat Map



- Holly Springs Cut-out
- Expanded Suburban Growth along Lower Birmingham Road



Hwy 20 East

- Implementation

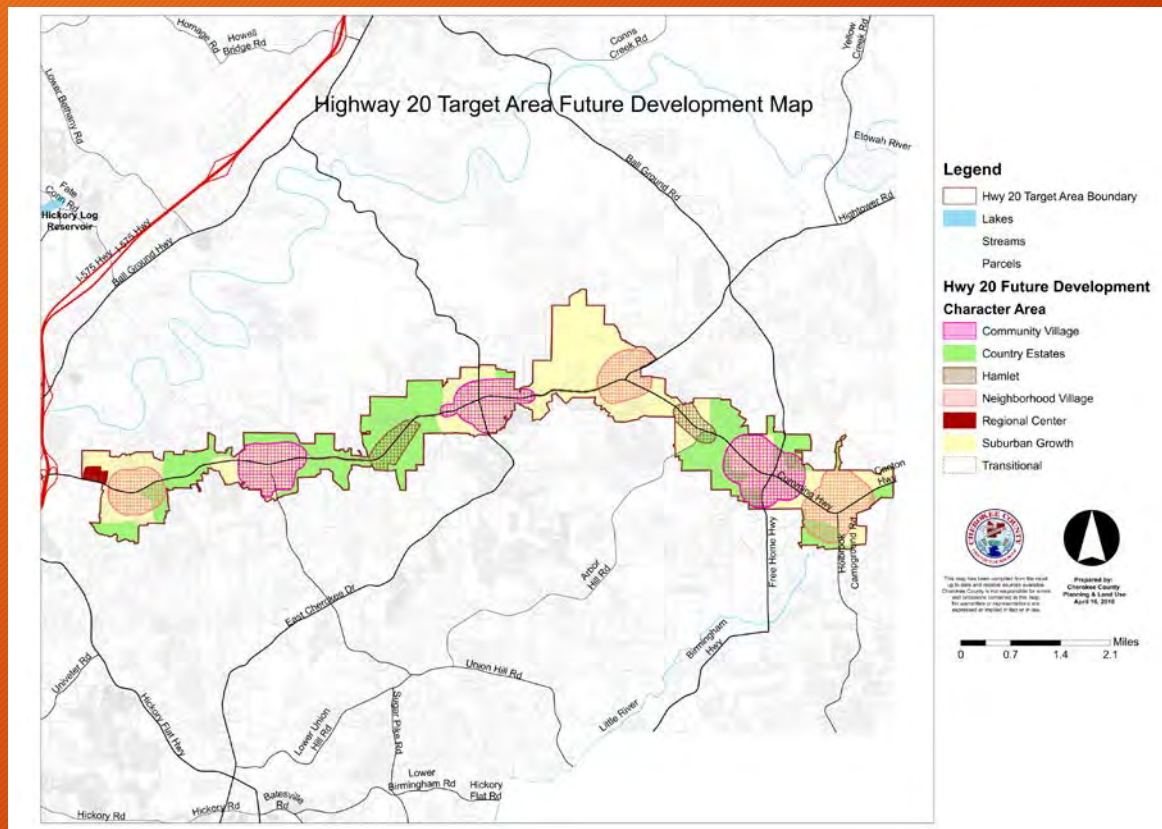
- Encourage nodal development
- Target appropriate businesses
- System of parks & greenspaces
- Enhance sense of place
- Maintain open dialogue about road widening project

- 5-year Work Plan

- Information sessions on SR 20 project
- Access Management Guidelines
- Document existing architecture
- Gateways & wayfinding
- Greenway master plan
- Acquire land for pedestrian connections
- Market Study



Hwy 20 Map



- Reshaped Nodes
 - Hamlet (Johnson Brady to Beavers)
 - Macedonia
 - SR 369 / Hightower
- Lathemtown changed to Hamlet
- Regional Center for Canton Exchange



SW Cherokee

- Implementation

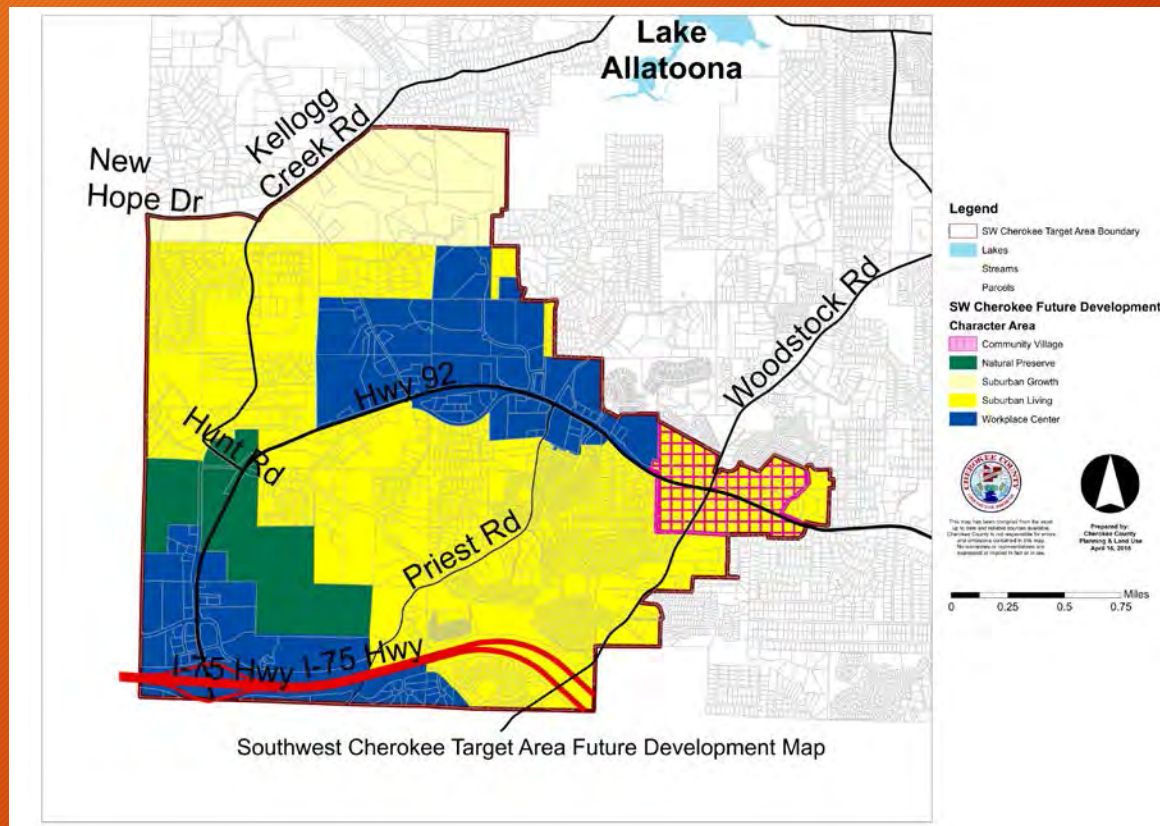
- Encourage retail, hospitality & mixed-use
- Preserve prime land for Industrial
- Support housing options
- Job training
- Bike & Ped facilities
- Develop parks & amenities

- 5-year Work Plan

- Assessment of 92 Overlay
- Market Study
- Bike / Ped Plan
- Purchase land for active park
- Trails & natural corridors



SW Cherokee Map



- Increased Suburban Living
- Workplace Center added around new Park
- Removed Development Corridor



Discussion



Upcoming Meetings

- Advisory Committee
 - May 21, 2018



Comprehensive Plan Update Advisory Committee Meeting #5

May 21, 2018 - 7:30 PM

- 1 City Target Areas**
 - Ball Ground
 - Waleska

- 2 Map Update**
 - SW Cherokee Options
 - Preliminary Draft Map

- 3 Character Area Descriptions**

- 4 Discussion**

- 5 Final Meeting**
 - Monday, June 18th?



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use

Comprehensive Plan Update

Advisory Committee Meeting - May 21, 2018

PLAN CHEROKEE
DIRECTIONS · DIALOGUE DECISIONS · DESTINY

Agenda

- City Target Areas
 - Ball Ground
 - Waleska
- Map Work
 - SW Cherokee Options
 - Preliminary Rough Draft of FDM
- Character Area Descriptions
- Discussion
- Upcoming Meeting



City Target Areas

Ball Ground & Waleska



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use



Ball Ground

- Implementation

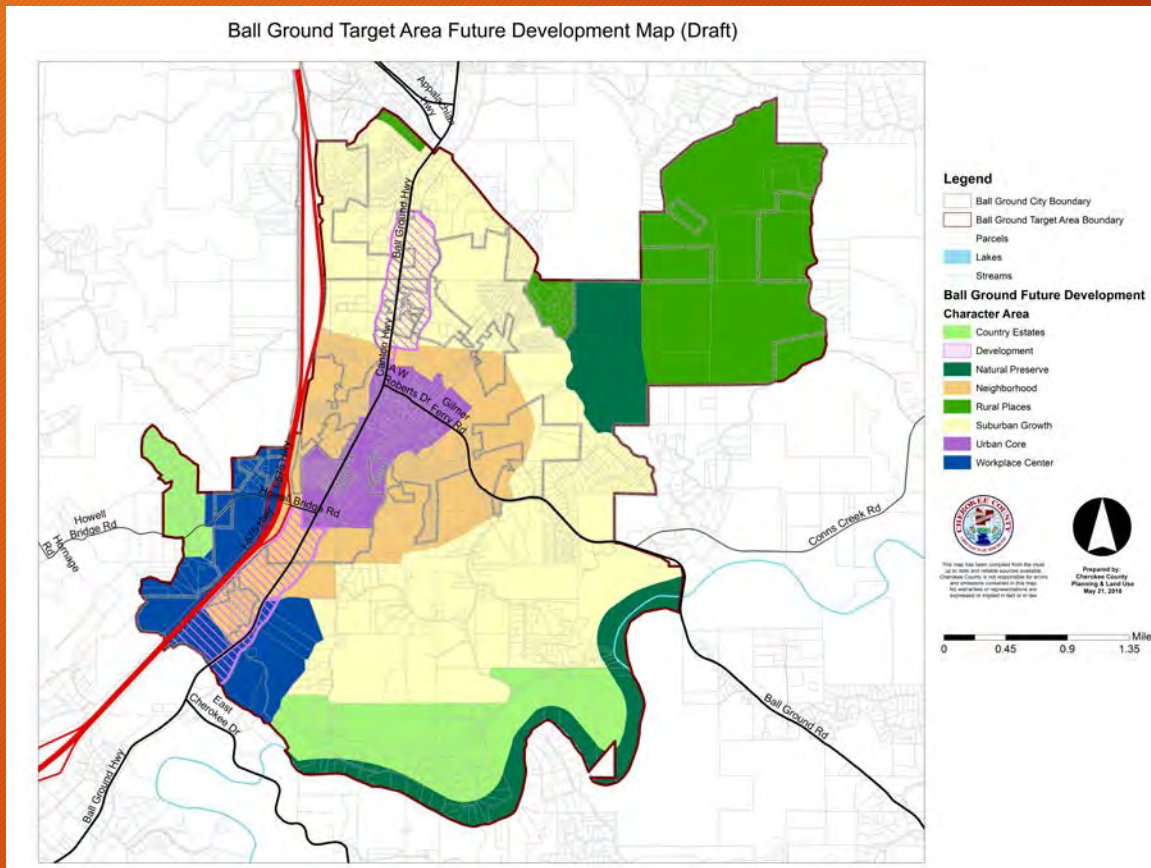
- Grocery store
- Housing options
- Pedestrian facilities
- Support adaptive reuse of existing buildings
- Invest in parks and greenspaces
- Build industrial base
- Tourism strategy
- Control land use along 372 bypass.

- 5-year Work Plan

- Market study for retail
- Infill & redevelopment properties
- Truck route changes
- Acquire property for nature park
- Update downtown residential standards
- Parks & rec masterplan
- Tourism strategy
- Evaluate alcohol ordinance



Ball Ground Map Changes



- Changes at Howell Bridge Rd at BG Hwy
- Removed Workplace Center at north end of BG Hwy
- May have additional changes from the LCI Plan



Waleska

- Implementation

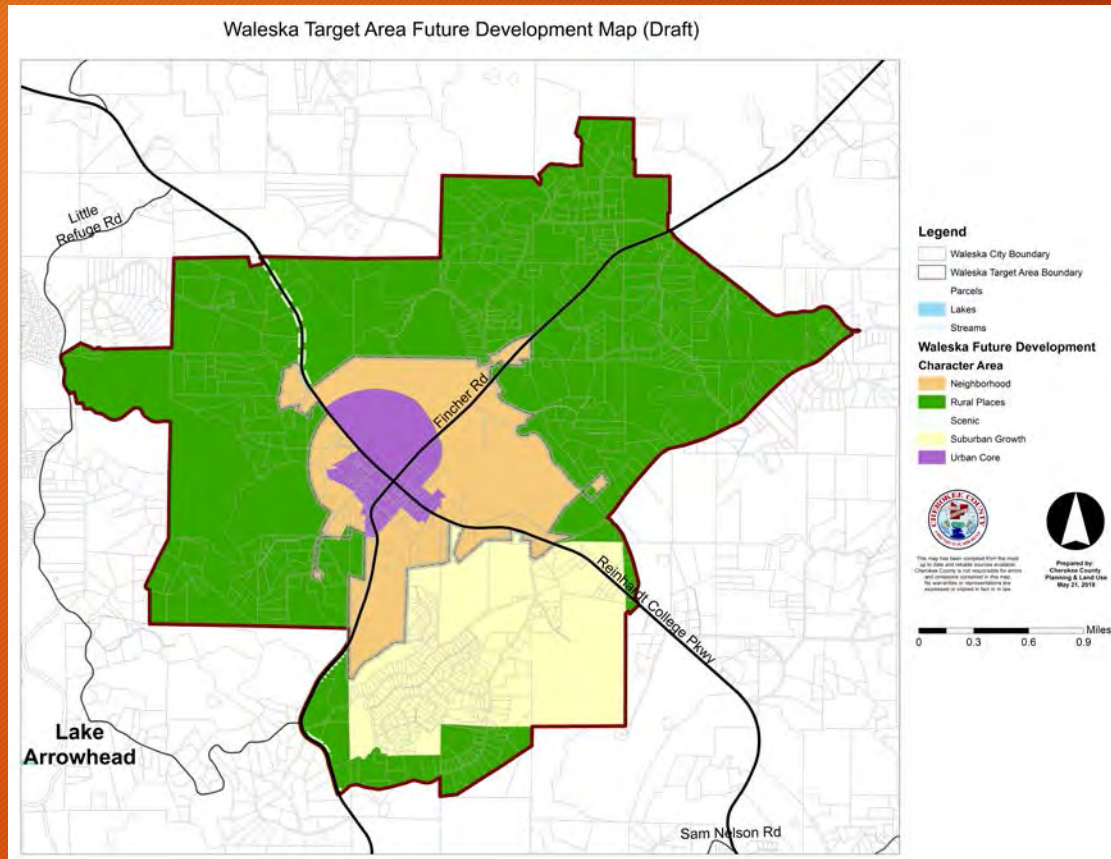
- Collaborate with Reinhardt University
- Encourage a Village Center
- Compatible improvements to SR 140 and SR 108
- Connectivity for roads, sidewalks and trails
- Housing options
- Connections to Lake Arrowhead
- Preserve surrounding rural & natural areas

- 5-year Work Plan

- Community Liaison to Reinhardt
- City Hall Events
- Expand recycling
- City Hall walking trail
- Update to Zoning Code for village-like development



Waleska Map



- Added Reinhardt Campus to Urban Core
- Removed Transitional Corridor on Reinhardt College Pkwy



Hwy 20 East

- Implementation

- Encourage nodal development
- Target appropriate businesses
- System of parks & greenspaces
- Enhance sense of place
- Maintain open dialogue about road widening project

- 5-year Work Plan

- Information sessions on SR 20 project
- Access Management Guidelines
- Document existing architecture
- Gateways & wayfinding
- Greenway master plan
- Acquire land for pedestrian connections
- Market Study



Map Update



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use



SW Cherokee Options

Option A - Adds more WC area along Hwy 92 that is already in the Opportunity Zone

Option B - Expands WC north and west of the Opportunity Zone

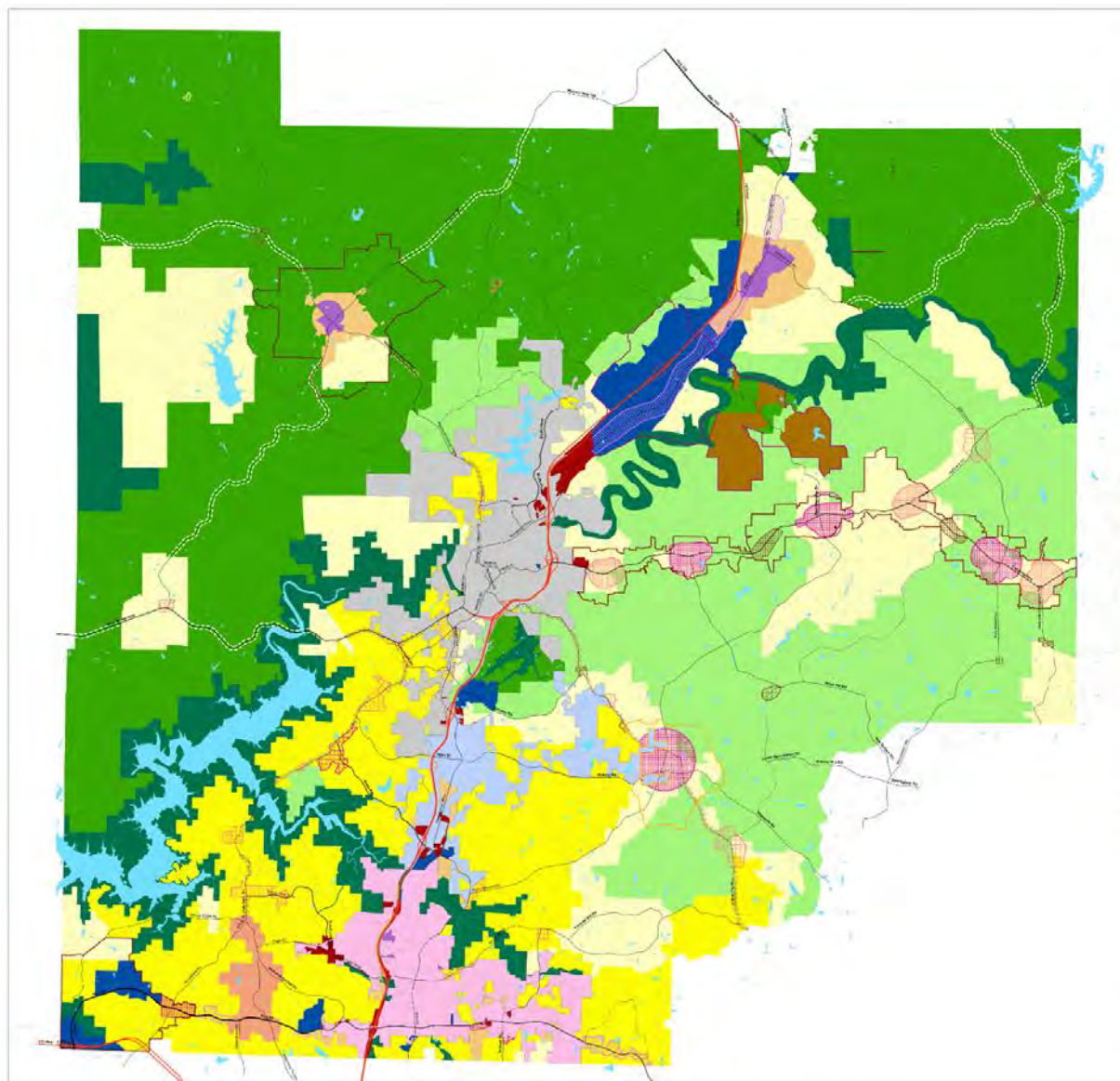
Option C - Extends WC north to Kellogg Creek Road



Preliminary Draft Map

- Target Areas inserted into remaining map
- Improved City boundaries
- Better coordinated character areas around the edges of the big 3 cities - Canton, Holly Springs & Woodstock





Legend

- BG Target Area
- Waleska Target Area
- Airport Target Area
- Hwy 20 East Target Area
- Hickory Flat Target Area
- Lakes
- Streams

Cities

- Canton
- Holly Springs
- Woodstock

Future Development Map

Character Areas

- Hamlet
- County Crossroads
- Neighborhood Village
- Community Village
- Scenic Corridor
- Transitional Corridor
- Development Corridor
- Natural Preserve
- Rural Places
- Country Estates
- Suburban Growth
- Suburban Living
- Neighborhood Living
- Bells Ferry LCI
- Urban Core
- Regional Center
- Workplace Center
- Utilities / Services



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Prepared by:
Cherokee County
Planning & Land Use
May 17, 2018



Draft Future Development Map

Character Area Descriptions



Summary of Changes

- Renamed / revised Waste Management to be Utility/Services
- New condensed format with images
- Converted suggested zoning districts to residential density and floor area ratio (FAR)



Discussion



Upcoming Meetings

- Advisory Committee
 - May 21, 2018



Comprehensive Plan Update Advisory Committee Meeting #6

June 18, 2018 - 7:30 PM

- 1 Comp Plan Update Highlights**
 - Community Introduction
 - Our Vision
 - Plan for the Future
 - Implementation

- 2 Map Update**
 - Hickory Flat Options

- 3 Update Timeline**

- 4 Discussion**



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use

Comprehensive Plan Update

Advisory Committee Meeting - June 18, 2018

PLAN CHEROKEE
DIRECTIONS · DIALOGUE DECISIONS · DESTINY

Agenda

- Comp Plan Update Highlights
 - Community Introduction
 - Our Vision
 - Plan for the Future
 - Vision Into Action
- Map Update
 - Hickory Flat Options
- Update Timeline
- Discussion



Comp Plan Update Highlights



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use



Community Introduction

Brief History	Updated and condensed
Demographic Snapshot	New summary of statistics - includes data from Market Study
Putting Together the Plan	Brief description of Public Engagement
Incorporating Related Plans	Summary of Plans - under development



Our Vision

Overall Vision	Updated and condensed
Guiding Principles	New Summary of Statistics - includes data from Market Study
Core Issues	Updated and condensed Combined - Sustainable Growth and Connectivity / Mobility
Target Areas	Summaries of Target Area Reports - under development



Plan for the Future

The Power of Character Areas	Updated and condensed version of Land Development Patterns
Character Area Summary Table	Updated with Residential Density and Floor Area Ratio
Future Development Map	Updated - nearly complete
Character Area Descriptions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Refined and condensed- Links to Core Issues- Images- Updated table



Vision Into Action

Implementation Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Combined development process and managing the plan- Eliminated amendment process discussion
List of Accomplishments	Finalizing
Short Term Work Plan	Updated - nearly complete



Map Update



Cherokee County Planning and Land Use



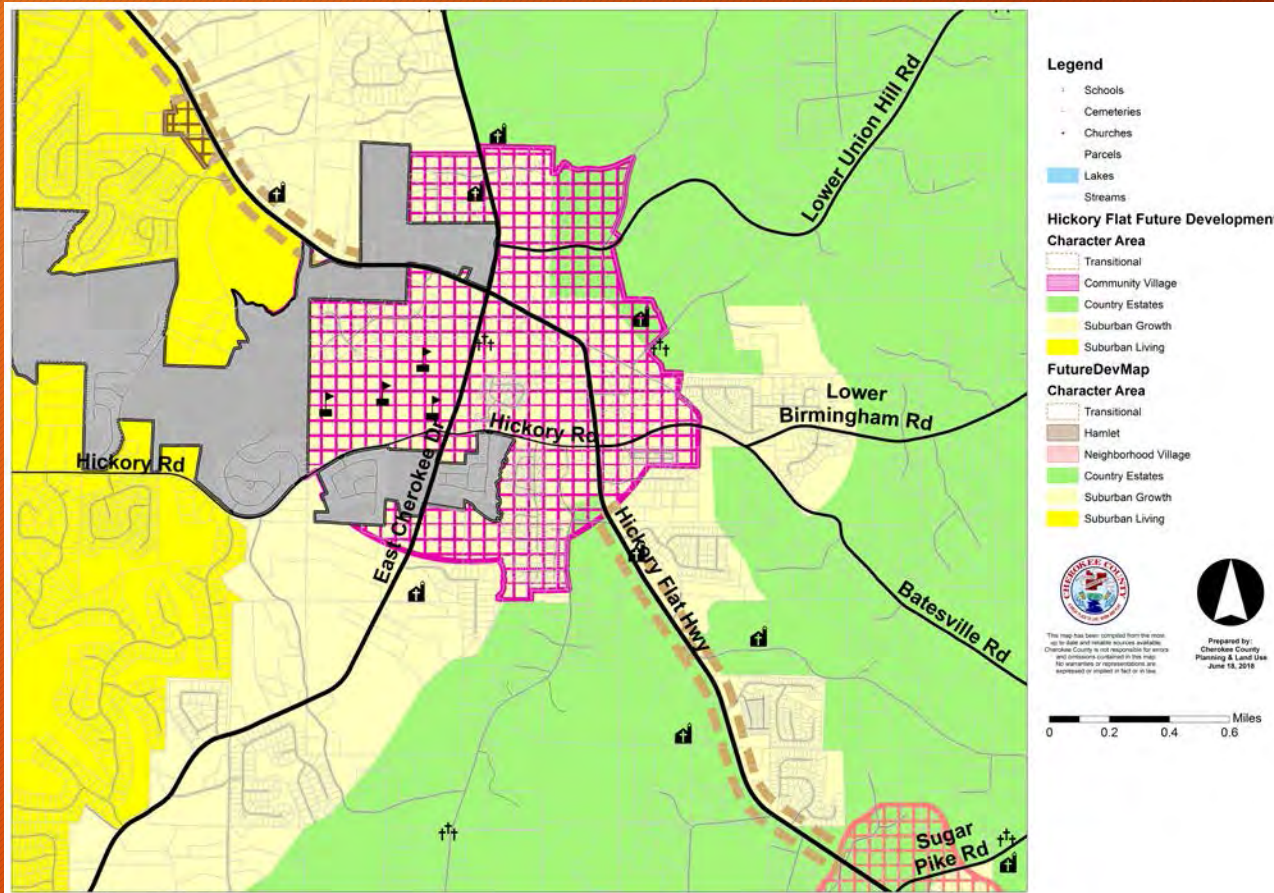
Hickory Flat Options

Option A – Reshaped “Circle” of Community Village + Suburban Living

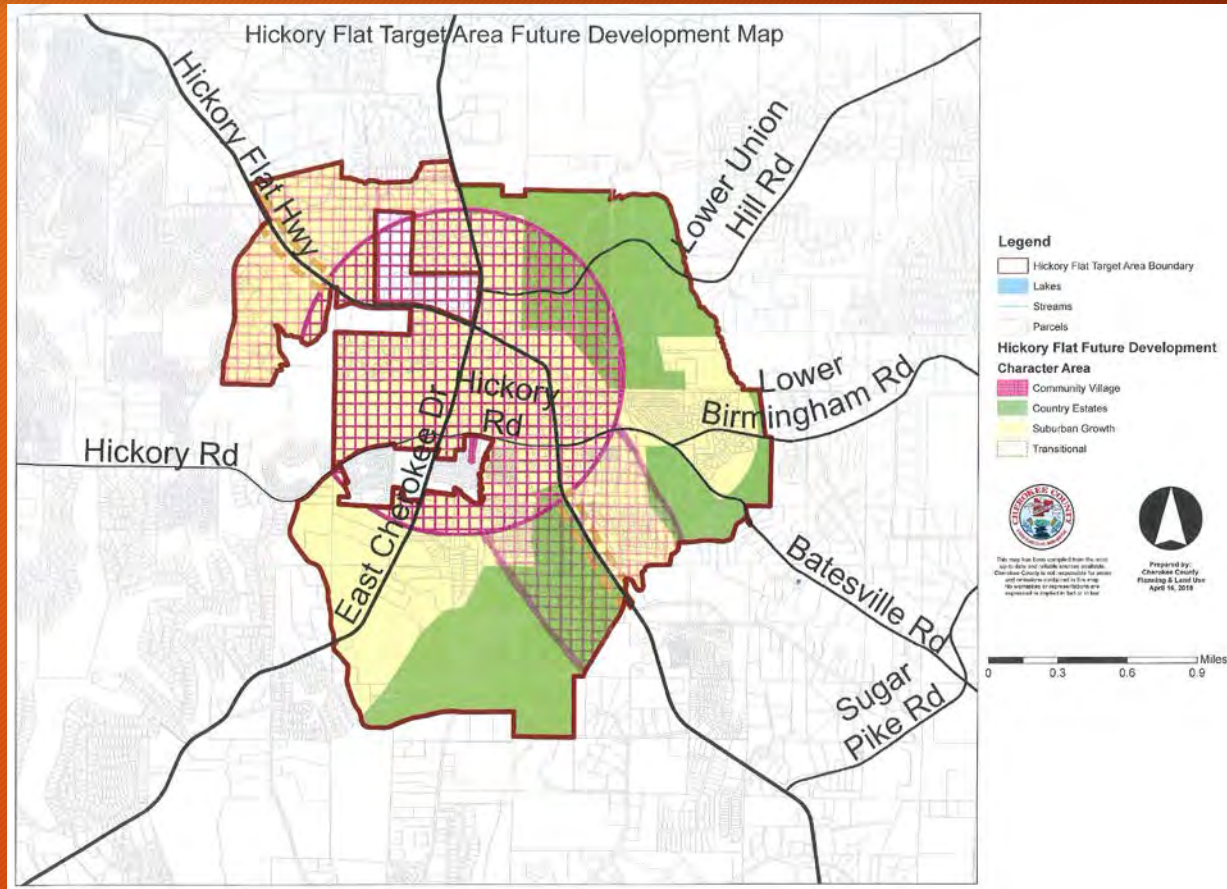
Option B – Expanded Community Village areas along Hickory Flat Hwy replacing Transitional Corridor



Hickory Flat - Option A



Hickory Flat - Option B



Update Timeline



Key Dates

Individual Meetings with Commissioners	Week of July 9 - 13
Draft Plan Forums	Week of July 16 - 20
BOC Work Session	August 7, 2018
BOC Public Hearing for Transmission	August 21, 2018
DCA & ARC Review	August - September - October
BOC Adoption	October 16, 2018



Discussion

