

# ROSWELL, GEORGIA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2025



DRAFT FOR REVIEW  
June 20, 2005

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(May 9, 2005 Draft)

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# ROSWELL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2025

## VISION AND COMMUNITY AGENDA



**June 20, 2005**

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## ROSWELL'S VISION

*"We are a family oriented, safe and attractive community that respects the natural environment, protects its historic character and celebrates its culture. We are Roswell ... The best place to live in Georgia."*

## ROSWELL'S UNIQUENESS

- Antebellum history sets Roswell apart from all other communities.
- Premier parks and recreational facilities that set Roswell above other cities.
- An unparalleled commitment to environmental protection.
- Areas of the community have identity (e.g., Canton Street, Parkway Village, Garrison Hill).
- Outstanding suburban neighborhoods.
- High-quality design of development is a trademark of the City.
- Ability to address policy issues before they become community problems.
- Provision of cultural opportunities (unusual for suburban government).
- Excellent services in relation to taxes.

**Antebellum history sets Roswell apart from all other communities.**



**Smith Plantation**



**Barrington Hall**



**Historic Streetscape**



**Historic Commerce, Canton Street**

**Premier parks and cultural resources set Roswell above other cities.**

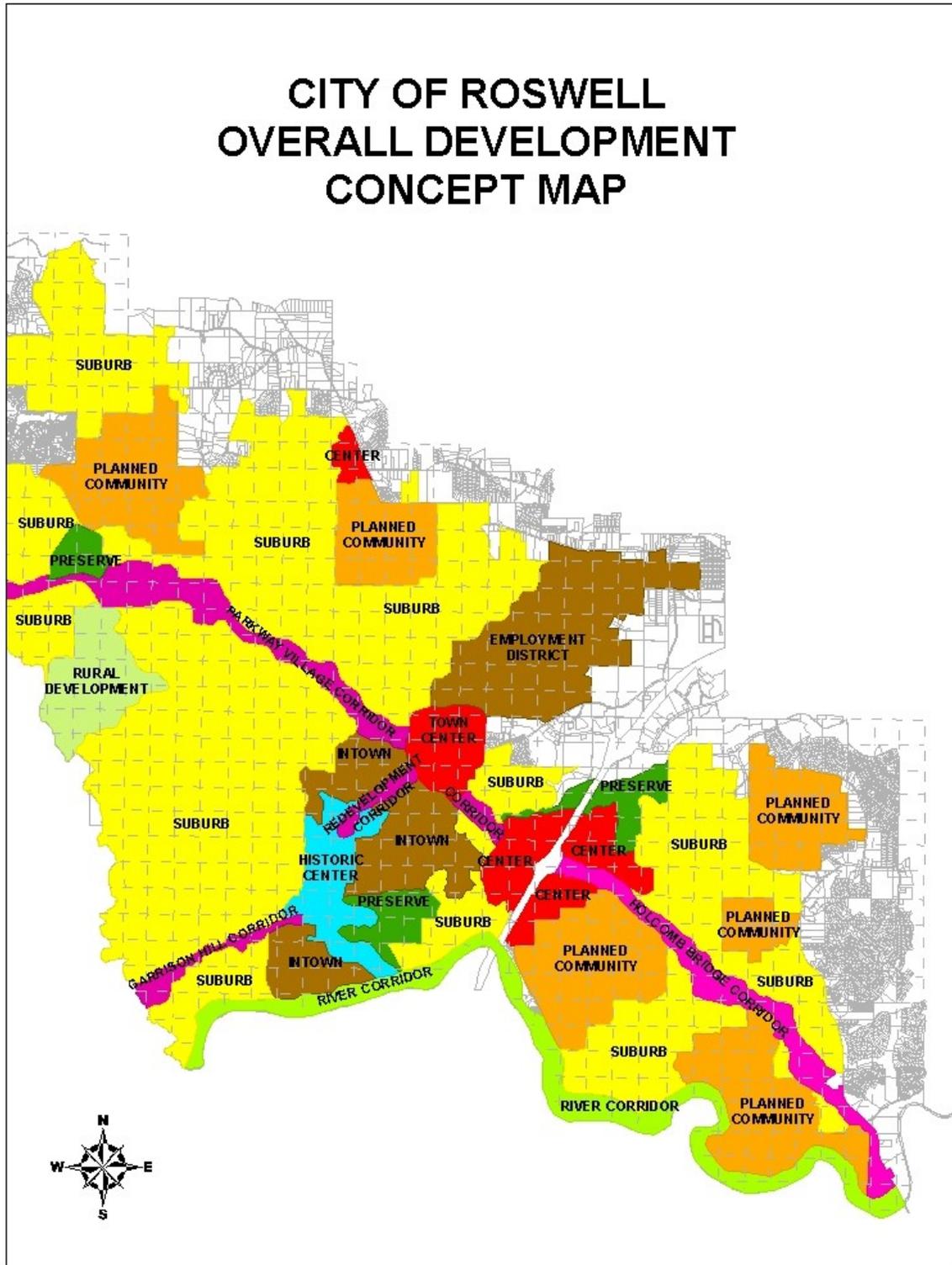


**Mill Village Park**



**Roswell Cultural Arts Center**

## OVERALL DEVELOPMENT CONCEPT



## ROSWELL'S CHARACTER AREAS

### Centers

Centers are local and regional destinations at the neighborhood, village, town, or urban scale. Centers are made up of multiple uses (retail spaces, housing, services, and civic buildings), but they are dominated primarily by retail.

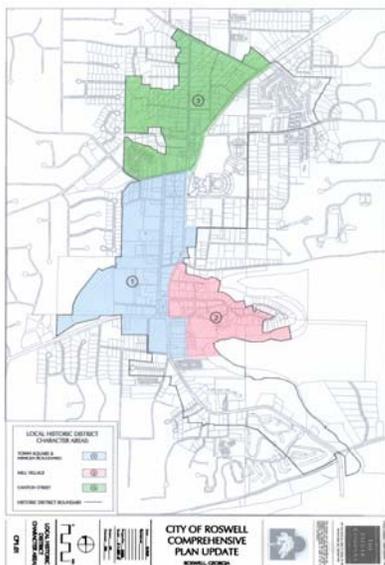
- Historic Roswell Activity Center
- Regional Activity Center (GA 400 @ Holcomb Bridge Rd.)
- Town Center (SR 9 @ Holcomb Bridge Rd.)
- Neighborhood Activity Centers

### **Historic Roswell Activity Center**

Located along Alpharetta Street (SR 9) between the Chattahoochee River and Woodstock Street, the City's local historic district is a mixed-use activity center with a rich heritage. Zoning provides for mixed land uses and issuance of certificates of appropriateness and approval of design plan applications for new development by the Historic Preservation Commission.



### **Canton Street Area**



The Comprehensive Plan calls for more specific design guidelines for three distinct areas of the Historic District.

### **Character Areas in the Historic District**

## 400 Holcomb Bridge East

Roswell's community activity center is located primarily on the east side of Georgia 400 at Holcomb Bridge Road. The Kimberly Clark campus is a central defining feature of the community activity center. The Holcomb Woods Business Park is also a part of the community activity center. Additional development potential exists in this area. Retail centers such as the store shown below present reuse opportunities.



**Kimberly Clark Campus**



**Before**



**After**

**Redevelopment – Mansell Road/ Alpharetta Highway**

## Roswell Town Center

Roswell Town Center is centered on the intersection of Alpharetta Highway (SR 9), Holcomb Bridge Road (SR 140), and Crossville Road (SR 92). It is included in the Midtown Roswell Redevelopment Plan and is envisioned for redevelopment as a more intensive, mixed-use, pedestrian friendly activity center. The area is regulated by the Midtown Roswell Overlay District which provides for additional residential uses and incentives for redevelopment.



**Roswell Town Center**

## Corridors

Corridors are connecting elements based on either natural systems or infrastructure and transportation lines. They represent a flow – of water, traffic, or habitat movement.

- Chattahoochee River
- Parkway Village (SR 92 or Crossville Road)
- Garrison Hill (SR 120 or Marietta Highway)
- Midtown (SR 9/Alpharetta Street) Redevelopment
- Holcomb Bridge Road (SR 140 east of GA 400)

### **Chattahoochee River Corridor**

The Chattahoochee River is the most important regional natural resource in the City. It is protected under state law (Metropolitan River Protection Act) and a corridor plan administered by the Atlanta Regional Commission and the City of Roswell.

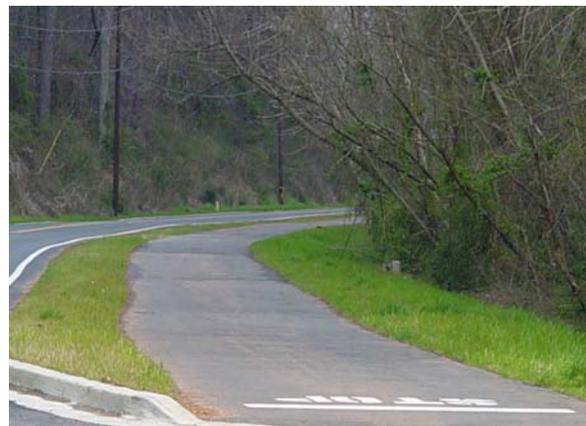
Roswell will ensure that the river corridor is accessible via a continuous, multi-use path that can be enjoyed by pedestrians, bicyclists, joggers, and all residents.



**Chattahoochee River**



**Azalea Road Multi-use Path**



**Riverside Park Multi-use Path**

## Parkway Village

The Crossville Road (SR 92) "Parkway Village" corridor has a special identity that has resulted from a combination of land use regulations and design guidelines. Larger developments are proposed in villages. White rail fencing is the signature streetscape element that frames the corridor. Small tracts that cannot be combined for village development may develop as compatible office or small business developments.



**Distinctive Streetscape Design**



**Townhouses in Parkway Village**



**"Small Tract" Development**

## Garrison Hill

The Garrison Hill corridor extends along Marietta Highway (SR 120) from the Cobb County line to the Roswell Historic District near Alpharetta Street (SR 9). This suburban highway corridor has its own set of adopted design guidelines that call for high quality development compatible with neighborhoods in the corridor. Focal points in the corridor include Coleman Road and SR 120 (neighborhood shopping) and an activity node at Willeo Road and SR 120.



**Garrison Hill Shopping Center**

## Midtown Roswell

Alpharetta Street (SR 9) is designated as a redevelopment corridor. A plan for redevelopment has been adopted and calls for three suburban commercial areas (including Roswell Town Center) to be redeveloped as pedestrian-friendly mixed-use centers. The corridor is regulated by an overlay district which provides for additional residential uses and incentives for redevelopment. Streetscape improvements are funded.



### Town Center Mall Redevelopment Concept

## Holcomb Bridge Road

Redevelopment potential along Holcomb Bridge Road east of Georgia 400 has been studied and a plan is being developed to enhance opportunities for redevelopment and connectivity to the corridor with sidewalk and multi-use paths to other destinations including the Chattahoochee River.

## **Districts**

Districts are special use areas which are necessarily dominated by a single primary activity. By definition, they are functionally separate from centers and neighborhoods. Roswell's overall development concept includes one district – the employment district in northeast Roswell.

### **Employment District**

The northeast portion of Roswell contains almost exclusively nonresidential development. Major employers in the employment district include North Fulton Regional Hospital, Northmeadow Business Park, light industries, and various business park developments. Additional development opportunities are almost exhausted. The City's Design Review Board reviews development to ensure high quality.



**North Fulton Regional Hospital**



**Business Park**

## **Preserves**

Preserves are open space elements that frame the City and preserve critical habitat.

- Big Creek Unit of National Recreation Area
- Big Creek Passive Park Preserve
- Leita Thompson Memorial Park

### **Big Creek Unit of National Recreation Area**

This nature preserve is strategically located in the center of Roswell on the east side of South Atlanta Street (SR 9) north of the confluence of Big Creek and the Chattahoochee River. Its 250 acres provide for hiking opportunities and enjoyment of nature in the middle of Roswell's urban environment.



**Approach Trail to Big Creek Unit of National Recreation Area**

### **Big Creek Passive Park Preserve**

A key open space acquisition in 2000, the Big Creek tract adds some 100 acres to the City's passive park system. The City will further enhance the Big Creek tract for passive recreational opportunities, wetlands preservation, and connection to the Alpharetta Big Creek Greenway.

### **Leita Thompson Memorial Park**

Leita Thompson Memorial Park in northwest Roswell provides for active and passive recreational facilities and also protects sensitive habitat.



**Leita Thompson Memorial Park**

## Neighborhoods

Neighborhoods are primarily residential subdivisions but within which some civic and recreational uses may also exist. Roswell is mostly a city of neighborhoods, with four distinct types:

- In-town Settlements
- Master Planned Communities
- Suburbs
- Rural Development

### **In-town Settlements**

Surrounding Roswell's Historic District are neighborhoods built in the 1950s and 1960s. They have distinctive advantages for in-town living opportunities given their location, but they also have some key challenges due to the age and small size of houses. The Comprehensive Plan calls for the City to develop neighborhood plans that will ensure their continued stability and enhancement while managing possible socio-economic transitions.

Any intensification of residential use should be compatible with historic character and existing in-town residences.



**"In-town" Neighborhood**



**"Infill Housing" - Barrington Gates**

## Master Planned Communities

Roswell is home to several large subdivisions that were master planned to include golf courses, including Willow Springs, Brookfield West, and Horseshoe Bend. Martin's Landing and Saddle Creek are representative of a second type of master-planned suburb, those that include open space and/or a mix of housing types. Another type is Ellard, which includes commercial activity at its entrance in addition to providing a mix of housing.



**Open Space in Martin's Landing**



**Suburb**

## Suburbs

The vast majority of Roswell's residential neighborhoods are conventional suburban subdivisions. They are attractive and stable, and most provide substantially higher property values than the regional average.

## Rural Development

Areas of northwestern Roswell are still characteristically rural, and some smaller scale agriculture still exists. The Comprehensive Plan acknowledges and identifies for preserving the rural feel of a small area in northwest Roswell, along Bowen Road and Jones Road. The area is not served by sanitary sewer and its character is protected by two-acre minimum lot size zoning.



**Representative Rural Conditions**

## OTHER ISSUES AND PRIORITIES



**Alpharetta Highway/ Holcomb Bridge Road**



**Hembree Road West of Houze Road**

- Maintain neighborhood character and stability.
- Manage transitions in older “in-town” neighborhoods.
- Provide for compatible infill development.



**Infill Development in an  
Intown Neighborhood**

## 2025 PLAN HIGHLIGHTS: POPULATION

### Population

2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
79,334	85,000	89,158	92,943	96,183	98,727

### Households

2000	2005	2010	2015	2025	2025
30,207	32,401	33,101	33,701	34,151	34,401

<u>Age</u>	Age Group	2005	%	2025	%
<p>A high senior population often translates into a need for health care and nursing and personal care homes.</p> <p>The “elderly” and the “retirement age” population are usually no longer in the work force. Some elderly households may have more disposable income than ever before in their lifetimes, but many elderly households will have limited incomes. Seniors are more likely than other age groups to need assisted care or medical attention.</p>	<b>0-4</b>	5,780	6.8%	6,319	6.4%
	<b>5-9</b>	5,525	6.5%	5,924	6.0%
	<b>10-14</b>	5,610	6.6%	6,121	6.2%
	<b>15-19</b>	5,270	6.2%	5,825	5.9%
	<b>20-24</b>	5,100	6.0%	5,330	5.4%
	<b>25-29</b>	7,140	8.4%	7,898	8.0%
	<b>30-34</b>	7,140	8.4%	7,405	7.5%
	<b>35-39</b>	7,650	9.0%	8,491	8.6%
	<b>40-44</b>	7,480	8.8%	8,095	8.2%
	<b>45-49</b>	7,310	8.6%	9,083	9.2%
	<b>50-54</b>	6,970	8.2%	8,984	9.1%
	<b>55-59</b>	4,675	5.5%	6,022	6.1%
	<b>60-64</b>	2,805	3.3%	3,653	3.7%
	<b>65-69</b>	1,870	2.2%	2,567	2.6%
	<b>70-74</b>	1,615	1.9%	2,271	2.3%
	<b>75-79</b>	1,360	1.6%	1,975	2.0%
	<b>80-84</b>	850	1.0%	1,382	1.4%
<b>85+</b>	850	1.0%	1,382	1.4%	
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>85,000</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>98,727</b>	<b>100</b>

### Education and Income

Roswell's population has attained very high education levels and is one of the most affluent jurisdictions in the state.

## 2025 PLAN HIGHLIGHTS: HOUSING

### Types of Housing Units

Type of Unit	No. of Units 2000	%	No. of Units 2004	%
One family, detached	19,259	61.4%	21,102	62.6%
One family, attached	2,186	7.0%	2,654	7.9%
Multiple family	9,870	31.4%	9,870	29.3%
Other	65	0.2%	65	0.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>31,389</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>33,691</b>	<b>100%</b>

### Recent Housing Trends

From the 2000 Decennial Census (April 2000) through September 2004, the City has issued building permits for 2,311 new housing units, all of which were either detached, single-family units (1,843) or townhouses (468).



**Centennial Mixed Housing Development**

### Housing Units

2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
31,389	32,401	33,101	33,701	34,151	34,401

### Age of Housing Units

The oldest housing on average across a given census tract is in Census Tract 114.11 (east of Georgia 400 including Martin's Landing), where the median year structures were built was 1979. The center of Roswell (west of SR 400 and south of Holcomb Bridge Road and east of SR 9) had the second oldest median year constructed (1983).

**Vacancy**

Year 2000 vacancy rates for both homeowner and renter units were lower than those of the county or state. This indicates strong demand for housing in Roswell in 2000.		<b>Home-owner Vacancy Rate, 2000</b>	<b>Renter Vacancy Rate, 2000</b>
	<b>City of Roswell</b>	1.1%	6.2%
	<b>Fulton County</b>	3.2%	7.6%
	<b>State of Georgia</b>	2.2%	8.5%

**Value**

<b>Value of Owner-occupied Units</b>	<b>Roswell</b>	<b>Fulton County</b>	<b>Georgia</b>
<b>1990 Median</b>	\$142,100	\$97,700	\$71,300
<b>2000 Median</b>	\$204,700	\$175,800	\$100,600

**Alternative Housing Types**

- Accessory Apartments
- Continuing Care Retirement Communities
- Mixed-Income Housing



**Key Housing Policies**

1. Preserve the general single family residential character of Roswell.
2. Retain detached single family housing as the predominant housing type in Roswell.
3. Maintain the mix of approximately 65% detached residential units to approximately 35% attached residential units.

**2025 PLAN HIGHLIGHTS: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

**Labor Force**

	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>16 Years and Over</b>	28,678	46,198

**Unemployment in 2000**

<b>Roswell</b>	<b>Georgia</b>	<b>United States</b>
3.4%	5.5%	5.8%

**Comparison of Employment by Industry in 2000**

<b>Percent of Total Labor Force, 2000 Selected Industries</b>	<b>Roswell</b>	<b>GA</b>	<b>U.S.</b>
<b>Construction</b>	6.1%	8%	7%
<b>Manufacturing</b>	8.7%	15%	14%
<b>Wholesale trade</b>	4.9%	4%	4%
<b>Retail trade</b>	12.8%	12%	12%
<b>Transportation, warehousing, utilities</b>	3.4%	6%	5%
<b>Information</b>	5.9%	4%	3%
<b>Finance, insurance, real estate rental/leasing</b>	11.4%	7%	7%
<b>Professional, scientific, management, administrative, &amp; waste management services</b>	19.7%	9%	9%
<b>Educational, health and social services</b>	12.8%	18%	20%
<b>Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services</b>	8.4%	7%	8%

**Employment**

2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
39,408	43,508	46,570	49,079	53,000

**Economic Assets**

- Major employers
- Business parks
- High average wages
- Office campuses

**Key Economic Development Resources**

- Roswell Economic Development
- Fulton County Economic Development
- Georgia Department of Economic Development
- Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Greater North Fulton Chamber of Commerce
- Utility Companies

**Key Economic Development Policies**

- Redevelopment of Commercial Strip Centers
- Promotion of Office Development
- Small and Home Business Support
- Maintain a Positive Business Climate
- Improving Mobility



**Parkway Village Shopping Center**

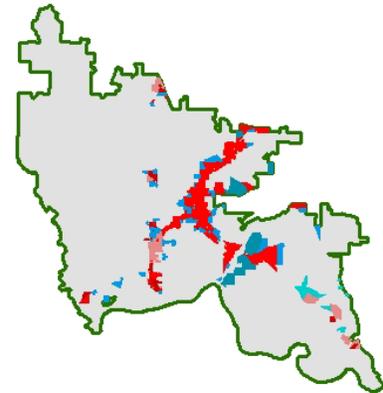


**Roswell Bike Race**

## 2025 PLAN HIGHLIGHTS: REDEVELOPMENT

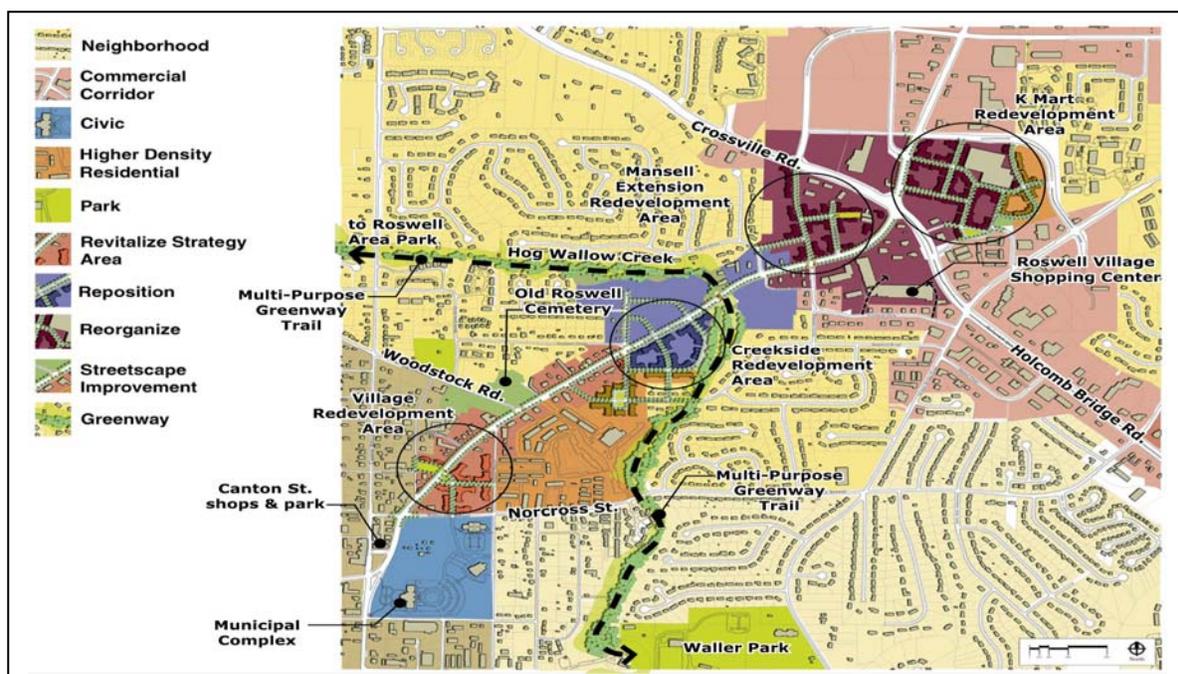
### Redevelopment Strategies

- Citywide investigation of redevelopment potential by a Task Force (2002)
- Midtown Redevelopment Plan
- Holcomb Bridge Road East Corridor Study



### Redevelopment Tools

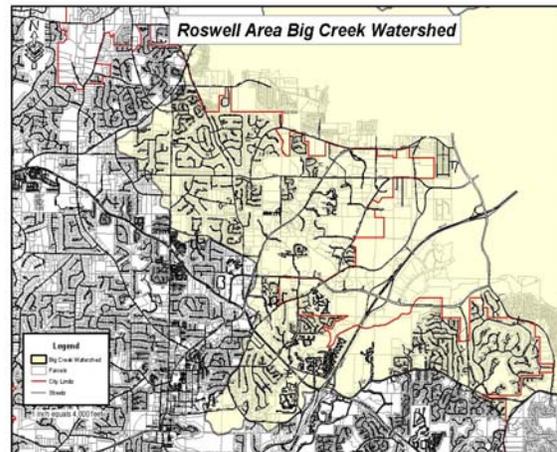
- |  |  |
|--|--|
| #1: Streetscape Improvement Programs     | #9: Waive Impact Fees or Development Fees                      |
| #2: Access Roads                         | #10: Business or Community Improvement Districts               |
| #3: Parking Decks                        | #11: Tax Allocation Bonds                                      |
| #4: Signalization and Traffic Management | #12: Policy-Driven Budget                                      |
| #5: Stormwater Management                | #13: Downtown Development Authority                            |
| #6: Streamlined Approval Procedures      | #14: Promote Redevelopment through Siting of Public Facilities |
| #7: Pre-packaged Site Design Approvals   |  |
| #8: Density Bonus                        |  |



## 2025 PLAN HIGHLIGHTS: NATURAL RESOURCES

*What are the natural features which make a township handsome? A river, with its waterfalls and meadows, a lake, a hill, a cliff or individual rocks, a forest, and ancient trees standing singly. Such things are beautiful; they have a high use which dollars and cents never represent. If the inhabitants of a town were wise, they would seek to preserve these things, though at a considerable expense...*

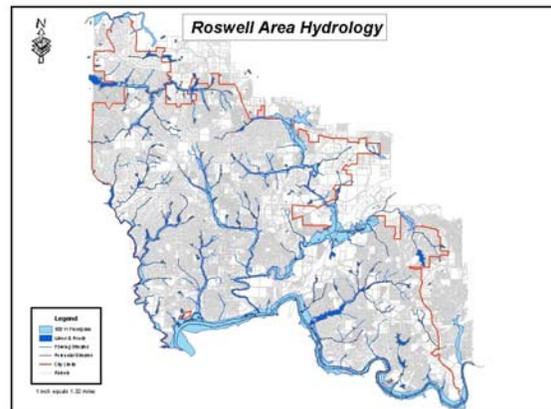
Henry David Thoreau, Journal, 1861  
(Quoted in Dramstad, Olson, and Forman 1996)



**Big Creek Water Supply Watershed  
(Roswell Water Intake)**

### Water Resources

Water Supply Watersheds  
Groundwater Recharge Areas  
Wetlands  
Protected River Corridor  
Flood Plains



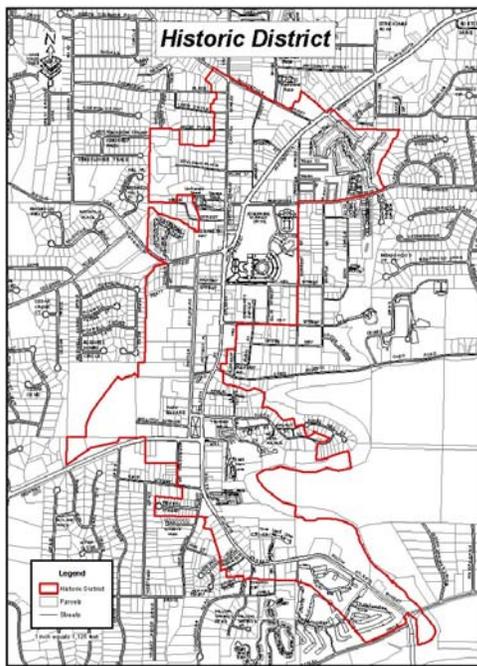
### Key Policies

- Citywide environmental strategies implemented during design review
- Protect environmentally sensitive areas
- Set aside open spaces in new developments

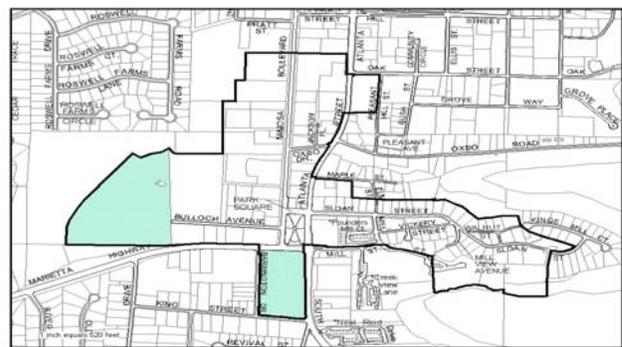
### Protection Regulations

Environmental Planning Criteria  
Metropolitan River Protection Act  
Chattahoochee River Tributary Protection  
Chattahoochee River Corridor Plan  
Watershed Management and Best Practices  
Flood Plain Management  
Erosion and Sedimentation Control  
Metro N. GA Water Planning District Rules

## 2025 PLAN HIGHLIGHTS: HISTORIC RESOURCES



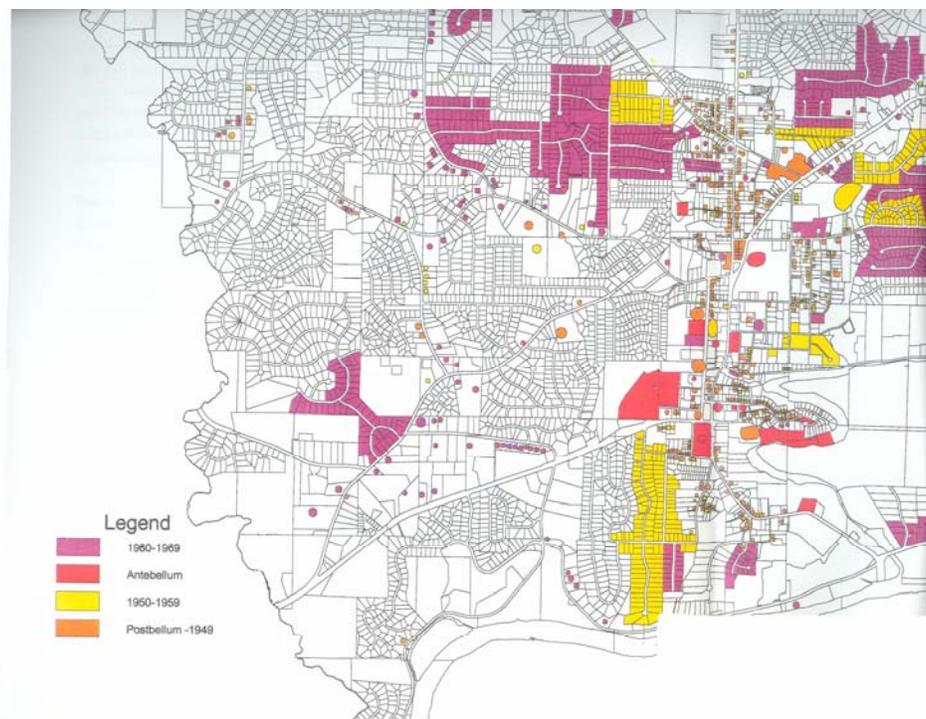
**Local Historic District Emphasizing Antebellum History**



**District and Individual Listings on the National Register of Historic Places**

Historic resources are generally considered to be 50 years of age or older.

Neighborhoods constructed from 1950-1959 and 1960-1970 are identified for planning purposes in the plan.



## HISTORIC CHARACTER AREAS



**Town Square and Mimosa Boulevard**



**Mill Village**



**Canton Street**

### HISTORIC RESOURCES GOALS

**Goal 1.** Identify Roswell's significant cultural resources in order to expand awareness and understanding of the community's heritage.

**Goal 2.** Protect Roswell's significant cultural resources by making resource protection an increasingly accepted policy of city government that is accompanied by appropriate regulatory mechanisms.

**Goal 3.** Promote a greater public awareness of Roswell's cultural resources and the local programs that protect these resources.

**Goal 4.** Promote the use of state and federal incentives for historic preservation projects.

**Goal 5.** Provide technical assistance to local residents and property owners to inform and assist them with historic preservation-related projects and efforts.

## 2025 PLAN HIGHLIGHTS: NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING

*"The neighborhood is a natural phenomenon. It is organic, growing naturally wherever people live close to one another... Neighborhoods can be cultivated and nourished, protected and allowed to blossom to full maturity. Or they can be stunted, made to struggle for existence." (Hallman)*

### OBJECTIVES

1. Articulate how Roswell would benefit from neighborhood planning;
2. Define neighborhoods by their development characteristics and boundaries;
3. Provide a framework for preparing neighborhood plans; and,
4. Suggest neighborhood self-help programs and neighborhood policies.

### BENEFITS OF NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING

- Sense of Community
- Sense of Identity
- Sense of Control
- Sense of Security
- Enhanced Link to the Comprehensive Plan
- Unique Physical Design

### Framework for Neighborhood Planning

- General Housekeeping
- Neighborhood Establishment
- Planning Process Validation
- Neighborhood Plan Elements
- Implementation Framework
- Evaluation/Monitoring



### Neighborhood Planning Policies

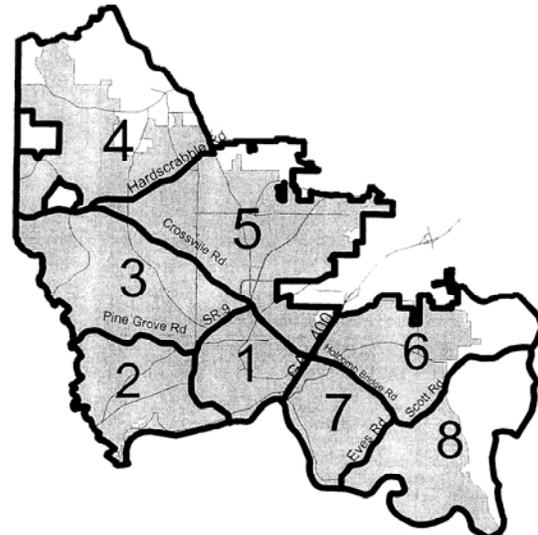
1. Develop neighborhood-planning brochure to stimulate interest.
2. Encourage them to develop their own neighborhood plans.
3. Provide limited technical assistance to neighborhood planning efforts.
4. Investigate alternative ways to foster unique approaches.
5. Adopt neighborhood plans as amendments to the Comprehensive Plan.



## 2025 PLAN HIGHLIGHTS: LAND USE

### Development Trends

- Continued single-family residential development
- Townhouse development
- Public and institutional development
- Office and business park development
- Redevelopment of older commercial areas
- Additions of City park land



**Roswell's Planning Areas**

### Planning Areas

The Plan divides the City (and fringe unincorporated land) into eight (8) planning areas for further analysis. Problems and issues are summarized in the matrix below.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Character Area	Central	SW	West Central	NW	North Central	NE	East Central	East
<b>Infill and Redevelopment</b>								
Residential Infill Potential	□	□	□	◆	□	□		
Commercial Infill Potential	◆		□		□	□	◆	□
Blighted Areas/Deterioration	□							
Redevelopment	◆				◆	□	□	
<b>Land Use Conflicts</b>								
Incompatibilities Identified	□	□	□	□	□	◆	◆	
Neighborhood Plan Priorities	◆							
Transitions in Land Use	◆		◆		◆			
<b>Infrastructure</b>								
Highway Traffic Congestion	◆	◆	◆	□	◆	◆	◆	◆
Water and Sewer Limitations	□			◆				
Limited Proximity to Parks								

◆ Significant □ Minor significance

**Policies for Specific Uses**

- Cell Towers
- Churches
- Schools
- Housing Policy - Detached/ Attached
- Housing for Seniors
- Neighborhood Shopping
- Office Campuses
- Big Box Commercial

**Types of Housing Units by Planning Area**

Planning Area Map	Detached to Attached Percentages (Excluding Mobile Homes and Trailers)
1	35% - 65%
2	65% - 35%
3	76% - 24%
4	96% - 04%
5	46% - 54%
6	65% - 35%
7	64% - 36%
8	39% - 61%
Total Shown	61% - 39%



**Vacant Land**

Roswell is almost out of vacant land, and a significant amount of the remaining undeveloped land is stormwater tracts and difficult-to-develop parcels. Emphasis is thus shifting to redevelopment.

## **Roswell's Guiding Land Use Principles**

- #1: Protect, support and maintain the City's many fine and stable neighborhoods.
- #2: Respect and maintain prevailing land use patterns.
- #3: Encourage a higher level of livability in future multi-family communities while reducing their impact on the City.
- #4: Encourage redevelopment of obsolete or economically deteriorating areas.
- #5: Emphasize redevelopment over expansion of commercial uses into new and unforeseen areas.
- #6: Restrict light industrial development opportunities to employment-oriented non-manufacturing uses in appropriate locations.
- #7: Protect the capacity of major thoroughfares through nodal development techniques. Discourage additional strip commercial development.
- #8: In newly annexed areas, respect the zoning and land uses previously approved by Fulton County.
- #9: Maintain detached residential versus attached residential ratio of 65:35.
- #10: Where there is a zoning amendment, the zoning text shall supercede the land use density represented in the City's Land Use Map.

## **Future Land Use Plan Categories**

- Estate Residential
- Low-Density Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Medium-Density Residential
- High-Density Residential
- Office-Professional
- Office Campus
- Neighborhood Commercial
- General Commercial
- Light Industrial/Showroom/ Wholesale
- Transportation, Communication and Utilities
- Public-Institutional
- Parks, Recreation and Conservation

## 2025 PLAN HIGHLIGHTS: COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

### Components

- Police Protection
- Fire Department
- Administration and Finance
- Community Development
- Transportation
- Public Works/Environmental
- Health and Hospitals
- Libraries
- Cultural Facilities
- Schools
- Court System
- Recreation and Parks
- Water
- Sanitary Sewer
- Stormwater Management
- Solid Waste Management
- Utilities
- Emergency Management



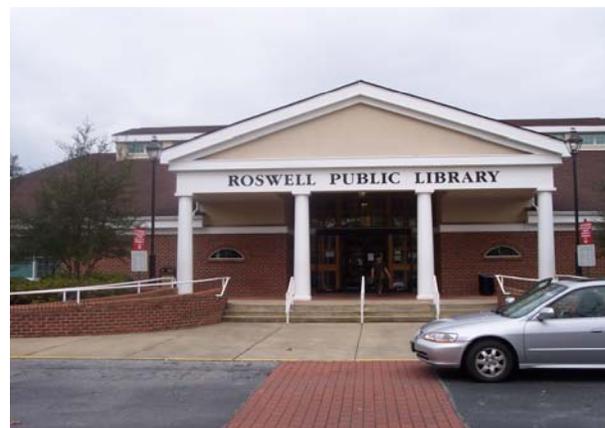
**Roswell's Fire Station #1**



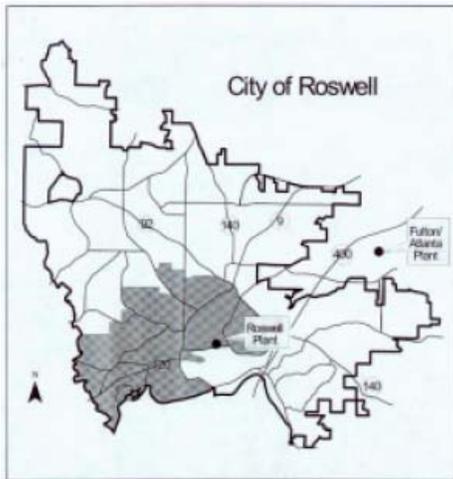
**Fire Station #7, on Holcomb Bridge Road (E Roswell), was part of the 2000 Bond Referendum**



**City Hall, built in 1992, is approaching build-out**



**Roswell's library branch (Atlanta-Fulton Co. System) does not meet desired levels of service.**



**Roswell's Water System Service Area**



**Fulton County's Big Creek  
Sewage Treatment Plant**



**Fulton County's schools have suffered  
from overcrowding**

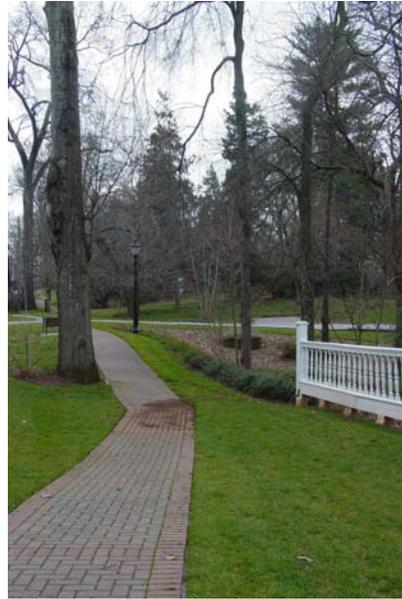
### **Selected Community Facilities Policies**

- Ensure cost-effective and timely provision of community facilities and services to support the needs of the City's neighborhoods, residents, and businesses.
- Maintain municipal buildings and grounds to the same high standard as exists today to ensure their continued attractiveness and superior accommodation of City customers.
- Fully integrate the City's capital improvement element (CIE), as required by state rules to be annually updated, with the City's capital improvement planning process, so that the two items are one and the same.

## 2025 PLAN HIGHLIGHTS: TRANSPORTATION

### Modes of Travel

- Walking
- Bicycling
- Single-occupant vehicle
- Carpooling
- Public transit
- Air transportation



**Sidewalk at Mimosa Boulevard**



**Pedestrian Bridge, Old Holcomb Bridge Rd.**

Roswell is committed to providing better pedestrian facilities. One example is the City's construction of a pedestrian bridge across Big Creek on Old Holcomb Bridge Road, which connects several large apartment complexes on Old Holcomb Bridge Road to commercial destinations on Holcomb Bridge Road.

Traffic in Roswell is influenced by regional growth patterns. There is a significant amount of cross-commuting from Cherokee County and Cobb County through Roswell to North Fulton and Gwinnett County job centers.

**Variables Affecting Travel Behavior**

- Vehicles Per Household
- Means of Transportation to Work
- Travel Time to Work
- Time Leaving for Work

**Understanding Levels of Service for Roads**

Level-of-Service	Volume-to-Capacity
A	< 0.50
B	0.50 – 0.60
C	0.60 – 0.75
D	0.75 – 0.90
E	0.90 – 1.00
F	> = 1.00

**Functional Class of Roads**

- Freeway
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Major Collectors
- Minor Collectors
- Local Roads and Streets



**Marietta Highway (SR 120), Level of Service "A." Most arterials in Roswell operate at levels "E" and "F" during peak periods.**

**Key Strategies for Transportation Management**

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Congestion management</li> <li>• Signalize intersections</li> <li>• Improve intersections with turn lanes</li> <li>• Rebuild bridges to maintain safety</li> <li>• Transportation demand management</li> <li>• Intelligent Vehicle Systems</li> <li>• Improved pedestrian accessibility/safety installation of bicycle lanes</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selected road extensions</li> <li>• Maintenance of bus transit in key corridors</li> <li>• Traffic calming</li> <li>• Road resurfacing program</li> <li>• Transportation enhancements/beautification</li> <li>• Context-sensitive design</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

**Transportation Goal**

Continue to support intersection improvements, access management, and multi-modal (bike, pedestrian, transit) opportunities to improve mobility.

## 2025 PLAN HIGHLIGHTS: INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

### The Challenge

Effective planning efforts for community facilities, environmental protection, transportation, and land use are increasingly beyond the abilities of single jurisdictions.

### Key Actors in the Intergovernmental System

Alpharetta and Mountain Park	Georgia Regional Transportation Authority
Fulton County Government	Georgia Department of Natural Resources
Fulton County Board of Education	Georgia Department of Community Affairs
Atlanta Regional Commission	Georgia Department of Transportation
Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA)	U.S. National Park Service
Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District	

### Intergovernmental Service Agreements

Fulton County (Service Delivery Strategy)  
Mutual Aid - Fire Protection  
Fulton Schools - Recreation Facilities  
Public Property - Land Use Agreement  
Joint Training, Erosion Control Inspection

### Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District Requirements

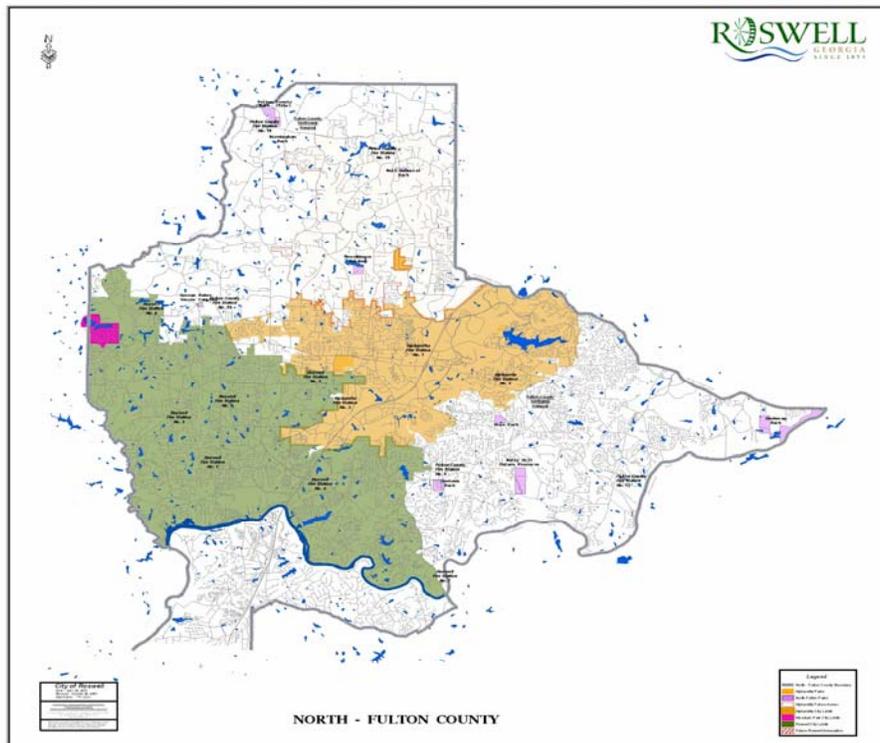
Water Supply and Water Conservation  
Long-term Wastewater Management  
District-wide Watershed Protection

### Substantive Issue Areas

- Annexation
- Land Use Conflict Resolution
- Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs)
- Big Creek Water Supply Watershed Protection

### INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION POLICIES

1. When appropriate, resolve conflicts with other local governments through established mediation processes or other informal means.
2. Share resources and information with all government entities.
3. Ensure that goals and implementation programs of the City's Comprehensive Plan are consistent with adopted coordination mechanisms and consistent with applicable regional and state programs.



## 2025 PLAN HIGHLIGHTS: IMPLEMENTATION

### Implementation Responsibilities of Boards and Commissions

#### Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is given authority to recommend overall policy direction with regard to the planning and zoning functions of the City.

#### Historic Preservation Commission

The Historic Preservation Commission has overall responsibilities for implementing historic preservation programs in the City.

#### Design Review Board

The Design Review Board has overall responsibilities for implementing urban design programs in Roswell. Those responsibilities are superseded by the Historic Preservation Commission in locally designated historic districts.

#### Housing Authority

The Housing Authority is responsible for the maintenance and improvement of the City's public housing units.

#### Downtown Development Authority

The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) is currently inactive. However, such an authority could be reactivated to construct projects and improvements in the downtown.

#### Key Implementation Techniques

- Short-term Work Program
- Five-Year Capital Program/ Budget
- Long-term Borrowing
- Federal and State Grants
- Best Practices
- Zoning Ordinance
- Subdivision Regulations
- Special Ordinances
- Intergovernmental Agreements

## **INTRODUCTION TO ROSWELL'S COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2025**

This is an introduction to Roswell's Comprehensive Plan 2025. It describes previous comprehensive planning efforts, the overall content and organization of the plan, provisions for amendments and updates of the plan, purposes and uses of the plan, and the citizen participation component used in initially preparing and adopting the 2020 Comprehensive Plan and the 2025 major update of the plan.

### **PREVIOUS COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING EFFORTS**

Roswell's first land use plan was developed in 1969 and 1970 using funds from the Urban Planning Assistance Program authorized by Section 701 of the Housing Act of 1954. Roswell adopted a Future Land Use and Thoroughfare Plan in 1970. A Roswell Development Plan was adopted during the fall of 1978. In the late 1980s, Roswell's planning staff engaged in a major citizen participation effort and updated the development plan to the year 2010. In 1992, the City submitted a revised Comprehensive Plan to meet the standards and requirements of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. In response to the Georgia Development Impact Fee Act of 1990 and subsequent state administrative rules, Roswell prepared and adopted a major amendment to the Comprehensive Plan in 1992; this amendment established an impact fee method and a capital improvement element to support implementation of development impact fees (roads, recreation and parks, and fire protection). The City updated the Comprehensive Plan 2010 in 1996, as required by the five-year interval for plan updates established by state administrative rules.

In 1999, the City hired a planning director and contracted with a team of planning consultants to prepare a new Comprehensive Plan to guide growth and development to the year 2020. The Comprehensive Plan 2020 represented approximately ten (10) months of intensive effort, from June 1999 to March 2000, by the planning staff of the Department of Community Development and the consulting team. It was adopted November 6, 2000.

### **THE 2025 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

Roswell, along with Fulton County and its other municipalities, was required by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to completely update its Comprehensive Plan by October 31, 2005 (its "recertification date"). New rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs went into effect January 1, 2004, and the Comprehensive Plan update was required to conform to those rules. While the basic tenants of the 2020 plan were sound, the 2025 Comprehensive Plan update focused on compliance with the new (2004) minimum planning standards.

In undertaking the 2025 Comprehensive Plan update, the City had decided the policy direction and vision associated with the 2020 plan was generally adequate, even if five years old. Also, the Community Development Department and City Council believed that the extensive public participation process followed in developing the 2020 Comprehensive Plan did not need to be repeated. Nonetheless, an appropriate participation strategy was followed in updating the 2020 Comprehensive Plan for the year 2025.

### **ORGANIZATION AND CONTENT**

The Comprehensive Plan 2025 is organized into two major documents – (1) this document, which contains fourteen chapters and is referred to as a "technical report" or "compliance

document” since it contains technical data and must demonstrate consistency with the data requirements of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs’ minimum standards for local planning; and (2) a “community agenda” which contains the City’s vision statement and a summary of the most salient features of the plan. The community agenda, with its provision of pictures, is intended to be much more “readable” to the citizens and policy makers of Roswell. The technical report or community assessment (which spans nearly 500 pages), on the other hand, is unlikely to retain the attention of readers.

In addition to making the most important parts of the plan more “readable” to the general public, there is another reason for dividing the Comprehensive Plan into an assessment report and a community agenda. At the time this Comprehensive Plan update was prepared (late 2004 to early 2005), the Georgia Department of Community Affairs was formally considering a major change to the minimum planning standards for local planning, one that emphasized a two-part plan document as generally described here. To the degree possible, Roswell’s 2025 Plan attempts to conform to the new (2005) standards, while nonetheless requiring a demonstration of compliance with the standards effective January 1, 2004.

The Comprehensive Plan 2025 is organized so that it follows the required elements of comprehensive plans, as required by the minimum planning standards adopted by administrative rule by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and effective January 1, 2004. However, the Plan goes considerably beyond the minimum required elements by including chapters on urban design and neighborhoods. It also divides the natural and cultural resources element into separate chapters on natural resources and historic preservation.

The data requirements for meeting the January 1, 2004 minimum standards are rather elaborate. As a result, there are many tables of data in order to demonstrate compliance with the various comprehensive planning standards of the state. Some of the chapters are lengthy because of the need to provide data that address all considerations in the minimum standards. The entire document of the Comprehensive Plan 2025 is available to those persons that require, for research purposes, considerable detail on a given Plan Element (population, housing, economic development, etc.). For those persons interested only in the overall direction suggested in the plan, the “Vision and Community Agenda” part of the Comprehensive Plan should suffice.

## **STUDY AREA**

The 2020 Comprehensive Plan had a “study area” that included some unincorporated areas in addition to the city limits (see Map 9.1). The unincorporated portion of the study area was included in 2000 to provide data on population, housing, and land use conditions in the event that those unincorporated areas are annexed in the future. The choice of including unincorporated areas in the 2020 plan was, in itself, not a policy decision. The study area boundary represented the outer boundary of what the planning staff and planning consulting team believed would be the limits of Roswell’s future municipal boundary by the end of the planning horizon. The 2025 Comprehensive Plan does not retain and update data for the study area used in the 2020 plan. However, since some of the information organized around planning areas in the 2020 plan is still valid and informative, it was retained (see the Land Use Element).

## **PURPOSES AND USES OF THE PLAN**

The Comprehensive Plan is sometimes called by other names such as a general plan, development plan, master plan, policy plan, and growth management plan. Regardless of what

it is called, there are many major characteristics of a comprehensive plan. First, it is a physical plan intended to guide the physical development (and redevelopment) of the City by describing how, why, when, and where to build, rebuild, or preserve aspects of the community. Second, the Comprehensive Plan covers a long-range planning horizon of 20 years (i.e., to the year 2025). Third, the Comprehensive Plan is “comprehensive” in that it covers the entire city limits, plus it encompasses all the functions that make a community work and considers the interrelatedness of functions. The Comprehensive Plan is based on the foundation that if the City knows where it wants to go, it possesses better prospects of getting there.

The Comprehensive Plan is intended to serve numerous purposes. It provides a primary basis for evaluating all significant future development proposals, whether they are requests for rezoning, applications for subdivision plat approval, petitions for design review or demolition of a historic structure, and others. The Comprehensive Plan is also intended to provide guidance for preparing capital improvement programs and budgets. Business persons, investors, and developers can learn from the Plan what the future vision of the community is, as well as the overall direction and intensity of new growth and redevelopment. Market analysts and researchers can draw on the wealth of data provided in the Comprehensive Plan for their own specific needs.

The ultimate clients, however, for the Comprehensive Plan are the Mayor and City Council and the Roswell Planning Commission. By adopting the Plan, the Mayor and City Council have made an extremely important expression of their consent and support for the vision, quality community objectives, goals, policies, and strategies contained herein.

### **AMENDMENT AND UPDATE OF THE PLAN**

As an adopted expression of the City’s policy, the Comprehensive Plan must be maintained in a manner that it still reflects the desires of the current Mayor and City Council. Developers, the general public, and other agencies have a right to rely on the adopted Comprehensive Plan as an expression of current policy. In cases where it is determined that a particular policy, goal, program, or statement is no longer a valid expression of the City’s policy, then the Plan needs to be amended, on a timely basis. Otherwise, the validity of the Plan is weakened, and those that have relied on the Comprehensive Plan when it is not a reflection of current policy have then been, in effect, misled.

As a local government charging development impact fees, Roswell is required by state administrative rules to prepare and adopt annual updates to the short-term work program and capital improvement element of the Comprehensive Plan. Local governments are required to update the Comprehensive Plan every five years, and at that time, they are encouraged to provide major rewrites of the Comprehensive Plan. Regardless, the Comprehensive Plan must be comprehensively revised every 10 years.

Amendments may be considered by the Roswell Mayor and City Council whenever it finds it necessary to do so. Amendments should take place any time that Roswell annexes additional unincorporated land, so as to include the area on the future land use map and to update population estimates and projections as appropriate. When there is a significant change in policy by the Mayor and City Council, for instance a decision to drop a major capital improvement project that is described in the adopted plan, the Plan should be amended.

Amendments must comply with procedures established in state rules. Major amendments, or those that raise some greater-than-local issue or consideration, are required to be reviewed by

the Atlanta Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The annual update is considered a major amendment because it affects the degree to which the City meets minimum planning standards and procedures.

### **THE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION COMPONENT**

As part of Roswell's Comprehensive Plan 2020 process (completed in the year 2000), the City provided a broad range of public participation opportunities. Participation included the City's elected officials, advisory committees, review boards and Planning Commission, as well as neighborhood associations and the business community.

The City with consultant assistance conducted five Community-Oriented Visioning Forums to assist in establishing the 2020 Plan's vision statement, guiding principles, and objectives. Four of the forums were held (1999) in different geographic areas of the City to promote greater participation by residents. A fifth meeting was provided specifically for the business community. Starting with the goals and policies currently contained in the Comprehensive Plan, the City with consulting assistance conducted an intensive, interactive process at each forum to solicit participants' opinions regarding desirable changes. Once the draft 2020 Comprehensive Plan elements had been prepared, two citywide forums were held for presentation of the drafts by the consultant and staff. The citywide forums were held March 28 and March 29, 2000. Detailed minutes of these meetings were published.

Given the extensive nature of the visioning process completed in 2000, Roswell's leaders decided that it did not need to repeat the extensive effort involved in the 2020 Plan visioning exercises. It was also determined that the overall vision established in 2000 for the 2020 Plan was generally adequate. An initial public hearing was held September 20, 2004. For the 2025 Plan, two visioning workshops were held by the City and its consultants in 2004. The public hearings required prior to authorizing transmittal of the draft Comprehensive Plan were held by the Roswell Planning Commission in April 2005 and by the Mayor and City Council in May 2005.

### **STATEWIDE PLANNING GOALS AND QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES**

Local comprehensive plans must address how they implement the statewide planning goals and "quality community objectives." Those goals and objectives are included in this introduction, and they are adopted locally. They serve as guides to the preparation of Roswell's 2025 Comprehensive Plan. The quotes indicate the statements are verbatim from the state's quality community objectives.

#### **State Goal – Economic Development**

"To achieve a growing and balanced economy, consistent with the prudent management of the state's resources, that equitably benefits all segments of the population."

1. **"Regional Identity Objective:** Regions should promote and preserve an 'identity,' defined in terms of traditional regional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics."
2. **"Growth Preparedness Objective:** Each community should identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These may include housing and infrastructure (roads, water, sewer and telecommunications) to support new growth,

appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances to direct growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities.”

3. **“Appropriate Business Objective:** The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.”
4. **“Educational Opportunities Objective:** Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.”
5. **“Employment Options Objective:** A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.”

### **State Goal – Natural and Historic Resources**

“To conserve and protect the environmental, natural and historic resources of Georgia’s communities, regions, and the state.”

1. **“Heritage Preservation Objective:** The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community’s character.”
2. **“Open Space Preservation Objective:** New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors.”
3. **“Environmental Protection Objective:** Air quality and environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development. Environmentally sensitive areas deserve special protection, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.”
4. **“Regional Cooperation Objective:** Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources.”

### **State Goal – Community Facilities and Services**

“To ensure that public facilities throughout the state have the capacity, and are in place when needed, to support and attract growth and development and/or maintain and enhance the quality of life of Georgia’s residents.”

1. **“Transportation Alternatives Objective:** Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes and pedestrian facilities, should be made available. Greater use of alternative transportation should be encouraged.”

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

### **State Goal – Housing**

“To ensure that residents of the state have access to adequate and affordable housing.”

1. **“Housing Opportunities Objective:** Quality housing and a range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community, to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community.”

### **State Goal – Land Use**

“To ensure that land resources are allocated for uses that will accommodate the state’s economic development, natural and historic resources, community facilities, and housing and to protect and improve the quality of life of Georgia’s residents.”

1. **“Traditional Neighborhood Objective:** Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.”
2. **“Infill Development Objective:** Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.”
3. **“Sense of Place Objective:** Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.”