

3. HOUSING ELEMENT

One of the best indicators of a community's quality of life is its housing stock. An adequate supply of structurally sound, uncrowded, and affordable housing is a prerequisite for a high quality of life. The following analysis of housing conditions of the City of Palmetto, Georgia represents a critical first step in the community's ongoing efforts to provide and maintain adequate housing for its residents. The analysis includes an inventory of Palmetto's past and present housing conditions and an evaluation of the its current and future housing needs in light of the community's projected population growth and economic development goals. The housing analysis serves as the basis for the formulation of housing goals and implementation programs.

3.1 Housing by Type

Table 3.1 presents data from the 1990 and 2000 Census of Housing regarding the type of housing units in Palmetto, Georgia. The total number of housing units in the community increased by nearly 20% in a decade. The only types of housing units not increasing over the ten year period were 1 unit attached and 2 unit structures. From 1990 to 2000 structures containing 10 to 19 units increased by 600% from 4 to 24 structures. The largest absolute increase in types of housing was 98 new 1 unit detached structures. The dominant type of housing in the community is the 1 unit detached structure that represented over 70% of the total housing inventory in 2000. The percent of 1 unit detached structures is indicative of the common preference for single family detached housing. In the State of Georgia, 1 unit, detached housing structures comprise 64% of all the housing stock and even in the heavily urbanized Fulton County they represent nearly one-half of all housing structures.

Table 3.1: Types of Housing Units 1990 - 2000

Housing Type	1990		2000		# Increase or Decrease	% Increase or Decrease
	#	%	#	%		
1 unit, detached	766	74.51%	864	70.53%	98	12.79%
1 unit attached	21	2.04%	7	0.57%	-14	-66.67%
2 units	114	11.09%	100	8.16%	-14	-12.28%
3 or 4 units	76	7.39%	110	8.98%	34	44.74%
5 to 9 units	41	3.99%	98	8.00%	57	139.02%
10 to 19 units	4	0.39%	28	2.29%	24	600.00%
20 to 49 units	0	0.00%	10	0.82%	10	X
50 or more units	0	0.00%	8	0.65%	8	X
Mobile home or trailer	6	0.58%	0	0.00%	-6	-100.00%
TOTAL of all types	1,028	100%	1,225	100%	197	19.16%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

3.2 Age and Condition of Housing Units

Age and the lack of complete plumbing and kitchen facilities are features often used to evaluate the condition of a community's housing stock. Tables 3.2 and 3.3 present data regarding the age of Palmetto's housing stock. Although age alone is not a definitive indicator of the quality of housing, it does provide some clues about the state of a community's housing stock. Older units are often in need of renovation and repair or saddle the occupants with higher maintenance cost. One special concern about older housing is the presence of lead based paints. Lead based paint was banned in 1979 due to its potential toxicity and harmful effects on the development of children. Slightly over one-half or 52.33% of the current housing units in the City of Palmetto were built prior to 1979. This is slightly over Georgia's rate of 50.14%. The age of the housing stock in Palmetto is similar to the age of the housing stock in the surrounding area and the state as a whole. The greatest differences between the age of Palmetto's housing and the surrounding areas occur when they are compared with Coweta County. Due to extremely rapid population growth since 1980, a large percent of Coweta County's housing stock is new.

Table 3.2: Age of Housing Units 1990 for Palmetto and Surrounding Areas

Year Built	Palmetto		Fulton		Coweta		Georgia	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
1989 to March 1990	21	2.04	8,901	2.99	1,208	5.92	92,438	3.50
1985 to 1988	170	16.54	32,297	10.86	3,961	19.40	405,556	15.37
1980 to 1984	103	10.02	27,724	9.32	2,708	13.27	349,315	13.24
1970 to 1979	222	21.60	56,804	19.09	4,681	22.93	646,094	24.49
1960 to 1969	162	15.76	61,508	20.67	2,855	13.99	453,853	17.20
1950 to 1959	148	14.40	46,207	15.53	1,731	8.48	309,335	11.72
1940 to 1949	74	7.20	28,699	9.65	1,054	5.16	168,889	6.40
1939 or earlier	128	12.45	35,363	11.89	2,215	10.85	212,938	8.07
TOTAL	1,028	100	297,503	100	20,413	100	2,638,418	100

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 3.3: Age of Housing Units 2000 for Palmetto and Surrounding Areas

Year Built	Palmetto		Fulton		Coweta		Georgia	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1999 to March 2000	59	4.82	9,519	2.73	2,584	7.79	130,695	3.98
1995 to 1998	222	18.12	35,497	10.18	6,545	19.72	413,557	12.60
1990 to 1994	59	4.82	33,119	9.50	5,888	17.74	370,878	11.30
1980 to 1989	244	19.92	63,177	18.12	6,388	19.25	721,174	21.98
1970 to 1979	159	12.98	55,608	15.95	4,028	12.14	608,926	18.55
1960 to 1969	142	11.59	56,928	16.33	2,486	7.49	416,047	12.68
1950 to 1959	78	6.37	41,579	11.93	1,861	5.61	283,424	8.64
1940 to 1949	96	7.84	22,048	6.32	1,216	3.66	144,064	4.39
1939 or earlier	166	13.55	31,157	8.94	2,186	6.59	192,972	5.88
TOTAL	1,225	100	348,632	100	33,182	100	3,281,737	100

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The City of Palmetto does not have a problem with housing structures lacking complete plumbing and kitchen facilities. Less than one percent of all housing units in the City lack complete plumbing and kitchen facilities. The portion of units lacking complete plumbing facilities is exactly the state rate and the percent of units lacking complete kitchen facilities matches regional rates.

Table 3.4: Plumbing and Kitchen Facilities 1990 – 2000 for Palmetto and Surrounding Areas

Housing Unit Characteristic	City of Palmetto		Fulton County		Coweta County		State of Georgia	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Lacking Complete Plumbing Facilities	0.39%	.60%	0.60%	.60%	1.45%	.60%	1.08%	.60%
Lacking Complete Kitchen Facilities	0.00%	.60%	0.65%	.70%	1.45%	.60%	0.91%	.50%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

3.3 Occupancy Characteristics

Table 3.5 provides information about the type of housing structures in the City of Palmetto. The owner occupied housing market in Palmetto is dominated by 1 unit, detached structures. The mix of owner occupied housing types has remained fairly constant between 1990 and 2000. The 1 unit, detached structure is a common housing choice among homeowners in suburban locations such as Palmetto. The 1 unit, detached structure also is popular in the rental housing market. In 1990 nearly 45% of all rental units in Palmetto were 1 unit, detached structures. Between 1990 and 2000 over 100 new multi family rental units were added to the community's housing stock. Multi family structures now comprise over 60% of all the rental housing units.

Table 3.5: Tenure by Housing Type 1990 – 2000

Type of Unit	Owner Occupied				Renter Occupied			
	1990		2000		1990		2000	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
1 unit, detached	582	89.54	617	91.00	143	44.41	190	39.42
1 unit, attached	21	3.23	7	1.03	0	0.00	0	0.00
Multi family	41	6.31	46	6.78	179	55.59	292	60.58
Mobile home or other	6	0.92	8	1.18	0	0.00	0	0.00
TOTAL	650	100.00	678	100.00	322	100.00	482	100.00

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Palmetto's housing vacancy rate, see Table 3.6, remained constant between 1990 and 2000. The community's vacancy rate is slightly lower than Fulton County and the State of Georgia and slightly higher than rapidly growing Coweta County. Palmetto has an especially tight rental housing market that is much lower than the surrounding counties and the state as a whole. See Table 3.7.

Table 3.6: Occupied and Vacant Housing Units 1990 – 2000 for Palmetto and Surroundings Areas

Jurisdiction	Occupied Housing Units				Vacant Housing Units			
	1990		2000		1990		2000	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
City of Palmetto	972	94.55	1,160	94.69	56	5.45	65	5.31
Fulton County	257,140	86.43	321,242	92.14	40,363	13.57	27,390	7.86
Coweta County	18,930	92.74	31,442	94.76	1,483	7.26	1,740	5.24
State of Georgia	236,615	46.54	3,006,369	91.61	271,803	53.46	275,368	8.39

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 3.7: Vacancy Rates by Occupancy Type 2000 for Palmetto and Surrounding Areas

Occupancy Type	City of Palmetto	Fulton County	Coweta County	State of Georgia
For rent	0	12,668	398	90,320
For sale only	65	5,438	572	46,425
Rented or sold, not occupied	0	2,214	189	23,327
For seasonal, recreational, or occasional use	0	2,416	139	57,847
For migrant workers	0	68	64	1,290
Other vacant	0	4,586	378	56,159
TOTAL	65	27,390	1,740	275,368
HOMEOWNER VACANCY RATE	2.80%	2.70%	1.90%	1.90%
RENTAL VACANCY RATE	1.90%	7.10%	6.00%	8.20%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

3.4 Housing Cost

Few things say more about the state of housing in a community than cost. Tables 3.8 present a summary of owner-occupied housing cost in Palmetto and its surrounding areas. Over 80% of Palmetto's owner occupied housing was priced less than \$100,000 per unit in 2000. Owner-occupied housing in Palmetto is less expensive than in the surrounding counties and the State of Georgia as a whole. The median housing value in Palmetto in 2000 was \$82,000 per unit which was over \$18,000 less than the State mean and over \$93,000 less than Fulton County's median price.

Table 3.8: Value of Owner-Occupied Housing Units 2000 for Palmetto and Surrounding Area

Range of Value	City of Palmetto		Fulton County		Coweta County		State of Georgia	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Less than \$50,000	97	14.31%	7,712	4.61%	1,733	7.06%	342,066	16.86%
\$50,000 to \$99,999	460	67.85%	38,600	23.10%	6,888	28.08%	666,086	32.82%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	114	16.81%	24,944	14.93%	8,082	32.94%	458,862	22.61%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	7	1.03%	22,793	13.64%	4,166	16.98%	239,312	11.79%
\$200,000 to \$299,999	0	0.00%	30,115	18.02%	2,511	10.24%	188,461	9.29%
\$300,000 or greater	0	0.00%	42,947	25.70%	1,153	4.70%	134,506	6.63%
TOTAL	678	100.00%	167,111	100.00%	24,533	100.00%	2,029,293	100.00%
Median Value (\$)	82,300		175,800		121,400		100,600	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Table 3.9 presents data about gross rent in the City of Palmetto and its surrounding areas. In 2000 over 90% of all rental units in Palmetto rented for less than \$750 per month and less than 2% rented for over \$1,000 per month. Approximately one-half of all rental units in Palmetto rent for \$500 to \$749 per month. The median gross rent in the City was less than the 2000 State median and the Coweta County median and over \$100 per month less than Fulton County's 2000 median gross rent.

Table 3.9: Gross Rent 2000 for Palmetto and Surrounding Areas

Gross Rent	City of Palmetto		Fulton County		Coweta County		State of Georgia	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Less than \$250	29	6.02%	15,302	10.16%	528	8.47%	84,279	9.30%
\$250 to \$499	152	31.54%	23,103	15.34%	1,502	24.09%	231,100	25.51%
\$500 to \$749	256	53.11%	44,179	29.34%	2,091	33.53%	301,088	33.24%
\$750 to \$999	38	7.88%	41,361	27.47%	1,474	23.64%	200,611	22.14%
\$1,000 or more	7	1.45%	26,623	17.68%	641	10.28%	88,835	9.81%
No cash rent	0	0.00%	3,210	2.13%	440	7.06%	58,533	6.46%
TOTAL with cash rent	482	100.00%	150,568	100.00%	6,236	100.00%	905,913	100.00%
TOTAL units	482		153778		6676		964446	
Median Gross Rent (\$)	588		709		628		613	

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

3.5 Cost Burdened Households

Housing costs are relative to the wealth of the residents of a community. Table 3.10 presents data on housing cost burdens for the inhabitants of Palmetto. Figures for gross rent incorporate utility payments by renters. Selected owner expenses such as mortgage payments, utilities, property taxes, and homeowners insurance are incorporated into owner-occupied housing costs.

Households that pay over 30% of their income for housing expenses are considered to be cost burdened. Those households that pay over 50% of their monthly income on housing expenses are considered to be severely cost burdened. A smaller portion of Palmetto's renters are cost burdened than in the surrounding counties and the state as a whole. Cost burdened homeowners represent 21.81% of all homeowner in the City which is nearly identical to the portion of cost burdened homeowners in the state as a whole.

Table 3.10: Cost Burdened and Severely Cost Burdened Households by Tenure 1999 for Palmetto and Surrounding Areas

Rental Units	City of Palmetto	Fulton County	Coweta County	State of Georgia
Gross Rent > 30% of Household Income in 1999	150	58893	2407	341484
% Total Rental Units	31.12	38.30	36.05	35.41
Gross Rent > 50% of Household Income in 1999	54	27794	1013	158922
% Rental Units	11.20	18.07	15.17	16.48
TOTAL Rental Units	482	153,778	6,676	964,446
Owner Occupied Units with a Mortgage	City of Palmetto	Fulton County	Coweta County	State of Georgia
Owner Cost > 30% of Household Income in 1999	96	32911	3663	295715
% of Total Owner Occupied Units with a Mortgage	25.95	27.86	21.06	24.61
Owner Cost > 50% of Household Income in 1999	4	13060	1103	103568
% of Total Owner Occupied Units with a Mortgage	1.08	11.06	6.34	8.62
TOTAL Owner Occupied Units with a Mortgage	370	118,113	17,393	1,201,569
Owner Occupied Units without a Mortgage	City of Palmetto	Fulton County	Coweta County	State of Georgia
Owner Cost > 30% of Household Income in 1999	32	4501	421	47151
% of Total Owner Occupied Units without a Mortgage	14.75	15.70	11.58	11.94
Owner Cost > 50% of Household Income in 1999	0	1680	133	15911
% of Total Owner Occupied Units without a Mortgage	0.00%	5.86	3.66	4.03
TOTAL Owner Occupied Units without a Mortgage	217	28,670	3,636	394,839
All Owner Occupied Units	City of Palmetto	Fulton County	Coweta County	State of Georgia
Owner Cost > 30% of Household Income in 1999	128	37412	4084	342866
% of Total Owner Occupied Units	21.81	25.49	19.42	21.48
Owner Cost > 50% of Household Income in 1999	4	14740	1236	119479
% of Total Owner Occupied Units	0.68	10.04	5.88	7.48
TOTAL Owner Occupied	587	146783	21029	1596408

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

3.6 Crowding

Overcrowding is another measurement of the quality of a community's housing stock. Traditionally, any housing unit with more than one person per room is considered to be overcrowded. As Table 3.6 indicates, in the City of Palmetto 2.49% of the rental units and 6.93% of the owner occupied units were overcrowded according to the *2000 U.S Census of Population and Housing*. The rate of overcrowding in rental units is considerably lower than in the surrounding counties and the State of Georgia as a whole. The rate of overcrowding in owner occupied units is much higher than the in the surrounding counties and the state as a whole.

Table 3.11 Overcrowded Housing Units by Tenure 2000 for Palmetto and Surrounding Areas

Units	Palmetto	Fulton	Coweta	Georgia
Overcrowded Renter Occupied	12	15,819	503	95,520
% Total Renter Occupied	2.49	10.26	7.28	9.78
Overcrowded Owner Occupied	47	3,104	534	49,715
% Total Owner Occupied	6.93	1.86	2.18	2.45

Source: U. S. Census Bureau

3.7 Housing for Special Needs Populations

3.7.1 Public Housing Programs

The Palmetto Housing Authority operates 20 units of government owned public housing in the community but does not operate a HUD Section 8 housing voucher program. Table 3.12 provides data about the 20 units of public housing operated by the authority. The public housing units range in size from 1 to 4 bedrooms and every unit is occupied. The average monthly income of residents in the public housing units is \$934.34. The average adjusted monthly income of residents is \$869.33 or \$65.00 less than the actual income.

Table 3.12: Palmetto Housing Authority Income Analysis by Room Size

Room Size	# of Units	Occupied Units	Average Income	Average Adjusted Income
1	4	4	\$ 609.25	\$575.91
2	8	8	\$ 711.38	\$663.04
3	5	5	\$1,210.49	\$1,075.83
4	3	3	\$1,502.08	\$1,426.52
TOTAL	20	20	\$934.34	\$869.33

Source: Palmetto Fairburn Union City Housing Authorities

Housing needs among local residents are measured as a portion of the Area Median Income (AMI). Palmetto is in the Atlanta Metropolitan Area. The United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) reports that the fiscal Year 2005 median family income for the Atlanta area is \$70,250. HUD makes adjustments to median family income for family size. The HUD FY 05 income limits for 30%, 50%, and 80% of the Median Income per number in a household are listed below in Table 3.13. Those following within the in the 50% to 80% category are considered low income. Those following at or below the 50% category are considered to be very low income.

Table 3.13: Income Limits by Percentage of Palmetto Area Median Income and Number of Persons in Household

Number of Persons	30% AMI	50% AMI	80% AMI
1	\$14,950	\$24,900	\$39,850
2	\$17,100	\$28,500	\$45,550
3	\$19,200	\$32,050	\$51,250
4	\$21,350	\$35,600	\$56,950
5	\$23,050	\$38,450	\$61,500
6	\$24,800	\$41,300	\$66,050
7	\$26,500	\$44,150	\$70,650
8	\$28,200	\$47,000	\$75,200

Source: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

Table 3.14 presents data on the level of poverty in the City of Palmetto. The U. S. Census Bureau reported that 11.29% of all the residents of Palmetto fell below the poverty level in 1999. Over one-half of all those living below the poverty level were in the 18 to 64 years age bracket. The rates of poverty among the very young, under 5 years old, and the elderly, over 64 years old, were not high. The relatively high level of poverty among 18 to 64 year olds, generally considered to be the prime wage earning years, may indicate a need to implement a rental voucher program in the community.

Table 3.14: Poverty Status in 1999 by Age for Palmetto

Age	#	%
Total:	3,207	100.00%
Income in 1999 below poverty level:	362	11.29%
Under 5 years	43	1.34%
5 years	8	0.25%
6 to 11 years	70	2.18%
12 to 17 years	38	1.18%
18 to 64 years	184	5.74%
65 to 74 years	9	0.28%
75 years and over	10	0.31%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

3.7.2 Homeless Population

An accurate count of the homeless population within the City of Palmetto is not available at this time. Nationwide, homeless persons are some of the most difficult individuals to enumerate. Although no specific data are available for homeless residents in Palmetto, the Metro Atlanta Tri-Jurisdictional Collaborative on Homelessness conducted a one-day census on of the homeless for its service area on March 12, 2003. The Tri-Jurisdictional Collaborative's service area includes the City of Atlanta, Fulton County, and DeKalb County. The results of the homeless census are reported below in Table 3.15. As the census indicates, the vast majority of the homeless in the Atlanta area resided within the City of Atlanta. Based on the work of the Tri-Jurisdictional Collaborative and the location and size of the City of Palmetto, one could reasonably assume that homelessness is not a major problem in the community.

Table 3.15: Homeless Census Population Totals by Jurisdiction

Jurisdiction	Unsheltered Homeless	Sheltered Homeless	Total	%
City of Atlanta	1,943	3,984	5,927	85.2
Balance of DeKalb Count	126	587	713	10.3
Balance of Fulton County	84	232	316	4.5
Totals	2,153	4,803	6,956	100

Source: The 2003 Metro Atlanta Tri-Jurisdictional Collaborative Homeless Census and Survey

3.7.3 Disabled Population

The disabled represent another segment of the overall population that often requires special housing needs. Table 3.16 presents data on the extent and type of disabled citizens in the City of Palmetto. With over 1 in 5 residents in the community classified as having some type of disability there is reason to assume that the City should devote some attention to the special housing needs of this group.

Table 3.16 Disability Status of the Civilian Noninstitutionalized Population

Category	Status
With a disability	627
Percent with a disability	21.7
Population 5 to 15 years	550
With a disability	24
Percent with a disability	4.4
Sensory	0
Physical	0
Mental	24
Self-care	0
Population 16 to 64 years	2,054
With a disability	531
Percent with a disability	25.9
Sensory	66
Physical	152
Mental	127
Self-care	9
Going outside the home	175
Employment disability	374
Population 65 years and over	280
With a disability	72
Percent with a disability	25.7
Sensory	46
Physical	55
Mental	18
Self-care	0
Going outside the home	33
Population 18 to 34 years	835
With a disability	213
Percent enrolled in college or graduate school	5.2
Percent not enrolled and with a bachelor's degree or higher	0
No disability	622
Percent enrolled in college or graduate school	6.1
Percent not enrolled and with a bachelor's degree or higher	4.3
Population 21 to 64 years	1,815
With a disability	455
Percent employed	44.2
No disability	1,360
Percent employed	75.4

3.8 Assessment and Future Housing Needs

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs has calculated projections of future housing needs for the City of Palmetto through the year 2025. The projections indicate that from 2000 to 2025 the City will need to increase its overall housing stock from 1,225 units to 1,830 units. The projected needed units represent nearly a 50% increase in housing stock. The projections also indicate that the city will experience increases in nearly all types of structures; however, the rate of increase in multi family units will be greater than the rate of increase in single family detached units. One could assume that most single unit, detached structures will be owner occupied while most multi family structure will be renter occupied. The increase in multi family housing seems reasonable considering the rapid growth in the South Atlanta Metropolitan area where Palmetto is located.

The housing projections presented here only represent a starting point for addressing future housing needs. Palmetto's location close to Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport and the economic activities that it generates could create a need for many more housing units than the Department of Community Affairs has projected. The City should closely monitor housing conditions throughout the 20 year planning horizon of this plan in order to insure that the housing needs of its residents are being met. Zoning ordinances and other land use regulations along with capital budgets should be designed to provide the land and infrastructure necessary to meet the community's housing needs.

Table 3.17: Palmetto's Future Housing Needs 2005 – 2025

Category	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
TOTAL Housing Units	1,485	2,216	2,705	3,305	4,039
Single Units (detached)	1,006	1,507	1,785	2,148	2,625
Single Units (attached)	7	11	11	13	16
Double Units	117	177	216	264	323
3 to 9 Units	277	443	595	760	969
10 to 19 Units	29	44	54	66	81
20 to 49 Units	0	0	0	0	0
50 or more Units	15	22	27	33	40
Mobile Home or Trailer	10	15	22	26	36
All Other	0	0	0	0	0

Source: *City of Palmetto and Keck & Wood, Inc. and, The Collaborative Firm, LLC.*

4. NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

The Natural and Cultural Resources Element of the plan inventories sensitive, historic, archeological and cultural resources within the City. It assesses the need for protection and management of these resources and goals/strategies for appropriate use of same.

4.0 Natural Resources

4.1 Public Water Supply Sources

Inventory

The City of Palmetto's water supply is taken from two reservoirs located west of the City in the Cedar Creek basin from which the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GA EPD) has permitted the City to withdraw up to 576,000 gallons of water per day. The older of the reservoirs is located on property owned by the Georgia Baptist Children's Home and north of the water treatment plant. This reservoir is utilized through an agreement with the property owner. This reservoir has a high water surface level of approximately 24 million gallons. Its drainage area is around ½ square mile. The second reservoir is west of the first reservoir at the confluence of five (5) streams. The City owns this reservoir. This facility has a drainage area of approximately three (3) square miles and a storage volume when new of about 60 million gallons.

Stormwater runoff is the primary cause of most pollution in the waterways of Metropolitan Atlanta. Heavy erosion and sediment deposits/silt degrade the streams ability to support aquatic habitats. Existing regulations and programs are in place to address stormwater runoff including Soil and Erosion Control Ordinances; the model ordinances and implementation schedule by the Metropolitan North Georgia Water District to assist local governments effectively address stormwater management issues; and the Adopt A-Stream Programs.

Escalating growth continues to put pressure on an already limited water supply in the State and South Fulton area. The extended drought from 1998 through 2002 created serious shortages. The ongoing Georgia, Alabama and Florida water allocation negotiations for the Apalachicola-Flint and Alabama-Coosa – Tallapoosa river systems will dictate future water withdrawals.

Following the extended drought many of Georgia's drinking water reservoirs were at dangerously low levels. Outdoor watering bans and even more restrictive limitations were put in place by the State and/or localities. An ongoing odd-even restriction on non essential outdoor watering currently applies.

The Cities of Palmetto, Fairburn and Union City have joined together to form the South Fulton Municipal Regional Water and Sewer Authority (created by the General Assembly in 2000). The Authority's purpose is to acquire and develop adequate sources of water

supply including reservoirs, treatment facilities, transmission lines and the treatment of wastewater for its member cities.

Engineering studies have determined an additional reliable water supply is a future need for the member cities due to the problems facing the Atlanta Water System and the anticipated future growth of the area. In 2003 the Authority issued revenue bonds for the development of a reservoir, treatment plant and transmission lines to serve the member cities. The project is currently in the engineering design and permit application phase.

Assessment

Raw water supply from the City's two (2) drinking water reservoirs and the several water treatment plant expansions and upgrades have provided an adequate water supply capacity for the immediate future. However, for the long term the City will require additional raw water supply and treatment capacity. This is being addressed through the activities of the South Fulton Municipal Regional Water and Sewer Authority which is in the design/permit application phase of developing a regional water supply reservoir and related facilities.

The City recognizes the impact of various factors on its public water system and the raw water supply in particular. Through appropriate ordinances, regulations and enforcement the City will continue to address the most significant problem of stormwater runoff through erosion control and sedimentation and stormwater management measures.

The City also recognizes the impact of unpredictable drought conditions, population growth and development on water supplies and will continue State imposed water conservation measures through odd-even limitations on non-essential outdoor watering.

4.2 Water Supply Watersheds

Inventory

A watershed is defined as a ridge dividing two drainage areas and the area drained by a river. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) defines water supply watersheds as "those areas of land upstream from a governmentally owned public drinking intake." DNR has two (2) categories of watersheds: Large which is more than 100 square miles and small which is fewer than 100 square miles.

According to data obtained from DNR, parts of Palmetto are within three different watersheds: Line Creek, Cedar Creek, and Alexander Creek. The Line Creek water supply watershed supplies water to Fayette County and the City of Newnan. The Cedar Creek watershed supplies Palmetto with water as does Coweta County's Alexander Creek watershed. According to DNR minimum planning criteria, these watersheds are considered small water supply watersheds.

Protection of water supply watersheds are critical to ensuring safe, reliable drinking water quality. As part of the Georgia Planning Act, DNR established minimum criteria for protection of watersheds and water supply. The City of Palmetto adopted a Water Supply Watershed District. The District is established as an overlay of the City's Zoning Ordinance and defined by the ridgelines of the respective watersheds and the boundary of a radius of seven (7) miles upstream of the city water supply reservoirs. These overlays are further delineated on the Water Supply Watershed Protection District Overlay map. The protection criteria includes:

- Maintain 100-foot buffer and 150-foot setback on each side of perennial stream (within 7-mile radius).
- New hazardous materials handlers must perform operations on impermeable pad having a spill and leak collection system.
- No septic tanks or drainfields are allowed within a 150-foot stream setback area.
- Limited impervious surfaces to 25% of total watershed land area.
- New hazardous waste treatment or disposal facilities are prohibited.
- New sanitary landfills are allowed only if they have synthetic liner and leachate collection systems.
- Maintain a 150-foot buffer around reservoirs.

Exempted land uses of the ordinance include:

- Land use permitted prior to the adoption of the ordinance.
- Utilities that cannot be located outside the stream corridor.
- Forestry, agricultural and mining activities within approved Best Management Practices.

Assessment

The Water Supply Watershed District enacted by the City of Palmetto establishes measures to protect the quality of the City's water supply. In addition, Fulton County has adopted a South Fulton Stream Protection Ordinance which establish regulations that address development within water supply watersheds in unincorporated Fulton County which places emphasis on buffer and setbacks and has a collateral positive impact on the City water supply.

The problem of stormwater runoff is not solved by the City's Watershed District alone. The City must continue to emphasize soil erosion and sedimentation control measures and move forward within the model ordinances, or comparable regulations, controlling stormwater runoff required by the Metropolitan North Georgia Water District.

4.3 Groundwater Recharge Areas

Groundwater recharge is the replenishment of an aquifer with water from the land surface. In addition to precipitation, other sources of recharge to an aquifer are stream

and lake or pond seepage, irrigation return flow (both from canals and fields), interaquifer flows, and urban recharge (from water mains, septic tanks, sewers, drainage ditches). These recharge areas usually occur on large flat surfaces where soils are thick.

The Georgia DNR has mapped all of the recharge areas in the state which are likely to have the greatest vulnerability to pollution. DNR's map indicates that none of the identified groundwater recharge areas are located in the City of Palmetto.

Assessment

There are five (5) ground recharge areas identified by the Georgia DNR in Fulton County. None are located within the City of Palmetto or in immediate proximity thereto.

4.4 Wetlands

Inventory

The Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments in 1972 established the Section 404 Regulatory Program. Under the Act, it is unlawful to discharge dredged or fill material into waters of the United States, without prior authorization from the US Army Corps of Engineers (COE). "Waters of the United States" includes lakes, streams, tidal waters, as well as wetlands."

Freshwater wetlands are defined by federal law as those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs and similar areas. Under natural conditions, wetlands help to maintain and enhance water quality by filtering out sediments and associated non-point source pollutants from adjacent land uses.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service define wetlands as "lands transitional between terrestrial and aquatic systems where the water table is usually at or near the surface or the land is covered by shallow water. For purposes of this classification wetlands must have one or more of the following three attributes: (1) at least periodically, the land supports predominantly hydrophytes; (2) the substrate is predominantly undrained hydric soil; and (3) the substrate is non-soil and is saturated with water or covered by shallow water at some time during the growing season of each year". Wetlands usually lie in low-lying areas or along rivers, lakes or creeks where they are subject to cyclic flooding.

According to the National Wetlands Inventory conducted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, wetlands within Palmetto occur generally in the areas surrounding the city's major streams (Shoal Creek and Little Bear Creek).

Assessment

Any development proposed for location in a wetland must be reviewed and authorized by the United States Army Corp of Engineers (COE). The City will continue to closely monitor the identified wetland areas within the City in order to protect those locations from becoming filled and destroyed. The City should review the County’s Watershed Protection Ordinance (or similar ordinance) for potential incorporation into the City’s development regulations.

4.5 Protected Mountains

No lands within Palmetto fall within Georgia DNR’s definition of a “protected mountain”.

Assessment

This section is not applicable to the City of Palmetto.

4.6 Protected River Corridors

Palmetto is not located in a protected river corridor.

Assessment

This section is not applicable to the City of Palmetto.

4.7 Coastal Resources

Palmetto is not located in a protected coastal resource area.

Assessment

This section is not applicable to the City of Palmetto.

4.8 Flood Plains

Inventory

A floodplain area is a relatively flat land area which may be adjacent to an active stream or adjacent to a river channel that is typically formed by deposition of sediments during major floods. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) identifies and maps most areas in the City that may be subject to flooding. FEMA uses the 100-year flood (1% statistical chance of flooding every year) as the measurement standard.

Areas that are mapped within 100-year flood plain are restricted in the type and intensity of development. These restrictions prevent the placement of structures or fill grading which would either be damaged by a flood or increase the potential of upstream or downstream flooding.

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

The 100-year floodplain limits development only in the northwest section of Palmetto. The floodplain is located along Little Bear Creek and occupies approximately fifty (50) acres of land between Toombs Street and where the creek exits the incorporated area near the sewage treatment plant.

Assessment

The City of Palmetto carefully monitors development to ensure that land development and associated activities do not adversely affect the functionality of floodplains. The City's plan review process includes a review component to check if the project is within a designated flood plain area.

4.9 Soil Types

Inventory

The predominant soils within the area of Palmetto are in the Cecil and Lloyd series. These soils, where undisturbed, generally consist of sandy or clay loamy surface soils and red clay subsoils. Also found in the area, but in far less quantities, are soils in the Madison, Appling, Chewacla series, and mixed alluvial soils. The Cecil, Lloyd, Madison and Appling series soils are upland soils, which the Chewacla and mixed alluvial soils are found in the wetland areas along the creeks.

Assessment

The runoff of sedimentation due primarily to the impact of development land disturbing activities (clearing, grubbing, grading, etc.) and to a lesser degree flooding is the principle negative impact to the quality of topsoil surfaces. Accordingly, the City must continue to aggressively enforce the provisions of its Soil and Erosion and Sedimentation Ordinance by continuing a thorough plan review process to ensure adequate mitigation measures and adequate inspection staff to police enforcement in the field.

4.10 Steep Slopes

Inventory

The physiographic features in the South Fulton County area are dominated by the ridge that extends from Atlanta through Palmetto. The ridge top elevations in the area of Palmetto range from approximately 1,000 feet to 1,050 feet above mean sea level. The land slopes to the northwest approximately eight miles until reaching the Chattahoochee River at an elevation of 700 feet (+/-). The elevations within the incorporated area of Palmetto range between approximately 900 feet and 1,050 feet above the mean sea level. The general surface features of the area are characterized by rolling to hilly and broad smooth uplands to steep V-shaped valleys along the drainage courses. Most of these areas are forested or covered with other forms of protective vegetation.

Assessment

Steep slopes are generally more prevalent along drainage courses including stream banks. The City's Watershed Supply District provides protection to many of these areas by means of buffer requirements. The City's Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Ordinance require steep slope stabilization. The City should continue to carefully monitor any land disturbance activities and development impacting steep slopes. The provisions of the ordinances referenced above should be used as tools to mitigate the adverse affect of such activities on steep slopes.

4.11 Prime Agricultural and Forest Land

Inventory

This section includes acres valued for agricultural or forestry production that may warrant special management practices. The primary uses in this category are farming, timber production and mineral recovery. A land use survey conducted in 1987 indicated that approximately 220 acres of land in Palmetto were classified as agricultural. Much of the land so classified at that time consisted of small family farming operations. In the ensuing years since that study the amount of land used for agricultural or forestry production in Palmetto has decreased to minimal levels. According to U.S. Bureau of Census information in 2000 only nine (9) persons or 0.7% of the population in Palmetto were involved in employment which would fall within the classification. According to the Fulton County Comprehensive Plan, Fulton County land area in farms has fallen from 62.49% in 1930 to 8.26% in 2002. In the City of Palmetto for the year 2002 only 0.13% of the land use was for agricultural purposes according to the Georgia Department of Revenue Consolidated Summary of the City's tax digest.

While that percentage has decreased dramatically the same source reports that there are parts of South Fulton with concentrations of prime agricultural and forest land. However, the City of Palmetto is not the location of significant large concentrations. Additionally,

the future Land Use Plan does not contemplate this is a significant land use moving forward.

The City does, however, recognize that the preservation of open spaces, both private and public in an urbanized environment is desirable for the general welfare of the populace. Accordingly, the City has adopted a Conservation Subdivision/Open Space Overlay District and Greenspace requirements for certain residential zoning districts. That ordinance does protect existing healthy native forests of at least one (1) contiguous acre; individual existing healthy trees greater than eight (8) inches, as measured at a point four and a half feet above the ground; and any prime agricultural lands of at least five (5) acres of contiguous area.

Assessment

The City of Palmetto does not have significant large concentrations of prime agricultural and farm lands consistent with the definitions of this section. However, where small dispersed areas may exist the City has in place a Conservation Subdivision/Open Space Overlay District to protect this land use within specified residential zoning districts. The City should continue to carefully monitor development subject to the provisions of this overlay district and apply protective limitations as appropriate.

4.12 Plant and Animal Habitats

Inventory

The United States Congress passed the Endangered Species Act in 1973. Following that, the State of Georgia passed first the Wildflower Preservation Act of 1973 and the Endangered Wildlife Act of 1973. As a result of these laws, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) began efforts to list native species of plants and animals that are considered endangered, threatened, rare, or unusual, therefore designating these as “protected species”.

Both the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and Georgia DNR’s Natural Heritage Inventory Program continue to refine the inventory of plants, animals, and natural habitats that are listed as threatened or endangered. As a result, four (4) animal species and seven (7) plant species have been identified.

<i>Species</i>	<i>Habitat</i>
Animal	
Bald eagle <i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Inland waterways and estuarine areas in Georgia
Bluestripe shiner <i>Cyprinella callitaema</i>	Brownwater streams
Highscale shiner <i>Notropis hypsilepis</i>	Blackwater and brownwater streams
Greater Jumprock <i>Scartomyzon lachneri</i>	Small to large streams in swift current over rocky substrate

<i>Plants</i>	
Bay star-vine <i>Schisandra glabra</i>	Twining on subcanopy and understory trees/shrubs in rich alluvial woods
Piedmont barren strawberry <i>Waldseinia lobata</i>	Rocy acedic woods along streams with mountain laurel; rarely in drier upland oak-hickory-pine woods
Pool Sprite, Snorkelwort <i>Amphianthus pusillus</i>	Shallow pools on granite outcrops, where water collects after a rain. Pools are less than 1 foot deep and rock rimmed
Missouri Rockcress <i>Arabis missouriensis</i>	Granite and amphibolite outcrops
Large-flowered Yellow Ladyslipper <i>Cypripedium parviflorum var. pubescens</i>	Upland oak-hickory-pine forest; mixed hardwood forests
Pink Ladysliper <i>Cypripedium acaule</i>	Upland oak-hickory-pine forest; piney woods
American Ginsent <i>Panax quinquefolius</i>	Mesic hardwood forests; cove hardwood forests

Source: United States Fish & Wildlife Services, Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Assessment

The City’s Conservation Subdivision/Open Space Development Overlay District specifically protects identified populations of endangered or threatened species, or the habitat for such species. The City should continue to carefully monitor development in areas where habitats vulnerable to land development are potentially jeopardized and utilize the provisions of this ordinance and other available state/federal regulations to mitigate adverse impact. The City should explore planning criteria to expand the influence of the Overlay District referenced herein to regulate land development surrounding habitat areas in other parts of the City.

4.13 Major Parks, Recreation and Conservation Areas

Inventory

There are no major federal, state or regional Park, Recreation or Conservation areas within the corporate limits of Palmetto. The City’s existing parks are local neighborhood in nature and consist of approximately eight (8) acres. Adjacent to the City is a Fulton County Community Park totaling thirty (30) acres which provides a wide range of recreation facilities and activities. This topic is discussed in greater detail in the Community Facilities Element of the Plan.

Assessment

The City has a relatively small number of acres dedicated to public recreation but these facilities are centrally located, well designed and layed out so as to provide multi-activity opportunities. In addition, the availability of the Fulton County Community Park immediately adjacent to the City limits offering a wide range of facilities and activities

effectively raises the availability of such services to Palmetto residents. The City needs to explore the possibility of expanding its neighborhood park inventory and working closely with Fulton County to ensure the continued availability and enhancement of the adjacent Community Park. The City should also explore the need for a recreation facility for “inside” activities in the form of a multi-use gymnasium facility. The City should explore the potential for passive recreation opportunities in conjunction with the Greenspace Conservation Subdivision regulations.

4.14 Scenic Views and Sites

Inventory

No scenic view or sites have been identified in Palmetto which warrant special consideration. However, the Georgia Department of Transportation has designated three (3) roads in South Fulton as Georgia Scenic Byways. The designation area for two of these roads, Hutcheson Ferry and Cochran Mill, while not within the corporate limits of Palmetto, abut the City’s eastern corporate limits at their intersection. In addition, the City is a participant in the Roosevelt Highway (U.S. 29) Corridor Enhancement Plan sponsored by South Fulton Revitalization Incorporated.

Assessment

While there are no identified scenic views or sites within the City limits of Palmetto multiple approaches to the City are either Scenic Byways designations or are under assessment for corridor enhancement improvements. The City should cooperate with Fulton County in their process of identifying and protecting tree canopies, scenic vistas, outcroppings and other elements along these approaches. The City should be prepared to participate more directly if any of these areas are annexed by the City. The City should continue to participate in the Roosevelt Highway (U.S. 29) Corridor Enhancement Study.

4.15 Cultural Resources

4.16 Residential Resources

Only two (2) properties in the City of Palmetto, both residential in nature, are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The first is the Thomas P. Arnold House, located at 518 S. Main Street. This house was listed in the register on May10, 1984. The second property, the Levi Ballard House, is located at U. S. 29 and S.R. 154. The house was listed on the National Register on October 22, 1980.

As the Housing Element more completely inventories and assesses the most dominant type of housing in the community is the single unit detached structure (70% of the total inventory in 2000). The remainder of the housing stock is primarily some type of multi-family. Just over one-half (52.3%) of the current housing stock was built before 1979.

Just less than 30% of the housing stock was built before 1950 and 13.5% was built before 1939.

There are a number of distinct residential styles most often reflective of the period in which they were constructed. The residential area contiguous to downtown show similar architectural styles and character from the historic origins of the community. In other areas, residential properties range from the smaller units of the first generation of merchant, service, railroad workers and tradesman who represented the transition from a farming community to a mercantile based community. Subsequent residential styles included single family detached one level “ranch” type houses of the typical tract subdivision. More recent styles include represent styles from more contemporary subdivisions and smaller lot, higher density multi-story structures.

Assessment

While there are only two (2) residential properties on the National Register of Historic Places given the age and diversity of the housing stock and the transition in the community’s economic base there are likely other structures which would also qualify.

A comprehensive survey to identify all historically significant residential properties followed by a plan to identify structures for their preservation should be considered. Some of the older houses are endangered due to their poor condition.

4.17 Commercial Resources

The City of Palmetto has three (3) primary commercial type resources; the downtown district (which is likely eligible for a local or National Historic designation); typical strip type commercial centers; and stand alone commercial type structures. The downtown commercial district is characterized by small, specialty shops, professional/service offices, retail and older architecturally unique structures.

Strip Commercial development occurs primarily along Main Street (U.S. 29/S.R.14) and to a lesser extent along portions of Fayetteville Road south of the railroad tracks. This type of development does not exhibit any uniformity in appearance and characteristically has extensive paved areas with bright signage.

Stand alone commercial type structures occur primarily along the U.S. 29/S.R.14 approaches to the City and the portion known as Main Street which passes through the heart of the City. These structures may range from recently constructed buildings to long established locations or conversions from residential to commercial use. Structures may be metal buildings, remodeled and converted residential units, or more aesthetically pleasing class A commercial space. These range from repair/service to retail and professional.

Assessment

There has been some interest expressed in designating the downtown area as either a local historic district or proposing its nomination for the National Register. The City should consult downtown property owners, business operators and other stakeholders to determine the level of interest and formulate an evaluation and implementation strategy for this action.

The City should consider a corridor overlay district to more effectively control the appearance of commercial development along primary entry ways to the City, the maintenance of these developments over time and improved traffic safety, access control and traffic movement.

4.18 Industrial Resources

Industrial type resources are limited in the City of Palmetto. The major exception is Spurlin Industries which produces whirlpool baths and employees 75 persons. In 2000 manufacturing employees represented 18.1% of those in the workforce from Palmetto. There are no industrial resources of historical significance in the City. For a more detailed discussion see the Economic Development Element of this plan.

Assessment

At present industrial resources within the corporate limits of Palmetto represent a small percentage of the land use and moderate percentage of the employment sector. Only one manufacturing facility ranks in the top ten (10) employers in the City. There is no indication of historically significant historical properties. For a more detail discussion see the Economic Development Element of this plan.

4.19 Institutional Resources

Inventory

Institutional resources in Palmetto fall into three (3) primary categories: 1) government buildings; 2) churches or religious affiliated organizations; and 3) schools. None of the identified institutional resources have been determined eligible for local or Nation Register historic designation. The public and quasi-public institutional buildings are identified, inventoried, described and assessed in the Community Facilities Element of this plan.

Assessment

While no institutional properties have been identified as historically significant they have never been formally inventoried. As part of the comprehensive historical survey

suggested as part of the residential resource section institutional properties should also be included.

4.20 Transportation Resources

Inventory

CSX Railroad which bisects the City is an important transportation asset and there are commercial associations as well as some historical significance. What was then the Atlanta and LaGrange Railroad was completed to Palmetto in 1851. The railroad was built on a high ridge of land which runs on an easterly parallel to the Chattahoochee River from Atlanta to West Point. Palmetto which had been primarily a farming town, found itself becoming a railroad town. Associated with the railroad there are three (3) overpasses (in poor condition) located at the railroad track and Church Street, the railroad track and Fayetteville Road and the railroad track and Thornton Road. In addition there is an abandoned depot building adjacent to the railroad track on Main Street (U.S. 29/SR 14) owned by the City.

As previously noted there is a Scenic Byway designation for two (2) roads, Hutcheson Ferry and Cochran Mill which while not currently extended into the City of Palmetto adjoins the corporate limits east of the City.

There are no formal historical designations for any of the locations referenced in this section.

Assessment

As part of the suggested comprehensive historical survey previously suggested these transportation resources should be included.

4.21 Rural Resources

Inventory

Fulton County and the City of Palmetto originally developed as farming (agricultural) areas which could be considered to be rural resources. However, the City has transitioned from primarily a farming town to first a railroad town, then subsequently a mercantile center and now a more diverse economic center. As the City has developed, there are few, if any, rural resources remaining within the City.

Assessment

There are no identified rural resources requiring special attention within the City of Palmetto.

4.22 Other Historical, Archaeological and Cultural Resources

Inventory

The City of Palmetto has a rich history beginning with the first know development in the area that was eventually to become Palmetto in 1833. The next step in the process of development was the arrival in the 1840's of Willis P. Menefee who is sometimes called the "father of the town". On February 18, 1854 the town of Palmetto was granted a Charter by the State Legislature. Palmetto was primarily a farming town until under the influence of the railroad found itself becoming a railroad community. The City has since transitioned to a mercantile center and subsequently to a more diverse economic center. There are, however, no areas known to possess archeological or cultural significance identified by responsible agencies private or public.

Assessment

The City should give consideration to initiating surveying the community for any unidentified archeological resources associated with the old history of the community.

4.23 Assessment of Current and Future Needs

- The City's public water supply sources and water supply watersheds are critical natural resources. The City has proactively taken appropriate regulatory, protection and enforcement steps to guard these natural resources in the form of a water supply watershed overlay district which provides certain protection on criteria addressing buffers, setbacks, septic tanks, impervious surfaces, etc. and in the form of a Conservation Subdivision/Open Space Development Overlay District which is intended to provide for the preservation of open space and greenspace for watershed protection and the nonstructural management of stormwater runoff.
- As it relates to other important natural resources such as wetlands, steep slopes, agricultural lands/forest, plant/animal habitats, archaeological sites, and scenic viewsheds, the Conservation Subdivision/Open Space ordinance also places these resources where found, or if identified in the future, in either primary or secondary conservation areas for their protection.

- The City must continue to be vigilant in applying these ordinances as applicable in its land development review process and appropriately enforcing its provisions in actual practice. Adequate and properly trained staff (or outside resources) will be necessary to continue this activity. The City will need to periodically review and update the ordinances as appropriate. Local elected officials and staff should continue to keep themselves informed and trained in evolving regulations, standards, tools, etc. in this field.
- The City must continue to address stormwater runoff not only through the existing ordinances in place, such as the Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Ordinance, but also by adopting the appropriate and applicable model ordinances of the Metropolitan North Georgia Water District addressing this matter. Adequate and properly trained staff (or outside resources) must be available.
- The 100 year floodplain limits development only in the northwest section of Palmetto. The floodplain is located along Little Bear Creek and occupies approximately fifty (50) acres of land between Toombs Street and where the creek exits the incorporated area near the sewage treatment plant.
- Limitations of soils are primarily slope related and could, in many instances, be overcome. Due to the chance of flooding, the Chewacla and mixed alluvial soils are not suited for building development, but could support seasonal passive recreational activities.
- Two (2) residential properties in the City have been identified and placed on the National Register of Historic Places. There has been some discussion regarding a local or National Historic designation for the downtown area. The inventory of cultural historic residential, commercial, industrial, transportation, rural and archaeological resources found no additional identified resources of historical significance.
- The City could likely benefit from a comprehensive survey, particularly for residential and downtown resources and for certain of the other cultural resources listed above, to identify all historically significant properties followed by a plan to identify strategies for their preservation. This step could be augmented by a public awareness/education component to encourage participation in preservation activities.
- The City has taken proactive steps to ensure the adequacy of its long-term water supply as a member of the South Fulton Municipal Water and Sewer Authority. Engineering and permit application is

proceeding by the Authority on the development of a water supply reservoir, treatment plant and transmission lines to serve Palmetto, Fairburn and Union City.

5. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES ELEMENT

This element provides an assessment of a wide range of community facilities and services and examines their adequacy for serving the present and future needs of the public. The information gathered in this analysis is helpful in coordinating the planning of public facilities and services, thus enabling the City to make the most efficient use of existing infrastructure as well as determining future investments for capital improvements, long-term operations and maintenance costs.

5.0 Transportation Network

See Transportation Element

5.1 Water Supply and Treatment

Inventory

The City of Palmetto presently owns and operates an approximately 560,000-gallon per day water treatment plant. Constructed in three phases, the plant is a conventional surface treatment facility utilizing pre chemical addition, flocculation, settling, filtration and disinfection. The City's raw water supply is taken from two reservoirs located west of the city in the Cedar Creek basin from which the Environmental Protection Division of the Department of Natural Resources permitted the City to withdrawal of up to 576,000 gallons per day. The older of the reservoirs is located on property owned by the Georgia Baptist Children's Home and north of the treatment plant. With a high water surface level of approximately 25 acres, the reservoir storage capacity is approximately 24 million gallons. Its drainage area is around ½ square miles augmenting the reported spring feed. The other reservoir is west of the first reservoir at the confluence of five streams. This facility has a drainage area of approximately 3 square miles and, when new, had a storage volume of about 60 million gallons. Historical water plant production data is presented in *Table 5.1*. Peak production rates remain within the permitted plant capacity. Water production rates have remained constant during the past five years, primarily reflecting changes in customer usage. For 2003, the average monthly production was 0.34 MGD.

High-service pumps at the water plant deliver water to the distribution system. The system consists of approximately 27 miles of 6-inch, 8-inch, and 12-inch mains. The mains are in generally good condition with breaks receiving immediate repair.

TABLE 5.1 – City of Palmetto Water Production

<u>Year</u>	<u>Minimum MGD</u>	<u>Average MGD</u>	<u>Maximum MGD</u>
2001	0.27	0.34	0.43
2002	0.23	0.35	0.49
2003	0.29	0.34	0.51
2004 Jan	0.30	0.33	0.42
Feb	0.30	0.32	0.41
Mar	0.31	0.33	0.38
Apr	0.31	0.33	0.40
May	0.33	0.36	0.40
June	0.31	0.35	0.43
July	0.32	0.39	0.41
Aug	0.33	0.38	0.49
Sept	0.32	0.38	0.44
Oct	0.33	0.37	0.44
Nov	0.31	0.33	0.38
Dec	0.30	0.33	0.39

Source: City of Palmetto, Monthly Operating Reports

This distribution system supplies water to all developed areas within the limits of the City and to several developed areas immediately adjacent to the limits. Historical water system customer growth during the last five years is presented in *Table 5.2*. The system currently has approximately 1,243 residential and 186 non-residential customers. *Table 5.3* provides a list of the largest water users.

Two elevated tanks provide water storage. The oldest is a 75,000-gallon unit constructed in 1935. The second is a 250,000-gallon tank erected in 1970. Both are in good condition and well maintained.

TABLE 5.2 – Water System Customers

Year	Residential	Commercial/Industrial	Total
1999	1,075	126	1,203
2000	1,081	133	1,214
2001	1,097	158	1,255
2002	1,157	156	1,313
2003	1,243	186	1,429

Source: City of Palmetto

TABLE 5.3 – Largest Water Customers - 2003-2004

<u>Customer</u>	<u>Total Annual Usage, 1000 gal</u>	<u>Total Annual Billing</u>
Genesis Garden Apartments	7,113	\$ 21,491
Georgia Baptist Children's Home	5,461	\$ 16,526
Fulton County	2,281	\$ 7,078
Ballard Crossing Chevron	1,247	\$ 3,904
Pine Grove Apartments	1,167	\$ 3,546
Spurlin Industries	997	\$ 3,034
Bojangles	861	\$ 2,628
Dairy Queen	769	\$ 2,352
Bradley's Big Buy	691	\$ 2,169
Palmetto Coin Laundry	643	\$ 1,974

Source: City of Palmetto

Assessment

The approximately 27 miles of 6-inch, 8-inch and 12-inch water mains are in generally good condition with breaks receiving immediate repair. The two (2) elevated water storage tanks are in good condition and well maintained.

The several water treatment plant expansions and upgrades have provided a generous treated water supply capability for the immediate future. Before such capacity can be utilized, additional clear well storage and high service pumping will be needed. These facilities can be installed when need arises.

However, Palmetto and its neighboring municipalities in South Fulton (Fairburn and Union City) are concerned about the long-term adequacy of their respective and cumulative raw water supplies and treatment capacity. The urban growth of the metropolitan Atlanta area and the capacity of existing water systems to support same will surpass the present resources ability to provide an adequate water supply for future demand.

Due to these concerns and recurring water outages on the City of Atlanta System, the three (3) South Fulton cities formed the South Fulton Municipal Regional Water and Sewer Authority to define alternative water sources for the area's growing water supply needs. It is anticipated the regional water system will enable the Authority's members, including Palmetto, to meet growing future water supply needs. A population, household and water consumption analysis has documented that consumption demand will require an additional water supply resources and treatment capacity beyond 2030 and through 2050.

A preliminary engineering report has explored water supply alternatives and facilities. A reservoir site with a 12.0 MGD withdrawal rate has been identified.

To utilize the reservoir described above a water treatment plant is needed to process reservoir water into potable water needed to serve the Authority's member cities. The exact location of the facility has not yet been firmly selected but will be in the area north of U.S. Highway 29 between Fairburn and Palmetto. Approximately 50 acres will be required to accommodate the treatment plant and a raw water storage impoundment.

Initial capacity of the plant will be a 2.0 million gallon per day conventional rate (2 gallons per square foot of filter area) facility with the ability to operate at a high rate level of 4.0 MGD (4gallons per square foot of filter area). Based on current projections, the initial treatment facility should be adequate until 2015. The planning period for the initial facility is less than normally considered adequate for a water treatment plant. However, because the Authority is in its formative years, it is necessary to keep cost as minimal as possible to allow the Authority to begin operations and generate a revenue base. It should be anticipated that not long after the initial plant is placed in operation, the planning for the next expansion will be necessary.

The treatment will include a number of components. An intake station will be located on the reservoir. The tentative site for the station is on its northeast side in the vicinity of S.R. 70. The station will include a pair of submerged intake screens in the middle of the reservoir with water pumps, each of 4.0 MGD capacity will be in the station structure along with associated electrical gear and controls. For security the facility will be enclosed in a chain link fence topped with barbed wire.

From the pumping station, an 18 inch raw water main will transfer water to a small raw water reservoir located on the plant grounds. Capacity of the plant reservoir is set at three days or 12 million gallons. Depending on the final selection of a plant site, the length the raw water main may vary from the length used in this planning document of 46500 feet. The raw water main will be either ductile iron or C905 PVC.

The treatment plant will be a standard surface water treatment plant designed to meet current EPA Safe Drinking Water Act regulations. Processes will include flocculation, settling, filtration, disinfection and distributing pumping. Plant design will be in accordance with *Minimum Standards for Public Water Systems* as published by the Drinking Water Permitting & Engineering Program of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division.

To transport treated water from the plant to the Authority's member cities a system of transmission mains are needed. While actual main lengths may vary depending on the final plant site selection from those used in this report, that variation should not significantly effect overall system planning.

Two finished water transmission mains will be necessary, one feeding Palmetto and a second feeding Fairburn and then Union City. The main to Palmetto is sized at 12 inches with an anticipated length of 12,000 feet. The main to Fairburn and Union City is sized at 16 inches up to the interconnect point with the Fairburn distribution system and from that point to Union City a 14 inch main. To reach Fairburn a length of 30,000 feet is anticipated. From there to Union City a length of 15,000 feet is planned. Exact routing has not been selected due to ongoing studies of the different possibilities and the varying impact of those possibilities. Finished water transmission mains will be either ductile iron or C900 PVC as appropriate for size. As with other component design, the finished water transmission mains will be designed in accordance with *Minimum Standards for Public Water Systems* as published by the Drinking Water Permitting & Engineering Program of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division.

The Authority has issued bonds in the amount of \$41,630,000 for the project which is currently in the engineering design and permit application phase.

5.2 Sewerage System and Wastewater Treatment

Inventory

The Palmetto Wastewater Treatment Facility was constructed and placed into service in 1969 for a design capacity of 0.60 million gallons per day. It is located off Carlton Road on the north side of the City and discharges to Little Bear Creek. The facility is an activated sludge treatment plant, which consists of influent screening, raw wastewater pumping, polymer conditioning, and dewatering on sludge drying beds.

Improvements that have been made to the treatment plant over the past five years include new sludge drying beds, a new polymer feed system, building to house the polymer feed, and dechlorination facilities. While these improvements provided adequate facilities for solids handling and controlling residual, very little has been done to change the main treatment process equipment in 35 years. It is now significantly beyond its useful life, and thus is sorely in need of replacement.

As indicated by the plant performance data presented in *Table 5.4*, the plant currently processes an average daily flow of 0.55 million gallons per day (MGD) for the first seven months of 2004. Peak flows as high as 1.5 MGD were recorded during wet weather periods during 2004, but have reached as high as 2.4 MGD in June 2003 during an extended wet period. High wet weather peaks are attributed to infiltration of groundwater and inflow of storm water during rainfall periods. The high wet weather flows hydraulically overload treatment facility components and are very disruptive in plant treatment processes due to washout of solids, and in particular of infiltration/inflow (I/I); however, this program is still under way, with a few more specific areas requiring isolation and either repairs or replacement to further reduce I/I.

During wet weather periods, the effectiveness of treatment is badly compromised by solids washout, which leads to unwanted discharges of pollutants and violations of the City's effluent discharge permit. In addition, most of the treatment plant hardware is very old, in some state of disrepair and in need of replacement. Since July 2003, the City has been under consent order executed by the EPD, which has resulted in fines, a moratorium of new sewer service connections other than those few that meet certain specific conditions, and development of a compliance plan consisting of long-term corrective actions required to bring the existing treatment facility back into compliance.

Palmetto's wastewater collection system includes 20 miles of 8-inch-diameter through 15-inch-diameter gravity sewers and twelve publicly owned sewage pumping stations. Within the last five years, the City has replaced approximately 8,000 feet of old, deteriorated sewers, which has resulted in the reduction of I/I. The program of sewer replacement is still under way, with only a few more specific areas requiring isolation and either repairs or replacement to further reduce I/I. Based on visual inspection, the collection systems of two mobile home parks have been identified as sources of I/I. The City met with the mobile home park owners, who agreed to make repairs that resulted in reducing nearly 50% of the I/I.

TABLE 5.4 – Wastewater Plant Performance

Year		Flow MGD	BOD5 mg/1		Suspended Solids, mg/1	
			Influent	Effluent	Influent	Effluent
2000	Minimum	0.13	96	2	85	3
	Average	0.45	185	9	150	12
	Maximum	0.94	354	33	286	34
2001	Minimum	0.13	48	3	40	<5
	Average	0.49	85	6	142	8
	Maximum	1.5	250	24	500	34
2002	Minimum	0.25	37	<5	30	<5
	Average	0.47	131	11	118	22
	Maximum	1.1	337	62	390	72
2003	Minimum	0.21	31	2	30	1
	Average	0.65	188	12	127	13
	Maximum	2.42	378	62	501	65
2004*	Minimum	0.40	83	3	72	2
	Average	0.55	268	13	154	17
	Maximum	1.50	539	48	325	83

Source: City of Palmetto, Monthly Operating Reports

* Jan-Jul 2004

The City has upgraded and renovated four of its pump stations in the last five years, including the addition of generators for standby power. In addition, the City is planning to upgrade three more of its pump stations in the next three years. Five pump stations are scheduled for having new autodialers installed, four of them by September 2005, and the fifth by August 2006.

As shown in *Table 5.5*, the number of sewer system customers has grown nearly 22% over for the past five years, with most of that growth occurring in 2002 and 2003, reaching a total of 1,388 customers in 2003. There are no areas within the city limits that are not served by the collection system. Of the 1,207 residential customers, 2 are located outside the City limits; and of the 181 commercial/industrial, only 3 are outside the City. *Table 5.6* presents the list of largest sewer customers.

TABLE 5.5 – Sewer System Customers

<u>Year</u>	<u>Residential</u>	<u>Commercial/Industrial</u>	<u>Total</u>
1999	1,021	119	1,140
2000	1,029	127	1,156
2001	1,034	155	1,189
2002	1,119	153	1,272
2003	1,207	181	1,388

Source: City of Palmetto

TABLE 5.6 – Largest Sewer Customers – 2003-2004

<u>Customer</u>	<u>Total Annual Flow, 1000 gal</u>	<u>Total Annual Billing</u>
South Oaks Mobile Home Park	17,970	\$ 62,929
Sweet Briar Mobile Home Park	10,366	\$ 36,208
Genesis Garden Apartments	7,113	\$ 25,046
Georgia Baptist Children's Home	5,461	\$ 19,147
Fulton County School	2,281	\$ 8,050
Ballard Crossing Chevron	1,247	\$ 4,398
Pine Grove Apartments	1,167	\$ 4,118
Spurlin Industries	997	\$ 3,523
Bojangles	861	\$ 3,047
Dairy Queen	<u>769</u>	\$ <u>2,725</u>
	48,232	\$ 169,191

Source: City of Palmetto

Assessment

Recent growth has been virtually halted by a moratorium on sewer connections as stipulated in the EPD Consent Order. This has generated a significant backlog of development, which is being stopped until public sewer service becomes available. The lifting of the sewer connection moratorium will trigger accelerated growth. That growth is expected to reach the level in 2010 that had been previously projected in the Comprehensive Plan for 2010.

A major public works project is required immediately to correct existing wastewater treatment and disposal deficiencies, and to provide a wastewater system necessary to meet existing needs and accommodate future growth. After considering the option of constructing and operating a new treatment plant, the City has moved forward with a plan to pump its wastewater to the Fulton County trunk system for treatment at the County's Camp Creek wastewater treatment facility, and decommission its existing wastewater treatment plant. This project is the embodiment of the City's plan for solving the compliance problems that led to consent order being issued by the Environmental Protection Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

This plan includes the construction of a new main pump station at the existing treatment plant site, and a new force main to a point where it can connect into the Fulton County wastewater collection system. Thus the City has agreed to purchase a share of the Camp Creek wastewater treatment facility, and construct the necessary wastewater transmission system to get the wastewater into the Fulton County system. These two elements are the City's portion of improvements for which capital must be raised.

The City has further developed a plan with the County, whereby the City leads the construction of a portion of County-owned infrastructure that is required for the City to connect to the County's system. Specially that embodies acceleration of construction of the County's Hobgood Road pump station, force main and gravity sewer to connect it to the County's Line Creek Interceptor near the McClure Road crossing.

Planned project improvements include the following items:

City's Wastewater System

- Construct a new main pump station at the site of the existing wastewater treatment plant. This structure of the new pump station will be capable of housing either a duplex or triplex pump arrangement, depending on which arrangement will provide the most appropriate near-term solution.
- Construct a new 23,300-ft force main to deliver wastewater from the new main pump station to terminus manhole in a proposed segment of the Fulton County sewer. The force main alignment will be generally to the east-northeast of the existing plant site, first crossing the swamp through which Little Bear Creek flows, through the Carlton Woods subdivision, cross-county to Cascade Palmetto

Highway, then running northward parallel in the highway's right-of-way to its intersection with Ono Road, then running northeast along Ono Road to its terminus in a proposed manhole at the intersection with Hobgood Road.

- Purchase for the City 1.0-MGD capacity at Fulton County's Camp Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility for treatment and disposal of the City's wastewater.
- Upgrade one existing wastewater pump stations, including the installation of standby generators: Walnut Way Pump Station.
- Rehabilitate existing sewers through replacement of deteriorated pipes in the following locations:
 - Locke Street from Phillips Drive to Carlton Road
 - Phillips Drive from Griffith Drive to Locke Street
 - Thurmond Street to Taylor Hill Pump Station
 - Mixon Avenue

Fulton County Wastewater System

- In conjunction with Fulton County, the City will construct a 3,500-ft segment of sanitary sewer along Hobgood Road, from the new force main terminus at the intersection with Ono Road to a new pump station on the north side of Bear Creek.
- In conjunction with Fulton County, the City will construct a new pump station on the northwest quadrant of the intersection of Hobgood Road and Bear Creek.
- In conjunction with Fulton County, the City will construct a new 10,700-ft force main to deliver wastewater from the new Hobgood Road pump station to a terminus manhole in a proposed gravity sewer leading to the Line Creek Interceptor. The force main alignment will be north along Hobgood Road to its intersection with Rivertown Road, then east along Rivertown Road to its intersection with Cedar Grove Road, then approximately 900 ft north along Cedar Grove Road to the terminus manhole.
- In conjunction with Fulton County, the City will construct a new 11,000-ft gravity sewer, with approximately 2,500-ft north along Cedar Grove Road, then northeast across the Parks at Cedar Grove subdivision, along the alignment of the existing subdivision sewer to Line Cree, and parallel to the Line Creek interceptor to a manhole on the interceptor north of McClure Road.
- In conjunction with Fulton County if the County elects to do so, the City will also construct two segments of gravity sewer at a total of 7,500 ft along Bear Creek

and a tributary to serve as a new interceptor sewer for the Upper Bear Creek watershed.

The estimated budget as presented in *Table 5.7* includes engineering, inspection and contingency costs for the City’s wastewater system improvements outlined in the previous section. It should be noted the entire cost of the City’s wastewater system improvements – main pump station, force main, and capacity at the Camp Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility – will be paid by the City. Only these costs to the City are included in the project budget for the bond. The entire cost of the County’s wastewater system improvements – Hobgood Road Pump Station, force main, and all gravity sewer segments – will be paid by the County from other sources, and therefore are not included in the budget for the bond.

TABLE 5.7 – City of Palmetto Estimated Project Budget

<u>Project Element</u>	<u>Estimated Cost</u>
<u>City’s Wastewater System</u>	
• Construct Main Pump Station	\$1,740,000
• Construct Force Main to Hobgood Road	2,240,000
• Purchase Capacity at Camp Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility	4,250,000
• Upgrade Walnut Way Pump Station	200,000
• Rehabilitate existing sewers	<u>570,000</u>
TOTAL BUDGET	\$ 9,000,000

To fund the project improvements, the City has elected to issue combined public utility revenue bonds for the \$9,000,000 in project costs.

The initial phase of the project is now in bid phase with construction slated to begin in the near future. Subsequently components of the project are in the final engineering design phase.

5.3 Solid Waste Management

Inventory

The State of Georgia requires each local government to prepare a Solid Waste Management Plan. The City of Palmetto approved retaining a consultant to complete the Solid Waste Plan by October 2005. This plan is being completed concurrently with the Comprehensive Plan process. In addition, solid waste is included in this element.

The City of Palmetto currently contracts with a private entity (Waste Management of Atlanta-South) to provide both residential MSW and residential recycling. The contract was most recently awarded in January 2004 and the term of same continues until September 30, 2007. New base rates to the City were established at the time of the extension and are subject to an annual rate adjustment by a percentage equal to the Consumer Price Index for the prior year. Waste Management of Atlanta-South services approximately 1,300 residential customers in Palmetto.

Residential collection is provided two (2) times per week (Tuesdays and Fridays), and recyclables collection one (1) time per week (Tuesdays). Residential Municipal Solid Waste (MSW) collection is accomplished by means of collecting approved 32 gallon garbage bags placed at curbside on designated collection days. Every calendar year the City provides 100 collection bags at no charge to each subscribing residential customer. Additional approved bags beyond the initial 100 may be purchased at selected locations within the City for a fee. Collection fees to the residential customer by the City is a \$13.50 monthly flat fee per residential unit. For recycling the fee is a \$3.00 per month flat fee per residential unit.

Recyclable collection is provided by means of recycling bins placed at curbside on the designated collection days. Acceptable recyclable products include specified paper, aluminum and plastics. Recyclable collections for residences who do not subscribe to the private provider's MSW collection service is \$3.00 per month. There is a one-time \$5.00 recycling bin charge for all recycling customers.

All residential MSW collected in the City by the private provider is transported to one of three (3) transfer stations located around the City. All those facilities transport the collected MSW to either Pine Bluff Landfill in Cherokee County, Georgia and/or R & B Landfill in Banks County, Georgia.

Additional commercial and industrial MSW collection is available directly by agreement between other private collection providers and the respective local user. There is no city-wide contract for these services. Collection methods typically include 2, 4, 6 and 8 yd front-loading "greenbox" containers and various sized roll off containers. In addition to Waste Management one additional private firm (BFI) provides significant commercial/industrial service within the City. Collected MSW from this private provider is transported to the BFI – Richland Creek Landfill in Buford, Georgia.

In addition to the City contracted residential MSW/recyclable collections and privately contracted commercial/industrial collection previously described there are two (2) additional types of collection/recycling utilized in the City.

The first consists of unstaffed drop-off collection bins for newspaper recycling only located at the City's Community Center and operated by the Volunteer Palmetto Community Association.

The second consists of a City provided yard trimmings collection program. Operated under the auspice of the City's Public Works Department residential yard trimmings meeting local and state limitations are picked up at curbside by appointment only. Trimmings must be bagged in biodegradable bags. Residents call the Public Works Department and schedule a pick-up date. The cost is \$25.00 per standard dump truck load. The City has in place the necessary equipment and manpower to provide this service. All collections under this program are authorized and tracked by written work order and detailed records are maintained. All trimmings collected are disposed of in an approved C&D landfill – Safeguard Landfill Management in Fairburn, Georgia.

In addition to this regular program of yard trimmings collection once a year in April the City sponsors a Community Clean-Up Weekend where all qualifying MSW and yard trimmings are collected at no charge.

As previously noted the City of Palmetto currently contracts with Waste Management of Atlanta-South to provide both residential MSW and recyclable collection/disposal. Waste Management Atlanta-South hauls all MSW collected in the City of Palmetto to one of three (3) transfer stations located around the City. All these facilities transport the collected MSW to either Pine Bluff Landfill in Cherokee County, Georgia and/or R. & B Landfill in Banks County, Georgia. BFI transports MSW collections from the City to the BFI – Richland Creek Road Landfill in Buford, Georgia.

The City of Palmetto under the auspices of the Public Works Department operates a residential yard trimming collection/disposal program. All trimmings are disposed of in the Safeguard Landfill Management C&D Landfill in Fairburn, Georgia.

Table 5.8 reflects the type, remaining life, ownership, types of wastes accepted in each disposal facility and other pertinent information used by the City and its contract private solid waste collection/disposal provider.

TABLE 5.8 – Landfills Receiving City of Palmetto Solid Waste

Name/Location	Type	Ownership	Remaining Life (Years)	Remaining Life (CY)
Cherokee Co. – Pine Bluff Landfill, Inc. Cherokee County, GA	MSW	Private	56	52787458

Name/Location	Type	Ownership	Remaining Life (Years)	Remaining Life (CY)
Chambers Road B Landfill Site #2 Banks County, GA	MSW	Private	36	22147641
Safeguard Landfill Management C&D Fairburn, GA	C&D	Private	4	2261814
BFI – Richland Creek Road Landfill Buford, GA	MSW	Private	19	216622121

Assessment

In order to meet State planning requirements for solid waste, to assess the current and future level of service for solid waste management and meet the State's 25% per capita pounds per day reduction goal the City is working with a consultant to update the City's solid waste plan. Key elements of that study include: Waste stream analysis; waste reduction; collections; disposal; land limitation; education/public involvement; and implementation strategy.

Preliminary assessments from that process find that the City's collection programs are collectively adequate to serve the City of Palmetto. The residential MSW collection system made available under the City contract helps ensure the broad spectrum of residences will have safe, reliable and reasonably priced collection services. The system of open market competition for commercial/industrial MSW collection services, where service demands may be more specialized and customers more familiar with service products, seems appropriately suited to that particular market.

Similarly, all residences have access to a City contracted curbside recycling program which provides perhaps the most convenient and effective recycling option available (as well as a volunteer newspaper drop-off recycling alternative) while commercial/industrial users with greater volumes and more specialized recyclable products can negotiate for service on the open market.

Overall, appropriate and adequate service is consistently available to the entire population of the City. There are no topographic or similar conditions which adversely effect or limit normal service provisions.

It also finds that existing disposal facilities will be adequate for MSW disposal for at least ten (10) years (capacity letter of assurance provided by private contractor) but that the City will have to explore additional capacity at an alternative disposal site for C&D disposal during the ten (10) year period.

5.4 General Government

Inventory

The City of Palmetto, incorporated in 1853, is located in south Fulton County and northern Coweta County. The City is approximately 25 miles southwest of downtown Atlanta. Since its charter the City has experienced continuous expansion and today encompasses approximately 3,581 acres.

Palmetto is governed by a Mayor and City Council form of government with a full-time City Administrator. Other key administrative positions include the Chief of Police and Director of Public Works.

The City of Palmetto owns and/or operates the following general government type facilities:

<u>Description</u>	<u>Location</u>
City Hall	509 Toombs Street
Public Works Shop	611 Main Street
Fire/EMS Station	501 Menefee
Police Department	401 Carlton Road
Water Treatment Plant	9425 Water Works Road
*Wastewater Plant	601 Carlton Road
Community Center	595 Main Street
**Old School/Seniors Bldg.	206 School Street
Wayside City Park/ Veteran's Park	Park Street/Virginia Avenue
Train Depot	Main Street

* To be abandoned when City connect to Fulton County System.

** Abandoned school and former Senior Center now vacant.

In addition to these facilities, Fulton County owns a Senior Center at 510 Turner Avenue and operates the facility cooperatively with the City of Palmetto.

Assessment

In 1994 the City's Administrative Offices, Police Department and Public Works Department were all located in a partially renovated train depot station on Main Street. In 1994 the City purchased the former Burnett Bank building located at 509 Toombs Street. Renovation to the building was completed in 1995 and serves as City Hall housing all of the City's general administration functions. Also, the same general time frame the City purchased another property at 611 Main Street, known as Cooper and Son Lumber Company, for use as the Public Works Department facility. It was occupied for this purpose in 1995. It has an outside storage area for equipment and materials. With

these acquisitions, renovations and relocations, the Police Department was left to occupy the Main Street depot location.

According to City officials, the facilities now housing City administrative and Public Works operations will provide adequate space through 2015 with no expansions or new construction. Both facilities are located on sites which will accommodate significant expansion as necessary. The service area is incorporated Palmetto and utility customers adjacent to the corporate limits.

The Police Department has also since located to a new facility which will be addressed in the Public Safety section as will Fire/EMS facilities/services.

The Community Center located at 595 Main Street is a former Fulton County property donated to the City, extensively renovated primarily by City forces and opened to the public in 2004. It contains a large community meeting/activity room, smaller break-out meeting space and kitchen facilities. According to City officials, this facility is adequate through 2015 with room for expansion as necessary at the present location. The service area is the City of Palmetto.

The Water and Wastewater facilities and services were previously addressed in some detail in their respective sections including capacity analysis, evaluation of options and service areas.

The park facilities will be addressed in the Recreation Facilities Section. The Senior Center building is owned by Fulton County.

5.5 Public Safety

5.5.1 Police Department

Inventory

Police services are provided by the Palmetto Police Department located in the City owned Police Department Building at 401 Carlton Road. The facility is a multi-story structure which previously housed a medical clinic. It was acquired by the City in 2001 and renovated for use as the Police Department's Main Station for occupancy in 2002. Included in the renovation is space for all normal police operations including a squad room with lockers, administrative offices, a municipal court room, evidence room, kitchen, temporary holding cell, lobby area, storage area, arsenal room and support functions such as restrooms. The holding cell is only for temporary detention of arrestees. The City participates in the South Fulton Regional Jail in Union City and utilizes that facility for longer term detention. One entire floor of the Police Department building is vacant and that along with available space elsewhere in the building make the location adequate for the entirety of the planning period. If some extraordinary occurrence should require expansion there is more than sufficient property to allow for same. No other options were seriously considered for the Police Department building

inasmuch as the location, purchase price, availability, absence of comparable space, functionality and renovation expense make it a superior choice to new construction.

The service area for the Palmetto Police Department is the corporate limits of the City. The Department has a compliment of fourteen (14) personnel which includes twelve (12) full-time certified sworn officers and two (2) administrative personnel. The Department owns and operates seven (7) patrol vehicles and one (1) administrative/command vehicle. The Department performs basic police functions including patrol, criminal investigation, command, administration and municipal court. Many of these duties are shared staffing responsibilities. Backup and additional support services for emergency cases are provided by Fulton County Police Department.

Assessment

As noted, in terms of physical facilities the existing police building is adequate through the planning period with property for expansion available as a contingency should extraordinary circumstances so dictate.

Response time is satisfactory at less than four (4) minutes or average. Based on national averages, the police officer to population ratio is 2.2 sworn officers per 1,000 residents. As stated previously, Palmetto currently has a force of twelve (12) full-time certified sworn officers. With an estimated 2005 population of 3,980 that represents an average of 3.01 officers per 1,000 residents which is below the national average.

As the City's population grows as projected the number of sworn certified police officers will need to increase proportionally ideally at a level to meet or exceed the national average of officers per 1,000 population. In addition, the Department will likely have to reorganize to more effectively address functions such as criminal investigation, court administration, special operations, crime prevention, traffic enforcement, etc. to ensure the continuation of a high level of police protection for the growing populace. The option to self provided police service is to have the Fulton County Police Department serve the City on a policy and service basis. The City does not prefer this option.

5.5.2 Fire Protection

Inventory

The City of Palmetto and Fulton County work cooperatively under a shared services agreement to provide fire protection to the City of Palmetto and portions of South Fulton. The service area is the City of Palmetto corporate limits and portions of South Fulton. Fulton County provides an engine company of full-time firefighters and the City of Palmetto augments that manpower with fourteen (14) volunteer firefighters. Fulton County provides a fully equipped Class A pumper engine, an administrative support vehicle and support equipment. The City of Palmetto provides a two (2) bay fire station at 501 Menefee Street. The City owns the Fire Station building.

In addition to fire suppression as part of the Fulton County Fire Department additional services providing include: emergency medical services; community risk reduction; fire code enforcement; hazardous material response/mitigation; technical rescue; and permit inspection. According to the Fulton County Fire Department the Palmetto Station responded to a total of 984 calls in 2003. The average response time is four (4) minutes or less.

Options for the City to provide fire protection service include: 1) no service; 2) all volunteer service; and 3) full-time paid service. Options 2 and 3 would require the City purchasing the necessary firefighting equipment. Option 3 would require the City pay personnel costs for a full-time engine company on duty 24 hours a day. None of these options is as service and cost and service effective as the shared service agreement with Fulton County.

Assessment

The Insurance Service Organization (ISO) has established a fire protection rating system based on a number of pertinent factors such as equipment, manpower, water availability, training, etc. These ratings range from 1-10 are used by insurance companies in calculating insurance rates for covered structures. The lower the ISO rating the more effective the fire protection in the community and generally the lower the insurance rate. The ISO rating in the incorporated area of the City is 4.

As the City continues to grow the efficient service area calculable by ISO (two and one-half miles in any direction from the station) will begin to decline. Responding to previous additions to the City's physical size and the likelihood that the size will continue to expand City officials have planned for the addition of a second fire station. Property has been acquired on Carlton Road adjacent to the Police Department for this purpose. The City will engage in discussions with Fulton County to revise the shared service agreement to staff this facility. It is anticipated the station will be constructed within the next two (2) years. This is consistent with Fulton County's plan to locate additional stations in South Fulton.

5.6 Emergency Management Agency (EMA)

The Atlanta-Fulton County Emergency Agency is a joint cooperative effort between the City of Atlanta and Fulton County. The Agency's responsibilities to local governments are disaster mitigation preparedness; response and recovery functions. All services are provided County wide, inclusive of all municipalities. The services provided by the Agency include: coordinate/develop/implement the Emergency Operation Plan; provide 24 hour/365 day Emergency Operations Center; provide coordination and support to the Fulton County Local Emergency Planning Committee; provide hazardous material facilities monitoring; and provide EMA training courses.

There is no viable option for the City of Palmetto to provide this service.

Assessment

According to Fulton County EMA the Agency's operational center is currently at its operational limit. More space is needed to coordinate additional state and federal agencies that are expected to respond to an event in Fulton County particularly since the event of 9/11 and creation of the new National Response Plan.

5.7 Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

Inventory

Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are provided to the City of Palmetto through the Fulton County Office of Emergency Medical Services (EMS). The office regulates ambulance response to County generated 911 requests for emergency medical services.

The County established a county wide EMS Service delivery strategy which includes contracting with independent ambulance contractors to serve the State mandated EMS zones in the County. All zone ambulance providers are designated by the State Department of Human Resources, Division of Public Health. However, the zone providers are obligated to contract with Fulton County to respond to all 911 calls within the County in accordance with Fulton County standards. The Program Manager of the Office of Emergency Medical Services serves as the County contract administrator for the zone providers and overall regulator of State EMS laws enforced in Fulton County.

All EMS services are provided County wide, inclusive of all municipalities.

Typically a EMS unit is assigned and stationed at the Palmetto Fire Department Station at 501 Meneffee.

There is no viable option for the City of Palmetto to provide this service.

Assessment

According to Fulton County the current demands to provide contracted ambulance services there are no additional needs for EMS. Current service levels are accommodated with annual reviews of the contracts with Rural Metro Ambulance and Grady EMS. Based upon population projections for the planning period demand will increase disproportionately compared to current service delivery with larger population growth in South and Southwest Fulton County. Other anticipated needs are call taker and dispatch staff and additional transmit/receive towers for the countywide 800MH2 radio system particularly in the South Fulton coverage area.

5.8 Recreation Facilities

Inventory

There are approximately eight (8) acres of neighborhood parks located within the City Limits. Wayside City Park and Veterans Park are located in central Palmetto. The City owns these parks. The parks have playground equipment; picnic pavilions/tables; lighted tennis courts; jogging/walking trails; and open play areas. In addition, a thirty (30) acre community park (Wilkerson Mill-Farris Park) owned and operated by Fulton County is located at the corner of Wilkerson Mill and U.S. Highway 29 adjacent to the Palmetto City Limits. It contains lighted ball fields, restrooms, auxiliary building and parking facilities.

The Fulton County Board of Education maintains recreation/sports facilities at Palmetto Elementary School.

In evaluating options the City has determined owning and operating neighborhood parks and related local recreation facilities is its most appropriate role. There are larger community, regional and specialty County owned and operated parks accessible within reasonable proximity to Palmetto citizens to round out overall recreation needs.

Assessment

National Standards require there be one (1) acre of park square per 200 people. By this standard and based on the 2005 population estimate of 3,980 Palmetto should have approximately 20 acres of parkland. The existing neighborhood parks and the adjacent community park exceed this criteria.

As the population grows in Palmetto and South Fulton as suggested in this plan the City will need to further evaluate the type/location of recreation/leisure services facilities and the scope of services. The increased population will not only add additional demands by quantity alone but will also have demands for a more diverse range of facilities and activities. The City has determined there is a near immediate need for an indoor multi-use gymnasium facility and land has been reserved for same on Carlton Road. The City should consider preparation of a comprehensive recreation plan to more completely assess and prepare for future recreation needs.

5.9 Hospitals and Other Public Health Facilities

Inventory

There is one general health care facility in Palmetto, the Family Doctor Medical Practice on Park Avenue. This is a private practice physician office. There is not a hospital or public health clinic located within the corporate limits of Palmetto. However, there are

numerous health care facilities, nursing homes, personal care homes, private physician practices, and hospitals in close proximity.

The following hospitals are most accessible by Palmetto residents:

- South Fulton Hospital located in East Point, Georgia approximately 19 miles from Palmetto.
- Emory Peachtree Regional Hospital located in Newnan, Georgia approximately 15 miles from Palmetto.
- Fayette Community Hospital located in Fayetteville, Georgia approximately 14 miles from Palmetto.

The nearest community public health clinic is the Fairburn Regional Health Center located in Fairburn, Georgia approximately 5 miles from Palmetto. This clinic, operated by Fulton County, provides breast/cervical cancer screening; child health/child health exams; eye/ear/dental screenings/school certificates; family planning; immunizations child/adult; nutrition/WIC; prenatal case management; pregnancy related services; pregnancy testing; refugee health; and TB testing.

None of the facilities described in this section are owned by the City of Palmetto. The service areas vary. It is not a viable option for the City to own and operate a hospital or public health facility.

Assessment

There is reasonable access to hospitals, private practice physicians and community public health proximate to Palmetto. These provide a wide range of tertiary and specialty/critical care/services. There is also reasonable access to nursing home and personal care facilities. In the greater Metropolitan Atlanta area there is access to some of the most advanced healthcare facilities and services in the state and region.

There is a limited presence of private practice physicians in the community. As the City grows as projected the City may want to consider more actively recruiting physicians to locate in the community. One alternative is for the City to partner with an area hospital to jointly recruit a hospital affiliated physician(s) for the community.

According to the Fulton County Health and Wellness Department, replacement of the Fairburn Regional Health Center is part of the Agency's Short-Term-Replacement Plan on a proposed site owned by the County. The design phase is complete. The total estimated replacement cost for this facility is \$6,128,661.

5.10 Educational Facilities

Inventory

The Fulton County School System was founded in 1871. It is one of the oldest and the fourth largest school districts in Georgia. The system serves the cities of Alpharetta, Roswell, Mountain Park, College Park, East Point, Fairburn, Hapeville, Union City, Palmetto and unincorporated Fulton County.

There are approximately 9,900 full-time employees, 5,400 of whom are teachers and other certified personnel, who work throughout the county in 88-schools and other administrative buildings. More than 75,000 students attend classes in 50-elementary schools, 18-middle schools, 12-high schools, 2-alternative schools and 4-charter schools. Two (2) elementary schools operate on a year-round calendar.

One (1) facility of the Fulton County School System is located in the City of Palmetto, Palmetto Elementary School. Palmetto Elementary is located at 505 Carlton Road. It is owned by the Fulton County School System. The service area is that portion of Palmetto located in Fulton County and the immediate area proximate to Palmetto located in Fulton County. According to information from the Fulton County Board of Education, Palmetto Elementary is located in the Creekside/Westside cluster and has an enrollment of 534 in 2004-2005. The forecast student enrollment by 2009-2010 is 840. The Georgia Department of Education (GADOE) Inventory Capacity for the facility is 625. The system projects that by 2009 enrollment for South Fulton elementary, middle and high school levels will exceed the State's capacity. The system's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for South Fulton indicates a number of renovations and new construction projects but does not include Palmetto Elementary.

Post-secondary educational opportunities are offered by a number of technical schools, colleges and universities including:

- Atlanta Technical College approximately 23 miles from Palmetto
- Clark Atlanta University approximately 24 miles from Palmetto
- Morehouse College approximately 24 miles from Palmetto
- Morris Brown College approximately 24 miles from Palmetto
- Clayton College and State University approximately 24 miles from Palmetto

Assessment

The Fulton County School System analysis indicates the Palmetto Elementary School in particular and South Fulton elementary, middle and high schools in general will exceed GA DOE inventory capacities by the 2009-2010 school year (the system is currently appealing what it considers discrepancies in the State's inventory capacity). The Palmetto Elementary School is not listed as a project in the system's CIP.

Given this data and the anticipated population increase in Palmetto the City may want to consult with the Fulton County School System to determine in greater specificity as to how plans for accommodating this growth will impact Palmetto Elementary and/or when potential education facilities proximate to Palmetto.

The citizens of Palmetto have adequate access to post-secondary and college/university education facilities within reasonable proximity to the community.

5.11 Libraries and Other Cultural Facilities

Inventory

The Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System serves all residents of Fulton County whether residing in municipalities including Palmetto, or the unincorporated areas. As of April 2005, there were 434,421 registered library cardholders. The Library has a collection over 2.3 million items for adults and children including, but not limited to, books, magazines, microforms, CDs, DVDs, and videocassettes. The Library provides 1,368 hours of library services per week. The Library system maintains 34 librarians.

There is no public library in Palmetto. The nearest public library is the Hobgood-Palmer Library Branch located some five (5) miles from Palmetto at 60 Valley View Drive in Fairburn, Georgia. This facility was built in 1975 and covers 7,800 square feet. A second library, South Fulton Branch, is located at 4055 Flat Shoals Road in Union City, Georgia approximately ten (10) miles from Palmetto. This facility was constructed in 1992 and encompasses 15,000 square feet. The Fairburn facility is classified as a neighborhood library and the Union City location is classified as an area library.

Assessment

According to information from the Library System regarding the life expectancy and general conditions of library facilities, the Fairburn Branch is a “replacement candidate” and the Union City location life expectancy extends through 2064. The Library System assessment of their facilities and services in the 2005 Fulton County Comprehensive Plan Draft document also states that there are current library facility needs in several locations with projected high growth rates including Palmetto. The City may want to initiate discussions with the Library System as to the possible location of a library facility in Palmetto.

The Library System’s own analysis specifically concludes that based on previous and anticipated growth a library facility is needed in the Palmetto area.

5.11.1 Community Center

As previously noted this former Fulton County property located at 595 Main Street was donated to the City of Palmetto and extensively renovated and opened to the public in late 2004. It contains a large community meeting/activity room which can accommodate cultural events from concerts, exhibits, performances, presentations, etc. by community

and invited groups. It also has smaller break-out meeting rooms and kitchen facilities. The grounds are also suitable for outside concert/performance events. According to City officials the facility is adequate through 2015 with room for expansion as necessary at the present location. The service area is primarily the City of Palmetto although it is anticipated there will be guests, patrons, supporters, and users from the surrounding area.

Assessment

The Community Center fills a major facility void for the City of Palmetto. Heretofore there was no publicly owned facility capable of accommodating large community gatherings for a wide range of activities including cultural arts, continuing education, group meetings, civic projects, public hearings, etc. This facility will be the focal point for community based activities and add significantly to the opportunities available to residents of Palmetto and its environs.

In addition, as part of the Atlanta Metropolitan area, Palmetto residents have access to the premier cultural facilities, attractions and performances in the region.

5.12 Assessment of Current and Future Needs

The City of Palmetto has proactively undertaken planning and public works projects to meet both current water/wastewater needs and future needs for essentially all of the planning period. Specifically, the City has joined the South Fulton Municipal Regional Water and Sewer Authority to undertake a project to develop a water supply reservoir, water treatment plant and transmission lines to meet the water supply/treatment/delivery needs of the Authority's member cities (Palmetto, Fairburn and Union City) beyond 2030 based on initial construction plans and incremental phased upgrades to system facilities. The Authority has issued over \$40 million in revenue bonds for this project which is in the engineering design/permit application phase.

Similarly, the City has begun a major public works project to upgrade and modify its sewerage system and wastewater treatment to meet current and future needs. The City has issued \$9 million in utility revenue bonds for a project which will decommission the existing City operated wastewater treatment plant and pump its wastewater to the Fulton County trunk system for treatment at the County's Camp Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility. The plan includes the construction of a new main pump station at the existing treatment plant and a new force main to the Fulton County connect point. The City has agreed to purchase 1.0 MGD capacity at the Camp Creek Wastewater Treatment Facility. In conjunction with Fulton County, the City will lead the construction of certain County-owned infrastructure to connect to the County system.

This project will correct current problems with the City's wastewater system and provide for collection, pumping and treatment capabilities through the planning period with the ability to incrementally upgrade facilities by phased improvements.

This project is in the bid phase with construction expected to begin in the near future. Subsequent components to the project are in the final engineering design phase.

As noted, financing for both the water and wastewater projects has been secured through the issuance of bonds which requires a comprehensive and exacting financial review to confirm the fiscal and technical soundness of the projects.

The City's Solid Waste Management facilities and services are adequate for current needs. Residential curbside collection (and disposal) of MSW is provided by a private firm under contract to the City. The same private contractor provides mandatory curbside recycling. The City intends to continue to outsource these services to the private sector. The City will periodically review its contract for these services to ensure cooperativeness with market costs and monitor the efficiency of the service.

The collection (and disposal) of commercial and industrial solid waste by private providers who contract directly with private businesses is satisfactorily meeting current needs and the City intends to continue this private market approach.

The private contract provider to the City has confirmed there is adequate disposal capacity for the City's MSW for at least ten (10) years. A review of available landfill capacity documented by GA EPD includes that capacity extends through the planning period.

The City disposes of yard trimmings, construction debris at a C&D landfill which has only four (4) years of remaining capacity. The City will need to identify an alternative C&D landfill for this waste.

The City needs to develop a better record keeping system for private non-contract MSW collectors in the City. The City also needs to evaluate grinding yard trimmings for mulch rather than landfilling this waste.

Because of actions taken over the previous ten (10) years or so the City has positioned itself well in regards to facility adequacy for most general government activities. A vacant bank building was purchased in 1994 and renovated as the City Hall facility. During the same general period, the City purchased a vacant lumber supply location and renovated that building and grounds as home for the City's Public Works Department. Both these facilities will provide adequate space through 2015. Both facilities are located on sites which will accommodate expansion as necessary. The City will need to monitor and assess space adequacy prior to 2015 and plan any necessary renovations/expansions as may be applicable.

The Community Center is a 2004 addition to the facilities inventory. It was donated by Fulton County and renovated as a Community Center. It is anticipated to have adequate capacity through 2015. There is room for expansion on site if necessary. The City will need to monitor and assess space adequacy for this facility prior to 2015 and plan any necessary renovations/expansions as may be applicable.

As with so many of its facilities the City acquired a vacant medical clinic building and renovated the structure for use as the Police Department in 2002. This multi-story building is adequate to physically accommodate the needs of the Department through the planning period. The City's police officer to population is currently below national averages. As the community grows the City will need to address upgrading these manpower levels.

The Fire Department is a cooperative shared services agreement between Fulton County and the City. Based on ISO rating criteria and projected growth the single fire station at its present location will not be adequate to provide the current level of fire services over the planning period. Expanding at the present location is not an option because the geographical location will not provide the necessary coverage and response time. The City has recognized this need and owns property in a geographically appropriate area for construction of a new fire station. The City needs to proceed with developing plans for this facility.

Emergency Management and Emergency Medical Services appear to be adequate based on assessments from those agencies contained in Fulton County Comprehensive Plan Draft. These services are provided by the County to all Fulton municipalities including Palmetto. Emergency Management cites a need for the expansion of its operations center. The new Palmetto fire station will provide a base for the EMS Unit located in South Fulton.

The City's recreation facilities located within the city limits when combined with the adjacent community park meet current national standards for park space per population. The City has determined an indoor multi-use gymnasium facility is a needed recreation facility and has acquired property for its location. As the population grows as projected it is anticipated there will not only be a demand for the quantity of recreation facilities/sources but also for a more diverse range of facilities services. The City needs to consider developing a comprehensive recreation plan for future recreation needs.

There is currently adequate access to most health care facilities by the residents of Palmetto. Hospitals, public health clinics, nursing homes and personal care homes are proximate to the residents of Palmetto. There is only one (1) private practice physician in the City. The health care industry as a rule is typically responsive to population growth and shifts and the market will respond to the growth projected in Palmetto and South Fulton. The plan to replace the Fairburn Regional Public Health Center is needed as it is the nearest such facility to Palmetto. The City needs to review strategies for ensuring adequate private practice physicians in the City as growth occurs. One potential strategy is to partner with an area hospital to jointly recruit a hospital affiliated physician for the community.

From Fulton County School System information contained in the Fulton County Comprehensive Plan Draft, it appears as though Palmetto Elementary School while currently adequate will exceed its capacity of 625 prior to 2009-2010. The school is not

among those listed for improvements in the system's CIP. The City needs to consult with the system to determine plans for accommodating estimated growth which will affect this facility.

The Atlanta-Fulton Public Library System notes in its section of the Fulton County Comprehensive plan that there is an existing need for a library facility in Palmetto. The City needs to initiate discussions with the system on possible locations for such a facility in Palmetto.