

The Community Agenda

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Comprehensive Planning

■ Comprehensive Planning Requirements

The three jurisdictions participating in this Plan—Cherokee County and the Cities of Ball Ground and Waleska—participated jointly in the adoption of their current Comprehensive Plans. In order to maintain their Qualified Local Government status (that is, to remain eligible for a wide range of State grants, assistance and permitting programs), the plans must be updated regularly—in the case of Cherokee County and its cities, by the end of October 2007. This current update is characterized by the State as the ‘tenth-year update,’ which, because of the significant changes that have occurred in Cherokee County over the past decade, coupled with the adoption of new planning standards by the State, requires a complete reevaluation, reorganization and rewrite of the Plan elements.

Planning requirements for the preparation and adoption of Comprehensive Plans are adopted by the State’s Board of Community Affairs pursuant to the Georgia Planning Act, and administered and supplemented by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The most recently applicable planning standards took effect May 1, 2005, and establish the minimum standards that must be met for DCA approval.

■ Components of the Comprehensive Plan

A comprehensive plan meeting the planning requirements of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs must include the following three components:

Community Participation Program

The first part of the comprehensive plan is the Community Participation Program that was adopted by all parties to the Joint Comprehensive Plan Tenth-Year Update in order to take advantage of ongoing citizen participation activities through the Citizens Roundtable. The Public Participation Program describes the strategy for ensuring adequate public and stakeholder involvement in the preparation of the Community Agenda portion of the plan.

Community Assessment

This part of the comprehensive plan is an objective and professional assessment of data and information about Cherokee County and its cities (with an emphasis on those cities participating in the Joint Comprehensive Plan). The following are included in the Community Assessment’s two volumes:

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

- Analysis of data and information to check the validity of the above evaluations and the potential issues and opportunities.

Community Agenda

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

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

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

■ **The Purpose of the Community Agenda**

The purpose of a community's Comprehensive Plan is to design a roadmap for the community's future. This road map is developed through a public process involving community leaders, major stakeholders, general public and elected officials, all of whom make key decisions about the future of the community. The overall goal of the Plan is to accommodate growth in a timely, orderly and efficient arrangement of land uses, public facilities, infrastructure and services that meet the needs of the present and future residents and businesses of the community.

The Community Agenda is the most important part of the Plan, for it includes the Community's Vision for the future, as well as key issues and opportunities, and the implementation program for achieving this Vision. The Community Agenda is intended to generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of the community, thereby allowing easy implementation of the guiding principles, policies and strategies outlined within the Plan.

This Agenda is developed in four Sections:

- Introduction
- Community Vision
- Future Development
- Implementation

As a Comprehensive Plan, each Section is interrelated and dependent upon each other and no part should be viewed in isolation. For example, policies contained within the Vision section should be applied when reviewing character areas, implementation measure listed under core issues and character areas have been compiled within the short-term work program.

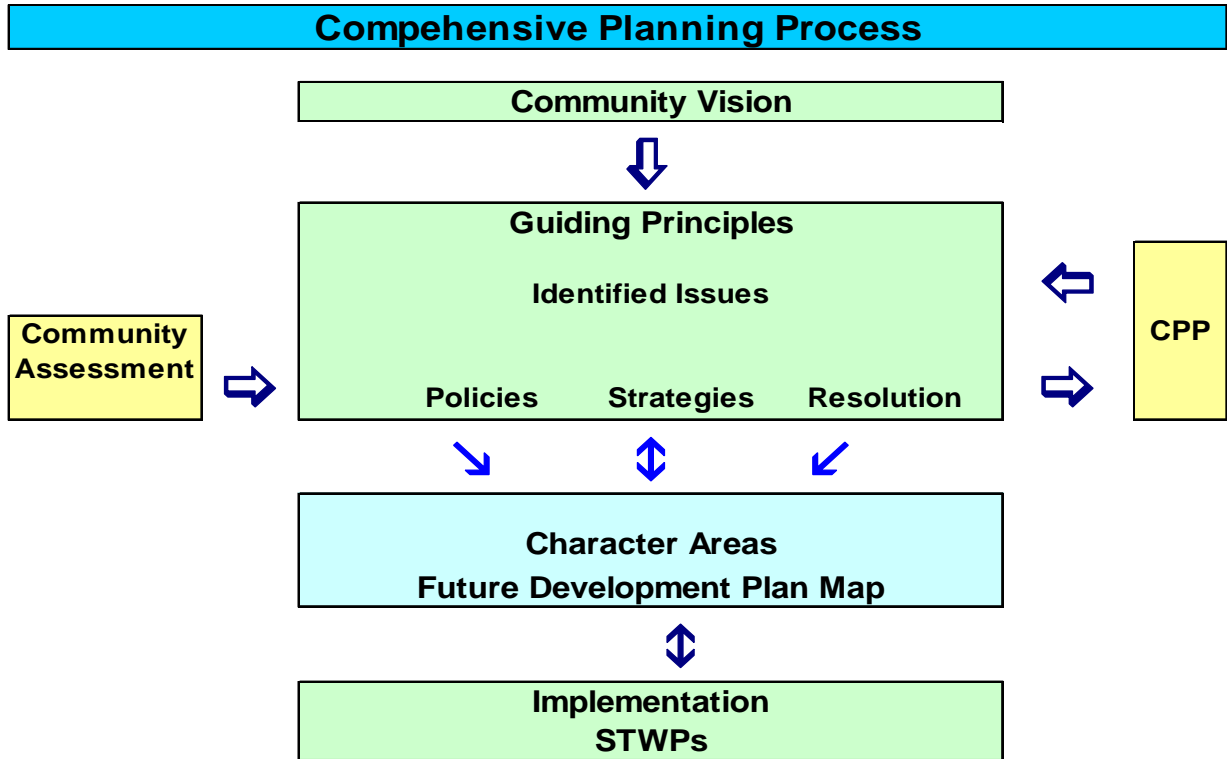
■ **Planning Process**

The planning process followed for the County and the cities of Ball Ground and Waleska took over two years, and an extensive research and analysis and Community Participation Program. Background reports that were utilized during this process included:

- The Community Assessment, Volumes 1 and 2;
- A Marketing Analysis;
- An Economic Strategic Plan;
- Detailed forecast reports for population, employment and housing;
- A Land Demand and Capacity Analysis; and
- A Fiscal Analysis.

The use of a wide range of public participation techniques yielded comprehensive visions for the county and each of its participating cities. The Community Participation Plan (CPP) incorporated planning educational meetings, 3 sets of open public forums, charettes, town meetings, a Citizens Round Table, public hearings, city subcommittees, a Steering Council, Joint Elected Officials Workshops, City Council Workshops, Planning Committee Workshops, citizen surveys and comments sheets, email distribution lists, mailings, the media and web notification to enhance the public's involvement in the process and to reach as many citizens and businesses as possible. An outline of this public campaign is available in the Community Participation Plan, posted on the County Website. This Joint Plan was truly a "bottoms up" process.

Below is a flow chart of the planning process. Starting with a Vision, policy and character areas were developed, which in turn led to implementation measures to achieve this Vision. Although the process seems very straightforward, in reality it is anything but that. Truly comprehensive planning is a very circular and interactive process. Throughout the process analysis, data and community input lead us to many paths, adjusted original assumptions and ideas. We believe that this fluid process has led us to a document that has truly achieved a consensus and Vision that represents the diverse interests and peoples of Cherokee County.



1.2 Community Overview

■ County Overview

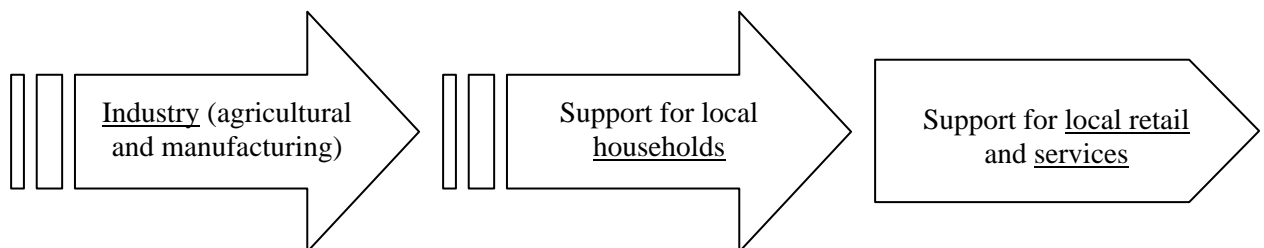
The modern county of Cherokee, now 429 square miles, was first surveyed in 1832. The primary industries were tobacco, cotton and marble before 1900. The extension of the railroad to Canton allowed these industries to ship their goods South to Marietta and Atlanta. In 1899, R. T. Jones, a local merchant, established the Canton Cotton Mill. The mill quickly dominated the economic and social life of Canton. This made Canton a major center for the manufacture of denim cloth. However, although cotton was king, the marble finishing business in the north end of the county would prove to be the county's largest revenue producer for a number of years.

As time progressed into a new century, Cherokee's five municipalities would emerge as centers of commerce and trade. Each town had its own identity. Canton, as the county seat, evolved to become the center of government. Ball Ground became known for its gems and minerals. Reinhardt College gave prominence to Waleska. Woodstock remained a quiet farming community for many years, as did Holly Springs, but that too would change.

Beginning in the early 1980's the economic base of the County began to change. As the County's roadway networks began to improve and expand, bedroom communities began to appear to serve commuters into metro Atlanta. Population growth has been most significant along the southern boundaries near the Cities of Holly Springs and Woodstock. The eastern portions of the County and Canton are beginning to experience notable growth as transportation networks and infrastructure systems are improved and expanded. The northern portions of the County are anticipated to retain their rural character, although Waleska and particularly Ball Ground are poised for growth in the near future.

Historically (pre-1990), growth in Cherokee County was very moderate and was driven by growth within the county. Fueled by agricultural and manufacturing industries, jobs were available for local households who, in turn, supported local retail and services:

Primary Market Driver of Growth – Pre 1990



Due to the desirability of the region, Cherokee County faces increasing development pressures as both a bedroom community to the metropolitan area and as a potential employment center. Over the last two decades, Cherokee County has, and continues to experience a remarkable growth rate. By 2030, the population is anticipated to more than double from 183,449 to 417,654; for every five people in the county today, there will be 11 by 2030.

This assessment promotes a mix and balance of residential development options available to existing and future residents of the County, in the spirit of maintaining the small town low-density character as desired by county residents, while at the same time encouraging economic opportunities to

promote a well balanced tax base. Clearly, however, density is building in the cities where services exist and a more “urban” character is developing.

- The nature of growth has changed over the past fifteen years and will continue to mature and evolve.
- The demographic characteristics of those who already live in the county are changing as they have children, age in place, etc.;
- The number and types of households that are attracted to the county will likely continue to change based on the types of development and potentially types of jobs; and
- The living environments these households will need whether it is lower maintenance housing for aging baby boomers or more affordable housing to support industry will help drive the nature of future development.

A well thought-out comprehensive plan is responsive to current market trends and anticipatory of likely future market trends. The following represents a snapshot of the history and past economies of the county and its cities.

■ **Ball Ground**

Ball Ground became known for its gems and minerals. Located in northern Cherokee County, the original ball field used by rival Indian tribes, is not the exact site of the town, however, Indian ball grounds were usually located on a level area of 100 yards long and often along a running stream. Ball Ground did not come into existence as a town until the railroad passed through it in 1882. Until that point, the community was almost entirely agricultural. When the railroad line was surveyed to run through Ball Ground, officials decided to put up a depot and develop a town to go along with it. Within two years, Ball Ground had a population of 250 and a large number of new buildings, including three churches and a high school. Ball Ground was considered one of the best business points on the railroad. In addition to providing a market for nearby farms, it had several industries such as saw milling and woodworking. However, its best-known industry for many years was marble working.

■ **Canton**

The county seat of Cherokee County was established in 1833 and re-named Canton in 1834. Once famous for its “Canton Denim,” known worldwide for the high-quality denim produced by Canton Cotton Mills, the City of Canton is now enjoying the greatest economic boom in its history.

■ **Holly Springs**

The City of Holly Springs is a seven square mile oasis of friendly neighborhoods, thriving businesses, and wonderful early-twentieth century homes and commercial buildings. The City was incorporated in 1906, and quickly began building up around a busy train depot established by the Louisville & Nashville (L&N) Railroad. That depot, now the Holly Springs Community Center, was painstakingly restored by the City in the late 1990’s and is a source of immense civic pride for its 5,000 residents.

■ **Waleska**

Waleska takes its name from Warluskee, daughter of an Indian chieftain who lived approximately 150 years ago. When this maiden was removed to the west with her people, Mr. and Mrs. Lewis W.

Reinhardt named their settlement in her honor. Waleska was chartered by the legislature in 1889. Agriculture and lumbering were two of the industries carried on in Waleska; however, the chief industry since the mid-1880s has been the education of students at Reinhardt College. Waleska has grown along with Reinhardt College in the past decades. Reinhardt College is now a four-year college offering a number of Bachelor's Degree programs. Waleska is also home to nearby Lake Arrowhead, a private community, known as a landmark of Waleska. Lake Arrowhead not only offers golf and tennis facilities but also boasts the largest private man-made lake in the south—over 500 acres—and provides boating and fishing fun. The small town of Waleska is only 1.5 square miles in area.

■ **Woodstock**

Woodstock is located in the southernmost part of Cherokee County, approximately 30 miles north of Atlanta and 12 miles south of Canton, the county seat. The southern part of Cherokee was settled first due to its flatter topography and easier access. Woodstock is over one hundred years old and one of the county's oldest towns. The railroad came to Woodstock in November 1879. Presumably, this is when the first train depot was built, although the first written account was recorded when the City of Woodstock limits were measured from the Depot in 1897. The City had a population of 300 and comprised a total of 960 acres.

Woodstock had industries of various kinds. The first gristmills in the county were located nearby. Woodcarving, yarn spinning and other related activities were also done. The abundance of waterpower around Woodstock, such as Little River, Noonday Creek, and other streams, facilitated these industries. Woodstock had a considerable activity in mineral development. The old Kellogg Gold Mine and several others are within a few miles of Woodstock. Mica and kaolin were also found in nearby areas.

In addition to industry, Woodstock had a strong agricultural base. By the 1890s, Woodstock was said to be shipping 2,000 bales of cotton annually. A number of Woodstock developers were influential in introducing innovative farming methods to the county. In the present, the City boasts a historic downtown with brick paved sidewalks and buildings dating back to 1879.

SECTION 2: COMMUNITY VISION

2.1 What is a Vision?

The first step in the Comprehensive Planning process is the creation of a Community Vision for each participating jurisdiction. This vision sets the tone for the entire process—the development of guiding principals, policies, and finally the Future Development Map. Core issues identified in the Community Assessment were addressed in terms of this Vision, related policies, and implementation measures were identified to resolve these issues. Lastly, a physical plan, the Future Development Map (FDM) was created utilizing these first two steps. This Vision is based on results from intensive public involvement activities, and reflects the desires and values of the county's diverse population.

A Vision.....

- Identifies aspects of the County and its cities, which most clearly represent its sense of community;
- Prioritizes the protection of County and its cities assets and resources that are most closely associated with the community's character and sense of community; and
- Translates desires and values into issue resolution and a physical map of preferred future land uses and patterns.

Visions were created Countywide, and for each jurisdiction.

■ Countywide

Cherokee County's future begins with a clear statement of its identity and competitive position in the marketplace. As the Atlanta metropolitan region continues to expand, being the most accessible, the most attractive or even the most affordable does not guarantee a community's success. The Vision is based on choices and opportunities. Today the community stands poised between the old and the new; between remaining a bedroom community to the Atlanta Metropolitan Area and becoming a destination on its own; between the choice to continue its current growth patterns or to embrace a variety of lifestyles and life cycles.

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

Our unique character blends natural beauty and a proud heritage of diverse cultures and lifestyles making Cherokee a desirable and sustainable community.

The pace of life is quiet with an overarching commitment to thrive and grow responsibly. The rich agricultural foundation and extensive equine activities are a critical part of our past, present and future that is preserved and enhanced through careful and deliberate community design.

Lake Allatoona and the Etowah River provide our essential natural water supply as well as expanding recreational opportunities. Special care must be exercised to preserve water quality and quantity to support community expectations.

Success is sustained through thoughtful planning – an executable plan and consistent implementation. As we progress toward 2030, there is a recognizable ‘balance’ between housing options, employment opportunities, quality education, shopping, recreation, infrastructure, transit options, public safety and exceptional services.

■ City of Ball Ground

The City of Ball Ground embraces its small town heritage and desires to retain its rural small town feel while incorporating elements of state of the art land use planning to shape its commercial and residential neighborhoods.

A self-contained small town that values its historic downtown as the heart of its heritage, which will hold onto its past while embracing a future of innovative commercial development mixed with a collection of community oriented neighborhoods.

■ City of Waleska

The City of Waleska is a small crossroads town that has very close ties to Reinhart College. The City sees its future as greatly connected to this college socially, recreationally, and services.

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

2.2 Guiding Principals

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

2.3 Core Issues

A number of critical issues relating to growth, housing, natural and historic resources, economic development and land use patterns were identified during the Comprehensive Plan process. Following is a description of the overall themes and issues facing the County and its cities and the guiding principles and policies for future development and implementation strategies.

■ Following the Plan for Sustainable Growth

The County's rich history cultural and natural resources, along with its location in the metro Atlanta growth corridor, all contribute to the continued attraction of living in Cherokee County. All of this translates into increased growth pressure. Growth is inevitably coming to the County and its cities; this is not the question. The real question is how the County will take active steps to guide this growth to meet the needs of its citizens. The challenge that the County and its cities face is to maintain a balance between the natural and built environment, between residential growth and economic development and between growth and preservation.

Policies

- Encourage growth in areas where it will be the most beneficial to the County and its cities. New development should be consistent with the Future Development Plan Map and the long range planning goals and policies.
- Look at new development proposals comprehensively by considering the benefit to the County or City overall, the character area and the immediate neighborhood, surrounding land uses, and the availability of infrastructure.
- Focus denser levels of growth within existing City boundaries and targeted growth areas within the County where there is adequate infrastructure;
- Coordinate transportation improvements, school locations, parks and opens spaces, and other public uses to enhance neighborhoods throughout the County.
- Ensure that natural resources are protected and that greenspace is abundant throughout the county.
- Encourage mixed-use village developments to provide for a diversity of economic opportunities in a walkable environment.

Discussion

The aim of the County and individual cities' Visions are to create a healthy and balanced community. The general vision is that residents and businesses will have a clean environment and that growth would balance development interests and environmental protection – accommodating growth while preserving open space and critical habitat, reusing land, and protecting water supplies and air quality. Efficient use of public and private infrastructure starts with creating neighborhoods that maximize the use of existing infrastructure. Higher density development, infill development, redevelopment and the adaptive re-use of existing buildings results in efficient utilization of land resources and more compact urban areas. Providing these housing choices also helps to preserve and protect the rural and suburban character of the county by focusing the growth where it is appropriate. The continued redevelopment of downtown and corridor areas maintains and enhances the County

and its cities' past and small town setting, while at the same time providing mixed-use areas that can utilize alternative modes of transportation.

The key to sustainable growth is to avoid unplanned and dispersed developments that are unrelated to one another, ignore the natural environment and exist in isolation at random locations. Instead, by focusing appropriate development within distinct character areas, corridors and villages, and arranging these areas within a comprehensive circulation system that incorporates multiple modes, provides guidance to other infrastructure investments, and protects our precious natural and historic resources, the County and cities will achieve a sustainable development pattern that will carry it through to the year 2030. To increase its position as a sustainable community, Cherokee County must be perceived as a unified community, where individual cities and the surrounding County are coordinated and focused on collaborative efforts. Efforts to achieve this image have begun, and the momentum should not be lost. The County and its cities can draw on their greatest strength, proactive and concerned residents. Extensive public participation, visioning, and goal setting has been the hallmark of these planning efforts. The question to be addressed is not, "is the community going to grow," but "how & where" will it grow, and "what" will guide that growth.

Areas Where Rapid Development or Change is Likely to Occur

Land use conflicts typically occur when homes are face-to-face with incompatible development or other changes to their residential environment, such as new infrastructure or higher traffic volumes. Rural areas of the county where sewer is available are facing growth pressure because of the potential for more intensive land use. Higher traffic volumes and ensuing road improvements along several major corridors have made the properties no longer desirable for low-density residential purposes, but excellent opportunities for existing homes to be converted for other uses. In other areas, as agriculture diminishes, pressures to realize the development value of family farms must be recognized. How the community accommodates growth while saving the overall rural feel is an immediate issue.

Such areas include the homes located along Highway 5, Highway 92, Bells Ferry Road, Highway 20 and Highway 140. Some of the homes already have been redeveloped as office and small retail type uses. Generally, these corridors are expansions of existing or planned commercial areas as outlined on the current Future Land Use Plan rather than spot commercial zoning. As private development takes place, commercial uses are anticipated to expand and may affect additional single-family residences and rural homesteads. By keeping the new uses low intensity in nature, nearby residential areas can be protected while offering a reasonable reuse of the properties. Further adaptive reuse or redevelopment of the remaining residences is expected, and eventual assembly and redevelopment for new office or commercial villages that is compatible with the surrounding areas would be encouraged. In order to protect the capacity of the adjacent roadway, commercial development should be clustered into village nodes separated by other types of development, such as residential subdivisions, greenspace and institutional uses in order to discourage strip commercial and to reduce curb cuts.

There are potential compatibility issues between the unincorporated sections of the County and the larger southern and central cities. These areas, primarily involving established single-family communities, adjacent to the city boundaries are areas of concern. As the cities grow through annexation and densification, these areas may be exposed to development pressure to be rezoned for more intensive land use, or may require cooperative efforts between the cities and the County to maintain their integrity.

Consistency between Plan and Regulations

The County and cities want to achieve consistency between the rewritten Comprehensive Plan, their Zoning Ordinances and other development regulations to ensure smooth implementation of the Plan.

Subsequent revisions of the relevant ordinances and regulations for consistency will begin with a detailed review of the zoning ordinance, the rezoning process and development plan reviews as they relate to the Character Area descriptions, plan implementation, and the Future Development Map, which provide a clear statement of the community's Vision. Changes to these documents and processes will be made over time to promote the desired vision.

Additional changes will involve the evaluation of current development patterns and the investigation of methods to achieve a balance between the natural and built environment. The general goals of the Regional Development Policies (RDP) and Quality Community Objectives (QCO) were incorporated into the Plan and implementation tools identified to be incorporated into the revised regulations. Finally, the timing, location and programming of community facilities will be periodically reviewed in terms of changing land use patterns.

Infrastructure and Service Availability

Cherokee County has experienced phenomenal growth in recent years. This growth has and will continue to have an impact on the infrastructure and community facilities in the County and the Cities. In a well-balanced community, infrastructure and services are available to support expected growth. Well planned, well-maintained and efficiently operated infrastructure systems contribute to a beneficial environment for both businesses and residents. As part of the zoning and development process, the County looks closely at infrastructure availability but this type of evaluations would also be beneficial in Ball Ground and Waleska.

Traffic Impact Studies

A traffic impact study can be required if a proposed developed will have a significant impact the adjacent road system. The study may be based on the absolute number of trips generated, the percentage of trips compared to adjacent street capacity and/or the existing level of service of the adjacent roads. The following criteria may be included in a traffic impact study.

- Existing and Proposed Traffic Conditions
- Projections for 10 and 20 years
- Capacity Analysis
- Level of Service Analysis
- Mitigation to maintain level of service of "E" or better on downtown and/or urban node and activity center streets and LOS "C" otherwise
- Cost Estimates for any required improvement on County, City or State roads

From this information, County and City staff could use an overall road network model to evaluate the cumulative effects of multiple development projects on the overall road network.

Utilities Capacity Analysis

A utility capacity analysis should be required if a proposed development will severely impact adjacent or system-wide capacity. The following elements should be included in such a study:

- Water System Capacity
 - Fire Flow
 - Peak day demand
 - Projections for 10 years
- Sewer System Capacity
 - Peak Flow
 - Projections for 10 years
 - Industrial surcharge
 - Pretreatment needs

- Stormwater
 - Rate of offsite flows

Update the Capital Improvements Plan and Budget

A part of the Capital Improvements Plan and Budget process, it is very important to identify future sites or at least general locations for community facilities such as parks as early as possible using the guidelines in the Plan. Early acquisition of sites minimizes ultimate land costs and permits quality sites for community facilities to be obtained. Capital facilities programming should be in conjunction with outlined land use patterns on the Future Development Map and policies within this Plan. The Capital Improvement Plan and Budget should include:

- Detailed project descriptions
- Location of desirable sites
- Schematic layouts of buildings and sites
- Construction cost estimates
- Design and construction schedule
- Possible grant funding
- Staff operation and maintenance costs
- Five-year capital budget

Infrastructure Financing

In addition to local funds, state and federal grants can be used to help pay for local projects. Typically, grant programs require some local participation for capital expenses as well as a commitment for local staffing, maintenance and operational expenses. Alternative funding sources should be identified during the update to the five-year capital budget program to provide a complete funding plan. These funding sources include such programs as impact fees, SPLOST, bonding and special improvement districts.

Support Services

Many activities of daily life should occur within walking distance of residential development, allowing independence for those who choose not to drive and to encourage an overall reduction in miles traveled. Although residents will more than likely use their cars to commute to work, the promise of being able to walk to shop, eat and play in their neighborhood or nearby will ensure a sense of place and community. Adequate facilities and infrastructure to facilitate mobility and to encourage an interactive streetscape are important for achieving the Community Vision. Public and semi-public uses should be sited for easy access and convenient social interaction.

Implementation Strategies

- Create Character Areas that identify the characteristics that are important to the community. Utilize these character areas to achieve this Vision through appropriate uses, compatibility and linkages between uses, site planning and aesthetics.
- Create a Future Development Map that accommodates adopted projected market, employment and population growth studies while mitigating negative impacts.
- Revise zoning ordinance and development regulations to ensure consistency with plan Vision, Guiding Principles, policies and Character Areas in order to maximize Comprehensive Plan implementation.
- Review the Future Development Map, rezonings and other plan data yearly based on changes to actual population, growth and potential adjustments.

- Continue to maintain and update a 5-Year Capital Improvements Plan.
- Align goals and strategic actions of the Economic Strategic Plan with the Transportation Improvement Plan and Regional Transportation Plan.
- Require impact studies and financial analyses for new developments to address specific community issues.
- Review and develop a comprehensive infrastructure-financing plan. Ensure that new development pays its fair share of infrastructure costs.
- Review Service Delivery strategies and level of services, and develop a plan to provide services to accommodate projected new growth.
- Investigate further consolidation of water and sewer services within the County, and develop regional sewer plan.
- Continue to investigate alternative transportation - Ongoing transit study, airport expansion, sidewalk needs, and bicycle suitability and connectivity to lesson congestion within the county.

■ **Preserve and Enhance Sense of Place and Historic Character**

Communities that craft a vision and set standards for development and construction which respond to community values will encourage the development of unique places with a variety of housing choices and modes of transportation. The environment created from such standards will strengthen and reinforce the sense of community among residents and businesses.

Policies

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

Discussion

Cherokee County values its historic, rural and cultural resources, and its unique sense of place. Historic resources include landmark buildings, historic structures and sites, commercial and residential districts, historic rural resources, cemeteries, archaeological and cultural sites and the historic environment in which they exist. Historic Resources serve as visual reminders of a community's past, providing a link to its cultural heritage and a better understanding of the people

and events that shaped the patterns of its development. Preservation of these important resources makes it possible for them to continue to play an integral, vital role in the community.

Many residents equate the county's sense of place with its rural heritage, "Horse County," and the historic nature of its cities. Scattered throughout the county are individual communities where residents are bound together with close ties. Cherokee County is also known for its open space, low-density development and family friendly orientation. These intangibles, along with the preservation of the physical aspects of the community's heritage must be translated within the character areas and Future Development Map in order to achieve the community's Vision.

Historic Preservation

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

Currently historic, archaeological and rural resources in Cherokee County have very little protection. The county has no local historic resource protective ordinances. Only those properties listed on the National Register of Historic Places have any type of protection; the protection is minimal and only relates to impacts of federally funded projects. Aside from the Historical Society, there is no centralized public or quasi-public organization to support or encourage preservation on a larger scale. Other individuals throughout the county have worked independently to nominate properties to the National Register or to restore individual properties. The Historical Society is working with the cities and county to possibly qualifying as a "Certified Local Government" under the Historic Preservation division of Georgia DNR.

Preservation of significant historic resources should become an integral part of land use planning. As such, historic resources should be recorded, mapped, and evaluated in existing land use inventories, and their desirability for preservation should be determined. The Cherokee County Historical Society is very active in collecting information on historic properties within the County. The Historical Society recently completed the process of updating a 1988 historical property survey of 591 properties by adding an additional 92 resources in the cities of Canton and Woodstock. This work shows the potential for enlarging the historic district in Canton and nominating a district in Woodstock. In addition, 44 new candidates have been identified for the historic register. Emphasis has been placed on both rural resources and the historic core of the cities, including the conversion of historic buildings for adaptive reuse.

Context-Sensitive Roadway Design

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

Roadways are endowed with two attributes: capacity and character. "Capacity" is the number of vehicles that can move safely through a segment of the roadway within a given time period. It is physically manifested by the number of lanes, their width, by the centerline radius, and the super elevation of the pavement. "Character" is the suitability of a thoroughfare as a setting for pedestrian activities and as a location for a variety of building types. The character of a roadway is shaped by

the combination of the surrounding context, traffic speed and design elements beyond the capacity dimensions such as the type of drainage, the presence of sidewalks / paths or traffic calming devices.

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

In general, the following apply to roadways:

- Pedestrian access and safety should be provided along all routes, particularly those in more densely populated areas. This includes the need for safe crossings at appropriate locations.
- Roadways should include bicycle access and safety, including both on-road and off road opportunities.
- Street trees and landscaping should line all public rights-of-way.

A second part of the roadway design is the design for the pedestrian. Some potential context-sensitive design elements include:

- Landscaped medians and oversized rights-of way
- Canopy trees, historic trees, and clear zone policy to preserve them
- Special guardrails to minimize obstruction
- Inclusion of sidewalks and bike lanes as part of mitigations and alternatives
- Construction materials that blend with the environment
- Gateways, amenity corridors and historic area sensitivity
- Open space and trails as buffers and preservation of the view shed

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

Rural Roadways

Some of the design techniques that may be used to maximize the fit between rural roads and rural landscapes are:

- Aligning roads to compliment the natural topography and avoid critical environmental areas;
- Avoiding bisection of open fields and agricultural lands;
- Placing guardrails so they do not block views and vistas;
- Using landscape features and locally available materials to blend roadways and bridges into the natural setting;
- Finding or creating ways to enhance vegetative buffers adjacent to wetlands or natural habitat areas;
- Using alternative strategies for slope retention and more natural appearing treatments;
- Grading easements or additional rights-of-way to allow blending of roadway side slopes with the adjacent landscape; and

- Designing bridges to consider the effects of visual intrusion on the state's waterways; visual and public access to waterways; and appropriate pedestrian and bicycle crossings.

Neighborhood Streets

Local, slow movement thoroughfares are suitable for neighborhoods and lower intensity nonresidential. Character may vary somewhat, however, responding to the actual Character Area it is located in. A neighborhood street is suburban in character with the following design elements:

- Parallel parking on at least one side of the street
- Continuous landscaped planting along both sides of the street
- Sidewalks along at least one side of the street
- Pedestrian scaled lighting
- Street calming measures such as bump-outs, tree lined medians, narrow streets, and circular plantings in cul-de-sacs.

Mixed-Use / Urban Streets

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

- On-street parking
- Continuous landscaping utilizing landscaped strips, parking bump-outs or medians
- Sidewalks on both sides of the street (width may vary depending on specific adjacent land uses)
- Where appropriate, pedestrian amenities, such as street furniture and landscaping would be designed and located to permit the unobstructed flow of pedestrians and allow adjacent retail or restaurants to expand outdoors.

Traffic Calming

Traffic calming measures can be used to address the issue of cut-through traffic experienced on residential streets through initial design within neighborhoods or a redesign of the roadway or other streetscape improvements in commercial corridors. Traffic calming measures not only influence safety and the pedestrian comfort level, but they add to a sense of place and intimacy to a community. Traffic calming for quieter neighborhood streets should be incorporated into all projects, such as loop road design, 3-and 4-ways stops, roundabouts, raised pavement areas, reduced street widths, and raised median islands.

All jurisdictions could benefit from the implementation of common methods to improve pedestrian safety and reduce vehicular congestion, including:

- Speed tables or humps (bringing the roadway to pedestrian grade)
- Decorative pavements at corridor gateways, special areas, or at intersection cross walks (pave block, cobblestone, imprinted concrete or asphalt, etc.) to increase driver awareness of pedestrian activity and to produce the desire to "slow-down"
- Narrowing of lane widths or changing roadway curb lines to slow vehicle passage
- Traffic circles or roundabouts

- Traffic signal timing modifications that give more cycle time to pedestrian movements and limit vehicle “progression through the corridor”
- Restricted “right-on-red” vehicular movements at signalized intersections
- Restricted left-turn or right-turn movements at some intersections
- Curb-line modification at intersections (use smaller corner radius to improve pedestrian crossings)

Implementation Strategies

- Develop and adopt a countywide historic preservation ordinance in compliance with the Georgia Historic Preservation act of 1980. Pursue the potential for possibly qualifying as a "Certified Local Government" under the Historic Preservation Division of Georgia DNR.
- Coordinate redevelopment of potential National or State historic register properties through the Historic Society prior to the issuance of building permits to facilitate preservation or rehabilitation where possible.
- Offer information and assistance to property owners who may be interested in having their potentially eligible property listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and to the development community regarding redevelopment and adaptive reuse.
- Develop more historic districts. Potential districts include: Downtown Woodstock-downtown along Main Street and Rope Mill Road, and possibly a few side streets; Downtown Ball Ground; and the Reinhardt College Campus area in Waleska.
- Update the historic resource map and create a database of properties contained in the 2005 Historic Resources Survey inventory, as well as the cemetery location map.
- Investigate preservation incentives and preservation tools such as easements, transfer of development rights, and overlay zoning.
- Develop Context-Sensitive Design program for transportation projects such as the one recommended by the Georgia Department of Transportation.
- Design and incorporate appropriate new street and sidewalk design concepts into the development regulations for each character area. All street designs should include provisions for alternative modes of transportation.
- Identify and implement traffic calming measures within all new development and appropriate existing neighborhoods that are experiencing cut-through traffic.
- Develop programs, such as Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs), conservation easements, the use of land trusts and wider use of conservation subdivisions, to promote a balance between preserving "rural" character and the rights of property owners.
- Identify design opportunities such as decorative pedestrian crossing/crosswalks, street lighting, signage, street furnishings, roadway street landscaping, banners and flags, public art and gateway features when planning civic spaces and roadway improvements.

■ Create Land Use Patterns that Promote Connectivity and Mobility

Cherokee County’s road network and planned improvements are not enough to ensure future connectivity and mobility within the community. This problem needs to be addressed on a multi-faceted level, through roadway improvements, the development of alternative transportation facilities, and integrated community planning. The transportation network should accommodate land

use patterns, multiple uses, provide adequate capacity, be multi-modal and serve the needs of all residents utilizing alternative modes of transportation along with automobiles. At the level of a comprehensive plan, community planning strategies focus less on the visual appearance of buildings and streets and more on the organization of neighborhoods, commercial areas and open spaces and their connectivity to the overall transportation network in order to increase overall capacity and mobility within the County.

Policies

- Improve traffic flow in and around the Bells Ferry Road, Highway 92 and Towne Lake Parkway, and Sixes Road, and overall connectivity within the County.
- Promote the clustering of uses and compact site development in appropriate areas that are pedestrian-oriented, community-centered and minimize vehicular trips with increased internal connectivity.
- Developments should not be built in isolation; developments should connect with the existing transportation network and adjacent properties.
- All roadways should be designed to be context sensitive and integrated with adjacent land use.
- Public facilities and infrastructure should be able to support new development and redevelopment efforts, particularly in the areas of circulation, access and linkages.
- Encourage neighborhood-serving retail and services in or near neighborhoods to reduce travel time and number of cars on our roads.

Discussion

Currently there are several areas where connectivity is an issue within the County, specifically along Bells Ferry Road, Highway 92, Towne Lake Parkway and Sixes Road. The over use of cul-de-sac streets and dead end roads in these areas has led to few choices in terms of routes for motorists. All traffic is funneled out on to the major roads even for short trips from one neighborhood to another. It is important that the main roadway not be considered in isolation, but that there is also an evaluation of the infrastructure and connectivity within the corridor to identify a cohesive secondary transportation system that will facilitate vehicular flow of traffic between uses while stimulating safe pedestrian activity. These heavily traveled roads have become major barriers for pedestrians. Sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities are few or non-existent in these areas.

Create a pedestrian friendly environment

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

Not only should the County and each individual city develop pedestrian infrastructure and require pedestrian connectivity within and between developments, but also this environment should be safe and pedestrian friendly. Elements such as pedestrian entrances, large windows and pedestrian scaled facades adjacent to pedestrian ways will increase the comfort and usability of sidewalks and path

systems. Landscaping, street trees, informational and way finding signage, and streetscapes will also contribute to the pedestrian environment. Adequate separation of pedestrian infrastructure from on going traffic with such elements as landscaping and on-street parking will greatly increase the safety for pedestrians.

Connections to adjacent properties

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

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

Implementation Strategies

- Complete the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and identify necessary funding mechanisms for identified projects that promote connectivity within the County and to surrounding counties.
- Adopt requirements that developments connect to any identified pedestrian linkage within the County as part of the development approval. Pedestrian linkages include greenways and existing sidewalks.
- Revise development ordinances to encourage shared parking and parking maximums in mixed-use areas to promote a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- Adopt requirements to establish a limit to the number of entrances for arterial roadways. For example, each development should provide inter-parcel vehicle access points between all contiguous commercial, office, or industrial tracts, if feasible.
- Investigate the potential for federal, state and regional grants and funding sources to further develop pedestrian connections and bike facilities.
- Continue to identify, fund and implement LCI projects.
- Increase pedestrian safety by developing specific roadway types and pedestrian related facilities by character area. Guidelines should include minimum widths, connectivity, and accessories.

■ Aging in Place

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

Policies

- Support innovative public, private and non-profit efforts in the development of housing for seniors with limited incomes.

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

Discussion

By 2030, the 55+ population county-wide is projected to increase from approximately 30,000 to more than 100,000, and represent 25% of the population versus 15% in 2007. This represents an increase of 250% over current population figures. This projected increase indicates a growing need for housing products that will accommodate active adults and seniors. New residential development, which has primarily consisted of single-family detached housing, will need to adapt to this growing market segment. New housing products could include varied single-family and multi-family units within planned communities, active adult communities featuring small lot single-family and attached homes with amenities at attractive costs. The County has begun to address this Senior Housing issue through a series of meetings between community leaders and the development community hosted by the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC).

Implementation Strategies

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

■ **Housing Choice and Spirit of Inclusiveness**

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

Policies

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

Discussion

Although there has been a slow increase in the number of attached and multi-family homes, single-family detached homes continue to be the predominate housing type within Cherokee County. The demographic characteristics of those who already live in the County are changing as they have children, age in place, etc. The living environments that this variety of households will need, such as lower maintenance housing for aging baby boomers, more affordable housing options for the workforce population, increasing single and small households, will help to shape future development. Despite this, the majority of growth is anticipated to come from in-migration of family households in the workforce age categories (25 to 65 years).

Smaller Households

The number of persons-per-household has been decreasing slowly over the past years, and is anticipated to continue to decrease moderately. The decreasing household size may be attributed to the attraction of first time homebuyers with no children (either as families or single), empty nesters, and single persons entering the local job market, and is relative to the national trend of smaller household sizes/fewer children. With a trend toward smaller households indicated, the availability of new residential opportunities at relatively affordable prices as compared to the overall metro Atlanta area will remain the primary draw for new residents. However, as a variety of market pressures increase the price of starter single-family housing, a small but growing share of new housing product is expected to be townhomes or similar attached product.

Workforce Housing

In the single-family market, Cherokee County has recently experienced a decrease in the number of new, lower priced detached homes being built. Concurrently, there has been a significant increase in executive and move-up housing opportunities, particularly conservation subdivision developments, and subdivision communities with golf courses or other amenities. The proportion of manufactured homes in the community, typically a valuable resource for affordable housing options, is decreasing, primarily due to aging and/or replacement of these types of housing in the course of redevelopment activities in the vicinity of Woodstock and the Bells Ferry/Highway 92 area of the County.

Cherokee County housing costs are slightly lower in comparison to the regional 10-county ARC. However, there exists a population of households experiencing housing problems, including substandard housing, overcrowding, and lack of affordability. Proportionally, the majority of households experiencing housing problems are renters with incomes below 50 percent of the County median. As well, statistics indicate that senior homeowners are also experiencing overpayment issues. Housing resources within the incorporated areas must be considered when addressing the needs of households experiencing housing problems, as the majority of the lower priced single family and townhome rentals and apartments, with the exception of mobile homes, are located in the incorporated areas. Although government subsidized housing programs will continue to be

instrumental in improving the living conditions in the County, the units associated with these resources are very limited.

Executive Housing

Within the metropolitan area, Cherokee County maintains a relatively high level of household income, the proportion of which is expected to grow, although representation in the highest income groups is lower than in adjacent counties. Comparatively the proportion of those below the poverty line is also lower than in other surrounding metropolitan counties, suggesting a financially solid, yet not extremely affluent community. The availability of executive and move-up housing is linked to the creation and attraction of new businesses to an area and the overall economic development of a community. Keeping this in mind, the County and Cities should ensure an adequate supply of high-end housing options to meet this demand.

Overall Housing Outlook

Various housing types will be required to meet the lifestyle characteristics of the area. Master planned developments that incorporate a nonresidential component and special considerations to linkages and mixed uses within village centers will enable people of all ages to remain within the County. The majority of residential development in the County has been single-family residential units at a variety of prices and sizes. This housing mix is attracting younger family households with children and first time homebuyers, and opportunities for move-up and executive housing in a suburban setting. There is also a greater range of housing opportunities at the lower end of the price spectrum than in other metro Atlanta communities, particularly comprised of the older housing stock located in the vicinity of the incorporated areas.

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

Housing Programs

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

Cherokee County does not offer its own housing programs for rehabilitation, maintenance or enhancement. However, as a member of the Georgia Urban County Consortium (GUCC,) the County receives an annual allocation of HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, which are used to fund emergency housing programs. HOME funds are dedicated to the Cherokee County Single Family Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation Program, which offers assistance for housing rehabilitation that is specifically targeted toward lower income elderly households.

Implementation Strategies

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

■ Designing With the Environment

The natural resources enjoyed by the residents of Cherokee County are presently abundant and varied but finite. The number of uses and demands against these resources is large, and growing as development pressures increase. The water quality of the Etowah River and its tributaries has been steadily declining. Lands previously available for wildlife management are being developed. The amount of timber farming and general agriculture is declining. As development continues to spread across the county, habitat fragmentation is becoming a significant concern.

Policies

- Proactively preserve Cherokee County's rural resources and character by protecting prime agricultural and forestlands with incentives, land use regulation and other means of preservation.
- Adopt policies and practices that create environmentally responsible and sensitive design, development and construction.
- Protect and conserve natural areas, which have important recreational, ecological and aesthetic values, including hydrologically sensitive areas, floodplains, steep slopes, protected mountains, wetlands, stream corridors and watersheds.

- Support wildlife management efforts and the protection of animals and plant species listed as of statewide importance, threatened and endangered.
- Sustainable communities should contain civic spaces to encourage healthy exercise habits and social interaction. Civic spaces include open space/conservation areas; greenways, parks, greens, squares and plazas; as well as special sites reserved for civic buildings.
- Specific conservation areas and greenways should be identified in a county-wide plan so that preserved land in existing and new developments will interconnect to form a network of protected lands.

Discussion

Growth needs to be balanced with the need to retain and protect significant natural resources, i.e., streams, wooded areas, wildlife habitats and open spaces throughout the county. It is also important to identify and protect historic sites, areas of steep slope, watersheds and water supplies. Development should be steered away from these valuable resources, including implementing additional measures to assess and protect the natural and historic resources of the County, particularly in the pre-development assessment phase. The County should identify targeted areas for conservation proactively, and not just react when faced with a development request.

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

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

Civic Spaces

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

Open Space and Conservation Areas

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

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

Greenway Trails

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

Parks

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

Greens

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

Plazas and Squares

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

Implementation Strategies

- Coordinate with cities, adjoining counties, and regional agencies on water supply, wastewater, and stormwater issues to provide efficient services and comprehensive plans for management and expansion.
- Review and revise development regulations to encourage greater use of conservation subdivisions, TNDs and cluster housing.
- Continue to promote conservation subdivisions as a method for preserving private open space and pursue relationships with land trusts to preserve this open space.
- Adopt regulations to require open space to be set-aside and connections to any identified path system with every new development.
- Publicize information to owners of undeveloped property, the farming community, and timber industry on conservation tax program.

- Continue to participate with other jurisdictions in creating a Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) to protect the Etowah River and its threatened and endangered fish species. Consider adoption of a Low Impact Development Guidelines to support the HCP.
- Design a countywide green infrastructure plan by conducting a comprehensive documentation and mapping of sensitive environmental areas, acquired and planned greenspace and other significant resources. This plan would also describe the development of a countywide system of open spaces, trails, passive recreation and trails. Compile the findings as an overlay to the Future Development Map to be consulted during the zoning and development process.
- Investigate funding sources to provide adequate funding for a new green infrastructure plan. Create a dedicated fund source for yearly greenspace/path acquisition.
- Continue to actively educate the public, locals elected officials, developers, economic agencies, etc. about resource conservation and protection through the County's Environmental Coordinator (EC) and supporting programs.

■ **Balanced Tax Base and Diverse Economic Opportunities**

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

Policies

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

Discussion

Jobs in Cherokee County have historically been in manufacturing, with this industry accounting for more than 25 percent of the employment in the 1980's. Over the past two decades, there have been major shifts in the national and regional economy towards a "knowledge"/service economy including

professional and administrative services, technology, education, and health and social services. It is important for our economic development policies and strategies to reflect this change.

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

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

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

Presently, residents are commuting out of the County to the professional jobs, while others are commuting into the County for the existing industrial and service-oriented jobs. This pattern may be changing as interest in Cherokee County by firms with professional jobs has increased significantly in the last 18 months. Efforts to "raise the profile" of the community seems to be paying off but this new interest needs to be translated into new offices being opened and operations started. It is critical that local government actions be strongly supportive of this type of economic expansion in order for it to be successful.

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

The Economic Strategic Plan of 2004 proposes strategies to accomplish the ultimate goal of diversifying the economy, including: expansion of identified target business sectors; expansion of tourism opportunities; promotion and support of local entrepreneurs and small business and minority business owners; and tying local incentives to the creation of quality jobs. Successful economic development strategies confront challenges to the business climate, including workforce and education, infrastructure, business costs and environment, housing and quality of life.

Implementation Strategies

- Improve Cherokee County Airport as an economic development asset. Obtain and designate land for quality business development in association with the airport. A focused plan that coordinates land use, transportation and development regulations could help to strengthen this emerging job center.
- Maintain an adequate supply of quality prepared business and manufacturing sites, in particular develop and promote the Bluffs Business Park.

- Continue the focused marketing campaign targeting industries identified in the Cherokee County Economic Strategic Plan.
- Enhance the entrepreneurship and small business support programs with a comprehensive range of financial assistance, training, networking, professional advice and educational opportunities.
- Continue the Development Authority's Business Expansion & Retention Program including its Existing Industry Incentive Program, Existing Industry Roundtable, Operation Thank You, and advocacy of existing industry.
- Implement the Georgia Department of Economic Development's Business InSight program for analysis of existing industry covering key areas of products and services, marketing, industry, management, workforce and utilities.
- Focus resources on supporting and expanding existing partnerships between local business and educational institutions, such as the CCSD Advisory Committees, Career Pathways, Partners in Education and Cherokee Focus.
- Continue to promote vocational training/continuing education at local institutions to residents to increase their skills and to businesses to address specific training needs.
- Facilitate stakeholder meetings concerning agribusiness and agritourism in the county.
- Coordinate and streamline permitting processes and development regulations across all communities in Cherokee County.
- Encourage the redevelopment of underutilized shopping centers along major transportation corridors to broaden the retail and personal service offerings within Cherokee County.

SECTION 3: LAND DEVELOPMENT

3.1 Land Development Patterns

The use of the policies, overall design considerations and character areas will produce land development patterns to move toward the community's Vision. The concept of "character areas" is used to identify places and areas that show a common form of development and land use pattern, lifestyle and "feel," intensity of use, design elements or other factors that collectively define the character of a place or areas, whether existing or intended in the future.

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

Character Areas will:

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

■ Future Development Map

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

- Applies the overall Vision, guiding principals and policies to land use patterns of the Comprehensive Plan to the unincorporated areas of the County, the City of Waleska and the City of Ball Ground ;
- Visualizes projections within the Land Demand and Capacity Analysis for residential, retail, commercial, office and industrial needs to the year 2030;
- Was developed in conjunction with infrastructure planning and availability, land use compatibility and existing zoning;
- Acknowledges projected growth and provides for capacity for this growth in **appropriate** areas of the county and cities;

*A Visual Aid to
the Future*

- Provides for strong “edges” to stop residential and retail “creep,” incompatible uses and denigration of infrastructure capacity;
- Acknowledges and accommodates corridors currently or proposed to go through residential/commercial transition;
- Identifies specific corridors and areas that are appropriate for redevelopment activities and further study;
- Provides strong emphasis on integrated design, beneficial mixing of uses and connectivity; and
- Utilizes character areas to provide a richer description of how an area should function, look and feel.

The use of Character Areas instead of standard land use categories strengthens the concepts of attraction, containment, mixed-use communities and compatibility between uses.

■ Using Character Areas

Why Use Character Areas?

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

*Direct Link
between the
Plan, Map and
Zoning*

Benefits of Character Areas

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

*What kind of
development
are we trying to
achieve?*

How it Works

- Character Area guidelines are intended to establish a general direction and a base level of development quality and compatibility with surrounding areas;
- Character Areas provide an area wide view of how a specific use on a specific property will interact with a larger area;

- Character Areas allow additional qualitative controls while small area and corridor studies are completed.
- A use must still fit the intent of the Character Area and any associated criteria. A potential type of non-residential development may be “allowed,” but it may still not be appropriate.

Zoning Decision Process with Character Areas

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

Step 2: Refer to the Character Area Summary Table for zoning districts and infrastructure.

Step 3: Review the Guiding Principles and the policies under each Core Issue in Section 2, and the Overall Design Considerations in Section 3, for applicability.

Step 4: If located within a Character Area, review the Intent, Elements and Development Strategies for the Character Area.

Step 5: If located within a Node or Corridor, review the Elements and Development Strategies for the Node or Corridor and the underlying Character Area.

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

- A) the Future Development Map, and
- B) the applicable policies and design considerations,
- C) the intent, elements and development strategies of the applicable Character Area, and Node or Corridor where applicable..
 - 1) The composition of the developed area and /or the use of the property in the immediate vicinity should be the initial criterion when considering a new proposed development.
 - a. Where existing developed areas contain uses or building mass at a higher proportion than the Character planned for the area:
 - i New proposed development should not exceed the intensity of the developed area immediately adjacent.
 - ii A transition of development intensity from areas of greater building mass or urbanization to areas of lesser intensity should be applied. The transition should closely match the level of intensity at either end.
 - b. Existing developed areas which exceed the scope of the Character planned and are confined to a limited number of dispersed parcels should not be considered as representative of the predominant development intensity of the area.

Step 7: As the project proceeds through the rezoning or development process it will be judged on how that specific proposal fits the specific site, utilizing Zoning Ordinance review standards already adopted by the jurisdiction.

Interpretation

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

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



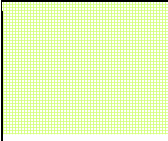
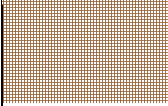
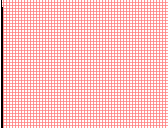
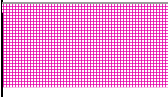

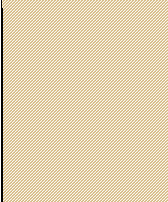
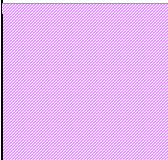

Plan implementation is carried out through the application of regulations such as the Zoning Ordinance and through projects and programs outlined in the Short Term Work Program. The Board of Commissioners and City Councils administer the Map within their respective jurisdictions, with input from their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

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

3.2 Character Area Summary Table

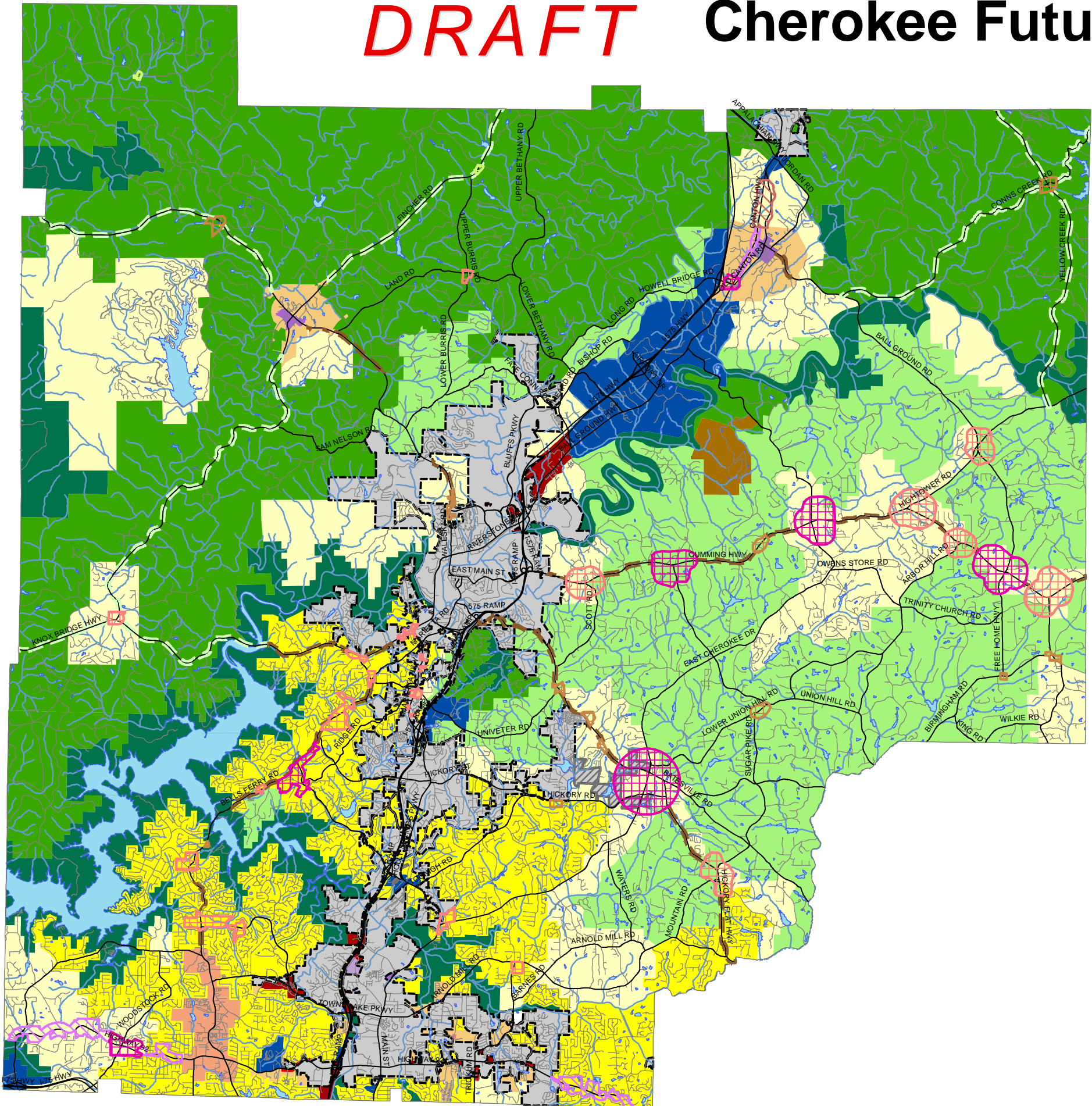
The following Table presents a summary of the Character Areas as shown on the Future Development Map, including infrastructure requirements, and zoning districts that are most compatible with the Character Area designation. Character Areas, Nodes and Development Corridors are more specifically described as to their intent, land uses and suggested development strategies in subsequent sections. Specific requirements and review standards of the Zoning Ordinance, site plan approval and other conditions control in all cases.

Character Area Summary Table				
Future Development Map Symbol	Character Area	Description of Character and Primary Land Uses	Community Facilities & Infrastructure	Suggested Zoning Districts
	Natural Preserve	Undeveloped natural lands with significant natural features that currently have some form of protection from development..	Very low level of services and community facilities	AG
	Rural Places	Outlying rural areas with active farming and scattered single-family housing on large lots. Preservation of sensitive natural resources is important.	Low level of services and community facilities. Potentially with public water but sewer is not planned.	AG
	Country Estates	Area of low intensity land use with a mixture of single-family housing on large lots and farms.	Local-serving roads, potentially with public water, typically lacks sewer	AG, R80
	Suburban Growth	Areas located outside identified centers that are experiencing a high volume of residential growth, primarily single-family houses.	Public water available, public sewerage available or planned; local public facilities	R-80, R-60, R-40,
	Suburban Living	Established residential neighborhoods with potential infill and redevelopment opportunities.	Public water available, public sewerage available or planned; local public facilities	R-40, R-30,R-20, R-15, RD-3,
	Neighborhood Living	Urbanized and growth oriented areas, adjacent to identified activity centers with higher densities. Various types of residential dwellings, and mixed-use developments.	Full urban services; regional public facilities.	RD-3, RZL, RA, RTH, TND Ball Ground & Waleska
	Bells Ferry LCI	Area targeted for new development and redevelopment integrating residential, commercial and greenspace per the LCI Plan.	Full urban services; regional public facilities.	TND
	Urban Core	Traditional downtowns with a broad range of uses.	Full urban services; regional public facilities.	Ball Ground & Waleska
	Workplace Center	Major employment centers utilizing a mixture of manufacturing, warehousing, wholesale, and commercial and office. Retail and high intensity residential are accessory uses to create a live/work and play environment.	Full urban services	OI, NC, GC, LI, TND Ball Ground

Future Development Map Symbol	Character Area	Description of Character and Primary Land Uses	Community Facilities & Infrastructure	Suggested Zoning Districts
	Regional Center	Regionally oriented large scale commercial, office, retail, entertainment and recreational, usually with a residential component development.	Full urban services	RM-10, RM-16, OI, NC, GC, HC
	Waste Management	Operating landfill facilities within Cherokee County.		LI, HI
Development Nodes and Corridors <i>(Underlying Character Area also applies within a Development Node or Corridor)</i>				
	Country Crossroads	This commercial activity node is envisioned as a restricted commercial node located at existing commercial "crossroads" locations within the rural areas. 5,000sf Maximum.	Limited Levels of Service, Based on existing commercial development	AG, OI, NC
	Hamlet	Hamlets are places where small-scaled commercial uses are arranged in a village-like setting. 17,500sf Maximum.	Limited Levels of Service	OI, NC, GC
	Neighborhood Village	Small-scaled commercial designated to serve a single neighborhood with access and size restrictions. May be part of a residential development. 50,000sf Maximum.	Public water is available & sewer may be available. Good transportation access.	OI, NC, GC
	Community Village	Medium-scaled commercial designated to serve several neighborhoods. 80,000sf Maximum.	Public water is available & sewer may be available. Good transportation access.	OI, NC, GC
	Scenic Corridor	Scenic corridors have low intensity development parallel to a viewshed.	Very low level of services and community facilities	AG
	Transitional Corridor	This corridor is designed to allow more intensive residential uses and limited compatible nonresidential uses along major roadways. Restrictions in this corridor allow a smooth transition to surrounding area. Size, appearance and parking standards apply to this corridor.	Linear transitional areas along major transportation corridors.	AG, OI, NC
	Development Corridor	Areas that extend along a major thoroughfare that have or are experiencing major development of retail, office or industrial land use and associated housing. These areas function as town centers.	Full urban services	OI, NC, GC, TND
	Highway Business Corridor	Auto-oriented uses along major thoroughfares	Full urban services. Located on arterial roads.	GC, HC Ball Ground

DRAFT

Cherokee Future Development Map



Legend

- Cities Not Included
- Disputed Holly Springs Annexation

Cherokee Character Areas

- Natural Preserve
- Rural Places
- Country Estates
- Suburban Growth
- Suburban Living
- Neighborhood Living
- Bells Ferry LCI
- Urban Core
- Regional Center
- Workplace Center
- Waste Management

Nodes

- Country Crossroads
- Hamlet
- Neighborhood Village
- Community Village

Corridors

- Scenic
- Transitional
- Development
- Highway Business

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IN FACT OR IN LAW, INCLUDING WITHOUT
LIMITATION THE IMPLIED WARRANTIES OF
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PARTICULAR PURPOSE.

Drawing Prepared by:
CHEROKEE COUNTY
PLANNING & ZONING DEPT.
CANTON, GEORGIA
DATE: 01/25/2008

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3.4 Overall Design Considerations

■ Residential Development

The Comprehensive Plan anticipates that, overall, the unincorporated area of the county will continue to be primarily a single-family low-density residential community, and that its neighborhoods will be enhanced as important community assets. The Cities of Waleska and Ball Ground will continue to develop with more urban land uses and densities suitable to each city. To address diversity and special housing needs within the county, areas have been designated to accommodate and incorporate medium-density and mixed housing types where appropriate. New residential development should reflect the overall quality and character of the each community's Vision, and should be integrated into the surrounding neighborhoods and Character Areas. All new residential areas should be developed as communities, meaning they should be sustainable and interconnected with adjacent uses and the community at large.

Considerations in evaluating new residential development should include:

- The effect on adjacent and nearby uses;
- The availability of public services and facilities;
- The character of the natural landscape;
- The provision of internal connectivity and a pleasant pedestrian/bicyclist environment;
- The continuity of local roads, walkways, pathways and open spaces;
- Protection from traffic and other undesirable impacts; and
- Connectivity within communities and to the greater community.

Residential Design Guidelines

The following additional enhancements that would further the development of communities should be added whenever possible:

- A variety of housing types, commercial and civic buildings should be included in large developments, such as shops, churches and, schools;
- A community should strive to create an interesting environment with modest distances between opposing house fronts, community squares and parks, and a short length of blocks to promote human interaction and support the creation of sustainable communities,
- All developments should be planned with inter-connectivity, both internally and externally, including such elements as footpaths, bikeways and open spaces linking blocks otherwise separated by natural features.

The designation of land for residential uses recognizes the need to provide land for support services to the individuals living in the area. Uses such as schools, parks and churches are compatible with the residential designations. However, in introducing such additional related uses into these residential environments, it is intended that they be located, designed and maintained with full and complete regard for the surrounding residential environment. In addition, to ensure that quality is an integral component in residential development, infrastructure should be adequate to support residents' needs.

■ **Nonresidential Development**

The Comprehensive Plan promotes high quality commercial and business development within Cherokee County and its Cities during the next 20 years in order to enhance the tax base, create new jobs, and provide convenient shopping opportunities for local residents. Commercial and other nonresidential uses have been organized into several Character Areas according to intensity, locational requirements and land use compatibility.

The following will be important during the review of non-residential development:

- The quality of physical development, design and siting;
- An enhanced pedestrian experience by providing a pleasant walking and shopping experience for business patrons;
- The inclusion of the natural environment, such as existing vegetation, topographic features, minimally undisturbed natural areas, and drainage;
- The visual nature of the development—view sheds, view corridors and primary views from on-site and off-site, and focal points;
- The patterns, character and scale of existing and planned development in the area;
- Potential connections and other relationships with adjoining development—i.e., pedestrian access points, shared driveways, off-street vehicular connections, open space systems and landscape buffers, and service corridors; and
- The creation of sustainable and complete communities through careful mixing of compatible and complimentary uses.

Commercial nodes and corridors often lack a sense of organizational structure, and this confusion reflects poorly on the community. These areas should be designed to resemble town squares of varying intensities and incorporate internal circulation patterns (for both automobiles and people) surrounding public spaces such as small pocket parks, squares and plazas. These “Main Streets” and “Villages” should become centers for community interaction where you would frequently run into friends and acquaintances. Commercial strip development is discouraged in all areas of the county.

Regional nonresidential centers should be developed as self-sustainable town centers that provide a variety of services to its residents and employees. A residential component should always be included to foster human interaction and a 24-hour environment. A sense of entry or arrival should be created at primary entryways into the development. Building placement, landscaping, gates, entry monuments, specialty lighting and other design elements can be used to create this design effect. These are large-scaled employment hubs that should be designed to create pleasant work and leisure environments with an integrated design and circulation plan, and be located in areas that provide sufficient transportation systems to limit negative impacts.

Nonresidential Design Guidelines

The guidelines presented in this section are intended to promote a quality development that implements the community’s Vision. Development proposals will be reviewed with respect to their response to physical characteristics of the site and to the contextual influences of the surrounding area as outlined below:

- All developments should provide safe and pleasant vehicle and pedestrian circulation patterns. In the more urban areas of the county and within the cities, sidewalks should be required along all rights-of-way to encourage interconnectivity between land uses;

- All building frontages and sides of buildings should be oriented to the street & sidewalks or other public areas as well as incorporating a combination of arcades, pedestrian-level display windows, storefronts, entrances and other architectural elements;
- Linear “strip” development must incorporate variations in building height, building mass, roof pitch, and changes in wall planes in order to mitigate the linear effect of a development. Particular attention should be made to building design when the building is adjacent to residential property or within any public view;
- Shared driveways, internal vehicular circulation systems linking properties, and linkages of interior pedestrian systems to adjoining sites are encouraged;
- Trees can define the character of a roadway corridor and unify the diverse elements that make up the corridor’s visual experience; trees and natural vegetation should be used extensively throughout the development;
- While off-street parking is essential for all but the smallest commercial projects, landscaping and screening techniques should be used to effectively hide such areas and soften the visual effects associated with large parking lots; and
- Commercial developments are encouraged to seek opportunities and incorporate features intended to reduce the dependence on the automobile (such as enhanced accessibility to transit and pedestrian connectivity and shared parking).

3.5 Character Area Descriptions

All of the land within the Cities of Ball Ground and Waleska, and within the unincorporated area of Cherokee County is located within one of the Character Areas described in this section. In addition to those Character Areas, specific Development Nodes and Corridors have been identified on the Future Development Map to guide more intensive land uses. Nodes and Corridors are described in the section following this one.

■ Natural Preserve

Narrative

Undeveloped, natural lands with significant natural features, including views, steep slopes, flood plains, wetlands, watersheds, wildlife management areas, conservation areas, private or publicly owned conservation areas and other environmentally sensitive areas not suitable for development, are included in this Character Area. This Character Area also includes passive open space, conservation areas and greenway trails.

Intent

It is the intent of the character area to identify areas where tracts are currently or formerly were protected by easement, acquisition or other means in large contiguous areas. These areas serve as critical environmental functions such as habitat protection, stormwater management and filtration of surface and ground water.

Elements

Future Development	<u>Primary Land Uses</u> Timber management and conservation uses Passive Recreation <u>Secondary Land Uses</u> Homesteads
Transportation	Greenways, trails, path systems
Infrastructure	N/A
Greenspace	Open Space and Conservation areas
Other	
Suggested Zoning Districts	AG

Development Strategies

Strategies for future development within this character area should include or consider:

- Maintain natural, rural and low intensity character;
- Widen roadways in these areas only when absolutely necessary and carefully design the roadway alterations to minimize visual impact; and
- Promote these areas as passive-use tourism and recreation destinations for activities such as hiking.

Implementation Measures

- Develop a Greenspace / Land Conservation Plan and program for the preservation of critical sensitive lands or habitat which considers acquisition of land, use of conservation easements or other measures.

■ Rural Places

Narrative

Rural Places are characterized by a balance between the natural environment and human uses with low density residential, farms, forests, outdoor recreation and other open space activities. Commercial uses should be small in scale to provide convenience services to the rural neighborhood. Industrial uses will generally be those that are related to and dependent on natural resources such as agriculture, timber or minerals. Home-based businesses are encouraged throughout the rural area provided they do not adversely affect the surrounding residential uses.

Much of Cherokee County's identity is tied to its rural and small town heritage. Although large-scale farms are not a major use within the county, many homesteads and "estate farms" still exist. Land within this Character Area is typically cultivated as pasture, farmland or woodlands under forestry management, or sparsely settled, homes on individual tracts and with large lot subdivisions. Areas of sensitive natural resources that require protection but are not Natural Preserves are found in this Character Area.

Intent

The intent of this Character Area is to provide an agricultural-residential community, which benefits from its scenic rural landscape while accommodating limited residential growth. Large-scale suburban development is not compatible within this Character Area due to conflicts such as agricultural smells or other forms of pollution resulting from raising animals, and dust and chemical drift from agricultural operations.

- Allow open space, the natural landscape and vegetation to predominate over the built environment;
- Foster traditional rural lifestyles, rural-based economies and opportunities to both live and work in rural areas;
- Provide visual landscapes that are traditionally found in rural areas and communities;
- Minimize the conversion of undeveloped land into extensive residential developments;
- Encourage and accommodate the further development of existing estates, homesteads and farms which comprise the overall fabric of the area.
- The uses and building scale of new development should maintain the character of the rural environment and surrounding area developments.
- Residential developments should use design elements or features such as meadows, woodlots, existing vegetation, mature landscaping and historic farm sites in order to maintain rural characteristics.

Elements

Future Development	<u>Primary Land Uses</u>
	Active farming, timbering and conservation uses
	Wholesale nurseries and commercial green houses
	Homesteads on individual lots
	Large lot single-family residential development
	Conservation subdivisions
	<u>Secondary Land Uses</u>
	Semi-public and institutional uses
	Outdoor recreation

Transportation	High Level Of Service on roads within the Character Area Low local connectivity Properties accessed by individual easements and private drives or driveways are common Roads characterized by grassy swales and narrow travel lanes
Infrastructure	Public water may be available Sewer is generally not available or planned
Greenspace	Conservation areas Greenspace in this Character Area is primarily privately-owned, borrowed “views” where the owners of property share in the provision of such greenspace. The continued existence of greenspace in this Character Area is dependent upon the discretion of each property owner.
Other	
Suggested Zoning Districts	AG

Development Strategies

Strategies for future development within this character area should include or consider:

- Active agricultural uses and residential development live side-by-side within this Character Area. To prevent incompatible uses, appropriate transitions between existing and newer developments should be provided;
- Nonresidential uses should be developed at a low intensity so that the natural landscape dominates the view of the buildings and parking;
- Alternatives to traditional impervious surfaces are encouraged;
- Provide a level of service appropriate to the pattern of development, in terms of transportation and sewer improvements, in order to maintain and protect the rural character and low intensity of development;
- There should be an emphasis on creating a sense of visual focus while protecting and enhancing the historic qualities of the community;
- Signs should be complementary to the historic and rural character and scale of the Character Area in the use of graphic symbols, lighting and natural materials;
- Retailing and wholesaling of agricultural products raised on nearby farms is allowed;
- Outdoor recreation should utilize open space and not be intrusive to the residential nature of surrounding residences.

Implementation Measures

- Develop a Greenspace / Land Conservation Plan and program for the preservation of critical sensitive lands or habitat which considers acquisition of land, use of conservation easements or other measures;
- Investigate methods and funding to encourage the continued existence of homesteads on large acreage, farms and forested areas.
- Encourage farming activities in the area (ie. crop production, animal / livestock raising, equestrian related uses), and appropriate accessory uses such as barns, corrals, grazing areas, stables and similar structures, and equestrian-related commercial usage such as equestrian centers, boarding stables, riding academies and tack shops.

■ Country Estates

Narrative

Areas within this Character Area are lands that are sparsely developed and sometimes contain agricultural production, or have been developed as “estate farms” or large-lot subdivisions. Horse farms and equestrian related developments dot the area landscape. The Country Estates Character Area seeks to provide a low-intensity residential community..

Intent

The intent of this Character Area is to:

- Retain and conserve the low-intensity character in the area;
- Support existing production-oriented agricultural activities such as major crop cultivation and animal production (including cattle, sheep, swine, and poultry broilers or eggs)
- Encourage upscale executive housing to meet the identified gap in market demand; and
- Encourage and accommodate the further development of large lot estates and “gentlemen’s farms” that blend into the overall fabric of the area.

Elements

Future Development	<u>Primary Land Uses</u> Active Farming, timbering, and conservation uses Wholesale nurseries and commercial green houses Homesteads on individual lots Large Lot Single Family home subdivisions Horse farms Gentlemen’s farms Executive housing Conservation subdivisions <u>Secondary Land Uses</u> Semi-public and institutional uses Passive Recreation areas
Transportation	High Level Of Service Some Subdivision streets built with curb and gutter Most roadways use grassy swales, have narrower travel lanes Properties more frequently accessed via public ROW Some additional connectivity of local roads / more local roads
Infrastructure	Sewer is generally not available or planned
Greenspace	Conservation areas Greenspace in this Character Area is primarily privately-owned, borrowed “views” where the owners of property share in the provision of such greenspace. The continued existence of greenspace in this Character Area is dependent upon the discretion of each property owner. Some conservation areas held in common within residential development
Other	
Suggested Zoning Districts	AG, R80

Development Strategies

- New development should be large-lot “estate” development of 2 acres or greater;

Implementation Measures

- Create design guidelines to assure compatibility with rural character and minimize visual impact; for example, open space utilizing rural elements such as pastures and forest stands that ensure that scenic and rural vistas are preserved;
- Encourage farming activities in the area (ie. crop production, animal / livestock raising, equestrian related uses), and appropriate accessory uses such as barns, corrals, grazing areas, stables and similar structures, and equestrian-related commercial usage such as equestrian centers, boarding stables, riding academies and tack shops.

■ Suburban Growth

Narrative

This Character Area covers areas within the County with limited existing development but where pressure is the greatest due to adjacency with current or proposed community infrastructure (such as sewer and water, and transportation). This Character Area generally consists of detached single-family homes situated on lots ranging in size with shallower setbacks than in rural areas. Generally, this is an area in transition from a rural area to a suburban area, often characterized by pockets of development interspersed among a rural landscape.

Intent

The intent of this Character Area is to channel growth pressures to areas that are suitable in terms of land use patterns and infrastructure investment to create more sustainable communities.

The intent of this Character Area is to:

- This Character Area is primarily residential in nature with most buildings detached;
- Promote walkability as new communities are developed;
- Promote diversity of uses such as housing types and civic uses;
- Promote residential development that fosters a sense of community and provides mobility, recreation and open space;
- Assure compatibility of new development with surrounding neighborhoods;
- New residential development shall be located where existing critical infrastructure (i.e. roads, schools, water/sewer, etc.) is available.

Elements

Future Development	<u>Primary Land Uses</u> Single-family detached housing Conservation Subdivisions Master planned communities <u>Secondary Land Uses</u> Residentially-related institutional uses
Transportation	Medium Level Of Service, but higher than urban areas Curb and gutter used in most new development Sidewalks within S/D's, radiating to community facilities Properties accessed almost exclusively by public roads Blocks are large and irregular Street connectivity is low Hierarchical road system dominates network Neighborhood Streets
Infrastructure	Public water and sewer may be available or planned for the near future Civic spaces such as greenways, parks and greens Pedestrian orientation is encouraged throughout the development.
Greenspace	Less shared views than in Rural areas More reliant on common owned spaces within new development (ie. golf course, parks, etc.) Made up of amenity areas Conservation Subdivision open space
Other	

Suggested Zoning Districts	R-80, R-60, R-40
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Development Strategies

Strategies for future development within this character area should include or consider:

- Create neighborhood focal points by locating schools, community centers, libraries, or health centers well-designed commercial activity centers at suitable locations within walking distance of residences;
- Provide connections to adjacent land uses and future developments;
- Encourage innovative development that integrates greenspace within its design, such as conservation subdivisions, master planned and traditional communities in appropriate locations;

Implementation Measures

- Create design guidelines to assure compatibility with rural character and minimize visual impact; for example, open space utilizing rural elements such as pastures and forest stands that ensure that scenic and rural vistas are preserved.

■ Suburban Living

Narrative

This Character Area is distinguished by its existing suburban neighborhoods of single family detached houses, its complimentary shopping areas, institutions such as churches, schools, libraries and regional parks. Houses tend to be on modest sized lots within large scale residential developments where structures are oriented on individual lots by building setbacks on all sides, and buffered from adjoining uses or properties. Most development within this area is characterized by low pedestrian orientation, high to moderate degree of building separation, predominately residential with scattered civic buildings and curvilinear street patterns. Water and sewer are either existing or planned within this Character Area. Land development within this character area often requires multiple tracts to be assembled. Such tracts are typically scattered throughout the area between existing neighborhoods.

Intent

The intent of this Character Area is to support existing suburban development with compatible residential and commercial development. Suitable development in this area should be similar to the existing pattern of development in terms of size, scale and lot density. The intent of this Character Area is to:

- Promote new residential development that fosters a sense of community and provides essential mobility, recreation and open space;
- Assure suitability of new development with existing, established neighborhoods;
- Protect existing residential neighborhoods;
- Encourage, where appropriate, within these areas development based upon traditional neighborhood design principles, such as connectivity of streets, pedestrian mobility and significant civic and green spaces;
- Create neighborhood focal points by locating schools, community centers, or well-designed small commercial activity centers at suitable locations within walking distance of residences; and
- Limit higher intensity development to areas where existing critical infrastructure (i.e. roads, schools, water/sewer, etc.) is available.

Elements

Future Development	<u>Primary Land Uses</u> Single-family residential Traditional Neighborhoods Conservation Subdivisions <u>Secondary Land Uses</u> Residential related semi-public and institutional uses Regional outdoor recreational uses or parks
Transportation	Medium Level Of Service, but higher than urban areas Curb and gutter used in all new development Sidewalks within S/D's, radiating to community facilities Major Intersections are signalized with pedestrian cross walks included Properties accessed by public roads Blocks are large and more regular shaped Street connectivity is moderate Hierarchical road system dominates network

	Neighborhood Streets Mixed-Use / Urban Streets are appropriate in certain locations where development pattern is more urban
Infrastructure	Public water and sewer is usually available Civic spaces such as greenways, parks and greens Pedestrian orientation is encouraged throughout the development.
Greenspace	Greenways and conservation areas Large Regional Parks Almost exclusively reliant on common owned spaces within new or existing development (ie. golf course, parks, amenity areas, etc.) Conservation Subdivision openspace
Other	<u>Senior Housing</u> SF detached products both for sale or rent Closer to services to reduce travel time and distance Located near development nodes and community facilities (churches, schools, parks, commercial centers)
Suggested Zoning Districts	R-40, R-30, R-20, R-15, RD-3

Development Strategies

- Utilize traffic calming improvements, sidewalks and increased street interconnections to improve walk-ability within and between existing neighborhoods;
- All neighborhoods should contain a civic space such as a park or village green of at least ¼ acre for every 10 housing units.
- Infill development should compliment existing uses, and provide missing elements that make a particular area a “sustainable community.” For example, in a neighborhood that is entirely residential, Corner Market type commercial would be missing;
- To the extent practical, development should help provide missing design elements and facilities such as internal sidewalks, plazas and focal points, and pedestrian and bicycle connections to adjoining neighborhoods;
- Public and semi-public uses should be incorporated into new neighborhoods or adjacent to existing neighborhoods; the size, scale and impact should be considered in order to provide compatibility; and Semi-public and institutional uses shall have adequate public infrastructure at the time of final plat approval;
- Outdoor recreation should not adversely impact residential development in terms of light and noise.
- New large scale residential development required to have multiple access points onto road network and provide future connections to adjoining properties

■ Neighborhood Living

Narrative

Neighborhood Living Character Areas are predominately residential in nature, but may include low intensity neighborhood-scaled shopping facilities in stand-alone buildings, commercial space in a live/work dwelling where the proprietor resides, or small retail and professional uses built as part of a residential development. These neighborhoods encompass housing on smaller lots, smaller front setbacks for both attached and detached dwellings; possess a distinct community identity through architectural style, lot and street design; and are predominately owner occupied. Appropriate residential types can include single-family dwellings, condominiums, townhouses, and apartments as part of a mixed-use project. The Neighborhood Living areas are generally located in and around the cities in Cherokee County.

Intent

The intent of this Character Area is to create new moderate-density housing to provide for empty nesters, singles, small families, stable workforce housing and moderate-income neighborhoods and to provide a choice of various housing types that accommodate a cross-section of incomes, life styles, and life cycles. Neighborhood Village Centers are common in these neighborhoods to provide for close and convenient services. Parking should be secondary to the façade of a building and to pedestrian access. Infill or redevelopment of parcels within this Character Area will provide greater housing choices, but should be respectful of existing neighborhoods.

Primary principles of this character area include:

- Encourage locating residential development where full urban services, public facilities and potential routes of public transportation are available; Encourage the conversion of sites to more intensive residential use when appropriate;
- The provision of community services and commercial uses to create a “complete community;”
- Accommodate a variety of housing types to suit a variety of lifestyles, price points and lifecycles;
- Develop residential areas that utilize innovative urban design principles to encourage community, pedestrian linkages and mixed-use environments;
- Multi-family housing should be small in scale and integrated into a mixed-use development in order to fit with surrounding neighborhood; and
- Internal and external connections and walkability are key to this Character Area in order to reduce automobile trips and to encourage a close-knit community.

Elements

Future Development	<p><i>Primary Land Uses</i> Smaller lot single-family dwellings; townhouses, duplexes Small-scaled apartments integrated into mixed use developments Live/Work Units Senior Housing <i>Secondary Land Uses</i> Public and Institutional Uses Mixed Use Buildings</p>
Transportation	<p>Mixed Use/Urban Streets Internal Pedestrian Ways Low Level Of Service, but higher than urban areas</p>

	<p>Curb and gutter used in all new development</p> <p>Sidewalks within S/D's, radiating to community facilities</p> <p>Major Intersections are signalized with pedestrian cross walks included</p> <p>Properties accessed by public roads</p> <p>Blocks are medium and regular shaped – 600ft in length max.</p> <p>Street connectivity is moderate-high</p>
Infrastructure	<p>Public water and sewer is usually available</p> <p>Civic spaces such as greenways, parks and greens</p> <p>Pedestrian orientation is required throughout the development.</p>
Greenspace	<p>Greenways and conservation areas</p> <p>Exclusively reliant on common owned spaces within new or existing development (ie. golf course, parks, amenity areas, etc.)</p>
Other	<p><u>Senior Housing</u></p> <p>SF detached or attached products both for sale or rent</p> <p>Many goods & services are walkable, rest are close to reduce travel time and distance</p> <p>Located near development nodes and community facilities (churches, schools, parks, commercial centers)</p>
Suggested Zoning Districts	<p>RD-3, RZL, RA, RTH, TND, Ball Ground, Waleska</p>

Development Strategies

- Mixed use is highly encouraged. Buildings may contain both a horizontal and low-rise vertical mix of uses. Development may consist of single uses placed side-by-side or different uses on different floors of the same structure. Mixed-use projects must conform to the square footage requirements of a Neighborhood Village and contain at least one civic space;
- Corner Markets and Neighborhood Villages should be integrated as part of a new development.
- Multi-family development should be limited to fewer than 100 units and be part of a mixed-use project;
- Institutional uses such as elementary schools, churches, libraries and community centers are encouraged;
- Substantial connections should exist within a development and to adjacent public rights-of-ways and other neighborhoods. A grid system of interconnected streets is encouraged; cul-de-sacs or other unconnected roadways are discouraged;
- Street trees are required. On-street parking should be part of an overall street design such as bump-outs, pavers and other aesthetic streetscape treatments;
- Neighborhoods should be designed to allows residents to walk from edge to center or civic space, or to a nonresidential use, in 5 to 10 minutes;
- Neighborhood civic spaces, such as parks, greens and squares should be located a maximum distance of 1,000 feet from any residential unit;
- Development should include prominent public features such as art, fountains and gazebos; these features should also serve as landmarks for way finding and navigation; and
- Parking should be located to the sides or rear of residential and non-residential buildings. All parking must be screened from the public pedestrian view.

■ **Bells Ferry LCI**

Narrative

The Bells Ferry Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) area is a gateway into Cherokee County from Cobb County. It connects the southwestern portions of the county with Towne Lake and Woodstock, areas of significant private investment and attractive physical development. The Bells Ferry LCI plan identified a series of issues to be addressed in the corridor; the need for redevelopment of some of the existing commercial space, the lack of alternative routes causing traffic congestion at the primary intersection and the potential development on currently vacant parcels in the study area.

Intent

The vision of the Bells Ferry community is to redevelop greyfield commercial properties and under-utilized areas into a “community of choice” that can offer diverse choices and activities for the whole community.

The intent of the Bells Ferry LCI Character Area is to:

- Provide diverse choices in shopping, housing, entertainment and recreation that not only serves this community but as a destination choice for the region;
- Increase job opportunities for residents and improve the jobs-to-housing balance;
- Provide the residents with transportation alternatives and modes for traveling within the area; and
- Support the diversity of people of all incomes, ages, social and cultural backgrounds.

The integration of land uses and emphasis on patterns of more compact development can facilitate the feasibility of transit in the future for this area. The following are the primary development areas within the corridor:

Mixed Use Nodes

The intersection of Bells Ferry/SR 92 (primary node), the warehouse/industrial node along Bells Ferry at Bascomb Carmel/Bells Ferry, and the Kellogg Creek/Bells Ferry intersection node are designated as “mixed use” and encourage the following uses:

Park/Open Space;
Commercial/Retail;
Civic;
Office;
Single-family Residential;
Townhomes; and
Multi-family Residential.

Residential Neighborhoods

Between the Mixed Use Nodes, the LCI Plan calls for existing and new residential neighborhoods to be knit together with a grid of streets to provide more options for local trips. The new residential development would include a wide variety of housing types (i.e. single family, townhouses and multi-family) with the higher intensity located along Bells Ferry.

Parks and Open Space

A high concentration of park space is located within the heart of the Bells Ferry Parkway Enclave. The park space here will accommodate both active and passive recreation opportunities along with

the proposed Cherokee County Aquatic Center and will serve as a unique asset within the Character Area. Also included within this zone are existing ponds, which are to be leveraged as public amenities and gathering spaces.

Elements

Future Development	<u>Primary Land Uses</u> Urban Residential - smaller lots and units with common civic spaces Live/Work Units Mixed Use Senior Housing <u>Secondary Land Uses</u> Public and Institutional Uses Mixed Use Buildings
Transportation	Mixed Use/Urban Streets Internal Pedestrian Ways Low Level Of Service Curb and gutter used in all new development Internal pedestrian pathways throughout Major Intersections are signalized with pedestrian cross walks included Properties accessed by public roads Blocks are medium and regular shaped – 600ft in length max. Street connectivity is moderate-high
Infrastructure	Full urban facilities and services Civic spaces such as greenways, parks and greens Pedestrian orientation is encouraged throughout the development.
Greenspace	Greenways and conservation areas Exclusively reliant on common owned spaces within new or existing development (ie. golf course, parks, amenity areas, etc.)
Other	<u>Senior Housing</u> SF attached and MF products both for sale or rent Many goods & services are walkable, rest are close to reduce travel time and distance Located near development nodes and community facilities (churches, schools, parks, commercial centers)
Suggested Zoning Districts	TND

Development Strategies

- Create a strong urban structure that reflects sound urban design principles of creating the public realm; hierarchy of streets, open spaces, creating vistas and public and civic spaces, pedestrian friendly environment and high quality architecture. Include a diverse mix of housing types, such as condominiums, apartments, live/work units, town homes, cluster housing and single family;
- Provide transportation alternatives for residents; good street grids, transit, bike and pedestrian pathways that not only serve as alternative ways but also encourage walking and biking. Internal and external connections and walkability are key to this Character Area in order to reduce automobile trips and to encourage a close knit community; All projects must connect to multi-use trail and paths;
- Preserve natural areas, features and make connections to Lake Allatoona and Noonday Creek;
- Provide enhanced arterial access and inter-parcel connectivity that enhances vehicular circulation. Create a hierarchy of streets and appropriate traffic calming that promotes appropriate vehicle speeds and safety;

- Encourage appropriate densities that can support the retail, entertainment and commercial activity that creates a successful community; and
- Provide open spaces, pocket parks and civic/public spaces that enhance quality of life within all land uses and developments. Open space and parks should be usable, designed and maintained spaces (not leftover open spaces) or buffers, creeks or flood plains.

Implementation

- Create a greenway system that links different areas of the community;
- Prepare and launch a Public/Private Partnership initiated by the County aimed at facilitating LCI compatible private development projects within the Bells Ferry Corridor utilizing redevelopment powers, bond financing and other economic development incentives available to the County. Explore establishing a Tax Allocation District (TAD) as a funding source for infrastructure improvements;
- Initiate funding efforts to attract Federal and State transportation funds, as well as Atlanta Regional Commission LCI Implementation Grant funds; and
- Adopt regulatory enhancements and develop public facilities and greenspace to facilitate the *Bells Ferry LCI Plan*.

■ **Urban Core**

The rising cost of housing, traffic congestion and changing market forces are currently encouraging a rediscovery of Ball Ground and Waleska downtown areas. As each city grows, it is increasing important to create a compact central core that will contribute to the existing energy and activity, while amplifying and connecting the existing centers of activity. With guidance, density can create variety and vitality in a city core, which will enhance safety by reducing unpopulated, unused areas. Primary objectives within the urban cores are to redevelop and revitalize existing historic buildings and to promote infill development that is a natural extension of the city's fabric.

The Urban Core Character Area generally consists of the highest density development and the widest range of mixed uses, combined with central civic areas such as a City Hall, a school or a library. Downtown residential neighborhoods contribute to the overall vitality of the Urban Core. Some buildings are attached and often taller, situated on a wide range of lot sizes. There is a very short mandatory front setback with wide sidewalks. The majority of the required parking is to be located to the rear, or provided on the street. Civic spaces, such as parks, squares and plazas, centered on public art or fountains are scattered through out the Urban Core areas. This diversity of development downtown helps to create an urban core where people are able to live, shop and work within a walkable area.

Downtown Ball Ground

Before the railroad came through in 1882, the community was almost purely agricultural, consisting of two country stores and a few dwellings. After the railroad, the town grew because of the marble-working industry. Today, Ball Ground is growing as businesses and homeowners are moving into the North Georgia Mountains along the I-575 corridor. Uses within the downtown are a mix between residential and commercial. As residential growth occurs, each new neighborhood should not be an isolated island, but should connect to land uses surrounding it. All new subdivisions and non-residential uses should promote walkability and connection. It is also anticipated that Main Street will continue to grow, redevelop, and remain the heart of Ball Ground

Ball Ground Development Strategies

- Signage should include small hanging signs, wall mounted signs and freestanding signs based on Ball Ground Standards. Signs should enhance the pedestrian experience.
- Parking is encouraged along the side and rear of downtown buildings. On-street parking shall be allowed where designated in the Downtown Master Plan. All parking, except for allowable on-street parking should be screened from view.
- Ball Ground's historic heritage should be enhanced by ensuring that new and renovated buildings are compatible with the character of existing buildings built between 1860 and 1940.
- Require architectural and storefront treatments that provide a sidewalk level street façade in the downtown area.
- Street trees and streetscape improvements should be placed on all streets.
- Sidewalk level uses should have a primary pedestrian entrance, which faces, is visible from, and is directly adjacent to the sidewalk or public open space plaza or courtyard.
- Neighborhood and Mixed Use/Urban Streets.

Downtown Waleska

Waleska, home of Reinhardt College, is a small town in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in the Northwest corner of Cherokee County. Established in 1889, almost everyone in Waleska has

some relationship with the college. Some are employees; some are students; some are alumni, and others are neighbors. The campus occupies close to half of the area within the city limits.

While the Waleska community has grown tremendously with the growth of the college, the town itself has retained its small town charm. The people of Waleska gather throughout the year to celebrate holidays, such as Fourth of July or Christmas. Passing through Waleska, you may see people taking walks and running on the city sidewalks, the college's beautifully landscaped campus and Boston Nature Trail. City residents also enjoy the opportunity to attend the many events on the Reinhardt campus, such as Atlanta Symphony Orchestra performances at the Felony Performing Arts Center. While the citizens of Waleska enjoy the conveniences of today and look forward to the future, history is respected and preserved in Waleska. The Funk Heritage Center and adjacent Early American Village draws thousands of visitors each year to see artifacts and exhibits on the history and art of the Southeastern Indians and European settlers.

It is envisioned that downtown Waleska will continue to develop in coordination with Reinhardt College. The further enhancement of a Main Street Village will provide service, retain, entertainment and cultural opportunities to residents and students in a pedestrian friendly and lively environment.

Waleska Development Strategies

- All streets should be pedestrian friendly with street trees and appropriate streetscape improvements.
- Signage would be compatible with the small town character of Waleska.
- Parking is encouraged on the side and in the rear of buildings along Hwy 140 and 108 to strengthen the "Main Street" feel of the area and to improve the walkability of the community.
- Enhancement of Waleska's historic quality by ensuring that new and renovated buildings are compatible with the character of buildings built between 1860 and 1940.
- Civic spaces such as parks, squares and plazas should be located throughout developments with no more than a maximum of 800 feet from any dwelling unit.
- Sidewalk level uses should have a primary pedestrian entrance, which faces, is visible from and it is directly adjacent to the sidewalk or a public open space plaza courtyard.
- Traditional Neighborhood Streets.

■ Regional Center

Narrative

A Regional Center is an open-air market-like development that focuses on certain retail sectors and blends mixed uses typical of an old-time Main Street, such as services, restaurants, offices and residential. These centers are pedestrian friendly where residents, employees and visitors can gather in public spaces and feel part of the community. Regional centers include a relatively high intensity mix of business and retail, office and employment opportunities, higher-education facilities, sports, recreational complexes, hotels, theatres, civic and semi-public uses (such as libraries, health clinics, museums and religious institutions) that create a multi-dimensional destination. A residential component is especially important as it adds density to the center and creates a 24-hour character area. Higher density condominium and rental residential complexes, townhomes, brownstones, live-work units, lofts, senior housing and residential over retail are appropriate to support these uses. This character area is a vibrant place where people can live, work, play and shop.

Intent

As a town center, pedestrian orientation and connectivity are a key focus. The overall environment should be attractive and enjoyable for walking. Sidewalks, paths, green spaces and open spaces are as important as the buildings. These shopping villages provide a pleasant “Main Street” type façade and allow for ease of internal movement. Design factors fostering community commercial include: addressing the size of commercial development in terms of square footage by breaking up facades of large buildings into more pedestrian-scaled units; design parameters for parking and internal circulation/access; architectural treatments; building setbacks, siting and orientation; buffer requirements to ensure compatibility with adjacent residential; and other factors.

The intent this character is to:

- Refocus strip commercial and new development into villages with the feel of a typical “Main Street;”
- Provide a high intensity of mixed uses, size of uses, and types of uses in order to create a critical mass;
- Promote pedestrian scale, connectivity, interconnection within and external to the Center;
- Plan for a community street, trail and sidewalk network that is as friendly to alternative modes of transportation as to the automobile;
- Require master planning to address access management;
- Plan and design transportation improvements that fit with community character; and
- Include civic and cultural uses to promote human interaction.

Elements

Future Development	<p><u>Primary Land Uses</u> Regional and professional offices; Department stores, large marketers and individual retail stores; Recreational uses such as theaters, roller skating rings, arcades; and Entertainment, restaurants and cultural arts.</p> <p><u>Secondary Land Uses</u> High density residential development within a mixed use master planned environment; Senior housing;</p>
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	Civic, institutional and semi-public uses, such as religious organizations, educational facilities; museums; libraries; health clinics; senior centers, YMCAs, Community Centers; Mixed Use Buildings
Transportation	Mixed Use/Urban Streets Low Level Of Service Curb and gutter used in all new development Internal pedestrian pathways throughout Major Intersections are signalized with pedestrian cross walks Properties accessed by public roads Blocks are medium and regular shaped – 600ft in length max. Street connectivity is high
Infrastructure	Full urban facilities and services Civic spaces such as greenways, parks and greens Pedestrian orientation is encouraged throughout the development.
Greenspace	Greenways and conservation areas Exclusively reliant on common owned spaces within new or existing development (ie. golf course, parks, amenity areas, etc.)
Other	<u>Senior Housing</u> SF attached and MF products both for sale or rent Many goods & services are walkable, rest are close to reduce travel time and distance Located near development nodes and community facilities (churches, schools, parks, commercial centers)
Suggested Zoning Districts	RM-10, RM-16, OI, NC, GC, HC

Development Strategies

- Regional Centers should include a diverse mix of higher-density housing types within it or on adjacent properties, including apartments, lofts over retail or office, townhouses, apartments and condominiums. Workforce housing and senior developments are also appropriate within this character area.
- Streets should follow urban patterns, such as small blocks within a grid system. The development should be connected internally and to the surrounding existing streets. There should be a variety of streets and sections throughout the development each having a different character to contribute to the sense of the project having been built up over time;
- Buildings should be oriented in close proximity to each other and on both sides of the street to facilitate walking instead of driving—all parcels should be interconnected wherever topography allows, along streets, squares and plazas.;
- Taller buildings or portions of a building should be located internally to a site with buildings stepping down in height as they reach the edges of the site that are adjoined by smaller scaled development or as they connect to existing residential uses;
- Sidewalks should be wide and developed with street trees and landscaping and traditional lighting. Seating and gathering areas should be worked into the overall design; all pedestrian areas should be inviting and safe and designed with appropriate furniture, landscaping and amenities;
- Provide bike lanes or wide curb lanes to encourage bicycling and provide additional safety, provide conveniently located, preferably sheltered, bicycle parking at retail and office destinations and in multi-family dwellings;

- Large commercial structures should be designed so that their facades are subdivided into smaller units of scale so that they give the appearance of a number of smaller attached buildings; Shop windows, entrances, colonnades, columns, pilasters and other details shall be designed to break down dimensions to human scale;
- All entrances should be obvious and welcoming. Main entrances should be oriented to the street, with secondary access from an internal plaza and pedestrian way. The front façade of the building should feature arcade/structural canopies along the front of the building and leading form parking areas that provide relief from the weather;
- The buildings should share similar design characteristics and design vocabulary. Precise replication is not desirable. Instead, utilization of similar colors, materials and textures as well as repeating patterns, rhythms and proportions found within the architecture of other buildings in the center can be utilized to achieve unity;
- A unified design plan is necessary for multiple building developments. This plan should include exterior facade colors and materials, signage and landscaping. This unified design plan should be reviewed for its compatibility with the surrounding site context, particularly if there are strong or dominant architectural styles;
- Civic gathering places should be distributed throughout the development. Amenities such as benches, landscaping, public art, and fountains should be included within the development;
- Owners and developers of adjoining properties should be encouraged to provide shared parking and access; Closing and consolidating excess driveways and curb cuts is highly desirable;
- Parking decks should be partially concealed from any public right-of-way or private drive. Decks should be “wrapped” by retail or residential uses, constructed to look like a building or heavily landscaped;
- Regional Centers are designed to serve populations of 80,000 to 200,000 people, have a 20-mile service radius and should be spaced 6 to 10 miles apart.

■ **Workplace Center**

The Workplace Center Character Areas are primarily large employment centers that incorporate many aspects of commerce such as professional office buildings, corporate offices, regional offices, high-tech and research facilities and small office complexes; educational services and recreation; and light industrial uses such as warehousing and wholesale. Retail and residential development are a secondary use that compliments these employment centers. High intensity residential integrated into a mixed-use development would provide a customer base for offices, cafés, restaurants and retail uses located in the corridor, and enhance the safety of the area by maintaining a continuous population base in a location that is typically unpopulated in the evening hours.

Development within a Workplace Center should be focused into villages, urban centers or compact activity centers. Workplace Centers are located close to major transportation connections and have a high level of access. An integrated mix of uses and building types, along with external and internal connectivity would create a synergy between retail, office, industry and surrounding residential development. Residential uses are considered an accessory use to non-residential uses and as such should be fully integrated into a center, and monitored closely so that large residential developments do not become a primary land use, therefore substantially reducing the non-residential character of the area.

Primary Land Uses

- Employment Generators, such as office buildings, small office complexes and limited light industrial, warehousing, and light manufacturing that will not have an adverse impact upon the environmental quality of the village. Heavy industrial is restricted to locations where adverse impacts can be adequately mitigated.
- Mixed use projects that feature vertical integration (such as ground floor retail with office or living units above), with an emphasis on greater street presence.
- Retail and residential secondary uses to employment uses, integrated within mixed-use developments.

Development Strategies

- Developments within a Workplace Center should be master planned to address site planning, landscaping, inter-parcel access, parking and circulation issues. Grouping or “clustering” of office and retail uses with co-mingled parking, landscaping and pedestrian areas are encouraged. Civic spaces should be incorporated into all development projects;
- Ground floor spaces should present a pedestrian façade. Ground floor retail is encouraged.
- Buildings set in a campus setting should have an internal pedestrian circulation system that makes travel between buildings convenient.
- Appropriate sidewalks, street trees, landscaping and lighting should be provided along both sides of any street.
- Buffers are critical between incompatible uses. Guidelines that address signage and lighting will help to mitigate the negative impacts of a high concentration of commercial and industrial uses;
- Significant amounts of parking and truck loading/unloading areas should be located to the rear and sides and screened from view;

- All sides of a parking garage visible from the street must present an architecturally finished look consistent with the building it serves. If locating along a street, office or commercial space must be provided on the ground level facing the street.
- Accessory, temporary, outdoor storage of retail goods should be shielded from public view. In the case of storage/repair businesses, vehicles stored on site should be screened from view from the public right of way by a low wall or hedge. Display platforms should be incorporated into overall design.

■ **Waste Management**

This Character Area encompasses the Pine Bluff Sanitary Landfill as designated in the Cherokee County Solid Waste Plan. This facility is shown because of its projected 50 year life span and the impact of this land use on the on the surrounding area.

3.6 Nodes and Corridors

Sustainable communities have a mix of uses to offer the daily conveniences to its residents and a chance to interact with other residents. Sustainable communities are also inclusive and accommodating to all residents, including those that are not able to drive an automobile, such as children and the elderly. An underlying guiding principle within Cherokee County and the Cities of Ball Ground and Waleska, is to encourage appropriate nonresidential development within or near its residential communities. Below is a description of the different types of development nodes and corridors. The descriptions below indicate additional, more intensive uses that may be appropriate in the designated Nodes and Corridors. The underlying Character Area will still inform and shape the character of that development.

■ Country Crossroads

Narrative

Country Crossroads are very small commercial areas that have or will be developed to serve local needs at historic crossroads in the more rural areas of the county. Businesses within Country Crossroads typically offer limited local convenience goods and services. These nodes typically consist of single story buildings with a single establishment in each. In these areas it is common for existing structures and buildings to be adapted for commercial use. If the location merits expansion, it may be upgraded to a Hamlet on the Future Development Map.

Elements

Future Development	<u>Primary Land Uses</u> Convenience retailers & local groceries Tack shops, “feed and seed” stores Gas stations <u>Secondary Land Uses</u> Local institutions such as churches, schools, day care, fire stations
Transportation	High Level Of Service due to surrounding rural character Usually 2 lane facility without signalization Street connectivity is very low
Infrastructure	Public water is available Typically lacks public sewer
Greenspace	N/A
Other	
Suggested Zoning Districts	AG, OI, NC

Development Strategies

- Country Crossroads have a service radius of 1 to 3 miles.
- Country Crossroad nodes are limited to a total of 5,000 square feet devoted to commercial/retail activity.
- Country Crossroads should be designed to reflect the rural attributes of the community.
- Existing Country Crossroads businesses are expected to remain and make improvements, but further new development or expansion of a Country Crossroads Character Area would require upgrading to a Hamlet.

- Country Crossroads should be compatible with surrounding residential properties and developed to serve a very limited immediate service area and pass-by traffic.

■ Hamlet

Narrative

Hamlets are places where small-scaled commercial uses are arranged in a village-like setting. A Hamlet might include businesses such as a bank, restaurant, dry cleaner and gas station, and other similar “daily-needs” commercial uses to serve nearby residents.

Developments within the Hamlet should include a small civic space, such as a neighborhood park, or green, as an integral part of the design. Sidewalks or pedestrian paths are encouraged within Hamlets to allow parking to be shared between businesses. Given a Hamlet’s small scale and emphasis on local-serving stores, the scale and size of individual businesses and the Hamlet as a whole are most important. Adaptive reuse of existing structures and buildings is encouraged to serve as focal points for the Hamlet.

Elements

Future Development	<u>Primary Land Uses</u> Small-scale shops, drug stores, bakeries, cafes, restaurants Tack shops, “feed and seed”, or hardware stores Personal services such as laundromats, dry cleaners, barber/beauty shops and video rental Professional services such as lawyers, accountants, insurance agents, physicians and dentists <u>Secondary Land Uses</u> Single-family detached homes appropriate for underlying character area Local institutions such as churches, schools, day care, fire stations
Transportation	Level of Service will vary depending on location within the County Generally located along an arterial or collector road Street connectivity is low
Infrastructure	Sewer availability will vary depending on location within the County Public water should be available
Greenspace	Small civic spaces such as a park or green
Other	
Suggested Zoning Districts	OI, NC, GC

Development Strategies

- Hamlets have a service radius of 1 to 3 miles.
- There should be a minimum separation between Hamlets of 1/2 to 2 miles.
- Hamlets should have no individual store or building greater than 17,500 gross square feet in size.
- Buildings should be clustered, one and two stories in height, and should respect the predominate scale of development in the surrounding area by locating larger scaled buildings in the center surrounded by smaller buildings that are compatible with adjacent residential.
- Design for each Hamlet should be pedestrian-oriented, with walkable connections between different uses.

- All principal buildings should have a front door facing a roadway or civic space. Shared driveways and inter-parcel access between different buildings are encouraged. Parking beyond a single row in front should be located to the side or rear of the building.
- Site design elements such as low-level pedestrian lights, consistent signage and landscaping contribute to the character of Hamlets and help create a sense of place.
- The use of coordinated and identified design elements such as awnings, varying shingle styles or other natural materials, archways and façade landscaping are encouraged;
- Wherever practical, streets should terminate at a focal point, such as a civic building, greenspace or park, church, bell tower, gazebo, etc. Streets should never terminate at a parking lot.

■ Neighborhood Village

Narrative

In a Neighborhood Village, one to three story buildings are arranged around a civic space such as a green or plaza in a small-town setting. Neighborhood Villages could include a bank, drug store, restaurant, grocery, dry cleaner and gas station, and other similar commercial uses. Each of these places should function as a compact assortment of retail establishments, professional services and local institutions that serve the surrounding neighborhoods.

The size and scale of the whole Neighborhood Village and the individual buildings are critical in this Character Area. Multi-tenant buildings should be broken apart to permit vehicular and pedestrian circulation to adjacent parcels and to the surrounding neighborhood. The design of pedestrian circulation within the village shall be of equal importance as vehicular circulation and parking. Integrated residential development would be appropriate at the edge of a Neighborhood Village.

Elements

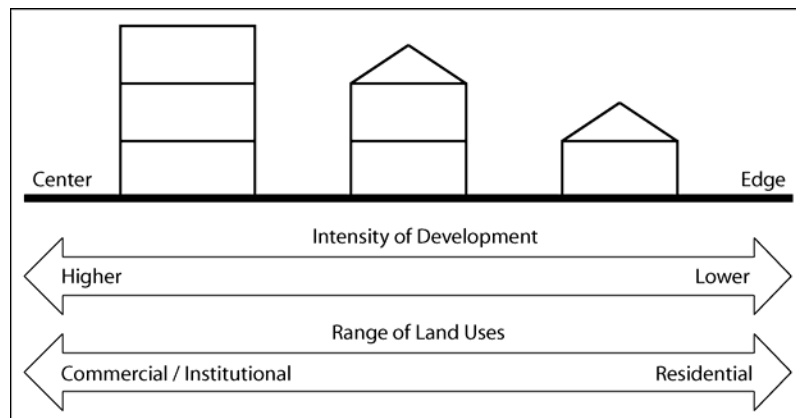
Future Development	<u>Primary Land Uses</u> Retail shops, drug stores, bakeries, cafes, restaurants Tack shops, “feed and seed” or hardware stores Grocery store Personal services such as laundromats, dry cleaners, barber/beauty shops and video rental Professional services such as lawyers, accountants, insurance agents, physicians and dentists <u>Secondary Land Uses</u> Single family residential neighborhoods Neighborhood institutions such as churches, schools, day care, fire stations and libraries
Transportation	Level of Service will vary depending on location within the County Located along an arterial or collector road. Neighborhood Villages should serve as hubs for sidewalks to be extended to surrounding neighborhoods and local institutions Street connectivity is low to medium
Infrastructure	Sewer availability will vary depending on location within the County Public water should be available
Greenspace	Small civic spaces such as a park, green or plaza
Other	<u>Senior Housing</u> SF detached for sale Many goods, services and institutions are walkable, rest are close to reduce travel time and distance
Suggested Zoning Districts	OI, NC, GC

Development Strategies:

- Each Neighborhood Village has a service radius of up to 5 miles.
- There should be a minimum separation between Neighborhood Villages of 1/2 to 3 miles.
- Neighborhood Villages are intended to have no individual store or building greater than 50,000 gross square feet in size.

- Buildings should be clustered, one to three stories in height, and should respect the predominate scale of development in the surrounding area by locating larger scaled buildings in the center surrounded by smaller buildings that are compatible with adjacent development.
- It is essential that Neighborhood Villages be designed to be pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between commercial and residential uses, neighborhood institutions and surrounding neighborhoods.
- All principal buildings should have a front door opening directly onto a sidewalk along a roadway or a civic space. Shared driveways and inter-parcel access between different buildings are required. Road edges should be clearly defined by locating buildings close to the road, with parking in the side or rear;
- Site design elements such as low-level pedestrian lights, consistent signage and landscaping contribute to the character of Neighborhood Villages and help create a sense of place.
- The use of coordinated and identified elements such as awnings, varying shingle styles or other natural materials, archways and façade landscaping are encouraged;
- Wherever practical, streets should terminate at a focal point, such as a civic building, greenspace or park, church, bell tower, gazebo, etc. Streets should never terminate at a parking lot.
- Residential development within a Neighborhood Village should be integrated into the overall plan with multiple vehicular and pedestrian connections to reduce trips and promote alternative modes of transportation.

Scale of Nodal Development Pattern



The figure above graphically depicts the Nodal Development Pattern as applied to the Neighborhood and Community Village Development Nodes. The center of the node is more appropriate for a higher intensity pattern of development while the edge is more appropriate for less intense development.

■ Community Village

Narrative

Typically located at the convergence of important transportation corridors, Community Villages are envisioned as places where a compatible mixture of higher-intensity uses are located, which may include a variety of housing options, small businesses, offices, retail shops, services, well-placed parks, plazas and open spaces that create a small, interconnected community where it is possible to live, work and play. Businesses within the Community Village offer a wide variety of goods and services, including both convenience goods for neighborhood residents and shopping goods for a market area consisting of many neighborhoods.

At the center of the Community Village, there is a core area containing the more intensive, primary land uses which are typically commercial in nature. Moving outward from the core, the land uses are a mixture of less intense retail, office and some residential. At the edge of the Community Village, the land uses are generally residential but still interconnected with secondary streets leading to the core area. This residential area is intended to provide housing opportunities that are close to services to address identified housing needs for seniors and other demographic groups in Cherokee County.

All types of development within each Community Village should provide a fine-grained network of streets and pedestrian connections to provide more travel options for customers and residents to travel around the node without utilizing the major transportation corridors for short trips. This additional road network will free up capacity on the arterials for cross-county traffic and forestall the need for some transportation improvements.

Natural and historic resources within Community Villages should be preserved and enhanced as a means of defining a distinct identity or sense of place. Improved pedestrian and vehicular connections to natural assets, and existing and developing residential communities, will tie the village together. Entertainment and cultural arts could be an important focus of investment in the village.

Elements

Future Development	<u>Primary Land Uses</u> Grocery stores Home Improvement Stores Restaurants & Fast Food Auto Sales, Repair and Maintenance Self Storage Personal services such as laundromats, dry cleaners, barber/beauty shops and video rental Professional services such as lawyers, accountants, insurance agents, physicians and dentists <u>Secondary Land Uses</u> Local institutions such as churches, schools, day care, fire stations Single family residential neighborhoods
Transportation	Level of Service will vary depending on location within the County Typically located along major arterial roads or state highways Community Villages should serve as hubs for sidewalks to be extended to surrounding neighborhoods and local institutions Street connectivity is medium
Infrastructure	Sewer availability will vary depending on location within the County Public water should be available
Greenspace	Major civic spaces such as a park, green or plaza

Other	<u>Senior Housing</u> Single family residential Many goods, services and institutions are walkable, rest are close to reduce travel time and distance
Suggested Zoning Districts	OI, NC, GC

Development Strategies

- Each Community Village has a service radius of up to 10 miles.
- There should be a minimum separation between Community Villages of 1 to 6 miles.
- Community Villages may contain no individual store or building greater than 80,000 gross square feet in size.
- Each Community Village should include a mix of retail, office, services and employment to serve a wider market area than a neighborhood village, but not regional in nature.
- Residential development should support the Community Village by locating integrated housing options adjacent to the commercial core area.
- It is encouraged that buildings be up to two levels on the area's edges, three levels internal to the area, and contains a mix of uses and shop sizes. Taller buildings or portions of a building should be located internally to a site with buildings stepping down in height as they reach the edges of the site that are adjoined by smaller scaled development.
- Design for each center should be very pedestrian-oriented, with strong, walkable connections between different uses. The pedestrian-friendly environment should be enhanced by providing sidewalks and other pedestrian-friendly trail/bike routes linking to other neighborhood amenities, such as libraries, community centers, health facilities, parks, schools, etc.
- Road edges should be clearly defined by locating buildings at roadside with parking hidden from public view and accessed from the side, nearby an alley or through a building in the rear; if this is not possible, then all parking should be masked by a wall and/or hedge or landscaped berms to a height of at least 5 feet. The parking areas itself should be landscaped throughout utilizing shrubs and shade trees.
- All principal buildings should have a front door opening directly onto a sidewalk along a roadway, a square or a plaza. Civic uses and gathering places should be part of the overall design of a Community Village. Outdoor seating and other street furniture is strongly encouraged.
- The design of a building that occupies a pad or portion of a building within a planned development should share similar design characteristics and design vocabulary. Precise replication is not desirable, instead, a development should utilize similar colors, materials and textures as well as repeating patterns; rhythms and proportions found within the architecture of other buildings in the center can be utilized to achieve unity.

■ Scenic Corridor

Narrative

Scenic Corridors parallel major transportation routes, and consist of rural or undeveloped lands that have significant natural, historic or cultural features, and scenic or pastoral views. A variety of scenic elements such as a canopy of trees extending over a roadway, or a rural landscape or a mountain viewshed may establish the character of the corridor. A location along the corridor may possess a single element, however along the length of the roadway, several such elements may exist to collectively establish the scenic character of the corridor.

An impact to one element within the corridor may have an impact upon the character of entire corridor. To preserve the scenic quality of a corridor, plans for development within the corridor should be sensitive to and integrate its most distinguishing elements. Commercial development should be encouraged to be clustered within designated Nodes rather than strip development occurring along an entire route.

Intent

It is the intent of the Scenic Corridor to be conceptual and not be a physical limitation upon any one property lying adjacent to or within a set distance from a roadway. The Scenic Corridor designation upon the Future Development Map recognizes the scenic quality of the roadway.

Elements

Transportation	Level of Service is generally high Rural Roadways Street connectivity is very low
Infrastructure	Public water should be available Sewer is not available or planned
Greenspace	Greenways and conservation areas
Other	
Suggested Zoning Districts	AG

Development Strategies:

- Development within the scenic corridor should be organized into villages and clusters in order to keep the scenic view shed intact, and utilize extensive landscaping and buffers for commercial uses;
- Outdoor recreation should utilize open space and should not be intrusive to the residential and natural nature of the Character Area; outdoor recreation that has substantial traffic, lighting or noise impacts is discouraged in this Corridor
- Plans for development should incorporate scenic elements existing on site within the development, and / or should maintain such element where it passes through the site. For example, if a tree canopy envelopes a roadway, development plans should be drafted so as to preserve the continuation of the canopy along the roadway.

■ Transitional Corridor

Description

Transitional Corridors lie along major roadways originally developed with very low intensity agricultural and residential uses that have or will become impacted by nearby commercial Nodes and adjacent thoroughfare improvements. Generally, these areas are becoming less desirable for or are no longer suitable for very low intensity types of uses fronting directly onto the major road. Properties along transitional corridors may be appropriate for more intense residential development or limited nonresidential use which would provide the transition from the roadway to adjacent agricultural land and residential neighborhoods. This transition is vital for the maintenance of the overall “look and feel” of the surrounding area.

New nonresidential uses would be generally small in size and scale. Compatible nonresidential development would include the conversion of existing homes for commercial use. The designation of this corridor is meant to encourage public and private investment that will promote vitality, activity and safety in the area, by controlling aesthetics, careful site planning and limiting nonresidential uses to those that will not overly affect residential neighborhoods adjacent to the site.

Intent

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

Elements

Future Development	<u>Primary Land Uses</u> Single-family detached housing Conservation Subdivisions Master planned communities <u>Secondary Land Uses</u> Retail shops Personal services such as Laundromats, dry cleaners, barber/beauty shops and video rental Professional services such as lawyers, accountants, insurance agents, physicians and dentists Neighborhood institutions such as churches, schools, day care, fire stations and libraries
Transportation	Level of Service is high to medium Rural Roadways Street connectivity is very low
Infrastructure	Public water should be available Sewer may or may not be available or planned
Greenspace	Greenways and conservation areas
Other	
Suggested Zoning Districts	AG, OI, NC

Development Strategies

- The intensity of new residential developments may be higher than the underlying Character Area but not to exceed the next more intensive Character Area, if infrastructure permits. Care should be taken to plan the residential neighborhoods with integrated greenspace and links to adjacent nonresidential development.
- The scale of new residential development may be higher nearest the roadway where supporting infrastructure exists and links to non-residential uses can be made. New residential development may exceed the ratio of units planned for the area immediately adjacent to the roadway, but no more than the next successive character area.
- To protect future roadway capacity, to maintain the operation of the adjacent roadway, and to promote roadway safety, access points to individual development parcels should be kept to a minimum number and require connections be made to adjacent development.
- New commercial developments should be compatible with the adjoining neighborhood. It should not attract a high volume of traffic or visitors have late night or early morning hours of operation, produce outdoor sound or other significant impacts on surrounding residences.
- New building design should take into consideration the unique qualities and the dominant character of the surrounding area. Architectural integrity and compatibility considerations include siting of the building, massing, proportion, scale, materials, colors, details, façade treatment, lighting and signage.
- New occupancies in converted houses should be limited to one business enterprise (with one business entrance) for structures under 2,000 square feet of gross leaseable area. Remodeling should be architecturally compatible with the neighborhood and must upgrade or at least be consistent with the basic architecture of the structure.

Implementation

- Adopt design and use requirements to guide new construction and adaptive reuse and conversion of existing structures that will assure compatibility with remaining residences on the road and with surrounding neighborhoods.

■ Development Corridor

Narrative

The Development Corridors extend along major thoroughfares that have or are experiencing major development of retail, office or industrial land uses, townhouses and multi-family housing, including mixed-use developments, and redevelopment areas. The overall goal of this Character Area is to provide, through transportation, land use and other physical enhancements, an environment that provides a distinctive “place,” not merely a roadway. Higher intensity development should be clustered at major intersections with new secondary roads to additional circulation.

Site planning, building design and landscaping are critical in order to create an appealing mixed-use corridor. Site design factors fostering community commercial, including design parameters for parking and internal circulation/access, building setbacks, and orientation; and other factors are important considerations. Buildings should be designed to meet architectural standards and oriented in close proximity to each other to facilitate walking instead of driving. Urban design features such as lighting, coordinated signage; street furniture and landscaping are used as visual cues that create a recognizable character for the area. Transition areas are critical between incompatible uses and guidelines that address signage and lighting will help to mitigate the negative impacts of a high concentration of commercial uses.

Elements

Future Development	<i>Primary Land Uses</i> Retail/Commercial Centers Grocery stores Home Improvement Stores Restaurants & Fast Food Personal services such as laundromats, dry cleaners, barber/beauty shops and video rental Professional services such as lawyers, accountants, insurance agents, physicians and dentists Office Buildings <i>Secondary Land Uses</i> Local institutions such as churches, schools, day care, fire stations Townhomes & Multi-family in master planned developments
Transportation	Level of Service is medium to low Neighborhood or Mixed Use/Urban Streets Street connectivity is low to medium
Infrastructure	Public water and sewer should be available or planned
Greenspace	Greenways and conservation areas
Other	
Suggested Zoning Districts	OI, NC, GC, TND

Development Strategies

- Focus development in villages, urban centers or compact activity centers in order to concentrate mixed uses and higher densities to protect surrounding areas;
- Encourage retrofitting of existing strip development into pedestrian scale, interconnected nodes;
- Plan for a community street network that is as friendly to alternative modes of transportation as to the automobile;

- Require master planning to address access management; and
- Plan and design transportation improvements that fit with community character.

Implementation

- Develop specialized development standards and requirements limiting the types of uses permitted by regulating the square footage allowed; establishing pedestrian oriented setbacks and parking lot layouts; specifying site layout and building orientation; recommending design features such as façade treatments, landscaping and streetscape elements; and instituting buffer requirements to protect the residential uses behind the corridor.

■ Highway Business Corridor (City of Ball Ground)

Narrative

The Highway Business Corridor is a specially designated corridor to encompass working commercial and light industrial “auto-oriented” areas along a major thoroughfare. These areas may be going through transition to uses attractive to the traveling public, or continued development as transportation improvements are made. Mixed-use developments incorporating commercial and office uses fronting major commercial corridors and light industrial uses to the rear along major thoroughfares are encouraged; the introduction of design and landscaping standards would be appropriate.

This Character Area relies on major transportation access, particularly from interstates or major arterials. Similarly, the provision of adequate public services in the form of water, sewer and power are critical to the functionality of these areas. This corridor is intended to create a pleasant environment that does not create either appreciable nuisance or hazard to other property, individuals or the public in general. The purpose of this corridor is the creation of an inviting commercial and mixed-use area.

Elements

Future Development	<u>Primary Land Uses</u> Retail/Commercial Centers Restaurants & Fast Food Auto Sales, Repair and Maintenance Personal services such as laundromats, dry cleaners, barber/beauty shops and video rental Professional services such as lawyers, accountants, insurance agents, physicians and dentists Office Buildings Business Parks, Distribution/Services, Light Industrial <u>Secondary Land Uses</u> Local institutions such as churches, schools, day care, fire stations Townhomes & Multi-family in master planned developments
Transportation	Level of Service is medium to low Neighborhood or Mixed Use/Urban Streets Street connectivity is low to medium
Infrastructure	Public water and sewer should be available or planned
Greenspace	Greenways and conservation areas
Other	
Suggested Zoning Districts	GC, HC Ball Ground

Development Strategies

- Create a visually appealing highway business corridor through the enforcement of appropriate development standards to ensure adequate site plans and landscaping;
- Buffers are critical between incompatible uses; and
- Accessory, temporary, outdoor storage of retail goods should be shielded from public view. In the case of auto dealerships and storage/repair businesses, vehicles stored on site should be screened from view from the public right-of-way by a low wall or hedge. Display platforms should be incorporated into overall design

■ Development Node Matrix

	Country Crossroads	Hamlet	Neighborhood Village	Community Village	Regional Center
Form					
size	5,000 sqft max.	17,500 sqft per store/bldg	50,000 sqft per store/bldg	80,000 sqft per store/bldg	unlimited
service area	1 to 3 miles	1 to 3 miles	3 to 5 miles	5 to 10 miles	
spacing		1/2 to 2 miles	1 to 3 miles	1 to 6 miles	
bldg characteristics	single story single use/tenant reuse of residential structures	1 - 2 stories single use/tenant typical reuse of residential structures	1 - 3 stories multi use/tenant new construction	2 - 4 stories multi use/tenant new construction	2+ stories mixed-use bldgs new construction
Land Use					
commercial	small retail restaurants gas stations	small - medium retail restaurants gas stations professional offices personal services	small - medium retail restaurants gas stations professional offices personal services	medium - large retail restaurants gas stations professional offices personal services office buildings	medium - large retail restaurants gas stations professional offices personal services office buildings
residential (on outer edge)	none	single family detached	single family detached senior housing	single family detached single family attached senior housing	single family attached multi-family
civic	local institutions	local institutions	neighborhood institutions	community institutions	community institutions
Transportation					
road type	Rural Roadways	Rural Roadways or Neighborhood Streets	Neighborhood Streets	Neighborhood or Urban Streets	Urban Streets
connectivity	none	inter-parcel access encouraged	inter-parcel access required	inter-parcel access required	inter-parcel access required
access	individual driveways	individual or shared driveways	shared drives	shared drives or internal streets	internal streets
ped facilities	none	paths encouraged	sidewalks	sidewalks (internal & external)	sidewalks (internal & external)
Infrastructure					
	Water	Water Sewer may be available	Water Sewer may be available	Water Sewer	Water Sewer
Greenspace					
	none	Pocket Park Green	Green Plazza	Plazza Square	Green Plazza Square
Locations					
	Salacoa Stancil Rd @ 108	Mica Salacoa Rd @ 140 Lathetown Univeter @ 140 Bart Manous @140 Darnell Rd @ 140 Harmony Lake Dr @ Hickory Rd Union Hill Birmingham Rd @ 372 Birmingham Rd @ Holbrook Campground	Clayton Sutallee Reinhart College Pkwy @140 369 @ 20 Sugar Pike @ 140 Scott Rd @ 20 Beaver Rd @ 20 372 @ 369 Holbrook Campground @ 20 Trickum Rd @ Arnold Mill Rd Victoria Rd @ Bells Ferry Rose Creek @ Towne Lake Bells Ferry @ Towne Lake East Cherokee @ 5 Howell Bridge @ 5 Woodstock Rd @ 92 Butterworth Rd @ Bells Ferry Rd Butterworth Rd @ 20	Hickory Flat Free Home BridgeMill Buffington Macedonia	Ridgewalk Hwy 92 @ I-575 Hwy 5 @ I-575

3.7 Quality Community Objectives

The following table notes those Character Areas that will, as part of their primary focus, contribute toward realization of the Quality Community Objectives established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

Quality Community Objectives	Natural Preserve	Rural Places	Country Estates	Suburban Growth	Suburban Living	Neighborhood Living	Bells Ferry LCI	Urban Core	Regional Center	Workplace Center	Waste Management
Development Patterns											
Traditional Neighborhoods Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Infill Development Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.				✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Sense of Place Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Transportation Alternatives Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.							✓	✓	✓	✓	
Regional Identity Each region should promote and preserve a regional "identity," or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		

Resource Conservation											
Heritage Preservation The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.	✓	✓	✓					✓			
Open Space Preservation New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		
Environmental Protection Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.	✓	✓	✓								✓
Social and Economic Development											
Growth Preparedness Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Appropriate Businesses The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.								✓		✓	
Employment Options A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.									✓	✓	
Housing Choices A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.			✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Educational Opportunities Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.								✓		✓	

Governmental Relations											
Regional Solutions Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.						✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Regional Cooperation Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.	✓							✓	✓	✓	✓

SECTION 4: IMPLEMENTATION

4.1 Rezoning and Development Process

Each community should use the policies and character area standards outlined within this Comprehensive Plan while reviewing specific proposals for rezoning, development and major renovation proposals. As general guidelines, character area standards cannot predict the unique potential and/or constraints for each project. Thus, these guidelines are intended to establish a general direction and a base level of development quality and compatibility with surrounding areas.

Growth management is a two-step strategy: 1. The Comprehensive Plan and 2. Establish the regulatory measures (such as adopted design guidelines by area, and zoning districts or overlays) required to protect and enhance that character.

■ Comprehensive Plan Consistency

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

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

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

■ Development Regulations

Development Regulations (Step 2) should reflect the Character Area guidelines and create a one to one relationship between this Plan and the implementing Codes. Typically, a natural outcome of a character area based Comprehensive Plan is a set of design regulations that speak to specific development characteristics such as site planning, massing, scale and density. This can be achieved in several ways: require detailed concept plans during the zoning and development review process to conform to the character area guidelines, a rewrite of the Codes to reflect a more performance based approach, the use of zoning overlay districts that supplement the current zoning provisions and safeguard the designated area from development patterns that perpetuate sprawl. By implementing this type of control measure, a community can work towards achieving the Vision.

Cherokee County is in the process of transforming zoning ordinances, subdivision regulations and other land use regulatory controls into a comprehensive and user-friendly format. The development code rewrite will combine and consolidate all phases of the land development process from the

zoning of a piece of property to the actual development of the property. The zoning ordinance will continue to regulate the use of the lot, lot size, building bulk and height, and setbacks. In addition, it will regulate the manner in which land may be subdivided to ensure that each subdivision meets standards as to minimum block and lot sizes, streets, relationship to existing streets, and provisions for open space, schools, and other public facilities and the protection of natural resources. The zoning ordinance is a valuable and necessary tool for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and for the creation of quality developments within the county.

4.2 Managing the plan

■ Detailed Planning Studies

Detailed plans, such as the Downtown Master Plans, a Solid Waste Management Plan, A Greenspace Plan, Livable Centers Initiatives, Parks and Recreation Plan, Greenspace Plan, Capital Facilities Plan, streetscape plans, small area studies and design regulations may be adopted as implementing measures of the Comprehensive Plan. A natural outcome a Character Area based Plan is to develop specific character based guidelines, such as those developed for “Olde Town” in Woodstock.

■ Incentives

The Community can implement incentives to encourage certain types of private development that will contribute significantly to the public good. Several development options, such as point systems that promote good design and protection of natural resources, a performance based system and an overall streamlining of the regulatory process has been one of the focuses of the development regulations.

■ Plan Review and Update

To be a useful and influential tool in guiding growth and development in the future and in ultimately realizing each community’s Vision for the future, the Comprehensive Plan must be kept current. Over time, changes will occur in the Community that may not have been anticipated and over which the Community may have no control—changing lifestyles, national or regional economic shifts, the impact of telecommuting or internet access on working and shopping patterns, etc. Annually monitoring these shifts against progress in plan implementation may lead to the need for amendments to the plan. At a minimum, a substantial Update will have to be undertaken five years from adoption, and a 10th year Major Update will be required after ten years, as per State requirements.

Annual Plan Review

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

- Pace of growth, in terms of housing units built and land absorbed by nonresidential development.
- Land development approvals over the past year as a score card of the Comprehensive Plan’s Vision.
- Zoning approvals over the past year in relation to the Future Development Map.
- Future Development Plan Map changes.
- Planned Short Term Work Program activities compared to actual accomplishments.

Short Term Work Program (STWP)

The STWP will be updated annually, reflecting the results of the Annual Plan Review. The STWP will be extended one year into the future in order to maintain a full five years of future activity, and any changes appropriate to the other years will be included. No later than thirty days after the end of

the year just completed, the updated STWP will be forwarded to the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) for their files.

Minor Plan Amendments

As a result of the annual plan review, amendments to the Comprehensive Plan may be appropriate. If the needed changes are strictly local and not considered to have an effect on another local government, the changes may be adopted as a minor amendment to the Plan at any time during the year by action of the Board of Commissioners or City Council. At the end of each year, along with the annual update to the STWP, a summary of all minor amendments is to be sent to the ARC with a statement that the individual and cumulative effects of the minor amendments do not significantly alter the basic tenets of the approved Plan.

Major Plan Amendments

If, as a result of the annual plan review process, conditions or policies on which the Plan is based have changed significantly so as to alter the basic tenets of the Plan, the County or City will initiate a major Plan amendment. The public will be involved in preparation of the Plan amendment to the extent warranted by the degree of change that has occurred. Following State procedural guidelines, a public hearing will be held to inform the public of the community's intent to amend the Plan, and to seek public participation. The amendment will be submitted to surrounding communities for review in accordance with our agreement under HB 489, and to the ARC for review under the State's requirements, prior to adoption.

4.3 List of Accomplishments

■ To be Inserted

4.4 STWP

■ Short Term Work Plan

Cherokee County									
Project Description	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Estimated Total Cost	Funding Source	Responsible Party
Natural and Historic Resources									
Develop the Etowah River Greenway	X	X	X	X	X	X	\$2,000,000	County Greenspace Program	BOC, Parks & Rec.
Develop Environmental Awareness Program	X	X	X	X	X	X	\$10,000	US EPA, GA DNR	Engineering, Recycling
Develop and adopt a countywide Historic Preservation Ordinance.		X	X				Unknown	County, GA DNR	BOC, Planning and Zoning, Historical Society
Pursue qualification as a "Certified Local Government" under the Historic Preservation Division of Georgia DNR.				X			Unknown	County, GA DNR	Planning & Zoning, Historical Society
In conjunction with the Historic Society, develop Historic Property Resource Kit.			X	X			Unknown	County	Planning & Zoning, Historical Society
Develop Historic Resources Map	X	X					Staff Time	County	Mapping, Planning and Zoning, Historical Society
Continue to update the cemetery location map as needed.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff Time	County	Mapping, Planning & Zoning
Investigate developing a National Register nomination for Downtown Ball Ground and the Reinhart Campus area in Waleska as historic districts	X	X	X				\$6,500	Historical Society	Historical Society, City of Waleska, City of Ball Ground
Complete the update of the Tree Preservation Ordinance.	X						Staff Time	County	BOC, Engineering
Continue to participate in the Etowah River Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). Consider adoption of Low Impact Development Guidelines to support the HCP.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff Time	County	BOC, Engineering
Design a countywide greenspace/land conservation plan.		X	X				\$50,000 + Staff Time	County	BOC, Planning and Zoning, Mapping, Parks & Rec.

Cherokee County									
Project Description	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Estimated Total Cost	Funding Source	Responsible Party
Develop program to acquire or set aside property identified in countywide greenspace plan.			X	X	X	X	Unknown	County Greenspace Program	BOC, Planning & Zoning, Parks & Rec.
Economic Development									
Facilitate stakeholder meetings concerning agribusiness and agritourism in the county.			X	X			Staff Time	Farm Chamber Bureau, of Commerce	Planning & Zoning, Farm Bureau, Chamber of Commerce
Prepare Tax Increment/Finance District Guidelines			X	X			Unknown	County	BOC, Finance Department, Planning & Zoning
Developing a comprehensive master plan to coordinate land use, transportation and development regulations around Cherokee County Airport.		X	X				\$50,000	County	Planning & Zoning, Airport Authority, Development Authority
Develop and promote business and manufacturing sites within Cherokee County, especially Bluffs Business Park.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff Time	Development Authority	Development Authority, Chamber of Commerce
Continue the focused marketing campaign targeting industries identified in the Cherokee County Economic Strategic Plan.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff Time	Development Authority	Development Authority, Chamber of Commerce
Enhance the entrepreneurship and small business support programs with a comprehensive range of financial assistance, training, networking, professional advice and educational opportunities.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff Time	Development Authority	Development Authority, Chamber of Commerce
Continue the Business Expansion & Retention Program, and advocacy of existing industry.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff Time	Development Authority	Development Authority
Implement the Georgia Department of Economic Development's Business InSight program for analysis of existing industry.	X	X					Staff Time	Development Authority	Development Authority
Focus resources on supporting and expanding existing partnerships between local business and educational institutions, such as the CCSD Advisory Committees, Career Pathways, Partners in Education and Cherokee Focus.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff Time	CCSD, Chamber	Cherokee County School District, Chamber of Commerce
Coordinate and streamline permitting processes and development regulations across all communities in Cherokee County.		X	X				Staff Time	County	Planning & Zoning, Engineering, Building Inspection, Fire Marshal

Cherokee County									
Project Description	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Estimated Total Cost	Funding Source	Responsible Party
Encourage the redevelopment of underutilized shopping centers along major transportation corridors to broaden the retail and personal service offerings within Cherokee County.			X	X			Staff Time	County	BOC, Planning & Zoning
Housing									
Upgrade Dilapidated Housing	X	X	X	X	X	X	Unknown	private	private developers
Continue to use federal funds (CDBG & HOME) for the Cherokee County Home Repair Program targeted for low-income seniors and affordable home ownership programs.	X	X	X	X	X	X	\$1,750,000	County, CDBG	Community Services, GUCC
Construct housing for the elderly and handicapped.		X	X	X	X	X	Unknown	state and federal programs, private	private developers
Develop Senior Housing regulations.	X	X					Staff Time	County	BOC, Planning & Zoning
Identify areas with adequate infrastructure to provide affordable housing opportunities.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff Time	County	Mapping, Planning & Zoning, Engineering
Facilitate County-wide meetings to encourage cooperation on affordable housing financing from federal and state sources.		X	X				Staff Time	County	Planning & Zoning
Review development ordinances to identify constraints and barriers to providing affordable housing.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff Time	County	Planning & Zoning
Community Facilities									
Review periodically Service Delivery strategies, level of services, and develop a plan to provide services to accommodate new growth.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Unknown	County	BOC, Public Safety, Engineering
Continue to identify, fund and implement Bells Ferry LCI projects	X	X	X	X	X	X	\$17,000,000	GDOT, ARC, County, Private	BOC, Planning & Zoning, Engineering, Private Developers
Parks and Recreation									
Clayton Area Park (Weatherby Park)	X						\$413,000	100% Impact Fee	CRPA, BOC
Little River/Mill Creek Park (Biello Park)	X	X	X	X			\$4,000,000	68% Impact Fee, County	CRPA, BOC

Cherokee County									
Project Description	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Estimated Total Cost	Funding Source	Responsible Party
Fields Landing Park Expansion		X	X	X			\$538,000	100% Impact Fee, SPLOST, Greenspace	CRPA, BOC
Develop Township Park System (min 10 acres) each			X	X			\$750,000	CRPA, County	CRPA, BOC
Transportation									
Roadway Improvements	X	X	X	X	X	X	\$60,000,000	GDOT, General Fund	BOC
Complete the Comprehensive Transportation Plan.	X							ARC	Engineering
Develop a Context-Sensitive Design Process such as the one recommended by the Georgia Department of Transportation.		X	X				Unknown	County, DCA, ARC	Engineering, Planning & Zoning
Extend Cherokee County Airport Runway	X	X	X				\$5,000,000	Airport Authority	Airport Authority, FAA
Expand Ride/Share Program	X	X	X	X			\$15,000	County, ARC	Community Services
Install Park/Ride Lots	X	X	X	X	X	X	\$25,000 per lot	County, ARC	Engineering, BOC
Develop Alternative Transportation Education Program	X	X	X	X	X	X	\$30,000	County, ARC	Engineering, ARC
Bell's Ferry Road widening (2 phases)	X	X	X				\$40,288,000	100% Impact Fee, General Fund	Engineering
Add Interchange at I-575/Rope Mill Road		X	X	X			\$12,000,000	GDOT, General Fund	BOC, City of Woodstock
Public Safety									
Communications System		X					\$13,809,772	69% Impact Fee, General Fund	Sheriff's Department, BOC
Sheriff's Patrol Precinct Space		X					\$546,096	100% Impact Fee, General Fund	Sheriff's Department, BOC
Sheriff's Patrol Precinct Space				X			\$546,096	100% Impact Fee, General Fund	Sheriff's Department, BOC
Expansion of Adult Detention Center				X	X	X	\$27,151,762	100% Impact Fee, General Fund	Sheriff's Department, BOC
Acquire Firefighting Equipment for High-Rise Buildings – Ladder Truck					X		\$1,000,000	100% Impact Fee, General Fund	Fire Department, BOC

Cherokee County									
Project Description	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Estimated Total Cost	Funding Source	Responsible Party
Emergency Services Training Facility		X	X				\$3,141,850	100% Impact Fee, SPLOST	Fire Department, BOC
Fire Station 1 Replacement				X	X		\$150,000	Fire District Fund, General Fund	Fire Department, BOC
Fire Department Supply Warehouse	X						\$2,325,000	100% Impact Fee, Fire District Fund	Fire Department, BOC
Fire Station 13 Replacement - Suttalee				X	X		\$1,200,000	General Fund	Fire Department, BOC
Fire Station 15 Relocation & Replacement - Mica		X	X				\$1,500,000	General Fund	Fire Department, BOC
Fire Engine	X						\$350,000	100% Impact Fee, General Fund	Fire Department, BOC
Fire Station 2 Replacement– Ball Ground	X	X					Unknown	100% Impact Fee, General Fund	Fire Department, BOC, City of Ball Ground
Fire Engine		X					\$375,000	100% Impact Fee, General Fund	Fire Department, BOC
Fire Engine x 2		X					\$750,000	100% Impact Fee, General Fund	Fire Department, BOC
Fire Engine x 2			X				\$800,000	100% Impact Fee, General Fund	Fire Department, BOC
Airport Crash Truck			X				\$800,000	100% Impact Fee, General Fund	Fire Department, BOC
Fire Station 3 Replacement	X	X					\$1,500,000	General Fund	Fire Department, BOC
Fire Station 5 Renovation - Macadonia	X						\$1,800,000	General Fund	Fire Department, BOC
Fire Station 6 Replacement (Clayton Area)		X	X				\$1,700,000	General Fund	Fire Department, BOC
Fire Station 7 Renovation	X						\$200,000	General Fund	Fire Department, BOC
Fire Station 17 Renovation	X						\$200,000	General Fund	Fire Department, BOC
Fire Station 20 Driveway	X						\$100,000	General Fund	Fire Department, BOC

Cherokee County									
Project Description	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Estimated Total Cost	Funding Source	Responsible Party
Fire Station 32 Renovation	X	X					\$100,000	General Fund	Fire Department, BOC
Air Truck Rechassis	X						\$70,000	SPLOST	Fire Department, BOC
Fire Apparatus Replacement Program	X	X	X	X	X	X	\$800,000	SPLOST, Impact Fees	Fire Department, BOC
EMS Squad Replacement Program	X	X	X	X	X	X	\$700,000	County	Fire Department, BOC
Small Fleet Replacement Program	X	X	X	X	X	X	\$180,000	County	Fire Department, BOC
Future Fire Station (new)			X				\$1,085,000	100% Impact Fee, General Fund	Fire Department, BOC
Purchase property for Future Fire Facilities		X	X	X			\$750,000	100% Impact Fee, General Fund	Fire Department, BOC
Library Services									
R.T. Jones Library Facility Addition		X					\$1,000,000	50% Impact Fee, General Fund, State of GA	Library System, BOC
Library Collection Materials	X	X	X	X	X	X	\$2,167,150	92% Impact Fee, General Fund	Library System, BOC
Southwest Library Facility				X			\$4,000,000	100% Impact Fee, General Fund	Library System, BOC
Rose Creek Library Facility Expansion						X	\$4,000,000	50% Impact Fee, General Fund	Library System, BOC
Water and Sewage									
Expand Sewer Service Area	X	X	X	X	X	X	\$60,000,000	CCWSA	County Water & Sewer Authority
Consolidate Water/Sewer Operations with one (1) Agency	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff Time	CCWSA	County Water & Sewer Authority
School System									
Construct New Schools	X	X	X	X	X	X	\$41,000,000	Tax, bonds	Board of Education
Construct Additions to Existing Schools	X	X	X	X	X	X	\$235,000,000	Tax, bonds	Board of Education

Cherokee County									
Project Description	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Estimated Total Cost	Funding Source	Responsible Party
Land Use & GIS									
Complete Major Update of Comprehensive Plan	X						\$300,000	County	BOC, Planning & Zoning
Draft specific development/design guidelines for downtown Ball Ground.		X					Unknown	City, Grants	City of Ball Ground, Planning & Zoning
Establish an agency to pursue implementing the Bells Ferry LCI Plan.		X	X				Unknown	County	BOC, Planning & Zoning
Create small area plans for areas experiencing significant growth pressures or infrastructure issues.		X	X	X	X	X	\$500,000	County	Planning & Zoning
Revise State Route 92 Corridor standards and regulations.		X	X				Staff Time	County	BOC, Planning & Zoning
Develop the master plan for downtown Waleska and consider design guidelines for the "college-entertainment" core.	X	X					Unknown	City, College Reinhardt	Planning & Zoning, City of Waleska, Reinhardt College
Continue to update annually the 5-Year Capital Improvements Plan and STWP.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff Time	County	Planning & Zoning, Engineering, Public Safety, Parks & Rec.
Conduct annual review of FDM, rezoning and capital projects for plan & map adjustments.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff Time	County	Planning & Zoning
Send a summary of all minor amendments annually to the ARC.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Staff Time	County	Planning & Zoning
Develop Unified Code that combines the zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations and development regulations to consistently implement elements of the Community Agenda.		X	X				\$75,000 + Staff Time	County	Planning & Zoning, Engineering
Revise rezoning process to provide better information on land use changes and infrastructure impact for each proposal.	X	X					Staff Time	County	Planning & Zoning
Create design guidelines for each Character Area for residential and non-residential development.		X	X				Staff Time	County	Planning & Zoning, Engineering
Undertake a Comprehensive Plan update five years after adoption of this Plan.						X	Staff Time	County	Planning & Zoning

Ball Ground									
Project Description	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Estimated Total Cost	Funding Source	Responsible Party
Natural and Historic Resources									
Draft and adopt a new Tree Preservation Ordinance that places more emphasis and gives more credit for tree preservation.		X	X				\$5,000	City	Mayor Manager Arborist
Complete mapping for storm water management and wetlands management.	X	X	X	X	X	X	\$100,000	City	Manager Ross Engineering
Flag Historic Properties on tax and land use maps and encourage a published record of the documented history of Ball Ground	X	X					Unknown	City	Historic Preservation Commission
Adopt a city wide or joint county wide historic preservation ordinance		X	X				Unknown	City	Council Historic Preservation Commission
Economic Development									
Draft and implement a business incentives policy to entice businesses to consider Ball Ground for their location.		X	X	X			Unknown	City	Mayor Clerk Manager
Development of a business relationship or partnership with the Cherokee County Water and Sewer Authority to insure the availability of adequate water and sewer capacity to support new development		X	X	X			No Cost	City	Mayor Manager
Prepare a downtown redevelopment plan that addresses commercial development, off street parking, streetscapes and the protection of historically significant properties and promotes tourism	X						??	City, GDOT	Lew Oliver Inc. Steering Committee Mayor, Manager

Ball Ground									
Project Description	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Estimated Total Cost	Funding Source	Responsible Party
Housing									
Encourage revitalization of substandard housing.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Unknown	Federal funds	Mayor Council Manager
Community Facilities									
Construct additional water storage facility			X	X			\$800,000	City, GEFA	Public Works Committee
Construction sidewalk to connect downtown area to Calvin Farmer Park			X	X	X	X	\$50,000	TEA Grant City	Roads & Streets Commission
Continue safety improvement to Old Dawsonville Road by building a shoulder in the vicinity of Calvin Farmer Park			X	X			\$50,000	City, GDOT	Roads & Streets Commission
Re-locate Tennis, Basketball and Softball facilities to create space for construction of a new elementary school		X	X	X	X		\$150,000	City, CPRA, LDF, ARC	Manager Parks & Rec Commission
Intersection Improvement of Terrell Street and Old Canton Road			X	X			\$50,000	City, DOT	Roads & Streets Commission Manager
Develop downtown off street parking		X	X	X			Unknown	City, Quality Growth Fund, DCA	Public Works Committee
Downtown streetscape improvements such as period lighting, street plantings and similar upgrades	X	X					??	City, TE Grant	Public Works Committee City
Pursue State Certification and National Accreditation of our Police Department	X	X	X	X	X	X	Unknown	City, Quality Growth Fund, COPS, DCA	Police Chief Manager Public Safety Commission

Ball Ground									
Project Description	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Estimated Total Cost	Funding Source	Responsible Party
Expand Police Department to achieve 24 hour coverage 7 days per week	X	X	X	X	X		\$40,000 Annually	City, COPS Homeland Sec Grant	Mayor Council Police Chief
Continue efforts to establish soccer, baseball and softball fields in the City	X	X	X	X	X		\$25,000 (\$400,000 SPLOST?)	CPRA, SPLOST Soccer Assoc City / LDF	Manager
Secure additional water supply		X	X	X	X	X	\$500,000	City, Grants, GEFA Developers	Public Works Committee
Develop a 5 year and 20 year transportation plan for the City to include streets, bike paths, pedestrian walkways, rail and bus				X	X	X	Unknown	City, Grants	Council Manager Consultant
Work with Cherokee County BOE to secure construction of a new Ball Ground Elementary School within the City Limits		X	X	X			Unknown	BOE and City	Mayor, City Manager, Council
Develop a plan for beneficial use of the old Ball Ground Elementary School Facility		X	X	X	X		Unknown	City and DDA	Mayor, City Manager, DDA
Land Use									
Obtain additional permanent green space			X	X	X		Unknown	Grants	Mayor, Council, City Manager
Draft specific development/design guidelines for downtown Ball Ground and the Highway Business Corridor.		X					Unknown	City, Grants	City of Ball Ground, Planning & Zoning

Waleska									
Project Description	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Estimated Total Cost	Funding Source	Responsible Party
Natural and Historic Resources									
Plan mapping for storm water management and wetlands management when required.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Unknown	City	Mayor City Council City Manager
Economic Development									
Draft and implement a business incentives policy to entice businesses and retain current businesses.		X	X	X			Unknown	City	Mayor City Council City Manager
Retain a business relationship or partnership with the City of Canton and Cherokee County Water and Sewer Authority to insure the availability of adequate water and sewer capacity to support new development.		X	X	X			No cost	City	Mayor City Council City Manager
Pursue avenues for obtaining additional water and sewer capacity		X	X	X			Unknown	City	Mayor City Council City Manager
Housing									
Strengthen enforcement of City Ordinances. Consider Off-Duty Enforcement Officer as needed.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Unknown	City, Grants	Mayor City Council City Manager
Encourage revitalization of substandard housing	X	X	X	X	X	X	Unknown	City, State and Federal funds	Mayor City Council City Manager
Community Facilities									
Construct additional water storage facility			X	X			Unknown	City, GEFA	Mayor City Council City Manager
Secure additional water supply	X	X	X	X	X	X	Unknown	City	Mayor City Council City Manager

Waleska									
Project Description	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Estimated Total Cost	Funding Source	Responsible Party
Extend existing sidewalks			X	X	X	X	Unknown	City	Mayor City Council City Manager
Pursue the possibility of Grants for Streetscape Projects	X	X	X	X	X	X	Unknown	City/ Joint Partnership with Reinhardt College	Mayor City Council City Manager
Develop a 5 year and 20 year transportation plan for the city to include streets, bike paths, pedestrian walkways, rail and bus				X	X	X	Unknown	City	Mayor City Council City Manager
Secure a new plan for the use of R.M. Moore School and work cooperatively with the Cherokee County Board of Education		X	X	X	X	X	Unknown	City	Mayor City Council City Manager
Secure a Public Library for City of Waleska	X	X	X	X	X	X	Unknown	City	Mayor City Council City Manager
Community Storm Warnings (Sirens)	X	X	X	X	X	X	Unknown	County	Mayor City Council City Manager
Land Use									
Develop the master plan for downtown Waleska and consider design guidelines for the "college-entertainment" core.	X	X					Unknown	City, Reinhart College	County Planning & Zoning, City of Waleska, Reinhart College
Obtain additional permanent green space			X	X	X		Unknown	Grants	Mayor City Council City Manager
Coordinate planning efforts with all local governments and Other public/private agencies within Cherokee County	X	X	X	X	X	X	Unknown	City	Mayor City Council City Manager