

# **GAINESVILLE AND HALL COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**



## **LAND USE ELEMENT**

**ADOPTED: JUNE 24, 2004**

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## **6.0.0.0: LAND USE**

### **6.1.0.0: EXISTING LAND USE INVENTORY**

#### **6.1.1.0: Land Use Trends**

Over the past few decades, the land use character of the City and County has experienced a change. The once compact development form centered on Gainesville and the other communities, has been replaced by rapidly suburbanized development.

The following language was taken, in part, from the 2000 update to the Land Use Plan, as it is still applicable to this plan update.

##### **6.1.1.1: RESIDENTIAL**

Significant residential development continues to occur in the southern most portion of Hall County. Good transportation facilities, proximity to the employment centers of the Atlanta metropolitan area, and the attraction of Lake Lanier development are all contributors to this growth trend. Due to the absence of sanitary sewer facilities, the majority of this development has utilized on-site septic systems on lots ranging in size from a minimum of 25,500 square feet to approximately one acre. Based on an analysis of building permit record, for the period from 1990 to present, the majority of residential development has occurred in the southern portions of the County. However, in recent years a significant amount of development has occurred in both East and North Hall County, although the development patterns have been more scattered in these areas. Concentrations of home construction in these areas include Harmony Church Road, Highway 52, Mount Vernon Road corridor, and Prince Road. The continued encroachment of residential subdivision development in North and East Hall County is beginning to impact existing farming operations.

Mobile home development continues to provide a significant, but declining, percentage of Hall County's housing stock. Rising land costs, particularly in South Hall County, have limited the supply of mobile homes, with the majority of such housing now being developed in the more rural areas of Hall County.

Multi-family housing is essentially non-existent in unincorporated Hall County, largely due to the absence of public sewer systems necessary to meet the wastewater needs of these development. The city of Gainesville, and to a lesser degree, the cities of Oakwood and Flowery Branch, continue to be the focus of multi-family development activity.

##### **6.1.1.2: COMMERCIAL**

As was anticipated in the former Comprehensive Plans, the municipalities continue to be the focus of commercial activity in Hall County. Major regional shopping facilities have been developed on Highway 53 in Oakwood, and on SR 347 in Buford, both in close proximity to Interstate 985. Municipal boundaries have been extended, and sewer service provided to support these regional shopping opportunities. The location of the Atlanta Falcons training facilities on Atlanta Highway in Flowery Branch is expected to spur similar commercial and office development activity in the vicinity of Exit 12 in Flowery Branch. The majority of commercial development in the unincorporated portion of Hall County continue to be neighborhood oriented (convenience retail, mini-warehousing, gasoline stations, boat storage facilities, etc), near significant highway intersections, or along collector roadways.

##### **6.1.1.3: INDUSTRIAL**

The focus of industrial development activity in unincorporated Hall County continues to be the area bounded by McEver Road and Interstate 985 between the cities of Oakwood and Flowery Branch. The city of Oakwood's 250 acre Industrial park on McEver Road, and the privately developed Tanners Creek office park on Thurmond Tanner Road, are evidence of the county's

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desire to develop the infrastructure to support, both sewer and transportation facilities, necessary for the development of employment centers in this portion of the county. Other industrial areas include the Raceway Technology Park on Highway 53 adjacent to the Road Atlanta Raceway, the city of Gainesville's Industrial park West on Atlanta Highway, and scattered industrial development on SR 129 and 60 south of the city of Gainesville.

**6.1.1.4: PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL**

Since the adoption of the previous Comprehensive Plan, the Hall County School System has embarked upon a facility expansion program, through the addition of two new middle schools, (Davis Middle and Chestatee Middle), a new elementary school which opened for the 2000 school year (Martin Road), and two new high schools in South and North Hall, which opened in 2002. School facilities are depicted in the Community Facilities Element of this plan.

**6.1.1.5: TRANSPORTATION/UTILITIES**

The city of Gainesville has 70 acres of land on Jim Crow Road for a new water treatment plant, and Hall County has 300 acres of land on Spout Springs Road for a land application wastewater facility to support residential/commercial development in the Mulberry basin.

**6.1.1.6: PARKS AND RECREATION**

The city of Gainesville, city parks currently include more than 380 acres of park land in 17 locations that include a range of Regional, Community, special purpose, and neighborhood facilities. Hall County has 781 acres of park land in 16 locations. These locations provide active and passive recreation opportunities. Additionally, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has a total of 10,518 acres of property located in Hall County. Of these more than 4,000 are zoned for limited development or are protected, another 4,000 plus acres are zoned as recreation areas, and the remaining 2,000 acres is found in the islands of Lake Lanier.

**6.1.1.7: AGRICULTURAL**

Agricultural uses continue to be a major part of the Hall County landscape. Farms are located throughout East and North Hall, but are diminishing rapidly in the southern portion of the county as the result of increased residential development. The majority of the agricultural uses are in the form of livestock, poultry houses, and dairy farms. A significant percentage of the land remains in forestry. Agricultural lands remaining in Hall County face continued pressure from residential development, and issues that develop between new residents and on-going agricultural activities. However, strong sentiment exists in Hall County against creating special agricultural protection areas, or significantly restricting residential development opportunities in the existing areas of agricultural operations.

**6.1.2.0: Existing Land Use Definitions**

**Residential.** The predominant use of land within the residential category is for single-family and multi-family dwelling unit organized into general categories of net densities;

**Commercial and Commercial Service.** This category is for land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities, organized into general categories of intensities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building. Local governments may elect to separate office uses from other commercial uses, such as retail, service or entertainment facilities;

**Industrial** This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction activities, or other similar uses, organized into general categories of intensity.

**Public/Institutional.** This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Government uses include city halls and government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc. Examples of

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institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc. Facilities that are publicly owned, but would be classified more accurately in another land use category, should not be included in this category. For example, publicly owned parks and/or recreational facilities should be placed in the Park/Recreation/Conservation category; landfills should fall under the Industrial category; and general office buildings containing government offices should be placed in the commercial category.

**Transportation/Communication/Utilities** This category includes such uses as major transportation routes, public transit stations, power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, telephone switching stations, airports, port facilities or other similar uses.

**Conservation/Parks/Recreation**. This category is for land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. These areas may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers or similar uses.

**Agriculture**. This category is for land dedicated to agriculture, farming (fields, lots, pastures, farmsteads, specialty farms, livestock production, etc.) or other similar rural uses such as pastureland not in commercial use.

**Forestry**. This category is for land dedicated to commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting or other similar rural uses such as woodlands not in commercial use.

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**6.1.3.0: City of Gainesville Existing Land Use**

The following table illustrates the break down of existing land use in the City of Gainesville.

**Table 1: Existing Land Use Inventory City of Gainesville**

| <b>Category</b>                               | <b>Sub Category</b>      | <b>Acres</b>  |
|---|--------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Residential</b>                            |                          | <b>6,897</b>  |
|   | Low Density              | 4,203         |
|   | Medium Density           | 1,182         |
|   | High Density             | 1,512         |
| <b>Commercial</b>                             |                          | <b>1,790</b>  |
|   | Office                   | 135           |
|   | Commercial/Retail/Office | 1,655         |
| <b>Industrial</b>                             |                          | <b>1,929</b>  |
| <b>Agricultural</b>                           |                          | <b>0</b>      |
| <b>Public Institutional</b>                   |                          | <b>277</b>    |
| <b>Transportation/Communication/Utilities</b> |                          | <b>508</b>    |
| <b>Conservation/Parks/Recreation</b>          |                          | <b>4,971</b>  |
| <b>Forestry</b>                               |                          | <b>0</b>      |
| <b>Undeveloped/Unused</b>                     |                          | <b>2,052</b>  |
| <b>Total</b>                                  |                          | <b>18,424</b> |

NOTE: Acreage is an approximate estimate based on a GIS analysis.

The Gainesville Existing Land Use Map on the following page illustrates the distribution of land uses in Gainesville. There is not Agricultural or Forestry land in the City.

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**Existing Land Use Map | City of Gainesville**

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**6.1.4.0: Hall County Existing Land Use**

The following table illustrates the break down of existing land use in Hall County, detailed land use distribution for the City of Gainesville is included in the Gainesville inventory.

**Table 2: Existing Land Use Inventory Hall County**

| Category                               | Acres          |
|--|----------------|
| Agriculture, Forestry                  | 70,418         |
| Commercial                             | 5,003          |
| Industrial                             | 5,504          |
| Public/ Institutional                  | 2,652          |
| <sup>1</sup> Lakes                     | 22,627         |
| Residential                            | 62,802         |
| Conservation/Parks/Recreation          | 1,283          |
| Transportation, Communication, Utility | 2,999          |
| Undeveloped Land                       | 100,680        |
| <b>Total</b>                           | <b>274,457</b> |

1. This land use category is not required, however, Lake Lanier constitutes a significant portion of the area of Hall County and it is included for this reason.

NOTE: Acreage is an approximate estimate based on a GIS analysis.

The existing land use map on the next page illustrates the land use distribution in Hall County.

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**Existing Land Use Map | Hall County**

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## 6.2.0.0: LAND USE ASSESSMENT

### 6.2.1.0: EXISTING LAND USE ASSESSMENT

As part of the planning process, a Demand Analysis was completed to determine the development pressure on the City and County over the next 20-30 years. The results of this analysis are presented in the population element of this plan. This analysis included as comprehensive examination and assessment of historic growth and building trends to determine at what rate the community can anticipate growth. In conjunction with the analysis of the demand for growth, a geographically based capacity analysis was completed. The Capacity Analysis utilized Geographic Information Systems (GIS), land use inventories, current land use regulations, and the 2000 Land Use Update to determine what the potential physical capacity for development would be within the City and County under current regulations. In essence, it identified the City and County's physical ability to accommodate the projected growth from the Demand Analysis.

The process first identified significant pieces of land that were either underdeveloped or vacant, then based on current land use regulations identified a development density and land use. These geographic areas are referred to in this plan as Potential Development Areas or PDAs. The capacity was determined by multiplying the available acreage by either a housing unit per acre density in the case of residential land or a floor area ratio in the case of non-residential land. Adjustments were made to the gross capacity by factoring in development constraints such as steep slope, location in floodplain or presence of resource protection areas and necessary infrastructure. A range of densities was used to calculate the potential buildout under current land use regulations. The findings of this analysis are illustrated in the following series of tables. Table 3 shows the densities used to calculate the buildout.

**Table 3: Density Assumptions for Capacity Analysis**

|                                   | <b>Low Residential<br/>Density<sup>1,2</sup><br/>dwelling<br/>units/acre</b> | <b>High<br/>Residential<br/>Density<sup>1</sup><br/>dwelling<br/>units/acre</b> | <b>Low FAR<sup>3</sup></b> | <b>High FAR<sup>3</sup></b> |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>Unincorporated Hall County</b> |  |   |                            |                             |
| <b>Agricultural Land</b>          | 0.50   | 1.00  | -                          | -                           |
| <b>Rural Residential</b>          | 0.50   | 1.00  | -                          | -                           |
| <b>Residential Growth</b>         | 1.00   | 2.00  | -                          | -                           |
| <b>Residential</b>                | 0.66   | 1.20  | -                          | -                           |
| <b>Local Retail/Office</b>        | -  | -   | 0.20                       | 0.25                        |
| <b>Commercial</b>                 | -  | -   | 0.20                       | 0.25                        |
| <b>Industrial</b>                 | -  | -   | 0.25                       | 0.30                        |

**Table 4: Density Assumptions for Capacity Analysis**

| <b>City of Gainesville</b>          |   |  |                             |                              |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
|                                     | <b>Low Residential<br/>Density <sup>1,2</sup><br/>dwelling<br/>units/acre</b> | <b>High<br/>Residential<br/>Density <sup>1</sup><br/>dwelling<br/>units/acre</b> | <b>Low FAR <sup>3</sup></b> | <b>High FAR <sup>3</sup></b> |
| <b>A-R Agricultural Residential</b> | 1.64  | 2.18   | -                           | -                            |
| <b>R-1-A Residential</b>            | 1.64  | 2.18   | -                           | -                            |
| <b>R-I Residential</b>              | 3.28  | 4.37   | -                           | -                            |
| <b>PRD Residential</b>              | 3.28  | 4.37   | -                           | -                            |
| <b>R-II Residential</b>             | 6.00  | 12.00  | -                           | -                            |
| <b>All Office</b>                   | -   | -  | 0.30                        | 0.35                         |
| <b>All Commercial</b>               | -   | -  | 0.20                        | 0.25                         |
| <b>All Industrial</b>               | -   | -  | 0.30                        | 0.35                         |

1. Residential densities are units/acre
2. The low residential density for Gainesville is a 25% reduction of the established zoning maximum density, represented as the High Density. This and all other densities were used for analysis purposes and do not reflect future policy decisions made for the City.
3. Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is the ratio of the floor area in a building to the area of the lot on which it is built.

**6.2.2.0: RESIDENTIAL CALCULATIONS**

**6.2.2.1: Hall County**

Residential land was assigned a development density based on the number of residential units permitted per acre. In some cases, the 2000 Update to the County Land Use Plan provides a range of densities for development in the County. Early in the process of updating the comprehensive plan, the Hall County Commissioners adopted an amendment to the 2000 Land Use Plan Update that limited the development density of most of the rural areas of the county to one unit per two acres. This adjustment is reflected in the Low Capacity numbers in Table 5. Table 5 illustrates the potential capacity for new residential development in the unincorporated areas of Hall County. The heading (# of PDA's) in the following tables refers to the number of Potential Development Areas which were included in the land use category as part of the analysis.

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**Table 5: Unincorporated Hall County Potential Residential Capacity**

| Land Use Category        | # of PDAs    | Gross Land (Acres) | Net Land (Acres)  | Density (units/acre) | Low                      |  | High                 |                          |   |
|--------------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|--|----------------------|--------------------------|---|
|                          |              |                    |                   |                      | Net Capacity (new units) | Capacity Adjusted for Slope. (new units) | Density (units/acre) | Net Capacity (new units) | Capacity Adjusted for Slope (new units) |
| Agricultural             | 511          | 51,254.85          | 43,566.61         | 0.50                 | 21,776                   | 21,393                                   | 1.00                 | 43,571                   | 42,011                                  |
| Rural Residential        | 608          | 38,910.57          | 33,073.98         | 0.50                 | 16,549                   | 16,168                                   | 1.00                 | 33,065                   | 31,495                                  |
| Residential              | 692          | 26,122.76          | 22,204.35         | 0.66                 | 14,665                   | 14,463                                   | 1.20                 | 26,638                   | 25,820                                  |
| Residential Growth       | 189          | 6,960.03           | 5,916.02          | 1.00                 | 5,922                    | 5,858                                    | 2.00                 | 11,832                   | 11,547                                  |
| <b>Residential Total</b> | <b>2,000</b> | <b>123,248.20</b>  | <b>104,760.96</b> | -                    | <b>58,912</b>            | <b>57,882</b>                            | -                    | <b>115,106</b>           | <b>110,873</b>                          |

Source: MDC, 2003.

Based on these densities, the unincorporated areas of Hall County have potential capacity for between 57,882 and 110,873 new homes. The Net Capacity is the base calculation of permitted density multiplied by the Net Land, and the Adjusted Capacity takes into account the reduction of capacity in areas with a slope greater than 15-percent.

**6.2.2.2: Gainesville**

In Gainesville, all of the zoning permitted residential densities are greater than 1 unit per acre and no low density was identified, so for the purposes of this analysis the low residential density in the City is based on a 25% reduction of the permitted densities. Based on these densities, currently incorporated Gainesville has potential capacity for between 9,760 and 13,794 new homes. The Net Capacity is the base calculation of permitted density multiplied by the Net Land, and the Adjusted Capacity accounts for the reduction of capacity in areas with a slope greater than 15-percent.

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**Table 6: Gainesville Potential Residential Capacity**

| Land Use Category             | # of PDAs  | Gross Land (Acres) | Net Land (Acres) | Low                  |                          | High                                |                      |                          |                                     |
|-------------------------------|------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
|                               |            |                    |                  | Density (units/acre) | Net Capacity (new units) | Adjusted For Slope Cap. (new units) | Density (units/acre) | Net Capacity (new units) | Adjusted for Slope Cap. (new units) |
| A-R Agricultural Residential  | 17         | 424.06             | 360.45           | 1.64                 | 593                      | 589                                 | 2.18                 | 786                      | 774                                 |
| R-I-A Residential             | 31         | 238.15             | 202.43           | 1.64                 | 335                      | 333                                 | 2.18                 | 441                      | 436                                 |
| R-I Residential PRD Planned   | 244        | 1,518.43           | 1,290.66         | 3.28                 | 4,235                    | 4,185                               | 4.37                 | 5,640                    | 5,476                               |
| Residential                   | 33         | 1,160.78           | 986.66           | 3.28                 | 3,237                    | 3,232                               | 4.37                 | 4,314                    | 4,298                               |
| R-II Multi-Family Residential | 50         | 282.54             | 240.15           | 6.00                 | 1,440                    | 1,421                               | 12.00                | 2,884                    | 2,810                               |
| <b>RESIDENTIAL TOTAL</b>      | <b>375</b> | <b>3,623.95</b>    | <b>3,080.35</b>  |                      | <b>9,840</b>             | <b>9,760</b>                        |                      | <b>14,065</b>            | <b>13,794</b>                       |

Source: MDC 2003.

Table LU-5 illustrates the combined residential capacity for Gainesville and Hall County and the other incorporated areas.

**Table 7: Planning Area Potential Residential Capacity**

|                            | # of PDAs    | Gross Land (Acres) | Net Land (Acres)  | Low                      |   | High                     |   |
|----------------------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|---|
|                            |              |                    |                   | Net Capacity (new units) | Capacity Adjusted for Slope (new units) | Net Capacity (new units) | Capacity Adjusted for Slope (new units) |
| Unincorporated Hall County | 2,000        | 123,248.20         | 104,760.96        | 58,912                   | 57,882                                  | 115,106                  | 110,873                                 |
| City of Gainesville        | 375          | 3,623.95           | 3,080.35          | 9,840                    | 9,760                                   | 14,065                   | 13,794                                  |
| Other Incorporated Areas   | NA           | NA                 | NA                | NA                       | 5,280                                   | NA                       | 7,040                                   |
| <b>RESIDENTIAL TOTAL</b>   | <b>2,375</b> | <b>126,872.15</b>  | <b>107,841.31</b> | <b>68,752</b>            | <b>72,922</b>                           | <b>129,171</b>           | <b>131,707</b>                          |

Source: MDC, 2003.

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**6.2.2.3: Nonresidential Calculations**

Commercial and industrial land was assigned a “floor area ratio” (FAR). This number relates to the ratio between the floor areas of buildings in relationship to the area of the lot on which they are constructed. This number accounts for sufficient land for parking and other site requirements. Because nonresidential development in urban areas often makes use of parking structures or on-street parking, the FAR for Gainesville nonresidential development allows for slightly higher floor area to lot area coverage. Tables 8, 9, and 10 illustrate the nonresidential capacity for the planning area.

**Table 8: Unincorporated Hall County Nonresidential Capacity**

| Land Use Category           | # of PDAs  | Gross Land (Acres) | Net Land (Acres) | Density (FAR) | Low                        |   | High          |                            |   |
|-----------------------------|------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------|----------------------------|---|---------------|----------------------------|---|
|                             |            |                    |                  |               | Net Capacity (SF of Space) | Capacity Adjusted for Slope (SF of Space) | Density (FAR) | Net Capacity (SF of Space) | Capacity Adjusted for Slope (SF of Space) |
| Local Retail/Office         | 189        | 3,751.85           | 3,189.07         | 0.20          | 27,783,176                 | 26,144,736                                | 0.25          | 34,729,002                 | 32,680,955                                |
| Commercial/Retail           | 51         | 985.98             | 838.08           | 0.20          | 7,301,351                  | 7,140,139                                 | 0.25          | 9,126,693                  | 8,925,176                                 |
| Industrial                  | 267        | 10,130.12          | 8,610.61         | 0.25          | 93,769,569                 | 88,496,164                                | 0.30          | 112,523,467                | 106,195,383                               |
| <b>NONRESIDENTIAL TOTAL</b> | <b>507</b> | <b>14,868</b>      | <b>12,638</b>    | <b>-</b>      | <b>128,854,096</b>         | <b>121,781,039</b>                        | <b>-</b>      | <b>156,379,162</b>         | <b>147,801,514</b>                        |

Source: MDC, 2003.

Based on these densities the unincorporated areas of Hall County have approximately 14,870 acres of land designated for nonresidential development. Most of this land is designated for industrial development. The Net Capacity is the base calculation of permitted density multiplied by the Net Land, and the Adjusted Capacity accounts for the reduction of capacity in areas with a slope greater than 15-percent.

**Table 9: Gainesville Nonresidential Capacity**

| Land Use Category           | # of PDAs  | Gross Land (Acers) | Net Land (Acres) | Density (FAR) | Low                        |   | High          |                            |   |
|-----------------------------|------------|--------------------|------------------|---------------|----------------------------|---|---------------|----------------------------|---|
|                             |            |                    |                  |               | Net Capacity (SF of Space) | Capacity Adjusted for Slope (SF of Space) | Density (FAR) | Net Capacity (SF of Space) | Capacity Adjusted for Slope (SF of Space) |
| Office                      | 38         | 108.78             | 92.46            | 0.30          | 1,208,287                  | 1,119,794                                 | 0.35          | 1,409,665                  | 1,306,424                                 |
| Commercial/Retail           | 36         | 94.70              | 80.50            | 0.20          | 701,301                    | 664,458                                   | 0.25          | 876,629                    | 830,572                                   |
| Industrial                  | 61         | 601.65             | 511.40           | 0.30          | 6,683,054                  | 6,446,954                                 | 0.35          | 7,796,889                  | 7,521,438                                 |
| <b>NONRESIDENTIAL TOTAL</b> | <b>135</b> | <b>805.13</b>      | <b>684.36</b>    |               | <b>8,592,642</b>           | <b>8,231,206</b>                          |               | <b>10,083,183</b>          | <b>9,658,434</b>                          |

Source: MDC, 2003.

**Table 10: Planning Area Nonresidential Capacity**

| Land Use Category           | # of PDAs  | Gross Land (Acres) | Net Land (Acres) | Low                        |   | High                       |   |
|-----------------------------|------------|--------------------|------------------|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|
|                             |            |                    |                  | Net Capacity (SF of Space) | Capacity Adjusted for Slope (SF of Space) | Net Capacity (SF of Space) | Capacity Adjusted for Slope (SF of Space) |
| Local Retail/Office         | 227        | 3,860.63           | 3,281.53         | 28,991,463                 | 27,264,530                                | 36,138,667                 | 33,987,379                                |
| Commercial/Retail           | 87         | 1,080.68           | 918.58           | 8,002,652                  | 7,804,597                                 | 10,003,322                 | 9,755,748                                 |
| Industrial                  | 328        | 10,731.77          | 9,122.01         | 100,452,623                | 94,943,118                                | 120,320,356                | 113,716,821                               |
| <b>NONRESIDENTIAL TOTAL</b> | <b>642</b> | <b>15,673.08</b>   | <b>13,322.12</b> | <b>137,446,738</b>         | <b>130,012,245</b>                        | <b>166,462,345</b>         | <b>157,459,948</b>                        |

Source: Table 7 and Table 8.

**6.2.3.0: CONCLUSION**

This analysis concludes that under these assumptions and current development trends:

There is a combined capacity under current adopted regulations in Gainesville and unincorporated Hall County for between 72,922 and 131,707 new homes.

There is a combined capacity in Gainesville and unincorporated Hall County to support

- 34 million square feet of office building space on 3,860 acres;
- 9.75 million square feet of commercial building space on 1,080 acres; and
- 113 million square feet of industrial building space on 10,731 acres.

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**6.2.4.0: SEWER AND SEPTIC SERVICEABILITY**

Using geographic information systems, it was possible to overlay existing and potential utility service areas on the buildout models. This analysis identified deficiencies in the current land use regulations in regard to sewer availability. Ultimately, what was found is that more than 63% of the newly developed homes (between 45,940-82,975 new homes on septic systems) would be outside of the existing and potential areas of sewer availability. Most of the soils in these areas slated for development at 0.5-1 unit per are considered to be poor soils for septic systems. The history of septic installation and request for repairs is one of the highest in the state (ranked 3<sup>rd</sup> in 2003). The following are the annual number of permits issued for septic permits since 1995. This total includes additions and repairs. From July 2002 through June of 2003 1,618 septic permits were issued for new construction, 49 for additions and 539 for repairs.

- 1995-1,925
- 1996-2,317
- 1997-2,590
- 1998-2,473
- 1999-1,837
- 2000-1,862
- 2001-1,805

The current plan promotes development at densities that would perpetuate a development style that is inefficient to sewer and at a high enough density that the quantity of new homes on septic systems may be detrimental to the environment. The housing distribution with sewer service areas are illustrated for the existing conditions, and future buildout under the high and low capacity scenarios for the existing land use regulations. Later in this section, the same analysis was conducted for the proposed plan.

**6.2.5.0: REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES**

While agricultural uses are a valuable asset to the community and should not be viewed as vacant land, there is significant development potential in agricultural land. Most of the currently rural areas are anticipated to experience development pressure over the planning horizon of 20 to 30 years. While there may be some areas in the county with redevelopment potential, much of the opportunity lies within the City of Gainesville, primarily in the area defined as Midtown Gainesville. This area located immediately to the south of the City’s central business area and is bound to the north by Jesse Jewell Parkway, the Norfolk-Southern railroad to the south, Queen City Parkway to the west, and E.E. Butler Parkway to the east. This area is important because of its proximity to downtown Gainesville and major transportation facilities, and because of its existing infrastructure, which lends itself to economic development. The area can provide a vital mix of uses that incorporated historical and cultural resources into a revitalized and thriving community. In 2001, a special area redevelopment plan was completed for this area.

Because of the complex pattern of development within the City of Gainesville, there are many opportunities for infill, redevelopment or enhancements within the existing neighborhoods. As part of the Comprehensive Plan the subareas have been identified for further more detailed study. For the purposes of this plan, a general land use designation has been made, but a site by site survey of existing neighborhoods in conjunction with a historic and cultural resources survey may reveal more detailed opportunities.

**6.2.6.0: ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE RESOURCES**

Many of the Environmentally Sensitive Resources are identified in the Natural and Cultural Resources section of the plan. For the purpose of the land use element, these areas have been identified as conservation areas and are indicated on both the existing land use and future land use maps as such.

**6.2.7.0: EXISTING DEVELOPMENT PATTERN**

The existing development pattern in the City and County play important roles in the determination of the future land use plan. Because there are existing districts and neighborhoods with strongly established

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and historic characteristics and development patterns the future land use plan is developed around a series of sub area that can build on or improve the existing fabric of the community. The sub areas are further defined in the Future Land Use narrative. The plan addresses both the needs of transitional areas that are changing from rural to suburban context as well as maintaining existing land uses with infill and improvements.

**6.2.8.0: PROJECTION OF FUTURE LAND USE NEEDS**

When the demand is compared to the capacity of the current land use regulations the gaps can be used to establish a basis for the future land use needs. The needs identified in this section in combination with the goals established thorough the community participation element of the planning process are the foundation for the future land use policies presented later in this plan. The following Future Land Use narrative, land use definitions, and policies have been crafted to address the needs identified in this section.

**6.2.8.1: Residential**

Based on trends and population projections, the demand analysis calculated that there was a potential demand for approximately 123,860 new households by the year 2030. Based on the current land use plan and available vacant land there is potential capacity for between 72,922 and 131,707 new housing units in the city and county including growth in other jurisdictions in the county. Table 11 shows the break down and difference between the demand and capacity.

**Table 11: Residential Unit Demand vs. Capacity**

|                            | Demand to 2030 | Capacity to Buildout |                |                |
|----------------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|----------------|
|                            |                | Low                  | Mid            | High           |
| Gainesville*               | 21,098         | 9,760                | 11,777         | 13,794         |
| Hall County                | 102,762        | 57,882               | 84,378         | 110,873        |
| <b>Total Planning Area</b> | <b>123,860</b> | <b>72,922</b>        | <b>102,315</b> | <b>131,707</b> |

\*Gainesville Capacity assumes current city boundary with no new annexation

Demand assumes that Gainesville can continue to annex at a rate similar to historic trends<sup>1</sup>

Build out assumes that all available land is developed at the currently assumed densities

Source: Ross and Associates, MDC. 2003

The next step in determining residential needs is to assess the type of housing choices that are demanded and what can currently be provided with current land use regulations. Table 12 shows the breakdown by housing type and the demand vs. the capacity for each category.

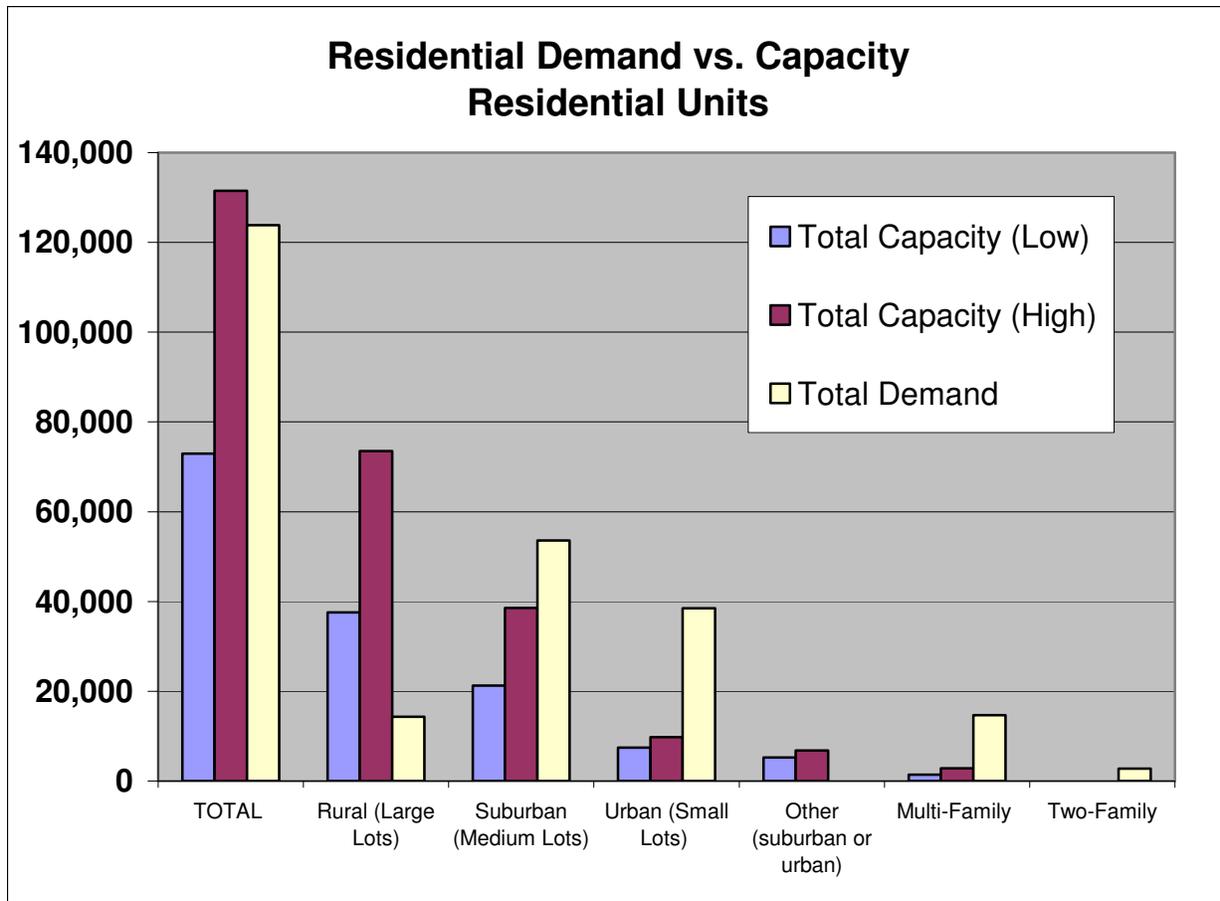
<sup>1</sup> The city of Gainesville annexes land on a request only basis. In the 5 years prior to the submission of the plan the city averaged an annexation of 405 acres a year, and around 20 parcels of varying size a year. Land is typically annexed for service provision.

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**Table 12: Housing Type |Demand Vs. Capacity**

|                              | TOTAL   | Rural<br>(Large<br>Lots) | Suburban<br>(Medium<br>Lots) | Urban<br>(Small<br>Lots) | Other<br>(suburban<br>or urban) | Multi-<br>Family | Two-Family |
|------------------------------|---------|--------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|------------|
| <b>Total Capacity (Low)</b>  | 72,922  | 37,561                   | 21,243                       | 7,417                    | 5,280                           | 1,421            | -          |
| <b>Total Capacity (High)</b> | 131,507 | 73,506                   | 38,577                       | 9,774                    | 6,840                           | 2,810            | -          |
| <b>Total Demand</b>          | 123,860 | 14,309                   | 53,565                       | 38,514                   | -                               | 14,675           | 2,798      |

Source: Ross and Associates, MDC. 2003



Source: Table LU-10

After comparing the gross demand and capacity and then breaking it down by housing unit type it becomes evident that there is probably adequate capacity for the total number of residential units demanded if the high capacity is used, however the distribution of type are disproportionate. The demand for suburban and urban type housing is much higher than the capacity for this type of development. However, the capacity for rural (large lot) residential out weighs the demand for this type of housing. The assessment of the current land use regulations are that using the high capacity of the 2000 Land Use Plan Update they provide an adequate number of residential development but an inadequate distribution of residential types for what is projected to be demanded. However, the reduced density adopted by the County Commissioners in mid-2003 reduces the capacity well below the projected demand with surplus of rural capacity and a deficit of suburban, urban and multifamily capacity. However, these choices make a clear statement that a reduction of the total residential capacity of the county is desirable. Community desire to have an overall smaller buildout population than what is currently possible is a valid and useful

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information in determining the needs for future residential. Estimates of residential buildout are included with the Future Land Use Plan element.

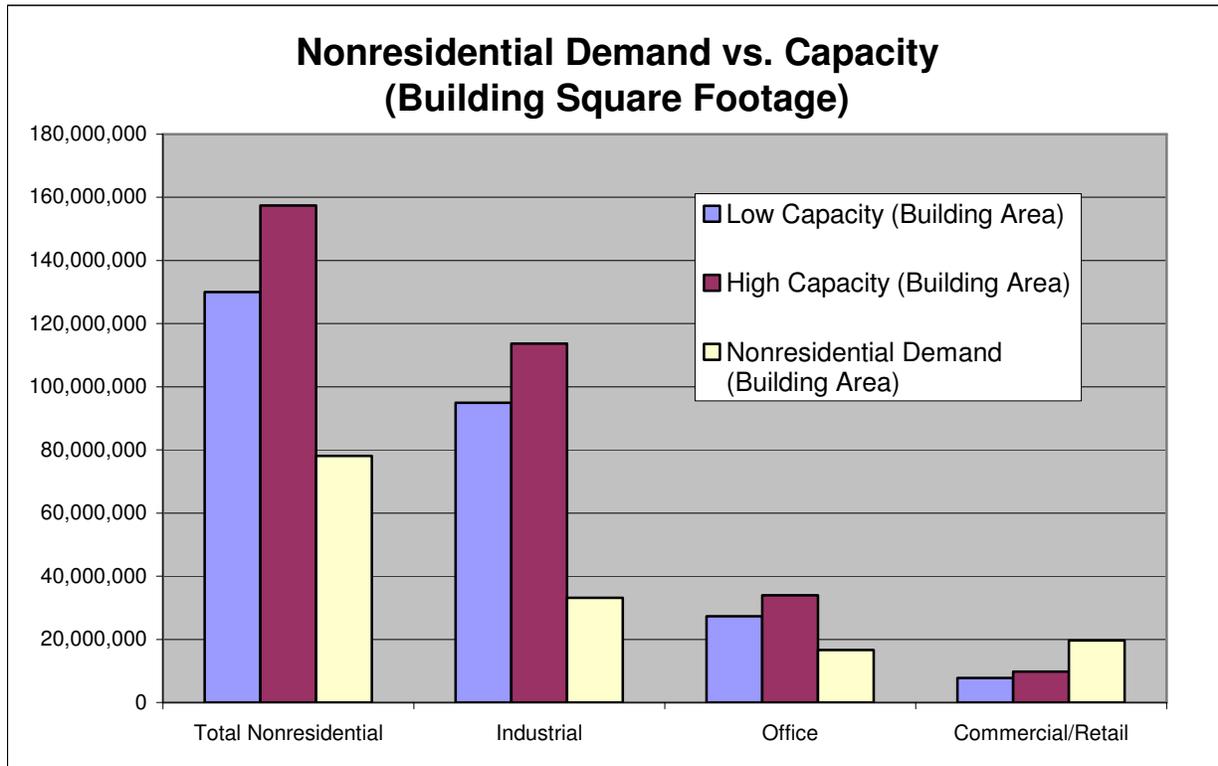
**6.2.8.2: Commercial and Industrial**

The demand for non-residential land uses was also determined using historic trends of growth in population and employment in Gainesville/Hall County. Currently nonresidential land uses are centrally located in Gainesville and along major corridors where sewer and other services are available. Based on current plans and zoning the city has a capacity for more than 130 million square feet of non residential floor area. On more than 13,000 acres of land. Table 13 shows the break down of Commercial/Retail, Office and Industrial Demand vs. Capacity.

**Table 13: Nonresidential Demand vs. Capacity**

|  | Total<br>Nonresidential | Industrial  | Office     | Commercial/<br>Retail |
|--|-------------------------|-------------|------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Low Capacity (Building Area)</b>          | 130,012,245             | 94,943,118  | 27,264,530 | 7,804,597             |
| <b>High Capacity (Building Area)</b>         | 157,459,948             | 113,716,821 | 33,987,379 | 9,755,748             |
| <b>Nonresidential Demand (Building Area)</b> | 78,087,630              | 33,139,290  | 16,593,540 | 19,649,400            |

Source: Ross and Associates, MDC. 2003



Source: Table 13.

Even at the lower capacity, there is a surplus capacity over demand for the overall nonresidential land use under current land use regulations and plans. Most of this surplus is in industrial land. There is also a slight surplus of land planned for or zoned office, while there is a greater demand for land for commercial/retail uses than is currently planned. Because the community desires to have a balanced mix of land uses as indicated in the goals and objectives The Future Land Use Plan should reflect a provision of land designated for nonresidential uses in a manner that reflects demand. To further refine the

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demand for commercial/retail uses a hierarchy of commercial/retail uses and the population they would serve was established. Table 14 illustrates this breakdown.

**Table 14: Commercial/Retail Types and Service Populations**

| <b>Retail Type</b>    | <b>Building Area</b> | <b>Site Size</b> | <b>Population Served</b> | <b>Target Radius</b> |
|-----------------------|----------------------|------------------|--------------------------|----------------------|
| <b>Neighborhood</b>   | 20,000-50,000 sf     | 2-5 acres        | 2,500-5,000              | 1-2 miles            |
| <b>Community</b>      | 50,000-250,000 sf    | 5-25 acres       | 10,000-50,000            | 2-5miles             |
| <b>Regional</b>       | 250,000-1,000,000 sf | 25-100 acre      | 150,000+                 | 5-10 miles           |
| <b>Super Regional</b> | 1,000,000+ sf        | 100+ acres       | 300,000+                 | 10+ miles            |

When the building area is applied to the site size, the average FAR established in these recommendations is 0.23. The buildout population can then be applied to a formula to calculate an estimate of the quantity and type of commercial development may be demanded by 2030. By dividing the buildout population by the population served for each retail category an estimate of the number of locations of each retail type can be determined. Then multiplying the number of sites by the site size determines the estimated number of acres to plan for each type of retail. Obviously some retail types may be combined and serve various populations, but for planning purposes this allows a gauge of the amount of retail that should be planned.

**6.2.8.3: Public/Institutional and Parks and Recreation**

Land use for future public and institutional uses has not been shown on the future land use maps. Land identification and acquisition for this land use category will be achieved with detailed study closer to the time of need. Through the park planning process a need for an additional 1,180 acres of parkland was identified. Other land needs related to community/public facilities will be determined on a case-by-case basis as the need arises.

## 6.3.0.0: LAND USE GOALS & IMPLEMENTATION

### 6.3.1.0: COMMUNITY VISION

The Gainesville/Hall County community will embody the best and most balanced forms of urban, suburban, and rural development. It will balance these three forms to achieve fiscal and economic health, preserve natural and cultural resources and open space, foster community facility efficiency and quality, and provide for a diverse housing stock and community livability. This will be accomplished by promoting a more compact form of growth, with new growth directed towards areas that can be efficiently provided with infrastructure and services. Infrastructure will be used as a tool to help manage growth, with infrastructure provided in support of desired types and patterns of growth, with a particular emphasis on high quality commercial, industrial, and business development. Gainesville/Hall County will have a strong economy that promotes fiscal health and prosperity for its citizens and as a means to allow local government to provide a high level of public services. Sensitive and compatible infill development that respects the historic fabric of existing neighborhoods will be encouraged as a way to maintain the viability of existing urban areas. In areas that cannot be efficiently served with public services such as sewers, rural densities will be maintained. Rural character, open space, and environmental resources will be preserved through the use of conservation oriented development practices that also acknowledge long term investments by existing land owners.

### 6.3.2.0: LAND USE GOALS & OBJECTIVES

#### Goal 1: Development Quality

Gainesville and Hall County will ensure that land resources are allocated for uses that will accommodate and enhance economic development, protect natural and historic resources, ensure adequate community facilities, and provide a range of housing - resulting in the preservation of a high quality of life.

- Objective 1:** *The economic and fiscal benefits of growth will be maximized, and the negative impacts of growth (i.e. traffic, land use, storm water, environmental, community character) will be minimized.*
- Objective 2:** *The design quality and appearance of new development in Gainesville and Hall County will be significantly improved. High standards for residential and commercial development quality will be implemented and enforced – with emphasis on land use compatibility, landscaping, signage, lighting, access management, traffic impact, and environmental impact.*
- Objective 3:** *The protection of natural resources and the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas will be promoted through a compact development pattern with new growth encouraged to occur in and around existing or planned service areas, and with urban and suburban growth discouraged in rural areas that are not efficiently provided with services.*

#### Goal 2: Efficient Growth

Gainesville and Hall County will grow and develop efficiently relative to the cost and timing of providing infrastructure and public services.

- Objective 1:** *Growth will be managed on the basis of available or planned public services and infrastructure. Infrastructure will be used as a tool to guide growth, not simply in reaction to market forces.*

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- Objective 2:** *Land use will be planned in concert with public services and infrastructure. Low-density uses will be planned in areas not efficiently served with public services, and compatible higher densities will be planned in areas that can be efficiently served with public services.*
- Objective 3:** *A compact development pattern will be identified that results in a more cost efficient infrastructure expansion.*
- Objective 4:** *New residential development, other than low density rural development will be directed to areas that are or can be efficiently provided with public services.*

### **Goal 3: Fiscally Sound Growth**

Gainesville and Hall County will grow and develop with a fiscally responsible land use pattern consisting of a balance of housing and jobs that supports the economic health and vitality of residents and businesses.

- Objective 1:** *There will be an appropriate balance targeted between the amount and type of growth of housing and business in order to assure long-term fiscal health.*
- Objective 2:** *Land that is suitable for commercial or industrial uses is a valuable resource that will be discouraged from developing as residential.*
- Objective 3:** *The provision of infrastructure in areas with potential to attract commercial and industrial development is a higher short-range priority than infrastructure that supports new residential development.*
- Objective 4:** *The costs of growth will be allocated fairly between local governments and the development community. Growth should generally pay its own way.*

### **Goal 4: Urban and Rural Distinction**

Existing and planned urban and suburban areas will be stable, vibrant, and well defined; development in rural areas will reflect low density that maintains true rural character.

- Objective 1:** *Gainesville and Hall County will maximize the use of existing infrastructure by encouraging compatible development or redevelopment of urban sites.*
- Objective 2:** *Sensitive and compatible infill and adaptive reuse that stabilizes and encourages reinvestment in urban areas will be promoted.*
- Objective 3:** *Downtown Gainesville and the surrounding area will continue to be the traditional focal point of the community, offering a pedestrian friendly range of civic, retail, employment, dining, and entertainment uses.*
- Objective 4:** *New urban or suburban development will be targeted in or around the existing cities and designated major activity areas at densities that promote an efficient utilization of land while being compatible with existing neighborhoods.*
- Objective 5:** *Relatively higher, yet compatible densities will occur in some areas currently designated for lower densities outside current municipal boundaries.*
- Objective 6:** *Development in rural areas will maintain rural character.*

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**Objective 7:** *The continuation of agricultural uses is encouraged as long as is feasible, but as such uses are converted to non-agricultural uses, rural density, character, and sensitive environmental features will be preserved.*

**6.3.3.0 FUTURE LAND USE DEVELOPMENT POLICIES**

This section sets forth the land use development policies that have been developed during the comprehensive planning process with significant citizen input. These policies are directly related to the goals and objectives set forth above and are an initial, important implementation step, providing greater detail to guide decision-makers. The county's development policies are set forth first followed by those applicable to the city.

**6.3.3.1: City of Gainesville Development Policies**

The city has developed detailed and specific development policies in the following topical areas:

- Suburban Medium and High-Density Residential
- Urban Residential
- Retail Commercial
- Industrial
- Mixed-Use
- Public/Institutional
- Transportation/Utilities/Communications
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Miscellaneous (Conservation Subdivision, Gateway Corridors, Gainesville Annexation Areas)

**6.3.3.2: Hall County Development Policies**

The county has developed detailed and specific development policies in the following topical areas:

- 
- 
- 
- 
- Residential
- Retail Commercial
- Industrial
- Mixed-Use
- Public/Institutional
- Transportation/Utilities/Communications
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Miscellaneous (Conservation Subdivision, Master Planned Communities, Gainesville Annexation Areas)

### 6.3.4.0: GAINESVILLE LAND USE POLICIES

The Future Land Use Map for the City of Gainesville reflects an urban development pattern that seeks to address the challenges of infill and redevelopment, while accommodating the City's need to grow. Medium density, suburban residential land uses are reflected around the established neighborhoods in Gainesville, such as Ridgewood Terrace, Longstreet Hills, and Dixon Drive. Mixed-use areas are reflected along Park Hill Drive and Enota Drive to allow for the compatible transition and necessary balance between neighborhoods and retail uses. Urban densities are reflected in areas where multi-family development has been planned or constructed. Retail and Industrial development continue to be a key focus of the City, which furthers Gainesville's place as the economic center of Northeast Georgia.

#### 6.3.4.1: Geographic Areas

A more detailed discussion of the land use plan and policy follows by geographic area:

##### SOUTH GAINESVILLE

This area is generally defined as the area south of Jesse Jewell Parkway lying between Queen City Parkway and eastward toward the 1,000± acre tract known as Shawshank. A key feature of this area is the section known as "Midtown". Midtown has been a focal point of redevelopment efforts over the past few years and continues to receive attention through the redevelopment efforts of the City. This area is planned for a mixture of uses as outlined in the **Midtown Redevelopment Plan** adopted by the City in 2001. Mixed-use and retail areas surround Midtown in anticipation of Midtown being the catalyst for redeveloping this part of Gainesville.

South Gainesville is also defined by existing residential neighborhoods, such as Newtown, surrounded by retail and industrial uses. Suburban medium densities are planned for this area to help prevent incompatible infill from occurring. Mixed-use areas surround parts of the residential area to allow for a mix of residential and neighborhood retail uses. The Shawshank property located at the far eastern boundary of South Gainesville is identified for Suburban High Residential densities in accordance with the master plan proposed for that area.

##### NORTHEAST GAINESVILLE

Northeast Gainesville is defined as the area north of Jesse Jewell Parkway lying between Green Street/Thompson Bridge Road and I-985/SR 365. A key feature of this area is the Limestone Corridor and the existing neighborhoods along Park Hill and Enota Drives. Both of these heavily traveled corridors are experiencing development pressures to convert existing residences to business uses. Suburban medium densities have been identified in these existing neighborhoods to help provide stabilization for those areas, while mixed-use has been proposed for the areas where commercial or retail intrusion has occurred. The mixed-use category in this area will set parameters for non-residential development to allow for a better balance between the neighborhood and retail-type uses.

Another significant area of Northeast Gainesville is the Northeast Georgia Medical Center. Due to its significance as a regional medical center and employer, land uses have been identified in areas surrounding the hospital that will allow for further infill and redevelopment of medical uses to support the hospital and nearby medical community. Green Street and its rich history have undergone a transition from residential uses to more professional/office uses. Land uses for this area are identified as mixed-use to allow for the transition to continue to occur if market forces permit, but to also allow a balance to occur between the office uses and residential neighborhoods surrounding Green Street.

Brenau University is another important asset of this area. Its position as an academic facility within the community draws a mixture of uses surrounding it including single-family and multi-family residential, as well as office and retail uses. Mixed-use is designated for this area to foster community balance between uses.

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#### NORTHWEST GAINESVILLE

Northwest Gainesville is generally defined as the area north of Jesse Jewell Parkway lying between Green Street/Thompson Bridge Road and Dawsonville Highway/Washington Street. Key features of this area include Lake Lanier, the Country Club, and Downtown. Downtown Gainesville has been designated its own land use category based on its successful Main Street program and redevelopment efforts. The mixed-use for Downtown will allow for the continued development of the Downtown area with shops and restaurants, as well as more loft-type dwelling units. Mixed-use areas immediately adjacent to Downtown are shown similar to the Midtown area, in that the development of the Downtown area will further define the development of these areas.

In northwest Gainesville, there is a large concentration of residential neighborhoods on both sides of the lake up to the City limits near the County Club. These areas have been designated Suburban Medium Residential to help preserve the area as residential and to help prevent incompatible infill. Multi-family developments are also a characteristic of this section of Gainesville and these are designated Urban High Residential.

#### WEST GAINESVILLE

West Gainesville is generally defined as the area south of Jesse Jewell Parkway/Browns Bridge Road lying between Queen City Parkway and McEver Road. A key feature of this area is the Lee Gilmer Airport and the surrounding industrial areas. Residential areas in this section of Gainesville are identified as Suburban Medium Residential to help protect them from incompatible infill. Retail/Commercial is predominate in this section of Gainesville in areas such as Lakeshore Mall and the McEver Road/Dawsonville Highway vicinity, which is a regional activity center drawing people from outside Hall County. It is anticipated that this area will grow in size to encompass the Skelton Road Area.

Multi-family developments, such as Caswyck Lanier, are located in this area and are identified as Urban High Residential. Other areas along the major corridors of this section are identified as mixed-use due to the anticipated transition from residential to retail.

### **6.3.4.2: Neighborhood Planning Unit Approach**

Every area of Gainesville is unique. The four areas described above have their own character, some of which is contained within the specific area and some of it spills over into other areas. There are common issues facing the City that are identifiable in every area and some that are unique to a particular part of Gainesville. In order to identify these areas and to make the process of land use planning continual, the City will begin the process of setting up Neighborhood Planning Units (NPU's). These NPUs will be a continuation of the land use plan, but provides for more detailed planning in the areas of design guidelines and parcel specific land uses in key areas. These NPUs will be a citizen-based effort that utilizes citizens from within the NPUs to develop plans and designs and present those to the City for consideration.

The purpose of the NPU will be a micro-level planning function that will look at specific areas of the City that have a unique character. While all of the NPUs will have common elements, each of them will have their own distinct issues. The initial outcome of these NPUs will be to identify the commonalties within the City while integrating the different characters of the individual NPUs.

It is envisioned that the NPUs will be established by the City of Gainesville based on factors such as geography, census tract and block characteristics, similar issues regarding traffic and growth, as well as recommendations received through a series of public meetings to gather input on how the community believes the NPUs should be organized. Each NPU will have its own Steering Committee composed of residents, property owners, business owners, and government officials. While the Steering Committee will be manageable, it should represent a cross section of the planning area. The final decision on the size and boundary of each NPU, as well as the Steering Committee organization, will be determined by the City Council. The NPU will be a function of the Planning Department, but it is expected that each

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department within the City will participate with this effort depending on the prevalent issues that could impact them.

After formation of the NPUs, a Steering Committee appointed by the City will hold public meetings to discuss issues and/or concerns contained within that area. From this series of meetings, a vision or character of the NPU will be developed. After this character has been identified, design guidelines will be drafted and meetings held to gain consensus on the requirements for development within the NPU. Specific parcels of land will be identified as priorities, based on the need to develop or protect those areas. At this point, a formal recommendation will be made to the City for acceptance and codification of the design guidelines.

While the establishment of these NPUs will be an ongoing process, Gainesville is at a point in its growth and development where it becomes necessary to maintain and/or establish character-type areas within geographic boundaries to shape the City as it enters a build-out phase. Careful consideration, through public input and analysis, should be carried out before NPU priorities are established.

**6.3.4.3: Land Use Definitions, and Policies**

The following are the specific land use categories depicted in the Future Land Use Plan, along with development policies that apply to those land use categories. The Development Policies are intended to define the circumstances under which the land use is considered appropriate.

SUBURBAN MEDIUM AND HIGH-DENSITY

The suburban medium and high-density categories are characterized primarily by single-family residential development and related uses. The following definitions apply to Suburban Medium Density Residential and Suburban High-Density Residential depicted on the Future Land Use map.

**Suburban Medium Density**

Suburban Medium Density in the City of Gainesville includes areas containing or planned for suburban residential development at a density not to exceed 2 dwelling units per acre.

**Suburban High-Density**

Suburban High-Density in the City of Gainesville includes areas containing or planned for suburban residential development at a density range of 2-4 dwelling units per acre.

|  |
|--|
| <b>Suburban Development Policies</b>   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The appropriate land uses within the Suburban Medium Density category include single-family, limited neighborhood commercial, and appropriately scaled institutional uses. In the Suburban High-Density category, attached housing is also appropriate subject to the development policies below.</li> <li>2. A mix of the land uses should be encouraged to reduce the dependency on the automobile. Uses such as parks, schools, churches, and senior housing should be considered as appropriate ancillary uses when part of an integrated site design and when located and designed to minimize negative impacts.</li> </ol> |
| <b>Suburban Development Policies (cont.)</b>   |

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3. Neighborhood commercial may be appropriate in areas not designated on the future land use plans only when consistent with the development policies contained in the retail commercial section.
4. More street connections should be encouraged in residential subdivision designs. Rather than focusing traffic on a few collector streets or arterials – which tends to create bottlenecks of congestion – more “through streets” should be encouraged to better disperse traffic and to reduce its impacts at certain points.
5. When new development occurs, it should be designed around and connected to any open space corridors or networks existing or planned.
6. Pedestrian facilities should be included in new developments, unless circumstances make this unrealistic. Improved connections between key destination areas should be developed, such as between residential and commercial areas and connecting to parks and schools.
7. Well-designed and integrated open space is encouraged as part of suburban development. Residential development should be designed around active neighborhood open spaces where practical, which in turn should connect to adjacent open space networks or regional systems.
8. Environmental quality standards should be incorporated in the development review process, particularly related to storm water runoff, stream protection, and tree protection.
9. New development should be timed and coordinated relative to infrastructure. Infrastructure, particularly sewer and water service, should be available concurrently with new development.
10. New infrastructure should be planned to be adequate for both existing and planned growth. Level of service standards should be developed to ensure that adequate public facilities are provided in both the short term and long term.
11. Infill development, while typically considered an issue in urban neighborhoods (see below), can also be a factor in suburban neighborhoods. When new development is proposed within existing suburban areas, it should be reviewed for compatibility with surrounding residential properties. Compatibility can be achieved by ensuring that the overall scale and design of infill development does not overwhelm or otherwise detract from the established character of existing neighborhoods.

**URBAN RESIDENTIAL**

The following definitions apply to Urban Residential uses as depicted on the City Future Land Use map.

**Urban Residential Low**

Urban Residential Low includes areas containing or planned for urban residential development at a density range of 4 - 5 dwelling units per acre.

**Urban Residential Medium**

Urban Residential Medium includes areas containing or planned for urban residential development at a density range of 5 - 10 dwelling units per acre.

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**Urban Residential High**

Urban Residential High includes areas containing or planned for urban residential development at a density range of 10 - 12 dwelling units per acre.

**Urban Residential Development Policies:**

1. The preservation and enhancement of existing residential neighborhoods is of paramount importance.
2. Infill development can be an effective means of ensuring the continued vitality and integrity of urban residential neighborhoods. Encouraging infill development on targeted sites provides an opportunity to incorporate housing alternatives into the urban area, while reducing the need for outward expansion of the community.
3. While recognizing the potential advantages of infill development, the need to ensure its compatibility with the surrounding residential context must be addressed. Compatibility can be achieved by ensuring that the overall scale and design of infill development does not overwhelm or otherwise detract from the established character of existing neighborhoods. Compatibility can be achieved through the development of targeted development standards that address:
  - Scale of development (building height and mass)
  - Neighborhood character
  - Lot coverage
  - Setbacks
  - Relationship to surrounding development
  - Neighborhood specific design characteristics
  - Relationship to historic properties
4. Historic preservation is a valuable tool to promote the protection of neighborhood character and can also be a valuable economic development tool by encouraging reinvestment and new investment in historic properties.
5. The preservation or creation of neighborhood identity is a high priority. In particular, gateways into neighborhoods and corridors through neighborhoods are important features that can reinforce neighborhood identity.

**RETAIL COMMERCIAL**

The retail commercial land use category generally includes commercial service activities such as grocery stores, banks, restaurants, theaters, hotels, and automotive related businesses. This land use category is intended to provide retail and related uses at three levels including neighborhood retail, community retail, and regional retail.

The following standards are used to define policy and guide retail land use decisions:

**Neighborhood Commercial**

Neighborhood Commercial is a node of development containing a total of 10,000-50,000 square feet of small scale buildings on sites totaling 2-5 acres, serving a population of approximately 2,500-5,000 living within a 1-2 mile radius. Such areas are typically made up of small shops and offices, possibly anchored by a small neighborhood grocery or drug store.

### **Community Commercial**

Community Commercial is a node of development containing 50,000-250,000 square feet of buildings on sites totaling 5-25 acres, serving a population of approximately 10,000-50,000 living within a 2-5 mile radius. Such areas are typically anchored by a major grocery store, major drug store, or large-scale retailer.

### **Regional Commercial**

Regional Commercial is a node of development containing from 250,000 to over 1,000,000 square feet of buildings on sites totaling 25 – to over 100 acres, serving a population of 150,000 or more living within a 5-10 mile radius. Such areas are typically anchored by a number of large-scale retailers.

These categories of retail development are intended to provide a hierarchy of retail locations that are designated based upon infrastructure, suitability, and access. These sites are identified on the Future Land Use Map.

The intent of the plan for this land use category is to provide adequate land to serve the anticipated future population. An excess of retail land is illustrated on the Future Land Use Map in order to provide market flexibility; the amount of land and number of sites proposed on the Future Land Use Map exceeds the amount of land needed to support the anticipated future population by approximately 50% in order to create this market flexibility.

The following definitions apply to the Retail Commercial land use categories depicted on the Future Land Use map.

### **Retail Commercial**

Retail Commercial includes areas containing or planned for focused retail activity, and specifically designated to provide for neighborhood, community, or regional retail needs as defined within the Comprehensive Plan.

Retail is planned at a number of locations on the Future Land Use Map. Illustrative examples of retail locations include:

- Neighborhood Commercial - Riverside Drive near City Park
- Community Commercial - Limestone Parkway; Atlanta Highway; Browns Bridge Road; Thompson Bridge Road and Enota Drive
- Regional Commercial - Dawsonville Highway and McEver Road; Lakeshore Mall Area; and Shallowford Road.

## Commercial Development Policies:

### NEIGHBORHOOD RETAIL

1. Neighborhood retail is intended to serve nearby residential areas with basic personal and retail services. Such uses are generally located in stand-alone buildings or in small commercial centers and they include uses such as convenience stores, beauty salons, specialty shops, smaller restaurants, grocery stores, and drug stores. These uses are appropriate in many areas and can help to minimize traffic by providing services near homes. On the other hand, they can also be obtrusive and have negative impacts on homes if they do not respect the neighborhood scale or are not properly located and designed.
2. Neighborhood retail should be located at a significant intersection along a collector street or arterial street, easily accessible from the area it is intended to serve.
3. Neighborhood retail clusters should be adequately spaced so as to avoid an over concentration in individual neighborhoods. The amount of neighborhood retail in a given neighborhood should be generally proportional to the needs of the surrounding area.
4. Adequate landscape buffering should be provided adjacent to any residential areas.
5. Building design should be compatible with surrounding residential areas with regard to materials, building scale, building massing, and relationships to streets.
6. Connections should be provided to any adjoining sidewalk or trail system that exists.
7. Parking facilities should be carefully designed to minimize visual impacts on surrounding residential areas and on the neighborhood as a whole.
8. Access should be limited to minimize impacts on surrounding residential areas.
9. Signage and lighting should be limited to avoid visual impacts on homes.

### COMMUNITY RETAIL

1. While community retail serves a larger area, it often serves a neighborhood retail function for immediately surrounding areas. For this reason, community retail should maintain a pedestrian scale that connects to surrounding residential areas.
2. Other related but smaller uses may also occur as part of community retail, such as restaurants and smaller specialty stores. These smaller uses must be carefully coordinated from a site-planning standpoint with the larger retail uses, particularly related to traffic access and circulation.

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COMMUNITY RETAIL (CONT.)

3. Community retail uses should meet quality standards related to site layout, building configuration, materials, massing, shape, height, landscaping, signage, parking lot aesthetic and functional design, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, trash removal, lighting, storm water management, environmental protection, and others as discussed below. Community retail should be subject for land use impact review and mitigation for such issues.
4. Community retail should be approved only upon a demonstration that adequate public facilities exist or will be established by the time of opening.
5. Circulation systems should be designed to efficiently facilitate traffic flow, yet designed to discourage speeds in volumes that impede pedestrian activity and safety. Common or shared access points are encouraged. Access management principles and techniques should be incorporated in the site plan design and development phase.
6. Adequate parking should be provided, but excessive parking is discouraged. The visual impacts of parking should be minimized through the use of interior landscape islands, and through dividing parking areas into groupings. The edges of parking lots should be screened through landscaping or other methods.
7. The location of service areas and mechanical equipment should be considered as part of the overall site design. Service areas and mechanical equipment should be screened from public view.
8. A master sign plan should be prepared illustrating the location, type, size, and material of signage.
9. Lighting should be designed to avoid spill over onto adjacent properties, including the use of cut off shields or similar features.

REGIONAL RETAIL

1. Regional retail is intended to serve larger areas, and include uses such as retail/grocery superstores, large discount stores, warehouse clubs, large specialty retailers, manufacturers' outlet stores, and department stores.
2. Other related but smaller uses may also occur as part of regional retail, such as restaurants and smaller specialty stores. These smaller uses must be carefully coordinated from a site planning standpoint with the larger retail uses, particularly related to traffic access and circulation.
3. Regional retail uses should meet quality standards related to site layout, building configuration, materials, massing, shape, height, landscaping, signage, parking lot aesthetic and functional design, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, trash removal, lighting, storm water management, environmental protection, and others as discussed below. Regional retail should be subject for land use impact review and mitigation for such issues.
4. Regional retail should be encouraged only where they have a strong network of interstate or arterial roadways to provide access.
5. Regional and community retail should be approved only upon a demonstration that adequate public facilities exist or will be established by the time of opening.

REGIONAL RETAIL (CONT.)

6. Circulation systems should be designed to efficiently facilitate traffic flow, yet designed to discourage speeds in volumes that impede pedestrian activity and safety. Common or shared access points are encouraged. Access management principles and techniques should be incorporated in the site plan design and development phase.
7. Adequate parking should be provided, but excessive parking is discouraged. The visual impacts of parking should be minimized through the use of interior landscape islands, and through dividing parking areas into groupings. The edges of parking lots should be screened through landscaping or other methods.
8. The location of service areas and mechanical equipment should be considered as part of the overall site design. Service areas and mechanical equipment should be screened from public view.
9. A master sign plan should be prepared illustrating the location, type, size, and material of signage.
10. Lighting should be designed to avoid spill over onto adjacent properties, including the use of cut off shields or similar features.

INDUSTRIAL

The industrial land use category includes a wide range of office, business, light industrial, manufacturing, research and development uses, and support commercial uses. Industrial uses involve a significant number of vehicle trips, particularly in the morning and evening peak hours. They also involve a mixture of automobile and truck traffic. Industrial uses may have need for rail access and are typically located near major highway facilities in areas naturally buffered or away from residential areas.

Industrial uses in the City are generally planned for the five City industrial parks. Industrial development will be directed to these established parks, including:

- Industrial Park West, which is a 242 acre industrial park
- Airport Industrial Park, which is a 16 acre industrial park
- Atlas Circle Business Park, which is a 62 acre industrial park
- Industrial Park North, which is a 216 acre industrial park
- Industrial Park South, which is a 171 acre industrial park

The following definition applies to Industrial depicted on the Future Land Use map.

**Industrial**

Industrial includes areas containing or planned for industrial activity including manufacturing, processing, mining, and major warehousing and distribution facilities.

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## Industrial Development Policies:

1. The appropriate land uses in this category include manufacturing, processing, mining, and major warehousing and distribution facilities.
2. Industrial uses should meet quality standards designed to mitigate negative impacts on any surrounding non-industrial uses.
3. The most desired form of industrial uses is that of an “employment campus” with an integration and coordination of uses, although freestanding industrial uses are also anticipated.
4. Industrial uses should be located within easy access to an arterial roadway and the interstate highway system, and take advantage of rail locations that are compatible with surrounding development.
5. Employer transportation programs are encouraged to reduce the percentage of trips made by single-occupancy vehicles.
6. Vehicular access should be designed to maximize efficiency and minimize negative impacts on the level of service of adjacent roads.
7. On-site amenities such as walking trails and eating areas are encouraged.
8. Accessory uses designed to serve on-site employees, such as restaurants, day care centers, and personal services are also encouraged but only when integrated with and subordinate to the primary business uses.

### MIXED-USE

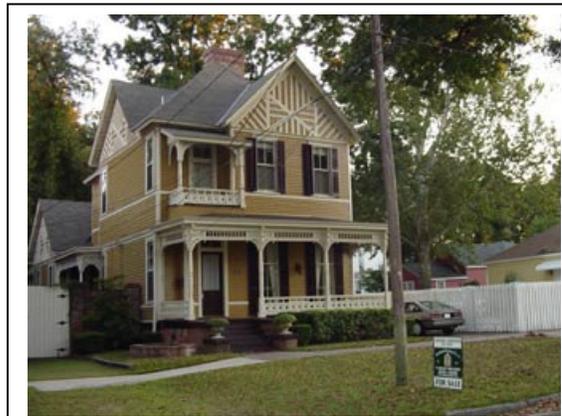
The category of mixed-use is intended to create a land use environment where compatible land uses can be located in close proximity to each other. This can be desirable for several reasons. First, allowing compatible and mutually supportive uses in close proximity to each other can reduce the length and amount of automobile trips on the road system, thereby helping to reduce congestion and negative environmental impacts caused by automobile traffic. Second, a well-planned mixture of land uses helps to create a positive transition of land uses, with less intensive uses serving as a transition between more intensive uses and single-family neighborhoods. At the same time, the idea of mixed-uses should not be interpreted as allowing for the intrusion of incompatible land uses into single-family neighborhoods that create negative land use impacts. On the contrary, mixed-use is intended, in part, as a tool to help protect neighborhoods.

The following definition applies to Mixed-Use depicted on the Future Land Use map:

### Mixed-Use

Mixed-Use includes areas containing or planned for a mixture of land uses including office, neighborhood retail, and residential. The types of uses that are desirable in this area would be restaurants, specialty retail, and low-intensity offices (e.g. accountant or real estate office). The mixture of land uses in this area is anticipated as follows:

**Office** – Anticipated making up approximately 40 percent of the mixed-use area, providing high quality



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employment areas such as professional offices including medical, law, accounting, real estate, and similar uses.

**Retail** – Anticipated to make up approximately 30 percent of the mixed-use area, providing support retail for neighborhood offices, service uses, and specialty retail for surrounding land uses.



**Residential** – Anticipated to make up approximately 30 percent of the mixed-use area, providing a range of single-family and multi-family housing accessible to employment and shopping areas.



### **Mixed-Use Downtown**

Mixed-Use Downtown includes areas containing predominately retail uses in conjunction with the Main Street Gainesville program. Residential units located above the retail uses will be encouraged such as loft-style residences.

For planning and management purposes, Downtown Gainesville generally comprises 20 square blocks bounded by Jesse Jewell Parkway, E. E. Butler Parkway, Academy and West Academy Streets. The City of Gainesville has been participating in the hugely successful National Main Street Program since 1995, which prescribes a managed approach to economic revitalization in the context of historic preservation. The redevelopment of Downtown is a true public-private partnership with the public sector providing financial incentives and strategic public investments to encourage private redevelopment of property within and surrounding the district.

The City government has invested in public utility infrastructure, streetscape, public building renovations, and a greenway. The City, through the Redevelopment Authority and the Main Street office, established a low-interest loan program and nominated the district to the National Register of Historic Places. The City is currently in the process of expanding public parking, intersection improvements, and an expansion of streetscape improvements.

The vision for Downtown includes the continued renovation of private property to enhance its visual and utilitarian value while encouraging appropriately designed mixed-use infill development. The vision focuses on a vibrant retail core surrounding the Square with adequate parking opportunities, pedestrian amenities, and served by appropriate public transit. The remaining land use strategy involves a mixture of office, residential, lodging/meeting, and government uses in a mid-rise configuration with adequate off-street, structured parking. The strategy is to enhance, reinforce, and expand the urban fabric and urban life experience to serve a growing and diverse community.

### **Mixed-Use Midtown**

Mixed-Use Midtown includes area to be developed in accordance with the Midtown Redevelopment Plan that has been adopted by the City of Gainesville.

The Midtown area is comprised of approximately 300 acres bounded by Jesse Jewell Parkway, Queen City Parkway, E.E. Butler Parkway, and the Norfolk-Southern rail line. Midtown was once a vibrant part of Gainesville, centered around the railroad and its associated businesses. Today, Midtown is characterized by blighted housing, incompatible land uses, unscreened outdoor storage for businesses, traffic, crime, and a lack of green space. Despite these drawbacks, the community believes that Midtown has the potential for significant change. Citizens envision a thriving mixed-use area with tree-lined streets, trails, and parks that would attract residents and visitors to the area. Possible opportunities include renovating the railroad depot, establishing an entertainment district, converting the CSX rail lines into a greenway, installing streetscaping along key streets, providing mixed-income housing, and protecting some of the area's valuable historic resources.

It is important to note that the City's method of redeveloping Midtown is to make strategic public investments in order to attract private redevelopment of property. The City does not plan to get in the business of redeveloping property.

The first public investment the City plans to make in Midtown is converting the CSX rail line into a greenway and building a park in the area. The creation of a greenway would not only have a positive impact on Midtown, but would benefit the entire City. A greenway in Midtown would greatly improve the aesthetic character of the area and would provide an alternative mode of transportation, recreational opportunities, and pedestrian connections to the downtown square, the Elachee trail system, and the Rock Creek greenway.

## Mixed-Use Development Policies:

1. Because this land use category is intended in part as a transition between more intensive uses and single-family uses, all sides of a building open to view to the public should display a similar level of architectural quality. Building materials should be limited to brick, masonry, stucco, wood, fiber cement siding, wood shingle, wood siding, cultured stone, or similar materials.
2. Buildings and sites should be designed to emphasize pedestrian orientation. A coordinated pedestrian system should be provided throughout the development including connections between uses on the site, in between the site, adjacent properties, and rights-of-way where appropriate.
3. Circulation systems should be designed to efficiently facilitate traffic flow, yet designed to discourage speeds in volumes that impede pedestrian activity and safety. Common or shared access points are encouraged.
4. Adequate parking should be provided, but excessive parking is discouraged.
5. The visual impacts of parking should be minimized through the use of interior landscape islands, and through dividing parking areas into groupings. The edges of parking lots should be screened through landscaping or other methods.
6. The location of service areas and mechanical equipment should be considered as part of the overall site design. Service areas and mechanical equipment should be screened from public view. Service areas and dumpster pad areas should be limited to daytime operation hours only.
7. A master sign plan should be prepared illustrating the location, type, size, and material of signage.
8. Lighting should be designed to avoid spill over onto adjacent properties, including the use of cut off shields or similar features.
9. In the Mixed-Use Downtown category, uses and development should be guided by the Main Street Gainesville Program. Residential units located above retail are encouraged.
10. In the Mixed-Use Midtown category, uses and development should be guided by the **Midtown Redevelopment Plan** adopted by the City of Gainesville.

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PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL

Public/Institutional includes areas containing or planned for public and institutional uses including governmental, educational and medical facilities, houses of worship, and similar institutional facilities. Specific areas are not identified for most future institutional uses, but appropriate criteria for their location are specified in other land use designations. Once institutional uses are established, extra care should be used to insure that surrounding development is compatible with the institutional uses function.

**Public/Institutional Development Policies:**

1. Institutional uses should be located at a significant intersection along a collector street or arterial street, easily accessible from the area it is intended to serve.
2. Adequate landscape buffering should be provided adjacent to any residential areas.
3. Building design should be compatible with surrounding residential areas with regards to materials, building scale, building massing, and relationships to streets.
4. Parking facilities should be carefully designed to minimize visual impacts on surrounding residential areas and on the neighborhood as a whole.

TRANSPORTATION/COMMUNICATIONS/UTILITIES

Transportation/Communications/Utilities include areas containing or planned for major transportation, utilities, or communications facilities.

PARKS/RECREATION/CONSERVATION

Parks/Recreation/Conservation include areas containing or planned for parks and recreation facilities permanently designated open space, and conservation areas, including buffers along waterways and other environmental features.

**6.3.4.4: Miscellaneous Development Polices**

CONSERVATION SUBDIVISION

While conservation subdivisions are often viewed as options in rural areas, there may be opportunities for such uses in suburban areas that are annexed into the City in the future. Unlike conventional suburban residential subdivisions, which typically consume an entire development parcel, conservation subdivisions rearrange and cluster housing lots and roadways to set aside a substantial amount of property as permanently protected, quality open space. This open space is retained in perpetuity as green ways, trails, woodlands, pastures, or other uses that maintain scenic character, protect environmental features, and contribute to the quality of life for residents. When properly planned, open space and conservation developments can become part of an interconnected regional open space network.

Benefits of conservation subdivisions include the ability to:

- Preserve open space, particularly environmentally sensitive areas, while yielding the same or more development potential on a piece of land, resulting in no loss of tax revenue.

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- Use less linear feet of roads, water lines, and sewers (if available) to serve the same number of homes, resulting in lower development costs for the developer, and lower maintenance costs.
- Preserve rural character (which can be valuable even in suburban areas) by protecting significant views and setting development off of existing rural roads.
- Allow residents a lower density neighborhood feel without having to personally maintain a large lot.
- Allow continued agricultural use of much of the common open space while still getting development value from property.
- Design subdivisions to provide the best views, best building sites, and best soils for septic systems, because less suitable land can be left as open space.

### **Conservation Subdivision Development Policies:**

1. Conservation subdivisions are encouraged in the suburban land use categories, subject to the development policies.
2. Flexible design that maximizes open space preservation should be promoted within the overall density constraints. A wide range of lot dimensions is possible based upon net density/yield rather than minimum lot size/width.
3. Open space should be designed to form an interconnected network, with provisions for linkages to existing or potential open space on adjoining properties. Where dedicated open space exists on an adjacent parcel, the lots should be situated such that the open space areas connect with similar areas on adjacent parcels.
4. Specific design requirements such as project layout, clustering, amount and configuration of open space, road design, private road considerations, setbacks and buffers, and landscaping should be implemented through the land development regulations.
5. Environmental considerations such as flood plains, slopes, soils, and others should be incorporated within the development standards.
6. A variety of tools can be appropriate to ensure permanent protection of open space, such as conservation easements, deed restrictions, homeowner associations, and dedication to public entities and land trusts.
7. Lots should be situated in locations least likely to block scenic vistas or views as seen from public roadways. The view of the developments from the public right-of-way should be minimized through buffering or through the use of existing topography and vegetation or the creation of such with grading and landscaping.

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### 6.3.4.5: Gateway Corridors

One of the key goals established in this planning process is the improvement of community quality, especially in the form of improved development quality. The perceived quality of new growth and development is an important element of community character and livability. An important element of quality of growth is the recognition of the importance of community “gateways”. Gateways refer to key points of entry into a community. In the case of Gainesville, there are several gateway corridors that are important both from a functional transportation and a symbolic perspective. These include:

- Browns Bridge Road and Atlanta Highway from the west;
- Thompson Bridge Road from the northwest;
- Cleveland Highway from the north;
- E.E. Butler Parkway from I-985 to the east; and
- Queen City Parkway from I-985 to the southeast.

## Gateway Corridors Development Policies

1. The City recognizes the importance of gateway corridors, both from a functional and symbolic perspective.
2. The functional needs of the corridors include both efficiency and safety of traffic flow.
3. The symbolic importance of the corridors means that the design quality of new development should be held to a high standard. Site plan standards should be designed to create a quality of development befitting a “front door” into the community.
4. The design quality of the public realm must also be held to a high standard. The aesthetic appearance of the corridors should be improved through streetscape improvements.
5. The City will explore incentives that encourage the coordinated development or redevelopment of multiple parcels of property in order to discourage a piecemeal appearance.

**Table 15: Future Land Use Summary City of Gainesville**

| Future Land Use Category              | Acres |
|---------------------------------------|-------|
| Commercial                            | 939   |
| Conservation/Parks/Recreation         | 3,986 |
| Industrial                            | 1,077 |
| Mixed Use Downtown                    | 71    |
| Mixed Use Midtown                     | 314   |
| Mixed Use                             | 1,032 |
| Suburban Medium Density (Residential) | 4,825 |
| Suburban High Density (Residential)   | 1,252 |
| Urban Residential Low Density         | 124   |
| Urban Residential Medium Density      | 131   |
| Urban Residential High Density        | 274   |

Source: 2004 Update to the Land Use Plan, MDC.

Note: Not all land uses illustrated on the accompanying map are presented in this table, land uses not designated in the incorporated portions of the city of Gainesville have not been included. Information on acreage for land use designation in the unincorporated areas of Hall County can be found in table 16.



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**City of Gainesville Future Land Use Map**

**6.3.5.0: HALL COUNTY LAND USE POLICIES**

The Future Land Use Plan for Hall County reflects an urban development pattern along the I-985/S.R. 365 corridor through and including the Cities of Buford, Flowery Branch, Oakwood, Gainesville, and Lula. Lower density suburban development is reflected around the balance of Lake Lanier and Gainesville, along the major highway corridors to the north, east and west, and in most of the southern portion of the County. The residential pattern throughout the County is based on infrastructure availability.

**6.3.5.1: Geographic Areas**

A more detailed discussion of the land use plan and policy follows by geographic area:

SOUTH HALL

Generally defined as areas lying south and west of Mundy Mill Road and Mulberry Creek, this area is characterized by suburban type residential development serving the commercial/industrial corridor along I-985, Atlanta Highway and McEver Road. A key feature of this area is the amount of access to and businesses serving Lake Lanier, including Lake Lanier Islands resort and major marinas. Slightly higher residential densities requiring sewer service are an option in those areas where such service could be reasonably be provided, including much of the Mulberry basin and areas adjacent to the I-985 corridor.

Potential regional retail nodes are planned at I-985 and Friendship Road, and the future I-985 interchange with Martin Road. Additional community level retail exists or is planned for Gaines Ferry Road and McEver Road, Flat Creek Road and McEver Road, Spout Springs Road and Friendship Road, Spout Springs Road and I-985, and Thompson Mill Road and Old Winder Highway.

CHESTNUT MOUNTAIN/CANDLER AREA

This area is generally defined as east of I-985 between Mulberry Creek and Allen Creek, and this area is shown for primarily residential development.. A significant area of industrial and mixed use development is shown in the area between Winder Highway and Old Winder Highway, taking advantage of the two I-85 interchanges that are only about 2 miles from the County line.

This area is served by the existing community commercial node at Winder Highway and Atlanta Highway. Additional community commercial nodes are also planned at Winder Highway and Martin Road, Winder Highway and Old Winder Highway/Tanners Mill Road, and Candler Highway and Poplar Springs Road.

EAST HALL

Lying in a crescent from Allen Creek north to the Chattahoochee River, this area features predominantly residential development with the exception of the Athens Highway and SR 365 corridors.

The Highway 365 corridor features a significant industrial area taking advantage of rail access, and large areas of mixed use that are anticipated to be dominated by office and business park development. Along either side of the office/industrial corridor, residential, along with supporting commercial opportunities in the mixed-use area, are designed to supplement the primary office/warehouse development in the area..

A regional retail node is planned at the intersection of Highway 365 and SR 52, based on its unique accessibility in this region. Community commercial nodes are planned for the intersections of Highway 365 and White Sulphur Road, Highway 365 and Belton Bridge Road, and Athens Highway and Gillsville Highway. Community level commercial services are also anticipated within Lula and Gillsville.

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NORTH HALL

This area, generally lying between the Chattahoochee River and Wahoo Creek, is characterized by residential development. A mixed-use corridor is shown along U.S. 129 to accommodate some office and light industrial areas. Community Commercial nodes have been identified at U.S. 129 and Nopone Road and U.S. 129 and SR 52 (Quillian's Corner), and an additional commercial area of this scale is anticipated within Clermont.

MURRAYVILLE/SARDIS AREA

This area, virtually surrounded by Lake Lanier and its Wahoo Creek and Chestatee arms, is characterized by residential development. Mixed uses are shown along much of the major highway corridors, and community commercial nodes are shown at Thompson Bridge and Mt. Vernon Roads, Sardis Road and Dawsonville Highway, and in the Murrayville area.

GAINESVILLE AREA (SOUTH OF THE LAKE)

The area around the City of Gainesville is characterized by a mixture of uses that generally follow sectors radiating out from the City. Areas to the immediate west of the City, such as along Skelton Road and Atlanta Highway, are shown as high density suburban, based on existing development patterns and potential for infill and redevelopment. Areas further west, including the Browns Bridge peninsula, are dominated by low and medium density suburban residential development. Areas to the southwest, along Mountain View Road, Old Oakwood Road, and Atlanta Highway are generally non-residential, including Industrial and Mixed Use areas, and the institutional uses of the Gainesville College/Lanier Tech area. Areas to the south and southeast along I-985 near Candler Road and Athens Highway are dominated by industrial and allied uses. Areas to the east are a mix of residential densities, and areas to the northeast along SR 365 and White Sulphur Road are shown for Industrial and Mixed Use areas.

Community commercial nodes serving this ring on the edge of and around Gainesville include Browns Bridge and McEver Roads, Mundy Mill and McEver Roads, Mundy Mill and Frontage Roads, Athens Highway at Gaines Mill Road, I-985 and Jesse Jewell Parkway, and Limestone Parkway at Clarks Bridge Road.

**6.3.5.2: Land Use Definitions, and Policies**

The following are the specific land use categories depicted in the future Land Use Plan, along with development policies that apply to those land use categories. The Development Policies are intended to define the circumstances under which the land use is considered appropriate.

**Residential**

The residential land use category is characterized by single-family residential development at moderate densities. This range of categories allows for larger lots served with septic systems as well as smaller lots served by sanitary sewers. Road infrastructure will be developed with urban dimensions and design features such as curb and gutter drainage. The residential development in the unincorporated County is based on infrastructure provision. One of the basic tenets of the County vision statement is to allow for a range of housing choices and to maximize infrastructure provision. Due to the existing and planned water and sewer improvements, the city of Gainesville is equipped to provide opportunities for higher density residential development. The unincorporated areas of the County will provide lot size options dependent upon available water and sewer service.

The following definition applies to the Residential category depicted on the Future Land Use map.

RESIDENTIAL

Residential includes areas containing or planned for single family residential development and limited non-residential uses. Residential development intensity is dictated by minimum lot size

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based upon infrastructure provision. For those properties with both public water and sewer service available, development will be allowed on minimum ½ acre lots. For those properties with public water, but utilizing septic tanks, development will be allowed on minimum 1 acre lots. For those properties where development must rely on wells and septic tanks, development will be allowed on minimum 1½ acre lots.

## Development Policies:

1. The appropriate land uses in the Residential category include single-family residential, limited neighborhood commercial and appropriately scaled institutional uses. Agricultural uses are appropriate interim land uses, but eventually it is expected that agricultural uses will transition into residential development.
2. Uses such as parks, schools, churches, and senior housing should be considered as appropriate ancillary uses when part of an integrated site design and when located and designed to minimize negative impacts.
3. Neighborhood retail uses are appropriate as indicated on the future land use map. Sites other than those indicated on the future land use map may be appropriate, subject to certain development policies as identified in the commercial land use section.
4. The lot size requirements are based on infrastructure availability. For the purpose of this policy, public sanitary sewer refers to facilities that return treated effluent to the surface water system and are not considered a consumptive use of water.
5. The integrity of environmental features should be preserved in residential areas. Measures should be implemented to ensure the protection of stream corridors and water quality, and measures should be taken to minimize adverse impacts of septic systems.
6. While this land use category is intended to promote residential character, neighborhood “connectivity” between subdivisions is encouraged wherever practical to avoid the creation of isolated islands of development, and reduce traffic impacts on the major road network.
7. Development within this land use category should be designed to be compatible with, and connect with open spaces, recreation facilities, and trails as established or proposed in county plans.

### RETAIL COMMERCIAL

The retail commercial land use category generally includes retail uses, offices, personal services, restaurants, automotive related business, and related uses. This land use category is intended to provide retail and related uses at three levels including neighborhood retail, community retail, and regional retail.

The following standards are used to define policy and guide retail land use decisions:

**Neighborhood Commercial**

Neighborhood Commercial is a node of development containing 10,000-50,000 square feet of small scale buildings on sites totaling 2-5 acres, serving a population of approximately 2,500-5,000 living within a 1-2 mile radius. Such areas are typically made up of small shops and offices, possibly anchored by a small neighborhood grocery or drug store.

**Community Commercial**

Community Commercial is a node of development containing 50,000-250,000 square feet of buildings on sites totaling 5-25 acres, serving a population of approximately 10,000-50,000 living within a 2-5 mile radius. Such areas are typically anchored by a major grocery store, major drug store or large-scale retailer.

**Regional Commercial**

Regional Commercial is a node of development containing from 250,000 to over 1,000,000 square feet of buildings on sites totaling 25 – to over 100 acres, serving a population of 150,000 or more living within a 5-10 mile radius. Such areas are typically anchored by a number of large-scale retailers.

These categories of retail development are intended to provide a hierarchy of retail locations that are designated based upon infrastructure, suitability, and access. These sites are identified on the future land use map.

The intent of the plan for this land use category is to provide adequate land to serve the anticipated future population. An excess of retail land is illustrated on the future land use map in order to provide market flexibility; the amount of land and number of sites proposed in the future land use plan exceeds the amount of land needed to support the anticipated future population by approximately 50% in order to create this market flexibility.

The following definitions apply to Retail Commercial depicted on the Future Land Use map.

**Retail Commercial**

Retail Commercial includes areas containing or planned for focused retail activity, and specifically designated to provide for neighborhood, community or regional retail needs as defined within the Plan.

Retail is planned at a number of locations on the future land use plan, including:

**Regional Commercial**

- I-985 and Friendship Road
- I-985 and Martin Road
- SR 365 and SR 52
- Shallowford Road/Dawsonville Highway/McEver Road Area

**Community Commercial**

- Spout Springs and Friendship Road
- Spout Springs and Hog Mountain Road
- Gaines Ferry and McEver Road
- Flat Creek and McEver Road
- Browns Bridge and McEver Road
- Pearl Nix and Browns Bridge Road
- Atlanta Highway and Memorial Park Drive
- Winder Highway and Martin Road
- Winder Highway and Old Winder/Tanners Mill Road
- Old Winder Highway and Thompson Mill Road (Relocated)

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- Candler Road and Poplar Springs Road
- Athens Highway and Gillsville Highway
- Jesse Jewell Parkway and I-985
- South Enota and Downey Blvd.
- White Sulphur Road and SR 365
- Belton Bridge and SR 365
- Limestone Parkway and Clarks Bridge Road
- Cleveland Highway and Nopone Road
- Cleveland Highway and SR 52 (Quillians Corner)
- Thompson Bridge Road and Enota Avenue
- Thompson Bridge Road (Murrayville)
- Thompson Bridge Road and Mount Vernon Road
- Dawsonville Highway and Sardis Road

At least one additional Community Commercial node is expected to be developed within Buford, Braselton, Clermont, Flowery Branch, Gillsville, Lula and Oakwood.

**Neighborhood Commercial**

- Spout Springs and Williams Road
- Spout Springs and Union Circle
- Spout Springs and Capitola Farm Road
- McEver and Lights Ferry
- McEver and Jim Crow Road
- Poplar Springs and Sherman Allen Road
- Candler Road and Tanners Mill Road
- Athens Highway and Roy Parks Road
- Harmony Church and Gillsville Highway
- Harmony Church and Mangrum Mill Road
- Gillsville Highway and East Hall Road
- Gillsville Highway and SR 52
- Old Cornelia and SR 52
- SR 52 and Glade Farm Road
- SR52/Skitts Mtn./Holly Springs Road
- Hubert Stephens and Mount Vernon Road
- Jim Hood and Mount Vernon Road
- Price Road and Thomas Road
- Price Road and Cool Springs Road
- Price Road and Sardis Road
- Chestatee Road and Cool Springs Road

Several additional Neighborhood Commercial nodes are expected to be developed within Buford, Braselton, Clermont, Flowery Branch, Gillsville, Lula and Oakwood.

**Retail Development Policies:**

NEIGHBORHOOD RETAIL

1. Neighborhood retail is intended to serve nearby residential areas with basic personal and retail services. Such uses are generally located in stand-alone buildings or in small commercial centers and they include uses such as convenience stores, beauty salons, specialty shops, and smaller restaurants, grocery stores and drug stores. These uses are appropriate in many areas and can help to minimize traffic by providing services near homes. On the other hand,

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they can also be obtrusive and have negative impacts on homes if they do not respect the neighborhood scale or are not properly located and designed.

2. Neighborhood retail should be located at a significant intersection along a collector street or arterial street, easily accessible from the area it is intended to serve.
3. Neighborhood retail clusters should be adequately spaced to avoid an over concentration in individual neighborhoods. The amount of neighborhood retail in a given neighborhood should be generally proportional to the needs of the surrounding area.
4. Adequate landscape buffering should be provided adjacent to any residential areas.
5. Building design should be compatible with surrounding residential areas with regards to materials, building scale, building massing, and relationships to streets.
6. Connections should be provided to any adjoining sidewalk or trail system that exists.
7. Parking facilities should be carefully designed to minimize visual impacts on surrounding residential areas and on the neighborhood as a whole.
8. Access should be limited to minimize impacts on surrounding residential areas.

COMMUNITY RETAIL

1. While community retail serves a larger area, it often serves a neighborhood retail function for immediately surrounding areas. For this reason, community retail should maintain a pedestrian scale that connects to surrounding residential areas.
2. Other related but smaller uses may also occur as part of community retail, such as restaurants and smaller specialty stores. These smaller uses must be carefully coordinated from a site-planning standpoint with the larger retail uses, particularly related to traffic access and circulation.
3. Community retail uses should meet quality standards related to site layout, building configuration, materials, massing, shape, height, landscaping, signage, parking lot aesthetic and functional design, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, trash removal, lighting, storm water management, environmental protection, and others as discussed below. Community retail should be subject for land use impact review and mitigation for such issues.

COMMUNITY RETAIL CONTINUED

4. Community retail should be approved only upon a demonstration that adequate public facilities exist or will be established by the time of opening.
5. Circulation systems should be designed to efficiently facilitate traffic flow, yet designed to discourage speeds in volumes that impede pedestrian activity and safety. Common or shared access points are encouraged. Access management principles and techniques should be incorporated in the site plan design and development phase.
6. Adequate parking should be provided, but excessive parking is discouraged. The visual impacts of parking should be minimized with interior landscape islands, and through dividing parking areas into groupings. The edges of parking lots should be screened through landscaping or other methods.
7. The location of service areas and mechanical equipment should be considered as part of the overall site design. Service areas and mechanical equipment should be screened from public view.
8. A master sign plan should be prepared illustrating the location, type, size, and material of signage.
9. Lighting should be designed to avoid spill over onto adjacent properties, including the use of cut off shields or similar features.

REGIONAL RETAIL

1. Regional retail is intended to serve larger areas, and include uses such as retail/grocery superstores, large discount stores, warehouse clubs, large specialty retailers, manufacturers' outlet stores, and department stores.
2. Other related but smaller uses may also occur as part of regional retail, such as restaurants and smaller specialty stores. These smaller uses must be carefully coordinated from a site-planning standpoint with the larger retail uses, particularly related to traffic access and circulation.
3. Regional retail uses should meet quality standards related to site layout, building configuration, materials, massing, shape, height, landscaping, signage, parking lot aesthetic and functional design, vehicular and pedestrian circulation, trash removal, lighting, storm water management, environmental protection, and others as discussed below. Regional retail should be subject for land use impact review and mitigation for such issues.
4. Regional retail should be encouraged only where they have a strong network of interstate or arterial roadways to provide access.

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REGIONAL RETAIL CONTINUED

5. Regional and community retail should be approved only upon a demonstration that adequate public facilities exist or will be established by the time of opening.
6. Circulation systems should be designed to efficiently facilitate traffic flow, yet designed to discourage speeds in volumes that impede pedestrian activity and safety. Common or shared access points are encouraged. Access management principles and techniques should be incorporated in the site plan design and development phase.
7. Adequate parking should be provided, but excessive parking is discouraged. The visual impacts of parking should be minimized with interior landscape islands, and through dividing parking areas into groupings. The edges of parking lots should be screened through landscaping or other methods.
8. The location of service areas and mechanical equipment should be considered as part of the overall site design. Service areas and mechanical equipment should be screened from public view.
9. A master sign plan should be prepared illustrating the location, type, size, and material of signage.
10. Lighting should be designed to avoid spill over onto adjacent properties, including the use of cut off shields or similar features.

INDUSTRIAL

The industrial land use category includes a wide range of office, business, light industrial, manufacturing, research and development uses, and support commercial uses. Industrial uses involve a significant number of vehicle trips, particularly in the morning and evening peak hours. They also involve a mixture of automobile and truck traffic. They also may prefer rail access and are typically located near major highway facilities in areas naturally buffered or away from residential areas.

Industrial uses are generally planned for one of several areas including:

- The industrial area along Candler Road, which is an area that has historically been used for industrial uses.
- The Interstate 985 Corridor generally around Buford and between Flowery Branch and Oakwood. This is an area recommended generally for lighter industrial uses with some heavier industrial uses anticipated along the railroad. Some of this area is already served with sanitary sewers and the remainder is planned for sanitary sewer service pursuant to a cooperative agreement between Hall County and Flowery Branch.
- The Interstate 985 Corridor between Candler Road and Athens Highway. This area supports more intense industrial uses, especially southeast of the Highway.
- The Winder Highway area around Road Atlanta, which has a high quality of development and has good access to both I-85 and I-985 via Winder Highway.
- State Route 365 north of Gainesville. This area includes some existing development, but also provides a long-term supply of industrial land with access to both regional highway

and rail systems. Sanitary sewer service will be provided to this area through a cooperative agreement between the City of Gainesville and Hall County.

The following definition applies to Industrial depicted on the Future Land Use map.

**Industrial**

Industrial includes areas containing or planned for industrial activity including manufacturing, mining and major warehousing and distribution facilities.

| <b>Industrial Development Policies:</b>   |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The appropriate land uses in this category include manufacturing, processing, mining, and major warehousing and distribution facilities.</li> <li>2. Industrial uses should meet quality standards designed to mitigate negative impacts on any surrounding non-industrial uses.</li> <li>3. The most desired form of industrial uses is that of an “employment campus” with an integration and coordination of uses, although freestanding industrial uses are also anticipated.</li> <li>4. Industrial uses should be located within easy access to an arterial roadway and the interstate highway system, and take advantage of rail locations that are compatible with surrounding development.</li> <li>5. Employer transportation programs are encouraged to reduce the percentage of trips made by single-occupancy vehicles</li> <li>6. Vehicular access should be designed to maximize efficiency and minimize negative impacts on the level of service of adjacent roads.</li> <li>7. On-site amenities such as walking trails and eating areas are encouraged.</li> <li>8. Accessory uses designed to serve on-site employees, such as restaurants, day care centers, and personal services are also encouraged but only when integrated with and subordinate to the primary business uses.</li> </ol> |

**MIXED-USE**

The category of mixed use is intended to create a land use environment where compatible land use can be located in close proximity to each other. This can be desirable for several reasons. First, allowing compatible and mutually supportive uses in close proximity to each other can reduce the length and amount of automobile trips on the road system, thereby helping to reduce congestion and negative environmental impacts caused by automobile traffic. Second, a well-planned mixture of land uses and help to create a positive transition of land uses, with less intensive uses serving as a transition between more intensive uses and single family neighborhoods. At the same time, the idea of mixed uses should not be interpreted as allowing for the intrusion of incompatible land uses into single-family neighborhoods that create negative

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land use impacts. On the contrary, mixed use is intended, in part, as a tool help protect neighborhoods.

The following definition applies to Mixed-Use depicted on the Future Land Use map.

**Mixed-Use**

Mixed-Use includes areas containing or planned for a mixture of light industrial and office-based employment, retail activities, and institutional uses, as follows:

**Office/Business Parks** – Anticipated to make up approximately 65 percent of this land area providing high quality employment areas such as offices, employment based institutions, “flex” office/warehouses, and research and development facilities, with limited light assembly and warehousing.

**Limited Retail** – Anticipated making up approximately 25 percent of this land area providing support retail for business parks, neighborhood office and service uses, and specialty retail for surrounding land uses.

**Residential** – Approximately 10 percent of this land area is anticipated to provide supporting residential development in single family, townhouse, or multi-family developments of up to 12 units per acre. Such residential development should be in response to commercial and industrial development, and restricted to the Gainesville sewer service districts.

### Mixed-Use Development Policies:

1. The dominant use in the mixed-use category is intended to be office/business park use. Retail uses are intended to be supportive of the job-based uses. Residential uses are also intended to be supportive of and in response to the establishment of job-based uses. Residential uses are only anticipated in those mixed use areas in the Gainesville sewer service districts, and the percentage of residential development may be greater on certain properties based on surrounding land uses. While not every individual development must meet the ratio guidelines identified above, the intent of this land use category is to provide for the mutually supportive mixture of land uses with business uses being the primary use.
2. Because this land use category is intended in part as a transition between more intensive uses and single-family uses, all sides of a building open to view to the public should display a similar level of architectural quality. Building materials should be limited to brick, masonry, stucco, wood, fiber cement siding, wood shingle, wood siding, cultured stone, or similar materials.
3. Buildings and sites should be designed to emphasize pedestrian orientation. A coordinated pedestrian system should be provided throughout the development including connections between uses on the site, in between the site, and adjacent properties and rights-of-way where appropriate.
4. Circulation systems should be designed to efficiently facilitate traffic flow, yet designed to discourage speeds in volumes that impede pedestrian activity and safety. Common or shared access points are encouraged.
5. Adequate parking should be provided, but excessive parking is discouraged. The visual impacts of parking should be minimized with interior landscape islands, and through dividing parking areas into groupings. The edges of parking lots should be screened through landscaping or other methods.
6. The location of service areas and mechanical equipment should be considered as part of the overall site design. Service areas and mechanical equipment should be screened from public view.
7. A master sign plan should be prepared illustrating the location, type, size, and material of signage.
8. Lighting should be designed to avoid spill over onto adjacent properties, including the use of cut off shields or similar features.

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PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL

Public/Institutional includes areas containing or planned for public and institutional uses including governmental, educational and medical facilities, houses of worship, residential child care, and institutional facilities. Specific areas are not identified for most future institutional uses, but appropriate criteria for their location are specified in other land use designations. Once institutional uses are established, extra care should be used to insure that surrounding development is compatible with the institutional uses function.

**Public/Institutional Development Policies:**

1. Institutional uses should be located at a significant intersection along a collector street or arterial street; easily accessible from the area it is intended to serve.
2. Adequate landscape buffering should be provided adjacent to any residential areas. Surrounding land uses and site planning should be sensitive to the needs and long-term function of the institutional use.
3. Building design should be compatible with surrounding residential areas with regards to materials, building scale, building massing, and relationships to streets.
4. Parking facilities should be carefully designed to minimize visual impacts on surrounding residential areas and on the neighborhood as a whole.

TRANSPORTATION/UTILITIES/COMMUNICATIONS

Transportation/Utilities/Communications includes areas containing or planned for major transportation, utilities, or communications facilities.

PARKS/RECREATION/CONSERVATION

Parks/Recreation/Conservation includes areas containing or planned for parks and recreation facilities (including marinas and associated accessory commercial uses), permanently designated open space, and conservation areas, including buffers along waterways and other environmental features.

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### 6.3.5.3: Miscellaneous Development Polices

#### CONSERVATION SUBDIVISION

Unlike conventional suburban residential subdivisions, which typically consume an entire development parcel, conservation subdivisions rearrange and cluster housing lots and roadways to set aside a substantial amount of property as permanently protected, quality open space. This open space is retained in perpetuity as green ways, trails, woodlands, pastures, or other uses that maintain scenic character, protect environmental features, and contribute to the quality of life for residents. When properly planned, open space and conservation developments can become part of an interconnected regional open space network.

Benefits of conservation subdivisions include the ability to:

- Preserve open space, particularly environmentally sensitive areas, while yielding the same or more development potential on a piece of land, resulting in no loss of tax revenue.
- Use less linear feet of roads, water lines, and sewers (if available) to serve the same number of homes, resulting in lower development costs for the developer, and lower maintenance costs for the County.
- Preserve rural character by protecting significant views and setting development off existing rural roads.
- Allow residents a lower density neighborhood feel without having to personally maintain a large lot.
- Allow continued agricultural use of much of the common open space while still getting development value from property.
- Design subdivisions to provide the best views, best building sites, and best soils for septic systems, because less suitable land can be left in the open space.

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**MASTER PLANNED COMMUNITIES**

Hall County recognizes that quality, balanced growth is desirable and occasionally there will be opportunities to plan and develop large contiguous parcels as new, master planned mixed-use communities throughout the County. These master planned communities may be desirable and can complement the Comprehensive Plan's stated goals. They can enhance economic development, protect natural and historic resources, ensure adequate community facilities, provide a range of housing types, improve the balance between jobs and housing, and achieve a higher standard of quality development across larger portions of the County. The approval of large-scale master planned communities, including the appropriate amendment to the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use map, is anticipated when compatible with the following policies.

| <b>Master Planned Communities Development Policies:</b> |  |
|---|--|
| 1.  | A master planned community should have significant frontage or direct access to a state or county arterial highway.  |
| 2.  | Master Planned Communities should include a mix of commercial, business, residential, community, and open space, in a configuration that builds on the benefits of mixed-use development.                  |
| 3.  | A significant percentage of a master planned community should be recreation, conservation, and/or open space, reflecting environmentally sensitive site planning and conservation practices.               |
| 4.  | The developer should demonstrate a commitment to partner with the County in order to ensure the provision of adequate public facilities to support the phased development of the master planned community. |
| 5.  | Comprehensive Plan amendments proposed under these policies for a master planned community must contain a minimum of 500 contiguous acres.   |

**Table 16: Future Land Use Summary (Hall County Unincorporated)**

| Future Land Use Category                            | Acres      |
|---|------------|
| Retail Commercial                                   | 5462       |
| Conservation/Parks/Recreation                       | 1,558      |
| Industrial  | 10,470     |
| Institutional/Public                                | 1,864      |
| Mixed-Use   | 9,499      |
| Residential   | 218,950    |
| <b>Transportation, Utilities, and Communication</b> | <b>382</b> |

Source: 2004 Update to the Land Use Plan, MDC, Hall County Planning Department.

Note: Not all land uses illustrated on the accompanying map are presented in this table, land uses not designated in the unincorporated portions of the county have not been included. Information on acreage for land use designation in the city of Gainesville can be found in table 15.



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**Hall County Future Land Use Map**



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**Hall County Future Land Use Map (Gainesville Detail)**

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### 6.3.6.0: City of Gainesville Annexation Areas

Through the joint planning process of the City and County in this plan, the land uses in most areas of future annexation by the City have been agreed to by both jurisdictions. Over the years, voluntary annexation of land into the City of Gainesville has created small pockets of County land that are surrounded by or significantly influenced by lands within the City limits. While this situation can happen along any boundary, City and unincorporated areas are particularly intermingled along the southern and western edges of Gainesville. Because of the potential for infill and redevelopment, and fine grain of uses in many of these areas, well conceived projects may be proposed for annexation that are not in specific conformance with the land use designation for that area. In order to protect the interests of area residents and landowners, while allowing for some flexibility in such situations, specific policies are offered to help manage such requests.

#### Annexation Policies:

1. Where an annexation request is made in clear non-conformance with the County land use designation for the property, the City and County staffs will work together to try and develop a program to make the proposal compatible with City and County development goals prior to formal submittal of the application for County Land Use review.
2. When the area proposed to be annexed is surrounded by City land and no impact on County territory is identified, it is the intent of the County to defer to the City on land use impact related issues, excluding instances subject to extraordinary circumstances that dictate otherwise.

In addition to the Future Land Use Plan for the City, there are additional planning elements with goals and policies that will influence the future of the City. The elements are summarized in the following sections of this document and additional information can be found in the complete plan element as part of the Gainesville Hall County Comprehensive Plan.

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### **6.3.7.0: PROGRAMS**

Hall County and the City of Gainesville are committed to undertaking a variety of programs to implement the land use goals and objectives discussed above. These programs break down into four major categories. For the most part, the city and county will be the lead implementation agencies.

1. Regulatory/Growth Management: The city and county have begun to revise their development codes (zoning, subdivision, etc.) to conform to the comprehensive plan. Additionally, they are examining appropriate amendments to zoning maps to implement the future land use map. The time frame for this effort will be 2-4 years.
2. Fiscal/Financial: Both jurisdictions will examine a range of tools to deal with the cost of growth, including impact fees (which the county already has) and fiscal impact assessment requirements for new development. The time horizon for this effort is 2-3 years.
3. Capital Investment: The city and the county have already initiated a program to provide water and sewer services to areas targeted for development in the plan. This is a multi-million dollar effort that will help bring a better balance to the property tax base in the county. Additionally, the county and city will refrain from making capital investments in rural areas that are not slated for urban/suburban intensity growth. It is estimated that the initial water/sewer construction projects will take 2-4 years.
4. Interagency Cooperation: The city and county have begun exploring a joint, coordinated annexation policy that reflects the comprehensive plan policies. This effort will take 2-3 years.

While many of these programs will be implemented over an extended period, there are short-term actions that can be taken to ensure that the efforts are begun and demonstrate progress. A short-term work program is set forth in the final section of this element.

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### **6.3.8.0: IMPLEMENTATION SYSTEMS AND TOOLS**

This section sets forth specific systems and tools that will be created or amended during the planning period to achieve the goals and objectives set forth above. These tools fall into four broad categories: (1) administrative systems (e.g., site plan review); (2) land development regulations; (3) fiscal and financing tools; (4) other growth management tools (e.g., urban growth boundaries, concurrency requirements, intergovernmental cooperation). The tools are keyed to the four overarching plan land use goals.

#### **6.3.8.1: Development Quality**

##### THE CITY OF GAINESVILLE WILL:

1. In cooperation with Hall County, prepare a comprehensive local preservation plan, including a comprehensive resource survey, to build on historic preservation efforts currently underway. The plan should present a vision and goals for the local program and recommend tools such as a local tax credits (we already have a local HP ordinance) to address threats to historic resources.
2. Conduct educational programs for citizens and in schools about the historic and cultural resources in the city and county. The city will also encourage the use of federal and state tax incentives for historic preservation.
3. Continue to take steps to achieve Certified Local Government (CLG) designation.
4. Revisit the city zoning ordinance to conform with the new comprehensive plan and consider adoption of residential and commercial design standards, as well as updates to landscaping and similar development quality regulations. O.K. Continue to enforce existing quality standards such as those relating to tree protection.
5. Take steps to implement the recommendations of the Midtown Redevelopment Plan, including increased code enforcement.
6. Implement "neighborhood planning units" and neighborhood-based plans to strengthen and improve neighborhoods throughout the city.
7. Finalize draft parks master plan and begin implementation.

##### HALL COUNTY WILL:

1. Revise its Unified Development Code (UDC) to include residential, commercial, and industrial design and site planning standards that will significantly upgrade the overall quality of development in terms of appearance, provision of open space, lighting, traffic management, and compatibility with surrounding development. Existing provisions regarding tree protection, landscaping/screening, and signage will be significantly revised to adopt more modern approaches that will improve development quality and ensure that new development is compatible with existing neighborhoods. This project is currently underway and scheduled to be completed in 2004.
2. Protect natural resources throughout the county by encouraging more compact development in and around the county's established municipalities and reducing the allowable residential densities in rural areas. New zoning and subdivisions provisions will be drafted as part of the UDC project to require a minimum amount of open space and encourage conservation subdivisions in rural areas that will allow smaller lots in return for preservation of additional open space. Historic resources will be targeted for protection through the conservation subdivision process.

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3. Explore the development of a septic system maintenance and enforcement program to ensure that septic systems are functioning properly and do not have an adverse impact on water quality.
4. Revise existing Planned Development District standards to require higher levels of development quality, community amenities, and environmental protection as a trade-off for flexibility with uses and density.
5. Draft new temporary use standards to ensure that temporary uses such as parking lot sales and carnivals are conducted in a safe and compatible manner.
6. During Phase 2 of the UDC update project, consider revisions to its regulations relating to hillside development, watershed protection, and similar environmental issues.
7. In cooperation with the City of Gainesville, assist in the preparation of a comprehensive local preservation plan to build on historic preservation efforts currently underway. (Don't want to over commit at this point on a lower priority issue.)
8. Evaluate the benefits of seeking designation as a Certified Local Government (CLG) designation for historic preservation purposes. Designation requires adoption of a local preservation ordinance and appointment of a preservation commission, among other steps.
9. Continue working on parks master plan to enhance quality of life in county.

#### **6.3.8.2: Efficient Growth**

TO ENCOURAGE EFFICIENT GROWTH, THE CITY OF GAINESVILLE WILL:

1. Through zoning code and map revisions, increase development densities in selected locations where adequate public facilities are available or planned.
2. Extend public infrastructure and services only into those areas designated for urban/suburban level growth in the comprehensive plan.
3. Develop a coordinated annexation policy with Hall County that encourages denser development to take place within municipal boundaries.
4. In coordination with the City School Board, develop a plan to address impacts of annexations on school resources in order to balance out the City's desire to expand along with the School Board's ability to provide education through the 'No Child Left Behind' mandate.
5. Implement the storm water model ordinances as dictated by the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District.

TO ENCOURAGE EFFICIENT GROWTH, HALL COUNTY WILL:

1. Through zoning code and map revisions, target new development in areas with adequate public services and infrastructure by increasing permissible development densities/uses in such areas while reducing allowable densities in rural areas/districts that cannot be efficiently served.
2. Focus new development around Gainesville and other municipalities by rezoning land in these areas and creating new zone districts that allow a variety of compatible denser developments in appropriate areas.
3. Develop a coordinated annexation policy with the City of Gainesville that encourages denser development to take place within municipal boundaries.

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4. Create new commercial and industrial zone districts that accommodate modern commercial and industrial uses in locations with good access and adequate public infrastructure.
5. Extend water, sewer, and other public infrastructure to areas designated in the plan for more intensive commercial, industrial, and residential development.
6. Adopt new mixed-use and revised planned development districts to encourage and expedite more efficient mixed-use projects.

#### **6.3.8.3: Fiscally Sound Growth**

TO ENCOURAGE FISCALLY SOUND GROWTH, GAINESVILLE WILL:

1. Continue to take steps to implement the Midtown Redevelopment Plan that will encourage new infill commercial and industrial development.
2. Explore the adoption of impact fees for key public facilities and services.
3. Provide adequate land and infrastructure for commercial/industrial development to achieve a better balance with residential development in the community.
4. Work closely with the Greater Hall County Chamber of Commerce to improve regional marketing efforts and improve site selection database for potential businesses.

TO ENCOURAGE FISCALLY SOUND GROWTH, HALL COUNTY WILL:

1. Undertake rezoning to create a better balance between residential and non-residential development in the county. This will generally entail reducing residential densities and the total acreage available for residential development and increasing available land for commercial/industrial areas as depicted in the future land use map.
2. In the UDC update, include fiscal impact assessment requirements for major new developments to enable the county to more accurately determine the costs and benefits associated with such developments.
3. Explore adequate public facility regulations to ensure that public infrastructure and is available concurrently with new development.
4. Review existing impact fee requirements and consider expanding to cover other facilities and services.
5. Work closely with the Greater Hall County Chamber of Commerce to improve regional marketing efforts and improve site selection database for potential businesses.

#### **6.3.8.4: Maintain Urban/Rural Distinction**

GAINESVILLE WILL:

1. Review its zoning and other development regulations to determine if there are any unnecessary impediments to appropriate and desirable urban-density development within the city.
2. Adopt new zone districts (e.g., commercial, industrial) that will accommodate and encourage new development in appropriate locations.
3. Develop a coordinated parks and open space plan with Hall County and undertake targeted land acquisition to maintain open space and buffers between rural and urban areas.
4. Consider infill design and development standards that ensure that new infill/redevelopment in the city is compatible with existing development.

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HALL COUNTY WILL:

1. Target new development, redevelopment, and infill to areas with existing infrastructure, existing cities, and designated activity centers. Study appropriate rezonings in accordance with future land use map to implement this goal.
2. Adopt new zone districts (e.g., commercial, industrial) that will accommodate and encourage new development in appropriate locations.
- 3.
4. Explore adequate public facility regulations to ensure that public infrastructure and is available concurrently with new development.
- 5.
6. Revise tree protection and screening requirements to help maintain rural character and buffer views of new development from public roads.
7. Adopt a coordinated annexation policy in cooperation with Gainesville. Explore such policies with other county municipalities.
8. Develop a coordinated parks and open space plan with the City of Gainesville and undertake targeted land acquisition to maintain open space and buffers between rural and urban areas.

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### 6.3.9.0: SHORT-TERM WORK PROGRAM

**Table 17: Gainesville Major Implementation Actions**

| Major Actions   | Time Frame | Estimated Cost | Responsible Party   | Comments   |
|---|------------|----------------|---|--|
| 1. Draft county/city preservation plan with implementation tools and seek CLG status*   | 2005       | \$50,000       | City staff with county assistance                         | Since the City is further along in its process (i.e. ordinance has been passed and Commission formed, it needs to be separated |
| 2. Undertake targeted revisions to city zoning ordinance to implement comprehensive plan; revise standards to encourage infill and reduce unnecessary processing delays | 2004-5     | \$35,000       | City staff +consultant                                    |  |
| 3. Implement Midtown and Downtown Plans. Step up code enforcement in Midtown  | 2004-5     |                | City staff  |  |
| 4. Begin work on neighborhood plans to include designation of boundaries and guidelines   | 2004-5     | NA             | City staff  |  |
| 5. Finish city parks plan.  | 2004-5     | NA             | City staff  |  |
| 6. Extend water/sewer to targeted development locations. *  | 2004-5     | \$15 million   | County and city   | Seek financial assistance from Ga. Environmental Facilities Authority  |
| 7. Review additional development impact fees in county; consider fees in city*  | 2004-5     | NA             | County and city staffs                                    |  |
| 8. Improve regional marketing.*   | 2004+      |                | Greater Hall Chamber with assistance from city and county |  |
| 9. Adopt coordinated intergovernmental annexation policy and agreement.*  | 2004-5     | NA             | County and city staffs                                    |  |

\* Indicates joint action listed in both the city and county tables.

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**Table 18: Hall County Major Implementation Actions**

| Major Actions   | Time Frame | Estimated Cost | Responsible Party   | Comments  |
|---|------------|----------------|---|---|
| 1. Comprehensively revise county UDC—quality regulations, environmental standards, fiscal impact assessment, etc. | 2003-4     | \$150,000      | County staff + consultants                                | 80% completed as of 1/1/04  |
| 2.  |            |                |   |   |
| 3. Study revisions to county zoning maps to bring into accord with comprehensive plan                             | 2004-5     | NA             | County staff  |   |
| 4. Continue work on county parks plan.  | 2004-5     | NA             | County staffs   |   |
| 5. Extend water/sewer to targeted development locations. *  | 2004-5     | \$15 million   | County and city   | Seek financial assistance from Ga. Environmental Facilities Authority |
| 6. Review additional development impact fees in county; consider fees in city*                                    | 2004-5     | NA             | County and city staffs                                    |   |
| 7. Improve regional marketing.*   | 2004+      |                | Greater Hall Chamber with assistance from city and county |   |
| 8. Adopt coordinated intergovernmental annexation policy and agreement.*  | 2004-5     | NA             | County and city staffs                                    |   |

\* Indicates joint action listed in both the city and county tables.