

# 2018 Joint Comprehensive Plan

## Habersham County



October, 2018

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# INTRODUCTION

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## PURPOSE

The purpose of planning and community development is to provide guidance for everyday decision-making by local government officials and other community leaders. This document, the *2018 Joint Comprehensive Plan for Habersham County*, represents the culmination of the efforts to plan for the future well-being for the County and the municipalities of Clarkesville, Alto, Baldwin, Cornelia, Demorest, and Mt. Airy. The residents and various stakeholders worked to identify the critical, consensus issues and goals for their communities, and implementing the plan will help the governments address those critical issues and opportunities while moving towards realization of the unique vision for its future.

As outlined by Georgia's planning standards:

*Statewide benefits of comprehensive planning*

*City and county comprehensive planning should be conducted in the context of Georgia's strong and vibrant intergovernmental system that clearly recognizes the important role cities and counties play in fostering the state's image as an attractive place to invest, conduct businesses and raise a family. City and county comprehensive planning enhances coordination at many levels.*

*Local benefits of comprehensive planning*

*The highest and best use of comprehensive planning for local governments is to show important relationships between community issues. A local comprehensive plan is a fact-based resource for local constituents that tracks implementation of community-based policies. Furthermore, local comprehensive planning creates an environment of predictability for business and industry, investors, property owners, tax payers and the general public. In addition, the plan helps local governments to recognize and then implement important economic development and revitalization initiatives. For these reasons, the state finds that well-planned communities are better prepared to attract new growth in a highly competitive global market.*

*In short, local planning should recognize that:*

*Assets can be **accentuated** and **improved**;*

*Liabilities can be **mitigated** and **changed** over time; and*

*Potential can be **sought after** and **developed**.*

With this Joint Comprehensive Plan, the County and its municipalities have updated the definitions for their goals and visions, laying out their plan for seeking economic expansion and managing development in a fashion that builds upon the existing assets and character traits that define each community. The Joint Comprehensive Plan can guide ambitions and coordinate efforts to improve the county, for all residents and stakeholders combined.

## SCOPE

This document addresses the local planning requirements and community development of Habersham County, Ga, and the municipalities of Clarkesville, Alto, Baldwin, Cornelia, Demorest, and Mt. Airy. Some consideration has been given to those areas and political entities outside the county that influence conditions within Habersham but all the cited issues, objectives and opportunities discussed herein are solely focused on the County or the various municipalities cited here.

## PLAN ELEMENTS

This comprehensive plan serves to meet the requirements and intent of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs's "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," as amended in 2013, and the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. It is essential the plan be prepared in compliance with these rules in order for Habersham County and the municipalities of Alto, Baldwin, Clarkesville, Demorest, and Mount Airy to maintain their Qualified Local Government (QLG) status. Further, State law requires that every local government update its comprehensive plan every 5 years.

*"The purpose of Minimum Standards is to provide a framework for the development, management and implementation of local comprehensive plans at the local, regional and state government level. They reflect an important state interest: healthy and economically vibrant cities and counties are vital to the state's economic prosperity."*

***(1) Community Goals.** The purpose of the Community Goals element is to lay out a road map for the community's future, developed through a very public process of involving community leaders and stakeholders in making key decisions about the future of the community. The Community Goals are the most important part of the plan, for they identify the community's direction for the future, and are intended to generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of the community, thereby leading citizens and leadership to act to ensure that the plan is implemented.*

*The Community Goals must include at least one or a combination of any of the four components listed below:*

***(a) General Vision Statement.** Include a general statement that paints a picture of what the community desires to become, providing a complete description of the development patterns to be encouraged within the jurisdiction.*

***(b) List of Community Goals.** Include a listing of the goals the community seeks to achieve. Review the suggested community goals in the Supplemental Planning Recommendations for suggestions.*

***(c) Community Policies.** Include any policies the local government selects to provide ongoing guidance and direction to local government officials for making decisions consistent with achieving the Community Goals.*

***(d) Character Areas and Defining Narrative.** This option lays out more specific goals for the future of the community by community sub-areas, districts, or neighborhoods, and may be prepared using the guidance provided for the Land Use Element.*

**(2) Needs and Opportunities.** *This is the locally agreed upon list of Needs and Opportunities the community intends to address. Each of the needs or opportunities that the community identifies as high priority must be followed-up with corresponding implementation measures in the Community Work Program. The list must be developed by involving community stakeholders in carrying out a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) or similar analysis of the community.*

**(3) Community Work Program.** *This element of the comprehensive plan lays out the specific activities the community plans to undertake during the next five years to address the priority Needs and Opportunities, identified Target Areas (if applicable), or to achieve portions of the Community Goals. This includes any activities, initiatives, programs, ordinances, administrative systems (such as site plan review, design review, etc.) to be put in place to implement the plan. The Community Work Program must include the following information for each listed activity:*

- *Brief description of the activity;*
- *Legal authorization for the activity, if applicable;*
- *Timeframe for initiating and completing the activity;*
- *Responsible party for implementing the activity;*
- *Estimated cost (if any) of implementing the activity; and*
- *Funding source(s), if applicable.*

In addition to the required core elements local comprehensive plans in Georgia must also include 1) an assessment of compliance and consideration for the appropriate regional water plans for each community, and 2) an assessment of their broadband capacity. As of July, 2018 the standards for the broadband element have not been established by the State of Georgia. The intention of the measure, however, is to facilitate the “*promotion of the deployment of broadband internet services*” throughout each community in recognition of how vital this technology is for economic development. In an effort to provide advance compliance with this standard the County will provide a brief analysis of their needs and objectives regarding broadband technology.

***Consideration of the Regional Water Plan and the Environmental Planning Criteria.*** *During the process of preparing its comprehensive plan, each community must review the Regional Water Plan(s) covering its area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria... to determine if there is need to adapt local implementation practices or development regulations to address protection of these important natural resources. The community must certify that it has considered both the Regional Water Plan and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria when it transmits the plan to the Regional Commission for review.*

As communities that have adopted a form of development regulations, Habersham County and its municipalities must also include the necessary land use element within their plan to aid in the coordination of their development policies and capital improvement projects.

***Land Use Element.*** *The Land Use Element, where required, must include at least one of the two components listed below:*

- (a) Character Areas Map and Defining Narrative. Identify and map the boundaries of existing or potential character areas (see definition in Chapter 110-12-1-.05) covering the entire community, including existing community sub-areas, districts, or neighborhoods.*

(b) *Future Land Use Map and Narrative.* Prepare a Future Land Use Map that uses conventional categories or classifications to depict the location (typically parcel by parcel) of specific future land uses. If this option is chosen, prepare the Future Land Use Map using either of the land use classification schemes described below and include a narrative that explains how to interpret the map and each land use category.

**PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

As a part of the planning process each local government must provide and implement opportunities to encourage public participation. The purpose of this is to insure that citizens and other stakeholders are aware of the planning process, are provided opportunities to comment on the local plan elements, and have adequate access to the process of defining the community’s vision, priorities, goals, policies, and implementation strategies.

At a minimum, the public participation program must provide for: adequate notice to keep the general public informed of the emerging plan; opportunities for the public to provide written comments on the plan; hold the required public hearings; and, provide notice to property owners through advertisements in the newspaper (legal organ) of the planning effort soliciting participation and comments. In addition, the local government must provide opportunities for public participation through other means and methods to help articulate a community vision and develop associated goals and implementation program.



The planning process for the Habersham County Joint Comprehensive Plan began in the spring of 2017 as community leaders considered the scope of work and identified nominees for the Stakeholder Advisory Committee. As the various governments committed to the process, the Committee members were finalized and a general timeline and approach for public input was devised. Between October of 2017 and June of 2018 the Committee would meet 5 times to discuss various elements of the plan, identifying key issues and priorities, ratifying general goals and vision statements, and offering input on development strategies. The Committee would ultimately assist in the review of, and provide feedback on, the draft document as it was also under review by local government staff and officials.

<b>Habersham County Joint Stakeholder Advisory Committee</b>	
Mike Beecham	Habersham County Planning Director
Andrea Harper	Habersham County Commissioner
Tammy Carter	Habersham County Planner
Audrey Turner	Town of Alto Mayor
PJ Huggins	Town of Alto Council
Stephanie Almagno	City of Demorest Downtown Development Authority Chair
Kristi Shead	City of Demorest City Manager
Tim Lee	Habersham Partnership for Growth
Barrie Aycock	City of Clarkesville Mayor
Barbara Kesler	City of Clarkesville City Manager
Tim Jarrell	Town of Mt. Airy City Manager

Additional public hearings were also held outside of normal committee meetings. They were held in various locations across the county to increase options for citizen involvement, with participants supplementing Committee discussions on plan elements such as critical needs and assessing the strengths and weaknesses of each community. Public hearing opportunities were also made available through general County Commission and City Council meetings, where elected officials would permit suggestions and questions about their respective communities' future. *(Copies of sign-in sheets and other evidence of public involvement are included in the Appendix.)*

A vital part of the public input process was the online survey made available via government web sites and promoted across the media and online platforms. This survey was drafted by the Advisory Committee and made available from January through April, ultimately yielding more than 400 unique participants. The survey featured over 20 questions asking residents opinions about such topics as their prospects for growth, primary needs in the areas of economic development and housing, and their overall satisfaction with various public services and facilities. This input provided insight into the perceptions and desires of many residents, and gave the Advisory Committee valuable material as they shaped the Plan in an effort to satisfy citizen interests. *(The summary of public survey results is included in the Appendix.)*

The screenshot shows the Habersham County website at the URL <https://www.habershamga.com/habersham-county-comprehensive-plan.cfm>. The page header includes the county logo, a 200-year bicentennial seal, and navigation links for HOME and CONTACT US. A search bar is present below the header. The main navigation menu includes SERVICES, ONLINE SERVICES, DEPARTMENTS, COURT SYSTEM, LIVING & VISITING, and BUSINESS. The main content area is titled "Celebrating our Past while Planning for the Future" and features a section for the "Habersham County Joint Comprehensive Plan". This section includes text about the county's 200th anniversary and a link to a survey. A sidebar menu titled "PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT" lists various topics: Permitting Guide, Building, Business Licensing, Code Enforcement, GIS Mapping, Planning, and Habersham County Comprehensive Plan.

Lastly, the City of Demorest was also engaged in a special visioning exercise sponsored by the Habersham EMC. This 2-day concentrated effort allowed that city to explore detailed issues and identify prevailing themes as the City and Piedmont College, which lies within Demorest, chart a course for a mutually beneficial development strategy. *(A summary sheet of findings from this process is included in the Appendix.)*

# COMMUNITY VISION

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## *Identification of Community Ideals in a Simply Expressed and Understood Statement*

The Minimum Standards and Requirements for Local Comprehensive Planning defines a community vision as something “... *intended to paint a picture of what the community desires to become, providing a complete description of the development patterns to be encouraged within the jurisdiction.*” It is required as an element of the comprehensive plan so that communities can truly establish a pure and simple ideal for themselves in a format that is easily expressed and understood.

Visioning provides communities with an opportunity to pause and consider the “big picture” as well as to attempt to clearly define their ideal future. Developing a vision means that community has at least tried to identify current values, describe how they’re to be realized in the future and use that image as a foundation for short and long-term planning. As a process this also requires the community to develop a consensus on what conditions to change or to preserve.

## COMMUNITY PROFILES

Habersham County, Ga., is located in the northeastern Georgia Mountains, in the foothills of the Appalachians as the piedmont gives way to more rugged terrain. It is a community with serene beauty and rolling, picturesque landscapes. It is populated by several small cities and towns and serves as part of the gateway for tourists traveling to and from the Appalachians. At just over 40,000 residents it’s among Georgia’s small-to-mid sized counties and many residents still favor the communities for their small-town nature.

Habersham County is also part of the transitional buffer between the encroachment of metropolitan Atlanta and the distinct rural character of the agrarian north Georgia countryside. Industry lines the major roads just south and the population in neighboring Hall County is expected to double to more than 300,000 people by 2040. Coupled with the volumes of commercial and tourist traffic traveling through, it’s understood that Habersham County is poised for dynamic change within the next 20-40 years.

### Total Population Estimates

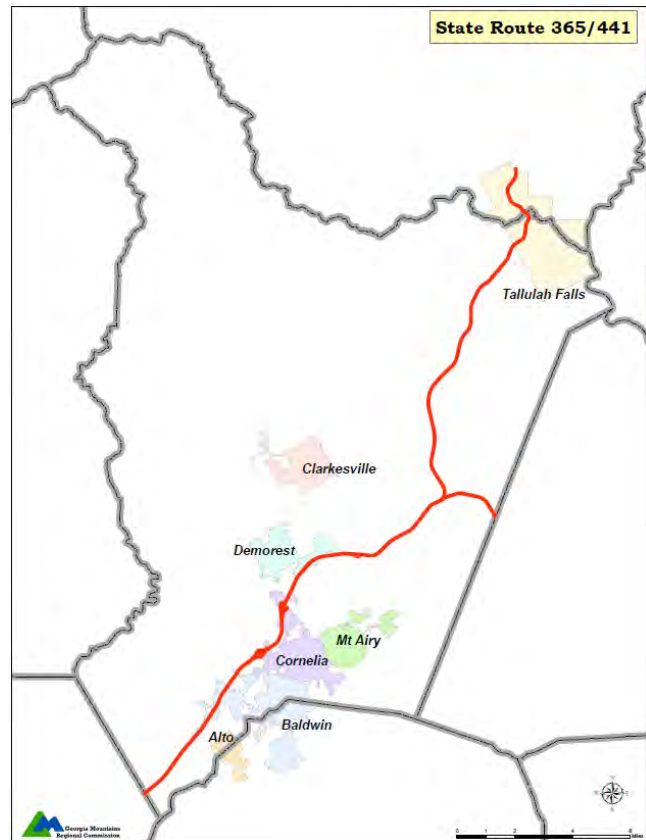
	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016		2010 - 2016
<b>Habersham County</b>	<b>43,081</b>	<b>43,096</b>	<b>43,478</b>	<b>43,283</b>	<b>43,688</b>	<b>43,926</b>	<b>44,246</b>		<b>1,165</b> <b>2.7%</b>
Alto (pt.)	656	655	654	655	657	657	660		4   0.6%
Baldwin (pt.)	2,539	2,539	2,543	2,534	2,548	2,536	2,564		25   1.0%
Clarksville	1,731	1,728	1,725	1,741	1,749	1,743	1,770		39   2.3%
Cornelia	4,178	4,180	4,171	4,183	4,205	4,216	4,267		89   2.1%
Demorest	1,872	1,889	1,953	2,000	2,044	2,050	2,061		189   10.1%
Mount Airy	1,287	1,286	1,282	1,283	1,288	1,290	1,300		13   1.0%
Tallulah Falls (pt.)	97	97	97	98	99	99	100		3   3.1%
Balance of Habersham	30,721	30,722	31,053	30,789	31,098	31,335	31,524		803   2.6%

Source: US Bureau of the Census



Habersham County is oriented along a longer north/south axis amidst the foothills of the Appalachian Mountains. A cluster of municipalities is found running from centrally-located Clarkesville (the County seat) southward along historical trading paths and rail routes. This includes the Municipalities of Cornelia, Demorest, Mt. Airy, Alto and Baldwin. The only incorporated area in the northern half of the county is Tallulah Falls, evidence of the terrain's impact on community development as the towns grow more remote and/or smaller as you travel deeper into the mountains.

The grouping of cities and towns in the south is also the result of roads and rails. Clarkesville, Cornelia and Baldwin represent the historic manufacturing centers of the County, roles which were defined by the routes that are now identified as Ga Hwy 365 and US 441. These arterial roads provide the critical access southward to Atlanta, the Interstate system, and the larger commercial and medical centers available in Gainesville and Athens.



### *Clarkesville*

Clarkesville was incorporated as a village and made the Habersham County seat November 26, 1823. The city was named in honor of Governor John C. Clarke, the son of the revolutionary hero and governor of Georgia, Elijah Clarke. The configuration of downtown Clarkesville differs from the traditional town square, with the main road bisecting town and then two rows of parking on either side of that before reaching the sidewalk and buildings.



In March of 2014 a major fire destroyed a quarter of the historic downtown Clarkesville square. Immediate actions were taken to reactivate the Downtown Development Authority. Opportunity zones were designated to assist with the economic redevelopment of the historically thriving downtown. The Carl Vinson Institute of Government in partnership with the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and the Georgia Municipal Association assisted with the development of a short-term and long-term Master Plan for the redevelopment of the historic square and the future development of the surrounding City. Approximately 50% of the City population participated in focus groups and responded to surveys

during the development of the Master Plan. In April of 2017 the City of Clarkesville completed the historic restoration of the burned buildings in the square. Other projects in the Master Plan were also completed such as extension of the streetscape, improved signage, and new events were added by the Main Street Board. The Clarkesville Council, Main Street Board, and DDA work together to maintain the viability and historic character of the City.

The city square is surrounded by mostly residential development to the northeast and southeast, with rural forms to the west across the Soque River and some industrial activity to the southwest. Some of the neighborhoods exhibit traditional urban forms and contain some historic homes.

### *Alto*



The Town of Alto is a smaller community compared to other Habersham municipalities but the Town has established industry as well as the Lee Arrendale Correctional facility as unique economic drivers. The location is ideally set alongside the growing GA 365 corridor, with rail access and just south of the airport and industrial park making it easily accommodating for shipping industrial products or goods. Alto has the feel of a bedroom community but with the assets to grow dramatically. There are a few commercial businesses in town, but the main street remains very rural at the present time.

The Mayor and Council desire to establish a designated downtown area but not to totally remove the rural element of the community. The Town does exhibit a high volume of older homes and some areas of elderly that live on fixed incomes are living on limited budgets with little options for maintenance or repairs. There have been some efforts to support renovation of some units and purchasing and demolishing others as Alto looks to rejuvenate and enhance their housing options. They are looking into more options to help revitalize the Town and is also looking to work with all of Habersham County as stakeholders to aspire to bring more jobs into the communities as a whole.

### *Baldwin*

Baldwin is the operational sibling city to Cornelia, as the two utilized their location alongside GA 365 and US 441 to become the major industrial hubs for Habersham County. The city has made strides in keeping the older downtown alive while also absorbing the emerging commercial corridor of US 441. As the home of the local airport and industrial park Baldwin has grown in size and economics, and now the City is working to find the next evolution that will better marry all these different elements into a single, cohesive community.



Baldwin developed their last plan update independent of the County a mere three years ago but has opted to participate with the County and other municipalities as part of efforts to improve coordination and growth strategies. Elements from their plan have been folded and updated into this document as able.

### *Cornelia*



Once a small railroad town along the short line track that served the region, Cornelia evolved into a modest hub of commercial and goods production within Habersham County. Cornelia today is a Main Street community with a proactive spirit that's always working to strengthen their economy and community spirit. The City has leveraged its location at the juncture of key transportation corridors to foster business and population growth, as well as investing in several historic sites and facilities that help define Cornelia's character.

In 2017 Cornelia opted to pursue the development of an independent comprehensive plan while amending their ordinances. Habersham County and the other municipalities will work with Cornelia in coordinating the implementation of both plans to ensure minimal conflicts and for mutual benefits where possible.

### *Demorest*



Demorest's history is defined by its location between Clarkesville and Cornelia and the founding of its preeminent institution, Piedmont College. The City is a crossroads community that evolved into a city of its own, with a humble main street along the arterial roadway and neighborhoods filling in around the school and other businesses. Today Demorest is an equal contributor to the burgeoning small-urban revitalization of central Habersham County, coordinating with the other cities in bringing more arts and cultural events to the area, as well as fostering economic growth.

Demorest is not the largest city in the county nor does it have significant industrial activity, but in addition to the college the City does have the most extensive water and sewer service within Habersham and it has used this to grow itself and other parts of the county. The City has recently taken steps to help restore historic properties and devise more plans for downtown in an effort to bring more commerce into the city's core and strengthen their unique urban form.

### *Mt. Airy*

Mount Airy was established in 1874 when a station on the Richmond and Danville railroad was built at the highest elevation between New Orleans and New York. The community was named for its elevation of 1,545 feet, and was once known as a resort town with summer homes, tourist cottages, and hotels built during the late 1800's and early 1900's. Due to the decrease in train travel and the burning of the

Monterey Hotel, tourism began to decline in the 1920's. As Cornelia and other places harbored more industrial growth, Mt. Airy settled into the more agrarian and bedroom community established today.

This rustic form has allowed the Town to serve a special role within Habersham County, by providing a community that fits in between the truly sparse rural forms of the unincorporated county and the bigger cities nearby. There are some commercial operations in Mt. Airy but most employers are local in scale as the town's proximity to Cornelia and Clarkesville limits the demand or capacity for anything larger or industrial. As a result Mt. Airy today exhibits a quintessential small-town charm.



### *Tallulah Falls*



Tallulah Falls is a small town located on the shore of the reservoir formed at the gorge from which the town got its name. Abutting the State park and nestled within the National Forest, this little community is striving to forge an identity that reaches beyond the gorge. The Town is seeking to capitalize on the Park's popularity with ambitions of providing ancillary attractions for visitors. The Town is also working with other regional stakeholders on regional tourist initiatives, and has seen some additional attention as the local boarding school has become more popular.

Since Georgia has enacted planning rules and standards Tallulah Falls has opted to pursue the comprehensive planning with Rabun County and its cities, as part of that city lies within Rabun. Habersham County and the other municipalities will work with Tallulah Falls in coordinating the implementation of both plans to ensure minimal conflicts and for mutual benefits where possible.

## **QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES ASSESSMENT**

*“Every Georgia community offers a quality of life where people and businesses can grow and prosper.”*

Vision Statement, Georgia Department of Community Affairs

To encourage comparable levels of sound community planning, and in the absence of a defined State plan, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) includes among the Minimum Standards a guide for analyzing each community's consistency with 10 Quality Community Objectives (QCO's) adapted from various community development principles to fit idealized qualities of Georgia's communities.

### **1. Economic Prosperity**

Encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community. Factors to consider when determining suitability include job skills required; long-term sustainability; linkages to other economic activities in the region; impact on the resources of the area; or prospects for creating job opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse local workforce.

*While committed to retaining the county's general rural character, the County and municipalities, together with their partners, are equally committed to securing the economic viability of the region going forward. Economic prosperity enables individuals, households and communities to be stronger with a favorable and desired quality of life. The governments support the efforts of The Habersham Partnership for Growth, Economic Development Council, the local Chamber of Commerce and the Habersham County Development Authority as part of ongoing efforts to foster economic development for the community and downtown city initiatives. The governments also maintain contact with the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission and the State for pursuit of assistance and outside funding opportunities in support of economic development opportunities.*

### **2. Resource Management**

Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. This may be achieved by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; encouraging green building construction and renovation; utilizing appropriate waste management techniques; fostering water conservation and reuse; or setting environmentally sensitive areas aside as green space or conservation reserves.

*The County and municipalities recognize the value of their location as part of the tourist-friendly Georgia mountains and the impact of their Appalachian heritage. The governments maintain contact with the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission and the Department of Natural Resources to work for the protection and promotion of natural and cultural resources in the area. The governments also employ policies and practices related to State Vital Areas, National Wetland Inventory (FIRM) data and other applicable sources to monitor and enforce the preservation of environmentally sensitive areas.*

### **3. Efficient Land Use**

Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the traditional core of the community; designing new development to minimize the amount of land consumed; carefully planning expansion of public infrastructure; or maintaining open space in agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.

*Through this planning process, ongoing efforts to update area mapping, and regular communication with each other, the County and municipalities work to ensure local development policies support sustainable development that enables economic growth while managing local resources, utilities and infrastructure.*

### **4. Local Preparedness**

Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.

*Through this planning process and ongoing coordination among emergency responders, and through regular communication with other stakeholders (such as the regional hospital), the municipalities and Habersham County work together to ensure the community is properly poised to prevent, manage and respond to growth pressures and natural and man-made hazards.*

## **5. Sense of Place**

Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

*The County and municipalities recognize the value of their location as part of the tourist-friendly Georgia mountains and the impact of their Appalachian heritage. The governments maintain contact with the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission, the Soque River Watershed Association, the Department of Natural Resources, and other partner organizations to work for the protection and promotion of natural and cultural resources in the area. They are also vested in celebrating their rural character and working to ensure development complements the pastoral and agrarian forms of the county and small-town appeal of the local cities and towns.*

*The cities of Clarkesville, Baldwin, and Demorest have or are pursuing some form of urban redevelopment plan. These plans will have an emphasis on creating more of a downtown sense of place, as these areas will significantly change in coming years as commercial development sprawls northward.*

## **6. Regional Cooperation**

Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. This may be achieved by actively participating in regional organizations; identifying joint projects that will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer; or developing collaborative solutions for regional issues such as protection of shared natural resources, development of the transportation network, or creation of a tourism plan.

*The County and municipalities actively coordinate with each other in maintaining their local Service Delivery Strategy and SPLOST program, and participate with the Georgia Mountains Regional Commission and other appropriate regional organizations. The governments also maintain regular contact with various State Departments to ensure knowledge of, and access to, their programs and resources. The municipalities and County are considered active partners in regional activities.*

## **7. Housing Options**

Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing in the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood; promoting programs to provide housing for residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds, including affordable mortgage finance options; instituting programs to address homelessness issues in the community; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community.

*Policies for Habersham County and the municipalities allow higher density housing to locate in accordance with utility capacity, but additional measures to accommodate newer forms of housing may be needed. The County and the municipalities all understand the need to raise the profile of the future housing stock, both to ensure the quality of life for area residents and also to*

*ensure the communities' sustainable appeal to businesses for economic growth. All local governments will review and amend their policies as needed to monitor the health of the existing supply, foster restoration/renovation where needed and possible, and encourage viable workforce housing among newer development.*

## **8. Transportation Options**

Address the transportation needs, challenges and opportunities of all community residents. This may be achieved by fostering alternatives to transportation by automobile, including walking, cycling, and transit; employing traffic calming measures throughout the community; requiring adequate connectivity between adjoining developments; or coordinating transportation and land use decision-making within the community.

*None of the local governments in Habersham County has an active, ongoing comprehensive transportation planning program. However, all local governments communicate their concerns and issues to the regional GDOT office and all communities do participate in the public involvement process for the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) as they are able. As the region grows additional transportation planning would be considered a benefit, if not a necessity. This will be reevaluated in 2019 once the Georgia Mountains Regional Transit Plan is completed and provides additional information about possible multi-jurisdictional programs.*

## **9. Educational Opportunities**

Make educational and training opportunities readily available to enable all community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, manage their finances, or pursue life ambitions. This can be achieved by expanding and improving local educational institutions or programs; providing access to other institutions in the region; instituting programs to improve local graduation rates; expanding vocational education programs; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure an adequately trained and skilled workforce.

*The County and municipalities work with the Habersham County School Board to ensure access for quality primary and secondary educational facilities and programs for area residents. The governments also work with other partners to ensure access to viable post-secondary resources such as Piedmont College, North Georgia Technical College, and other area educational institutions.*

## **10. Community Health**

Ensure that all community residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, have access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities. This may be achieved by providing services to support the basic needs of disadvantaged residents, including the disabled; instituting programs to improve public safety; promoting programs that foster better health and fitness; or otherwise providing all residents the opportunity to improve their circumstances in life and to fully participate in the community.

*The governments work with Habersham County Medical Center and the Habersham County Health Department to ensure access for quality health care facilities and programs for area residents. The governments also work with other partners to monitor residents' needs and requests in providing access to these services as the area grows.*

## PUBLIC COMMENT AND COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

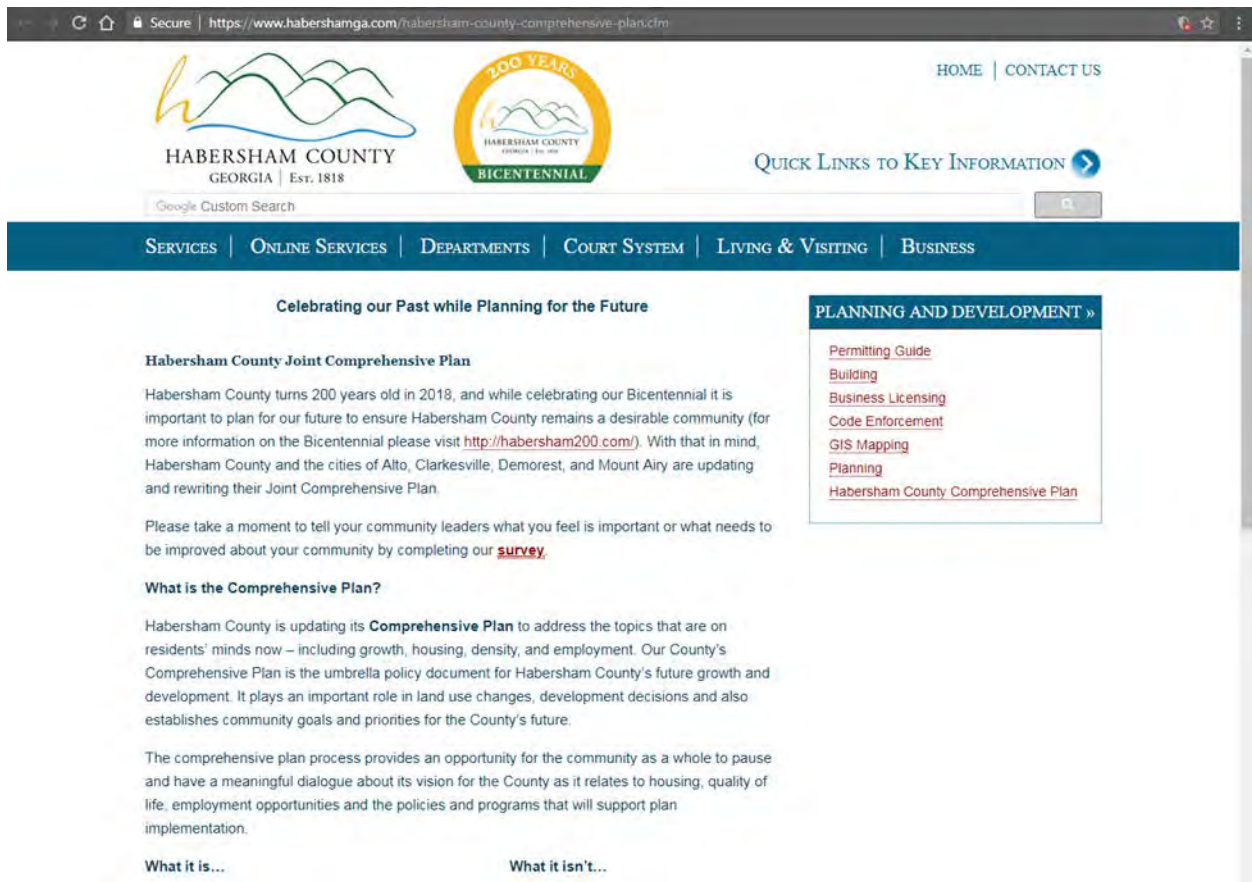
### Public Comment

The Habersham County online surveys yielded more than 420 unique responses, while the public meetings combined had more than 50 additional participants offering input. Combined, their comments and ideas provided insight into the prevailing interests and concerns of the general populace of Habersham County and the various municipalities. This information was collected and presented to the Advisory Committee, contributing to the basis for selecting Plan priorities and objectives.

The bulk of public comments received were in consensus with their preference for maintaining a rural lifestyle in the face of oncoming growth, and that while some change was desired, the form of that change and growth should be managed so as to elicit key job centers and commerce without disrupting the sense of community already in place. Several respondents expressed a fear of too much change such that the county and municipalities would be, as one put it, “lost amidst a sea of suburban boringness.” Economic expansion was desired, but not at the loss of their identities.

**“My community’s most important asset that should be preserved is...”**

<u>Count</u>	<u>Topic</u>
59	Small town (feel)
36	Nature/Natural
34	Rural
32	History/Historic
17	Agricultural/ Farm
14	Downtowns
11	Quality of Life
9	Clarksville





Coupled with this concern over growth was the prevailing notion that many Habersham communities had vacant, dilapidated, or underutilized land that could be used by new businesses and residents. Efforts should be directed at making these properties viable and active before concentrating too greatly on developing greenfields or sacrificing rural properties. This was especially true for housing where participants want to see established neighborhoods full and thriving, and see older and distressed properties revitalized. Absent attention while the county is growing many participants expressed concerns the existing dilapidated properties would be left to “die on the vine,” being abandoned for something new and different.

Additional areas of focus included quality of life amenities, such as parks, roads and entertainment options. Roads and parks both scored passing grades among survey participants but they also scored the lowest among public facilities and services in Habersham County. Much of the road issue was divided equally into traffic issues along the main roads in the southern half of the county and the condition of the local roads in aging cities and neighborhoods. The parks issue, meanwhile, could be paired with a lot of calls for additional entertainment options and retail in the area. Many residents expressed the lack of such amenities as one reason many kids don’t return to the area for work after graduating, implying that other places not only have more job opportunities but also a great variety of things to do under the “Play” element of the “Live, Work, and Play” mantra. There was no consensus as to the types of amenities, retail, or dining was needed but respondents implied such things should conform to other Plan objectives about staying rural.

**Broadband Assessment**

As communities move forward the importance of access to reliable and high-speed, high capacity internet connections cannot be overestimated. Unserved and underserved areas of Georgia will not remain economically competitive without sufficient internet infrastructure, as this technology becomes the default utility for all manners of communication.

To address this issue in 2018 the Georgia General Assembly amended the provisions of local planning in Georgia by passing the "Achieving Connectivity Everywhere (ACE) Act," intended to facilitate the enhancement and extension of high-speed internet access in communities that lack such infrastructure and the vast resources it provides. In time the State will support programs and initiatives aimed at delivering the community improvement and empowerment potential that reliable, high-speed internet access can provide to even the most difficult-to-serve citizens, schools, and businesses. As the first step in planning for this critical, potentially catalytic infrastructure, the "Ace" Act requires all local governments to incorporate the "promotion of the deployment of broadband internet services" into their local plan.

**Alto discusses Comprehensive Plan**

BY ERIC PEREIRA  
 Adam Hazell, planning director at Georgia Mountain Regional Commission, and Habersham County Community Planning and Development Director Mike Brechman met with Alto Mayor Audrey Turner on June 20 to discuss the 2018 Comprehensive Plan draft, addressing the town's needs and opportunities within the next five years.  
 "Just moving forward right now," Turner said on what she anticipates for the future of Alto. "We have just about accomplished everything we had on our previous plan so we're shifting modes now. Hopefully get more business in town now as soon as we get this going."  
 Hazell discussed how Alto's location could present the opportunity for growth.  
 "Alto is another smaller community. It's likely going to be predominately a bedroom community," Hazell said. "But they do have some opportunities for commercial and at least one property that might be good for industrial development in the future, with access to the rail line and not too far from (state Route) 365. And they also know that they can hopefully work out arrangements with Baldwin to bring access into the area if needed."  
 "Because if the town wanted to bring in a commercial enterprise, like a restaurant or something with a high turnover and customer base, they would need the sewer capacity in order to make that viable even for the main drag," Hazell said.  
 Hazell highlighted the main priority for the town of Alto.  
 "Their big focus is just going to be to continue to position themselves as new development comes in, hopefully some new subdivisions, it will raise the caliber of housing in the area," he said.  
 In regard to the residential areas, Turner told The Northeast Georgian the town doesn't "necessarily" have any housing that is available inside city limits.  
 Hazell discussed the current housing situation as well.  
 "They do have a number of older properties. They do also have a number of seniors and households that are on fixed incomes," Hazell said. "So they know that's one of the reasons why they have properties that have lapsed to their repair and maintenance. A lot of single older adults that have not been conditioned to take care of their properties. So they're trying to see what they can do to find other partnering agencies and groups that might help with giving people alternatives for fixing up their properties."  
 Hazell went on to say that focusing on repairs could "lead that as a means for bringing in new development that is more conducive to seniors."  
 Hazell did mention that Turner has plans of preserving the history of Alto with the help of its older and long-time residents.  
 "They don't have much in the way of archives or documentation that help celebrate their past," Hazell said. "She knows of a number of residents that she said just in speaking with them that they have stories to tell that they have a lot of great information that just has not been bundled together in a way that they can either be saved or shared to celebrate their history."  
 Turner said once the new Alto town hall is complete, she wants to start this process as soon as possible.  
 "I've been wanting to do this for some time, but

ALTO ON 7A

**ALTO** From Page 5A

there's really not the space to do it," Turner said. "But we have a lot of history here that's not all just inside the city. There's history that's not documented about English moving from Canada to this area. And we have such a large elderly population that we need to get this documented before we lose them."  
 Turner also mentioned the city plans to do some annexation of the following roads in the future: Alto-Mud Creek Road, a portion of Wynn Shoals Road, a portion of the north side of Gainesville Highway and a portion of Nix Road that runs to Apple Pie Ridge Road.  
 She added that the Alto Public Safety Department would like to consider two new police cars depending on the annexation of the mentioned roads.

The Northeast Georgian - 6/22/18

Habersham County is among the better served rural counties in the Georgia Mountain region when it comes to broadband accessibility. The County’s major population and economic centers have access to the North Georgia Network (NGN), an incorporated cooperative providing a regional fiber optic system with over 1,600 linear miles of infrastructure. The NGN provides infrastructure that loops through the northeast Georgia mountains with 100 gigabit core line and connects to almost all the schools and colleges in the region as well as reaching many government structures and prominent business parks.

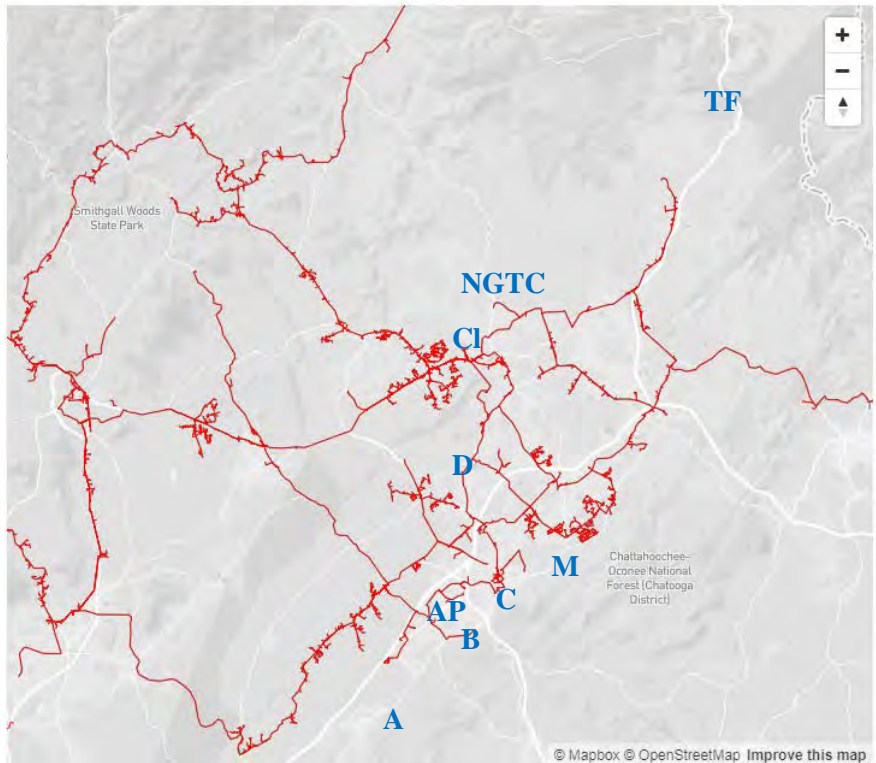
This does not imply that accessibility is universal or infrastructure problems aren’t present. Last-mile connections to the NGN are still a big issue, while rural parts of the county beyond the network’s reach are considered devoid of high quality service options. Windstream is the only other major supplier in the county, with capacity of 100 mbps. Many of the business customers within Habersham cited concerns over stability of service and maximum capacity limitations. Based on survey results, public comments and stakeholder input, there remains a strong need for improved internet access in rural Habersham.

**Priorities for Future Network Enhancements**

- Ability to increase “last-mile” connections in rural areas
- Higher-capacity trunk lines from providers extending westward into county
- Assistance with last-mile connections into providers along Hwy 365 corridor in projected industrial areas

*North Georgia Network Lines in Habersham County*

**Network Map**  
HOME • NETWORK MAP



TOGGLE NETWORK ROUTE

- NGN Network
- Affiliate Networks

- A** - Alto
- B** - Baldwin
- CI** - Clarkesville
- C** - Cornelia
- D** - Demorest
- M** - Mt. Airy
- TF** - Tallulah Falls

- NGTC** - North Ga. Tech
- AP** - Airport Industrial Park

## NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES

To achieve its stated vision a community must understand those obstacles and issues that must be addressed in order to reach the goals implied. The comprehensive planning process asks communities to assess the information outlined in an effort to identify issues and opportunities that should be considered when trying to plan for the future. In doing so the communities can more effectively define their objectives and actions to better achieve the desired vision.

Based on the results of surveys and public comments gleaned during the planning process the identified issues were largely grouped into the following categories:

***Land Use Management*** - With the expectation of continued growth and development, and with the demand from residents to preserve the area's predominantly rural character, the County must ensure its land use policies are applied in such a way that will concentrate development to areas better suited for more intensive activity. This will include planning and zoning policies, using more resource material to promote preferred development types, an update of greenspace and conservation planning, and working to ensure capital improvements are directed in coordination with an overarching land use and development strategy.

***Sense of Place*** - Area residents and stakeholders wish to see Habersham County aspire for a stronger, unique identity and a sense of community by fostering complementary development forms, increased visual cues that define and unify the community, and coordinated use of capital improvements that will enhance the residential appeal of Habersham County.

***Comprehensive Strategy for Housing*** - As part of the demand to strengthen the community as a premier hometown and rural residential destination for families there is a need to ensure Habersham County will attract and sustain quality housing at all economic levels. Efforts must be made to ensure quality workforce housing is available, to ensure the market is viable for reinvestment and maintenance of properties, that there is a plan to attract and accommodate more higher-end housing, and that all residential areas are/feel rooted in the community.

***Coordinated Economic Development Strategy*** - In an effort to attract business and industry types that are desired and a best fit for Habersham County, there should be an intentional and coordinated strategy among local economic development stakeholders to ensure the best use of area resources. The County and municipalities must work with neighboring jurisdictions to identify suitable land that works with prevailing infrastructure and utilities, while simultaneously coordinating capital improvements as part of a comprehensive land use strategy. The County must also support efforts to improve local education and training resources as well as fostering conditions that make the community attractive as a hometown to employees.

***Coordinated Planning for Capital Improvements*** - The County needs to ensure that all capital improvement projects, such as roads, utilities, and public facilities, are pursued in a manner that is both fiscally responsible and designed in a manner that best supports the overall development strategy for the community. Improvements should be limited in areas where high intensity development is less compatible, and should be done so as to yield efficient returns in more populated areas.

***Invest in Cultural Infrastructure***- Public facilities and quality of life amenities in Habersham County should be done of sufficient quality so as to enhance the character of the community and serve as a source of pride for local residents. Facilities such as parks, trails, and event centers and civic structures should be done with fiscal responsibility but also aspire to showcase the appeal of the area,

building a brand and image for Habersham County that evokes quality and a strong sense of community.

**Localized Issues and Objectives** – These are the specific concerns or objectives that each community had at the outset of the process, many of which the local government had already begun steps to address.

The following represents a refined listing of Issues and Opportunities for Habersham County and each of the municipalities. Some may have carried over from the previous plan, but the list has been confirmed and/or refined based on the discussions and analyses throughout the current planning process.

***Needs and Opportunities applicable to all communities***

Needs and Opportunities	Mitigation Strategies
<b><i>Land Use Management</i></b>	
Need to manage the volume of expected growth by linking utilities and capital improvements with land development policies.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Develop long-term water and sewer plans ('20)</li> <li>2 Develop road improvement plan ('19)</li> <li>3 Develop facility and vehicle assessment for fire depts. and law enforcement. ('19)</li> <li>4 Update Parks and Recreation Master Plan ('21)</li> <li>5 Develop County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan ('20)</li> </ol>
Need to manage development's impact on the County's character by coordinating land use policies to concentrate growth and preserve rural areas.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Develop long-term water and sewer plans ('20)</li> <li>5 Update Future Development Strategy ('22)</li> <li>6 Adopt conservation design sbdv. regulations ('19)</li> </ol>
<b><i>Sense of Place</i></b>	
Desire to see quality in development; Design emphasis on rural development styles	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7 Develop/Obtain reference material for architectural design guidelines to promote desired forms among developers. ('19)</li> <li>8 Perform marketing and branding assessment for the county ('19)</li> <li>9 Develop preferred design elements for County and School Board facilities ('20)</li> </ol>
Need to review and possibly amend property maintenance policies to protect against properties falling into blight and unsafe conditions that adversely impact property values and deter private investment into the community.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 Survey code enforcement performance ('19)</li> <li>11 Hold workshop to review code enforcement practices ('19)</li> <li>12 Initialize annual report on code enforcement, tracking site visits and violations. ('20)</li> <li>13 Identify resources to assist homeowners with property revitalization ('20)</li> </ol>

***Needs and Opportunities applicable to all communities (cont'd)***

<b>Needs and Opportunities</b>	<b>Mitigation Strategies</b>
<b><i>Coordinated Economic Development Strategy</i></b>	
The County lacks a formal plan for where to locate and best sustain new industrial development.	14. Develop freight traffic study for the county ('20)
<b><i>Coordinated Planning for Capital Improvements</i></b>	
Planning for all capital improvements must be done in a way that respects other Comp Plan goals, such as regarding the County's rural character and demand for fiscal responsibility.	6 Adopt conservation design sbdv regulations ('19) 15 Survey county to identify prime agricultural areas ('19) 16 Establish policy to protect prime agricultural areas from urban scale utilities. ('20) 1 Develop long-term water and sewer plans ('20)
Need for long-term cooperation among County, Cities, and regional partners/ neighbors in attracting economic development.	P Maintain support for Habersham County Development Authority (HDCA) P Maintain Service Delivery Agreement 1 Develop long-term water and sewer plans ('20)
<b><i>Invest in Cultural Infrastructure</i></b>	
Habersham County should pursue parks and public facilities that present a sense of quality and unique brand/identity to the community and strengthen its sense of community.	4 Update Parks and Recreation Master Plan ('21) 9 Develop preferred design elements for County and School Board facilities ('20)
<b><i>Comprehensive Strategy for Housing</i></b>	
Habersham County currently does not have sufficient housing to meet projected demands for various special needs housing, such as senior housing (dependent and independent) and for low income households.	17 Develop/ Obtain a market study for senior housing in Habersham Area ('20) 18 Identify target sites best suited for senior housing (based on market study) ('21) 19 Convene forum with builders and banks to discuss entry level housing ('19)
The County must work to improve the quality of affordable housing units by seeking to foster reinvestment and maintenance and providing a climate that attracts better new development.	19 Convene forum with builders and banks to discuss entry level housing ('19) 13 Identify resources to assist homeowners with property revitalization ('20)

**Localized Issues and Objectives – Habersham County**

Needs and Opportunities	Mitigation Strategies
Need to replace existing detention facility	H1 Construct new jail ('20)
Need to upgrade hangars at airport	H2 Construct replacement hangars ('20)
Need for new/more county administrative office space	H3 Complete new County administrative complex ('19)
<b>Land Use Management</b>	
Need to protect the area's natural resources in manner that supports the local ecology and Habersham County's rural character.	P Maintain State Environmental Planning Criteria 6 Adopt conservation design sbdv regulations ('19) P Support the Soque River Watershed Partnership
<b>Sense of Place</b>	
Strong demand to preserve the area's rural character through measures that protect natural resources, support agricultural activity, and concentrates growth and development.	P Maintain State Environmental Planning Criteria P Support the Soque River Watershed Partnership 6 Adopt conservation design sbdv regulations ('19) 15 Survey county to identify prime agricultural areas ('19) 16 Establish policy to protect prime agricultural areas from urban scale utilities. ('20)
<b>Comprehensive Strategy for Housing</b>	
Habersham County needs a strategy to lure higher grade housing units that will increase the variety of local options and improve the prevailing property tax conditions.	H4 Survey realtors re: potential for high-end housing in Habersham ('19)
<b>Coordinated Economic Development Strategy</b>	
Need to match utility, infrastructure, and housing development designed specifically to support economic development.	1 Develop long-term water and sewer plans ('20) 2 Develop road improvement plan ('19) 3 Develop facility and vehicle assessment for fire depts. and law enforcement. ('19) 4 Update Parks and Recreation Master Plan ('21) 5 Update Future Development Strategy ('22)

**Localized Issues and Objectives – Municipalities**

Needs and Opportunities	Mitigation Strategies
<b>CLARKESVILLE</b>	
Opportunity to have major economic development in Downtown at the site of the former Courthouse/ Administration Building	C1 Establish conceptual development terms for former courthouse property ('19) Reach formal agreement with County on development terms for former courthouse property ('19) C2
<i>Comprehensive Strategy for Housing</i>	
Habersham County needs a strategy to lure higher grade housing units that will increase the variety of local options and improve the prevailing property tax conditions.	C3 Survey realtors re: potential for high-end housing in Clarkesville ('19)
<i>Coordinated Economic Development Strategy</i>	
Need to match utility, infrastructure, and housing development designed specifically to support economic development.	1 Develop long-term water and sewer plans ('20) 2 Develop road improvement plan ('19) 3 Develop facility and vehicle assessment for fire depts. and law enforcement. ('19) 4 Update Parks and Recreation Master Plan ('21) 5 Update Future Development Strategy ('22)
<b>DEMOREST</b>	
Need to replace existing fire house	D1 Build/Rebuild Fire Department
Need to replace municipal courtroom	D2 Renovate existing courtroom
Need to update City ordinances	D3 Review existing ordinances; Update as needed; Post new ordinances online ('19)
Need to complete streetscape efforts	D4 Pursue funding assistance for streetscape improvements
<i>Coordinated Economic Development Strategy</i>	
Need to match utility, infrastructure, and housing development designed specifically to support economic development.	1 Develop long-term water and sewer plans ('20) 2 Develop road improvement plan ('19) 3 Develop facility and vehicle assessment for fire depts. and law enforcement. ('19) 4 Update Parks and Recreation Master Plan ('21) 5 Update Future Development Strategy ('22)

**Localized Issues and Objectives – Municipalities (cont’d)**

Needs and Opportunities	Mitigation Strategies
<b>BALDWIN</b>	
<i>Coordinated Economic Development Strategy</i>	
Need to match utility, infrastructure, and housing development designed specifically to support economic development.	1 Develop long-term water and sewer plans ('20) 2 Develop road improvement plan ('19) 3 Develop facility and vehicle assessment for fire depts. and law enforcement. ('19) 4 Update Parks and Recreation Master Plan ('21) 5 Update Future Development Strategy ('22)
<b>ALTO</b>	
Opportunity to expand sewer service for industry	A1 Develop sewer expansion plan ('20)
<b>MT. AIRY</b>	
Opportunity for Lake Russell to grow as a recreation and tourism attraction	M1 Develop a business plan with USFS for possible expansion of uses and access to the lake. ('20)

**VISIONS AND GOALS**

A vision for the community’s future must be included in the comprehensive plan. The community vision is intended to provide a complete picture of what the community desires to become. The community vision must be based on public input, the assessment of current and future needs and be supported by the goals, policies and objectives in the comprehensive plan. In addition, there must be consistency between the community vision and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Quality Community Objectives as well as consistency with the community visions of other communities within the region.

The following vision statements were derived from the various comments and suggestions raised during public meetings and through the available survey process. They reflect the consistent themes and issues cited in discussions about prioritizing the local residents over pursuit of change and the strong desire to retain the current level of “*small town charm*” that so many people used to affectionately describe their hometown. To the extent that the local governments pursue major projects and policies the citizens participating in the planning process stressed the need to remain focused on the well-being of current residents and to not sacrifice too much of the existing character of the community, as established by the prevailing scale and rustic nature of local development and the strong academic, civic, and other institutions that help bond the community.

The vision statements also reflect the established importance of the natural setting for Habersham County and its municipalities, the Appalachian foothills and pastoral landscape. Most residents expressed appreciation for the appeal of the setting and they wish to see it preserved against the prospect of change and growth that might undue the very rural, country fabric at the heart of the community. As such, Habersham County and the cities should work to protect the agricultural areas and mountainsides as they are as best as possible, directing capital investments and supporting heavier development within areas more conducive to non-rural settings.



### Habersham County

The Vision for Habersham County remains largely intact from the original incarnation in 2008. While this was conceived as an encompassing vision for Habersham County and the municipalities that participated both then and now, it is most applicable to the county and will continue to represent its ambitions and objectives.

*Habersham County will continue our special, healthy, and safe quality of life, become even more appealing to prospective residents and tourists, and provide a superior ‘Sense of Place’ in our region and state*

*We will accomplish the following:*

- *Preserve rural character, unique small towns, scenic beauty and natural environment despite significant growth.*
- *Residential development will occur primarily near infrastructure, will provide a full range of housing choices, will include service businesses that are valuable to residents, and will create the advantages and charm of traditional neighborhoods.*
- *The county will have effective facilities, resources, and recruiting to compete for business and industry that will provide jobs and a more balanced tax base. Increasing the K-12 graduation rate and expanding development programs at our four-year institutions will create a stronger workforce. Close proximity to a full range of medical services will exist due to an expansion of facilities and services needed by the community*
- *Our area will be a magnet for tourism in the region with choices for communing with nature, participating in sports and other recreation activities, and having cultural experiences with friendly services and facilities. The protection and preservation of scenic corridors, mountains, streams, and farmland will maintain a rural character and enable increased tourism.*
- *Gateways and corridors will exist to manage current and future traffic increases and enable residents, guests and tourists to move safely and efficiently to their destinations. The Highway 365/441 corridor has limited access and will be safe, free from congestion and unsightly appearance, and will enable quality business development.*
- *Government will optimize service to the whole county through effective coordination and efforts to reduce costs.*

This statement outlines the aspiration for the County to hone its character as a quality place for residents that continues the current character with a particular focus on managing costs and keeping growth closely linked with utility and infrastructure capacities.

### Clarksville

The County seat bills itself as a community “where big-city amenities mesh with small-town charm to create an unforgettable experience.” The City works hard with their DDA and Main Street Boards to keep the historic small-town beauty of downtown and foster a true sense of community and economic opportunity. Clarksville remains the civic heart of the county and has a vibrancy of its own that has

flourished in a unique manner due to the leadership's commitment to keeping true to the community identity.

*The vision for Clarkesville comes from the work done during the Master Planning process.*

*The City of Clarkesville will preserve and enhance our special and growing community, fostering a safe and vibrant quality of life and a model historic small-town. Clarkesville will sustain a vital downtown for commerce, culture, and the arts, will preserve our natural and cultural resources, and give residents peaceful and healthy neighborhoods that celebrate our community spirit. Clarkesville provide quality services while being fiscally responsible and will continue to work with neighboring jurisdictions, Habersham County, and community partners to enhance the Clarkesville experience.*

### Alto

The town of Alto is a comparably small municipality that does have industrial opportunities, so they're bridging the divide between rural residential, cross-roads community and suburban industrial destination. Their proximity to Hwy 365 and the railroad line means they will be subject to elements that other Habersham communities don't experience.

Their vision statement is reflective of this dynamic and addresses the diverging opportunities for industrial and economic development.

*The Town of Alto is proud and protective of its small hometown heritage amidst the surrounding agricultural and growing industrial corridor into the northeast Georgia mountains. The Town is dedicated to maintaining its rustic character through the preservation of their neighborhoods and by facilitating new development that embraces the area's rural charm. The Town is focused on maintaining a quiet and safe community for its residents while making strides to encourage prosperous economic growth for the Town. We will work with neighboring communities in fostering economic growth and industrial opportunity when possible while capitalizing on our agricultural heritage and supporting existing and future industry.*

### Baldwin

*The City of Baldwin is, and will remain, a family-oriented community that seeks balanced growth and economic opportunity for all citizens while respecting our past and envisioning a brighter future.*

#### City Goals:

1. *To create a "Sense of Place" for the city.*
2. *To develop and maintain a stronger sense of community.*
3. *To promote balanced, responsible growth throughout the city.*
4. *To create new economic opportunities for all citizens.*
5. *To protect and preserve our natural and historic resources.*

As a guidepost and barometer for Baldwin, the vision statement will be used to ensure that capital improvements and development policies are oriented around strengthening the local neighborhoods and their connections with the economic activity centers. Further, retail and service operations should

complement the ideal of creating a pedestrian friendly urban core, as should programs related to parks, sidewalks and supporting the local school.

The vision statement will also serve as a call to arms for keeping the City aggressive in its pursuit of economic development, working with area partners in recruiting and expanding area industries. The City must also work to establish and implement policies that strive to preserve historic structures and fosters more community activities and events, building civic pride and a stronger identity among residents and within the region.

If the City works toward these ends then Baldwin will move closer to achieving the stated vision and become a better version of the community idealized by citizens today.

### **Demorest**

The City of Demorest is pursuing an evolution of sorts, seeking to remain a quiet, small town but also exploring ways they can better partner with Piedmont College to foster a stronger and more vibrant college-town setting that is attractive to local businesses and cultural tourism.

*The City of Demorest, Georgia, is a proud home town and cultural destination with small-town charm and southern hospitality. The City will preserve and enhance its college-town urban fabric as a defining trait of the community's unique character, and create a vibrant core for civic, social, and commercial opportunity.*

*The City of Demorest will provide efficient and high quality services in support of area citizens, visitors, and local businesses, and will be a wise steward of area financial and natural resources in pursuit of the well-being and prosperity of residents, enabling growth while focusing on the preservation of local character.*

This vision is to be coupled with the various goals the City has outlined for itself as part of their own specialized planning charrettes done in conjunction with the Habersham EMC.

#### **City Goals:**

- 1. To strengthen downtown's character through preservation and appropriate infill*
- 2. To bring more business into downtown*
- 3. To strengthen the pedestrian connectivity of downtown, the college, and the residential neighborhoods*

### **Mt. Airy**

As with Alto the Town of Mt. Airy has a vision statement that emphasizes the community's small-town nature and their desire to be first and foremost focused on serving their residents. They also recognize the desire and ability to partner with other communities for economic development.

*The Town of Mt. Airy, Georgia, is a rural community dedicated to the preservation of its small-town character. It celebrates the country lifestyle rooted in its agricultural history and the Appalachian character of the region by offering families and visitors a serene environment to live and grow. Mt. Airy will work with neighboring communities to support economic development, will maintain and improve the character of its built environment, and support the inclusion of small-scale commercial and institutional uses that complement the rural residential setting.*

# Community Development Strategy

## 3

Land use management policies and programs represent guidelines for shaping development patterns that provide for efficient growth while also protecting sensitive social and environmental areas. As such, communities should take into account their current and immediately projected conditions and assess the identified needs and issues regarding the built landscape and community services for the area. This section presents an inventory of existing land use patterns and development trends for the community, allowing the local government to produce the most effective policies needed to manage the demands from projected development.

### DEVELOPMENT TRENDS AND INFLUENCES

Habersham County's location suggests growth pressures are inevitable due to the increasing industrial and residential growth coming up from the south along Ga Hwy 365 in Hall County and by virtue of all the tourism coming into the Appalachian mountains along the same corridor and US 441. As those arterial roads are the primary option for all manner of traffic heading into the northeastern corner of Georgia and onward to points in North Carolina and Tennessee, these roads create linear hubs of activity and are vital to the livelihood of locals along the way. Habersham County and its partners are currently planning to utilize the southern reaches of Hwy 365, which is near to a railroad line and the local airport, as the focal point for industrial and heavy commercial activity, relieving the pressure for such uses elsewhere in the county.

Within the County are also several prominent locations that serve as internal magnets for additional growth, either as a lure for tourism or as an economic engine that tends to draw similar uses. The County is home to two post-secondary education facilities in North Georgia Technical College (Clarksville) and Piedmont College (Demorest). These not only draw students and visitors but are employment anchors through their own staff and with affiliate business partners. There is also Tallulah Gorge State Park/ Tallulah Falls on the county's northern boundary with Rabun County, a preeminent tourist attraction in the region. Additionally there are various large scale employers in Cornelia and Clarksville such that the reach between Clarksville, through Demorest and Cornelia, to Baldwin is more suburban than rural. This part of the County is likely to see more additional development pressure as residents seeking amenities while being close to the employment centers will be able to cluster near retail options, local schools, and have access to water and sewer. All of these will likely serve to attract development to the county as a whole and not simply their respective home cities.

#### Clarksville

Clarksville serves as the civic hub of the county by virtue of its role as the County seat, but it is also a growing cultural hub oriented around their historic downtown, complete with a growing theater and popular neighborhood park along the Soque River.

Just east of the city Clarksville is one of the area's biggest aquatic centers that hosts many regional events, along with the adjoining County recreational park. This part of the city bustles due to the access to Hwy 365 and Business 441, which are the arterial roads that drive most of the county's economy and connects most of the residents. The neighborhoods between downtown and the aquatic center are

considered among the nicer traditional neighborhoods in the area, serving as the transitional buffer between the rural county and downtown Clarkesville.

To the west the City has access along SR 17 to a myriad of key County office buildings, the home of Habersham EMC, Fieldale and other major employers that make this arterial road the next major hub of activity responsible for the small-scale urban setting of the city.

To the north is the main campus of North Georgia Technical College, about 1.5 miles outside of downtown. This facility is responsible for much of the training and labor development programs that support many regional businesses, and their campus has evolved as their role in the community becomes ever larger. Development has not yet encroached too heavily north of the city but the traffic between the school and downtown will steadily grow and eventually as Clarkesville's urban form expands there will be more residential use between the two.

### Demorest

Demorest exhibits a crossroads form of historic town centers, with a comparably small downtown but with Business 441 cutting through the city. This form, combined with the location of Piedmont College occupying a prominent amount of the main street area in downtown, means the City is largely subject to the demands forced by the conditions along the arterial. Business 441 is heavily trafficked for a 2 lane road and there is little space for new commercial or business use in downtown, but there are opportunities for infill development along the corridor that could enhance the Main Street character of the community.

Just north of the city, between Demorest and Clarkesville, is the Habersham Medical Center as well as several medical offices, giving that area a special role within the community. This node rests just north of the intersection of Business 441 and Demorest/ Mt. Airy Highway, the City's prime east/west route and direct access to Hwy 365. This location and nature of access suggests northern Demorest will be more likely to experience residential and passive suburban development influences.

Demorest does have some property along Hwy 365, anchored by two local school facilities. The City is also one of the prominent water and sewer providers for Habersham County, giving them a pivotal role in managing the overall development of the county.

### Baldwin

The near-term future has shown strong signs of economic expansion for Baldwin and the locations and conditions that placed Baldwin in the center of growth prior to the recession are at work in similar fashions today. The Highway 365 corridor, which is already heavily trafficked by tourists and through travelers moving between metro Atlanta and the Carolina mountains, has seen a resurgence of the industrial development that began in Hall County in the late 1990's. Much of southern Habersham County is now poised to receive varieties of manufacturing, warehousing and other industrial development, plus all the affiliated commercial and new residential uses that will support those facilities.

Baldwin is one of several Cities along this corridor that will be working to manage utilities to attract new growth but manage it properly to ensure protection of local resources and maintaining a balance of live, work and play options. As part of this land use management the City annexed additional portions of the Airport Industrial Park nestled in between downtown and the airport itself.

Within the heart of the City, Baldwin needs to find additional resources that can assist with revitalizing local neighborhoods and helping residents with their efforts to reinvest in their home properties. There remains the raw elements to sustain highly attractive and functional neighborhoods surrounding the

downtown commercial district, the elementary school and some City parks, however most houses are relatively smaller and older compared to most newly constructed units, with many suffering various degrees of disrepair or dilapidation.

### Alto

Alto is a geographically smaller city without a formal downtown but instead features a sparsely populated main street buffeted by older housing on both sides. Some of the streets feature older, distressed units that are being targeted for redevelopment, while there are other areas adjacent to Alto's core that may be targeted for infill development. If the City can resurrect the viability of the older housing units then their location near Hwy 365 and with the rail line running through town will make them a viable target for additional goods production facilities.

They are adjacent to a stretch of Hwy 365 that already features retail and dining. They are also the home town for a prominent industrial operation (Mt. Vernon Mills) and the Lee Arrendale Correctional Facility. These provide excellent employment opportunities for the Town and surrounding communities. The Town does have land available for industrial use that includes access to rail and will have sewer as well.

### Mt. Airy

On the opposite side of Hwy 365 from Demorest is Mt. Airy, which functions as a rural bedroom community supporting the retail and employment centers of the adjoining municipalities. There is no formal downtown for Mt. Airy and the main road is sparsely developed. There are some businesses dispersed throughout city but they are and not as large as those in neighboring Cornelia to the south.

The primary drivers for Mt. Airy will be the overall management of growth along Hwy 365 and within Cornelia that might see immediate spillover into Mt. Airy and the aspirations for increased tourist activity at nearby Lake Russell. This modest reservoir in the National Forest next to Mt. Airy is accessible to the public but is considered a highly underused asset. Should the visions for more activity at the lake site come to pass then Mt. Airy will be poised to receive additional attention and possible development.

### **General Land Use Issues**

- Strip commercial development areas will require special attention to **prevent underutilization and blight** as market and economic conditions change.
- **New development could alter the character of the county and cities** along routes such as U.S. 441 dramatically if development occurs without an emphasis on protecting scenic views.
- As new development increases property values throughout the city, pressure to convert from agricultural uses to residential or commercial uses increases. **Preservation of the remaining agricultural residential property** is considered important for sustaining the city's rural character in the long-term.
- It will be important for the cities to **accommodate more intensive commercial, industrial or residential uses** in the future in order to take advantage of continuing economic opportunities in certain corridors such as SR 365 and portions of US 441.
- Most development in the cities is suburban residential development that separates residential from commercial. Fostering more **mixed-use development could provide opportunities** for increased

housing affordability and accessibility to jobs and services within walking distance of residences in specific portions of the cities.

The *traditional neighborhood development* approach can provide a wide range of housing types in newly developing areas with a connected pedestrian-friendly street system and ample open space. With proactive planning, Baldwin can cluster community facilities including schools, fire stations, libraries and parks in order to create a sense of place.

- *Transfer of development rights* can be applied to preserve agricultural lands and other sensitive areas in need of protection from development.
- *Conservation subdivisions* can be used to retain the character of agriculture and protect the natural resources of the environmentally sensitive areas.
- Development regulations can encourage developers of residential and mixed-use development to set aside appropriate amounts of *green space for public recreation and storm water collection/filtering*.

## ANALYSIS OF AREAS REQUIRING SPECIAL ATTENTION

Land use management policies and programs represent guidelines for shaping development patterns that provide for efficient growth while also protecting sensitive social and environmental areas. As such, communities should take into account their current and immediately projected conditions and assess the identified needs and issues regarding the built landscape and community services for the area. This section presents an inventory of existing land use patterns and development trends for the community, allowing the local government to produce the most effective policies needed to manage the demands from projected development.

### *Areas of significant natural or cultural resources in need of attention*

The various *Downtowns for the Clarkesville, and Demorest* retain the form and most of the structures of traditional main street or town square communities, complete with historic zero-lot-line buildings recalling each community's bygone days as more established commercial and employment hubs. Baldwin has torn down some of its older structures as they seek to revitalize the area, but they retain a nodal intersection and collection of commercial structures that may form the basis of a future urbanized area. Together with their respective surrounding neighborhoods these city cores should be retained and restored both to provide a source for civic pride and community identity but also to foster more economic development within the city center that is conducive to supporting area residents and strengthening the community's character.

The *Baldwin Falls* area to the east of Baldwin is also considered of key social and scenic importance to the area. Baldwin Falls has historically been an undeveloped area and has been preserved through private interests in recent years, featuring a steep hillside overlooking Banks County with scenic views reaching miles outward. There are also several creeks and beautiful wooded landscapes. Baldwin seeks to preserve this area of Banks County because it is an environmentally sensitive area that offers citizens excellent recreational opportunities within the city limits.

*Lake Russell*, the small reservoir east of Mt. Airy, remains a secluded and loved outdoor recreation area, one with potential for greater use. This water body should be preserved in terms of its natural

surrounding and general public accessibility, ensuring that as a local destination it can be enjoyed for generations.

Natural resources, particularly water resources, are of special concern as Habersham County experiences population growth and associated housing and commercial development. Greenspace planning and preservation will also be important to achieve preservation of natural resources and provision of recreation facilities and transportation alternatives for residents. Areas for water and sewer development have been identified and infrastructure expansion projects are planned. It is important to encourage development in the areas planned for infrastructure expansion. Additionally, planning for future infrastructure expansions should be coordinated with and guided by land use planning that is consistent with a comprehensive vision for growth and development.

*Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur*

The **Highway 365 corridor** and the **US 441 corridor** are both attracting attention for various development opportunities. These major transportation corridors provide direct, four-lane highway transportation links between communities, plus they offer special opportunities for targeted economic development activity that is reliant on regional accessibility, particularly large scale employers. These areas also contain undeveloped/underdeveloped lots conducive to easy purchasing and development when full utilities are available.

*Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation*

The bulk of unincorporated Habersham County is rural and agricultural, save for select corridors and the commercial/industrial mix south of Clarkesville. The distribution of sewer and water lines will be monitored as the communities look to improve coordination of service delivery to foster better economic development. At the moment, however, there are no larger, significant areas where development is outpacing utility capacity. (Note: There could be considered an exception for high-speed telecommunications, but this issue is a part of a broader matter currently being addressed by the State.)

*Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors)*

**Downtown areas in the cities**, with their historic structures and classic main-street or town square character, are ideally suited for small scale urban commercial activity. The Cities and area residents would like to see these areas continue revitalization efforts and grow stronger as civic and commercial destinations.

Further, the **older residential areas** in some municipalities and parts of Habersham County are in need of attention. Alto has begun working to address housing conditions in some of their weaker neighborhoods, while Cornelia and Baldwin have also made strides in addressing dilapidated housing units. As these structures grow older, and are often exhibiting legacy issues with things like lead paint or asbestos, it becomes more costly for residents/owners to maintain and possibly reinvest in the properties. Particularly for poorer households this can foster a cycle of ever decreasing returns on property investment that traps some households in impoverished conditions.



*Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated*

There are two small-to-mid sized, **older brick industrial buildings in downtown Baldwin** that are not only becoming eyesores and health risks but represent opportunities for ideal locations that could be put to better use. They may be dilapidated to the point that renovation is no longer cost effective, in which case the land itself is still in prime locations for either economic activity or new residential properties.

Any/all other empty industrial properties are already being marketed through local economic development organizations and renovation efforts will have support and guidance from the local governments.

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**

The following is provided as a simplified assessment of critical environmental conditions in effect in Habersham County. The locations for any identified conditions can be found on the correlating map.

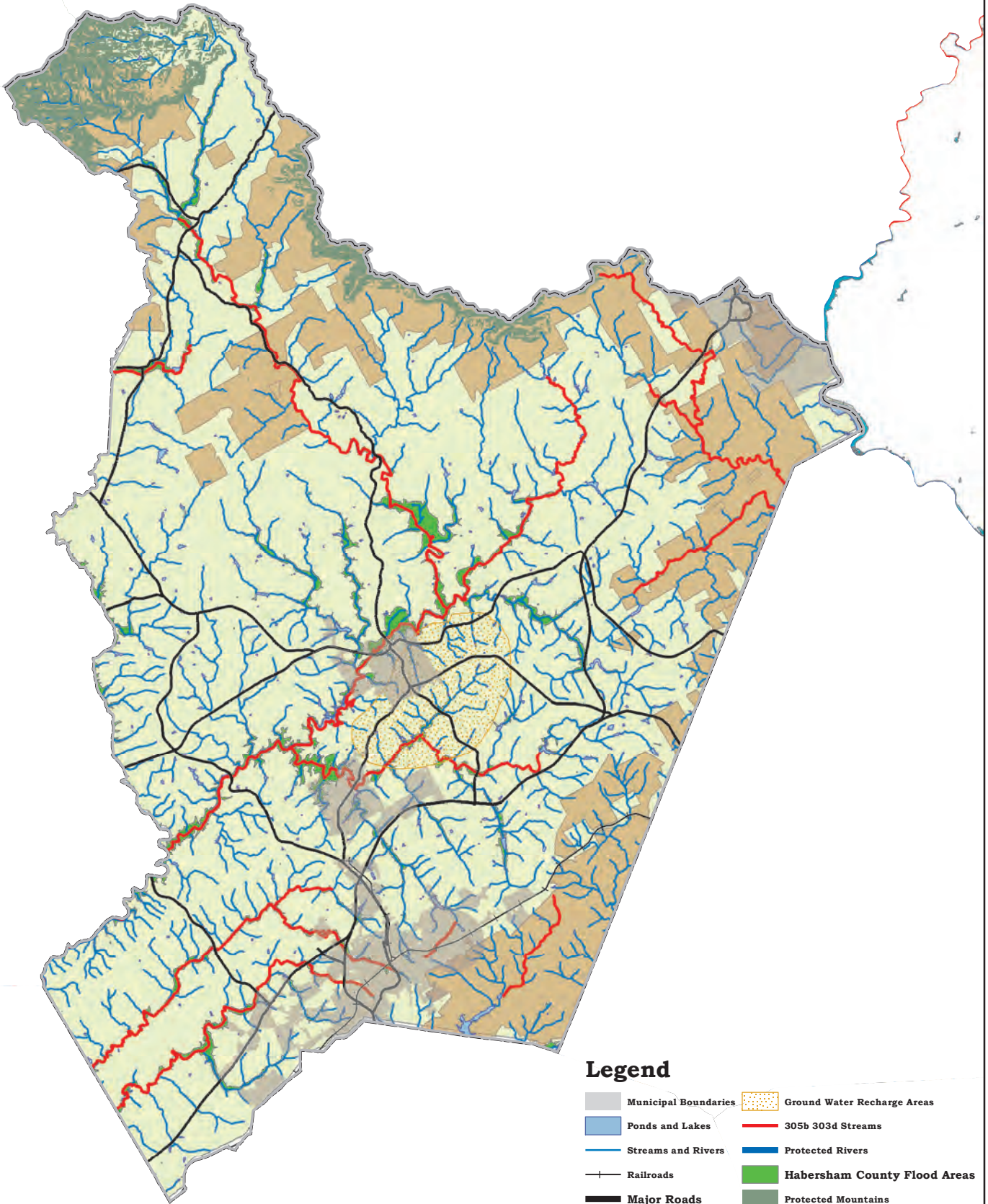
**Clean Water Act Compliance**

<b>Y</b>	Any “not supporting” 303(d) listed waterbodies? If yes, these waterbodies have been found contaminated to the extent that they are not considered supporting their designated use. As such the local community should seek to manage land uses within the watershed so as to yield healthier water quality.
<b>Y</b>	Any 305(b) listed waterbodies?
<b>N</b>	If yes, do the Implementation Plans/Watershed Management Plans require any outstanding actions from the local government? If so, please include these actions within the Implementation Program.

There are several listed stream segments within Habersham County, predominantly for fecal coliform (bacteria) and for sedimentation, however the County, municipalities and other area stakeholders have worked hard the past 10+ years to greatly improve water resource stewardship practices and water quality standards. The Soque River Watershed Partnership, with support from North Georgia Technical College, has made great strides in educating the public and performing watershed improvements that have already yielded results. Further efforts are ongoing and the prevailing outlook for streams in Habersham County is much stronger compared to the early 2000’s.

**Environmental Planning Criteria**

<b>Y</b>	Water Supply Watersheds	Minimum regulations in place?	<b>Y</b>
<b>Y</b>	Wetlands	Minimum regulations in place?	<b>Y</b>
<b>Y</b>	Groundwater Recharge Areas	Minimum regulations in place?	<b>Y</b>
<b>Y</b>	Protected River Corridors	Minimum regulations in place?	<b>Y</b>
<b>Y</b>	Steep Slopes	Minimum regulations in place?	<b>Y</b>
<b>N</b>	Protected Mountains	Minimum regulations in place?	<b>NA</b>
<b>N</b>	Coastal Areas	Minimum regulations in place?	<b>NA</b>
If any required regulations have not yet been established, please list any action items for achieving compliance within the Implementation Program.			



**Legend**

- Municipal Boundaries
- Ponds and Lakes
- Streams and Rivers
- Railroads
- Major Roads
- Ground Water Recharge Areas
- 305b 303d Streams
- Protected Rivers
- Habersham County Flood Areas
- Protected Mountains
- National Wetlands Inventory
- Conservation Lands

**Habersham County  
Environmentally Sensitive Areas**






## CHARACTER AREA ASSESSMENT



Character area planning is designed to focus on the physical appearance (aesthetics) and function of a particular area. Development strategies are tailored and applied to each individual area. The goal is to enhance the existing character/function or promote a new, more desirable character for the future. Character areas identify portions of the community that have a unique or special character that needs to be preserved or require special attention because of unique development issues.


A key component of the comprehensive planning process is the development of a Character Area Map that reflects the communities' vision for future growth and development during the course of the planning period. This vision was developed through an extensive public visioning process and expresses the unique character of various portions of the county. The various character areas, when combined, form a single map that is intended to supplement the Future Development Map by organizing common themes of development patterns throughout the county. They promote the desired development patterns guiding the design of structures and physical development. They also provide a framework for changes to development regulation and policies. Finally, they help to guide future zoning decisions.

**Character Areas**



	Habersham Co.	Clarkesville	Alto	Baldwin	Demorest	Mt. Airy
US 441 Business Corridor				X		
US 441 Throughway	X	X				
SR 365 Corridor	X		X	X	X	
Industrial	X	X		X		
North Georgia Tech	X					
Gateway Corridors	X	X			X	
Commercial	X	X			X	
Village Center	X		X			X
Downtown Clarkesville		X				
Downtown Baldwin				X		
Downtown Demorest					X	
Traditional Neighborhood		X	X	X	X	X
Mixed Residential		X	X		X	X
Suburban Transition	X				X	X
Rural	X					
Parks and Greenways	X	X				X
Conservation	X			X		X

US 441 Business Corridor	
<b>Vision</b>	<b>Appropriate Land Uses</b>
<p>The US 441 Business Corridor character area describes the portion of US 441 located within Baldwin. US 441 serves as a primary transportation artery connecting North Georgia to I-85 and Athens, Georgia. However, many drivers use the highway system as an alternative travel route to/from places further south, such as middle &amp; south Georgia and even to places like Florida and North Carolina. This tourism related travel makes the corridor prime for developing tourism related industries along the corridor. Baldwin could serve as a major hub for attracting and retaining tourism industry investments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Commercial and retail use</li> <li>▪ Professional offices</li> <li>▪ Mixed-use development</li> <li>▪ Residential development</li> </ul>
	<b>Implementation Measures</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Update existing land use and development regulations to accommodate desired changes</li> <li>2 Develop an overlay district for the US 441 corridor</li> <li>3 Examine the use of CIDs, TADs, BIDs and similar tools to foster development and redevelopment</li> <li>4 Develop a Stormwater Management ordinance</li> <li>5 Develop a County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan</li> <li>6 Develop partnerships with local chambers of commerce and tourism agencies to promote and enhance investment opportunities in the corridor</li> </ol>
	


441 Throughway	
Vision	Appropriate Land Uses
<p>This refers to US 441 from Antioch church road to Tallulah Falls, and the portion of SR 17 coming out of Stephens County and connecting with US 441. Both are divided highways that serve as a primary route for commuters, tourist, and commercial traffic into and out from the north.</p> <p>The goal is to maintain these roads as high speed throughways, while preserving adjacent open space and agricultural lands, as well as historic features along old 441. Commercial developments and residential subdivisions that create an excess of local traffic are required to use access roads. Conservation subdivisions and other clustered mixed use development is allowed, using other roads for access. Development is buffered from view from the roadways protecting rural scenery. The proposed route of the former Tallulah Falls railway has been protected to allow for conversion to a recreational trail</p>	<p>Agriculture, conservation covenants and easements, developments such as conservation subdivisions, clustered mixed commercial and residential use, all visually screened and on access roads.</p>
	Implementation Measures
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>7 Develop overlay district regulations to assure adequate right-of-way, and protect the corridor from excess local traffic through access management standards.</li> <li>8 Amend ordinances to require development of access roads as a condition for future commercial development along the corridor.</li> <li>9 Request DOT to restrict further curb and median cuts.</li> </ol>
	


SR 365 corridor	
Vision	Appropriate Land Uses
<p>This area serves as a primary transportation artery connecting North Georgia to I-985, Gainesville and Atlanta, Georgia. Many drivers use the highway system as a primary commuter route for employment and entertainment. This business related travel makes the corridor prime for developing commercial and industrial interests along the corridor. Baldwin could serve as a major hub for attracting and retaining business investments including major industries, corporate headquarters and commercial/retail businesses.</p> <p>New commercial projects will be planned at the individual site level but with consideration of inter-parcel access among compatible properties. This area will continue to be auto-dependent.</p>	<p>Highway-oriented commercial land uses, offices, services, and institutions. Generally, residential is not provided (though not necessarily discouraged) because land values are prohibitive for residential due to highway frontage and access.</p>
	Implementation Measures
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>10 Develop access management standards for this area to reduce traffic conflicts and maintain roadway efficiency.</li> <li>11 Ensure compatible uses through continued enforcement of land use ordinances.</li> <li>12 Develop corridor-specific quality development regulations.</li> </ol>
	

<b>Industrial</b>	
<b>Vision</b>	<b>Appropriate Land Uses</b>
<p>The Industrial character area describes the portion of land that includes land uses of low and high intensity manufacturing, wholesale trade, distribution, assembly, processing and similar uses that may or may not generate nuisance characteristics such as excessive noise, particulate matter, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors, radiation, or other nuisances.</p> <p>Identified industrial areas are provided with adequate infrastructure and designated truck/rail access routes that are safe and where heavy vehicles can maneuver with minimal noise, vibration, and intrusion of trucks in residential areas. Industrial site design provides adequate room for expansion and the development of ancillary businesses and employee services. Landscaped entrances and grounds are encouraged, environmentally sensitive areas protected, and surrounding neighborhoods buffered. Truck docks and waste handling areas are screened from public view. The intrusion of obnoxious uses into industrial parks is discouraged. Institutional uses are buffered from view through extensive landscaping to avoid negatively affecting adjacent property values.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Industrial</li> <li>▪ Commercial</li> <li>▪ Professional offices (corporate headquarters/medical office complexes)</li> <li>▪ Research and Development facilities</li> <li>▪ Mixed-use developments (commercial/industrial; but no residential)</li> </ul>
	<b>Implementation Measures</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Update existing land use and development regulations to accommodate desired changes</li> <li>13 Employ design/development standards for industrial sites</li> <li>14 Incorporate into the development review process a “development impact matrix” to determine impacts of specific industries on the environment and infrastructure</li> <li>15 Coordinate economic development activities for recruiting new business investments</li> </ol>
	
	

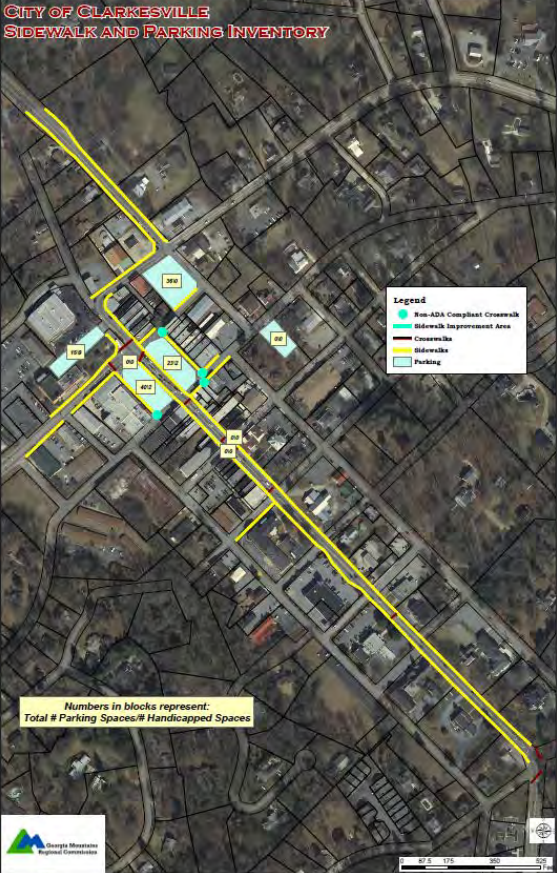

North Georgia Technical College	
Vision	Appropriate Land Uses
<p>This category is exclusive to the campus for North Georgia Tech, in recognition that it stands apart from the surrounding rural areas and may continue to expand as a distinct land use by comparison.</p> <p>The vision for this area is to foster an appropriate setting for major educational facilities. The impact of automobiles on pedestrian and bicycle traffic is minimized by constructing sidewalks and bicycle paths to connect campus areas with nearby activity centers. Development and traffic management strategies are to be coordinated between local governments and the college. Development is compact in form centered around the school campus cluster.</p>	<p>Primarily single- function institutional uses, with several buildings of varying sizes and heights, along with incidental open space or recreation, off-site parking, and accessory uses. Residential and commercial uses appropriate for locating next to a school area; businesses such as neighborhood stores, small restaurants, service stations and similar uses.</p>
	Implementation Measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>16 Rezone land adjacent to campus allowing only appropriate residential and commercial uses.</li> <li>17 Maintain a cooperative relationship with the college in order to better coordinate land use decisions and institutional goals.</li> <li>18 Build partnerships that enhance the community’s learning environment.</li> <li>19 Take active community roles in campus master planning.</li> </ul>
	



Gateway Corridors	
Vision	Appropriate Land Uses
<p>This refers to four, predominantly 2-lane rural arterials that connect Demorest and Clarkesville to US 441 and to one another:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Business 441 from Cornelia to Clarkesville</li> <li>• Demorest/ Mt. Airy Highway</li> <li>• SR 197</li> <li>• Toccoa Highway</li> </ul> <p>These are smaller roads that handle some freight and through traffic but primarily serves local traffic into and out of these burgeoning small-urban cities. The roads already feature a mix of uses, including some commercial retail, service and dining, but also harbor plenty of residential use. They are also scaled for rural uses, with limited strip shopping-style developments and most properties exhibiting modest lot sizes and limited parking.</p> <p>The desired pattern is more of the same with some refinements to ensure traffic and pedestrian safety, and to minimize the scale of destinations along the roadways so that they may remain rural in size and facilitate through traffic to the cities.</p>	<p>A mix of uses will be promoted, including businesses and offices, as well as single-family residences.</p> <p>Residential in the form of conservation subdivisions and commercial uses in master planned developments that do not directly access the gateway corridor.</p>
	Implementation Measures
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11 Ensure compatible uses through continued enforcement of land use ordinances.</li> <li>20 Undertake streetscape improvements to enhance the aesthetics and pedestrian orientation</li> </ol>
	

<b>Commercial</b>	
<b>Vision</b>	<b>Appropriate Land Uses</b>
<p>This area is typified by its commercial uses that are larger than those found in urban, downtown settings. It is typified by auto-oriented commercial activities such as retail, dining, service industries and professional offices.</p> <p>These areas are found along major arterial roadways, with building sizes, styles, and locations of notable scale to attract and serve customers and visitors from around the region. There are often expansive parking lots with multiple points of entry and possibly internal navigation corridors, plus the potential for stand along signs, out-parcel structures, and more. Such developments are not conducive to high grade pedestrian accessibility beyond selective sidewalks, but they serve a vital role in providing the large scale commerce considered vital to local economies.</p>	<p>General commercial and business activities, such as service establishments, restaurants, professional offices, financial institutions, government offices, utilities, for-profit and non-profit uses, theatres and churches.</p>
	<b>Implementation Measures</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>21 Guide development and use of properties in the Commercial Character Area by providing compatible zoning requirements.</li> <li>22 Support mixed use development, business community organizations, streetscape enhancements and state community development programs such as Better Hometown and Signature Community.</li> <li>23 Support design and architectural standards to promote pedestrian-friendly environment by adding sidewalks, bike/trail routes linking neighborhoods and commercial centers.</li> <li>24 Promote infill development of existing properties.</li> </ul>
	


Village Center	
Vision	Appropriate Land Uses
<p>This district comprises those areas that function as an existing or potential commercial and civic node within a neighborhood or village scale. Preferences are for pedestrian friendly areas and retail or dining options within minimal parking lots and styles that evoke rural settings. This district includes the downtown core of Alto, the main street corridor of Mt. Airy, and select crossroad intersections in the unincorporated county.</p> <p><i>The Alto area includes a collection of historic and modern buildings housing a small number of commercial uses. With the location of the railroad through the center of Town, they will have to be innovative enough to integrate pedestrian accessibility to existing commercial properties. The vacant convenience store and church have been purchased by the Town and they are being renovated to house the Police Department and the City Hall Complex respectively.</i></p> <p><i>The commercial areas of Mt. Airy are comprised of the lands on both sides of the town's high-volume roadways, Old 123, Nancy Town Road and State Hwy 197.</i></p> <p><i>Service activity areas located at highway intersections that provide a mixture of uses to serve passers-by and adjoining rural and agricultural areas such as Batesville and Habersham Mill Village.</i></p> <p>These goal for areas is to foster thriving commercial civic centers with a variety of retail and service uses tailored for local residents and in keeping with the rural, small-town nature of the area.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Single-family residential</li> <li>▪ Multi-family residential (when part of a master planned development or subarea master plan)</li> <li>▪ Mixed-use (when part of a master planned development or subarea master plan)</li> <li>▪ Commercial and retail uses</li> <li>▪ Professional offices</li> <li>▪ Public/Institutional</li> <li>▪ Parks/Recreation</li> <li>▪ "Strip" style development is not appropriate.</li> </ul>
	Implementation Measures
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Update existing land use and development regulations to accommodate desired changes</li> <li>3 Examine the use of CIDs, TADs, BIDs and similar tools to foster development and redevelopment</li> <li>5 Develop a County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan</li> <li>25 Develop a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) ordinance</li> <li>26 Consider an Infill Development ordinance</li> <li>27 Develop street connectivity requirements for new developments</li> <li>28 Develop a County Parks and Recreation Master Plan</li> </ol>
	
	

Downtown Clarkesville	
Vision	Appropriate Land Uses
<p>Located within the twelve block centralized heart of Clarkesville, this area contains several 100-year old structures, exemplified by hand-made brick facades, parapet walls and handcrafted scrollwork typical of the architecture of the period. The majority of the buildings on the east side of the square are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The area will remain a vital commercial and community center and the distinctive character of downtown Clarkesville will be maintained through community based preservation efforts.</p> <p>The shape the future of their downtown, this district will pursue the visions and guidelines established as part of a 2015 planning process specific to downtown.</p>	<p>Commercial establishments, service industries, professional, institutional, governmental and residential uses.</p> <p><b>Implementation Measures</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>29 Encourage a relatively high-density mix of retail, offices, services, and employment.</li> <li>30 Require design standards that are pedestrian-oriented with strong walkable connections between different uses.</li> <li>31 Update architectural and design standards for existing and new construction to preserve these sites and the district.</li> <li>32 Allow residential development in Downtown District in conjunction with business activity.</li> <li>33 Identify historical and cultural sites and adopt local requirements consistent with state and federal preservation standards.</li> </ul>
	



*Concept renderings included in the 2015 plan for Downtown Clarkesville. These depict a revitalized west side of downtown, proposing a replacement of the old courthouse, a new/relocated town square and gazebo, and new infill development extending the city's urban fabric.*

The 2015 Plan for Downtown Clarkesville arose after the City experienced a fire that destroyed several historic structures on their main square. In their pursuit for funding to assist with rebuilding the area, the City partnered with their Main Street Association, the Clarkesville Downtown Development Authority and others in hiring the Carl Vinson Institute to develop a redevelopment strategy for the downtown. The resulting plan offered options for managing infill development, improving streetscapes and pedestrian accessibility, and reimagining the downtown square and parking areas. This comprehensive review of development schemes gave Clarkesville the vision and tools needed to shape key decisions about investment in downtown and, more importantly, honed their commitment to a walkable and vibrant small urban center. The downtown area had come to define their growing community, and everyone who participated in the planning processes then and now want to see Clarkesville's social and civic core grow even more.

<b>Downtown Baldwin</b>	
<b>Vision</b>	<b>Appropriate Land Uses</b>
<p>The Downtown Redevelopment Corridor character area describes the portion of Baldwin that includes Willingham Avenue from Hendel Street north to the Cornelia city limits and encompasses all or portions of Walden Street, King Street, Short Street, Spring Street, Switzerland Avenue, Stonepile Street, Airport Road, Grando Lane, Sandy Lane, Chandler Street, Wells Street, Chatham Street, Williams Street, Thorn Drive, Yonah View Drive, Williams Street, Presley Street, Baldwin Falls Road and Park Avenue. This area serves as the heart of the City and includes a number of historic properties.</p> <p>This part of town is already the subject on ongoing redevelopment efforts, including a study under development by the UGA Archway Partnership that proposes significant changes to the main 5-points intersection of downtown near the current City Hall. Pending the relocation of City Hall, this plan proposes a new Farmer’s Market to the north, a new community center at the corner by renovating an existing set of buildings, and the possible reconstruction of the intersection as a roundabout. The overall scheme is still under assessment but the City is using this as part of their pursuits for a larger Urban Redevelopment Strategy (currently in development) that will be part of an Opportunity Zone application.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Single-family residential</li> <li>▪ Multi-family residential (when part of a master planned development or subarea master plan)</li> <li>▪ Mixed-use (when part of a master planned development or subarea master plan)</li> <li>▪ Commercial and retail uses</li> <li>▪ Professional offices</li> <li>▪ Public/Institutional</li> <li>▪ Parks/Recreation</li> </ul>
	<b>Implementation Measures</b>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Update existing land use and development regulations to accommodate desired changes</li> <li>3 Examine the use of CIDs, TADs, BIDs and similar tools to foster development and redevelopment</li> <li>5 Develop a County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan</li> <li>28 Develop a County Parks and Recreation Master Plan</li> <li>34 Update and implement the Downtown Redevelopment overlay ordinance</li> <li>35 Develop a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) ordinance</li> <li>36 Develop an Infill Development ordinance</li> <li>37 Develop a Senior Housing ordinance</li> <li>38 Develop a Mass Grading ordinance</li> <li>39 Develop a city-wide historic resource management plan</li> </ol>






The Farmers Market concept is in the final stages of idea development, with an application for Federal grant monies currently underway. This would take a block of the downtown core and renovate the property for a covered, open-air events space. This is part of the City’s efforts to reinvigorate the space for cultural events and foster the local economy.






Downtown Demorest	
Vision	Appropriate Land Uses
<p>This area is comprised of the five blocks in the center of Demorest, which are the historic commercial core of the city, bisected by Old Historic Highway 441 Business Route. Development in this area is compact and pedestrian-friendly. The area has been aided by concentrated public investment.</p> <p>New development will follow the original downtown pattern of small rectangular blocks. Buildings are brought up to the street with little or no setback from the road and development follows “Main Street” principles. Consistent with historic district guidelines developed in alignment with the principals governing historic districts placed on the National Register of Historic Places.</p>	<p>Predominantly commercial, services, office and civic- institutional uses. Residences on upper stories of multi-story buildings are appropriate, as are adaptive reuse of structures for mixed uses.</p>
	Implementation Measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>40 Community Beautification Enhancements (maintain/ implement program) (Policy)</li> <li>41 Encourage public-private partnerships to continue investment in the area and redevelopment of historic buildings.(Policy)</li> <li>42 Make use of a Downtown Development Authority (DDA) to foster continued revitalization. (Policy)</li> <li>43 Establish a local Historic District by ordinance governed by a Historic Preservation Commission charged with implementing design guidelines.</li> <li>44 Pursue National Register of Historic Places designation for eligible structures.</li> </ul>
















<b>Traditional Neighborhood</b>	
<b>Vision</b>	<b>Appropriate Land Uses</b>
<p>This area refers to the mix of urban residential neighborhoods and stable suburban subdivisions that comprise the densely populated areas in and around the municipalities. For Clarkesville and Demorest this can include historic neighborhoods that warrant additional layers of protection, but all of these areas are considered stable, safe, and attractive areas that contribute to the communities' family oriented profile. Efforts to grow the county and cities should begin by seeking to preserve these areas and replicate their form as new residential growth comes into the area.</p> <p>Most of the properties within this character area are single-family detached housing, typically in the 3 bedroom range and built before 2000. Within the cities this can include traditional urban blocks and gridded, or heavily connected, street patterns. Further outside the city cores there are more conventional subdivisions with minimal entries, common amenity areas, and more winding roads with longer blocks. Combined, these areas cater to the middle and upper middle income households and provide serene residential settings distinct from the truly rural parts of the county.</p>	<p>Limited recreation uses                      Low to medium density single- family detached houses                      Neighborhood commercial, professional and institutional</p>
	<b>Implementation Measures</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>45 Protect historic properties and encourage rehabilitation, including National Register Designation</li> <li>46 Historic properties should be maintained or rehabilitated/restored according to federal guidelines.</li> <li>47 Develop design and architectural standards for new development in historic district.</li> <li>48 Amend ordinances to require new developments to include parks and other amenities.</li> <li>49 Amend ordinances to require new development to connect internal pedestrian circulation systems to the nearest off-site sidewalks.</li> <li>50 Amend ordinances to require master planned new development to include neighborhood-serving commercial centers plus tree preservation and replacement standards</li> </ul>
	
	

<b>Suburban Transition</b>	
<b>Vision</b>	<b>Appropriate Land Uses</b>
<p>This character area corresponds with properties that have been subdivided and developed as conventional suburban subdivisions during the past several years. Also, this character area corresponds with properties that have not yet been developed to any significant degree but are anticipated to be subdivided and developed for new, detached, single-family dwellings. Since these areas are mostly undeveloped, there are opportunities to influence their character in the future.</p> <p>Residential development is encouraged and promoted in moderate to high density consisting of traditional residential subdivisions for single and multifamily housing. New developments are master-planned with mixed-uses, blending residential development with schools, parks, recreation, retail businesses and services, linked in a compact pattern that encourages walking and minimizes the need for auto trips. Connectivity occurs between each development, allowing good vehicular and pedestrian/bike access to retail/commercial services as well as connecting to adjacent properties and subdivisions. Compatible architecture styles are encouraged to maintain the regional character. Wherever possible, regional networks of green space and trails are developed. Street design fosters traffic calming, e.g. narrower residential streets, on- street parking, bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Existing trees are preserved in new developments or replaced.</p>	<p>Uses in these areas should be predominantly residential with scattered civic buildings and small hubs of commercial and service business development to serve adjacent neighborhoods. Residential development will vary from single family homes on lots of 1/3 - 2 ½ acres to condominiums, townhouses and apartments. Mixed use development is encouraged in the form of planned urban developments and planned residential developments.</p> <p>Predominantly detached, single-family, site-built dwellings on individual lots. Supportive civic and recreational uses may be included, such as churches, schools, community centers, and parks.</p>
	<b>Implementation Measures</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>51 Develop policies for decentralized waste treatment.</li> <li>52 Establish the urban service boundary.</li> <li>53 Expand sewer and water infrastructure into these areas on a priority basis.</li> <li>54 Modify ordinances to encourage mixed use and higher density residential development.</li> <li>55 Implement a tree preservation ordinance.</li> <li>56 Modify ordinances to encourage Rails to Trails organization and greenways.</li> </ul>
	

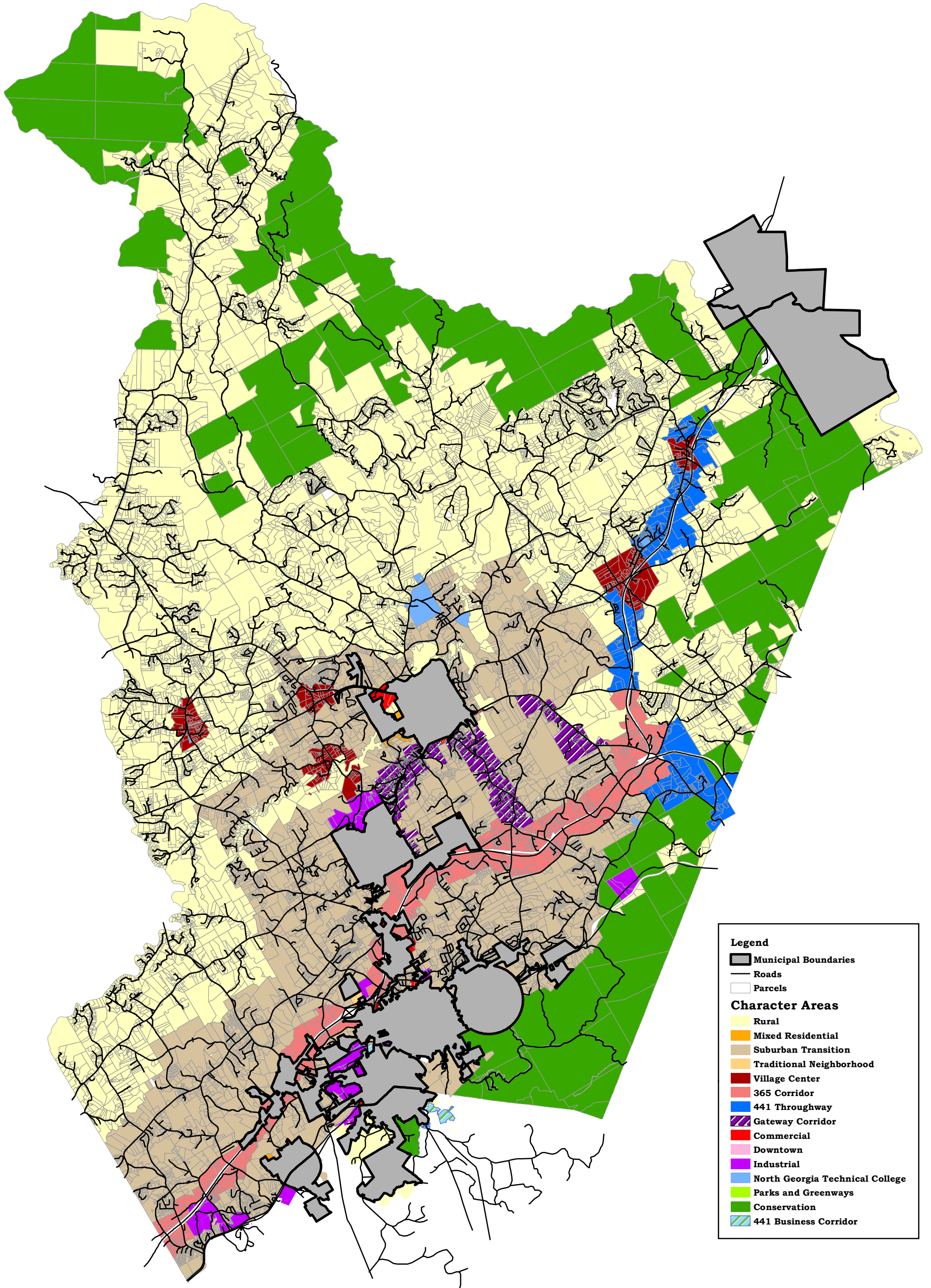
<b>Mixed Residential</b>	
<b>Vision</b>	<b>Appropriate Land Uses</b>
<p>This designation corresponds with areas that are already predominantly developed with some diversity in residential building types (e.g., duplexes, manufactured homes, apartments, and/or manufactured home parks).</p> <p>Lots shall be large, but may contain more than one dwelling unit on a given lot. The street pattern in these areas is more similar to traditional neighborhood development principles than conventional suburban subdivision characteristics, in that cul-de-sacs generally do not exist and road patterns resemble a “grid” or “modified” grid pattern. Densities are higher than other residential areas in most cases, and hence these areas need to be connected to the public sanitary sewer system. Compatible infill development will be encouraged in these areas, as multiple housing options may provide access to housing that is more affordable than that found in the more suburban areas of the city.</p>	<p>The land use categories to be allowed are low to medium density with mixed mobile homes and houses.</p> <p>Combinations of residential dwelling types, including detached, single-family, site-built units; manufactured homes on individual lots; duplexes, townhouses; apartments; and manufactured home parks. Supportive civic and recreational uses may be included, such as churches, schools, community centers, and parks.</p>
	<b>Implementation Measures</b>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>57 Implement neighborhood watch programs.</li> <li>58 Protect residents from incompatible land use activities by enforcing current ordinances.</li> <li>59 Encourage new housing and development by giving incentives for upgrading from manufactured homes to stick built homes.</li> <li>60 Encourage the maintenance and improvement of current housing.</li> <li>61 Add and enforce signs to reduce cut-through traffic on residential streets.</li> <li>62 Identify appropriate areas and add sidewalks where feasible to encourage walk-ability and increase neighborhood connectivity.</li> </ul>
	

<b>Rural</b>	
<b>Vision</b>	<b>Appropriate Land Uses</b>
<p>Unique rural neighborhoods and undeveloped land that help establish the rural character of the County. These areas have low pedestrian orientation and accessibility, large lots (2 ½-20 acres), open space, pastoral views, and a high degree of building separation.</p> <p>Preserve the rural atmosphere of these areas and ability to farm while accommodating new residential developments using rural cluster or conservation subdivision design principals that incorporate significant amounts of open space. The regional rural character is enhanced by encouraging compatible architectural styles, fostering a regional network of green space and trails, preserving cultural and historic sites.</p> 	<p>Agriculture, small family and hobby farms, conservation subdivisions, planned residential development with significant open space. Traditional residential subdivisions should have lot sizes greater than 2 ½ acres.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Traditional large lot single-family residential</li> <li>▪ Conservation subdivisions</li> <li>▪ Traditional neighborhood commercial</li> <li>▪ Forestry/agricultural</li> <li>▪ Passive recreation</li> </ul> <p><b>Implementation Measures</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1 Update existing land use and development regulations to accommodate desired changes.</li> <li>63 Encourage farming through financial incentives, TDR programs, conservation easements, and restrictive covenants.</li> <li>64 Consider raising minimum lot size in areas without water and sewer</li> <li>65 Develop a Conservation Subdivision ordinance</li> </ol> 
	

<b>Parks and Greenways</b>	
<b>Vision</b>	<b>Appropriate Land Uses</b>
<p>This character area consists of the active-use parks and greenways that will serve as destinations for outdoor recreation. While serving some greenspace protection purposes the main goal of these areas is to encourage and cater to people gathering for outdoor activities.</p> <p>This area is found adjacent to US 123 from the town's boundary to Lake Russell Road and is comprised of the undeveloped land paralleling the roadways. This green gateway into the town will be maintained and preserved so as to provide delineation between the town and the unincorporated county</p> <p>Included in this are plans for the proposed Wilbanks Park, a 5 acre property amidst Baldwin's residential uses, between the airport industrial area and the Highway 441 corridor. This new park would provide a walking trail and picnic facilities as well as an athletic field. Additional land across from this facility has also been identified for a potential expansion.</p>	<p>Parks with athletic fields                      Passive use parks with on-site facilities and within developed areas                      Recreational trails and pathways</p>
	<b>Implementation Measures</b>
	<p>28 Develop county-wide Parks and Recreation Master Plan                      66 Support plans for Tallulah Falls Rails to Trails (Policy)</p>
	
	

Conservation	
Vision	Appropriate Land Uses
<p>This area includes the most scenic views in the County, steep slopes, woodlands, meadows, and large parcels of actively farmed land, including those used for poultry and livestock production. The area is sparsely settled with rural roadways that have minimal visual and environmental impact. A large portion of this area is within the Chattahoochee National Forest.</p> <p>Protect the sensitive environmental and unique scenic nature of Habersham County’s rivers both as critical water resources and as recreation areas. Efforts will be made to maintain public access. Passive recreation areas and trails are encouraged in the vicinity of these resources to increase their attractiveness to residents while strengthening the county’s tourism potential.</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Undeveloped areas in their natural state</li> <li>▪ Nature Preserves and WMAs</li> <li>▪ Parks and recreation</li> <li>▪ Agriculture</li> </ul>
	Implementation Measures
	<p>63 Encourage farming through financial incentives, TDR programs, conservation easements, and restrictive covenants.</p> <p>67 Encourage US Forest Service to give priority to recreation and scenic impact when implementing Best Management Practices. (Policy)</p> <p>68 Widen roadways in this area only when absolutely necessary and then carefully design improvements to have minimal visual and environmental impact.</p> <p>69 Identify historical and cultural sites and specify measures for their protection including available grant funds.</p> <p>70 Develop a comprehensive tourism strategy for Habersham County to foster tourism for the local economy with emphasis for the potential for this area.</p>
 	

# Habersham County Character Areas

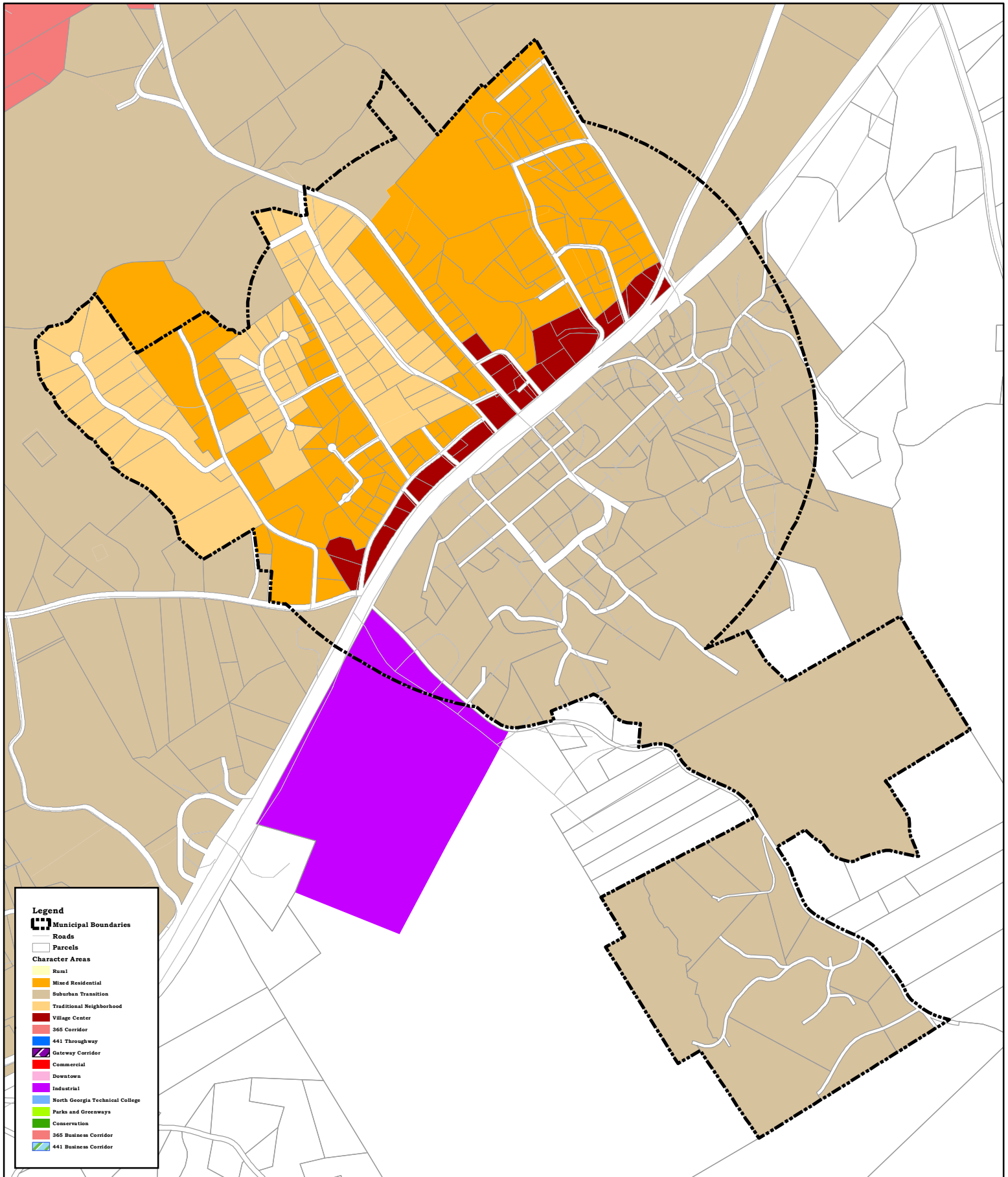


**Legend**

- Municipal Boundaries
- Roads
- Parcels

**Character Areas**

- Rural
- Mixed Residential
- Suburban Transition
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Village Center
- 365 Corridor
- 441 Throughway
- Gateway Corridor
- Commercial
- Downtown
- Industrial
- North Georgia Technical College
- Parks and Greenways
- Conservation
- 441 Business Corridor



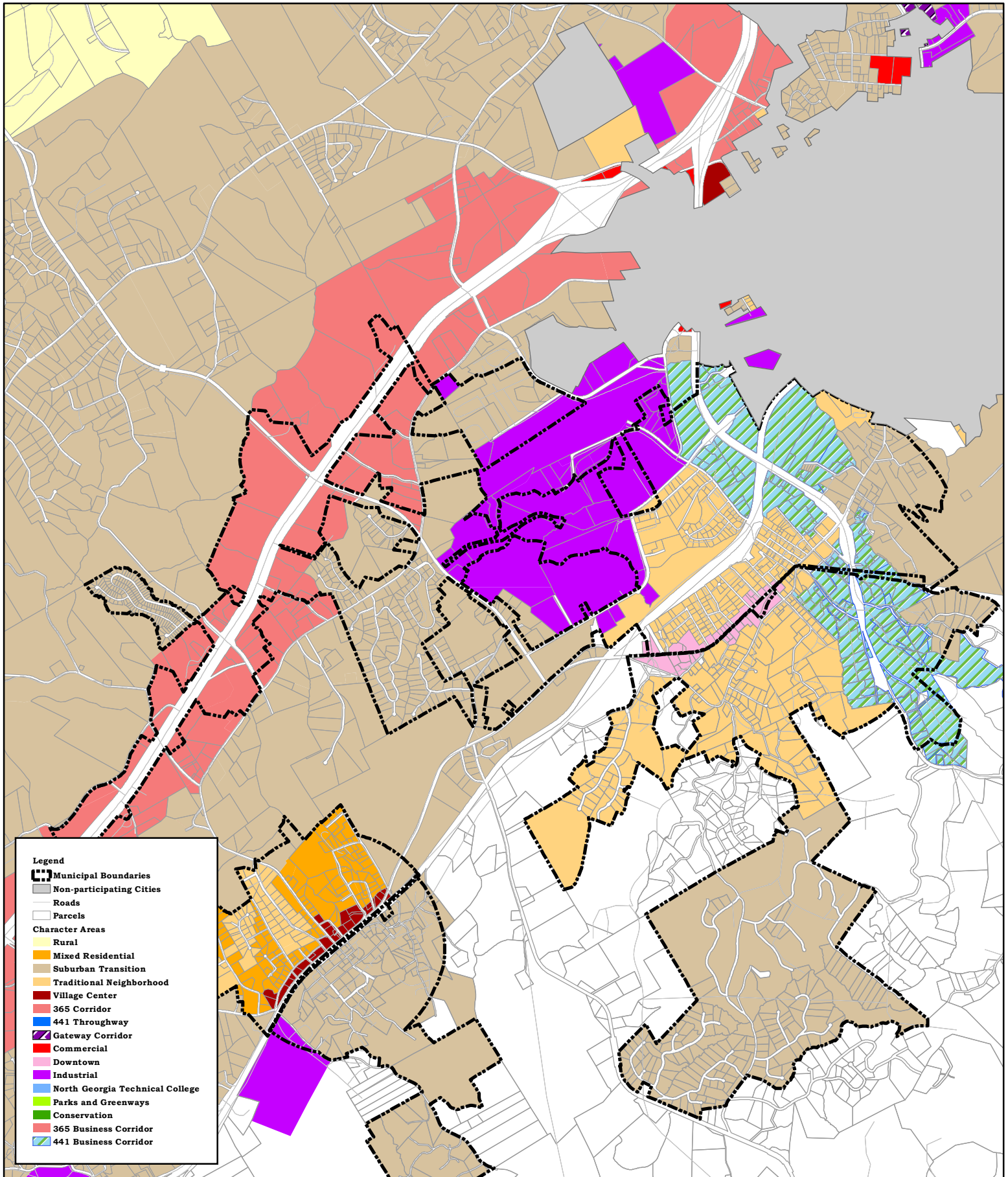
**Legend**

- Municipal Boundaries
- Roads
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- Character Areas**
- Rural
- Mixed Residential
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- Gateway Corridor
- Commercial
- Downtown
- Industrial
- North Georgia Technical College
- Parks and Greenways
- Conservation
- 365 Business Corridor
- 441 Business Corridor

# City of Alto Character Areas







**Legend**

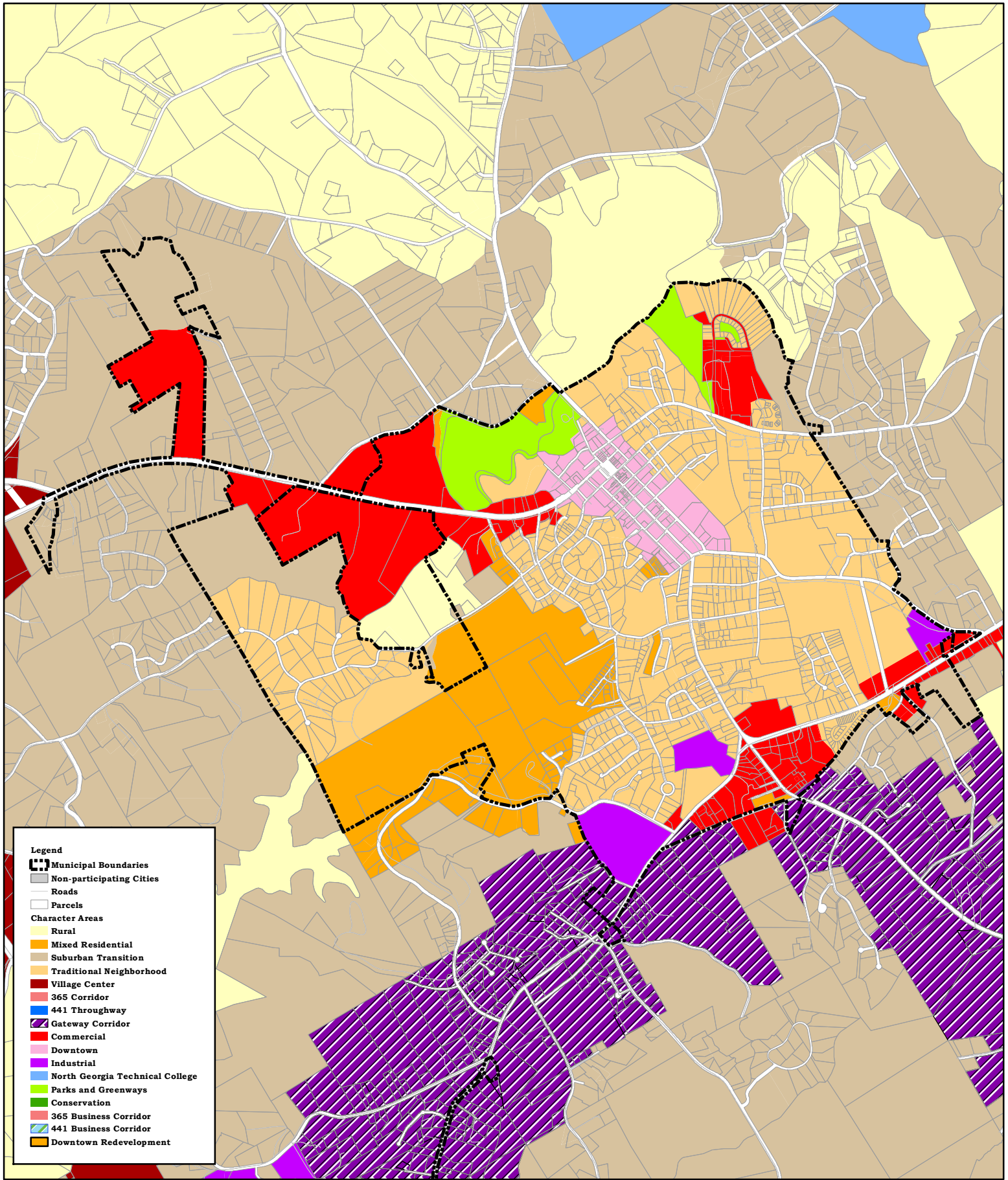
- Municipal Boundaries
- Non-participating Cities
- Roads
- Parcels

**Character Areas**

- Rural
- Mixed Residential
- Suburban Transition
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Village Center
- 365 Corridor
- 441 Throughway
- Gateway Corridor
- Commercial
- Downtown
- Industrial
- North Georgia Technical College
- Parks and Greenways
- Conservation
- 365 Business Corridor
- 441 Business Corridor

# City of Baldwin Character Areas





**Legend**

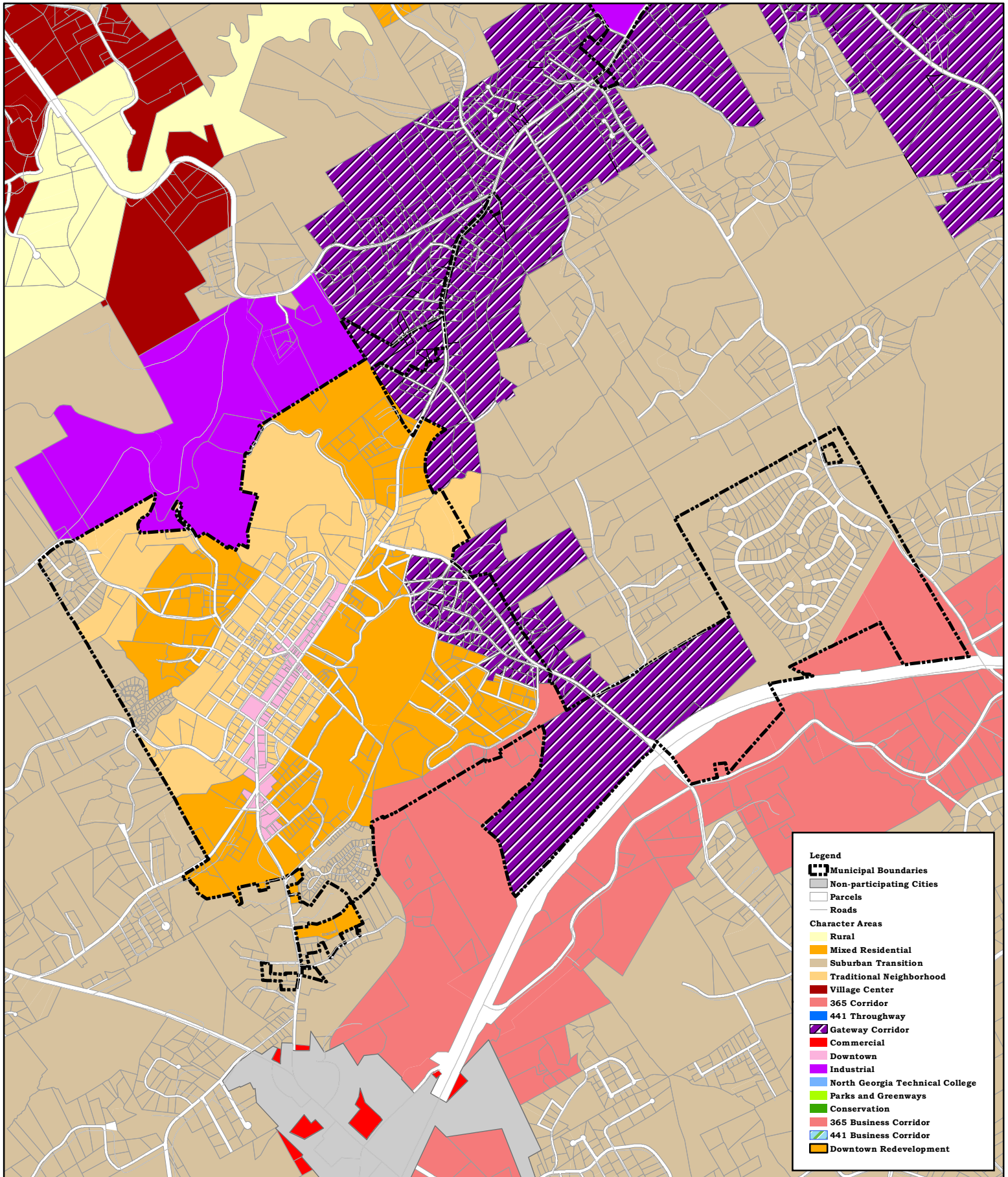
- Municipal Boundaries
- Non-participating Cities
- Roads
- Parcels

**Character Areas**

- Rural
- Mixed Residential
- Suburban Transition
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Village Center
- 365 Corridor
- 441 Throughway
- Gateway Corridor
- Commercial
- Downtown
- Industrial
- North Georgia Technical College
- Parks and Greenways
- Conservation
- 365 Business Corridor
- 441 Business Corridor
- Downtown Redevelopment

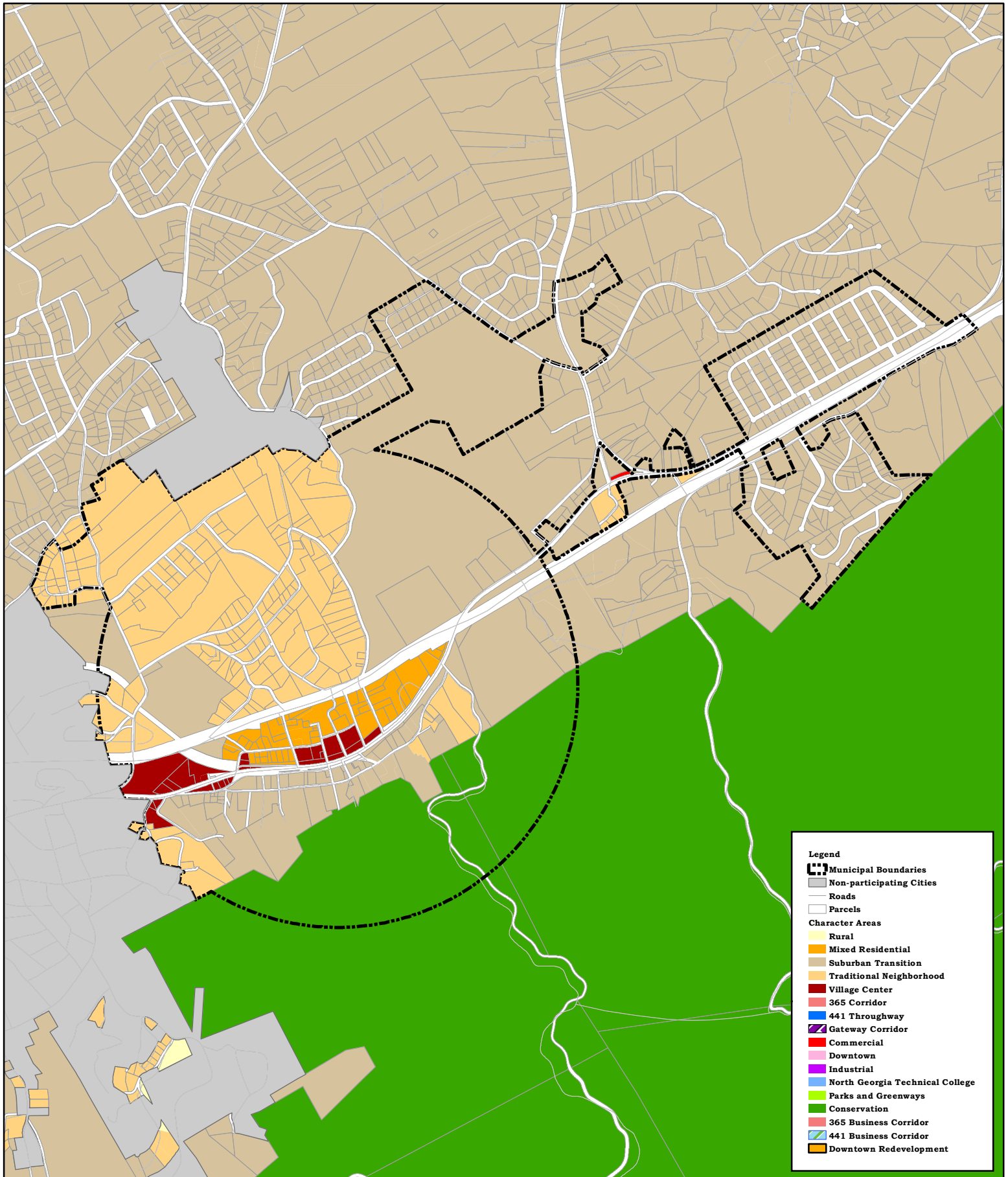
# City of Clarkesville Character Areas





# City of Demorest Character Areas





**Legend**

- Municipal Boundaries
- Non-participating Cities
- Roads
- Parcels

**Character Areas**

- Rural
- Mixed Residential
- Suburban Transition
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Village Center
- 365 Corridor
- 441 Throughway
- Gateway Corridor
- Commercial
- Downtown
- Industrial
- North Georgia Technical College
- Parks and Greenways
- Conservation
- 365 Business Corridor
- 441 Business Corridor
- Downtown Redevelopment

# Town of Mount Airy Character Areas



# Implementation Program

## 4

### *Achieving the Vision and our goals for the community*

The Implementation Program is the overall strategy for achieving the Community Vision and for addressing each of the Community Needs and Opportunities. It identifies specific measures, both short and long-term, that must be undertaken by the community in order to realize the community's goals. Identifying these items helps the community organize their actions.

#### **POLICIES, LONG-TERM ACTIVITIES AND ONGOING PROGRAMS**

One type of action a community can establish to achieve its vision is the establishment of policy. These are those ongoing principles and practices that the community will observe in order to realize specific objectives. Some policies may compliment single action-items while others may provide ongoing guidance and direction to local government officials for making decisions consistent with achieving the Community Vision or addressing Community Issues and Opportunities.

In addition to establishing policy, communities may also establish long-term or ongoing programs and activities that support identified objectives. These measures may compliment policies or may simply be action items that must be employed more than once. These are recognized here so as to distinguish their need and conditions apart from the single-action items and to identify any required special terms or context.

*(Unless otherwise indicated, policy is applicable to all participating governments.)*

- Maintain State Environmental Planning Criteria
- Support the Soque River Watershed Association
- Maintain Service Delivery Agreement
- Maintain support for Habersham County Development Authority (HDCA)
- Work with GDOT to improve/maintain safety and flow conditions on Hwy 365, including possible new interchanges
- Support efforts to develop the Tallulah Falls Rail-to-Trail and comparable trail projects in the area
- Implement the County's 50-year Comprehensive Water Development Plan
- Make use of a Downtown Development Authority (DDA), and or Main Street programs to foster continued revitalization
- Maintain/ Expand sidewalks (Cities)
- Maintain/ Implement existing parks, recreation, greenway, and trail programs

***Policies and Long-Term Objectives from Character Area Implementation Strategies***

<b>#</b>	<b>Action</b>
6	Develop partnerships with local chambers of commerce and tourism agencies to promote and enhance investment opportunities in the (business 441) corridor (Baldwin)
11	Ensure compatible uses through continued enforcement of land use ordinances.
15	Coordinate economic development activities for recruiting new business investments
17	Maintain a cooperative relationship with the college in order to better coordinate land use decisions and institutional goals.
18	Build partnerships that enhance the community's learning environment.
19	Take active community roles in campus master planning.
11	Ensure compatible uses through continued enforcement of land use ordinances.
21	Guide development and use of properties in the Commercial Character Area by providing compatible zoning requirements.
22	Support mixed use development, business community organizations, streetscape enhancements and state community development programs such as Better Hometown and Signature Community.
23	Support design and architectural standards to promote pedestrian- friendly environment by adding sidewalks, bike/trail routes linking neighborhoods and commercial centers.
24	Promote infill development of existing properties.
29	Encourage a relatively high-density mix of retail, offices, services, and employment. (Clarksville)
32	Allow residential development in Downtown District in conjunction with business activity. (Clarksville)
40	Community Beautification Enhancements (maintain/ implement program) (Demorest)
41	Encourage public-private partnerships to continue investment in the area and redevelopment of historic buildings. (Demorest)
45	Protect historic properties and encourage rehabilitation, including National Register Designation
46	Historic properties should be maintained or rehabilitated/restored according to federal guidelines.
58	Protect residents from incompatible land use activities by enforcing current ordinances.
59	Encourage new housing and development by giving incentives for upgrading from manufactured homes to stick built homes.
60	Encourage the maintenance and improvement of current housing.
63	Encourage farming through financial incentives, TDR programs, conservation easements, and restrictive covenants.
66	Support plans for Tallulah Falls Rails to Trails
67	Encourage US Forest Service to give priority to recreation and scenic impact when implementing Best Management Practices.
68	Encourage farming through financial incentives, TDR programs, conservation easements, and restrictive covenants. (County)
69	Widen roadways in (conservation) areas only when absolutely necessary and then carefully design improvements to have minimal visual and environmental impact.
70	Identify historical and cultural sites and specify measures for their protection including available grant funds.

*\*Applicability of policies will depend on correlation between local government and their respective Character Areas. See previous section for details.*

The other elements of the Implementation program are the *Reports of Accomplishments* and the *Community Work Programs*. These are monitoring tools for action items that each community is considering, with one being a review of past performance of the other.

These are being presented back to back for each community to make it easier to track projects that remain in progress or postponed as they cross over from one table to the next.

#### **REPORTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

This is the review of the STWP from the previous five years. As a new STWP is produced every five years, the items within the previous STWP must be identified for their status as either complete, in progress, postponed or cancelled. Those items that have been postponed or are in progress must be shown in the next STWP where appropriate, while those items that have been postponed or cancelled must also include a reason for their status.

#### **COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAMS**

The third forward-thinking element of the Implementation Program is the Community Work Program (STWP). This identifies specific implementation actions the local government or other entities intend to take during the first five-year time frame of the planning period. This can include any ordinances, administrative systems, community improvements or investments, financing arrangements, or other programs or initiatives to be put in place to realize the plan goals.

The action items presented here, which include a projected cost, time frame, and responsible party, are presented to help the local government plan and budget for these activities. The government is not beholden to these exact terms, but rather this is a tool to help the government determine the best means for incorporating any or all of the actions within their annual work scope. If, for example, they are able to complete the tasks at a different time or for less cost that can still be considered progress toward the visions identified within the plan. The objective is to ensure that these items are being considered by the local government within the general 5-year time frame.

**Habersham County Report of Accomplishments**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Update and adopt Industrial Park Covenants	Complete	
Ensure buffers around industrial development	Complete	
Revise CLDR regulations to allow for higher density development	Complete	
Revise Subdivision regulations re: housing preferences	Postponed	Part of new zoning ordinance
Review/revise slope tables in CLDR	Complete	
Expand River Protection Corridor	Complete	
Implement Resource/Rural Conservation Areas	Postponed	Part of new zoning ordinance
Support active farming	Complete	
Scenic road overlay district regulations	Canceled	No longer a priority
Complete salary study	Complete	
Modify regulations for street connectivity	Postponed	Part of new zoning ordinance
Revise Conservation subdivision regulations	Complete	
Implement Agricultural Conservation Subdivision	Postponed	Part of new zoning ordinance
Implement PUD/PRD/PCD ordinances	Postponed	Part of new zoning ordinance
Update Comprehensive Plan Character Areas	In progress	
Revise and Update the 2029 Comprehensive Plan for Unincorporated Habersham County.	In progress	
365/441 corridor master plan	Complete	
Purchase additional land for Industrial Park	Postponed	Postponed-lack of HCDA funds
Concept plan for Business/Office Park	Canceled	Future land use changed
Funding/land for Business/Office Park	Canceled	Future land use changed
Seek the ONE Georgia Grant for airport terminal.	Complete	
Rural Village Overlay	Postponed	Part of new zoning ordinance
Protect historic buildings	Complete	Survey completed by GMRC
Develop by-laws, appointments by HCBOC	Complete	
Complete staffing analysis	Complete	
Planning for bypass of Clarkesville	Cancelled	No longer a priority
Seek LMIG Grant for road and bridge improvements.	In Progress	Annually sought through GDOT
Zone to use existing infrastructure	Postponed	Part of new zoning ordinance
Define incentives for infill subdivisions	Postponed	Part of new zoning ordinance
Establish requirements for visual buffers on 365	Complete	
Revise land development ordinances to focus Industrial development on 365	Complete	
Establish Council of Planning Depts.	Complete	
Develop plan for county wide trail system	Complete	Plan complete through Archway
Modify CLDR to protect archeological sites	Postponed	Part of new zoning ordinance
Seek All System Safety reimbursements for sign upgrading as well as airport construction.	In Progress	(2020)
Increase lot size in Conservation Areas	Postponed	To be addressed as part of ordinance rewrite in 2019
Develop a new zoning ordinance	Postponed	Being written
Update future land use map	In progress	



Establish Council of regional transportation staff	Complete	
Undertake a fire/police service needs study	Complete	
Extend Freeport exemption to all jurisdictions	In Progress	All except Baldwin
Fire/Police service consolidation	Canceled	No appetite among local govts
Develop and adopt a joint sign ordinance	Canceled	Each local govt better served by own
Hire a Land Use Planner / GIS analyst	Complete	Consolidated into one position
Survey existing emergency shelters and conditions	Complete	

### Habersham County Community Work Program

Year	Action	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Responsibility
<i>Action Items Carried over from Previous work Program</i>				
2020	Revise Subdivision regulations re: housing preferences	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2020	Implement Resource/Rural Conservation Areas	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2020	Modify regulations for street connectivity	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2020	Implement Agricultural Conservation Subdivision	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2020	Implement PUD/PRD/PCD ordinances	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2018	Update Comprehensive Plan Character Areas	NA	NA	Planning Dept.
2018	Revise and Update the 2029 Comprehensive Plan for Unincorporated Habersham County.	NA	NA	Planning Dept.
2021	Purchase additional land for Industrial Park	TBD	HCDA Funds	Development Authority
2020	Rural Village Overlay	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2019	Seek LMIG Grant for road and bridge improvements.			
2020	Zone to use existing infrastructure	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2020	Define incentives for infill subdivisions	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2021	Modify CLDR to protect archeological sites	TBD	TBD	Planning Dept.
2019	Seek All System Safety reimbursements for sign upgrading as well as airport construction.	\$10,000	FAA	Airport Commission
2019	Increase lot size in Conservation Areas	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2019	Develop a new zoning ordinance	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2018	Update future land use map	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.

<i>Items from Needs and Opportunities</i>				
2020	1. Develop long-term water and sewer plans	TBD	TBD	County; Cities
2019	2. Develop road improvement plan	\$2,000	General Fund, GDOT	County; Cities
2019	3. Develop facility and vehicle assessment for fire depts. and law enforcement.	\$5,000	General Fund, DCA	County; Cities
2021	4. Update Parks and Recreation Master Plan	\$5,000	General Fund DNR	County; Cities
2020	5. Develop County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan	\$5,000	GDOT	County; Cities
2019	6. Adopt conservation design sbdv. regulations	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	7. Develop/Obtain reference material for architectural design guidelines to promote desired forms among developers.	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	8. Marketing and branding assessment for the county	\$10,000	General Fund GDED; HCDA	County; Cities; HCDA
2020	9. Develop preferred design elements for County and School Board facilities	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities; School Board
2019	10. Survey code enforcement performance	\$2,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	11. Hold workshop to review code enforcement practices	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2020	12. Initialize annual report on code enforcement, tracking site visits and violations.	NA	NA	County; Cities
2020	13. Identify resources to assist homeowners with property revitalization	NA	NA	County; Cities; GMRC
2020	14. Develop freight traffic study for the county	\$3,000	GDOT	County; Cities; GMRC
2019	15. Survey county to identify prime agricultural areas	\$2,000	General Fund, DNR	Planning Dept.
2020	16. Establish policy to protect prime agricultural areas from urban scale utilities.	NA	NA	Planning Dept.
2020	17. Develop/ Obtain a market study for senior housing in Habersham Area	\$2,000	General Fund, DCA	County; Cities; GMRC
2021	18. Identify target sites best suited for senior housing	\$1,000	General Fund DCA	County; Cities; GMRC
2019	19. Convene forum with builders and banks to discuss entry level housing	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2020	H1. Construct new jail	\$33,000,000	Local	Sheriff's Dept.
2020	H2. Construct replacement hangars	\$3,950,000	Federal, State, Local	Public Works, Airport Commission
2019	H3. Complete new County administrative complex	\$5,200,000	General Fund	County Manager
2019	H4. Survey realtors re: potential for high-end housing in Habersham	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.

2019	Completion of New Terminal Building		Federal, State, Local	Public Works, Airport Commission
2019	Relocate Fuel Farm to new terminal building	156,800	Federal, State, Local	Public Works, Airport Commission
2019	Survey Runway 6/24 approaches for obstructions	\$50,000	Federal, State, Local	Public Works, Airport Commission
2019	Acquire land for new west corporate hangar area	400,000	Federal, State, Local	Public Works, Airport Commission
2019	Replace Super Tanker	\$200,000	SPLOST	Fire
2019	Repair Coon Creek bridge	\$231,439	SPLOST	Road Dept.
2019	Runway Drive – base, paving, & marking	\$265,000	SPLOST	Road Dept.
2020	Crack seal, seal coat & re-mark Runway 6/24 including PAPI relocation	\$406,300	Federal, State, Local	Public Works, Airport Commission
2020	Construct west corporate hangar area	\$1,560,000	Federal, State, Local	Public Works, Airport Commission
2020	Replace pumper truck	\$360,000	General Fund	Fire
2020	Construct new cell five	\$3,311,500	TBD	Landfill
2021	Clear Obstructions from flight paths	\$1,215,000	Federal, State, Local	Public Works, Airport Commission
2021	Refurbish Fire Engine (E1 Pumper)	\$300,000	SPLOST, General Fund	Fire
2023	Land/easement acquisition to convert runway to precision approach	\$600,000	Federal, State, Local	Public Works, Airport Commission
2023	New approach lighting	\$250,000	Federal, State, Local	Public Works, Airport Commission
<b>Items from Character Area Implementation Strategies</b>				
2020	1. Update existing land use and development regulations to accommodate desired changes	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept. GMRC
2021	3. Examine the use of CIDs, TADs, BIDs and similar tools to foster development and redevelopment	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2021	7. Develop overlay district regulations to assure adequate right-of-way, and protect the corridor from excess local traffic through access management standards.	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2020	8. Amend ordinances to require development of access roads as a condition for future commercial development along the corridor.	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2019	9. Request DOT to restrict further curb and median cuts (on 441)	NA	NA	Administration
2020	10. Develop access management standards for (365) to reduce traffic conflicts and maintain roadway efficiency.	TBD	GDOT	Planning Dept. GDOT
2020	12. Develop corridor-specific quality development regulations.	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept. GDOT
2020	13. Employ design/development standards for industrial sites	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept. GMRC
2021	14. Incorporate into the	\$3,000	General Fund;	Planning Dept.

			DCA	GMRC
	development review process a “development impact matrix” to determine impacts of specific industries on the environment and infrastructure			
2019	16. Rezone land adjacent to NGTC campus allowing only appropriate residential and commercial uses.	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2022	20. Undertake streetscape improvements to enhance the aesthetics and pedestrian orientation	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept. GMRC
2020	25. Develop a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) ordinance	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2020	26. Consider an Infill Development ordinance	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2022	27. Develop street connectivity requirements for new developments	TBD	General Fund	Planning Dept. GDOT
2020	51. Develop policies for decentralized waste treatment.	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept. NRCS
2022	52. Establish the urban service boundary.	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2022	53. Expand sewer and water into Suburban Transition areas on a priority basis.	TBD	General Fund	Public Works
2020	54. Modify ordinances to encourage mixed use and higher density residential development.	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept. GMRC
2021	55. Implement a tree preservation ordinance.	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2020	56. Modify ordinances to encourage Rails to Trails organization and greenways.	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept. GMRC
2020	64. Consider raising minimum lot size in areas without water and sewer	\$3,000	TBD	Planning Dept. GMRC
2023	71. Develop a comprehensive tourism strategy for Habersham County to foster tourism for the local economy with emphasis for the potential for this area.	TBD	TBD	HDEC

**City of Clarkesville Report of Accomplishments**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Update Solid Waste Management Plan	Complete	
Improve traffic flow by coordinating with DOT at key intersections	In Progress	(2020)
Purchase new garbage truck	Complete	
Purchase new custom pumper fire truck	Complete	
Coordinate code enforcement for consistency	In Progress	(2020)
Coordinate Water Resources Plan with County, Cities	in Progress	(2020)
Complete Streetscape Project	Complete	
Reestablishment of DDA	Complete	
Continue Greenway and Pedestrian Program	Complete	Policy
Develop and Adopt Historic Properties Preservation Standards	In Progress	(2020)
Develop and Adopt Architectural Design and Review Standards in HPC	In Progress	(2020)
Coordinate tax policies on CID's and TAD's	Complete	
Participate in the development of County-Wide recreation plan	Postponed	Awaiting input from other communities (2021 - See Item #4 <i>Needs and Opportunities</i> Section)
Develop plan for county wide trail system	Complete	
Attract and Retain Inn/Small Hotel	In Progress	
Develop and keep an inventory of housing and sales data	In Progress	
Improve and expand city sidewalk facilities	Complete	Policy
Develop and adopt inter-parcel connectivity standards for development	Complete	
Establish Process for Coordination of City and County Land Use Plans	Complete	
Complete new public safety facility to house Police and Fire	Complete	
Update Comprehensive Plan	Complete	

**City of Clarkesville Community Work Program**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<i><b>Action Items Carried over from Previous work Program</b></i>				
2020	Improve traffic flow by coordinating with DOT at key intersections	TBD	GDOT	Administration
2020	Coordinate code enforcement for consistency	NA	NA	Planning; Administration
2020	Coordinate Water Resources Plan with County, Cities	\$5,000	General Fund	Planning; Administration
2020	Develop and Adopt Historic Properties Preservation Standards	\$5,000	DNR	Planning; GMRC
2020	Develop and Adopt Architectural Design and Review Standards in HPC	\$5,000	DNR	Planning; GMRC
2021	Attract and Retain Inn/Small Hotel	TBD	TBD	Administration; HCDA
2018	Update Comprehensive Plan	NA	NA	Administration
<i><b>Items from Needs and Opportunities</b></i>				
2020	1. Develop long-term water and sewer plans	TBD	TBD	County; Cities
2019	2. Develop road improvement plan	\$2,000	General Fund, GDOT	County; Cities
2019	3. Develop facility and vehicle assessment for fire depts. and law enforcement.	\$5,000	General Fund, DCA	County; Cities
2021	4. Update Parks and Recreation Master Plan	\$5,000	General Fund DNR	County; Cities
2020	5. Develop County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan	\$5,000	GDOT	County; Cities
2019	6. Adopt conservation design sbdv. regulations	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	7. Develop/Obtain reference material for architectural design guidelines to promote desired forms among developers.	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	8. Marketing and branding assessment for the county	\$10,000	General Fund GDED; HCDA	County; Cities; HCDA
2020	9. Develop preferred design elements for County and School Board facilities	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities; School Board
2019	10. Survey code enforcement performance	\$2,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	11. Hold workshop to review code enforcement practices	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2020	12. Initialize annual report on code enforcement, tracking site visits and violations.	NA	NA	County; Cities
2020	13. Identify resources to assist homeowners with property revitalization	NA	NA	County; Cities; GMRC
2020	14. Develop freight traffic study for the county	\$3,000	GDOT	County; Cities; GMRC
2019	15. Survey county to identify prime agricultural areas	\$2,000	General Fund, DNR	Administration
2020	16. Establish policy to protect prime agricultural areas from urban scale utilities.	NA	NA	Administration

2020	17. Develop/ Obtain a market study for senior housing in Habersham Area	\$2,000	General Fund, DCA	County; Cities; GMRC
2021	18. Identify target sites best suited for senior housing	\$1,000	General Fund DCA	County; Cities; GMRC
2019	19. Convene forum with builders and banks to discuss entry level housing	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	C1. Establish conceptual development terms for former courthouse property	\$5,000	General Fund	Administration
2019	C2. Reach formal agreement with County on development terms for former courthouse property	NA	NA	Administration
2019	C3. Survey realtors re: potential for high-end housing in Clarkesville	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration; County
2023	Partner with county to find multi use Developer for old-courthouse site	NA	NA	Administration
<b>Items from Character Area Implementation Strategies</b>				
2020	1. Update existing land use and development regulations to accommodate desired changes	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Board; GMRC
2021	7. Develop overlay district regulations to assure adequate right-of-way, and protect the corridor from excess local traffic through access management standards.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2020	8. Amend ordinances to require development of access roads as a condition for future commercial development along the corridor.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2019	9. Request DOT to restrict further curb and median cuts (on 441)	NA	NA	Administration
2020	13. Employ design/development standards for industrial sites	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Board; GMRC
2021	14. Incorporate into the development review process a “development impact matrix” to determine impacts of specific industries on the environment and infrastructure	\$3,000	General Fund; DCA	Planning Board GMRC
2022	20. Undertake streetscape improvements to enhance the aesthetics and pedestrian orientation	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Board/DDA/ Main Street Board
2021	30. Require design standards that are pedestrian-oriented with strong walkable connections between different uses.	\$1,000	General Fund, DCA	Administration, GMRC
2021	31. Update architectural and design standards for existing and new construction to preserve these sites and the district.	\$2,000	General Fund, DCA	Administration, GMRC
2020	32. Identify historical and cultural sites and adopt local requirements consistent with state and federal preservation standards.	\$3,000	General Fund, DNR	Administration, GMRC
2020	47. Develop design and architectural standards for new development in historic district.	\$5,000	General Fund, DNR	Planning Board/DDA/ Main Street Board
2020	48. Amend ordinances to require new developments to include parks and	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration

	other amenities.			
<b>2020</b>	49. Amend ordinances to require new development to connect internal pedestrian circulation systems to the nearest off-site sidewalks.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
<b>2023</b>	50. Amend ordinances to require master planned new development to include neighborhood-serving commercial centers plus tree preservation and replacement standards	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
<b>2023</b>	57. Implement neighborhood watch programs.	TBD	TBD	Administration
<b>2020</b>	61. Add and enforce signs to reduce cut-through traffic on residential streets.	TBD	General Fund; GDOT	Administration; Public Works
<b>2022</b>	62. Identify appropriate areas and add sidewalks where feasible to encourage walk-ability and increase neighborhood connectivity.	TBD	General Fund	Administration



**Town of Alto Report of Accomplishments**

Action Item	Status	Comment
Resume work on zoning ordinance to preserve areas for ag/rural & address land use and development	Complete	Ordinance adopted
Repair asphalt roads/driveways that were damaged by new waterline construction. Repave all parking lots and new memorial park & trail.	In Progress	(2020 as “Repave new Veterans Memorial Park”)
Plan/ develop new recreation areas/ playgrounds	In Progress	(2019) More landscaping needed
Adopt standards that prohibit development in environmentally sensitive areas. The town building inspector should take a lead role in this activity.	In Progress	(2019) Greenspace & Zoning Ordinances Adopted
Extend 6” Waterlines to Hwy. 365 and to Apple Pie Ridge Road approx. 6375 feet.	In Progress	(2021) SPLOST Project
Develop simple prioritization system for new traffic facilities, including improvements to existing roads and additions of new roads. Continue to work with GDOT traffic studies, including LMIG program to improve existing road conditions.	In Progress	(2020) Planning a Paving Schedule for the Town Streets
Generate an annexation policy that innumerate conditions that make annexation an appropriate decision	In Progress	(2019) Updating our Annexation Benefit Sheet
Complete a redevelopment plan for the revitalization of the Main Street District.	In Progress	(2020) Zoning Ordinance and planning.
Develop a public education campaign to (1) inform community members of restricted areas near railroad and (2) improve overall railroad safety. Partner with neighboring jurisdictions where appropriate and coordinate with sidewalk improvement plans.	In Progress	(2019) Planning public education classes and public outreach.
Complete walkability audit to determine the most effective location for investing in sidewalks.	In Progress	(2019)
Create database of needed services/ businesses/ jobs in the community along w/ strategies to attract those to town.	In Progress	(2020) Create a registry of jobs/businesses/services
Research Incentives for improving existing housing	In Progress	(2020) Research options of incentives for upgrading housing
Plant trees along streets to provide shading for pedestrians and bicyclists. Encourage all new developments to plant trees in landscape.	In Progress	(2020) Determine the placement of shade in sidewalk areas and ROWs
Develop an assistance program to help low-income renters pay deposits and/or first and last month’s rent.	In Progress	(2020) Possible CDBG Funding
Develop regulations to guide design of infill housing so new structures fit with the existing character.	In Progress	(2020)
Develop greenways & pedestrian walkways	In Progress	(2021)
New water tank and storage	In Progress	(2020) Research various funding options
Pursue Sewer Source/Connection	In Progress	(2020) Looking at best avenue for sewer
Review sites listed on NAHRGIS for those worth pursuing as National Register sites and work with the Georgia HPD to pursue their designation.	In Progress	(2020) Research and recognize sites
Possibly develop a sports complex for the southern end of the county.	Postponed	(2021) Discuss with County and assess needs
Develop plan for county wide trail system	In Progress	(2020 See Item #4 <i>Needs and Opportunities</i> Section)
365/441 corridor master plan	Complete	

**Town of Alto Community Work Program**

Year	Action	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Responsibility
<i>Action Items Carried over from Previous work Program</i>				
2020	Repave new Veterans Memorial Park & trail.	\$50,000	GDOT; SPLOST	Administration Public Works
2019	Plan/ develop new recreation areas/ playgrounds	\$10,000	General Fund	Administration Public Works
2019	Adopt standards that prohibit development in environmentally sensitive areas.	\$500	General Fund	Administration
2021	Extend 6” Waterlines to Hwy. 365 and to Apple Pie Ridge Road approx. 6375 feet.	\$1,000,000	SPLOST; Grants, Loans	Administration Public Works
2020	Develop simple prioritization system for new traffic facilities, including improvements to existing roads and additions of new roads.	TBD	General Fund	Administration Public Works
2019	Generate an annexation policy	\$5,000	General Fund; DCA	Administration; GMRC
2020	Complete a redevelopment plan for the Main Street District.	\$10,000	General Fund; DCA	Administration; GMRC
2019	Develop a public education campaign to (1) inform community members of restricted areas near railroad and (2) improve overall railroad safety.	\$3,000	General Fund	Administration
2019	Complete walkability audit to determine the most effective location for investing in sidewalks.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2020	Create database of needed services/ businesses/ jobs in the community along w/ strategies to attract those to town.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2020	Research Incentives for improving existing housing	NA	NA	Administration
2020	Plant trees along streets to provide shading for pedestrians and bicyclists.	\$5,000	General Fund	Administration
2020	Develop an assistance program to help low-income renters pay deposits and/or first and last month’s rent.	TBD	TBD	Administration
2020	Develop regulations to guide design of infill housing so new structures fit with the existing character.	\$3,000	General Fund	Administration
2021	Develop greenways & pedestrian walkways	TBD	TBD	Administration
2020	New water tank and storage	\$1,000,000	SPLOST; Grants, Loans	Administration
2020	Pursue Sewer Source/Connection	TBD	TBD	Administration
2020	Review sites listed on NAHRGIS for those worth pursuing as National Register sites and work with the Georgia HPD to pursue their designation.	\$5,000	DNR	Administration, GMRC
2021	Possibly develop a sports complex for the southern end of the county.	TBD	TBD	Administration; County

<i>Items from Needs and Opportunities</i>				
2020	1. Develop long-term water and sewer plans	TBD	TBD	County; Cities
2019	2. Develop road improvement plan	\$2,000	General Fund, GDOT	County; Cities
2019	3. Develop facility and vehicle assessment for fire depts. and law enforcement.	\$5,000	General Fund, DCA	County; Cities
2021	4. Update Parks and Recreation Master Plan	\$5,000	General Fund DNR	County; Cities
2020	5. Develop County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan	\$5,000	GDOT	County; Cities
2019	6. Adopt conservation design sbdv. regulations	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	7. Develop/Obtain reference material for architectural design guidelines to promote desired forms among developers.	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	8. Marketing and branding assessment for the county	\$10,000	General Fund GDED; HCDA	County; Cities; HCDA
2020	9. Develop preferred design elements for County and School Board facilities	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities; School Board
2019	10. Survey code enforcement performance	\$2,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	11. Hold workshop to review code enforcement practices	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2020	12. Initialize annual report on code enforcement, tracking site visits and violations.	NA	NA	County; Cities
2020	13. Identify resources to assist homeowners with property revitalization	NA	NA	County; Cities; GMRC
2020	14. Develop freight traffic study for the county	\$3,000	GDOT	County; Cities; GMRC
2019	15. Survey county to identify prime agricultural areas	\$2,000	General Fund, DNR	Administration
2020	16. Establish policy to protect prime agricultural areas from urban scale utilities.	NA	NA	Administration
2020	17. Develop/ Obtain a market study for senior housing in Habersham Area	\$2,000	General Fund, DCA	County; Cities; GMRC
2021	18. Identify target sites best suited for senior housing	\$1,000	General Fund DCA	County; Cities; GMRC
2019	19. Convene forum with builders and banks to discuss entry level housing	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2020	A1. Develop Sewer expansion plan	TBD	TBD	Administration
<i>Items from Character Area Implementation Strategies</i>				
2020	1. Update existing land use and development regulations to accommodate desired changes	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept. GMRC
2021	3. Examine the use of CIDs, TADs, BIDs and similar tools to foster development and redevelopment	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
2020	10. Develop access management standards for (365) to reduce traffic	TBD	GDOT	Planning Dept. GDOT

	conflicts and maintain roadway efficiency.			
<b>2020</b>	12. Develop corridor-specific quality development regulations.	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept. GDOT
<b>2020</b>	25. Develop a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) ordinance	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
<b>2020</b>	26. Consider an Infill Development ordinance	\$1,000	General Fund	Planning Dept.
<b>2022</b>	27. Develop street connectivity requirements for new developments	TBD	General Fund	Planning Dept. GDOT
<b>2020</b>	47. Develop design and architectural standards for new development in historic district.	\$5,000	General Fund, DNR	Planning Board/DDA/ Main Street Board
<b>2020</b>	48. Amend ordinances to require new developments to include parks and other amenities.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
<b>2020</b>	49. Amend ordinances to require new development to connect internal pedestrian circulation systems to the nearest off-site sidewalks.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
<b>2023</b>	50. Amend ordinances to require master planned new development to include neighborhood-serving commercial centers plus tree preservation and replacement standards	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
<b>2023</b>	57. Implement neighborhood watch programs.	TBD	TBD	Administration
<b>2020</b>	61. Add and enforce signs to reduce cut-through traffic on residential streets.	TBD	General Fund; GDOT	Administration; Public Works
<b>2022</b>	62. Identify appropriate areas and add sidewalks where feasible to encourage walk-ability and increase neighborhood connectivity.	TBD	General Fund	Administration

**City of Baldwin Report of Accomplishments**

<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Conduct a cost/benefit analysis of renovating old Garment Factory facility for New City Hall	Complete	
Conduct a cost/benefit analysis of renovating old Carwood building for use as a new community center	Complete	
Stormwater collection & BMPs (from current plans)	In Progress	(2019)
Develop & implement bicycle & pedestrian plan	In Progress	(2020 See Item #4 <i>Needs and Opportunities</i> Section)
Pursue funding for new Farmers Market	Complete	
Research and analyze the use of TADs, CIDs & BIDs for promoting new growth & development	In Progress	(2019)
Develop business plan for Farmers Market	In Progress	(2019)
Pursue Opportunity Zone designation	Complete	
Develop new Farmers Market	Complete	
Pursue grant funding for new City Hall	Complete	
Implement water and sewer line inventory	Complete	
Begin joint comp plan update w/Habersham	Complete	
*Implement TND Ordinance	In Progress	(2019)
*Implement Infill Development Ordinance	In Progress	(2019)
*Implement Senior Housing Ordinance	In Progress	(2020)
*Implement Mass Grading Ordinance	In Progress	(2020)
*Implement Conservation Subdivision Ordinance	In Progress	(2019)
*Implement Big Box Ordinance	In Progress	(2019)
*Implement street connectivity requirements for new developments	In Progress	(2019)
Develop a bicycle and pedestrian master plan	In Progress	(2020 See Item #4 <i>Needs and Opportunities</i> Section)
Implement an historic resource protection program	Postponed	Deferred as a priority (2022)
Coordinate with Banks Co. re: Watershed Protection Ordinance	Complete	
Complete comp plan update	Complete	

**City of Baldwin Community Work Program**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<i><b>Action Items Carried over from Previous work Program</b></i>				
2019	Stormwater collection & BMPs	\$175,000	Grants	City
2019	Examine the use of CIDs, TADs, BIDs and similar tools to foster development and redevelopment	N/A	N/A	City
2019	Develop business plan for Farmers Market	\$1,000	City	City
2019	Implement TND Ordinance	N/A	N/A	City
2019	Implement Infill Development Ordinance	N/A	N/A	City
2020	Implement Senior Housing Ordinance	NA	NA	City
2020	Implement Mass Grading Ordinance	NA	NA	City
2019	Implement Conservation Sbdv Ordinance	NA	NA	City
2019	Implement Big Box Ordinance	NA	NA	City
2019	Implement street connectivity requirements for new developments	NA	NA	City
2022	Implement a historic resource protection program	TBD	TBD	Administration
<i><b>Items from Needs and Opportunities</b></i>				
2020	1. Develop long-term water and sewer plans	TBD	TBD	County; Cities
2019	2. Develop road improvement plan	\$2,000	General Fund, GDOT	County; Cities
2019	3. Develop facility and vehicle assessment for fire depts. and law enforcement.	\$5,000	General Fund, DCA	County; Cities
2021	4. Update Parks and Recreation Master Plan	\$5,000	General Fund DNR	County; Cities
2020	5. Develop County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan	\$5,000	GDOT	County; Cities
2019	6. Adopt conservation design sbdv. regulations	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	7. Develop/Obtain reference material for architectural design guidelines to promote desired forms among developers.	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	8. Marketing and branding assessment for the county	\$10,000	General Fund GDED; HCDA	County; Cities; HCDA
2020	9. Develop preferred design elements for County and School Board facilities	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities; School Board
2019	10. Survey code enforcement performance	\$2,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	11. Hold workshop to review code enforcement practices	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2020	12. Initialize annual report on code enforcement, tracking site visits and violations.	NA	NA	County; Cities
2020	13. Identify resources to assist homeowners with property revitalization	NA	NA	County; Cities; GMRC

2020	14. Develop freight traffic study for the county	\$3,000	GDOT	County; Cities; GMRC
2019	15. Survey county to identify prime agricultural areas	\$2,000	General Fund, DNR	Administration
2020	16. Establish policy to protect prime agricultural areas from urban scale utilities.	NA	NA	Administration
2020	17. Develop/ Obtain a market study for senior housing in Habersham Area	\$2,000	General Fund, DCA	County; Cities; GMRC
2021	18. Identify target sites best suited for senior housing	\$1,000	General Fund DCA	County; Cities; GMRC
2019	19. Convene forum with builders and banks to discuss entry level housing	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2018	Develop a greenspace plan	\$5,000	City, DNR	City, Counties, GMRC
2018	Seek opportunities to purchase Baldwin Falls	N/A	N/A	City
2019	New water source and capacity study	\$15,000	City, GEFA, Grants	City
2019	Pursue funding for new greenspace	TBD	City, DNR	City
2019	Implement first round of sidewalk improvements	\$100,000	GDOT, Grants	City
2019	Pursue funding for water system improvements	\$1,000	City	City
2019	Pursue 441 business and development study	\$3,000	City, Grants	City
2019	Survey realtors re: potential for high-end housing in Habersham	NA	NA	Administration
2020	Water system improvements	TBD	City, GEFA, SPLOST	City
2020	Pursue funding to purchase (more of) Baldwin Falls	TBD	Grants	City
2020	Develop and implement a Stormwater Management ordinance	\$2,000	General Fund	Administration
2020	Develop and implement an overlay district for the US 441 corridor	\$2,000	General Fund	Administration
2023	Develop and implement street connectivity requirements for new development	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
<b>Items from Character Area Implementation Strategies</b>				
2019	1. Update existing land use and development regulations to accommodate desired changes	\$2,000	General Fund	Administration
2020	2. Develop an overlay district for the US 441 corridor	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2021	3. Examine the use of CIDs, TADs, BIDs and similar tools to foster development and redevelopment	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2019	4. Develop a Stormwater Management ordinance	\$5,000	General Fund	Administration
2020	10. Develop access management standards for (365) to reduce traffic conflicts and maintain roadway efficiency.	TBD	GDOT	Administration; GDOT
2020	12. Develop corridor-specific quality development regulations.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration; GDOT

<b>2019</b>	34. Update and implement the Downtown Redevelopment overlay ordinance	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
<b>2021</b>	39. Develop and implement a city-wide historic resource management plan	\$5,000	General Fund, DNR	Administration, GMRC
<b>2023</b>	71. Develop a comprehensive tourism strategy for Habersham County to foster tourism for the local economy with emphasis for the potential for this area.	TBD	TBD	HDEC



**City of Demorest Report of Accomplishments**

Action	Status	Comment
Develop a strategic plan for creating downtown leisure facilities, programs, or events	In progress	(2019)
Initiate a municipal code enforcement program or partner with Habersham County or other municipalities for these services	Postponed	Deferred until after update of ordinances (2020)
Add eligible properties to the National Register of Historic Places.	Complete	
Develop a neighborhood watch system throughout the city’s residential and commercial areas.	Complete	Citizens group in place
Implement measures identified in the County’s 50-year Comprehensive Water Development Plan to meet the City’s long-term water supply needs.	Complete	(Now Ongoing Policy) Water Work Issue Group
Add an additional 6.9 MGD of capacity for water treatment to serve demand in 2030.	Postponed	(2020) Still acquiring funds
Implement or participate in the implementation of water conservation programs.	Complete	Water Conservation Plan
Review available sewerage capacity when permitting new developments within the City’s limits.	Complete	
Develop a master plan for expanding sewer.	Complete	SDS
Community Beautification and Enhancement – complete downtown streetscape improvements.	In progress	(2019) Ph 2 started
Develop an official city website.	Complete	
Develop a streamlined system for community members to report alleged code violations.	Postponed	(2020) Delayed while addressing other priorities
Reconsider, revise and readopt existing intergovernmental agreements, as appropriate.	Complete	
Conduct an inventory and prepare a list of vacant and developable sites within the city	Complete	Nextsite Program
Develop a housing search program with Piedmont College to help connect off-campus students with available housing in the community	Cancelled	Deferred to College
Participate in the development of a homebuyer education program in partnership with other agencies and private groups.	Cancelled	No longer a priority
Develop a partnership or secure an agreement with the campus security at Piedmont College to coordinate the effective protection of residents and students alike.	Postponed	(2020) Delayed while addressing other priorities
Review existing communication strategies with residents, and develop a plan for better connecting with community members.	Complete	Nixle, Social Media
Develop an annexation policy to define when annexation is or is not in the best interest and to define its expectations for prospective developers.	Postponed	(2020) Deferred as a priority
Complete walkability audit to determine effective locations for investing in sidewalk infrastructure.	Complete	
Extend Freeport exemption to all jurisdictions	Cancelled	No longer a priority
Develop a plan to motivate new businesses to locate downtown	In progress	(2019)
Revise sbdv. regulations re. housing preferences	Cancelled	No longer a priority
Update the survey of historic resources	Cancelled	Moved to long-term objectives

Identify facility-sharing possibilities with Piedmont College; create a procedure for reserving and using those facilities to City and community events.	Postponed	(2021) Deferred as a priority
Revise development regulations with an eye toward the preservation of natural resources.	Postponed	(2021) Deferred as a priority
Develop a sidewalk installation and repair program and secure funding for its implementation.	Complete	
Prepare and implement a local street intersection program to reduce intersection safety hazards.	Cancelled	No longer a priority
Develop plan for county wide trail system	Postponed	(2020 See Item #4 <i>Needs and Opportunities</i> Section)
365/441 corridor master plan	Complete	
Historic Preservation Ordinance	Complete	
Prepare, adopt, and implement historic district design guidelines to insure appropriate scales, setbacks, materials, and signage are achieved	Complete	
Identify and acquire additional land for festivals and green spaces.	Postponed	(2021) Deferred as a priority
Community Beautification Enhancement – Identify public spaces and rights of way that could benefit from additional trees or vegetation.	Postponed	(2021) Deferred as a priority
Develop a plan to work with Piedmont College to beautify Lake Road	Postponed	(2019) Deferred as a priority
Develop a streamlined system for community members to report alleged code violations.	Postponed	(2020) Deferred as a priority
Prepare and adopt a zoning ordinance replacing the city's land use ordinance.	Postponed	(2019) Deferred as a priority
Develop unified zoning / land use ordinances	In Progress	(2019)
Hire additional police staff to meet the need for increased patrolling in the area.	Complete	
Plan/ install improvements to downtown park.	In Progress	(2019) Power/lights upgraded
Establish Council of Planning Depts.	Cancelled	No longer a priority
Conduct analysis and provide recommendations for improved access mgmt. along Historic 441.	Postponed	(2021) Deferred as a priority
Participate in the planning/ construction of the Tullulah Falls RR Multi-use trail; provide connections to other bike/pedestrian facilities in the city.	Complete	(Now Long-Range Objective)
Update Comprehensive Plan	Complete	
Community Beautification Enhancement – Install gateway improvements.	Postponed	(2021) Still acquiring funds
Develop and adopt a sign ordinance	Complete	
Consider needs for police and fire departments	Complete	
Consider need for a community center	Postponed	(2022) Funding options not available at this time
Repair old sewer lines	Complete	
Upgrade water meters to radio read system	Complete	
Traffic Calming Program – monitor performance of existing measures and revise or add calming features where appropriate.	Complete	

**City of Demorest Community Work Program**

Year	Action	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Responsibility
<b><i>Action Items Carried over from Previous work Program</i></b>				
2019	Develop a strategic plan for creating downtown leisure facilities, programs, or events	50,000	General Fund, SPLOST, Grant	City
2020	Initiate code enforcement program (or partner with other governments for these services)	N/A	N/A	City
2021	Add 6.9 MGD of capacity for water treatment to serve demand in 2030.	TBD	General Fund	City
2019	Community Beautification and Enhancement – complete downtown streetscape improvements.	150,000	General Fund	City
2020	Develop a partnership/ agreement with campus security at Piedmont College to coordinate protection.	N/A	General Fund	City
2020	Develop an annexation policy	TBD	TBC	City
2019	Develop a plan to motivate new businesses to locate downtown	2,000	General Fund, DED	City
2021	Identify facility-sharing possibilities and procedures with Piedmont College	1,000	General Fund	City
2021	Revise development regulations with an eye toward the preservation of natural resources.	3,000	DCA, General Fund	GMRC, DCA, City
2021	Identify and acquire land for festivals and green spaces.	N/A	General Fund	City
2021	Community Beautification Enhancement – Identify public spaces and rights of way that could benefit from additional trees or vegetation.	\$1,000	General Fund	City
2019	Develop a plan to work with Piedmont College to beautify Lake Road	1,000	DNR, General Fund	City
2020	Develop a streamlined system for community members to report alleged code violations.	TBD	DCA, General Fund	GMRC, DCA, City
2019	Prepare and adopt a zoning ordinance replacing the city’s land use ordinance.	5,000	DCA, General Fund	GMRC, DCA, City
2019	Develop unified zoning / land use ordinances	5,000	DCA, General Fund	GMRC, DCA, City
2021	Plan and install improvements to downtown park.	TBD	General Fund	City
2021	Conduct analysis and provide recommendations for improved access management along Historic 441	TBD	GDOT, General Fund	GDOT, City
2020	Community Beautification Enhancement – Install gateway improvements.	TBD	TBD	City
2020	Consider need for a community center	N/A	N/A	City
<b><i>Items from Needs and Opportunities</i></b>				
2020	1. Develop long-term water and sewer plans	TBD	TBD	County; Cities
2019	2. Develop road improvement plan	\$2,000	General Fund, GDOT	County; Cities

2019	3. Develop facility and vehicle assessment for fire depts. and law enforcement.	\$5,000	General Fund, DCA	County; Cities
2021	4. Update Parks and Recreation Master Plan	\$5,000	General Fund DNR	County; Cities
2020	5. Develop County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan	\$5,000	GDOT	County; Cities
2019	6. Adopt conservation design sbdv. regulations	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	7. Develop/Obtain reference material for architectural design guidelines to promote desired forms among developers.	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	8. Marketing and branding assessment for the county	\$10,000	General Fund GDED; HCDA	County; Cities; HCDA
2020	9. Develop preferred design elements for County and School Board facilities	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities; School Board
2019	10. Survey code enforcement performance	\$2,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	11. Hold workshop to review code enforcement practices	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2020	12. Initialize annual report on code enforcement, tracking site visits and violations.	NA	NA	County; Cities
2020	13. Identify resources to assist homeowners with property revitalization	NA	NA	County; Cities; GMRC
2020	14. Develop freight traffic study for the county	\$3,000	GDOT	County; Cities; GMRC
2019	15. Survey county to identify prime agricultural areas	\$2,000	General Fund, DNR	Administration
2020	16. Establish policy to protect prime agricultural areas from urban scale utilities.	NA	NA	Administration
2020	17. Develop/ Obtain a market study for senior housing in Habersham Area	\$2,000	General Fund, DCA	County; Cities; GMRC
2021	18. Identify target sites best suited for senior housing	\$1,000	General Fund DCA	County; Cities; GMRC
2019	19. Convene forum with builders and banks to discuss entry level housing	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2020	D1. Build/Rebuild Fire Department	TBD	General Fund; Grants; Loans	City
2020	D2. Renovate existing courtroom	TBD	General Fund; Grants; Loans	City
2019	D3. Review existing ordinances; Update as needed; Post new ordinances online	\$10,000	General Fund; DCA	City
2020	D4. Pursue funding assistance for streetscape improvements	NA	NA	City
2019	Participate in development of a homebuyer education program	N/A	N/A	City
2020	Traffic Calming Program – monitor performance of existing measures and revise or add features where appropriate.	3,000	GDOT, City	GDOT, City
2020	Update city website.	10,000	City	City
2020	Develop a streamlined system for community members to report alleged	5,000	City	City

	code violations.			
2020	Upgrade county water meters to the cities radio read system	20,000	GEFA, City	City
2021	Repair old sewer lines	TBD	GEFA	City
2021	Develop growth strategies for urbanizing areas	\$2,000	General Fund, DCA	Administration, GMRC
2021	Encourage public-private partnerships to continue investment in the area and redevelopment of historic buildings.	NA	NA	City, GMRC
2021	Establish a local Historic District by ordinance governed by a Historic Preservation Commission charged with implementing design guidelines.	\$5,000	General Fund, DNR	City, GMRC
2022	Pursue National Register of Historic Places designation for eligible structures.	TBD	General Fund, DNR	City, GMRC
<b>Items from Character Area Implementation Strategies</b>				
2021	7. Develop overlay district regulations to assure adequate right-of-way, and protect the corridor from excess local traffic through access management standards.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2020	8. Amend ordinances to require development of access roads as a condition for future commercial development along the corridor.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2019	9. Request DOT to restrict further curb and median cuts (on 441)	NA	NA	Administration
2020	10. Develop access management standards for (365) to reduce traffic conflicts and maintain roadway efficiency.	TBD	GDOT	Administration GDOT
2020	12. Develop corridor-specific quality development regulations.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration GDOT
2022	20. Undertake streetscape improvements to enhance the aesthetics and pedestrian orientation	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration GMRC
2020	43. Establish a local Historic District by ordinance governed by a Historic Preservation Commission charged with implementing design guidelines.	\$5,000	General Fund; DNR	Administration; GMRC
2021	44. Pursue National Register of Historic Places designation for eligible structures.	TBD	TBD	Administration; GMRC
2020	47. Develop design and architectural standards for new development in historic district.	\$5,000	General Fund, DNR	City; DDA
2020	48. Amend ordinances to require new developments to include parks and other amenities.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2020	49. Amend ordinances to require new development to connect internal pedestrian circulation systems to the nearest off-site sidewalks.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2023	50. Amend ordinances to require master planned new development to include neighborhood-serving commercial centers plus tree preservation and	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration

	replacement standards			
2020	51. Develop policies for decentralized waste treatment.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration NRCS
2022	52. Establish the urban service boundary.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2022	53. Expand sewer and water into Suburban Transition areas on a priority basis.	TBD	General Fund	Public Works
2020	54. Modify ordinances to encourage mixed use and higher density residential development.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration GMRC
2021	55. Implement a tree preservation ordinance.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2020	56. Modify ordinances to encourage Rails to Trails organization and greenways.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration GMRC
2023	57. Implement neighborhood watch programs.	TBD	TBD	Administration
2020	61. Add and enforce signs to reduce cut-through traffic on residential streets.	TBD	General Fund; GDOT	Administration; Public Works
2022	62. Identify appropriate areas and add sidewalks where feasible to encourage walk-ability and increase neighborhood connectivity.	TBD	General Fund	Administration
2023	71. Develop a comprehensive tourism strategy for Habersham County to foster tourism for the local economy with emphasis for the potential for this area.	TBD	TBD	HDEC

**Mt. Airy Report of Accomplishments**

<b>Action</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Comment</b>
National Register of Historic Places designations	In Progress	(2019)
School House renovation plans	In Progress	(2019)
Park improvements	Complete	
Upgrade 6" water line	Complete	
Develop a capital improvement program	In Progress	(2019)
Sign maintenance	Complete	
Replace 2" metal lines	In Progress	(2019)
Develop plan for county wide trail system	In Progress	(2020 See Item #4 <i>Needs and Opportunities</i> Section)
Policed 24 hours	Postponed	(2020) Pending funds
Downtown redevelopment plan	Cancelled	Deferred as a priority
Creation of land conservation housing incentives	Cancelled	No longer a priority
Upgrade wells	In Progress	(2020)
Repair sidewalks	Complete	
Transportation study for Main Street District	Cancelled	Deferred as a priority
Sidewalk installation and repair program	Complete	
Update Comprehensive Plan	Complete	
Develop a tree ordinance	In Progress	(2019)

**Mt. Airy Community Work Program**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<i><b>Action Items Carried over from Previous work Program</b></i>				
2019	National Register of Historic Places designations	\$1,000	DNR	Administration; GMRC
2019	School House renovation plans	\$100,000	General Fund; Grants, Loans	Administration; Public Works
2019	Develop a capital improvement program	TBD	General Fund; DCA	Administration; GMRC
2019	Replace 2” metal lines	\$500,000	General Fund; Grants, Loans	Administration; Public Works
2020	Policed 24 hours	TBD	General Fund	Police Dept.
2020	Upgrade wells	TBD	General Fund; Grants, Loans	Administration; Public Works
2019	Develop a tree ordinance	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
<i><b>Items from Needs and Opportunities</b></i>				
2020	1. Develop long-term water and sewer plans	TBD	TBD	County; Cities
2019	2. Develop road improvement plan	\$2,000	General Fund, GDOT	County; Cities
2019	3. Develop facility and vehicle assessment for fire depts. and law enforcement.	\$5,000	General Fund, DCA	County; Cities
2021	4. Update Parks and Recreation Master Plan	\$5,000	General Fund DNR	County; Cities
2020	5. Develop County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan	\$5,000	GDOT	County; Cities
2019	6. Adopt conservation design sbdv. regulations	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	7. Develop/Obtain reference material for architectural design guidelines to promote desired forms among developers.	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	8. Marketing and branding assessment for the county	\$10,000	General Fund GDED; HCDA	County; Cities; HCDA
2020	9. Develop preferred design elements for County and School Board facilities	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities; School Board
2019	10. Survey code enforcement performance	\$2,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2019	11. Hold workshop to review code enforcement practices	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2020	12. Initialize annual report on code enforcement, tracking site visits and violations.	NA	NA	County; Cities
2020	13. Identify resources to assist homeowners with property revitalization	NA	NA	County; Cities; GMRC
2020	14. Develop freight traffic study for the county	\$3,000	GDOT	County; Cities; GMRC
2019	15. Survey county to identify prime agricultural areas	\$2,000	General Fund, DNR	Administration
2020	16. Establish policy to protect prime agricultural areas from urban scale utilities.	NA	NA	Administration
2020	17. Develop/ Obtain a market study for senior housing in Habersham Area	\$2,000	General Fund, DCA	County; Cities; GMRC



2021	18. Identify target sites best suited for senior housing	\$1,000	General Fund DCA	County; Cities; GMRC
2019	19. Convene forum with builders and banks to discuss entry level housing	\$1,000	General Fund	County; Cities
2020	M1. Develop a business plan with USFS for possible expansion of uses and access to the lake.	\$5,000	General Fund; USFS	City; USFS
<b>Items from Character Area Implementation Strategies</b>				
2020	1. Update existing land use and development regulations to accommodate desired changes	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration GMRC
2021	3. Examine the use of CIDs, TADs, BIDs and similar tools to foster development and redevelopment	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2020	25. Develop a Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND) ordinance	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2020	26. Consider an Infill Development ordinance	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2022	27. Develop street connectivity requirements for new developments	TBD	General Fund	Administration GDOT
2020	47. Develop design and architectural standards for new development in historic district.	\$5,000	General Fund, DNR	Administration
2020	48. Amend ordinances to require new developments to include parks and other amenities.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2020	49. Amend ordinances to require new development to connect internal pedestrian circulation systems to the nearest off-site sidewalks.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2023	50. Amend ordinances to require master planned new development to include neighborhood-serving commercial centers plus tree preservation and replacement standards	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2020	51. Develop policies for decentralized waste treatment.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration NRCS
2022	52. Establish the urban service boundary.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2022	53. Expand sewer and water into Suburban Transition areas on a priority basis.	TBD	General Fund	Administration
2020	54. Modify ordinances to encourage mixed use and higher density residential development.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration GMRC
2021	55. Implement a tree preservation ordinance.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration
2020	56. Modify ordinances to encourage Rails to Trails organization and greenways.	\$1,000	General Fund	Administration GMRC
2023	57. Implement neighborhood watch programs.	TBD	TBD	Administration
2020	61. Add and enforce signs to reduce cut-through traffic on residential streets.	TBD	General Fund; GDOT	Administration; Public Works
2022	62. Identify appropriate areas and add sidewalks where feasible to encourage walk-ability and increase neighborhood	TBD	General Fund	Administration

	connectivity.			
<b>2023</b>	71. Develop a comprehensive tourism strategy for Habersham County to foster tourism for the local economy with emphasis for the potential for this area.	TBD	TBD	HDEC

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# Appendix

5

**County Fact Sheet**

**Area Labor Profile**

**Summary of Survey Results**

**Sample evidence of Public Forums**

## County Fact Sheet



# Georgia Mountains Regional Commission

## HABERSHAM COUNTY, GEORGIA

### TOTAL POPULATION

	2010	2016	CHANGE		AGE DISTRIBUTION	
			#	%	2016	
<b>Georgia</b>	<b>9,713,521</b>	<b>10,310,371</b>	<b>596,850</b>	<b>6.1%</b>	< 18 yo	23.0%
<b>GMRC Region</b>	<b>601,216</b>	<b>670,327</b>	<b>69,111</b>	<b>11.5%</b>	18-64	59.3%
<b>Habersham County</b>	<b>43,081</b>	<b>44,246</b>	<b>1,165</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	65+	17.7%
Alto town (pt.)	656	660	4	0.6%		
Baldwin city (pt.)	2,539	2,564	25	1.0%		
Clarksville city	1,731	1,770	39	2.3%		
Cornelia city	4,178	4,267	89	2.1%		
Demorest city	1,872	2,061	189	10.1%		
Mount Airy town	1,287	1,300	13	1.0%		
Tallulah Falls town (pt.)	97	100	3	3.1%		
Balance of Habersham Co.	30,721	31,524	803	2.6%		

### MINIMAL EDUCATION

#### Adults age 25+ - 2016

< 9 <sup>th</sup> Grade	9.7%
9 <sup>th</sup> – 12 <sup>th</sup>	12.0%
HS Graduate	34.2%
Some College	20.2%
Assoc. Degree	6.4%
Bach. Degree	9.6%
Grad. Degree	7.9%

### UNEMPLOYMENT TRENDS

2017 - 2018 Local Unemployment Rate (Not Seasonally Adjusted)



### COMMUTING PATTERNS - 2010

Origination of Habersham Co. Employees			Destination of Habersham Co. Residents		
Origin		Share	Destination		Share
Habersham Co.	GA	69.6%	Habersham Co.	GA	67.6%
White Co.	GA	9.0%	Hall Co.	GA	10.4%
Banks Co.	GA	6.9%	White Co.	GA	5.4%
Stephens Co.	GA	3.7%	Stephens Co.	GA	4.2%
Hall Co.	GA	3.4%	Banks Co.	GA	2.3%
Rabun Co.	GA	1.9%	Gwinnett Co.	GA	1.8%
Franklin Co.	GA	1.1%	Rabun Co.	GA	1.4%
Gwinnett Co.	GA	0.8%	Fulton Co.	GA	0.8%
Lumpkin Co.	GA	0.5%	DeKalb Co.	GA	0.7%
Other		3.1%	Other		5.5%
<b>Total Trips</b>		<b>16,335</b>	<b>Total Trips</b>		<b>16,809</b>

Demographic data courtesy of the US Bureau of the Census  
 Unemployment Rate courtesy Georgia Department of Labor

## **Area Labor Profile**



Georgia

Area Labor Profile

Habersham

County



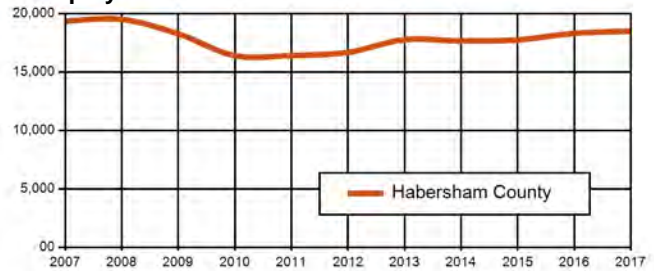
Updated: Jun 2018

Labor Force Activity - 2017

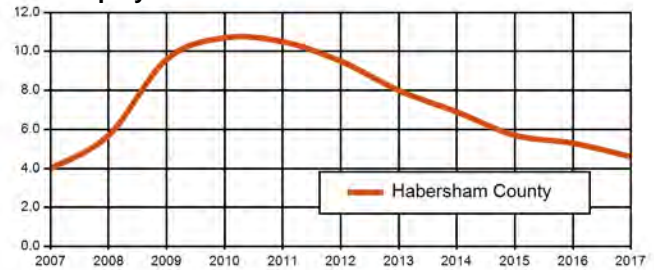
2017 ANNUAL AVERAGES

	Labor Force	Employed	Unemployed	Rate
Habersham	19,372	18,485	887	4.6%
Banks	9,242	8,876	366	4.0%
Hall	100,338	96,413	3,925	3.9%
Rabun	6,915	6,570	345	5.0%
Stephens	11,020	10,438	582	5.3%
Towns	3,839	3,588	251	6.5%
White	15,745	15,133	612	3.9%
<b>Habersham Area</b>	<b>166,471</b>	<b>159,503</b>	<b>6,968</b>	<b>4.2%</b>
Georgia	5,061,399	4,821,622	239,777	4.7%
United States	160,320,000	153,337,000	6,982,000	4.4%
Oconee, SC	34,315	32,817	1,498	4.4%

Employment Trends



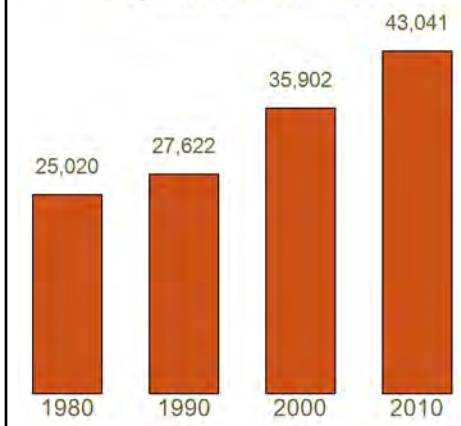
Unemployment Rate Trends



Note: This series reflects the latest information available. Labor Force includes residents of the county who are employed or actively seeking employment.

Source: Georgia Department of Labor; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Population Estimates



Population

	2010 Census	2017 Rank	2017 Estimate	% Change 2000-2017	2025 Projected*	% Change 2010-2025
Habersham	43,041	46	44,567	3.5	49,131	14.1
City of Clarkesville	1,733					
<b>Habersham Area</b>	<b>393,169</b>		<b>423,257</b>	<b>7.7</b>	<b>468,684</b>	<b>19.2</b>
Georgia	9,687,653		10,429,379	7.7	11,538,707	19.1
United States	308,745,538		325,719,178	5.5	349,439,199	13.2
Oconee, SC	71,983		77,270	7.3	87,500	21.6

Source: Population Division, U.S. Census Bureau, \*Governor's Office of Planning and Budget.

MARK BUTLER - COMMISSIONER, GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

Auxillary Aids and Services Available upon Request to Individuals with Disabilities

Workforce Statistics & Economic Research; E-mail: Workforce\_Info@gdol.ga.gov Phone: (404) 232-3875

# Industry Mix - annual averages of 2017

INDUSTRY	Habersham				Habersham Area			
	NUMBER OF FIRMS	EMPLOYMENT NUMBER	PERCENT	WEEKLY WAGE	NUMBER OF FIRMS	EMPLOYMENT NUMBER	PERCENT	WEEKLY WAGE
<b>Goods-Producing</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>4,452</b>	<b>31.1</b>	<b>823</b>	<b>1,333</b>	<b>34,888</b>	<b>26.8</b>	<b>862</b>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	13	217	1.5	775	73	1,174	0.9	921
Mining, Quarrying, and Oil and Gas Extraction	1	*	*	*	8	78	0.1	1,207
Construction	76	378	2.6	709	807	5,869	4.5	918
Manufacturing	55	3,849	26.9	836	445	27,768	21.4	847
Food	6	*	*	*	54	12,130	9.3	702
Textile Mills	3	*	*	*	17	1,994	1.5	686
Textile Product Mills	1	*	*	*	7	55	0.0	547
Apparel	2	*	*	*	3	*	*	*
Wood Product	6	55	0.4	854	30	507	0.4	663
Printing and Related Support Activities	4	34	0.2	565	26	404	0.3	815
Chemical	3	*	*	*	22	1,175	0.9	1,203
Plastics and Rubber Products	1	*	*	*	19	1,014	0.8	756
Nonmetallic Mineral Product	4	18	0.1	999	28	223	0.2	920
Fabricated Metal Product	9	162	1.1	818	69	1,353	1.0	1,016
Machinery	1	*	*	*	32	2,627	2.0	1,111
Transportation Equipment	3	*	*	*	18	2,288	1.8	982
Furniture and Related Product	4	30	0.2	524	29	854	0.7	762
Miscellaneous	8	951	6.6	1,338	46	1,561	1.2	1,153
Leather and Allied Product	0	0	0.0	0	1	*	*	*
Petroleum and Coal Products	0	0	0.0	0	2	*	*	*
Paper	0	0	0.0	0	4	96	0.1	842
Primary Metal	0	0	0.0	0	5	548	0.4	1,044
Computer and Electronic Product	0	0	0.0	0	8	116	0.1	1,051
Electrical Equipment, Appliance, and Component	0	0	0.0	0	9	428	0.3	987
Beverage and Tobacco Product	0	0	0.0	0	16	356	0.3	952
<b>Service-Providing</b>	<b>632</b>	<b>6,920</b>	<b>48.3</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>5,871</b>	<b>76,730</b>	<b>59.0</b>	<b>806</b>
Utilities	4	*	*	*	18	590	0.5	1,407
Wholesale Trade	48	229	1.6	1,047	419	5,219	4.0	1,129
Retail Trade	151	1,775	12.4	479	1,095	14,795	11.4	527
Transportation and Warehousing	13	56	0.4	846	192	3,329	2.6	962
Information	9	409	2.9	833	73	1,136	0.9	1,047
Finance and Insurance	51	302	2.1	894	409	3,201	2.5	1,248
Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	21	99	0.7	591	287	917	0.7	753
Professional, Scientific, and Technical Services	57	236	1.6	836	614	2,536	2.0	1,073
Management of Companies and Enterprises	4	*	*	*	40	1,672	1.3	1,707
Administrative and Support and Waste Management and Remediation Services	44	443	3.1	610	424	6,657	5.1	545
Educational Services	8	664	4.6	752	55	3,219	2.5	633
Health Care and Social Assistance	89	715	5.0	757	806	16,406	12.6	994
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation	5	38	0.3	363	116	1,476	1.1	3,412
Accommodation and Food Services	73	1,555	10.9	274	620	12,921	9.9	319
Other Services (except Public Administration)	55	163	1.1	513	456	2,435	1.9	555
<b>Unclassified - industry not assigned</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>621</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>909</b>
<b>Total - Private Sector</b>	<b>806</b>	<b>11,395</b>	<b>79.5</b>	<b>688</b>	<b>7,204</b>	<b>111,618</b>	<b>85.9</b>	<b>824</b>
<b>Total - Government</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>2,933</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>705</b>	<b>301</b>	<b>18,324</b>	<b>14.1</b>	<b>738</b>
Federal Government	10	97	0.7	1,012	53	776	0.6	1,166
State Government	21	670	4.7	663	105	3,673	2.8	709
Local Government	27	2,166	15.1	704	143	13,875	10.7	722
<b>ALL INDUSTRIES</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>14,328</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>691</b>	<b>7,505</b>	<b>129,944</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>812</b>
<b>ALL INDUSTRIES - Georgia</b>					<b>274,910</b>	<b>4,346,073</b>		<b>1,003</b>

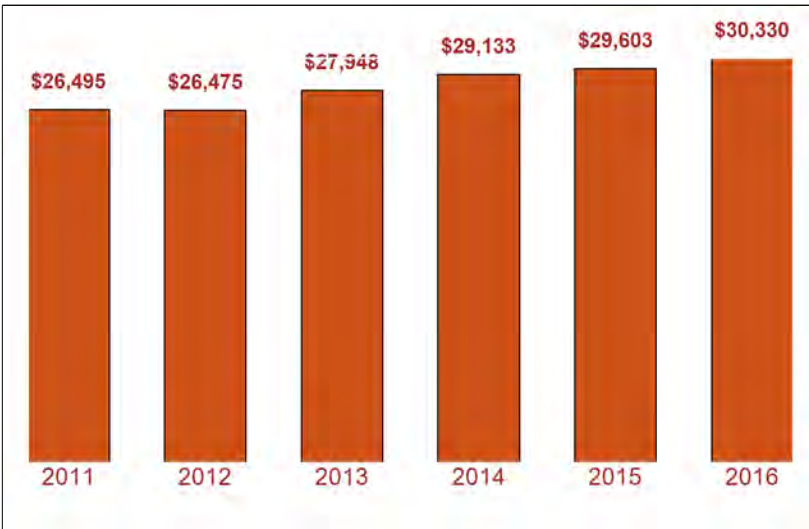
Note: \*Denotes confidential data relating to individual employers and cannot be released. These data use the North American Industrial Classification System (NAICS) categories. Average weekly wage is derived by dividing gross payroll dollars paid to all employees - both hourly and salaried - by the average number of employees who had earnings; average earnings are then divided by the number of weeks in a reporting period to obtain weekly figures. Figures in other columns may not sum accurately due to rounding. All figures are annual averages of 2017.

Source: Georgia Department of Labor. These data represent jobs that are covered by unemployment insurance laws.



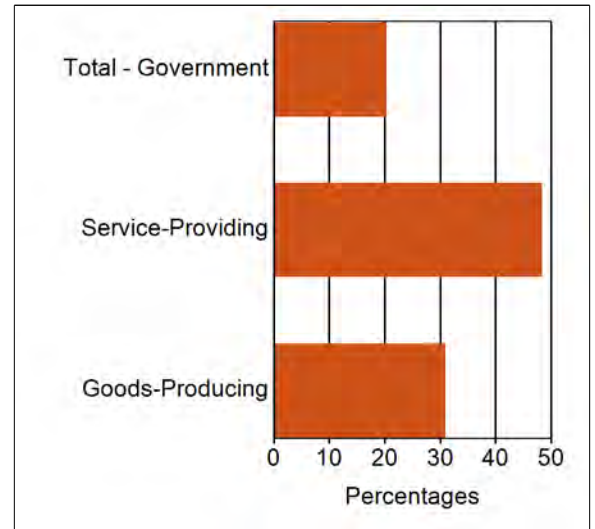
## Habersham Per Capita Income

Source: U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis



## Habersham Industry Mix 2017

Source: See Industry Mix data on Page 2.



## Top Ten Largest Employers - 2017\*

### Habersham

Ethicon, Inc.  
 Fieldale Farms Corporation  
 Ga Dept Of Corrections  
 Ingles Markets, Inc.  
 Mt. Vernon Mills, Inc.  
 Piedmont College  
 TC Baycor  
 Wal-Mart  
 Windstream Standard, LLC  
 Zaxbys

\*Note: Represents employment covered by unemployment insurance excluding all government agencies except correctional institutions, state and local hospitals, state colleges and universities. Data shown for the Fourth Quarter of 2017. Employers are listed alphabetically by area, not by the number of employees.

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

### Habersham Area

Fieldale Farms Corporation  
 Fieldale Farms Corporation  
 Kubota Manufacturing of America Corporation  
 Mar-Jac Poultry  
 Northeast Georgia Medical Center, Inc.  
 Northeast Georgia Physicians Group  
 Pilgrim's Pride Corporation  
 Victory Processing, LLC  
 Walmart  
 Wrigley Manufacturing Co, LLC

### COUNTY

Hall  
 Habersham  
 Hall  
 Hall  
 Hall  
 Hall  
 Hall  
 Hall  
 Hall  
 Hall

## Education of the Labor Force

### Habersham Area

### PERCENT DISTRIBUTION BY AGE

	PERCENT OF TOTAL	PERCENT DISTRIBUTION BY AGE				
		18-24	25-34	35-44	45-64	65+
Elementary	9.5%	5.3%	11.8%	10.0%	7.0%	14.2%
Some High School	13.8%	21.0%	14.2%	12.2%	10.5%	16.3%
High School Grad/GED	33.6%	37.7%	31.5%	32.9%	34.7%	31.2%
Some College	20.2%	30.4%	20.2%	17.6%	20.0%	16.4%
College Grad 2 Yr	5.5%	2.9%	6.7%	7.4%	6.1%	3.2%
College Grad 4 Yr	10.9%	2.6%	10.6%	13.1%	12.8%	11.4%
Post Graduate Studies	6.5%	0.2%	5.1%	6.9%	8.9%	7.4%
Totals	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Note: Totals are based on the portion of the labor force between ages 18 - 65+. The "Some College" category represents workers with less than two years of college and no degree.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau - 2010 Decennial Census.

## High School Graduates - 2017



	PUBLIC SCHOOLS	PRIVATE SCHOOLS*	TOTAL
Banks	161	--	161
Habersham	392	--	392
Hall	2,062	--	2,062
Rabun	147	--	147
Stephens	231	--	231
Towns	68	--	68
White	1,724	--	1,724
<b>Habersham Area</b>	<b>4,785</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>4,785</b>

Note: Public schools include city as well as county schools systems.

\* Private schools data is not available for 2017 from Georgia Independent School Association.

Source: The Governor's Office of Student Achievement of Georgia.

## Colleges and Universities

### Habersham Area

#### Hall

Brenau University	<a href="http://www.brenau.edu">www.brenau.edu</a>
University of North Georgia	<a href="http://www.gsc.edu">www.gsc.edu</a>
Lanier Technical College	<a href="http://www.laniertech.edu">www.laniertech.edu</a>
Oakwood Campus (Satellite campus of Lanier Technical College)	<a href="http://www.laniertech.edu">www.laniertech.edu</a>

#### Banks

Milledgeville Campus (Satellite campus of Central Georgia Technical College)	<a href="http://www.centralgatech.edu">www.centralgatech.edu</a>
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#### Habersham

North Georgia Technical College	<a href="http://www.northgatech.edu">www.northgatech.edu</a>
Piedmont College	<a href="http://www.piedmont.edu">www.piedmont.edu</a>

#### Stephens

Currahee Campus (Satellite campus of North Georgia Technical College)	<a href="http://www.northgatech.edu">www.northgatech.edu</a>
Toccoa Falls College	<a href="http://www.tfc.edu">www.tfc.edu</a>

#### White

Truett-McConnell College	<a href="http://www.truett.edu">www.truett.edu</a>
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#### Towns

Young Harris College	<a href="http://www.yhc.edu">www.yhc.edu</a>
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Note: The colleges and universities listed include public and private institutions. This list is updated periodically as information becomes available.

Source: Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS).

## Technical College Graduates - 2017\*

PROGRAMS	TOTAL GRADUATES			PERCENT CHANGE	
	2015	2016	2017	2015-2016	2016-2017
Accounting Technology/Technician and Bookkeeping°	126	134	161	6.3	20.1
Administrative Assistant and Secretarial Science, General	61	58	76	-4.9	31.0
Aesthetician/Esthetician and Skin Care Specialist°	20	36	31	80.0	-13.9
Allied Health and Medical Assisting Services, Other°	36	37	22	2.8	-40.5
Autobody/Collision and Repair Technology/Technician°	52	49	71	-5.8	44.9
Automobile/Automotive Mechanics Technology/Technician°	117	289	220	147.0	-23.9

# Technical College Graduates - 2017\*

PROGRAMS	TOTAL GRADUATES			PERCENT CHANGE	
	2015	2016	2017	2015-2016	2016-2017
Business Administration and Management, General°	63	56	109	-11.1	94.6
Business Administration, Management and Operations, Other	17	17	17	0.0	0.0
CAD/CADD Drafting and/or Design Technology/Technician°	6	29	20	383.3	-31.0
Child Care and Support Services Management°	1	5	4	400.0	-20.0
Child Care Provider/Assistant°	82	138	110	68.3	-20.3
Clinical/Medical Laboratory Technician	10	18	21	80.0	16.7
Commercial Photography°	13	11	10	-15.4	-9.1
Computer Installation and Repair Technology/Technician°	29	53	82	82.8	54.7
Cosmetology/Cosmetologist, General°	187	151	163	-19.3	7.9
Criminal Justice/Safety Studies°	76	85	75	11.8	-11.8
Culinary Arts/Chef Training	17	15	16	-11.8	6.7
Customer Service Support/Call Center/Teleservice Operation	6	3	8	-50.0	166.7
Data Entry/Microcomputer Applications, General°	24	19	69	-20.8	263.2
Data Processing and Data Processing Technology/Technician°	13	32	33	146.2	3.1
Dental Assisting/Assistant	14	14	9	0.0	-35.7
Design and Visual Communications, General°	12	24	26	100.0	8.3
Drafting and Design Technology/Technician, General°	6	24	29	300.0	20.8
Early Childhood Education and Teaching°	27	39	35	44.4	-10.3
Electrical and Power Transmission Installation/Installer, General°	14	10	16	-28.6	60.0
Electrician°	39	56	44	43.6	-21.4
Emergency Medical Technology/Technician (EMT Paramedic)°	116	173	171	49.1	-1.2
Engineering Technologies and Engineering-Related Fields, Other	7	12	12	71.4	0.0
Entrepreneurship/Entrepreneurial Studies°	5	3	11	-40.0	266.7
Environmental Control Technologies/Technicians, Other	7	6	8	-14.3	33.3
Fire Prevention and Safety Technology/Technician°	4	3	3	-25.0	0.0
Fire Science/Fire-fighting°	12	11	28	-8.3	154.5
Fire Services Administration	7	2	5	-71.4	150.0
Food Preparation/Professional Cooking/Kitchen Assistant°	13	14	13	7.7	-7.1
Graphic Design°	1	12	13	1100.0	8.3
Health Services/Allied Health/Health Sciences, General°	97	125	135	28.9	8.0
Heating, Air Conditioning, Ventilation and Refrigeration Maintenance Technology/°	84	85	100	1.2	17.6
Industrial Mechanics and Maintenance Technology°	73	120	142	64.4	18.3
Interior Design°	34	11	43	-67.6	290.9
Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse Training	76	39	53	-48.7	35.9
Lineworker°	45	59	57	31.1	-3.4
Machine Shop Technology/Assistant°	60	53	73	-11.7	37.7

# Technical College Graduates - 2017\*

PROGRAMS	TOTAL GRADUATES			PERCENT CHANGE	
	2015	2016	2017	2015-2016	2016-2017
Marketing/Marketing Management, General	6	6	9	0.0	50.0
Mechanic and Repair Technologies/Technicians, Other	6	9	7	50.0	-22.2
Medical Insurance Coding Specialist/Coder°	11	15	29	36.4	93.3
Medical Office Assistant/Specialist°	33	18	23	-45.5	27.8
Medical Office Management/Administration	15	11	13	-26.7	18.2
Medical/Clinical Assistant	113	125	109	10.6	-12.8
Network and System Administration/Administrator°	52	66	61	26.9	-7.6
Nursing Assistant/Aide and Patient Care Assistant/Aide°	135	54	29	-60.0	-46.3
Pharmacy Technician/Assistant°	11	20	12	81.8	-40.0
Phlebotomy Technician/Phlebotomist°	13	15	18	15.4	20.0
Professional, Technical, Business, and Scientific Writing°	8	10	6	25.0	-40.0
Radiologic Technology/Science - Radiographer	13	13	19	0.0	46.2
Retailing and Retail Operations°	4	1	4	-75.0	300.0
Selling Skills and Sales Operations°	6	5	7	-16.7	40.0
Surgical Technology/Technologist	8	25	13	212.5	-48.0
Tool and Die Technology/Technician°	7	3	2	-57.1	-33.3
Truck and Bus Driver/Commercial Vehicle Operator and Instructor°	21	23	19	9.5	-17.4
Web Page, Digital/Multimedia and Information Resources Design°	5	19	12	280.0	-36.8
Welding Technology/Welder°	218	316	353	45.0	11.7

Definition: All graduates except those listed as technical certificates(°) are diploma and degree graduates. Diploma and degree programs are one to two years in length. Technical certificates are less than a year in length. Duplication may occur due to graduates with multiple awards.

Source: Technical College System of Georgia

\*Data shown represents Annual 2015, 2016, and 2017.

Note: Please visit TCSG website for any college configuration changes.

## Georgia Department of Labor Location(s)

### Career Center(s)

215 Hodges Street

Suite #205

Cornelia, GA 30531

Phone: (706) 776 - 0811

Fax: (706) 776 - 0822

For copies of Area Labor Profiles, please visit our website at: <http://dol.georgia.gov> or contact Workforce Statistics & Economic Research, Georgia Department of Labor, 148 Andrew Young International Blvd N.E. Atlanta, GA. 30303-1751. Phone: 404-232-3875; Fax: 404-232-3888 or Email us at [workforce\\_info@gdol.ga.gov](mailto:workforce_info@gdol.ga.gov)

**Summary of Survey Results**

# Q1: Please tell us which part of Habersham County in which you live.

Answered: 379 Skipped: 1

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I live in Clarkesville	25.59%	97
I live in a rural part of unincorporated Habersham County	19.00%	72
I don't live in Habersham County	16.62%	63
I live in Demorest	11.61%	44
I live in Mt. Airy	10.82%	41
I live in Cornelia	8.44%	32
I live in Tallulah Falls	4.49%	17
I live in Alto	2.11%	8
I live in Baldwin	1.32%	5
TOTAL		379

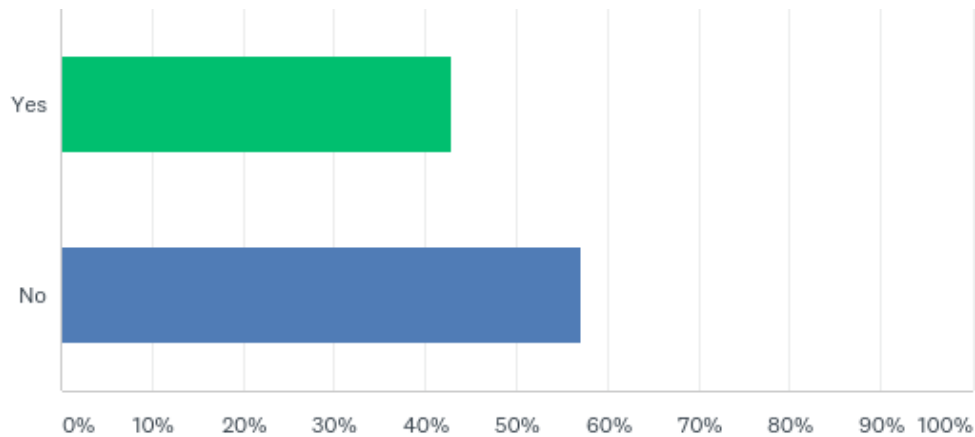
## Q2: please indicate which of the following applies to you. (Mark all that apply)

Answered: 380 Skipped: 0

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I live in Habersham County, in a house that I own	69.21%	263
I shop and dine in Habersham County	63.68%	242
I work in Habersham County	53.42%	203
Other	9.47%	36
I live in Habersham County, in property that I rent	9.21%	35
I own undeveloped property in Habersham County	7.11%	27
Total Respondents: 380		

## Q4: Does your household have any school-age children? (18 years old or younger)

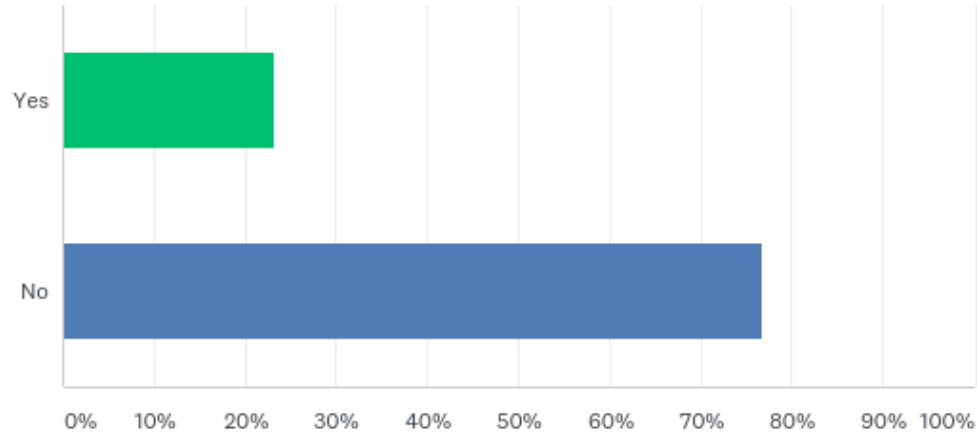
Answered: 377 Skipped: 3





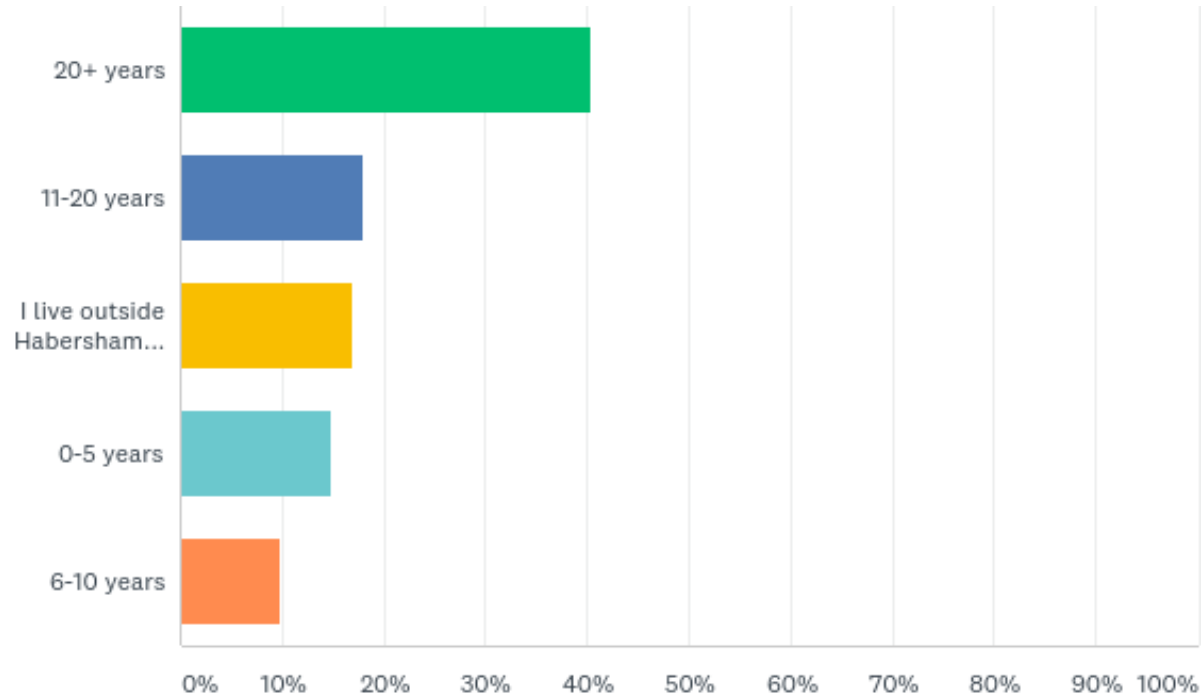
## Q5: Does your household have any seniors age 65 or older?

Answered: 376 Skipped: 4



## Q6: How long have you lived in Habersham County?

Answered: 378 Skipped: 2



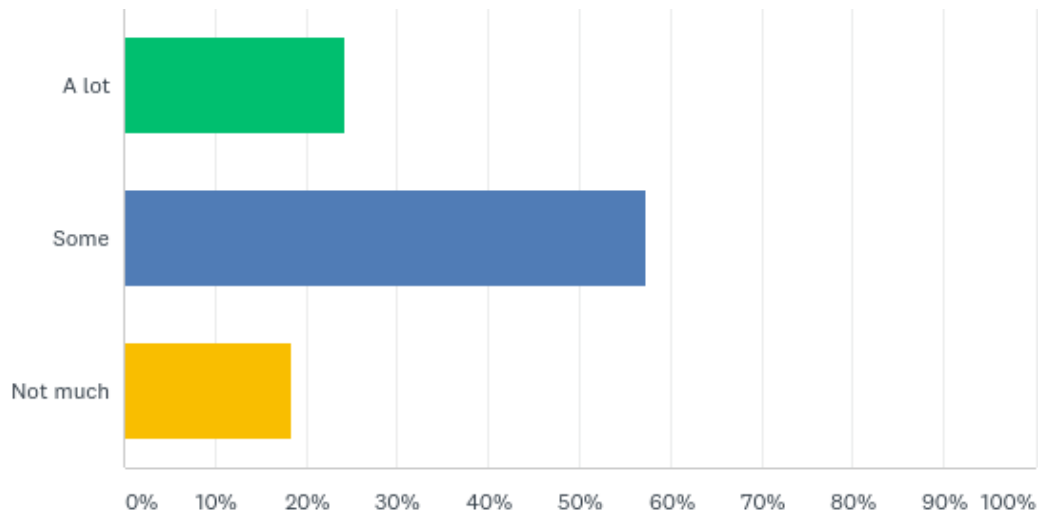
# Q7: Please rank the following characteristics that you consider the most important for why you live or work in Habersham County.

Answered: 367 Skipped: 13

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	TOTAL	SCORE
General appeal of the community/ Quality of life	20.13% 62	19.81% 61	19.48% 60	10.71% 33	5.84% 18	6.82% 21	4.87% 15	10.06% 31	2.27% 7	308	6.34
Rural setting/ Access to outdoor amenities	10.37% 31	21.07% 63	15.72% 47	13.38% 40	9.36% 28	10.70% 32	10.70% 32	5.69% 17	3.01% 9	299	5.88
Employment opportunity	22.55% 69	14.38% 44	8.82% 27	6.86% 21	11.11% 34	9.15% 28	10.78% 33	11.11% 34	5.23% 16	306	5.73
Local connections (family, friends)	24.69% 79	7.81% 25	8.44% 27	7.81% 25	8.44% 27	9.69% 31	8.13% 26	13.44% 43	11.56% 37	320	5.34
Affordability of community	3.88% 12	8.09% 25	15.86% 49	18.12% 56	16.18% 50	17.15% 53	10.36% 32	8.74% 27	1.62% 5	309	5.19
Quality of the schools	8.70% 26	11.04% 33	11.71% 35	15.72% 47	14.05% 42	10.70% 32	9.03% 27	13.04% 39	6.02% 18	299	5.15
Cultural and recreational amenities	0.64% 2	7.40% 23	8.36% 26	12.54% 39	18.97% 59	15.76% 49	21.86% 68	12.86% 40	1.61% 5	311	4.50
Quality of local services	2.77% 9	7.69% 25	7.38% 24	11.38% 37	14.77% 48	12.92% 42	19.08% 62	20.62% 67	3.38% 11	325	4.34
Other	10.71% 12	1.79% 2	3.57% 4	2.68% 3	2.68% 3	2.68% 3	3.57% 4	4.46% 5	67.86% 76	112	2.63

## Q9: How much new development would you like to see come to Habersham County?

Answered: 375 Skipped: 5



## Q10: If you live in the unincorporated County, please express whether or not you agree or disagree with the following statements for the future of your community.

Answered: 244 Skipped: 136

	AGREE	DISAGREE	NO OPINION	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	TOTAL
Concentrate development in and around cities	75.83% 182	6.67% 16	16.25% 39	0.42% 1	0.83% 2	240
Concentrate development along the GA 365 corridor	68.75% 165	12.50% 30	17.50% 42	0.42% 1	0.83% 2	240
Concentrate development to the southern half of the county	41.10% 97	24.15% 57	33.47% 79	0.42% 1	0.85% 2	236
Direct new development to the northern half of the county	21.85% 52	48.74% 116	28.15% 67	0.42% 1	0.84% 2	238
Encourage the development of vacant/underutilized properties	76.54% 186	11.11% 27	11.11% 27	0.41% 1	0.82% 2	243
Allow development with mixed residential and commercial uses	50.21% 120	26.36% 63	22.18% 53	0.42% 1	0.84% 2	239

## Q11: If you live in a City/Town, please express whether or not you agree or disagree with the following statements for the future of your community.

Answered: 228 Skipped: 152

	AGREE	DISAGREE	NO OPINION	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	TOTAL
increase allowed densities of residential areas	25.68% 57	46.85% 104	26.13% 58	0.45% 1	0.90% 2	222
Encourage the development of vacant/underutilized properties	76.75% 175	10.53% 24	11.40% 26	0.44% 1	0.88% 2	228
Allow development with mixed residential and commercial uses	57.14% 128	22.32% 50	19.20% 43	0.00% 0	1.34% 3	224
Limit residential growth	35.71% 80	39.73% 89	23.21% 52	0.45% 1	0.89% 2	224

## Q14: With regards to housing, please indicate which options are important issues for your community.

Answered: 356 Skipped: 24

	AGREE	NO OPINION/ NOT APPLICABLE	DISAGREE	(NO LABEL)	(NO LABEL)	TOTAL	WEIGHTED AVERAGE
Developing more high-end housing ( > \$350,000)	30.79% 105	35.19% 120	34.02% 116	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	341	2.03
Developing more rental options	40.63% 141	27.09% 94	31.99% 111	0.29% 1	0.00% 0	347	1.92
Developing more housing for disabled/ special-needs residents	45.95% 159	43.93% 152	9.83% 34	0.29% 1	0.00% 0	346	1.64
Developing more affordable single-family housing ( < \$180,000)	60.17% 210	25.79% 90	14.04% 49	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	349	1.54
Concentrating development in/near the cities	63.37% 218	21.80% 75	14.53% 50	0.29% 1	0.00% 0	344	1.52
Developing more housing options for seniors	59.48% 207	30.75% 107	9.77% 34	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	348	1.50
Work to address dilapidated properties	86.65% 305	9.66% 34	3.41% 12	0.28% 1	0.00% 0	352	1.17

## Q15: Our top two priorities with regard to economic development should be...

Answered: 367 Skipped: 13

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Attracting/sustaining any business with high paying jobs	52.32%	192
Attracting/sustaining businesses within the cities	44.41%	163
Attracting/sustaining commercial businesses	40.33%	148
Attracting/sustain agricultural businesses	37.06%	136
Attracting/sustaining industrial businesses	26.70%	98
Other (please specify)	7.63%	28
Total Respondents: 367		



## Q16: Our top two priorities regarding natural resources should be...

Answered: 369 Skipped: 11

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Protection of water resources	79.67%	294
Protection of forests and wildlife areas	78.59%	290
Flood/erosion prevention	15.99%	59
Wildfire prevention	13.01%	48
Current efforts are sufficient	11.11%	41
Other (please specify)	3.25%	12
Total Respondents: 369		

## Q17: Our top two priorities regarding cultural amenities should be...

Answered: 358 Skipped: 22

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Need more/new entertainment options	56.42%	202
Need for more/new parks and recreation facilities	42.46%	152
Need for more/new recreational trails	39.11%	140
Need for more/new social events in our community	30.17%	108
Need for more/new museums or tourist attractions	23.18%	83
Other (please specify)	8.38%	30
Total Respondents: 358		

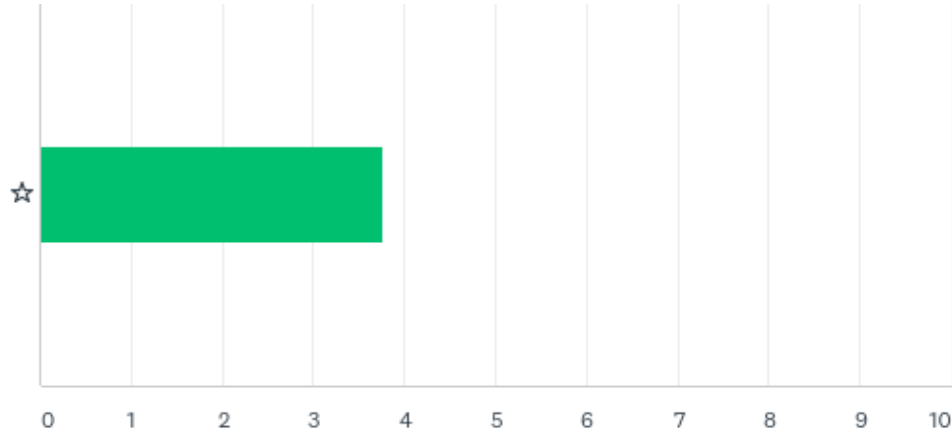
## Q18: Please rank the following recreational facilities/services in order of importance for you?

Answered: 354 Skipped: 26

	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
Trails/ Bike paths	37.79% 116	21.50% 66	16.61% 51	9.45% 29	9.12% 28	5.54% 17	307	4.53
Passive recreational parks	21.73% 68	36.10% 113	18.21% 57	11.82% 37	7.99% 25	4.15% 13	313	4.39
Playgrounds	14.89% 49	13.98% 46	24.62% 81	18.54% 61	23.40% 77	4.56% 15	329	3.65
Indoor athletic facilities	11.75% 37	13.65% 43	17.78% 56	25.71% 81	24.76% 78	6.35% 20	315	3.43
Outdoor sports fields	8.44% 26	11.36% 35	19.48% 60	29.87% 92	26.62% 82	4.22% 13	308	3.32
Other	18.75% 18	3.13% 3	6.25% 6	3.13% 3	7.29% 7	61.46% 59	96	2.39

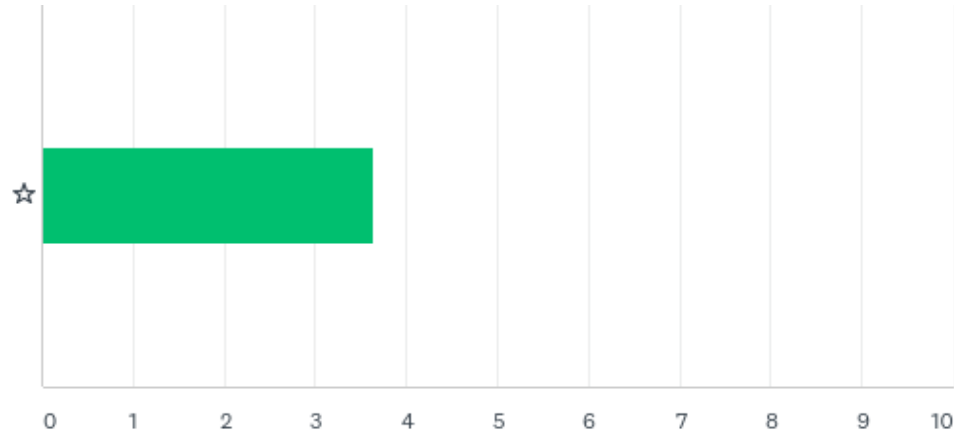
# Q19: On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great) please rate the quality of your public water service. (Leave blank if you do not use public water.)

Answered: 255 Skipped: 125



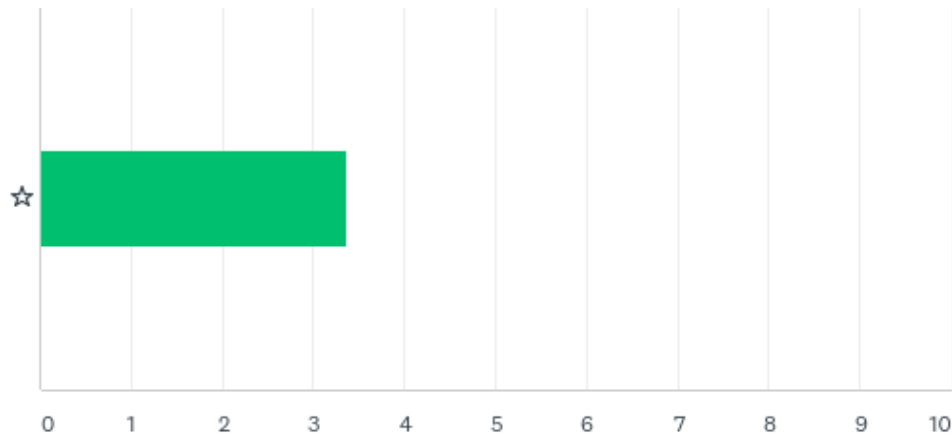
## Q20: On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great) please rate the quality of your public sewer service. (Leave blank if you do not use public sewer.)

Answered: 138 Skipped: 242



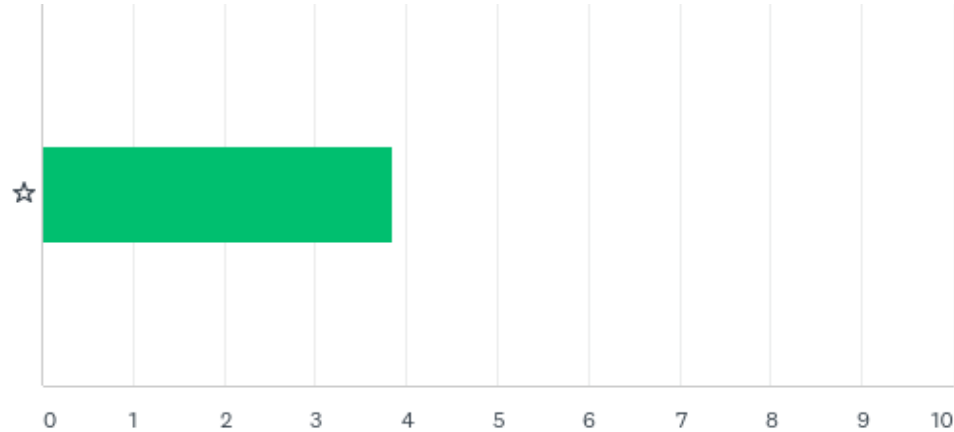
## Q21: On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great) please rate the quality of your parks and recreation facilities and services.

Answered: 357 Skipped: 23



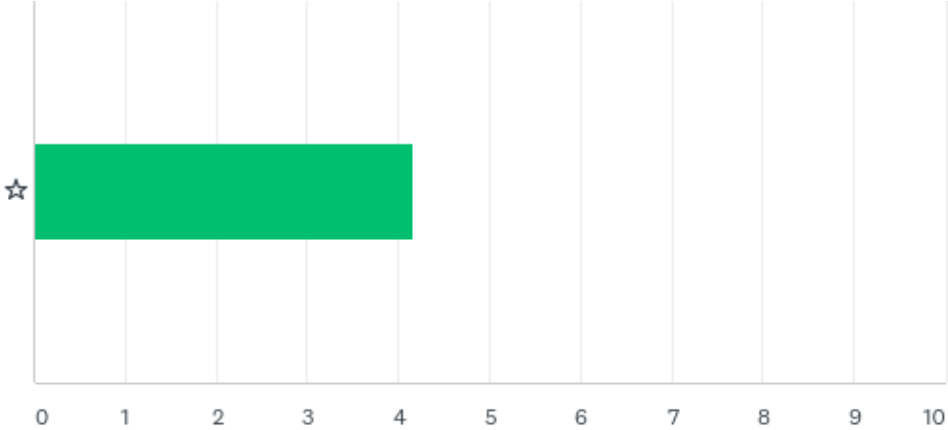
## Q22: On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great) please rate the quality of your law enforcement services.

Answered: 356 Skipped: 24



# Q23: On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great) please rate the quality of your fire protection/ EMS services.

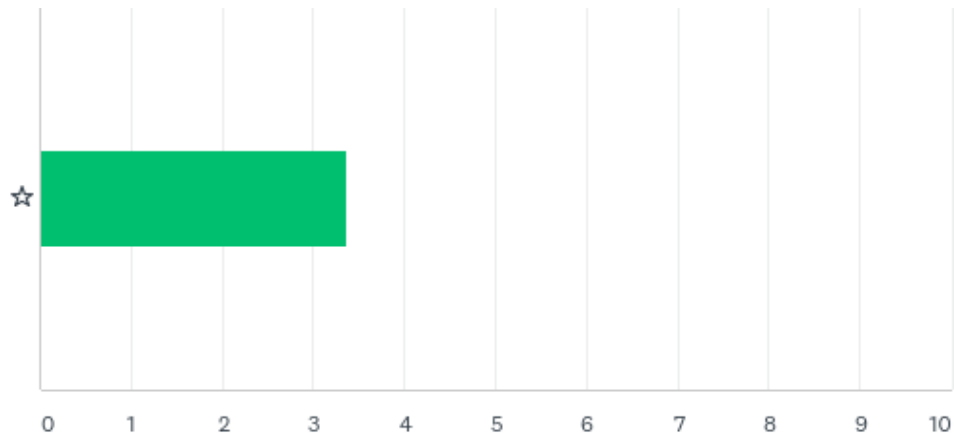
Answered: 346 Skipped: 34





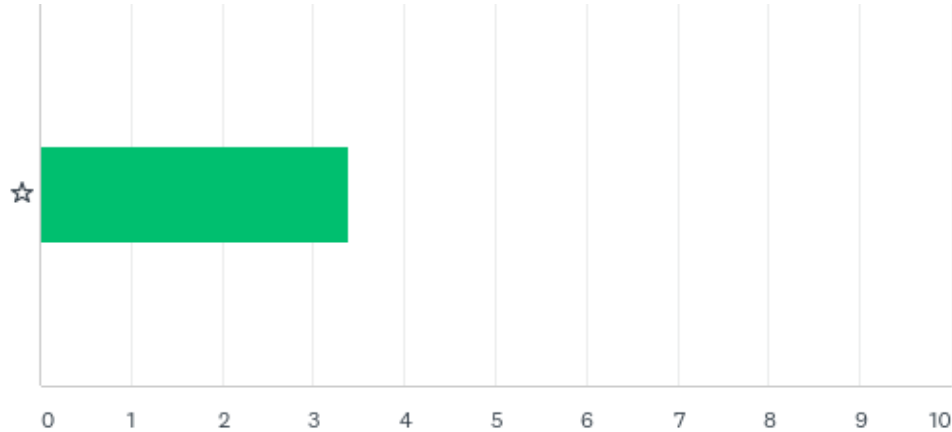
## Q24: On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great) please rate the quality of your local roads.

Answered: 361 Skipped: 19



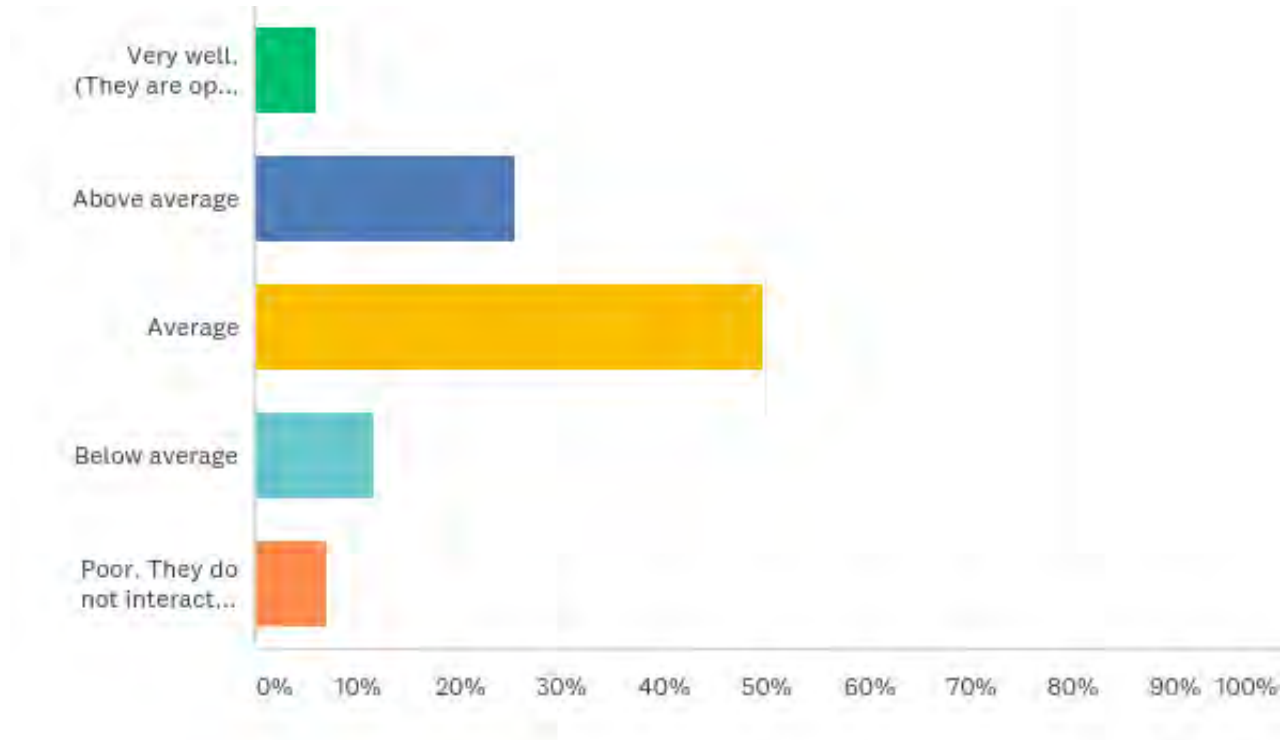
## Q25: On a scale of 1 (bad) to 5 (great) please rate the quality of your general government services.

Answered: 351 Skipped: 29



## Q26: How well do you rate your local government with regards to openness and communicating with the public?

Answered: 352 Skipped: 28



## Q27: For your local government, please rank the following objectives in terms of highest and lowest priority.

Answered: 345 Skipped: 35

	1	2	3	4	5	6	TOTAL	SCORE
Attracting/sustaining economic development	22.40% 69	21.43% 66	15.91% 49	16.23% 50	21.10% 65	2.92% 9	308	3.99
Maintaining a low tax base	21.47% 67	18.27% 57	19.55% 61	18.59% 58	16.99% 53	5.13% 16	312	3.93
Maintaining our community's rural character	22.74% 73	17.76% 57	18.38% 59	15.89% 51	19.63% 63	5.61% 18	321	3.91
Maintaining/improving the quality of local facilities and services	10.56% 32	19.80% 60	27.72% 84	24.75% 75	14.19% 43	2.97% 9	303	3.79
Maintaining/improving local safety	12.81% 41	19.69% 63	18.44% 59	20.63% 66	22.19% 71	6.25% 20	320	3.62
Other	15.38% 12	5.13% 4	2.56% 2	1.28% 1	5.13% 4	70.51% 55	78	2.13

## **Sample evidence of Public Forums**



## **YOUR CITY. YOUR PLAN.**

The City of Demorest is seeking public input for the creation of a visioning statement which will be vital in the creation of a comprehensive plan. The comprehensive plan will be used to help direct future growth and development within the city. We would like to solicit your help to identify community goals, needs and opportunities, and create a vision for the future.

The City has set aside two visioning sessions for you to provide input:

February 7<sup>th</sup> at 4pm – College Student Visioning Session – Meeting will be held on the upper level of the Commons located at Piedmont College.

February 8<sup>th</sup> at 5pm – Business Owners and Residents Visioning Session – Meeting will be held at the Municipal Building located at 125 Ivy Street, Demorest.

**The City thanks you in advance for your time and participation!**

COMMUNITY VISIONING SESSIONS  
DOWNTOWN DEMORST  
FEBRUARY 7 & 8, 2018

In an effort to create a vision for the future of Downtown Demorest, a series of community listening sessions were held around the community. The participants were asked two questions "What are the 'Keepers' or things you love about Downtown Demorest?" and "What are the 'Fixers' or things you would like to see improved in downtown?" Each group then voted on the issues they felt are the highest priority. Carrie Barnes, a Community Development Consultant from Georgia EMC, facilitated the meeting on behalf of Habersham EMC.

## LISTENING SESSION 1: Piedmont College

### KEEPERS

- Art Museum and the Artifact
- Community activities and events
- Piedmont College
- Police Station
- Post Office is available for student mail
- Restaurants
- Safety
- Small town atmosphere & friendliness
- The Park

### FIXERS

- A boutique
- A cinema
- Affordable coffee shop/bakery/ice cream shop
- Arcade
- Be able to use Piedmont College Student Declining Balance at downtown shops
- Better connection and communication with students and the City of Demorest
- Better drainage
- Bike Racks
- Bring back the lake
- Convenience Store/Dollar General
- Deck at the Shoals
- Get people back on the quad
- Invest more in sidewalks and greenspace
- Medical services in downtown (doctor's office or urgent care)
- More Parking/Parking Deck
- More tables at the park
- Nail salon
- Nightlife and things to do on the weekends (trivia or karaoke)
- Pool

COMMUNITY VISIONING SESSIONS  
DOWNTOWN DEMORST  
FEBRUARY 7 & 8, 2018

- Public Transportation (shuttle, regional bus system, transportation to shopping areas)
- Restaurants like Tacos and Tequilas
- Running/Bike Trail to connect campus, downtown and the village
- Speed bumps to control speed near campus
- Third Spaces (hang out spaces)
- Thrift Store/ Food Bank
- Wifi available throughout downtown

**PRIORITY VISION ITEMS**

1. **Restaurant similar to Tacos & Tequilas**
2. **More downtown parking/parking deck**
3. **Night Life and Things to do on the weekends (trivia or karaoke)**
4. **Third Spaces (Hang out space)**
5. **Affordable coffee shop/bakery/ice cream shop**

**LISTENING SESSION 2: City of Demorest**

**KEEPERS**

- Art Gallery
- Historic home around downtown
- Old Brick Facades
- Old Coffee Cup building
- Piedmont College
- Sidewalk renovations
- Sweet Breads
- The Park
- Tree Canopy (Beech Trees and Sycamore Trees)

**FIXERS**

- A Dogwood Festival
- A restaurant that is open for breakfast and open later (possibly a coffee shop)
- Businesses open past 9pm
- Continuity with historic design elements in new development
- Don't be a speed trap
- Flash Mob or Pop Up events
- Gateway signage
- More involvement between the community and Piedmont College
- More unique lodging (Bed and Breakfasts or a Boutique Hotel)
- Opportunities for locally owned restaurants
- Plant more trees (Could be an event, More Dogwood trees)



COMMUNITY VISIONING SESSIONS  
DOWNTOWN DEMORST  
FEBRUARY 7 & 8, 2018

- Recreate older buildings (like City Hall)
- Restore façade of the old Coffee Cup Building
- Small/local businesses
- Walking trails/bike paths/sidewalks

**PRIORITY VISION ITEMS**

- 1. Plant more trees**
- 2. Recreate older buildings (like City Hall)**
- 3. Opportunities for locally owned restaurants**
- 4. Continuity with historic design elements in new development**

**PARTICIPANTS**

- Aida Roberts
- Andrea Guillen
- Ann Sutton
- Areli Albarran
- Brenda Salazar
- Carmen Nichols
- Dalton Patterson
- Emily Pierce
- Gabriel Gutierrez
- Jennifer Austin
- Kanler Cumbass
- Kim Crawford
- Kristi Shead
- Marilla Martin
- Mark Jestel
- Marlena Sosebee
- Mary Ann Lesterdiedrick
- Rick Austin
- Rose Marie Allison
- Stephanie Almagno
- Taylor Houston

12/13/17

Habersham Plan Mtg.

Name

Mike Beecham

Ray McAllister

Barbara Kesler

Bambi Aycock

Tim Lee

Stephanie Almagno

Patti Polk

Kristi Sheard

Andrez Hapuw

Teri Dobbis

2/13

Habersham County Mtg

Name

Bernie Aycock Clarkesville

Natalie Crawford Habersham

MONA PAINTER

Carol Means Clarkesville

Mike Means Clarkesville

STACY HALL - HABERSHAM COUNTY

Peggy Ingram - Clarkesville

Tim Jarrell - Town of Mount Airy

Kristi Sheard - Demorest

Stephanie Almagno Baldwin

Milco Beecham - Habersham County

TAMMY Carter Habersham County

5/29/18

Hebersham Plan Mtg.

Name

Mike Beacham

Tammy Carter

Ray McAllister

Audrey Turner

Barbara Kesler

Stephanie Almagro

Dargie Aycock

Andrea Harper

Town of Mount Airy

Council Meeting

Sign-in sheet

February 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018 7:00 p.m.

Reg McCallister MT. Airy

Mike Beecham Halifax County

ANDREA HARPER HAB Co. Commissioner

STACY HALL HAB CO. COMMISSIONER

Adam Tullis MT. Airy Council

Tammy Carter Hab. County

Richard & Janice Webb Hab. County

Scott Funk Mt. Airy Sunlit Hollows

Bobby Ayler " " "

# Rope Roberts: Northeast Georgia continuing economic development growth spurt

BY DONALD FRASER

Business is booming in Northeast Georgia and that will continue to affect Habersham County.

That's just part of the message Rope Roberts, Georgia Power Co.'s regional manager for economic development in Northeast Georgia, told the Rotary Club of Habersham County at its March 1 weekly meeting.

Local businesses like Northeast Georgia, according to Roberts, since "78 percent of projects [during 2017] are expansion projects" for existing businesses. Foreign investment also continues to be popular, since 60 projects with \$1.4 billion in investment located in the area.

Jobs are also booming in Northeast Georgia, with over 25 companies announcing openings for 100 or more jobs during 2016, 2017 and into 2018, Roberts said.

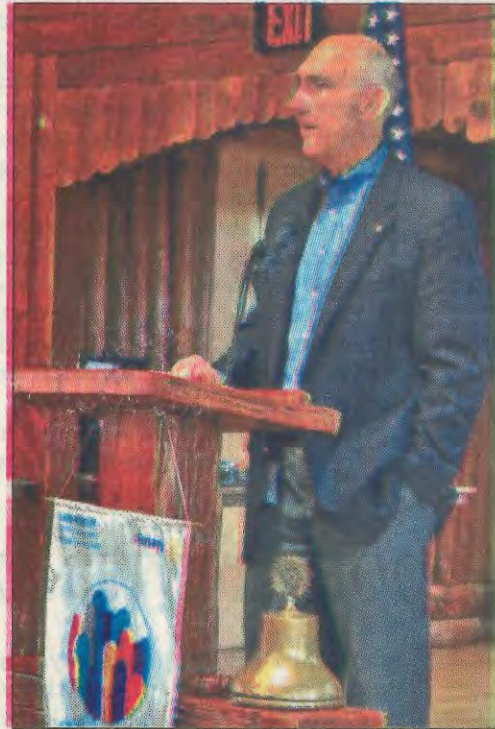
Kubota, with three plants in Jackson County and five in Hall County, had 600 jobs openings, Roberts said, while Haering, in Hart County, had 60 job openings. Locally, Fieldale Farms, with its \$22 million processing plant expansion, had 100 local jobs available.

The available nearby jobs means a significant number of Habersham County residents "don't mind driving 60 minutes to a job," he said.

"This is a demand on our work force," Roberts said, which is a two-edged sword. With the booming economy, people can find jobs, but if they are not Habersham jobs, where do local employers find a workforce?

"How do we become more competitive?" he asked rhetorically. Roberts advised local businesses and employers "to connect with them" (the student population) and let them know there are opportunities in Habersham County, whether they graduate from high school, college or technical college.

Health care and manufacturing are two rapidly growing business sectors in the Northeast Georgia region, he said, and "the manufacturing sector is growing



DONALD FRASER/Staff

Georgia Power Co.'s Northeast Georgia Regional Economic Development Manager Rope Roberts presented the Rotary Club of Habersham County with a snapshot of economic development conditions in Northeast Georgia March 1, telling the members some industries are expanding and jobs are available.

faster in the region, when compared to the state and to the nation."

To capitalize on the region's growth trends, Habersham County must keep in mind several thoughts, Roberts said: "Is your community meeting the demand for new workers in these areas?; Are you competitive with other counties to attract new businesses?; and; Are you talking to and listening to your existing industries' needs?"

"Everybody everywhere is dealing with the problem of unqualified employees," he said.

An inevitable fallout of not creating a qualified workforce is the ever stronger push for automation, Roberts said.

The Northeast Georgian  
3/9/18

8A

## Public input sought for HC Comp Plan

Habersham County officials have set two more public hearings to receive input from the community regarding its proposed 2038 Comprehensive Plan.

"The Comprehensive Plan is a plan required by state law to be completed every 10 years and we're seeking public input to develop a vision for the community for 2038," Habersham County Planning and Development Director Mike Beecham told *The Northeast Georgian*. "The Comp Plan is a guidebook to get to that point."

Because county officials would like to hear from the public about what they'd like to see their community look like in 2038, two opportunities have been scheduled in late March allowing those interested to voice their opinions. Other hearings have already been held in Demorest, Mt. Airy and Tallulah Falls, and at North Georgia Technical College and Piedmont College.

The next public hearings are scheduled for 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. Tuesday, March 27, at Clarkesville City Hall.

See future editions of *The Northeast Georgian* for news of additional public hearings as they are scheduled.

- CHRISTINA SANTEE

# Alto discusses Comprehensive Plan

BY ERIC PEREIRA

Adam Hazell, planning director at Georgia Mountain Regional Commission, and Habersham County Community Planning and Development Director Mike Beecham met with Alto Mayor Audrey Turner June 20 to discuss the 2018 Comprehensive Plan draft addressing the town's needs and opportunities within the next five years.

"Just moving forward right now," Turner said on what she anticipates for the future of Alto. "We have just about accomplished everything we had on our previous plan so we're shifting modes now. Hopefully get more business in town now as soon as we get this going."

Hazell discussed how Alto's location could present the opportunity for growth.

"Alto is another smaller community, it's likely going to be predominately a bedroom community," Hazell said. "But they do have some opportunities for commercial and at least one property that might be good for industrial development in the future, with access to the rail line and not too far from (state Route) 365. And they also know that they can hopefully work out arrangements with Baldwin to bring sewer into the area if needed."

Because if the town wanted to bring in a commercial enterprise, like a restaurant or something with a high turnover and customer base, they would need the sewer capacity in order to make that viable even for the main drags," Hazell said.

Hazell highlighted the main priority for the town of Alto.

"Their big focus is just going to be to continue to position themselves as new development comes in, hopefully some new subdivisions, it will raise the caliber of housing in the area," he said.

In regard to the residential areas, Turner told *The Northeast Georgian* the town doesn't "necessarily" have any housing that is available inside city limits. Hazell discussed the current housing situation as well.

"They do have a number of older properties. They do also have a number of seniors and households

that are on fixed incomes," Hazell said. "So they know that's one of the reasons why they have properties that have lapsed in their repair and maintenance. A lot of single older adults that have not been conditioned to take care of their properties. So they're trying to see what they can do to find other partnering agencies and groups that might help with giving people alternatives for fixing up their properties."

Hazell went on to say that focusing on repairs could "lead that as a means for bringing in new development that is more conducive to seniors."

Hazell did mention that Turner has plans of preserving the history of Alto with the help of its older and long-time residents.

"They don't have much in the way of archives or documentation that helps celebrate their past," Hazell said. "She knows of a number of residents that she said just in speaking with them, that they have stories to tell that they have a lot of great information that just has not been bundled together in a way

they can either be saved or shared to celebrate their history."

Turner said once the new Alto town hall is complete, she wants to start this process as soon as possible.

"I've been wanting to do this for some time, but

**ALTO ON 7A**

## ALTO

From Page 5A

there's really not the space to do it," Turner said. "But we have a lot of history here that's not all just inside the city ... there's history that's not documented about English moving from Canada to this area. And we have such a large elderly population that we need to get this documented before we lose them."

Turner also mentioned the city plans to do some annexation of the following roads in the future: Alto-Mud Creek Road, a portion of Wynn Shoals Road, a portion of the north side Gainesville Highway and a portion of Nix Road that runs to Apple Pie Ridge Road.

She added that the Alto Public Safety Department

would have to consider two new police cars depending on the annexation of the mentioned roads.

*The Northwest*

*Georgian 6/29/18*



# Residents talk Habersham Joint Comprehensive Plan

BY ERIC PEREIRA

Citizens from Habersham County met at Clarkesville City Hall for a public meeting on the Habersham County Joint Comprehensive Plan. At the March 27 morning meeting, quality of life was one of the focuses of the community vision discussion.

"My thought is quality of life is going to be one of the most important issues, even for economic development purposes," said Habersham County Planning Director Mike Beecham. "Companies tend to locate where the quality of life is very important. I think we need to push that."

Clarkesville City Manager Barbara Kesler added that lot has changed since the last comprehensive plan, completed about 10 years ago.

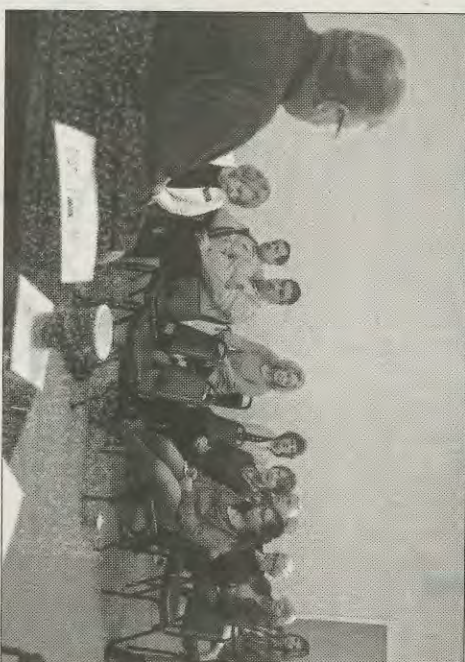
"Quality of life wasn't anywhere close to the top of the list then," she said. "But now, that's like No. 1 for every- Beecham reminded the audience that this plan in- cludes the entire county.

"Cornelia decided to do their own and at the end, they were going to incorporate it into the overall document," he said. "Baldwin has done theirs with Banks County. We are treating this as the entire county as a whole."

Clarkesville resident Bob Parker suggested the need for senior housing in the Clarkesville area. Clarkesville Mayor Barrie Aycock responded by saying the younger generation has the same need, as well. "... It's affordable housing, not necessarily senior housing." There's a lot of talk about a sort of community housing. "...," Aycock said.

Beecham said the county is aware of this. "... You know, with all the building code changes within the last 10 years, it's very expensive to build a new house," he said. "Energy code requirements and everything else - it's very hard to build affordable housing."

At the meeting and in an interview with *The Northeast Georgian*, Angela Kiker, real-estate broker with Century 21 Community Realty, talked about the shortage of housing. "There is a housing shortage in Habersham County," Kiker said. "We have a need, especially for housing under \$200,000. Real-estate agents have buyers, but they need new construction investors. The market is not there."



ERIC PEREIRA/Staff  
County Planning Director Mike Beecham talks to an audience about the Habersham County Comprehensive Plan.

sive plan meeting, both jointly with the county and city, and individually with the cities, are vital to the positive growth and development in Habersham County. There is tremendous potential for all of us to have an extraordinary quality of life."

Doug Henry, of Clarkesville, asked what will happen to the comprehensive plan when it's completed.

"The county and the cities will work on it," Beecham said. "The actual document will be written by the regional commission."

"And then what happens?" Henry asked. "It sits in a drawer somewhere?"

Beecham responded by saying the one currently adopted has been "sitting on the shelf for 10 years."

He added that elected officials would use it when they're making land-use and infrastructure decisions, etc.

With this being the fourth public meeting, out of all the input received, Beecham said the general consensus was "any development - keep it on the south side of the county."

Toward the beginning of the meeting, Beecham had

idents online.

"As of the end of last week, we have about 380 surveys [completed]," Beecham said. "We've tried to spread that around. We've given it to the [Habersham County] Board of Education, Tallulah Falls, Piedmont."

He said they had hoped for 1,000 survey submissions.

"Quite frankly," Beecham said, "the current one (comprehensive plan) we are operating under - I don't think anybody ever actually looked at it after it was done and we hope to have a little bit better plan this time around."

He added that the current comprehensive plan is about 400 pages.

"They cut down a lot of the requirements that were in effect 10 years ago," Beecham said. "This document should be about 80-100 pages, so it's a lot more manageable."

Residents can take a survey for the comprehensive plan at [habershamga.com/habersham-county-comprehensive-plan.cfm](http://habershamga.com/habersham-county-comprehensive-plan.cfm).

# Mt. Airy council discusses Comprehensive Plan

BY ERIC PEREIRA

The Mt. Airy Town Council discussed the future development of the town at a called work session June 20. The council revised a 2018 Comprehensive Plan draft with Planning Director Adam Hazell of Georgia Mountain Regional Commission and Habersham County Community Planning and Development Director Mike Beecham.

"We do know there is going to be a degree of growth," Hazell said. "We do know there is going to be some change coming this way both in terms of general population growth as residents move into the area and ... more employment centers going in and around Habersham County, particularly along the [state Route] 365/[U.S. Highway] 441 borders. But now is how we want to shape it. What type of growth is going to come?"

Hazell said he would gather all of the information and mitigation strategies discussed and return with a full draft of the Comprehensive Plan, which should be complete in late July or early August. The Comprehensive Plan draft discussed the following topics:

## LAND-USE MANAGEMENT

The first issue discussed was the county ensuring its land use policies "are applied in such a way that will concentrate development to areas better suited for more intense activity," the Comprehensive Plan draft reads.

Councilman Ray McAllister mentioned that a small business or restaurant would be preferred around the U.S. Highway 123 corridor. Councilman Adam Tullis said there is space near state Route 197, as well.

This led to discussion of the town's capabilities of supporting this through sewer and water.

"With regards to your plans for land use, you're content with working within your existing utility and infrastructure scope?" Hazell said.

"Well, on infrastructure as far as water goes, that's going to require expansion. So the decision we have to make is will we go with purchasing water from sister cities or will we seek another well?" responded Mayor Gary Morris.

## SENSE OF PLACE

In this section, the Comprehensive Plan draft reads that "area residents and stakeholders wish to see Habersham County aspire for a stronger, unique identity and a sense of community."

Hazell addressed the notion from survey responses that people want to "preserve the rural nature of the area."

"Some folks are wanting to see, if not a sense of design guidelines, but certain standards tied in with development regulation," Hazell said. "At least have reference guides for developers and industrial development workers."

Hazell told the council that one of the more critical needs and opportunities is the need to review and possibly amend property maintenance policies to protect against properties falling into blight and unsafe conditions.

"We're already discussing those as we speak," McAllister said. "We're discussing about blighted properties, areas that are developed in lots and their maintenance of those

## COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY FOR HOUSING

This section concerned whether or not Habersham County will attract and sustain quality housing at all economic levels.

In regard to higher-grade housing, McAllister said the city probably doesn't have enough building sites.

City Manager Tim Jarrell said this is only possible if Mt. Airy were to expand its town limits.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

The Comprehensive Plan draft stated "there should be an intentional and coordinated strategy among local economic development stakeholders to ensure the best use of area resources."

Regarding needs and opportunities, the county lacks a formal plan for where to locate and best sustain new industrial development, according to the Comprehensive Plan draft.

"... there's likely going to be an emphasis that your best industrial sights for this discussion are going to be outside Mt. Airy ...," Hazell said.

He followed up by asking if the council had any quarrels with this matter.

"We don't look at it as a negative or a positive for us," McAllister said. "It's just a necessity issue. They're going where they have the infrastructure to deal with their business."

Beecham mentioned the county commission would like to see some more promotion of Lake Russell.

Jarrell and members of the council agreed and discussed possibilities that could lead to increased promotion.

"Those of us that have grown up here, particularly, have realized the asset that Lake Russell is to our county and community," Morris told *The Northeast Georgian*.

## CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS

In order for growth and development to come to Mt. Airy, the first capital improvement that would need attention is water.

"Water is always a key issue," Morris told *The Northeast Georgian*. "We're ongoing with that. We do need to look at a new water tank in the future and possibly a new well. We're gonna try to continue to make the city a better place to live and continue to work on small improvements without having to increase taxes, which is our main goal."

Jarrell mentioned the need for the replacement of a maintenance truck in the road department, a maintenance truck in the water department and two patrol cars. The town is in the process of seeking funding.

In other business, the council:

- Heard Jarrell report the county commission has approved to award Allied Paving Contractors Inc. the bid for the paving project for Keller Road. There is no time frame as to when this project will begin. However, it is still expected to be complete by October;

- Immediately following the work session, in a called meeting, held the second reading of the Habersham County Animal Control Ordinance. Councilman Tullis made the motion to adopt the ordinance. It was seconded by