CITY OF CHATTAHOOCHEE HILLS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

COMMUNITY AGENDA

Chattahoochee Hills Mayor and City Council

Mayor Don Hayes
John Taylor, District 1
Carl Hattaway, District 2
David Hanson, District 3 and Mayor Pro Tem
Faye Godwin, District 4
Rodney Peek, District 5

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TASK FORCE

Paul Alford
W.C. Blackmon
Clifford Blizard
H. Thomas Blum
Carl Bouckaert
Stan Bouckaert
Dr. George Brown
Kenneth Bryant
Margaret Clime
Steve Dray
George Eichler
David Goode
Nancy Green Leigh
Gene Griffith
Nehemiah Haire
Andy Hannah
Don Harrelson
Mike Harris
Monty Harris
Judy Henderson
Sandra Huffmaster
Steven Kopelman
Ken Langley
Wendy McGhee
Alan Merrill
Tara Muenz
Steve Nygren
Stacy Patton
Mark Prater
Tom Reed,
Task Force Chair
Rocky Reeves
Dan Sanders
Laurie Searle
Rick Sewell
Allen Shropshire
Bob Simpson
Clay Stafford
Sandra Storrar
Hugh Tyer
Dana Wicher

CITY OF CHATTAHOOCHEE HILLS STAFF

Carol Wolfe, City Manager
Jahnee Prince, City Planner
Mike Morton, City Planner
Dana Wicher, City Clerk
Sarah McQuade, Planning Intern

PLANNING CONSULTANT TEAM

Steve Cover
Wally Warren, Keck and Wood (GIS maps)
David Green, Perkins+Will

CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 3

A VISION FOR THE STATE OF GEORGIA 7

PLANNING IN CHATTAHOOCHEE HILLS 11

THE FIRST COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 12
REFINING THE VISION 14
EXISTING CONDITIONS 14

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TASK FORCE 21

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION 23
COMMITTEE STRUCTURE 24

THE 2010 VISION 27

DELIBERATELY RURAL 28
CHALLENGES 28

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 31

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAP 33
CHARACTER AREAS 33
TOWN 37
VILLAGE 43
MIXED-USE HAMLET 49
RICO CROSSROADS COMMUNITY 53
RESIDENTIAL HAMLET 57
FARMETTE 63
AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL RESIDENTIAL 69
AGRIBUSINESS/INDUSTRIAL 73

REGULATION 76
ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION 78

SHORT TERM WORK PROGRAM 97

CONCLUSION 99

"The future will belong to the nature-smart—those individuals, families, businesses and political leaders who develop a deeper understanding of the transformative power of the natural world and who balance the virtual with the real."

–Richard Louv

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
COMMUNITY AGENDA

COMMUNITY AGENDA

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Comprehensive Plan Community Agenda is the product of a year long planning effort that involved an extensive public outreach effort and numerous public workshops. It is intended to be a concise, user-friendly document usable for day-to-day decision making by the city's elected officials and staff as they work toward achieving the desired future of the communities within the City of Chattahoochee Hills.

The foundation of the Chattahoochee Hills Comprehensive Plan is a vision for the future that is deliberately rural. Not rural because suburban development pressure has not yet arrived, but an intentional vision to remain rural in the face of the inevitable suburban development pressure. The citizens of Chattahoochee Hills have made a deliberate and bold choice to stand apart from the predominant development pattern of metro Atlanta. The deliberately rural vision encapsulates both a desired development/non-development pattern and an economic development strategy. By creating a unique place in the region, the city will be fulfilling an otherwise unmet need to be close to nature and agriculture in what would otherwise become a typical sprawling suburban environment. Agriculture and agriculturally compatible sustainable businesses are the city's primary economic development targets. The rural nature of the community, if protected, will create value for the property owners already here as others come to appreciate the beauty and serenity of the city.

City residents recognize that coming development pressure must be channeled into an acceptable form that fits the city's vision and enhances the city's tax base. Therefore the comprehensive plan task force has refined the existing village, hamlet and AG-1 vision for the city (from the Focus Fulton 2025 plan) into a revised town, village, hamlet form integrated with traditional rural/agricultural development. Outside of the intentionally densely developed mixed-use nodes—the town, village and hamlets—the city will be rural, with a strong focus on agriculture and preservation of the rural public realm and rural vistas that are highly valued by the community.

Each of the Comprehensive Plan committees began their work with a thorough review of the Comprehensive Plan survey results and of the feedback given through the outreach meeting process. Letting the citizens' charge of "keep it rural" guide them, each committee set out to define what rural is, and how to best achieve that state in the context of the needs of a small city.

In hewing to the consensus of the Comprehensive Plan Task Force committees by maintaining the rural character of the city, the Mayor and City Council are not only following the wishes of the city's citizens, but are also creating a valuable asset that will competitively differentiate the city, improving property values and tax collections as well as quality of life. Metro Atlanta is overrun with suburban sprawl. Families continually move further out from the center of the city to escape that sprawl. In Chattahoochee Hills, people will be able to enjoy the rural appeal of the community in perpetuity because the city has made a deliberate choice to preserve and maintain its rural character. It will remain rural not only for the 20 year time frame of the Comprehensive Plan, but permanently, rather than being temporarily rural only because the suburban sprawl hasn't yet arrived to destroy that character.

In its current rural state, the city has a very limited tax base. In order for the city to be able to continue to provide an acceptable level of services in the future without significant property tax increases, the property tax base will have to be improved. In order to keep the majority of the city rural while allowing for needed development, that development will be permitted (and concentrated) only in designated development areas (the town, villages and hamlets). Additionally, the elements that most embody the rural nature of the city, the scenic roadways and viewscapes, will be protected through transportation planning and buffer protection policies.

The Comprehensive Plan calls for preservation of the City's natural resources and rural character while still accommodating targeted growth. Based on the results of the public outreach efforts, this plan calls for promoting a village and town pattern of development in order to preserve open space and accommodate anticipated growth. Several specific development patterns are identified:

Town – An activity center that contains all of the elements of a traditional small town, including civic, commercial, industrial and residential uses of all types, as well as a significant percentage of preserved space. The town will be walkable and have land use mixed at a very fine grain, and will become the future core of the city.

Village(s) – Activity centers that contain most of the elements of a small town, with civic, commercial, and residential uses all linked by a pedestrian-friendly transportation network, in addition to a significant percentage of preserved space. Villages will offer housing, employment, commercial and recreational opportunities.

The town and village(s) will be the focal points of new public facilities such as road improvements, utilities, schools, and additional parks and recreational facilities.

Hamlet(s) – The committees defined two types of hamlets: mixed-use and residential. In both cases, the development form will require significant land preservation, with dense, pedestrian-oriented housing nodes. As the name suggests,

the Mixed-Use Hamlet will include commercial uses, while the Residential Hamlet will not.

Crossroads Communities – An existing/historical community that contains a few commercial uses with closely spaced buildings and houses. If desired by the residents, the Rico crossroads community will be allowed infill development in the form of an historic hamlet reflective of the history of the area.

Rural – All of the remaining areas of the City that are to remain in conservation, with very low density residential, conservation or agricultural uses.

The Community Agenda includes a Future Development Map that offers an illustrative view of the city in terms of seven character areas. The map is based on the community's vision for the future as developed through the public outreach process, and is intended to reflect the future built environment.

Each of the character areas is identified on the Future Development Map and is described in the text in terms of the vision for its future, its operation, the regulatory intent, critical factors, policy themes, and the Quality Community Objectives it achieves

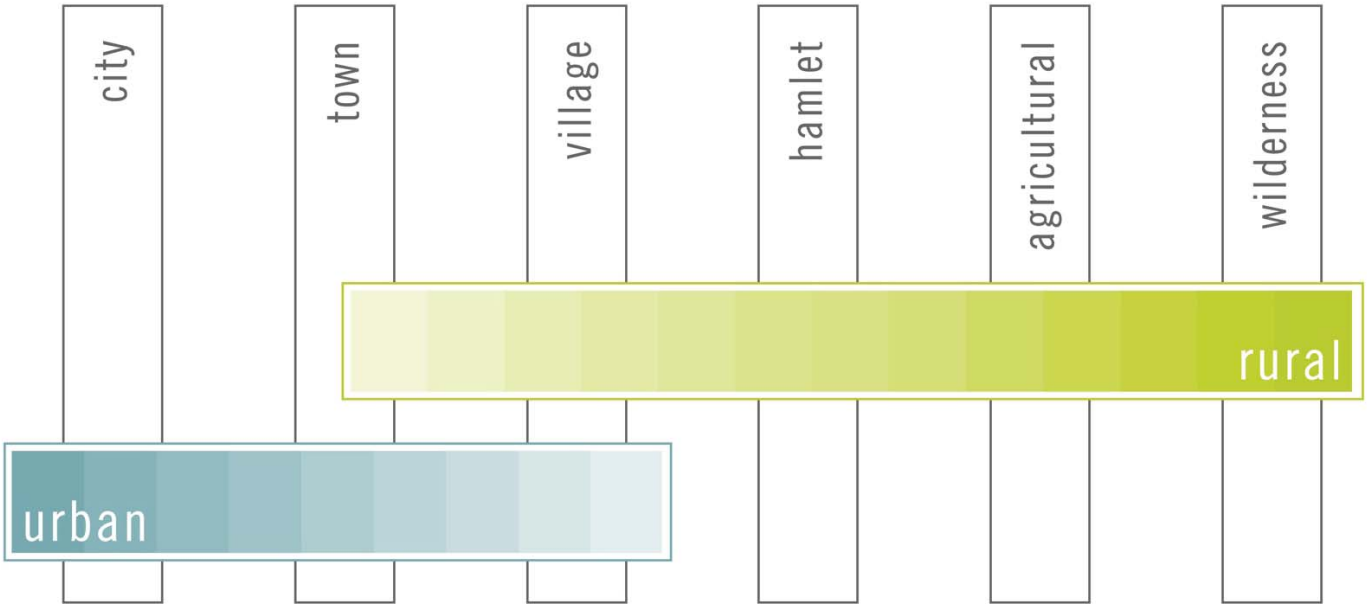
This plan includes a discussion of the issues and opportunities, brought up in the community outreach meetings, that the city will face over the next 20 years, as well as Policies and an Implementation Program to address each one. The last chapter of the plan is a Short-Term Work Program that outlines an action plan for the city to realize its vision.

COMMUNITY AGENDA

A VISION FOR THE STATE OF GEORGIA

For much of the past century, American comprehensive planning has produced a development pattern that is understood as suburban. In concept, suburban development patterns were intended to provide the best of rural and urban living in a healthy and productive environment for all citizens. As the suburban model spread, however, it became clear that a number of unintended consequences had emerged. Commuters came to rely heavily on the automobile; uses were disconnected from each other; and the rural and native landscapes were replaced with highly dispersed, infrastructure-intense development. As Georgia moves into the twenty-first century, there is an opportunity to address many of these challenges in the way we comprehensively plan in the state.

Historically, comprehensive planning focused on the physical development of communities. This is clearly indicated in the original language of the City Planning Enabling Act, provided by the Hoover Commission, and produced by Congress in 1929. In this vision, the primary act of city building, whether for a new city or an expanding existing township, was the creation of the physical public realm. This act deals specifically with the conversion of land into a framework of streets and infrastructure, public spaces and public buildings, and block and lot configurations. The framework, particularly the configuration of streets and blocks, provides a long-term structure for changing patterns of land use, building form and building occupancies. How this structure is designed is vital to the performance of a jurisdiction. Small yet easily developable blocks are the key to creating a city that not only allows, but promotes, public activity through its walkability. The formation of such a public framework is the first step toward livability, sustainability, and adaptability, all within the context of a strong community. The strategic projection of a public framework has a long history in the constitution of enduring cities, from the Roman use of the 'cardo' and 'decumanus' (the main streets at the core of every Roman town) to Oglethorpe's plan for Savannah, or the



Commissioners' Plan of 1811 for the city of Manhattan. These plans all passed from regulatory documents to long-lived and much loved constructed places, and have all survived adaptations over the course of time.

In Georgia, this sort of comprehensive planning can drive the makeup and expansion not only of cities and towns, but also of non-urban areas—places that historically have been understood as rural. Rural planning is just as important as urban planning, and in many ways more so. As with the creation of a city, there are also physical elements of a rural district or area that create a framework that determines the character of future development. Much of the United States, especially as it spread westward, was planned at a very high level through the Land Ordinance of 1785. The system of townships and ranges was used to dimensionally determine the patterns of development and land transfer for everything from capital cities to ranches and farmland, and those patterns, in places, have defined that development for generations after the plans were laid.

Chattahoochee Hills has an opportunity to provide a model for bridging the urban and the rural as a strategy for supplanting the suburban development model. The vision incorporates the best of rural living with the best of town and urban living, but without confusing and combining the two. Each type of development has its own characteristics and qualities that make it livable, sustainable, adaptable and accessible. But the rules for each are not always the same, and the physical elements of each require different approaches. The vision of the Chattahoochee Hills Comprehensive Plan is to provide a model for the state as it moves forward with comprehensive planning in the coming decades, and to provide a model for planning that addresses the differences and similarities between the rural and urban environments. And along with this, the vision for Chattahoochee Hills provides a strategy to transition between the two without losing the value and the values of each.

Image courtesy of The University of Georgia

COMMUNITY AGENDA

PLANNING IN CHATTAHOOCHEE HILLS

The vision for Chattahoochee Hills began to form long before the city was incorporated. Fulton County played a key role in laying the groundwork for the unique Chattahoochee Hill Country community's development concepts through the implementation of creative zoning and land use legislation. Beginning in 2000, Fulton County began working with residents in a grass roots initiative that created the Chattahoochee Hill Country, an area bound together by a concept which preferred development in dense nodes with a high level of permanent land preservation over the more typical suburban sprawl seen in the Atlanta area. In 2002, Fulton County amended its Land Use Plan, officially designating the 40,000-acre area known as the Chattahoochee Hill Country, and also adopted the Chattahoochee Hill Country Overlay District, which established the mixed-use hamlet and village zoning districts and the corresponding goal of permanently preserving at least 60% of the land.

In 2003, the County adopted a Transfer of Development Rights Ordinance, which provided for the permanent protection of land driven by the development of villages, consolidating development there using development rights transferred from the surrounding farm and forestlands. The first hamlet development was approved by the County in 2004. In 2005, Fulton County adopted the Chattahoochee Hill Country Conservation Subdivision Ordinance, making conservation subdivisions the only other development mode allowed in the Chattahoochee Hill Country. In 2006, Fulton County recorded the first two Transfer of Development Rights transactions in the State of Georgia.

The desire to permanently strengthen these programs and to administer them locally was the primary driver behind citizen efforts to incorporate the Chattahoochee Hill country area into a city. That incorporation took place in 2007, creating the new city of Chattahoochee Hill Country, which later changed its name to Chattahoochee Hills.

THE FIRST COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Upon its incorporation in 2007, the City of Chattahoochee Hills adopted Fulton County's Comprehensive Plan and development regulations. A portion of the Fulton County Comprehensive Plan, Focus Fulton 2025, specifically addressed the special needs of the area of Chattahoochee Hills, creating an overlay zoning district that called for preservation of a minimum of 60% percent of the area in a relatively undisturbed state, with development concentrated in villages and hamlets located in specific areas. The future land use map included three villages (informally called Center Town, Friendship Village and Foxhall Village) located in Chattahoochee Hills and the remaining land to be agricultural residential (AG-1, one acre minimum lot size). The 'Friendship Village' village was approved as a DRI by ARC under Fulton County in 2005.

When the city was created in the State legislature, the city limits were drawn differently than originally intended, with the northeast quadrant excised. In addition, the neighboring city of Palmetto annexed some property in the east of the proposed city at the behest of the developer. The boundary changes removed one of the villages (Foxhall) entirely, along with two thirds of another (Friendship). Foxhall Village, now in the City of Palmetto, was approved as a DRI by ARC in 2006. The conceptual village known as Center Town, on land owned by Carl Bouckaert, remained in the city. Despite losing one and two thirds of its presumed village sites, the city kept the Fulton County Comprehensive Plan, although there was immediate recognition that some elements of the plan might need to be amended to accommodate the changes in the boundaries.

Since formation of the city, the downturn in the economy has greatly reduced the development pressure experienced throughout the entire Atlanta region, including the City of Chattahoochee Hills.

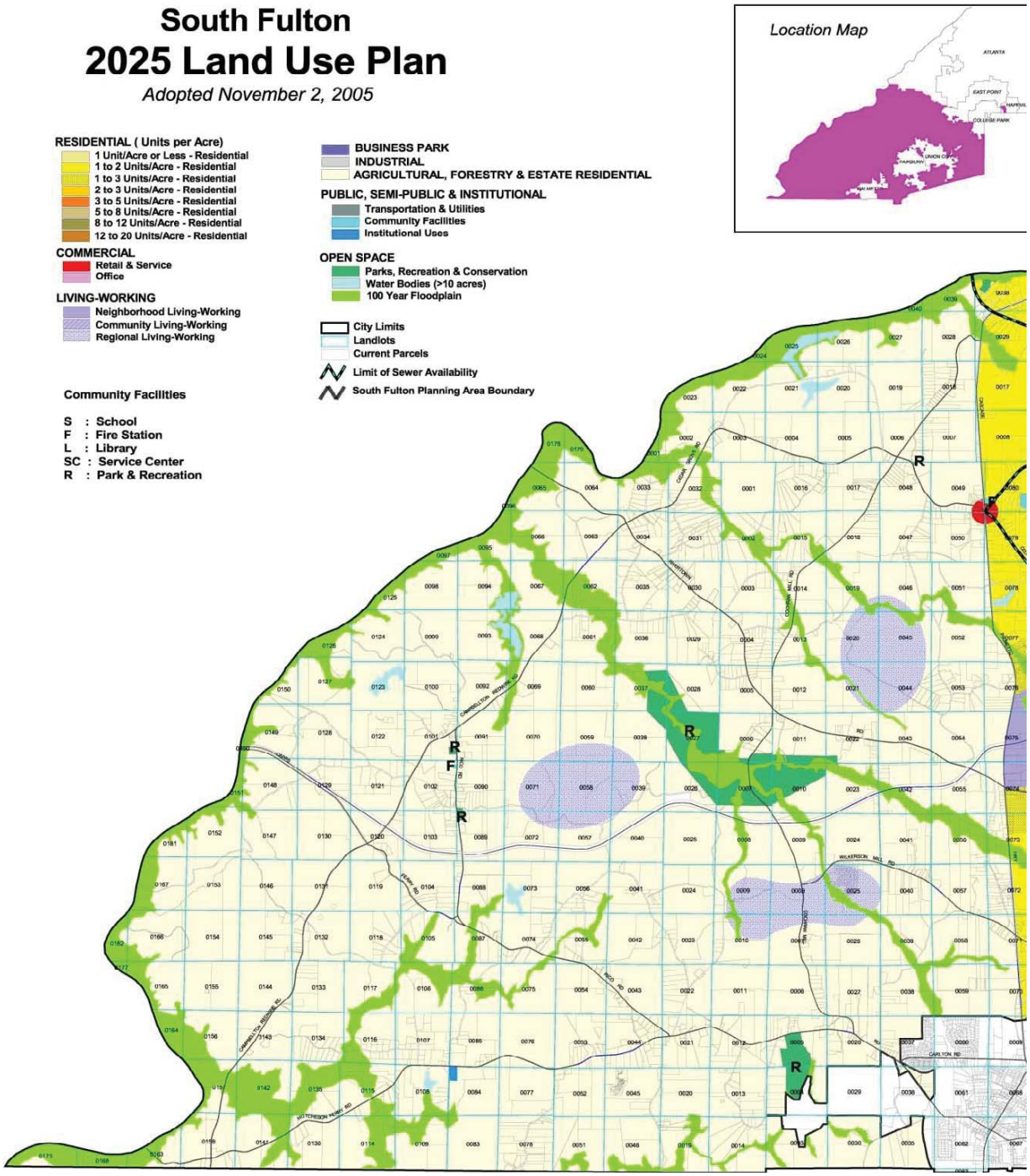
The assets that make the community attractive for development—a large, physically attractive, contiguous and almost entirely undeveloped area with a highly sustainable development plan located only 25 minutes from the world's largest airport—remain, however, and the city is likely to experience intense development pressure in coming years.

In the three years since the adoption of Focus Fulton, the leadership and citizens of Chattahoochee Hills have consistently demonstrated their willingness and their passion for "The Plan"; for raising the bar for preservation of rural land and lifestyles, and for promoting responsible and sustainable development. The most prominent example of preservation-oriented development in the community is Serenbe, the first phase of which has been substantially completed. Serenbe serves as a nationally recognized, award-winning example of outstanding land conservation, agricultural integration, planning and implementation.

It is the intent of this Community Agenda to build upon the spirit that was established in Focus Fulton, to identify problem areas, and to encourage even higher standards to create and to maintain a sustainable community for the citizens of Chattahoochee Hills.

The Community Agenda identifies short and long-term planning strategies for the City of Chattahoochee Hills that supports that community vision. These planning strategies are intended to help guide the pattern of development

FOCUS FULTON 2025
FUTURE LAND USE MAP



within the city while supporting the character guidelines for specific areas of the community. The goals and policies expressed in the Community Agenda identify how the City of Chattahoochee Hills will address demands associated with future anticipated population and work force growth while supporting the overall vision for the city.

REFINING THE VISION

A diverse spectrum of stakeholders was appointed by the Mayor and City Council to develop the Community Agenda. Experience in public involvement has shown that lasting solutions are best identified when all segments of a community—individuals, elected officials, the business community, potential developers, and civic organizations—are brought together in a spirit of cooperation. That was certainly the case in Chattahoochee Hills.

The broad based participation in developing the Community Agenda will help ensure that it will be implemented, because many in the community are involved in its development and thereby become committed to seeing it through.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The City of Chattahoochee Hills is rural. The city is home to 2316 people in 1028 households spread out over 38,628 acres. That yields a population density of one resident per 16.7 acres.

The land is divided into more than two thousand separate parcels. Of these, the 159 parcels that are larger than fifty acres make up over half the city's area.

Seventy one percent of the city's land is used for agriculture and forestry. Of this, the majority is forested with second-growth mixed hardwoods and pine

Six percent of the city is residential land, the vast majority of which contains single-family detached housing, though there are a small number of live-work units in Serenbe. The city has no major employers and there is very little commercial use. Outside the hamlet of Serenbe, there is only one store, Smith's Grocery.

Since the city's incorporation, the economic climate has not been supportive of development. The two conservation subdivisions that were underway at the time of incorporation have failed and await redevelopment, and though the existing city code allows for village and hamlet developments, Serenbe remains the only example of development on that scale currently active.

EXISTING LAND USES

Existing land use information for the City of Chattahoochee Hills was gathered from a field survey completed in March 2010. Land uses are classified into the eight standard land use classifications as described in DCA's planning Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning. Most of the land use data for the city was gathered from field surveys and aerial photos. The majority of land in Chattahoochee Hills is currently devoted to agricultural/forestry uses, which occupy 71% of the city. Six percent of land was classified as residential. Because so much of the city is agricultural or forested, from the road, it is hard to see where houses are located. Even from aerial photos, the tree cover can obscure houses. The city has many very large tracts of lands on which one house is located but the rest

is pasture land or forest. These lots were classified by the majority use. If most of the lot was agricultural or forest, it was classified as Agriculture/Forestry. If the lot was not in any productive agricultural or forestry use and was mostly devoted to residential use, it was classified as residential.

Transportation/communication/utilities land is 16% of the total land area. The city has 101 miles of roads: 66 miles are paved, 34 miles are gravel. The park/recreation/conservation category includes the newly purchased city parks, Cochran Mill Nature Center and the conservation area for one platted conservation subdivision. The land that is categorized as undeveloped/vacant is land that was platted for subdivisions but has been abandoned.

The current mixed use category is currently defined by Serenbe.

RESIDENTIAL

According to DCA, the predominant use of land within the residential category is for single-family and multi-family dwelling units organized into general categories of net densities. In Chattahoochee Hills, residential generally means AG-1, lots of one acre or more, not in a subdivision, or conventional residential subdivisions.

There is one conventional subdivision, Crossroads (sometimes called Little Fawn) off of Wilkerson Mill Road, which was developed in the early 1980s. The layout of Crossroads is a typical suburban pattern with only one entrance to the development for more than 150 houses and numerous cul-de-sacs. Houses in the Crossroads subdivision are on lots that are approximately 10,000 square feet in size. The subdivision was originally served by a sewage treatment package plant that failed. It is now served by Fulton County Sewer.

The City has two unsuccessful, partially built, abandoned conventional suburban subdivisions, Arbor Reserve and Bear Creek, which are in need of redevelopment and/or significant aesthetic improvements.

Arbor Reserve and Bear Creek were built as conservation subdivisions. However, the average citizen may not notice the conservation area because much of the surrounding area is undeveloped. The average person only sees small lots, the problems associated with existing conventional suburban subdivisions in the community and the suburban nature of these developments.

The new residential hamlet designation will replace the conventional conservation subdivision in the major subdivision process and is intended to address the concerns related to conventional subdivisions and force a more rural aesthetic for residential development. Although the number of houses allowed for each acre in the development would remain the same (with an overall density of one house per acre), the appearance will be that of a small rural hamlet, because all of the development will be focused on 30% of the land.

There will be no future development of typical AG-1 (one acre) lot type after the proposed subdivision regulations and zoning ordinance amendments are adopted. AG-1, or one acre lots, are suburban in nature and are not in keeping with the city's rural vision. The current subdivision regulations allow parcels to be subdivided using the minor subdivision process only once and the majority of lots in the

EXISTING AND FUTURE LAND USE

Land Use Category	Acres	Current Percentage of the City	Future Percentage of the City
Residential	2,296	6%	6%
Commercial	17	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Industrial	0	0%	Less than 1%
Public/Institutional	28	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Transportation/Communication/ Utilities	6,060	16%	16%
Park/Recreation/Conservation	1,958	5%	5%
Agriculture/Forestry	27,586	71%	62%
Undeveloped/Vacant	138	Less than 1%	Less than 1%
Mixed Use	545	1%	9%
Total	38,628	100%	

(Percentages equal more than 100% due to rounding)

Source: Community Assessment

city smaller than 10 acres have already been through the minor subdivision process. Those lots cannot be subdivided again. Proposed revisions to the subdivision regulations and zoning ordinance will increase minimum lot size and a limit on the number of small parcels (3 acres) that can be created. Lots created under the minor subdivision process will likely be small farms or farmettes and will be included in the agriculture land use category.

COMMERCIAL

DCA characterizes this category as land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities, usually organized into general categories of intensities. The only commercial development outside of Serenbe is Smith's Store in the Rico crossroad community. Future commercial development will be located in the Town, Village and Mixed-use Hamlets, not in a separate commercial district, so there will be no net increase in the land designated commercial.

INDUSTRIAL

This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction activities, or other similar uses. There is approximately 10 acres of undeveloped industrially zoned land on Cambellton-Redwine Road. Future industrial land uses may be located in the town or in a new industrial district located adjacent to Highway 154, depending on the size and intensity of the use. Small-scale agricultural industrial of the type typically found in the nonworking farms will also be allowed in the rural district.

PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL

This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Government uses include city halls and government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc. Examples of institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc. New civic uses are generally to be located in the town, but may be built in other locations based on need.

TRANSPORTATION/COMMUNICATION/ UTILITIES

This category includes such uses as major transportation routes, public transit stations, power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, telephone switching

Future Land Use Category	Definition	Corresponding Zoning
Mixed Use	Dense town, village and mixed-use hamlet development surrounded by greenspace	CHC-MIX or three separate new zoning districts for town, village, and mixed-use hamlet
Agricultural/Forestry	Agricultural uses including timbering, houses are allowed	New zoning district
Residential	Rural residential on existing lots or new lots three or more acres in size	New zoning district
Industrial	Industrial or Agricultural uses that are best separated from residential uses of any kind (e.g. Slaughterhouse)	New zoning district
Parks Recreation Conservation	Parks or permanently protected greenspace	New zoning district

stations, airports, port facilities or other similar uses. This category of land uses is not expected to increase significantly over the planning period.

PARK/RECREATION/CONSERVATION

This category is for land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. These areas may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers or similar uses. The city has recently acquired all the parks in its borders from Fulton County. Additional conservation areas will be set aside as part of each development in the city, and depending on the use may be a part of the "permanently preserved land" designated in each development.

AGRICULTURE/FORESTRY

This category is for land dedicated to farming (fields, lots, pastures, farmsteads, specialty farms, livestock production, etc.), agriculture, or commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting. The theme of this comprehensive plan is deliberately rural, with a focus on agricultural activities, so although the amount of land in this category decreases slightly with the town, village, hamlet development pattern, the city desires to promote agriculture and forestry in the city limits. Typical low-impact agricultural uses may also be a part of the "permanently preserved land" designated in each development.

UNDEVELOPED/VACANT

This category is for lots or tracts of land that are served by typical urban public services (water, sewer, etc.) but have not been developed for a specific use or were developed for a specific use that has since been abandoned.

MIXED USE

DCA allows communities to create the definition for their own mixed-use districts but spells out that they must be fine-grained mixed land use, or one in which land uses are more evenly balanced, and that mixed land use categories must be clearly defined, including the types of land uses allowed, the percentage distribution among the mix of uses (or other objective measure of the combination), and the allowable density of each use.

The Mixed Use category for Chattahoochee Hills will include the Town, Village and Mixed-use Hamlet character areas. Other than the new small industrial land use designation, it will be the only land use type to significantly increase over the 20 year planning period.

The Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations will need extensive revisions in order to codify the “Deliberately Rural” vision of Chattahoochee Hills. The existing zoning districts are inadequate to create the type of development and preservation that are part of the Chattahoochee Hills vision.

COMMUNITY AGENDA

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TASK FORCE

Beginning in December of 2009, the Mayor and City Council began recruiting citizens to work on the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan was discussed at City Council and Planning Commission Meetings, information was posted on the City's website and information about the Comprehensive Plan was reported in the Weekly Reader, the weekly on-line newspaper for Chattahoochee Hills. The Comprehensive Plan Task Force is the body that interpreted the input of the community and created the Community Agenda of the Comprehensive Plan. The task force was created through appointments from the Mayor and City Council and citizens volunteering. There were originally 45 people (fully 2% of the city's entire population) appointed to the task force. While some were unable to participate fully due to other commitments, the task force added members over time as citizens came forward to volunteer their time to the effort to maintain its broad-based community input level.

The task force was guided by three facilitators, two of whom are professional planners (consultant and city planner), and the President of the Chattahoochee Hills Civic Association, who served as the Citizen Chair.

City staff was included in the task force for the professional knowledge that they bring to the process. Four out of five of the members of the Chattahoochee Hills Planning Commission were also included in the task force because planning is the focus of their positions on this appointed board. (The Chairman of the Planning Commission elected not to serve on the Comprehensive Plan Task Force due to his work schedule.)

Because of the community's strong planning history, there are a number of community organizations working in the City of Chattahoochee Hills. The following appointees to the Comprehensive Plan Task Force represent various community organizations.

- Nancy Green-Leigh, CHCA Sustainable Development Committee
- Alan Merrill, Chairman, Chattahoochee Hill Country Conservancy
- Tom Reed, President, Chattahoochee Hills Civic Association
- Laurie Searle, Scenic Byways Committee

The local business community and education community were also targeted for involvement in the Comprehensive Plan Task Force.

- Sandra Storrar, Realtor
- Dr. George Brown
- Andy Hanna, Builder
- Sandra Huffmaster, Educator
- Clifford Blizzard, Educator
- Judy Henderson, Chattahoochee Hills Community Library, Educator

The Mayor and City Council also invited the largest landowners in the City to participate in the process because of the impact that those parcels will have once they are developed. They are:

- Mark Hennessey, Hennessey Properties
- Stacy Patton, Minerva
- Carl Bouckaert, Bouckaert Properties
- Brook Cole, Merrill Trust
- Steve Nygren, Serenbe

Citizen Representatives were selected to be part of the process based on interest and willingness to serve the city. The citizens serving on the Comprehensive Plan Task Force included (but were not limited to):

- Paul Alford
- Margaret Clime
- Gene Griffith
- Nehemiah Haire
- Don Harrelson
- Michael Harris
- Monte Harris
- Ken Langley
- Wendy McGhee
- Tara Muenz
- Dan Sanders
- Rick Sewell
- Allen Shropshire
- Bob Simpson

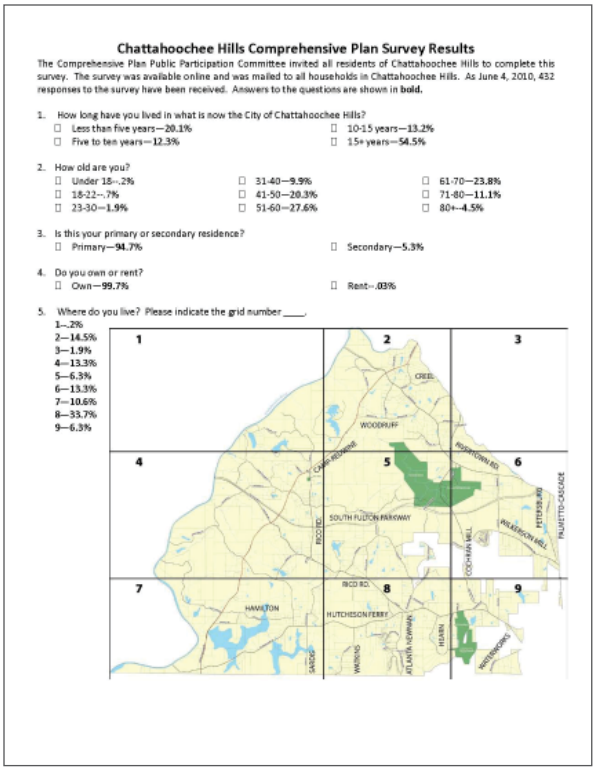
Members of the Task Force were divided into five committees based on interests and expertise. The five committees were Public Participation, Natural and Community Resources, Economic Development, Housing, and Land Use and Transportation. Many of the citizens and stakeholders served on more than one committee.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Public Participation Committee comprised of Gene Griffith, Mark Prater, Tom Reed, Laurie Searle, Sandra Storrar, and Dana Wicher had the important task of reaching out to the community to gather opinion-based information to guide the development of the Community Agenda. This was done in two ways. First was through a mail and online survey. The survey was mailed to all 985 households in Chattahoochee Hills. The combined mail and online survey yielded 432 responses—representing almost 50% of all households in the entire city! The results of the survey were presented to the entire task force.

The second part of the community outreach was a series of meetings held around the city to get more survey responses, perform an additional visual preference survey and to gather any other feedback from the community regarding the physical development of the city in the next 20 years. Five outreach meetings were held around the city during the last two weeks of March and first week of April. Four meetings were held at local churches and one at the Serenbe Institute within Serenbe. The meetings were advertised through all four church bulletins, the Chattahoochee Hills Weekly Reader (a weekly community e-mail newsletter), an e-mail blast to all residents with e-mail addresses on file at City Hall and through flyers posted at Smith's Grocery Store (the only grocery store in Chattahoochee Hills) and at the Blue Eyed Daisy Bakeshop in Serenbe.

The format of all of the meetings was the same. There was a visual preference survey given to inform the Land Use and Transportation Committee about preferred development types. There were walls with signs posted on them. Each



Chattahoochee Hills Comprehensive Plan Survey Results

The Comprehensive Plan Public Participation Committee invited all residents of Chattahoochee Hills to complete this survey. The survey was available online and was mailed to all households in Chattahoochee Hills. As June 4, 2010, 432 responses to the survey have been received. Answers to the questions are shown in **bold.**

1. How long have you lived in what is now the City of Chattahoochee Hills?
   - ☐ Less than five years—**20.1%**
   - ☐ Five to ten years—**12.3%**
   - ☐ 10-15 years—**13.2%**
   - ☐ 15+ years—**54.5%**
2. How old are you?
   - ☐ Under 18—.2%
   - ☐ 18-22—.7%
   - ☐ 23-30—**1.9%**
   - ☐ 31-40—**9.9%**
   - ☐ 41-50—**20.3%**
   - ☐ 51-60—**27.6%**
   - ☐ 61-70—**23.8%**
   - ☐ 71-80—**11.1%**
   - ☐ 80+—**4.5%**
3. Is this your primary or secondary residence?
   - ☐ Primary—**94.7%**
   - ☐ Secondary—**5.3%**
4. Do you own or rent?
   - ☐ Own—**99.7%**
   - ☐ Rent—.03%
5. Where do you live? Please indicate the grid number ____.

1—.2%
2—14.5%
3—1.9%
4—13.3%
5—6.3%
6—13.3%
7—10.6%
8—33.7%
9—6.3%

sign was the same "Tell us your concerns about _____" with all of the required topics of each of the chapters of the Community Agenda inserted. One wall sign read "Tell us your concerns about Transportation", another about Development, another about Natural Resources, Housing, Economic Development, Intergovernmental Coordination, etc. Next to each of the signs were five by eight inch Post-It notes where participants could write their concerns and stick them to the wall.

The consolidated list of concerns for each topic was presented to the committee working on that part of the Community Agenda. These comments were used to create the issues and opportunities lists in the Community Assessment. There were 66 attendees in the five outreach meetings.

COMMITTEE STRUCTURE

Each committee received a report of the survey results, the visual preference survey results and list of residents' concerns along with the Community Assessment and other supplemental information. The committees utilized a visioning process; held workshops with experts in their subject areas, or engaged in a full-scale charrette process. Each committee completed their work by developing policies to achieve goals set by the committee, and steps to implement each policy.

NATURAL, CULTURAL AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES COMMITTEE

The Natural, Cultural and Community Resources Committee addressed topics from the Natural and Cultural Resources element, the Community Facilities and Services element and the Intergovernmental Coordination Element of the Community Assessment. This committee was the first topic-based committee to begin work, holding their first meeting in June, 2010. Members of the committee include:

Paul Alford
Clifford Blizard
Sandra Huffmaster
Judy Henderson
Alan Merrill
Tara Muenz
Stacy Patton
Rocky Reeves
Laurie Searle
Bob Simpson
Clay Stafford
Hugh Tyer
Dana Wicher

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

The Economic Development Committee addressed the Economic Development element of the Community Assessment. Unlike the Natural and Community Resources Committee, there was very little Chattahoochee Hills-specific data available to inform their work. This committee was the second topic-based committee to begin work in June, 2010. Members of the committee included:

Paul Alford
Nancy Green Leigh
Alan Merrill
Wendy McGhee
Steve Nygren
Stacy Patton
Rocky Reeves
Dana Wicher

HOUSING COMMITTEE

The Housing Committee addressed the Housing element of the Community Assessment. There was very little Chattahoochee Hills-specific Census housing data available for the committee to review. This group had speakers from the Georgia Tech City Planning program and the Atlanta Regional Commission Aging Division to assist the committee in its work. This committee was the third topic-based committee to begin work in July 2010. Members of the committee include:

- Steve Dray
- Andy Hannah
- Michael Harris
- Nancy Green Leigh
- Rick Sewell
- Allen Shropshire
- Bob Simpson
- Dana Wicher

LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

The Land Use and Transportation Committee addressed the Land Use and Transportation elements of the Community Assessment. This committee dealt with a great deal of information in the Community Assessment and also had to consider the work of the other topic based committees. This committee was the last topic-based committee to begin work in August 2010. Members of the committee included:

- Dr. George Brown
- Carl Bouckaert
- Margaret Clime
- Brook Cole
- Steve Dray
- Gene Griffith
- Michael Harris
- Don Harrelson
- Monty Harris
- Ken Langley
- Nancy Green Leigh
- Wendy McGhee
- Alan Merrill
- Steve Nygren
- Larry Parrott
- Stacy Patton
- Tom Reed
- Rocky Reeves
- Laurie Searle
- Dan Sanders
- Bob Simpson
- Sandra Storrar
- Hugh Tyer

COMMUNITY AGENDA

THE 2010 VISION

Public comment and sentiment are a rich source of information about peoples' values and philosophies. These values and philosophies must be interpreted into meaningful information to guide the project. The Community Participation Program for the Chattahoochee Hills Comprehensive Plan included a mail and online survey and five outreach meetings to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan reflects the full range of community values and desires. Based on the input of 432 citizens who responded to the comprehensive plan survey and 50 citizens who participated in the outreach meetings, the city is to be preserved and maintained as closely as possible to its current rural state.

The City of Chattahoochee Hills has created its own Comprehensive Plan, distinct from and more refined than the previous Fulton County plan, to guide future development. The new comprehensive plan was crafted by local citizens with the help of a professional city planning team to better fit the rural community of Chattahoochee Hills. The Chattahoochee Hills Comprehensive Plan seeks to carry out the wishes of the Chattahoochee Hills community:

- Provide for the permanent preservation of a rural landscape and quality of life ("Keep it Rural")
- Allow specific types of development concentrated in preferred areas
- Improve the city's built aesthetics and design quality orientation

All of the Comprehensive Plan Task Force members had to develop specific concepts regarding what is "rural" and what is not, what types of development would be allowed where, and what would stay the same and what would change. The most difficult challenge for all of the committee was not determining what needed to be done, but how to do it.

The City of Chattahoochee Hills is both city and country in a location that would ordinarily be a suburban environment anywhere else in the Atlanta metropolitan area. Our future development will take place only in dense mixed-use towns and villages, and in smaller hamlets designated on our character area and future land use maps. The remainder of our City will be deliberately and permanently rural. Not large-lot suburban claiming to be rural, but truly rural, in that all land outside of the town, villages, and hamlets will be in agricultural, conservation or very low density residential use. As in the Focus Fulton plan, the goal is to preserve 60 to 70 percent of the city as open space, including agriculture and forestry lands.

DELIBERATELY RURAL

Each of the Comprehensive Plan committees began their work with a thorough review of the Comprehensive Plan survey results and the feedback given through the outreach meeting process. Letting the citizens' charge of "keep it rural" guide them, each committee set out to define "what is rural?"

The consensus of the Comprehensive Plan Task Force committees was that by maintaining the rural character of the city, the Mayor and City Council is not only following the wishes of the city's citizens, but is also creating a valuable asset that will differentiate the city, improving both property values and tax collections, as well as quality of life. Metro Atlanta is overrun with suburban sprawl. Families continually move further out from the center of the city to escape that sprawl. In Chattahoochee Hills, people will be able to enjoy the rural nature of the community in perpetuity because the city has made a deliberate choice to be rural for the 20 year time-frame of the Comprehensive Plan and beyond, rather than being temporarily rural only because the suburban sprawl hasn't arrived yet.

In its current rural state, the city has a very limited tax base. In order for the city to be able to continue to provide an acceptable level of services in the future without significant property tax increases, the property tax base will have to be improved. In order to keep the majority of the city rural, development will only be permitted in designated development areas (town, villages and hamlets). This development will be compact traditional development which has been found to be the lowest cost for provision of city services and the highest benefit with regard to property tax revenues. Compact traditional development allows the majority of the city's land to remain rural. Additionally, the other elements that most embody the rural nature of the city, rural roads (both paved and gravel) and rural viewscapes, will be protected.

CHALLENGES

Translating vision into action can present a number of challenges. Some of them are addressed directly in the structure contained in this plan, while others will require additional work.

Zoning and Subdivision Regulations. As the city attempts to create a regulatory structure that will ensure the vision, it has a limited set of tools at its disposal. Ironically, the most powerful of these tools, the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations are the tools that share part of the blame for suburban sprawl—precisely the kind of development that the vision excludes. The city's vision prescribes development patterns that predominated before the advent of zoning. So

the city will be attempting to use the tools that created the problem and adapt them to its solution.

TDRs. Enabling Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs) protects the property rights of landowners while focusing development in distinct, intense nodes. But a lack of development pressure means there is no market for development rights, and if no rights are being transferred then there is no preservation taking place. An additional challenge comes from incorporating open space requirements into the various development types. The existing open space requirements in Hamlets, Villages and Conservation Subdivisions mean most transfers will happen internally. Developers of those forms and the newly defined town may be able to achieve their density goals without seeking development rights from other property owners. Without demand for TDRs it is difficult for the city to protect critical lands. The city needs a funding mechanism to purchase development rights and protect targeted lands.

Benefits from Preserved Land. The density bonuses that come with preserving open space are made available because that preservation activity is expected to have a public benefit. The development standards must be written to ensure that public benefit.

Clustering. Current regulations allow villages, hamlets, and conservation subdivisions that require a certain amount of open space preservation, but the regulation does not describe the relationship between the open space and the development. Chattahoochee Hills must find a way to ensure a clear demarcation between these areas in order to guarantee development distinct from standard large-lot subdivision sprawl, and to secure the benefits of the open space.

Preservation Priorities. Preserved open space can be used in a variety of ways, some of which may be considered more beneficial than others. The city's residents need to determine their priorities among those uses and design a structure that encourages the uses that provide the most public benefit but do not bar other appropriate uses.

Buffering. The buffers that are required to protect the existing views from roadways and neighboring properties pose a challenge to pedestrian connectivity and to the organic growth of the development nodes. It may be beneficial to establish guidelines under which the buffers may be pierced when neighboring properties are developed compatibly and to appropriately support commercial needs.

Economic Development. The city needs economic development. It is critical for the tax base and to provide employment opportunities for residents. There are challenges to accommodating and encouraging economic development while remaining rural.

Rural Character. The vision describes a desire for rural character. Designing regulation to produce a particular character can be difficult, particularly when treading the line with individual rights. Rural character can be particularly difficult to plan since one of its chief features is randomness.

Minimum Lot Sizes. Designing regulation that will reliably produce lot sizes larger than the lot size minimum defined in the regulation is a challenge. It may be difficult to ensure that lot sizes intended for one purpose are not misused for another purpose through a sequence of rezonings and subdivisions.

COMMUNITY AGENDA

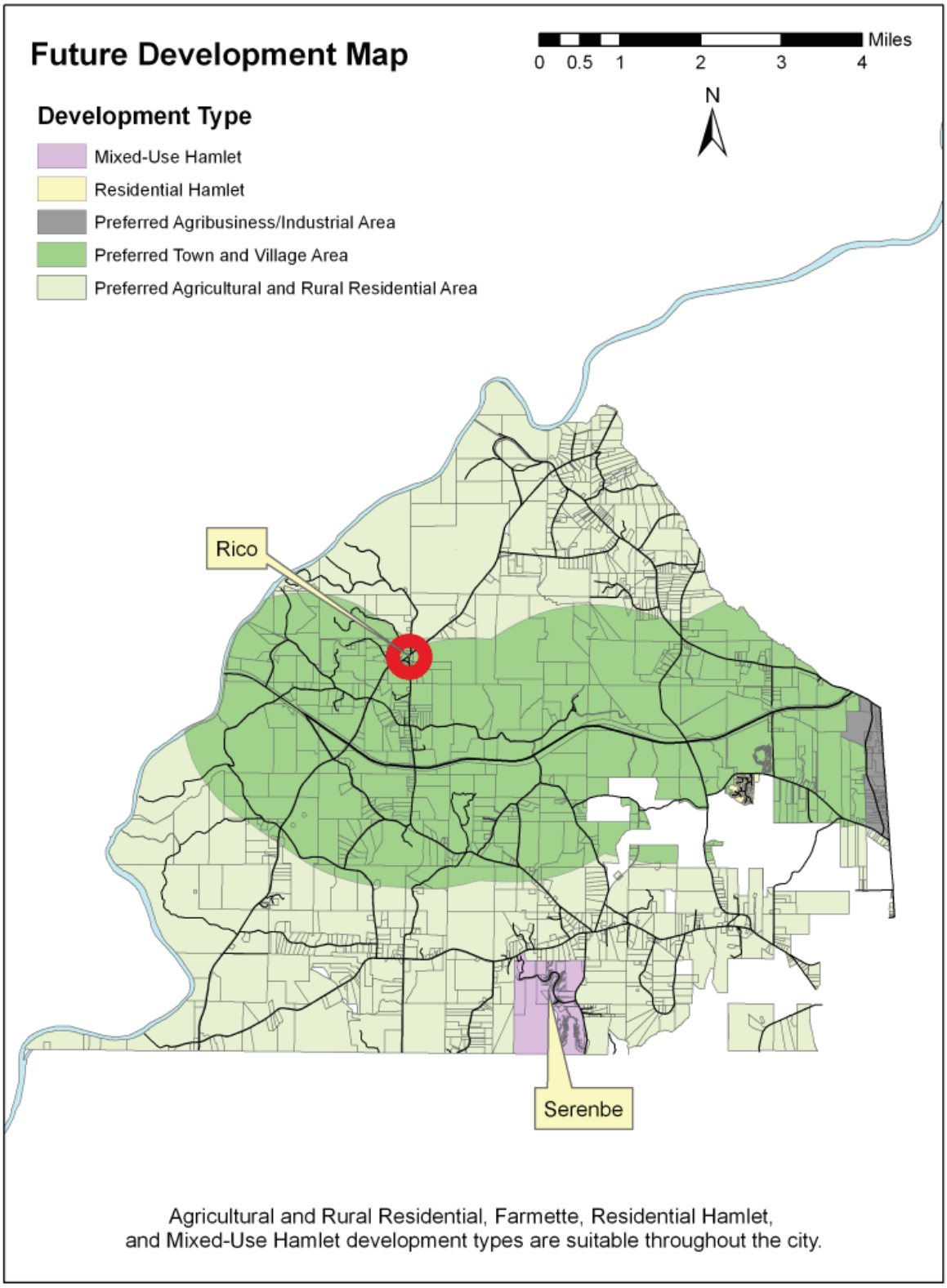
FUTURE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

In order to fulfill its vision of remaining deliberately rural in the face of the development pressure that is sure to come, the city must channel that pressure into desirable patterns and locations. The city has identified a handful of development patterns that are desirable to both preserve large amounts of land and allow for the economic development that is critical for the city's future. The rural character of the city will be embodied most distinctly in its agricultural and forest land, and will be supported by the development that takes place in well-defined nodes. Each of these areas will have a distinct character that was laid out by the task force.

A central feature of the community's vision is the permanent preservation of a majority of the city's land. It is an indispensable part of remaining deliberately rural. The preservation goal is achieved through several methods. First, the most intense land uses—the town, the village(s), and the hamlets—all include significant open space preservation requirements within those developments. Second, density bonuses are available to developers who preserve larger portions of their land. Finally, the city has a Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program that allows individual landowners to receive money for placing a conservation easement on their property, thus permanently preserving it. These development rights may be sold to other land owners who will apply them on their own property to increase the amount of development allowed. Alternatively, the TDR program allows an organization (such as a government or a land bank) that is interested in preserving targeted properties to purchase development rights. These institutionally-owned development rights may be subsequently sold into a town, village, or hamlet development, increasing its developable density just as a direct transfer would. In any case, the development rights are purchased in a market environment, allowing the landowner to receive the full financial benefit of the development opportunity they are foregoing.

Because requiring preservation of open-space in the city's development nodes will reduce demand for TDRs early in the development cycle, it may be difficult to achieve targeted

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAP (CHARACTER AREAS MAP)



preservation while critical lands are still available. A method of pre-funding early-stage targeted preservation would be beneficial. If the city could develop a funding mechanism that would allow it to purchase development rights early in the development cycle, the lands most valued by the community could be preserved. A preservation-oriented impact or transfer fee attached to new development might be one such method.

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAP

The Future Development Map on page 32 represents a general understanding of the preferred locations for various development types, as defined in the Community Agenda planning phase. The Character Areas shown represent the range of possible long term uses in the various areas as originally conceived by the Land Use and Transportation Committee and reinforced by a consensus of the entire comprehensive plan task force. The map is meant to be a guide to understand future development within Chattahoochee Hills, embracing smart growth principles, protecting the natural resources of the area, and promoting economic development that fits in with the "deliberately rural" concept. The character areas do not automatically change zoning districts or regulations; rather they are meant as a guide for decision making over time, based on an overall desire to keep the majority of the city as it is (rural) while focusing development in the town, village(s) and various hamlets and embracing economic growth of businesses that fit in with the vision for the city.

The use of character areas in planning acknowledges the visual and functional differences between the various areas in Chattahoochee Hills. They help guide future development through policies and implementation strategies that are tailored to each area of the city. These character areas can be used to define areas that (1) presently have unique or special characteristics that need to be preserved; (2) have potential to evolve into unique areas; or (3) require special attention because of unique development issues. In some cases, different character areas are defined by existing land use and future land use in order to highlight appropriate transitions as the community evolves. The city's character areas are described and defined individually in the following pages and are shown on the Future Development Map on page 32.

The Future Development Map and its character areas were developed as part of the Comprehensive Plan to:

- Provide a strong link between the community's vision, goals, and land use policy.
- Provide qualitative guidance to the development community.
- Guide future rezoning, special use, and development decisions.
- Lay the groundwork for the new zoning ordinance, subdivision regulations, urban design guidelines and any other necessary changes to development regulations.
- Encourage and promote quality development and redevelopment.
- Define the vision for the various areas of the city.
- Be used as a tool in securing funding for projects.

CHARACTER AREAS

The following table describes each character area in terms of what defines its character, what is affecting that character, its vision for the future, and the types of policies that need to be in place to achieve that vision. After this table definitions can be found for the policy themes, and fact sheets are included for each character area. Policies do not supersede standards and regulations in the Chattahoochee Hills Zoning Ordinance, Development Regulations and other ordinances as adopted by the Mayor and City Council. The evaluation of each character area for the Quality Community Objectives is listed under the description of the character area.

Character Area	Characteristics	Vision	Implementation Policies
Town	Minimum of 3000 acres with access to South Fulton Parkway. Minimum of 60% open space with the remaining 40% a mix of civic, commercial, office, industrial, and residential development. Must be 10 miles from any other town. Full visual buffering from surrounding roads with the exception of a significant "retail window."	Focal point of the city, with all but the heaviest industrial and agricultural uses allowed. Mixed-use development and connectivity are vital to ensure walkability and economic viability.	• Develop and adopt a Town zoning district. • Work with state officials to develop a Transfer Fee or other mechanism to fund preservation and to improve current Transfer of Development Rights legislation. •Work with state officials to provide property tax relief for TDRs held by TDR banks.
Village	Minimum size of 1000 acres with access to South Fulton Parkway. Minimum of 60% open space with the remaining 40% a mix of commercial, office, and residential uses to promote walkability. Must be 5 miles from any other village or town. Full visual buffering from surrounding roads with the exception of a significant "retail window."	Smaller and less dense than the Town development, the Village will be a mixed-use community that can accommodate most of the everyday needs of residents. Walkability is an important feature.	• Update current Village Community Standards within the City of Chattahoochee Hills Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with the vision.
Mixed-Use Hamlet	Mixed-use community of commercial, office and residential development. Minimum of 250 acres with 6-25% commercial. Conservation of 70% of the open space. Full visual buffering from surrounding roads. Pedestrian connectivity within the village is a necessity.	The smallest of the mixed-use developments, this character area will contain both residential and commercial uses. Rural in nature, the Hamlet will provide residents with a close knit community that capitalizes on pedestrian connectivity.	• Examine and update existing Hamlet Community Standards within the City of Chattahoochee Hills Zoning Ordinance to be consistent with the above vision.

Character Area	Characteristics	Vision	Implementation Policies
Crossroads Community (Rico)	Crossroads communities are found where existing or historic communities have developed at the intersections of one or more roads in a rural setting, and have the appearance of a small village. They generally consist of a nucleus of landmark buildings and often have strong historical ties to the community.	Contingent on community support, Rico would be developed into an active crossroads community, with the infill addition of smaller, historically consistent, commercial or civic development. Citizen input is vital and development will not occur if there is not support. Rico is the only crossroads community currently under consideration for this sort of development.	• Public meetings with community members • Develop a master plan that examines architectural and economic development. • Provide incentives necessary to attract the sort of development desired in Rico. • Examine and adjust necessary zoning ordinances to ensure that new development will be consistent with the historical character of Rico.
Residential Hamlet	Low-impact/Light imprint development, with a rural hamlet appearance. Conservation of 70% of the open space. Clustering of homes and connectivity for pedestrians. Full visual buffering from surrounding roads.	Rural hamlet, rather than the conventional suburban subdivision patterns that perpetuate the sprawling patters present throughout the rest of Metro Atlanta.	• Revised construction standards for light imprint development (stormwater controls, no curb and gutter, no cul-de-sacs, houses close to the street); buffering
Farmette Subdivision	Subdivided mini-farms that seen from the road appear to be only one farm/home site, with shared drives and visual screening where possible.	Small scale agricultural activities and homes on 20+ acres hidden from the road	• Add Farmette Subdivision to subdivision regulations and zoning ordinance.
Rural-Agricultural	Agricultural uses and single-family homes on very large tracts of land	More true agricultural uses, more land in productive use	• New zoning category for agricultural uses and one house per three acres (up to nine acres) allowed • Continued limitations on minor subdivisions
Agribusiness/ Industrial	Agriculturally related (industrial scale) uses of an intensity or scale that is incompatible with residential uses and scale	A development zone that supports the less attractive uses related to agriculture and agribusiness	• New zoning category that allows only specific uses envisioned

TOWN SQUARE
STOP

TOWN
CHARACTER AREA

VISION

The Town is a new character area for the city. It was created as a mechanism for concentrating residential, commercial, and civic development originally planned for the now missing one and two thirds villages (and needed for the city's tax base) while staying true to the vision of the City. Located north of South Fulton Parkway, in the central part of the City, this new character area has little existing development.

The centralized location of the town is ideal for dense, mixed-use development patterns, with residential, commercial, civic, and industrial uses all within this character area. This area will become the center of daily life for the city, with the majority of the new development happening within its boundaries. Commercial and civic development will be concentrated within close proximity to South Fulton Parkway, with commercial window/buffer exceptions to allow drivers visual access to the area.

OPERATION

The town will have a minimum area of 3000 acres and be a minimum of ten miles from any other town. It may be located anywhere along the parkway that these conditions are met. Sixty percent of the town's total area must be permanently protected as open space.

Commercial development will comprise no less than 15% (and up to 50%) of the town's development, and will include phasing requirements to ensure that the area maintains an appropriate balance of uses. Further, development will not be limited to a minimum lot size, allowing for the dense development pattern desired in this area. While

KNOW YOUR TOWN

- **Minimum size: 3000 acres**
- **60 Percent must be preserved as open space; density bonuses are available for additional land preservation**
- **Mixed use and walkable**
- **Will offer housing, employment, commercial, and civic uses**
- **Visually buffered from existing roads and neighboring properties except for a small window to South Fulton Parkway**
- **Development is clustered and permanently delineated from the preserved open space**
- **Limit block size to promote walkability and route choice**
- **Provide bonus for providing public infrastructure**
- **Require some public benefit from preserved open space**
- **Consider methods to accommodate future growth and connectivity through the buffers**
- **Require dedication of easements for multi-use path right-of-way to improve connectivity throughout the city**
- **A street plan is required**

TOWN

the majority of the residential development will be concentrated around the commercial and civic areas, larger residential lots will also be permitted.

Direct access to South Fulton Parkway is an important requirement for the town, as the parkway, which is the only major arterial road in the city, will provide the primary vehicular access. The town's new streets will also connect to existing city roads, in order to achieve secondary connectivity.

A dense and fine-grained mix of uses is allowed throughout the town. The density envisioned for the town is higher than currently entitled for the land. In order to achieve this increased density, development rights from elsewhere in the city must be applied. These rights can be transferred from the protected land within the town or they can be purchased and transferred from other land in the City of Chattahoochee Hills.

Buildings in the town should be expected to address the street, with lot sizes based on building type or street type, and minimal front or side yard requirements. Block sizes should be limited. Sidewalks will be provided throughout, with pedestrian or multiuse paths providing connections and recreational opportunities through the open space where appropriate.

Preserved open space in the town must be permanently delineated from the developed land by a right-of-way or

some other method.

Neighboring property owners may be allowed to submit plans to be included in the town.

REGULATORY INTENT

The town must be at least 3000 acres and cannot be located within 10 miles of another town [from the primary access off of South Fulton Parkway] in order to support the city's desire to maintain and preserve its current rural nature.

Likewise, the requirement that 60% of the town's acreage be preserved as open space is consistent with the vision of the city. The majority of the town's development will be concentrated within a specific area allowing much of the rest of the property to remain rural and consistent with what currently exists in Chattahoochee Hills. Additionally, the concentration and mixture of civic, commercial, and residential uses will ensure that the community is walkable.

The open space preservation requirement should serve to

- conserve sensitive land
- provide wildlife habitat corridors
- provide stormwater detention and filtering
- provide some buffering from neighboring property
- provide parks and recreational and gardening opportunities for village residents and guests

- provide opportunities for small-scale farming and forestry operations
- provide opportunities for residents and guests to benefit from interacting with nature

The transfers of development rights, whether internal to the town or from outside the town serve not only to provide additional density in the town, they also provide a mechanism for preserving open space throughout the city, supporting the vision of Chattahoochee Hills as a rural community.

The 15–50% requirement for commercial development will have phasing requirements to ensure that the area develops at an appropriate pace.

Reduced block lengths support the goal of walkability and provide route choices for motorists and opportunities for on-street parking. The inclusion of sidewalks and paths also will support the goal of walkability. Within the town, walking and biking should be seen as the most convenient and desirable way to get around. This would allow reduced parking requirements in addition to exercise and recreational opportunities for residents.

Multiple connections to city roads provide numerous benefits. They reduce congestion by removing the traffic burden from individual roads, provide route alternatives, reduce vehicle miles travelled, and reduce pollution. These connections will also support the character of the Town as an actual Town and not a suburban mixed-use pod. Use of the connection to South Fulton Parkway should be encouraged through its design, the use of wayfinding signage, and the fact that it will be the most convenient access to the bulk of the metropolitan area.

Accessory dwelling units are encouraged within the Town to provide housing variety at multiple price points, and to support lifecycle housing/lifelong community.

CRITICAL FACTORS

- Block size
- Open Space Preservation
- Walkability
- Mix of Uses
- Civic Space
- Transfer of Development Rights
- Density Bonuses
- Connectivity
- Sustainability
- Growth

POLICY THEMES:

- Town Center
- Development Node

- Open Space Protection
- River Protection
- Scenic Corridor
- Watershed Protection

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED:

Environmental Protection Objective: Light Imprint stormwater management best practices and a tree-replanting ordinance will apply for all new development. Also, land use measures are used that will protect the natural resources in the community.

Growth Preparedness Objective: The elected officials within the community have a strong understanding of the land-development process within the community. Specific areas have been identified for growth. Additionally the development regulations and zoning codes are being updated to help achieve the Quality Community Objective (QCO) goals.

Housing Choices Objective: All housing types will be allowed in the town including stacked flats, garden apartments, townhouses, live-work units, and single-family houses with accessory units allowed, and dedicated senior housing. Universal design must be offered as an option in all new housing.

Open Space Preservation: Development in this character area is required to permanently conserve 60% of the property as open space. Boundaries between private property and open space must be designated with some form of public right-of way to prevent "lot size creep".

Sense of Place Objective: Chattahoochee Hills is making specific zoning and development choices to ensure that the current rural character is preserved and is represented throughout the city. Visitors should instantly know that they are within the city limits through a distinct shift in development patterns compared to those in nearby communities. The Scenic Byway ordinance regulates the size and type of signage present along the roadway.

Traditional Neighborhood Objective: Mixed-use development will promote walkability verses vehicular transportation. Schools should be located in this character area, allowing children to walk or bike to school.

Transportation Alternatives Objective: The town development will be required to connect to multiple adjacent city roads, including a connection to South Fulton Parkway, and it must preserve space for future transit connectivity. The town also must have an efficient street network/grid for internal circulation. Sidewalks also will be required.

Garrett

VILLAGE
CHARACTER AREA

VISION

Like the town, the Village is intended to draw away the development that would have occurred elsewhere within the city, thereby allowing the rural character to be preserved throughout most of the city. The village concept differs from the town primarily in size and intensity. The village is smaller and less intense than the town. As in the town, development in the village would be a fine-grained mix of uses, including residential, office, commercial, light industrial and civic.

Villages are 1000 or more acres in size, and are visually screened from surrounding roadways by the rural protection buffer. Commercial development will represent no less than 10% and up to 45% of the units in the village, composed of smaller businesses such as professional offices, dry cleaners, coffee shops, small bookstores or groceries, etc., which will be able to support most of the daily needs of the residents. These businesses will be located near the parkway and will be allowed a buffer exception to provide them with a commercial window to drivers on South Fulton Parkway. Uses within the core of the development will be mixed at a very fine grain, and a great deal of attention will be given to the connectivity of pedestrian routes so that the character area will be walkable.

One village location is at South Fulton Parkway at Rivertown Road, close to the existing Friendship Crossroads Community. Called Friendship Village, it straddles the city's border with unincorporated Fulton County. It is planned to contain over 5500 residential units and a great deal of supporting mixed-use commercial and retail. Friendship Village has already received DRI approval from ARC and has the necessary mixed-use zoning in the city (CHC-MIX). The

KNOW YOUR VILLAGE

- **Minimum size: 1000 acres**
- **60 Percent must be preserved as open space; density bonuses are available for additional land preservation**
- **Mixed use and walkable**
- **Will offer housing, employment, commercial, industrial and civic uses**
- **Visually buffered from existing roads and neighboring properties except for a small window to South Fulton Parkway**
- **Development is clustered and permanently delineated from the preserved open space**
- **Limit block size to promote walkability and route choice**
- **Provide bonus for providing public infrastructure**
- **Require some public benefit from preserved open space**
- **Require dedication of easements for multi-use path right-of-way to improve connectivity throughout the city**
- **Consider methods to accommodate future growth and connectivity through the buffers**
- **A street plan is required**

VILLAGE

developer currently has the project on hold.

OPERATION

In order to qualify as a village, a development must be at least 1000 acres. A village must be at least 5 miles from any other village or town and 60% of its total area must be permanently protected as open space. A village may be located anywhere along the parkway that these conditions may be met.

A dense mix of uses is allowed throughout the village. The density envisioned for the village is higher than currently entitled under existing AG-1 zoning. In order to achieve this increased density, development rights from elsewhere in the city must be applied. These rights can be transferred from the protected land within the village or they can be transferred from other land in the City of Chattahoochee Hills through the TDR program.

Buildings in the village should be expected to address the street, with lot sizes based on building type or street type, and minimal front and side yard requirements. Block lengths should be limited. Sidewalks will be provided throughout, with pedestrian or multiuse paths providing connections and recreational opportunities through the open space where appropriate.

Numerous connections between Village streets and existing city roads are important, but these connections should not be used as the primary access point. The majority of traffic should enter and exit onto South Fulton Parkway.

Preserved open space in the village must be permanently delineated from the developed land by a right-of-way or some other method.

Neighboring property owners may be allowed to submit plans to be included in the village.

REGULATORY INTENT

Like the Town, the intent of the village is to concentrate development within the city and to provide a location for commercial and social life. The Village is not as large or intense as the town and the regulations are intended to enforce this. The overall size of the village is smaller than the town, building height limits are somewhat lower, and industrial and office uses are somewhat less intense. The village is intended to meet the daily needs of its citizens, but to be only a secondary employment center.

The open space preservation requirement will serve to

- conserve sensitive land
- provide wildlife habitat corridors
- provide stormwater detention and filtering
- provide some buffering from neighboring property
- provide parks and recreational and gardening opportunities for village residents and guests
- provide opportunities for small-scale farming and forestry operations
- provide opportunities for residents and guests to benefit from interacting with nature

The transfers of development rights, whether internal to the village or from outside the village serve not only to provide additional density in the village, they also provide

Faith
STOP

a mechanism for preserving open space throughout the city, supporting the vision of Chattahoochee Hills as a rural community.

Reduced block lengths support the goal of walkability and provide route choices for motorists and opportunities for on-street parking. The inclusion of sidewalks and paths also will support the goal of walkability. Within the village, walking and biking should be seen as the most convenient and desirable way to get around. This would allow reduced parking requirements in addition to exercise and recreational opportunities for residents.

Multiple connections to city roads provide numerous benefits. They reduce congestion by removing the traffic burden from individual roads, provide route alternatives, reduce vehicle miles travelled, and reduce pollution. These connections will also support the character of the village as an actual village and not a suburban mixed-use pod. Use of the connection to South Fulton Parkway should be encouraged through its design, the use of wayfinding signage, and the fact that it will be the most convenient access to the bulk of the metropolitan area.

Accessory dwelling units are encouraged within the village to provide variety in housing type and price-point and to support lifecycle housing/lifelong community

CRITICAL FACTORS

- Block size
- Open Space Preservation
- Walkability
- Mix of Uses
- Transfer of Development Rights
- Density Bonuses
- Connectivity
- Sustainability
- Growth

POLICY THEMES:

- Development Node
- Historic Preservation

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED:

Environmental Protection Objective: Light Imprint stormwater management best practices and a tree-replanting ordinance will apply for all new development. Also, land use measures are used that will protect the natural resources in the community.

Growth Preparedness Objective: The elected officials within the community have a strong understanding of the land-development process within the community. Specific areas have been identified for growth. Additionally the development regulations and zoning codes are being updated to help achieve the QCO goals.

Housing Choices Objective: All housing types will be allowed in the town including stacked flats, garden apartments, townhouses, live-work units, and single-family houses with accessory units allowed, and dedicated senior housing. Universal design must be offered as an option in all new housing.

Open Space Preservation: Development in this character area is required to permanently conserve 60% of the property as open space. Boundaries between private property and open space must be designated with some form of public right-of way to prevent "lot size creep."

Sense of Place Objective: Chattahoochee Hills is making specific zoning and development choices to ensure that the current rural character is preserved and is represented throughout the city. Visitors should instantly know that they are within the city limits through a distinct shift in development patterns compared to those in nearby communities. The Scenic Byway ordinance regulates the size and type of signage present along the roadway.

Traditional Neighborhood Objective: Mixed-use development will promote walkability verses vehicular transportation. Schools may be located in this character area allowing children to walk or bike to school.

Transportation Alternatives Objective: The village development will be required to connect to multiple adjacent city roads, including a connection to the South Fulton Parkway. The village must have an efficient street network for internal circulation. Sidewalks will be required.

SERENITY
REAL ESTATE

MIXED-USE HAMLET
CHARACTER AREA

VISION

The original vision for the City of Chattahoochee Hills included three villages along with multiple hamlets, designed to concentrate development into specific areas as a mechanism to maintain the current rural development patterns throughout the bulk of the city.

The Mixed-Use Hamlet character area will provide the city with a smaller version of the town and village character areas. The hamlet's small scale is especially suited for pedestrians, so the character area is intended to create close-knit, walkable communities. To ensure walkability, the different land uses must be carefully considered and mixed to ensure the layout and design suit pedestrian needs. Development should be tightly clustered on the property, providing a clear demarcation between the development and the preserved open space.

OPERATION

The minimum size of a mixed-use hamlet is 250 acres. 70% of the land must be preserved as open space, concentrating development in nodes and centers within the development. 6-25% of the development must be commercial. Residents will have access to some small scale retail, but will have to leave the hamlet to get certain items that may only be found in larger commercial establishments.

Since connectivity is vital, block sizes and the design of the public rights-of-way will be critical. Block sizes should be limited. Boundaries between private property and open space should be marked with some form of right-of way. Streets in the more densely developed portions of hamlets should have sidewalks or paths and street trees to protect

KNOW YOUR MIXED-USE HAMLET

- **Minimum size: 250 acres**
- **70 Percent must be preserved as open space; density bonuses are available for additional land preservation**
- **Mixed use and walkable**
- **Offers housing, employment, and commercial opportunities**
- **Visually buffered from existing roads and neighboring properties**
- **Provides both vehicular and pedestrian connections to neighboring properties where possible, otherwise provides easements or right-of-way for future connections.**
- **Development is clustered and permanently delineated from the preserved open space**
- **Limit block size to encourage connectivity and walkability**
- **Provide bonus for providing public infrastructure**
- **Require some public benefits from preserved open space**
- **Consider methods to accommodate future growth through the buffers**
- **A street plan is required**

HAMLET

the pedestrian realm.

Because a hamlet is smaller than a town or village, access to South Fulton Parkway is not required. Access to mixed-use hamlets must be provided from collector roads, the next level of road classification in Chattahoochee Hills. Since a hamlet can be located anywhere within the City, it must have a full visual buffer from city roads.

Preserved open space in the mixed-use hamlet must be permanently delineated from the developed land by a right-of-way or some other method.

Hamlets must have municipal water, but sewage can be managed through the city, community, or privately.

REGULATORY INTENT

The commercial space requirement will provide residents access to certain everyday necessities, but is not intended to fulfill all of their needs.

Visual buffers will ensure that the rural character of the City is maintained while allowing for growth and development. By requiring a visual buffer the development will be hidden from individuals driving by while allowing property owners to develop their property fully.

By limiting block sizes and regulating the design of the public rights of way, pedestrian activity is encouraged, increasing resident interaction and reducing the need for automobile use.

CRITICAL FACTORS

- Block size
- Open Space Preservation
- Walkability
- Transfer of Development Rights
- Density Bonuses
- Connectivity
- Sustainability
- Growth

POLICY THEMES:

- Development Node
- River Protection
- Scenic Corridor
- Watershed Protection

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED:

Environmental Protection Objective: Light Imprint stormwater management best practices and a tree-replanting ordinance will apply for all new development. Also, land use measures are used that will protect the natural resources in the community.

Growth Preparedness Objective: The elected officials within the community have a strong understanding of the land-development process within the community. Specific areas have been identified for growth. Additionally the development regulations and zoning codes are being updated to help achieve the QCO goals.

Housing Choices Objectives: All housing types will be

allowed in hamlets including flats/garden apartments, townhouses, and single-family houses with accessory units allowed and dedicated senior housing. Universal design must be offered as an option in all new housing.

Open Space Preservation: Development in this character area is required to permanently conserve 70% of the property as open space.

Regional Identity Objective: Currently, the only existing hamlet, Serenbe, attracts many tourists based upon its unique development patterns. Future development strives to mimic these methods.

Sense of Place Objective: Chattahoochee Hills is making specific zoning and development choices to ensure that the current rural character is preserved and is represented throughout the city. Visitors should instantly know that they are within the city limits through a distinct shift in development patterns compared to those in nearby communities. The Scenic Byway ordinance regulates the size and type of signage along the roadway.

Traditional Neighborhood Objective: Mixed-use development will promote walkability over vehicular transportation. Schools may be located in this character area allowing children to walk or bike to school.

Transportation Alternatives Objective: A hamlet will be required to connect to existing city streets and have more than one entrance/exit. Sidewalks will be present in the mixed-use area of this development type.

SMITH
GROCERY
RICO, GEORGIA
On-Road
DIESEL
K-1
Kerosene
thirsty?
ICE

RICO CROSSROADS COMMUNITY
CHARACTER AREA

EXISTING:

Crossroads communities are historic settlements found at the intersections of one or more roads in a rural setting and have the appearance of a small village. They generally consist of a nucleus of landmark buildings and businesses such as churches, general stores and schools, surrounded by outlying residential development. There are five crossroads communities in the City of Chattahoochee Hills: Rivertown, Rico, County Line/Redwine, Goodes and Friendship. Each has its own distinct history, yet they also all share a connectedness due to their close proximity and through the families and people of the area who lived, went to school, worked and worshiped in them.

The community of Rico, currently the largest remaining community and the only one that still has an active commercial presence, has numerous residential buildings, including an operating small general store, two active churches, the Old Rico School (now City Hall) and the Rico Lodge, which are located at intersections of Campbellton-Redwine, Kite and Rico Roads.

VISION:

As one of the remaining crossroads communities, Rico was identified by citizens as an area on which they would like to study further, specifically targeting the development of an individual master plan which would address architectural design and the types of economic development feasible for this sort of community. To ensure that development is desired by the affected community members, input from the Rico community will be required before the development of any master plan begins. If the local community decides that they would like pursue

KNOW YOUR CROSSROADS COMMUNITY

- **Historic Community**
- **Maintain Historic Character**
- **May offer housing, employment , and commercial opportunities**
- **Rico is the only Crossroads Community under consideration for development**
- **The community will develop a Master Plan for Rico**

RICO

development within Rico, all new construction must be true to the historic character of the community. Commercial development would be limited in size and scale, and must be consistent with businesses that could have historically operated in the area. New development should be mixed use in nature, with the possibility of a business owner living above their commercial space. Buffer requirements would be revised to allow new development to have road frontage, keeping consistent with historical development patterns, while limiting the external impact.

IMPLEMENTATION:

- Hold a series of public meetings with community members to discuss the creation of a master plan for Rico
- Development of a master plan that examines architectural and economic development within Rico
- Create zoning district to codify the vision of the Rico Crossroad Community Master Plan
- Provide incentives necessary to attract the sort of development desired in Rico

APPROPRIATE USES:

- Low intensity historically appropriate mixed use
- Small scale commercial
- Residential
- Civic

POLICY THEMES:

- Development Node
- Historic Preservation

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED:

Environmental Protection Objective: Light Imprint stormwater management best practices and a tree-replanting ordinance will apply for all new development. Also, land use measures are used that will protect the natural resources in the community.

Growth Preparedness Objective: The elected officials within the community have a strong understanding of the land-development process within the community. Specific areas have been identified for growth. Additionally the development regulations and zoning codes are being updated to help achieve the QCO goals.

Infill Development: The mixed-use nature of this area allows for small scale development of 5,000 square feet or less for some uses within this Crossroads Communities.

Regional Identity Objective: If the existing community members wish to develop this character area, business that have a historical precedence will be located here.

Sense of Place Objective: Chattahoochee Hills is making specific zoning and development choices to ensure that the current rural character is preserved and is represented throughout the city. Visitors should instantly know that they are within the city limits through a distinct shift in development patterns compared to those in nearby communities. Ordinances regulating the aesthetics, size and type of development will be developed. The Scenic Byway ordinance regulates the size and type of signage present along the roadway.

Traditional Neighborhood Objective: Mixed-use development will promote walkability verses vehicular transportation. Schools may be located in this character area allowing children to walk or bike to school.

RESIDENTIAL HAMLET
CHARACTER AREA

VISION

The Residential Hamlet character area is based upon the Chattahoochee Hill Country Conservation Subdivision Ordinance.

Existing conservation subdivisions do not fit with the city's rural vision, so a new residential hamlet development option has been created. The residential hamlet is an attempt to utilize the concepts of conservation subdivisions while correcting the problems with the two previous developments zoned under that ordinance.

A residential hamlet must permanently preserve 70% of its land as open space. Like the hamlet character area, a residential hamlet must be walkable. Development should be tightly clustered on the property, providing a clear demarcation between the development and the preserved open space.

OPERATION

The lot sizes within the character area will vary, depending on whether the development is going to utilize community sewer or individual septic systems. The minimum lot size for a residential hamlet on septic systems is 1.5 acres. On community sewer, minimum lot size is regulated by building type.

Residential Hamlets will preserve 70% of the property as open space, with density bonuses available for increased levels of preservation. A full visual buffer from city roadways will be required in order to maintain the rural character of Chattahoochee Hills.

There will be no commercial development within the

KNOW YOUR RESIDENTIAL HAMLET

- **Minimum size: 29 acres**
- **70 Percent must be preserved as open space; density bonuses are available for additional land preservation**
- **Development is clustered and permanently delineated from the preserved open space**
- **Pedestrian friendly**
- **Limited or no commercial uses**
- **Visually buffered from existing roads and neighboring properties**
- **Provides both vehicular and pedestrian connections to neighboring properties where possible, otherwise provides easements and right-of-way for future connections.**
- **Limit block size to encourage connectivity and walkability**
- **Provide bonus for providing public infrastructure**
- **Require some public benefits from preserved land**
- **Consider methods to accommodate future growth through the buffers**
- **A street plan is required**

RESIDENTIAL

Residential Hamlet, unless it is on a sewer system, in which case it may have up to 5% commercial use.

Since connectivity is vital, block sizes and the design of the public rights-of-way will be critical. Block sizes should be limited. Boundaries between private property and open space should be marked with some form of right-of way. Streets in the more densely developed portions of hamlets should have sidewalks or paths and street trees to protect the pedestrian realm. Light imprint development practices should be employed.

Preserved open space in the residential hamlet must be permanently delineated from the developed land by a right-of-way or some other method.

REGULATORY INTENT

Residential Hamlets will be designed to look rural, rather than suburban. Visual buffers will ensure that the rural character of the City is maintained while allowing for growth and development. By requiring a visual buffer the development will be hidden from individuals driving by while allowing property owners to develop their property fully.

By limiting block sizes and regulating the design of the public rights of way, pedestrian activity is encouraged, increasing resident interaction and reducing the need for automobile use.

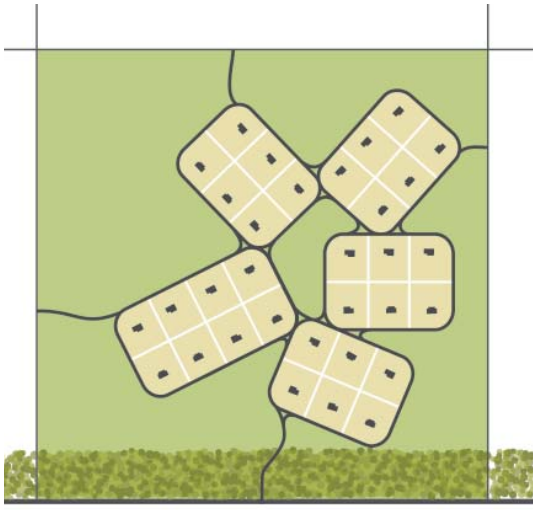
At their core, conservation subdivisions employ methods that will help Chattahoochee Hills maintain the rural character they are striving to maintain. It would be inappropriate to restrict their development because of failed efforts in the past, before the city was even a city. In the future this sort of development type needs to be closely examined to ensure that Residential Hamlets are constructed according to these new development standards, and that they align with the overall vision for the city.

CRITICAL FACTORS

- Block size
- Open Space Preservation
- Walkability
- Transfer of Development Rights
- Density Bonuses
- Connectivity
- Sustainability
- Growth

POLICY THEMES:

- Development Node
- River Protection
- Scenic Corridor
- Village Center
- Watershed Protection

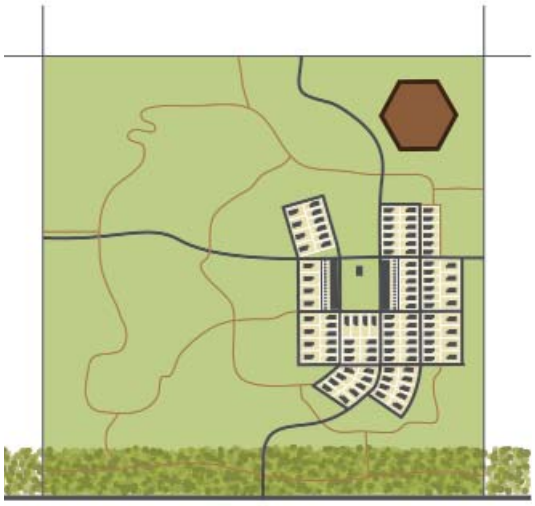


RESIDENTIAL HAMLET ON SEPTIC

- 1.5 Acre lot minimum
- No Commercial development allowed
- Minimum 70% of property preserved as open space

SHOWN:

- Thirty-two 1.5-acre parcels in a 160-acre residential hamlet
- 70% of land preserved as open space
- 300 foot buffer along the existing public roadway
- Street connections to neighboring properties



RESIDENTIAL HAMLET ON SEWER

- Lot sizes vary with housing type
- up to 5% commercial development allowed
- Minimum 70% of property preserved as open space, with density bonuses available for higher percentages.
- All houses connect to a community sewage system

SHOWN:

- 160 Acres
- 90% Preserved as open space
- 128 0.125-acre lots (50’ x 110’)
- Community sewer package plant
- Variety of housing types
- Public preserved land separated from private parcels by roads and paths
- Includes a central public park/green with a site for a barn, stable, church...
- 300 foot buffer along the existing public roadway
- Street and path connections to neighboring properties

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED:

Environmental Protection Objective: Light Imprint stormwater management best practices and a tree-replanting ordinance will apply for all new development. Also, land use measures are used that will protect the natural resources in the community.

Growth Preparedness Objective: The elected officials within the community have a strong understanding of the land-development process within the community. Specific areas have been identified for growth. Additionally the development regulations and zoning codes are being updated to help achieve the QCO goals.

Housing Choices Objectives: Accessory units are allowed and encouraged as a mechanism for providing rental housing within the community. New development is regulated and closely examined to ensure it stays consistent with existing development within the character area.

Open Space Preservation: Development in this character area is required to permanently conserve 70% of the property as open space. Further, this character area is based upon the conservation subdivision ordinance that was adopted by the City upon its incorporation in 2007.

Sense of Place Objective: Chattahoochee Hills is making specific zoning and development choices to ensure that the current rural character is preserved and is represented throughout the city. Visitors should instantly know that they are within the city limits through a distinct shift in development patterns compared to those in nearby communities. The Scenic Byway ordinance regulates the size and type of signage along the roadway.

Traditional Neighborhood Objective: Pedestrian connectivity is a primary objective of this character area so residents will have the choice to walk if they choose.

Transportation Alternatives Objective: This area should to connect to existing city streets and have more than one entrance/exit.

FARMETTE
CHARACTER AREA

VISION

Chattahoochee Hills has many large parcels of land. The owners of these parcels may wish to subdivide their land among family members, while retaining a portion of the land for their own use. The minor subdivision process inherited from Fulton County is intended to allow them to do this with minimal regulation. However, since a parcel may be subdivided through the minor subdivision process only once, the process may not suit the needs of all landowners. The Farmette character area was conceived to support community needs in these situations.

The minor subdivision process allows a maximum of three additional lots to be carved out of a large parcel. If the landowner wishes to further subdivide the land, the Farmette character area will allow a one-time further subdivision into lots with a minimum size of 20 acres. Landowners who have not engaged in a minor subdivision may create a Farmette subdivision concurrent with an initial minor subdivision. Existing lots smaller than three acres will be allowed to exist in perpetuity.

Given that the city already limits minor subdivisions, the committee wanted to allow subdividing that would have minimal impact to existing property owners and maintain rural character. Because the lots on gravel roads were seen to be more rural in character, the committee felt that they should be the model for new minor subdivisions in the city. These gravel road rural lots are currently a minimum of three acres in size.

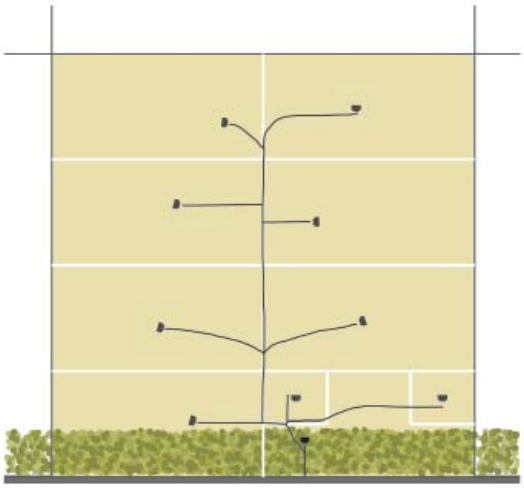
KNOW YOUR FARMETTE

- **Very large (20 acre minimum) lots**
- **Rural character**
- **Agricultural uses**
- **Visually buffered from roadways**
- **One-time minor subdivision of up to three 3-acre lots allowed**
- **After that, the minimum lot size is 20 acres**
- **Private, unpaved roads allowed**
- **Minimize curb cuts**
- **Density bonuses available for dedicating pre-served open space**

FARMETTE

FARMETTE

- **Rural in character**
- **Small, 3-acre lots from minor subdivision process**
- **Remainder of property is divided into twenty acre lots**
- **Buffered from roadway**
- **Single curb cut**



OPERATION

The proposed new minor subdivision standard for rural residential property allows one house per 3 acres for the first 9 acres owned by an individual. After that, one house per each additional 20 acres will be allowed under the Farmette guidelines.

Farmette lots are a three acre minimum for up to three lots, and a 20 acre minimum for the remainder of the subdivision. One house and one accessory residential unit will be allowed per lot, all on septic or individual systems.

Under the existing Minor Subdivision process, owners may be exempt from required traffic and drainage studies and tree surveys "when an analysis is submitted and concludes that the development would have no negative impact on traffic or drainage." These exemptions would extend to the farmette development.

A single curb cut per road frontage is preferred. If this is not possible, curb cuts should be limited to one per 500 feet of road frontage, with mailboxes clustered.

REGULATORY INTENT

The intent of the Farmette type of development is to allow landowners to subdivide their land among family members and to maintain the rural character of Chattahoochee Hills, while still allowing for some development on the rest of their property. By allowing up to three lots as small as three acres, the current minor subdivision process allows a land owner to provide lots for family members while maintaining the bulk of the property in its current state. By allowing for further subdivision into lots of 20 at least acres, the farmette type provides the owner an opportunity to develop the rest of the property while maintaining a distinctly rural character and avoiding some of the regulatory burden of a more intense development type.

Through measures such as limiting curb cuts, requiring shared internal roads, clustering mailboxes along the street, and visually buffering when possible, proposed farmette subdivision regulations seek to minimize aesthetic impact. When visual buffering is not possible, design guidelines will address the scale and placement of structures.

The limitation on curb cuts and requirement for internal roads are intended only to discourage direct access to individual subdivided lots. These provisions are not intended to create a very-large-lot version of a suburban residential pod inside a superblock. Rather, connectivity is encouraged; internal roads should allow through traffic and connect with neighboring properties where possible.

Large 20 acre lots are intended to provide separation between houses and a sense of space and at least a semblance of rural isolation for their residents. Specifying septic and restricting sewer reinforces the rural character of the farmette type and ensures a minimum separation between houses.

20 acre lot minimums also lend themselves to small scale agriculture and equestrian uses, which are consistent with the rural character envisioned by the community.

The three acre lot minimum under the minor subdivision regulations effectively limits any subdivision to lots over six acres. If the property has been a part of the minor subdivision process in the past, the effective limit is 40 acres.

CRITICAL FACTORS

- Parcel size
- Curb cuts
- Visual Buffers
- Septic Systems

POLICY THEMES:

- Agricultural Protection
- Rural Conservation
- River Protection
- Scenic Corridor
- Watershed Protection

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED:

Environmental Protection Objective: Stormwater management best practices and a tree-replanting ordinance apply for all new development. Also, land use measures are used that will protect the natural resources in the community.

Growth Preparedness Objective: The elected officials within the community have a strong understanding of the land-development process within the community. Specific areas have been identified for growth. Additionally the development regulations and zoning codes are being updated to help achieve the QCO goals.

Heritage Preservation Objective: If not visually buffered, new construction in this area must satisfy design guidelines that will address the scale and placement of structures.

Housing Choices Objectives: Accessory units are allowed and encouraged as a mechanism for providing rental housing within the community. New development is regulated and closely examined to ensure it stays consistent with existing development within the character area.

Regional Identity Objective: Agricultural uses are encouraged in this area, as they were once common throughout the community.

Sense of Place Objective: Chattahoochee Hills is making specific zoning and development choices to ensure that the current rural character is preserved and is represented throughout the city. Visitors should instantly know that they are within the city limits through a distinct shift in development patterns compared to those in nearby communities. The Scenic Byway ordinance regulates the size and type of signage along the roadway. There will be a plan to protect designated farmland.

AGRICULTURAL AND RURAL RESIDENTIAL
CHARACTER AREA

VISION
All agricultural uses at the intensity level of the traditional family farm are allowed. These are considered to be in keeping with the rural character desired by the citizenry. Large scale or agribusiness uses may not be located in the Agricultural and Rural Residential character area. Uses associated with large scale farming and agribusiness, such as industrial slaughterhouses should be located in the agribusiness/industrial character area or the village(s) or town.

Small scale, traditional, and craft-style extensions of agricultural activities are encouraged, as is agritourism.

OPERATION
Agricultural uses and traditional small farm structures are allowed by right.

Any agricultural land to be subdivided will initially be limited to a minor subdivision of no more than three lots. Any further subdivision will convert the land to the Farmette character area and will be subdivided under the Farmette guidelines.

REGULATORY INTENT
The Agricultural and Rural Residential character area is a preservation of traditional agricultural uses. It is intended to support and encourage traditional farms, small farms, and sustainable farming methods, as well as existing large-lot residential uses.

KNOW YOUR AGRICULTURAL LAND

- **Upholds the historic use of the land**
- **Maintains Rural Character**
- **Owners may sell development rights and continue to farm the land**
- **Leverages the local food and farm-to-table trends**
- **Traditional agriculturally related businesses allowed by right**
- **Supports agritourism, such as u-pick, horseback riding, wineries, farm tours, etc.**
- **No large scale agribusiness, such as Concentrated Feeding Lots, industrial slaughterhouses, processing plants, feed yards, etc.**
- **Traditional small farm structures are allowed by right**
- **Traditional rural business uses of accessory structures are allowed**

AGRICULTURAL

CRITICAL FACTORS

- Preservation
- Transfer of Development Rights
- Sustainability

POLICY THEMES:

- Agricultural Protection
- Rural Conservation
- River Protection
- Scenic Corridor
- Watershed Protection

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED:

Environmental Protection Objective: Light Imprint stormwater management best practices and a tree-replanting ordinance apply for all new development. Also, land use measures are used that will protect the natural resources in the community.

Growth Preparedness Objective: The elected officials within the community have a strong understanding of the land-development process within the community. Specific

areas have been identified for growth. Additionally, the development regulations and zoning codes are being updated to help achieve the QCO goals.

Housing Choices Objectives: Accessory units are allowed and encouraged as a mechanism for providing rental housing within the community. New development is regulated and closely examined to ensure it stays consistent with existing development within the character area.

Regional Identity Objective: Agricultural uses are encouraged in this area, as they were once common throughout the community.

Sense of Place Objective: Chattahoochee Hills is making specific zoning and development choices to ensure that the current rural character is preserved and is represented throughout the city. Visitors should instantly know that they are within the city limits through a distinct shift in development patterns compared to those in nearby communities. The Scenic Byway ordinance regulates the size and type of signage along the roadway. There will be a plan to protect designated farmland.

Photo Credit: OZinOH via Flickr.com

AGRIBUSINESS/ INDUSTRIAL
CHARACTER AREA

VISION
The Agribusiness/Industrial character area hosts the industrial uses related to agriculture and agribusiness that are less attractive or incompatible with residential uses. The area will promote economic development in the city and provide employment opportunities for residents. A variety of agricultural supply and processing businesses, or other industry consistent with the city's rural character may locate here.

OPERATION
The Agribusiness/Industrial character area must be fully buffered from all residential uses. All industrial businesses in the district must have direct access to Palmetto Cascade Hwy (154). All nuisance regulations, such as noise, odor, or light pollution will apply. Traditional, green, and sustainable businesses and the services that support them are encouraged.

REGULATORY INTENT
The Agribusiness/Industrial character area is intended to provide the support necessary for a viable agricultural industry, while separating nuisances from the bucolic agricultural countryside. It is critical that the character area be fully buffered from residential uses.

In order to support the larger economic development goals of the city, it is important that the businesses in the agribusiness/industrial area be consistent with the overall rural vision for the city. The businesses should be of appropriate scale and align with the sustainable, rural vision set forth in this plan.

KNOW YOUR AG-INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

- **Provide support for the historic agricultural uses of the land**
- **Maintain Rural Character**
- **Leverage the local food/farm-to-table trends**
- **Encourage agriculturally related businesses**
- **Businesses in the district should have a synergistic relationship with the city's targeted agricultural uses to encourage economic development**
- **Supports economic development opportunities for owners of agricultural lands**
- **Must be fully buffered from residential uses**

AGRIBUSINESS

CRITICAL FACTORS

- Segregation of nuisance
- Economic Development
- Sustainability
- Growth

POLICY THEMES:

- Agricultural Protection

QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES ACHIEVED:

Environmental Protection Objective: Light Imprint stormwater management best practices and tree-replanting ordinance apply for all new development. Also, land use measures are used that will protect the natural resources in the community.

Growth Preparedness Objective: The elected officials within the community have a strong understanding of the land-development process within the community. Specific areas have been identified for growth. Additionally the development regulations and zoning codes are being updated to help achieve the QCO goals.

Regional Identity Objective: Businesses that complement agriculture are encouraged in this area, providing support for the remainder of the city to operate sustainably in its rural state.

REGULATION

The most important aspect of how a jurisdiction is regulated for future development is the regulatory framework through which the environment is both protected and built. More than any other initiative, the land development regulation establishes a city's form and character. Because of the impact that regulations have on cities, it is critical that the regulations in the City of Chattahoochee Hills meet three standards:

1) They must stem directly from the vision that citizens of Chattahoochee Hills have for their city;

2) They must be methodically pre-tested to understand its impacts under true development scenarios; and

3) They must be neatly choreographed with other regulations and codes, such as a city's subdivision ordinance.

The best codes bring a community's vision to reality through careful organization, logic, and a simplicity that yields a code that is easy to understand and navigate. These elements are fundamental to the creation of a regulatory structure that operates as intentionally and efficiently as possible.

In our case, there must be a clear conceptual and mechanical relationship between the Code and the Comprehensive Plan, including its supporting elements. This relationship is reinforced through a simple strategy that builds on the previous work that the city has undertaken while avoiding a typical pitfall: the 'piecemeal' development of comprehensive plans and land development regulations.

The code must also clearly establish the regulatory relationship between rural and preserved areas and the more highly developed town and village districts.

In order to avoid the situations that produce fragmented regulations, the city's strategy has two horizons in mind, a short-term phase focused on specific regulation in targeted categories or districts, and a longer-range framework that evaluates and implements operational and administrative strategies. The process will address the City's most pressing concerns, such as the specific zoning categories, overlay districts, and aspects of the subdivision ordinance, prior to implementing a deeper, transformational reconfiguration of the Code as it is warranted. It is critical that the short-term modifications to the Code align with long-term proposals; essential to this process is testing ideas through short-term changes as a way to lay the essential groundwork for future modifications to the Code and the Subdivision Ordinance.

Ultimately, the task is to protect the rural nature of the city while providing for the design of the physical public realm of the more intensely developed areas of the city. This process, through the Code, deals specifically with the urban framework for the town and villages, consisting of streets and infrastructure, public spaces and buildings, and block and lot configurations. Both the rural and urban frameworks provide a long-term structure for the ever-changing patterns of life in Chattahoochee Hills. This approach to regulating for a desired rural and urban framework, for example, looks at how zoning regulation effects street life, how street design is implemented through subdivision, and how certain building forms and types of lot utilization are appropriate for certain places but not others.

This is a task of choreography. Form is an important part of this equation, but the Code must also provide the City's rural and urban framework with the flexibility necessary to accommodate needed growth. Ultimately, the regulations must play a leading role in creating a Chattahoochee Hills that promotes public life in both the rural setting and the town setting, and successfully reconciles the needs of both.

This process is based on the design and continuing life of cities, both rural and urban, and the idea that the citizens of Chattahoochee Hills will be continually involved in rigorous analysis and a creative journey. This is a process of evidence-based design and decision making that provides a conceptual framework for the design process. Chattahoochee Hills begins this process by asking a seemingly simple question, "What kind of place does Chattahoochee Hills want to be?" In the answer to this question lies a roadmap for the successful review, modification, and execution of the City of Chattahoochee Hills' regulatory framework.

ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES, POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION

The following issues and opportunities were identified from a review of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) "Quality Community Objectives", analysis of the data and information contained in this document, and concerns stated by city residents in the five outreach meetings hosted by the Public Participation Committee. Translating the vision for the community's future into an implementation plan first requires setting goals and identifying the issues and opportunities that must be addressed in making the plan a reality. The following list of issues and opportunities was identified by citizens during the public participation process and later refined by the planning team and city officials. The overarching goal is to develop a plan that best manages the anticipated growth in the community and preserves the rural character.

Policies are adopted to provide ongoing guidance and direction to local officials. They provide a basis for making decisions when implementing the Comprehensive Plan, including achieving the Community Vision and appropriately addressing the Community Issues and Opportunities. The policies listed here are intended to be general in nature and applied citywide, particularly at the time of rezoning, permit review and budget preparation. Many of these policies will be referenced in staff reports for future rezonings and may influence conditions of zoning that may be placed on future development. Geographic-based policies are part of the description of the Future Development Map. Policies do not supersede standards and regulations in the Chattahoochee Hills Zoning Ordinance, Development Regulations and other ordinances as adopted by the Mayor and City Council.

The implementation strategies are the specific measures that have to be undertaken to implement the plan. They are listed to address the issues and opportunities identified by the community in the planning process. Implementation strategies carry out city policies and create the city's "to do" list, also known as the Short Term Work Program.

- Land Use
- Transportation
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Natural and Cultural Resources
- Community Facilities and Services
- Intergovernmental Coordination

LAND USE

Based on the input of the citizens who responded to the comprehensive plan survey and who participated in the outreach meetings, the city is to be preserved and maintained as closely as possible to its current rural state. By maintaining the rural character of the city, the Mayor and City Council are not only following the wishes of the city's citizens, but is also creating a valuable asset that will differentiate the city from the rest of metro Atlanta, improving property values and tax collections, as well as quality of life.

Metro Atlanta is overrun with suburban sprawl. Families continually move further away from the city to escape that sprawl. In Chattahoochee Hills, people will be able to enjoy the rural appeal of the community in perpetuity because the city has made a deliberate choice to be rural, rather than being temporarily rural only because the suburban sprawl hasn't arrived yet.

The city has a very limited tax base. In order for the city to be able to continue to provide an acceptable level of services in the future without significant property tax increases, the property tax base will have to be improved. In order to keep the majority of the city rural while allowing for needed development, that development will only be permitted in designated development areas (the town, villages and hamlets). Additionally, the elements that most embody the rural nature of the city, the roadways and viewscapes must be protected.

The following table addresses each of the land use issues and opportunities that came up through the Comprehensive Plan survey and outreach meeting process.

Issues and Opportunities	Policy	Implementation Measures
The preservation requirements that are a part of the various character area development modes do not meet community requirements for preservation of sensitive areas critical to the maintenance of rural character outside of the developments themselves.	Use development regulations and transfer of development rights (TDR) ordinance to accomplish the city's future development and conservation strategy.	•Rewrite development regulations and transfer of development rights ordinance. • Lobby for legislative support of tax incentives and transfer fee programs required to preserve land outside of developments.
Developments approved to date have required many variances, and have not created much real preservation.	Use development regulations and TDR ordinance to accomplish future development and conservation strategy. New zoning regulations should focus on form rather than use where appropriate.	• Rewrite development regulations and transfer of development rights ordinance. • Include form based code in addition to land use regulations.
Zoning code needs to include best practices to achieve desired development pattern. There are zoning districts in the ordinance that are not compatible with the currently adopted Comprehensive Plan.	Use development regulations to accomplish the city's future development and conservation strategy.	• Rewrite development regulations. • Delete unused zoning districts from the code.
Current zoning is almost silent on development outside of villages, hamlets and conservation subdivisions, which could allow development that is not in keeping with community desires.	Use development regulations to accomplish the city's future development and conservation strategy.	• Rewrite development regulations.
As originally conceived, three villages and multiple hamlets would create around 30,000 housing units—creating concerns regarding sprawl and loss of community character.	Use development regulations to accomplish the city's future development and conservation strategy and to enforce dense nodal development.	• Rewrite development regulations. • Include form based code in addition to land use regulations.

Issues and Opportunities	Policy	Implementation Measures
Lack of economic incentives for dense, nodal development in villages and hamlets, and disincentives for conventional suburban sprawl.	Town, village and hamlet will be the only allowed non-rural development types in the city's zoning ordinance. Traditional suburban style development will not be allowed.	• Rewrite zoning districts to reflect the desired development patterns and restrict suburban style development. • Consider limiting cut-and-fill.
In the creation of the city, 1½ of the planned villages were cut out of the city's boundaries. The city needs this tax base.	The new, larger Town style development in particular, as well as the Village and Hamlet development pattern will make up for the loss of village designated land.	• Create zoning districts for Town. • Update current zoning standards for villages and hamlet development.
Rural community values should be reflected in development codes, particularly as related to dark skies and signs.	Use the dark sky ordinance to protect the nighttime sky. Use the sign ordinance to prevent unwanted signage within community.	•Keep the dark sky ordinance in the new zoning ordinance. • Review/update the sign ordinance to ensure that it reflects community character.
Can the current zoning ordinance promote agricultural uses and discourage suburban sprawl?	Use incentives to encourage agricultural uses and disincentives for sprawl.	• Update the zoning ordinance to incorporate incentives for agricultural uses and disincentives for sprawl.
Balance between the level of regulation and community values that support personal freedom, but are sometimes conflicted on 'neighbor freedom'	Restrictions on rural uses should be directly related to nuisances close to residential structures. Agricultural uses should be supported and protected under grandfathering provisions.	• Revise the zoning ordinance and remove restrictions normally found in suburban communities that prevent rural uses.
Comp Plan needs input of major landowners/developers. Their buy-in and success are required drivers of this process.	Involve major landowners/developers in the planning process so they help to refine the vision for the city.	• Continue to include major landowners/developers in the planning process.
Concerns regarding development without city water or sewer available	Utility polices for the city must be incorporated into the new development regulations	• Incorporate new utility policies for the city in development regulations.

Issues and Opportunities	Policy	Implementation Measures
Concern about options for landowners to realize financial benefit from their land, without selling it to a developer	Adherence to the future development plan/future land use map and policies of the Comprehensive Plan will create additional value for properties in the city.	• Rewrite development regulations to include new development options. • Revise transfer of development rights ordinance.
Existing AG-1 zoning allows lots as small as one acre in size which is not consistent with rural character but with suburban large lot zoning.	Use development regulations to accomplish the city's future development and conservation strategy.	• Rewrite development regulations and transfer of development rights ordinance.
Protection of the South Fulton Scenic Byways, especially when the Byway intersects one of the crossroads communities.	Provisions for protection of the scenic byway must be included in the development regulations and Rico Crossroads Community Master Plan.	• Include provisions for visual buffering requirements, and protection of the scenic byway in the development regulations and Rico Crossroads Community Master Plan.
Preservation of viewsheds of lakes and streams, farmland, horse pastures, riparian corridors and mature forests that are prevalent throughout the City of Chattahoochee Hills.	Use development regulations to accomplish the city's future development and conservation strategy.	• Implement visual buffering requirements for all development styles. • Rewrite zoning districts to reflect the desired development patterns and restrict suburban style development.
Preservation of historical and cultural sites with regards to the placement, size and type of future development.	Future development must respect the area's historic and cultural significance.	• Rewrite the development regulations, Rico Crossroads Community Master Plan, and any other plans or studies of other crossroads communities to include respect for the area's historic and cultural sites.
City has a history of land use planning that supports the vision of villages, hamlets and preserved open space.	Use the Comprehensive Plan to build on and refine the vision for Chattahoochee Hills.	• Rewrite development regulations. • Rewrite zoning districts to reflect the desired development patterns and restrict suburban style development. • Include form based code in addition to land use regulations.
High level of recognition of anticipated development pressure and the need for tax revenue to support the city's operating needs and to implement the Comp Plan vision.	Use the Town, Village, Hamlet development pattern to channel development pressure into desired areas and forms to create the city's tax base.	• Rewrite zoning districts to reflect the desired development patterns and restrict suburban style development while increasing the city's tax base.

TRANSPORTATION

Protecting the character of the existing 100 miles of roads, both paved and gravel, is the key to maintaining the rural nature of the city. All the paved rural roads in the city (except for South Fulton Parkway) are two narrow lanes (e.g. 10 feet wide) with a grass shoulder. Both the paved and gravel roads are very lightly travelled, even during rush hour.

In order to maintain the rural road character neither the gravel nor paved roads will ever be widened (with the possible exception of South Fulton Parkway only) . Additional traffic from new town and village development(s) will be addressed by sound transportation planning principles that include connectivity and building an enhanced rural road network throughout the city, giving residents many ways to get from one part of the city to another. Traffic will be minimized on existing roads by requiring developers to build new roads within their developments and new roads to connect to South Fulton Parkway. The enhanced road network will allow traffic volumes on existing roads to stay low enough to continue to have free flow on rural roads, thus maintaining the existing character.

Developers of all towns, villages and hamlets (mixed-use or residential) will be responsible for constructing necessary new arterial and collector roads to connect with South Fulton Parkway or other major arterial roads, in addition to local roads to serve the development OR will pay transportation impact fees in the amount equivalent to the cost of constructing the new roads for any development.

The following table addresses each of the transportation issues and opportunities that came up through the Comprehensive Plan survey and outreach meeting process.

Issues and Opportunities	Policy	Implementation Measures
Preserve rural character.	Existing rural roads will not undergo any improvements that will change the character of the road other than at the parkway. New development regulations should include a requirement for city approval for access (curb cuts) to city owned roads.	• Implement visual buffering standards for all new development • Implement curb cut standards that incentivize sharing of curb cuts for all new development as appropriate •Develop road standards for paved and gravel roads to be incorporated into the South Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) scheduled to begin in 2011.
Strong support for and strong opposition to the notion of public transportation.	There is a need for transportation for the disabled and elderly in the community. When population density of the Town is adequate to support transit, a study of community needs must be done.	• Address in the upcoming South Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) scheduled to begin in 2011.
Desire for multi-use trails without compromising rural character		• Trail standards should be addressed in the CTP and the city's parks plan. • Design trail standards to accommodate equestrian users.
Need to accommodate increasing traffic volumes as development occurs	Existing rural roads will not undergo any improvements that will change the character of the road.	• Developers will build new roads to connect to South Fulton Parkway, a new internal street grid, and multiple connections to existing city roads. The land use mix of the town, village and mixed-use hamlets will allow residents to walk and bike for more trips than would be possible in a suburban style development.

Issues and Opportunities	Policy	Implementation Measures
What are the local transportation priorities (roundabouts instead of traffic lights, preference for traffic calming measures, etc.)?	Existing rural roads will not undergo any improvements that will change the rural character of the road. Improve the city road network to have multiple two lane roads, rather than fewer wider roads.	• Roundabouts are preferred over traffic lights. Multiple two lane roads are preferred over wider roads.
A number of bridges in the city have low sufficiency ratings and will need to be replaced.	City bridges must have adequate sufficiency ratings.	• These bridges will be listed in the city's capital improvement program.
State and federal money for transportation improvements is limited.	Developers must build all the roads to support their developments. Other transportation funding sources must be considered, including impact fees.	•Developers will build new roads to connect to South Fulton Parkway, a new internal street grid, and multiple connections to existing city roads.
The City of Chattahoochee Hills has minimal traffic indicated by relatively low traffic counts on all of its roads.	Very light traffic and free flow conditions fit the rural vision for the community, therefore the minimum Level of Service (LOS) acceptable for city roads is C.	•Developers will build new roads to connect to South Fulton Parkway, a new internal street grid, and multiple connections to existing city roads.
The South Fulton Parkway Access Study is underway and the Atlanta Regional Commission plans to start the South Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan in 2011.	The city's policies regarding transportation must be incorporated into both the Access Management Study and the CTP.	• See above.

Protecting the character of the existing roads is the key to maintaining the rural nature of the city. A detailed transportation plan for the city will be developed as part of the South Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan. The following city policies must be incorporated into the CTP.

- The city's future development map which shows preferred areas for towns and villages.
- Gravel roads must be maintained in their current state.
- Current paved rural roads are typically two narrow lanes (e.g. 10 feet wide) with a grass shoulder.
- Neither gravel nor paved roads will ever be widened (with the possible exception of South Fulton Parkway).
- The minimum acceptable LOS for existing city roads is generally 'C'. Developers of all towns, villages and hamlets (mixed-use or residential) will be responsible for constructing necessary new arterial and collector roads to connect with South Fulton Parkway or other major arterial road, in addition to local roads to serve the development OR will pay transportation impact fees in the amount equivalent to the cost of constructing the new roads for any development that will degrade service below 'C' LOS.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Based on the input of the citizens who responded to the comprehensive plan survey and who participated in the outreach meetings, the city is to be preserved and maintained as closely as possible to its current rural state. By maintaining the rural character of the city, the Mayor and City Council are not only following the wishes of the city's citizens, but is also creating a valuable asset that will differentiate the city from the rest of metro Atlanta, improving both property values and tax collections.

The city currently has a very limited tax base. In order for the city to be able to continue to provide an acceptable level of services in the future without significant property tax increases, the property tax base will have to be improved and new businesses attracted to the city. In order to ensure that the city develops in the way envisioned by the citizens and that the types of businesses that fit the city's vision will locate here, the city must conduct an economic development study and develop an economic development strategy.

The following table addresses each of the economic development issues and opportunities that emerged through the Comprehensive Plan survey and outreach meeting process.

Issues and Opportunities	Policy	Implementation Measures
How to market Chattahoochee Hills to companies that fit in with the vision for the city.	Only businesses that fit into the Chattahoochee Hills vision should locate here.	• Perform feasibility study to determine the types of businesses we could attract that fit into our vision. As a result of the feasibility study, develop an economic development strategy to attract the types of businesses named in the study.
Need for consistent branding of the Chattahoochee Hills vision of rural countryside and villages/hamlets/ sustainable development pattern.	Only businesses that fit into the Chattahoochee Hills vision should locate here.	• Concurrent with the Feasibility Study, develop a Branding Program for Chattahoochee Hills: with a focus on conservation/development pattern that makes Chatt Hills unique.

Issues and Opportunities	Policy	Implementation Measures
Need for city code and financial mechanisms that facilitate economically and environmentally sustainable growth and traditional neighborhood development.	Only businesses that fit into the Chattahoochee Hills vision should locate here.	• Rewrite development regulations and transfer of development rights ordinance to accomplish the city's future development and conservation strategy.
Placement of infrastructure to be cost effective and facilitate the type of growth desired.	Infrastructure location policies must be developed.	• Utility polices for the city must be incorporated into the new development regulations.
Promoting economic growth while maintaining 60-80% preservation/ conservation.	This policy is already incorporated into the zoning code but must be updated.	• Rewrite development regulations and transfer of development rights ordinance to accomplish the city's future development and conservation strategy.
Options to improve the city's tax base except for conventional suburban sprawl.	The Town, Village, Hamlet development pattern will channel development pressure into desired areas and forms to create the city's tax base.	• Rewrite development regulations.
Local food movement requires locally grown food and may provide opportunities to promote agricultural activity in the city.	New comprehensive plan and zoning ordinance will protect agricultural areas.	• As a part of the zoning ordinance revisions, incorporate incentives for agricultural uses.
Cooperation with nearby communities	Sending development requests that don't fit our vision to surrounding communities that would welcome it.	•Create an Economic development authority coordinating with other nearby communities as they have things we don't have and vice versa (Fairburn, Palmetto, etc).

Issues and Opportunities	Policy	Implementation Measures
City government should be business friendly within the context of the envisioned Chattahoochee Hills development pattern.	Support existing and new businesses that fit the Chatt Hills vision.	• Promote local businesses in & outside of the city on the city's website. • Revise related city ordinances and processes to increase certainty and efficiency. Sign and Zoning ordinances must be reviewed.
The city is hard to find and navigate for newcomers.	Make the city easier to find and navigate.	• Improve wayfinding and signage in the city. • Customize street signs to let you know you're in the city. • Develop a wayfinding system for the city to include parks, trail system and roads.
Industrial development should be located with primary vehicular access from state highways to minimize wear and tear on city maintained roads.	Agribusiness/Industrial land use designation located adjacent to Highway 154 at the city's eastern edge	• Agribusiness/Industrial land use designation located adjacent to Highway 154 at the city's eastern edge is shown on future development map.
Rural nature of the community often requires the use of accessory structures for home occupation (workshops, barns, etc) but current rules are too restrictive for a rural area.	Home occupations that are compatible with the city's vision are welcome here.	• Change home occupation rules in the Zoning Ordinance so they fit the businesses that happen here in a rural area as opposed to the suburban zoning that we currently use.

HOUSING

The City of Chattahoochee Hills needs housing options for all incomes and age groups. Based on the results of the City's Comprehensive Plan survey, there is a need for rental housing in the city limits. There is also a need for housing for senior citizens.

According to the US Census 2008 American Community Survey, 6.2 percent of Fulton County's population was over 65 years of age. The population of Chattahoochee Hills seems to include a higher percentage of older residents than Fulton County has as a whole. When the 2010 census is released it will be important to analyze Chattahoochee Hills' population trends. The city will need to ensure that housing options are provided to meet the needs of the aging population.

The following table addresses each of the housing issues and opportunities that came up through the Comprehensive Plan survey and outreach meeting process.

Issues and Opportunities	Policy	Implementation Measures
Maintain rural character.	Deliberately rural	Rewrite development regulations to accomplish the city's future development and conservation strategy. Include rules about siting of houses to protect steep slopes, ridge lines, and viewsheds. Limit building heights relative to ridge heights (Height may vary depending on base elevation or visual screening).
TND can require mass grading by developers. How will greenspace and viewsheds be preserved?	Open space requirements currently in the Zoning Ordinance.	All proposed development types (Town, Village, and Hamlet) require significant open space preservation.
No census data is available for the city.	When 2010 census data is released, re-examine Chattahoochee Hills' population and housing trends to plan for housing options to meet the needs of the aging population.	Update the Comprehensive Plan when the 2010 census data is released.
Lack of rental housing in the city.	Accessory housing units should be used throughout the city to help meet rental housing needs and should not be restricted to family members.	Revise Zoning Ordinance to allow accessory units without restrictions.

Issues and Opportunities	Policy	Implementation Measures
Only one type of housing (single-family detached) is available in the city. Need housing for all life stages and price ranges.	In town, village(s), and hamlets have full range of housing types: stacked flats/garden apartments, live-work units, townhouses, single-family houses with accessory units allowed, and senior housing.	Rewrite Zoning Ordinance.
In rural areas have two types of housing: single-family and accessory dwelling units.	Allow accessory dwelling units in rural areas.	Rewrite Zoning Ordinance.
Need for senior housing.	Incorporate the principles of ARC's Lifelong Communities Handbook: Creating Opportunities for Lifelong Living to address the city's senior housing and aging in place needs and require Universal Design as an option in all new housing developments.	Rewrite Zoning Ordinance.
Continued support for village/hamlet style development with live/work units.	Allow live work units in villages and hamlets.	Rewrite development regulations to accomplish the city's future development and conservation strategy.
Access to houses for fire trucks.	All houses must have adequate access for fire trucks.	Must be considered as part of the development code rewrite.
Need for design standards in town, village, and hamlets.	Form based standards should be user friendly and easily accessed by the public.	Adopt a form based zoning code that will include rules for conservation subdivisions (street layout, placement of houses on the land, architectural rules for houses).
Abandoned subdivisions and vacant foreclosed homes cause code enforcement problems.	Enforcement of existing city codes and vacant structure registry.	Work with local land owners and developers to address stalled housing development sites and foreclosed homes.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Chattahoochee Hills has abundant and valuable natural resources including streams, the Chattahoochee River, lakes, wetlands, forests and rock outcroppings. The various natural water features support a wide variety of uses for its citizens, from drinking water to recreation to irrigation. Water also provides wildlife habitat for both aquatic and terrestrial animals.

In order to maintain the rural character of Chattahoochee Hills, the city's natural and cultural resources must be protected. The following table addresses each of the natural and cultural resources issues and opportunities that came up through the Comprehensive Plan survey and outreach meeting process.

Issues and Opportunities	Policy and Implementation Measures
Promote Chattahoochee Hills' Rural Identity	• Develop design standards for all buildings (civic and commercial) in town, village(s) and hamlets. • Preserve country views through revisions to the Zoning Ordinance requiring: three acre minimum lot size, increased curb cut/road access spacing restrictions, requiring sharing of curb cuts where appropriate, and mailbox placement limitations to disallow the "picket fence of mailboxes."
Preserve rural character of scenic corridors.	• Incorporate scenic byway protections into development regulations. • Implement visual road buffering standards for all new development. • Develop Gravel Road Standards to maintain rural look and feel of the area. Include requirements for increased lot width/frontage, landscaping and buffers, road width, road buffers and tree canopy. • Develop Paved Road Standards to maintain rural look and feel of the area. Include requirements for increased lot width/frontage, landscaping and buffers, road width, road buffers and tree canopy.

Issues and Opportunities	Policy and Implementation Measures
Give city residents more recreation opportunities.	• Develop a Parks Master Plan which will include a bike facilities plan, a land acquisition plan with riverfront property and boat access as a priority. The Master Plan should also address programming for parks and grant funding. • Include equestrian uses in recreation planning. • Develop a Trail Master Plan for the city, building on the existing trail plan.
The current TDR program is not preserving land now. Alternative mechanisms need to be considered.	• Rewrite TDR ordinance, create entity to manage TDR/PDR program including identification of sending and receiving zones. Require preservation in all development types. • Implement the transfer fee based program to fund TDR/PDR program. • Develop a protected area prioritization program to direct transfer fee funded TDR/PDR purchasing. • Appoint a land bank agency/land trust to implement the system apolitically and establish a Memorandum of Understanding.
How land preservation is made permanent needs to be defined.	• All options must be considered and spelled out in TDR/PDR and development code rewrite.
Citizens do not have public access to the Chattahoochee River.	• This must be considered in the city's parks planning process.
Maintaining the ability to hunt and fish in the city limits.	• Work with Georgia Department of Natural Resources to develop a hunting preservation program.
Illegal dumping and recycling	• In the next update of the city's solid waste management plan, illegal dumping and cycling must be addressed more completely.
Current zoning does not allow for best practices and actually limits the flexibility needed for real innovation.	• Rewrite development regulations to accomplish the future development/conservation strategy.
Conservation of natural resources	• Develop a Greenspace Master Plan which will include provisions for protection of wildlife and a prioritized list of types of natural areas and habitats to be protected. In development regulations: protect species native to bedrock outcroppings in the city and require a survey of unique geological features; limit the disturbance or covering of rock outcroppings; preserve wetlands and protect streams. • Develop a tree ordinance to promote protection of tree cover, replanting of native trees, and use of best management practices.
Use parks, protected greenspace and vistas to promote economic development.	• Use parks, protected greenspace and vistas to promote economic development. • Include eco-tourism, eco-industry and wetlands mitigation in economic development strategy.
Revaluate conservation subdivision ordinance.	• Replace conservation subdivision ordinance with residential hamlets.
Protection of the city's drinking water.	• Adopt Groundwater Recharge Area Protection Ordinance. Promote purchase of water from South Fulton Water Authority. Restrict land uses near the Bear Creek Reservoir.
Preservation of historic resources.	• Develop Historic Resources Plan to include stabilization of existing structures and funding opportunities, including grants.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The City of Chattahoochee Hills provides public services to its residents through city departments and contracted services. Adequate facilities and services promote public health, safety, and welfare throughout the city. Specifically, Community Facilities and Services addresses the existing level of public services and facilities in the city including water, sewer, stormwater system, streets, fire protection, law enforcement, solid waste management, parks and recreation, administrative services, library, and school facilities, as required by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

The following table addresses each of the community facilities and services issues and opportunities that came up through the Comprehensive Plan survey and outreach meeting process.

Issues and Opportunities	Policy and Implementation Measures
Need for community facilities	• Civic buildings should be located in the Town. Architecture should reflect community character.
No sewer outside of Town, Village and Mixed-use Hamlets	• Incorporate into revised development regulations.
Regional stormwater facilities should be considered	• Develop Light Imprint Stormwater Management Plan.
Improve water infrastructure	• Work with South Fulton Municipal Regional Water and Sewer Authority to improve area water infrastructure.
Need for cultural resources	• Develop Cultural Resources Plan to develop cultural resources in context with surrounding area. • Welcome center, community theater, community center, historical society.
Need for increased educational opportunities within the city	• Support the Chattahoochee Hills Charter School district. Developments over a certain size must provide continuing education facilities. Support the development of a home school network. Develop higher education access points/venue.
Need for funding for city facilities and services	• Hire a grant writer for the city.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

Chattahoochee Hills is one of six municipalities within south Fulton County. Fulton County provides many services to the residents of the City of Chattahoochee Hills, as they are also residents of the County. The Service Delivery Strategy is designed to serve as the primary coordination mechanism between the city and county governments. In 1997 the State of Georgia passed the Service Delivery Strategy Act (HB489). This law mandates the cooperation of local governments with regard to service delivery issues. Each county was required to initiate development of a Service Delivery Strategy (SDS) between July 1, 1997 and January 1, 1998. Service Delivery Strategies must include an identification of services provided by various entities, assignment of responsibility for provision of services and the location of service areas, a description of funding sources, and an identification of contracts, ordinances, and other measures necessary to implement the SDS. The Service Delivery Strategy for Fulton County was adopted prior to incorporation of the City of Chattahoochee Hills. The city is not a signatory of this document, but, rather has shared services with the county through other intergovernmental agreements.

The following table addresses each of the intergovernmental coordination issues and opportunities that came up through the Comprehensive Plan survey and outreach meeting process.

Issues and Opportunities	Policy and Implementation Measures
How will impacts of development on the city's borders be addressed?	• Participate in ARC DRI review process. • Engage in outreach to neighboring municipalities in the interest of "zoning edge area" coordination.
Need for changes in how undeveloped land is taxed	• This issue needs to be addressed by all local governments in Fulton County in the State Legislature.
Desire to build cooperative relationships with nearby local governments and explore possibility of shared services	• Explore joint economic development strategy/authority and other services. Continue joint transportation planning efforts.

DRAFT COMMUNITY AGENDA

SHORT TERM WORK PROGRAM

The city has set for itself an ambitious vision. Seeing it through will be challenging. There is further planning to be done, there are technical details to iron out, and there is legislation to craft and adopt. There will be both opportunities and challenges in translating the vision into effective regulation, and there will be pressure to abandon portions of the vision for short-term benefit. But only by remaining focused on the core goals of the community and continuing the difficult work begun years ago, will the city realize the benefits of those many years of effort.

The short term work program described on the next page outlines some of the work ahead for the city. While the current economic conditions have placed some strains on the city, they have also provided an opportunity to thoughtfully conduct the work that is so important to the city's future.

Project	Fiscal Year(s)	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Responsible Party
Rewrite Zoning Ordinance	2012-2013	$80,000	General fund	City
Engage grants writer	2016	$40,000	General fund	City
Adopt Groundwater Recharge Area Protection Ordinance	2012	Staff time	General fund	City
Develop Sustainable Local Agriculture Plan	2012-2013	$50,000	Grants	City
Develop Historic Resources Plan	2015	$80,000	Grants	City
Develop Cultural Resources Plan	2015	Part of above plan	Grants	City
Develop Light Imprint Stormwater Management Plan	2015	$70,000	General fund or stormwater utility fee	City
Develop Rural Paved and Gravel Roads standards	2013	Staff time	General fund	City
Create entity to manage PDR/ TDR program	2014	Staff time	General fund	City
Develop Parks Master Plan	2013	$80,000	General fund	City
Research transit options for the elderly and disabled	2015	Staff time	General fund	City
Economic Development Feasibility Study	2012	$65,000	General fund	City
Develop Branding Program for Chatt Hills	2012	$20,000	General fund	City
Participate in South Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan	Ongoing	Staff time	General fund	City
Develop Capital Improvements Program	2012	Staff time	General fund	City
Impact fee study for transportation, fire, police and parks	2013	$50,000	General fund	City
Work with Georgia Regional Transmission Authority to develop a plan that respects the city's rural character	2012	Staff time	General fund	City

CONCLUSION

The citizens of Chattahoochee Hills have mapped out a unique future for the city. Remaining deliberately rural in the face of development pressure that will inevitably come will take a concerted effort. Balancing the rights of property owners with the strictures of the vision is paramount in this effort. Chattahoochee Hills is populated by strong, independent citizens who value the autonomy that comes with life in the country, but they recognize that they must act collectively in order to protect valued elements of their lifestyle that are at risk from encroaching development.

In order to preserve what is important, the city must prevent the sprawling suburban development that spreads over much of the Atlanta region. It must also establish its distinct identity to attract the kinds of development that will preserve the rural lifestyles of its residents.

The road to success for Chattahoochee Hills lies not through being all things to all people and accepting every opportunity for development, but rather by clearly defining itself, rigorously defending its vision, and establishing itself as the finest example of a purposeful rural community situated in a major metropolitan area. Only by rejecting inappropriate development can the city maintain its brand and attract development that respects the current residents' vision to remain rural.

Chattahoochee Hills is blessed with miles of undisturbed landscape, beautiful rolling hills, lush forests, scenic vistas, and miles of Chattahoochee River frontage. But at the heart of it all are the citizens. The people of Chattahoochee Hills have proven that they are up for a challenge. The people who created the City of Chattahoochee Hills, the people who bought the city its parks, the people who responded to the planning survey in astonishing numbers, the people who showed up at meeting after meeting to hammer out the vision for the city that is expressed in this document, and the people who work hard day after day to better their lives and the lives of their neighbors—these are the people who make Chattahoochee Hills what it is. And these are the people who can see the vision through. It will take their continuing efforts and the efforts of all the citizens of the city to ensure that the city stays unique not only in the Atlanta area, but also in the State of Georgia.