

**PARTIAL PLAN UPDATE  
FOR THE  
2025 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
OF  
GILMER COUNTY  
CITY OF ELLIJAY  
CITY OF EAST ELLIJAY**

**In Compliance With the  
GaDCA Local Planning Requirements  
May 2005**

**Adopted: \_\_\_\_\_**

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# INTRODUCTION

## PURPOSE

The purpose of a Joint Comprehensive Plan is to coordinate planning on interjurisdictional issues and provide a policy framework for guiding long range and day-to-day decision making for local government officials and administrators.

This document is a partial update to the *2004 – 2025 Joint Comprehensive Plan for Gilmer County and the Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay* which was adopted in October 2004. This partial update is intended to serve as a policy guide during the interim period between full updates to the *Joint Comprehensive Plan* as it helps the community identify critical issues and opportunities which have either remained or arisen since 2004. The next full update will be due in October 2014.

This update is prepared according to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Office of Planning and Quality Growth "Requirements for a Partial Update to the Local Government Comprehensive Plan, March 2007."

## REQUIRED COMPONENTS

Four components are required for this partial plan update and are briefly described below.

### 1. Analysis of Consistency with the State's Quality Community Objectives.

The DCA Office of Planning and Quality Growth has created an assessment tool to assist local governments in evaluating their progress toward becoming sustainable and livable communities. This tool was used at the beginning of the update process.

### 2. Analysis of Areas Requiring Special Attention

Areas requiring special attention are defined by the DCA as:

- A. Areas of significant natural or cultural resources
- B. Areas where rapid development or change of land uses are likely to occur.
- C. Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services
- D. Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness
- E. Large abandoned structures or sites
- F. Areas with significant infill development opportunities
- G. Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or substantially higher than average levels for the community as a whole.

### 3. Identification of Issues and Opportunities

A list of issues and opportunities in Gilmer County was developed by assessing the "Quality Community Objectives," analyzing the "Areas of Special Attention," and seeking input from the

Gilmer County Comprehensive Plan Update Stakeholder Group. The items are grouped into eight major topics as defined in Georgia's Local Planning Requirements.

**4. Updated Implementation Program**

The updated implementation program includes the following:

- A. **Policies** – A list of policies has been prepared to provide ongoing guidance and direction to local officials. These policies are designed to address the issues and opportunities identified in part 3 of the plan update.
- B. **Report of Accomplishments** – This report identifies the current status for each activity in the current (2008 – 2012) Short Term Work Program for each jurisdiction. The report identifies if the proposed activity has been completed, is currently underway, has been postponed, or has not been accomplished.
- C. **2009 – 2013 Short Term Work Program** – The Short Term Work Program identifies specific implementation actions the community intends to take during the 2009 – 2013 time frame of the planning period. This includes any ordinances, administrative systems, community improvements or investments, financing arrangements, or other programs or initiatives to be put into place to implement the plan.

**THE PUBLIC PROCESS**

This plan update has been prepared with the substantial involvement and input from local elected officials from each jurisdiction, city and county staff, various public and private agencies and groups, and members of the general public. A stakeholder group of local government officials, staff, other community leaders, and interested citizens was formed to assist in the planning process. Public meetings were held on the following dates:

- April 13, 2009: First Stakeholder Group Work Session
- June 2, 2009: First Joint Public Hearing
- June 2, 2009: Second Stakeholder Group Work Session
- July 7, 2009: Third Stakeholder Group Work Session
- August 11, 2009: Second Joint Public Hearing

Gilmer County and the Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay approved transmission of the draft Update for state-mandated regional and state reviews on the following dates: August 14, August 17, and August 11, respectively. Subsequent to notification that the draft partial update met with satisfactory regional and state reviews, the partial update was adopted by each jurisdiction on the following dates:

- Gilmer County: \_\_\_\_\_
- City of Ellijay: \_\_\_\_\_
- City of East Ellijay: \_\_\_\_\_

## Part 1: Analysis of Consistency with the State's Quality Community Objectives

This section reviews the community's current policies, regulations, activities, and development patterns for consistency with Georgia's "Quality Community Objectives" (QCOs). The DCA's Office of Planning and Quality Growth created this format to assist local governments in evaluating their progress towards sustainable and livable communities. While "yes" and "no" responses are useful as a quick measure of local status, the supplementary comments also clarify details, perhaps making distinctions between governmental jurisdictions within the same county boundary.

Traditional Neighborhoods				
Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.				
	Gilmer Co.	Ellijay	East Ellijay	Comments
1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.	Y	N	Y	Generally, all ordinances separate commercial and residential uses; however, East Ellijay's zoning ordinance includes a Planned Development District and a Transitional Mixed Use Commercial District which allow for a mix of uses. In addition, Ellijay's zoning ordinance permits loft dwelling units in the Central Business District.
2. Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development "by right" so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process.	N	N	N	Much of the mountainous terrain in Gilmer County does not lend itself to neo-traditional development.
3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.	N	Y	N	Ellijay's zoning ordinance includes requirements for tree preservation in certain zone districts.
4. Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer.	N	N	N	
5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.	Y	Y	Y	All governments conduct routine maintenance and repairs.
6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.	n/a	Y	Y	There are no sidewalks in the unincorporated areas of the county.
7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.	N	Y	N	Primarily in downtown Ellijay.
8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.	N	Y	N	
9. Some of our children can and do bike to school safely.	N	N	N	
10. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community.	N	Y	N	Ellijay Primary and Ellijay Elementary are located in downtown Ellijay.

<b>Infill Development</b>				
Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.				
	Gilmer Co.	Ellijay	East Ellijay	Comments
1. Our community has an inventory of vacant site and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.	Y	Y	N	Maintained by the Gilmer County Chamber of Commerce and Ellijay's Better Hometown Program.
2. Our community is actively working to promote Brownfield redevelopment.	n/a	n/a	n/a	No Brownfields are known to exist.
3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment.	n/a	n/a	N	No greyfields are known to exist.
4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road).	N	N	N	To some degree, development along SR 515 could be considered nodal due to the limited number of access points to the highway.
5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some areas.	N	Y	Y	Planned Development Districts allow for small lot development under certain conditions in Ellijay and East Ellijay.

<b>Sense of Place</b>				
Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve, as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.				
	Gilmer Co.	Ellijay	East Ellijay	Comments
1. If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics.	N	Y	N	Downtown Ellijay is unique. Apple orchards in the county might also give a general indication of location. The majority of the land in the county is either mountainous or rural/agricultural. The landscape is very typical of the North Georgia region, but not necessarily specific to Gilmer County.
2. We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage, and have taken steps to protect those areas.	N	Y	N	Ellijay has a local historic district. There is a published historic resources survey for Gilmer County which includes Ellijay and East Ellijay. Outside of the historic district protection mechanisms for these resources do not exist.
3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.	Y	Y	N	In Ellijay, only in the historic district.
4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.	N	Y	Y	
5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.	N	N	N	This is under consideration for downtown Ellijay.
6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.	N	N	n/a	

<b>Transportation Alternatives</b>				
Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.				
	Gilmer Co.	Ellijay	East Ellijay	Comments
1. We have public transportation in our community.	Y	Y	Y	Limited public transportation is available through the Mountain Area Transportation System.
2. We require that new development connect with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.	N	N	N	The County has recently completed several connector roads to improve the street network.
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.	N	Y	Y	The largest network of sidewalks is in Ellijay. The City is very interested in expanding the sidewalk network.
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community to provide user-friendly sidewalks.	N	N	N	
5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.	N	N	N	
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.	Y	Y	Y	A regional bicycle and pedestrian plan is complete for the county and cities. Signage has been posted on some roads.
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas whenever possible.	N	N	Y	

<b>Regional Identity</b>				
Each region should promote and preserve a regional "identity," or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.				
	Gilmer Co.	Ellijay	East Ellijay	Comments
1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.	Y	Y	Y	
2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.	Y	Y	Y	The poultry industry is the greatest dollar value contributor to the agricultural economy in Gilmer County. The apple industry is also a significant contributor to the agricultural economy.
3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.).	Y	Y	Y	
4. Our community participates in the Georgia Economic Development's regional tourism partnership.	Y	Y	Y	It also participates in the Southern Highroads Development Association.
5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.	Y	Y	Y	Tourism in Gilmer County is characterized by weekly cabin rentals, vacation homes, and eco-tourism. The Georgia Apple Festival is also a popular event that draws tourists from around the region.
6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.	Y	Y	Y	

<b>Heritage Preservation</b>				
The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.				
	Gilmer Co.	Ellijay	East Ellijay	Comments
1. We have designated historic districts in our community.	N	Y	N	There is a local historic district in Ellijay.
2. We have an active historic preservation commission.	N	Y	N	Ellijay has a local historic preservation commission.
3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure this.	n/a	Y	n/a	Ellijay has a historic preservation ordinance and design guidelines for the historic district and in-town neighborhoods. An ordinance is needed to address "demolition by neglect."

<b>Open Space Preservation</b>				
New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.				
	Gilmer Co.	Ellijay	East Ellijay	Comments
1. Our community has a green space plan.	Y	Y	Y	It is part of the Governor's Greenspace Program.
2. Our community is actively preserving green space, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.	Y	Y	N	Ellijay is in the process of developing a city park. Expansions of the River Park are an ongoing priority.
3. We have local land conservation program, or we work with State or national land conservation programs, to preserve environmentally important areas in our community.	Y	N	N	Two Federal Wilderness areas are located in the County: Cohutta and Rich Mountain.
4. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.	Y	Y	N	Ordinances are in place, but not widely used. Two examples of recent developments in the county are preserving open space include Anderson Creek Retreat and Falling Waters.

<b>Environmental Protection</b>				
Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.				
	Gilmer Co.	Ellijay	East Ellijay	Comments
1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resource inventory.	Y	Y	Y	Compiled as part of the 2004 – 2025 Comprehensive Plan.
2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.	Y	N	N	
3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.	Y	Y	Y	The County and Cities have adopted water supply watershed, wetlands, groundwater recharge, and mountain protection ordinances.
4. Our community has passed the necessary "Part V" environmental ordinances, and we enforce them.	Y	Y	Y	The County and Cities have adopted water supply watershed, wetlands, groundwater recharge, and mountain protection ordinances.
5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance, which is actively enforced.	N	Y	N	Ellijay's zoning ordinance includes requirements for tree preservation in certain zone districts.
6. Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.	N	Y	N	Ellijay's zoning ordinance includes requirements for tree preservation in certain zone districts.
7. We are using storm water best management practices for all new development.	Y	Y	Y	Also soil erosion ordinance and NCRS review.
8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).	Y	Y	Y	

<b>Growth Preparedness</b>				
Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.				
	Gilmer Co.	Ellijay	East Ellijay	Comments
1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.	Y	Y	Y	Population projections are prepared annually.
2. Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.	Y	Y	Y	
3. Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.	Y	Y	Y	
4. We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.	Y	N	N	
5. We have Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.	Y	Y	Y	
6. We have designed areas of our community where we would like to see growth, and these areas are based on a natural resources inventory of our community.	Y	Y	Y	This was completed as part of the 2004 – 2025 Comprehensive Plan.
7. We have clearly understandable guidelines/ordinances for new development.	Y	Y	Y	
8. We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.	N	N	N	
9. We have procedures in place that make it easy for the public to stay informed about land use issues, zoning decisions, and proposed new development.	Y	Y	Y	Activities are publicized through the local press.
10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.	Y	Y	Y	

<b>Appropriate Businesses</b>				
The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.				
	Gilmer Co.	Ellijay	East Ellijay	Comments
1. Our economic development organization has considered our community’s strengths, assets and weaknesses, and has created a business development strategy based on them.	Y	Y	Y	The Economic Development Authority is the responsible organization.
2. Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit businesses and/or industries that will be compatible.	Y	Y	Y	
3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products.	Y	N	Y	
4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy.	N	N	N	The closing of Pilgrim's Pride and Blue Ridge Industries would cripple Ellijay's economy.

<b>Employment Options</b>				
A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.				
	Gilmer Co.	Ellijay	East Ellijay	Comments
1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.	N	Y	N	
2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	Y	Y	Y	To a limited degree.
3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	Y	Y	Y	
4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs.	Y	Y	Y	There are a limited number of professional positions. This often keeps college graduates who grew up in the community from living in their hometown after graduation.

<b>Housing Choices</b>				
A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.				
	Gilmer Co.	Ellijay	East Ellijay	Comments
1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.	N	N	Y	In the county, a conditional use permit is required.
2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.	Y	Y	Y	
3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average).	Y	Y	Y	
4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks.	N	N	N	Due to steep terrain, there is a limited amount of land surrounding the City of Ellijay which could follow the pattern of the original town.
5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or “neo-traditional” development.	N	Y	N	
6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.	Y	Y	Y	
7. We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.	Y	Y	Y	
8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.	N	Y	Y	
9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.	N	N	N	
10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.	N	N	N	East Ellijay's Planned Development District allows for small lot development under certain conditions. In Ellijay, this is only permitted for lots of record.

<b>Educational Opportunities</b>				
Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.				
	Gilmer Co.	Ellijay	East Ellijay	Comments
1. Our community provides workforce-training options for its citizens.	N	N	N	Appalachian Technical College and North Georgia Technical College are located in neighboring counties.
2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.	n/a	n/a	n/a	
3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	Y	Y	Y	Dalton State College recently opened a branch in downtown Ellijay. Appalachian Technical College and North Georgia Technical College are located with reasonable driving distances.
4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.	N	N	N	

<b>Regional Solutions</b>				
Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.				
	Gilmer Co.	Ellijay	East Ellijay	Comments
1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.	Y	Y	Y	Local governments are members of the NGRDC.
2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.	Y	Y	Y	Northwest Georgia Regional Water Partnership, Coosawattee River Alliance
3. We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services, such as public transit, libraries, special education, tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security, etc.	Y	Y	Y	At times the county may work better with the Cities than the Cities do with each other.
4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.	Y	Y	Y	To a limited degree via the Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) Program administered by the NGRDC.

<b>Regional Cooperation</b>				
Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.				
	Gilmer Co.	Ellijay	East Ellijay	Comments
1. We plan jointly with our Cities and County for comprehensive planning purposes.	Y	Y	Y	The county and cities continue to share in the update of their Joint Comprehensive Plan.
2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.	Y	Y	Y	
3. We initiate contact with other local government and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft region-wide strategies.	Y	Y	Y	Local governments are members of the NGRDC and Northwest Georgia Regional Water Partnership.
4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.	Y	Y	Y	Local governments are members of the NGRDC and Northwest Georgia Regional Water Partnership.

## Part 2: Analysis of Areas Requiring Special Attention

As part of the plan update process, existing land use patterns and trends in Gilmer County, Ellijay, and East Ellijay were evaluated to identify how development might impact that existing natural and cultural resources as well as community facilities, services, and infrastructure. In 2003 and 2004, during the time of the planning process for the *2004 – 2025 Joint Comprehensive Plan*, Gilmer County was experiencing significant growth. Since that time, the economy has changed and growth has slowed, but development is still occurring, particularly as infrastructure expansions and improvements occur. Following is a list of areas requiring special attention that were identified. These areas are illustrated on maps on pages 17 and 18.

### 1. Areas of significant natural and cultural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon or otherwise impacted by development.

- Ellijay, Cartecay, and Coosawattee Watersheds
- Ellijay, Cartecay, and Coosawattee Rivers
- All primary and secondary trout streams bisecting private property. (Cox Creek, Flat Creek, Mountaintown Creek, and Tails Creek are impaired by fecal coliform bacteria.)
- Areas with significant slopes and elevations. (Note: Elevations in private ownership, above 2,200 feet, having slopes of 25 percent or greater for at least 500 feet horizontally already are protected.)
- Southern Highroads Trail
- Ellijay Historic District
- Ellijay City Cemetery
- Resources related to Cherokee Heritage
- Farmland and orchards
- Rainbow Lake and other flood control lakes
- Fort Hetzel
- Historical Communities such as Whitepath, Cartecay, and Oak Hill
- The Old Federal Road



**The Coosawattee River is one of Gilmer County's many outstanding natural resources.**

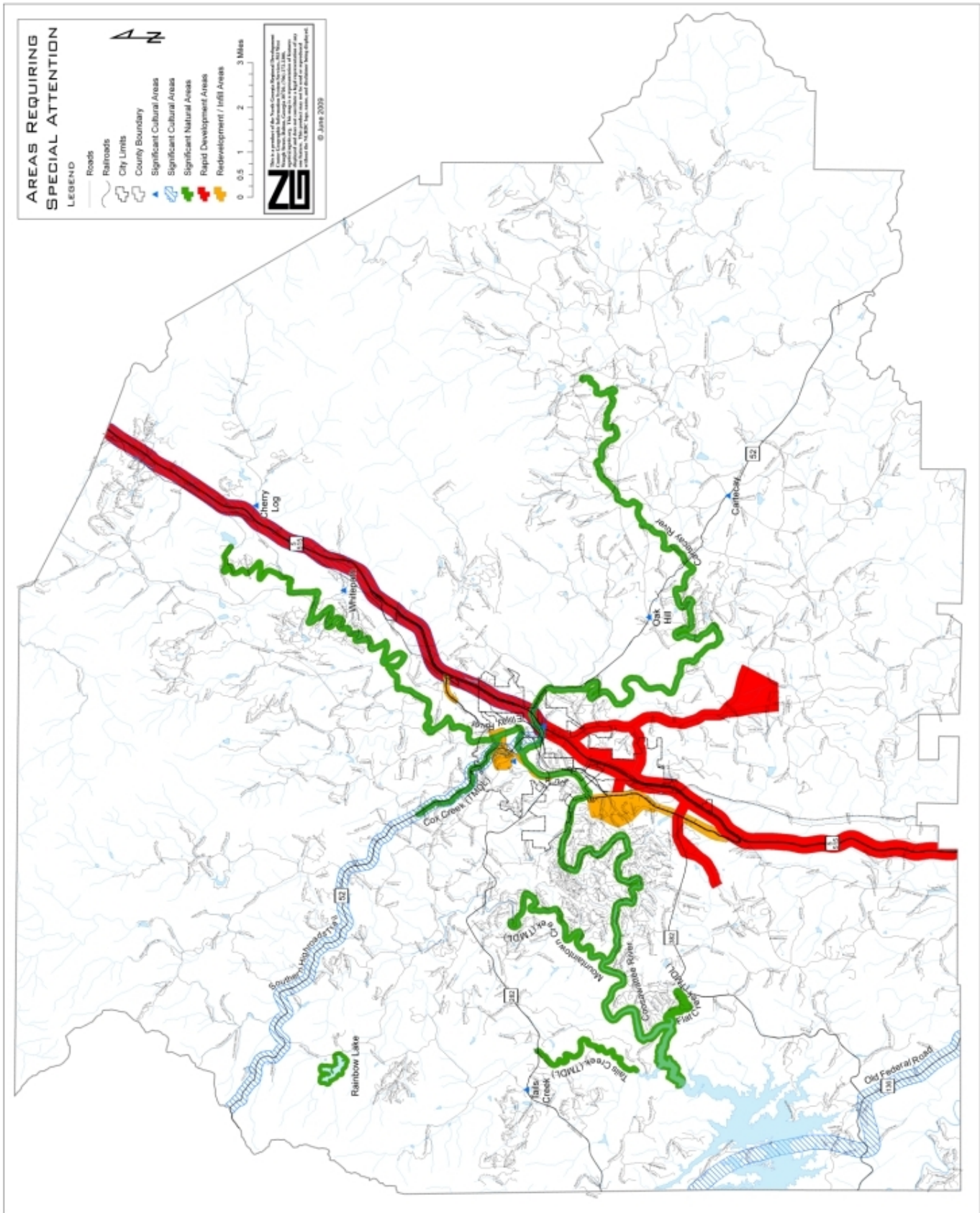
### 2. Areas where rapid development and change in land use are likely to occur.

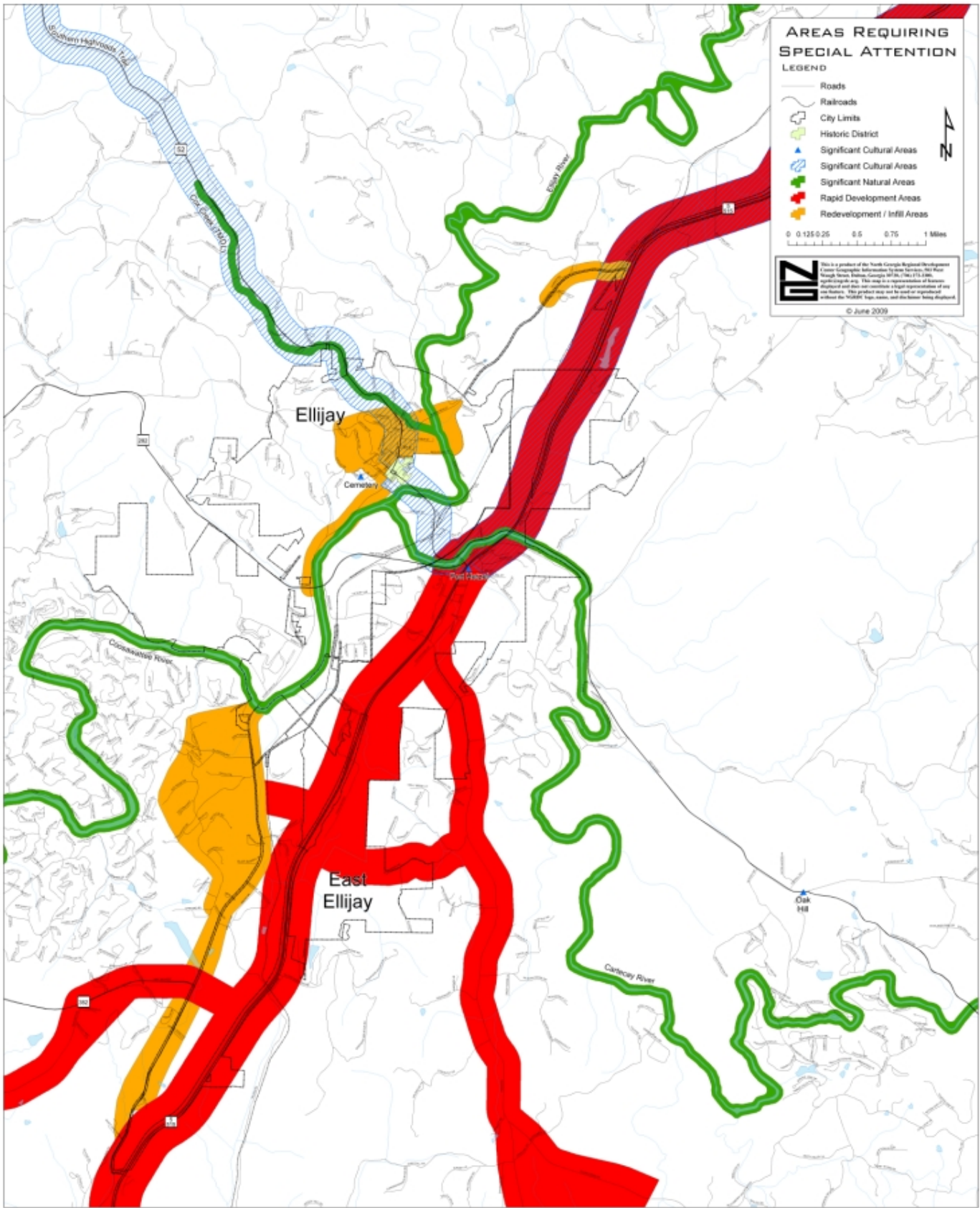
- GA 515/Appalachian Development Highway
- Area surrounding Clear Creek Middle School
- Yukon Road
- Sunlight Road (Future Industrial Park)
- Simmons Road/Eller Road
- Highway 382 to 515 Connector
- Future location of new hospital (presently the location is unknown)



**The area surrounding Clear Creek Middle School is expected to experience continued growth.**

- 3. Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation.**
  - GA 515/Appalachian Development Highway (limited water and sewer availability)
  - Highway 52 East
  - Intersection of River Street/1<sup>st</sup> Avenue/Highway 515/Industrial Boulevard
- 4. Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors).**
  - Old Highway 5 South (between Townhome Drive and Orchard Road)
  - Old Highway 5 North (near 515)
  - South Main Street along the Coosawattee River
  - Sunlight Road/Roundtop Road Area
- 5. Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated.**
  - none at this time
- 6. Areas with significant infill development opportunities (scattered vacant sites).**
  - Most opportunities are in or immediately adjacent to the cities.
- 7. Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or substantially higher than average levels for the community as a whole.**
  - Orchard Road
  - Corbin Hill
  - Old Highway 5 in Ellijay
  - Chatsworth Highway
  - Sunlight Road/Roundtop Road





## Part 3: Identification of Issues and Opportunities

The following list of issues and opportunities in Gilmer County was developed by assessing the "Quality Community Objectives," analyzing the "Areas of Special Attention," and seeking input from the Gilmer County Comprehensive Plan Update Stakeholder Group. The items are grouped into eight major topics as defined in Georgia's Local Planning Requirements. The topics are as follows:

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

Following each list of issues and opportunities are various implementation measures that are recommended to resolve issues and take advantage of opportunities that are critical for the future development of Gilmer County and its municipalities.

### A. POPULATION

#### Issues

1. In terms of total population, Gilmer County ranked 68th out of the 159 counties in Georgia in the year 2000, but it ranked 4th in terms of population growth between 1990 and 2000. During this time it had a growth rate of 75.5%, which was much higher than the rates for the NGRDC region and the state. Approximately 90% of the population growth was due to net migration rather than natural increase (i.e. the difference between the number of births and the number of deaths), while just 66% of Georgia's population growth was due to net migration.
2. The area is expected to experience stable growth over the next decade, but at slightly lower rates than during the 1990s. This growth will continue to place a heavy demand on housing and community facilities and services.
3. Education attainment in Gilmer County has increased steadily over the past 20 years. The percentage of persons in Gilmer County with high school diplomas or college degrees is very similar to the figures for the NGRDC region, but is still substantially lower than the figures for Georgia. As education levels increase, Gilmer County will become more competitive in attracting industries that require a more skilled and educated labor force.

#### Opportunities

1. In 2009, Dalton State College opened an extended campus site in the old Gilmer County Library in downtown Ellijay. This should help improve education levels in the community by making access to a college education more convenient.
2. Retirees produce positive economic impacts. Studies indicate that the economic impact of one retiree household is equal to 2.5 to 3.7 factory jobs.



Dalton State College now has an "Extended Campus" in downtown Ellijay.

## **B. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Issues**

1. The service and retail sectors are growing in Gilmer County, while the manufacturing sector is declining.
2. Job growth has not kept pace with population growth in Gilmer County.
3. In terms of the type of jobs which are available, many employment opportunities exist in minimum wage jobs, particularly in the retail and service industries. Because of a lack of professional and technical jobs in the community, some residents commute for higher-paying jobs.
4. In the past, the labor force of Gilmer County, Ellijay, and East Ellijay lacked sufficient skills and education to attract high technology and capital intensive industries.

### **Opportunities**

1. Highway 515 provides convenient access to and from the area.
2. The abundant natural resources in Gilmer and surrounding counties make the area appealing to residents, tourists, and second home buyers.
3. Improved visibility and public access to the county's three rivers would aid in promoting the area to both tourists and future residents.
4. Tourism, second home development, and retirement development can have positive impacts on the economy.
5. A full service business and technology park and/or industrial park will aid in the recruitment of new businesses.
6. A new hospital facility will stimulate development and re-development in the area where it is located and could attract retirees to the area.
7. The recent opening of a branch of Dalton State College in downtown Ellijay provides an excellent and convenient opportunity for residents who want to further their education.
8. Downtown Ellijay is an attractive, pedestrian friendly shopping area.
9. Gilmer County was named an "Entrepreneur Friendly Community" by the State of Georgia in 2008. The designation indicates the community has worked to develop an environment that is welcoming to small business and entrepreneurs

### **Implementation Measures**

1. Through a committee of local officials, developers, and interested citizens, develop design guidelines for the Highway 515 corridor which will promote a positive visual image of the community.
2. Work with the Georgia Department of Economic Development to promote the community to statewide development interests.
3. Continue programs at the schools to improve educational levels.
4. Pursue the development of a business and technology park, including adequate infrastructure.
5. Seek funding to develop a downtown master plan for the City of Ellijay to address traffic, parking, landscaping, signage, historic preservation, pedestrian facilities, and housing. This plan should address both residential and commercial development in downtown.
6. Support the development of a new hospital.
7. Continue to expand the streetscape program in Ellijay.



**Downtown Ellijay an attractive and pedestrian friendly. A master plan would address additional residential and commercial development downtown.**

## C. HOUSING

### Issues

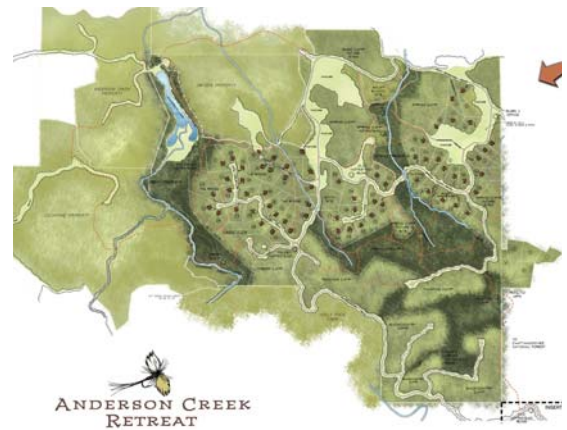
1. Housing is fairly inexpensive when compared with neighboring counties, so housing prices is not a significant reason why portions of the workforce reside in other counties. The cost of new housing in Gilmer County is less than that of surrounding counties.
2. In 2000, the jobs to housing balance in Gilmer County (excluding seasonally vacant homes) was 0.69 jobs per housing unit which implies that there is more housing in Gilmer County than there are jobs.
3. There is an adequate supply of higher-end housing for vacation home/retiree market; however, many residents are of low to moderate income, and the supply of housing for this income range is limited.



**There is an adequate supply of higher-end housing in Gilmer County.**

### Opportunities

1. In 2005, the City of Ellijay completed a housing assessment for the downtown area. This assessment can be used to identify areas for possible CDBG funding of housing rehabilitation.
2. A neighborhood stabilization grant has been funded within the region which will assist low-moderate income families to acquire foreclosed homes.
3. Two recent developments in the county have been designed to preserve open space: Falling Waters and Anderson Creek Retreat.



**Anderson Creek Retreat is a fairly recent development in Gilmer County. It is a 1,500 acre community "designed to protect wildlife habitat, water quality and open space."**

Source: <http://www.andersoncreekretreat.com>

### Implementation Measures

1. The provision of infrastructure is one of the primary ways the local governments can assist developers of affordable housing. Local governments should continue to seek CDBG funding to supplement the infrastructure in targeted areas.
2. Continue to enforce building codes and subdivision regulations.
3. Periodically review subdivision standards to ensure adequacy.
4. Using the 2005 housing assessment as a guide, apply for CDBG funding for housing rehabilitation in targeted areas.
5. Assist the Regional Development Center in implementing the neighborhood stabilization grant.

## **D. NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES**

### **Issues**

1. Gilmer County's natural resources are some of its greatest assets. Those resources which are especially vulnerable include the following:
  - water supplies and watersheds;
  - rivers, trout streams, and creeks;
  - steep slopes and protected mountains; and
  - farm land and forest land.
2. The community's cultural resources are vulnerable. Over forty historic structures have been demolished in the past 10 years. Others suffer from "demolition by neglect." Irreplaceable archaeological resources relating to Cherokee history are also vulnerable to development.



**Gilmer County's natural resources are some of its greatest assets.**

### **Opportunities**

1. Two effective ways to protect the area's valuable resources will be through (1) the enforcement of existing regulations and (2) public education.
2. The three rivers in Gilmer County (Coosawattee, Cartecay, and Ellijay) are essentially inaccessible to the majority of residents and tourists. Two canoe launch areas are currently being developed, but additional improvements in both visibility and access would greatly benefit the community.
3. Efforts are underway to better document Cherokee resources in North Georgia.
4. The Northwest Georgia Regional Water Resources Partnership is a multi-jurisdictional agency that provides a variety of resources related to water issues.

### **Implementation Measures**

1. Investigate the effectiveness and applicability of open space subdivision design and consider this type of design in any housing projects in which local governments participate.
2. Implement the recommendations of the Total Maximum Daily Load plans for impaired streams.
3. Support the efforts of the Coosawattee River Alliance.
4. Support the efforts of the Historic Preservation Commission to protect the historic fabric of downtown Ellijay.
5. Pursue public awareness and education of the ethnic culture of the Cherokee Indians of North Georgia.
6. Through a committee of local officials, developers, and interested citizens, develop design guidelines for the Highway 515 corridor which will promote a positive visual image of the community.
7. Improve access to the three rivers in Gilmer County.
8. Consider ways to address "demolition by neglect."



**Improvements in the visibility of and access to the three rivers in Gilmer County would greatly benefit the community. A riverwalk such as the one shown above could link downtown Ellijay to other points in the community.**

## **E. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

### **Issues**

1. Gilmer County has made tremendous progress in terms of expanding community facilities and services since 2004. Among the many projects it has completed in the last five years are a new courthouse, a new Emergency Management headquarters, several new fire/EMS stations, a new public library, several connector roads, and airport improvements.
2. Both Cities have also completed large capital projects since 2004. The City of Ellijay built a new public safety facility and the City of East Ellijay built a new city hall.
3. A new hospital is planned for the community, but its location has yet to be determined.
4. The expansion of water and sewer service as well as the construction of new roads will have a major impact on the location of new development.
5. Additional park and recreation facilities are still needed throughout the community.

### **Opportunities**

1. Gilmer County continues to be proactive in terms of providing excellent public facilities for the community.
2. The location of the new hospital will have a significant impact on development and redevelopment.

### **Implementation Measures**

1. Continue to make system-wide water and sewer improvements.
2. Support the development of a new hospital.
3. Prepare and implement a Parks and Recreation Master Plan.
4. Develop the park at Clear Creek School.
5. Provide additional multi-purpose trails throughout the community.
6. Seek grant funding for recreation projects when appropriate.



**Among the many projects that Gilmer County has completed since 2004 are a new courthouse and a new public library.**

## F. LAND USE

### Issues

1. The County and Cities are fortunate in that there are currently no large abandoned commercial or industrial sites in the community. Structures which were vacant in 2004, such as the old Wal-Mart building, are currently occupied.
2. Strip commercial development is occurring along Highway 515. This type of development pattern is going to drastically reduce the highway's capacity because more traffic signals and lower speed limits will be requested. In addition, without some form of design guidelines for signs and landscaping, auto-oriented commercial development has the potential to detract from the natural beauty of the community.



**Highway 515 provides excellent access to Gilmer County. Design guidelines for the corridor could help ensure that development does not detract from the natural beauty of the community.**

### Opportunities

1. Downtown Ellijay serves as a commercial hub for the City of Ellijay. It contains a variety of commercial uses such as restaurants, retail shops, and professional offices. Because of recent streetscaping efforts, it offers a pedestrian-friendly environment.
2. Redevelopment along Old Highway 5 South should be encouraged as an alternative to Highway 515. Low intensity commercial and light industrial development would be appropriate. New development should be conducted in a manner which will allow for the future widening of Old Highway 5.
3. The mountainous topography found in much of Gilmer County limits the opportunities for traditional neighborhood development and other compact forms of urban development; however, this type of development can be encouraged in areas where public water and sewer infrastructure exists. Infill opportunities exist in limited areas within the Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay.
4. An area which is experiencing growth is in the vicinity of the new school campus on Clear Creek Road. A variety of residential developments and some light commercial development is likely to occur there when the school campus is developed, and especially when water and sewer service is extended to the area.
5. A new hospital is planned for Gilmer County. Its location has yet to be determined, but it will impact growth in its immediate vicinity. Medical and other hospital support business are likely to locate near the new hospital.

### Implementation Measures

1. Through a committee of local officials, developers, and interested citizens, develop design guidelines for the Highway 515 corridor which will promote a positive visual image of the community.
2. Continue to enforce environmental regulations.
3. Investigate the effectiveness and applicability of open space subdivision design and consider this type of design in any housing projects in which local governments participate.
4. Support the use of package treatment plants and other alternative on-site wastewater treatment systems in subdivision developments in the county and incorporated cities.
5. Provide information to property owners of farmland, forest land, and environmentally sensitive land about tax incentives for leaving property undeveloped.
6. Prepare and implement a Parks and Recreation Master Plan.

## **G. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION**

### **Issues**

1. Local governments are affected by the actions of adjacent governments and the State.

### **Opportunities**

1. Local government partnerships with the Chamber of Commerce, Ellijay Better Hometown Program, the Board of Education, and Gilmer County Family Connections are important to the overall success of the community.
2. Relationships with other counties and cities are for the common good.
3. Local governments are required to resolve issues through the preparation of official Service Delivery Agreements.
4. Developments of Regional Impact review is a means to mitigate differences between governments because of impacts caused by development activity.



**Preparation of this partial update was guided by input from a stakeholder group of individuals representing Gilmer County and the Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay.**

### **Implementation Measures**

1. Require that rezoning actions be consistent with the Future Land Use Maps in the Comprehensive Plan.
2. Discourage making capital investments in rural areas that are not slated for urban/suburban intensity growth in the Future Land Use Plan.
3. Work with state level economic development agencies to attract new businesses to the area.
4. Jointly approach the Department of Transportation regarding needed road improvements.
5. Support efforts to improve water quality in the community.

## H. TRANSPORTATION

### Issues

1. Gilmer County and its municipalities are making steady progress in improving the road network. In particular, Simmons Road and Eller Road have improved connectivity and helped alleviate congestion at certain intersections.
2. There are few transportation alternatives in the area. Generally, local residents must rely on their automobiles to meet their travel needs.
3. There are not enough sidewalks or bicycle facilities in the cities to provide good connectivity between neighborhoods, schools, parks.

### Opportunities

1. A Long Range Transportation Plan has been prepared and is being implemented.
2. A Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan has been prepared.
3. An Airport Master Plan has been prepared and is being implemented.

### Implementation Measures

1. Continue to implement the adopted Long Range Transportation Plan and pursue system-wide improvements, including new connector roads and alternate routes, to improve the level of service on the roads in the community.
2. Evaluate setback requirements, access, and zoning activities for properties on roads which will be widened in the future.
3. Complete renovations of the airport and continue to update the Airport Master Plan.
4. Maintain a positive working relationship with GNRR.
5. Continue to utilize the Local Assistance Road Program for resurfacing projects.
6. Support implementation of the regional bicycle and pedestrian plan.
7. Seek funding to develop a downtown master plan for the City of Ellijay to address traffic, parking, pedestrian facilities, and housing.
8. Pursue funding for and develop additional pedestrian facilities to include sidewalks, trails, and river crossings.
9. Continue to advocate for Blue Ridge Scenic Railroad excursions to Ellijay.
10. Develop and implement a Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities Plan for Ellijay and East Ellijay.



**Currently there are not enough sidewalks or bicycle routes in Gilmer County to provide connectivity between neighborhoods, schools, and parks. Residents and visitors of all ages can enjoy bicycle trails.**

## Part 4: Updated Implementation Program

The following implementation program identifies the specific policies, programs, and projects to be undertaken to implement the recommendations contained in the Issues and Opportunities report. The implementation program consists of the following sections:

- Policies
- Report of Accomplishments related to the 2008 – 2012 Short Term Work Programs for each jurisdiction
- 2009 – 2013 Short Term Work Program for each jurisdiction

### A. POLICIES

Policies are adopted to provide ongoing guidance to local officials when making decisions relating to the comprehensive plan, including achieving overall goals for the community and addressing the list of issues and opportunities. These policies were obtained from the 2004 – 2025 Joint Comprehensive Plan and are organized into the following seven areas:

1. Economic Development
2. Housing
3. Natural and Cultural Resources
4. Community Facilities and Services
5. Land Use
6. Intergovernmental Coordination
7. Transportation

#### Economic Development

***Economic Development Goal:** A healthy economy which is diversified among both the industrial and commercial sectors, which enhances the quality of life for all of our citizens, and which prudently manages the community's resources.*

**Policy 1: Growth Preparedness.** Support an on-going, effective, and coordinated economic development program which will promote Gilmer County throughout the state and nation.

**Policy 2: Regional Identity.** Refine and promote the community's identity to take advantage of the unique aspects of its character.

**Policy 3: Appropriate Business and Employment Options.** Support the retention and expansion of existing business and industry and attract and recruit businesses and industries which are compatible with the community's long-term goals and which provide quality jobs for our citizens.

**Policy 4: Educational Opportunities.** Provide a more skilled and educated labor force to attract business and industry to the area.

**Policy 5: Adequate Infrastructure.** Promote new growth in areas where necessary infrastructure is already in place or is planned in the future.

**Policy 6: Downtown Development.** Promote downtown Ellijay as a center for retail and tourist activities and implement measures which will enhance the charm and the value of the downtown area.

## **Housing**

*Housing Goal: Adequate and affordable housing for all citizens.*

**Policy 1: Quality Housing.** Promote quality housing construction and subdivision development.

**Policy 2: Housing Opportunities.** Promote the development of housing in a wider range of prices and types to insure that all who work in the community have a viable option for living in the community. Affordable housing that is designed for long-term sustainability and stable value should be encouraged.

**Policy 3: Infill Housing and Neighborhood Preservation.** Stimulate infill housing in existing neighborhoods.

## **Natural and Cultural Resources**

*Natural and Cultural Resources Goal: To conserve, protect, and wisely manage the area's environmental, natural, and historic resources.*

**Policy 1: Open Space.** New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed and open space should be set aside from development for use as buffers, parks, greenbelts, or wildlife corridors.

**Policy 2: Environmental Protection.** Air quality and environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development. Environmentally sensitive areas deserve special protection, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.

**Policy 3: Regional Cooperation.** Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as the protection of shared natural resources.

**Policy 4: Heritage Preservation.** The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas, encouraging new development that is compatible with traditional features, and protecting other scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

## **Community Facilities**

*Community Facilities Goal: Public Facilities which have the capacity, and which are in place when needed, to support and attract growth and development and maintain and enhance the quality of life of all residents in the community.*

**Policy 1: Regional Solutions.** Regional solutions should be used when needs are shared by more than one local jurisdiction, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.

**Policy 2: Water Supply and Treatment.** Assure an adequate and economical supply of water for the growth needs of the county and incorporated cities.

**Policy 3: Sewerage System and Wastewater Treatment.** Provide public sewer service to growth areas as consistent with the Future Land Use Plan.

**Policy 4: Solid Waste Management.** Manage solid waste activities in a manner consistent with State requirements and the Joint Solid Waste Management Plan.

**Policy 5: Public Safety.** Provide excellent emergency management and law enforcement services commensurate with the unique needs of the area.

**Policy 6: Public Health Facilities.** Support improvements in the area's health care system.

**Policy 7: Recreation.** Provide recreation facilities and programs that meet both the active and passive recreational needs of community's residents.

**Policy 8: Government Facilities.** Expand and/or construct government facilities necessary to meet the demands of the growing population.

**Policy 9: Education Facilities.** Provide excellent education facilities and support coordination between local governments and the school system to assure new school locations are consistent with the Future Land Use Plan.

**Policy 10: Cultural and other Public Facilities.** Support the expansion of cultural facilities and programs and other public facilities in keeping with population growth.

## **Land Use**

*Land Use Goal: Land resources which have been allocated for uses that will accommodate and enhance economic development, natural and historic resources, community facilities, and housing and will protect and improve the quality of life of residents and visitors.*

**Policy 1: Community Character and Environmental Quality.** The positive qualities of the natural environment, historic and cultural resources, and scenic characteristics which contribute to Gilmer County's character should be preserved.

**Policy 2: Residential Development.** Future residential development should be compatible with the physical limitations of the land and the established land uses in the area. In addition, the transition in size, density, site development, and other characteristics should be compatible from one district to another.

**Policy 3: Agriculture and Forestry.** Prime agricultural and forest lands should be protected through the use of incentives, land use regulation, and other means.

**Policy 4: Parks and Recreation.** Plan for the development of parks and open spaces in locations throughout the community.

**Policy 5: Reuse of Historic Buildings.** The adaptive reuse of historic facilities and structures in the county and incorporated cities should be encouraged.

**Policy 6: Sense of Place.** Community focal points are important and should be encouraged. Such areas should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment. Downtown Ellijay is a focal point which should be promoted.

**Policy 7: Traditional Neighborhoods.** Traditional neighborhood patterns should be encouraged, including the use of human scale development, mixing uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.

**Policy 8: Infill Development.** The development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of Ellijay and East Ellijay should be encouraged.

**Policy 9: Infrastructure.** Development should be encouraged in areas which are targeted for growth on the future land use map and which either have public services or where public services can be extended at a reasonable cost.

**Policy 10: Strip Commercial Development.** Strip commercial development should be discouraged and compact development in activity nodes should be encouraged to reduce traffic congestion and efficiently utilize public services.

**Policy 11: Neighborhood Commercial Development.** Appropriate neighborhood commercial development should be planned to serve the needs of major residential areas in the county and cities.

**Policy 12: Transitional Uses.** An orderly transition between commercial areas and single family residential areas should be promoted through transitional uses such as multi-family residential and natural buffer areas.

**Policy 13: Industrial Development.** Industrial development should be encouraged in areas which have compatible soils, drainage, and other environmental characteristics, and which can be efficiently and effectively provided with adequate utilities and infrastructure with minimum costs to both industry and government.

**Policy 14: Government Facilities.** The downtown area of Ellijay should be promoted as the primary location for government facilities.

### **Intergovernmental Coordination**

*Intergovernmental Coordination Goal: Positive, cooperative, and effective relationships between Gilmer County, the City of Ellijay, the City of East Ellijay, and other public agencies and organizations.*

**Policy 1: Local Coordination.** Promote effective coordination between the County and City governments and the County School Board, the Water and Sewer Authority, and Economic Development Authority.

**Policy 2: Joint Planning.** Continue the joint comprehensive planning approach to ensure collaborative planning and decision-making.

**Policy 3: Consistency with the Future Land Use Plan.** Use the adopted Joint Comprehensive Plan as a guide for decision-making.

**Policy 4: State Coordination.** Pursue effective relationships with key State agencies and departments.

**Policy 5: Cooperative Planning.** Promote cooperative planning efforts throughout the community.

### **Transportation**

*Transportation Goal: To achieve a modern, well-funded multi-modal transportation network that is efficient, safe, and protects the environment while enhancing the area's economic development.*

**Policy 1: Adequate Transportation System.** A good transportation network is vital for the physical, social, and economic well-being of Gilmer County and the cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay; therefore transportation planning should be a priority for the community.

**Policy 2: Transportation Alternatives.** Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available and greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.

## B. REPORTS OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### Report of Accomplishments Gilmer County Short-Term Work Program 2008-2012

ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped.
		complete	underway	postponed	dropped	
Acquire and develop new parks and open space	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.
Pursue TMDL and SWAP initiatives and conduct public education and BMP demonstration projects to improve the environment and increase environmental awareness	2008-2009	X				Final projects have been funded for 2009.
Advocacy for the Coosawattee River Alliance	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.
Support the planning efforts of the Coosawattee Regional Water and Sewer Authority	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.
Construct three satellite fire stations	2009-2012		X			Will be complete by December 2009.
Construct three additional EMS stations	2009-2012		X			Will be complete by December 2009.
Prepare a Parks and Recreation Master Plan	2009			X		Lack of funding.
Develop one satellite park	2010		X			
Seek grant funding for recreation projects as appropriate	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.
Complete the new County Courthouse	2008-2012		X			Will be complete by June 2010.
Build a new Chamber of Commerce facility	2009			X		Lack of funds and identification of site. Postpone to 2011.
Support Gilmer County Family Connection efforts to construct a Gilmer County Family Resource Center as well as an emergency children's shelter.	2008-2009				X	Lack of funds.
Hold annual, biannual, or joint planning meetings of the local governments, authorities, boards, and agencies as needed to improve communication and coordination.	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.
Implement the programs of the adopted Long-Range Transportation Plan in concert with the priorities of the local governments	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.
Continue implementation of the adopted Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.
Pursue finding for additional pedestrian facilities to include sidewalks, trails, and river crossings	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.
Support ongoing capital improvements at County Airport	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.

**Report of Accomplishments  
City of Ellijay Short Term Work Program 2008-2012**

ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped.
		complete	underway	postponed	dropped	
Continue to expand the streetscape program	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.
Working with the new Historic Preservation Commission and the established Historic District, continue working on design guidelines that will protect the historic fabric of downtown Ellijay	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.
Hold annual, biannual, or quarterly joint planning meetings of the local governments, authorities, boards, and agencies as needed to improve communications and coordination.	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.
Implement the programs of the adopted Long-Range Transportation Plan in concert with the priorities of the local governments	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.
Continue implementation of the adopted Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.
Pursue funding for additional pedestrian facilities to include sidewalks, trails, and river crossings (i.e. park improvements)	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.
Advocate for Blue Ridge Scenic Railroad Excursions to Ellijay	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.

**Report of Accomplishments**  
**City of East Ellijay Short-Term Work Program 2008-2012**

ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped.
		complete	underway	postponed	dropped	
Hold annual, biannual, or quarterly joint planning meetings of the local governments, authorities, boards, and agencies as needed to improve communications and coordination.	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.
Implement the programs of the adopted Long-Range Transportation Plan in concert with the priorities of the local governments	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.
Continue implementation of the adopted Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan	2008-2012		X			This is an ongoing activity.

## C. 2009 – 2013 SHORT TERM WORK PROGRAMS

### Gilmer County Short-Term Work Program 2009-2013

Project or Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Acquire and develop new parks and open space	X	X	X	X	X	Gilmer County	\$200,000 - \$400,000	General Fund, Grants
Advocate for the Coosawattee Watershed Alliance	X	X	X	X	X	Gilmer County, NGRDC	n/a	n/a
Support the planning efforts of the Coosawattee Regional Water and Sewer Authority	X	X	X	X	X	Water and Sewer Authority	n/a	n/a
Construct three satellite fire stations	X					Gilmer County	\$500K ea	General Fund
Construct three additional EMS stations	X					Gilmer County	\$100K ea	General Fund
Prepare and implement a Parks and Recreation Master Plan	X	X	X	X	X	Gilmer County Recreation Department	staff time	General Fund, Grants
Develop one satellite park	X	X				Gilmer County	\$1,000,000	General Fund, Grants, User Fees
Seek grant funding for recreation projects as appropriate.	X	X	X	X	X	Gilmer County	staff time	n/a
Complete the new County Courthouse	X					Gilmer County	\$7,500,000	SPLOST
Build a new Chamber of Commerce facility			X			Chamber, Gilmer County, Ellijay, East Ellijay	\$250,000 (variable)	General Fund, Grants
Hold annual, biannual, or joint planning meetings of the local governments, authorities, boards, and agencies as needed to improve communication and coordination.	X	X	X	X	X	Gilmer County, Ellijay, East Ellijay, EDA, W&SA	staff time	n/a
Implement the programs of the adopted Long-Range Transportation Plan in concert with the priorities of the local governments.	X	X	X	X	X	Gilmer County, Ellijay, East Ellijay	variable	General Fund, State/Federal funds
Continue implementation of the adopted Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.	X	X	X	X	X	Gilmer County, Ellijay, East Ellijay	staff time; variable	Recreational Trails Program
Pursue funding for additional pedestrian facilities to include sidewalks, trails, and river crossings.	X	X	X	X	X	Gilmer County, Ellijay	staff time; variable	Grants
Support ongoing capital improvements at County Airport.	X	X	X	X	X	Gilmer County	\$3,000,000	General Fund, Grants
Assist the North Georgia Regional Development Center in implementing the neighborhood stabilization grant.	X	X				Gilmer County, Ellijay, East Ellijay, NGRDC	staff time	n/a
Cooperate with the Georgia Chapter of the Trail of Tears in research, public education, and the development of a guidebook, a brochure, and/or a driving tour.	X	X	X	X	X	GA Trail of Tears, Gilmer County, City of Ellijay	staff time	n/a

### City of Ellijay Short-Term Work Program 2009-2013

Project or Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Continue to expand the streetscape program	X	X	X	X	X	Ellijay	unknown	Grants, General Fund
Working with the Historic Preservation Commission and the established Historic District, continue working on design guidelines that will protect the historic fabric of downtown Ellijay	X	X	X	X	X	Ellijay	staff time	n/a
Hold annual, biannual, or quarterly joint planning meetings of the local governments, authorities, boards, and agencies as needed to improve communications and coordination.	X	X	X	X	X	Gilmer County, Ellijay, East Ellijay, EDA, W&SA	staff time	n/a
Implement the programs of the adopted Long-Range Transportation Plan in concert with the priorities of the local governments.	X	X	X	X	X	Gilmer County, Ellijay, East Ellijay	variable	General Fund, State/Federal Funds
Continue implementation of the adopted Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.	X	X	X	X	X	Gilmer County, Ellijay, East Ellijay	staff time; variable	Recreational Trails Program
Pursue funding for additional pedestrian facilities to include sidewalks, trails, and river crossings (i.e. park improvements).	X	X	X	X	X	Gilmer County, Ellijay	staff time; variable	Grant funds
Advocate for Blue Ridge Scenic Railroad Excursions to Ellijay.	X	X	X	X	X	Ellijay, DEMA	staff time	n/a
Assist the North Georgia Regional Development Center in implementing the neighborhood stabilization grant.	X	X				Gilmer County, Ellijay, East Ellijay, NGRDC	staff time	n/a
Develop the City Park off Old Highway 5 North.	X	X	X	X	X	Ellijay	variable	Grants, Private Donations
Cooperate with the Georgia Chapter of the Trail of Tears in research, public education, and the development of a guidebook, a brochure, and/or a driving tour.	X	X	X	X	X	GA Trail of Tears, Gilmer County, Ellijay	staff time	n/a
Build a new Chamber of Commerce facility			X			Chamber, Gilmer County, Ellijay, East Ellijay	\$250,000 (variable)	General Fund, Grants
Investigate ways to protect the integrity and appearance of the historic City Cemetery.	X	X	X	X	X	Historic Preservation Commission	staff time	n/a

**City of East Ellijay Short-Term Work Program 2009-2013**

<b>Project or Activity</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Cost Estimate</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>
Hold annual, biannual, or quarterly joint planning meetings of the local government authorities, boards, and agencies as needed to improve communications and coordination.	X	X	X	X	X	Gilmer County, Ellijay, East Ellijay, EDA, W&SA	staff time	n/a
Implement the programs of the adopted Long-Range Transportation Plan in concert with the priorities of the local governments	X	X	X	X	X	Gilmer County, Ellijay, East Ellijay	variable	General Fund; State/Federal Funds
Continue implementation of the adopted Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan	X	X	X	X	X	Gilmer County, Ellijay, East Ellijay	staff time	Recreational Trails Program
Assist the North Georgia Regional Development Center in implementing the neighborhood stabilization grant.	X	X				Gilmer County, Ellijay, East Ellijay, NGRDC	staff time	n/a
Build a new Chamber of Commerce facility			X			Chamber, Gilmer County, Ellijay, East Ellijay	\$250,000 (variable)	General Fund, Grants