PICKENS COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

2018-2028

Including the Cities of Jasper, Nelson, and Talking Rock

Plan Prepared By: The Northwest Georgia Regional Commission

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ACKNOWLEGEMENTS

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Mayor

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CITY OF NELSON

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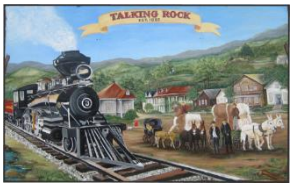

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INTRODUCTION

Pickens County and the Cities of Jasper, Nelson, and Talking Rock have joined together in an effort to meet the challenges ahead, working together with their citizens, elected officials, professional staff, business leaders, and property owners to prepare the *Pickens County Joint Comprehensive Plan Update 2018-2023.*

WHY WE PLAN

Comprehensive planning is an important management tool for promoting a strong, healthy community. A Comprehensive Plan provides a vision, shared by all, that describes the future of the community. It protects private property rights and also encourages and supports economic development. The plan can be used to promote orderly and rational development so that Pickens County and the cities of Jasper, Nelson, and Talking Rock can remain physically attractive and economically viable while preserving important natural and historic resources. The comprehensive plan provides the tool to become more confident about where development will occur, what it will be like, when it will happen, and how the costs of development will be met. Planning also helps the County and its municipalities invest their money wisely in infrastructure such as roads, water and sewer, schools, parks and green space, and other facilities to maintain and improve the quality of life for the residents of Pickens County.

PURPOSE

The Comprehensive Plan represents the community's vision, goals, key needs and opportunities that the community intends to address, and an action plan highlighting the necessary tools for implementing the comprehensive plan. In addition, it outlines

COMMUNITY SNAPSHOT

JOINT Needs & Opportunities

- Job Growth and diversity
- Downtown revitalization
- Increase Utilities Service

Population Trends

Area	1990	2000	2014
Pickens County	14,510	23,359	29,997
Jasper	1,991	2,548	3,744
Nelson	470	653	1,342
Talking Rock	62	65	65

Source: U.S. Census 1990-2014

Population Projection

	2015	2020	2025	2030
Pickens	30,218	31,781	33,262	34,610

Source: Governor's Office of Planning and Budget

Figure 1: Wordle created from the Community Survey asking citizens how they would describe Pickens County

desired development patterns and supporting land uses with a future development map for unincorporated Pickens County and the municipalities of Jasper, Nelson, and Talking Rock. The Comprehensive Plan serves the purpose of meeting the intent of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," as established on March 1, 2014. Preparation in accordance with these standards is an essential requirement in maintaining status as a Qualified Local Government. State law requires Pickens County and its municipalities to update their respective comprehensive plans by June 30, 2018. This plan fully updates the *Pickens County Comprehensive Plan 2008-2028* adopted in 2013 by the Pickens County Board of Commissioners and the mayors and city councils of Jasper, Nelson, and Talking Rock. Like the 2013 plan, this 2018 update will serve as the official comprehensive plan for unincorporated Pickens County and the municipalities of Jasper, Nelson, and Talking Rock.

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION AND INVOLVEMENT

Creating a functional comprehensive plan begins with defining a common vision for the future development of the community. A community vision is the overall image of what the community wants to be and how it wants to look at some point in the future. It is the starting point for creating a plan and actions to implement the plan. A successful visioning process requires meaningful participation from a wide range of community stakeholders.

PAGE 4A PICKENS COUNTY PROGRESS THURSDAY, APRIL 27, 2017

Public wanted at county planning session

By Angela Reinhardt
Staff writer
areinhardt@pickensprogress.com

Members of the public are invited to the kickoff meeting for an update to a state-mandated plan intended to be a "vision statement" for county.

The Pickens County Joint Comprehensive Plan must be completely revised every 10 years, and updated every five years. The last update was in 2013.

Pickens County Planning & Development Director Richard Osborne said, "This is a locally, citizen-driven plan. We want business owners, farmers, residents to be involved, and they can be involved in the area of their interest. Say you're interested in downtown Jasper, you can focus on that."

Similar to the comprehensive plan adopted in 2008 and revised in 2013, there are separate sections for Jasper, Nelson, Talking Rock; unincorporated communities like Blaine, Hinton, and Tate; developments like Bent Tree and Big Canoe; as well as larger areas like conservation areas in the east or agricultural areas in the west, depending on what community residents, property owners, and others want.

Elected officials from Pickens County, and from the cities of Nelson, Talking Rock and Jasper, have been invited and are crucial to the process, he added.

"This plan is a general vision for the future," Osborne said. "It's one big document but it has many parts. It's not just for the county [government]. It's not one-size fits all. Down the road elected officials can use it in the decision-making process. It serves as a foundation for those decisions."

Osborne said the plan could impact issues like zoning, emergency management planning, the county's code of ordinances, and public safety.

The first public discussion meeting for the Pickens County Joint Comprehensive Plan will be on Tuesday, May 2 at 6 p.m. at the Pickens County Administration Building at 1266 E. Church Street, Jasper.

A representative from Northwest Georgia Regional Commission (NWGRC) will do all coordination during the process and work with local government staff members, elected officials, citizens, business owners to make the update, which is not expected to be completed until next year. There are no additional costs to taxpayers for this service.

"This is a nine-month process," Osborne said. "This is just the kickoff meeting and there will be plenty of opportunities in the future for people to get involved. This will not be finalized until early 2018."

The comprehensive plan update must be recommended for approval by NWGRC and the Department of Community Affairs and approved by all local jurisdictions on or before June 30, 2018. The draft must be ready by March 2018.

During the first public hearing, the NWGRC representative will give an overview of the process, as well as goals and objectives. Elements of long-range planning that must be included in the plan are community goals, needs and opportunities, the community work program, and land use. Optional elements of the plan are economic development, housing, and transportation.

"Each element of the plan is developed with public participation," Osborne said in an email. "Critical to development of the plan is having a good steering/stakeholder committee.

Throughout the process, the public can contact Ethan Calhoun with NWGRC at ecalhoun@nwgrc.org.

Figure 2: Article written and published by the Pickens County Progress

Pickens County residents, property owners, business owners and other stakeholders contributed to the production of the *Comprehensive Plan*. Due to the participation involved in the process, the *Comprehensive Plan* should generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of the county and each city encouraging citizens to remain engaged in the development process in order to ensure that each local government implements the plan.

PUBLIC HEARINGS

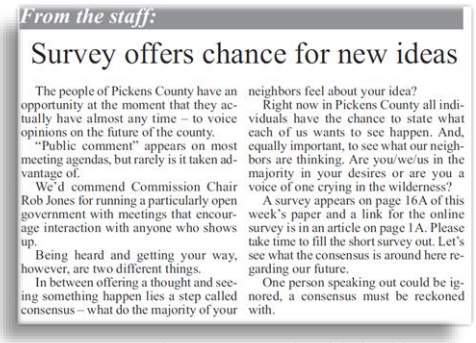
The initial public hearing was held at the Pickens County Commissioner's chambers in the City of Jasper on May 2, 2017 and was very well attended. Several articles were published in the local paper to ensure public awareness of the plan and process as well as the understanding that public input is not only preferred but, in fact, a keystone in creating an effective plan. The second and final public hearing was held at the same location on Monday April 30, 2018.

Figure 3: The initial public hearing in Jasper May, 2017

COMMUNITY SURVEY

Immediately following the initial public hearing the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission worked with Pickens County planning officials to create a brief community survey in order to gather initial information prior to the initial stakeholder meeting. The survey, once created, was uploaded to the internet via a smartphone friendly survey software and, easy to use hyperlinks were posted on several local government websites and social media accounts. A custom URL was created and posted in the local newspaper along with a hard copy of the survey which citizens could fill out and mail-in. Email blasts were also used to promote the survey which remained online for approximately one month. Once the survey was halted and the response data was processed the planners were pleased to see that 734 surveys had been completed. The results generated from this survey process can be found in Appendix A.

Figure 4: Fourth joint Stakeholder meeting in Jasper



From the staff:

Survey offers chance for new ideas

The people of Pickens County have an opportunity at the moment that they actually have almost any time – to voice opinions on the future of the county.

"Public comment" appears on most meeting agendas, but rarely is it taken advantage of.

We'd commend Commission Chair Rob Jones for running a particularly open government with meetings that encourage interaction with anyone who shows up.

Being heard and getting your way, however, are two different things.

In between offering a thought and seeing something happen lies a step called consensus – what do the majority of your neighbors feel about your idea?

Right now in Pickens County all individuals have the chance to state what each of us wants to see happen. And, equally important, to see what our neighbors are thinking. Are you/we/us in the majority in your desires or are you a voice of one crying in the wilderness?

A survey appears on page 16A of this week's paper and a link for the online survey is in an article on page 1A. Please take time to fill the short survey out. Let's see what the consensus is around here regarding our future.

One person speaking out could be ignored, a consensus must be reckoned with.

Figure 5: Article written and published by the Pickens County Progress

Should city and county combine water/sewage systems?

Some say joint services would improve efficiency; Others say if it's not broke, don't try to fix it

By Dan Pool
Editor
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Should the city of Jasper and Pickens County combine resources to form a joint water/sewage authority?

That question was the key discussion point of the Comprehensive Planning Session December 12th at the County Admin building. The comprehensive plan update is required in all Georgia counties on a regular basis. Pickens is expected to begin drafting a revision to the current plan early next year to submit to the state by summer of 2018.

For the discussion among the 30 or so citizens and employees of city governments and Pickens County, the idea of a joint water/sewage authority provoked an array of differing opinions.

Clayton Preble, who is on the county planning commission but was speaking as part of a citizen study group, presented some basics on authorities and sought to get a consensus that the idea of a joint operation merits further consideration. He got that, but clearly not universal approval among those at the meeting.

Preble worked with Roger Schultz and Don House to gather and present some basic information on authorities. He stated that none of their group has any interest in an

See Merger on 12A

Clayton Preble, standing, and Roger Schultz, seated to his right, lead a discussion on merging some operations of the county and city at a planning meeting last week.

Figure 6: Article written and published by the Pickens County Progress

STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

Each government appointed members from their locality who displayed the leadership, ambition, and visionary capabilities to guide the community towards a mutual destination. These community stakeholders develop symbiotic relationships that will create not only a document but also a vested interest in the plans successful administration. Pickens County and the municipalities of Jasper, Nelson, and Talking Rock appointed a diverse group of community leaders who volunteered to attend bi-monthly scheduled meetings at the Pickens County administration building in the City of Jasper.

Figure 7: Joint Stakeholder's Meeting in Jasper

Pickens County Joint Comprehensive Plan Input Results

Summary data of input from residents / property owners / business owners / others
May 2017 to January 2018
Results from 2017 survey (743 responses); stakeholders mtgs (4); numerous individual emails/phone calls/face-to-face discussions

TOPIC OF INTEREST	MAJORITY VIEW	SIGNIFICANT MINORITY VIEW
Contributing factors to	Scenic views and natural wildlife	Friendly neighbors
Pickens area quality of life	Overall safe place to live	Outdoor activities (hunting, fishing, hiking)
	Small town atmosphere	Good fire, police, EMS protection
Factors holding back	Lack of entertainment for all ages	Population increasing too rapidly
Pickens area from having	Lack of career opportunities	Too much traffic
an exceptional quality of life	Lack of local stores and restaurants	Loss of natural scenic character
Where you would take	Burnt Mountain / overlook / scenic spots	Woodbridge Inn restaurant
out-of-town visitors	Downtown Jasper	61 Main restaurant
	Downtown Talking Rock	Tate House
Projects you would support	Invest in the downtowns	Improve public education
to improve the Pickens area	Improve public parks	Improve transportation infrastructure
	Recruit more local businesses	Increase & improve water & sewer infrastructure
Economic Development	Promote quality jobs - mostly retail/service here	Technical college, if improved, could help development
	Promote flexibility/openness to diversified businesses	Options for alcohol-related businesses not fully utilized
	(agri-business; tourism; industrial; institutional)	Perception that it may be difficult to do business here
	Promote development based on assets/resources	Proximity to ATL has goods/bads (fairly close to jobs and
	(airport, hospital, hwy515, railroad, safe place, schools)	retail/services/restaurants but dollars spent out of town)
	Promote area as senior retirement destination	Promote area as a less regulated, more conservative, safe,
	Promote full-service community with adequate	patriotic alternative to many Metro ATL communities
	jobs, entertainment, parks, schools	Inferior broadband/telecom coverage discourages devt
	Consider holistic approach to having all necessary	Improve Gateway to Jasper along W. Church St
	infrastructure in place to promote commercial growth	Develop a new light industrial park & promote manuf.
		Adopt architectural control standards, especially Jasper

Figure 8: Exert drafted from input gathered during the previous four joint stakeholder meetings presented at fifth joint stakeholder meeting

JOINT COMMUNITY GOALS

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

COMMUNITY-WIDE VISION

The Community Vision section paints a picture of what Pickens County desires to become and provides complete descriptions of the development patterns envisioned. This section begins with the vision statement for Pickens County and our municipalities along with action steps and guiding policies. Each jurisdiction within the county will have more specific goals related to their land use section that includes the Future Development Map with supporting character area descriptions.

Figure 9: Wordle created from community survey asking citizens what they would like Pickens County to be like in twenty years

VISION STATEMENT

Pickens County and our municipalities are a proud and vibrant community that work to promote sustainability and self-sufficiency. We embrace our history while coming together as a community to promote economic growth and development, protect our natural and cultural resources, and build a successful future for our children through actions listed below:

Economic Development

- Actively promote and pursue new and innovative businesses to diversify and strengthen our local economy, while simultaneously investing in and retaining a high quality environment for our existing businesses

Housing

- Promoting a diversified housing stock for our current and future residents of all socioeconomic tiers while protecting the character of existing neighborhoods from inappropriate development

- Encourage infill housing within unfinished residential developments as well as neighborhood revitalization especially in areas where blighted properties are common

Transportation

- Providing a variety of walkable neighborhoods with sidewalks, greenway trails, and bike lanes in appropriate locations

- An inclusive community that offers a variety of public transportation opportunities for its residents, with special attention given to those disadvantaged by age, income, or special needs

Natural and Cultural Resources

- Embrace our history by supporting the preservation of historic resources and neighborhoods for the coming generations to enjoy

Figure 10: Historic Tate Mansion in Pickens County

- Strongly enforce codes and ordinances to ensure our community remains clean, comfortable, nice, peaceful, and most of all family-friendly

Figure 11: Grandview Lake in Pickens County

- Continue to support our technical college that, through its attractive programs and an enriching educational environment, produces a skilled workforce for our community and region

Community Facilities and Services

- Become community rich with neighborhood parks and trail systems that provide recreational opportunities for our residents and visitors

Figure 12: Pickens County Fire Department's Yellow Creek Fire Station

- Research and pursue resources related to water and sewer service areas to better plan for needed expansions regarding service areas or system capacity where it is found to be feasible and prudent

Land Use

- Guiding future development with informed land use plans that take into account the protection of our natural resources, reduce sprawling development, and determine where future growth is or is not suitable by considering the Smart Growth goals below:

Healthier, Safer Communities

A central goal is to improve the quality of neighborhoods where we live. Our efforts will make our communities healthier, safer, more convenient, more attractive, and more affordable.

Protecting the Environment

Neighborhoods designed to reduce our dependence on automobiles also reduce our impact on the environment. By creating streetscapes that encourage walking and biking, we create opportunities for individuals to reduce their carbon footprint. Reducing environmental impacts may also occur through promotion of recycling throughout the community and strong enforcement of best management practices for erosion and sedimentation control.

Better Access, Less Traffic

Mixing land uses, clustering development, and providing multiple transportation choices helps us to encourage healthier lifestyles, manage congestion, pollute less, and save energy.

Thriving Cities, Suburbs, and Towns

By guiding development to areas already served by water and/or sewer service, we maximize our investments in transportation, schools, libraries, and other public services. Our public dollars can serve the community where people live today.

Shared Benefits

Building a comprehensive transportation system and locating jobs and accessible housing within reach of each other expands opportunities for all income levels.

Lower Costs, Lower Taxes

Taking advantage of existing infrastructure keeps taxes down. Convenient transportation choices also reduce our household transportation costs, leaving families with more money for other needs.

Keeping Open Space Open

Protecting our natural resources creates healthier air and cleaner drinking water. From forests and farms to wetlands and wildlife, let us pass on to our children the landscapes we love.

JOINT POLICIES

Policies are adopted to provide ongoing guidance and direction to local officials. They provide a basis for making decisions in implementing the comprehensive plan, including achieving the Community Vision and appropriately addressing the Community's Needs and Opportunities.

These policies have been reviewed and approved by Pickens County and each of the municipalities: City of Jasper, City of Nelson, and Town of Talking Rock.

1. Economic Development

1. Pickens County and its cities will support an on-going, coordinated economic development program resulting in a diversified economic base, which will raise income levels.

2. We will encourage re-investment in older, declining commercial corridors.

3. We will support and assist existing businesses and industries to grow and expand in the county and cities.

4. We will enhance the historical, aesthetic, and economic vitality of our downtowns and other existing commercial areas to create a unique atmosphere for shopping, entertainment and cultural activities.

5. We will support the development and promotion of tourism opportunities that utilize our mountain resources, marble mining heritage, and other historic events and places.

2. Housing

1. We will support affordable housing opportunities to ensure that all those who work in the community have a viable option to live here.

2. We will stimulate infill housing development in existing neighborhoods.

3. We will encourage development of housing opportunities that enable residents to live close to their places of employment.

4. We will support the development of housing opportunities and choices that allow people upward mobility from rental dependence to home-ownership.

5. We will support opportunities for "aging in place" and other housing needs.

3. Infrastructure and Facilities

1. We will continuously plan and develop an adequate and economical supply of water and sewer service to meet the growth and development needs of the county and incorporated areas.

2. We will continually evaluate public water and sewer service demands, and program system improvements in areas of the county and cities where development is planned.

3. We will support the development of private wastewater treatment facilities in planned communities where appropriate.

5. We will ensure that new development does not cause a decline in existing levels of service for the community's residents and employers.

6. We will limit development within the county to areas that can be reasonably served by public infrastructure.

7. We will ensure that public facilities and services needed to accommodate future development are provided concurrent with new development.

8. We will coordinate the provision of public facilities and services with land use planning to promote more compact nodal development in areas identified on the Future Development Map.

9. We will consider and support all alternative finance mechanisms (impact fees, special improvement districts, SPLOST, grants, etc.) necessary to provide needed public infrastructure and services.

10. We will support the development of neighborhood parks as well as larger county parks.

11. We will continually evaluate fire protection needs and program system improvements where needed.

4. Transportation

1. We will continually improve the transportation system to provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods within the county and cities and with adjoining counties.

2. We will target transportation improvements to support desired development patterns for the community (recognizing that ready availability of transportation creates demand for and development in adjacent areas.)

3. We will design and reconstruct roadways using context sensitive design considerations that enhance community aesthetics and minimize impacts on the environment and our historic resources.

4. We will plan our new and/or reconstructed roadways to include consideration of multiple functions, including pedestrian facilities, parking, bicycle routes, public transit (if applicable) as well as local vehicular circulation.

5. We will promote connectivity of our road network (such as fostering a grid network of streets, multiple connections between subdivisions) in the non-rural areas of the county.

6. We support the creation of a community-wide greenway or multi-use path network for pedestrians and cyclists.

5. Natural and Cultural Resources

1. We will support Federal and State protection measures that preserve water quality and endangered species habitat.

2. We will encourage the preservation of fragile mountain ecology and scenic views.

3. We will ensure safe and adequate water supplies through protection of ground and surface water resources.

4. We will promote the benefits of open space and tree preservation in all developments.

5. We will support the preservation of important historic resources in the county.

6. Land Development

We will embrace the following Smart Growth Goals and Principles for shaping our land use and development activity.

Principles

Our Smart Growth goals will be implemented via the following principles.

1. Provide a variety of transportation choices.
2. Mix land uses.
3. Create a range of housing opportunities and choices.
4. Create walkable neighborhoods.
5. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration.
6. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place.
7. Make development decisions predictable, fair and cost effective.
8. Preserve Open Space, farmland, natural beauty and critical environmental areas.
9. Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities.
10. Take advantage of compact building design and efficient infrastructure design.

7. Intergovernmental Coordination

1. We will seek opportunities to share services and facilities with neighboring jurisdictions when mutually beneficial.

2. We will work jointly with neighboring jurisdictions to develop solutions on multi-jurisdictional issues such as watershed protection, stormwater management and environmental protection.

3. We will share information with other jurisdictions when making decisions that are likely to impact them.

4. We will provide input to other jurisdictions when they are making decisions that are likely to impact our jurisdictions.

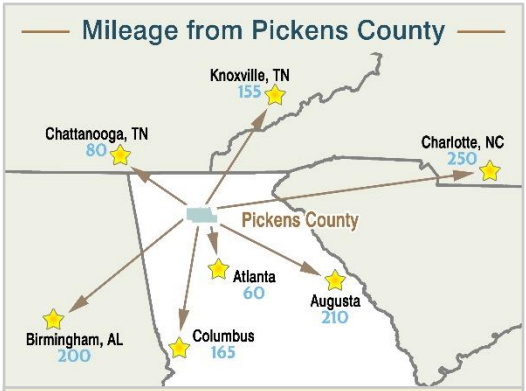
5. We will coordinate with the Pickens County Board of Education in regard to decisions to build new school facilities and the use of schools as community facilities.

6. Local public safety officials will work cooperatively with E.M.A staff to administer the Pickens Hazard Mitigation Plan 2013. The Emergency Management Agency (E.M.A.) is the local arm of Federal Emergency Management Agency (F.E.M.A.) and Georgia Emergency Management Agency (G.E.M.A.) each of which are part of the Office of Homeland Security.

PICKENS COUNTY OVERVIEW

Geography

Pickens County is conveniently located less than an hour from downtown Atlanta on the Interstate 575/Highway 515 corridor and located in the foothills, of the Appalachians. The three incorporated cities of Jasper, Nelson, and Talking Rock along with several unincorporated communities such as Tate, Marble Hill, and Hinton are also located within Pickens County. The County was created by land derived from Cherokee and Gilmer Counties.



Geography

Total Area: 233 square miles

Highest elevation: The 3,288 foot summit of Mount Oglethorpe, the southernmost peak in the Blue Ridge Mountains and, for a number of years, the southern terminus of the Appalachian Trail. Other notable peaks: Sharp Top Mountain and Sharp Mountain. One of the best viewpoints of Sharp Top Mountain is from Grandview Lake Dam on Grandview Road.

Source: Pickens County Government Website

History

Pickens County, founded in 1853, is a community rich in history ranging from the Cherokee Indians to the Industrial Revolution and much more. Although it was named after Andrew Pickens, a Revolutionary War hero, Pickens County's history primarily revolves around the marble industry and railway. The county sits on a sea of the sought after stone, most of it Georgia white, but also some rare pink Etowah marble. The mining of this marble has been occurring in Pickens County since the 1830's, supplying it for the Lincoln Memorial, the U.S. Capitol Building, and still today for tombstones for the U.S. Military, as well as for use in pharmaceuticals, agriculture, cosmetics, and other properties. Marble has been the building material of choice for structures in the county, as well, such as the historic Tate House, the Pickens County Courthouse, and the historic Tate Elementary School, the only school in the U.S. built of marble.

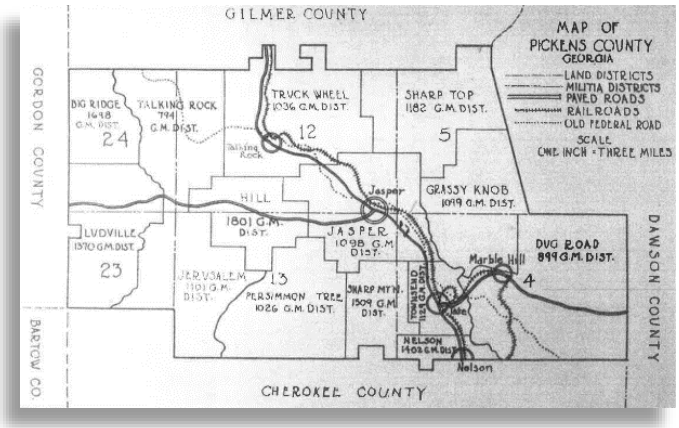


Figure 13: Historic map of Pickens County

Educational Assets

Pickens County boasts strong community assets such as its healthcare systems and award-winning public schools. The nation's Head Start program was, in fact, pioneered here in Pickens County. Upon graduation, students may learn employable skills at Chattahoochee Technical College's Appalachian campus in Jasper, or go just a few miles away to earn college degrees at such quality institutions as Reinhardt University or the University of North Georgia.

Figure 14: Chattahoochee Tech located in Jasper, Photo courtesy of Pickens Chamber of Commerce

Healthcare System

Piedmont Mountainside Hospital anchors the area's healthcare systems and contributes to the community's focus on wellness. Pickens County ranks as the 32 healthiest of Georgia's 159 counties by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's County Health Rankings for 2017. Pickens County residents are also served by the Pickens County Health Department, which ensures that even the neediest citizens can receive quality, low cost or no cost healthcare.

Figure 15: Piedmont Mountainside Hospital

Other Community Amenities

Although much of Pickens County would be classified as rural character, great places to shop, dine, and lodge can be found with only a brief commute. Social events and festivals such as *Jeep Fest* and the *Marble Fest* tend to draw rather large crowds from around the region and state. Given the abundance of natural land in Pickens County there are many locations that provide great locations for passive recreation opportunities to hike, bike, camp, and fish.

Figure 16: Marble Fest in Downtown Jasper, Photo courtesy of Pickens County Chamber of Commerce

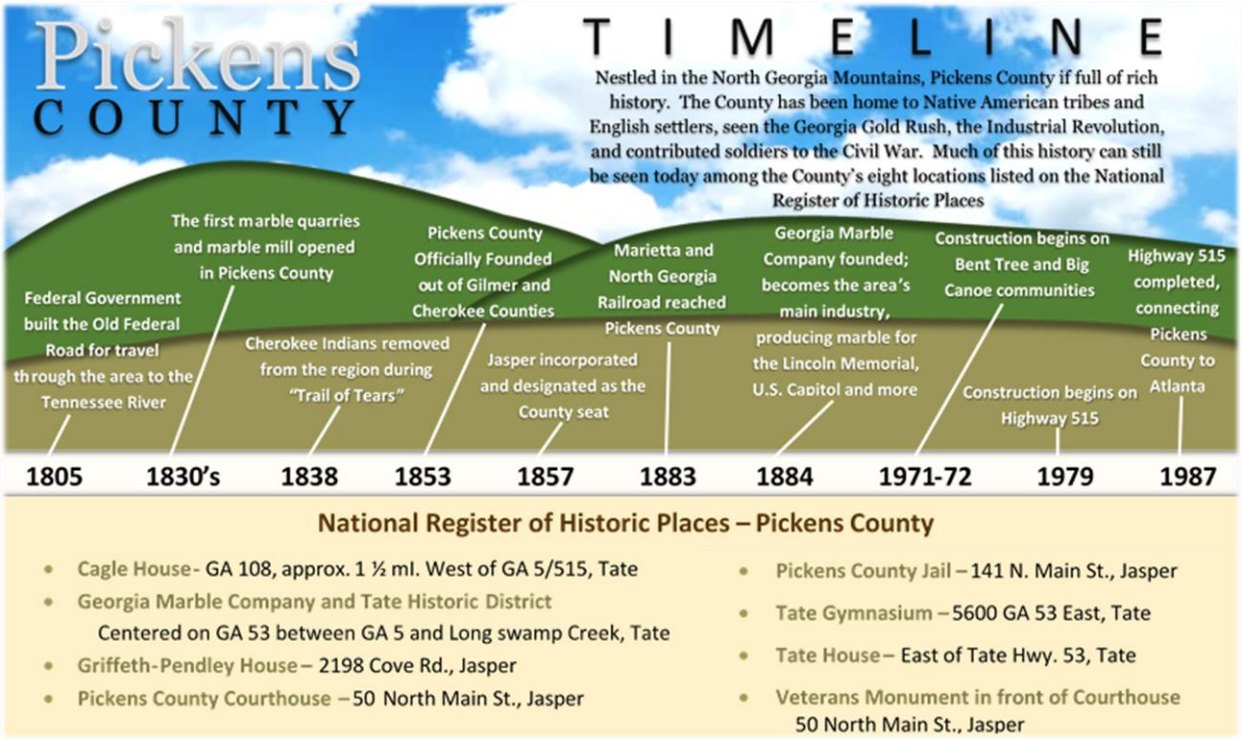


Figure 17: A timeline of significant events relevant to Pickens County

Figure 18: Photo from inside Blue Ridge Marble Co. in Nelson. Photo courtesy of Pickens County Marble Museum

Figure 19: Historic Tate Train Depot, recently restored and relocated

LAND USE IN PICKENS COUNTY

Summary of Land Use

The predominant land use throughout Pickens County continues to be rural in nature, which is due primarily to the lack of interstate access, mountainous terrain, current agricultural practices, and limited water and wastewater infrastructure. This overall rural character, however, is also the prevailing trait throughout the northwest Georgia region for many of the same reasons. Areas of greater population density throughout the county are mostly centralized within or surrounding Pickens' three municipalities due to infrastructure availability such as sewer and water. These areas of higher population density are also where commercial activity is typically focused. There are some unincorporated areas within the county that have been developed as large planned communities such as Big Canoe and Bent Tree which both display a concentrated density of residential development along with amenities to serve these private developments. Moderate population density and commercial land use can also be seen surrounding the County's arterial corridors like State Route 515, and Highways 108, 136, and 53. There are several crossroad communities throughout the county, although lacking incorporated status, display traits of a community center such as the Tate, Blaine, Marble Hill, and Hinton Communities. Commercial/industrial activity in Pickens County is generally seen along the primary corridors such as state highways 515, 108, 136, and 53.

Figure 20: View of Sandy Bottom Farms from the Tate Mansion

Figure 22: Vacant store near the City of Nelson

Figure 21: Imerys Marble processing plant in the Marble Hill Community

Figure 23: Panoramic view of Sharp Top Mountain in Pickens County

Land Use Analysis Methodology

This land use analysis relied heavily on GIS to identify and map current conditions, with a base map of the county's watersheds and ground water recharge areas sourced from the 2012 Northwest Georgia Regional Resource Plan map located in Appendix C. Development of land and provision of services via infrastructure are heavily influenced by the contour of the land which varies greatly throughout Pickens County's mountainous terrain. Wastewater and drinking water systems optimize downslope flow; land development is less expensive on flat land, a rare commodity in Pickens County; and central travel corridors often follow ridge lines. Arguably, the most significant challenge for Pickens County's future, not unlike state and global challenges, is the management of its water. As previously stated, access to drinking water will be a limiting factor on the county's growth while obligations to manage wastewater and stormwater can quickly become crippling government costs, passed along to businesses, residents, and tourists therefore making the county an expensive place to live and conduct business. The land use conversation revealed the need for continuing to direct future growth in areas already supplied with water and wastewater services, while encouraging future development to be impact conscious in its footprint and connections. In prioritizing new development on vacant lots already served by water and sewer and prioritizing redevelopment in both established residential and commercial centers, both county government and future residents benefit from cost savings while natural resource impacts are minimized. Unmanaged development patterns can also worsen traffic and erode natural amenities highly valued among residents. As a result, the following character areas reflect strategies which leverage existing infrastructure and established neighborhoods while accommodating growth in more natural or rural expanses through moderation and character specific approaches.

This Land Use Plan supports the Community's Smart Growth Goals identified previously:

- PROTECT AND PRESERVE NATURAL RESOURCES- Protecting the Environment
- TARGET GROWTH- Keeping Open Space Open
- LEVERAGE AND PROMOTE EXISTING AND NEW ASSETS- Thriving Cities, Suburbs, and Towns
- CREATE CONNECTIONS- Better Access, Less Traffic, and Shared Benefits
- MAINTAIN FISCAL VIABILITY- Lower Costs, Lower Taxes

Overview of Character Area Planning

The 2013 Comprehensive Plan used future development maps with character areas to describe and plan land use in the county. Character area planning combines form and function to define distinct areas in a community and move the community toward its vision. The goal is to identify overall patterns of development, not just individual land uses on a lot-by lot basis. A character area has unique characteristics, holds potential to develop into a unique area when given planning and guidance, or must be cared for in special ways because of its particular development issues. Character area planning gives consideration to geographical features, like floodplains and existing greenspace, when planning future development. The 2013 Comprehensive Plan also followed the Transect Model, where character areas run the gamut from the least developed, most rural area, "Greenspace/Conservation", to the most developed "Industrial" areas. Future development maps graphically guide managers in planning commercial, industrial, residential, and recreational development with the geography and existing land uses in mind.

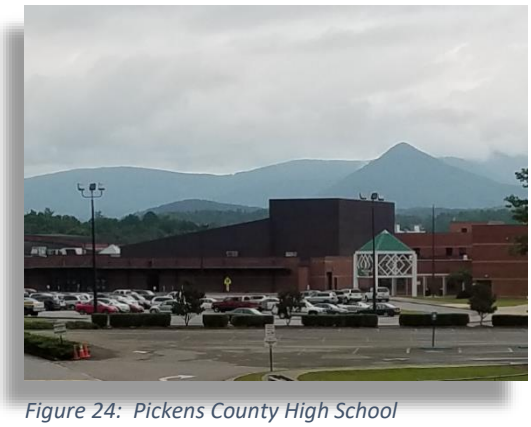
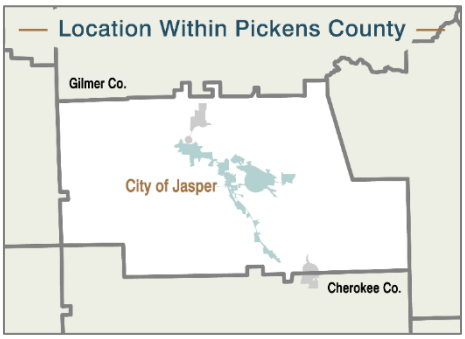


Figure 24: Pickens County High School

CITY OF JASPER OVERVIEW

Geography

Perched on a ridge a little east of the geographic center of Pickens County sets the City of Jasper. Since the City's humble beginnings it has expanded its boundaries immensely. This growth is primarily attributed to the commercial and industrial development made possible by the railway and more recently State Route 515. Due to Jasper's placement on the ridge, one can enjoy a view of the surrounding mountains from almost anywhere inside the city.



History

The City of Jasper, founded in 1857 as the County's seat, was named after the Revolutionary War hero Sergeant William Jasper. As with most historically thriving communities, the railroad brought with it an opportunity for commerce that had not previously existed. The railroad was the City's conduit for importing equipment and supplies as well as exporting the heavy marble products from the County's mines and milling operations. Being the county seat, Jasper became the central business district within Pickens County facilitating both commercial and residential development. Jasper's overall growth can be most attributed to the creation and capacity of its water and sewer utilities. As the use of the railroads decreased in recent decades, creation of the Appalachian Regional Highway (State Route 515) has allowed economic prosperity to continue in the City of Jasper.

Figure 25: Historic Kirby-Quinton Cabin restored and relocated to downtown Jasper

Figure 26: Fully Functional Historic Jasper Water Tower

Other Community Amenities

Jasper is by far the largest and most dynamic city within Pickens County boasting a busy historic downtown, diverse residential housing stock, and ever-growing commercial corridor. Much of the growth and development in Jasper, as stated previously, was made possible by the City's water and sewer infrastructure. Being the County's seat Jasper is home to many of the previously mentioned assets such as Chattahoochee Technical College, Piedmont Mountainside Hospital, and the location of Marble Fest. Jasper also has several recreational assets such as its main city park located on Pioneer Road, Peace Park, and Lee Newton Park offering a pond, two playgrounds, obstacle course, grills, tennis courts, bathrooms and walking trails.

Figure 27: Jasper's City Park, located on Pioneer Road

Figure 28: Peace Park, located in downtown Jasper

LAND USE IN JASPER

Summary of Land Use

One will observe more diverse land use characteristics within the City of Jasper than anywhere else in Pickens County. This is not unusual given that Jasper is both the largest municipality within Pickens County as well as the County's seat. Land use character varies from the city's historic downtown, historic and modern residential neighborhoods, industrial, and modern "big box" commercial development along or near State Route 515. The City's ability to serve its citizens and land owners public water and wastewater utilities created opportunities for increased density and high intensity uses not found in most areas of the Pickens County. By promoting their utilities the City of Jasper has the ability to continue to increase its incorporated boundaries prudently as prospective development occurs. The analytic methodology and character area style of land use planning for the City of Jasper followed the same technique as noted in initial Pickens County section.

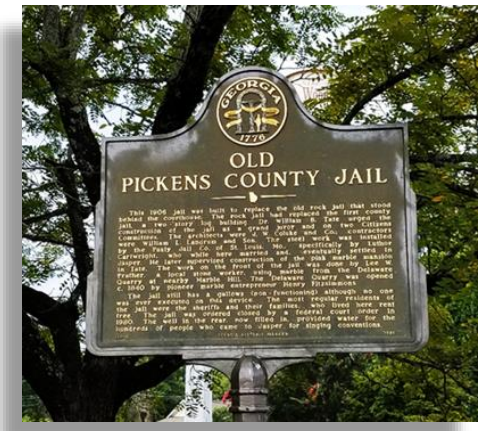
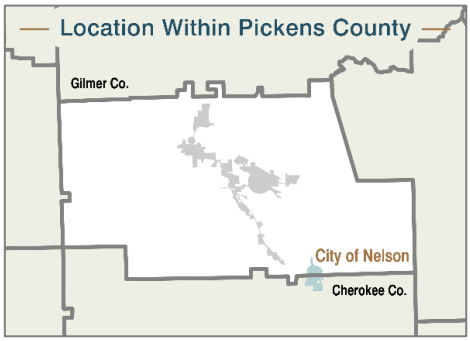


Figure 29: Historic Marker interpreting the Old Pickens County Jail in downtown Jasper

CITY OF NELSON OVERVIEW

Geography

Along Pickens County's southern border with Cherokee County the City of Nelson lies just east of center. The City's incorporated boundaries span beyond Pickens' borders into Cherokee County creating a dual jurisdictional city. South on old 5 lies the City of Ball Ground and North is unincorporated Tate. The North end of I-575 and South end of State Route 515 are at the County line just to the Southwest of Nelson.



History

The City of Nelson is named after John Nelson, early landowner, farmer, and rifle maker. Nelson is served through its downtown by the Georgia Northeastern Railroad, and by the former route of State Route 5 along its Main Street. A railroad line built in 1883 from Atlanta through the valleys and mountain passes of Pickens County to Tate and Nelson made possible the development of large marble quarries. One of the largest marble veins in the world is in Pickens County, running at least four miles long. It is a half-mile deep and almost that wide in places. Over 60 percent of the monuments in Washington D.C. are made from Pickens County marble milled here in Nelson. Many stone cutters and other workers who migrated from either Italy or Scotland in the early years of the industry settled in Nelson to work in the area's marble industry. Today, the Georgia Northeastern Railroad operates between Tate, and the CSX Interchange at Elizabeth (Marietta) five days a week. The Georgia Marble rail lines at Tate, Marble Hill, and the Blue Ridge Scenic Railroad at Blue Ridge, Georgia are also operated by GNRR.

Figure 30: Marble being shipped via rail from Blue Ridge Marble Co.

Truly an International City, Nelson was home to approximately 50 Italian families brought to Nelson by the Georgia Marble Company because of their skilled craftsmanship in marble carving and sculpting. They worked here side by side with other Nelson residents to craft some of the

most widely recognized structures in America, and even around the world today. Some of these include headstones at Arlington National Cemetery, the East front to the U.S. Capital Building, The Lincoln Memorial, the Russian Embassy, The New York Stock Exchange, The Federal Reserve Bank, and St. Peters Cathedral in the Loop Downtown Chicago. The Structural Division in Nelson was formed early in the industry's history to handle the many requests for structural marble. At the Nelson facility the marble was/is shaped into panels, columns, floor tiles and all special needs specified by the architect. The Structural Division has seen many architectural styles come and go over the past century, and can fabricate any type of design old or new.

Figure 31: Marble Lathe inside Blue Ridge Marble Co.

Other Notable Amenities

The City of Nelson's city park and baseball field, nature trail, and marble museum are currently its most notable amenities. The Marble Museum is located in the Nelson City Hall. The Museum includes a year-round exhibit of examples of fine marble and shows the history of marble mining in Pickens County. All historical photos included in this document were provided by the Nelson Marble Museum.

Figure 32: Exhibits on display inside the Pickens County Marble Museum and Nelson City Hall

Community Vision Statement

The City of Nelson will retain its traditional small community roots while continuing to evolve into a dynamic, active town adjacent to the fast-growing suburbs of Cherokee County by utilizing the following implementation strategies:

- Work with the Chamber of Commerce to promote a variety of commercial and industrial uses depending on location and demand.

Figure 33: City limits sign in Nelson

- Work cooperatively with Pickens County and Cherokee County officers to maintain a safe community with clean streets and properties and structurally sound residences. If desired, consider contracting with service providers for an increased level of code enforcement.
- Continually maintain and increase parks & recreation facilities as well as community center facilities.
- Work with Cherokee Water & Sewer Authority representatives to plan for continual maintenance and, where possible, upgrades to existing water lines.
- Plan for whether or not future annexations and rezonings for higher uses (residential to commercial or residential to industrial as examples) may be appropriate. Consider whether or not, depending on ability to install an adequate septic system, rezonings for increased residential density may be appropriate.
- Continually maintain and, where appropriate, add sidewalks throughout the community.

Figure 34: Nelson's nature trailhead

Figure 35: Baseball Field at Nelson's City Park

LAND USE IN NELSON

Summary of Land Use

Nelson is a small, rural community with city limits that extend from southern Pickens County into northern Cherokee County. Old Highway 5 runs north-south through Nelson and connects the city to Tate to the north and Ball Ground to the south. The downtown contains a few small commercial enterprises and a large marble stone processing plant, which dominates the downtown area. There are newer subdivision developments as well as older, deteriorating housing in the city. The city has no sewer services, and water is provided by the Cherokee County Water Authority. Public safety services are provided to Nelson through agreements with Pickens County and Cherokee County. The City constructed a new city hall in 2002. The city also owns a 7 acre park, which contains a ball field, playground, a multi-purpose court and walking trail. The analytic methodology and character area style of land use planning for the City of Nelson followed the same technique as noted in initial Pickens County section.

Figure 36: Georgia Marble Co. milling facility, located behind Nelson's City Hall

Development Patterns

The future development pattern should seek to:

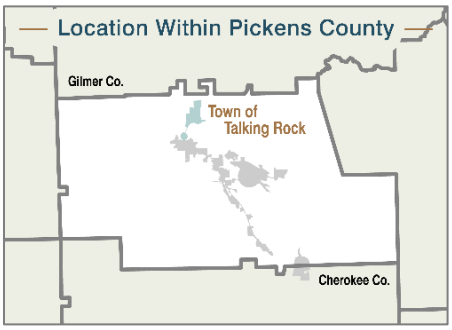
- Preserve the historical context of Nelson's early development and its association with the marble mining and processing industry.
- Increase commercial and industrial development along Old Highway 5.
- Improve the downtown area with improved sidewalks, street lighting, and other features.
- Increase and improve park and community center facilities in the city.
- Maintain a rural village atmosphere.

Figure 37: Nelson's City park playground

TOWN OF TALKING ROCK OVERVIEW

GEOGRAPHY

The Town of Talking Rock is nestled in the foothills of the North Georgia Mountains between the cities of Ellijay and Jasper in Pickens County. Happily, the third smallest town in the state of Georgia, Talking Rock has not changed much since its beginning in 1883, when the train was the lifeline of the town.



HISTORY

Talking Rock's history is rich with stories about the Trail of Tears, the Civil War, the railroad, and the Great Depression. The origination of the town's name is unclear and there are many interesting stories regarding its derivation. Some individuals believe that it's from the noise of the water rolling over the rocks in our beautiful creek, while others like the story of folks sitting for a spell on a rock to have a talk with a neighbor. Still others believe that the name originated with the local Indians. The railroad played a vital part in the lives of the residents by providing a source for shipping cotton grown in the community, mail delivery, and travel to other parts of the state. The once busy depot saw an average of four trains a day. In more recent years the town has purchased two historic rail cars which rest on a former spur track in front of the town hall and parallel to the modern railway. The town's plan is to restore the railcars with the purpose of interpreting historic transportation related to the town's history. The town's historic schoolhouse, seen in figure 39, has been restored and is now yet another asset to the vintage aesthetics of the town center.

Figure 39: Historic Talking Rock Schoolhouse

Figure 38: Hollyhocks Antiques on Hwy 136 in Talking Rock

Other Notable Amenities

While it may be lacking a bustling central business district the Town of Talking Rock's town center has several notable assets such as the general store, a landmark antique shop, and a large passive recreation park adjacent to Talking Rock Creek which draws individuals and families from across the area. Talking Rock is also the location of Heritage Days, an annual festival that draws an impressive crowd year after year.

Figure 40: Heritage Days 2016, Photo courtesy of the Pickens County Progress

Community Vision Statement

Talking Rock will remain a rural town that retains its historical characteristics. The downtown area, including the popular park along Talking Rock Creek, will continue to be a dynamic, scenic destination for residents and visitors by adhering to the following implementation strategies:

Figure 41: Historic caboose in Talking Rock's town center

- Work with property owners to improve the septic systems in the downtown area so that a greater range of businesses can thrive, including the potential for one or more restaurants.

- Work with the County Economic Development office Chamber of Commerce to continue to develop and promote tourism opportunities.

- Provide assistance to property owners to preserve and rehabilitate historical buildings.

- Develop and implement a streetscape plan (lighting, landscaping, sidewalks, pavilion or stage, etc.) in the downtown area to accommodate festivals and other events.

Figure 42: Bluegrass band performing during the Town's annual Heritage Days Festival

- Refurbish railroad cars for greater use as a tourist attraction.

- Support and promote positive community events at the park building, fire station, area churches, and other nearby facilities.

- Work cooperatively with business representatives and landowners for development and redevelopment for agri-business and agri-tourism in all areas of the community.
- Support and promote continual maintenance and expansion of the park.

- Support and promote redevelopment of properties near Talking Rock Creek while ensuring that actions are considerate of creek bank maintenance; stormwater best management practices; federally-designated floodplain areas; etc.

Figure 43: Talking Rock Creek bank erosion within the Town's park

Figure 44: Historic building along GA. Highway 136 in Talking Rock

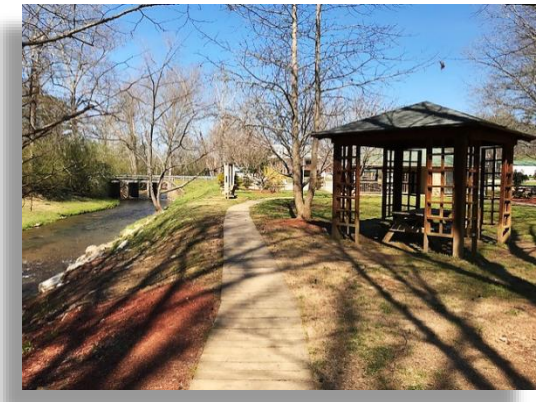


Figure 46: View of the extensive handicap accessible nature trail within the Town's park

Figure 45: Covered picnic area and sanitary facilities located in the town park

LAND USE IN TALKING ROCK

Land Use Summary

Figure 47: View of Talking Rock's town center from the rail crossing along GA. Highway 136

Talking Rock was once located on a major highway, but the modern primary arterial corridor State Highway 515 bypasses the town. An active rail line also passes through the town center. A small historical commercial district exists in the center of the town along State Highway 136. Several downtown buildings have been renovated and are now occupied by antique stores and other tourist oriented businesses. The town has been promoting its historical heritage and is seeing renewed interest in historic preservation development opportunities. Other land uses in the older sections of town include low density residential, public uses, and the town park. The park serves as a focal point and destination for residents and visitors to enjoy. Tourism-oriented businesses also operate in the nearby Talking Rock gateway intersection of Antioch Church Road and State Highway 136. The town is served by the Pickens County Water Authority, but Talking Rock lacks a centralized sewer system that would facilitate the town's desire for light commercial growth and sustainability opportunities.

Development Patterns

The future development pattern should seek to:

- Preserve the historical context of Talking Rock's early development.
- Maintain a rural village atmosphere with a clearly defined town center surrounded by low density residential uses and open space.

Figure 48: Business occupying historic structure in Talking Rock's town center along GA. Highway 136

CHARACTER AREAS

PICKENS COUNTY CHARACTER AREAS

ARTERIAL COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

Vision

A major transportation corridor, State Highway 515 and its surrounding parcels promote the free and efficient flow of traffic and goods and serve as an attractive gateway to Pickens County and the City of Jasper.

Narrative

State Highway 515 is the community's regional commercial corridor containing a mix of highway oriented businesses, large scale auto dealers, big box retailers, the Piedmont Mountainside hospital, multifamily residential, the county airport, and the Airport Technology Business Park. Future development adjacent to the hospital may include medical facilities, one or more hotels, senior care facilities, retail, and dining services. State Highway 515 provides an easy means of access to the area from surrounding communities whose inhabitants want to shop, dine or enjoy other amenities. The success of this area depends upon the ability of the city and county governments to cooperate and coordinate planning for this area. In this corridor, too, is the Pickens County Airport, located just west of the intersection of Highway 515 and Highway 53, with a 5000- foot full-service general aviation airport offering 24-hour fueling, flight planning and hangar storage for private and business aircraft, and support for law enforcement, military training, Civil Air Patrol, flight training, aerial photography and surveys. A 17-acre extension of airport property is designed for commercial aircraft hangar development to attract businesses whose

Piedmont Mountainside Hospital

Development located at the Hwy. 53 and 515 intersection.

Looking north on Hwy. 515

operations require access to airport facilities. The runway accommodates general aviation traffic, including typical business jet aircraft. Local general aviation airports are recognized engines of business and economic development. With the extension of the runway to 5,500 feet, the leasing of parcels for construction of commercial hangars, the planned addition of T-hangars to meet the demand for private aircraft storage, the expansion of on-field businesses offering aircraft maintenance and other services and the anticipated construction of a new terminal facility, the airport is poised to attract new business and generate enhanced economic activity for the community.

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Improve traffic flow and minimize traffic congestion at intersections by promoting inter-parcel access and development of a system of connecting streets and/or frontage roads between major intersections.
- Accommodate a mix of uses that serves both local and regional markets.
- Provide adequate buffers between commercial uses and adjacent residential areas.

Primary Land Uses

- A mixture of primarily retail, restaurants, services, offices, and institutional uses. High-density residential and/or senior residential may be appropriate. Proposals for industrial development would be reviewed based on a specific proposal and not on a speculative basis (for properties in unincorporated Pickens, NC or HB land use districts)

Implementation Strategies

- Review and modify, if necessary, City and County buffer requirements between commercial and residential areas.
- Review and modify, if necessary, City standards for new commercial developments including exterior finish materials, roof pitch, signage, and landscaping.
- Prepare a plan for developing a system of connecting streets, frontage roads and other inter-parcel connectivity along the corridor to minimize excessive driveway cuts directly on the Highway.
- Extend water and sewer services, where necessary, to growth areas of the corridor.
- Explore incentives for existing development to retrofit to updated design standards.

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Sense of Place
- Growth Preparedness
- Regional Cooperation
- Regional Identity

BENT TREE AND BIG CANOE AREA

Vision

Bent Tree and Big Canoe are unique, creative, and imaginative places that provide a mix of uses that result in live, work, play arrangements and lifestyles while preserving the county's scenic and unique environmental resources.

Figure 49: Entrance at Bent Tree

Narrative

Bent Tree and Big Canoe, planned multi-use gated developments, are home to permanent as well as seasonal residents. These developments include homes and facilities dating from the 1970s to the present and have not yet been fully built-out. Bent Tree and Big Canoe are recognized throughout Georgia and beyond as quality developments that contribute to the quality of life of Pickens County. Each community has thousands of residences, scenic mountain views, and beautiful water features. Although the majority of Big Canoe is in Pickens County, a significant portion of the community is across the line in Dawson County. Due to the significance of these developments, Bent Tree and Big Canoe may influence the development of nearby areas. An example is a cluster of commercial establishments near the north entrance of Big Canoe. There may also be significant conservation areas present, such as the Potts Mountain area on the east side of Steve Tate Highway.

Figure 50: Scenic View from within Bent Tree

Development Patterns The development pattern should seek to:

Figure 51: Covered Bridge inside Big Canoe

- Preserve rural character, scenic views and environmentally sensitive resources. Cluster residential development in a conservation subdivision design that incorporates significant amounts of open space and natural conservation areas.
- Preserve natural hydrology and drainage ways.
- Limit grading and clearing.
- Preserve sufficient tree canopy during project development and building construction.

- Carefully design new road way construction to minimize scenic and environmental impacts.
- Utilize natural features for stormwater management.
- Provide a mix of housing types to meet the diverse needs of the population.
- Incorporate traditional neighborhood design that offers a mix of neighborhood commercial, civic, institutional and public gathering places within walking distances of residential areas. Assure that all public facilities and services (roads, utilities, fire protection, recreation, solid waste, etc.) serving new development and redevelopment are adequate to accommodate the population.
- Plans within the gates of Bent Tree and Big Canoe may be dependent on covenants and association approvals.

Figure 52: Example of an entrance at Big Canoe

Primary Land Uses

- Mixed residential uses and densities (dependent upon the availability of centralized sewer)
- Neighborhood commercial.
- Civic and institutional uses.
- Parks and recreation
- Open space and greenways.

Implementation Strategies

- Review and revise, if necessary, the County's Suburban Residential Private Community (SRPC) land use (zoning) district.
- Review and revise, if necessary, the County's development regulations related to planned communities.
- Encourage use of Conservation Design subdivision principles.
- Utilize *Stormwater Better Site Design Standards* from the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual to conserve natural areas, reduce impervious surfaces, and better integrate stormwater treatment in site planning and design. Support the development of private, centralized sewer services.
- Work cooperatively with Bent Tree and Big Canoe representatives on possible future signage and landscaping in nearby areas to improve gateways corridors to these communities, including Cove Road and Steve Tate Highway.
- Work cooperatively with representatives of new developments near these communities, such as new commercial and redeveloped commercial on Steve Tate Highway, to encourage quality design features in architecture and site design.

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Heritage Preservation
- Sense of Place
- Open Space and Wildlife Preservation
- Environmental Protection

BLAINE

Vision

Blaine will remain a low-density crossroads community, presenting both residential and commercial opportunities. The clearly defined roadbed of the Old Federal Road, and the site of Fort Newnan, an Indian removal fort will be preserved, marked, and interpreted as significant Cherokee heritage sites, along with the adjacent cemetery. The old Blaine Store and the Masonic Lodge will remain important community landmarks, and will continue to serve the community.

Narrative

Blaine, near the site of the Cherokee village of Sanderstown, has long been the center of a small, rural community in the vicinity of the intersections of Hwy. 136 and Swan Bridge Rd, and Hwy. 136 and Antioch Church Road. Much of the area's character is defined by low-density development interspersed among woods and fields. The old Blaine Store is a defining feature of the area, as is the roadbed of the Old Federal Road (the Trail of Tears), which runs alongside the current Hwy. 136, and is clearly defined as a deep, linear depression in the ground.

Figure 1: Blaine Store near the Highway 136 and Swan Bridge Road intersection

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Preserve the Blaine Store, the bed of the Old Federal Road, and the site of Fort Newnan, along with the associated cemetery, as defining features of the area.
- Maintain the low-density development pattern, and conserve open space.

Primary Land Uses

- Low density, single-family residential (ER, RR, SR county land use districts)
- Agriculture (AG, SA county land use districts)
- Neighborhood commercial (NC county land use district)

Implementation Strategies

- Coordinate with property owners to define the parameters of Fort Newnan and the associated cemetery; protect them along with the roadbed of the Old Federal Road; and, promote them together as significant Cherokee heritage sites.
- Continue to recognize the location of Sanderstown, and recommend that developers take account of the possibility of Indian burial sites and significant archaeological remains.
- Continually maintain and, where necessary, upgrade county water lines in the Blaine area.
- Plan for a Blaine area park to include, if appropriate, playground equipment, a walking area, and/or other facilities.
- Work cooperatively with business representatives and landowners for development and redevelopment for agri-business and agri-tourism in the area.
- Support and promote area community events.

Related Quality Community Objectives

- Heritage Preservation
- Sense of Place
- Open Space Preservation
- Growth Preparedness

EAST PICKENS CONSERVATION AREA

Vision

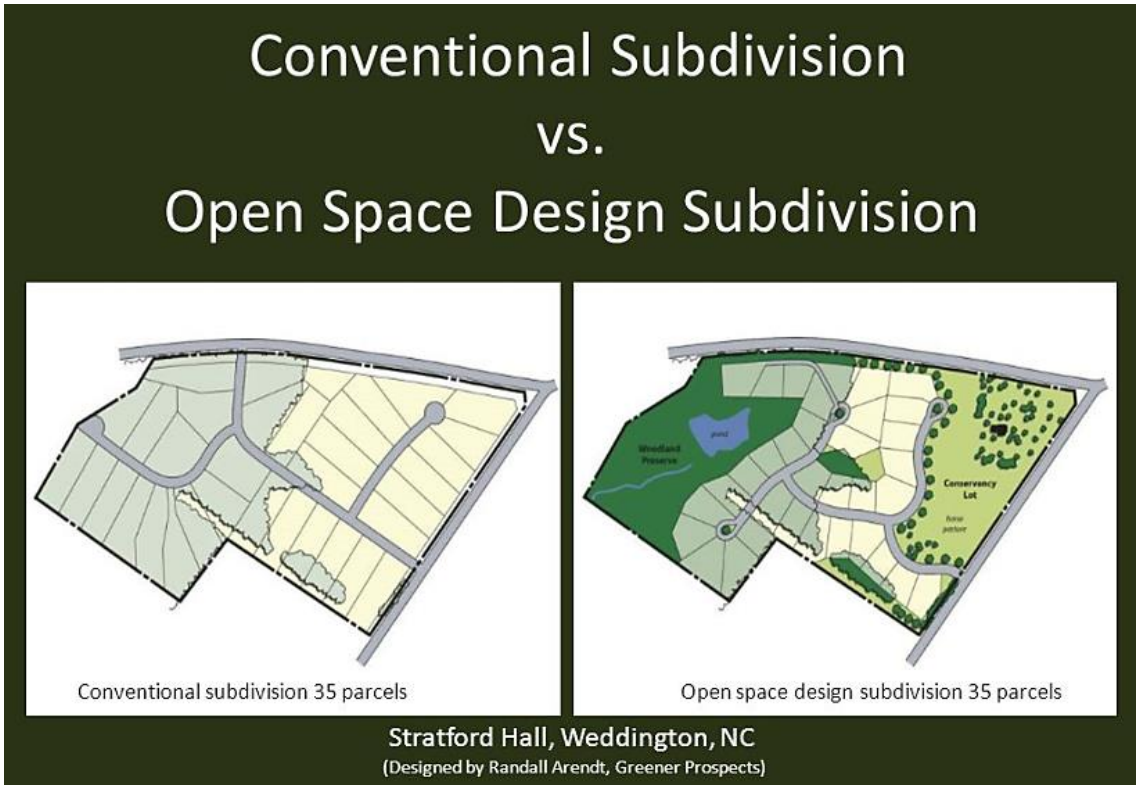
The county's most significant scenic views and environmentally sensitive area are preserved to maintain the County's image as the "Gateway to the Mountains".

Narrative

This area includes the high mountain ridges, steep slopes and stream valleys of eastern Pickens County. The higher elevations within the area qualify as "Protected Mountains" under the State Mountain Protection Act. Many of the streams and lakes contain endangered fish species, whose habitats can be negatively impacted by development activity. Because of the scenic qualities, this area is an attractive location for second home/retiree developments as well as permanent resident homes. Concerns about development in the area include water quality due to erosion from home construction and road construction; loss of trees; impacts on scenic views; and new commercial retail, which may not be appropriate in this low-intense development area. The intent of this character area is to maintain scenic views, tree cover, and water quality that contribute to the community's character as the "Gateway to the Mountains." Since 2000, thousands of acres in East Pickens have been saved for conservation green space by nonprofits as well as the county government. Public, private, and nonprofit (open to public) trails are present in the area. Numerous residents have stated that the area's scenic views, wildlife, and outdoor activities are contributing factors to the community's quality of life. When asked where residents would take out-of-town visitors, many residents stated that they would show visitors scenic spots on and adjacent to Burnt Mountain Road, Cove Road, Grandview Road, and Monument Road. In addition to scenic areas and conservation green space, tourism-related businesses and retreat centers are present.

Development Pattern

The development pattern should seek to:



- Protect steep slopes, scenic views and environmentally sensitive areas by maintaining low density development.
- Encourage new residential development in a conservation subdivision design that incorporates significant amounts of open space and natural conservation areas.
- Connect new conservation subdivisions to create the opportunity for a countywide network of greenways.
- Limit grading and clearing.
- Preserve natural hydrology and drainage ways.
- Preserve existing trees and sufficient canopy cover during development activity.
- Carefully design roadway construction to minimize scenic and environmental impacts.
- Utilize natural features for stormwater management

Primary Land Uses

- Greenway and Conservation Areas (county AG land use district)

- Undeveloped land left in a natural state
- Low-intensity single-family residential (county SA, ER, RR land use districts)
- trails (hiking, equestrian, non-motorized bike trails, etc. that do not conflict with one another)
- Tourism related businesses, event centers, and other facilities that would need conditional use approval

Implementation Strategies

- Maintain large lot size requirements for properties that do not use conservation / open space design development.
- Provide incentives to encourage use of Conservation Design subdivision principles.
- Utilize Best Management Practices for any land disturbance activities, including tree harvesting and utility construction
- Utilize *Stormwater Better Site Design Standards* from the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual to conserve natural areas, reduce impervious surfaces and better integrate stormwater treatment in site planning and design
- Promote the use of conservation easements and conservation tax credits by landowners to help preserve environmentally sensitive land.
- Utilize the Georgia Land Conservation Program as a source of grants, low interest loans and tax incentives for preservation of open space.
- Continually maintain city and county water lines serving the East Pickens area.
- Promote the East Pickens area as a senior retirement destination and work cooperatively with development representatives on new development proposals related to seniors.
- Work cooperatively with private and nonprofit groups with proposals for land conservation.
- Maintain standards for small freestanding signs – as an example, new freestanding signs on local (non-State) roads in East Pickens should not exceed 10 feet and should not exceed 32 square feet in size.
- Plan for addition of educational signs in the Burnt Mountain overlook area informing visitors of the area's historic (original start of the Appalachian Trail), environmental, and scenic significance.

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued:

- Sense of Place
- Open Space Preservation
- Environmental Protection
- Growth Preparedness

FOOTHILLS CROSSROADS

Vision

This crossroads area is developed as a village center that provides a variety of commercial services in support of surrounding residential development. Development contributes to the rural scenic and mountain architectural characteristics of the area.

Narrative

This crossroad community is a commercial area that serves the surrounding population including the residents of the Marble Hill community and population of nearby Big Canoe - a major second home/retiree home development. Population growth will continue to occur in the area and increase the demand for convenience goods and services. The area surrounding this crossroads is also characterized by rural scenic views with foothill mountain characteristics.

Figure 53: Foothills Shopping Center

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Provide a range of businesses to serve the Marble Hill and East Pickens area (retail, restaurants, institutional facilities, offices, services, etc.)
- Establish sidewalks and bike paths to connect the commercial center to residential developments that are likely to occur.
- Limit the size and height of signs – as an example, freestanding signs over 15 feet tall and over 50 square feet in size may be excessive on the two-lane roads in this area.
- Landscape parking lots for new developments to provide shade and reduce impervious surfaces.
- Preserve the beautiful rural quality of the area immediately surrounding the area.

- Encourage compatible architectural styles that maintain local characteristics of surrounding developments.
- Reduce driveway cuts on Steve Tate Highway, SR 53, and Yellow Creek Road by promoting inter-parcel access and connecting roads.

Primary Land Uses

- Mixed land use consisting of commercial retail and services, offices and low density residential off the main roads (county NC and HB districts on main roads such as Steve Tate Highway and Hwy 53; county ER, RR, and SR districts for properties on adjacent smaller roads)
- Public-semi-public institutional uses (Schools, churches, and civic uses.)

Implementation Strategies

- Develop a neighborhood park for the Foothills area to include, depending on local needs, playground equipment, walking areas, and/or other facilities.
- Work cooperatively with private and/or nonprofit groups who may wish to add signage in the Foothills area directing visitors to nearby places such as Big Canoe; churches; Gibbs Gardens; etc.
- Continually maintain and, where necessary, upgrade county water lines serving the Foothills area.
- Encourage new multi-use paths that could be used by pedestrians, cyclists, golf carts, etc.
- Work cooperatively with business representatives to consider tourism-related uses in this scenic mountain area.

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Sense of Place
- Open-space Preservation
- Appropriate Businesses
- Growth Preparedness

HINTON

Vision

Hinton will continue to serve the surrounding area as a rural village center composed of a variety of low-intensity residential, commercial, and agricultural uses while accommodating growth. The agricultural and residential uses create Hinton's character while the need for a commercial core and the intersection create the location.

NARRATIVE

Hinton has historically been the center of a broad rural area surrounding the intersection of Hwy. 53, Carver's Mill Rd, Hwy. 136, and Bradley Rd. The character of the area is primarily determined by its open spaces and agricultural uses. The commercial uses in Hinton are geared toward supplying goods towards farmers and general merchandise to residents. Several aesthically unique and interesting buildings (primarily the feed & seed, and the old store) are central in defining the character of the area at the heart of the intersection. The Hinton fire station, community center, and nearby churches also serve as anchors for the area. The activities at the intersection are surrounded by a broad fringe of rural residential development (interspersed with agricultural uses) that gradually gives way to agricultural uses (interspersed with limited residential use). Hinton is a model of a rural, agricultural village center.

Hinton stores

Church facilities at Hinton.

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Maintain the historic, rural commercial crossroads pattern of development.
- Maintain historic building characteristics, setbacks and uses.

Primary Land Uses

- Mixed land uses with neighborhood/agricultural commercial at the center, surrounded by low-density residential, surrounded by agriculture. (AG, SA, ER, RR, SR, NC county land use districts)

- Variety of Commercial, depending on specific request, may be acceptable on the arterial Highway 53 corridor in the Hinton Area (NC, HB county land use districts).

Implementation Strategies

- New commercial development should be agriculture-related and/or neighborhood focused retail or services unless located on Highway 53, where various commercial uses may be acceptable.
- Support and promote positive community events at the community center, fire station, area churches, and other nearby facilities.
- Work cooperatively with business representatives and landowners for development and redevelopment for agri-business and agri-tourism.
- Continually maintain and, where necessary, upgrade county water lines serving the Hinton area.

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Sense of Place
- Regional Identity
- Heritage Preservation
- Open-space Preservation
- Growth Preparedness
- Appropriate Businesses

Figure 54: Photo from Hinton Fest

MARBLE HILL

Figure 55: Looking southeast along GA. Highway 53

Vision

The Marble Hill area includes much of southeast Pickens County. The vision for this area is to retain its historic significance of marble heritage and continue to grow with new development and redevelopment of single-family housing with a variety of price ranges.

Figure 56: Industrial marble plant in the Marble Hill area

Narrative

Marble Hill, along with Nelson and Tate, has historic roots in activities related to the area's marble quarries. The area also includes roads that reference the community's heritage related to religious institutions (Four Mile Church Road) and historic routes (Lawson Federal Road). The area has variable topography and variety of land cover that help to make it picturesque. State Highway 53 serves as the main arterial route through the area, and includes industrial, commercial, and other uses. Yellow Creek Road also serves as a major collector route connecting East Pickens with North Cherokee County.

Figure 57: Part of Georgia's Old Federal Road in the Marble Hill area

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Preserve the beautiful rural quality of the area.
- Encourage continued development and redevelopment of various uses along the arterial State Highway 53.
- Maintain low density residential pattern and open space characteristics of the majority of the area.

Figure 58: Marble Hill U.S. Post Office

Primary Land Uses

- Commercial along Highway 53 (HB, NC county land use districts) with the possibility of industrial (I county land use district)
- Along Yellow Creek Road, primarily single-family residential (RR, ER, SR county land use districts) with the possibility of commercial (HB, NC county land use districts)
- Single family residential (RR, ER, SR county land use districts) on and adjacent to local roads

Implementation Strategies

- Repair existing sidewalks and install new sidewalks where needed.
- Work cooperatively with the chamber of commerce to encourage tourism building upon its historical marble quarry character. Encourage agri-tourism and eco-tourism building upon the scenic character of this area.
- Maintain standards limiting size and height for new freestanding signs, especially on all local (non-State designated) roads.

Figure 59: Yellow Creek Fire Station in the Marble Hill area

- Continually maintain and, where necessary, upgrade county water lines serving the area.
- Consider possible new park land in the area with a playground, walking area, and/or other facilities.
- Work cooperatively with business representatives and landowners to encourage positive redevelopment of existing buildings and vacant lots.
- Consider new gateway landscaping, signage, etc. welcoming visitors driving into the county from Dawson County and Cherokee County.

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Heritage Preservation
- Sense of Place
- Open-space Preservation
- Traditional Neighborhoods
- Appropriate Businesses

Figure 60: Huber industrial marble operation in the Marble Hill area

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AREA

Vision

The Rural Development area represents "traditional" rural Pickens County. While the rest of Pickens County is growing rapidly, this area should retain its less-developed, rural, open space characteristics and maintain them for future generations.

Narrative

Figure 61: Typical agricultural and residential development in Rural Pickens County

The Rural Development area includes western and northern Pickens County and consists of predominantly rural, less-developed land that is suited for agricultural, forestry and large-lot residential uses. Development in the area should respect the county's farming and forestry tradition and maintain its rural characteristics. This area also lacks a high level of public water, road surfaces and other public services that are needed to support more intense development. If subdivision of land for residential purposes occurs in this area, environmental (floodplain, steep slope, stormwater, etc.) and infrastructure (well water versus county or city water lines, soil type and other septic considerations, road conditions, etc.) should be carefully reviewed.

Development Pattern

Figure 62: Antioch Church in Pickens County

The development pattern should seek to:

- Protect farmland, open space, and environmentally sensitive areas by maintaining low density development.
- Preserve the economic viability of agriculture, livestock production and forestry activities in Pickens County.
- Limit grading and clearing.
- Preserve natural hydrology and drainage ways.
- Carefully design roadway alterations and new road construction to minimize scenic and environmental impacts.
- Preserve rural character, viewsheds, and natural features/resources.
- Utilize natural features for stormwater management

- Accommodate low-intensity uses

Primary Land Uses

- Agricultural (AG, SA county land use districts)
- Forestry (AG county land use district)
- Low density single-family residential (ER, RR county land use districts)
- Recreational facilities
- Convenience goods and service establishments at strategic locations along major collector and arterial roads, especially State routes (NC, HB county land use districts)

Figure 63: Remnants of a former dwelling along Pleasant Union Road in Pickens County

Implementation Strategies

- Utilize Best Management Practices for land disturbance activities, including tree harvesting and utility construction
- Utilize *Stormwater Better Site Design Stan*dards from the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual to conserve natural areas, reduce impervious surfaces and better integrate stormwater treatment in site planning and design
- Promote the use of conservation easements and conservation tax credits by landowners to help preserve viable farmland

Figure 64: Twin Mountain Lake in Pickens County

- Utilize the Georgia Land Conservation Program as a source of grants, low interest loans and tax incentives for preservation of agricultural land.
- Support and promote positive community events at community centers such as fire stations area churches, and other facilities.
- Work cooperatively with business representatives and landowners for development and redevelopment for agri-business and agri-tourism.
- Continually maintain and, where necessary, upgrade county and city water lines serving the area.

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Sense of Place
- Open Space Preservation
- Environmental Protection
- Heritage Preservation

SUBURBAN INFILL AREA

Vision

This area is envisioned to become an extension of the broader Jasper community. Quality of life is enhanced by improved street connectivity, sidewalks, and trails (pedestrian, bike, golf cart, etc.) to provide alternative ways to get to parks, schools, and neighborhood commercial areas.

Narrative

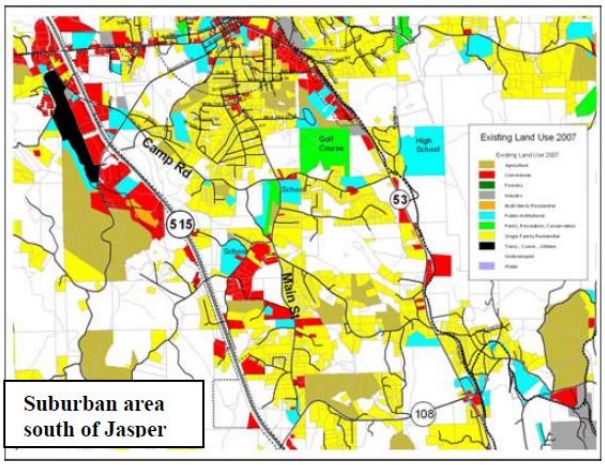


Figure 65: A variety of housing options should be available to offer workforce housing

These are areas around the city of Jasper that have some development and have the potential to develop further. The area can be generally described as from west of SR 515 to east of SR 53 (Jasper-Tate section), and north to south from Philadelphia Road to south of SR 108. These areas typically consist of single family residences at different price points served by a system of curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs. Interspersed throughout the area are schools, a county park, a golf course and scattered commercial uses. Some agricultural uses are also found in the area. The residential areas have typically developed in a leap-frog fashion and tend to lack street connectivity, which adds to traffic congestion on collector roads. The area also contains significant tracts of vacant land with development potential. Without intervention, these areas are likely to evolve with low pedestrian orientation, larger lot residential areas with scattered civic buildings and various street patterns.

This area contains a developed public water system and some sewer utilities, a good road network and other community services that can be economically utilized and rationally extended to potential infill areas. Mixed used, higher density residential development opportunities should be encouraged and optimized in this area in order to minimize the current low density sprawl development patterns that are evident throughout the rest of the county. Encouragement of infill development would result in minimal jobs-to-housing travel distances and commuting times. Residential development should offer a range of housing choices related to size, cost, and housing types in order to increase the availability of affordable housing within the county. Traditional neighborhood development patterns are

encouraged including compact development, and mixed residential uses within walking distances of one another and community amenities such as schools, parks and neighborhood commercial centers.

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Provide a system of streets to improve connectivity between subdivisions as well as to the existing road network.
- Incorporate sidewalks, traffic calming measures, golf cart paths, and biking facilities to provide safe, alternative ways of travel within and between neighborhoods, and to improve connectivity to schools, parks, and neighborhood commercial areas.
- Accommodate infill development that compliments the scale, building setbacks, and the style of existing residential areas.
- Preserve existing mature trees during the development process.
- Preserve open space and greenway opportunities.
- Accommodate a mix of residential uses.
- Encourage neighborhood commercial uses at strategic locations along collector roads (S. Main Street/Refuge Road, Camp Road, and State Routes 53 and 108).

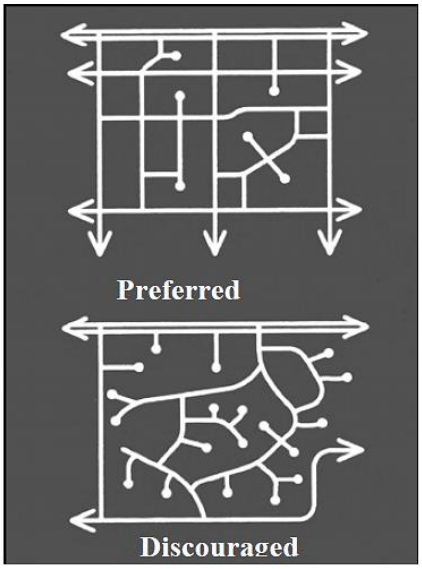


Figure 66: Example of preferred street design

Primary Land Uses

- Mixed residential uses and densities (dependent upon the availability of centralized sewer).
- Parks and passive recreation areas.
- Civic and semi-public institutional uses
- Neighborhood commercial

Implementation Strategies

- Develop a plan to improve the water system (with expansions where appropriate) and extend sewer infrastructure to potential infill development areas. Continually maintain existing city and county water lines in the area.
- Develop a plan to assess where additional sidewalks, trails and bike route facilities can be provided.
- Amend development regulations to require all new developments to provide sidewalks.
- Expand/renovate Roper Park and continually investigate possible new park properties.

- Provide incentives to encourage use of “Conservation Design” principles for new subdivision development.
- Revise Jasper ordinances, if necessary, to accommodate higher density, mixed use residential development in the incorporated areas.

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Sense of Place
- Transportation Alternatives
- Traditional Neighborhood Development
- Infill Development
- Housing Choices
- Growth Preparedness

TATE

Vision

Tate is a model of the quintessential small southern village. The community includes commercial retail and services; medical facilities; churches; a historic school; and a historic train depot anchored by a crossroads surrounded by single family houses laid out in the form of a traditional neighborhood.

Narrative

The historic center of marble production in Georgia, Tate has experienced a resurgence thanks to projects such as the public depot renovation and private renovation of historic buildings. The Tate community retains a great deal of charm and historical character. Its setting surrounded by variable topography and variety of land covers helps to make it picturesque. Renovations of older homes and maintenance of an active community group have helped to maintain the unique character of the community. The depot and rail line are resources for possible tourism and event promotion.

Figure 67: Historic Tate Methodist Church along Highway 53

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Preserve the beautiful rural quality of the area surrounding Tate
- Maintain historic building setbacks, low density residential pattern, and open space characteristics.

Primary Land Uses

- Single family residential (RR, ER, SR county land use districts)
- Institutional uses (Schools, churches, cemeteries, medical clinic, etc.)
- Commercial along the Highway 53 and Highway 108 corridors (NC, HB county land use districts)

Figure 68: Historic Tate Gymnasium

Implementation Strategies

- Repair existing sidewalks and install new sidewalks where needed.
- Work cooperatively with the local chamber of commerce to encourage tourism building upon its historical character. Resources like the Tate House; marble school & gym; and local churches could be used for additional regional events.
- Assist owners of historic properties (Tate House, etc) with acquiring grant funding for preservation and enhancement.
- Maintain standards limiting size and height for new freestanding signs in this area having two-lane roads.
- Continually maintain and, where necessary, upgrade county water lines serving the Tate area.
- Work with Pickens County Fire personnel regarding the possible relocation of the Tate fire station.
- Work cooperatively with representatives of the Tate community group to promote existing and possible new events and community improvement projects.
- Use the renovated Tate depot as an anchor for community events.
- Consider possible new park land in the Tate area with a playground, walking area, and/or other facilities.
- Work cooperatively with business representatives and landowners to encourage positive redevelopment of existing buildings and vacant lots.
- Promote the depot and rail line for railroad-related tourism activities and events.

Figure 69: Commercial area near Highway 108 and Highway 53 intersection

Figure 70: Historic Tate Mansion along Highway 53

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Heritage Preservation
- Sense of Place
- Open-space Preservation
- Traditional Neighborhoods
- Appropriate Businesses

JASPER CHARACTER AREAS

EAST JASPER GATEWAY CORRIDOR

Vision

This gateway to the city from the east presents a favorable impression to visitors by maintaining the current mix of uses complemented by improved landscaping and other streetscape amenities.

Narrative

The section of the Burnt Mountain Road – Cove Road corridor in the City limits of Jasper includes the Appalachian campus of Chattahoochee Technical College; Jasper's City Hall; city park facilities; public housing; other multi-family housing; a public library, and commercial uses. This corridor is the entrance to the city from the east.

Figure 71: Chattahoochee Technical College campus in Jasper

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Accommodate a variety of activities on the Technical College campus, including community events as well as college-specific activities such as classes.
- Maintain the current mix of existing uses and encourage quality redevelopment of buildings and sites.
- Improve sidewalk conditions along the corridor and extend sidewalks to provide better connections between adjoining residential neighborhoods and the city park and library.
- Add landscaping on public properties and possibly on right-of-ways (where appropriate and not conflicting with site visibility and utilities) to provide shade and reduce impervious surfaces. Encourage redeveloping commercial developments to include added landscaping.

Primary Land Uses

- Public and institutional uses
- Multi-family residential
- Neighborhood commercial uses.

Implementation Strategies

Figure 72: Example of a traffic circle for consideration

- Expand the downtown streetscape improvements theme along Burnt Mt. Road to the Cove Road intersection.
- Determine the feasibility of establishing a traffic circle at the intersection of Burnt Mt. Road and Cove Road instead of the current 3-way stop.
- Plan for Jasper gateway improvements at the Burnt Mt. Road and Cove Road intersection for added landscaping and possible signage.
- Review and, where appropriate, revise the Jasper commercial design standards for contributing quality new and redeveloped commercial structures.
- Review and, where appropriate, revise the Jasper development regulations for increased landscaping and sidewalks for new and redeveloped commercial sites.
- Continually maintain and, where appropriate, upgrade Jasper water and sewer lines serving the area.
- Complete an assessment and evaluation of the current Jasper city park facilities and, where appropriate, redevelop and/or upgrade the area.
- Work cooperatively with business representatives on possible new commercial and redeveloped structures and sites.

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Infill Development
- Sense of Place
- Transportation Alternatives

HISTORIC DOWNTOWN JASPER

Vision

The Jasper Downtown area retains its strong sense of place and unique historic characteristics, and remains a viable community focal point for both residents and visitors.

Narrative

Pickens County Courthouse

Historic downtown Jasper includes the Central Business District as well as surrounding areas on both sides of Hwy. 53 that contain a blend of commercial businesses, professional offices, the courthouse, and a few historic residential properties. This area has consistent development patterns including traditional building facades, buildings close to the street, and use of sidewalks. Most of the buildings represent historic architecture that gives the downtown a strong sense of place. Public art is displayed at various points that utilize marble resources mined in the nearby Tate and Marble Hill communities. Maintaining the historic integrity of the downtown will be important to retain the sense of place; signage, exterior changes to buildings and new construction should honor the existing character. Encouraging a strong mix of uses, including commercial (restaurants, services, office, retail) as well as residential (above or behind commercial) will be important for economic vitality. Coordinating events downtown throughout the year helps to make this area dynamic and active.

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Retain and enhance existing building stock with appropriate maintenance and rehabilitation that is consistent with historic characteristics.
- Maintain a mix of uses that continues to attract both residents and visitors.
- Encourage mixed uses within buildings such as residential development of underutilized second floors and sidewalk dining.

Figure 73: View of Jasper's downtown main street

- Continue to utilize the downtown as a focal point for community activities, public art displays, and festivals.
- Maintain a strong connection with adjoining neighborhoods via sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities.
-

Figure 74: View of sidewalks and streetscapes in downtown Jasper

Primary Land Uses

- Mixed commercial including retail, professional offices and services.
- Civic/institutional
- Residential on upper floors as well as behind and adjacent to commercial structures.
- Parks, public gathering places.

Implementation Strategies

Figure 75: View of historic Downtown Jasper

- Investigate the feasibility of establishing a Historic District.
- Seek designations such as the Better Home Town and Main Street programs available through the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.
- Expand downtown streetscape improvements theme to West and East Church Streets, as well as other side streets.
- Expand parking opportunities.
- Improve gateway landscaping and signage entering into downtown from all directions.
- Continually maintain and, where appropriate, upgrade Jasper water and sewer lines serving downtown.
- Encourage entrepreneurial creativity with uses and facilities downtown. Be flexible in working cooperatively with businesses and others on new ideas for downtown, including new development and redevelopment as well as various uses.

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Heritage Preservation
- Sense of Place
- Housing Choices

Figure 76: Historic Wood Bridge in Downtown Jasper

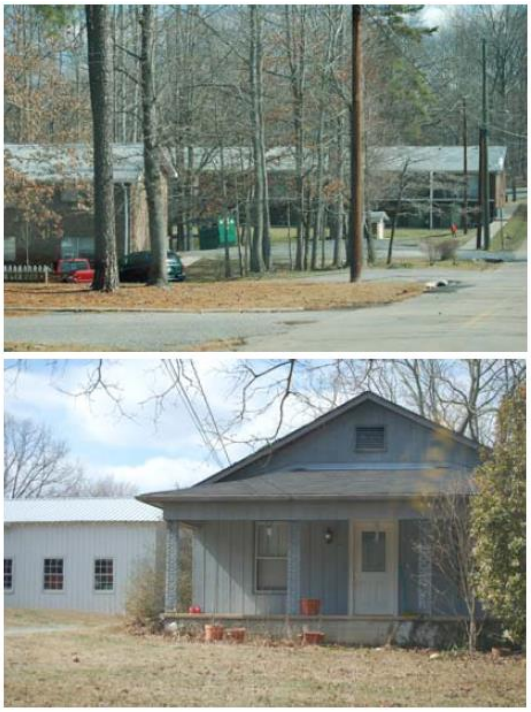
JASPER TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD AREA

Vision

Jasper's traditional neighborhoods provide a variety of housing choices in close proximity to the downtown and other commercial corridors. Accessibility is improved with continual maintenance and additions to the existing network of sidewalk and trails (may be for pedestrians, bikes, and/or golf carts).

Narrative

Jasper's traditional neighborhoods contain older housing stock and traditional development patterns. These areas consist of moderate to well-maintained single family and scattered multi-family housing. Density is higher due to the presence of sewer services. These neighborhoods are typically served with a grid system of streets and have shallower building setbacks. The neighborhoods are thought of as "in-town" due to their proximity and accessibility to the downtown. A few of the closer in neighborhoods contain sidewalks, which provide accessibility to the downtown. Vacant tracts of land are still available. New development and redevelopment may include cluster detached single-family homes;
condos; townhouses; senior housing; and/or apartments.



A variety of housing is available in Jasper's traditional neighborhoods.

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Maintain existing homes and character defining features such as drives, walls, landscaping, and tree cover.
- Promote building rehabilitation that is in keeping with a building's existing architectural style and scale and that of neighboring homes.
- Accommodate in-fill development that complements the scale, setbacks and style of adjacent homes.
- Increase pedestrian connectivity between neighborhoods, the downtown, schools, parks, and other activity centers.

- Accommodate senior housing, which can be integrated into the existing development pattern and can benefit from close proximity to the downtown area and other streets containing commercial uses.

Primary Land Uses

- Mixed residential uses with a variety of densities (cluster detached single-family homes, condos, townhouses, senior housing, and/or apartments.
- Civic, institutional uses
- Neighborhood commercial on arterial and major collector routes, especially at significant intersections
- Parks, recreational areas

Implementation Strategies

Figure 77: Traditional Neighborhood dwellings near downtown Jasper

- Prepare and adopt new residential architectural design standards to assure new development is compatible with old development.
- Repair existing sidewalks and install new sidewalks where needed.
- Improve and increase paths and trails (pedestrian, bike, and/or golf cart).
- Plan for acquisition of new land to increase parks and recreation offerings in Jasper. New park(s) may include playground facilities, ballfields, trails, tennis courts, and/or other facilities.
- Pursue Federal and State grants and other programs to rehabilitate houses and upgrade houses where needed.
- Encourage senior housing opportunities in close proximity to daily shopping, health and recreation needs.
- Prepare and adopt senior housing design standards to encourage “aging-in-place” that address home and site features that are more functional for the elderly.
- Review and, where appropriate, revise Jasper development regulations regarding new residential development and redevelopment regarding infill.
- Review and, where appropriate, revise Jasper zoning regulations regarding new residential development and redevelopment regarding infill.
- Continually maintain and, where appropriate, upgrade Jasper water and sewer lines serving the area.

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Heritage Preservation
- Sense of Place
- Traditional Neighborhoods
- Infill Development
- Housing Choices

NORTH JASPER CORRIDOR

Vision

This gateway to the city from the north presents a favorable impression to visitors by maintaining this as a viable commercial corridor and industrial area.

Narrative

This area, located in the City limits of Jasper, consists of North Main Street and areas to the east along the railroad. A mix of residential, commercial and institutional uses are located along the road as it approaches the downtown area. The majority of the industrial uses and more intense commercial uses, including Pioneer Industrial Park, are located adjacent to the railroad to the east. North Main Street is the primary north entrance into the city of Jasper. Since Hwy. 515 opened and became the primary north-south corridor through the county, traffic volumes on North Main have diminished. A number of vacant tracts are scattered throughout the corridor. Inconsistent building setbacks, architecture and materials, mixed size and height of signage, and a lack of landscaping characterize the corridor. A number of residential subdivisions lie adjacent to the corridor with limited street connectivity to North Main Street.

Figure 78: View along North Main approaching downtown Jasper. Note poorly defined driveway entrances

Figure 79: Typical industrial Structure located in Pioneer Industrial Park.

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Preserve the diverse industrial base and fill in vacant tracts within the industrial park.
- Provide adequate buffers between industrial areas and adjacent residential areas.
- Provide sidewalk connections between North Main Street and adjacent residential areas.
- Increase landscaping throughout the area, including parking lots to provide shade, reduce impervious surfaces, buffer parking areas and improve the appearance of individual sites and the entire corridor.
- Clearly define driveway cuts and entrances.
- Provide a mix of uses along North Main Street to serve populations north of the City.

Primary Land Uses

- Industry
- Various commercial (offices, retail, services, etc.)
- Public and institutional uses

Implementation Strategies

- Seek grants to fund desired streetscape improvements such as improved or extended sidewalks, landscaping, lighting and underground utilities.
- Improve inter-parcel access and street connectivity to adjoining neighborhoods.
- Review and, where appropriate, revise the Jasper commercial design standards for contributing quality new and redeveloped commercial structures.
- Review and, where appropriate, revise the Jasper development regulations for increased landscaping and sidewalks for new and redeveloped commercial sites.
- Continually maintain and, where appropriate, upgrade Jasper water and sewer lines serving the area.
- Work cooperatively with business representatives on possible new commercial and industrial developments.

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Infill Development
- Transportation Alternatives

SOUTH JASPER GATEWAY CORRIDOR

Vision

This gateway to the city from the south presents a favorable impression to visitors by maintaining this as a viable commercial corridor while improving overall streetscape appearances.

Narrative

Figure 80: Recommendations for this corridor include: vegetative streetscapes, underground utilities, and improved pedestrian infrastructure

The East Church Street corridor, located in the City limits of Jasper, is south of the downtown area along State Highway 53. This corridor was once the primary commercial highway leading into Jasper from the south. Since the construction of the four-lane Hwy. 515 west of the city, there has not been a significant number of new buildings constructed along the corridor. There has, however, been much redevelopment and reuse of existing buildings in recent years. The area includes a mix of older commercial establishments, scattered residential uses, the County Administrative Offices, and other public uses. Deep building setbacks, inconsistent building architecture and materials, mixed size and height of signage, and a lack of landscaping characterize the corridor. The railroad borders the eastern side of the corridor. A number of vacant tracts are located to the rear of the commercial uses that could be developed for multi-family or other higher density residential development. The presence of some sidewalks and proximity to the downtown also present the potential for pedestrian scale development.

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Maintain viability as a commercial corridor while enhancing overall street appearance through landscaping, sign control, and pedestrian scale lighting.
- Improve sidewalk connections along the corridor and with adjoining residential neighborhoods.
- Landscape parking lots to provide shade and reduce impervious surfaces.

- Encourage upgrades to the appearance of existing older commercial buildings with façade improvement or new architectural elements.
- Encourage shallow setbacks and quality construction for new construction.
- Accommodate a mix of uses that primarily serve the local market demand versus a regional market demand.
- Encourage multi-family or other high density residential to develop on vacant tracts that back up to the commercial uses.

Primary Land Uses

- Retail, offices, restaurants, and other commercial services
- Industry
- Multi-family or other high density residential
- Public and other institutional uses

Implementation Strategies

- Seek grants to fund desired streetscape improvements such as improved or extended sidewalks, landscaping, lighting and underground utilities.
- Improve inter-parcel access and street connectivity to adjoining neighborhoods.
- Review and, where appropriate, revise the Jasper commercial design standards for contributing quality new and redeveloped commercial structures.
- Review and, where appropriate, revise the Jasper development regulations for increased landscaping and sidewalks for new and redeveloped commercial sites.
- Continually maintain and, where appropriate, upgrade Jasper water and sewer lines serving the area.
- Work cooperatively with business representatives on possible new commercial and multi-family developments.

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Infill Development
- Transportation Alternatives
- Housing Choices

WEST JASPER GATEWAY CORRIDOR

Vision

The Highway 53/ West Church Street corridor connects downtown Jasper to State Highway 515. As the gateway to the City of Jasper, this corridor serves as an extension of downtown providing a mixture of uses to serve residents and visitors alike.

Narrative

The Highway 53/ West Church Street corridor between Hwy 515 and historic downtown Jasper is the primary entrance to the city. This corridor is characterized by a mix of uses, numerous curb cuts that impede traffic flow, and a lack of landscaping and other streetscape amenities. A mix of signage size and heights also dominate the landscape. The corridor is also proposed for major widening in the near future. To draw people from Hwy. 515 into downtown, as well as serve surrounding neighborhoods, new development and redevelopment along this corridor should be inviting, attractive and contain a mix of uses. This can be done by a combination of incentives and requirements to improve landscaping, street lighting, landscaping, signage, and sidewalks. Improved public signage will help direct and inform visitors about downtown businesses and facilities.

Looking west toward Hwy 515

Looking east toward downtown

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Encourage the continued transition of this corridor into a commercial mixed-use link between the core of historic Jasper and the dynamic commercial/retail node on Hwy 515 at the intersection with Highway 53.
- Encourage and, where appropriate, require new and redeveloped buildings to have masonry exterior finish materials.
- Minimize traffic congestion by promoting inter-parcel access and development of a connecting system of streets that connects downtown Jasper with areas surrounding the corridor and Hwy. 515.
- Limit the size and height of signs– as an example, freestanding signs over 20 feet tall and over 100 square feet in size may be excessive on this two-lane road.

- Incorporate streetscape enhancements such as underground utilities, sidewalks, landscaping and decorative streetlights to make it more pedestrian friendly.
- Continually maintain and, where appropriate, upgrade water and sewer capacity in this area.
- Parking lots should be adequately landscaped to provide shade, and reduce impervious surfaces.
- Accommodate a mix of institutional, medical, office, restaurant, retail, and service uses.

Primary Land Uses

- Retail, restaurants, offices, and other services.
- Institutional uses
- Multi-family residential and senior residential where appropriate

Implementation Strategies

- Review and, if needed, revise signage at or near the intersection with Hwy. 515 to let the traveler know that this is the place they should turn off to get to downtown.
- Use signage and/or banners along the corridor to pull the consumer from Hwy 515 into the town.
- Strategically extend the existing grid network from downtown out along the corridor providing connections between existing roads and new access where there was none previously.
- Extend sidewalks on both sides of the road the entire length of the corridor.
  - Modify the Jasper *Sign Ordinance* to limit height, size and location of freestanding signs.
  - Revise the Jasper *Landscaping* regulations to enhance tree replacement requirements.
  - Adopt *architectural standards* for Jasper with a masonry requirement to improve the quality and aesthetics of commercial development.
- Consider parking lot lighting requirements for Jasper – maximum height standards and requirement that new parking lot lighting face downward (example is shoebox style lighting fixtures).
- Plan for alternative routes with signage giving trucks and other thru-vehicles options to get around West Church Street. Examples include A.W. Lawson Boulevard south of West Church Street and Philadelphia Rd north of West Church Street. If the proposed West Church Street

widening project may not be feasible or may not be completed in the next five years, consider improving the alternate routes with wider shoulders and other road measures.

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Infill Development
- Sense of Place
- Transportation Alternatives
- Growth Preparedness

NELSON CHARACTER AREAS

NELSON INDUSTRIAL

Vision

This area is envisioned to retain its industrial and manufacturing character for many years to come. Properties within this character area are largely responsible for Nelson's history and will continue to be a part of its future providing job opportunities, tax revenue, and a way of life for the community.

Figure 81: Skilled workforce inside Blue Ridge Marble Co.

Narrative

Although most of the industrial properties within Nelson have existed for many decades, they continue to produce their products consistently and on a large scale. Land used in higher intensity manufacturing, assembly, processing activities where noise, particulate matter, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors, radiation, or other nuisance characteristics are not contained on-site.

Development Patterns

- Encourage buffers between industrial structures/uses and residential areas

Primary Land Uses

- Industrial
- Park/Recreation/Conservation

Implementation Strategies

More detailed sub-area planning:

- Have mix of small and large industry appropriately buffered from residential developments

New or revised local development regulations:

- Require percentage of open space on site

Incentives:

- Tax breaks for incubators and small business for reuse and site cleanup

Public Investments:

- Install high-speed internet, provide alternative access roads

Infrastructure Improvements:

- Maintain and upgrade roads, install traffic lights, improve utilities

Quality Community Objectives

- Infill development
- Sense of place
- Transportation alternatives
- Regional identity
- Heritage preservation
- Open space preservation
- Environmental protection
- Growth preparedness
- Appropriate businesses
- Employment options

NELSON SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

Vision

This area is envisioned to become an extension of the more recently developed Nelson community. Quality of life is enhanced by improved street connectivity, sidewalks, and trails (pedestrian, bike, golf cart, etc.) to provide alternative ways to get to parks, and neighborhood commercial areas.

Narrative

These are areas around the city of Nelson that have some development and have the potential to develop further. These areas typically consist of single family residences at different price points served by a system of curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs.

This area contains a developed public water system but no sewer utilities, and a good road network and other community services that can be economically utilized and rationally extended to potential infill areas. Encouragement of infill development would result in minimal jobs-to-housing travel distances and commuting times. Residential development should offer a range of housing choices related to size, cost, and housing types in order to increase the availability of affordable housing within the county. Traditional neighborhood development patterns are encouraged including compact development, and mixed residential uses within walking distances of one another and community amenities such as schools, parks and neighborhood commercial centers.

Figure 82: A variety of housing options should be available to offer workforce housing

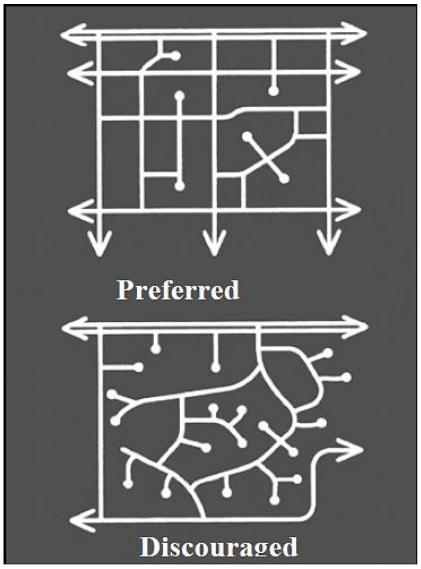


Figure 83: Example of preferred street design

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Provide a system of streets to improve connectivity between subdivisions as well as to the existing road network.

- Incorporate sidewalks, traffic calming measures, golf cart paths, and biking facilities to provide safe, alternative ways of travel within and between neighborhoods, and to improve connectivity to schools, parks, and neighborhood commercial areas.
- Accommodate infill development that compliments the scale, building setbacks, and the style of existing residential areas.
- Preserve existing mature trees during the development process.
- Preserve open space and greenway opportunities.
- Encourage neighborhood commercial uses at strategic locations along collector roads.

Figure 84: Entrance of Laurel Lake community

Primary Land Uses

- Single Family residential uses
- Parks and passive recreation areas.
- Civic and semi-public institutional uses
- Neighborhood commercial

Implementation Strategies

- Develop a plan to improve the water system (with expansions where appropriate) to potential infill development areas. Continually maintain existing city and county water lines in the area.
- Develop a plan to assess where additional sidewalks, trails and bike route facilities can be provided.
- Amend development regulations to require all new developments to provide sidewalks.
- Provide incentives to encourage use of "Conservation Design" principles for new subdivision development.

Figure 85: Example of density and design within the Laurel Lake community. Note the lack of pedestrian infrastructure.

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Sense of Place
- Transportation Alternatives
- Traditional Neighborhood Development
- Infill Development
- Housing Choices
- Growth Preparedness

Figure 86: Cul-de-sac within Laurel Lake Community

NELSON TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD AREA

Vision

Nelson's traditional neighborhoods provide a variety of housing choices in close proximity to the town center and other commercial corridors. Accessibility is improved with continual additions to the existing network of sidewalk and trails (may be for pedestrians, bikes, and/or golf carts).

Figure 87: Historic single family detached residence in Nelson

Narrative

Nelson's traditional neighborhoods contain older housing stock and traditional development patterns. These areas consist of moderate to well-maintained single family housing. Density is not high due to the lack of sewer services. These neighborhoods are typically served with a grid system of streets and have shallower building setbacks. The neighborhoods are thought of as "in-town" due to their proximity and accessibility to the town center. Vacant tracts of land are still available. New development and redevelopment may include cluster detached single-family homes; townhouses; and senior housing.

Figure 88: Historic single family detached residence under renovation in Nelson. Note the use of marble blocks for the foundation, a common practice within the traditional neighborhood.

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Maintain existing homes and character defining features such as drives, walls, landscaping, and tree cover.
- Promote building rehabilitation that is in keeping with a building's existing architectural style and scale and that of neighboring homes.
- Accommodate in-fill development that complements the scale, setbacks and style of adjacent homes.
- Increase pedestrian connectivity between neighborhoods, the town center, parks, and other activity centers.
- Accommodate senior housing, which can be integrated into the existing development pattern and can benefit from close proximity to the downtown area and other streets containing commercial uses.

Primary Land Uses

- Mixed residential uses with a variety of densities (cluster detached single-family homes, townhouses, and senior housing.
- Civic, institutional uses
- Neighborhood commercial on arterial and major collector routes, especially at significant intersections
- Parks, recreational areas

Implementation Strategies

- Repair existing sidewalks and install new sidewalks where needed.
- Improve and increase paths and trails (pedestrian, bike, and/or golf cart).
- Pursue Federal and State grants and other programs to rehabilitate houses and upgrade houses where needed.
- Encourage senior housing opportunities in close proximity to daily shopping, health and recreation needs.
- Prepare and adopt senior housing design standards to encourage "aging-in-place" that address home and site features that are more functional for the elderly.
- Review and, where appropriate, revise Nelson's development regulations regarding new residential development and redevelopment regarding infill.

Figure 89: Example of good pedestrian infrastructure serving a traditional style residential neighborhood in Jasper

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Heritage Preservation
- Sense of Place
- Traditional Neighborhoods
- Infill Development
- Housing Choices

NELSON TOWN CENTER

Vision

The Nelson Town Center area retains its strong sense of place and unique characteristics, and remains a viable community center for both residents and visitors.

Narrative

Figure 90: Nelson City Hall along Kennesaw Avenue

Nelson's town center includes the Central Business District as well as surrounding areas on both sides of Kennesaw Avenue that contain a blend of commercial businesses, professional offices, and a few historic residential and industrial properties. This area has a blend of development patterns including non-traditional building facades, and lack of sidewalks. The commercial style buildings lack historic architecture. Encouraging a mix of uses, including commercial (restaurants, services, office, retail) as well as residential will be important for long range economic vitality and sense of a community center.

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Retain and enhance existing building/housing stock with appropriate maintenance and rehabilitation.
- Promote a mix of uses to attract both residents and visitors.
- Develop the downtown as a focal point for community activities, public art displays, and festivals.
- Create a strong connection with adjoining neighborhoods via sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities.

Figure 91: Example of a commercial structure along Kennesaw Avenue near Nelson's City hall

Primary Land Uses

- Mixed commercial including retail, professional offices and services.
- Civic/institutional
- Single Family detached Residential

- Parks, public gathering places.

Implementation Strategies

- Create streetscape improvements to help create a more pedestrian friendly environment.
- Improve gateway landscaping and signage entering into downtown from all directions.
- Encourage entrepreneurial creativity with uses and facilities in the town center. Be flexible in working cooperatively with businesses and others on new ideas for downtown, including new development and redevelopment as well as various uses.

Figure 92: Example of walkable town center residential development in downtown Jasper

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Heritage Preservation
- Sense of Place
- Housing Choices

TALKING ROCK CHARACTER AREAS

TALKING ROCK SUBURBAN AREA

Vision

This area is envisioned to become an extension of the more recently developed Talking Rock community. Quality of life is enhanced by improved street connectivity, sidewalks, and trails (pedestrian, bike, golf cart, etc.) to provide alternative ways to get to parks, and neighborhood commercial areas.

Narrative

These are areas around the Town of Talking Rock that have some sparse development and have the potential to develop further. These areas typically consist of single family residences at different price points served by a system of county or state roads. Curvilinear streets and cul-de-sacs would be the preferred future design for new residential development in this area.

Figure 93: A variety of housing options should be available to offer workforce housing

This area contains a developed public water system but no sewer utilities, and a good road network and other community services that can be economically utilized and rationally extended to potential infill areas. Encouragement of infill development would result in minimal jobs-to-housing travel distances and commuting times. Residential development should offer a range of housing choices related to size, cost, and housing types in order to increase the availability of affordable housing within the county. Traditional neighborhood development patterns are encouraged including compact development, and mixed residential uses within walking distances of one another and community amenities such as schools, parks and neighborhood commercial centers.

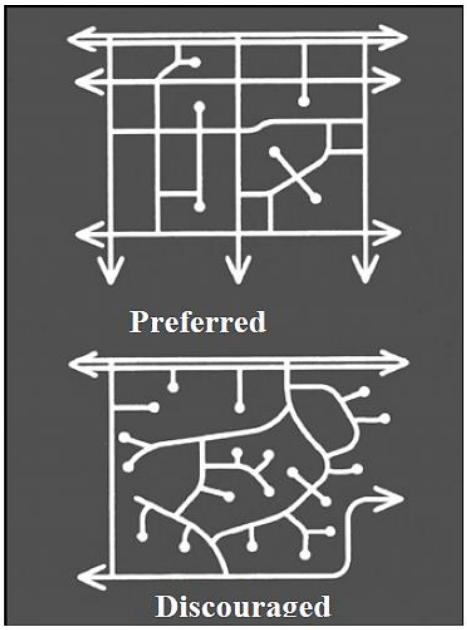


Figure 94: Example of preferred street design

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

Figure 95: Example of a modern suburban community entrance

- Provide a system of streets to improve connectivity between subdivisions as well as to the existing road network.
- Incorporate sidewalks, traffic calming measures, golf cart paths, and biking facilities to provide safe, alternative ways of travel within and between neighborhoods, and to improve connectivity to schools, parks, and neighborhood commercial areas.
- Accommodate infill development that compliments the scale, building setbacks, and the style of existing residential areas.
- Preserve existing mature trees during the development process.
- Preserve open space and greenway opportunities.
- Encourage neighborhood commercial uses at strategic locations along collector roads.

Primary Land Uses

- Single Family residential uses
- Parks and passive recreation areas.
- Civic and semi-public institutional uses
- Neighborhood commercial

Implementation Strategies

Figure 96: Example of density and design within the Suburban character area. Preferably with pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalks, etc).

- Develop a plan to improve the water system (with expansions where appropriate) to potential infill development areas. Continually maintain existing city and county water lines in the area.
- Develop a plan to assess where additional sidewalks, trails and bike route facilities can be provided to connect residences to the town center.
- Consider amending development regulations to require all new developments to provide sidewalks.
- Consider providing incentives to encourage use of "Conservation Design" principles for new subdivision development.

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Sense of Place
- Transportation Alternatives
- Traditional Neighborhood Development
- Infill Development
- Housing Choices
- Growth Preparedness

Figure 97: Cul-de-sac design for the Suburban character area

TALKING ROCK TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD AREA

Vision

Talking Rock's traditional neighborhoods provide a variety of housing choices in close proximity to the town center and other commercial highway corridors. Accessibility is improved with continual additions to the existing network of sidewalk and trails (may be for pedestrians, bikes, and/or golf carts).

Figure 98: single family detached residence along Highway 136 in Talking Rock

Narrative

Talking Rock's traditional neighborhoods contain older housing stock and traditional development patterns. These areas consist of moderate to well-maintained single family housing. Density is rather low due to the lack of sewer services. These neighborhoods are typically served with a grid system of streets and have shallower building setbacks. The neighborhoods are thought of as "in-town" due to their proximity and accessibility to the historic town center. Vacant tracts of land are still available. New development and redevelopment may include detached single-family homes; and townhouses.

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Maintain existing homes and historic character defining features such as drives, walls, landscaping, and tree cover.
- Promote building rehabilitation that is in keeping with a building's existing architectural style and scale and that of neighboring homes to retain the town's character.
- Accommodate in-fill development that complements the scale, setbacks and style of adjacent homes.
- Increase pedestrian connectivity between neighborhoods, the town center, parks, and other activity centers.

Primary Land Uses

- Mixed residential uses with a variety of densities (cluster detached single-family homes, and townhouses.
- Civic, institutional uses
- Neighborhood commercial on arterial and major collector routes, especially at significant intersections
- Parks, recreational areas

Implementation Strategies

- Repair existing sidewalks and install new sidewalks where needed.
- Improve and increase paths and trails (pedestrian, bike, and/or golf cart).
- Pursue Federal and State grants and other programs to rehabilitate houses and upgrade houses where needed.
- Consider adopting senior housing design standards to encourage "aging-in-place" that address home and site features that are more functional for the elderly.

Figure 99: Example of good pedestrian infrastructure serving a traditional style residential neighborhood in Jasper

- Review and, where appropriate, revise Talking Rock's development regulations regarding new residential development and redevelopment regarding infill.

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Heritage Preservation
- Sense of Place
- Traditional Neighborhoods
- Infill Development
- Housing Choices

TALKING ROCK TOWN CENTER

Vision

The Talking Rock Town Center area retains its strong sense of place as well as its unique historic characteristics and remains a viable community center for both residents and visitors.

Talking Rock Town Hall and Fire Station

This home is an example of several historical structures in Talking Rock.

Narrative

Talking Rock's town center includes the Central Business District as well as surrounding areas on both sides of Highway 136 that contain a blend of commercial businesses, professional offices, and a few historic residential properties. This area has a blend of development patterns including traditional building facades, and lack of sidewalks. The commercial style buildings display historic architecture. Encouraging a mix of uses, including commercial (restaurants, services, office, retail) as well as residential will be important for long range economic vitality and sense of a community center.

Development Patterns

The development pattern should seek to:

- Retain and enhance existing building/housing stock with appropriate maintenance and rehabilitation.
- Promote a mix of uses to attract both residents and visitors.
- Develop the downtown as a focal point for community activities, public art displays, and festivals.
- Create a strong connection with adjoining neighborhoods via sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities.

Primary Land Uses

- Mixed commercial including retail, professional offices and services.
- Civic/institutional

- Single Family detached Residential
- Parks, public gathering places.

Implementation Strategies

- Create streetscape improvements to help create a more pedestrian friendly environment.
- Improve gateway landscaping and signage entering into downtown from all directions.
- Encourage entrepreneurial creativity with uses and facilities in the town center. Be flexible in working cooperatively with businesses and others on new ideas for downtown, including new development and redevelopment as well as various uses.

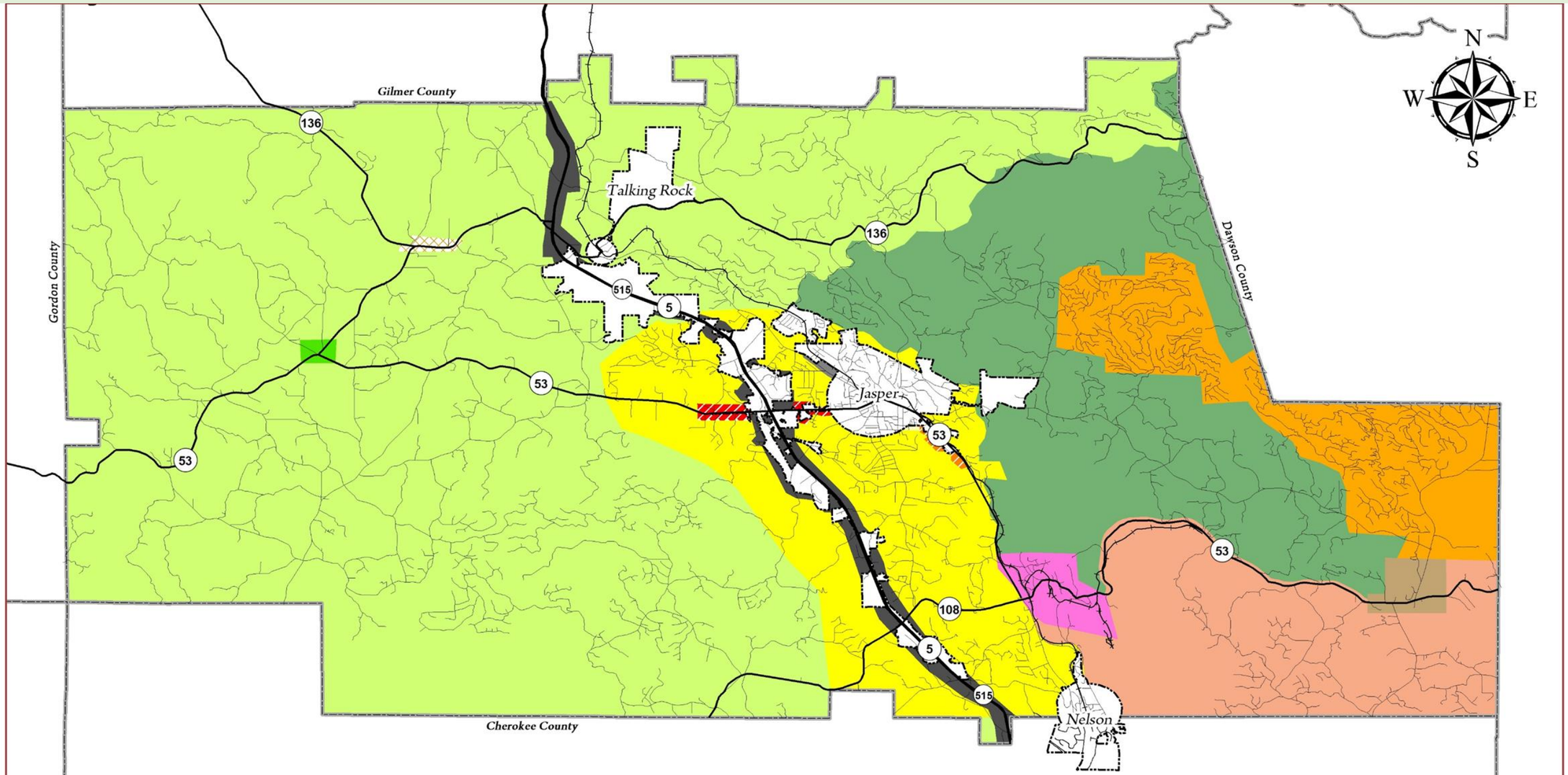
Figure 100: Example of walkable town center residential development in downtown Jasper

Quality Community Objectives to be pursued

- Heritage Preservation
- Sense of Place
- Housing Choices

FUTURE DEVELOPMENT MAPS

PICKENS COUNTY



Future Development Map - Pickens County, GA

1 in = 2 miles

City Limits
Railroads
Highways
Roads

Character Areas
Arterial Commercial Corridor
Blaine
Burnt Mt Cove Rd
East Jasper Gateway Corridor
East Pickens Conservation Area
Foothills Crossroads
Hinton
Marble Hill
North Jasper Corridor
Planned Communities
Rural Development
Suburban Area
Suburban Infill
Tate
West Jasper Gateway Corridor

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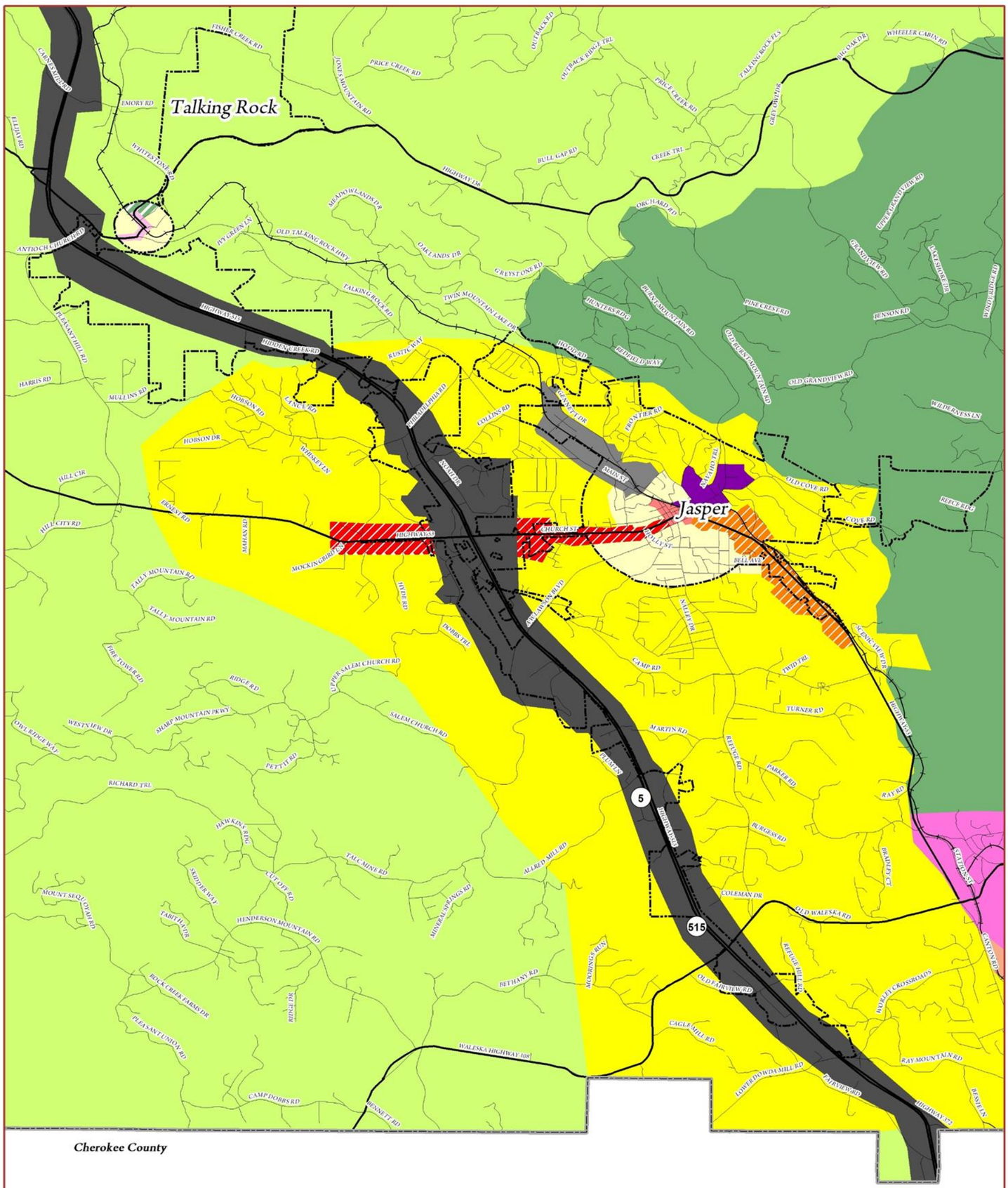

Future Development Map - Jasper, GA

- City Limits
- Roads
- Highways
- Railroads

Character Areas

- Arterial Commercial Corridor
- Burnt Mt Cove Rd
- East Jasper Gateway Corridor
- East Pickens Conservation Area
- Historic Downtown
- Marble Hill
- North Jasper Corridor
- Rural Development
- Suburban Area
- Suburban Infill
- Tate
- Town Center
- Traditional Neighborhood
- West Jasper Gateway Corridor

N W E S

1 in = 5,000 feet

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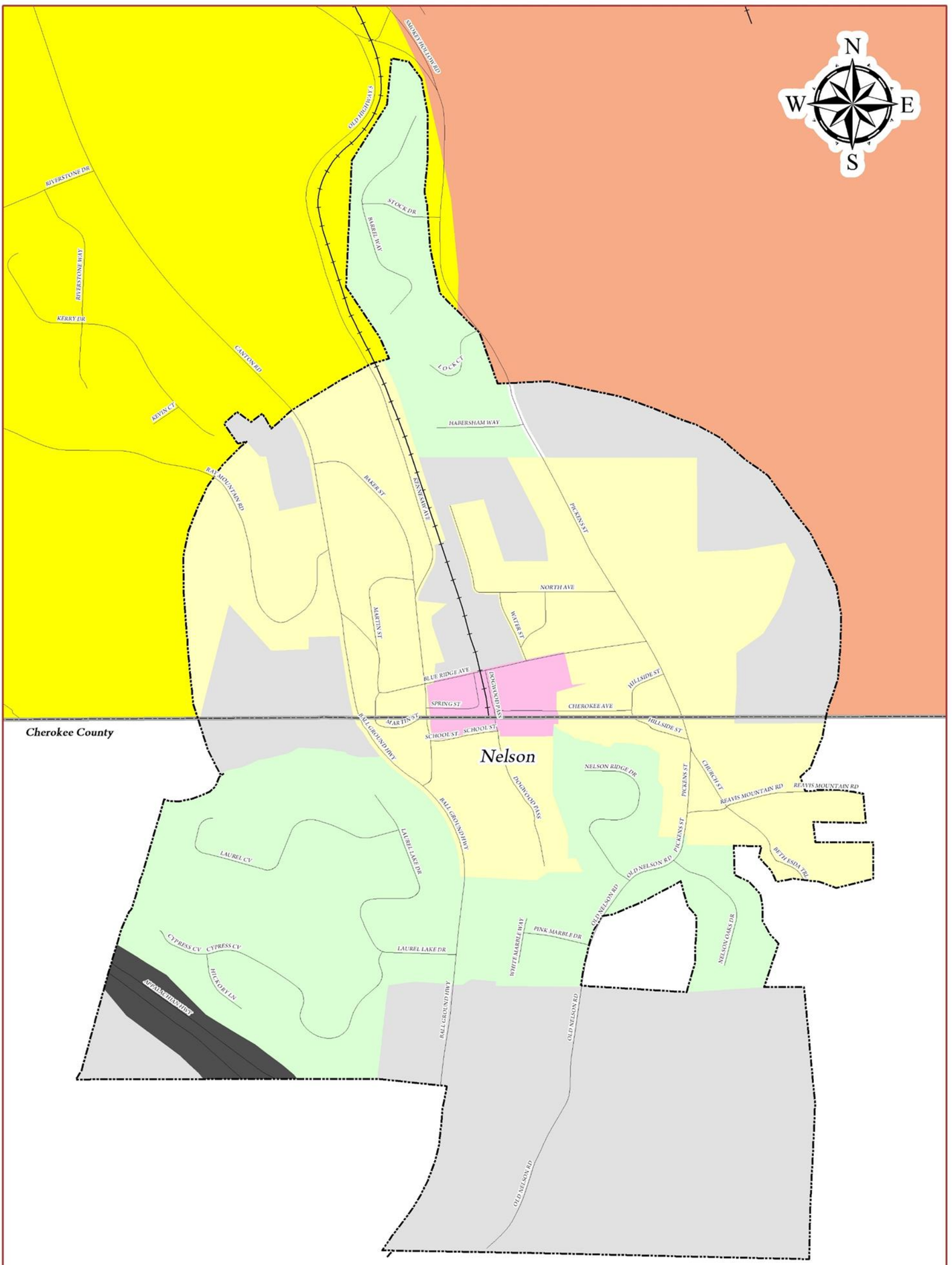

Future Development Map - Nelson, GA

1 in = 900 feet

City Limits
Roads
Highways
Railroads

Character Areas
Arterial Commercial Corridor
Industrial
Marble Hill
Suburban Infill
Suburban Neighborhood
Town Center
Traditional Neighborhood

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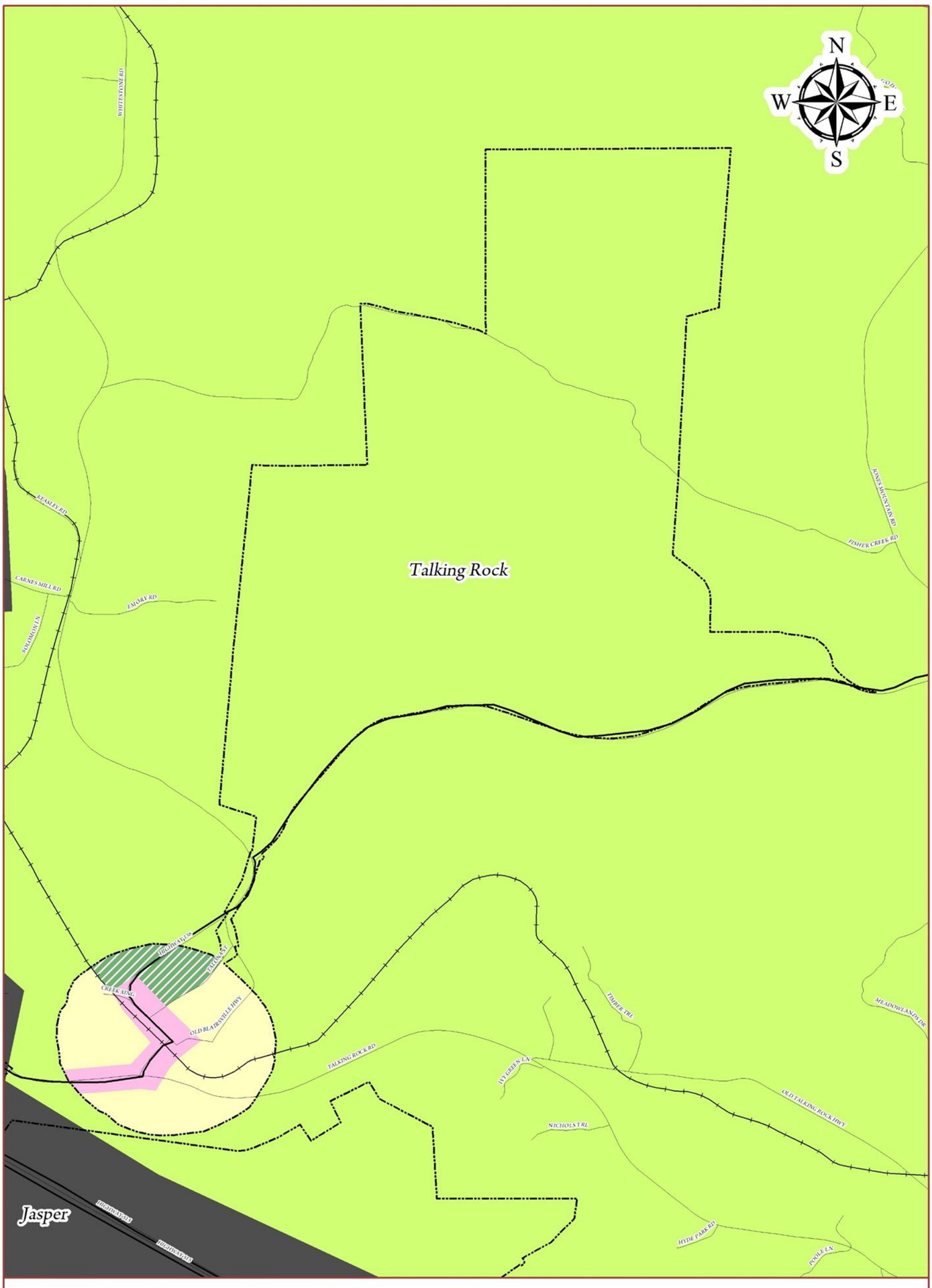

Future Development Map - Talking Rock, GA

1 in = 1,250 feet

City Limits
Roads
Highways
Railroads

Character Areas
Arterial Commercial Corridor
Rural Development

Suburban Area
Town Center
Traditional Neighborhood

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IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

METHODOLOGY

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The first step of plan implementation is to conduct a report of accomplishments specific to Pickens County, Jasper, Nelson, and Talking Rock respectively. The report of accomplishments show the results of past planning efforts. The status of each work program item can be found here. Since work programs are updated every five years, the items under consideration here are from the period from 2013-2017. The local government officials reviewed the 2013-2017 work programs for their respective governments and noted which projects had been completed. If projects were started but not completed, the "Underway" column was marked and the estimated year of completion was noted. There is no penalty for postponing or dropping a project, since this is a planning document and not a binding legal agreement. However, an explanation is required for postponed or dropped projects. For example, a project may not have been accomplished because voters rejected a ballot measure to fund it. Sometimes an item is dropped because it may have been a new initiative or new mandate several years ago, but over time it has become a routine or function of government. Items marked as underway or postponed are carried forward to the work programs in this current plan, *Pickens County Joint Comprehensive Plan, 2018-2022*. However, projects noted as "Ongoing," annual tasks, or policy statements will not be carried forward to the current 2018-2022 work program

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The required SWOT analysis, which stands for Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats, is a brainstorming exercise designed for stakeholders to reflect on their community's needs and opportunities. The exercise was carried out by addressing the entire group of stakeholders rather than separating the group by jurisdiction. Stakeholders had been presented the results of the community survey as well as a detailed presentation showing current population and economic trends in order to provide each stakeholder with the basis for an informed discussion during the initial stakeholder's meeting. The SWOT analysis was conducted during the second stakeholder's meeting. This discussion was broken down into seven categories, (Economic Development, Housing, Community Facilities and Services, Transportation, Natural/Cultural Resources, Land

Use, and Intergovernmental Coordination). One planner facilitated the discussion while the other wrote down the groups responses on a poster board. Stakeholders were given the opportunity to address each category with the SWOT perspective. These sheets were collected by the planners after the second stakeholder meeting and the responses were developed into a list of needs and opportunities which were then published in the Pickens County Progress, emailed to all stakeholders, and further discussed during the following stakeholder meetings. The joint list of needs and opportunities was then brought to each jurisdiction's staff and/or elected officials in order to determine which items could be addressed specific to each community. Some of the more overreaching viewpoints discussed during the stakeholder meetings were better addressed via policy statements and other area specific approaches within the character descriptions rather than the more action provoking items in the following list. This list, along with the character areas and policy statements were reviewed by the stakeholder's committee during the final stakeholder's meeting in April prior to being presented during the second public hearing.

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM

Figure 101: Vineyards in East Pickens County

The community work programs represent a list of specific tasks that the governments are willing to attempt accomplishing. Developing the work program from needs and opportunities lists helps to lead the residents and managers from general ideas about issues to creating specific tasks to solve them. It is not a contract or binding document, since many items that go on the list are dependent on funding that has not yet been awarded or obtained. Using the possible strategies from the Needs and Opportunities, planners created work program tables. The stakeholders, managers, and other government officials reviewed these work programs. The managers and/or elected officials had final say in the content of the work programs, because they are the officials who run the government. In the tables below incomplete projects can be found from the previous 2013-2017 work program as well as new projects for the 2018-2022 period. However, as stated previously, any items in the previous work program that would be considered a policy statement or an annual practice such as routine maintenance will not be carried forward in the current 2018-2022 work program as these items are not quantifiable projects with a clear beginning and end. In the first (left) column one will note the number which references the specific need or opportunity cited previously in the plan. The second column contains a brief description of the item or project to be carried out, followed by a timeline, an estimated cost, a funding source, and the party responsible for the project's completion.

PICKENS COUNTY

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2013-2017

Pickens County

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT						
Conduct Targeted Industry Analysis.	2015		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Work with private sector to develop more industrial properties.	2016-2017		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Implement "Entrepreneur Friendly" programs.	2013-2017		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Develop and implement a Business and Industry Retention Program.	2015		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Develop and promote tourism attractions.	2013-2017		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Continue to develop and promote the Pickens County Airport	2013-2017		Ongoing			Policy Statement
HOUSING						
Prepare "Senior Housing" Design Guidelines. (activity re-written)	2015		Underway			Chamber of Commerce working on various design guidelines
Prepare an affordable housing analysis	2016				X	Varying community views on affordable housing
Amend development regulations for "Aging in Place"	2013-2014	Complete				Depending on ability to get separate septic systems, multiple residential structures can be built on same property
TRANSPORTATION						
Implement *Transportation Study* recommended road improvements	2013-2017		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Implement *Transit Development Plan* recommendations	2013-2017		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Implement sidewalk/bicycle route recommendations of *Transportation Study*	2013-2017		Ongoing			Policy Statement

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2013-2017

Pickens County

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
Conduct a Joint City/County Street Connectivity Study for areas adjoining Jasper	2016			2021		Not sure of status
Amend Subdivision Regulations to require sidewalks in higher density residential areas adjacent to cities.	2015			2021		Varying community views on this possible new requirement.
NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES						
Adopt *Storm water Better Design Standards* recommended by the Storm Water Management Manual	2014			2020		Not required as of Dec 2017
Revise and improve Landscaping and Tree Preservation Ordinance	2016				X	Varying community views on this type of ordinance
Implement Total Maximum Daily Load Implementation Plans for Talking Rock and Long Swamp Creek	2013-2015	Some complete	Some ongoing			2004 Talking Rock Creek 2010 Long Swamp Creek Ongoing Talking Rock Creek
Prepare and adopt improved Grading (Cut & Fill) Standards	2015	Complete				
Establish a Historic Preservation Commission	2016				X	Varying community views on a possible new commission
Adopt the “Protection Implementation Plan” for the Upper Etowah River Basin	2013			2021		Not required as of Dec 2017
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES						
Construct new wastewater treatment facilities	2014-2017		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Expand water system distribution and storage	2013-2017		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Implement County *Recreation Master Plan* recommendations	2015-2017		Ongoing			Policy Statement

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2013-2017

Pickens County

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
Implement County *Fire Protection Plan* recommendations (stations & equipment)	2014-2017		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Develop a Capital Improvements Plan. (Activity rewritten)	2015				X	Not required as of Dec 2017
Implement *Solid Waste Management Plan* operations (Activity rewritten)	2013-2017		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Construct a new solid waste convenience center	2016				X	Not needed as of Dec 2017
Implement a comprehensive GIS system that is functional for all departments	2014-2015	Completed				
Complete improvements to the emergency communications system (911) in un-served portions of Pickens County	2014-2015	Dispatch improvements completed				
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION						
Revise and maintain Service Delivery Agreements	2013	Complete 2013	Ongoing 2017-18			Policy Statement
Continue participation in Northwest Georgia Regional Water Resources Partnership and Etowah River Basin Group	2013-2017		Ongoing			Policy Statement

PICKENS COUNTY NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ED1 Identify and address needs for industrial development and redevelopment, including Opportunity Zone management.

ED2 Retain existing businesses and industries in both traditional and trending business sectors.

ED3 Recruit and locate business and industry based on assets such as the Airport, logistics, and available skilled workforce.

ED4 Opportunities for alcohol-related restaurants and retail can be improved.

ED5 Promote area as a less regulated, more conservative, safer alternative to many Metro Atlanta communities.

ED6 Review permit process to create a more business-friendly approach.

HOUSING

H1 More developments of single-family, large-lot housing are needed in unincorporated Pickens County.

H2 Improve the range of affordable housing options available in unincorporated Pickens County.

H3 Demand for alternative housing options and materials is increasing.

TRANSPORTATION

T1 Plan for the Highway 515 growth corridor for regional commercial development.

T2 Improve East-West routes through Jasper and Pickens County for better traffic flow.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

NR1 The arts and cultural heritage need greater visibility in the community.

NR2 Protect and preserve greenspace in Pickens County as it is an unreplaceable asset.

NR3 Promote private parks including Eagle's Rest, STPAL Bike Park for citizens and tourists.

NR4 Seek out best water and environmental management practices.

NR5 Plan for changing water and environmental requirements; Participate in regional water and environmental planning and coordination.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

CF1 Improve county facilities, and replace road signage for visibility and to comply with standards.

CF2 Improve or repair recreation facilities and parks, and add new parks, openspace and greenspace.

CF3 Plan and provide for extension of existing waterlines and water facilities to better provide public water services to citizens and business owners that currently rely solely on costly on-site wells.

CF4 Increase efforts for regional water interconnectivity for emergency redundancy and to increase service areas.

CF5 Develop additional local water reserves to increase the county's current capacity in order to increase and improve the county water service area over time.

CF6 Plan for and provide emergency shelters for variety of natural disasters; update and implement Hazard Mitigation Plan.

CF7 Plan for and fund public service facilities, training and operations, including fire facilities to improve coverage (high ISO rating in areas).

CF8 Improve walkability in communities; use Complete Streets approach to add bicycle and pedestrian facilities where possible.

LAND USE

LU1 Review land development, land use ordinances, and code enforcement in order to ensure all no ordinances are in conflict and that all codes/ordinances are in line and up-to-date with state and federal laws and best practices.

LU2 Provide appropriate land use regulations to guide development along commercial corridors and in residential and agricultural areas to: protect and improve street views, ensure adjacent land uses do not conflict, preserve and improve economic property values, and protect the natural landscape throughout the county.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

IG1 Improve intergovernmental and interagency communication between county, all cities, Chamber, Sheriff's office, GDOT, State DCA, others for service provision and coordination, as well as emergency response.

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

PICKENS COUNTY

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT								
ED1	Work cooperatively with business representatives for new industrial development and redevelopment in the Marble Hill and southeast Pickens area, including annual efforts to report on the Opportunity Zone in the area. Review and, where appropriate, revise allowed industrial uses in chapter 67 of the Pickens County Code of Ordinances.	x	x	x	x	x	$2,000/yr	Time and effort of staff	Chamber and Planning & Development
ED2	Conduct and continually evaluate business and industrial retention efforts, whether for traditional uses such as manufacturing or for trending uses such as agri-tourism. Review and revise, where appropriate, newer uses that may not be specifically mentioned in chapter 67 of the Pickens County Code of Ordinances.	x	x	x	x	x	$2,000/yr	Time and effort of staff	Chamber and Planning & Development
ED3	Work cooperatively with business representatives for new developments in and around the Pickens County airport. Review and revise, where appropriate, airport-related business and industrial uses in chapter 67 of the Pickens County Code of Ordinances.	x	x	x	x	x	$2,000/yr	Time and effort of staff	Chamber and Planning & Development
ED4	Review alcohol ordinances and analyze whether or not changes may be appropriate to encourage and promote legitimate alcohol-related businesses such as restaurants. Review and revise, where appropriate, chapter 6 of the Pickens County Code of Ordinances.	x	x	x	x	x	$2,000/yr	Time and effort of staff	Chamber and Planning & Development
ED5	Promote the county as a less-regulated, more conservative, and safer alternative to many Metro Atlanta communities. Review and revise, where appropriate, chapters 4, 6, 16, 18, 38, and 67 of the Pickens County Code of Ordinances for better promotion.	x	x	x	x	x	$2,000/yr	Time and effort of staff	Chamber and Planning & Development
ED6	Review and analyze building permit and business license policies to streamline processes and promote a business-friendly culture. Review and revise, where appropriate,	x	x	x	x	x	$5,000/yr	Time and effort of staff	Chamber and Planning & Development

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

PICKENS COUNTY

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
	chapters 4, 6, 16, and 18 of the Pickens County Code of Ordinances to help streamline processes.								
	HOUSING								
H1	Encourage and promote additional developments of single-family residential with septic systems and larger lots in the county. Review and revise, where appropriate, chapters 38 and 67 of the Pickens County Code of Ordinances for increased promotion of this goal.	x	x	x	x	x	$5,000/yr	Time and effort of staff	Planning & Development
H2	Encourage and promote a variety of housing types in the county for affordability – various sizes; manufactured housing; modular housing; stick/site-built housing; etc. Flexibility in exterior finish material and roof pitch of housing in the county. Review and revise, where appropriate, chapters 38 and 67 of the Pickens County Code of Ordinances for increased promotion of this goal.	x	x	x	x	x	$5,000/yr	Time and effort of staff	Planning & Development
H3	Work cooperatively with citizens for alternative housing options such as earthcraft/green building materials; tiny houses; etc. that must be code-compliant as safe, permanent residential structures. Review and revise, where appropriate, chapters 16, 38, and 67 of the Pickens County Code of Ordinances regarding alternative housing definitions, uses, etc.	x	x	x	x	x	$5,000/yr	Time and effort of staff	Planning & Development
	TRANSPORTATION								
T1	Continue to encourage and promote highest and best regional commercial uses on the Hwy 515 corridor. Review and revise, where appropriate, chapters 4, 16, 18, 38, and 67 regarding the regional importance of the Hwy 515 corridor and regulations related to development, uses, signage, etc.	X	X	X	X	X	$5,000/yr	Time and effort of staff	Chamber and Planning & Development

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

PICKENS COUNTY

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
T2	Review and analyze East-West roads in the greater Jasper area such as Hwy 53, Philadelphia Rd, AW Lawson Blvd, to work cooperatively with Jasper representatives on transportation options and alternatives for persons seeking to smoothly and quickly drive East-West through and within the county. Improved signage may be one example of many possibilities that should be reviewed to improve traffic flow from one side of the county to the other.	x	x	x	x	x	$5,000/yr	Time and effort of staff	Roads and Planning & Development departments
	NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES								
NR1	Continue to work cooperatively with arts groups such as Pickens Arts and Cultural Alliance (PACA) and support and promote expansion of various arts programs. Examples include an active folk school and greater participation in events such as the Cornbread reunion. Continue and enhance activities related to marble/mining heritage including the Marble festival; Native American heritage; and historic preservation. Continue to support existing historic sites (Tate gym, Tate House, etc.) and identify new sites.	X	X	X	X	X	$5,000/yr	Time and effort of staff	Chamber and Planning & Development working with PACA and other groups
NR2	Continue to work cooperatively with private and nonprofit groups to conserve greenspace, including sensitive environmental areas such as creeks, floodplain areas, and steep-slope mountainous portions of the county. Review and revise, where appropriate, chapter 38 of the Pickens County Code of Ordinances regarding environmental and land development matters.	X	X	X	X	X	$5,000/yr	Time and effort of staff	Chamber and Planning & Development
NR3	Continue to encourage, support, and promote private parks such as Eagle's Rest and the STPAL (Southeastern Trust for Parks and Land) parks.	x	x	x	x	x	$5,000/yr	Time and effort of staff	Chamber and Planning & Development

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

PICKENS COUNTY

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
NR4	Continue to participate in continuing education sessions each year related to stormwater management; floodplain management; safe dams; best practices in soil erosion & sedimentation control; water quality; etc. Review and revise, where appropriate, chapter 38 of the Pickens County Code of Ordinances regarding stormwater management and related matters.	X	X	X	X	X	$5,000/yr	Time and effort of staff	Planning & Development
NR5	Continue to participate in regional water and environmental groups such as the Coosawattee Regional Water & Sewer Authority; Georgia Rural Water Association; North Georgia Water Resources Partnership; Upper Etowah River Alliance; etc. Review and revise, where appropriate, sections of the Pickens County Code of Ordinances related to water based on changing regulations and policies.	X	X	X	X	X	$5,000/yr	Time and effort of staff	Planning & Development and Water departments
	COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES								
CF1	Continue current renovations and expansions of the Roads department and Recycling center headquarters on Camp Road. Continue current county wide sign replacement. Continue replacing all old 6 inch engineered grade street name signs with new signs, size is determined by speed limit, that meet the current reflectivity standards set forth by the MUTCD. Also continue replacing all road signs in the county that do not meet the current reflectivity or size requirements. These include stop signs, yield signs, stop ahead signs, speed limit signs, etc, just to name a few.	x	x	x	x	x	$10,000/yr	Various sources of funding	Roads department
CF2	Continue renovations to Roper Park on Camp Road, including the pool. Plan for park expansion if nearby property acquisition becomes feasible. Plan for one or	x	x	x	x	x	$75,000	Various sources of funding	Parks & Recreation department

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

PICKENS COUNTY

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
	more new significant size parks at one or more ends of the county (west, north, or east).								
Cf2	Implement 2006 County Parks and Recreation Plan	x	x	x	x	x	$50,000	Various sources of funding	Parks & Recreation department
CF2	Review feasibility of property acquisitions in various parts of the county (Blaine, Hinton, Ludville, Marble Hill, Tate, etc.) for new small parks and consider partnerships with private and nonprofit park properties	x	x	x	x	x	$200,000	Time and effort of staff	Parks & Recreation department
CF3, CF4	Continue program of targeted, appropriate line extensions such as the Jones Mountain Rd line extension. Continue program of working with adjacent counties for regional water interconnectivity, including possible future connection with Dawson County (Etowah Water & Sewer Authority) lines.	x	x	x	x	x	$100,000	Various sources of funding	Water department
CF5	Continue current project for Grandview Lake dam reservoir. Continue to work cooperatively with public and private partners on this project.	x	x	x	x	x	$50,000	Various sources of funding	Water department
CF6	Continue ongoing project for additional temporary emergency shelters for certain natural and/or manmade disasters/situations. Continue to utilize, evaluate, and revise the Pickens Hazard Mitigation Plan where needed. Continue ongoing project to have generator back-up capacity for various county facilities. Continue annual emergency management training and certification.	x	x	x	x	x	$100,000	Various sources of funding	Emergency Management and other departments
CF7	Continue current project for new Carlan Rd fire station. Continue project to review possibilities for renovated or relocated Tate fire station. Continue to maintain great services and aim for lower ISO rating in various parts of the county.	x	x	x	x	x	$50,000/yr	Various sources of funding	Fire department working with other departments

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

PICKENS COUNTY

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
CF7	Sheriff's office will renovate and reuse a portion of the former Jasper Middle School building(s) and property for a public safety training facility.	x	x	x	x	x	$20,000	Non-tax related income from Sheriff's Dept.	Sheriff's department working with other departments
CF8	Review feasibility of projects to improve existing sidewalk (especially the less than one mile section of Tate between the depot and elementary school) and add new sidewalk, multi-use paths, and other similar infrastructure.	X	X	X	X	X	$20,000	GDOT funding	Planning & Development, Parks & Recreation, Roads departments
	LAND USE								
LU1	Review and analyze chapter 38 (land development) and chapter 67 (land use/zoning) sections of the Pickens County Code of Ordinances for possible needed revisions based on the comprehensive plan	x	x	x	x	x	$5,000/yr	Targeted and budgeted time and effort of staff	Planning & Development
LU1	Review and evaluate ways to better enforce existing land use rules and regulations in the Pickens County Code of Ordinances. Review and revise, where appropriate, violations sections of various chapters (including 38 and 67) of the Pickens County Code of Ordinances.	X	X	X	X	X	$6,000	Targeted and budgeted time and effort of staff	Planning & Development
LU2	Encourage and promote commercial development and land use/zoning for commercial on Hwy 515 and Hwy 53, with industrial potential on a parcel-by-parcel basis. Encourage nonresidential development on other state routes to a lesser degree. Review and revise, where appropriate, chapters 38 and 67 of the Pickens County Code of Ordinances regarding this promotional goal.	X	X	X	X	X	$5,000/yr	Targeted and budgeted time and effort of staff	Planning & Development
LU2	Encourage and promote residential and agricultural uses and land use/zoning on local (non-State) roads. Review and revise, where appropriate, chapters 38 and 67 regarding this promotional goal.	x	x	x	x	x	$2,000/yr	Targeted and budgeted time and effort of staff	Planning & Development

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

PICKENS COUNTY

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
	INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION								
IG1	Continue cooperative agreements for intergovernmental service provision. Continue agreements for back-up service provision in worst-case scenarios. Continue day to day communication with various organizations. Coordinate positive efforts between the Chamber, county, and cities to promote economic development efforts for new developments, redevelopment, and existing business retention throughout the community.	x	x	x	x	x	$10,000	Time and effort of staff	Various county departments; Chamber; and cities

CITY OF JASPER

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2013-2017

City of Jasper

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT						
Continue supporting joint City and County Economic Development Council and director	2013-2017	X				Policy Statement
Establish Main Street Program for Downtown Development Authority	2013				X	Lack of staff time
TRANSPORTATION						
Implement streetscape improvements on West Church Street	2017			2020		Project will be completed using future splost funds. City lacked funding for this project.
Implement streetscape improvements on Burnt Mountain Road	2016			2020		Project will be completed using future splost funds. City lacked funding for this project.
Implement streetscape improvements on East Church Street	2016			2020		Project will be completed using future splost funds. City lacked funding for this project.
Implement streetscape improvements and install lighting on SR 515 within city limits	2015			2022		Lack of Funding
Construct four lane road and one-way pair on 53 west from SR515 thru Downtown Jasper	2016-2017			2018		Due to gdot project not completed.

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2013-2017

City of Jasper

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
Revise Zoning Ordinance to create Overlay Districts for West Church St., East Church St., and SR 515 to address building setbacks, mixed uses, inter-parcel access, landscaping and lighting	2013			2020		Project will be completed using future splost funds. City lacked funding for this project.
Revise and improve Sign Regulations	2013		2018			Project will be completed using future splost funds. City lacked funding for this project.
Enhance traffic flow in Central Business District by creating north and south one way traffic	2015			2022		Public support lacking
Roundabout construction – Burnt Mountain/Pioneer Rd	2015			2019		Project will be completed using future splost funds. City lacked funding for this project.
Roundabout construction-- Burnt Mountain Rd/Cove Rd	2016			2022		Project will be completed using future splost funds. City lacked funding for this project.
Roundabout construction-- Pioneer Rd/Indian Forest Rd	2016			2022		Project will be completed using future splost funds. City lacked funding for this project.
Adopt Architectural Standards with masonry requirement for commercial uses.	2013			2020		We were in a recession and the city did not want to pass rules that would limit growth.
Participate in implementation of County-wide Long Range Transportation Plan	2013-2017				X	Lack of current funding. Policy statement
Resurface all roads in city limits	2015-2017		2020			
Gateway at SR 515 and Hwy 53 intersection	2016			2022		Lack of funding.
Gateway at SR 515 and Hwy 108 intersection	2017			2022		Lack of funding.
NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES						
Revise and improve Landscaping & Tree Preservation Ordinance	2014				X	Lack of funding.

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2013-2017

City of Jasper

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
Relocation of approximately 2,000 trees from local tree farm donated to City	2013-2014	X				
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES						
Expand sewer collection system to planned growth areas	2013-2014	X				
Expand wastewater treatment plant to 1.56 m.g.d. capacity to reuse capability	2013			2019		Postponed due to economic downturn.
Participate in development of Impact Fee program	2016			2020		Postponed due to economic downturn.
Construct a water reservoir – land has been purchased, but construction may be nearer to 2035.				2035		Long Range Item
Installation of water and sewer infrastructure on Hwy 515	2013-2017	X				
Expand water treatment plant to 3.0 m.g.d.	2015			2020		Reviewing cost of construction
Build a fire department station on SR 515	2016			2021		
Acquire an aerial platform firefighting vehicle	2016			2020		Project will be completed using future splost funds. City lacked funding for this project.
Construct new police precinct on Hwy 515	2016			2019		Project will be completed using future splost funds. City lacked funding for this project.
Develop off-road recreational trails, connecting to central business district	2013-2016			2021		Need funding and land acquisition.
Purchase Fire Engine Pumper Truck	2017		2018			
Build 65 ac. Park with hiking trails, picnic	2013	X				
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION						
Revise or maintain the Service Delivery Strategy Agreements	2013-2017	X				

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2013-2017

City of Jasper

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
Participate in North Georgia Water Resources Partnership activities	2013-2017			2019		

CITY OF JASPER NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ED1 Improve gateways leading into Jasper, including W. Church St, the SR 515 and Hwy 53 intersection, and the SR 515 and Hwy 108 intersection

ED2 Renew downtown development efforts led by the Downtown Development Authority to incentivize local retail and restaurants, and housing, through programming, marketing, infrastructure, incentives, and assistance.

ED3 Dispose of surplus property with revenues to fund identified shortages.

ED4 Implement streetscaping, lighting, signage and design projects to improve downtown Jasper's visual appeal and ease of navigation.

HOUSING

H1 Incentivize multi-family and single family housing at appropriate densities for a variety of incomes and age groups.

TRANSPORTATION

T1 Hwy 515 continues to be a main growth location and should have corridor planning for needed infrastructure and zoning to guide additional growth.

T2 Provide needed road improvements to increase visibility and safety, improve traffic flows and mitigate traffic congestion, including along the Jasper-Tate corridor (SR 53).

T3 Implement streetscape improvements including sidewalks, pedestrian crossings, median islands, striping, signage and lighting, and landscaping.

T4 Provide additional parking areas or trailheads to improve access to parks and resources.

LAND USE

LU1 Adopt architectural control standards to create a cohesive appearance within an area.

LU2 Update and administer local land use and development regulations to improve how downtown Jasper looks, feels, and works as a great place to shop, eat and relax.

PARKS AND RECREATION

PR1 Improve or repair public sites and parks including landscaping, facilities, parking and access, and connectivity to residential and downtown areas

PR2 Add new parks, openspace and greenspace with connections to downtown and residential neighborhoods, including Doris Wiggington Park and the Perrow/Pool/Roper greenspace.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

CF1 Use holistic, planned approach to improve infrastructure in areas where commercial growth, greater residential density or additional private investment is desired.

CF2 Increase water storage and wastewater treatment capacity and infrastructure to serve areas where growth is desired and to meet future demands.

CF3 Plan and provide for maintenance and improvement of existing water and sewer infrastructure.

CF4 Promote orderly growth and development by establishing uniform standards to require that new growth and development pay a proportionate share of the cost of new public facilities needed to serve new development.

CF5 Preserve safe living conditions by fully funding facilities and equipment needed by public services (fire, police, emergency providers)

CF6 Ensure signs, streetscapes and trails meet ADA regulations.

CF7 Map public infrastructure investments.

CF8 Provide needed public amenities including restrooms and ADA access

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

IG1 To better anticipate future needs and ensure that resources are available to meet those needs, participate in county-wide, regional, and state planning and coordination efforts

IG2 Improve intergovernmental and interagency communication between Pickens County, Jasper, Nelson, and Talking Rock, the Chamber, the Sheriff's office, GDOT, State DCA and other agencies.

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

CITY OF JASPER

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT								
ED2	Establish Main Street Program for Downtown Development Authority			X			$ 10,000	GENERAL FUND	City Manager
ED3	Sell and/or develop properties previously donated to the city and designate funds and/or properties in order to fully fund the city's retirement plan with GMA.		X				$ 3,000	GENERAL/WATER OR FUNDS FROM SALES	City Manager
CF1	Extend a 10 inch water main from the northernmost 500 gal water tank located at Appalachian Court north to the city limits line located at Antioch Church Road and SR 515		X				$ 250,000	Water/Sewer Revenue, Cost of Construction Aid, Sale of Leachate, ARC grant, Rural Develepment grant, GEFA loan and/or sale of revenue bonds	Water Dept.
CF1	Add a parallell line of sanitary sewer line and install four pump stations from Philadelphia Road north to Antioch Church Road and 515.		X				$ 1,500,000	Water/Sewer Revenue, Cost of Construction Aid, Sale of Leachate, ARC grant, Rural Develepment grant, GEFA loan and/or sale of revenue bonds	Water Dept.
ED4	Paint all poles on Main and directional wayfinding signage	X					$ 25,000	2018 operational budget	Public Works
ED4	Lighting for downtown Main Street	X					$ 20,000	2018 operational budget	Public Works

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

CITY OF JASPER

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
PR2	Develop the city property known as the Perrow/Pool/Roper greenspace. If appropriate, depending on a majority consensus, development could be completed by a consultant.	X	X				$ 30,000	General Fund	Public Works
	HOUSING								
H1	Housing Authority to build 20 units on Mary Street		X				$ 1,000,000	Federal Government	Housing Authority
H1	Review and revise, if majority consensus agrees, City standards to encourage additional condos, townhouses, and apartments.		X	X			$ 1,000	General Fund	City Manager
	TRANSPORTATION								
T3, CF6	Implement streetscape improvements on West Church Street			X			$ 20,000	SPLOST	Public Works
T3, CF6	Implement streetscape improvements on Burnt Mountain Road			X			$ 20,000	SPLOST	Public Works
T3, CF6	Implement streetscape improvements on East Church Street 2023	leave		X			$ 20,000	SPLOST	Public Works
T3, CF6	Implement streetscape improvements and install lighting on SR 515 within city limits					X	$ 100,000	SPLOST	Public Works

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

CITY OF JASPER

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
T2	Construct four lane road and one-way pair on 53 west from SR515 thru Downtown Jasper	X					$30,000,000 - $50,000,000	Federal Government and GDOT	GDOT
LU1	Revise Zoning Ordinance to create Overlay Districts for West Church St., East Church St., and SR 515 to address building setbacks, mixed uses, inter-parcel access, landscaping and lighting			X			$ 5,000	General Fund	City Manager
LU2	Revise and improve Sign Regulations	X					$ 2,000	Staff Time	City Manager
CF6	Update all street signage to meet MUTCD regulations		X				$ 10,000	SPLOST	Public Works
T2	Enhance traffic flow in Central Business District by creating north and south one way traffic if majority consensus occurs					X	$ 50,000	SPLOST	Public Works
T2	Roundabout construction – Burnt Mountain/Pioneer Rd		X				$ 150,000	SPLOST	Public Works
T2	Roundabout construction-- Burnt Mountain Rd/Cove Rd					X	$ 150,000	SPLOST	Public Works
T2	Roundabout construction-- Pioneer Rd/Indian Forest Rd					X	$ 150,000	SPLOST	Public Works

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

CITY OF JASPER

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
LU1	Adopt Architectural Standards with masonry requirement for commercial uses.			X			$ 2,000	General Fund	City Manager
T2	Resurface all roads in city limits			X			$ 6,000,000	SPLOST	Public Works
ED1	Gateway at SR 515 and Hwy 53 intersection					X	$ 20,000	GDOT	GDOT
ED1	Gateway at SR 515 and Hwy 108 intersection					X	$ 20,000	GDOT	GDOT
T2	Build a decel lane in front of middle school on Hwy 53 to Holly Street	X					$ 50,000	GDOT	GDOT
T2	Improve Appalachian Trail to handle excess State Route 53 traffic	X					$ 50,000	SPLOST	Public Works
T2	Resurface Main Street	X					$ 100,000	SPLOST	Public Works
T2, T3	Repair and replace traffic lights on State Route 53 (replace with mast arms) at Main St and Sammy McGee Blvd and SR 53	X					$ 250,000	GDOT	GDOT
T4	Construct parking from the wood bridge to Old Federal Road					X	$ 100,000	SPLOST	Public Works
T2	Build a connection road from Brock Supply on SR 53 to Industrial Blvd at AW Lawson's pasture				X		$ 400,000	GA DOT & SPLOST	Public Works

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

CITY OF JASPER

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
T2	Extend Pine St. to intersect Burnt Mountain Rd. and Pioneer Rd. including a roundabout intersection at Pioneer and Burn Mountain Roads.			X			$ 200,000	SPLOST	Public Works
ED2, ED4, T2	Conduct downtown parking study to determine current and future needs		X	X			$ 10,000	SPLOST	City Manager
	COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES								
CF2	Expand wastewater treatment plant to 1.56 m.g.d. capacity to land application/reuse capability		X				$ 7,000,000	Cost of Construction aid, water & sewer revenues, leachate revenues, ARC grant, Rural Development and other grants, GEFA loans, potential municipal bonds and future designated SPLOST funds	Water Dept.
CF4	Participate in development of Impact Fee program to better account for current and future community needs			X			$ 5,000	Water/Sewer fund	City Manager
CF1, CF2	Construct a water reservoir – land has been purchased, but construction may be nearer to 2035. Conduct strategic planning and development feasibility study identifying needs, resources, and approval strategies.	Long Range Item					$ 50,000,000	Cost of Construction aid, water & sewer revenues, leachate revenues, ARC grant, Rural Development and other grants, GEFA loans, potential municipal	City Manager

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

CITY OF JASPER

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
								bonds and future designated SPLOST funds	
CF1, CF2	Expand water treatment plant to 3.0 m.g.d.			X			$ 5,000,000	Cost of Construction aid, water & sewer revenues, leachate revenues, ARC grant, Rural Development and other grants, GEFA loans, potential municipal bonds and future designated SPLOST funds	Water Dept.
CF1, CF5, T1	Build a fire department station on SR 515				X		$ 500,000	General Fund, Future impact fee, Future SPLOST	Fire Dept.
CF5	Acquire an aerial platform firefighting vehicle			X			$ 1,000,000	General Fund, Future impact fee, Future SPLOST	Fire Dept.
CF5	Refurbish the city-owned cabin on Liberty Lane to hold new Police Precinct		X				$ 10,000	General Fund	City Manager
PR2	Develop off-road recreational trails, connecting to central business district from Arbor Hills Subd to downtown Jasper (approx Woodbridge area)		X		X		$ 500,000	General Fund, Future impact fee, Future SPLOST	Public Works
CF5	Purchase Fire Engine Pumper Truck	X					$ 750,000	General Fund, Future impact fee, Future SPLOST	Fire Dept.

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

CITY OF JASPER

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
CF1, CF2	Work with local mining operations (Polycor and Imerys) to obtain raw water locations at Tate, Marble Hill and Whitestone		X				$ 50,000	WATER/SEWER REVENUE, GEFA ARC GRANT	City Manager
CF3, CF7	GIS mapping system to map all City infrastructure		X				$ -	PAID FOR SYSTEM IN 2017 - STILL WORKING ON MAPPING	City Manager
CF8	Build city public restrooms. Identify needs and follow all state-related standards (health, life safety, etc) during construction	X	X				$ 20,000	General Fund	Public Works
PR2, CF6, CF8	Doris Wigington Park: two sets bathrooms, pavilion, and improve signage.			X			$ 100,000	Trail Grant from DNR and General Fund dollars	Public Works
PR1, CF6, CF8	Jasper City Park: landscape top of water fall		X				$ 5,000	General Fund	Public Works
PR1, CF6, CF8, ED2, ED4	Maintain Wood Bridge			X			$ 50,000	SPLOST	Public Works
CF3	Paint all water tanks (5)			X			$ 700,000	Cost of Construction aid, water & sewer revenues, leachate revenues, ARC grant, Rural Development and other grants, GEFA loans, potential municipal bonds and future designated SPLOST funds	Water Dept.

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

CITY OF JASPER

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
	INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION								
IG1, IG2	Revise or maintain the Service Delivery Strategy Agreements	X					$ 1,000	Staff Time	Mayor and City Manager
IG1	Participate in the North Georgia Water Resources Partnership	X	X	X	X	X	$ 10,000	Water and Sewer Fund	Water Dept.

CITY OF NELSON

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2013-2017

City of Nelson

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT						
Develop an economic marketing feature in a proposed Nelson web site to present a positive pictorial image of Nelson, and provide basic demographic and economic information about Nelson to attract new investment in industrial park. (activity re-written)	2013		X 2019			Current City website has been upgraded and is coming along nicely. We are looking into budgeting money to have a professional site developed where more information could be presented to those that visit the site.
Meet with owners of Lafarge and CW Matthews Company to discuss annexation of quarries and processing plants.	2013				X	There seemed to be no interest in annexation by these companies at this time.
Meet with industrial park realtors to coordinate promoting their listings with County Economic Development entities.	2013				X	There was no active interest at the time this was initially presented, however we intend to revisit this now that the economy has improved by way of a policy.
Meet with each employer in Nelson to identify any assistance the city might offer or issues that need to be addressed.	2013	X				While this was completed, this will be an ongoing activity so that the City may keep in touch with the needs of its employers.
Meet and cooperate with commercial and Industrial property owners to facilitate industrial Park site development. (Activity re-written)	2013		X 2019			
HOUSING						

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2013-2017

City of Nelson

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
Conduct a bi-annual survey to identify and initiate building code enforcement process as adopted in 2012 by City Council, to bring unsafe or deteriorated properties or structures into compliance.	2014 2016			X		This was postponed due to problems with organization and abuse of power by those assigned to these duties. This will be an activity that will be revisited at the Council's request.
TRANSPORTATION						
Improve drainage on Ray Mountain Road (Activity re-written)	2013	X				
Prepare and adopt a street lighting and sidewalk improvement plan for inclusion in capital improvements program. (Activity re-written.)	2014			X		This item was postponed due to other projects that required priority as well as a lack of interest at the time.
Identify, prioritize and recommend streets and roadways to be included in Nelson capital improvements program for resurfacing, patching or repair. (Activity re-written.)	2013		X 2020			
Review feasibility of converting all narrow streets that do not meet minimum widths for two lane traffic, into being signed as one way streets.	2013	X				
Recommend a plan of action to monitor and replace faded traffic signage. Recommend a schedule for bringing traffic signage up to new proposed State signage standards.	2013	X				
NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES						
Continue to gather and organize information, photos and artifacts documenting the history of Nelson and supporting Marble Industry History Museum. (Activity re-written.)	2013-2017	X				This is something that the City wishes to continue doing as long as possible. As more items become available, they will be added to the museum.

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2013-2017

City of Nelson

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES						
Identify and relocate to semi-permanent location, (adjacent to City Maintenance building) the current recycling containers. Create a recycling facility that is safe, attractive and easily accessible to the public.	2013			X 2022		The City has been struggling to find a company that will provide recycling service. There was no point in constructing anything until a provider is found.
Construct a retention wall at the North end of the City Hall parking lot, with attractive and low maintenance landscaping.	2014		X 2020			
Identify key entrance points into the City of Nelson, and construct and erect "Welcome to Nelson" entrance identification signage.	2014	X				
Renovate and upgrade existing Kiddy Park facility and play equipment. (Activity re-written)	2013	X				
Construct a picnic table/open shelter, and expand existing half basketball court to regulation High School size half basketball court, at the city water tower property and Pickens Street.	2015				X	This item was dropped due to lack of interest for such a project by residents of the City.
Complete Nelson's construction of phase one of Cherokee County Parks Bond project.	2014	X				
Recommend capital improvement construction phases for Nelson Master Park Plan development. Phase 2, new covered picnic sites, additional parking and baseball field upgrades. Phase 3, new walking and hiking trails, and additional parking.	2015-2017	X				

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2013-2017

City of Nelson

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION						
Coordinate with both Pickens and Cherokee County Economic Development Offices to attract new industrial/commercial investment in and adjacent to the City of Nelson.	2013-2017		X			Policy statement not included in new Community Work Program

CITY OF NELSON NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ED1 Improve public access to data, information and the history of Nelson to generate tourism and community pride.

HOUSING

H1 Improve housing conditions for senior citizens.

H2 Preserve, and rehabilitate where needed, existing housing stock especially near the city center area.

TRANSPORTATION

T1 Improve walkability and connections from the City Center to other areas of the City; use Complete Streets approach to add bicycle and pedestrian facilities where possible

T2 Improve safe access to Marble Plant.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

NR1 Make Nelson's history more visible and accessible for guests and residents.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

CF1 Improve City Hall parking and grounds.

CF2 Senior citizens and all residents need an accessible center for programs and events.

CF3 Gateway entrances to Nelson should reflect the City's history and heritage.

CF4 Stormwater improvements are needed to prevent damage to streets and housing.

LAND USE

LU1 Ensure land use ordinances and maps are in compliance with current State law.

LU2 Improve public access to City's zoning ordinances, maps and procedures.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

IC1 Develop partnership with a county for zoning and code enforcement.

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

CITY OF NELSON

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT								
ED1	Improve the City's website provide basic demographic, economic, and historical information about Nelson.		X				$5,000	General Fund	City Manager
ED1	Meet and cooperate with commercial and Industrial property owners to facilitate industrial Park site development. (Activity re-written)		X				$2,000	Staff Time	City Manager
	HOUSING								
H1, H2	Identify a specific area within the City with a concentration of low-income senior citizen home owners in order to apply for CDBG grant funding to assist with needed home improvements to create safe and decent housing for the City's aging population and prevent the deterioration of existing housing stock.		X				$2,000	Staff Time	City Manager, Mayor & Council
H1, H2	Submit a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) to find a qualified grant application author and administrator for the City's CDBG application for existing senior housing preservation and rehabilitation.			X			$1,000	Staff Time	City Manager, Mayor & Council
H1, H2	Hire a qualified grant application author to apply for the City's CDBG application for existing senior housing stock preservation and rehabilitation.				X		$8,000	General Fund	City Manager, Mayor & Council
	TRANSPORTATION								
T1	Improve pedestrian walkability from City Hall to other areas within the City. (Phase 1) Kennesaw Avenue starting at Blue Ridge Avenue to School Street			X			$70,000	SPLOST GDOT Grant	City Manager, Mayor & Council
T1	Connect the City center to other City areas. (Phase 2) School Street from Kennesaw Avenue to Dogwood Pass				X		$60,000	SPLOST GDOT Grant	City Manager, Mayor & Council

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

CITY OF NELSON

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
T1	Connect the community center to other City areas. (Phase 3) Dogwood Pass from School Street back to Blue Ridge Avenue					X	$75,000	SPLOST GDOT Grant	City Manager, Mayor & Council
T1, T2	Create a turning lane at the intersection of Kennesaw Avenue and Blue Ridge Avenue which will be safer for residents and allow for truck traffic to better enter the Marble Plant.		X				$85,000	SPLOST & LMIG	City Manager, Mayor & Council
	NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES								
NR1	Partner with a Historical/Heritage Society that will assist in managing and promoting the City's local history museum.					X	$1,000	Staff Time	City Manager, Mayor & Council
NR1	Create a comprehensive inventory of the contents of the Marble Museum which can be maintained and updated as items are added.				X		$3,000	Staff Time, General Fund	City Manager, Mayor & Council
NR1	Create a project plan to organize, display, and preserve items housed in the Marble Museum.					X	$5,000	Staff Time, General Fund	City Manager, Mayor & Council
	COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES								
CF1	Construct a retention wall at the North end of the city hall parking lot, with attractive and low maintenance materials.			X			$12,000	General Fund	City Manager, Mayor & Council
CF1	Develop a feasibility study and preliminary architectural report to develop a community building/senior center.	X					$10,000	SPLOST Funding	City Manager, Mayor & Council

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

CITY OF NELSON

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
CF2	Design and construct a community building/senior center.					X	$250,000	SPLOST Funding	City Manager, Mayor & Council
CF3	Create a large "Welcome to Nelson" gateway sign at the main corridor entrance of the City representing the City's history and heritage.		X				$25,000	GDOT Gateway Grant	City Manager, Mayor & Council
CF4	Storm water Improvement Project (Phase 1) Cherokee Avenue	X					$70,000	SPLOST & LMIG	City Manager, Mayor & Council
CF4	Storm water Improvement Project (Phase 2) Kennesaw Ave. between School St. and Spring St.		X				$100,000	SPLOST & LMIG	City Manager, Mayor & Council
CF1	Identify and relocate to semi-permanent location, (adjacent to City Maintenance building) the current recycling containers. Create a recycling facility that is safe, attractive and easily accessible to the public.					X	$10,000	General Fund	City Manager
	LAND USE								
LU1	Review and amend the City's zoning ordinances, procedures, and standards to make sure they are compliant with current State Law.			X			$4,000	Legal fees and staff time	City Manager & City Attorney
LU2	Partner with NWGRC to update and digitize the City's zoning map.	X					$1,000	Staff Time	City Manager, City Attorney & NWGRC
LU2	Make zoning map, ordinances, and procedures available digitally via the City's website.					X	$2,000	Staff time	City Manager

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022

CITY OF NELSON

Need/ Opportunity Code:	Activity Description	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
	INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION								
IC1	Enter into an intergovernmental agreement with a County to carry out zoning and code enforcement for the City.					X	TBD, Annual Contract	General Fund	City Manager, City Attorney, Mayor, & Council

TOWN OF TALKING ROCK

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2013-2017

Town of Talking Rock

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT						
Restore railroad cars for use as tourist attractions and festival events.	2016			2021		Lack of current funding
Continue to sponsor Heritage Days Festival.	2013-2017		On-Going			Policy Statement
Coordinate with the Pickens County Chamber of Commerce Tourism Committee to market and promote tourist attractions.	2013-2017		On-Going			Policy Statement
HOUSING						
No activities identified.						
TRANSPORTATION						
Review and revise Zoning Ordinance	2013-2017		2020			
NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES						
Coordinate with Upper Etowah River Alliance to restore sections of Talking Rock Creek and reduce erosion at town park.	2015		On-Going			Policy Statement
Create and conduct a children's environmental program emphasizing water conservation (using creek) and recycling. (activity re-written)	2013				X	Lack of staff time

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2013-2017

Town of Talking Rock

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
Establish a citizen committee to assemble historic facts that are worthy of publication and dedicated to making the Town of Talking Rock a tourism destination.	2014-2015		2020			
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES						
Build handicapped accessible trails in the town park (one-half length is now complete)	2015			2019		Lack of current funding
Complete streetscape plan for downtown street, parking areas, and Festival area.	2016-2017		2020			
Re-grade shop side parking and re-gravel	2013	2017				
Increase parking at Park Pavilion on the railroad side to assist ingress and egress	2013		2020			
Clear debris from drains around town and re-direct water flow in same	2013	2017				
Evaluate and implement improvements to the Town's septic system or possibility connect to Jasper sewage system	2013-2017				X	Lack of feasibility for the foreseeable future
Replace the wood fence at the Pavilion, inside the park	2013	2016				
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION						
Review and revise Service Delivery Agreements, if necessary.	2013-2017		2018			

TOWN OF TALKING ROCK NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

ED1 Make Talking Rock's railroad history more visible and accessible as a tourism product.

ED2 Create an environment that attracts tourism commercial retail developers/investors to the historic town center

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

NR1 Capture the full narrative of Talking Rock's history.

NR2 Restore Talking Rock Creek riparian buffer and stabilize the creek bank.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

CF1 Build more trails that are accessible for all users.

CF2 Plan for and provide streetscape improvements for Talking Rock town center.

CF3 Ensure parking and other facilities are in place to host events and accommodate visitors.

CF4 Improve wastewater treatment provision for businesses and the town center.

LAND USE

LU1 Ensure zoning ordinance and map are in compliance with current State law.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

IC1 Keep service delivery agreements current.

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022 CITY OF TALKING ROCK									
Need/ Opportunity Code:	**Activity Description**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**Cost Estimate**	**Funding Source**	**Responsible Party**
	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT								
ED1, ED2	Restore railroad cars for use as tourist attractions and festival events.				X		$25,000	SPLOST	Mayor
	NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES								
NR1	Establish a citizen committee to assemble historic facts that are worthy of publication and dedicated to making the Town of Talking Rock a tourism destination.			X			$1,000	Staff Time	Clerk and Mayor
NR2	Apply for grant funding to assist with restoring the riparian buffer along the Talking Rock Creek bank travelling through Talking Rock's town park with assistance from NWGRC environmental planners.		X				$1,000	Staff Time	Mayor, NWGRC, GAEPD
NR2	Restore creek bank vegetative buffer along Talking Rock Creek bank travelling through Talking Rock's town park with assistance from NWGRC environmental planners.				X		$10,000	SPLOST	Mayor, NWGRC, GAEPD
	COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES								
CF1	Build handicapped accessible trails in the town park (one-half length is now complete)		X				$2,000	SPLOST	Mayor
CF2, ED2	Complete streetscape plan for downtown street, parking areas, and Festival area.			X			$10,000	SPLOST	Mayor

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM, 2018-2022 CITY OF TALKING ROCK									
Need/ Opportunity Code:	**Activity Description**	**2018**	**2019**	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**Cost Estimate**	**Funding Source**	**Responsible Party**
CF3, ED2	Increase parking at Park Pavilion on the railroad side to assist ingress and egress			X			$5,000	SPLOST	Mayor
CF4, ED2	Create a plan for a joint on-site septic system to serve the town center commercial retail area of town	X	X	X	X	X	$10,000	General Fund	Mayor
	LAND USE								
LU1, ED2	Review and revise Zoning Ordinance			X			$5,000	Staff Time, attorney fees	Clerk and Mayor
	INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION								
IC1	Review and revise Service Delivery Agreements, if necessary.	X					$1,000	Staff Time	Clerk, Mayor, and Council

APPENDIX

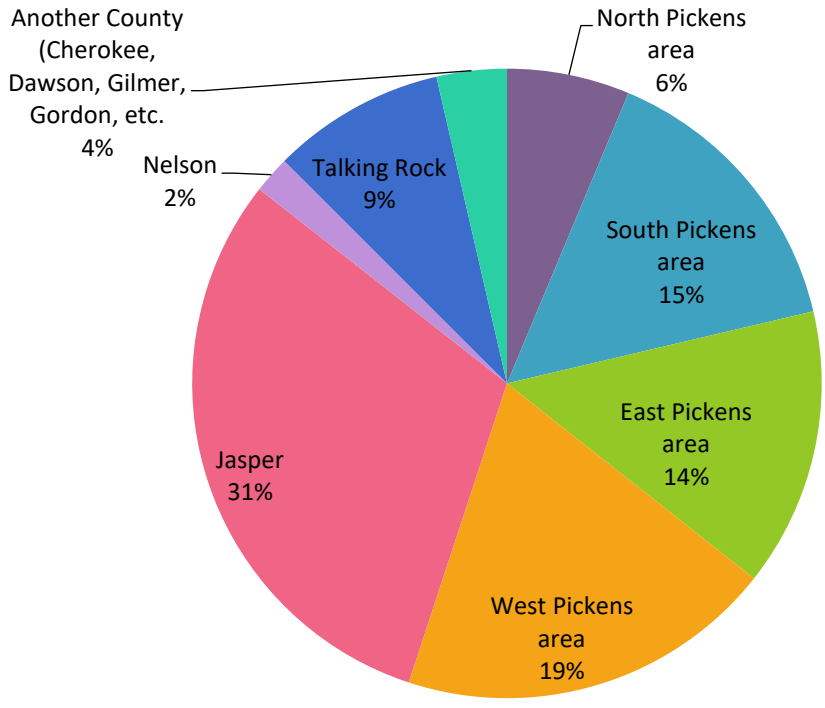
APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

Results for Pickens County's Comprehensive Plan survey May, 2017

Response Statistics

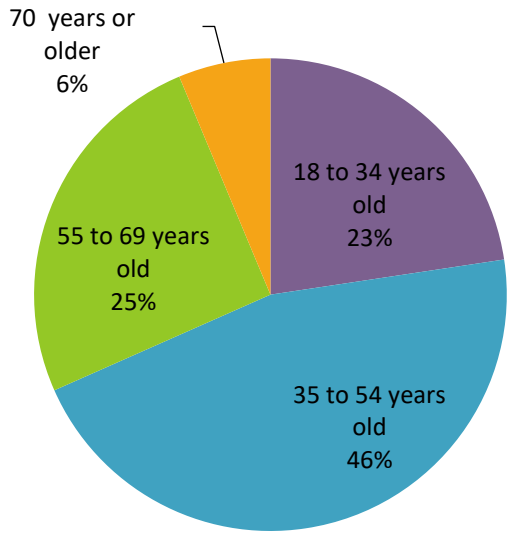
	Count	Percent
Complete	734	100
Partial	0	0
Disqualified	0	0
Total	734	

1. Where do you live? (Choose One)



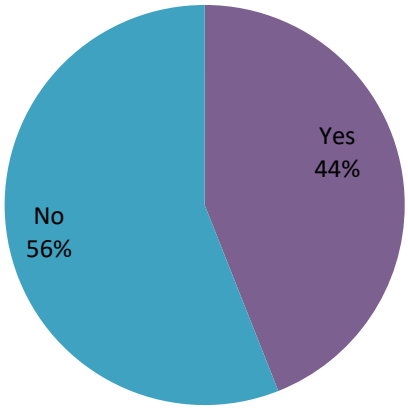
Value	Percent	Count
North Pickens area	6.3%	46
South Pickens area	15.0%	109
East Pickens area	14.3%	104
West Pickens area	19.4%	141
Jasper	30.5%	222
Nelson	1.9%	14
Talking Rock	8.9%	65
Another County (Cherokee, Dawson, Gilmer, Gordon, etc.	3.6%	26
	Total	727

2. What is your age?



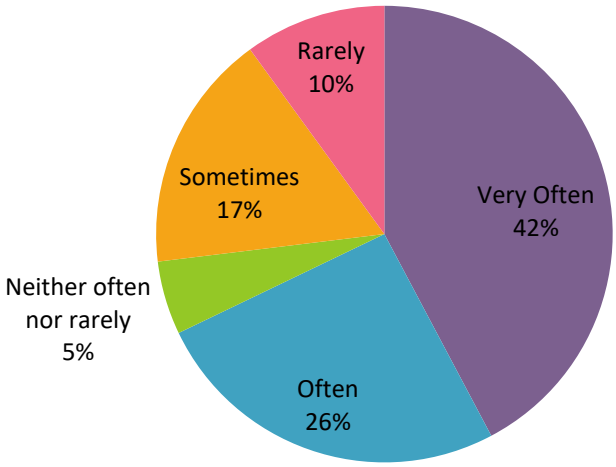
Value	Percent	Count
18 to 34 years old	22.6%	164
35 to 54 years old	45.7%	332
55 to 69 years old	25.3%	184
70 years or older	6.3%	46
	Total	726

3. Are there children (age 17 or younger) in your household?



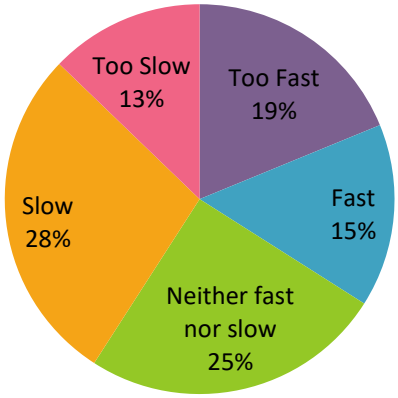
Value	Percent	Count
Yes	44.0%	320
No	56.0%	407
	Total	727

4. How often do you use a service or buy something in one of the downtowns (Jasper, Nelson, Talking Rock)?



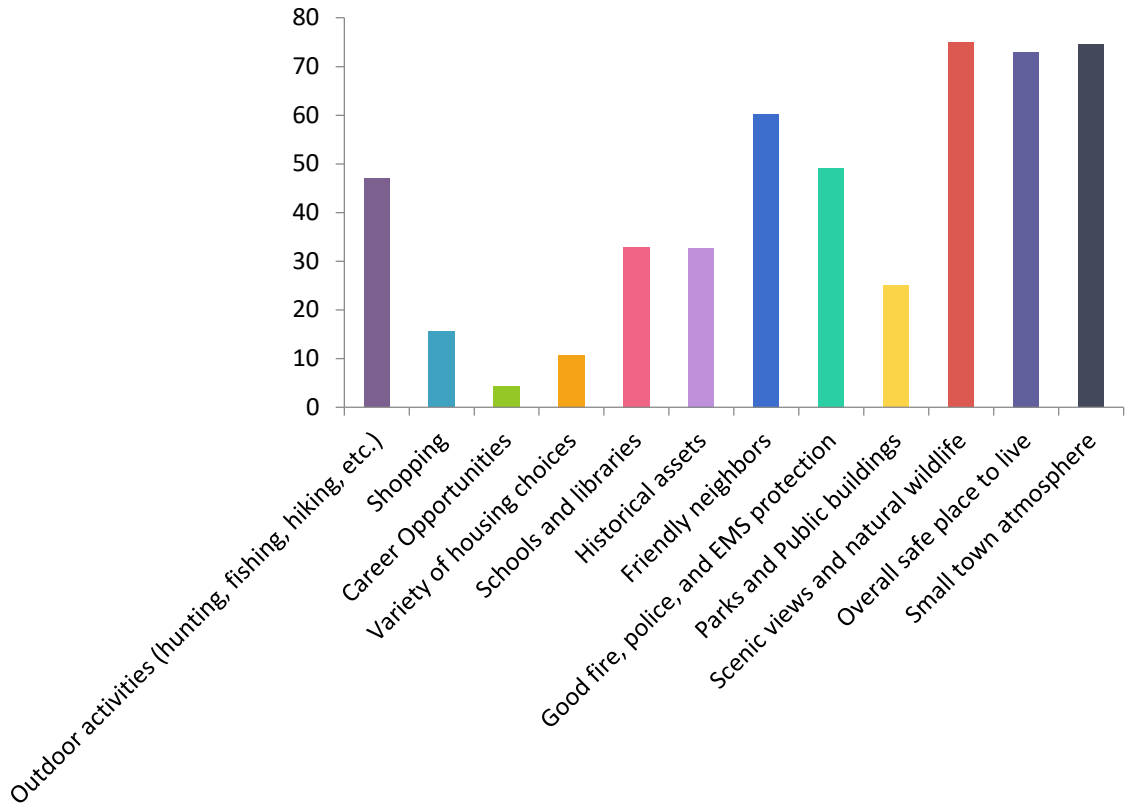
Value	Percent	Count
Very Often	42.2%	307
Often	25.6%	186
Neither often nor rarely	5.2%	38
Sometimes	16.9%	123
Rarely	10.0%	73
	Total	727

5. How fast is Pickens County (including the cities in the county) growing?



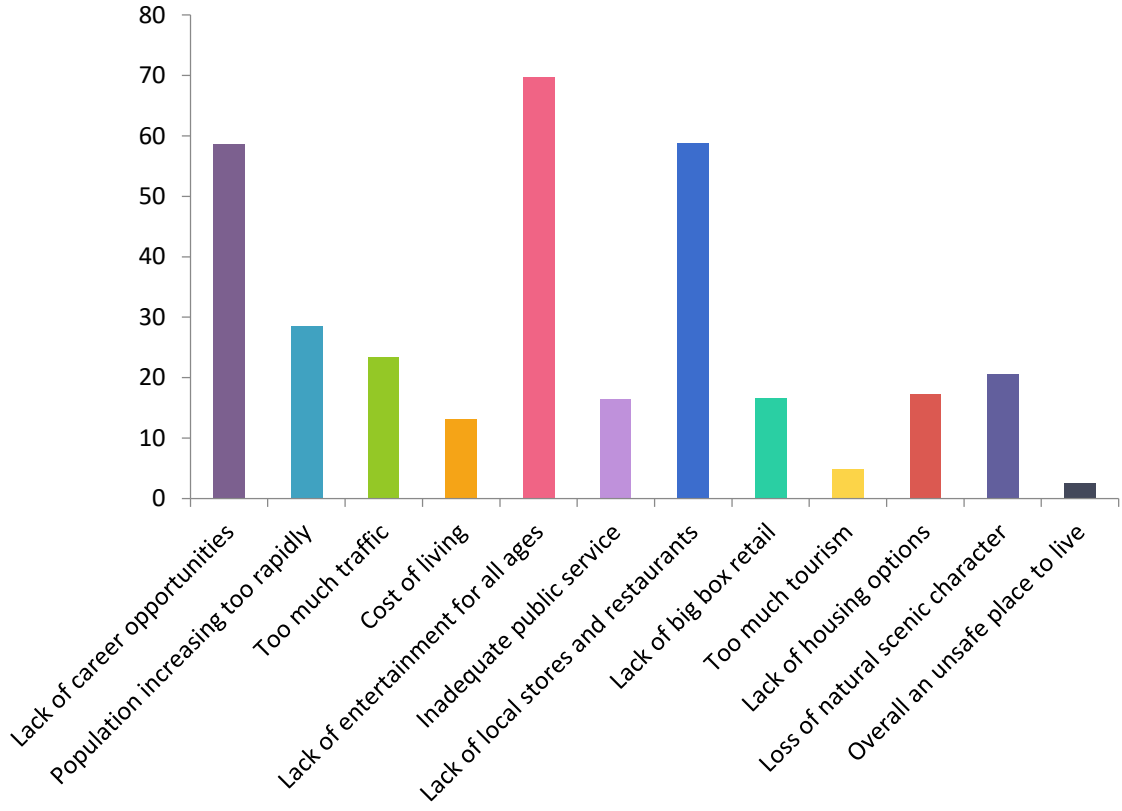
Value	Percent	Count
Too Fast	18.8%	136
Fast	15.2%	110
Neither fast nor slow	25.1%	182
Slow	28.1%	204
Too Slow	12.8%	93
	Total	725

6. What do you like about Pickens County (including the cities in the county)? Check ALL that apply.



Value	Percent	Count
Outdoor activities (hunting, fishing, hiking, etc.)	47.0%	339
Shopping	15.5%	112
Career Opportunities	4.4%	32
Variety of housing choices	10.8%	78
Schools and libraries	32.9%	237
Historical assets	32.7%	236
Friendly neighbors	60.3%	435
Good fire, police, and EMS protection	49.1%	354
Parks and Public buildings	25.0%	180
Scenic views and natural wildlife	75.0%	541
Overall safe place to live	73.0%	526
Small town atmosphere	74.5%	537

7. What do you not like about Pickens County (including the cities in the county)? Check ALL that apply.



Value	Percent	Count
Lack of career opportunities	58.7%	420
Population increasing too rapidly	28.5%	204
Too much traffic	23.4%	167
Cost of living	13.1%	94
Lack of entertainment for all ages	69.8%	499
Inadequate public service	16.5%	118
Lack of local stores and restaurants	58.9%	421
Lack of big box retail	16.6%	119
Too much tourism	4.8%	34
Lack of housing options	17.3%	124
Loss of natural scenic character	20.6%	147
Overall an unsafe place to live	2.5%	18

8. Where in Pickens County (including the cities in the county) would you take out-of-town visitors?

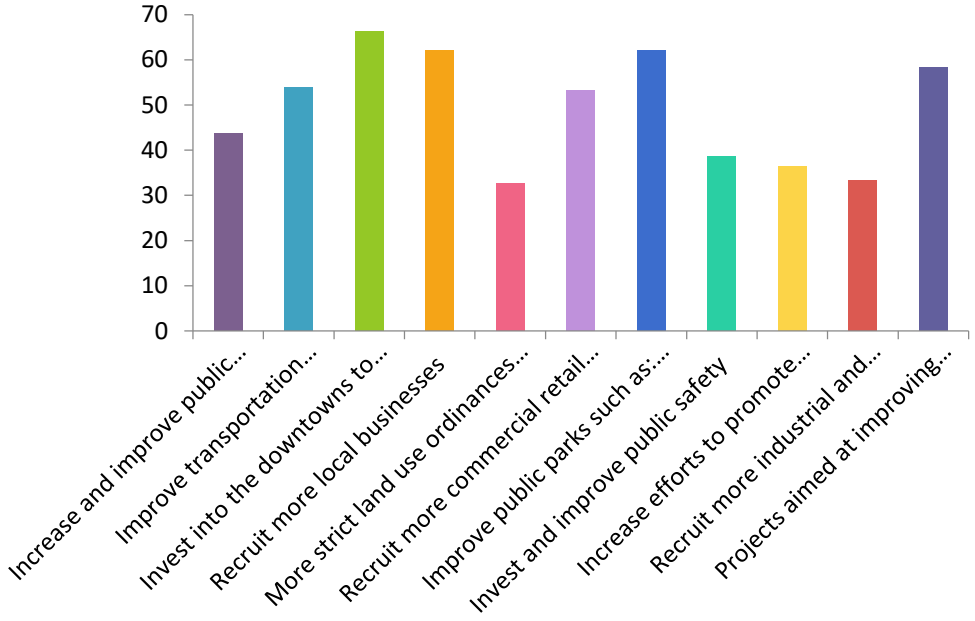
(Includes only items that received at least 2 responses)

9. In three words or less, describe Pickens County.

10. In three words or less, what kind of place would you like Pickens County (including the cities in the county) to be in 20 years?

11. In three words or less, what can community leaders (Pickens County and cities in the county) do to make the community a better place?

12. What types of projects would you support in order to reach this goal for Pickens County (including the cities in the county)? Check ALL that apply.



Value	Percent	Count
Increase and improve public water and sewer infrastructure	43.7%	309
Improve transportation infrastructure such as: roads, intersections, street lighting, etc.	53.9%	381
Invest into the downtowns to preserve historic landmarks, improve walkability, increase parking, etc.	66.2%	468
Recruit more local businesses	62.1%	439
More strict land use ordinances to control future growth	32.7%	231
Recruit more commercial retail and dining businesses.	53.2%	376
Improve public parks such as: parking, trails, signs, and other amenities.	62.2%	440
Invest and improve public safety	38.5%	272
Increase efforts to promote tourism	36.5%	258
Recruit more industrial and manufacturing companies	33.2%	235
Projects aimed at improving education	58.4%	413

APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY DATA PROFILE

Population

The population of Pickens County and the cities within it provide an important view of the people and their characteristics. It can help identify future growth, employment opportunities, housing needs and impact on future land use.

Total Population

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Pickens County's 2014 population was 29,997 which gave it a ranking of 57 out of 159 counties in Georgia. The populations of each city in Pickens County are listed below.

Prior Growth

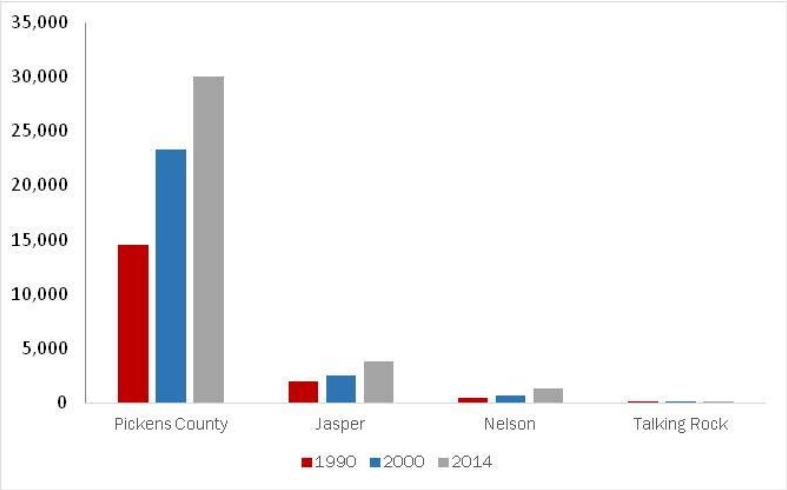
Comparing the population changes of each jurisdiction from 1990 to 2014 is shown below.

Population of Pickens County and Cities – 1990, 2000, 2014

Area	1990	2000	2014
Pickens County	14,510	23,359	29,997
Jasper	1,991	2,548	3,744
Nelson	470	653	1,342
Talking Rock	62	65	65

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 STF 1; 2000 SF 1; 2014 SF 1

Pickens County and Cities Population Trends 1990-2014



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 STF 1; 2000 SF 1; 2014 SF 1

Population of NWGRC Counties – 1990, 2000, and 2014

Area	1990	2000	2014
Bartow	55,911	76,019	101,736
Catoosa	42,464	53,282	65,621
Chattooga	22,242	25,470	24,939
Dade	13,147	15,154	16,389
Fannin	16,061	19,947	23,753
Floyd	81,251	90,565	96,063
Gilmer	13,368	23,456	28,829
Gordon	35,072	44,104	56,047
Haralson	21,966	25,690	28,641
Murray	26,147	36,506	39,410
Paulding	41,611	81,678	148,987
Pickens	14,432	22,983	29,997
Polk	33,815	38,127	41,133
Walker	58,340	61,053	68,218
Whitfield	72,462	83,525	103,542
NWGRC	548,289	697,559	873,305

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 STF 1; 2000 SF 1; 2014 SF 1

Projected Growth

Population projections were prepared by the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget.

Pickens County Projected Growth 2015-2050

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Pickens	30,218	31,781	33,262	34,610	35,851	37,109	38,498	40,028
Georgia	10,250,112	10,895,213	11,538,707	12,173,406	12,795,547	12,412,400	14,043,187	14,709,321

NWGRC County Projected Growth 2015-2050

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Bartow	103,438	108,763	113,783	118,274	122,135	125,461	128,371	131,085
Catoosa	66,522	69,484	72,290	74,878	77,170	79,250	81,230	83,210
Chattooga	25,171	25,224	25,164	24,926	24,526	24,017	23,465	22,941
Dade	16,542	16,575	16,497	16,353	16,149	15,892	15,622	15,393
Fannin	23,926	24,272	24,425	24,349	24,057	23,656	23,262	22,952
Floyd	96,639	98,546	100,159	101,509	102,514	103,214	103,763	104,392
Gilmer	28,925	29,754	30,484	31,094	31,617	32,172	32,866	33,749
Gordon	56,865	59,527	61,912	63,966	65,650	67,045	68,235	69,290
Haralson	28,869	29,774	30,571	31,173	31,537	31,719	31,810	31,871
Murray	39,554	40,152	40,441	40,353	39,847	39,019	37,955	36,739
Paulding	153,654	170,901	189,548	209,745	231,234	253,980	278,266	304,621
Pickens	30,218	31,781	33,262	34,610	35,851	37,109	38,498	40,028
Polk	41,781	43,176	44,315	45,166	45,746	46,136	46,393	46,579
Walker	68,730	69,933	70,790	71,200	71,155	70,777	70,182	69,562
Whitfield	104,496	108,222	111,528	114,277	116,368	117,828	118,760	119,343
NWGRC	885,330	926,085	965,168	1,001,873	1,035,556	1,067,275	1,098,679	1,131,755

Source: County Residential Projections 2015 to 2050. Provided by the Office of Planning and Budget, January 2016 and the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission

Households

The U.S. Census defines a household as a group of persons sharing the same housing unit, whether related or not. A household may or may not constitute a family. For example, a single person living alone in an apartment is considered to be a household, but not a family. A family is a household with two or more family members.

The next table illustrates the total number of households and average household size for Georgia, Pickens County, Jasper, Nelson, and Talking Rock. Each jurisdiction gives evidence of slight growth over the decade. Average household size follows the same pattern for each area. With growing populations an increase in households, such as this, is to be expected.

Total Number of Households and Average Household Size (Persons)

Year	Pickens		Jasper		Nelson		Talking Rock		Georgia	
	Number	Size	Number	Size	Number	Size	Number	Size	Number	Size
2000	8,960	2.54	942	2.24	254	2.75	19	2.37	3,281,737	2.71
2010	11,291	2.57	1,484	2.4	478	2.46	27	2.58	4,088,801	2.67

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, 2010

Study of Census data of household occupancy shows similar unit vacancy for all locations making the average vacancy for the county 17.5%.

Household Occupancy and Tenure for Selected Locations

Category	Pickens		Jasper		Nelson		Talking Rock		Georgia	
Household Occupancy										
Total Housing Units	13,692		1,644		519		34		4,088,801	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Occupied Units	11,291	82.5	1,484	90.3	478	92.1	27	79.4	3,585,584	87.7
Vacant Units	2,401	17.5	160	9.7	41	7.9	7	20.6	503,217	12.3
Housing Tenure										
Occupied Units	11,291		1,484		478		27		3,585,584	
Owner Occupied	8,822	78.1	693	46.7	380	79.5	22	81.5	2,354,402	65.7
Renter Occupied	2,469	21.9	791	53.3	98	20.5	5	18.5	1,231,182	34.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

Age Distribution

The median age of persons living in the 15 counties is 38.3 years. Pickens is older at 42.1 years of age. 2011 Census estimates are used in the table. Pickens County ranks fourth among other counties in the NWGRC region regarding median age.

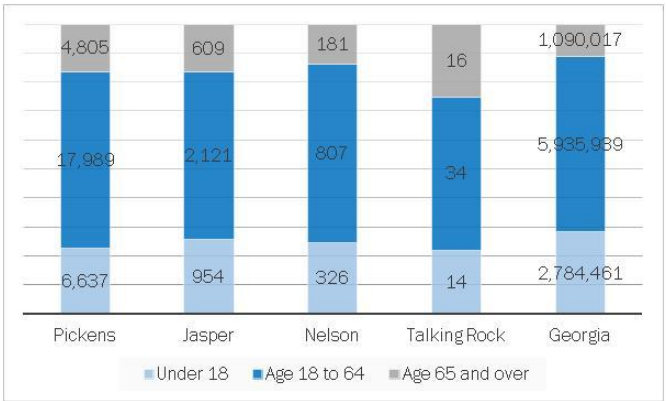
Median Age – for Selected Locations in the NWGRC

Area	Median Age (years)
Bartow	36.2
Catoosa	38.3
Chattooga	39.3
Dade	39.7
Fannin	39.0
Floyd	37.6
Gilmer	42.3
Gordon	36.0
Haralson	38.5
Murray	36.2
Paulding	33.8
Pickens	42.1
Polk	36.2
Walker	39.7
Whitfield	34.0
NWGRC	38.3
Georgia	35.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 Estimates

The chart below has a population grouped by three age segments and shows the percentage for each. They are age under 18, age 18 to 64 and age 65 and over. The results shown in the graph below seem to show similar age group distribution in all areas. However, age 18 to 64 appears to be the largest percentage of individuals by far in every group.

Age Group Percentage for Various Locations – 2010 Census



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

Race

A breakdown of racial groups by number and percent is presented. The racial compositions of the various jurisdictions of Pickens County provide the following statistics:

Race and Ethnicity (Hispanic) Groups – Pickens County Jurisdictions and Georgia - 2010

	Pickens		Jasper		Nelson		Talking Rock		Georgia	
Group	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
White	28,171	95.7	3,431	93.1	1,210	92.1	64	100	5,413,920	55.9
Black	312	1.1	115	3.1	59	4.5	0	0	2,910,800	30
Native American	81	0.3	9	0.2	0	0	0	0	21,279	0.2
Asian	119	0.4	9	0.2	7	0.5	0	0	311,692	3.2
Pacific Islander	7	0.0.	0	0	0	0.0.	0	0	5,152	0.1
Other	396	1.3	80	2.2	14	1.1	0	0	19,141	0.2
2 or more races	345	1.2	40	1.1	24	1.8	0	0	151,980	1.6
TOTAL	29,431	100	3,684	100	1,314	100	64	100	9,687,653	100
Hispanic **(Ethnicity)**	819	2.8	138	3.7	15	1.1	0	0	853,689	8.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

The table below illustrates median age changes from 2010 to 2014 as well as how those changes affected Pickens County and the state of Georgia. The county has historically hosted an older population since the mountains are a popular location for the elderly to retire. In 2014, all races and ethnicities labeled below were close in age with a median age of 44.4 among them all.

Median Age by Race

Location	Year	All	White	Black	Hispanic
Pickens	2010	40.8	41.5	27.6	41.8
	2014	44.4	44.5	45.3	44.6
Georgia	2010	35.3	39.2	31.7	25.3
	2014	37	39.3	32.3	25.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010, and 2014

Growth of the Hispanic population in Pickens County has remained below the state level's percentage.

Hispanic Population in Selected locations – 2000 and 2010 Census

Year	Pickens			Jasper		
	Total Population	Total Hispanic	Percent Hispanic	Total Population	Total Hispanic	Percent Hispanic
2000	22,983	467	2	2,167	70	3.2
2010	29,431	819	2.8	3,684	138	3.7
Year	**Nelson**			**Talking Rock**		
	Total Population	Total Hispanic	Percent Hispanic	Total Population	Total Hispanic	Percent Hispanic
2000	626	1	0.2	49	0	0
2010	1,314	15	1.1	64	0	0
Year	**Georgia**					
	Total Population	Total Hispanic	Percent Hispanic			
2000	8,186,453	435,519	5.3%			
2010	9,687,653	853,689	8.8%			

U.S. Census Bureau, 2000, 2010

Education Attainment

Employee pay and therefore living standard most often are related to educational attainment. A higher education level of the local population may attract companies that need more skilled workers. The following information examines Pickens County and its 14 sister counties. The municipality's data is also given. To view progress made in improving education in the planning area, there is information since 2000. The least educated group, those with less than a 9th grade education, has been on a decline. Those with a college degree or higher have also steadily improved. Unfortunately, neither group has yet reached the Georgia percentages.

Educational Attainment in NWGA and Pickens County– Census Estimated Data 2010 - 2014

Subject	Bartow	Catoosa	Chattooga	Dade	Fannin	Floyd	Gilmer	Gordon	Haralson	Murray	Paulding
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT											
Population 25 years and over	65,807	43,846	17,655	11,055	17,877	63,085	20,331	36,097	19,008	25,689	90,989
Less than 9th grade	4,146	1,754	1,766	633	1,430	5,677	1,829	4,331	1,710	3,339	2,729
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	8,160	5,262	3,531	1,547	2,145	8,201	2,643	5,415	2,661	4,881	7,279
Highschoool Graduate (includes equivalency	24,809	13,592	6,709	3,869	6,872	20,176	6,709	12,633	7,253	9,505	32,756
Some college, no degree	1,361	10,523	2,825	2,432	3,218	13,878	4,269	7,219	3,626	4,624	20,927
Associate's degree	3,948	4,384	1,059	774	1,430	4,416	1,423	2,165	1,145	1,284	6,369
Bachelor's degree	7,128	4,384	1,059	1,327	1,609	7,159	2,236	2,887	1,718	1,284	13,648
Graduate or Professional degree	3,948	2,631	529	553	898	5,046	1,219	1,805	950	1,027	7,279
Percent highschool Graduate or higher	81.3%	83.4%	68.1%	80.3%	79.9%	77.9%	77.5%	73.7%	76.4%	68.8%	89.0%
Percent bachelor's degree or higher	17.3%	18.5%	8.5%	16.2%	17.7%	18.6%	16.9%	13.9%	13.8%	8.6%	23.3%

Subject	Pickens	Polk	Walker	Whitfield	NWGRC	NWGRC%	Georgia%
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT							
Population 25 years and over	21,295	26,817	47,170	64,680	571,401	100.00%	100.00%
Less than 9th grade	13,628	2,413	3,301	9,702	58,388	10.2%	5.6%
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	2,342	4,022	6,603	10,348	75,040	13.1%	9.4%
High school Graduate (includes equivalency)	6,815	10,190	17,542	18,757	198,187	34.6%	28.6%
Some college, no degree	4,259	5,368	10,377	12,936	107,842	18.8%	21.1%
Associate's degree	1,490	1,370	3,301	3,234	37,792	6.0%	7.0%
Bachelor's degree	3,194	1,877	4,717	5,821	60,048	10.3%	17.9%
Graduate or Professional degree	1,703	1,609	2,358	3,880	35,435	6.2%	10.4%
High School Graduate or Higher	82.5%	75.2%	79.6%	68.5%	77%	77%	85%
Bachelor's degree or higher	23.7%	12.7%	14.3%	14.3%	16%	16%	28%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community Survey

Pickens County Educational Attainment of Persons Age 25 and Older as a % of Population

Level	2000	2010	2014	Georgia 2014
Less Than 9th grade	11.7	7.3	6.5	5.6
High School, no Diploma	18.1	1.4	11	9.4
High School Graduate	33.1	32.6	32	28.6
College, no degree	18.3	19.3	19.8	21.1
College, Degree or higher	18.8	27.5	30.7	35.3

Jasper Educational Attainment of Persons Age 25 and Older as a % of Population

Level	2000	2010	2014	Georgia 2014
Less Than 9th grade	17.1	9.7	3.5	5.6
High School, no Diploma	16.4	17.8	13.14	9.4
High School Graduate	29	33	26.3	28.6
College, no degree	19.2	16.6	25.1	21.1
College, Degree or higher	18.4	22.9	31.6	35.3

Nelson Educational Attainment of Persons Age 25 and Older as a % of Population

Level	2000	2010	2014	Georgia 2014
Less Than 9th grade	13.8	7.1	7.7	5.6
High School, no Diploma	17.1	8	10	9.4
High School Graduate	29.6	23.9	27.7	28.6
College, no degree	16.3	23.2	31	21.1
College, Degree or higher	23.3	37.7	23.6	35.3

Talking Rock Educational Attainment of Persons Age 25 and Older as a % of Population

Level	2000	2010	2014	Georgia 2014
Less Than 9th grade	23.8	9.8	14	5.6
High School, no Diploma	28.6	19.7	8	9.4
High School Graduate	31	50.8	42	28.6
College, no degree	16.7	19.7	22	21.1
College, Degree or higher	0	0	14	35.3

When the Pickens County graduation rate is compared to that of the state, its graduation rate is much higher.

2014 High School Graduation Rate

Area	Rate
Pickens County	85.1%
Georgia	72.5%

Source: Georgia Department of Education 2014 4-yr Cohort Graduation Rate

To give a partial picture of what the graduates do upon leaving high school, rates for Georgia public college entrance from the county indicates the same rate as the state.

2010 Students Entering Post-Secondary Education

Area	Rate
Pickens County	63%
Georgia	61%

Source: Governor's Office of Student Achievement

Income

Per capita income or income per person is calculated by taking a measure of all sources of income and dividing the entire income by the total number of persons in a geographic area. Pickens County saw an increase from 2000 to 2014.

Per Capita Personal Income for Selected Areas

Area	2000	2014
Bartow	$26,574	26,922
Catoosa	$22,691	$28,446
Chattooga	$18,350	$23,205
Dade	$21,162	$26,374
Fannin	$21,769	$28,195
Floyd	$23,707	$32,331
Gilmer	$20,274	$28,469
Gordon	$22,336	$27,970
Haralson	$21,384	$28,273
Murray	$20,160	$24,568
Paulding	$24,262	$34,152
Pickens	$26,966	$35,425
Polk	$19,097	$25,740
Walker	$22,028	$26,506
Whitfield	$25,618	$28,588
NWGRC	**$23,170**	**$29,199**
Georgia	**$28,541**	**$34,747**
United States	**$30,319**	**$39,937**

Source: U.S. Bureau of economic Analysis

Household income is the income of all the members of the household. Median is the middle number of a sorted list of numbers. The county amount was more than the region and the state. The most recent numbers show Pickens at $1,105 more than Georgia.

Median Household income levels in the NWGRC Region

2014 ACS 5-Year Estimates are in 2014 inflation-adjusted dollars.

NWGRC estimates based on household income distribution data

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 SF3; 2010-2014 American Community Survey

Area	Median Household Income	
	1999	2014
Bartow	$43,660	$48,306
Catoosa	$39,998	$50,180
Chattooga	$30,664	$32,496
Dade	$35,259	$44,992
Fannin	$30,612	$35,441
Floyd	$35,615	$41,046
Gilmer	$35,140	$39,581
Gordon	$38,831	$42,414
Haralson	$31,656	$41,482
Murray	$36,996	$34,478
Paulding	$52,151	$61,153
Pickens	$41,387	$50,452
Polk	$32,328	$39,121
Walker	$32,406	$39,688
Whitfield	$39,377	$40,081
NWGRC	**$38,560**	**$42,862**
Georgia	**$42,433**	**$49,347**

A look at how household income is distributed by income ranges below. Percentage of household income for each range is shown for each jurisdiction. Over half of the County's population (56.3%) is making $15,000-$75,000. The amount is lower than that of the state's (60.2%). In the top range of households ($200,000 or more) the county's average is much higher than the state's.

Household Income Distribution Percentage: 2015

Area	Less than $10,000	$10,000 to 14,999	$15,000 to 24,999	$25,000 to $34,000	$35,000 to $49,999
Pickens	3.5%	1.7%	9.4%	9.5%	15.7%
Jasper	4.8%	8.5%	18.2%	8.1%	12.3%
Nelson	2.3%	21.6%	11.5%	5.8%	9.3%
Talking Rock	7.7%	11.5%	26.9%	0.0%	19.2%
Georgia	12.8%	9.3%	18.2%	14.2%	11.5%

Area	$50,000 to $74,999	$75,000 to $99,999	$100,000 to $149,999	$150,000 to $199,999	$200,000 or more
Pickens	21.7%	14.5%	14.5%	5.2%	4.6%
Jasper	20.6%	7.0%	6.6%	12.3%	1.4%
Nelson	19.0%	17.9%	8.9%	2.3%	1.4%
Talking Rock	19.2%	3.8%	3.8%	7.7%	0.0%
Georgia	16.3%	10.5%	6.3%	0.5%	0.5%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2015 American Community survey

Poverty

Poverty thresholds are set by the Census Bureau and vary by family size and composition. Pickens County has a slightly higher percentage than that of the region and the State. The same results are seen in the 2000 census as well

Poverty Estimates for NWGRC – 2010

Area	Estimate of people of all ages in poverty		Estimate percent of people oa all ages in poverty		Estimate of people age 0-17 in poverty		Estimated percent of people age 0-17 in families in poverty		Estimate of related children age 5-17 in families in poverty		Estimated percent of related children age 5-17 in families in poverty	
	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010	2000	2010
Bartow	7,494	14,369	9.5	14.5	3,214	5,765	14.5	21.9	2,079	4,051	13	20.90
Catoosa	5,219	9,039	9.6	14.3	1,935	3,228	13.8	20.6	1,281	2,124	13	18.50
Chattooga	3,464	4,922	14.3	20.5	1,160	1,648	19.8	28.8	789	1,109	19.1	26.70
Dade	1,733	2,535	11.8	16.3	515	781	14.3	22.3	353	537	13	20.60
Fannin	2,843	4,262	14	18.2	923	1,252	21.8	28.2	616	905	20	27.30
Floyd	11,670	17,634	13.3	19.1	4,401	5,971	19.7	26.3	2,880	4,136	18	25.30
Gilmer	3,185	4,454	13.2	15.9	1,209	1,755	20.7	28.8	791	1,185	19.6	26.50
Gordon	5,006	10,045	11.1	18.5	1,930	3,804	16.3	26.3	1,275	2,470	15	23.50
Haralson	3,802	5,868	14.7	20.7	1,476	2,030	21.9	28.7	988	1,373	20.4	26.20
Murray	4,228	7,491	11.3	19.1	1,825	2,849	17.5	27.2	1,213	1,900	17	24.90
Paulding	5,143	12,468	5.8	8.8	2,256	5,175	8.3	12.2	1,487	3,376	8	10.80
Pickens	2,402	3,939	9.9	13.6	962	1,456	16.9	22.4	651	995	16	20.90
Polk	5,226	9,065	13.8	22.1	2,056	3,381	20.7	31.3	1,410	2,208	20	29.30
Walker	7,339	11,970	12.1	17.8	2,785	4,121	18.4	25.9	1,844	2,862	17	24.30
Whitfield	8,796	20,507	10.3	20.2	3,737	7,914	15.8	27.4	2,473	4,976	15	23.90
NWGRC	**77,550**	**138,568**	**10.9**	**16.3**	**30,384**	**51,130**	**16.1**	**23.1**	**20,130**	**34,207**	**15**	**21.20**
Georgia	**1,006,329**	**1,698,004**	**12.3**	**18**	**386,095**	**613,581**	**17.5**	**25**	**252,326**	**406,975**	**16**	**23.00**

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Estimates Branch, Small Area Income & Poverty Estimates

Including the cities, poverty statistics yields the percentages in the table below. Each city shows a slightly different rate from one another compared to the county averages. Nelson has the highest poverty rate of all the communities in Pickens County.

Percentage of Persons and Families below Poverty Level – 2014

Category	Pickens	Jasper	Nelson	Talking Rock
All People	11.6	7.7	22.1	6.7
All Families	8.6	3.3	16.6	0
Children under 5	29.2	3	36.1	0
People 65 and over	6	18.4	9.6	9.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2014 American Community survey

Pickens County has one school system: Pickens County Schools. Comparing the school systems in Pickens County with other school systems in the NWGRC region is shown in the table below. Pickens County Schools rank 16th among poverty rates in the region in order from highest to lowest rate.

Poverty among Children Ages 5-17 Years Living in Families:

NWGRC Area School Districts, 2011

District Name	Population are 5 to 17 years	Percentage of population 5 to 17 in poverty
Bartow County	3,828	24.20%
Bremen City	389	30.50%
Calhoun City	912	30.60%
Cartersville City	976	26.90%
Catoosa County	2,216	18.70%
Chattooga County	920	24.20%
Chickamauga City	92	14.80%
Dade County	556	21.40%
Dalton City	2,003	29.80%
Fannin County	1,101	33.60%
Floyd County	2,383	22.90%
Gilmer County	1,770	39.30%
Gordon County	1,770	24.80%
Haralson County	1,936	25%
Murray County	1,001	25.90%
Paulding County	2,010	15.60%
Pickens County	4,919	23.70%
Polk County	1,122	30.70%
Rome City	2,371	33.80%
Trion City	2,109	43.20%
Walker County	167	24.80%
Whitfield County	27,700	20.50%

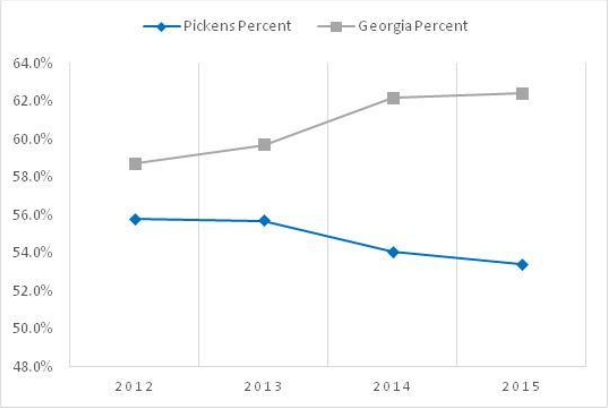
Source: U.S> Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

An indicator of poverty among school children is their eligibility to receive free or reduced price meals. Pickens County student percentages remained below state averages over the years, and have continued to decrease.

Students Eligible to receive free or Reduced Price meals

Location	Data Type	2012	2013	2014	2015
Pickens	Percent	55.8%	55.7%	54.1%	53.4%
Georgia	Percent	58.7%	59.7%	62.2%	62.4%

Source: Georgia Department of Education



Employment

Unemployment in NWGRC Region and State

Location	Year				
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Bartow	5.70%	8.40%	11.50%	12.40%	11.50%
Catoosa	6.30%	9.10%	10.40%	11.40%	10.10%
Chattooga	9.80%	12.30%	12.40%	8.90%	8.90%
Dade	6.60%	9.00%	10.80%	11.30%	10.60%
Fannin	8.40%	13.00%	16.70%	15.20%	15.50%
Floyd	8.40%	11.00%	13.10%	14.30%	13.80%
Gilmer	7.70%	10.10%	10.90%	9.90%	11.60%
Gordon	8.00%	9.40%	10.40%	10.80%	9.80%
Haralson	12.30%	13.00%	16.50%	14.00%	13.60%
Murray	11.00%	11.00%	15.10%	15.10%	13.60%
Paulding	9.20%	11.00%	11.40%	11.60%	10.90%
Pickens	8.90%	11.20%	12.00%	11.10%	10.40%
Polk	9.80%	13.90%	16.00%	15.40%	12.50%
Walker	10.70%	13.40%	13.30%	12.50%	10.90%
Whitfield	9.20%	10.50%	12.30%	12.50%	13.40%
Georgia	8.40%	10.20%	11.90%	11.90%	11.10%

Source: U.S. Census Community Survey 2009-2013

Industry Data for Pickens County and Cities – 2014

Industry	Pickens		Jasper		Nelson		Talking Rock	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	12,678	100	1647	100	617	100	34	100
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining	272	2.15	0	0	13	2.11	0	0
Construction	1,270	10.02	132	8.01	20	3.25	8	23.53
Manufacturing	1,350	10.65	148	8.99	45	7.29	0	0
Wholesale Trade	365	2.88	32	1.94	6	0.97	4	11.76
Retail Trade	2,173	17.14	327	19.85	11	1.78	3	8.82
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	736	5.81	89	5.4	47	7.62	3	8.82
Information	255	2.01	67	4.07	4	0.65	0	0
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasir	851	4.58	93	5.56	68	11.02	0	0
Profesional, scientific, management, administrative, and waste management	1,349	10.64	242	14.69	58	9.4	3	8.82
Educational services, health care and social assistance	2,080	16.41	289	17.55	147	23.82	5	14.71
Arts, entertainment, recreation, acomodation	923	7.28	160	9.71	38	6.16	0	0
Other services, except public administration	526	4.15	33	2	39	6.32	7	20.59
Public administration	528	4.16	75	4.55	21	3.4	1	2.94

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010-2015 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates;

Percentages extrapolated by NWGRC

The table below lists the largest private employers within Pickens County as well as the surrounding area. Note that employers are listed alphabetically by area not by the number of employees.

Largest Private Employers of Pickens County and Surrounding Area

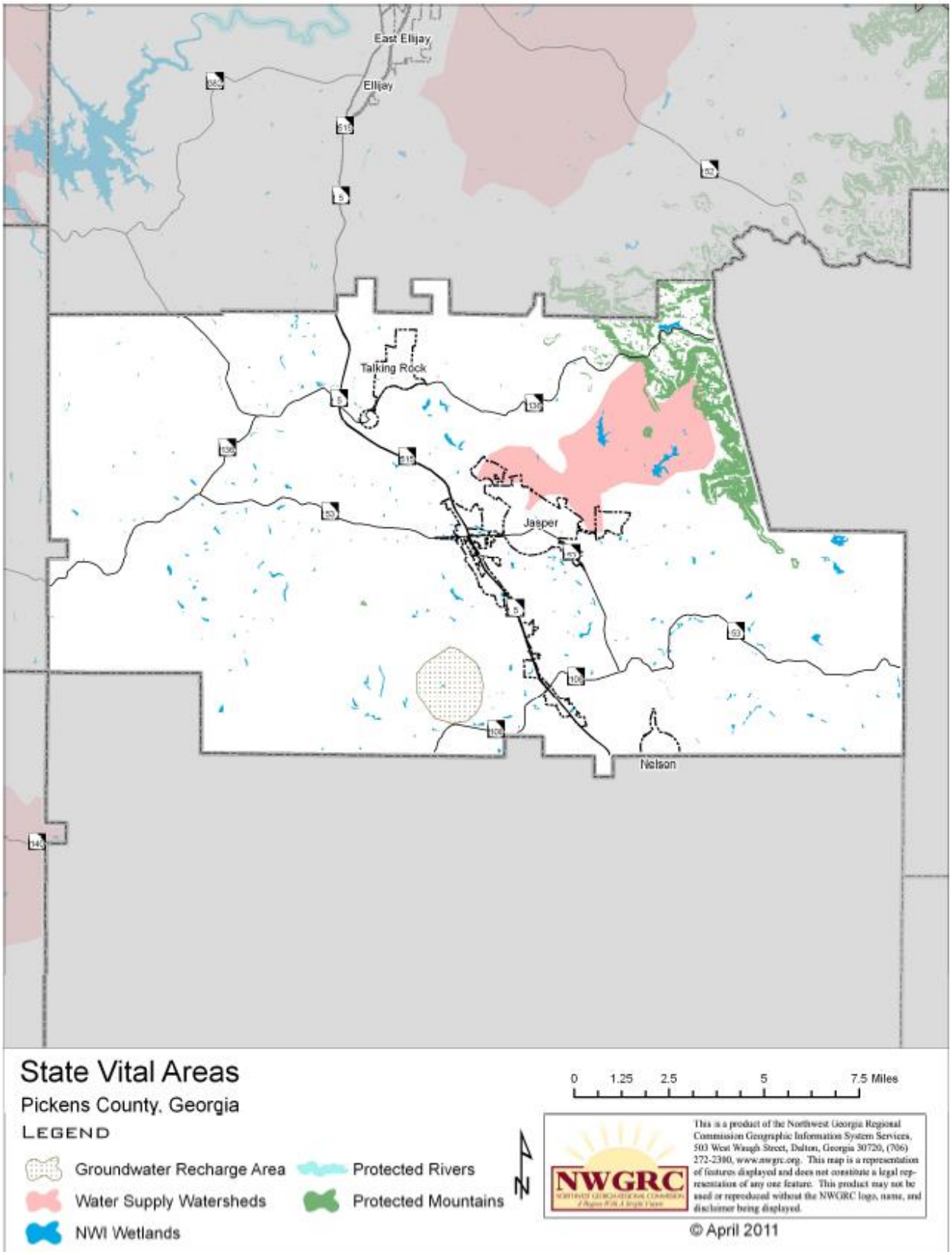
Employers Within Pickens County	Employers near Pickens County	Location
Amicalola Electric Membership Corp	Engineered Floors, LLC	Gordon
Bojangles	Gold Kist Inc.	Gilmer
Ingles Markets, Inc.	Mohawk Carpet Distribution LP	Gordon
Lexington Precision Corporation	North Georgia Eye Care	Gordon
Piedmond Mountainside Hospital, Inc.	Northside Hospital	Cherokee
Royston, LLC	Publix Super Markets, Inc.	Cherokee
The Home Depot	Shaw Industries Group, Inc	Bartow
The Kroger Company	Shaw Industries Group, Inc	Gordon
United Technology Group, LLC	The Kroger Company	Cherokee
Walmart	Walmart	Cherokee

Source: Georgia Department of Labor 2015

Commuting

Worker Flow Patterns for NWGRC Counties – 2013

Area	Worker Inflow		Interior Flow	Worker Outflow	
	Employed in Area	Employed in Area/ Living Outside Area	Employed/ Living in Area	Living in Area	Living in Area/ Working Outside Area
Bartow	30,108	17,686	12,422	41,043	28,621
Catoosa	12,899	8,573	4,326	26,593	22,267
Chattooga	5,608	2750	2,858	8,258	5,380
Dade	31,364	1,920	1,244	5,174	3,930
Fannin	4,930	2,725	2,205	7,819	5,614
Floyd	32,687	16,361	16,326	31,044	14,718
Gilmer	6,489	3,773	2,716	10,035	7,319
Gordon	17,251	9,727	7,524	18,194	10,670
Haralson	6,172	3,773	2,399	11,027	8,628
Murray	8,772	5,448	3,324	16,966	13,642
Paulding	20,216	11,848	8,368	56,927	48,559
Pickens	6,753	3,737	3,016	10,979	7,963
Polk	10,619	5,239	5,380	16,846	11,466
Walker	10,910	5,905	5,005	21,446	16,441
Whitfield	52,539	30,159	22,380	37,928	15,548

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 Inflow/Outflow Report

APPENDIX C: REGIONALLY IMPORTANT RESOURCES MAP