

2020-2024 JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

For Gilmer County and the Cities of
Ellijay and East Ellijay



October 2019

Prepared by:
Northwest Georgia Regional Commission



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Gilmer County

Joint Comprehensive Plan 2020-2024

Joint Comprehensive Plan Update for

Gilmer County Including the

Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay



Prepared for:

Gilmer County

City of Ellijay

City of East Ellijay



By:



Northwest Georgia Regional Commission

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ADOPTION RESOLUTIONS



GILMER COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

Charlie Paris, Chairman
Vacant, Post 1 Commissioner
Karleen Ferguson, Post 2 Commissioner

Edwina Daman, County Clerk
David Clark, County Attorney
Sandi Holden, CFO

19-139
A RESOLUTION
TO ADOPT THE

Gilmer County Joint Comprehensive Plan (2020-2024) including the Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay

Whereas, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 requires local governments to develop and maintain a comprehensive plan to retain their Qualified Local Government status and eligibility for State permits, grants, and loans; and

Whereas, the *Gilmer County Joint Comprehensive Plan (20120-2024) including the Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay* is now complete; and

Whereas, such **Joint Comprehensive Plan Update** is approved by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs as meeting Georgia's Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures (effective October 1, 2018); and

Whereas, the second and final public hearing on the draft plan was held on Thursday August 29th, 2019 at the East Ellijay City Hall at 10:00am.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, that the Board of Commissioners of Gilmer County, Georgia hereby officially adopts the *Gilmer County Joint Comprehensive Plan (2020-2024) including the Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay*.

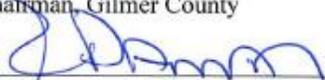
Resolved, this 16th day of October, 2019.

BY:



Charlie Paris
Chairman, Gilmer County

ATTEST:



Edwina Daman, County Clerk
Gilmer County

1 Broad Street, Suite 106 • Ellijay, Georgia 30540
Telephone (706) 635-4361 • Fax (706) 635-4349

Al Hoyle, Mayor
Amy Crump, City Clerk



COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Ruth Caudell Al Fuller
Kathryn Lancey Lynelle Stewart
David Westmoreland

CITY OF ELLIJAY

A RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE

Gilmer County Joint Comprehensive Plan (2020-2024) including the Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay

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Whereas, the second and final public hearing on the draft plan was held on Thursday August 29th, 2019 at the East Ellijay City Hall at 10:00am.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, that the City Council of The City of Ellijay, Georgia hereby officially adopts the *Gilmer County Joint Comprehensive Plan (2020-2024) including the Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay*.

Resolved, this 21 day of October 2019.

BY: Al Hoyle
Al Hoyle
Mayor, City of Ellijay

ATTEST: Amy Crump
Amy Crump
City Clerk

RESOLUTION 19-08

**A RESOLUTION
TO ADOPT THE**

Gilmer County Joint Comprehensive Plan (2020-2024) including the Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay

Whereas, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 requires local governments to develop and maintain a comprehensive plan to retain their Qualified Local Government status and eligibility for State permits, grants, and loans; and

Whereas, the *Gilmer County Joint Comprehensive Plan (2020-2024) including the Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay* is now complete; and

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Whereas, the second and final public hearing on the draft plan was held on Thursday August 29th, 2019 at the East Ellijay City Hall at 10:00am.

Now Therefore Be It Resolved, that the City Council of the City of East Ellijay, Georgia hereby officially adopts the *Gilmer County Joint Comprehensive Plan (2020-2024) including the Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay*.

Resolved, this 29th day of October 2019.

BY:

Mack G. West
Mack G. West
Mayor, City of East Ellijay

ATTEST:

Linda Wood
Linda Wood
City Clerk

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

GILMER COUNTY

Charlie Paris

Chairman, Board of Commissioners

Dallas H. Miller
Board of Commissioners Post 1

Karleen Ferguson
Board of Commissioners Post 2

Edwina Daman
County Clerk

CITY OF ELLIJAY

Al Hoyle

Mayor and Chairman of City Council

David Westmoreland
Mayor Pro-Tem

Ruth Caudell
Council Woman

Al Fuller
Councilman

Kathryn Lancey
Council Woman

Lynelle Stewart
Council Woman

Amy Crump
City Clerk

CITY OF EAST ELLIJAY

Donald L. Callihan
Council Member

Mack G. West
Mayor

Harold L. Crump
Council Member

David Edwin Forrester
Council Member

Linda G. Smith
Council Member

Linda Wood
City Clerk

STEERING COMMITTEE

Karleen Ferguson
Gilmer County Commissioner

Lynelle Stewart
Ellijay City Council

Paige Green
President & CEO
Gilmer Chamber

Maria Mullins
Citizen/Retired Director of
Economic Development

Jason Smith
Ellijay Telephone Company

John Marshall
Chairman of Gilmer Chamber

Don Callihan
East Ellijay City Council

Devell Frady
Builder/Former Builder's
Association President

Karen Henson
Gilmer County Planning and
Zoning

Bob Sosebee
Gilmer County Schools

Mark Holden
Gilmer County
Resident & Farmer

Mack Wood
East Ellijay City Manager

Lex Rainey
Citizen/Representing Ellijay

Rick Tanner
GM Coosawattee River Resort

Gary McVey
Director; Ellijay/Gilmer County
Water and Sewer Authority

Kent Sanford
Executive Director
Greater Gilmer Joint Development
Authority

STAKEHOLDER COMMITTEE

Lisa Frady
Resident & Business Owner

Chad Watkins
Resident & Business Owner

Larry Watkins
Business Owner

Mark West
Business Owner

Damon Gabriel
Resident & Business Owner

Darren West
Resident

Judy Turner
Resident

Roy Turner
Resident

Darren Cantlay
Resident & Business Owner

PREPARED BY NORTHWEST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION

Lloyd Frasier
Executive Director

Julianne Meadows
Director of Regional Planning

Ethan Calhoun
Assistant Director of Regional Planning

SaVaughn Irons
Community Planner

INTRODUCTION

Introduction to the Community Agenda for Gilmer County and the Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay

Located in the North Central portion of the State of Georgia, Gilmer County covers approximately 694 square miles of land and water area and is the 2441st largest county, equivalent in area, in the United States. Gilmer County is a gem of the North Georgia Mountains with thousands of acres protected by state and federal lands, including a portion of the Chattahoochee National Forest, Georgia Department of Natural Resources' Rich Mountain Wildlife Management Area, and Carters lake.



Figure 1: Aerial photo of downtown Ellijay. Photo courtesy of Eric Smithson Photography.

Outdoor Recreation Destinations

Lying at the heart of the Chattahoochee-Oconee National Forest, Gilmer County is a prime destination for outdoor recreation of all types. The southern terminus of the Appalachian Trail (as well as that of the Benton MacKaye Trail) sits in Gilmer County. With easy access to Amicalola Falls State Park and the beautiful Three Forks Valley, Gilmer County is a destination for outdoor enthusiasts and adventurers alike. Gilmer County is home to an extensive trail network. With over 100 miles of single track and no real off-season, the county has also been featured as a biking destination in national publications and has been declared "Georgia's Mountain Biking Capital." The rivers are well known for the paddling and fishing opportunities they provide, as well as the tranquil settings for day hikes or picnics. The area lakes are premium destinations for those seeking quality watersports without the maddening crowds of other reservoirs in the region.



Agriculture and Agritourism

Along with the incredible outdoor recreation opportunities, Visitors to Gilmer County will also find vineyards, pick-your-own orchards, farmers' markets, and mountain roads with stunning vistas. The annual Georgia Apple Festival, held on two weekends in October, entices visitors from all over with craft vendors, artists, antique cars, a parade, and all things apple. Alongside Gilmer's tourism-based agriculture is an active and significant proportion of conventional agricultural farms that collectively contribute hundreds of millions to the local economy. Many visitors to Gilmer County return time and again in search for ways to make it their home.

Gilmer County and the Appalachian Trail

The Appalachian National Scenic Trail is the longest hiking-only footpath in the world, measuring roughly 2,190 miles in length (see map in figure 2). The Trail travels through fourteen states along the crests and valleys of the Appalachian Mountain Range, from its southern terminus at Springer Mountain, Gilmer County Georgia, to the northern terminus at Katahdin, Maine. Known as the "A.T.", more than 3 million people visit the Trail every year and over 3,000 people attempt to "thru-hike" the entire footpath in a single year.

People from across the globe are drawn to the A.T. for a variety of reasons, such as reconnecting with nature, escaping the stress of city life, meeting new people or deepening old friendships or experiencing a simpler life. Completed in 1937, the A.T. is a unit of the National Park System. It is managed under a unique partnership between the public and private sectors led by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy.

Gilmer County has been designated as an Appalachian Trail Community™ by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy. There are only 40 communities along the Appalachian Trail's corridor that have been recognized in The Appalachian Trail Community™ program. These towns and cities are considered assets by all that use the A.T., and many of these towns act as good friends and neighbors to the Trail.



Figure 2: Map of the Appalachian Trail sourced from www.appalachiantrail.org

Planning for the Future

Gilmer County and the cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay have joined together in an effort to meet the challenges ahead, in cooperation with their citizens, elected officials, professional staff, business leaders, property owners and major employers to prepare the *Gilmer County Joint Comprehensive Plan 2020-2024*.

WHY WE PLAN

Comprehensive planning is an important management tool for promoting a strong, healthy community. A Comprehensive Plan provides a vision, clearly stated and shared by all, that describes the future of the community. It protects private property rights, as well as encourages and supports economic development. The plan can be used to promote orderly and rational development so that Gilmer County and the Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay can remain physically attractive and economically viable while preserving important natural and historical resources.

The comprehensive plan provides the tool to become more certain about where development will occur, what it will be like, when it will happen, and how the costs of development will be met. It provides a tool for the community to achieve the development patterns it desires, such as: traditional neighborhoods, infill development creating a sense of place, providing transportation alternatives, permitting mixed uses, protecting natural resources and accommodating economic growth.

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 Gilmer County.

PURPOSE

The *Joint Comprehensive Plan* represents the community's vision, goals, policies, 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 desired development patterns and supporting land uses with a future development map for Gilmer County and the Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay.

The *Joint Comprehensive Plan* has been prepared in accordance with and serves the purpose of meeting the intent of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' Chapter 110-12-1, Minimum Standards and Procedures for Comprehensive Planning (effective March 1, 2014, updated October 2018). This joint comprehensive plan consists of the three core elements (i.e., Community Goals, Needs and Opportunities, and Community Work Program) and an additional three elements (i.e., Capital Improvements Element, Land Use Element, and the Rural Broadband Element).

The DCA's Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning emphasize preparation of plans that help local governments address their immediate needs and opportunities while moving toward realization of their long-term goals. To maintain qualified local government certification, and thereby remain eligible for selected state funding and permitting programs, each local government must prepare, adopt, maintain, and implement a comprehensive plan as specified in these standards and procedures.

The comprehensive plan is not regulation that binds the citizens of Gilmer County, rather it is a guide to local decision-making.

SCOPE

The *Joint Comprehensive Plan* provides a fine-tuned list of needs and opportunities, future development maps with character areas, narratives on housing and transportation of each character area depicted. The plan also contains an implementation program listing strategic capital projects aimed at addressing the community's, previously mentioned, needs and opportunities. For the future development maps, the Land Use narrative presents strategies for implementation.



Figure 3: Annual Apple Festival. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.



Figure 4: Ribbon Cutting for the Downtown Ellijay visitor's Center. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.



Figure 5: Historic Tabor House in downtown Ellijay

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

Steering and Stakeholder Committees

Every five years, there is an update of the Joint Comprehensive plan for Ellijay, East Ellijay and Gilmer County that provides a discussion of future growth and how local government agencies can plan for it. Joint meetings held with the steering and stakeholder committees allow feedback from members who represent the two cities and county.

A diverse group of elected officials, professional staff from each city and county, as well as representatives of private sector organizations, such as communications and agriculture, formed a collaborative committee to build the foundation and framework of this plan. The stakeholder committee held a total of five joint meetings facilitated by the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission (sign-in sheets found in Appendix G). Over the course of these meetings, committee members discussed and assessed the needs and opportunities of Gilmer County as well as how to best engage the community in order to ensure the steering committees' views aligned with the general public's perspective. After four steering committee meetings, a stakeholder's meeting was held in order to gather more input from a group of stakeholders based upon the needs and opportunities, maps, survey results, vision statements, and goals identified by the steering committee. The steering committee met once again soon after the stakeholders' meeting to discuss the outcome and input gathered, and how to address the feedback that was received from the stakeholders.



Figure 6: Steering Committee meeting in Spring 2019. Photo courtesy of the Times Courier.



Figure 7: Steering Committee meeting in Spring 2019. Photo courtesy of the Times Courier.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH SURVEY

The Northwest Georgia Regional Commission Survey entitled “Planning for Growth in Gilmer County” was uploaded on May 6, 2019 and ran continuously until it was closed on June 4, 2019. The total number of responses were 2,091 with a 100% completion rate (meaning that all surveys were 100% completed with no unanswered questions). Survey Gizmo was utilized as the software provider due to it being smartphone friendly and the NWGRC website, as the host for the period the survey remained active. With the utilization of the NWGRC website, we were able to create a direct URL, www.nwgrc.org/gilmer, to the online survey to make it easily accessible for individuals that discovered the survey via flyer or newspaper articles.

The surveys were disbursed in several mediums which included online, email blasts to the membership of the Gilmer Chamber, Gilmer public school system, the Gilmer branch of Dalton State College, local government staff as well as various civic groups. Social media platforms, such as Facebook and the Gilmer Chamber’s social media were also used to further the digital outreach as a grassroots approach by much of the steering committee. More than 100 paper copies were completed and uploaded by volunteer steering committee members so that the final data reports from the study would incorporate the paper responses along with the digital responses.

Why We Plan

- Set a new standard for protecting natural and cultural resources
- Promote desired patterns of development
- Facilitate economic development
- Accommodate a range of housing and transportation options
- Prioritize capital expenditures
- Enhance quality of life



Figure 8: White Path Golf Course, owned and operated by Gilmer County. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce

PUBLIC HEARINGS

The initial public hearing was held at the East Ellijay City Hall in the city of East Ellijay, GA on December 10, 2018. An article was published in the local paper to ensure public awareness of the plan, the process and the understanding that public input is not only preferred but, in fact, key in creating an effective plan.

The final public hearing was also held at the East Ellijay City Hall in the City of East Ellijay, GA on August 29, 2019. The hearing was well attended, and ads were published in the Times-Courier newspaper to inform Gilmer County citizens about the comprehensive plan and how to be involved in the process.



Figure 9: Stakeholder's reviewing future land use maps for Gilmer County, July 2019



Figure 10: Stakeholder's reviewing future land use maps, July 2019

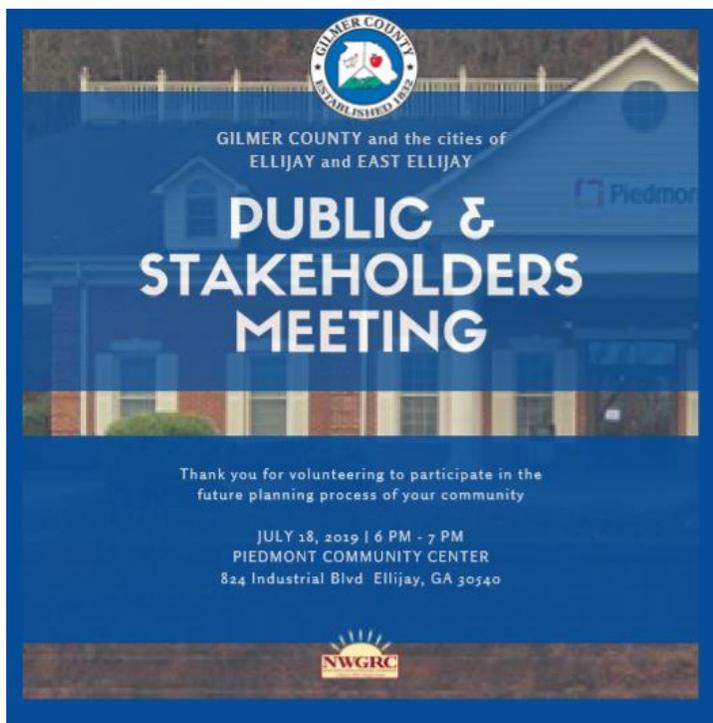


Figure 11: Flier used to inform the public of the Joint Comprehensive Plan stakeholder's meeting



Figure 12: Stakeholders reviewing needs and opportunities created by the steering committee.

HOW TO USE THIS PLAN

Joint Narratives

The purpose of this plan is to implement a vision for growth and development by guiding and implementing land use and development policy for Gilmer County and the cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay. Each jurisdiction addresses each of the elements (described below) in joint sections that focus on each element as it relates to the entire county. This is a slightly different format from the previous 2014-2018 Joint Comprehensive plan to create a more individualized approach for each government.



Figure 13: Employees of a local manufacture. Photo courtesy of the Gilmer County Historical Society.

- Capital Improvements Element** is required for communities that charge development impact fees. The Capital Improvements Element annual update for SFY 2019, prepared separately, has been prepared based on the Development Impact Fee Act (DIFA), the Development Impact Fee Compliance Requirements (DCA Rules 110-12-2), and the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning (DCA Rules 110-12-1). These documents dictate the essential components of an annual update: (1) an impact fee financial report and (2) a five-year schedule of capital improvements.
- The Land Use Element** of this plan is a joint section including copies of the Future Land Use Maps, showing standard land use categories, and provides an explanation of how the Future Land Use Map is to be interpreted in terms of those categories. These categories will play an important role in determining the direction of the future growth of the county and its cities.
- Rural Broadband Element** Each local government must include in its Local Comprehensive Plan an action plan for the promotion of the deployment of broadband services by broadband service providers into unserved areas within its jurisdiction. The action plan must describe steps for the promotion of reasonable and cost-effective access to broadband to parts of the local government's jurisdiction designated by the DCA as unserved areas. The local action plan required pursuant to this element may include, but shall not be limited to, any assessments, studies, ordinances, and/or goals to achieve certification as a Broadband Ready Community or designation of facilities and developments as Georgia Broadband Ready Community Sites. Each local comprehensive plan should contemplate and seek to implement this element in a manner which stresses the importance of broadband deployment across this state, and that broadband services should be considered as important as other necessary utilities.



Independent Narratives

These portions of the plan are jurisdictionally specific and therefore require more individualized organization than the joint narratives. Gilmer County and the cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay each have independent narratives for the following plan elements:

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 vision for future development and appropriately addressing the community needs and opportunities. Policy statements are identified for each planning element. Due to the interjurisdictional similarity of the policies adopted in the previous Comprehensive Plan this plan will incorporate them into a single joint section to reduce unnecessary repetition



Report of Accomplishments The first step of plan implementation is to conduct a report of accomplishments specific to Gilmer County and the Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay. The report of accomplishments shows 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 2014-2018. The local government officials reviewed the 2014-2018 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, Gilmer County Joint Comprehensive Plan, 2020-2024. However, projects noted as “Ongoing,” annual tasks, or policy statements will not be carried forward to the current 2020-2024 work program



Community Vision/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.

For this plan, the Community Goals element includes a list of goals Gilmer County seeks to achieve and policies selected to provide ongoing guidance and direction to local government officials for making decisions consistent with achieving the Community Goals.



Needs and Opportunities The methodology for generating the list of needs and opportunities was accomplished via SWOT analyses, 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 shown a presentation illustrating the current population and economic trends to provide each stakeholder with the basis for an informed discussion during the initial stakeholder's meeting. The SWOT analyses were carried out during steering committee meetings one and two and the community outreach survey was solely based on the information obtained during those initial steering committee meetings. 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, wrote down the group responses and noted if the responses were specific to individual communities or all communities. Stakeholders were given the opportunity to address each category with the SWOT perspective. The list of needs and opportunities was then brought to each jurisdiction's staff and/or elected officials to determine which items could be addressed specific to each community. Some of the more overarching 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



Community Work Program The Community Work Program lays out the specific activities the community plans to undertake during the next five years to address the priority Needs and Opportunities. It represents 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 leaders 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, leaders, 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. This includes any activities, initiatives, programs, ordinances, or administrative systems to be put in place to implement the comprehensive plan. The Community Work Program includes the following information for each listed activity:

- Brief description of the activity;
- Timeframe for initiating and completing the activity;
- Responsible party for implementing the activity;
- Estimated the cost (if any) for implementing the activity;
- Funding source(s), if applicable; and
- Need or Opportunity addressed by the activity, if applicable.



JOINT LAND USE ELEMENT

A comprehensive guide for future development and redevelopment within Gilmer County and its two Cities.



Geography

Gilmer County Includes the cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay. It also includes smaller communities that are unincorporated cities but are recognized places within the county. The information below is addressed by geographic area:

Gilmer County

Gilmer County is one of North Georgia's great mountain counties. Located in the north central portion of the State of Georgia, Gilmer County was created on December 3, 1832 and has become well-known for its mountains and annual Apple Festival. Gilmer's population grew from a total of 13,368 in the year 1990 to a total of 30,674 as of 2017, and Gilmer's population is projected to exceed 32,000 by the year 2040 according to the U.S. Census.

Cities

Ellijay

The City of Ellijay is known as the county seat for Gilmer County and has been incorporated since December 20, 1834. Located in the center of Gilmer County, Ellijay has approximately 2,304 acres of land with a population of 1,719 as of year 2017, according to the U.S. Census. The city is served by a principal arterial GA SR 515, as well as other state highways which offer great mobility through the area.

East Ellijay

The City of East Ellijay was established in 1903. East Ellijay is located in the central portion of Gilmer County, adjacent to the eastern boundary of the City of Ellijay. The U.S. Census estimates the population of 570 as of 2017. The City of East Ellijay is served by GA SR 515 as well as other local roads which offer great mobility through the area.

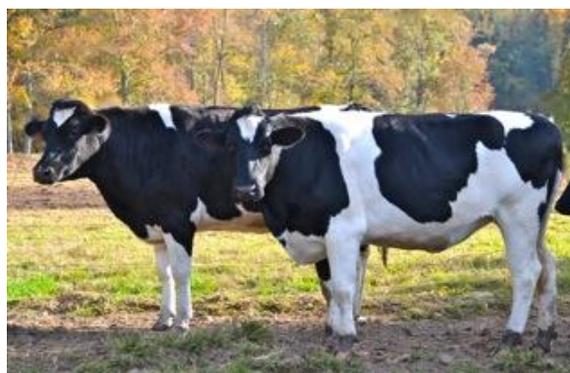
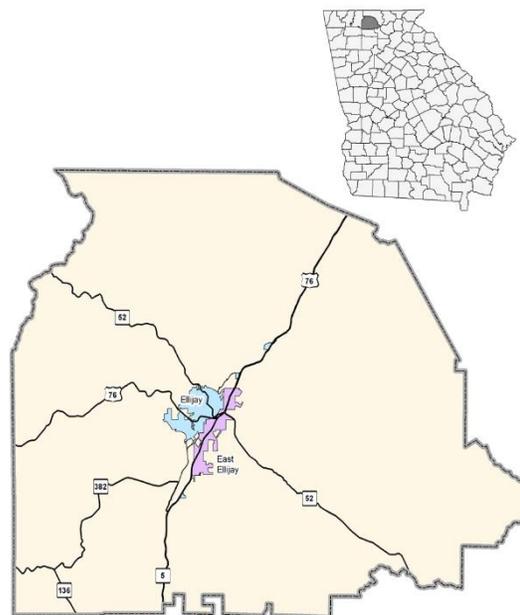


Figure 14: Nearly 6% of Gilmer's land area (15,629 acres) is utilized for agriculture or forestry.

OVERVIEW OF LAND USE IN GILMER COUNTY



Mountains

Gilmer County, along with the cities of Ellijay, and East Ellijay are some of North Georgia's great mountain communities. The Blue Ridge Mountain range is an environmental corridor with natural beauty that provides several recreational opportunities in the form of hunting, fishing, hiking, mountain biking, horseback riding, camping, and many more activities. Gilmer County receives much of its ambience from its environmental characteristics and the panoramic vistas of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Mountainous terrain, while attractive to the observer, often creates challenges for modern community development. Land use patterns in Gilmer County have been largely determined by the Cohutta Mountains, a sub-group of the Blue Ridge Mountains of the Appalachian Mountain range. The steep slopes can expose water bodies to degradation if best management practices are not adhered to when conducting earth moving activities such as grading and forestry. Because of Gilmer's obvious attraction to developers and destination homebuilders, Gilmer County has adopted a mountain protection ordinance designed to ensure that new development respects the environmentally sensitive areas that make Gilmer County so unique.

Waterways

Cold water mountain streams provide Gilmer County with a good source of drinkable water, as well as, making it a destination for trout fishing. The cool waters of the local streams help support trout populations in eight primary trout streams: the Cartecay River, the Ellijay River, the Consauga River, Harris Creek, Johnson Creek, Mountain Creek, Tails Creek, and the Toccoa River. Because of



Figure 15: Mountain biker in Gilmer County. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.



Figure 16: Mountain view in Gilmer County. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.

Gilmer's abundance of waterways, paddlesports such as kayaking and tubing are also popular recreational opportunities for residents and visitors. Although Gilmer County has many tributaries and minor waterways, the county's most significant waterways are the Cartecay, Ellijay, and Coosawattee Rivers. The Cartecay River headwaters are in the Chattahoochee National Forest, and flow from east to west through the county, and the cities of East Ellijay, and Ellijay. The Ellijay River flows from the northern portion of the county southward to the City of Ellijay. These two rivers are part of the Coosa Watershed. The confluence of the Cartecay River meets the Ellijay River in the City of Ellijay to form the Coosawattee River. Though the Coosawattee River is a larger waterbody than both the Ellijay and Cartecay rivers, it only supports trout throughout certain periods the year and there is no sustainable reproduction. The Coosawattee River flows into the Army Corps of Engineers' Carters Lake. Carters Lake provides many recreational opportunities and contains no private docks or developments. Another mentionable waterway is the Toccoa River, which belongs to the Tennessee River watershed and is in the northern portion of the county on National Forest Service lands. Because of the natural, recreational, and economic significance of Gilmer's waterways, the community leaders and citizens recognize the importance of protecting these assets for future generations. For the reasons mentioned above, all of Gilmer's rivers and many of its streams are protected by local and state ordinances to ensure that future development does not compromise their integrity as the community continues to grow. One of the most consistent responses from members of the steering committee and community survey responses was the understanding that there is a need for more public access points to existing trails and waterways. Multiple projects aimed at improving access to Gilmer's waterways may be found in Gilmer County's Community Work Program, and a list of impaired waters may be found in Appendix F.

Preserved Lands

Gilmer County is ranked third in Georgia counties for National Forest acreage, totaling 55,501 acres. This is the predominate land use within the county. These lands can be found North of Ellijay and are adjacent to Gilmer County's boundary with Murray County, and the forest continues to span east to southeast along the county's boundary with Fannin County. The cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay lack any National Forest lands. The future land use categories characterize National Forest lands as



Figure 17: Whitewater kayaking on the Cartecay River. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.



Figure 18: Kayaker and canoers on Carters Lake. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.



Figure 19: Ellijay River photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.

Parks/Recreational/Conservation. While the abundance of protected lands confines development, it preserves much of Gilmer County's most significant and beloved natural resources. Gilmer's access to this abundance of preserved land greatly contributes to its character as an outdoor recreation destination community, and many of the preserved lands offer hiking, mountain biking, fishing, and camping opportunities. The preserved natural vistas have also created a sense of equity for the residents of Gilmer County. Gilmer's citizens and leaders understand that these great natural assets will, even as the community grows, forever remain protected.

Transportation

Transportation in Gilmer County was once limited due to the geographic constraints of the mountains. The local economy and population in Gilmer grew, as time advanced, largely due to the improvements of the roadways that connected Gilmer County to other communities. Although Gilmer County lacks access to the U.S. Interstate Highway system, there are several arterial state highways that connect Gilmer to other areas of the state. Historically, State Route 5 and U.S. Highway 76 were the primary north/south arterial corridors for travelers in this area of Northwest Georgia. With the sustained growth and traffic, in this area of Northwest Georgia, typical ongoing improvements to the primary roadways continued to be made. The most significant transportation improvement, to this area of Northwest Georgia, was the creation of Georgia State Route 515. State Route 515 (SR 515) is a 76.2-mile-long four-lane state highway in the central northern part of the state of Georgia. It begins slightly west of the City of Nelson, GA. It then curves to the northeast to Lake Chatuge, where it travels northward to the North Carolina state line. This highway was built to give motorists in the North Georgia mountains better access to Atlanta and its outlying suburbs, as opposed to the old SR 5 and U.S. Route 76 (US 76) highways, which this project replaced. SR 515 is also known as the Zell Miller Mountain Parkway, in honor of Zell Miller, the Young Harris native turned Georgia governor and U.S. senator. The highway was officially designated in 1989. Over the fifteen years following SR 515's completion, Gilmer County would witness its most-significant growth period, to-date, for both population and economic development. Much of Gilmer's modern commercial growth concentrated along or near SR 515 to take advantage of the heavy volumes of daily traffic. The portion of SR 515 within Gilmer



Figure 20: Appalachian Trail marker in Gilmer County. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.



Figure 21: Cyclists in Gilmer County. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.



Figure 22: Aerial view of SR 515. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.

County sustains somewhere between 14,000-20,000 average annual daily trips, based on data collected in 2018 by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). Other significant arterial corridors in Gilmer include SR 52, SR 136, SR 282, and SR 382. Gilmer County is also accessed by a north/south short line freight railway operated by Georgia Northeastern Railroad. While the railway is not sufficient enough to extend the Blue Ridge Scenic Railway to Gilmer County, collaborative projects such as rails with trails may offer opportunities for more trail connections and a long-anticipated riverwalk. Gilmer County also owns and operates the only public airport in the county. Gilmer's airport contains a 3,500 ft. x 75 ft. asphalt runway which offers leasable hanger space as well as aviation fuel sales. Air-traffic at the Gilmer County Airport averages 58 aircraft operations per week where over thirty-percent of aircraft operations are from transient aircrafts. Gilmer County's transportation network, like all infrastructure, requires ongoing strategic planning and improvement, and several transportation-related projects can be found in the implementation programs of Ellijay, East Ellijay, and Gilmer County.



Figure 23: Aerial view of the Gilmer County Airport



Figure 24: Hanger space may be leased at the Gilmer County Airport by private aircraft owners, and revenue generated from hanger leases along with aviation fuel sales assists in the airport's ongoing maintenance and improvements.

Public Water and Wastewater Utilities

History

While no official history exists regarding the establishment of Gilmer's first water utility, we know that the City of Ellijay had a water utility as early as 1929 due to a surviving date-marked water tank. The city of Ellijay was the first community in Gilmer County to have public water, and Ellijay remains as the center of operations for the water and sewer utilities. While Gilmer County and the City of East Ellijay developed their own water systems, both systems relied upon the water supplies and wastewater treatment plant located in the City of Ellijay. By the year 1987, Ellijay, East Ellijay, and Gilmer County combined their water and wastewater systems into a single entity known as the Ellijay-Gilmer Water and Sewer Authority (EGWSA) via legislation. The EGWSA is governed by a five-member board of directors which meets monthly. Three members of the board are appointed by the Gilmer County Board of Commissioners, one member is appointed by the City of East Ellijay, and one member is appointed by the City of Ellijay.

Public Water Infrastructure

The EGWSA has three raw water supplies: the Cartecay River, the Ellijay River, and Joyce Spring. Raw water from these sources is collected and treated chemically before being piped



Figure 25: Historic Pont du Gard aqueducts in southern France illustrate that public drinking water infrastructure has been an important part of community design since the ancient Roman Empire.

into the water supply system. The Ellijay Gilmer County Water and Sewerage Authority operates a conventional water plant that is rated at 5.5 MGD (million gallons per day). The plant primarily withdraws water from the Cartecay River under permit from the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (GEPD) and can use up to 4.0 MGD. Another 0.45 MGD can be withdrawn from the Ellijay River, when river flow is above minimum levels. The plant was constructed in 1971 as a 0.5 MGD plant and has been expanded several times to keep pace with water usage. The plant is set up so that it can easily be expanded up to 8.0 MGD in order to meet future requirements of the community. The plant has received Gold and Platinum Awards for operational excellence and was named "Plant of the Year" in 2013, for plants in the State of Georgia between 3.0 and 8.99 MGD in size. The EGWSA has eleven storage tanks with a total storage capacity of 1,815,000 gallons. Its distribution system contains eight booster pumping stations and approximately 344 miles of water lines (See appendix D. Public Water Service Area map). The EGWSA recently received a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), on behalf of Gilmer County, in order to expand their public water service area to serve 125 residences in the unincorporated Roundtop community. The Roundtop expansion will also have a second phase that will be funded by the EGWSA. The grant was awarded primarily due to the poor quality of the well water in this area and the public need for an alternative source of drinking water. Currently, the EGWSA is also underway with its most significant public water system expansion in recent history with ambition to serve approximately 2,800 new users along Yukon Road. The Yukon Road expansion will create a connection between the EGWSA and Pickens County water system in order to serve as a redundancy for both water systems. Because parts of the EGWSA's infrastructure are of advanced age, it is standard practice to replace and repair the existing service area infrastructure in order to reduce instances of system failure and water loss. The EGWSA estimate a daily water loss of 13-18%, based on the total volume of daily water supply, and the amount of daily water loss should continue to improve as the scheduled replacement plans are carried out over time.



Figure 26: Access to potable public water is continuously improving in Gilmer County, and water lines have extending the beyond city limits into the rural areas of the County.

Wastewater Infrastructure

The Ellijay-Gilmer County Water and Sewerage Authority operates an activated sludge, extended air wastewater treatment plant that is permitted by GEPD to treat up to 2.5 MGD. The plant also removes phosphorus down to a level of 1.0 parts per million. The reclaimed water is discharged to the Coosawattee River, which is one of the many trout streams found in Gilmer County, GA. The plant received a Gold Award in 2013 for operational excellence. It was constructed in 1970 and has been expanded several times to provide wastewater capacity that supports community growth. It is currently running at approximately 50% capacity and can be further expanded to handle up to 5.0 MGD. A septic receiving station is available for local haulers that pump septic tanks. Recreational vehicles may dump at the station at no charge, which is a great service for the many visitors traveling to Gilmer County to camp in their recreational vehicle. The existing sewer service area is much more limited than the public water service area



Figure 27: Sanitary Sewer infrastructure is often the costliest investment regarding local utilities, which explains why Gilmer's sewer service area is lesser than that of the public water service area.

(see appendix E), but the available capacity of the water plant means that a significant increase in service area can be achieved. The primary limitations for sewer service area involve steep slopes and the distance to the existing treatment plant. For example, the Clear Creek Middle School campus is located in a different drainage basin from the existing plant. For this reason, a pump system was needed, substantially increasing the cost of providing sewer service to this project. While topography can create a challenge for certain areas, there are areas in the drainage basin of the treatment plant that can be served in a cost-efficient manner. The EGWSA is eager to work with developers and residents to increase the current sewer service area, but sewer service area expansions require an adequate density of new users in order for the utility provider to recuperate the construction costs.

Agriculture

Agriculture is another significant land use that Gilmer County receives much of its character from and is an important economic resource for the county, particularly in the production of apples, wine, and poultry. Gilmer County as of 2017, is the number one producer of apples in the state of Georgia, with a total reported 525 acres. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) reports the total market value of apples, minus the production cost (Farm Gate Value) to be at \$7,560,000. The apple industry also contributes to the strong agritourism industry in the county, bringing visitors to the county during apple harvesting season. Gilmer County is reported as nineteenth in Farm Gate Value in the state of Georgia out of 159 counties at \$189,178,235 total income value. Farm wineries have also gained momentum in North Georgia, and Gilmer County is quickly becoming a destination for wine connoisseurs. Farm wineries also greatly contribute to the Gilmer's growing agritourism base by hosting various special events and retreats on-site. Although it is not an agritourism generator, the most economically significant agricultural commodity within the county is poultry. The United States Department of Agriculture has reported Gilmer County to be ranked 13th out of the 159 Georgia Counties for poultry production with a Farm Gate Value totaling \$156,415,169.00. Since Pilgrim's Pride has a poultry processing facility in Ellijay, Gilmer generates revenue from both the production and processing of poultry. Row crops and cattle production occur in Gilmer to a lesser degree than the previously mentioned commodities primarily because of Gilmer's



Figure 28: In Spring of 2018 the EGWSA voted to eliminate tap fees for commercial and residential water and sewer utilities of a 2" or less diameter, and EGWSA also voted to reduce both residential and commercial impact fees for 2" or less diameter to \$25.00 in order to make access to these utilities more-affordable for residents and business owners.



Figure 29: Visitors touring a local apple orchard in Gilmer County. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.



Figure 30: Dairy Cattle in Gilmer County. photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.

varying topography making fencing and row cropping difficult. All of these agricultural aspects contribute to Gilmer's economy and overall character. When asked about community growth in the comprehensive plan community survey, an overwhelming majority of the 2019 survey responses indicated that agricultural land should be protected. With such a significant survey response rate, it is evident that agriculture is greatly valued in Gilmer County.

Housing

Considering that approximately 25% of Gilmer's total land area is preserved within the Chattahoochee National Forest and Carters Lake reservoir, there were an estimated 17,247 housing units in Gilmer County as of July 2018 according to the U.S. Census Bureau. The total number of housing units, recorded by the U.S. Census, in the year 2000 was 11,924. By analyzing the total number of housing units between the eighteen-year period between the year 2000 and 2018 one can determine that the total number of housing units in Gilmer County grew by approximately 295 units per year. When compared to the six adjacent counties, Gilmer ranks third in the total number of housing units, as of July 2018, behind the counties of Fannin and Gordon. Gordon County, although adjacent to Gilmer, is significantly different when comparing its geography and infrastructure to Gilmer County, which make these counties difficult to compare. Agriculture and forestry land use occupies nearly 50% of Gilmer's total land area, including both its municipalities, according to 2018 tax assessor's data. With the majority of land area within Gilmer County being either preserved or utilized agriculturally, most of Gilmer's concentrated housing stock can be found within or nearby the cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay. There are, however, pockets of residential communities throughout the unincorporated Gilmer County. These pockets of residential neighborhoods are within the medium-density residential category on the following Future Land Use Map. Residential lot sizes in Gilmer County are largely determined by their proximity to water and sewer services. When referencing the water and wastewater service areas in Appendix D and E, one can determine that residential density will continue to be limited outside these service areas. For example, the minimum lot size for the areas outside the water and sewer service area in Gilmer County is 1.5-acres. Any development seeking less than one-acre tracts will require access to



Figure 31: Vineyard in Gilmer County. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.



Figure 32: Gilmer County is home to several Georgia Grown producers. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.



Figure 33: Mountainside cabin in Gilmer County. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.

both public water and wastewater in Gilmer County. While capacity for expansion of both water and wastewater services is possible in Gilmer County, future utility expansions will rely on development of a certain density threshold in order to create a sustainable return on investment for the EGWSA. With the previously mentioned development limitations, however, there are significant opportunities for new residential development throughout Gilmer County. While population and housing units are expected to continue growing in Gilmer County, new housing development should be respectful of the natural and rural character of the County. The Cities of Ellijay, and East Ellijay, along with unincorporated Gilmer County have developed guiding policies in order to sustain the characteristics that attribute to the quality of life for both citizens and visitors for the future generations. Policies for guiding development in Gilmer County, Ellijay, and East Ellijay may be found in each community's implementation program.



Figure 34: Flowering front lawn in Ellijay. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce

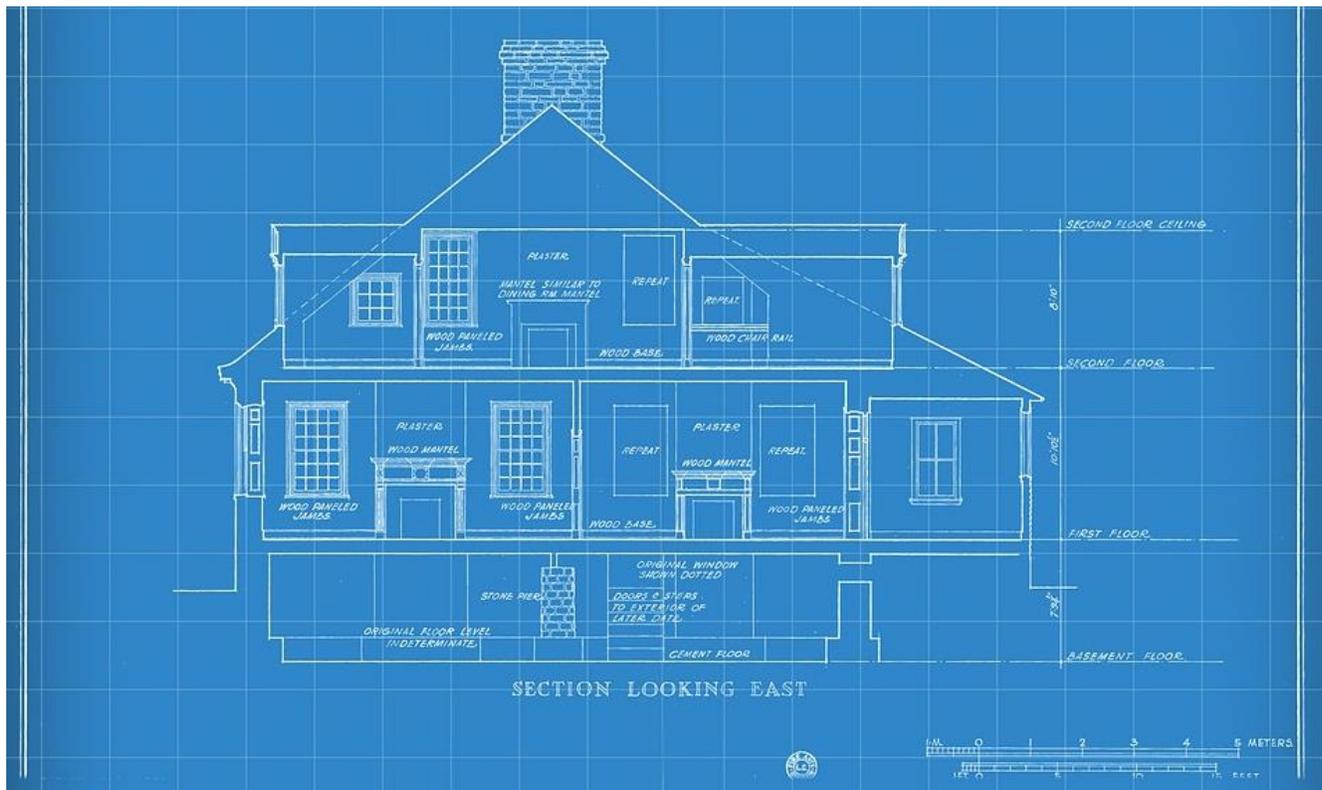


Figure 35: Much like a blueprint guides a carpenter during construction, the Future Land Use Element and accompanying maps should serve as a guide for local officials to follow when they are faced with making a land use decision as the community grows.

USING THE FUTURE LAND USE MAP

A significant component of the comprehensive planning process is the creation of the Future Land Use Map. The future land use map shows the standard land use categories and provides an explanation of how the future land use map should be interpreted in terms of those categories. These categories play a significant role in the determination of the direction of future growth of the county and its cities.

A large portion of land use has been historically determined by the county's topography; the presence of National Forest Lands, the highway system, especially Georgia Highway 515, resort development potential, the historical happenstances leading to the locations of the two cities and various settlements, and any number of other variables.

Gilmer County is correspondingly categorized by sensitive areas, including the Blue Ridge Environmental Corridor, which has high value in its natural state, shielding wildlife habitat, significant watersheds, and other ecologically noteworthy features. The high elevation and panoramic landscapes also contribute to local economies, bringing tourism, second home, and retiree revenue.

Another significant feature is the Chattahoochee National Forest Lands. Of the nine counties in Northwest Georgia where the forest is located, Gilmer County has the largest acreage. These forested areas support hunting, hiking, fishing, horseback ridings, mountain biking, swimming, camping, and many more activities that are great contributors to the economy.

Gilmer County is also the location of two significant publicly owned wildlife management areas. Those areas are the Cohutta and Rich Mountain Wildlife management areas and they provide public access to lands suited for hunting, fishing, and other significant recreational activities.



Figure 36: Hikers in Gilmer County. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.



Figure 37: Cohutta Wildlife Management Area in Gilmer County.



Figure 38: Rich Mountain Wildlife Management Area in Gilmer County.

LAND USE CATEGORIES

A great extent of the commercial development in the county is centered on Georgia Highway 515, particularly within the corporate limits of East Ellijay. The historic core of Ellijay is also home to a significant concentration of commercial activity, and outside of the cities, Highways 282 and 52 East also support considerable commercial activity, including convenience stores and the apple houses that have an iconic status in Gilmer County.

The categories and descriptions below are based on the Department of Community Affairs' Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning that came into effect on March 1, 2014.

Residential: can be detailed into three categories: this category includes land used for single-family and multi-family residential uses.

Low-Density Residential – this category includes Residential land use consisting of single-family detached dwellings at a maximum density of one dwelling unit per acre.



Figure 39: Low-density residential land use in Gilmer County

Medium-Density Residential – this category includes residential land use consisting of single-family detached dwellings at a maximum density of one dwelling unit per 0.5 acres.



Figure 40: Medium-density residential development in Ellijay

High-Density Residential – this category includes Residential land use consisting of multi-family dwellings such as duplexes, triplexes, quadplexes, townhouses, condominiums, and apartments at a maximum density of 10 dwelling units per acre.



Figure 41: Example of high-density residential development

Commercial – this category includes land used for non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service, and entertainment facilities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building.



Figure 42: Commercial development in East Ellijay

Industrial – this classification includes land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehouses, wholesale trade facilities, mining, mineral extraction activities, or similar uses.



Figure 43: Industrial development in Ellijay

Public/Institutional – this grouping includes certain state, federal or local governmental and institutional land uses. Its public uses include city halls, governmental building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, and more. Some examples of institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, and hospitals.



Figure 44: Government buildings in Ellijay and East Ellijay

Transportation/Communication/Utilities – this category includes such uses as roads, public transit stations, railway, radio towers, telephone switching stations, airports, or other similar uses.



Figure 45: Illustration of utility infrastructure

Park/Recreation/Conservation – these usages include land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. These are areas that may be either publicly or privately owned.

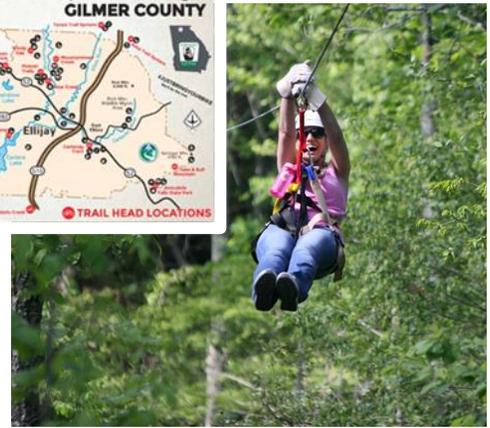


Figure 46: Gilmer County has many outstanding recreation opportunities

Agriculture/Forestry – this grouping includes land dedicated to agriculture, farming, orchards, viticulture, or similar rural uses, as well land dedicated to commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting.

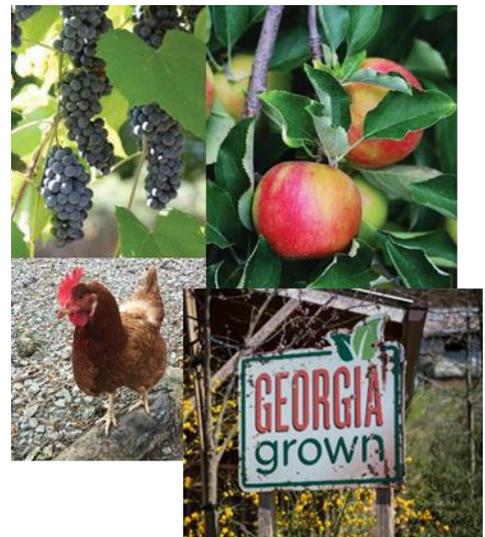


Figure 47: Gilmer boasts an economically significant and diverse agricultural production

Mixed Use – this grouping includes a blending of land uses such as low-intensity retail, service, and office commercial within the same structure or lot as single or multi-family residential uses. For Mixed Use development there should be a minimum of 60% gross leasable area for commercial use. No more than 40% of gross leasable area should be utilized for residential purposes in order to maintain a commercial dominant district. For residential development in the Mixed Use district, the maximum permissible density should be no more than ten dwelling units per-acre. This category of land use would be defined as a Mixed Use or Planned Unit Development (PUD) in a zoning ordinance. Mixed Use development is also common within the downtown area or central business district.



Figure 48: Downtown Ellijay offers many opportunities for mixed-use re-development

GILMER COUNTY: FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The tables, below, provide the projected future land use for Gilmer County by standard land use categories for the county excluding the cities and the county including the cities, respectively. Following the tables, on page 29 is the Gilmer County Future Land Use Map.

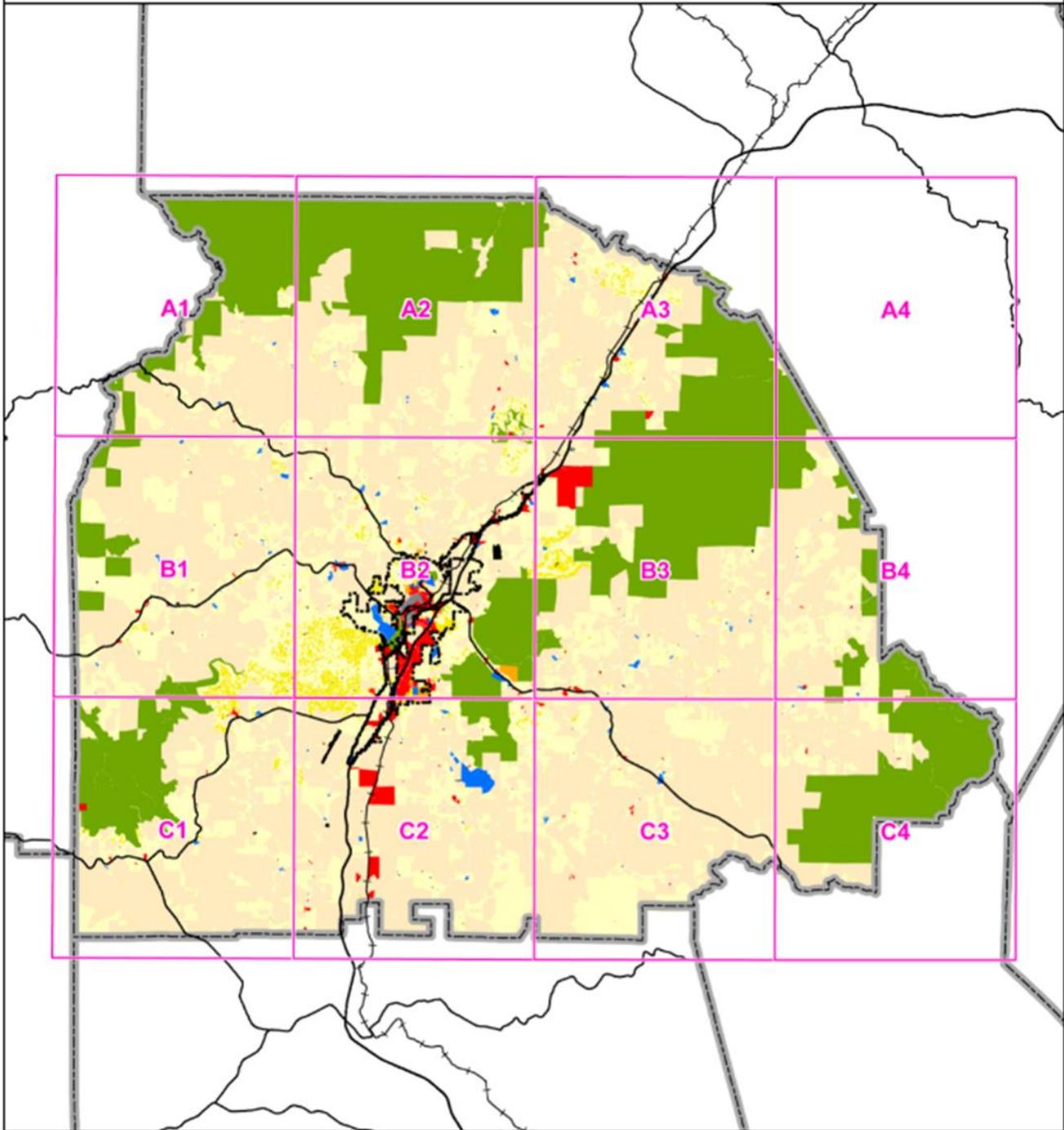
Future Land Use by Standard Categories – Gilmer County (excluding cities)

Land Use Category	Acres	Percent of Total Acres
Residential	59,632	22.61%
-High Density	124.3328	0.05%
-Medium Density	3741.056	1.42%
-Low Density	55,766.6112	21.14%
Commercial	2,026.301	0.77%
Industrial	33.6071	0.01%
Public/Institutional	816.197	0.31%
Transportation / Communication / Utilities	231.689	0.09%
Park / Recreation / Conservation	67,320.9	25.53%
Agriculture / Forestry	129,776	49.21%
Total	263,703	100.00%

Future Land Use by Standard Categories – Gilmer County (including cities)

Land Use Category	Acres	Percent of Total Acres
Residential	60,837.14	22.71%
-High Density	351.3261	0.13%
-Medium Density	4,107.61	1.53%
-Low Density	56,378.2039	21.05%
Mixed Use	7.915619	0.00%
Commercial	3,005.987	1.12%
Industrial	181.5563	0.07%
Public/Institutional	1,115.307	0.42%
Transportation / Communication / Utilities	293.7516	0.11%
Park / Recreation / Conservation	67,427.9	25.17%
Agriculture / Forestry	130,510.7	48.73%
Total	267,839.2	100.0%

Gilmer County, Georgia - Future Land Use



Future Land Use Category

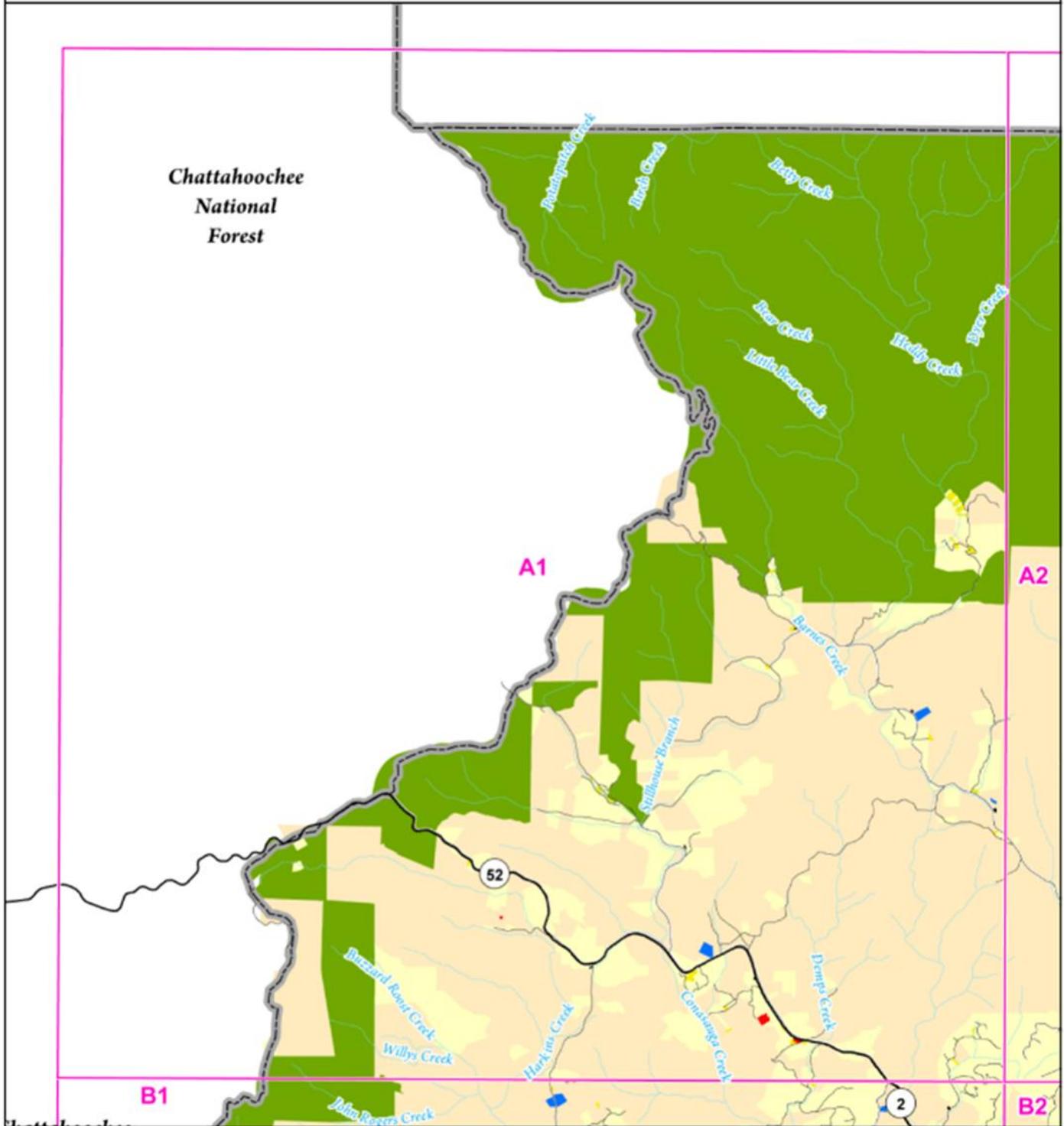
- | | |
|--|--|
|  Agriculture/Forestry |  High Density Residential |
|  Commercial |  Mixed Use |
|  Industrial |  Parks/Recreation/Conservation |
|  Low Density Residential |  Public/Institutional |
|  Medium Density Residential |  Transportation/Communication/Utilities |
- 1 inch = 4 miles



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Gilmer County, Georgia - Future Land Use



Future Land Use Category

- | | |
|---|--|
|  Agriculture/Forestry |  High Density Residential |
|  Commercial |  Mixed Use |
|  Industrial |  Parks/Recreation/Conservation |
|  Low Density Residential |  Public/Institutional |
|  Medium Density Residential |  Transportation/Communication/Utilities |



1 inch = 1 miles

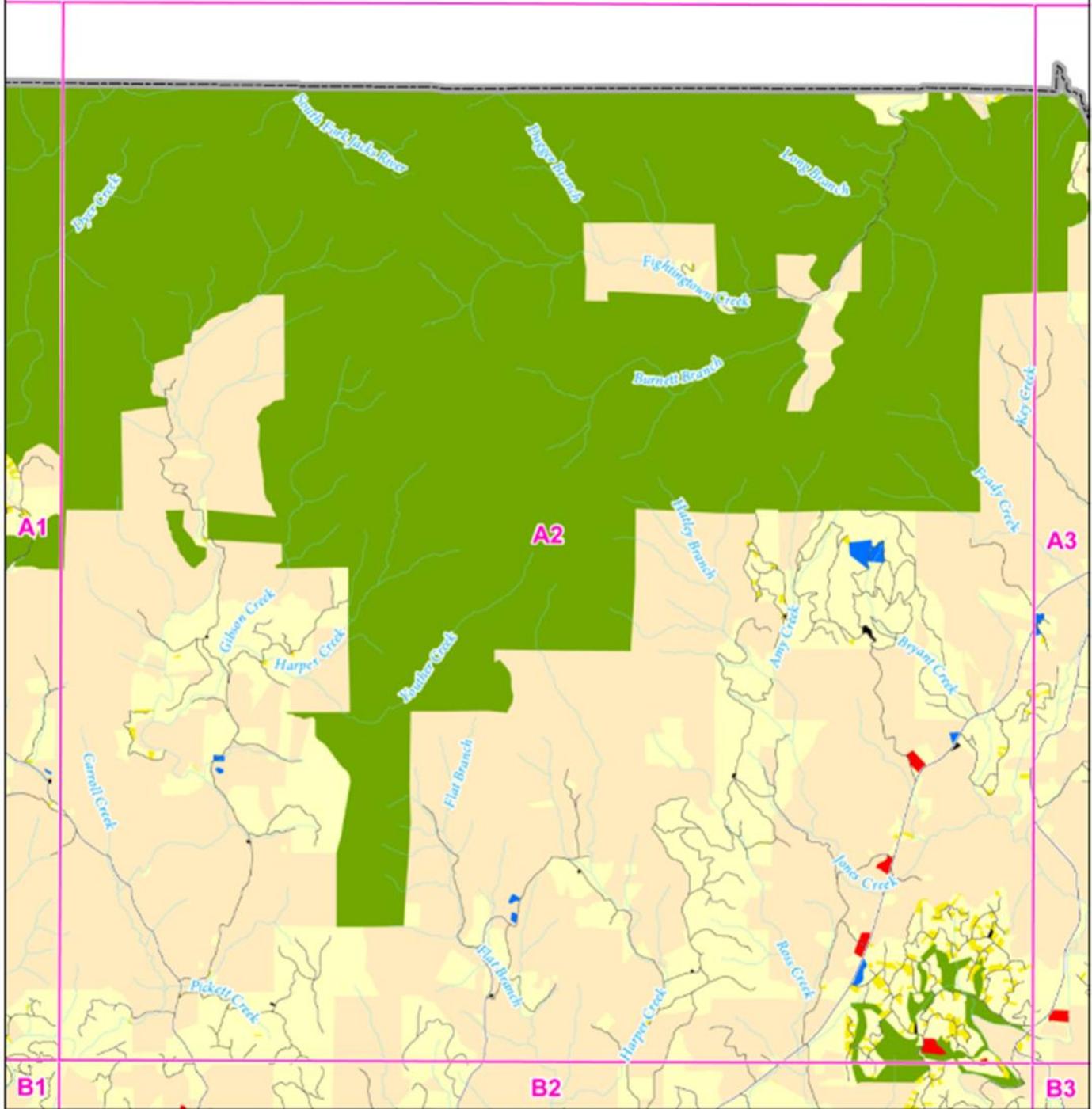


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Grid A1

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Gilmer County, Georgia - Future Land Use



Future Land Use Category

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Agriculture/Forestry |  High Density Residential |
|  Commercial |  Mixed Use |
|  Industrial |  Parks/Recreation/Conservation |
|  Low Density Residential |  Public/Institutional |
|  Medium Density Residential |  Transportation/Communication/Utilities |



1 inch = 1 miles

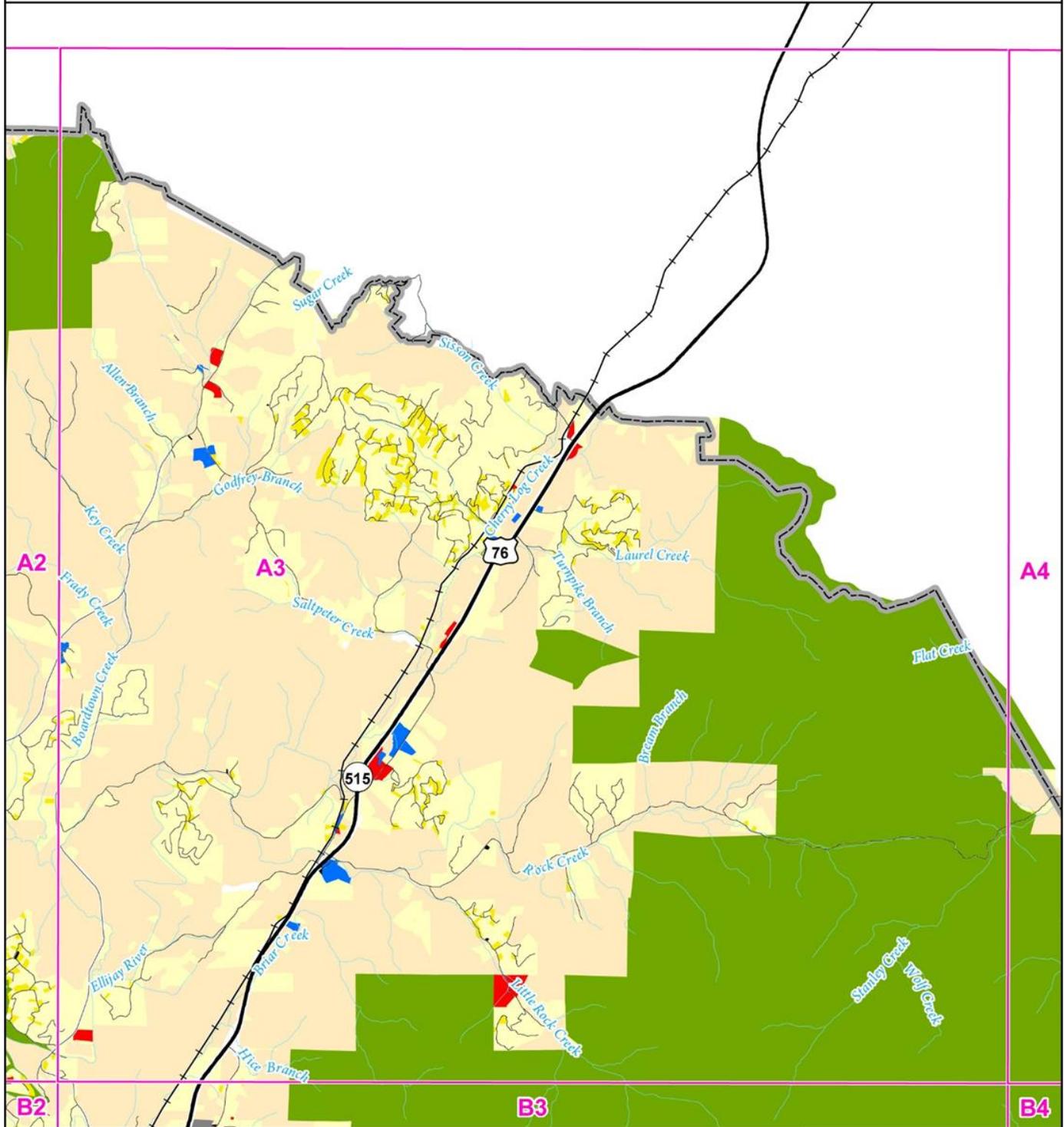


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Grid A2

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Gilmer County, Georgia - Future Land Use



Future Land Use Category

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Agriculture/Forestry |  High Density Residential |
|  Commercial |  Mixed Use |
|  Industrial |  Parks/Recreation/Conservation |
|  Low Density Residential |  Public/Institutional |
|  Medium Density Residential |  Transportation/Communication/Utilities |



1 inch = 1 miles

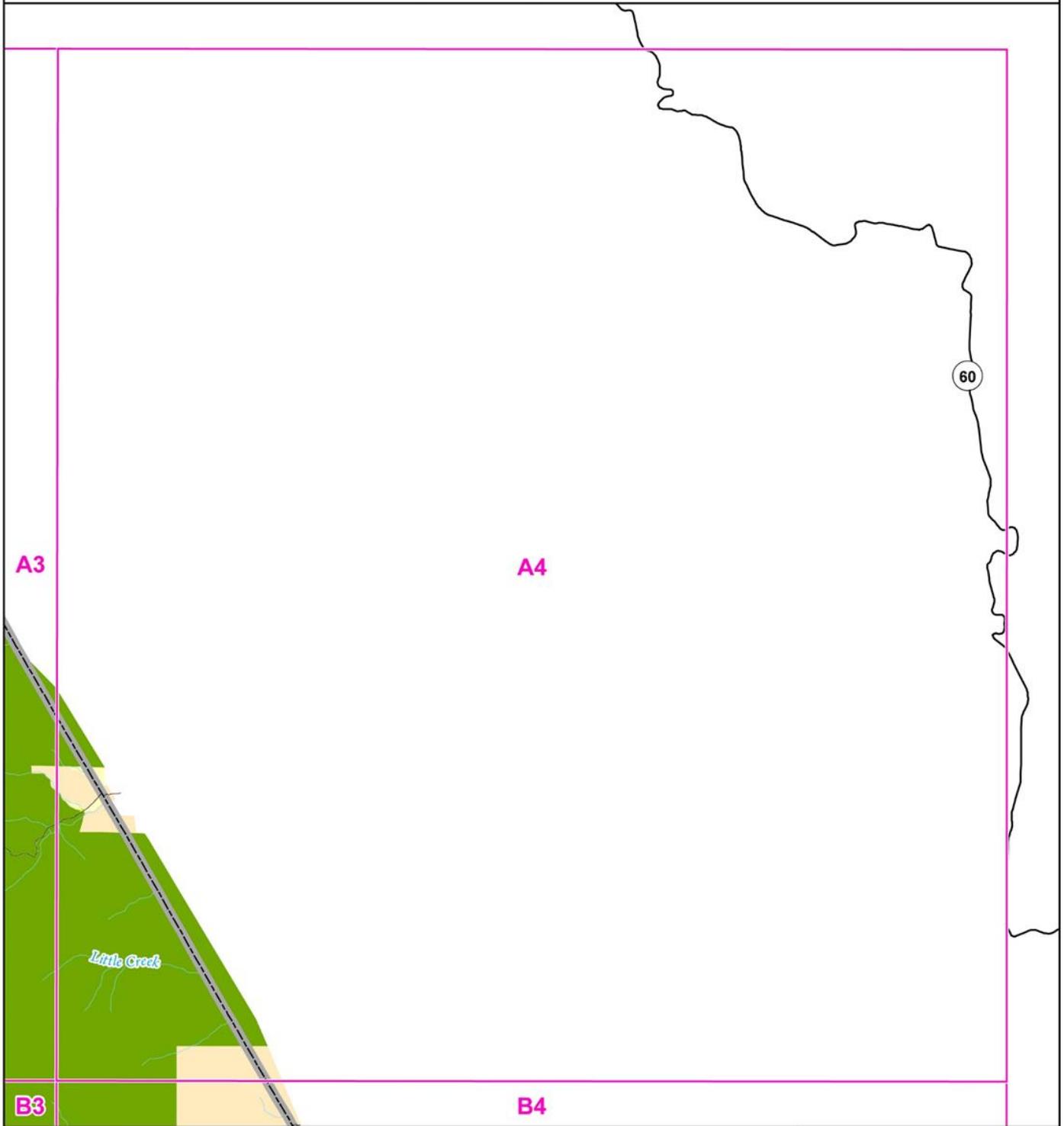


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Gilmer County, Georgia - Future Land Use



Future Land Use Category

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Agriculture/Forestry |  High Density Residential |
|  Commercial |  Mixed Use |
|  Industrial |  Parks/Recreation/Conservation |
|  Low Density Residential |  Public/Institutional |
|  Medium Density Residential |  Transportation/Communication/Utilities |



1 inch = 1 miles

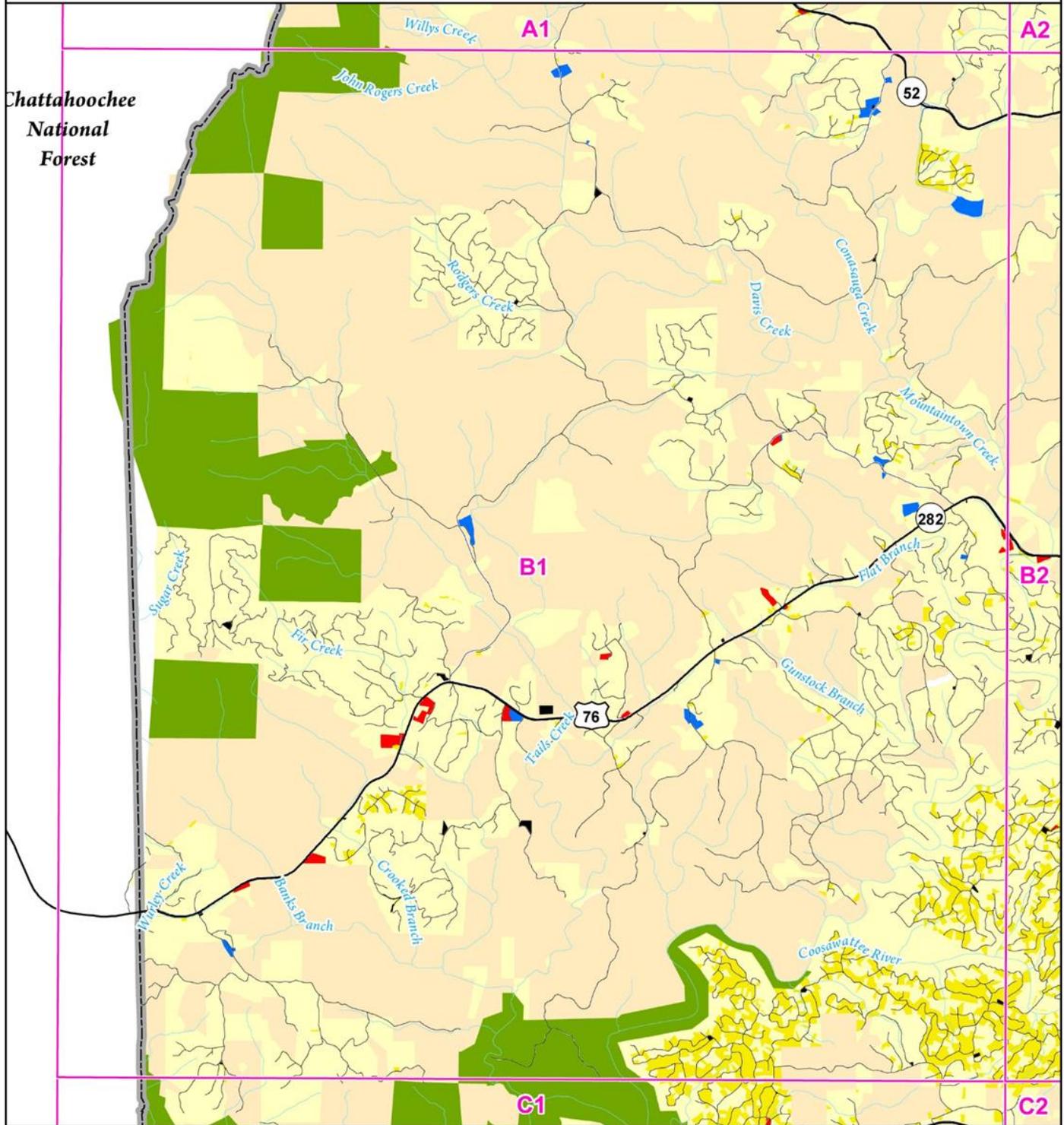


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Gilmer County, Georgia - Future Land Use



Future Land Use Category

- | | | | |
|--|----------------------------|--|--|
| | Agriculture/Forestry | | High Density Residential |
| | Commercial | | Mixed Use |
| | Industrial | | Parks/Recreation/Conservation |
| | Low Density Residential | | Public/Institutional |
| | Medium Density Residential | | Transportation/Communication/Utilities |
- 1 inch = 1 miles

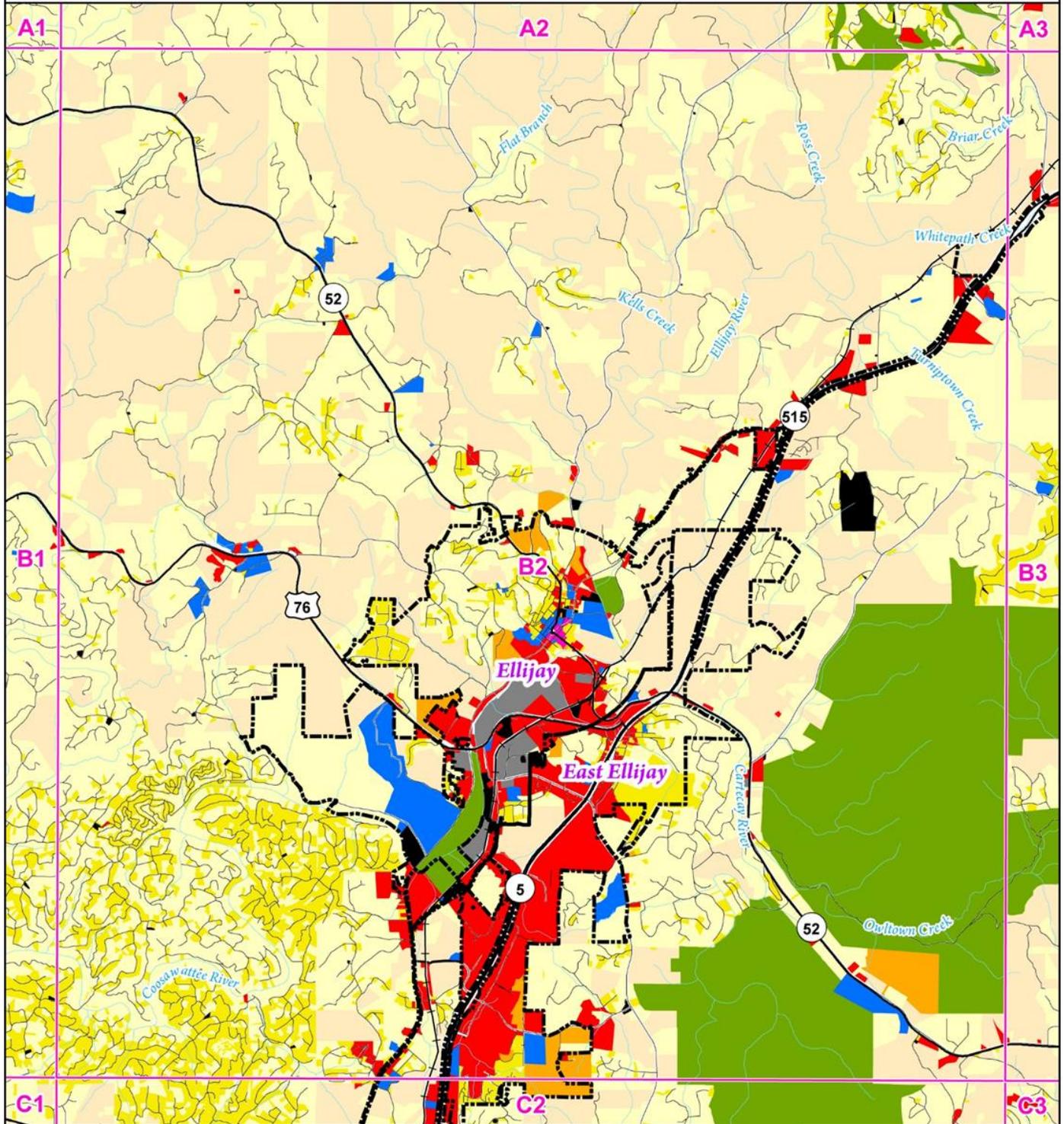


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Grid B1

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Gilmer County, Georgia - Future Land Use



Future Land Use Category

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Agriculture/Forestry |  High Density Residential |
|  Commercial |  Mixed Use |
|  Industrial |  Parks/Recreation/Conservation |
|  Low Density Residential |  Public/Institutional |
|  Medium Density Residential |  Transportation/Communication/Utilities |
- 1 inch = 1 miles

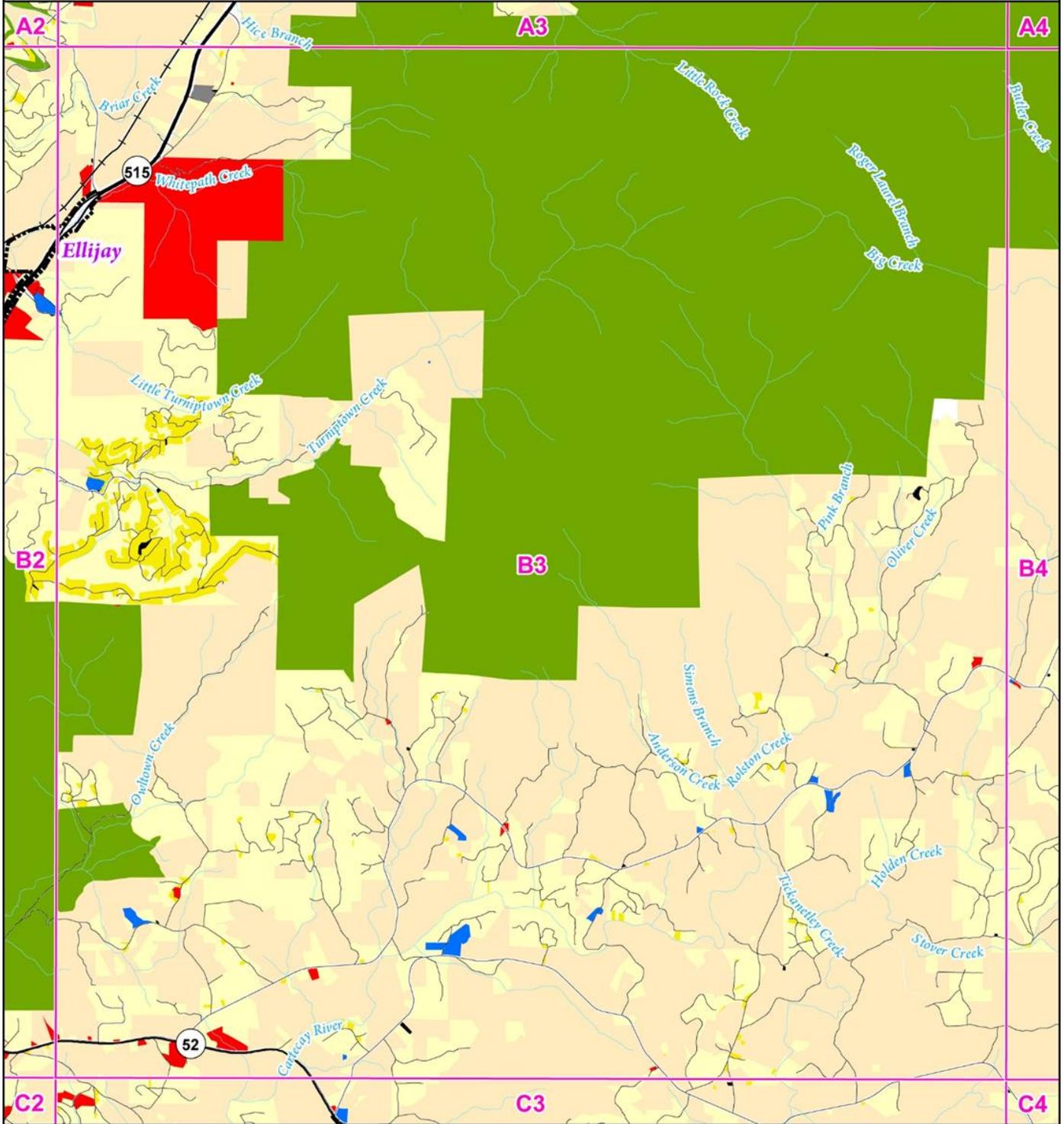


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Gilmer County, Georgia - Future Land Use



Future Land Use Category

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Agriculture/Forestry |  High Density Residential |
|  Commercial |  Mixed Use |
|  Industrial |  Parks/Recreation/Conservation |
|  Low Density Residential |  Public/Institutional |
|  Medium Density Residential |  Transportation/Communication/Utilities |



1 inch = 1 miles

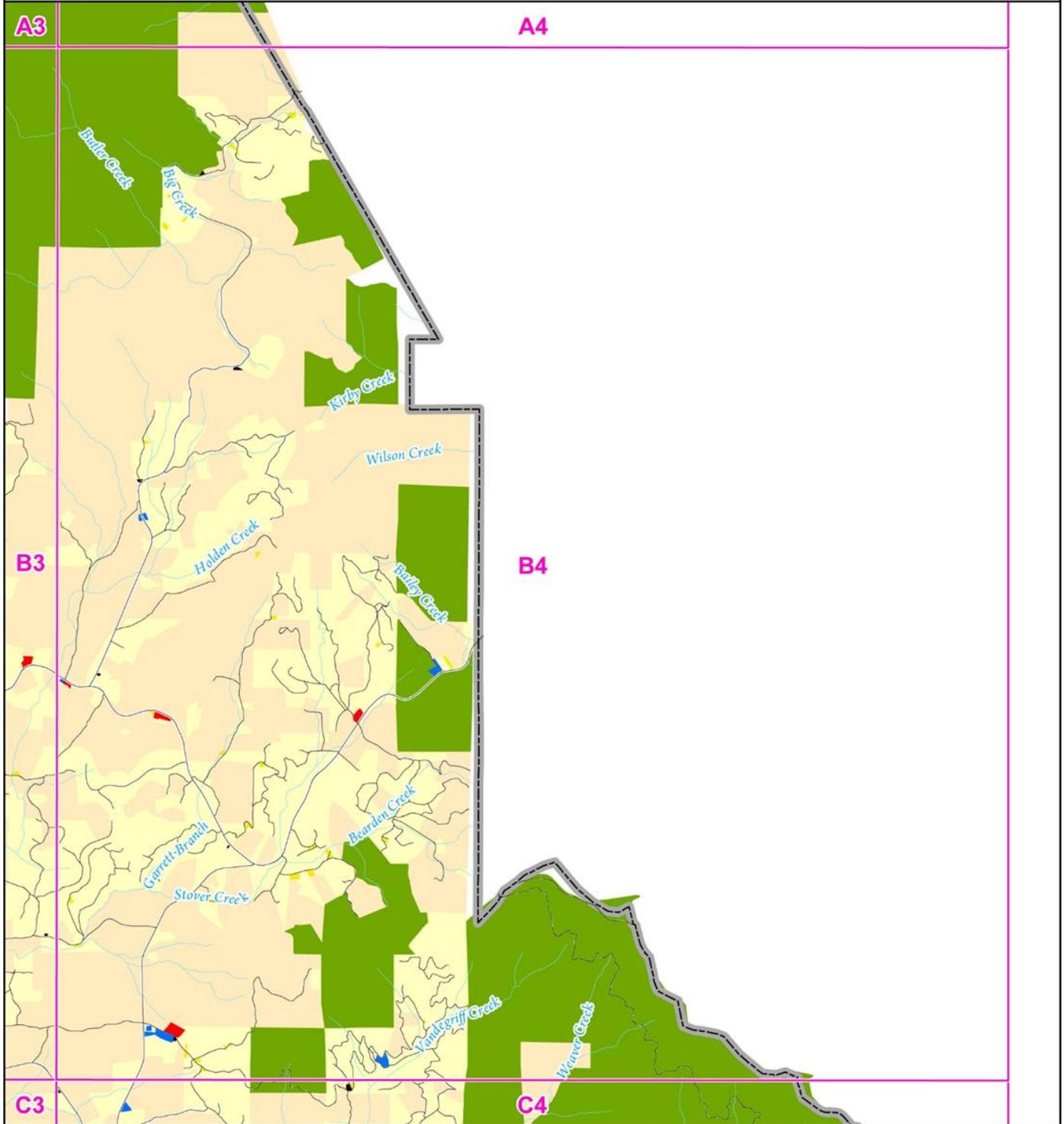


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Gilmer County, Georgia - Future Land Use



Future Land Use Category

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Agriculture/Forestry |  High Density Residential |
|  Commercial |  Mixed Use |
|  Industrial |  Parks/Recreation/Conservation |
|  Low Density Residential |  Public/Institutional |
|  Medium Density Residential |  Transportation/Communication/Utilities |
- 1 inch = 1 miles

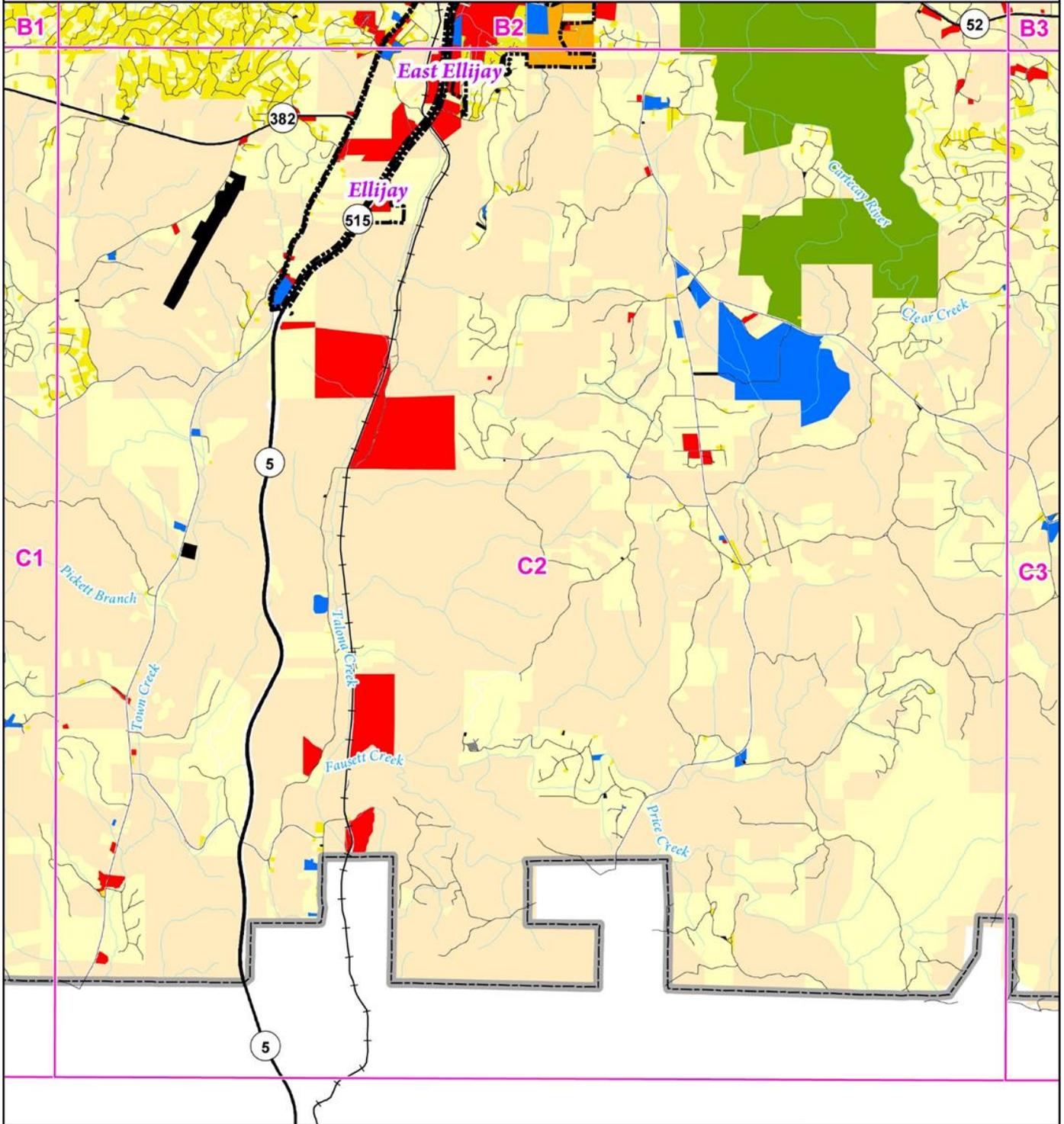


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Gilmer County, Georgia - Future Land Use



Future Land Use Category

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Agriculture/Forestry |  High Density Residential |
|  Commercial |  Mixed Use |
|  Industrial |  Parks/Recreation/Conservation |
|  Low Density Residential |  Public/Institutional |
|  Medium Density Residential |  Transportation/Communication/Utilities |



1 inch = 1 miles

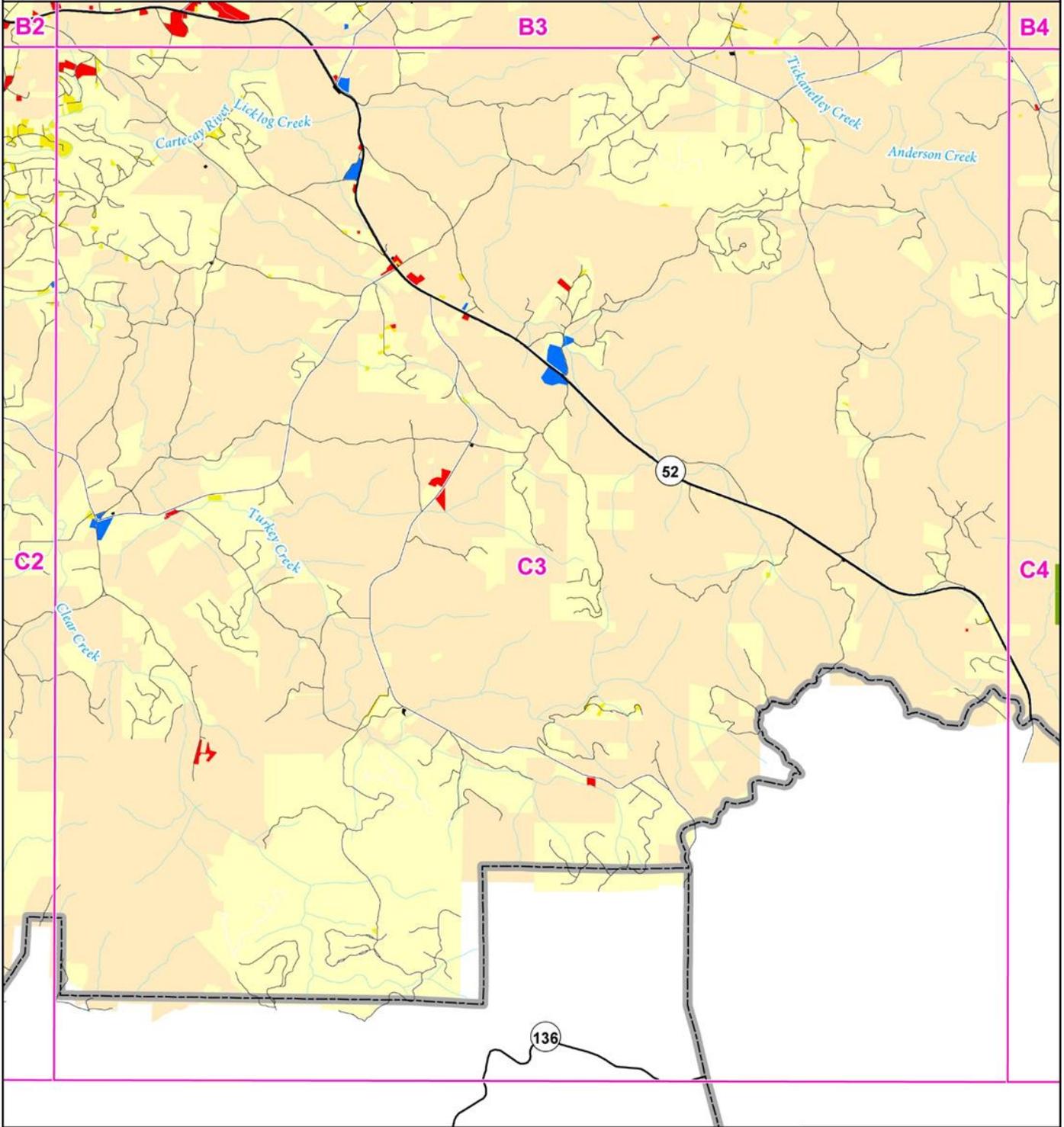


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Gilmer County, Georgia - Future Land Use



Future Land Use Category

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Agriculture/Forestry |  High Density Residential |
|  Commercial |  Mixed Use |
|  Industrial |  Parks/Recreation/Conservation |
|  Low Density Residential |  Public/Institutional |
|  Medium Density Residential |  Transportation/Communication/Utilities |



1 inch = 1 miles

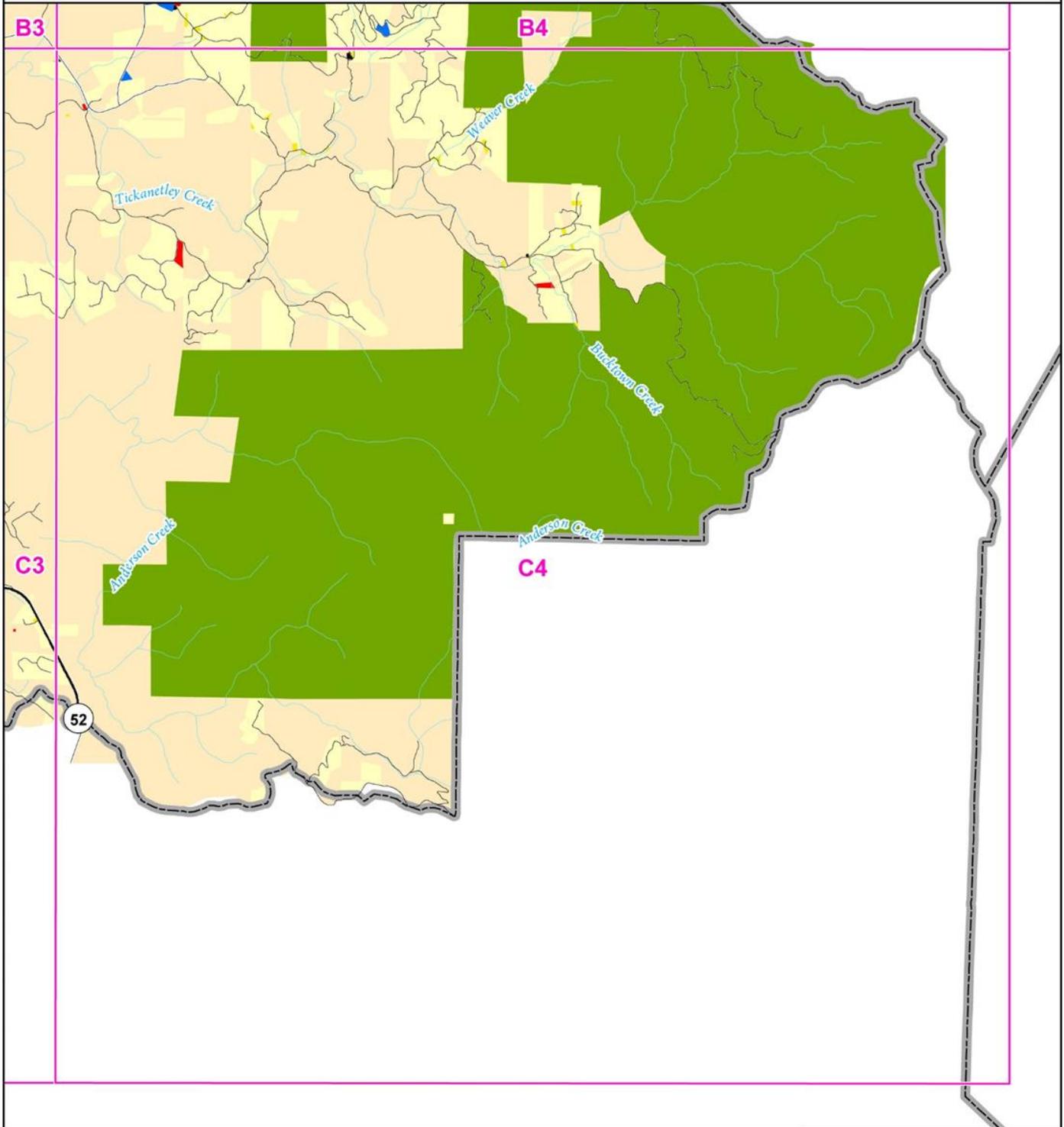


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Gilmer County, Georgia - Future Land Use



Future Land Use Category

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Agriculture/Forestry |  High Density Residential |
|  Commercial |  Mixed Use |
|  Industrial |  Parks/Recreation/Conservation |
|  Low Density Residential |  Public/Institutional |
|  Medium Density Residential |  Transportation/Communication/Utilities |



1 inch = 1 miles



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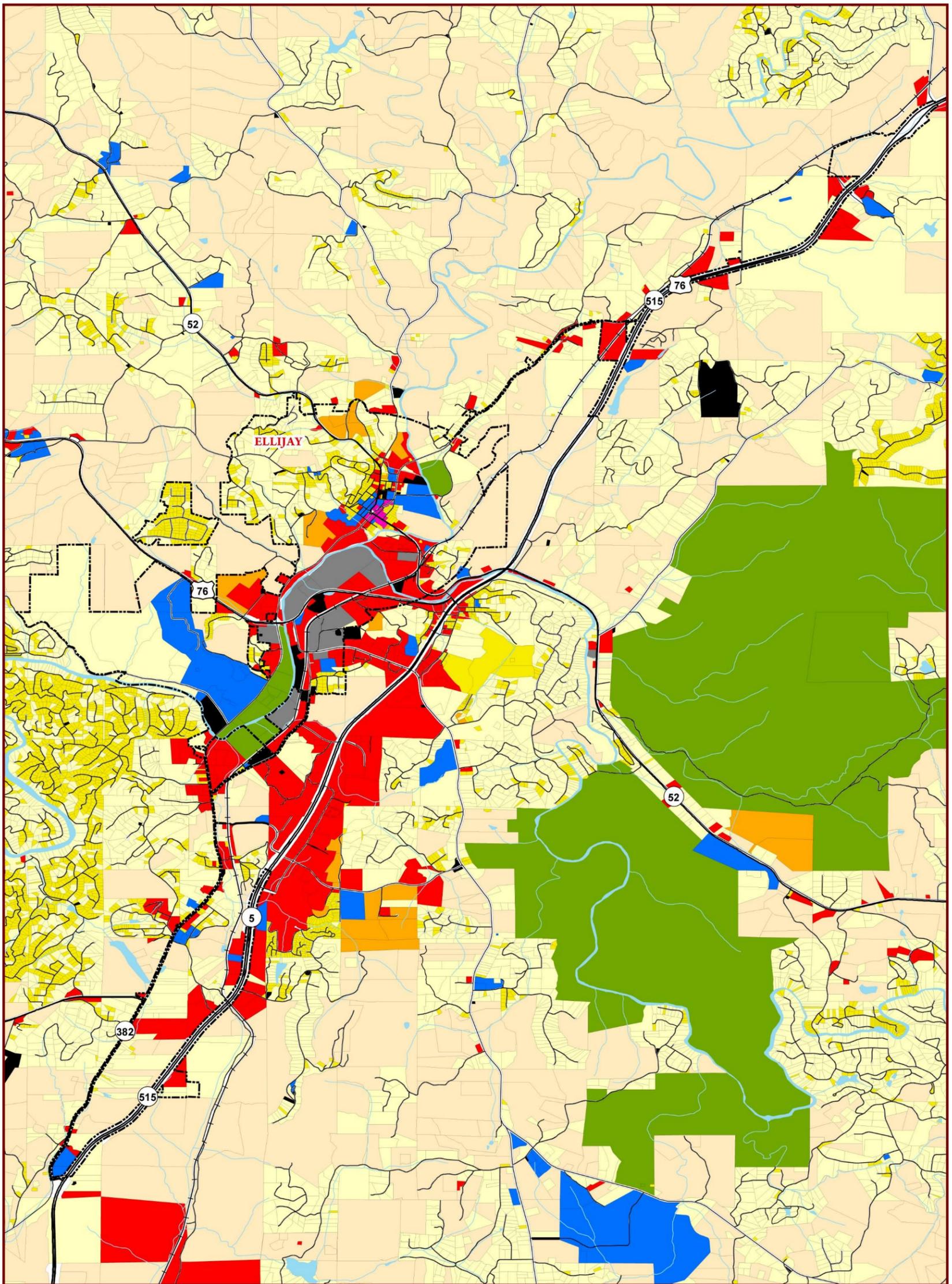
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CITY OF ELLIJAY: FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The table below provides the projected future land use for the City of Ellijay by Standard land use categories. Following the table on page 42 is the City of Ellijay Future land Use Map.

Future Land Use by Standard Categories – City of Ellijay

Land Use Category	Acres	Percent of Total Acres
Residential	828.312	35.35%
-High Density	87.5846	3.74%
-Medium Density	196.426	8.38%
-Low Density	544.3014	23.23%
Mixed Use	7.91562	0.34%
Commercial	324.104	13.83%
Industrial	147.9492	6.31%
Public/Institutional	233.3171	9.96%
Transportation / Communication / Utilities	60.12498	2.57%
Park / Recreation / Conservation	106.9865	4.57%
Agriculture / Forestry	350.5722	14.96%
Total	2,343.29	100.0%



Future Land Use

City of Ellijay, Georgia

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Agriculture/Forestry |  High Density Residential |
|  Commercial |  Mixed Use |
|  Industrial |  Parks/Recreation/Conservation |
|  Low Density Residential |  Public/Institutional |
|  Medium Density Residential |  Transportation/Communication/Utilities |



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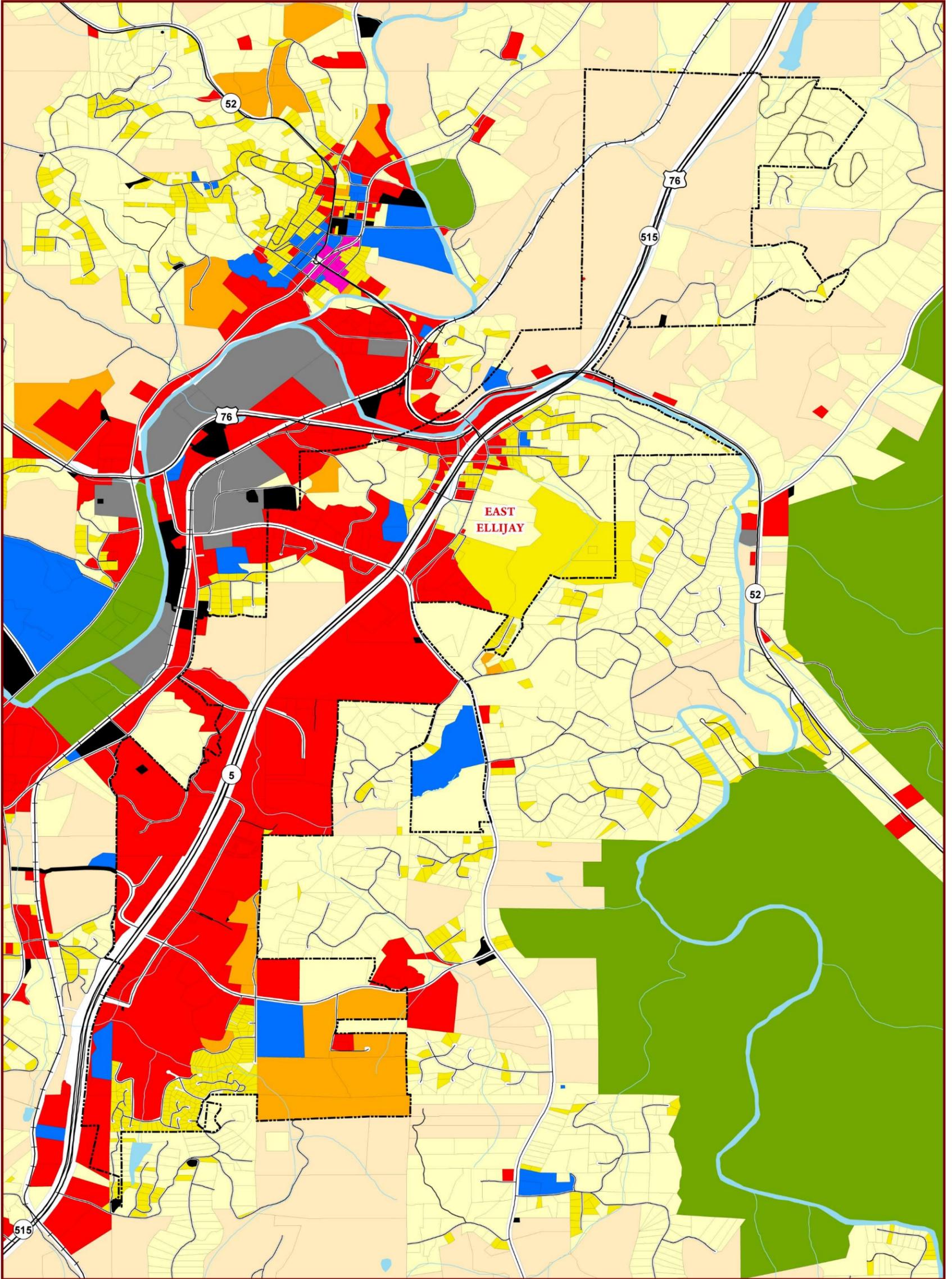
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CITY OF EAST ELLIJAY: FUTURE LAND USE MAP

The table below provides the projected future land use for the City of East Ellijay by Standard land use categories. Following the table, on page 44 is the City of East Ellijay future land use map.

Future Land Use by Standard Categories – City of East Ellijay

Land Use Category	Acres	Percent of Total Acres
Residential	376.8054	21.01%
-High Density	139.4088	7.77%
-Medium Density	170.1282	9.49%
-Low Density	67.2686	3.75%
Commercial	655.5824	36.56%
Industrial	0.0	0.0%
Public/Institutional	65.79335	3.67%
Transportation / Communication / Utilities	1.937799	0.11%
Park / Recreation / Conservation	0.0	0.0%
Agriculture / Forestry	383.6239	21.39%
Total	1,793.28	100.0%



Future Land Use

City of East Ellijay, Georgia

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Agriculture/Forestry |  High Density Residential |
|  Commercial |  Mixed Use |
|  Industrial |  Parks/Recreation/Conservation |
|  Low Density Residential |  Public/Institutional |
|  Medium Density Residential |  Transportation/Communication/Utilities |



1 in = 0.4 miles



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Introduction

RURAL BROADBAND

Access to high speed Internet has become a necessity for business and greatly improves the quality of life for residents. In 2015, the Federal Communications Commission established the definition of high-speed internet, or broadband, at 25 megabits per second for download, (downstream) and 3 megabits per second for upload (upstream). The State of Georgia used this definition as a benchmark for high speed Internet service in Senate Bill 403, which was passed to become the “Achieving Connectivity Everywhere (ACE)” Act in Spring 2018. This Act has allowed for the creation of the Broadband Ready Program to help communities bring high speed internet service even to the most rural areas. Gilmer County, Ellijay, and East Ellijay would like to participate in the Broadband Ready Community program because they see a real need to facilitate better internet connectivity for all residents, regardless of how remote their homes are. Therefore, this broadband element is being added to the comprehensive plan, and three work program items have been added for each government

- The first item is a commitment to pass a broadband ordinance covering the process of providing broadband to all residents
- The second item states that they will participate in the Broadband Ready Community Program with its adopted ordinance.



Figure 50: Modern education curriculum often requires homework assignments to be completed that require internet access.



Figure 49: Broadband infrastructure is largely reliant upon fiber optic cable buried underground.

- The third item is a commitment to apply for funding under the Broadband Ready program. The Northwest Georgia Regional Council has formed a Broadband committee in response to the Broadband Ready Program. Chairman Paris has participated in that committee to find solutions to the issue of rural areas without good internet connection.

Careful thought and preparation have assisted Ellijay Telephone Company (ETC) with becoming one of the leading independent companies in the nation. In terms of commitment to broadband, Gilmer County's primary utility provider, ETC, though in year 2000 merged with its sister cable company, actively evaluates opportunities to build fiber in and around the footprint of the community based on new builds, expenses, and subscriber interest. Within this, there is a continuous growth within network and ETC currently has 2,708 miles of copper lines, 2,010 miles of coax cable, and 652 miles of high-speed fiber.



Coaxial cable overlays much of the copper network in ETC's ILEC of Gilmer County Georgia. ETC has some pockets where fiber to-the-home/business has been deployed, overlaying where ADSL had been the only option. In our northern CLEC market, we have completed edge expansions to our existing coax broadband footprint with fiber.

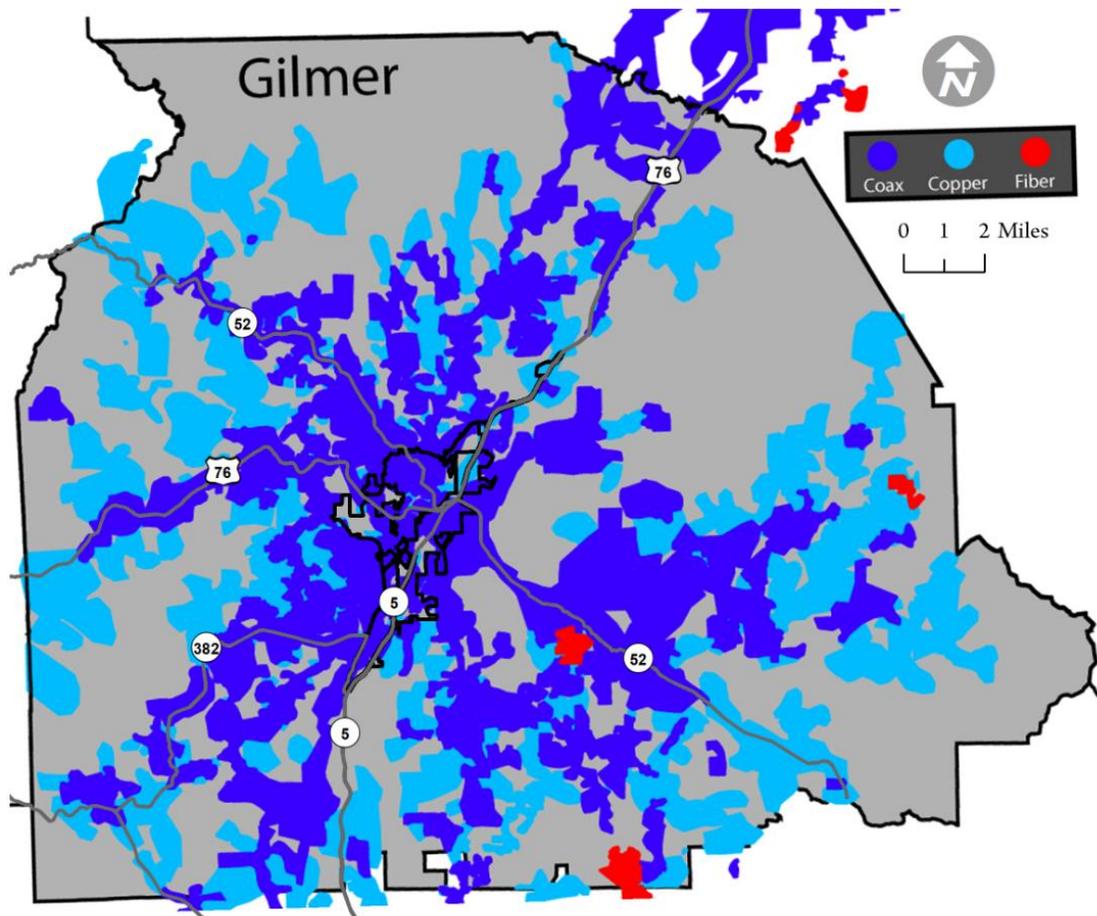


Figure 51: Illustration of ETC's internet infrastructure, provided by ETC.

Internet service, as shown in figure 51, in Gilmer County already exists everywhere providers can achieve a reasonable return on their investment. The significant footprint of internet service area in Gilmer County was greatly attested by the results of the community outreach survey. Out of the 2,091 survey responses, 39 percent of responses said they had internet with insufficient speed while 57 percent of responses said that they have internet with adequate speed for their needs. Only four percent of responses indicated that they had no internet access. While sufficient internet speed is subjective to the individual and their needs, the observation is that out of the 2091 survey responses 96 percent of responses show that internet access is available. Improving internet speeds for the existing service areas may be achieved by deployment of technology advancement for existing copper facilities. Some new equipment may allow providers to offer at least 25/3 across copper in some areas which would be a great step for those customers where it is unfeasible for fiber. For the continued expansion and investment of new and improved infrastructure, one or more of the following conditions must occur:

- Increased density in specific unserved area creating opportunity for return on investment
- Grant funds become available to offset some of the deployment expenses
- Agreements with individuals or HOA/POAs for a combination of construction co-pays and additional service commitments (how providers have typically been adding new service areas to their existing network).

ETC - IGNITE FIBER

8 zones in service

9 zones in pre-registration

3504 backers registered



Figure 53: ETC technician in rural Gilmer County. Photo courtesy of ETC.



Figure 52: ETC technician working on a large server. Photo courtesy of ETC.



Figure 54: ETC technician installing residential phone and internet infrastructure. Photo courtesy of ETC.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAMS

From hence forth the plan will focus on individual, rather than joint needs of each community as previously stated in the HOW TO USE THIS PLAN section. Each community will provide a community statement and/or a list of goals, policies, a report of accomplishments from the previous 2014 -2019 planning period, a list of current Needs and Opportunities, and finally a new Community Work Program for the current 2020-2024 planning period.

GILMER COUNTY IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

VISION STATEMENT

Gilmer County and its cities are proud and vibrant communities that work to promote livability, sustainability, self-sufficiency, and a healthy economy. We embrace and protect our Historical, cultural, and natural resources, while coming together as a community to promote positive, cooperative, and effective relationships, economic growth and development, as well building a successful future for our residents that include the following goals:

- A healthy economy which is diversified among the industrial, commercial, agriculture and tourism sectors, which enhances the quality of life for all citizens and carefully manages the community's resources.
- Being able to guide future growth and conservation, with informed land use strategies that take into account the fortification and wise management of the areas of our natural, environmental, and historic resources.
- Adequate and attainable housing for all citizens.
- To achieve broadband connectivity everywhere.
- Public facilities that have the capacity to support and attract growth, development, as well as maintain and enhance the quality of life for all residents in the community.
- Positive, effective, and cooperative relationships between Gilmer County, the City of Ellijay, the City of East Ellijay, as well as other public agencies and organizations.
- A modern, well-funded multi-modal transportation network that is efficient, safe, and protects the environment while enhancing the areas' economic development.
- Land resources that have been allocated for uses that will accommodate and enhance economic development, natural and historic resources, community facilities, and housing that protect and improve the quality of life for residents and visitors.



Figure 55: Roadway signage in Gilmer County to direct travelers to agritourism locations.



Figure 56: Historic mill and mill village early industrial development in Gilmer County



Figure 57: The Cartecay River in Gilmer County. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.

POLICY STATEMENTS

Economic Development

- Support Joint Development Authority Economic Development sales team.
- Continue to support the CORE business incubator as a local and regional asset to entrepreneurs.
- Continue to work towards improving Broadband connectivity in Gilmer County by working with the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission, Department of Community Affairs, as well as local internet providers.
- Encourage the Gilmer County School's administration to continue vocational pathways.
- Continue to support the Partners in Education Program.
- Support and identify workforce training resources that relate to local needs and promote them with the community.
- Support the Gilmer County Chamber of Commerce's tourism marketing team to maximize promotion of agritourism and outdoor activity/recreation opportunities.
- Continue to work with the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission to achieve the goals within both the Northwest Georgia Regional plan as well as the Northwest Georgia Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

Housing

- Support diverse housing development that is attainable at all price points.
- Ensure that the portion of Gilmer's aging population that become unable to remain fully-independent have housing options that allow them to continue living in Gilmer County.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- Continue to improve public access to the Coosawattee, Cartecay, and Ellijay Rivers.
- Support the Georgia Trail of Tears Association to preserve sites of cultural and archaeological significance.
- Protect Gilmer County's water resources such as its three rivers, groundwater recharge area, and water supply watershed by the following practices:
 - Work with the County Health Department to ensure that new developments requiring on-site septic system are limited to a safe density for the soil quality.
 - Discourage any hydraulic fracturing "fracking" activity in Gilmer County.
 - Promote and enforce both public and private stormwater management, including long-term maintenance of stormwater infrastructure.
 - Encourage both the existing citizens and prospective citizens to utilize sewer, rather than on-site septic systems.
- Continue to improve access to trails, as well as trail connectivity and the creation of new trails for hiking, biking, and canoeing in order to better showcase Gilmer County's tremendous natural resource assets for its citizens, while also promoting outdoor tourism.



Figure 58: View of downtown Ellijay from the Gilmer County Courthouse.



Figure 59: CORE Collaboration On Rivers Edge business incubator est. 2019 in Ellijay



Figure 60: Dalton State Gilmer Campus in downtown Ellijay.

Community Facilities and Services

- Continue to work with the Northwest Georgia Area Agency on Aging to ensure that the county's aging population have resources they need to "age in place" such as:
 - Transportation
 - Home improvements/maintenance and
 - Access to healthcare
- Continue to extend the public water and wastewater infrastructure to better serve Gilmer County citizens and businesses while continuing to ensure that all new expansions are sustainable through the continued administration of impact fees.
- Promote Gilmer County's highly competitive water and sewer tapping fees to both commercial and residential developers as a means to encourage investment in Gilmer County.



Figure 61: Park in Gilmer County on the Coosawattee River.

Land Use

- Continue to enforce policies and codes that discourage residential sprawl into the low-density areas of the county that are predominantly agricultural or otherwise undeveloped.
- Encourage new development to occur where supporting infrastructure is already available or nearby to reduce unsustainable sprawl.
- Continue to enforce the wetlands protection, protected mountains, and Coosawattee River Protection ordinances detailed within the Gilmer County Code to ensure that the impact of new land disturbance does not compromise these sensitive environmental assets.



Figure 62: Many travel from afar to purchase locally grown apples from Gilmer County. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.

Intergovernmental Coordination

- Continue to work with the cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay to hold meetings of local governments, authorities, Board of Education, and other agencies to improve communication to best serve all of Gilmer County



Figure 63: Little library in downtown Ellijay.

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2014-2019

Gilmer County

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT						
Develop Core Economic Development sales team	2014-2019	X				
Explore federal programs that support economic development	2014-2019	X	Ongoing			Policy
Develop a digital economy plan	2014-2019	X				
Participate in the Investing Manufacturing Communities Program (IMCP) partnership	2014-2019	X				Regional Project Completed
Develop an existing business/industry program to address the needs and concerns of commercial enterprises with the intent of improving the environment for business retention and expansion and workforce development	2014-2019	X				Workforce Development Study
Develop a business incubator	2014-2019	X				CORE
Establish Enterprise Zones	2014-2019				X	City of East Ellijay Project
Identify workforce training resources that relate to local needs and promote them with the community	2014-2019	X				Policy
Encourage the high school administration to train students for local jobs.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy
Form a proactive agricultural and tourism marketing team to maximize promotion of agriculture, tourism, and outdoor activity/recreation opportunities.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy
Assign core economic development sales team to attract major sporting goods retailer	2014-2019				X	GAP Study does not support

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2014-2019						
Gilmer County						
WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS			Explanation if postponed or dropped	
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed		Dropped
Identify areas for coordination and cooperation among the Ellijay Downtown Development Authority, the Greater Gilmer County Joint Development Authority, and the Gilmer County Chamber of Commerce, and organize meetings among the principal players to foster mutual understandings of goals and strategies.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
HOUSING						
Stimulate low cost housing development.	2014-2019	X				Zoning changes completed
Encourage hotel/motel construction in the area	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Research and contact private assisted living corporations to investigate opening a new facility in the area in consultation with the Georgia Department of Human Services to discover options available to bring assisted living facilities to the area.	2014-2019	X				East Ellijay project (Gilmer County excluded)
Ensure that the zoning ordinance of the jurisdiction has provisions for assisted living facilities.	2014-2019	X				
Compile a list of foreclosed housing.	2014-2019	X				

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2014-2019**Gilmer County**

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS			Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	
NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES					
Improve public access to the county's three rivers	2014-2019	X			
Cooperate with the Georgia Chapter of the Trail of Tears in research, public education, and the development of a guidebook, a brochure, and/or a driving tour.	2014-2019		2022		
Advocate for the Coosawattee Watershed Alliance.	2014-2019		Ongoing		Policy Statement
Work with the Georgia Trail of Tears Association to preserve sites of cultural and archaeological importance.	2014-2019		Ongoing		Policy Statement
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES					
Upgrade hospital facilities and services or construct a new hospital	2014-2019				X Emergency room only – not attached to facility
Attract more medical professionals to the community through intern recruitment programs.	2014-2019		Ongoing		Policy Statement
Build an indoor, multi-use recreational facility.	2014-2019		2024		Property Acquisition Underway
Upgrade water and sewer infrastructure.	2014-2019		Ongoing		Policy Statement
Support the planning efforts of the Coosawattee Regional Water and Sewer Authority	2014-2019		Ongoing		Policy Statement

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2014-2019						
Gilmer County						
WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
Prepare a Parks and Recreation Master Plan.	2014-2019	X				
Finalize the development of one satellite park (Clear Creek Park-25 ac.).	2014-2019		In progress-2022			
Seek grant funding for recreation projects as appropriate.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Continue to improve solid waste reduction through recycling processes that are financially beneficial and pursue grant funding, when available, to provide additional recycling facilities or opportunities.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Acquire and develop new parks and open space	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION						
Promote all-around intergovernmental cooperation by holding planning meetings of the local governments, authorities, boards and, agencies, as needed, to improve communication and coordination.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
TRANSPORTATION						
Promote an east-west highway corridor through Gilmer County	2014-2019				X	Lack of feasibility currently

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2014-2019

Gilmer County

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
Take greater advantage of railway facilities by encouraging industrial and commercial development along the railroad line	2014-2019				X	Lack of interest for Railway
Continue to implement the Airport Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan and Airport Layout Plan.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Improve the functionality of the intersection of SR 515, 1st Avenue, Industrial Blvd., and River Street.	2014-2019		2021			Traffic analysis in progress
Extend SR 382 from CR 239 to SR 5/SR 515. (Inc. utility work)	2014-2019		2023			
Pursue funding for additional pedestrian facilities to include sidewalks, trails, and river crossings	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Implement the programs of the adopted Long-Range Transportation Plan in concert with the priorities of the local governments.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
LAND USE						
Strengthen subdivision regulations dealing with final plat implementation, and impose a moratorium on new subdivisions until existing subdivisions are built out	2014-2019	X				Housing economy has solved this issue
Promote development of available/vacant commercial and industrial buildings and land.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy JDA & Chamber

Needs and Opportunities

Economic Development

ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
ED-1	Improve broadband service to business and citizens
ED-2	Have ready, reliable and affordable access to broadband internet service throughout the county
ED-3	Continue improvements to the Gilmer County Airport

Transportation

ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
T-1	Work with DOT to better promote Gilmer County to travelers along major highways
T-2	Promote traffic safety and accessibility to Gilmer County

Natural and Cultural Resources

ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
NC-1	Preserve the County's historical assets and landmarks and incentivize sustainability of said assets
NC-2	Have improved public access to Gilmer County's three rivers (Ellijay, Coosawattee, and Cartecay)
NC-3	Improve trail connectivity in Gilmer County
NC-4	Better market Gilmer County's trail systems
NC-5	Create a riverwalk trail connected to downtown Ellijay

Community Facilities and Services

ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
CF-1	Build multi-use recreation facilities/courts for use for our community
CF-2	Improve and expand the county's recreational and cultural assets
CF-3	Improve public safety equipment and facilities
CF-4	Improve landfill operations
CF-5	Expand and improve public utilities

Intergovernmental Coordination

ID: The need or opportunity is to:

IC-1 Maintain better all-around intergovernmental coordination

IC-2 Work with surrounding communities and other government organizations to connect to trail systems outside Gilmer County

Land Used

ID: The need or opportunity is to:

LU-1 Improve land use, zoning, and utility maps for greater accuracy

The Community Work Program, on the following pages, reflects projects listed in the State Transportation Improvement Program, as well as the Capital Improvements Element five-year schedule of improvements, along with locally identified projects for planning continuity.



Figure 64: View of Harrison Park from the historic Ellijay Cemetery. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM 2020-2024									
GILMER COUNTY									
Need/ opportunity Code	Activity Description	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT									
ED-3	Expand airport to accommodate larger aircraft and add additional hanger space				X	X	\$5,800,000	FEMA GDOT County, ARC	Gilmer County Airport Staff
ED-1 ED-2	Pass a broadband ordinance	X	X				\$1,000/ Staff Time	General Fund	Gilmer County Board of Commissioners (BOC)
ED-1 ED-2	Participate in the Broadband Ready Community Program with its adopted ordinance	X	X	X			\$1,000/ Staff Time	General Fund	Gilmer County BOC
ED-1 ED-2	Commitment to complete the application for funding under the Broadband Ready program			X	X		\$1,000/ Staff Time	General Fund	Gilmer County BOC
TRANSPORTATION									
T-1 T-2	Digital Gateway Billboard along Hwy. 515	X	X	X			\$50,000	County Funds	Gilmer County BOC
T-1 T-2	Extend SR 382 from CR 239 to SR 5/SR 515 (Inc utility work).	X	X	X	X		\$18,002,399	GDOT	Gilmer County BOC and GDOT
T-1 T-2	Improve the functionality of the intersection of SR 515, 1st Avenue, Industrial Blvd., and River Street.	X					\$100,000	GDOT	GDOT

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM 2020-2024									
GILMER COUNTY									
Need/ opportunity Code	Activity Description	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES									
NC-3 NC-4	Hold first Annual Trail Festival	X					\$5,000	Private Funding	Ga. Mountain Trails Partnership
NC-2 NC-3 NC-4 IC-2	Re-establish connection with Ga. Water Trails network after 12-year absence	X					\$5,000	Hotel/ Motel Tax	Chamber of Commerce, GMTP
NC-1 NC-3	Post Trail of Tears signage	X	X	X			\$10,000	Gilmer County, TOTA	Gilmer County Public Works
NC-1 NC-2 NC-3 NC-4 NC-5 IC-2	Partner with Railroad to create new Rails with Trails connection from Cartecay River Park to Downtown Ellijay as a river walk trail with potential to connect to other existing trails nearby	X	X	X	X		\$5,000	Private funding, RTP, Local Match	Ga. Mountain Trails Partnership
NC-2 NC-3 NC-4 NC-5	Clear Creek satellite park		X	X			\$548,000	GA DNR	Gilmer County BOC GA DNR
NC-2 NC-3 NC-4 IC-2	Acquire 138-acre riverfront property for new river access, trails and other county park amenities	X	X	X			\$2,000,000	GOSP Grant, Local Match	Gilmer County BOC, Parks and Recreation
IC-2 NC-2	Cooperatively lease all the lake access and campground locations from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers surrounding Carters Lake <u>within Gilmer County only</u>	X	X				\$1,000	General Funds, Daily User Fees	Gilmer County BOC, Parks and Recreation

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM 2020-2024

GILMER COUNTY

Need/ opportunity Code	Activity Description	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES									
CF-2	Move Baseball Fields to Clear Creek campus			X	X		\$1,000,000	County Funds, LWCF	Gilmer County Recreation Department
CF-1 CF-2	Build three new tennis courts	X					\$140,000	DNR Grant & Match, LWCF	Gilmer County Recreation Department
CF-1 CF-2	Build four pickle ball courts	X					\$140,000	DNR Grant & Match, LWCF	Gilmer County Recreation Department
CF-1 CF-2	Build dirt bike pump tract on old pool	X					\$10,000	Private Donation, LWCF	Gilmer County Recreation Department
CF-1 CF-2	Build River Park Amphitheatre	X					\$50,000	Private Funds, LWCF	Gilmer County Recreation Department
CF-5	Complete Scada added for chemical use efficiency	X					\$325,000	General fund	Ellijay-Gilmer Water and Sewer Authority
CF-5	SC2 8" sewer – Gartrell St. to Westwood Dr.		X	X			\$200,000	Impact Fees	Ellijay-Gilmer Water and Sewer Authority
CF-5	SC2A 4" sewer – Vista Dr. to Lucille		X	X			\$140,923	Impact Fees	Ellijay-Gilmer Water and Sewer Authority
CF-5	SC5 8" – Hancock Dr. to Visa Dr.		X	X			\$200,000	Impact Fees	Ellijay-Gilmer Water and Sewer Authority
CF-5	SC5A 4" sewer – to Westwood Subdivision	X					\$206,448	Impact Fees	Ellijay-Gilmer Water and Sewer Authority

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM 2020-2024

GILMER COUNTY

Need/ opportunity Code	Activity Description	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
CF-5	WD 38A New 8" main on River Street Phase 2	X					\$134,758	General Fund	Ellijay-Gilmer Water and Sewer Authority
CF-5	WD 38B New 8" main on Roundtop	X					\$1,898,500	CDBG Impact Fees	Ellijay-Gilmer Water and Sewer Authority
CF-5	WD 38C New 12" main Hwy. 282 to sunlight	X					\$208,510	General Fund	Ellijay-Gilmer Water and Sewer Authority
CF-5	WD 49 Water Tank New Hope 300,000	X					\$1,725,3000	GEFA	Ellijay-Gilmer Water and Sewer Authority
CF-5	WD 51 Water Tank Clear Creek	X	X	X			\$500,000	General Fund	Ellijay-Gilmer Water and Sewer Authority
CF-5	WD 52 Yukon Road Expansion	X					\$760,000	General Fund GEFA	Ellijay-Gilmer Water and Sewer Authority
CF-5	WD 53 new 8" water main-hwy. 515 to Talona	X					\$82,392	General Fund GEFA	Ellijay-Gilmer Water and Sewer Authority
CF-5	WD 54 New 12" pipe Simmonds Roads to 382	X					\$665,280	General Fund GEFA	Ellijay-Gilmer Water and Sewer Authority
CF-2 IC-2	New Mountain Bike trails at Carter's Lake	X					\$250,000	RTP, IMBA, CORPS	IMBA, Corps of Engineers
CF-1 CF-2	Acquire access easement from railroad to access new River Park expansion	X					\$5,000	Gilmer County Funds	Gilmer County Park and Recreation

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM 2020-2024									
GILMER COUNTY									
Need/ opportunity Code	Activity Description	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
CF-2	Replace swimming pool at new location		X	X			\$250,000	Gilmer County Funds	Gilmer County Park and Recreation
CF-3	Move Emergency Operation Center to Airport Property and construct new building				X	X	\$1,000,000	GEMA, FEMA, FAA, USDA RD	Gilmer County Public Safety Director
CF-3	Purchase new pump truck for Fire Department		X				\$300,000	AFG Local match, USDA RD	Gilmer County Public Safety Director
CF-4	Leachate pumps for County landfill			X			\$700,000	GEFA Loan	Gilmer County Solid Waste Authority
CF-2	Add event building at White Path Golf Course	X					\$100,000	Golf Course funds, Private funds	Gilmer Parks and Rec
LAND USE									
LU-1	Update all land use, zoning maps, and utility maps to provide hard copies to Planning and Zoning Department	X					\$500	NWGRC Staff Time	Gilmer County Planning and Zoning, NWGRC
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION									
IC-1	Partner with Ellijay and East Ellijay to create multi-purpose indoor recreation facility	X	X	X	X	X	\$1,000,000	SPLOST Grants General Fund	Gilmer County Ellijay East Ellijay
IC-1	Complete the service delivery strategy					X	\$1,000/ Staff Time	General Fund	Gilmer County BOC and Gilmer County attorney

CITY OF ELLIJAY: IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

Vision Statement

The City of Ellijay, in parallel with the Gilmer County community, has a shared vision for the area while also maintaining some of its own individuality. Within the collective vision, the City of Ellijay has defined its future vision that contains the following goals:

- Growth management strategies that deliver effective, sprawl-preventing growth patterns, and promote cooperation, coordination, efficient use, and expansion of the city's public facilities and services
- A community that provides a variation of neighborhood connections such as sidewalks, greenway trails, and bike lanes
- Protecting and promoting downtown's historic resources and its traditional role as the business/civic center of the community
- Conserving the character of established neighborhoods and supporting revitalization efforts to increase housing opportunities and long-term neighborhood stability
- The ability to foster and maintain better all-around intergovernmental coordination
- Promoting the development of existing, unfinished subdivisions prior to the development of new subdivisions
- Land resources that have been allocated for uses that will accommodate and enhance economic development, natural and historic resources, community facilities, and housing that protects and improves the quality of life for residents and visitors



Figure 65: Aerial view of downtown Ellijay traffic circle. Photo courtesy of Eric Smithson Photography.



Figure 66: Annual Apple Festival in Ellijay. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.



Figure 67: View from historic Ellijay Cemetery.

POLICY STATEMENTS

Economic Development

- Support Joint Development Authority Economic Development sales team
- Protect existing business/industry program by addressing the needs and concerns of commercial enterprises with the intent of improving the environment for business retention and expansion and workforce development
- Encourage the Gilmer County School System to continue offering vocational pathways
- Continue to support the CORE business incubator as a local and regional asset to entrepreneurs
- Implement the Northwest Georgia Digital economy plan
- Implement the Ellijay Urban Redevelopment Plan adopted in 2019

Housing

- Support diverse housing development that is attainable at all price points
- Encourage appropriate mixed-use residential and light commercial development, both within and near the downtown area

Natural and Cultural Resources

- Support programs that ensure that the historic preservation commission members receive training, so the city can remain a Certified Local Government to be eligible for federal grant money, as well as tax incentives
- Promote state and federal rehabilitation tax credits for contributing buildings in the local historic district
- Cooperate with the Georgia Chapter of the Trail of Tears in research and public education
- Continue to improve and promote Harrison Park as both a Historically-significant property, and passive recreation asset to the community

Land Use

- Continue to protect the three rivers by enforcing buffer areas when land is disturbed near a waterway
- Continue to support the City of Ellijay's Planning Commission and encourage members to attend training opportunities

Transportation

- Continue to improve pedestrian infrastructure to encourage walking and biking, with a focus on connecting existing residential areas to the downtown
- Coordinate with the Georgia Department of Transportation to continue the implementation of the State Transportation Improvement Program as it relates to projects in Ellijay

Intergovernmental Coordination

- Promote all-around intergovernmental cooperation by holding planning meetings of the local governments, authorities, boards, and agencies, as needed, to improve communication and coordination
- Collaborate with water, sewer, and other utilities to encourage interdepartmental coordination when replacing utilities and resurfacing city streets in order to mitigate potential damage to infrastructure



Figure 68: Light post banner in downtown Ellijay. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.



Figure 69: Downtown welcome center in Ellijay



Figure 70: Historic Downtown Ellijay. Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce.

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2014-2019

City of Ellijay

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS			Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT					
Develop core Economic Development sales team	2014-2019	X			
Explore federal programs that support economic development	2014-2019		Ongoing		Policy Statement
Ensure that the historic preservation commission members receive training, so the city can become a Certified Local Government to be eligible for federal grant money	2014-2019		Ongoing		Policy Statement
Allow alternative rehabilitation building codes in the local historic district.	2014-2019	X			
Promote state and federal rehabilitation tax credits for contributing buildings in the local historic district.	2014-2019		Ongoing		Policy Statement
Continue TE-funded landscape program.	2014-2019		Ongoing		Policy Statement
Develop a digital economy plan.	2014-2019	X			
Participate in the Investing in Manufacturing Communities Program (IMCP) Partnership.	2014-2019		Ongoing		Policy Statement
Develop an existing business/industry program to address the needs and concerns of commercial enterprises with the intent of improving the environment for business retention and expansion and workforce development.	2014-2019	X			
Develop a business incubator.	2014-2019	X			

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2014-2019

City of Ellijay

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
Establish Enterprise Zones.	2014-2019	X				Federal Opportunity Zone is achieving this goal
Identify workforce training resources that relate to local needs, and promote them within the community	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Encourage the high school administration to train students for local jobs.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Assign core economic development sales team to attract a major sporting goods retailer.	2014-2019				X	This is a long-term goal
Identify areas for coordination and cooperation among the Ellijay Downtown Development Authority, the Greater Gilmer County Joint Development Authority, and the Gilmer Co. Chamber of Commerce, and organize meetings among the principal players to foster mutual understandings of goals and strategies.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Implement the Ellijay Urban Redevelopment Plan, to include public infrastructure improvements, facilitation of public and private redevelopment and reinvestment projects, application for an Opportunity Zone, continuing redevelopment and reinvestment assistance to the Ellijay Downtown Development Authority and City of Ellijay, and pursuit of private investment and job creation within the downtown, residential, and commercial redevelopment areas.	2014-2019	X				

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2014-2019

City of Ellijay

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
Emphasize and expand community asset opportunities for recreation and commercialization adjacent to the Ellijay/Coosawattee River corridors.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
HOUSING						
Stimulate low cost housing development.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Encourage hotel/motel construction in the area.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Research and contact private assisted living corporations to investigate opening a new facility in the area in consultation with the Georgia Department of Human Services to discover options available to bring assisted living facilities to the area	2014-2019	X				
Ensure that the Zoning Ordinance of the jurisdiction has provisions for assisted living facilities.	2014-2019	X				
Compile a list of foreclosed housing	2014-2019				X	Housing market has improved No longer an issue
NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES						
Improve public access to Gilmer County's three rivers.			Ongoing			Policy Statement
Cooperate with the Georgia Chapter of the Trail of Tears in research, public education, and the development of a guidebook, a brochure, and/or a driving tour.	2014-2019	X				
Investigate ways to protect the integrity and appearance of the historic City Cemetery.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2014-2019						
City of Ellijay						
WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES						
Upgrade hospital facilities and services or construct a new hospital	2014-2019	X				Emergency room has been opened
Attract more medical professionals to the community through intern recruitment programs	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Build an indoor, multi-use recreational facility.	2014-2019		2024			
Upgrade water and sewer infrastructure.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Continue development of Harrison Park.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION						
Promote all-around intergovernmental cooperation by holding planning meetings of the local governments, authorities, boards, and agencies, as needed, to improve communication and coordination.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
TRANSPORTATION						
Promote an east-west highway corridor through Gilmer County.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Take greater advantage of railway facilities by encouraging industrial and commercial development along the railroad line.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Improve the functionality of the intersection of SR 515, 1st Avenue, Industrial Blvd., and River Street.	2014-2019		2020			
Extend SR 382 from CR 239 to SR 5/SR 515 (Inc utility work).	2014-2019		2023			

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2014-2019**City of Ellijay**

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
Pursue funding for additional pedestrian facilities to include sidewalks, trails, and river crossings.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Implement the programs of the adopted Long-range Transportation Plan in concert with the priorities of the local governments	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Continue implementation of the adopted Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Continue advocacy for Blue Ridge Scenic Railroad Excursions to depart from Ellijay.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
LAND USE						
Strengthen subdivision regulations dealing with final plat implementation and impose a moratorium on new subdivisions until existing subdivisions are built out.	2014-2019	X				
Promote development of available/vacant commercial and industrial buildings and land.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement

Needs and Opportunities

Economic Development

ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
ED-1	Improve broadband service to business and citizens
ED-2	Have ready, reliable and affordable access to broadband internet
ED-3	Create opportunity for destination retail and housing developments

Housing

ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
H-1	Create an environment that fosters new housing investment
H-2	Improve quality of life amenities for existing neighborhoods

Transportation

ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
T-1	Promote traffic safety and accessibility to the City of Ellijay
T-2	Connect existing neighborhoods to downtown Ellijay and Harrison Park

Natural and cultural Resources

ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
NC-1:	Continue improvements within Ellijay's locally designated historic district.
NC-2	Upgrade city parks for increased and greater usage

Community Facilities and Services

ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
CF-1	Promote greater pedestrian mobility through bike riding and walking

Intergovernmental Coordination

ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
IC-1	Maintain better all-around intergovernmental coordination

Land Use

ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
LU-1	Encourage mixed use developments within the City of Ellijay
LU-2	Update zoning map for greater accuracy



Figure 71: River Park in Ellijay



Figure 72: Historic Barn at Harrison Park in Ellijay.

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM 2020-2024**City of Ellijay**

Need/ opportunity Code	Activity Description	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT									
ED-1 ED-2 H-2	Pass a broadband ordinance	X	X				\$1,000/ Staff Time	General Fund	NWGRC, Mayor and Council
ED-1 ED-2 H-2	Participate in the Broadband Ready Community Program with its adopted ordinance		X	X			\$1,000/ Staff Time	General Fund	NWGRC, Mayor and Council
ED-1 ED-2 H-2	Commitment to complete the application for funding under the Broadband Ready program			X	X		\$1,000/ Staff Time	General Fund	NWGRC, Mayor and Council
TRANSPORTATION									
T-1 T-2	Improve the functionality of the intersection of SR 515, 1st Avenue, Industrial Blvd., and River Street.	X					\$100,000	GDOT	GDOT
T-1 T-2	Extend SR 382 from CR 239 to SR 5/SR 515 (Inc utility work).	X	X	X	X		\$18,002,399	GDOT	GDOT

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM 2020-2024

City of Ellijay

Need/ opportunity Code	Activity Description	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES									
NC-2	Repair Harrison Park barn; new roof, exterior paint and other minor repairs	X	X	X	X		\$10,000	Private and City funds, LWCF	Friends of Harrison Park & Mayor and Council
NC-2 H-2	Complete Harrison Park 10-year master plan	X					\$25,000	Private and City funds, LWCF	Friends of Harrison Park & Mayor and Council
NC-2	Build public restrooms for Harrison Park	X	X	X			\$30,000	Private and City funds	Friends of Harrison Park & Mayor and Council
NC-1	Update and digitize Downtown Ellijay Historic District map	X	X				\$2,000	Staff Time	Ellijay HPC, NWGRC

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM 2020-2024									
City of Ellijay									
Need/ opportunity Code	Activity Description	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES									
CF-1 H-2	Complete a bicycle and pedestrian study			X			\$5,000	General Fund	NWGRC, Mayor and Council
LAND USE									
LU-1 ED-3 H-1	Amend Ellijay Zoning Ordinance to include a Mixed -Use zone district	X					\$2,000	Staff Time	Ellijay Zoning Department, NWGRC
LU-2 H-1	Re-digitize the current Ellijay zoning map in order to create current hard copies for City Hall	X					\$1,000	Staff Time	Ellijay Zoning Department, NWGRC
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION									
IC-1	Complete Service Delivery Strategy					X	\$5,000	Staff Time	Mayor and Council, City Attorney
IC-1 H-2	Partner with Gilmer County and East Ellijay to create multipurpose indoor recreation facility	X	X	X	X		\$1,000,000	SPLOST GRANTS GENERAL FUND	Gilmer County and East Ellijay

CITY OF EAST ELLIJAY: IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

Vision Statement

The City of East Ellijay, in conjunction with the Gilmer County community, has a shared vision for the area while also maintaining some of its own individuality. Within the collective vision, the City of East Ellijay has defined its future vision that contains:

- A community that offers a variation of opportunities to live and work in East Ellijay
- A community that preserves industrial professions while creating new commercial opportunities
- A community that contributes to a variation of neighborhood connections such as sidewalks, greenway trails, and bike lanes
- Growth management policies that deliver efficient, sprawl-preventing growth patterns, and promote cooperation, coordination, and efficient use and expansion of the City's public facilities and services
- Future development that supports and preserves its rural and natural setting while also providing for traditional neighborhood development pattern



Figure 73: Highlands Shopping Center in East Ellijay.



Figure 74: Undeveloped commercial property in East Ellijay.

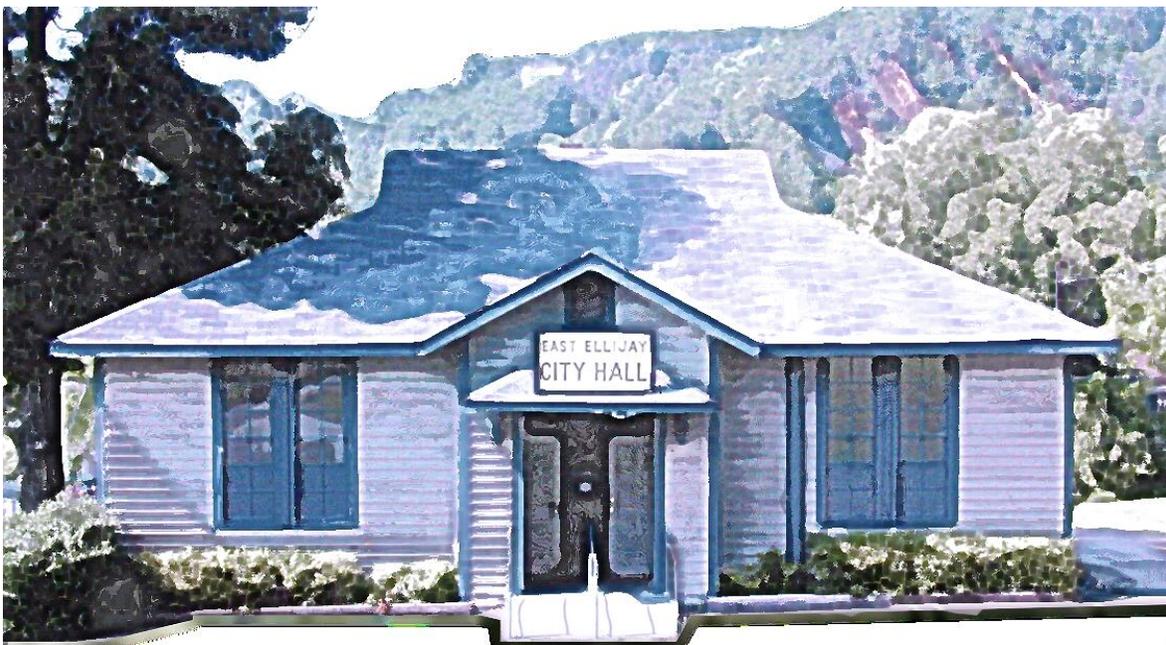


Figure 75: Historic East Ellijay City Hall

POLICY STATEMENTS

Economic Development

- Support Joint Development Authority Economic Development sales team
- Continue to support the CORE business incubator
- Encourage the high school administration to train students for local jobs through the continued support of Partners in Education.
- Promote development of available/vacant commercial and industrial buildings and land
- Encourage investment in East Ellijay by promoting the absence of an additional city millage rate

Housing

- Stimulate diverse and attainable housing development at all price points
- Encourage senior housing development and assisted living facilities to invest in East Ellijay

Natural and Cultural Resources

- Support the Improvements of public access to the county's three rivers
- Partner with the Georgia Chapter of the Trail of Tears Association to increase educational signage in the city where it is applicable

Transportation

- Continue to support the implementation of the adopted Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan
- Work with state transportation officials in order to reduce traffic congestion and increase public safety

Land Use

- Strive to promote development by ensuring the city's ordinances are cohesive and streamlined, while being protective of existing development in the city

Community Facilities and Services

- Continue to support the implementation of the Airport Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan and Airport Layout Plan
- Strive to make prudent budget decisions when improving the city with the goal to keep the cost of living as low, while maintaining a high quality of life environment, for the citizens and business owners in East Ellijay

Intergovernmental Coordination

- Promote all-around intergovernmental cooperation by holding planning meetings of the local governments, authorities, boards, and agencies, as needed, to improve communication and coordination



Figure 76: East Ellijay City Hall



Figure 77: Commercial development in East Ellijay

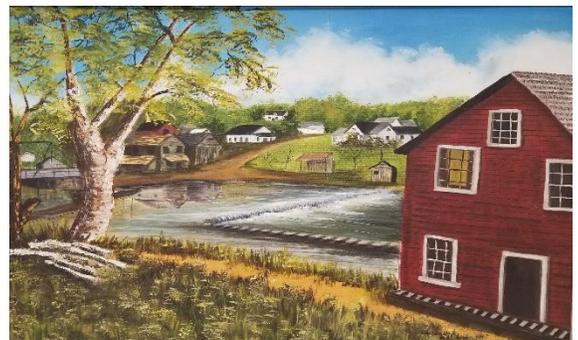


Figure 78: Artist rendition of East Ellijay circa 1920's.

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2014-2019

City of East Ellijay

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT						
Develop core Economic Development sales team	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Explore federal programs that support economic development	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Develop a digital economy plan	2014-2019	X				Regional Plan
Participate in the Investing Manufacturing Communities program (IMCP) partnership	2014-2019	X				Policy Statement
Develop an existing business/industry program to address the needs and concerns of commercial enterprises with the intent of improving the environment for business retention and expansion and workforce development	2014-2019	X				
Develop a business incubator	2014-2019	X				
Establish Enterprise Zones	2014-2019				X	Long-range project Beyond 2024
Identify workforce training resources that relate to local needs and promote them with the community	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Encourage the high school administration to train students for local jobs.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Assign core economic development sales team to attract major sporting goods retailer	2014-2019				X	The city would like to attract a major sports retailer, but this is a long-term goal

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2014-2019

City of East Ellijay

WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS				Explanation if postponed or dropped
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed	Dropped	
HOUSING						
Stimulate low cost housing development	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Encourage hotel/motel construction in the area	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Research and contact private assisted living corporations to investigate opening a new facility in the area in consultation with the Georgia Department of Human Services to discover options available to bring assisted living facilities to the area.	2014-2019	X				Private sector assisted living facility slated to begin development in 2020 in East Ellijay
Ensure that the zoning ordinance of the jurisdiction has provisions for assisted living facilities	2014-2019	X				
Compile a list of foreclosed housing	2015-2018				x	Improved housing economy
NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES						
Improve public access to the county's three rivers	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES						
Upgrade hospital facilities and services or construct a new hospital.	2014-2019	X				Hospital opened an emergency room for urgent care and transport
Attract more medical professionals to the community through intern recruitment programs	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Build an indoor, multi-use recreational facility	2014-2019		2024			Purchased property to be donated to Gilmer County for the building
Upgrade water and sewer infrastructure	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS, 2014-2019						
City of East Ellijay						
WORK PROGRAM ACTIVITY	YEAR	STATUS			Explanation if postponed or dropped	
		Complete	Underway; Projected Completion Date	Postponed		Dropped
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION						
Promote all-around intergovernmental cooperation by holding planning meetings of the local governments, authorities, boards, and agencies, as needed, to improve communication and coordination.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
TRANSPORTATION						
Promote an east-west highway corridor through Gilmer County	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Take greater advantage of railway facilities by encouraging industrial and commercial development along the railroad line					X	Lack of interest in railroad regarding manufacturing
Continue to implement the Airport Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan and Airport Layout Plan	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Improve the functionality of the intersection of SR 515, 1st Avenue, Industrial Blvd., and River Street.	2014-2019		2020			Project studies complete and preliminary design completed by GDOT
Implement the programs of the adopted Long-range Transportation Plan in concert with the priorities of the local governments.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
Continue implementation of the adopted Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement
LAND USE						
Promote development of available/vacant commercial and industrial buildings and land	2014-2019		Ongoing			Policy Statement

Needs and Opportunities

Economic Development

ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
ED-1	Improve broadband service to business and citizens
ED-2	Have ready, reliable and affordable access to broadband internet

Transportation

ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
T-1	Improve the functionality and congestion of traffic
T-2	Promote greater mobility and functionality throughout the City of East Ellijay

Community Facilities and Services

ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
CF-1	Work with Gilmer County and the City of Ellijay to provide greater recreational opportunities

Intergovernmental Coordination

ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
IC-1	Maintain better all-around governmental coordination

Land Used

ID:	The need or opportunity is to:
LU-1	Ensure that the zoning ordinance does not conflict with the goals of East Ellijay

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM 2020-2024

City of East Ellijay

Need/ opportunity Code	Activity Description	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT									
ED-1 ED-2	Pass a broadband ordinance	X	X				\$1,000/ Staff Time	General Fund	Mayor Council/NWGRC
ED-1 ED-2	Participate in the Broadband Ready Community Program with its adopted ordinance		X	X			\$1,000/ Staff Time	General Fund	Mayor Council/NWGRC
ED-1 ED-2	Commitment to complete the application for funding under the Broadband Ready program			X	X		\$1,000/ Staff Time	General Fund	Mayor Council/NWGRC
TRANSPORTATION									
T-1 T-2	Improve the functionality of the intersection of SR 515, 1st Avenue, Industrial Blvd., and River Street.	X					100,000	GDOT	GDOT, Mayor and Council
T-1 T-2	Highland Parkway + Highlands Crossing roundabout	X	X	X	X		300,000	General Fund, GDOT grant	Mayor and Council, GDOT
T-1 T-2	Construct 700 feet of new roadway in Highlands commercial development	X	X				250,000	General Fund	Mayor and Council

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM 2020-2024**City of East Ellijay**

Need/ opportunity Code	Activity Description	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Responsible Party
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES									
CF-1	Build an indoor, multi-use recreational facility. East Ellijay will purchase and donate property for the facility.	X					\$270,000	General Fund	Mayor and Council
LAND USE									
LU-1	Amend East Ellijay zoning ordinance to include a Planned Unit Development (PUD) zone district	X					\$2,000	Staff Time	Mayor and Council, NWGRC
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION									
IC-1	Re-Adopt Service Delivery Strategy with Ellijay and Gilmer County					X	\$2,000	Staff Time	Mayor and Council
IC-1	Partner with Gilmer County and Ellijay to create multipurpose indoor recreation facility	X	X	X	X	X	\$1,000,000	SPLOST Grants General Fund	Gilmer County and Ellijay

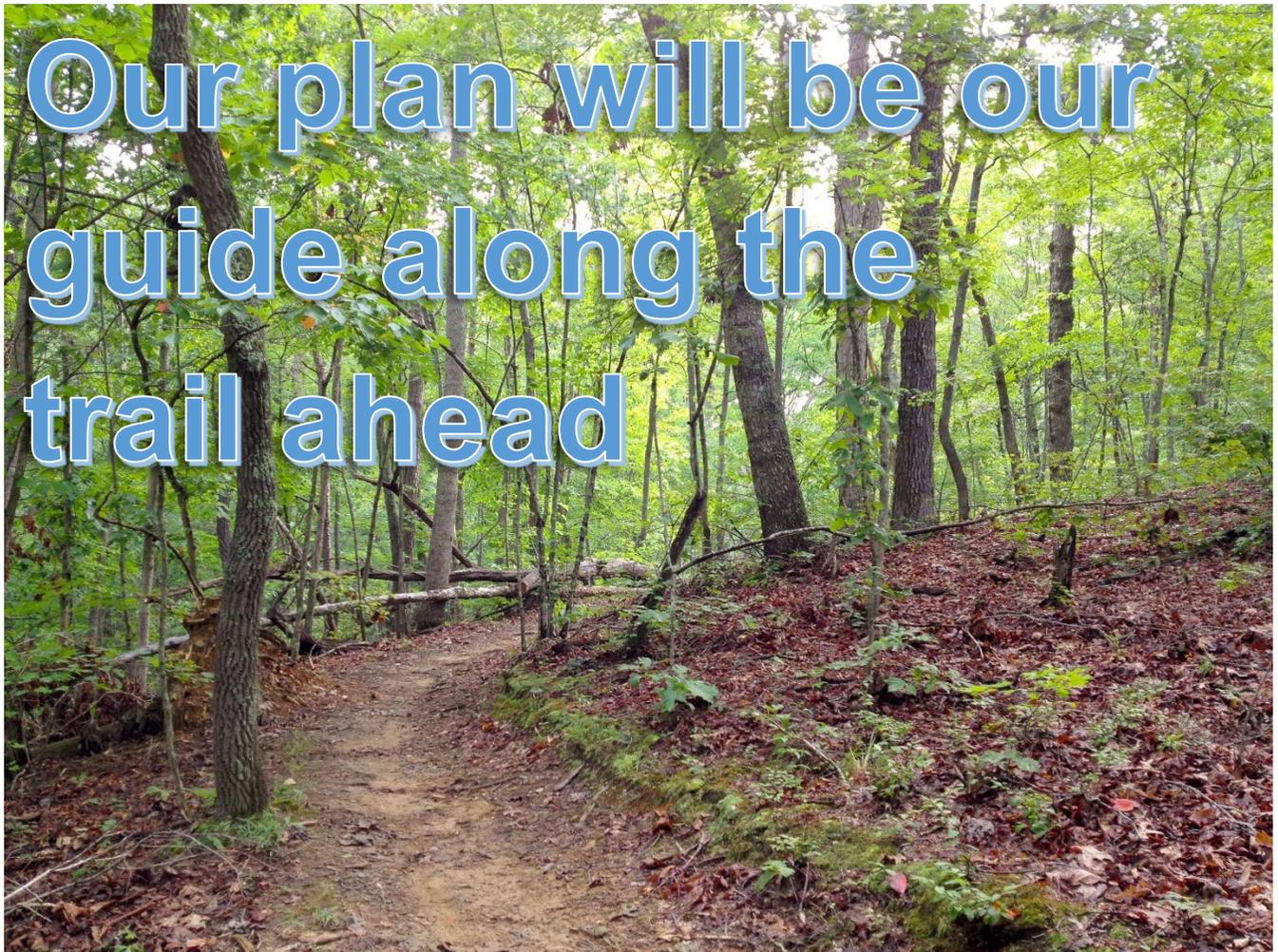


Photo courtesy of the Ellijay-Gilmer Chamber of Commerce

APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SURVEY RESULTS

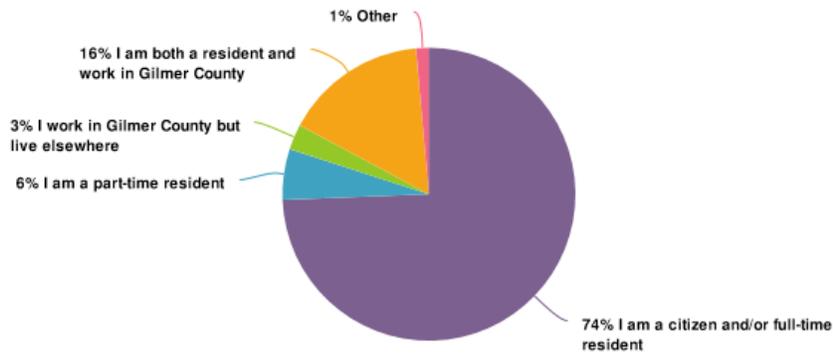
Results for Gilmer County’s Comprehensive Plan Survey June 5, 2019.

Response Counts

Completion Rate:	100%	<div style="width: 100%; height: 15px; background-color: #663399;"></div>
Complete		<div style="width: 100%; height: 15px; background-color: #663399;"></div> 2,091

Totals: 2,091

1. What is your connection to Gilmer County, Ellijay or East Ellijay? (Select only one)



Value	Percent	Responses
I am a citizen and/or full-time resident	74.4%	1,549
I am a part-time resident	5.6%	116
I work in Gilmer County but live elsewhere	2.8%	58
I am both a resident and work in Gilmer County	15.8%	329
Other	1.4%	30

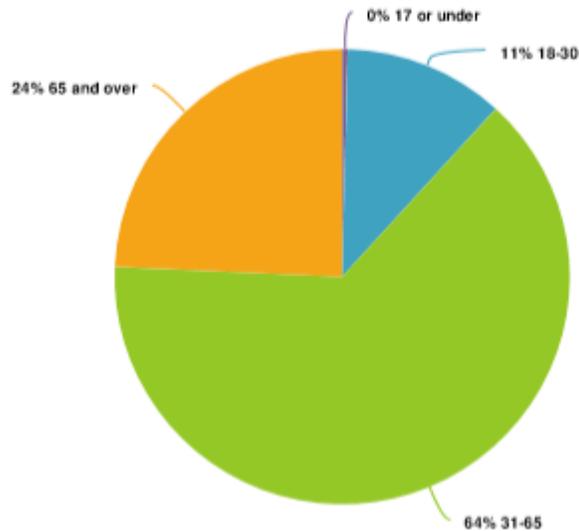
Totals: 2,082

2. Where is your residence or place of business located? (Dropdown tab)



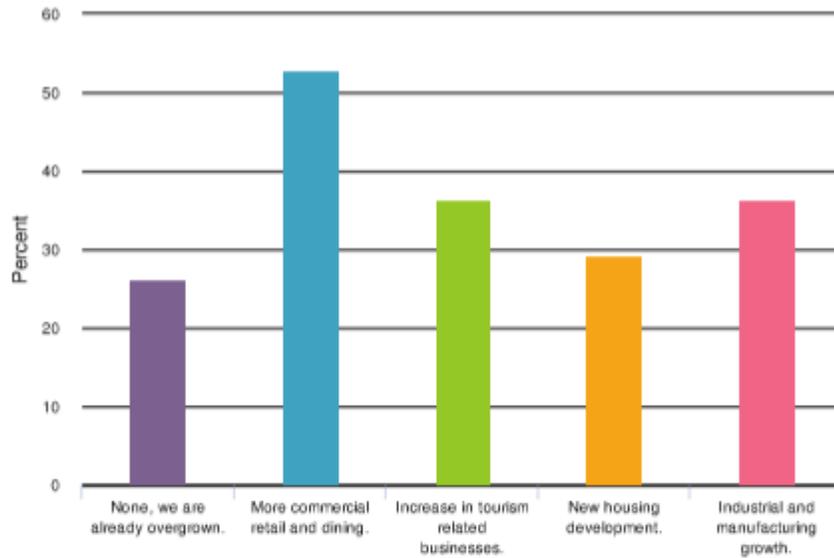
Value	Percent	Responses
Within the city limits of Ellijay	24.0%	496
Within the city limits of East Ellijay	7.5%	155
In the unincorporated area of Gilmer County	68.5%	1,417
Totals:		2,068

3. What age group are you within? (Select only one)



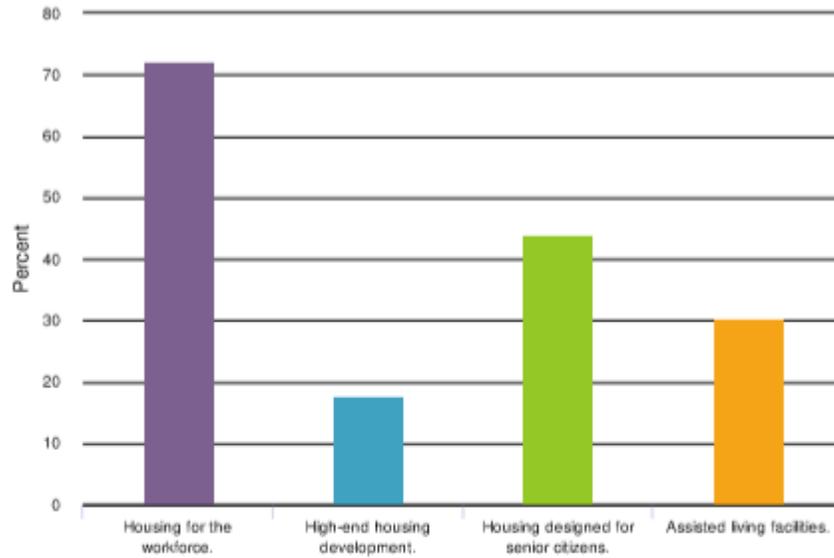
Value	Percent	Responses
17 or under	0.4%	8
18-30	11.4%	237
31-65	63.9%	1,332
65 and over	24.3%	507
Totals: 2,084		

4. What kind of growth would you like to see in your community? (Select all that apply)



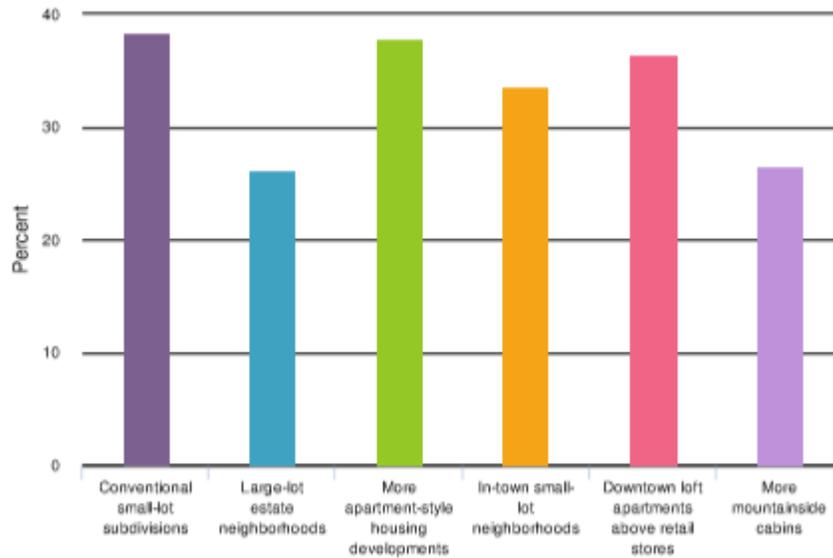
Value	Percent	Responses
None, we are already overgrown.	26.3%	545
More commercial retail and dining.	52.7%	1,093
Increase in tourism related businesses.	36.3%	753
New housing development.	29.2%	605
Industrial and manufacturing growth.	36.4%	755

5. What type of housing do you think your community needs most? (Select all that apply)



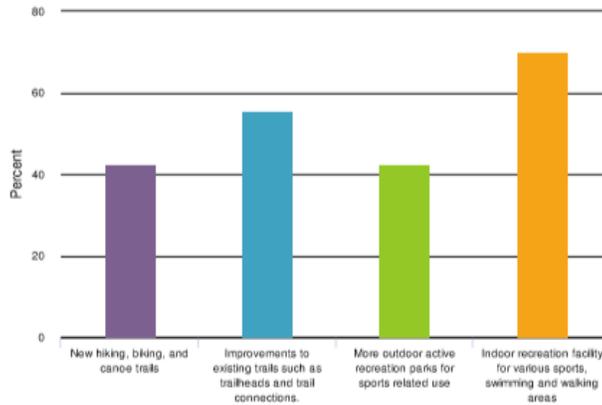
Value		Percent	Responses
Housing for the workforce.		72.2%	1,433
High-end housing development.		17.8%	354
Housing designed for senior citizens.		44.0%	872
Assisted living facilities.		30.2%	599

6. What style of new housing development would best suit your community? (Select all that apply)



Value	Percent	Responses
Conventional small-lot subdivisions	38.5%	755
Large-lot estate neighborhoods	26.2%	514
More apartment-style housing developments	37.8%	742
In-town small-lot neighborhoods	33.6%	659
Downtown loft apartments above retail stores	36.4%	715
More mountainside cabins	26.4%	519

7. What type of recreation would you like to see more of in your community? (select all that apply)



Value	Percent	Responses
New hiking, biking, and canoe trails	42.3%	862
Improvements to existing trails such as trailheads and trail connections.	55.6%	1,131
More outdoor active recreation parks for sports related use	42.4%	864
Indoor recreation facility for various sports, swimming and walking areas	69.9%	1,423

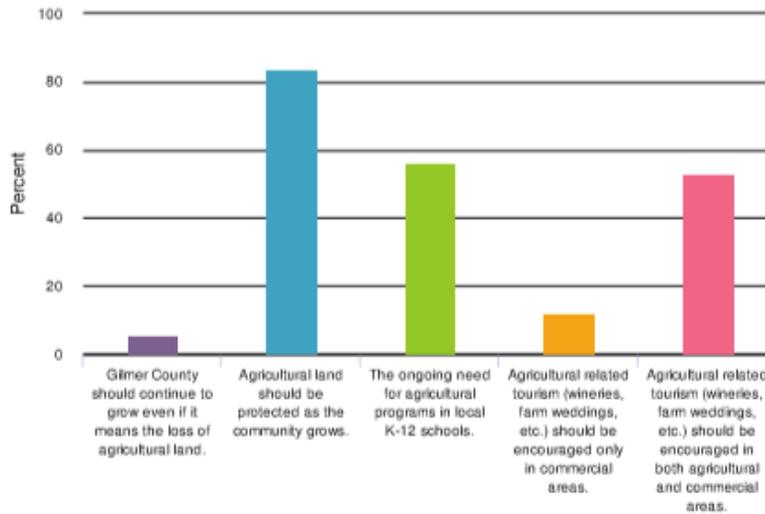
8. Do you have internet access at your home and/or place of business in Gilmer County? (Select only one)



Value	Percent	Responses
No	4.1%	86
Yes, but the speed is too slow for my needs	39.0%	811
Yes, and the speed is adequate for my needs	56.9%	1,183

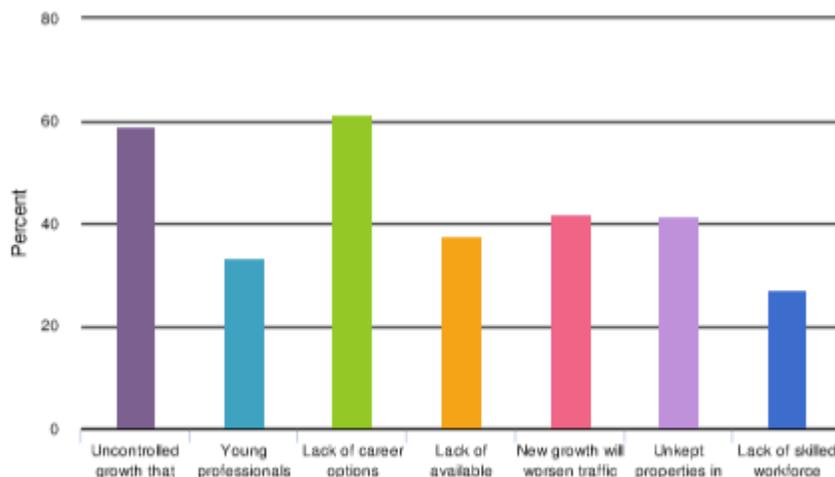
Totals: 2,080

9. Agriculture has played a significant role in Gilmer County's history and continues to generate more than \$200,000,000 annually to the local economy. How do you feel about the future of agriculture in Gilmer County? (Select all that apply)



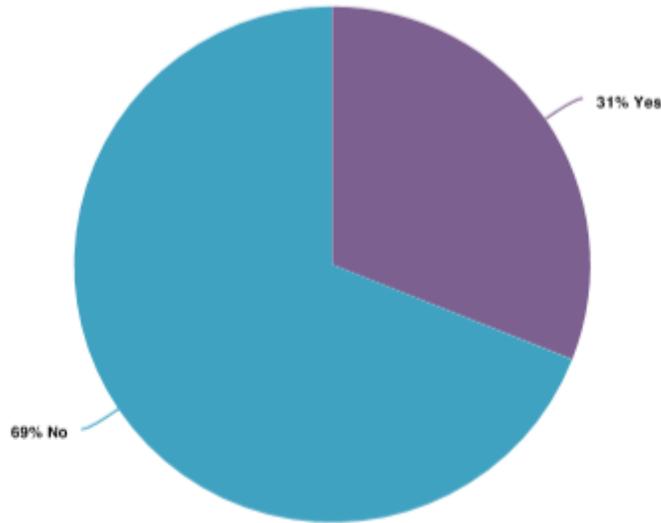
Value	Percent	Responses
Gilmer County should continue to grow even if it means the loss of agricultural land.	5.4%	110
Agricultural land should be protected as the community grows.	83.4%	1,710
The ongoing need for agricultural programs in local K-12 schools.	56.2%	1,153
Agricultural related tourism (wineries, farm weddings, etc.) should be encouraged only in commercial areas.	12.1%	248
Agricultural related tourism (wineries, farm weddings, etc.) should be encouraged in both agricultural and commercial areas.	53.2%	1,092

10. What do you consider the greatest threat to your community? (Select all that apply)



Value	Percent	Responses
Uncontrolled growth that could destroy our small towns and scenic views	59.1%	1,229
Young professionals leaving our community for college and not returning	33.4%	696
Lack of career options	61.2%	1,273
Lack of available housing	37.8%	786
New growth will worsen traffic congestion and other traffic issues	42.1%	877
Unkept properties in need of more code enforcement	41.3%	860
Lack of skilled workforce capable to meet the needs of large employers	27.1%	563

11. Approximately one out of four citizens of Gilmer County are over 65 years of age, do you believe that the senior citizen tax exemption unfairly shifts the tax burden to the younger citizens of Gilmer County? (select only one)



Value	Percent	Responses
Yes	31.0%	644
No	69.0%	1,435

Totals: 2,079

APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY DATA PROFILE

The population of Gilmer 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, Gilmer County's 2014 population was 28,829 which gave it a ranking of 59 out of 159 counties in Georgia. The populations of each city in Gilmer County are listed below.

Prior Growth

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

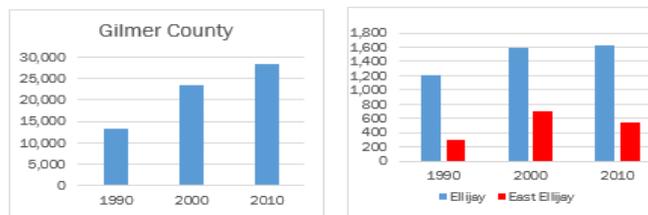
Population of Gilmer County and Cities – 1990, 2000, 2014

Area	1990	2000	2014
Gilmer County	13,368	23,456	28,829
Elijay	1,178	1,580	6,227
East Elijay	N/A	707	549

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

Gilmer County experienced a 47% growth between 1990 and 2010. Many people, including metro Atlanta citizens, purchased homes in the beautiful north Georgia Mountains. Gilmer was a county that experienced that growth. The county saw a much slower growth of just 21%. The city of Elijay followed the same trend with 30% in the first decade, but only 2% in the second. East Elijay underwent a different movement with a very large 133% jump by 2000, but then a 23% decline in the 2000-2010 decade. Overall, the county has grown in population; trends can be seen in the graph below.

Gilmer County and Cities Population Trends 1990-2010



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 STF 1; 2000 SF 1; 2010 SF 1

Population of NWGRC Counties – 1990, 2000, and 2014

Projected Growth

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	15,992	19,798	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	548,220	697,410	873,305

Gilmer County population projections were prepared by the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget.

Gilmer County Projected Growth 2015-2050

	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Gilmer	28,925	29,745	30,484	31,094	31,617	32,172	32,866	33,749
Georgia	10,250,112	10,895,213	11,538,707	12,173,406	12,795,547	13,413,400	14,043,187	14,709,321

Source: County Residential Projections 2015 to 2050. Provided by the Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, 2015 Series, January 2019 and the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission.

NWGRC County Projected Growth 2015-2050

County	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040	2045	2050
Barrow	103,438	108,769	113,789	118,274	122,135	125,461	128,371	131,085
Catoosa	66,922	69,484	72,200	74,878	77,170	79,290	81,280	83,210
Chattooga	25,171	25,224	25,164	24,926	24,526	24,017	23,465	22,941
DeKalb	16,942	16,575	16,407	16,328	16,140	15,892	15,622	15,328
Fannin	23,926	24,272	24,425	24,340	24,057	23,696	23,262	22,922
Floyd	96,699	96,546	100,159	101,509	102,514	103,214	103,765	104,302
Gilmer	26,925	29,746	30,484	31,094	31,617	32,172	32,666	33,140
Gordon	56,865	59,527	61,912	63,966	65,650	67,046	68,235	69,200
Harrison	26,869	29,774	30,571	31,173	31,537	31,719	31,810	31,871
Murray	39,954	40,152	40,441	40,555	40,647	40,719	40,765	40,799
Paulding	133,694	170,901	181,548	201,745	231,254	253,980	278,266	304,621
Pickens	30,218	31,781	33,292	34,610	35,851	37,100	38,408	40,028
Polk	41,781	43,176	44,315	45,166	45,746	46,136	46,393	46,579
Walker	68,750	69,938	70,790	71,200	71,155	70,777	70,182	69,569
Wilkes	104,406	108,222	111,528	114,277	116,368	117,828	118,780	119,343
NWGRC	865,330	926,075	965,180	1,001,873	1,036,596	1,067,275	1,096,678	1,131,782

Source: Governor's Office of Planning and Budget, 2015 Population Projections Series, January 2019; NWGRC

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, Gilmer County, Ellijay and East Ellijay. 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	Gilmer		Ellijay		East Ellijay		Georgia	
	Number	Size	Number	Size	Number	Size	Number	Size
2000	9,071	2.57	593	2.49	251	2.82	2,366,615	2.65
2010	11,314	2.48	638	2.38	222	2.46	3,585,584	2.63

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 12.5%.

Household Occupancy and Tenure for Selected Locations

Category	Gilmer		Ellijay		East Ellijay		NWGRC		Georgia	
Household Occupancy										
Total Housing Units	16,422		933		355		361,306		4088801	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Occupied Units	11,533	70.2	791	84.8	300	84.5	314,244	87	3,585,584	87.7
Vacant Units	4,889	29.8	142	15.2	55	15.5	47,062	13	503,217	12.3
Housing Tenure										
Occupied Units	11,533		791		300		314,244		3,585,584	
Owner Occupied	8,263	71.6	285	36	136	45.3	225,308	62.4	2,354,402	65.7
Renter Occupied	3,270	28.4	506	64	164	54.7	88,936	24.6	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. Gilmer is slightly older (42.3 years). 2011 Census estimates are used in the table. Gilmer County ranks first among other counties in the NWGRC region regarding median age. Due to the cool mountain temperatures recent retirees are typically attracted to places such as Pickens and Gilmer counties, which display the highest median age in the region.

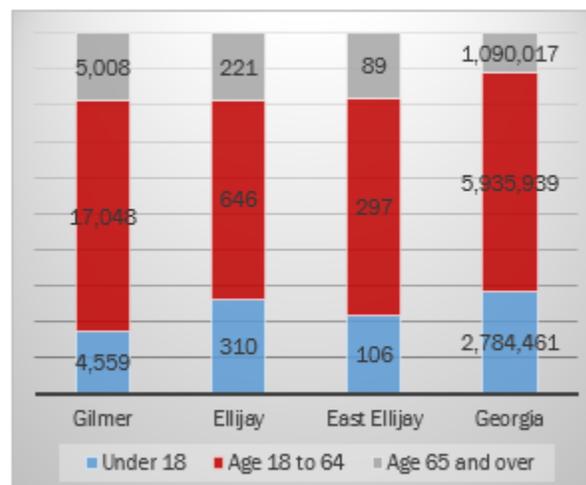
Median Age – for Selected Locations in the NWGRC

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 19 and under, age 20 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 20 to 64 appears to be the largest percentage of individuals by far in every group.

Age Group Percentage for Various Locations – 2010 Census



Race

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

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

Group	Gilmer		Ellijay		East Ellijay		Georgia	
	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent	Count	Percent
White	26,115	92.3	1,076	66.5	410	37.1	5,413,920	55.9
Black	135	0.5	18	1.1	12	1.1	2,910,800	30
Native American	94	0.3	7	0.4	4	0.4	21,279	0.1
Asian	74	0.3	2	0.1	0	0	311,692	3.2
Pacific Islander	39	0.1	3	0.2	12	1.1	5,152	0.1
Other	1,464	5.2	0	0	106	9.6	19,141	0.2
2 or more races	371	1.3	16	1	2	0.2	151,980	1.6
TOTAL	28,292	100	1,619	100	1,104	100	9,687,653	100
Hispanic (Ethnicity)	2,677	9.5	497	1.8	144	13	853,689	8.8

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010

The Hispanic population in Gilmer County and its communities has grown in sync with the total population. With a review of data, total population declined in East Ellijay. The percentage of people of Hispanic origin increased but declined in East Ellijay.

Hispanic Population in Selected locations – 2000 and 2010 Census

Year	Gilmer			Ellijay		
	Total Population	Total Hispanic	Percent Hispanic	Total Population	Total Hispanic	Percent Hispanic
2000	23,456	1,815	7.7%	1,584	399	25.2%
2010	28,292	2,677	9.5%	1,619	497	30.7%
Year	East Ellijay			Georgia		
	Total Population	Total Hispanic	Percent Hispanic	Total Population	Total Hispanic	Percent Hispanic
2000	707	236	33.4%	8,186,453	435,519	5.3%
2010	546	144	26.4%	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 Gilmer 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 1980. 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 Gilmer County Cities – 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
High school 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 high school 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	Pickers	Polk	Walker	Whitfield	NWGR	NWGR%	Georgia%		Gilmer	Ellijay	East Ellijay
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT											
Population 25 years and over	21,295	26,817	47,170	64,680	571,401	100.00%	100.00%		20,331	1,100	465
Less than 9th grade	13,628	2,413	3,301	9,702	58,388	10.2%	5.6%		1,829	181	108
9th to 12th grade, no diploma	2,342	4,022	6,603	10,348	75,040	13.1%	9.4%		2,643	149	70
High school Graduate (includes equivalency)	6,815	10,190	17,542	18,757	198,187	34.6%	28.6%		6,709	308	135
Some college, no degree	4,259	5,368	10,377	12,936	107,842	18.8%	21.1%		4,269	176	73
Associate's degree	1,490	1,370	3,301	3,234	37,792	6.0%	7.0%		1,423	73	30
Bachelor's degree	3,194	1,877	4,717	5,821	60,048	10.3%	17.9%		2,236	114	29
Graduate or Professional degree	1,703	1,609	2,358	3,880	35,435	6.2%	10.4%		1,219	98	20
High School Graduate or Higher	82.5%	75.2%	79.6%	68.5%	77%	77%	85%		77.5%	69.9%	61.7%
Bachelor's degree or higher	23.7%	12.7%	14.3%	14.3%	16%	16%	28%		16.9%	19.3%	10.5%

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

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

Level	2000	2010	2014	Georgia 2014 est.
Less Than 9th grade	15	9.9	9.3	5.6
High School, no Diploma	20	14.7	13.2	9.4
High School Graduate	33	36.2	33	28.6
College, no degree	16	20.7	20.8	21.1
College, Degree or higher	16	18.5	23.7	35.3

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

Level	2000	2010	2014	Georgia 2014 est.
Less Than 9th grade	32	29.7	16.5	5.6
High School, no Diploma	19	16.9	13.6	9.4
High School Graduate	23	18.9	28	28.6
College, no degree	12	15.3	16	21.1
College, Degree or higher	14	19.2	25.9	35.3

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

Level	2000	2010	2014	Georgia 2014 est.
Less Than 9th grade	35	18.9	23.2	5.6
High School, no Diploma	16	24.3	15.1	9.4
High School Graduate	26	31.3	29	28.6
College, no degree	11	6.2	15.7	21.1
College, Degree or higher	12	19.4	17	35.3

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau 2000, 2010, and 2014 5-Year Estimate

When the Gilmer County graduation rate is compared to that of the state, its graduation rate is slightly higher.

2014 High School Graduation Rate

Area	Rate
Gilmer County	79.9%
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 that it's a rate of 68% which is slightly above that of the state.

2010 Students Entering Post-Secondary Education

Area	Rate
Gilmer County	68%
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. Gilmer County saw an increase from 2000 to 2010. However, the dollar amount lags that of the region and the state.

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 less than the region and the state. The most recent numbers show Gilmer \$9,766 less than Georgia.

Median Household Income Levels in the NWGR Region

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
NWGR	\$38,560	\$42,862
Georgia	\$42,433	\$49,347

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

NWGR estimates based on household income distribution data

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

A look at how household income is distributed by income ranges below. Percentage of household income for each range is shown for each jurisdiction. Ellijay was slightly below and East Ellijay slightly exceed the state's poorest income range percentage. Over half of the County's population (65%) is making \$15,000-\$75,000. The amount is much higher than that of the state's (60.2%). In the top range of households (\$200,000 or more) the state percentage remains below that of the county's.

Household Income Distribution Percentage: 2014

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
Gilmer County	9.1%	7.2%	14.1%	14.5%	17.7%
Ellijay	12.4%	18.0%	13.1%	13.1%	12.3%
East Ellijay	15.9%	15.5%	14.8%	12.0%	20.8%
Georgia	12.8%	9.3%	18.2%	14.2%	11.5%

Area	\$50,000 to \$74,999	to \$99,999	to \$149,999	\$150,000 to \$199,999	\$200,000 or more
Gilmer County	18.5%	7.8%	7.0%	1.8%	2.4%
Ellijay	18.8%	3.9%	4.1%	3.1%	1.1%
East Ellijay	14.8%	0.0%	2.5%	1.8%	1.8%
Georgia	16.3%	10.5%	6.3%	0.5%	0.5%

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

Poverty

Poverty thresholds are set by the Census Bureau and vary by family size and composition. Gilmer 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 of 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. Buchanan has the highest poverty rate of all the communities in Gilmer County.

Percentage of Persons and Families below Poverty Level – 2014

Category	Gilmer County	ElIJay %	East ElIJay %
All People	21.4	25.2	34.3
All Families	13.3	26.5	26.9
Children under 5	41.3	48.6	61.3
People 65 and over	7.9	12.5	9.9

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

Comparing the Gilmer County schools to the other districts in the NWGRC region table shown below, indicates a less than desirable statistic. Only the Trion City district has a higher percentage of students in poverty. Gilmer 39.3 versus Trion 43.2%. This can mean teachers have students that have a less conducive homework and study environment. Also, most of these students tend to be less motivated to pursue better jobs as they have few role models in their living and social circumstances.

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

NWGRC Area School Districts, 2011

District Name	Population age 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%

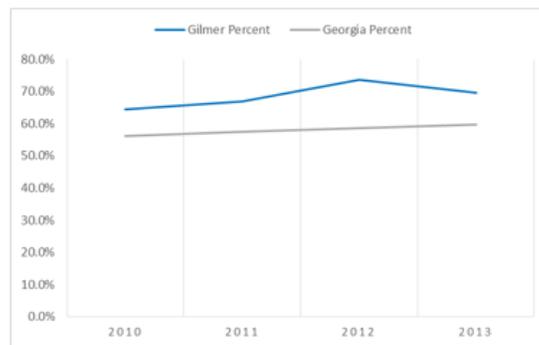
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

An indicator of poverty among school children is their eligibility to receive free or reduced price meals. Gilmer County student percentages have remained above the state averages.

Students Eligible to receive free or Reduced-Price meals

Location	Data Type	2010	2011	2012	2013
Gilmer	Percent	64.4%	66.9%	73.7%	69.7%
Georgia	Percent	56.1%	57.4%	58.7%	59.7%

Source: Georgia Family Connection Partnership



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 Gilmer County and Cities – 2017

Industry	Gilmer		Elijay		East Elijay	
	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent	Estimate	Percent
Civilian employed population 16 years and over	12,120	100	1093	100	284	100
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting and mining	326	2.7	6	0.5	0	0
Construction	1,562	12.9	304	27.8	20	7
Manufacturing	1,802	14.9	203	18.6	68	23.9
Wholesale Trade	188	1.6	2	0.2	15	5.3
Retail Trade	1,578	13	67	6.1	26	9.2
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	406	3.3	9	0.8	0	0
Information	213	1.8	3	0.3	5	1.8
Finance, insurance, real estate, rental and leasing	664	5.5	7	0.6	12	4.2
Administrative, and waste management services	1,017	8.4	26	2.4	15	5.3
Educational services, health care and social assistance	2,199	18.1	198	18.1	69	24.3
Arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation	1,345	11.1	211	19.3	18	6.3
Other services, except public administration	540	4.5	27	2.5	4	1.4
Public administration	280	2.3	30	2.7	32	11.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

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

Largest Employers of Gilmer County and Surrounding Area

Employers Within Gilmer County	Employers near Gilmer County	Location
Chick Fil A	2Work Staffing	Gordon
Elijay Telephone Company	Apache mills, Inc.	Gordon
Imery's	Gold Kist Inc.	Gilmer
Ingles Markets, Inc.	Mohawk Carpet Corp	Gordon
Lowe's Home Centers, Inc.	Mohawk Carpet Distribution LP	Gordon
Pilgrim's Pride Corporation	Mohawk Carpet Distribution LP	Murray
Southern Health Corporation of Elijay	North Georgia Eye Care	Gordon
Subway	Shaw Industries Group, Inc.	Gordon
Walmart	Shaw Industries Group, Inc.	Murray
Whitepath Fab Tech, Inc	University of North Georgia	Lumpkin

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

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	2,750	2,858	8,258	5,380
Dade	31,364	1,020	1,244	5,174	3,030
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

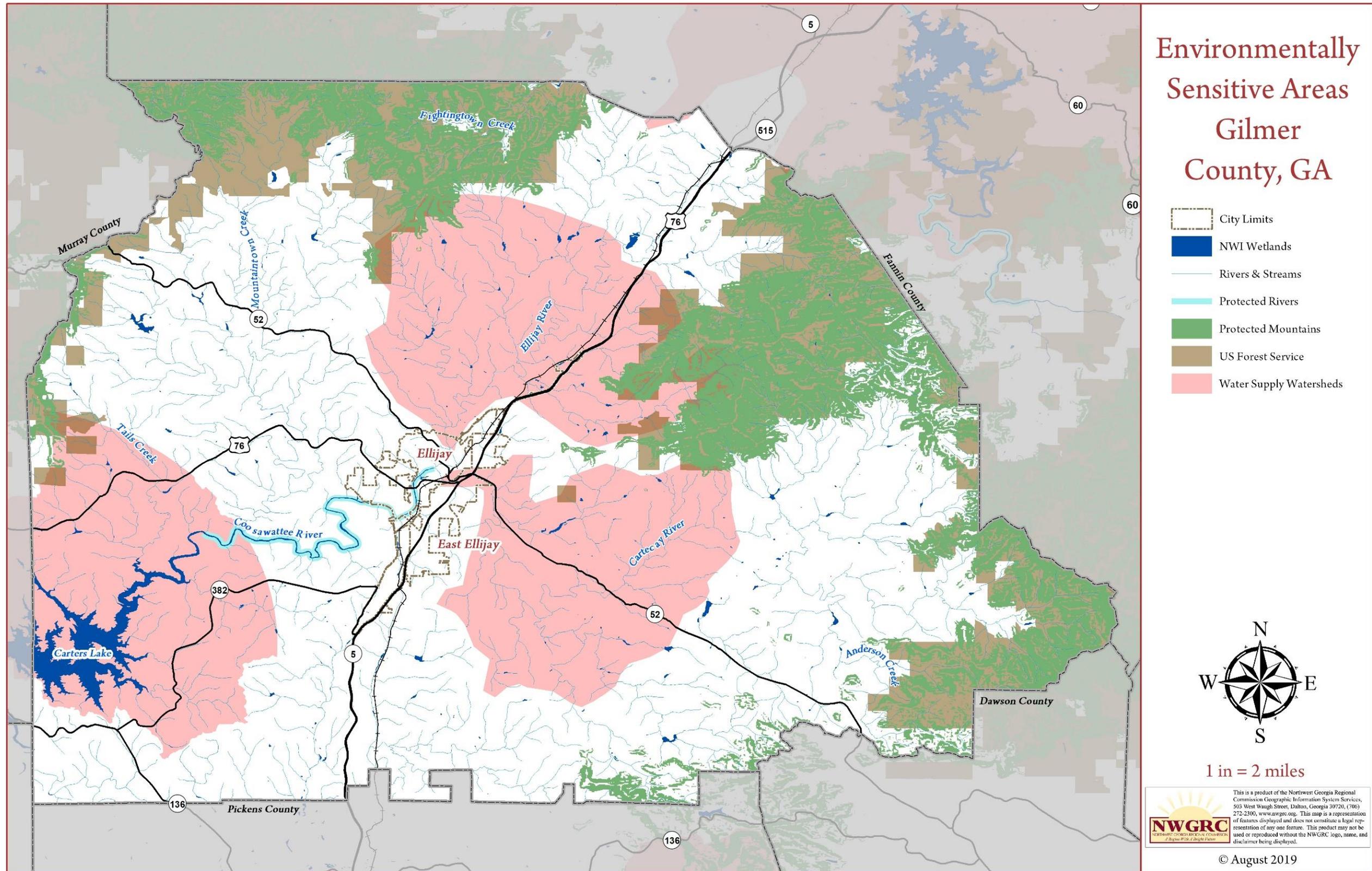
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013 Inflow/Outflow Report

Gilmer County Workers – 2012 Estimates

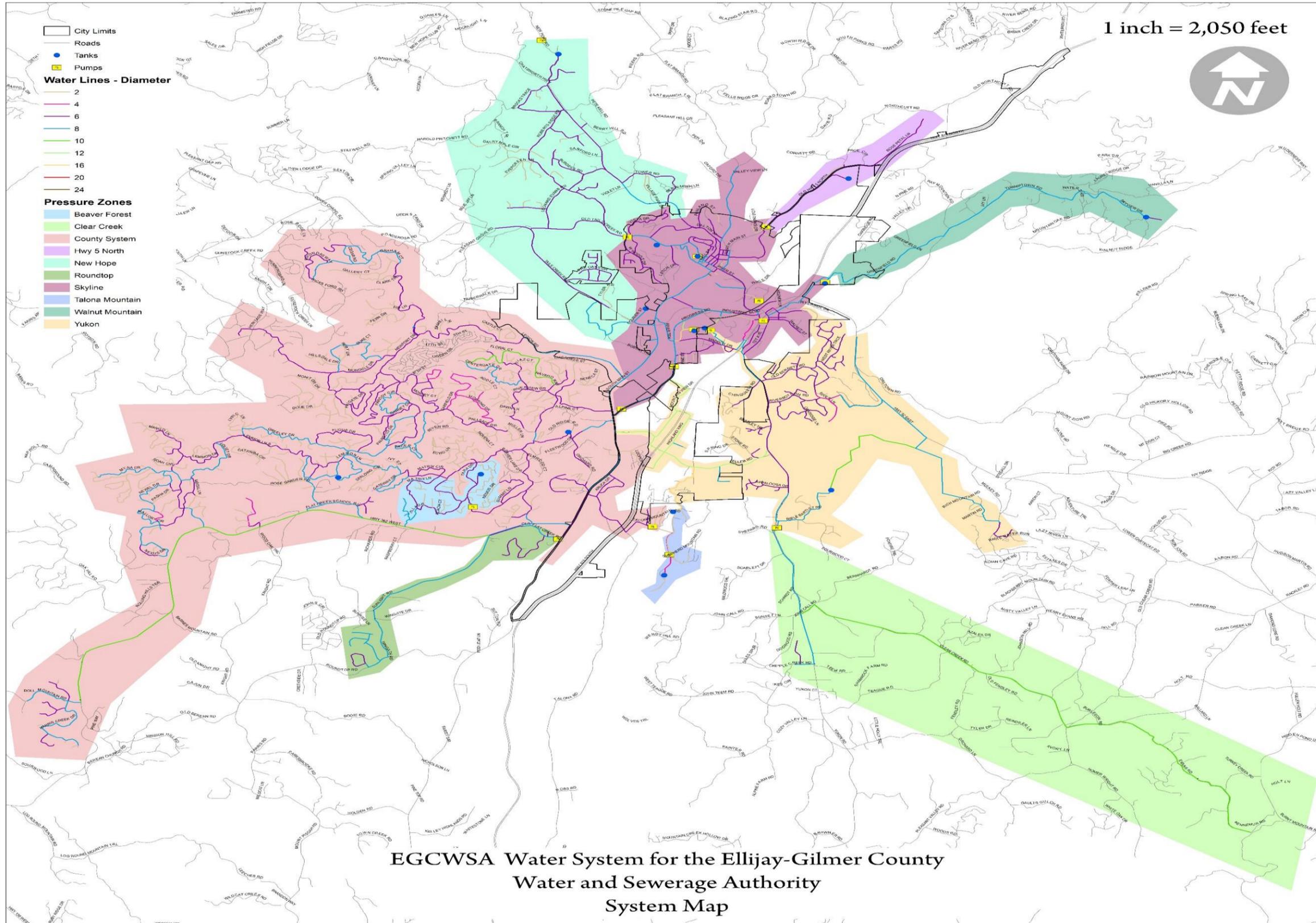
Year	Employed Residents of Gilmer County	Number of Working Inside of County	Percent Working Inside of County	Number Working Outside of County	Percent Working outside of County
2017	11,883	7,319	61.60%	4,337	36.50%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates

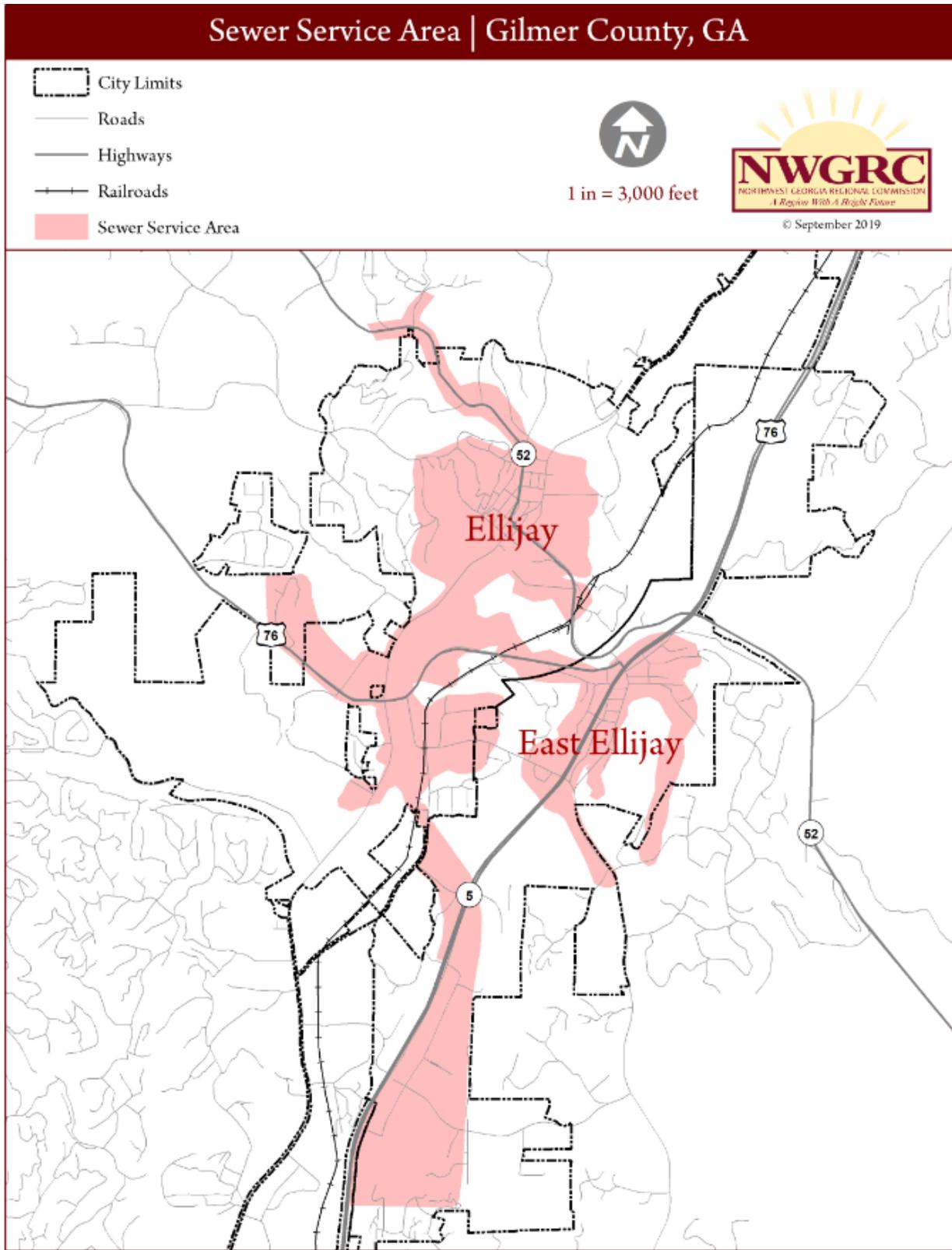
APPENDIX C: ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS MAP



APPENDIX D: PUBLIC WATER SERVICE AREA MAP



APPENDIX E: PUBLIC WASTEWATER SERVICE AREA MAP



APPENDIX F: IMPAIRED WATERS LIST

List of Gilmer County waters with impaired water quality

The following table is prepared from the current 2016 Georgia EPD 305(b)/303(d) 2016 of Impaired streams and the Draft 2018 list. The 2108 draft list has been compiled using new data but has yet to be adopted by the state. All of these waterbodies are in the Coosa River drainage, in which most of the county lies. There are a few streams on the north side of the county that flow into the Tennessee River drainage, but none of these are listed as impaired.

Parts of Carters Lake are impaired because of high chlorophyll A levels, a sign of phosphorus nutrient enrichment from sources such as agricultural fertilizer, animal waste, or human waste. The Woodring Branch/Midlake area of Carters Lake is on the 2016 current list, but on the draft 2018 list it has been moved to “assessment pending” because insufficient information. Chlorophyll A values only went above the standard once in 5 years. The Coosawattee River Embayment of Carters Lake has “assessment pending” designation on the current 2016 list but would be no longer considered impaired on the 2018 draft list because newly collected data have shown that excessive chlorophyll a is not a problem (see Tables 1 and 2 below).

Twenty streams and rivers have impaired water quality in Gilmer County. This includes two sections (or reaches) of the Cartecay River, and two sections of Flat Creek. Seven rivers or streams are impaired by fecal coliform bacteria. Thirteen have degraded fish communities. Two streams may have the macroinvertebrate community degraded, but the assessment is not complete. Fish community and macroinvertebrate community degradation are often caused by sediment choking the stream bottom.

All of Gilmer County’s streams are trout streams, except for the Coosawattee River downstream from GA Hwy 5 Bridge and Talking Rock Creek. These streams are either primary trout streams, have reproducing trout populations, or secondary, capable of supporting a reproducing trout population, but there is no evidence of reproduction. In addition, the lower portions of the watersheds of several streams are not considered trout streams, including Cartecay River (below the mouth of Clear Creek), Clear Creek (below Gilmer County Road 92), Ellijay River (below the mouth of Kells Creek), Mountaintown Creek (below US Highway 76), and Tails Creek (below Hwy 282). For Tails Creek, the cause is the warming influence of the Carters Lake impoundment as the stream flows into the lake. On the impaired list of streams, all of the streams are trout streams except Cox Creek, Owltown Creek, and these lower portions of Mountaintown Creek and Tails Creek.

Table 1. Current 2016 Georgia EPD list of impaired lakes, Gilmer County.

2016 current Georgia EPD list Impaired lakes-Coosa Drainage, Gilmer County						
Reach Name	Reach location	Criterion violated	Potential causes	Extent	Use	Notes
Carters Lake	Coosawattee River Embayment	Assessment Pending		1280 acres	Drinking water, recreation	Total Phosphorous TMDL drafted in 2015. Chlorophyll a is in Category 3 because the growing season average exceeded the criteria once in the last 5 years
Carters Lake	Upstream Woodring Branch/Midlake	Chlorophyll a	Non-point source, Urban Runoff/Urban effects	1472 acres	Drinking water, recreation	Total Phosphorous and Chlorophyll a TMDL drafted in 2015

Table 2. Draft 2018 Georgia EPD list of impaired lakes, Gilmer County

Draft 2018 Georgia EPD list Impaired lakes-Coosa Drainage, Gilmer County						
Reach Name	Reach location	Criterion violated	Potential causes	Extent	Use	Notes
Carters Lake	Upstream Woodring Branch/Midlake	Assessment pending		1472 acres	Drinking water, recreation	TMDL completed for Total P & Chlorophyll a 2016. The water is being placed in Category 3 because the growing season average for chlorophyll a exceeded the criteria once in the last 5 years.

Table 3. Current 2016 Georgia EPD list and draft 2018 list of Impaired streams, Gilmer County

Current 2016 Georgia EPD list and Draft 2018 list Impaired streams-Coosa Drainage, Gilmer County						
Reach Name	Reach location	Criterion violated	Potential causes	Extent	Use	Notes
Big Turniptown Creek- trout stream	Headwaters to the Ellijay River	Biota impacted (Fish Community)	Non-point source	7 miles	Fishing	Biota impacted Fish community TMDL drafted 2015
Boardtown Creek Trout stream	Headwaters to Jones Creek/Bryant Creek	Biota impacted (Fish Community)	Non-point source	6 miles	Fishing	Biota impacted Fish community TMDL drafted 2015
Cartecay River Trout stream	Licklog Creek to Clear Creek	pH	Non-point source	5 miles	Fishing	
Cartecay River Not trout stream in this section	Owltown Creek to Coosawattee River	Fecal Coliform bacteria	Non-point source	3 miles	Fishing	TMDL completed fecal coliform 2004
Cherrylog Creek (aka Ellijay River) Trout stream	Laurel Creek to Rock Creek	Biota impacted (Fish Community)	Non-point source, Urban Runoff/Urban effects	3 miles	Fishing	Biota impacted Fish community TMDL drafted 2015
Clear Creek Trout stream	Headwaters to Cartecay River	pH	Non-point source	2 miles	Fishing	-
Conasauga Creek Trout stream	Headwaters to Demps Creek	Biota impacted (Fish Community)	Non-point source	5 miles	Fishing	Biota impacted Fish community TMDL drafted 2015
Coosawattee River Trout stream	Confluence with Ellijay River to unnamed tributary 250 ft downstream on Newport Dr. & Legion Rd. intersection	Fecal Coliform Bacteria	Non-point source	3 miles	Fishing	
Cox Creek	Headwaters to Ellijay River	Fecal Coliform Bacteria	Non-point source	3 miles	Fishing	TMDL completed Fecal Coliform 1998
Ellijay River Trout stream	Upstream Coosawattee River	Fecal Coliform Bacteria	Urban Runoff/Urban effects	2 miles	Drinking water	TMDL completed fecal coliform 2004
Fir Creek Trout stream	Headwaters to Tails Creek	Biota impacted (Fish Community)	Non-point source	5 miles	Fishing	Biota impacted Fish community TMDL drafted 2015
Flat Creek Trout stream	Headwaters to SR 382 (formerly Headwaters to Carters Lake)	Biota impacted (Fish Community)	Non-point source	4 miles	Fishing	Biota impacted Fish community TMDL drafted 2015. This site has narrative rank of fair for macroinvertebrates. When EPD completes the reevaluation for the metrics used to assess macroinvertebrate data it will be determined if the macroinvertebrate criteria are being met.
Flat Creek Trout stream	SR 382 to the Coosawattee River (formerly u/s Coosawattee River)	Biota impacted (Fish Community), Fecal Coliform Bacteria	Non-point source	1 mile	Fishing	Biota impacted Fish community TMDL drafted 2015. This site has narrative rank of fair for macroinvertebrates. When EPD completes the reevaluation for the metrics used to assess macroinvertebrate data it will be determined if the macroinvertebrate criteria are being met.
Harris Creek Trout stream	Upstream Carters Lake	Biota impacted (Fish Community)	Non-point source	3 miles	Fishing	Biota impacted Fish community TMDL drafted 2015
Mountaintown Creek Not trout stream in this section	Hwy 282 to Coosawattee River	Fecal Coliform Bacteria	Non-point source	5 miles	Fishing	TMDL completed Fecal Coliform 2004
Owltown Creek	Headwaters to the Cartecay River	Biota impacted (Fish Community)	Non-point source	5 miles	Fishing	Biota impacted Fish community TMDL drafted 2015
Rock Creek Trout stream	Headwaters to Allen Lake	Biota impacted (Fish Community)	Non-point source	4 miles	Fishing	Biota impacted Fish community TMDL drafted 2015
Ross Creek Trout stream	Headwaters to Ellijay River	Biota impacted (Fish Community)	Non-point source	4 miles	Fishing	Biota impacted Fish community TMDL drafted 2015.
Tails Creek Not trout stream in this section	Hwy 282 to Carters Lake	Fecal Coliform Bacteria	Non-point source	3 miles	Fishing	TMDL completed Fecal Coliform 2004
Tickanety Creek Trout stream	Headwaters to Anderson Creek	Biota impacted (Fish Community)	Non-point source	10 miles	Fishing	Biota impacted Fish community TMDL drafted 2015
Tributary to Talking Rock Creek Trout stream	Sevenmile Creek to Talking Rock Creek	Assessment pending		1 mile	Fishing	This site has a narrative rank of fair for macroinvertebrates. Waters with a narrative rank of fair will remain in Category 3 until EPD completes the reevaluation of the metrics used to assess macroinvertebrate data.
Whitpath Creek Trout stream	Headwaters to the Ellijay River	Biota impacted (Fish Community)	Residual from Industrial Source, Non-point source	4 miles	Fishing	Biota impacted Fish community TMDL drafted 2015

APPENDIX G: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION DOCUMENTATION

8A WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 2018

LOCAL

THE COURIER • ELLIJAY, GEORGIA

Making for an excellent Agstravaganza



Above, Gilmer High School agriculture teacher Paul Little, left, and Clear Creek Middle School ag advisor Nick Cantrell check in with Gilmer High FFA members Octavia Bushey, Alyssa Ashurst, Torri Reed, Mary Keener, Helena Orosz and Matt Long before the students begin serving drinks and appetizers to attendees during the 2018 Agstravaganza at the Clear Creek Agricultural Complex Tuesday, Nov. 13. Below, Downtown Roy band members Steve "Possum" Jones, Bill Craig, Don Roberts and Dan Worley entertain guests at the Gilmer Chamber-hosted function with an evening of Americana, folk and old-time rock 'n' roll music.



Nurses Sandy Ralston, left, and Mary Moody arrange items that will be for sale at the upcoming Christmas Bazaar hosted by Watkins Memorial Hospital and Gilmer Nursing Home. The Civic Center event will raise money to purchase new heart monitors at the hospital.



Pickens County's Tater Patch Players perform their *Festival On Broadway* show before an enthusiastic crowd at the Ellijay Elementary School Auditorium. The review of song and dance from several popular Broadway musicals features talented adults, teens and children from Gilmer and Pickens. At right, Helen Westmoreland and David Stuart perform a selection from *Annie Get Your Gun*.



The following represents the proposed budget for Gilmer County for fiscal year 2019. Any person wishing to review the budget may do so during the hours of 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday - Friday at the office of the Board of Commissioners - 1 Broad Street, Suite 106 - Ellijay, Georgia 30540

GILMER COUNTY Projected Revenues & Budgeted Expenditures Fiscal Year 2019					
January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019					
General Fund Budget	General Fund		Special Revenue Funds		Totals
		E-911	Phone/Mail Fee	Whitpath Golf Course	
Projected Revenue including operating transfers:	\$ 21,711,407.00	\$ 902,777.00	\$ 600,000.00	\$ 452,313.00	\$ 23,666,497.00
Departmental Expenditures:					
General Government	\$ 4,365,008.00				\$ 4,365,008.00
Judicial	\$ 2,428,304.00				\$ 2,428,304.00
Public Safety	\$ 9,837,715.00	\$ 902,777.00			\$ 10,740,492.00
Public Works	\$ 2,066,243.00				\$ 2,066,243.00
Health & Welfare	\$ 304,247.00				\$ 304,247.00
Culture & Recreation	\$ 1,029,856.00				\$ 1,029,856.00
Housing & Development	\$ 667,365.00				\$ 667,365.00
Tourism			\$ 600,000.00		\$ 600,000.00
Whitpath Golf Course				\$ 452,313.00	\$ 452,313.00
Total Budgeted Expenditures	\$ 21,711,407.00	\$ 902,777.00	\$ 600,000.00	\$ 452,313.00	\$ 23,666,497.00
SPECIALIZED SERVICE BUDGETS					
	Revenue	Expenditures			
13 MR & DSCR Bond	\$ 3,960,936.00		Capital Outlay	Other Service	
LRMS Grant Revenue	\$ 684,004.00				
2014 SFR DSR	\$ 3,880,000.00				
Project Length Budget	\$ 27,505,000.00		\$ 3,923,016.00	\$ 4,000,000.00	

Pursuant to O.C.G.A. Section 36-81-6(a), the Gilmer County Board of Commissioners will adopt the budget for fiscal year 2019 at the monthly meeting of the Board of Commissioners on Thursday, December 13, 2018 at 6:00pm in the Board of Commissioners Conference Room.

Five expenses you can do without if you want financial freedom

FUTURE MONEY TRENDS

For some consumers, spending too much on luxuries can make it difficult to pay for all of their necessities on time; a Pew study found that close to half of Americans spend more money than they make every month. Many people consider ways to cut monthly expenses, but then balk at eliminating certain items because the thought of doing without them seems too painful.

"Let's face it, the economy has changed, and the pension system and conventional retirement are in the past," says Ameduri, co-founder of the *Future Money Trends* newsletter. "If you really want to get ahead or make the choice to become wealthy, it will require you to do things that are not normal."

"It starts with sacrifice in your personal finance life, and ideas that might seem drastic are ways to save real money."

Ameduri lists five effective cost-cutting measures to save money every month:

- Get rid of your smartphone.
- Stop eating meat.
- Cancel the cable bill.

much for cable, or cable and internet in the same package?" says Ameduri. "Replace the cable bill with Netflix and Hulu, or search around for what you want to watch on YouTube."

"Your life is too short to be making payments for something that costs so much per month," he says. "A car shouldn't be a matter of pride."

• Don't be a fashion plate.

Getting too caught up in what we wear can get expensive, Ameduri warns. He says it makes sense to shop at discount stores.

"You can look nice buying clothes for half or two-thirds of the cost of top-line brands," he says.

"Avoiding high-end brands is a smart way to save money. Someone who truly wants to change their financial position won't care about shopping at a second-tier store."

Meat can eat up much of a food budget, and Ameduri says there are smarter alternatives for main courses.

"It's overpriced and it really isn't that healthy for you anyway," Ameduri says. "Instead, eat beans and raw nuts for your protein. Think of all the money you will save by grilling vegetables and eating salads."

Daniel Ameduri is co-founder of the *Future Money Trends* newsletter.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

GILMER COUNTY, ELLIJAY AND EAST ELLIJAY UPDATE OF JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Gilmer County and Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay share a Joint Comprehensive Plan. Under the 2017 local planning rules promulgated by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, it is time to update the Plan document. An initial public hearing is being held to explain the process for the plan preparation and the opportunities for public participation in the development of the updated plan. The affected governments intend to appoint citizens to participate as part of a Steering Committee to work with planners for the plan preparation. In addition, broad citizen participation at every meeting related to the plan preparation is desirable and recommended.

The plan document, estimated for completion in draft form by August 2019, will ultimately be submitted for review to the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Plan approval by October 31, 2019 will allow the affected governments to extend their Qualified Local Government status, and each will therefore be eligible for State loans, grants, or permits for another five years.

The public hearing will be held in the East Ellijay City Hall, 107 Oak Street, East Ellijay, Georgia, on Monday, December 10, 2018; 10:00 a.m.

Materials related to this public hearing will be available for review at the East Ellijay City Hall, 107 Oak Street, East Ellijay, Georgia during regular business hours, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday beginning Friday, December 7, 2018.

Charlie Paris, Chairman
Gilmer County Board of Commissioners

**FIRST PUBLIC HEARING FOR THE GILMER COUNTY JOINT
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

	NAME	PHONE (HOME)	PHONE (CELL)	EMAIL
1	Paige Green	N/A	706-889-2889	paigeg@gilmerchamber.com
2	Kent Sanford		706-273-7623	director@greatergilmerjda.org
3	CHARLIE PARIS		706-635-4361	cparis@gilmercountyga.gov
4	Al Houle		706-273-9977	maya@elijay.com
5	Gretchen Latham			NWGRCCity
6	M. Wood		706-273-0323	
8	Ethan Calhoun		(706) 295-6485	e.calhoun@nwgrc
9	Julianne Meadows		(706) 295-6425	jmeadows@nwgrc.org
10				
11				
12				
13				
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ORGANIZATIONS
 Gilmer County, Ellijay, and East
 Ellijay/Northwest Georgia
 Regional Commission

TIME
 10 am

EVENT DATE
 December 10, 2018

LOCATION
 East Ellijay City Hall
 107 Oak Street
 East Ellijay, Georgia, 30539



**GILMER COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING #1**

Facilitator: NWGRC

Date: January 31, 2019

Place/Room: Gilmer County Planning and Zoning Conference Room

Time: 10AM-12PM

Please Print Name	
1.	Ethan NWGRC
2.	R. Devell Frady
3.	John Marshall
4.	Lex Rainey
5.	Lynelle Stewart
6.	Mark Hobbs
7.	Marisa Mullins
8.	KAREN Ferguson
9.	Mark Wood
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GILMER COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE
MEETING #2

Facilitator: NWGRG, Gilmer County

Date: March 28, 2019

Place/Room: Gilmer County Planning & Zoning Conference Room

Time: 10:00 AM

	Print Name	Representing Ellijay, East Ellijay, or Gilmer County?	Your Field of Expertise? Public Works, Transportation, Zoning, Business, Agriculture, etc.
1.	Gary McVey	EGCWSA	Water/Sewer
2.	MIKE GIBBS	EGCWSA	Water/Sewer
3.	John Marshall	Gilmer Chamber	
4.	Lex Rainey	Joint Dev. Auth.	Education
5.	Karen Henson	Gilmer Co. P+Z	Planning + Zoning
6.	Karleen Ferguson	DOC - CONSERVATION	
7.	Synelle Stewart	City Council Ellijay	education
8.	DOU CALLIHAN	CITY COUNCIL EAST ELLIJAY	
9.	Kent Sanford	JDA	
10.	Devell Frady		Housing-Building
11.	Paige Green	Chamber	Tourism, Business Development
12.	MARK HOLDS	Gilmer County	AG
13.	RIK TANNER	GILMER COUNTY	PUBLIC WORKS, BUSINESS
14.	Maria Mullin	Citizen	Eco Dev/Authority
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GILMER COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

MEETING #3

Facilitator: NWGRG, Gilmer County

Date: April 18, 2019

Place/Room: Ellijay Water and Sewer Authority

Time: 10:00-11:00 AM

	Print Name	Representing Ellijay, East Ellijay, or Gilmer County?	Your Field of Expertise? Public Works, Transportation, Zoning, Business, Agriculture, etc.
1.	Gary McVey	EGCWA	Water/Sewer
2.	MIKE GIBBS	EGCWA	Water/Sewer
3.	John Marshall	Gilmer Chamber	
4.	Maria Mullins	Citizen	Eco. Dev.
5.	Lex Rainey	Citizen	
6.	Karen Nelson	Gilmer Co. P+Z	Planning & Zoning
7.	Kathleen Ferguson	BOC - Commissioner	
8.	Sydney Stewart	City Council Ellijay	education
9.	DON CALLIHAN	city council EAST Ellijay	
10.	Kent Sanford	JOA	
11.	Bob Josephson	Gilmer County Schools	
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GILMER COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE
MEETING #4

Facilitator: NWGRG, Gilmer County

Date: June 20, 2019

Place/Room: Ellijay Water and Sewer Authority

Time: 10:00 AM

	Print Name	Representing Ellijay, East Ellijay, or Gilmer County?	Your Field of Expertise? Public Works, Transportation, Zoning, Business, Agriculture, etc.
1.	Ethan Calhoun	NWGRG	
2.	Mack Wood	CITY of East Ellijay	
3.	MARK Holden	Gilmer County	
4.	Bob Sorensen	Gilmer County Schools	
5.	Sabaughn Irons	NWGRG	Community planner
6.	Karen Wenson	GCPT 2	
7.	Tasha Smith	ETC	
8.	GARY McYen	EGCWSA	water/sewer
9.	Maria Mullins	Citizen	Eco. Dev.
10.	Alex Rainey	Citizen	
11.	John Marshall	Gilmer Chamber	
12.	Karleen Ferguson	Gilmer Co. Commissioner	Commissioner
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**GILMER COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE
STAKEHOLDER'S MEETING**

Facilitator: NWGRC, Gilmer County

Date: July 18, 2019

Place/Room: Piedmont Community Center

Time: 6:00 PM

	Print Name	Are you a resident, business owner, or employed in Gilmer County?
1.	Ethan Calhoun	NWGRC
2.	Dawell & Lisa Frady	Resident, Business owner
3.	Darrell Cutler	Business owner / Resident
4.	Chad Watkins	Resident, business owner
5.	GARRY WATKINS	BUSINESS OWNER
6.	Maria Mullins	Resident
7.	Mark West	Business owner
8.	Sabaughn Irons	NWGRC
9.	Damon Gabriel	Resident & Business owner
10.	John Marshall	Resident - Current Chamber Chair
11.	Keat Sanford	JOA
12.	Darren West	Resident
13.	Judy Turner	Resident
14.	Roy Turner	Resident
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GILMER COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

MEETING #5

Facilitator: NWGRG, Gilmer County

Date: August 6, 2019

Place/Room: Ellijay Water and Sewer Authority

Time: 10:00 AM

	Print Name	Representing Ellijay, East Ellijay, or Gilmer County?	Your Field of Expertise? Public Works, Transportation, Zoning, Business, Agriculture, etc.
1.	Edna Colbran	NWGRG	Planning
2.	Jean Smith	ETC	
3.	Don Callihan	EAST ELLIJAY	Public
4.	Kathleen Frouese	Gilmer County Council	
5.	Marie Mullins	Volunteer/Cherry log	
6.	Gary McKay	ECWSA	utility
7.	Lynette Stewart	Ellijay	
8.	Ruby Jew	Chamber	
9.	John Marshall		
10.	Mark Holdes		
11.	Dave Frady	Building Community	
12.	Kent Sord	JDA	
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Enter the apple recipe contest and win \$300

Now that most schools are back in session, that means fall is just around the corner and with it comes the Georgia Apple Festival and the apple recipe contest. The contest is held each year at the Georgia Apple Festival in Ellijay. This year the goal is to find the best apple cake recipe (apple cake only, no "cheesecake" of any kind.) The first-place apple cake recipe winner will receive \$300 and a ribbon. The second-place winner will receive \$100 and a ribbon. Entering is easy. Just



Extension News
Jessie Moore

submit an entry form and recipe (Attn: Recipe Contest) to the Gilmer County UGA Extension office in Ellijay. Only put your name (contestant name) on the back side of the recipe, not on the front. All recipes must be received by noon Friday, Sept. 20, and all recipes must use fresh Georgia apples. If applesauce is used in the recipe, it must be made from Georgia apples. Recipe cannot use any brand names. Five finalists will be selected from the entries. There are no kitchen facilities available at the festival, so upon notification, final contestants will bring their prepared apple cake to the Lions Club Fairgrounds in Ellijay Saturday, Oct. 12, by 9:45 a.m. for judging at 10 a.m.

Members of the Georgia Agricultural Commodity Commission for Apples and employees of the University of Georgia Cooperative Extension are not eligible to participate. The contest is not open to food professionals. First-place winners from the 2016 - 2018 contests are not eligible. Only one entry per family and only one entry per person. Contestant must be age 10 or older.

For more details and/or an entry form that provides further information, call the UGA Extension office in Gilmer County at 706-635-4426 or come by the office at 1123 Progress Road in Ellijay. Our office hours are Monday - Friday from 8 a.m. to noon and 1-5 p.m. We are closed for lunch from noon to 1 p.m. The entry form is also on-line at our local website which is www.ugaextension.org/gilmer, so you may print a copy from there.

The Georgia Apple Festival "recipe contest" is coordinated by the Gilmer County UGA Extension office and sponsored by the Georgia Apple Festival in cooperation with the Georgia Agricultural Commodity Commission for Apples. Jessie Moore can be reached by phone 706-635-4426 or by email, jessmoor@uga.edu.



From left, Kent Sanford, Gilmer High School counselor Daniel Marshall, Dianne Scoggins and Gilmer Schools Support Services Coordinator Diane Vautrot go over plans for the new Partners in Education mentoring program expected to be available to Gilmer High School students this academic year.

MENTORING

CONTINUED FROM 1A

students showed that at least 150 who responded thought they could benefit from having a mentor. "The school system already has mentoring programs on other levels, such as the REACH program. It's state-based and for only five students a year at the eighth-grade level. The Christian Learning Center has had a limited mentor program for a number of years, but nothing on this scale," he added.

Dianne Scoggins, who will be overseeing the program through Partners in Education, described what will be required of those who apply to be mentors.

"We will be doing recruiting and screening through CORE. The application process includes a criminal background check and fingerprints. The high school principal, Carla Foley, will sign off on (all approved applicants), as will the superintendent, Dr. Downs," she said.

"We then have a training session. The first one has been scheduled for Sept. 10 at GHS for those who've already been approved."

Sanford described how having a mentor during the transition from childhood to young adulthood can have long-term benefits.

"There are lots of things that impact your ability to be successful. One of the best illustrations for this I've seen is the visual of a plumbing system where water is being moved from one place to another," he said.

"If there are cracks in that system, you start having leakage and losing water. In an economic system, if you don't have a well-insulated system of moving infants to childhood to adolescence to adults with good education and good job preparation, your workforce suffers."

"At the same time, those young adults don't feed back into the system prepared to have children of their own and help them be successful."

The next orientation session for anyone interested in becoming a mentor will be Thursday, Aug. 22, 6 p.m., at the CORE building located at 142 River Terrace.

More applicants are needed to get the program off the ground, Scoggins noted. It's hoped that mentoring will be available to GHS students later this academic year.

"So far, we have 30 people who are already going through the process," Scoggins said.

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PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE GILMER COUNTY, ELLIJAY AND EAST ELLIJAY UPDATE OF JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Gilmer County and Cities of Ellijay and East Ellijay share a Joint Comprehensive Plan. Under planning rules promulgated by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs effective on March 1, 2014, it is time to update the Plan document. This initial public hearing is being held to explain the process for the plan preparation and the opportunities for public participation in the development of the updated plan. The affected governments intend to appoint citizens to participate as part of a Steering Committee to work with planners for the plan preparation. In addition, broad citizen participation at every meeting related to the plan preparation is desirable and recommended.

The plan document, estimated for completion in draft form by August 23, 2019, will ultimately be submitted for review to the Northwest Georgia Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. Plan approval by October 31, 2019 will allow the affected governments to extend their Qualified Local Government status, and each will therefore be eligible for State loans, grants, or permits for another five years.

The public hearing will be held in the East Ellijay City Hall, 107 Oak Street, East Ellijay, Georgia, on Thursday, August 29, 2019; 10:00 a.m.

Materials related to this public hearing will be available for review at the East Ellijay City Hall, 107 Oak Street, East Ellijay, Georgia during regular business hours, 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday beginning Friday, August 23, 2019.

Charlie Paris, Chairman
Gilmer County Board of Commissioners

NOTICE							
The Gilmer County Board of Commissioners does hereby announce that the millage rate will be set at a meeting to be held in the Board of Commissioners Conference Room on Friday, August 23rd at 10:00am and pursuant to the requirements of O.C.G.A. § 48-5-32 does hereby publish the following presentation of the current year's tax digest and levy, along with the history of the tax digest and levy for the past five years.							
CURRENT 2019 MAINTENANCE & OPERATIONS TAX DIGEST AND 5 YEAR HISTORY OF LEVY							
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
COUNTY WIDE							
C	Retail & Personal	1,175,411,035	1,254,462,852	1,343,582,912	1,383,870,040	1,563,768,303	1,633,423,114
U	Motor Vehicles	62,080,940	46,774,110	36,133,020	27,814,710	22,033,930	18,580,210
U	Mobile Homes	10,576,700	10,133,270	9,742,090	9,587,480	9,292,440	10,242,820
U	Tobacco - 100%	325,430	650,760	567,827	610,894	405,797	386,818
U	Heavy Duty Equipment	0	0	0	0	0	483,480
U	Grass Digest	1,252,588,114	1,312,020,942	1,390,024,458	1,421,883,089	1,596,300,470	1,663,117,304
U	Lease Exemptions	130,124,292	145,929,040	190,898,045	200,246,010	255,089,477	256,265,730
T	NET ASSESS VALUE	1,113,463,114	1,146,091,962	1,199,126,413	1,211,816,175	1,341,650,917	1,406,851,464
U	Grass Maintenance & Operations	0.3330	0.4810	0.3810	0.3330	0.3630	0.2430
A	MS&E	1.1580	1.4280	2.3080	2.3510	2.2880	2.3440
U	Lease Refund (Local Option Sales Tax)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
U	NET MGO MILLAGE RATE	7.2340	6.9830	6.9830	6.9830	6.9830	6.8980
U	TOTAL MGO TAXES LEVIED	\$8,043,034	\$8,003,146	\$8,373,500	\$8,303,688	\$9,364,559	\$9,704,463
U	TAX	\$53,343	(\$40,498)	\$190,340	\$157,180	\$833,872	\$189,904
U	Net Tax % Increase	0.20%	-0.50%	4.63%	1.80%	9.77%	3.02%
CURRENT 2019 GENERAL OBLIGATION BOND TAX DIGEST AND 5 YEAR HISTORY OF LEVY							
		2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
COUNTY WIDE							
C	Retail & Personal	1,175,411,035	1,254,462,852	1,343,582,912	1,383,870,040	1,563,768,303	1,633,423,114
U	Motor Vehicles	62,080,940	46,774,110	36,133,020	27,814,710	22,033,930	18,580,210
U	Mobile Homes	10,576,700	10,133,270	9,742,090	9,587,480	9,292,440	10,242,820
U	Tobacco - 100%	325,430	650,760	567,827	610,894	405,797	386,818
U	Heavy Duty Equipment	0	0	0	0	0	483,480
U	Grass Digest	1,252,588,114	1,312,020,942	1,390,024,458	1,421,883,089	1,596,300,470	1,663,117,304
U	Lease Exemptions	130,124,292	145,929,040	190,898,045	200,246,010	255,089,477	256,265,730
T	NET ASSESS VALUE	1,113,463,114	1,146,091,962	1,199,126,413	1,211,816,175	1,341,650,917	1,406,851,464
U	Grass Bonded Millage	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
A	T	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
U	Lease Refund (Local Option Sales Tax)	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
U	NET BOND MILLAGE RATE	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000	1.0000
U	TOTAL BOND TAXES LEVIED	\$1,113,477,114	\$1,154,479,962	\$1,339,126,413	\$1,383,870,040	\$1,596,300,470	\$1,663,117,304
U	TAX	\$1,113,477,114	\$1,154,479,962	\$1,339,126,413	\$1,383,870,040	\$1,596,300,470	\$1,663,117,304
U	Net Tax % Increase	0.00%	3.57%	5.64%	3.89%	9.76%	4.02%

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GILMER COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE; FINAL PUBLIC HEARING

Facilitator: NWGRC, Gilmer County

Date: August 29, 2019

Place/Room: East Ellijay City Hall

Time: 10:00AM

Please Print Name	
1.	Ethan Calhan
2.	Mack Wood
3.	Karleen Ferguson
4.	John Marshall
5.	Ked Sapul
6.	Chalita
7.	Marian Mullins
8.	
9.	R Dezell Frady
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