

**Hart County Comprehensive Plan 2007-2030
Community Assessment and Participation Program**



August, 2007

Community Assessment and Participation Program ***Hart County Comprehensive Plan 2007-2030***

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Executive Summary

Hart County is in the process of updating its Comprehensive Plan, the document that collects facts, information and public perspectives of the community, defines a Vision of what the people want the community to be, then establishes guidelines for making that Vision a reality.

Without participating in this process it's already clear Hart County, Georgia, is a scenic community beside the shores of Lake Hartwell. Updating the Comprehensive Plan, however, has revealed Hart County can also be described as the nexus where several converging cultures meet:

- Straddling the state line Hart County is where people pass to and from Georgia and South Carolina;
- At the edge of the piedmont and coastal plateau Hart County is the gateway to and from Appalachia;
- Tucked between three growing metropolitan areas Hart County is exurban buffer between Atlanta and Athens, GA, and Anderson, SC;
- At the end of an industrial era, Hart County is the embodiment of economic change, growing from rural and agrarian characteristics to those more suburban and service oriented.

With the 21st Century now several years old, Hart County is poised to experience some of the most dynamic change it's ever known. This change can be positive, negative, or neither, but change is happening and much of it is the result of forces originating from outside the county.

This document, the Community Assessment of the Hart County Comprehensive Plan, seeks to identify and study those forces and their affects on the county. It outlines the nature of how things are now and *could* be in the future. It then sets the table for the County, the citizens and all interested stakeholders to define how things *should* be. Ultimately the Comprehensive Plan's final section, the Regional Agenda, will clarify that vision of what should be and identify the measures that will be taken to make that vision a reality.

The issues and opportunities identified herein cover topics such as housing quality, economic development and natural resource protection. In accordance with the minimum requirements established for Georgia, and with the help of the Georgia Mountains regional Development Center, these issues and opportunities were identified as part of a critical assessment of facts and information about the county. Some present formidable challenges, others merely build upon what's already in place. All of them, however, represent something that should be considered in developing the best plan for Hart County.

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Purpose

The Community Assessment and the Community Participation Program are the first two of three documents comprising the local comprehensive plan in Georgia. Enclosed herein are the Community Assessment, the Community Participation Program and all necessary supporting material for Hart County, for the planning period between 2007 and 2030. This material will support the development of the third, and most important, element of the comprehensive plan: The Community Agenda.

The purpose of planning and community development is to provide guidance for everyday decision-making by local government officials and other community leaders. To this end, the requirements for local comprehensive planning in Georgia emphasize involvement of stakeholders and the general public in preparation of plans that include an exciting, well-conceived, and achievable vision for the future of the community. When implemented, the resulting plan will help the community address critical issues and opportunities while moving toward realization of its unique vision for the community's future.

The Community Assessment presents a factual and conceptual foundation upon which the rest of the comprehensive plan is built. Preparation of the Community Assessment is largely a staff or professional function of collecting and analyzing data and information about the community and presenting the results in a concise, easily understood format, such as an executive summary, for consideration by the public and decision-makers involved in subsequent development of the Community Agenda.

The purpose of the Community Participation Program is to ensure that the local comprehensive plan reflects the full range of community values and desires, by involving a diverse spectrum of stakeholders in development of the Community Agenda. This broad-based participation in developing the Community Agenda will also help ensure that it will be implemented, because many in the community are involved in its development and thereby become committed to seeing it through.

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Profile of Hart County

What is now Hart County was part of the Cherokee Nation until the Cherokee relinquished their lands to the state through various treaties in the late 1700's. Early settlements were made adjacent to major waterways such as the Savannah and Tugaloo Rivers to take advantage of the rich bottomland most suitable area for farming. Tobacco began as the main staple but was quickly abandoned in the early 1800s. Over time the farm economy diversified until cotton began to dominate the antebellum period around 1850.

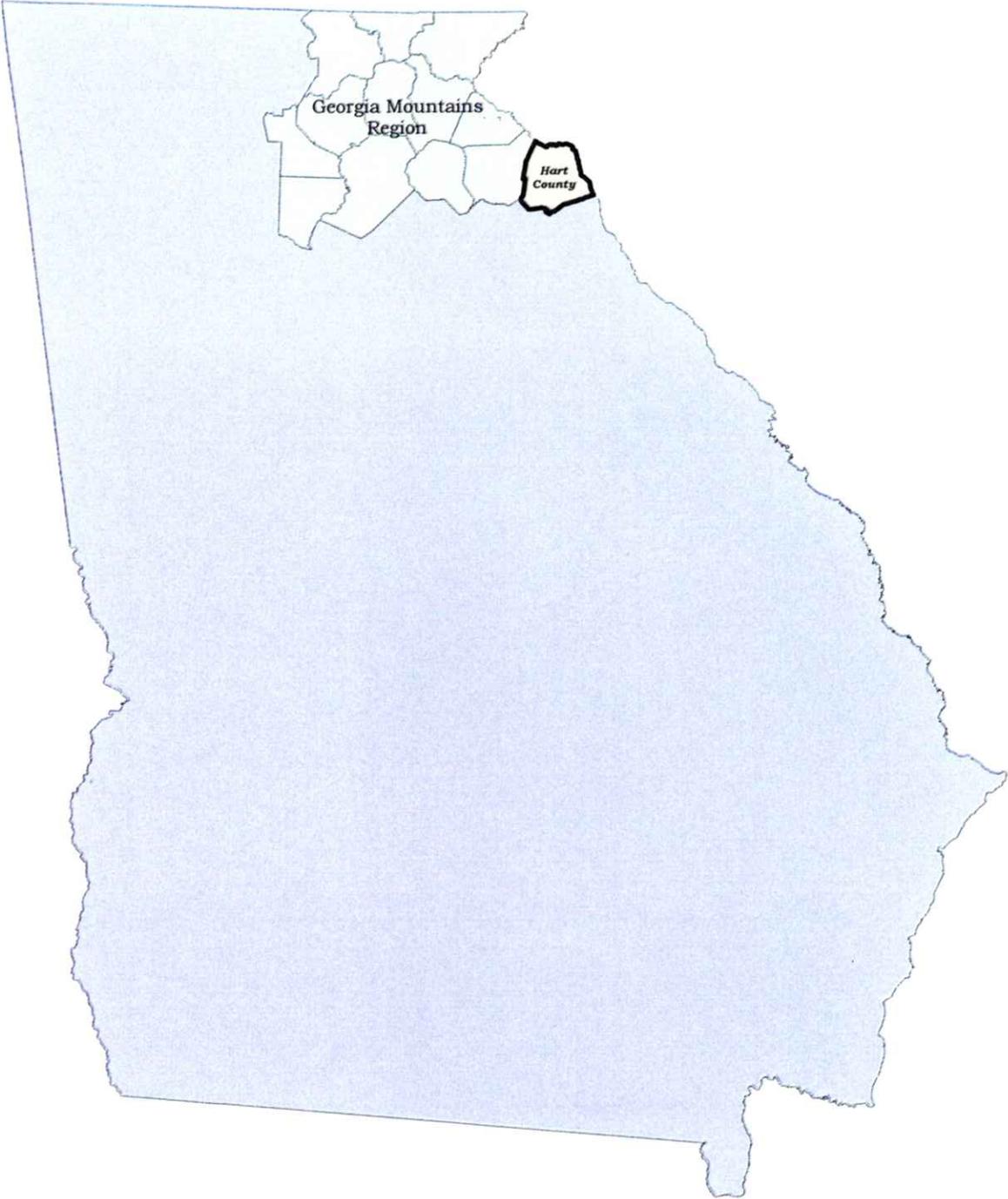
In late 1853 Hart County was created from portions of Franklin and Elbert Counties. The County was named for Revolutionary War heroine Nancy Hart, and lies on the eastern edge of Georgia, along the Savannah River/Lake Hartwell boundary between Georgia and South Carolina.

By the time of the Great Depression in 1929 the cotton industry in Hart County began to fade. A series of government supported efforts would slowly aid the development of industry in and around Hart County while farming began to recover. In 1950 the United State Congress authorized the construction of Hartwell Dam. By 1961, Lake Hartwell was completed and full. and with it began the second decline of agriculture. This time, however, the changes were not due to economic woes but by as a byproduct of growth in manufacturing related industries.

Today, Hart County is noted for its location immediately south of Interstate 85 near Lavonia, situated within one of the fastest growing areas of the United States, surrounded by rapidly expanding metropolitan areas; Atlanta, Gainesville and Athens, Georgia, and the Greenville-Spartanburg-Anderson metropolitan area of South Carolina.

There are two incorporated cities within Hart County. Hartwell is the county seat and the largest of the two at just over 4,200 residents. It is located in the center of the county close to Lake Hartwell. The other city is Bowersville, a small community in northwestern Hart County with approximately 340 people. Combined the county was estimated to have 24,036 residents in 2005.

Location Map Hart County



**A RESOLUTION APPROVING THE SUBMITTAL OF
THE DRAFT COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN
FOR HART COUNTY TO
THE GEORGIA MOUNTAINS RDC FOR REGIONAL REVIEW**

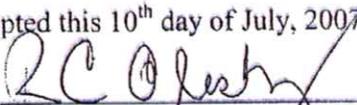
WHEREAS, the Hart County Board of Commissioners have completed the draft Comprehensive Land Use Plan as part of the 10-year Plan Update.

WHEREAS, this document was prepared according to the rules and regulations of the State of Georgia, and the required public hearing was held on July 10, 2007.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Hart County Board of Commissioners does hereby transmit the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Update to the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center for regional review.

Adopted this 10th day of July, 2007

BY:



RC Oglesby, Chairman Hart County Board of Commissioners

ATTEST:



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ANALYSIS OF DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS

Land use management policies and programs represent guidelines for shaping development patterns that provide for efficient growth while also protecting sensitive social and environmental areas. This section presents an inventory of existing land use patterns and development trends for the community, allowing the local government to produce the most effective policies needed to manage the demands from projected development.

EXISTING LAND USE

Classification of Land Uses

The following categories are used for discussion during this chapter and coordination between the existing land use map and tables:

Agriculture/Forestry – This category includes all farms and existing land devoted to growth of field crops or plants, vegetation, and trees, the raising of livestock, poultry houses, and other similar operations. Small plots for gardens were not included in this category because such gardens are considered accessory to the residential uses of the property. Lands were also classified as agricultural if they a) contained fencing along the property line, b) if the land was substantially cleared for pasture, or c) the land was clearly in active forest production.

Residential - This category includes all detached single-family dwellings, along with their customary accessory structures and uses. It also includes single-wide and double-wide mobile and manufactured homes on individual lots, or mobile home parks.

Public/Institutional - The public/institutional land use category consists of all lands used for government purposes such as schools and fire stations, plus churches, cemeteries, and clubs, private/public colleges, schools, training facilities, hospitals, and sanitary landfills.

Transportation/Communications/Utilities (TCU) - This category includes such uses as power generation plants (such as the 600 acre "Hartwell Energy Limited Partnership" Power Plant), radio towers, communications towers, electricity, telephone and other transmission substations, telephone switching stations, airports and landing strips, and similar uses.

Commercial - This land use category includes all property of retail business and trade, consumer services such as motels, restaurants, banks, commercial and professional services, and wholesale activities; as well as accessory use areas such as parking and storage. Small-scale retail sales or personal service establishments operated within (or in conjunction with) a residence on the same lot were considered accessory to residential use (a home occupation) and were not included in the commercial classification.

Industrial - The industrial category includes land occupied for the purpose of extracting, fabricating, assembling, and/or refining raw or semi-finished materials.

Undeveloped - This category is for land that is vacant, and not developed for a specific use. This category consists of nonagricultural and non-forested lands.

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Hart County as a whole is predominantly rural, with large amounts of land in a natural, undeveloped state. Much of this is land around large residential estates, preserved for conservation use (such as Army Corps of Engineers property) or former agricultural land that has not yet been converted to another use.

Most of the remaining land has an active use but is rural in character because of the sparse development. Large lot residential properties abound, some forestry operations also remain and many small to mid-size farms throughout the county. Most of the suburban/urban forms of development are concentrated around Hartwell and the Lavonia/Interstate 85 area.

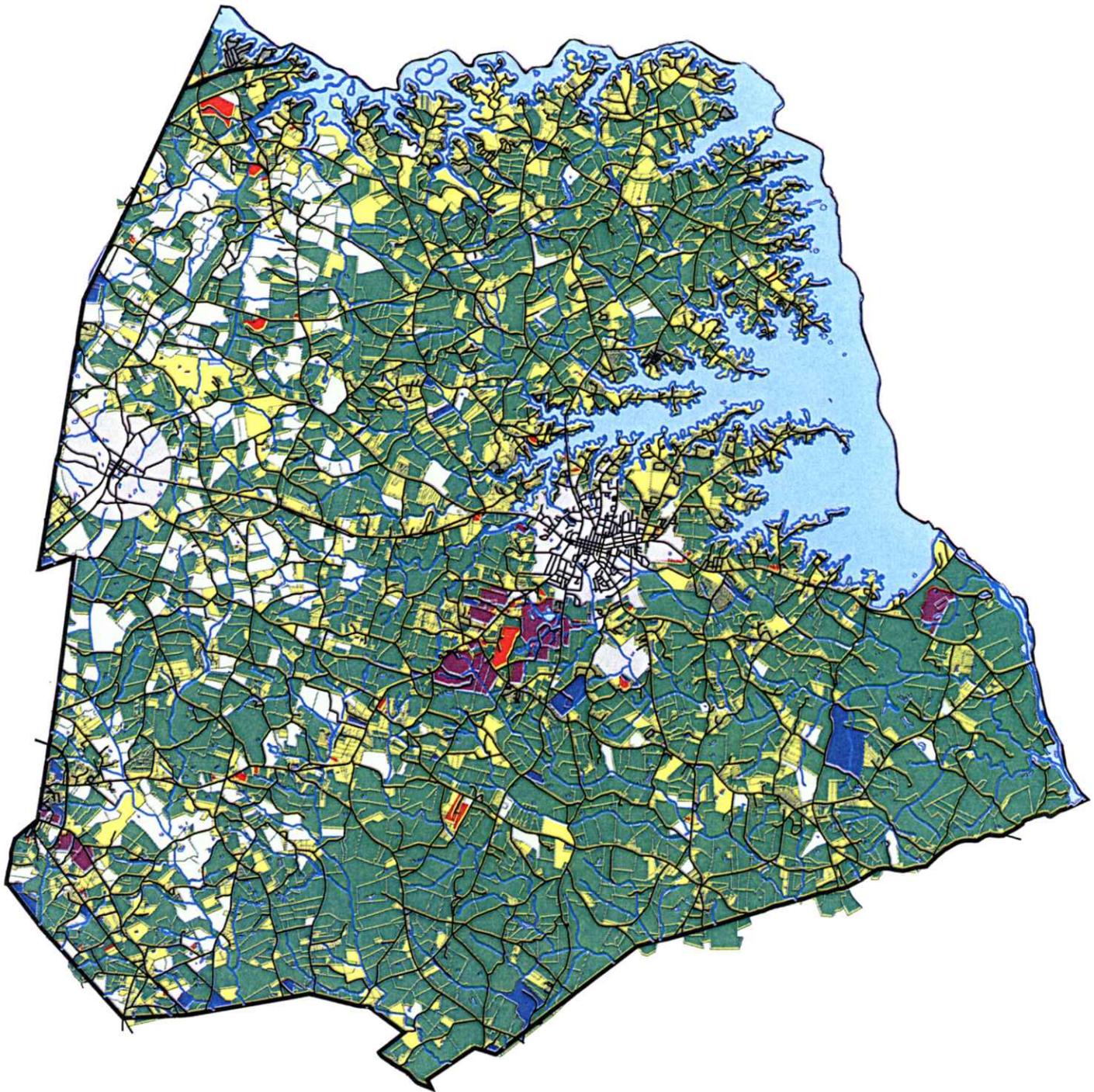
Hart County Existing Land Use, 2006

Undeveloped	61,100	44.5%
Agricultural	36,746	26.8%
Residential	29,984	21.8%
Forestry	4,459	3.2%
Industrial	2,406	1.8%
Commercial	1,643	1.2%
Public	796	0.6%
TCU	112	0.1%
<i>Total</i>	<i>137,247</i>	

Source: GMRDC, 2006

Hart County

Generalized Existing Land Use 2007



Legend		Generalized Existing Land Use	
GDOT 2005 Roads	County Boundary	Institutional	Industrial
Railroad	Municipalities	Residential	Undeveloped
Rivers & Streams		Commercial	
Lakes & Ponds		Agricultural	

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General Land Use Descriptions

Northwestern Hart County (Census Tract 9602)

The northwest portion of the County, is bordered by Interstate 85 and Lake Hartwell to the north and Franklin County to the west. S.R. 77 runs east-west through the area, and crosses Shoal Creek, whose course runs from Lake Hartwell south to the City of Bowersville. The Town of Bowersville is located in the southwest corner of the division, along with a portion of the City of Canon. This Division has been partitioned into two areas for land use discussion purposes; the Lake Area, and the Shoal Creek Area.

Lake Area - NW:

The lake area in the northern portion of this division is characterized by subdivisions that border the lake. Primarily single-family residences on small lots occupy this land, with a small number of mobile homes scattered along the lake. Some of the subdivisions include Arrowhead, Tugaloo Bay, Knox Bridge Crossing, Parkertown Heights, and Tugaloo Heights. For the most part, lots fronting the lake are occupied by such residences, while many interior lots remain vacant.

Construction of new residences has increased in recent years. The Tugaloo Bay subdivision had numerous undeveloped interior lots that have recently had entry level homes constructed on them. Additionally, several older homes surrounding lake Hartwell have been remodeled, rebuilt or removed due to the increased demand for lake property. A new marina has been constructed on the end of Knox Bridge Crossing road.

The undeveloped land, in general, is heavily wooded. Agricultural land does exist in the lake area, but is limited and is mostly pasture type agriculture. Public and commercial uses in the lake area include churches and cemeteries, the Clem's Music Park facility on S.R. 77 near the Parkertown intersection, and Harbor Light Marina located in the northwest and the new marina described above.

The only other commercial developments in the lake area are a gas stations and a restaurant. Moreover, the I-85 exit contains a vacant commercial spot, gas stations, and a convenience store/restaurant. TCU uses are limited to a power substation in the Parkertown Heights subdivision. The County has recently developed the Gateway Industrial park on I-85 adjacent to the 177 interchange. This 150 acre industrial park has all utilities in place. TI automotive, a large high tech automotive manufacturer has recently been constructed and is slated to start operations.

The installation of sewer and water infrastructure to this area has poised the County for tremendous growth over the planning period. Several larger private tracts of undeveloped land are now being marketed as industrial/commercial property. Commercial development is expected around the interstate interchange and along the major State highways (77 and 59) as well as other tracts adjacent to I-85 between I-85 and Knox Bridge Crossing.

Commercial and industrial development on the north side of I-85 is expected to be limited during the planning period unless sewer and water is expanded to the other side of I-85 (northern side). However this would most likely be a costly endeavor and make not take place during this

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planning period. There also exists a large tract of land on Lake Hartwell north of the interstate. This undeveloped tract is very valuable and may see some type of mixed use development over the planning period.

Shoal Creek Area:

The Shoal Creek Area encompasses the remaining portion of the land in this division. It extends south of the lake area down to the southern portion of the Canon city limits. The majority of land in this area is agricultural, with many large open fields. A large area of forested land is located south of the lake area and west of S.R. 77. Poultry farms are prevalent, and seem to be concentrated primarily just north of the Town of Bowersville. Dairy farms exist east of Bowersville, and an orchard is located between Bowersville and Canon on S.R. 51. Undeveloped land occurs in patches throughout the division.

Residential uses consist of conventional single-family and mobile homes that are located on large agricultural tracts. Housing is fairly dispersed but is more concentrated around several major intersections. Commercial and public uses are also concentrated at these areas. These intersections are known locally as the Shoal Creek, Cross Roads, Maretts, and Airline communities.

The Shoal Creek community, located at the intersection of S.R. 77 and Shoal Creek Road, is primarily residential, with a large number of mobile homes. The community is characterized by Providence Church and a fire station. The Cross Roads community is located at the intersections of S.R. 77, Lou Gurley Road, Will Bailey Rd., and Airline School Road. The Cross Roads and Union Hill Church are also located in this area. The Maretts community is located along the border of the division, at the intersection of County Route 503, Walt Wilson Road, and S.R. 77 Connector. This community has a small grocery and an auto repair shop. Single-family residences comprise the primary land use along these roads.

The Airline Community, which is the most densely developed community in this division, is located east of Bowersville, along S.R. 51 and the Southern Rail Line. Commercial uses in this community include a convenience store and a gas station. The former Airline Elementary School is also located here. Several TCU uses include a rail lookout tower, Hart County Telephone switching station, and two electric substations. Residential development, in the form of single-family dwellings, is dense along S.R. 51.

Commercial uses outside of these communities include the Lavonia Speedway, on S.R. 77, an auto repair shop and used car lot, a feed store, gas stations, a van conversion business, an electric company, and a small junk yard.

Industrial uses consist of Misty Mills on S.R. 77 just east of Lavonia. One other small industrial facility is located just north of the Town of Bowersville. Public uses in the Shoal Creek Area are comprised primarily of churches and cemeteries. TCU land uses include a radio antenna. Scenic views of rolling fields exist in the Shoal Creek Area just north of the Airline Community, off Martin Dairy Rd., and near the Cross Roads community seen from Will Bailey Rd.

A new elementary school has been constructed in this area on State 77 a few miles north of

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Hartwell. The Airline School was closed and is now vacant. The North Hart Elementary School may also be a magnet for increased residential growth in this area.

Northeastern Hart County (Census Tract 9601)

The northeast portion of the County, is bordered by Lake Hartwell to the north, east, and southeast, by Lightwood Log Creek to the south, and by Census Tract 9602 to the west. This tract saw the second largest percent population growth rate at 22% change in the 1990 decade.

This section of the County has been divided into the Lake Area (which includes all of the land fronting the lake to the north, east, and south), and the non lake area “Reed Creek” for purposes of description.

Lake Area - NE:

The lake area in this division is characterized by subdivisions that border the lake. This area is heavily developed with conventional single-family residences, located primarily in subdivisions, many of which are only strips of land immediately adjacent to the lake and only one lot deep. There are a few subdivisions with interior lots but these are primarily newer subdivisions.

Similar to northwestern lake area, the waterfront property is in high demand. Most vacant lots have been developed in recent years or are slated for development soon. There are few interior lots in these subdivisions especially the older lakefront subdivisions where the prior farmland was kept and only the lakefront property sold one lot deep from the lakefront.

There exists numerous forested undeveloped areas owned by the Corp of Engineers in reserved lands directly on the lake mostly on lower lying points or pieces of land that have low lying land connecting them to the rest of the County. In addition to these reserved lands, Corp of Engineers parks noted in this area include a boat ramp, located far east along the lake in the Hatton Ford Road area, a campground and boat ramp facility near the Paradise Point subdivision, and New Prospect Park boat ramp. Other recreational areas include the Lake Hartwell Yacht Club in the southern portion of the lake area off Yacht Club Drive.

Located near Hatton Ford Road is a small, private airfield, accessible from Mustang Drive. Another private airstrip is located in the southern lake area where County Route 503 meets S.R. 51. Public uses include several churches located along the main roads. No industrial uses are present in the lake area. Scenic views of the lake are abundant.

Reed Creek Area:

The remaining area of this tract is primarily referred to as the “Reed Creek Area”. This area was primarily agricultural and forested lands but has been developing more residential uses. This area is characterized by several small communities, each located at the intersections of two or more roads. These include the Reed Creek community, located in the northeastern portion of the Division, at Country Route 301 and S.R. 51; and the Mount Olivet community at the intersection of County Route 503, Beacon Light Road, and Morris Road. Poultry farming is present, but is not particularly concentrated in this division. Vacant, undeveloped land is dispersed throughout.

Residential development consists mostly of conventional single-family homes, with mobile

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homes dispersed throughout. The residences usually front large agricultural tracts of land. While subdivisions predominate in the lake area, the remaining residential land use within this division is mostly linear in nature, located along the roadways.

There are exceptions to the linear residential development and more traditional developments have been developed in recent years. There has been increased development adjacent to Mt. Olivet Road and adjacent to Will Bailey Road. There are also mobile homes and mobile home parks located near a private air landing strip off of County Route 503 just before it crosses S.R. 51 over the lake.

Commercial developments at the Reed Creek intersection consist of a gas station, restaurant and gift shop. Along S.R. 51 as it approaches the Hartwell City limits, are garage, gas station, and auto sales establishments. Other commercial uses in the Reed Creek Area include auto repair, a veterinary facility with kennels, gas stations/convenience stores, two private boat storage facilities, a nursery, a gas tank sales business, and several other single unit commercial structures.

Limited industrial exists including Turner Concrete and private recycling are located on S.R. 51 near the Hartwell City limits. Public uses in the Reed Creek Area include a generous scattering of churches and cemeteries. In addition, the former Mount Olivet Elementary School (now closed and consolidated with the North Hart Elementary School) is located at the Mount Olivet intersection, and a fire station is located in the Reed Creek community. Park and recreational areas not directly located along the lake include ball fields near Mount Olivet Elementary School on Beacon Light Road.

Transportation, communication and utilities land uses are limited to a radio/cell tower, telephone switching stations, and power substations.

Southeastern Hart County (Census Tracts 9604 & 9605)

The southeastern portion of the county is bounded by Lightwood Log Creek to the north, and Elbert County to the south. The eastern boundary is Lake Hartwell and the Savannah River. The western border is primarily Eagle Grove School Road. The City of Hartwell is included in this division, but has been excluded from this land use description except the influence on the unincorporated sections of the county adjacent to the City. These tracts have seen the slowest population growth rates at about 11% over the 1990s decade.

City of Hartwell Area:

The Hartwell Area is comprised of land located in the vicinity of the Hartwell City limits. It contains little agricultural land as many other land uses are present. Undeveloped forested land is abundant in the vicinity of Lightwood Log Creek. Dense single-family residential areas and subdivisions are concentrated near the city limit along U.S. 29, and along S.R. 172.

Commercial uses are more prevalent near the Hartwell City limit and consist of gas stations/convenience stores, restaurants, car sales and repair, and other retail establishments. The commercial growth corridor has been moving down Highway 29 towards the dam, although most of the commercial establishments on this corridor have annexed into the City.

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Industrial uses are also abundant, and include the Hart Industrial Park (containing Springs and others), Monroe Manufacturing, Milliken and other Industrial establishments. A large strip mine operation is located off of S.R. 172.

Public uses consist of several churches and cemeteries, and a youth center located on U.S. 29. The Hartwell Sewage Plant is located off of S.R. 77 near the city limit. Other TCU land uses include a Georgia Power office and an adjacent electrical transmission tower on Zion Church Rd., as well as a water tower near the Hart Industrial Park. Park and recreational uses in this area include the Hartwell Golf Club off of U.S. 29, and the Hart Memorial Park Cemetery also on U.S. 29 near the city limit. The Cherokee Memorial is found at U.S. 29 and Zion Church Road which a memorial dedicating what was believed to be the location of the center of the Cherokee Nation (called “center of the world”). The highest point in Hart County is located in this tract on Blackmon Road near State 51.

Catechee golf course and conference center is located on Elberton highway south of the City of Hartwell. A few small tracts of vacant land surrounding this golf course have recently been developed into residential subdivisions. The remaining vacant land around the golf course especially on the east side is expected to undergo high end residential development over the planning period.

Bio Area:

The Bio Area is less densely developed than the other areas in this division. Agricultural and undeveloped forested land are prevalent. Residential development is mostly single-family fronting large agricultural tracts. Few single-family subdivisions exist in this area. Mobile homes are scattered, although there are concentrations at the intersection of Thornton Road and Liberty Church Road and on Allen and Orsley Roads.

The main commercial use in this area is the Hartwell Speedway. Other commercial businesses include gas stations, auto sales, a junk yard, and farm equipment sales. No industrial uses exist in this area. Public uses include several churches and the Bio Fire Department on Bio Church Road. TCU use includes a natural gas station. There are no designated park/recreational lands in the Bio Area. 7.2.5. The County public works facility and closed landfill is located in this area and the State of Georgia Whitworth Detention center is located adjacent to the County Public Works.

Lake Area - SE:

The lake area in this division includes two primary “peninsulas” on Ridge Road and Old 29 highway. There is also development along Highway 29 from the City of Hartwell towards the Hartwell Dam. There is also a large section of lakefront near the dam that is redzone and has limited or no development. Hartwell Energy Limited Partnership power plant is located here.

There is a great amount of forested land, particularly near the City of Hartwell along U.S. 29, and in the vicinity of Hartwell Dam. There is also a substantial amount of forested lakefront land reserved by the Corp of Engineers in this area.

Commercial uses along the lake are also mostly located on U.S. 29. They include a boat storage

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facility, the Budget Inn, Jameson Inn, supermarkets, several mobile home sales businesses, a few retail stores, and a realty. In and near the Hartwell City limits are a Wal-Mart commercial retailer, gas stations, and other retail establishments. An industrial site is also located near the Hartwell City limit.

Public uses along the lake are limited to a few churches, and an office building near Hartwell. In addition, towards the dam are the Hartwell Lake Reservoir Management Offices and the Land Management Offices. TCU uses consist of a radio tower, gas line station and a transmission station across the street from the Hartwell Lake Management Offices, as well as a power substation located where Lake Hartwell meets the Savannah River (by the dam).

Parks and recreation facilities are prevalent in this area, with the Hartwell Marina located where North Forest Avenue ends at the lake and Hart State Park at Ridge Road. In addition, in the Hartwell Dam area, a recreational park lies adjacent to the Hartwell Lake Management Offices, as well as the park surrounding Hartwell Dam.

Scenic views in this area include views of Lake Hartwell from U.S. 29. The park at Hartwell Dam is particularly scenic as a long paved walkway extends from a parking area, along the lake, to the dam.

Savannah River Area:

The area below the dam on the Savannah river is heavily forested and remote. This area has limited development although several large tracts of land have recently been sold. This area is very scenic with river vistas overlooking shoals. Smith McGee Highway has a park area that is accessible to the public. Otherwise this area remains relatively undeveloped.

Wildlife Management Area:

The Wildlife Management Area (980 acres) is located in the southeast portion of the division. It includes land extending south of U.S. 29, west of the Savannah River, north of the County line, and east from the Hart County Wildlife Management Area. In general, this area is more heavily wooded than any other section in the county. Several of the roads in the easternmost portion are blocked and impassible. Agricultural land exists mostly closer to U.S. 29, and to the south of the Hart County Wildlife Management Area, which is itself virtually all forested.

Commercial uses are limited to auto related businesses. There are no industrial uses in this area. Public uses include several churches. Residential development is concentrated primarily south of the dam near S.R. 181.

Housing is also more concentrated both north and south of the Hart County Wildlife Management Area, mostly with single-family residences. There are several views overlooking pasture lands.

The Nancy Hart Area:

The Nancy Hart Area includes all land in this division west of the Hart County Wildlife Management Area and south of U.S. 29 and the Hartwell City limits. The division boundary crosses the community of Nuberg where Coldwater Creek Road intersects S.R. 77 in the

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southern portion of the county. The Nancy Hart Area is developed areas with some residential development. There is also a good deal of agricultural land including poultry farming, dairy farming, and row crops.

The majority of the residential development is conventional single-family homes, located along most of the roadways. A particularly heavy concentration of conventional single-family residences occurs near the Hartwell City limit where S.R. 77 splits. Several concentrations of mobile homes are located where Liberty Hill Church Road forks with Page Road, and to the north and south of the landfill off S.R. 172.

Commercial uses in the Nancy Hart Area consist of a restaurant, auto repair and sales, junk yard, outdoor equipment sales, boat equipment sales, gas stations, and several other single unit businesses. Significant residential and commercial growth of the area not near the City of Hartwell is not expected to take place.

Public uses are also more prevalent in this area. In addition to the various churches, there are two schools. One is an old school house located across from Flat Rock Church on Flat Rock Road, and the other is the Nancy Hart School which has been converted into a special school with the opening and consolidation of the South Hart Elementary school. The Nancy Hart Volunteer Fire Department is located along the S.R. 77 Spur near Flat Rock Road.

The corridors leaving the City of Hartwell will expect new growth over the planning period. The Highway 29 corridor towards the Hartwell dam is expected to have continued commercial growth including a high probability of large retailers (big box type). Residential growth is expected in this same area including single family non-lake and intensive lake front development such as condominiums.

The Elberton highway corridor includes a new recreation park constructed by the County and the Catechee Golf Course. This area is expected to grow over the planning period. Residential growth is expected to continue in this area especially higher priced residential development around the golf course. It is also expected that commercial growth will take place in this area.

Southwestern Hart County (Census Tract 9603)

The southwestern portion includes the area near the City of Royston, Vanna area, and all land located to the west of North Beaverdam Creek and south of Carlton Brown Road. Madison and Elbert Counties border this division to the south. This area saw the third highest population growth change in the 1990 decade with 17% change.

Goldmine Area:

The Goldmine Area covers the northern and central portions of the division. This area is characterized primarily by the Goldmine community, located along U.S. 29 at Airline-Goldmine Road, and more concentrated residential, commercial, and industrial development on State Route 29 leading out of the City of Royston.

Commercial land use is prevalent at the intersection of U.S. 29, Airline-Goldmine Road, and Bonds Road. Commercial uses include gas stations, a convenience grocery, restaurants, auto

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repair, a junk yard, a beauty shop and shoe repair, a farm equipment supplier and several other single unit commercial structures.

Industrial uses include a lumber company located just outside Royston on U.S. 29, and another small industrial site at the Goldmine community intersection. Several churches and cemeteries dot the area and Eagle Grove School resides on the border of this division at the intersection of U.S. 29 and Eagle Grove School Rd. A fire station is located at the Goldmine intersection.

The Royston Bypass is between S.R. 17 and S.R. 122. This bypass allows the movement of traffic between the two thoroughfares without entering the Royston City limits. Next to Eagle Grove School is a telephone switching station. Some residential development includes a few subdivisions. Residences in the Goldmine Area are typically conventional single-family units fronting large agricultural fields, with a few well-dispersed mobile homes.

Agricultural land is characterized primarily by large open fields and pastures and poultry farms. In addition, a large commercial nursery is located on Bonds Road, off of U.S. 29. Forested land exists in several areas including commercial forests. Several scenic views in the Goldmine area are of agricultural land.

Vanna Area:

Vanna, lies in the southwestern portion of the county. S.R. 17 and Southern Railway both run through the former Vanna city limits. While the land in this area is largely agricultural, residential population is concentrated where S.R. 17 and the railroad intersect. Residences consist largely of conventional single-family housing with only a few mobile homes in this area. Most of the homes, even in these denser areas, are abutted by agricultural land to the rear. Several small orchards are also located within the denser residential area.

Poultry and dairy farms exist in the outlying areas. There is very little forested or undeveloped land directly in Vanna; however, land to the east of Vanna is largely agricultural and forested. Commercial uses in the Vanna area include several gas stations, an auto repair shop, a small printing company, a poultry equipment business, and a restaurant.

Industrial uses include the former Johnson and Johnson plant located within the Royston city limits and Royston LLC in the unincorporated county.

Public uses include several churches, and a fire station located along the rail tracks. TCU uses are limited to a power generator and substation and the rail line. Scenic views are provided by orchards as well as agricultural lands.

Eagle Grove Area:

The Eagle Grove Area is located in the eastern portion of the division. The area is predominantly agricultural with undeveloped forested areas located along rivers, streams, and other bodies of water. Residential development is mostly conventional single-family, with mobile homes dispersed throughout the area. Subdivisions in this area include undeveloped sites on Eagle Lake at Eagle Lake Road, and the neighboring Eagle Heights subdivision.

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Commercial uses in the Eagle Grove Area are limited to a few gas stations, a mini-storage business, and auto related businesses. Industrial uses are limited to a few small business scattered in the area.

In addition to churches, cemeteries and garbage disposal sites, other public uses include Eagle Grove School, located at the Eagle Grove community (intersection of U.S. 29 and County Route 505). A telephone switching station at the Eagle Grove intersection and a water tower, located along U.S. 29 near Kesler Road. constitute TCU land uses. In addition, a large power generator station is found on John W. Jordan Road.

The southwestern section of the County has been identified as an opportunity zone due to the census data where two or more adjacent blocks have more than 20% below the poverty level. This fact combined with other factors is expected to poise this section of the County for growth over the planning period as described in more detailed below.

Future Land Use Issues and Analysis

By analyzing the existing land uses, combined with growth pattern, infrastructure, planned infrastructure investments, and other issues that are or could affect growth, the future land uses can be speculated. This is a very important part of the planning process. Through this analysis the County can have a clearer picture of where growth can be expected and where infrastructure investments should take place.

On the other side of the development issue, through analyzing trends and issues of growth as well as future land use speculation the County can attempt to steer the type of growth that is desired and try to discourage the type of growth that is not desirable to the County.

One tool to steer land use is through regulations such as zoning. Zoning regulations were attempted in the late 1990's. Initially a simple land use control ordinance was presented based on the recommendations of a citizen advisory group. However this simple ordinance was redrafted into a much more detailed comprehensive ordinance which was thoroughly rejected by the public.

Hart County is the last Georgia County on the I-85 interstate from Atlanta that does not have zoning. As the Atlanta MSA influence has grown up the I-85 corridor the undesirable growth has been shifting further up the interstate through zoning. This has shifted further and further away from Atlanta and just recently Franklin County has instituted zoning.

The population in Hart County continues to reject zoning. In general the population of the County does not want the local government to tell them what they can do with their own land. However as the County gets more developed, the impact of what a neighbor does on his property is affecting what happens on that persons property. Therefore land use controls such as zoning are not expected to have an influence on growth over the planning period unless the current atmosphere towards land use controls changes over the planning period.

Another avenue for "controlling" growth is through infrastructure investments. Water service, road improvements, and more importantly sewer service can provide services for growth. In

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general the cost of raw land is low enough that wells and septic tanks on one acre or larger lots is not a limiting factor in residential development. The road network is also sufficient to accommodate increase residential development.

However more intensive residential development, commercial and in particular industrial development depends on infrastructure investments. The County is currently in a mode of promoting, rather than controlling, growth, especially for industrial activities.

Northwestern Hart County (Census Tract 9602)

This section of the County witnessed the largest percent population growth in the 1990 decade. This area is poised for continued rapid growth over the planning period especially in the northern section near the interstate. Due to the fact that all other Georgia Counties on I-85 north of Atlanta now have zoning, this area could be most negatively impacted from the lack of land use controls.

The interstate allows rapid access to the metro Atlanta area and metro areas in South Carolina. Land uses that are more tightly controlled in other counties may seek to locate in this section of the County due to the lack of land use controls combined with ease of access to the metro areas. This should be closely monitored over the planning period to address future threats.

Additionally the ease of access to the interstate will increase the demand for residential housing. As adjacent metropolitan areas in South Carolina and Georgia become more crowded and expensive for residential development, individuals may seek this section of the county as a lower cost, slower paced residential area. This may take place over the planning period but is not expected to have a large impact during this planning period.

The ease of interstate access combined with lower cost for land and low taxes has resulted in an increased interest in larger industrial and warehousing facilities to locate in this area. The new industrial park and recent investments in infrastructure will result in a change to the interstate area. Now that sewer and water are available to this area, the rural characteristic is expected to change as more commercial development takes place.

Sewer and water currently are available at the industrial park however more sewer expansion is expected outside the park especially fronting the State highways (77 & 59) and along Knox Bridge Crossing county road.

A 12 inch water line is now in place from the Gateway Industrial park south on State 77 to the City of Hartwell. This will also act as a catalyst for development along this corridor.

The Hart County Water and Sewer Utility Authority (HCWSUA) has a plan for a large water line on highway 51 from Hartwell to Bowersville. Installation of this line could also promote additional growth along the 51 corridor from Hartwell towards Bowersville.

An additional impact to this area is the State's plans to widen State 17. The widening of this highway to a 4-5 lane road will ease access to the interstate and result in increased growth to this area of Hart County.

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Northeastern Hart County (Census Tract 9601)

The northeast portion of the County saw the second largest percent population growth rate at 22% change in the 1990 decade. This area too has ease of interstate access in the Northern section of this tract.

The most significant impact to this area over the planning period is expected to be residential development. The area is too vast for significant investment in sewer and water infrastructure so the development of industrial uses is expected to be non-existent over the planning period.

There are plans for water investments in the southeastern sections of this tract but these multimillion dollar investments may take some time to implement. The highway 77 and highway 51 areas are expected to grow as more sewer and water capacity is extended in these areas especially near the intersection of these two state highways. The City of Hartwell has recently expanded sewer capacity on highway 51/77 and future extensions will occur over the planning period.

It is anticipated that as more residential development occurs in this tract the need for more commercial development will follow. Currently most of the commercial development is occurring in the 29 highway corridor (southeastern section of the County) near the City of Hartwell however the difficulty of ease of access to this area may result in more commercial development in the Northeastern section of the County. Currently to access the commercial areas from the north, northeast and west, requires travel through downtown Hartwell.

Another expected change to this section of the County is the lakefront development. Traditionally, there has been a one house/one lot type of residential development however the limited supply of lakefront land combined with the increased demand for such land is expected to create more intensive lake front development.

A few of the remaining larger tracts have been recently subdivided into larger subdivisions that include lakefront and interior lots. Some of the remaining large tracts that front the lake remain undeveloped. Some smaller tracts that contained a few acres, a house, and lake frontage have been subdivided into several tracts of lakefront property.

Another interesting recent trend is for more intensive lakefront development. As undeveloped lakefront property becomes rarer, developers are seeking alternatives that intensify land use. One recent proposal is to subdivide slightly more than 3 acres into 11 tracts of land with a community dock.

The limiting factor is water and sewer capacity. No public water or sewer is yet in the lake area. Most newer developments are utilizing non-lakefront land for potable water wells. The traditional development more recently has included 0.5 acre lots that have a remote well serving multiple lots and individual septic tanks.

However developers are looking at more intensive developments utilizing larger onsite sewer treatment facilities. The exception to this is the lake area near the City of Hartwell. One section

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of the lake off highway 51/77 North of Hartwell is in this tract. Recently a condominium type complex with lake frontage was constructed and connected to the City of Hartwell's sewer. This type of development will most likely take place on other tracts of land near this site. In addition, intensively lakefront development on vacant land on 29 near the commercial corridor is expected to take place with connections to city sewer.

Other developments that will likely take place more intensely will include lakefront development with interior lots that have "lake access". These interior lots will have lake access through common area and community docks increasing the value and desirability of the interior lots.

During the planning period this section of the county should see continued residential growth both on the lake and off lake. There may be commercial growth on the highway 77 section of this area but there is no evidence of increased commercial growth at this point. There will be more intensive lakefront development other than the traditional one house per acre or half acre and may include group type housing.

In general, the lakefront land area residents desire more land use controls in contrast to the non-lake residents who want no land use controls. An expected challenge over this planning period will be to overcome that difference in the desire for land use controls. If a lake front character area could be established with distinct land use controls then this area could potentially establish the land use controls they desire while not negatively impacting the non-lake character areas.

Without land use controls residential growth in this area is expected to continue to put pressure on the agricultural land uses especially poultry farming. As residential areas become more densely located they will seek to control agricultural uses especially uses that create odors. Land use controls that protect residential properties would also protect those agricultural uses as allowable land uses. Additionally, uncontrolled growth is expected over the planning period including more intensive lake front development.

Southeastern Hart County (CensusTracts 9604 & 9605).

The southeastern portion of the county has seen the slowest population growth rates at about 11% over the 1990s decade. Other than commercial development on the 29 corridor southeast of Hartwell, growth is expected to be primarily residential over the planning period.

Industrial growth in this area of the County is not expected to increase due to the lack of interest on the part of the current City of Hartwell for expanding industrial development. The older industrial sites will hopefully be redeveloped into new uses. Without sewer capacity and an atmosphere of promoting industrial growth from the City of Hartwell, this area will be limited in industrial growth over the planning period. This may change over the planning period if the City has an interest in promoting industrial growth.

The Savannah river area is currently remote and has limited development however the recent selling of large tracts of land may result in more residential development in this area.

Overall the growth of this area is expected to be slow over the planning period and minimal impacts are expected.

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Southwestern Hart County (Census Tract 9603).

The southwestern portion saw the third highest population growth change in the 1990 decade with 17% change. This section of the county is expected to be impacted by growth over the planning period from the Athens area MSA.

The Athens MSA is impacting Madison County now with the current impacts on residential development about 10 minutes from Hart County. Over the planning period this impact is expected to be felt in Hart County. The expected impact is in the residential sector although commercial development may follow the residential development. Commercial development may take place over the planning period depending on the how fast the residential growth occurs.

An additional impact is expected in the industrial sector. This impact will be limited by sewer and water infrastructure however as described in the economic development section of this plan, there is a great potential for industrial growth. Currently the County is working with the City of Royston to put plans in place for expanding water service into Hart County through the HCWSUA.

However, the City of Royston is limited in sewer capacity. If the City of Royston was to plan any sewer capacity upgrades then there may exist the potential for a partnership with Royston for providing sewer capacity to Hart County in this section of the County near Royston. This could provide for expanded industrial growth.

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ANALYSIS OF AREAS REQUIRING SPECIAL ATTENTION

This section provides a brief assessment of select issues and concerns around the county based on geographical reference. This will help each jurisdiction recognize those specific locations in need of special attention through physical investment or change of policy. A map is included to help reference each area.

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

- The most notable area of concern is around Lake Hartwell, which is a significant cultural amenity and attracting a great deal of interest as a destination for new development. This is especially true for the area near the City of Hartwell for proximity to shops and other amenities. There is a water supply intake located off the lake to the north of the City of Hartwell, which would be the area most susceptible to pollution concerns from development. The entirety of the lake should be monitored for development pressures, however, to mitigate any imbalance between demands and abilities for public services, as well as maintaining the general integrity of the lake environment. *(Map reference – Rapid Development)*

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

- Lake Hartwell will continue to see pressure as a destination for residential and seasonal development. It is anticipated the extent and pace of development in this area will be dictated by the level of public utilities available. *(Map reference – Rapid Development)*
- The Interstate 85 corridor is receiving attention from all forms of development, particularly from commercial and industrial interests. This area is expected to grow rapidly considering the improvements being made to Ga. Highway 17 and the interchange with I-85. This area is capable of serving as, and is being targeted as, a significant spot for economic development. To the extent possible Hart County is working with Franklin and Stephens County to improve the area and attract employment centers to this corridor. *(Map reference – Rapid Development)*
- The area outside the City of Hartwell is also expected to grow more rapidly than other portions of the County. The availability of public utilities and services, combined with the accessibility of commercial and employment centers, attracts development to and around Hartwell. Particularly along the arterials feeding into the city. *(Map reference – Rapid Development)*

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

- Not applicable in Hart County.

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

- Not applicable in Hart County.

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

- There are some structures near and in the Hart County Industrial Park that are currently vacant and most likely in need of renovation. One of these buildings is suspected of contamination concerns from chemical used on site in previous operations, but it is not known for sure about the possibility of similar conditions with any other properties. *(Map reference – Abandoned sites)*

Areas with significant infill development opportunities (scattered vacant sites)

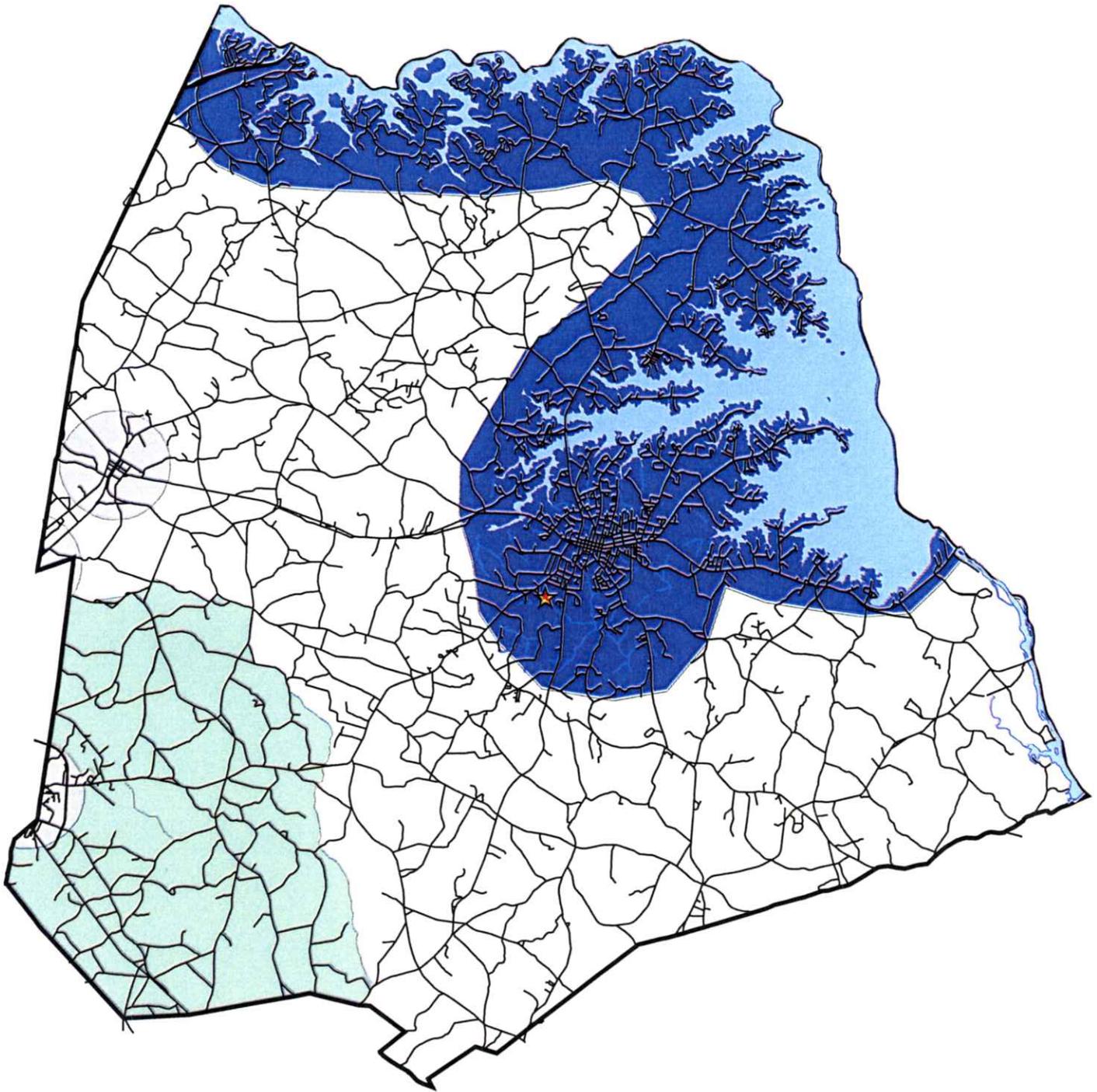
- Not applicable in Hart County

Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the community as a whole.

- There is a portion of southwestern Hart County adjacent to Franklin County and the City of Royston that does exhibit higher percentages of impoverished households and unemployment. Unemployment in Hart County as a whole is currently at a higher than state average level, but these areas have been the hardest hit from recent job losses in and around Hart County, and their distance from the lake has left them removed from new development and property reinvestment. As a result of these trends several Census tracts within this area have been targeted as Empowerment/ Opportunity Zones in an effort to spur new business growth. *(Map reference – Unemployment)*

Hart County

Areas Requiring Special Attention



0 0.375 0.75 1.5 2.25 3 Miles

Legend

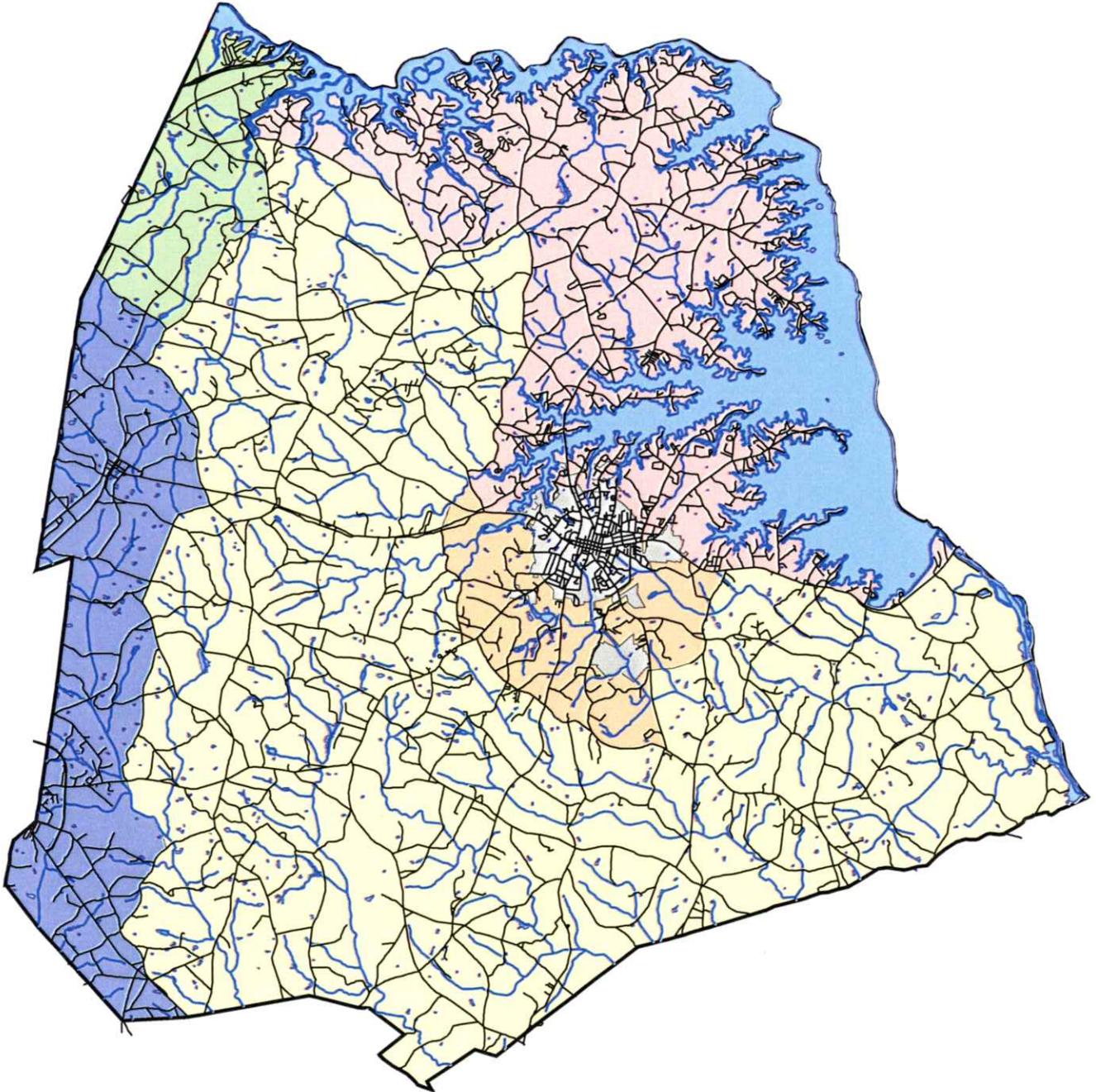
	GDOT 2005 Roads		County Boundary
	Railroad	Areas Requiring Special Attention	
	Hart County Industrial Park		Rapid Development
	Rivers & Streams		Unemployment
	Lakes & Ponds		

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RECOMMENDED CHARACTER AREAS

Character Area - Location	Description
<p>Ga. 17 Corridor – Eastern edge of Hart County and the areas surrounding the cities of Bowersville, Canon and Royston.</p>	<p>Currently a mix of small towns, rural residential and agricultural development, this corridor will be the focus of several improvement efforts in the near future including changes to Ga. 17 and modest utility improvements. The concentration of commercial and civic activity centers will serve as one attraction for new residential development, with each general city area expected to grow outward during the planning period, even if only slightly. The corridor should cater to this trend and foster comparable, small-town development types and keeping the village scale.</p>
<p>Lavonia/ I-85 Area – The northwest portion of the county that includes portions of the City of Lavonia and I-85, bordered to the south and east by Pooles Creek.</p>	<p>Comparable to the Ga. 17 Corridor as an attraction for development, but geared for industrial and heavier commercial growth. Scope will be dictated by available utility capacity, but County should continue to utilize the Interstate as an employment and economic activity center.</p>
<p>Greater Hartwell – The area immediately surrounding Hartwell and reaching south and west in accordance with utility service areas.</p>	<p>Recognized as the civic and commercial center for most of Hart County and the seasonal visitors to Lake Hartwell. The area is shaped by the small-town scale residential uses and mix of local and regional commercial uses. Extent of this area will be largely shaped by extent of water and sewer service, with much of this land considered potential annexation into the City of Hartwell. Development should be fostered that maintains the more suburban, town scale and design, complimenting what exists in Hartwell.</p>
<p>Lake Hartwell Corridor – The area immediately adjacent to the lake and coming inland to the nearest major intersections, including most of the peninsula north of Hartwell.</p>	<p>A mix of seasonal and year-round residential, with some lake-related commercial, conservation and recreation use. This should be maintained in accordance with management plans for the resource and of such scale that permanent structures do not potentially lead to overcrowding the Lake.</p>
<p>Rural Hart County – All the land between the other character areas.</p>	<p>The remaining land remains largely rural, with a mix of agricultural activity, large lot residential, conservation lands, churches and some shops. Lots of landscape in natural settings or cultivated for agricultural uses. Development should be concentrated within the other character areas and this one left as rural as possible in scale and design.</p>

Hart County Character Areas



0 0.375 0.75 1.5 2.25 3 Miles

Legend

	GDOT 2005 Roads		County Boundary
	Railroad		Municipalities
	Rivers & Streams	Character Areas	
	Lakes & Ponds		Georgia 17 Corridor
			Greater Hartwell
			Lake Hartwell Corridor
			Lavonia / I-85 Area
			Rural Hart County