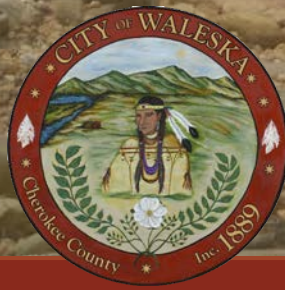




OUR CHEROKEE

Planning the Future Together
The City of Waleska Comprehensive Plan



Acknowledgements

THANK YOU...

City of Waleska City Council

Vickie Boswell
Lee Lamb
Kristi Bosch
Dennis Cochran
Jon Costales

City Staff

Mary Helen Lamb, City Mayor
Robyn Smith, City Clerk/Manager

Cherokee County Planning and Zoning Staff

Margaret Stallings, Director of Planning and Zoning
Kevin Turner, Deputy Director
David Greenberg, Senior Planner
Jillian Willis, Planner

Consultant Team - Pond

Jonathan Corona, Project Manager

And the biggest thank you to the many residents and business owners who generously gave their time to be engaged in the development of this plan!

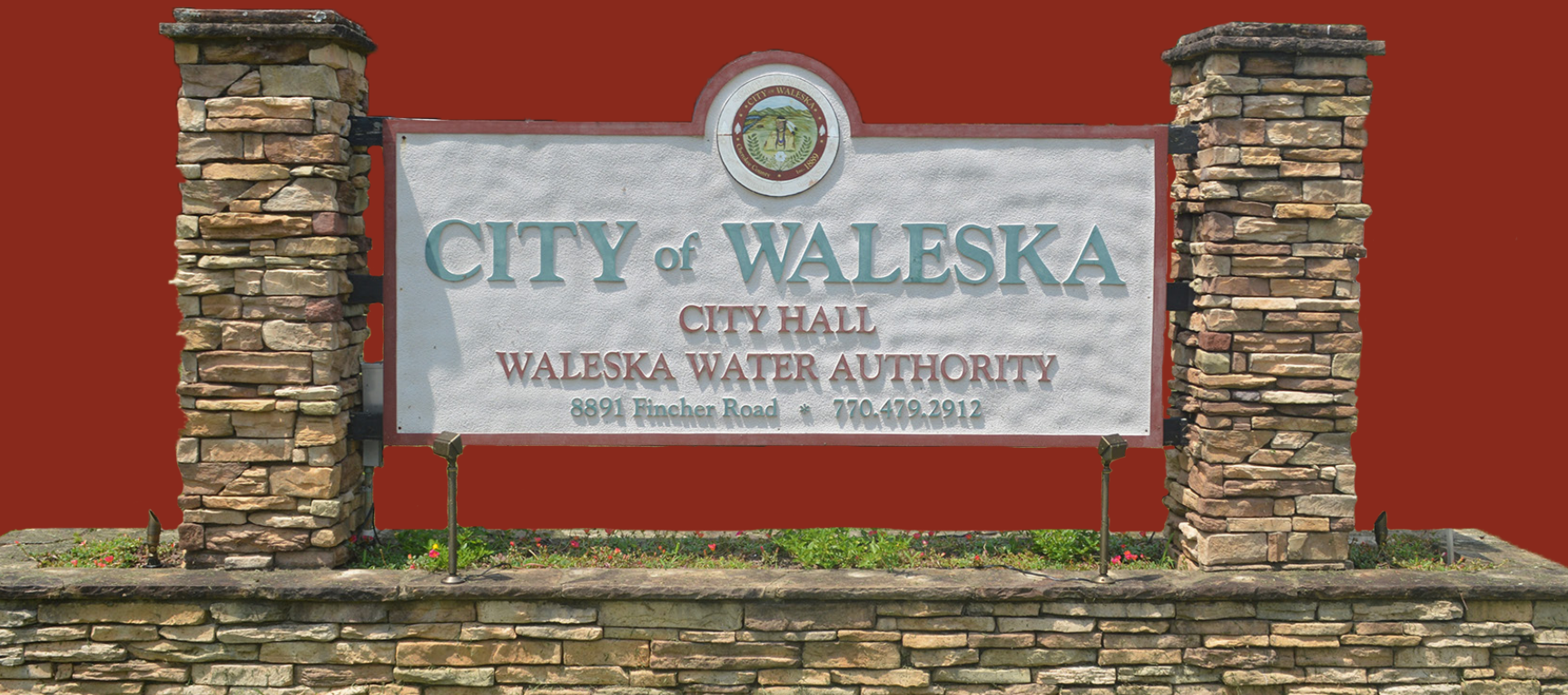


Table of Contents



1: Cherokee and Waleska In The Present

1.....Introduction
2.....Cherokee and Waleska Across The Years
5.....Demographic Profile
7.....Economic Profile
9.....Housing Profile
11.....Transportation Profile
13.....Quality of Life Profile



2: Community's Vision for Waleska

16.....Comprehensive 4 Step Planning Process
17.....Community Engagement
23.....Vision & Guiding Principles
25.....Core Values



3: Future Development

31.....What are Character Areas?
33.....Zoning Decision Process with Character Areas
35.....Future Development Map
37.....Character Area Descriptions
47.....Character Area Summary Table
48.....Zoning Connections Matrix



4: Implementing Our Vision

49.....Implementation Process
50.....Plan Review and Update
51.....Recent Accomplishments
.....Community Work Plan

Appendices

Figures and Tables

Figures

1	Regional Context
3	Cherokee and Waleska Across the Years Timeline
5	Population Per Decade
5	Age Distribution
5	Educational Attainment
6	Race and Ethnicity Density
6	Median Age
6	Native and Foreign-Born Population
7	Live and Work in Cherokee
7	Waleska Industry by Occupation
7	Cherokee Employment and Workforce
8	Where Cherokee County Workers Live
8	Where Cherokee County Residents Work
8	Employment Density
9	Age of Housing Units by Timeframe
9	Housing Occupancy
9	Housing Units by Building Type
9	Occupied Housing Units by Ownership
9	Annual Household Income
10	Median Household Income
10	% of Housing Cost-Burdened Households
10	Home Values for Owner-Occupied Units
10	Gross Rent for Renter-Occupied Units
11	Functional Class
11	Regional Transportation
12	Average Daily Traffic Counts
12	Planned Transportation Projects
12	Planned Bike/Ped Projects
13	Community Facilities
13	Parks and Historic Resources
13	Broadband Availability
21	Survey Significant Takeaways
40	Character Areas/Future Development Map/Zoning Decision
42	Zoning Decision Process with Character Areas
43	Future Development Map
81	Implementation Process
82	Annual Plan Review Timeline

Tables

77	Character Area Summary Table
79	Zoning Connections Matrix
	Recent Accomplishments Chart
	Community Work Program



The Our Cherokee Comprehensive Plan is the City’s guide to enhancing and sustaining Waleska residents’ quality of life and happiness by establishing a unified action plan for sustainable growth, housing inclusiveness, economic welfare, land use, and placemaking. This document covers the County’s and City’s current social, economic, housing, and transportation profiles while utilizing the data to develop projections for the future of Cherokee and Waleska’s land use, development patterns, and growth. However, it is significant to understand that these are not ideas formulated solely by County/City employees, but a plan that is developed by residents themselves. The Planning Team began the comprehensive planning process in 2022, holding multiple community meetings across the year-long planning timeline and launching a County-wide survey. Residents were able to voice their opinions and dictate an overall vision with guiding principles and core values that directly influence future growth and development in the County and City.

With four major components, this document provides a summary of the planning process and houses the land use policies that regulate development. First, the document highlights the past, present, and potential future of the City with existing conditions and statistics. The City is always evolving and understanding this change is significant to formulating efficient policies. Second, there is a brief overview of the community engagement process that touches on community desires and needs. The third component is a compilation of the updated Character Areas that cover future development on County and City land. Lastly, the final component of this document highlights the comprehensive annual review process, recent accomplishments, and the Community Work Plan that highlights future projects and tasks. Therefore, this document is the tool that dictates how we perceive the City. It is an agreement of our shared responsibility to implement codes, policies, and regulations that directly coincide with the vision and core values established by County and City residents, business owners, property owners, and other stakeholders.

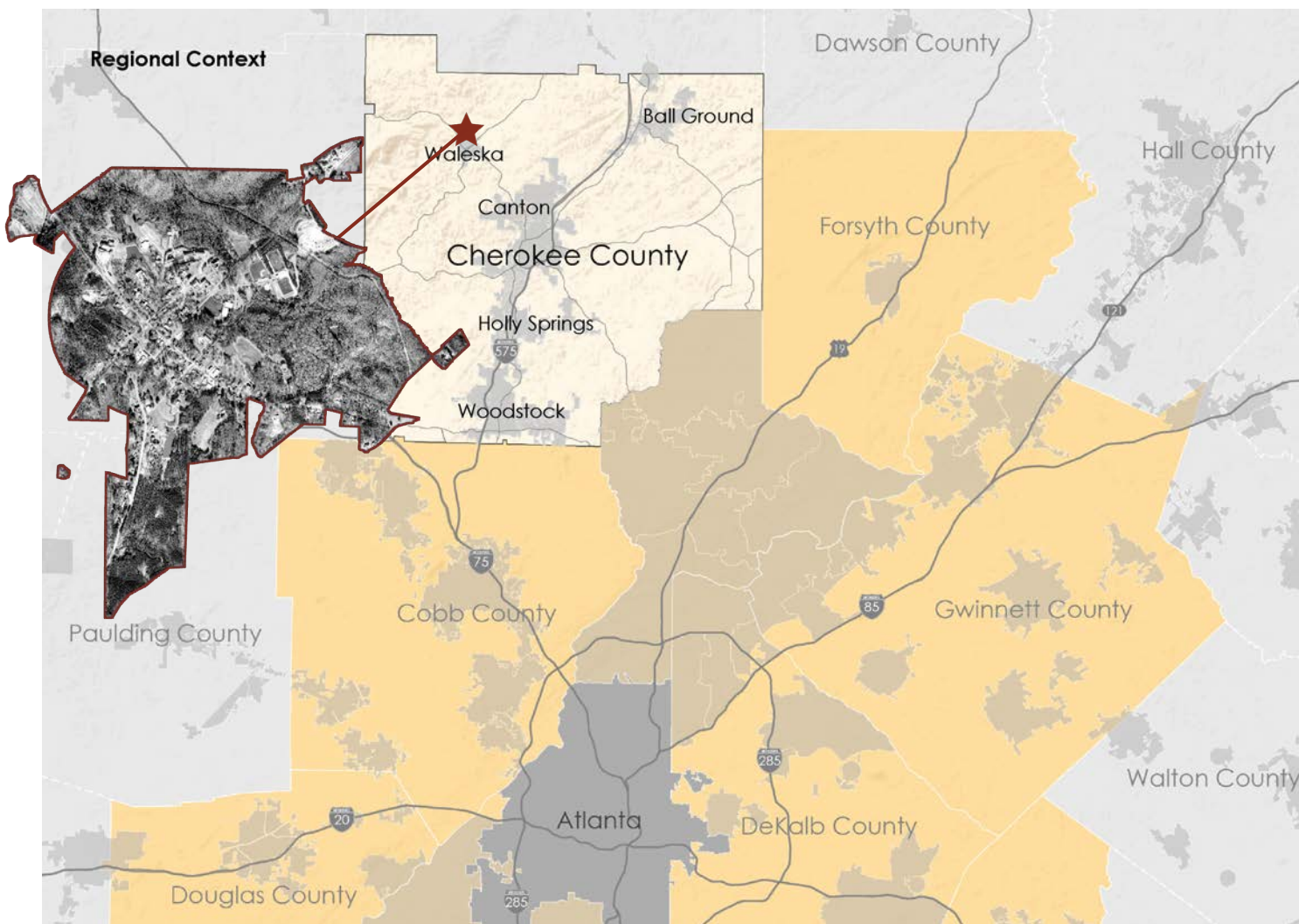
“Together, we believe that Waleska is and will continue to be *one of the best kept secrets in Cherokee County.*”



1 Cherokee and Waleska In The Present

Introduction

This part of the 2023 Waleska Comprehensive Plan will cover the past and present of the County and City. It will highlight significant events and milestones across the development of the City and Cherokee County. Then it will touch on major trends in the different profiles. For instance, how the demographics of the City/County has changed across time, how the economy has evolved, changes in housing type, impacts to our transportation infrastructure, and the quantity and quality of basic services and community facilities.



Cherokee and Waleska Across the Years

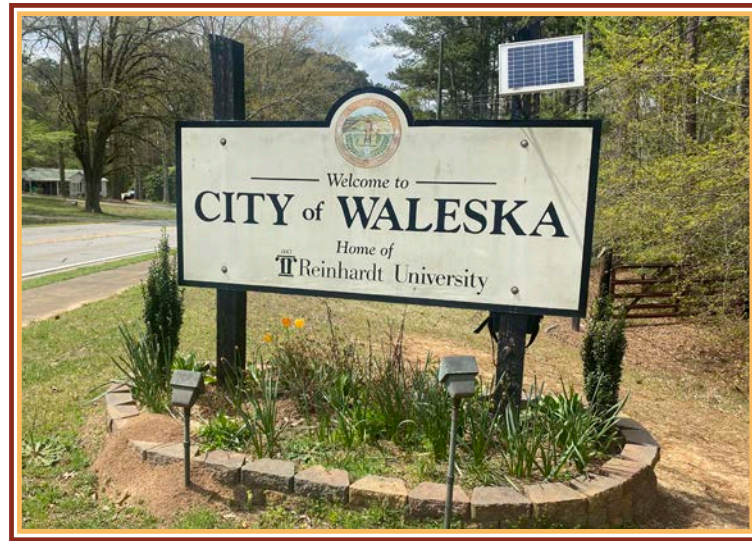


Incorporated in 1889, Waleska is named after Warluskee, the daughter of a Native American chief who lived in the area. Historically, the town was home to diverse industries, including grist mills, timber businesses, tobacco manufacturing, and mineral development. In addition, Waleska was always a college town with the founding of Reinhardt University in 1882.

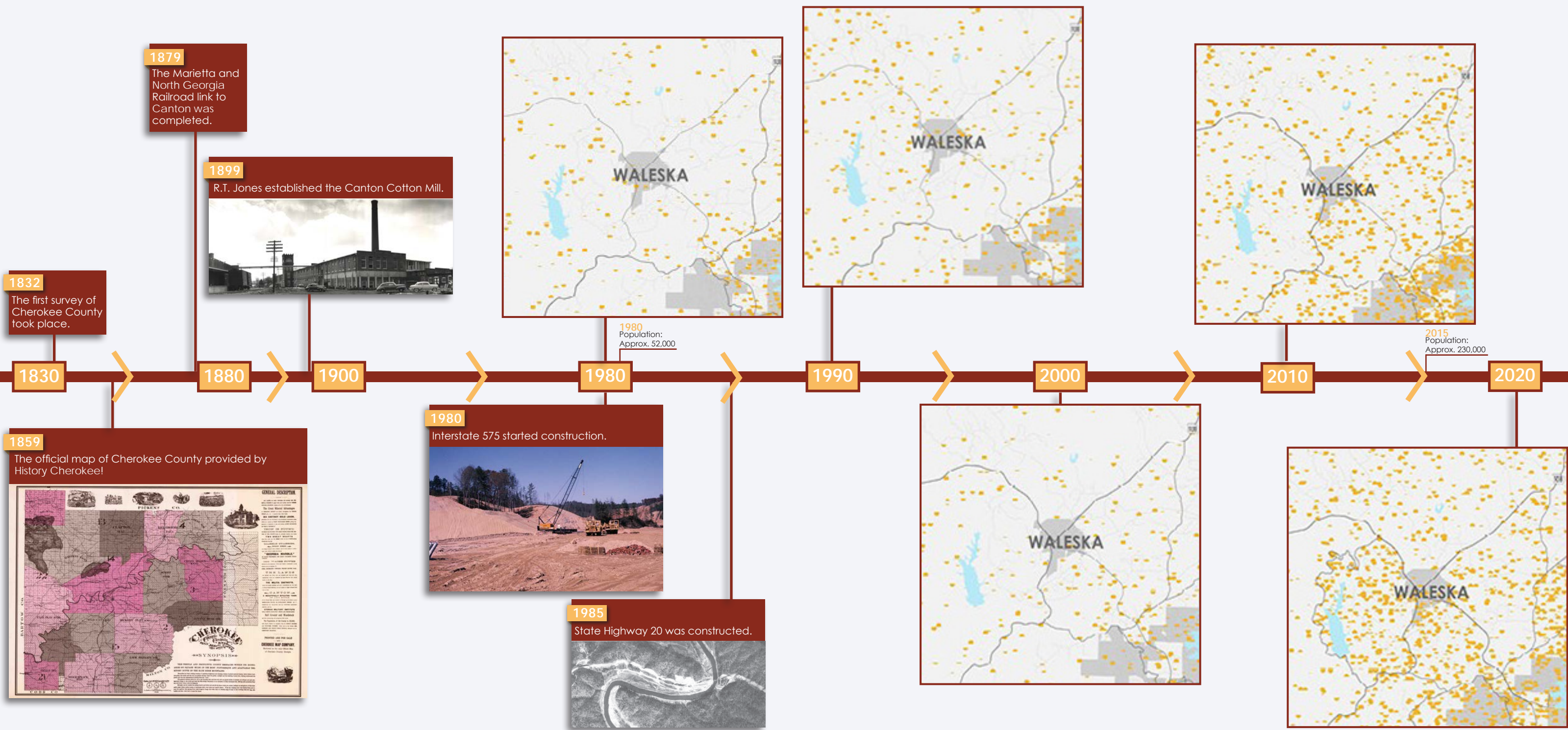
In the early 1900s, Waleska grew slowly but steadily with the expansions of the university and growth at nearby manufacturing businesses. In the 1950s and 1960s, poultry raising and processing became a major industry in Cherokee County. The rise of the poultry industry created much-needed job opportunities for residents in related businesses such as hatcheries, feed stores, rendering plants, processing plants, and equipment manufacturers. Some of these businesses were nearby in Canton.



Beginning in the 1970s, the nearby Lake Arrowhead development has had an impact on the City. These Waleska neighbors have access to all of the cultural opportunities at the University, especially the programs at the Falany Performing Arts Center. In the last 20 years, Reinhardt College has grown into a university with a diverse range of degree programs, sports teams, and on-campus housing options. Today, Waleska is growing with the University while retaining the small-town charm that has earned it the reputation of being one of the “best-kept secrets” in Cherokee County.

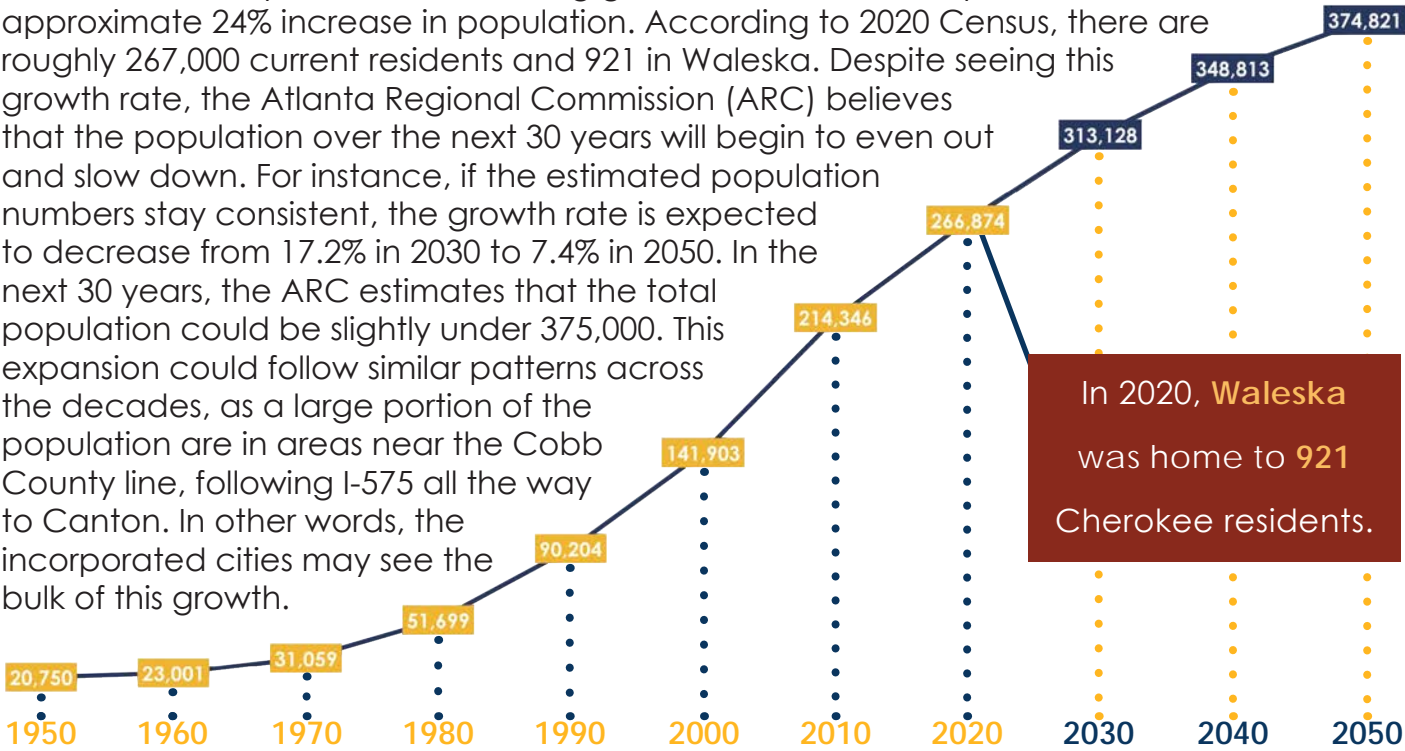


Cherokee and Waleska Across the Years Timeline

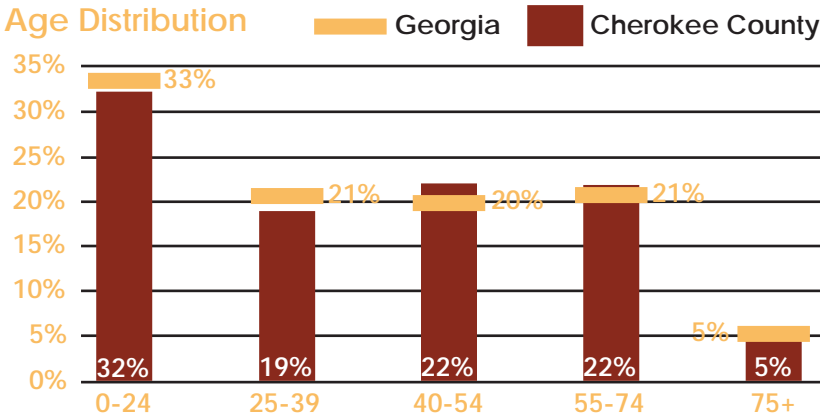


Demographic Profile

Cherokee County has seen increasing growth over the last 10 years with an approximate 24% increase in population. According to 2020 Census, there are roughly 267,000 current residents and 921 in Waleska. Despite seeing this growth rate, the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) believes that the population over the next 30 years will begin to even out and slow down. For instance, if the estimated population numbers stay consistent, the growth rate is expected to decrease from 17.2% in 2030 to 7.4% in 2050. In the next 30 years, the ARC estimates that the total population could be slightly under 375,000. This expansion could follow similar patterns across the decades, as a large portion of the population are in areas near the Cobb County line, following I-575 all the way to Canton. In other words, the incorporated cities may see the bulk of this growth.



The age of our residents tends to follow the age distribution found in the State of Georgia. The main differences are that Cherokee County has a slightly lower population of people in their 20s and 30s and a slightly higher population of people in their 40s and mid-50s. Cherokee County could see changes in its age distribution as families move and grow their households in the County. But many residents are long-term, generational natives of the County and will continue to age in place.



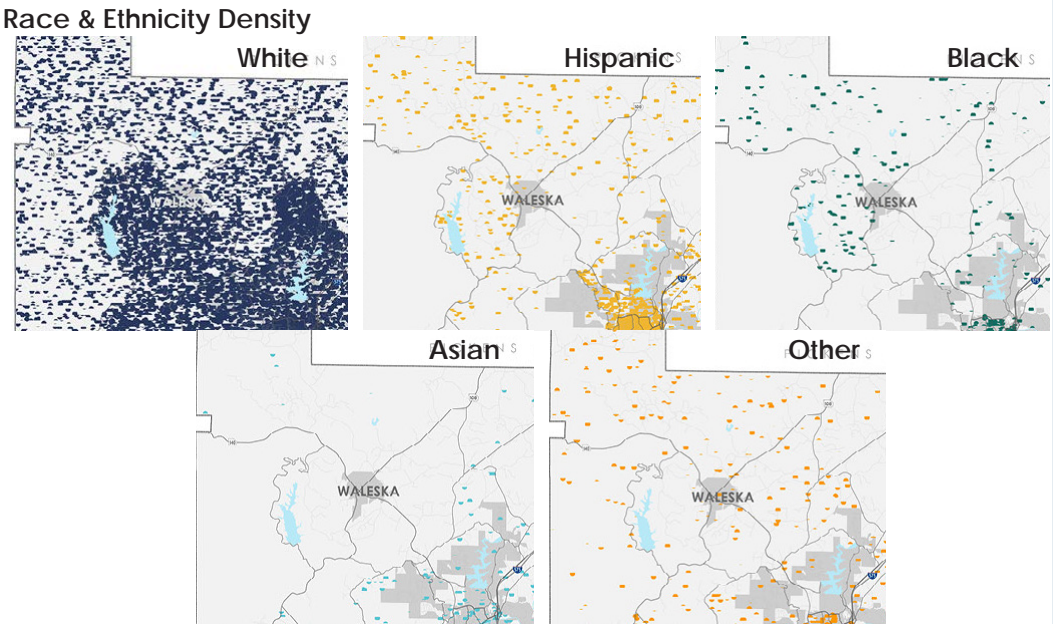
Along with the growth the County has seen, there have been slight increases in diversity. Despite being predominately white, there have been increases in residents who do not identify as non-Hispanic white. The majority of this population seems to reside in incorporated cities along I-575 and near the Cobb County line. Lastly, the County has a high level of educational attainment, with 45% of the population having an Associate's Degree or higher. As for Waleska, a majority of the population has some form of schooling.

Educational Attainment (18 to 24 years old)

No High School Diploma	0.2%
High School Diploma or Equivalent	7.9%
Some College or Associates Degree	84.3%
Bachelors Degree	7.6%

Educational Attainment (25+ years old)

No High School Diploma	7.8%
High School Diploma or Equivalent	18.1%
Some College, No Degree	27.7%
Associates Degree	22.9%
Bachelors Degree	11.4%
Graduate or Professional Degree	12%



In terms of diversity, Cherokee County sees the most of it in incorporated areas and along the Cobb County line.



Across Cherokee, the median age tends to be below the age of 45.

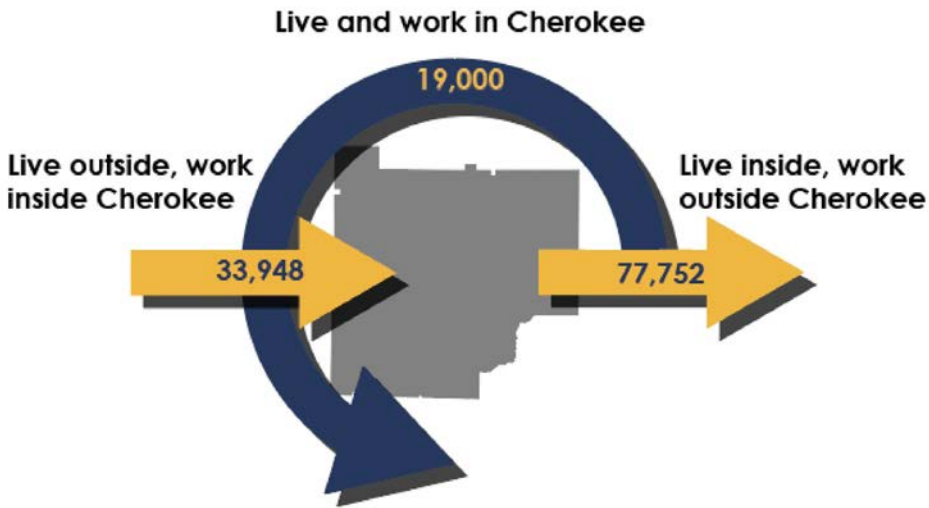


Nearly 90% of Cherokee County's population was born in the US with 46.6% being born right here in Georgia!



Economic Profile

Cherokee County continues to resemble characteristics of a bedroom community as around 78,000 residents live inside the County, but travel outside for work. There are only an estimated 19,000 residents who live and work in Cherokee County. These numbers do seem low as Cherokee’s employment by industry carries multiple similarities to Cherokee’s workforce. For instance, manufacturing is a large industry in both categories. However, some of the significant differences are in the professional, scientific, and technical services and other services not specifically mentioned.



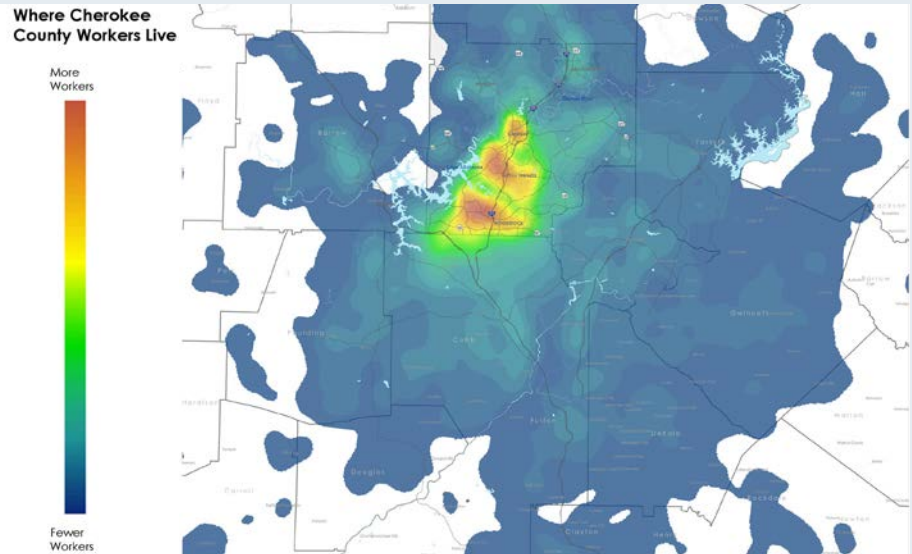
Most of Cherokee County’s workforce can be seen in other job centers like Kennesaw, Alpharetta, Buckhead, Midtown, and Downtown Atlanta. But in some of these places and other parts of the metro-Atlanta area, there are non-residents who commute to Cherokee County for work. This number is minuscule compared to others as only 34,000 live outside and commute to Cherokee. In terms of the internal employment density, there are larger hotspots in the incorporated areas, down I-575 near the airport, and along other major roadways.

Waleska Industry By Occupation

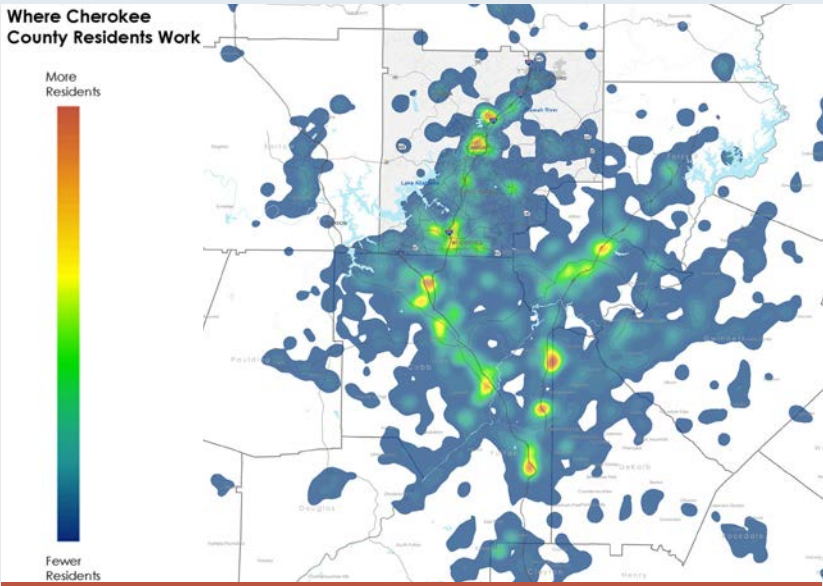
Construction	2%
Manufacturing	2%
Retail Trade	13.4%
Transportation, Warehousing, and Utilities	2.8%
Information	0.4%
Finance, insurance, Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	2%
Professional, Scientific, and Waste Management	19.5%
Educational Services, Health Care, and Social Assistance	44.3%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, and Food Services	6.9%
Public Administration	3.7%
Other Services	2.8%

Cherokee Employment and Workforce

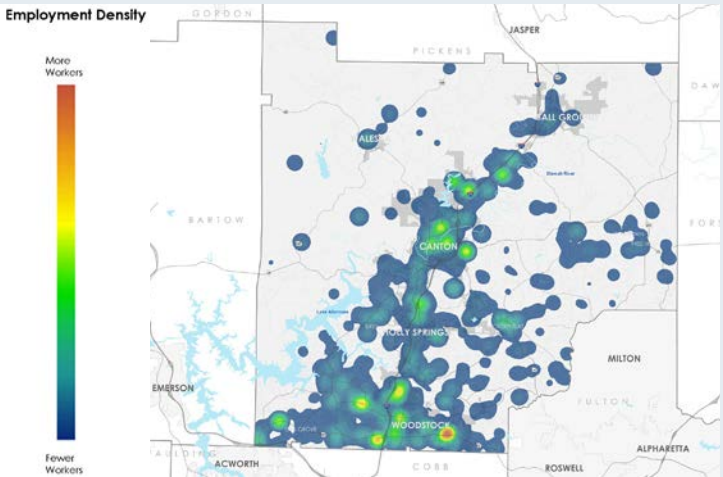
	Employment By Industry	Workforce By Industry
Agriculture, Mining, & Construction	9.8%	8.0%
Health Care & Social Assistance	9.1%	9.7%
Professional, Scientific, & Technical Services	5.6%	10.4%
Accommodation & Food Services	13.3%	9.7%
Administration & Support, Waste Management & Remediation	9.1%	8.0%
Retail	18.9%	13.4%
Other Services	14.3%	21.6%
Manufacturing & TCUW	19.9%	19.2%



The majority of Cherokee County workers live within the County, but some do travel from all over the metro area.



Cherokee residents work all over the metro area with major cities being hotspots.



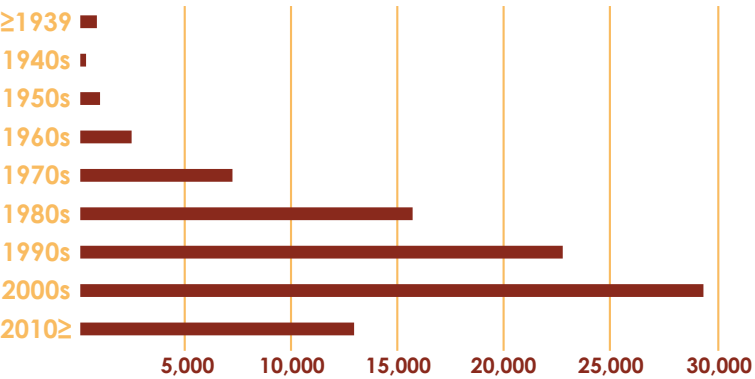
In Cherokee, most jobs can be found in the cities and along major roadways.



Housing Profile

Cherokee County has consistently seen growth in its housing market with the majority of the stock being built after 1980. From 2000 to 2009, the County saw an increase of roughly 30,000 units. From 2010 to now, there has been a noticeable lull in homes built. The number is less than half the growth seen in previous years. In the last four years, approximately 6,800 residential permits were issued in Cherokee County. Amongst these

Age of Housing Units by Timeframe



Housing Occupancy



Housing Units by Building Type



Occupied Housing Units by Ownership

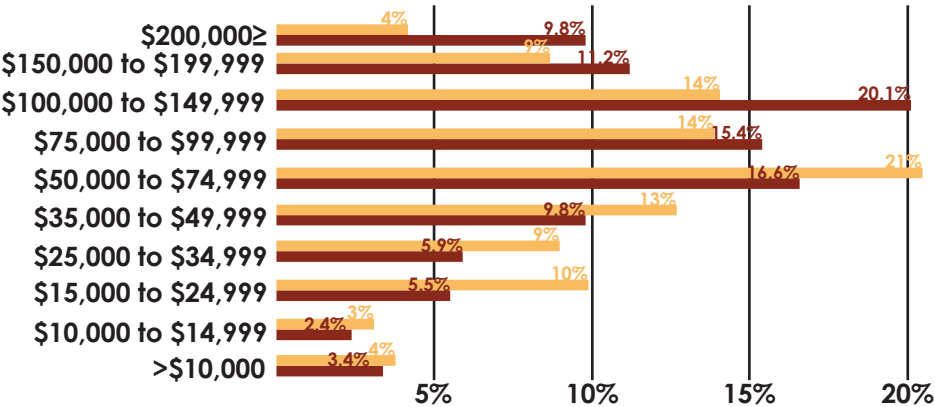


Along with an increase in housing stock, there has been an increase in wealth. Since 2010, the number of households making \$75,000 or more has increased. Likewise, the number of households making \$74,999 or below has decreased.

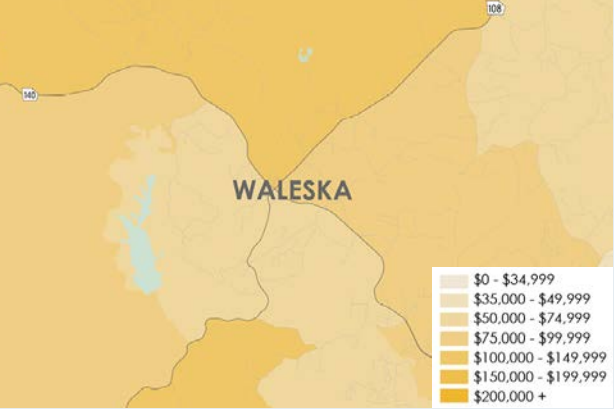
This change can increase the demand for services and higher-cost housing, but can also be detrimental to those in the lower brackets who may be more housing cost burdened and have limited access to services. According to the data for housing cost-burdened households, the more cost-burdened areas are in the approximate locations where the median household income is the lowest. However, in terms of percent of impoverished households, the highest percentage can be found in Canton, below Waleska, west of Woodstock near Bells Ferry, and below Lathemtown and Free Home.

Annual Household Income

2010 Percent
2020 Percent



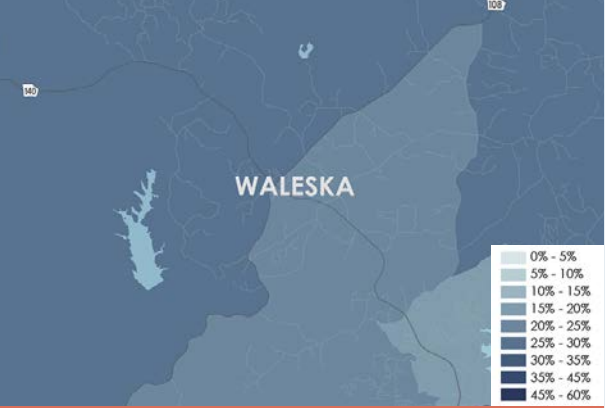
Median Household Income



The lower median income is the most present in incorporated areas.

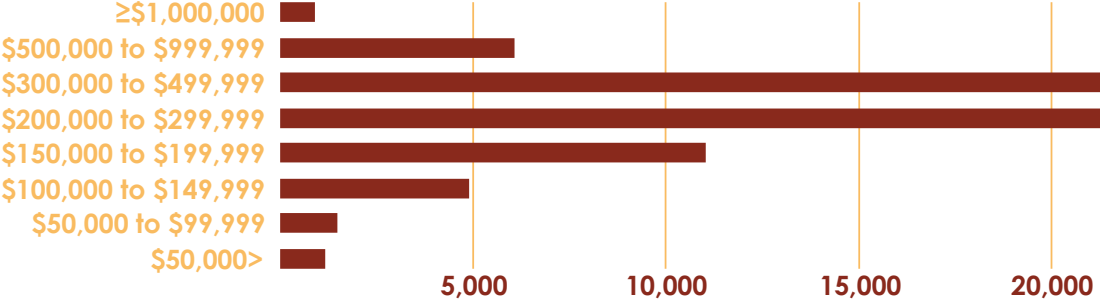


% of Housing Cost Burdened Households



The most cost-burdened residents live within incorporated areas.

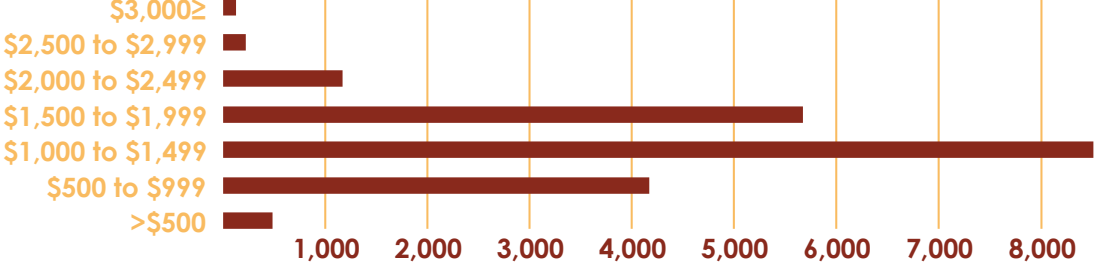
Home Values for Owner-Occupied Units



In Cherokee, the home value is mostly in between \$200K and \$499K.



Gross Rent for Renter-Occupied Units

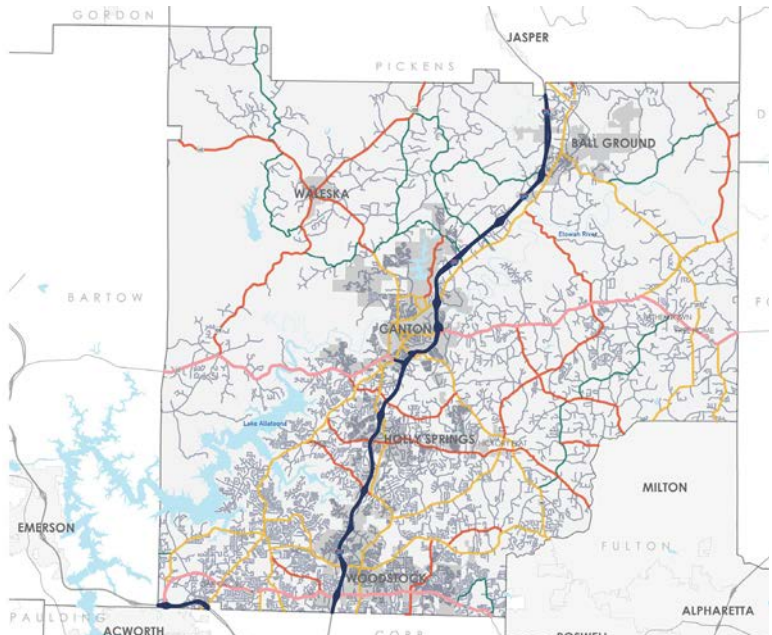


In Cherokee, the gross rent is mostly in between \$1,000 and \$1,999.



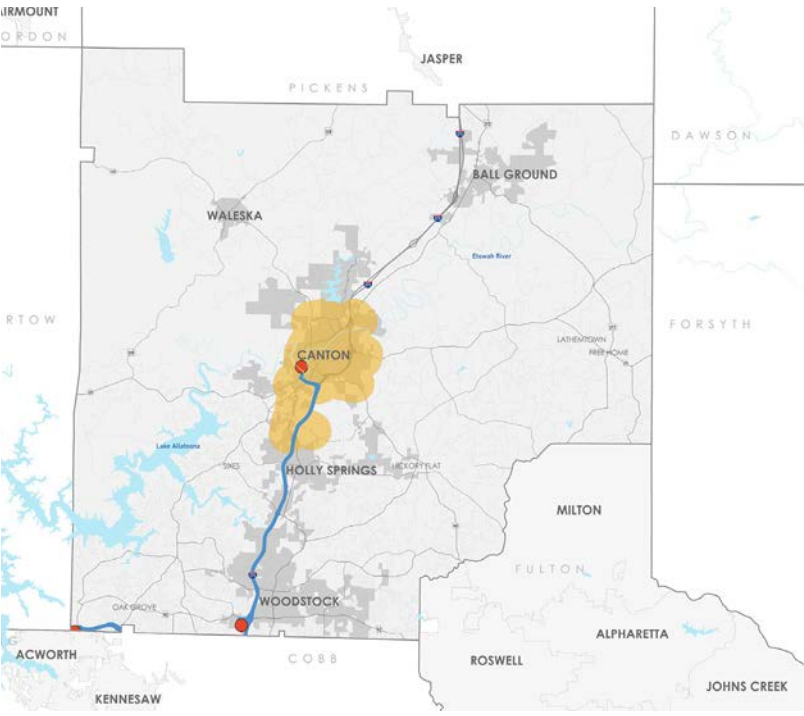
Transportation Profile

Cherokee County residents predominately travel by personal vehicle with the County's expansive local and major routes and connections. From north to south, I-575 connects the County and cities to Kennesaw, Marietta, Atlanta, and other major employment centers. As for the east-to-west connections, State Route 20 and State Route 92 provide passage to Bartow and Forsyth County. Therefore, residents have swift access to outside services, entertainment, and jobs. In terms of alternative transit opportunities, the County is limited. There are currently options like the Xpress Service offered by the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority and the paratransit service in the Canton area. The Xpress Service connects the County to the metro-Atlanta area, whereas the Canton paratransit only operates within a ¾-mile radius. It is primarily of service to those who cannot travel without assistance to access services and grocery stores.

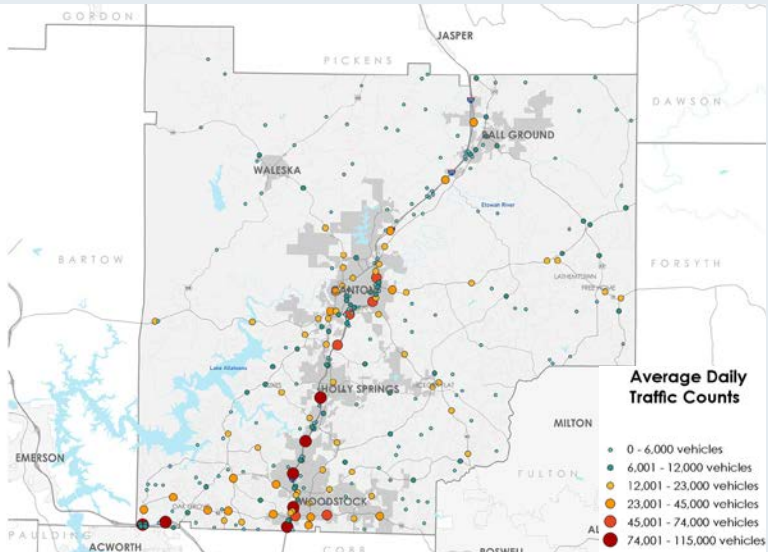


Functional Class
1 3 4 5 6 7

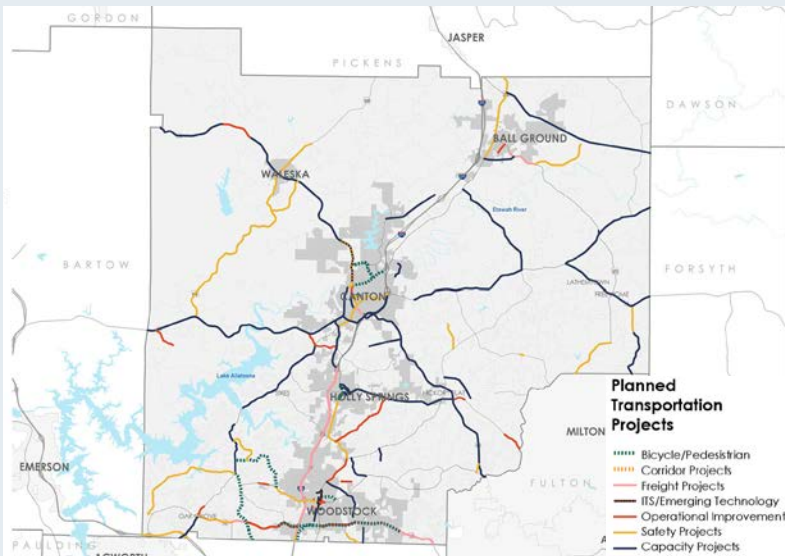
As the County continues to grow, it puts a greater demand on the roadways. On major roads, like I-575, State Route 20, and State Route 92, there are average daily traffic counts between 23,000 to 115,000. Some of the more local roads, like Bells Ferry and Hickory Flat Highway, have an average of between 12,000 to 45,000. It is estimated that these numbers could continue to grow, which is why the County has an abundance of planned transportation projects. Two projects currently happening or planned to happen in the is the widening of State Route 20 between Canton and Forsyth County. Outside of transportation projects, there are also planned bike and pedestrian projects, like the expansion of the trail system in Woodstock and Southwest Cherokee. These will provide much-needed recreational activities and the ability to travel by bike or foot.



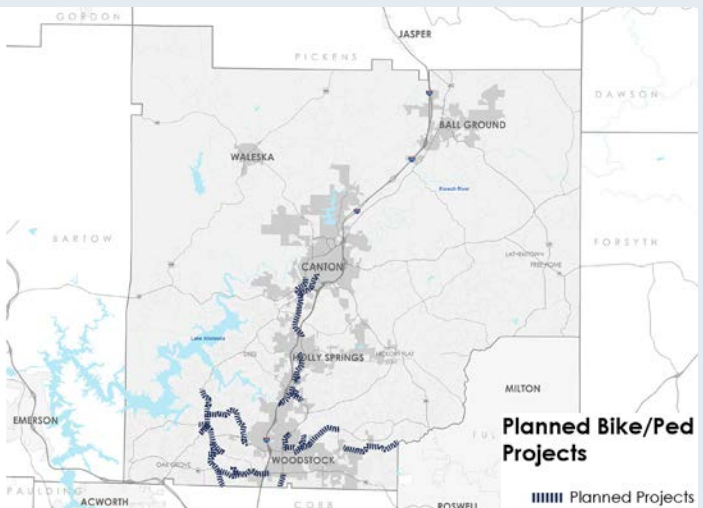
Regional Transportation
● Park & Ride Location — State Road & Tollway Authority Route ■ Paratransit Coverage



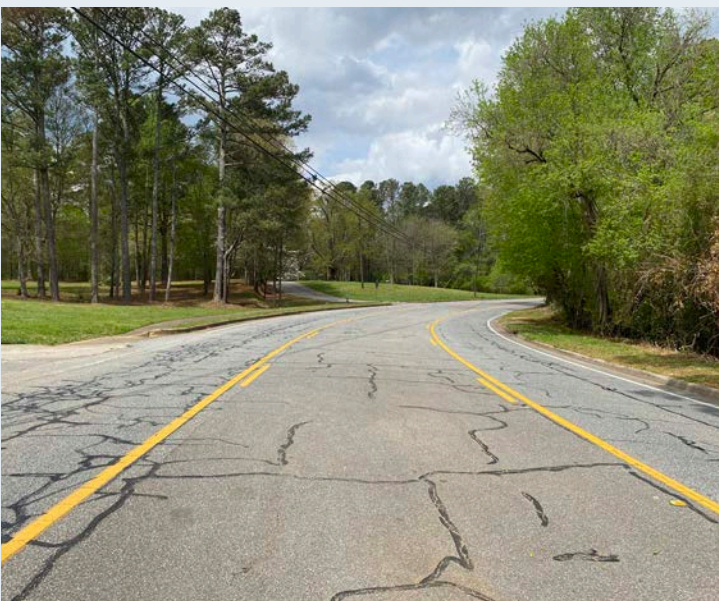
Average Daily Traffic Counts
Cherokee has higher daily traffic counts along the Cobb County line and along I-575.



Planned Transportation Projects
The County has an abundance of planned projects, including multiple capacity ones.

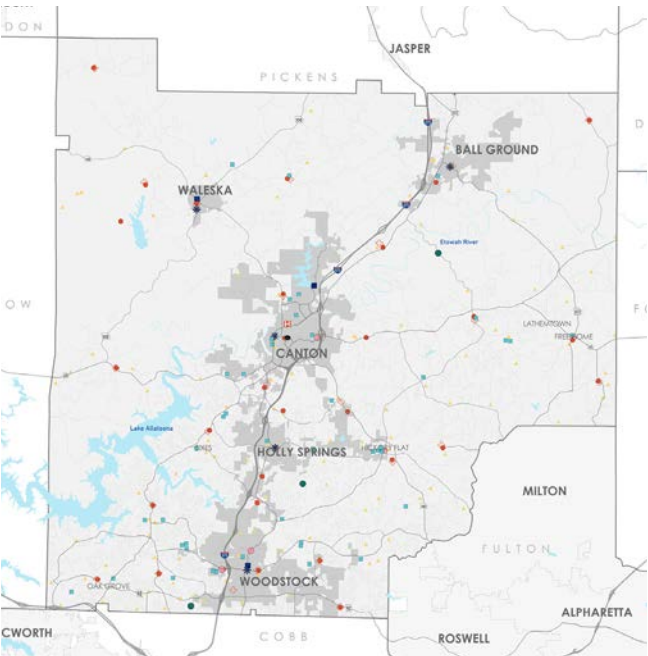


Planned Bike/Ped Projects
Cherokee plans on expanding the established trail system in multiple areas.

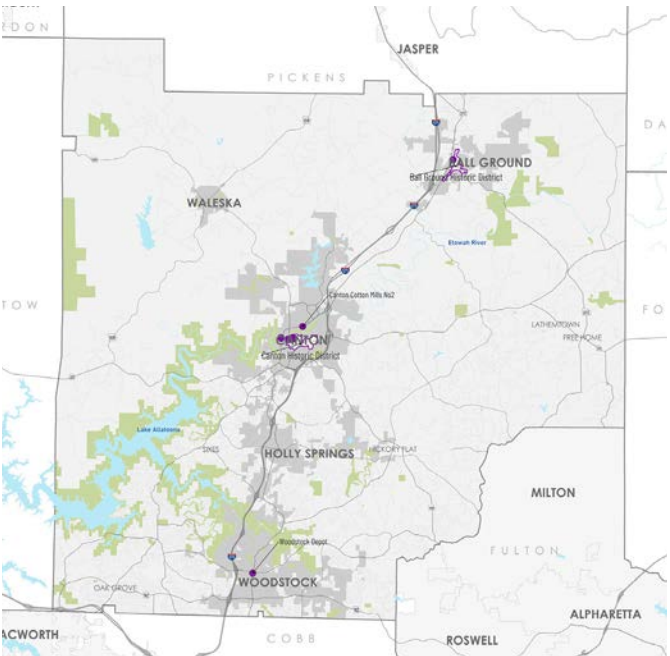


Quality of Life Profile

Cherokee County provides an abundance of community facilities and recreational opportunities that provide a boost to the quality of life of residents. The majority of these services are located in or nearby the incorporated cities of Woodstock, Holly Springs, Canton, Ball Ground, and Waleska. Along with community facilities and parks, the County also has two historic districts and multiple nationally registered historic resources. Canton and Ball Ground both have recognized historic districts that are fundamental features of the cities. As for the historic resources, it ranges from the old Woodstock depot and the Canton Cotton Mills.



- Community Facilities**
- College
 - Court
 - ✚ EMS
 - ▲ Cell Towers
 - School
 - Library
 - Fire Station
 - ✱ City Hall
 - Hospital
 - Solid Waste Facility



- Parks & Historic Resources**
- National Registry
 - Historical Resource
 - Historic District
 - Park

Another large aspect of quality of life is access to broadband/internet services. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs conducted broadband research by obtaining data from the various internet service providers in Georgia. According to their data, most areas within Cherokee County are considered served. This is based on the broadband definition of 25 Mbps down and 3 Mbps up available to more than 80% of the locations within a census block. Therefore, the northern region of Cherokee County has large portions of unserved blocks. This is especially concerning near the cities of Waleska and Ball Ground. Both cities are growing and will continue to grow, so reducing the number of unserved areas is significant to their quality of life.

- Broadband Availability**
- No Data
 - Served Areas
 - Unserved Areas





Considering the pace at which Cherokee County has grown over the past ten years, many residents are concerned about increased congestion, over-development, and the potential loss of historic and natural resources in the City. Growth is important for Cherokee's future, but maintaining our community character as we evolve is why a Comprehensive Plan is essential. This part of the Plan covers the Planning Team's comprehensive process and the outreach activities utilized to engage the public and stakeholders throughout the Comprehensive Plan Update. Based on the existing conditions, future projections, and the community engagement data collected, we updated the Core Values, Guiding Principles, and Character Areas to better reflect the community's priorities for the City.



City of Waleska Comprehensive Plan 16

The Important Dates

October 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4 BOC Kick-Off Meeting!	5 Website Kick-Off!	6	7	8
9	10	11 1st County Wide Meeting!	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19 2nd County Wide Meeting!	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31	1	2	3	4	5

Across our engagement activities, the website, meetings, and surveys, there was a total of **2,253** active residents!

November 2022

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
30	31	1	2	3 Waleska Meeting!	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20 Website Closes!	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	1	2	3

Community Engagement

As part of the Vision phase of the comprehensive planning process, community engagement was essential to developing a County-wide vision. To gather necessary input, the Project Team held six pre-draft meetings and developed a website that ran in tandem. Two of the meetings focused on Cherokee County as a whole, whereas the remaining 4 focused on some of the Target Areas.



Our Cherokee Website

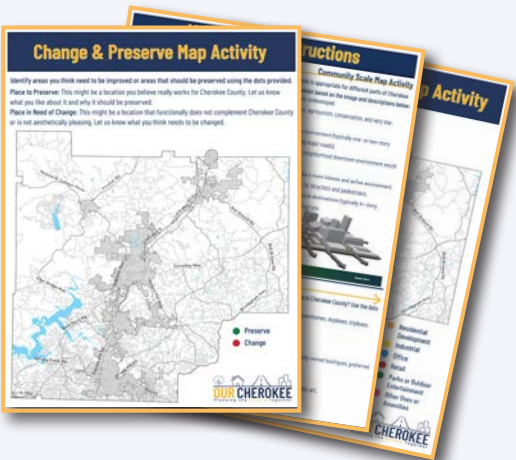
The website, Our Cherokee, acted as a hub for information and community input. On there, residents could see meeting dates, past plans, and participate in our online survey and interactive map tool. The map tool allowed participants to pinpoint portions of the County they find significant. Participants could also comment on: places they wanted to change or preserve, what the community scale should look like, any issues and concerns, any opportunities and ideas, and different types of new uses and amenities.

Along with the interactive map, the website had a link to a survey. The survey asked generic demographic questions about age, income, and employment. As well, there was a focus on sustainability, broadband, and future land use.

County-Wide Meetings

The 2 County-wide meetings happened on October 11th and October 19th at the Northside Cherokee Conference Center and the WREC Recreation Center.

The meetings were set up as open house style and had multiple activities for people to participate in. The activities were exact replicas of the interactive map tool on the Our Cherokee website. This was to allow as many people as possible to participate on the same activity, in-person or online. As well, paper copies of the survey were present. More pictures of the activities can be found in Appendix Two.



Community Engagement

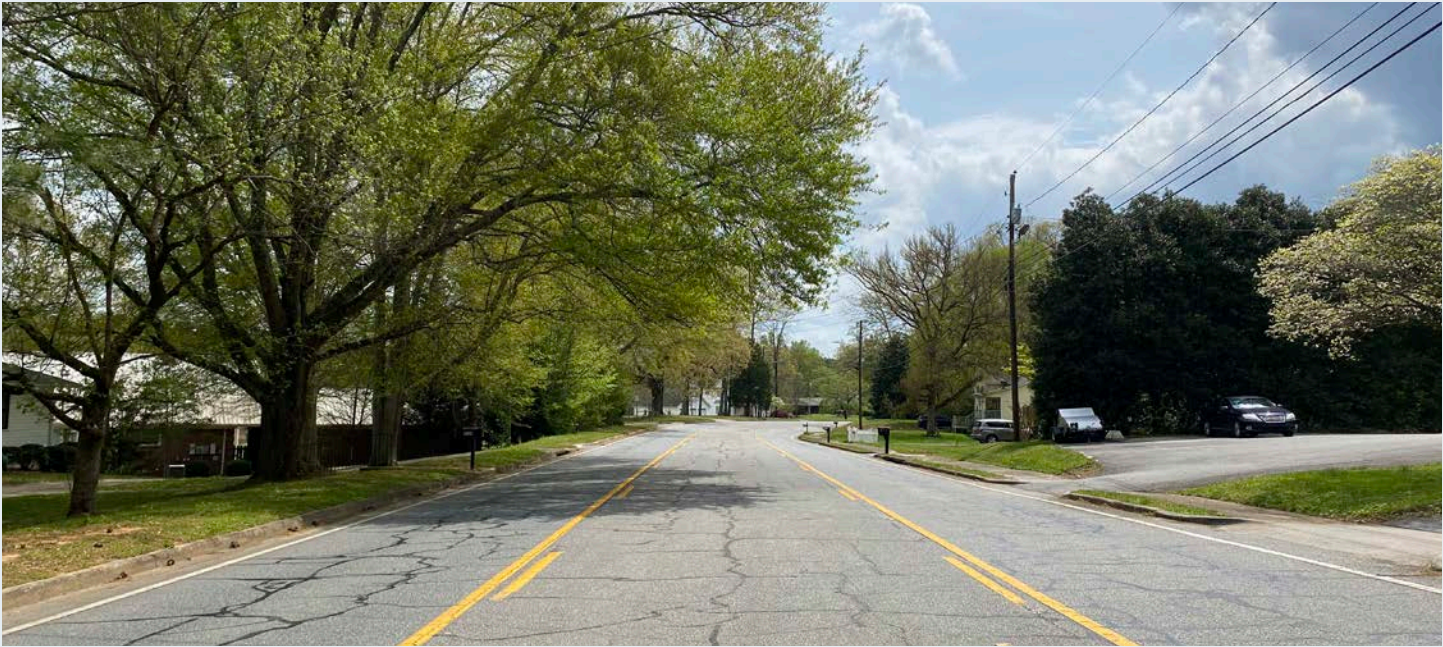
Waleska Meeting

The Waleska meeting took place on November 3rd at the Waleska Fire Station. The activities were similar to what was on the Our Cherokee website. For instance, issues, concerns, opportunities, and community scale. However, Waleska had their own concerns and issues to focus on.

At this meeting, County and City staff and officials were present. As well, three of the consultant’s team were there to help answer questions and guide people through the activities. In Waleska, conversations were centered around commercial growth, connectivity, and housing opportunities. Waleska resident’s and staff want to see sustainable growth that enhances their quality of life but does not take away from the small-town feel that everyone enjoys.



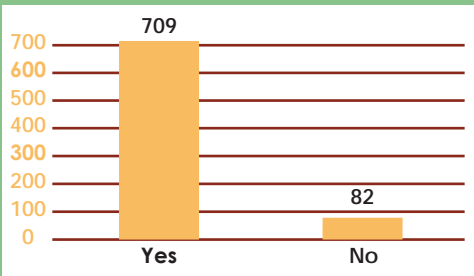
At Waleska’s community meeting, there were **20** attendees that participated in the activities and surveys!



Survey Significant Takeaways

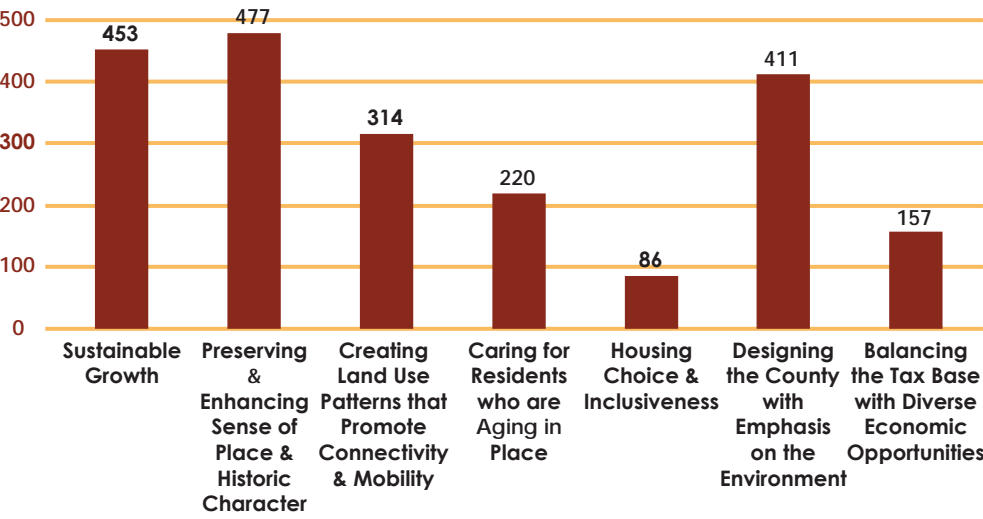
Only 397 of 779 respondents are confident that the current Future Development Map accurately reflects where they live.

709 respondents said they have access to consistent and reliable internet at home.

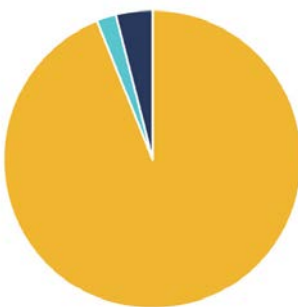


On a scale of 1 to 5, respondents averaged **3.7** when asked to indicate how significant sustainable growth is in Cherokee County.

What 3 core issues should Cherokee County prioritize?

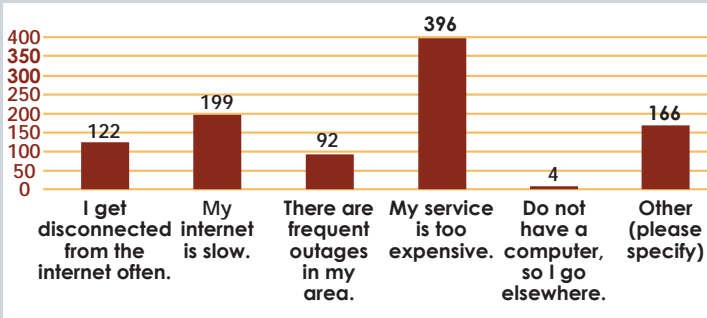


Respondents believe that **Sustainable Growth**, **Preserving and Enhancing Sense of Place and Historic Character**, and **Designing the County with an Emphasis on the Environment** should be prioritized. There is a strong desire to protect and preserve the rural characteristics of the County.



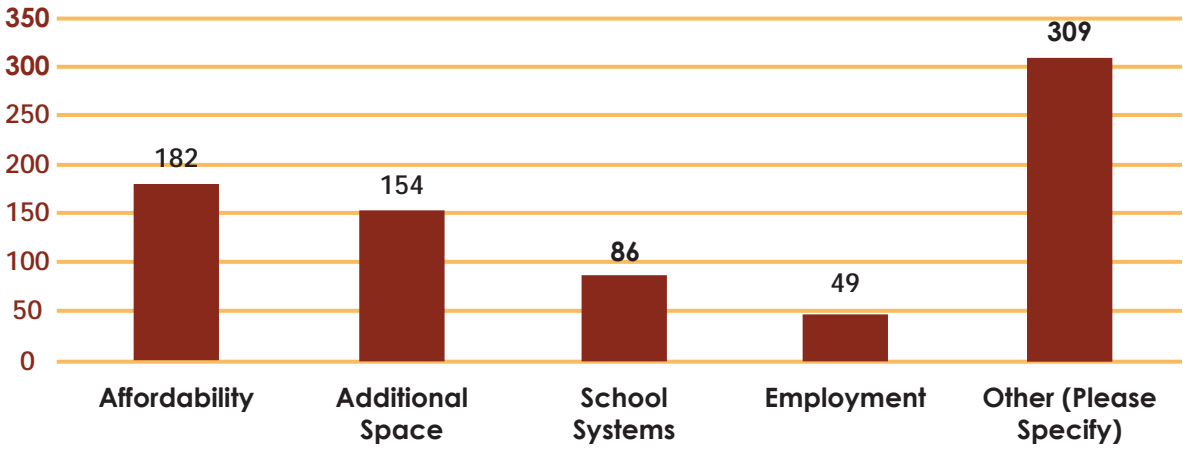
700 respondents believe Cherokee County should look into establishing a sustainability plan to protect Cherokee's natural spaces.

When asked about internet access issues, **396** respondents said that their service is too expensive and **199** said that their internet is slow.



In the other issues category, roughly **110** respondents stated that they do not have many issues. However, multiple respondents made note that there is a limited number of options for providers.

If you moved to the County recently, for what reason(s)? Please choose all that apply.



Some of the other not listed reasons were...

The **beauty** of Lake Arrowhead and the surrounding rural areas.

Good place for **equestrian activities** and space, especially suitable for trail riding.

More closely aligned **values** to raise a family.

Rural lifestyle close to most amenities Metro Atlanta offers.

Small town atmosphere. A **community** feel.

The exquisite beauty and **serenity** of the county.

Great place to live with **recreation, arts and natural beauty**, sense of community very level of civic pride.

Natural spaces, charm, **simpler life style**.

As well, approximately a third of those who specified the other reason stated that they have been long-term residents of the County. The number of years here ranged from 10 to 55+.

639 respondents said new development should be encouraged to incorporate sustainable building practices, such as regional stormwater detention, waste reduction, green building materials, energy conservation measures, and the like.

When asked what is the most pressing issue facing their neighborhood...
326 people said congestion while
242 people said encroaching development.

After the Meetings

After the numerous community enagement meetings held by the Planning Team, time was spent consildating and analyzing the data and responses received. Survey participants were asked to prioritize the Core Values established in the 2018 Comprehensive Plan. The results showed that an overwhelming amount of people want to see sustainable development and growth at the forefront with maintaining the “small-town” feel of the County. As well, the Planning Team noticed that in some of the write-in responses, people seemed overwhelmingly concerned with housing opportunities and the County’s housing market in general. Therefore, with these observations in mind, the Planning Team sought out to condense the eight original Core Values into three succinct “umbrella” areas. They encompass the previous plan’s concerns, while providing tools related to the concerns resident’s wish to prioritize. Along with the three Core Values, the Planning Team also established a Community Vision and some Guiding Principles from the engagement data.

“Waleska has something special. The rural and small-town characteristics draw in people who need a break from the congestion brought from a larger city. It is home to Reinhardt University and has such tremendous economic opportunities.”

Community Vision

A historic small-town nestled in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, Waleska has the charm, scenic beauty, cultural assets, and strong community gathering spaces, anchored by the City’s cherished relationship with Reinhardt University, will continue to grow the college-town energy in the walkable center of the crossroads community.



3 Core Values

Sense of Place

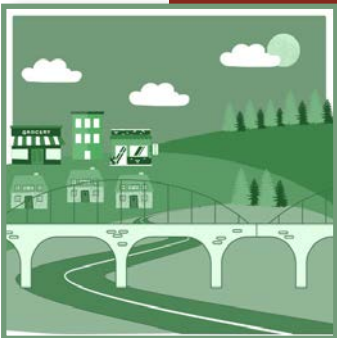
Guiding Principles

- Growth should be guided to preserve and enhance the unique character of our communities.
- The County includes natural areas, critical water resources, and animal habitats that should be preserved while respecting the rights of private property owners.



Housing Opportunities

- An array of housing choices is important to address the diverse needs of the population within our communities.



Sustainable Growth

- The continued economic development of our area depends on a variety of new commercial and industrial development in appropriate locations.
- New development should not cause undue burden on public services, infrastructure and community facilities.



Sense of Place

A community's history, its social connections, the natural and built environment, and means of transportation all contribute to a Sense of Place. This is an important Core Value because communities do not simply house residents and businesses; they convey their own unique energy that contributes to neighborhood comfort and pride. For some County residents, this could be a farm that has been in the family for generations. For others, it is a neighborhood full of families who gather in someone's driveway to socialize. While Sense of Place may sound intangible, there are a few planning components that directly affect it. Encouraging compatible land uses in the character areas creates a healthy Sense of Place by providing accessible amenities vital to everyday life. Appropriate roadway design impacts the Sense of Place by increasing recreational activity and promoting a sense of security and freedom among residents and businesses. Another major component of Sense of Place is the historic character, which tells the story of a community's past.

Relationship to the 2018 Comprehensive Plan Core Values:

- ☒ Promoting Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure
- ☒ Preserve and Enhance Sense of Place and Historic Character
- ☒ Aging in Place
- ☐ Housing Choice and Spirit of Inclusiveness
- ☐ Designing with the Environment
- ☒ Balanced Tax Base and Diverse Economic Opportunities

Implementation Strategies:

- Design and incorporate appropriate new street and sidewalk design concepts into the development regulations for each character area. All street designs should include provisions for alternative modes of transportation.
- Investigate preservation incentives and preservation tools such as easements, transfer of development rights, and overlay zoning.
- Update the historic resource map and create a database of properties contained in the 2005 Historic Resources Survey inventory, as well as the cemetery location map.
- Offer information and assistance to property owners who may be interested in having their potentially eligible property listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and to the development community regarding redevelopment and adaptive reuse.

Policies that positively impact land use, roadway design, and historic character may include the following:

- Focus new growth into appropriate character areas, thereby lifting development pressure from farming and rural communities and strengthening the more developed areas of the County.
- Protect and preserve unique historical resources within the County and its cities, specifically buildings, structures, neighborhoods, or areas of historical, architectural, or cultural significance.



Housing Opportunities

This Core Value pertains to residents' ability to find a living space regardless of occupation or age group. The housing market supply and affordability have been a national issue for some time, and Cherokee County has not been immune. While the County's affordability fares slightly better than other parts of Metro Atlanta, housing costs have increased since our last plan update. The County has also seen a decline in the number of starters or 'first-time' homes. Household sizes have decreased in the past several years as well. We must allow for a variety of housing types so our residents may find a home that matches their price point and lifestyle. On the other end, it is important to take care of our long-time residents who may need a smaller living space for this phase of life. As many residents age in place, we need to account for this increase over the next two decades.

Relationship to the 2018 Comprehensive Plan Core Values:

- ☒ Promoting Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure
- ☐ Preserve and Enhance Sense of Place and Historic Character
- ☒ Aging in Place
- ☒ Housing Choice and Spirit of Inclusiveness
- ☐ Designing with the Environment
- ☐ Balanced Tax Base and Diverse Economic Opportunities

Policies that can improve housing opportunities include the following:

- Encourage a variety of housing stock to serve a range of incomes, age groups, and lifestyles to provide choices and opportunities.
- As employment opportunities diversify in our communities, ensure adequate amounts, types, and densities of housing needed to support desired commercial and industrial growth.
- Support innovative public, private, and non-profit efforts in the development of housing for residents with limited incomes.
- Encourage senior housing in areas that have good access to services, medical facilities, and nonresidential development, and are walkable.
-

Implementation Strategies:

- Develop a housing task force with County and City stakeholders to explore innovative housing opportunity strategies.
- Research the feasibility of a land bank for the County.
- Review development regulations to remove constraints to the development of second units (i.e., accessory or granny flats) in appropriate areas in order to provide additional affordable housing opportunities in areas where infrastructure already exists
- Continue to target the use of available CDBG funds for the Single Family Owner-Occupied Rehabilitation program.
- Develop a comprehensive strategy to address the broad range of housing options needed by the growing number of senior residents.
- Consider revising ordinances to encourage appropriate senior housing in existing and future development nodes, where goods and services are easily accessible.



Sustainable Growth

The term 'sustainable growth' may sound like a buzzword, at its root, it refers to how efficiently we use our resources and infrastructure to ensure residents and businesses thrive as growth continues. We have changed a lot as a County. Our natural resources, location near the mountains, and proximity to Atlanta have made us an attractive choice for residents and businesses in the past 30 years. To accommodate this influx, we must be proactive in where and how we develop. How do we balance job and population growth with preserving the natural resources for which the County has long been known? How can we manage traffic for those traveling throughout the County? Where should we prioritize density? These are all questions we must address in order to grow sustainably.

Relationship to the 2018 Comprehensive Plan Core Values:

- ☒ *Promoting Sustainable Growth and Infrastructure*
- ☒ *Preserve and Enhance Sense of Place and Historic Character*
- ☐ *Aging in Place*
- ☐ *Housing Choice and Spirit of Inclusiveness*
- ☒ *Designing with the Environment*
- ☒ *Balanced Tax Base and Diverse Economic Opportunities*

Below are some goals to help achieve that:

- Continue to analyze our zoning ordinance and development regulations to ensure consistency with the county's vision.
- Annually review the Future Development Map, rezonings, and other data based on population and growth trends to make potential adjustments.
- Continue to identify, fund, and implement LCI projects.
- Increase pedestrian safety by developing specific roadway types and pedestrian-related facilities by character area.
- Continue the focused marketing campaign targeting industries identified in Opportunity Cherokee.
- Maintain an adequate supply of quality-prepared business and manufacturing sites.
- Enhance Cherokee County Airport as an economic development asset by adopting an overlay district that meets FAA requirements and protects the Airport from incompatible land uses.

Implementation Strategies:

- Concentrate density in downtown and commercial nodes, allowing for less intense development further from commercial areas.
- Protect natural resources and greenspace in the midst of ongoing development.
- Connect developments with existing transportation networks and adjacent properties.
- Design public facilities and infrastructure that support increasing development.
- Create regional job centers with a mix of commercial, office, and residential uses that minimize car trips and promote a Live-Work-Play lifestyle.
- Continue to ensure that the training and educational needs of employers are being met through partnerships between industry and educators.



3 Future Development

What are Character Areas?

The 2008 Comprehensive Plan introduced Character Areas to Waleska. These areas are used to identify places and areas that show a common form of development and land use pattern, lifestyle and sense of place intensity of use, design elements, or other factors that collectively define the character of a place or areas, whether existing or intended in the future. The use of Character Areas provides a much more comprehensive picture of the communities' vision for a place or areas instead of individual land use categories.

The Character Area designations indicate primary and secondary types of land uses and the infrastructure necessary for that type of development. As the community continues to grow over the next 20-plus years, the Character Area descriptions will serve as a guide in the determination of future development approvals.

Character Area Highlights:

- Encourage a "holistic" approach to long-range planning by integrating the community's vision and desires with actual land use patterns;
- Directly link the Comprehensive Plan to regulations and implementation strategies, such as impact fees and development codes;
- Provide solutions "outside the box" by integrating new and exciting concepts in land use planning and community design; and
- Allow the maximum amount of flexibility in land use planning.

Waleska's Current Character Areas



Neighborhood Living

50%



Urban Core

50%

Character Areas

Why Use Character Areas?

- Provides a strong link between the community's vision, guiding principles, goals, and the Future Development Map;
- Provides additional protection, enhancement, and clarification for zoning and land development; and
- Provides additional guidance to developers regarding the qualitative issues the County and Cities will consider during the rezoning process.

Benefits of Character Areas

- Provides for strong land use compatibility and transitional standards;
- Looks at an overall area for both internal and external connectedness, with an emphasis on the mixing and integration of appropriate and complementary uses;
- Identifies intensity levels, compatibility considerations, and infrastructure considerations;
- Spells out the overall "feel" of an area in quantitative terms, thereby giving decision makers additional guidance during the rezoning and development review process; and
- Coordinates economic development, natural resource, and capital facility policies within land use planning.

How it Works

- Character Area guidelines establish a general direction by providing a base level of development quality and compatibility with surrounding areas;
- Character Areas provide an area-wide view of how a specific use on a specific property will interact with a larger area;
- Character Areas allow additional qualitative controls while small area and corridor studies are completed; and
- A use must still fit the intent of the Character Area and any associated criteria. A potential type of non-residential development may be "allowed," but it may still not be appropriate.

Future Development Map

Visualizes the Character Areas throughout the county to establish where appropriate growth can occur.

Zoning Decision

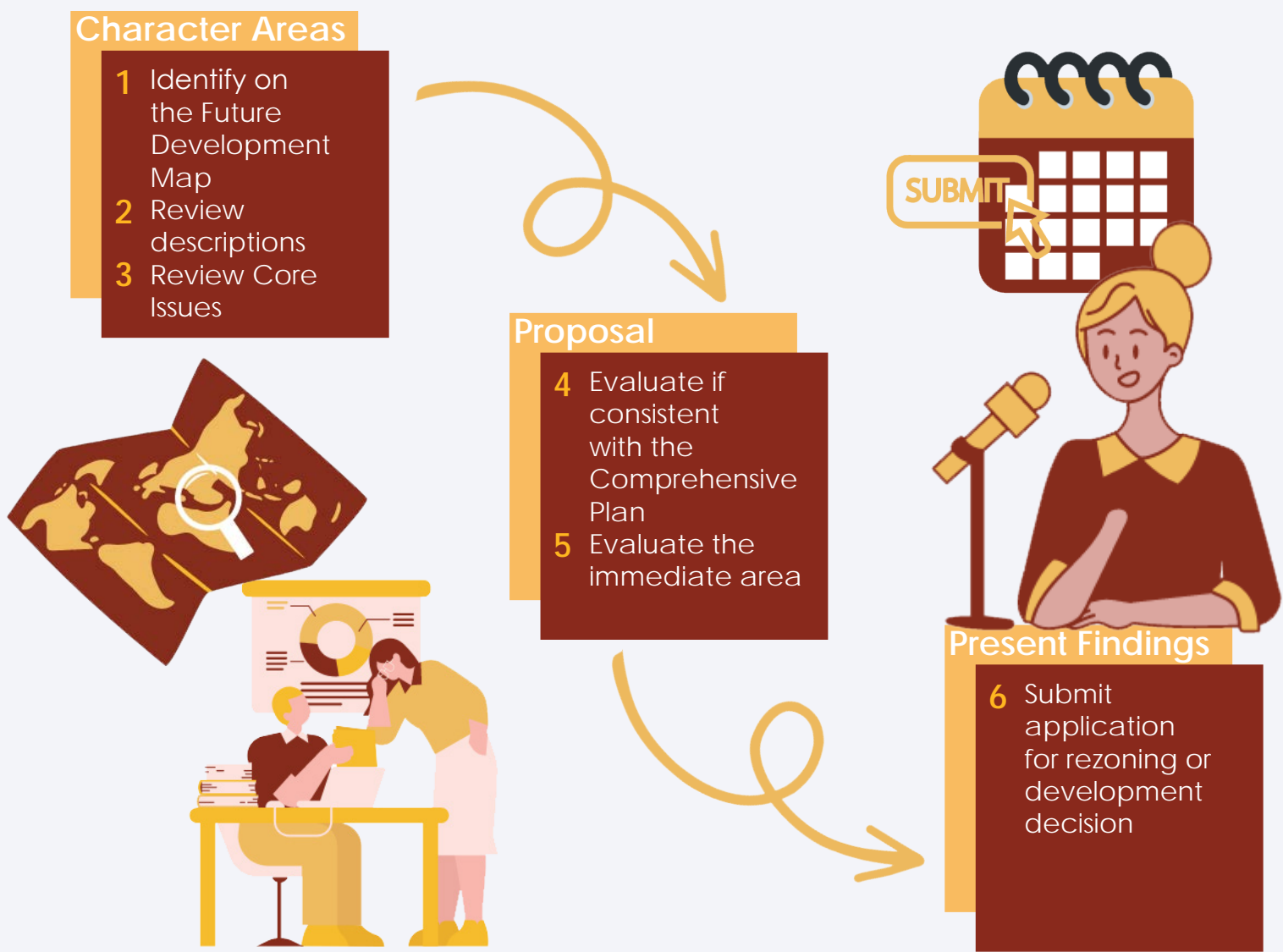
Helps establish where certain land development or a zoning district suits a place or area.

The Future Development Map

The Future Development Map was developed through the analysis of current and future conditions and land use patterns on the Existing Land Use Plan Map, the Current Zoning Maps, approved developments, an economic market study, topographic characteristics, natural resource sensitivity, the availability of infrastructure, infrastructure programming and needs demonstrated by residential and employment forecasts. These analyses provided an essential base of information for Character Area development.

- Applies the overall vision, guiding principles, and policies to land use patterns of the Comprehensive Plan to the unincorporated areas of the County and the City of Waleska;
- Was developed in conjunction with infrastructure planning and availability, land use compatibility, and existing zoning;
- Acknowledges projected growth and provides capacity for this growth in appropriate areas of the County and City;
- Acknowledges and accommodates corridors currently or proposed to go through residential/commercial transition;
- Identifies specific corridors and areas that are appropriate for redevelopment activities and further study; and
- Provides a strong emphasis on integrated design, beneficial mixing of uses, and connectivity.

Zoning Decision Process with Character Areas



Interpretation







This plan is developed based on the idea that the Future Development Map and the text are to be used as an integrated whole, with the map being a graphic representation of the text. Interpretation of the Future Development Map is a process, which rests on the guiding principles, goals, and policies expressed in the text. The Character Area designations on the map, both in terms of overall definition and intensity of land use types, require that policies and intent statements regulating the development and the location of each land use type, be evaluated and applied in the process of plan implementation.

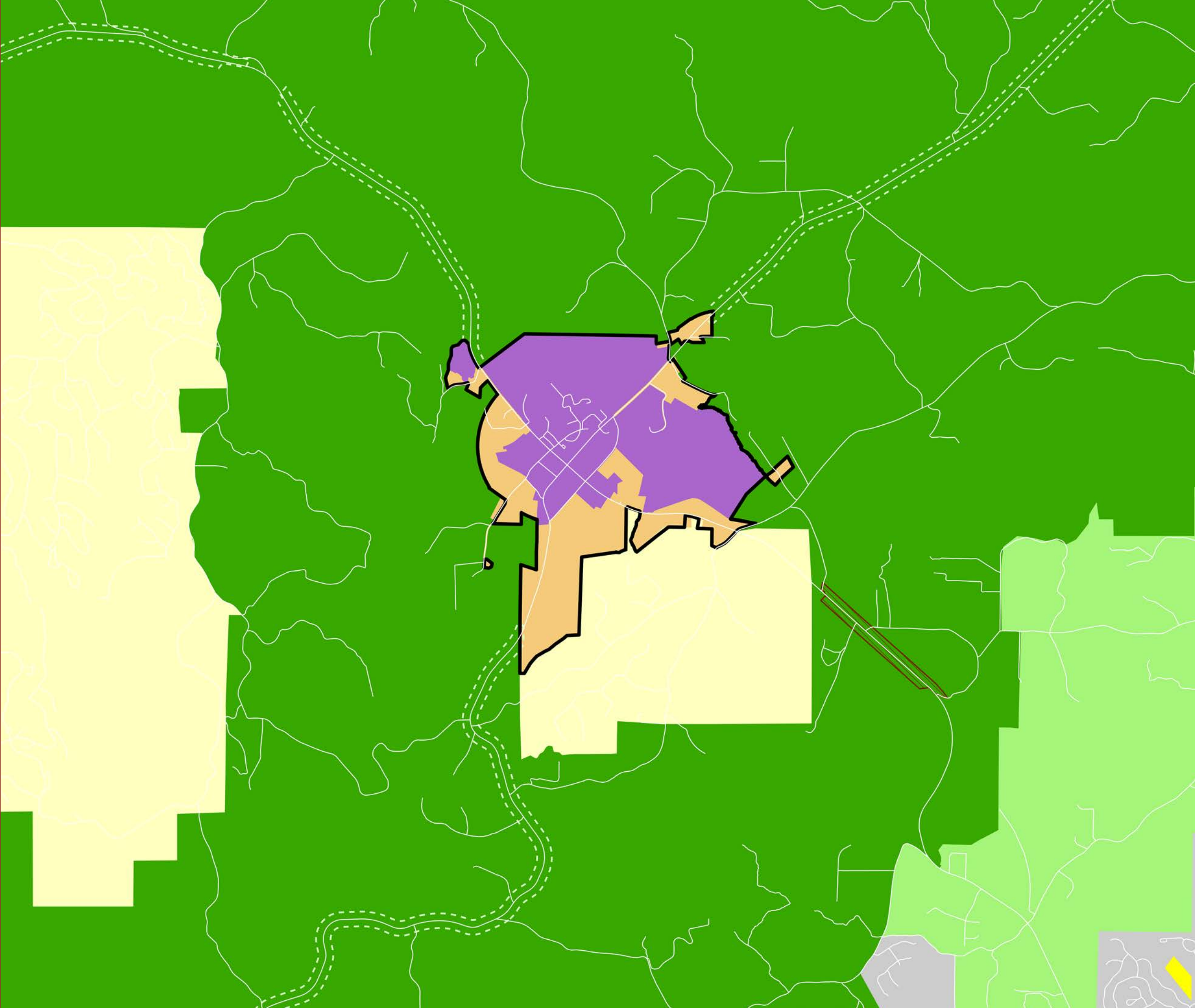
Plan implementation is carried out through the application of regulations such as the Zoning Ordinance and through projects and programs outlined in the Short-Term Work Program. The Board of Commissioners and City Councils administer the Map within their respective jurisdictions, with input from their Planning Commissions and planning staff.

The initial contact for plan interpretation begins with the staff. It is at this point that the proposal is evaluated for its conformity and compliance with the Comprehensive Plan and other functional plans. In the event a use or development proposal is inconsistent with the Future Development Map or Comprehensive Plan policies, that fact is addressed as one of the Standards for Zoning Review already adopted by each jurisdiction in their Zoning Ordinance.

Future Development Map

Legend

-  Rural Places
-  Country Estates
-  Suburban Growth
-  Neighborhood Living
-  Urban Core
-  Corridor & Nodes





Rural Places

Description

Land in Rural Places is typically cultivated as pasture, farmland, or woodlands under forestry management, or sparsely settled homes on individual tracts, which is mostly located in the northern part of Cherokee County and surrounding Natural Preserves. This area represents a balance between the natural environment and human uses with low-density residential, farms, forests, outdoor recreation, and other open space activities.

Intent

Rural Places is envisioned as an agricultural-residential community, which benefits from its scenic rural landscape while accommodating limited, low-density residential growth. Large-scale urban/suburban development is not compatible with this Character Area due to conflicts such as agricultural uses or other forms of activities resulting from raising livestock and crop production. Focused efforts should be made to encourage and support agricultural businesses, promote flexible site design to fit the land, and allow open space and/or the natural landscape to dominate these areas.

Strategies

- Preserve undeveloped land so that the natural landscape dominates the majority of the Character Area while identifying appropriate spots for low-density residential homes.
- Manage development along roadways to provide appropriate, compatible, and complimentary transitions from new construction to existing development.
- Provide adequate access to services at a level appropriate to the development pattern that prioritizes maintaining the rural, small-town feel of the Character Area.
- Zoning districts could include AG.

Summary Chart

Intensity	<i>Residential Density</i> - 0.5 units per acre maximum
Future Development	<i>Primary Land Uses</i> Active farming, timbering & conservation uses Homesteads on individual lots Large lot estate-style single-family residential development <i>Secondary Land Uses</i> Outdoor recreation Semi-public & institutional uses
Infrastructure	Easement & private driveway access. Roads have grassy swales & narrow lanes. Public water may be available.
Greenspace	Significant greenspace often on private property Typically surrounding Natural Preserves

Where in the County can this be found?

The green color below represents all the Rural Places in the County. In these areas, you will find private, low-density housing, large properties, and land used for agriculture and livestock purposes.





Suburban Growth

Description

Suburban Growth areas have limited existing development but occur where growth pressure is the greatest due to adjacency with current or proposed community infrastructure (such as sewer and water, and transportation). This is an area in transition from rural types of development to suburban ones, often characterized by pockets of development interspersed among a rural landscape. More specifically, these areas mostly consist of single-family detached homes situated on lots ranging in size with shallower setbacks than in Rural Places and agriculturally-dominated land.

Intent

Suburban Growth is intended to preserve the primarily residential nature of these areas while promoting new, low-density residential communities that foster a sense of community and provide mobility, recreation, and open space. To obtain this it is significant to channel growth pressures to areas that are suitable in terms of land use patterns and infrastructure investment to create more sustainable communities. Hence, there is a need to ensure new development is compatible and located where existing infrastructure (i.e. roads, schools, water/sewer, etc.) is available.

Strategies

- Create neighborhood focal points by locating schools, community centers, libraries, health facilities, and other services at suitable locations near residential communities.
- Provide suitable, efficient connections and infrastructure to nearby services and land uses for ease of access and quality of life.
- Encourage innovative development that integrates greenspace within its design such as conservation subdivisions, and master-planned and traditional low-density communities in appropriate locations.
- Zoning districts could include AG, R-80, and R-40.

Summary Chart

Intensity	Residential Density - 0.5 - 1.0 units per acre
Future Development	Primary Land Uses Single-family detached housing Conservation subdivisions Secondary Land Uses Semi-public & institutional uses
Infrastructure	Roads have a combination of swales & curb/gutter Public water is available Sewer may be available or planned for the future
Greenspace	Open space & conservation areas in neighborhoods Public parks & greenspaces

Where in the County can this be found?

The light yellow color below represents all the Suburban Growth area in the County. It is predominately located between larger residential and highly-populated service areas and rural residences as a transitional phase. In these areas you will find slowly developing homes and services.





Neighborhood Living

Description

Neighborhood Living areas are mostly residential in nature but may include small commercial areas. The residential units include townhouses and duplexes, along with single-family homes intended for empty nesters, seniors, singles, small families, and workers employed in the County. The Neighborhood Living Character Area is denser than suburban areas because it is generally located in and around cities in Cherokee County where there are full urban services, infrastructure, and compatible commercial development.

Intent

The intent of this Character Area is to create new moderate-density neighborhoods to accommodate a range of housing types that suit a variety of lifestyles, price points, and stages of life while being respectful of existing neighborhoods. Community facilities and commercial uses are common in these areas to provide close and convenient services with pedestrian and trail connections to encourage the use of walking and bicycling.

Strategies

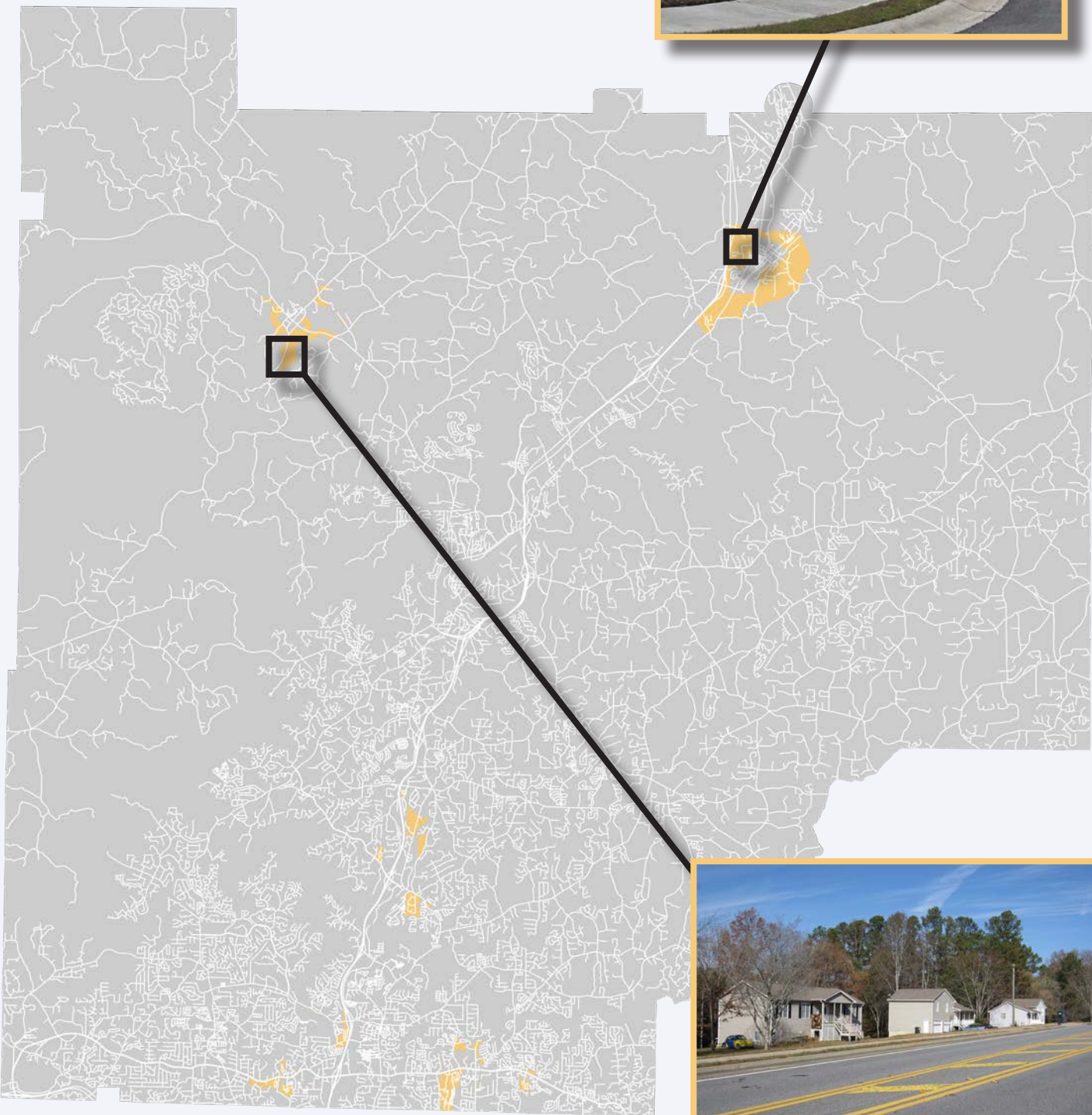
- Integrate commercial establishments such as corner markets and mixed-use buildings as part of new developments to encourage walkability and ease of access to services.
- Locate parks, squares, and other greenspaces close to all new homes so every resident lives in close proximity to recreational activities.
- Locate parking to the sides or rear of residential and non-residential buildings, and screen all parking from the public pedestrian view.
- Zoning districts could include RD-3, RZL, RTH, and TND.

Summary Chart

Intensity	Residential Density - 3.0 - 8.0 units per acre
Future Development	Primary Land Uses Small lot single-family homes Attached single-family duplexes and townhouses Secondary Land Uses Public & institutional uses Mixed-use buildings
Infrastructure	Urban streets with sidewalks on both sides Full urban services (water & sewer)
Greenspace	Smaller civic spaces (i.e. pocket parks, playgrounds, etc.) within the residential areas

Where in the County can this be found?

The light orange color below represents all the Neighborhood Living space in the County. In these areas you will find mostly homes and predominately surrounds Cherokee's smaller cities like Waleska and Ball Ground.





Urban Core

Description

The Urban Core Character Area covers the few unincorporated pockets of Urban core areas within Woodstock. As well, it provides an outline of the potential growth of commercial and institutional uses possible in the smaller cities of Ball Ground and Waleska. Overall, Urban Core is characterized by higher-density development and a wide range of commercial and institutional uses. Civic spaces and public buildings amidst retail storefronts and dense housing help create a compact core that promotes an urban feel and vibrancy.

Intent

The purpose of the Urban Core Character Area is to support the urban downtown areas of Canton, Holly Springs, Woodstock, Waleska, and Ball Ground with future development that is compatible and comparable to the existing infrastructure of each individual City. In other words, each city's Urban Core is based on its surrounding characteristics, density, and service capability.

Strategies

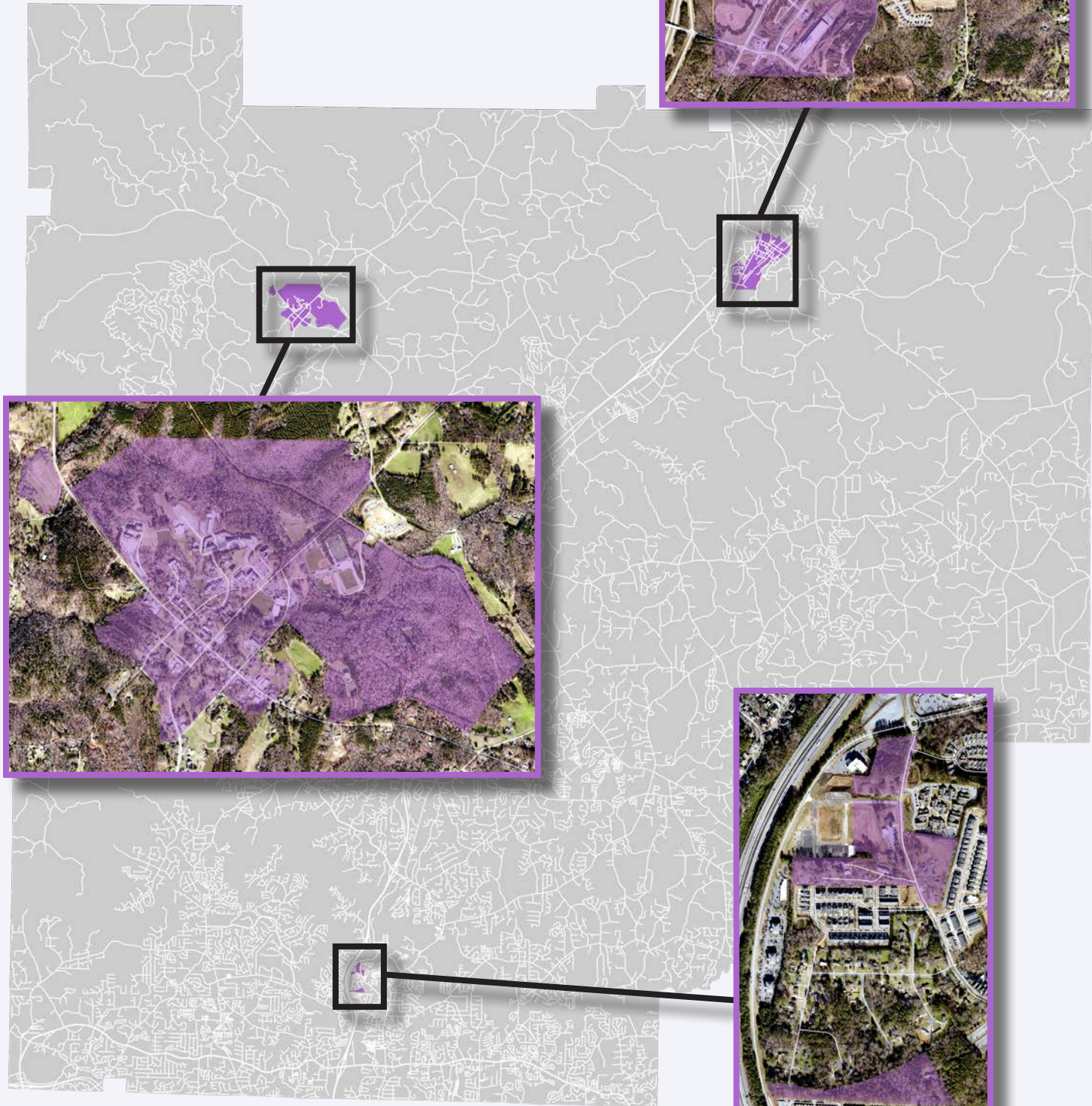
- Encourage the adaptive reuse of older buildings into newer uses to promote sustainable development and reduce construction waste.
- Ensure that new developments connect to existing infrastructure to promote walkability and maintain the urban feel of the area.
- Locate parking on the side and rear of buildings to strengthen the 'main street' feel and improve walkability.
- Market the historic core of the cities to attract additional businesses and ultimately grow the downtown area economically and socially.
- Zoning districts could include a mixed use of RTH, RM-10, RM-16, OI, NC, and GC.

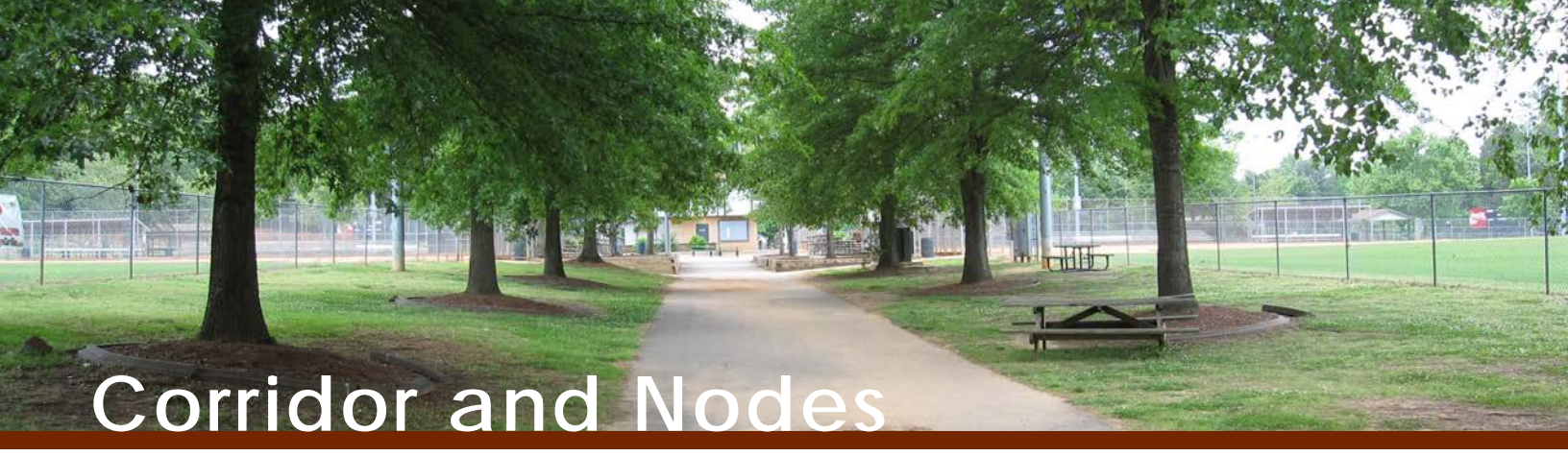
Summary Chart

Intensity	Residential Density - 3.0 - 16.0 units per acre
Future Development	Primary Land Uses Multi-Family Flats Attached single-family duplexes & townhouses Mixed-use buildings Secondary Land Uses Public & institutional uses Single-Use Commercial
Infrastructure	Urban streets with sidewalks on both sides Full urban services (water and sewer)
Greenspace	Smaller civic spaces (i.e. pocket parks, playgrounds, etc.) within the residential areas

Where in the County can this be found?

The purple color below represents all the Urban Core space in the County. In these areas, you will find traditional downtown elements like shops, sidewalks, restaurants, and what is considered the heart of Waleska and Ball Ground.





Corridor and Nodes

Description
Corridors and Nodes are typically located at the convergence of transportation corridors or along major roadways originally developed with very low-intensity agricultural and residential uses that have been impacted by nearby development and adjacent road improvements. Businesses within these nodes offer a wide variety of goods and services, including both convenience goods for neighborhood residents and shopping goods for a larger market area. Corridors, such as SR20 and SR 140 can increase the intensity of residential development up to 150% of the existing Character Area.

Intent
Corridors and Nodes are envisioned as places where a compatible mixture of higher to lower intensity uses are located, including a variety of housing options, small offices, retail shops, services, and well-placed parks/plazas that create a small, interconnected community. At the center of the node, there is a core area containing the more intensive, primary land uses. Moving outward from the core, the land uses are a mixture of less intense retail, office, and some residential. Commercial uses should be the primary land use, with residential and institutional being secondary.

Size and scale in Corridors and Nodes are very important. Corridors and Nodes are not intended to be uniform, but a step up in intensity relative to the underlying character area. Nodes in Rural Places should remain small-scale and compatible with existing areas, while nodes in Suburban may develop larger or multi-tenant neighborhood commercial. Nodes located at smaller intersections or corridors in high-intensity character areas should have a more moderate scale of development. Corridors and nodes in Rural Places or Country Estates should be most restricted in scale.

- Strategies**
- Scale shall vary in intensity: At smaller nodes, no individual store or building larger than 18,00 square feet, with a maximum height of 2 stories; other nodes shall have a limitation of 50,000 square feet, with 3 stories.
 - Larger buildings and more intensive uses should be located in the center of the node surrounded by smaller, residential-compatible buildings. Commercial uses should be near the road.
 - New development should be pedestrian-oriented with front doors that open directly onto a sidewalk or civic space and connections between commercial and residential areas.

Summary Chart	
Intensity	<i>Residential Density</i> - 150% of Character Area
Future Development	<p>Primary Land Uses Grocery stores, drugstores, restaurants & shops Personal services—dry cleaners, auto repair shops Professional services—doctors, lawyer offices</p> <p>Secondary Land Uses Local institutions—churches, schools Residential housing/senior housing</p>
Infrastructure	Located along major arterial roads or highways Sidewalks connect into surrounding neighborhoods Public water is available Sewer may be available depending on location
Greenspace	Major civic spaces-- park or green, ball fields and courts for active recreation

Where in the County can this be found?

The brown color below represents all the Corridor and Nodes space in the County. These areas are found along roadways and intersections that require further investment on top of the underlying Character Area.



Character Area Summary Table

Character Area	Description of Character and Primary Land Uses	Community Facilities & Infrastructure	Suggested Residential Density
Urban Core	Traditional downtown areas with a broad range of uses, primarily in Ball Ground and Waleska.	Full urban services; regional public facilities.	3 - 16 dua
Rural Places	Outlying rural areas with active farming and scattered single-family housing on large lots. Preservation of sensitive natural resources is important.	Low level of services and community facilities. Potentially with public water but sewer is not planned.	0.5 dua max
Country Estates	Area of low intensity land use with a mixture of singlefamily housing on large lots and farms.	Local-serving roads, potentially with public water, typically lacks sewer.	0.5 dua max
Suburban Growth	Areas located outside identified centers that are experiencing a high volume of residential growth, primarily single-family houses.	Public water available, public sewerage available or planned; local public facilities.	0.5 - 1.0 dua
Neighborhood Living	Urbanized and growth oriented areas, adjacent to identified activity centers with higher densities. Various types of residential dwellings, and mixed-use developments.	Full urban services; regional public facilities.	3 - 8 dua
Scenic Corridor	Scenic corridors have low intensity development parallel to a viewshed.	Very low level of services and community facilities	0.5 dua max
Corridor & Nodes	Development along roadways is increasingly impacted by growth. They feature a range of uses at varying scales, depending on the underlying character area.	Sidewalks connections Public water is available Sewer may be available depending on location	150% of Character Area

Zoning Connections Matrix

The matrix below demonstrates the exact connections between the Character Areas from the Future Development Map and the Waleska's Zoning Districts further described in the Zoning Ordinance, Article 7 District Uses and Regulations. Within City limits, there are only two Character Areas, Neighborhood Living and Urban Core. However, nearby Chracter Areas were included on the chart to keep in mind future annexations. Each Character Area is coupled with possible Zoning Districts, primary, secondary, and mixed land use priorities. This is essential to applicants, stakeholders, and the County Board and Committies in determining future development and land uses across the County.

		Character Areas						
		Rural Places	Country Estates	Suburban Growth	Neighborhood Living	Urban Core	Scenic Corridor	Corridor & Nodes
		0.5 dua max		0.5 - 1.0 dua	3 - 8 dua	3 - 16 dua	0.5 dua max	150% of Character Area
Related Zoning Districts	Suggested Residential Density							
	R-80	P	P	P			P	S
	R-40			P	P			S
	R-30				P	M		S
	OI				S	M		P
	NC				S	M		P
	GC					M		P
LEGEND		P	Primary Land Use		S	Secondary Land Use		M Mix of Land Uses



4 Implementing Our Vision

Implementation Process

The adoption of this Comprehensive Plan is not the end but the beginning of the implementation process to translate the community vision into reality. The three-step process outlined here is the best way to ensure effective community planning for the City of Waleska.

1 Develop and adopt a Comprehensive Plan.
The Character Area standards are intended to establish a general direction and a base level of development quality and compatibility with surrounding areas. After completion, detailed plans, such as the Downtown Master Plans, a Solid Waste Management Plan, Livable Centers Initiatives (LCI) Plans, Parks and Recreation Plan, Capital Facilities Plan, small area studies, and design regulations may be adopted as implementing measures of the Comprehensive Plan.

2 Use the Comprehensive Plan to evaluate proposals for rezoning and other approvals.
Each community should use the policies and Character Area standards outlined within the Comprehensive Plan while reviewing specific proposals for rezoning and development.

- All new development should relate and coordinate with policy;
- Review general design considerations for consistency with Character Area descriptions;
- Character Areas are not regulations so it allows flexibility during project review.

3 Establish regulatory measures necessary to protect and enhance the character of our communities.
Development Regulations should reflect the Character Area guidelines and create a one-to-one relationship between this Plan and the Codes. Typically, a natural outcome of a character area-based Comprehensive Plan is a set of design regulations that speak to specific development characteristics such as site planning, massing, scale, and density. This can be achieved in several ways: require detailed concept plans during the zoning and development review process to conform to the character area guidelines, a rewrite of the Codes to reflect a more performance-based approach, the use of zoning overlay districts that supplement the current zoning provisions and safeguard the designated area from undesirable development patterns.

The Waleska Zoning Ordinance and Development Regulations need to be transformed so they can be modernized and calibrated to reflect the community's vision while creating a user-friendly format. Regulations that are not clear and easy to understand are likely to be poorly enforced or even worse, ignored altogether. These regulations are valuable and necessary tools for the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and for the creation of quality developments within the City.

Plan Review and Update

To be a useful tool in guiding growth and development in the future and in ultimately realizing each community's vision for the future, the Comprehensive Plan must be kept current. Over time, changes will occur in the community that may not have been anticipated and over which the community may have no control—changing lifestyles, national or regional economic shifts, the impact of telecommuting or internet access on working and shopping patterns, etc. Annually monitoring these shifts against progress in plan implementation may lead to the need for amendments to the plan. At a minimum, a substantial update will have to be undertaken every five years as per state requirements.

Annual Plan Review

The annual review is to be accomplished in coordination with the annual budgeting and CWP update process. At a minimum, the annual review should include:

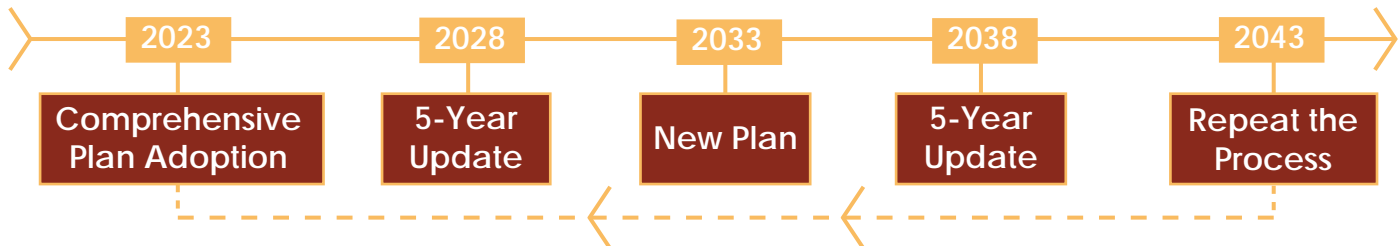
- Pace of growth, in terms of housing units built and land absorbed by nonresidential development.
- Land development approvals over the past year as a scorecard of the Comprehensive Plan's Vision.
- Zoning approvals over the past year in relation to the Future Development Map.
- Future Development Plan Map changes.
- Planned Community Work Plan (CWP) activities compared to actual accomplishments.
- The CWP will be updated annually, reflecting the results of the Annual Plan Review. The CWP will be extended one year into the future to maintain a full five years of future activity, and any changes appropriate to the other years will be included.

Minor Plan Amendments

As a result of the annual plan review, amendments to the Comprehensive Plan may be appropriate. If the needed changes are strictly local and not considered to have an effect on another local government, the changes may be adopted as a minor amendment to the Plan at any time during the year by action of the Board of Commissioners or City Council. At the end of each year, along with the annual update to the STWP, a summary of all minor amendments is to be sent to the ARC with a statement that the individual and cumulative effects of the minor amendments do not significantly alter the basic tenets of the approved Plan.

Major Plan Amendments

If, as a result of the annual plan review process, conditions or policies on which the Plan is based have changed significantly so as to alter the basic tenets of the Plan, the County or City will initiate a major Plan amendment. The public will be involved in the preparation of the Plan amendment to the extent warranted by the degree of change that has occurred. Following State procedural guidelines, a public hearing will be held to inform the public of the community's intent to amend the Plan and to seek public participation. The amendment will be submitted to surrounding communities for review in accordance with our agreement under HB 489, and to the ARC for review under the State's requirements, prior to adoption.



Recent Accomplishments Chart

The next few pages contain a complete list of recent accomplishments across the last five years. The items on this list were pulled from the Short-Term Work Plan (STWP), now known as Community Work Plan (CWP), in the 2018 Comprehensive Plan Update.

Each project is organized by different categories: Natural and Historic Resources, Economic Development, Housing, Community Facilities, Parks and Recreation, Transportation, Public Safety, Water, and Land Use. Then, the projects are deemed either Complete, Ongoing, Pending, or Dropped. As well, each projects will include an associated date with the status.

- Legend
- ✓ Completed
 - ▶ In Progress
 - ▶▶ Ongoing
 - ⏸ On Hold
 - Dropped

Natural and Historic Resources



Project Description	Status	Comments
Encourage development of open space for recreation or buffer protection.		
Expand recycling program to include shredding twice a year.		

Economic Development



Project Description	Status	Comments
Participate in County-wide economic development efforts.		
Develop and implement a strategy to recruit service establishments.		
Draft and implement a business incentives policy to entice businesses and retain current ones.		
Maintain relationships with the City of Canton and Cherokee County Water and Sewer Authority to ensure the availability of adequate water and sewer capacity.		
Pursue avenues for obtaining additional water and sewer capacity.		
Establish a community liaison role with Reinhardt University.		
Review City ordinances and policies and consider options to address local barriers to the provision of broadband services.		

Housing



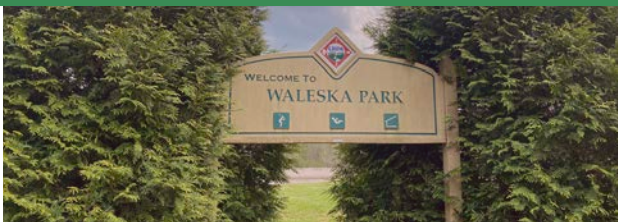
Project Description	Status	Comments
Encourage revitalization of substandard housing through the CDBG Senior Home Repair Program.		

Community Facilities



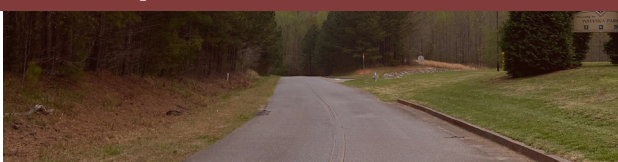
Project Description	Status	Comments
Pursue additional funding for streetscape projects.		
Restart hosting weddings at City Hall.		
Add a gazebo to City Hall property to support outdoor special events.		

Parks and Recreation



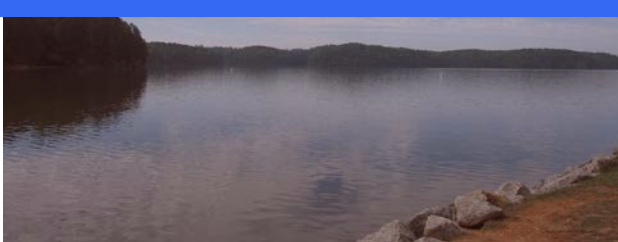
Project Description	Status	Comments
Annex new City greenspace property into the City limits.		
Develop plans to build a walking trail behind City Hall.		

Transportation



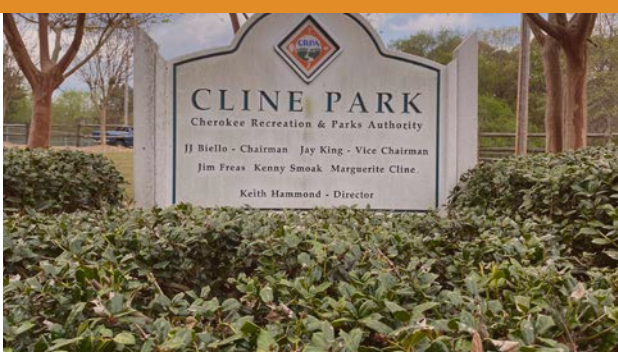
Project Description	Status	Comments
Extend existing sidewalks.		

Water



Project Description	Status	Comments
Construct additional water storage facility.		
Secure additional water supply.		

Land Use



Project Description	Status	Comments
Develop the master plan for downtown Waleska and consider design guidelines.		
Coordinate planning efforts with all local governments and other public/private agencies within Cherokee County.		
Update zoning code to allow more compact, village-like development.		



5 Appendix

In this section of the document, you will find an array of contributing and related resources that were significant to the development of the 2023 Comprehensive Plan. Below is a list of the included appendices:

Incorporating Related Plans.....

Community Engagement Materials.....

Pond Engagement Summary.....

Pond Existing Conditions.....

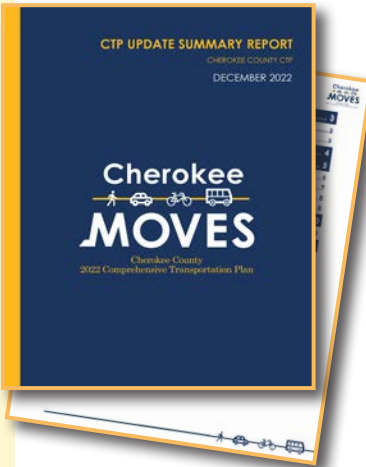
Pond Development Study.....

Incorporating Related Plans

To maximize the impact of the Comprehensive Plan, it is important that we are in sync with other major initiatives/plans in the County and Waleska. These related plans, covering areas such as transportation, parks and green space, and economic development, play a crucial role in the shaping of our City. Each plan branches off the goals of the Comprehensive Plan to provide specific strategies/action items to reach those goals.

Comprehensive Transportation Plan

The 2022 Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) addresses multi-modal transportation issues through 2050. The final prioritized goals were developed with input from citizens, business owners, and elected officials, then evaluated for effectiveness. The five goals include Improve Connectivity and Mobility, Maintain Community Health, Safety, and Environment, Align Transportation and Land Use Planning, Infrastructure Preservation, and Increase Modal Options. The CTP includes projects related to state routes, bridges, local roads, sidewalks, trails, and technology/ITS support. Likewise, there are changes that may not directly impact the physical infrastructure but will help guide future development in the County. Working with the County Engineer, the Planning Team has incorporated some of these projects into the Comprehensive Plan to follow the tier recommendations set out in the CTP.

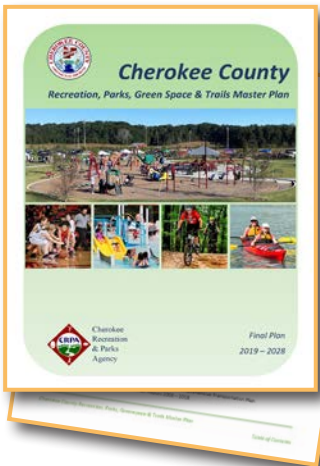


Cherokee By Choice 2.0 - Five Year Strategic Plan

The Cherokee Office of Economic Development (COED) drafted the county's five-year economic development strategic plan, Cherokee By Choice 2.0. This plan, which included interviews, surveys, and group discussions with 3,500 participants, highlighted the county's assets that make it an ideal employment center, along with strategies for creating jobs attracting people to live and work in Cherokee. COED identified six target sectors for the county to focus on expanding: Advanced Manufacturing, Commercial Developers, Headquarters, Entrepreneurs/Startups, Film & Digital Entertainment, and Technology. Essentially, Cherokee By Choice 2.0 expands on the Comprehensive Plan to provide a more specific overview of the existing industries and strategies that will grow jobs in the target market, and ultimately keep Cherokee County residents from having to commute outside the County. The plan also emphasizes the importance of attractive & connected places, educated & talented workers, innovative & enterprising businesses, and a vibrant & inviting image. These elements, along with promoting a sense of place for workers, will help the county's workplace and regional centers to thrive as planned.

Recreation, Parks, Green Space & Trails Master Plan

The Recreation, Parks, Green Space, & Trails Master Plan 2019-2028 prioritizes action items that help improve the location connectivity in the County while developing and improving existing parks. This includes developing a system of linear parks and greenways that connect residents to amenities and services throughout the County, as well as constructing new facilities at existing parks that allow for a wider variety of activities. The plan also seeks to take advantage of the County's natural resources by advocating for canoe/kayak launch points along the Etowah and Little Rivers. Finally, the plan includes a 'gap analysis' which analyzes areas of Cherokee County that lack parks and green space. In this capacity, the plan calls for additional parks to be developed north of Highway 20 and in southeastern Cherokee.



Waleska Community Meeting - November 3, 2022 - Waleska Fire Station

[illegible]