

The Greenspace Initiative

Gainesville & Hall County, Georgia



Prepared For: Vision 2030

Prepared By: Brightman S. Thomas, Intern for the Jaeger Company

Table of Contents

I.	Introduction.....	1
II.	Summary of Existing Plans and Studies.....	5
	a. 2000 Hall County Greenspace Plan.....	5
	b. 2004-05 Hall County Comprehensive Plan.....	5
	c. 2006 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.....	6
	d. 2008 Urban and Community Forestry Management Plan.....	6
	e. 2009 Vision 2014: Strategic Parks and Recreation Plan.....	6
	f. 2012-2030 City of Gainesville Comprehensive Master Plan.....	7
	g. 2013 Gainesville Transportation Masterplan (Preliminary Draft).....	7
III.	Progress to Date.....	7
	a. Additional Green Space.....	7
	b. Environmental Protection Measures.....	8
	c. Greenspace Statistics.....	8
IV.	Plan Recommendations.....	8
	a. The Openspace Vision.....	8
	b. Synthesis Process & Open Space Prioritization.....	11
	i. Attributes to consider in Conservation Efforts	
	1. Ecological	
	2. Built Environment	
	c. Openspace Plan.....	12
V.	Hall County Plan.....	13
	a. Master Plan with Focus Area Details	
VI.	City of Gainesville Plan.....	14
	a. Gainesville Concept Plan.....	14
	b. Gainesville Greenway System.....	15
	c. Focus Area Table.....	16
	d. Scenic Viewshed Table.....	17
VII.	Policy and Implementation Techniques.....	18
	a. General Tools for Preservation and Greenspace Implementation.....	18
	b. Greenway Implementation Techniques.....	18
	c. Agricultural and Forest Land Preservation.....	19
	d. Conservation Subdivision (CSD) Policy Recommendations.....	19
	e. Scenic Viewshed Protection.....	20
	f. Increasing Revenue with Greenspace.....	21
	g. Recommendations for Gainesville & Hall County.....	22
VIII.	Glossary of Terms.....	25
IX.	Appendices.....	29
	a. Conservation Subdivision (CSD) Management & Operations.....	29
	b. Mill Revitalization District (MRD) Toolkit.....	33
	c. Land Trusts in the State of Georgia.....	36

I. Introduction

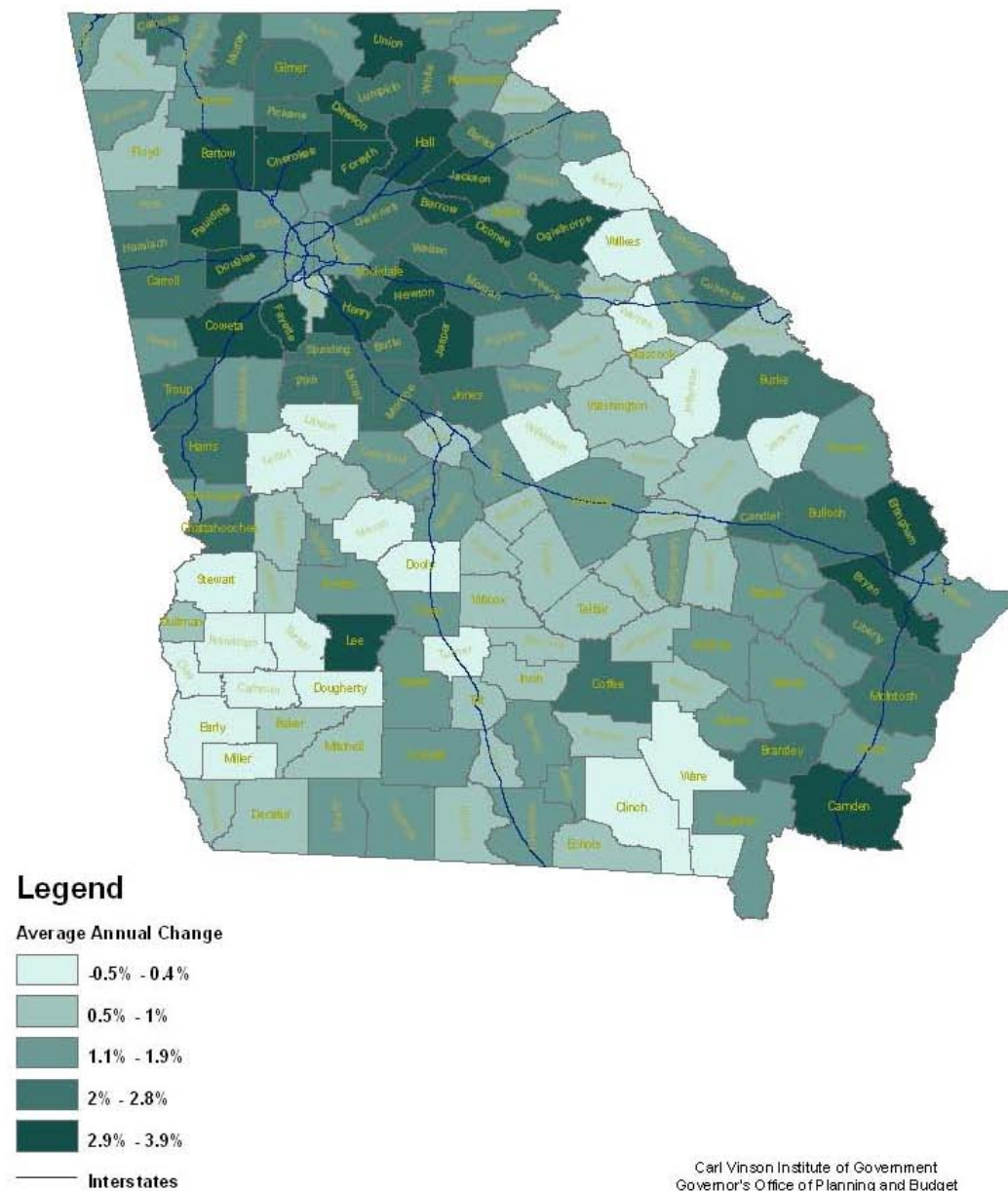
This report is a product of the Vision 2030 effort and a step towards achieving the goals listed in the “15 big ideas,” particularly the green space initiative and the desire for a “culture of wellness.” The final plans and recommendations are also a step towards the specific “Goals and Actions” prepared by the Vision 2030 Greenspace Committee. Identifying the most important resources to preserve, developing a priority system for these lands, and exploring the conservation options available are fundamental components of the openspace plan.

Envisioning and implementing a comprehensive openspace network is a key element in communities that wish to generate quality economic growth, public health and vitality, and environmental sustainability. Creating an “openspace network” is more than the simple goal of setting aside 10 or 20% of county lands as permanently protected greenspace. A well designed open space network examines all of the natural, cultural, and historical attributes of a city and county and preserves these assets into perpetuity. By linking these attributes together, a community is able to create a legible narrative thread that celebrates its history while promoting appropriate growth and new opportunities for residents. The natural beauty of Lake Lanier and the surrounding mountains, the rural character of Hall County, historic crossroads and farms, and the architectural uniqueness of downtown Gainesville all create a local *genius loci*, or sense of place. Designated greenways, pedestrian paths, and bicycle routes help link these elements together, allowing residents and visitors to explore what makes Gainesville and Hall County special and promoting active, healthy lifestyles for all ages.

The state of Georgia is one of the fastest growing states in the union and is projected to double in population by 2040. An additional 10 million people will call themselves residents of Georgia, mostly being accommodated in the Atlanta metropolitan area and along the coastal corridor. While traditionally a rural area, Hall County will be one of the most populous counties in the state by 2030 and

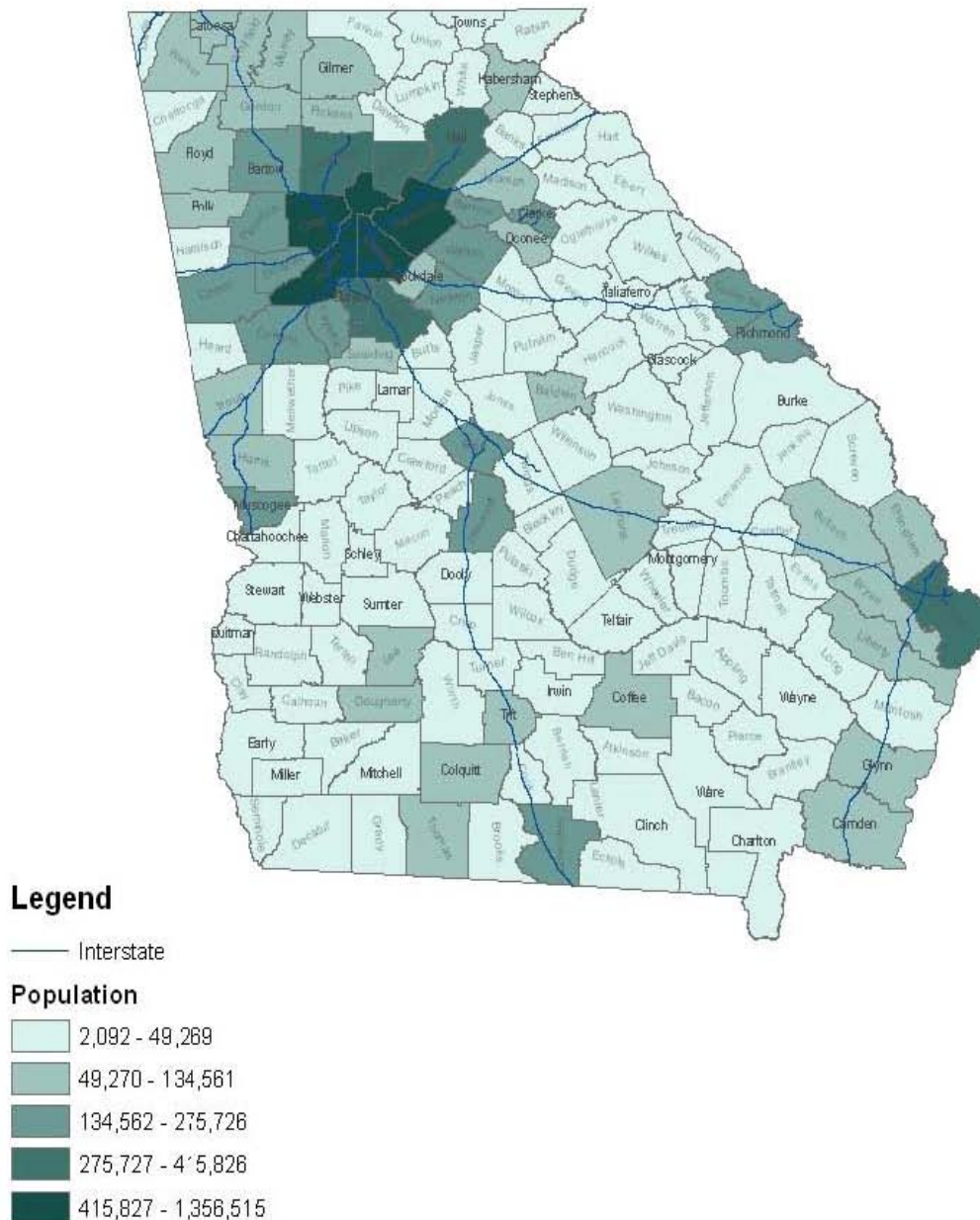
is in the top tier of percent annual change in population between 2013 and 2030.¹

Average Annual Change in Population Georgia Counties: 2010 - 2030



¹ Georgia 2030 Population Projections: Office of Planning and Budget, March 2010

Projected Population Georgia Counties: 2030

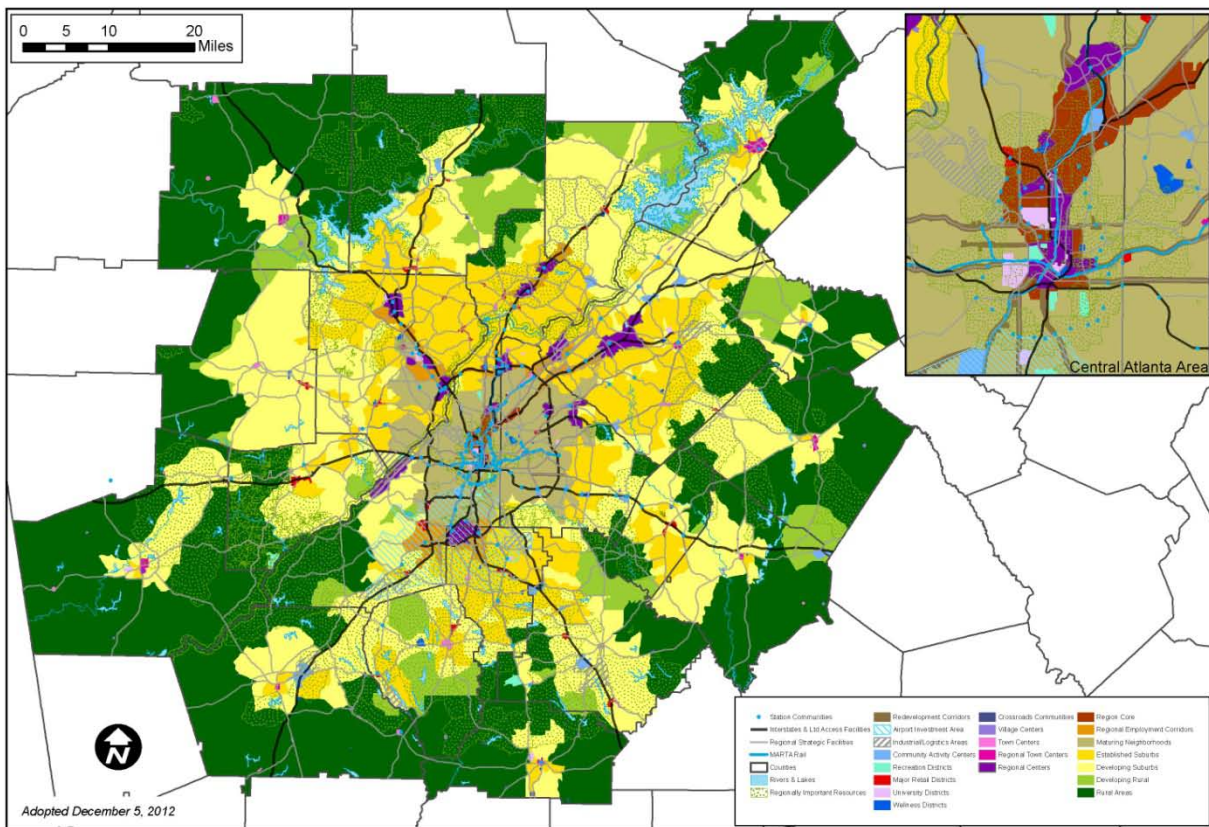


The Governor's Office of Planning and Budget projects that Hall will grow from approximately 200,000 people in 2013 to 380,000 in 2030 and 540,000 by 2040.² Southeastern Hall is now considered a

² Hall County Comprehensive Plan

burgeoning suburb of Atlanta:

PLAN 2040 Unified Growth Policy Map



The city of Gainesville, labeled as a regional town center and employment corridor, is also expected to see rapid population growth.³ Now a city of 35,000 people, Gainesville is projected to triple in population by 2030 (106,000) and will reach 160,000 people by 2040⁴. These statistics emphasize the importance of smart growth policy and openspace planning. Early and comprehensive planning will ensure that Gainesville and Hall County preserve their most valued resources while encouraging economic growth and prosperity.

The purpose of this report is to examine all previous open space plans and studies, review what has been accomplished, and to propose a number of new ideas and goals. The summary and analysis of previous plans is followed by an updated plan and vision for Gainesville and Hall County. Policy recommendations, implementation techniques, and a glossary of terms offer a range of practical tools for realizing the greenspace vision.

³ Plan 2040 Regional Resource Plan, Atlanta Regional Commission

⁴ City of Gainesville Comprehensive Plan

II. Summary of Existing Plans

2000 Hall County Greenspace Plan:

The Hall County Greenspace Plan was created as an application to the Georgia Greenspace Program, which allocated roughly \$700,000 dollars to Gainesville, Flowery Branch and Oakwood and about \$500,000 to Hall County. Because this program no longer exists, future preservation of land in the city and county must come from more localized efforts. All recommendations assume the goal of setting aside 20% of Hall County land area as legally protected greenspace. The final product of this plan, the Hall County Greenspace Vision Map depicts a system of greenways that follow natural streams and watershed lines, proposed quadrants to host additional regional parks, key highway viewshed corridors, stream buffers, watersheds to protect, and key points of interest in the county.

It is worth noting that if the 100 foot stream buffers were in place, the county would be over halfway towards achieving its 20% greenspace goal. These greenways can serve as wildlife corridors only or can include public access and trails where feasible. The plan emphasizes the southeastern portion of the county where residential pressures are greatest.

An important distinction is made in this plan between protected and unprotected greenspace. In 2000, the only permanently protected open spaces were the Corps of Engineer land around Lake Lanier and the Chattahoochee State Park (now Don Carter State Park). The most significant unprotected land were identified as the Chicopee Woods Nature Preserve and the Allen Creek WMA.

2004-05 Hall County Comprehensive Plan:

In terms of open space planning, the “Natural & Cultural Resource Element,” the “Land Use Element,” and the “Transportation Element” sections of this document are all applicable. This Plan offers an in depth inventory of Hydrological, Geological, Geographic, Historical, and Cultural Resources with Goals and Implementation Measures. Generalized policy recommendations include upgrading resource protection standards, extending public infrastructure only to desirable development locations, and requiring more detailed traffic impact analysis/mitigation for major projects. The Comprehensive Plan also set a goal to complete a city and county parks plan and identify future sites, to revise development codes to require a minimum percentage of open space for all developments, and to create a conservation subdivision (CSD) option in rural areas. The plan also states that CSDs should be encouraged as a historic preservation measure where culturally significant areas would be set aside as open space for new communities. Detailed maps and descriptions are provided for all suitable and

unsuitable soils, steep slopes, scenic views, heritage trails, protected species habitats, hydrological resources, archaeological resources, and existing park facilities in Hall County.

2006 Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan:

This plan examines a possible city and countywide network that would better accommodate pedestrian and bicycle traffic. The document provides a detailed analysis of existing conditions, proposed network of sidewalks, bike lanes, and multi-use paths, as well as possible funding sources. The document proposes a phased schedule of projects to be completed between 2005-2010, 2011-2020, and after 2021.

2008 Urban and Community Forestry Management Plan:

The 2008 Urban and Community Forestry Management Plan was created in response to rapid population growth in Gainesville and Hall County and as a tool for preserving forest cover as the area urbanizes. Keep Hall Beautiful and the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce Beautification Committee worked together and with the UGA horticulture and landscape architecture departments to inventory several study areas and to track canopy cover changes over time. The Plan includes a countywide canopy cover analysis and an inventory and assessment for three locations within the Gainesville city limits. The importance of forest cover, its relevance to the Vision 2030 efforts, and an analysis of local tree ordinances are key elements in the study.

Recommendations include requiring a higher percentage of existing trees retained in development projects, performing a survey to identify existing significant, historic, and landmark trees in the city and county, and to increase the overall density credit depending on the type and scope of development. The use of bioswales and bioretention ponds are encouraged as alternatives to traditional curb and gutter designs and as a more natural way to treat stormwater.

2009 Vision 2014: Strategic Parks and Recreation Plan:

The Vision 2014 Parks and Recreation Plan is a comprehensive examination of all existing parks and facilities with park specific assessments and recommendations. Additional community parks, services needed, proposed programming, budget evaluation, and maintenance standards are all included in the study. Vision 2014 lists 19 park sites, \$30 million dollars in capital improvements over a 10 year period, \$12.3 million in expenditures and \$22.8 million in future greenway development. This last number includes 20 miles of new pedestrian and bike trails in Hall County. A section is also devoted

to funding options and programs including SPLOST taxes, impact Fees, TEA grants, and other alternative funding sources.

2012-2030 City of Gainesville Comprehensive Master Plan:

As the official “road map” for the community, the Gainesville Comprehensive Plan is the most extensive planning document available. For the purposes of open space, I was particularly interested in the future development patterns proposed in the plan as well as unique natural qualities, historic resources and character areas that were labeled as key features to protect and preserve. Population projections for Gainesville and the transportation plans required to accommodate those populations were also helpful for open space planning.

The Gainesville Comprehensive Plan has incorporated the “15 big ideas” from vision 2030 and includes many recommendations proposed in previous studies. The Midtown Greenway and Hall County Multi-Purpose Trail are discussed as well as the idea of using sewer easements for future multi-use trails.

2013 Gainesville Transportation Masterplan (Preliminary DRAFT):

The preliminary draft of the transportation plan includes a number of focus areas and recommendations for new roads, alternative modes of transportation, and phased implementation schedules. A boulevard style widening of Green Street, a proposed road east and parallel to Dawsonville Highway, and a series of complete streets in historic downtown Gainesville are among the recommendations.

III. Progress to Date

Additional Green Space:

- Chicopee Woods placed under conservation easement in 2001
- Cedar Creek Reservoir (143 acres) and Surrounding Greenspace (377 acres)
- 2012: North Hall Park (127 acres)
- Cherokee Bluffs (100+ acres)
- Williams Mill (48 acres)
- 2003 Healans Mill (4 acres)
- East Hall 90 acre Sports Complex
- 2002 Smithgall Woodland Botanical Gardens (168 acres, opening 2014)

Environmental Protection Measures:

- Oconee River Watersupply Watershed Overlay Zone [See Glossary]
- Chestatee and Chatahoochee River Protection [See Glossary]
- Conservation Subdivision Ordinance added as permitted right rather than special use

Greenspace Statistics:

- Current Greenspace:
 - o 16, 676 Acres (mostly owned by government entities)
 - o Hall County: 252, 130 Acres (274, 730 with Lake Lanier)
 - o 6.6 % of Total Acreage (excluding Lake Lanier)
- Future Greenspace:
 - o 10% = 25, 214 Acres (8, 538 to go)
 - o 15% = 37, 821 Acres (21, 145 to go)
 - o 20% = 50, 428 Acres (33, 752 to go)
 - o 1,985 acres/year between 2014-2030 to reach 20% Goal

IV. Plan Recommendations

a.) Create an Openspace Vision

Before proposing a series of implementation techniques, it is important to establish a vision for an openspace network for Gainesville and Hall County. Marketing and branding a vision creates synergy in a community and encourages public involvement and cooperation. Because the city of Gainesville is projected to triple in size by 2030 and Hall County is projected to double in size, it is important to envision what that growth will look like. While the urban areas of Gainesville, Oakwood and Flowery Branch are likely to see a fair amount of infill projects, there will also be many residents locating to the suburban fringe areas. As the economy recovers and the number of construction projects escalates, it is important to have a unified vision, smart growth policies, and economic incentives in place.

While many plans and studies have been completed, it would be helpful to have one comprehensive graphic open space plan (one each for the city and county) whose layers could be turned on and off for clarity. The attached county plan, for example, shows existing and proposed bicycle routes, proposed greenways, and focus areas that could be formatted by layer for online viewing. While efforts in this study have focused on a citywide greenway system, future effort should be made to

create a plan that shows the greenways and parks as well as pedestrian routes, bicycle lanes, public transportation routes, and points of interest.

The Openspace Vision:

Sydney Lanier memorialized the beauty of the foothills region when he composed the poem, “Song of the Chattahoochee” in 1877. The river is personified as a spiritual force that flows through the rolling hills and valleys of Habersham and Hall Counties:

All down the hills of Habersham,
All through the valleys of Hall,
The rushes cried *Abide, abide*,
The wilful waterweeds held me thrall,
The laving laurel turned my tide,
The ferns and the fondling grass said *Stay*,
The dewberry dipped for to work delay,
And the little reeds sighed *Abide, abide*,
Here in the hills of Habersham,
Here in the valleys of Hall.

While the narrator in this case refers to the Chattahoochee River, one can apply this lyrical poem to the residents and visitors of the region. The unique setting of Gainesville and its surrounding natural beauty will entice the visitor and resident to “*abide*” in a historic city nestled between the Lake and the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains. A comprehensive open space network and greenways system is a key element in preserving what makes Gainesville and Hall County unique. The Rock Creek Greenway, Midtown Greenway, and Central Hall Trail are all exemplary efforts in creating linear parkways for people to enjoy within the Gainesville city limits and extending into the county. The following plan has three main elements: a countywide greenway system, a series of focus areas that contain important natural, cultural, and historic features to preserve, and a priority system for realizing the design. Implementation measures and public policy recommendation are discussed afterwards.

Key Elements of the Plan:

1.) “The Foothills Greenway System”

- a. A countywide system that follows natural streams and floodplains and explores the “valleys and hills” that Sydney Lanier memorialized in “The Song of the Chattahoochee”. Electric Transmission lines, sewer easements, and other public utilities are also used to connect these paths together.

2.) “The Sapphire Necklace”

- a. This greenway encircles the city like a necklace, draped over the foothills and winding along sapphire streams. Weaving its way through the Chattahoochee and Oconee Watersheds, various public parks, and newly developed Conservation Subdivisions, this multi-use trail signifies a new cultural zeitgeist that promotes smart growth, conservation, and community vibrancy.
- b. The proposed alignment for the Sapphire Necklace lies just outside the city limits of Gainesville and will most likely become incorporated as new suburban developments expand. The multi-use trail follows several streams and connects to Lake Lanier and the Central Hall Trail. It also connects the two largest green spaces in Hall County; Chicopee Woods and the Allen Creek WMA. The name and trajectory of the trail emphasize the natural drainage pattern of local watersheds and its proximity to Lake Lanier.

3.) “Thompson’s Ferry”

- a. An active, mixed use community along the shores of Gainesville’s most popular openspace, Lake Lanier. Residents and visitors stroll along a lakeside promenade with restaurants, live music, and ferry rides up the Chattahoochee. Greenway trails wind through the development, connecting to Smithgall Woodland Garden, Lynwood Nature Preserve and Downtown Gainesville.
- b. Because the Chattahoochee River was not a navigable river and Gainesville historically never had a harbor, “Thompson’s Ferry” could be a possible replacement name for “Harbor Town.” A historic ferry crossing was located near Holly Park and Thompson Bridge.

- c. This development would increase tourism, provide a stronger connection between Lake Lanier and downtown, and provide a new asset that draws on Gainesville's historic past.

b.) Create a Priority System & Phased Implementation Plan

The countywide conceptual plan identifies prioritized focus areas where preservation efforts should be made and land should be set aside as open space. Implementation measures and policy recommendations are included but a specific phasing plan and budget would be the next phase.

Synthesis Process & Open Space Prioritization:

One of the main goals of the Vision 2030 Open Space Committee is to create a system for prioritizing the most important lands to preserve. Based on this goal, the following plan outlines a process of identifying lands based on environmental, cultural, and historical attributes as well as proximity to urbanizing areas, sensitive watersheds, road access, and proposed greenways. All existing plans and studies were reviewed to guide decisions as well as data gathered from Geographic Information Systems (GIS). A final graphic is included below that depicts the geographical locations of the most significant open space in the city and county and a prioritized list of these lands.

Attributes to consider in Conservation Efforts:

Natural Resources:

- Restrictive Rock / Unsuitable Soil
- Slopes in Excess of 25%
- Protected Species Habitat
- Hydrological Resources:
 - o Stream Buffers and Flood Zones (100 year)
 - o Groundwater Recharge Areas
 - o Sensitive Watersheds / Water Supply
- Scenic Viewsheds (Natural & Agricultural)
- Wildlife Corridors

Proximity to Built Environment:

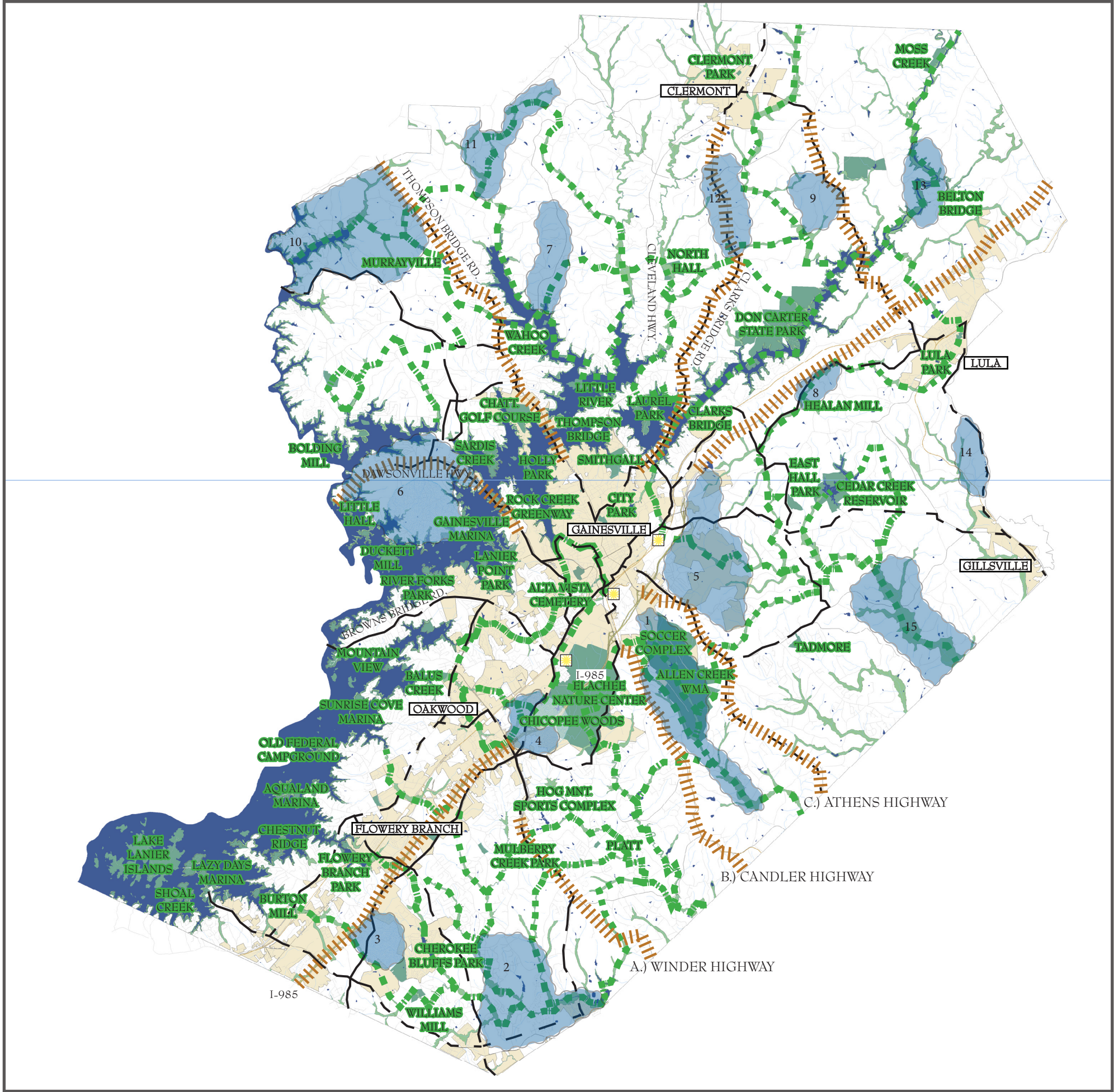
- Proximity to Pedestrian/Bicycle Networks (Existing and Proposed)

- Proximity to Historic Resources:
 - o Ferry Crossings
 - o Historic Crossroads
 - o Heritage Trails
 - o Abandoned Railroads
 - o Archaeological Sites
 - o Historic Buildings, Points of Interest
- Proximity to Gainesville
- Proximity to Suburbanizing SE Hall
- Availability & Size of Land Parcels

c.) Create a Comprehensive Openspace Plan

A comprehensive Openspace Plan should include the city and county scale and should combine previous plans and studies into one document. The Hall County Masterplan, the City of Gainesville Conceptual Plan, and the Gainesville Greenway Plan are depicted on the following pages.

OPENSOURCE MASTERPLAN:
HALL COUNTY, GEORGIA



LEGEND

- MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES
- LAKE LANIER
- STREAM BUFFERS/ FLOOD ZONES
- STREAMS/RIVERS
- GROUNDWATER RECHARGE AREAS
- EXISTING GREENSPACE
- RAIL LINES
- INTERSTATE - 985
- STATE ROAD
- LOCAL ROAD
- PRIVATE ROAD
- PROPOSED BICYCLE ROUTES
- PROPOSED GREENWAYS
- SCENIC VIEWS
- FOCUS AREAS
- HISTORIC MILL VILLAGES

** Focus area attributes and recommendations are on the following page.



FOCUS AREA	ATTRIBUTES	RECOMMENDATIONS
1.)	ALLEN CREEK MWA	A.) CONSERVATION EASEMENT
	WATERSHED SENSITIVITY	B.) TURN LANDFILL SITE INTO PARK
	SLOPES > 25%	
	PERIODIC HIGH WATER TABLE	
	RESTRICTIVE ROCK	
2.)	ROBERTS CROSSROADS	A.) ACQUIRE LAND OR CONSERVATION EASEMENT
	EAGLE RANCH	
	PROTECTED SPECIES HABITAT	
3.)	GROUNDWATER RECHARGE AREA	A.) REQUIRE CSDs IN NEW DEVELOPMENT
4.)	GROUNDWATER RECHARGE AREA	A.) REQUIRE CSDs IN NEW DEVELOPMENT
5.)	RABBIT TOWN	A.) INCENTIVES FOR CSDs DESIGN
	SLOPES > 25%	
	SUBURBANIZING AREA	
6.)	GROUNDWATER RECHARGE AREA	A.) REQUIRE CSDs IN NEW DEVELOPMENT
	PROTECTED SPECIES HABITAT	
	ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE	
7.)	HERITAGE TRAIL	A.) ACQUIRE LAND OR CONSERVATION EASEMENT
	ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE	
8.)	HEALANS MILL	A.) ACQUIRE MORE LAND AROUND MILL
	PROPOSED GREENWAY	
9.)	GLADES FARMHOUSE	A.) ACQUIRE LAND OR CONSERVATION EASEMENT
	ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE	
10.)	CHESTATEE RIVER WATERSHED PROTECTION	A.) ACQUIRE LAND OR CONSERVATION EASEMENT
	ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE	
	PROTECTED SPECIES HABITAT	
11.)	WAHOO CREEK WATERSHED	A.) ACQUIRE LAND OR CONSERVATION EASEMENT
	HERITAGE TRAIL	
12.)	SHOALS GLADE	A.) CONSERVATION RESERVE PROGRAM
	BROOKTON CROSSROADS	
	PROPOSED RAILS-TO-TRAILS PROJECT	
	ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE	
13.)	PROTECTED SPECIES HABITAT	A.) ACQUIRE LAND OR CONSERVATION EASEMENT
	HERITAGE TRAIL	
	ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE	
14.)	HERITAGE TRAIL	A.) ACQUIRE LAND OR CONSERVATION EASEMENT
	ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE	
15.)	OCONEE FLOODPLAIN	A.) FARM WETLANDS PROGRAM





ROAD	ATTRIBUTES	RECOMMENDATIONS:	
			1.) SCENIC VIEWSHED OVERLAY ZONE
A. WINDER HIGHWAY	SCENIC VIEWSHED		- STRICT DESIGN GUIDELINES
	CHESTNUT MOUNTAIN CROSSROADS		- BILLBOARD CONTROLS
	DESIGNATED HERITAGE TRAIL		- DESIGN REVIEW PROCESS
B. CANDLER HIGHWAY	SCENIC VIEWSHED		
	CANDLER CROSSROADS		
	KLONDIKE CROSSROADS		
C. ATHENS HIGHWAY	SCENIC VIEWSHED		
	DESIGNATED HERITAGE TRAIL		

**“THE SAPPHIRE
NECKLACE”**

THE GAINESVILLE GREENWAY SYSTEM

(CONCEPTUAL PLAN)

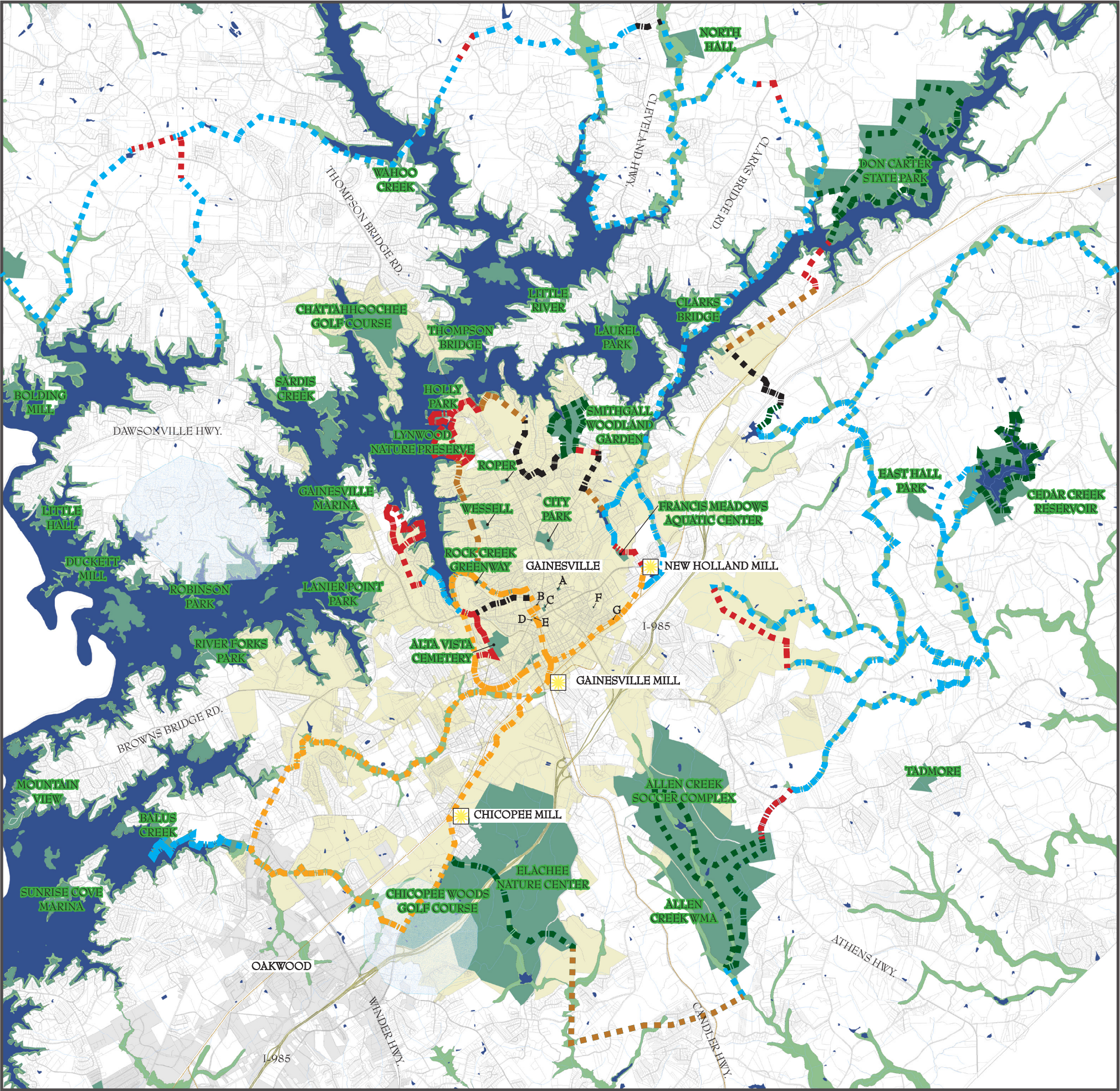
LEGEND

-  THE SAPPHIRE NECKLACE
-  CONSERVATION SUBDIVISION ZONE
-  GREENWAY LOOPS
-  HISTORIC MILL VILLAGES

The concept for the “Sapphire Necklace” utilizes the natural topography and drainage patterns of the city to link Gainesville’s suburbs and Lake Lanier together. The greenway mostly follows existing streams, weaving its way through the Chattahoochee and Oconee Watersheds, various public parks, and a future Conservation Subdivision Zone. The greenway encircles the city like a necklace, draped over the foothills and winding along sapphire streams.

**“THE SAPPHIRE
NECKLACE”**

THE GAINESVILLE GREENWAY SYSTEM



GAINESVILLE CITY PARKS:

- A.) BRENAU GREENSPACE
- B.) THE SQUARE
- C.) CITY HALL GREEN
- D.) POULTRY PARK
- E.) ENGINE 309 PARK
- F.) FAIR STREET PARK
- G.) DESOTA PARK

LEGEND

- GAINESVILLE CITY LIMITS
- LAKE LANIER
- STREAM BUFFERS/ FLOOD ZONES
- STREAMS/RIVERS
- GROUNDWATER RECHARGE AREAS
- EXISTING GREENSPACE
- RAIL LINES
- INTERSTATE - 985
- STATE ROAD
- LOCAL ROAD
- PRIVATE ROAD
- GREENWAY TYPE:
 - PARK TRAIL
 - EXISTING / PLANNED
 - STREAM / FLOOD PLAIN
 - UTILITY TRAIL
 - ROAD IMPROVEMENT
 - EASEMENT OR ACQUISITION
 - HISTORIC MILL VILLAGES

The greenway types shown in this graphic illustrate how the Gainesville Greenway System will be created. Green lines represent trails that cross existing park spaces. These trails may already exist within the park or may need to be created for connectivity. The orange lines are trails that already exist or are planned to be constructed. Blue lines follow natural streams and flood plain areas. Brown trails follow public or private utility lines and were used when other connections were not available. Black lines follow existing roads and would require ROW improvements to accommodate the mutli-use trail. Finally, the red lines are proposed trails that would require purchase of an easement or fee simple acquisition for implementation.



VII. Policy Recommendations and Implementation Techniques

- a. General Tools for Preservation and Greenspace Implementation
- b. Greenway Implementation Techniques
- c. Agricultural and Forest Land Preservation
- d. Conservation Subdivision (CSD) Policy Recommendations
- e. Scenic Viewshed Protection
- f. Increasing Revenue with Greenspace
- g. Recommendations for Gainesville & Hall County

a. General Tools for Preservation and Greenspace Implementation:

- Fee Simple Acquisition. Limited based on funding and public support.
- Conservation Easements:
 - o Marketing: Educational materials should be made available to landowners & public officials, explaining the economic benefits of conservation easements
- Purchase of Development Rights. Can be used when a landowner is unwilling to donate a conservation easement.
- Other Partial Interests in Land: Conservation Reserve (CRP) Program, Farm Wetlands Program (FWP), Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentives Program (VPA-HIP). These kinds of programs offset the political cost of regulation and the financial costs of land acquisition. [See Glossary]
- Acquiring easements or using utility lines as Greenways.
- Offering tax breaks in return for farmland/timberland protection
- Conservation Subdivisions (CSD): This type of cluster development creates permanently protected open space with development. Details in CSD section.
- Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) Programs: established through local zoning ordinance. TDR bank can be created to buy development rights with public funds and sell to developers/landowners. Could offer this as an option.

b. Greenway Implementation Techniques:

- Fee simple acquisition / Purchase of easements along Proposed Greenways

- Utilize natural systems, flood plain areas
- Encourage CSD Developments along Proposed Greenways
- Use public ROWs for greenways in more urban areas (ie. Sewer Easements).
- Gain access to private ROWs for greenways in more rural areas (ie. Georgia Power Electrical Transmission Lines).
- Rails-to-Trails Program (Midtown Greenway underway, proposed trail through Hall County)

c. Agricultural & Forest Lands Preservation:

- Offer a reduced property value assessment for tax purposes for those following “Best Management Practices.”
- Implement a tax abatement term easement program. This reduces property taxes if participating landowners put their land under an agricultural / forest conservation easement for a certain time period (ie. 15-20 years).
- Offer a reduced tax rate if the landowner agrees to a CSD rezoning of their property. This offers an incentive for landowners/developers to put limitations of the pattern of development that will occur on their property but without negatively affecting the economic yield.
- Voluntary Public Access & Habitat Incentives Program (VPA-HIP) [See Glossary]
 - Public access for wildlife dependent recreation
- Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) & Farm Wetlands Program (FWP)
 - Both administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA)
 - Yearly rental payment (10-15 year) to take sensitive land out of production and plant native species. [See Glossary]

d. Conservation Subdivision (CSD) Policy Recommendations

- Market Benefits to Developers, Realtors, Public Officials, and the General Public:
 - Economic:
 - Federal Income Tax Deduction On Conservation Land (into perpetuity)
 - State Income Tax Credit on Conservation Land (into perpetuity)
 - Lowered Infrastructure/overall development costs.
 - Greenspace fosters economic growth & creates desirable places to live.

- Public Health/Social:
 - Greenspace promotes an active community and lowers rates of obesity and associated health problems.
 - Greenspace improves overall mental health in a community by providing places of respite & contemplation in the natural environment
 - CSDs foster community involvement and provide accessible trails and greenspace.
- Environmental:
 - CSDs help maintain forest cover, which ensures better air quality.
 - CSDs preserve biodiversity and natural habitats by setting aside open space.
 - CSDs help combat pollution by encouraging pedestrian/bicycle activity rather than vehicular traffic.
- Encourage Density
 - Create a sliding scale that increases the density bonus based on:
 - The percent area set aside for conservation
 - Linkage to the larger green space plan or trail network
 - Public Access to all or a portion of the open space
- Regulatory Options:
 - Adopt a Conservation Subdivision Zoning that requires cluster development.
 - Increase Impact Fees on conventional developments so that CSDs appear more desirable.
 - May be used in more sensitive areas, as outlined in the 2000 Hall County Greenspace Plan. This could be an overlay zone or a new form of zoning altogether.
- Establish a Local Land Trust
 - Allows easy transfer and management of CSD conservation lands.

e. Scenic Viewshed Protection:

- Regulatory:
 - Zoning Overlay District
 - Restricts building/billboard heights, signage
 - Can withhold public infrastructure from designated areas
 - Design Guidelines / Review Process

- Educational & Voluntary:
 - o Visual Assessment Workshops
 - o Activities based on assessment (community walks, photographic expositions etc.)
 - o Encourage Voluntary Protection of scenic areas.
- Incentive-Based:
 - o Tax Break for owners who donate land or easements
 - o Awards Program to honor Conservation Efforts
- Land Purchase:
 - o TDR Programs: Local governments can buy development rights from “sending areas” and put them into a bank to sell to developers in “receiving areas.”

f. Increasing Revenue with Green Space:

- General:
 - o Economic Growth & Development follows Greenspace
 - o Increase in Property Taxes, Sales Taxes
 - o CSDs lower infrastructure cost to Developer and Local Government.
- Tourism & Spending:
 - o Tourism Corridor Planning
 - Heritage trails, Scenic roads, waterways, promenades
 - Open space corridors that connect historical sites, natural areas, waterfronts, downtowns, and other tourist attractions.
 - o Growing Interest in Agri-tourism:
 - Proximity to Atlanta
 - Wineries, Traditional farms
 - Success of the Ellijay Apple Festival & Chateau Élan
 - Roberts Family Blueberry Farm (Hall County)
 - Agricultural mazes (Buford Corn Maze, Jaemor Farms)
 - o Yearly Festivals & Activities that Increase Tourism
 - o Art Installations that attract visitors, encourage spending
- Leasing Options:
 - o Private-Public Partnerships to create parks and generate income

- Wildlife Management Areas (WMAs): hunting and fishing leases help cover operating expenses for public or private land. WMAs are not considered permanently protected greenspace but can be put under a conservation easement.
- Silviculture practices can also generate revenue.

g. Recommendations for Gainesville & Hall County:

Gainesville:

- Create a Phased Plan for “The Sapphire Necklace”
- Establish a CSD Zoning or Implement Incentives for CSD Development
- Create a Phased Plan for “The Gainesville Greenway System”
- Establish a Local Land Trust
- Allen Creek:
 - All or part of Allen Creek WMA should be permanently protected for its natural resources, recreational opportunities, restrictive rock bed, excessive slope, and archaeological value.
 - The Georgia Water Coalition listed Allen Creek in their 2012 “Dirty Dozen,” as one of the most problematic waterways in the state due to industrial pollution and its proximity to the Hall County landfill site. Because landfill sites cannot be developed, it is possible to convert them into nature preserves or public parks. Mount Trashmore in Virginia Beach, Virginia is one example. Landfill parks are a didactic tool and an amenity for the public.
 - The Allen Creek WMA is currently leased for bow hunting and can continue this revenue generator if the land is put under conservation. As the area becomes more developed, a more detailed program should be created for various activities at different times of the year.
- Alta Vista Cemetery:
 - As the final resting place of Lt. General James Longstreet, two former Georgia Governors, an astronaut, a rocket scientist, and even a circus performer, Alta Vista is a historical community asset. Due to poor connectivity, the site is underused. Cemeteries have a long history as being used as public parks. In The United States, Memorial Cemeteries, Lawn-Park Cemeteries, and the “Garden Cemetery” Movement gained momentum between the Civil War and the 1920’s.

- Notable Examples: Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, Massachusetts and Forest Hills Cemetery in Boston.
 - The cemetery should be incorporate into the Gainesville Open Space Plan and provide pedestrian/bicycle connections to it. An activities program should be developed and more trees and landscaping should be planted for shade and aesthetics. Marked trails, an open lawn area, and park benches are common elements in a usable cemetery park.
- Create a Looping Greenway System within the City Limits (See Map)
 - Create a new loop trail through Holly Park, Lynwood Preserve and adjoining city lands.
 - Create a multi-use trail along Alta Vista Rd, through the historic cemetery, and along Jones St in order to interconnect with the proposed trail along Pearl Nix Pkwy (which will create a loop with the Rock Creek, Midtown, and Central Hall Greenway).
 - Coordinate with Milliken to include a greenway loop through the proposed Mixed Use Redevelopment of New Holland.
 - Dawsonville Highway Loop through possible Lakefront Development Site.
 - Connect Holly Park to Smithgall Gardens (using transmission lines and neighborhood street improvements).
 - Connect Smithgall to Brenau Lake & New Holland Site.

Hall County:

- Create a Phased Plan for “The Foothills Greenway System”
 - Market Proposed routes and benefits to the community
- Create CSD Zoning
 - Regulatory or Incentive-based
 - Work with landowners/developers to include greenway trails/public access through proposed developments
- Connect Chicopee Woods with Allen Creek (via electric transmission line ROW)
- Acquire parcels for greenspace or apply various protection measures in mapped “focus areas”
 - These are based on watershed protection, steep slopes, soil suitability, proximity to proposed greenways or bicycle routes, scenic viewsheds, historic resources, and archaeological value.

- Incorporate Greenway Planning (from the 2000 Greenspace Study) into the Comprehensive Plan. Focus on suburbanizing SE Hall first. Publicize and Market ideas to residents. Connectivity is key.
- Explore leasing options to generate income:
 - o Hunting & Fishing Leases in WMA / Conservation Areas
- Contact Centennial Farm Owners and market the VPA-HIP Program and other Conservation Options.
- Create & Update a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Parks and Recreation layer.
- Set a time frame, budget, and implementation plan for setting aside 10, 15, and 20% of lands as conservation.
 - o Current Greenspace:
 - 16, 676 Acres (mostly owned by government entities)
 - Hall County: 252, 130 Acres (274, 730 with Lake Lanier)
 - 6.6 % of total land area
 - o Future Greenspace:
 - 10% = 25, 214 (8, 538 to go)
 - 15% = 37, 821 (21, 145 to go)
 - 20% = 50, 428 (33, 752 to go)
 - 1 ,985 acres per year would need to be acquired/protected between 2014-2030 to reach 20% by 2030.

VIII. Glossary of Terms

Conservation Easements:

“A conservation easement is an agreement between a landowner and another party, either a government entity or a private land trust, to forego some of the development potential of a tract in order to protect the conservation value. If an easement is perpetual and satisfies one or more of four conservation purposes established by the IRS, the landowner may be entitled to federal and state income tax deductions, a reduction in estate taxes, and reevaluation of the ad valorem tax” (Hall County Greenspace Plan 17).

Conservation Subdivision Ordinance:

“As one of the many tools a community may use to create a green infrastructure network, conservation subdivision design is one of the most widely utilized. Conservation subdivision design is the concept of allowing development of buildings closer together on a smaller portion of land so that components of green infrastructure may be preserved as part of the amenity for the development. A conventional subdivision usually divides all of the available land into lots based upon the minimum lot size established by a zoning ordinance. In contrast, conservation subdivision models typically divorce the concepts of density and lot size. The overall density of a project may be determined by the gross acreage divided by the minimum lot size, but the actual dimensional requirements of each lot may be reduced to allow a more flexible placement of buildings. Open space resulting from conservation or clustering is typically more contiguous and protected by a conservation easement preventing development in the future.”

http://www.sustainablecitiesinstitute.org/view/page.basic/class/feature.class/Lesson_Conervation_Subdivision_Design

Farm Service Agency Programs:

- **Conservation Reserve Program (CRP):**

“The Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is a land conservation program administered by the Farm Service Agency (FSA). In exchange for a yearly rental payment, farmers enrolled in the program agree to remove environmentally sensitive land from agricultural production and plant species that will improve environmental health and quality. Contracts for land enrolled in CRP are 10-15 years in length. The long-term goal of the program is to re-establish valuable land cover to help improve water quality,

prevent soil erosion, and reduce loss of wildlife habitat. Signed into law by President Ronald Reagan in 1985, CRP is the largest private-lands conservation program in the United States. Thanks to voluntary participation by farmers and land owners, CRP has improved water quality, reduced soil erosion, and increased habitat for endangered and threatened species” (<http://www.fsa.usda.gov>).

- **Farm Wetlands Program (FWP):**

“The Farmable Wetlands Program (FWP) is designed to restore previously farmed wetlands and wetland buffer to improve both vegetation and water flow. FWP is a voluntary program to restore up to one million acres of farmable wetlands and associated buffers. Participants must agree to restore the wetlands, establish plant cover, and to not use enrolled land for commercial purposes. Plant cover may include plants that are partially submerged or specific types of trees. The Farm Services Agency (FSA) runs the program through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) with assistance from other government agencies and local conservation groups” (<http://www.fsa.usda.gov>).

Green Infrastructure:

“Green infrastructure is an approach that communities can choose to maintain healthy waters, provide multiple environmental benefits and support sustainable communities. Unlike single-purpose gray stormwater infrastructure, which uses pipes to dispose of rainwater, green infrastructure uses vegetation and soil to manage rainwater where it falls. By weaving natural processes into the built environment, green infrastructure provides not only stormwater management, but also flood mitigation, air quality management, and much more.

At a time when so much of our infrastructure is in need of replacement or repair and so few communities can foot the bill, we need resilient and affordable solutions that meet many objectives at once. Green infrastructure is one solution.”

<http://water.epa.gov/infrastructure/greeninfrastructure/index.cfm>

Groundwater Recharge Areas:

These areas are defined by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as any portion of the earth’s surface where water infiltrates into the ground to replenish an aquifer. Hall County has adopted zoning ordinances in these areas to comply with DCA standards.

North Oconee Water Supply Watershed Overlay Zone:

This zoning regulation imposes 100 foot buffers on perennial streams, 150 foot setback requirements on development within the watershed, and limits impervious surface in the watershed to 25% (Gainesville and Hall County Comprehensive Plan: Natural and Cultural Resources Element 2).

Planned Community District:

This type of zoning encourages large-scale developers to introduce innovative design components that include mixed-use, openspace and limited impervious surfaces. A minimum of 20% total acreage is set aside as recreation, conservation, or openspace. It is required that a conservation easement is placed on the openspace and can be managed by a Home Owner's Association, Land Trust, or government entity. (Hall County Greenspace Plan 14).

Protected River Corridors and Floodplains:

The Chestatee and Chattahoochee Rivers are both protected rivers. The city and county have enacted ordinances requiring 25 and 50 foot setbacks on all streams and rivers within the two watersheds (Gainesville and Hall County Comprehensive Plan: Natural and Cultural Resources Element 5).

Purchase of Development Rights:

"This occurs when a government body or other entity purchases a development right and then retires it so that it is never used, rather than transferring it to be used at a receiving site. In those situations where a landowner is unwilling to donate a conservation easement, it might be appropriate for the county to purchase the development rights instead." Funding sources include general obligation bonds, SPLOST taxes, or increased motel/hotel taxes. "The purchase of development rights, is negotiated between landowner and the Trust for Public Land on behalf of the county (Hall County Greenspace Plan 17, 18).

Transferable Development Rights (TDR) Program:

"Under a Transferable Development Rights (TDR) Program, a local government designates an area or areas it wants to preserve as "sending" areas. This might be prime agricultural land, or a critical groundwater recharge zone. These areas may subsequently be zoned at about one unit per 20 to 25 acres. The government then designates areas where it wants to grow more intensely due to existing or planned infrastructure; these are called "receiving" areas. The TDR Program allows the landowner in a

sending area to sell his development rights for use in the receiving area, then to place a permanent conservation easement on his sending property” (Hall County Greenspace Plan 17).

Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentives Program (VPA-HIP):

“The Voluntary Public Access and Habitat Incentives Program (VPA-HIP) encourages private landowners to voluntarily make their land available to the public for wildlife-dependent recreation. States and tribes approved for funding of this Farm Service Agency (FSA) program use the funds as incentives to encourage private landowners of farms, ranches, and forests to make that land available to the public for wildlife-dependent recreation. This may include hunting or fishing. The overall goal of VPA-HIP is to enhance wildlife habitat and management and to boost local economies through activities that attract wildlife enthusiasts.

Why Is VPA-HIP important?

Lack of access, particularly in urbanized areas, is one of the most common reasons stated by individuals as to why they do not participate in traditional outdoor activities. This program allows the public to use private land for hunting, fishing, and other outdoor recreational activities. In doing so, it allows the public to enjoy the benefits of FSA conservation programs, such as increased wildlife populations” (<http://www.fsa.usda.gov>).

IX. Appendices

Appendix A:

Conservation Subdivision (CSD) Management & Operations

Management Techniques for Conservation Lands:

- Conservation Easements:
 - o Conservation Easements are typically used and held by land trusts, conservancies, and other nonprofits. They can also be held by a government body.
 - o A conservation easement can provide a financial advantage in terms of federal taxation, but only when the conservation restriction serves a legitimate public purpose and when the building density is lowered to the degree that lowers the property's economic value. This is not an issue with the density neutral design of CSDs.
- Creating an Effective Home Owners Association:
 - o Most common form of ownership for the open space.
 - o Membership must be automatic for owners of lots, homes (condition of sale)
 - o Authorize HOA to place liens on property of members who fail to pay dues.
 - o Minimize regular maintenance costs
- Management Plans and Permanent Funding Sources:
 - o Zoning Regulations should require automatic membership in HOAs, granting lien authority and also requiring developers to submit management plans for conservation lands and open spaces in the subdivision.
 - o The Natural Lands Trust has a model "Maintenance and Operations Plan" that developers can use as a guide.
 - o If land is given to a land trust, it is usually stipulated that a reserve fund must be established by the donor, interest from which would cover operating expenses. Assuming a 5% interest income, the size of the fund must be 20 times as large as the projected average yearly maintenance costs. Because donors usually can't make that size contribution, land trusts generally work with donors to generate this endowment through additional "endowment lots." Local zoning must be amended to permit a small

density bonus for the purpose of ensuring that HOAs or Land Trusts will have the financial means to implement a Maintenance and Operations Plan.

- It is best to include an open space assessment as part of each homeowner's tax bill (minimal cost) and to require the HOA to carry liability insurance coverage.

Endowment Funds for Ongoing Maintenance:

- Home Owners Associations (HOAs) can raise annual operating funds whereas land trusts and other nonprofits cannot.
- Funds can come from the developer through the sale of additional lots (above the normal permitted density).
- The size of the endowment should be such that interest generated annually covers the ongoing expenses of managing the property (taxes, liability insurance premiums, mowing/maintenance).
- If the conservation land is farmland, the lease income should offset taxes and liability insurance premiums

Encouraging CSDs in Georgia:

Incentives:

- Federal Income Tax Deductions
 - Can be applied to land set aside for outdoor recreation, natural habitat, preservation of farmland and forestland, and preservation of historically important areas. Developers can effectively lower the net costs of development after the deduction is taken. Infrastructure costs are also lower.
- State Income Tax Credit:
 - 2006 Conservation Tax Credit Act, modified in 2008
 - Allows donors to deduct 25% of fair market value of donated land from state income tax. Carried over for a maximum of 10 years (GA is one of 15 states who offers this tax break).
 - Does not apply if a CSD increases development density
- Density:
 - Most CSDs are "density neutral," meaning they have the same lot yield (just smaller with common open space).

- Density can be used as an incentive for CSDs and a disincentive to conventional layouts. A city or county government can create an ordinance that reduces the density allowed if the design does not provide for a specific open space percentage. With this approach, one avoids the problem of not being eligible for the Conservation Tax Credit.
- In Athens-Clarke County, CSDs are allowed in the AR zone where the typical density is 1 unit/10 acres. CSD designation allows 1 unit/5 acres.
- Incentive Method:
 - Sliding scale that increases the amount of density allowed based on:
 - Total area protected (percentage)
 - Linkage to the overall greenspace network
 - Allowing a public greenway to cross the property or allowing public access to the CSD openspace.
- A Conservation Ordinance should expedite the permitting process for discretionary review and reduce the turnaround time for approval. A local government can have a dedicated staff member that specializes in CSD plan review. This position may be hard to fund in smaller jurisdictions so it may be better to have a regional expert funded by small contributions by several participating cities and counties. Instead of an environmental consultant handling national and state permitting, this advocate could help coordinate at all levels of government, linking state and federal permits with local permitting requirements. The fastest growing counties around the Metro Atlanta area (including Hall) should consider pooling resources for a regional expert.
- Marketing:
 - The Local Government
 - Lower Infrastructure costs of cluster development
 - Higher property values and taxes
 - The Potential Buyer:
 - Added privacy benefits and larger feeling of lots due to abutment to natural lands.
 - Ability to access greenspace as an “amenity.”
 - Realtor Education:
 - Georgia approved CSD continuing education classes are available.

- A marketing list of a CSD should be provided to realtors and the buying public. Home builders may want to seek out “ecobrokers” to market the property to appropriate clientele. (Ecobroker.com)
- Public Recognition and Awards:
 - Urban Land Institute, AIA, and the Southface Energy Institute all offer recognition for conservation design. Green Certificate Program.
- Education
 - Outreach Materials should be distributed to local planning offices with permit application materials. Advertising should also be posted on local government websites. Workshops can be held to allow developers to express concerns. This allows educators and developers to label the issues (monetary, design etc). All parties must understand the myriad benefits and incentives of CSDs.
 - The general public also must be educated, particularly if the local jurisdiction is making an effort to link protected open spaces of subdivisions with a larger open space network.
 - The greenspace website should have a link to a CSD specific site for public education.
 - When a CSD is platted on a site, materials should be sent to surrounding landowners to dispel misconceptions about density. Some may think that a CSD increases the overall density of a development when, in reality, CSDs cluster lots in order to protect environmental areas or to retain the existing rural character.

Appendix B:

Mill Revitalization District (MRD) Zoning

The following text is part of a “Smart Growth / Smart Energy Toolkit” that details the process and benefits of creating a MRD:

“While mill districts are difficult to revitalize the benefits are significant. Through mill revitalization projects, municipalities have an opportunity to rejuvenate the "heart" of the community, promote compact development, and take full advantage of the river/canal and other water resources. Suggested actions for communities interested in revitalizing these districts include:

- Define the physical boundaries of the mill district. Within these borders, one can typically locate a mix of uses including manufacturing, retail, office, institutional, and residential.
- Adopt a vision and statement of purpose for the MRD. Ideally, it should be included in the community's working master plan and zoning by-laws/ordinances.
- Create and maintain a comprehensive inventory of buildings, occupancy status, tax title status, and other pertinent information within the MRD.
- Consider using special permit granting authority to govern the MRD in a manner that can accommodate significant levels of flexibility and discretion on the part of the permit granting authority.
- Explore a different set of permitting processes, zoning regulations, and building codes to encourage development. These would include providing easily available data from the inventory above, streamlining the approval process, creating flexible zoning bylaws or ordinances including incentive overlays, and exploring historic preservation and design guidelines.
- Maintain existing building stock by mothballing structures to prevent further deterioration and enforcing demolition delays when applicable.
- Conduct Phase 1 and 2 environmental assessments of existing mill sites.
- Explore innovative techniques to encourage smart growth/smart energy including green technologies, and multi-modal transportation options.
- Identify all the infrastructure improvements that may be required to revitalize the district and attempt to fund through existing state level grant programs.

- Explore innovative financial options such as tax abatements, TIF or DIF Districts, long-term leases, grants and other non-traditional funding options.

In addition to the above actions, the MRD can be promoted as an incentive based district where the redevelopment potential is optimized when developers meet certain conditions, such as the use of energy conservation and low impact development practices, provision of public amenities and/or affordable housing, enhanced stormwater treatment, and the use of green technologies.

The MRD may require the participation of the community using its public-private partnership powers to make it work. Typically, developers will request capital improvements such as increased parking, higher water and sewer capacity, and fiber-optical capability. In most cases, the cost of these improvements can be recovered when the community and developers enter into a Tax Increment Financing agreement.

The potential benefits of a successful MRD include:

- The MRD contributes greatly to realizing smart growth by reclaiming underused industrial space and locating new growth in areas where basic infrastructure is typically available.
- Through careful site design, MRDs can open up riverfronts for pedestrian uses, improve scenic vistas, and help to improve water quality.
- At the most basic level, a complex of buildings that are critical historic, cultural, and social icons, and that formed the economic engine for so many of our cities and towns, is revitalized.
- The MRD reflects a diversity of commerce, interests, and needs of the community. These districts are places where small industrial uses and services are comfortably placed near artist lofts and market rate, attainable housing. They are places where "dotcoms" work on upper floors while there are restaurants, bars and retail activities on the street level below. The MRD is often a critical stimulus to the revitalization of a community's core.
- In communities where there is a great demand for these types of mixed-uses, the MRD may serve as a "receiving zone" under the community's transfer of development rights provisions. Thus, it helps prevent sprawl and conserves natural resources, agricultural land, and forests while concentrating development in preferable areas.
- The MRD improves environmental health through remediation of degraded and contaminated buildings and land.

- The MRD promotes alternative transit options that reduce fossil fuel consumption and instead, foster healthy and active communities while mitigating greenhouse gas emissions.

Financial Considerations:

The regeneration of mill districts typically results in the following financial benefits to cities and towns:

- Mill districts transform areas that once drained taxes and municipal services into financial assets through improved property values and higher property taxes.
- They generate employment opportunities for local workers. In many instances, this reduces commuting and the environmental problems associated with auto use.
- They provide flexible space for small firms. Thus, these businesses have the opportunity to grow and prosper while remaining in the mill.
- Surrounding property owners tend to reinvest, making their properties more valuable and typically resulting in a higher tax yield for the community.
- The environmental remediation of mill districts leads to environmental improvements to adjacent waterways.”

(http://www.mass.gov/envir/smart_growth_toolkit/pages/mod-mill-redev.html)

Appendix C:

Land Trusts in Georgia

Organization Name	Address	Contact
*Athens Land Trust	685 N. Pope Street Athens, GA 30601	Laura Hall (706) 613-0122 www.athenslandtrust.org
*Central Savannah River Land Trust	P.O. Box 148 Augusta, GA 30903	Hazel Langrall (706) 312-5263 www.csrlt.org
*Mountain Conservation Trust of Georgia	104 North Main Street, Suite B3 Jasper, GA 30143	Pamela Sunderland (706) 253-4077 www.mctga.org
*Oconee River Land Trust	380 Meigs Street Athens, GA 30601	Steffney Thompson (706) 552-3138 www.orlt.com
*Tall Timbers Land Conservancy	13093 Henry Beadel Drive Tallahassee, FL 32312-0918	Kevin McGorty (850) 893-4153 x238 www.talltimbers.org
*The Nature Conservancy	1330 West Peachtree Street, Suite 410 Atlanta, GA 30309-2904	Preeya Philipp (404) 873-6946 www.nature.org/Georgia
Atlanta Audubon Society	4055 Roswell Road Atlanta, Ga 30342	David Kuechenmeister (404) 822-8089 www.atlantaaudubon.org
Atlantic Coast Conservancy	634 S. Main Street Jasper, GA 30143	Robert Keller (706) 273-9173 www.atlanticcoastconservancy.org
Chattahoochee Valley Land Trust	P.O. Box 175 Columbus, GA 31902	Katherine Eddins (404) 861-8567

		www.galandtrust.org
Chattooga Conservancy	8 Sequoia Hills Lane Clayton, GA 30525	(706) 782-6097 www.chattoogariver.org
Chattowah Open Land Trust	226 Old Ladiga Road Piedmont, AL 36272	Leslie Horne (912) 231-0507 www.galandtrust.org
Easements Atlanta, Inc.	327 St. Paul Ave., SE Atlanta, GA 30312	Angela Threadgill (404) 688-3357 x16 www.easementsatlanta.org
Elachee Nature Science Center	2125 Elachee Drive Gainesville, GA 3050	Andrea Timpone (770) 535-1976 www.elachee.org
Georgia Agricultural Land Trust	P.O. Box 1680 Carrollton, GA 30117	John Pershing (770) 656-6743 www.georgiafarmland.org
Georgia Department of Natural Resources	2 Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, Suite 1454 East Atlanta, GA 30334-9000	Steve Friedman (404) 656-9173 www.georgiawildlife.org
Georgia Forestry Commission	1055 E. Whitehall Road Athens, GA 30605	Buford Sanders (706) 553-4443 www.gfc.state.ga.gov
Georgia Land Trust	428 Bull Street, Suite 210 Savannah, GA 31401	Leslie Horne (912) 231-0507 www.galandtrust.org
Georgia Piedmont Land Trust	P.O. Box 3687 Suwanee, GA 30024	Carol Hassell (770) 945-3111 www.gplt.org
Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Commission	4310 Lexington Road, P.O. Box 8024 Athens, GA 30603	Brent Dykes (706) 552-4470 www.gaswcc.ga.gov
Georgia Wildlife Federation	11600 Hazelbrand Road	Jerry McCollum

	Covington, GA 30014	(770) 787-7887 www.gwf.org
Historic Savannah Foundation	321 East York Street Savannah, GA 31405	Daniel Carey (912) 233-7787 www.myHSF.org
Livable Buckhead, Inc.	3340 Peachtree Road NE, Suite #1640 Atlanta, GA 30326	Denise Starling (404) 842-2682 www.livablebuckhead.org
National Wild Turkey Federation	770 Augusta Road Edgefield, SC 29824	Lynn Lewis-Weiss (706) 554-0592 www.nwtf.org
Newton County Land Trust Alliance	P.O. Box 208 Covington, GA 30015-0208	Frank Turner (770) 786-4390
North American Land Trust	P.O. Box 467 Chadds Ford, PA 19317	Lee Echols (706) 338-2157 www.nalt.org
Ocmulgee Land Trust	P.O. Box 6437, 479 Cherry St. Macon, GA 31201	Blake Lisenby (404) 464-5338
SE Regional Land Conservancy	6111 Peachtree-Dunwoody Road, Bldg E, Suite 102 Atlanta, GA 30328	James Wright (770) 351-0411 x307 www.serlc.org
Southeastern Trust for Parks and Land, Inc	4892 Hampton Lake Drive Marietta, GA 30068	Bill Jones (404) 376-7012 www.stpal.org
Southern Conservation Trust	192 McIntosh Trail Peachtree City, GA 30269	Pam Young (770) 846-4730 www.sctlandtrust.org
St. Simons Land Trust	P.O. Box 24615 St. Simons Island, GA 31522	Ben Slade (912) 638-9185 www.sslt.org

The Conservation Fund	4500 Hugh Howell Road, Suite 470 Tucker, GA 30084	Andrew Schock (770) 414-0211 www.conservationfund.org
Trust for Public Land	600 W. Peachtree Street NW, Suite 1840 Atlanta, GA 30308	Curt Soper (404) 873-7306 www.tpl.org
Wetlands Foundation	10745 Westside Way, Suite 100 Alpharetta, GA 30009	Necholus Ogden (770) 541-4200

Source: <http://glcp.georgia.gov/qualified-organizations>