

CLAY COUNTY

comprehensive plan update

2014

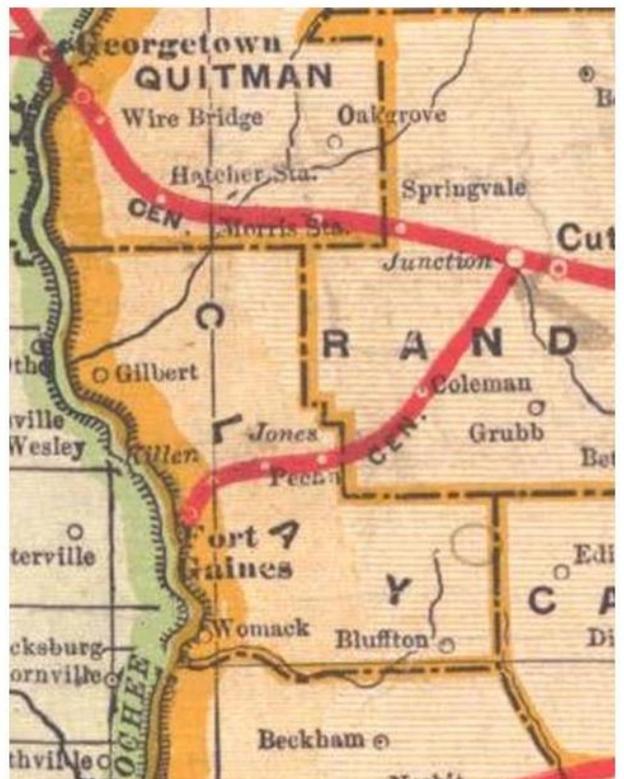


Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION	2
ORGANIZATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE	2
COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT	3
PURPOSE.....	3
IDENTIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDERS.....	3
CITIZEN NOTIFICATION AND PUBLIC MEETINGS.....	3
PUBLIC HEARINGS	3
COMMUNITY GOALS.....	5
CLAY COUNTY VISION STATEMENT	5
COMMUNITY GOALS AND POLICIES	5
COMMUNITY NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES	12
QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES	12
IDENTIFIED NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES	14
DATA AND INFORMATION.....	15
LAND USE	19
EXISTING LAND USE.....	19
DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS	19
FUTURE LAND USE	22
CHARACTER AREAS.....	27
DEFINING NARRATIVE.....	27
CHARACTER AREA MATRIX	29
CLAY COUNTY U.S. HIGHWAY 27 CORRIDOR	33
CLAY COUNTY CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVER CORRIDOR.....	35
CLAY COUNTY GA HIGHWAY 39 CORRIDOR.....	38
CLAY COUNTY RECREATIONAL AND CONSERVATION AREA	41
CLAY COUNTY RURAL RESIDENTIAL AND FARMLAND.....	43
WALTER F. GEORGE LAKESIDE	46
LAKESIDE SUBURBAN AREA.....	49
OTHER / SPECIAL	52
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM.....	55
CLAY COUNTY REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS 2007 - 2012	55
COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM FOR CLAY COUNTY 2014 - 2018.....	58
APPENDIX	65
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE SCHEDULE.....	66
CLAY COUNTY LEADERSHIP TEAM AND STAKEHOLDER LIST.....	67
CITIZEN COMPILED LIST OF NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES 2014: CLAY COUNTY.....	68
CLAY COUNTY RETAIL MARKETPLACE PROFILE.....	70
MAP: WATERSHED.....	72
MAP: GROUNDWATER RECHARGE AREA	73
MAP: WETLANDS.....	74
MAP: SOILS.....	75
MAP: GROUND SLOPE.....	76

Introduction

Organization of the Comprehensive Plan Update

The State of Georgia updated the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning in 2013 (O.C.G.A. 110-12-1). These updates included a list of required elements and optional elements each community was encouraged to use to supplement their comprehensive planning efforts.

Elements required by the state for each community include:

- Community Involvement--An initial and final public hearing;
- Community Goals—A review of the community's vision and goals;
- Needs and Opportunities--A list of potential community needs and opportunities;
- Land Use—An analysis of the community's existing development patterns; and
- Community Work Program--the community's action plan for the next five years.

While not included in the Comprehensive Plan Update document, renegotiation of the community's Service Delivery Strategy is also required as part of the process.

Other elements encouraged by the state to supplement the community's comprehensive planning efforts include:

- Economic Development—Encouraged for communities seeking to improve economic opportunities for their citizens (Only required for communities included in Georgia Job Tax Credit Tier 1);
- Capital Improvements—Only required for governments that charge impact fees;
- Transportation—Recommended for communities with automobile congestion problems, parking problems, or that are interested in adding alternative transportation facilities (Only required for governments that have a portion of their jurisdiction included in a Metropolitan Planning Organization); and
- Housing—Encouraged for communities with concentrations of substandard housing or a jobs-housing imbalance (Only required for HUD CDBG Entitlement Communities).

The Clay County Comprehensive Plan Five Year Update consists of the four state-required elements: Community Vision and Goals, Community Needs and Opportunities, Community Land Use, and Community Work Program. The Comprehensive Plan is intended to be a policy guide relating to land use, community infrastructure, housing and economic development activities. This document should generate local pride and enthusiasm, engage interest in the implementation of the comprehensive plan, and become a handbook to guide daily decision making for the local government officials and community leaders.

Community Involvement

Purpose

The comprehensive planning process, at its inception and culmination, is a vision for the future. The ultimate aim of the process is to develop a strong community. In order to achieve that objective, a meaningful comprehensive planning process must solicit and integrate the input of community citizens, government officials, and staff. The result will be a well-balanced comprehensive plan addressing the issues of today, the opportunities of tomorrow, and outlining the steps necessary to bring about positive change over the next twenty (20) years. The intent of the Clay County Comprehensive Plan Update process is to encourage as much public participation, open dialogue and communication as possible; seeking to build consensus among Clay County residents that will result in better government decisions and greater community agreement with those decisions.

Identification of Stakeholders

The Clay County Board of Commissioners selected a steering committee at the beginning of the process. This group consisted of a combination of elected officials, planning and zoning commission members and local citizens. The steering committee developed a list of stakeholders from whom to solicit input regarding the comprehensive plan update (See Appendix for Steering Committee/Stakeholder Lists).

Citizen Notification and Public Meetings

Various media was used to get citizens involved in the planning process. Civic leaders and civic groups were contacted to assist in citizen involvement opportunities. Staff addressed the Fort Gaines Women's Club, the Clay County Lion's Club, and local residents of Clay County at numerous public meetings to gain input on all elements of the Comprehensive Plan Update.

Public Hearings

The State of Georgia Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning in 2013 (O.C.G.A. 110-12-1) require that two (2) public hearings be held in association with the development of a community's Comprehensive Plan Update. The initial public hearing was held December 19, 2013 to inform the public that the planning process was underway, to go over the plan's timeline, and how they can help the planning process. Attendees were also given an opportunity to comment on Clay County's potential Needs and Opportunities (See Appendix for Documentation).

A final public hearing was held April 17, 2014 at the Clay County Social Services Building. The purpose of the meeting was to allow citizens to review and comment on the Comprehensive Plan Update. All draft documents and maps were available for review. Staff was positioned at various stations to take comments. Displays, comment cards, handouts, and other information materials were distributed. All commenters were

collected at the conclusion of the meeting, were summarized and responded to in a timely manner. A deadline of April 24, 2014 was given for formal written comments.

Plan Development Time Frame							
Plan Element	December 2013	January 2014	February 2014	March 2014	April 2014	May 2014	June 2014
Initial Public Hearing							
Needs and Opportunities							
Land Use							
Community Work Program							
Service Delivery Strategy							
Final Public Hearing							
RC Review							
DCA Review							

Community Goals

Clay County Vision Statement

We aspire to become a place of unity and total citizen involvement. We want a safe, healthy, drug-free community to achieve academic success. We desire to maintain a community with rural character and a clean, healthy living environment through quality growth planning principals. We look for better communication within the community through a local media outlet. We want adequate housing, job opportunities, recreational facilities, and cultural events for all residents. We want local healthcare facilities treating citizen's medical needs. We want environmentally friendly businesses that support the population and facilities, events, and activities that take advantage of the natural and historic resources to boost tourism.

Community Goals and Policies

Clay County has adopted the following policies to provide ongoing guidance and direction to officials for making decisions consistent with achieving Clay County's Vision and addressing identified Needs and Opportunities. These policies will guide Clay County in future development decisions. The framework for decisions to be made about the future development of Clay County by investors and public officials will be provided by these policies. This section is organized with a broad community goal statement followed by policies for guidance.

Planning

- Operate and maintain a sound and efficient planning system which guides and assists in continued development.
 - Pursue, promote and encourage a close relationship between Clay County and the Cities of Bluffton and Fort Gaines and other agencies and authorities regarding mutual growth and development concerns including, but not limited to: comprehensive planning, zoning, subdivision regulations, extension of public water and sanitary sewer services, storm drainage, annexation, water management, environmental issues, cultural resources, and other related matters.
 - Pursue, promote and encourage coordination of the plans of several public boards, agencies, commissions, and other authorities in accordance with Clay County and its municipalities' policies and programs, to enhance mutual understanding and improve decision-making.
 - In Clay County, development plans (i.e. subdivisions, PUDs, etc.) should have architectural and site plans reviewed and approved by the planning and zoning commission prior to the granting of final approval.



Clay Planning Meeting

Land Use

■ Make balanced and efficient use of land appropriate with the resource base and the health, safety and welfare of the residents.

- Discourage incompatible land uses, adjacent or within residential areas.
- Encourage safe, effective and aesthetically pleasing residential developments.
- Require construction practices designed to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation, including requirements for re-vegetation during and following construction.
- Encourage the use of flood prone areas for passive recreation and other appropriate open space uses.
- Discourage residential development in areas designated as having critical environmental hazards such as floodplain and severe slopes.
- Prohibit the disposal of hazardous waste within Clay County and the Cities of Bluffton and Fort Gaines.



Example: Land Use Map

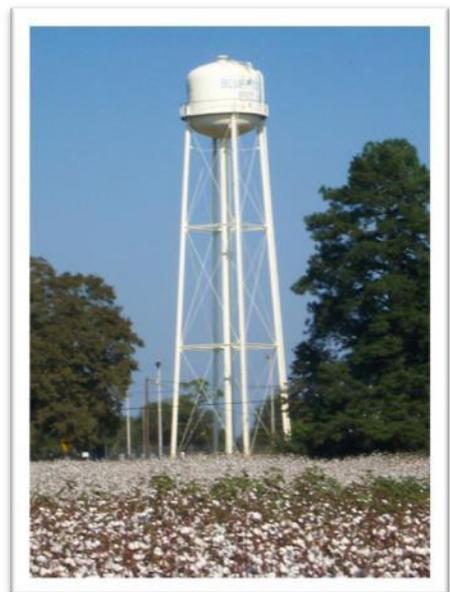
■ Protect residential areas and their residents from incompatible land uses and their associated activities.

- Encourage and support the review of all development ordinances such as zoning, subdivision regulations, historic preservation ordinances, building codes, etc. to ensure that there is no conflict in any of the ordinances.
- Encourage safe, effective and aesthetically pleasing residential developments.
- Prohibit the disposal of hazardous waste within Clay County and the Cities of Bluffton and Fort Gaines.

Community Facilities

■ Improve and extend the public water systems to better serve the current and future population.

- Encourage those water system extensions that would support or encourage new development in areas appropriate for such activities by reason of policy and the health, safety and welfare of residents and employees.



Bluffton Water Tower

- Develop and maintain a water system maintenance program for each public water system to increase efficiency and operational longevity.
- Encourage coordination between Clay County and Fort Gaines for the expansion of the public sewer system.

Housing

- Protect residents from significant hazards to life, health and property.

- Prohibit structural uses in areas where significant hazards to health, safety, life and property exist.
- Require construction practices designed to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation, including requirements for re-vegetation during and following construction.



Example: Historically Appropriate Infill Housing

- Encourage infill residential development within established neighborhoods that is architecturally compatible with existing housing.
- Encourage owners of substandard housing units to improve their properties through use of every available means, including adopting and enforcing codes and ordinances, providing public technical assistance and seeking public financial support.
- Encourage and support the development of an ordinance that will require owners of deteriorating unoccupied structures to either demolish or remove the structure or pay a fine sufficient to cover the cost of demolishing/removing the structure.
- Encourage and support the removal of deteriorating unoccupied structures that serve as a fire hazard and a magnet for crime and drugs.

- Encourage and support construction of new housing countywide to meet local housing demand

- Promote affordable housing.
- Develop and support more housing opportunities to help the county become more desirable as a place of residence.
- Encourage innovative housing that is compatible with the county's policies.
- Encourage and promote development and construction of desirable infill housing, such as duplexes and cottages, designed to fit the context of existing neighborhoods, so long as all other basic development criteria may be met.



Code Enforcement Officer

- Improve and expand the existing housing stock for all income levels.

- Strive for the elimination of housing discrimination and promote fair housing practices.
- Promote and encourage more affordable housing opportunities.
- Support continued improvement of existing housing conditions through all available public and private means.
- Encourage owners of substandard units to improve their properties through the use of every available means including adopting and enforcing codes and ordinances, providing public technical assistance and seeking public financial support.
- Conserve existing housing stock insofar as practical through rehabilitation and improvement of substandard housing units that are suitable for repair.
- Support enforcement of existing building codes and nuisance ordinances.
- Discourage residential development in areas designated as having critical environmental hazards such as floodplain and severe slopes.
- Strive to improve the quality of development along the Chattahoochee River as recreational second homes.

Natural and Cultural Resources

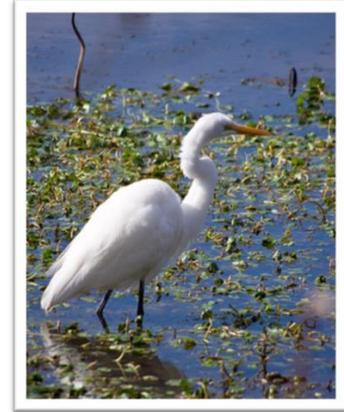
- Conserve and maintain shared green spaces for recreation and natural resources preservation in expanding residential neighborhoods.

- Require construction practices designed to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation, including requirements for re-vegetation during and following construction.
- Encourage the use of flood prone areas for passive recreation and other appropriate open space uses.
- Discourage residential development in areas designated as having critical environmental hazards such as floodplain and severe slopes.



- Promote and preserve the existing sense of place in the county through the promotion of historic resources.
 - Support economic development that is compatible with existing businesses and the tourist industry.
 - Promote and encourage recruitment of a diversity of businesses to provide a broad economic base.
 - Encourage the rehabilitation of storefronts in the Fort Gaines Central Business District.
- Conserve, maintain and promote the natural, historic, and cultural resources in order to make Clay County an attractive place in which to live, work and enjoy.
 - Conserve, maintain and promote the natural, historic and cultural resources of Clay County.

- Encourage maximum use of the county's natural resources while maintaining sound environmental protection practices.
- Encourage and promote land use and development that respects natural limitation of flood plains, steep slopes, wetlands and limiting soil types.
- Encourage the use of flood prone areas for passive recreation and other appropriate open space uses.
- Discourage the obstruction of scenic views and sites in the county.
- Promote and Enhance the Outdoor Recreation Industry through the development of additional campsites and boat ramps.
- Encourage the development of Private Hunting Lodges.
- Encourage large property owners to lease their land to hunters.
- Encourage the development of service facilities to meet the needs of this sector of the economy.
- Establish natural habitats for a variety of wildlife.
- Encourage the safe, wise and legal use of firearms and other hunting techniques.
- Develop and promote additional competitions and festivals targeted to this market.
- Encourage the development of the Clay/Quitman/Stewart County's Scenic Byways Designation.
- Prohibit the systematic neglect of structures that lead to the blight and decay of the countryside.



Egret on Lake Walter F. George

- Conserve, maintain and promote the cultural, historic and natural resources to provide a variety of educational experiences.
 - Support the development of additional cultural resources that will aid in the understanding of local heritage.
 - Encourage the further development of Frontier Village, Coleman's Opera House Museum and Sutton's Corners Museum.
 - Support regional tourism alliances with other counties and facilities (such as Bagby State Park or Kolomoki Mounds State Park) to promote existing and future natural, historic and cultural resources to increase the number of visitors.
 - Encourage local schools to use these facilities as outdoor classrooms.
- Encourage and Support the provision of educational and recreational opportunities for residents of Clay County.
 - Encourage and support the expansion of Adult Education opportunities in Clay County.
 - Encourage and support the expansion of services at the library in Fort Gaines.

- Encourage and support the activities of the Clay County School System to educate the children of Clay County.
- Support and encourage the provision of recreational and fine arts opportunities for the residents of Clay County.
- Encourage the collaboration between the Clay County Board of Education and the Clay County Board of Commissioners on the use of School System facilities for County Recreation i.e. ball fields, gymnasiums, etc.
- Encourage and support the expansion of the Clay County Recreational Program to provide additional sports opportunities.
- Encourage and support the development of opportunities to share the fine arts with the community, i.e. art shows, theatrical presentations, musicals, etc.
- Encourage and support the efforts of the healthcare community in Clay County.

Transportation

- Improve and extend the street and highway system to promote safe, efficient and well-maintained access to property in Clay County and on through routes for local and regional travelers.

- Encourage and promote the design and engineering of roads to fit, rather than dominate, topography and other site conditions. Encourage the development of bike paths and sidewalks throughout the neighborhoods.

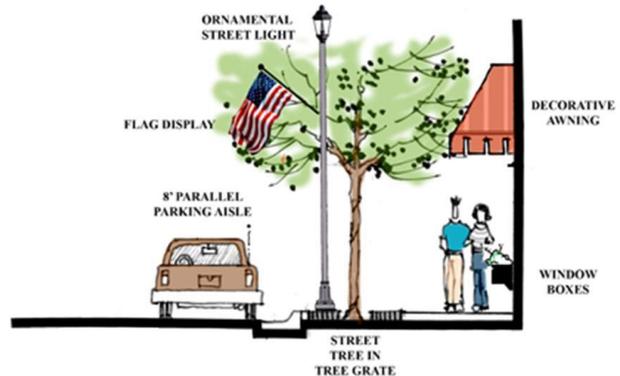
- Provide for safe, efficient movement of people, goods and services in and around Clay County.

- Minimize conflicts between local and through traffic using every available means.

- Provide for timely maintenance and improvement of roads.

- Promote and enhance the highway and commercial corridors in Clay County.

- Encourage landscaping of parking areas and incorporation of on-site stormwater mitigation or retention features, such as pervious pavements.
- Encourage and support the development of a Sign Ordinance for Clay County.
- Encourage and support the review of all development ordinances such as zoning, subdivision regulations, Historic Preservation Ordinances, etc. to ensure that there is no conflict in any of the ordinances.
- Encourage and support the development of a uniform building permit process including application forms and review criteria.



Example: Streetscape Improvements

Economic Development

- Support economic development that is compatible with the highway service industry.
 - Promote an adequate, efficient and appropriate mix of goods at the main intersections along GA 39 and US Hwy 27.
 - Encourage development on sites that are served by water and sewer.



- Promote the Central Business District in the Fort Gaines as the primary commercial and cultural center of Clay County.
 - Encourage and support the efforts of the Cities of Bluffton and Fort Gaines to make improvements to their downtowns including streetscapes, addition of bicycle lanes and racks, and renovation/restoration of public buildings.
 - Support the location and maintenance of desirable and suitable entertainment facilities downtown.
 - Encourage cultural events, i.e. art shows, fairs, and other attractions in the Central Business Districts.
 - Encourage adaptive re-use of historic structures.
 - Preserve historic and cultural buildings and monuments.
 - Provide daily clean-up services in the downtown areas.
 - Encourage Citizens to Shop Locally.
 - Make business hours more compatible to fit the needs of local shoppers.
 - Encourage merchants to sell items that are bought most frequently.
 - Encourage merchants to sell items unique to Clay County and/or the State of Georgia.



Example: Downtown Landscape Concept Design

- Improve the existing built environment.
 - Encourage and promote development and construction of desirable infill development designed to fit the context of existing neighborhoods, so long as all other basic development criteria may be met.
 - Encourage landscaping of new parking lots to minimize visual impact.
 - Encourage revitalization of vacant or under-utilized buildings using public and/or private resources.

Community Needs and Opportunities

Quality Community Objectives

Clay County has reviewed the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' Quality Community Objectives. These objectives were adopted to guide this Comprehensive Plan Update and the future growth, development and redevelopment of Clay County. These objectives will assist community leaders in making local government decisions that affect the county's future land use patterns, environmental and historical resources, and economic development. These objectives will provide the framework needed in order to make well-informed decisions.

Economic Prosperity

Encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community. Factors to consider when determining suitability include job skills required; long-term sustainability; linkages to other economic activities in the region; impact on the resources of the area; or prospects for creating job opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse local workforce.

Resource Management

Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. This may be achieved by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; encouraging green building construction and renovation; utilizing appropriate waste management techniques; fostering water conservation and reuse; or setting environmentally sensitive areas aside as green space or conservation reserves.

Efficient Land Use

Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the traditional core of the community; designing new development to minimize the amount of land consumed; carefully planning expansion of public infrastructure; or maintaining open space in agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.

Local Preparedness

Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.

Sense of Place

Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable,

mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

Regional Cooperation

Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. This may be achieved by actively participating in regional organizations; identifying joint projects that will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer; or developing collaborative solutions for regional issues such as protection of shared natural resources, development of the transportation network, or creation of a tourism plan.

Housing Options

Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing in the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood; instituting programs to provide housing for residents of all socio-economic backgrounds; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community.

Transportation Options

Address the transportation needs, challenges and opportunities of all community residents. This may be achieved by fostering alternatives to transportation by automobile, including walking, cycling, and transit; employing traffic calming measures throughout the community; requiring adequate connectivity between adjoining developments; or coordinating transportation and land use decision-making within the community.

Educational Opportunities

Make educational and training opportunities readily available to enable all community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or pursue life ambitions. This can be achieved by expanding and improving local educational institutions or programs; providing access to other institutions in the region; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure an adequately trained and skilled workforce.

Community Health

Ensure that all community residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, have access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities. This may be achieved by providing services to support the basic needs of disadvantaged residents; instituting programs to foster better health and fitness; or providing all residents the opportunity to improve their circumstances in life and to fully participate in the community.

Identified Needs and Opportunities

Better Maintenance of roads and pavement repair

- Pave dirt roads

- Clean the sides of existing roads

- CR 115 needs repair and paving

- More grading on all dirt roads

- Paved roads in the lake area

- Repair road between Fort Gaines and Bluffton

- Proper drainage on county dirt roads

More lake development needed.

More and better citizen participation

More industry

- 300 acre solar farm

- Pellet Plant

- Solar/Pellet Plan jobs

Restoration of Buildings

Transit System

Closer adherence to Comp Plan

Emergency Medical Care

New Gymnasium multi-purpose building

More youth activities

- Tutoring for youth

- Arts and Music programs for children

Cottonhill Campground-Look into upgrading

Better use of Social Services building for school experiences

More community education opportunities

Better policing of drugs

More police presence

Better usage of Bagby State Park

Partner with Bagby State Park to develop Golfing and Fishing Tournaments

Hold neighborhood clean-ups

Improve local Medical and Dental care

Better affordable housing

Develop a Farmers Market

Data and Information

Population

The projected population for Clay County over the next twenty plus years is expected to continue to decline. However, the current trends of migration to southern rural counties could stabilize or increase the population. It is believed that as the State of Georgia's Metropolitan areas continue to grow many residents will chose to relocate to smaller communities to escape the bustle of the larger cities.

Population							
	1980	% Change	1990	% Change	2000	% Change	2010
Bluffton	132	4.50%	138	-14.50%	118	-12.70%	103
Fort Gaines	1,260	-1.00%	1,248	-11.00%	1,110	0	1,107
Unincorporated County	2,161	-8.50%	1,978	7.60%	2,129	-1.00%	2,108
Clay County	3,553	-5.30%	3,364	0	3,357	-1.00%	3,183
GA	5,486,900	0	6,478,149	0	8,186,453	18.30%	9,687,653

Source: Georgia County Guide 1992 and U.S. Census 2010

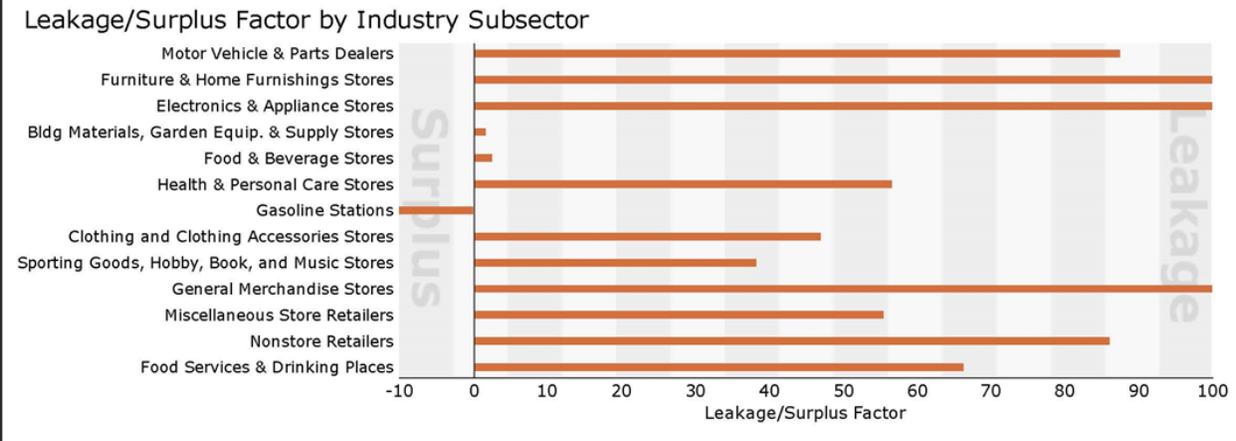
Total Population Projections 2005-2030					
	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Clay County	3,259	3,210	3,161	3,112	3,065
Bluffton	111	108	104	101	98
Fort Gaines	1,035	998	960	923	887
Unincorporated	2,113	2,104	2,097	2,088	2,080

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, River Valley RC Staff, 2014

Economic Development

Clay County has a multitude of needs including workforce development, entrepreneurial assistance, and coordinated tourism marketing. The county does not have a broad range of business types. The majority are retail-type establishments with limited employment opportunities. There are very few industrial-type businesses. Currently education is the largest employer. Because of the county's location on Lake Walter F. George, there is potential for a variety of eco-tourism businesses allowing stabilization and diversification and stability of the economy. Some businesses not currently represented in the Clay County marketplace are Furniture/Home Furnishings Stores; Auto Parts, Accessories, and Tire Stores; and Clothing/Clothing Accessories Stores. Tourism (including cultural sites, eco-tourism, and agri-tourism sites), horticultural nurseries and agribusinesses continue to be excellent prospects for industry development and employment.

Clay County Retail Marketplace Profile



Source: ESRI Business Analyst Retail Marketplace Profile 2014

Housing

The housing stock in Clay County consists of a mixture of traditional single-family stick-built homes, multi-family units and manufactured housing units. The county's 2010 housing inventory consists of 2,102 housing units.

The number of housing units in Clay County has increased by 9% since 2000 and by 32.5% since 1990. The majority of the county's housing stock is single family units, 64.9% of total units in 2010. Secondary housing components consist of manufactured housing units and multi-family. As of 2010, multi-family units comprised 6% of all housing units while the stock of manufactured housing units has increased substantially. In 1980, mobile home units comprised 7% of the total housing units; by 2010 the number of mobile home units had grown to 28.7% of the county's housing stock. This evidences a need for affordable housing options in Clay County.

Clay County Number of Household Units by Type 1980-2010				
	1980	1990	2000	2010
Total Housing Units	1,318	1,586	1,925	2,102
Single Family Units	1,138	1,038	1,015	1,364
Multi-Family Units	84	75	93	135
Mobile Home/Trailer	96	455	814	603
All Other Units	0	18	3	0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000, 2010, American Community Survey 2008-2012

Community Facilities

The county has an excellent ground water supply and individual wells provide an adequate water source for Clay County residents. However, the increased development along Lake Walter F. George has justified a public water system in this area.

Water & Sewer Service			
City/County	Services Provided Water-W Sewer-S Both-B	Source Water Ground-G Surface-S	Number of Water Connections
Clay County	W	G	316
Bluffton	W	G	55
Fort Gaines	B	G	501

Source: RVRC Regional Plan 2013

Water Usage & Storage Information						
	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served By Public Supply
Clay County	400,000	33,000	400,000	N/A	450 gpm	800
City of Bluffton	62,000	15,000	301,000	N/A	535 gpm	132
City of Fort Gaines	400,000	325,000	500,000	300,000	717 gpm	1107
TOTAL:	462,000	373,000	1,201,000	300,000	1702 gpm	2039

Source: RVRC Regional Plan 2013

Because of the low-density population in Clay County, a public sewer system is not warranted. However, since the preservation of the quality of Walter F. George Reservoir and the rural county as a whole are vitally important to Clay County, the County adopted Planning and Zoning ordinances in 2002 and updated them in 2006 to insure: 1) Property owners acquired proper building permits; 2) The health department verified the suitability of the soil for septic tank use; and 3) provide density control by enforcement of a county-wide zoning ordinance.

Sewage Treatment System Capabilities		
	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
Clay County	N/A	N/A
City of Bluffton	N/A	N/A
City of Fort Gaines	300,000	100,000
TOTAL:	300,000	100,000

Source: RVRC Regional Plan 2013

Clay County should continue to expand appropriate infrastructure to meet development needs and minimize the effects on environmentally sensitive areas.

Health Services

Clay County has one Health Department located on Wilson Street in the City of Ft. Gaines. There is one doctor in the City Ft. Gaines. Clay County is within a 20-mile radius of three hospitals: Patterson Hospital in Cuthbert, Calhoun Memorial in Edison and Early Memorial in Blakely. In addition, Clay County residents utilize the tertiary level hospitals in Dothan, Alabama and Albany, Georgia. The county operates a full time EMS service made up of Paramedics and EMT's. The units are dispatched via an E-911 operations center. This trend evidences a need for basic healthcare for the entire community, but especially for those without reliable transportation.

Transportation

Clay County is served by U.S. Highway 27, Georgia Highways 37 and 39, and Georgia Highway, 266. There are a total of 501.8 miles of road in Clay County. Of the roads that are owned and maintained by Clay County, 206.02 miles are unpaved. Only 164.54 miles are improved roads. The Clay County Board of Commissioners must approve any road before it is accepted. The county requires that roads meet GDOT specifications with an 80' right-of-way for road development, but does not require that the road be paved before it is accepted.

Clay County operates a public transportation service on a fixed route and an as-needed basis. This is the only mass transportation system in the county. There is no rail transportation. However, Clay County is located on the Chattahoochee River at a point where barge traffic is possible. The lock, dam, and Lake Walter F. George make water traffic a possible means of transportation. However, there is no port facility in the county. The nearest barge facilities are located in Eufaula, Alabama, 23 miles North of Fort Gaines and Columbia, Alabama.

An opportunity exists for the public transit service to partner with similar systems in surrounding jurisdictions to increase the service area for local citizens and riders.

Land Use

Existing Land Use

Maximizing land development opportunities while protecting natural resources is an important goal for Clay County. Key challenges for county officials include protecting natural resources while encouraging development and establishing an effective mix of appropriate land uses. Agriculture dominates the county's existing land use. Second to agricultural is residential land use in the county. While single-family detached housing is the predominant residential use, manufactured housing is the second most frequently used residential type. Commercial uses are predominantly located in the Town Center and along Federal and State Routes and make up less than one percent of total land use.

The following figure illustrates the acreage and percent of total land in the counties and cities dedicated to existing land uses. Acreage totals do not include roads.

Clay County Existing Land Use		
	Acres	% of Total
Residential (low density)	1,368.87	45.16%
Residential (high density)	88.09	2.91%
Agriculture/Forestry	86.56	2.86%
Transportation Communication Utilities	284.57	9.39%
Parks Recreation Conservation	38.23	1.26%
Public/Institutional	276.66	9.13%
Industrial	698.34	23.04%
Commercial	189.85	6.26%
Total	3,031.15	100.00%

Source: RVRC Regional Plan 2013

Development Patterns

An analysis of existing development patterns provides an understanding of how land is used at a specific point in time. Identifying existing land use is the first step in gaining an understanding of not only what land uses exist and where they are but how they interact.

A major development trend in Clay County is the continued growth around Lake Walter F. George. In this area, the county faces many development issues related to growth including lot size, housing construction methods, availability of public utilities (water/sewer), and adequate road capacity and condition (paved roads/dirt roads). The local elected officials also need to consider the effects of development on water quality, since most of the county is located in a ground water recharge area for an important aquifer. Other considerations include the effect of housing type and construction methods in this area on the county's tax base.

Another trend is the expansion of U.S. Hwy. 27 to a four-lane highway. Better access along this US Highway will increase pressure to develop the primarily agricultural land adjacent to the road with commercial properties. In this area, the county will need to balance the loss of prime agricultural land with the lack of existing commercial businesses to serve the resident population. Targeting commercial development first to major intersections with the use of buffers and landscaping around paved areas will help balance these needs.

The popularity of the local-grown/organic food movement is also a development trend in Clay County. This movement has spurred the growth of many agri-businesses. White Oak Pastures in southern Clay County is one such business that has grown exponentially in the last few years. With immediate access to U.S. Hwy. 27 and strategic planning done by this farm owner, White Oak Pastures is poised for continued economic progress. Issues facing the county regarding the development of more such agri-businesses include the need for workforce housing and infrastructure that will allow visitors' safe-enjoyment of agri-tourism endeavors.



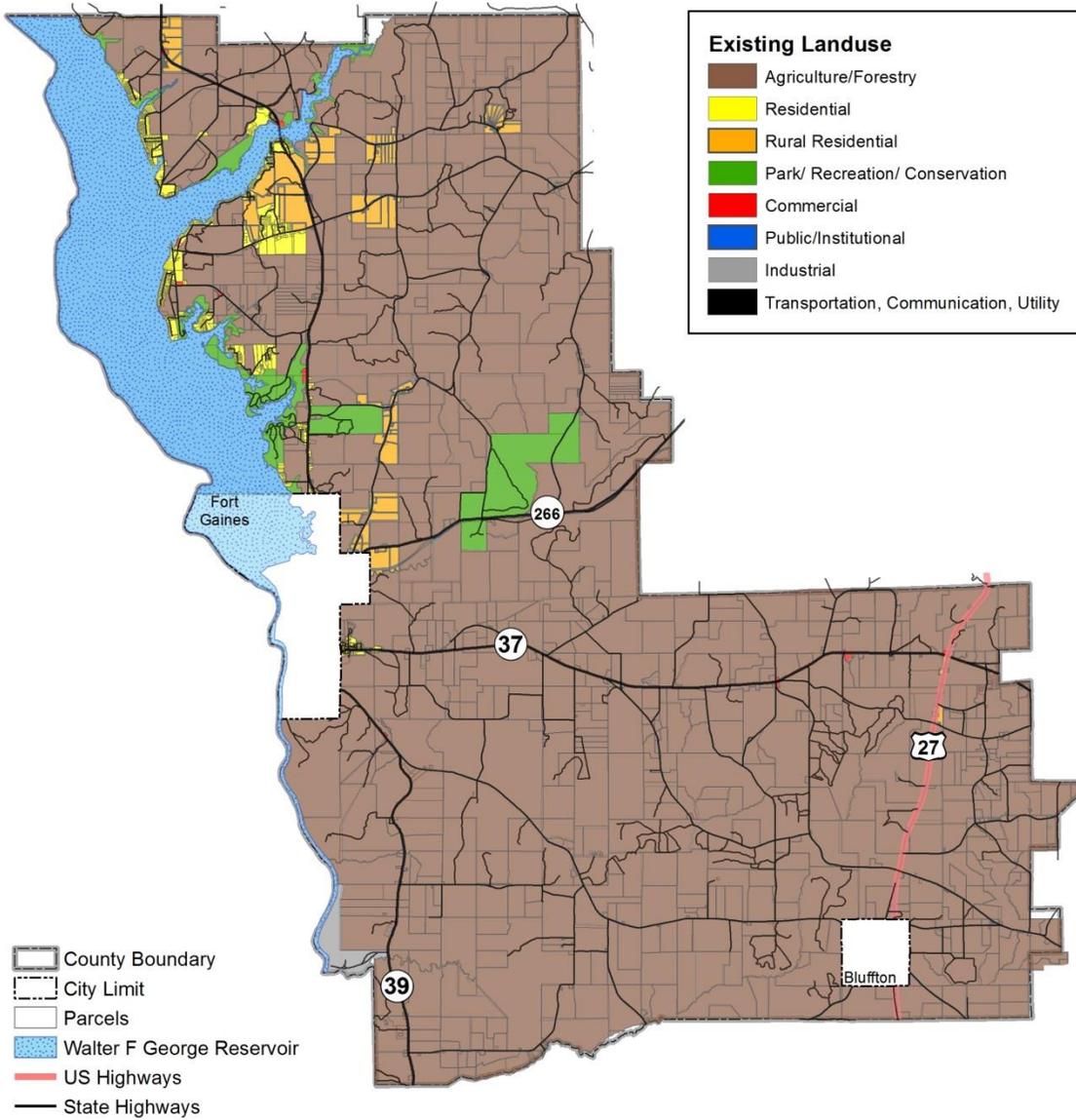
White Oak Pastures Office and Store



Walter F. George Aerial

Clay County, Georgia

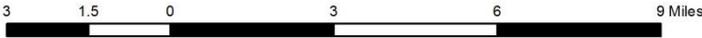
Existing Land Use



Existing Landuse

- Agriculture/Forestry
- Residential
- Rural Residential
- Park/ Recreation/ Conservation
- Commercial
- Public/Institutional
- Industrial
- Transportation, Communication, Utility

- County Boundary
- City Limit
- Parcels
- Walter F George Reservoir
- US Highways
- State Highways



Future Land Use

Areas Requiring Special Attention

Areas Where Development is Likely to Occur

The major growth area in Clay County is the northwestern section of the county along the shore of Lake Walter F. George. Clay County has extended water lines into this area to increase the density of future development while reducing potential contamination of underground aquifers. See Future Development Areas Map.

Significant Natural Resources

The natural environment places certain opportunities and constraints on the way land is used. Soil conditions, slopes, flood frequency and wetlands all affect where development can safely and feasibly occur. In Clay County, Bluffton, and Fort Gaines, development of areas adjacent to and affecting the Chattahoochee River and important underground aquifers should be reviewed for compliance with state and local ordinances and regulations. See Future Development Areas Map.

Acreage of Parks, Recreation, Conservation Lands in Clay County			
	Total Park, Recreation, Conservation Land Use (Acres)	Designated Wildlife Management Areas, State Parks, Natural Areas (Acres)	Local Parks and Conservation Areas (Acres)
Clay	1,824.60	1,066.56	758.04

Source: RVRC Regional Plan 2013

Water Supply Watersheds

Overall, Clay County, Bluffton, and Fort Gaines fall within the Lower Middle Chattahoochee Watershed. Within the county itself, there are seven (7) watersheds of moderate size. The Town of Bluffton is within the Spring Creek-Perry Creek Watershed and the Chattahoochee River-Kolomoki Creek Watershed. The City of Fort Gaines lies within the Chattahoochee River-Cemochechobee Creek Watershed. Unincorporated Clay County falls within these watersheds, but also includes the Chattahoochee River-Walter F. George Reservoir Watershed, Chattahoochee River-Barbour Creek Watershed, Pachitla Creek-Little Pachitla Creek Watershed, and the Pataula Creek Watershed. See Appendix for Map.

Groundwater Recharge Areas

Clay County is located in the Southern Coastal Plain Province. This is a very important groundwater recharge area. There are seven major aquifer systems in the Coastal Plain Province. Clay County is located over the Cretaceous-Tertiary aquifer system. The Cretaceous-Tertiary aquifer system, which includes the Providence and Clayton aquifer systems, is an interconnected group of sub-systems that

developed in the Late Cretaceous sands of the Coastal Plain Province. (Donahue, Groundwater Quality in Georgia for 2002). See Appendix for Map.

Wetlands

Wetlands can be broken into four distinct categories: Open Water Wetlands, Scrub/Shrub Wetlands, Forested Wetlands, and Non-Forested Emergent Wetlands. In Clay County, there are 4,535.11 acres of Forested Wetlands, 392.69 acres of Non-forested Emergent Wetlands, 1,102.05 acres of Scrub/Shrub Wetlands, and 14,439.96 acres of Open Water Wetlands. See Appendix for Map.

Soil Types

Clay County is within the Southern Coastal Plain Major Land Resource Area (MLRA–133A). The surface relief ranges from almost level and gently sloping to steep. Slopes range from 0 to 5 percent in the more nearly level areas and from 15 to 45 percent in the hilly and steep areas. Good surface drainage prevails, except for in the lower-lying depressions and in areas along streams. Most of the soils are located on uplands, are well drained, and have a sandy or loamy surface layer and a loamy or clayey subsoil. Other soils on uplands are nearly level and less well drained and have a sandy surface layer and loamy subsoil or a loamy surface layer and clayey subsoil. Nearly level, poorly drained soils are in depressions or on flood plains near streams. The soils on flood plains are loamy or clayey throughout. See Appendix for Map.

Steep Slopes

The topography of Clay County also places constraints and limitations on placement of development. Much of the county has slopes exceeding 25%. Areas of 3% and less are found along the Chattahoochee River in the western part of the county and in patches in the southeastern section of the county. See Appendix for Map.

Prime Agricultural and Forest Land

Prime farmland, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is available for these uses. There are 138,880 acres of land in Clay County. In the county, 44,566 acres are identified as farmland with 21,347 acres in harvest crops. The main crops in Clay County are cotton and peanuts. Corn, rye, grain sorghum, wheat, and some oats and millet are also grown in Clay County.

Significant Cultural Resources

A county-wide historic resources survey has been completed. There are two individually listed National Register Historic Properties in unincorporated Clay County: Sutton – Warren House (U.S. Hwy. 27) and the Toney – Standley House (Days Cross Road Community). There are no National Register Historic Districts in unincorporated Clay County. There are also no archaeological National Register Historic Sites in unincorporated Clay County. See Future Development Areas Map.

Clay County has not enacted a historic preservation ordinance or appointed a historic preservation commission; therefore, they are not eligible for the Certified Local Government program administered by the National Park Service nor are they eligible for the Historic Preservation Fund grant program offered through the State Historic Preservation Office. While an inventory of the historic sites, structures, and objects within the county's borders was completed in 1998, there is no county-wide government entity to sponsor National Register listings, oversee the application for survey funds, maintain an inventory of local historic resources, and attempt to preserve endangered resources. At present, the Fort Gaines Historic Society (a county-wide not-for-profit) and individual, private citizens carry out these goals.

Areas Where Development May Outpace Availability of Facilities & Services

Clay County has extended water lines into the northern section of the county along the shore of Lake Walter F. George to encourage development and mitigate the presence of non-conforming lots. To further encourage development and bring existing non-conforming lots into compliance with Clay County land use planning documents, Clay County will soon need to provide sewer in this area as well as water. See Future Development Areas Map.

Areas with Significant In-fill Development Opportunities

In-fill opportunities exist in and around Fort Gaines. Overall, in-fill opportunities within the city limits are good, because of available public water and public sewer. However, some existing vacant lots should be kept for park and open space. See Future Development Areas Map.

Brownfields

In general terms, Brownfields are abandoned or underused industrial or commercial properties where redevelopment is complicated by actual or perceived environmental contamination. There is no requirement on size, location, age or past use for Brownfield's. Some issues involving Brownfield's are the potential to cause harm to the population and the environment, the reduction in employment opportunities and tax revenue, the increase in illegal dumping, and the reduction in the property value for the surrounding area. Redeveloping Brownfield's can restore property to productive use, increase property values, improve public health and the environment, and utilize existing public infrastructure and increasing job opportunities and local tax revenues.

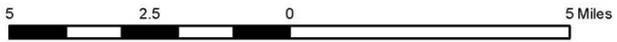
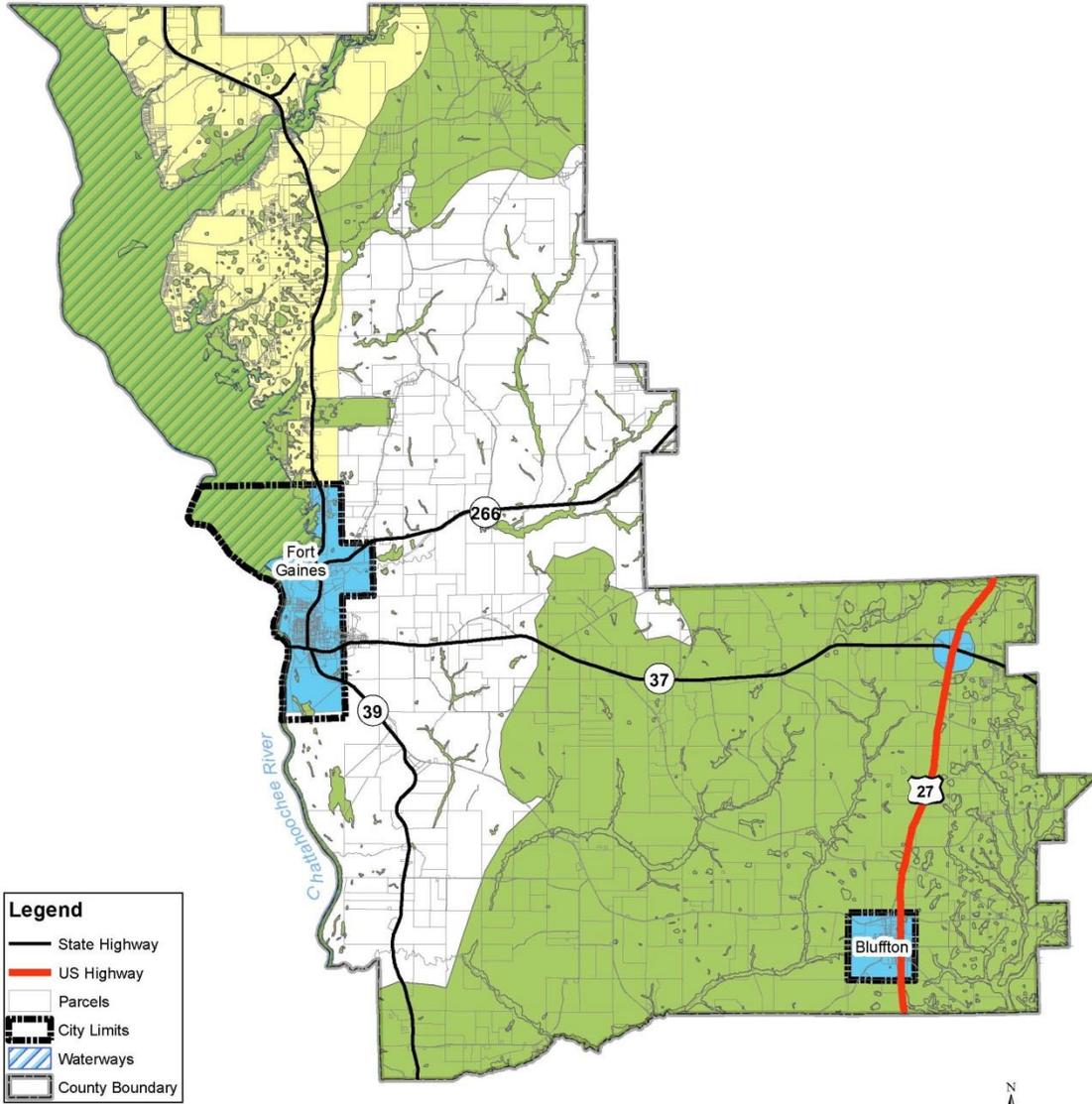
Potential Brownfield's in Clay County, Bluffton and Fort Gaines consist of mostly junk yards, old gas stations, and property with abandoned vehicles and equipment. See Future Development Areas Map.

Areas of Disinvestment

All communities have areas of disinvestment or areas in need of improvement; Clay County, Bluffton, and Fort Gaines are no different. Market forces over time will stabilize or improve most of the areas in need of revitalization. However in some cases a public/private partnership will be needed to make improvements happen. See Future Development Areas Map.

Clay County, Georgia Areas Requiring Special Attention

- Areas Where Development Likely To Occur
- Significant Cultural Resources (City Limits)
- Significant Natural Resources (Conservation Areas, Groundwater Recharge Areas, Streams, Wetlands)



Character Areas

Defining Narrative

Character Areas are specific geographic areas within unincorporated Clay County that have unique or special characteristics to be preserved or enhanced; have the potential to evolve into a unique area with more intentional guidance; or require special attention due to unique development issues. Each Character Area Vision Statement, is not meant to conflict with the Community-Wide Vision Statement given previously, but is meant to give additional guidance to planning commissioners and elected officials in updating and reviewing land use regulations and in reviewing and approving new developments. Each Character Area is a planning sub-area within the county where more detailed, small area planning and implementation of certain policies, investments, incentives and/or regulations may be applied in order to preserve, improve or otherwise influence its future development patterns in a manner consistent with the community vision.

For all Character Areas, there are overarching policies which should be followed.

- Encourage and support the review of all development ordinances such as zoning, subdivision regulations, historic preservation ordinances, building codes, etc. to ensure that there is no conflict in any of the ordinances.
- Protect residential areas and their residents from incompatible land uses and their activities.
 - Discourage incompatible land uses, adjacent or within residential areas.
 - Encourage safe, effective and aesthetically pleasing residential developments.
 - Prohibit the disposal of hazardous waste within Clay County.
- Protect residents from significant hazards to life, health and property.
 - Prohibit structural uses in areas where significant hazards to health, safety, life and property exist.
 - Require construction practices designed to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation, including requirements for re-vegetation during and following construction.
- Operate and maintain a sound and efficient planning system which guides and assists in continued development.
 - Pursue, promote and encourage a close relationship between Clay County, the Cities of Bluffton and Fort Gaines and other agencies and authorities regarding mutual growth and development concerns. This includes, but is not limited to: comprehensive planning, zoning, subdivision regulations, extension of public water and sanitary sewer services, storm drainage, annexation, water management, environmental issues, cultural resources, and other related matters.
 - Pursue, promote and encourage coordination of the plans of several public boards, agencies, commissions, and other authorities in accordance with the policies and programs of Clay to enhance mutual understanding and improve decision-making.

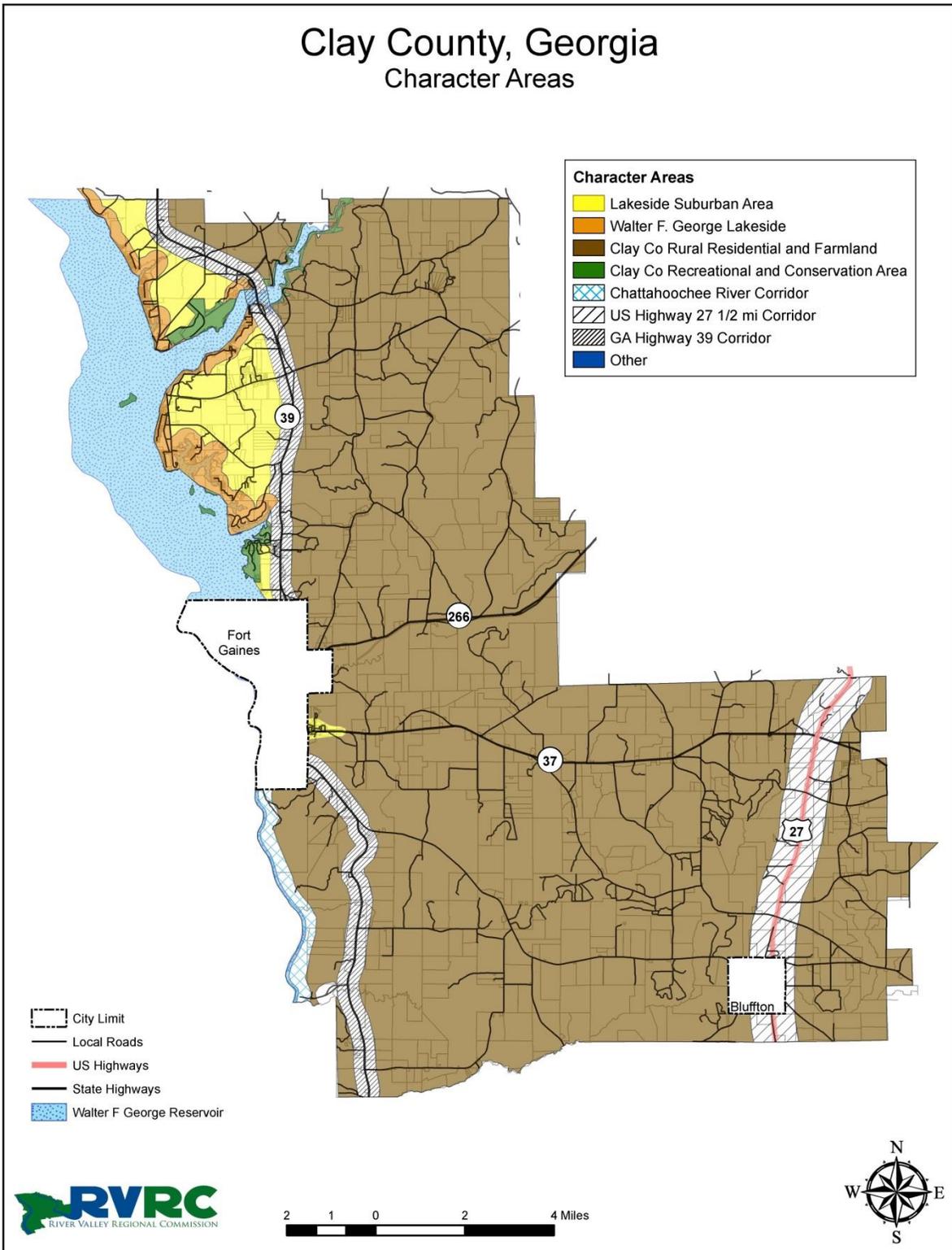
- Improve and extend the street and highway system to promote safe, efficient and well-maintained access to property in Clay County and on through routes for local and regional travelers.
 - Minimize conflicts between local and through traffic using every available means.
 - Provide for timely maintenance and improvement of roads.

Character Area Matrix

Character Areas	Vision	Land Uses	Quality Community Objectives
Clay Co U.S. Highway 27 Corridor	Clay County will ensure proper management of developed and undeveloped land on both sides of U.S. Hwy 27 by controlling land uses, points of ingress and egress, encouraging landscaping, minimizing impervious surfaces, encouraging frontage roads/ access roads, and land use connectivity.	Agricultural Residential (low and high density) Commercial Industrial Limited public/institutional.	Economic Prosperity Local Preparedness Transportation Options Regional Cooperation Housing Options
Clay Co Chattahoochee River Corridor	Clay County will protect the Chattahoochee River through sound and wise planning and the use of best management practices. Clay County will encourage economic development in the area, including limited industrial growth, by promoting a variety of recreational uses within the River Corridor and encouraging the development of businesses to serve the people utilizing the Chattahoochee.	Agriculture/forestry Parks/ recreation/ conservation Residential (low density) Limited industrial Limited public/institutional	Economic Prosperity Resource Management Efficient Land Use Local Preparedness Sense of Place Regional Cooperation Transportation Options
Clay Co GA Highway 39 Corridor	Clay County will ensure that all undeveloped land along the route of GA Highway 39 having significant natural, historic, and/or cultural features and scenic or pastoral views are protected.	Agriculture/forestry Residential (low density R-1 and RR) Commercial	Economic Prosperity Resource Management Efficient Land Use Local Preparedness Sense of Place Regional Cooperation Housing Options Transportation Options
Clay Co Recreational & Conservation Area	Clay County will protect its natural and cultural resources, local and state parks, conservation areas, and other significant preserves. Clay County's natural resources should be conserved and maintained and their sound and wise use promoted in support of the local economy and the health and welfare of local residents.	Agriculture/forestry Parks/ recreation/ conservation Limited public/institutional	Economic Prosperity Resource Management Efficient Land Use Local Preparedness Sense of Place Educational Opportunities
Clay Co Rural Residential & Farmland	Clay County will promote new housing developments in areas of the county that have infrastructure available. Agriculture and forestry will continue to be a part of Clay County's economy. Existing residential areas in Clay County will be maintained for the continuation of family-centered living. A balanced diversity of age groups and social and economic backgrounds among residents will continue to be encouraged for the good of Clay County and its people.	Agriculture/forestry Residential (low density) Transportation/ communication/ utility Limited institutional	Economic Prosperity Resource Management Efficient Land Use Local Preparedness Sense of Place Housing Options
Walter F. George Lakeside	Clay County will protect Lake Walter F. George through sound and wise planning and the use of best management practices. Clay County will encourage the use of the Lake as a location for primary homes, second homes, and lakeside related commercial and high-density housing while reserving adequate public access.	Agriculture/forestry Parks/ recreation/ conservation Residential (low and high density) Commercial (PUD or R-3) Limited public/institutional	Economic Prosperity Resource Management Efficient Land Use Local Preparedness Sense of Place Regional Cooperation Housing Options Transportation Options

Character Areas	Vision	Land Uses	Quality Community Objectives
Lakeside Suburban Area	This area will be a focal point for the county offering a concentration of activities to include low, moderate and high-density housing and appropriate public and open space uses, which will all be easily accessible by pedestrians. An attractive, residential, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly place where people choose to live due to its proximity and connection to the lake and government facilities, shopping, dining, socializing and entertainment facilities in Fort Gaines.	Mixed-residential, commercial and public (A-1, RR, R-1, C-1, PUD)	Economic Prosperity Resource Management Efficient Land Use Local Preparedness Sense of Place Regional Cooperation Housing Options Transportation Options
Other / Special	Clay County and the Cities of Bluffton and Fort Gaines will continue to have a nursing home as well as public schools, public housing, cemeteries, parks, and other public buildings and recreational facilities in the county.	Public/Institutional	Resource Management Efficient Land Use Local Preparedness Regional Cooperation Transportation Options Educational Opportunities Community Health

Clay County, Georgia Character Areas



Clay County U.S. Highway 27 Corridor

Vision:

Clay County will ensure proper management of developed and undeveloped land on both sides of US Hwy 27 by controlling land uses, points of ingress and egress, encouraging landscaping, minimizing impervious surfaces, encouraging frontage roads/ access roads, and land use connectivity.

Description:

- Buildings will be architecturally integrated with the site and one another.
- New parking areas will be landscaped to minimize visual impact on adjacent roads and uses.
- The majority of new parking will be located at the rear or side of buildings to minimize visibility from the highway.
- New parking lots will incorporate on-site stormwater mitigation or retention features, such as pervious pavements.
- Landscaped tree islands and medians will be used to break up large expanses of paved parking.
- Site plans, building design and landscaping will be sensitive to the natural features of the site, including topography and views.
- Infrastructure availability will be limited in order to steer development away from areas of natural, cultural, and environmentally sensitive areas.



US Hwy 27 Aerial



Example: Gas Station with Landscaping

Land Uses or Zoning Categories to be allowed:

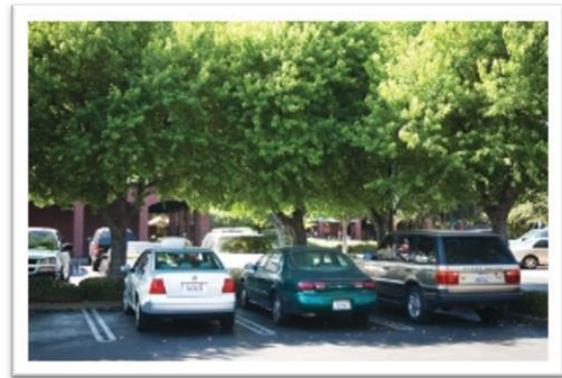
Agricultural, residential (including low-density single-family and a mix of high-density residential including single-family and multi-family residential), commercial, industrial and limited public/institutional. Public water and sewer or private package treatment systems are required for high density development in this area. Preferred land use categories include: A-1, R-R, R-1, C-1, I-1.

Quality Community Objectives addressed:

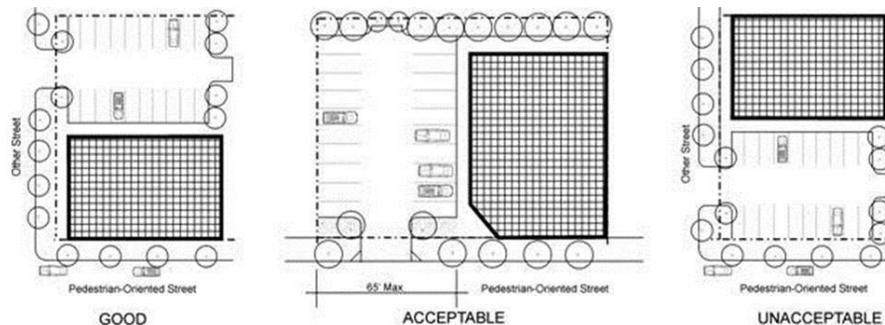
Economic Prosperity, Local Preparedness, Transportation Options, Regional Cooperation, Housing Options

Implementation Measures and Strategies:

- Promote and enhance US Highway 27 in Clay County.
 - Encourage the implementation of a Gateways Program in Clay County.
 - Encourage landscaping of parking areas and incorporation of on-site stormwater mitigation or retention features, such as pervious pavements.
 - Encourage and support the adoption or review of all development ordinances such as zoning, subdivision regulations, historic preservation ordinances, etc. to ensure that there is no conflict in any of the ordinances.
 - Encourage and support the development of a uniform building permit process including application forms and review criteria.
- Support economic development that is compatible with the highway service industry.
 - Promote an adequate, efficient and appropriate mix of goods at the main intersections along US Hwy 27.
 - Encourage development on sites that are already served by water and sewer.
 - Support regional/state tourism alliances to promote existing and future natural, historic, and cultural resources to increase the number of visitors.
- Maintain a natural vegetation buffer along the corridor.
 - Ensure all new developments are set back behind the buffer with access roads, shared driveways or inter-parcel road connections providing alternate access to these developments and reducing curb cuts and traffic on the main highways.
 - Encourage and support the development of a Sign Ordinance for Clay County.
 - Adopt highway corridor/overlay district to regulate parking, signage, landscaping and points of ingress and egress.



Example: Parking with Trees



Parking Lot Placement

Clay County Chattahoochee River Corridor

Vision:

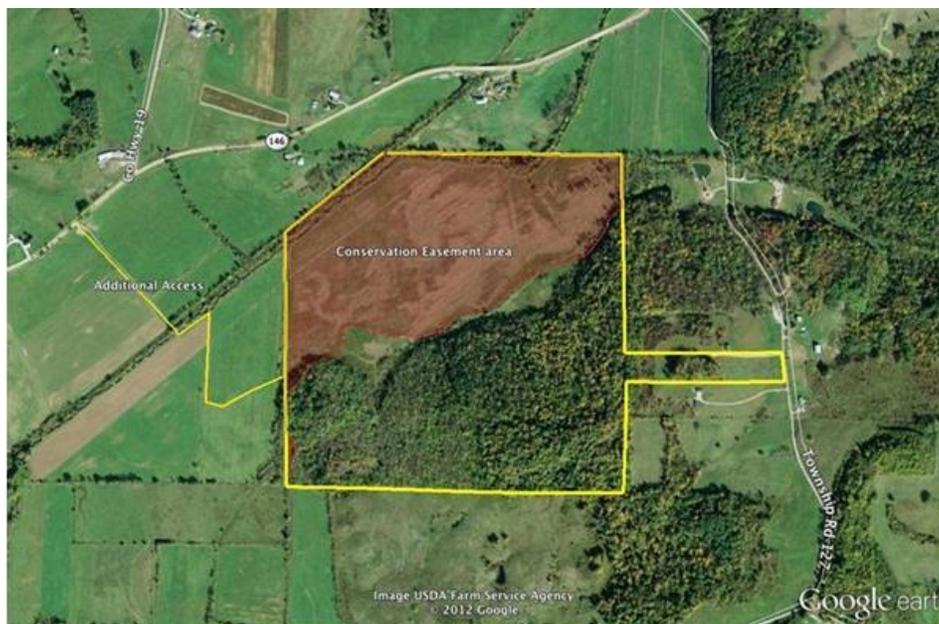
Clay County will protect the Chattahoochee River through sound and wise planning and the use of best management practices. Clay County will encourage economic development in the area, including limited industrial growth, by promoting a variety of recreational uses within the River Corridor and encouraging the development of businesses to serve the people utilizing the Chattahoochee.



Chattahoochee River

Description:

- Limited development in this area in order to maintain its existing natural state.
- Conservation easements will be encouraged.
- Environmentally sensitive areas will be preserved by setting them aside as public parks, trails, or greenbelts.
- Subdivision designs will incorporate a significant amount of open space.
- Wherever possible, developments will connect to greenspace and trails, available to pedestrians and bicyclists for both tourism and recreational purposes.
- Site plans, building design and landscaping that are sensitive to the natural features of the site, including topography and views, will be encouraged.



Example: Conservation Easement

Land Uses or Zoning Categories to be allowed:

Agriculture/forestry, parks/ recreation/ conservation, low density residential, limited industrial and public/institutional. Preferred land use categories include: A-1, R-R, R-1, and PUD.

Quality Community Objectives addressed:

Economic Prosperity, Resource Management, Efficient Land Use, Local Preparedness, Sense of Place, Regional Cooperation, Transportation Options

Implementation Measures and Strategies:

- Conserve, maintain and promote the natural, historic and cultural resources of Clay County.
 - Encourage maximum use of the county’s natural resources while maintaining sound environmental protection practices.
 - Encourage and promote land use and development that respects natural limitation of flood plains, steep slopes, wetlands and limiting soil types.
 - Encourage the use of flood prone areas for passive recreation and other appropriate open space uses.
 - Encourage and promote the design and engineering of roads and other facilities to fit, rather than dominate, topography and other site conditions.



Kayakers on the Chattahoochee

- Conserve, maintain and promote the cultural, historic and natural resources to provide a variety of educational and recreational experiences.
 - Encourage local schools to use these facilities as outdoor classrooms.
 - Support the development of additional cultural resources that will aid in the understanding of local heritage.
 - Encourage the further development of eco-tourism initiatives.



Example: Mountain Bike Trail

- Support regional tourism alliances with other counties and other facilities to promote existing and future natural, historic and cultural resources to increase the number of visitors.
- Encourage the development of the Clay/Quitman/Stewart/Calhoun County’s GA Hwy 39 Scenic Byways Designation.

■ Conserve, maintain and promote the natural, historic, and cultural resources in order to make Clay County an attractive place in which to live, work and enjoy.

- Prohibit the systematic neglect of structures that lead to the blight and decay of the countryside.
- Discourage the obstruction of scenic views and sites in the county.

■ Promote and Enhance the Outdoor Recreation Industry.

- Encourage the development of additional campsites.
- Encourage additional boat ramps along the Chattahoochee River.
- Encourage the development of Private Hunting Lodges.
- Encourage large property owners to lease their land to hunters.
- Encourage the development of service facilities to meet the needs of this sector of the economy.



Cotton Hill Campground

- Establish natural habitats for a variety of wildlife.
- Encourage the safe, wise and legal use of firearms and other hunting techniques.
- Develop and promote additional competitions and festivals targeted to this market.

■ Conserve and maintain shared green spaces for recreation and natural resources preservation.

- Require construction practices designed to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation, including requirements for re-vegetation during and following construction.



Example: Wildlife Habitat

■ Protect residential areas and their residents from incompatible land uses and their activities.

- Discourage incompatible land uses, adjacent or within residential areas.
- Encourage safe, effective, and aesthetically pleasing residential developments.
- Prohibit the disposal of hazardous waste within Clay County.



Gassing up boat at a marina

- Improve and expand the existing housing stock for all income levels.
 - Support continued improvement of existing housing conditions through all available public and private means.
 - Strive to improve the quality of development along the Chattahoochee River as recreational second homes.
 - Strive for the elimination of housing discrimination and promote fair housing practices.
 - Discourage residential development in areas designated as having critical environmental hazards such as floodplain and severe slopes.
 - Promote and encourage affordable housing opportunities.
 - Encourage owners of substandard units to improve their properties through the use of every available means.



Example: Historically Appropriate Affordable Housing



Residence on Bluff Street

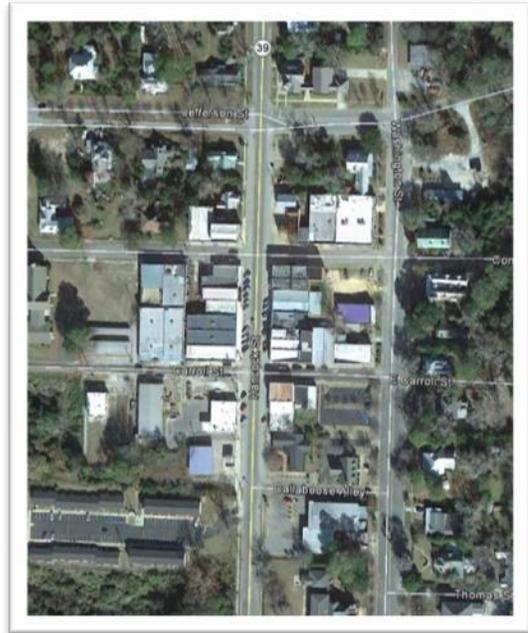
Clay County GA Highway 39 Corridor

Vision:

Clay County will ensure that all undeveloped land along the route of GA Highway 39 having significant natural, historic, and/or cultural features and scenic or pastoral views are protected.

Description:

- Limited development in this area in order to maintain its existing natural state.
- Conservation easements will be encouraged.
- Environmentally sensitive areas will be preserved by setting them aside as public parks, trails, or greenbelts.
- Subdivision designs will incorporate a significant amount of open space.
- Wherever possible, developments will connect to greenspace and trails, available to pedestrians and bicyclists for both tourism and recreational purposes.
- Site plans, building design and landscaping that are sensitive to the natural features of the site, including topography and views, will be encouraged to protect viewsheds as identified on a case by case basis.



GA Hwy 39 Corridor Aerial

Land Uses or Zoning Categories to be allowed:

Agriculture/forestry, low-density single-family residential, commercial development including but not limited to, transportation, related retail establishments, office buildings and other service related uses. Commercial development will be encouraged at highway intersections. Zoning categories preferred include: A-1, R-1, RR, and C-1.

Quality Community Objectives addressed:

Economic Prosperity, Resource Management, Efficient Land Use, Local Preparedness, Sense of Place, Regional Cooperation, Housing Options, Transportation Options



View along GA Hwy 39

Implementation Measures and Strategies:

- Establish and enforce guidelines to protect characteristics deemed to have scenic value.
 - Require compatible landscaping and architectural designs that enhances the scenic value of the corridor.
 - Encourage and support the development of a Sign Ordinance for Clay County.
- Manage flow of traffic; using directory signage to clustered developments.
 - Provide pedestrian linkages to adjacent and nearby residential or commercial districts.
 - Encourage the implementation of a Gateways Program in Clay County.
 - Maintain a natural vegetation buffer along the corridor.
 - Ensure all new developments are set back behind the buffer with access roads, shared driveways or inter-parcel road connections providing alternate access to these developments and reducing curb cuts and traffic on the main highways.
 - Adopt highway corridor/overlay district to regulate parking, signage, landscaping and points of ingress and egress.

PROJECT RIVERWAY

Fort Gaines

THE NATURAL PHENOMENON TRAIL

41

The proposed Phenomenon Trail system has great potential to expose users to the unique beauty and variety of amenities that lie along the Chattahoochee River. Beginning at Bagby State Park, the proposed route for phase one of the trails was created based on a previous study of the site. A variety of environments unfold along the route, from the shores of the river to woodlands and farmsteads. A possible amendment to phase one is to connect to Corps property earlier to avoid crossing private property. This portion of the trail could be used either as the route for the main trail or as a spur connecting with the main trail further south.

Phase two begins at Walter F. George Lock and Dam. This portion of the trail can quickly be linked with existing, unimpaired roads and an old railbed. The reuse of the road and railbed would require minimal grading, thus reducing the cost of construction and damage to the environment. Porous concrete is recommended for this portion of the trail, and if kept up properly, is allowed by the Department of Transportation. This section also provides users with cultural and historical elements in addition to the natural landscape. The old railway can be interpreted and tied to refurbished buildings including an old cotton gin and warehouses. Various spurs have been added to key points of interest such as the lock and dam system, an overlook of the Chattahoochee River, a playground and recreation area, and an interpretive center for the trail. Native plant systems will be protected by designated boardwalks and pathways and educational kiosks will explain and interpret the uniqueness of the ecosystem.

The end destination of the trail is downtown Fort Gaines. The trail is connected to downtown through several routes, one of which will lead through the interpretive center. These routes will serve both the residents of Fort Gaines and tourists who come to the area seeking a unique experience. Signage and information kiosks will help visitors pick their routes. Economic invigoration, education, and environmental appreciation should result from this new trail experience.

Final Report of the Project Riverway 9 Students, 1 Big River, Summer 2006 Study of the Lower Chattahoochee River Corridor. Produced by the University of Georgia

Clay County Recreational and Conservation Area

Vision:

Clay County will protect its natural and cultural resources, local and state parks, conservation areas, and other significant preserves. Clay County's natural resources should be conserved and maintained and their sound and wise use promoted in support of the local economy and the health and welfare of local residents.

Description:

- Limit development in this area (only including agricultural use, bike/ pedestrian paths or other low impact recreation facilities such as baseball or softball fields, and low-density residential) in order to maintain its existing rural nature.
- Conservation easements will be encouraged.
- Roadways will be widened only when absolutely necessary with careful designs.
- Environmentally sensitive areas will be preserved by setting them aside as public parks, trails, or greenbelts.
- Infrastructure availability will be limited in order to steer development away from areas of natural, cultural, and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Promote areas as passive recreation and tourism destinations.



Trail at Bagby State Park



Fort Gaines Bald Eagle Habitat

Land Uses or Zoning Categories to be allowed:

Agriculture/forestry, parks/ recreation/ conservation, low-density residential, and public/institutional in a very limited manner. Preferred land use categories include: A-1 and R-R.

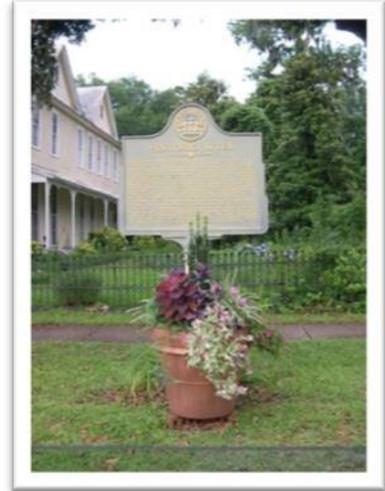
Quality Community Objectives addressed:

Economic Prosperity, Resource Management, Efficient Land Use, Local Preparedness, Sense of Place, Educational Opportunities

Implementation Measures and Strategies:

- Conserve, maintain and promote the natural, historic and cultural resources of Clay County.

- Encourage maximum use of the county's natural resources while maintaining sound environmental protection practices.
- Encourage and promote land use and development that respects natural limitation of flood plains, steep slopes, wetlands and limiting soil types.
- Encourage the use of flood prone areas for passive recreation and other appropriate open space uses.
- Encourage and promote the design and engineering of roads and other facilities to fit, rather than dominate, topography and other site conditions.



Historic Marker in Fort Gaines

- Conserve, maintain and promote the cultural, historic and natural resources to provide a variety of educational experiences.

- Encourage local schools to use these facilities as outdoor classrooms.

Support the development of additional cultural resources that will aid in the understanding of local heritage.

- Encourage the further development of Bagby State Park, Lake Walter F. George, the Meadowlinks, Sutton's Corner Museum, and the Phenomenon Trail.

- Support regional tourism alliances with other counties and other facilities (such as Florence Marina State Park or Providence Canyon) to promote existing and future natural, historic and cultural resources to increase the number of visitors.

- Encourage the development of the Clay/Quitman/Stewart/Calhoun County's Scenic Byways Designation.

- Conserve, maintain and promote the natural, historic, and cultural resources in order to make Clay County an attractive place in which to live, work and enjoy.

- Prohibit the systematic neglect of structures that lead to the blight and decay of the countryside.

- Discourage the obstruction of scenic views and sites in the county.

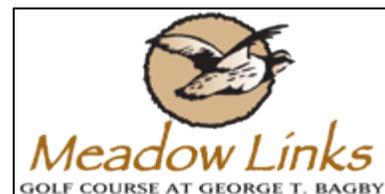
- Promote and Enhance the Outdoor Recreation Industry.

- Encourage the further development of the Cotton Hill Campground.

- Encourage the development of additional campsites.

- Encourage additional boat ramps along the Chattahoochee River and Lake Walter F. George.

- Encourage the development of Hunting Lodges.



- Encourage large property owners to lease their land to hunters.
- Encourage the development of service facilities to meet the needs of this sector of the economy.
- Establish natural habitats for a variety of wildlife.
- Encourage the safe, wise and legal use of firearms and other hunting techniques.
- Develop and promote additional competitions and festivals targeted to this market.



Items from Sutton's Corner Museum



Items from Sutton's Corner Museum



Items from Sutton's Corner Museum

Clay County Rural Residential and Farmland

Vision:

Clay County will promote new housing developments in areas of the county that have infrastructure available. Agriculture and forestry will continue to be a part of Clay County's economy. Existing residential areas in Clay County will be maintained for the continuation of family-centered living. A balanced diversity of age groups and social and economic backgrounds among residents will continue to be encouraged for the good of Clay County and its people.



Rural Road in Clay County

Description:

- Subdivision designs will incorporate a significant amount of open space.
- Wherever possible, housing will connect to greenspace and trails, available to pedestrians and bicyclists for both tourism and recreational purposes.
- Very large minimum lot size requirements will be used to limit development density and protect the farmland and rural character.
- Site plans, building design and landscaping that are sensitive to the natural features of the site, including topography and views, will be encouraged.
- Promote the use of conservation easements by land owners.
- Widen roadways only when absolutely necessary and with careful designs.



Example: Typical Subdivision Site Plan



Example: Conservation Subdivision Site Plan

Land Uses or Zoning Categories to be allowed:

Agriculture/forestry, low density residential, transportation/communication/utility, and public institutional in a limited manner. With an approved public water and/or sewer system minimum lot size shall be three quarters (3/4) acre and one (1) acre without either water or sewer. Preferred land use categories include: A-1, RR, and R-1.

Quality Community Objectives addressed:

Economic Prosperity, Resource Management, Efficient Land Use, Local Preparedness, Sense of Place, Housing Options

Implementation Measures and Strategies:

- Conserve and maintain shared green spaces for recreation and natural resources preservation in expanding residential neighborhoods.
 - Require construction practices designed to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation, including requirements for re-vegetation during and following construction.
- Protect residential areas and their residents from incompatible land uses and their activities.



Peanut Field

- Discourage incompatible land uses, adjacent or within residential areas.
 - Encourage safe, effective, and aesthetically pleasing residential developments.
 - Prohibit the disposal of hazardous waste within Clay County and the Cities of Bluffton and Fort Gaines.
- Improve and expand the existing housing stock for all income levels.
 - Support continued improvement of existing housing conditions through all available public and private means.
 - Strive to improve the quality of development along Lake Walter F. George and the Chattahoochee River as recreational second homes.
 - Strive for the elimination of housing discrimination and promote fair housing practices.
 - Discourage residential development in areas designated as having critical environmental hazards such as floodplains and severe slopes.
 - Promote and encourage more affordable housing opportunities.
 - Encourage owners of substandard units to improve their properties through the use of every available means.



Example: Wildlife Habitat

Walter F. George Lakeside

Vision:

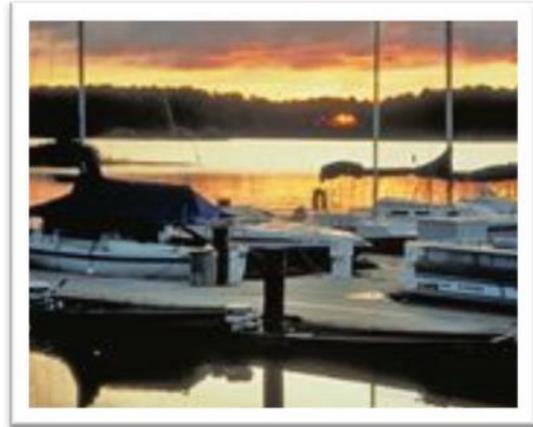
Clay County will protect Lake Walter F. George through sound and wise planning and the use of best management practices. Clay County will encourage the use of the Lake as a location for primary homes, second homes, and lakeside related commercial and high-density housing while reserving adequate public access.

Description:

- Public access to the Lake will be preserved.
- Environmentally sensitive areas will be preserved by setting them aside as public parks, trails, or greenbelts.
- Subdivision designs will incorporate a significant amount of open space.
- Wherever possible, developments will connect to greenspace and trails, available to pedestrians and bicyclists for both tourism and recreational purposes.
- Site plans, building design and landscaping that are sensitive to the natural features of the site, including topography and views, will be encouraged.
- Preferred residential development will be stick built and modular. Manufactured Housing Units will be discouraged.

Land Uses or Zoning Categories to be allowed:

Agriculture/forestry, parks/ recreation/ conservation, low and high density stick built or modular residential and commercial development as part of a PUD or R-1 zoning classification and public/institutional in a very limited manner. All high-density development must have public water and/or sewer or include a private package treatment system. Preferred land use categories include: A-1, R-R, R-1, and PUD.



Example: Marina on Lake Walter F. George



Example: Conservation Subdivision

Quality Community Objectives addressed:

Economic Prosperity, Resource Management, Efficient Land Use, Local Preparedness, Sense of Place, Regional Cooperation, Housing Options, Transportation Options

Implementation Measures and Strategies:

- Conserve, maintain and promote the natural, historic and cultural resources of Clay County.

- Encourage maximum use of the county's natural resources while maintaining sound environmental protection practices.
- Encourage and promote land use and development that respects natural limitation of flood plains, steep slopes, wetlands and limiting soil types.



Example: Nature Trail

- Encourage the use of flood prone areas for passive recreation and other appropriate open space uses.
- Encourage and promote the design and engineering of roads and other facilities to fit, rather than dominate, topography and other site conditions.

- Conserve, maintain and promote the cultural, historic and natural resources to provide a variety of educational and recreational experiences.

- Encourage local schools to use these facilities as outdoor classrooms.
- Encourage the further development of eco-tourism initiatives.

- Conserve, maintain and promote the natural, historic, and cultural resources in order to make Clay County an attractive place in which to live, work and enjoy.

- Prohibit the systematic neglect of structures that lead to the blight and decay of the countryside.

- Discourage the obstruction of scenic views and sites in the county.

- Promote and Enhance the Outdoor Recreation Industry.

- Encourage the development of additional campsites.
- Encourage additional boat ramps along the Lake.



Example: Outdoor Classroom

- Encourage the development of service facilities to meet the needs of this sector of the economy.
- Establish natural habitats for a variety of wildlife.
- Develop and promote additional competitions and festivals targeted to this market.

- Conserve and maintain shared green spaces for recreation and natural resources preservation.
 - Require construction practices designed to minimize soil erosion and sedimentation, including requirements for re-vegetation during and following construction.
- Protect residential areas and their residents from incompatible land uses and their activities.
 - Discourage incompatible land uses, adjacent or within residential areas.
 - Encourage safe, effective, and aesthetically pleasing residential developments.
 - Prohibit the disposal of hazardous waste within Clay County.
- Improve and expand the existing housing stock for all income levels.
 - Support continued improvement of existing housing conditions through all available public and private means.
 - Strive to improve the quality of development along the Lake as recreational second homes.
 - Strive for the elimination of housing discrimination and promote fair housing practices.
 - Discourage residential development in areas designated as having critical environmental hazards such as floodplain and severe slopes.
 - Encourage owners of substandard units to improve their properties through the use of every available means.
 - Encourage stick built and modular residential development.
 - Discourage Manufactured Housing Units.

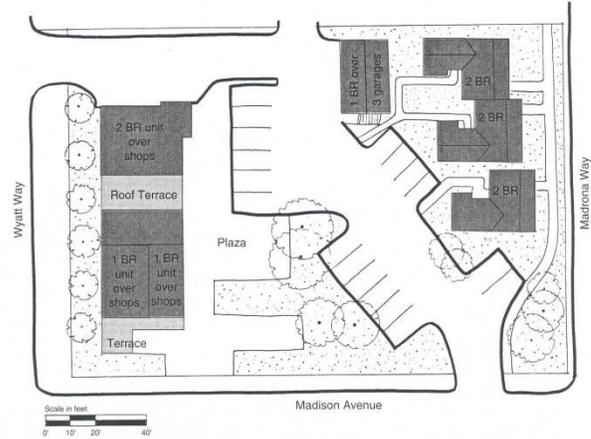


Example: Appropriate Recreational Second Home

Lakeside Suburban Area

Vision:

This area will be a focal point for the county offering a concentration of activities to include low, moderate and high-density housing and appropriate public and open space uses, which will all be easily accessible by pedestrians. An attractive, residential, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly place where people choose to live due to its proximity and connection to the lake and government facilities, shopping, dining, socializing and entertainment facilities in Fort Gaines.



Description:

- Public access to the Lake will be preserved.
- Environmentally sensitive areas will be preserved by setting them aside as public parks, trails, or greenbelts.
- Subdivision designs will incorporate a significant amount of open space.
- Wherever possible, developments will connect to greenspace and trails, available to pedestrians and bicyclists for both tourism and recreational purposes.
- Site plans, building design and landscaping that are sensitive to the natural features of the site, including topography and views, will be encouraged.



Example: Residential Neighborhood with Sidewalks and Street Trees

Land Uses or Zoning Categories preferred:

Land Use categories preferred include mixed-residential (stick built, modular, and manufactured housing units) and commercial and public uses, parks, etc. Zoning classifications preferred include A-1, RR, R-1, C-1, PUD. Public water and sewer or approved septic tanks are required for development in this area. Public water and sewer is necessary for higher density development.

Quality Community Objectives for this Area:

Economic Prosperity, Resource Management, Efficient Land Use, Local Preparedness, Sense of Place, Regional Cooperation, Housing Options, Transportation Options

Implementation Measures/Strategies:

- Add sidewalks and provide amenities such as benches and streetlights to new developments and existing higher density areas.
- Encourage a mix of residential and community facilities at small enough scale and proximity to encourage walking between destinations.
- Improve and expand the existing housing stock for all income levels.
 - Support continued improvement of existing housing conditions.
 - Strive for the elimination of housing discrimination and promote fair housing practices.
 - Promote and encourage more affordable housing opportunities.
 - Encourage owners of substandard units to improve their properties.
- Promote mixed, residential uses, blending residential development with schools, parks, recreation, linked in a compact pattern that encourages walking and minimizes the need for auto trips within the subdivision.
- Promote strong connectivity and continuity between developments.
- Establish good vehicular and pedestrian/bike connections to retail/commercial services as well as internal street connectivity; connectivity to adjacent properties/subdivisions, and multiple site access points.
- Wherever possible, connect to region network of greenspace and trails, available to pedestrians, bicyclists and equestrians for both tourism and recreational purposes.
- Promote street design that fosters traffic calming such as narrower residential streets, on-street parking and addition of bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
- Where feasible retrofit subdivisions to better conform to user sensitive design.
- Promote infill development where possible.
- Encourage adaptive re-use of historic structures.



Example: Affordable Infill Housing



Building Rehab Before



Building Rehab After

- Preserve historic and cultural buildings and monuments.
- Create usable spaces by renovating deteriorating structures and tearing down dilapidated structures.



Workers Restoring Historic Windows



Vision:

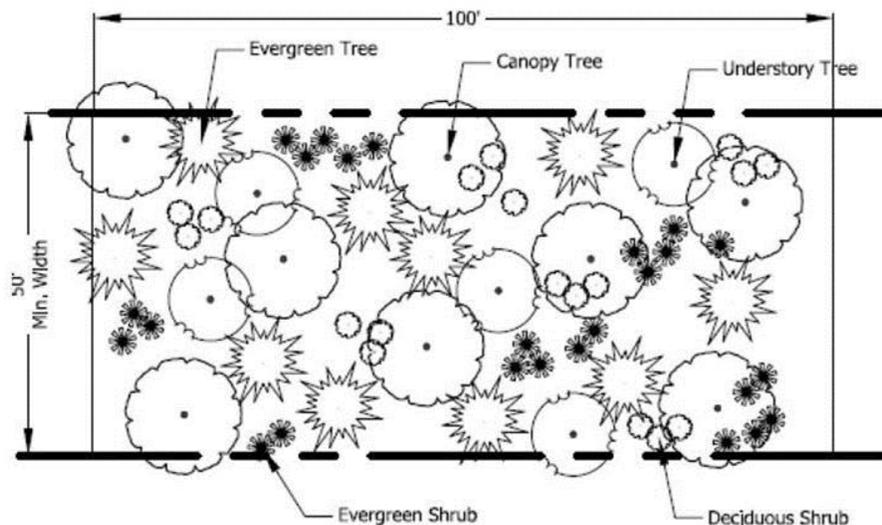
Clay County and the Cities of Bluffton and Fort Gaines will continue to have public schools, public housing, cemeteries, parks, and other public buildings and recreational facilities. These are public land uses that are not likely to change over the planning period.



Walter F. George Lock and Dam

Description:

- Landscaped buffers between the roadways and pedestrian walkways will be constructed.
- Addition of public buildings on appropriate infill sites to serve surrounding neighborhoods.
- Parks and other recreational facilities will have facilities for bicycles, including bikeways or bike lanes, frequent storage racks, etc. will be added.
- Public Housing developments will offer a mix of housing types (single-family homes, town homes, live/work units, lofts, over-the shop, and apartments).
- Public Housing developments will have a healthy mix of uses (corner groceries, barbershops, drugstores) within easy walking distance of residences.
- Parking areas will be landscaped to minimize visual impact on adjacent streets and uses.
- Cemeteries will have fences and be landscaped.
- New community facilities will be accommodated by the reuse of existing vacant or under-utilized structures (e.g. commercial centers, office space, and warehouse).



Example: Landscape Buffer

Land Uses or Zoning Categories to be allowed:

Public/Institutional

Quality Community Objectives addressed:

Resource Management, Efficient Land Use, Local Preparedness, Regional Cooperation, Transportation Options, Educational Opportunities, Community Health

Implementation Measures and Strategies:

- Conserve, maintain and promote existing recreation areas.
 - Encourage maximum use of natural resources while maintaining sound environmental protection practices.
 - Encourage and promote land use and development that respects natural limitation of flood plains, steep slopes, wetlands and limiting soil types.
 - Encourage the use of flood prone areas for passive recreation and other appropriate open space uses.
 - Encourage and promote the design and engineering of roads and other facilities to fit, rather than dominate, topography and other site conditions.
- Improve and extend the public water systems to better serve the current and future population.
 - Encourage those water system extensions that would support or encourage new development in areas appropriate for such activities by reason of policy and the health, safety and welfare of residents and employees.
 - Develop and maintain a water system maintenance program for each public water system to increase efficiency and operational longevity.
- Encourage coordination between Fort Gaines and Clay County for the expansion of the public sewer system.
- Improve and extend the street and highway system to promote safe, efficient and well-maintained access to property in the county and the cities and on through routes for local and regional travelers.



Example: Recreational Tennis Facility



Example: Outdoor Classroom

- Provide for safe, efficient movement of people, goods and services in and around Clay County and the Cities of Bluffton and Fort Gaines.
 - Minimize conflicts between local and through traffic using available means.
 - Provide for timely maintenance and improvement of streets.
 - Support and encourage the addition of bicycle lanes whenever streets are repaved and it is economically feasible.
- Encourage and Support the provision of educational opportunities for residents of Clay County and the Cities of Bluffton and Fort Gaines.
 - Encourage and support the expansion of Adult Education opportunities in Clay County.
 - Encourage and support the expansion of services at the library in Fort Gaines.
 - Encourage and support the activities of the Clay County School System to educate the children of Clay County.



Example: Athletic Field

- Support and encourage the provision of recreational and fine arts opportunities for the residents of Clay County and the Cities of Bluffton and Fort Gaines.
 - Encourage collaboration between the Clay County Board of Education and the Clay County Board of Commissioners on the use of school system facilities for county recreation i.e. ball fields, gymnasiums, etc.
 - Encourage and support the development of a Clay County Recreational Program that will provide opportunities for Little League baseball, football, basketball and other sports.
 - Encourage and support the development of opportunities to share the fine arts with the community, i.e. art shows, theatrical presentations, musicals, etc.

Community Work Program

Clay County Report of Accomplishments 2007 - 2012		
Community Facilities		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Support a public transportation system in the 4-county area.	Completed	
Continue maintenance program for government buildings to include a new roof for the historic courthouse and a new county government center.	Currently Underway	Continue into 2014. Project is in the planning stages.
Work with the City of Fort Gaines and Bagby Park to construct the Phenomenon Trail.	Currently Underway	Phase 1 completed in 2013. Phase 2 underway. This item will be carried over to the new work program.
Support the Clay County Volunteer Fire Department.	Completed	
Recruit and retain appropriate medical personnel and facilities to attend to the needs of county residents to include constructing a medical/dental clinic.	Not Accomplished	The County does not have the staff or funding to complete this goal. This item will not be carried over to the new work program.
Work with the Clay County-Fort Gaines Recreation Committee on gymnasium improvements and other needed recreation improvements.	Completed	
Provide full-time Emergency Medical Service to the county and municipalities.	Completed	
Construct and maintain public water and sewer systems in growing areas of the county.	Currently Underway	Projected Completion Date: 2014 Completing extension plans for water system now and applying for additional funds.
Resurface county roads, pave densely populated roads, and provide drainage improvements to include Lakeview, County Line, St. Luke Church Rd, Pebble Shores, and Jenny Lynn.	Currently Underway	Projected Completion Date: 2015 Using LMIG and TSPLOST funds.
Expand the county library to include an archives section/building.	Postponed	Resume in 20???. This item will be combined with another in the new work program.
Encourage public-private partnerships to develop new recreational opportunities.	Currently Underway	Projected Completion Date: 2016 Developing partnerships with White Oak Pastures (Bluffton) and County Rec Dept.
Purchase necessary equipment and vehicles for public safety and public service departments including laptops in all sheriff's and EMS vehicles and a hydraulic-lift stretcher for the ambulance.	Currently Underway	Projected Completion Date: 2014

Economic Development		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Work with the EDC and neighboring counties on a regional Welcome Center.	Not Accomplished	Lack of funding. This item will not be carried over to the new work program.
Market Bagby State Park and Lodge and the Meadowlinks Golf Course.	Completed	
Support the efforts of the Clay County Development Authority in developing lakefront retirement community.	Postponed	Projected Completion Date unknown due to a legal issue, but this is still a commission priority. This item will be carried over to the new work program.
Support the Clay County Development Authority, Clay County Economic Development Council, the 4-County Southwest Georgia Development Authority, and the Clay County Chamber of Commerce.	Completed	All elements of this activity were completed, except for the 4-county Southwest Georgia Development Authority. That organization disbanded. This item will not be carried over to the new work program.
Apply for a Scenic Byway Designation for Hwy 39.	Postponed	Resume in 2015. This item will be carried over to the new work program.
Review and update development ordinances to promote environmentally friendly development with proper infrastructure and greenspace.	Postponed	Resume 2015. This item will be combined with another item in the new work program.
Recruit appropriate businesses for the county, especially major highway corridors.	Currently Underway	Two projects are in the development phase: Solar Farm Facility and Bio Mass Factory.
Develop a work force training program for county residents.	Currently Underway	Clay County is Included in the PILOT program.
Develop an inventory of sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment.	Not Accomplished	Lack of funding. This item will not be carried over to the new work program.
Adopt highway corridor/overlay district to regulate parking, signage, landscaping and points of ingress and egress.	Currently Underway	The County has ordered new signage. This item will be carried over to the new work program.
Housing		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Support efforts of the Southwest Georgia Housing Authority to increase affordable housing in the area.	Currently Underway	The County will continue to support this organization, but this will not be an element in the new work program.
Provide for a code-enforcement program in the county.	Completed	
Pursue housing redevelopment programs to renovate/ rebuild substandard housing throughout the county.	Currently Underway	Continue into 2014. This item will be carried over to the new work program.
Develop standards for use, placement, and compatibility of Manufactured Housing Units in the county.	Not Accomplished	Waiting on industry decision. This will not be an element in the new work program.

Land Use		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Review and update Comprehensive Plan	Currently Underway	Projected Completion Date: 2014
Review and update Solid Waste Management Plan.	Completed	
Enforce zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations	Completed	
Adopt and enforce buffer requirements along roadways	Completed	
Continue efforts of farmland protection in the county.	Completed	
Adopt an ordinance to encourage preservation of existing shade trees or planting of new ones in new developments.	Not Accomplished	Due to lack of development, this is not a commission priority at this time. This item will not be carried over to the new work program.
Develop a community greenspace plan that identifies new areas for passive recreation and organizes a tree planting program for public spaces.	Currently Underway	Continue into 2014. This item will be combined with another item in the new work program.
Review the existing subdivision ordinance to provide illustrative examples of desirable new development.	Postponed	Resume in 2015. This item will be combined with another element in the new work program
Natural and Historic Resources		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Adopt Part V Planning Criteria for wetlands and groundwater recharge areas.	Postponed	Lack of funding. This item will be carried over to the new work program.
Adopt and enforce buffer requirements along roadways	Postponed	Resume in 2015. This item will be combined with another element in the new work program
Adopt Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) limits for Drag Nasty, Hog, Pataula, and Roaring Branch Creeks and the Chattahoochee River	Postponed	Resume in 2014. This item will be carried over to the new work program.
Develop an inventory of natural and cultural resources to aid in county decision making.	Cultural Resources Completed Natural Resources Not Accomplished	There is a historic resource survey for Bluffton. However, this is not a council priority at this time. This item will not be carried over to the new work program.

Community Work Program for Clay County 2014 - 2018									
Activity	Time Frame						Responsible Party/Partners	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019			
Review and update zoning code and all development ordinances to reflect current state law and best development practices.		X	X				Clay County RVRC	\$10,000	County Funds DCA
Form a committee of the County Tax Assessor, Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners to investigate ways to optimize tax revenues through development choices.		X	X				Clay County RVRC	\$2,000	County Funds
Upgrade Cottonhill campground and Sandy Branch park.	X						Clay County	\$20,000	County Funds DNR
Develop a county newsletter to provide information to citizens.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Clay County	\$5,000	County Funds
Partner with the School Board and Family Connections to offer/enhance after-school and tutoring programs for children.			X				Clay County Board of Education Clay Family Connections 4-H	\$50,000	County Funds BOE Funds

Activity	Time Frame						Responsible Party/Partners	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019			
Partner with prospective industries to insure that local citizens have workforce training and job skills to gain employment.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Clay County Industries Workforce Investment Administration Technical College	\$50,000	County Funds Private Funds
Request Area Agency on Aging to offer training for caregivers and for chronic disease management.		X		X		X	Clay County RVRCAAA	\$500	County Funds RVRCAAA
Partner with Bagby State Park to develop golfing and fishing tournaments and eco-tourism events.			X	X	X	X	Clay County Bagby State Park Friends of Bagby	\$50,000	County Funds Private Funds GDEcD
Improve and expand the county's recreation program to include a wider variety of events and activities.		X	X	X	X	X	Clay County Clay Family Connections Board of Education	\$50,000	County Funds Private Funds Event Fees

Activity	Time Frame						Responsible Party/Partners	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019			
Partner with Fort Gaines and the Fort Gaines 200 organization on the celebration of the city's bi-centennial.	X	X	X				Clay County Fort Gaines Fort Gaines 200	\$5,000	County Funds Private Funds Event Funds GDEcD
Partner with Fort Gaines and the Downtown Development Authority to create a Farmer's Market.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Clay County Fort Gaines DDA GA Farm Bureau	\$5,000	County Funds City Funds Private Funds Event Fees GA Dept of Ag GDEcD
Partner with White Oak Pastures on developing agri-tourism events and activities that complement existing offerings.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Clay County White Oak Pastures GA Dept of Ag GA Organics	\$5,000	County Funds Private Funds Event Fees GDEcD
Develop a maintenance schedule for paving and upkeep of county roads.	X						Clay County Golden Triangle RC&D	\$10,000	County Funds

Activity	Time Frame						Responsible Party/Partners	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019			
Review alternative paving types or systems to maximize transportation dollars.			X	X			Clay County Golden Triangle RC&D	\$10,000	County Funds
Review "Better Backroads" Manual for cost-effective ways to manage rural county roads.	X	X					Clay County Golden Triangle RC&D	\$10,000	County Funds
Continue maintenance program for government buildings to include a new roof for the historic courthouse and a new county government center.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Clay County	\$100,000	County Funds USDA
Work with the City of Fort Gaines and Bagby Park to construct the Phenomenon Trail.	X	X	X				Clay County Ft Gaines City Council Bagby State Park	\$250,000	County Funds City Funds Private Funds GDOT
Encourage and support the expansion of services at the library in Fort Gaines.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Clay County Ft Gaines City Council Kinchafoonee Regional Library System	\$5,000	County Funds City Funds Library Funds

Activity	Time Frame						Responsible Party/Partners	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019			
Recruit appropriate businesses for the county, especially along major highway corridors.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Clay County Clay County EDC	\$25,000	County Funds Private Funds
Apply for a Scenic Byway Designation for Hwy 39.		X	X				Clay County Ft Gaines City Council Clay County EDC GDOT	\$10,000	County Funds City Funds Private Funds
Adopt highway corridor/overlay district to regulate parking, signage, landscaping, buffers and points of ingress and egress.			X	X	X		Ft Gaines City Council Clay County Board of Commissioners GDOT	\$10,000	County Funds City Funds
Pursue housing redevelopment programs to renovate/ rebuild substandard housing throughout the county.	X		X		X		Clay County	\$250,000	County Funds USDA CDBG
Adopt Part V Planning Criteria for wetlands and groundwater recharge areas.							Clay County		

Activity	Time Frame						Responsible Party/Partners	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019			
Adopt Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) limits for Drag Nasty, Hog, Pataula, and Roaring Branch Creeks and the Chattahoochee River.	X						Clay County		
Promote appropriate development along and enhance aesthetics of U.S. Hwy. 27.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Clay County Clay County EDC	\$25,000	County Funds TSPLOST
Encourage local schools to use the cultural, historic and natural resources of Clay County for educational purposes.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Clay County Clay County BOE	\$5,000	County Funds BOE Funds
Support regional/state tourism alliances to increase the number of visitors.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Clay County Clay County EDC RVRC	\$5,000	County Funds GDEcD
Purchase necessary equipment and vehicles for public safety and public service departments including laptops in all sheriff's and EMS vehicles and a hydraulic-lift stretcher for the ambulance.	X	X	X	X	X	X	Clay County GEMA	\$500,000	County Funds FEMA USDA

Activity	Time Frame						Responsible Party/Partners	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019			
Construct and maintain public water and sewer systems in growing areas of the county.	X						Clay County EPD	\$250,000	County Funds
Support the efforts of the Clay County Development Authority in developing lakefront retirement community.	X	X	X	X			Clay County Clay County EDC	\$25,000	County Funds Private Funds

Appendix

Comprehensive Plan Update Schedule

CLAY COUNTY
Comprehensive Plan Five Year Update
FY2014 Work Session Schedule

Plan Element	Required Update Elements	Optional Update Elements	Work Session Agenda	Date
1 st Public Hearing	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan Update Process/Meeting Schedule 	December 19, 2013
Community Goals		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop Vision Statement. List Community Goals. Community Policies. Character Areas and Defining Narrative. 	
Needs and Opportunities	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop this list using S.W.O.T analysis. Provide supplemental planning recommendations. Analysis of data and information. Analysis of consistency with quality community objectives. 	January 6, 2014 January 14, 2014 February 7, 2014 February 11, 2014 February 18, 2014
Land Use Element	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Character Area Map and Defining Narrative. Future Land-Use Map and Narrative. 	February 11, 2014 February 18, 2014 March 4, 2014 March 18, 2014
Economic Development Element		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use CEDS information to develop this section. 	
Community Work Program	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Define activities that each govt. plans to undertake during the next 5 years to address priority Needs and Opportunities. 	March 4, 2014 March 18, 2014
Transportation Element		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss with Planning and Zoning Commission (where applicable) any updates to prior plan. 	
Housing Element		✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss with Planning and Zoning Commission (where applicable) any updates to prior plan. 	
Service Delivery Strategy (SDS)	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All Local Governments required to update SDS 	April 2014
2 nd Public Hearing	✓		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final Plan Review and Comments. 	April 17, 2014

Notes:

- **Plan date of adoption June 30, 2014; Plan Submission to DCA for review no later than April 30, 2014.**
- Combination of the Mayor/Councilor or Chairman/Commissioner and Planning and Zoning commission members (where applicable) will act as steering committee.
- RVRC will email stakeholder list to the Local Elected Official and City staff for update.
- RVRC is responsible for scheduling and documenting 2 public hearings during comp plan update process.

Clay County Leadership Team and Stakeholder List

Leadership Team

David Shivers
Roselle Moody
Joyce Sanders
Jim Snyder
Lee Hubbard
Earnest Jenkins
James Davenport
Adria McLendon
Anne Lynn
Bill Gleaton
James Crozier
Ken Penuel (Clay Economic Development Council Member)

Stakeholders

Betty Adams	Kenneth Sumpter
Pat Andrae	Mable Giles
Sherri Baker	Bobby Dupree
Jo Ann Braxton	Donna Brooks
Almeda Freeman	Charles Crozier
Peggy Brown	Carol Sealey
Sue Cook	Caryl Munford
Kathryn Fuller	Bobbie Brown
Carolyn Gleaton	Carolyn Gleaton
Arlene Goodman	Sheri Baker
Debbie Harrell	Linda Morgan
Suzie Tedford	Pete Klear
Marcia Huggins	Cindy Shute
Christine King	Cynthia Gore
Joyce Martin	Trey Anderson
Janice Miller	Trey Crozier
Betty Mills	Lisa Shivers
Colleen Morrell	Deanna Bertrand
Ann Penuel	Eddie Watson
Sonja Sedberry	Carl Childs, Jr.
Nan Stanfield	Phillip Wills
Barbara Whatley	

Citizen Compiled List of Needs and Opportunities 2014: Clay County

- Better maintenance of roads and pavement repair.
- Fast food restaurant.
- Better use of Social Services Building for school experiences.
- Jobs.
- Re-zoning that allows for more businesses along Hwy 39.
- A technical school—more community education opportunities.
- Find a better place for public housing. Close the current building on the main street and re-develop that parcel for a recreational area.
- Better policing of drugs.
- Pave dirt roads.
- Clean the sides of existing roads.
- More police presence.
- More lake development needed. Landing.
- Hwy 39 to Quitman County line needs repaving
- CR 115 needs repair and paving.
- More grading on all dirt roads.
- More and better citizen participation.
- More industry.
- Better usage of Bagby State Park.
- Partner with Bagby State Park to develop Golfing and Fishing Tournaments.
- Partner with the churches.
- Hold neighborhood clean-ups.
- Paved roads in the lake area.
- Repair road between Fort Gaines and Bluffton.
- Need local Medical and Dental care.
- Tutoring for youth.
- Arts and Music programs for children.
- Ad Valorem tax level of lots around the lake need to be stabilized or improved.
- 300 acre solar farm.
- Pellet Plant.
- Solar/Pellet Plant jobs.
- Nuisance Abatement Ordinance.
- Cottonhill Campground.
- Restoration of Buildings.
- New Gymnasium- multi-purpose building.
- County wide water/sewer.
- Transit System.

- Medical improvements.
- New Political atmosphere.
- Closer adherence to Comp Plan.
- Streamline Law Enforcement.
- Proper drainage on county dirt roads.
- Emergency Medical Care.
- Local High School.
- Improved housing.
- Better affordable housing.
- More youth activities.
- Recreation with supervision.
- More child care.
- Create a Boys and Girls Club
- Hospital with 24 hour emergency room.
- Training for caregivers of dementia patients.
- Develop agriculture like truck farms.
- Lower waterfront taxes.

Clay County Retail Marketplace Profile



Retail MarketPlace Profile

Clay County, GA 3
Clay County (13061)
Geography: County

Summary Demographics						
2013 Population						3,299
2013 Households						1,386
2013 Median Disposable Income						\$21,275
2013 Per Capita Income						\$15,826
Industry Summary	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Total Retail Trade and Food & Drink	44-45,722	\$23,679,656	\$9,770,709	\$13,908,947	41.6	17
Total Retail Trade	44-45	\$21,700,151	\$9,370,460	\$12,329,691	39.7	16
Total Food & Drink	722	\$1,979,505	\$400,249	\$1,579,256	66.4	1
Industry Group	NAICS	Demand (Retail Potential)	Supply (Retail Sales)	Retail Gap	Leakage/Surplus Factor	Number of Businesses
Motor Vehicle & Parts Dealers	441	\$4,111,751	\$272,832	\$3,838,919	87.6	2
Automobile Dealers	4411	\$3,537,591	\$0	\$3,537,591	100.0	0
Other Motor Vehicle Dealers	4412	\$243,251	\$0	\$243,251	100.0	0
Auto Parts, Accessories & Tire Stores	4413	\$330,909	\$272,832	\$58,077	9.6	2
Furniture & Home Furnishings Stores	442	\$426,833	\$0	\$426,833	100.0	0
Furniture Stores	4421	\$256,959	\$0	\$256,959	100.0	0
Home Furnishings Stores	4422	\$169,874	\$0	\$169,874	100.0	0
Electronics & Appliance Stores	443	\$599,844	\$0	\$599,844	100.0	0
Bldg Materials, Garden Equip. & Supply Stores	444	\$746,562	\$721,600	\$24,962	1.7	1
Bldg Material & Supplies Dealers	4441	\$603,838	\$721,600	-\$117,762	-8.9	1
Lawn & Garden Equip & Supply Stores	4442	\$142,724	\$0	\$142,724	100.0	0
Food & Beverage Stores	445	\$3,796,035	\$3,602,449	\$193,586	2.6	4
Grocery Stores	4451	\$3,569,027	\$3,602,449	-\$33,422	-0.5	4
Specialty Food Stores	4452	\$71,194	\$0	\$71,194	100.0	0
Beer, Wine & Liquor Stores	4453	\$155,814	\$0	\$155,814	100.0	0
Health & Personal Care Stores	446,4461	\$1,965,103	\$545,144	\$1,419,959	56.6	1
Gasoline Stations	447,4471	\$2,779,675	\$3,401,953	-\$622,278	-10.1	1
Clothing & Clothing Accessories Stores	448	\$1,072,465	\$387,050	\$685,415	47.0	2
Clothing Stores	4481	\$796,322	\$387,050	\$409,272	34.6	2
Shoe Stores	4482	\$142,093	\$0	\$142,093	100.0	0
Jewelry, Luggage & Leather Goods Stores	4483	\$134,050	\$0	\$134,050	100.0	0
Sporting Goods, Hobby, Book & Music Stores	451	\$439,232	\$195,990	\$243,242	38.3	1
Sporting Goods/Hobby/Musical Instr Stores	4511	\$350,349	\$195,990	\$154,359	28.3	1
Book, Periodical & Music Stores	4512	\$88,883	\$0	\$88,883	100.0	0
General Merchandise Stores	452	\$3,924,249	\$0	\$3,924,249	100.0	0
Department Stores Excluding Leased Depts.	4521	\$1,205,760	\$0	\$1,205,760	100.0	0
Other General Merchandise Stores	4529	\$2,718,489	\$0	\$2,718,489	100.0	0
Miscellaneous Store Retailers	453	\$507,350	\$144,577	\$362,773	55.6	3
Florists	4531	\$26,437	\$0	\$26,437	100.0	0
Office Supplies, Stationery & Gift Stores	4532	\$114,074	\$29,053	\$85,021	59.4	1
Used Merchandise Stores	4533	\$52,528	\$0	\$52,528	100.0	0
Other Miscellaneous Store Retailers	4539	\$314,311	\$115,524	\$198,787	46.2	2
Nonstore Retailers	454	\$1,331,052	\$98,865	\$1,232,187	86.2	1
Electronic Shopping & Mail-Order Houses	4541	\$1,010,726	\$0	\$1,010,726	100.0	0
Vending Machine Operators	4542	\$66,330	\$0	\$66,330	100.0	0
Direct Selling Establishments	4543	\$253,996	\$98,865	\$155,131	44.0	1
Food Services & Drinking Places	722	\$1,979,505	\$400,249	\$1,579,256	66.4	1
Full-Service Restaurants	7221	\$796,451	\$400,249	\$396,202	33.1	1
Limited-Service Eating Places	7222	\$999,426	\$0	\$999,426	100.0	0
Special Food Services	7223	\$63,083	\$0	\$63,083	100.0	0
Drinking Places - Alcoholic Beverages	7224	\$120,545	\$0	\$120,545	100.0	0

Data Note: Supply (retail sales) estimates sales to consumers by establishments. Sales to businesses are excluded. Demand (retail potential) estimates the expected amount spent by consumers at retail establishments. Supply and demand estimates are in current dollars. The Leakage/Surplus Factor presents a snapshot of retail opportunity. This is a measure of the relationship between supply and demand that ranges from +100 (total leakage) to -100 (total surplus). A positive value represents 'leakage' of retail opportunity outside the trade area. A negative value represents a surplus of retail sales, a market where customers are drawn in from outside the trade area. The Retail Gap represents the difference between Retail Potential and Retail Sales. Esri uses the North American Industry Classification System (NAICS) to classify businesses by their primary type of economic activity. Retail establishments are classified into 27 industry groups in the Retail Trade sector, as well as four industry groups within the Food Services & Drinking Establishments subsector. For more information on the Retail MarketPlace data, please view the methodology statement at <http://www.esri.com/library/whitepapers/pdfs/esri-data-retail-marketplace.pdf>.

Source: Esri and Dun & Bradstreet. Copyright 2013 Dun & Bradstreet, Inc. All rights reserved.

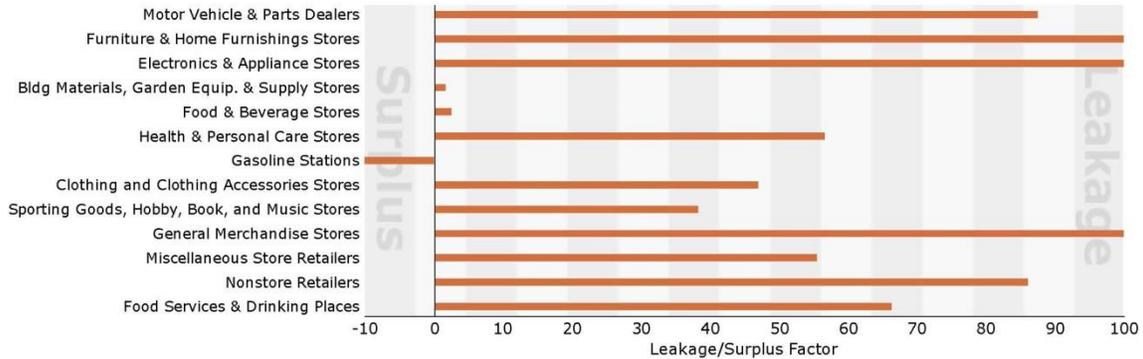
April 12, 2014



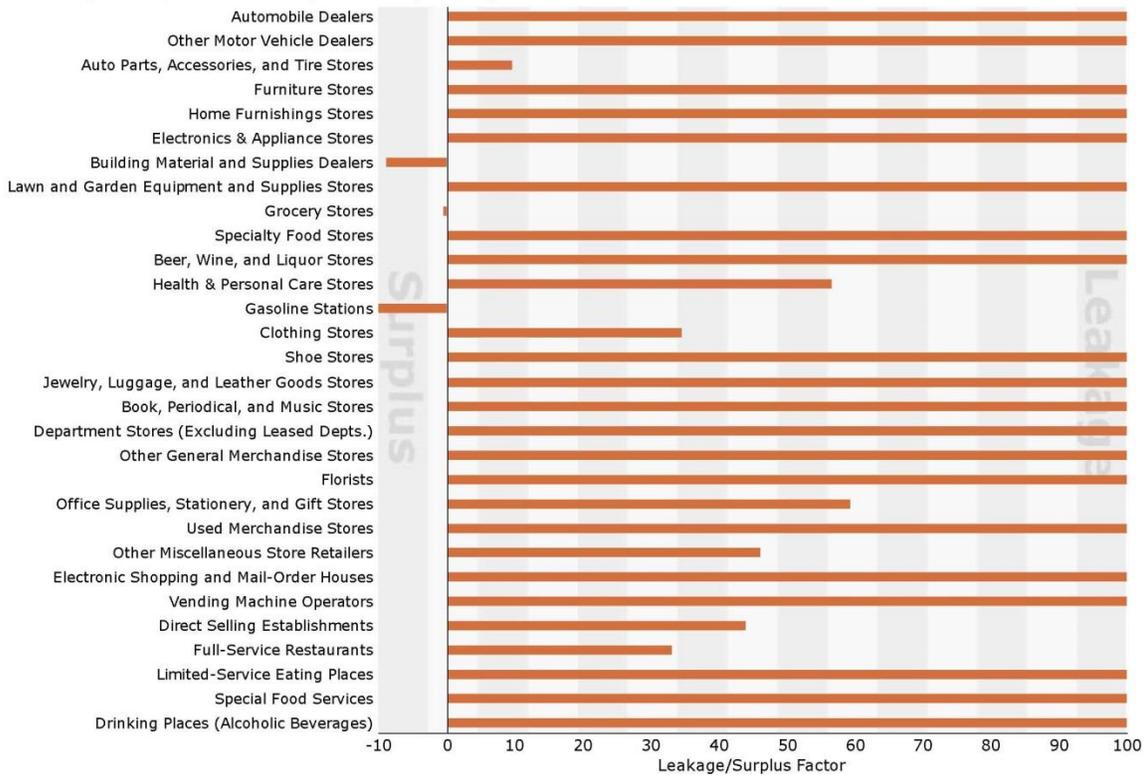
Retail MarketPlace Profile

Clay County, GA 3
 Clay County (13061)
 Geography: County

Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Subsector

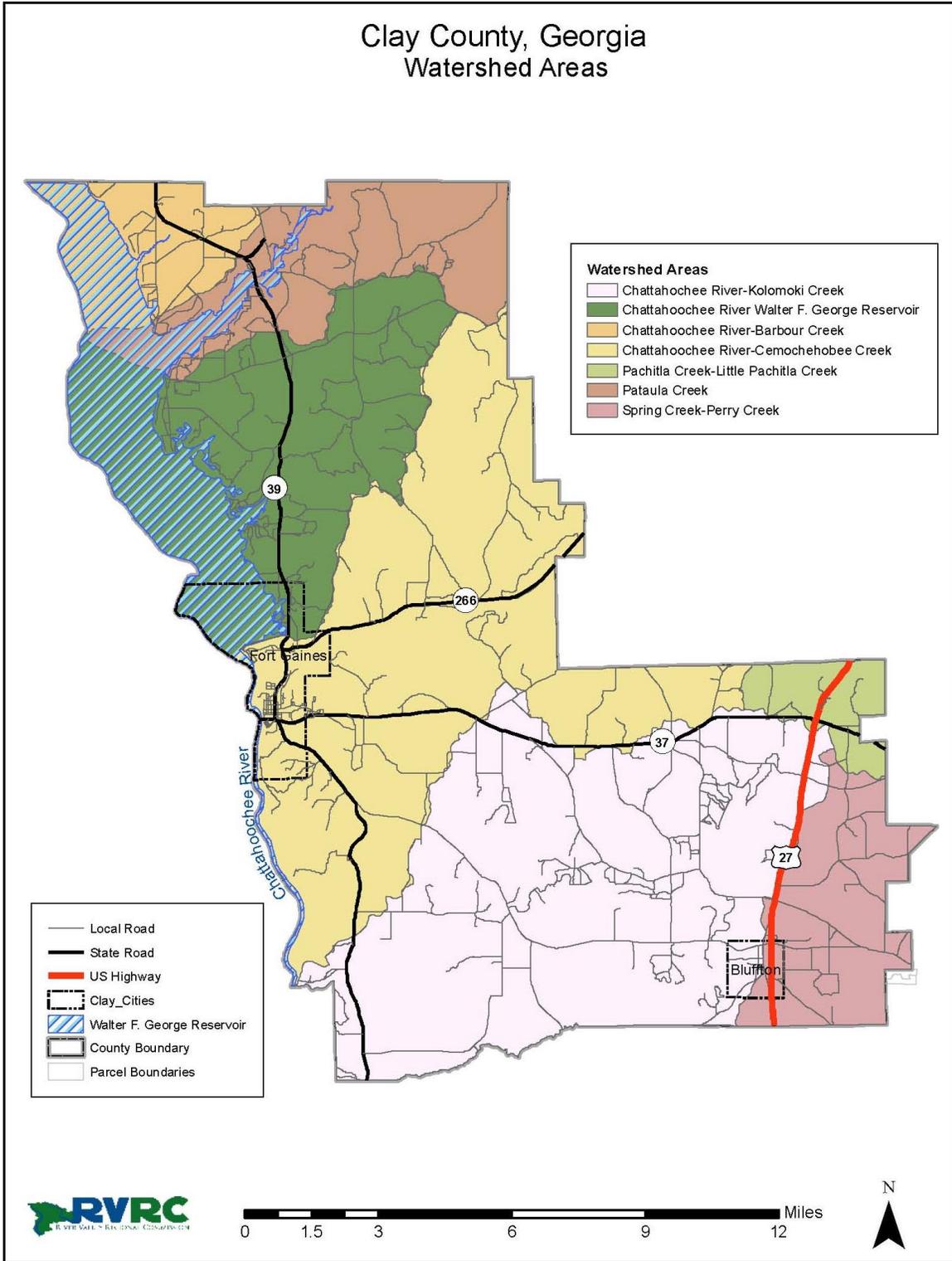


Leakage/Surplus Factor by Industry Group

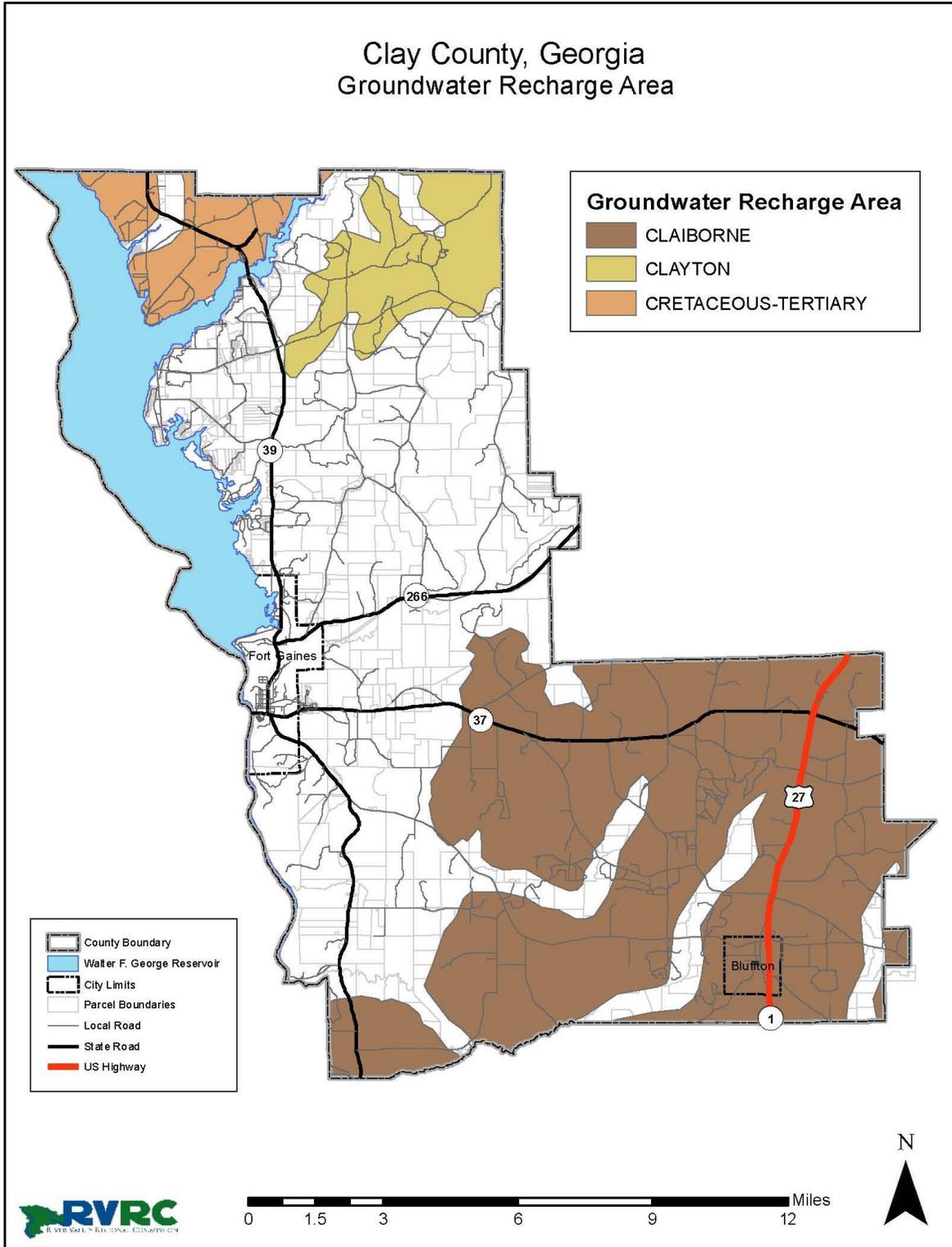


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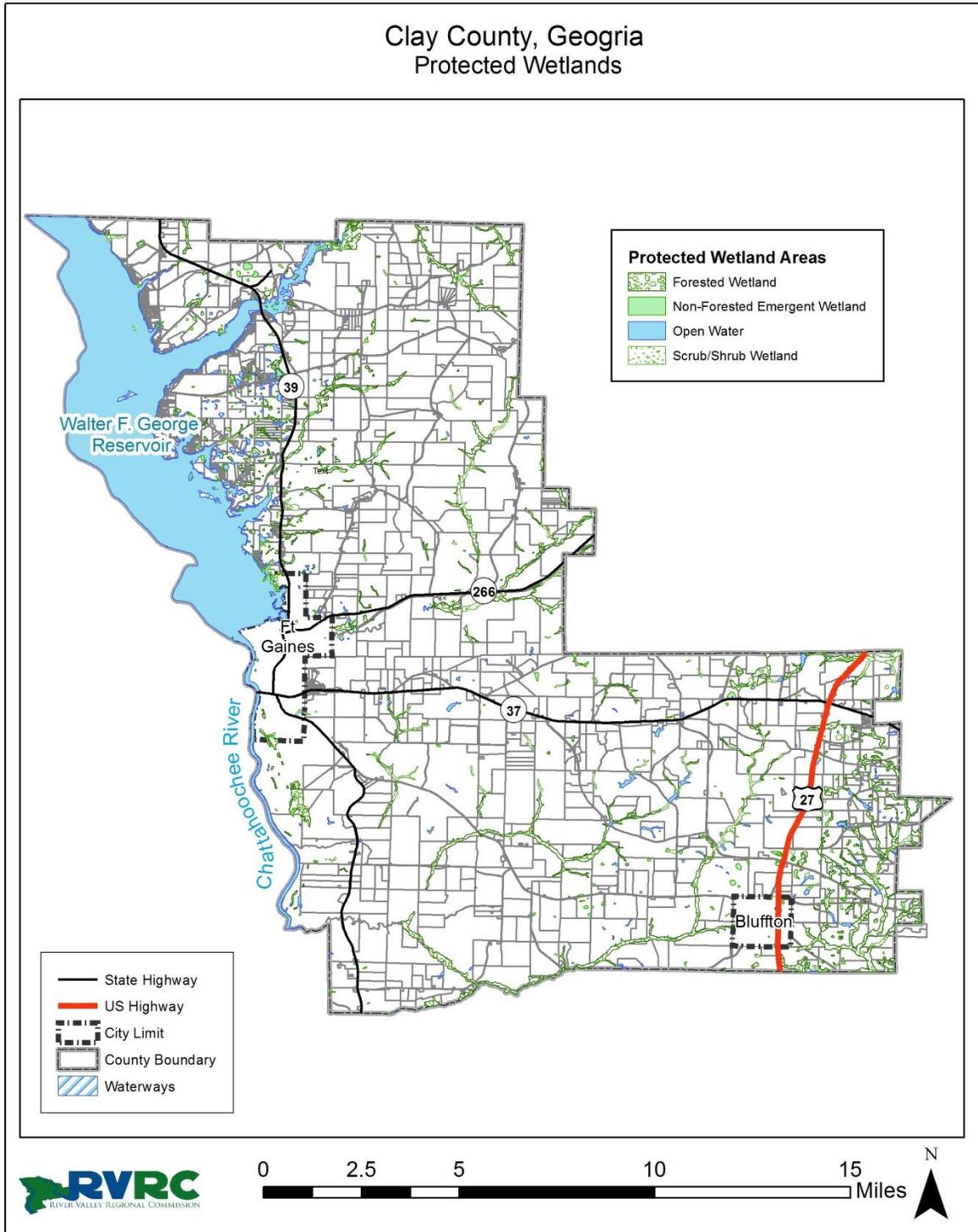
Map: Watershed



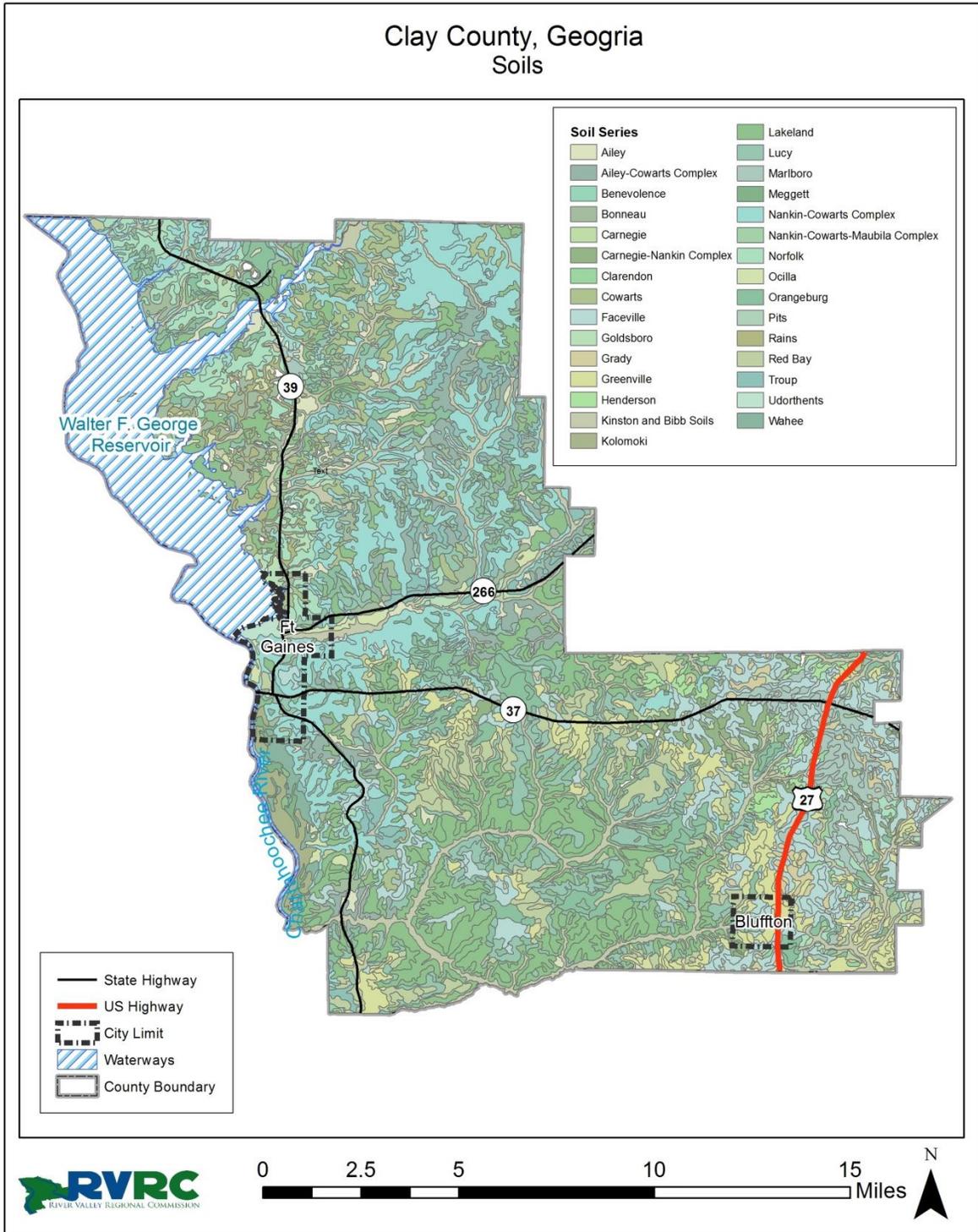
Map: Groundwater Recharge Area



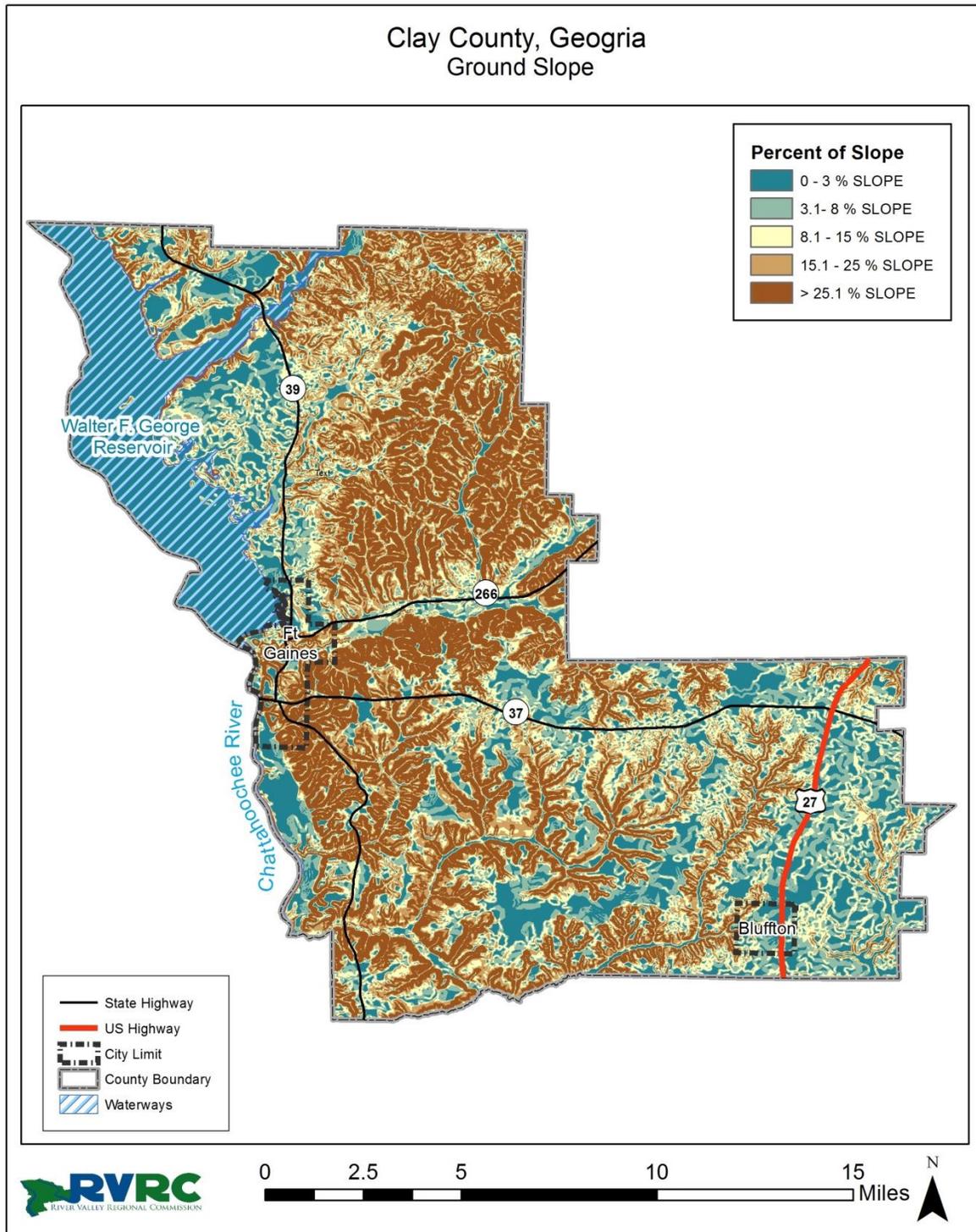
Map: Wetlands



Map: Soils



Map: Ground Slope



RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION
CLAY COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2014-2018

WHEREAS, the Georgia General Assembly did enact, and subsequently amend, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 to institute local comprehensive planning in communities throughout the state, and

WHEREAS, said Act requires local governments to prepare, maintain and periodically update a state-approved local comprehensive plan to be eligible for certain state-issued grants, loans and permits, and

WHEREAS, Clay County has been notified by cognizant authority that the County's most recent effort to update the local comprehensive plan does adequately address the minimum standards and procedures promulgated by the state to ensure compliance with said Act.

NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, by the Clay County Board of Commissioners that the Clay County Comprehensive Plan 2014-2018 be adopted.

Duly considered and approved by the Clay County Board of Commissioners in session this 16 day of September, 2014.

Clay County
Board of Commissioners



Chairman

ATTEST



County Clerk

RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION
TOWN OF BLUFFTON COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2014-2018

WHEREAS, the Georgia General Assembly did enact, and subsequently amend, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 to institute local comprehensive planning in communities throughout the state, and

WHEREAS, said Act requires local governments to prepare, maintain and periodically update a state-approved local comprehensive plan to be eligible for certain state-issued grants, loans and permits, and

WHEREAS, the Town of Bluffton has been notified by cognizant authority that the Town's most recent effort to update the local comprehensive plan does adequately address the minimum standards and procedures promulgated by the state to ensure compliance with said Act.

NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, by the Town of Bluffton Council that the Bluffton Comprehensive Plan 2014-2018 be adopted.

Duly considered and approved by the Town of Bluffton Council in session this _____ day of July, 2014.

Town of Bluffton
Council

Dwight F. A. II
Mayor

ATTEST

Gail Hubbard
Town Clerk



RESOLUTION OF ADOPTION
CITY OF FORT GAINES COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2014-2018

WHEREAS, the Georgia General Assembly did enact, and subsequently amend, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 to institute local comprehensive planning in communities throughout the state, and

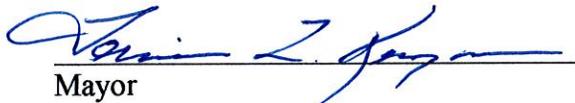
WHEREAS, said Act requires local governments to prepare, maintain and periodically update a state-approved local comprehensive plan to be eligible for certain state-issued grants, loans and permits, and

WHEREAS, the City of Fort Gaines has been notified by cognizant authority that the City's most recent effort to update the local comprehensive plan does adequately address the minimum standards and procedures promulgated by the state to ensure compliance with said Act.

NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, by the City of Fort Gaines Council that the Fort Gaines Comprehensive Plan 2014-2018 be adopted.

Duly considered and approved by the City of Fort Gaines Council in session this 8 day of July 2014.

City of Fort Gaines
Council



Mayor

ATTEST



City Clerk