

City of Kennesaw  
Comprehensive Plan 2006-2026

*Community  
Assessment*

Prepared for:  
**City of Kennesaw**  
Kennesaw, Georgia



MACTEC Engineering and Consulting, Inc.  
Kennesaw, Georgia  
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Project 6311-06-0025

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Purpose

The Community Assessment provides a factual and conceptual foundation for the remaining work involved in preparing the *City of Kennesaw Comprehensive Plan 2006-2026*. The City adopted the comprehensive plan that the City uses to guide growth and development today in 1999. Production of the Community Assessment involved the collection and analysis of community data and information. This report represents the final product of that analysis and provides a concise, informative report that stakeholders will use to guide their decision making during the development of the Community Agenda portion of the plan.

The *City of Kennesaw Comprehensive Plan 2006-2026* will primarily focus on the area within the City limits, although since Cobb County government provides some services to residents of the City, a review of county data in some instances will help define the existing and future demands.

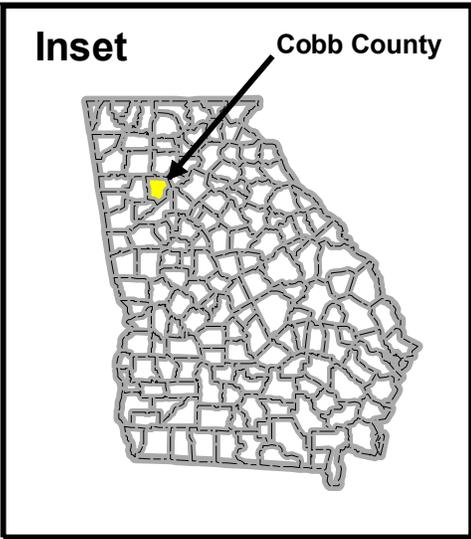
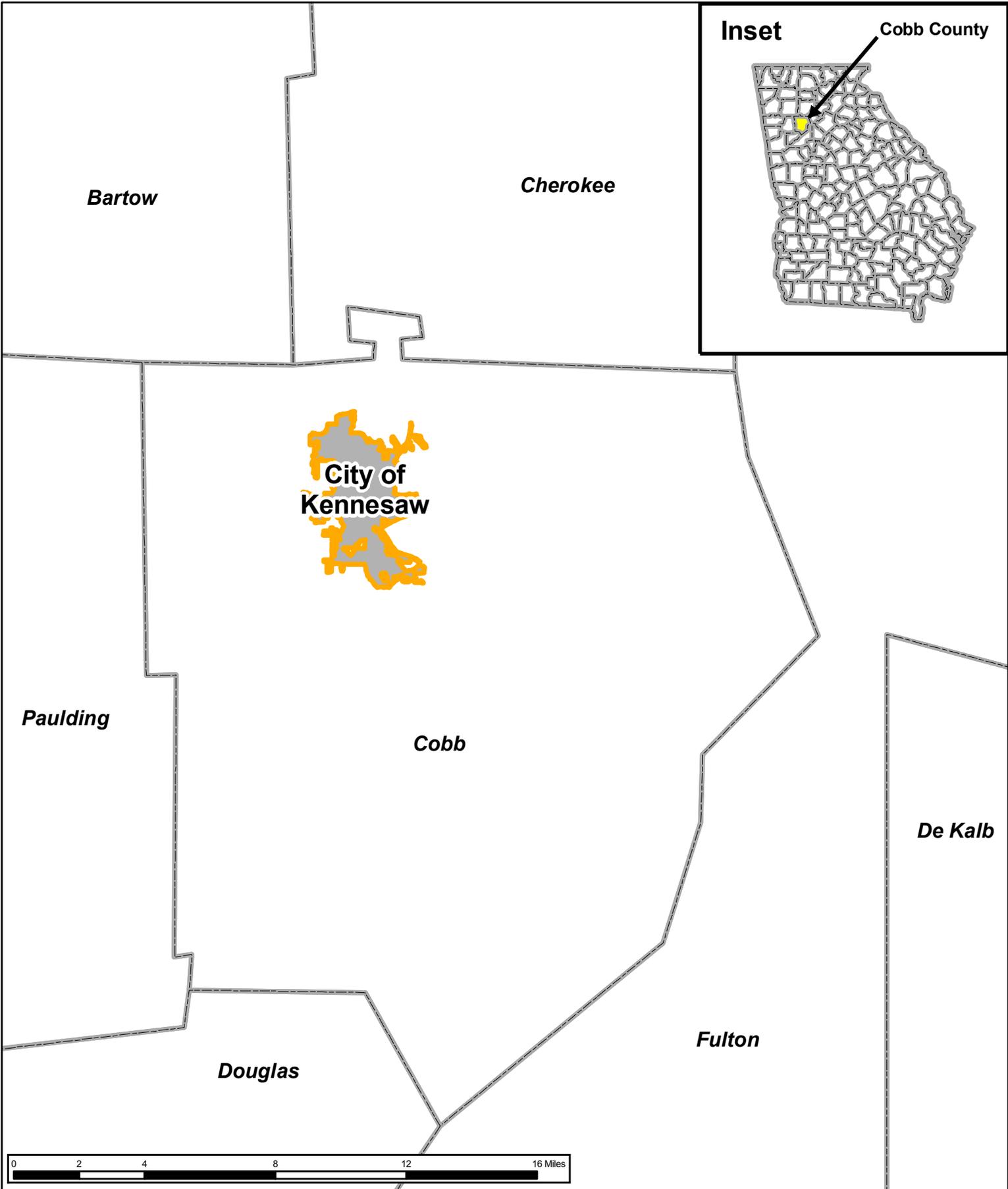
The Community Assessment also serves the purpose of meeting the intent of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," as established on May 1, 2005. Preparation in accordance with these standards is an essential requirement in maintaining the City's status as a Qualified Local Government.

## 1.2 Scope

The Community Assessment includes the following information, as required by the DCA Standards:

- Listing of issues and opportunities that the community wants to address
- Analysis of existing development patterns
- Analysis of consistency with the Quality Community Objectives
- Analysis of supporting data and information

The Community Assessment provides an executive summary of community analyses in order to provide an easy reference for stakeholders who will need to refer to the information throughout the planning process. Information referenced in Sections 2 and 3 of the report can be found in its entirety in the "Analysis of Supportive Data for the Community Assessment." Figure 1-1 shows the City location in relation to Cobb County.



**City of  
Kennesaw**

*Bartow*

*Cherokee*

*Paulding*

*Cobb*

*De Kalb*

*Fulton*

*Douglas*

- Legend**
-  City Limits
  -  County Boundary



City of Kennesaw	
Regional Location	
Prepared by: THP	
Checked by: DRH	
Project number: 6311060025	
Figure Number: 1-1	

## 2 Issues and Opportunities

### 2.1 Introduction

The issues and opportunities described below have been identified from a review of the *Analysis of Supportive Data*. This analysis included an examination of the Quality Community Objectives. The *Analysis of Supportive Data* can be found as an addendum to this report. The Issues and Opportunities section organizes the issues and opportunities by the major topics defined in the State of Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Local Planning Requirements. The assessment topics are:

- Population
- Economic Development
- Housing
- Natural and Cultural Resources
- Community Facilities and Services
- Land Use
- Transportation
- Intergovernmental Coordination

### 2.2 Population

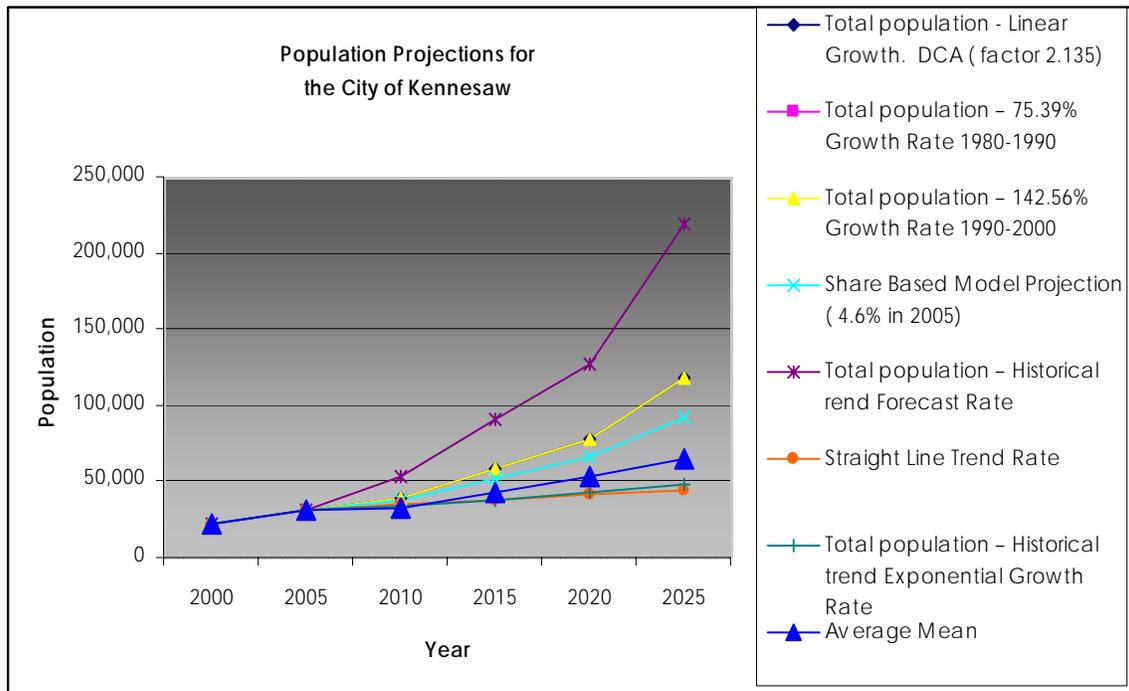
#### 2.2.1 Issues

##### 1. Moderate Population Growth

The 2005 estimate of population for Kennesaw is 30,552. Several population projection models were used to determine Kennesaw's population for 2025, including historical growth trends, DCA projections, and a share-based model. These projections indicate a low of 40,862 (per the share-based model) and a high of 218,426 (based on rate of growth between 1990 and 2000). Based on a 25 year historical growth rate, 1980-2005, the population is projected to be 48,487; population in excess of this number for the year 2025 is unlikely given the current City Limit boundaries and land use practices. Higher projections will likely be the result of annexations.

As can be seen from this wide range of values, future population in the City is somewhat unpredictable due to uncertainties regarding the City's Future Land Use, Growth Management and Annexation Policies. Other factors influencing future growth include the land use and growth management coordination between the County and adjacent municipalities, local housing market trends and conditions, and economic conditions in metro Atlanta and the nation.

Figure 2-1: Population Projections



Source: Analysis of Supportive Data. Fig. 2.1.45

## 2. Moderate Growth Across All Age Groups

Projections show an increased share of Kennesaw’s population will fall in the age 65 and older category, moving from 4.7% of the total population in 2000 to 6.0% in 2025. The DCA projection means 7,704 seniors will live in Kennesaw in 2025. The slight shift will create a need for more housing choices for seniors, increased accessibility and choice in health care services as well as increased senior-focused recreation programming and alternative transportation services.

Likewise, in 2000 children age 0-17 comprised 26% of the population and are expected to comprise a smaller portion of the population in 2025 with 25%. Working adults age 18-64 comprised 66.5% of the population in 2000 and are expected to share a larger portion of the 2025 population at 67.8%. Even though the growth rates are relatively unchanged, actual population counts will increase. There must be continued efforts to plan for growth in the school system as well as the job market.

Note: See Analysis of Supporting Data for more information about the various projections mentioned in this section.

## 2.3 Housing

### 2.3.1 Issues

#### 1. Demographic Changes Affect Housing Demand

Several demographic factors will likely shape the Kennesaw housing market. These include:

- Single family housing is the predominant housing option.

- Majority of householders are white, yet they are becoming increasingly diverse as minority householders move to the City. Hispanic households are increasing at an especially fast rate.
- Child-rearing age households in the 25 to 44 age group make up the City's largest age cohort, nearly half; this should sustain demand for traditional single-family houses, but not necessarily new homes.
- Homeowners are solidly middle class with a median household income of \$66,839 according to the 2000 Census. Since 1990 households earning more than \$60,000 annually have increased significantly. Households earning more than \$75,000 have grown more than 973% in the same 10 year period. Households earning less than \$20,000 have diminished suggesting that more households are earning more income and may be looking for more expensive housing and lifestyle options.

## **2. Aging Neighborhoods**

As neighborhoods mature, they may fall into disrepair, become attractive as rental properties or become a target for property crimes. There is a need to identify these areas and promote the value of home repair, improvement and home ownership, and establish and enforce codes that specifically address the appearance of aging neighborhoods.

### **3. Limited Space for Greenfield Development**

Approximately 95% of the property within the City limits is currently built out. As a result, new housing will be the result of infill or redevelopment.

## **2.3.2 Opportunities**

### **1. Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND)**

Where redevelopment or infill housing development opportunities exist, TND developments should be encouraged. TND's offer a variety of housing types in a dynamic mixed-use environment. These developments consolidate housing, employment and activity centers which help to reduce traffic congestion and create an identity unique to Kennesaw.

### **2. Encourage and Promote Preservation of Historic Homes**

Incentives should be identified to encourage owners, business or residential, to improve or maintain the historic appearance of buildings located in one of Kennesaw's historic districts. There is an opportunity to bolster preservation efforts by reviewing existing design guidelines and recommending appropriate modifications. This assessment and update is currently being undertaken by a historic preservation consultant and will help make the guidelines more effective.

### **3. Monitor Market for Opportunity to Encourage High-End and Senior Housing**

As household income rises, Kennesaw residents may desire upgrades in housing. Also, as the baby boomer population ages, there will be a need for housing that has appeal to retirees, whether that is in the form of low-maintenance loft condominiums in downtown Kennesaw or detached single-story units in a senior-oriented residential community. In-town opportunities and the redevelopment of existing under performing properties that may provide convenient, centrally located services can be appropriate options. Implementation of the LCI study's Downtown Target Area Plan can provide such opportunities.

### 2.3.3 Issues

#### 1. Relevant Job Growth to Population Growth

Based on generalized employment patterns in 2000, the number of jobs are not aligned with the population growth. Of those eligible to work, only 10.8% or 1,760 were employed in Kennesaw in 2000. The number of residents employed in Kennesaw between 1990 and 2000 increased by 192%. By comparison the population grew at a 143%. For 1990 and 2000, the labor force comprised 75% of the total population. However, 90% of the labor force must work outside of Kennesaw causing missed opportunities for local business, in particular, those in the retail and services industries.

**Table 2.4.1 Kennesaw Employment Patterns**

City of Kennesaw: Labor Force by Place of Work		
Category	1990	2000
Total population	5,095	21,675
Total Labor Force	6,715	16,259
Worked in County of residence	3,258	11,577
Worked in place of residence	602	1,760
Worked outside of place of residence	4,491	9,985
Worked in State of residence	5,093	11,745
Worked outside of state of residence	56	168

Source: DCA

#### 2. Lack of a Strategic Economic Development Plan

The City lacks a strategic economic development plan. The City office of Community Development, in general, has begun to place ideas in action; however, little can be done without additional funding which requires a larger commercial tax base or grants.

#### 3. Existing Land Use

Kennesaw has over time become into a bedroom community with a disproportionate number of single family dwellings. Small strips of industrial development to the east and south of the CBD and the commercial corridor along Highway 41 represent most of the City’s non-residential uses.

#### 4. Lack of a Diversified Economy

Kennesaw’s disadvantages to creating a diversified economy are that the City has few jobs relative to its population, and those few jobs are mostly in retail, educational and health services and in professional or management services. Between 1980 and 2000, professional and management services have increased their job share by 9.8%, educational and health services have increased their share by 2.3%, while retail has lost 10% of the job share, with likely pressure from the Town Center Retail Area and the Highway 41 corridor in Kennesaw.

### 2.3.4 Opportunities

#### 1. Highly visible properties ripe for development and redevelopment

Land use policy established by the City during the comprehensive planning process will impact the long range economic opportunities of the City. Redeveloping highly visible properties currently vacant near industrial uses as well as the development of vacant properties and redevelopment of under-performing commercial properties along

Highway 41 should become top priorities. Policy for these areas should encourage zoning changes, annexation and other tools needed to ensure that these properties are developed appropriately.

## **2. Downtown Redevelopment**

The Kennesaw Downtown Development Authority (KDDA) and others should continue to develop, refine and sell their vision for the downtown area and historic districts to residents, business owners, and prospective developers. The downtown area has tremendous opportunity for mixed use development to include housing, retail and services which may include the redevelopment and use of some of the historic structures. Creative, focused and sustained marketing strategies will be needed to lure businesses, residents and tourists to the commercialized historic districts.

## **3. Business Recruitment**

Since the City of Kennesaw is not dominated by any one industry, there are limited competitive pressures within the City. Competitive pressures will likely come from adjacent municipalities and areas of unincorporated Cobb County. There is an opportunity for Kennesaw to determine which industries are a proper fit for the City and its residents based on an evaluation of those that attract the majority of the labor force out of the City. In addition, there are two projects on Highway 41 that can act as catalysts for additional development that can provide both businesses and jobs. The two sites, approximately 30 and 40 acres in size, are being developed as mixed-use projects with a significant commercial component.

## **4. Educational Advantages for Economic Development**

Kennesaw benefits from its proximity to Kennesaw State University and North Metro Technical College, in addition to being serviced by Cobb County School District. Education levels among City residents are higher, relative to that of other northwest Metropolitan Atlanta areas.

## **5. Intergovernmental Coordination**

The City should continue to work with the State, the County, the Chamber of Commerce, and surrounding municipalities to develop ideas and strategies to encourage economic development and develop an effective Strategic Economic Development Plan.

## **6. Annexation**

Adjacent unincorporated property in unincorporated Cobb County may provide opportunities for the City to expand its boundaries and capture more of the commercial tax base that residents of the City currently use for shopping and other services. Opportunities to annex undeveloped or existing commercial land use parcels into the City should be pursued.

**Table 2.4.2 Educational Attainment**

Educational Attainment	Percent of Total Population Age 25+ in 2000								
	Georgia	Cobb County	Kennesaw	Marietta	Smyrna	Acworth	Cartersville	Woodstock	Canton
Less than 9th Grade	7.6%	3.9%	2.0%	6.9%	5.4%	5.9%	11.2%	4.9%	19.8%
9th to 12th Grade (No Diploma)	13.9%	7.4%	6.3%	10.6%	8.5%	9.5%	15.6%	8.9%	13.9%
High School Graduate (Includes Equivalency)	28.6%	20.7%	23.8%	20.9%	19.9%	24.3%	27.2%	23.7%	23.5%
Some College (No Degree)	20.3%	22.3%	26.2%	20.9%	20.4%	24.9%	19.6%	21.5%	22.5%
Associate Degree	5.4%	6.0%	7.3%	4.9%	5.3%	5.9%	3.6%	6.9%	3.8%
Bachelor's Degree	15.9%	27.9%	25.6%	24.8%	27.7%	22.2%	15.4%	24.5%	11.6%
Graduate or Professional Degree	8.3%	11.8%	8.8%	11.0%	12.8%	7.3%	7.4%	9.6%	4.9%

Source: DCA, U.S. Bureau of the Census (SF3)

## 2.4 Natural and Cultural Resources

### 2.4.1 Issues

#### 1. Financing Greenspace Acquisition

Creative financing (e.g. impact fees) and funding programs must be developed if property taxes are to remain unchanged.

#### 2. Preservation of Historic Resources

Adequate design guidelines are needed to protect the historic resources located in Kennesaw’s historic districts, especially as opportunities for new infill development increase. It is important to govern blending of the new with the old. In addition, existing non-historic commercial structures within the CBD and along the Highway 41 corridor each lack unifying character. Although the City has adopted design guidelines, there is an issue of effectiveness as they are currently written.

### 2.5.2 Opportunities

#### 1. Regionally-Connected Network of Open Space

Kennesaw has an opportunity to at least partially define its identity by its greenspace. Currently, 18 neighborhood, local and regional parks are present throughout the City. Two additional parks, Smith-Gilbert Arboretum and Smith-Cantrell Park, are under development and are expected to become an integral part of the “Chain of Parks” that will be linked by sidewalks and trails. This system of linkages is planned as a segment of a larger Trail system connecting Lake Allatoona to Kennesaw Mountain to the Silver Comet Trail. This development of this park and trail system will provide recreational and

transportation alternatives while preserving greenspace, wildlife habitats and corridors, and adding intrinsic value to the City.

## **2. Water Quality Protection**

Lake Allatoona, which is fed in part by Proctor and Butler creeks in Kennesaw, provides the City and many other north metro cities and counties with drinking water. As such, protecting the creeks from pollutants takes on an added importance that necessitates consistent enforcement of regulations that cover erosion and sedimentation controls and stormwater management. Protecting creek and streams with undeveloped buffer areas and greenways, such as the development of new parks and the connecting trail system, offer localized opportunities to protect this regional source of water.

## **3. State and Federal Historic Preservation Programs**

The Main Street Program and Certified Local Government (CLG) Program are two federal programs that are administered at the state level. Designation as a Main Street City provides member cities with an opportunity to receive technical assistance that can further historic preservation efforts, such as design assistance related to historic building facades. The CLG Program also makes designated cities eligible to receive historic technical assistance, as well as matching grant funds for historic preservation-related activities.

## **2.5 Facilities and Services Issues**

### **2.5.1 Issues**

#### **1. Meeting the Service Demands of a Growing Population**

Many public services are owned and managed by Cobb County such as the fire department, health services, water and sewer treatment and the public library. The City provides police, stormwater management, solid waste management and parks and recreation services to the residents. Based on the City's current population, an additional five to six police officers are needed as well as incentives to battle attrition.

#### **2. Aging Stormwater Sewer System**

Over the years the metal and concrete pipes used in the stormwater sewer system have deteriorated. Many of the corrugated metal pipes under roadways need to be replaced. A replacement schedule with identified funding sources is needed.

#### **3. Parks and Recreation**

In spite of the City's extensive park system, there is a need for adult softball and multi-use fields. Additionally, the evaluation and expansion of senior citizen programs should be considered as this segment of the population increases. Furthermore, to reach Phases II and III of Swift-Cantrell Park, the City will need to find funding estimated at \$16 million to build an aquatic center and performing arts center. The Smith-Gilbert Arboretum will have to become self supporting within five years of opening to the public.

### **2.5.2 Opportunities**

#### **1. Meeting the Service Demands of Growing Population**

The Kennesaw Police Department patrol cars and 911 Dispatch Center are each equipped with state-of-the art communication equipment. The technology allows the force to be less centralized, more mobile, and more visible to the public. There is an

opportunity for the police to position themselves strategically and leverage communication and GIS technologies to improve efficiency and response times. The process improvements and quality criteria required to achieve the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA) certification will also benefit the effectiveness of the department and make it an attractive option for potential recruits.

## **2. Meeting the Facility Space Requirements for a Growing Population**

The new building being constructed for the Public Works Department will provide the additional work and storage space required by the department. This new structure will have more floor space than initially required. The city may be able to maximize the use of this facility by expanding other departments.

The 911 Dispatch Center will be renovated to expand for a total of 2,800 square feet. Since this department also services 911 calls from Acworth, Acworth will likely benefit from an improved facility. The opportunity is that Kennesaw can use this department to strengthen its relationship with Acworth.

## **2.6 Land Use**

### **2.6.1 Issues**

#### **1. Suburban Sprawl**

Most of the recent development in the City over the past 10 years has occurred in a typical suburban land use pattern. Most of the new development associated with this pattern is single-family residential. Sixty-Six percent of the land use is zoned as some form of Residential.

Retail and employment opportunities are primarily relegated to Cherokee Street, Highway 41 or to the industrial Park corridor along Jiles Road and Moonstation Road. Small pockets of commercial developments exist throughout.

#### **2. Strip Commercial Development**

The land uses along some highway corridors, in particular Highway 41, form stereotypical commercial strips that may detract from the City's character. Many of the strip malls are lacking visual appeal and consist of aging structures in need of revitalization. In addition, the amount of traffic along Highway 41, coupled with the numerous curb cuts, makes the existing businesses difficult and dangerous to access.

#### **3. Transitioning Uses**

Cherokee Street has experienced conversions of single family homes into businesses. While sensitive adaptations have afforded continual protection of historic structures, adjacent established neighborhoods may be threatened by encroachment. Conversely, the long-term viability of the now commercial-oriented corridor is impacted by limitations imposed by the typical lot sizes.

### **2.6.2 Opportunities**

#### **1. Redevelopment**

Redevelopment of highway corridors provides an opportunity to create a more seamless transition of land uses between existing sprawling single-use commercial strips and low-density single family residential. As opportunities present themselves for redevelopment of underutilized and under-performing properties along commercial corridors, the City

should recruit developers capable of providing commercial and mixed-use centers that produce tax revenue for the City and provide jobs that may reduce commuting patterns for residents who commute outside of Kennesaw for employment.

## **2. Reserve Remaining Land for Industrial and Commercial Growth**

Within the Future Land Use Plan, adequate space for the growth of employment-related uses should be included.

## **3. Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Development**

Traditional neighborhoods developments can be viable in any context, but they should be encouraged in the CBD area.

## **4. Corridor Overlay District**

The City's familiarity and support for design guidelines to protect historic homes makes a similar approach feasible for corridors. In addition to architectural design, the overlay district could address interparcel access, utility placement, parking, landscaping, site lighting, sidewalks and signage.

# **2.7 Transportation**

## **2.7.1 Issues**

### **1. Automobile Dependence**

The dependence on the private automobile for all trips in the City contributes to the region's air and water pollution problems. Increased regional traffic and peak period congestion are reducing the level of service on many of the City's arterial roadways and the neighboring Interstate system.

### **2. Shift in Commercial Development Patterns**

Current development trends appear to be facilitating the shifting of businesses away from town centers and activity centers and towards strip retail developments along arterial road networks.

### **3. Inter-Parcel Connectivity**

Many of our major arterial corridors are experiencing increased peak period vehicular congestion, unappealing commercial signage clutter, and a heightened level of sprawling development patterns with a general lack of inter-parcel access. Inter-parcel connections between individual development uses where compatible, should continue to be encouraged, if not strengthened, in new development scenarios.

### **4. Increase in the Need for Public Transportation**

A growing resident and employment population dependant upon public transportation has emphasized the need for transportation alternatives for these populations to have access to quality jobs, services, goods, health care, and recreation opportunities.

## **2.7.2 Opportunities**

### **1. Transportation Alternatives and Improvements**

The City should support opportunities and transportation alternatives that reduce the dependence on the private automobile, thereby reducing traffic congestion. Greater connectivity and operational effectiveness can be achieved by mixing travel modes

with respect to pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and vehicular transportation options. The City should maintain an effective balance between auto-dependent transportation initiatives and alternative modes of transportation (e.g. bicycle, pedestrian, transit, carpooling, etc).

## **2. Promote Pedestrian Safety**

Coordination with GDOT and the Cobb DOT to improve pedestrian visibility and signalization -- and thereby reduce vehicular speeds -- along the City's major arterials should be continued.

## **3. Development Patterns**

Development patterns that blend uses incorporating housing, jobs, and recreation should be promoted for mixed-use opportunities in the future. These development patterns provide the activity nodes needed to make public transportation effective. Continued implementation of the Kennesaw Livable Centers Initiative (LCI) Study will help make the downtown area an activity center with mixed, yet concentrated uses.

## **4. Context-Sensitive Design**

Transportation facilities should be designed in a manner that compliments the character and aesthetics of the surrounding area, while also achieving positive results for connectivity and capacity.

## **5. Develop a Plan and Encourage Acceptance of Public Transportation**

The City should continue to coordinate with CCT and GRTA with the intent of transit service options that adequately serve the residents of Kennesaw, including those with special and/or paratransit needs.

# ***2.8 Intergovernmental Coordination***

## **2.8.1 Issues**

### **1. Communication with Cobb DOT**

The City has identified a need to strengthen its relationship with Cobb DOT, including communication and community involvement.

## **2.8.2 Opportunities**

### **1. Impact Fees**

The City should continually evaluate its impact fees relative to its current need, projected needs, and compare to that of surrounding cities. The City's impact fees will be reviewed in 2006-2007.

### **2. Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax**

City officials need to continue to work closely with the County to help ensure that this important source of capital improvements funding is used effectively.

### **3. Regional Transportation Planning**

City officials need to continue to be actively involved in the transportation planning activities with ARC, GRTA, and the Cobb County DOT. Transportation issues affect everyone and are the foundation for many home purchases, employment selections and economic development decisions.

## 3 Analysis of Existing Development Patterns

### 3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this analysis is to understand the development conditions and growth patterns currently occurring in Kennesaw. The analysis allows the further exploration of issues and opportunities related to the physical environment. The following analysis considers three aspects of the existing development patterns: existing land use, areas requiring special attention and recommended character areas.

### 3.2 Existing Land Use

An existing land use map displays the development on the ground categorized into groups of similar types of development at a given point in time. For purposes of this analysis, the Kennesaw Existing Land Use Map (Figure 3-1) shows the existing land uses in the City. The data was collected by preparing geographic information system acreage estimates of existing land use inventory based on field observations and aerial photographic interpretation. Kennesaw's land uses are organized into 13 classifications based on the Georgia Department of Community Affairs "Standard Land Use Classification System". Each is represented by a different color on the Existing Land Use Map. The land use classification categories are described below.

- **Single-family residential** areas include subdivisions and single-family homes, town homes or estates occupying individual tracts of land usually smaller than two acres.
- **Multi-family residential** includes duplexes and other multiple dwelling units, individual buildings, complexes of buildings, and public housing units.
- **Commercial** includes land used for non-industrial retail, office and business.
- **Public/Institutional** includes state, federal, and local government facilities, schools, day-care centers, elder care centers, churches, cemeteries, libraries, and post offices. The few public and institutional uses in the City are scattered, but there is a small concentration in the Central Business District.
- **Industrial** category includes manufacturing facilities, wholesale and distribution facilities, warehousing facilities, truck terminals, and land parcels that house both offices and warehouse/distribution facilities.
- **Transportation/communication/utilities** category includes airports, water and sewer facilities, power stations, substations, water storage tanks, radio and television facilities, limited access highways, and railroad lines. The primary transportation use, aside from an extensive road network, is the CSX railroad line extending through the heart of the City.
- **Undeveloped/vacant** category includes greenfield parcels, whether privately or publicly owned, and abandoned parcels. This category does not suggest any preference for future development type, nor should it be understood simply as a holding designation.
- **Park and Recreation** developed public parks and recreation centers located on parcels are scattered across thirteen parks throughout the City.
- **Residential** areas, the vast majority of which is covered with single-family detached houses, blanket the City.

Table 3.2 provides the name of each land use classification as well as the acreage of each. Land classified in the Residential categories makes up the largest percentage of the City at 66% of the total area. Commercial and industrial lands comprise 27.3%. Optimally, this balance should be a 60/40 division in order to create a solid economic tax base and provide a sufficient number of jobs for residents.

**Table 3.2: Existing Land Use Acreage, 2004**

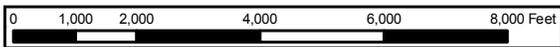
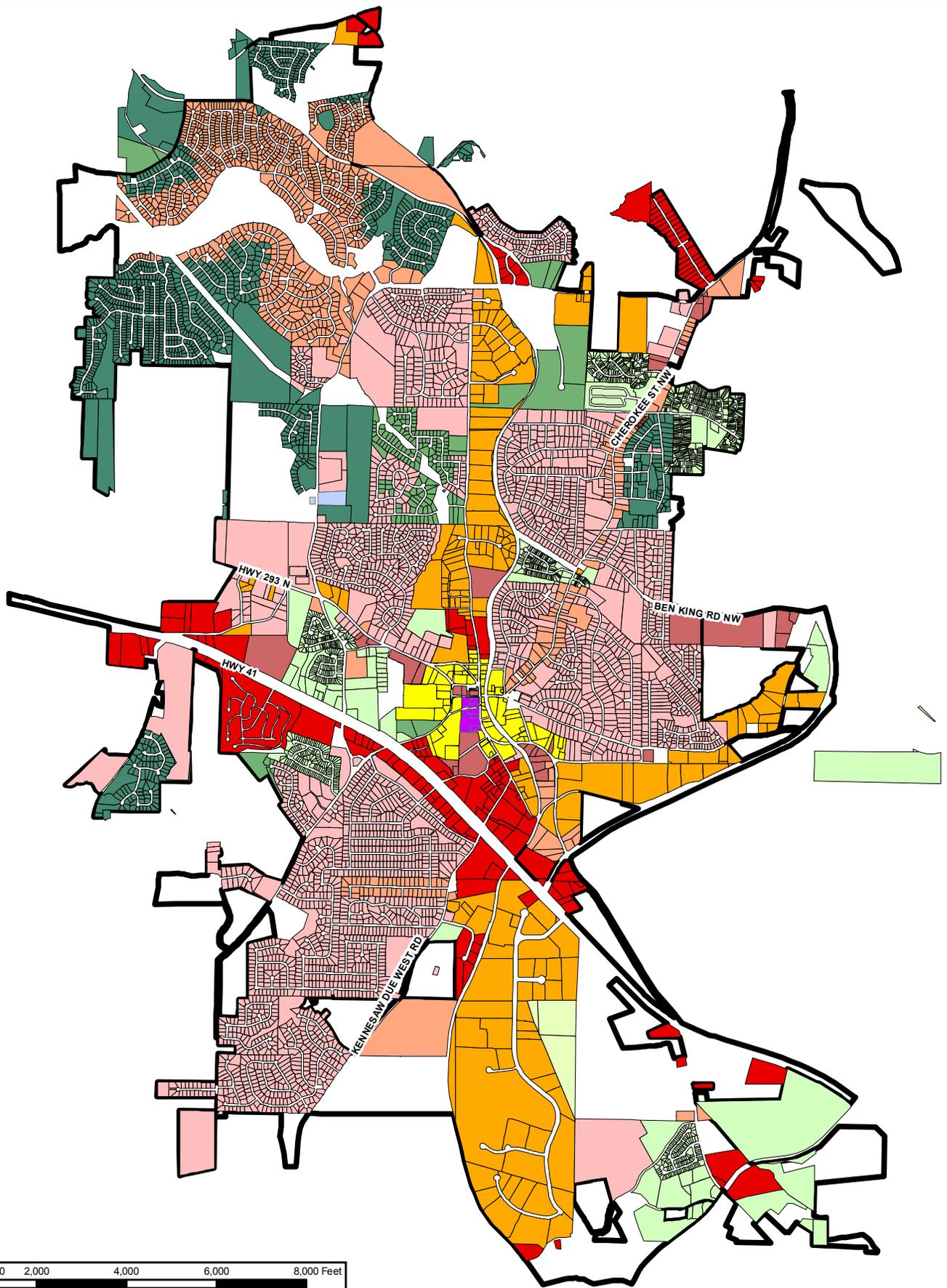
Land Use Classification	City of Kennesaw	
	Acres	%
Community Activity Center (CAC)	369.0	8.44%
Central Business District (CBD)	7.0	0.16%
Downtown Activity Center (DAC)	83.8	1.92%
Industrial (I)	735.4	16.81%
Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC)	497.3	11.37%
Public Services/Institutional (PI)	110.6	2.53%
Parks and Conservation (PRC)	143.4	3.28%
Planned Urban Development (PUD)	369.1	8.44%
Single Family Residential (R-20)	4.8	0.11%
Regional Activity Center (RAC)	34.9	0.8%
Residential High (RH)	476.7	10.9%
Residential Low (RL)	1541.8	35.25%
Transportation Communication, Utilities (TCU)	0.4	0.1%
Total	4374.1	100.0%

Source: City of Kennesaw

### 3.3 Recommended Character Areas

Character area planning focuses on the way an area looks and how it functions. Applying development strategies to character areas in Kennesaw can preserve existing areas and help others function better and become more attractive. They help guide future development through policies and implementation strategies that are tailored to each situation. The character areas recommended for the City of Kennesaw, described in Table 3.3 and mapped in Figure 3-2, define areas that:

- Presently have unique or special characteristics that need to be preserved.
- Have potential to evolve into unique areas.
- Require special attention because of unique development issues.



**Legend**

- |                                 |   |  |
|---------------------------------|---|--|
| City Limits                     | Lake                                      | RAC - Regional Activity Center               |
| <b>Existing Land Use</b>        | NAC - Neighborhood Activity Center        | RH - Residential High                        |
| CAC - Community Activity Center | PI - Public Service/Institutional         | RL - Residential Low/Medium                  |
| CBD - Central Business District | PRC - Park/Recreation/Conservation        | TCU - Transportation Communication Utilities |
| DAC - Downtown Activity Center  | PUD - planned Unit Development            |  |
| I - Industrial                  | R-20 - Single Family Residential District |  |



City of Kennesaw

**Existing Land Use**

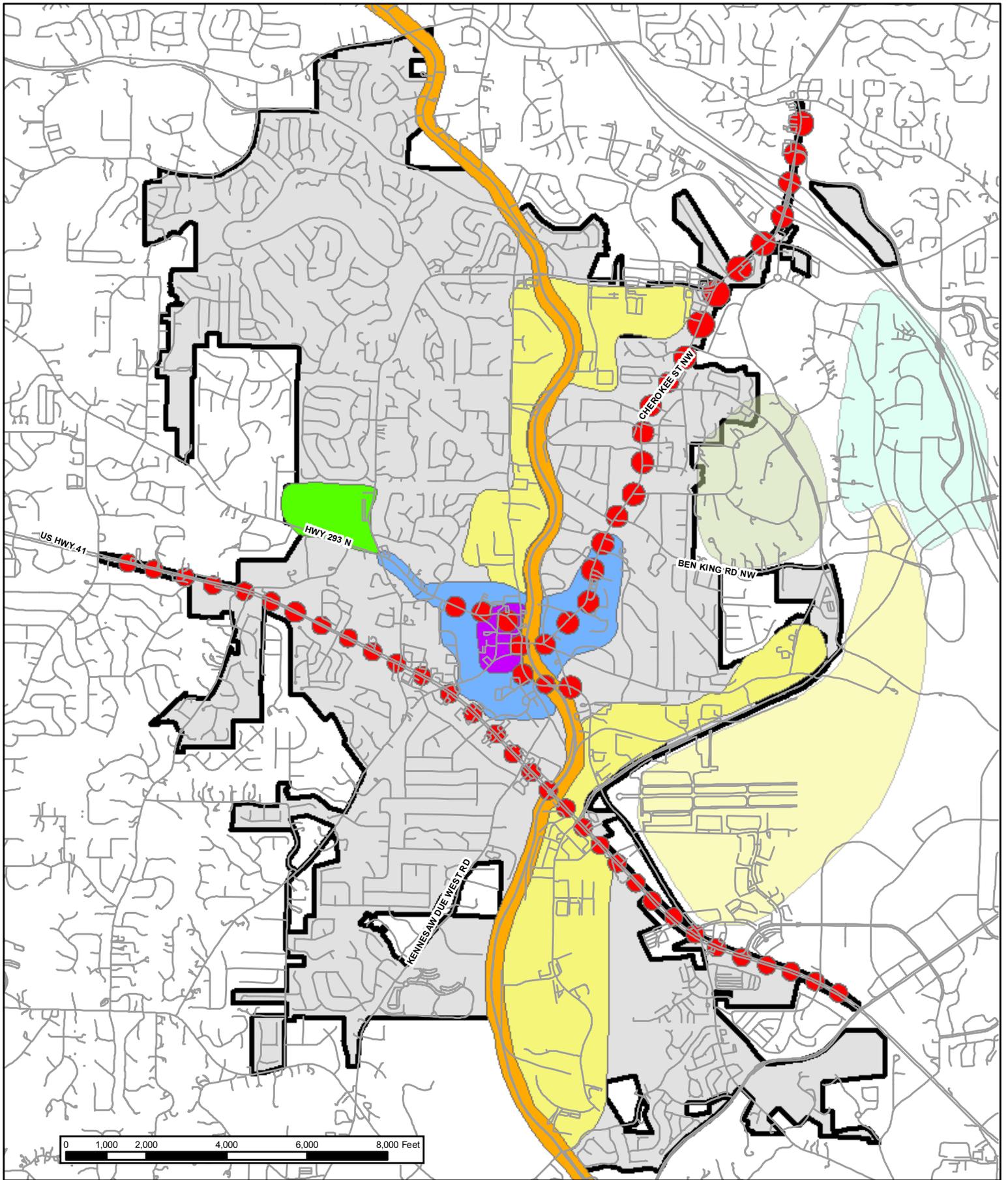
Prepared by:  
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Checked by:  
DRH  
Project number:  
6311060025



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3-1

**Table 3.3: Recommended Character Area Descriptions**

<i>Character Area</i>	<i>Description</i>
RR Corridor	CSX rail line that runs North to South through town. The corridor is an appealing attraction for train-watchers and important to the historical identity of the City.
Country Club	This area is not part of the City, however the type of recreation (events held) available and the age and style of homes help to shape the character of the City in this area.
Downtown Activity Center and Historic Districts	This is the largest segment of Kennesaw that is primarily responsible for giving Kennesaw its unique identity. It surrounds the Historic Business District.
Historic Central Business District	This is the core district of Kennesaw containing historic structures.
Commercial Corridor	Highway 41 is the one significant commercial corridor. The second is Cherokee Street from East Jiles Road to Main Street. These corridors are in need of revitalization.
Industrial	These are areas north and south of the CBD that define the character of Kennesaw prior to entering the downtown district. Attention is needed to encourage economic development in these areas.
Regional Recreation	This is the location of Swift- Cantrell Park. It will have significant impact on the City's identity when Phases II and III are completed.
University Grounds	This is the area of Kennesaw State University that establishes a college-town feel to Kennesaw. KSU is not located within the City, but it has tremendous bearing on the perception of Kennesaw because of its location, visibility and namesake.



**Legend**

- |             |                                    |   |  |
|-------------|------------------------------------|---|--|
| City Limits | <b>Character Areas</b>             | Downtown Activity Center and Historic Districts | Country Club (Outside City Limits)       |
| Road        | CSX Railroad Corridor              | Industrial                                      | University Grounds (Outside City Limits) |
|             | Commercial Corridors               | Regional Recreation                             | Industrial (Outside City Limits)         |
|             | Historic Central Business District | residential / Light Commercial                  |  |

City of Kennesaw

**Character Areas**

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Project number:  
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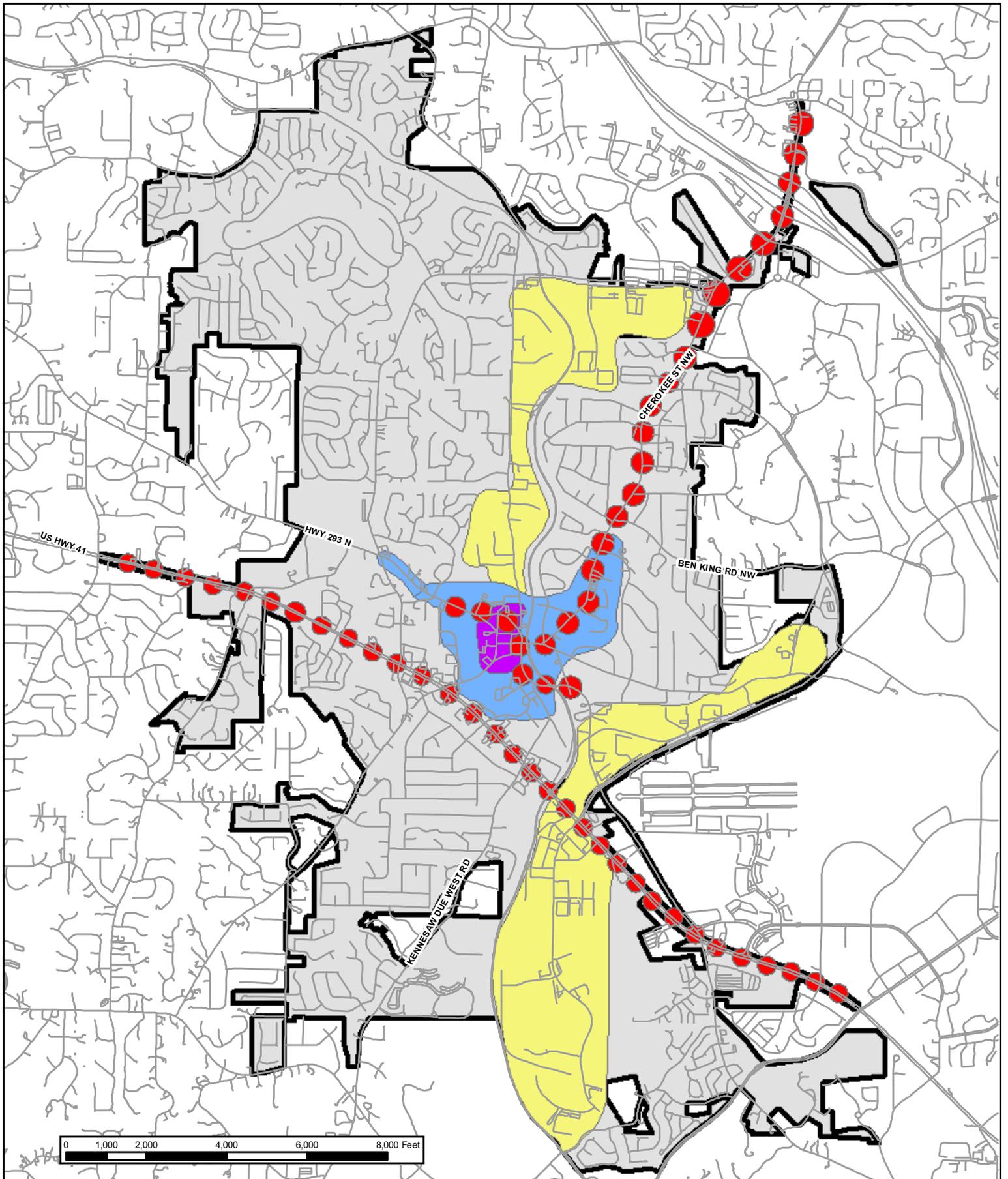
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3-2

### 3.4 Areas Requiring Special Attention

As growth continues, there will inevitably be impacts to the existing natural and cultural environment as well as the community facilities, services and infrastructure that are required to service existing and future development. This section outlines areas where the real estate market has and continues to produce development that is dominated by single-function land uses, where aging commercial areas are in need of functional and aesthetic revitalization, where growth should be well managed due to the environmentally-sensitive nature of the land, and where historical districts and elements should be maintained as they comprise much of the identity of Kennesaw.

**Table 3.4: Areas Requiring Special Attention Descriptions**

<i>Area</i>	<i>Description</i>
Historic Central Business District	These roughly six square blocks of Downtown Kennesaw are key elements in defining the character of Kennesaw as new development mixes with the old, blending a broad mix of architectural styles and land uses.
Commercial Corridors	The <i>Highway 41 Corridor</i> contains many aged buildings as well as incompatible land uses. This corridor is in need of revitalization and restructuring of land uses to provide a more suitable economic base for the City. The <i>Cherokee Street Corridor</i> into the CBD is spotted with older strip malls and mixed with residential land uses. A limited ROW may prevent traditional commercial development/ revitalization.
Downtown Activity Center and Historic Districts	The LCI plan produced a realistic vision for the downtown area with plans and suggestions to integrate the historic district with new residential and commercial development. This area is one of the few areas where immediate impacts can be felt from new development.
Industrial Areas	The two industrial corridors in Kennesaw are a mix of bustling businesses and vacant buildings. Aggressive economic development and industry recruitment is needed in order for these areas to fulfill their potential.



**Legend**

-  Road
-  City Limits
-  Commercial Corridors
-  Historic Central Business District
-  Downtown Activity Center and Historic Districts
-  Industrial



City of Kennesaw  
**Areas Requiring  
 Special Attention**

Prepared by:  
 THP  
 Checked by:  
 DRH  
 Project number:  
 6311060025



Figure  
 Number:  
 3-3

## 4 Analysis of Consistency with Quality Community Objectives

This section is intended to meet the Minimum Standards for Local Comprehensive Planning requirement that the Community Assessment include an evaluation of the community’s current policies, activities and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives contained in the State Planning Goals and Objectives. The Department of Community Affairs’ Office of Planning and Quality Growth created the Quality Community Objectives Local Assessment to assist local governments in evaluating their progress towards sustainable and livable communities. The assessment is meant to give the community an idea of how it is progressing toward reaching these objectives.

Traditional Neighborhoods			
Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.			
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.	✓		
2. Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development “by right” so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process.		✓	
3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.	✓		
4. Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer.		✓	
5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.	✓		
6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.	✓		
7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.	✓		
8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.	✓		
9. Some of our children can and do bike to school safely.	✓		
10. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community.	✓		

Infill Development			
Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.			
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.	✓		
2. Our community is actively working to promote Brownfield redevelopment.		✓	
3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment.	✓		
4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road).		✓	
5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses.		✓	

Sense of Place			
Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.			
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics.	✓		
2. We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage, and have taken steps to protect those areas.	✓		
3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.	✓		
4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.	✓		
5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.	✓		
6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.			NA

<b>Transportation Alternatives</b>			
Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.			
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. We have public transportation in our community.	✓		
2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.	✓		
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.	✓		
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.	✓		
5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.	✓		
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.		✓	
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.	✓		

Regional Identity			
Each region should promote and preserve a regional "identity," or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.			
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.	✓		
2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.	✓		
3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.).	✓		
4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development's regional tourism partnership.	✓		
5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.	✓		
6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.	✓		

Heritage Preservation			
The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.			
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. We have designated historic districts in our community.	✓		
2. We have an active historic preservation commission.	✓		
3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure this.	✓		

<b>Open Space Preservation</b>			
New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.			
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Our community has a greenspace plan.	✓		
2. Our community is actively preserving greenspace, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.	✓		
3. We have a local land conservation program, or we work with state or national land conservation programs, to preserve environmentally important areas in our community.	✓		
4. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.	✓		

<b>Environmental Protection</b>			
Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.			
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.	✓	✓	
2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.	✓		
3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.	✓		
4. Our community has passed the necessary "Part V" environmental ordinances, and we enforce them.	✓		
5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced.	✓		
6. Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.	✓		
7. We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development.	✓		
8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).	✓		

<b>Growth Preparedness</b>			
Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.			
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.	✓		
2. Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.	✓		
3. Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.	✓		
4. We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.	✓		
5. We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.	✓		
6. We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth, and these areas are based on a natural resources inventory of our community.	✓		
7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.	✓		
8. We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.	✓		
9. We have procedures in place that make it easy for the public to stay informed about land use issues, zoning decisions, and proposed new development.	✓		
10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.	✓		

Appropriate Businesses			
The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets and weaknesses, and has created a business development strategy based on them.	✓		
2. Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit businesses and/or industries that will be compatible.	✓		The City has partnered with developers to assist with attracting compatible businesses.
3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products.	✓		
4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy.	✓		

Employment Options			
A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.		✓	Kennesaw Business Association assists with this.
2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	✓		
3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	✓		
4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs.	✓		

Housing Choices			
A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.		✓	
2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.	✓		
3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average).		✓	
4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks.	✓		
5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or "neo-traditional" development.	✓		
6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.		✓	
7. We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.	✓		
8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.		✓	
9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.		✓	
10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.		✓	

Educational Opportunities			
Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.			
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens.		✓	Continuing education and training classes are available at local colleges.
2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.			N/A
3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	✓		
4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.	✓		

Regional Solutions			
Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.			
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.	✓		
2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.	✓		
3. We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services, such as public transit, libraries, special education, tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security, etc.	✓		
4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.	✓		

<b>Regional Cooperation</b>			
Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.			
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. We plan jointly with our cities and county for comprehensive planning purposes.	✓		
2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.		✓	Continued discussions with the County are needed.
3. We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft region-wide strategies.	✓		
4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.	✓		

<b>Transportation Alternatives</b>			
Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.			
	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1. We have public transportation in our community.		✓	However there are links to CCT bus routes directly outside the City's limits.
2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.	✓		The City's subdivision regulations require that new developments continue existing streets.
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.	✓		There is a good sidewalk network connecting many areas in the downtown, however additional safe crossings are needed for pedestrians. One area where additional sidewalks could be beneficial is older neighborhoods, which should also be connected to activity centers such as schools and parks.
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.	✓		All subdivisions located within one mile from an existing or proposed school or within a distance of up to one mile on streets leading to or going through commercial areas, street sites, places of public assembly and other congested areas must provide sidewalks. Additionally, sidewalks in residential areas cannot be adjacent to street curbs.
5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks whenever possible.		✓	The City's current zoning and development regulations do not include this specification.
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.	✓		In its 2003 LCI Study the city laid out plans for a downtown greenway trail system for pedestrian and bicycle use. These plans include trails to encircle Adams Park, City Hall and the Kennesaw Spring, City Cemetery, new single-family developments, the proposed community green space and the Southern Museum of Civil War and Locomotive History. In the future, connections from these trails could be made to Big Shanty Elementary School, Kennesaw Elementary School, Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw Mountain and the Silver Comet Trail.
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas whenever possible.	✓		The City's regulations allow for shared parking arrangements within the CBD.