

Comprehensive Plan and Unified Development Code Update

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Zoning

September 10, 2024



Objectives



Provide an overview of the complete Comprehensive Plan and UDC

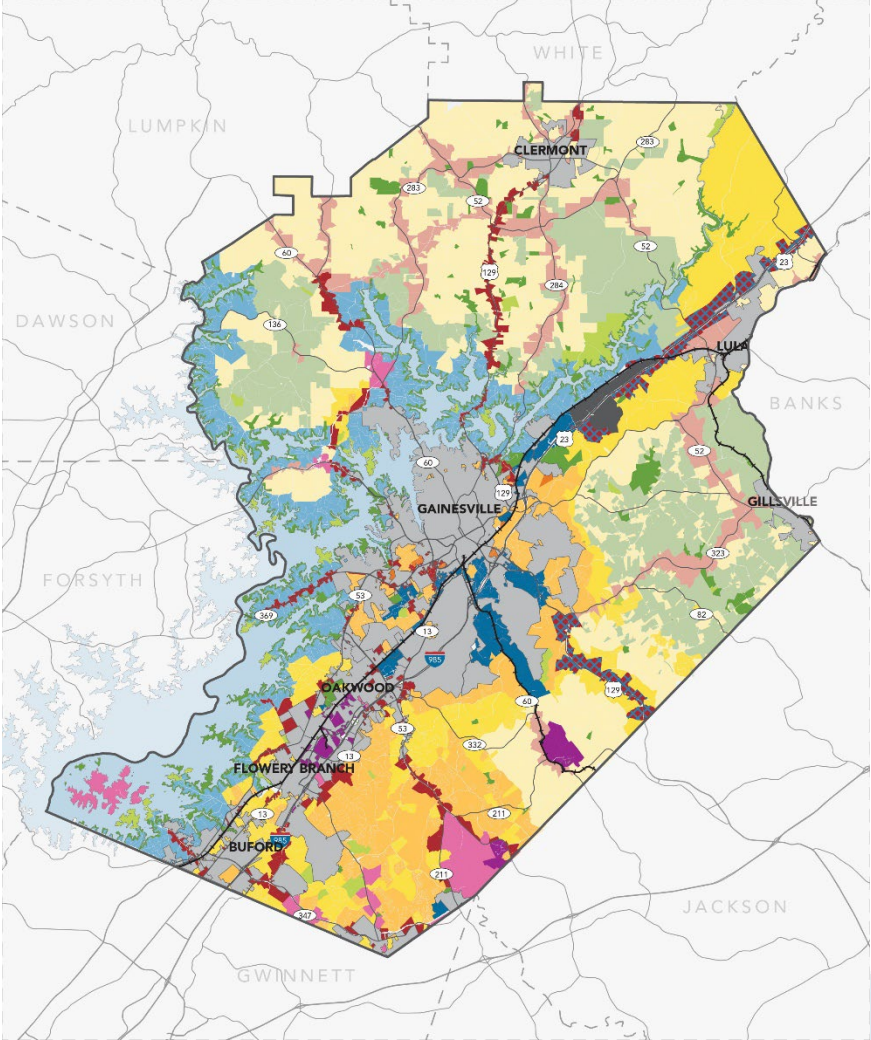


Highlight major changes from our previous plan

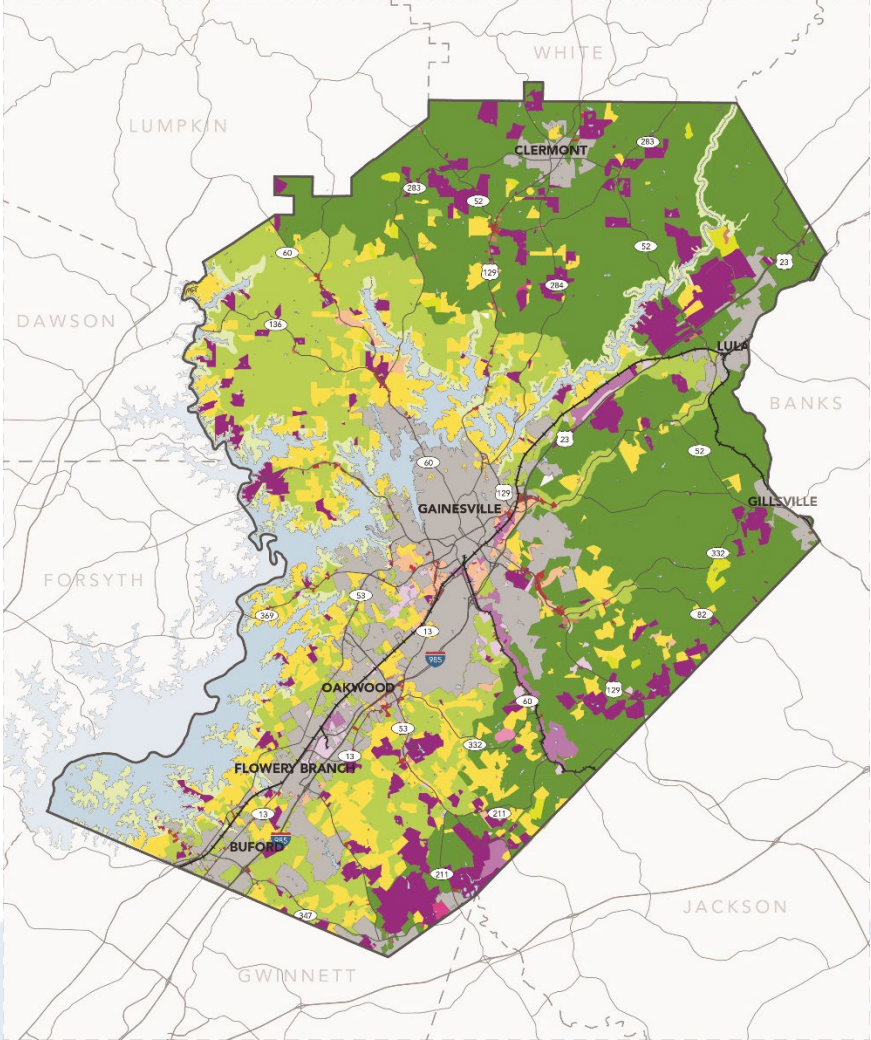
Comprehensive Plan and Unified Development Code (UDC) Processes



The Comprehensive Plan & UDC



The Comprehensive Plan establishes the vision



The UDC helps implement the vision



Comprehensive Plan Process

We are here!



September 2022 -
December 2022

Orientation

Learning about
the key issues and
opportunities in Hall
County



January 2023 -
May 2023

Determine Direction

Figuring out
what Hall County
stakeholders want
for the future



June 2023 -
September 2023

Plan Development

Creating draft
recommendations



October 2023 -
November 2024

Confirm Direction

Presenting our
recommendations
and asking the
question, "is this
reasonable?"

UDC Process

ANALYSIS &
LISTENING



EARLY 2019 -
LATE 2020

CHARTING A
COURSE



LATE 2020 -
EARLY 2021

DRAFT
CHANGES



LATE 2022 -
MID 2023

We are here!

FINAL
UPDATES

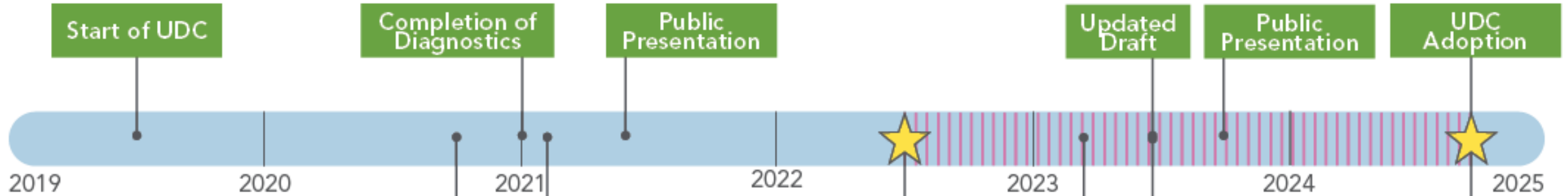


MID 2023 -
LATE 2024

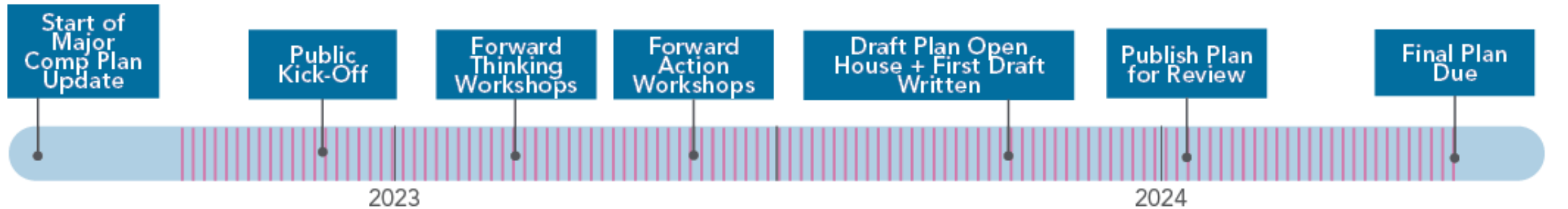


Timeline

UDC



Comp Plan



Comprehensive Plan Overview



How is this plan different than previous plans?

- ✓ New goals and strategies for development
- ✓ More detailed Future Land Use Strategy
- ✓ Provides better zoning guidance
- ✓ Updated Community Work Program (CWP)

Key Themes

- Hall's population is growing rapidly and is projected to reach over 382,000 by 2050.
- Housing supply is becoming less attainable, with rapid price increases due to high demand.
- Hall County anticipates the continuation of new development in the next 5-10 years, making future planning critical.
- Future growth impacts road and infrastructure capacity, supporting the expansion of multimodal options and sewer.



Components of a Comprehensive Plan

- **Introduction** – introduces the plan, explains why planning is important, and reviews the processes used to develop the plan
- **Hall County Today** – analysis of existing conditions and regulations
- **Community Input** – summarizes the process used to obtain public comment, including methods and outcomes
- **Hall County Tomorrow** – discusses the overall vision for the county, with nine topic areas which feature goals, strategies, and action items
- **Future Land Use Strategy** – establishes the vision for future development and provides framework for decisions
- **Implementation Plan** – describes action items, responsible parties, estimated costs, proposed timelines, etc.
- **Appendix** – supporting information



Community Input



**> 12,500
Website Visits**



**> 1,300 Total
Survey Responses**



**8 Public
Meetings**



**> 200 Meeting
Participants**



**9 Advisory
Meetings**



**> 2,200 Comments
Made**

Goals



Growth Management. Efficiently plan to accommodate new developments and prioritize connections to existing or planned infrastructure while retaining the character of each area of the county.



Attainable Housing. Provide a variety of housing options across size, type, tenure, price, location, and other factors that ensure access to transportation and amenities while minimizing the number of cost-burdened households.



Infrastructure Maintenance & Expansion. Improve infrastructure for growing areas, prioritize land use and infrastructure alignment, and expand broadband, road networks, water access, and sewer systems.

Goals



Parks & Recreation. Enhance and expand parks and recreation facilities to maximize quality of life.



Greenspace. Preserve and protect existing greenspace while seeking out new opportunities for inventory expansion.



Natural Resource Conservation. Preserve and protect natural resources like Lake Lanier, rivers and streams, and undeveloped forestry to safeguard community identity.

Goals



Multi-Modal Transportation. Expand alternative transportation options by increasing pedestrian infrastructure, developing complete streets, and enhancing public transit.



Safety & Security. Ensure a safe environment for all by improving existing safety and security measures and proactively addressing crime concerns as Hall County continues to grow.



Economic Development. Continue to encourage and support an atmosphere for economic growth and development to create opportunities for all.

Quality Development Strategies

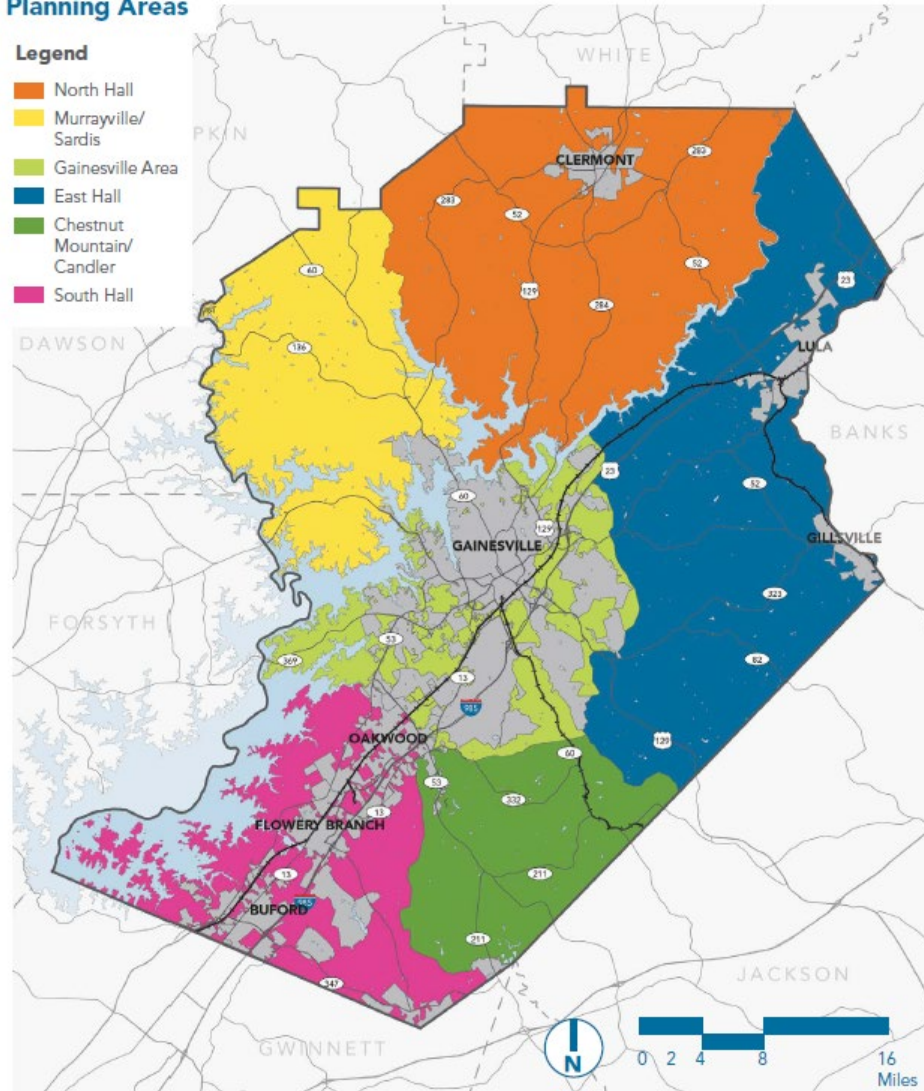
- New developments should incorporate the following strategies:
 - Mix land uses and residential types
 - Support walkability, both within the development and/or to nearby areas
 - Provide street connections to other nearby future developments
 - Provide recreational facilities
 - Preserve open space and agricultural land
 - Foster a strong sense of place through quality architecture and landscaping

Character Areas & Future Land Use

Planning Areas

Legend

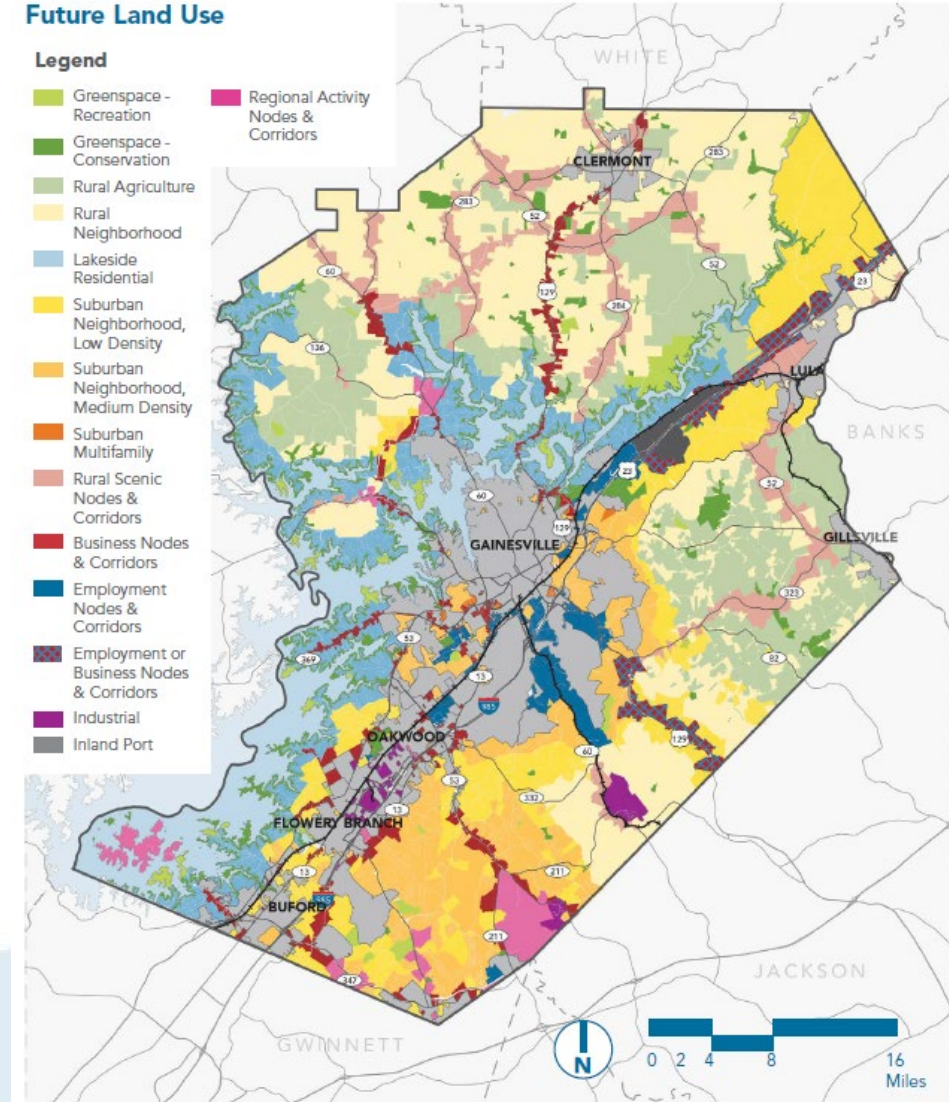
- North Hall
- Murrayville/Sardis
- Gainesville Area
- East Hall
- Chestnut Mountain/Candler
- South Hall



Future Land Use

Legend

- Greenspace - Recreation
- Greenspace - Conservation
- Rural Agriculture
- Rural Neighborhood
- Lakeside Residential
- Suburban Neighborhood, Low Density
- Suburban Neighborhood, Medium Density
- Suburban Multifamily
- Rural Scenic Nodes & Corridors
- Business Nodes & Corridors
- Employment Nodes & Corridors
- Employment or Business Nodes & Corridors
- Industrial
- Inland Port
- Regional Activity Nodes & Corridors



Character Areas & Future Land Use

SOUTH HALL

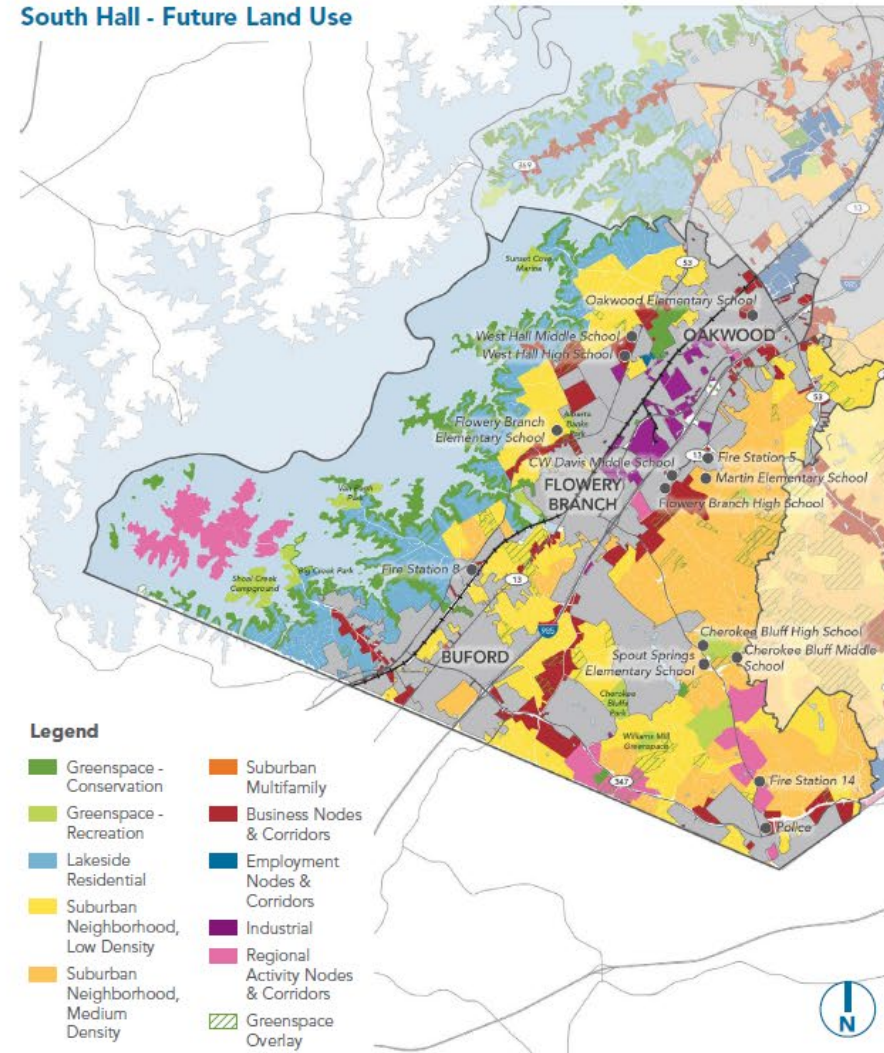
Vision

The vision for South Hall is to foster growth and development that realigns the balance between residential and non-residential areas and creates a unique, suburban character. To achieve this balance, infrastructure, housing, and conservation must be strategically planned in a way that respects the needs and desires of its diverse population. This would set the area up to become a model for responsible and prosperous development in the region.

Supporting Ideas

- **Regional Collaboration and Informed Planning.** Recognizing the intergovernmental impacts of decisions, South Hall aims to establish a platform for collaboration between the Cities of Buford, Flowery Branch, and Oakwood to better enhance planning outcomes and ensure a holistic approach to land development.
- **Livable Communities.** South Hall endeavors to promote development that prioritizes the creation of vibrant, connected neighborhoods with efficient traffic flow. Mindful of congestion and commute times, the community seeks solutions that enhance daily life for residents and minimize negative impacts.
- **Preservation of Greenspace and Character.** What was once considered a quiet area has experienced a spillover of growth from neighboring Gwinnett County, causing rapid suburbanization. Continuing to preserve South Hall's natural beauty is paramount to existing residents. A focus on balanced development, reduced tree cutting, and integration of green spaces into neighborhoods will ensure a harmonious coexistence of nature and urban spaces.
- **Quality Housing and Affordability.** South Hall should continue to offer diverse housing options, including housing affordable for all income levels. Prioritizing incremental development, the community will ensure that its housing supply is aligned with programmed and future infrastructure projects, maintaining housing affordability and economic stability.
- **Quality of Community Resources.** South Hall's growth plan will seek to accommodate the needs of the school system, healthcare facilities, and road networks to support a thriving environment for residents of all ages. It is imperative that the County and the Hall County Board of Education continue to have conversations about growth's future effects on enrollment.
- **Balanced Urbanization.** New development in South Hall should avoid the pitfalls of the urban sprawl that has plagued the area for decades. With thoughtful zoning and development practices, responsible growth can occur while preserving the aspects of community character that residents enjoy. The establishment of mixed-use and mixed-density developments to promote walkability and access to local amenities should be prioritized where noted in the Future Development Strategy. With a focus on well-designed spaces, South Hall will create environments that cater to both residents and businesses.
- **Environmentally Responsible Growth.** South Hall should continue to protect its natural resources and open spaces. By adopting sustainable practices, enforcing tree ordinances, and minimizing pollution, the environment's health and longevity can be preserved.

South Hall - Future Land Use



Character Areas & Future Land Use

SOUTH HALL

Tying It Back to Growth...

Under this future land use strategy, South Hall can expect to see up to 15,000 new households before 2050 if land is developed or redeveloped to the highest density allowed by zoning. To ensure quality of life, this means that:

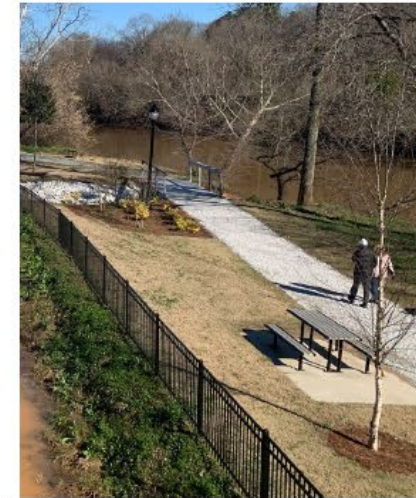
- Hall County will need to build or set aside up to 400 additional acres of programmed parks and/or greenspace (assuming 8.5 acres per new 1,000 residents).
- Hall County Schools will need to accommodate up to 7,000 additional students in this area.
- Anywhere between 12,000 and 26,000 additional vehicles will be on the roads (assuming 1.7 cars per new household).

Key Strategies

- Continue working with the Cities of Flowery Branch, Oakwood, and Buford as well as the Town of Braselton to coordinate land use planning efforts, solve code enforcement issues and provide joint services where necessary.
- Continue updating and implementing the South Hall Sewer System master plan.
- Continue efforts to fully construct the Highlands to Islands Trails system and explore other opportunities for regional trail connections.
- Promote the construction of new sidewalk connections in new developments.
- Prioritize fixing transportation issues along McEver Road, Mundy Mill Road, SR 347/Friendship Road, Spout Springs Road, and SR 13/Atlanta Highway.

South Hall Future Land Use & Zoning Compatibility Table

Future Land Use	AG-1	AR-1	V-C	R-1-L	R-1	R-TF	R-X	R-MF	MHP	O-I	S-S	H-B	M-U	I-1	I-2	PCD	PID	POD	PRD	
Greenspace - Recreation			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Greenspace - Conservation			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Lakeside Residential			X	X	X		X													
Suburban Neighborhood, Low-Density				X	X		X													
Suburban Neighborhood, Medium-Density						X	X		X											
Business Nodes & Corridors								X		X	X	X	X	X		X				X
Employment Nodes & Corridors										X			X	X			X	X		
Industrial														X	X		X			
Regional Activity Centers						X	X	X		X	X	X	X			X				X



Note: Images are for example purposes only and may not be located in unincorporated Hall County.



Implementation Plan

Community Work Program – identifies specific implementation actions that the county and other entities intend to pursue over the next decade. These items assist in establishing the vision set forth by the Comprehensive Plan.

- Includes 117 action items with:
 - Description
 - Anticipated timeframe
 - Estimated cost
 - Responsible party
 - Funding source
 - Additional notes
- Also includes information about supplemental plans, plan maintenance guidelines, and the Capital Improvement Element
- Examples include: GHMPO's Regional Plan, Highlands to Islands Trail Plan, and the Sewer Masterplan

Unified Development Code (UDC) Overview

Why update the code?

The Official Code of Hall County was originally adopted on August 28, 1978. Since that time, sections have been added, deleted, or modified to address current zoning issues. Over time, code becomes obsolete or conflicting; in updating the code and converting to a unified format, the county is able to review the ordinances in detail and identify sections that warrant revisions.

The update is focused on cleaning up the text and providing clarity to new and existing types of development, as well as making the code easier to navigate and find information.



Document Organization

UDC has 12 Articles

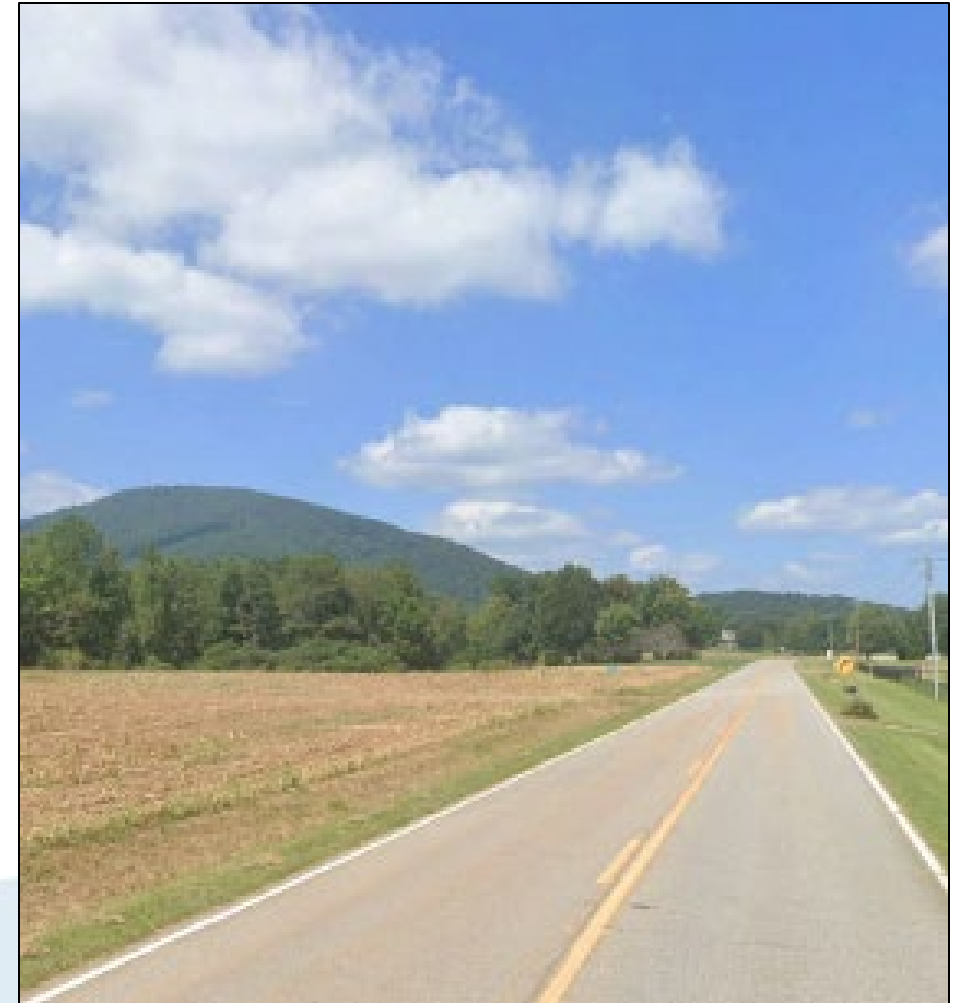
- Article 1. Introductory Provisions
- Article 2. Rules Common to All Districts
- Article 3. Agricultural Districts
- Article 4. Residential Districts
- Article 5. Mixed-Use and Business Districts
- Article 6. Special and Overlay Districts
- Article 7. Use Provisions
- Article 8. Site Development
- Article 9. Subdivisions
- Article 10. Environmental Protection
- Article 11. Administration
- Article 12. Definitions



Changes to Agricultural Districts

New District: Agricultural General, AG-1

- Focus is on providing land for true agricultural uses and open space preservation
- Large lots of 5+ acres
- Residential uses allowed
- Up to two dwellings per lot to allow for multi-generational housing



Changes to Residential Districts

New District: Residential Mix, R-X

- Allows a variety of residential uses on a single lot
- At least two residential types required, except that cottage courts may be used as the only type



R-X Standards

Created standards for R-X districts to reflect desire for true mixed residential communities

- New developments must contain at least two distinct housing types
 - Exception made for Cottage Court developments, which can be permitted as a stand-alone use
- When only two housing types are selected, there must be at least 20% of each typology
- When more than two housing types are selected, no single housing type can be provided at less than 10% of the total number of units
- Open space must be provided for each development
 - 25% of the gross lot area
 - Cottage Courts – open space is based on the number of units, with no open space being less than 3,000 square feet
 - Includes passive and active recreation, conservation space, etc.



New Residential Standards

Added Use Standards for the following residential housing types:

- Standards apply to all applications of uses, regardless of zoning district
- Townhouse
 - Focus on providing rear access to townhouse units to limit driveway encroachments into public rights-of-way
 - No more than six units per building
- Cottage Court
 - Central courtyard required with direct access for each unit onto common area
 - Parking located in rear and utilize shared driveways/access
 - Between 4-12 units per court/cluster
- ADU's
 - One per lot, maximum floor area of 1,000 sq. ft. or 40% of primary structure
 - Must be site-built and be compatible in design/materials to the primary structure

Changes to Commercial Districts

New District: Mixed-Use, M-U

- Allows for both residential and nonresidential uses in a development
- Nonresidential development requirement of minimum 20% of total developed floor area



New MU Standards

Created standards for MU districts to reflect higher standards of site design

- Block-style arrangement of buildings for sites of 10 or more acres
- Internal streets and pedestrian connections are utilized to promote a stronger sense of cohesion and place within developments
 - Locations for future interparcel access and street connections should be identified and reserved during planning stages
 - Streets must connect to other existing or planned streets
 - Buildings must be close to the street to provide a more uniform streetscape
 - Sites will provide direct pedestrian access (internally between uses and with the adjacent public rights-of-way)
- Driveway locations will be limited for access on high traffic rights-of-way

Use Terminology Changes

Special Use and Conditional Use Permit

Aligning UDC with Zoning Procedures Law (ZPL)

- **Legislative (BOC)** decisions are Special Uses
- **Quasi-judicial decisions (PC)** decisions are Conditional Use Permits

Legacy Uses added to UDC

- Geared toward small businesses and the role these uses and buildings had as community focal points
- Only permitted in commercial structures built before first ordinance (1978)
- Re-establishment of a building for the following uses:
 - Eating and drinking, restaurants
 - General retail
 - Craft manufacturing (Artisans, business incubators, crafts, etc.)
 - Office uses

Future Land Use & Zoning Compatibility

Future Land Use & Zoning Compatibility Table

Future Land Use	AG-1	AR-1	V-C	R-1-L	R-1	R-TF	R-X	R-MF	MHP	O-I	S-S	H-B	M-U	I-1	I-2	PCD	PID	POD	PRD
Greenspace - Recreation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Greenspace - Conservation	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Rural Agriculture	X	X																	
Rural Neighborhood		X		X															
Lakeside Residential			X	X	X		L												
Suburban Neighborhood, Low-Density				X	X		L												
Suburban Neighborhood, Medium-Density						L	X		L										L
Suburban Multi-Family						X	X	X											X
Rural Scenic Nodes & Corridors	X	X								X	X					L			
Business Nodes & Corridors							L	L		X	X	X	X	X		X			L
Employment Nodes & Corridors							L	L		X			X	X	L		X	X	L
Industrial														X	X		X		
Inland Port							X								X	X	X	X	
Regional Activity Centers							X	X		X	X	X	X			X			X

X = Permitted

L = Limited to certain character areas



Comprehensive Plan/UDC Adoption Timeline

- **September 3:** Staff Presentation to Planning Commission
- **September 10:** Staff Presentation to Board of Commissioners
- **September 11:** Transmit draft plan to DCA/GMRC for review and open drafts to public comments
- **October 11:** Close public comments
- **November 4:** Planning Commission to consider final adoption
- **November 14:** Board of Commissioners to consider final adoption



QUESTIONS/FURTHER DISCUSSION

