





The Quality Growth Resource Team for Pike County was brought together in November, 2002 through a collaboration with Pike County, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) and the Georgia Quality Growth Partnership, a state-wide coalition of government agencies, universities, non-profits and business groups working to provide technical assistance on “quality growth” issues to Georgia communities. The resource team focused their study on the entire area of Pike County, and its municipalities.

The multidisciplinary team was made up of specialists in city planning, real estate development, urban design, historic preservation, architecture, resource conservation, and housing. Team members were chosen with the area’s particular concerns in mind, which were initially defined in a meeting with the local officials held weeks in advance of the actual team visit.

The team spent a week in the project area. The visit began with a facilitated meeting involving a broad cross section of community representatives, designed to give the team members a deeper understanding of development issues and needs of the project area. During the week the team toured the project area by bus, visited area buildings, spoke with local officials, reviewed local ordinances, conducted field surveys, prepared schematic design solutions, and formulated policy recommendations. The visit culminated with a final presentation to the public on Thursday, November 21st. The team’s recommendations were then passed to DCA staff for formatting into this final report.

The Resource Team would like to thank Pike County staff, elected officials and citizens for making us feel so welcome in the area. The ideas and solutions proposed here are only a beginning – intended to stimulate interest in redeveloping Pike County so that residents may continue to enjoy living in a vibrant and beautiful area.

Community Resource Team visits and final presentation reports are coordinated and produced by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The electronic version of this publication (PDF) may be found online at: [www.dca.state.ga.us/publications/pikecounty.html](http://www.dca.state.ga.us/publications/pikecounty.html)

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# Meet the Resource Team



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The Georgia Quality Growth Partnership (GQGP) is a collaboration among diverse public and private organizations formed out of the desire to coordinate their efforts at promoting “quality growth” approaches throughout the State of Georgia. The primary purpose of the GQGP is to facilitate local government implementation of quality growth approaches by:

1. Disseminating objective information on the various approaches.
2. Developing tools for implementing these approaches.
3. Sharing of best practices learned from other places, times, and cultures.
4. Promoting acceptance of quality growth by the general public and community leaders.

Founded in March, 2000, the GQGP has grown to more than forty organizations, each contributing time, in kind services, or financial resources to fostering Partnership efforts.

#### Guiding Principles

The GQGP members believe that fostering livable communities requires innovative solutions that:

1. Ensure equitable access for all citizens to a range of options for education, transportation, housing, employment, human services, culture, and recreation.
2. Create opportunities for citizens to learn more about community planning and actively encourage their involvement in public decision-making.
3. Respect and protect our natural resources – wildlife, land, water, air and trees.
4. Shape appealing physical environments that enhance walkability and positive social interaction.
5. Recognize that community decisions have an impact on neighboring jurisdictions and, therefore, must be made from a responsible regional and statewide perspective.
6. Incorporate practices learned from our local experience as well as from other communities and cultures.
7. Preserve and enhance our cultural and historic places for future generations.
8. Provide for the efficient and economical use of public infrastructure.
9. Employ the principles of sustainability and balance to ensure the economic viability of all communities and to enhance the state’s economic competitiveness.

# Georgia Quality Growth Partnership





# Overall Development Concept

The Resource Team identified six separate development focus areas within the county and recommends unique development strategies for each of these areas. The focus areas are described below and mapped in Illustration 1:

- **Conservation Areas** consisting primarily of flood plains, wetlands and other sensitive areas not suitable for development of any kind.
- **Agricultural Areas** reserved almost exclusively for agricultural and forestry uses. These areas are not recommended for large-scale or even minor residential subdivision development, although some two-acre lot subdivisions have already intruded into these areas.
- **Rural Residential Areas** where a substantial proportion of land has already been subdivided for residential development at a typical density of one unit per two acres.
- **Suburban Areas** consisting primarily to the northeast portion of Pike County, where pressures for the typical types of suburban residential subdivision development are greatest (due to similar development occurring just across the border in Spalding County).
- **Town Centers** corresponding primarily with the city limits of Pike County's existing municipalities. Each city is considered a "node" of development. An additional node is proposed for the northeast corner of Pike County, which is facing commercial development pressure from neighboring Spalding County.
- **Major Highway Corridors** include U.S. Hwy. 19 and U.S. Hwy. 41, both of which face the prospect of uncontrolled strip development if growth is not properly managed.

The Resource Team recommends that new development in the county be concentrated in and around the **Town Centers** (including a proposed new town center in the northeast corner of the County, tentatively named "East Williamson" in this report). Each of the **Town Centers** should strive to manage new development so that it enhances the existing charm, walkability, and livability of these communities. The **Town Centers** should be linked by attractive rural highways (perhaps protected as Scenic Byways) and a countywide network of greenspace and trails, available to pedestrians, bicyclists, equestrians, and canoeists for both alternative transportation and recreation purposes. Outside the **Town Centers**, every effort should be made to encourage and maintain the existing rural character of the County. This does not mean that no development would occur outside the **Town Centers** – but any new development should be designed to blend with the rural landscape that makes Pike County a desirable and unique place to live.



