

A Partial Update To



The  
Comprehensive Development Plan

For

The City of Hoschton  
79 City Square  
Hoschton, GA 30548

As Approved on  
October 1, 2007

<b>Table Of Contents</b>	2
<b>Purpose</b>	4
<b>Quality Community Objectives</b>	5
Development Patterns	
Resource Conservation	
Social & Economic Development	
Governmental Relations	
QCO Questionnaire – See Appendix VI	
<b>Areas Requiring Special Attention</b>	7
Natural & Cultural Resources	
Areas Where Rapid Change Is Likely	
Infill Potential And Other Developable Areas	
Disinvestment And Brownfield Areas	
Map of Areas Requiring Special Attention – See Appendix I	
<b>Issues and Opportunities</b>	10
Natural and Cultural Resources	
Rapid Growth	
Facilities and Services	
Economic Development – Housing and Land Use	
Economic Development – Transportation	
Intergovernmental Coordination	
<b>Implementation Program</b>	12
Short-term Work Program	
Long-term and Ongoing Activities	
Strengthen Commercial Core	
Exploit Assets	
Improve Intergovernmental Communication Efforts	

## **Policies**

14

Natural & Cultural Resources

Rapid Growth

Facilities & Services

Hoschton Depot – Building and Parking Improvements

Hoschton Park

Water & Sewer

Economic Development – Land Use Issues

Industrial Park Sewer Extensions

West Jefferson Sewer Replacement

City Square – Area Definition / Design Standards

Economic Development – Transportation Issues

Highway 332 Realignment

West Jefferson Improvements

East Jefferson / Maddox Road Improvements

Intergovernmental Coordination

Highway 53 Sidewalks

Highway 332 Realignment

Services Agreement with JCWSA

## **Accomplishments**

16

**Appendix I – Map of Areas Requiring Special Attention**

**Appendix II – Current Zoning Map**

**Appendix III – Future Land Use Map**

**Appendix IV – Transportation Plan Map**

**Appendix V – Utility System Map**

**Appendix VI – Quality Community Objectives – Local Assessment**

## **Purpose**

This Partial Update to The Comprehensive Plan for The City of Hoschton is intended to serve as a guide. The intent is that it assists Hoschton and its constituencies regarding critical issues and opportunities during that period between Comprehensive Plan updates. The City of Hoschton engaged in an ongoing process for a full update to the Comprehensive Development Plan that will be offered for adoption in 2009.

This Partial Update contains all required components for local governments updating comprehensive plans created before 2005, and in accordance with the Minimum Planning Standards prescribed by the State of Georgia.

Public Hearings were held in 2006 and 2007 to review the Future Land Use and Transportation maps, the final public hearing for input was held on September 25, 2007, for the purpose of briefing the community on issues and opportunities to be addressed in the Implementation Program described herein. The City of Hoschton seeks to allow residents an opportunity to comment on the material, and to inform the community of when these materials will be transmitted to the Northeast Regional Development Center.

After this document is found to be in compliance with established planning requirements defined by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, the City of Hoschton expects to adopt this Partial Update in December of 2007.

## **Quality Community Objectives**

The City of Hoschton conducted an assessment in accordance with the Quality Community Objectives requirement found in the Local Planning Requirements section for the Local Comprehensive Planning program managed by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The completed Local Assessment Tool is found in Appendix VI.

The City of Hoschton has already begun to address the identified Quality Community Objectives, and will continue to work toward the goals listed.

## **Development Patterns**

There is an older area of homes clustered around City Hall and the Depot, with small lots and few sidewalks. Vacant lots are abundant in this older area. There has not been significant new development within this older housing area. Newer developments have been built around the periphery, often following annexations of new land. Sidewalks are now required as a part of all new developments, and must be provided by the developer.

The Zoning and Land Use Maps show commercial development centered on Highway 53 in a short stretch near the City Square, then at and around Towne Center Parkway, with industrial uses on the southerly side of town.

## **Resource Conservation**

Quality Community Objectives related to resource conservation include the preservation of the symbols of our heritage, and the protection of our open space and environmental features.

The best-known symbol of our heritage is The Hoschton Depot, which was been listed on the National Register of Historic Places on March 31, 2000. The Depot is a reminder of that time when trains, rather than highways, carried our commerce, and the train is the reason Hoschton exists.

The first Hoschton landmark placed on the National Register of Historic Places, listed on May 2, 1985, is the Hillcrest-Allen Clinic and Hospital. It was built in the early 1900s and has other outbuildings on the large site.

Hoschton has two parks, one beside The Depot, and the West Jackson Ball Field. One family owns the largest undeveloped tract within the city limits, and its central location makes it an ideal location for a large community park or nature-learning center. Other large tracts are being investigated for their potential use as open space offering walking trails.

Lacking a budget for non-essential elements, Hoschton strives to acquire Open Space as a condition of new developments, with maintenance being a responsibility of the local homeowner associations. This creates pockets of parks in each community without adding a financial burden to the City. Concessions are required of developers for public open space and other amenities.

New development around the original city center is regulated by modest design standards. These standards seek to foster an old-town appearance and sense of stability with an emphasis on the use of durable materials, specifically brick. This mixed-use area provides a buffer between highway commercial and residential uses. Hoschton vigorously enforces state and federal legislation designed to protect watercourses and sensitive lands. Hoschton has also begun the review process with a goal to formally adopt a tree protection ordinance.

## **Social and Economic Development**

Hoschton recognizes that growth is not inherently evil, nor is all growth good. Appropriate growth is good for the community and must be nurtured with appropriate rules coupled with fair enforcement of those rules. Hoschton seeks to attract businesses that will support and provide needed services and goods within easy reach of our residents. We also have the good fortune to be near many large intensively developed malls for additional choices without suffering the ill effects of having such activities located on our peaceful streets.

Our Capital Improvement Program provides for the creation of an infrastructure that promotes healthy living by encouraging walking activities. We seek pedestrian-accessible specialty shops and dining facilities that are consistent with the needs of residents we are trying to attract to our town. Hoschton is content to be an upscale bedroom community rather than a major commerce center. But we know that well-heeled families expect easy access to a variety of commercial necessities as well as employment opportunities.

Our Industrial area has a substantial amount of undeveloped land, due in part to the lack of sewer lines in the Industrial area. Industrial growth will be spurred by the extension of sewer lines. Concurrently Hoschton is working to upgrade and expand sewer services through the other residential and commercial areas.

## **Governmental Relations**

Hoschton strives to administer its development regulations in a fair and consistent fashion, and to keep the regulations current and accessible to the public. We work with our counterparts in the county administration to ensure our goals are compatible and mutually supportive, and our mayor is actively involved in monthly meetings with other mayors from the surrounding towns.

## Areas Requiring Special Attention

Hoschton is surrounded by the rapid growth of Jackson and neighboring counties. This growth is inevitable since we are located squarely within the Atlanta-to-Charlotte Corridor along heavily traveled Interstate 85.

Since growth is inevitable, our task is to manage that growth so that it is orderly and supportive of our other goals, and contributes to our community rather than detracts from our quality of life.

Georgia's Department of Community Affairs requires that each community address seven special conditions that DCA has identified:

- Areas of significant natural and cultural resources
- Areas likely to experience rapid development or change
- Areas where pace of development might exceed handling capacity
- Areas needing redevelopment
- Significant abandoned sites or buildings
- Areas with infill opportunity
- Areas of significant financial disparity relative to the overall community

## Natural and Cultural Resources

**The Hoschton Depot** is the signature landmark in Hoschton, and is located at the intersection of Broad Street and Highway 53. It served as the base point from which the original town was defined; in 1891 the original Hoschton Charter noted that the town extended three quarters of a mile in each direction from the depot. The town existed because of the train. Farmers and industries could transport both crops and finished products created from the raw materials provided by the surrounding farms.

The reliable transportation provided by the train also attracted doctors who served a very large area thanks to the train facilitating easy access those early doctors. Hoschton was a center of commerce, and the Hoschton Depot is a reminder of those early days.

**The Hillcrest – Allen Clinic and Hospital** became a focal point for folks needing medical services, and the train brought in patients from across north Georgia for their care. The property was also a large working farm, producing cotton, soybeans, corn, apples and pecans, was the location of the original Hosch Store. The building was first a residence, and then was converted to a medical facility in 1930.

**Hoschton's two cemeteries** are both very old, and contain graves of those early settlers and their many descendents. One cemetery, located on Broad Street and Cabin Drive, served the white population. The Black community was largely served by the cemetery located on the north side of town on Jefferson Place. The Hoschton Women's Civic Club has previously hosted an annual Spirit Walk that will likely be taken up by another organization in the community.

**The Hoschton Ball Park** (West Jackson Park) is located west of downtown Hoschton off of Cabin Drive. It is owned by Hoschton and managed by the Jackson County Parks and

Recreation Department. It has excellent well-maintained baseball diamonds that are lighted, and includes ample parking. Tennis Courts would be a welcome addition.

**Hoschton's City Square** is located across Highway 53 from the Hoschton Depot and has a very old building from our past and that now serves as the City Hall. And the City Square has a new brick building built to look like an original building from Hoschton's early times. This new building contains several tenants that provide services targeted at local residents. The City Square parking area is shared and very attractively landscaped. There is vacant land on the City Square block and this land is governed by architectural design standards that require new development also be of a matching design.

### **Other Resources:**

Hoschton has several flowing streams, and the Deer Creek subdivision abuts the Mulberry River. To protect the water quality, Hoschton vigorously enforces erosion and stream protection ordinances.

We also have one remaining very large tract within the city limits that is used in an agricultural fashion. It is owned by a retired professor who also served as an Agricultural Extension Agent, and this tract provides him a chance to continue his passion. Neighborhood children are fascinated with the real cows that roam the pasture.

Hoschton has a second sizable tract of undeveloped land located south of Broad Street near the cemetery and between The Village and Quail Crossing subdivisions. It is landlocked so that development would be difficult, and it is an odd-shaped parcel with a stream flowing through it adding to the difficulty to develop it. However, it would make an excellent passive park that could accommodate walking trails that could serve the adjacent residential communities.

Hoschton has a third tract of land suitable for park use. It is located on the west side of Highway 53, and immediately south of the West Jackson Primary School. It has a ball field on its western side. This tract would make an excellent addition to the existing ball field, and is large enough to accommodate a soccer field.

The Hoschton Women's Civic Club is a valuable community resource. Among their many public service projects, these concerned citizens took it upon themselves years ago to prevent the demolition of the Hoschton Depot. They raised money and provided labor to begin restoration of the Depot, then spearheaded efforts to obtain grants to pay for more extensive renovations to the old building, converting it to be used as a community center and a community museum.

### **Areas Where Rapid Change Is Likely**

Hoschton has several areas that will be undergoing rapid change in the near future. The Highway 53 Corridor is generally commercial in nature and is heavily traveled. There is pressure from county and state officials to either widen it or build a bypass around downtown Hoschton.

Jefferson Street running each direction from 53 has new developments planned that will increase pressure to improve Jefferson Street.

Highway 332 is residential in nature, but has many new subdivisions on it, and should be realigned where it connects to Highway 53, at the Town Center Shopping Center. The additional traffic through Towne Center Shopping Center could provide the impetus needed to secure a

major tenant such as a grocery store that the public has often listed as a desirable addition. Hoschton will continue to work with Jackson County to ensure that 332 remains a rural highway rather than have it become a commercial stretch, adding to sprawl.

The Hoschton Industrial Park has many vacant lots, and with the pending plans to expand sewer service in the industrial area, there will be denser and more rapid growth and expansion possible in that area.

### **Infill Potential and other Developable Areas**

Hoschton has several areas that are ripe for development. We have a number of vacant tracts along Highway 53, a large parcel on the City Square, an eight-acre vacant commercial tract across 53 from Towne Center, and several large tracts at the south end of town in the Industrial Park.

We have many vacant lots in the older residential area both east and west of 53, and these have been recently rezoned to Office-Residential to allow residential and single-tenant professional office uses.

We have a large tract on the west side of 53 to the north of Jefferson Street that was recently rezoned for a mixed use development.

Jefferson Street going west of 53 has a mixture of nice homes interspersed with many marginal uses that detract from the nicer development. If Jefferson Street is improved to provide better access to I-85 by bypassing downtown Braselton, it will likely increase pressure for more development along West Jefferson Street.

### **Significant Disinvestment or Brownfield Areas**

Hoschton is not plagued by an abundance of abandoned buildings, but there are several isolated eyesores that serve as deterrents to development. Hoschton has taken the steps to more vigorously enforce building codes and nuisance laws, with the goal of improving the image of the community, which protects investments and encourages reinvestment in the community.

Developers have publicly stated that they view the more stringent code enforcement and the imposition of design standards as indicators that this is a community worth their investments of time and money.

Hoschton has not identified any areas that qualify as brownfield areas

## **Issues and Opportunities**

### **Natural and Cultural Resources**

Hoschton Depot – Our signature image has the potential to attract new residents, through its use as a community center, and can pay its own way through rentals. No attempt has been made to actively market the depot in the past, though today’s staff is capable and eager for the chance.

Hillcrest - Allen Clinic and Hospital – This building is in excellent condition and very accessible making it an ideal choice for a civic facility. The privately owned structure is located in the city limits on the northern end of a large tract that is adjacent to but outside the current city limits.

Hoschton Cemeteries – There are two historical cemeteries in Hoschton. The more visible one is on Broad Street, and another very old cemetery is on Jefferson Place. Both can serve to attract folks interested in rural Georgia history.

### **Rapid Growth**

Hoschton will be pulled by the currents of growth all around us, and we will see rapid growth on the currently platted subdivisions. It took Hoschton over 100 years to get to 500 households, and we will double that within the next 5 years just building out currently approved lots. The influx of new residents has created demand for more commercial services, and this will lead to more commercial growth along Highway 53 and Towne Center Parkway. The pending extension of sewer service into the industrial area will also promote rapid growth.

### **Facilities and Services**

Hoschton city government offices occupy three spaces. City Hall is located in the center of town, the Police Department is located at the southern end of town in the industrial park, and the third site is the Wastewater Treatment Plant located south of downtown on the northerly edge of the industrial park.

The City manages a cemetery to the southwest of the downtown area, along Broad Street at Cabin Drive. Burial records have been manually maintained by inscribing names of owners of sites on old paper maps, as well as recording deeds to the sites.

A major asset for the City is the Hoschton Depot, that with proper management can not only serve its intended purpose as a Community Center and Museum, but it can also be rented to recover some of the operating costs. Recent landscaping improvements and the addition of a proper parking lot make it more attractive than ever for its intended use as a community center, and also more marketable as a meeting room for special events like birthday parties.

### **Economic Development – Housing and Land Use**

Economic Development is a major factor in land use planning and the decision making process in Hoschton. When considering changes in designated land use, how it affects our economy is fundamental. Balance is important, insufficient commercial land inhibits a healthy economy, and commercial intrusion into residential area hurts those surrounding property values. Neither can be considered without realizing the implications for the other.

City Square – Commercial focal point with neighborhood-friendly restaurants, shops and services. It has excellent access, visibility, and the potential to provide mixed uses such as commercial first floor shops and upper floor apartments that will increase nightlife and business opportunities for local merchants.

Vacant Land – There are many vacant lots scattered around the older residential section of Hoschton that, together with some poorly maintained structures, inhibit private investors from spending money in a piecemeal approach. There are large tracts of vacant land abutting Hoschton to the east, west and to the south.

Creekside Village Tract – This is a large tract fronting on Hwy 53 that is zoned for mixed-use development, with an attractive master plan that is part of the conditional zoning. This project will create a supportive addition to the Hoschton Cityscape. This project contains both commercial and residential portions.

Abandoned Structures – When structures are abandoned for a period of years, and there is no maintenance being performed, they attract undesirable tenants from rats to drug dealers. This reduces the property value of the surrounding properties, which hurts the entire community.

Inappropriate Uses – When parcels are spot zoned for uses that are not compatible with the surrounding parcels, owners have no incentive to maintain their properties. This reduces the value of the inappropriate use and the surrounding parcels and hurts the entire community of Hoschton.

### **Economic Development – Transportation, Facilities and Services**

Hoschton's economic development future is closely coupled with its Transportation Plan, which was amended in 2006 as Hoschton began its CDP review process. There were several major changes in roadways suggested to support orderly growth.

Hwy 53 Corridor – Underutilized commercial opportunity for new investment that can build on existing attractive projects recently completed. Good access and visibility with attractive and well-maintained parking. Growing interest in commercialization along 53, and some interest in commercial development with upper floor residential on City Square.

Hwy 332 Corridor – Two-lane rural highway that acts as major collector street funneling traffic into Hoschton from nearby middleclass and upscale neighborhoods, and it is an excellent source of customers for local merchants. The City has worked with land owners, the DOT and Jackson County to realign 332 to improve the intersection with 53, with the side benefit of helping spur economic development.

Jefferson Street Corridor – Two-lane road that can provide significant relief for traffic by providing a westerly route out of Hoschton toward the Interstate and Atlanta, bypassing the slow drive through the town of Braselton. It has a mixture of nice homes and unattractive structures that are textbook examples of what is wrong with spot zoning. The road, development and zoning all need attention if this stretch is to serve as an asset to Hoschton.

Industrial Park – Large and barely developed industrial area already populated with many well-maintained and clean industrial facilities. The large amount of open space remaining is because of the lack of sewer service in the industrial area, despite being so close to the treatment plant.

### **Intergovernmental Coordination**

Hoschton will continue to work with other jurisdictions to effect changes that are mutually beneficial. Braselton and Hoschton share a common interest in improvements to Josh Pirkle Road and West Jefferson Street. Hoschton and Jackson County have common interests in maintaining the residential character of Maddox Road and Highway 332 as "Rural Highways."

## Implementation Program

Hoschton has assessed current conditions, both in the context of goals from our previous CDP, and in the context of new developments and issues identified since that last CDP Update. And Hoschton has assessed the likelihood of future development based on activities currently underway. This has all been tempered in the light of budgets and changing desires as voiced by the population via the input received at several public hearings over the last year dealing with Land Use and Transportation Plan Amendments.

### Short-term Program

Hoschton has identified specific projects that can be completed in the near term, and that do not require external funding either as grants or through tax increases. These projects will improve the quality of life for existing residents, and will promote orderly growth without adding future costs to the City budget. Hoschton will continue to enforce state and federal regulations which provide significant protection for our natural resources, and we will continue to require plan reviews for all new projects to ensure that developers' goals mesh with our needs.

**Develop a marketing program for Hoschton assets** – The Hoschton Depot and Festivals are marketable destinations and should be exploited. A real marketing program for the depot will attract new residents to our town, and will let that asset break even, if not even turn a profit. The festivals – ArtTrax and the Fall Festival – are well-attended events that attract new residents as well as new patrons for our established locally owned and operated restaurants.

**Sewer Line Addition on West Jefferson to Brook Glen** – This upgrade will allow Hoschton to eliminate a long-time problematic lift station which has required constant attention, and runs the additional risk of causing substantial penalties and fines for the too-frequent overflows that occur due to the very old and undersized equipment. Furthermore, replacement of it will allow development of approximately 200 new homes and about six acres of new commercial development.

**Sewer Extensions in Industrial Park** – This extension of service will allow our industrial park to attract new businesses that currently do not wish to develop on septic tanks. That will result in jobs for our area, and additional revenue to the City of Hoschton. As we help our investors that created the park, we will encourage them to work with us again to promote orderly growth and new development.

**Add Architectural Design Standards for Commercial Development** – Developers have reported that when we protect their investments in our town with tough standards, they are more encouraged to reinvest in our area. New standards will ensure that the attractive new development by Gary & Olsson on City Square will be further enhanced with more attractive buildings, and the entire town benefits with very little public cost.

**Add Park Space** – Hoschton now encourages and provides incentives to developers to provide park space that does not cost the City – either to acquire or maintain. The last three projects approved include significant acreage set aside as passive open spaces with walking trails and picnic areas. These were trade-offs for smaller lot sizes, the park spaces are to serve the local subdivision that contains each, and the mandatory homeowner's association is required to maintain the park. We will continue to find ways to acquire park space, and space that has its maintenance paid for, without cost to the City.

**Reroute Highway 332** – The current connection of Highway 332 with Highway 53 is at a narrow intersection with no opportunity to expand the road for turning movements, and no opportunity for a turn signal. By turning 332 toward Highway 53 at Towne Center Parkway, we accomplish a number of excellent goals. We gain the needed right of way for dedicated turn lanes, we drive more traffic through a commercial corridor that will further benefit the town with traffic counts that are more likely to land a grocery store which many residents often cite as a desirable addition to the town. And we improve the chance for getting a traffic light permit from the DOT, which improves safety while supporting economic development.

**Improve Intergovernmental Relationships** – Hoschton and our neighbors will benefit from our working together, more than fighting our battles alone. Hoschton will continue to improve our working relationship with neighboring towns as well as with the County and State agencies. We will do this by identifying projects of mutual interest.

## **Long-term and Ongoing Activities**

Hoschton's commercial core is a short stretch along State Highway 53, and is bounded on the southern end with a modern, attractive commercial development known as Towne Center. New development within the core area is now governed by Architectural Design Standards, which include the requirement to install sidewalks and landscaping to build on the successes to date.

The Planning and Zoning Commission has undertaken the task of refining and extending the Architectural Design Standards to ensure all new commercial development is consistent with our existing efforts.

The professional staff is making greater use of modern tools such as computers and the Internet to market the town and share information such as rules and regulations. All permits are available over the web, together with the underlying rules that govern the issuance of permits. The staff is currently developing detailed plans and specifications to further exploit digital tools, to allow more work to be done with the existing staff. Shared databases will play a much larger role as opposed to the old method of relying on institutional knowledge: someone having to remember where the water line is buried, or when an item was last considered, or a parcel was rezoned.

By exploiting our existing assets, we can build on the positive aspects of our community, the very things that have attracted so many new residents. We will more aggressively market elements such as The Depot, The Fall Festival, and our newest annual festival – ArtTrax. These elements make Hoschton a destination. As folks visit us, many will eat in our excellent locally owned restaurants, and see our upscale residential communities and growing system of recreational opportunities and choose to relocate here, where a short walk will make each of these easily accessible. Hoschton offers diversity, safety and easy access to a major city.

We will continue to add parks and open space through innovative low-cost approaches working with developers; and we have begun to approach landowners with large tracts to consider dedicating land to maintain our town as a green spot in a growing sea of concrete.

As we improve intergovernmental communication efforts, we hope to gain support for projects that benefit Hoschton and those that joint venture with us. Our superior skills in areas like management, electronic tools, and marketing make us a valuable partner.

## **Policies**

### **Natural And Cultural Resources**

Hoschton will continue to exploit our resources and use these to attract new residents that place a premium on a high quality of life, and ready access to healthy living activities. We will do this through the use of electronic tools, word of mouth, active marketing programs as with the Business Alliance, and working to have positive press coverage of our town.

A major asset for Hoschton includes the social organizations like the Friends of The Library and in particular the Hoschton Women's Civic Club. Both of these groups undertake activities that place Hoschton in a very positive light, and their efforts serve to promote Hoschton as a place you would want to call home. Hoschton will work more closely with them in the future to ensure they continue to serve as our unpaid sales and marketing team.

### **Rapid Growth**

Growth for the sake of growth is generally not a desirable goal. Growth must be orderly to ensure that resources are not outstripped. Unmanaged growth leads to overly dense development, frustration, pollution, and a desire to escape. We want folks to want to come here to stay, not to look forward to escaping.

Toward that end, we are working to improve traffic flow. We have completed a detailed look at our street network, and determined potential long-term solutions to improve access. We are upgrading our wastewater treatment plant to allow a five-fold increase in capacity. All new plans must be thoroughly reviewed as to their impact on traffic, noise, schools, and other systems. Concessions are often required of developers to avoid future costs to the City of Hoschton that could result from unchecked market forces.

Design standards ensure that new development will be supportive of efforts to date, and will further enhance the appearance of our community. These standards are a relatively new concept to our formerly rural population, but have met with general acceptance.

### **Facilities and Services**

Hoschton has the good fortune to have adequate resources for our community. But as development continues, utilizing the vacant land already approved for development, we will begin to outgrow those assets if we do not proactively plan.

The Depot is a symbol of our heritage; we were a center of commerce and transportation. It reminds us of that past, and serves the community as a meeting place, and a desire to be a leader into the future. Recent landscaping in the park and the addition of a proper parking lot are some of the Depot improvements that should lead to more use of that facility, which has the potential to attract quality new residents – both homeowners and businesses.

Our Cemeteries also remind us of our history, and are a rich source of stories of our past. We have done a good job of providing water and sewer services, and are planning for the next generation of residents that will increase our borders, and play in our open spaces. We are already expanding both water and sewer capacity before we find ourselves underserved.

### **Economic Development – Land Use Issues**

Hoschton's Industrial Park is an underutilized asset. Development there has been slow largely because septic tanks are required since there is no sewer service available there.

Hoschton has begun the process of planning new sewer line locations so we may develop a realistic budget and timeline to serve this area, and to promote development there.

Development north of West Jefferson Street has been impeded by the lack of sewer service, despite the fact that it is prime real estate. Hoschton has begun the process to remove the deficient lift station on West Jefferson Street and connect that area, as well as the residential area just west of City Hall, into a new system with a larger lift station with more reliable equipment, larger pumps and lines, and connectivity to our SCADA. With these changes underway, we now have a group working to develop a large mixed-use development, Creekside Village, in the northwest corner of West Jefferson and Highway 53.

We have begun work on a definition of our “City Square” and new Architectural Design Standards to ensure that we build on work-to-date with new development that will further our orderly growth.

### **Economic Development – Transportation Issues**

Highway 332 needs to be realigned where it connects with Highway 53 in Hoschton. This is because the current intersection is constrained by narrow rights of way that preclude adding turning lanes and signalization. Hoschton is working with Jackson County and the Georgia DOT to turn 332 over to Highway 53 at Towne Center Parkway. This will allow for adequate right of way for dedicated turning lanes, and will improve chances for a turn signal. Equally important, this additional traffic through the Towne Center Shopping Center area will increase traffic counts such that we increase the likelihood of having a major grocery store chain relocate into Hoschton. A major grocery store is an often-cited desire of residents at public hearings.

West Jefferson Street offers a good route from Highway 53 to the intersection of Highway 211 and I-85 without forcing the traffic through downtown Braselton which is itself heavily congested. With the addition of Brook Glen subdivision traffic onto West Jefferson over the next few years, Hoschton needs to address that stretch of road to reduce loads on 53. The improvements to West Jefferson could also assist in improving the quality of development along that roadway.

Hoschton has adopted the Jackson County goal of utilizing Maddox Road as a “Rural Highway” which limits it to two lanes, and does not promote commercialization. East Jefferson Street becomes Maddox Road at our city limit line. Hoschton wants to continue the sidewalk construction started on East Jefferson, and the newest developer seeking to develop the Hampton Homes tract has agreed to fund the sidewalks along Maddox and East Jefferson to connect to our existing sidewalks that connect the Intermediate School to downtown.

Hoschton reiterates its preference that any Highway 53 bypass should be located east of the City of Hoschton, in a corridor yet to be identified.

### **Intergovernmental Cooperation**

Hoschton’s support of the Jackson County Rural Highway designation for Maddox Road is an excellent example of intergovernmental cooperation. Another good example is the concession received from the Creekside Village developer to provide approximately eight acres of park space on Highway 53, adjacent to the Primary School and an existing park. Hoschton will acquire title to the land and allow Jackson County Parks and Recreation to add a needed facility in a very visible location. We hope to have similar success with the county

as we address improvements to Peachtree Road. We will continue to work with the Jackson County Water & Sewer Authority.

## **Accomplishments**

Hoschton listed a series of goals in our last Comprehensive Development Plan. The following is a listing of those goals and their status.

### **Review Zoning / Subdivision Regulations for conflicts regarding open space requirements.**

Hoschton has undertaken several projects regarding development regulations and mandatory provision of open space, working toward a single document to simplify the development process.

### **Adopt and implement Wetlands Protection Standards**

Hoschton has adopted by reference and vigorously enforces all state and federal regulations regarding protection of wetlands and watercourses. We contract with a certified soil and erosion control inspector to augment the activities of a full-time building inspector added since the last plan was adopted. We also have added incentives for Planned and Mixed Use Developments to set aside and manage sensitive lands for pedestrian-oriented public access.

### **Prepare and adopt preservation ordinance for commercial area, with formal guidelines.**

Hoschton undertook a study to identify commercial areas in and around the core, adopted a new zoning category for mixed residential and office development, and adopted Architectural Design Standards for this area. The Planning and Zoning Commission is now refining those Architectural Design Standards to provide broader protection for commercial development to ensure compatible growth in our historic community.

### **Produce and provide educational materials about historic preservation.**

Hoschton has produced informative material about our historic community, and encourages new developers to show sensitivity to our past.

### **Monitor traffic and road changes that may affect downtown.**

Hoschton has in the past year reviewed its transportation plan and adopted an updated plan to reflect the changes that have occurred, and are likely to occur as inevitable development occurs.

### **Consider redevelopment of vacant lot next to City Hall.**

Hoschton has implemented new design standards that control development of all of City Square, including the vacant lot adjacent to City Hall. We have also held discussions with several developers about our interest in seeing new compatible development on all of City Square.

### **Adopt and implement a Tree Protection Ordinance**

For a variety of reasons, this was not done. The addition of a full-time staff member to manage planning issues has resulted in renewed efforts to codify this goal. For the past year it has been an informal process, requesting tree planting of developers as a part of the plan approval process, as well as the set-aside of pocket parks in new developments.

**Coordinate historic preservation with all economic development initiatives**

All economic development initiatives, as well as all significant development projects are reviewed in the context of historic preservation. All new zoning and Architectural Design Standards projects are reviewed in the context of furthering historic preservation goals.

**Follow the Future Land Use Map when locating new businesses.**

Hoschton strives to follow the Future Land Use Map in making land use decisions.

**Follow the Future Land Use Map when locating new residential development.**

Hoschton strives to follow the Future Land Use Map in making land use decisions.

**Increase marketing efforts to attract employers to Hoschton**

This has been handled largely by the Hoschton Business Alliance, under the guidance of Councilman Schulte as their sponsor. The new dedicated planner will further these efforts as he takes more control of electronic resources such as web-based tools.

**Utilize available buildings for economic development purposes when feasible**

Whether blessed or cursed, Hoschton has a scarcity of vacant existing buildings available for economic development activities.

**Update Future Land Use Map every two years**

Hoschton has developed an in-house ability to create, manage and expand our mapping activities, and does hold hearings as needed to address changes needed to all maps including the Future Land Use Map.

**Develop Downtown Overlay zone and incorporate mixed-use development into downtown**

The Zoning Ordinance was amended to include a Downtown Development Overlay district which permits commercial and upper-floor residential uses, and a set of Architectural Design Standards was adopted for the district.

**Construct sidewalks linking major nodes within the city to the downtown**

Hoschton has paid for some sidewalks to be built, used grant money to add a sidewalk along the City Square, and linking Highway 53 to the Intermediate School. We have also obtained commitments for new sidewalks from developers, one to connect the Creekside Village project to City Square, and one to connect the Intermediate School with new development going west from the school to the Hampton Homes project at the city limit line. Towne Center's developer has agreed to install sidewalks along Highway 53 from the southern end of the Downtown Development Overlay district to below Towne Center Parkway. All new developments are required to provide sidewalks within their projects and to connect their projects to existing sidewalks.

### **Improve signalization and signage in congested areas and accident-prone locations**

Hoschton continues to work with the Georgia DOT to obtain traffic lights at Jefferson Street and at Towne Center Parkway. The police department is managing a program for standardization of appropriate signage.

### **Improve water, sewer and transportation infrastructure to meet community demands**

Hoschton has stayed on top of all three items. We are increasing the capacity of the wastewater treatment plant five-fold. We've upsized and looped water lines to equalize pressure and provide redundant sources to each neighborhood. We've completed a study of our roads, held a public hearing and amended our Transportation Plan.

### **Increase capacity of the water pollution control plant**

We are increasing the capacity of the wastewater treatment plant five-fold, and upgraded the SCADA to provide better management capabilities, including support for remote management.. We are replacing the lift station on West Jefferson Street as it was undersized and unreliable.

### **Increase Police Department staff by adding two patrol officers**

Hoschton has added three full-time officers to the Police Department

### **Construct an additional 300,000-gallon water tank**

The intent of this project has been addressed by upgrading water lines and looping lines around the town to improve water flow and pressure. Recent upgrades to the SCADA allow us to more precisely monitor the status of our water and sewer systems, including the addition of remote management capabilities for our system supervisor so that adjustments can be made without requiring that he drive in to the plant. Plans are on file for the placement of an additional tower on high ground if the addition proves necessary.

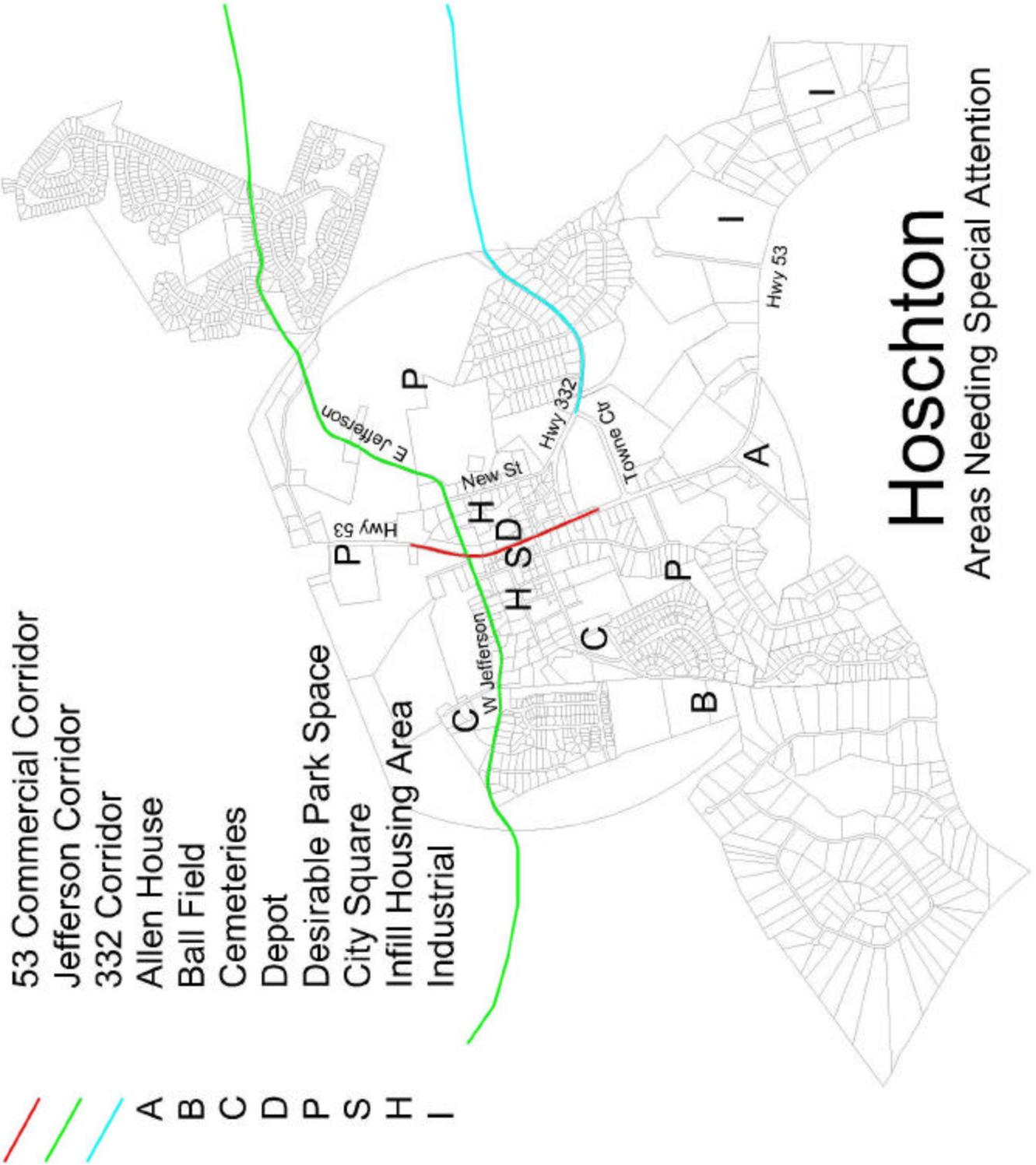
### **Nominate Hoschton for National Register listing**

This was not done, but has resurfaced as a desirable goal, championed by the Historic Committee.

### **Develop more comprehensive manufactured housing regulations....**

All residential development in Hoschton must comply with applicable setback, landscaping and structural design requirements, whether stick-built or manufactured.

Appendix I  
 Areas Needing Special Attention



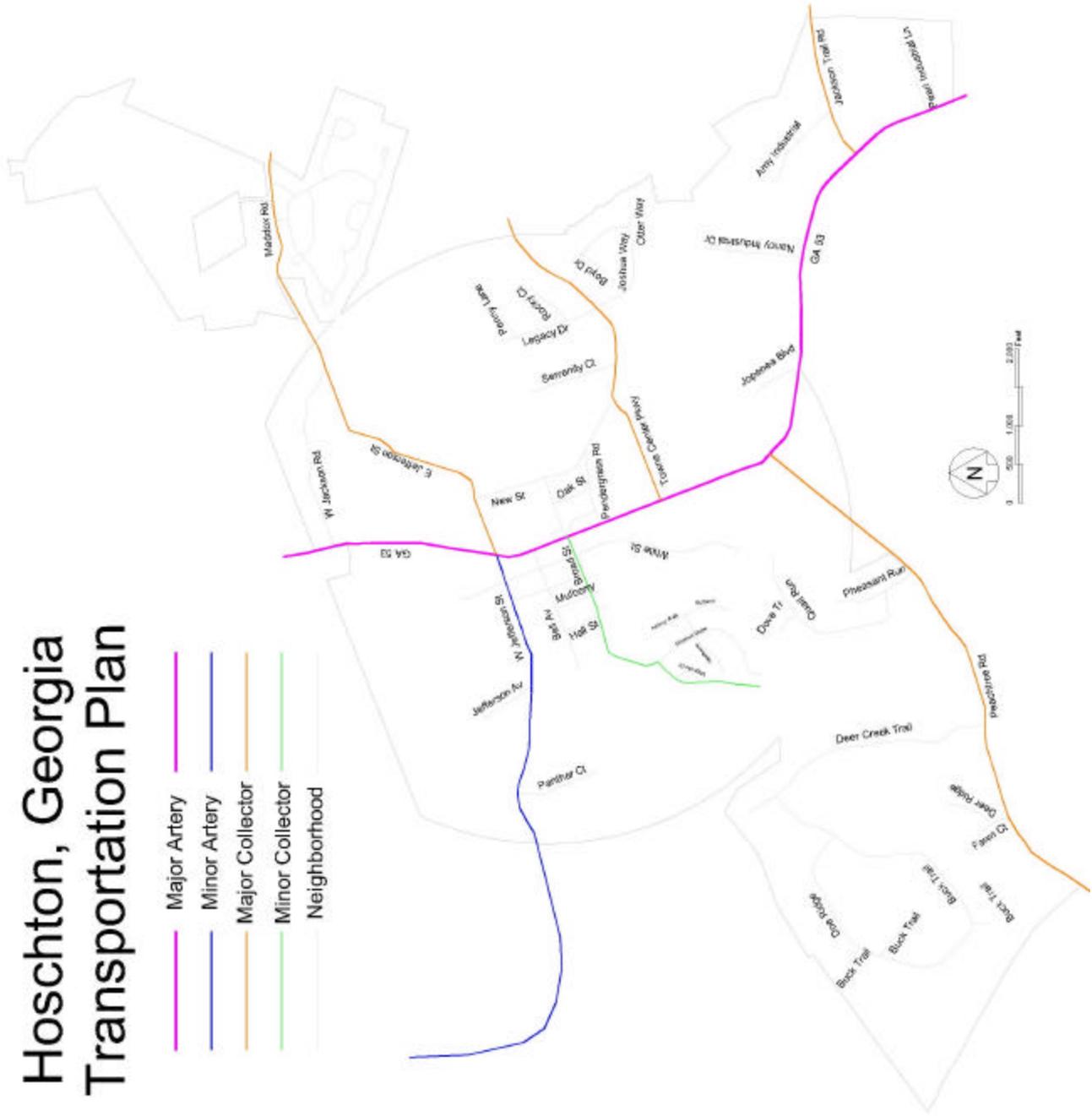




# Appendix IV Transportation Plan

## Hoschton, Georgia Transportation Plan

- Major Artery
- Minor Artery
- Major Collector
- Minor Collector
- Neighborhood





Appendix VI – Quality Community Objectives  
Local Assessment

<b>Development Patterns</b>					
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.					
		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1	If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.		✓		Our Zoning Ordinance has discrete districts that segregate uses, and we also have a provision for mixed use developments
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	✓			

## Quality Community Objectives

<b>Infill Development</b>					
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.					
		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
1	Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.		✓		Currently being created
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.	✓			
<b>Sense of Place</b>					
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.					
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.	✓			Downtown Development Overlay
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.			✓	

## Quality Community Objectives

<b>Transportation Alternatives</b>					
<p>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.</p>					
		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
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.	✓			
<b>Regional Identity</b>					
<p>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.</p>					
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.	✓			

## Quality Community Objectives

<b>Resource Conservation</b>					
<b>Heritage Preservation</b>					
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.					
		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
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.	✓			OR (Office Residential) and DDO (Downtown Development Overlay) District guidelines contain Architectural Design Standards
<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.					
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.	✓			Our Planned Unit Development Regulations require that developers provide open space

## Quality Community Objectives

### Environmental Protection

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.

		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
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.).	✓			

## Quality Community Objectives

### Social and Economic Development

#### Growth Preparedness

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.

		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
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.	✓			

## Quality Community Objectives

### 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	N/A	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.	✓			
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.

1	Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.	✓			
2	Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	✓			
3	Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	✓			
4	Our community has professional and managerial jobs.	✓			

## Quality Community Objectives

### 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	N/A	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.	✓			

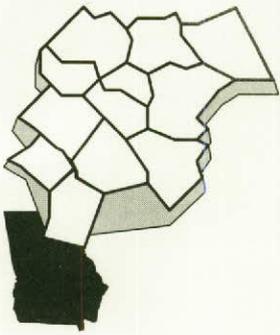
### Educational Opportunities

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..

1	Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens.		✓		
2	Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.		✓		
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.	✓			

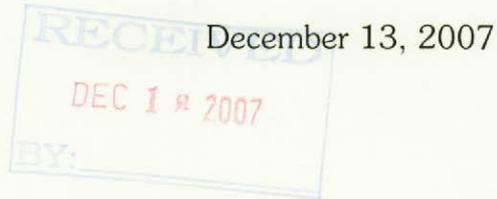
## Quality Community Objectives

<b>Governmental Relations</b>					
<b>Regional Solutions</b>					
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.					
		Yes	No	N/A	Comments
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.					
1	We plan jointly with our cities and county for comprehensive planning purposes.	✓			
2	We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.		✓		
3	We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft regionwide strategies.	✓			
4	We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.	✓			



**NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER**  
305 Research Drive Athens, Georgia 30605-2795  
(706) 369-5650 • Fax (706) 369-5792

**James R. Dove**  
Executive Director



Mr. Jim Frederick  
Director  
Georgia Department of Community Affairs  
Office of Coordinated Planning  
60 Executive Park So., NE, Rm. 377  
Atlanta, GA 30329-2231

**RE: *Adopting Resolution* — Comprehensive Plan Partial Update for the City of Hoschton, Georgia.**

Dear Jim,

Enclosed is the Resolution from the City of Hoschton, Georgia officially adopting their Comprehensive Plan Partial Update. Please send the appropriate official notification to this local government extending their Qualified Local Government status.

Sincerely,

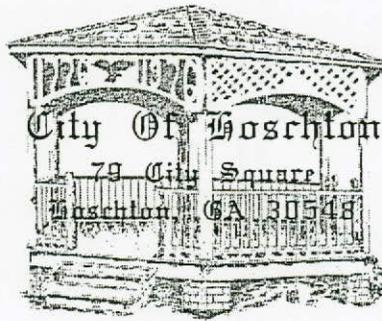
Lee A. Carmon, AICP  
Planning Director/General Counsel

LAC:jab

enclosure

c: Bill Copenhaver, Mayor, City of Hoschton  
Cindy R. Edge, Clerk, City of Hoschton

Bill Copenhaver, Mayor  
Cindy R. Edge, City Clerk



City Council  
Richard Green  
Jim Jester  
John Schulte  
Tom Walden  
Richard Shepherd  
Theresa Kenerly

## RESOLUTION

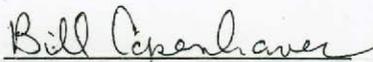
WHEREAS, the 1989 Georgia General Assembly enacted House Bill 215, the Georgia Planning Act, requiring all local governments to prepare a comprehensive plan in accordance with the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures promulgated by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan for The City of Hoschton, Georgia, adopted December 3, 2007 was prepared in accordance with the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by The City of Hoschton that the Comprehensive Plan Amendment for The City of Hoschton, Georgia, dated October 1, 2007, as approved by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs is hereby adopted, and furthermore, that the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center shall be notified of said adoption within seven (7) days of the adoption of this ordinance.

Adopted this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of December, 2007.

City of Hoschton

  
Bill Copenhaver, Mayor

  
Cindy R. Edge, City Clerk