

MARION COUNTY~CITY OF BUENA VISTA



**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
1995 - 2015**

MARION COUNTY ~ CITY OF BUENA VISTA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
1995 - 2015

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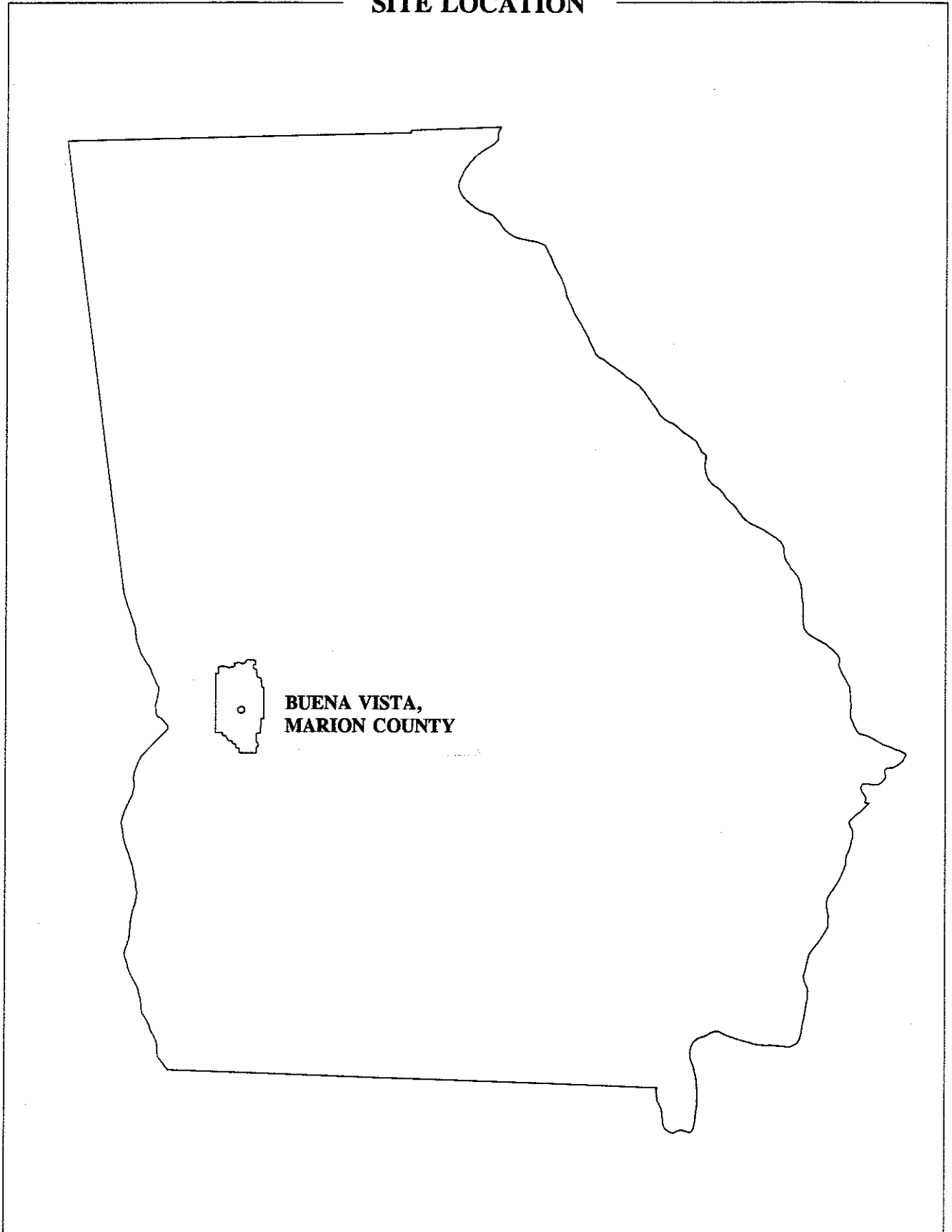
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Assisted by
Middle Flint Regional Development Center
228 West Lamar Street, Americus Georgia

SITE LOCATION



**BUENA VISTA,
MARION COUNTY**

INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The joint Marion County ~ City of Buena Vista Comprehensive Plan was prepared for use by elected officials as a management tool to control and guide growth and development through the year 2015. The Plan represents local participation in and contribution to the coordinated planning process as set forth by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. By meeting the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures established as part of said law, the Comprehensive Plan establishes a framework from which the city and county can work when planning for the provision of public facilities and services. In addition, the Plan will serve as the basis for local government decision-making regarding housing, economic development, environmental protection, and future land use patterns.

PLANNING PROCESS

The Comprehensive Plan was prepared using the planning process required by the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures. The process is summarized as follows:

1. **Inventory and Assessment:** Background information on population, housing, community facilities and services, economic development, natural and historic resources, and land use was collected and organized. An assessment of each of these elements was performed to determine resource adequacy in light of projected population changes and anticipated future development patterns.
2. **Findings and Goals:** Based upon the inventory and assessment needs were identified and goals were developed to meet these needs, and to document future aspirations of the resident population.
3. **Implementation:** This consists of a Five Year Work Plan which identifies the various projects and programs to be undertaken and/or completed by 1999/2000 to meet identified needs.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In accordance with the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures, one public hearing was held prior to preparation of this plan, and after numerous work sessions a second public hearing was held to receive public input on the "draft" document. Subsequent to the second hearing, the Marion County Board of Commissioners and the Buena Vista City Council authorized submission of the draft Plan to the Middle Flint Regional Development Center for review in accordance with the Georgia Planning Act.

BRIEF HISTORY

Marion County was created by act of the Georgia General Assembly on December 14, 1827. Named for General Francis Marion of South Carolina, the county was formed from lands previously part of Muscogee and Lee Counties. Subsequently, portions of Marion's original territory were used by the General Assembly to create or enlarge adjoining counties.

Most early settlers chose homesites near large creeks where the soil was especially fertile. The lands lying along Shoal, Buck, Uchee, Kinchafoonee, Muckalee, and Lannahassee Creeks were rapidly taken. Cotton gins, grist mills and saw mills were constructed on these creeks which furnished power for running the machinery. According to the census report of 1830, Marion County had a resident population of 1,436.

Horry, approximately seven miles northeast of Tazewell, was Marion's first county seat. Residents in the lower part of the county found it very inconvenient to make the long trip to Horry, especially in winter when the roads were in bad condition. In the spring of 1838 the electorate voted to relocate the county seat to Tazewell where a new courthouse and jail were erected in 1839. Tazewell's original courthouse was destroyed by fire in 1845, and was replaced by a new one in 1848.

In December, 1847, the General Assembly extended the county south by adding lands previously part of Stewart County. With additional electorate now further south voters decided the following spring to again relocate the seat of county government.

Pea Ridge was selected as a desirable site for the county seat. This was approximately one mile from the ancient site of King's Town, home of one of the Uchee chiefs. This Indian village was situated on the "Uchee Trail", a great thoroughfare between the Indian towns of Alabama and trading posts at Savannah where the native american's bartered for English goods.

Although the location was acceptable, the name "Pea Ridge" was not. At that time Zachary Taylor was a popular general in the Mexican War. The name "Taylor" was suggested, but there was already one Taylor in Georgia. News of Taylor's victory over Santa Ana at Buena Vista reached local residents. A local writer penned an article describing the beautiful scenery around Pea Ridge, calling it Buena Vista, "beautiful view". Locals immediately adopted this as the name of the new county seat.

In January, 1849, D. N. Burkhalter donated to the county one hundred acres where Buena Vista now stands. In March, a site for the new courthouse was selected, and by the spring of 1850 the courthouse which today graces Buena Vista's central square was complete.

On January 26, 1850, Buena Vista was granted a charter and the town was incorporated. On February 17, 1854, the city charter was amended and the corporate limits extended. According to the census report of 1850, the county had a population of 10,280.

**ENACTING RESOLUTION
MARION COUNTY ~ CITY OF BUENA VISTA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1995 - 2015**

WHEREAS, the Georgia General Assembly did enact the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 to provide a framework to facilitate and encourage coordinated, comprehensive planning and development at the local, regional and state levels of government, and

WHEREAS, Marion County, and the City of Buena Vista have prepared a joint comprehensive plan for the period 1995 - 2015 for use as a management tool in guiding planned growth and development within their respective political jurisdiction, and

WHEREAS, the Middle Flint Regional Development Center, regional review agency, has determined that said Plan is not in conflict with the comprehensive plans of nearby communities, and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, state review agency, has determined that said Plan is in full compliance with provisions of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, as amended,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the duly elected and qualified Board of Commissioners of Marion County, and the City Council of Buena Vista, Georgia, hereby adopt the Marion County ~ City of Buena Vista Comprehensive Plan 1995 -2015 in joint session this 19th day of September, 1995.

MARION COUNTY

CITY OF BUENA VISTA

Billy Mack Powell, Chairman

Floyd Story, Jr., Mayor

Christine Davis, County Clerk

Deborah Faulk, City Clerk

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POPULATION

An understanding of a community's past, present, and probable future population characteristics serves as the basis of any comprehensive planning effort. The following section provides an overview of the county's various demographic characteristics.

It is important for the interested reader to understand that some of the numbers presented in the following tables are projections, not predictions, of future populations. Far too many variables affect mankind and community development for one to consider population projections as prophecy. This is especially true in small, sparsely developed areas for which some demographers will not make projections because accuracy is so elusive. Additionally, the further into the future one projects, the greater the margin of error is likely to be.

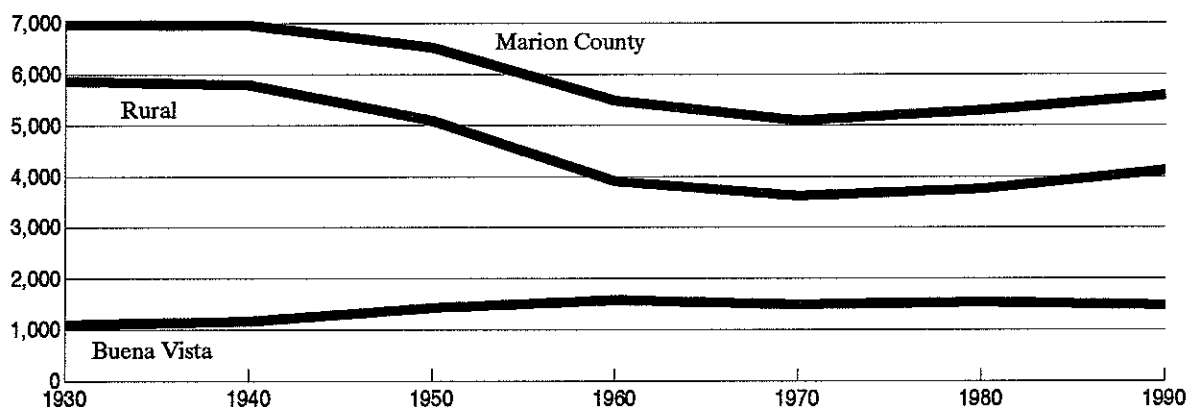
Generally, the best tools for projecting the future are trends of the past. Since we do not presently know the nature and extent to which variables will affect future residents and local development, it is assumed that future developments will build upon those of the past and that the resulting impacts will, likewise, be proportional to those of the past.

POPULATION

Over the course of the forty-year period 1930 - 1970, Marion County's population decreased by 27%. Although the rate of decline varied each decade, overall it was equivalent to the loss of 47 persons each year. With the minor exception of the decrease of 88 city residents (-5.6%) between 1960 and 1970, Marion County's loss is attributed to the rural¹ area which recorded a 38% decline (-2258). Population loss in the rural area was inconsistent between decades also, averaging the loss of 56 residents each year. In 1930 the rural population accounted for 84% of the county total; by 1970, 71% of the county population resided in the rural area.

The county's population loss was part of the statewide, economically induced migration from rural to urban communities. Buena Vista's position as the only incorporated area in the county, and the seat of county government helped shelter it from the severe out-migration. Over the same forty-year period Buena Vista's population increased 35%.

FIGURE 1



Source: U.S. Census

The small increase (+58) Buena Vista recorded during the 1970s was negated by the loss of a slightly larger (-72) number of residents the following decade (Table 1). The 1980s was a period of instability for the city. Although the local poultry processor continued to expand, a thriving, locally-owned, furniture manufacturer (and major employer) was sold to an out-of-state corporation and subsequently closed, the hospital closed (in 1991), and Buena Vista experienced a wholesale turnover in political leadership. These and other economic changes have since been weathered. Spill-over from the Columbus/Muscogee County Metropolitan Statistical Area accounted for the majority of rural population growth, especially during the 1980s. This was the source of the 9.6% population increase credited to Marion County between 1970 and 1990, and which continued into the early 1990s.

¹ Throughout this document the term "rural" is in reference to unincorporated Marion County.

The state's rate of population increase has, in recent decades, been among the highest in the nation. The majority of this growth is attributable to economic expansion in the Atlanta Metropolitan Statistical Area.

TABLE 1

**TOTAL POPULATION
1970 - 1990**

	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	% Change 1970-1990
Marion	5,099	5,198	5,297	5,444	5,590	9.6%
Buena Vista	1,486	1,515	1,544	1,508	1,472	-0.9%
Rural	3,613	3,683	3,753	3,936	4,118	14%
Georgia	4,589,575	5,026,340	5,463,105	5,970,105	6,478,216	41.2%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1970, 1980, 1990.

Mid-census data are straight-line estimates of Middle Flint RDC.

As the graph on the preceding page reveals, the number of city residents was relatively static during the period 1970 - 1990. The rural area increased by 14% during this period; 16% in the northern half and 10% in the southern half (see map graphic on page 12). As previously stated, this rural population increase was fueled predominantly by in-migration.

The 1970 Census should represent the low ebb of the community's population through the current planning horizon (Table 2). Recent and anticipated economic developments should, at a minimum, help preserve the population base. In fact, the community is in position to experience additional economic growth, and spill-over from Columbus/Muscogee County should generate population growth in the county's northwest quadrant for several years. The state is also projected to maintain a very strong growth rate.

Attempting to accurately project the future population of Marion County and Buena Vista is the most difficult task in this planning effort. After losing population for four consecutive decades the county started recording small increases in the 1970s (+198), predominantly in the rural area. In the early 90s it became apparent that the northwest quadrant of the county was experiencing significant in-migration from the west. Long-time residents were not surprised when the Georgia Office of Planning and Budget prepared estimates of population for July 1, 1994, indicating that since the 1990 Census Marion County had recorded a higher percentage of growth than the state (10.26% v. 8.9%). Neither were locals surprised when first year building permits issued for the rural area (May 1, 1994 - April 27, 1995) suggested a population increase which greatly exceeded the four year average (1990 - 1994) estimated by the state. Local leaders interpret this to be the beginning of a long term cycle fueled by urban development pressures to the west, and have no doubt that the county's twenty-five year rate of population increase will exceed the state rate. So, the projected state growth rate (37.5% for the period

1990 - 2015) is considered to be the minimum rate of local increase.

There are numerous facts which support this contention: Marion County is a reasonable commuting distance for many who would prefer to relocate out of urban congestion into a rural setting, yet maintain their present employment; the community has a highly rated elementary school; a new industrial park is available with excess water and sewage treatment capacity; current development of a rural water system, etc. In absence of a reliable mathematical formula which can properly account for all relevant facts and variables, the community has applied the ratio of state estimated county and state growth rates for the period 1990-1994 to population projections for the period 1990-2015. This yields a community-wide population increase of 43% over the 1990 Census. For purposes of presentation in Table 2, a straight-line, constant increase is applied throughout the period.

TABLE 2
POPULATION PROJECTIONS
1990 - 2015

	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	% Change 1990-2015
Marion	6073	6556	7040	7523	8006	43.2%
Buena Vista	1672	1872	1950	2000	2100	42.7%
Rural	4401	4684	5090	5523	5906	43.4%
Georgia	7,061,570	7,523,788	8,025,363	8,470,216	8,907,732	37.5%

Source: Local Projections by City, County, and Middle Flint RDC.
State Projections by Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.

Presented in Table 3 are annual, straight-line estimates and projections of local populations.

TABLE 3
POPULATION
1990 - 2000

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Marion	5,590	5,687	5,783	5,880	5,976	6,073	6,170	6,266	6,363	6,459	6,556
Buena Vista	1,472	1,512	1,552	1,593	1,632	1,672	1,712	1,752	1,792	1,832	1,872
Rural	4,118	4,175	4,231	4,288	4,344	4,401	4,458	4,514	4,571	4,627	4,684

Sources: Marion and Buena Vista 1990 from U.S. Census. Rural data is balance of county totals.
Estimates and Projections by Middle Flint RDC

Past and future populations are presented by age groups in the following three tables. Age distribution is important to a community because specific needs are associated with different age groups. Generally, the younger and older sub-groups have a greater dependence on specialized community services and facilities, which range from schools and parks to transportation and health care. For planning purposes it is important to determine if specific population needs are being met, and if improvements are warranted. For example, if a significant percentage of a community's citizens are age 55 or older, plans for expanded activities and/or services for older adults may be in order.

Based on the age groupings presented in the following tables, Georgia and the U.S. had very similar age distributions in 1990. The two greatest differences were a 1.3 percentile spread in the 15 - 24 age group (Georgia higher), and a 2.5 percentile spread in the 65+ age group. The state recorded a 10.1% distribution in this latter age group, while nationwide the percentage was documented at 12.6%. Since these two larger jurisdictions have such similar age distributions, state data will be used as the reference for local jurisdictions.

The 1990 Census also credited Marion County and the state with similar distributions. The county was credited with distributions in the 25-34 and 35-44 age groups (both working age populations) which were two percentiles lower than recorded state levels, but a distribution three percentiles higher than the state in the number of elderly residents (65 years of age or older).

County projections suggest significant shifts in age distribution by the year 2015. The two youngest age groups are each projected to increase by two percentiles from 1990 levels. The bulk of the working age population would record major proportional losses, although the number of residents in these age groups would increase by almost 400. The 15 - 24 age group is projected to decrease by one percentile; the 25 - 34 age group down six percentiles; and the 35 - 44 age group down two percentiles. This suggests that as the county population increases, local employers may continue to rely heavily on in-commuters for workers. The 55 - 64 age group will reportedly increase by four percentiles.

TABLE 4
MARION COUNTY POPULATION BY AGE
1970 - 2015

AGE GROUPS	1970		1975		1980		1985		1990	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
0-4	481	9	430	8	378	7	404	7	429	7
5-14	1,224	24	1,116	21	1,009	19	956	18	902	16
15-24	898	18	949	18	1,000	19	907	17	817	15
25-34	531	11	624	12	717	14	813	15	910	16
35-44	425	8	509	10	593	11	694	13	795	14
45-54	525	10	484	9	443	8	520	10	596	11
55-64	514	10	510	10	505	10	464	9	422	8
65+	501	10	576	11	652	12	684	13	719	13
TOTAL	5,099	100	5,198	99	5,297	100	5,444	100	5,590	100

AGE GROUPS	1995		2000		2005		2010		2015	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
0-4	668	11	656	10	704	10	677	9	721	9
5-14	1,093	18	1,246	19	1,266	18	1,354	18	1,441	18
15-24	790	13	852	13	986	14	1,053	14	1,121	14
25-34	729	12	720	11	634	9	677	9	801	10
35-44	1,093	18	1,115	17	1,056	15	978	13	961	12
45-54	668	11	852	13	1,056	15	1,128	15	1,041	13
55-64	364	6	459	7	634	9	828	11	960	12
65+	668	11	656	10	704	10	828	11	960	12
TOTAL	6,073	100	6,556	100	7,040	100	7,523	100	8,006	100

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1970, 1980, and 1990
1975 and 1985 straight-line estimates by Middle Flint RDC
Percentage distributions by Woods and Poole Economics, Inc., with minor adjustments to projections by Middle Flint RDC
Some percentages do not total 100 due to separate rounding.

TABLE 5
RURAL MARION COUNTY POPULATION BY AGE
1970 - 2015

AGE GROUPS	1970		1975		1980		1985		1990	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
0-4	367	10	313	8	259	7	282	7	304	7
5-14	888	25	818	22	748	20	702	18	655	16
15-24	625	17	659	18	694	18	657	17	617	15
25-34	404	11	478	13	553	15	610	15	674	16
35-44	298	8	381	10	463	12	548	14	633	15
45-54	366	10	335	9	305	8	392	10	488	12
55-64	349	10	350	10	349	9	334	8	310	8
65+	316	9	349	10	382	10	411	10	437	11
TOTAL	3,613	100	3,683	100	3,753	99	3,936	99	4,118	100

AGE GROUPS	1995		2000		2005		2010		2015	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
0-4	440	10	468	10	509	10	497	9	531	9
5-14	836	19	890	19	967	19	994	18	1,063	18
15-24	572	13	609	13	713	14	828	15	827	14
25-34	528	12	515	11	509	10	552	10	590	10
35-44	792	18	843	18	764	15	774	14	768	13
45-54	529	12	656	14	763	15	828	15	827	14
55-64	308	7	328	7	458	9	608	11	709	12
65+	396	9	375	8	407	8	442	8	591	10
TOTAL	4,401	100	4,684	100	5,090	100	5,523	100	5,906	100

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1970, 1980, and 1990
1975 and 1985 straight-line estimates by Middle Flint RDC
Compiled by Middle Flint RDC from city and county census totals.
Some percentages do not total 100 due to separate rounding.

Marion County's rural age group distributions were also similar to statewide proportions in 1990. This projection shows older workers (35-54) accounting for the bulk of the increase among the working age population. The 55-64 age group shows a strong increase as do the two children's age groups.

TABLE 6
BUENA VISTA POPULATION BY AGE
1970 - 2015

AGE GROUPS	1970		1975		1980		1985		1990	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
0-4	114	8	117	8	119	8	122	8	125	8
5-14	336	23	298	20	261	17	254	17	247	17
15-24	273	18	290	19	306	20	250	17	200	14
25-34	127	9	146	10	164	11	203	13	236	16
35-44	127	9	128	8	130	8	146	10	162	11
45-54	159	11	149	10	138	9	128	8	108	7
55-64	165	11	160	11	156	10	130	9	112	8
65+	185	12	227	15	270	17	275	18	282	19
TOTAL	1,486	101	1,515	101	1,544	100	1,508	100	1,472	100
AGE GROUPS	1995		2000		2005		2010		2015	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
0-4	184	11	187	10	195	10	200	10	189	9
5-14	301	18	337	18	351	18	340	17	357	17
15-24	217	13	243	13	273	14	280	14	294	14
25-34	167	10	150	8	156	8	160	8	168	8
35-44	268	16	300	16	254	13	240	12	231	11
45-54	167	10	243	13	273	14	280	14	273	13
55-64	117	7	150	8	175	9	220	11	252	12
65+	251	15	262	14	273	14	280	14	336	16
Total	1,672	100	1,872	100	1,950	100	2,000	100	2,100	100

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1970, 1980, and 1990
1975 and 1985 straight-line estimates by Middle Flint RDC
Percentages distributions by Woods and Poole Economics, Inc., with minor adjustments to projections by Middle Flint RDC.
Some percentages do not total 100 due to separate rounding.

A disproportionately high elderly population gave Buena Vista an age group distribution quite dissimilar from the state. In 1970, the city had an elderly distribution 4.4 percentiles higher than Georgia; in 1980, eight percentiles higher; and in 1990, nine percentiles higher. Such high percentiles must be counter-balanced by lower distributions in other age groups. The proportion of residents in the 35 - 44 age group was five percentiles lower than the state level, and the city's 45 - 54 age group was three percentiles lower (1990 Census).

The increase in the number of elderly residents between 1970 and 1980 (85) was 47% more than the city's net population increase (58) during the same period, and the elderly was one of only four age groups to increase between 1980 and 1990. The city expects to maintain an elderly population which is disproportionately higher than the state.

The preceding age group projections were prepared by demographers on the basis of purely statistical methodologies and without benefit of knowledge of trends and developments taking place after the 1990 Census. There are several developments, some already underway, others anticipated, which will have significant impact on future age group distributions.

As of this writing Cargill has increased employment at the local poultry processing facility by several hundred since purchasing Dent Poultry in 1980. Since the 1990 Census Cargill has increased production and employment at the local facility, and has plans of additional increases. This is expected to keep the working age population from being as disproportionately low as the accompanying projections suggest, or as has already been stated, local employers will be dependent on in-commuters for future labor force increases.

Another recent development is the opening of an 80 acre industrial park on the city's east side. With ample water and wastewater treatment capacities, the community is now in position to accommodate the utility service needs of several additional industries. Some industrial spillover from Columbus/Muscogee County is expected. The metropolitan community is beginning to experience environmental and land use pressures, effectively constraining its future industrial expansion capabilities. Some industrial growth is already occurring north of Columbus/Muscogee; in the near future some is expected to come to Buena Vista/Marion County.

The Fall Line Freeway, currently under construction, is expected to become a major transportation corridor connecting Columbus and Augusta. This will make northern Marion County even more accessible to residential and industrial spillover development from Columbus, even though no portion of the highway will be physically located in the county. It is believed that collectively these developments will keep local age group distributions similar to state projections.

Between 1970 and 1990 Marion County recorded significant losses in the number of residents below the local median age, and with one exception, the 55 - 64 age group, significant population increases in residents older than the median. When factored together these trends resulted in a faster rate of increase in local median age than was recorded statewide. At the beginning of the twenty-year period (Table 7), Marion County's median age was 1.7 years lower than the state's; by 1990 the county was credited with a median age one-half year above the state median.

TABLE 7
MEDIAN AGE
1970-1990

	1970	1980	1990	Change 1970-1990	% Change 1970-1990
Marion	24.2	28.4	32.1	7.9 Years	33%
Buena Vista	N/A	30.0	31.5	N/A	N/A
Georgia	25.9	28.6	31.6	5.7 Years	22%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

The male-female population ratios in the local and state populations changed very little between 1970 and 1990 (Table 8). It is common for municipalities to have a higher proportion of female residents than the surrounding rural areas. The Marion Memorial Nursing Home contributes in some small way to Buena Vista's high percentage. The trends are expected to continue.

TABLE 8
POPULATION BY SEX
1970 - 2015

	1970		1980		1990		2000		2010		2015	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Marion	48%	52%	48%	52%	48%	52%	48%	52%	48%	52%	48%	52%
Buena Vista	45%	55%	45%	55%	44%	56%	44%	56%	44%	56%	44%	56%
Rural	49%	51%	49%	51%	48%	52%	48%	52%	48%	52%	48%	52%
Georgia	49%	51%	48%	52%	49%	51%	49%	51%	48%	52%	48%	52%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Local projections by Middle Flint RDC.

State projections by Woods and Poole Economics, Inc., 1992

Between 1970 and 1990 Marion County recorded a divergence in racial composition. In 1970, the resident population was roughly half black, half white; by 1990 the proportions were approaching a 40% black, 60% white ratio. This shift was not consistent throughout the county, however.

Over this twenty-year period the city experienced very little change in total population. However, an increase of 55 black residents and 75 fewer white residents resulted in a change in racial composition from 60% black - 40% white, to 65% black - 35% white.

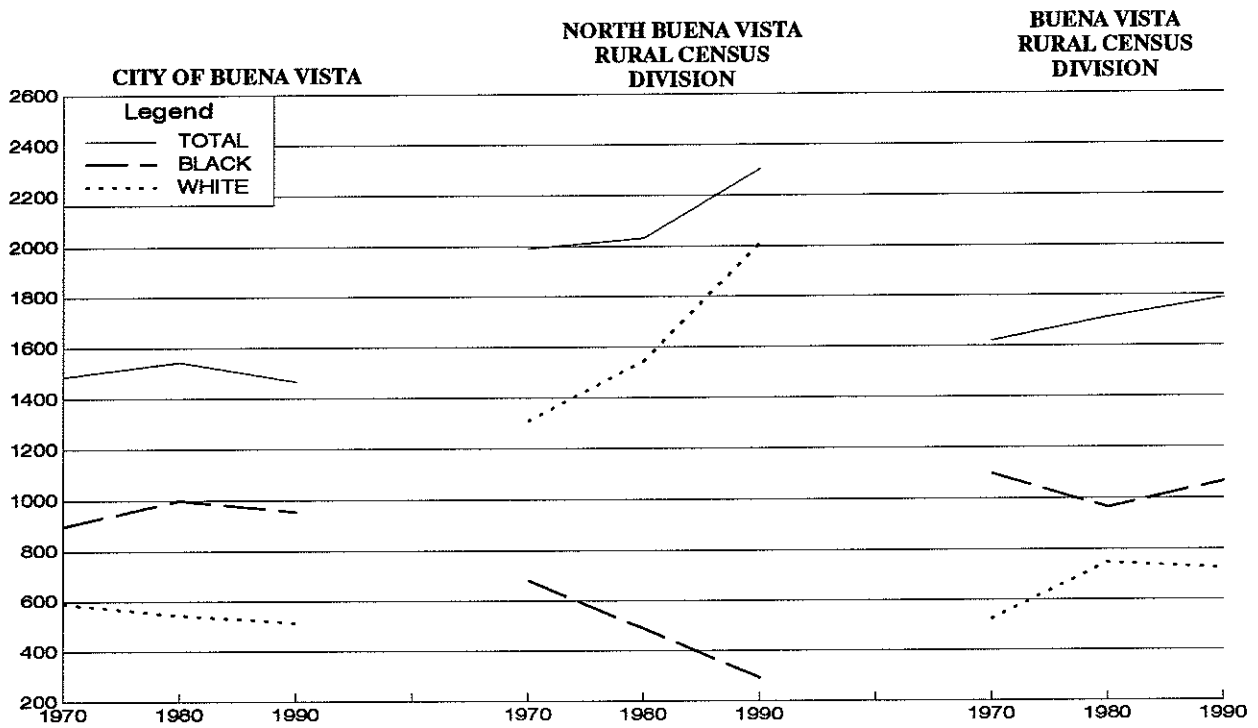
Between 1970 and 1990 the number of black residents in the rural area decreased by 423, while white residents increased by 903. This resulted in an increasingly white, rural proportion; from 51% in 1970, to 67% in 1990. The greatest difference in racial composition is found in the northern half of the county's rural area (North Buena Vista Rural Census Division - see next page), where the white proportion increased from 66% to 87%. The projections presented in Table 9 suggest the continuation of these recent trends in the local population. State projections indicate a gradual increase in the proportion of residents of "other" races, and a decrease in the proportion of white residents.

TABLE 9
POPULATION BY RACE
1970 - 2015

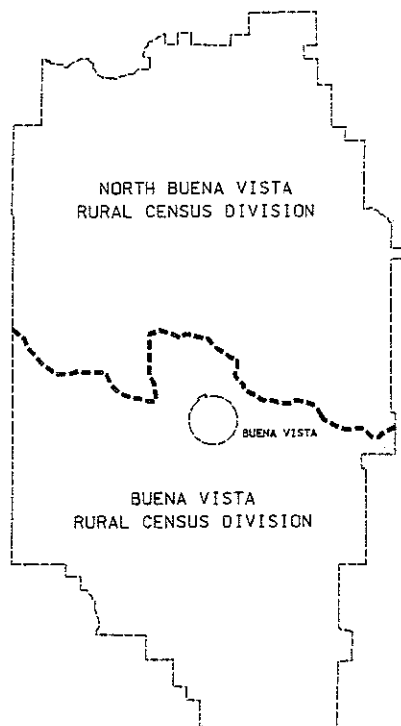
	1970		1975		1980		1985		1990	
	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black
Marion	48%	52%	51%	49%	54%	46%	56%	44%	58%	42%
Buena Vista	40%	60%	38%	62%	35%	65%	35%	65%	35%	65%
Rural	51%	49%	56%	44%	61%	39%	63%	37%	67%	33%
Georgia	74%	26%	73%	27%	72%	27%	72%	27%	71%	27%
	1995		2000		2005		2010		2015	
	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black	White	Black
Marion	61%	39%	62%	38%	66%	34%	68%	32%	68%	32%
Buena Vista	34%	66%	33%	67%	34%	66%	30%	70%	29%	71%
Rural	70%	30%	71%	29%	71%	29%	72%	28%	72%	28%
Georgia	71%	27%	70%	27%	70%	28%	69%	28%	69%	28%

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census; 1970, 1980, 1990
 Local projections by Middle Flint RDC
 State projections by Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.
 "Other" races not included in state data.

FIGURE 2
POPULATION TRENDS BY RACE
1970 - 1990



Source: U.S. Census



The Census Bureau defines household as all the persons who occupy a housing unit as their place of residence. A housing unit is defined as a house, apartment, mobile home, a group of rooms or a single room that is occupied as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupant(s) live and eat separately from any other person(s) in the building, and who have direct access from outside the building or through a common hall. The occupant(s) may be a single family, one person living alone, two or more families living together, or any other group of related or unrelated persons who share living arrangements.

The city, county and state all recorded a decline in average household size between 1970 and 1990. But information gleaned from Table 10 is contradictory to the norm; to wit, lower income households are, on average, larger than higher income households. True, Marion County was credited with a larger household size than the state in 1970 and 1980, but in 1990 the county average was only .1 person higher. Buena Vista, which has a significantly larger proportion of low income households, was credited in 1990 with an average size actually lower than the state. Such apparent "contradictions" raise questions of accuracy of the historic data, and recent crowded housing arrangements of immigrant laborers make it even more difficult to project the number of households and average size. Nevertheless, recent changes in Marion County's average household size have been used here to project average size to the year 2015.

TABLE 10
AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE
1970 - 2015

	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015
Marion	3.6	3.4	3.2	3.0	2.8	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.7	2.7
Buena Vista	N/A	N/A	2.9	3.0	2.6	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.5	2.5
Rural	-	-	3.2	3.0	2.9	3.0	3.0	2.9	2.7	2.8
Georgia	3.3	3.1	2.8	2.7	2.7	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.4	2.4

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1970, 1980, 1990

Local mid-census straight-line estimates and projections by Middle Flint RDC
State data from Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.

The statistical relationships of Buena Vista's historic average household size to those of the county and state have been used to project the city's future average size. The projected resident population (Table 2) was reduced by the percentage of residents who, in 1990, were not residing in households. Throughout Marion County 1.4% of residents, 5% of city residents and none of the rural residents were residing in a nursing home, correctional facility or group quarters. This adjusted population was divided by the appropriate average household size to project total households (Table 11). The number of households is projected to increase and household size is expected to continue to decline, though slower than the projected state rate. Buena Vista's average size will be influenced by the long-term housing arrangements of Cargill's imported labor force.

TABLE 11
TOTAL HOUSEHOLDS
1970 - 2015

	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990	% Change 1970-1990
Marion	1,410	1,539	1,667	1,806	1,962	39%
Buena Vista	N/A	N/A	508	511	534	-
Rural	N/A	N/A	1,159	1,259	1,428	-
Georgia	1,369,225	1,620,895	1,872,564	2,119,570	2,366,575	73%
	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	% Change 1990-2015
Marion	2065	2,229	2,479	2,747	2,924	49%
Buena Vista	588	659	712	760	798	49%
Rural	1,467	1,561	1,755	2,045	2,109	48%
Georgia	2,638,284	2,860,830	3,144,139	3,466,522	3,817,466	61%

Sources: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1970, 1980, 1990
Local mid-census straight-line estimates and projections by Middle Flint RDC
State data from Woods and Poole Economics, Inc.

Educational attainment is compiled for persons 25 years of age or older (Table 12). In 1980, almost two thirds of the county population had not completed twelve years of formal classroom instruction, compared to 44% statewide. (It is worth noting that at the time many older residents were of school age, high school did not go beyond the eleventh grade.) The proportion of state residents with at least four years of college education was more than twice (15% v 6%) the county level. Buena Vista recorded the largest local percentage of college educated residents.

TABLE 12
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT
1980

YEARS COMPLETED	MARION	BUENA VISTA	RURAL	GEORGIA
Elementary School 0-8	38%	45%	36%	24%
High School 1-3	26%	21%	28%	20%
High School 4	23%	18%	25%	28%
College 1-3	7%	5%	8%	13%
College 4+	6%	11%	4%	15%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

At the time of the 1990 Census the proportion of county residents lacking a high school diploma (or GED) had "improved" to 45%; statewide, 29% lacked a diploma. Although the census documented higher levels of college attendance for local jurisdictions, the proportions with college degrees reportedly declined from 1980 levels.

TABLE 13
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT
1990

YEARS COMPLETED	MARION	BUENA VISTA	RURAL	RDC	GEORGIA
Less than 9th Grade	21%	25%	20%	20%	12%
9th-12th, no diploma	24%	23%	25%	23%	17%
High School Graduate	36%	32%	37%	31%	30%
Some College, no degree	9%	10%	9%	12%	17%
Associate Degree	5%	2%	6%	3%	5%
Bachelor's Degree	3%	5%	2%	7%	13%
Graduate or Professional Degree	2%	3%	1%	4%	6%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

According to information provided by Tri-County High School and state data compiled by the Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism, the local high school dropout rate is, on average, almost two percentiles lower than the rate statewide (Table 14). Between 1992 and 1993 the local rate reportedly increased by 1.4 percentiles, and the state rate increased by 1 percentile; representing an increase of nine students in the local system and five thousand students statewide.

While dropout data may be of some value for purposes of comparison, the raw statistics can be misleading because the numbers include not only those who quit attending school, but those who transfer to other systems as well. Since the local system does not track "dropouts" who transfer to other schools, it is not known how many prematurely terminate participation in the public education system.

TABLE 14
HIGH SCHOOL DROPOUTS
1991 - 1993

YEAR ENDING	TRI-COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL			GA.
	Enrollment	Dropout	%	%
1991	763	24	3.1	5.3
1992	751	27	3.6	5.5
1993	725	36	5.0	6.5
Average	746	29	3.9	-

Source: Tri-County School System
Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism

Data presented in Table 15 reveal the different career choices made by Tri-County (local high school) Alumni within their first year of graduation. Recent graduates have opted in roughly equal proportions to continue their formal education in college, or in vocational/technical school, or not continue their formal education. This latter category is somewhat misleading because it includes those who joined the military and did receive technical training. The number who volunteer for military service is; however, a small proportion of the sub-category total. The data also show local graduates more inclined to pursue vocational/technical education while graduates statewide are more inclined to pursue a college education. It is worth noting that the local high school has a vocationally oriented curriculum.

TABLE 15
CONTINUING EDUCATION
1990 - 1992

GRADUATING CLASS	GRADUATES	COLLEGE	VOCATIONAL/ TECHNICAL	NOT CONTINUING ¹
1990	113	42%	30%	27%
1991	138	30%	25%	45%
1992	114	35%	32%	33%
3 Year Average	122	36%	29%	35%
1991 - Georgia	56,605	52%	14%	34%

Source: Tri-County High School
Georgia Department of Education

Table 16 reveals major swings in local students' standard test scores. The Criterion - Referenced Test Scores of Marion County third graders, averaged for the years 1989, 1990 and 1991, were thirteen points higher in math and fifteen points higher in reading than the state averages. Local sixth graders' test results exceeded state averages by ten points in math and six points in reading. By the eighth grade local scores trailed the state average by three points in math and five points in reading.

Local test scores are not as favorable in the more recent (1992 and 1993) Curriculum - Based Assessment (CBA) Tests. The brightest local performance was the four point higher reading score average recorded by third graders. In all other scores local students scored equal to or lower than students statewide; by the eighth grade seven and eight points lower.

TABLE 16
STANDARD TEST SCORES
1989 - 1993

TEST AREA	CRITERION - REFERENCED TESTS (CRT)*					
	3RD GRADE		6TH GRADE		8TH GRADE	
	COUNTY	STATE	COUNTY	STATE	COUNTY	STATE
MATH	225.61	212.33	216.77	206.27	211.65	214.72
READING	230.62	215.74	213.43	207.77	205.09	210.12
TEST AREA	CURRICULUM-BASED ASSESSMENT TESTS (CBA)**					
	3RD GRADE		5TH GRADE		8TH GRADE	
	COUNTY	STATE	COUNTY	STATE	COUNTY	STATE
MATH	181	181.5	171.5	176.5	177.5	184
READING	182.5	178.5	191.5	191.5	174	182.5

*Averaged scores for school years ended 1989, 1990 and 1991. Criterion - Referenced Tests measure students' performances on Georgia rated education scales. For grades 3, 6 and 8 the score scale ranges from 100 - 300 with 200 the minimum passing score.

** Averaged scores for school years ended 1992 and 1993. Curriculum - Based Assessment tests measure students' performances on Georgia's Quality Core Curriculum. For grades 3, 5 and 8 the score scale ranges from 100 - 225 with an adequate to quality performance score ranging from 162 - 192.

Source: Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism.

In case the poor performance recorded by local students relative to state scores on the CBA was the result of a delay in the local school system's conformance with the state mandated core curriculum, performance on a third standardized test were compared. Data in Table 17 show how students performed on a national standardized test. Reading and math scores were combined in tests administered during school years which ended in 1989 - 1991. The grade

equivalents and grade percentiles for the three years were averaged for presentation here. Likewise, for the two years in which results were released separately by test area (1992 and 1993), grade equivalents and percentiles were averaged for ease of presentation in Table 17.

The results are similar to data presented in the preceding Table. Marion County students consistently out-performed students statewide through grade 4. At the fifth and seventh grade levels local and state averages are similar. By the eighth grade some significant differences in test results are evident with neither jurisdiction out-performing the other overall. It was not until the ninth grade (with three years of data averaged) that local performance fell below the fiftieth percentile.

On the Criterion - Referenced Test, a state standardized exam, and the Norm-Referenced Test, a national standardized exam, Marion County students fare very well relative to students elsewhere as they begin their formal education. Local performance gradually declines; however, as students enter the middle grades. For the two years for which data is available (1992 - 1993), local students have not performed well on the state mandated core curriculum. It is important to note that the Marion County Elementary School system goes through the first seven grades. Marion County is the host community of Tri-County High School (grades 8 - 12), which also serves Schley and Webster Counties.

TABLE 17
NORM-REFERENCED TEST SCORE AVERAGES
1989 - 1993

GRADE	GRADE EQUIVALENT						GRADE PERCENTILE					
	Mar.	Ga.	Mar.	Ga.	Mar.	Ga.	Mar.	Ga.	Mar.	Ga.	Mar.	Ga.
2					3.5	3.2					81	69
3	4.1	3.7	4.3	3.8			61	52	70	55		
4					5.3	4.9					69	59
5	5.9	6.0	5.8	5.9			56	57	56	58		
7					8.2	8.0					63	58
8	8.8	9.0	9.4	8.8			51	54	56	54		
9					10.1	10.7					49	55
11	12.2	11.2	10.6	12.1		55	45	42	54			

Source: Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism, Marketing and Research Division.

Norm - referenced tests measure the level at which students are performing in comparison to national averages. Grade equivalent scores indicate the grade level at which students in a system are performing compared to the national Norm; Percentile scores rank students in comparison to all the students in the nationally averaged grade groups.

Table 18 reveals significant jurisdictional differences in household income distributions. In 1990, one-fourth of households in the City of Buena Vista had an income of less than \$5,000. For a household of 3.5 persons (Buena Vista's average household size in 1990 was 2.6, but poor households characteristically have more members) at the \$5,000 income level, there is approximately \$3.90 per person with which to provide daily necessities; food, shelter, clothing, transportation, medication, etc. Only 11% of the rural households were living at this lowest income level. Almost half (45%) of city households had incomes of less than \$10,000. One-third of households countywide were in this income range, and 17% statewide.

TABLE 18
HOUSEHOLD INCOME DISTRIBUTION
1990

INCOME	MARION		BUENA VISTA		RURAL		GEORGIA
Less than \$5,000	293	15%	135	26%	158	11%	8%
\$5,000 - \$9,999	330	17%	100	19%	230	16%	9%
\$10,000 - \$14,999	198	10%	58	11%	140	10	9%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	401	21%	79	15%	322	23	18%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	290	15%	66	13%	224	16	16%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	239	12%	37	7%	202	14	18%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	110	6%	36	7%	74	5	14%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	45	2%	7	1%	38	3	5%
\$100,000 or more	39	2%	4	1%	35	2	4%

Source: U.S. Census

Rural data was computed by Middle Flint RDC from city and county statistics.

Median family income and per capita income are presented in Table 19. The U.S. Bureau of the Census defines these income measures as follows:

MEDIAN INCOME: The point in any income range which divides the distribution into two equal groups, one having incomes above the median and the other having incomes below the median.

PER CAPITA INCOME: The mean (or average) income computed for every man, woman, and child in a particular group. It is derived by dividing the total personal income of a particular group by the total population in that group.

Of these two, per capita income is commonly considered the better indicator of a community's economic health.

In comparison with state data, Marion County's per capita income recorded a significant improvement during the period 1970 - 1990. In 1970, the county's per capita income was equivalent to 62% of the state per capita income. Twenty years later, and after a 493% increase, the county's per capita income was 72% of the documented state level. All of this relative improvement occurred during the 1980s; the 1980 income was 61% of the recorded state income. Thirty-seven percent of Buena Vista residents, 28% of residents countywide, 15% of the state population and 13% of the resident U.S. population lived below the 1989 national poverty level of \$12,674.

Between 1980 and 1990 the city's per capita income fell from 58% to 53% of the state level. The statewide increase in per capita income between 1980 and 1990 was 113%.

Marion County recorded a negative performance relative to the state in the increase in median family income (MFI), and Buena Vista lagged the county's performance. At the time of each successive census the county's MFI was equivalent to 72%, 69% and 62% of state MFI. Buena Vista's MFI amounted to 55% and 49% of the county level in 1980 and 1990, respectively. The state increase between 1970 and 1980 was 113%, and 93% between 1980 and 1990.

TABLE 19
INCOME
1970 - 1990

PER CAPITA	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
Marion	\$1,649	\$2,791	\$3,933	\$6,856	\$9,779
Buena Vista	N/A	N/A	\$3,745	\$5,526	\$7,306
Georgia	\$2,649	\$4,525	\$6,402	\$10,017	\$13,631
MEDIAN FAMILY	1970	1975	1980	1985	1990
Marion	5,919	\$8,980	\$12,040	\$16,472	\$20,904
Buena Vista	N/A	N/A	\$9,583	\$12,971	\$16,359
Georgia	\$8,167	\$12,790	\$17,414	\$25,472	\$33,529

Source: U.S. Census; 1970, 1980, 1990

Mid-census straight-line estimates by Middle Flint RDC.

HOUSING

An inventory and assessment of a community's housing stock provides a foundation upon which to base projections of future housing needs. The use of these projections can be used to help ensure an adequate supply of housing for all residents. This section examines the number, type, location and cost of the existing housing stock and provides an assessment of housing conditions and future housing needs.

HOUSING

Marion County recorded a very high degree of consistency in changes in housing during the 1970s and 1980s. The numerical increases and decreases were strikingly similar between decades. Overall vacancy rates were stable, averaging 8.5% and varying by less than one-half percentage point. Statewide, vacancy rates were 7%, 7% and 10% with each successive census. One of the most significant changes documented was in tenure. Homeownership increased as a proportion of occupied housing with each successive census; 62%, 72%, and 79%. Statewide, the relevant percentages were 61%, 65% and 65%. The racial composition of homeowners remained static; one-third black, two-thirds white.

TABLE 1
HOUSING - MARION COUNTY
1970-1990

HOUSING	1970	1980	1990	% Change 1970-1980	% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1970-1990
Total Housing Units	1,531	1,841	2,152*	20%	17%	41%
Occupied	1,402	1,687	1,962	20%	16%	40%
Owner	876	1,217	1,546	39%	27%	76%
White	593	800	1,019	35%	27%	72%
Black	283	414	521	46%	26%	84%
Vacancy Rate-Marion	-	-	9%	-	-	-
Vacancy Rate-Georgia	-	-	2.5%	-	-	-
Renter	526	470	416	-11%	-11%	-21%
White	187	198	201	6%	2%	7%
Black	339	272	212	-20%	-22%	-37%
Vacancy Rate-Marion	-	-	-	-	-	-
Vacancy Rate-Georgia	-	-	6.5%	-	-	-
Vacant	129	154	190	19%	23%	47%
For Rent	44	13	29	-70%	123%	-34%
Single-Family	1,337	1,378	1,269	3%	-8%	-5%
Multi-Family	85	163	150	92%	-8%	76%
Manufactured Housing**	109	300	686	175%	129%	529%
Lacking Complete Plumbing						
Local	46%	18%	7%	-	-	-
State	13%	3%	1%	-	-	-

Source: U.S. Census; 1970, 1980, 1990

* Included 47 "other units not classified as single-family, multi-family or manufactured housing.

** Predominantly mobile homes

Conversely, renter-occupied housing decreased; from 38% of occupied units to 21%. White renter households recorded a minor increase (7%), while black renter households decreased by 37%. Blacks decreased their proportionate share of rental housing from 64% to 51%.

The single most revealing fact gleaned from a review of recent county housing data is the change in housing by type of construction. Single-family and multi-family housing, both of conventional, site-built construction, and manufactured housing, predominantly mobile homes, all increased in numbers during the 1970s. However, the two former housing types decreased in numbers between 1980 and 1990, while growth in manufactured housing doubled. In 1970, manufactured housing accounted for 7% of all housing units. By 1980, the proportion more than doubled to 16%. By 1990 this proportion again doubled, to 32%. These percentage increases took place even as the number of total housing units increased. The number of manufactured units added during the 1980s exceeded the increase in total housing inventory for the decade.

Buena Vista recorded the same numerical increases (+48) in total housing units during the 1970s and 1980s. However, the increase in occupied units during the 1980s was half the recorded increase of the 1970s. The overall vacancy rate fluctuated from 5.8% to 3.6% to 7% with each successive census, for an average rate of 5.5%.

TABLE 2
HOUSING - BUENA VISTA
1970 - 1990

HOUSING	1970	1980	1990	% Change 1970-1980	% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1970-1990
Total Housing Units	479	527	575*	10%	9%	20%
Occupied	451	508	534	13%	5%	18%
Owner	274	384	325	40%	-15%	19%
White	147	212	143	44%	-33%	-3%
Black	127	169	182	33%	8%	43%
Vacancy Rate-Buena Vista	-	-	1.2%	-	-	-
Vacancy Rate-Georgia	-	-	2.5%	-	-	-
Renter	177	124	209	-30%	69%	18%
White	69	0	79	-	-	14%
Black	108	124	128	15%	3%	19%
Vacancy Rate-Buena Vista	-	-	6.7%	-	-	-
Vacancy Rate-Georgia	-	-	12.2%	-	-	-
Vacant	28	19	41	-32%	116%	46%
For Rent	11	3	15	-73%	400%	36%
Single-Family	387	370	331	-4%	-11%	-14%
Multi-Family	63	99	132	57%	33%	110%
Manufactured Housing**	29	58	103	107%	78%	268%
Lacking Complete Plumbing						
City	34%	14%	2%	-	-	-
State	13%	3%	1%	-	-	-

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; 1970, 1980, 1990

* Includes 9 "other" units not classified as single-family or manufactured housing.

** Predominantly mobile homes.

The city recorded significant fluctuations in homeownership, for unexplained reasons. Between 1970 and 1980 owner-occupied housing reportedly increased by 110 units. The following decade a reduction of 59 units was documented. As a proportion of the total housing inventory, owner-occupied units fluctuated significantly with each census from 61% to 76% to 61%.

The ratio of homeownership between races reversed. In 1970, 54% of owners were white, 46% were black. In 1990, the reported percentages were 44% white, 56% black. The racial composition of renter-occupied housing was essentially unchanged, approximately 40% white, 60% black. There is no known explanation for the reported absence of white renters at the time of the 1980 Census; the accuracy of this data is questioned.

The data show a declining reliance on single family housing of conventional construction; from 81% of total units in 1970, to 58% in 1990. Multi-family housing in Buena Vista recorded increases of approximately 35 units both decades, increasing from 13% to 23% of all housing. This proportional increase was exceeded slightly by manufactured housing which accounted for 6% of all units in 1970, and 18% in 1990.

Rural Marion County (Table 3) recorded virtually identical numerical increases in the housing inventory in the 1970s (262) and 1980s (263). All three housing types, single-family, multi-family, and manufactured housing contributed to this increase during the 1970s. However, according to the 1990 Census manufactured housing, predominantly mobile homes, was the only type added to the rural housing inventory during the 1980s. Over the two decades conventionally constructed (site-built), single-family housing decreased in proportionate share of total housing units from 90% to 59%. During this same period manufactured housing increased from 8% of all housing to 37%. This averages an additional 25 manufactured units a year (16 a year during the 1970s, and 34 a year during the 1980s).

Manufactured housing is contributing to increased homeownership in the rural area. In 1970, 63% of occupied housing was owner-occupied; by 1990 this had increased to 86%, twenty percentiles higher than the rate statewide. The local ratio of homeownership by race stayed relatively constant over the two decades; approximately 72% white and 28% black. The ratio among renters is diverging, however. In 1970, 34% of renter households were white; by 1990 this had reportedly increased to 59%; a change fueled primarily by the drastic decrease (-147) in black renter households; from 66% to 41% of rented units.

The rural area accounted for the community's higher vacancy rate. In 1970, 9.5% of total housing units were vacant, in 1980 - 10.3%, and in 1990 - 9.4%. The vacancy rate for the three periods averaged 9.7%. The state average for the three periods was 8.35%.

TABLE 3
HOUSING - RURAL MARION COUNTY
1970 - 1990

HOUSING	1970	1980	1990	% Change 1970-1980	% Change 1980-1990	% Change 1970-1990
Total Housing Units	1,052	1,314	1,577*	25%	20%	50%
Occupied	952	1,179	1,428	24%	21%	50%
Owner	602	833	1,221	38%	47%	103%
White	446	588	876	32%	49%	96%
Black	156	245	339	57%	38%	117%
Renter	349	346	207	-1%	-40%	-41%
White	118	198	122	68%	-38%	3%
Black	231	148	84	-36%	-43%	-64%
Vacant	101	135	149	34%	10%	48%
For Rent	33	10	14	-70%	40%	-58%
Single-Family	950	1,008	938	6%	-7%	-1%
Multi-Family	22	64	18	191%	-72%	-18%
Manufactured Housing**	80	242	583	203%	141%	629%
Lacking Complete Plumbing						
Rural	51%	20%	9%	-	-	-
State	13%	3%	1%	-	-	-

Source: All numbers compiled from U.S. Census data by Middle Flint RDC

* Includes 38 "other" units not classified as single-family or manufactured housing

** Predominantly mobile homes

The absence of complete plumbing facilities in residences is sometimes considered an indicator of housing condition. In 1970, 46% of the county's housing inventory reportedly lacked complete plumbing facilities; statewide, the rate was 13%. By 1980, the county rate had improved to 18%, while the state rate was documented at 3%. In 1990, the rates were 7% and 1%, respectively. Although the community's incorporated and rural areas both recorded major improvement, data in Tables 2 and 3 reveal the rural area has consistently maintained a higher incidence of housing units lacking complete plumbing for the sole use of occupants.

For purposes of this study additional data was collected with which to assess housing conditions. In the spring and summer of 1994, a field survey was performed to determine the number of housing units in Marion County (all-inclusive) and to assess their physical condition. Performed by a two-person team, the survey consisted of a visual evaluation of the exterior condition of each dwelling from public rights-of-way. The following classification system was used:

STANDARD HOUSING - dwelling units that exhibit no deficiencies and require no repair. Housing units in this classification represent well-maintained units. (classified as #1)

DETERIORATED - MINOR DETERIORATION - dwelling units that have several minor deficiencies that are corrected in the course of regular upkeep and maintenance. Deficiencies in this class include: need for exterior repainting; repair of gutters and downspouts; and minor repair work on windows, doors, eaves, and trim. (classified as #2)

DETERIORATED - MAJOR DETERIORATION - dwelling units with deficiencies which, through continued neglect, may lead to total deterioration of the structure. These deficiencies are normally a major expense and require the services of a contractor rather than being done by the homeowner. Deficiencies in this class include: structural deterioration of the roof, foundation, or porch; the repainting of exterior walls over raw wood; and the repair of walls, windows, and doors that are out-of-square due to structural problems. (classified as #3)

DILAPIDATED HOUSING - dwelling units which have a combination of major deficiencies that make the dwelling unsafe and unfit for occupancy. Generally, the cost of repair is too high to make rehabilitation of the structure economically feasible. (classified as #4)

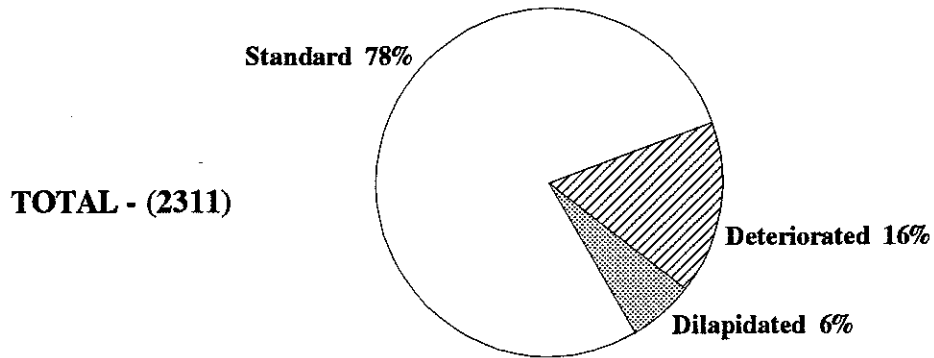
For purposes of presentation in Figures 1 - 3, residences in a state of minor deterioration (#2 classification) are included in the Standard housing percentages. The reader should be aware; however, that a strict interpretation of housing codes would probably include most such structures in the Deteriorated, i.e., Substandard category. A single-table summary follows.

TABLE 4
HOUSING CONDITIONS
1994

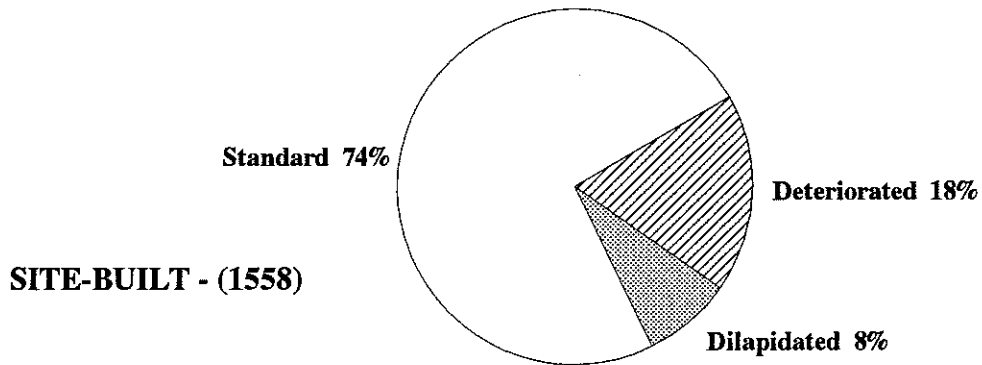
Total Housing Units	#1	#2	#3	#4	Total
Marion	1,338 - 58%	462 - 20%	369 - 16%	142 - 6%	2,311
Buena Vista	303 - 39%	193 - 25%	214 - 27%	70 - 9%	780
Rural	1,035 - 68%	269 - 18%	155 - 10%	72 - 5%	1,531
Site-Built	1	2	3	4	Total
Marion	856 - 55%	302 - 19%	274 - 18%	126 - 8%	1,558
Buena Vista	248 - 42%	131 - 22%	152 - 26%	58 - 10%	589
Rural	608 - 63%	171 - 18%	122 - 13%	68 - 7%	969
Manufactured	1	2	3	4	Total
Marion	482 - 64%	160 - 21%	95 - 13%	16 - 2%	753
Buena Vista	55 - 29%	62 - 32%	62 - 32%	12 - 6%	191
Rural	427 - 76%	98 - 17%	33 - 6%	4 - 1%	562

Source: Middle Flint RDC Windshield Survey Spring-Summer, 1994

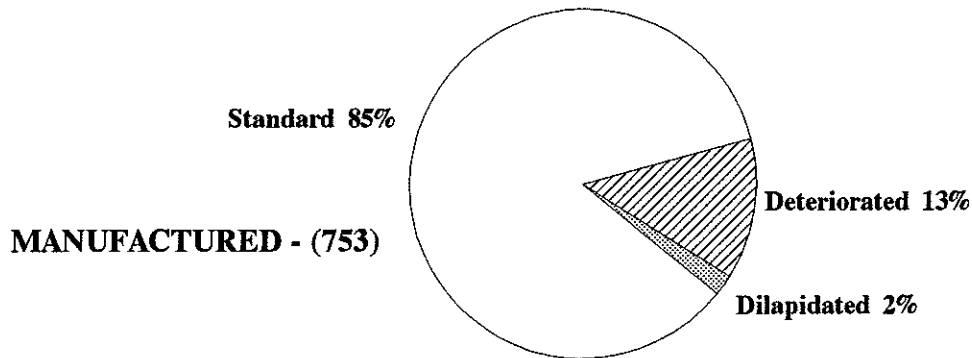
FIGURE 1
MARION COUNTY HOUSING CONDITIONS



Standard - 1338, Minor Deterioration - 462, Major Deterioration - 369, Dilapidated - 142



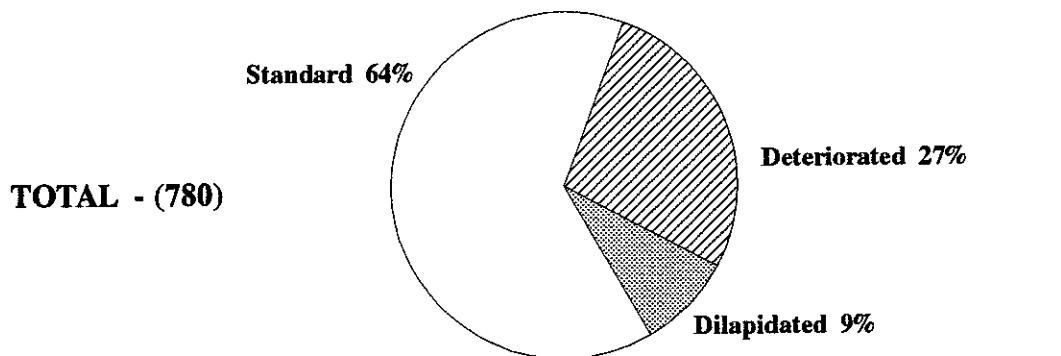
Standard - 856, Minor Deterioration - 302, Major Deterioration - 274, Dilapidated - 126



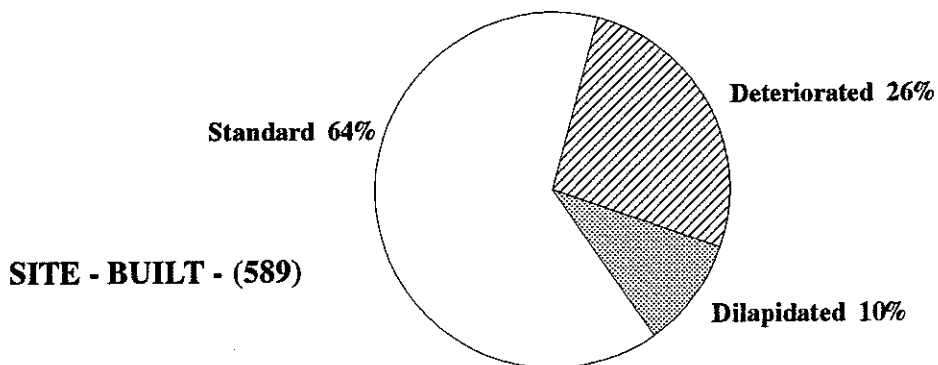
Standard - 482, Minor Deterioration - 160, Major Deterioration - 95, Dilapidated - 16

The preceding narrative is integral to interpretation of this data.
Source: Middle Flint RDC Windshield Survey, Spring - Summer, 1994

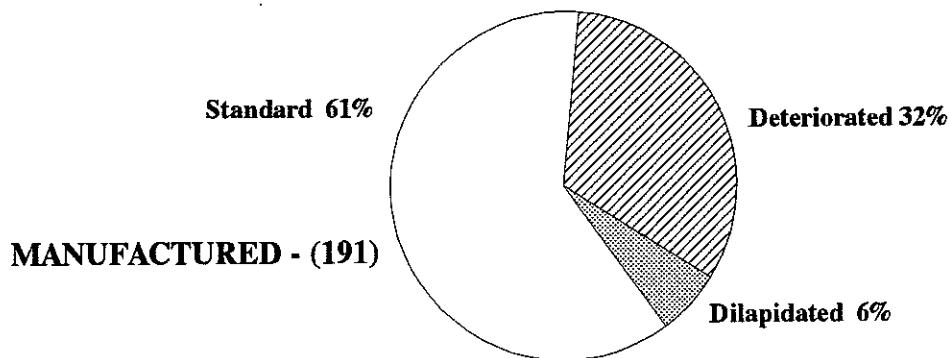
FIGURE 2
BUENA VISTA HOUSING CONDITIONS



Standard - 303, Minor Deterioration - 193, Major Deterioration - 214, Dilapidated - 70



Standard - 248, Minor Deterioration - 131, Major Deterioration - 152, Dilapidated 58

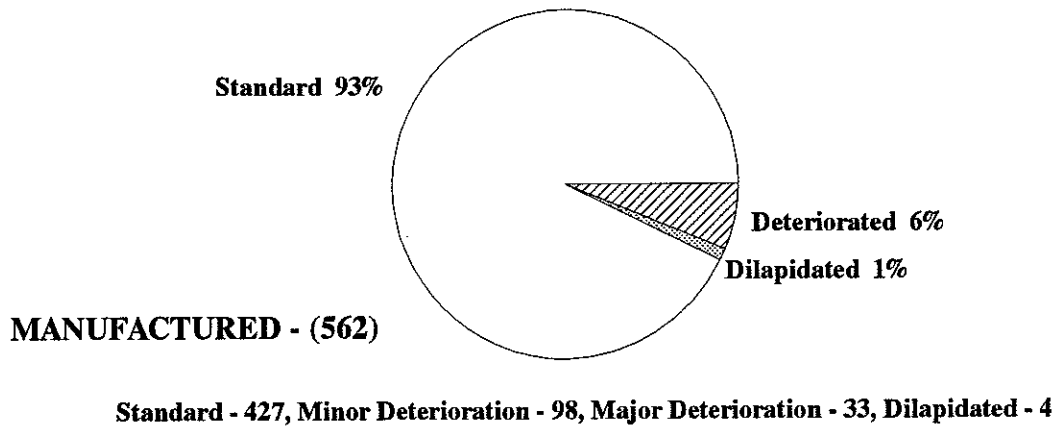
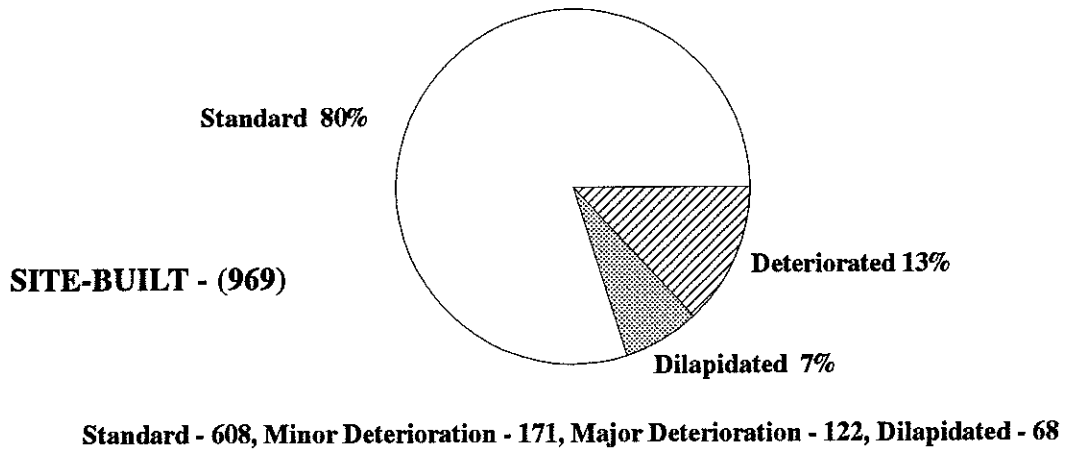
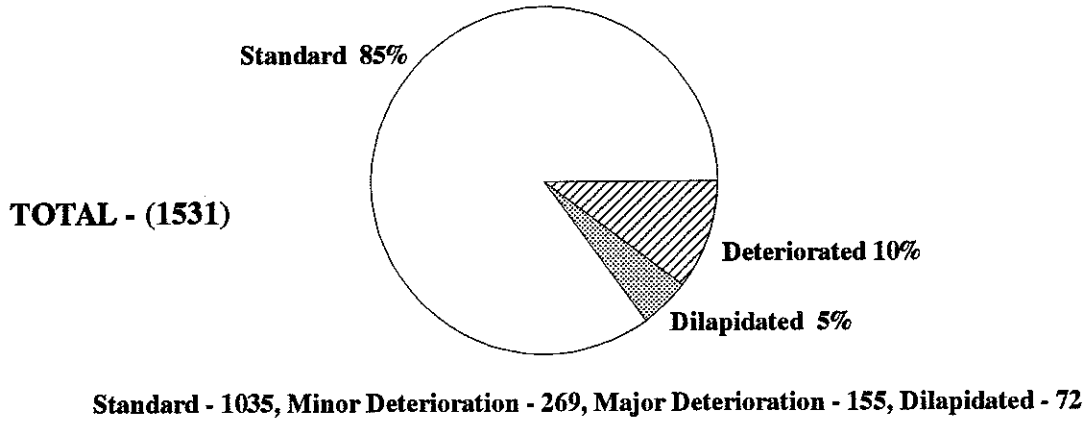


Standard - 55, Minor Deterioration - 62, Major Deterioration - 62, Dilapidated - 12

The preceding narrative is integral to interpretation of this data.
Source: Middle Flint RDC Windshield Survey, Spring - Summer, 1994

FIGURE 3

RURAL MARION COUNTY HOUSING CONDITIONS



The preceding narrative is integral to interpretation of this data.
Source: Middle Flint RDC Windshield Survey, Spring - Summer, 1994

Local housing costs are significantly lower than state averages, both in absolute dollar costs and as a share of income. The county's median contract (cash) rent in 1970 was equivalent to 46% of the state level. In successive censuses it declined to 27% and 34%, respectively. The relative value of owner-occupied housing was 49%, 56% and 54% of respective state levels. The relative cost of Buena Vista's rental housing increased between 1980 and 1990, from 26% to 32% of the state level. Owner-occupied housing in the city maintained its relative value at 58% of the state median.

TABLE 5
HOUSING COSTS
1970-1990

JURISDICTION	MEDIAN CONTRACT RENT			MEDIAN VALUE OWNER - OCCUPIED HOUSING		
	1970	1980	1990	1970	1980	1990
Marion	\$30	\$57	\$116	\$ 7,100	\$20,700	\$38,800
Buena Vista	-	\$54	\$110	-	\$21,300	\$41,200
Georgia	\$65	\$211	\$344	\$14,600	\$36,900	\$71,300

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Expressed as a percentage of median family income (MFI), during the twenty-year study period local housing costs increased at a slower rate than the documented state levels. In 1980 and 1990, median cash rent in Buena Vista was 6.8% and 8.1%, respectively, of MFI. Median rent countywide ranged from 5.7% to 6.7%. Statewide, relative cash rents fluctuated significantly; 9.5% - 14.5% - 12.3%, of MFI.

Between 1970 and 1990 the median value of owner-occupied housing in Georgia increased from 179% of MFI to 213%. In Marion County the increase was from 120% to 186%. Housing cost ratios in Buena Vista were higher than the county and state levels, increasing from 222% of MFI in 1980, to 252% in 1990.

Ages of housing inventories are presented in Table 6. The data reveal that at the time of the three most recent decennial censuses, approximately one-third of the state housing stock was less than ten years old. At the county level the averages were slightly more than one quarter, with the rural area recording the higher percentage and Buena Vista the lower. Relative to the state, the community recorded a major improvement in median age of housing during the 1970s.

TABLE 6
AGE OF HOUSING
1970-1990

1970				
YEAR OF CONSTRUCTION	MARION	BUENA VISTA	RURAL	GEORGIA
	%	%	%	%
1969 to March 1970	6%	-	-	6%
1965 to 1968	10%	-	-	14%
1960 to 1964	11%	-	-	15%
1950 to 1959	15%	-	-	23%
1940 to 1949	12%	-	-	15%
1939 or earlier	47%	-	-	29%
Median	1942	-	-	1953
1980				
1979 to March 1980	2%	3%	1%	4%
1975 to 1978	8%	5%	9%	11%
1970 to 1974	16%	11%	18%	19%
1960 to 1969	27%	21%	30%	25%
1950 to 1959	12%	13%	12%	17%
1949 or earlier	35%	46%	31%	25%
Median	1961	1953	1962	1963
1990				
1989 to March 1990	5%	3%	6%	4%
1985 to 1988	12%	7%	14%	15%
1980 to 1984	11%	13%	10%	13%
1970 to 1979	24%	22%	25%	24%
1960 to 1969	19%	16%	20%	17%
1950 to 1959	10%	11%	10%	12%
1940 to 1949	5%	8%	5%	6%
1939 or earlier	14%	19%	12%	8%
Median	1971	1967	1971	1973

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census; 1970, 1980, 1990.

Presented in Table 7 is the community's projected housing demand through the year 2015. The city's projected population for each five-year increment was reduced by five percent to account for residents who (in 1990) did not live in households, but in group quarters such as the nursing home, correctional facility, etc. According to the census there were no group quarter residents in the rural area. The "adjusted" populations were divided by the respective projected average household size (page 13) yielding an occupied housing subtotal. Average vacancy rates from the 1970, 1980 and 1990 Censuses were factored in: Buena Vista's occupied housing subtotal was increased by 5.5%, the rural area by 9.7%. The products of city and county calculations (projections) were totalled resulting in a projected housing demand for Marion County.

These projections suggest a demand for additional housing in Buena Vista averaging eleven units a year (± 1 each month) over the twenty-five year planning horizon. The census documented an average annual increase of five units in the city during the twenty-year period 1970 - 1990. Rural projections indicate an average annual increase of 29 units compared to the 26 documented during the preceding two decades. Countywide, the projections suggest an average demand of 40 additional units, while recent history has documented an average annual increase of 31 units.

TABLE 7
FUTURE HOUSING DEMAND
1990 - 2015

YEAR	MARION		BUENA VISTA		RURAL	
	PROJECTED POPULATION	HOUSING DEMAND	PROJECTED POPULATION	HOUSING DEMAND	PROJECTED POPULATION	HOUSING DEMAND
1990	5,590	2,152	1,472	575	4,118	1,577
1995	6,073	2,229	1,672	620	4,401	1,609
2000	6,556	2,407	1,872	695	4,684	1,712
2005	7,040	2,677	1,950	752	5,090	1,925
2010	7,523	3,046	2,000	802	5,523	2,244
2015	8,006	3,156	2,100	842	5,906	2,314

Source: Middle Flint RDC

The community's current economic position is the product of over 150 years of economic evolution. It has not changed, and despite local economic development activities is not likely to change overnight. The single strongest factor driving housing choice and development is economics. The strongest housing trend in the local economic environment is occupancy of manufactured housing, predominantly mobile homes. Multi-family housing has also recorded recent increases. The conventionally constructed single-family housing market actually decreased in size during the 1980s. Based on the current economy and housing market trends, mobile homes will continue to account for the vast majority of an increasing housing inventory. Additional multi-family housing will continue to be concentrated in Buena Vista.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

The availability and quality of community facilities, both publicly and privately operated, play an important role in attracting and maintaining residential, commercial, and industrial development. As a result, planning for the expansion and improvement of community facilities is an important element of the comprehensive planning process. The following section provides a description of existing community facilities and services in Marion County and Buena Vista.

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COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Transportation: Marion County has 454 miles of public roadway; 3% of which is in Buena Vista. Twenty-nine percent of local roadways are state routes, 69% are county roads and 2% are city streets. Throughout Georgia these percentages are 16%, 72% and 12%, respectively. Sixty percent of all public roadways in Marion County are paved compared to 68% throughout the state. Only one-third mile of public street in the city is not paved. At this writing none of the routes in Marion County are approved by the Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT) for use by twin-trailer transport trucks.

TABLE 1

HIGHWAY TRANSPORTATION NETWORK (In miles)

JURISDICTION	ROUTE	PAVED	UNPAVED	TOTAL
MARION COUNTY	State	130.07	0.00	130.07
	County	134.88	179.91	314.79
	City	8.80	0.47	9.27
	Subtotal	273.75	180.38	454.13
BUENA VISTA	State	5.66	0.00	5.66
	County	.21	0.00	.21
	City	8.80	.35	9.15
	Subtotal	14.67	.35	15.02
RURAL	State	124.41	0.00	124.41
	County	134.67	179.91	314.58
	City	0.00	.12	.12
	Subtotal	259.08	180.03	439.11

Source: Ga. Dept of Transportation 12/31/91; DPP 441-PDS

Rural data was compiled by Middle Flint RDC from city and county totals.

The county and city have nine-man and five-man road/street departments, respectively, which keep county and city rights-of-way mowed and apply cold patch asphalt to pot-holes. The county personnel also maintain the 180 miles of unpaved roadway in the rural area.

The county uses two motor graders, 1981 and 1991 models, several mowers and dump trucks, pickup trucks, two bulldozers, a backhoe and front-end loader to perform roadway maintenance activities. Equipment maintenance and minor repairs are performed at the maintenance barn located behind the county jail on Buena Vista's northwest city limit. This is a metal facility with a 30 x 30 repair shop and a four-bay shed. The city has one small tractor on which a rotary mower is mounted to mow rights-of-way. Routine maintenance and minor repairs are performed on all city equipment at the municipal shop located on East Sixth Avenue south of the railroad. The city's equipment inventory also includes three pick-up trucks used by all municipal departments on an as needed basis.

Both jurisdictions also work closely with the Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT) to pave or resurface roadways added annually to a prioritized list. On average, DOT assists the county in paving two miles and resurfacing six miles of roadway, and assists the city in resurfacing approximately one mile of street each year.

The Georgia Department of Transportation has already identified and tentatively "scheduled" four, local bridge replacement projects: (1) S.R. 355 at Pine Knot Creek - construction scheduled for 1997; (2) C.R. 128/Doyle Road at Oochee Creek - construction scheduled for 1998; (3) S.R. 41/Broad Street in Buena Vista at railroad - construction scheduled for sometime after 1998; (4) S.R. 355 at Juniper Creek on Talbot County line - construction scheduled for sometime after 1998.

Norfolk Southern Railroad has an eighteen mile segment of track which roughly parallels state route 26 on its east-west route through Marion County. Approximately 2.4 miles of this track is in Buena Vista. Because of the absence of freight origination or destination points in or near the county, rail traffic ceased in early 1995. Trains which previously traveled this line have been diverted to a more northerly route.

On a 206 acre tract approximately two miles south of Buena Vista, the county owns one of the state's 121 public airports. Located at 32 degrees, 16 minutes, 56 seconds north latitude, and 84 degrees, 30 minutes, 13 seconds west longitude, the airport is 681.5 feet above mean sea level; ranging from 663.5 feet on the runway's east end to 681.5 feet on the west end. The asphalt runway is 75 feet wide and 3200 feet long. There are no aircraft based at the airport and the only service offered is tie-down for transient aircraft.

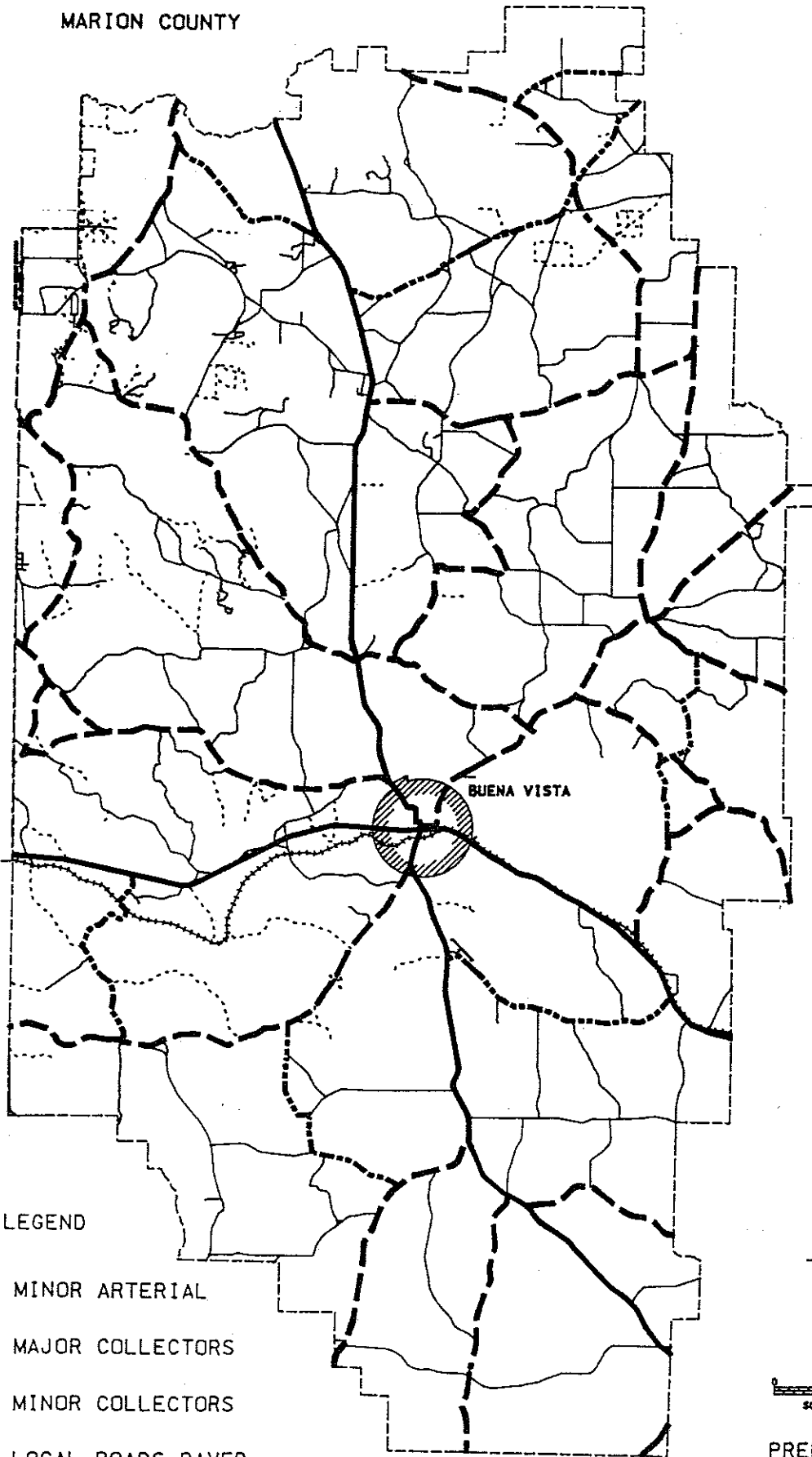
Assessment: The proportions of local roadways which are state, county and city routes differ significantly from statewide totals. Unlike most Georgia counties, Marion has only one incorporated municipality; hence, a disproportionately small network of city streets.

Relative to statewide data, a larger share of the county's public roadway is not paved. Marion is one of the state's most heavily forested counties which tends to limit developments depending on, or supported by, high vehicular traffic counts. Although the percentage of paved roadway may be relatively low, that fact alone should not be a cause of concern. The city and county should continue their local roadway improvement efforts, and maintain good relationships with the Georgia Department of Transportation to further enhance the highway transportation network.

The county needs to replace several pieces of its most expensive equipment in the next 2-3 years. The bulldozer needs extensive repair if it is to stay in operation another year. Immediate replacement should be considered. The maintenance barn is in good condition. One additional mobile radio is needed to aid interdepartmental communications.

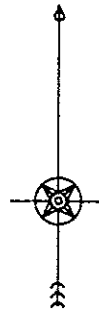
FEDERAL ROAD CLASSIFICATION

MARION COUNTY



LEGEND

- MINOR ARTERIAL
- - - MAJOR COLLECTORS
- · - · - MINOR COLLECTORS
- LOCAL ROADS PAVED
- LOCAL ROADS UNPAVED



0 1 2 3
SCALE IN MILES

4-95
PREPARED BY:
MIDDLE FLINT RDC

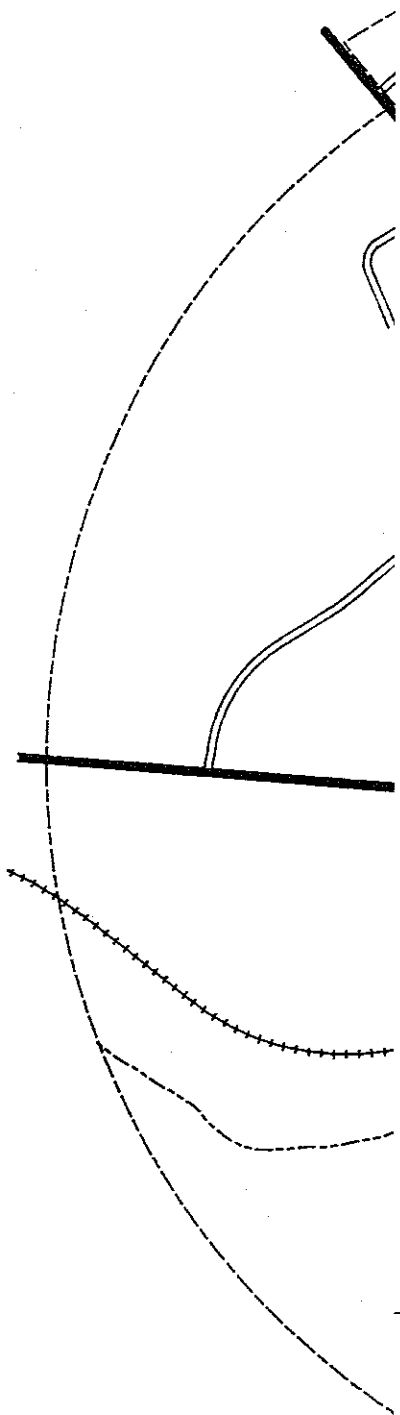
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FEDERAL ROAD CLASSIFICATION



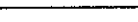
BUENA VISTA, GEORGIA

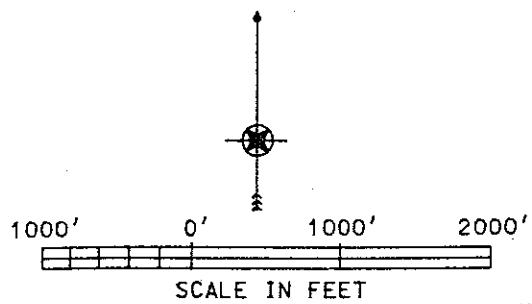
MARION COUNTY

APRIL, 1995



LEGEND

-  MINOR ARTERIAL
-  MAJOR COLLECTOR
-  LOCAL STREET



PREPARED BY: MIDDLE FLINT RDC

The motorized equipment and physical facilities of the city's transportation department are in poor to fair condition. The tractor used to mow rights-of-way is a mid -70's model (20 years old) and in poor condition. The same is true for the 1976 model pick-up truck. The two 1984 model pick-ups were purchased used and will soon need replacing. The maintenance barn is in bad physical/structural condition. The shop space is undersized, unheated, and insufficiently lighted. The only protective storage for vehicles is in the shop itself. Although there are no current problems with the communications system, two walkie talkies would help keep the public works director in contact with city hall and other departmental personnel.

Railroad service is important for any community desiring to expand its industrial base. The cessation of rail transport through the county in early 1995, and possible diversion by the owner of track maintenance to other active trackage could be a major blow to attracting and landing industrial prospects. It is especially ironic that rail traffic was diverted around the county at the very time Buena Vista opened an industrial park adjacent to this rail line.

Local officials understand there to be federal regulations requiring this rail carrier to meet the freight service needs of any local industry. However, it is not known locally whether there are any freight thresholds which must be satisfied for the railroad to reinstate service. Furthermore, if the local line were profitable the freight traffic would not have been diverted. Provision of a low level freight service could make this line an even greater economic loss to the railroad, possibly resulting in the carrier petitioning the Interstate Commerce Commission for rail abandonment. Railroad officials have indicated they are negotiating with Georgia Southwestern Railroad, an independent short-line carrier, to provide rail service on this track segment.

Over the past thirty years railroads have abandoned 950 miles of trackage in Georgia because they were unprofitable for the owner. A similar amount was acquired/leased by shortline railroads before being abandoned by the large railroads. Shortline operations are often an intermediate step to abandonment because trackage profitability is often more a function of line location than ownership/management.

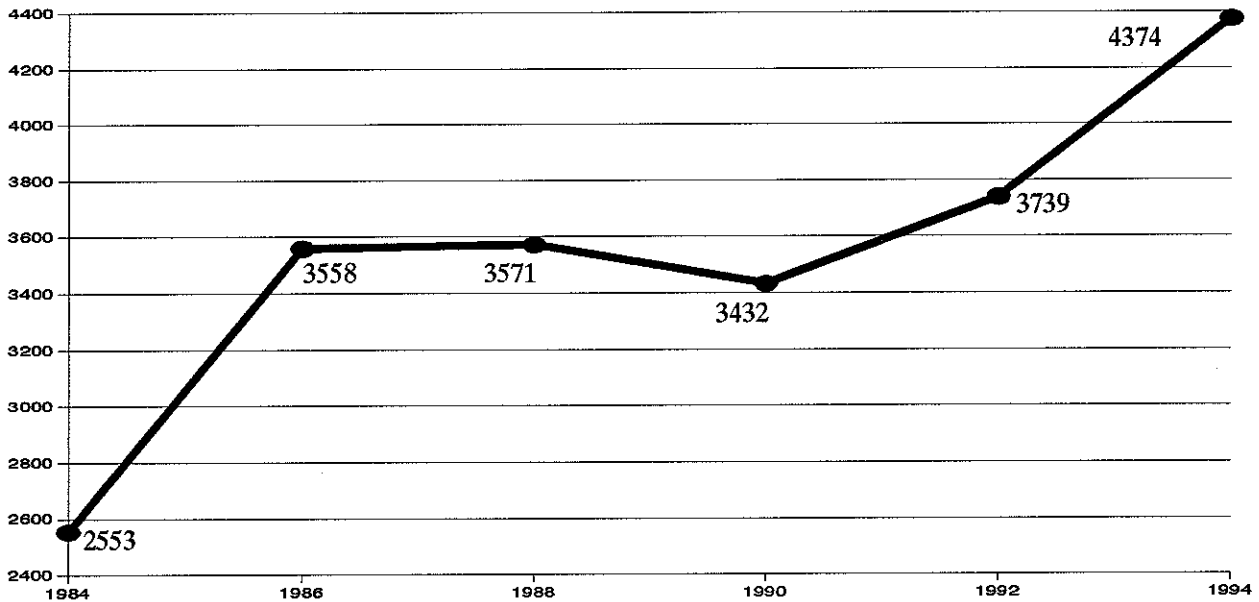
An evaluation of Georgia's rail system performed for the Georgia Department of Transportation in 1989 did not identify the local segment of tract as being of questionable economic viability. However, recent curtailment of service is cause for serious concern. If freight service has been diverted north to a rail segment which parallels the proposed Fall Line Freeway, this could prove to be especially harmful to recent development of Buena Vista's industrial park. Local officials need to establish a dialogue with appropriate rail transport and regulatory authorities.

The potential loss of rail service becomes even more critical to the community because it is not located on a route approved by the Georgia Department of Transportation for use by twin-trailer transport trucks. Hence, the community can be at an even greater disadvantage in many industrial recruitment efforts. Twin-trailers would be used by current industry if local routes were approved for such traffic; some of these vehicles have been ticketed trying to make local deliveries. The community needs an approved twin-trailer route and any road improvements that may be entailed, e.g., three/four lane GA 26 east and west, three/four lane GA 41 north and south. State routes 41 N and 26 E provide direct access to existing industrial sites, though the

latter needs entrance access developed into the industrial park.

In addition, the traffic volume in Buena Vista has reached the point that significant thoroughfare improvements are needed around the county seat. As the following graphic shows, the average daily traffic volume near the city's busiest intersection (state routes 26 and 41) has increased by almost 2,000 vehicles in the last ten years without any physical site improvements. The majority of large trucks which pass through the city must negotiate a tight turn at this intersection; or as has become common, detour off the roadway across the vacant corner lot and re-enter the traffic pattern.

AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC VOLUME
at traffic count station
.3 mile south of GA. 26/41 intersection

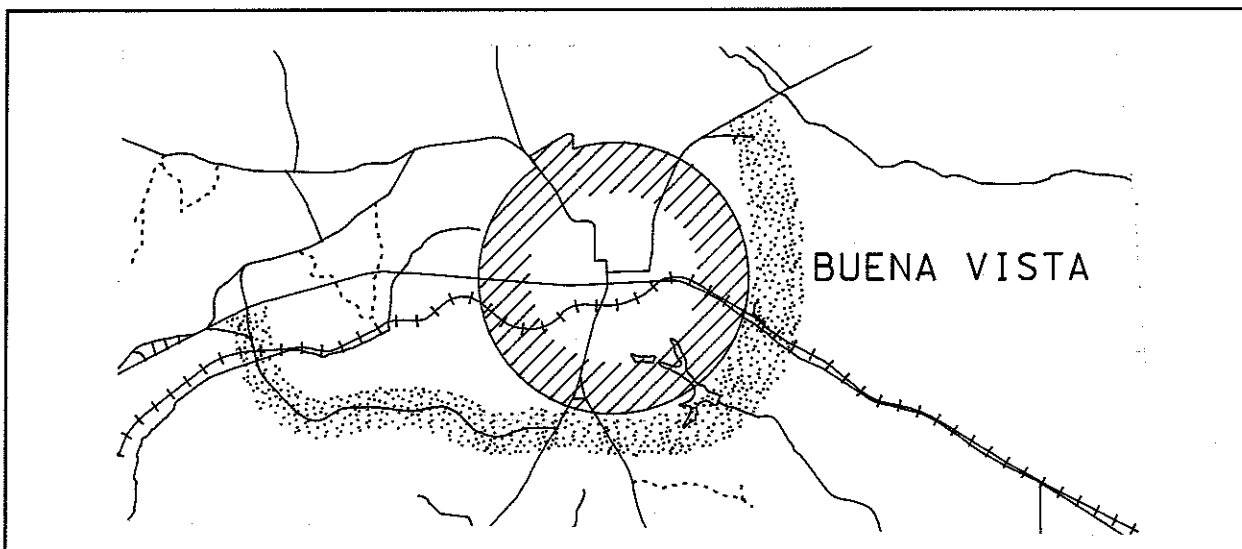


Source: Georgia Department of Transportation

During this period Buena Vista's downtown square has recorded increased numbers of semi-trucks transporting poultry, timber and solid waste, the latter bound for the commercial landfill in neighboring Taylor County. Ambient odors from poultry and solid waste trucks, and the lingering stench of spillage from the latter is not an inviting environment for tourists the community is courting to downtown. The community is expecting increasing levels of tourist and industrial traffic, and it is time to develop by-pass routes to segregate these different types of traffic (see next page).

It is important that the county continue to maintain the airport in proper condition. It can be a very valuable asset in a rural community's economic development program.

PROPOSED BY-PASS ROUTE



Water Supply and Treatment: As defined in the Georgia Rules for Safe Drinking Water, a public water system is a system that provides piped water to the public for human consumption, if such system has at least fifteen (15) service connections, or regularly serves an average of twenty-five (25) individuals at least sixty days out of the year. At this writing there are four, state permitted, public water systems in Marion County: Buena Vista municipal system, the Marion County water system, Oakland Heights Subdivision and Tri-County High School.

Due primarily to the water supply needs of Cargill, Buena Vista has a large municipal water system for a city its size. Six deep wells with a collective pumping capacity of 2,600 gallons per minute pump raw water directly to the water treatment facility constructed in 1982. Treatment consists of aeration followed by lime, fluoride, phosphate and chlorine injection. Treated water is then pumped into the system by means of three, 1,000 gpm pumps. Water is stored in two, 150,000 gallon elevated storage tanks; one 500,000 gallon elevated storage tank, and one 500,000 gallon ground storage tank located adjacent to the water treatment plant. From here water is distributed to approximately 675 customers (100[±] of whom are outside city limits) through 13 miles of 12", 10", 8", 6" and smaller diameter water mains. In the early months of 1995 the city pumped and treated an average of 40.2 million gallons of water each month.

Marion County has completed (1994) the first of a planned, three phase, rural water system. The system starts near the airport with an 800 gpm pump in a well 435 feet deep. Raw water is pumped into a 200,000 gallon ground level tank for treatment with chlorine, lime and fluoride. This treatment plant also has the potential for iron removal. Water is stored in a 250,000 gallon elevated storage tank from which it is distributed to 375 customers, including Tri-County High School, through 46.1 miles of 10", 8", and 3" diameter water mains. (Water service extends a short distance beyond county road 165 into Schley County.) Phase 1 serves water needs in the southern region of the county. Phase 2 is proposed for the county's northeast

region and the last phase would serve west and northwest Marion County. The county system is designed for consumption purposes, not fire flow. Only those areas along the larger mains will have rated fire protection. The county hopes to complete the rural system by the year 2000 (see map on page 43).

The Oakland Heights Subdivision water system serves approximately 50 households. This system has been in operation in north central Marion County since 1977, and in recent years was deeded to the residents by the subdivision developer. Chlorine is the only treatment provided. Residents plan to tie onto the county's rural system when it becomes available.

Because of its remote location Tri-County High School had to include its own water system in the building's original design (mid 1970s). A pump was used to maintain pressure in the system rather than an elevated tank. Tri-County has tied into the rural water system however, and will most probably not try to maintain an independent, state permitted system.

Assessment: In addition to maintaining the current treatment and delivery systems, there are numerous water system improvement needs in Buena Vista and on the outer perimeter of the incorporated area. These needs are itemized as follows, in no particular order, with current-day cost estimates. The need is such that if funding was available the city would pursue many of these improvements almost immediately. However, since timing of the improvements is dictated by the availability of funding, a ten-year timeframe is more realistic.

WATER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

1. Church Street	\$210,000	8. Oprylanding	\$ 80,000
2. Langston Heights	\$ 75,000	9. GA 137 North	\$ 33,000
3. Wastewater Plant	\$222,000	10. Samson Lane	\$ 24,000
4. Third Avenue	\$ 18,000	11. Porter Lane	\$ 13,000
5. Miller Avenue	\$116,000	12. Trailer Pk, 26E	\$ 10,000
6. Shady Acres	\$ 37,000	13. Water Plant	\$100,000
7. Fudge's Place	\$ 10,000	14. New Well	<u>\$200,000</u>
			<u>\$1,148,000</u>

Sewerage System and Wastewater Treatment: Buena Vista collects raw wastewater from approximately 500 sewer customers through approximately 10.5 miles of gravity flow and force main. Seven force mains are used to pump sewage from low lying areas to the system's treatment facility. Treatment is accomplished by a 500,000 gallon per day extended aeration sewage treatment facility last upgraded in 1982. Treated wastewater is discharged into a tributary of Oochee Creek. Raw wastewater discharged from Cargill's processing plant is treated in the company owned facility. Its treatment volume does not affect Buena Vista's wastewater treatment capacity.

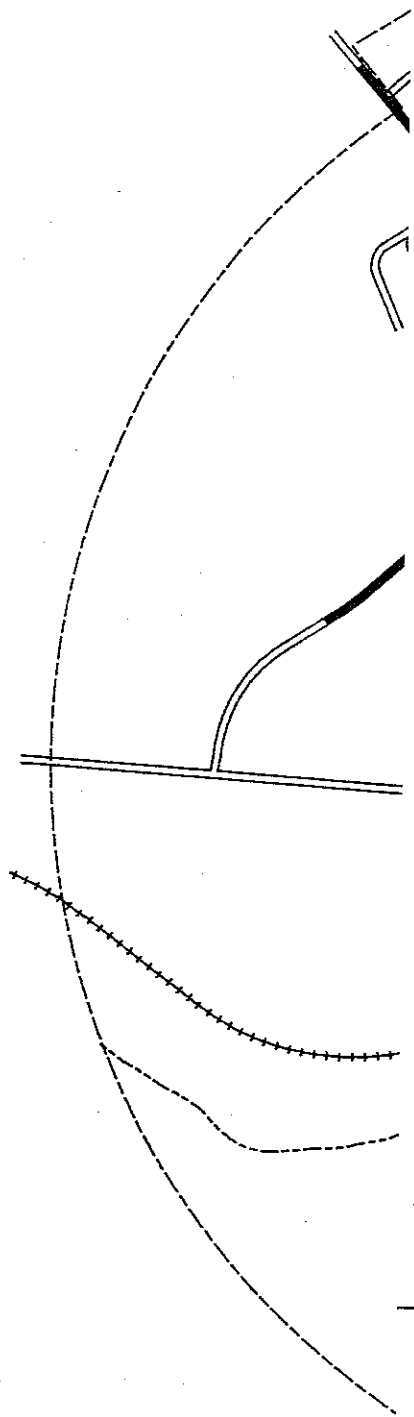
Tri-County High School has a small wastewater treatment facility on site. Elsewhere throughout the rural area wastewater treatment is performed by individual septic tanks. According to the 1990 Census, there are approximately 1550 housing units in rural Marion County. There is presumably one septic tank at each dwelling site.

WATER SYSTEM





BUENA VISTA, GEORGIA

MARION COUNTY

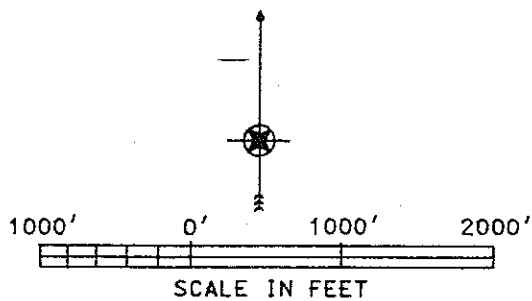
APRIL, 1995



LEGEND

-  WATER LINES
-  TANKS (4)
-  WELLS (6)
-  WATER TREATMENT PLANT

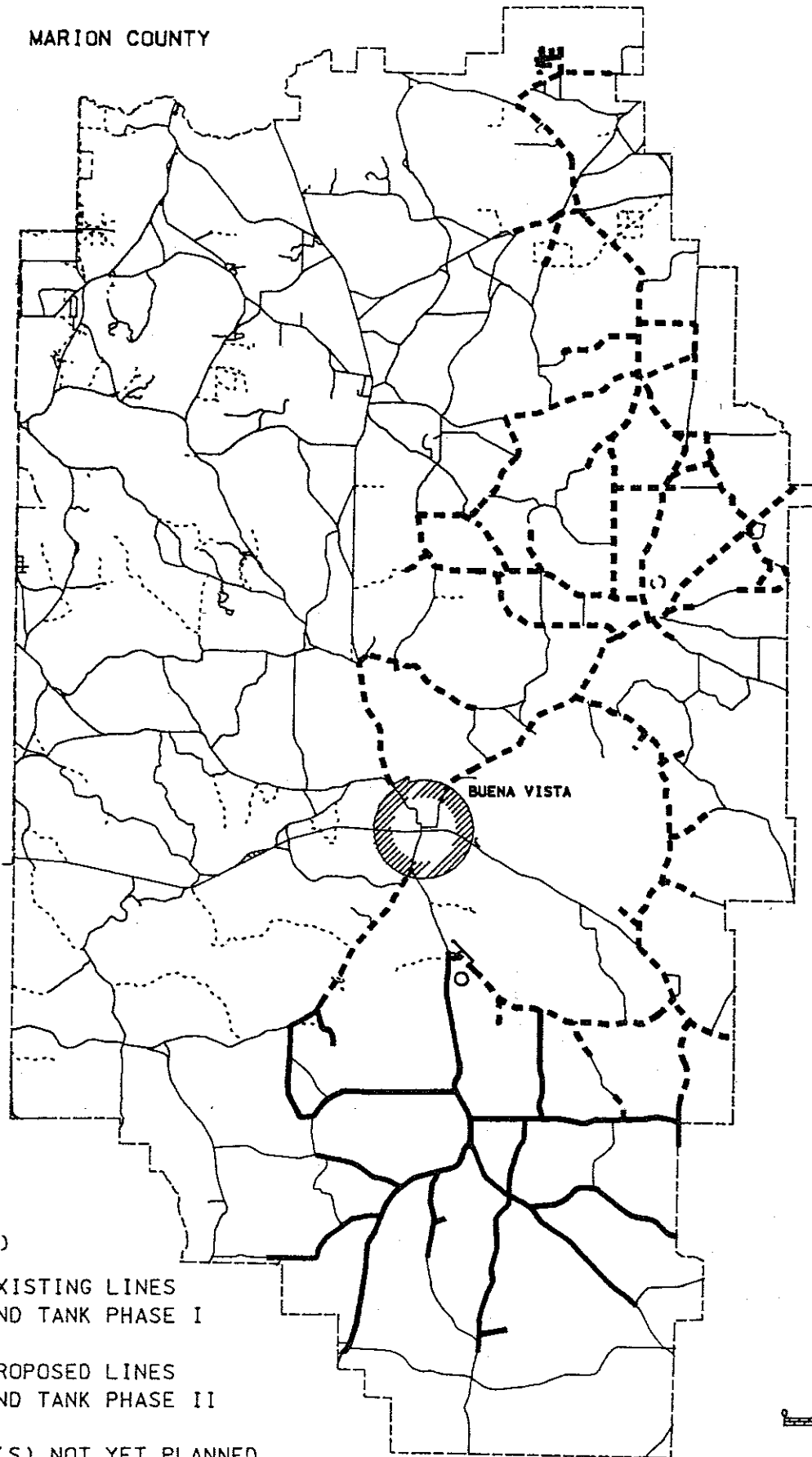
SOURCE: TRIBBLE & RICHARDSON INC.



PREPARED BY: MIDDLE FLINT RDC

RURAL WATER SYSTEM

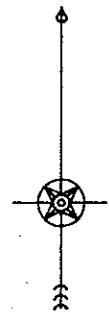
MARION COUNTY



LEGEND

- EXISTING LINES AND TANK PHASE I
-
- - - PROPOSED LINES AND TANK PHASE II
-

FUTURE PHASE(S) NOT YET PLANNED



SCALE IN MILES
0 1 2 3

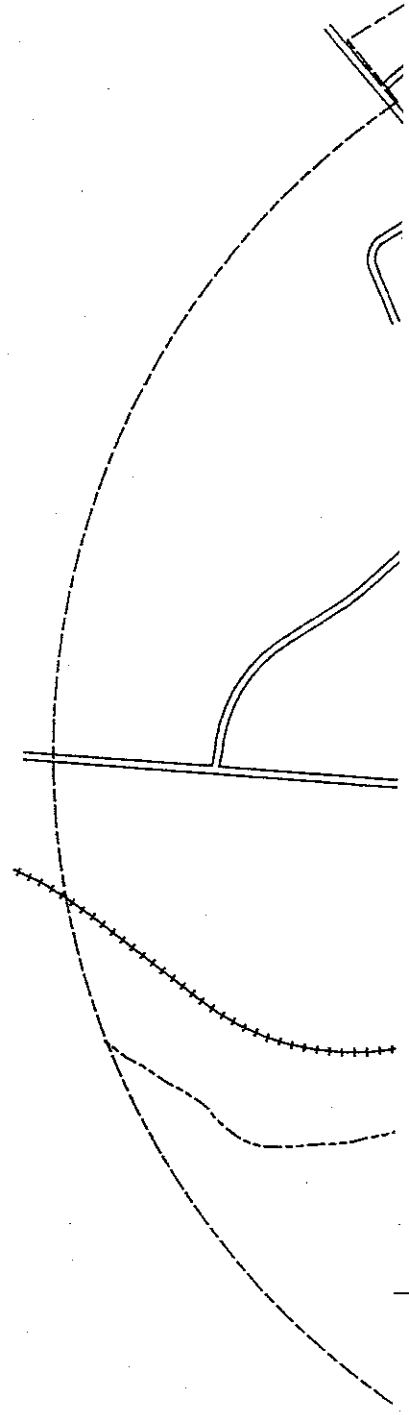
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PREPARED BY:
MIDDLE FLINT RDC
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SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM

BUENA VISTA, GEORGIA

MARION COUNTY

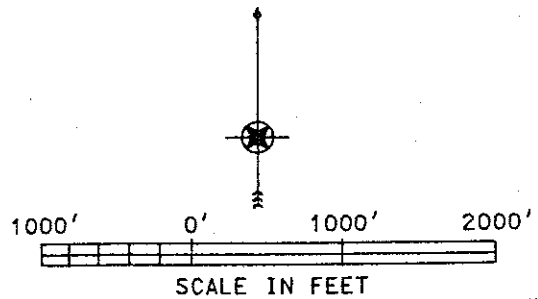
APRIL, 1995



LEGEND

————— EXISTING SANITARY SEWER

SOURCE: TRIBBLE & RICHARDSON INC.



PREPARED BY: MIDDLE FLINT RDC

Assessment: In addition to maintaining the current collection and treatment systems, Buena Vista also has numerous system improvement needs in and around the incorporated area. These needs are itemized as follows, in no particular order, with current-day cost estimates. The need is such that if funding was available the city would pursue many of these improvements almost immediately. However, since timing of the improvements is dictated by the availability of funding, a ten-year timeframe is more realistic.

SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM IMPROVEMENTS

1.	Line extension - southeast Buena Vista	\$675,000
2.	Line extension - Langston Heights	\$220,000
3.	Line extension - Bridges/Minter Area	\$215,000
4.	Line extension - Miller Avenue Area	\$145,000
5.	Line extension - Toward Industrial Area North	\$187,000
6.	Wastewater Treatment Plant Improvements	<u>\$110,000</u>
		\$1,552,000

Solid Waste Disposal: The county road department assigns one individual the responsibility of collecting solid waste throughout the rural area and for transporting same to the disposal site. Collection equipment consists of two, 35 cubic yard, front-end loading packer trucks, and 142 dumpsters (green boxes) distributed among 14 sites. The trucks are 1994 and 1987 models; the former is used daily while the latter is maintained in reserve. Collection costs are covered through the general fund. Dumpsters usually receive "boots" ,or inserts, after a period of use to extend their useful life at considerably less cost than replacement of the dumpster.

The city's street department makes use of a 25 cubic yard, side-loading, 1993 model packer truck during the five day work week to collect from 500 garbage customers. The city maintains a 1985 model packer truck in reserve, but it is in such poor condition that it is of little use. Recyclables are collected curbside by pick-up truck one day each week. Corrugated cardboard is collected from businesses daily. Yard waste is collected daily and disposed in an informal compost area on Puttville Street. White goods are picked up on demand for a fee, and sold to a scrap dealer from the storage site at the county's maintenance barn. City residents pay \$2.50 per month for collection; businesses are assessed a \$4.50 monthly fee.

In response to the solid waste disposal contract offered by a private company, the Marion County Board of Commissioners closed the county-owned solid waste landfill in June, 1991. Both local jurisdictions transport their collections daily to the Subtitle D landfill in Taylor County, three miles beyond Marion County's northern boundary. The county's current five year contract with the owners of the commercial landfill expires at the end of calendar year 1996; the city's contract expires twelve months later.

Assessment: Both jurisdictions are pleased with their collection and disposal programs and intend to renew their contracts with the commercial landfill, provided tipping fees continue to be reasonable. Local officials may want to consider initiating negotiations with the current commercial landfill early, perhaps jointly, to be assured of long-term disposal at an acceptable fee. Because of proximity to the landfill and the collection routes of the county, there appears to be no advantage to combining the collected wastes of the two jurisdictions for transport to the landfill.

The county has a problem with public misuse of dumpsters. Drop-off sites are often littered, some garbage is placed on the ground instead of in the containers, some garbage is placed in the wrong containers, etc. Several of these sites are on major thoroughfares. Corrective actions are deserving of serious consideration. Increased population will soon require placement of additional dumpsters in the (northern) rural area.

The community needs to enhance its waste reduction/recycling effort. Significant percentage decreases in waste volume is difficult to achieve in rural settings because of the difficulty marketing recyclables in small volume. For this reason the community should consider combining its marketing program with neighboring communities.

Law Enforcement: The Marion County sheriff's department and jail is located on the city's northwest city limit. The current facility was constructed in 1978 in front of the previous, antiquated jail. Quarters for two of the twenty-two beds were designed for female prisoners. Seldom is there space in nearby counties to house Marion County prisoners, so local warrants are prioritized for service on the basis of the severity of the charge(s) and availability of bed space. One patrol car in the three vehicle fleet is rotated out of service each year.

The sheriff has three POST certified deputies, four full-time and one part-time jailers. There are times when the department is strained to adequately patrol the county with this number of deputies. The sheriff also serves as the county's Emergency Management Agency Director.

The Buena Vista police department is housed in city hall and is staffed by five full-time, and one part-time (32 hours) POST certified officers. There is no secretarial or support staff. The department operates on eight hour shifts and is currently using three vehicles; one 1987 and two 1992 model police cruisers. These vehicles are serviced commercially. The city does not have a base radio station, but each police cruiser has a mobile radio and all officers have portable radios to receive dispatches which come through the Sheriff's office.

Assessment: In light of increasing population and traffic flow in the rural area, there is a need to add a fourth deputy to the sheriff's department. Some portable radio equipment also needs replacing. Although the sheriff is the locally designated EMA director, the local department is not certified by the state. Staff with the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) presented a draft Emergency Management Operations Plan (EMOP) in conformance with state law for local consideration. Adoption and enforcement of an EMOP is required to receive state financial assistance in time of natural disaster. Receipt of federal financial assistance is not predicated on any such plan. Nevertheless, the county should complete a detailed review of the

draft and adopt it or some reasonable facsimile thereof so appropriate local personnel will have a written set of procedures to follow in the event of a local disaster, and the community will be eligible for state disaster assistance, if needed.

The Police Chief reported very little turnover in personnel. The department is believed to be sufficiently staffed to perform its law enforcement duties at the current population level; however, part-time secretarial/support staff would be beneficial. The oldest model cruiser in the department needs to be replaced, as well as the oldest (25 - 30 years) of the mobile radios. Of the other two radios, one may need to be replaced within the next five years.

Fire Protection: Buena Vista's all-volunteer fire department operates from a metal-sided fire hall built in 1991, adjacent to city hall. Eleven hundred square feet are dedicated to housing two fire apparatus, and an additional 500 square feet are used as training space by the ten-member department. The facility is heated, but the training space is unfinished.

The City's main fire apparatus is a 1984 model Chevrolet pumper. This truck has a 750 gallon tank and a rated pumping capacity of 1,000 gallons per minute. The vehicle underwent a bumper-to-bumper maintenance inspection/overhaul in 1993 and is in fair condition. The department maintains in reserve a 1962 model International pumper with a 500 gallon tank and a 500 gallon per minute pumping capacity. Although this pumper is in good condition, the truck is very unreliable.

During the period 1991-1993 the department maintained a stable complement of ten members. Presently, seven are certified fire-fighters and three are pursuing state certification. Because the majority of these firefighters are employed at work sites outside the city, there are usually only four in the city on weekdays available to respond to a fire call between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Emergency calls are received at city hall and the Sheriff's Department, and dispatched to the one volunteer "on call" and in possession of a hand-held, two-way radio. This volunteer reports to the fire hall and pages other firefighters.

Three city fire fighters are trained First Responders, personnel with the training needed to stabilize accident victims for transport prior to the arrival of EMS personnel. Four are trained to operate the department's extrication tools, the Jaws-of-Life and Holmator. The department has also received some hazardous materials training, but training, maintaining and equipping a HazMat team is cost prohibitive for communities this size.

Departmental personnel are reasonably well equipped to fight fires. Six complete sets of turn-out gear were added to the inventory early in 1994. The department has six breathing masks with reserve bottles. Both fire apparatus are fully equipped with hose, nozzles, ladders and hand tools.

There is a strong effort to develop a countywide system of volunteer fire departments. The Oakland community has had a strong department for several years. Currently, there are sixteen volunteers who have received basic training from the Georgia Fire Academy. Two fire apparatus are housed in fire station #1 located behind the Oakland community center. The

Tazewell community has a double-bay fire house (station #2), one fire apparatus, and at this writing five volunteers. Other departments in the Brown Springs (station #3) and Draneville (station #4) communities are in the formation stages with little more than sites for future fire houses.

Thus far, assistance provided these rural departments by the county has been in the form of monthly gas allowances, insurance coverage and minor equipment purchases. Volunteers and community residents participate in fund-raising efforts and donate materials and services to construct fire stations, purchase equipment, etc. For insurance rating purposes each department will have a prescribed five mile radius service area; however, pursuant to the county fire department's written charter they all have mutual aid agreements, which includes the City of Buena Vista. The two jurisdictions already coordinate fire service delivery. Marion has mutual aid agreements with surrounding counties as well.

Assessment: The single greatest need in the city's fire department is replacement of the reserve fire apparatus with a vehicle offering expanded fire fighting capabilities, e.g., a tele-squitter to assist with fire suppression above ground level in old, two story structures. The city should investigate the possibility of having the current reserve apparatus rebuilt at a state technical school or by state prisoners on work detail, and housed in the vicinity of the woodworking plant on the city's north side.

Although the department is relatively well equipped at the present time, there are numerous items which should be placed on a replacement schedule, e.g., hoses, nozzles, breathing apparatus, radios, beepers, etc. In addition, construction of the indoor training space needs to be completed, e.g., lighting, restroom, additional heat. The city council should allocate annually \$2,500 above the department's current operating budget so the department can prioritize and schedule these departmented needs.

The department should continue the training program available through the Federal Emergency Television Network. Instructional tapes are viewed and followed by written exams. This training method should be supplemented with as much hands-on practice as possible. This applies also to hazardous materials because of the presence of three sites where such materials are handled: the municipal water treatment plant, Cargill, and Baby Dreams.

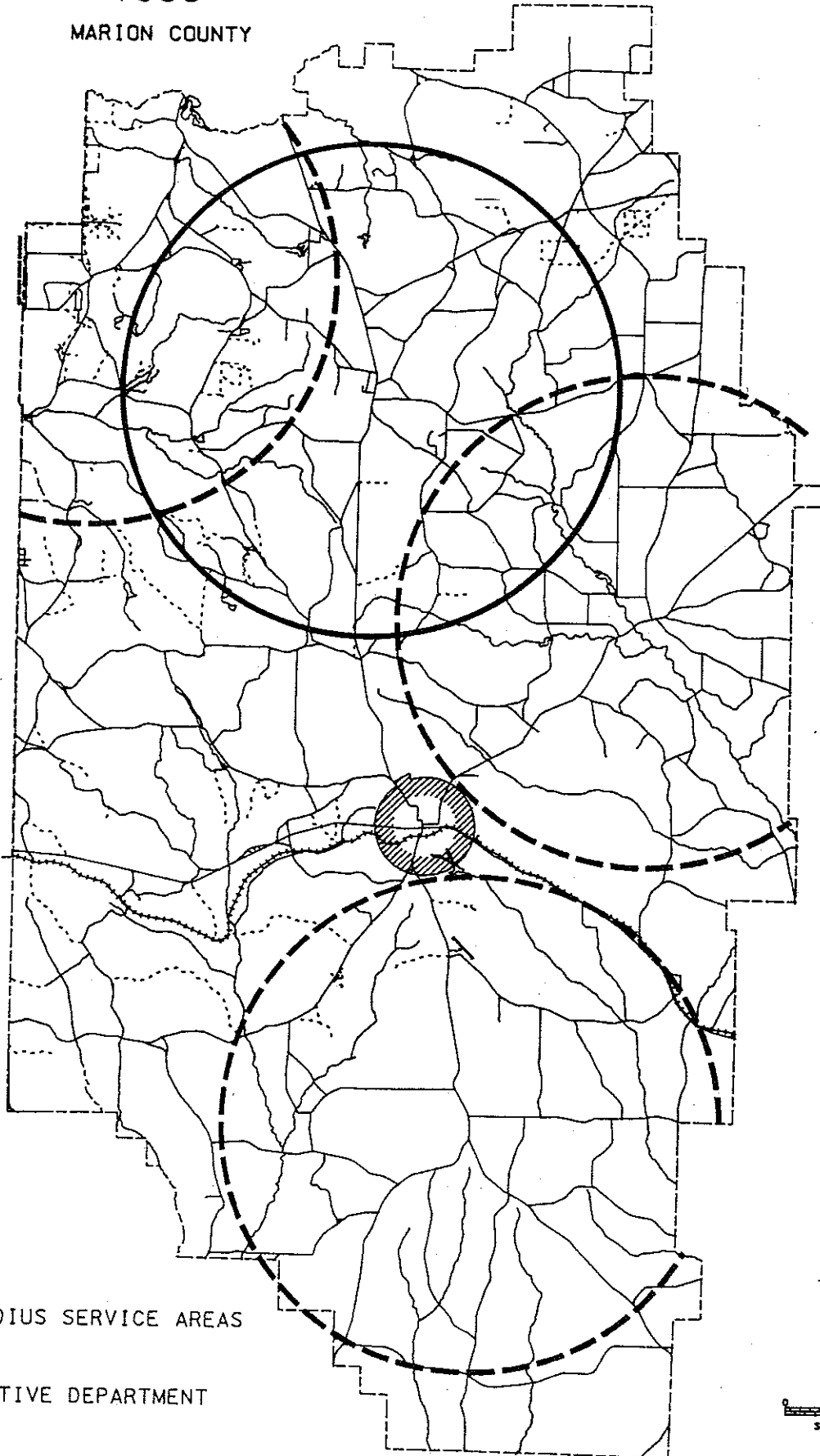
City council should also investigate the possibility of offering preferential rates on municipal utilities/services to those who volunteer for fire department service.

Marion County has a growing need for rural fire protection. Increased residential development in the county's northwest quadrant by families accustomed to the availability of fire service in their former residential communities is expected to increase citizen pressure for fire protection. Financial assistance is needed to equip these departments. The two jurisdictions must continue to coordinate fire protection programs and develop enough volunteers so each department can respond appropriately when called upon - at all hours of the day.

RURAL FIRE DEPARTMENTS

1995

MARION COUNTY



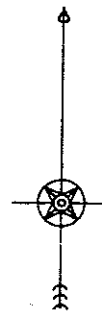
FIVE MILE RADIUS SERVICE AREAS



ACTIVE DEPARTMENT



DEPARTMENTS BEING ORGANIZED



0 1 2 3
SCALE IN MILES

PREPARED BY:
MIDDLE FLINT RDC

Emergency Medical Service: The Marion County Emergency Medical Service (EMS) relocated from the rear of the county jail to the Marion County Government Office building on Baker Street in the fall of 1994. Emergency medical services are currently provided by 7 paramedics and 11 Emergency Medical Technicians, all of whom are part-time employees and can be contacted at any time via two-way radio. The service averages thirty emergency transport calls per month. Since the Marion County hospital closed in 1991, EMS patients are taken to hospitals in Americus, Richland and Columbus. The EMS currently has two ambulances, 1989 and 1993 models, both equipped with advanced cardiac life support.

Assessment: Emergency medical services are funded by the county and the local hospital authority. The community is well pleased with the quality of service provided.

Recreation: Neither the city nor county has recreation departments or programs. The city does have a five acre recreation area located on the north end of Rosa B. Williams Lane. Facilities include two tennis courts, one basketball court and a water fountain; the site does not have restroom facilities. The county has three, fenced, softball/baseball fields with a concession/restroom facility covering less than half of a twenty-three acre site adjacent to the airport. There is also a baseball field located on privately owned land on Pineville Road approximately two miles south of Buena Vista.

Assessment: There are strong, local needs for recreation programs and additional facilities. The two jurisdictions should jointly pursue establishment of at least a part-time, structured, summer recreation program.

Immediate needs in the city park are playground equipment, construction of restroom facilities, addition of a lighted, regulation size basketball court, improvements to the existing tennis courts and enlargement of the existing basketball court. The immediate need at the only county site is lighting on at least one of the three existing softball fields. This feature will extend playing time giving many more residents an opportunity to participate in organized league play. Softball/baseball fields are also needed in the northern half of the county in response to the population increase. Funding is also needed to finance a summer program director. Long term needs include securing and operating a multi-use recreation center.

General Government: Direction and oversight of county operations are provided by a three member, part-time board of commissioners elected by district, with the chair elected by and among the three commissioners. The commission manages thirty-five county employees and an annual operating budget currently totalling approximately \$1.7 million. A county clerk works at the pleasure of the commission handling daily receipts, disbursements, correspondence, reports, payroll, meeting agenda, etc.

Because of crowded office conditions in the county courthouse the board of commissioners renovated a building in its possession on Baker Street for use by the commission/county clerk, EMS, county water department and voter registrar. This complex was opened in the fall of 1994. On adjoining parcels are located the Health Department/Department of Family and Children Service/County Extension Office, and a Senior Citizens Center currently under

construction. The courthouse, constructed in 1850, houses county elected offices, e.g., Probate Judge, Clerk of Superior Court, Tax commissioner, etc.

Marion County has not enacted any land development or subdivision regulations for the rural area. Building permits are required and minimum lot sizes (one acre) are enforced as of May 1, 1994.

Buena Vista is governed by a five member, part-time city council and a part-time mayor. Council members are elected by post, and are each assigned by the Mayor, who is elected at large, to oversee specific municipal departments. Collectively, they manage the activities of eighteen city employees and implementation of a \$2.75 million annual operating budget.

City Hall is a modern (constructed in 1990), 2,000 square feet facility housing the city's general administrative offices, mayor's office, police, and volunteer fire departments. The city clerk serves at the pleasure of the mayor and council handling utility billings, daily receipts and disbursements, correspondence, reports, payroll, meeting agenda, etc.

Assessment: General governmental operations of the city and county appear to be functioning well. Although county office space was expanded by 1500 square feet in 1994, there is still a deficiency of space. The Department of Family and Children Services also needs additional space. The county's public works facilities appear to be adequate for the next 5-10 years. The courthouse needs some physical repair, e.g., wood trim, insulation, etc. All county facilities are believed to be accessible to the handicapped with the exception of the second floor of the courthouse. Thus far, Superior Court judges have agreed to hold court proceedings at another appropriate location when necessary to accommodate handicapped persons. This has saved the county the expense of retrofitting the historic courthouse with an elevator.

The city's municipal offices are adequate for the planning horizon. Both city and county staffing levels appear adequate. Both jurisdictions should, however, give serious consideration to adopting and maintaining a capital budget to plan for the best and most efficient use of equipment and facilities.

The city does not have land development or subdivision regulations to regulate development.

Educational Facilities: Marion County has one elementary school (K-7) and one high school. Overall system expenditures per pupil for the 92/93 school year were \$3,763; 97% of the state average, and local and state pupil/teacher ratios were 17:1. A reportedly higher proportion of local faculty and principals have advanced degrees, Masters or higher, than their colleagues statewide; 60% v. 51%.

Marion County Elementary School was built on Burkhalter Street in 1951. The facility is maintained in good physical condition, but because of changes in instructional techniques, methods and tools is not as efficient as a new educational facility would be. Financial considerations preclude construction of a complete new school, however. Increased student enrollment in recent years has resulted in crowded classroom conditions. In the fall of 1994,

the electorate passed a school bond referendum to construct new classrooms for kindergarten through second grade. This facility is being constructed at a location approximately 1 1/4 mile south-southwest of the city on Pineville Road, and scheduled to be ready for the beginning of the 96/97 school year.

Tri-County High School, Georgia's first consolidated, comprehensive high school, opened in 1976 to serve students in grades 8 - 12 from Marion, Schley and Webster counties. The school is located in the southeast quadrant of the county, approximately seven miles south, southeast of Buena Vista. The facility has been well maintained and is in excellent condition. In 1993, approximately 50% of the students were from Marion County and the balance was evenly split between Schley and Webster Counties. Enrollment went down slightly between the 1992/1993 and the 1993/1994 school years. For the two previous years enrollment was around 800 students. The Board of Education consists of seven members; five are elected from Marion, the host county, while Schley and Webster counties each have one elected member.

Assessment: Local school facilities are in good physical condition. However, there is dissatisfaction among residents of the three participating counties about operations of the high school. The twenty-five year cooperative agreement expires in 2001. Although very serious renegotiations are anticipated, at the present time the apparent differences of opinion/philosophy are believed to be easier to resolve than the financial burden each county would incur by withdrawing from the educational cooperative.

Medical Facilities: After closing of the local hospital in 1991, the Marion County Hospital Authority leased the old hospital building to Columbus Regional Health Care Systems, Inc. This enabled an expansion of the Marion Memorial Nursing Home which now has fifty beds and received a state approved Certificate of Need in May, 1994, for an additional twenty beds. These additional beds are scheduled to be available for occupancy July 1, 1995. This expansion is taking place within the existing building. With the increasing trend of home health care, the nursing home administrator does not believe it possible to justify a capacity above the seventy bed level. Plans do call for a floor space expansion by 1998 to enhance dietary and rehabilitation services.

The facility is licensed for skilled care and intermediate care patients, most of whom come from Marion, Schley, Talbot and Webster Counties. Health care services are provided by 66 employees, fifty of whom work full time. Approximately 45 workers reside in Marion County.

After renovating one wing of the building Columbus Regional Health Care sub-leased it to the Columbus Regional Dialysis Center. This kidney dialysis center was originally open three days a week, but at this writing has to operate six days a week to provide four, hour-long treatments every other day to each of twenty-four patients.

Columbus Regional has also employed a physician recruiting firm to locate a medical doctor to operate a family practice center in another wing of the building. After the initial year of operation the center closed because physicians from Columbus tired of the commute. This will basically be a doctor's office operating from 8:00 - 5:00, and will complement the two medical

doctors and one dentist maintaining local practices.

Assessment: Loss of the local hospital was a severe blow to the community. The nearest hospital is approximately twenty-five miles south of Buena Vista, the county's population center, and is the smallest of the hospitals used by the community. The larger hospitals are thirty-five miles away from the county seat. The community should be responsive to opportunities to further expand the availability of local health care services, and does support current efforts to re-establish a family clinic in Buena Vista.

Absence of a local hospital places additional importance on the value of the county's emergency medical service; personnel, training, scheduling, equipment and vehicle maintenance, etc. With an average of one call a day for EMS, and many of these calls going out-of-county, it is critical that at least two ambulances, appropriately staffed, be available for service at all times. An increasing elderly population and presence of a nursing home place additional strain on EMS. The community must be responsive to departmental needs if this service is to meet the emergency care needs of residents.

Library and Other Cultural Facilities: The local library is one of five in the Chattahoochee Valley Regional Library System¹, part of the organizational structure through which the Georgia Department of Education dispenses state funds for public libraries and their operations.

The 4,300 square feet facility was constructed (opened in 1991) as the result of a 90% grant received from the state Department of Education. The city and county both contributed to the required local cash match. Two part-time librarians share the 35 hours each week the library is open. The card catalog is not computerized, but the regional library is attempting to automate (network) all libraries in the system. The local library does have one personal computer for use by patrons, and one room available for public meetings.

There are 8,000 volumes on the local shelves; however, through membership in the regional library system local patrons have access to the 450,000 volumes in regional system holdings. Annual circulation is currently about 11,600. The local governing board consists of seven members, three appointed by the county, and two each by the city and Board of Education.

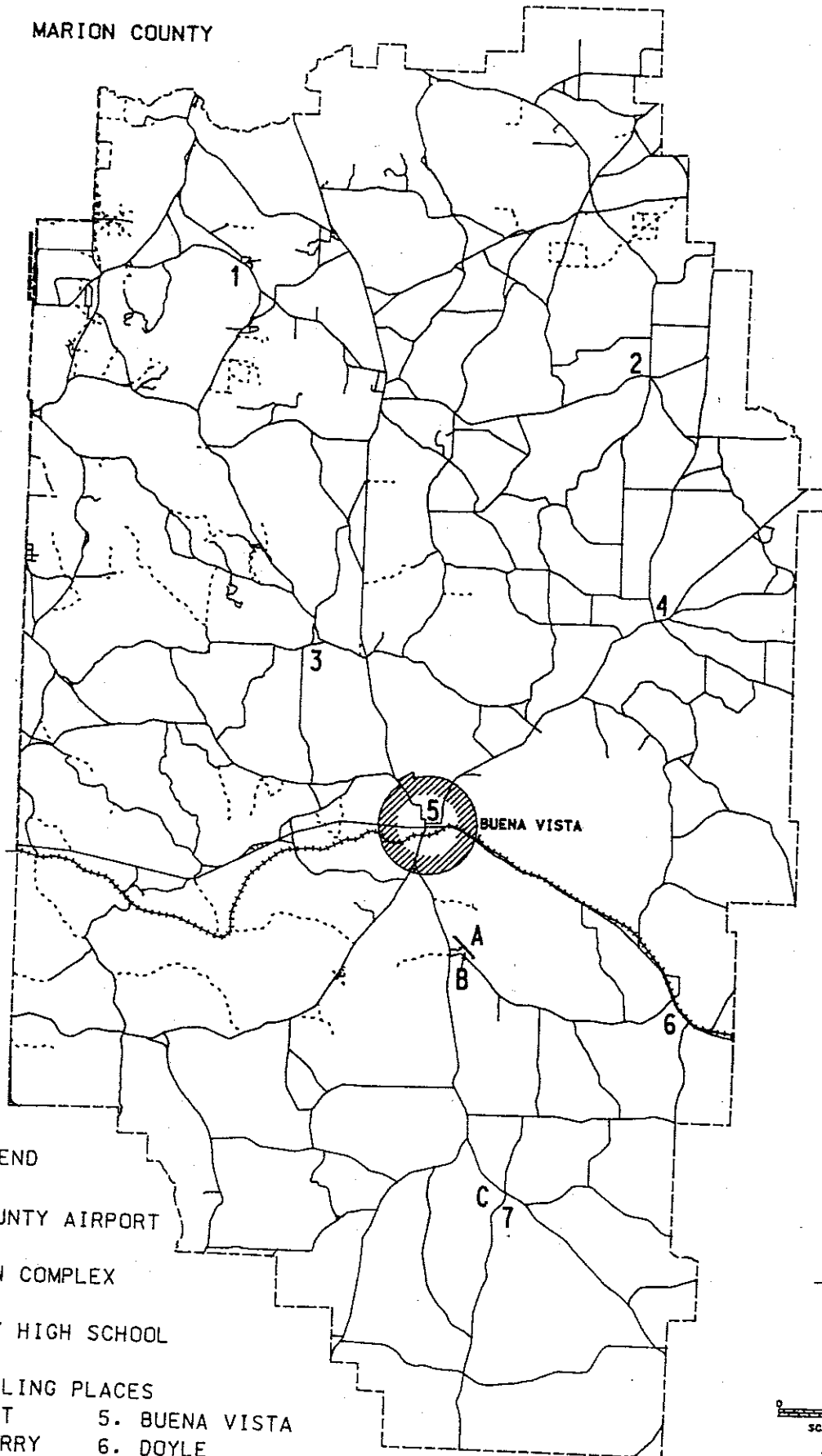
The local library participates in such regional activities and services as children's summer and winter reading programs, six weeks summer film series, seasonal programming throughout the year, interlibrary loan and weekly delivery of materials to the library and schools in the county. Most recently the local library has participated in the Grassroots Arts Council program, a summer program intended to stimulate children's interest in the arts.

Assessment: The community is well pleased with the library facility and the services provided.

¹ Comprised of Chattahoochee, Marion, Muscogee, Stewart and Quitman Counties

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

MARION COUNTY



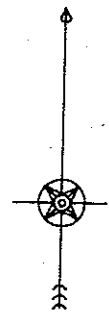
LEGEND

- A. MARION COUNTY AIRPORT
- B. RECREATION COMPLEX
- C. TRI-COUNTY HIGH SCHOOL

POLLING PLACES

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| 1. PINEKNOT | 5. BUENA VISTA |
| 2. FORT PERRY | 6. DOYLE |
| 3. BRANTLEY | 7. DRANEVILLE |
| 4. TAZEWELL | |

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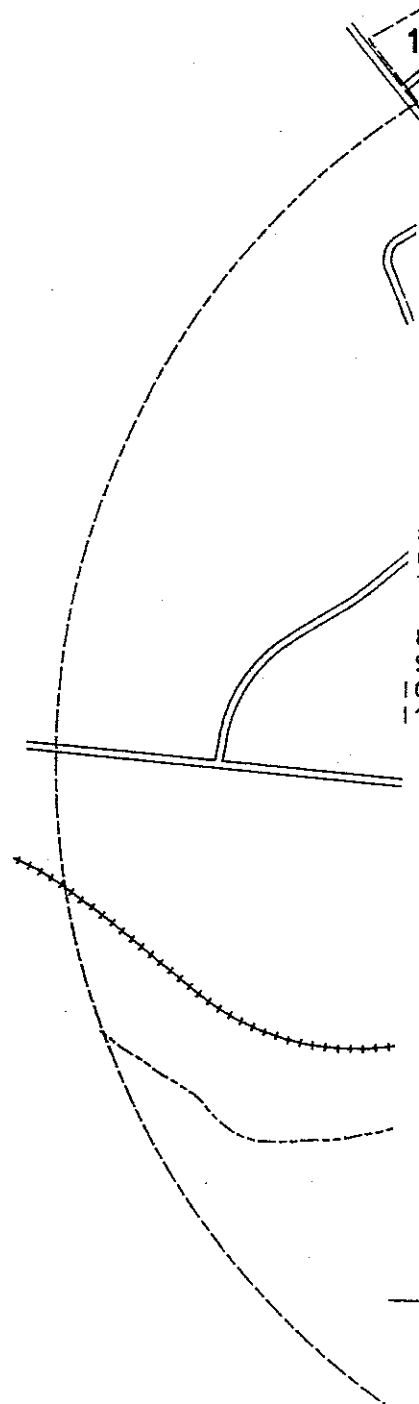
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PREPARED BY:
MIDDLE FLINT RDC

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

BUENA VISTA, GEORGIA

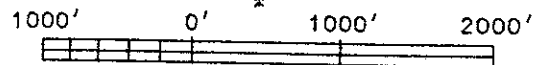
MARION COUNTY

APRIL, 1995



LEGEND

1. MARION COUNTY JAIL
2. MARION COUNTY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
3. CITY PARK
4. POST OFFICE
5. COUNTY ADMINISTRATIVE BLDG./EMS OFFICE
6. SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER
7. MARION COUNTY HEALTH DEPT./DFACS OFFICE/COUNTY EXTENSION OFFICE
8. MARION COUNTY COURTHOUSE
9. LIBRARY
10. BUENA VISTA CITY HALL
11. HEAD START/BOARD OF EDUCATION



SCALE IN FEET

PREPARED BY: MIDDLE FLINT RDC

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The economic development element provides an inventory and assessment of the economic base and labor force of the community. It provides a basis for developing and setting future economic development policies. Analysis and understanding of past and present economic development trends can benefit the community by helping decision-makers make informed decisions regarding the maintenance and enhancement of a high quality of life for both residents and business community members.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Manufacturing was Marion County's largest employment sector at the time of the 1980 Census, accounting for 39% of all resident workers (Table 1). Employment in this sector was roughly evenly distributed between the manufacture of Durable (rubber, concrete, fabricated metal, electrical equipment, etc.) and Non-Durable (food, textiles, apparel, lumber, furniture, paper, etc.) goods. Services was the second largest employment sector with almost one-quarter of the work force. Agriculture and Forestry rounded out the top three sectors with 11% of the labor force.

Among the employed city population in 1980, the largest proportion (37%) worked in Services, with almost half in the Education subsector. Manufacturing was the second largest employer (30%) with balanced employment in the two subsectors. Construction, with 8%, was the distant third largest employment sector.

At the state level Services was the largest sector, but with a more balanced distribution in the five subsectors than was documented at the local level. Manufacturing accounted for the second largest number of workers, (24%) with a disproportional reliance on the manufacture of Non-Durable goods. Retail Trade was the State's third largest sector with 15%.

The three greatest differences in county and state employment in 1980 were in Agriculture, Forestry... where local employment was almost three times the state rate; Manufacturing with local employment fifteen percentiles higher than the state; and a local Retail Trade employment level which was only half of the documented state rate.

Between 1980 and 1990 the county recorded a major reduction in Non-Durable Manufacturing. The loss is attributable to the closing of a furniture manufacturer on the city's north side. This one loss was the major contributor to the county's eleven percentile reduction in manufacturing employment. Nevertheless, it remained the county's largest employment sector. Most of this loss was absorbed by the Retail Trade sector which increased by six percentiles. This increase was the result of stores opening on the Buena Vista square. During the decade total countywide employment reportedly increased by 200 workers, +11%.

The two largest changes in employment of city residents were a ten percentile decrease in Services, and an eleven percentile increase in Retail Trade. The reported loss of 51 residents working in Education was sufficient to account for virtually all the decline in Services employment. As previously stated, redevelopment on the Buena Vista town square fueled increased Retail Trade employment. Between the two censuses city employment in Agriculture, Forestry... increased four percentiles to 6% (17 additional workers). City employment in Construction fell by five percentiles; 26 workers. Over the course of the decade the number of employed city residents reportedly decreased by 37, -7.4%.

The greatest change in state industrial employment during the 1980s was a five percentile decrease in Manufacturing; a change easily absorbed by nominal increases in other sectors.

TABLE 1
EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY
1980, 1990

INDUSTRY	1980					1990				
	MARION		BUENA VISTA		GA	MARION		BUENA VISTA		GA
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Mining	207	11%	12	2%	3%	268	13%	29	6%	3%
Construction	100	5%	40	8%	6%	133	6%	14	3%	7%
Manufacturing (total)	726	39%	149	30%	24%	590	28%	120	26%	19%
Durable Goods	330	18%	78	16%	9%	349	17%	30	6%	8%
Nondurable Goods	396	21%	71	14%	15%	241	12%	90	19%	11%
Transportation	45	2%	7	1%	5%	48	2%	12	3%	5%
Communication and Other Public Utilities	28	1%	8	2%	3%	22	1%	10	2%	3%
Wholesale Trade	59	3%	17	3%	5%	70	3%	16	3%	5%
Retail Trade	133	7%	32	6%	15%	274	13%	77	17%	16%
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	33	2%	14	3%	6%	83	4%	16	3%	7%
Services (total)	429	23%	187	37%	27%	431	21%	126	27%	30%
Business & Repair	18	1%	11	2%	4%	53	3%	11	2%	5%
Personal, Ent. & Rec.	67	4%	38	7%	5%	33	<2	17	4%	4%
Health	130	7%	41	8%	2%	145	%	47	10%	7%
Education	162	9%	89	18%	8%	174	7%	38	8%	8%
Professional & Related	52	3%	8	2%	8%	26	8%	13	3%	6%
Public Administration	115	6%	34	7%	6%	156	8%	43	9%	5%
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT	1,875	100%	500	99%	100%	2,075	99%	463	98%	100%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census
Some percentages do not total 100 due to separate rounding.

Between 1980 and 1990 Marion County's average weekly wage (Table 2) among all industries increased 70%, while the state average increased 71%. As a result, the local average industrial wage continued to be equivalent to 60% of the state average. In 1980, the highest local average wage was credited to Transportation and Public Utilities, over \$100 higher than the second highest local average which was reportedly paid by the Construction sector. Nevertheless, it was still equivalent to only 77% of the state average. Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate essentially tied with Government for the county's lowest paying sector in 1980.

According to 1990 data, Transportation and Public Utilities was still the highest paying local sector, and again \$100 higher than the second highest average wage which this time was the

Government sector. However, according to the source of this information only nine county residents were employed in the Transportation... sector, and local government wage data was not included in Marion County's Government sector. The lowest paying sector at the local and state level was Retail Trade.

Because the law specifically protects the confidentiality of individual employers, data are not disclosed for industry groups in which there are fewer than three establishments and/or in which one establishment accounts for 80 percent or more of employment within the group. This explains the absence of so much wage local data from Table 2.

TABLE 2
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES BY INDUSTRY
1980, 1985, 1990

INDUSTRY	1980		1985		1990	
	MARION	GEORGIA	MARION	GEORGIA	MARION	GEORGIA
Agriculture, Forestry & Fisheries	NA	\$179	\$248	\$225	-	\$276
Construction	\$177	\$264	\$344	\$361	-	\$434
Manufacturing	\$161	\$261	\$193	\$366	-	\$449
Transportation & Public Utilities	\$287	\$372	\$373	\$517	\$535	\$603
Wholesale Trade	\$160	\$337	\$152	\$473	\$216	\$603
Retail Trade	\$136	\$164	\$178	\$208	\$200	\$236
Finance, Insurance & Real Estate	\$131	\$274	\$123	\$423	-	\$543
Services*	\$152	\$214	\$228	\$310	\$195	\$414
Federal, State & Local Government*	\$132	\$287	\$252	\$374	\$443**	\$432
All Industries	\$149	\$248	\$209	\$344	\$253	\$425

*Reflects a major shift in job classification between Services and Government between 1980 and 1990. Consequently, data in the Services and Government categories are not directly comparable between years.

** No local government data was available.

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

County and state level employment and earnings data, and projections, are presented in Tables 3 and 4. Because the source of this data and industrial classifications used differ from those in most other Tables in this section, especially Tables 1 and 2, information is not directly comparable between Tables.

Table 3 reveals a major transformation in county-wide industrial sector employment between 1970 and 1990. In 1970, two-thirds of local employment was distributed in roughly equal proportions among three industrial sectors: Farming - 21%, Services - 21%, and Government - 24%. Two decades later each of these three sectors had followed uniquely different trend lines to the point that neither was a major employer. In 1990, aggregate employment attributable to these three sectors was 39%; less than the 40% credited to Manufacturing.

The twenty-eight percentile increase in Manufacturing is traceable to investments by local industrialists/entrepreneurs. In 1955, one local family began processing poultry. Under local ownership highest employment was approximately 150. In 1980 this manufacturing facility was bought by Cargill and within ten years employment had increased by several hundred. Two other investor-partners began manufacturing wood furniture in 1969, and by the time of the 1990 Census had approximately 250 employees. Employment in the Farming, Services, and Government sectors decreased to counterbalance the tremendous increase in Manufacturing.

At the state level Manufacturing employment decreased in proportionate share of total employment by seven percentiles. This, plus increased statewide employment in Wholesale Trade and Retail Trade indicates passage from the secondary (manufacturing-based) economic sector to the more highly developed tertiary (wholesale and retail trade) economic sector.

The local increase in Manufacturing earnings was less than commensurate with the increase in Manufacturing employment. Consequently, impacts in various sector earnings, expressed as proportional distributions, was not as drastic as was the fluctuation in employment. Perhaps the most noteworthy was how little Farming earnings were affected. The reported proportional decrease in Farming earnings was significantly less than the recorded decrease in employment. It is not known whether this is attributable to a good crop year or whether poultry farming is supplementing Farming earnings to this extent.

The statewide decrease in Manufacturing earnings was commensurate with the decline in Manufacturing employment. This proportional decrease was counterbalance by a nine percentile increase in Services earnings.

The overwhelming trend revealed in the projections (Table 4) is increased local reliance on Manufacturing. The source of Table 4 projected an 85% increase in the number of workers between 1990 and 2015, with 93% of the net increase credited to the Manufacturing sector. Projected growth in manufacturing is so strong that by 2015 all other sectors experience a loss in proportional share of total employment. According to this information, Manufacturing will account for two-thirds of the county's employment and earnings. These projections show little change in state employment and earning distributions over the 25 year period.

TABLE 3

**EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS BY INDUSTRY
MARION COUNTY AND STATE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTIONS
1970 - 1990**

EMPLOYMENT	1970		1975		1980		1985		1990	
	MAR	GA	MAR	GA	MAR	GA	MAR	GA	MAR	GA
Farming	21%	5%	20%	4%	19%	4%	13%	3%	9%	2%
Agricultural Serv.	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	1%	>1%	1%
Mining	0%	>1%	0%	>1%	0%	>1%	0%	>1%	0%	>1%
Construction	3%	5%	2%	5%	5%	5%	2%	6%	5%	6%
Manufacturing	12%	23%	16%	20%	16%	20%	32%	18%	40%	16%
Trans, Comm, & Public Utilities	2%	5%	1%	5%	1%	6%	1%	6%	1%	6%
Wholesale Trade	3%	5%	4%	6%	3%	6%	4%	7%	2%	7%
Retail Trade	11%	14%	11%	15%	12%	15%	12%	16%	11%	17%
Finance, Ins. & Real Estate	2%	5%	2%	6%	2%	6%	1%	7%	1%	7%
Services	21%	17%	14%	18%	9%	18%	15%	20%	14%	23%
Government	24%	20%	30%	20%	32%	19%	20%	17%	16%	17%
EARNINGS	1970		1975		1980		1985		1990	
	MAR	GA	MAR	GA	MAR	GA	MAR	GA	MAR	GA
Farming	24%	3%	28%	3%	2%	>1%	22	2%	18%	2%
Agricultural Serv.	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%	>1%
Mining	0%	>1%	0%	>1%	0%	>1%	>1%	>1%	0%	>1%
Construction	5%	6%	3%	6%	7%	6%	2%	7%	5%	6%
Manufacturing	13%	25%	14%	21%	19%	23%	27%	21%	35%	18%
Trans, Comm, & Public Utilities.	3%	8%	2%	9%	2%	10%	3%	9%	3%	9%
Wholesale Trade	7%	8%	7%	9%	7%	9%	5%	9%	3%	9%
Retail Trade	10%	11%	10%	11%	12%	11%	8%	10%	7%	10%
Finance, Ins. & Real Estate	2%	5%	2%	6%	3%	6%	>1%	6%	1%	7%
Services	13%	13%	9%	15%	11%	16%	14%	18%	13%	22%
Government	22%	20%	25%	20%	37%	18%	20%	17%	16%	16%

Source: Woods and Poole Economics, Inc., 1993. Earnings percentages based on 1982 constant dollars. Some percentages do not total 100 due to separate rounding.

TABLE 4

**EMPLOYMENT AND EARNINGS PROJECTIONS BY INDUSTRY
MARION COUNTY AND STATE PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTIONS
1995 - 2015**

PROJECTED EMPLOYMENT	1995		2000		2005		2010		2015	
	MAR	GA	MAR	GA	MAR	GA	MAR	GA	MAR	GA
Farming	7%	2%	6%	1%	5%	1%	4%	1%	4%	1%
Agricultural Serv.	<1%	<1%	<1%	1%	1%	1%	<1%	1%	<1%	1%
Mining	0%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%	<1%
Construction	5%	6%	5%	6%	5%	6%	4%	6%	4%	6%
Manufacturing	44%	15%	49%	15%	53%	15%	59%	15%	64%	15%
Trans, Comm, & Public Utilities	1%	6%	<1%	6%	1%	6%	<1%	6%	<1%	6%
Wholesale Trade	2%	7%	2%	7%	1%	8%	1%	8%	1%	8%
Retail Trade	11%	17%	11%	17%	10%	17%	9%	17%	8%	17%
Finance, Ins. & Real Estate	1%	7%	1%	7%	1%	7%	1%	7%	<1%	7%
Services	14%	23%	13%	24%	12%	24%	10%	25%	9%	26%
Government	15%	17%	13%	16%	12%	15%	10%	15%	9%	14%
PROJECTED EARNINGS	1995		2000		2005		2010		2015	
	MAR	GA	MAR	GA	MAR	GA	MAR	GA	MAR	GA
Farming	15%	2%	12%	2%	10%	2%	8%	1%	6%	1%
Agricultural Serv.	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	1%
Mining	0%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%	<1%
Construction	5%	6%	5%	6%	5%	6%	5%	6%	4%	6%
Manufacturing	41%	18%	47%	19%	53%	19%	59%	19%	65%	19%
Trans, Comm, & Public Utilities.	2%	10%	2%	10%	1%	10%	1%	10%	1%	10%
Wholesale Trade	3%	10%	2%	10%	2%	11%	2%	10%	2%	10%
Retail Trade	7%	10%	7%	10%	6%	10%	5%	10%	5%	9%
Finance, Ins. & Real Estate	1%	6%	1%	6%	1%	7%	1%	7%	1%	7%
Services	12%	22%	11%	23%	10%	23%	9%	23%	8%	24%
Government	15%	15%	13%	15%	12%	14%	10%	14%	9%	13%

Source: Woods and Poole Economics, Inc., 1993. Earnings percentages based on 1982 constant dollars.
Some percentages do not total 100 due to separate rounding.

According to census data presented in Table 5, occupational employment distributions are very similar at the state and national levels. In 1980, there was only one employment sector in which the two jurisdictions differed by more than one percentile; Machine Operators, Assemblers and Inspectors. In 1990, there were reportedly two sectors which differed by more than one percentile; Precision Production and Repair, and Machine Operators.... In each instance state employment exceeded the national distribution by two percentiles.

There are few similarities in the occupational employment distributions of the local and statewide economies. This is evident from both 1980 and 1990 Census information and encompasses working residents of the city and rural area. In general, the state and national economies have a greater proportion of workers employed in the higher paid occupations, while greater percentages of local workers are employed in lower paid occupations.

TABLE 5
EMPLOYMENT BY OCCUPATION
1980, 1990

OCCUPATION	1980					1990						
	Marion		Buena Vista		GA	US	Marion		Buena Vista		GA	US
Executive/dministrative/ Managerial	105	6%	26	5%	10%	10%	180	9%	31	7%	12%	12%
Professional	115	6%	57	11%	11%	12%	149	7%	44	10%	12%	14%
Technicians and Related	17	1%	11	2%	3%	3%	71	3%	19	4%	4%	4%
Sales	98	5%	12	2%	10%	10%	113	5%	43	9%	12%	12%
Administrative Support	183	10%	55	11%	16%	17%	251	12%	54	12%	16%	16%
Services:	295	16%	99	20%	12%	13%	232	11%	71	15%	13%	14%
Priv Household	28	1%	17	3%	1%	1%	16	2%	8	2%	1%	1%
Protective	15	1%	5	1%	1%	1%	78	4%	11	2%	2%	2%
Other	252	13%	77	15%	10%	11%	138	7%	52	11%	10%	11%
Farm, Forest & Fisheries	243	13%	23	5%	3%	3%	193	9%	23	5%	2%	2%
Precision Production and Repair	213	11%	41	8%	13%	13%	320	15%	76	16%	9%	7%
Machine Operators, Assemblers, & Inspectors	310	17%	76	15%	12%	10%	228	11%	48	10%	9%	7%
Transportation, Material Moving	108	6%	34	7%	5%	5%	200	10%	20	4%	5%	4%
Handlers, Equipment Cleaners, Helpers, Laborers	188	10%	66	13%	5%	5%	138	7%	34	7%	4%	4%
TOTAL EMPLOYMENT	1,875	100%	500	98%	100%	101%	2,075	100%	463	99%	101%	100%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census
U.S. data is from the Statistical Abstract
Some percentages do not total 100 due to separate rounding.

Data presented in Table 6 reveal that relative to the local economy a significantly greater proportion of workers statewide are on the private sector payroll. Fully three-fourths of Georgia workers are employed in the private sector by someone other than themselves. In 1980 and 1990 Marion County lagged this state ratio by seven percentiles, yet the county has not been overly reliant on government sector employment. In 1980, the proportion of Marion County's working residents on the "public sector" payroll was four percentiles higher than the state level; however, the county also had a ratio of self-employed workers which was four percentiles higher than the state level.

The 1990 data reveal a two percentile increase in local workers on the private sector payroll, but a three percentile decrease in the number self-employed. Countywide, total government employment remained proportionally constant, although local government employment reportedly decreased by three percentiles.

The city recorded a significant proportional increase in working residents on the private sector payroll (17 additional workers). This was countered by a twelve percentile decrease in government employment among working city residents. Federal and state employment increased by seventeen jobs, but for unknown reasons local government employment reportedly decreased by 88.

TABLE 6
EMPLOYMENT BY CLASS OF WORKER
1980, 1990

CLASS OF WORKER	1980					1990				
	Marion		Buena Vista		Georgia	Marion		Buena Vista		Georgia
Private Wage and Salary	1,277	68%	314	63%	75%	1,453	70%	331	71%	77%
Government Workers	407	22%	167	33%	18%	460	22%	96	21%	16%
Fed. & State	160	9%	39	8%	10%	251	12%	56	12%	9%
Local	247	13%	128	26%	8%	209	10%	40	9%	7%
Self-Employed	191	10%	19	4%	6%	151	7%	32	7%	6%
Unpaid Family Workers	0	0	0	0	1%	11	1%	4	1%	<1%
TOTAL	1,875	100%	500	100%	100%	2,075	100%	463	100%	100%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Recent censuses have documented an increasing presence of females in the labor force (Table 7). In 1980, females comprised 43% of Marion County's civilian labor force. Although male and female participation increased during the decade, the number of females added exceeded males by a ratio of 2:1, increasing the female share of the labor force to 46% by the time of the 1990 Census. Females also comprised an increased proportion of the county's unemployed; 57% in 1980 and 68% in 1990.

TABLE 7
LABOR FORCE STATUS
1980, 1990

MARION	1980			1990		
	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Civilian Labor Force	1,139	873	2,012	1,242	1,074	2,316
Employed	1,080	795	1,875	1,164	911	2,075
Unemployed	59	78	137	78	163	241
Rate	5.2	8.9	6.8	6.3	15.2	10.4
Armed Forces	5	0	5	28	0	28
Total Labor Force	1,144	873	2,017	1,270	1,074	2,344
Not In Labor Force	588	1,160	1,748	1,995	2,189	4,184
Persons 16 Yrs. or Older	1,732	2,033	3,765	1,995	2,189	4,184

BUENA VISTA	1980			1990		
	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Civilian Labor Force	276	264	540	232	324	556
Employed	264	236	500	198	265	463
Unemployed	12	28	40	34	59	93
Rate	4.3	10.6	7.4	14.7	18.2	16.7
Armed Forces	0	0	0	4	0	4
Total Labor Force	276	264	540	236	324	560
Not In Labor Force	177	403	580	207	319	526
Persons 16 Yrs. or Older	453	667	1,120	443	643	1,086

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Among Buena Vista's working resident population females have assumed an even greater share of the civilian labor force, increasing from 49% in 1980 to 58% in 1990. Females in the labor force increased by 60 during the decade while the number of male workers decreased by forty-

four. Similar to the county data, Buena Vista's female labor force participants have higher unemployment rates than males; 70% in 1980 and 63% in 1990.

Increased female participation in the labor force is a nationwide trend. The 1990 Census documented females comprising 47% of the state labor force and 46% of the U.S. civilian labor force, up from 44% and 45%, respectively, in 1980 (Table 8).

TABLE 8
LABOR FORCE STATUS
GEORGIA AND U. S.
1980, 1990

GEORGIA	1980			1990		
	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Civilian Labor Force	1.379	1.102	2.481	1.738	1.540	3.278
Employed	1.310	1.026	2.336	1.649	1.441	3.090
Unemployed	.070	.076	.145	.090	.099	.188
Rate	5.1%	6.9%	5.9%	5.2%	6.4%	5.7%
Armed Forces	.065	.007	.072	.066	.008	.073
Total Labor Force	1.444	1.109	2.553	1.804	1.547	3.352
Not in Labor Force	.461	1.013	1.474	.550	1.037	1.587
Persons 16 Yrs. or Older	1.906	2.121	4.027	2.354	2.585	4.938
U. S.	1980			1990		
	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
Civilian Labor Force	61.5	45.5	106.9	68.2	56.6	124.8
Employed	57.2	42.1	99.3	64.4	53.5	117.9
Unemployed	4.3	3.4	7.7	3.8	3.1	6.9
Rate	6.9%	7.4%	7.1%	5.6%	5.4%	5.5%
Armed Forces	-	-	1.6	-	-	1.6
Total Labor Force	-	-	108.5	-	-	126.4
Not in Labor Force	18.0	42.9	60.8	21.4	41.8	63.3
Persons 16 Yrs. or Older	-	-	171.7	-	-	194.3

Source: Georgia data from U.S. Census
U.S. data from Statistical Abstract, 1981, 1992

The local community has a significantly lower labor force participation rate than the state or national economies. In 1980, 54% of the Marion County resident population sixteen years of age or older was in the labor force. The 1990 Census documented a two percentile increase. The state labor force participation rate in 1980 was 63%, and increased five percentiles by 1990. Participation rates nationwide were similar to the state rates, 63% and 65%, respectively.

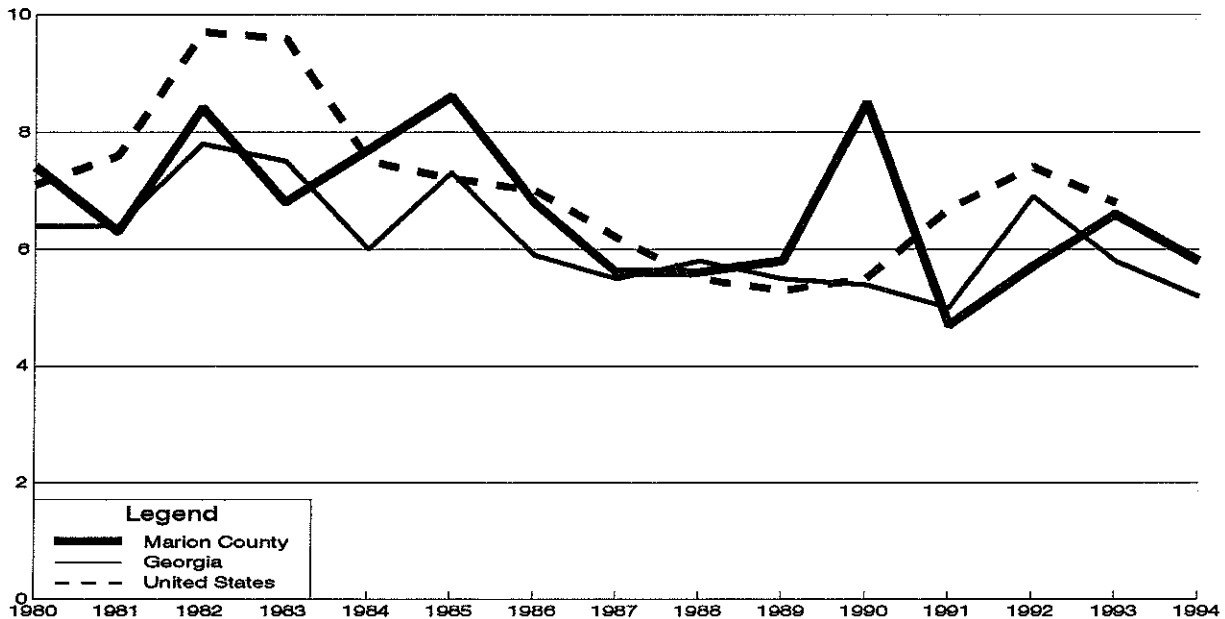
Buena Vista lagged even further behind state and national participation rates at 48% in 1980 and 52% in 1990. Partial justification for the city's lower level of participation is a disproportionately elderly population; nine percentiles higher than the state in 1990. However, this accounts for only a small portion of the difference. Marion County's elderly population was only three percentiles higher than the state in 1990, but the county's labor force participation rate was twelve percentiles lower than the recorded state level.

Although percentages for all jurisdictions are low relative to the total labor force, the community has a lower military participation rate than the state and nation.

As the following graphic shows, local and state unemployment have tracked closely in recent years. Over the fifteen year period 1980 - 1994 inclusive, Marion County has averaged an annual unemployment rate of 6.7%, while the state rate averaged 6.2%. Data of the type presented in Figure 1 is collected systematically each month by the Georgia Department of Labor at the county and state levels. The monthly data is then converted to annual averages.

FIGURE 1

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES 1980 - 1994



Source: County and state data is from Georgia Department of Labor.
U.S. data is from Statistical Abstract.

Unemployment data is not collected for small cities on a monthly basis, but it is collected for virtually all general purpose local governments with each decennial census. This is the only unemployment data by which Buena Vista can be compared with other communities, and it is presented in Table 9. Because the source of this data and method of collection differ from data presented in Figure 1, rate comparisons between the two should not be made.

TABLE 9
UNEMPLOYMENT RATES
1980, 1990

	Marion	Buena Vista	Area*	Georgia	U.S.
1980	6.8%	7.4%	8.4%	6.4%	7.1%
1990	10.4%	16.7%	7.8%	5.4%	5.5%

Source: 1980 and 1990 U.S. Census

*Members counties of the Middle Flint Regional Development Center: Crisp, Dooley, Macon, Marion, Schley, Sumter, Taylor, Webster

According to the 1970 Census, 32% (508) of working Marion County residents commuted to their place of employment outside the county (see Table 8). By the time of the 1980 Census, 42% (661) were commuting to their work place out-of-county. The average among Georgia's 159 counties was 27%. The 1990 census reported out-commuting to twelve counties; some as distant as Meriwether and Bibb. In-commuters were reportedly traveling from eight counties. Presented on the next page (Figure 2) is a graphic representation of commuting patterns recorded on census day in 1980 and 1990.

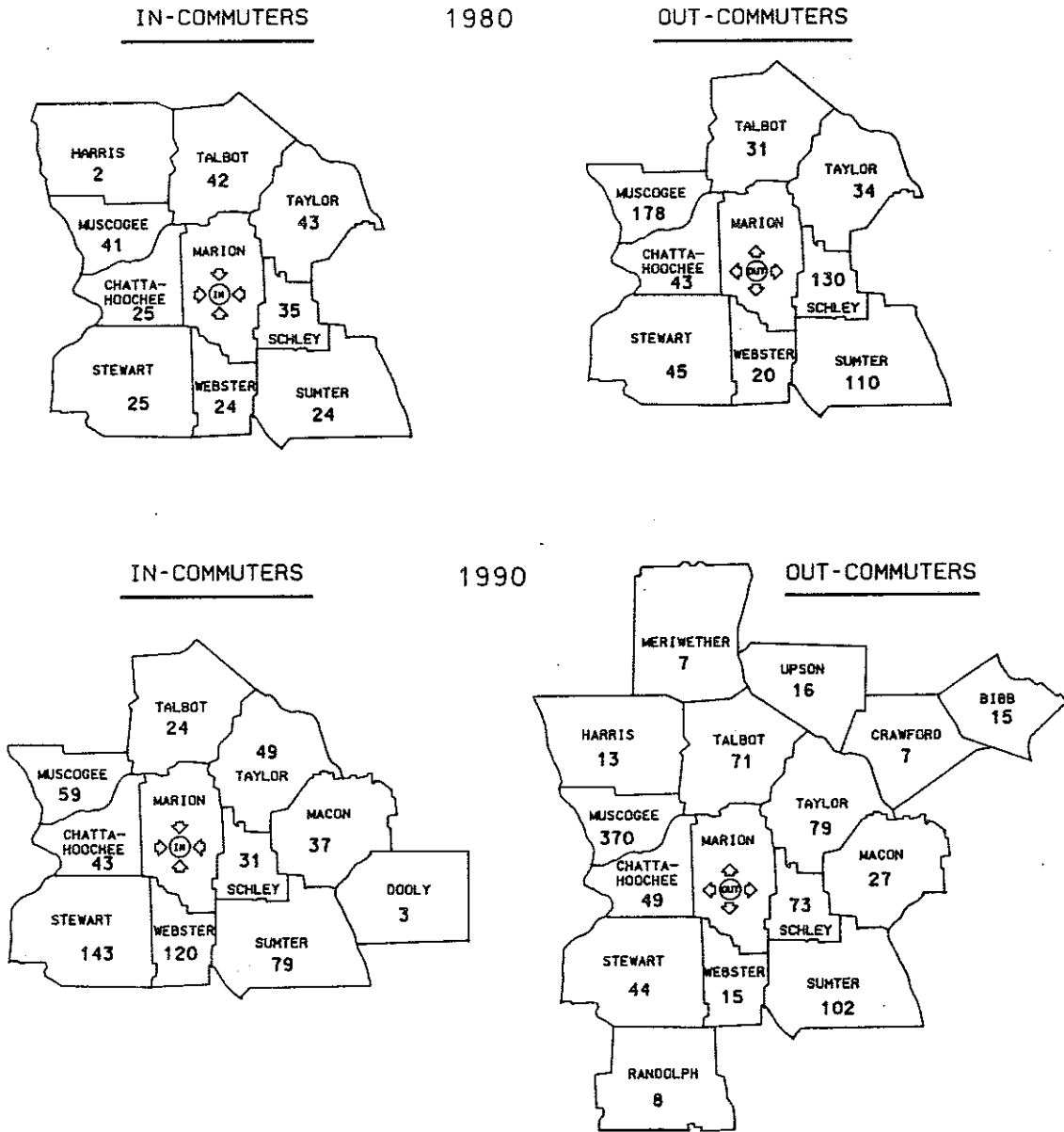
TABLE 10
COMMUTING PATTERNS
1970, 1980

	1970	1980
Workers 16 years of age or over	1,764	1,814
Place of Work Reported	1,604	1,590
Worked in County of Residence	1,096	929
Worked Outside County of Residence	508	661
Place of Work not Reported	160	224

Source: U.S. Census

FIGURE 2

GEOGRAPHIC COMMUTING PATTERNS



Source: 1980 commuting pattern is from *Issues Facing Georgia*, Douglas C. Bachtel, et.al., University of Georgia, Cooperative Extension Service, Vol. 2, No. 2, April, 1985.
 1990 commuting pattern is from 1990 Census of Population and Housing, Summary Tape File 5-5.

Earned income is defined in general terms as compensation received for current employment or work related activity, while unearned income has no relationship to current employment or work status. Earned and passive income data are presented in Tables 11 and 12. Because incomes were not classified consistently in the 1980 and 1990 Censuses, only that data collected at the same date is directly comparable between jurisdictions. Furthermore, the reader should be aware both Tables are replete with double count. Households with more than one source of income are included in the count of each income category. For example, the number of households credited in Table 12 to Marion County in 1990 is 47% higher than the 1990 Census documented; for Buena Vista; 42% higher.

In 1980, 41% of Buena Vista households reportedly received at least some income from Earnings (wage, salary or self employment). Marion County's rate was 48%, the state - 52%. The 1990 Census credited all three jurisdictions with increased percentages of households deriving at least some income from earnings, but the state's percentile increase was more than twice the local rates. The 1990 levels were 48%, 54% and 68%, respectively. This large difference suggests a proportional expansion of the state economy in excess of that experienced at the local and immediately surrounding area.

Between the 1980 and 1990 Censuses local jurisdictions recorded greater increases than the state in the proportions of aggregate income attributable to earnings. Buena Vista is credited with the greatest percentile increase (12), from 69% to 81%. The county increased from 78% to 87%, while the increase statewide was from 85% to 91%.

Local households are more dependent on public assistance (SSI, AFDC and general assistance). In 1980, 5% of Georgia households received public assistance equivalent to 1% of state aggregate household income. A decade later 6% of households received less than 1% of state aggregate household income in the form of public assistance. In 1980, 14% of Buena Vista households received public assistance equivalent to 4.6% of aggregate household income. By 1990, the proportion of households had increased to 19% (only four additional households), while proportional income decreased to 4%. Relevant countywide rates were 10% and 2.8% in 1980 and 16% and 2.8% in 1990. Data reveal the rural area accounted for the local increase in households receiving public assistance.

In 1980, the local mean household public assistance income was higher than the state level: Buena Vista 1.6% higher, Marion County 7.6% higher. According to the 1990 Census local incomes were lower than the state level: 82% and 96%, respectively, of the state level.

Historically lower local earnings relative to the state are revealed in mean household social security incomes. In 1980 city and county SS incomes were equivalent to 84% and 89%, respectively, of reported state medium incomes. In 1990, local SS incomes had decreased to 68% and 78%, respectively.

The number of Marion County households receiving social security payments reportedly increased 10% between 1980 and 1990, while the number receiving public assistance increased 62%. This latter increase is surprising and unexplained, especially in light of such a small

reported increase in Buena Vista (3%). Households in the city receiving social security payments reportedly decreased by 3%. The 1990 Census did document a small increase in elderly residents (65+ years of age) over the 1980 count.

Income projections (Table 13) suggest a gradually increased reliance on Earnings income in Marion County as the state experiences the opposite. These proportional changes are very minor; however, over the course of the twenty-five year planning horizon. The reader should be aware that the source used in Table 13 is not the same as in Tables 11 and 12, and percentages between tables are not directly comparable.

TABLE 11
INCOME BY TYPE, BY HOUSEHOLD
GEORGIA

GEORGIA							
Income By Type	1980			1985	1990		
	Households	Hhld Income*	Mean Hhld Income	Mean Hhld Income	Households	Hhld Income*	Mean Hhld Income
<u>Earnings</u>							
Wage or Salary	1.5M	\$27B	\$18,089	\$26,978	1.9M	\$68.4B	\$35,866
Non-Farm Self-Employment	158,610	\$ 2B	\$12,606	\$16,086	260,242	\$ 5.1B	\$19,566
Farm Self-Employment	54,860	\$298M	\$ 5,429	\$ 7,500	37,442	\$ 358M	\$ 9,572
Social Security	458,723	\$1.7B	\$ 3,661	\$ 5,310	542,518	\$ 3.8B	\$ 6,960
Public Assistance	179,870	\$352M	\$ 1,959	\$ 2,585	194,987	\$ 626M	\$ 3,210
Retirement	-	-	-	-	306,296	\$ 3B	\$ 9,763
Interest, Dividend, Rental	556,127	\$1.6B	\$ 2,865	-	-	-	-
All Other	398,899	\$1.6B	\$ 4,136	-	-	-	-
Aggregate Household Income	-	34.5B	-	-	-	\$81.3B	-

Source: U.S. Census, 1980 and 1990 - incomes are for 1979 and 1989

1985 data are straight-line estimates of Middle Flint RDC

Incomes are in millions (M) or billions (B) of current dollars.

Households receiving more than one type income are counted in each.

TABLE 12

**INCOME BY TYPE, BY HOUSEHOLD
MARION COUNTY, CITY OF BUENA VISTA**

MARION COUNTY							
Income By Type	1980			1985	1990		
	Households	Hhld Income*	Mean Hhld Income	Mean Hhld Income	Households	Hhld Income*	Mean Hhld Income
<u>Earnings</u>							
Wage or Salary	1,138	\$15.1	\$13,294	\$21,801	1,358	\$ 41.2	\$30,307
Non-Farm Self-Employment	189	\$ 1.0	\$ 5,521	\$ 9,737	173	\$ 2.4	\$13,952
Farm Self-Employment	98	\$.6	\$ 6,191	\$ 7,191	41	\$.3	\$ 8,191
Social Security	529	\$ 1.7	\$ 3,250	\$ 4,329	582	\$ 3.1	\$ 5,408
Public Assistance	283	\$.6	\$ 2,108	\$ 2,599	459	\$ 1.4	\$ 3,090
Retirement	-	-	-	-	278	\$ 1.8	\$ 6,589
Interest, Dividend, Rental	351	\$.98	\$ 2,274	-	-	-	-
All Other	357	\$ 1.3	\$ 3,535	-	-	-	-
Aggregate Household Income	-	\$21.28	-	-	-	\$ 50.2	-
BUENA VISTA							
Income By Type	1980			1985	1990		
	Households	Hhld Income*	Mean Hhld Income	Mean Hhld Income	Households	Hhld Income*	Mean Hhld Income
<u>Earnings</u>							
Wage or Salary	350	\$ 3.8	\$10,859	\$16,282	329	\$ 7.1	\$21,704
Non-Farm Self-Employment	39	\$.171	\$ 4,404	\$ 8,190	34	\$.407	\$11,976
Farm Self-Employment	4	\$.067	\$16,735	\$10,288	4	\$.015	\$ 3,840
Social Security	186	\$.57	\$ 3,073	\$3,906	181	\$.858	\$ 4,738
Public Assistance	137	\$.27	\$ 1,991	\$2,314	141	\$.372	\$ 2,636
Retirement	-	-	-	-	70	\$.558	\$ 7,976
Interest, Dividend, Rental	122	\$.65	\$ 5,367	-	-	-	-
All Other	115	\$.35	\$ 3,048	-	-	-	-
Aggregate Household Income	-	\$5.88	-	-	-	\$ 9.3	-

Source: U.S. Census, 1980 and 1990 - incomes are for 1979 and 1989

1985 data are straight-line estimates of Middle Flint RDC

* Incomes are in millions of current dollars.

Households receiving more than one type of income are counted in each.

TABLE 13

**INCOME BY TYPE
1995 - 2015**

INCOME TYPE	1995		2000		2005		2010		2015	
	Marion	GA	Marion	GA	Marion	GA	Marion	GA	Marion	GA
Earnings										
Wage & Salary	42%	59%	45%	59%	47%	57%	48%	56%	50%	55%
Other Labor	4%	6%	4%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%	5%
Proprietor's Inc.	17%	7%	15%	7%	13%	7%	12%	6%	10%	6%
Interest, Dividend and Rental	15%	14%	15%	15%	16%	16%	16%	16%	17%	17%
Transfer Payments	21%	14%	20%	14%	20%	15%	19%	16%	18%	17%

Source: Woods and Poole Economics, Inc., 1993

Marion County and Buena Vista have numerous resources available to assist in developing economic potential. Although the community is generally pleased with these agencies, resources and opportunities, locals continue to develop and expand the resource base. Recent examples are development of a rural water system (not listed), opening of the industrial park (1995) and passage of the freeport exemption (1994). The community must make good use of existing resources and continue to develop local economic potential.

Development Agencies

Marion County Chamber of Commerce
 Marion County Industrial Authority
 Downtown Organization
 Middle Flint Regional Development Center

Programs, Tools and Resources

Marion County/Buena Vista Industrial Park
 Quick-Start available through Georgia Department of Labor
 Job Tax Credit
 Freeport Exemption
 FmHA and SBA financing through Middle Flint RDC

Training Opportunities

Adult Education/GED
 Job Training Partnership Act through Middle Flint RDC

NATURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

The natural environment offers certain opportunities and places some constraints on the way in which land can be wisely used. Soil characteristics, slope of the land, and flood frequency are only a few of the many factors which affect where development can safely and feasibly occur. Other areas such as wetlands, prime agricultural and forest areas, sensitive plant and animal habitats, and historic sites which are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of development should be given consideration in the planning process and provided appropriate protection. The following section examines the county's natural features and areas of environmental, ecological and historic significance.

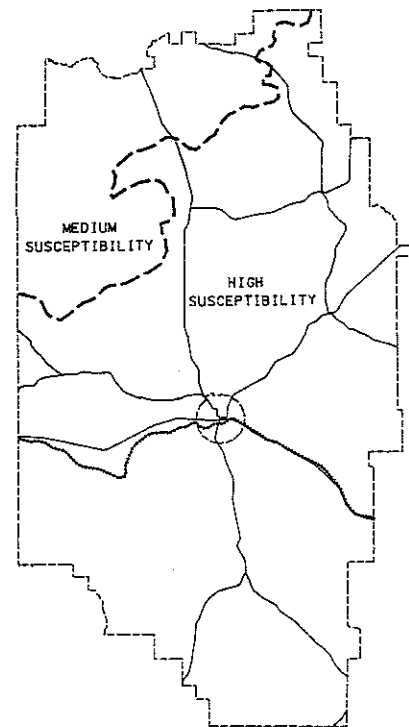
NATURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

Aquifers, Watersheds, Wetlands and Floodplains: Approximately 13,000 square miles (23%) of Georgia's land surface have been identified as the area where the most significant recharge to aquifers occurs. Aquifers are soils or rocks that will yield water to wells. Recharge is the process by which precipitation, primarily in the form of rain, infiltrates soil and rock to add to the volume of water stored in pores and other openings within them. Recharge areas are among those regions in Georgia likely to have the greatest vulnerability to groundwater contamination from the surface and near surface activities of man. Marion County overlies the Cretaceous-Tertiary Aquifer System, and the only areas in the county not included in the state's significant groundwater recharge region are the narrow bands along creeks. Most of the precipitation which falls near creeks flows into these surface waters and out of the county, or evaporates.

Pollution from sources located in recharge areas has the increased potential not only of polluting groundwater in the immediate vicinity of the site, but also of eventually affecting a substantial portion of the aquifer down gradient. Because flow rates are relatively slow in most aquifers the effects of pollution may not appear for years at sites distant from the recharge area.

There is other research which reveals variation in the potential for groundwater pollution. Composite mapping of seven features; depth to water, net recharge, aquifer media, soils, topography, impact of the vadose zone, and hydraulic conductivity yields a pollution susceptibility map which defines the general vulnerability of shallow aquifers to pollution from common land use practices. A review of this map reveals approximately 80% of the county has a "high" susceptibility to pollution; the northwest corner has a medium susceptibility.

Depth to the top of the first major groundwater reservoir ranges from approximately 100 feet in the eastern region to approximately 400 feet in the western region of the county.



There are not any water supply watersheds in Buena Vista or Marion County; neither is the community located within a water supply watershed. Groundwater aquifers are the source of the local water supply and they are accessed by wells.

Wetlands are currently defined by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as "those areas inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas".

Some wetlands are not easily recognized, often because they are dry during part of the year. The Corps of Engineers considers three characteristics of wetlands when making wetland determinations - vegetation, soil and hydrology. A partial listing of some 5,000 plant types common in such areas includes cattails, bulrushes, sphagnum moss, bald cypress, willows, sedges, water plantains, and tupelo gum. An incomplete listing of common soil characteristics includes predominance of decomposed plant material and an odor of rotten eggs. In addition, the U.S. Soil Conservation Service has published a list of some 2,000 (hydric) soils that commonly occur in wetlands. Hydrologic indicators of wetlands include presence of standing or flowing water on a site for seven or more consecutive days during the growing season, and soil that is water-logged.

According to the only source of wetland mapping available at this writing (the National Wetlands Inventory), approximately 3% (7,300 acres) of the county's area is wetland; the vast majority of which is concentrated along creeks. Scale limitations preclude insertion of a legible wetland map in this document. The National Wetlands Inventory should be considered a general guide to wetland location; however, and a conservative representation of actual acreage. On-site investigations must be made for definitive wetland delineation.

There are not any mapped or officially designated floodplains in the community.

Assessment: Based on the 1990 Census, there are approximately 1,600 residential structures in the county's rural area. Virtually all of these are assumed to have individual septic tanks. With relatively rare exception residences in Buena Vista are served by the municipal wastewater treatment system. Although there is no information detailing how many of these rural systems may have been improperly constructed over the years, or how many of the systems may now be malfunctioning, these septic tanks would seem to be the greatest threat for aquifer contamination in Marion County. This threat has not been quantified, however. This potential, plus the fact that approximately 80% of the county is a significant groundwater recharge area makes compliance with chapter 391-3-16-.02, Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources all the more critical. These planning criteria, enforced by the Marion County Health Department, include minimum lot sizes for installation of septic tank drain field systems serving new homes and mobile home parks.

It is important that the Health Department receive the support needed to make proper inspection of septic tank systems. One supportive action taken recently (May, 1994) by the county has been institution of a building permit program whereby all housing units constructed or placed in the rural area must be permitted, in writing, by the county prior to construction/placement. The Health Department can use this information to cross-reference whether all new septic systems are being inspected pursuant to applicable Environmental Planning Criteria.

Because of pollution susceptibility findings the State's Environmental Planning Criteria also regulate synthetic liners and leachate collection systems in sanitary landfills, prohibit land disposal of hazardous wastes, regulate treatment, storage, and disposal of hazardous waste and handling of same, above-ground chemical or petroleum storage tanks, new agricultural waste impoundments, spray irrigation of wastewater and land application of wastewater sludges.

Because of the agricultural activity in the county underground fuel storage tanks are common throughout the rural area. Such underground facilities, regardless of use, are regulated by the Georgia Underground Storage Act. Farm advocacy organizations educate members and aerial applicators of proper farm chemical mixing and application procedures.

Generators of industrial wastewater usually seek plant sites from which raw sewage can be discharged into a municipal treatment system. Presently, there is only one industrial wastewater generator in the community. Cargill treats its own wastewater discharge pursuant to applicable regulatory standards. None of the other local industries use water in their respective manufacturing processes. Their wastewater discharge is classified as domestic and is "treated" by a septic tank or the city's sewage treatment plant.

The U.S. Clean Water Act requires a permit be secured by anyone prior to dredging or placing fill in a wetland, and prescribes severe penalties for anyone found guilty of violating provisions of the Act. Under current law the final determination of whether an area is a wetland and whether a permit is required for the proposed action must be made by the U.S. Corps of Engineers.

A relatively small proportion of the local land area is currently classified as wetland. Inquiries made of local government concerning wetlands will be referred to existing regulatory authorities. Marion County and Buena Vista lack the technical resources to assist developers with wetland delineation.

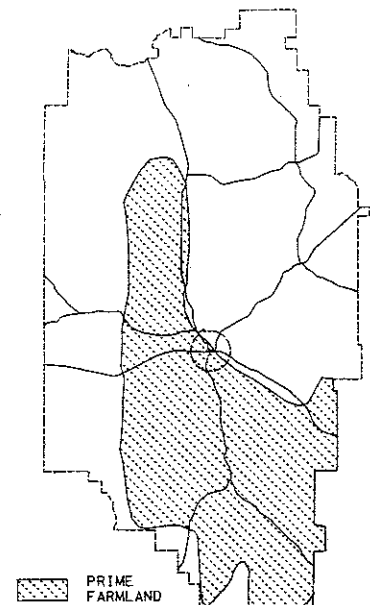
Steep Slopes: Steep slopes are considered to be grades of 25% or greater. Marion County does have a limited acreage that meets this definition; roughly estimated at 1,000 to 1,200 acres, or .5% of the county's total area. The majority of the acreage is located approximately 3 1/4 miles east of Buena Vista, while the much smaller balance is approximately 5 miles northwest of the city.

Assessment: Because steep slopes in Marion County are of such limited acreage and are believed to be in timber production, they are not perceived locally to be a resource in need of protection. Regardless of slope; however, the Georgia Erosion and Sedimentation Act requires permits be issued for land-disturbing activities affecting 1.1 acres or more. Land disturbing activities are defined as any activity which may result in soil erosion from water or wind and the movement of sediments onto lands within the state, including, but not limited to clearing, dredging, grading, excavating, transporting, and filling of land. There are exceptions, including farming and mining, both of which are affected by other statutes or regulations.

Both Marion County and Buena Vista have adopted erosion and sedimentation control ordinances which conform with applicable state law/regulations, and consequently have authority to issue permits for appropriate erosion and sedimentation control plans. Such plans are reviewed by the local Soil Conservation Office for recommendation prior to local government action. Local issuing authorities can facilitate the process for appropriate development. Otherwise, permit applications must be submitted to and reviewed at the state level often resulting in considerable delay.

Prime Agricultural and Forestland: Prime farmland is defined by the U. S. Department of Agriculture as being that land best suited to producing food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops. It produces the highest yields with minimum inputs of energy and money, and farming it results in the least damage to the environment. Prime farmland is of major importance in satisfying the nation's short- and long-range needs for food and fiber. Even in municipal settings it is important because it possesses physical characteristics most conducive to non-agricultural development. Any particular site is classified as prime farmland on the basis of soil characteristics, not current land use.

Marion County is located on the northwest fringe of the state's belt of prime farmland. A lengthy segment of this belt covers southeast and south-central Marion County, with a narrow band extending north into the west-central region of the county. Local prime farmlands are of the Dothan, Greenville, Nankin, Orangeburg, and Red Bay soil series. It is estimated that approximately 40% of the county is comprised of prime farmland. By comparison, only 21% of Georgia's and 15% of the nation's total land areas are classified as prime agricultural land.



Approximately 81% (190,993 acres) of the county area is in commercial timber production, compared to 65% statewide. Of this local acreage, 46% is owned by the forest industry, and 54% is in smaller, private ownership. Major forest types in Marion County are hardwood (53%), Pine (36%) and Oak-Pine (11%).

Assessment: Prime agricultural land is not defined by land use, but by the soil's characteristics and capabilities. The soil characteristics which are so conducive to efficient food and fiber production are the same features which make this resource attractive for residential, commercial, industrial and other land uses. Consequently, there is competition among the various economic sectors for prime agricultural land. The agricultural sector rarely wins in such head-to-head competition because virtually all other land uses yield a much higher and immediate financial return to the investor/owner. Although the county is not now experiencing the kinds of development pressures which threaten this resource, the county should keep a watchful eye on the conversion of prime farmland to uses other than agricultural production. It is very rare for any land converted to a nonagricultural use to revert to agricultural production. The county should consider whether imposition of development standards is an appropriate course of action for protection of this natural resource.

Timberland is also a valuable asset and resource in Marion County. It is not believed; however, to be threatened by the activities of man for the foreseeable future.

Plant and Animal Habitats: There are reportedly three animal species and two plant species which are classified as Endangered, Threatened or considered to be rare element occurrences in Marion County.

1. **American Alligator (Alligator mississippiensis)** A huge, rough-backed reptile with a broad rounded snout. Coloration is black, but some light markings may be present. Adults range from 6-12 feet in length. Preferred habitats are river swamps, lakes, bayous, marshes in Gulf and Atlantic states. Heavy poaching by collectors of commercial skins contributed to their decline, along with habitat losses and drainage of wetlands. Protection has resulted in increased population to the point that in some areas of Georgia they have become a nuisance to landowners. Local sightings have been documented as well as in virtually all Georgia counties below the fall line. Status - Endangered.
2. **Southern Bald Eagle (Haliaeetus leucocephalus)** Brown with a strikingly white head, appearing bald at a distance, this raptor has a wingspan of six feet. Inhabits inland waterways and estuarine systems. Main diet is fish and occasionally birds and mammals. The Bald Eagle requires suitable wetland areas for hunting, and undisturbed lakeshore or coastal regions in which large trees for roosting and nesting are available. As a wetland species, the Bald Eagle has long suffered from habitat destruction. Illegal shooting and disturbance of nesting areas have also played a significant part in the species dwindling numbers. Although there are apparently no documented local sightings, all of Georgia is included in the bird's habitat range. Status - Endangered.
3. **Red-cockaded Woodpecker (Picoides borealis)** A gregarious, non-migratory species with black on the tip of the head, conspicuously white cheeks, and sides spotted with black. Average length is 8.5 inches. The bird feeds in the upper regions of large pines covering large areas in the course of a day. Nesting is tied very closely to overmature pines infected with red heart disease. Understory vegetation less than five

feet in height is generally preferred. Population declines have resulted primarily from reduction of pine forests with trees 60 years old or older. Management for the species is usually viewed as incompatible with economic use of the forest. Fort Benning Military Reservation selectively manages its Red-cockaded population. Although there are apparently no documented local sightings, all of Georgia is included in the bird's habitat range. Status - Endangered.

4. **Nestronia, Indian Olive (*Nestronia umbellula*)** A small, colonial, deciduous, shrub up to three feet tall. The leaves are arranged oppositely on the stem, narrowly ovate to elliptic, and 1 1/2 to 2 1/2 inches long. Flowering period: Apr-May; fruiting period: July. This species may be parasitic on the roots of pines and oaks. Primarily found in dry, open, upland forest of mixed hardwood and pine. Local sightings have been documented. Status - Threatened
5. **Arkansas Oak (*Quercus Arkansana*)** - rare element occurrence - no information available.

Assessment: Neither Marion County nor Buena Vista have the resources to monitor developments which may negatively impact any of these species, and will therefore depend on intergovernmental review of projects receiving public financial assistance to determine possible adverse impacts.

Parks and Recreation Areas: No federal, state or regional park or recreation area is located in Marion County or Buena Vista. However, there is great potential for a regional recreation area in Marion County.

In the early 1970s a considerable amount of time and money was expended investigating the possibility of a Kinchafoonee Reservoir (lake) Development. With a dam constructed at a specific Webster County site, approximately 4,500 acres would have been flooded at a mean sea level elevation of 425 feet - normal pool level. Approximately 740 acres of this flooded area would have extended approximately three miles into southwest Marion County along Kinchafoonee Creek. The northernmost point of the lake would have been five miles from Buena Vista. The lake could aid in flood control and be a valuable, regional recreational facility. In fact, in the original study a large recreation area was proposed for a portion of the Marion County shoreline.

Assessment: The original Kinchafoonee Lake proposal failed to get the necessary federal financial support. Development today would still take federal financing, but would generate enormous economic impact for the region, especially because of its accessibility from the Albany and Columbus metropolitan areas. It is recognized that there are numerous environmental and financial hurdles which would have to be overcome on a project of this scope, but development of this type would have a tremendous, positive impact on the community and region. Project development should be pursued.

Scenic Views and Sites: The community is blessed with an aesthetically pleasing environment. There are numerous attractive vistas across vast expanses of forested elevations.

Assessment: Though perhaps not of a nature in and of themselves to constitute the foundation for local tourism, these and other sites make positive contributions to the local quality of life. However, none of these resources are believed to warrant protection based solely on their scenic value.

Soil Types: Marion County soils are predominantly ($\pm 80\%$) loamy sand, and are comprised of four soil associations. North of GA 26 the associations, in descending order of acreage are: the Troup-Lakeland Association and Troup-Cowarts-Ailey Association with roughly equivalent acreages; Orangebury-Troup-Lucy ; and Nankin-Cowarts-Ailey. South of GA 26, again by descending areages: Orangebury-Troup-Lucy (virtually all of the southeast quadrant); Troup-Cowarts-Ailey; Nankin-Cowarts-Ailey; and Troup-Lakeland. There is also a fifth association, Bibb-Iuka, which has been mapped along some creeks in the southern part of the county.

Assessment: Some loamy sand soil series are not well suited for cultivated crops, although they may respond well to fertilizer and good management practices if high moisture levels are maintained. These particular classifications are better suited for pasture and timber production, and are generally located in the north half of the county. Marion County does have other loamy sand soil series which are suited to cultivated crops, especially if soil moisture is high, and these are located generally in the south half of the county. Such soils are also suited to pasture and timber production.

Loamy sands are generally well suited for such developments as dwellings, light industries, septic tank filter fields, local roads and streets, etc. Limitations to such physical developments which may exist at any given site are so minor they are usually easily overcome.

Historic Resources: Historic resources are buildings, sites, districts, objects or structures associated with events or persons significant in our past, or that embody unique or distinctive construction or artistic value, or have yielded or are likely to yield information important in prehistory or history. Such resources must generally be at least fifty years of age to be considered historically significant.

A definitive historic resources survey of Marion County has not been performed. However, a preliminary survey performed in the mid-1970s, with an accuracy rating of 40%, documented 650 structures and sites of potential historic significance. This survey was never validated, and in the intervening period many of the identified structures are believed to have been destroyed by neglect or the willful act of man. A windshield survey performed in February, 1994, by the Middle Flint Regional Development Center Historic Preservation Planner revealed 515 resources in the county. Most identified resources in Marion County are located in rural areas with a potential historic district in Buena Vista, and a possible multiple resource listing in Tazewell, the previous county seat.

At this writing, five local structures or sites are listed on the National and State Registers of Historic Places:

Fort Perry site
Reference number 75000601
Listed on the National Register 7/30/75

Old Marion County Courthouse
Reference number 80001116
Listed on the National Register 9/18/80

Marion County Courthouse
Reference number 80001115
Listed on the National Register 9/18/80

Shiloh-Marion Bapt. Church & Cemetery
Reference number 84001159
Listed on the National Register 5/17/84

Champion-McGarrah Plantation (Merritt Farm)
Reference number 84001156
Listed on the National Register 6/28/84

One other site has received substantial statewide recognition for its eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places: Pasaquan - a four acre complex noted for brilliantly executed and brightly painted walls, pagodas, and outdoor sculpture.

Several other properties are eligible for listing on the National Register, including districts comprising downtown Buena Vista and peripheral residential areas within the city limits. Currently, the Ables House, three blocks east of downtown, is pursuing a National Register listing as well as federal and state tax incentives offered for the rehabilitation of historic properties. The historic significance of the Ables House is primarily associated with its turn-of-the century style architecture and its representation of African-American heritage.

There are five markers which identify historic sites in the community. The following are the texts as they appear on the markers:

Fort Perry - 1813 (098-1) GA. 41, twelve miles north of Buena Vista

One half mile due east lies the site of Fort Perry, along the Old Federal Road. A stockade fort, defended by block houses, this post was ordered erected by General John Floyd, of Camden County, as he led a body of 400 Georgia Militiamen through this friendly Indian country to fight the Red Sticks across the Chattahoochee river in Alabama territory. Completed in October 1813, it was named in honor of Commandant Oliver Hazard Perry, Naval hero of the War of 1812, whose message from the Battle of Lake Erie that "We have met the enemy and they are Ours" gave him immortal fame.

Old Federal Road (098-2) GA. 41, twelve miles north of Buena Vista

The road crossing east and west here is the Old Federal Road, western Georgia's first vehicular thoroughfare. Beginning at Fort Hawkins (now Macon), it led across the Creek Indian Country to the Alabama River above Mobile. Permission to open the trace was granted by the Indians in 1805. The road long served as an emigrant and post route to the West. Fort Perry, one-half mile due east, was established by General John Floyd's army when it came this way during the Creek War of 1813-14. Lafayette travelled this road to Alabama in 1825. He spent the night of March 30 at Spain's Tavern near Fort Perry.

New Courthouse - 1850 (098-3) on the courthouse square in Buena Vista

Built in 1850 of locally made brick, this is one of the two courthouses standing in Marion County. The other built in 1848 is at Tazewell. The first courthouse was at Horry. When the county seat was moved here the town was called Pea Ridge. Wishing a new name the citizens chose Taylor, for Gen. Zach. Taylor, but found there was already a Taylor Georgia, then came news of a Mexican War victory at Buena Vista and this name was chosen. Pea Ridge was one mile from the Uchee Trail used by Indians to carry trading goods 300 miles from Alabama to Savannah.

Old Courthouse - 1848 (098-4) GA 137 in Tazewell.

This courthouse, built in 1848 at a cost of \$1,637 replaced one built in 1839 and burned in 1845. The courthouse now in use was built at Buena Vista, then Pea Ridge, in 1850 when the county seat was moved. The first courthouse in Marion County was at Horry. Members of Marion Lodge No. 14 F. & A.M. established in 1840 have met in this courthouse since its construction. Prior to this they met in the courthouse that was burned. This courthouse now marks the exact center of the new city limits established by incorporation in 1953.

Church Hill (098-5) GA. 41, twelve miles south of Buena Vista.

This name was given to the large settlement here because of its many churches. Shiloh Baptist, still active, was constituted in 1853, Smyrna Presbyterian, constituted in 1838, was active until 1925. Church Hill Methodist was here from 1838 until 1898. The Christian Union Church operated from 1840 to 1870. The famous Old St. Mary's Road from Columbus to St. Mary's, on the coast, passed on the west side of Smyrna Church and in front of the others. The old Mt. Pisqah Free Will Baptist Church was nearby. This section, known as Cut-Off District, originally part of Stewart County, was added to Marion County in 1847.

William Bartrum (1739 - 1823) was the first native-born American artist-naturalist. In March, 1773, he left Philadelphia to travel through Georgia and Florida with the financial backing of a wealthy Englishman, to collect and send to his patron all the curious plants, seeds and other natural productions he found, and to draw birds, reptiles, insects and plants on the spot. Bartrum's published record of his journey is regarded by some as the most important and beautiful description of the southeast United States during the eighteenth century. Mr. Bartrum returned to Philadelphia in 1777. The route (Bartrum's Trail) he took through Marion County is recognized by a marker placed by the Garden Club of Georgia near the Old Federal Road.

Assessment: A comprehensive historic resource survey of Buena Vista and Marion County is needed to determine how many historic resources survive. Such a survey will help locate and identify potential historic properties and districts, and can be used to generate a development history of communities that were unable to survive the test of time, e.g., Draneville, White Water, Oakland, Doyle, Five Points, Pea Ridge, Juniper, Putnam and Pineville. This information may revive an interest in community heritage and result in a heightened level of research into local genealogy. It can also result in consideration of development options before irreplaceable resources are destroyed. The community should use the information generated to devise the means to protect the county's remaining historic resources.

LAND USE

The following is an inventory and assessment of existing land use in Marion County. A windshield survey of land uses was conducted in the spring and summer of 1994. Two primary products result from a typical land use survey: (1) a map depicting existing land uses, and (2) statistics describing the amount of land in each land use category. A knowledge and understanding of how land is presently being used establishes the foundation for the preparation of future land use plans which are also included in the following section.

EXISTING LAND USE

A land use survey of Marion County, all-inclusive, was performed in the spring and summer of 1994. Every public right-of-way was traveled for the purpose of recording and mapping the different types of land uses. All sites were assigned to one of the eight following land use classifications:

1. **Agriculture/Forestry:** This category is for land dedicated to farming (fields, lots, pastures, farmsteads, specialty farms, livestock production, etc.), aquaculture, or commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting.
2. **Commercial:** This category is for land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service, and entertainment facilities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building.
3. **Industrial:** This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction facilities, or other similar uses.
4. **Park/Recreation/Conservation:** This category is for land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses which are accessible to the general public. These areas may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers, and similar uses.
5. **Public/Institutional:** This category includes certain state, federal, or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Examples of institutional land uses include colleges, churches and cemeteries, hospitals, etc. Government uses in this category would include: city halls or government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc. Facilities that may be publicly owned, but would more accurately be classified in another land use category should not be included in this category. For instance, parks or recreational facilities would be included in the Park/Recreation/Conservation category; landfills in the Industrial category; and general office buildings containing government offices in the Commercial category.
6. **Residential:** Predominant uses of land in the residential category are single family and multi-family dwelling units.
7. **Transportation/Communication/Utilities:** This category includes such uses as power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, public transit stations, telephone switching stations, airports, port facilities or other similar uses.
8. **Undeveloped/Unused:** This category is for land that is not developed for a specific use, or land that was developed for a particular use but which has been abandoned for that use. This category includes woodlands or pasture land (not in agricultural crop, livestock, or commercial timber production), undeveloped portions of residential subdivisions and industrial parks, water bodies (lakes, rivers, etc.), and locations of structures that have been vacant for some time and allowed to become deteriorated or dilapidated.

TABLE 1
EXISTING LAND USE
RURAL MARION COUNTY
1994

LAND USE	1994 ACREAGE	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL AREA
Agriculture/Forest	222,269	96%
Commercial	50	.02%
Industrial	350	.15%
Park/Recreation/ Conservation	20	.008%
Public/Institutional	207	.09%
Residential	1633	.7%
Transportation/ Communication/Utilities	3,533	1.5%
Undeveloped/Unused	3,500	1.5%
Total	231,562*	100%

* This acreage is exclusive of Buena Vista's 2038 acre incorporated area. Marion County's total area is 365 square miles - 233,600 acres.
Source: Land use acreage estimations from Middle Flint RDC Survey, Spring-Summer, 1994

Agriculture/Forest is by far the predominant land use in Marion County, accounting for 96% of the total area. The vast majority of acreage in this land use category is in forest/woodlands. International Forest Seed Company owns and operates a 130± acre nursery on GA 26 east. Because this acreage is devoted to growing pine seedlings, it is here considered to be an agriculture/forest land use rather than commercial.

At the time of the survey there were twenty-seven **Commercial** sites accounting for fifty rural acres. The two largest commercial acreages were the Silver Moon complex (twenty acres) and the grocery (five acres) in the Oakland community; collectively accounting for half of this category.

There were two sites classified as **Industrial** land uses. Oakcrest Lumber (ten acres) and the sand mine (340 acres) on the county's northeast boundary.

Park/Recreation/Conservation land uses totaled twenty acres. These sites include the campground on GA 41 south, a ten acre softball/baseball complex adjacent to the airport, and the private baseball field on Pineville Road.

Churches and cemeteries account for seventy percent of the rural area's **Public/Institutional** land use. Some sixty-four church and/or cemetery sites total approximately 145 acres. This land use includes eight institutional sites, the largest (55 acres) being Tri-County High School. The other sites are six polling places, (which excludes the one Buena Vista site), and the one fire station (Oakland) in place at the time of the survey.

Residential is the fourth largest land use in the rural area, accounting for 1633 acres. The 562 manufactured housing sites were estimated to average .75 acre, and the conventionally constructed, single-family unit was estimated to average 1.25 acres. The source of these housing unit counts was the 1994 survey. This acreage is more heavily concentrated in the north half of the county (North Buena Vista Census Division - see lower half of page 12).

The second largest land use is the **Transportation/Communication/Utilities** category. The rural road network accounts for 90% (3,195 acres) of this total, and railroad right-of-way another 3% (123 acres). The Marion County airport has 206 acres, a private landing strip in the north part of the county another five acres, while the balance consists of telephone switching stations, radio towers, etc.

The **Undeveloped/Unused** land use category poses the single greatest difficulty in acreage estimation and mapping. The local Consolidated Farm Service Agency reports that in 1994 there were 3,132 acres in an agricultural set-aside; a management program designed to limit production of some crops by leaving a pre-determined acreage out of cultivation. Most of this acreage looks little different from other agricultural lands which have been "vacated or abandoned", the primary definition used for this land use classification. Hence, the windshield survey so useful in determining other land uses is of little value in this assessment.

Marion is one of the counties in the state for which a soil survey has not been published. In the absence of such a resource there is little reliable information available for estimating the acreage that is not suitable for development. Even some acreage so classified, e.g., wetlands at 7,300 acres, is in timber production and would not be classified as unused.

Applicable definitions include water surface area as an undeveloped/unused land use. After reviewing the county's eleven, 7.5 minute, USGS quadrangle maps, some of which were quite dated, it was determined that lakes and ponds account for an estimated 300 acres of surface area, including that portion of Juniper Lake which is in Marion County.

Without individual, on-site investigations it is impossible to determine whether some acreages have been, or are waiting to be re-planted in pines; especially such areas which are adjacent to legitimately "unused" sites. There are unused sites interspersed with agriculture/forest lands, and it is virtually impossible to distinguish the difference within a reasonable time period. Hence, using these identified acreages the undeveloped/unused category has been rounded to 3,500 acres for presentation in the accompanying table, although this is known to be grossly underestimated. This acreage is not differentiated from agriculture/forest on the accompanying existing land use map.

Assessment: Marion County has never been heavily populated, in large part because of its proximity to Columbus, a river town with access to the world's shipping lanes. Today, proximity to the metropolitan area is having the opposite effect as Marion County is experiencing population increase in that portion of the community nearest Columbus; spillover resulting from development pressures caused by a large population base.

There is little in the way of unique features to describe the land use patterns of rural Marion County. Much of the northern part of the county has sandy soils which is generally less forgiving on agricultural production than timber production. Hence, there is a greater proportion of forested acreage in the north while the southern half has the majority of the county's agricultural production acreage.

Only fifty acres of the rural area are in commercial land use; .02% of total rural acreage. Two of the twenty-seven sites account for half of this total. The other twenty-five are primarily mom and pop stores, auto repair/body shops, beauty shops and the like scattered sparsely throughout the countryside. The majority of these sites are in the northern half of the county.

Very little of the community's industrial base is located in the rural area. A sand mine on the county's northern boundary accounts for 98% of this land use category, and a hometown wood manufacturer, Oakcrest, in south-central Marion County, accounts for the ten acre balance.

Typical of small, rural counties there is very little recreational acreage in the county, and all that does exist is in the southern half. Population growth is now occurring in the county's northwest quadrant.

Churches and cemeteries are scattered throughout the rural area and account for 70% of the public institutional category. Many of the cemeteries are no longer maintained in association with a specific church because the congregation either disbanded or consolidated with another church.

Residential acreage is the most common "developed" acreage in the rural area, but is so sparse that the county has a definite rural feel. The northern and southern halves (rural census division) of the county have been relatively equally populated (55% - 45%, respectively) during the 1970-1990 time period, but the northwest quadrant is the only part of the rural area now experiencing significant population growth. The only public infrastructure in this area is the roadway which will need increasing attention in the very near future.

The most common transportation/communication/utility feature in the rural area is the 439 miles of public roadway. Not as obvious are the eighteen miles of railroad track, 2.4 miles of which are in Buena Vista, which cross the full width of the county. The nearest developed areas of the state are generally east and west of Marion county, which explains the east-west direction of this rail line.

Existing Land Use Marion County, Georgia

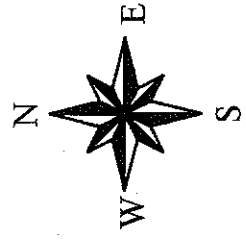
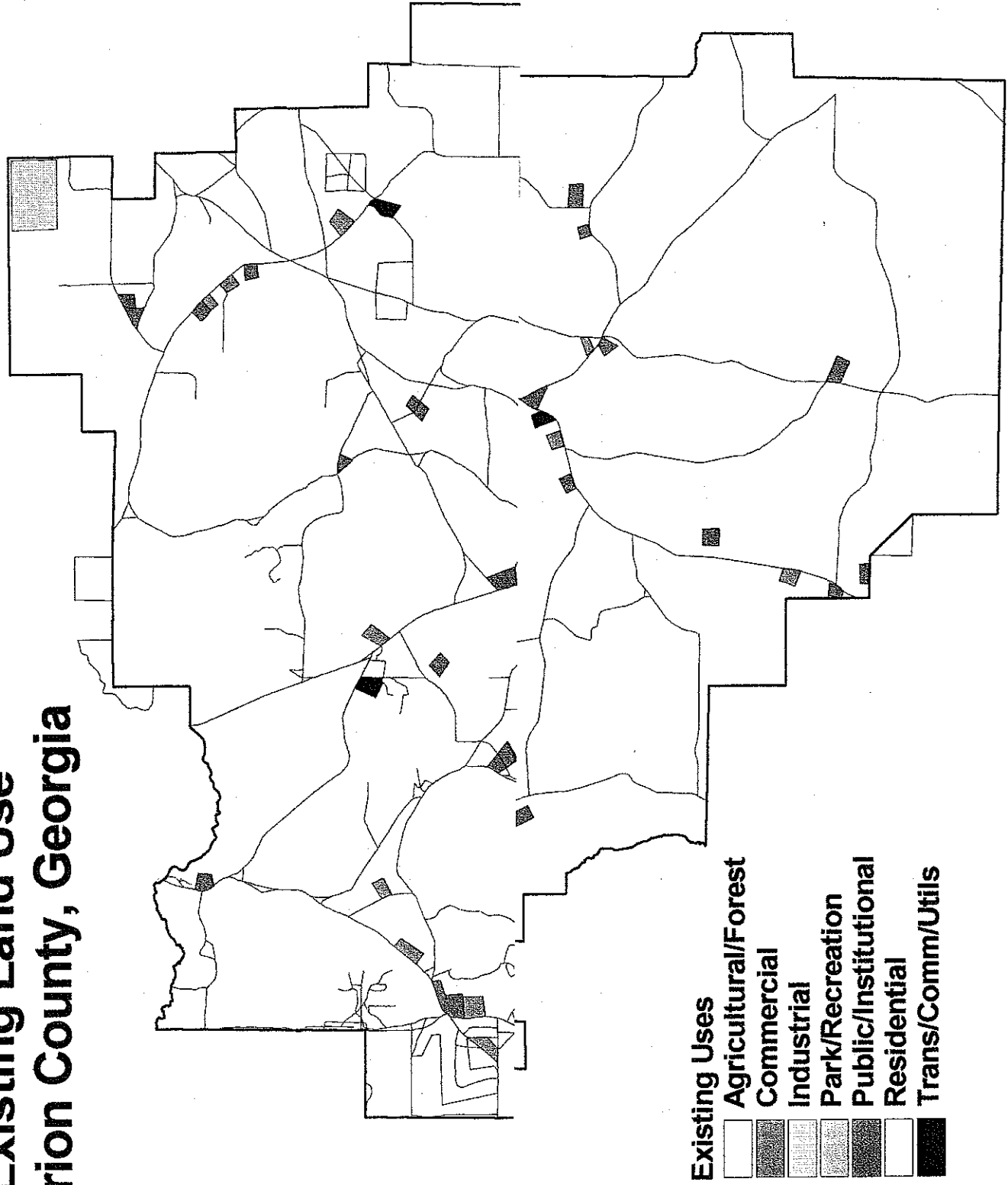


TABLE 2
EXISTING LAND USE
BUENA VISTA
1994

LAND USE	1994 ACREAGE	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL AREA
Agriculture/Forest	1,404	69%
Commercial	45	2.2%
Industrial	50	2.4%
Park/Recreation/ Conservation	5	.2%
Public/Institutional	65	3.2%
Residential	325	15.9%
Transportation/ Communication/Utilities	132	6.4%
Undeveloped/Unused	12	.7%
Total	2038	100%

Source: Middle Flint RDC, Summer, 1994

Buena Vista is circular in shape, extending one mile from its midpoint. An additional 27.7 acres were annexed on the northwest boundary in 1978 incorporating the county jail, bringing the total municipal area to 2038.35 acres. The city is centered around one of the incorporated area's highest points, courthouse square, at a mean sea level elevation of 690 feet. The highest elevation in the city is 702 feet and is on the grounds of Marion Memorial Nursing Home. There is a 700 foot elevation very near the southern-most corporate limit. The lowest elevation, approximately 530 feet, is on the northeast city limit.

Courthouse square is surrounded by commercial development, accounting for the majority of the city's retail establishments. The next ring of land use consists of residential, wooded and undeveloped acreages. From the central core development has spun off to the northeast, east-southeast and south, all in predominantly residential land use, and northwest, predominantly in residential and industrial land uses. These development patterns have been governed by topography. These four tentacles of development are located astride the highest ridges of "flat" terrain emanating from the central core. Of the city's five entrance ways the only one not yet developed is GA 26 west because it crosses a "steep" drainage channel.

Forest accounts for the vast majority of the area in Buena Vista, covering most of the acreage not attractive/conducive to development. The **agriculture/forest** acreage total in the above table includes undeveloped/unused acreage because of the difficulty of differentiating between the two land uses in some areas. Neither are these acreages differentiated on the accompanying Existing Land Use map. The twelve acres of **Undeveloped/Unused** land use identified in Table 2 are incorporated lake area near the southeast boundary. This is exclusive of a fraction of an acre of water area on the northwest boundary.

Commercial development is concentrated around the courthouse square. Other "free-standing" commercial establishments are interspersed along the strips of development described earlier.

Industrial acreage consists of wood manufacturing (32 acres) on the northwest boundary, and poultry processing (13 acres) near the southeast boundary. Applicable land use definitions also include the city's four acre wastewater treatment facility in this category. This facility is located in the north-central portion of the city. An industrial building (little used) covers approximately 1/2 acre in the northeast corner of the intersection of Oliver Street and Fourth Avenue. Abandoned industrial structures on adjoining property to the east were classified as unused. A petroleum (gasoline) wholesaler on east Fourth Avenue accounts for one acre.

The only **Park/Recreation/Conservation** acreage is the city park (five acres) just beyond the northeast perimeter of the central core. The park has two lighted tennis courts, a children's playground and one basketball court. A 1,000 feet, unimproved nature trail connects the north end of this area with GA. 137/Oliver Street. The Head Start center and elementary school (both public/institutional land uses) have recreation areas for their students, but these facilities are not included here as free standing recreational areas open to the general public.

Educational facilities account for almost one-fourth of the city's **Public/Institutional** land use. The elementary school complex covers approximately fifteen acres, and the Board of Education/Head Start complex (old high school) another seven acres. Four cemeteries collectively cover approximately sixteen acres; unused plots are included in this total acreage. The other largest sites in this land use are the county jail/maintenance barn (six acres), courthouse square and Georgia DOT maintenance facility at three acres each. Government offices and churches comprise most of the balance.

Residential development is predominantly single-family, but is becoming increasingly multi-family. However, the strongest residential trend in the city is occupancy of manufactured housing (mobile homes).

Buena Vista's network of street rights-of-way covers approximately 108 acres, 84% of the **Transportation/Communications/Utility** land use, and railroad right-of-way another 18 acres. The city's water treatment plant and adjacent well and storage tank cover one acre. Another acre is attributed to the other three municipal storage tanks in use and the communications tower adjacent to the cemetery on Church Street. The elementary school has approximately two acres devoted to school bus parking and a maintenance facility, each on separate parcels at the north end of school property. An electrical substation near the southern corporate limit and a

telephone substation on Broad Street near Sixth Avenue collectively account for two additional acres.

Assessment: Physical improvements have already been made to most of the incorporated acreage which was most easily developed. Public roadways, especially state and federal routes, are constructed on the highest feasible elevations along proposed routes. Beyond Buena Vista's central core development has occurred in strips like long tentacles along the highest ridges in the city. Physical development is concentrated along highway frontage, leaving approximately 20% of the incorporated area with relatively attractive topographic features behind disjointed strip developments. These sites are more difficult to access and less aesthetically attractive because they are likely to face the rear of buildings already fronting major streets.

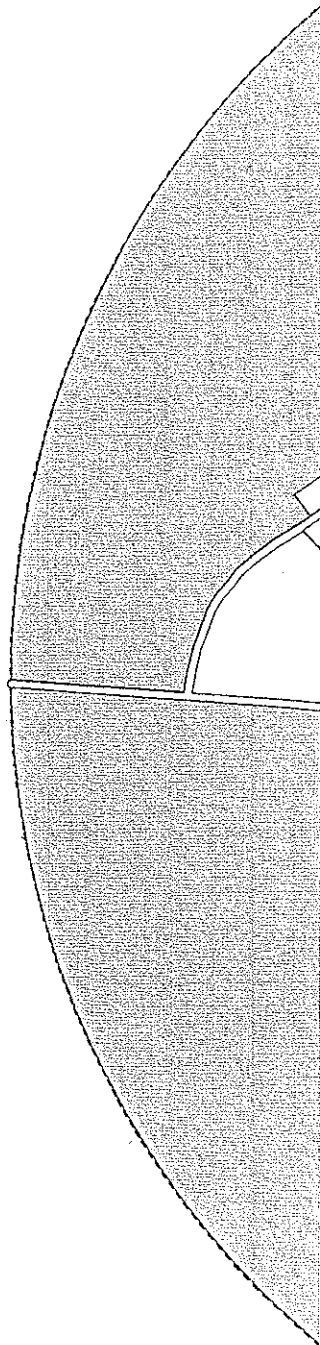
At the present time Buena Vista is not confronted with many significant land use conflicts. Both existing industries are on the extremities of the incorporated area, and the municipal wastewater treatment plant is buffered. In the late 1980s a by-pass was constructed to direct industrial traffic servicing Cargill around a densely populated residential neighborhood. Even the new industrial park is expected to have little if any conflict with nearby land uses.

Since 1994 the city has been experiencing one particular development which poses significant land use development conflicts. A recent increase in Cargill's need for laborers has led some local investors/developers to place up to ten - twelve single-wide mobile homes on single-acre lots, creating conflicts in residential neighborhoods. These density levels pose significant potential fire hazards, create problems with solid waste collection, and as more of the immigrant workers become automobile owners there will be problems with vehicle parking.

Even if this problem were resolved by methods other than land development standards, the city will need such a regulatory process to preclude serious land use conflicts in the future. As time passes and development is forced to occur off the highway frontage, increased potential for land use conflicts can be precluded only by appropriate land development standards. Standards need to be imposed and enforced before more serious problems arise.

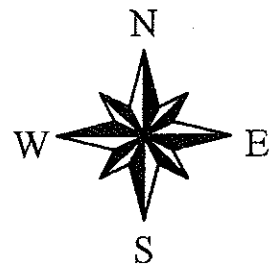
ig Land Use 1994 a Vista, Georgia

Marion County



Existing Uses

-  Agricultural/Forest
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Park/Recreation
-  Public/Institutional
-  Residential
-  Trans/Comm/Utils
-  Undeveloped/Unused



FUTURE LAND USE

A ratio methodology has been used as a general guide to determine future acreage needs of the community. The developed acreage currently devoted to each land use was divided by the total resident population (1990 Census). The resulting ratio was then applied to the population projected for the year 2015 to estimate future acreage needs for each land use. The difference between the current estimated acreages and those projected for the year 2015 approximates the amount by which each respective land use may reasonably be expected to increase over the duration of the study period. Acreages presented in the following Table represent adjustments to the raw calculations. The adjustments are explained in the accompanying narrative.

TABLE 3
FUTURE LAND USE
RURAL MARION COUNTY

LAND USE CATEGORIES	ACREAGE		CHANGE	2015 PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
	1994	2015		
Agriculture/Forest	222,269	221,214	-1055	95.5%
Commercial	50	75	+ 25	.03%
Industrial	350	500	+ 150	.2%
Park/Recreation/ Conservation	20	30	+ 10	.01%
Public/Institutional	207	257	+ 50	.11%
Residential	1,633	2,333	+ 700	1.0%
Transportation/ Communication/Utilities	3,533	3,653	+ 120	1.6%
Undeveloped/Unused	3,500	3,500	0	1.5%
Total	231,562*	231,562	0	100%

Source: Middle Flint RDC

*This acreage is exclusive of Buena Vista's 2038 acre incorporated area.

The accompanying text is integral to interpretation of this data.

In an area as undeveloped as Marion County it is unusual for land to be converted from one developed use to another. Accordingly, the accompanying projections indicate the **Agriculture/Forest** (and undeveloped/unused) category will yield acreage to future developments in the rural area. The majority of this conversion will be to accommodate residential development, primarily in the northwest quadrant.

The projection formula suggests an increase of 25 **Commercial** acres. Much of this will be in the form of small shops, e.g., beauty shops, auto repair, convenience stores. Some will be behind the residence of the owner and not highly visible. There is also likely to be some multi-acre tracts developed in response to residential development in the northwest quadrant.

The projection methodology suggests an additional 150 acres needed for **Industrial** development. The community believes this may be excessive, in large part due to the 80 acre industrial park opened recently (1995) in the city. Nevertheless, this acreage will be used for present purposes.

The county has fifty acres available for industrial development within the airport tract. The water facilities (well and elevated water tank) and airport available at this location make this an attractive industrial site. Another fifty acres would seem to make a reasonable industrial tract in the northern part of the county. However, it is hoped that with continued development of the rural water system Marion County can capitalize on urban spillover from Columbus/Muscogee County. With continued in-migration of residents from the adjoining metropolitan community, industries experiencing development pressures in Muscogee County or looking to expand may find the combination of a growing labor force and rural water system in proximity to the Fall Line Freeway an attractive incentive to locate a facility in north Marion County. If this does materialize, a fifty acre tract may be inadequate for the planning horizon. Therefore, a 100 acre tract is targeted near the county's northern boundary. In addition, once the proposed elevated water storage tank north of the Tazewell community is constructed, the acreage adjacent to this site may be attractive industrial property. Because of its remote location it would likely be attractive only to local developer(s); however, and is not projected as future industrial acreage.

The community is in agreement with the raw projection of ten additional acres for **Recreation**. Two of these acres would enable a one-field addition to the recreation complex at the airport. The balance of this acreage would make for a recreation complex in the northern part of the county.

Raw projections suggest the need for an additional 90 acres devoted to **Public/Institutional** acreage. Based on the current development ratio, 35 acres of this would be for churches and cemeteries. However, much of the existing acreage is expected to absorb a significant share of the future demand for this specific use. The 14 acre elementary school (K- second grade) currently under construction (on a 100 acre site) is credited to this projection. Few other public/institutional developments of significant acreage are expected to occur outside the city limits of Buena Vista. Construction of by-pass routes around the city may open some rural area for such development, but roadway planning, scheduling and construction would put such land use developments in, or near, the latter half of the planning horizon. Even then, some of the developed acreage may be annexed into the city. The community feels fifty additional public/institutional acres are a reasonable projection.

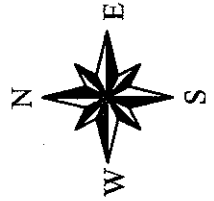
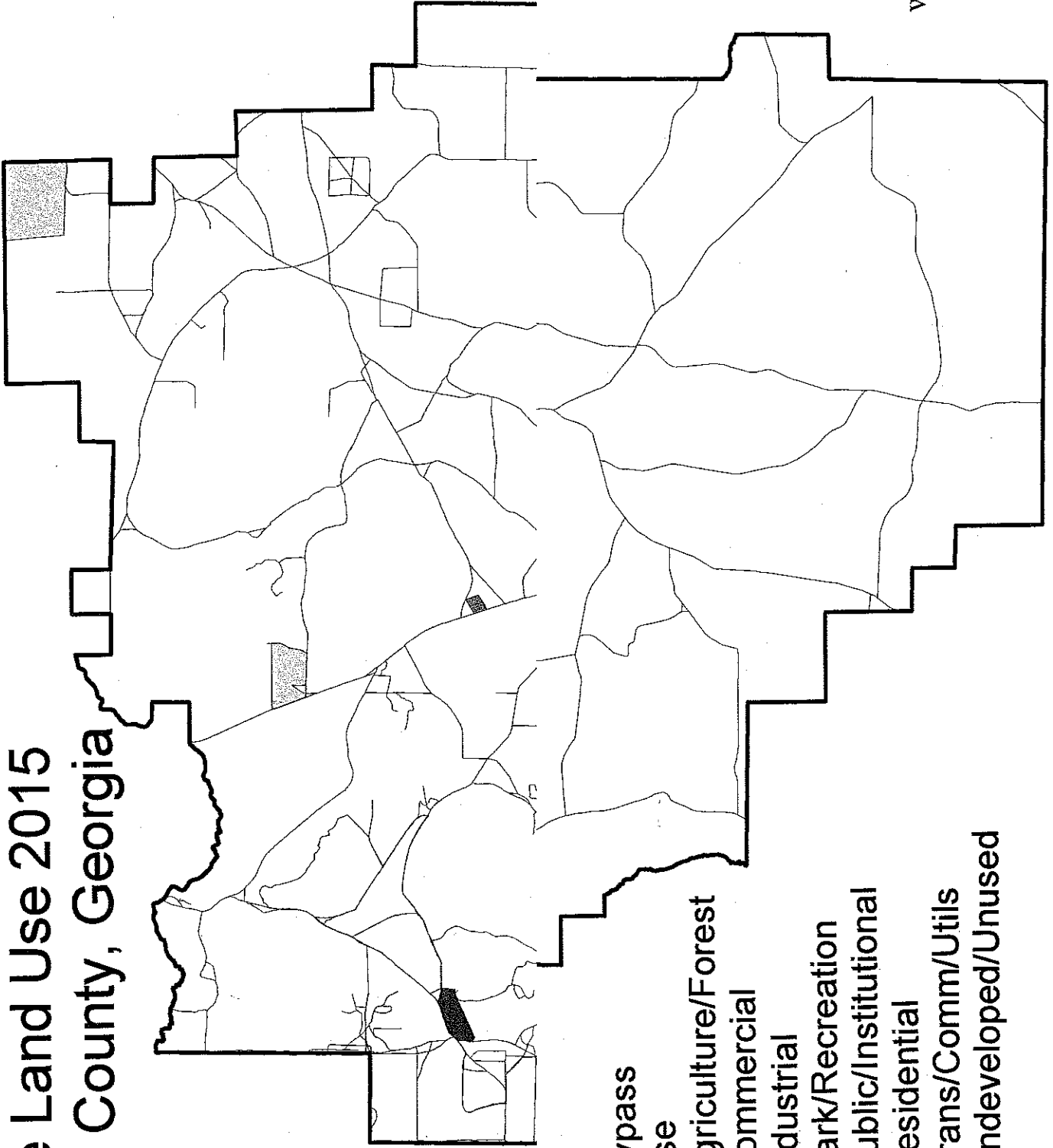
Seven hundred additional **Residential** acres are projected. Most of this will be single lot development at scattered locations through the rural area, and the majority is expected to be concentrated in the northwest quadrant.

The rural area should not need to develop roadways, railways or airports at the same rate as has occurred to date. These three developments account for over 99% of the existing **Transportation/Communication/Utilities** land use. The existing networks will absorb much of the future demand. Hence, the 1500 acre raw projection of future need is a gross exaggeration.

Six miles of passing lane/three-lane highway development is currently underway on GA. 26 increasing right-of-way by approximately 9 acres. Additional acreage will also be needed for by-pass/truck routes around Buena Vista, at locations not yet determined, as well as new road construction in the northern region to accommodate residential and industrial development. Fifteen miles, arbitrarily considered to be a reasonable projection of new road construction, with 60 feet right-of-way will require 110 acres. A total of 120 acres is considered a reasonable projection for the current planning horizon.

If the reader compares the county's existing and future land use maps, it is evident many developments sited on the former do not appear on the latter. The vast majority of developed sites excluded from the county's future land use map are random, single - acre developments dispersed throughout the county's rural/agricultural area which the community chose not to endorse as single, site-specific, future land uses.

Future Land Use 2015 Marion County, Georgia












-  Bypass Land Use
-  Agriculture/Forest
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Park/Recreation
-  Public/Institutional
-  Residential
-  Trans/Comm/Utils
-  Undeveloped/Unused

TABLE 4
FUTURE LAND USE
BUENA VISTA

LAND USE CATEGORIES	ACREAGE		CHANGE	2015 PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL
	1994	2015		
Agriculture/Forest	1,404	1,222	-182	60%
Commercial	45	65	+ 20	3.2%
Industrial	50	70	+ 20	3.4%
Park/Recreation/ Conservation	5	7	+ 2	.3%
Public/Institutional	65	80	+ 15	3.9%
Residential	325	425	+100	20.9%
Transportation/ Communication/Utilities	132	157	+ 25	7.6%
Undeveloped/Unused	12	12	0	.7%
Total	2,038	2,038	0	100%

Source: Middle Flint RDC

Because there is so much Agriculture/Forest, Undeveloped/Unused acreage in the city, most future development will occur on these sites rather than the conversion of developed acreage to another developed land use. Hence, **Agriculture/Forest** is the only land use projected to experience a decline in acreage. Since there is such difficulty differentiating between some of the agricultural/forest and undeveloped/unused acreages, all converted acreage is credited to agricultural/forest while **Undeveloped/Unused** acreage is projected to remain constant.

Approximately 20 additional acres of **Commercial** development are projected; some of which will be infill development which can not be reasonably sited at this writing. Most, however, is projected to be adjacent to Marion Memorial Nursing Home and on GA 26 West. Development in this latter area will necessitate utility extensions which are also identified as community facility needs.

The projected methodology suggests an additional 20 **Industrial** acres. The eighty acre industrial park which opened in early 1995 will be more than sufficient to meet the projected need.

Additional **Recreation** area is projected to be 2 acres. Within the existing city park (5 acres) there is room for additional development; ball courts, playground area, etc. Nevertheless, since the city owns the surrounding property there is likely to be some expansion of the existing park area. Because of the expense associated with recreational development, the recreation center- a long-term goal- will probably be accomplished by converting an existing structure for such use.

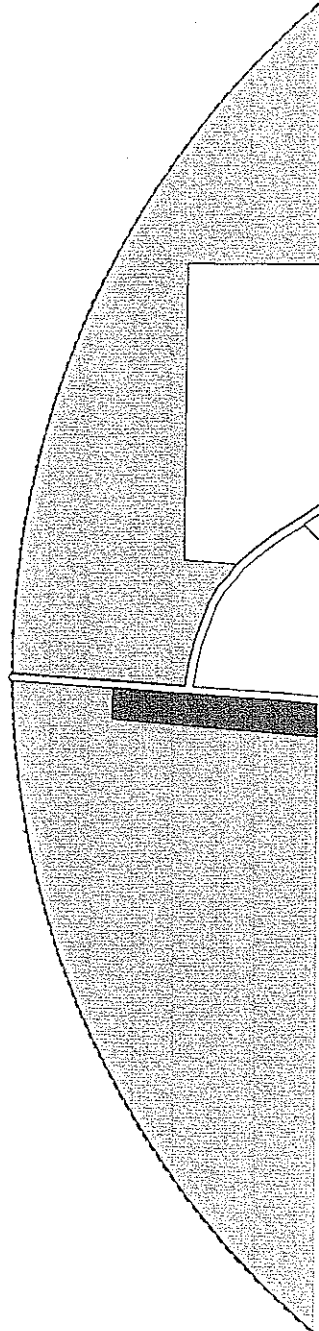
Raw projections suggest an additional 28 acres in the **Public/Institutional** land use category. Some of this acreage need will be addressed by the new school for kindergarten - second grade which is being constructed southwest of the city. It is difficult to project sites of future churches, and it is believed existing facilities will absorb most of this future demand. Existing cemetery acreage includes sufficient vacant space to meet most of the anticipated need. The greatest acreage need for this category will be for government operations. The operations of general local government, primarily at the county level, still require more space than is currently available, and offices such as the Department of Family and Children Services also need additional space. Demands on public services are expected to increase along with the projected increase in population. However, since the costs for these improvements are generally borne by the local tax base(s), existing structures are likely to be extended, renovated or otherwise converted for additional floor space. Therefore, the raw projection for this category is halved to fifteen acres.

Raw projections suggest an additional 140 **Residential** acres. However, the recent population increase, i.e., addition of immigrant labor between 1990 and 1994, has resulted in high density residential development with up to ten mobile homes per acre and 6-8 people sharing housing. These density levels are atypical for the city and continuation would preclude development of an additional 140 acres. It is not known whether the immigrant laborers will remain and bring their families, thus creating a greater housing demand. The city believes 100 acres is a more reasonable projection because multi-family housing is expected to assume a greater share of the local housing market, and such housing demands less acreage than conventional single-family housing.









Roadway and railroad development will be less extensive in Buena Vista than it has been in the past, as the existing network will absorb much of the future demand. True, there are roadway development needs which have been addressed in earlier sections of this document, but their entire routes are not likely to be constructed within the incorporated area. No additional railroad construction is anticipated, with the hopeful exception of a spur in the industrial park. Because of this, and in anticipation of negligible increases in communication and utility acreages, the city feels 25 acres is a more reasonable projection for **Transportation/Communication/Utilities** than the 55 acres which result from the projection formula.

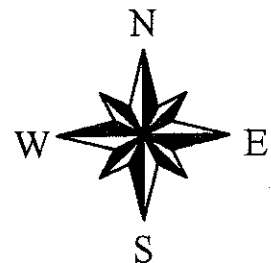
Land Use 2015 Vista, Georgia

Marion County



Future Uses

-  Agricultural/Forest
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Park/Recreation
-  Public/Institutional
-  Residential
-  Trans/Comm/Utils
-  Undeveloped/Unused



FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

POPULATION

Marion County's recent population growth (1990 - 1994) has occurred in the northwest corner near Muscogee and Talbot Counties. Most of this growth is spill-over from development pressures in Muscogee and Harris Counties, with most of the working age population commuting to places of employment in Muscogee County. As this growth continues the need for development standards will increase. Because current development patterns in this area are having adverse impacts on surrounding property values, the county proposes to adopt development standards to prevent further property devaluation, and preclude problems involving roadway development and public service delivery.

Roadway improvements in this area will primarily benefit commuters on their travels to and from their places of employment. Because of the population growth anticipated in this area, its proximity to the Fall Line Freeway and the development this transportation corridor may foster, the rural water system should have a well and elevated storage tank constructed in this vicinity.

The city is projected to maintain a disproportionately high elderly (65 years and older) population. Although the community presently seems to have a healthy elderly population, a higher degree of medical care is needed for residents of all ages.

Relative to statewide statistics, the local population has a lower income and lower educational attainment level. Lower household incomes often mean a decline in local property values, resulting in a decline in the tax base and greater difficulty generating local revenues needed to provide governmental services. This negative projection may be compounded by the growing immigrant population. These residents are not presently contributing to the local tax base at a level proportionate to the increased demand they impose on municipal services.

The proportion of the local adult population whose highest attainment level is a high school diploma is roughly comparable to the recorded state level. However, both the city and rural areas have disproportionately high proportions of populations who did not complete high school, and disproportionately low proportions with more than a high school education. According to recent information slightly over one third of recent high school graduates are continuing their formal education into college; statewide, slightly over half do so.

The local economy is hampered by low income levels, which are primarily the result of low educational attainment and low wage jobs.

HOUSING

In recent years (1970 - 1990), the two most striking changes in local housing have been significant, proportional increases in homeownership and manufactured housing units. This latter trend is expected to continue for the foreseeable future.

It is not believed that the strong growth in the number of manufactured housing units is a personal preference for this type construction (predominantly mobile home), but one driven primarily by economic considerations. This current "housing of choice" can perhaps be better interpreted as affordable housing. The manufactured unit has the lowest purchase price of new housing and the convenience of dealer financing, in some cases for up to thirty years, quick set-up, all helping make this type housing so attractive.

Almost three-fourths of this increase in mobile homes was documented in the rural area during 1970 - 1990 (predominantly in the northwest quadrant); only the rural area recorded a population increase through the two decades. However, since the 1990 Census an estimated two hundred immigrants have moved into the city to work at the local Cargill plant; virtually all of whom reside in mobile homes. The next census is expected to show a large increase in manufactured housing over the city's documented 1990 level.

Furthermore, residents demand the same basic public services regardless of the type housing they occupy. Manufactured housing is taxed at a lower rate, i.e., as personal property, than conventionally constructed housing. Hence, the community may have difficulty generating the revenues needed to maintain a high level of public services for an increasing population base.

Housing conditions in the community are generally good. If minor deficiencies (items of routine maintenance) are included in the standard housing count, three-fourths of units in the city and rural areas combined are in standard condition. A more basic, and less encompassing indication of housing conditions is the fact that according to the 1990 Census 9% of the rural housing inventory lacked complete plumbing for the exclusive use of occupants. This condition is a function of household income/affordability and utility availability/accessibility. The latter function is currently being addressed in the rural area with construction of a rural water system.

Local housing costs are less than the state average; not only in absolute dollars but also as a share of personal income. The only exception is in the case of owner-occupied housing in Buena Vista. Recently purchased housing in the county seat consumes a significantly larger share of owners' incomes than is typical throughout the state. This is attributed to the fact that there is such a shortage of housing for sale in the city.

It is the consensus of those in the community that the demand for housing is such that if additional units were made available, for sale or rent, all would be occupied almost immediately. However, both local governments feel that because of the financing options available from other sources they should not be directly involved in new housing development, e.g., formation of a housing corporation, arranging construction financing.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Marion County and Buena Vista are well served with road/street networks. The expenditure of locally generated funds and the cooperation of the Georgia Department of Transportation in paving and resurfacing roadways have thus far resulted in an efficient and convenient transportation system. There are improvements yet to be made, but the limited public monies available have been expended wisely.

The need for some improvements become clearer with time. Greatly increased heavy truck traffic is generating serious traffic congestion on the downtown square. In addition, the malodorous freights carried by most of these large, noisy, industrial vehicles present a very unpleasant image of the community in the minds of tourists drawn to local attractions. This industrial traffic can serve as a serious deterrent to the tourist trade the community is striving so hard to cultivate. The community should initiate serious discussions with appropriate officials to resolve this major conflict, possibly by means of truck route by-passes.

Developments which occurred in early 1995 suggest the community may soon be without rail service. If this does in fact occur, there may not be any immediate negative affects. However, in the long term the adverse impact could be immeasurable because some industries looking for rail siding would not consider the community in the absence of rail service. It is important that the community initiate a dialogue with appropriate rail transport and regulatory authorities to maintain permanent rail service before the level of service deteriorates further.

Marion County and the Georgia Department of Transportation have also cooperated in maintaining the local airport. Needless development expenses have been avoided, but there is an apparent willingness on the part of both parties to make appropriate developments when needed. This service is one advantage Marion County has over most rural communities, and it is important not to loose it via neglect or allowing conflicting land uses.

To satisfy federal and state mandated waste reduction goals, the community should seek to enhance current waste reduction efforts. Because it is so difficult for rural communities acting independently to achieve cost effective waste reduction, the two jurisdictions should consider combining efforts/programs with neighboring communities.

The two local law enforcement agencies are believed to be reasonably well equipped and staffed, and providing good service to the community. The community must be sensitive, however, to the increasing demands a growing population will place on this service. Additional personnel may soon be warranted.

Marion County is in the beginning stages of developing a rural fire department. The demand for such service is expected to increase, especially in the developing population center in the county's northwest corner inhabited by in-migrants accustomed to fire protection.

The rural area's only active volunteer fire department (Oakland) serves ___% of county residences within its five mile service district, although the department responds to calls

throughout the county. With the addition of three more departments currently organizing (Tazewell, Brown Springs and Draneville), the aggregate percentage of rural residences within designated service areas will increase to __%. Continued development of the rural water system will make rural fire protection more feasible. However, it is important to note that the system is not being designed with the fire flow capacity needed to result in reduced insurance rates throughout the rural area.

To facilitate expansion of rural fire protection and further develop existing departments, the county should pursue any funding sources which may be available to help with associated planning and/or development costs. All rural departments will need funds with which to purchase large and small pieces of fire fighting equipment.

The city needs to develop the capacity to fight fires above ground level because of the two-story structures on the city square. Because of deficiencies in rural and city fire fighting capabilities, it is important for all these volunteer departments to build upon the current level of cooperation. All departments need to enlist a volunteer base large enough to be able to respond in sufficient force at any time of the day or night. Many current volunteers are employed at locations outside their respective service areas.

The community is pleased with the current emergency medical service. Local officials recognize the need to employ a full-time staff in the future. At this writing such a development appears to be financially feasible in the 5-10 year timeframe.

The city and county should pursue establishment and maintenance of a countywide, structured, full-time recreation program. Because the county's greatest population increase has recently been in the northwest corner, and is expected to continue in this area, recreation facilities will need to be developed proximate to this population base.

Day to day operations of local government are perceived as organized and efficient. The community's educational infrastructure is considered adequate for the foreseeable future.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The local economy is based on lower paying industrial employment and the community plans to address this from two different directions.

The community feels it has most of the physical infrastructure needed to accommodate industries dependent on employees with higher skill levels than are currently demanded by most local employers: industrial sites are available, the water and sanitary sewer services needed by most industries is available, rail access, convenient location between Atlanta, Columbus, Macon and Albany, etc. The community will have to enhance the transportation systems; local roads and rail service.

The community will need to enhance chamber of commerce/industrial development activities; two distinctly different yet related economic development functions. It is rare to find small communities with these different roles performed well by different volunteers, though it can conceivably be done. The community should work toward funding at least one paid staff position, housed in a highly visible chamber or economic development office to be proactive in industrial development. This is a 5-10 year goal.

A second proactive role for this staff/office is promotion of tourism. The community needs to take advantage of attractions which in recent years have been developed by private investors. A plan of action should be developed by which the community not only makes wise use of existing attractions, but also develops these and other resources to draw more tourists. A major aspect of this will be to attract the development of overnight accommodations (motel, bed and breakfast) so travelers can visit in the community longer. This could soon entail preparation of a downtown development plan addressing streetscape, historic preservation, marketing, facade development/preservation, parking, etc.

Most direct employment generated by tourism will likely be in retail trade. The reader may recall this to be among the lowest paying of all economic sectors, both locally and statewide. Although the wages are typically low, they do bring additional jobs to the community, offering the potential of additional family income as the result of part-time or full-time employment. Such activity will enhance and possibly stimulate the local economy.

Long-term residents appreciate the rural, un-hurried atmosphere of the community, and desire to preserve it. There is a sincere interest in quality growth and development; the kind that will improve the quality of employment opportunities for current residents, not just for those who move into or commute into the community to take attractive jobs.

NATURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES

The community is blessed with an abundance of clean groundwater and clean air; major, positive contributors to the local quality of life. Threats to either of these resources must be promptly and responsibly addressed. It is the local consensus that the existing regulatory system is adequate to protect these resources, but that all elements thereof should be enforced. No additional, locally instituted safeguards are deemed to be necessary at the present time.

Prime agricultural land is an irreplaceable local, state and national resource; the true value of which is forever being revealed as increasing mechanization and efficiency extracts higher and higher yields from a shrinking agricultural production base. This economic value is only one measure of the resource's worth, for when in an agricultural land use it makes immeasurable, positive contributions to the community's quality of life.

Conversion of prime farm land to uses other than agricultural production is not presently a serious threat to the community. However, if the community should institute some form of land development regulations this resource should be given serious consideration as a resource worthy

of protection.

Likewise, forest land is an important contributor to the local quality of life. However, no manmade threat to this resource is foreseen, especially in light of recent increases in local forested acreage.

The habitats of endangered plants and animals are recognized as important elements in the local and larger ecosystems and must be carefully addressed in any future land development standards. At the current level of physical development no additional protective measures above those currently enforced resulting from federal/state statutes are deemed necessary.

Because it would be so easily accessed by residents from a large section of the state, and offers so much economic potential to the community and region, Marion County and Buena Vista should work with the appropriate officials to get previous Kinchafoonee Lake studies updated for the purpose of developing the proposed lake site.

Marion County and Buena Vista should pursue the funding necessary to perform a comprehensive historic resources survey of the community. Once this information is compiled, a determination should be made as to whether any supportive/protective measures should be taken to preserve these resources, and if so, the best form of implementation.

LANDUSE

Refer to narrative on pages 86 - 93.

STATEMENT OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

STATEMENT OF GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- I. POPULATION - ENCOURAGE THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF RESIDENTS.**
 - I.A. Maintain the historically high test performance of the county's elementary school students.
 - I.B. Improve the test performance of the county's high school students.
 - I.C. Enhance the quantity and quality of health care in the community.
 - I.D. Capitalize on and enhance the tourism potential of the community.
 - I.E. Attract and/or develop industries which can pay current residents higher wages than are presently common in the community.

- II. HOUSING - ENCOURAGE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A HOUSING INVENTORY WHICH IS SAFE, SOUND AND SANITARY.**
 - II.A. Maintain the public utility infrastructure necessary to properly serve current and future populations.
 - II.B. Design and adopt development standards ordinances.

- III. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES - WITHIN THE FINANCIAL CONSTRAINTS OF THE COMMUNITY, PROVIDE THE HIGHEST LEVEL OF PUBLIC SERVICES NECESSARY TO PROMOTE THE HEALTH, SAFETY AND WELFARE OF RESIDENTS.**
 - III.A. Improve the highway infrastructure to enhance vehicular traffic flow in and through the community.
 - III.B. Ensure permanent rail service in the community.
 - III.C. Increase the current level of recycling.
 - III.D. Equip and staff law enforcement agencies at levels adequate to provide for the public safety.
 - III.E. Improve the current fire fighting capacity and expand fire service countywide.
 - III.F. Maintain the high level of emergency medical service with an eye toward staffing the service with full-time personnel.
 - III.G. Establish a structured, staffed, recreation program.
 - III.H. Provide more recreational facilities.
 - III.I. Enact appropriate land development standards.

IV. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - IMPROVE THE NUMBER AND QUALITY OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

IV.A. Capitalize on and enhance the tourism potential of the community.

IV.B. Attract and/or develop industries which can pay current residents higher wages than are common in the community.

V. NATURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES - ENCOURAGE THE PROTECTION OF THOSE RESOURCES WHICH HAVE THUSFAR MADE THE COMMUNITY SO ATTRACTIVE TO THE RESIDENT POPULATION.

V.A. Design and adopt development standards ordinance.

V.B. Develop Kinchafoonee Lake.

V.C. Inventory and locate the community's historic resources.

FIVE YEAR WORK PLAN

The purpose of this section is to provide a detailed listing of various projects and programs recommended for implementation during the first five years covered in the comprehensive plan. Priority projects and program initiatives resulting from the overall planning process are listed for each of the five years (1995/96 -1999/00). Each recommendation should be undertaken and/or completed in the year scheduled. In addition to the scheduling of priority items the Five Year Work Plan also provides guidance to local officials regarding cost estimates and potential sources of financing. By scheduling major initiatives and capital expenditures in advance over a period of years, the Five Year Work Plan will be an aid to the community in undertaking activities to implement its plan and achieve its goals. In addition, the recommended capital improvement items contained in the work program will allow the elected officials to schedule purchase of these "big ticket" items in a more logical and cost efficient fashion.

To be effective the Five Year Work Plan must be linked to and coordinated with the annual operating budget. The majority of the items contained in this section require direct expenditures or indirect costs through allocation of staff. Therefore, implementation of established goals, policies and recommendations is tied directly to the annual budget. As city and county governmental officials implement this plan they should: (1) review the recommendations in the Five Year Work Plan for the upcoming year; (2) revise the recommendations based on current information; and (3) transfer the recommended items that require local funding that year to the annual operating budget. Through such an approach Marion County and the City of Buena Vista will be able to systematically implement this comprehensive plan.

**SHORT TERM WORK PLAN
MARION COUNTY 1996 - 2000**

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>ESTIMATED COST</u>	<u>FUNDING SOURCE</u>
1996	Pave Two Miles; Resurface Six Miles [±]	\$ -	GA DOT
	Dialogue with DOT: By-pass Routes	\$ -	-
	Additional Mobile Radio for Road Dept.	\$ 2,000	Local
	Replace Motor Grader	\$150,000	Local
	Applications-Rural Water System Expansion	\$ -	-
	Enhance Recycling Effort	\$ -	County/City
	Replace Sheriff's Patrol Car	\$ 19,000	Local
	Adopt Emergency Management Operations Plan	\$ -	GEMA
	Light Baseball Field at Airport	\$ 40,000	Local/GA-DNR
	Establish Summer Recreation Program	\$ -	County/City
	Design and Adopt Land Development Standards Ordinance	\$ 5,000	Local
	Historic Resources Survey	\$ 1,500	Local/GA-DNR
	Pursue Kinchafoonee Lake Development	\$ -	-
1997	Pave Two Miles; Resurface Six Miles [±]	\$ -	GA DOT
	Dialogue with DOT: By-pass Routes	\$ -	-
	Bridge Replacement S.R. 355 at Pine Knot Creek	\$ -	GA DOT

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>ESTIMATED COST</u>	<u>FUNDING SOURCE</u>
	Rural Water System Expansion Part of Phase II	\$ 1.5 M	Local/RDA/ GA-DCA CDBG
	Replace Sheriff's Patrol Car	\$ 19,000	Local
	Replace Two Radios for Sheriff's Cars	\$ 8,000	Local
	Design and Implement Rural Address System	\$ 20,000	Local
	Construct Softball Fields - North	\$ -	Local/GA-DNR
	Pursue Kinchafoonee Lake Development	\$ -	-
1998	Pave Two Miles; Resurface Six Miles [±]	\$ -	GA DOT
	Dialogue with DOT: By-pass Routes	\$ -	-
	Bridge Replacement C.R. 128/Doyle Road at Oochee Creek	\$ -	GA DOT
	Replacement Truck for Road Superintendent	\$ 18,000	Local
	Replace Front-end Loader	\$140,000	Local
	Rural Water System Expansion Part of Part II	\$ 2.5 M	Local/RDA GA-DCA-CDBG
	Replace Sheriff's Patrol Car and Equipment	\$ 19,500	Local
	Replace Two Radios for Sheriff's Cars	\$ 8,000	Local
	Ambulance - County Share	\$ 32,000	Local
	Pursue Kinchafoonee Lake Development	\$ -	-

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>ESTIMATED COST</u>	<u>FUNDING SOURCE</u>
1999	Pave Two Miles; Resurface Six Miles [±]	\$ -	GA DOT
	Dialogue with DOT: By-pass Routes	\$ -	-
	Bridge Replacement S.R. 41/in Buena Vista at Railroad	\$ -	GA DOT
	Applications-Rural Water System Expansion	\$ -	-
	Replace Bulldozer	\$155,000	Local
	Replace Sheriff's Patrol Car and Equipment	\$ 20,000	Local
	Pursue Kinchafoonee Lake Development	\$ -	-
2000	Pave Two Miles; Resurface Six Miles [±]	\$ -	GA DOT
	Dialogue with DOT: By-pass Routes	\$ -	-
	Bridge Replacement S.R. 355 at Juniper Creek	\$ -	GA DOT
	Rural Water System Expansion Part of Phase III	\$ 2.5 M	Local/RDA/ GA-DCA CDBG
	Replace Garbage Truck	\$135,000	Local
	Pursue Kinchafoonee Lake Development	\$ -	-

**SHORT TERM WORK PLAN
BUENA VISTA 1995/96 - 1999/00**

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>ESTIMATED COST</u>	<u>FUNDING SOURCE</u>
1995/96	Resurface One Mile of Street±	\$ -	GA DOT
	Dialogue with DOT: By-pass Routes	\$ -	-
	Replace Pick-up Truck - Public Works	\$ 12,000	Local
	Replace Tractor for Street Department	\$ 23,000	Local
	Purchase Fire Apparatus	\$125,000	Local
	City Park - Construct Restrooms, Basketball and Tennis Court Improvements	\$ -	Local/GA-DNR
	Establish Summer Recreation Program	\$ -	City/County
	Design and Adopt Land Development Standards Ordinance	\$ -	Local
	Historic Resources Survey	\$ 1,500	Local/GA-DNR
	Pursue Kinchafoonee Lake Development	\$ -	-
1996/97	Resurface One Mile of Street±	\$ -	GA DOT
	Dialogue with DOT: By-pass Routes	\$ -	-
	Replace Police Cruiser & Oldest Mobile Radio	\$ 18,000	Local
	Two Walkie Talkies for Public Works	\$ 2,000	Local
	Replace Trash (Debris) Truck	\$ 11,000	Local
	Enhance Recycling Effort	\$ -	City/County

<u>YEAR</u>	<u>PROJECT</u>	<u>ESTIMATED COST</u>	<u>FUNDING SOURCE</u>
	Improvements to Maintenance Barn	\$ 12,000	Local
	Pursue Kinchafoonee Lake Development	\$ -	-
1997/98	Resurface One Mile of Street±	\$ -	GA DOT
	Dialogue with DOT: By-pass Routes	\$ -	-
	Replace Pick-up Truck - Public Works	\$ 14,000	Local
	Replace Backhoe/Front-end Loader	\$ 45,000	Local
	Pursue Kinchafoonee Lake Development	\$ -	-
1998/99	Resurface One Mile of Street±	\$ -	GA DOT
	Dialogue with DOT: By-pass Routes	\$ -	-
	Pursue Kinchafoonee Lake Development	\$ -	-
1999/00	Resurface One Mile of Street±	\$ -	GA DOT
	Dialogue with DOT: By-pass Routes	\$ -	-
	Bridge Replacement S.R. 41/Broad Street at Railroad	\$ -	GA DOT
	Replace Pick-up Truck - Public Works	\$ 15,000	Local
	Replace One Mobile Radio - Police	\$	Local
	Pursue Kinchafoonee Lake Development	\$ -	-

RESOLUTION
ADOPTING PARTIAL UPDATE 2008-2010
MARION COUNTY-BUENA VISTA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS; the Marion County-City of Buena Vista Comprehensive Plan 1995-2015 was adopted by the Marion County Board of Commissioners in September, 1995, and

WHEREAS; applicable "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning" were revised by the state, effective May 1, 2005, and supplemented with standards and procedures for Partial Updates, effective March, 2007, and


WHEREAS; the Partial Update 2008-2010 to the Marion County-City of Buena Vista Comprehensive Plan was prepared in accordance with Partial Update requirements of Georgia's current "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning", and


WHEREAS; the draft Partial Update, having completed mandatory regional and state reviews, has been deemed by cognizant regional and state review agencies to be in compliance with current "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning".

NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED; that the Marion County Board of Commissioners hereby adopt the Partial Update 2008-2010 to the Marion County-City of Buena Vista Comprehensive Plan.

Approved this 11th day of September, 2007

MARION COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS


George Neal, Jr.
Chairman

 9/11/07
~~Judy Summers~~
Assistant County Clerk

RESOLUTION
ADOPTING PARTIAL UPDATE 2008-2010
MARION COUNTY-BUENA VISTA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS; the Marion County-City of Buena Vista Comprehensive Plan 1995-2015 was adopted by the Mayor and City Council of Buena Vista in September, 1995, and

WHEREAS; applicable "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning" were revised by the state, effective May 1, 2005, and supplemented with standards and procedures for Partial Updates, effective March, 2007, and

WHEREAS; the Partial Update 2008-2010 to the Marion County-City of Buena Vista Comprehensive Plan was prepared in accordance with Partial Update requirements of Georgia's current "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning", and

WHEREAS; the draft Partial Update, having completed mandatory regional and state reviews, has been deemed by cognizant regional and state review agencies to be in compliance with current "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning".

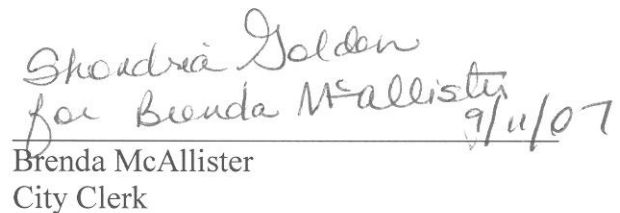
NOW, BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED; that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Buena Vista hereby adopt the Partial Update 2008-2010 to the Marion County-City of Buena Vista Comprehensive Plan.

Approved this 11th day of September, 2007

MAYOR AND COUNCIL
CITY OF BUENA VISTA



Ralph T. Brown, Jr.
Mayor



Brenda McAllister
City Clerk