

**Jackson County Comprehensive Plan**

# **COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

**A Chapter of the Technical Appendix  
Community Assessment**

**Revised November 16, 2009**

**Prepared For:**

**Jackson County Board of Commissioners  
c/o Department of Public Development**

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## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

### **PURPOSE AND OVERVIEW**

The quality of life in a given community depends on maintaining existing facilities and adding facility and service capacity in order to continue growing and developing. Without adequate facilities, such as roads, water, sewer, schools, parks, etc., private development will not be possible. The provision of facilities is understandably complex, and the provision of facilities can take several years to plan, design, construct, and operate.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an inventory of the community facilities and services serving Jackson County and assess their adequacy. The information contained in this chapter will assist the county in coordinating the planning of public facilities and services with new development and as the population and employment of the county increases.

In this assessment, facilities and services are grouped generally into eight categories. There is some overlap among the categories in some instances, and arguments could be made that one particular facility or service belongs under a different category than the one assigned. However, the classifications represent typical organizational arrangements by county and/or municipal departments.

1. Public Safety Facilities and Services
2. Utility-Type Operations
3. Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Cultural Facilities
4. General Administrative Facilities and Services
5. Grounds, Public Works, and Transportation
6. Planning and Zoning-Related Functions
7. Health, Education, Welfare and Social Services
8. Economic and Community Development

### **PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

#### **Law Enforcement and Jail**

The Jackson County Sheriff's Offices moved its Administrative operations, Uniform Patrol, Criminal Investigations, and Central Records to the new Jackson County Jail located at 555 General Jackson Drive.

According to the FY 2009 county budget, the current jail population is housed in an old facility that is in constant need of repair. The same facility also houses the administrative services of the Sheriff's Office, the Patrol Division Dispatch, and the Records Division. The facility is only large enough to contain Jail Operations. Therefore, this necessitates the construction of a new facility to house the Administrative Services and Patrol Division.

Municipal police departments exist in Arcade, Braselton, Commerce, Hoschton, Jefferson, Maysville, and Pendergrass. The Jackson County Sheriff's Department provides law enforcement (in effect the police force) for the unincorporated part of the county, as well as for the Cities of Talmo and Nicholson. Mutual aid agreements exist between Jackson County and all municipalities, effective in 1999 according to the Service Delivery Strategy.

Jackson County provides jail services on a countywide basis. The Sheriff's Department operates the county jail which is located at 268 Curtis Spence Drive (next to the Correctional Institution). It was initially built in 1953 but renovated in 1989 with a capacity of 140 beds. In 1996, 25 beds were added to the jail, physical security was improved, and additional monitoring equipment was installed. The building inventory shows that the jail currently consists of 18,828 square feet. The main corrections building at 255 Curtis Spence Drive was constructed in 1987 and consists of 27,512 square feet. Through SPLOST IV funding, a new jail is being constructed (see capital improvements at the end of this chapter)

All municipalities in Jackson County send their prisoners to the Jackson County Jail. Municipalities pay lodging fees as appropriate per housing and booking contracts (last revised in 2003), and Jackson County has such contracts with Maysville, Pendergrass, Commerce, Hoschton, and Jefferson.

The Jackson County Correctional Institution is to be moved to the former I.W. Davis facility located at 265 I.W. Davis Road around January 1, 2010. A contractual agreement was made between the Department of Corrections and the Jackson County on July 1, 2009, for a 20-year lease and an additional 10-year lease on a year-to-year basis. An additional agreement was made to raise the maximum amount of inmates located at the Jackson County Correctional Institution from 174 to 200. The acquisition of the I.W. Davis Facility will provide an even more secure environment for the inmates and citizens of Jackson County. It will provide a more efficient area to prepare the inmates for their return into the workforce upon release due to the space it offers for classrooms needed for programs such as GED, Motivation for Change, Compass, Alcoholics Anonymous, Religious Programs and Re-Entry Classes.

## **Fire and Rescue**

### *Overview*

Planning for fire protection involves several steps, including the identification of the nature and extent of fire risks, establishment of level of service standards, identification of the most efficient and effective use of public resources to obtain the level of service standards, and implementation of a management and evaluation system.<sup>1</sup> The water system, discussed in another section, is an integral part of fire protection capabilities. Fire houses must be adequate in terms of size (e.g., equipment storage, number of bays for rolling stock, volunteer or full-time firefighters' quarters, etc.).

Fire protection is broader than many people realize at first glance—fire departments have become providers of emergency medical care, emergency management, disaster assistance, providers of “cat in the tree” calls, rescue services, and many other roles. The overall objective of fire protection services is to “minimize casualties and losses of property from fire by helping to prevent fires from occurring and to reduce losses and casualties from fires that do occur.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Burns, Robert B. 1988. “Planning for Community Fire Protection.” In Ronny J. Coleman and John A. Granito, eds, *Managing Fire Services*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Washington, DC: International City Management Association, 1988.

<sup>2</sup> Hatry, Harry P., et al. 1992. *How Effective Are Your Community Services? Procedures for Measuring Their Quality*. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. Washington, DC: Urban Institute and International City/County Management Association.

*Fire Districts in Jackson County*

According to the adopted Service Delivery Strategy, there are 10 fire districts and two municipalities that provide fire protection for Jackson County (see map). The City of Commerce contracts with the East Jackson Fire District for services. The City of Commerce Fire Department serves the municipal district and the unincorporated areas in the East Jackson Fire District. The City of Jefferson operates a city fire department which also service unincorporated property adjacent to Jefferson. The Service Delivery Strategy indicates that the Commerce and Jefferson fire districts change to coincide with city limit expansion upon annexation.

The West Jackson Fire District is the only district that is constitutionally established, and it directly levies its own tax, with the Jackson County Tax Commissioner providing for billing, collection, and remittance of taxes to the District.

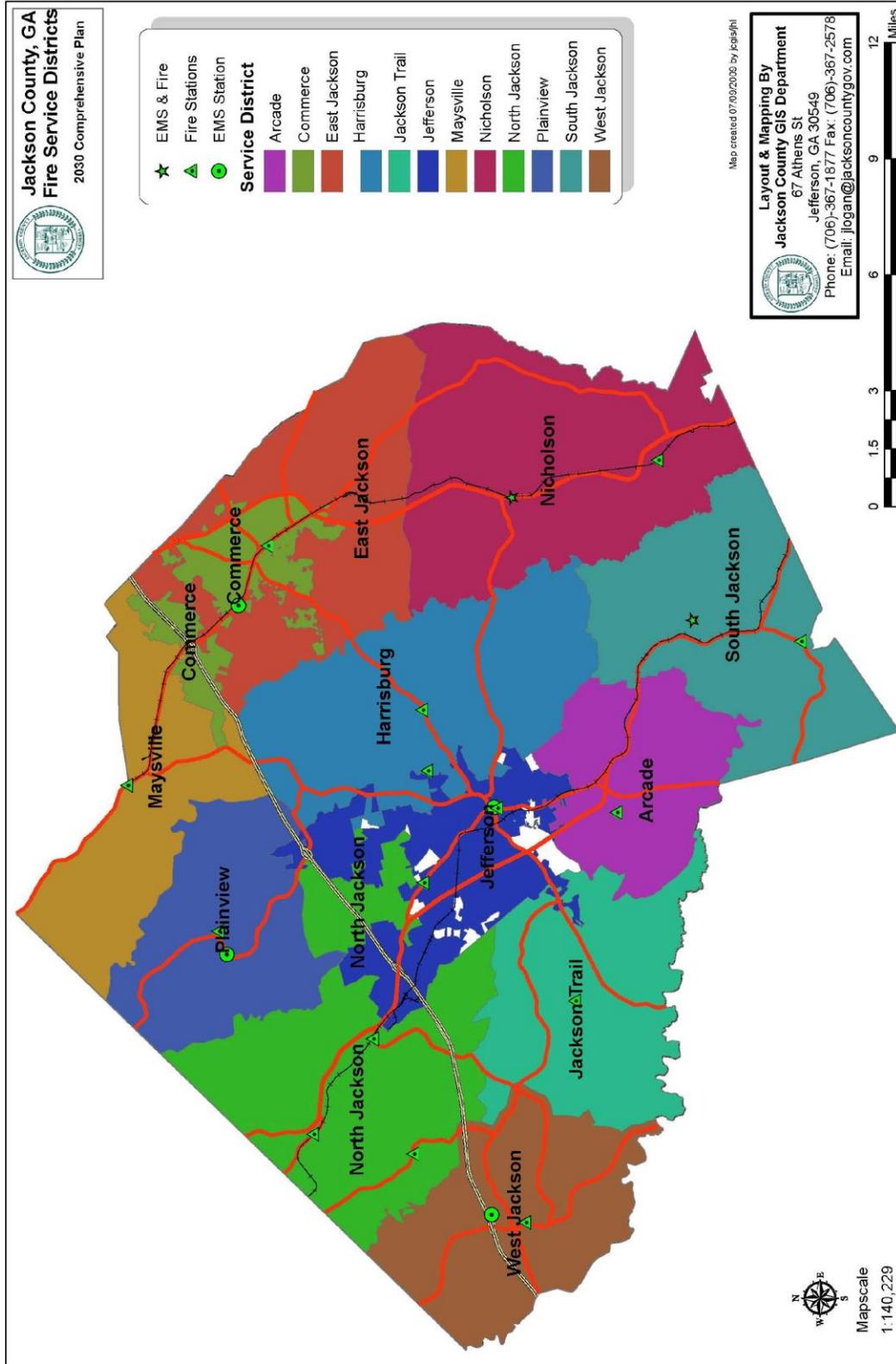
The other Fire Districts were created through acts of the General Assembly and the Jackson County Board of Commissioners. The Jackson County Board of Commissioners can levy taxes in each fire district which are also handled by the Jackson County Tax Commissioner. Each independent Fire District has a Board of Directors. Table 1 provides an inventory of fire stations by fire district in Jackson County (confirm/complete).

**Table 1  
Fire Stations by Fire District, Jackson County**

Fire Service District	Station	Address	Construction Date	Square Footage	No. of Bays	ISO Rating
North Jackson	1	22 Railroad St. Pendergrass	1996			9
North Jackson	2	541 Main Street Talmo	1986			9
North Jackson	3	2689 Highway 60, Pendergrass	1980			9
Plainview	1	4346 Plainview Rd. Maysville	1981; 1995	3,800	2	9
Maysville	1	9223 Gillsville Rd, Maysville	1988	7,400	6	6
East Jackson/ Commerce	1	1491 S. Elm St., Commerce	1985	9,300		5/7
Nicholson	1	4562 US Hwy. 441, Nicholson	1985	12,000		9
Nicholson	2	9371 US Hwy. 441, Center	1985	1,800		9
South Jackson	1	Crooked Creek Road	1983	1,750		9
South Jackson	2	SR 330	1990	1,500		9
Arcade	1	483 Swann Road	1993	4,800		9
Harrisburg	1	Thiatyra Community Church Rd.		4,000		9
Harrisburg	1	Jackson Co. Correctional Inst. 255 Curtis Spence Dr.	1992	3,396		
Jefferson	1	147 Athens St. Jefferson	1970	10,376		4
Jefferson	2	U.S. Hwy. 129 N. Jefferson				4
Jackson Trail	1	3343 Jackson Tr. Rd.	1978	2,400		7
West Jackson	1	69 West Jackson Rd.	1973;1988	5,500	5	6
Ga. Forestry Comm.	1	SR 11	Mid-1950s	800		

Source: Jackson County Comprehensive Plan 1998, Community Facilities Element, updated with available information.

Due to the separately constituted fire districts, the Jackson County Firefighters Association plays a key role in coordinating the activities and services between fire departments and on a countywide basis. Because fire services are a critical countywide public safety function, some support to the private association by Jackson County appears warranted.



Jackson County has constructed a Fire Service Training Center which is available to all fire district personnel for regular training. Jackson County also operates a fire brigade through the Correctional Institute which provides backup support to all fire departments in the county. The Jackson County Correctional Institute fire station is located on Curtis Spence Drive and consists of 3,396 square feet (constructed in 1990).

Rescue Operations in Jackson County are managed through the Emergency Management Agency (discussed in a separate section below). There are nine rescue units operating around the county and are staffed with volunteers (see Table 2).

**Table 2  
Fire Districts, Rescue and EMS Facilities in Jackson County**

Fire Service District	General Area (Municipalities and unincorporated surroundings)	Fire Stations	Rescue	EMS
West Jackson	Braselton; Hoschton	Yes (#3)	Yes (#3)	Yes (#3)
North Jackson	Talmo; Pendergrass	Yes (#4) (Pendergrass)	Yes (#4) (Pendergrass)	No
Plainview	All unincorporated	Yes (#10)	Yes (#10)	Yes (#5)
Maysville	Maysville	Yes (#5)	Yes (#5)	No
East Jackson	Commerce	Yes (#1)	Yes (#1)	Yes (#1)
Nicholson	Nicholson	Yes (#2)	Yes (#20)	Yes (#4)
South Jackson	All unincorporated	Yes (#7)	Yes (#6)	Yes (#6)
Arcade	Arcade	Yes (#6)	Yes (#6)	No
Jackson Trail	All unincorporated	Yes (#9)	No	No
Jefferson	Jefferson	Yes (#11) (two stations, City #1 and City #2)	Yes (#2)	Yes (#2)
Harrisburg	All unincorporated	Yes (#8 and #15)	No	No

Source: Compiled from the Jackson County government web page.

### ISO Ratings

The Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO) rates communities according to the adequacy of the water and fire protection systems. The Fire Suppression Rating Schedule (FSRS) is the manual ISO uses in reviewing the fire-fighting capabilities of individual communities. The schedule measures the major elements of a community's fire-suppression system, including but not limited to the sizes and types of buildings in a community, the presence or absence of fire alarm systems, the way calls are received and handled, whether fire fighters are paid or volunteer, the size of water mains and capacity, and how long it takes to respond to a call. Fifty percent of the overall grading is based on the number of engine companies and the amount of water a community needs to fight a fire. ISO reviews the distribution of fire companies throughout the area and checks that the fire department tests its pumps regularly and inventories each engine company's nozzles, hoses, breathing apparatus, and other equipment. The rating schedule manual uses a numerical grading called a Public Protection Classification ([www.iso.com](http://www.iso.com)). ISO ratings are based on a scale from one to ten, with a one being the best and ten being no fire protection.

## **Emergency Medical Services**

Emergency Medical Services in Jackson County are provided by six full-time stations on a countywide basis, including all municipalities. Stations are located in Commerce, Jefferson, Braselton/Hoschton, Nicholson, Plainview, and South Jackson. EMS is responsible for the provision of First Responder programs and Advanced Life Support (ALS) patient treatment/transport throughout the county. Jackson County hosts an Emory Flight base at the Jackson County Airport where an aircraft is stationed and staffed with a pilot, paramedic, and nurse.

## **911 Communications Center/Services**

This is a countywide service. The Jackson County Public Safety Communications Center was established in 1991 by referendum to the voters of Jackson County. The center serves as central dispatch for all public safety units within Jackson County. All communications of public safety agencies are directed through Jackson County's primary public safety answering point, thus serving the Sheriff, municipal police departments, volunteer fire departments, volunteer rescue units, emergency medical services, animal control, and the county marshal. In 2006, the Board of Commissioners approved an upgrade of equipment in the communications center, the first major upgrade since 1991.

## **E-911 Addressing Services**

Jackson County provides this service countywide, including all municipalities.

## **Emergency Management and Homeland Security**

Jackson County's Emergency Management Agency is responsible for mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery to emergencies and disasters throughout Jackson County and its municipalities. Volunteer rescue units, a dive team, and other specialized response units are under the direction of this agency. Homeland security is provided on a countywide basis by the Jackson County Emergency Management Agency, and Jackson County is the lead agency for homeland security. Work of the agency includes identification of critical infrastructure and possible targets of terrorism. Emergency management also has an EMT flight building at the Jackson County Airport, constructed in 2005 and consisting of 13,260 square feet.

## **Animal Control**

Jackson County provides animal control services to the unincorporated areas of Jackson County and in some of the cities in Jackson County to differing degrees based on service agreements. This service is managed by the Public Development Department. Jackson County employs animal control officers to capture and control animals and contracts with an animal care facility for the housing and care of animals. With respect to the municipalities, the current arrangements for animal control service by municipality are summarized in Table 3.

The only formal intergovernmental agreement with regard to animal control referenced in the service delivery agreement is between Jackson County and the Town of Braselton (July 2003). There may be opportunities to formalize or revisit current service delivery arrangements with the

municipalities for animal control. The most pressing concern appears to be that no animal control services are available within Talmo and Pendergrass. At minimum, it seems that Jackson County should approach the elected officials of these two cities to see if they desire to provide animal control services within the city limits. Secondly, since two cities (Jefferson and Hoschton) provide their own animal control services, there may be opportunities for collaboration or the joint delivery of services or selected portions thereof. Third, the semi-limited service agreement with Commerce should be periodically evaluated for adequacy.

**Table 3  
Status of Animal Control Agreements with and Services by Municipalities**

Municipality	Full Service: Capture, Control, Housing, Care, and Disposal by County	Limited Service: Capture and Control Only by County	Semi-Limited Service: Housing, Care and Disposal by County
Arcade	X		
Braselton	X		
Commerce			X
Jefferson	None: City provides all of its own animal control services.		
Hoschton	None: City provides all of its own animal control services.		
Maysville	X		
Nicholson	X		
Pendergrass	None, and no municipal animal control service is provided.		
Talmo	None, and no municipal animal control service is provided.		

**Courts**

On a countywide basis, Jackson County provides Superior Court, State Court, Magistrate Court, Probate Court and Juvenile Court to all citizens of Jackson County including the municipalities. All cities except for Nicholson and Talmo have their own municipal courts. Jackson County provides court services for all law violations committed within the cities of Nicholson and Talmo. The service delivery strategy does not reference any formal service agreements with these two cities for court services. As such, service arrangements should be formalized and/or periodically revisited for adequacy.

Court facilities for the county are housed in the Jackson County Courthouse, constructed in 2004 with 134,304 square feet.

**UTILITY-TYPE OPERATIONS**

**Jackson County Water and Sewerage Authority**

The Jackson County Water and Sewerage Authority (JCWSA) is an authority created by the Jackson County Board of Commissioners through the Jackson County Water and Sewerage Authority Act, Georgia Laws 1986. The Authority owns and operates a water and sewerage system that primarily serves the unincorporated area of Jackson County, Georgia.

The Authority is run by a five-member board of directors, appointed by the Jackson County Board of Commissioners on a rotating schedule. Board directors serve without compensation. Board appointments are for three-year terms, with a limit of a three term maximum.

The JCWSA operates as an independent political entity, except that it does not have the power to tax. The Authority operates as an enterprise fund, and as such is designed to operate off of revenues from water and sewer billings and fees. The JCWSA does, however, receive a percent of the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) dollars from Jackson County. The SPLOST dollar amount is subject to the review and approval of the Jackson County Board of Commissioners. Any such funds, as designated by Georgia Statute, are reserved for capital improvements and have been used exclusively for major projects such as water mains, water towers, and pumping stations.

The day-to-day operations of the Authority are supervised by a general manager, who is appointed by the Authority Board. Staff includes four water staff, three sewer staff, four engineering/inspection/construction staff, one Geographic Information System (GIS) staff member, and a six-person administrative/financial staff. The main office of the JCWSA is located at 117 Martin Luther King Avenue in Jefferson and serves as the central point for the provision of the Authority's services.

### **Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority**

The Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority was formed in 1994 in response to the demand for the growing water supply needs of its four member counties: Athens-Clarke, Oconee, Barrow and Jackson. The Board of Commissioners of the four counties adopted local resolutions approving the passage of state legislation which created the Authority as a political subdivision of the State of Georgia and a public corporation. The Authority is governed by a ten-person Board that is directly responsible to the citizens through the commission chairpersons of its member counties.

Pursuant to the Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority Act (H.B. 1514), the Authority encourages regional planning (while acknowledging the independence of its member counties to determine their own growth strategies), encourages water conservation, and guarantees the performance of its projects in an environmentally sensitive manner.

Initial planning of the Authority ensured that stream withdrawal rights among member counties were addressed prior to funding of its reservoir project, denied preferential rate treatment to one member over others, and required uniform rates for comparable service. Member jurisdictions can reduce or increase the uniform rate between and among themselves in response to an enhancement to the water supply such as treatment or transmission. Authority power is limited in that it may not obligate any member county to guarantee revenue bonds or indebtedness unless the member county has approved, and the membership in the Authority does not affect the ability of counties, cities, and other authorities to own and operate water and wastewater systems.

The member counties decided it was in their collective best interest to purchase water from a regional reservoir owned and controlled by the Authority (see discussion of source of water – Bear Creek Reservoir, below). Although the Authority is empowered to develop and provide wastewater services, efforts to date have included the construction of the reservoir and associated pump station and the construction of the Bear Creek Water Treatment Plant. The terms of the authority agreement were entered into July 22, 2006, and are effective for 50 years. The Bear Creek Reservoir project does not include the transmission of raw or treated water to member county distribution systems.

Each member county has an established maximum quantity that may be withdrawn from the reservoir based on percent of the total yield. Associated formulas establish monthly and daily withdrawal limits for each member county based on peaking factors. Annual raw water allocation for each county is as follows: Athens-Clarke (44 percent); Barrow (19 percent); Jackson (25 percent); and Oconee (12 percent).

## **Water**

### *Overview*

Potable water is a vital community service. A lack of adequate water can stifle if not terminate a community's growth and development. As with any growing community, the need for water will continue to increase. Water service is best thought of as an integrated system of production, treatment, storage, and distribution. Water systems, regardless of their size, are complicated and expensive operations. Thus, there are many aspects of the water system that are included in this inventory and analysis.

### *Water Supply*

The vast majority of the water supplied by the JCWSA is purchased from the Upper Oconee Basin Water Authority (UOBWA) from its Bear Creek Water Treatment Plant, which is located immediately adjacent to its Bear Creek Reservoir located on Georgia Route 330 in southwest Jackson County. Raw water is pumped from the reservoir directly into the water treatment plant, where it is conditioned and filtered. The water is then chlorinated and pumped into JCWSA's water distribution system ready for consumption. As noted above, the Bear Creek Reservoir is owned by four member counties: Athens-Clarke, Barrow, Jackson and Oconee. The Bear Creek Reservoir is permitted for withdrawal of 52 MGD.

The water treatment plant is owned by Barrow, Jackson and Oconee counties. Jackson County's ownership share of the reservoir is 25 percent and its share of the water treatment plant is 44 percent. Authority water supplies are supplemented by water purchases from the City of Commerce, most often only when water main breaks or other unforeseen circumstances occur.

### *Water Treatment*

Concurrent with the signing of the agreement that created the Bear Creek Reservoir, Jackson, Barrow and Oconee counties executed an agreement with the Upper Oconee Water Authority which provided for the construction of the 21 MGD Bear Creek Water Treatment Plant. Under the 50-year agreement, the authority owns and manages the water treatment facility and provides water treatment and transmission to the three member counties for resale. Athens-Clarke County chose to pump its raw water to a water treatment facility which is owned by and located within Athens-Clarke County. Table 4 provides the allocation of water capacity at the Bear Creek Water Treatment Plant.

**Table 4  
Allocation of Treated Water Capacity  
Bear Creek Water Treatment Plant**

<b>Member County</b>	<b>Allocation</b>	<b>Percentage of Total</b>
Barrow	8 MGD	38.10%
Jackson	9 MGD	42.86%
Oconee	4 MGD	19.04%

*Water Distribution Service Area Areas*

Jackson County through the Jackson County Water and Sewerage Authority purchases treated water from the Upper Oconee Water Basis Authority and other sources, then transmits it to the majority of unincorporated areas, Arcade, Talmo, and Pendergrass, and to various other municipalities in accordance with separate water purchase agreements. As the map of current water lines shows, most of unincorporated Jackson County is served with water lines with the exception of the eastern portion, along the SR 334 corridor, which consists mostly of agricultural and undeveloped land.

Commerce, Jefferson, Hoschton, Maysville, and Nicholson (through its Water Authority) provide water distribution service for their respective service areas. Arcade will have a shared water distribution service district within Arcade, recognizing the county authority's current water distribution services. The service delivery areas for water are shown on a map included in this report.

*System Details*

The JCWSA water system contains 425.47 miles of water main, seven pumping stations and has a water storage capacity of 6.2 millions of gallons per day (mgd). A generalized map of the water system is provided in this report.

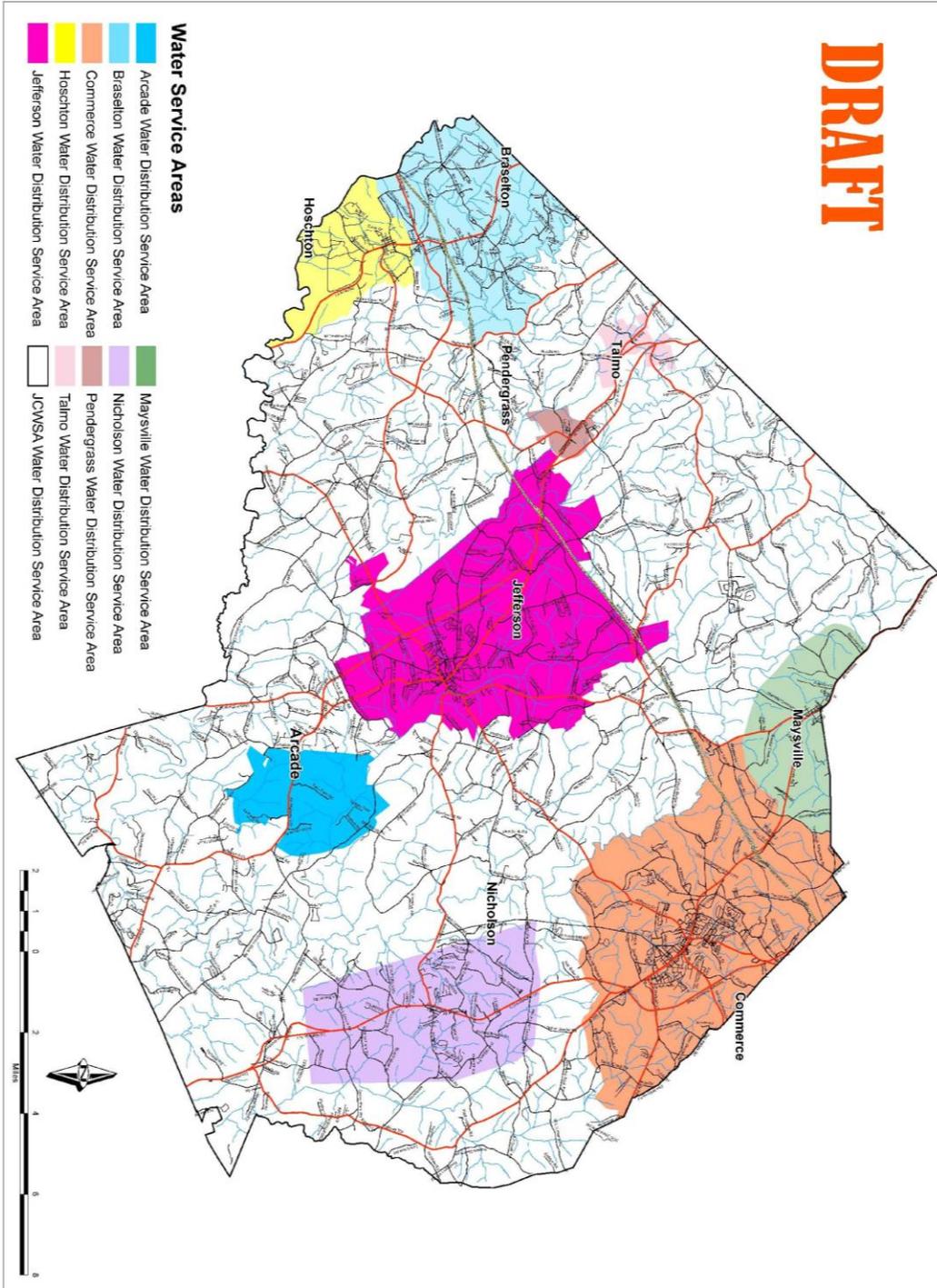
*Customers and Service Demands*

JCWSA water service has grown rapidly in the past ten years, as indicated by the increasing number of customers shown in Table 5. Principal customers as of 2008 are shown in Table 6.

**Table 5  
Customers, 1999-2008  
Jackson County Water and Sewerage Authority**

<b>Year</b>	<b>Residential Customers</b>	<b>Commercial Customers</b>
1999	1,597	0
2000	1,925	0
2001	2,415	0
2002	2,994	16
2003	3,702	28
2004	4,411	28
2005	5,200	37
2006	6,098	39
2007	6,712	41
2008	6,927	53

**DRAFT**



<p>Map Created: December 8, 2005  <b>Last Revised: March 10, 2006</b>                  This Printing: December 8, 2005</p>	<p><b>JACKSON COUNTY, GEORGIA</b></p> <p>Water Distribution Service Areas</p>	<p>Jackson County                  Department of Public Development                  Planning Division                  67 Athens Street                  Jefferson, Georgia 30549                  706-367-5808</p> <p><a href="http://www.jacksoncountygov.com">www.jacksoncountygov.com</a>                  email: <a href="mailto:cbrink@jacksoncountygov.com">cbrink@jacksoncountygov.com</a></p>
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Water purchases during the corresponding time period began at 170.4 million gallons in 1999, and grew steadily and peaked at 807.7 million gallons in 2007. With the declaration of a Level 4 drought and corresponding watering restrictions and conservation efforts, water purchases by the JCWSA dropped to 569.5 million gallons in 2008.

These restrictions have negatively impacted the cash flow to the JCWSA as sales income is their sole income source, and these strict conservation restrictions will negatively impact Authority operations over time if the restrictions are not altered. The conservation efforts can place pressure on the Authority to raise water and sewer rates due to a slow down in overall water consumption.

**Table 6  
Principal Customers, 2008  
Jackson County Water & Sewerage Authority**

Customer Name	Facility Type	Annual Usage (Gallons)	Total Bill (Annual)	Percent of System Billing
Georgia Power	Power Plant	929,000	\$534,553	11.17
Jefferson	City	45,279,600	\$168,868	3.53
Braselton	City	745,000	\$2,159	0.05
Hoschton	City	16,695,610	\$44,873	0.94
Georgia Freezer	Cold Storage	8,240,540	\$79,480	1.66
Louisiana Pacific	Wood Processing	7,428,120	\$69,562	1.45
Jackson County Board of Education	Public Schools	9,495,340	\$151,677	3.17
Affordable Homes	Mobile Home Park	2,802,200	\$26,265	0.55
Potters House	Charitable Organization	2,806,350	\$26,316	0.55
TD Auto Compressor	Automotive	10,595,190	\$169,900	3.55
Totals		105,016,950	\$1,273,652	26.62

Source: JCWSA Comprehensive Financial Annual Report: 3-16-2009

*System Interconnections*

During the long period of drought that was experienced from mid-2004 to late 2008, the JWCSA made investments in improving connectivity to four in-county municipal water systems and the Gainesville-Hall County water system, in order to guarantee a safe and adequate water supply to Jackson County residents. Most of these connections are two-directional and will enable each provider to negotiate water transfers during emergency periods. These negotiations, on several occasions, produced inter-local water purchase agreements and outlined the opportunity for the JCWSA to purchase additional treated water supply should it be needed.

*Capacity Needs*

To meet future needs for water, estimates of future consumption are needed. Many factors influence the amount of water used, including the price, leaks in the system, wasteful practices versus conservation measures, the sizes and types of commercial and industrial establishments, and the amount of municipal annexation (or changes to water service area boundaries) and rezoning. If the estimates are too low, the community risks not having enough water to meet its needs. If the estimates are too high, it risks spending substantial sums of money for capacity it will not use.

Domestic water use can vary between 40 and 120 gallons per person per day. Average per capita per day consumption of water for all uses (residential, commercial, institutional, industrial) generally is in the range of 170 to 300 gallons per capita per day. Water use can be much higher than these averages, and there are substantial variations in water use from community to community. For planning purposes in the absence of a water master plan, a level of service of 300 gallons per day per person is recommended.

For the JCWSA system, average daily water system consumption has never peaked above 4 MGD. The JCWSA has excess production potential from the Upper Oconee Water Basin Authority and agreements with the City of Commerce and Gainesville-Hall County. Hence, JCWSA has between two and three times the current usage available to serve future growth.

Even so, the extended drought also led the JCWSA to begin a study of the potential development of a future water supply watershed lake dedicated to meet the long term future growth needs of the unincorporated county. This study is ongoing. Many community leaders have supported this effort, as it will require an extensive investment by the JCWSA and/or Jackson County. The driving force behind this planning effort is the recognition that bringing a water supply lake and treatment facility on-line takes between ten and fifteen years after study completion and a decision made to proceed with the project.

#### *Mapping and Information Management*

The JCWSA GIS staff has worked diligently to update the authority's mapping data base, which is available for use by the various independent fire departments in Jackson County. JCWSA GIS staff maintains a comprehensive listing of fire hydrants sorted by county fire districts, and a corresponding Fire Hydrant Map Book with roads and streets indexed by street number and hydrant location. The data are available in both hard copy and in electronic form.

In addition to the firefighting data base, the authority maintains an electronic database of all water and sewer service locations as well as the county's adopted water and sewer construction standards and its industrial pretreatment program for the development community. The information is essential for design professionals, as well as residential, commercial and industrial developers.

#### *City of Braselton Water System*

Braselton operates a water system and the source is groundwater accessed via drilled wells.

#### *City of Commerce Water System*

The City of Commerce is permitted by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division to operate a water supply reservoir, a drinking water treatment plant, a water distribution system, three wastewater treatment facilities, and a sewer collection system.

Commerce owns and maintains a 325-acre watershed lake, known as the Grove River Reservoir, which is located in the southern part of Banks County. The lake is fed by the Grove River and its tributaries that extend to eastern Hall County. The drainage basin for the reservoir covers 37 square miles. This lake is the supply for the city's drinking water system. Public use is allowed; however, there are rules and regulations that must be followed. These are enforced by the City of Commerce and the Department of Natural Resources. The city has adopted

ordinances for watershed protection and reservoir management. Commerce also prepared and adopted a drought contingency plan, which was updated in November, 2007 to more closely comply with the EPD-mandated water restrictions.

A feasibility study to modify the dam structure at the reservoir to increase storage capacity was completed in January 2009 by Schnabel Engineering, LLC. These modifications to the dam to raise the normal full pool by four feet will increase the area to 380 acres and double the storage capacity of the reservoir. The timing of this project will be dependent on the increased water demand.

Commerce operates the water plant in accordance with Withdrawal Permit No. 006-0106-01 issued by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) and Operational Permit No. CS157001. The water plant was originally placed in service in 1970, with a treatment capacity of 2.2 MGD. This plant is a conventional filter plant with sedimentation basins and dual media filters. The most recent upgrade was completed in 2000, which increased the treatment capacity to 4.5 MGD. The plant can pump 3,125 Gallons per Minute (GPM) into the distribution system at a pressure of 130 PSI. Future increases in treatment capacity will require building additions and new treatment facilities.

The City produces an annual report known as the Consumer Confidence Report (CCR) which outlines the parameters for water quality in the system.

The water and sewer service area is defined in the Jackson County Service Delivery Strategy as approved by the Department of Community Affairs. The service areas include the city limits of Commerce as well as adjoining unincorporated areas of Jackson, Banks, and Madison Counties.

Commerce's water distribution system consists of four elevated storage tanks with a capacity of 1.6 million gallons. There are 118 miles of water mains ranging in size from 16 inch to 6 inch and 760 fire hydrants. The system is basically looped within the service territory with the exception of a few dead ends. Water system expansion for new subdivisions and commercial projects is funded by developers and subdividers. Those projects are reviewed by city staff and city engineers under a delegation of review agreement with the Georgia EPD.

#### *City of Hoschton Water System*

Hoschton operates a municipal water system which is supplied by groundwater and the purchase of water from the City of Winder. There were agreements in the 1990s for emergency water supplies from the Barrow County Water and Sewer Authority and the City of Braselton. Also, during the 1990s, Hoschton had an agreement to supply water to the Jackson County Water and Sewerage Authority.

#### *City of Jefferson Water System*

The City of Jefferson has its own public water supply, the 35-acre Curry Creek Reservoir, located in the eastern part of the city. It has operated a surface water treatment facility since the early 1950s. Jefferson is working toward a new raw water supply reservoir on Parks Creek. This facility would be augmented by pumping water from the North Oconee River. A withdrawal permit for this source has been under review by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) since early 2000. The City has three interconnections with the Jackson County Water

and Sewerage Authority, and has an agreement to purchase finished water from the County for up to 0.3 MGD.

### *Nicholson Water Authority*

The Nicholson Water Authority provides water service within the city limits of Nicholson and to unincorporated areas within its designated service area.

### *Issues and Opportunities*

1. *Water service to Arcade.* Water service to Arcade, via the Jackson County Water and Sewerage Authority as well as plans for municipal service by the City of Arcade, is increasingly critical since groundwater still serves a number of residents in the area and it is contaminated with environmental hazards.
2. *System interconnections for contingencies.* If not already sufficient, contingency plans should be prepared for dealing with major water line breaks, loss of water sources during drought, and other possible damages to the water system such as flooding. There may be additional opportunities to connect municipal and county water distribution systems in order to move water around the county during periods of drought.
3. *Extensions of service to additional unincorporated areas.* Adequate water supplies are needed for all parts of unincorporated Jackson County from a public health and also a fire fighting capability standpoint. However, as water lines are run to into rural areas, such projects may not be very efficient (i.e., the marginal costs exceed marginal revenues in terms of connecting additional water customers in low-density rural areas). Yet, JCWSA relies on user fees to fund its system tends to provide an incentive to expand its system to increase revenues. Extending water lines into previously unserved areas can stimulate residential development, sometimes in a manner inconstant with countywide land use plans. At issue is how the county and JCWSA coordinate their activities to ensure that proprietary concerns of the authority are met, critical public needs are satisfied, and county land use planning efforts are not frustrated.
4. *Water conservation.* It is important that governments take steps to promote water conservation. As population growth continues, there is an increased strain on existing water supplies, so water facility expansion is necessary. Water conservation efforts can minimize the levels of increased expansion by cutting down on the amount of water used per capita.
5. *Financial considerations.* Because water systems are operated as utilities, the revenue produced by the system should be sufficient to pay for all necessary capital expenditures, operation and maintenance costs, debt service, administrative costs, and provide a contingency fund for emergencies. Customers should also pay for the amount of water they use. Flat monthly rates for water encourage wasteful practices. Customers requiring very large volumes of water should pay additional demand charges. All customer lines should be metered. Developers of new subdivisions should be required to install the water mains and appurtenances through or along the tract and deed the facilities to the county (JCWSA).

6. *Oversizing of water mains where necessary for growth.* Regulations should establish a policy for the “oversizing” of water mains so that when a larger water main is needed than would serve the subdivision or development, the county can contribute a prorated share of the cost to construct a water main that serves a larger population or area.

## **Wastewater Collection and Treatment**

Sanitary sewer systems are indispensable to maintaining community health. The utility provider must be able to manage water-borne waste by operating, maintaining, expanding, and replacing components of the wastewater system to ensure uninterrupted collection, transport, processing, and treatment. Collection and treatment of sewage is one of the most critical elements in the development of any site. A key challenge for the wastewater system is to convey all sanitary wastewater flows to the treatment plant without bypassing flows into receiving waters and without causing waste backups that store sanitary sewage on private properties.

Wastewater systems that discharge into receiving waters must apply for a permit to discharge under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System administered by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Permits require collection of samples, laboratory analyses, reporting, and periodic inspections to assure compliance with regulatory requirements.

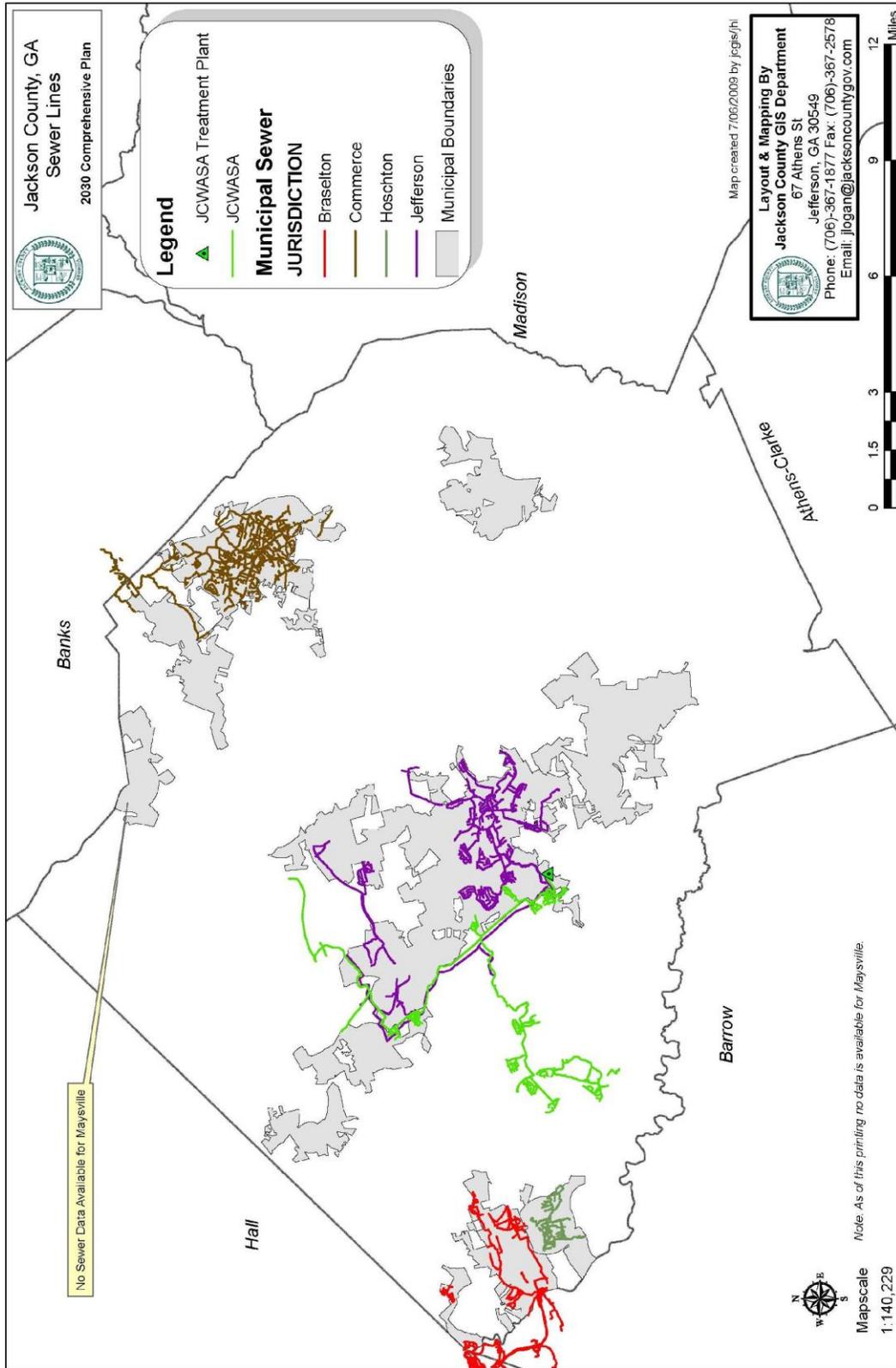
Jackson County through the Jackson County Water and Sewerage Authority has a wastewater permit and provides sanitary sewer services in parts of unincorporated areas of the county and the cities of Pendergrass and Talmo. The cities of Commerce, Jefferson, Braselton, Hoschton, and Maysville provide wastewater collection services in their respective service areas. Nicholson through the Nicholson Water Authority has a designated sewer service area but currently relies on septic systems. Arcade has also maintained interest in developing its own sanitary sewer services and applied for a wastewater permit, as it currently relies exclusively on septic tanks.

The Authority provided sewer service to 472 customers as of December 31, 2008. The sewerage is received into the JCWSA sewerage system and is treated at the Middle Oconee Wastewater Treatment Plant which is located on the south side of Georgia Route 11 (Winder Highway), west of U.S. 129. The plant is permitted to treat up to 300,000 gallons per day.

In early 2008, the JCWSA began an upgrade to the existing treatment plant to include new head works, an electrical building, an emergency generator, and a SCADA system, a primary operations control system that allows remote sensing of a lift station or wastewater treatment plant. When the upgrade is accepted and approved by the Environmental Protection Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, design specifications call for the facility to be permitted and treat 500,000 gallons of wastewater effluent daily. Long term design plans for the facility call for the treatment of 2.5 million gallons daily of wastewater.

### *City of Jefferson Wastewater System*

Jefferson currently operates three wastewater treatment facilities. Commerce provides sanitary sewer treatment and collection to areas in Banks County. Braselton provides treatment and collection to areas in Barrow, Gwinnett, and Hall Counties.



### *City of Commerce Wastewater System*

The City of Commerce is permitted by the Georgia Environmental Protection Division to operate three wastewater treatment facilities and a sewer collection system. The Northside Water Pollution Control Plant (WPCP), National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit No. GA0026247, is located off W.E. King Road.

Commerce's W.E. King plant has a permitted capacity of 1.05 MGD. The discharge from this facility flows to Beaver Dam Creek, a tributary in the Savannah River Basin.

The Davis House WPCP, NPDES Permit No. GA0032646, is located off Eisenhower Drive at Banks Crossing. This oxidation pond has a permitted capacity of 0.067 MGD. The discharge from this facility flows to Crooked Creek, a tributary in the Savannah River Basin.

The Holiday Inn WPCP, NPDES Permit No. GA0032638, is located behind the Holiday Inn located on U.S. Highway 441 at Banks Crossing. This oxidation pond has a permitted capacity of 0.041 MGD. The discharge from this facility flows to Crooked Creek, a tributary in the Savannah River Basin.

The Northside WPCP has completed an expansion that increases the capacity to 2.1 MGD as well as complies with the new Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) requirements for water quality. The average daily flow for 2008 was 0.850 MGD. It is projected that the plant will reach 80 percent capacity by 2025.

Commerce's sewer collection system consists of 98 miles of sewer lines ranging in size from 21 inches to 6 inches in diameter with 1,185 manholes. There are 7 pump stations and 5 miles of force mains. Sewer system expansion to new residential and commercial developments is funded by developers.

The water and sewer service area is defined in the Jackson County Service Delivery Strategy as approved by the Department of Community Affairs. The service areas include the city limits of Commerce as well as adjoining areas in unincorporated Jackson, Banks, and Madison Counties.

### *Forecasting Future Needs*

As a general rule of thumb, approximately 70 to 80 percent of the potable water supplied by any given community's water system is returned to the sanitary sewer collection system. Sanitary sewer systems are usually sized to accommodate average wastewater flows of approximately one hundred gallons per capita per day (Somers et al 1986).<sup>3</sup> Other sources note that in general "about 60 to 80 percent of the per capital consumption of water will become sewage,"<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Somers, Donald M., Martin J. Manning, and L. Scott Tucker. 1986. Water Resources. In Sam M. Christofano and William S. Foster, Eds., *Management of Local Public Works*. Washington, DC: International City Management Association, 1986.

<sup>4</sup> Colley, B. C. 1986. *Practical Manual of Site Development*. New York: McGraw-Hill. 1988.

and that an estimated 65 percent of the water used for residential use returns to the sewage system.<sup>5</sup>

### **Solid Waste Collection and Disposal**

Jackson County does not operate a landfill, but it has one transfer station at 100 Landfill Drive in Jefferson. The main transfer station building was constructed in 1994 and consists of 3,120 square feet. The transfer station site also includes the scale house and scale-house office, inmate break room, and records storage. The transfer station facility is in need of repair, and the Board of Commissioners has authorized a replacement project (see discussion of capital improvements). Jackson County also operates two compactor sites, one at 781 New King Bridge Road and the other at 232 Yarbrough Ridgeway Road. Both buildings on the compactor sites were constructed in 1990.

The county and cities are individually responsible for arranging for the collection of municipal solid waste. However, most jurisdictions allow for the private market to provide for collection services. Jackson County provides a clean community program through Keep Jackson County Beautiful as an umbrella program involving cities, schools, civic organizations, nonprofit groups, and neighborhood associations. Programs include Adopt-A-Highway, Bring One for the Chipper, Recycling and Litter education, and Great American Cleanup.

Jackson County operates two compactor sites and a transfer station; solid waste is disposed of at the R & B Landfill operated by Waste Management in Banks County. Long-term contracts are in place, and Waste Management has provided the County with a Letter of Capacity Assurance until 2013.

Jackson County currently operates a drop-off program to collect recyclables at the County transfer station and the two staffed compactor sites. The transfer station and drop-off sites have collection containers for aluminum cans, newspaper, and cardboard.

The Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act of 1990 requires local governments to develop a plan for reducing the amount of solid waste going into landfills and other disposal facilities. Such reductions may be accomplished by many techniques, including recycling materials such as plastic, aluminum, and newspaper and the diversion of yard waste from disposal facilities into backyard and other composting operations. The county has participated in a regional solid waste management plan, prepared by the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission.

## **PARKS, RECREATION, OPEN SPACE AND CULTURAL FACILITIES**

### **Jackson County Parks and Recreation**

Jackson County provides parks and recreation facilities at five locations: Hurricane Shoals Park, Lamar Murphy Park, Sell's Mill Park, West Jackson Park (Hoschton) and East Jackson Park (Nicholson). These are described below (need confirmation of acreage figures):

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<sup>5</sup> Brewer, William E., and Charles P. Alter. 1988. *The Complete Manual of Land Planning and Development*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

1. **Hurricane Shoals Park** (70.3 acres) is located just off Ga. Hwy. 82 Spur south of Maysville. There are seven covered pavilions and an amphitheatre which can be rented. There are many open picnic tables, grills, two restroom facilities, two playgrounds and walking trails.
2. **Lamar Murphy Park** (15.0 acres) opened in 1997 and has the following amenities: three 300 foot lighted baseball/softball fields; two 200 foot lighted baseball/softball fields; two lighted football/soccer fields; two outdoor batting cages, two concession stands, three covered pavilions with picnic tables, a playground, and a walking trail.
3. **West Jackson Park** opened in Spring 2004 and is located in Hoschton. Its facilities include the following: four 200 foot lighted baseball/softball fields; one 100 foot t-ball field, one concession stand, two covered pavilions with picnic tables, a playground, and a walking trail.
4. **Sell's Mill Park** (28 acres) has a covered pavilion with several picnic tables, a playground, restrooms, walking trails and the Mill building.
5. **East Jackson Park**, near Nicholson, opened in the Spring of 2008. It consists of four ballfields and is on a site of approximately 36 acres.

Two other parks exist, Center Park south of Nicholson (10 acres) (now owned by private entities) and Hoschton City Park (7 acres). Neither is owned by Jackson County but Hoschton City Park is programmed and maintained by the Jackson County Department of Parks and Recreation according to the System-Wide Recreation Master Plan 2003-2012. Hoschton City Park is small but serves residents of the western portion of the County. Hoschton City Park contains multi-use fields and support facilities. Center Park contains a gymnasium (which needs renovation) and some other improvements. In addition, the county is in the process of developing an access point on the Bear Creek Reservoir.

The county Parks and Recreation Department also utilizes Jackson County Schools and their recreational facilities, which constitute approximately 15 acres. There are also five school recreation sites that have indoor and outdoor facilities that are used by Jackson County Parks and Recreation Department for practice and game purposes.

According to the FY 2009 county budget document, there is a need to provide greenways and trail systems throughout the county, as well as at individual parks, particularly Sells Mill Park, which is presently underdeveloped. There is also a great need for indoor facilities; with the exception of the old gymnasium at Center Park and facilities at county schools, there are no indoor recreation facilities available for use by county residents.

With regard to funding, according to the 2009 county budget document, the preferred method for funding recreation system improvements is a continuation of the Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST). It is suggested that, in order to develop future facilities, particularly those with a high cost such as recreation centers, that the portion of SPLOST dedicated to recreation increase to 25 percent. In the new SPLOST approved in March, 2005, the portion dedicated to recreation is 20 percent.



To address growing needs for parks and recreation in Jackson County, a bond referendum for \$15 million in parks and recreation improvements was held in February, 2008, but it was not passed by the citizenry. The funds would have been used to finance a recreation center, 340 acre park, a facility for the disabled, covered arena exposition center, the addition of a soccer field and tennis court at West Jackson Park, and the addition of a football/soccer stadium and facilities at Lamar Murphy Park. These items were considered priority projects to alleviate the lack of infrastructure needed for recreational programs and opportunities. Though the parks and recreation bond referendum failed, the list of needs is retained for future capital improvement programs; furthermore, as needs mount, however, a new referendum for parks and recreation may be warranted.

With regard to programming, the county Parks and Recreation Department provides a wide range of youth programs for children between ages of 5 and 16 years. Program offerings include athletics, cheerleading, and camps. With the opening of the new East Jackson Park, more opportunities are available for recreation programs. However, according to the FY 2008 budget document, there are not enough outside and indoor programs offered, and current programs do not address the needs of all age groups. Specific needs include: soccer, swimming, volleyball, fitness, tennis, theater and cultural programs, racquetball, disc golf, and senior programs.

### **Municipal Parks and Recreation Programs**

Jefferson and Commerce are the only cities in Jackson County that have recreation departments that provide several park and recreational facilities within their city limits. Commerce's Recreation Department cooperates with the Commerce School System for joint use of recreational facilities. Commerce has a full-time Parks and Recreation Department staff that operates and maintains the recreational facilities and operates programs within the city. Arcade and Braselton have limited park facilities but do not have organized recreational activities.

### **Senior Center**

Jackson County provides senior center services on a countywide basis. It operates one senior center located at 219 Darnell Road; the building was constructed in 1981 and consists of 11,220 square feet. In 2008, a CDBG grant was received to completely renovate the senior center. One complication with the renovation is it will cause temporary displacement. The I W Davis Facility, which was recently purchased by Jackson County, may be used for a temporary home for the senior center.

### **Pat Bell Conference Center**

Jackson County owns the Pat Bell Conference Center located at 7020 Highway 82 Spur and is generally considered to be a part of the Hurricane Shoals Park complex.

## **GENERAL ADMINISTRATIVE FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

Administrative employees, such as county management, human resources, and financial managers, need adequate space for work. Space needs may be based on projections of employees and a certain square footage per employee (e.g., 300 square feet for each

employee). In addition, space needs should take into account needs for a comfortable council/court chambers, conference room(s), and storage space.

### **Jackson County Courthouse**

The Jackson County Courthouse opened for business in August, 2004. It has five courtrooms, two jury rooms, two public restrooms on each of its three floors, five elevators, and a full basement. It houses all judicial offices, including Superior Court, Probate Court, Juvenile Court, State Court, Magistrate Court, District Attorney's Office, Public Defender's Office, and Clerk of Court's Office. It also houses the Jackson County Historic Society, Information Technology, Sheriff/Courthouse Security and a law library. The state-of-the-art building has automated lighting and temperature controls and is secured by metal detectors and surveillance cameras.

### **Jackson County Administration Building**

The County Administration Building, at 67 Athens Street in Jefferson, was constructed in the 1930s and consists of approximately 26,000 square feet. It is by no means considered adequate to continue in its current role of housing county administrative offices, including the public development department, GIS, and tax assessment offices among others.

### **Voter Registration and Elections**

Elections are provided on a countywide basis. However, municipalities are responsible for their own city elections.

### **Tax Assessment and Tax Collection**

Jackson County provides tax assessment services on a countywide basis and collects property taxes for the entire county. Commerce, Jefferson, and Maysville also collect municipal property taxes within their incorporated boundaries.

## **GROUND, PUBLIC WORKS, AND TRANSPORTATION**

### **Buildings and Grounds**

The main office for Buildings and Grounds is located at 330 Curtis Spence Drive and is shared with the Engineering Department; it was constructed in 1995. The Department will be moving to 381 Curtis H. Spence Drive once renovations to that building are completed. The shop facility at 358 Curtis Spence Drive consists of three buildings (6,000 square foot building built in 2007, which houses trade technicians and tool and parts storage; mobile construction shop; and old pole barn).

### **Road and Bridge Construction and Maintenance**

Jackson County provides road and bridge construction and maintenance services through a combination of in-house, consultant, and contractor service provides for all county-maintained roads and bridges, some of which are inside the city limits. The county's Service Delivery Strategy contains a list of roads that are within cities and towns that are county-maintained roads. Cities are responsible for all city streets within their respective jurisdictions; however, they may be eligible for county maintenance through intergovernmental agreement under

certain conditions. The Service Delivery Strategy calls for establishment of countywide road and bridge construction standards, uniform road classifications, and countywide transportation master planning.

One issue that arises on occasion is the issue for who is responsible for road maintenance when a municipality annexes the road, or along one side of the road. Also, if the county operates traffic signals in a given area that is annexed, responsibility may not necessarily be shifted to the annexing municipality. These are issues that deserve further attention and policy development.

Road Department facilities are located at 12 Hendrix Drive in Jefferson. The main office consists of 3,102 square feet and was constructed in 1959. Other facilities include a fertilizer pole shed, a sign shop, tractor storage, and salt shed.

### **Fleet Maintenance**

Fleet maintenance reviewed these numbers and found that the main building is about 6,300 square feet with an addition of about 1,160 square feet, for a total of approximately 7,460 square feet for the main building. An oil change facility of approximately 792 square feet also exists. The main shop building was constructed sometime in the 1950s. The front office area and the welding shop were added in the early 1990s. The body shop room, paint room and small engine building along with an inmate restroom and the tire storage building were also most likely constructed in the 1950s.

## **PLANNING AND ZONING-RELATED FUNCTIONS**

### **Land Use Planning**

In 1998, Jackson County was lead agency for preparing a comprehensive plan for the county and all municipalities with the exception of Maysville, which is assigned to the Georgia Mountains region and plans with Banks County. Since that time, the county and each municipality has prepared their own respective land use/comprehensive plans.

### **Planning Commissions, Zoning Administration and Development Plan Review**

Jackson County has an appointed Planning Commission which serves the unincorporated area only. Zoning administration and development plan review are provided by the Department of Public Development which is housed in the Jackson County Administration Building in Jefferson.

At one time, Jackson County administered zoning regulations and conducted land development inspections for Jefferson and other municipalities. In 2003, the Quad Cities Planning Commission was formed among the Cities of Arcade, Jefferson, Pendergrass, and Talmo. The cities consolidated their zoning administration and building inspections functions under a new planning commission which was housed within the City of Jefferson's government facilities. The municipalities prepared a consolidated land use management code. Pendergrass withdrew from the planning commission and assumed its own planning and zoning functions in 2004, just before the new code was adopted by the three other cities. In 2009, Arcade withdrew from the planning commission, leaving just the cities of Jefferson and Talmo. As a result, the Quad Cities Planning Commission was reconstituted as the Jefferson-Talmo Planning Commission. Arcade

provides its own planning and zoning services via the city and a contract with a private consulting firm.

Braselton, Commerce, Hoschton, and Maysville administer their own zoning ordinances. In 2009, Nicholson adopted a zoning ordinance for the first time and is administering it on its own.

Although the municipalities conduct their own long-range planning activities, the need for countywide coordination has not diminished. Efforts have been made in this comprehensive plan to provide a countywide perspective, including all municipalities and parts of municipalities located in Jackson County. However, additional and regular coordination is paramount to the success of any countywide growth management strategies.

### **Geographic Information Systems**

At the time the Service Delivery Strategy was most recently revised (2006), there was no arrangement for countywide provision of GIS services. Jackson County has a GIS Division which serves the mapping needs of all county departments, especially the tax assessor, as well the municipalities in Jackson County. The City of Commerce has a GIS system and at the time the strategy was enacted Braselton was exploring the possibility of providing GIS services. Municipalities can contract with Jackson County for GIS Services, and the county has been in the process during the past year of cultivating relationships with the various cities and consolidating all GIS services into the County's GIS Division. Initial technical assistance by the county regarding GIS has been an essential step, as municipal boundary changes (through annexation) were not being updated on a timely basis by all cities, thus affecting various aspects of the county's facility and service system.

### **Building Inspections**

Jackson County provides building inspections in the unincorporated area and also provides inspections for the Jackson County portion of Maysville. Building inspections functions are provided by the Department of Public Development.

## **HEALTH, EDUCATION, WELFARE AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

### **Public and Environmental Health**

The Jackson County Health Department provides services on a countywide basis. There are two public health facilities. The primary health department office is located in the Jefferson area (275 General Jackson Drive) and consists of 7,140 square feet in a single building constructed in 1991. A second public health office is located in the "Jackson Campus," a shopping center within the city limits of Commerce (623 South Elm Street) which was purchased by Jackson County (it consists of 67,349 square feet). These two health clinics provide the following basic services: health checkups, immunizations, WIC Supplemental Food Program, nutrition education, family planning, and screening for STDs, HIV, Tuberculosis and Hepatitis B.

The Health Department also has a separate Environmental Health office located at 260 Lee Street in Jefferson. The building was constructed in 1958 and consists of 3,094 square feet.

The comprehensive plan in 1998 identified the long-term need to provide more convenient health services to residents of southern Jackson County. Otherwise, south Jackson residents

have to drive several miles to Jefferson or Commerce for public health assistance. Though recognizing limitations to funding, the 1998 plan also indicated that health-related transportation was needed, such as to and from the BJC Medical Center.

### Hospitals

BJC Medical Center is located in Commerce. BJC Medical Center consists of 90 licensed hospital beds, 167 nursing facility beds, and a staff of over 400 medical professionals that provide a range of in-patient, out-patient and long-term nursing care services including 24-hour emergency services, surgical services, obstetric services, laboratory services, radiology services, physical therapy services, outpatient clinics, and other services.

### Public Schools

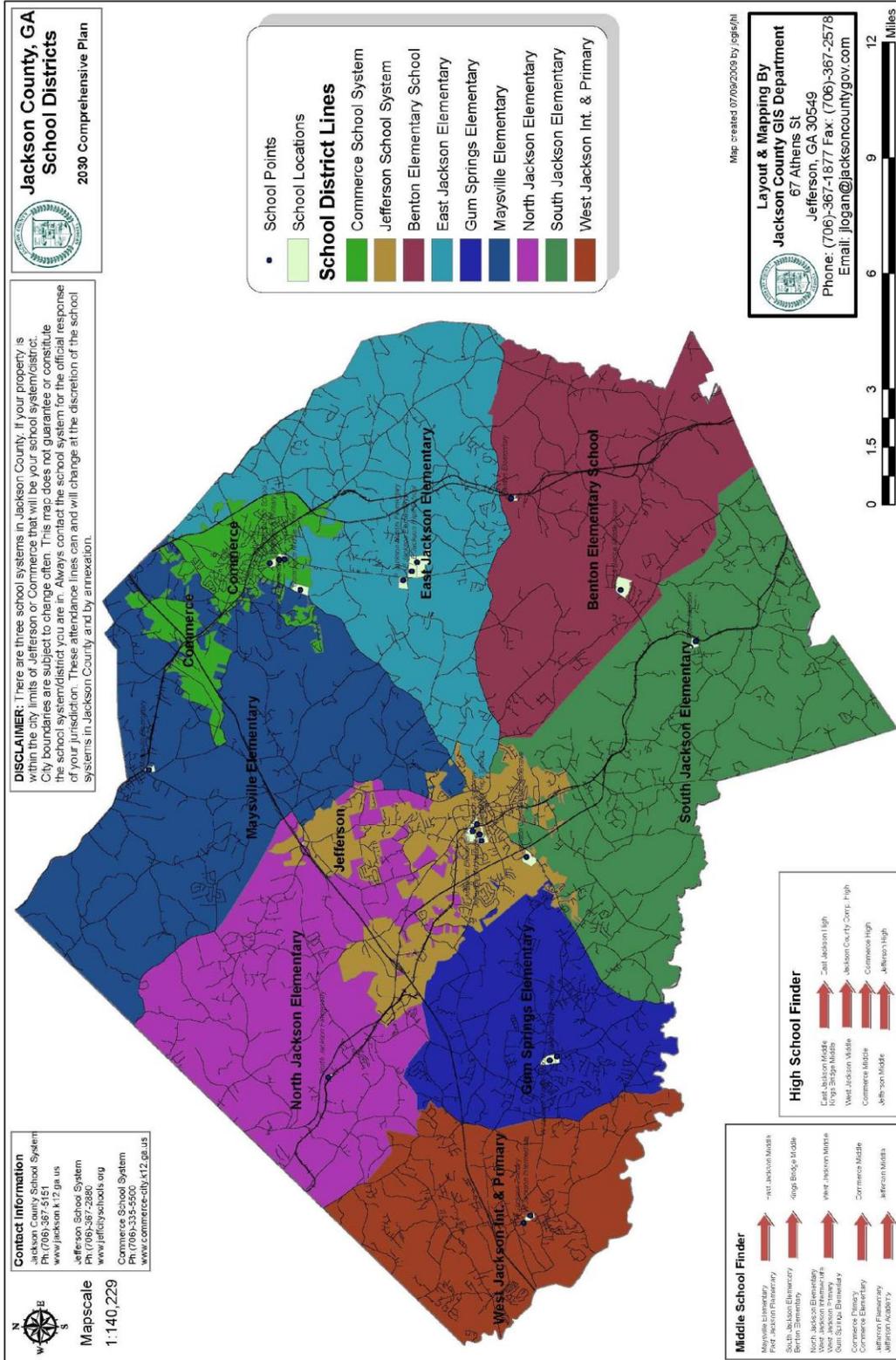
Unlike most counties that have countywide public school systems, there are three independent public school systems in Jackson County: the county system, and city school systems in Commerce and Jefferson. Table 7 provides the individual student enrollments for the past three years for all three school systems.

**Table 7  
Public School Enrollment by System by Grade, FY 2007 to FY 2009  
Jackson County, Commerce, and Jefferson Public School Systems**

Grade	Jackson County			City of Commerce			City of Jefferson			Total, All Three School Systems		
	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009	2007	2008	2009
Pre-k	200	208	221	44	53	51	78	92	93	322	354	365
Kindergarten	563	605	606	144	140	151	195	217	206	902	962	963
1 <sup>st</sup> grade	530	563	595	108	132	105	208	195	229	846	890	929
2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	527	522	534	118	108	136	198	211	195	843	841	865
3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	527	540	538	124	122	101	188	190	208	839	852	847
4 <sup>th</sup> grade	489	542	553	113	124	112	177	199	204	779	865	869
5 <sup>th</sup> grade	493	512	552	107	121	118	193	173	208	793	806	878
6 <sup>th</sup> grade	523	516	536	123	106	105	192	202	194	838	824	835
7 <sup>th</sup> grade	512	513	490	116	109	101	190	193	207	818	815	798
8 <sup>th</sup> grade	518	530	526	120	116	116	184	191	185	822	837	827
9 <sup>th</sup> grade	604	608	590	118	120	112	190	189	208	912	917	910
10 <sup>th</sup> grade	416	491	518	113	109	117	153	178	188	682	778	823
11 <sup>th</sup> grade	410	368	432	81	102	94	137	138	159	628	608	685
12 <sup>th</sup> grade	341	380	347	83	64	88	136	139	136	560	583	571
Total	6653	6898	7038	1512	1526	1507	2419	2507	2620	10584	10931	11165

Source: Georgia Department of Education, Data Collection System.

The county's school system has increased in terms of total number of students in recent years. Given the population growth anticipated in the county, demands on the county's public school system will undoubtedly increase. Jefferson's total school enrollment has increased by roughly 100 students in the past few years. Enrollment in Commerce's school system, in contrast, has remained relatively steady in recent years.



From the figures in Table 8, public school student generation multipliers have been calculated for the 2007 year. These multipliers can be useful in terms of projecting future school students in Jackson County as a whole, or for the three independents school systems. Also, for rezoning applications, the Department of Public Development might use these multipliers as the best available estimates of potential impacts on schools serving the area rezoned.

**Table 8  
Public School Student Generation Multipliers Per Household (Occupied Housing Unit)  
Jackson County (All Three School Systems Combined; Year 2007 Data)**

Grade	Student Generated Per Household 2007
<b>(pre-k through 2<sup>nd</sup> grade)</b>	<b>0.1350</b>
Pre-k	.0149
Kindergarten	.0418
1 <sup>st</sup> grade	.0392
2 <sup>nd</sup> grade	.0391
<b>3<sup>rd</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>0.1118</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> grade	.0389
4 <sup>th</sup> grade	.0361
5 <sup>th</sup> grade	.0368
<b>6<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>0.1149</b>
6 <sup>th</sup> grade	.0389
7 <sup>th</sup> grade	.0379
8 <sup>th</sup> grade	.0381
<b>9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>0.1290</b>
9 <sup>th</sup> grade	.0423
10 <sup>th</sup> grade	.0316
11 <sup>th</sup> grade	.0291
12 <sup>th</sup> grade	.0260
<b>Total Per Household</b>	<b>0.4908</b>

Source: Compiled by Jerry Weitz & Associates, Inc., August 2009, based on estimate of 2007 households and year 2007 enrollment data for the Jackson County, Commerce, and Jefferson School Systems from the Georgia Department of Education, Data Collection System.

**Table 9  
Jackson County School Enrollment by School, FY 2007 to FY 2009**

School, Jackson County School System	FY 2007 Enrollment	FY 2008 Enrollment	FY 2009 Enrollment
North Jackson Elementary (pre-k through 5 <sup>th</sup> grade)	393	395	390
Maysville Elementary (pre-k through 5 <sup>th</sup> grade)	397	414	434
East Jackson Elementary (pre-k through 5 <sup>th</sup> grade)	444	432	468
South Jackson Elementary (pre-k through 5 <sup>th</sup> grade)	540	585	510
Benton Elementary (pre-k through 5 <sup>th</sup> grade)	295	302	348
Gum Springs Elementary (pre-k through 5 <sup>th</sup> grade)	--	--	714
West Jackson Primary (pre-k through 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade)	670	724	396
West Jackson Intermediate (3 <sup>rd</sup> through 5 <sup>th</sup> grade)	590	640	339
West Jackson Middle (6 <sup>th</sup> through 8 <sup>th</sup> grade)	920	747	758
East Jackson Middle (6 <sup>th</sup> through 8 <sup>th</sup> grade)	633	403	406
Kings Bridge Middle (6 <sup>th</sup> through 8 <sup>th</sup> grade)	540	409	388
East Jackson Comprehensive High (9 <sup>th</sup> through 12 <sup>th</sup> grade)	--	826	932
Jackson County Comprehensive High (9 <sup>th</sup> through 12 <sup>th</sup> grade)	1,739	986	898
Regional Evening Alternative School	32	35	57
Total, All Schools	6,653	6,898	7,038

Source: Georgia Department of Education, Data Collection System.

While Table 7 above provides consolidated enrollment statistics by grade in all three public school systems in Jackson County, Tables 9, 10, and 11 provide enrollment statistics for specific schools in Jackson County, Commerce, and Jefferson, respectively for the three most recent years.

**Table 10  
City of Commerce School Enrollment by School, FY 2007 to FY 2009**

School, City of Commerce School System	FY 2007 Enrollment	FY 2008 Enrollment	FY 2009 Enrollment
Commerce Primary (pre-k through 2 <sup>nd</sup> grade)	414	433	443
Commerce Elementary (3rd and 4th grade)	237	246	213
Commerce Middle (5 <sup>th</sup> through 8 <sup>th</sup> grade)	466	452	440
Commerce High (9 <sup>th</sup> through 12 <sup>th</sup> grade)	395	395	411
Total	1,512	1,526	1,507

Source: Georgia Department of Education, Data Collection System.

**Table 11  
City of Jefferson School Enrollment by School, FY 2007 to FY 2009**

School, City of Jefferson School System	FY 2007 Enrollment	FY 2008 Enrollment	FY 2009 Enrollment
Jefferson Academy (3 <sup>rd</sup> through 5 <sup>th</sup> grade)	--	562	620
Jefferson Elementary (pre-k to 5 <sup>th</sup> grade 2007) (pre-k to 2 <sup>nd</sup> 2008-9)	1,237	715	723
Jefferson Middle (6 <sup>th</sup> through 8 <sup>th</sup> grade)	566	586	586
Jefferson High (9 <sup>th</sup> through 12 <sup>th</sup> grade)	616	644	691
Total	2,419	2,507	2,620

Source: Georgia Department of Education, Data Collection System.

According to the FY 2009 county budget document, the one percent Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax for education is not generating enough revenues to keep up with current demand. The new East Jackson High School has opened and has helped to alleviate the capacity strain at the high school level for the county. The East Jackson High School was financed with \$30 million of the \$70 million bond issued in 2005. Future school development will undoubtedly be aimed at the rapidly growing west side of Jackson County in the Braselton/Hoschton area.

## Libraries

### *Historical Context*

As in many parts of the country, Jackson County's libraries all began as either volunteer libraries, book deposits or as collections of used books. Over the years, the seven cities of Braselton, Commerce, Jefferson Maysville, Nicholson, Pendergrass and Talmo decided that their libraries were an important part of their cultural identity and thus the municipal libraries were founded. However, the model for individual municipal libraries is an outdated one from the 1930s and 1940s.

Beginning in the 1950s, regional or county-based systems developed and are now the norm throughout Georgia and the Southeast. The state of Georgia encourages regional systems to foster cooperation and resource sharing. To encourage cooperation, efficiency and scalability since the late 1950s, the only libraries eligible for state aid are those which are a part of a county or a regional system.

*Piedmont Regional Library System*

The Piedmont Regional Library System provides library services to Banks, Barrow, and Jackson Counties. All of the libraries in Jackson County are affiliated with the regional system in what is considered a loose confederation. While operating under a loose confederation within the Piedmont Regional Library System, the seven libraries of Jackson County are independent of each other. Unlike most other library systems in Georgia, the Regional Agency does not have direct line authority over the seven libraries in Jackson; instead, the libraries report directly to their individual city governments.

The Regional System provides access to PINES, courier service to share materials across the system and the state, cataloging and processing of books and other materials, administration of state funds (including construction funds), operating extension services, and other services. Additionally, the Regional System also does most of the acquisition and selection of books, a time-consuming task that requires much professional judgment, especially on limited budgets.

*Municipal Libraries in Jackson County*

The following cities have their own library facilities and provide paid and volunteer staff: Braselton, Commerce, Jefferson, Maysville, Nicholson, Pendergrass, and Talmo. There are full-service libraries in Braselton, Commerce, Jefferson, Maysville, and Nicholson, while Pendergrass and Talmo libraries are characterized as book-service outlets.

Table 12 provides an inventory of the square footage of existing library buildings in Jackson County, as well as planned expansions.

**Table 12  
Current Library Stock and Existing and Planned Building Inventory, 2009  
Libraries in Jackson County**

<b>Municipal Library</b>	<b>Print and Audio Visual (AV) Materials</b>	<b>Existing Building Square Footage</b>	<b>Additional Building Square Footage Planned</b>
Braselton	22,688	6,100	--
Commerce	31,290	9,000	5,000
Jefferson	24,780	4,800	--
Maysville	10,983	4,120	--
Nicholson	10,672	4,500	--
Pendergrass	5,931	843	--
Talmo	3,452	578	--
<b>Totals</b>	<b>114,796</b>	<b>29,941</b>	<b>34,941</b>

Source: Piedmont Regional Library System, August 2009.

### *Existing Level of Service*

Though it does not capture level of service measures of quality, in terms of quantity the existing level of service of library facilities in Jackson County can be judged in part by determining how much building square footage per resident is provided by the various libraries.

With a 2010 population estimate of 64,564 persons (extrapolated from the population projections provided in Table 4 of the population analysis in this data appendix), the libraries in total in Jackson County provide an overall level of service of 0.48 square feet per capita as of 2008 and 0.46 square feet per capita as of 2010. Considering the 5,000 square foot addition to the Commerce library, by 2011 (with another year of projected growth, to 66,036 persons), the level of service will be an estimated 0.53 square feet per capita.

In terms of library holdings, one standard often used is to maintain two volumes per person. Considering that benchmark, Jackson County residents (assuming no additions from the current library stock) have a 2010 level of service of 1.78 volumes per capita.

### *Board Oversight*

The Jackson County Library Board of Trustees is composed of representatives from each funding agency and sends four representatives to the Regional Library Board. The Jackson Board exists to develop policy for the libraries, and to determine the distribution of County and State funds.

### *Funding*

The libraries in Jackson County are supported primarily by their individual cities, with some support by the county, mostly through in-kind payment of regional membership fees. As funding has continued to grow over the years from the municipalities, the county levels have not increased. County funding distribution is based on the following formula: one-third is divided evenly amongst the seven libraries and the remaining two-thirds are based on the size of the local budgets. Therefore, cities that support their libraries more aggressively receive more county funding.

The majority of state funding for libraries consists of book money, and the Jackson County Library Board of Trustees has voted to distribute these funds to each library based on population, as the state does. The remaining portion of the state funding goes to the Regional Office, to provide services to the member libraries throughout the region.

### *Inconsistent Standards and Operations*

Library service is not consistent, due to each city library operating independently and current funding formulas. There are no set standards that these seven municipal libraries adhere to, so the quality of library service varies greatly. The findings below illustrate the differences that occur with the various libraries given that there are no system-wide standards in place:

- Each city determines the level of service it wants to receive and pays accordingly. As a result, annual budgets at libraries range from \$20,000 to \$230,000.
- Wage rates vary considerably, especially for managers.

- Annual local expenditures on books and other materials range from \$0 to \$20,000.
- There is a wide range of services and programs provided.
- Facilities range from less than 1,000 to 9,000 square feet.
- No two libraries have the same operating hours.

*Dramatic Increases in Use*

Jackson County’s libraries have undergone a dramatic increase in use over the past several years. From Fiscal Year 2005 to Fiscal Year 2008, libraries in Jackson County have experienced a 40 percent increase in foot traffic, a 90 percent increase in computer users, and a 126 percent increase in checkouts (Source: Regional Library System 2009). It is the substantial population growth in unincorporated parts of the county that is placing the lion’s share of new burdens on city libraries. This presents a funding equity issue described further below.

*Inability to Accommodate Future Growth*

None of the existing libraries is sized for the next 15 years of county growth, according to the Regional Library Director, Alan Harkness. And there is no county-wide library strategic plan to address those future growth needs.

Future needs can be projected by looking at population projections and applying a level of service (LOS) standard. The American Library Association generally recommends a level of service standard of 0.6 square feet per capita. Also, the Georgia Public Library Service, a unit of the Board of Regents, also recommends the same 0.6 square feet per capita that the American Library Association does. As noted above, the libraries in Jackson County with programmed improvements will provide a level of service of 0.53 square feet per capita in 2011 with the 5,000 square foot planned addition to the Commerce Library. The current level of service, before the planned expansion of the Commerce library, is 0.48 square feet per capita.

**Table 13  
Library Level of Service and Projected Populations  
Municipal Libraries in Jackson County**

Jurisdiction	Population 2008	Existing Building Square Footage	Level of Service (Square Feet Per Capita)	Projected Population 2028
Arcade	2,019	--	--	3,501
Braselton*	3,195	6,100	*	6,245
Commerce	6,575	9,000	1.37	9,186
Hoschton	1,625	--	--	2,700
Jefferson	7,813	4,800	0.61	13,251
Maysville*	1,698	4,120	*	2,763
Nicholson	1,989	4,500	2.26	3,601
Pendergrass	588	843	1.43	900
Talmo	627	578	0.92	1,118
Unincorporated	35,491	--	--	52,348
Jackson County	61,620	29,941	0.48	95,614

\* City limits extend into one or more other counties; therefore, a LOS calculation based on Jackson County alone would not be valid.

As the figures in Table 13 indicate, because libraries are only provided by certain municipalities (with some county funding), some municipal residents are without library services unless they use the facilities in other municipalities. Similarly, residents of unincorporated areas must use the municipal libraries, since none is provided in unincorporated areas. The level of service standards noted in Table 13 are therefore somewhat misleading, in that the municipal libraries have much lower levels of service when one considers they are used by unincorporated residents. The level of service analysis, however, is important in showing what is considered a major funding disparity between Jackson County and the municipal libraries. Stated another way, if the municipalities in Commerce, Jefferson and Nicholson in particular did not have to serve unincorporated residents, they would have levels of service that would far exceed the suggested standard of 0.6 square feet per capita, and they would not need to expand their libraries for many years.

A look at year 2028 conditions is also instructive. Based on a level of service standard of 0.53 square feet per capita (the 2011 level of service with the planned 5,000 square foot library expansion in Commerce), Jackson County will need (in 2028) 50,675 square feet of library space total, meaning there will be a need to add 15,734 square feet of new library space. If the standard is 0.6 square feet per capita as recommended by the American Library Association, the total need in 2028 will be 57,368 square feet, or an additional 17,427 square feet.

#### *Increasing City-County Funding Disparities and Funding Equity Concerns*

Under current arrangements, and with no countywide facilities plan, the municipal libraries are expected to continue serving Jackson County's growth, the vast majority of which is expected to occur in the unincorporated portions of the county. This is creating a serious fiscal disparity that raises funding equity issues. The cities cannot be expected to continue funding improvements to municipal libraries to serve a burgeoning unincorporated population. Clearly, Jackson County is participating in the funding of libraries in the municipalities, but at issue is the extent to which municipal library expansion can be expected to meet the needs of unincorporated residents without substantial increases in funding from the county government, or without the county becoming a library service provider itself (or considering a regional service alternative).

Another way of illustrating the disparity is to note that Jackson County will have 52,348 residents residing in unincorporated areas in the year 2028. The total demand for library space to serve the unincorporated residents (without using the municipal libraries) would be 27,744 square feet at an LOS standard of 0.53 square feet per capita and 31,408 square feet at an LOS standard of 0.60 square feet per capita. Clearly, some reduction of those dramatic needs would be justified, considering that Jackson County has assisted with the funding of libraries in the municipalities with the understanding they have patrons from unincorporated areas as well. But these projections of needs underscore the need for some sort of alternative service delivery system for libraries in Jackson County in the future, unless the county government increases its funding in proportion with the demands placed on the municipal libraries as a result of substantial growth in the unincorporated areas.

Jackson County should seriously consider changing the loose confederation of individual municipal libraries into either a countywide system or officially merging all municipal libraries into the Piedmont Regional Library System. Advancing one of those options, which would require a change to the county's service delivery strategy, would increase efficiency, provide for systemwide standards, and provide for the projected demands placed on libraries by unincorporated and incorporated residents alike. Of course, municipalities, several of which

have funded libraries over several years, may be politically reluctant to give up a city service and make a major change to existing service delivery arrangements. Notwithstanding that potential limitation, serious considerations of alternative arrangements must be explored.

### **Housing Authorities**

Jackson County does not have a housing authority, but there are housing authorities in Commerce and Jefferson. These agencies provide low-income public housing to residents who qualify for government-subsidized housing. Commerce has two projects, Willoughby Homes and Bellview with a total of 50 units. Jefferson has three projects totaling 90 units. In the Jackson County portion of Braselton, the Winder Housing Authority provides the Dunaway Massey housing project.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Economic development functions are described also in the chapter on Labor Force and Economy, which is a part of the community assessment technical appendix. The county's service delivery strategy indicates that there is a formal agreement between the county and the City of Commerce regarding economic development.

### **Chamber of Commerce**

The Jackson County Area Chamber of Commerce is the primary coordinator and promoter of economic development. It is described further in another chapter of this community assessment technical appendix.

### **Industrial Development Authorities**

Jackson County's Industrial Development Authority owns industrial parks in the incorporated areas of the City of Commerce (East Jackson Industrial Park) and the City of Jefferson (Central Jackson Industrial park). The only city in Jackson County that has a similar authority is the City of Jefferson, which has created a Development Authority in 1996 to promote economic development. Periodic coordination between the Jefferson and Jackson County Development Authorities is warranted, and there may be opportunities for collaboration.

### **Downtown Development Authorities**

Downtown development is not a service that is provided by Jackson County, since it is not a municipality and does not have a downtown area of its own in an unincorporated area. The cities and towns of Braselton, Commerce, Jefferson, and Maysville have established downtown development authorities. Other cities in the future may opt to form their own downtown development authorities.

There is probably little if any cooperation among these downtown development authorities with one another, and with the county's chamber of commerce and Industrial Development Authority. Indeed, the county's industrial development authority is focused on attracting industry and manufacturing, while the city and town downtown development authorities are focused on primarily retail and service "Main Street" type businesses within a concentrated urban area. However, all of these development authorities are working for a common purpose of bettering the economy and employment opportunities in Jackson County. Note that two of the

municipalities, Braselton and Maysville, cross into other counties and therefore necessitate additional coordination efforts with counties other than Jackson.

Given the importance of economic development in municipalities which intertwines with historic preservation and downtown “Main Street” type activities, there is an opportunity to bolster the resources of the various authorities into an umbrella-type coordination function. Furthermore, the umbrella-type organization for downtown development in the various municipalities should be linked with county industrial recruitment efforts into an overall strategic economic development program, coordinated among all providers and constituent interests.

## **CAPITAL PROJECT FUNDING**

The primary funding source for major capital improvements is the Special Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST). According to the 2009 county budget document, in March, 2005, Jackson County and its nine municipalities voted to approve a new 1% Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax, and the tax was implemented in July 2005 (SPLOST #4).

There are two “level-one” countywide projects: the Jail Facility that will receive 20 percent of the total SPLOST, and the Health Department Facilities will receive 1 percent of the total SPLOST. The municipalities within the County will share 29 percent of the SPLOST proceeds and the unincorporated portions of the County will receive 50 percent. The county’s share will be distributed as follows: parks and recreation (20%); public safety (14%); roads and bridges (32%); libraries (1%), and water and sewerage (32.5%).

## **RECENT AND ONGOING CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS**

### **Historic Courthouse**

In 2008 the county appointed a committee to oversee the renovation of the historic Jackson County Courthouse. Approximately \$2 million have been appropriated for the renovation. The committee is also expected to make recommendations for future uses within the renovated facility.

### **Jackson County Jail**

The Jackson County Jail, funded with SPLOST III at a cost of approximately \$33 million, consists of 125,000 square feet and will house 424 inmates, jail support services, and Sheriff’s administrative space.

### **Jackson County Fire Training Facility**

Also funded with SPLOST, this facility began construction in August 2008 and includes a burn building, a pumper test station, and various training facilities to support other emergency services operations. This project supports all 12 fire units in the county.

### **East Jackson Sports Complex**

Utilizing SPLOST funding, Jackson County completed the East Jackson Sports Complex, which includes four baseball fields, a refreshment center, and spectator seating on a 36-acre park site. This park opened in December 2008.

### **Hurricane Shoals Park**

Several recent improvements to Hurricane Shoals Park have been made or are in the process of being completed. These include restoration of the coverage bridge with an ISTE A grant, the addition of Heritage Village (where historic structures from around the county have been saved from destruction and relocated in a village setting), the Pat Bell Conference Center, horse riding arena, and disc and miniature golf facilities. The miniature golf course at Hurricane Shoals Park was completed in time for the annual *Art in the Park Festival* held in September, 2008. The new miniature golf course contains running water to mimic shoals just yards away and also miniature replicas of some of the historic structures of the park.

### **Solid Waste Transfer Station**

As of 2008 the existing solid waste transfer station was in a state of disrepair. The Board of Commissioners authorized \$1.1 million for a new transfer station. The master plan for the site calls for reconstruction of the transfer station building and scale house and provides a future site for a recycling center.

### **Economic Development Road Projects**

In partnership with the Industrial Development Authority, the Board of Commissioners in 2004 issued \$16 million in bonds for economic development road projects.

### **Senior Center Renovation and Expansion**

In August 2008 Jackson County received a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to renovate and expand the Senior Center.

### **Health Department Renovations**

The county has completed renovations to the health department in Jefferson.

### **E-911 Communications**

The county has completed a major upgrade of the E-911 computer aided dispatch system.

## **FACILITY MASTER PLANS AND CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMMING**

### **Public Safety Master Plan**

The 2007 Partial Plan Update called for preparation of a public safety master plan and indicated its preparation was ongoing. Such a master plan will provide more detailed assessments and identification of future facility needs.

### **Sewer and Water Master Plan**

The 2007 Partial Plan Update indicates that water and sewer master planning was ongoing at that time. Clearly, the master plans for water and sewer facilities need to be coordinated with this comprehensive plan update, in particular to ensure that land use plans and facility extension

plans are compatible with one another. Phase II of a water study was authorized in 2008 at a cost of approximately \$294,000. With respect to water and fire protection, there is an identified need to install additional fire hydrants throughout the county fire improved fire protection.

### **Parks and Recreation Master Plan**

In 2002, the county completed a System-Wide Recreation Master Plan, 2003-2012. That plan needs updating to account for several new initiatives and improvements made, as described in the previous section.

### **Space Needs Analysis and Formal Capital Improvement Programming**

The 2007 Partial Plan Update included a short-term work program which called for development of a formal capital improvement program, along with an update to the previously prepared office needs assessment. These items have not been completed but are necessary in order to fully identify capital needs of the various departments in Jackson County and to project facility requirements in the future.

## **EVALUATING FACILITIES**

In determining the need for new facilities, and in evaluating various existing buildings and structures for their adequacy in the future, the following considerations should be kept in mind. These are provided in this report to assist facility managers with further, more detailed assessments of the adequacy of their facilities and services.

- **Facility plans.** Has a space needs study ever been conducted for the facility or service, and have capital plans been developed to meet needs identified?
- **Legal requirements.** Are there federal or state mandates with respect to the operation of the facility, and if so, are they met? If not, what is required to comply?
- **Location and accessibility.** When planning for new facilities, do they need to be located at a central point in the service area?
- **Centralization versus decentralization.** Can the facility or service be provided in smaller, decentralized locations? Or is it important for efficiency that all operations of the facility or service be located in one, centralized place?
- **Age and condition.** How old is the facility? When was it constructed and last renovated? Does it have roof leaks, old HVAC equipment, or other immediate maintenance and replacement needs?
- **Obsolescence.** Is the facility obsolete in the sense that it has not been modernized to keep up with advances? Were parts of the building designed for certain uses but are now used for other purposes? If so, what are the potential renovation costs, and are they prohibitively expensive?

- **Expansion potential.** Is there any expansion potential for the existing building, or does it consume the vast majority of the lot or site on which it is located, thus preventing expansion?
- **Adequacy of parking.** Does the facility receive visitors? Are enough parking spaces provided? Is ingress and egress adequate, especially for public safety vehicles?
- **Adequacy of office space for personnel.** Are work spaces provided for each employee, and are they adequate? Does office and other equipment spill into halls and entrance ways?
- **Restrooms facilities and employee support space.** Are the restrooms adequate and ADA accessible? Is there a “break” room or kitchen for personnel?
- **Adequacy of storage and on-site records space.** Has the facility outgrown its storage capacity? To what extent do overcrowded storage spaces increase the time of retrieval and decrease efficiency of departmental operations? Has all existing storage space been maximized in terms of efficiency? Does the department or office have records or equipment stored off-site?

**Table 14  
Inventory of Major Buildings  
Jackson County**

Type	Facility Description	Address (Jefferson unless noted)	Year Built	Square Footage	Replacement Cost New
Cultural	Courthouse (old)	85 Washington St.	1879	13,217	\$2,093,400
Administration	Administration	67 Athens St.	1939	35,018	\$4,572,100
Courts, etc.	Courthouse	5000 Jackson Pkwy.	2004	134,304	\$28,511,100
Health	Health Department	275 General Jackson Dr.	1991	7,140	\$1,464,300
Health	Environmental Health	260 Lee St. Jefferson	1958	3,094	\$547,900
Health, Schools, etc.	Jackson Campus (shopping center)	623 Broad St. Commerce	1980	67,349	\$5,451,400
Sheriff	Criminal Investigations	368 Curtis Spence Dr.	2001	5,252	\$802,400
Sheriff	Jail	268 Curtis Spence Dr.	1953	18,828	\$4,249,200
Sheriff	Evidence Building	268 Curtis Spence Dr.	1955	936	\$45,000
Sheriff	Nurse's Trailer	268 Curtis Spence Dr.	1990	784	\$76,700
Corrections	Corrections Main	255 Curtis Spence Dr.	1987	27,512	\$5,301,600
Emergency Services	EMT/Flight Bldg.	500 Airport Dr.	2005	13,260	\$1,103,900
Fire	JCCI Fire Station	Curtis Spence Dr.	1990	3,396	\$293,600
Parks and Recreation	Main Office	1801 County Farm Rd.	2002	1,566	\$692,700
Parks and Recreation	Pat Bell Conference Center	7020 Highway 82 Spur	1955	2,388	\$190,100
Parks and Recreation	Senior Center	151 General Jackson Pkwy.	1981	11,220	\$1,286,700
Solid Waste	Compactor Building	781 New King Br. Rd, Athens	1990	96	\$59,000
Solid Waste	Compactor Building	232 Yarbrough Ridgeway Rd Maysville	1990	96	\$86,700
Solid Waste	Transfer Station – Scale House/Office	100 Landfill Dr.	2001	1,200	\$201,700
Solid Waste	Transfer Station – Transfer Station	100 Landfill Dr.	1994	3,120	\$180,400
Solid Waste	Transfer Station – Inmate breakroom	100 Landfill Dr.	1998	420	\$32,100
Solid Waste	Transfer Station – Records Storage	100 Landfill Dr.	1985	288	\$19,100
Social Service	Jackson Creative	106 Industrial Pkwy. Commerce	1994	16,994	\$2,132,200
Social Service	Head Start	215 General Jackson Dr.	1997	9,400	\$1,022,200
Social Service	Mental Health	383 General Jackson Dr.	2000	5,429	\$609,100
Extension	4H Main Office	256 Clover Leaf Cir.	1956	2,414	\$292,000
Extension	4H Work Shop	256 Clover Leaf Cir.	2003	1,471	\$124,200
Buildings and Grounds	Office	509 Curtis Spence Dr.	1995	750	\$86,600
Buildings and Grounds	Shop	509 Curtis Spence Dr.	1995	1,200	\$93,900
Buildings and Grounds	Grounds Shed	509 Curtis Spence Dr.	1988	2,100	\$94,200
Buildings and Grounds	Hay Barn	Curtis Spence Ln.	1975	2,880	\$61,100
Buildings and Grounds	Open Space	Curtis Spence Ln.	2002	3,200	\$92,800
Public Works	Fuel Canopy	131 Four Fifty Seven Dr.	1998	2,257	\$104,400

Type	Facility Description	Address (Jefferson unless noted)	Year Built	Square Footage	Replacement Cost New
Public Works	Attendant Station	131 Four Fifty Seven Dr.	2000	308	\$132,500
Roads	Main Office	12 Hendrix Drive	1959	3,012	\$477,500
Roads	Fertilizer Pole Shed	12 Hendrix Drive	1995	3,744	\$119,800
Roads	Sign Shop	12 Hendrix Drive	1995	4,988	\$174,400
Roads	Tractor Storage	12 Hendrix Drive	2001	3,444	\$99,900
Roads	Salt Shed	12 Hendrix Drive	2005	10,000	\$352,700
Fleet Maintenance	Main Building	170 Fowler Drive	1975	8,288	\$921,700
Fleet Maintenance	Tire Storage	170 Fowler Drive	1975	1,440	\$80,900
Fleet Maintenance	Paint Shop	170 Fowler Drive	1975	3,195	\$211,900

Source: CBIZ Valuation Group, LLC. Association County Commissioners of Georgia – Interlocal Risk Management Agency. Jackson County 2006 Property Appraisal Report.

Sheriff's Office Note: The Sheriff's office moved its Administrative operations, Uniform Patrol, Criminal Investigations, and Central Records to the new Jackson County Jail located at 555 General Jackson Drive.

Fleet Maintenance Note: Fleet maintenance reviewed these numbers and found that the main building is about 6,300 square feet with an addition of about 1,160 square feet, for a total of approximately 7,460 square feet for the main building. An oil change facility of approximately 792 square feet also exists. The main shop building was constructed sometime in the 1950s. The front office area and the welding shop were added in the early 1990s. The body shop room, paint room and small engine building along with an inmate restroom and the tire storage building were also most likely constructed in the 1950s. The oil change area was just a shelter with a roof over it in November 1997; it was re-roofed in 1998-1999. Then in about 1999-2000, the old metal was taken from the old roof to enclose the sides and one end of the oil change area. The oil change area was destroyed by the weather in June 2009. The estimate to replace it is \$34,000, including two electronic overhead doors, concrete block construction, more and better lighting, and more compressed air hook-ups, a passage door and new metal roof.

Solid Waste Collection and Disposal: The table above has been modified to reflect comments received from the Solid Waste Collection and Disposal personnel of Jackson County.



