

**Jackson County Comprehensive Plan**

**TRANSPORTATION**

**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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## TRANSPORTATION

Transportation can be divided into air travel, water transportation, and many forms of ground transportation. Air travel includes not only general aviation airports but private landing strips, military posts with air operations, and even helicopter landing facilities. Water transportation includes port facilities, marinas, ferry transportation, and other considerations.

Ground transportation is usually the central focus of local transportation planning efforts. It includes highways, streets, and roads (which are themselves multi-modal in nature and include cars, trucks, bicycles, and pedestrians in addition to buses or public transit), railroads, multi-use pathways, off-street bicycle lanes, and sidewalks. Ground transportation can be further divided into “private” and “public,” the latter including (in addition to public streets) public transportation systems such as rural public transit.

Local transportation plans may involve all of the following, and more: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) requirements for airports, state freight mobility, and other statewide transportation plans, regional transportation plans prepared by Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), service delivery by regional transportation special districts, and the need to coordinate with adjacent county and city governments and other departments in the same local government (parks and recreation, public works, etc.). We plan transportation systems with several outcomes in mind: safety, mobility, accessibility, connectivity, congestion mitigation, efficiency, and convenience, among others.

### AIR TRANSPORTATION

#### Jackson County Airport

Jackson County operates its own airport and has an airport department and airport manager to oversee the airport. The overall mission is to “provide safe and adequate aviation facilities to support community requirements for access to the nation’s air traffic system and support general aviation as a viable part of the community’s transportation network” (FY 2009 Budget). The airport also intends to promote the growth of aviation commerce through the aggressive development of an Airport Master Plan that maximizes benefits to the community within acceptable geographical and environmental limits.

Jackson County received an AIRGeorgia grant for \$2,927,923 to complete a 5,000-foot runway expansion in order to accommodate larger aircraft such as corporate jets. That \$6.1 million project was considered vital to sustain economic viability and competitiveness for Jackson, Banks, and Madison Counties in the Northeast Georgia Region as corporate businesses are seeking out this area for their facilities. Plans have also been readied for the addition of parallel taxiway that is essential for improving safety during takeoff and landings. A new Airport Master Plan is being completed as part of the Runway Extension Project.

The proposed runway extension to 5,000 feet will dramatically increase the number of based aircraft and the demand for additional aircraft hangar space at the airport. As a result of that expansion and for other reasons, the airport has a number of other capital project needs in addition to the runway expansion being completed.

1. Acquisition of 52 acres of property bordering the west property line of the airport at an estimated cost of \$3,025,000. Future development will include a new west taxiway

which is required to provide access to the new airport terminal area and commercial/corporate ramps.

2. Construction of a Hangar Taxiway at an estimated cost of \$435,000 to meet the increasing requirement for hangar space at the airport.
3. The airport currently has 31 names on its hangar waiting list. Current plans include construction of four new T-hangar buildings, 350' x 50' in size.
4. Jet A Fuel Storage and Dispensing System at an estimated cost of \$150,000
5. Fuel Ramp and Parking Construction at an estimated cost of \$135,000.
6. Rejuvenate and Paint Runway & Taxiways at an estimated cost of \$90,000.
7. AWOS (automatic weather observation system) Update at an estimated cost of \$28,000.

### **Heliports and Helistops**

It is not common for local transportation plans to consider the needs of helicopter landing facilities. However, the needs for public and private heliports and helistops should be considered if applicable in the local transportation plan. Helicopter facilities and their locations can become critically important in emergency management situations, so they should at least be inventoried for inclusion in emergency management and disaster preparedness plans.

### **WATER TRANSPORTATION**

Jackson County does not have any ports or other water transportation modes.

### **RAILROADS**

Jackson County is served by two railroads. CSX Transportation has a rail line extending from Athens to Gainesville that traverses western Jackson County. Leaving Athens, this line heads northwest, passing several storage tanks related to the pipeline easements that cross it. U.S. Highway 129 parallels the line. As the line leaves Athens-Clarke County and enters Jackson County, the surroundings become increasingly agricultural in character. The line passes through the cities of Arcade and Jefferson, then continues through Pendergrass and Talmo and enters Hall County.

Norfolk Southern has a line extending from Lula to Athens that passes through the east side of Jackson County. The Commerce-Center segment is a portion of a longer railroad line, and part of it is inactive, Part of it is operated by The Athens Line. From unincorporated Center in Jackson County, it travels north, through predominately undeveloped areas. The adjacent U.S. Highway 441 has been recently upgraded to four lanes, which could bring new growth to the area. Around Nicholson, density increases, with predominately residential subdivisions. North of Nicholson, the line turns away from US 441 and through largely undeveloped areas, with some agriculture and industry. The line travels through the center of Commerce, with streets on both sides and numerous crossings. This area is relatively dense, with residential and commercial uses. North of Commerce, it continues towards the town of Maysville through an area with a mix of agriculture and residential uses. South from Center, the Center-Athens-Bishop (Norfolk & Southern) line passes through an area with a mix of industrial, residential, and undeveloped land. Further south, it continues through an industrial area, approaching downtown Athens. (Source: Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center, June 2008. "Corridor Feasibility Study for Evaluation of Potential Greenway Networks in Northeast Georgia").

Both of these railroad light have light traffic density and serve local industries. Neither of these railroad lines carry through or overhead railroad traffic. There are no existing switching yards or

other major related facilities located in Jackson County. Two industrial parks currently have rail access: Walnut Fork Industrial Park and Commerce 85 Business Park (Source: Moreland Altobelli Associates, Inc.).

## **TRUCKING FACILITIES**

A number of trucking facilities are located primarily within the Interstate 85 corridor. These are inventoried in the I-85 Corridor Study prepared by Moreland Altobelli Associates, Inc.

## **PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION**

Jackson County's Section 5311 Rural Transportation Program has been included within the General Fund as a department of the Health and Welfare function. It continues to experience increases in demands. In FY 2009, Jackson County shifted one part-time driver to full-time status based on high demand for the service. The mission of the Jackson County Transport System is to provide a low cost transportation alternative to the citizens of Jackson County. The department has three full-time positions (FY 2009 Budget).

The program logged 5,200 hours of bus service operation in 2007 and expects that number to increase to 5,400 in FY 2009. It served 9,284 passengers in 2007 and that number is expected to increase to 9,800 in FY 2009. Jackson County recently agreed to prepare a public transportation plan to be spearheaded by the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission.

## **PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE TRANSPORTATION**

Bicycling and walking are the most basic and efficient forms of transportation and were once perceived as an important mode of transportation. Both are healthy, low-impact modes of travel that provide low-cost transportation alternatives for all segments of society, including financially disadvantaged, children, elderly, and disabled populations. Many of the trips people make on a daily basis are short enough to be accomplished on a bicycle, on foot, or by wheelchair.

Despite the importance of pedestrian and bicycle travel, the overwhelming majority of transportation improvements are dominated by auto-centric projects. Today, motor vehicles dominate the transportation system, and cycling and walking have been largely relegated to recreational status. Because of this increased automobile dependency, bicycling and walking are now perceived as an increasingly dangerous mode of transportation.

Increased use of bicycle and pedestrian modes of transportation requires concentrations of populations within proximity to major trip generators. The majority of development in the northeast Georgia region, outside of Athens, has been low-density, single-family residential development that has been constructed in isolation from the types of uses (schools, employment, shopping) that generate bicycle and pedestrian activity.

Overall, the current environment is generally considered unsafe for non-motorized travelers, aside from walking or cycling within residential neighborhoods, because of high travel speeds on the majority of major roads and the lack of adequate shoulder space to accommodate additional users. The general perception that cyclists and pedestrians do not belong on the road and the lack of financial commitments to improving the nonmotorized travel environment has greatly contributed to an overall lack of safety for existing users, which in turn, has prevented any nominal increase in the use of alternative modes of transportation (Source: Northeast

Georgia Regional Development Center, 2005. Northeast Georgia Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan).

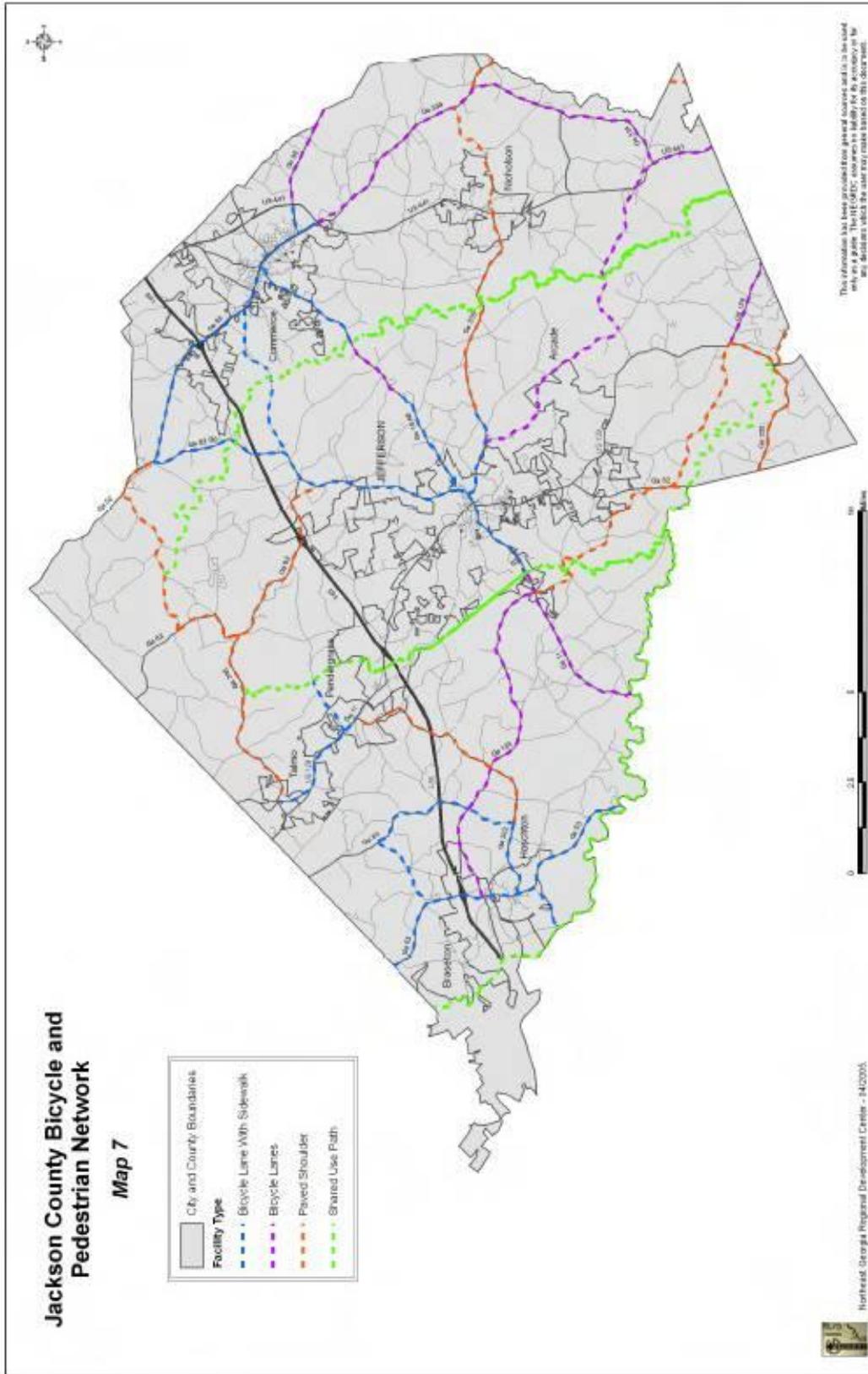
### **Existing Facilities**

Jackson County, as a still rural county is no different from the description above, and as a result, does not have many facilities to serve pedestrians and has few if any bicycle facilities. The overall lack of facilities means that existing bicycle users and pedestrians largely rely on the local road network.

There are some sidewalks along state highways in the unincorporated area, but by and large pedestrian travel facilities are confined to the municipalities. Jackson County also requires that new streets have sidewalks, but in the case of subdivisions, sidewalks have not been installed except along the frontage of each lot as it is developed. Therefore, even in newer developed areas, the sidewalk system is spotty and insufficient. As a result, the county does not have a good inventory of sidewalks.

### **Northeast Georgia Regional Bike and Pedestrian Plan**

This plan determines several routes suitable for bicycle facilities, and identifies several corridors that could potentially support shared use paths, on a county-by-county basis. Proposed projects in Jackson County are shown on the following map.



### **Potential Upper Oconee River Greenway**

Multi-use greenway trails can be considered not only recreational amenities but also part of the multi-modal transportation system. The Northeast Georgia Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan (2005) recommends two greenway projects in Jackson County: along the North Oconee River, from the Athens-Clarke County line northward to Deadwyler Road (some 46.9 miles); and one along the Middle Oconee River.

It appears that the North Oconee River greenway presents a good opportunity for establishing connections to an existing greenway. The Sandy Creek Nature Center, a park and currently the northern terminus of the North Oconee River Greenway, is situated at the confluence of the North Oconee River and Sandy Creek. Cook's Trail and the associated Sandy Creek Greenway tie in here. From the Nature Center, the North Oconee River flows south through Downtown Athens (Source: Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center, June 2008. "Corridor Feasibility Study for Evaluation of Potential Greenway Networks in Northeast Georgia"). Hence, a connection/extension to that greenway would be an important component of a planned regional system.

### **Potential Use of Interstate Highway Right of Way for Bicycle or Pedestrian Facilities**

Interstate highways present a unique opportunity for multi-use trails. They often have wide rights-of-way, screened with substantial vegetation. Within Northeast Georgia, trails sited along an interstate could run several miles without having to cross a street (Source: Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center, June 2008. "Corridor Feasibility Study for Evaluation of Potential Greenway Networks in Northeast Georgia").

### **Potential Use of Railroad Right of Ways**

Two railroads, CSX and Norfolk & Southern, operate the major railroads within the Northeast Georgia region. Each of these is a Class I Railroad, the highest level of freight railroads operating in the United States, with a network spanning the Eastern U.S. Both railroads have policies that discourage rails-with-trails.

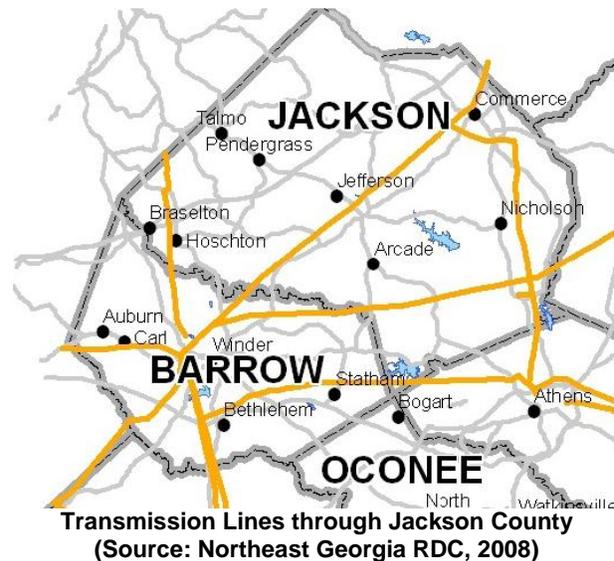
However, the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center in 2008 identified the Center-Athens-Bishop (Norfolk & Southern) railroad line which leads into downtown Athens, as a potential multi-modal trail route. It suggests that this railroad corridor's proximity to the University of Georgia and downtown Athens makes it an opportunity for trails. Norfolk & Southern currently leases the track to a short line, which moves very little freight. If this line were acquired by UGA, it could provide an opportunity for both campus transit and rails-with-trails (Source: Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center, June 2008. "Corridor Feasibility Study for Evaluation of Potential Greenway Networks in Northeast Georgia").

### **Potential Use of Electric Transmission Line Easements**

Transmission lines are primarily owned by one of two entities: Georgia Power or Georgia Transmission Corporation, which maintains transmission lines for smaller EMCs throughout the state. Transmission line rights-of-way tend to be mowed once every six years, with some pesticides applied by hand to prevent the growth of tall trees. Security concerns only exist around the base of the pylons, and at substations. The regulations require that trees shall not

interfere with the overhead wires. Corridors vary in width, with most ranging between 75 and 150 feet.

Commerce is a hub for these transmission lines. Two main lines leave the city for other points within the region: one to Jefferson and Winder, and one to Nicholson and Athens. A line connects these two south of the city. Several other lines head north, beyond the region. A shorter line branches off northwest to Maysville (Source: Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center, June 2008. "Corridor Feasibility Study for Evaluation of Potential Greenway Networks in Northeast Georgia").



## PARKING FACILITIES

Jackson County has no public parking areas except for those that exist on the county government campus complex. Therefore, this is not a consideration in terms of Jackson County's comprehensive plan.

## TRANSPORTATION AND LAND USE CONNECTIONS

Transportation projects can act as stimuli to further land use changes, which may be desirable or undesirable. Land use changes can stimulate the need for transportation improvement projects.

The Countywide Roads Plan delves into several important relationships between transportation and land use. That plan took into account population projections, major land use generators, and future land use policies, among many other considerations. In addition, it provides a number of important recommended amendments to the Unified Development Code in order to implement the Countywide Roads Plan.

## ROADS

### Interstate 85

In Jackson County, Interstate 85 runs for some 21.7 miles. The approximate annual average daily traffic on I-85 in Jackson County was 52,500 in 2006. Also with respect to I-85 in Jackson County, there are currently 4 exits, 6 overpasses, 1 underpass, 3 bridges, 1 rail overpass, and 1 rail underpass (Source: Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center, June 2008. "Corridor Feasibility Study for Evaluation of Potential Greenway Networks in Northeast Georgia").

## **U.S. Highways**

Two major U.S. highways traverse Jackson County in a north-south direction. U.S. Highway 129 connects Gainesville and Athens, traveling the entire length of Jackson County from Talmo, through Jefferson and Arcade, to the Clarke County line. Almost all of this route has been improved to four lanes with median dividing the directions of travel. U.S. Highway 441 connects Athens to Commerce and beyond, into Banks and Habersham Counties to the north. U.S. Highway 441 has been improved to four lanes with a median dividing the directions of travel.

## **State Highways and Local Streets**

A road inventory is not provided here, since there is a separate "Countywide Roads Plan" being developed by Moreland Altobelli Associates, Inc. However, some of the following paragraphs summarize the inventory and public participation work done pursuant to that planning effort.

## **Road Resurfacing, Paving, and Maintenance**

Jackson County strives to maintain its present paved roads and to upgrade gravel roads to hard-surfaced roads. Currently, the county has 582 miles of road, 445 paved miles and 137 gravel miles. The county continues to make efforts towards reducing the number of miles of gravel road through a proactive base and paving program. The Road Department paved over 5 miles of gravel roads in 2008, and it expects to pave an additional 5 miles in FY 2009. As new roads are upgraded from gravel to paved, there will be additional maintenance requirements several years later, when they will be added to the routine maintenance list.

The county continues an aggressive road resurfacing program. There were over 21 miles of roads resurfaced in FY 2008, and in FY 2009 the Roads Department expects to resurface 25 miles of roadway. The lifetime of a resurfaced road is ten years. Since the county has 445 of surfaced roads it should resurface at least 44 miles of roadway each year to have well maintained roads and to stay within the standards of safety. Jackson County has adopted a standard of paving 25 miles per year, but asphalt prices have been rising, and funds received through SPLOST have proved to be insufficient to meet this standard. For FY 2009, the county hopes to resurface 40 miles.

Road maintenance also includes mowing of right of ways. Jackson County has mowed about 5,000 or more miles of roadways annually during the past several years. The county also has about 5 miles of guardrails which require maintenance.

## **Bridges**

Jackson County has 76 bridges. Their locations are mapped in the Major Roads Plan. That plan indicates that Bridge Serial Number 157-0011-0 on SR 15 Alternate over the North Oconee River will need replacement in the short-term.

## **Major Roads Inventory and Plan**

Jackson County secured the services of Moreland Altobelli Associates, Inc. to prepare a major roads plan. That work was completed at the time this community assessment was completed. This report excerpts major sections of that plan, which included an extensive inventory of roads and road conditions in the county. The existing roadway inventory and analysis not only includes the types, location, and capacity of the various existing roadways, but also identifies

current safety issues or signage problems along the major roadways within the county. Additionally, the existing roadway analysis also included an intercity connectivity element.

This summary assessment does not substitute for the entire roads inventory in that document, and readers are encouraged to review that document for more detailed information.

**Basic Operational Safety Considerations**

The following considerations were accounted for in the Countywide Roads Plan:

Blind hill	Offset intersections
Blind curve	Poor sight distance at street intersection
Bridge width too narrow	Road intersection located in a curve
Bridge condition seems structurally unsafe	Shoulder width too narrow
Stormwater drainage flows over the roadway	Shoulder is eroded
Improper driveway spacing	Skewed intersection angle
Improper intersection spacing	Very poor driving surface condition
Travel lane width too narrow	

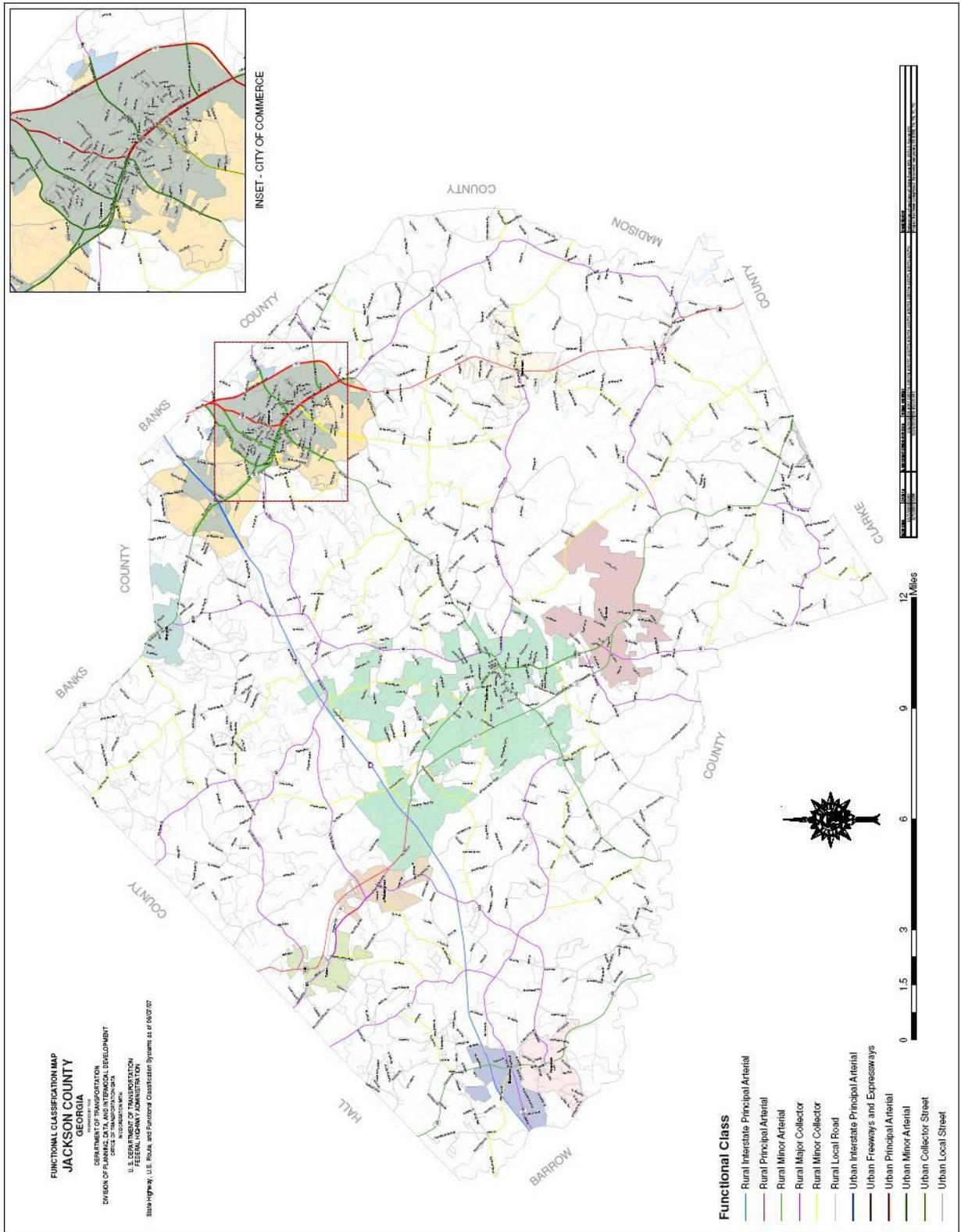
**Functional Classification of Roads**

Jackson County has established a street classification system in Subsection 1010(b) of the Unified Development Code. The functional classification system established by the County includes five different classifications, listed as follows. These classifications are generally consistent with the AASHTO standards and those used by GDOT, except GDOT breaks out urban vs. rural classifications. The functional classification of each road in the county is provided in Table 1 of the Countywide Roads Plan and includes the following classifications: Principal arterials, minor arterials, major collectors, minor collectors, and local roads. A map of the GDOT functional classification of roads is included in this technical appendix.

**Planned Road Improvements**

The county’s Major Road Plan contains a review of the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) Construction Work Program to identify those projects planned for Jackson County. GDOT construction projects in Jackson County include the following (for more detail, please see County Major Roads Plan):

1. SR 98 @ CR 286/B WILSON & CR 536/KING ROAD (Intersection improvement)
2. SR 98 @ NS #717696D (railroad crossing)
3. SR 15 @ 3 LOCS & SR 11BU @ 1 LOC (signals)
4. JACKSON COUNTY INDUSTRIAL PARK - LOCAL ACCESS ROAD (widening)
5. SR 15ALT @ NS #717706G|SR 98WE and NS #717707N|SR 326@NS #717703L (Railroad Crossing Warning Devices)
6. CR 536/KING ROAD @ NS #717710W (Railroad Crossing Warning Devices)
7. MCCLURE INDUSTRIAL PARK IN JEFFERSON - LOCAL ACCESS ROAD (Miscellaneous Improvements)
8. SR 11/ US 129/ @ ALLEN CREEK N OF TALMO (bridges)
9. SR 11/US 129 FM SR 332 @ TALMO/JACKSON TO SR 323/HALL (widening)
10. I-85 @ 7 Locations IN BANKS & JACKSON - BRIDGE REHABILITATION
11. HOODS MILL RD @ WATERWORKS RD (intersection improvements)
12. STATE ROUTE 332 IN HOSCHTON (relocation)
13. GA18X024 5311 RURAL JACKSON CAPITAL (transit projects)



### Countywide Road Issues and Concerns (In ranked order of importance)

1. The SR 124/SR 53 intersection needs improvements in order to reduce traffic congestion caused by poor semi-truck turning movements, and this problem also affects other county road intersections that receive semi-truck traffic.
2. Need better lighting, more turn lanes and traffic signals at school locations and those roads leading to schools to reduce traffic congestion and enhance public safety.
3. Concerned with insufficient funding to meet future roadway improvement needs including maintenance.
4. The existing interchange area, north and south of the interchange, on Interstate 85 at SR 53 (Exit 129) needs improvements by GDOT.
5. Keep big box businesses close to Interstate 85 to help maintain the existing character of the rural areas of Jackson County.
6. The Board of Commissioners should prepare and update on a regular basis a long-range plan for future road needs throughout Jackson County.
7. Need more direct travel routes between existing major highways in Jackson County.
8. Need left-turn lanes and traffic signals installed by the Owner/Developer at the time of construction of new subdivision and business entrances, if warranted.
9. Need to ensure that county roadway improvements are of the highest quality.
10. The road intersection at SR 124 (Braselton Highway) and SR 11 (Lee Street) located southwest of Jefferson needs the same type of intersection improvements that were installed at SR 124/SR 332 east of Hoschton, which included a 4-way stop and turn lanes at all approaches.
11. Need GDOT to construct a new interchange on Interstate 85 at SR 60, which would also include the necessary side road improvements and mitigation of impacts to adjacent residential areas.
12. Construction standards for roadways need to vary by functional classification, especially those receiving semi-truck traffic.
13. The existing SPLOST (Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax) Program will be needed to meet future roadway funding needs.
14. Continue to make safety improvements like those recently completed at the intersection of SR 11/SR Alternate 15 and Apple Valley Road, which eliminated a poor sight distance problem at the intersection due to a blind hill, which was lowered, and turn lanes were added.
15. Posted speed limits along all county roadways need to be consistent with the existing road conditions, such as functional classification, shoulder condition, road grade,

adjacent land uses, frequency of driveway accesses, building setbacks, sight distances, geometric features of the roadway, pedestrian activity, and historical crash data.

16. Need to continue to build the access feeder roads along I-85 throughout Jackson County to concentrate major commercial and industrial uses along that corridor.
17. Existing traffic backups at various locations along county roads need to be eliminated, especially during peak travel periods. An example is SR Alt. 15 (Commerce-Jefferson Road).
18. SR 124 needs to be extended around Jefferson and subsequently connect to SR 15 resulting in a by-pass around Jefferson. (GDOT is in the process of reconstructing the bridge on Galilee Church Road and this may be a good time to consider making this bridge wider or maybe even relocating the part of Galilee Church Road that has the large curve and putting the bridge somewhere else.)
19. SR 335 needs to be widened between Nicholson and Jefferson and rerouted before approaching the existing old bridge near Jefferson possibly at Mauldin Road. At that point the realigned road would continue northwesterly and cross SR Alternate 15 and either continue to US 129 to connect to Exit 137 at I-85 or alternatively continue to SR 82 and connect to Exit 140 at I-85.
20. The Unified Development Code (UDC) should preclude the creation of off-set road intersections.
21. Need a new by-pass travel route around the Hoschton/Braselton area.
22. Safety at all roadway intersections needs improving by requiring better design standards on all county roads.
23. Concerned that the road system will not be able to accommodate the future travel demands based upon projected growth.
24. More east-west travel routes are needed throughout Jackson County to improve intra-county connectivity.
25. Jackson County should utilize consultants in their long-range planning program, especially where special expertise is required.
26. The Unified Development Code (UDC) needs to be amended to ensure that the minimum design standards for those roadways that allow semi-truck traffic do accommodate the proper semi-truck turning maneuvers.
27. Need to install rumble strips on all approaches to the signalized intersections along US 441 to improve driver awareness of each of the approaching intersections resulting in enhanced public safety.
28. Existing north-south travel routes need capacity improvements, such as increasing the number of travel lanes.

29. Need a traffic signal and turn lanes installed at the road intersection of SR 98 at B. Wilson Road to improve capacity and driver safety.
30. Need adequate police enforcement for driver disregard of traffic control signage, such as traffic signals, speed limit signs, and stop signs.
31. Concerned with existing high traffic volumes and poor levels of service along SR 124 from the Barrow County line to SR 11.
32. Need to improve road maintenance in Jackson County to better address poor drainage, narrow or lack of shoulders, lack of pavement markings, etc.
33. All traffic signals throughout Jackson County should have different timing lengths during nighttime use vs. daytime use.
34. Improved roadway lighting is needed at critical areas, such as horizontal alignment curves, blind areas, intersections, and bridges.
35. Need to complete the existing by-pass travel route around the Jefferson area which included the Brockton Loop.
36. Concerned that the construction of by-passes around small cities or towns adversely affect, to the point of nonexistence, the local economies of those locales.
37. Concerned with the lack of traffic control signage at various locations along some of the county roads, such as stop signs, warning signs, and "No Through Trucks" signs.
38. A plan is needed for SR 11 and SR Alternate 15 to be widened to 4 lanes from Commerce to the Barrow County line.
39. Need a traffic signal and turn lanes installed at the road intersection of SR 98 at Old Maysville Road to improve capacity and driver safety.
40. Interstate 85 needs to be widened from 4-lanes to 6-lanes through Jackson County.
41. Concerned that there are no shoulders on some roadways in Jackson County.
42. A plan is needed for SR 332 to be widened from Hoschton to Pendergrass.
43. Concerned with the increase in traffic volumes on SR 53 entering Jackson County from Hall County north of Braselton.
44. Traffic signals need to be installed at certain locations along the county road system.
45. Warehousing and industrial land uses are adversely affecting the public's ability to safely access Interstate 85.
46. Concerned that the SR 53 widening project will adversely affect adjacent roadways and residential subdivisions.
47. Concerned with the quantity of litter along road rights-of-way.

48. Concerned that some existing commercial areas do not have access via a major road.
49. Continuity of roads within Jackson County is a concern, since road improvements are implemented on roads that lead “nowhere.”
50. A one-cent sales tax on gasoline sales is needed to help fund the future roadway improvements.
51. A system of integrated sidewalks and bike paths is needed in Jackson County.
52. Sidewalks are needed on many county roads near residential subdivisions and other residential areas.
53. Concerned about the high level of semi-truck noise affecting residential areas, especially at night.
54. The Board of Commissioners needs to prohibit cell phone use while driving a motorized vehicle in Jackson County.
55. Jackson County should reduce reliance on stormwater detention ponds located in neighborhoods by planning for and constructing regional stormwater retention ponds that could also be used as parks supporting multiple uses, including fishing.
56. Need to not waste money on sidewalks and bike lanes on main roads, such as U.S. 441, in the Nicholson area.
57. Need to promote the use of roundabouts with sufficient land area in lieu of 4-way stop or signalized intersections.
58. Concerned that “solutions” to current problems will worsen those original problems.
59. Another new interchange exit off I-85 is needed at Ridgeway Church Road in the City of Commerce.
60. Work with the cities and/or utility/construction companies in Jackson County about limiting work on construction projects during normal school hours for student attendance (i.e.: gas pipeline work currently being done on SR 11). This would help with the traffic congestion in and around Jefferson and other cities in Jackson County.

### **Concerns and Issues with Roads in Municipalities**

#### **City of Maysville**

- Upgrading county roads including widening and paving.
- Replacing any one-lane bridges on county roads.

#### **City of Arcade**

- Lack of money for maintenance of county roads.
- Need funding for joint projects to upgrade some city roads/streets.
- County’s inability to work with municipalities to share all available resources for the betterment of the county as a whole, such as by assisting the cities in

developing satisfactory infrastructure to serve all the citizens of the county, at a fair and reasonable expense.

- Lack of a schedule for paving dirt roads and repaving existing roads.

#### **City of Jefferson**

- Need for efficient cross-county arterial road connections.
- Need for an integrated countywide road system with a single point of contact to inform of new developments.
- Need consistent road signage. Road ownership is a problem affecting naming roads, especially after annexations.
- Need continued enhanced communication involving road projects and pending development.

#### **City of Commerce**

- Need to complete the parallel roads to I-85 near the City of Commerce to enhance economic development in the county. Particularly, it was noted that Bana Road between Spur 82 and SR 98 needs to be extended east and west as part of the proposed parallel road system.
- County needs more active approach to maintaining all roads and streets that transverse into municipal limits, including mowing of rights-of-way. Municipalities typically mow urban streets on a weekly basis vs. a monthly schedule on rural county roads.
- Improving intersection visibility with minor sight distance maintenance improvements at Hospital Road (Old Maysville Road) and Ridgeway Road (Mt. Olive Road).

#### **Town of Braselton**

- County needs better access management standards and utilization.
- Reducing future municipal improvements and costs, due to the County's curb cut approvals on roads within the Town creating offset street intersections at new residential subdivision entrance roads.
- Jackson County's acceptance of financial payments in lieu of Developer's required project improvements in the Town is resulting in poor appearance and safety concerns.

#### **City of Hoschton**

- Hoschton needs better access to I-85 instead of the narrow congested segment of SR 53, and we want better access for all our residents to any part of Hoschton. Currently, it is difficult, and sometimes dangerous, for people on one side of SR 53 to patronize businesses on the other side of SR 53.
- Hoschton would like to participate in the planning and improvements on those roads that lead into Hoschton.
- Hoschton would like to participate in the future land use planning for areas adjacent to the city.

#### **City of Talmo**

- Need a parallel road along I-85.
- Need new off/on-ramps at SR 60 and I-85.

### **City of Pendergrass**

- Paving and resurfacing of county roads and state roads in and around our cities

### **New Roads and Road Improvements Suggested by Municipalities**

#### **City of Arcade**

- Etheridge Road at Old 129 intersection improvement: The roads do not line up at Etheridge Road and Ramblers Inn Road.

#### **Town of Braselton**

- Jesse Cronin Road (road widening)
- Zion Church Road east and west of SR 53 to connect to I-85

#### **City of Jefferson**

- Hog Mountain Road (McClure Industrial) to Possum Creek Road (road widening)
- Old Pendergrass Road (road widening)
- An eastern by-pass is need possibly beginning at Galilee Church Road to Canter Way to SR 82 to Dry Pond Road Connector to the I-85/SR 82 interchange
- SR 82/Jett Roberts/McClure Industrial intersection improvement
- Assistance with signal improvements at SR 11 at US 129 By-pass serving the Jackson County Comprehensive High School

#### **City of Hoschton**

- West Jefferson Street needs to be improved from SR 53 to SR 124 (road widening).
- SR 53 on the southern end of Hoschton (road widening)
- SR 53 By-pass

### **Intercity Connectivity Analysis and Improvement Needs**

Jackson County officials emphasized that intercity connectivity was an important issue that should be evaluated in the Countywide Roads Plan. Hence, the work of Moreland Altobelli included an identification of where future road improvements could be made and result in better connectivity between existing municipalities within the county. As a result, several potential improvements were identified in the Countywide Roads Plan, and five were recommended in the Countywide Roads Plan:

1. **Braselton and Hoschton to Arcade:** Connection between SR 332 and SR 124
2. **Braselton and Hoschton to Pendergrass:** Connection between Tom White Rd and Charlie Cooper Rd (I-85 Overpass) and a connection between Charlie Cooper Rd and Lanier Rd, or alternatively a connection between Cedar Rock Rd and Lanier Rd
3. **Braselton and Hoschton to Maysville:** The recommended improvements for Braselton to Pendergrass as well as a connection between SR 332 and Wayne Poultry Rd at Old State Rd and a connection from Wayne Poultry Rd at SR 82 to Silver Dollar Rd at Plainview Rd
4. **Braselton and Hoschton to Nicholson:** The recommended improvements for Braselton to Arcade as well as a connection between the SR 15/Damon Gause By-Pass intersection to Orrs School Road to Brockton Loop to new connection road to SR 335

5. Braselton and Hoschton to Talmo: Connection between New Cut Rd and A.J. Irwin Rd

These potential improvement routes are shown on the following map:

