

**Oconee County Joint Comprehensive Plan Stakeholders Meeting
Public Forum
Oconee Veterans Park
February 5, 2018 - 6:00 p.m.**

Elected Officials Present:

Chairman John Daniell
Commissioner Chuck Horton
Commissioner Mark Thomas
Commissioner W.E. "Bubber" Wilkes
Commissioner Mark Saxon

Oconee County Staff Present:

Justin Kirouac, County Administrator
Kathy Hayes, County Clerk
Sandy Weinel, Planning & Code Enforcement Assistant Director
Lisa Davol, Parks & Recreation Director

Northeast Georgia Regional Commission Staff Present:

Justin Crighton, Planner
Eva Kennedy, Project Specialist
Jordan Shumake, Project Specialist

Media Present:

Michael Prochaska, The Oconee Enterprise
Lee Shearer, Athens Banner Herald

Overview of Plan Recommendations:

Justin Crighton, Northeast Georgia Regional Commission, reviewed the findings of the subcommittees for Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure and Parks, Recreation and Greenspace. Mr. Crighton, Ms. Kennedy and Ms. Shumake have evaluated the discussions of these groups and the full committee to create a draft revision of the County Land Use Map and recommendations for the Comprehensive Plan Update.

(A PowerPoint presentation was given by Mr. Crighton and is attached to the minutes.)

Land Use:

The draft Land Use Map is shown as character areas within three categories: Agricultural/Conservation, Residential and Activity/Industry. Mr. Crighton explained that the character areas each have unique traits and/or special attention to unique circumstances within the character areas.

Mr. Crighton reviewed the revised map legend for the new/existing character areas. The Agriculture & Conservation category presented by Mr. Crighton included the Character Areas of Parks/Recreation/Conservation, Agricultural Preservation and Rural Places. The Residential category included Character Areas of Country Estates, Suburban Neighborhood, Traditional Neighborhood, and City Living. The Activity & Industry group encompasses multiple Character Areas of Country Crossroads, Neighborhood Village Center, Community Village Center, Historic Main Street, Downtown, Gateway Corridor, Mixed-Use Office, Corridor Commercial, Civic Center, Technology Gateway Regional Center, Workplace Center and Public Institutional.

The update of the Comprehensive Plan regarding Land Use includes several recommendations: Character areas as the primary source of guidance for land use/zoning; concentrated growth

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within established or identified nodes; appropriate areas for infrastructure investment; cooperative planning with the Board of Education for school locations; accommodate senior living within multi-aged communities; identify nodes within the residential uses of the Civic Center Character Area to offer smaller lot sizes for housing diversity; encourage multi-family in areas of denser development within municipalities; and remove R-3 zoning designation in Suburban Living Character Area.

Transportation Improvements:

Mr. Crighton displayed the Madison Athens-Clarke Oconee Regional Transportation System (MACORTS) map to view road classifications. The Comprehensive Plan Update will include the following recommendations: Truck route to lessen traffic congestion; upgrade major roadways; sidewalk network; road improvements to accommodate cyclists; multi-use trail or network of trails; strategy to acquire broadband internet county-wide; follow Water and Wastewater Strategic Plan; consider qualitative/quantitative factors when considering expansion locations.

Parks, Recreation, Greenspace:

Mr. Crighton discussed recommendations for the Comprehensive Plan Update in the area of Parks, Recreation and Greenspace: Master Plan for all park facilities; multi-use trail network; encourage neighborhood parks and, when funding is available, large park expansion; evaluate inventory of public/semi-public spaces; continue/complete 2007 Long Range Plan and Heritage Park Phase II; and focusing park improvements to enhance quality of life and connectivity between destinations.

After Mr. Crighton's presentation, he asked the group if there were items that should be incorporated into the plan that was not addressed in the presentation. The next Public Forum of the Committee will be held in March at the Planning Commission Meeting.

Mr. Crighton asked that those in attendance proceed to visit each table representing Land Use, Transportation & Infrastructure and Parks, Recreation and Greenspace.

The meeting was adjourned.

Kathy Hayes, County Clerk

OCONEE COUNTY
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
OVERVIEW OF RECOMMENDATIONS

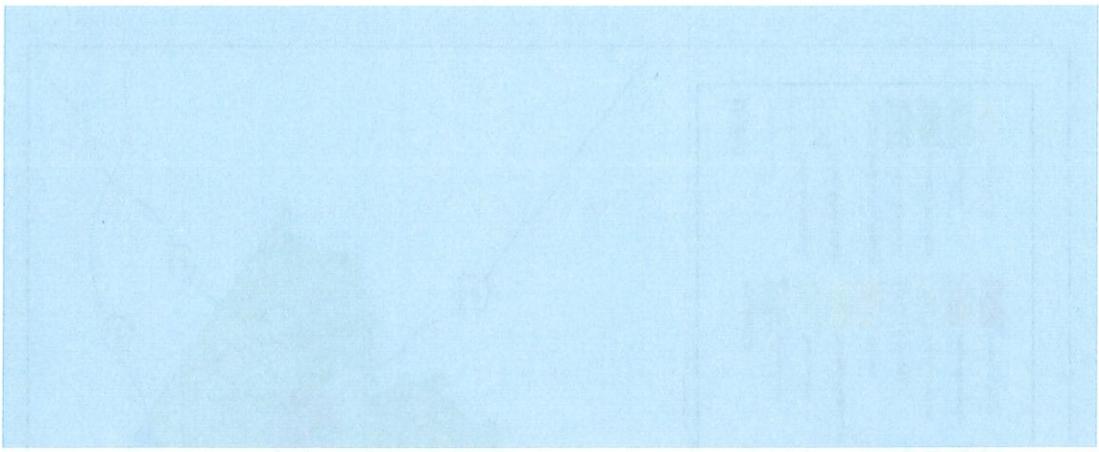
Please sign in

FEBRUARY 5, 2018



AGENDA

1. Overview of Plan Recommendations by NEGRC Staff
2. Breakout Groups for more in depth discussion:
 - a. Transportation & Infrastructure
 - b. Land Use
 - c. Parks & Greenspace
3. Adjourn



LAND USE

Agriculture & Conservation

- Parks/Recreation/ Conservation
- Agricultural Preservation
- Rural Places

Residential

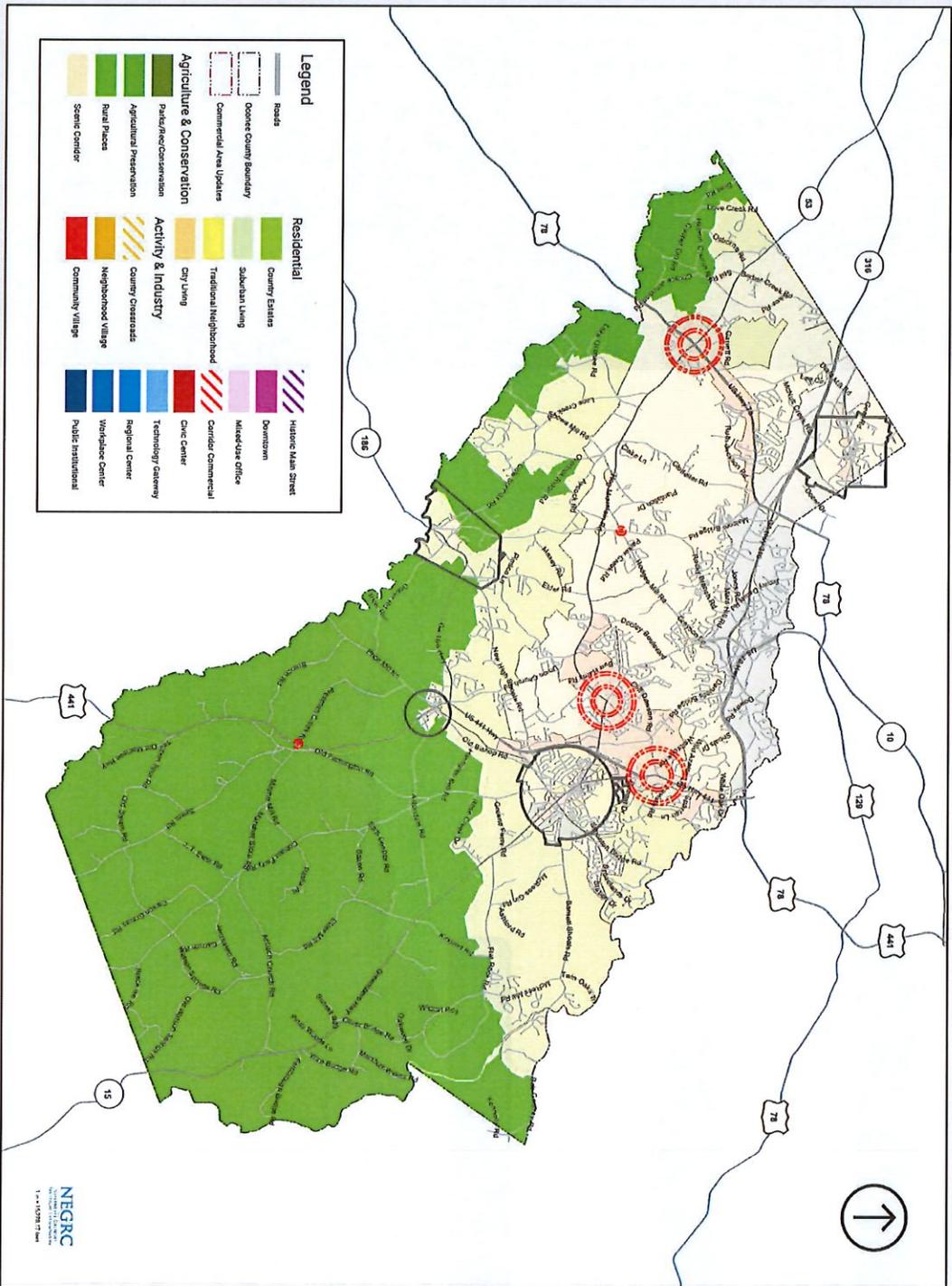
- Country Estates
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- City Living

Activity & Industry

- Country Crossroads
- Neighborhood Village Center
- Community Village Center
- Historic Main Street
- Downtown
- Gateway Corridor
- Mixed-Use Office
- Corridor Commercial
- Civic Center
- Technology Gateway
- Regional Center
- Workplace Center
- Public Institutional

LAND USE

In order to provide a more legible and logical document, character areas will be grouped into three overarching categories

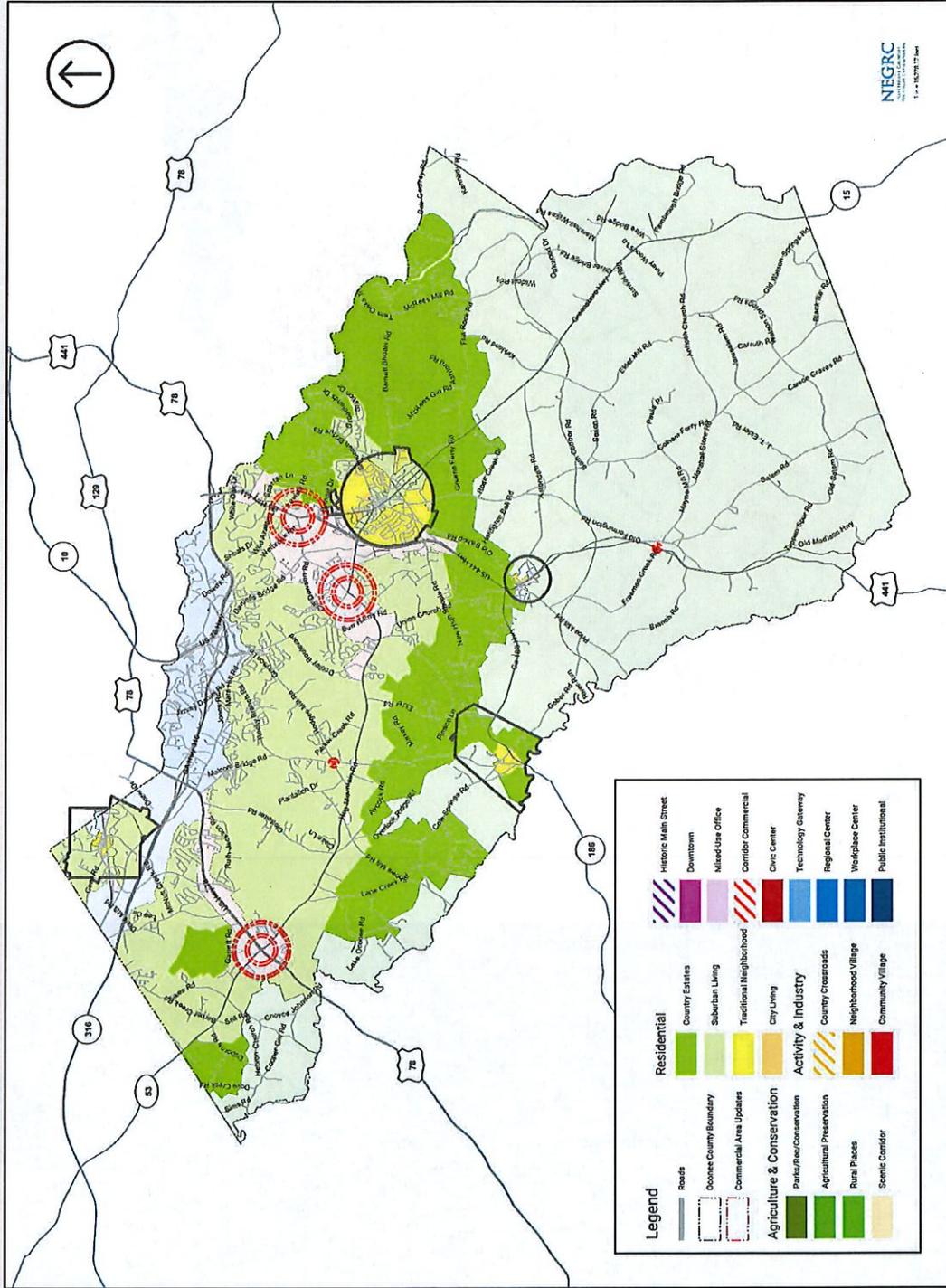


AGRICULTURE & CONSERVATION CHARACTER AREAS

- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Agricultural Preservation
- Rural Places

RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER AREAS

- Country Estates
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Neighborhood
- City Living



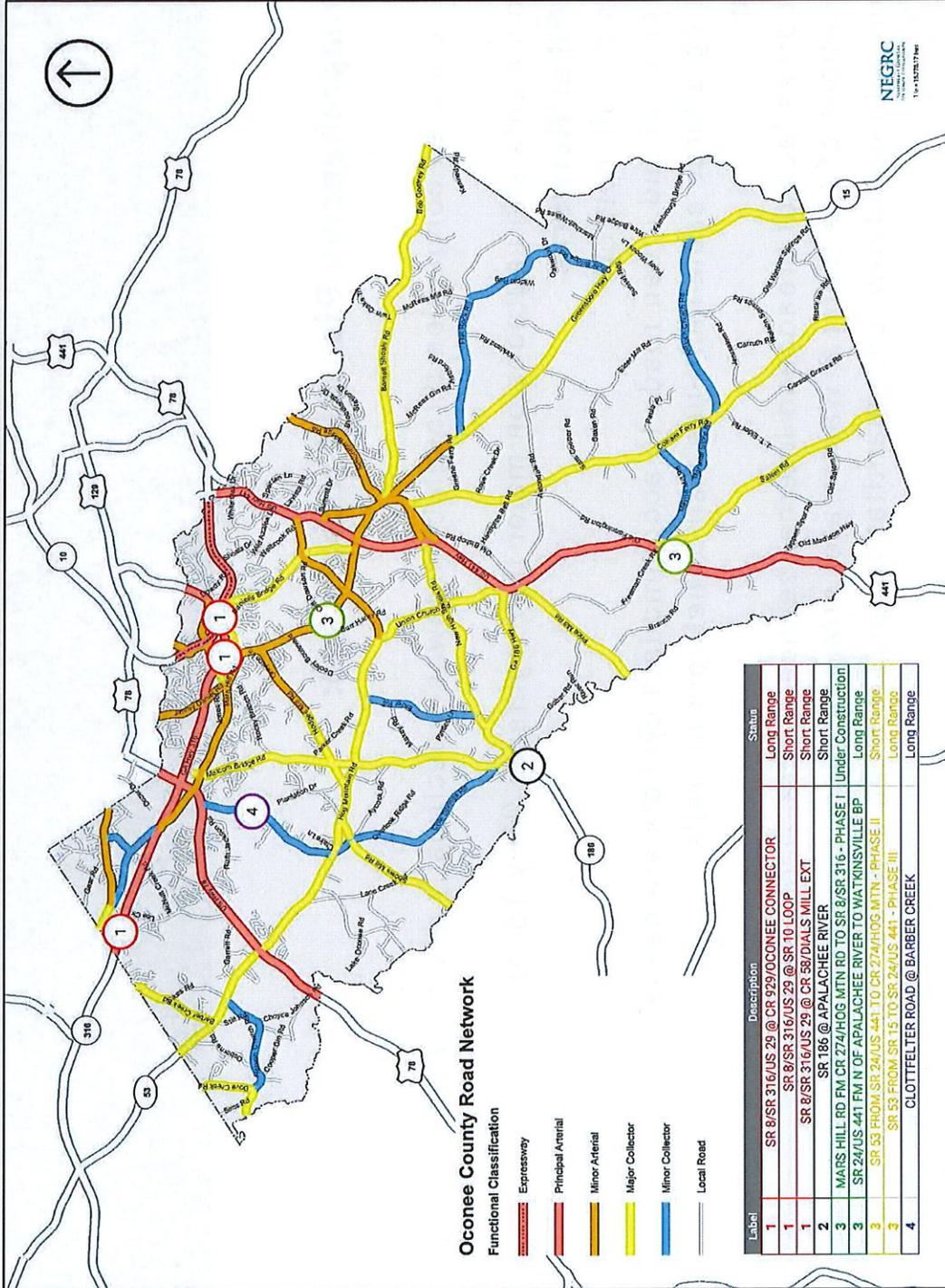
TRANSPORTATION

LAND USE

The Update of the Comprehensive Plan will recommend:

- The vision described for each character area will be used as a primary source of guidance in determining whether a land use and/or zoning decision is appropriate and should be approved.
- Growth should be concentrated within the established or identified nodes, and not permitted to sprawl down corridors.
- The County and cities can support development within these nodes by pursuing infrastructure investment and expansions in areas identified as appropriate on the Future Development Map (FDM) and in the Character Area Descriptions.
- Continue to plan cooperatively with the Board of Education in locating new schools to avoid generating unwanted growth in rural and agricultural areas.
- Develop incentive programs and provide assistance to developers and non-profit organizations to promote mixed housing types within developments to accommodate seniors within a multi-aged community.
- At the identified nodes within the Civic Center Character Area residential uses with smaller lot sizes and overall footprints could be encouraged to help diversify housing stock.
- Multi-family residential should be encouraged in areas slated for denser development. R-3 should be removed as an appropriate zoning designation in the suburban living character area. The subcommittee felt multi-family housing was more appropriate within the municipalities.

TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS



NEGRC
11-1327571 Rev

TRANSPORTATION

The Update of the Comprehensive Plan will recommend:

Road Network

- Designate truck route to lessen congestion through downtowns- specifically downtown Watkinsville
- Prioritize safety improvements and upgrades on major thoroughfares (Hwy 15, ex.)

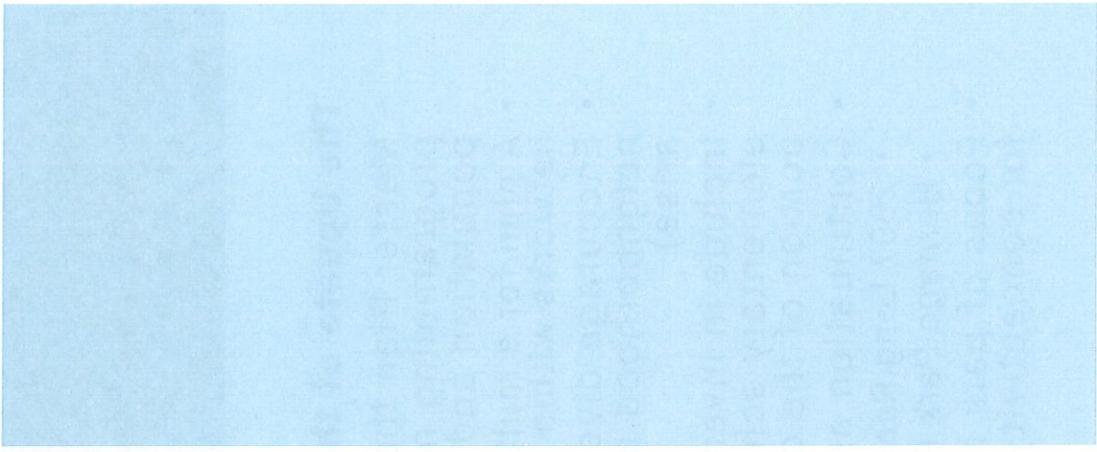
Bike, Pedestrian, and Other Networks

- Prioritize buildout of sidewalk network
- Safety improvements on rural and urban roads to accommodate cyclists are needed
- Work towards developing a large scale multi-use trail or network of trails

Water, Sewer, Telecom

- Develop strategy to address lack of broadband internet service in rural Oconee Co.
- Follow the recommendations of the Water & Wastewater strategic plan
- Take into consideration both qualitative and quantitative factors when considering location of expansions

PARKS, RECREATION, GREENSPACE



PARKS, RECREATION, GREENSPACE

The Update of the Comprehensive Plan will recommend:

- Master Plan that can provide guidance on the physical space, staffing, and programming needed to accommodate both the needs and desires of the current population and a growing population overall.
- A plan for a multi-use trail network to connect green spaces, parks, and with other trail networks within the county and the region should be developed.
- Encourage diversity of scales in new parks and open spaces: (Encourage neighborhood parks AND large park expansion as needs and funding opportunities arise)
- Include in inventory currently underutilized public and semi-public spaces such as elementary school or other existing playgrounds that might be used to serve a portion of the demand.
- Continuation and completion of ongoing initiatives
 - 2007 Long Range Plan
 - Heritage Park Phase II
- Focus of park improvement is to bolster the quality of life, and increasing options for connectivity between destinations.

CONTACT

NORTHEAST GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION

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Please sign in

