

CHATTahoochee HILL COUNTRY

Sustainable Development Overlay

Location	Fulton Co., Georgia
Property Area	40,000
Population	9,000
Client	Land Owners' Association & County Gov.
Status	Approval process by county gov.
Planning Team	Ecos Environmental Design, Inc. Village Habitat Design, Inc. Associated Engineering Consultants, Inc.
Services Provided	Technical review of existing conditions, Community interaction, Master planning, Implementation tools and Design guidelines
Sustainability Features	Land preservation, watershed protection, mixed use village nodes, transportation oriented development, targeted growth areas, walkable.



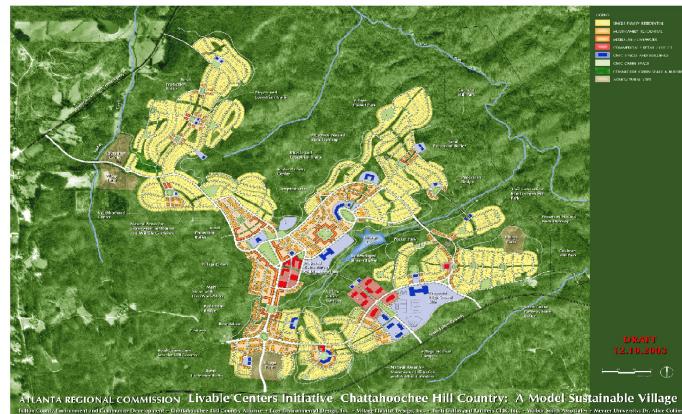
The Atlanta area has experienced extraordinary growth and continues to consume land at rates far outstripping any historical precedent. This area of south Fulton County has been largely passed over by development until recently. Land owners in the Hill Country area tracked an increasing number of proposed conventional development projects. Residents foresaw their area becoming like the northern end of the county where farms have vanished, unwalkable strip highway development consumes roadside views, and large lot subdivisions consume land and aggravate traffic problems.

These residents responded by forming an association of land owners to partner with the Nature Conservancy and the Fulton County Planning Department to create a 40,000 acre overlay district. The purpose of the district is to preserve the rural character, provide for riparian corridor and watershed protection, and protect real estate values.

Through a series of public forums and design charette, the stakeholders formulated criteria for the overlay district. The district actually increases development rights in the area at the same time it provides for the preservation of 50-75% of the land as undisturbed greenspace and farm. The development nodes include Live/Work/Play mixed use villages linked



Village Habitat Design was a key team leader in the planning of the Chattahoochee Hill Country with a goal of preserving an initial 30,000 of 40,000 acres by introducing the first "transfer of development rights" program for the preservation of greenspace in Georgia and converting approximately 40,000 1 acre lots worth of development rights to 3 future villages and hamlets. Serenbe is the first hamlet to be developed in the Chattahoochee Hill Country.



First prototype village

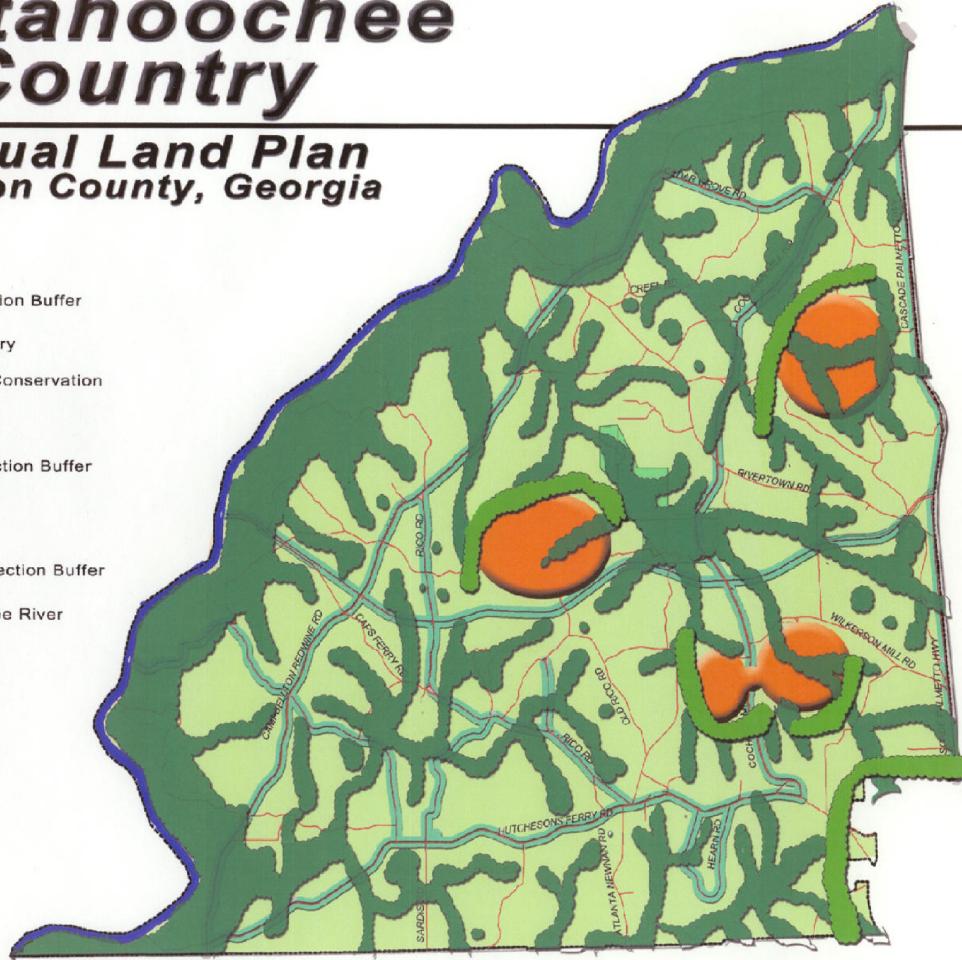
Optimizing the "edge interface" between the village and the waterways and greenspace

Chattahoochee Hill Country

Conceptual Land Plan South Fulton County, Georgia

Legend:

- Rural Protection Buffer
- CHC Boundary
- Agricultural Conservation
- Roads
- Scenic Protection Buffer
- Village
- Riparian Protection Buffer
- Chattahoochee River



Chattahoochee Hills-an organizational history

Chattahoochee Hill Country Alliance

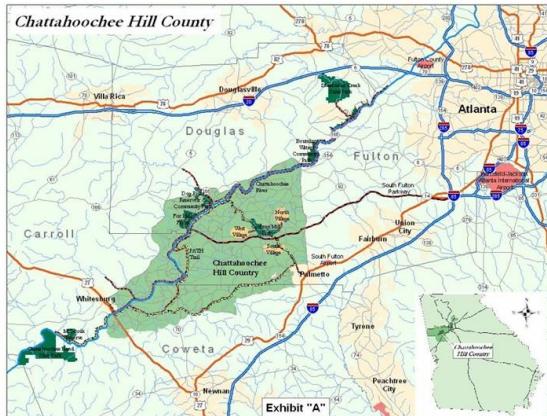
Formed in the early 2000s, the Alliance's primary purpose was to advocate for an alternative development pattern for 40,000 acres of southwest Fulton County. Atlanta had grown primarily inside of its northern "favored quarter," as coined by Chris Leinberger, leaving rural areas to the south and west essentially undeveloped. When an unfinished development highway was funded for completion, local residents engaged their county commissioner to secure funding from the county economic development office for a long range plan. Much work by local land owner and proprietor of the Serenbe Inn, Steve Nygren, had been done to garner support among other large land owners for an alternative plan that would both allow development and preserve the rural character of the area.



This work coalesced into a nonprofit organization named the Chattahoochee Hill Country Alliance. The Alliance received the funding from the county economic development office to ensure the selection of a

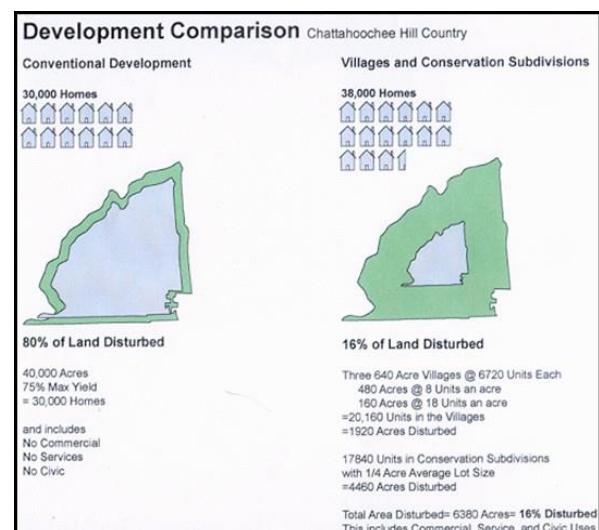
planning firm with a vision that aligned with the Alliance mission. Since all the county's previous plans had resulted in suburban sprawl in the "favored quarter," it was important to the Alliance that the county not control the process. Additionally, this avoided county procurement requirements which were notoriously problematic.

Upon selection of the ECOS/Village Habitat team the



Alliance's work shifted to building support for their vision outside of the community as ECOS/Village Habitat developed the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) plan.

The Alliance worked to secure local support from Fulton County Planning Commission and Board of Commissioners. Additionally, the Georgia code needed to be amended to facilitate the TDR model.



Chattahoochee Hill Country Conservancy

As work progressed, it was recognized that a different entity was needed to manage a TDR “bank.” The Chattahoochee Hill Country Conservancy was formed and its mission today is:

*...to preserve scenic vistas, wildlife habitats, forests and streams. We also seek to
preserve sites of historic significance and to advocate for public access to
parks and trails.*

City of Chattahoochee Hills

Unique to the Metro Atlanta region, many new cities have been incorporated from previously unincorporated county jurisdictions, ostensibly for better local control of services and land use. The community land planning efforts in Chattahoochee Hills and ongoing frustration with the county's reluctance to increase development controls led to efforts to incorporate. This is an unnecessary step in most communities which provide adequate levels of development control.



The City of Chattahoochee Hills has addressed much of the advice given by Smart Growth America in ongoing development of its development regulations.