

DEKALB COUNTY

VILLAGE CONSERVATION DISTRICT

PHASE 2 JULY 2024



CONSERVATION VILLAGE

Executive Summary

GREEN DEKALB – CONSERVATION VILLAGE COMMUNITIES – PHASE 2

To promote walkable, resilient village development surrounded by protected conservation land, expanded trail systems and productive farmland.

THE PROBLEM

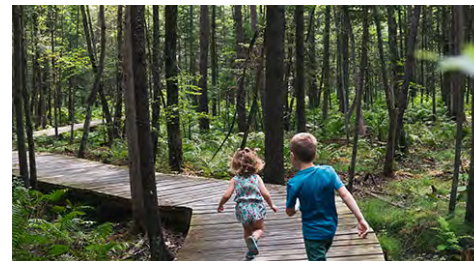
Only 3% of undeveloped lands remain in DeKalb County and this acreage is under intense pressure to be developed conventionally.

- A Green DeKalb Smart Growth Focus -The remaining undisturbed green spaces are precious and will disappear quickly if a new development approach is not embraced to insure the conservation of remaining forests and urban agricultural lands
- Suburbs leaving youth, seniors and families isolated from each other as well as from close by services and amenities.
- The lack of walkable neighborhood-based green business opportunities has created an environment devoid of career training and mentorship opportunities.
- Car dependent real estate growth is creating unsurmountable traffic problems.
- The lack of walking and bikeability and greater food desert creates serious health hazards from lack of “active living” opportunities and easy access to fresh foods.
- The lack of intergenerational opportunities and neighborhood based educational initiatives shortchanges youth potential and involvement of the elderly.

THE SOLUTION AND BENEFITS

The “Village Conservation Community” (VCC) is a development approach that can solve these problems. Creating sustainable economic and social value by walkable village centers surrounded by preserved lands. This would create economic value and social benefits. It would also reduce the need for costly sprawling infrastructure while providing new green investment opportunities and reconnecting people to nature and local farms.

- Clusters new development into conservation based villages to permit the majority of the forest and urban farmland to be preserved.
- Builds economic opportunities through neighborhood business incubation and internships.
- Creates neighborhood-scaled mixed use development to provide walkable destinations to grocery, café, amenities and small businesses while reducing traffic impacts.
- Encourage community interaction and health and wellness through increasing active living - walking and bicycling.
- Enhances educational programs for youth such as after school and summer programs built around forest and farm preserves.
- Reduces the tax burdens of sprawling physical infrastructure



THE CONTEXT

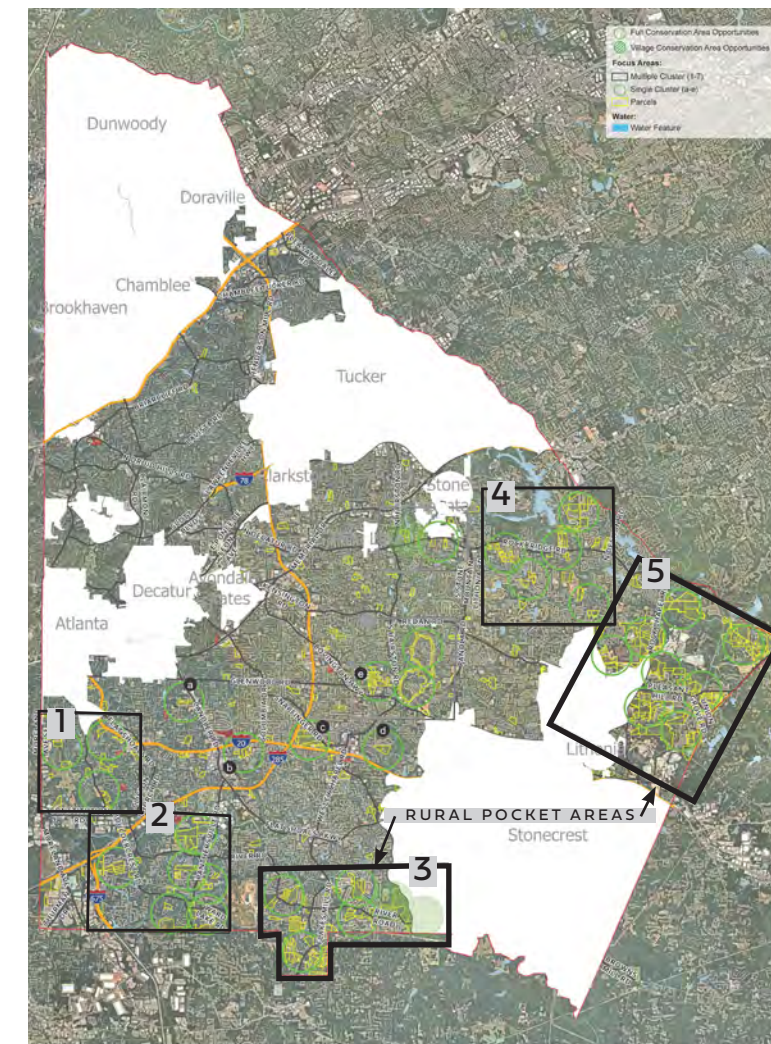
The 3% remaining undeveloped lands in DeKalb County are distributed throughout the county with concentrations in 5 main “focus areas.”

- Focus area 1 is in an intown traditional neighborhood character area (Intrenchments Creek)
- Focus areas 2-5 are in suburban character areas (2 and 3 - South River, 4 - Stone Mountain and 5 - Yellow River.
- Area 5, the Yellow River focus area has by far the greatest forest land remaining in a rich ecosystem integrated to the Yellow River. It is deserving of being called the last “rural pocket” character area in DeKalb County.

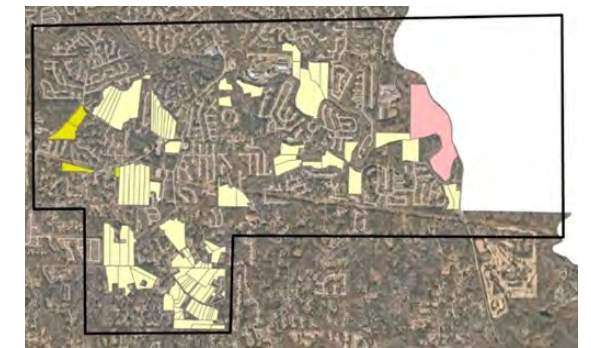
IMPLEMENTATION

To set up optimal opportunities for Village Conservation Communities on the last remaining 3% of DeKalb County undeveloped properties requires several strategic tasks:

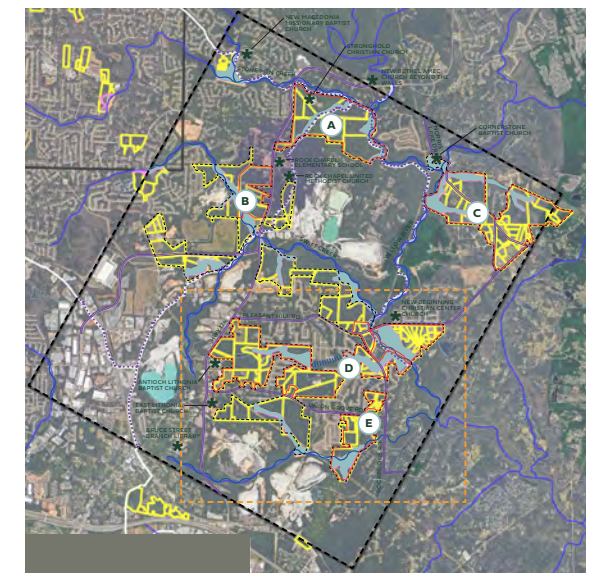
- Discourage future suburban sprawl development and upzoning of suburban properties.
- Assemble conservation, walkability and equity development partnerships.
- Develop land use and zoning policies that encourage Village Conservation Community development on these last undeveloped parcels of land.
- Identify pilot projects and form development partnerships for land acquisition, land preservation, restoration, and village development.



DEKALB FOCUS AREA MAP



SOUTH RIVER FOCUS AREA 3



YELLOW RIVER FOCUS AREA 5



GROWING COMMUNITIES

DEKALB COUNTY

EAST LAKE COMMONS- CONSERVATION VILLAGE
DeKalb County, GA - 60% preserve with Atlanta Education

Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

PART I - OVERVIEW

- Introduction
- Definition
- Introduction to Guiding Principles

PART II- DEKALB LAST CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES

- Overview
- DeKalb County Natural Anchors
- Map Analysis Framework
- Maps
- Focus Areas

PART III - DEKALB AND REGIONAL EXAMPLES

- Lake Clarie Land Trust and Cohousing Community
- Sherrydale Preserve
- Pendergrast Farm
- East Lake Commons
- Honeywood Farms
- City of Chattahoochee Hills

PART IV - GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Land Conservation
- Walkability
- Neighborhood Equity

PART V - CONSERVATION VILLAGE MAPPING

PART VI - LAND USE AND ZONING CONSIDERATIONS

PART VII - POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

PART VIII - IMPLEMENTATION

APPENDIX

- Definitions

Plans and diagrams are designed for conceptual purposes only. Images included within are for educational purposes only. All sampled copyrighted work (imagery) is under the protection of Section 107 of the Copyright Act.



PART I - OVERVIEW

HISTORIC CONSERVATION VILLAGE

Preserving farms and forests

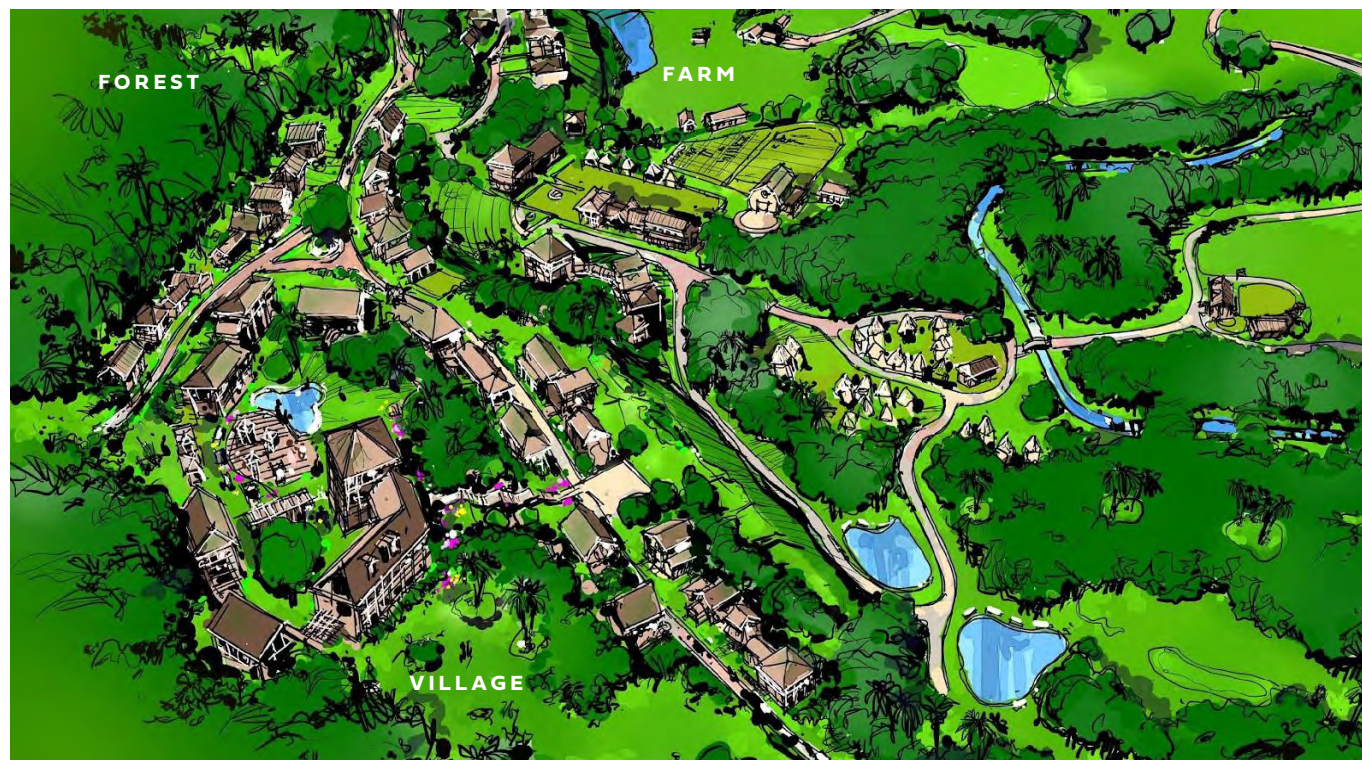
Introduction

Village Conservation Community

DeKalb County has lost 97 - 98% of its developable lands leaving 2 to 3%. Primarily due to the fast rate of suburban growth and primary dependence on the automobile from the 1950's to present. The remaining green spaces are precious and a new development approach is needed that permits future real estate growth to be clustered insuring that existing neighborhoods will become more walkable and sustainable. Creating neighborhood based opportunities for seniors, youth and families with walking destinations that include neighborhood retail, small businesses and a variety of neighborhood activities and amenities. We call this approach Village Conservation Community (VCC development). The village represents the clustering of future development into walkable village clusters while the conservation refers to the preservation of forests and future urban farm lands accessible by foot by neighborhood residents. These future Village Conservation Communities can then be used as anchors to create new neighborhood investment opportunities while enhancing the quality of life, health and economic resilience for DeKalb County neighborhoods.

The VCC model draws its inspiration from historic forest and farm connected towns and villages where residents were more connected to the land as well as to each other. Clustered development, such as villages and hamlets connected within a 5-10 min walk to forest rails and urban farms are the most efficient form of real estate based land use, far outperforming car-dependent sub-divisions and ultimately support a more successful and resilient local economy, community and environment.

The benefits of the VCC can be reaped by new existing village residents and the existing neighborhood by offering a variety of agriculture and nature based programs and creating incentives to reinforce opportunities for more neighborhood based local economic and community oriented activities.



CONSERVATION VILLAGE CONNECTED TO FARMLANDS AND FOREST

Two current DeKalb County development trends create serious challenges to the preservation of the remaining forests and urban ag land opportunities and the creation of walkable oriented development.

1. The continued use of suburban larger lot development to mass grade sites and create car dependency
2. Up-zoning of the last remaining larger undeveloped properties from suburban district to full site high density residential district with little or no regard for conservation, pedestrian priority or equitable access to neighborhood housing, work places, services and amenities.

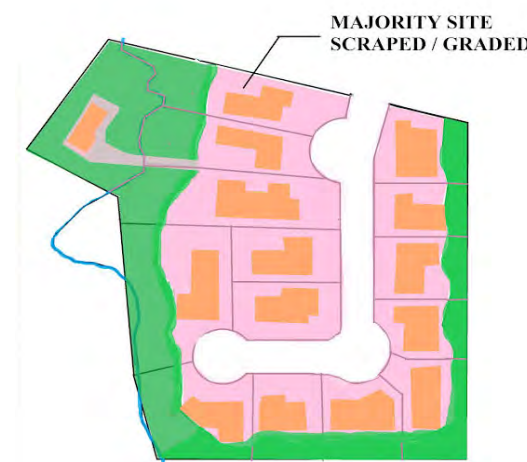
Village Conservation Community provides a solution to these current development trends.

- Converting suburban districts to Village Conservation Communities (VCC) precluding suburban district mass grading, preserving the majority of the green space, creating walkable destinations centered around forest and urban ag preservation and creating commensurate investment opportunities in the form of conservation village and hamlet development.
- Ensuring that no up-zoning occurs without preservation of forests and urban ag opportunities, enhanced pedestrian priority planning, and equitable access to neighborhood services and amenities
- Including all development rights from underlying zoning districts with additional development bonuses in order to enable a substantive shift from Suburban districts to Village Conservation Community focused land use.

It will be important to:

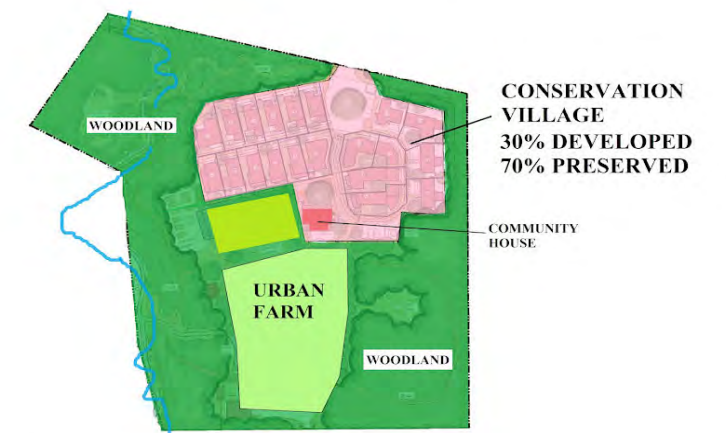
- Develop a conservation and community based valuation of the remaining undeveloped lands of DeKalb County (5 acre parcels and larger) to identify opportunities
- Develop a conservation and community based parcel prioritization (identify parcel focus areas)
- Develop land use/zoning changes to enable Village Conservation Community Applications
- Initiate conservation and community development partnerships
- Develop educational programs to raise awareness and understanding of the value of creating clustered conservation village and hamlet developments in order to preserve the majority of the few last remaining undeveloped green spaces and increase the local neighborhood economic and community opportunities

SUBURBAN 2-3 UNITS/ACRE
SITE MASS-GRADE



SUBURBAN SUBDIVISION
R100 YIELD PLAN

CONSERVATION VILLAGE
MINIMUM 8 UNITS PER ACRE



VILLAGE CONSERVATION COMMUNITY
70% PRESERVE

DEFINITIONS

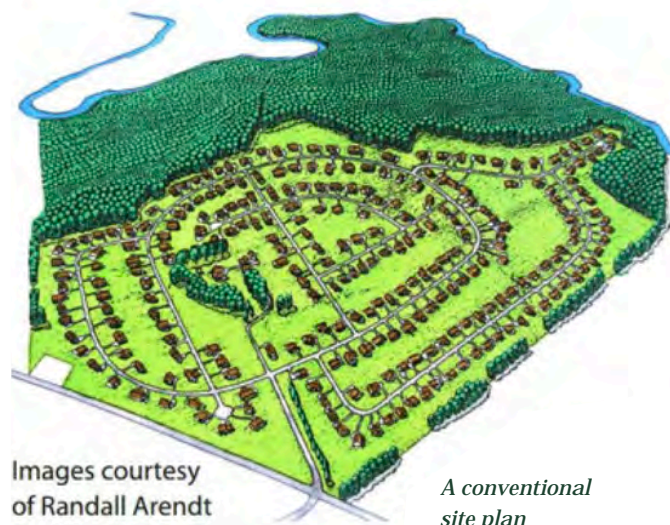
A Village Conservation Community (VCC) consists of one or more “conservation village or hamlet clusters” connected or surrounded by preserved lands which provide an opportunity for developing walkable communities. These provide neighborhood access to walkable and bikeable services, preserved woodlands, and urban agriculture. The scale of a VCC can range from 5 acres to larger parcels incorporating intown areas, suburban metropolitan areas, and rural areas. The village consists of mixed use clustered, walkable, intergenerational, and mixed income development within a 5-10 min walk of forest, stream, and farm land preserve. Conservation within the VCC consists of the majority of forest and farm lands preserved either by the owner working with a land trust, the local jurisdiction, or preserved by a “conservation village” (see below).

A Village Conservation District is a planning overlay that informs the best way to guide growth with Conservation Villages and to optimize land conservation.

A Conservation Village is a type of conservation development designed to preserve the majority of a site by clustering the existing development rights into a village cluster using the conservation village metric. Village clusters can vary in size from 4-15 units (also called a hamlet), a small village cluster (20 to a few hundred units) and a large village (1,000 or more units). Conservation Villages allow denser development than conservation subdivisions as well as an appropriate mix of uses in the form of traditional village lots and stacked uses (stacked flats and live work). Designed at a walking scale, heights of buildings are integrated and transitioned appropriately into the present neighborhood context.

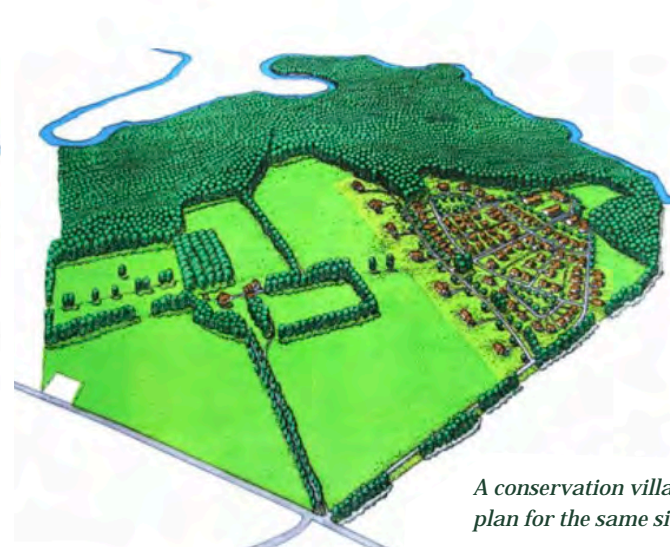
A Conservation Hamlet is a very small conservation village ranging in size from 4-15 units. It originates historically from farmers creating a cluster of housing around the original farm house (attached or detached) for several generations of children to remain on the farm and have homes for their families and start “value added” farm based work places. It also has historic origins as a “Crossroad Hamlet” located at a crossroads where a family owned a general store or seed and feed with a few housing units to provide essential provisions for surrounding farmers and passer buyers that might need a meal or a nights lodging.

“It takes a village, a farm, and a forest”



Images courtesy of Randall Arendt

A conventional site plan



A conservation village plan for the same site

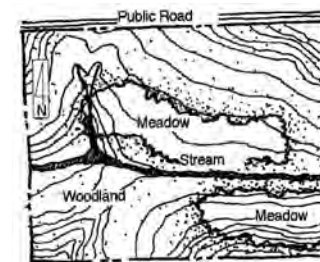
INTRODUCTION TO GUIDING PRINCIPLES

CONSERVATION

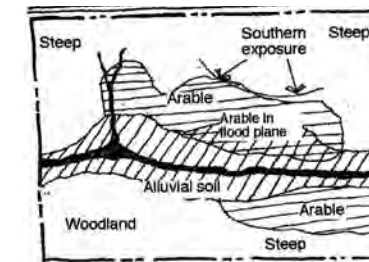
The Conservation Village takes the underlying zoning density (site yield density), adds an incentivizing development bonus and clusters the development at a density allowing preservation based on the VCC conservation metric. It is the land preservation “**gold standard**” because the village or hamlet density enables significantly smaller “conservation lots” and traditional “missing middle” housing, clustered in a way that maximizes the preservation of green space, while designing the majority of units to front and connect onto the preserved green space.

The scale of the Conservation Village or Hamlet ranges from a 4-15 home hamlet cluster to a small village or neighborhood cluster of 20 to a few hundred homes up to a major village of one thousand or more units. The larger conservation villages are most useful for protecting the last large green spaces in the county, instead of fragmenting them into multiple developments (cluster and infrastructure sprawl). The small conservation villages and hamlets are useful for protecting smaller, infill green spaces. The success of integrating conservation villages and hamlets into the existing suburban landscape rests largely on incorporating the following into each VCC development:

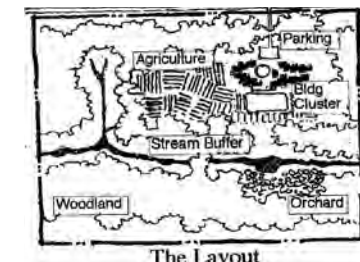
CONSERVATION SITE ANALYSIS MAPPING PROCESS



Determine which areas are the most ecologically sensitive



Determine which areas are the most suitable for agriculture



Locate the buildings in the least damaging areas

Attention to these five aspects will foster support in the initial development/conservation phase, help create more healthy connected communities for the long term while creating a pro-growth approach to developing conservation villages and hamlets.

- Substantive Preservation: the substantive preservation of remnant forests, passive recreation areas and potential urban ag lands based on the VCC preservation metrics.
- Pedestrian Access to preserved green spaces: pedestrian and bicycle access of these preserved lands to surrounding neighbors
- Transitional Buffers: well designed transitional buffers to the adjoining lower density suburban district
- Density Gradients: well designed density gradient ensuring that the higher density areas of the village are farther away from the adjacent lower density neighborhood.
- Reduced Automobile Impact: reducing automobile impact from what could conventionally be developed through better use of community transit, enhanced pedestrian and bike connectivity and increased day to day functional walking destinations.

SCALE OF VILLAGE CLUSTER



Hamlet
4-15 units



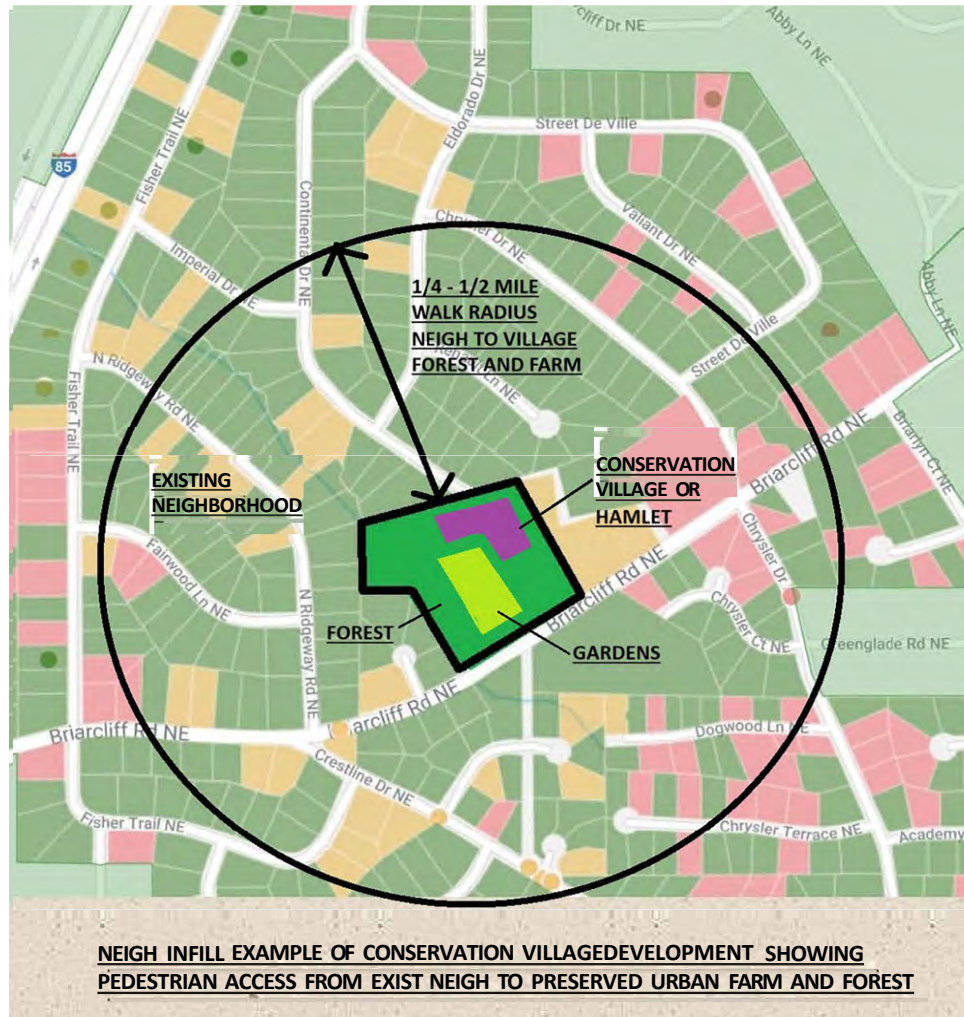
Small Village
20 to a few hundred units



Large Village
1,000 or more units

WALKABILITY

Pedestrian Connectivity is the second foundational principle and refers to walkability both within the conservation village and hamlet as well as to the surrounding neighborhood. Typically a 1/4 - 1/2 mile radius (5-10 min walk), from the preserved lands into the surrounding neighborhood defines the pedestrian shed. The intent within that pedestrian shed is to create walkable access to preserved green space as well as to a diversity of functional daily destinations appropriate to the underlying zoning district. This permits reduction of traffic trips and increases community interaction through a series of walking based exchanges. Longer multi-use trails can connect to the conservation villages and hamlets as well enabling access to the larger natural corridors.



NEIGHBORHOOD EQUITY

Equitable access to neighborhood housing, work places, services and amenities to create more sustainable and resilient neighborhoods

- **Community Building & Gathering Spaces:** build community and create gathering spaces; starts with persons interested in community and conservation, facilitated through pedestrian priority design and completed through the development of gathering spaces connected to the preserved green space
- **Neighborhood Based Retail and Services:** Neighborhood scaled farm store/grocery, Cafe or community dining and other essential neighborhood walkable services to enhance security and vitality of the neighborhood.
- **Neighborhood Based Workplaces:** Integrate zoning-appropriate neighborhood based workplaces to reduce commuter patterns and neighborhood day time absenteeism, increase youth learning opportunities, community
- **Mixed Income Housing:** create mixed income housing opportunities around shared values for land conservation and community to include the following housing categories: on site land caretaker/urban agriculture housing, middle income/work force housing and upper middle to higher income housing
- **Intergenerational Community:** Integrate full intergenerational age groups; seniors need to be able to live in communities where they can age in place, not need a car and be able to move to smaller units where they are surrounded by community and nature. Youth need the benefit of seniors as mentors in their lives and families need help with children and caring for seniors; it takes a village.
- **Sustainability, Health & Resiliency:** increase sustainability, health and resilience of neighborhoods through connection to nature and urban agriculture, active living opportunities (walk/bike), food & energy resilience and general creation of an intergenerational supportive neighborhood
- **Neighborhood Based Education:** education linked to the neighborhood and the preserved land accessible within a 1/2 - 1 mile walking/bike diameter; focused particularly on local youth supported by local schools and other community resources; this place-based education provides opportunities such as internships, work/study programs, after school programs and summer school programs

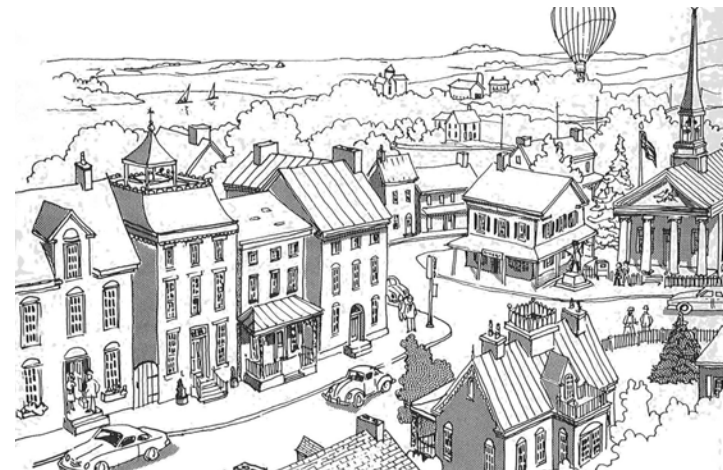


CONSERVATION VILLAGE INSPIRATIONS

Origins of the VCC are based on historic, walkable woodland and agrarian-based villages and hamlets connected to the land, nature, farms and gardens with integrated workplaces and a culture of community and local mentorship and interdependency.



DPZ TRANSECT URBANISM



CHESTER PLANNING COMMISSION

HAMLET



SMALL VILLAGE



LARGER VILLAGE



PEDESTRIAN VILLAGE SPINE



PART II - DEKALB LAST CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES



YOUTH CONNECTING WITH NATURE

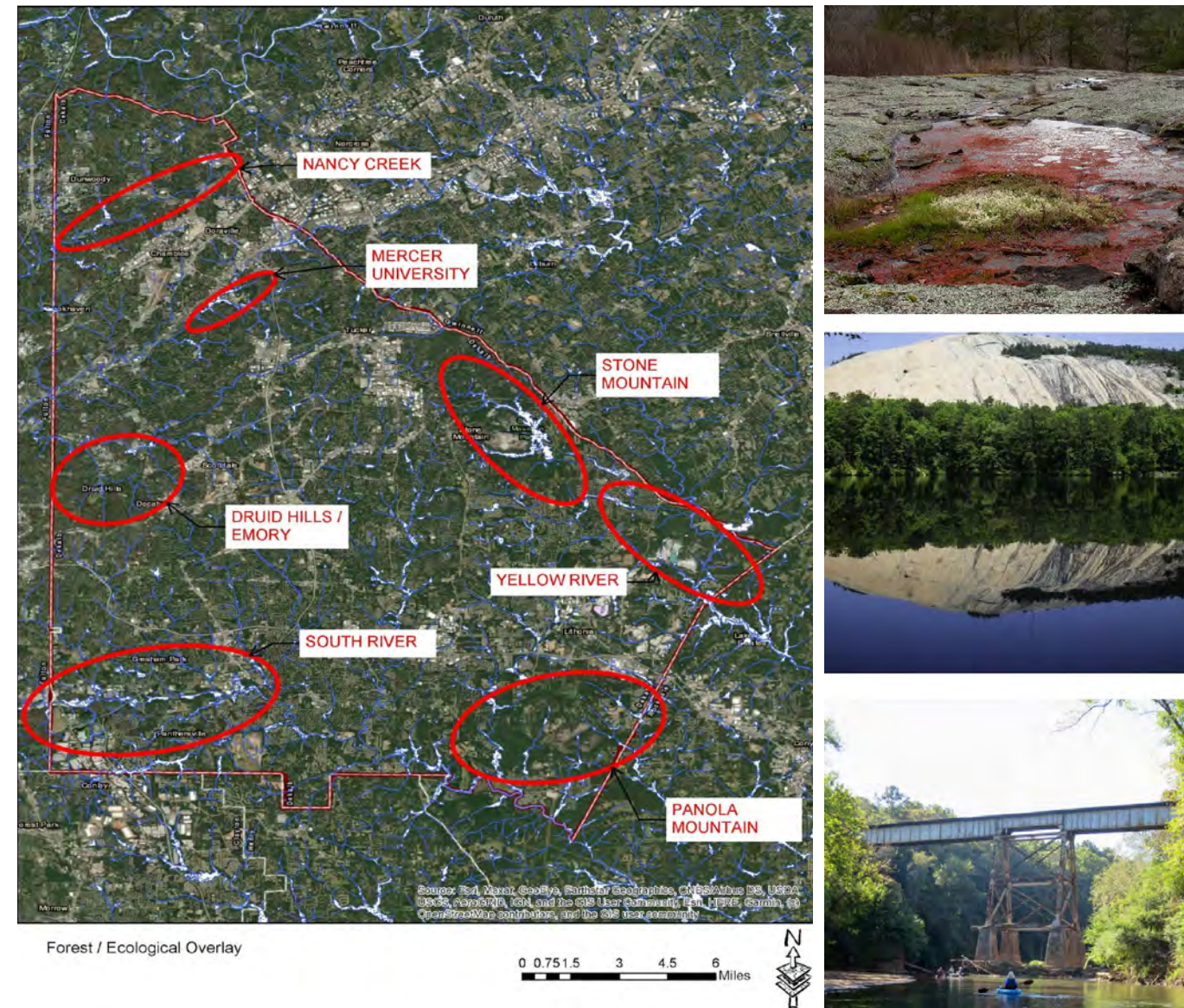
Village Homes, Davis, California

OVERVIEW

In order to identify potential VCC candidate sites for high priority preservation of remaining key forest and urban ag opportunity areas a land assessment process has been undertaken prioritizing undeveloped parcels with specific qualities and opportunities. As a first step the team researched large undeveloped parcels, identified patterns or trends, and applied the VCC character areas conservation metrics to DeKalb County. This process starts with an overview of the last major natural habitat areas and potential urban ag areas left in DeKalb County and then proceeds to a general map analysis and parcel assessment framework.

DEKALB COUNTY NATURAL ANCHORS

For natural anchor areas, the two obvious categories would be forestland and pasture or ag land. In the Panola Mountain and Stone Mountain areas, there are areas that have exposed granite outcrops that rise out of forested areas. The area around Mercer University is a big wetland area and mostly forested (riparian / wetland areas) -Nancy Creek, South River, and the Yellow River form the major Riparian corridors areas and are mostly forested. The areas around Emory and Druid hills have natural forested areas and also and combine as a historic category.



MAP ANALYSIS FRAMEWORK

Utilizing existing data, the team conducted a high level analysis to identify undeveloped greenspace within unincorporated DeKalb County, applied VCC character areas to the County and identified potential focus areas and walkable clusters.

- Character Areas: identify the green space relationships and general conservation metrics for the development character areas of the county. Character map areas include traditional intown, suburban, and rural pocket (suburban areas where most undeveloped parcels remain).
- Focus Area: maps within each character area that identify green spaces (corridor and standalone green spaces) and their relationships to community services, schools, youth services and other community amenities.
- Sub Areas: maps within each focus area that define the walkable scaled areas with green spaces and services, schools and amenities. Walkable areas consist of 1/2 mile diameter for functional walking and are typically defined within “super block” areas to ensure no major roads create impasses to pedestrian/bike access. These 1/2 mile diameter walking areas can interconnect along corridors to create longer recreational walking trails and destinations

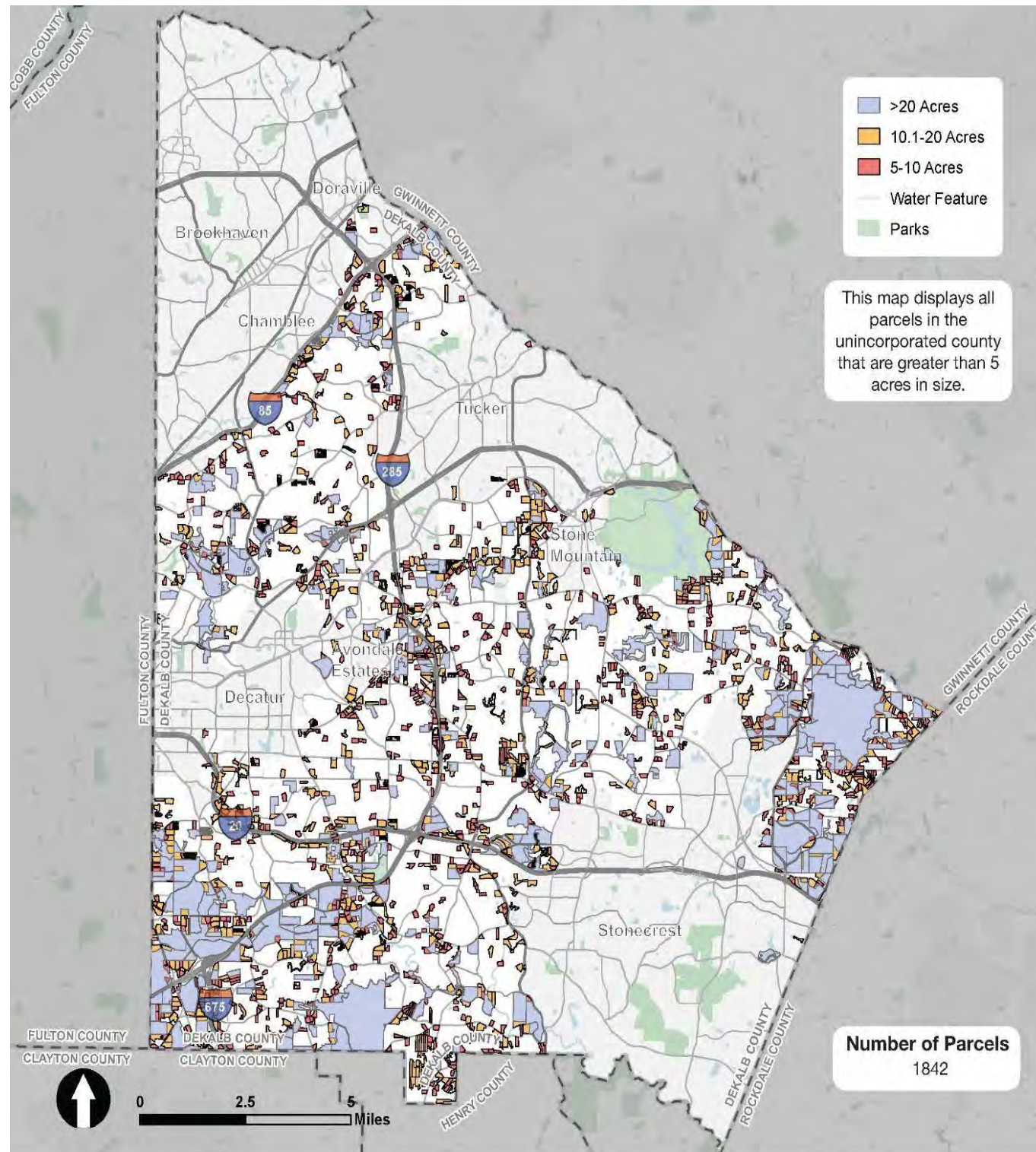
Map Analysis Conclusions

In general, much of the County has already experienced growth with few remaining green spaces. Of the remaining green spaces, most is located in southern or eastern DeKalb County and most is zoned at suburban residential densities.

Based on existing zoning, development patterns and the character of the remaining green spaces, the three VCC character areas have been defined geographically. Those areas include Traditional/Transitional, Suburban, and Rural Pocket. No truly rural areas remain within DeKalb County, but there are “pockets” of rural character in the eastern area of the County. Additionally, there are several existing industrial areas within the County that will need to be considered when identifying potential candidate sites.

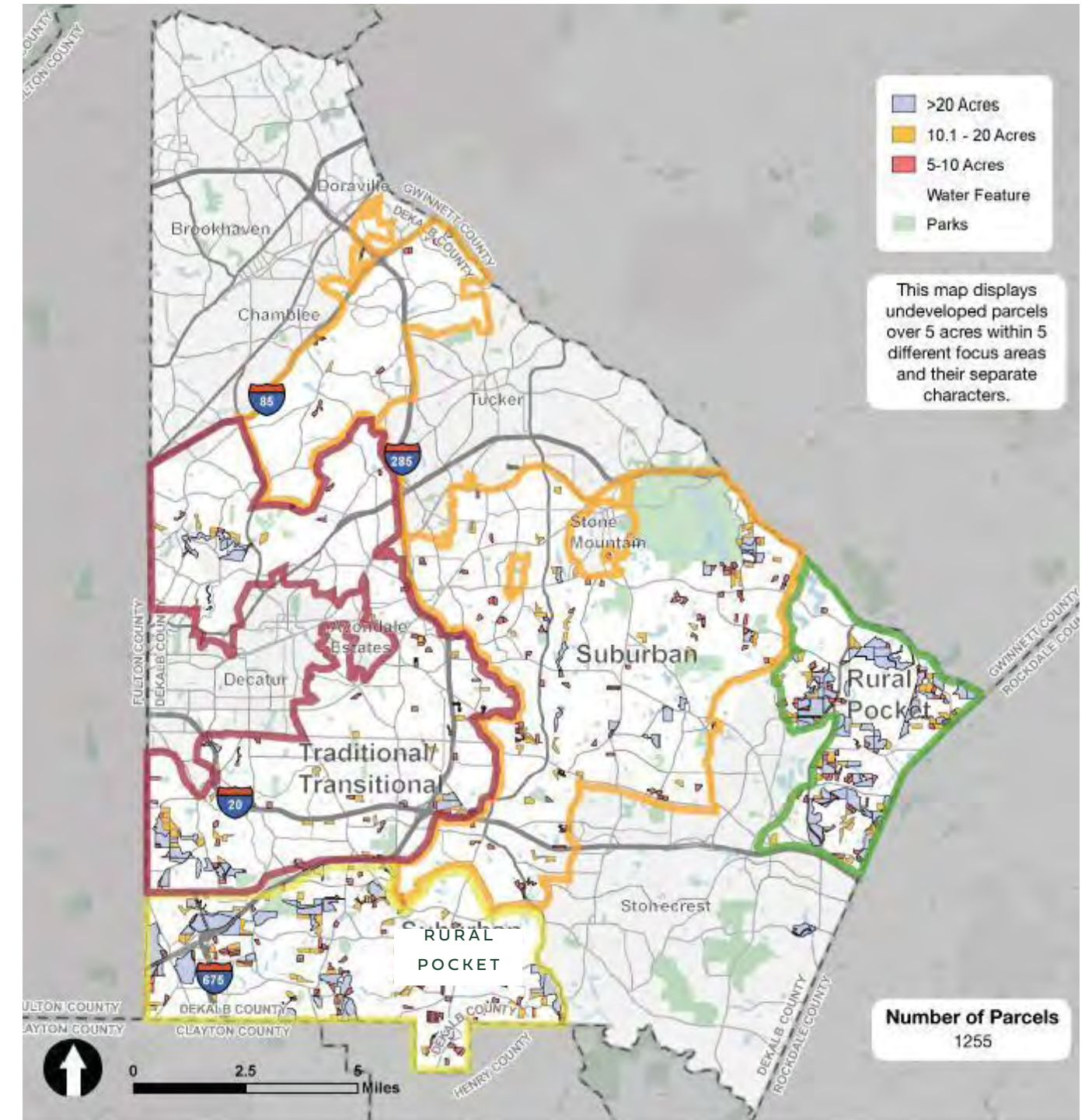
The summary master county map shows parcels 5 acres or larger distributed across unincorporated DeKalb. The concentrations of undeveloped parcels of land are shown in 5 focus areas. Focus area 1 in the Traditional Intown character areas and focus areas 2-5 are in suburban character areas. Focus areas 3 and 5 are the two areas with the most undeveloped parcels designated “Rural Pocket”.

DEKALB COUNTY REMAINING UNDEVELOPED PARCELS (2%)



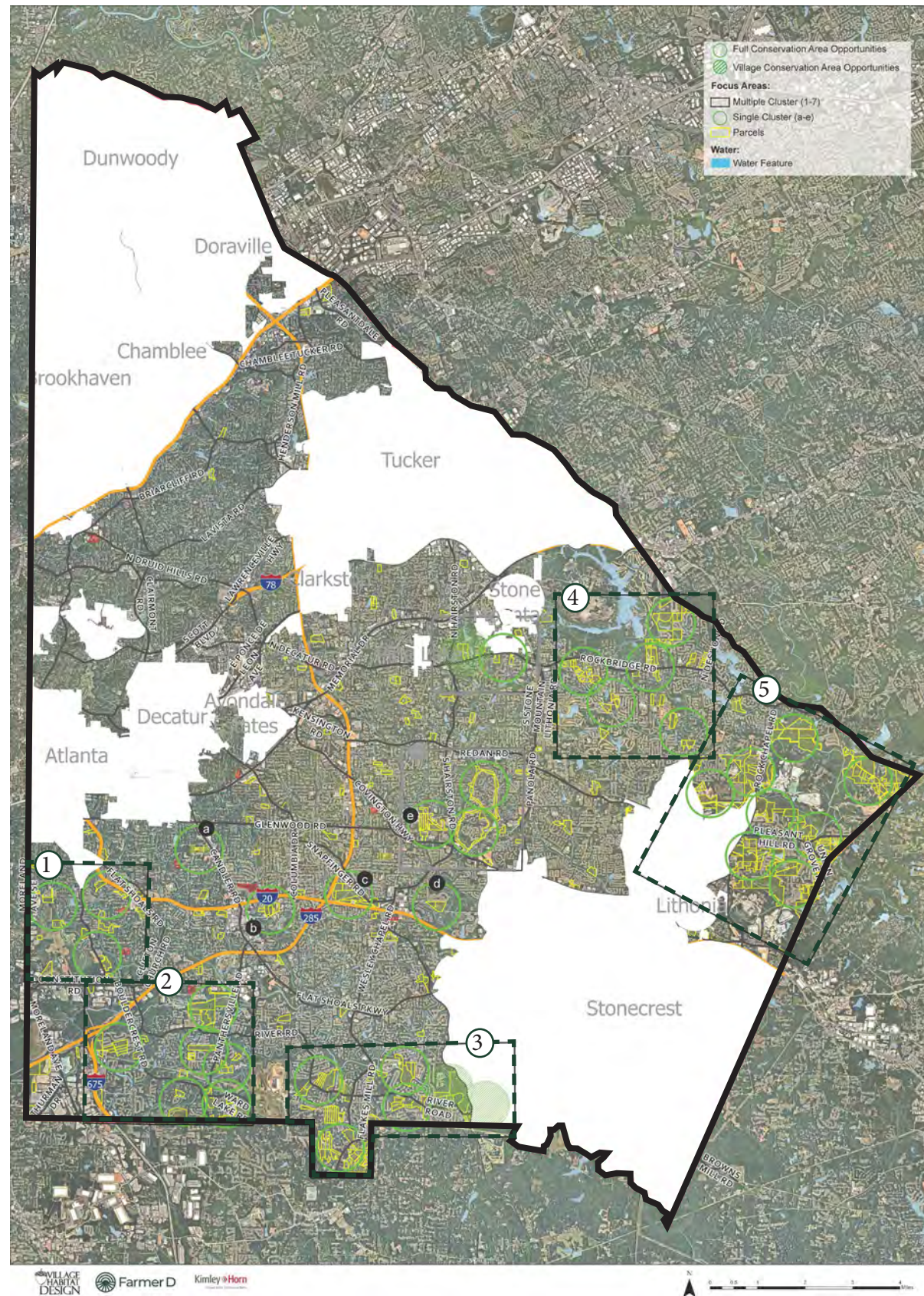
This map shows parcels sized 5 acres and above in unincorporated DeKalb County. The larger parcels and areas of more contiguous parcels are found mostly in the southwestern and eastern portions of the County in the blue (greater than 20 acre zone).

DEKALB COUNTY CHARACTER AREAS



Based on existing zoning, existing development patterns, the character of the remaining undeveloped greenspace, the three VCC character areas of Traditional, Suburban, and Rural Pocket have been applied to DeKalb County in this map. The amount and character of undeveloped greenspace in each character area is different and presents unique opportunities or challenges.

FIVE FOCUS AREAS - UNDEVELOPED PARCELS AREAS



DEKALB COUNTY FOCUS AREA MASTER PLAN

This map shows 5 focus areas within DeKalb County with a concentration of undeveloped parcels.

FOCUS AREAS

While there are remaining parcels of land 5 acres or greater distributed across DeKalb County, the concentrations of remaining undeveloped land have been identified in these 5 focus areas. The key to efficient implementation of conservation villages within these focus areas is to use existing roads and minimize expansion of new roads to minimize fragmentation of the remaining undeveloped lands. The conservation village guiding principles then allows development rights to be offset or transferred from the most sensitive lands to the best areas for walkable village development.

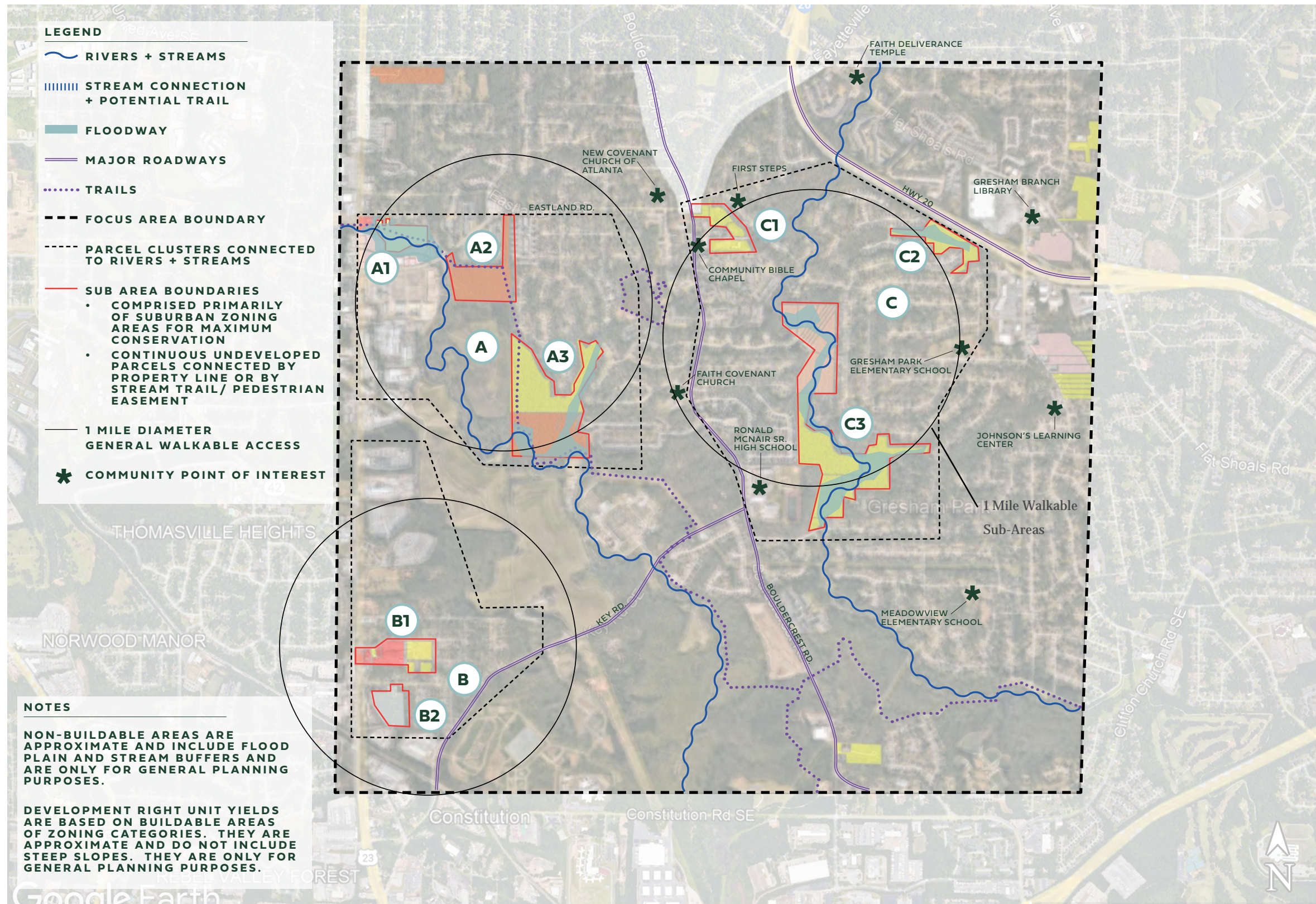
There are 5 focus areas identified in DeKalb county.

Focus area 1 is located in the intown character area connected to Intrinchantment creek. While it has limited conservation area potential, it has potential for converting existing greyfield areas to conservation development.

Focus area 4 is located in a suburban character area and while it has limited conservation potential, its strength is the proximity to stone mountain park with the opportunity for several conservation villages.

Focus areas 2, 3, and 5 are located in suburban character areas but represent the last rural character “pocket” areas left in the county where the greatest concentration of undeveloped land is found connected to the south river and yellow river. These character areas offer the richest opportunity to safeguard unique ecological areas in DeKalb, minimizing further intrusion of infrastructure into remaining forests and farmlands, while promoting conservation village development.



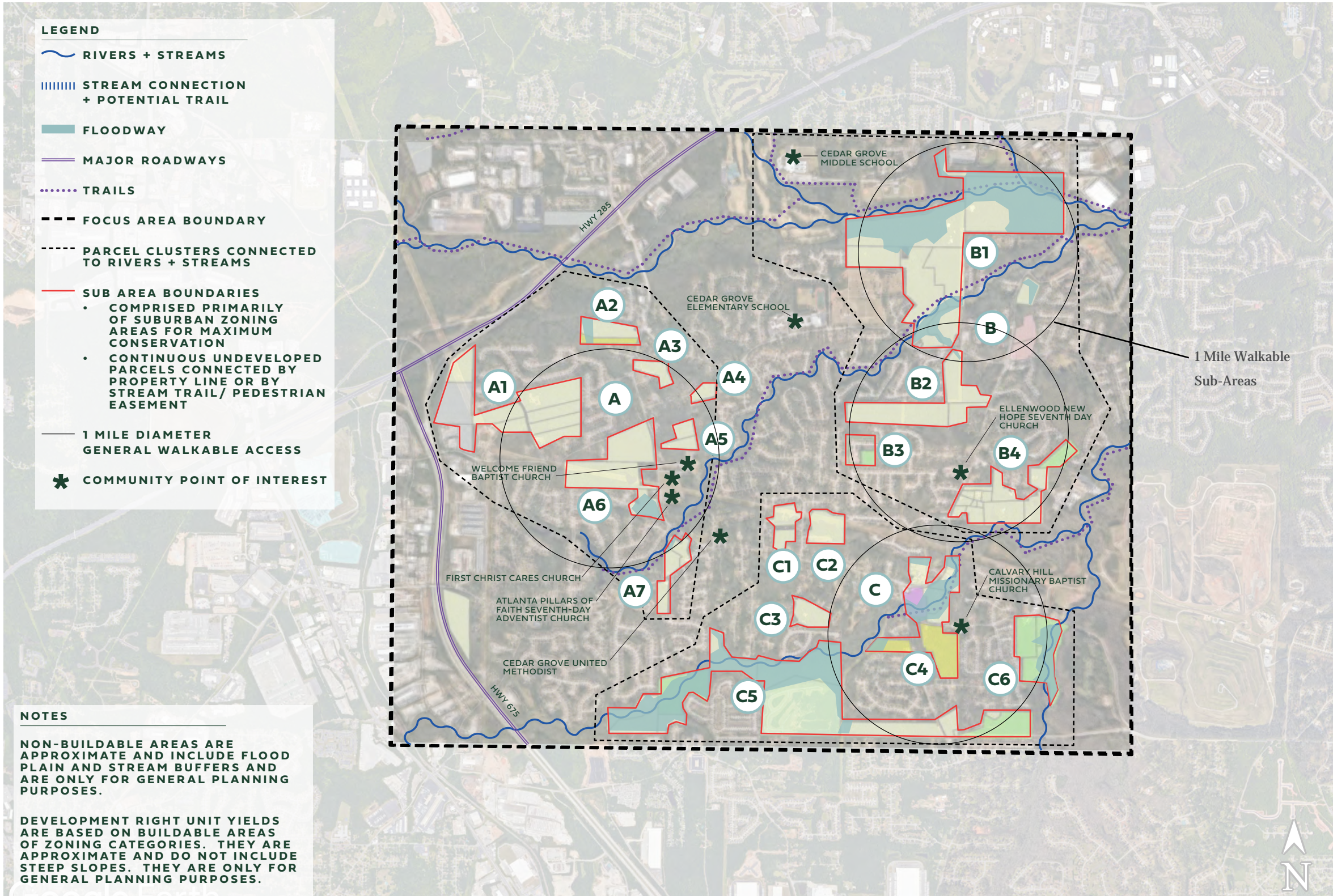


- A:**
 - A1** - R-75 and C-1 zoning
Total area: 20 Acres
 - A2** - MR-2 zoning
Total area: 18 Acres
 - A3** - R-75 and MR-2 zoning
Total area: 49 Acres
- B:**
 - B1** - R-75 and C-2 zoning
Total area: 14 Acres
 - B2** - M zoning
Total area: 8 Acres
- C:**
 - C1** - R-75 zoning
Total area: 8 Acres
 - C2** - R-75 zoning
Total area: 10 Acres
 - C3** - R-75 and MR-1 zoning
Total area: 66 Acres

DEKALB COUNTY FOCUS AREA 1 INTRENCHMENT CREEK

PRESERVATION TOOLS

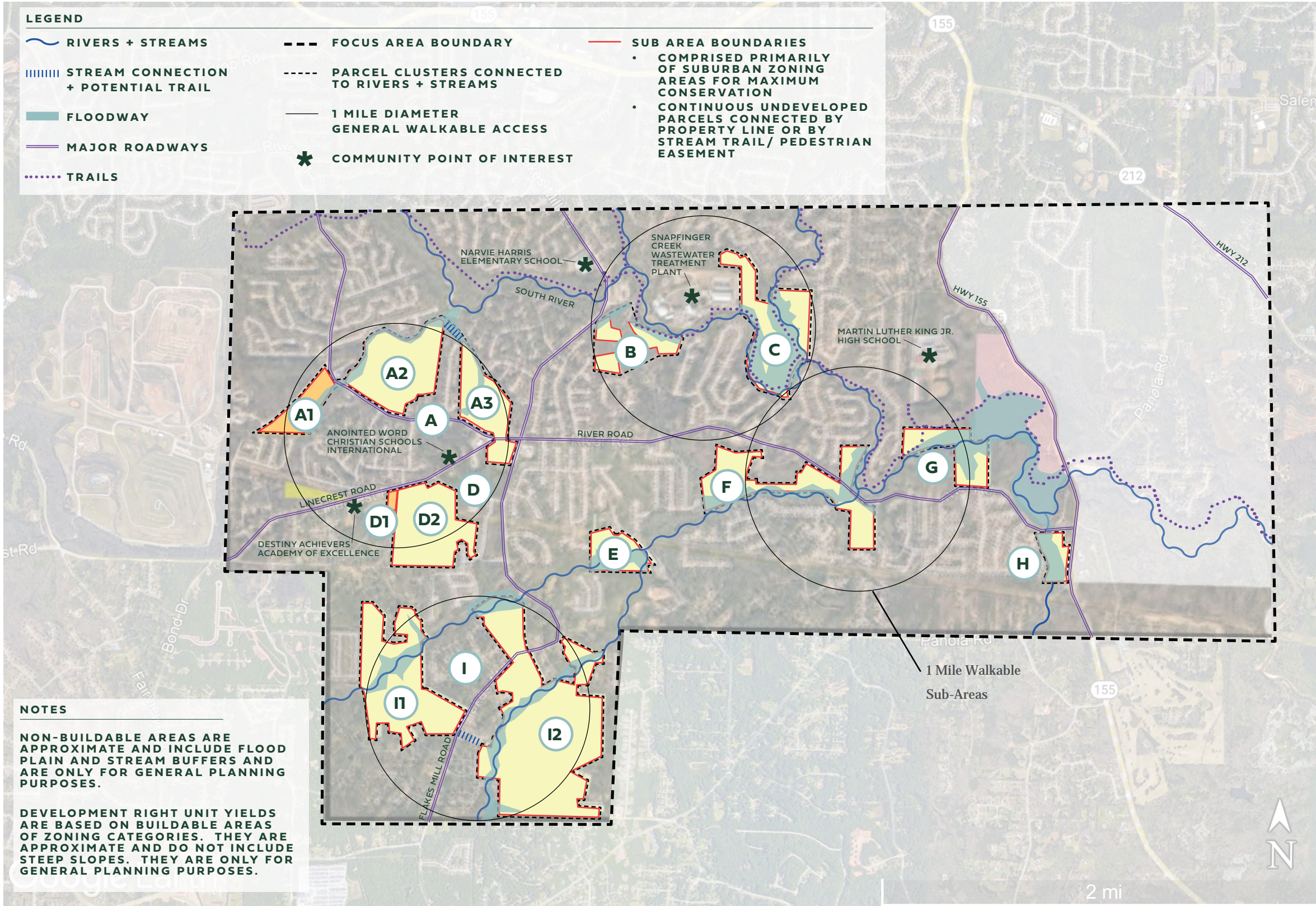
1. SALE OF LAND BY OWNER FOR FULL LAND PRESERVATION FOR NATURAL HABITATS AND URBAN FARM LAND
2. CONSERVATION VILLAGES - SUB AREA PARCEL CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS TO BE OFFSET TO MOST SUITABLE CONSERVATION VILLAGE SITES ADJACENT TO EXISTING ROADS AND SEWER ACCESS (TBD)



- A:**
 - A1** - R-100 and M zoning
Total area: 98 Acres
 - A2** - R-75 and R-100 zoning
Total area: 19 Acres
 - A3** - R-100 zoning
Total area: 8 Acres
 - A4** - R-100 zoning
Total area: 5 Acres
 - A5** - R-100 zoning
Total area: 10 Acres
 - A6** - R-100 zoning
Total area: 61 Acres
 - A7** - R-100 zoning
Total area: 17 Acres
- B:**
 - B1** - R-100 zoning
Total area: 237 Acres
 - B2** - R-100 zoning
Total area: 58 Acres
 - B3** - RSM zoning
Total area: 6 Acres
 - B4** - RSM and R-100 zoning
Total area: 57 Acres
- C:**
 - C1** - R-100 zoning
Total area: 13 Acres
 - C2** - R-100 zoning
Total area: 16 Acres
 - C3** - R-100 zoning
Total area: 12 Acres
 - C4** - R-75, R-100, and NS zoning
Total area: 62 Acres
 - C5** - R-100, RSM, and MU-1 zoning
Total area: 112 Acres
 - C6** - RSM zoning
Total area: 41 Acres

DEKALB COUNTY FOCUS AREA 2 SOUTH RIVER

- PRESERVATION TOOLS**
- SALE OF LAND BY OWNER FOR FULL LAND PRESERVATION FOR NATURAL HABITATS AND URBAN FARM LAND
 - CONSERVATION VILLAGES - SUB AREA PARCEL CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS TO BE OFFSET TO MOST SUITABLE CONSERVATION VILLAGE SITES ADJACENT TO EXISTING ROADS AND SEWER ACCESS (TBD)

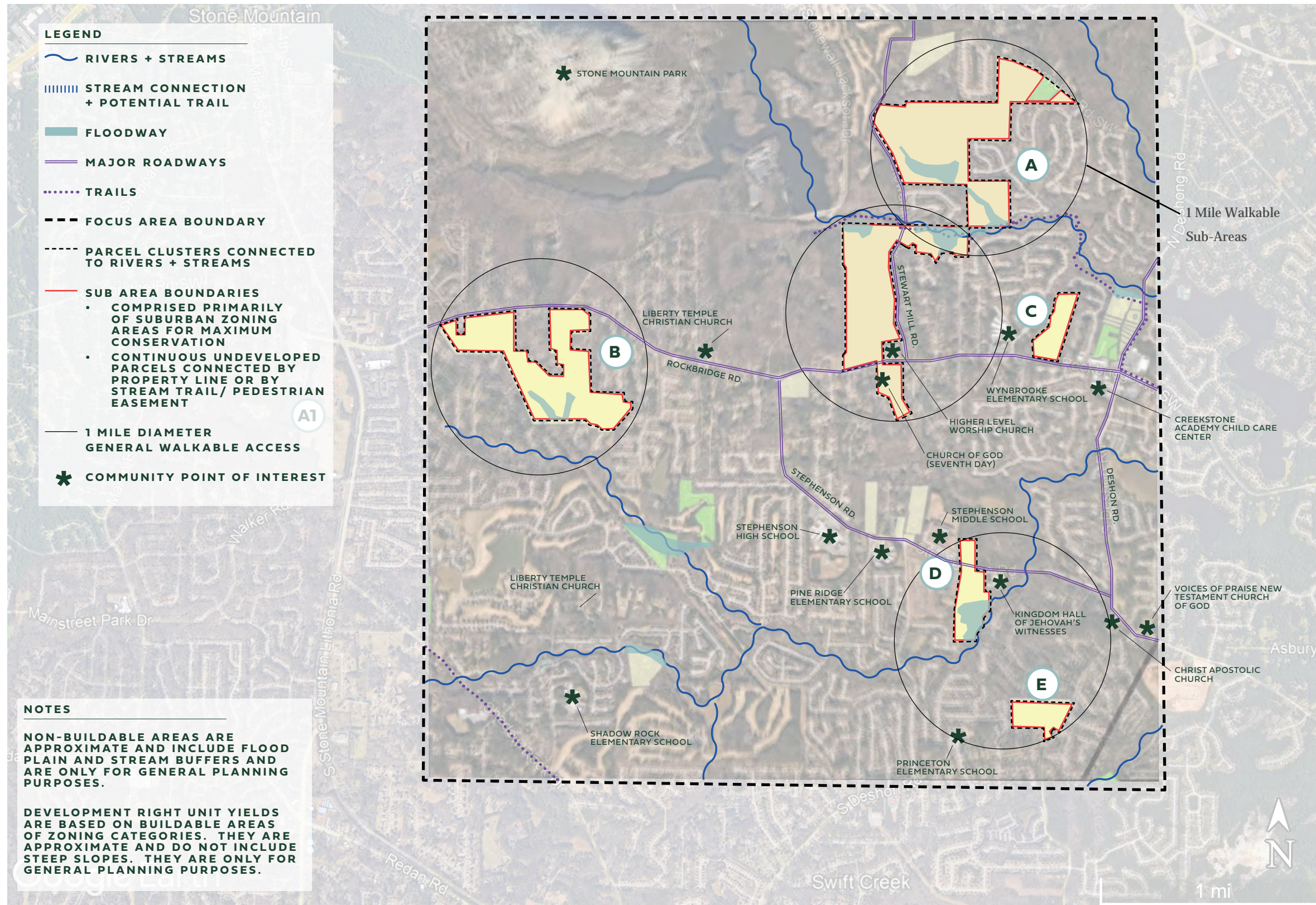


A:	A1 - R-75 zoning Buildable area: 24 Acres Non-buildable area: 2 Acres
	A2 - R-100 zoning Buildable area: 71 Acres Non-buildable area: 7 Acres
	A3 - R-100 zoning Buildable area: 47 Acres Non-buildable area: 3 Acres
B:	R-100 zoning Buildable area: 21 Acres Non-buildable area: 4 Acres
C:	R-100 zoning Buildable area: 43 Acres Non-buildable area: 46 Acres
D:	D1 - R-75 zoning Buildable area: 2 Acres Non-buildable area: 0 Acres
	D2 - R-100 zoning Buildable area: 71 Acres Non-buildable area: 0 Acres
E:	R-100 zoning Buildable area: 19 Acres Non-buildable area: 9 Acre
F:	R-100 zoning Buildable area: 56 Acres Non-buildable area: 21 Acre
G:	R-100 zoning Buildable area: 16 Acres Non-buildable area: 20 Acre
H:	R-100 zoning Buildable area: 5 Acres Non-buildable area: 11 Acre
I:	I1 - R-100 zoning Buildable area: 95 Acres Non-buildable area: 12 Acres
	I2 - R-100 zoning Buildable area: 160 Acres Non-buildable area: 19Acres

Total for B through E:
Buildable area: 1,015 Acres
Non-buildable area: 173 Acres

DEKALB COUNTY FOCUS AREA 3 SOUTH RIVER

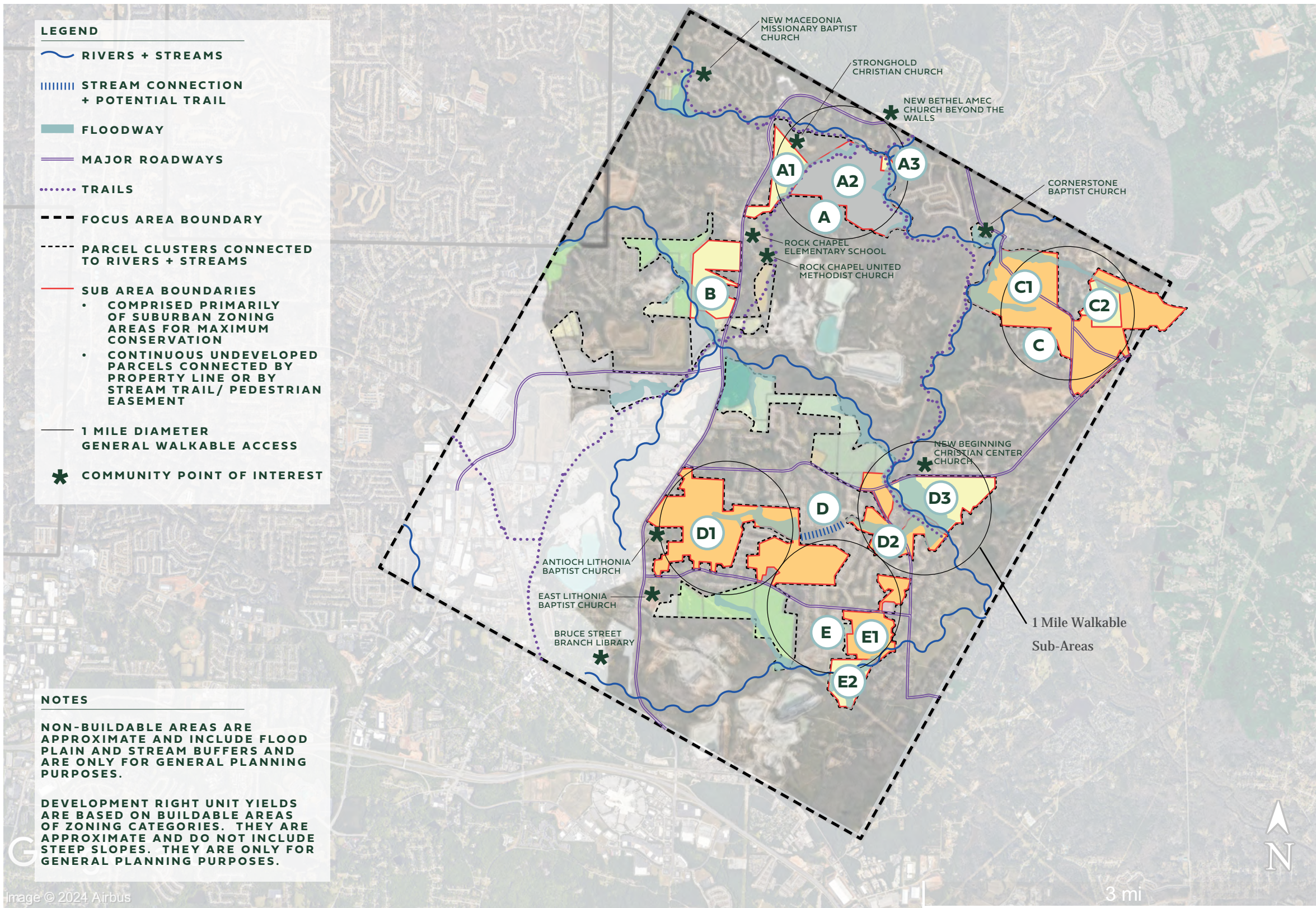
- PRESERVATION TOOLS**
1. SALE OF LAND BY OWNER FOR FULL LAND PRESERVATION FOR NATURAL HABITATS AND URBAN FARM LAND
 2. CONSERVATION VILLAGES - SUB AREA PARCEL CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS TO BE OFFSET TO MOST SUITABLE CONSERVATION VILLAGE SITES ADJACENT TO EXISTING ROADS AND SEWER ACCESS (TBD)



DEKALB COUNTY FOCUS AREA 4 STONE MOUNTAIN

PRESERVATION TOOLS

1. SALE OF LAND BY OWNER FOR FULL LAND PRESERVATION FOR NATURAL HABITATS AND URBAN FARM LAND
2. CONSERVATION VILLAGES - SUB AREA PARCEL CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS TO BE OFFSET TO MOST SUITABLE CONSERVATION VILLAGE SITES ADJACENT TO EXISTING ROADS AND SEWER ACCESS (TBD)



A:	A1 - R-100 zoning Buildable area: 57 Acres Non-buildable area: 3 Acres
	A2 - Non-suburban/ M zoning Buildable area: 187 Acres Non-buildable area: 17 Acres
	A3 - R-100 zoning Buildable area: 3 Acres Non-buildable area: 2 Acres
B:	R-100 zoning Buildable area: 83 Acres Non-buildable area: 7 Acres
C:	C1 - R-85 zoning Buildable area: 307 Acres Non-buildable area: 41 Acres
	C2 - R-100 zoning Buildable area: 45 Acres Non-buildable area: 1 Acre
D:	D1 - R-85 zoning Buildable area: 346 Acres Non-buildable area: 21 Acres
	D2 - R-85 zoning Buildable area: 50 Acres Non-buildable area: 38 Acres
	D3 - RE zoning Buildable area: 68 Acres Non-buildable area: 43 Acres
E:	E1 - R-85 zoning Buildable area: 86 Acres Non-buildable area: 1 Acre
	E2 - R-100 zoning Buildable area: 30 Acres Non-buildable area: 21 Acres
Total for B through E: Buildable area: 1,015 Acres Non-buildable area: 173 Acres	

DEKALB COUNTY FOCUS AREA 5 YELLOW RIVER

PRESERVATION TOOLS

1. SALE OF LAND BY OWNER FOR FULL LAND PRESERVATION FOR NATURAL HABITATS AND URBAN FARM LAND
2. CONSERVATION VILLAGES - SUB AREA PARCEL CLUSTER DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS TO BE OFFSET TO MOST SUITABLE CONSERVATION VILLAGE SITES ADJACENT TO EXISTING ROADS AND SEWER ACCESS (TBD)



PART III - DEKALB AND REGIONAL EXAMPLES

LAKE CLAIRE LAND TRUST AND COHOUSING COMMUNITY
 5 Acres/ 60% Preservation - Infill Parcel - Intown/ Traditional Character Area

Located in an intown area of the City of Atlanta/ DeKalb County, Lake Claire Community Land Trust (LCCLT) and contiguous green space comprises over 2 acres of open land. It was assembled in part by purchase from neighbors and by Conservation Village development. The Land Trust sponsors a variety of neighborhood events including weekly music, outdoor theater and fire circle, as well as pumpkin carving, Easter egg hunts, community gardens, and a craft fair.

**LAKE CLAIRE COMMONS
 LAND TRUST & COHOUSING
 COMMUNITY**

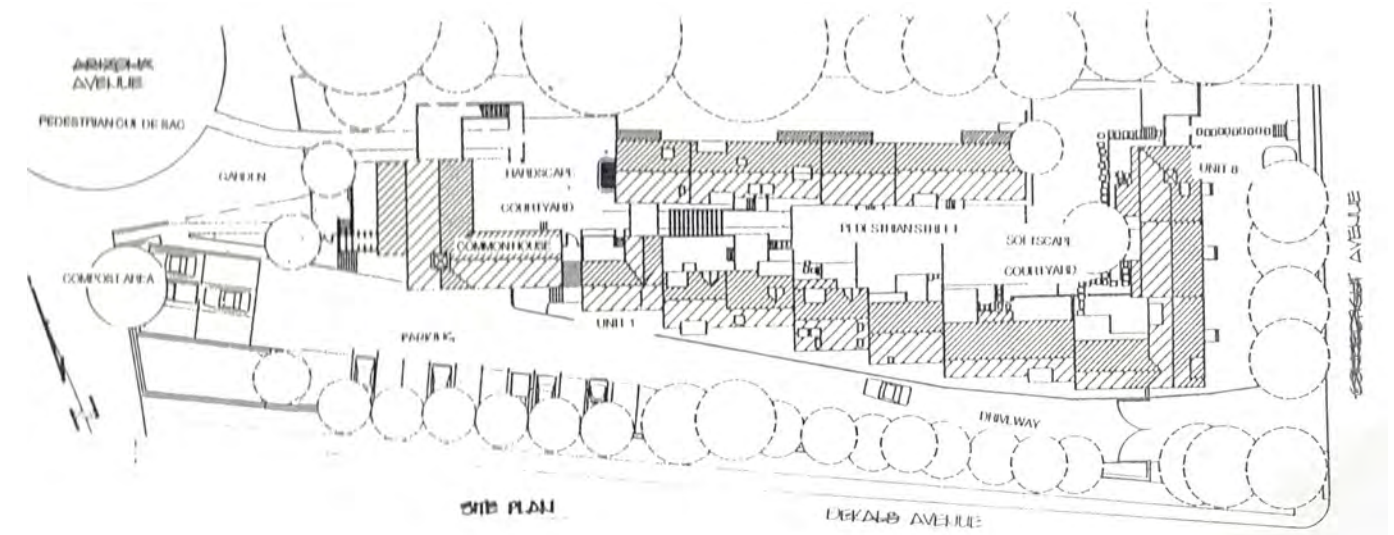
SINGLE FAMILY
 & DUPLEX &
 ADU COTTAGES

**AMATA
 VILLAGE CONSERVATION
 COMMUNITY**



THE LAKE CLAIRE COHOUSING COMMUNITY
 1 Acre

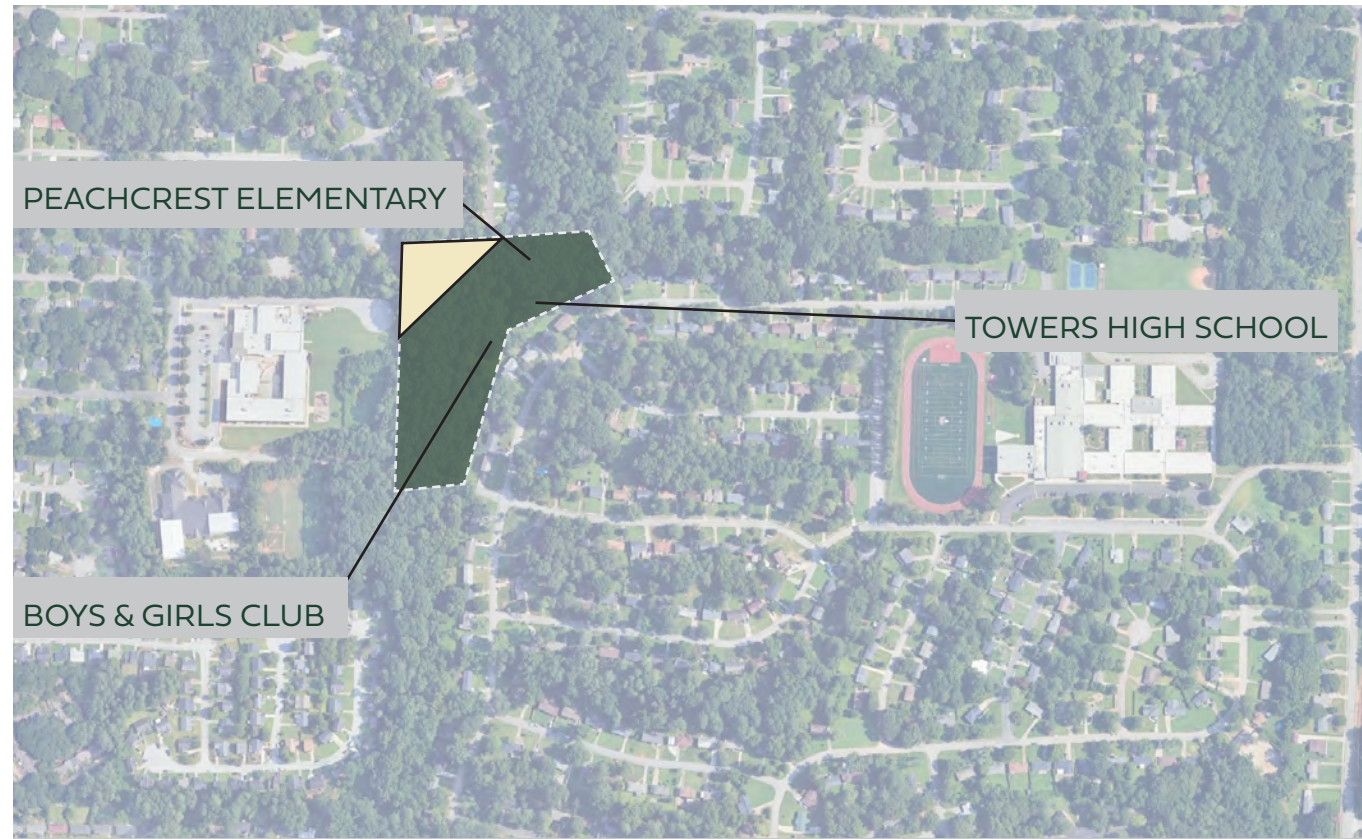
The Lake Claire Cohousing Community (LCCC) is located across the cul-de-sac from the Land Trust. The cul-de-sac acts as a "village square" during larger events. The LCCC provides mixed income housing and a community house facing the land trust designed for the Cohousing Community, as well as for the land trust and neighborhood associate members for events and community meals. A large porch focuses on the land trust with an interior courtyard.



SHERRYDALE PRESERVE

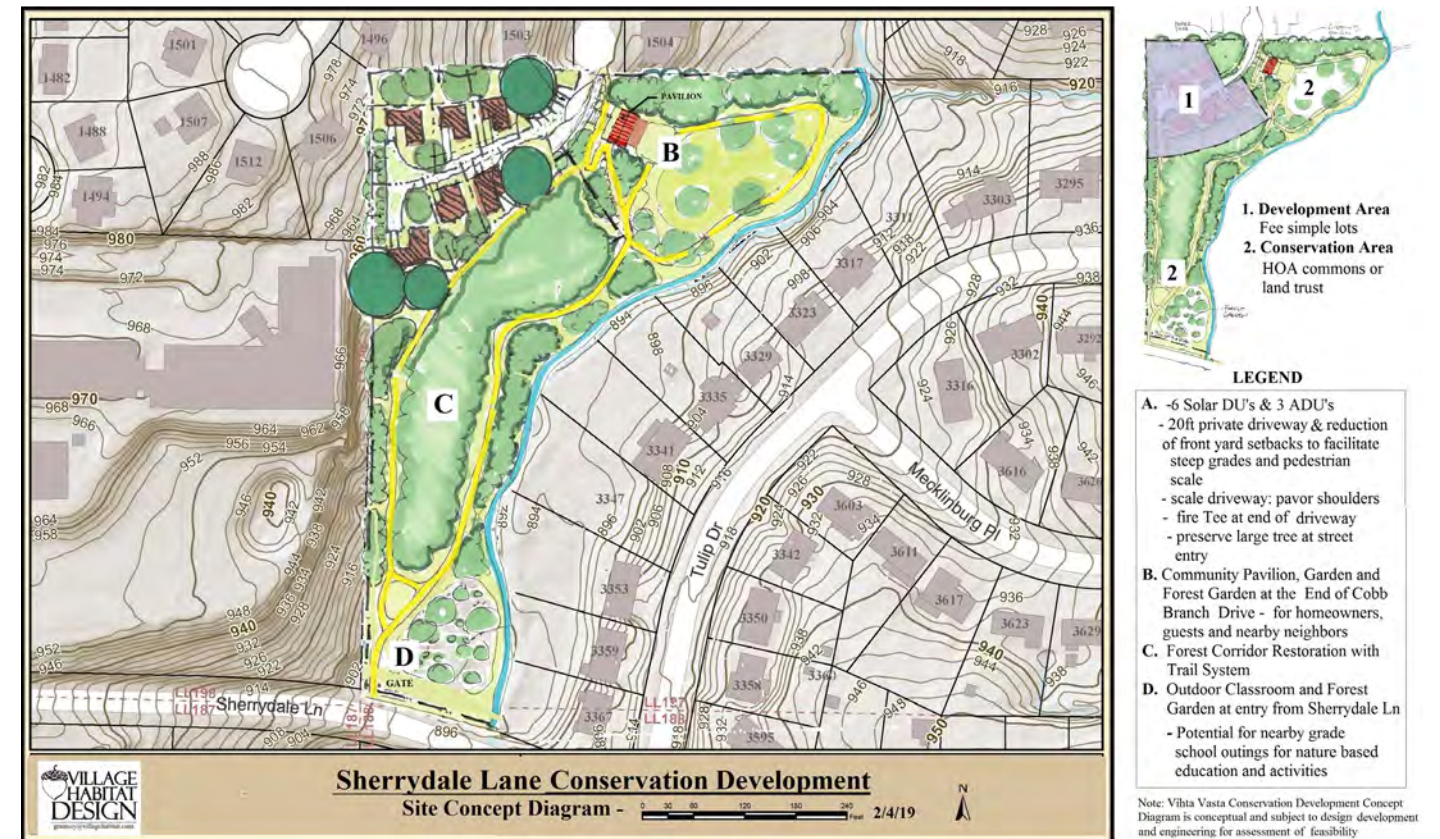
5 Acres/ 50% Preserved Buildable Area/ 75% Total - Intown Character Area

Sherrydale Preserve is a 10 unit cottage development and preserve in Dekalb County currently being developed. As a "Conservation Hamlet" (a very small conservation village) it preserves 70% (3.5 acres) of the 5 acre site. The 3.5 acre preserve is managed by the Sherrydale Community Land Trust (SCLT). The forest interpretive trails and outdoor classrooms being developed by SCLT are for neighborhood residents as well as Peachcrest Elementary, Boys and Girls Club, and Towers High School.



SHERRYDALE PRESERVE CONTEXT MAP

There is an opportunity to build a forest interpreter ADU ("accessory dwelling unit") to house an on site land steward to help with forest programs and help care-take the property. The site is in the Traditional/ Intown character area and was rezoned to a conservation village from R75. One of the zoning conditions allows the 3.5 acre preserve to be subdivided off of the cottage development and gifted to a land trust upon completion on the rezoning.



SHERRYDALE PRESERVE SITE PLAN



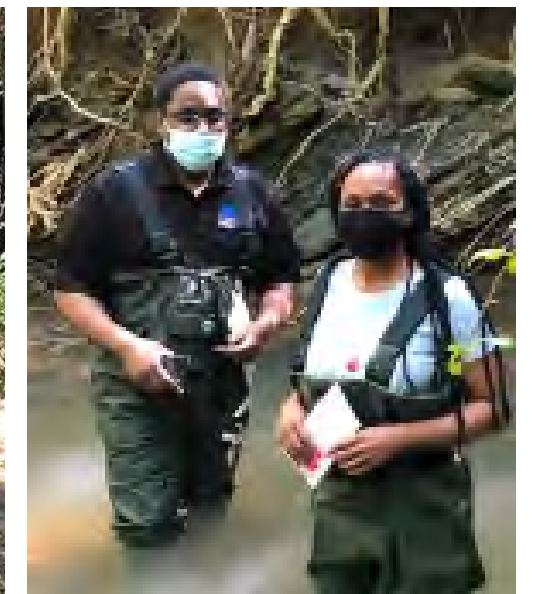
SUSAN MOSS (SECOND FROM LOWER RIGHT) FOUNDER OF SHERRYDALE PRESERVE WITH EARLY LAND TRUST GROUP



LAND TRUST SITE CLEANUP WORKDAY



LAND TRUST STREAM CLEANUP WORKSHOP



PENDERGRAST FARM
8.7 Acres / 70% Preservation - Infill Parcel - Suburban Character Area

Pendergrast Farm, located in DeKalb County Georgia, is a 20 unit Conservation Village. It preserved 70% of the 8.7 acre site for farm gardens and forest trails accessible by residents as well as neighbors. The site was rezoned to a conservation village from R100 suburban zoning that would have mass graded the site - Dennis McConnell developer.



VILLAGE SQUARE AND FARM-TO-TABLE DINING



EDGE OF VILLAGE AND FARM

- HOMES AND AMENITIES**
- 1600 SF - 3000 SF HOMES WITH GARAGE OPTION AND PRIVATE COURTYARD WITH A COMMON BACK YARD CONSISTING OF APPROX. 5 ACRES OF WOODLANDS AND FARM AND A STREAM AND WITHIN BIKING DISTANCE OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES
 - AMENITIES
 - 1/2 MILE NATURAL TRAIL SYSTEM
 - COMMON HOUSE
 - POOL
 - 1 TO 1.5 ACRE FARM GARDENS/ ORCHARD/ VINEYARD & WOODLAND GARDEN/ SMALL ANIMALS
 - GARDENER/ CARETAKER RESIDENCE WITH FARM SUBSCRIPTION (CSA) FOR HOUSEHOLDS AND CLOSE BY NEIGHBORS
 - 5 ACRES WOODLAND
 - CONSERVATION EASEMENT PROTECTING FARM AND WOODLANDS IN PERPETUITY

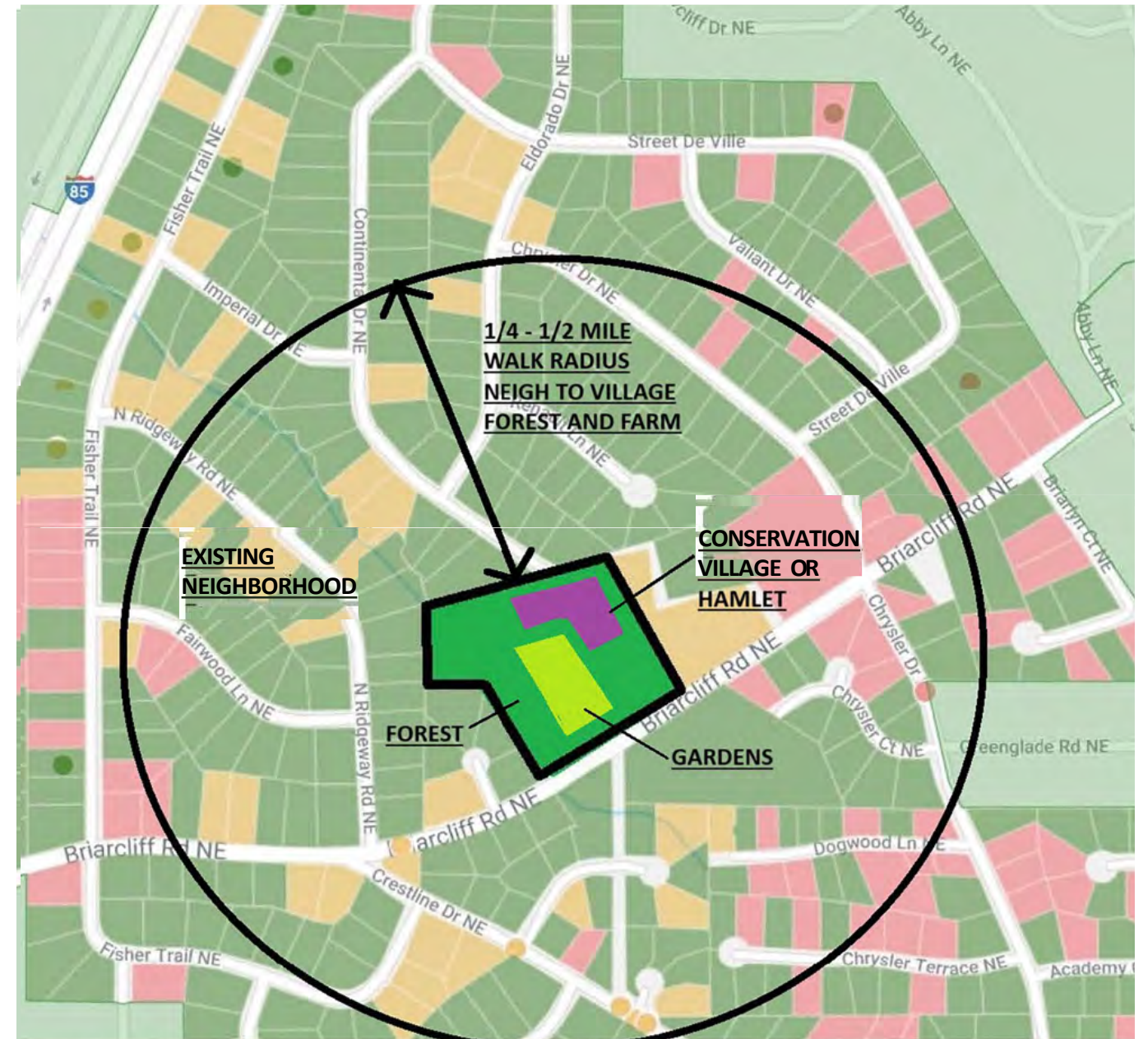
- GENERAL SCOPE**
- 3380 BRIARCLIFF RD DEKALB COUNTY GA
 - 8.7 ACRES
 - CLUSTER AREA (SUBURBAN)
 - EXIST ZONING: R100
 - PROPOSED ZONING: RSM SITE PLAN SPECIFIC
 - CONSERVATION COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: 20 MARKET RATE DWELLING UNITS AND AN AFFORDABLE GARDENER/ CARETAKER DWELLING UNIT
 - CONSERVATION AREA: MIN. 60% OF BUILDABLE AREA - TOTAL 72% WITH CONS. EASEMENT
 - DEV. AREA: MAX. 40% OF BUILDABLE AREA
 - PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY UNITS FRONT TO PED. PATH/GREEN
 - REAR TO ALLEY GARAGE WITH SEVERAL UNITS FRONTING PRIVATE DRIVE/WOODS (SLOW SPEED INTEGRATED WALK DRIVE)



VILLAGE HABITAT DESIGN
grammy@villagehabitat.com

PENDERGRAST HISTORIC FARM
SITE PLAN CONCEPT 3/27/19

GRAPHIC SCALE



NEIGH INFILL EXAMPLE OF CONSERVATION VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT SHOWING PEDESTRIAN ACCESS FROM EXIST NEIGH TO PRESERVED URBAN FARM AND FOREST

EAST LAKE COMMONS

20 Acres/ 60% Preservation - Infill Parcel - Intown/ Traditional Character Area

East Lake Commons, a 67 unit mixed income Conservation Village with a community house, was developed in 1998 through 2000 in Atlanta, Georgia in DeKalb County. It focused on preserving 12 out of 20 acres and developing the first CSA farm (5 acres) designed to mentor other Urban Ag start-up farms and gardens in the Atlanta Metro Area.



THE FARM WAS DEVELOPED FIRST WHILE THE VILLAGE WAS STILL BEING CONSTRUCTED IN THE BACKGROUND



FARM PATH



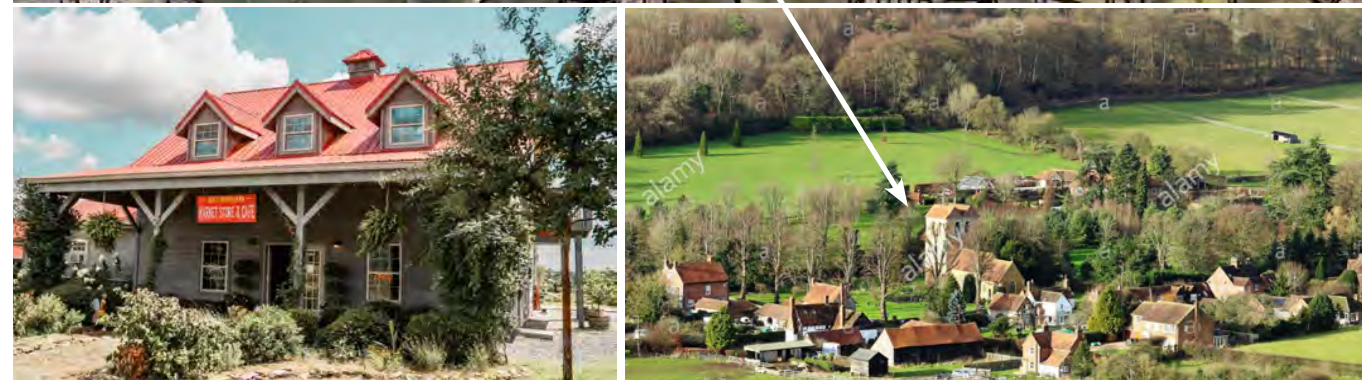
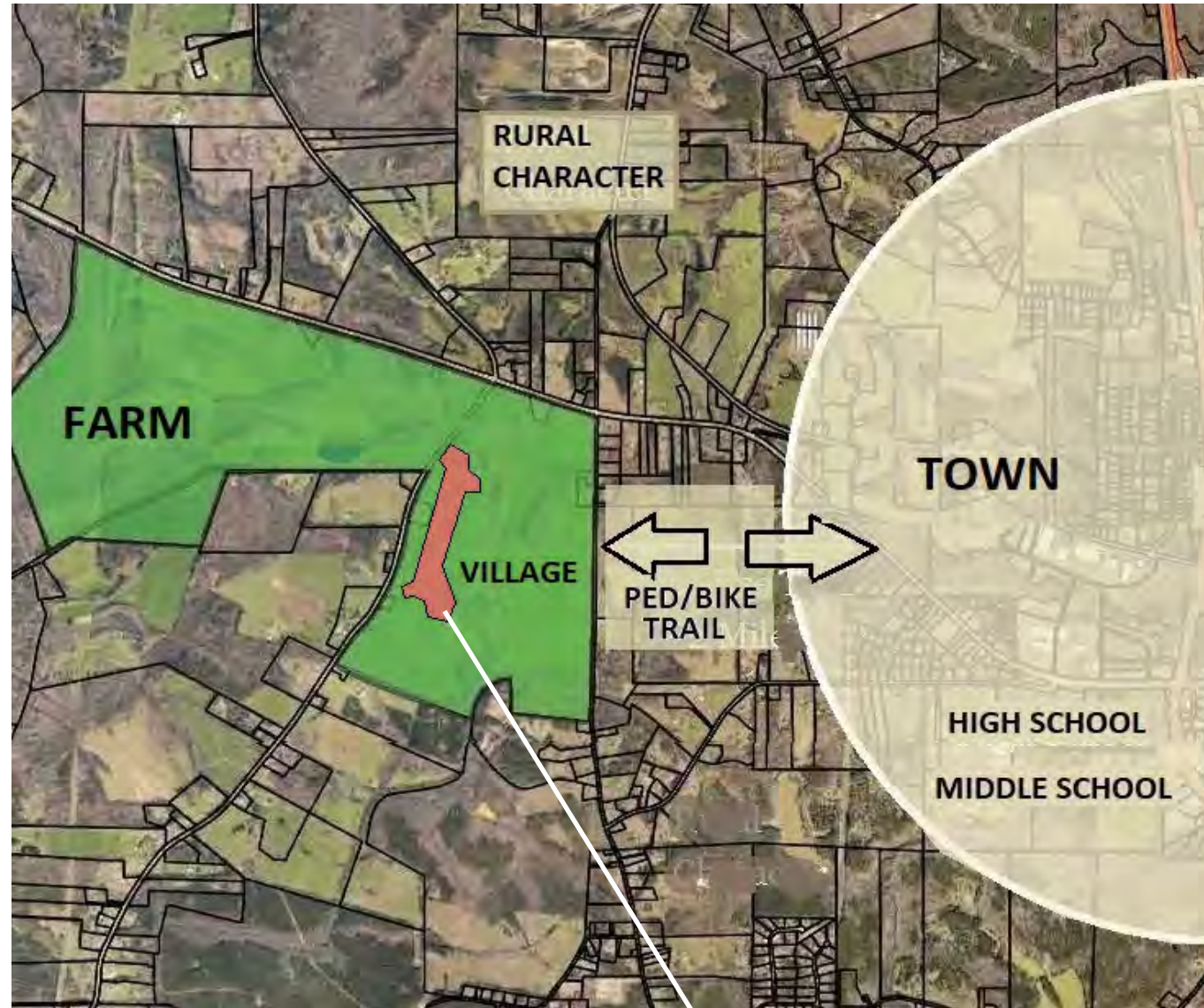
CSA BASKET FOR RESIDENT



PEDESTRIAN STREET

HONEYWOOD FARMS
1,000 Acres/ 90% Preservation - Rural Character Area

Honeywood Farm is a 1,000 acre cattle and market gardens farm located on the outskirts of Barnesville, Georgia (60 miles from Atlanta). The 1,000 acre farm is a “farm belt” project with potential for linking the farm via pedestrian and bike trails to the town, while preserving 90% of the farmland with a conservation village and hamlets. Current development includes market gardens with a store and cafe, and a grass fed beef operation. Future opportunities include small farm incubation, workforce housing, value-added products, agri-tourism, and a conservation village and hamlet. As a Dekalb county comparative example, there is approximately 1,000 buildable acres remaining in the Yellow River focus area 5.



SMALL TOWN FARM BELT - LARGE FARMS CONNECTED TO TOWN WITH SAFE WALKING AND BIKING ACCESS



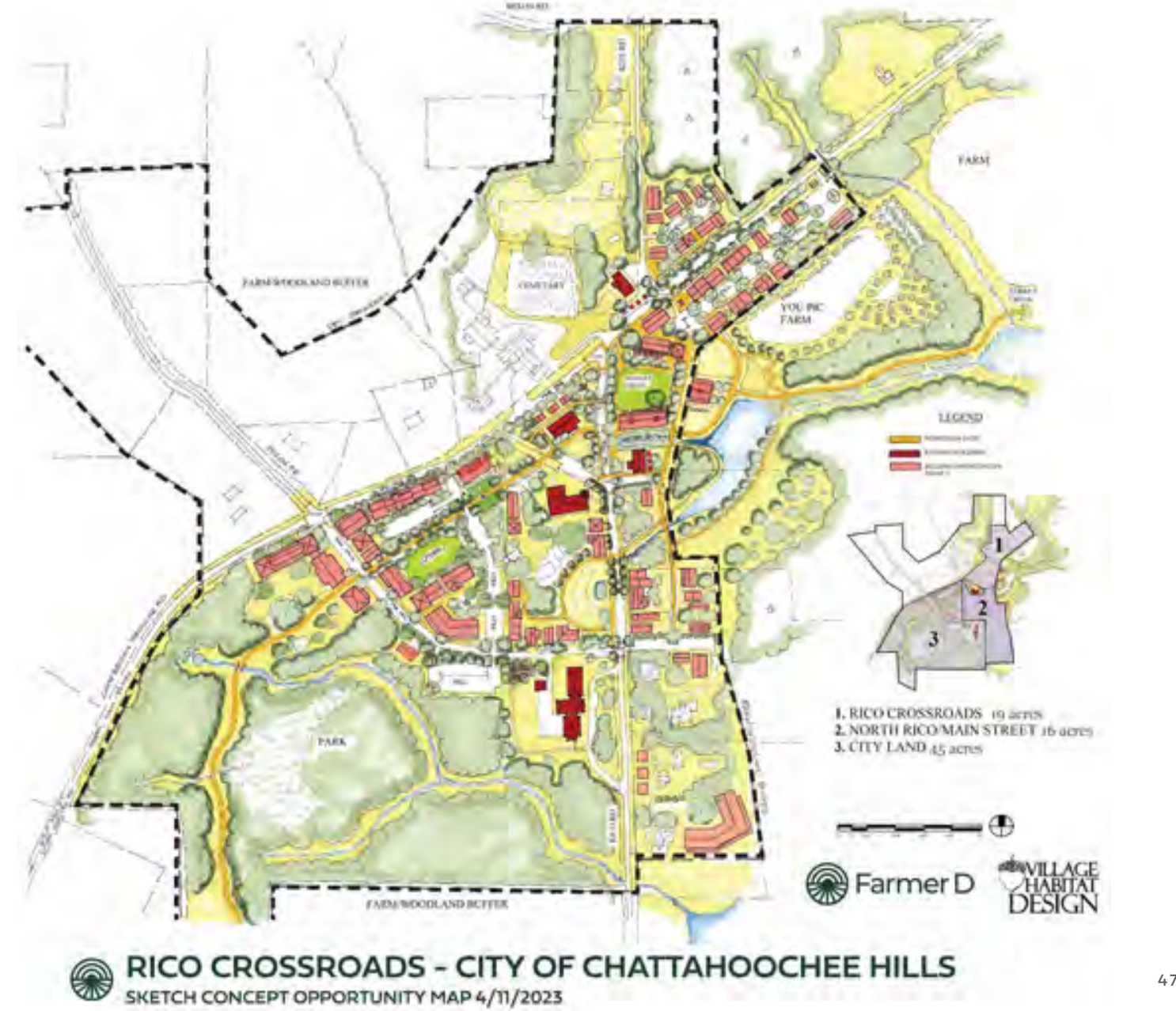
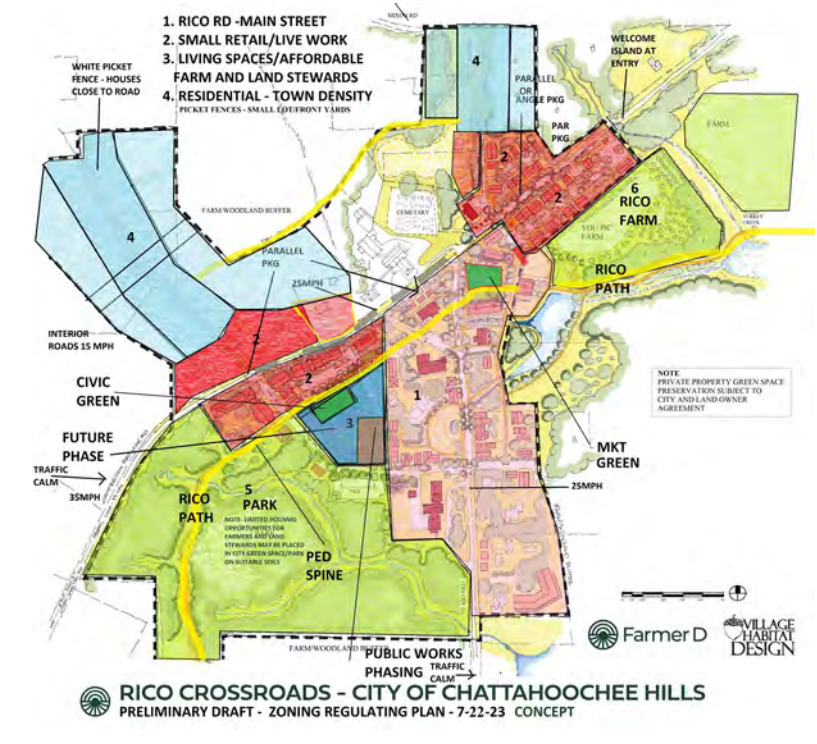
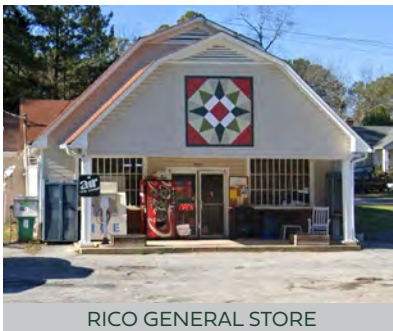
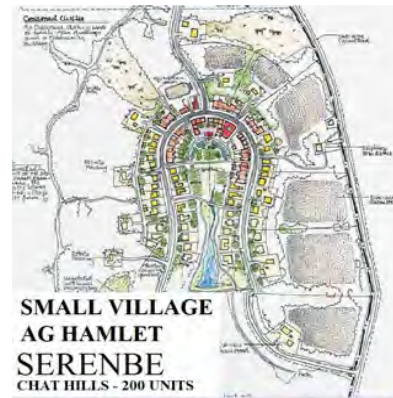
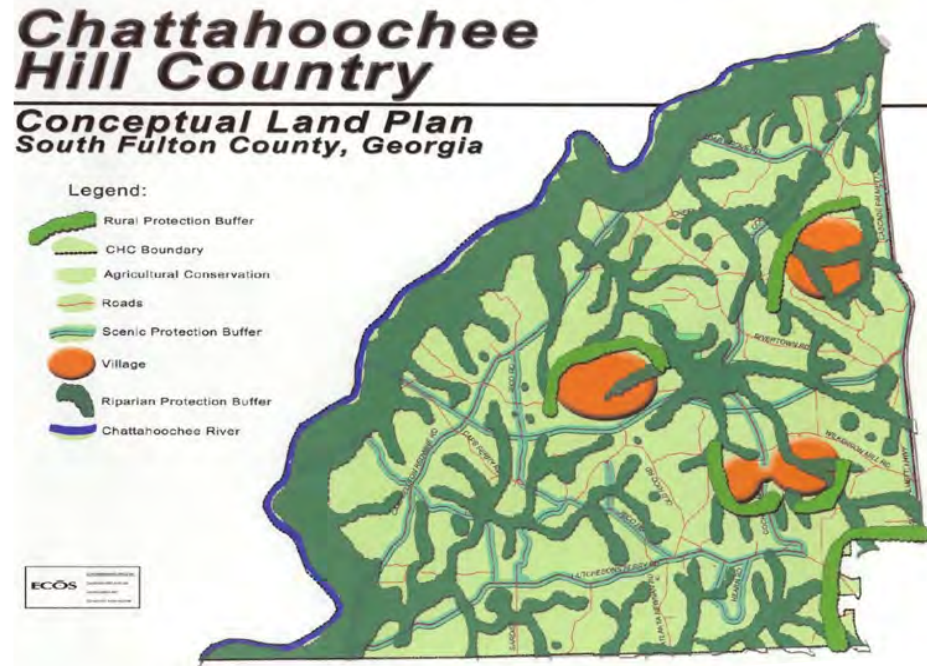
EXISTING PASTURE AND MARKET GARDENS



MARKET STORE AND CAFE FOR LOCAL COMMUNITY

CITY OF CHATTAHOOCHEE HILLS
40,000 Acres/ Rural Character Area

Chattahoochee Hill Country in a 40,000 acre area also known as the City of Chattahoochee Hills designed to preserve 70% of the land with three mixed-use villages and hamlets. The initial village prototype concept in the lower left hand corner demonstrates the intended contiguous village and contiguous green space surrounding it. Village residential lots remain urban ranging in size from 1,000 square feet to a maximum of 10,000 square feet at the edge of the village. The village is crinkled to adapt to the topography and stream corridors. The Rico cross roads hamlet concept is compact and designed to be walkable and connect to the "farm greenbelt" surrounding it, retaining and revitalizing the historic heritage and farm culture. Serenbe is the first series of hamlets initiated in 2004 by developer Steve Nygren.





PART IV - GUIDING PRINCIPLES



YOUTH CONNECTING WITH NATURE
VILLAGE HOMES, DAVIS, CALIFORNIA

CONSERVATION VILLAGE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

LAND CONSERVATION	WALKABILITY	NEIGHBORHOOD EQUITY
<p>CONSERVATION METRICS <u>Objective:</u> to determine the development capacity and land conservation ratios *Including sewered and non-sewered areas</p>	<p>OPTIMIZE WALK AND BIKE CONNECTIVITY <u>Objective:</u> to existing neighborhoods, conservation villages, stream corridors, farm & forest lands</p>	<p>PROVIDE EQUITABLE ACCESS to nature, farms and conservation village (neighborhood economy, educational opportunities and community care)</p>
<p>RESTORATION AND STEWARDSHIP OF CONSERVED LANDS <u>Objective:</u> to restore and steward urban forests, grasslands and agriculture lands</p>	<p>First: Sub Focus Area ½ mile – 1 mile area Connect Neighborhood to Individual Conservation Village & preserved lands</p> <p>Second: Focus Area 2 mile – 3-mile area Connect Neighborhood to Several Conservation Villages & preserved lands.</p> <p>Third: Stream Corridor Connect multiple neighborhoods to stream corridors.</p>	<p>Safe Neigh Spaces & Ped/Bike Mobility Paths and neighborhood gathering spaces.</p> <p>Small Business Incubation -fresh food outlet - café/community dining - bakery, deli/prepared foods - offices/workspaces and live work</p> <p>Mixed Income Housing -conservation lots and missing middle housing -senior housing -housing retrofit</p>
<p>LAND COVER ANALYSIS <u>Objective:</u> to determine the best location for conservation villages in order to minimize the impact on the natural habitats and farmlands</p>	<p>PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY VILLAGE DESIGN <u>Objective:</u> to prioritize pedestrian circulation, optimize “spontaneous pedestrian interactions” and connectivity between buildings and exterior commons</p>	<p>Educational Venues -Outdoor classrooms -Maker spaces -Farm/Culinary internships -Forest programs - Fitness/outdoor clubs</p> <p>Farm Gardens Farmers market, CSA farm subscriptions, Value added products, farm coop store.</p>
<p>INFRASTRUCTURE ANALYSIS <u>Objective:</u> to optimize the use of existing roads and minimize the intrusion of new roads to avoid the fragmentation of natural habitats and farmlands.</p> <p><u>Objective:</u> to optimize use of existing community infrastructure including commercial nodes, schools and churches</p>		

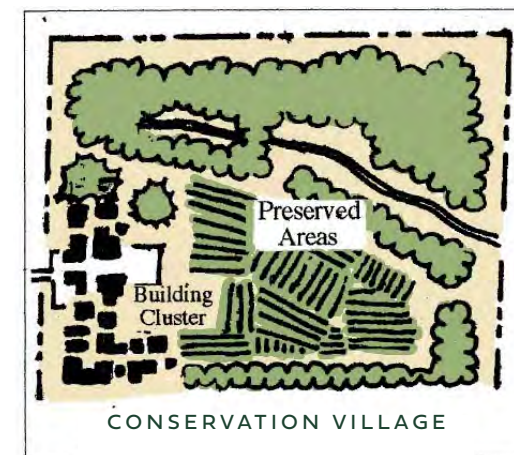
Below is an elaboration on the guiding principles introduced in the Overview section that includes **Conservation, Walkability and Neighborhood Equity.**

Land Conservation

CONSERVATION OF RIPARIAN CORRIDORS, FORESTS, AND URBAN AGRICULTURE LANDS

Based on the character area of the project context the following VCC conservation metrics are applied to the buildable area of the site: 50% preservation in traditional neighborhood area, 60% preservation in suburban area and 80- 90% preservation in rural pocket area. The most valuable land that can be preserved is land in walking proximity to existing residences and businesses in the county with the potential for connection to wildlife corridors. In a suburban context, those green space parcels may vary from 1 to 20 acres or more depending on the extent of the suburban growth. For the purpose of this assessment, the smallest parcel size considered is 5 acres. The two aspects of VCC that enable it to become the gold standard for conservation of land are:

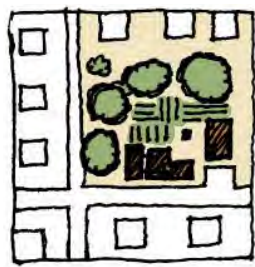
- Higher density conservation village and hamlet clusters enable increased preservation of land
- The Preservation criteria based solely on the buildable area of the site (not the entire site) so as not to include areas already required to be preserved by ordinances such as wetlands and stream buffers.



- Conservation
- Pedestrian Priority
- Integrated Work Places
- Mixed Housing Types
- Health & Resiliency
- Preserved Woodland
- Clustered Buildings & Minimal Roads
- Variety of Housing Types
- Active Living & Food
- Residential & Commercial

CONSERVATION METRICS

Conservation metrics (ratios of preserved and built lands) are based on the following three county character areas - Traditional, Suburban and Rural Pocket. The character areas are derived from the existing development character as well as the character of the green spaces remaining. The actual conservation metrics are derived from the underlying zoning, though in several cases we recommend adjusting the future land use map and underlying zoning to adapt to the green space character. For instance, in the Suburban Pocket and Rural Pocket areas, larger vestiges of undeveloped lands remain which may require a change in underlying zoning to increase the amount of land 24 preserved with the clustered conservation village and hamlet approach to conservation community.



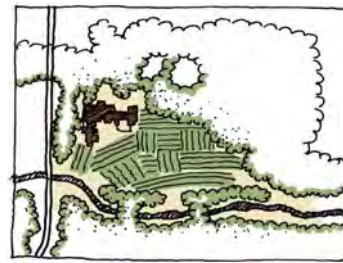
Traditional

50%-60% open space



Suburban

60%-80% open space



Rural

80%-90% open space

Conservation Metrics Table

CHARACTER AREAS	UNDERLYING DENSITY	CONSERVATION OF BUILDABLE AREA	VILLAGE CONSERVATION COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SCOPE
TRADITIONAL TRANSITIONAL Traditional/historic pre-suburban neighborhoods that are more walkable	6,000 - 10,000 SF lots R60 - R75	50% - 60%	1,200 - 2,500 SF lots, townhouses, and 2-8plex
SUBURBAN Low density, car dependent character area	12,000 SF lots - 1/2 acre lots R85 lots - RLG	60% - 80%	1,200 - 5,000 SF lots, townhouses, and 2-4plex
RURAL POCKET Permanent Rural Pocket areas within existing Suburban areas	12,000 SF lots - 1 acre lots R85 - estate lots	80% - 90%	1,200 - 10,000 SF lots, townhouses, and 2-4plex with 8plex in larger villages

RESTORATION AND STEWARDSHIP OF CONSERVED LANDS

Manage natural habitats (riparian corridors, urban forests and grasslands, urban ag lands and ecological landscapes to promote bio-diversity and healthy communities. Stewarding these conserved lands plays a crucial part in the health and resiliency of communities within DeKalb County.

Riparian Corridors

STREAMS WETLANDS AND EXPANDED BUFFERS

DeKalb county's riparian corridors are critical to storm water management as climate patterns change, water quality enhancement and creating wildlife habitat corridors and sanctuaries linked by trails. VCC development permits for substantive expansion of riparian buffers to meet these goals. Urban Forests DeKalb County has historic forests dominated by deciduous forests (oak-hickory mixed forests (oak-hickory-pine, and pine plantations. Deciduous forests were more dominant in the northern part of the County while the southern part of the County saw a wider mix of pine dominated forests (Loblolly-Shortleaf and pine plantations.

With the increases in urban and suburban land cover across the County, it is common for the fragmented forests still intact to lack the health and diversity they once had. Since most of the forests in the County have largely regenerated following several rounds of timbering and cultivation, they have seen the addition of more opportunistic hardwoods, like Sweetgum and Poplar. The midstory of these forests have also lost significant diversity with the introduction of Chinese Privet that in most cases has overtaken the midstory of the County's forests.

Many of the critical functions of forests in DeKalb County have been diminished, including terrestrial and aquatic habitat biodiversity, water quality/stormwater management, stream health, carbon sequestration, noise mitigation, air quality and recreation. These functions have diminished in response to a variety of factors, including fragmentation, invasive species intrusion, and stormwater point source discharges. VCC planning and development creates an opportunity to restore health to DeKalb's forests that will serve a value that is vast and immeasurable.

Grasslands

Grasslands can provide habitat for communities of birds and enhance passive recreational opportunities as well as provide storm water/land stability with meadows that function as storm water facilities.

Urban Agriculture

DeKalb County was once the largest producer of milk in the south and was home to more dairies than any other county in the state. Today, just a handful of historic farms remain and are at risk of being supplanted by development.



Using a Village Conservation Community approach, DeKalb County is poised to support the last urban agriculture opportunities and reap the benefits. VCC provides a tool for proactively planning to preserve the dwindling agricultural lands and support new urban farms and gardens. Urban agriculture can be integrated into the fabric of the county's communities to promote environmental, economic and social benefits and reduce food deserts for residents of DeKalb.

Economically, urban agriculture can provide meaningful employment opportunities within communities. It boosts the local economy by cycling food dollars within the community and supporting local agriculture businesses. Urban agriculture can increase land value of vacant or underutilized urban lots and simultaneously reduce upkeep costs. The full spectrum of economic benefits go beyond the metrics of dollars spent in the community to include impacts such as increased home values, improved socioeconomic diversity and resilience of the local community and economy.

The social benefits include health and wellness metrics associated with increased physical activity, improved access to fresh, nutritious food, access to green space, human connection and opportunities for cultural identity celebration through food and agriculture. Trusting relationships can be built through urban agriculture and it has been shown to reduce crime in communities. Neighbors can share their learning experiences and younger generations are empowered with knowledge on growing food and healthy lifestyles.



Ecological Landscapes

Ecological landscapes are created through improved environmentally friendly methods that help shift the industry from a fossil fuel and chemical dependency. These landscapes have many positive externalities: promote natural habitats such as pollinator gardens, facilitate water quality, improve biological quality of the soil and grow food for the community. These landscapes can be integrated into any existing landscape designs and implemented at little to no additional cost.



LAND COVER ANALYSIS



- **Substantive Preservation:** the substantive preservation of remnant forests, passive recreation areas and potential urban ag lands based on the VCC preservation metrics
- **Pedestrian Access to preserved green spaces:** pedestrian and bicycle access of these preserved lands to surrounding neighbors (not in the VCC development)
- **Transitional Buffers:** well designed transitional buffers to the adjoining lower density suburban district
- **Density Gradients:** well designed density gradient ensuring that the higher density areas of the village are farther away from the adjacent lower density neighborhood
- **Reduced Automobile Impact:** reducing automobile impact from what could conventionally be developed through better use of community transit, enhanced pedestrian and bike connectivity and increased day to day functional walking destinations. Attention to these five aspects will foster support in the initial development/conservation phase, help create more healthy connected communities for the long term while creating a pro-growth approach to developing conservation villages and hamlets

INFRASTRUCTURE ANALYSIS

Conservation is directly linked to analysis and efficient re-use of existing infrastructure.

ROADS

In order to minimize further fragmentation of remaining forest and farm lands, locate future conservation village(s) adjacent to existing through roads and close by sewer access, and connect village(s) with a shuttle or bus service when possible. A few farm and nature based “Destination Hamlets” for farming, agriculture tourism, and nature tourism can be located in the areas that have the best farm potential and “nature access gateways”. These are designed primarily for farming and for farm stay experiences and should require minimum car trips for access (main access are multi-use trails and service roads).

SEWER

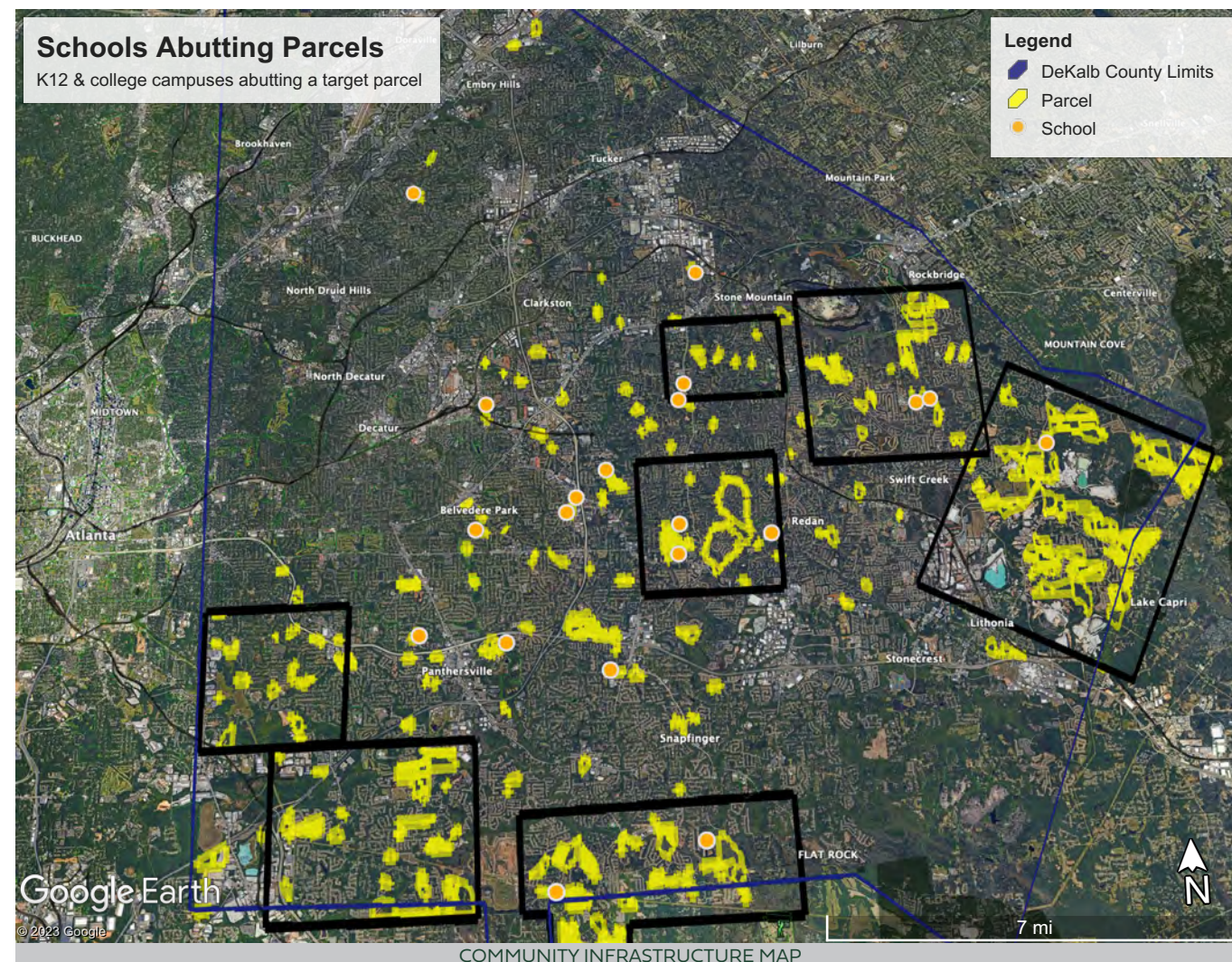
Where possible, locate village(s) close to sewer access, particularly in hard rock and low perc soil areas.

DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS

Where sewer is available to all parcels, use zoning to assess the base level development rights with a bonus for a conservation village. Where sewer is not available and difficult to access, use lot sizes adequate in size to provide septic fields and, if needed, wells.

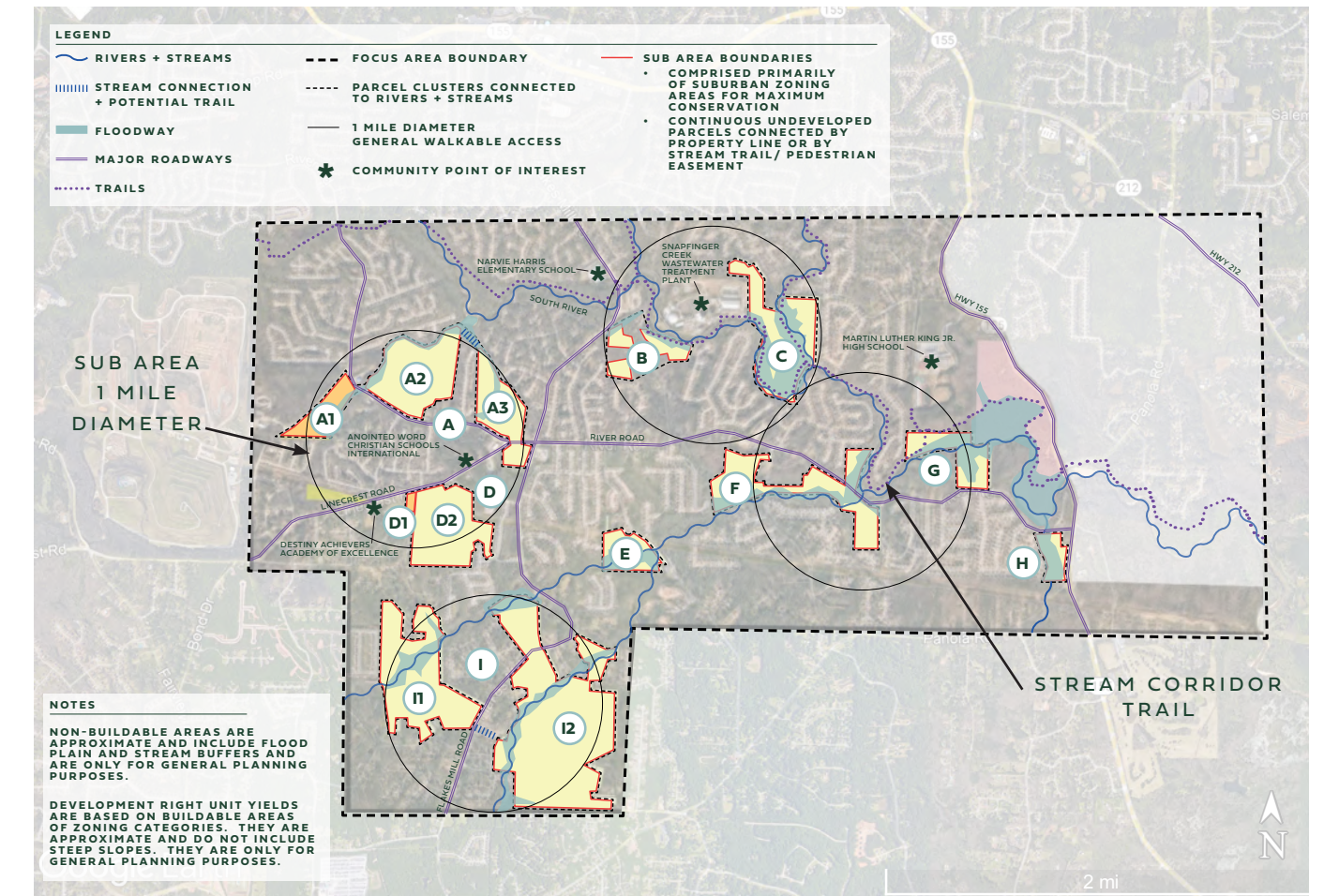
COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE

The location of villages and hamlets should take full advantage of existing commercial areas, schools, and churches.



Walkability

OPTIMIZE PEDESTRIAN AND BIKE CONNECTIVITY



FOCUS AREA 3

Typical Conservation Focus Area

PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY DEVELOPMENTS

- **Prioritize pedestrian/bike/shuttle and transit access.** Make sure that the land use and zoning strategies fit with the street and building relationships
- **Create more functional walkable destinations;** expand zoning compatible uses and services to augment functional walkable destinations
- **Reduce impacts of car infrastructure;** Reduce need for sprawl infrastructure through development of conservation villages using existing infrastructure -roads and sewer.

Objective: to prioritize pedestrian circulation, optimize “spontaneous pedestrian interactions” and connectivity between buildings and exterior

LIVING / SHARED STREET MODEL

The Woonerf, also called a “Living Street”, consists of a street shared among pedestrians, bicyclists, and motor vehicles with pedestrians having priority over cars, and cars moving at the speed of pedestrians.



POCKET NEIGHBORHOOD AND PARK AND WALK VILLAGES

ROSS CHAPIN

Interior of the development is reserved for pedestrians. Some units on the periphery may have direct car access while most units are accessed from cluster parking areas at the periphery or have no car and access services on food, bicycle, or by community transit (including rent on demand vehicles).



POCKET NEIGHBORHOOD - ROSS CHAPIN



PEDESTRIAN WAY

BUILDINGS FACING PEDESTRIAN COMMONS

This model is intended to create pedestrian-friendly residential housing with all the homes facing on to a shared green space and pedestrian ways accessing local shops and schools and the backs of lots facing a service alley for vehicular access with some cluster parking at the edges of the common green spaces.



VILLAGE HOMES, DAVIS CALIFORNIA



A HOUSE FACING THE COMMON GREEN ENHANCES COMMUNITY INTERACTIONS - ROSS CHAPIN

NEIGHBORHOOD EQUITY

In the VCD, conserved areas and the village offer various opportunities enhanced by green spaces and walkable developments, embodying the principles of “a village in every neighborhood” and “it takes a village”. Walking and biking connections to the land matter.

NEIGHBORHOOD SPACES SAFETY AND MOBILITY

Effective design and management is necessary for pedestrian and cyclist safety, including:

- Neighborhood and municipal organizations addressing safety concerns and maintenance of community spaces
- Paths and sidewalks designed for seniors, those with impaired mobility and cyclists.
- Community gathering spaces for seniors, families and youth.
- Community presence “eyes on the street” in gathering spaces and along paths.

WORKSPACES

Workspaces should offer local economic and entrepreneurial opportunities, including green jobs. Creating more workspaces in the neighborhood is of high value. It reduces “neighborhood absenteeism” - the trend of many residents leaving the neighborhood for their commute to work. Keeping more residents working in the village or neighborhood increases opportunities for youth internships and mentorship as well as being of service to the aged that are losing mobility.

These include:

- Organizations facilitating workforce incubation programs
- Large anchor workspaces (e.g. solar panel or e-bike fabrication)
- Smaller neighborhood workspaces (e.g. small grocery store, café, bakery, mechanic)
- Live/work spaces (ACUs – accessory commercial units) for small businesses run out of the home

HOUSING

Mixed income new housing opportunities. Providing missing middle housing and “land steward” provides options ensuring



NEIGHBORHOOD BASED WORKPLACES

COMMISSIONER TERRY - ACCESSORY COMMERCIAL UNITS

Integrate zoning-appropriate neighborhood based workplaces to reduce commuter patterns and neighborhood day time absenteeism, increase youth based ,mentoring and learning opportunities, community security and vitality.

Neighborhood based workplaces build community through economic and educational exchanges, increase walkability dramatically by promoting walkable based retail and services and help create local economic entrepreneurship and resilience (Neighborhood residential, Neighborhood commercial and Inter Neighborhood mixed-use commercial/lite industrial).

Workplace applications can range from home occupation and accessory commercial units to full mixed use commercial development. Categories of workplaces include:

- Local agriculture production
- Urban forestry
- Artisan maker - a variety of community based crafts
- Local food retail, farmers market, CSA farm subscriptions and co-ops
- Local food culinary, prepared foods (home kitchens and community commercial kitchens)
- Community services (service repair shops – bike/garage/wood and metal, etc.)
- Community care services (daycare, senior care, etc.)



NEIGHBORHOOD SCALED FOOD RETAIL

FARM STAND, FARM STORE, GROCERY, CAFE OR CO-OP



ACCESS TO FRESH FOOD IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD IS ESSENTIAL. FARM BASED STORES, CO-OPS, AND COMMUNITY DINING CAN HELP IF A GROCERY OR CAFE ARE TOO COSTLY.

MIXED INCOME HOUSING

PONCE DE LEON COURT, DECATUR, GEORGIA

The largest mistake we make when it comes to providing housing for everyone is concentrating large numbers of inexpensive apartments and concentrating large numbers of middle to high end single family housing. What is needed is mixed income housing streets that are well done and well managed. Ponce de Leon Court in Decatur, Georgia, is a great example as one of the most sought after streets to live on in Decatur. It is a historic mixed-income street with residents ranging from entry level students and young adults to families and retirees. Approximately half of the units (the majority of the street) are 2-3 bedroom cute single family bungalows on 6,000 square foot lots, and half of the units are “missing middle housing” ranging from 2 and 3 family homes up to 2-12 plex apartment buildings framing the beginning and end of the street. The street ties it all together - pedestrian scaled, tree lined, and charming. Close attention to detail and design, as well as good management, turn the multi-plex buildings into an asset instead of a problem.



A HISTORIC MIXED INCOME HOUSING STREET

INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNITY

Integrate full intergenerational age groups; seniors need to be able to live in communities where they can age in place, not need a car and be able to move to smaller units where they are surrounded by community and nature. Youth need the benefit of seniors as mentors in their lives and families need help with children, (it takes a village), and caring for their parents/seniors.

Intergenerational housing can take many forms. Successful models include designed communities where seniors choose between private apartments or, for those who desire more support and a family-like setting, fully assisted senior residences with medical care and care-taking staff. Older adult residents have access to social services and engagement opportunities, and families with children and young adults live alongside older adults.



FAMILIES GARDENING



NATURE CLOSE BY



SENIORS AND CHILDREN - A GOOD MIX



ASSISTED SENIOR ACTIVITIES

SUSTAINABILITY, HEALTH & RESILIENCY

Increase sustainability, health and resilience of neighborhood through

- Connection to nature and urban agriculture
- Active living opportunities (walk/bike)
- Food security and fresh/nutritious foods- access to trails and nature
- Energy self reliance such as solar collectors and charging stations
- Watershed resilience including increased buffers/storm event holding capacity and water quality, and rainwater catchments
- Supportive neighborhood with a focus on youth and the elderly: variety of neighborhood compliments to insure neighborhood viability and longevity including mixed income, intergenerational and other community compliments



SOLAR COLLECTORS



FARMERS MARKET



OUTDOOR EDUCATION - RIVER MONITORING



SAFE BICYCLING

NEIGHBORHOOD BASED EDUCATION

The increased centralization of schools and small businesses out of neighborhoods decreases the ability for youth to be exposed to after school, weekend and summer educational opportunities. Neighborhood based education re-integrates these opportunities into the neighborhood and the preserved land accessible within a 1/4 mile to 1 mile walking/bike radius. With support from local schools and other community organizations, this neighborhood based education, focused particularly on local youth, provides opportunities such as internships, work/study programs, after school programs and summer school programs.

Program opportunities are based on the neighborhood community resources and the type of land preserved (forest or urban agricultural). Education themes include: biology, urban agriculture, urban forestry, watershed restoration, community and health care, culinary and local food training, green construction and energy applications.



COMMUNITY BUILDING & GATHERING SPACES

Opportunities for building community start with a shared desire for community and are facilitated through pedestrian oriented design and completed through the development of opportunities for diverse daily community activities, exchanges and gathering spaces.

- Shared desire for community - in order to develop a VCC community it is important to draw in future residents with a desire for community and conservation/access to green space
- Pedestrian oriented design - good pedestrian design creates "spontaneous community encounters" like traditional small towns as people pass each other on foot in their daily lives
- Community activities and gathering spaces - connecting residences to work places, and to farms and nature creates ample opportunities for community activities and gathering spaces such as dining/cafe areas, event barn/pavilion, event greens, outdoor classrooms, trails, etc.



COMMUNITY BUILDING & GATHERING SPACES CONTINUED

Partnerships include for profit and nonprofit developers, community land trusts and housing cooperatives with missing middle housing types. These efforts require changing the conventional image of the “single family house suburb” as American dream and using the “traditional neighborhood” as a model with a mix of housing types, adjacent to preserved woodlands and urban gardens.

*Conservation lands provide “free land” for land steward housing – gardeners, forest and stream corridor educators and after school and summer camp caretakers.

EDUCATIONAL, HEALTH/WELLNESS AND RECREATION VENUES

Outdoor and community spaces should support education, health and recreation, including:

- Outdoor classrooms and neighborhood workspaces
- Maker spaces for trades
- Garden/farm outdoor classrooms and culinary opportunities
- Forest and stream education programs
- Health and wellness programs
- Clubs for fitness, Scouts, or Boys and Girls Clubs

FARM GARDENS

A Community Supported Farm can offer produce and other farm-based products with sales through individual subscriptions, neighborhood farmers markets or co-op shares including:

- Fresh produce
- Cut flowers
- Value added products (prepared Deli foods, canned food, dried or frozen food)

NATURE ACCESS

Nature-based amenities such as forest trails, outdoor classrooms and interactive access to water bodies such as stream monitoring stations should be available. Funding for these opportunities can be supported by partnerships between the county, developers and nonprofit organizations.

- Forest Trails
- Outdoor Classroom
- Stream interactive/monitoring station

*Funding for these opportunities is provided by a partnership between the county, developers and nonprofit organizations.



OUTDOOR RECREATION



NATURE ACCESS



INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES



HEALTH AND WELLNESS



MANY PEOPLE WOULD BIKE IF IT WAS SAFE AND BEAUTIFUL



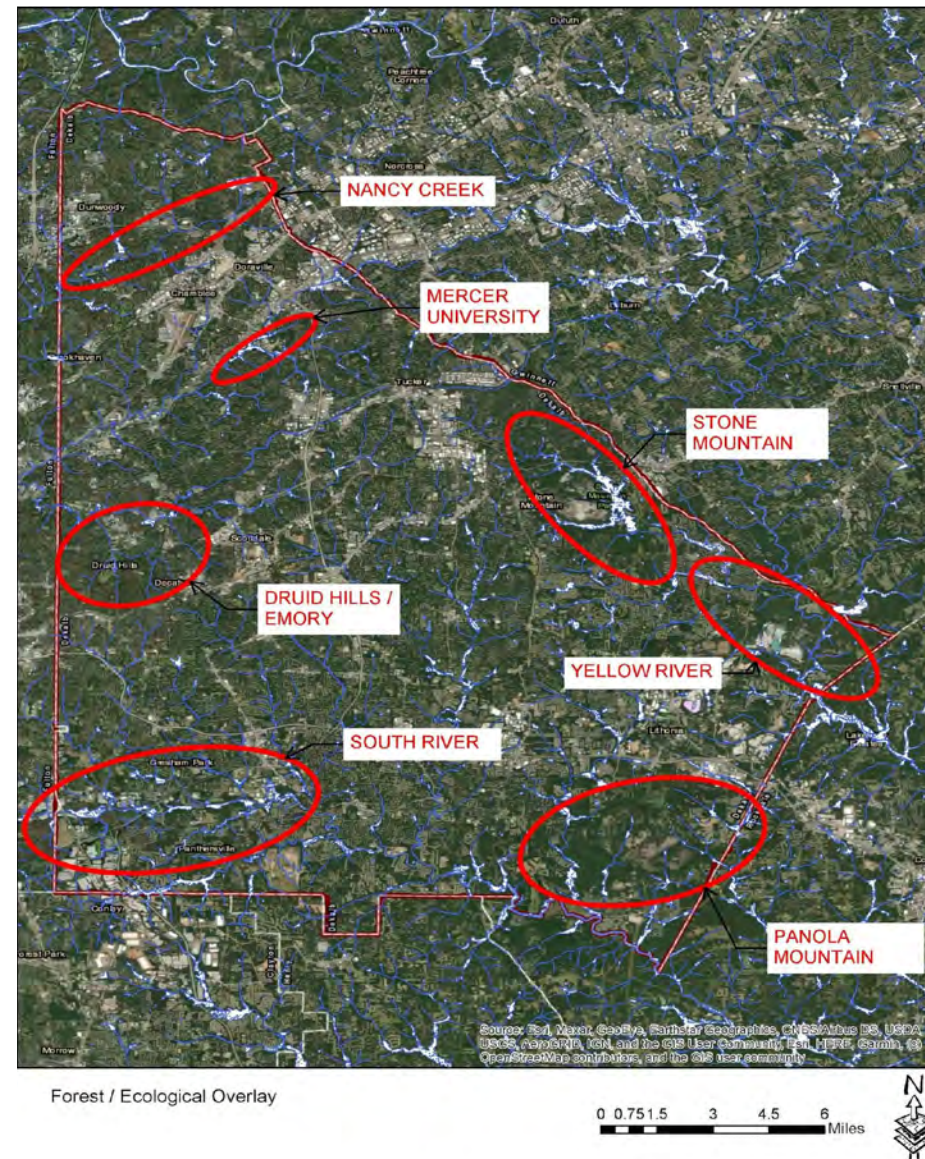
PART V - CONSERVATION VILLAGE MAPPING

CONSERVATION VILLAGE MAPPING INTRODUCTION

In Part II we identified the Conservation Opportunity Mapping Framework for DeKalb County for individual and clustered parcels of undeveloped land 5 acres or larger. We concluded that the majority of the remaining undeveloped parcels are contained in Focus Areas 1-5. Focus area 1 lies in a Traditional/ Intown character area that includes some greyfield and brown field opportunities as well as greenfield. Focus areas 2-5 are in suburban character areas that are primarily greenfield conservation focused. Focus areas 3 and 5 have sufficient land resources left to be considered as “Rural Pocket” character areas.

These parcels are clustered and lend themselves to Conservation Villages that can preserve undeveloped land on multiple parcel assemblages - potentially with conservation villages ranging from several hundred units to 1,000 or more units depending on the focus area and existing development yield and bonus incentive. Land use and zoning tool opportunities at the scale of a focus area are discussed in Part VI and VII.

The remaining individual parcels are scattered across Unincorporated DeKalb County and can be treated as individual parcels. Example projects for individual parcels 5 acres or larger are Sherrydale Preserve, Pendergrast Farm, and East Lake Commons.



In Part V, we set up an analysis to identify the best location opportunities for Conservation Villages (village development and conservation) within the 5 identified focus areas.

The Conservation Village mapping analysis includes the following categories:

Preservation

1. Sensitive Ecological Land including non-buildable areas (stream buffers, wetlands, etc.) and buildable areas (old growth forests, larger stream corridors, intermittent streams, etc.) - see part IV for a conservation metric table based on character areas.
2. Agricultural Lands ranging in size from small community gardens to larger urban farms

Walk & Bike Connectivity

1. Riparian corridor connections linking the focus areas
2. Focus Area connections linking Sub-Focus Areas (1 mile diameter walkable areas)
3. Sub-Focus Area connections within the 1 mile diameter walkable areas

Infrastructure

1. Roads and Sewer are key to understanding the best place for locations of Conservation Villages in order to optimize existing infrastructure as well as to better understand historic roads and cross-roads. There is a significant amount of rock in several of these focus areas which imply a difficulty with sewer and may require larger septic field areas.
2. Community Infrastructure is critical to understand relationships between preservation, urban ag, and conservation village development. Primary community infrastructure includes: schools, churches, community centers, commercial areas such as historic cross-roads, as well as existing commercial nodes. Schools and churches are key building blocks for urban ag education/ teaching farms and churches in particular offer land opportunities for more equitable housing and community opportunities.

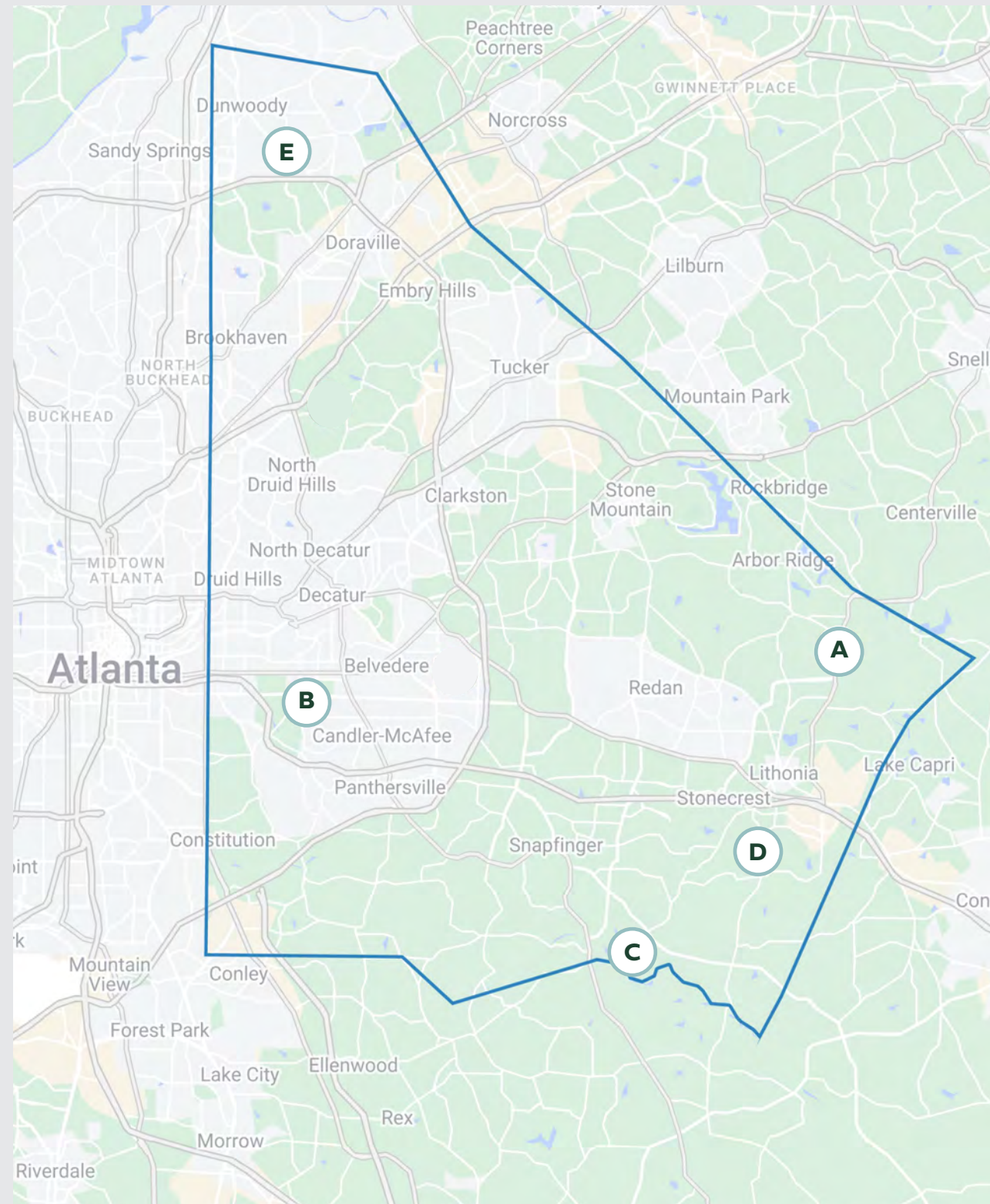
Development Yield

In order to calculate the size of the conservation villages we must understand the existing “development yield”. The development yield is based on the current development capacity based on the zoning and whether or not the property has reasonable access to sewer. For properties on sewer, the development yield is based on the underlying zoning. For properties without reasonable access to sewer, the development yield is based on environmental health requirements for individual septic fields. Whether properties are on a sewer or not, they are eligible for a development bonus for undertaking conservation focused development.

The following pages of maps show the initial stages of this mapping analysis. Maps will be further developed in Phase 3, which is designed to engage the neighborhoods in and around the 5 focus areas as well as the key stakeholder partnerships involved in facilitating this process. Phase 3 will culminate in identifying Conservation Village Opportunity Zones and specific pilot projects.

FARM AND CONSERVATION PROJECTS

Village Conservation Communities can be initiated by a developer to construct a conservation focused community or they can be non-profit driven with a mission to preserve the land. DeKalb County features successful examples of both with ample opportunities for more.



A

E.M.B.A.R.C. YOUTH FARM

40 ACRES

Commissioner Lorraine Cochran-Johnson created E.M.B.A.R.C. Community Youth Farm with the mission to cultivate and nurture a community hub for youth to grow food, engage in entrepreneurship and sustain lasting skills that will enhance their quality of life and the health of DeKalb County.



B

EAST LAKE COMMONS, GAIA GARDENS

5 ACRE URBAN FARM
12 ACRE FOREST PRESERVE

A farm and village conservation community with a working community farm successfully preserving 60% of land area for woodland forest canopy.



C

LYONS FARM

HISTORIC FARM

One of the oldest homesteads in once-rural DeKalb County, the Lyon Farm stands today as a reminder of the area's history and a glimpse into the agricultural lifestyle that once dominated the county. It also is key to the history of Flat Rock.

D

VAUGHTERS FARM

HISTORIC FARM

Within Panola Mountain State Park, this preserved landmark is home to the historic Vaughters Dairy Farm.

E

DONALDSON BANNISTER FARM

HISTORIC FARM

Apart of the Dunwoody Preservation Trust, the historic farm house has been renovated and the surrounding grounds are landscaped and open to the public as a park setting.



DEKALB COUNTY

Existing Conservation and Agriculture Projects





Ag Map

COMMUNITY CENTERS, PARKS,
PLACES OF WORKSHOP AND LIBRARIES

Churches Future Ag Opportunities

All items

Libraries

All items

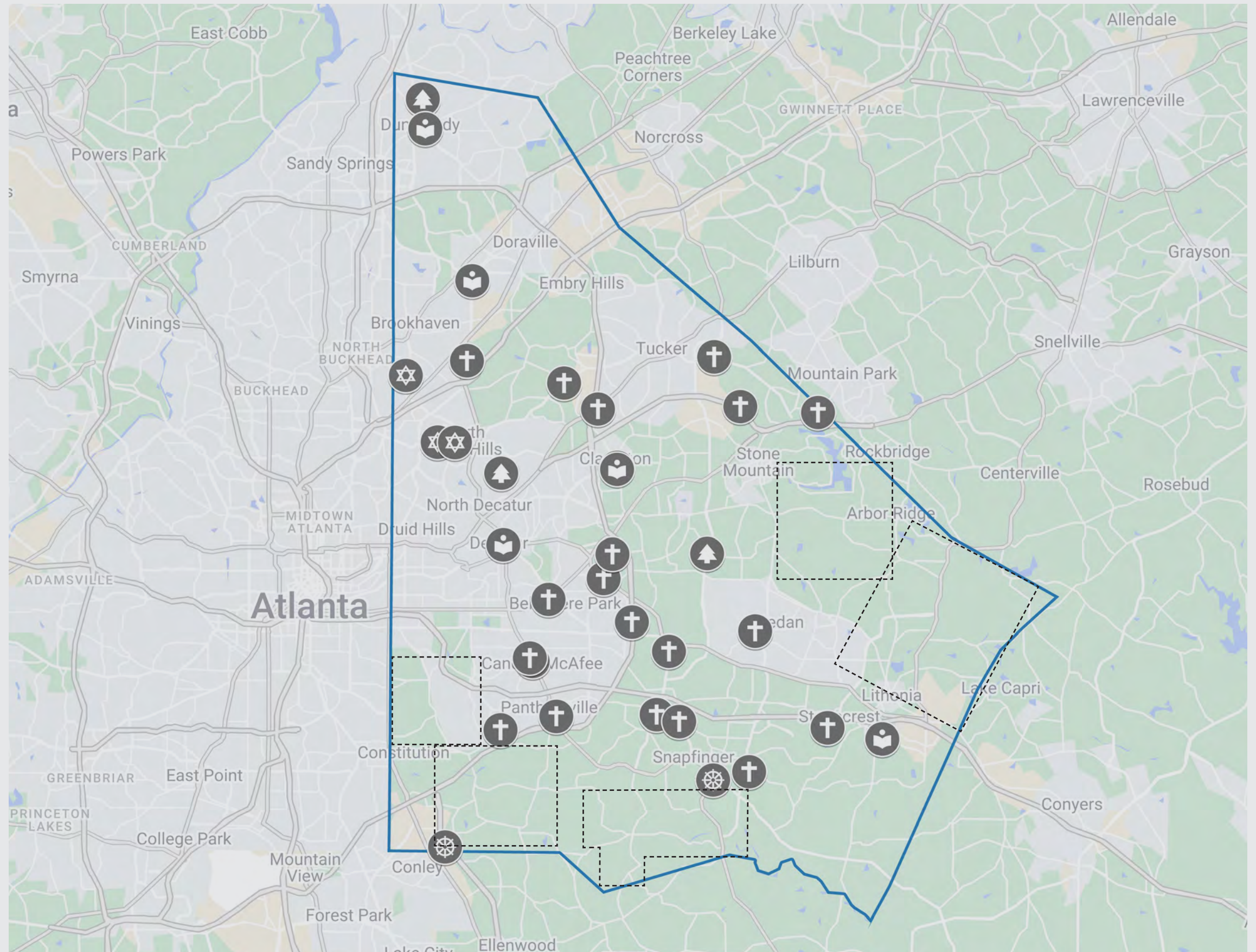
Temples, Synagogues & Monasteries

- Kim Cang Monastery
- Wat Lao Buddha Phothisaram Inc
- Congregation Bet Haverim
- Congregation Beth Jacob
- Congregation Or VeShalom
- Spiritual Living Center of Atlanta

Parks

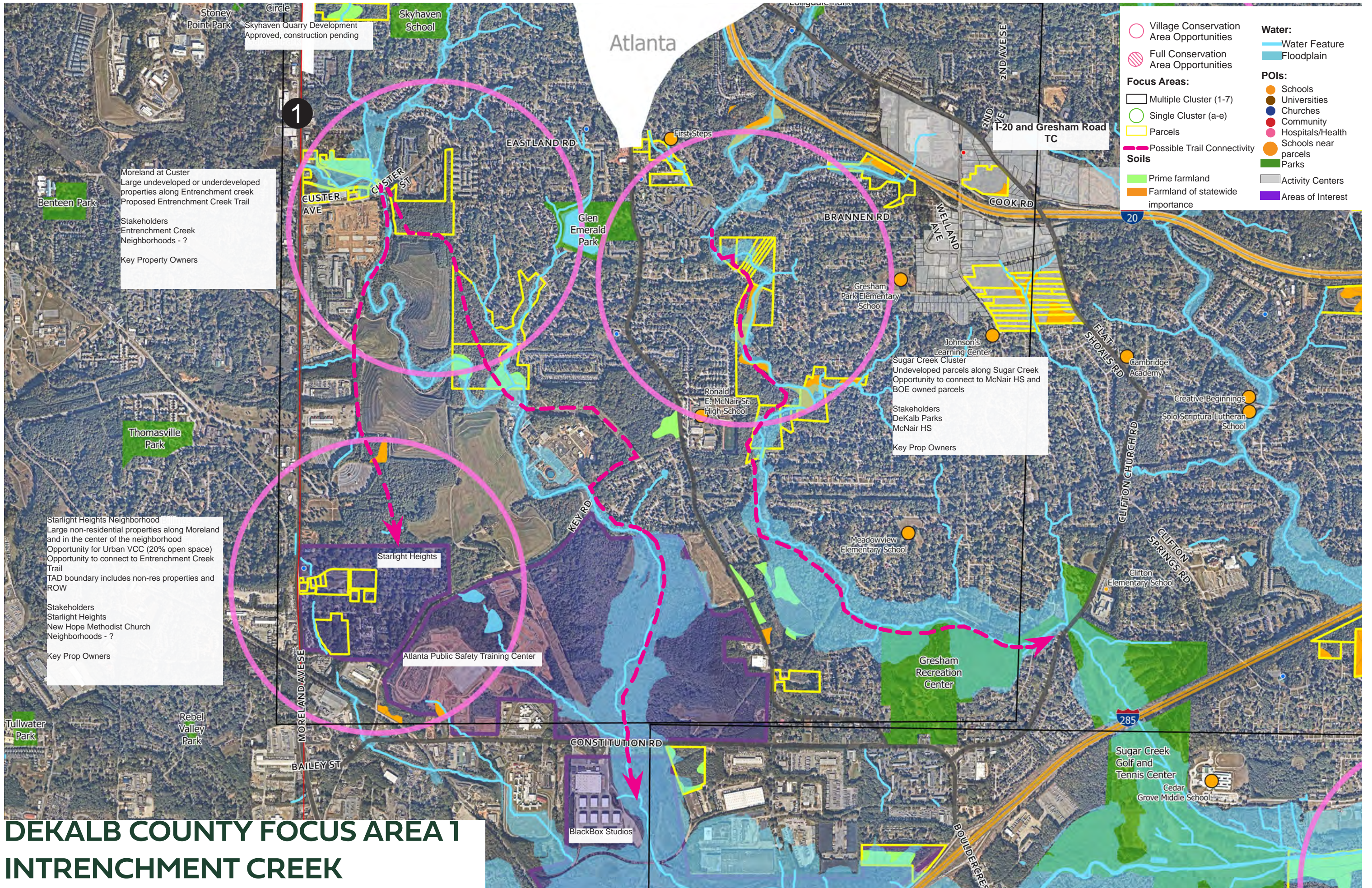
All items

Source:
Georgia Arc GIS
<https://gaglohome-gagio.hub.arcgis.com/search>



DEKALB COUNTY
Future Community Agriculture Opportunities





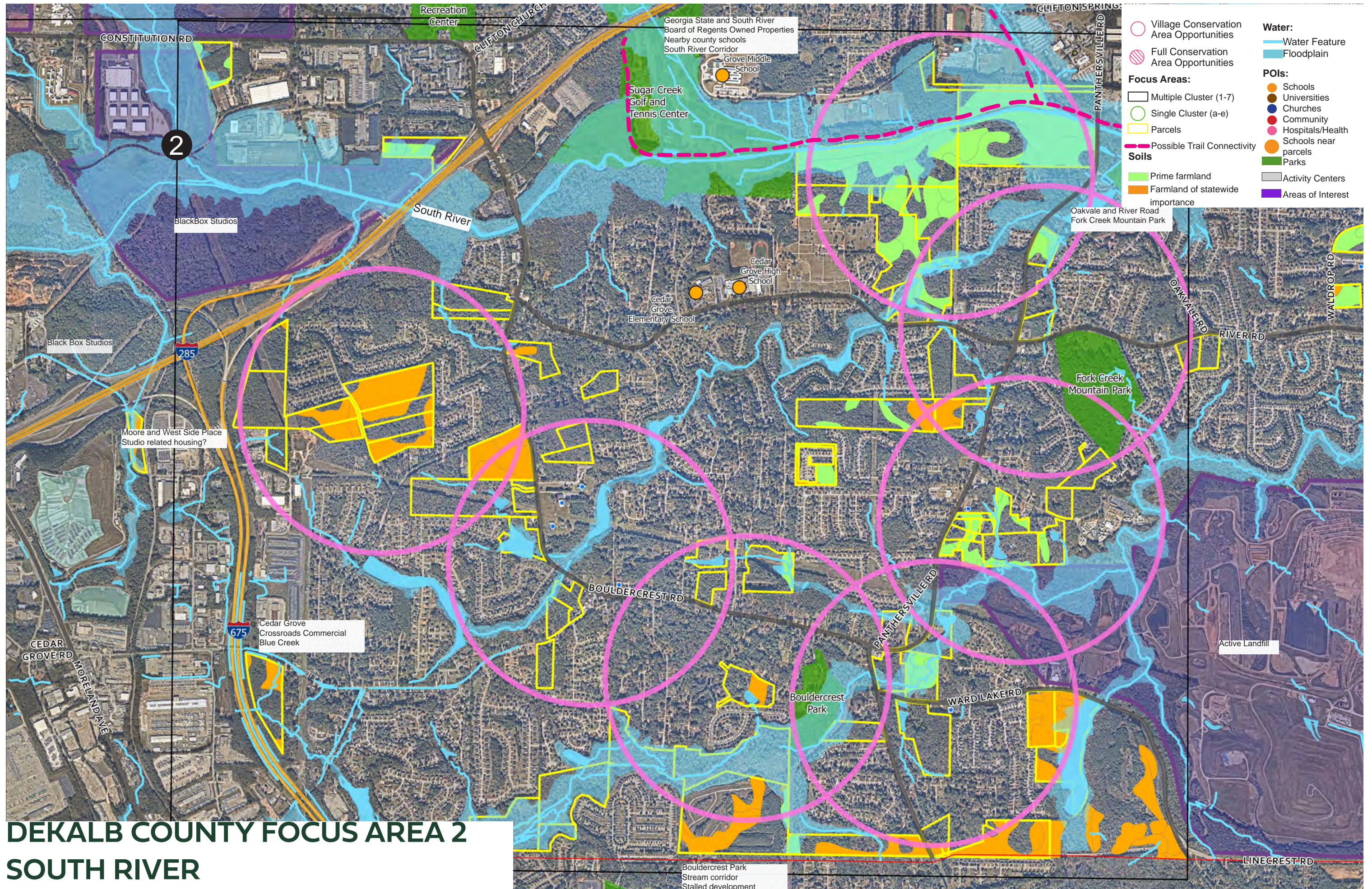
Moreland at Custer
 Large undeveloped or underdeveloped properties along Entrenchment creek
 Proposed Entrenchment Creek Trail
 Stakeholders
 Entrenchment Creek Neighborhoods - ?
 Key Property Owners

Starlight Heights Neighborhood
 Large non-residential properties along Moreland and in the center of the neighborhood
 Opportunity for Urban VCC (20% open space)
 Opportunity to connect to Entrenchment Creek Trail
 TAD boundary includes non-res properties and ROW
 Stakeholders
 Starlight Heights
 New Hope Methodist Church
 Neighborhoods - ?
 Key Prop Owners

Sugar Creek Cluster
 Undeveloped parcels along Sugar Creek
 Opportunity to connect to McNair HS and BOE owned parcels
 Stakeholders
 DeKalb Parks
 McNair HS
 Key Prop Owners

- Village Conservation Area Opportunities
- Full Conservation Area Opportunities
- Focus Areas:**
- Multiple Cluster (1-7)
- Single Cluster (a-e)
- Parcels
- - - Possible Trail Connectivity
- Soils**
- Prime farmland
- Farmland of statewide importance
- Water:**
- Water Feature
- Floodplain
- POIs:**
- Schools
- Universities
- Churches
- Community
- Hospitals/Health
- Schools near parcels
- Parks
- Activity Centers
- Areas of Interest

DEKALB COUNTY FOCUS AREA 1 INTRENCHMENT CREEK



DEKALB COUNTY FOCUS AREA 2
SOUTH RIVER

Bouldercrest Park
 Stream corridor
 Stalled development

Moore and West Side Place
 Studio related housing?

Cedar Grove
 Crossroads Commercial
 Blue Creek

Georgia State and South River
 Board of Regents Owned Properties
 Nearby county schools
 South River Corridor

Sugar Creek
 Golf and
 Tennis Center

Cedar
 Grove
 Elementary School

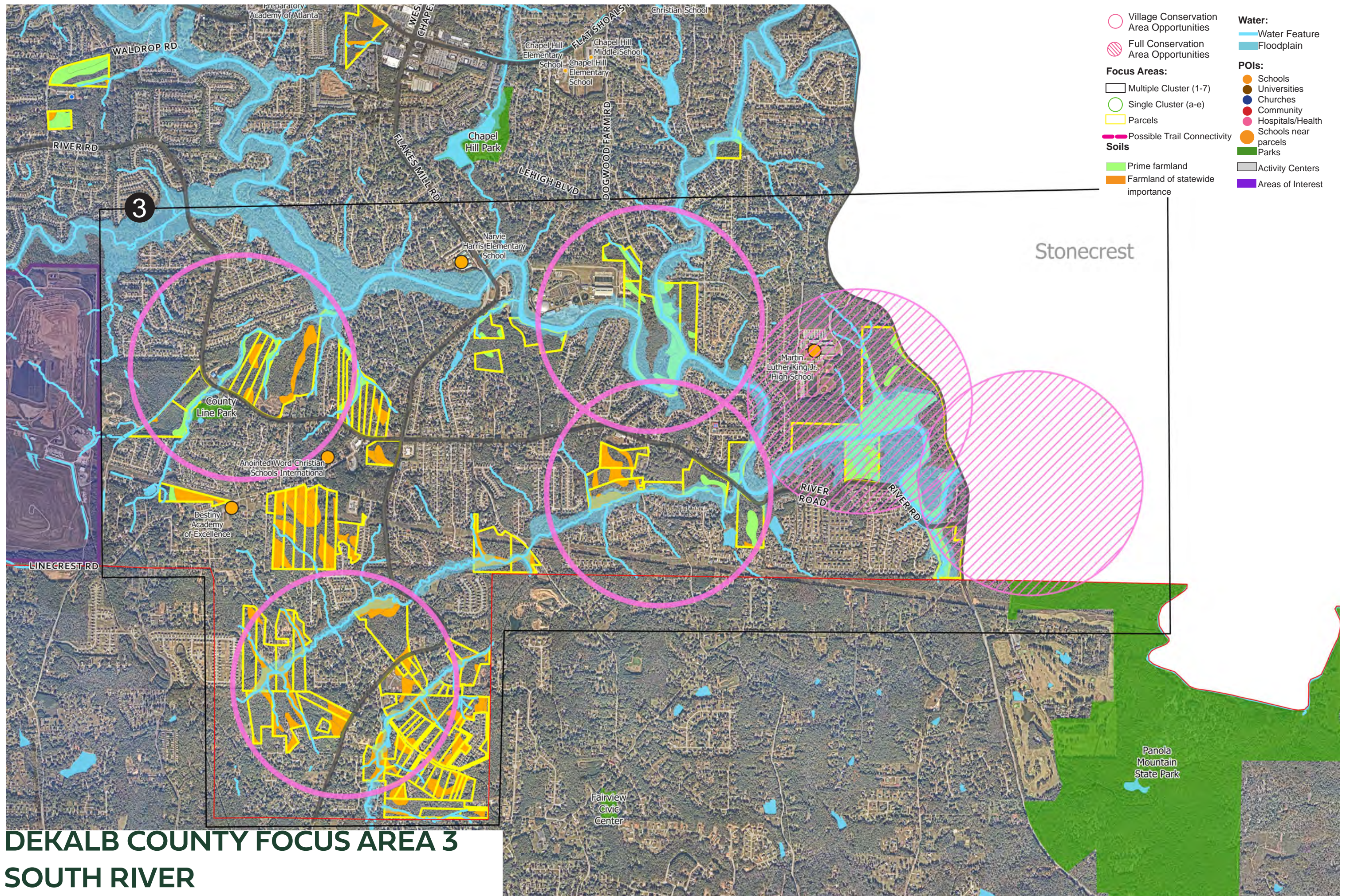
Cedar
 Grove High
 School

Oakvale and River Road
 Fork Creek Mountain Park

Fork Creek
 Mountain Park

Active Landfill

LINECREST RD



DEKALB COUNTY FOCUS AREA 3
SOUTH RIVER

DEKALB NATURAL AREAS ON PRIVATE PARCELS ASSESSMENT

DeKalb Natural Areas on Private Parcels Assessment
Applied to VCD Combo Focus Area Maps (Greg Ramsey)
Kathryn Kolb @ July 7, 2024

page 1 of 5

Today, the landscape of DeKalb County is a “patchwork quilt” reflecting different land uses over the past approximately 180-200 years. Because most of the landscape was in original or old growth forest form when Americans acquired the land from Creek and Cherokee Native Americans in the early 1800s, remnants of this original landscape can still be found where land disturbance has been minimal. Typically stream corridors, steeper slopes and places with rock formations were not desired areas for farming in the 19th and early 20th centuries, and not desired for development until the last few decades, when real estate values grew to support the cost of building on more difficult terrain.

Highlighted areas here show the difference between our highest value older hardwood forests, including old growth remnants, (shown in magenta) and recovering forests that may consist of more pines and younger hardwoods with more disturbed soils, younger trees (including more pines), and reduced biodiversity. Younger, or less diverse forest areas (shown in orange) are often places that were farmed with row crops, sometimes terraced, or cleared for pastures, homesteads and other uses.

Our native ecosystem in DeKalb county consists primarily of mature hardwood forest. Overstory trees create the high canopy -- Red, Black and Post Oaks and Hickories along with a few Pines on the ridges; Tulip Poplar, White Oak, Beech and Maple on mid-slopes, and Sweetgum, Sycamore, Water Oak, Sugarberry and Box Elder in the floodplains. A diversity of midstory and understory trees, such as Persimmon, Black Gum, Paw Paw, Hornbeams and many others, along with an extraordinarily rich array of native shrubs, vines and other flora are native to our forests and woodlands, and these, including uncommon and rare species, can still be found in pockets of older forest and even some areas that were timbered, but allowed to recover naturally without significant soil disturbance since Native American times.

We have a tremendous opportunity to recognize the special quality of these remaining high value forest areas and preserve them even as we continue to develop the County. These areas serve as ecological bio-reserves for native and rare species, birds, wildlife, and soils, and they function as the “backbone” of the County’s green infrastructure: mitigating stormwater, cooling and cleaning the air, reducing costs for health care, human services and infrastructure, and generally creating a healthy living space for DeKalb residents.

This study serves as a good overview of areas generally with some specific locations when they could be identified by roads, streams or other landmarks. I recommend follow-up ground truthing and where parcels are small and no landmarks are clearly identifiable as reference points. Individual parcels often have a mix of higher and lower quality value natural areas that would need to be distinguished in a more granular way.

Three significant natural areas meriting protection in perpetuity, in private conservation easement or public land purchase, have been identified, pending ground assessment.

Color key:

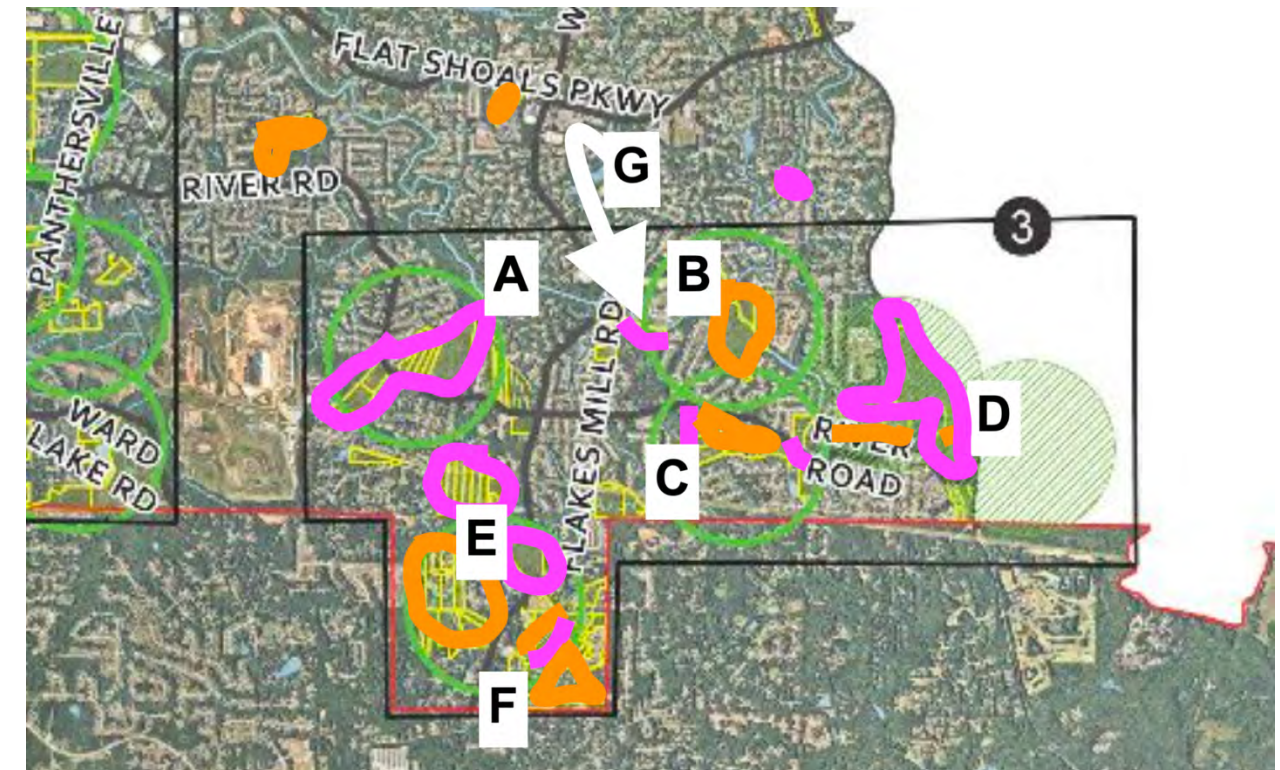
Magenta – highest value older forest, mostly hardwoods, less prior land/soil disturbance
Orange – recovering younger forest, more pines, more prior land/soil disturbance

*** top priority for Dekalb County acquisition, conservation easement, permanent protection

DeKalb Natural Areas on Private Parcels Assessment
Applied to VCD Combo Focus Area Maps (Greg Ramsey)
Kathryn Kolb @ July 7, 2024

page 2 of 5

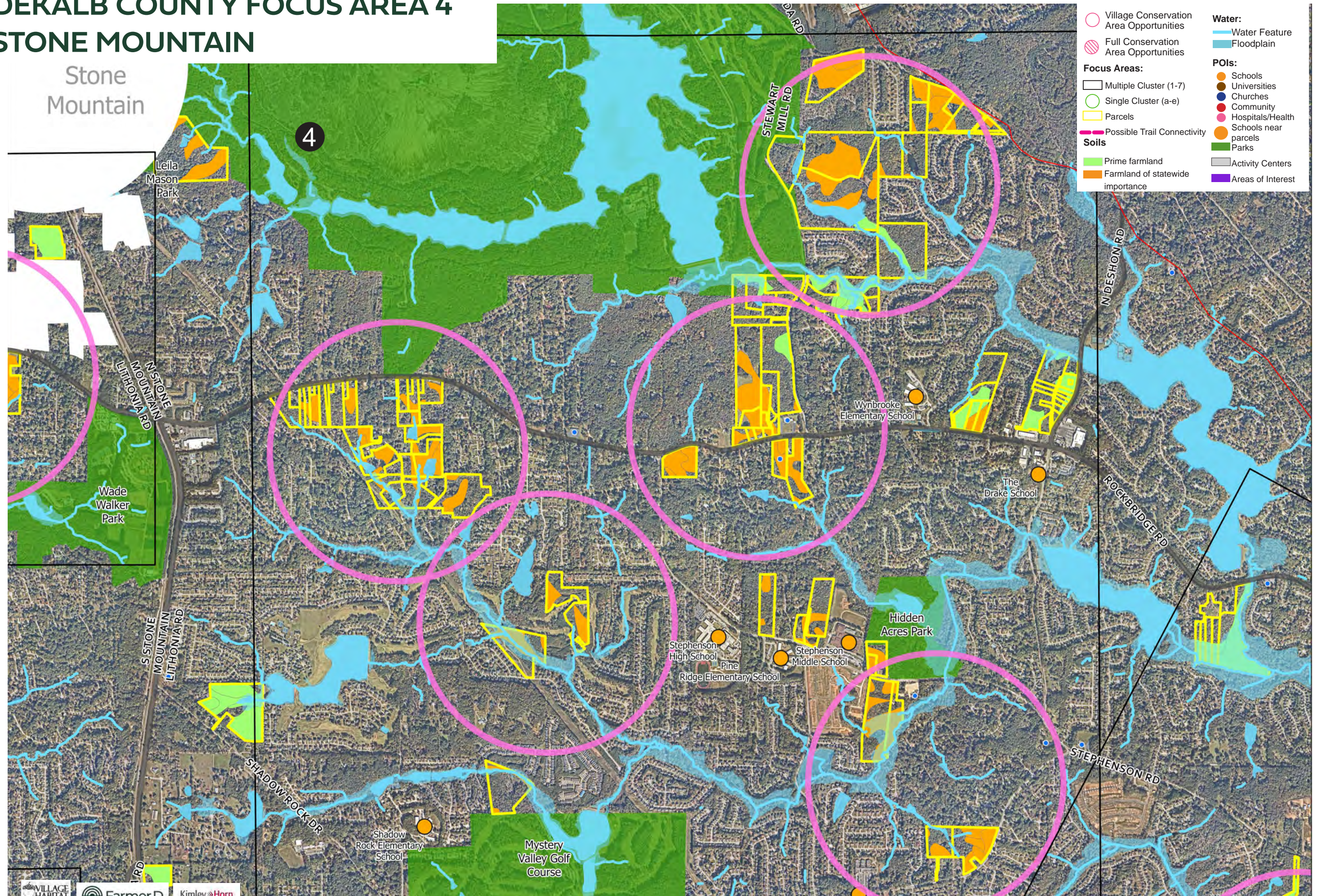
Focus Area 3

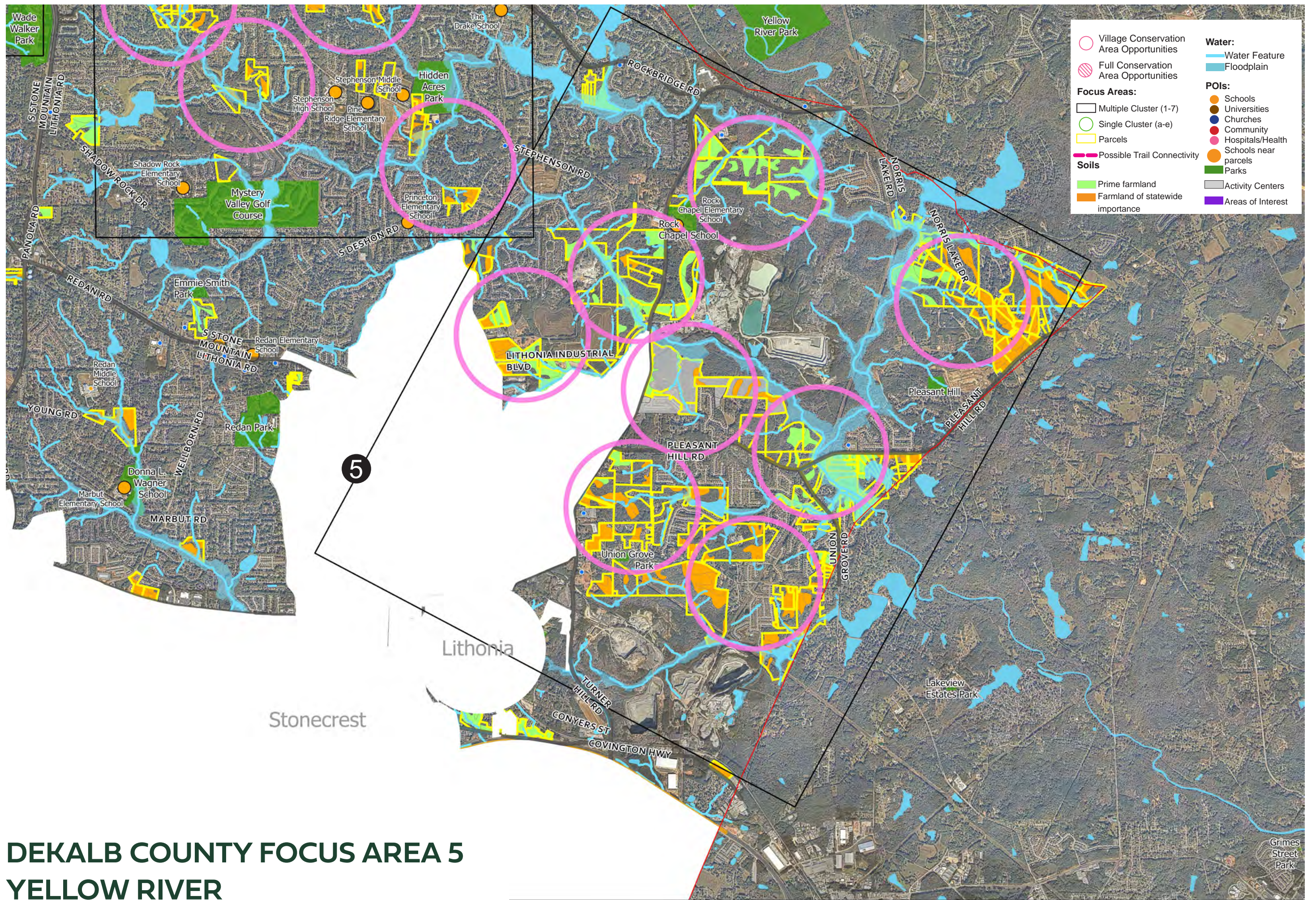


- A. *** Candidate for Old Growth Forest, undisturbed mature hardwood canopy in 1955 and forward. Very high value.
- B. Forest recovering, some disturbance in past, especially east side, but river corridor retains high value, older forest.
- C. Forest recovering, some disturbance in past, area in SW edge (left) of River Point Place may retain small undisturbed older forest areas.
- D. *** Area between MLK High school, S River and Candler Rd old growth candidate, contains at least one large rock outcrop, South Town Trail runs through this area, forest recovering overall, a few pockets of disturbance in past, high value forest retained along river corridor, generally less disturbed higher value forest above South River.
- E. Mixed, some disturbance in past, younger forest with pockets of high value hardwoods, possible old growth forest stands remain.
- F. Mixed, some disturbance in past, disturbed, younger forest areas at margins with higher value forest located between Scarlett Ohara, Flakes Mill and Amsler Rd, and above Scarlett Ohara along the Corn Creek corridor.
- G. Candidate for Old Growth Forest, undisturbed mature hardwood canopy from 1955 and forward

DEKALB COUNTY FOCUS AREA 4

STONE MOUNTAIN

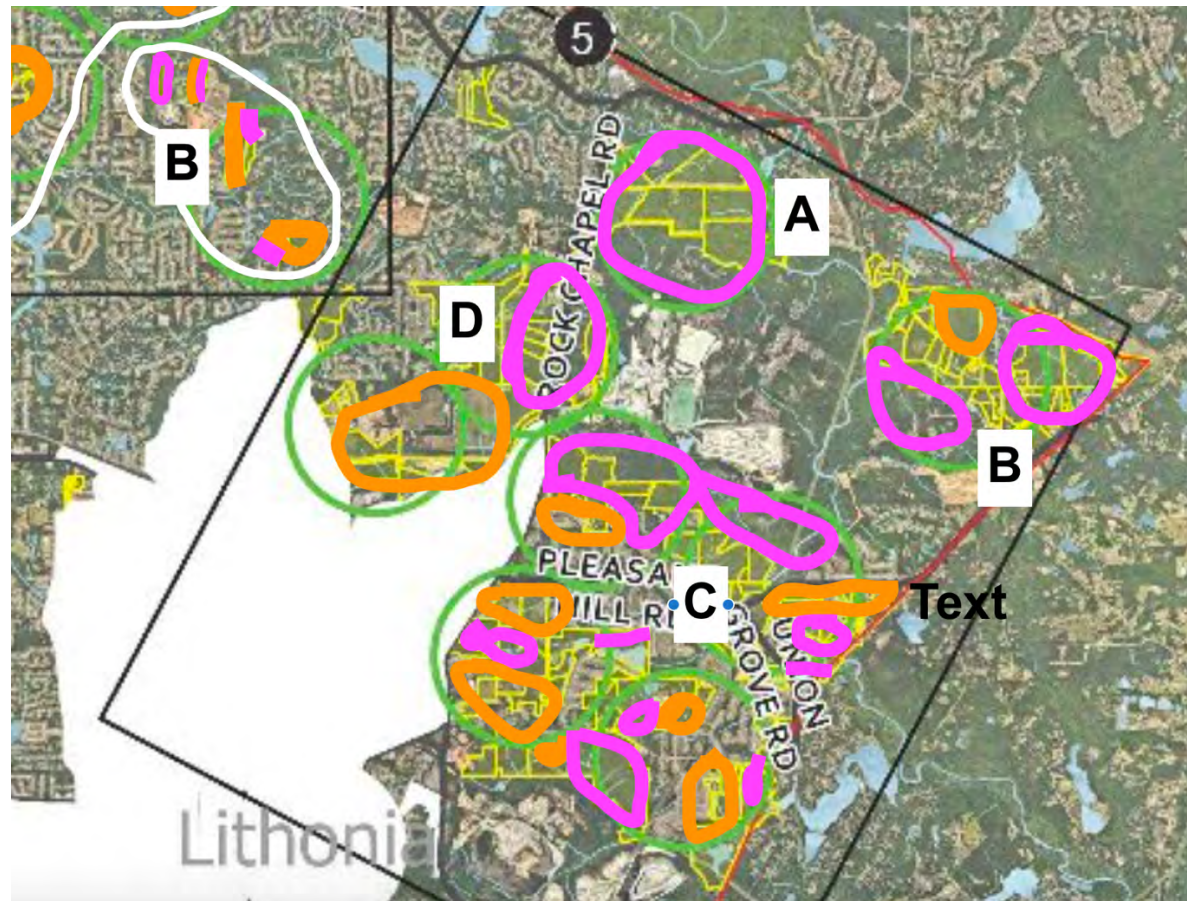




DEKALB COUNTY FOCUS AREA 5

YELLOW RIVER

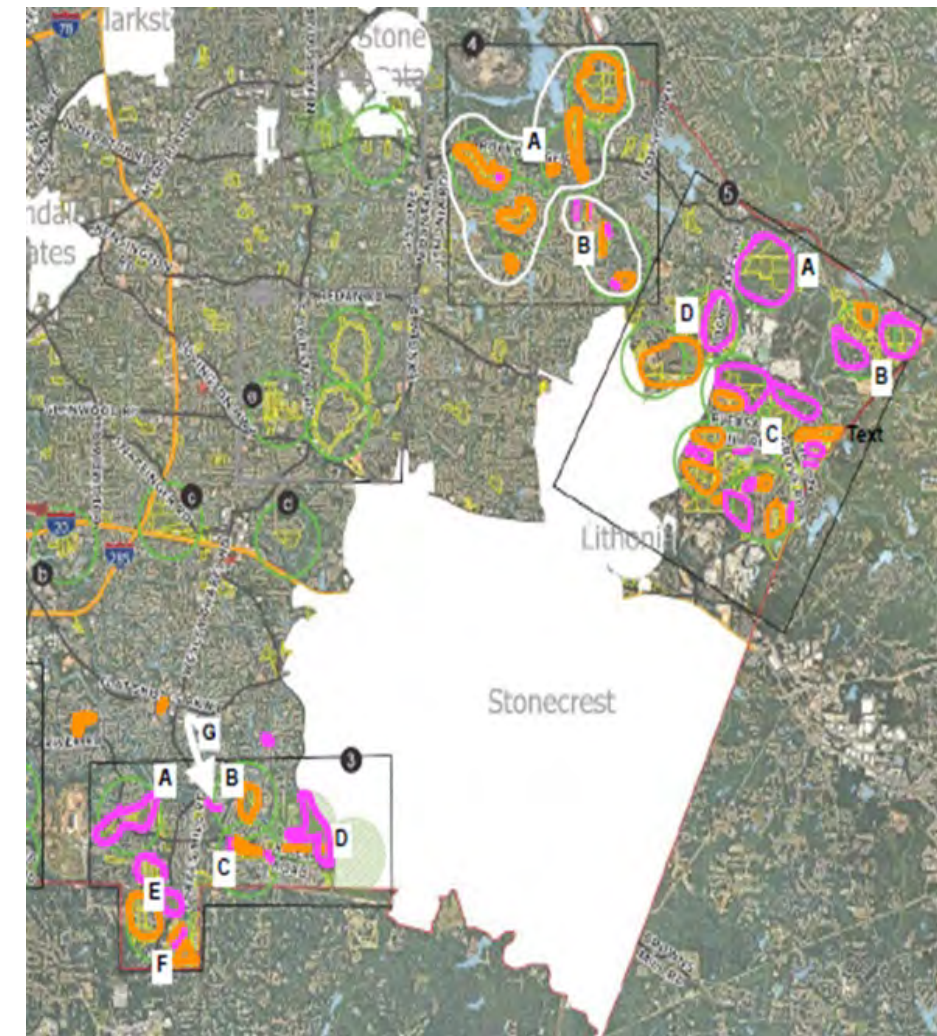
Focus Area 5



- A. *** This area is largely a forest that is 80 years old and some parts older, likely high values pockets are likely found on the ridge and steep slopes along the creeks at the south and west. There are some pockets of disturbance within this area, such as the cleared linear area along the Hightower Trail. It appears timbering may have taken place on the 1940s, but without significant ground disturbance, so the forest is at least 80 years old, with some stands potentially older. A large intact area of forest extends from the South River at the east, centering on ridges with significant rock outcrops to Hwy 24 to the West. Due to the topography, river and creek intersections, and rock outcrops, this area is a likely candidate for old growth pockets, relic trees, and uncommon species.
- B. (3 clusters) This area holds a complex mix of past land uses, mature hardwoods stands are found in some pockets, especially adjacent to creeks. It is hard to discern the individual parcel character at this scale.

Focus Area 5 – cont'd

- C. (16 clusters) This area holds a broad mix of past land uses, and it appears large areas in this section were timbered in the 1940s, but now have about 80 years of regrowth with little or no other subsequent disturbance. Areas that appear to have highest value forest are: just above Johnson Lake, between Swift Creek and Pleasant Hill Rd below the quarry, to the right of Rock Chapel Road extending to wetlands as Swift Creek approaches the Yellow River, and an area above the lower quarry site along the power easement.
- D. (2 clusters) Mixed past uses show significant land disturbance at the southwest side, with higher value forest remaining on the west side of Rock Chapel Rd, across from the quarry.





PART VI - LAND USE & ZONING CONSIDERATIONS

Land Use and Development Policy Considerations

There are several policy, regulation, and issue areas that are critical to understand from the outset about the VCD land use and development policy effort in DeKalb County.

The VCD land use approach takes into consideration the true cost of land development; the long-term effects of climate change, loss of biodiversity, impacts to social equity, lack of neighborhood based economic opportunities and amenities, community health (walkability and access to nature and fresh food), and the ability to age in place. All of these factors have profound effect on the long-term quality of life in DeKalb County and need to be factored into the choice of policy consideration. Today, many of these aspects have been ignored for decades to the exclusion of short-term growth and development. VCD with Conservation Villages offers a rewarding opportunity for real estate growth and substantive change in addressing long term sustainable growth policy issues.

INTENT

Due to the vast majority of DeKalb County having been suburbanized, there is a dire need to shift the future land use and policies to stop mass grading, preserve the majority of the last remaining tree canopy, and urban agriculture opportunities on undeveloped land in the county while creating healthier walkable neighborhoods.

LAND USE

Develop policies that will eliminate sprawl and optimize neighborhood walkability. Direct future greenfield development in intown and suburban character areas towards substantive preservation with neighborhood mixed use cluster development at a walkable scale, optimizing the use of existing roads, sewer, and community infrastructure.

PRIORITY PROPERTIES TO PRESERVE

The most valuable land that can be preserved is land in walking proximity to existing and future development populations to insure a maximum 5-10 minute walk to urban agriculture and forest preserves.

High priority land preservation areas include the following:

- Individual 5 acres or larger undeveloped parcels and parcel clusters (focus area 1-5)
- Properties connected or in close proximity to riparian corridors and trails that facilitates trail development
- Properties in walking proximity to schools, churches, businesses, and neighborhood amenities
- Best social equity opportunities
- Mature forest lands
- Best opportunities for urban agriculture

The following illustrate the recommended ratios of preserved green space on buildable areas (areas outside flood plain and stream buffers) in 3 character areas: Traditional 50-60%, Suburban 60-70%, and Rural Pocket 70-90%



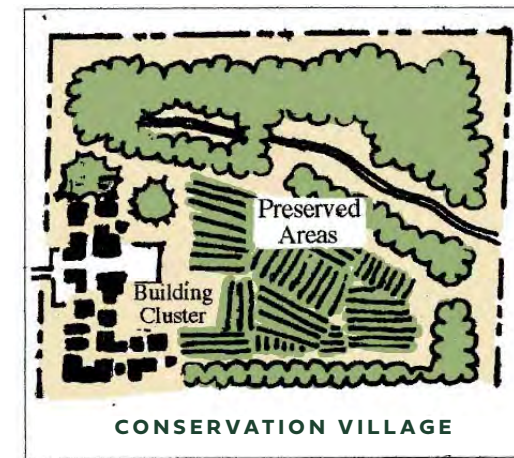
Traditional



Suburban



Rural Pocket



CONSERVATION VILLAGE

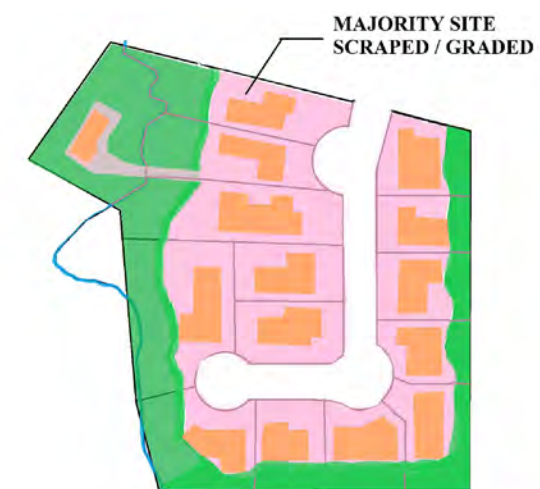


SCALE

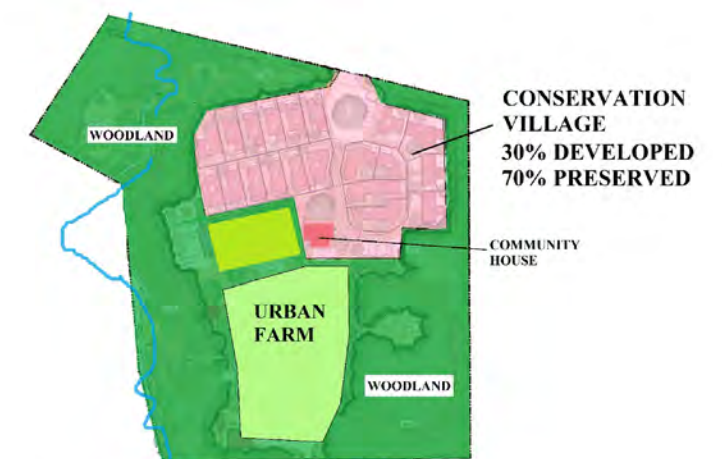
The following is the scale for the conservation cluster districts:

- Conservation Hamlets 4 to 15 units and can include ADU's based on underlying zoning yield plan capacity. The conservation hamlet is used primarily for smaller infill residential properties or small crossroad developments.
- Conservation Villages 20 to 100 and up to 1,000 or more (20-100 small village, 100-1,000 medium village, and 1,000 or more as a large village). The conservation village is very versatile as it operates at many scales and ranges from residential to high level mixed use.

The following illustrates a 20 units conservation village example in a suburban character area preserving 60% of the buildable areas and 70% of the overall site. A 30% density bonus was added to the original R100 suburban yield.



Conventional Suburban Subdivision



Village Conservation Community

NEIGHBORHOOD EQUITY

The future conservation village developments incorporate neighborhood equity objectives including neighborhood business development, after school and summer education, intern programs, missing middle and senior housing, and neighborhood amenities. Incentivize these objectives through non-profit partnerships and developer density bonus incentives.

DEVELOPMENT AND COMMUNITY INCENTIVES

DEVELOPMENT INCENTIVES

Key development incentives afforded by Village Conservation Community include:

- Home buyers are increasingly looking for smaller lots with less maintenance, better views onto preserved land and more adjacent walkable access to substantive green spaces (gardens and woodlands)
- Creating development incentives such as unit bonuses and expediting development processes can benefit developers and municipalities that are looking for ways to incentivize the preservation of the last remaining forests and open spaces without spending more tax dollars to purchase undeveloped properties
- Conservation village and hamlet development is inherently more efficient to develop due to its reduced infrastructure requirements
- Significant marketing incentives are created when the development product aligns with market trends and the desires and future quality growth planning of municipalities

COMMUNITY INCENTIVES

Key community incentives afforded by Village Conservation Community include:

- Preservation of forest canopy and increase buffers to streams and waterways for long term watershed resilience
- Increase of health and wellness through opportunities to create urban agriculture for fresh food access (reduction of food deserts), and increased active living through pedestrian and bicycle priority design and general health and wellness programs
- Neighborhood trail connectivity between surrounding neighborhood and VCC preserved areas (woodlands and gardens)
- Adopted zoning conditions and design guidelines for management of green spaces and development of conservation villages and hamlets to ensure long term maintained high value developments
- Expand education and employment opportunities through the integration of zoning compatible work places/ services and neighborhood based educational opportunities connected to the preserved forests and urban ag lands
- Expand youth leisure activities through the reconnection of youth to nature and urban agriculture
- Create community wide economic branding opportunities, reinforcing the growth of walkable urban centers connected by expanded multi-use trail systems to eco and ag tourism and passive recreation opportunities



OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT OF THE GREEN SPACE

There are two primary models of ownership and management of the open space.

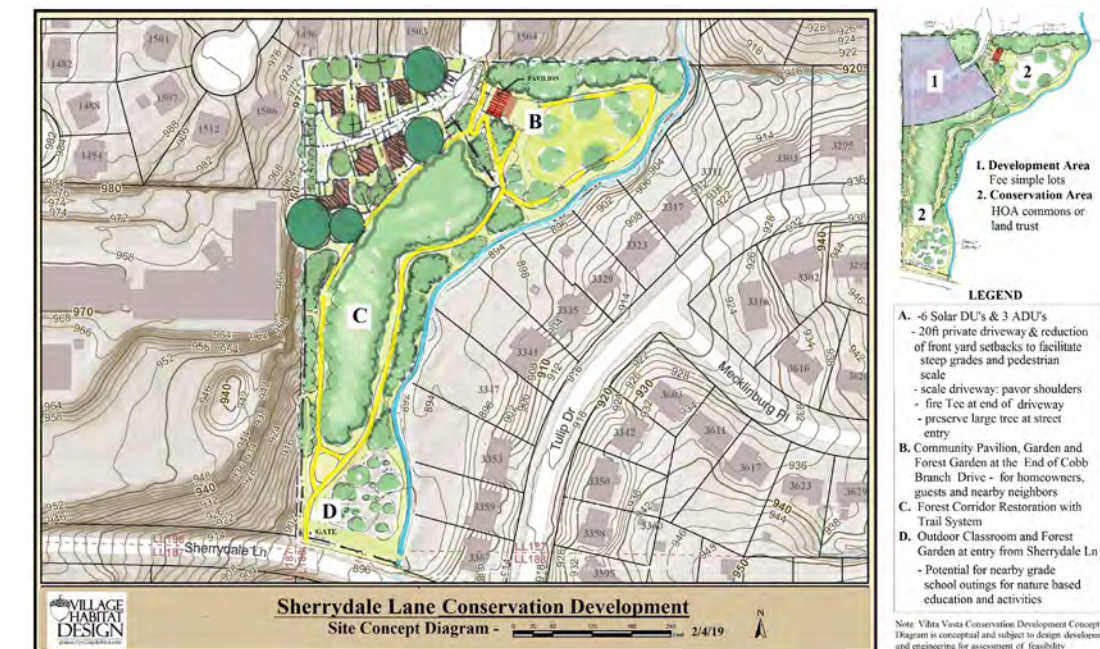
Model 1

HOA of the conservation village or hamlet retains ownership and management of the open space such as East Lake Commons below with residents enjoying their 5 acre farm - Gaia Farm



Model 2 The green space is subdivided off from the conservation village or hamlet and is conveyed to a non-profit entity to own and manage. Examples of non-profit entities include a conservation group, a community land trust, an agricultural non-profit or a municipality.

Sherrydale Conservation Community, a proposed conservation community in DeKalb County is zoned in a way that allows the 3.5 acre proposed green space to be subdivided from the 1.5 acre proposed conservation hamlet cluster. Located adjacent to Peachcrest Elementary and the Salvation Army Boys and Girls Club outdoor classrooms and stream cleanup are being planned by the school and community. (<https://www.sherrydalecommunitylandtrust.org>)



ZONING CONSIDERATIONS FOR TEXT AMENDMENTS, SITE SPECIFIC & ZONING CONDITIONS

The following are the best practices that are key to the success of VCC and can be incorporated through text amendments, zoning condition, or site-specific graphic descriptions:

- Inclusion of missing middle/work force housing density with adequate buffer and building type transition between these and any adjacent stable single-family neighborhoods
- Allow accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on small “conservation village lots” based on “yield plan” (underlying zoning lot size)
- Allow accessory commercial units where applicable (see Strong Towns and Portland Examples)
- Resolve and address short term rental (i.e., Air BnB) appropriateness within VCC development - in general these are discouraged unless adjacent to a commercial district.
- Protect preserved area with a conservation easement held by a land trust
- Consolidate car related impact and site infrastructure closer to the entry of the site to reduce fragmentation/sprawl of the site
- Allow reductions of parking and maximum parking limits with shared parking strategies to balance the car access with pedestrian, bicycle, shuttle, or transit access
- Create intergenerational, youth and aging in place programs and opportunities
- Pedestrian connectivity/ access between the VCC development and the surrounding existing neighborhoods
- The viability of incorporating pedestrian oriented design such as cottage court, pocket neighborhoods, living and complete streets
- Use home occupation and woodland/urban agriculture-based clubs to increase community vitality in residential districts
- Develop cluster design building guidelines to ensure the quality and durability of the VCC development
- Ownership and management guidelines of preserved green space

page left blank, intentionally



PART VII - POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS



DeKalb County Unified Plan - General Policy Recommendations

Policy considerations at this stage include revisions or additions to the Comprehensive Plan, which is currently being updated as part of the DeKalb 2050 Unified Plan. These are listed below:

COMMUNITY GOALS (ORGANIZED BY ISSUE AREA):

Land Use

- Preservation of the majority of the remaining undeveloped land through clustering with “Conservation Villages”
- Encourage clustered mixed use walkable local neighborhood development
- Diverse Housing and Development - Encourage more diverse housing and development types to meet the changing needs of residents and communities

Natural Resources and Sustainability

- Sustainable Zoning - Implement zoning tools that preserve open space, natural resources and the environment.
- Sustainable and Conservation Development – Promote development that incorporates sustainable practices and conserves critical environmental areas.
- Private Partnerships
 - Partner with non-governmental organizations to acquire and protect land
 - Incentivize private developers to implement Conservation Villages

Community Health, Wellness, and Safety

- Food Access - Work with public, private, and non-profit partners to address challenges related to access to healthy foods within some areas of DeKalb.
- Quality of Life - Improve quality of life by increasing the amount of sidewalks and trails that connect homes to regional trail networks, nearby businesses, schools, parks, and other community services and amenities.
- Active Living - Create communities designed to encourage active living and healthy lifestyles.

Transportation

- Enable Healthy Communities and Improve Quality of Life - Leverage transportation infrastructure to encourage an active walkable lifestyle and overall improved quality of life. Reinforce trail connectivity and local neighborhood uses and services.

Arts, Culture, and Historic

- Preservation - Encourage the preservation and adaptive reuse of rural and historic structures or sites to promote a sense of place related to the heritage and rural character of communities.

Education

- Internships - Provide a variety of neighborhood based youth internships around urban ag, restoration forestry, and revitalized neighborhood scaled businesses.

DeKalb County Unified Plan - Specific Policy Recommendations

The following reflect the specific policy recommendations regarding VCD and the development of Conservation Villages.

Given the urgency to not lose the last undeveloped parcels of land in DeKalb County to sprawl, mass grading, and car dependent development, we present the following land use and zoning recommendations. These recommendations should be coordinated as part of the adoption of the 2050 CDP/ Unified Plan as well as the Zoning Code Update.

LAND USE

- ***Develop a mapping overlay*** that identifies priority single parcels 5 acres or greater and clustered parcels 5 acres or greater (represented in focus areas 1-5). Connect to this mapping area an initial site permit review process as a first step to any permit submittal informing an applicant of the advantages of the VCD and Conservation Village applications.
 - Note: to the extent possible place dis-incentives/restrictions on these properties to reduce or eliminate the possibilities of further suburban mass site grading or upzoning to single dense uses that will preclude walkability, worsen traffic issues, and preclude preservation of the last undeveloped forest areas.
- ***Use the Small Area Plan Tool*** to identify and adopt priority focus areas (of the 1-5 recommended) and then engage the Small Area Plan process to bring in key partnerships, stakeholders, and general phasing of the development and preservation areas and identify pilot project sites.
- ***Adopt TDR and PDR programs*** to allow sending and receiving areas within identified focus areas as required or insure that these challenges can be resolved with “internal – single project assemblages” that can function under proposed Conservation Village zoning districts.
- ***Clarify the Land Bank/Trust Charter*** around its role to facilitate acquisition and control of priority lands around a Land Bank working with other key stakeholders.
- ***Add “Rural Pocket Areas”*** to FLUM (focus areas 3 and 5)

ZONING

Conservation Village development to date in DeKalb County has been developed or is in the process of being developed in 3 primary projects (East Lake Commons, Pendergrast Farm, and Sherrydale Preserve).

East Lake Commons developed in 1997 (20 acre site with 67 units and 60% land area preserved) was rezoned to a Conservation Village using a PUD which no longer exists as a zoning district.

Pendergrast Farm is currently completing the build out of the last 5 of 20 units (8.7 acre site with 20 units and 70% preserved) was rezoned to RSM for the Conservation Village area only (2.5 acres) with a site specific plan preserving the remaining 70% of the land. In addition a conservation easement has been placed on the preserve.

Sherrydale Preserve in the process of being developed (5 acres with 70% preserved) was rezoned to RSM for the 1.5 acre 10 unit conservation hamlet site with the remaining 70% preserve protected as part of the site plan specific zoning. In addition a conservation easement will be placed on the preserve.

In order for private developers to implement Conservation Village Development today with very limited undeveloped land remaining, it is important that the process be simplified and key incentives offered, such as density credits.

The best way to simplify the process is to create a “by right” zoning district that allows Conservation Village development with no rezoning requirements and priority support through the LDP process.

Two “by-right” zoning districts would generally be required for Conservation Village Development on 5 acre or larger greenfield sites within Traditional or Suburban character areas.

The first is called “**Conservation Village Residential**” or **CVR** allowing Conservation Village development in residential zoned areas.

The second is called “**Conservation Village Mix Use**” or **CVMU** allowing Conservation Village development adjacent to or in neighborhood commercial or other commercial districts.

In order to alleviate concerns from neighborhoods, Conservation Village Districts would have to clearly offer more benefits than deficits to the surrounding neighborhood. Therefore, in order to draft successful districts, spelling out the benefits and how to mitigate any impacts is essential.

Add Neighborhood Benefits (included in the Pendergrast Farm and Sherrydale Preserve projects) include:

- Walking access for neighbors to be able to access preserved forest trails and urban gardens through HOA associate memberships or Land Trust memberships – access to gardens includes access to purchase produce or value added products, participate in farm to table neighborhood events including educational and internship opportunities for youth, etc.
- Increased green space view sheds from adjoining neighbors properties

Mitigate Impacts

A number of Conservation Village development best practices would be incorporated as part of the “By Right” zoning district. These include:

- Minimum transitional buffers equal or greater than the existing Traditional or Suburban yard requirements
- No additional traffic trips generated
- Land preservation ratios equal to “Conservation Metrics” table, etc.

Additional appropriate administrative options would be available as well.

Implementation of these two zoning districts would be applicable to single parcels or contiguous assemblage of parcels (acting as a single parcel/project).

Large assemblage of parcels is important, particularly in the rural pocket character areas. In order to minimize further fragmentation of forested lands with new roads and sewer, Conservation Villages are placed primarily to the edge of these Focus or Focus Sub Areas on existing roads and sewer.

Note: if some parcels are not contiguous, they can be linked to the other parcels through trail right of ways or a policy can be written that states that any parcels that are within a 5-10 minute walking radius and are part of a Conservation Village internal transfer program will conform for sending development rights internally without requiring a “TDR” program which can be more complicated to enact for relatively small areas/focus areas.

TDR Program – in the event that the above zoning mechanisms cannot be applied, then adopting a TDR program may be required.

Neighborhood Equity - Zoning Recommendations

The following are a mix of recommended residential compatible Conservation Village Uses in order to allow increased walkable access to key neighborhood amenities and services.

The uses below in neighborhoods can be limited to walking access only as they are not intended as “public commercial” but neighborhood based:

- Urban Ag Areas – Allow farm stand, neighborhood farm store, café, value add products, event barn, and education venues
- ACU’s – Expand home occupation to identifiable “live/work” spaces that offer a variety of neighborhood based services and uses that are primarily walkable and not car dependent
- Mix of Housing
 - Allow missing middle and senior housing in Conservation Villages working with “transitional density” requirements that require higher density housing (density greater than single family conservation lots) to be further away from existing single family homes adjacent to the site
 - Land Steward Housing – Allow urban agriculture and forest restoration preserve areas to have “land steward housing” for caretakers that is in addition to the density bonus.

Education

- Develop on-going VCD policy education through PECS & PWI committees.



PART VII - IMPLEMENTATION

The approach to implementing a strategic Village Conservation Community Plan for DeKalb County after the initial assessment is complete is to develop key partnerships with land owners, educational entities to emphasize the importance of the VCC, land trusts to help secure lands initially and VCC development partners both for the conservation villages and hamlet as well as the preserved areas.

These Partnerships can enhance the VCC outcome to increase conservation metrics , social equity and urban agriculture, economic resilience and many more community benefits. A rising movement is taking place in DeKalb County, Georgia. Momentum, funding, and inspired initiatives have sprung into action to address preservation, activation, access and education; with the goal of lasting positive change in the lives and landscapes of DeKalb county and beyond.

Previously dispersed efforts in the realms of education, land conservation, sustainability, equitable access to nature and healthy food, and ecological and edible landscapes have joined in collaborative partnership to support stewardship of the land and activate healthy communities. Through collaborative partnerships, the magnitude of impact is amplified. DeKalb is a potent local example of a much needed movement in counties across the nation.

Conservation Partnerships

Conservation partnerships can create an opportunity to exceed the minimum preservation required by the VCC metrics and facilitate restoration and education programs.

- County Land Trust/Land Bank: to hold properties for a longer time; making sure it is adequately structured to hold many of the conservation parcels while waiting to activate connectivity and community development to the parcel
- Non Profit Land trusts: Trust for Public Land, Conservation Fund, Southern Conservancy Trust,

Social equity partnerships

Working with nonprofit organizations with social equity missions to reinforce the VCC project in under-served neighborhoods.

- Affordable housing: ANDP, Mercy Housing, churches with church land, etc.

Urban Agricultural Partnerships

Working with urban agricultural nonprofit organizations will increase food access. Urban gardens and farms become “anchors” for neighborhoods to increase health, economic resilience and community identity.

- Food Well Alliance

EDUCATION AND MARKETING OUTREACH

Groups

- Education for elected officials
- Education for staff
- Education for general community buy-in
- Education for community buy-in at the scale of land-based community to identify support groups at smaller focus areas scale (business/churches/schools scale area) – who are players: YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs, etc.. business development partners, etc.

Programs

- Forest Restoration
- Stream Restoration
- Urban Ag Programs
- Maker Programs
- Health & Wellness Programs

**See Sherrydale CC programs*

Specific partners include:

Micro Life Institute

Promoting micro living through education, advocacy, research & demonstrations

<https://www.microlifeinstitute.org>

Georgia Organics

Our mission is to invest in organic farmers for the health of our communities and the land. We believe that farmers have the power to nurture and heal the land, people, and communities.

<https://www.georgiaorganics.org>

Roots Down

Building Productive Urban Landscapes is the foundation of our work. Our mission is for every person in the US to be within a 5-minute walk from fresh, nutritious food. We believe that virtually all urban spaces can be redesigned to incorporate edible landscaping and pollinator habitats. <https://www.rootsdownga.com/about>

Food Well Alliance

Food Well Alliance is a collaborative network of local leaders working together to build thriving community gardens and urban farms. Our mission is to provide resources and support to local growers to connect and build healthier communities. Our vision is for an equitable, local food ecosystem in which everyone can participate and benefit. We believe that community-driven agriculture is at the core of a strong urban food system and brings value to cities in metro Atlanta.

<https://www.foodwellalliance.org/about-food-well-alliance>

Children & Nature Network

The mission is to increase equitable access to nature so that children—and the natural world—can thrive. To increase equitable access to nature, we need to influence the big systems that impact children’s lives: city policies and programs; schools and early childhood programs; family access to safe, nearby green spaces and outdoor experiences; and youth development programs to inspire a new generation of diverse, nature-smart leaders. <https://www.childrenandnature.org/about/>

West Atlanta Watershed Alliance

As an all-volunteer organization, WAWA has successfully preserved over 400 acres of green space from development in Southwest Atlanta. Through an MOU with the City of Atlanta Bureau of Parks, Recreation, and Cultural Affairs, WAWA now operates the Outdoor Activity Center (OAC), a 26-acre urban forest preserve and nature center. WAWA is also the steward of the nearby 135-acre Cascade Springs Nature Preserve and the 200-acre Lionel Hampton Beecher Park; all in Southwest Atlanta. <https://www.wawa-online.org/>

page left blank, intentionally

Farmer D Consulting

Farmer D Consulting works alongside Village Habitat Design on land planning and community planning, prioritizing conservation and connectivity to agriculture and nature. Farmer D Consulting brings expertise in agriculture, design, land planning and activation to the mission of creating thriving communities, where farming, conservation and development bring food, nature and people together to create a healthier, more connected world. <https://farmerd.com/#/>

Citizen Farmers

Citizen Farmers is a movement that inspires, educates and empowers people to grow healthy food, build thriving communities and give back to the Earth. Citizen farmers organization is growing a worldwide coalition of citizen farmers who are on a mission to grow healthy food, build thriving communities and give back to the earth. <https://citizenfarmers.org/>

Citizen Farmer’s Academy launched a successful youth education initiative including a local pilot after school program. The program is designed to teach youth all the aspects of farming through a unique experience of starting their own farm enterprise. By following the Citizen Farmers framework they experience the whole growing cycle of a season, reap the fruits of their labor, share the harvest with their families and community and learn valuable life lessons both practical and personal. Participants will develop a deeper understanding and appreciation for how soil, farming and food affect their own personal health as well as the health of the planet. <https://citizenfarmers.org/academy>

Appendix

DEFINITIONS

Partial list:

Offset Density: The preservation of the majority of a site comprised of contiguous or semi-contiguous parcels with a village cluster development (conservation village)

Transfer of Development Rights: The preservation of the majority of a site comprised of non-contiguous parcels with the use of sending and receiving parcels

Sustainable Community: A community with shared values of helping to steward the land and social needs, optimizing availability of sustainable resources and maintaining walk and bikeable access to day to day businesses and community services

Agricultural Tourism: An accessory agricultural use, designed to attract visitors for the purpose of enjoyment, education, and/or active involvement in the activities or products of the farm or agricultural operation.

Apiary: A place where bees are kept; a collection of beehives.

Aquaponics: Any system that combines conventional aquaculture (raising aquatic animals such as snails, fish and shell fish) with hydroponics (cultivating plants in water without water) in a symbiotic environment.

Bed and Breakfast: See Inn.

Biodynamics: A holistic, ecological, and ethical approach to farming, gardening, food, and nutrition.

Café: A small restaurant, less than 5,000 sq.ft. in size, that sells light meals and drinks

Coffee House: An establishment that sells primarily coffee but may also include ancillary sales of light meals and other drinks.

Cottage Industry: A home-based occupation or service carried on by a resident within the principle dwelling in return for compensation, provided such use, occupation or service is incidental and secondary to the principal use of the dwelling as a residence.

Community Garden: A single piece of land containing individual plots that are leased to households within the community. Residents are responsible for the care and maintenance of their plot and may choose from an approved list of the plants to grow. The garden can also be managed by a professional farm/garden manager to ensure compliance with the established rules and regulations regarding the types of plants permitted and maintenance requirements to ensure the garden remains attractive, healthy, and free of pests and disease.

Members of the community may participate in the planting and harvesting of crops under the direction of farm staff. Produce may be sold and/or donated through farm stands, a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) Program; supply local school food programs and other non-profit organizations; or sold to local restaurants, grocers, specialty markets, or farmers markets.

Craft Industry: The creation of goods handmade by artisans or those skilled in a particular trade, which are operated independently and are not franchised. Materials and supplies are typically sourced locally or on-site to the greatest extent feasible. Craft industries can include food and non-food items such as jewelry, apparel, pottery, baskets, and similar goods.

Creamery: An establishment that manufactures milk or any product of milk.

Delicatessen: A store selling cold cuts, cheeses, and variety of salads and other prepared foods.

Farm: A plot of land where food is grown for the consumption of an entire community and/or for commercial sale.

Farm Incubator: A program that involves leasing out sections of farmland to individuals who will participate in a collective, hands-on education about farming and associated business practices to prepare them in establishing and operating their own farm.

Farm to Fork: a direct relationship between the farm and consumer where foods is grown and consumed within a local context.

Farm Stay: Overnight accommodations for 20 or fewer guests on a working farm. Accommodations may be provided in a farmhouse; Converted farm buildings; tents, yurts, or similar structures; or campsites. Meals may be provided depending on how the farm is operated. Participation in chores may or may not be required but participation in the farm by guests is encouraged. Farms may offer classes in cheese making, spinning, gardening, cooking, animal keeping and more.

Garden: A plot of land where food is grown for personal consumption.

Guest Room: A room without cooking facilities rented to transient visitors for a period not to exceed 30 days.

Greenhouse: A structure with walls and roof made primarily of transparent materials, such as glass, in which plants requiring regulated climatic conditions are grown.

Grocery: A retail store that sells primarily food but may also sell other household items such as cleaning supplies, personal care items, and more.

Horticulture: A branch of agriculture that deals with the art, science, technology, and business of growing plants. It includes the cultivation of medicinal plants, fruits, vegetables, nuts, seeds, herbs, sprouts, mushrooms, algae, flowers, seaweeds and non-food crops such as grass and ornamental trees and plants.

Hydroponics: A method of growing plants using mineral nutrient solutions, in water, without soil. Hydroponics is typically done indoors or in Greenhouses.

Inn: A dwelling unit or other facility with 20 or fewer guest rooms, which provides lodging and breakfast for temporary overnight occupants in return for compensation. Cooking provisions, such as a stove, oven or grill, are prohibited in the guest rooms, adjoining patios, balconies, and decks. May also be called a Bed and Breakfast.

Incidental Commercial Use: A commercial use that is directly related and secondary to the principal agricultural use located on the same parcel or project site.

Non-profit Office Incubator: A program that involves leasing out small office spaces with shared common facilities such as meeting rooms, office equipment, and more to provide small non-profits with affordable work space to start and grow non-profit ventures related to farming, food, nutrition, health, social justice, education, and sustainability.



Growing Communities

