

# **Chapter 6: Community Facilities & Services**



# Chapter 6: Community Facilities & Services

The Community Facilities and Services section helps the county and its municipalities shape future growth and development patterns. The availability of infrastructure will direct growth in a planned fashion and provide the necessary parts for a fully functioning community.

As Madison County continues to experience population growth, the demand for new and upgraded community facilities and services will also increase. It is difficult to effectively plan infrastructure expansion and addition because of changing growth patterns. Current trends and future projections must be carefully assessed in order to facilitate orderly growth throughout the county.

## 6.1 Purpose and Organization

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) has created a set of minimum standards for local comprehensive planning that outlines the information to be presented in each element of the comprehensive plan. The Community Facilities and Services element consists of the following ten sections:

- ◆ Transportation
- ◆ Water Supply and Treatment
- ◆ Sewerage System and Wastewater Treatment
- ◆ Solid Waste Management
- ◆ Public Safety
- ◆ Hospitals and Other Public Health Facilities
- ◆ Recreation
- ◆ General Government
- ◆ Educational Facilities
- ◆ Libraries and Other Cultural Facilities

Each of these sections will be inventoried and assessed according to the level of service that they provide to current residents. A list of specific goals and policies, identified primarily through the public participation process of the plan, will be included. The needs, goals and policies identified will form the basis of the strategies included in the Implementation Schedule.

## 6.2 Transportation

Goal: Provide an adequate transportation system that offers county residents a variety of transportation alternatives and provides appropriate infrastructure.

### 6.2.1 Inventory

The inventory of the transportation network will incorporate various modes of transportation, including the road network, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, public transportation, railroads, and airports.

Madison County covers 285 square miles of the Piedmont Plateau. The City of Danielsville is situated in the center of the county and is located 17 miles northeast of Athens, 80 miles northeast of Atlanta, and 87 miles

southwest of Greenville, South Carolina. As stated in the Economic Development chapter, approximately 75 percent of the Madison County labor force commutes outside of the county. With such a high volume of daily traffic it is important that the county provide, and maintain, an adequate transportation system.

## 6.2.2 Road Network

According to the 1993 Transportation Study of the Northeast Georgia Region<sup>1</sup>, Madison County housed over 694 miles of roadways. This figure represented the fourth highest total of the twelve-county region. The mileage can be analyzed at a smaller level revealing the amount of mileage by type of route. The county had 108 miles of state roads, 566 miles of county roads, and 20 miles of city streets.

The U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) classifies roads according to their function within the local highway network. Madison County contains the following road classifications:

- ◆ **Rural Principal Arterials:** These roads serve all types of trips and are defined as such according to traffic volume. They connect urban areas and provide an integrated network without stub connections.
- ◆ **Rural Minor Arterials:** These roads form a rural network linking cities, towns, and other traffic generators. Accommodates relatively high traffic speed with minimal interruptions to through-traffic.
- ◆ **Major Collectors:** Primarily serve the county rather than state traffic. Linked to intra county traffic generators such as, schools, parks and shopping centers.
- ◆ **Minor Collectors:** Serves county traffic and links local roads with major collectors. Links locally important traffic generators to the relatively isolated portions of the county.

**Scheduled Improvements to the Existing Road Network:** The Georgia DOT is divided into seven districts across the state which are responsible for operating and maintaining State routes within the local transportation system. Each district is responsible for planning, organizing and directing the activities of the district. Madison County lies within District 1, with the main office in Gainesville.

Table 6-1 lists the schedule of improvements for State routes in Madison County. It outlines the State Transportation Improvement Program initiatives scheduled for the following three fiscal years.

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<sup>1</sup>The Northeast Georgia Region consists of the following twelve counties: Barrow, Clarke, Elbert, Greene, Jackson, Jasper, Madison, Morgan, Newton, Oconee, Oglethorpe, and Walton.

Table 6-1

State Transportation Improvement Program: Madison County Schedule for Improvements FY 2001-2003				
Route No.	Type of Work	Location	Length in Miles	Status
SR 8	Widening from 2 to 4 lanes	FM CR 228 to CR 88	6.5	- PE underway* - ROW acquisition in 2001* - CST after 2003*
SR 8	Widening from 2 to 4 lanes	FM SR 106 to CR 228	4.3	- PE underway - ROW acquisition in 2001 - CST after 2003
SR 72	Widening from 2 to 5 lanes	FM Sr 172 to WCL of Comer	NA	- PE in 2001
SR 72	Widening from 2 to 4 lanes	FM WCL Comer to Broad River	NA	- PE in 2001
SR 106	Passing lanes	FM M.P. 1.35N of SR 106 to M.P. 2.55N of CR 177	1.2	- PE underway - ROW acquisition in 2001 - CST in 2003
CR 221	Bridge replacement	Brush Creek 2.2MI NE of Colbert	0.2	- PE underway - CST in 2003

\*PE = Preliminary Engineering; ROW = Right-of-Way; CST = Construction

The county is responsible for the operation and maintenance of all county roads. These roads are scheduled for improvements on a yearly basis according to need and cost.

### 6.2.3 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Madison County does not provide pedestrian or bicycle facilities in the unincorporated portions of the county. These facilities are provided, to varying degrees, by the municipalities.

Sidewalks exist within the incorporated areas but are underutilized because they are not part of a network. Citizen Advisory Committee members have expressed the desire for more sidewalks and bike paths to reduce the traffic volume within the communities.

### 6.2.4 Public Transportation

There is currently no form of public transportation available in Madison County or its municipalities. The Madison County Senior Center provides its clients with transportation service as part of the Center's program. Services include transportation to grocery stores, job sites, medical appointments and to and from the Senior Center. Also, the Northeast Georgia Regional Development Center administers a regional transportation program for all clients of the Department of Human Resources in Madison County.

### **6.2.5 Railroad**

Madison County is served by the CSX Railroad System along the Tucker to Abbeville, South Carolina corridor. The railroad travels through Hull, Colbert, Comer and Carlton. In the past decade the track has been surfaced and timbered and is reported to be in excellent condition. There are between fourteen and twenty-two trains that utilize the corridor daily.

All products that are transported by CSX are carried along the corridor including coal, automobile parts, various merchandise and chemicals. The greatest usage of the rail lines comes from inbound shipments of raw materials that may be too heavy, or bulky for other modes of transportation. The majority of finished goods are transported via truck. There is an increasing use of "piggyback" containers that can be placed on either a truck trailer or a railroad flatcar. CSX operates the Hulsey Yard, a "piggyback" transfer station in Atlanta, where containers are transferred to or from rail cars for long hauls.

A growing concern in North Georgia is the amount of traffic volume on major roadways. A proposed solution to these problems is the construction of commuter rail lines along identified corridors. The potential corridors are identified based on their current and projected traffic volumes. The proposed Atlanta-to-Athens corridor would provide Madison County residents with an alternative mode of transportation into the City of Atlanta from a rail terminal located in Athens.

### **6.2.6 Airports**

Madison County does not have commercial air service but is serviced by the Athens/Ben Epps Airport in Athens, Hartsfield International Airport in Atlanta, and the Greenville-Spartanburg Airport in Greer, South Carolina.

The Athens/Ben Epps Airport provides commuter passenger service to Charlotte, North Carolina on US Air Express and to Hartsfield International on Sky Bus Express. The two major airports in Atlanta and Greer, South Carolina provide commercial air service through a variety of airlines to major destination points worldwide. The average driving time from Madison County to Hartsfield International Airport is 113 minutes and to Greenville-Spartanburg Airport, 88 minutes.

### **6.2.7 Assessment**

One of the priorities identified by the Community Facilities Advisory Committee was to improve highway safety, particularly on roads extending through municipalities. The current speed along major roadways is considered dangerous and must be reduced. With all new construction and road improvements, traffic calming techniques should be identified, and wherever feasible, used.

To help increase the level of safety, increased signalization needs to be addressed at all railroad crossings, particularly those that are currently unguarded. The Georgia DOT identifies 35-40 public railroad crossings per year that require train-activated warning devices. They base their selection on a variety of factors that help to assess the level of safety for each crossing.

The transportation system has a major impact on the character of the community. One of the county's assets is its rural setting and county residents have expressed the need to preserve this quality. The Citizens Advisory Committee would like to see all transportation projects incorporate aesthetic preservation to help maintain the county's rural character.

As the county's population grows, so too does its traffic congestion. As previously mentioned, approximately 75 percent of the county's labor force commutes outside of the county for employment. There is a need to promote the implementation of ride sharing programs to help reduce the amount of traffic volume experienced on the major roadways.

The county, and its municipalities, need to incorporate a multi-modal approach to future transportation investments. The provision for sidewalks, bike lanes and multi-purpose trails provide residents with alternative

modes of transportation as well as recreational opportunities. This will help to decrease the demand on the existing road network and lead to safer, more liveable communities.

### **Needs**

- Utilize better roadway design to help decrease speeds along major roadways.
- Preserve the aesthetics along roadways.
- Increase the overall safety of railroad crossings throughout the county.
- Provide an adequate supply of pedestrian and bicycle facilities and trails and sidewalks in residential areas.
- Promote car pooling as a viable mode of transportation to county residents commuting to Athens-Clarke County.

### **Policies**

- Evaluate methods for traffic calming along major roadways. Look at infrastructure modifications such as traffic circles, and speed humps.
- Promote the benefits of car pooling to commuting residents as a means to decrease traffic volumes.
- Evaluate transportation improvement projects according to their potential effects on the rural character of the area.
- Promote the preservation of aesthetic qualities along federal, state and county roads.
- Work with the Department of Transportation to identify dangerous railroad crossings.

### **Implementation**

- Identify potentially dangerous railroad crossings and work with DOT to assess safety issues. (Madison County and the cities of Carlton, Colbert, Comer, and Hull; initiate in 2002; estimated cost 1,000; potential funding - local)
- Examine the feasibility of including traffic calming techniques in infrastructure improvements. (Madison County and the cities of Carlton, Colbert, Comer, Danielsville, Hull, and Ila; initiate in 2002; estimated cost 1,000; potential funding - local)
- Determine the potential demand for implementation of a ride sharing program departing from the Government Complex in Danielsville. (Madison County; initiate in 2001; estimated cost 500; potential funding - county)
- Construct sidewalks along main streets. (City of Colbert - carried over from 1995 short term work program; initiate in 2002; estimated cost 25,000; potential funding - local, DCA, DOT)
- Place sidewalk adjacent to Campbell Street. (City of Ila - carried over from 1995 short term work program; initiate in 2002; estimated cost 30,000; potential funding - local, DCA, DOT)

## 6.3 Water Supply and Treatment

Goal: Provide adequate public water supply and treatment particularly in those areas that have been identified as high growth areas, both residential and commercial.

### 6.3.1 Inventory

Public water is currently provided by Madison County and the cities of Carlton, Colbert, Comer, Danielsville, and Ila. The Town of Hull does not provide public water. It has been receiving water from the Athens-Clarke water system and from private wells.

### 6.3.2 Madison County

Since the 1996 revision of the Comprehensive Plan, Madison County has invested in two public water supply and treatment systems. The first was constructed to provide the Madico Industrial Park with a treated water system. This allowed the county to actively recruit businesses to the industrial park promoting the new water supply and treatment system. Water is provided from one well site and the county constructed a 150,000 gallon elevated storage tank. The system currently serves seven customers with six inch waterlines.

The other county system was recently constructed to service the Hull/Sanford Elementary School, along Fortson Store Road. This system currently only serves one customer, the Hull/Sanford School, but is fully expandable and situated in one of the county's designated growth areas. Much of the future residential development is anticipated to occur in the Hull area and this system will provide service to new residential developments. Water is drawn from one well and stored in a 300,000 gallon-elevated tank. The system was constructed with twelve inch waterlines.

### 6.3.3 Carlton

The City of Carlton provides water to its 320 customers through four wells. The city completed major renovations to its water system in 1998 and has no immediate plans to expand or improve the current infrastructure. Water is chemically treated at each of the well sites and is stored in a 100,000 gallon-elevated tank. On average, the water demand is 60,000 gallons per day.

### 6.3.4 Colbert

The City of Colbert contracts with a private water company to provide its water service. The system has undergone significant change in the past five years, which was largely funded by the State DOT and the water company. The city added six and eight inch waterlines to accommodate some of the new growth, and replaced the existing two inch waterlines with six and eight inch lines.

The system currently serves 420 customers with four wells and an average demand of 100,000 gallons per day. Water is chemically treated at each well site and stored in a 100,000 gallon-elevated tank.

### 6.3.5 Comer

The City of Comer provides water service to its 450 customers using three wells located within the city limits. Water is chemically treated at each well site and stored in a 150,000 gallon-elevated tank. The average daily consumption is 100,000 gallons.

### **6.3.6 Danielsville**

The City of Danielsville provides water to its 430 customers using two wells. Water is chemically treated at each well site and stored in a 200,000 gallon-elevated tank that has been constructed since the previous plan.

### **6.3.7 Hull**

The Town of Hull does not provide a public water system and many of its residents utilize private wells. Some of its residents have been using the Athens-Clarke County water system, which will be connected to the Hull/Sanford system in April 2001.

### **6.3.8 Ila**

The City of Ila obtains its water from one well and its system serves 165 customers. Water is chemically treated at the well site and is stored in a 100,000 gallon-elevated tank. The average daily consumption is approximately 40,000 gallons with peak consumption reaching 50,000 gallons per day.

### **6.3.9 Assessment**

Since the 1996 Plan there has been major expansion to public water systems, most notably the county construction of two elevated water tanks. There was no activity in Hull and Ila over the past five years but Carlton, Colbert, Comer, and Danielsville all underwent major expansions to their respective systems.

Carlton expanded its system by approximately 3.5 miles and installed a new 100,000 gallon-elevated tank. It reports that the current system adequately serves the residents needs and there is no immediate plan for expansion.

Colbert added approximately 3 miles of 6" and 8" water lines to service the subdivision expansion and replaced approximately 5 miles of 2" lines with 6" and 8" lines. Colbert reports a need for a new source of water and future expansion of its current system to service new subdivisions.

Comer added approximately 2 miles of 6" and 8" lines in the northeast portion of the city and added a third well. They report that their current system has an adequate capacity to service the immediate needs of the residents.

Danielsville constructed a new 200,000 gallon elevated water tank to better serve its residents needs. The system currently adequately serves the residents and there are no immediate plans for expansion.

#### **Needs**

- The county, and all of the municipalities, need to ensure there is an adequate water supply available prior to initiating any new developments.
- The county needs to continue to search for additional water sources and to explore multi-jurisdictional water supplies.
- County residents need to be educated on the benefits of conserving water. It is important that citizens are aware of the consequences resulting from the overuse of the existing supply.
- Identify other methods of purifying water other than chlorine.

## **Policies**

- Ensure that there is an adequate water supply before service is expanded.
- Educate residents on the importance of water conservation.
- Identify the potential to purify water using alternative methods to chlorine.
- Explore potential partnerships with adjacent counties to create a regional water source.
- Explore the feasibility of a county partnership with a private contractor for water distribution.
- Expand County and municipal water systems within each jurisdictions service delivery area as part of the long-term growth strategies.

## **Implementation**

- Expand water system to incorporate new subdivision developments within the existing Service Delivery Area. (The cities of Colbert and Ila; initiate in 2002; estimated cost 150,000; potential funding - local, DCA)
- Replace existing 2" lines with 4". (City of Ila - carried over from the 1995 short term work program; initiate in 2002; estimated cost 35,000; potential funding - DCA, local)
- Explore the availability of a new water source. (Colbert; initiate in 2001; estimated cost 10,000; potential funding - local)
- Continue to participate in all discussions concerning the potential for a regional reservoir for Madison County. (Madison County; ongoing)

## **6.4 Sewerage System and Wastewater Treatment**

Goal: Provide adequate public sewerage systems in Comer and Danielsville and work to expand and upgrade the facilities to accommodate anticipated growth.

### **6.4.1 Inventory**

The cities of Comer and Danielsville are the only municipalities that provide public sewerage systems and wastewater treatment facilities. Residents in unincorporated Madison County and the municipalities of Carlton, Colbert, Ila and Hull use individual septic systems.

### **6.4.2 Comer**

The City of Comer provides a municipal sewerage system to city residents. It currently serves 450 customers, which represents 99% of the city's water customers. It treats the water using an oxidation pond located in the southeast portion of the city. The system has a capacity of 90,000 gallons per day with an average demand of 62,000 gallons per day.

### **6.4.3 Danielsville**

The City of Danielsville public sewerage system serves 140 customers, which represents approximately 33% of the total water customers. Water is treated using an oxidation pond located behind the Madison County High School. It has an average demand of 75,000 gallons per day.

### **6.4.4 Assessment**

Danielsville has added sewer lines to accommodate the new residential developments in the northwest section of the city. The city would like to expand the system with the goal of having all of its water customers on the sewerage system.

Comer has not expanded the system in the past five years but is in the process of doing so. They are also planning on upgrading the current wastewater facility.

Committee members expressed the desire to implement sewerage systems within the high density regions to decrease the reliance on septic systems. This is a long term goal associated with the expansion of the county water infrastructure.

#### **Needs**

- Concentrate development in areas with access to public sewerage systems.
- High growth areas within the unincorporated county should be identified as a priority area for the implementation of a public sewerage system as part of the county's long-term growth strategy.

#### **Policies**

- Encourage development to occur in areas with access to public sewerage systems and extend and expand the system as needed to accommodate population increases.
- Extend sewer lines as needed as part of long - term growth strategy.

#### **Implementation**

- Initiate study to determine the costs associated with the implementation of a county public sewerage system to coincide with the planned county public water system. (Madison County; initiate in 2002; estimated cost 10,000; potential funding - local)
- Extend sewer lines as needed as part of long-term growth strategy. (The cities of Comer and Danielsville; ongoing; estimated cost unknown; potential funding - local, DCA)
- Upgrade the wastewater treatment facility. (Comer; initiate in 2003; estimated cost 50,000; potential funding - local, DCA)

## 6.5 Solid Waste Management

Goal: Provide adequate solid waste management services to county and municipal residents and promote the importance of recycling.

### 6.5.1 Inventory

Madison County does not provide solid waste collection services but does operate a transfer station. They have contracted with United Waste to haul solid waste to the Banks County landfill. The transfer station serves as a recyclable drop-off center.

The cities of Carlton, Colbert and Ila contract with private firms to collect waste and Comer and Danielsville provide city staff for waste collection.

The county funds a Clean and Beautiful Commission that is active in solid waste issues in the county. They are located in the Agricultural Building along Highway 29 in Danielsville and they have a recyclable drop-off center in front of their facility. The Commission promotes conservation, recycling and composting through various programs in conjunction with the 4-H Club and the Broad River Action Group.

### 6.5.2 Assessment

Committee members would like to see an increase in the number of recyclable drop-off stations throughout the county. There currently are not enough stations and recycling needs to be better promoted.

Madison County participates in the Northeast Georgia Solid Waste Authority, which is primarily concerned with waste disposal, collection, recycling and composting. The county is striving to increase the availability of recyclable stations and is identifying potential partners in a joint county landfill site.

#### Needs

- Make recycling more convenient by increasing the number of drop-off stations.
- Increase the awareness of recycling, and its benefits, to county residents.
- Participate in regional efforts to minimize solid waste.
- Continue participation in the Northeast Georgia Solid Waste Authority.
- Promote recycling and composting as part of a larger campaign to increase environmental awareness throughout the county.
- Expand the number of recycling drop-off stations.

#### Implementation

- Establish three recycling drop-off centers. (Madison County - carried over from 1995 short term work program; initiate in 2001; estimated cost 20,000; potential funding - local)

- Promote the activities of the Clean and Beautiful Commission to increase citizen awareness of recycling benefits. (Madison County and all municipalities; Initiate 2001; estimated cost 500; potential funding - local)
- Establish an efficient recycling program in cooperation with the county taking into consideration distance, number of different categories and products within categories, ease of identification, and enforceable penalties for noncompliance. (City of Hull - carried over from 1995 short term work program; ongoing)

## 6.6 Public Safety

On June 1, 1999, the county began operations on their Emergency-911 dispatching system. All emergency calls for law enforcement, fire protection, or emergency medical services are handled by the 911 system.

Average response times for all calls have been estimated at 13 minutes, 11 seconds. Fire calls are 5 minutes, 5 seconds and emergency medical services calls are 6 minutes, 48 seconds.

### 6.6.1 Law Enforcement

Goal: Provide adequate law enforcement services to county citizens and update equipment and personnel as needed.

#### Inventory

Madison County has a Sheriff's Department, located in Danielsville, serving the entire county. The Department provides service to all incorporated municipalities on demand. The cities of Colbert, Comer and Danielsville provide supplemental police protection.

The Sheriff's Department is staffed with one sheriff, two investigators, nineteen uniformed officers, one drug investigator, eight jailors, three secretaries, and twelve dispatchers. The Department has twenty-one patrol cars.

The City of Colbert contracts with the county to provide supplemental police protection within the city limits during the hours of 7:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. seven days a week, and from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. four days a week. All calls are dispatched through the 911 system and the department is based in the City Hall.

The City of Comer has a police department that provides an officer on duty between the hours of 6:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. seven days a week. All calls are dispatched through the 911 system and the department is located in the Comer City Hall. It is staffed with one police chief and two sworn officers. The department utilizes three patrol cars.

The City of Danielsville has a police department located in the Danielsville City Hall. It is staffed with one officer and it utilizes one patrol car. All calls are received either through the 911 system or through direct calls to the station.

#### Assessment

The Sheriff's Department has received significant upgrades since the 1996 plan. The staff has increased by 20, including an additional seven uniformed officers, one additional investigator and an additional drug investigator. In addition the Department received an additional five patrol cars. The current detention center is at capacity with 16 male inmates and therefore inadequate to accommodate additional demands. Construction is slated to

begin this year (2001) on a new detention facility capable of housing 68 inmates. Currently, Sheriff Lowe reports that the department adequately serves the county's needs.

Chief Barry Reed, of the Comer Police Department reports that the facility has received upgrades to its computer system since the previous plan but that the facility is too small for the department's needs. He expressed the desire to increase the staff by one full-time officer and one part-time officer and for another patrol car.

There has been no upgrade to the Danielsville Police Department but Chief Joe Merk expressed the desire to increase the staff to adequately monitor the increased amount of traffic flow through the city.

The Emergency 911 system is relatively new to the county and they are continuing to monitor its effectiveness. The 911 director, David Camp, has expressed the desire to upgrade the radio system within the next five years.

### **Needs**

- Invest in law enforcement agencies to ensure adequate protection.
- Enforce traffic regulations to increase the level of safety on public roadways.

### **Policies**

- Invest in law enforcement agencies as necessary to provide adequate personnel, equipment and training.
- Upgrade police department personnel and equipment in Danielsville and Comer as part of the long - term plans.
- Enforce traffic regulations on major roadways to increase traffic safety.

### **Implementation**

- Construct new jail. (Madison County; Ongoing; estimated cost \$3.2 million; funding - SPLOST, local)
- Upgrade E-911 radio systems. (Madison County; initiate in 2003; estimated cost \$50,000; potential funding - SPLOST)

## **6.6.2 Fire Protection**

Goal: Provide adequate fire protection throughout the county and continue to upgrade personnel, equipment and facilities as needed.

### **Inventory**

Madison County has eleven volunteer fire departments throughout the county to provide service to both the incorporated and unincorporated areas. There is also a detachment of the Georgia Forestry Commission that combats woodland, wildland and agricultural fires.

All departments, collectively, have approximately 200 volunteers and they are located in; Carlton, Colbert, Comer, Danielsville, Hull, Ila, Harrison District, Pocatigo, Shiloh, Collins District, and Neese/Sanford. Each department receives funding from the county to provide services and derives the remainder of its funding through private donations and fund raisers. Each department's primary

coverage area is within a five-mile radius of the fire station and the secondary coverage area is to provide backup to all other departments when needed.

### **Assessment**

All Madison County Fire Departments have received upgrades in the following areas: personnel, equipment, facilities, or all three. However, in order to provide adequate fire service throughout the county these areas must be upgraded on a regular basis. Upgrades are essential to help decrease the rating given to each department by the Insurance Services Organization (ISO). These ratings are not legal standards but are recommendations that insurance companies can use to set up fire insurance rates. Many factors are weighed in the application of an ISO rating, including the existence of an adequate water system, size of water mains, size and type of buildings within a community, presence or absence of a fire alarm system, method of handling and receiving calls, whether fire fighters are paid or volunteers, and average response time.

The ISO ratings vary between departments based on their proximity to a public water system. Departments within the major communities have a lower rating than those in the unincorporated areas of the county. The continuing upgrades to equipment and personnel training will help to reduce the ISO ratings of the county's departments.

New subdivision developments must incorporate greater recognition of fire safety regulations into their design. The number of access points along roadways and the interval of fire hydrant placement must be consistent with the fire code. No roadway should exceed 1,250 feet without a second entrance and fire hydrants should be placed at, no more than, 500 feet intervals in subdivisions.

The county has installed dry hydrants throughout the county and now has 38 hydrants throughout all 11 districts. As the unincorporated areas continue to experience residential expansion, it is important to continue adding dry hydrants to ensure adequate fire protection.

Since the 1996 Plan, the Comer and Ila Volunteer Fire Departments have moved into new facilities. They were constructed in conjunction with the new ambulance substations, discussed in section 6.6.3.

### **Needs**

- Invest in fire equipment, personnel, and training to ensure adequate protection.
- The county needs to incorporate specific fire safety regulations into its zoning ordinance, limiting the length of streets with only one access point and enforcing the distance interval between fire hydrants.
- Increase the number of dry hydrants to provide greater fire protection to unincorporated areas and to help lower the Insurance Services Organization (ISO) rating.

### **Policies**

- Continue to invest in better fire equipment and personnel training to work toward lowering the Insurance Services Organization rating.
- Work with developers and the County Planning Commission to develop subdivision design standards to increase fire protection.

## Implementation

- Add dry hydrants. (Madison County; initiate in 2001; estimated cost approximately \$1,500 per hydrant - varies according to distance from water source; potential funding - local)
- Amend zoning ordinance to require a maximum of 500 feet between fire hydrants in new subdivision development. (Madison County and the cities of Carlton, Comer, Danielsville, and Hull; initiate in 2002; cost estimate \$1,500 per jurisdiction; potential funding - local)
- Amend zoning ordinances to require subdivisions to have a second entrance if the road exceeds 1250 feet. (Madison County and the cities of Carlton, Comer, Danielsville, and Hull; initiate in 2002; cost estimate \$1,500 per jurisdiction; potential funding - local)

### 6.6.3 Emergency Medical Services

Goal: Provide adequate emergency medical services throughout the county and continue to upgrade facilities, personnel and equipment as needed.

#### Inventory

The Madison County Emergency Medical Services has three ambulance stations. The base station is located in Danielsville and two new substations are in Comer and Ila.

The stations serve the entire county and receive all calls through the 911 system. The average response time is 6 minutes, 48 seconds to the scene and the department receives approximately 2,400 calls per year.

The emergency medical services department is staffed with 1 director, 1 assistant director, 2 full-time emergency medical technicians, 9 part-time emergency medical technicians, 7 full-time paramedics, and 10 part-time paramedics.

Madison County has an active volunteer rescue squad with approximately 100 members. Members are trained in crash victim extrication, specialized rescues, hazardous materials, infection control, first responder, first aid, and CPR.

The Madison County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) serves as the coordinating agency for all emergency/rescue services in the county. EMA works with emergency medical services, the rescue squad, and all volunteer fire departments to provide mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery for any natural or manmade disaster that may occur within the county. Coordinating efforts between these agencies provides public education, hazard analysis, planning, resource management, training, and exercises to ensure efficient response. The agency is staffed by county employees and provides service to the entire county.

#### Assessment

The level of service increased significantly since the previous plan through the construction of the 2 new substations and the installation of the 911 system. These improvements led to a decrease in average response time from 10 minutes in 1995 to 6 minutes, 48 seconds in 2000. Staff has been increased by 6 full-time personnel and a new ambulance has been purchased.

These upgrades were desperately needed in order to provide an adequate level of service. However, current staff is insufficient to provide the desired level of services to county residents. The department would like to hire additional full-time professional staff and increase the number of available ambulances.

### Need

- The county needs to continue to invest in emergency medical services to provide adequate medical assistance county wide.

### Policy

- Invest in Emergency Medical Services as necessary to provide adequate personnel, equipment, training, and facilities. (Part of long-term strategy to improve EMS services county wide)

## 6.7 Hospitals and Other Public Health Facilities

Goal: Provide adequate health care facilities that serve the population's needs.

### 6.7.1 Inventory

Madison County does not have hospital service. Residents must go to Athens, Royston, Commerce, or Elberton. The county's health department provides preventive care services for county residents and immunization programs in the school system. In addition, the County Sanitarian monitors the placement of septic systems and investigates complaints related to water quality. The Madison County Health Department has a branch office in Colbert that provides the same preventive care services.

The Madison County Senior Center is located along SR 98, northwest of Danielsville. The 6,800 square foot facility was constructed in 1995 using a Community Development Block Grant. The center offers nutrition education, congregate meals, information and referral services, home delivered meals, health information, transportation, arts and crafts, and health and fitness programs. The Center is staffed with a director, assistant director, and a transportation director. It obtains funding from the Older Americans Act and local funds.

The Madison County Mental Retardation Center is about to move to a new location along SR 98 northwest of Danielsville. The new facility was completed in 2000 and funded with a Community Development Block Grant. The Center serves 53 people on a daily basis and provides outreach work to clients in the community, currently serving 12 people. The Center offers the following programs including basic self-help and personal care skills, development of motor skills and coordination, learning to get along in the community, adult workshops, and planned recreational activities. It is staffed by 1 supervisor, 1 social worker, 1 secretary, 1 program supervisor, and 7 instructors. The Center tries to accommodate all clients to avoid having a patient waiting list.

The Cobb Memorial Hospital in Comer is a 116-bed long-term care health facility providing group housing for the elderly.

The Athens Regional Hospital has a satellite medical center located in Colbert. It offers a wide array of health care options for local residents.

## 6.7.2 Assessment

There are a wide variety of health care services provided in Madison County, and residents are located in close proximity to state of the art medical facilities in Athens. Public facilities need to be maintained and upgraded as needed to continue to provide adequate health services to county residents.

The Senior Center is relatively new, with its construction in 1995, and is reportedly in good condition. Once the clients for the Mental Retardation Center are allowed to occupy the new facility the level of service is expected to significantly increase. Upon occupation of the new facility the Center will commence a new program that allows lower functioning residents to earn money through job placements in the community.

### Need

- Existing public health facilities need to be improved, if required, to ensure that they are able to operate to their fullest potential providing health services to all county residents.

### Policy

- Seek funding options to improve existing facilities.

### Implementation

- Utilize the Community Development Block Grant program to construct adequate public health facilities. (Madison County; initiate in 2004; cost unknown; potential funding - local, DCA)

## 6.8 Recreation

Goal: Improve existing facilities and expand the park system to better serve the expanding community needs.

### 6.8.1 Inventory

The Madison County Recreation Department is located along Highway 98 northwest of Danielsville. It is staffed by 1 director, 1 assistant director, 1 program director, 1 maintenance coordinator, 1 assistant maintenance coordinator, 1 park attendant, 2 part-time maintenance technicians, 2 part-time administrative assistants, and 45-50 part-time seasonal staff. The Department obtains its funding from the County Board of Commissioners, participation and rental fees, and concession funds.

The Department operates and maintains three community parks: the Sammy A. Haggard Park on Highway 98; Diamond Hill Park on Highway 29, south of Danielsville; and the Cliff Mize Park on Colbert Road off Highway 29.

Sammy A. Haggard Park contains the department's offices and is the largest of the three facilities. It is approximately 30 acres and contains baseball, softball, and football fields, tennis courts, batting cages, picnic pavilions, and playground equipment. It houses a maintenance shop, public restrooms and concession stands.

Diamond Hill Park contains 2 baseball fields, public restrooms, concession stands, picnic pavilions, and playground facilities. The Cliff Mize Park contains a baseball field, with public restrooms and a concession stand.

The Department has a strong relationship with the County School Board and utilizes the school gymnasiums to house many of their athletic programs. In addition to the school facilities the Department utilizes the gymnasium in the old Colbert elementary school.

In addition to the county facilities, the cities of Comer and Colbert each have municipal parks offering a variety of recreational activities.

## **6.8.2 Assessment**

Significant renovations have occurred to all of the recreation facilities operated by the County Recreation Department. However, the amount of park acreage has not increased. According to the National Recreation and Parks Association the minimum standards of park acreage to population should be approximately 10 acres per 1,000 population. With an estimated population of 25,000 and approximately 49 acres of parks the Madison County ratio is approximately 2 acres per 1,000 population.

The increased demand for youth soccer has placed a strain on the current fields because there is not a field specifically designated for this activity. The Department would like to construct a soccer complex to house all soccer activities to lessen the burdens on the existing baseball and football fields. The Department would like to construct a multipurpose building to house the Department of Recreation offices, meeting rooms, a gymnasium, and assembly areas for a variety of community functions.

The Department is negotiating with the cities of Comer and Colbert to operate and maintain their municipal parks, and to lease the gymnasium from the old Colbert school.

### **Needs**

- Acquire additional land to provide sufficient recreational acreage.
- Provide more trails for walking and bicycling.
- Construct a recreational area specifically for use as a soccer facility.
- A multi-purpose facility recreational building that could serve the entire county and provide services that are not currently available.
- Increase the irrigation capabilities of the existing parks.

### **Policies**

- Expand the amount of park acreage.
- Provide more diverse recreational opportunities.

### **Implementation**

- Expand Sammy A. Haggard Park using adjacent county lands. (Madison County; initiate in 2002;)
- Create irrigation ponds in all parks other than Sammy A. Haggard. (Madison County; initiate in 2003; estimated cost \$50,000; potential funding - local, LDF)
- Construct multi-purpose trails for bicycling and walking. (Madison County; initiate in 2003; estimated cost \$25,000; potential funding - local, LDF, DNR)

- Examine the feasibility of constructing a multi-purpose building for Madison County. (Madison County; initiate in 2003)
- Increase service fees at recreation parks to support funding for new recreation facilities. (City of Hull - carried over from the 1995 short term work program; ongoing)

## 6.9 General Government

Goal: Provide an adequate supply of government facilities.

### 6.9.1 Inventory

The county renovated the old Danielsville elementary school in May of 1997 and relocated many of the county offices into the new 25,000 square foot facility. The new facility houses the Board of Commissioners, the County Courthouse, Planning and Zoning Administration, the Tax Commissioner, Superior, Magistrate and Probate judges, District Attorney, Tag Office, and Voter Registrar's Office.

Carlton utilizes the volunteer fire department as its city hall. Colbert, Comer, Danielsville, and Hull all continue to use their existing facilities with no immediate plans for expansion or construction. The City of Ila plans to renovate its city hall because the fire department has recently moved into a new facility.

### 6.9.2 Assessment

The new county government complex has relieved many of the overcrowding problems experienced in the old multipurpose government facility. The City of Ila plans to expand to fully utilize the existing space. All other facilities are in good shape and there are no plans for upgrades.

#### Needs

- Ensure that government facilities can adequately serve the demands placed on them.

#### Policy

- Upgrade government facilities as needed to provide adequate service to county residents.

#### Implementation

- Expand city hall to fully utilize the available space from the vacated fire department. (City of Ila; initiate in 2001; cost dependant upon size of expansion; potential funding - local)
- Explore the possibility of utilizing the old courthouse for government uses if it cannot be used for economic development purposes. (Madison County; Initiate 2003)

## 6.10 Educational Facilities

Goal: Provide an adequate supply of educational facilities to provide a safe and accessible learning environment.

### 6.10.1 Inventory

The county has added another elementary school, Hull-Sanford Elementary, bringing the total in the county school system to seven. The other facilities are the Ila Elementary, Comer Elementary, Colbert Elementary, Danielsville Elementary, Madison County Middle School, and Madison County High School.

The county provides child development services through the Head Start program. Located in Colbert, the program offers pre-schooling to economically disadvantaged children aged 3-5. It is staffed by 1 director, 1 center manager, 2 family service workers, 4 lead teachers, 4 assistant teachers, 1 disability support teacher, 1 full-time cook, 1 part-time cook, and 1 part-time bus driver. The center serves approximately 80 students and provides service for 6.5 hours per day with 2 meals per day.

The Madison County Learning Center, located in Comer, provides adult education programs for county residents aged 16 years and over. It is a satellite center for the Athens Area Technical Institute offering GED training, basic adult literacy classes, job search training, and vocational school preparation. It staffs 1 full-time teacher and served approximately 150 students in 2000.

Colleges and universities in the Madison County area include the University of Georgia and the Athens Area Technical College in Athens, The Georgia Institute of Technology and Georgia State University in Atlanta, Brenau College in Gainesville, and Emmanuel College in Franklin Springs.

Table 6-2

Inventory of Schools			
School	Location	Capacity	99-00 Enrollment
High School	Madison St., Danielsville	1500	1178
Middle School	Madison St., Danielsville	1025	1087
Danielsville Elem.	Madison St.	550	630
Colbert Elem.	Colbert School Rd.	450	661
Comer Elem.	Gholston St.	400	380
Ila Elem.	Sewell Mill Rd.	425	539
Hull-Sanford Elem.	Fortson Store Rd.	537	-

As Table 6-2 indicates, many of the school facilities were operating at or near capacity in 1999-2000. The Hull-Sanford Elementary will help relieve some of the pressure but there is an immediate need for expansion of the middle school.

## **6.10.2 Assessment**

In 1999, the high school was expanded by 12,628 square feet and the middle school by 6,090 square feet. The middle school is operating at capacity and the high enrollments in all five of the county's elementary schools suggest that there is going to be an increased enrollment at the county middle school. The middle school needs to be either further expanded or another facility needs to be constructed to adequately serve county residents.

Temporary classroom additions may need to be used in the elementary schools to provide adequate space for current and future student populations. The Board of Education has identified the possibility of classroom additions for the Danielsville and Comer Elementary Schools.

The Learning Center is adequately staffed for the Center's needs and there are no immediate plans for expansion.

The Head Start Program has expressed the desire to relocate to a more central location in Danielsville. The centralized location would allow them to serve more children in the county and allow the creation of a supplemental program called Early Head Start, incorporating children under the ages of three.

### **Needs**

- Ensure that all educational facilities are adequately equipped to handle the existing and future demands.
- Expand the facilities as needed to accommodate the expected increase in enrollments.

### **Policies**

- Invest in educational facilities as the need arises.
- Continue to support the Madison County Learning Center.
- Facilitate the transition of the Head Start Program into a more adequate facility to allow it to better serve the county youth.

### **Implementation**

- Provide classroom additions to those schools most in need. (Madison County Board of Education; initiate in 2001; estimated cost - \$63,500 per addition; potential funding - local)
- Examine the feasibility of constructing a new middle school. (Madison County Board of Education; initiate in 2001)
- Renovate the old elementary school to provide an adequate facility for the Head Start Program. (City of Colbert; initiate in 2001; estimated cost \$150,000; potential funding - local, DCA, LDF)
- Assist county in enriching educational programs and facilities through the investigation of grant sources for continual upgrading of school facilities and instructional materials.

## 6.11 Libraries and Other Cultural Facilities

Goal: Provide equitable access to library services for all residents of the county.

### 6.11.1 Inventory

The Madison County Library is the only such facility in the county. It is located on Highway 98, west of Danielsville and is a branch of the Athens Regional Library System. It is fully automated, and provides computer access to the public. It currently houses over 40,000 volumes along with a variety of audio and visual accessories. It employs 1 branch manager and 3 branch assistants.

### 6.11.2 Assessment

The facility is reportedly in good shape and is in no need of expansions or upgrades. The library's system is about to become part of the statewide network increasing the level of services available to county residents.

The library would like to develop outreach programs aimed at promoting the library's services to minority populations throughout the county.

#### Needs

- Better promote Madison County Public Library's services.
- Develop a community outreach program to promote the library to minority populations.
- Renovate the old elementary school in Colbert to create a public auditorium.

#### Policies

- Invest in the library as the need arises.
- Promote the library to minority populations to increase their access to library services.

#### Implementation

- Develop community outreach programs to increase awareness of library programs and services. (Madison County; initiate in 2002; estimated costs \$2,000; potential funding - local)
- Renovate old elementary school to include a 350-seat auditorium. (City of Colbert; initiate in 2001; estimated costs \$150,000; potential funding - local, DCA, LDF)

