



**Vinings Vision:
A Master Plan for a Georgia
Historic Community**

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Vinings Vision Plan Final Report

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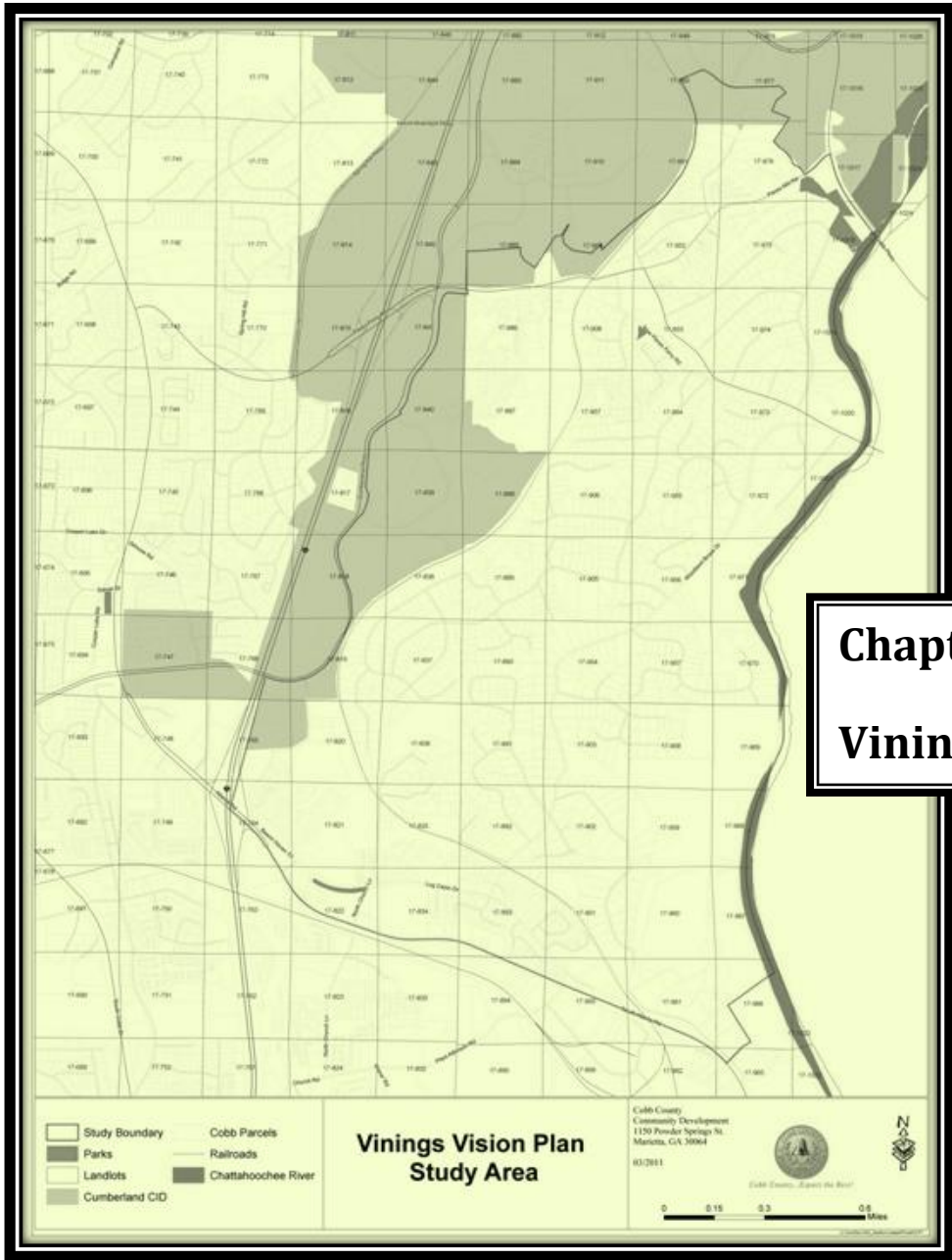
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Chapter 1
Vinings Context

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- Parks
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- Chattahoochee River

**Vinings Vision Plan
Study Area**

Cobb County
Community Development
1120 Powder Springs Rd
Marietta, GA 30064
03/2011

(Cobb County - Beyond the Best)
0 0.15 0.3 0.5 Miles



Chapter 1 – Vinings Context

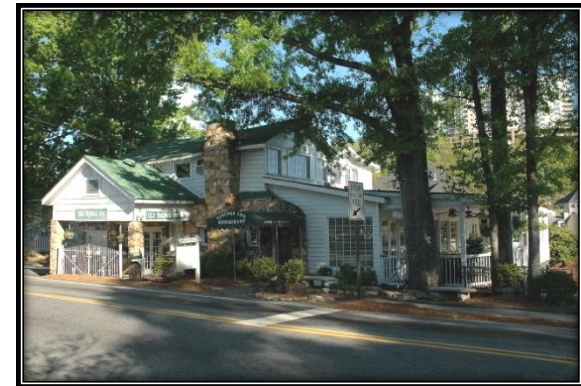
Introduction

In March 2011, the Board of Commissioners requested the Cobb County Community Development Agency, Planning Division to undertake a master planning process for Vinings. This planning project began with efforts of the Vinings community which had expressed interest in creating long range strategies for Vinings. While many studies have been done on areas surrounding and adjoining Vinings (particularly in and for the Cumberland Community Improvement District), none of have focused solely on the issues related to the core of Vinings and the residents and businesses that reside there. These issues are wide-ranging that include land use, transportation, historic preservation, natural resources and maintaining a sense of place. Vinings is unique in that it has a historic core that has developed into a high-end, low density residential community that is now surrounded by more intense and higher density uses. These land use issues, along with Vinings’ prime location, has led to other challenges with traffic being the most dominant. The goal of the Vinings Vision Plan is to ascertain the most prevalent issues through public input, data analysis, field visits and existing conditions analysis, determine an overall vision through a concept plan and provide recommendations how to accomplish the vision, both in the short-term and the long-term.

Community Character

Vinings is where history, charm, and tradition meet modern metropolitan living. Although the “village” has never been incorporated, there has always been a strong sense of identity associated with the area by its residents and businesses.

The intersection of Paces Ferry Road and Paces Mill Road act as the village center, in history, culture, and entertainment. To the southwest of this corner is the Vinings Jubilee, a shopping center that opened in the mid-1980s. It features small boutiques and restaurants built in the style of a fairly walkable village. Instead of a strip style shopping center, “Downtown Vinings”, as the shopping center has affectionately been called, is broken into approximately 10 different buildings each fronted with parking. A diverse collection of businesses are located along the Paces Ferry corridor, from Paces Mill Road towards I-285.



Old Vinings Inn

The other three corners of the Paces Ferry/Pace Mill intersection contain three of Vinings’ historic buildings: the Old Vinings Inn, the Yarborough House, and the Vest-Hodge House. Located nearby is the Pace House, the home of Solomon Pace, son of Hardy Pace who



was the founder of Vinings. Vinings Crossing, now serving a heavily used CSX rail line, historically served travelers coming into Vinings or points north via train.

Although Vinings is a well established community, growth over time has provided a varied collection of housing styles through natural evolution. Over time, some residential structures have been torn down and replaced. This infill development has continued the trend of creating a diversified market-based housing stock. Streets are typically narrower than is seen in many new developments and the tree growth provides a distinct character to the community design. While the infrastructure is not entirely suburban in form, there are many cul-de-sacs and dead ends throughout the neighborhoods of Vinings.

In some areas, traffic threatens this quaint environment. Growth pressure from the north and west from Cumberland and Smyrna have led to many more vehicles using roads in and around Vinings to get to areas beyond. Without action, more development could increase congestion and lower the quality of life Vinings residents have come to appreciate.

This plan is a strategic approach to preserve the history, culture, and charm of Vinings, taking opportunities to improve on those things, while also preparing for growth and its potential effects on the community.

Community Building

As Vinings is unincorporated, there is no formal governmental body specific to the village. However, there are several community organizations serving the residents of Vinings. These organizations promote the culture, history, and social aspects of its members and the community.

The Vinings Homeowner’s Association, the Civic Club, the Women’s Club, and the Vinings Historic Preservation Society are the principal groups. Each of these organizations meets periodically to enhance cooperation between their members. Still there is no one group, or single place that residents can causally stay informed about the community. Neither is there a way to adequately grasp, organize, or manage community stakeholders other than at the county level. Included in the Appendix are details on each of the existing Vinings Community Organizations.



Pace House

Vinings History

Vinings has a unique history that ranges from Native American settlements to the arrival of pioneers to the rise of railroads to the Civil War to the development and growth in Cobb County during and after World War II.



The history of Vinings traces back to the presence of Native Americans in the area, particularly both Creeks and Cherokees. Cobb County was created in 1832 with the Land Lottery that distributed land in northwest Georgia to white settlers. In 1838, considered the origin of Vinings, Hardy Pace arrived in the area and quickly established himself near the Chattahoochee River. Pace eventually had a ferry, grist mill, inn and post office.

The Western & Atlantic Railroad began construction of tracks between Atlanta and Marietta in the 1830s. The area around “Pace’s Crossroads” became a construction camp for the railroad. William H. Vining, a civil engineer, arrived to design a trestle for the railroad. A railroad stop remained at the construction camp and the area became known as Vining’s Station.

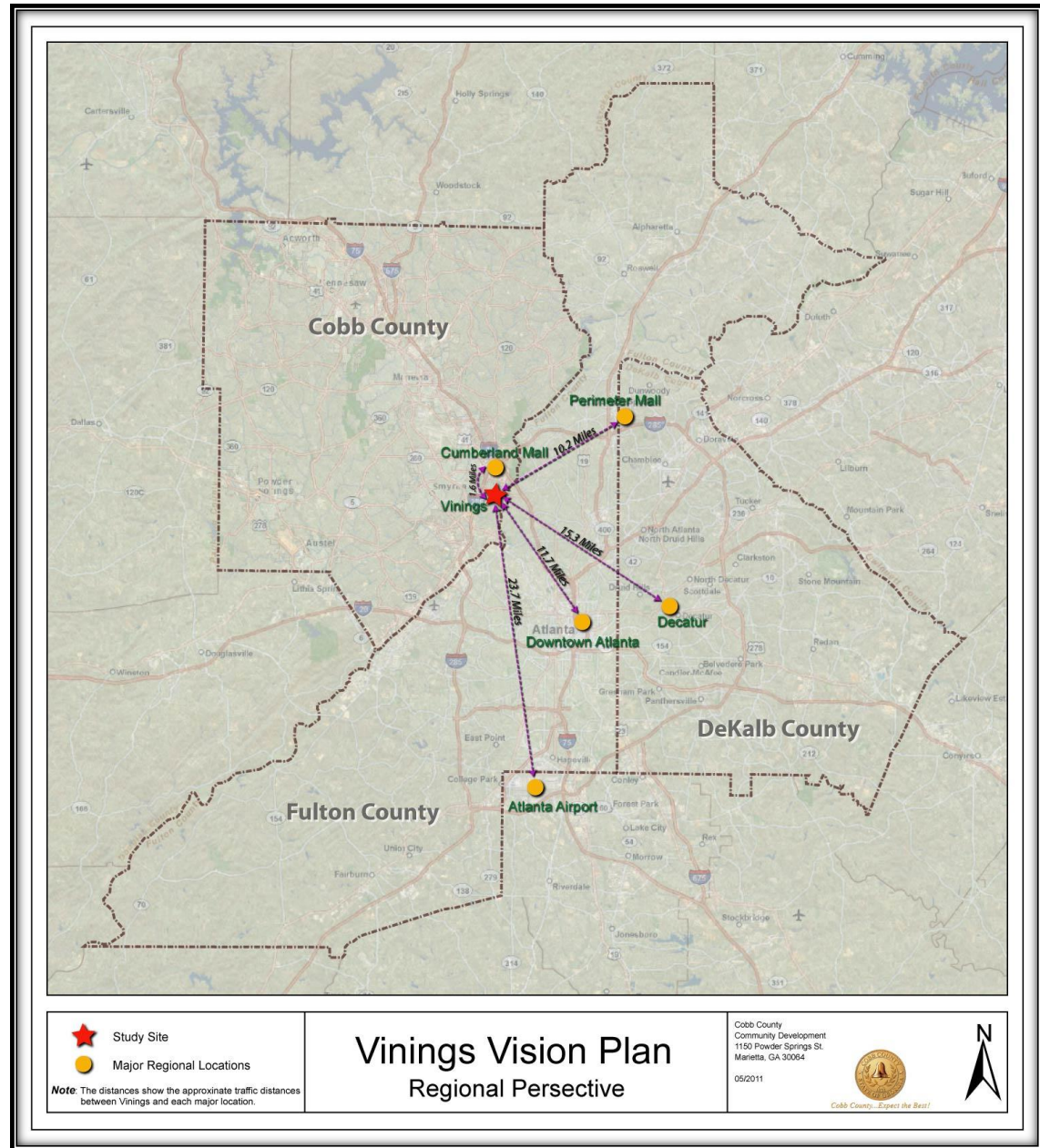
During the Civil War, Vining’s Station was occupied by Union forces in July 1864 as they prepared to cross the Chattahoochee River. Hardy Pace fled to Milledgeville, Georgia, where he died. His house was destroyed by a fire.

The word “Station” was eventually dropped from the name. Vinings survived the Civil War and began to expand around the railroad stop. Along with the growth Cobb County during and after World War II, Vinings began to grow into the affluent residential community that is known today.



Regional Context

Vinings is ideally located in the Atlanta region, with easy access to I-75, I-285 and Cobb Parkway (U.S. 41). It is close to major employment centers such as Perimeter Mall, Cumberland Mall, Buckhead, Midtown and Downtown Atlanta. Vinings has easy access to Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport. It is also close to other communities in the region like Decatur, Marietta, and North Fulton.



Map 1



Local Context

Vinings is located in the southeast part of Cobb County inside of I-285. It is south of the Cumberland Community Improvement District (CID), east of Smyrna, northeast of Mableton and adjacent to the City of Atlanta Buckhead neighborhood. Due to its location, Vinings acts as a gateway to the county from the southeast. People entering Cobb County from the southeast via I-285, I-75 or Cobb Parkway are encountering Vinings or areas adjacent to it.

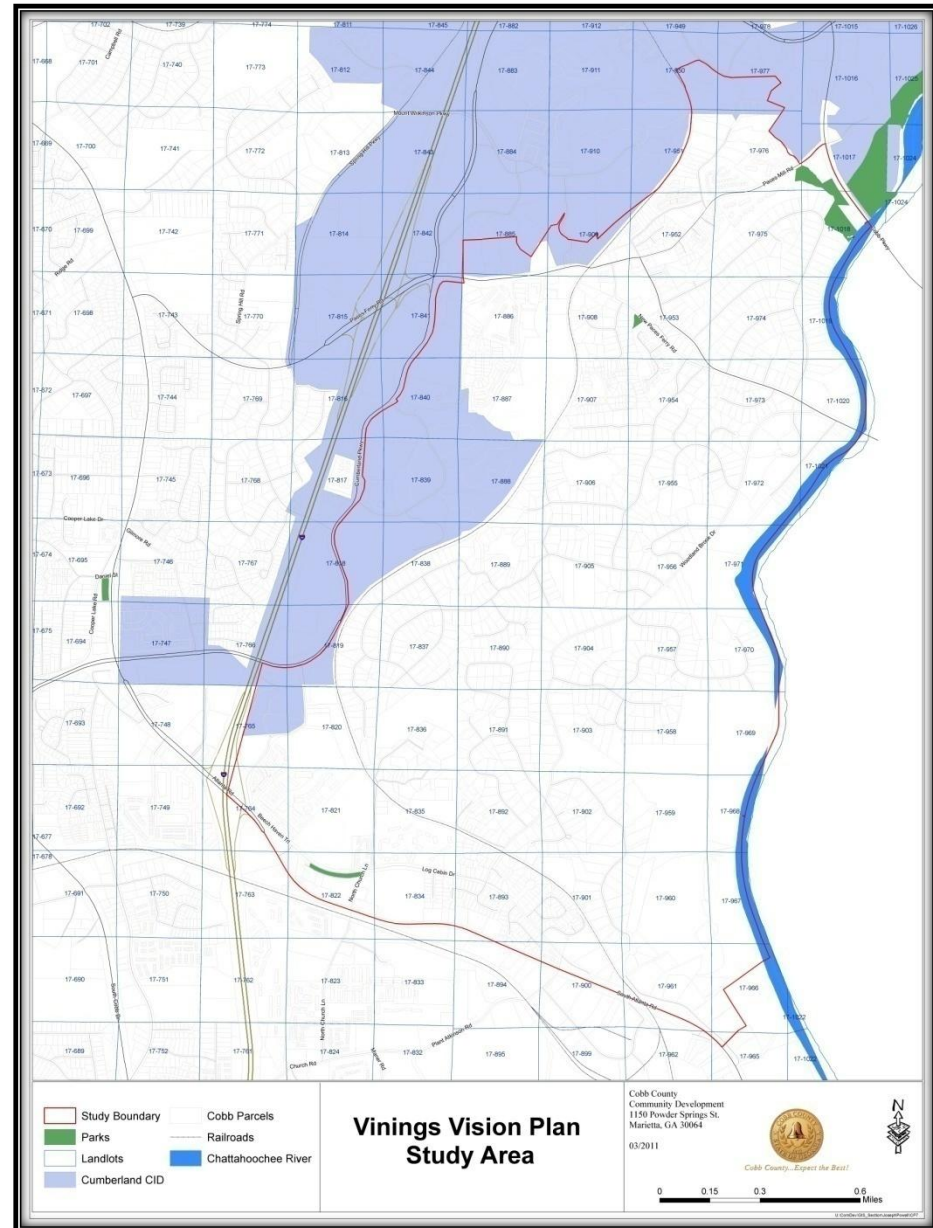


Map 2



Study Boundaries

The boundaries for the study area incorporate all of what is considered Vinings but also includes surrounding influencing areas. It would be difficult to study Vinings and its various issues without looking at the areas around it. These areas affect Vinings in numerous ways and studying them helps in understanding the problems Vinings faces and aids in seeking solutions.





Planning Process and Public Participation

Once the Board of Commissioners authorized the development of the Vinings Vision Plan, Community Development staff moved forward with creating an Advisory Committee made of residents and business owners in the area. The purpose of the Advisory Committee was to help guide the project and act as a sounding board for ideas and concepts. The first Advisory Committee meeting was held on May 16, 2011 and the first public meeting was held on May 23, 2011 at the Vinings United Methodist Church. Approximately 120 people were present. The purpose of both meetings was to review existing conditions with attendees and to gather information on positives, negatives and opportunities for Vinings.

Location and accessibility was the most mentioned positive for Vinings. Walkability, the Chattahoochee River and sense of community were also stated frequently. The biggest negative was traffic. Lack of parks and more dense development were other negatives. Opportunities include greenspace, dealing with the traffic and improving aesthetics.



Public Meeting at Vinings United Methodist Church

Through reviewing responses from the Advisory Committee and the public in the first set of meetings, staff developed themes for the Vinings Vision Plan. These themes are as follows: natural environment, traffic, bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure, community facilities, preserving existing land uses, building and street aesthetics, historic preservation and preserving a sense of place. The themes were intended to guide the planning process to ensure that the concerns and issues of the community were addressed.

The second Advisory Committee meeting was held on September 14, 2011 and the second public meeting was held on September 20, 2011, also at the Vinings United Methodist Church. There were about 90 in attendance. At the each of these meetings, a brief overview of the first public meeting was given. The themes were also introduced to the community. The public was then invited to visit four tables that each addressed different issues. Each table had staff to facilitate discussion. The four tables were: traffic and bicycle/pedestrian infrastructure, land use, historic preservation and community facilities and community identity. The community was encouraged to provide their input on solutions and ideas for Vinings by drawing on provided maps or through written comments.

The third Advisory Committee Meeting was held on November 9, 2011 and the third public meeting was held on November 17, 2011 at the Vinings United Methodist Church. Approximately 80 people were present. In the time since the second set of meetings, staff had used that time to review all the feedback from the community. These ideas and possible solutions were discussed among Community Development staff, Cobb Department of Transportation, Cobb Parks and Recreation and Cobb Water System. Four draft maps were created that covered transportation, natural and cultural resources and character. An overall master plan map was also created. A list of recommendation and implementation items was also drafted. The purpose of the third round of meetings was for



staff to present the first draft of the vision maps and implementation items. Staff made a brief presentation giving an overview of the second public meeting and relating some highlights from the draft plan.

Staff provided surveys to the attendees listing all the proposed implementation items in order to gather how they felt about each item. Attendees were also given two green dots and one red dot in order to identify their favorite and least favorite implementation item on the provided charts.

The Advisory Committee met three more times after the third public meeting on December 7, 2011, January 18, 2012 and February 8, 2012. The purpose of these meetings were to review the results from the third public meeting, discuss what items needed further attention and determine if another public meeting was necessary. After much discussion, it was determined that a fourth public meeting was necessary in order to finalize the transportation solutions, especially for the Paces Mill and Paces Ferry intersection and the Woodland Brook and Paces Ferry intersection.

The fourth and final public meeting for the Vinings Vision Plan was scheduled for March 13, 2012 at the Cochise Club. There were about 150 people in attendance. Staff reviewed the planning process that had taken place over the last year, summarizing what had happened at each of the previous three meetings. The summary results from the survey that was conducted at the third public meeting were presented. The Vinings Vision Plan concept maps were also reviewed. A staff member from the Cobb County Department of Transportation then took the audience through all the potential solutions that were considered for the Paces Ferry Road and Paces Mill Road intersection (see Transportation section for more details), as well as the proposed roundabout at the Paces Ferry Road and Woodland Brook Drive intersection. Staff and Commissioner Bob Ott took questions from the audience about various transportation topics associated with the Vinings Vision Plan. Attendees were then able to review all the draft maps and plan recommendations, which were on display.



Break-out Group during a Public Meeting

Staff and Commissioner Bob Ott took questions from the audience about various transportation topics associated with the Vinings Vision Plan. Attendees were then able to review all the draft maps and plan recommendations, which were on display.

The public involvement process for the Vinings Vision Plan was crucial to ensure that the final plan was something the community viewed encompassed their vision of the community's future. It also had to be something that they could support and something they could get excited about as implementation moves forward. Over the course of four public meetings, the Vinings Vision Plan attracted approximately 440 people. Community involvement is paramount to any master planning process and, for Vinings, it was even more essential to the success of the Vinings Vision Plan.



Previous Planning for Vinings

The following are description of several previous plans referring to Vinings. Many of these plans have a wider focus, but provide a foundation to the Vinings Vision Plan. No previous plans have focused on the Vinings core.

Cobb County 2030 Comprehensive Plan

The 2030 Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 2007, and most recently revised in February 2012, gives a brief history of Vinings and discusses the prescribed direction of the area. The 2030 Comprehensive Plan denotes a focus on preserving and maintaining the character of the neighborhoods and business district. It suggests that infill development be sensitive to the character of Vinings, but also meet market demands. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are also encouraged for the area.

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs has developed fourteen (14) Quality Community Objectives to be applied to planning across the state. Cobb County has chosen eleven (11) that should be applied specifically to planning in Vinings: Appropriate Business, Educational Opportunities, Employment Options, Growth Preparedness, Housing Opportunities, Infill Development, Regional Cooperation, Regional Identity, and Regional Solutions.



Vinings Jubilee

The Vinings Transition Zone, is defined by the properties along both sides of Upper Stillhouse Road and River Oaks Drive, south of Cumberland Boulevard. The transition zone is meant to provide an appropriate buffer between the area of higher intensity use (Cumberland) from those of lower intensity use (Vinings). Two areas have been defined as Neighborhood Activity Centers in the Future Land Use Map. These are the area around Vinings Jubilee and the shopping center north of Paces Ferry Road at the Chattahoochee River. This land use category is meant to provide for areas that serve neighborhood residents and business, typically in the form of small offices, limited retail and grocery stores. The 2030 Comprehensive Plan specifies that the Neighborhood Activity Center at the river “shall not extend to the north or south beyond the boundaries of the existing commercial activity” so as to protect the residential character of the surrounding area.

Supplemental Plans include the Atlanta Regional commission (ARC) Regional Development Plan (RDP) and the Blueprint Cumberland II (2007).



Other Plans and Studies

There are several additional plans that provide important planning context to the Vinings Vision Plan.

South Quadrant Transportation Study (2008)

Cumberland CID

The *South Quadrant Transportation Study* completed for the Cumberland Community Improvement District (CID) in 2008, studies growth issues in and around Vinings, specifically concerning land use and transportation needs. The primary focus of the document is on the future needs and possible opportunities in and around the Cumberland CID. Project identification guidelines were to improve vehicular level of service (LOS), increase multimodal accessibility, and to preserve and accentuate the community character. Candidate projects include complete streets and intersections modification mainly along Paces Ferry Road, Cumberland Parkway and Cumberland Boulevard. Other recommendations include variable message signs for the railroad crossing and the implementation of a shuttle/trolley system.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvement Plan (2011)

Cobb County

The intent of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvement Plan was to ascertain community needs with respect to bicycling and walking at a more “micro” level by gathering and analyzing data to describe bicycling and walking conditions on all of the County’s major thoroughfares. Additionally, it is to make recommendations for improvements where needed, and to provide further guidance on a variety of topics including policy, facility design and specific trail alignments.

A major section of the plan calls for an extension of the Silver Comet Trail across the Chattahoochee and connect it to the City of Atlanta Bicycle Network. There are four alternatives. Three call for crossing the river at Atlanta Road and the other calls for a crossing at Paces Ferry Road. The alternative that calls for a trail alignment along Log Cabin Drive received the highest priority ranking (7A - 50) and was also the cheapest option (p. 7A-54), while the Paces Ferry Road alternative was deemed undesirable and removed from consideration (p 7A-41). However, the proposed multi-use trail located on the south side of the study area should by-pass the historic Log Cabin church and be relocated to Atlanta Road at that point.

Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2008)

Cobb County

The 2030 Comprehensive Transportation Plan is the product of a partnership between Cobb County and the cities of Acworth, Austell, Kennesaw, Marietta, Powder Spring and Smyrna to study, assess, and make recommendations for the county’s transportation needs



and challenges. The plan, completed in 2008, incorporates mandates from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and consults analyses from the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC).

Major elements from the plan include roadways and bridges, freight movement, pedestrian, bicycle, and multi use trail facilities, transit facilities, and the airport. Projects from the CTP are broken down in the CIP, Community Improvement Projects. This document delineates various transportation projects going on in the county complete with updates of their status. Widening, access management, and intersection improvements were major elements as were improving transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities throughout the county.

The widening of Cobb Parkway and Cumberland Boulevard were recommended projects in close proximity to the study area. Programmed projects in the CTP include the widening of Cobb Parkway from a new bridge across the Chattahoochee River to Akers Mills Road, intersection improvements at Cumberland Parkway and Cumberland Boulevard, improving capacity along Cumberland Parkway, reconstruction of the I-285 Interchange with Atlanta Road, as well as operational improvements to Woodland Brook Drive.

For a regional context, the Atlanta Regional Commission provides plans, resources, and data for use across the Atlanta Metro area.

Chapter 2

Existing Conditions





Chapter 2 - Existing Conditions

Demographics

Using block level data from the 2010 Census, the Community Development Staff was able to obtain the most accurate population count for the study area. It is important to note that Vinings is a Census Defined Place, or CDP. However, the population for the CDP is much greater than that of Vinings because the boundaries of the CDP do not accurately reflect what is often considered Vinings.

The population for the entire study area was gathered at the block level. In 2000, there were 9,219 people living within the study area, and by 2010 the population had dropped to 9,000 residents, a 2.4% decrease. The drop in population was due to a tear down and rebuilt of an older apartment community into a mixed-use development with condominiums, townhomes and retail/office space.

The Atlanta Regional Commission conducts population projections for each Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ) throughout the region. The boundaries for these zones do not coincide with the boundaries of the Vinings Vision Study, and as a result will have a higher population than the more accurate population count from the 2010 Census. The projections for future growth in Vinings can be found in the Table 1 below.

Table 1

	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Study Area	9,800	9,942	10,218	10,247	10,419

Source: Atlanta Regional Commission

Racial data in the study area was collected from the 2010 Census at the block level. Racial data for the study area and Cobb County can be found in Table 2 below.

Table 2

	White	Black/African-American	Asian	Hispanic*	Other**
Study Area	64.4%	26.1%	2.5%	4.7%	2.3%
Cobb County	56.3%	24.4%	4.4%	12.3%	2.5%

Source: United States Census Bureau

* Hispanic/Latino

** Other: Indian, Islander, Two races, and Other



The study area is not as racially diverse as the county as a whole. While African-American populations are of similar percentages to Cobb County, the Hispanic/Latino population, at 4.7%, is far below that of the county’s where Hispanics/Latinos make up 12.3% of residents.

While specific age groups were not broken down to the block level, the 2000 Census does provide block level data about children and the elderly around the core of Vinings and the study area. In the core of Vinings, people younger than 18 years old accounted for 21.2% of the population and those older than 64 years old accounted for 15.1%. Within the study area, those under 18 made up only 12.3% of the population with the elderly making up 6.7%. This compares to Cobb County as a whole where children make up 26.1% of the population and the elderly account for 6.9%. This indicates that within Vinings, there are more families with children, while within the study area there are fewer families. The higher percentage of people older than 64, indicates that Vinings is a desirable place to live for people who are entering potential retirement.

Income data is not available at the block level so data from the 2005-2009 American Community Survey estimates for the Vinings CDP and Cobb County is used. Chart 1 below depicts income distribution for households for the CDP and Cobb County. The median household income for the CDP is estimated to be \$59,211, while the county has a median income of \$66,515. However, the Vinings CDP has a mean household income of \$103,383 which suggests that income is not evenly distributed within the CDP population. A better proxy for the Vinings median household income may be found using block group 2 in census tract 312.04. This block group encompasses the heart of Vinings, and has a median household income of \$66,293.

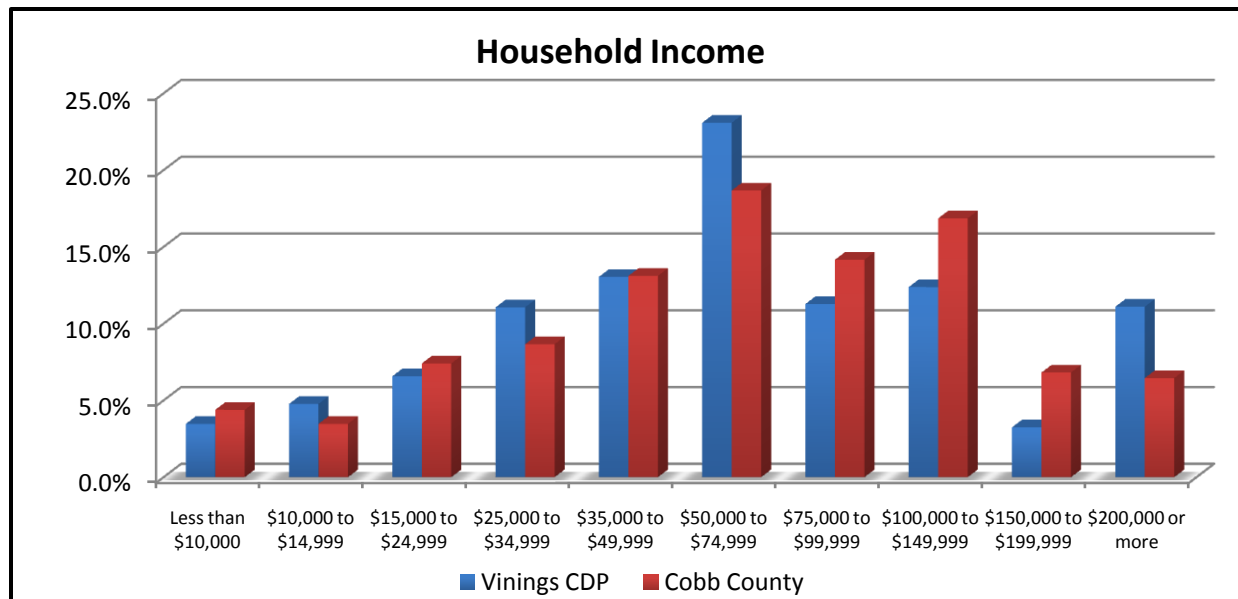


Chart 1

Source: United States Census Bureau



Housing

Housing covers a vast majority of the study area. Vinings has become a desirable neighborhood in the Atlanta metro area. The community is optimally located to allow its residents to get to employment centers, schools, cultural attractions, recreation, and the airport in just a short drive. As a result, the area has been almost completely developed.

The Vinings CDP boundaries covered too large an area to produce an accurate representation of the types of housing in Vinings. As a result, Community Development staff used GIS, Cobb County parcel data, and zoning districts to survey and analyze housing types. The survey broke the units down into four types: Single-family detached homes, Townhomes, Condominiums, and Apartments. The results of the survey are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

Type	Vinings Residential Area		Study Area	
	Units	Percent	Units	Percent
Single-Family	1,072	74.1%	1,258	24.1%
Townhomes	143	9.9%	326	6.2%
Condominium	232	16.0%	1,043	20.0%
Apartments	0	0.0%	2,590	49.6%
Total	1,447		5,217	

Source: Cobb County Community Development Agency

The largely residential area around the core of Vinings is dominated by single-family detached homes, with 1,072 units, accounting for 74% of the housing units within its boundaries. This is slightly higher than the percentage of single family detached homes within all of Cobb County. According to the 2005-2009 American Community Survey, this type accounted for 67.1% of all housing units within the county. Townhomes and condominiums account for the remaining housing making up 10% and 16% respectively. Single family homes can be found throughout Vinings, while the townhomes and condominiums are limited to areas off of Paces Mill Road and Paces Ferry Road.

Apartments are mostly found adjacent to the core of Vinings, along Cumberland Parkway. When they are added to the housing count, apartments become a dominant housing type for the study area. Apartments account for 2,590 of the 5,117 total housing units for the study area, or about 50%. Single family homes account for only 24% of units within the study area, a decrease from the largely residential area percentage.



The age of housing units within Vinings is distributed fairly evenly over the past four decades. This is a good trend for the area and indicates that the housing stock will remain balanced in age in the future. The most notable figure is the amount of housing structures built before 1970, only 9% of the housing is older than forty years old. This is more than 7% lower than the amount of older buildings in Cobb County.

Table 4

Decade Structure Built	Vinings CDP	Cobb
2000's	16.3%	17.7%
1990's	27.3%	22.7%
1980's	19.9%	26.8%
1970's	27.5%	16.5%
Before 1970	9.0%	16.2%

Source: United States Census Bureau

Housing in Vinings is considerably more expensive than the rest of Cobb County. Most of Cobb County's owner occupied housing is valued under \$300,000, while in Vinings a majority of homes are valued over \$300,000. The chart below was created using the 2005-2009 American Community Survey estimates for the Vinings CDP and Cobb County.

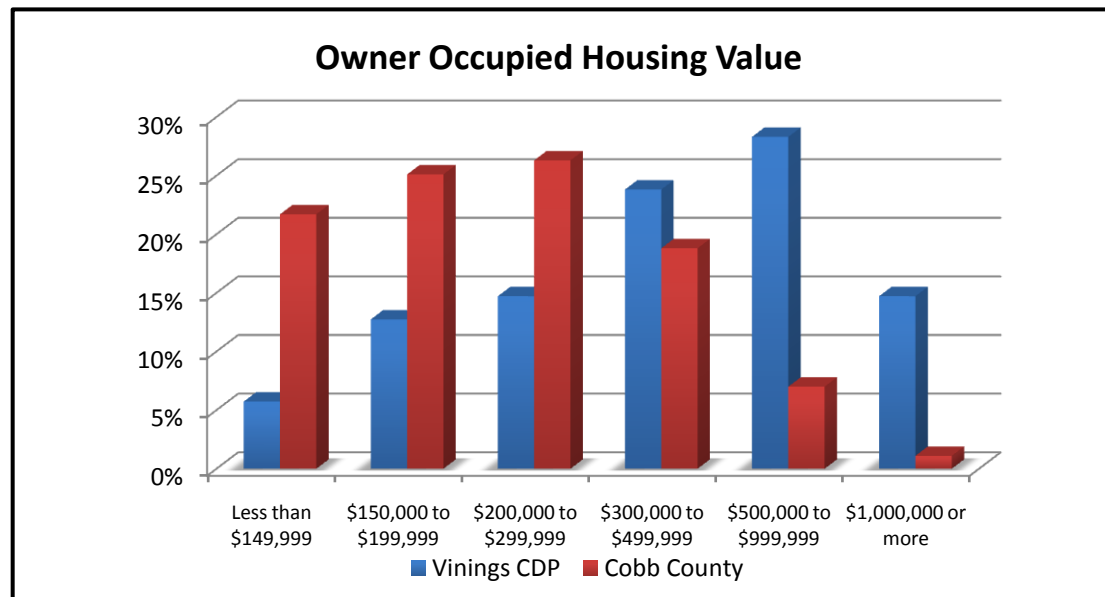


Chart 2

Source: United States Census Bureau



Within the core of Vinings, very little new development has occurred recently. A couple of new townhomes and some new single family homes are scattered throughout, but there has not been a large housing development in the community for some time. New construction typically occurs when an older house is torn down and replaced with a new one. However, in the more commercial parts of the study area, several new housing developments have been recently completed, are currently under construction or have been proposed.

Much of this development is completed or ongoing just west of the railroad tracks along Paces Ferry Road. There are four different developments in between Cumberland Parkway and the railroad tracks that are located along Paces Ferry Road: Vinings Main, The Battery, Paces View and The Aberdeen.



Market Analysis

Market Background

Vinings is located in southern Cobb County and is primarily a residential real estate market. Around the Vinings Jubilee, there are several commercial properties, but they pale in comparison to the quantity of residential development. Away from the Vinings Jubilee, apartments dominate the residential market; in recent years condominiums have increased their share of housing surrounding Vinings. In the area surrounding Vinings, townhomes and single-family homes are rare and there are a number of mid-rise office buildings as Vinings transitions into the Cumberland CID. Finally, there are numerous large scale commercial “big box” properties, including two Kroger shopping centers, a strip center anchored by a Publix Supermarket, and a Home Depot retail store.

Demographic

The Vinings Study area contains approximately 9,000 residents. The growth of the area has been fairly consistent over the last few decades, but the area did see the largest increase in population during the 1990s. This market has stabilized and is expected to experience slower growth over the next 20 years. Most residents are white, while African-Americans make up 26% of the study area population. The African American population is about equal to the percentages for Cobb County as a whole. The number of Hispanic residents in the study area is far below that of the County’s at just below 5%. Vinings residents are well educated, with 66.5% of the population holding a bachelors degree or higher. The Vinings CDP consisted of 4,991 households with most earning between \$50,000 and \$100,000 a year. About 27% of households in the study area earn more than \$100,000. Apartments make up 50% of the study area housing types, with single family homes accounting for 24%, condos making up 20%, with 6% townhomes. There is a definitive split between the core of Vinings and the overall study area with most of the single-family residential structures being in the stable residential neighborhoods versus a majority of the apartments being along Cumberland Parkway. The age of these housing units are varied, a majority of units were built in the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, with only 9% being built before 1970, and 16% being built during the 2000s.

Owner Occupied Housing Market Analysis

The effects of the 2007 subprime mortgage crisis and the ensuing economic recession are still being felt throughout the metro Atlanta region. According to the *Atlanta Journal Constitution’s* annual Home Sales Report, the fall of home values continues on its four year dive and the pace of sales remains stagnant. The report states that, “Five thousand fewer homes sold in nine metro counties last year than in 2009, accounting for a 9 percent drop. Those that did sell went for less than in 2009: Home prices fell 4.5 percent last year.” <http://www.ajchomefinder.com/mortgage-center/ajc-home-sales-report-967215.html>. It continues, saying “the median sale price for existing single-family homes in Atlanta dipped \$22,700 to \$98,100 in April [2011], a stunning 18.8 percent drop compared to April of



last year.” Real estate professionals are not sure if the market has bottomed out yet, and say that we will only know until homes values and the pace of sales start to rise again.

Despite the dismal news for the region’s housing market, Vinings is showing signs that it is beginning to recover. In the 30339 zip code of Cobb County that includes the study area, the median resale price of existing homes rose 19% to \$260,000 from 2009 to 2010. In addition, the median sales price for new homes rose 10.5% to \$249,000 over the same period. It is important to note that the 30339 zip extends beyond the study area, but it does provide strategic insights into the Vinings housing market. More information about home sales can be found in the table below.

Table 5

Home Sales for 30339 in Cobb County								
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2009-2010 change
Total Units Sold	530	297	465	574	248	318	280	-11.95%
Resale Units Sold	110	138	133	163	108	140	143	2.14%
New Units Sold	420	159	332	411	140	178	137	-23.03%
Median Total Price	\$222,250	\$340,000	\$240,246	\$376,290	\$281,270	\$219,950	\$250,000	13.66%
Median Resale Price	\$290,600	\$284,552	\$233,000	\$245,000	\$255,000	\$218,550	\$260,000	18.97%
Median New Price	\$216,950	\$375,300	\$242,770	\$408,924	\$292,646	\$226,000	\$249,900	10.58%

Source: AJC Atlanta Home Sales Report – 2010 (<http://projects.ajchomefinder.com/atlanta-home-sales-report/detail/Cobb/30339/>)

According to the *AJC Homefinder*, as of May 26, 2011 there are 48 single family homes for sale within the Teasley Elementary attendance zone and within the 30339 zip code. This area makes up all of Vinings and much of the study area, although it does include some areas outside the study boundaries. Prices for these homes range from \$485,000 to \$3,200,000.

Within this same search criteria there are 78 condominiums or townhomes for sale, and they range in price from \$205,000 to \$1,700,000. These units may be outside the Vinings study area due to their connection to the Teasley attendance zone and 30339 ZIP code rather than within the study area boundaries. Therefore, there is a possibility that the data presented in the last two paragraphs may be skewed in comparison to the study area, but are a good indication of market realities in the overall Vinings area market.

Rental Housing Market Analysis

While there are not apartments within the core of Vinings, there are several complexes in the rest of the study area. All eight of the developments are garden style apartment complexes. Three of the apartments are Class A while the remaining five are Class B.



Apartments within the study area have high occupancy rates. The newer complexes, built in the late 1990s, appear to garner higher monthly rents. Apartment market data for the study area can be found in the table below.

Table 6

Vinings Study Area Apartments						
Name	Low Rent	High Rent	Avg. Rent	Occupancy	Year Built	Class
Oak Park of Vinings	\$675	\$980	\$828	92%	1972	B
Broadstone at Vinings	\$853	\$1,400	\$1,127	95%	1996	A
Ivywood Park at Vinings	\$760	\$800	\$780	92%	1992	B
Tamarron of Vinings	\$685	\$880	\$783	95%	1985	B
Gables Vinings	\$840	\$1,460	\$1,150	96%	1998	A
Forest Hills of Vinings	\$694	\$927	\$811	97%	1979	B
The District at Vinings	\$649	\$999	\$824	92%	1972	B
Paces Station	\$615	\$970	\$793	96%	1984-1991	A
Median	\$690	\$975	\$817	95%	1985	

Source: Cobb County Community Development Agency – July 2011

The study area apartment market is very strong. There are only Class A and B complexes within the study area. These complexes pull higher rents than the rest of the Metro Atlanta area market as a whole and the Cobb County market, which is one of the better markets in the region in terms of pricing. Vinings falls within the Cumberland apartment market, which is considered among the top markets in Atlanta. Average rents for apartment units by market can be found in the table below.

Table 7

Average Rents for Apartments by Market				
	Vinings	Cumberland	Cobb County	Metro Atlanta
Class A	\$1,023	\$1,003	\$989	\$878
Class B	\$805	\$829	\$795	\$781
Class C	-	\$689	\$691	\$636
Class D	-	\$610	\$577	\$566
All	\$887	\$761	\$726	\$724

Source: Brown Realty Advisors, July 2011

The apartment market is expected to grow substantially over the next several years. The recent mortgage crisis and housing bubble has made it harder for people to secure financing for the purchase of a home in addition to reducing the desire to become a home owner. This creates a market that is ripe for multifamily development. Within the Atlanta market, very few apartment projects have been built over the last four years, which has resulted in a shortage in apartment supply. According to Brown Realty Advisors,



“occupancy and rental rates have stabilized and are beginning to rise in many submarkets.” An increase in rents will result in an increase in multifamily property values, and as a result developers will want to build new apartment complexes. However, within the study area there is little to no undeveloped land suitable for a new apartment development. The area may see most of the older apartment complexes bought and either substantially renovated or razed and rebuilt as new Class A developments that can garner even higher rental rates. The older complexes that may be redeveloped include: The District, Forest Hills of Vinings, Oak Park of Vinings, and Tamarron of Vinings.

Senior Housing

Looking at an approximate five mile radius from the Paces Ferry Road and Paces Mill intersection, fourteen senior living facilities and housing developments were noted. These places offer a wide range of senior living from memory care to independent living. While there are none within the core of Vinings, one is located within the study area and another is located just outside the study boundaries on Cumberland Parkway.

Table 8

Name	Address	City, State	Zip	Type
Emeritus Senior Living	2401 Cumberland Parkway	Atlanta, GA	30339	Assisted living; memory care; short stay/respice
Emeritus Vinings Place	4375 Beech Haven Trail	Smyrna, GA	30080	Retirement living; assisted living; memory care, short stay/respice
Gardens of Magnolia Trail	1418 Spring Street	Smyrna, GA	30080	Assisted living
Delmar Gardens of Smyrna	404 King Springs Village Parkway	Smyrna, GA	30082	Retirement community; assisted living
Smyrna Towers	4000 South Cobb Drive	Smyrna, GA	30082	Senior housing-independent living
Woodland Ridge	4005 South Cobb Drive	Smyrna, GA	30080	Assisted living; memory care
Marietta Road High Rise	2295 Marietta Road	Atlanta, GA	30318	Senior housing-independent living
Saint Anne’s Terrace	3100 Northside Parkway	Atlanta, GA	30327	Senior housing-independent living
William Bremen Jewish Home	3150 Howell Mill Road	Atlanta, GA	30327	Independent living; assisted living; short term rehab
Nursecare of Buckhead	2920 Pharr Court	Atlanta, GA	30305	Assisted living; rehab
Campbell-Stone of Buckhead	2911 Pharr Court	Atlanta, GA	30305	Senior housing-independent living
Cathedral Towers	2820 Peachtree Road	Atlanta, GA	30305	Senior housing-independent living
Dogwood Forest of Buckhead	4804 Roswell Road	Atlanta, GA	30342	Assisted living; memory care, short term; adult day care
Homestead Village	2100 Riveredge Parkway	Atlanta, GA	30328	Assisted living

Source: Cobb County Community Development Agency – August 2011



There have been two re-zonings in the past three years that are senior housing or include a senior housing component. The proposed development on the north side of Paces Ferry Road at Overlook Parkway includes a 12-story senior living tower. The property on the south side of Cumberland Boulevard, just west of the Cobb Parkway intersection, is zoned Residential Senior Living (RSL). The proposed 33 story tower includes 200 independent living units and 54 assisted living units. If these two proposals are built as zoned and with the addition of nearby facilities, the demand for senior housing could be satisfied. However, if the two potential developments are not built, there could be the need for additional senior housing development within the study area. Even if the two towers are constructed, there could be the possibility of redevelopment with low-rise independent and assisted living.

Housing Supply

Within the largely residential area of Vinings, very little new development has occurred recently. A couple of new townhomes and some new single family homes are scattered throughout, but there has not been a large housing development in the community for some time. New construction typically occurs when an older house is torn down and replaced with a new one. This type of infill development is expected to continue for the foreseeable future, due to the lack of undeveloped land within Vinings. In the more commercial areas, several new housing developments have been recently completed, are currently under construction, or have been proposed.

Much of the development that is ongoing or completed is just west of the railroad tracks along Paces Ferry Road. There are four different developments in between Cumberland Parkway and the railroad tracks that are located along Paces Ferry Road: Vinings Main, The Battery, Paces View and The Aberdeen.



New Housing on Paces Ferry Road

Vinings Main is a mixed use development, consisting of office, retail, and condominiums, that was completed in 2008. The new community replaced a 1970s era garden apartment complex. Unfortunately, the community came on-line during the height of the housing downturn and as such the development filed for bankruptcy on December 12, 2009. The condominium units are currently for sale at a lower price compared to the original asking sales price. Vinings Main is offering one bedroom condos from \$150,000, and two bedroom condos from \$190,000. According to Metrostudy, as of the first quarter of 2011, 64 out of 150 units had been occupied. Sales have increased since the second quarter of 2010. Metrostudy calculates the 'Housing Inventory Months of Supply' that estimates the length of time that the current supply of housing inventory will last based on the annual closings rate for a particular development. As of the first quarter of 2011 the months of supply for all of North Atlanta was at 11.1, a decrease from 11.5 the previous year. During this first quarter of 2011, Vinings Main had 16.5 months of



supply, indicating that the development is oversupplied. However condo sales have been increasing over the previous four quarters, which will allow the months of supply to decrease to a healthier level.

The Aberdeen is a 14-story, high rise condominium building completed in 2009. It was built on a hill overlooking Vinings and offers views of downtown Atlanta. The luxury condos are currently selling from \$600,000 and offers penthouses from \$1.65 million. Like a majority of the condominium market in Metropolitan Atlanta, sales for these condominiums have been sluggish. According to Metrostudy, only 7 of the Aberdeen’s 55 units were occupied as of the first quarter of 2011. The development only sold three units in 2009 and four in 2010. Housing inventory for The Aberdeen is at 294 months of supply, indicating a development that is vastly oversupplied. Despite slow sales, the Aberdeen is currently not in danger of foreclosure as the investor remains patient and confident in the project.



Abandoned Development

Paces View, formerly known as Avignon at Vinings, is a single-family and townhome development. There are 18 townhome units completed or nearly completed, 9 of which are occupied. There are also 5 single family homes, but only 1 is occupied as of the first quarter of 2011. The site plan calls for a total of 25 single family homes and 85 townhomes once the current phase of development is complete. There are areas on the site that will develop in future phases, contingent on the market. Most of the site is currently a pipe farm, as there is no active construction occurring and a majority of the lots sit cleared and vacant. Construction last began on the townhomes in the third quarter of 2009. The townhomes had 54 months of supply as of the fourth quarter of 2010, while the single family homes had 48 months of supply. John Wieland is offering the townhomes from \$400,000 and the detached homes are available starting at \$700,000.



Abandoned Development

The Battery on Paces Ferry is a townhome development consisting of completed and occupied units as well as ongoing construction and vacant lots. There are 20 completed townhome units, and plans call for a total of 80 units at full build-out. As of the first quarter of 2011, 12 of the completed units are occupied, 6 are vacant, and two are being used as model homes. There is active construction occurring on the site, with eleven units beginning construction in the first quarter of 2011. The Battery had 13.7 months of supply, as of the fourth quarter of 2010. The townhomes are being marketed by Ashton Woods Homes from \$300,000 and by Harry Norman Realtors from \$400,000. The homes are up to 4,100 square feet. There are two other developments in the study area that have no construction

occurring and are made up primarily of vacant lots. Vinings Gateway, formerly known as Stonehall is a



townhome development on the corner of Log Cabin Drive and Atlanta Road. There are currently 3 completed townhomes, 2 of which are occupied, and plans call for 8 more units. The site is being marketed by Benchmark Homes, with units available from \$400,000.

The second development is located 300 yards up Log Cabin, and is called Vinings at Log Cabin, formerly Vinings Orchard. This is a single family home development, however there is only one completed house in the subdivision. The plan calls for a total of 16 homes to be built there, which will be sold starting at \$750,000. The 15 vacant lots are minimally cleared, many with large trees remaining, with pipes and for sale signs marking each one.

There are two approved developments within the study area that have not yet begun construction. The first development is located directly across from Vinings Main on Paces Ferry Road on a site made up of 10.5 acres. The mixed use development was approved in October 2008 (Z-40) and was planned to consist of a considerable amount of retail along Paces Ferry Road, two residential buildings and a high rise office tower. One of the residential buildings will be for independent and assisted senior living and is not to exceed 12 stories or 150 leased units. The second residential building will consist of “for sale” condominium units with a maximum allowance of 10% of the units that can be leased. This building is not to exceed 16 stories or 168 units. This development will inevitably add more traffic to an already congested segment of Paces Ferry Road. The zoning decision called for the developments’ site plan to come back to the Board of Commissioners as an “Other Business” agenda item to be approved before construction can begin. With the economy lagging and a sluggish housing market, it is anticipated that this project may be a long way from initial land disturbance.

The second development is proposed on the 18 acre site of the current Riverview Village Shopping Center at the northwest corner of Paces Mill Road and Highway 41/Cobb Parkway. The new mixed use development, approved in February 2009 (Z-49), will replace an aging strip retail shopping center developed in 1979, with new retail below residential units and a stand alone office tower. The residential will include a maximum of 180 owner occupied condominium units, however if Highway 41 is widened then a maximum of 216 units will be allowed. If redevelopment does not occur on this site by February 2012 the site will revert back to a General Commercial zoning.

Conclusion

Vinings has one of the strongest housing markets in the Metro Atlanta area. People are attracted to the suburban style community that exists within the perimeter. The name carries a powerful weight in the real estate world. As a result this market will remain strong for several decades to come. However, in the near future, developments will struggle to fill units that were built in the last couple years. However, it appears that the pace of sales are picking up despite a difficult economic recovery. Single family housing will remain very strong, and older homes will be torn down and replaced by new ones, thereby raising property values.

For the short-term, the housing supply in Vinings will likely continue to decline, but the speed of the decline will depend on the improvement of the economy. While most of the current housing supply is in condominiums, there will be some continued single-



family residential construction in subdivisions that were abandoned during development because of the economy. The rental market will likely continue to be positive, because of the excellent location of Vinings and the booming rental market due to the foreclosure crisis.

Over the next ten to twenty years, new development of housing in Vinings is likely to decline due to the fact that majority of the land in Vinings has been already developed. The mixed-use development on Paces Ferry Road that has been rezoned, but has not been built, could have a long-term impact on Vinings. The rental market could start to decline in the long-term as the apartment complexes continue to age. However, the advantage of the Vinings location might temper any decline. With the aging of apartment complexes, and some condominium complexes, redevelopment opportunities could arise in and around Vinings. This could offer opportunities for better transitions between high density and high rise uses and the single-family residential character of Vinings.



Business Survey

Community Development staff conducted a business survey in the study area to determine the types of businesses and services that were offered. The survey was conducted on April 14 and 26, 2011 and May 10, 2011. A wide assortment of businesses was discovered in the study area. The most predominant category was “other” (34%) which incorporated gas stations, hotels, tailor/alterations, fitness centers and a variety of small businesses such as bakeries and marketing/advertising firms. The next highest category was general retail with 14% of the business. The next two highest categories were full services restaurant and bars (13%) and beauty shop/hair salons (8%). See page 82 in the appendix for more detailed information.

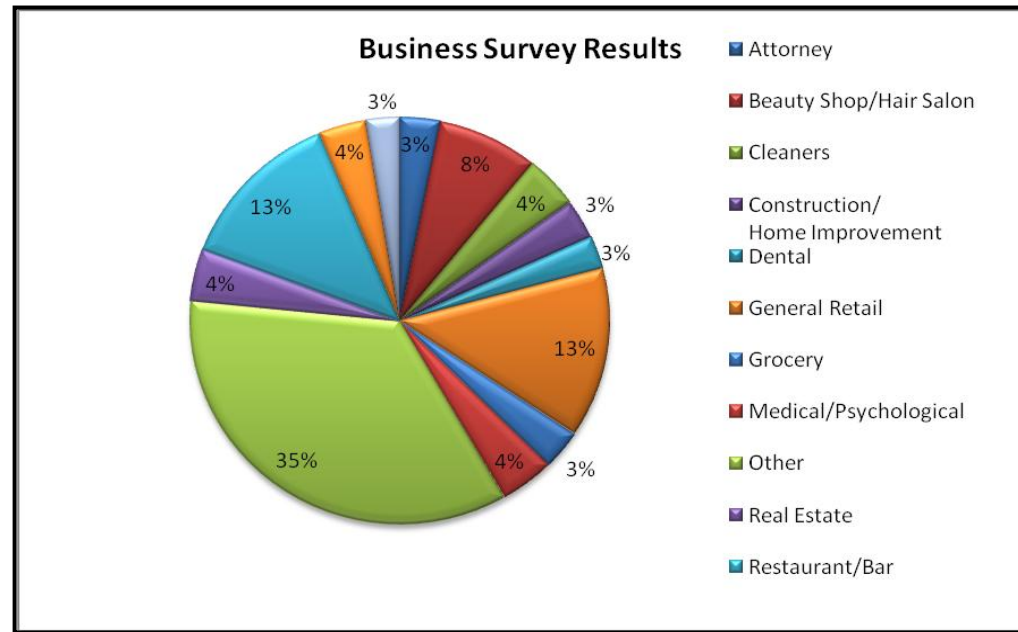


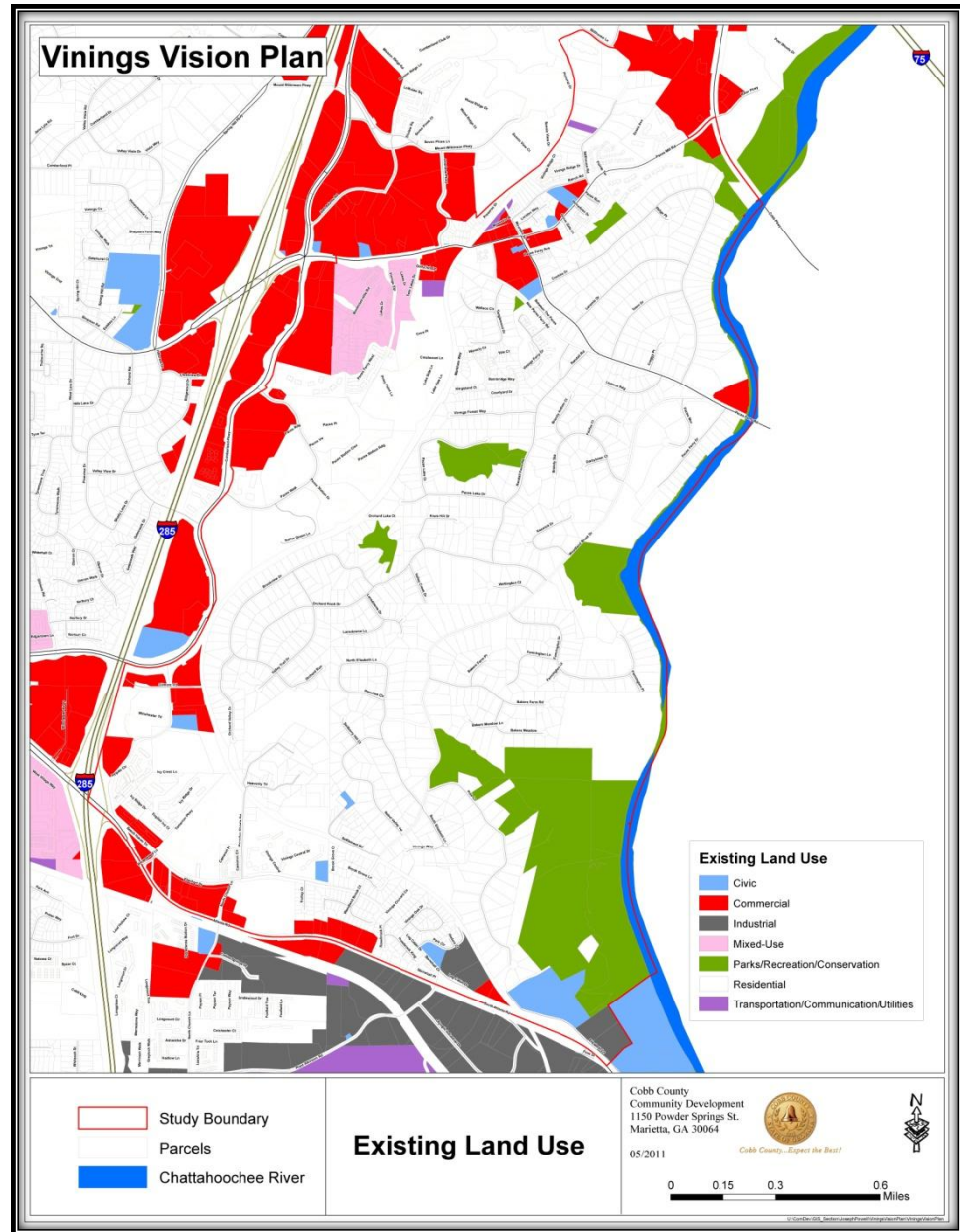
Chart 3



Existing Land Use

The majority of the existing land use for the study area is residential. Commercial uses remain at the outer edges of the area along Atlanta Road, Cumberland Parkway and Paces Ferry Road. There are some industrial uses just outside of the study area on the south side of Atlanta Road. With close proximity to the Paces Mill Unit of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area and Cobb County Water System land, there is a considerable amount of Parks/Recreation/Conservation uses.

Residential uses cover about 75.86% of the study area. Commercial uses cover about 5.25% of the area. Parks and Conservation is about 14.9% of the area. The remaining categories (civic, industrial, mixed-use and transportation) cover only 3.99% of the area.

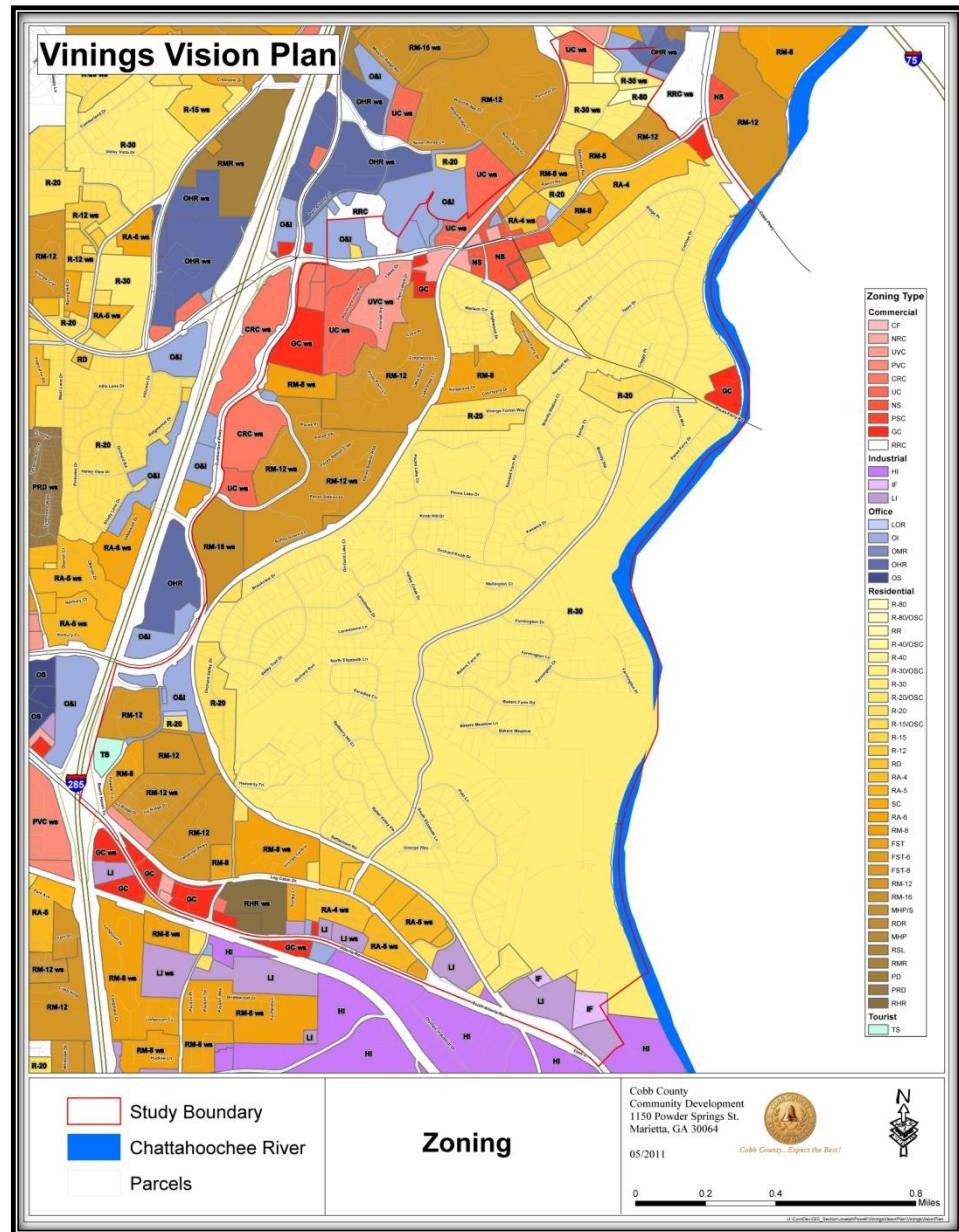


Map 4



Zoning

Zoning describes the specific land use regulations for individual parcels, including setbacks, density, height and use. Zoning categories are shown on Map 5. The current zoning in the study area is largely residential, with R-30 being the most predominant category. Some of the R-30 zoned land is legally non-conforming due to a smaller lot size than the required land use rules. There are some pockets of R-20 and even R-80. Denser residential zoning categories can be found along Log Cabin Drive, Cumberland Parkway, Paces Ferry Road and Paces Mill Road. Office and commercial zoning categories are concentrated along Atlanta Road near I-285 and the Paces Ferry Road and Cumberland Parkway intersection. There are some Light Industrial zonings along Atlanta Road.



Map 5

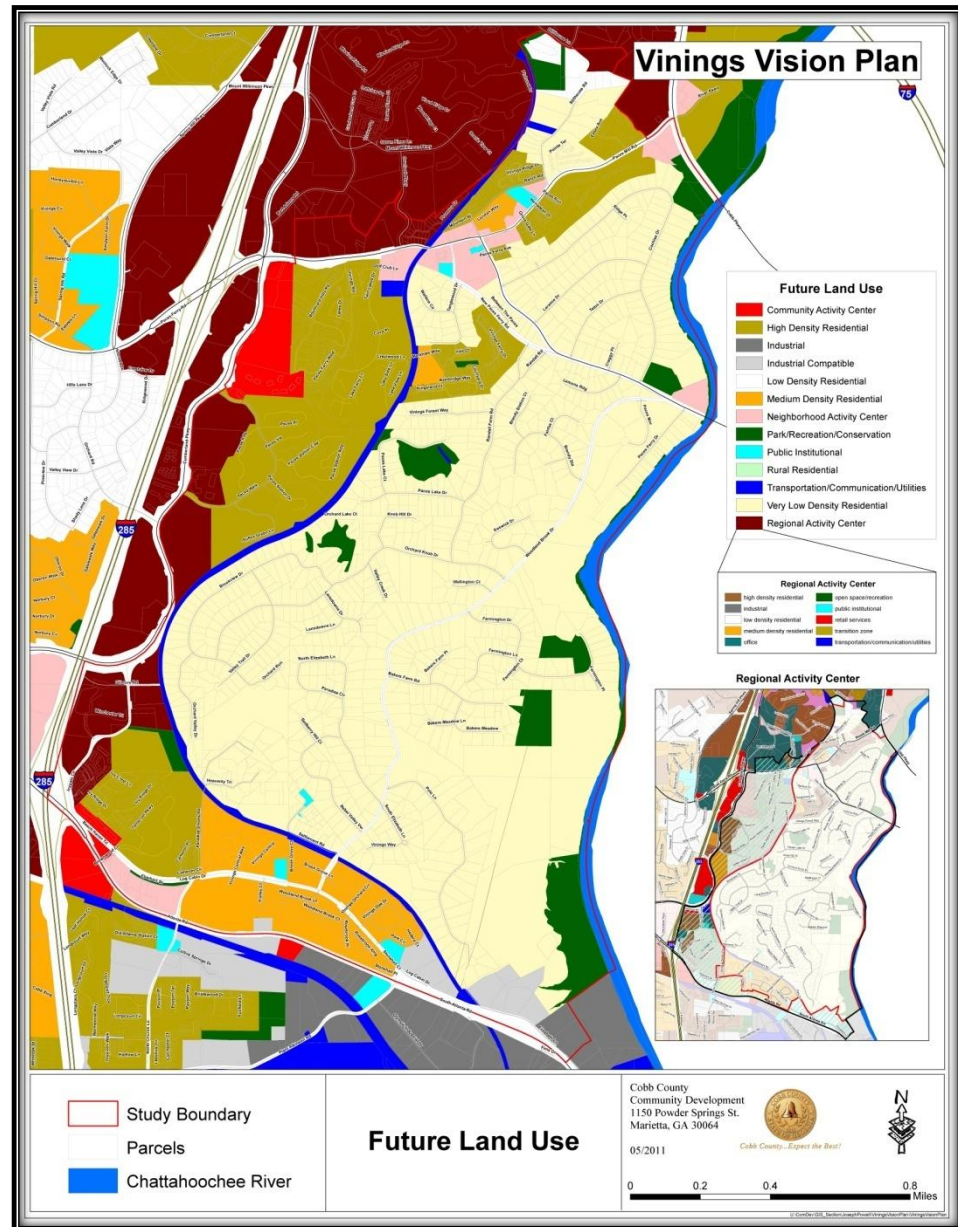


Future Land Use

On the future land use map, Map 6, Vinings is covered mostly by the Very Low Density Residential designation. Areas along Paces Mill Road, and across the tracks along Paces Ferry Road and Cumberland Pkwy, are High Density Residential areas. Log Cabin Drive is primarily Medium Density Residential.

Parcels along Cumberland Parkway are part of a Regional Activity Center that stretches south into the study area. Community Activity Centers are located at the southeast corner of Paces Ferry Road and Cumberland Parkway and near the Atlanta Road interchange with I-285. Within the Vinings core, there are Neighborhood Activity Centers, which is the category used to provide low intensity office and retail that serves neighborhood residents and businesses. These are located near the Village Center and adjacent to the river at Paces Ferry Road.

To the south, along Atlanta Road, industrial development dominates. Throughout the study area, are designations for recreation space, institutions, and transportation/utility corridors. This can be seen in more detail on Map 4 and Map 6. In comparing the existing land use and future land use, there is not much change. According to this plan the area will remain primarily residential. Allowances are made for uses of higher intensity to be located in logical places with the infrastructure to handle it.



Map 6



Undeveloped Land

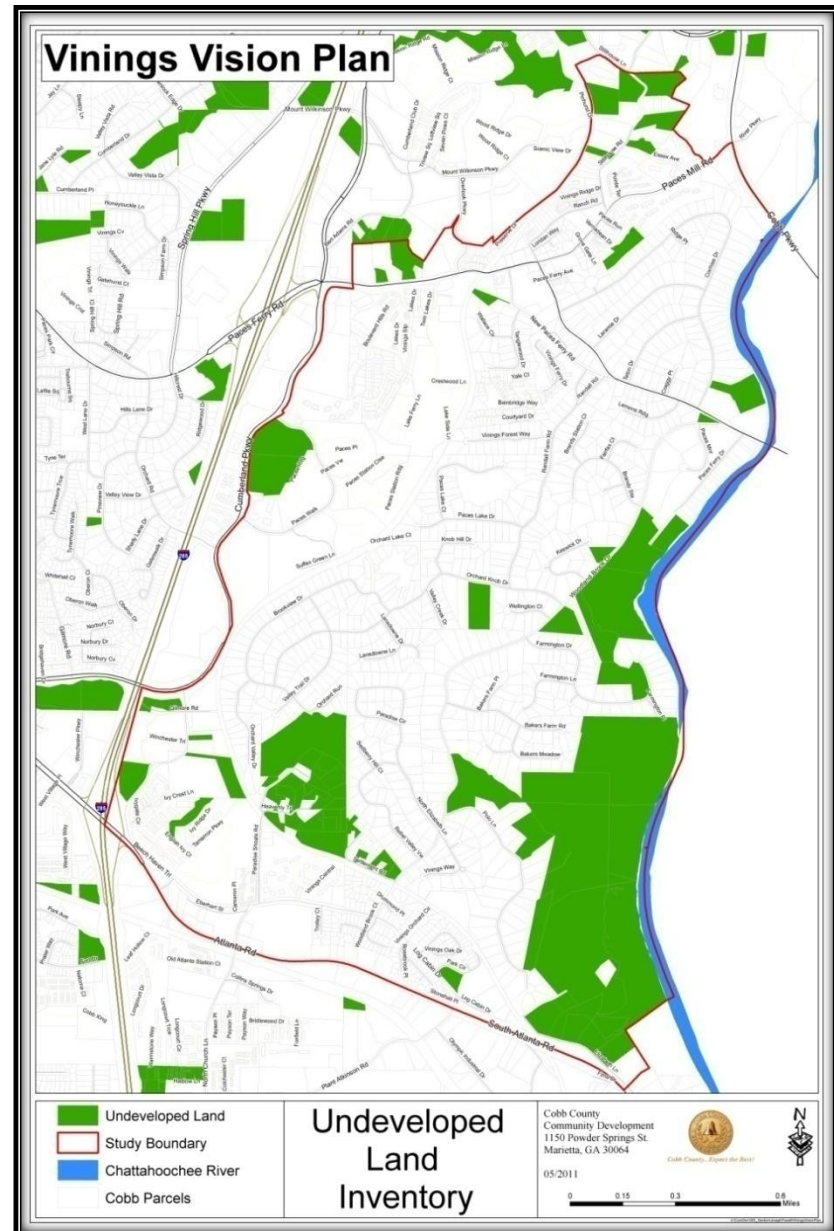
While most of the study area has been developed in some way, there are still large tracts of land that remain undeveloped or underdeveloped. Map 7 displays the Undeveloped Land Inventory. Some of this land sits undeveloped as a result of being located within the floodplain along the Chattahoochee River.

Land along Settlement Road and Paradise Shoals Road is the largest undeveloped tract not within the flood plain. In 2007, a developer, John Wieland Homes and Neighborhoods, petitioned for a zoning change from R-30 to R-15 OSC for the 46 acre Settlement Road site (Z-108). Wieland proposed building a development of 96 homes, which would result in an overall density of 2.24 units per acre. This density is higher than what is recommended in the Cobb County Comprehensive Plan which calls for very low density (0 to 2 units per acre). Wieland withdrew the petition, and still owns a majority of the properties, most of which now sit vacant. The site is in the immediate vicinity of documented Civil War earthworks and the St. John’s Baptist Church cemetery. The area around the cemetery and Civil War earthwork would be ideal for use as a park. The property provides additional challenges with two streams running through it, steep topography and it is heavily wooded.

Another large piece of undeveloped land lies along Cumberland Parkway at the intersection with Paces Walk. The 18.8 acre, graded and vacant lot is currently zoned community retail commercial. A mixed use development was proposed for the site in 2007, but the subsequent zoning petition (Z-69) was withdrawn.

Land along the river could also be used for parks and recreation or conservation, however most of these tracts are privately owned.

Map 7





Community Facilities

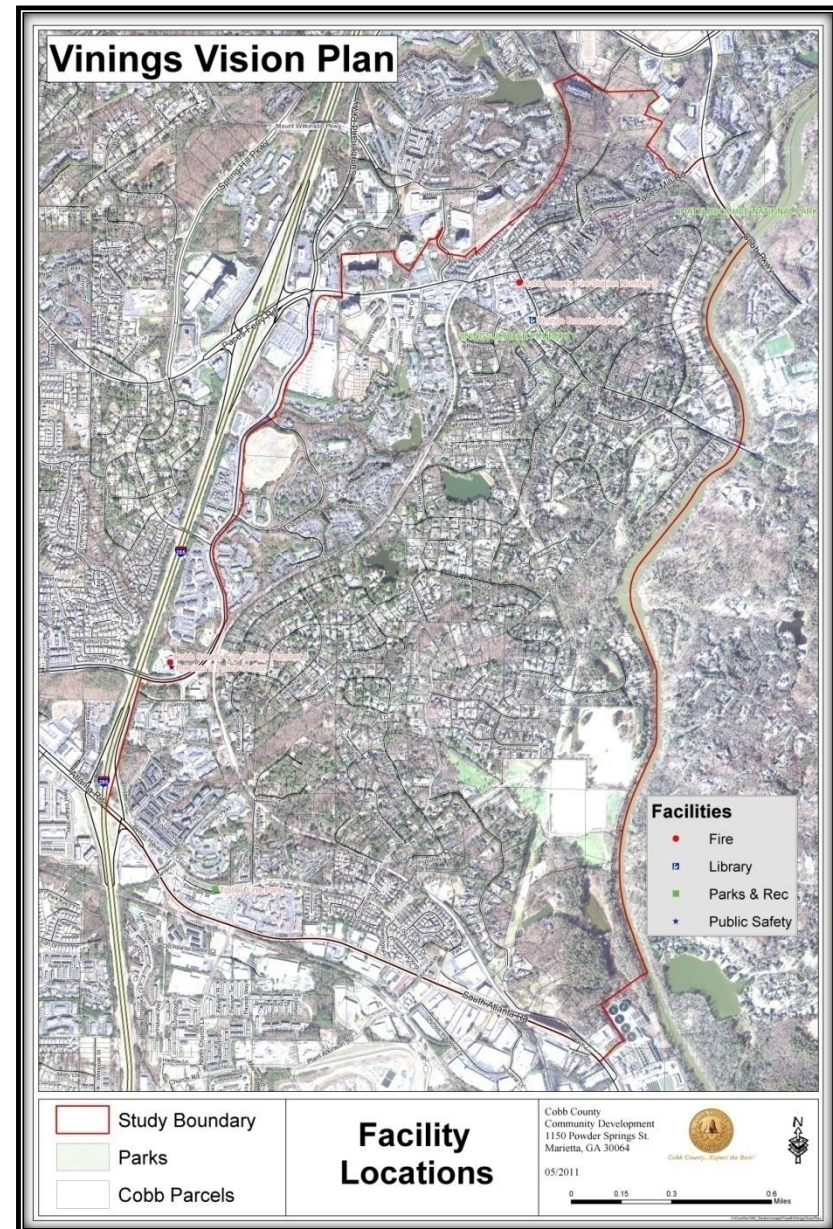
In the heart of Vinings, there are two important civic buildings: the Vinings Branch Library and Cobb County Fire Station Number 5. Both of these facilities are located next to the Vinings Jubilee on Paces Ferry Road. The Southern end of the Palisades Units of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area is located in off of Cobb Parkway, south of Paces Mill Road.

In the southern end of the study area, Trolley Line Park is the only public facility. It is a small strip park that covers about 1 acre and was created to preserve and remember the historic interurban trolley line that once ran there, and to allow for walking and running. Cobb County Fire Station Number 4 and the Cobb County Police Station for Precinct 3 are located just outside the study area on Cumberland Parkway.

There are no public schools within the study area. Children who reside in the community and attend public schools will go to Teasley or Nickajack Elementary, then Campbell Middle School, and finally Campbell High School.

Many children who live within Vinings attend one of the several private schools located outside the study area: the Lovett School, the Westminster Schools, Trinity School, Pace Academy, and Whitefield Academy. The proximity to these schools is one of many reasons that Vinings is an attractive place to live.

Vinings lacks a place for the community to come together and meet in a public space. There is no large public park or adequate community center in the area to hold public meetings and events.



Map 8



Historic Preservation

Vinings has a unique history that helps create a unique sense of place. Its history ranges from Native American settlements to arrival of pioneers to the rise of railroads to the Civil War to the development and growth in Cobb County during and after World War II.

Vinings has eleven historic resources listed in the county’s 2007 Historic Resources Survey. The survey provides information on location, building type, approximate year of construction, whether a resource could be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and whether a resource is listed on the Cobb County Register of Historic Places.

Table 9

Survey Field #	Georgia Historic Resources Survey ID	Resource Name	Address	Current Use	Architectural Style	Building Type	Date of Construction	National Register Eligible	Listed on Cobb County Register
825	206634	Solomon & Penelopy Pace House	3057 Paces Mill Road	Event Facility	Folk Victorian	Gable Wing Cottage	c 1870	Listed	Yes
826	206635	Western & Atlantic Railroad Pavilion / Vinings Pavilion	3057 Paces Mill Road	Event Facility	Folk Victorian	N/A	c 1874	Yes	Yes
827	206633	Yarbrough House	3010 Paces Mill Road	Vinings Center, VHPS Office	Folk Victorian	Hall-Parlor	1875-1879	Yes	Yes
828	206624	Hill General Store / 4040 Building	3011 Paces Mill Road	Old Vinings Inn Restaurant	N/A	N/A	c 1890	Yes	No
829	206646	Vest-Hodge House	2949 Paces Ferry Road	Harry Norman Realtors	Folk Victorian	Gable Wing Cottage	c 1890	Yes	No
830	206625	5 Mountain Street –Gable Wing Cottage	5 Mountain Street	Commercial – Business/Office	N/A	Gable Wing Cottage	c 1900	Yes	No
831	206647	Vinings First Baptist Church	2950 New Paces Ferry Road	La Paz Restaurant	N/A	Front Gable Church	c 1949	No	No
832	206644	Robinson’s Tropical Garden Supper Club	4199 Paces Ferry Road	Canoe Restaurant	N/A	N/A	c 1948	Yes	No
833	206645	Paces Ferry Bridge / Hermi’s Bridge		Pedestrian Bridge	N/A	N/A	c 1904	Yes	No
869	207307	Boy Scouts Hut, Troop 1	2845 Log Cabin Road	Boy Scout Hut	N/A	N/A	1950-1959	May be	No
870	207308	Log Cabin Community Sunday School	2699 Log Cabin Road	Church	Gothic Revival	Front Gable Church	1912-1949	Yes	No

Source: Architecture, Archaeology, and Landscapes: Resources for Historic Preservation in Unincorporated Cobb County, Georgia. Darlene R. Roth, Ph.D.



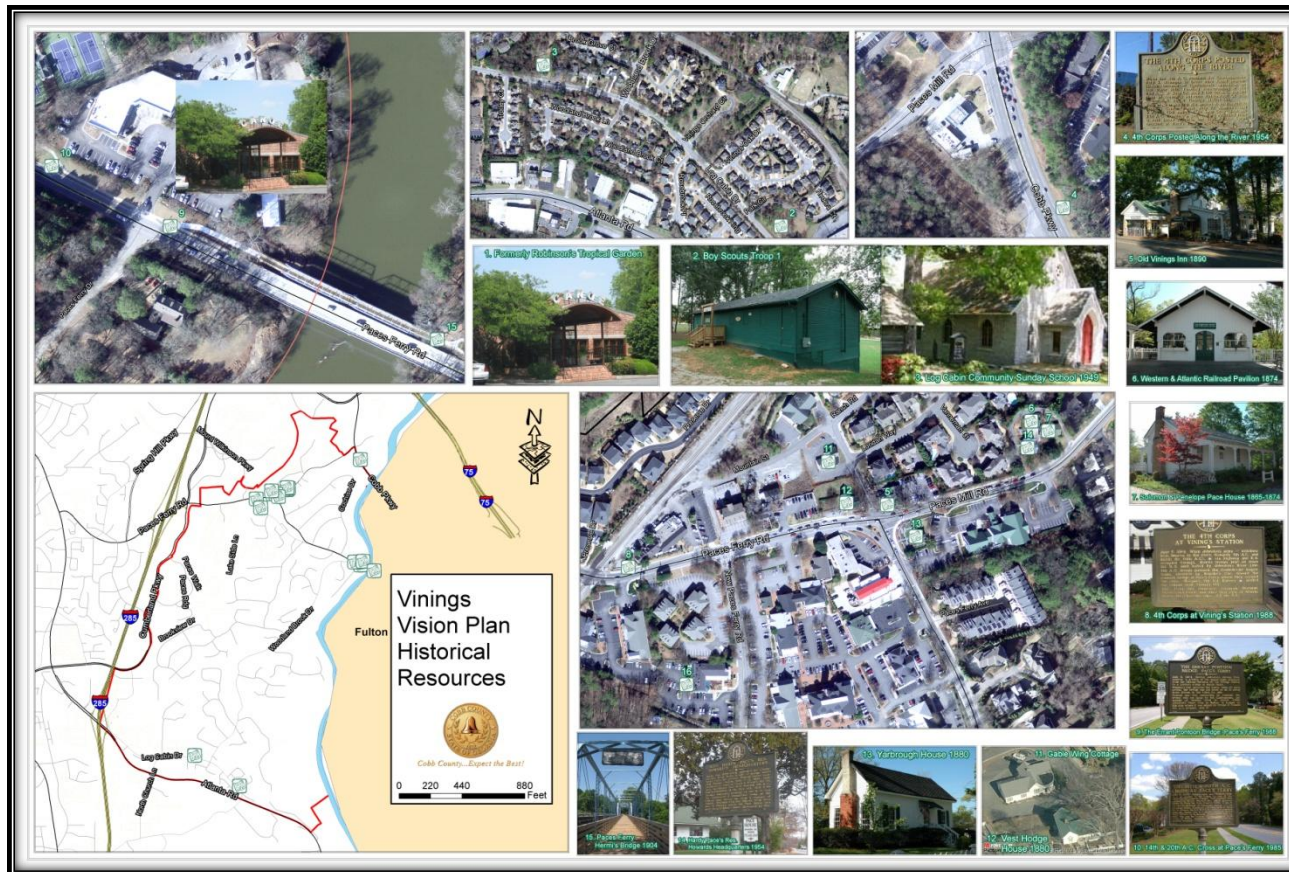
The survey sought to identify properties that “appear” to be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. Of the eleven properties surveyed in Vinings, eight appear to be eligible for listing. Most of these resources were found to possess a qualifying degree of individual significance as well as noteworthy architectural characteristics and a good level of integrity.

On May 20, 2009 the National Park Service announced that the Solomon & Penelopy Pace House was to be listed on the National Register. This was the first property in Vinings to be included in the Register and further demonstrates the historic importance of Vinings Village, and the potential for more properties to be listed.

These initial determinations of eligibility were made by the consultant conducting the survey. Final determinations of eligibility are

made by the Historic Preservation Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

There are also five historic markers within the study area: The Errant Pontoon Bridge: Pace's Ferry, The 14th & 20th A.C. Cross at Pace's Ferry, Site: Hardy Pace's Res. Howard's Headquarters, The 4th Corps at Vinings Station and the Johnston's River Line. There is one just outside the study boundaries: The 4th Corps Posted Along The River. These markers were installed by the State of Georgia and highlight some of the history of Vinings and mainly reference Civil War activity in the area.



Map 9

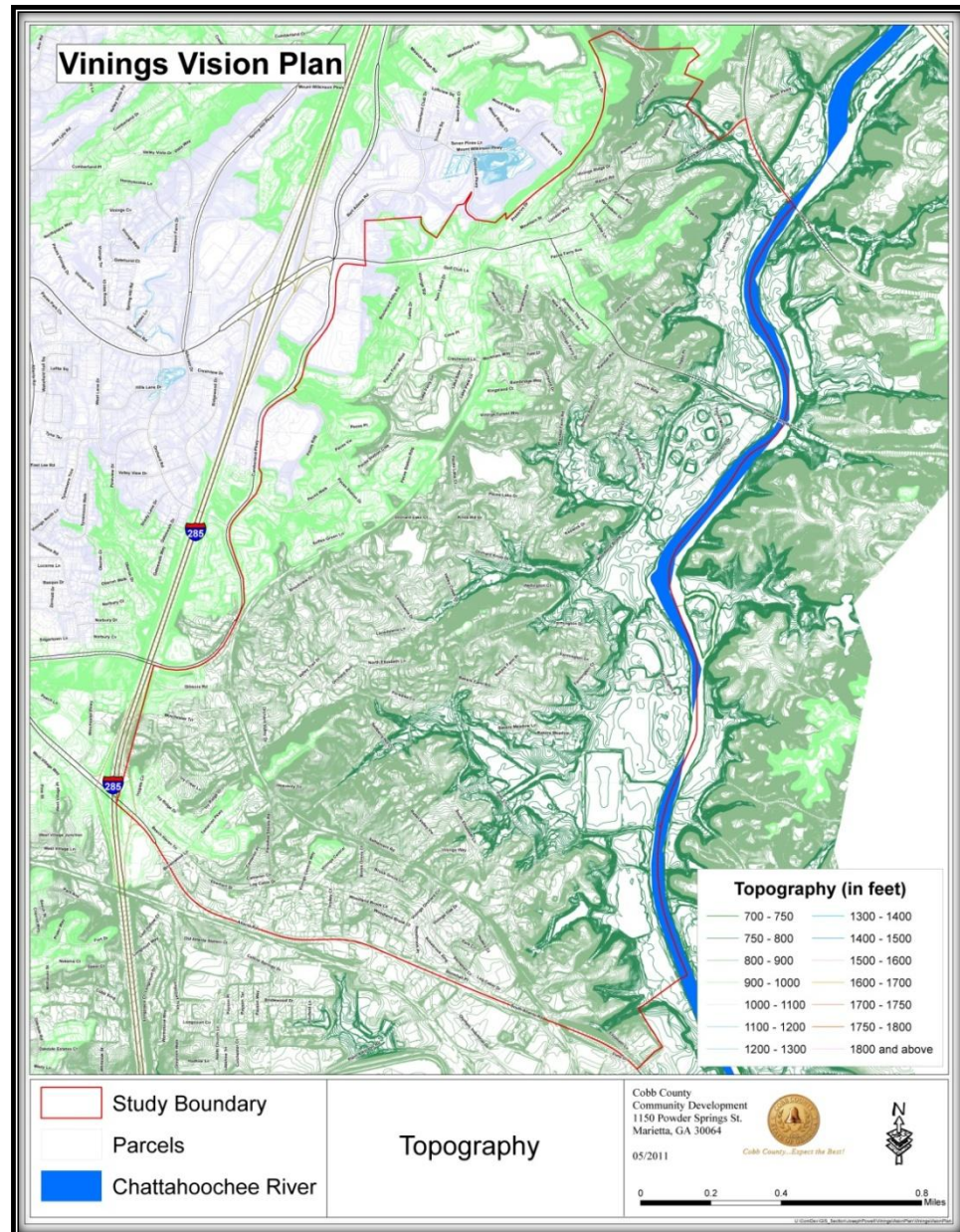


Environmental and Natural Resources

Topography

Vinings has a relatively varied topography. The commercial core of Vinings is located in the Chattahoochee River Valley and is overlooked by Mount Wilkinson, which is more commonly referred to as Vinings Mountain. A CSX rail line connecting Atlanta to Marietta and Chattanooga runs on a ridge to the west of the village. Some of the best views of the Atlanta skyline can be seen within the study boundaries.

Despite the many hills in Vinings, the village overall has a very low elevation relative to other parts of the county. Distinguishable in Map 10, is Mount Wilkinson, the Polo Fields, the relative height of the Village Center and upper Cochise Drive, and the elevation increase of the terrain moving from east to west of the study area.



Map 10

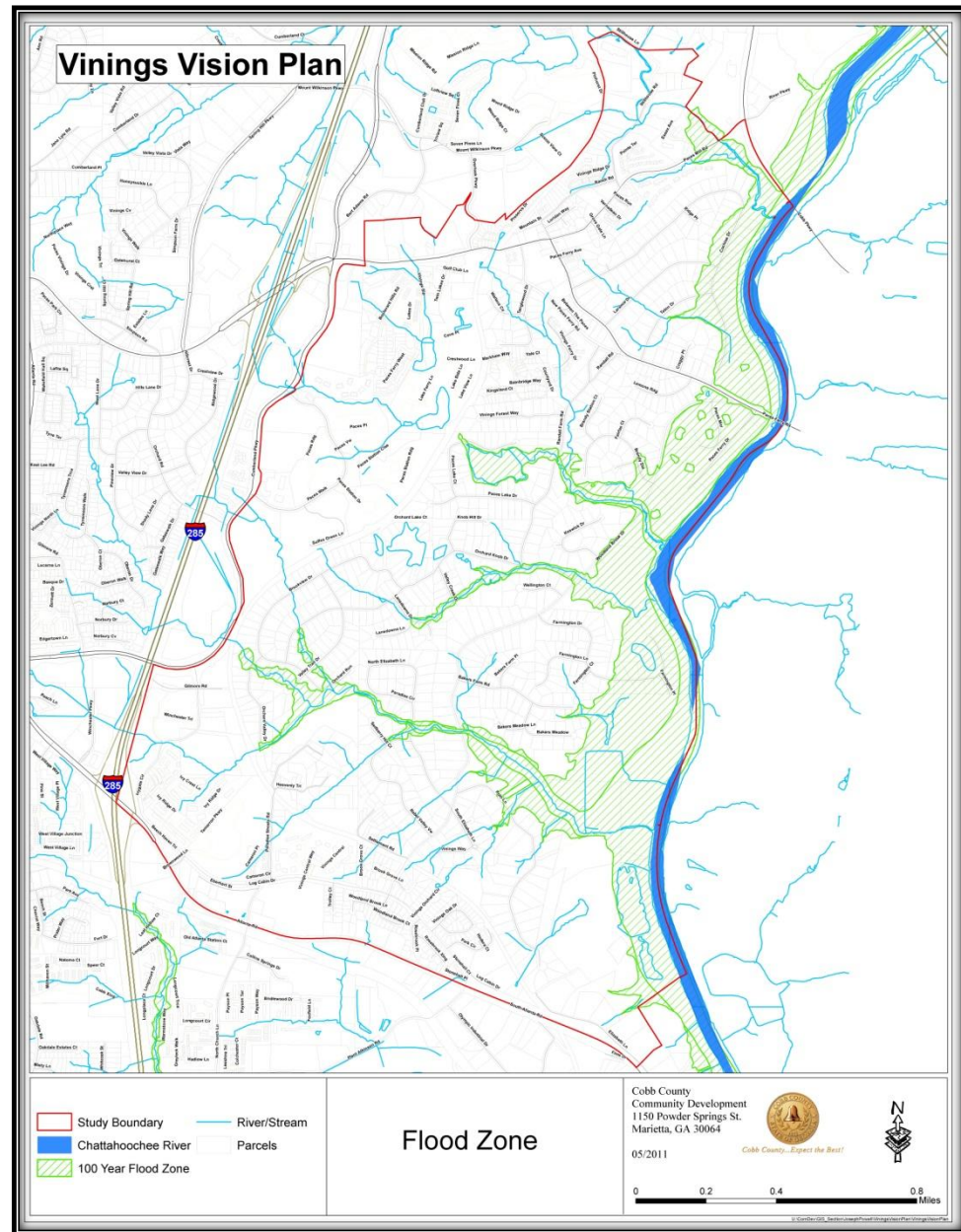


Floodplain

Located in the eastern portion of the study area, the Chattahoochee River is the dividing line between Fulton and Cobb Counties. Flowing from the Blue Ridge Mountains to the Gulf of Mexico through the Atlanta Metro area, the use of the river as a drinking source, protecting its water quality, and mitigating impacts of flooding are of primary concern.

Although the Chattahoochee River has been underutilized as a recreational amenity to Vinings, there are opportunities here not seen elsewhere in the county. Paces Lake, North Paces Lake, Orchard Lake, and a few smaller ponds feed into creeks and streams that flow through Vinings to the river.

Flooding is an issue that has affected Vinings and Cobb County in the past. In late September of 2009, a flood of historic proportions affected the entire metro Atlanta region. Vinings was one of many communities hit hard by the flood. In all, 68 properties in Vinings sustained flood damage.



Map 11



Transportation

Access to transportation routes has always been an integral part of what makes Vinings an attractive place to live. From ferries, to trains, and now to automobiles; Vinings thrives but also feels pressure due to traffic flow throughout the surrounding area. The following section will assess some of the current issues as well as look at future developments that might have an impact on the transportation network.

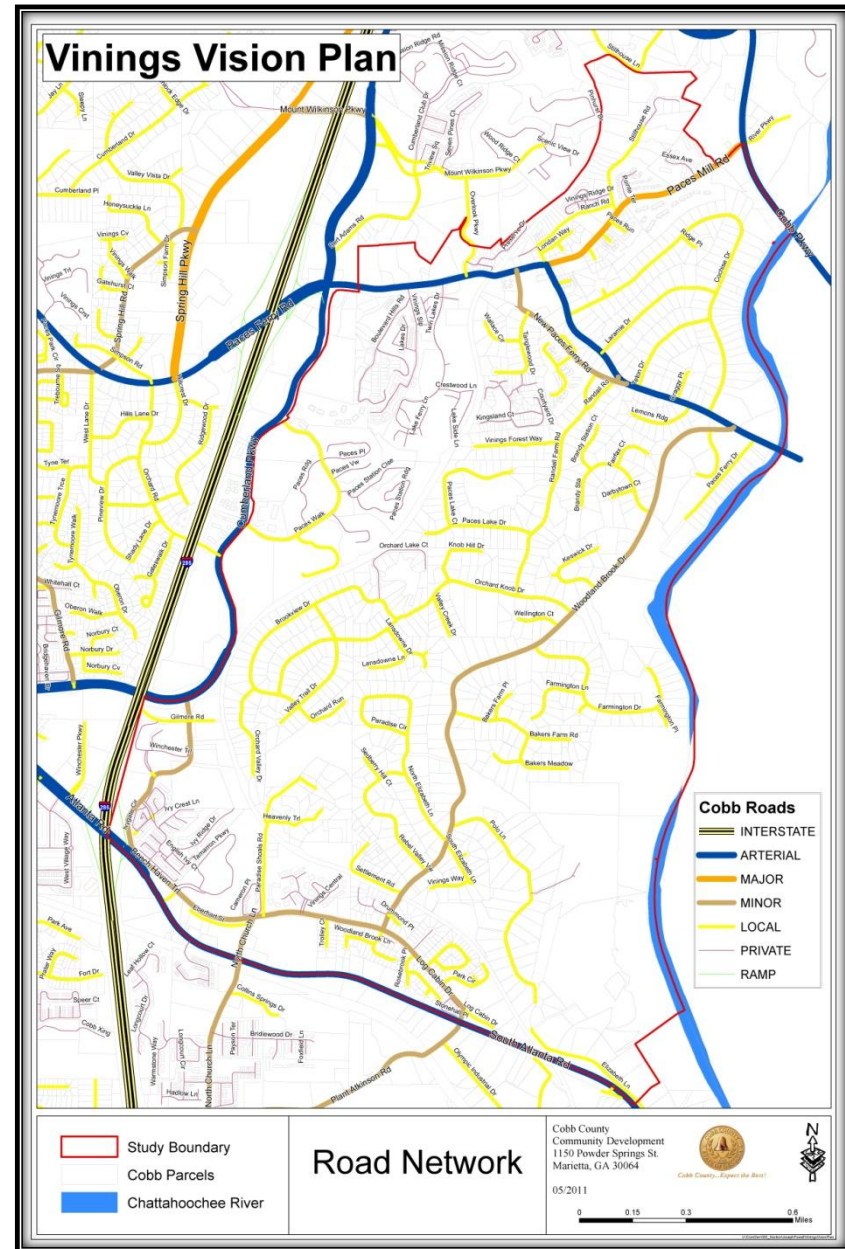
Access and Connectivity:

External

Vinings is located near the intersections of several important highway routes within the Atlanta Metro Area. Interstates 75, traveling south from Chattanooga to Atlanta, and 285, also known as the Perimeter (around Atlanta) intersect just to the north of Vinings. These are the primary commuter routes through Cobb County and provide direct access to some of the major employment centers of the region, Cumberland, Perimeter Center, Midtown, Downtown Atlanta and Atlanta Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport.

The Cumberland Activity Center is located to the north and West of Vinings, surrounding the I-75/285 Interchange. Cobb Parkway, or US 41, was the primary north-south route through Cobb County before the construction of Interstate 75. It connects Acworth, Kennesaw, Marietta, Dobbins Air Reserve Base, Smyrna, the Cumberland Activity Center and Vinings. US 41 continues on to Atlanta as Northside Parkway. Atlanta Road, another major arterial, connects Marietta to Smyrna and to then to Atlanta.

Paces Ferry Road and Paces Mill Road, through Vinings, are other major routes through the area. Cobb Parkway, *Map 12*





Paces Ferry Road, and Atlanta Road each have an interchange with I-285. Access to I-75 is provided by Northside Parkway and Mt. Paran Road in Fulton County or by Cumberland Boulevard. Cumberland Parkway begins at Cumberland Mall and connects the aforementioned routes to the southwestern part of the county via the East-West Connector. All of these primary routes, provide great access to anywhere in the region, but are subject to congestion during peak travel periods. This is likely to increase as growth continues around the Cumberland Activity Center throughout Cobb County.

Internal

Like many of the streets outside of Central Atlanta, the streets in Vinings follow an organic, suburban design. Many cul-de-sacs and dead ends leave little or no alternatives to traveling between residential areas or to commercial areas. For those that use the streets for walking, running or bicycling, options are also limited for connecting to places of interest.

Walk Score is an online tool that measures pedestrian connectivity or walkability for a given address or street. A high score indicates nearby access to many services without having to drive. Table 10 shows some of the walk scores for areas around Vinings Village.

A *Connectivity Index* is another method of measuring the accessibility of a neighborhood. This is calculated by dividing the number of street segments in a specific area by the number of intersections or nodes.¹ Vinings has a connectivity score of 1.2. The State of Virginia recently imposed a new requirement of a score of 1.6 in population-heavy areas and 1.4 in less dense areas. Based on this standard, Vinings has a very low internal connectivity.

While the absence of much developable land presents little demand for development except in the village center and the Settlement Road/Paradise Shoals Area (see Map 7 - Undeveloped Land Inventory), the Connectivity Index can be improved by building pedestrian connections in the form of greenways. In some instances strategic road connections could be made to the benefit of the entire network.

Volume

Chart 4 (see following page) shows the change in the Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) on a few of the primary routes through Vinings, from 2005 to 2009². The data shows a steady decrease in traffic along Paces Ferry Road from the Chattahoochee River to Paces Mill Road and an increase in traffic on Paces Ferry Road from Paces Mill Road to I-285. There is an overall increase in traffic along Atlanta Road and a decrease in traffic on Cobb Parkway from the river to Cumberland Boulevard.

Table 10

Location	Walk Score	
Atlanta Average	58	Somewhat Walkable
Marietta Square	89	Very Walkable
Vinings Branch Library	74	Very Walkable
Cochise Drive	65	Somewhat Walkable
Cochise Riverview Club	32	Car-Dependent
Paces Ferry Drive	31	Car-Dependent
Orchard Knob Road	26	Car-Dependent
Brandy Station	29	Car-Dependent
Polo Lane	26	Car-Dependent
N Church Lane	62	Somewhat Walkable

¹ <http://greatergreaterwashington.org/post/1847/virginias-new-street-connectivity-regulations-the-specifics/>

² GDOT – Georgia State Traffic & Report Statistics (STARS)

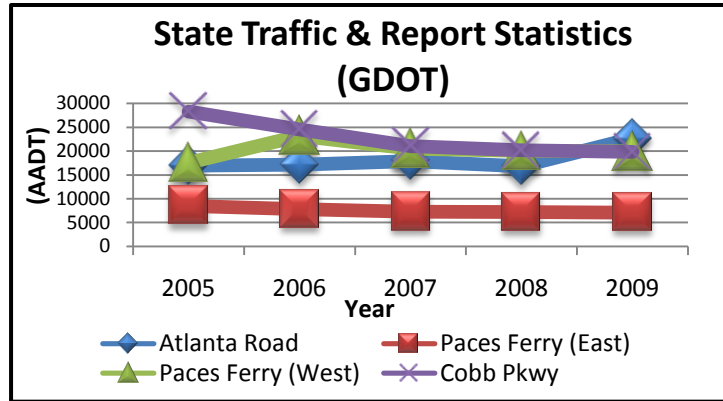


Chart 4 afternoon rush occurs between 5 and 6 pm, primarily in the westbound direction. Westbound traffic also peaks between 11 am and noon. The data confirms general observation of traffic in Vinings. According to Cobb DOT, the AADT for Paces Ferry Road has leveled off at between 19,000 to 22,000 cars. Woodland Brook Drive carries considerably less traffic than the arterials in and around Vinings, but shows the same peak trends.

Traffic counts (see Chart 5) were completed at the Paces Ferry Road and Paces Mill Road intersection in August 2011 at morning and evening peak times. The highest counts in the morning (7:00-8:00 a.m.) and evening (5:00-6:00 p.m.) were through traffic eastbound on Paces Ferry Road to Paces Mill Road. The second highest counts in the morning and evening were through traffic westbound on Paces Mill Road to Paces Ferry Road. There was also a high volume of right turns from eastbound on Paces Ferry Road to Paces Ferry Road. The Cobb County Department of Transportation conducted analysis on the counts and determined that the left turns from Paces Mill Road to Paces Ferry Road have the most difficulty considering the lack of gaps in traffic coming from the opposite direction.

Flow

Level of Service (LOS) is a ratio given to road segments and intersection, grading its ability to handle traffic. The 2008 Cobb County Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) determined a LOS for Paces Mill Road from Cobb Parkway to Paces Ferry Road. Paces Ferry Road from Overlook Parkway to Cumberland Parkway was graded a LOS of D. The segment of Paces Ferry Road from Paces Mill Road to Overlook Parkway was graded a LOS F. All other roads were graded a LOS A to C. One of the general goals of the CTP is to improve

It is suspected that these trends will continue, even without much new development. Chart 4 also illustrates that most of the traffic along Paces Ferry Road through Vinings is originating on Paces Mill from Cobb Parkway and continuing to points past Cumberland Parkway. The corridor provides a desirable connection from I-75 to Smyrna, which avoids the Cumberland CID. Congestion will increase should more development be added to either end of this roadway.

There are three peaks in traffic along Paces Ferry Road, coinciding with the morning, afternoon, and noontime rushes, with the afternoon rush hours being only slightly higher than the other peaks. The morning peak occurs between 8 and 9 am, with most of the cars moving eastbound. The

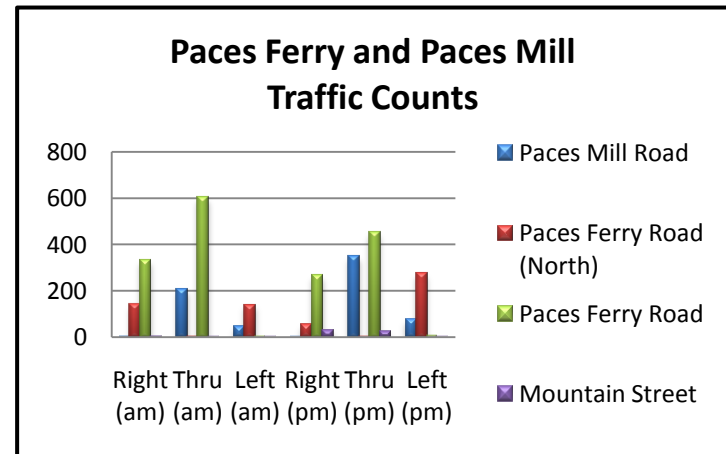


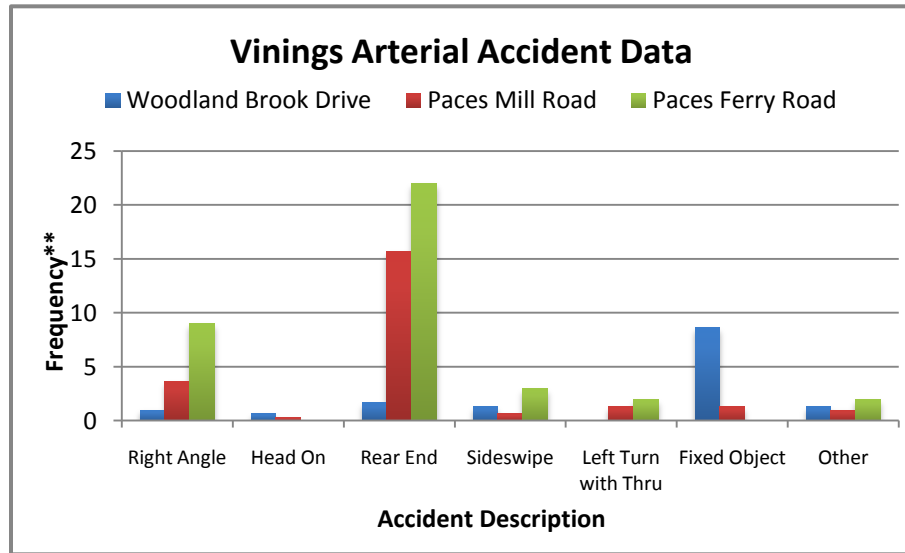
Chart 5



all roads and intersection to LOS A to C. Due to current land uses, topography, and other factors, improving the Paces Mill Road/Paces Ferry Road Corridor will not be an easy or quick fix. More information on traffic patterns in and around Vinings, can be found in the Cumberland Community Improvement District South Quad Study, created September 2008.

Speed

The speed of traffic is important to the flow and congestion of vehicles on roadways, but excessive speeds can lead to unsafe conditions for drivers, pedestrians and bicyclists. The current speed along Woodland Brook is 35 miles per hour. Residents of Vinings have expressed concerns over speed along the corridor. According to the Cobb DOT, 79% of the cars along the route moved at speeds greater than 35 m.p.h. However, more cars going northbound exceeded the speed limit (82.5%) than vehicles going southbound (76.6%). At this time no other corridors within the study boundary presented a speeding problem.



Accidents

The frequency of accidents along specific corridors can point to issues with safe and efficient driving conditions. Using accident data provided by Cobb DOT, Paces Ferry Road, Paces Mill Road, and Woodland Brook Drive were accessed by type, frequency, location, and cause. Chart 6, displays the amount of accidents by type for each roadway.

Rear end accidents were a major problem at the intersection of Paces Mill and Paces Ferry Road and at Paces Mill Road’s intersection with Cobb Parkway. Over 60% of recorded accidents along these two routes were rear end accidents. Many of these accidents involved a vehicle hitting a stopped vehicle at a traffic signal or other intersection, in dry and daylight conditions. This suggests perhaps an issue with traffic flow, tailgating, panic stops, or general attention of drivers. Along Woodland Brook Drive,

Chart 6 one-car accidents with fixed objects were most frequent. These occurred often while negotiating curves near Polo Lane and Bakers Farm Road in wet conditions. Overall there were not many injuries and no fatalities for the recorded time period. A chart with a summary of this data can be found in the Appendix.

Transit

There are no direct connections to bus or rail service within the core of Vinings . However, there are nearby bus routes operated by Cobb County Transit (CCT), and the Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority (MARTA). Two of these routes connect Cobb County to MARTA Rail Service via Cobb Parkway. CCT operates a bus transfer center north of Vinings along Cumberland Boulevard serving



seven routes. High capacity transit in the form of light rail, bus rapid transit or express bus service, is currently being studied by the Cobb County Department of Transportation through an Alternatives Analysis. The modes being evaluated would likely use Cobb Parkway or I-75 as the main routes.

Vinings Crossing (Rail)

A primary concern for the residents of Vinings is the intersection of Paces Ferry Road with the CSX Rail Corridor just west of Downtown Vinings. This corridor is owned by the State of Georgia. The lease with CSX will expire in 2019. Due to the high frequency of freight traffic in the corridor, and present land uses surrounding the crossing, vehicle congestion is a problem during peak hours.

The high volume of train traffic has also caused issues with noise problems for the adjacent residents and businesses. The Vinings community raised money to complete a “quiet zone” at the railroad crossing to help reduce these noise disturbances caused by train horns.

Traffic issues could only increase with the possibility of increasing freight traffic in the region, and any possible introduction of passenger rail in the form of commuter, intercity or high speed train lines from points northwest of Atlanta. Extending the double tracked portion of the railway from Smyrna west of I-285 to Tilford Yard in Atlanta has also been discussed. Amtrak is being asked to conduct a study for the addition of passenger rail in this corridor. Again, because of the crossing’s proximity to business at the village center, the construction of a bridge or underpass is unlikely.



Vinings Railroad Crossing



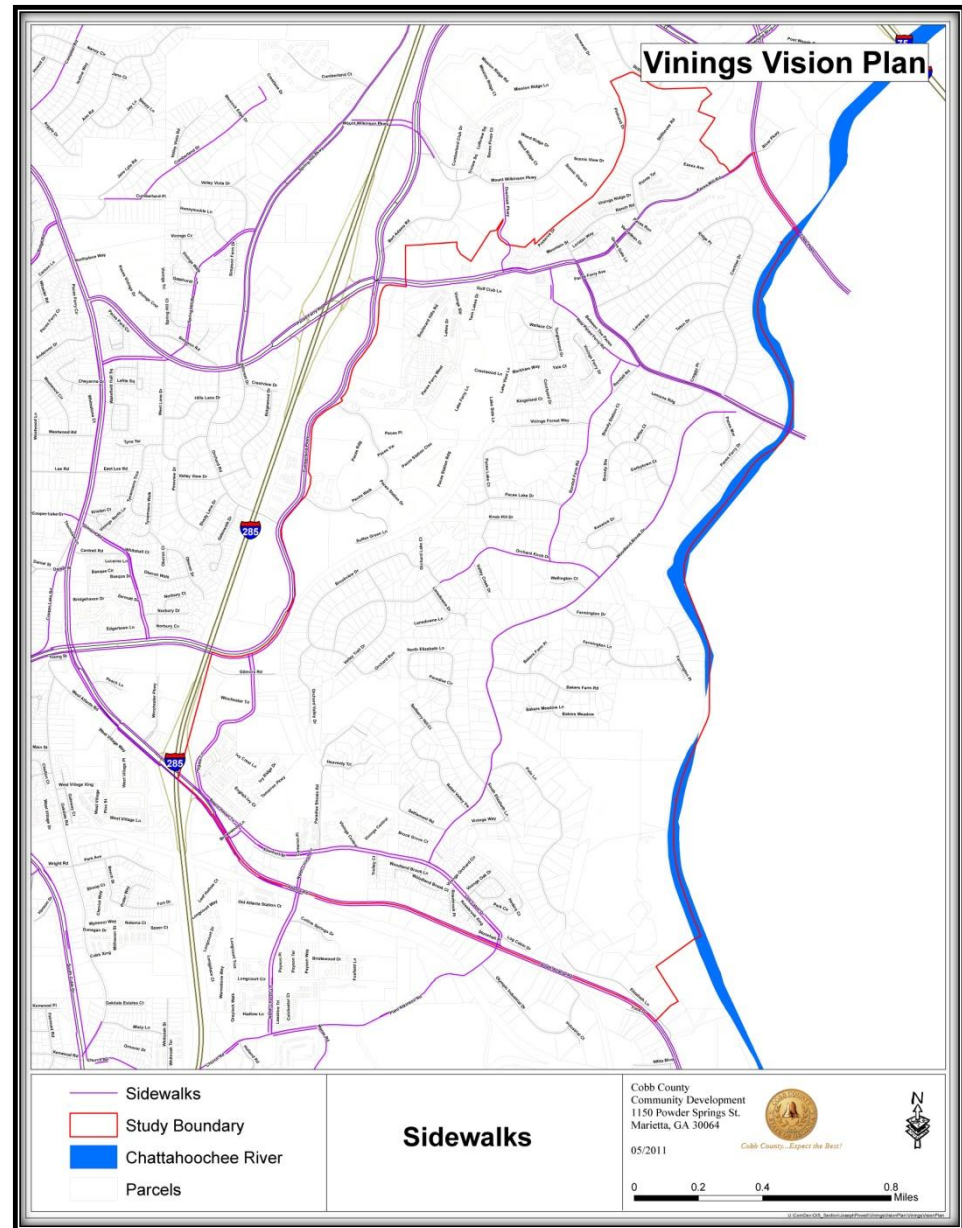
Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure

Map 13 shows the location of sidewalks throughout Vinings. There are sidewalks along most of the principle corridors and main neighborhood streets, but key segments and links are missing.

There are no multi-use (greenway) paths in Vinings. However, there are several nearby trails that could eventually be connected in the future via Vinings. The Silver Comet Trail is a 'Rails to Trails' project that currently extends from the Alabama state line to Smyrna. The entire trail spans nearly 100 miles from Anniston, Alabama to its current terminus near the East West Connector and South Cobb Drive. A future extension would extend it into Atlanta. A trail already connects the Silver Comet Trail to Cumberland via multi-use paths along several arterials.

The Rottenwood Creek Trail begins in the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area just north of Cobb Parkway and extends north of Interstate 285. In the future the trail would continue north along the creek running parallel to I-285. The Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area also includes hiking trails. All of these trails are in close proximity to Vinings.

A mixture of linear and traditional open space would not only improve walkability, diversify recreation activities, and increase connections across the community, but would increase property values as well.



Map 13



Improvement Projects

Some of the following projects do not directly impact the Vinings Vision Plan study area, but could be happening in areas immediately adjacent to the study area. The goal is give a broad view of potential improvement projects in and around the study area.

2011 SPLOST

Listed under Safety and Operational Roadway Improvements a project along Woodland Brook Drive between Log Cabin Drive and Paces Ferry Road was designated as a Tier 1 project. The project is described as “Safety and drainage improvements, including Brandy Station” and is estimated to cost \$1,000,000.

Cobb Parkway Bridge Replacement

Design and construction of a new bridge over the Chattahoochee River from Paces Mill Road to Northgate Drive is planned. The project has been estimated to cost \$15 million according to Georgia DOT’s FY10 bridge funds budget. The Cumberland Community Improvement District (CID) will provide an additional \$260,000.

Cobb Parkway Widening

There are plans to widen Cobb Parkway from Akers Mill south to Paces Mill Road from four lanes to six lanes at a cost of \$33 million total with \$1.4 million coming from the Cumberland CID. Construction is scheduled for 2015, and is expected to be complete by 2020.

Cumberland Parkway/Paces Ferry Intersection Improvement

The project includes the construction of dual-left turn lanes from Paces Ferry Road westbound to Cumberland Parkway and includes landscaping enhancements to the intersection. According to the CCID website the project is estimated to cost \$899,000 with \$559,000 coming from the CID. A portion is funded by the State Road & Tollway Authority. The CID will match this grant via the Georgia Transportation Infrastructure Bank loan program. Final plans are underway for the project.

Interstate 285 Interchange with Atlanta Road

Modifications to the interchange will improve flow along Atlanta Road. Currently there are two lanes in each direction with no left turn lanes. The overpass crossing I-285 will be replaced, the I-285 ramps will be reconfigured, and additional lanes will be added. The Orchard Road Bridge over I-285 will also be replaced. Additional lanes will be added to I-285 at the interchange. This project was included in the 2005 SPLOST Program and is a part of the FY2008-2013 Transportation Improvement Plan. Construction is set to begin in 2013.

Trail Improvements

There are several proposed extensions of trail in the area, including the Cumberland Connector and the Silver Comet Trail. No trail improvements have been programmed.



Visions Light Rail Plan

This project is focused on improving regional connectivity to Atlanta, Perimeter Center, and Gwinnett County. Transit would be focused along the US 41/Cobb Parkway and Interstate 75 Corridor. Circulators would be included within the Cumberland and Town Center/KSU areas. The proposed schedule anticipates the design-build process to begin in 2019. The Light Rail is a major item on Cobb County's wish list for the regional transit tax under consideration for July 2012.

Connect Cobb

An Alternative Analysis study is currently being completed by the Cobb County Department of Transportation for high capacity transit from MARTA's Art Center Station to the City of Acworth. The mode of transit and alignment of the transit corridor have not yet been released.

Additional Notes:

Millions of dollars have already been contributed by the Cumberland CID for improvements to the Paces Ferry and I-285 interchange, as well as the construction of Cumberland Boulevard and its interchange with I-75. Collaboration with the Cumberland CID could be an important partnership to create improvements in Vinings.



Crime

The study area spans, in part, four police beats, which are used to record crime data. Each is a part of Cobb County Precinct three. In order of size, they are 315, 310, 316 and 317. Map 14 shows where these beat intersect the study boundaries. Included in these statistics are the Cumberland Activity Center, and areas along South Cobb Drive and Atlanta Road south of Concord/Spring Road. Beat 316 most closely follows what is considered Vinings. It is located east of I-285 and south of the Paces Ferry/Pace Mill corridor.

In all beats, Entering Auto, Residential Burglary, Larceny, Simple Assault, and Business Burglary were the most frequent instances of crime. Beat 316, covering the core of Vinings, had the lowest occurrence of crime, with less than half that of 315 and 317. Chart 7 shows the occurrence of tracked/reported crime for beat 316. Entering Auto and Residential Burglary make up half of the crime incidents. In comparison to other beats, Beat 316 has a greater amount of residential development. This and other land use factors contribute to the type and quantity of crime in the area.

Map 14 shows a dramatic difference in the quantity of crime within the core area of Vinings and the remainder of the study area.

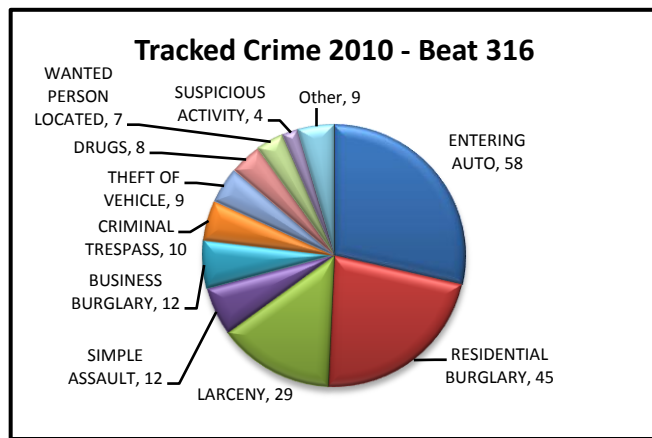
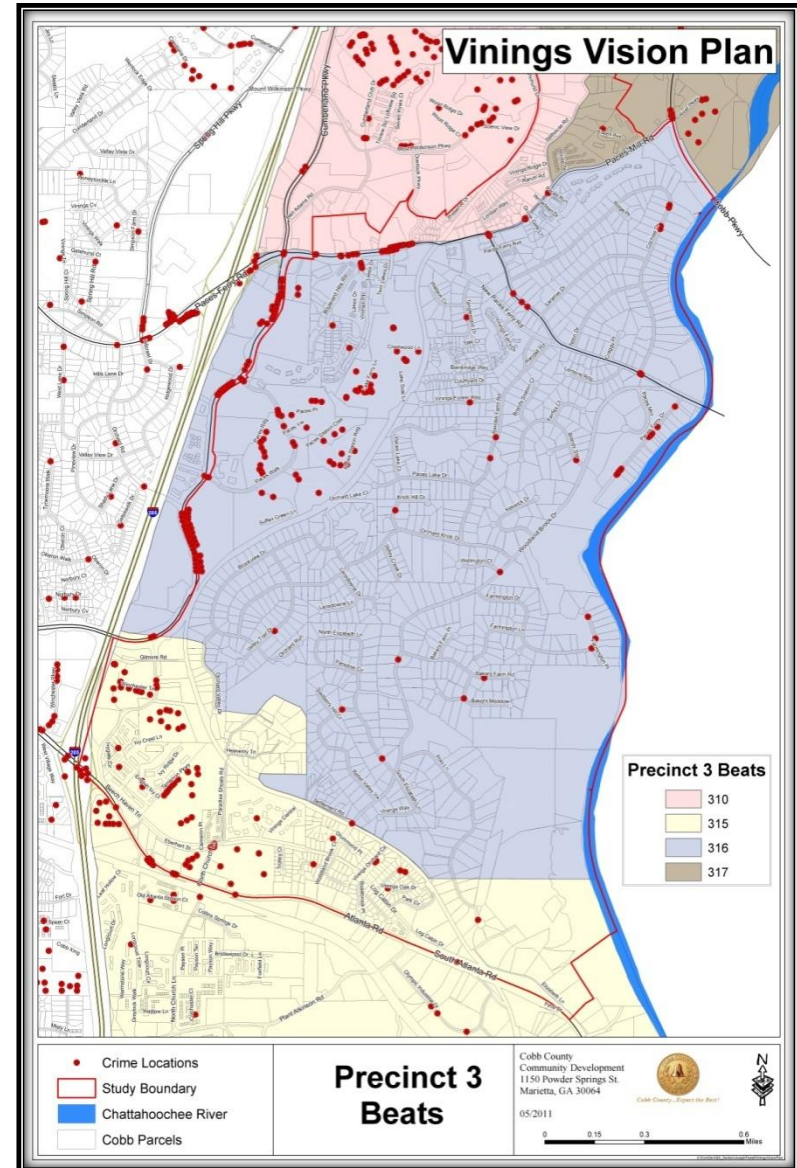


Chart 7



Map 14