

SECTION ONE
VILLA RICA WORK PLAN

VILLA RICA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN VISION STATEMENT

Meetings were held with Villa Rica representatives during preparation of the plan:

- ✓ August 13, 2004
- ✓ November 22, 2004
- ✓ March 30, 2005
- ✓ April 18, 2005
- ✓ June 13, 2005

A Community Visioning meeting was held on January 18, 2005. From these meetings the goals and objectives were developed and the following vision statement arose:

Villa Rica is embracing the growth that has propelled it into the 21st Century much as it embraced the gold rush that created it in 1826. Villa Rica builds upon its fortune of being located 30 miles outside of the world-class city of Atlanta yet surrounded by natural beauty and bucolic offerings.

The city seeks to become a unique blend of small town and suburbia that offers its residents and visitors ample recreational opportunities, refreshing green vistas, all while having ready access to all necessary goods and services. Villa Rica is working towards providing citizens of all ages an array of housing choices, a diverse economic base and a quality of history and life that exceeds what could be provided in a typical suburb or a typical small town.

The Comprehensive Plan describes the management framework necessary to achieve the City's vision. Goals, Objectives and Policies are laid out in the areas of Natural Resources, Historic Preservation, Economic Development, Housing and Community Facilities. The Plan also establishes goals, objectives and policy framework for land use, transportation and intergovernmental coordination. The Villa Rica Planning Commission and the Villa Rica City Council have determined that the Comprehensive Plan advances the Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Chapter 110-12-1-.04(5).

GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES

NATURAL RESOURCES

GOAL: Conserve, protect and promote natural resources in Villa Rica.



Objective NR-1: New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks and greenbelts.

Policies:

NR-1a: Encourage developers to build open space subdivisions.

NR-1b: Identify lands that should be permanently protected as open space.

NR-1c: Require development approvals to be consistent with the Future Land Use Map and other planning directives.

Objective NR-2: Air quality and environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from the negative impacts of development. Environmentally sensitive areas deserve protection particularly when they are important for maintaining character or quality of life.

Policies:

- NR-2a: Preserve existing natural historic areas.
- NR-2b: Ensure that all environmental ordinances are properly enforced.
- NR-2c: Provide opportunities for non-motorized transportation within the transportation network.
- NR-2d: Create better public awareness of natural resources and the role they play in quality of life.
- NR-2e: Adopt ordinances in compliance with State law for the protection of water supply watershed, wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, protected mountains and river and corridors, and sedimentation and erosion control.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

GOAL: Conserve, protect and promote Villa Rica's historic resources.

Objective HP-1: Maintain Villa Rica's traditional character by preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the city's character.



Policies:

- HP-1a: Identify and document Villa Rica's historic properties to Georgia DNR standards.
 - HP-1b: Support efforts (such as National Register listings) to recognize Villa Rica's historic resources.
 - HP-1c: Adopt local measures to protect and maintain Villa Rica's significant historic resources.
- Objective HP-2: Use Villa Rica's story and related historic resources to promote tourism to the city.



Stockmar Gold Mine

Policies:

- HP-2a: Restore and use Villa Rica's historic resources to encourage tourism.
- HP-2b: Develop tourism themes based on Villa Rica's story and related historic resources.



HP-2c: Support efforts to provide heritage education to local residents.

HP-2d: Participate in county and regional heritage tourism projects and programs.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

GOAL: Achieve a growing economy that equitably benefits all segments of Villa Rica.



Objective ED-1: Identify and put in place the prerequisites for quality economic growth.

Policies:

- ED-1a: Designate and develop sufficient economic development sites to accommodate long-term employment growth.
- ED-1b: Coordinate the location and development of new housing and infrastructure with the city's economic development planning.
- ED-1c: Support local workforce training programs.
- ED-1d: Encourage professional office and service development near Tanner Medical Center.
- ED-1e: Encourage regional commercial development to occur within close proximity to freeway interchanges to promote regional commerce.
- ED-1f: Strengthen the City's ability to identify potential interjurisdictional impacts and input from its development authorities and other affected parties.

Objective ED-2: Strengthen and diversify Villa Rica's economic base.

Policies:

- ED-2a: Market the City for industry and businesses that pay above average wages.
- ED-2b: Encourage a greater variety of businesses.
- ED-2c: Support initiatives to provide jobs for residents with limited education.
- ED-2d: Support entrepreneurial training and local business development.
- ED-2e: Participate in county and regional initiatives to provide new quality businesses.
- ED-2f: Promote businesses that complement other businesses in the region.

- ED-2g: Encourage businesses with prospects for future expansion and for creation of higher skill job opportunities.
- ED-2h: Encourage commercial /retail development that will be compatible to existing land uses
- ED-2i: Promote downtown initiatives that support aesthetic improvements and the redevelopment of obsolete buildings.
- ED-2k: Analyze all financial resources and opportunities and identify an overall economic development strategy for Villa Rica.

HOUSING

GOAL: Provide opportunities for quality, affordable, safe, and sanitary housing to all residents of the City of Villa Rica.

Objective H-1: Maintain quality housing and a range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in Villa Rica, to make it possible for all who work in Villa Rica to also live in Villa Rica.

Policies:

- H-1a: Eliminate substandard housing in the City of Villa Rica
- H-1b: Stimulate infill housing in existing neighborhoods
- H-1c: Create housing through adaptive reuse of existing buildings
- H-1d: Create affordable housing opportunities to ensure that all who work in the City of Villa Rica have a viable choice or option to live in the community.
- H-1e: Enhance the City’s existing supply of housing by promoting conservation practices, supporting rehabilitation programs and encouraging the replacement or restoration of dilapidated structures.
- H-1f: Identify and encourage new and innovative approaches to quality residential development, which expand housing opportunities and minimize public and private costs.

Objective H-2: Promote traditional neighborhood development patterns, including use of more human scale development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.



Policies:

- H-2a: Change land use and development regulations (such as zoning and subdivision regulations) to allow or promote accessory apartments, "granny flats," and carriage houses as alternative affordable housing; zero lot line or cluster housing development to achieve higher and more affordable densities of residential development; and creation of mixed-income and mixed-use neighborhoods and/or the creation of housing within walking distance to employment and commercial centers.

- Objective H-3: Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.

Policies:

- H-3a: Take advantage of existing state and federal housing programs that address the identified housing needs and goals of the City of Villa Rica.
- H-3b: Preserve stable residential neighborhoods throughout the City and initiate actions to enhance the character of the historic homes located in and around the downtown area.



Objective H-4: Assure the provision of adequate, safe, and convenient housing opportunities for existing and future residents.

Objective H-5: Establish high building standards to ensure quality workmanship and construction for housing in Villa Rica.

H-5a: Ensure a licensing and certification program for buildings and developers and assure that all new construction meets minimum building code requirements, is energy and water efficient, that all materials meet quality standards, and that standards for material are equal to or better than the standards set by the manufacturer.

H-5b: Strengthen local building code.

H-5c: Ensure that building inspectors are thoroughly trained and supervised.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES



(Avanti Buildings – Proposed City Hall and Library)

GOAL: Ensure that public facilities have the capacity and are in place to maintain or enhance health, safety, and quality of life.

Objective CF-1: Ensure water supply and wastewater capacity to meet current and future demands



Policies:

- CF-1a: Require development approvals to be consistent with available capacity.
- CF-1b: Provide water and sewer only within an adopted Urban Growth Boundary.
- CF-1c: Secure future water supply.
- CF-1d: Address the immediate need to expand wastewater treatment capacity.

Objective CF-2: Provide residents with quality cultural arts and recreation facilities and programs and access to these quality facilities and programs.

Policies:

- CF-2a: Develop parkland in all parts of the city.
- CF-2b: Promote the development of venues for the arts.
- CF-2c: Expand recreation department staff to meet needs of new facilities.

Objective CF-3: Expand and upgrade infrastructure in an affordable and equitable manner

Policies:

- CF-3a: Develop a long-term capital improvement plan.
- CF-3b: Ensure that new development pays for itself through use of regulatory tools such as Impact Fees and development exactions.

Objective CF-4: Promote community facilities according to need, population density, land use continuity, natural resources suitability, compatibility with historic resources, user safety, neighborhood policies, and the optimum allocation of public funds, all coordinated through planning.

Policies:

- CF-4a: Extend and improve public services and facilities on a priority basis into areas with an existing need or into areas where the timing for urban development is appropriate.
- CF-4b: Ensure that new development bear an equitable share of and responsibility for the cost of new public services and facilities.
- CF-4c: Coordinate all land use plans and capital improvement plans to assure they are mutually supportive and comply with the area's development concept.
- CF-4d: Ensure that public facilities comply with all county, regional, state and federal government regulations.

LAND USE AND GROWTH



GENERAL LAND USE POLICIES

GOAL: Maintain a balanced, sustainable land use pattern that accommodates projected growth while fostering community vitality, and maintaining or improving the quality of the built environment.

Objective LU-1: Economic Base Expansion – Increase the availability and diversity of employment opportunities for residents and seek to maintain the historical jobs / housing balance.

Policies:

- LU-1a: Participate in joint economic development initiatives with the County that result in fiscal and employment benefits.
- LU-1b: Designate, serve and protect sufficient economic development sites to accommodate long-term employment growth.
- LU-1d: Support economic development initiatives that meet the employment needs of existing residents with limited education and attract higher wage opportunities for the future.
- LU-1e: Link economic development subsidies and programs to specific performance targets (e.g., numbers of jobs at target wage/salary rates, tax generation or payments in lieu of taxes, and other measurable community benefits).

Objective LU-2: Land Use Compatibility – Mitigate land use transitions to ensure that agricultural, residential, industrial, commercial and environmental lands can serve their intended functions (as determined by the Comprehensive Plan) with minimal interference from adjacent land uses.

Policies:

- LU-2a: Require development approvals to be consistent with the Future Land Use Plan (**Maps 5a-5e**) and other plan directives.
- LU-2b: Adopt appropriate compatibility standards that buffer dissimilar land uses or otherwise mitigate negative impacts through building and site design standards.
- LU-2c: Preclude residential development within planned industrial and business park areas as well as significant flood hazard areas.
- LU-2d: Ensure that new residential development is designed to minimize conflicts with existing development at lower densities.
- LU-2e: Review the Future Land Use Plan and the goals and policies of this Plan on a biannual basis to determine if changing conditions warrant as plan amendments.

Objective LU-3: Urban Growth Areas (UGA) – Execute an agreement with Carroll and Douglas Counties to ensure that development in the City’s urban growth area is consistent with applicable City standards for land use and infrastructure.



Policies:

- LU-3a: Coordinate with Carroll or Douglas County as appropriate to ensure that within the UGA:
- a. Land uses are consistent with the City’s future land use map;
 - b. Densities/intensities are consistent with the City’s plans to provide centralized water, sewer and other public facilities;
 - c. All development within the UGA will be served by adequate public facilities at adopted levels of service.
 - d. Public improvements are consistent with applicable City plans and design standards;
 - e. The use of private on-site facilities (e.g., septic tanks and water wells) will be limited and only allowed when they will not present a barrier to coordinated urban growth and the efficient extension of municipal facilities;
 - f. Site design standards are consistent with applicable city standards;
 - g. Buildings will be constructed in accordance with the applicable City building codes;
 - h. Development review procedures are streamlined to encourage planned development, and to minimize procedural redundancy; and
 - i. Regulatory and enforcement responsibilities are clearly assigned to the appropriate jurisdiction.

- LU-3b: Permit interim development within the UGA provided that:
- a. The land use and transportation facilities are consistent with adopted plans and applicable inter-governmental agreements;
 - b. Development is designed to be compatible with planned land uses;
 - c. Lots are clustered and do not exceed ½ acre, except as necessitated by environmental constraints;
 - d. Centralized water service meeting adopted fire protection standards is available; and
 - e. Funding and design provisions are made for future connection to centralized water and sewer facilities.

Objective LU-4: Corridor Commercial and Employment – Target arterial street corridors for commercial and employment opportunities that support community vitality and enhance the attractiveness of the corridors.

Policies:

- LU-4a: Avoid shallow strip development along corridors and encourage nodal development patterns where commercial uses interconnect with each other and adjacent residential neighborhoods through common access points along arterial street corridors.
- LU-4b: Facilitate property access from a system of collectors or side streets that are generally parallel to the arterial street corridor.
- LU-4c: Ensure that new development and redevelopment are designed to be compatible with the function of the corridors and to establish an attractive environment for users of corridors. Design standards in corridors should address landscape, building form and materials, parking area design, signs and other site design factors.
- LU-4d: Ensure that Adequate Public Facilities (APF) are available concurrently with development in these corridors. Participate in the development costs of these public facilities when consistent with adopted economic development objectives and policies.

Objective LU-5 Residential Development – Allow high quality residential development and limited support businesses and institutions where adequate infrastructure and services are available.

Policies:

- LU-5a: Require residential development to fund its proportional share of public facilities required to meet its demands.
 - LU-5b: Ensure that public facilities are adequate to meet the demands from new development as development occurs in accordance with adopted level of service standards (see the community facilities and services element for level of service standards).
 - LU-5c: Allow neighborhood scale retail and service uses, as well as institutional uses at appropriate locations in residential areas through the planned development process. Such uses shall be located where adequate facilities, including adequate road capacity are available to meet long-term demands to be generated by the uses.
 - LU-5.d: Ensure that residential development occurs in a logical growth pattern by precluding premature subdivision, which is evidenced by:
 - a. inadequate roads, water or wastewater service;
 - b. excessive separation from existing suburban development;
 - c. the predominance of agricultural operations in the vicinity; and/or
 - d. inadequate fire and emergency medical service response times.
 - LU-5.d: Ensure that residential development is designed and constructed to be a long-term asset to the City through effective design standards addressing open space, building materials and building design.
- Objective LU-6: Downtown Development – Use an appropriate mix of zoning, capital investments and other growth management techniques to increase downtown economic activity and residential development.

Policies:

- LU-6a: Establish a civic center in the Downtown to accommodate City Hall and various community facilities.
- LU-6b: Extend planned pedestrian and parking improvements along the rail corridor and Highway 78 to connect the planned civic center and storefronts along Highway 78 from Stone Street to West Wilson Street.

- LU-6c: Promote compatible residential infill and redevelopment of detached and attached single-family dwellings within walking distance (1/4 mile) of Downtown businesses.
- LU-6d: Facilitate development of a downtown auto museum at the existing Avanti factory through the provision of public improvements that support tourist access and assistance with the process of redeveloping existing structures.

TRANSPORTATION



GOAL: Ensure that the transportation network supports planned development patterns.

Objective T-1: Maximize the capacity of the existing and planned transportation network.

Policies:

T-1a: Establish and adopt Level of Service (LOS) Standards for transportation facilities and services to be achieved and/or maintained during the first ten-year planning period through capital improvements, service expansions or other strategies.

T-1b: Ensure the adequacy of the existing and projected transportation system to evacuate populations prior to an impending disaster.

T-1c: Provide land development regulations and incentives to ensure that new development does not cause the City of Villa Rica's adopted level of service for an individual transportation facility to decline below the established transportation performance measures, and to insure that transportation capital improvements or other strategies needed to accommodate the impacts of development are made concurrent with the development.

Objective T-2: Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged. Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including transit, bicycle routes and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in the community.

T-2a: Recommend standards for bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and programs or actions to promote the use of bicycles and walking.

T-2b: Provide ways for pedestrians and cyclists to access the City of Villa Rica downtown and its community centers from the residential areas of the City through the provision of sidewalks, nature and bike trails, and safer railroad crossings.



Objective T-3: Traditional downtown areas should be maintained and the development of newer activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community centers should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.

T-3a: Conduct additional detailed sub-plans, such as corridor plans, gateway plans, and use other measures, such as traffic-calming measures, street realignments, intermodal connections, pedestrian or sidewalk plans, bikeway plans, etc., to achieve specific, targeted transportation goals and/or policies.

T-3b: Conduct a traffic study that examines growth trends and travel patterns and interactions between land use and transportation, and assesses compatibility issues between land use patterns and transportation facilities.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

GOAL: Ensure the coordination of local planning efforts with other local service providers and authorities, with neighboring communities and with state and regional plans and programs.

Objective IC-1: Multi-jurisdictional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources, the placement of educational facilities, etc.

Policies:

IC-1a: Mechanisms to share information among surrounding jurisdictions should be developed and strengthened to aid mutual cooperation.

IC-1b: Conflict resolution should be handled through established mediation processes or informal means.

IC-1c: Comprehensive plans and implementation actions should be coordinated with surrounding jurisdictions as they are developed.

Objective IC-2: Multi-jurisdictional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.

Policies:

IC-2a Promote joint funding and operations to meet shared needs.

IC-2b: Participate in regional discussions affecting service delivery, transportation, water and wastewater needs, and land use.

IC-2c: Establish joint planning and decision-making on population projections and the location and extension of public facilities.

IC-2d: Establish joint planning and decision-making for the location of facilities with countywide significance, such as water supply reservoirs, water and wastewater treatment facilities, and solid waste disposal facilities, etc.