

# CHAPTER 5 NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES



# NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

This chapter addresses both the natural and cultural resources found in the City of Griffin. It covers the natural features of the city including physiography, topography, soils, slopes, and existing and historic land covers. Riparian resources including wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, water supply watersheds, floodplains and water quality are also inventoried. Cultural resources including historic properties and structures, views, and scenic areas are inventoried as well.

These resources are valued within the city and their proper stewardship and edification is important to the residents of Griffin. This plan incorporates these values throughout the planning process. It also seeks ways to leverage the natural and cultural resources to the benefit of the city's residents.

## **5.1 Natural Resources Inventory**

### **5.1.1 Introduction**

Under the revised minimum planning standards of 2004, natural resources include public water supply sources, water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, flood plains, soils, steep slopes, prime agricultural land, conservation areas and scenic views. To preserve and protect a community's natural resources, the Department of Natural Resources established minimum protection standards for natural resources, the environment and vital areas of the state, specifically, water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, river corridors, and mountains.

### **5.1.2 Physiography and Topography**

The topography of an area is an important planning consideration because it indicates how suitable an area is for development and the potential cost that could be involved. In Spalding County, the topography is gently sloping to moderately steep with elevations ranging from 710 feet to 995 feet, with the City of Griffin's elevation being 980 feet above sea level. Steep slopes are not a concern in Griffin, due to this rolling topography and associated gentle slopes.

The City of Griffin is located in north central Georgia, approximately 40 miles south of Atlanta. The City serves as the county seat for Spalding County. The county's immediate neighbors are Clayton and Henry counties to the north, Pike and Lamar counties to the south, Fayette, Coweta and Meriwether counties to the west and Butts County to the east. The total land area of Griffin is 13.9 square miles, or 8,922 acres.

### **5.1.3 Geology and Mineral Resources**

An inventory and analysis of local geology and mineral deposits are important in determining site-specific development potential as well as opportunities for expansion of extractive industries as part of the local economic base. The underlying bedrock in Spalding County consists of biotite gneiss and schist and granite/granite gneiss. Other mineral resources found in the county are feldspar, mica and granite.

### **5.1.4 Soils**

The United States Department of Agriculture Soil Conservation Service, in cooperation with the University of Georgia's College of Agriculture, completed a soil survey for Spalding County in 1961. This survey did not include the City of Griffin. However, the findings for the county are likely applicable to the City as well.

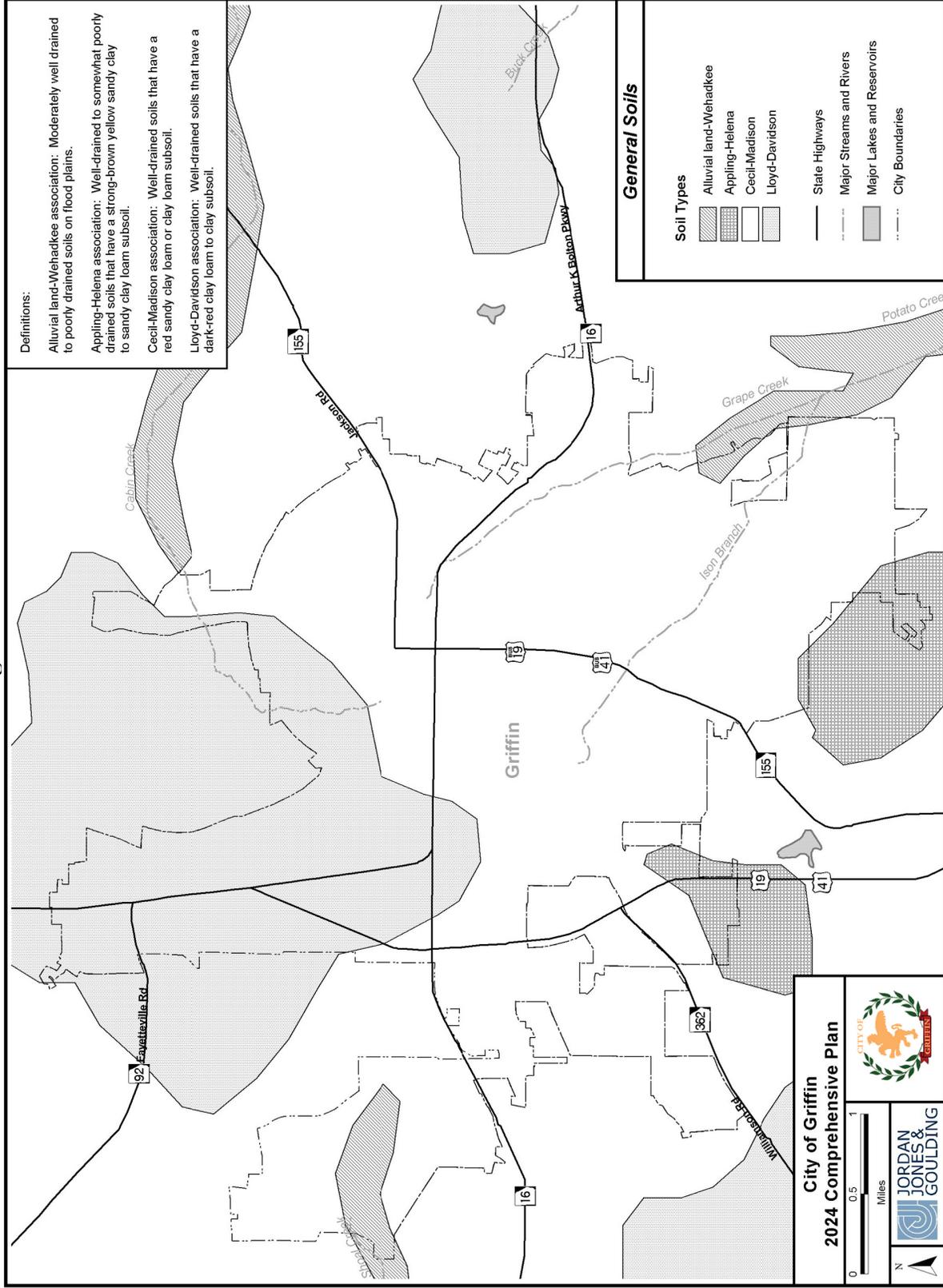
As shown on the General Soils Map included as **Figure 5-2**, several main patterns of soils called soil associations exist in and around Griffin. Each association usually contains a few major soils and several minor soils in a pattern that is characteristic although not strictly uniform.

According to the Spalding County Soil Survey, there are four soil associations in the county, the Cecil-Madison, Lloyd-Davidson, Appling-Helena and Alluvial land-Wehadkee associations. The first three associations listed above are found primarily on upland areas, while the Alluvial land Wehadkee association is found along the county's larger streams and rivers. The most common soil type found in the county is the Cecil-Madison association, making up approximately 70 percent of the total land area. **Figure 5-1** summarizes the important characteristics of each soil type.

**Figure 5-1  
Soil Types in Spalding County**

Association Name	General Description
Cecil-Madison	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad, very gently sloping to strongly sloping areas dissected by many streams and smaller drainageways</li> <li>• Makes up 70% of the county’s soils</li> <li>• Well drained, the best-suited soils in the county for agriculture</li> <li>• Soils respond well to good management and well suited for development and septic tank drainage fields</li> </ul>
Lloyd-Davidson	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad, very gently sloping to strongly sloping uplands dissected by many streams and smaller drainageways</li> <li>• Makes up 11% of the county’s soils</li> <li>• Well drained and good for agriculture</li> <li>• Are well-suited for development and generally well-suited for septic tanks; the Davidson soils comprise less than 10% of this classification and are not well-suited to septic tanks</li> </ul>
Appling-Helena	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very gently sloping and gently sloping interstream divides that are dissected by many streams and smaller drainageways</li> <li>• Makes up 9% of the county’s soils</li> <li>• Well drained and good for agriculture</li> <li>• Well-suited for development and generally well-suited for septic tanks; the Helena soils comprise less than 12% of this classification and are not well-suited to septic tanks</li> </ul>
Alluvial land-Wehadkee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comprise most of the floodplains within the county</li> <li>• Makes up 10% of the county’s soils</li> <li>• Range from moderately well drained to wet</li> <li>• Poor drainage, frequent flooding, in addition to wetlands protections, limit the suitability of these soils for agriculture</li> <li>• Not suited to septic tank drainage fields and development</li> </ul>

**Figure 5-2**



### **5.1.5 Prime Agricultural and Forest Lands**

Griffin has an economic history grounded in agriculture and forestry. Since its original settlement through the 1950s an important portion of the City's economy was grounded in agriculture. Cotton, peaches and corn were among the most important crops. As well, the old growth forests were harvested in earnest in the 1860s, exhausting supplies by 1920. Today, agriculture and silviculture are not as important to the local economy as they once were. The county still contains some dairy and beef cattle farms and a limited degree of silviculture. Very few farmers still grow row crops; hay and grass farming are more prevalent.

Within the city limits of Griffin, most of the remaining agricultural land is part of the University of Georgia Experiment Station. However, mature trees can be found throughout the City. These should be preserved as they provide aesthetic benefits, cool and clean the city's air, buffer adjacent land uses, and provide character to a community. Griffin can help preserve Spalding County's farms and forests by attracting new residents and businesses to the city through new construction, infill, and redevelopment.

### **5.1.6 Plant, Animal and Wildlife Habitat**

Before western settlers arrived around 1815, loblolly-shortleaf pine forests dominated the uplands of Spalding County. These forests consisted of the two dominant pines with an understory of mid-level deciduous trees such as dogwood and sourwood. Oak-hickory forest, consisting of white, post and southern red oaks along with pignut and mockernut hickories was present to a lesser degree. The wetlands were truly dominated by hardwoods including Yellow Poplar, gum, oak, maple and ash. As mentioned above, all of the old growth forests were logged prior to 1920.

The City of Griffin does not have a tree ordinance. Most residents and stakeholders involved in the public involvement efforts supported a strong tree ordinance and were disappointed in several recent commercial developments' lack of landscaping and trees. In developing a tree ordinance, the city should protect specimen trees, ban exotic and invasive species, and include a provision encouraging native trees and landscaping to enhance wildlife habitat as well as conserve water.

Similar to other components included in the Natural Resources section of the Comprehensive Plan, specific data related to plant, animal and wildlife habitat is not available for the City of Griffin. Information on these habitats can be found for Spalding County only. However, it is likely the city's plant and animal environments are similar to those found in the unincorporated areas of the county.

No areas within the City have been established as natural preserves at any level of government.

The Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has created the Georgia Natural Heritage Program that focuses on identifying elements of special concern in the state. These elements

include plant species, animal species, or natural community types that are especially rare or threatened. The only plant species on the DNR list for Spalding County is the Alexander Rock Aster, which is found on granite outcrops. The DNR includes the following animal species as endemic to Spalding County on their list:

- Altamaha Shiner (minnow),
- Florida Floater (freshwater mussel),
- Highscale Shiner (minnow),
- Oval Pigtoe (freshwater clam),
- Shinyrayed Pocketbook (freshwater clam),
- Southern Elktoe (freshwater mussel), and
- Rayed Creekshell (freshwater mussel).

All seven animal species are aquatic, which underscores the importance of the streams and river basins habitats within the county. While there are no riparian natural preserves within the city, there are federal and state protections for water quality, wetland and stream buffers, in addition to the species protection acts, which all serve to preserve the stream and river habitats within the city. In addition to plant and animal species, the DNR's Natural Heritage Program also lists protected natural communities, but none are located within Spalding County.

### **5.1.7 State and Federal Park, Recreation and Conservation Areas**

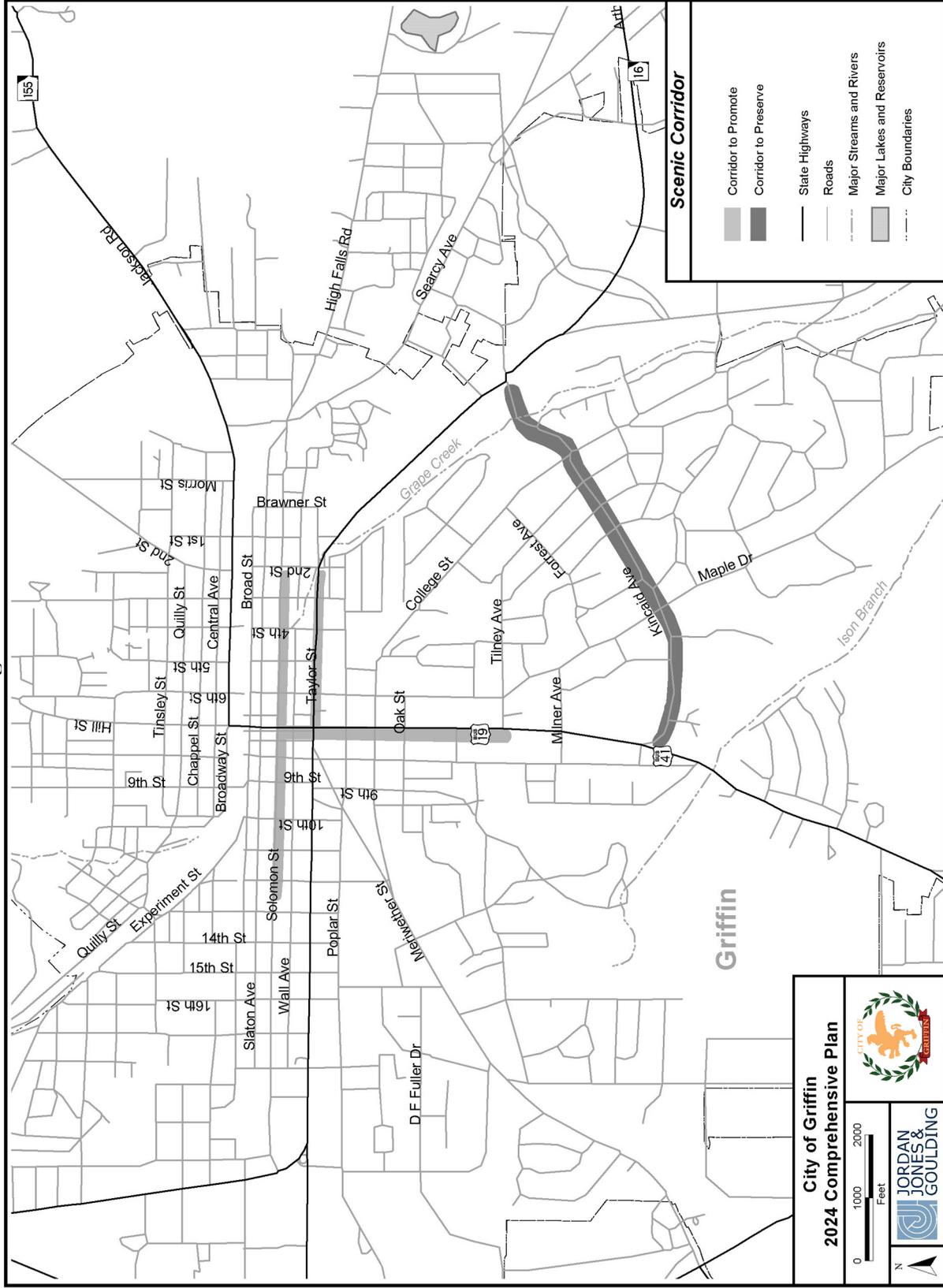
The University of Georgia (UGA) owns an agricultural research center in the northwestern part of Griffin along U.S. 19/41. The Georgia Station is managed by UGA's College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences and occupies 1,166 acres, 881 acres in Spalding County and 285 acres in Pike County. The Georgia Station has several hundred acres of farmland, some of which is located within the City of Griffin. While not a conservation area per se, the research plots represent some of the City's last agricultural land, and will likely remain in agriculture through 2024, the planning horizon for this plan.

There are no state or national parks, recreation, or conservation areas within the City of Griffin.

### **5.1.8 Scenic Views**

As shown on **Figure 5-3**, citizens and elected officials have identified two areas that have scenic qualities. One of the areas identified by citizens should be promoted, while the other should be preserved. The area identified for promotion is in the heart of Griffin's Central Business District (CBD). This area is defined as Hill Street from Milner Avenue north to 6<sup>th</sup> Street. The areas identified for preservation include College Street and Maple Drives, just southeast of the CBD.

**Figure 5-3**



In order to both promote and preserve these identified scenic views, certain steps should be taken. First, the City may want to continue improving the downtown area by moving the overhead utility lines underground and pursuing additional streetscaping construction where appropriate. Second, the City should encourage local merchants to take advantage of the numerous programs offered by the Downtown Development Authority and the DDA should strive to expand the programs and funding opportunities it has to offer local merchants. Third, in order to preserve the identified scenic views, the City should consider establishing overlay zoning districts. This would provide additional requirements above that required by the underlying zone.

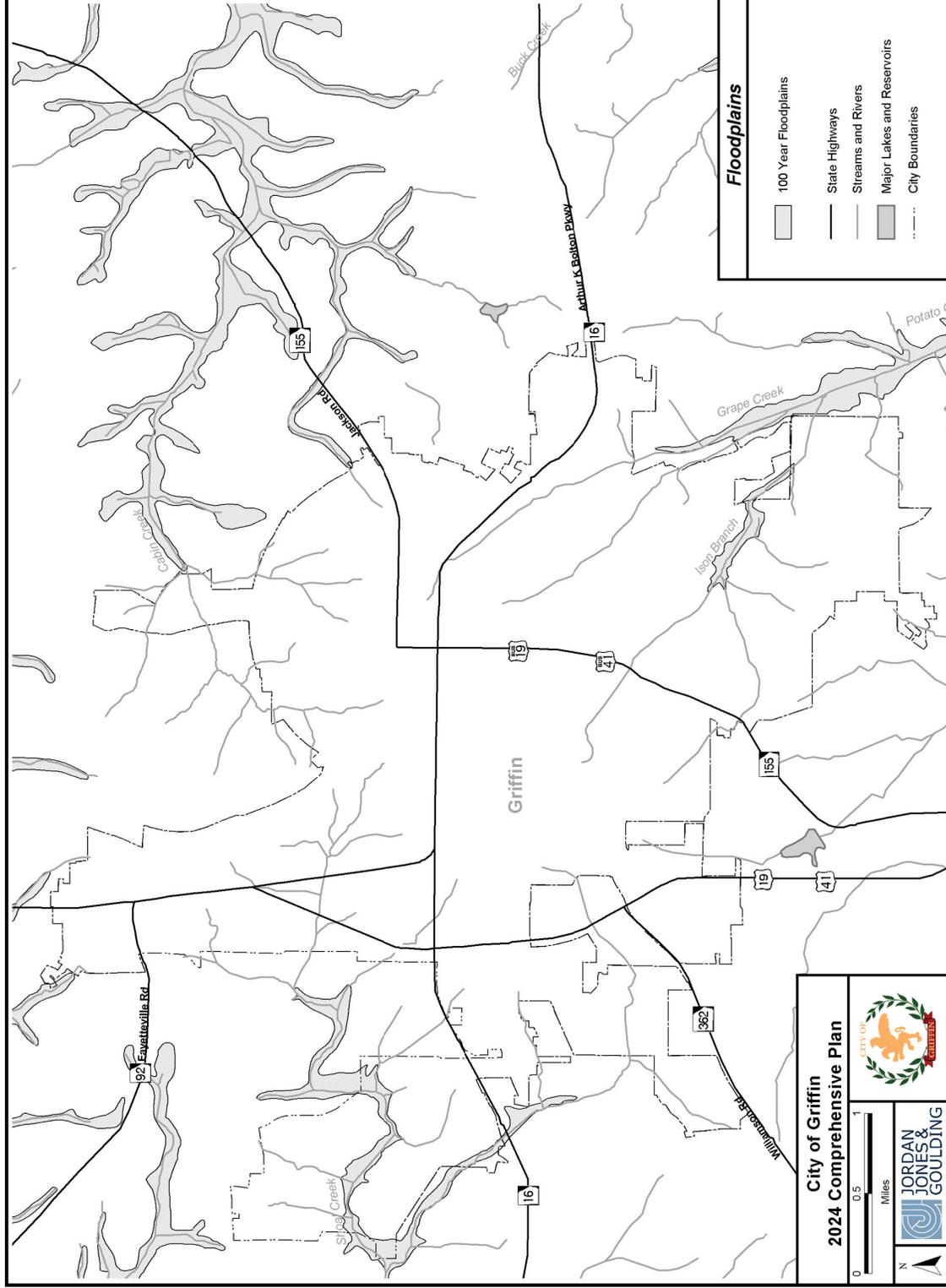
### **5.1.9 Floodplains**

Floodplains are the lowlands adjoining streams or rivers that are subject to periodic and temporary flooding. A floodplain undisturbed by human activity serves as a natural drainage channel for flood flows. The vegetation of the floodplain retards the velocity of the flows and allows infiltration of water and settling of sediments. Periodic flooding of the floodplain is a natural part of stream processes. The size of a flood is described by its likelihood of occurrence. For example, a “50-year flood” is one likely to occur once in 50 years. Floodplains are described by the size of the flood that can inundate them. Many floodplain regulations refer to the 100-year flood (one which has a one percent chance of occurring each year).

In July, 2003, the City of Griffin adopted a Floods Ordinance. The ordinance, which primarily limits development activities within the 100-year floodplain, is designed to minimize property damage and human harm from floods.

**Figure 5-4** indicates the locations of the 100-year floodplain within Griffin. Because downtown Griffin is located on a ridgeline, there are few floodplains in its vicinity. There are two principal flood-prone areas within Griffin’s city limits. One is along Shoal Creek within the Griffin Country Club on City’s west side. Ison Branch, which begins within Municipal Park and flows southeast towards Orchard Hill, is also a flood-prone stream. Both of these streams are primarily bordered by single-family residential development, recreation space, and vacant land.

**Figure 5-4**



### **5.1.10 Environmental Planning Criteria**

Environmental Planning Criteria prepared by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources, establishes minimum standards for local governments to protect mountains, coastal resources, water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, and river corridors. This protection is essential to public health, safety and welfare.

The City of Griffin contains no protected mountains, no coastal resources, no groundwater recharge areas and no protected river corridors. The City does contain portions of a water supply watershed as well as wetlands, both of which are discussed in following sections.

### **5.1.11 Water Supply Watersheds**

A watershed is an area bounded by a divide that drains to a particular stream or river. Because the eastern continental divide bisects the City of Griffin, the western half of the city lies in the watershed for the Flint River, and drains to the Gulf of Mexico via the Apalachicola River. The eastern half of the county is within the Towaliga River watershed, which drains to the Atlantic Ocean via the Ocmulgee and Altamaha Rivers. Within these large watersheds, smaller watersheds can be delimited around streams and creeks.

Presently, the City of Griffin gets its water from an intake on the Flint River and an intake on the Head's Creek Reservoir. In response to recent drought and the unreliability of the Heads Creek Reservoir, the City is constructing a new regional reservoir within Pike County. Construction began during the fall of 2002 and the facility is expected to be operational by 2007. The area upstream from each of these points encompasses a water supply watershed. The vast majority of the water supply watersheds are located within unincorporated Spalding County. Within Griffin, the extreme northern end of the City along Highway 41 is located within the water supply watershed for the Heads Creek Reservoir. The extreme northwest corner of the Griffin Country Club is within the same watershed protection area.

Protection of the Spalding County portion of these watersheds is provided by Spalding County's Unified Zoning Ordinance through the S-2 Sensitive Lands overlay district. In general, development restrictions in this district include no sewage treatment facilities or industries which deal with toxic products. Additionally, no new industrial and commercial uses are permitted within 1,000 feet of an existing or proposed reservoir, and all uses are governed by minimum lot requirements and setbacks near this 1,000 foot line. The S-2 district places an impervious surface limit of 25% on new developments. It also expands the minimum stream buffer width from 25 to 100 feet and bans impervious surfaces and septic tanks within 150' of the stream edge.

## 5.1.12 Wetlands

Wetlands are areas that are “flooded or saturated by surface or groundwater often and long enough to grow vegetation adapted for life in water-saturated soil.” Some wetlands, such as marshes and swamps, are easy to identify. Other wetlands, such as bottomland forest and wet meadows, are less obvious, since they may be dry part of the year or not be visibly wet. Wetlands are a valuable resource that provide flood storage and groundwater recharge, filter sediment and pollutants from runoff and provide erosion protections. Wetlands also serve as important habitat for many plant species as well as for fish, waterfowl and other wildlife.

Wetlands are protected under Section 404 of the Federal *Clean Water Act*, which is administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Section 404 requires that any activity involving the deposition of dredged or fill material into “waters of the United States, including wetlands,” must receive a permit from the Corps of Engineers. Some of the activities requiring permits include: filling and grading, levee and dike construction, land clearing, road construction, dam construction and placement of structures or structural supports in a wetland.

The state of Georgia has provided local governments criteria in O.C.G.A. 391-3-16, “Criteria for Wetlands Protection” which describe the mandatory considerations for wetlands protection in the land use planning process with regards to wetlands identified in the Department of Natural Resource’s freshwater wetlands database. Those minimal considerations are:

1. Whether impacts to an area would adversely affect the public health, safety, welfare, or the property of others.
2. Whether the area is unique or significant in the conservation of flora and fauna including threatened, rare or endangered species.
3. Whether alteration or impacts to wetlands will adversely affect the function, including the flow or quality of water, cause erosion or challenge, or impact navigation.
4. Whether impacts or modification by a project would adversely affect fishing or recreational use of wetlands.
5. Whether an alteration or impact would be temporary in nature.
6. Whether the project contains significant state historical and archaeological resources, defined as “Properties On or Eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.”
7. Whether alteration of wetlands would have measurable adverse impacts on adjacent sensitive natural areas.
8. Whether wetlands created for mitigation purposes under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, such wetlands shall be considered for protection.

As stated in the *Georgia Planning Act* certain land uses are acceptable in wetlands, while other uses are unacceptable. The designated acceptable uses are timber production and harvesting, wildlife and fisheries management, wastewater treatment, recreation, natural water quality treatment and purification, and other uses permitted under Section 404 of the *Clean Water Act*. Unacceptable uses include receiving areas for toxic or hazardous waste or other contaminants, hazardous or sanitary waste landfills, and other uses unapproved by local governments. The City

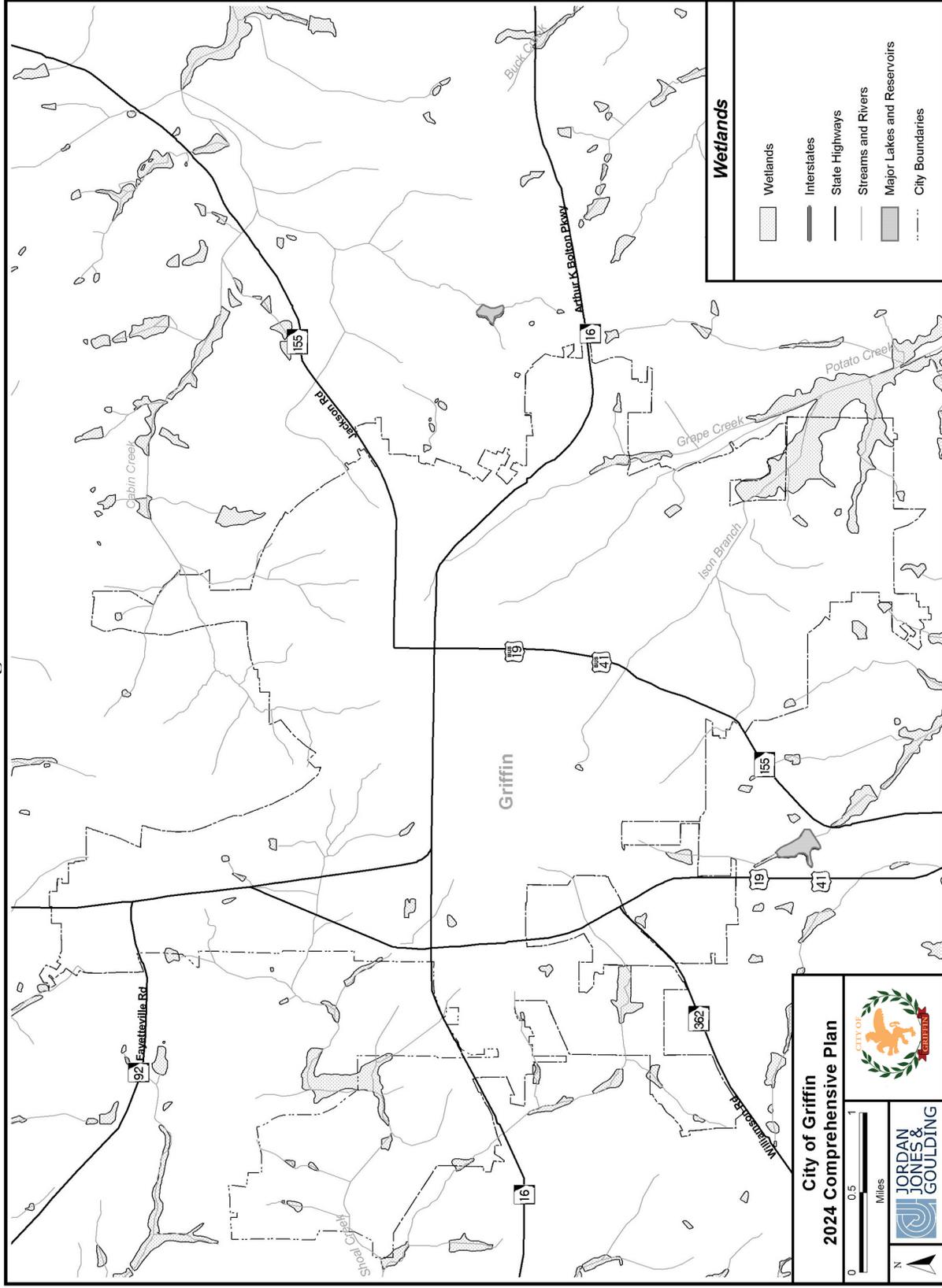
of Griffin has a Flood Hazard/Wetland (FH/W) district designed to minimize property damage and human harm from floods.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has developed a complete set of wetlands maps for Spalding County through the National Wetlands Inventory. **Figure 5-5** summarizes the acreage of the City’s wetlands. As indicated, roughly 2.1% of the City (192 acres) is covered by wetlands. **Figure 5-6** illustrates the location of the City’s wetlands, lakes and streams. The largest concentrations of wetlands are along Potato Creek and Ison Branch, but most of the City’s wetlands are small isolated wetlands scattered throughout the City.

**Figure 5-5  
Wetland Acreage  
City of Griffin**

	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Percent</b>
City of Griffin	8,888	100.0%
Uplands	8,660	97.4%
Wetlands	192	2.1%
Lakes	36	0.4%
<i>Source: National Wetlands Inventory, US Fish and Wildlife Service</i>		

**Figure 5-6**



### **5.1.13 Water Quality**

Since the enactment of the *Clean Water Act*, states have been encouraged to clean up point source pollutants to their waterways. Considerable progress has been achieved in this area. However, today there is an increased focus on contaminants from nonpoint source pollutants. These include sediment, nutrients, pesticides, animal wastes and other substances that enter waterways from runoff and ground water flow.

The US Environmental Protection Agency, via the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD), identifies two of the City's streams as not supporting the *Clean Water Act* (CWA) mandate of being "fishable and swimmable." The list of waterways not meeting the CWA mandate is referred to as the 303d list, referring to the section of the CWA requiring the list. **Figure 5-7** summarizes the 303d listed streams located within the City of Griffin.

**Figure 5-7: State Listed Impaired Waterways**

Name	Location	Water Use Classification	Violation	Sources	Evaluation	Priority	Action Taken
Potato Creek	Headwaters to U.S. Hwy. 333 (Spalding/Lamar Counties)	Fishing	Biota Impacted	Municipal Facility, Nonpoint Source, Urban Runoff	Partially Supporting	Low	EPD will address nonpoint source (urban runoff) through a watershed protection strategy. Griffin Potato Creek WPCP is under a compliance schedule to meet TRC limit by 5/14/99 and to meet other permit limits including one for whole effluent toxicity
Cabin Creek	Griffin	Fishing	Biota Impacted, Copper, Toxicity Indicated	Industrial Facility	Not Supporting	Moderate	Spring Industries (formerly Dundee Mills) under Order to attain compliance with permit limits by 12/1/01.

Source: US Environmental Protection Agency

In preparation of the 2003 *Griffin Stormwater Master Plan*, the City conducted a comprehensive water quality evaluation over 28 months. That monitoring effort found that, not just Potato and Cabin Creeks, but every stream within Griffin had “very poor” biotic integrity and elevated levels of fecal coliform bacteria. Biotic integrity is essentially a measure of habitat quality. The better the biotic integrity, the more healthy the stream. Fish, insects, and plants can survive, and water quality is generally good. Fecal coliform is an indicator of the presence of pathogens that are harmful to human health. In short, the *Stormwater Master Plan* assessment found that each of the streams in Griffin is both unhealthy for people and unhealthy for plants and animals.

The water quality evaluation went further. The assessment found elevated levels of nutrient runoff in the city Golf Course, both nitrogen and phosphorus. The study found elevated levels of heavy metals in downtown Griffin and low dissolved oxygen downstream of the Griffin Country Club. The study also found elevated levels of the heavy metal zinc in the OakView Area and wet weather turbidity in Shoal Creek.

The stormwater plan maps out a strategy for improving water quality within Griffin that includes additional use of a variety of water quality Best Management Practices (BMPS), a suite of new policies and ordinances, a multi-faceted education, outreach, and community participation program, as well as additional monitoring and study. The **Community Facilities** chapter addresses the recent creation of the stormwater utility, and enhancements in stormwater management the City has recently undertaken to improve water quality.

### **5.1.14 Air Quality**

Air quality has a direct and far reaching impact on public health and well-being. Maintaining a high level of air quality is especially important because of the mobile nature of the air in the atmosphere and the difficulty in controlling and cleaning polluted air once it has been contaminated. Young children, the elderly, and people with asthma and other respiratory ailments are especially vulnerable to polluted air conditions.

Air quality is affected by a number of factors, including dust, pollen, temperature, humidity, smoke and chemical emissions. Generally speaking, any type of particulate matter suspended in the air lessens the overall air quality. Natural sources of air pollution, such as weather conditions and seasonal changes are difficult to control. However, the greatest amount of polluting emissions released into the atmosphere come from man-made sources.

Ground level ozone is the most serious threat to the ambient air quality in the City of Griffin. Ground level ozone is formed by a chemical reaction that combines nitrogen oxide (NO<sub>x</sub>), and volatile organic compounds (VOC) in the presence of sunlight. Ground level ozone, the principal component of smog, is a major irritant to the mucous membranes and causes burning and irritation of the eyes, nose and throat, and often causes coughing and choking. Repeated exposure to high ozone levels can cause what is sometimes described as “sunburn of the lungs” and can cause permanent lung damage. Ground level ozone should be distinguished from the “ozone layer” found in the upper atmosphere of the earth. This layer of ozone in the stratosphere acts as a protective shield filtering out damaging ultraviolet radiation, known to cause skin

cancer. Although ground level ozone is produced from natural sources, the majority found in urban areas can be traced to mobile sources of air pollution, such as automobiles, trucks, buses and airplanes and stationary sources such as power plants.

Spalding County will likely fall out of compliance with the Clean Air Act standard for ozone in the coming year because of historically poor air quality. Presently, 13 counties comprise the Atlanta area's urban air quality basin. Spalding County is one of nine counties that might be added to the basin within the next year. Overall, air quality in this 13 county area is measured and compared against the National Ambient Air Quality Standards. This is a method used to evaluate the air quality in the nation's urban areas. The Atlanta area is currently considered to be a "non-attainment area" for air quality, meaning that levels of ozone exceed current federal standards for urban areas. This non-attainment status directly affects the region's ability to expand its system of regionally significant roadways, since automobile emissions are directly linked to these high levels of air pollution. Due to federal regulations, non-attainment designation would directly impact the county's road improvement program and its ability to add additional travel capacity to regionally significant roads, such as through street widening.

Falling out of compliance with the Clean Air Act would bring Spalding County under the control of the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA). This regional government is working to improve regional transit service and lessen the impact of Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs). GRTA also has influence over some aspects of new transportation investments.

## **5.2 Cultural Resources Inventory**

### **5.2.1 Introduction**

The cultural resources section of this element provides an inventory of the City's cultural resources. It also includes a description of the City's developmental history that helps establish an historical context for its buildings, sites and landscape features. The cultural resources inventory provides residents, elected officials, and others with information about historic areas and individual historic resources that require special consideration in the planning process. This information may be used to guide local preservation efforts and activities.

Much of the cultural resources section is based on the 2000 preservation plan and historic survey, which the City of Griffin contracted the Carl Vinson Institute of Government to complete in 2000. As part of this arrangement, the School of Environmental Design researched and created a preservation plan. Some of the graphics from that preservation plan are reproduced in **Appendix A**.

Six survey teams from the University divided the City into seven different areas. The teams visually inspected each tax parcel in their respective districts, and determined the age and integrity of the structures. The survey teams took a critical approach to integrity issues, especially when considering common building forms, such as 1920s and 1930s vernacular structures; older structures were judged with less strict scrutiny. The survey not only focused on houses and commercial buildings, but also considered districts, landscapes, cemeteries, and other permanent

objects. As the state of Georgia has not yet made survey recommendations regarding post-WWII resources, the survey did not include anything built prior to 1940.

## 5.2.2 Developmental History

In the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries, what is now Spalding County was claimed by both Spain and the colony of South Carolina. However, white settlement did not begin until the 1820s, when Georgia purchased the land from the Creek Indians.

The Creeks, under the First Treaty of Indian Springs, ceded a large piece of territory between the Ocmulgee and Flint Rivers in 1821. This territory was originally divided up by the state into five counties, one of which was Monroe County. In 1822, Pike County was created out of the western half of Monroe County.<sup>1</sup> Twelve hundred acres of land in what was then Pike County was acquired by Bartholomew Still. This 1,200-acre plot would later become the town of Griffin, Georgia.

Griffin was founded and laid out by General Griffin on June 8, 1840.<sup>2</sup> The original city plan was rectangular and lay entirely inside of Pike County. The northern boundary at that time was the Henry County line, 200 feet north of Tinsley Street. Poplar Street was the southern boundary, Brawner Street was the eastern line and 10th Street was the western boundary.

Twenty-two acres were given to the town to be used for public purposes. The cemetery was in the southeast corner of town. Lots were set aside for various religious denominations, which were evenly distributed throughout the different quadrants of the city. Four acres were set aside for a courthouse and square between Broad and Solomon Streets.<sup>3</sup>

Griffin had a horse-pulled railroad running into the City by 1841 and steam-powered locomotives by 1842. The rails terminated in Griffin. The railroad served scattered cotton farms throughout the surrounding area in getting their produce to larger markets. By 1849, Griffin served as a market for Meriwether, Henry, and Pike Counties, and also for parts of Troup, Fayette, Upson, Monroe, and Butts Counties. Forty-nine thousand bales of cotton were brought into Griffin each year in the 1840s. **Figure A-1 in the Appendix** shows Griffin as it appeared in the 1840s.

In 1851, Spalding County was created and Griffin, being the largest city within the new county, was named county seat. The County Court used City Hall and other city government property to hold its first sessions.<sup>4</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>Goddard, John H. Jr., *The History of Spalding County*, (1976).

<sup>2</sup>Quimby, Melton Jr., *History of Griffin, Griffin Daily News*, (1959).

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

Griffin’s educational opportunities expanded during the 1850s including one all-male college, two all-female colleges, and a medical college. All three of the schools were located in the southern section of the city, in the vicinity of Poplar and College Streets, but none survived the Civil War and Reconstruction.

In April of 1861 the Civil War broke out and Spalding County became the mobilization point for Georgia troops headed for the front. Although no battles were fought in Griffin, the city played a role in the war. Camp Stephens, located two miles north of McIntosh Road, was a mobilization point for Confederate infantry. Calvary were mobilized at Camp Milner (also called Camp Northen), which was located where the city park is currently. Many of the institutional buildings and residences in town served as hospitals with many of the sick and wounded arriving in Griffin for treatment. Griffin was also one of the main centers for printing Confederate money and stamps. As the war came to a close, the railroad from Atlanta to the coast was destroyed and with it, Griffin found itself in financial devastation. **Figure A-2 in the Appendix** shows Griffin as it appeared between 1850 and 1869.

After the Civil War, former slaves established their own churches. The first, Mount Zion Baptist Church, was built on the corner of 9<sup>th</sup> and Solomon Streets (where the Post Office stands now). Soon after, seven other African-American churches appeared.<sup>5</sup> In spite of racial prejudice, many African-Americans stayed and prospered in Griffin. By 1890, there were twelve African-American owned businesses, including a funeral home and a blacksmith.<sup>6</sup>

Griffin’s first public education building was the Sam Bailey School, on Taylor Street near 4<sup>th</sup> Street. It began as a private school, but was turned over to the public school system in 1885, when the first public school board was established in Griffin. In 1910, Griffin’s high school was also located in this area.<sup>7</sup>

The Georgia Midland Gulf Railway (later the Southern Railway) was built through southwest Griffin in 1886 (see **Figure A-3 in the Appendix**) and by 1888, the railroad connected Griffin to Chattanooga. The railroad used the New Orleans Street right-of-way, virtually obliterating the once important street. During this period there were two mills at South 8<sup>th</sup> Street and Taylor Street and tenements north of Broadway Street, in the vicinity of 6<sup>th</sup> Street. North of Broadway and west of 6<sup>th</sup> Street, streets had been laid out, but residences were still rather sparse. Development stretched almost to Poplar Street to the south, and just beyond Quilly to the north. Commercial areas could be found on Hill, Broad, and Taylor Streets and several cotton warehouses were located between Taylor and Poplar Streets.

In 1888, the Georgia Agricultural Experimental Station opened in Griffin about one and a half miles northwest of downtown. The Experiment Station enabled Griffin to take advantage of the latest advances in agricultural production processes.

---

<sup>5</sup>Rapson, Kristi W., “Full of the Hope the Present has Brought Us, (February, 1993).

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

<sup>7</sup>Quimby

By 1900, with a population of almost 7,000, Griffin had an electric light plant, electric street lights, a waterworks system, a large granite quarry for building and paving material.<sup>8</sup> The city's economy was still dominated by agriculture, but its mill industry was growing.

In 1909, a landscaped median on Hill Street was widened, and the popular greenway was emulated on parts of Solomon and Taylor Streets. Also around 1909 a cotton seed oil factory was built on the east end of town. African-American neighborhoods predominated just northwest of this mill. Numerous large houses were constructed south of Poplar Street. Another cotton mill was built on the north side at 8<sup>th</sup> and Hill Streets and mill housing around Griffin Manufacturing Company filled parts of Experiment, Wright, Ray, Randle, Hammock, Williams, Quilly, Ellis, and Haliburton (now Hallyburton) Streets. See **Figure A-4 in the Appendix** for a map of Griffin in the early 1900s.

The state ceded Camp Milner to Griffin and mandated the old military camp be used as a park. In 1915, Lightfoot Park was built where Memorial Stadium is now.<sup>9</sup> Because of World War I, 1917-1918 was a boom time for Griffin: mills worked overtime and cotton and freight traffic marked record sales. During the war, a new commercial area emerged on Taylor Street and the City's dirt sidewalks were paved.

The local economy slumped in 1919 due to the arrival of the boll weevil coupled with post-war recession. At that time, over 8,000 people resided within the City but many of the textile mills and their villages were just outside of the city limits and not included in the count. Highland Mills, however, built a factory in town, as well as a 73-home mill town around the plant. Other big events that occurred during that time included the completion of the Dixie Highway, which passed through Griffin, the development of a country club at West Poplar Street, and the opening of the City's first golf course, designed by Bobby Jones, at the Municipal Park.

By the 1920s, the city limits of Griffin stretched out in a one-mile radius from the courthouse, and the town was beginning to grow out of these limits. See **Figure A-5 in the Appendix** for Developmental History between 1910 and 1940. By 1925, the wells in town were drying up, no longer adequate for the growing population. Housing was also a problem. To alleviate a growing housing problem, a new African-American subdivision called "Spring Hill" was built near Camp Northen. Also during the mid-1920s, landscaped medians ran through many major north-south and east-west streets. Because the medians interrupted traffic flow, Griffin merchants pressured the City into gradually narrowing these greenways in the 1930s, until most were removed.

In 1930, Griffin's population exceeded 10,000. A new City waterworks opened on the Atlanta Highway, just outside of the City, supplanting the Municipal Park waterworks plant. The city added a new swimming pool, 18-hole golf course, clubhouse, tennis courts, picnic grounds and scenic drives and walks to Municipal Park (**Figure A-5 in the Appendix.**)

---

<sup>8</sup> ----, "Griffin: 'The Garden...'," GDN, 1965.

<sup>9</sup>Quimby.

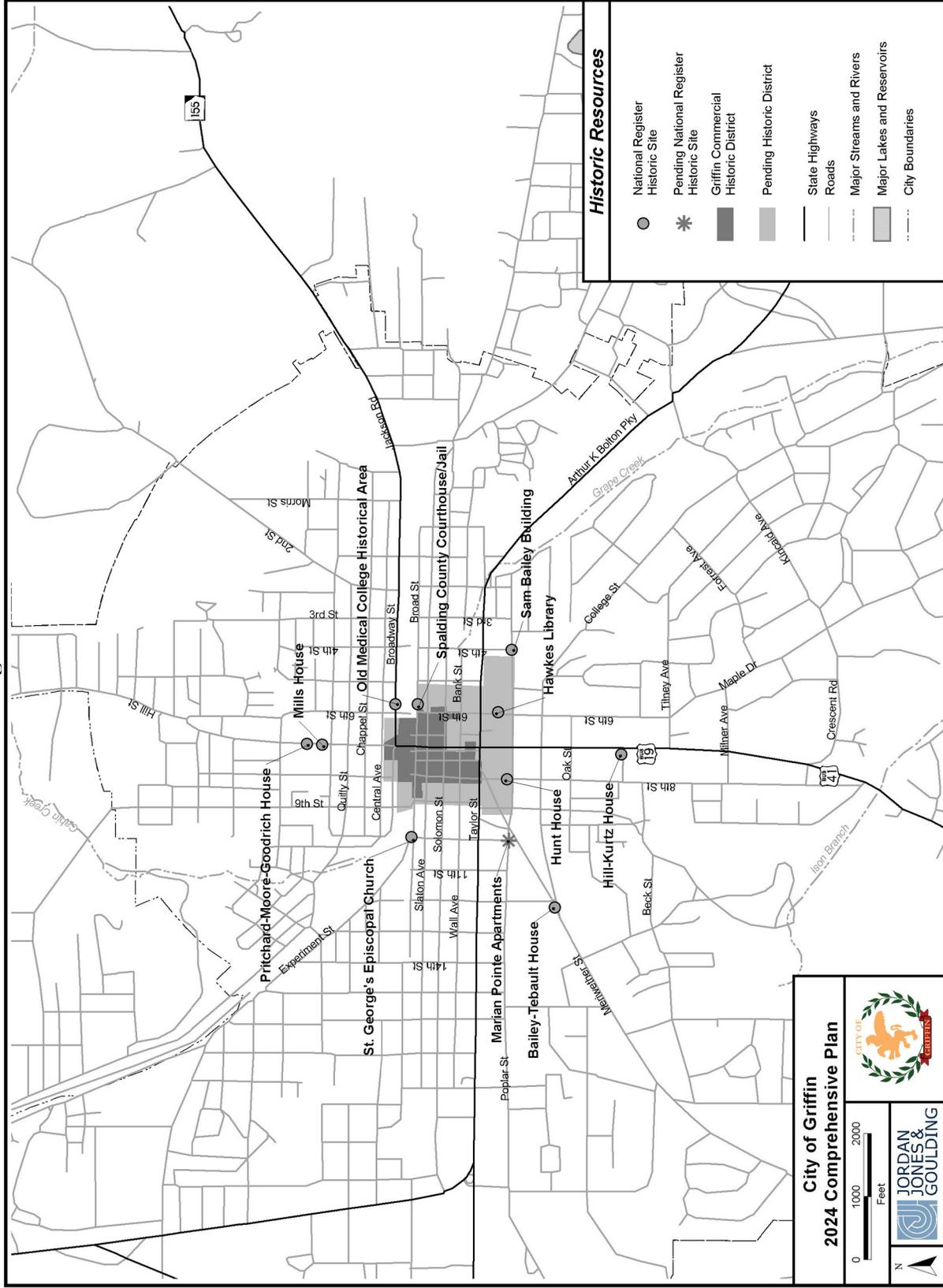
### 5.2.3 Architectural Characteristics

The heart of Griffin is its Central Business District. This area, in the vicinity of Hill, Taylor, and Solomon Streets, includes the majority of Griffin's historic commercial buildings. Wide streets that are divided by landscaped medians with structures set at the zero-lot line define the character of the Central Business District. The buildings are mostly two to three story brick structures and vary in their architectural detailing. Built adjacent to the railroad, some of the earliest commercial structures date back to the 1880s and 90s. Four Antebellum structures remain in Griffin's building stock including the Spalding County Courthouse/Spalding County Jail, built originally in 1860. To the east, a number of historic warehouses, though abandoned, reveal information on Griffin's history. Although a great deal has been lost over time, there remains a significant amount of historic resources in and around the downtown Griffin commercial district. **Figure 5-8** provides a list of properties currently listed or pending listing on the National Register of Historic Places, and **Figure 5-9** shows their location.

**Figure 5-8  
National Register of Historic Places Listed Properties  
Griffin and Immediate Area**

<b>Property</b>	<b>Dates of Significance</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Date Registered</b>
Bailey-Tebault House	1850-1874	633 Meriwether Street	1973
Double Cabins	1825-1849	NE of Griffin on GA Hwy 16	1973
Griffin Commercial Historic District	1825-1949	Central Alley, 6 <sup>th</sup> Street, Taylor, and 8 <sup>th</sup> Streets	1988
Hawkes Library	1916, 1915	210 S. 6th Street	1973
Hill-Kurtz House	1850-1899	570 S. Hill Street	1973
Hunt House	1850-1874, 1900-1924	232 S. 8th Street	1973
Lewis-Mills House	1850-1874	406 N. Hill Street	1972
Mills House and Smoke House	1875-1899	South of Griffin at 1590 Carver Rd.	1980
Old Gaissert Homeplace	1825-1874 1900-1924	NE of Williamson on GA Hwy 362	1973
Old Medical College Historical Area	1850-1874	223-233 E. Broadway	1972
Pritchard-Moore-Goodrich House	1850-1874	441 N. Hill Street	1973
Sam Bailey Building	1850-1874	E. Poplar and 4 <sup>th</sup> Streets	1973
St. George's Episcopal Church	1850-1949	132 N. Tenth Street	1994
Spalding County Courthouse-Spalding County Jail	1850-1974	232 E. Broad Street	2000
<b>Pending National Register Property</b>			
Marian Pointe Apartments	1919	400 W. Poplar Street	pending

**Figure 5-9**



## Residential Resources

The houses within the neighborhoods surrounding the Central Business District include both vernacular types and high style structures. Architectural housing types found in the various neighborhoods include early vernacular styles such as central hallway, saddlebag, saltbox, hall-parlor, shotgun, and double shotgun houses. Housing styles include Craftsman (both high style and vernacular) Bungalows, New South Cottage, Folk Victorian, English Vernacular Revival, Greek Revival, Italianate, Colonial Revival, and Queen Anne.

Between 1880 and the turn of the century, most of Griffin's residential development occurred due to the arrival of a number of mills and the expanding railroad. This development occurred mostly to the north and northwest of the Central Business District and somewhat to the southwest of the Central Business District. Approximately five mills were built between 1883 and 1902, resulting in a wide variety of mill housing. These building types, primarily wood framed and covered in wood clapboard and asphalt shingles, are primarily vernacular forms, including pyramid cottage, saddlebag, saltbox, hall-parlor, shotgun, and double shotgun. The houses in these new developments were laid out in a grid pattern, set close to the street, and are built in close proximity to one another. The similarity of houses in specific areas lends to the idea that these working class houses were provided/built by the mill companies for their workers. Additions, façade modifications, and other alterations have affected the integrity of much of this mill housing.



*Bailey-Tebault House*

Also at the turn of the century, to the south and southwest of the Central Business District, numerous large, high style houses were constructed. Poplar, Meriwether, Hammond, Maple, and College Streets were the locale of many Colonial Revival, Tudor Revival, Greek Revival, and Victorian era style houses. Brick and wood are the primary building materials with terra cotta and slate roofing materials. These neighborhoods featured wider streets and larger setbacks for the buildings themselves.

## Commercial Resources

The Griffin Commercial District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1988 and encompasses approximately eight blocks in Griffin's downtown Central Business District. The original grid pattern, laid out in 1840 by General Lewis Lawrence Griffin, is retained with the main concentration of commercial development along Hill Street instead of along Broadway as first envisioned. The majority of buildings within the commercial district are of brick construction, one to four stories in height, set flush with the sidewalk, and with the



*Commercial buildings and landscaped median along Hill Street*

common front façade features of the building cornice, upper double-hung windows, storefront cornice, and transparent storefronts with transoms, large display windows, entrances, and bulkheads. Commercial styles in the downtown district are typical of small-town southern design prominent in the mid-19th century to the early 20th century. The 19th century Italianate and Victorian commercial influences and the 20th century Neoclassical and Art Deco influences are all found in the commercial area.

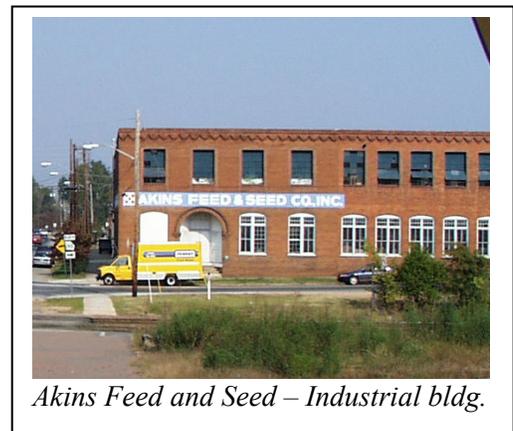
Landmark commercial buildings include the 1892 Opera House/Odd Fellows Hall, a three-story, brick structure with stone details in a Romanesque style, the Griffin Hotel a brick two-story, U-shaped building built 1910, and the 1929 Montgomery Ward building in Neoclassical style with Art Deco elements to name a few.



Griffin is unique in southern towns because of the lack of a court house square and the planned, wide landscaped medians on the two main commercial streets. The landscape features in downtown Griffin are significant to the historic character of the district with intact street medians on Solomon and Hill Street dating from the 1890s. The medians convey a park-like setting in the commercial area.

### **Industrial Resources**

The industrial and warehouse buildings in the district are located along the railroad on Broad and Broadway Streets and along Eighth Street. They are typical brick rectangular structures with segmentally-arched windows and corbelled brick cornices. Griffin was in a prominent location along the railroad line and hosted a major cotton market in the 19th century as well as supporting a number of other industrial and manufacturing interests. From the 1880s to the 1920s, Griffin manufacturing included a wagon factory, grist mill, cotton seed product factories, a mill roller factory, a pressed brick factory, two power companies, two large iron and brass factories, a fertilizer factory, cotton seed oil mills, a sash and blind factory, and ice factory, a bottling works, a broom factory, a wire fence factory, Coca-cola bottling plant, and a printing company. Only three survive in their original condition into 1950.

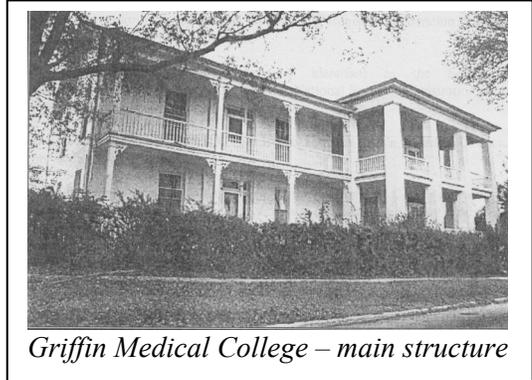


### **Institutional Resources**

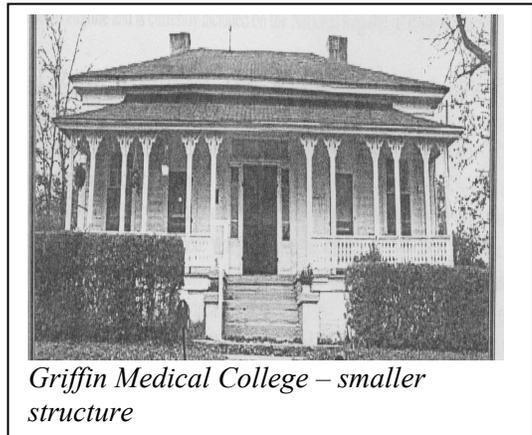
One of Griffin’s oldest institutional structures is the antebellum era Spalding County Courthouse/Spalding County Jail. The two-story, painted-brick building is in the Italianate Style with a gabled roof and pedimented façades set on a rock foundation. The original structure was built in 1860 and served as a courthouse until it was converted into a jail in 1914. It then served as a jail

until 1984. The structure is one of only 15 surviving antebellum Georgia courthouses and is a fairly rare example of the Italianate style of architecture which was not a popular style in antebellum Georgia.

Another antebellum structure is the Griffin Medical College with two structures located on East Broadway Street along the railroad tracks. The main structure is a two-story brick faced building with stucco built around the original structure was constructed in the early 1850s as a two-room side hall plan. Later additions expanded the structure and it now has both Victorian and Greek Revival style wings. The other Griffin Medical College structure is a smaller one-story hipped-roof structure with details suggesting it was built before the larger building. The house is a four-room central hall built in a dogtrot plan. The Medical College was incorporated in 1859. The structures do not maintain their original institutional use. The structures are currently being used as multi-family residential units.



*Griffin Medical College – main structure*



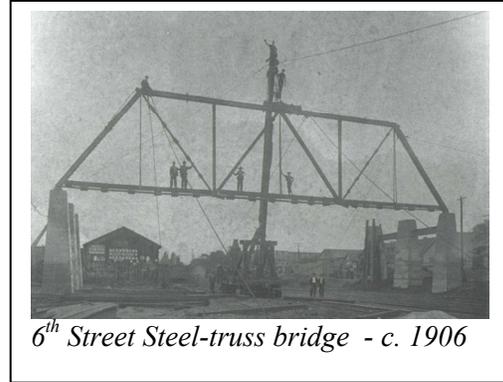
*Griffin Medical College – smaller structure*

### **Transportation Resources**

The City of Griffin was founded because General Lewis Lawrence Griffin received the authority to build a rail line from Macon to Forsyth in 1833, known as the Monroe Railroad. The tracks were planned to connect Macon, Savannah, Augusta to Madison and Chattanooga to Terminus. General Griffin saw the opportunity for a prosperous town at the north-south and east-west crossing. He laid out the grid pattern for Griffin in 1840 and the first north-south train came through town two years later in 1842. The town was officially incorporated in 1843. Griffin, however, did not become the type of city General Griffin had envisioned, but it thrived on cotton and other textile type of industries. The railroad was the central catalyst in the establishment of the City of Griffin.

Also in downtown Griffin is a steel-truss bridge constructed in 1906. It was widened in 1958 with concrete foundations extending over the railroad tracks at 6th Street.

The Griffin Airport was built about one mile south of the city limits, between 1936 and 1939. It had one hangar, one administration building and two runways. According to the June 17, 1940 Griffin Daily News article, the airport was “one of the finest and best equipped airports in the South.”



### 5.3 Assessment of Current and Future Needs

The City of Griffin has three critical environmental and cultural needs:

1. Improve water quality,
2. Protect air quality, and
3. Preserve the City’s historic character.

All of Griffin’s creeks are degraded, several severely. The City’s stormwater program is leading the way towards managing the nonpoint source pollution problem and there is still much work to be done. The recently drafted *Stormwater Management Plan* identifies a host of initiatives and infrastructure needs to help clean up Griffin’s water. Implementing this plan, evaluating its successes and continuing to identify additional needs will be critical to success.

With Spalding County’s newfound non-compliance with the *Clean Air Act*, Griffin and Spalding County need to develop a strategy for protecting air quality. Present growth patterns and trends in travel will invariably lead to a continued decline in air quality. It is critical for the City to identify ways to change these patterns and trends while growth is still relatively slow and the air quality problem relatively minor.

The Griffin Historical and Preservation Society was incorporated in 1969. The impetus for the society's founding was that the community was frustrated with "seeing the continued demolition and destruction of so many of the fine old homes in Griffin."

The loss of historic resources is also evident in the U.S. Census Data on information related to historic preservation (**Figure 5-10**). This information, available for 1970 to 2000, includes a total number of houses that were constructed prior to 1939 that have not been remodeled or repaired. Comparing the totals for these years shows the “attrition rate” for historic buildings. Throughout Georgia between 1970 and 2000, there was a reduction in the number of houses built before 1939. The State lost 226,398 or 53% of its older houses during this period, while Spalding County lost 3,254 or 63% and Griffin lost 2,163 or 68% during this same period.

**Figure 5-10  
Houses Built Before 1939  
1970 to 2000**

	<b>1970</b>	<b>1980</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>
Georgia	419,370	296,662	212,938	192,972
Spalding County	5,144	3,380	1,879	1,890
Griffin	3,169	2,012	1,139	1,006
<i>Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.</i>				

There have been a number of vehicles to help bring preservation to the attention of Griffin residents and businesspeople and to create a foundation of support within town. Educating citizens, business owners, and city leaders can lead to more positive preservation goals. Home and business owners can learn about the economic advantages of maintenance on the existing historic resources and provide the tools to help owners of homes and commercial buildings properly care for their properties. Incentives both through federal and state funding are available for historic resources. The preservation society has taken steps to educate and foster a sense of pride for preservation efforts in their community through printed promotional material. Since 1987, the Junior Guild has printed and sold calendars with photographs of Griffin's past. The society has shared in the proceeds from the sale of a set of six drawings of historic buildings: the Bailey-Tebault House; the Dean House; the Sam Bailey Building; Griffin Female College; the Lewis-Mills House; and the original Spalding County Courthouse.

A Historic Preservation Ordinance was adopted in October 2002 and formed the Historic Preservation Commission. The Historic Preservation Commission has identified a potential Historic District and 10 additional sites that qualify for preservation efforts. The Historic preservation and the zoning ordinance are interrelated, as stated in the current Ordinance, Section 407.1. "All amendments to this Ordinance shall be consistent with the Land Use Plan of the City of Griffin, Georgia..." In order to strengthen and most effectively guide preservation efforts in Griffin these basic concepts of historic preservation should be reinforced in the zoning ordinance. Topics of concern include building setback, height limit, minimum lot width, demolition, street right-of-way, sidewalks, and planting strips.

The creation and adoption of Architectural Design Guidelines is recommended to act as a guide for both appropriate maintenance and for new construction within the historic district. They are meant to do the following:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Reinforce the historic character of Griffin</li> <li>❖ Protect its visual aspects</li> <li>❖ Serve as a tool for designers and clients in making design decisions</li> <li>❖ Increase public awareness</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Discourage inappropriate new construction</li> <li>❖ Deal with exterior only</li> <li>❖ Guarantee "high quality" construction</li> <li>❖ Be specific but not restrictive</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

Griffin is also a Main Street City. The Main Street Program, developed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, is designed to improve all aspects of a downtown or central business district. Its approach is based on historic preservation and saving historic commercial

architecture, while at the same time serving as a powerful economic development tool. Griffin's Main Street Program co-sponsored *A Self-Guided Tour of Downtown Griffin, Georgia and its Environs*, a publication listing 37 sites for a walking tour of downtown.

Another recommended option is to obtain a Certified Local Government (CLG) status from the National Park Service (NPS). NPS and State governments, through their State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs), provide valuable technical assistance and small matching grants to hundreds of diverse communities whose local governments are endeavoring to keep for future generations what is significant from their community's past. The CLG program seeks: 1) to develop and maintain local historic preservation programs that will influence the zoning and permitting decisions critical to preserving historic properties, and 2) to ensure the broadest possible participation of local governments in the national historic preservation program while maintaining preservation standards established by the Secretary of the Interior.

Among the kinds of activities funded are the following: architectural, historical, archeological surveys; oral histories; nominations to the National Register of Historic Places; staff work for historic preservation commissions; design guidelines and preservation plans; public outreach materials such as publications, videos, exhibits, and brochures; training for commission members and staff; and rehabilitation or restoration of National Register listed properties. While CLG grants generally represent a relatively small amount of funds, they have often been used as seed money to attract funding from local government or other sources. Also, in many cases, the products generated by CLG grants have provided credibility to a fledgling local historic preservation program. Beyond being just a source of funds, the CLG program has helped institutionalize historic preservation and give it legitimacy as a function of local government.

There are numerous resources available through the State Historic Preservation Officer in Atlanta, and both federal and state programs to help in technical assistance and financially in a variety of preservation efforts. The following recommendations should be used to help achieve the goals set by the Comprehensive Plan to help the city's economy, cultural and architectural resources, community pride, and a sense of place for future generations.

## 5.4 Natural and Cultural Resource Goals

1. Improve the City’s water quality.
2. Protect the City’s air quality.
3. Continue to preserve and protect the City’s greenspace, wetlands, and floodplains.
4. Protect and restore the City’s historic and cultural resources.

## 5.5 Implementation Program

### Goal #1: Improve the City’s water quality.

Action Item	Responsible Party	Time Frame
Implement Stormwater Master Plan.	Griffin Public Works & Utilities Dept.	On-going
Update and expand applicable policies and regulations necessary for improving water quality.	Griffin Public Works & Utilities Dept and Planning & Development Dept	On-going
Expand the use of Best Management Practices in new developments and widen minimum stream buffer width.	Planning & Development Dept	2004 – 2005
Conduct Potato Creek water quality study.	Griffin Public Works & Utilities Dept	2004 – 2005
Work with local golf courses to reduce nutrient runoff.	Griffin Public Works & Utilities Dept	On-going
Implement long-term watershed monitoring program.	Griffin Public Works & Utilities Dept	On-going
Expand public education efforts. Focus on residential and commercial chemical application, pet waste, and proper maintenance of riparian buffers.	Griffin Public Works & Utilities Dept	On-going

**Goal #2: Protect the City's air quality.**

<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>
Establish streetscape and sidewalk requirements for new developments.	Planning & Development Dept	2005-2006
Encourage new large-scale developments throughout the City to include a mixture of uses in a pedestrian friendly format.	Planning & Development Dept	On-going
Adopt connectivity standards as part of the City's subdivision regulations.	Planning & Development Dept	2005-2006
Support the development of commuter rail line connecting Griffin to Atlanta and Macon.	City Commission and County Commission	On-going
Undertake a feasibility study for reintroducing local transit service.	City Commission and McIntosh Trail RDC	2005-2006

**Goal #3: Continue to preserve protect the City's greenspace, wetlands, and floodplains.**

<b>Action Item</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Time Frame</b>
Draft and present a tree preservation ordinance to the City Commission for adoption.	City Planning & Development Dept.	2004-2005
Create a Greenway Master Plan as part of a new Recreation Master Plan. The Greenway Master Plan should include recommendations on linking the open space in conservation subdivisions together. It should also look at ways to permanently preserve wetlands and floodplains.	Griffin Public Works Dept and Spalding County Parks & Recreation Dept	2006-2007
Continue to enforce existing regulations protecting the City's water resources.	Griffin Public Works and Utilities Dept	On-going
Amend zoning and land development regulations to provide incentives and guidelines for conserving open space in the subdivision process and to widen minimum stream buffer widths.	City Planning & Development Dept	2005-2006

**Goal #4: Protect and restore the City’s historic and cultural resources.**

Action Item	Responsible Party	Time Frame
Obtain Certified Local Government Status through the National Park Service and State Historic Preservation Officer	Historic Preservation Commission	2004-2005
Designate new residential historic districts and expand the existing commercial district.	Historic Preservation Commission	On-going
Create and Adopt Architectural Design Guidelines within historic districts and throughout the City.	City Planning and Dev. Services Dept., Historic Preservation Commission	2004-2005
Revitalize neighborhoods through education, community outreach, and neighborhood programs to help foster a sense of community pride.	School System, Private Interests, City Commissioners, City Planning & Development Dept	On-going
Educate the community about its history and its resources.	Historic Preservation Commission, Main Street Program	On-going
Encourage infill development, suitable reuse of vacant buildings, and promote adaptive reuse of historic buildings.	DDA, Main Street Program, Historic Preservation Commission, City Planning & Development Dept	On-going
Expand focus of revitalization efforts beyond Main Street to adjacent neighborhoods.	DDA, Main Street Program, Historic Preservation Commission	On-going