

Highway 441

Planning Report



COLLEGE OF ENVIRONMENT AND DESIGN

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

2002

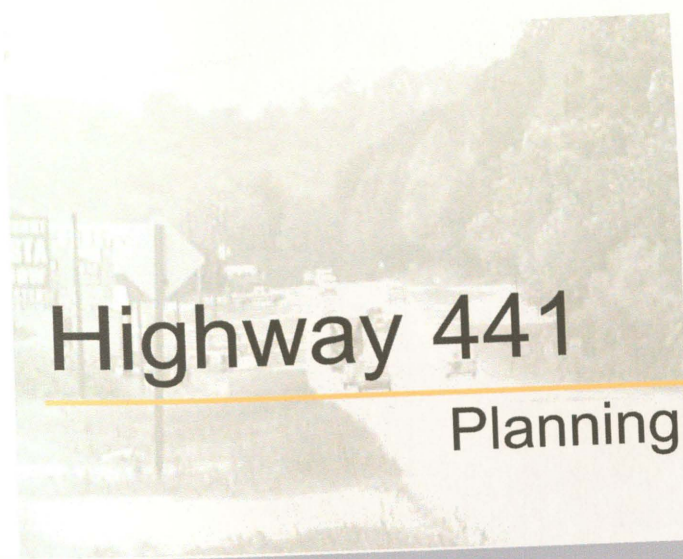
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Highway 441
background

b a c k g r o u n d

Highway 441
background

I

Highway 441

a slice of georgia

background

preface

us 441

Prior to the advent of the interstate highway system, US 441 served as a major north/south transportation corridor through Georgia. The highway traverses 367 miles through every type of indigenous terrain found in the state. Like many other transportation corridors of the time, including US Route 66 and 17, the highway served as an economic engine fueling the small towns found along its path. In Georgia these towns include: Clayton, Athens, Milledgeville, Dublin and Douglas. These towns are steeped in cultural and historic heritage. By developing these assets, "heritage tourism" can be fostered.

Heritage tourism is a national trend involving traveling to natural, historic and cultural attractions for enjoyment while learning about the past. It introduces the visitor to authentic places that make history come alive. It maintains a balance between tourism and the preservation of history and the environment. People are searching for vacations that do more than entertain. They seek experiences that enrich their lives.

Tourism is important for Georgia's communities, including those counties that lie along US 441. The Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism reported that tourists spent \$22 million in 2000 in the counties along US 441, increasing almost 5 % from 1999.

Around the United States, there are several examples of successful heritage tourism projects. Examples include national Heritage Areas such as Iowa's Silos & Smokestacks or the Augusta Canal. In Iowa, over 600,000 new visitors are expected to spend up to \$60 million annually. Benefits include new jobs and increases in state and local tax revenue. Tourism diversifies the economy, creating a sustainable future. A successful heritage tourism program along 441 has the potential to generate similar increases in tourism dollars, diversifying the economic vitality and stability of this cultural corridor.

Community leadership is the key to creating and keeping vibrant, healthy, communities. Athens, Georgia resident E.H. Culpepper is one such leader. In his work with the Georgia Heritage Association, he recognized that the communities along US 441 have unique characteristics. The historic road binds them together. This could be solidified by organizing a 441 corridor through designation of a "heritage highway." He approached Rusty Brooks with the idea at the.

HISTORIC OVERVIEW

Institute for Community and Area Development (ICAD) meeting at the University of Georgia in 1997. Brooks and his counterpart, Bernie Moore, contacted agencies and organizations from communities along US 441, and found great enthusiasm for such a project. The first organizational meeting of the US 441 Heritage Corridor Corporation was held in April of 1998 at the University of Georgia's Center for Continuing Education. For the first time, over 100 community leaders from the length of the corridor gathered to discuss their needs and expectations pertinent to community development efforts along the highway.

ICAD had gotten the process started, but in 1999 it was agreed that a stand-alone non-profit organization was needed to become a self-reliant organization. By 2000, the incorporation of a new 501 (c) (6) organization was complete. By-laws approved, a bank account was established, a dues structure was determined, and goals were agreed upon. Volunteer executive director Hannah Ledford, former Deputy Commissioner of Tourism, began working from her new Office of Tourism at West Georgia College. Under direction of Ledford, the first US 441 newsletter was published, and an application to fund a tourism study and plan through Transportation Enhancement Act funding (TEA21) was submitted to the Georgia Department of Transportation

(GDOT). The marketing committee developed and printed a brochure, and in early 2001 the TEA 21 grant was awarded. Representative Bob Smith authored legislation for "heritage highway" status, which was passed by the Georgia General Assembly in 2001. US 441 is the first heritage highway in Georgia. As part of the legislation, funding was provided for heritage highway identification signs, which GDOT installed in 2002.

Hannah Ledford's retirement from West Georgia College in the spring of 2001 necessitated another means of monitoring the TEA 21 grant. Jack Crowley, Dean of the new College of the Environment and Design at the University of Georgia, was approached. He agreed to implement the grant. This planning report, an updated website, new marketing brochure and poster concept, and an expandable GIS database were the products of this TEA 21 grant.

*Joy Spears Walstrum, President
US 441 Heritage Corporation*

House Resolution 272

House resolution 272 was passed in June of 2001. 441 was designated as Georgia's first Heritage Highway. Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) was required to fund the development of signage. This was installed in 2002.

Highway 441

a slice of georgia

Highway 441

a slice of georgia

introduction

diversity

For many, US 441 is just another line on a map. 374 miles of asphalt stretching through rural Georgia from Florida to North Carolina. However, a deeper meaning is felt by those that live along the US 441 corridor. Its vitality affects their economic future. It also reflects their history, connects communities together and offers a link to the past. For them, the road reveals a glimpse of the Georgia landscape—past, present and future.

Along US 441, as in many parts of rural America, communities are struggling to strike a balance between economic viability and cultural identity. Road improvements and associated



Children Enjoying a Summer Treat

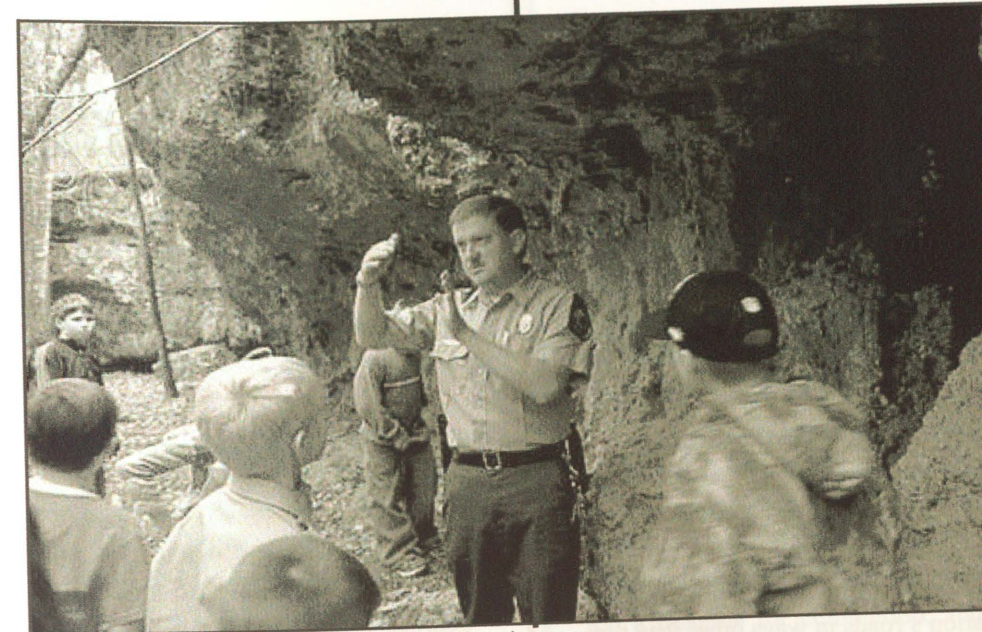
development brings business, jobs, industry and improved tax structures to rural communities. Unfortunately, these same "improvements" may threaten rural character and deplete a community's sense of place.

The US 441 corridor has a rich history. Deeply rooted southern traditions coupled with the desire for economic development has defined the corridor. Many communities preserve their historic and cultural character through



Bridge Building on 441

BACKGROUND



Heritage Tourism at Broxton Rocks

programs such as the Main Street Program, while the Governor's Road Improvement Program (GRIP), invests millions of dollars to widen and improve the road itself. U.S. 441 is the longest of 19 GRIP corridors. Through the GRIP program, the Highway Department will build over three thousand miles of multi-lane highways, placing 98% of the state within twenty miles of a four-lane highway. These improvements are vital to the economic viability of the state and its citizens.

Vision and proper planning will ensure that road improvements enhance economic opportunities without depleting community character. Wider roads bring both traditional business and industry to rural Georgia towns, as well as tourism. At 16.1 bil-

lion dollars a year, tourism is the second-largest industry in the state of Georgia. Heritage tourism is a national trend involving traveling to natural, historic and cultural attractions for enjoyment and education. It relies on maintaining a strong sense of place through preserving a community's natural and cultural treasures.

According to the National Trust for Historic Preservation, a successful heritage tourism program must:

- ✓ Focus on authenticity and quality
- ✓ Preserve and protect resources
- ✓ Makes sites come alive
- ✓ Balance community and tourism
- ✓ Cooperation through partnerships

Highway 441

a slice of georgia

Highway 441

a slice of georgia

background

INTRODUCTION

purpose of the project

The Intermodal Surface Transportation Equity Act (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act of the 21st Century (TEA 21) were passed in 1991 and 1998 respectively. These important federal laws were passed in an attempt to support not only the needs of automotive infrastructure (road building and improvements) but also to promote alternative modes of transportation, roadside accessibility, interpretation and roadside amenities. In general, ISTEA and TEA 21 provide grant monies to improve the nation's roads in ways other than typical road construction and maintenance. These grants are intended to encourage more "user friendly" roads and right-of-ways. This US 441 Heritage Highway project is a product of a TEA 21 grant, which was written by the US 441 Heritage Highway Corporation and accepted by the Georgia Department of Transportation in the spring of 2002.

The expressed purpose of this grant is to "provide technical assistance and guidance to communities along the corridor" and to assist in the promotion and development of the corridor as a Heritage Highway. The intent of this study is to enhance tourism opportunities by preserving community integrity. Highlighting unique places and events which typify the flavor and spirit of the Georgia landscape is an additional goal. On April 18, 2002,

new signage was unveiled to recognize the official designation of US Highway 441 as "Georgia's Heritage Highway." A partnership was established between U.S. 441 Heritage Highway, Inc., the Georgia Department of Transportation and the University of Georgia's College of Environment and Design.

project scope/site boundaries

The US Heritage Highway may be defined in many ways. As a road and right-of-way system it stretches over 350 miles from the North Carolina boarder to the Florida Line. The highway passes through 18 Georgia counties and three physiographic regions. Travelers driving the highway impact a corridor much wider than simply the right-of-way or the counties through which they pass. Those seeking opportunities and events along the way may venture many miles off the highway, thereby widening their experience to neighboring communities and counties. A clear definition of the study area is therefore difficult to establish. Project boundaries are fuzzy and somewhat dependent on the will and curiosity of the traveling public.

For the purposes of this study, the 441 Heritage Highway will be loosely defined as the fifteen counties through which the highway passes, plus the 29 contiguous counties on either side of these core counties (see map pages 11 and 12).

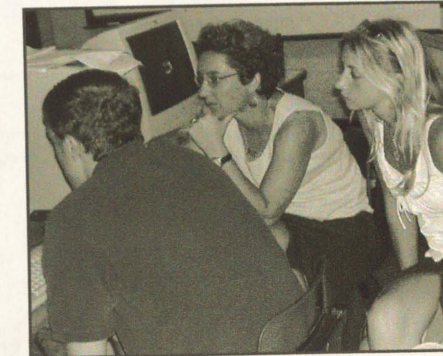
PURPOSE OF THE PROJECT

methodology

The US 441 Heritage Highway Study began in late May 2002. Three University of Georgia faculty from the College of Environment and Design, Brian LaHaie, Henry Parker and Judith Wasserman, led a design team of more than a dozen students in a three month study of the scenic, historic and natural resources of 441. While traveling they took photographs and notes. They also collected brochures and visited sites of interest. Back at the University of Georgia, the information was compiled and analyzed. After several weeks of traveling the entire highway, each team focused on one of the three geographic regions. By researching the Mountains, the Piedmont, and the Coastal Plain sections of the heritage corridor, the groups sought the unique qualities that give the highway its personality and charm. "Road teams" also met with community leaders to help ascertain the unique community

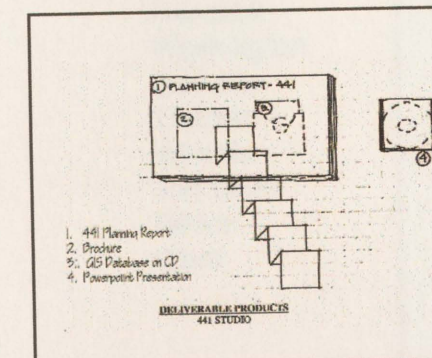


*Student and Faculty
Assembling Brochure*



Working on the Report

assets available along highway 441. In mid-June, the design team met with representatives of the U.S. 441 Heritage Highway, Inc. to review the project's progress, to reach consensus on a timeline for completion, and to discuss what the final products would be. This planning report is one of the products of this study, along with a GIS searchable database, a sample website, and a sample travel brochure. A PowerPoint presentation summarizing our observations and recommendations was also created.



*Deliverable Products,
US 441 Studio*

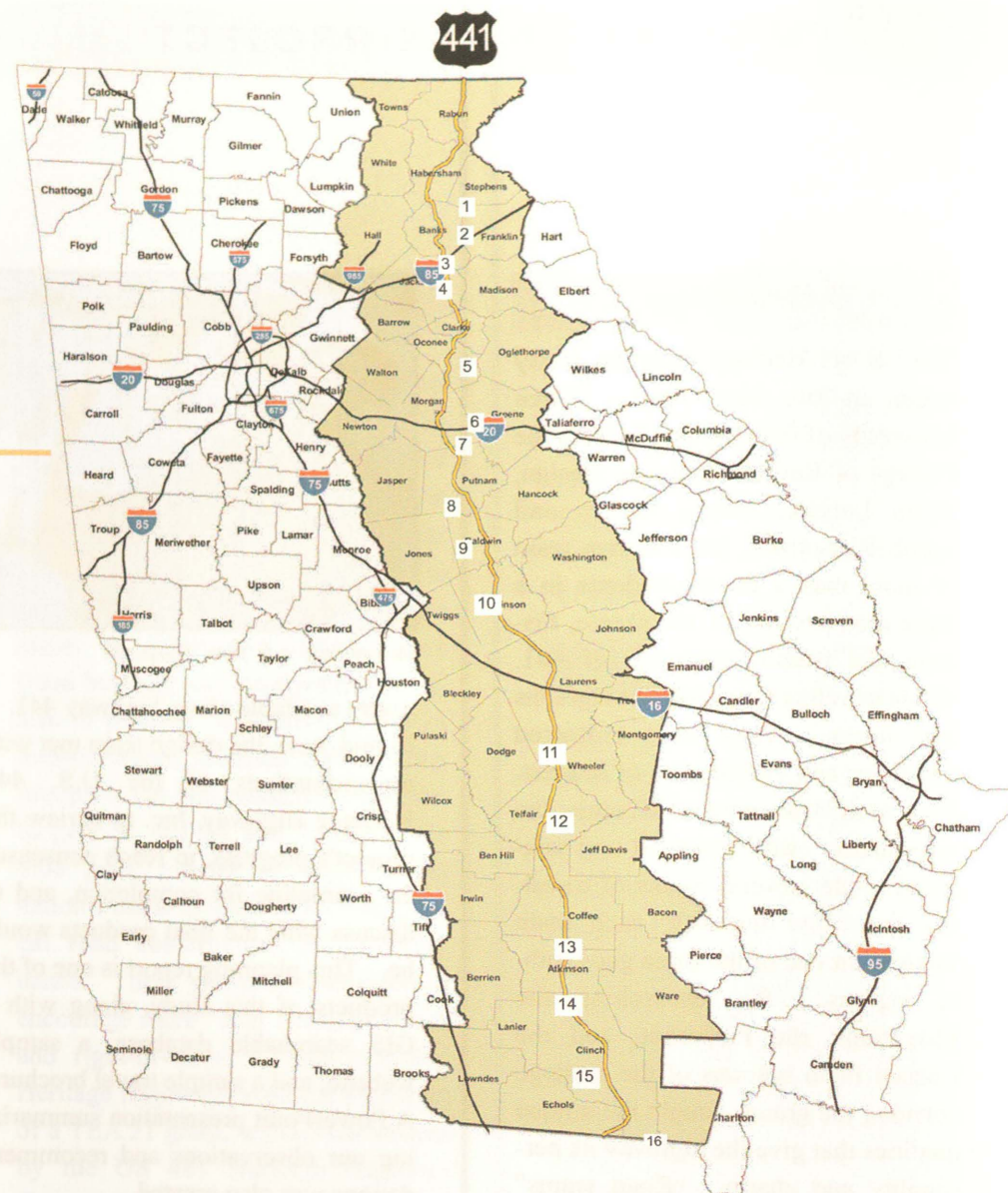
Highway 441

a slice of georgia

Highway 441

a slice of georgia

background



CITIES AND COUNTIES ON 441

Major Cities on US 441

1. Dillard
2. Clayton
3. Clarkesville
4. Cornilia
5. Commerce
6. Athens
7. Watkinsville
8. Madison
9. Eatonton
10. Milledgeville
11. Dublin
12. McRae
13. Douglas
14. Willacoochee
15. Homerville
16. Fargo

15 Core Counties

Rabun
Habersham
Banks
Jackson
Clarke
Oconee
Morgan
Putnam
Baldwin
Wilkinson
Laurens
Telfair
Coffee
Atkinson
Clinch

29 Contiguous Counties

West of 441

Towns
White
Hall
Barrow
Walton
Newton
Jasper
Jones
Twiggs
Bleckley
Dodge
Ben Hill
Irwin
Berrien
Lanier
Echols

East of 441

Stephens
Franklin
Madison
Oglethorpe
Greene
Hancock
Washington
Johnson
Treutlen
Wheeler
Jeff Davis
Bacon
Ware

Highway 441

a slice of georgia

INTRODUCTION

outline and overview of chapters

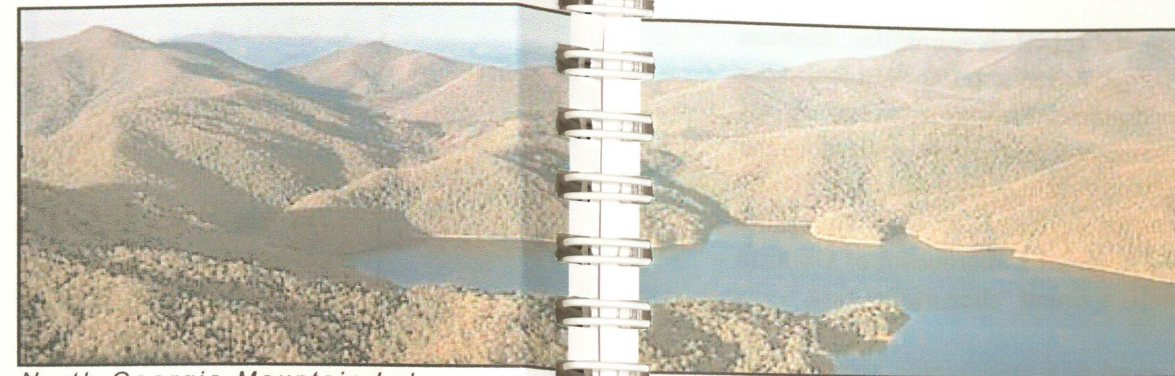
This planning document is divided into five parts or chapters. These chapters explore the special qualities of the US 441 Heritage Highway and provide assistance and guidance to local communities to increase heritage tourism opportunities in the future.

chapter one: background

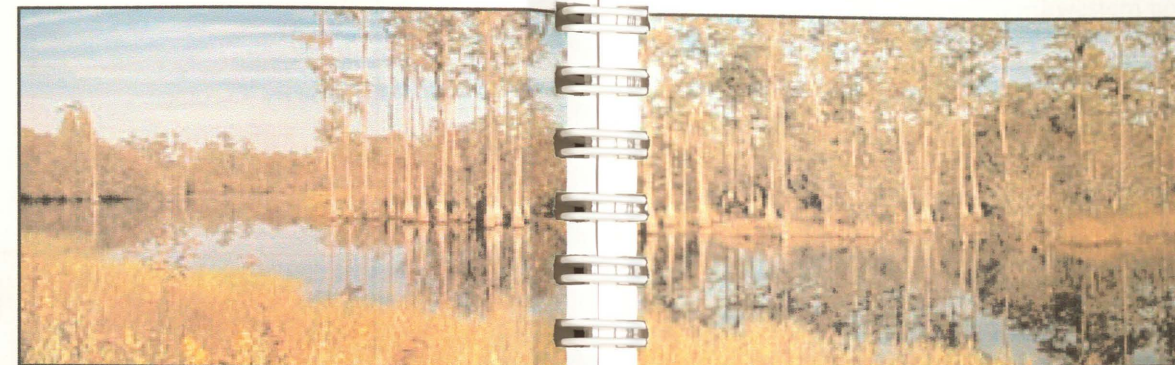
Chapter one, "Background," introduces the US 441 Heritage Highway Corporation in the preface. The introduction discusses the challenges and changes facing this corridor in the future. An explanation of the importance of defining community character and establishing a sense of place and community identity is included. Heritage tourism is defined and linked to the corridor. The project purpose, methodology and boundaries will reveal the structure of the heritage highway study. An outline and overview of chapters is included. The theme or concept of "A Slice of Georgia" is introduced in this chapter as both a literal and metaphoric project statement expressing the highway's dual roles as a physical transect bisecting the state from north to south and also as a method of experiencing rural Georgia flavor.

chapter two: observations

Chapter two, entitled "Observations," explores the different qualities, values



North Georgia Mountain Lake



Okefenokee Swamp

or lenses through which the corridor can be observed. Natural, historic, cultural, recreational and agricultural resources within the corridor provide the structure upon which heritage tourism can be developed. This chapter will attempt to define and reveal the corridor's history, natural resources, cultural assets, and recreational and agricultural amenities.

chapter three: recommendations

Chapter three includes recommendations for all aspects of the corridor. Topics include corridor management, design, signage, Heritage Centers, road alignment, mapping, and promotion and marketing.

OUTLINE OF REPORT

chapter four: examples

Chapter four, "Examples," highlights examples of towns and places along the US 441 corridor which have discovered and preserved their community identity and have developed heritage tourism programs, marketing their unique sense of place.

chapter five: conclusion

Chapter five concludes by highlighting both the unique qualities of the US 441 corridor and also the diversity of its people and landscapes. From the North Georgia mountains to the swampy coastal plains, US 441 represents a sampling of the people and places unique to Georgia.



Madison Church Gospel Choir

Highway 441

a slice of georgia

background

defining character

a slice of georgia

US 441 stretches from north to south through the rural Georgia landscape offering a "sampling" of southern hospitality, style and character often unavailable to the interstate traveler. Due to its length, geographic diversity and rural character, US 441 offers the traveler an opportunity to experience the state from northern mountains to broad coastal plains and wetlands largely unencumbered by commercial-

ism and suburban sprawl. Like an ecologist's transect, US 441 bisects the landscape offering a sampling of events, and destinations reflecting the cultural and regional offerings of the state of Georgia. A drive along US 441 becomes a microcosm of Georgia itself- a virtual "slice of Georgia."

Viewed as a topographic section, US 441 traverses the north Georgia mountains at elevations exceeding 2000 feet, then gradually drops in elevation through the rolling piedmont and finally onto the expansive coastal plains of south Georgia. These topographic differences greatly impact each climate, agriculture and settlement patterns. These "patterns" become the foundations from which

DEFINING CHARACTER

culture, religion and community values evolve and add to both the physical and cultural diversity of the state.

physiographic provinces

US 441 passes through three of Georgia's five physiographic provinces on its north-south alignment. The Ridge and Valley Province and the Appalachian Plateau Province occupy the extreme northwestern portion of the state and lie outside the US 441 corridor. The northern section of the highway 441 corridor exists in the narrow Blue Ridge Province which occupies the northernmost counties of Rabun, Towns, White and Habersham. This province is characterized by an irregular sequence of

mountains, ridges and basins with elevations ranging between 1600 and 4700 feet.

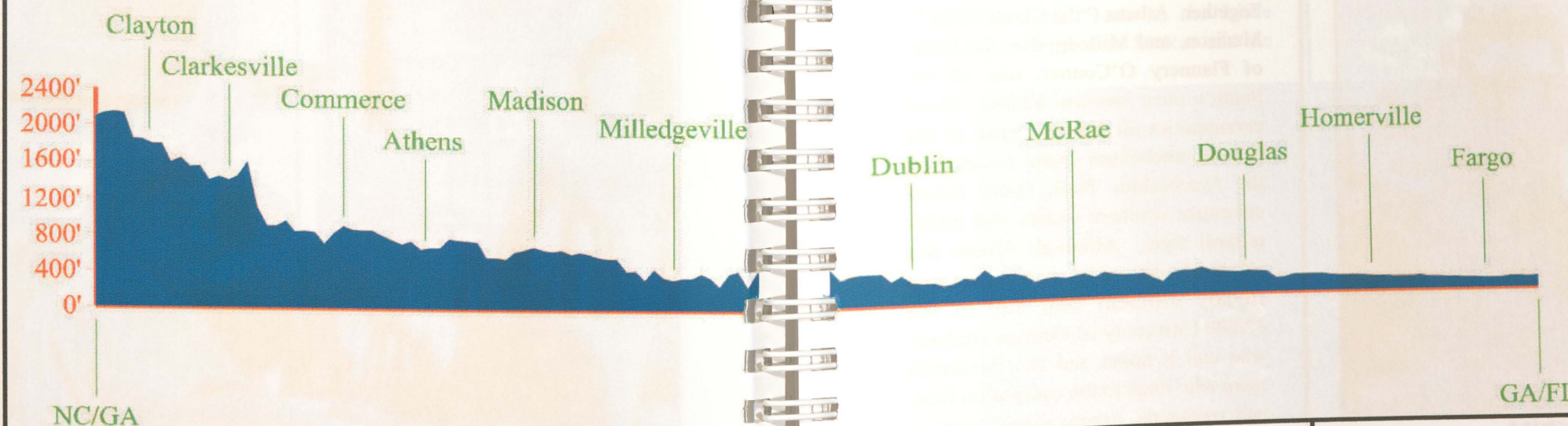
The Piedmont cuts a diagonal swath of rolling hills through the state accentuated by young rivers and ravines. Some of the cities in the Georgia Piedmont include Athens, Madison and Milledgeville. These communities exist on rolling pastoral hills and pastures, interspersed with oak-hickory-pine forests and mixed deciduous forested valleys. Elevations range from 750 to 1600 feet.

In the southern half of the state, US 441 passes through the Upper and Lower Coastal Plain Province after passing through the Sand Hills Region

Highway 441

a slice of georgia

"A Slice of Georgia"



Highway 441 Topographic Section

Highway 441

a slice of georgia

background

DEFINING CHARACTER

of central Georgia. This province is characterized by sandy and sandy-clay soils of relatively low natural fertility. Dublin, McRae, Douglas, Homerville and Fargo exist in these flat pinelands and wiregrass fields. Peanuts and pines are the dominant crops, while tobacco and cotton still have a presence here as well.

441 communities

mountains

If US 441 is perceived as a "slice of Georgia", then the towns through which it passes certainly represent some of Georgia's finest communities. The arts, crafts and music of the north Georgia Mountains can be experienced in the villages of Clayton and



Peanut Farming

Clarkesville, both of which are surrounded by National Forests, hiking trails and clear mountain streams. The mountain communities of Georgia provide a reprieve from the summer's heat and humidity. In fact, Sky Valley, Georgia's northernmost US 441 community, is also Georgia's winter time destination, with an active ski slope and lodge.



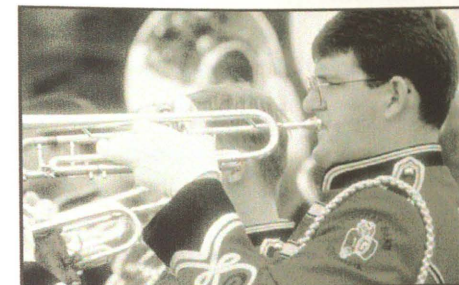
Sky Valley

piedmont

Together, Athens ("the Classic City"), Madison, and Milledgeville, the home of Flannery O'Connor, one of the South's most renowned writers. These communities all reflect a taste of the historic antebellum south. Located on the Antebellum Trail, these towns epitomize southern charm and architectural style. Although Athens has plenty of southern spirit, it moves to a slightly different beat due to the 32,000 University of Georgia students who call it home and the thousands more who flock to the campus on football weekends. Athens music scene is known throughout the world due to

441 COMMUNITIES

the emergence of such musical artist as REM, Wide Spread Panic, The Indigo Girls and the B-52's. The local club scene actively encourages new talent.



UGA Redcoats

coastal plain

Agriculture and agro-forestry dominate the landscape and communities of the southern US 441 corridor. Dublin and Douglas are both thriving communities interspersed between irrigated fields of peanuts, cotton, and tobacco. Slow, meandering rivers make their way to the Atlantic Coast across these sandy flatlands such as the Little Ocmulgee River near McRae and the

famous Suwanee River near Fargo. Pine plantations and wiregrass occupy the southernmost sections of the 441 corridor, giving way to wetland pockets and swampy lowlands as one travels toward the great Okefenokee

connecting experiences

For those that seek more than a destination, Highway 441 offers the traveler an opportunity to sample the landscapes, communities and cultures through which they pass. US 441 is a conduit to these experiences- a vehicle for experiencing all that we have come to know and all that we wish to share about this state of Georgia. Traveling US 441 offers a "slice of Georgia" and a sampling of southern charm and hospitality.

Ski slopes and southern swamps, alligators and brook trout, fine wine and fast cars; all this and more can be experienced on US 441 - Georgia's Heritage Highway corridor.



Okefenokee Swamp

Highway 441

a slice of georgia

Highway 441

a slice of georgia

background



PHYSIOGRAPHIC REGIONS

- Appalachian Plateau
- Ridge and Valley
- Blue Ridge
- Piedmont
- Upper Coastal Plain
- Lower Coastal Plain

Highway 441

a slice of georgia

Highway 441
observations

o b s e r v a t i o n s

Highway 441
observations

||

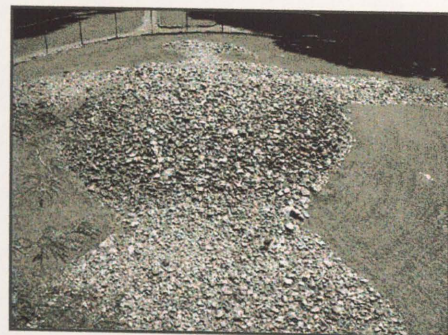
history

people and the land

Highway 441 can be thought of as a series of snapshots of man's 12,000 year relationship to this place on earth. Powerfully shaped by human intervention, today the corridor is a mosaic of natural, social, and economic histories. The great attraction of Highway 441 is that it passes through many of the best landscapes in Georgia and that history can still be read.

prehistoric era

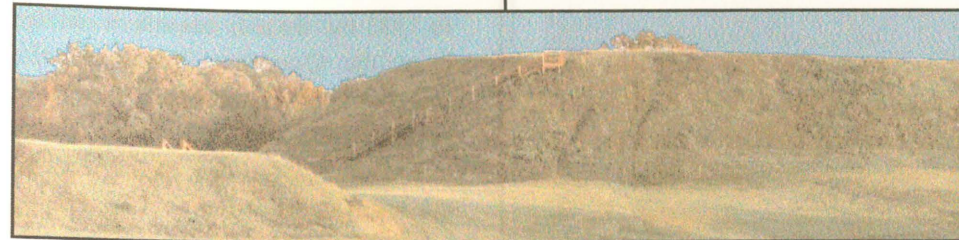
Archaeologists describe the simple hunter-gatherer cultures that existed from 10,000 B.C. until 1,000 B.C. as Paleo-Indians and Archaic Indians. The people of the more sophisticated Woodland Culture (1000 B.C.- A.D. 900) that followed lived in semi-permanent villages, cultivating sunflow-



Rock Eagle Effigy

ers, gourds, and other plants. A major legacy of this culture is Rock Eagle, a stone effigy mound found just north of Eatonton in Putnam County. About 2,000 years ago, people from the Woodland Culture mounded white quartz boulders eight feet high to create the image of a giant bird extending over 100 feet in length and with a wingspan of 120 feet. The only other ancient stone effigy in Georgia is Rock Hawk, also located in Putnam County near Lake Oconee. The pre-European influence on the land probably peaked about 900-1500 A.D. This was at the height of the Mississippian Culture, a complex society with priests, administrators, craftsmen, and farmers who grew corn, beans, squash, tobacco, and other crops in the rich bottomlands along the rivers. Fire was used to clear land for farming and to make it easier to hunt game. Centuries of burning created a relatively open forest and savannah landscape dominated by fire-tolerant tree species. A patchwork of fields surrounded central villages defined by wooden stockades, dry moats, and earthen embankments. Inside, great earthen platforms supported temples, elite residences, council buildings and granaries situated around a central plaza. Smaller outlying villages and farmsteads supported and protected the ceremonial center. The location of these chiefdoms on ecotones near fertile floodplains made a broad range of cultivated and natural foods available.

PREHISTORIC ERA



Temple Mounds at Ocmulgee National Monument

A good sense of the architecture of these villages is presented by the National Park Service at their website for the Ocmulgee Nat'l Monument (<http://www.nps.gov/ocmu.htm>). Public buildings and chieftain's residences were generally larger, more ornate versions of ordinary domestic dwellings. Houses were rectangular to square in shape, commonly between 10 and 30 feet in length. Walls were constructed of cane wattle daubed with clay and attached to posts set into the ground. Roofs topped with thatch or bark were set at a steep angle to allow good runoff during heavy rains. Houses normally contained only a single room with a fireplace centrally located to provide warmth in the winter and protection from insects in the summer. Most of the cooking was probably done outside, either in the open or under a kitchen shed.

A few of the earthen temple mounds can still be seen along the 441 Hwy Corridor, with Ocmulgee National Monument east of Macon being probably the most dramatic and well preserved. Although the Mississippian Culture was already past its prime by the time Europeans arrived, with the

first Spanish explorers came diseases completely unknown to the native population and for which they had developed no tolerance. Before small pox and other diseases from the Old World decimated their populations, anthropologists estimate possibly as many as 100,000 people lived in the territory now occupied by the State of Georgia. The colonial era saw a tremendous demographic collapse with the contraction of entire chiefdoms into single villages such that nearly 95% of the population was wiped out. By the time history recorded native Southeastern culture in detail, it had degenerated into tribal societies already greatly Europeanized.

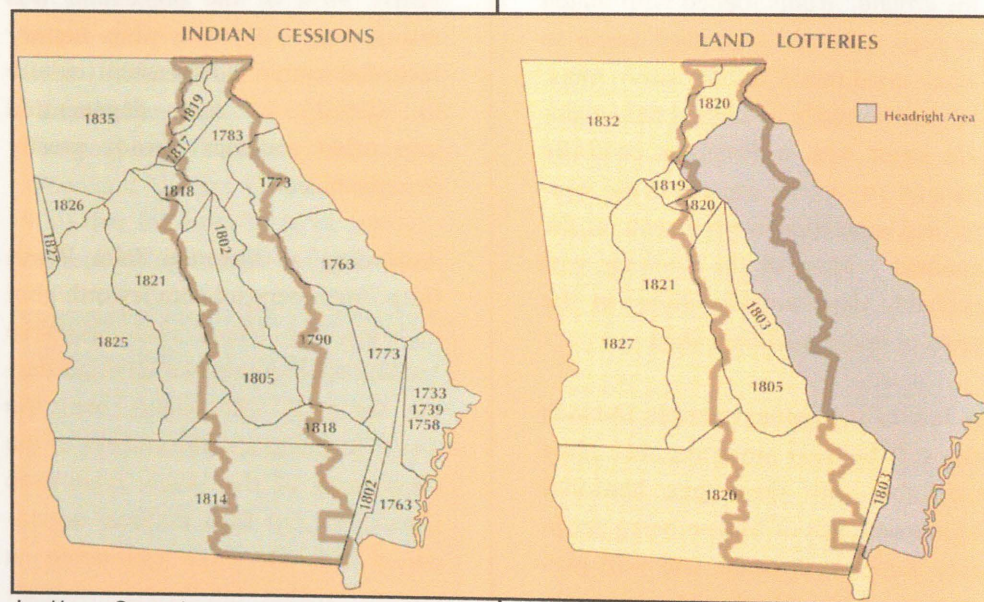
According to historian John Worth (<http://members.aol.com/jeworth/gboind.htm>), the Creek and Cherokee Indians who dominated Georgia during the early 19th-century were the direct genealogical descendants of the inhabitants of the state's prehistoric chiefdoms, but their political organization was far more egalitarian in nature, lacking the strongly-centralized and strictly-hereditary leadership offices of these ancestral chiefdoms.

HISTORY

European settlement

The story of the settling of the piedmont by people of European descent is in many ways the typical tale of westward expansion in America. Land-hungry settlers from Virginia and the Carolinas poured into up-country Georgia during the Revolutionary War years while the colonial capital of Savannah and much of the low country was held by the king's troops. With the influx of white settlers, indigenous Creek and Cherokee Indians found themselves giving way under a succession of treaties in which they ceded land, usually under pressure to pay off debts they had accrued from their ever increasing dependence on trade goods.

In 1783 the frontier boundary shifted from the Ogeechee River to the Oconee River. Almost 20 years later, between 1802-1805, the Creeks ceded land from the Oconee River west to the Ocmulgee River. The newly devised land lottery system, embodying Thomas Jefferson's theories of a yeoman democracy, was used to distribute the land in this strip between the rivers. Surveyors laid out tracts of 202 1/2 acres (45 chains square) on a grid in the ten counties along the central piedmont portion of today's 441 Corridor. Between 1805 and 1815, lotteries were held to distribute land in Morgan, Baldwin, Wilkinson, Jones, Lauren, Putnam, Randolph (later Jasper), Twiggs, Pulaski and Telfair counties. Prior to 1803, lands taken from the Indians were distributed by the headright system or by bounty



Indian Cessions and Land Lotteries

PLANTATION ERA

grants in reward for past services, particularly military service during the Revolutionary War. Because wealthy planters had been able to manipulate this system using their social and political influence to grab the best land and amass large holdings, settlement was uneven and much of the more marginal land was left unsettled. Furthermore, the corrupt process frequently embarrassed the Government when conflicting and fraudulent claims became public scandals. The new lottery system was devised to encourage a more uniform settlement pattern by homesteaders.

Indian trading paths converged at the fall line near Augusta where goods were loaded on boats and floated downstream to the ports of Savannah and Charles Town (later Charleston). Early industrial cities - Augusta, Milledgeville, Macon and Columbus - were all developed along the fall line to take full advantage of the rapids or shoals as a manufacturing power source.

plantation era

North of the fall line, the red clay hills of the piedmont gave rise to the mid-nineteenth century plantation towns of Athens, Commerce and Madison. Morgan County provides a good illustration of the failure of the land lottery system to achieve the intended stable society of yeomen living on small holdings and practicing subsistence

farming. Although surveyed into 1,100 separate 202-1/2 acre parcels intended as farms for homesteaders, lottery winners were not required to settle their holdings and could sell as soon as ownership was recorded. Better-financed planters and investors soon began to consolidate holdings to establish larger plantations.

The main incentive for consolidation, of course, was cotton, and the dark, fertile soil of the piedmont was ideal for growing it. Eli Whitney's invention of the cotton gin in 1793, in combination with the slave system, drove the piedmont economy toward large-scale plantations of a single cash crop. Thus the social structure and economy of piedmont began to mimic that of the low country in the southeastern corner of the state where huge cotton, rice and indigo plantations near the coast were worked by large numbers of slaves. The disastrous, long-term social and environmental legacy of this system is well known.

Madison, which had begun as a trading and government center for a pioneering group of yeoman farmers, soon became a county town for a new class of cotton planters. By 1820, the farming of wheat, oats, corn, vegetables, and livestock was giving way to the new and immensely profitable monoculture of cotton. The dependence of cotton farming on slave labor shifted the population ratios in Morgan County dramatically. By 1838 there were 3,820 whites and



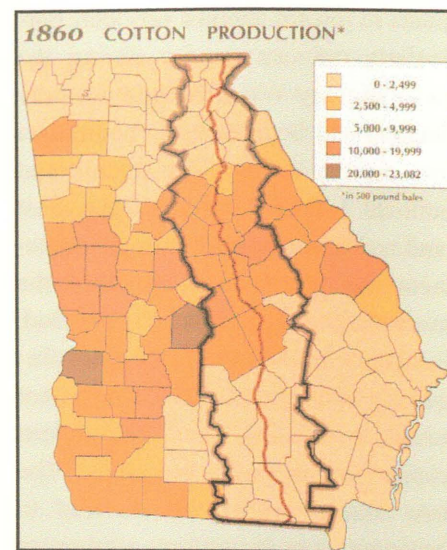
Historic Madison Home

5,908 colored. It was really this new, slave-based economy that could support the large, in-town second homes that were coming to predominate in Madison. Many of these antebellum homes, with their Greek Revival and Federal-style architecture, have been well-preserved and attract tourists from all over the world.

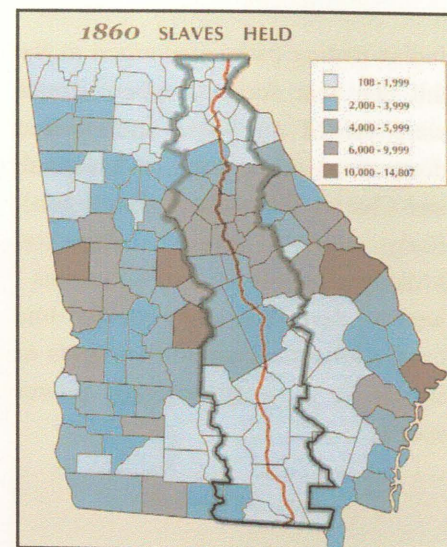
The 1850's were truly the decade of King Cotton. Insatiable demand, strong prices, and aggressive planters put new acreage into production as older fields became unproductive. Georgia's Piedmont had the highest production and correspondingly, the highest concentration of slaves.

In the mountains, white settlers arrived from the north via "The Great Wagon Road" originating in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania or from Virginia or the Carolinas. Small farms gave way to gold mining around 1828. Today, citizens and tourists alike still pan for gold in Dahlonega, just west of Highway 441.

HISTORY



Cotton Production in 1860



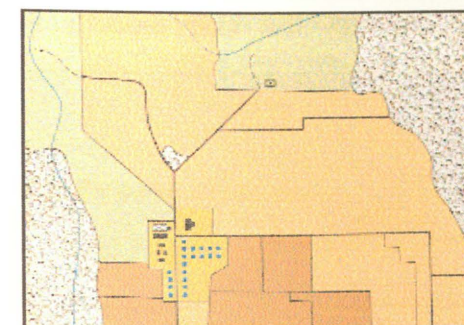
Slaves Held in 1860

sharecropping era

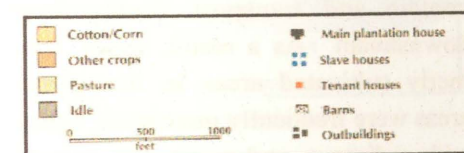
The Civil War brought an abrupt halt to the prosperity enjoyed by southern planters. After the disruptions of war and Reconstruction, short-staple cotton production gradually recovered, but the pattern of farming and inhabit-

SHARECROPPING ERA

ing the land changed significantly to a system of tenancy and sharecropping arrangements. The following diagrams illustrate how the centralized inhabitation pattern of the slave plantation became decentralized as the system of tenant farming was adopted after the Civil War. The population remained quite rural until the 1930s.



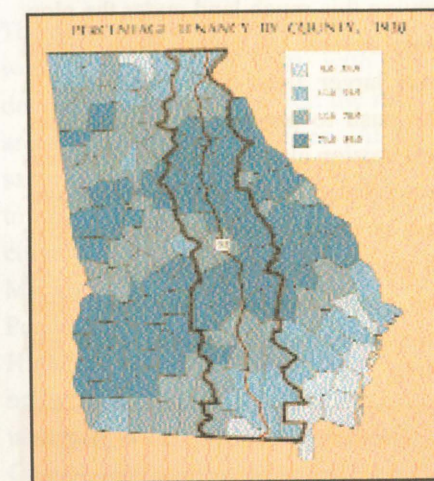
Antebellum Plantation Layout



Post-bellum Tenant Farmer Layout

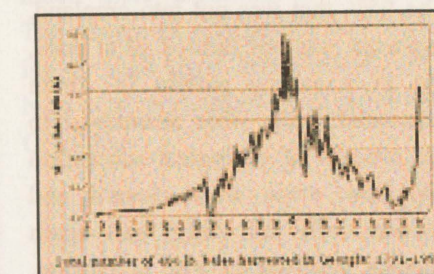
The following map, "Percentage Tenancy By County, 1930," shows how the piedmont cotton belt that, prior to the Civil War, had produced the highest amount of cotton and had

the highest concentration of slaves, now had the highest percentage of tenant farmers, typically 71-89%.



Percentage Tenancy by County, 1930

The following chart of historic cotton production in Georgia shows how cotton continued to dominate the economy of Georgia up until the Great Depression of the 1930s, with the peak of production occurring in 1914 during World War I at nearly 2.8 million bales. At the peak of Georgia's output, an acre of land yielded on average not more than half of a 480-pound bale. This meant that at least 5 million acres were planted in cotton at the peak.

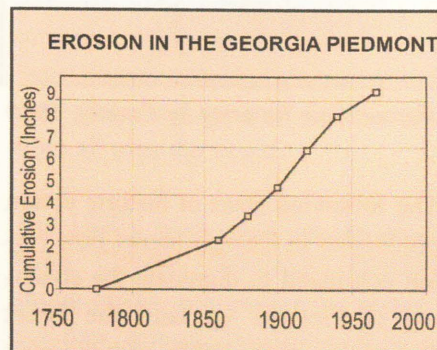


Historic Cotton Production in Georgia

HISTORIC

collapse

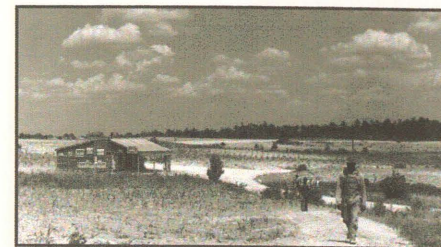
The environmental consequences of having this much land under the plow were severe. As cotton fields spread over larger areas of the landscape in the push to produce 5 million bales, soil erosion also accelerated. This was exacerbated by the sharecropping system in which tenants had no incentive to practice good farming methods. As the graph indicates, the most rapid erosion occurred between 1870 and 1930.



Erosion in the Piedmont

The original forestlands of the Georgia Piedmont were largely cleared for cultivation by the early to mid 1800's, but clearing continued until ultimately, probably no more than 5% of the piedmont completely escaped the plow, (Godfrey, 1997). The 95% that was put into cropland, however, was not farmed all at once, but in a rolling pattern in which exhausted fields were abandoned to the process of ecological succession and new areas were cleared and farmed until the virgin soil again became depleted or lost to erosion.

Consequently, most of the region's topsoil was eroded from slopes and hillsides. During the era of peak sedimentation, from 1870 to 1930, erosion rates and sediment delivery to streams and valleys were at their peak. The amount of soil lost varies from eight inches to as much as four feet, depending upon the circumstances. Streams became choked with sediment and subsequently lost their capacity to



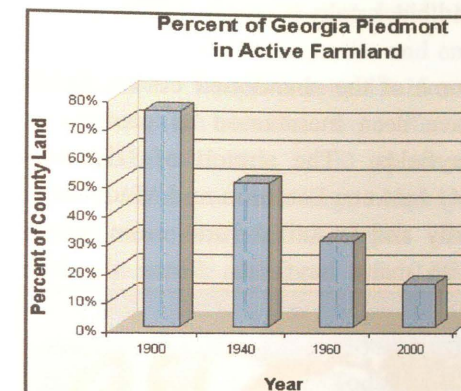
Eroded Cotton Fields

contain and transport floodwaters downstream. As a result, many formerly cultivated areas in floodplain areas were frequently inundated, filled with sediment, and eventually developed into some of the riverine wetlands that exist today.

The boll weevil first appeared in Georgia in 1915, and cotton production began declining rapidly, from a historical high of 2.8 million bales in 1914 to 600,000 bales in 1923. Georgia's economy lay in ruins. Aerial applications of calcium arsenate dust began in the early 1920s. This helped increase yields somewhat, but the industry never really recovered, and overall production continued declining steadily for another 60 years. In 1983 Georgia produced only

COLLAPSE OF COTTON

112,000 bales on 115,000 harvested acres. Between 1987 and 1990 a boll weevil eradication program was initiated. Since then, cotton production has increased dramatically each year. In 2001, Georgia produced 2.2 million bales, an output unseen since the early part of the century. But today, it is the counties in the coastal plain that dominate production with very little coming out of the piedmont. The percentage of the Georgia piedmont in active



Decrease in Farmland



Former Slaves

farmland has dropped from an estimated 75% in 1900 to about 15% today. Although erosion today is

nothing like it once was, cropland in Georgia still loses 5-6 tons of soil per acre each year.

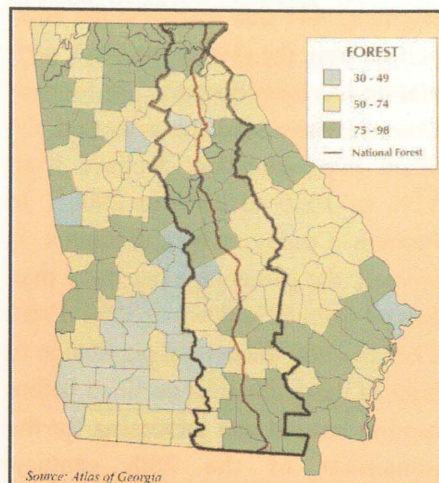
The population of the piedmont underwent a fundamental shift with the demise of cotton. People left the rural areas and moved to the cities. At the same time, many black people began to migrate to the industrial jobs in the cities of the North, in places such as Michigan, Illinois, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. In the towns along Highway 441 that comprise the antebellum trail, the shift in the black population has been dramatic. In Morgan County, where Madison is located, the black population has declined from 57% in 1930 to 28% in 2000. In Putnam County, where Eatonton is located, the percentage has more than halved from 62% down to 30%. From 1930 to 1960 the overall population in both of these counties declined before turning around and increasing for the remainder of the 20th century.

The number of farms, however, has continued to decline in the piedmont as it has generally throughout Georgia. At the same time, the remaining farms have gotten much bigger and become much more industrial in character. The pattern of agricultural land holding is once again consolidated, perhaps even more than it was before the Civil War.

HISTORY

reforestation

In the uplands of the piedmont, the forest has mostly returned and taken over the abandoned farms, but because there has been so much soil loss, the species diversity of the grasses and forbs that make up the ground layer is very low compared to what it was before cotton was king. The natural seed bank that evolved over the millennia was largely lost to erosion,

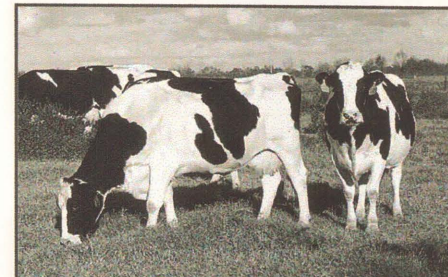


Percentage of County Land in Forest

along with all the topsoil. Today, 50-98% of the land in the counties comprising the piedmont is forested once again, although the composition of the forest is quite different from the forests encountered at the time of European settlement. It is second-growth forest, with large populations of trees homogeneous in age and much of it approaching 100 years old. Even the Oconee National Forest, which straddles Highway 441, is second-growth forest. Most importantly,

these forests have practically never experienced fire. This lack of disturbance in the ecosystem means that today's piedmont forests tend to be dominated by less fire-tolerant white oaks, hickories and tulip poplars, with beeches beginning their ascendancy. Analysis of the land survey records made prior to the land lotteries in the early part of the 19th century show that the forest at that time was dominated by fire-tolerant pines, post oaks, and black oaks (Cowell, 1998).

Some of the abandoned cotton fields have been maintained as pasture or hayfields. The stretch of Highway 441 between Eatonton and Madison is hilly and beautiful rural countryside with many hayfields. Since the late



Dairy Cattle

19th century, dairy has been a big industry in this area. In 2002, Putnam County was ranked second and Morgan County third in Georgia in terms of numbers of milk cows, with 8,400 and 6,170 cows respectively. Periodic mowing and bailing hay in those big rolls for the cows effectively replaces the process of forest development.

MINING - KAOLIN



Kaolin Mining

mining - kaolin

Highway 441 crosses the Fall Line just south of Milledgeville and enters a narrow "kaolin" belt, 10-25 miles wide, which stretches from Macon to Augusta. In this 1,200 square mile band lie the world's largest high-grade kaolin reserves. Georgia's kaolin resources are estimated at 5-10 billion tons. Kaolin was first used in Colonial days when it was shipped to England for pottery and china. Today kaolin is found in numerous industrial products including paint, rubber, plastics, cement, detergents, and fertilizers; but most importantly for Georgia is its use in paper. As filler, kaolin improves the opacity and ink receptivity of paper. As a surface coating, it makes a smoother, whiter paper. Glossy magazine are nearly one-third kaolin by weight. Kaolin deposits vary from six to fifty feet in thickness and are mined by giant dragline machines whose shovels scoop up to 20 tons at a bite. After the kaolin is removed, the land is carefully reclaimed and restored by contouring and grading the surfaces to blend with

the surrounding terrain. Reclaimed lands are suitable for a wide variety of uses including agriculture, forest production and wildlife. Since 1969, 80 percent of all lands mined have been reclaimed or are in the process of being reclaimed. It is estimated that 3,700 acres are currently involved in active mining. Georgia produced nearly 8 million metric tons of kaolin in 2000, with a market value of nearly one billion dollars. Economists estimate that the total payroll effect exceeds \$470 million annually as payroll dollars are spent and re-circulated in communities in middle Georgia and throughout the state.



Reclaimed Kaolin Pit

HISTORY

US 441 history

In Georgia, roads developed in much the same way as did the three geographical regions. As settlers spread throughout the state, first the piedmont, then the mountains, and then the coastal plains were peopled. Wagon paths and eventually, roads were carved from the wilderness. The route that eventually became US 441 in Georgia has a long history, not completely documented, but starting with Native American trails. Later European settlers then utilized and further developed these trails.

Through the use of historic maps, it was discovered that, by 1822, a route was established from just north of Athens, perhaps around Commerce, through Watkinsville, Madison, Milledgeville to Dublin. The mountain region around Clayton was connected to the piedmont by 1834, but not directly; rather, indirectly through Jefferson (now on US 129). While many other paths were developed during the rest of the 19th century, the path of the future US 441 did appear on maps on this time.

In 1914, Georgia governor John M. Slaton and the Atlanta Consitution lent their support to the establishment of a "Dixie Highway" linking Florida to the upper Midwest and Canada along the eastern seaboard. The "Dixie Highway" became a dual system with eastern and western routes, but for all

its promise of economic prosperity for cities on its route, it mostly benefited Florida real estate developers. The highway was the brainchild of Carl Fisher, who, in 1910, had invested heavily in real estate in Miami, Florida.

As paved roads became more comon, the federal government began a uniform system of numbering and marking highways that continues today. The Florida road between Ocala and Orlando was designated US 441 in 1926.

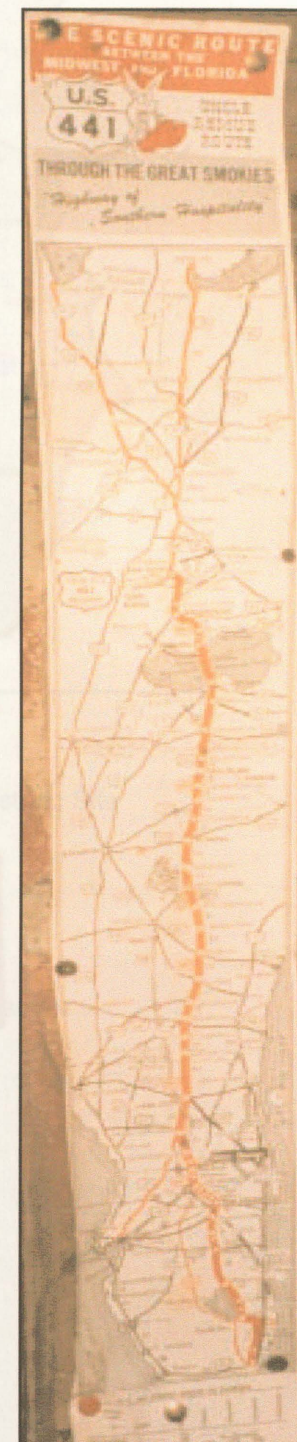
Reading a 1929 map, some of the Georgia routes are numbered, such as US 1 and US 41. However, the southern section from Dublin to the Florida line is still not connected. There were other routes connecting southern towns, but none on the route of what would become US 441.

In the early 1920's the federal government offered matching grants to pay for highway construction. Poor, rural, states, including Georgia, did not benefit from these funds because they had no means of raising the match. Instead, roads were paid for by automobile and gasoline taxes, and by individual counties. In the mid-1920's, the Georgia State Good Roads Association lobbied for road paving bond referendums. These bonds provided millions of dollars and, by 1932, three north-south highways were completely paved through Georgia.

US 441 HISTORY

From 1914 on, communities along US 441 had witnessed and been inspired by the Dixie Highway success story of bringing travellers, and economic development to Florida. Representatives from these communities gathered to discuss naming the route - US 441 - that connected their towns. They lobbied the US legislature for such a designation, and the "Uncle Remus Route" was designated. It received its name by authority of the Joel Chandler Harris heirs since it passes through Eatonton, the birthplace of the famous creator of the Uncle Remus stories. The US Highway 441 Association, formed in 1947, sponsored this highway.

In September of 1948, "The Uncle Remus Route" extending from Lake City, Florida to Cornelia, Georgia, was officially numbered; it was designated as US 441. This designation was an extension of the federally designated US 441 which had, until that time, began in Orlando, Florida and ended at High Springs, Florida. The extension to the Florida/Georgia state line was recommended by the Florida Highway authorities and the extension to Cornelia in North Georgia was recommended by the Georgia authorities. In Cornelia, US 441 joined with US 23 heading north. By 1952 maps, the current US 441 swath through Georgia is clearly defined, from North Carolina to Florida and beyond in both directions.

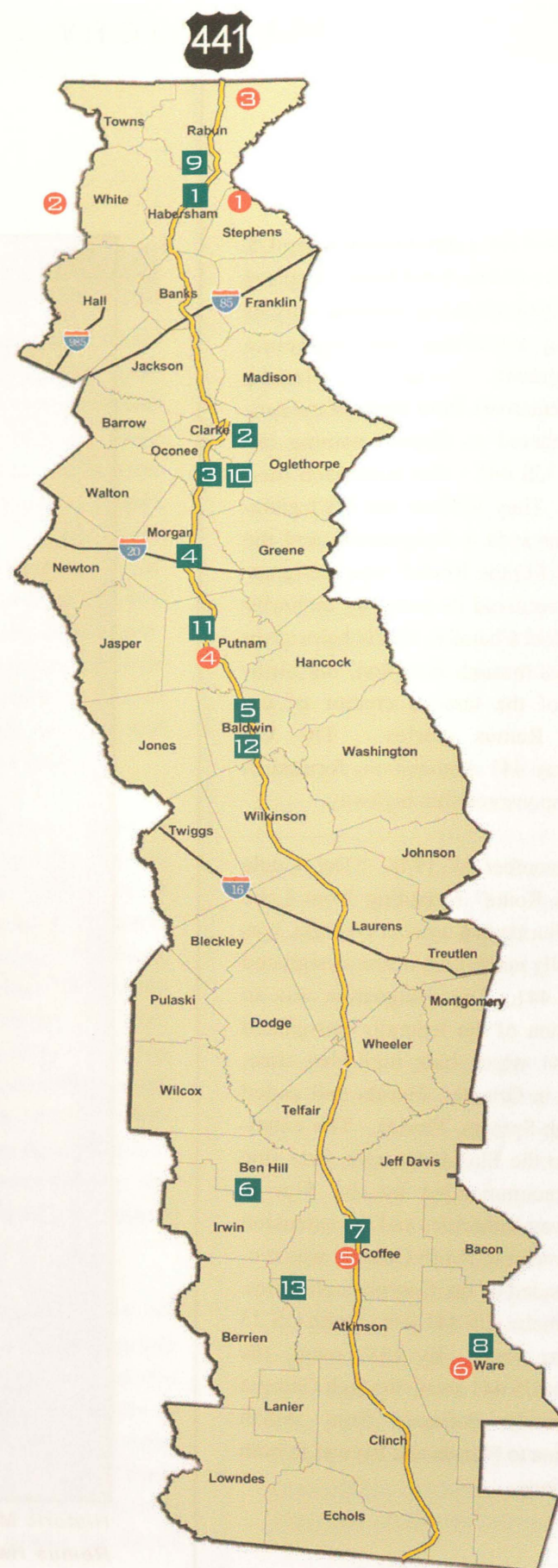


Historic Map of Uncle Remus Hwy

Highway 441

slice of georgia

observations



HISTORIC RESOURCES

National

National Register Historic Districts

- 1 Demorest Commercial H.D.
- 2 Downtown Athens/Milledge Ave. H.D.
- 3 Watkinsville H.D.
- 4 Downtown Madison H.D.
- 5 Milledgeville H.D.
- 6 Fitzgerald Commercial H.D.
- 7 Downtown Douglas H.D.
- 8 Downtown Waycross H.D.

National Register Historic Sites

- 9 Glen-Ella Springs Hotel
-Turnerville
- 10 Elder's Mill Covered Bridge
-Watkinsville
- 11 Rock Eagle
-Eatonton
- 12 Old State Capital/Governor's Mansion
-Milledgeville
- 13 McCranie's Turpentine Still
-Willacoochee

State and Other

State Park Historic Sites

- 14 Travelers Rest Historic Site
- 15 Dahlonega Gold Museum Historic Site

Historic Museums

- 16 Foxfire Museum
-Mountain City
- 17 Uncle Remus Museum
-Eatonton
- 18 Douglas Heritage Station Museum
-Douglas
- 19 Obediah's Okefenok
-Waycross

Highway 441

slice of georgia

natural resources

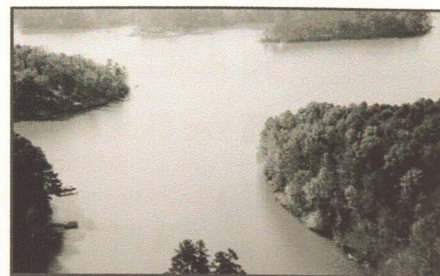
land and water

The US 441 Heritage Highway is blessed with a diversity of natural systems and features. The corridor traverses the state's three largest physiographic provinces - the Blue Ridge Mountains, piedmont and coastal plain - showcasing Georgia's geology, hydrology and natural vegetation. Recreational opportunities abound in this setting of mountains, forests, rivers, fields, and swamps. National forests, national wildlife refuges, a national monument and a national conservation reserve join with ten (soon eleven) state parks to provide access to varied recreational opportunities (see map, p. 43).

geology

The geologic history of Georgia is as varied as its landscapes. Over hundreds of millions of years the landform encompassing the State of Georgia had been submerged under great seas, dotted with volcanic eruptions, and uplifted with the collision of shifting tectonic plates. More recently (last 100 millions years), the landform as we know it began to take shape. As recently as fifty million years ago the edge of the sea extended to what is now the present fall line and covered

the lower third of the state. Erosion of the once mighty Appalachian Mountains provided the sediment to form today's coastal plain and continental shelf. During the last two million years fluctuations in the continental ice sheet has caused a series of sea level rises and retreats giving shape and definition to Georgia's sea islands and the Florida Peninsula.



Lake Oconee

hydrology

Georgia has a wealth of rivers, lakes and man-made reservoirs to support both the recreational and hydro-electric needs of the region. See map, pages 45- 46. Runoff from the mountains and foothills forms most of the river patterns throughout the state. Rivers on the eastern side of the state flow to the Atlantic Ocean and include the Savannah, Ogeechee, Oconee, Ocmulgee, Altamaha and Satilla Rivers. Western Georgia rivers flow south and southwestward to the Gulf of Mexico. These rivers include waters in the Chattahoochee and Flint River watersheds. Smaller, spring-fed streams and creeks originate in the North Georgia mountains and fall rapidly toward the piedmont, creating

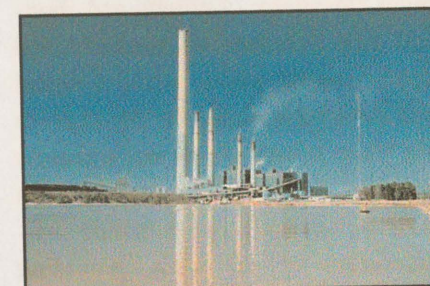
GEOLOGY & HYDROLOGY

good habitat for trout and other freshwater stream fish. Both the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River and the Chattahoochee River offer opportunities for whitewater tubing, rafting and kayaking. Slower rivers of the coastal plain offer recreational opportunities for paddling and wildlife viewing. Most of the major rivers of the piedmont have undergone extensive transformation by being dammed. The purpose is to create water reservoirs to fuel hydropower for an ever-expanding human population. Lake Burton and Lake Rabun, both managed by Georgia Power for hydro-electric needs and recreation, are nestled in the North Georgia mountains.

The Oconee River, which parallels US 441 from Athens down to McRae in Telfair County, is used for hydro-electric power by the building of Wallace Dam to form two giant reservoirs - Lake Oconee and Lake Sinclair. Named after Cyrus M. Wallace, a former Executive Vice President of Georgia Power, who owns and maintains the lakes, the dam stretches for 2,800 ft and rises 125 ft in height. Lake Oconee, created by the dam in 1979, is located in four counties - Morgan, Putnam, Hancock, and Greene. Lake Oconee is the second largest lake in Georgia with over 19,000 surface acres and over 370 miles of shoreline. The lake is long and narrow, reaching a mile at its widest point. It is fed by the Oconee River, the Apalachee River and Richland Creek.

Lake Sinclair lies just south, the two separated only by the dam. Located in three counties - Baldwin, Hancock and Putnam, it was created in 1953 when the Oconee River was dammed by the Sinclair Dam to create a 45,000-kilowatt hydroelectric generating station. The dam is approximately 3,000 feet long and 105 feet high. The surface area of Lake Sinclair covers 15,000 surface acres, but it has over 400 miles of shoreline with a maximum water depth of 90 feet. The lake is fed by several creeks and rivers: Beaverdam, Crooked, Rooty, Sandy Run, Shoulder Bone, Potatoe, Island, Rocky, Nancy Branch, and Reedy Branch. Lake Oconee serves as a pump-back reservoir for Lake Sinclair. At night the water is pumped from Lake Sinclair back over the Wallace Dam into Lake Oconee, and then is released in the morning hours to flow once again into Lake Sinclair.

On the banks of Lake Sinclair just north of Milledgeville, US 441 passes by Plant Branch, a large, coal-fired power plant with four electricity-generating units (a unit includes a boiler, turbine and generator). Operational



Powerplant on Lake Sinclair



Wiregrass and Pines

since 1965, Plant Branch now provides up to 1,540 megawatts of electricity, enough to power about 192,375 homes on an average day.

vegetation

While pine is the dominant vegetation type throughout the state of Georgia, it exists in plant communities reflective of the area's topographic, soil and climatic characteristics. In the north, pine shares its dominance with oak-hickory forests at high elevations and mixed deciduous forests at lower piedmont elevations. Loblolly and shortleaf pine dominate the piedmont and upper coastal plains while longleaf and slash pine occupy the fire-dependent lower coastal plains and wiregrass regions. Forests play a major role in both the aesthetic and economic characteristics of the state, providing

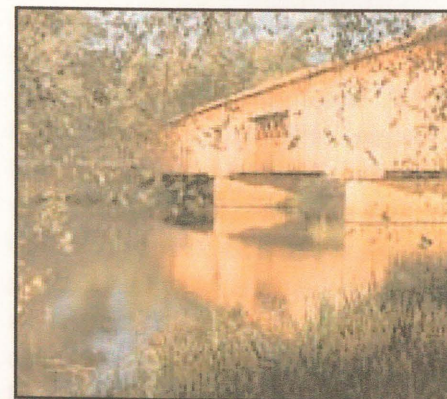
NATURAL

wildlife habitat, recreational lands and commercial forest products to the region.

national forests and wildlife refuges

Located in North Georgia, the Chattahoochee National Forest contains over 750,000 acres of forest land including both primitive and developed camp sites, hiking trails, picnic sites, and rivers, lakes and streams. Highway 441 travels through this national forest from Clarkesville to the North Carolina border. Sites of particular interest in the Chattahoochee National Forest include Anna Ruby Falls, the Chattooga Wild and Scenic River and the Chattahoochee River Recreation Area near the headwaters of the Chattahoochee River.

Oconee National Forest is located in the rolling piedmont of north-central Georgia near the towns of Grey, Eatonton, and Athens. This 113,000 acre forest contains access to both Lake Oconee and Lake Sinclair, two



Watson Mill State Park

VEGETATION

of Georgia's larger inland reservoirs. Also included in the Oconee National Forest is the Scull Shoals Historic Area - remnants of the once prosperous Scull Shoals community. Together, these two national forests contain more than 500 developed campsites, over 200 picnic areas, 10 wilderness areas, 6 swimming beaches and more than 500 miles of trails.

In south Georgia, the Okefenokee



National Forest Sign

National Wildlife Refuge and Wilderness Area preserves and protects the flora and fauna of one of the nation's most intact wetland wilderness areas- the Okefenokee Swamp.



Broxton Rocks

national monument and conservation preserve

Ocmulgee National Monument and the Broxton Rocks Conservation Preserve represent two nationally recognized sites worth visiting while traveling the US 441 corridor. Ocmulgee National Monument is located just east of Macon and commemorates the historic and cultural settlement patterns of this area of the past 10,000 years. This 702-acre park features remnants of early temple-burial grounds, a reconstructed ceremonial earthen lodge, and other archaeological and historical artifacts. While Ocmulgee National Monument celebrates remnants of the area's cultural past, the Broxton Rocks Preserve protects the natural history of South Georgia by preserving the ecosystems adjacent to these rare sandstone rock outcrops. This 778-acre preserve is home to more than thirty species of rare plants and animals including stands of longleaf pine, pitcher plants and the eastern indigo snake.

NATURAL

state parks

US 441 presently contains ten state parks within its corridor boundaries, with an eleventh currently under construction. In addition, Stephen C. Foster State Park lies just outside the corridor in South Georgia, located adjacent to the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. These eleven state parks provide endless opportunities to observe and participate in Georgia's natural landscapes.

In the North Georgia Mountain Region, Black Rock Mountain State Park, Moccasin Creek State Park, and Tallulah Gorge State Park all take advantage of breathtaking vistas, sheer cliffs and clear mountain streams to entice the traveler to seek out these natural wonders. All three parks are ideal sites for mountain exploration.



Black Rock Mountain State Park

Four state parks lie in the piedmont section of Georgia. Victoria Bryant State Park is tucked in the rolling hills of the upper piedmont region and offers a nice transition to the lower piedmont parks. Fort Yargo State Park and Watson Mill Bridge State Park offer both scenic vistas and historic structures, with Watson Mill having the longest original-site covered bridge in Georgia. Hard Labor Creek State Park offers a variety of recreational amenities including one of the state's best public golf courses. In addition, this park offers lakes, trails and campgrounds including 12 equestrian campsites.

In South Georgia, three state parks lie within a stone's throw of the US 441 highway. Little Ocmulgee State Park is located just outside McRae and sports a championship golf course, as well as a buzzard rookery. Outside Douglas, General Coffee State Park

STATE PARKS



Golfing at Little Ocmulgee State Park

focuses on interpreting the agricultural heritage of the region and is complete with tobacco barns and cane mills in the Heritage Farm area of the park. Okefenokee State Park (currently under construction) and Stephen C. Foster State Park serve as gateways to the Great Okefenokee Swamp. Both parks celebrate the tannin-stained rivers and swamps of South Georgia and provide protected habitat to some of the area's most interesting and endangered plant and animal species.

Individually, these 11 state parks offer an abundance of recreational opportunities and resources to the state and its citizens. Collectively, this string of parks has a special relationship to the 441 corridor. Each park helps to identify and interpret the region's natural diversity and unique natural features. Together, these parks help us comprehend the incredible wealth of natural resources available as one travels the length of the state.



Okefenokee State Park

Highway 441

slice of georgia

observations



NATURAL RESOURCES - LAND

National Resources

National Forest

- 1 -Chattahoochee N.F.
- 2 -Oconee N.F.

National Wildlife Refuge

- 3 -Piedmont N.W.R.
- 4 -Okefenokee N.W.R.

National Monument

- 5 -Ocmulgee National Monument
- 6 -Broxton Rocks

National Conservation Preserve

- (Nature Conservancy)

State Resources

State Parks

- 1 -Black Rock Mountain S.P.
- 2 -Moccasin Creek S.P.
- 3 -Tallulah Gorge S.P.
- 4 -Fort Yargo S.P.
- 5 -Victoria Bryant S.P.
- 6 -Watson Mill Bridge S.P.
- 7 -Hard Labor Creek S.P.
- 8 -Little Ocmulgee S.P.
- 9 -General Coffee S.P.
- 10 -Okefenokee S.P.
- (Under Construction)
- 11 -Stephen C. Foster S.P.

Highway 441

slice of georgia

Highway 441

slice of georgia

observations



NATURAL RESOURCES - WATER

Water Resources

Rivers

- 1 -Chattooga River
- 2 -Chattahoochee River
- 3 -Oconee River
- 4 -Apalachee River
- 5 -Ocmulgee River
- 6 -Satilla River
- 7 -Suwanee River

Lakes

- 1 -Lake Burton
- 2 -Lake Oconee
- 3 -Lake Sinclair

Wetlands

- 1 -Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge

Highway 441

slice of georgia

cultural

traditions

The last century- especially the last 50 years - has brought massive global changes in transportation and communication. These changes have affected the US 441 Corridor, also. People in this day and age can travel, communicate and move goods and information with an ease unimaginable even a few decades ago. A side effect of this has been a slow blending and homogenizing of state, national, and global cul-



Historic Downtown Athens

tures. Cultural diversity and preservation of local culture is valuable and needed. It links us to our past, and maintains a sense of identity.

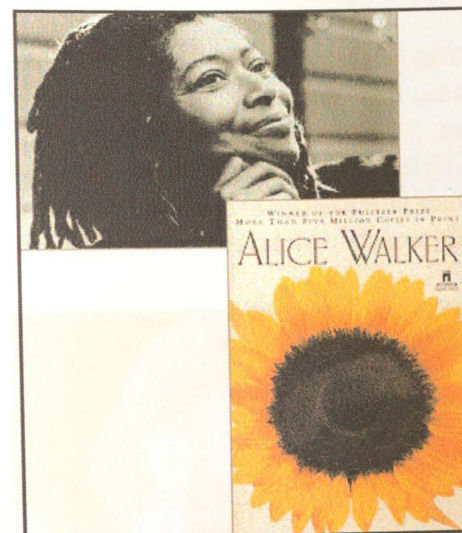
local culture

Unique stories, traditions and arts define local culture. Changes are inevitable through time. Transportation and communication are increasingly shifting the economic base of a community. This can influence cultural practices. Despite changes, there are many practices which persist. Conscious attention and support of their maintenance is necessary. Just as important is the preservation of the cultural artifacts of our past.

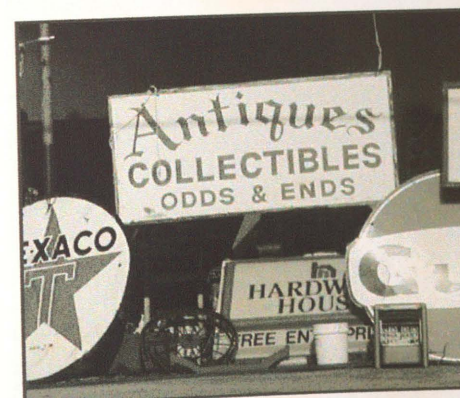
PRESERVING LOCAL CULTURE

cultural tourism

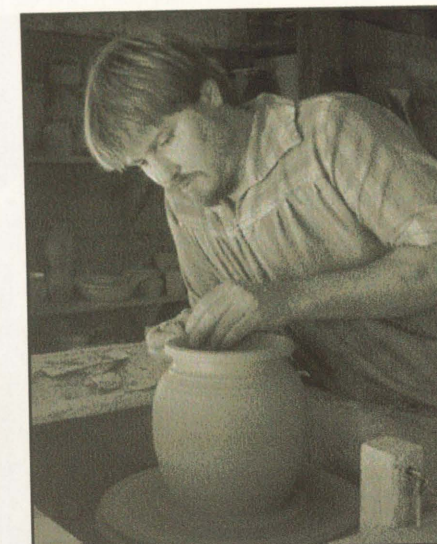
Tourism can be an excellent way to preserve local culture while creating new economic opportunities, hence providing multiple benefits to a community. Tourism can function in three ways: showcasing local culture, as an economic development tool and as a means of fostering community pride in their unique heritage.



Local Celebrities: Alice Walker



Antique Store



Local Arts and Crafts

In the year 2000, tourism was a 16.1 billion dollar industry in Georgia, and has since been growing steadily. Much of this revenue was collected from a growing number of tourists interested in cultural exploration. In the 1992 Harris poll for Travel and Leisure Magazine, tourists were asked, "What is very important to you when planning trips?" Over 50% responded: "visiting cultural, historical and archaeological treasures." This showed a significant increase over a similar poll conducted 10 years earlier. Additionally, over 80% of people polled described their primary travel motive as "to understand culture." The trend in tourism is moving away from an emphasis on escapism and amusement and toward authenticity. The increase in cultural tourism is integrally linked with preservation, promotion, and fostering the awareness of local cultural practices and history.

Tourism Trends:

The trend in tourism is moving away from an emphasis on escapism and amusement and rather toward authenticity and experience.

CULTURAL

441 inventory

The communities along the US 441 Heritage Highway are rich in local culture. Successes in cultural tourism are already evident. The mountains are known for their arts, crafts and music; the piedmont for its historic architecture and the arts; and the plains for its agrarian traditions.

Foxfire, a mountain heritage and craft museum hosting several special events and festivals each year, is the centerpiece of the region. Other mountain festivals showcase local flora such as the Mountain Laurel Festival in Clarkesville or the Dahlonega

Mountain Folk /Wildflower Festival. For something truly unique, Helen hosts an annual Hot-Air-Balloon Race that reaches all the way to the Atlantic. What a way to see the mountains!

Food is a great festival theme. Cornelia takes advantage of this fact with the Big Red Apple Festival each fall. An extra benefit for festival-goers is the autumn foliage showcase happening at the same time.

The Piedmont region loves to showcase their artistry with festivals such as Southworks in Watkinsville and Athfest in Athens. Historic architecture, a mainstay of heritage tourism, is proudly celebrated with tours of



Local Music: Athfest in Athens

CULTURAL INVENTORY



Local Parades and Cultural Events, St. Patrick's Day Parade in Dublin

homes in Madison, Athens, and Milledgeville. Local cultural pride is also seen in such events as Dublin's St. Patrick's Day Festival. Athens brings the cycling world to its downtown each spring for the Twilight Criterium bike races, truly a spectacle for the thousands who crowd the fast turns.

The coastal plains love to show off their agrarian hospitality and food with festivals. The Vidalia Onion Festival, Georgia Catfish Festival, and the Annual Blueberry Festival are all good examples. Agrarian life is the central theme for Alma's Georgia Farm Show, while tiny Hazelhurst hosts the Altamaha Wilderness Adventure Challenge for visitors from near and far.

Councils / Foundations

Non-profit and publicly-funded arts councils and coalitions act to provide funding, promotion and other assistance to the arts. These are not directly tied to tourism, but can be used to bolster arts, crafts and other local cultural events and groups. Many such councils and foundations which already exist can be used as a direct resource or as a model for similar organizations. Some examples include Georgia Council for the Arts, South Georgia Folklife Project, Southern Arts Federation, and Georgia Humanities Council.

Highway 441

slice of georgia

observations



FESTIVALS, FAIRS, AND EVENTS

History & Nostalgia

- 1 Garden Tour of Athens
-Athens
- 2 Madison in May-Spring Tour of Homes
-Madison
- 3 Eatonton Tour of Homes
-Eatonton
- 4 Old Clinton War Days
-Clinton
- 5 1890 Homestead Celebration/Farm City Day
-Hazlehurst
- 6 Wild Chicken Festival
-Fitzgerald
- 7 Antique, Craft, & Collectible Extravaganza
-Douglas
- 8 Georgia Farm Show
-Alma

Arts & Culture

- 1 Foxfire Community Celebration
-Mountain City (May)
- 2 Mountain Laurel Festival
-Clarksville
- 3 Helen to Atlantic Hot-Air-Balloon Race
-Helen (May)
- 4 Mountain Folk Festival/Wildflower Festival
-Dahlonega (April/May)
- 5 Athfest
-Athens (June)
- 6 Southworks Art Festival
-Watkinsville (May)
- 7 Southland Jubilee
-Greensboro (April)
- 8 Cow & Horse Show
-Madison (May)
- 9 Native American Festival/Fiesta Day
-Eatonton (April/May)
- 10 Arts & Letters Festival
-Milledgeville (April)
- 11 Fall Harvest Festival
-Sandersville (September)
- 12 St. Patrick's Festival
-Dublin (March)
- 13 Georgia's Farm Show
-Alma (January)
- 14 Douglas Chautauqua
-Douglas (April)
- 15 Festival of Colors
-Waycross (April)

Highway 441

slice of georgia

Highway 441

slice of georgia

observations



FESTIVALS, FAIRS, AND EVENTS

Food

- 1 Bluegrass BBQ Cookoff
-Dillard (July)
- 2 Winefest
-Helen (May)
- 3 Big Red Apple Festival
-Cornelia (October)
- 4 Classic City Brewfest
-Athens (April)
- 5 Taste of Madison
-Madison (March)
- 6 Dairy Festival
-Eatonton (June)
- 7 Georgia Catfish Festival
-Wrightsville
- 8 Vidalia Onion Festival
-Vidalia (May)
- 9 Annual Blueberry Festival
-Alma (May)

Competitions & Other

- 1 Energy Conservation Exposition
-Helen (March)
- 2 Northeast Georgia Antique Car Show
-Clarksville
- 3 NHRA Southern Nations
-Commerce (May)
- 4 Twilight Criterium/Great Southland Rodeo
-Athens
- 5 Corvette Auto Show
-Madison (May)
- 6 Shadydale Rodeo
-Shadydale/Jasper County
- 7 Altamaha Wilderness Adventure Challenge
-Hazlehurst

Highway 441

slice of georgia

Scenic resources reflect shared images of what is special or unique about a region's landscape, and establishing these collective community values is essential to ultimately making sound protection decisions.

- David Copps, Views From the Road

scenic value

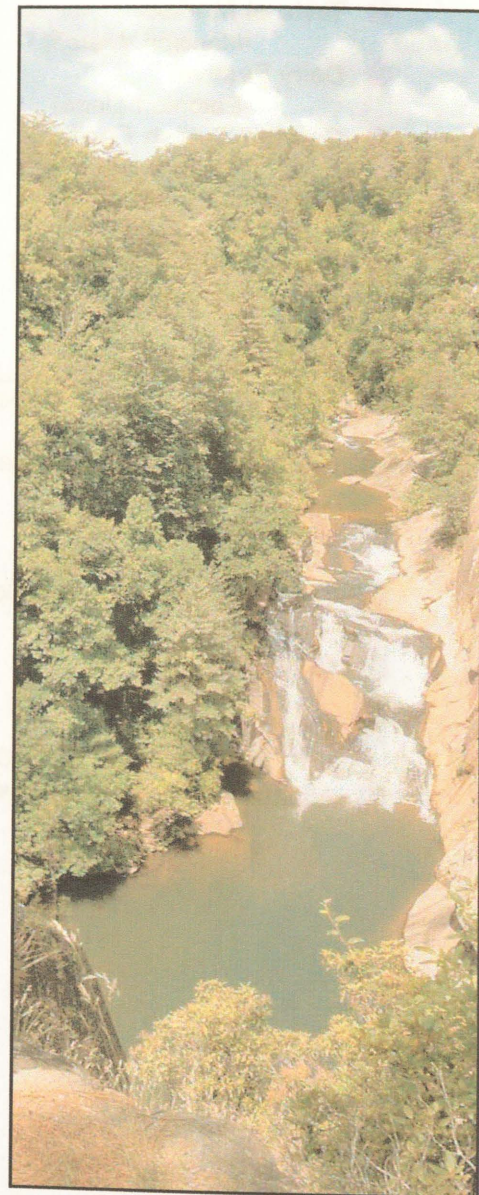
views along the way

US 441 owes much of its unique character to the scenic elements that line the road all the way from the mountains in the north to the Okefenokee Swamp in the southern part of the state. Determining exactly what is scenic - and what is not scenic - is important as part of an overall plan to preserve and enhance the road corridor.

When we look at a landscape, what we are really seeing is a combination of line, form, color, texture and composition. Stephen and Rachel Kaplan, in their book Cognition and Environment, identify four qualities which contribute to making a landscape that is both visually appealing and memorable. These qualities are: mystery, complexity, coherence, and legibility. Variety, vividness, unity, uniqueness, pattern, and balance are some more examples of desirable features which help set apart a beautiful scene from one that is jarring or simply mundane.

Public road corridors are important because this is the main view from which many people experience rural landscapes. Conducting an invento-

ry of the scenic resources along the road is an important part of an overall resources inventory and can help guide future preservation efforts.



Tallulah River

THE VISUAL EXPERIENCE



View from 441 Near Homer

mountains

It can be useful to begin by examining some of the more successful scenes that can be found along US 441. The Tallulah Gorge area is one example of a great place to find magnificent views. The dramatic cliffs, along with the striking combination of rocks, water, and trees, have a vividness and visual variety that makes the area stand out. Tourists as well as outdoor enthusiasts come to the North Georgia Mountains simply to enjoy the natural beauty. Keeping these natural resources and special views intact is therefore economically important, since tourism is a large source of income for many mountain towns. An especially important consideration in the mountains is protecting the ridgeline views. Mountaintops and ridges are part of the shared scenery of a region and many people value a distant view of tree-covered slopes outlined against the sky. Views are spoiled when developers clear trees and build near or on the ridgelines, and it disrupts everyone's view of the mountain for miles around. It is therefore important to prevent distant view of mountain development. This can be accomplished through careful

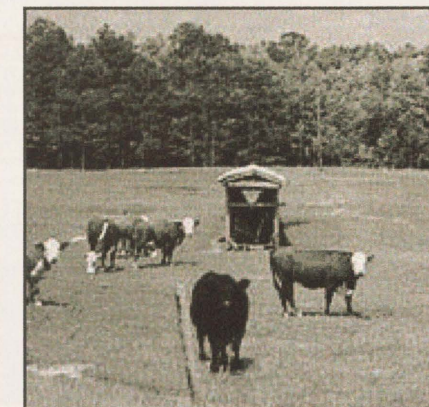
siting. Setting guidelines that prohibit building above certain elevations may help prevent inappropriate development. This can assist in maintaining a scenic viewshed for the 441 traveler.



Sunflowers Irwinton to Dublin

agriculture

Agricultural views are a significant visual resource throughout the entire US 441 corridor. The openness of a cow pasture or a field filled with hay bales provides a welcome break from



Cattle Pasture

SCENIC VALUE

a tree-lined road or strip development. The repetition of cows or hay bales gives the fields a coherence and visual unity that makes them appealing.

Small farms, in particular, can be especially scenic. Farmland protection strategies should be adopted to make it economically possible for people to continue farming. Farm assistance is especially critical as land prices and development pressures increase. In addition to their pastoral beauty, they often offer a glimpse of the past. Some of the



Pecan Orchard

farm buildings may be centuries-old, and both the farming methods and the chosen crops can have links to the specific history of the area.



Putnam County Courthouse

historic structures

Historic buildings, structures, and objects are all visual resources that contribute to the overall experience of driving along US 441. Many of the small

towns along the road have historic courthouses and compact downtowns with interesting shops to browse in. Some towns, such as Madison and Milledgeville, have a large number of antebellum homes, which tourists enjoy seeing. When conducting a visual inventory of a town or a specific area, it is a good idea to document all the his-

THE BUILT ENVIRONMENT

toric structures. This can include, but is not limited to structures such as barns, sheds, schoolhouses, canals, windmills, bridges, and buildings. Also, it is important not to limit the inventory only to what is "beautiful." Dilapidated buildings or a scraggly field probably don't fit most people's idea of "scenic," yet they may still be prominent visual features that convey a sense of the local history.

roadside stands

Roadside stands are another visual feature that people enjoy seeing as they drive along the road. People scattered along US 441 have set up stands to sell all sorts of items, including produce, boiled peanuts, jam, and pecans. These home-grown businesses usually have hand-painted signs and represent part of the unique local character in a way that fast-food restaurants and chain stores simply do not. Such stands are an example of a positive human element in the visual landscape, showing that built structures



Fresh Produce Stand



Pine Forest

and human activity can have a scenic value just as significant, in its own way, as a pristine natural area.

Highway 441

slice of georgia

observations

SCENIC VALUE

places for improvement

Although much of the historic character of Georgia has been preserved along US 441, some elements along the road are distracting. The improvement or removal of these elements can enhance the corridor.

billboards & strip malls

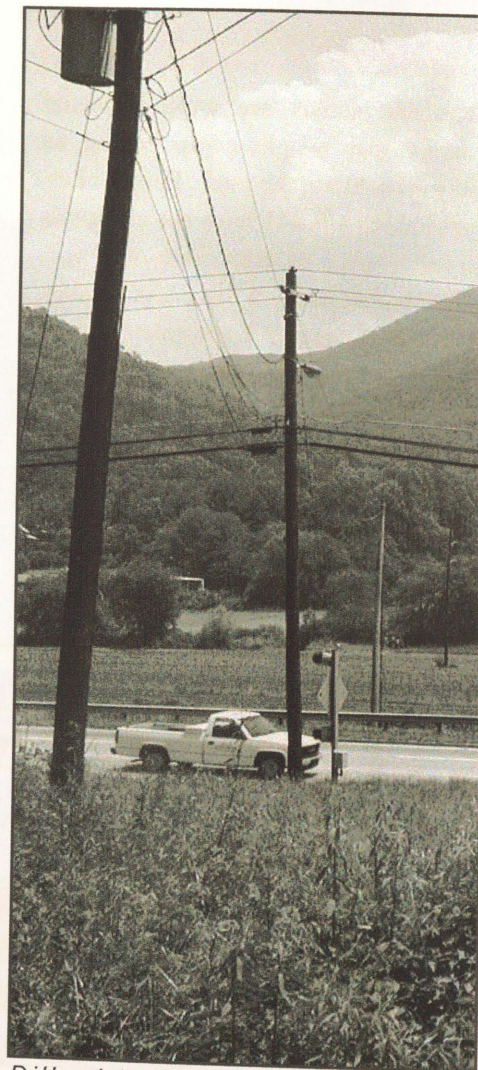
The large number of billboards and strip malls along the road has a major impact on scenic quality. An example of this can be seen at the intersection of I-85 and US 441 in Commerce, Georgia. Chain restaurants, billboards and parking lots dominate the scene. A lack of trees and an overload of visual clutter creates a jarring experience, especially at night with the profusion of lighting (see the Signage section in Part III- Recommendations for a discussion of billboard controls).

gas stations

Gas stations are necessary, but they often detract from an otherwise scenic place. Abandoned gas stations, especially historic ones, are prime targets for restoration and adaptive reuse. As such, they and could once again contribute to the scenic value of the highway. Likewise, new stations would benefit from better design, siting, and landscaping to blend in with the existing sense of place.

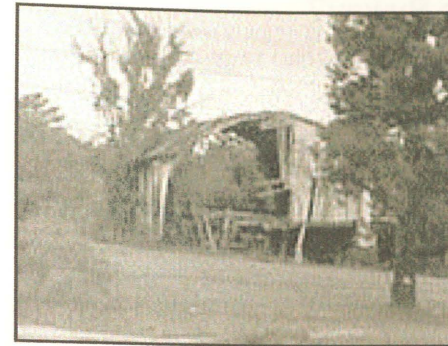


Commerce



Dillard to Clayton

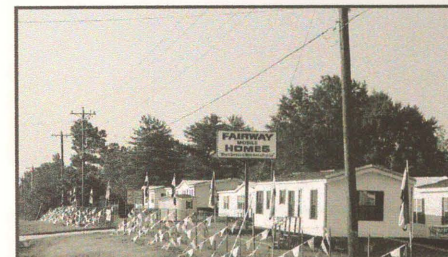
PLACES FOR IMPROVEMENT



Collapsing Building

damaged structures

Historic structures which are severely damaged can be considered scenic. Unfortunately, some are so badly damaged that they detract from the scenic view. These do offer prime opportunities for preservation, restoration and adaptive reuse. Before beginning a restoration project, it is usually necessary to have a professional assess the building to see if it is structurally sound and if it is worth restoring.



Pre-fab Homes for Sale

mobile and pre-fab homes

Mobile homes and trailers are a common sight all along US 441. In limited numbers, and with proper site planning, these need not detract from the surrounding scenery. Because mobile home sales yards want their products

to be visible, there is typically no buffer between the sales yard and the highway. Sales visibility and scenic value are not mutually exclusive: Signage guidelines and careful visual planting buffers can enhance the highway experience while maintaining visual prominence for the business.

medians

Landscaped medians need careful attention. Ideally, medians should separate the two roads with vertical elements to block oncoming headlights and assist in avoiding traffic accidents. The most obvious of those is plantings, including small trees, shrubs and meadows. The style of planting could be either a formal, informal, or a natural treatment. It is best to use native plants whenever possible. Being well adapted to their region, native plants typically require minimal maintenance. Additionally, they offer a natural expression of the unique regional eco-systems found along US 441. A simple and relatively low-cost approach would be to seed the median with wildflowers, creating a meadow effect. This is particularly suitable for a highway situation since the plants would not pose a safety hazard if a car were to accidentally cross into the median. Ornamental grasses can also be an elegant addition to a median design. In general, it is useful to keep in mind that countryside medians should be natural and more informal, while in-town medians should be more formal to reflect the arrival into an inhabited area.

Highway 441

slice of georgia

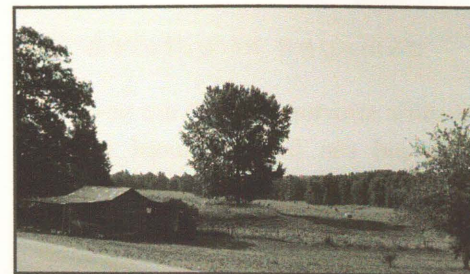
SCENIC VALUE

What is a Scenic Byway?

The National Scenic Byways program is a voluntary program to protect and promote America's scenic roads. States can participate by applying for funding, National Scenic Byway designations, or both. To be designated as a National Scenic Byway, a road or highway must significantly meet at least one of the six intrinsic qualities discussed below.

scenic

Scenic quality is the heightened visual experience derived from a view of natural or man-made visual elements in a road corridor. The characteristics of such a landscape are often strikingly distinct and offer a pleasing and memorable view.



441 Near Homerville

natural

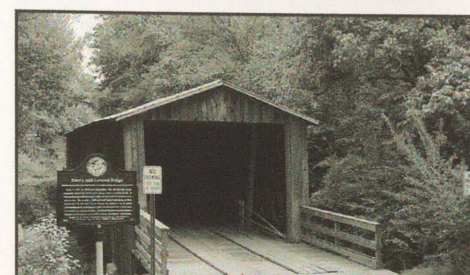
Natural quality encompasses those features in the landscape that are in a relatively undisturbed state. Examples include geological formations, fossils, landforms, bodies of water, vegetation, and wildlife.



Black Rock Mountain

historic

Historic quality represents legacies of the past that are distinctly associated with physical elements of the landscape, either natural or man-made. This may include buildings, settlement patterns and other examples of human activity.



Elders Mill Bridge: Watkinsville

SCENIC BYWAYS

...Foreigners don't want to waste time in the freeway-strip-mall-franchise-warehouse-outlet-lowrise-taco stand burger landscape of America that we all know and don't see as it spreads... They want to see the magnificent things in America. They want to see where the music comes from and where the books come from...

Garrison Keillor, *White House Conference on Travel and Tourism* in September, 1995

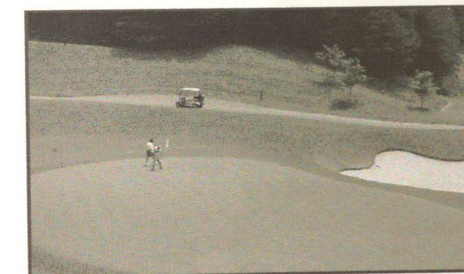
cultural



Foxfire Museum

Cultural quality refers to expressions of the customs of a distinct group of people. Examples of cultural features include crafts, music, dance, rituals, festivals, food and special events.

recreational



Kingswood Resort

Recreational quality encompasses outdoor recreation activities that are directly associated with and dependent upon the natural and cultural elements of a corridor's landscape. A few of the activities included in this group are skiing, rafting, boating, fishing and hiking.

archaeological



Rock Eagle Effigy

Archaeological quality involves physical evidence of historic or prehistoric human activity which is visible and capable of being inventoried and interpreted.

Examples:

Other examples of scenic byways in the Southeast include the Russell-Brasstown Scenic Byway in Georgia and the Cherokee Foothills Scenic Byway in South Carolina. The Russell Brasstown Scenic Byway is located in the Chattahoochee National Forest and winds its way through the green valleys and mountain gaps of the southern Appalachians. The Cherokee Foothills Scenic Byway passes through stream-laced foothills and the rugged Blue Ridge Mountains.



SCENIC RESOURCES

Established Scenic Resources

National

- 1 Russell-Brasstown Scenic Byway
- 2 Chattooga Wild and Scenic River

State

- 3 Monticello Crossroads Scenic Byway

Points of Scenic Interest

Mountain

- 1 Mountain City/Dillard
- 2 North of Clayton

Agricultural

- 3 North of Homer
- 4 South of Madison
- 5 North of Irwinton
- 6 South of McRae

Architectural

- 7 Madison
- 8 Milledgeville
- 9 Douglas

Water

- 10 Tallulah Gorge
- 11 Lake Sinclair
- 12 Ocmulgee River
- 13 Suwanee River

Highway 441

slice of georgia

observations



441 DESTINATIONS

Natural

- 1 Chattahoochee National Forest
-Rabun County
- 2 Whitewater Rafting on the Chattooga
-Clayton
- 3 Sky Valley Ski Resort
-Sky Valley
- 4 Tallulah Gorge
-Tallulah Falls
- 5 Anna Ruby Falls/Smithgall Woods
-Helen
- 6 State Botanical Garden of Georgia
-Athens
- 7 Oconee National Forest
-Jasper County
- 8 Lake Oconee
-Near Eatonton
- 9 Lake Sinclair
-Near Milledgeville
- 10 Altamaha and Ocmulgee Rivers
-Hazlehurst
- 11 Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge
-Fargo

Historic

- 1 Dahlonega Gold Museum
-Dahlonega
- 2 Foxfire Museum
-Mountain City
- 3 Uncle Remus Museum/Rock Eagle Effigy
-Eatonton
- 4 Georgia Museum of Art
-Athens
- 5 Old State Capital Building
-Milledgeville
- 6 Ocmulgee National Monument
-Macon
- 7 Obediah's Okefenok
-Waycross

Cultural

- 1 Habersham Winery
-Helen
- 2 Tanger Outlets/Atlanta Dragway
-Commerce

Highway 441

slice of georgia

Highway441
recommendations

r e c o m m e n d a t i o n s III

Highway 441
recommendations

...Thoroughfares commonly establish an image of the quality of life in the town for residents and visitors alike. Preservation of natural beauty is required to enhance trade, capital investment, tourism, and the general welfare.

-Introduction, Cary, NC Overlay District

corridor planning

vision and leadership

As stated earlier in this document, Georgia's US 441 is in a state of transition. As well as undergoing significant economic and demographic shifts, this historically two-lane, predominately rural road is being actively reconfigured as a four-lane transit corridor. These looming changes bring the very real potential for both positive and negative ramifications for both the communities and the people along US 441.

future vision

As growth and development come to cities and counties along the US 441 corridor, it is vital that local residents take a hard look at how they envision their future, and the future of their communities. By 2025, population projections predict that Georgia will be the 9th most populous state in the nation, with 9.9 million people. Georgia will also rank fourth nationally in terms of net population gain. These increases will likely bring growth and change to all regions of the state, including along US 441, and it is up to those regions to make decisions now that will dictate what their communities will look like in the future.



Rural Road

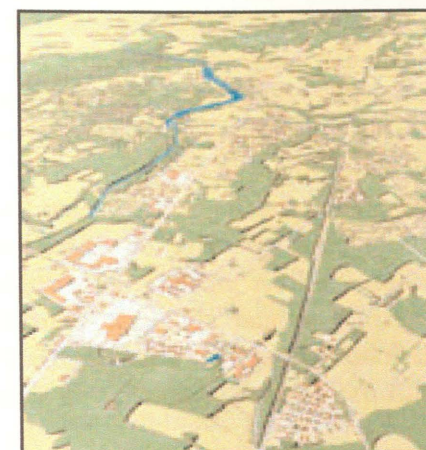
appropriate growth

Most Georgians would probably agree that a desirable transportation plan would be one that moves people and goods efficiently, strengthens the economy, protects the environment, and enhances quality of life. These goals are not mutually exclusive, nor are they beyond reach. Yet to realize them, active efforts to plan for the future, both locally and regionally, must be made. A great many municipalities and regions across America are taking part in efforts to strategize for the appropriate growth and character of their roadways as well as their communities. The partisan voices of farmland conservationists, economic development proponents, historic preservationists, tourism boosters, community residents, and environmental interests are beginning to recognize that their goals are not as disparate as was once thought. In mapping out a growth and land-use plan, preferably through an inclusive public process,

APPROPRIATE GROWTH



Planning Meeting



Rural Land Plan



Sign Sprawl

development can be accommodated, economic vitality sustained, and quality of life retained.

There is a growing awareness that land-use decisions affect transportation needs, and transportation improvements, in turn, affect land-use decisions. Freeway interchanges and arterial road junctions have become focal points for new shopping centers, industrial parks, and office complexes. Urban and suburban roadways are lined with strips of roadside development. Consequently, an area's natural and scenic beauty, as well as its cultural and historic assets, is greatly diminished. These losses are also reflected in economic terms, especially if they cause a decrease in quality of life or tourism. Open space preservation is not founded simply on nostalgia for an agrarian past, or a preference for wilderness areas. Rather,

Highway 441

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recommendations

CORRIDOR PLANNING

as many communities are discovering, the impacts of land use and transportation patterns are bound inexorably with issues of quality of life and economic vitality. Developing tools to guide growth is essential for these reasons.

scenic byway designation

The Georgia Scenic Byways Program was recently established in this state by the Georgia Department of Transportation. The purpose of the Byways Program is to identify and designate particular roads or highways which have intrinsic qualities that should be protected or enhanced. While natural areas are generally associated with the "Scenic" designation, the program equally represents cultural, archaeological, historic, and recreational

features along roadways. Roads which have this designation not only allow for the preservation and display of these "intrinsic qualities," but also allow for unique economic development opportunities along the highway. Along Scenic Routes, the road itself is considered a destination to travelers, who come to find the "real Georgia" off the interstates. Scenic Byway designation carries with it state recognition, interpretive signage and other assistance, a community-developed corridor growth plan, promotion and marketing, and technical assistance. The US 441 corridor recently received State House designation as a Heritage Highway, being "one of the few areas remaining in the United States where there are miles of scenic landscapes, historic small towns, cultural experiences, and abundant recreation facilities" (from House Resolution 272, 6/21/01). This accomplishment clearly



Cluttered Highway View

SCENIC BY WAYS

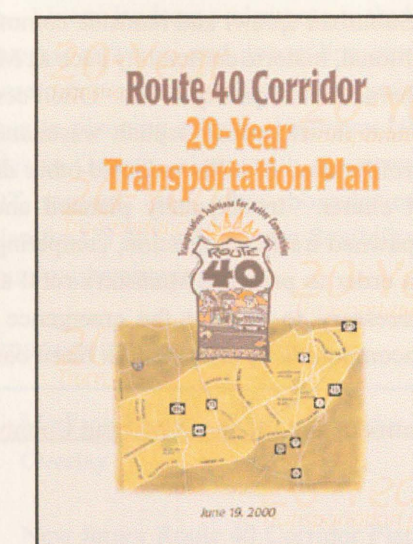


Two-lane Road

demonstrates the potential for scenic highway designation.

This designation is one of the best tools for maintaining and promoting the existing visual historic and cultural qualities of the 441 highway, while allowing the newly widened corridor to function for commercial transport of goods. It is important to remember that communities and stakeholders themselves will actually develop the corridor management growth plan which envisions and structures the future of their towns and counties. It is recommended that communities along US 441 work together to explore the potential for scenic byway designation. In the absence of such collaboration, these communities should at least pursue similar goals within the current Heritage Highway designation framework. Joining together to establish a corridor management

plan is the best way to ensure that the future of the valuable "slice of Georgia" unfolds according to the vision of the people who inhabit it.



Delaware Highway Corridor Plan

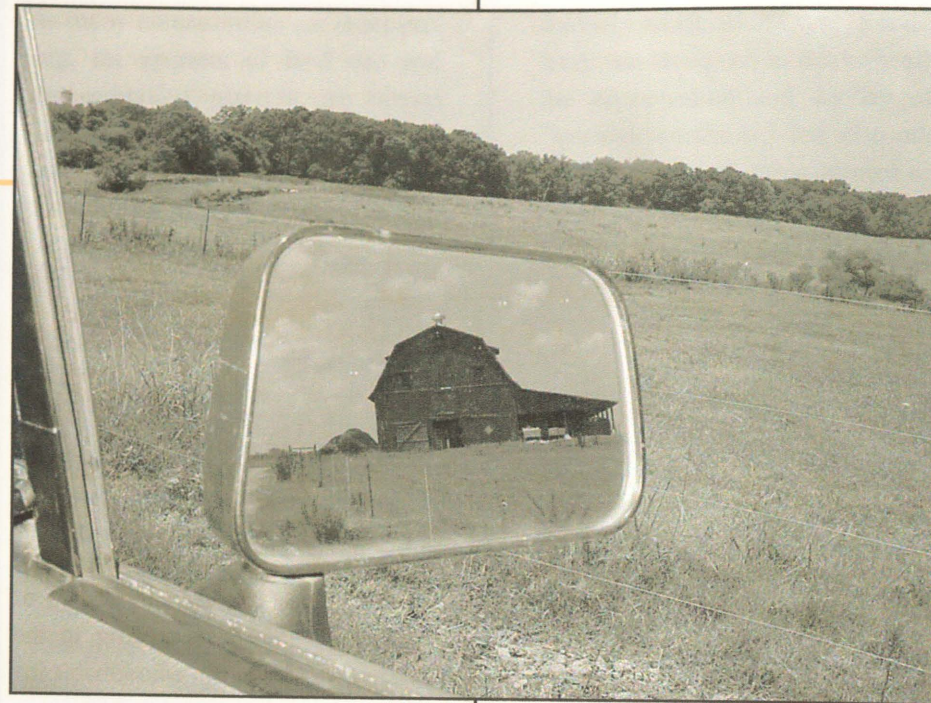
Highway 441

slice of georgia

Recommendation:

It is recommended that communities along US 441 work together to explore the potential for scenic byway designation.

CORRIDOR PLANNING



Roadside Barn

"Suburban sprawl and roadside commercial developments, when set into a traditional, historic community such as Madison, have a devastating effect on town character and quality of life. Often conventional development patterns produce linear development, asphalt wastelands, harsh and glaring light levels, and a proliferation of billboards and other distracting signage, along with other visual clutter. Inadequately planned and regulated strip development has also spawned traffic congestion, competing signage, and incompatible architecture. In order to preserve Madison's rural ambience and historic nature, guidance is necessary to prevent the emergence and expansion of continuous strips of incompatible development in these corridors".

Introduction, Madison-Morgan County Overlay Document

CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT PLANS

zoning

Zoning divides land into discrete areas, designating the type of use to occur in each area. Typically, a zoning plan distinguishes industry, residential, commercial, and agricultural uses. Zoning plans can be loosely worded along general usage patterns, or they can be quite detailed, describing building design details and parking space requirements. Cities and larger towns, by necessity, generally describe land use requirements in greater detail than rural areas. Often, citizens of rural communities have grown up with a closer connection to their land and property, and have evolved a strong sense

of personal stewardship towards the land. For this reason, zoning regulations - which often are generated "top-down," can be considered an infringement of property rights, and can readily inflame local opposition to even general zone mapping. Second, it is frequently antithetical to rural communities who have been economically bypassed for several generations to consider growth and development as something necessitating control of any kind. These factors must be considered when attempting to suggest or implement traditional zoning as a land planning tool in rural communities. Despite this, a great many towns, particularly those for whom tourism is a

Tools for Corridor Management

A corridor management plan refers to a land use strategy for future growth along a linear structure in a landscape. Linear landscape elements include rivers, roadways, greenways, trail networks, railways, and power-line cuts. Because they typically cut through numerous properties and regional jurisdictions, they present a greater challenge to planning efforts. Highway US 441 itself traverses 18 different counties in Georgia, along with numerous towns, development districts, GDOT regions, and other boundaries. Developing a comprehensive growth plan for US 441 will require flexibility, context-sensitive guidelines, and community planning input.

For examples of corridor management plans, see:

Cary, North Carolina Overlay District

Madison-Morgan County Corridor Overlay

Georgia 400 Corridor Study:
Department of Community Affairs

New Jersey Route 40 Corridor Plan

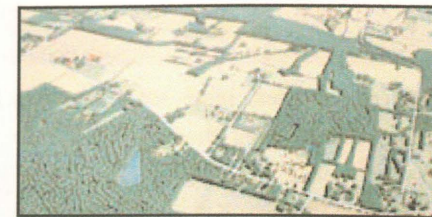
CORRIDOR PLANNING

source of revenue, are recognizing that zoning is a potent tool for protecting the cultural, historic and environmental resources which give their towns a unique character and enhanced quality of life, as Georgia moves into the 21st century.

Zoning is not retroactive- it does not affect existing land uses. Thus the importance of establishing zoning in undeveloped areas is acute. Much of the US 441 corridor still exists as open land and scenic vistas, free from the "quickie-marts" and national fast-food franchises which dominate the interstates of "Anywhere, USA", and deprive small towns and local business owners of revenue. There are traditional as well as alternative programs that can help retain US 441's unique character, as well as that of the communities through which it travels.

overlay zoning

Some communities find alternative zoning programs allow for greater flexibility than traditional zoning. Overlay zoning is a tool used by local governments to protect certain resources found throughout the community, regardless of existing zoning. Historic districts and scenic areas/viewsheds are examples of resources which have been preserved using overlay zoning. This type of zoning is superimposed over a community's other existing zones, imposing a second set of require-



Land Plan

ments to be met when the resource is affected by a proposed land alteration. Highway corridor overlay zoning has been employed, or is being proposed, in some regions as a means to:

...enhance the economic and aesthetic appeal and orderly development of properties adjacent to major transportation corridors.

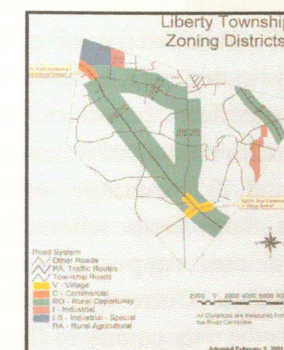
Durham, NC Transportation Overlay

Centreville, Delaware recently developed a "Centreville Village Plan," which employed ideas generated in a community charette to create a guide to future development and transportation decisions. Ted Matley, Centreville's planning executive director states:

We have worked hard to help preserve the character of our communities with the land use reforms instituted under the county's Unified Development Code...the whole process will allow residents to develop their own creative solutions to sprawl, and all of the compromises to quality of life associated with it.

ZONING

Overlay zoning districts imply a wide range of regulatory compliance. It is essential that the affected communities and their stakeholders are involved in defining the terms and enforcement of the plan. In many cases, property rights perceptions can hamper zoning efforts, particularly when regulations come from a source outside the community. In Habersham county, GA, a broad-based group of farmers, business people, educators, conservationist and some developers are trying to enact the Habersham Smart



Zoning Districts

Growth Coalition to:

...nudge the county toward land-use measures that would preserve its farmland, water supplies, and natural beauty, while promoting development in current service areas and renewal in town centers (www.accessatlanta.com).

Vocal opposition to this coalition viewed any regulatory guidelines as top-down government interferences and an infringement on property rights. In such situations, it may be better for an overlay district to be non-regulatory and/or incentive based. If that is the case, then advisory regulations should be put in place, giving direction to property owners who wish to comply. Incentive-based systems encourage voluntary compliance by granting special privileges or financial assistance in return for following the guidelines.

Four Review Systems

Advocacy Program

Guidelines are promoted for voluntary use by a public service organization or non-profit agency.

Advisory Program

Property owners are required to listen to a critique of their plans, but are not required to comply with the recommendations

Incentive Program

Special loans, grants, or other financial assistance is offered to owners who comply with the guidelines.

Regulated District

Review and compliance are required by ordinance or in some cases by covenant.

Highway 441

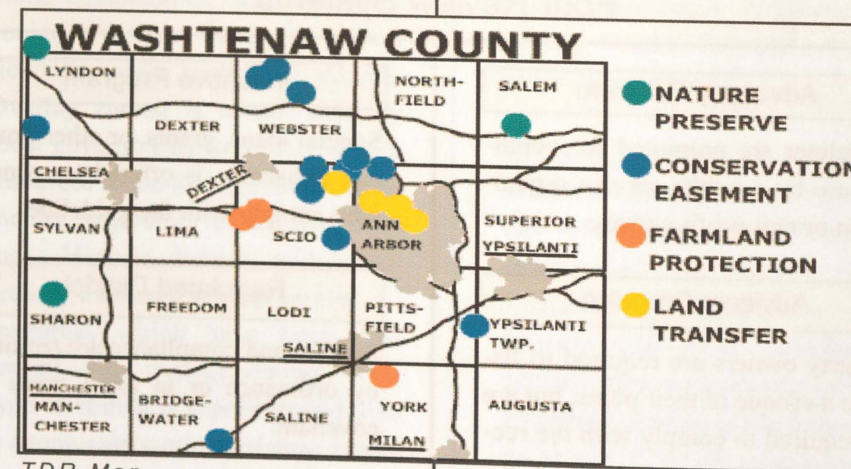
slice of georgia

recommendations

transferable development rights

TDR refers to a land planning tool known as Transferable Development Rights. Under this program a land owner can sell the development rights to their land, and these rights are transferred to another piece of land which is zoned for development. In other words, a property owner in an area zoned under a more restrictive development clause (known as a "sending area"), may sell their development rights to a developer in an area zoned as appropriate for development (known as a "receiving area"). A TDR program aims to compensate property owners for development restrictions placed on their land. TDR's benefit the community by clustering development and protecting agricultural land and open space, at no cost to the taxpayer other than program administration.

The most successful TDR's have occurred in communities where land values were relatively high, as a healthy market for the sale of the development rights must exist in order for the system to work. Current population and development trends in Georgia, however, indicate that the land values will continue to increase markedly in future years, recommending that TDR programs be adopted in rural areas as well as urban areas of the state. Many hundreds of communities across the nation have passed TDR legislation. Georgia House Bill 1540 authorized the use of TDR programs in this state, in order to 1) protect significant resources with a minimum investment of government funds, and 2) encourage development in those areas where infrastructure can support increased development. Currently, Cherokee county is the only county in Georgia to have passed TDR legislation.



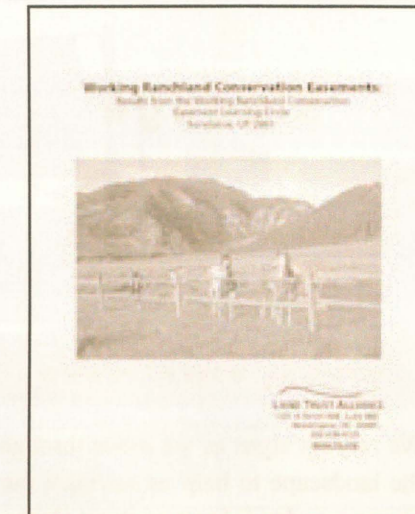
TDR Map

purchase of development rights

The Purchase of Development Rights program is similar in some respects to TDR. Such programs are usually operated by a state or county government, which purchases the development rights from the landowner. The land is then held in trust by the community, as a means of protecting agricultural land or ecologically valuable areas. For example, wetlands and critical watersheds are sometimes protected using PDR's. For qualifying counties in Georgia (initially based on counties with high rates of growth), the Governor's Green Space Program offers potential funding for the preservation of 20% of a county's green space. Other counties can raise funds through Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST), property tax increases, or through the sale of general obligation bonds.

conservation easements

Property owners can voluntarily elect to sell or donate certain specified development rights on their land. The property owner then becomes eligible for reductions in income and property taxes. The owner continues to hold title to the land, and may continue to live or operate on it, depending on the terms of the easement. For example, a farmer may put his land under an



Zoning Districts

easement which prohibits future development and/or subdivision, while allowing for the continuation of farming practices. More restrictive covenants, where agreed upon, may bar any use of or access to the property. While the owner retains title, the easement is held by a government or private non-profit organization, such as a land trust. The sale price of the land is determined by figuring the difference between the land without restrictions (unencumbered land), and the value of the land after restrictions (encumbered land). It is clear that conservation easements are a valuable tool in the preservation of farmland as well as ecologically sensitive areas.

Highway 441

slice of georgia

Recommendation:

It is recommended that communities along 441 seek strategies to guide responsible growth including zoning, overlay zoning, transferrable development rights, purchase of development rights, and conservation easements.

Highway 441

slice of georgia

recommendations

signage

visual experience and wayfinding

visual experience

We rely on signs as we move through the landscape to help us navigate our journey and to inform us about places. Effective and appropriate signage establishes both physical and symbolic linkages to a town or region.

In many cases, signs have unique character and history which root them to the place. The hand-painted "fresh peaches" and "boiled peanut" signs which lead the traveler to a local roadside produce stand, for example, are important parts of the cultural and his-



Snack Shack

toric roadside landscape. But signage can also disrupt, introducing visual chaos and clutter which is disconnected from a region. Corporate franchises and national chains often make use of inexpensive advertising sources such as billboards, at the expense of a community's sense of place. Carl Steinitz and the Harvard Design School, in their study Alternative Futures for Monroe County, Pennsylvania, identified two distinct sign types. The first was signs that were "rooted," meaning those whose message is physically and properly connected to the place. The second type was "non-rooted," referring to those signs which are dislocated from the place of the message. They observed that in Monroe County, non-rooted billboards "overwhelmed the scenic potential of these roadways." Recommendations for regulations removing existing billboards and banning new ones followed.

VISUAL EXPERIENCE



The Lord Can Fix Anything



Peaches Just Ahead

the economic argument

It is important for communities to enact design standards for signage in their towns and along their highway corridors. The visual clues from the roadway are the primary sources of visitors' impressions of a place. Some of the US 441 travellers are looking for "the real Georgia," and have left the six-lane interstates and major thoroughfares in order to find it. Scenic highways are compatible with highways designed for commercial transit. But it is crucial to give thought to the impacts that unrestrained, out-of-scale signage can have on degrading the quality of the visual landscape. Further, the "gateway" quality of a town's edge can be greatly diminished when signs and advertisements spill along stretches of highway on either side of town.

Highway 441

slice of georgia

Recommendation:

It is recommended that communities encourage "rooted" signs and discourage "unrooted" signs, such as large billboards.

SIGNAGE

big-business advertisers

Often, the billboard and outdoor advertising industry will make claims that a region's economic viability is linked to the presence of large commercial signs. Case studies in states and communities which have enacted sign control ordinances have not borne out this theory. There are currently five states and more than 1,000 communities nationwide which prohibit new billboard construction, including 200 communities in Florida. None of these towns have suffered economically due to billboard controls. In fact, the state of Vermont experienced a 50% rise in tourism spending in the first two years after it became billboard-free. In Houston, Texas, retail sales had increased

more than 100% ten years after it banned billboards.

Visual preference surveys conducted in many communities in Georgia and nationwide reinforce these numbers, and reflect the fact that people not only value, but actively seek out, places where towns and their surrounding landscapes retain aesthetic quality, unique character, and a refreshing alternative to "Anytown, USA."



Outdoor Advertising: It's in Your Face



Outside Homerville

ORDINANCES AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

starting points for ordinances and design guidelines

New development, and accompanying signage, can be successfully blended into the existing town fabric in a manner that is in harmony with the character of the town. Madison is an historic town in the lower Piedmont located along Highway 441. Madison has been highly successful in preserving and promoting its unique cultural and historic qualities, but has faced unregulated sprawl along its peripheries. Madison recognizes the importance of preserving the integrity of its roadway corridors as a means of maintaining its aesthetic appeal. Because of this, Madison is proposing guidelines for growth management along its highway corridors. Among these are a set of guidelines which allow for compat-

ible sign development. These guidelines are recommended as a viable starting place for communities seeking to implement their own signage ordinances.

For Further Information:

See: Billboards by the Numbers
compiled by the non-profit organization
Scenic America
www.scenic.org/fact12ftm

See: Design Guidelines for Corridor Conservation and Development in Madison, Georgia

Contact: The state or regional offices for the Department of Community Affairs for further assistance in establishing signage standards and signage ordinances.



First Chance Lottery

Highway 441 slice of georgia

recommendations

wayfinding & branding

Identifiable signage along the route is essential as a device to orient travelers to US 441. Given the historic highway designation, a special “look” is called for to mark its unique status in Georgia. Strong graphic symbols, serving as visual unifiers, can create an identity for the highway. Signage is the primary method of displaying these graphic markings publicly. By using these visual clues, signs can assist travelers in identifying and locating themselves on the highway. SR 272 (see description on page 6) requires that the Georgia Department of Transportation supply appropriate signage. A 441 Heritage Highway sign was designed by members of the US 441 Heritage Corporation, and has been installed in many locations en route. This was done prior to the University of Georgia study.

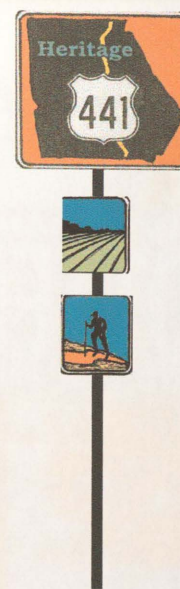


US 441 Heritage Highway Sign Unveiling, 2002

SIGNAGE

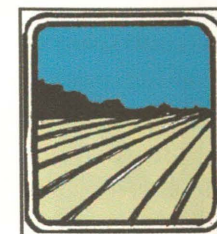
Icons have been developed as part of the University of Georgia studio to serve as identifiers along the route. These images (to the right) were created to serve as quick graphic markings to educate the traveler about the various tourist attractions in the vicinity. They can be attached beneath the main US 441 Heritage Highway sign, offering a great deal of information in a quick glance.

It is recommended that all the products related to US 441 maintain a uniform graphic look, or identity. This includes the website, brochure logo's, color palette and PowerPoint presentation. This will enhance the connection between them, while reinforcing the legibility of each in the traveler's experience.

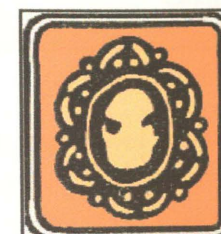


Example of Heritage Highway sign with tourist icons

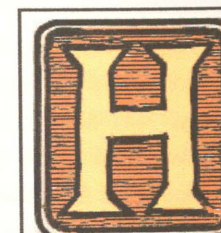
WAYFINDING



Agricultural resource icon



Cultural resource icon



Historical resource icon



Natural resource icon



Recreational resource icon

The five icons on the left are to be used to represent the five areas of interest to tourist identified in this study: agricultural, cultural, historical, natural and recreational. These icons can be used in multiple ways, including on the brochure and website, on the highway itself as wayfinding and branding images, and in many other creative ways.

One idea for promoting tourism and education is the use of stamps and a booklet. The image on the stamps can consist of the icons shown here. As the tourists travel to specific tourist spots along the way, they would be given a stamp or stamps to add to their collection. These would be placed in a collectible US 441 Heritage Highway booklet, a keepsake of US 441 travels. This could even be turned into a game or treasure hunt, with prizes given to those who complete their booklet within a given time frame. This type of activity would not only increase visitation along the corridor, but also educate the traveller to the array of diverse resources that exist.

Individual communities can use their specific icons to reinforce this visual image by including them on signage, banners, brochures, websites and other promotional and marketing materials.

Highway 441 slice of georgia

Recommendation:
It is recommended that communities create signage guidelines and consider banning or limiting billboards. It is also important to carefully consider the placement and design of highway signs in order to make navigation as clear and easy as possible for drivers.

SIGNAGE

degrees of signage and information

Differentiating categories of signage is essential for a successful way-finding program. The type and form of information one needs when seeking the appropriate highway exit is quite different from the type and form of information necessary to locate specific sites of local interest or regional attractions. It is helpful to designate three general types, or “degrees” of signage which would be necessary to incorporate along and off of the 441 Heritage Highway. These are: point of entry signs, point of decision signs, and point of arrival signs.

A point of entry would refer to a signage marker along a high speed (standard) highway segment, and would serve to inform the traveler, through bold clear graphics and limited text, simple information about the highway name or an upcoming exit. The second degree, or point of decision, would be viewed at lower speeds, and would impart more information regarding direction to general features (downtown, state park), or further information sources (welcome center, kiosk). The third, point of arrival signage, would typically be viewed outside of a vehicle. This level of signage would provide the most text-based information, and communicate site-specific cultural or natural area information. Again, it is recommended that



441 Business Route

all signage levels incorporate thematic unity of form, logo, and color, in order to read as a cohesive group.

bypass signing

One of the biggest challenges facing the 441 corridor is the changing form of the roadway. 441 is in mid-transition from a two-lane rural highway traversing agricultural fields and small towns, to a four-lane commercial transit-oriented highway. At the same time, 441 is changing its relationship to many of the places with which it has previously coexisted. Along the length of the state, different highway strategies have been, and will be, employed.

Some segments of the new corridor, particularly in North Georgia, are entirely new structures, and run parallel within several miles, or nearly adjacent to, the old highway sections. This realignment poses obvious difficulties for local commercial establishments located on the old 441 highway

BYPASS SIGNAGE

segments. Some, like the Talullah Gorge Overlook, have adjusted successfully. Others, like the now boarded-up Steak House near Hollywood, have been economically, and literally, sidelined. Many historic downtown districts, such as Cornelia and Watkinsville, have been loop-bypassed by the new corridor.

These realignments have the potential to threaten the economic vitality of towns on 441. However, with careful planning, this need not be the case. Good communication and corridor planning between US 441 Heritage Highway Corporation and GDOT is essential. Reinforcing the plans and discussions with good signage is vital in rerouting travelers, via clear and consistent markers, into the older town centers. Madison has done an effective job in signing its commercial bypass and designating “gateway” signs to historic Madison. Douglas reroutes commercial traffic around town on an alternately numbered loop, while retaining through-town traffic which observes stop-light signals as it moves through the historic downtown business district. Please review the section on road alignment with four-laning options on pages 103- 106.

General “cookie cutter” recommendations for all 441 communities would be inappropriate. Rather, each community needs to recognize the importance of carefully and clearly signing

to travelers and establish a strategy for effectively locating signs in and outside their town. One recommendation, however, would be to use the term “truck route” for all by-pass type road structures. This would give the impression that travellers other than truckers should stay on the main road, which would bring them through town, leaving the trucks on the loops. Another option would be to sign a “through route” for those travellers who do not want to deal with the possible congestion of a downtown, and an alternative “scenic or historic route.”

The distinctive “Heritage Highway” logo demarcation, while necessarily marking the new highway, should also have a recognizable variant form, or added sign-bar, an additional metal bar allowing for denotation of business, historic, and old routes. The historic route markers currently on 441 from Hollywood to Cornelia (brown/white highway shield) are a good beginning, but their location off the new corridor makes locating the old segment difficult. When the new corridor opens from Commerce to Homer, a similar need will exist along that old 441 route. More standard GDOT highway/interstate signs (green/white) should also designate upcoming Heritage Trail linkages along the main highway.

I wish to readmit the discussion of beauty to intellectual respectability... in the context of what used to be called civic art.

-Home from Nowhere
James Howard Kunstler

design

aesthetics

Design can play a large role in developing an identity for the US 441 Heritage Highway. Good design produces a pleasing aesthetic that can serve as a unifying theme for the corridor. Design can, and should, affect most physical aspects of the corridor. One tool used to accomplish this is design guidelines.

design guidelines

Design guidelines are typically used by municipalities to create a unified "look." They can be regulatory in nature, as in a city ordinance, or advisory, as in suggested design concepts. The scope may also vary, but can include, among other things, signage, architectural design, and historic preservation and public art. Since the US 441 corridor is extremely long and varied the design guidelines would not, and should not, be prescriptive and uniform. However, some visual unification along the corridor could be beneficial for definition. This could be in the form of features such as signage and small informational buildings along the route (see page 86). For other design elements, regional uniqueness needs to be identified and

celebrated. This can take the form of preserving important buildings and landscape, maintaining the scale and features of downtown, and developing the entrance or "gateway" into the community.

Banks County Courthouse

architecture

Architectural design guidelines can be, either regulatory or voluntary in nature. New architecture, whether a personal residence, a community's town hall, or a US 441 Heritage Center, should be thoughtfully sited, designed, and built. Equally important to the buildings is the space created between them, called the public realm. Town squares, parks, and the landscape are part of the overall architectural design.

historic preservation

The preservation of significant prehistoric sites, historic structures, landscapes, and urban layout is central to the integrity of a heritage highway. Efforts need to be made to identify significant buildings, neighborhoods, and landscapes before they are threatened. Strategies for preservation can then be developed. Historic downtowns are especially valuable since these can become lively, attractive retail districts, reinforcing to the economic development goal of heritage tourism.

DESIGN GUIDELINES



Historic Cabin at Coffee State Park

Historic neighborhoods and industrial sites are vital parts of a community's heritage, serving a dual purpose: Encouraging a community's appreciation of their "roots" and as a tourist attraction. As our cultural landscape becomes more and more homogenized, places that do retain their historic character are becoming sought-after because of their scarcity.

Design guidelines specifically oriented toward preserving a community's historic character are called historic preservation guidelines. They can be regulatory or advisory in nature.

Technical Assistance

Preservation Guidelines

University of Georgia
College of Environment and Design
Office of Public Service and Outreach
Athens, Georgia
706.542.2449

Design Guidelines

University of Georgia
College of Environment and Design
Public Service & Outreach
Office Athens, Georgia
706.542.2449.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that communities identify and preserve historic features and that they create a set of design guidelines in order to establish a unified look for their town.

Highway 441

a slice of georgia

recommendations

road alignment

GRIP

Georgia's US 441 highway is undergoing radical transformation. In 1989 the Governor's Road Improvement Program (GRIP) was created. Its purpose is to foster economic development in rural Georgia. The stated goal is to create a complete network of roads which would encourage commerce and trade by the year 2018. This includes both "up-grades" such as adding two additional lanes to two lane roads, and the construction of new thoroughfares, such as cross-state parkways. These programs are enacted by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT).



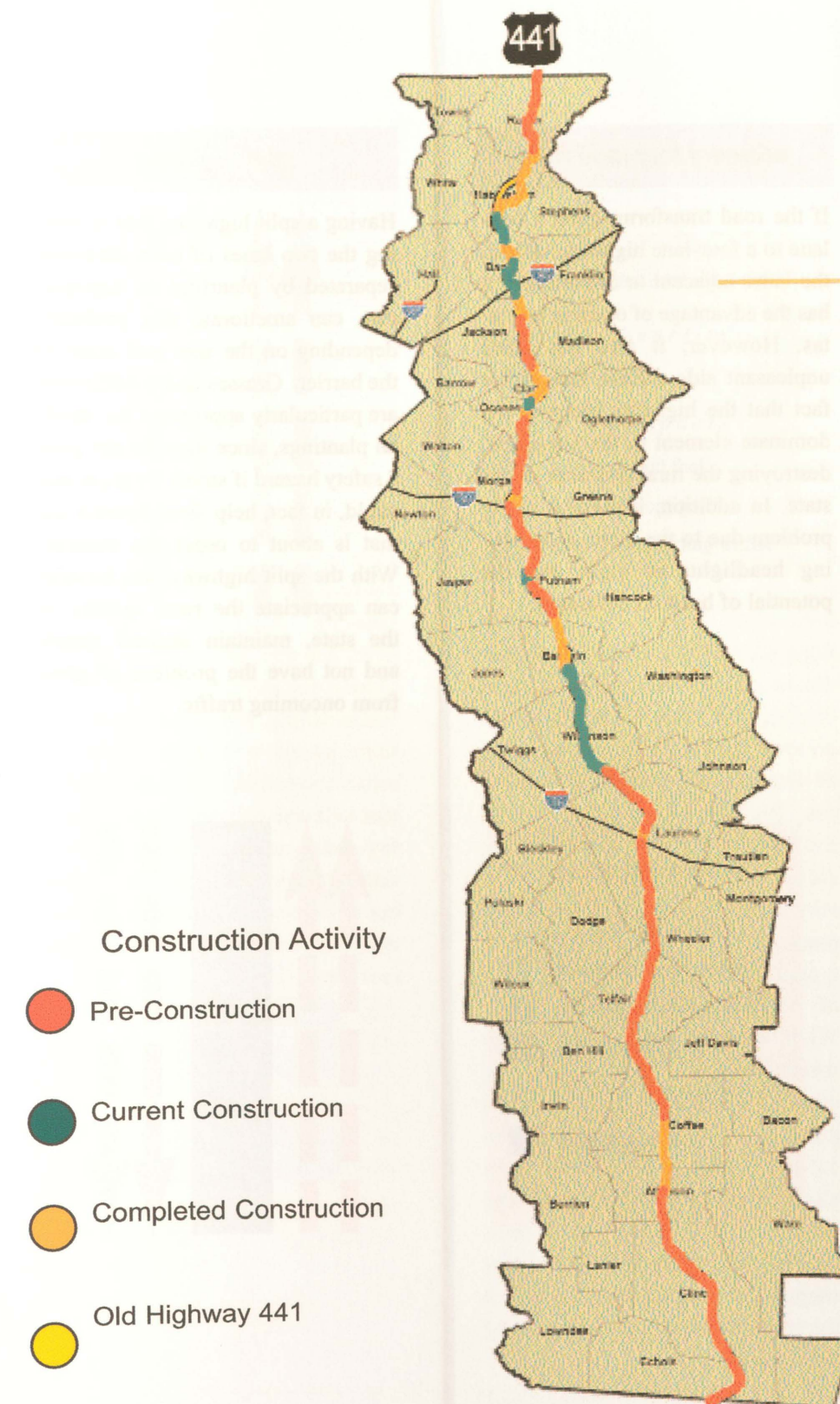
Existing two-lane portion of US 441

US 441 is not a "priority corridor", but thanks to the active lobbying effort by the Douglas based US 441 Economic Development Council, Inc., most of the finances needed to accomplish the four-laning effort have been obtained (see map on page 94).

Most communities strive for some level of economic development and growth. Often growth can have its negative side effects, such as undermining the quality of life through harming natural and historic resources. Conflicts can arise between the needs of truckers and the desires of tourists and community members. The goal of this examination is to lessen the negative impacts, while accentuating the positive potential of the highway.

The text and diagrams on pages 95 - 100 explain the costs and benefits of the various "4-laning" scenarios. It includes a discussions on its impact through the country-side and in the towns.

441 ROAD IMPROVEMENT



Highway 441

a slice of georgia

Highway 441 a slice of georgia

recommendations

ROAD ALIGNMENT

adjacent four-lane road

If the road transforms from a two-lane to a four-lane highway, with all the lanes adjacent to one another, it has the advantage of opening up vistas. However, it also has some unpleasant side effects. One is the fact that the highway becomes the dominate element in the landscape, destroying the rural character of the state. In addition, it poses a safety problem due to the glare of oncoming headlights at night and the potential of head-on collisions.

split highway

Having a split highway, that is having the two lanes of each direction separated by plantings or topography, can ameliorate this problem, depending on the size and scale of the barrier. Grasses and wildflowers are particularly appropriate for median plantings, since they do not pose a safety hazard if struck by a car and could, in fact, help slow down a car that is about to cross the median. With the split highway, the traveler can appreciate the rural quality of the state, maintain desired speed, and not have the problem of glare from oncoming traffic.

RURAL RELATIONSHIPS

four adjacent lanes

positive benefits

■ opens vistas

negative impacts

- reduces rural feel
- highway dominates
- glare of oncoming traffic

split highway

positive benefits

- maintains rural quality
- maintains desired speed
- minimal glare

negative impacts

- limited access

Highway 441 future of 441

ROAD ALIGNMENT

by-pass

The most common situation is for Highway 441 to by-pass the town. This has some benefits for the community and for truck drivers. It allows trucks to circle the city without the hindrance of stop lights and pedestrians. Downtown truck reduction serves the community by lowering air and noise pollution in the center of the city. While beneficial in many respects, by-passing the town can also create hardships for the community. Many of the towns along US 441 are dependent on tourism as part of their economic base. Causing the bulk of traffic to be diverted around the towns can cause an economic downfall for communities. The form and quality of the typical by-pass is standardized throughout the country. Traveling on it holds very little uniqueness or sense of place. Additionally, these by-passes typically encourage the proliferation of chain stores and restaurants. While many people enjoy the standardization of these alternatives, they often compete with local establishments - at times even putting them out of business. If the by-pass occurs along the primary route, the traveler will be less likely to explore the community for restaurants and other shopping needs, instead, relying on the multi-national businesses along the by-pass.

by-pass with tourist route

One way to avoid the problems of a US 441 by-pass is to designate a clearly marked tourist route through the town. The route can be designed so as to highlight places of scenic, historic or cultural value in the community. This option is a good retrofit if the by-pass has already been planned and/or executed. Community meetings can provide an excellent forum for planning and designating a route. Providing an alternate to the bypass has the benefit of encouraging travelers to stop in the town and spend tourist dollars while letting the trucks maintain their speed and circumvent the urban congestion. It is also important to create a simple route with as few turns as possible in order to decrease the problem of way-finding in the town. A good example of this is found in Douglas, Georgia (see pages 125-128).

RELATIONSHIP TO TOWNS

by - pass

positive impacts

- maintains speed of traffic
- prevents truck pollution in city

negative impacts

- diverts tourist away from town
- loss of "sense of place"
- encourages chain stores
- discourages local businesses

by-pass with tourist route through town

positive impacts

- highlights scenic and cultural amenities
- brings in tourist income
- retrofit potential
- avoids the truck

negative impacts

- way-finding problems

Recommendation:
It is recommended that communities carefully consider all their options for transportation improvements.

FOUR LANING OPTIONS

alternate loop road

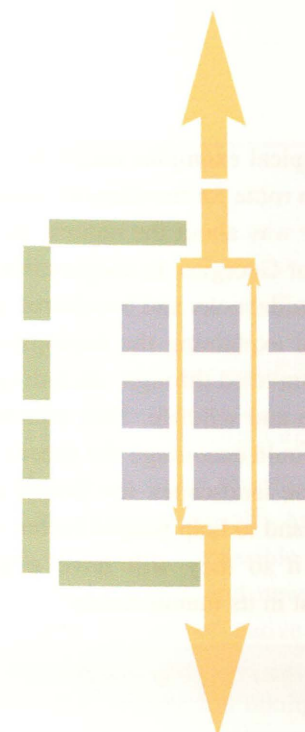
Offering a loop road for truck traffic, while allowing Route 441 to continue through town, is a promising alternative. While in appearance it seems very similar to the by-pass option, it offers some important distinctions. Having a truck route encourages the trucks to avoid the city, therefore omitting the serious noise, air and speed problems associated with trucking. The vacation traveler, however, will most likely opt to stay on 441 for fear of getting lost. They will then find themselves in the midst of the historic communities, and will very likely take advantage of the offerings of the town. By traveling through the town, the visitor gains an understanding of the unique qualities and sense of place of small town Georgia life. To maintain the four lanes through town, two lanes of one-way traffic can be initiated on two adjacent blocks. In contrast, the loop road can serve as an industrial spine for businesses who rely on trucking. Non-commercial traffic will primarily be drawn away from this road and through town, so it will not have the same negative impact as the by-pass would. The one drawback to this scheme is the potential difficulty of way-finding through the city. However, this can be solved through clear and plentiful signage.

no loop road

The effectiveness of this situation is completely dependent on its treatment. If the four-lane road continues through town the same way it does through the surrounding countryside, it can have detrimental effects. Also, if sections of the town are destroyed in the process of highway creation, it can have negative impacts on the quality of life for the town and visitor. Maintaining a high speed of traffic through town poses a dangerous and unpleasant situation for community members. Traffic, particularly that of large diesel vehicles, will create air and noise pollution. A highway like this can literally sever one side of the town from the other, dividing the community. The fast traffic will offer little opportunity for the traveler to enjoy the community and its amenities.

On the other hand, if the highway slows as it moves through the town, it offers many of the benefits of the alternate loop road, such as bringing in tourists and maintaining a sense of place for the traveler. If poorly done, it can do the opposite, destroying the quality of place for the inhabitants of the town.

LOOP ROAD OR NO LOOP ROAD



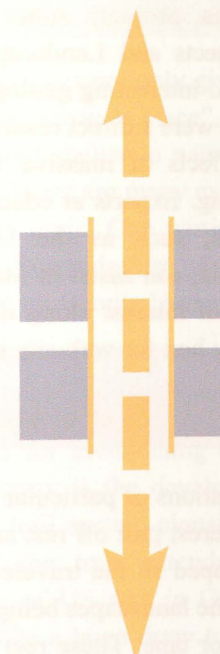
alternate loop road

positive impacts

- maintains speed of
- prevents truck pollution in city
- encourages tourism
- maintains "sense of place"
- creates industrial spine

negative impacts

- way-finding can be a problem



no loop

positive impacts

- maintains speed of truck traffic
- prevents truck pollution in city

negative impacts

- diverts tourist away from town
- loss of "sense of place"
- encourages chain stores
- discourages local businesses

Highway 441

slice of georgia

recommendations

eco-tourism

land-based tourism

Eco-tourism is an approach to the tourist experience which allows the experience of new places, while minimally impacting them. It is tied in very closely with the idea of sustainability. Sustainability has been defined in various ways, from sustaining the ecological and cultural health of a region, to improving it. It is also considering the impact any decision may have on future generations, to a more pro-active stance of actually improving the damage that has been done by past generations. For communities along 441, eco-tourism is an approach to marketing which should be considered. The benefit for US 441 is that it could become a corridor which will maintain or improve the quality of life in the for the state of Georgia.

marketing the environment

Eco-tourism holds promise as a marketing tool as tours can be organized around specific ecological and environmental events. The fact that the route traverses the three types of geological landscapes in Georgia offers many possibilities for educational tours. Brochures could be developed describing these landscapes in depth,

and typical examples could be identified en route for travelers to learn, in a deeper way about the natural environment of Georgia. In conjunction with this, guidebooks and brochures can be created explaining the ecology of the areas traveled through, including vegetation and wildlife. This educational tour would encourage the preservation of these landscapes for future enjoyment, and to help people better understand it so they will have a greater interest in its maintenance.

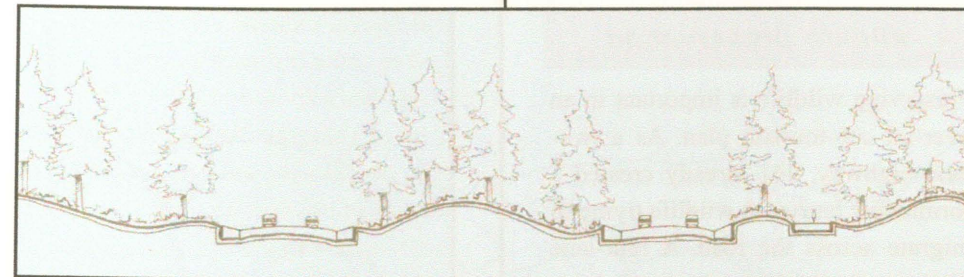
marketing example

A good example of a successful environmental marketing strategy was one examining the ice age floods in Idaho. In this project, Jones and Jones Architects and Landscape Architects located interesting geological features which were a direct result of the cyclical effects of massive flooding and freezing. Experts at educational institutions, such as the University of Georgia, can assist in identifying key areas of interest along the route. See yellow box for web-site information.

rest areas

In locations of particular environmental interest pull off rest areas could be developed so the traveler can experience the landscapes being described in book or tape. These rest stops should be low impact visually and environmentally. To do this, local materials, such as regional stone, should be used. In addition, stone or porous paving

LOW IMPACT TOURISM



Road section showing vegetated median strip and a bicycle trail

material should cover the ground to prevent storm water run-off. As much existing vegetation as possible should be preserved on site, and new plantings should consist of native hardy plant species. Connecting these car pull-offs with hiking and biking trails can further the eco-tourism experience.

native plants

Using native plants not only gives the visitor a good "sense of place", it also offers food and shelter to native animal species. There are many excellent books on the topic. One particularly good one is Roadside Use of Native Plants, edited by Bonnie Harper-Lore.

bicycle trails

Another idea for establishing a truly "green" highway is the development of a bicycle trail system alongside the highway. If the trail extended the entire length of US 441 in Georgia, this could offer a huge draw to those preferring cycling vacations. This is the ultimate in low-impact tourism. Typically cyclists will stop at towns along the way to take advantage of the

amenities. With successful marketing, it can potentially become the site of a major bicycle race... the "Tour de 441!" The possibilities are exciting.

Eco-tourism offers many possibilities for developing a tourist experience which is both beneficial to the environment as well as financially lucrative for the communities along US 441.

Goals of Land-Based Tourism:

Introduce visitors to wildlife and natural features

Accomplish environmental restoration

Demonstrate ways to minimize negative impacts on the environment

Provide spiritual and emotional recuperation

Provide relaxation and recreation

Teach visitors that understanding our local environment is valuable, and will assist in future decision making

Highway 441

slice of georgia

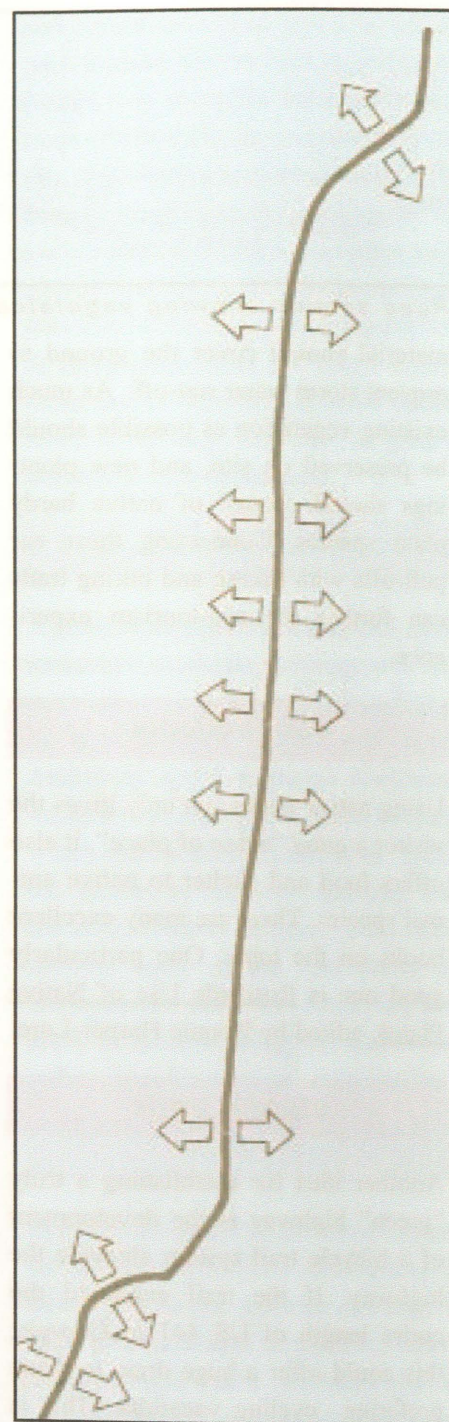
Recommendation:
It is recommended that opportunities to create eco-tourism experiences be explored. Also, the development of a bicycle path system should be explored.

ECO-TOURISM

wildlife preservation

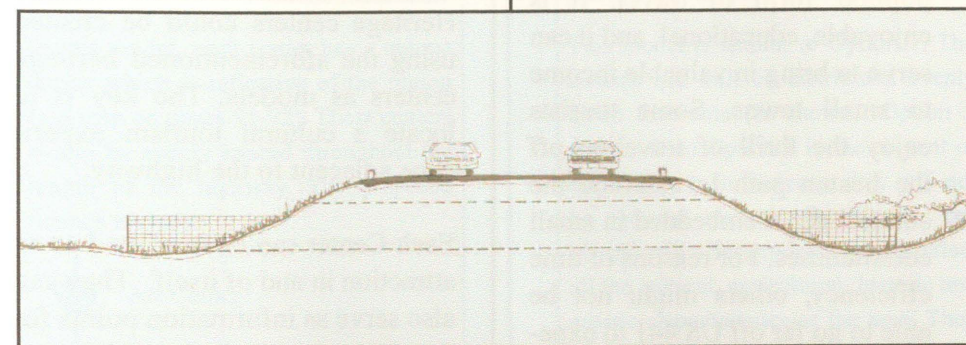
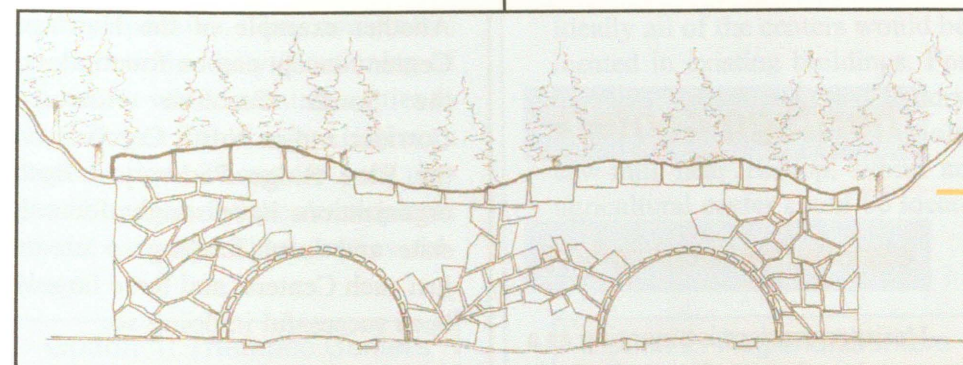
Preserving wildlife is important in an over-all eco-tourism plan. As a two-lane highway, 441 already created a formidable barrier to wildlife trying to migrate across the road. A four-lane highway is even more treacherous. Wildlife crossings should be considered to allow movement across the highway. These have been implemented elsewhere, and have met with success. This includes a bear underpass in Florida on State Road 46, across the Rasmussan Creek in Washington state on Route 112, under the open span bridge on US Highway 2 in Montana, and along the Trans-Canada Highway.

Since US 441 is already in the construction phase, these solutions would be difficult to retrofit. However, there is an option to bring wildlife over the highway. These vegetated crossings can help reduce road kill, and serve as a tourist attraction in themselves. Some examples include Florida Interstate 75 and various places along the Trans-Canada highway. This alternative should be considered as a long range goal. Before commencing such an endeavor it is critical to work with a wildlife biologist to determine major migratory routes. The federal highway department has biologists on staff who are experts on these issues.



Road alignment, showing potential wildlife crossings

WILDLIFE PRESERVATION



Wildlife crossings. The top image is an example of a vegetated overpass that the animals walk over, and the bottom shows a wildlife tunnel crossing.

For Further Information:

Roadside Use of Native Plants, ed. by Harper-Lee, US Department of Transportation Federal Highway Administration

Sustainable Design and Ecotourism at the Topsail Hill State Preserve, Florida, Lloyd, Brent Hill. 1999. Master of Landscape Architecture Thesis, University of Georgia

Architectural Surface Treatment Guidelines for Bridges, Wildlife Crossings and Retaining Walls: US 93 from Evaro to Polson, Montana, prepared by Jones and Jones Architects and Landscape Architects, LTD. November 2002

Visit the Web-Sites about the Ice Age Floods:
www.nps.gov/iceagefloods
www.uidaho.edu/igs/iafi/iafihome.html

heritage centers

experience local culture

Heritage tourism is emerging as a popular form of travel. It is enjoyable, educational, and it can serve to bring in valuable income to small towns. Some tourists enjoy the thrill of traveling off the beaten path to examine the cultural gems embedded in small communities. For reasons of time efficiency, others might not be able to go far off US 441 to experience local culture. To accommodate the latter, a series of heritage centers is proposed.

The heritage center idea was inspired by the Georgia Heritage Center for the Arts in Tallulah Falls. The transition from the piedmont to the mountain region is the perfect spot for a heritage center. This gateway highlights the abundant arts, crafts and traditions of the region. The building itself, donated to the Georgia Heritage Association by Georgia Power, is an excellent example of adaptive reuse. Despite its lack of historicism, the building still maintains the character of the area. Its location and use furthers the local areas "sense of place".

Another example of the Heritage Center concept can be found along the South Carolina Heritage Corridor and in North Carolina on the Blue Ridge Parkway. Both organizations have sought federal, state and local funding to create just such Centers, and have largely been successful in doing so.

Heritage centers could be created using the aforementioned heritage centers as models. The key is to locate a cultural tourism experience adjacent to the highway.

Each Center can be marketed as an attraction in and of itself. They can also serve as information points for the US 441 Heritage Highway, offering informational materials about local, regional, and statewide activities. For promotional purposes they should be located on the brochure, maps, and the website. They can, if properly implemented, be a significant addition to tourism along US 441.

An option for creating the Centers would be to partner with other organizations. For example, the Georgia Heritage Center for the Arts is administered by the Georgia Heritage Association. The US 441 Heritage Highway Corporation could gain similar assistance from the Association. Local organizations in the targeted locations may also be interested in participating

HERITAGE CENTERS

in this endeavor. They could offer support in the daily functioning of the center while maintaining ties to the larger Heritage Highway organization. There are two proposed options for the development of the centers. These are as follows:

Option 1: Thematic Centers

In this model, each center has a unique theme which is reflective of the region (see map on pages 91-92). These centers would be evenly spaced throughout the length of the highway. The proposed themes include:

- Art Center
- Craft and Music Center
- Antiques and History Center
- Farmers market/
Fresh Produce Center
- Agricultural Center
- Agri-Forestry Center
- Rivers and Wetlands Center

These are some examples. It would be an important community building exercise to identify the theme which most accurately typifies your region. This can be arrived at through community participation to insure the greatest support and success.

Ideally all of the centers would be located in existing buildings. For example, an antiques and history center would be located in an old saw-mill near Bishop, while an agricultural center could be located in an unused silo or barn.

Option 2: Regional Centers

This model is similar to Option 1. The centers will still be distributed evenly down the route (as shown). Option 2 departs from Option 1 in the content of these centers. In this case, they will not be focused on specific themes, but instead will offer products which reflect all the cultural, agricultural, historic and artistic characteristics of the area. They will therefore offer a more complete picture of the region.

Analysis of Options:

Both options offer possibilities and limitations.

Option 1 creates a strong identity for each region along US 441, but may limit the tourists experience to only one aspect of the region.

Option 2 offers the wide range of experiences, but might not create as much tourist interest due to the similar nature of each of the centers.

Recommendation:
It is recommended that a series of "Heritage Centers" be developed to showcase local culture and provide an educational experience for tourists.



HERITAGE CENTER LOCATIONS

Heritage Centers

- 1 Art Center (Existing)
-Near Tallulah Falls
- 2 Craft and Music Center
-Near Cornelia/Clarkeville
- 3 Antiques and History Center
-Watkinsville/Bishop/Madison
- 4 Farmers Market/Fresh Produce
-Eatonton/Milledgeville
- 5 Agriculture Center
-McRae/Jacksonville
- 6 Agri-Forestry Center
-Pearson/Homerville
- 7 Rivers and Wetland Center
-Fargo

Highway 441

slice of georgia

recommendations

promotion & marketing

selling US 441

In August of 2002 the US 441 Heritage Highway Corporation (HHC) adopted the marketing mission statement below:

The US 441 Heritage Highway will use the theme Slice of Georgia to sell agriculture, culture, history, nature- and recreation to seniors, baby-boomers, two-laners, and families who live in Atlanta and Georgia, Florida, North Carolina and Tennessee through the use of brochure(s), web site, travel media and thematic tours.

slice of georgia

The "Slice of Georgia" theme should be used as the basis for an overall "branding" program (see page 85 for a description of branding). Successfully marketing US 441 as a tourist destination will entail commitment to a consistent and cohesive image. To accomplish this, a repetitive use of the theme, colors and graphic images should be used on the website, all brochures, posters and maps. If appropriate it may also be included in a signage program. The slogan "Slice of Georgia" can be used to literally describe the highway as it traverses the state, metaphorically to allude to the sampling of southern hospitality, and figuratively, as an opportunity to explore Georgia's vast experiential opportunities.

brochures

Historically the tourism industry has relied on brochures to advertise the unique offerings of their communities. Following that lead, the US 441 HHC designed and produced a brochure focusing on communities along US 441 as tourist destination places. This initiated the process of highway identification and promotion - thanks in part to its extensive distribution.

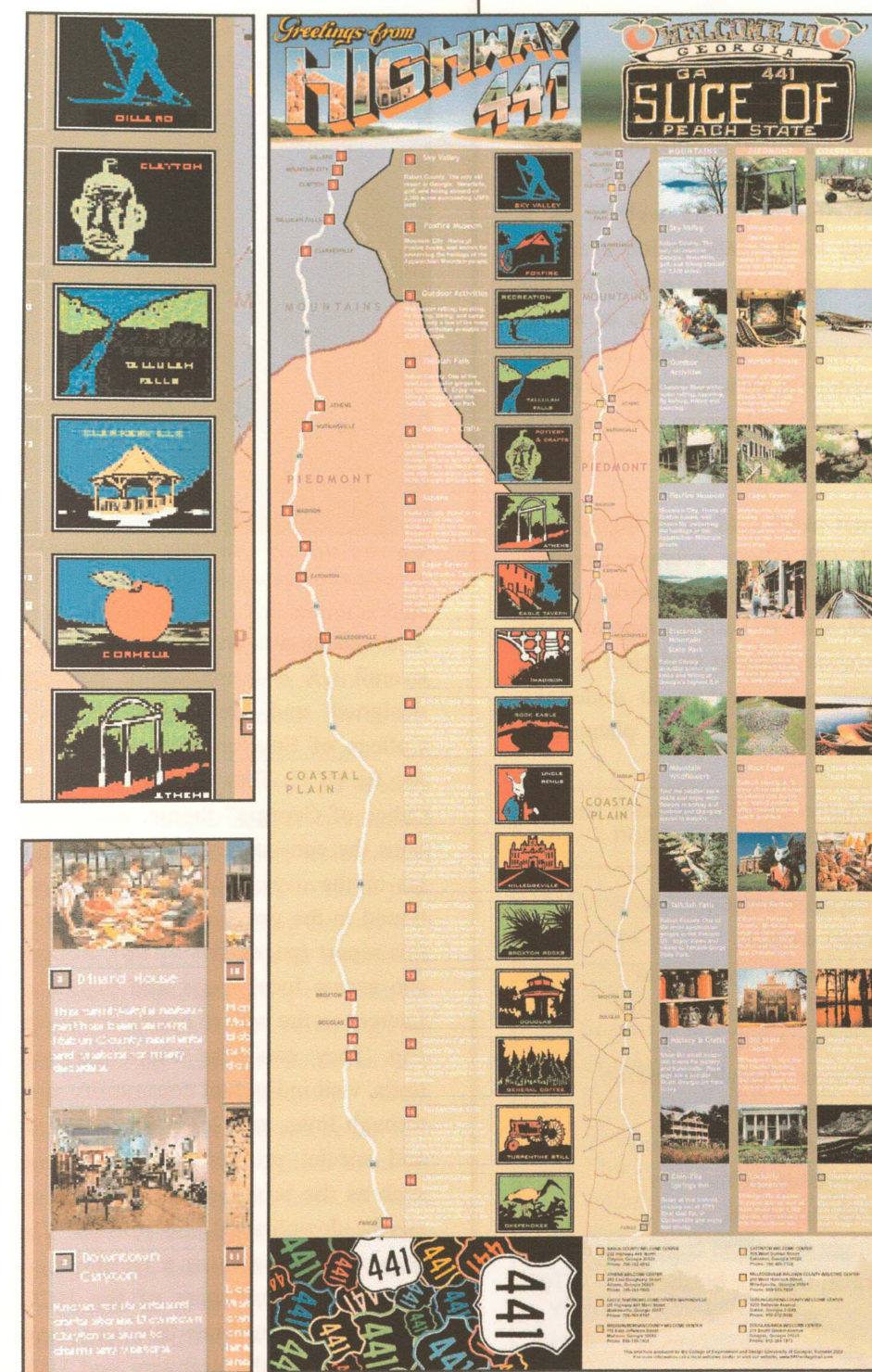
The new brochure was created during the College of the Environment and Design summer studio in 2002. The brochure uses nostalgic graphics (reminiscent of 1930's print graphics) to appeal to the target markets. The colors are consistent with the historic image, and they blend with roadside historic markers.

The brochure is just a starting point. It is recommended that it be developed into a booklet with in depth information and listings. Similar highways, such as the South Carolina Heritage Corridor have already developed this type of marketing strategy. They have developed several brochures detailing different sections of the Corridor, as well as a complete travel guide. Equivalent promotional materials were created by Handmade in America. They publish and sell a comprehensive guidebook which serve both as a marketing tool and as a means of fundraising.

For Further Information Contact:
South Carolina Heritage Corridor:
www.sc-heritagecorridor.org

441 Heritage Highway:
www.us441heritagehighway.org

SLICE OF GEORGIA



Detail views

New US 441 brochure

Highway 441

slice of georgia

PROMOTION & MARKETING

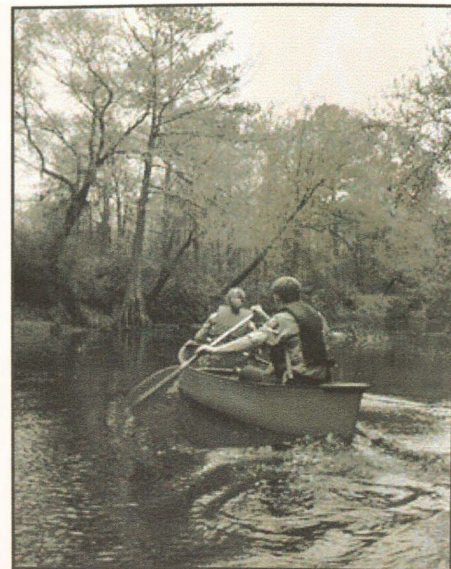
website

The use of the internet among travelers has increased exponentially in the last few years (see pages 103 - 105 for a description of the website as a tourists tool). Information available on the web is rapidly overcoming the traditional tourist brochure as a tool for vacation decisions. Investing financially in website design, development, and maintenance will reap benefits in increased tourists revenue.

Internet users tend to be highly educated with above average incomes. This is precisely the market niche sought after in heritage tourism. And the tourist website is perfect for the traveler who prefers to undertake independent research in planning a trip.

Mediums Used in Recent Years to Plan a Trip or Vacation

Newspaper travel section	28%
Internet website	21%
Travel show on television	21%
Motor Club Magazine, such as AAA	18%
Consumer lifestyle magazine	17%
News magazines	12%
Consumer travel magazine	12%
Membership publication	12%
Travel guidebook	11%
In-flight magazine from airline	10%
A travel trade or business publication	10%
An electronic e-mail	9%



Canoeing on the Satilla River

The website was created as part of the overall US 441 marketing package designed and developed by the College of Environment and Design for the HCC. This website uses the "Slice of Georgia" theme, and maintains the consistent colors and graphics of the overall package. As mentioned in the previous GIS section of this report (pages 101 - 106), tourists can access local maps and places of interest on the web to create their own trip. They can also view thematic tours, visit individual community sites through links, and learn about events and special promotions. Documents such as the brochure and local maps can be downloaded and printed. The web can also serve as a communication tool for members of the HCC. Through this medium they can learn the history of the highway and HCC

WEBSITE & TRAVEL MEDIA

itself. They can distribute meeting minutes and agendas, and other relevant documents. The website can also host instant communication through the development of a chat room. In the future as the technology evolves, new possibilities for use of the web by HCC members will emerge. A professional website design and maintenance contractor is necessary for this operation.

travel media

Media such as newspapers, magazines, radio, and television are key methods of promoting the highway. Advertising can be purchased in major cities across the South, in places such as Florida, Alabama, North Carolina and Tennessee. Prime journals for advertising include Preservation and Southern Living, as well as history and nature magazines. It is essential that consistent themes, colors, and graphic images be used in these promotional spots. Including the web-site address in the ads will encourage interested travelers to visit the site for further information. Soliciting the assistance of travel writers can also serve your community well. Assembling a press kit can be the first step in enticing the writers to cover community events and areas of local interests. Including short, interesting ideas allows the writer the opportunity to determine if they are interested in proceeding with the writing project.

A Successful Press Kit Includes:

- ✓ A Letter of Welcome
- ✓ Summary of planning report
- ✓ Brochure
- ✓ Power Point disk
- ✓ Maps of each region
- ✓ Five sample itineraries
- ✓ Color copies of five images
- ✓ Short story ideas
- ✓ Short video
- ✓ List of Contacts
- ✓ US 441 mememto

PROMOTION & MARKETING

thematic tours

Creating pre-packaged tourist activities is a marketing strategy that can increase tourism revenue in a community. It is ideal for those who are too busy to plan their vacation, offering a pre-made tourist experience. Self-guided thematic tours can be established based on the five categories previously mentioned; agriculture, culture, heritage, nature and recreation. They can also be organized by the three eco-regions traversed by US 441: mountains, piedmont and coastal plain. Pre-packaged tours can also be



Agricultural Tourism

based on seasonal activities, such as folk music, crafts festivals and agricultural fairs. The corporation could serve as a tour operator by developing and leading the tours. There is infinite variations on how the tours would be organized. Some might be focused on a particular specialty, such as wildflower exploration, while others may target the appeal towards a generalist audience.



Historic Tours



Cultural Events



Nature Tours

opportunities

US 441 communities are in a unique situation to court various heritage tourists with specialized tours.

Can your community design a tour based around any of the themes listed in the boxes to the right?

THEMATIC TOURS

Agriculture

- ✓ Cotton field tours
- ✓ Pecan orchards
- ✓ Peach orchards
- ✓ Roadside food stands

Culture

- ✓ Art museums
- ✓ Artist studios & galleries
- ✓ Concerts
- ✓ Cultural centers
- ✓ Famous people
- ✓ Festivals
- ✓ Literature
- ✓ Local cuisine
- ✓ Museums and Theatres
- ✓ Music Festivals
- ✓ Public art

Nature

- ✓ Birdwatching
- ✓ Nature hikes
- ✓ Owl watches

History

- ✓ African-American history
- ✓ Archeological sites
- ✓ Battlefields
- ✓ Civil War history
- ✓ Early settlement history
- ✓ Native American history
- ✓ Historic farms
- ✓ History of the "new south"
- ✓ Historic homes
- ✓ Historic mills and gins
- ✓ Historic transportation structures

Recreation

- ✓ Camping
- ✓ Canoeing
- ✓ Climbing
- ✓ Cycling
- ✓ Fishing
- ✓ Hiking
- ✓ Hunting
- ✓ Mountain biking
- ✓ Rappelling
- ✓ Skiing
- ✓ Water sports

Recommendation:
It is recommended that communities take advantage of marketing opportunities such as websites, brochures and other travel media to promote local destinations. Putting together thematic tours is another good way to highlight and promote unique features of the area.

Highway 441 slice of georgia

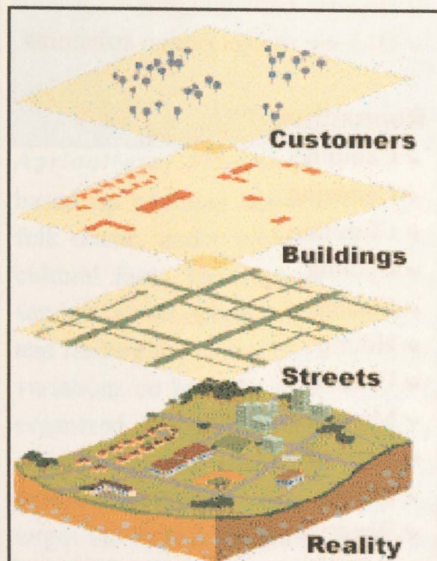
recommendations

mapping the future

using GIS

Through the process of inventory and analysis for US 441, the College of The Environment & Design acquired massive amounts of information. The study area spans the 374-mile highway and reaches to the adjoining counties. With this amount of geographical and statistical data the question became "how do we best organize, sort, display and present thousands of entries in an easy-to-comprehend format?"

Geographical Information Systems (GIS) provides an answer. An added



Layering Spatial Data - www.gis.com

benefit is its ability to manipulate, update and expand upon the information. The software is a data set that can combine statistical data and geographical data into one "spatial data set," giving a better understanding of a particular place. Each of these spatial data sets can be described as a layer, which can be graphically manipulated in order to interpret and analyze the site of study.

The visual display of GIS illustrates intricate statistical data in a form that is easy to comprehend. This is only the basic function of a GIS system. A GIS user can also query a database for specific geographic and statistical data or cross reference information in order to conduct trend analysis.

This data was then layered over the 441 corridor, including the cities, and the major interstates. The counties

Four Categories of Data

Natural Resources: National Forests, State Parks, Wildlife Management Areas

Culture: Museums, Monuments, Schools, Churches, Cemeteries

Fairs: Regional or City Wide Celebrations and/or Events

Recreation: Hiking, Skiing, Camping, Hotels/Motels, Water Sports, and Golf

MAPPING THE FUTURE

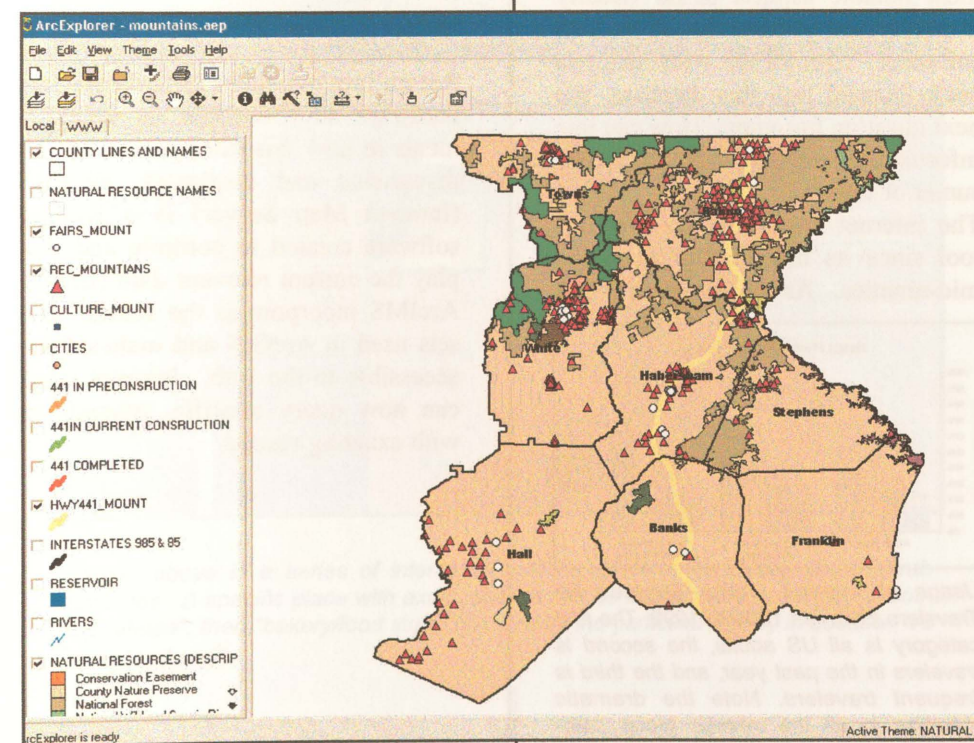
Attributes of Recreation									
Shape	Area	Perimeter	Counties	County	Feature	Feature	Feature	Feature	Feature
Point	310550	Antioch Campground			campground				CAMP
Point	320362	Appalachian Trail			trail				TRAIL
Point	344170	Argusland House			house				HOUSE
Point	326375	Athens Y M C A Camp			campground				CAMP
Point	310270	Baker Park Campground			campground				CAMP

Shape	Area	Perimeter	Counties	County	Feature	Feature	Feature	Feature	Feature
Polygon	447445536.00	113052.727	9	11	13281 Town	6754	110070.58	245214.43750	3864380.75000
Polygon	59730784.00	152745.047	10	2	13241 Rabun	11648	241385.00	262567.04688	3958624.12500
Polygon	723495912.00	152500.493	12	200	13137 Habersham	27621	178976.78	270237.49219	3835046.37500
Polygon	527679680.00	122346.719	13	225	13211 White	13006	155089.65	248116.63906	3837933.37500
Polygon	472286000.00	95770.790	15	339	13257 Spalding	23257	117509.84	250538.06250	3820346.25000

Shape	Feature	Feature	Feature	Feature	Feature	Feature	Feature	Feature	Feature
PolyLine	36	11	3	3	15369.706	28	2121	2	1
PolyLine	75	36	3	3	34903.943	76	2121	2	1
PolyLine	78	76	3	3	1218.756	77	2121	8	9
PolyLine	88	78	3	3	9588.146	86	2121	2	1
PolyLine	88	97	3	3	1044.650	88	2121	2	1

Shape	Feature	Feature	Feature	Feature	Feature	Feature	Feature	Feature	Feature
Polygon	5424.81444	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	Wildlife habitat
Polygon	292.52378	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	Wildlife habitat
Polygon	3278.59341	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	Wildlife habitat
Polygon	72250.76881	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	Wildlife habitat
Polygon	2223.01633	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	Wildlife habitat
Polygon	1101.98.11424	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	Wildlife habitat
Polygon	1101.98.11424	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	Wildlife habitat
Polygon	1101.98.11424	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	Wildlife habitat
Polygon	1101.98.11424	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	Wildlife habitat
Polygon	1101.98.11424	T	T	T	T	T	T	T	Wildlife habitat

Database



Visualization

Highway 441 slice of georgia

Highway 441 slice of georgia

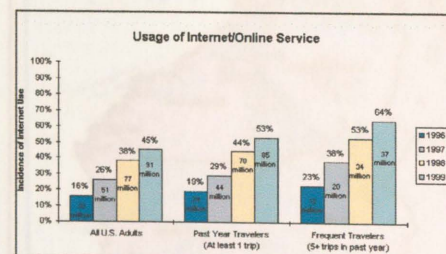
recommendations

MAPPING THE FUTURE

were then divided into three physiographic regions: Mountains, Piedmont, and Coastal Plain. All data obtained and displayed is easily queried within the database for specific information and locations. The information, although extensive and varied, is not a complete database. This database is instead meant to be a template to understand the choices that a visitor has along the US 441 corridor, and is designed to be expanded as more understanding of the conditions and opportunities of the corridor become apparent.

Visual observations have been noted while traveling up and down the US 441 corridor. This information has been analyzed and sorted, leaving the most notable aspects to be visually displayed and mapped though the GIS software. With all the effort that has been focused into this database, the next question becomes, "How can this information be made viable for a consumer or tourist?"

The internet has become a practical tool since its mass inception in the mid-nineties. As the internet's popu-



Usage of Internet Online Services for Travelers Between 1996 to 1999. The first category is all US adults, the second is travelers in the past year, and the third is frequent travelers. Note the dramatic increase in all the traveler group categories.

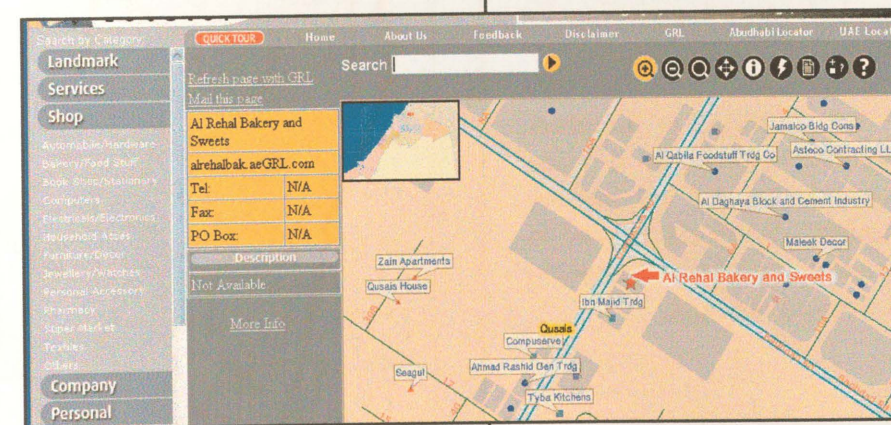
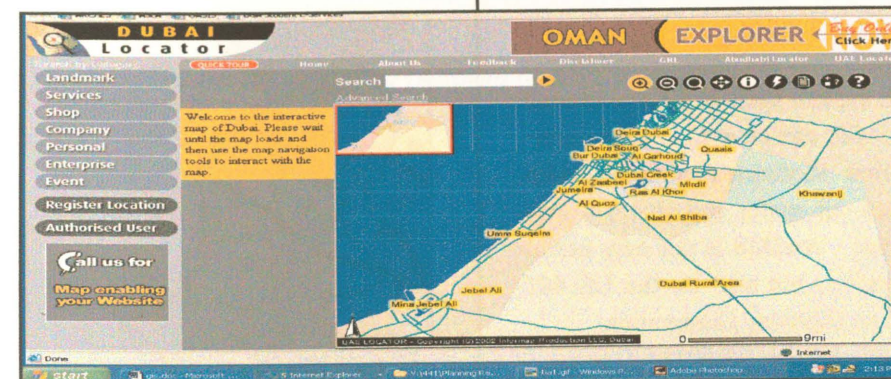
what's next?

larity has grown, more and more institutions and organizations have seen the means to quickly, effectively and relatively cheaply display their ideas and information to their target audience. The travel industry is no exception to this trend. In fact the use of the internet for travel purposes has grown exponentially since the mid-nineties and is one of the most-used mediums for planning a trip.

As the internet has become more sophisticated, so has the user. A static website that has been the tourism industry standard will no longer suffice. Besides some small search options and stationary maps, the progression of interactive intuitive displays and multi-layered information has been slow.

Recent improvements in software and hardware have ushered in advancements in how this information can be researched and displayed. ArcIMS (Internet Map Server) is a leading software created to compile and display the current relevant data (ESRI). ArcIMS incorporates the spatial data sets used in ArcGIS and makes them accessible to the web. Internet users can now query specific information with exacting results.

LOOKING AHEAD



Shown above is a series of interactive website graphics for Dubai, United Arab Emirates. A specific place with exact location can be located very quickly by choosing "shops", then "bakery/food stuff," followed by the particular bakery in question "Al Rehal Bakery."

Highway 441 slice of georgia

Highway 441

slice of georgia

recommendations

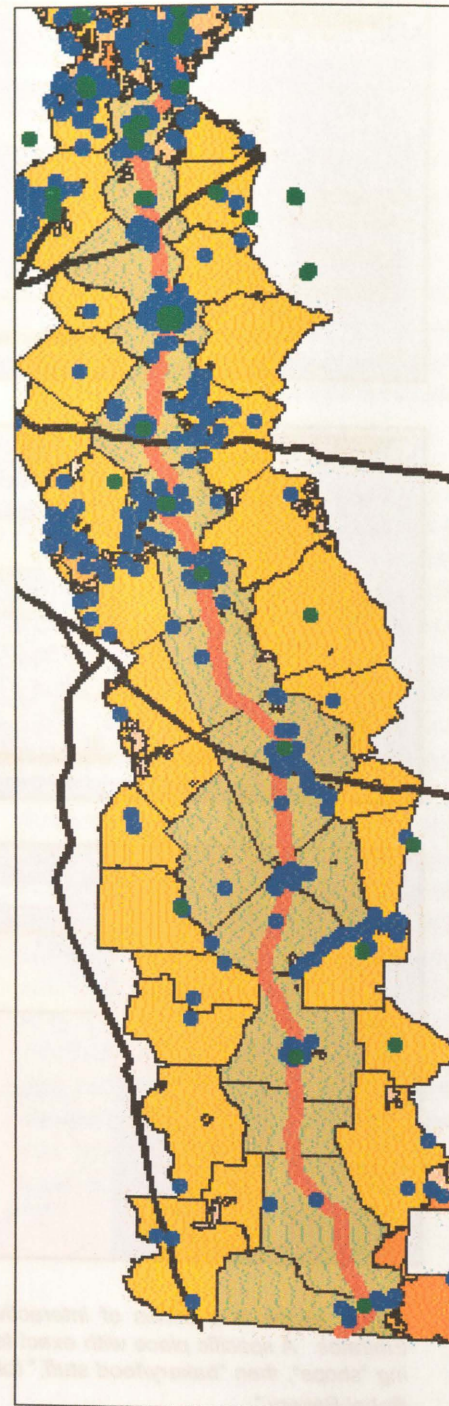
MAPPING THE FUTURE

gis for us 441

A GIS system such as the one created for US 441 can be used to create user-specified itineraries complete with mapped-out routes and alternate suggestions. ArcIMS is not only useful for tourists, but also for the US 441 Heritage Highway Corporation.

Imagine a user who has used the integrated GIS website to orchestrate a vacation. The website itself and the destination points along the vacation route could include questionnaires for tourists to complete. This "point of source" is an excellent method of collecting vital demographic information about US 441 travellers. This information can be assessed and mapped, giving the organization a powerful tool to use in displaying its strengths and weaknesses and projecting its future.

Using GIS, difficult to document demographic information is made accessible for the US 441 member communities. It can also be used to project trends, assisting with economic development strategies.



GIS Map Locating Sites of Interest

GIS FOR US 441

GIS can be used to look up sites of interest, such as the State Botanical Garden in Athens or the Chatooga River.



Chatooga River



State Botanical Garden, Athens

Highway 441

slice of georgia

Recommendation:
It is recommended that communities along 441 take full advantage of new mapping technologies such as GIS.

Highway 441
examples

e x a m p l e s

Highway 441
examples

IV

Highway 441

slice of georgia

examples

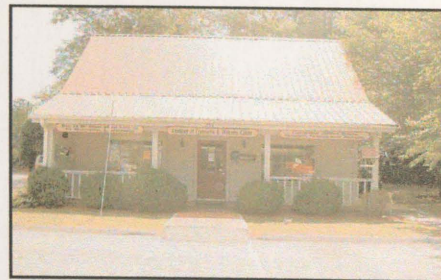
clayton

cities on 441

The city of Clayton in Rabun County, GA, is a historic town located in the northeast corner of the state and nestled in the lower Blue Ridge Mountains of the Southern Appalachian chain. It offers a myriad of options for those seeking to get close to nature.

welcome center

The welcome center located on US 441, which is also the Rabun County Chamber of Commerce, provides an array of brochures, maps and up-to-date information on happenings and attractions in and around Clayton. Advertising their amenities on the County web-site, Clayton has taken full advantage of its prime mountain location and plethora of recreational facilities in enticing visitors.



Welcome Center on US 441

tourist attractions

Clayton was originally a part of the Cherokee lands, yet it is also rich in Appalachian culture and heritage. Additionally, Clayton provides links and access to recreational areas like the Chattooga river, the five lakes (Burton, Rabun, Seed, Tallulah, and Tugalo), three state parks (Moccasin Creek, Black Rock Mountain, and Tallulah Gorge state park) and the Chattahoochee National Forest, which occupies 60% of Rabun county. Clayton offers the adventures of camping, hiking, boating, canoeing, kayaking, white water rafting, hunting, fishing, horseback riding, golfing, and water skiing.

In contrast to these rigorous activities, Clayton also offers the experience of a slow paced and relaxed life amidst nature. As a result, Clayton is home to many retirees and artisans. Various local works of art include paintings, pottery, leather crafts, decorative house and garden furniture, and sculpture. The art galleries and craft shops do a good job of promoting local



Inside an Art Gallery

CLAYTON

artists. "Celebrate Clayton," an annual festival features juried art and craft exhibitions. Other events such as the "Blue Grass Music Festival" and country-western dancing shows are held throughout the spring and summer months to attract tourists. Another festival, "Taste of Rabun," is held in the Rabun County Civic Center in Clayton and is an attraction for both tourists and the local community.

Clayton offers its visitors various accommodation options. There are a number of bed and breakfast facilities, several national chain motels, privately owned and operated hotels and motels, inns, lodges, lake front rentals, cabins, cottages, resorts, and campgrounds. Many of the local accommodations feature spectacular mountain-top or waterfront views.



Downtown Inn

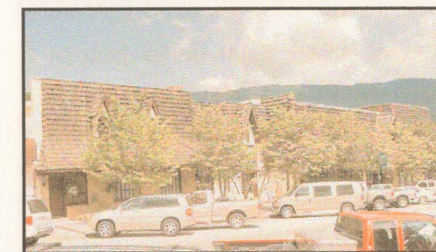
historic downtown

The historic downtown is located just off Highway 441 on Main Street and is framed by a backdrop of beautiful mountain views. The downtown is a well-preserved and vibrant space. It is full of restaurants, antique shops, art



Road to Downtown

galleries, gift shops, book stores, hardware stores, and outdoors stores. The Korean War Veteran's Memorial, a lush green spot in the middle of the town, serves as a perfect place to rest and take a break while shopping. The Downtown Development Authority focuses on downtown, promoting tourism as the focus for economic development.



View of Downtown



Green Space in Downtown

The efforts put in by Clayton make it a successful town that attracts tourists throughout the year.

cities on 441

athens

The unified government of Athens-Clarke County (ACC) has done a very good job of preserving its historic resources, and promoting its cultural ones. It has a very active Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB), that works to promote Athens as a destination for conventions and tourists.

history in athens

Athens prides itself on its history. It calls itself the "Classic City" and markets the cultural and historic facets of tourism. The historic significance and level of preservation in ACC is high. There are 14 historic districts in ACC protected by local ordinance. The active Athens/Clarke Heritage Foundation insures preservation through this and other methods. Several of the oldest antebellum houses in town have been protected and turned into museums. The oldest, the Church-Waddel-Brumby house, now serves as the Athens Welcome Center. This is an excellent use of an important historic building.

preservation

Some historic areas of Athens have no formal protection, and have survived simply through good fortune. The most notable of these is the downtown central business district. Despite having been listed in the National Register of Historic Places for the last thirty years, it still has no protective local designation. This should be rectified. Athens' downtown is a gem. A positive sense of place is maintained through the continued existence of the compact urban grid, the well scaled facades, and the significant historic fabric. This has encouraged a thriving, vibrant and pedestrian friendly downtown.

Much has been done to improve and maintain the appearance of downtown, mostly through the Main Street Program and the Downtown Development Authority. Appropriate lighting is used in the more popular café areas, street trees are a priority, and, recently, crosswalks and sidewalks were redone in brick. These small touches should not be overlooked: an attractive streetscape in a walkable downtown is a rare commodity that truly sets Athens apart from many towns. The downtown atmosphere of Athens is an incentive when trying to attract conventions to town.

Useful web-sites:
www.visitathensga.com
www.athensclarkecounty.com
flagpole.com
onlineathens.com

ATHENS



Brick Crosswalks at the Arch

town and gown

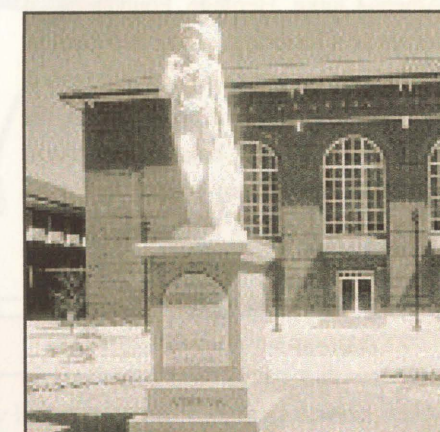
"Town and Gown" relationships are not always easy. In Athens, though, the City and the University of Georgia work together on many issues. While there are, in some eyes, real drawbacks to having 32,000 students living in your town, there are also immense benefits.

Athens has one of the most vibrant arts community in the state. Its music scene is internationally famous, and the invariably sold-out college football games bring tens of thousands of visitors into town. The City of Athens embraces these contributions, and eagerly provides a venue for various events, such as the citywide music and arts festival AthFest, the UGA homecoming parade, and various theater productions and art exhibits at the Lyndon House Arts Center and the Georgia Museum of Art.

Athens actively and successfully promotes tourism and convention business. It has two large convention

conventions & tourists

facilities, The Classic Center, city-owned, and the Georgia Center, owned by the University of Georgia. Both host a remarkable number of conventions every year, with every conventioner spending money on food, lodging, and other purchases while in town. The CVB has established an excellent website (visita-thensga.com) to provide potential tourists and convention planners information they need to plan activities in Athens.



The Classic Center



Athens Streetscape

Highway 441

slice of georgia

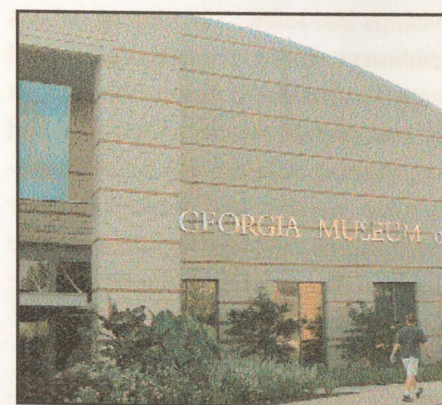
examples



Church-Waddell-Brumby House

welcome center

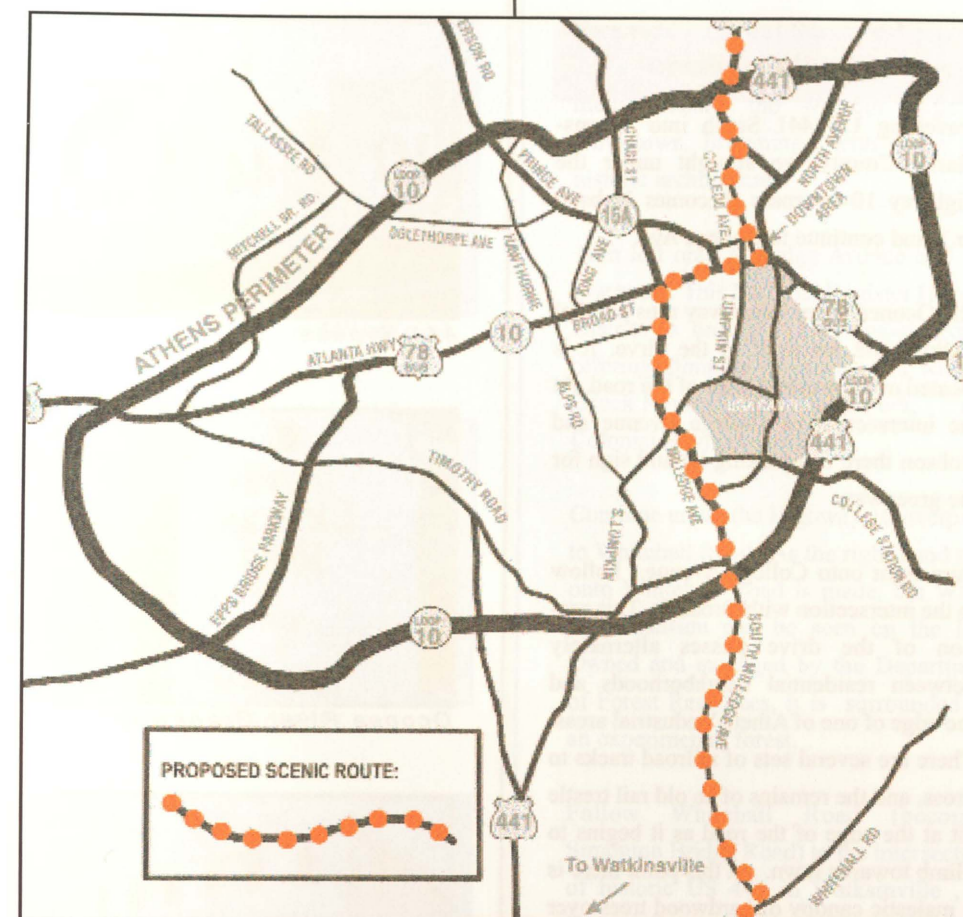
Athens has a good Welcome Center. Located in the historic Church-Waddell-Brumby House and managed by the Athens-Clarke Heritage Foundation, it serves as a historic gateway to Athens as well as a tourism and relocation information center. The range of materials in the Welcome Center is broad- from tourist information (walking guides to downtown, maps, guides to Athens architecture) to more general information on the cultural and historic facets of Athens. There is a large shelf of promotional material for cities, parks, and attractions in other parts of Georgia, especially in the Historic Heartland tourism region. In the gift shop visitors can purchase local music, books cookbooks, food, and historic photography of Athens. In addition, Classic City Tours provides daily bus tours of Athens, led by an historian. It begins its route at the visitor center. The message is clear: Athens is a culturally and historically rich town, eager for, and quite amenable to, visitors.



Georgia Museum of Art

EXAMPLES FROM CITIES ON 441

ATHENS



A Scenic Alternative to 441

The charm and attraction of a rural highway like 441 is that it differs from an interstate highway. People who travel small rural highways in lieu of interstates look for quality of experience rather than mere transport. They expect to travel a little slower and be exposed to the life of the area that they are passing through, rather than being whisked through it as quickly and efficiently as possible.

Highway 441 currently bypasses Athens. It joins the perimeter highway 10 at the northern and southern extremes of Athens, and skirts the town between these two points. In the interest of providing a glimpse of Athens for the 441 traveler looking for a more interesting drive, we propose a historic and scenic route through Athens, an "in-town connector" that leads from 441 at the northern junction with Hwy 10 to Watkinsville, where it rejoins the highway. The following pages describe the journey.

Highway 441

slice of georgia

Highway 441

slice of georgia

examples

EXAMPLES FROM CITIES ON 441

the description

Travelling US 441 South into Athens-Clarke County, go straight under the Highway 10 overpass (becomes Hobson Dr.), and continue to College Ave.

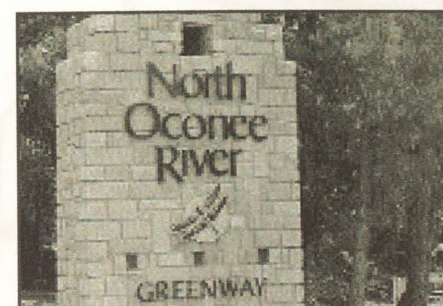
The Oconee River Greenway runs parallel to this road for most of the drive. It is located at the western edge of the road. At the intersection of College Avenue and Hobson there is a parking lot and sign for the greenway.

Turn right onto College Avenue. Follow to the intersection with Broad St. This section of the drive passes alternately between residential neighborhoods and the edge of one of Athens' industrial areas. There are several sets of railroad tracks to cross, and the remains of an old rail trestle sit at the edge of the road as it begins to climb towards town. At this point there is a majestic canopy of hardwood trees over the road. College Avenue runs past the entrance of the Lyndon House, a municipal theater and arts center.

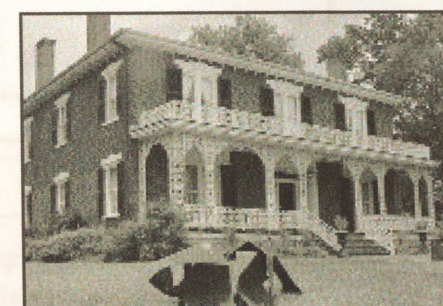
College Avenue continues into downtown Athens, past the city hall, with its double-barreled cannon on display out front, through the heart of the downtown shopping district, past the café strip, and to Broad Street, immediately across from the symbol of the University of Georgia, the enigmatic arch.



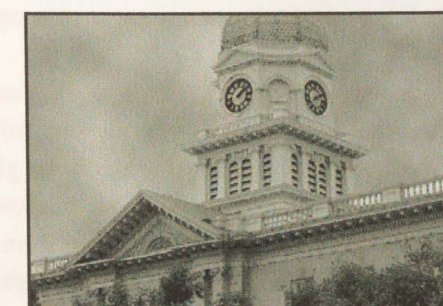
441 Bypass



Oconee River Greenway



Lyndon House



Athens City Hall

ATHENS



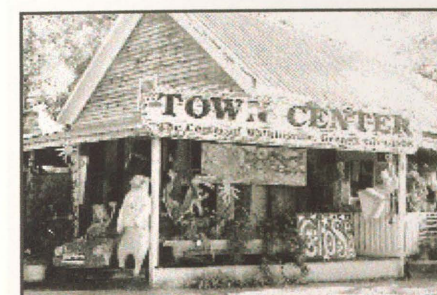
Faternity House on Milledge



Agricultural Character



Oconee River Bridge



Town Center, Watkinsville

Turn right on Broad Street, and continue to the intersection of Milledge. This segment touches the western edge of Downtown, brimming with shops and historic architecture.

Turn left onto Milledge Avenue and follow south. This National Register Historic District is one of Athens most scenic, offering glimpses of another era with its Greek Revival, Victorian-era, and Colonial Revival mansions.

Continue under the Highway 10 overpass, to Whitehall Road. As the right-hand turn onto Whitehall Road is made, the White Hall mansion can be seen on the left. Owned and managed by the Department of Forest Resources, it is surrounded by an experimental forest.

Follow Whitehall Road (becomes Simonton Bridge Road) to the intersection of historic US 441 in Watkinsville, in Oconee County. This is a beautiful rural drive with agricultural scenes with both historic and new residential development. Passing over the Oconee River in two places allows a glimpse of the natural features of the county.

Turn left onto historic US 441 in downtown Watkinsville, known for its artist community and quaint shops. It is definitely worth a stop and look-around. The Eagle Tavern, just north of the Town Center, is now a museum and Welcome Center. The drive south through this delightful town returns the traveller to US 441 heading south toward Madison.

Highway 441

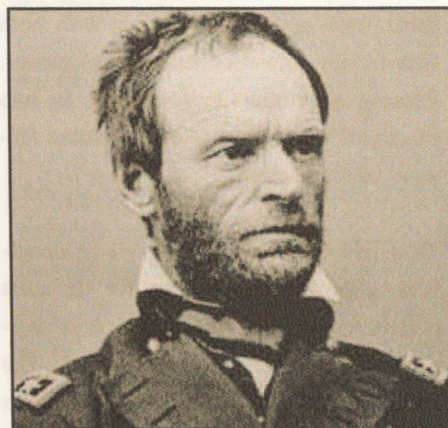
slice of georgia

madison

cities on 441

history

After General Sherman burned Atlanta to the ground towards the end of the Civil War, he was making his march to the sea. Madison lay directly in his path. Realizing this, one of Madison's leading citizens, Senator Joshua Hill, was able to convince Sherman to spare his town. Thus one of the finest collections of homes was saved from the torch. Madison now constitutes one of Georgia's largest historic districts.



William Tecumseh Sherman

Madison has long been a popular area for visitors since its founding. In the early 19th century it was known as a

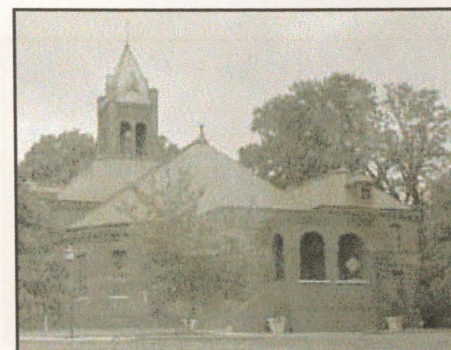
"cultured and aristocratic town" on the stagecoach route from Charleston to New Orleans. That tradition continues today.



Rose Cottage

cultural center

The unique collection of historic homes, along with the rich heritage of of Madison, is promoted during special seasonal events such as the Tour of Homes. The hub of these events is the Madison-Morgan Cultural Center, a restored 1895 Grade School building, located in the heart of Madison's Historic District. The Center has exhibits on both local and regional history as well as an auditorium for performing arts.



Cultural Center

MADISON



Historic Downtown Madison

welcome center

The Welcome Center for Madison is located on the town square, but can be difficult to locate. The staff is helpful and they have a wide range of brochures describing various activities and features of Madison. Some of these activities and features include guided walks, carriage tours, restau-

rants, shopping and overnight accommodations.

Whether you are just passing through Madison in your car or have time to enjoy the pedestrian scale of this town, a visit to Madison is enjoyable and memorable enough to make you want to return.



Historic Neighborhood Streetscape

douglas

cities on 441

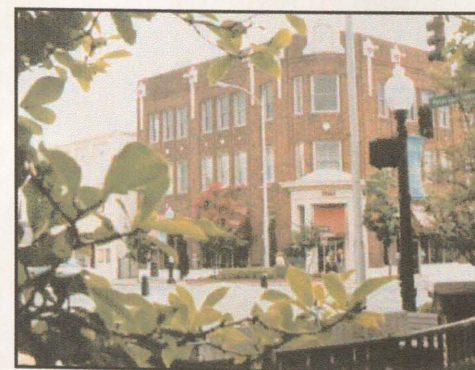
Douglas, established in 1896, serves as the county seat for Coffee County Georgia and is known as a regional shopping, government, business, and entertainment center in South Central Georgia. Abundant natural recreation and leisure opportunities are epitomized by nearby General Coffee State Park. This community of just over ten thousand (10,000) citizens recognizes that its future lies in preserving the best from its past. It is blessed with high energy leaders who have designed, funded, and implemented many projects as part of overall community development with a special emphasis on heritage and cultural tourism.

Douglas is centrally located between Interstate 16 to the north, I75 to the west, I95 to the east, and I10 to the south. Highways 441, 32 and 82 are smaller "blue highways" that bring visitors to Douglas via a slower, more interesting route. Historically, US 441 was a two-lane, two-way highway through the center of town. In the 1980's, as part of an industrial development plan, Hwy 206 was built as a perimeter

road- one of only three in Georgia. A second two-lane road was added to US 441, which became a town "spine" divided into a pair of two-lane, one-way road segments. The end result is that Douglas is easy to navigate, and trucks are encouraged to follow the perimeter road. In fact, a local ordinance, passed in the 1990's, requires the diversion of trucks around the city in order to protect downtown while encouraging industrial development.

historic downtown

The downtown National Register Historic District was established in 1989. Protected by a local historic preservation ordinance, exterior changes to buildings and streetscape projects must be approved by a design review committee. The Douglas Comprehensive Plan encourages investment in downtown through a Facade Grant Program and a low interest loan pool, as well as an overlay district approved in the 1990's. Recent investments include the installation of the headquarters for Douglas Asphalt in a



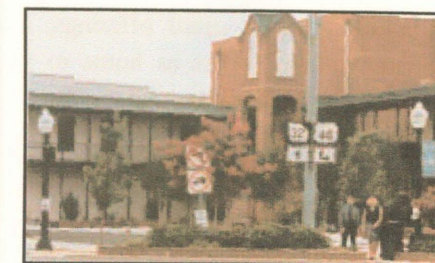
Historic Downtown Building

DOUGLAS

downtown "white elephant," while the former Belk building is undergoing a \$2 million private renovation into retail and office space. Downtown's historic architecture and cultural arts are the backdrop for the area's shopping, business, government and entertainment district. The pedestrian-friendly environment had its beginnings in historic architecture and design, recognized in 1987 by the establishment of the Douglas Main Street Program. A massive streetscape project in the early 1990's was the next step in revitalizing the downtown. Occupancy has risen from 17% prior to the streetscape Street Program to a current high of 95%! Citizens and visitors alike glean antiques, hardware, gifts, clothing, shoes, and high-quality home furnishings from locally-owned shops.

urban design

Adding to the pedestrian ambiance is Atkinson Plaza, a recently completed downtown urban park. Sited right in the center of downtown, it is used for special events and as a relaxing interlude to running errands and shopping. This project is an excellent example of continued downtown improvements and a creative funding strategy. Ten private investments, combined with Department of Community Affairs state and local development funds, were used to re-create a century old bell tower that once stood at the (and re-built) historic county courthouse. Seating, a fountain with waterfall, and



Atkinson Plaza

landscaping complete the park and create an inviting downtown green-space.

welcome center

The Douglas/Coffee County Welcome Center, also known as the Ashley-Slator House Museum (c. 1914), is located on Hwy 32, two blocks east of US 441. It is easily found through excellent signage, and is walkable from any downtown location. Visitors can visit the turn of the century in the beautiful house museum, refurbished with period colors and furnishings, while also gaining information about current day events and facilities in the Douglas and Coffee County area. The staff is extremely helpful and gracious. The house was restored through GDOT Transportation Enhancement grant funds and is home to the Chamber of Commerce, the Convention & Visitors Bureau, and the Main Street Program. House rentals assist with maintenance costs.

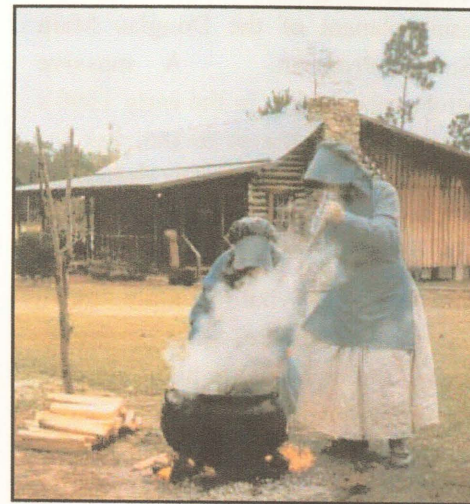
EXAMPLES FROM CITIES ON 441

In addition to its retail offerings, downtown also serves as home to both the City of Douglas and Coffee County facilities. Central Square supports downtown as the core of this government complex. More than 100,000 square feet of public space on a five acre parcel is available for group events, meetings, and conferences. Many professional businesses such as those servicing legal and government functions fill other downtown spaces. Douglas also serves as a South Central Georgia educational hub. South Georgia College is the oldest 2 year institution under the University System of Georgia, and East Central Tech is a growing campus with four proposed buildings slated for construction in the near future.

historic preservation

Historic preservation has been key to keeping downtown alive, and has provided funding for many preservation projects. Douglas' first hospital, Douglas Infirmary (c. 1909) was restored as the annex of the Coffee County Courthouse (c. 1938). Visitors to the courthouse complex are able to enjoy Heritage Art Walk, where original artwork by local artist Pong Holton is displayed in the public corridors. All artwork depicts local places and faces that represent the historic character of the community. Heritage Station Museum stands where a depot has

stood since 1905. Restored with GDOT TEA grant funds in the 1990's, the project went community-wide when railroad employees and friends of the museum provided a large collection of railroad memorabilia. A scale model engine offers children a chance to hop aboard as they ride the rails of local history when they enter the front doors of the muse-



General Coffee State Park

um. Exhibits focus on life during the early 1900's, showcasing agriculture, business, industry, and community development.

cultural resources

The Martin Centre, a 1940's movie house, was also restored in the 1990's under a public/private partnership and SPLOST funds, and now serves as a performing arts center with seating for more than 700. The art deco facility is host to thousands of visitors annually for

DOUGLAS

arts and educational programs. Music, dance, theater, and visual art take center stage at the Martin.

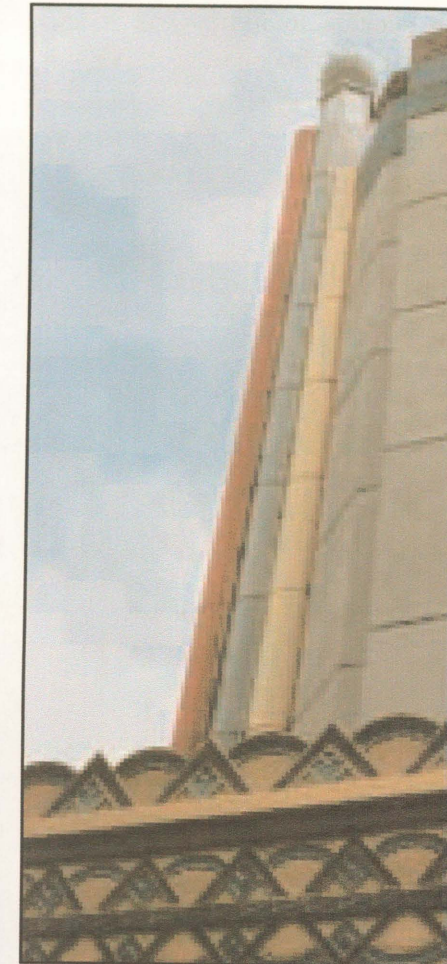
nature & recreation

General Coffee State Park is a major natural and recreational area attraction that brings visitors to the Douglas area. Heritage Farm, Relihan Museum and Meeks antebellum cabin are featured in the park, as are an abundance of nature trails, and an endangered plant and animal project.

fairs & festivals

Each November the annual Pioneer Skills Day features pioneer skills and arts from 1860 - 1930. Civil War reenactment, cane grinding, syrup making, blacksmithing and other skills are demonstrated to thousands of visitors.

Other festivals that bring tourists to town include Smoking on the Square barbeque cookoff in November, the week-long spring Chataqua Art Festival, Freedom Fest on July 4, and Festival of Lights in December. Agricultural tours have recently become part of the heritage tourism package offered by the Douglas Convention & Visitor's Bureau (CVB). McCranie Brother's Turpentine Still and Lott's Kountry Store and Grist Mill are not-to-be-missed stops on these tours.



The Martin Center

Douglas is a US 441 community with community development leadership, holistic vision, innovative projects funded creatively. They are an excellent example to emulate.

Highway 441
conclusion

c o n c l u s i o n

Highway 441
conclusion

V

conclusion

wrapping it up

US 441 is indeed a very special *Slice of Georgia*: a historic highway connecting unique communities filled with intriguing places and interesting people. This report has recorded some of its best aspects. US 441 has many qualities worth preserving, and the communities along the corridor have a significant opportunity to guide its future.

Growth and change are coming to the corridor, both physically and demographically. US 441's communities need to be prepared to shape this growth to fit their vision of the future. Leadership will be the key factor in determining how the communities receive, shape, and implement that growth. Willingness to include heritage tourism as part of the economic development engine ensures that the agricultural, cultural, historic, natural and recreational assets will be protected, enhanced, and promoted for citizens and visitors alike.

Summary of Recommendations:

Explore Scenic Byway designation.

Seek strategies to guide responsible growth including zoning, overlay zoning, Transfer of Development Rights, Purchase of Development Rights and conservation easements.

Identify and preserve historic features and create a set of design guidelines in order to establish a unified "look" for each community.

Create signage guidelines and consider banning or limiting billboards.

Develop a series of "Heritage Centers" along the 441 corridor.

Carefully consider all available options when making transportation improvements.

Take full advantage of new mapping technologies such as GIS.

Use marketing opportunities such as websites, brochures and other travel media to promote local destinations. Putting together thematic tours is also a good way to highlight the unique features of an area.

As we documented the corridor, it became obvious that one of US 441's most valuable assets is communities and the leadership- a willingness to work together for the common good. The US 441 Studio thanks you for allowing us to participate in your efforts to create better communities. The report's recommendations include specifics of good corridor management, design, signage, and road alignment. Many excellent examples of these are already implemented in various places along the corridor. Some of these are listed in the examples section, featuring Clayton, Athens, Madison and Douglas.

This report is intended as a starting point, to be used in several ways. Understanding its contents and implementing any specific suggestions is one use. Printing the new brochure and launching the website are also good examples of immediate tools which can be used to promote 441. There are some secondary projects such as completing the Geographic Information System and integrating it with the website. Signage along the corridor, use of the graphic icon images, and additional tourism product development is also important. The final layer would be taking time to understand the philosophies of growth management strategies and heritage tourism. Some of these themes will necessitate discussions, further research, and implementation strategies. You may want to have a

speaker present the Scenic Byway program, or host a panel discussion on design guidelines. These concepts can be somewhat daunting to present, but they are an integral, vital, part of an overall heritage tourism strategy.

As a final note, maintaining the US 441 Heritage Highway Corporation as an organized way to continue to share information, ideas, and projects is an extremely important component of building a true heritage corridor. This organization should reach out to others beyond those in the traditional tourism community.

Preservationists, conservationists, educators, business people, and citizens must be included and made to feel a part of the US 441 Heritage Highway. Heritage tourism and partnerships can exist within each of the communities on its own. Bringing everyone together, from along the length of the highway and from differing points of view, creates a synergy and enthusiasm for something much larger – the sum of the parts can be greater than the whole.

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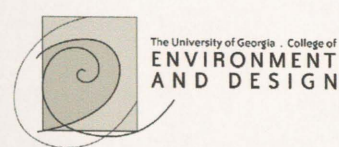
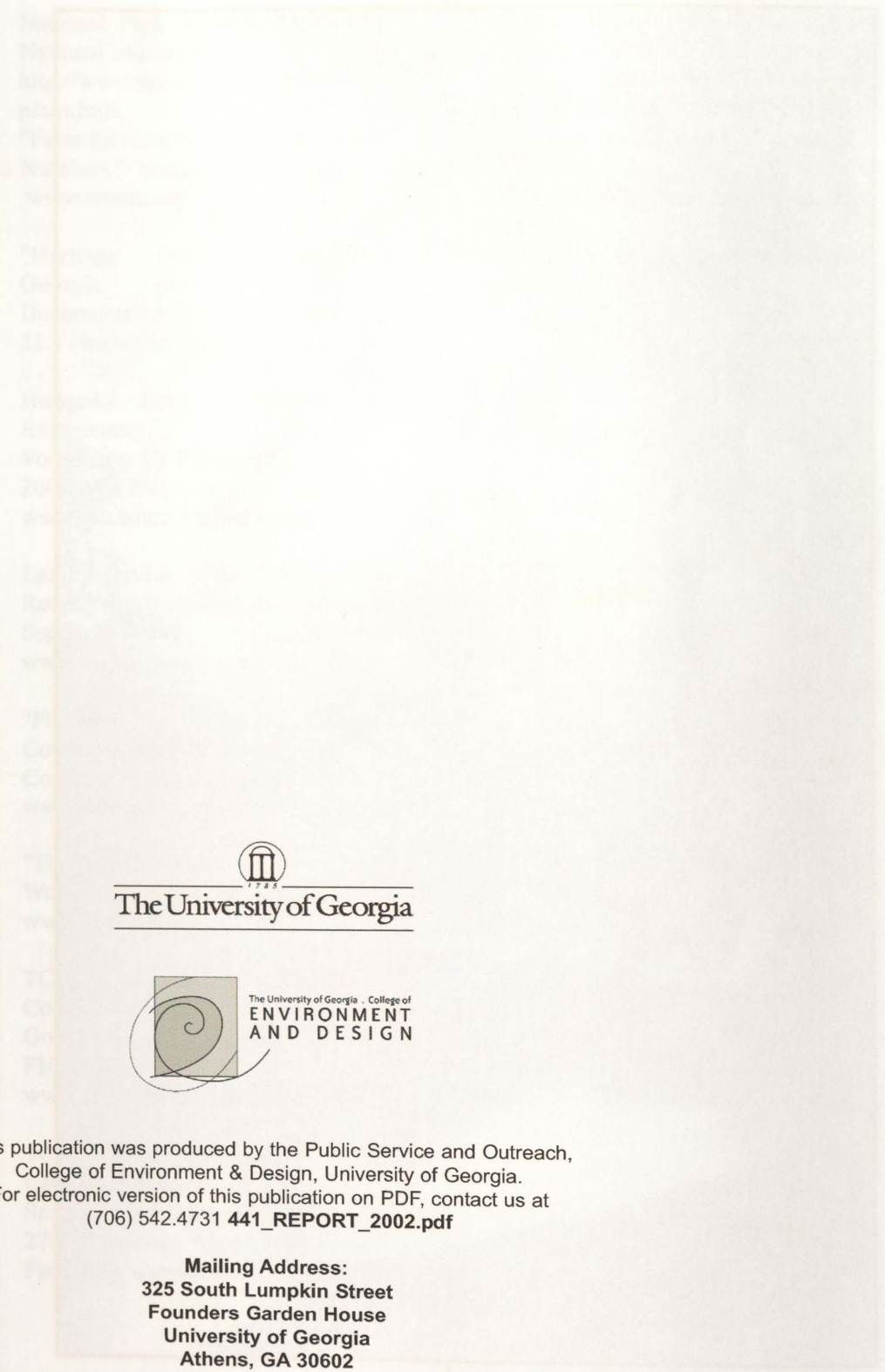
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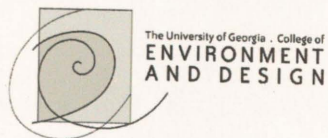
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