



New Opportunity to Vote on School Bond Referendum

At the January 9th Board of Education Meeting, the Board adopted a resolution to call for a vote for a new bond referendum in the amount of \$125 million. The bond referendum vote will be held on **March 20th**.

There was an unsuccessful bond referendum for the same amount, \$125 million, in September of 2006. The bond was defeated by a 6 to 4 margin. However, only 11.3% of the population turned out for the vote.

Since then, the school district has worked with a consultant to revise its five-year facility plan.

(See related article on page 6)



Paulding County Builders Association Hosts Meeting to Discuss Impact Fees

On January 11th, the Paulding County Builders Association hosted a meeting to share information on the Georgia Development Impact Act. Attendees of the meeting included members of the Paulding County Builders Association Board of Directors; members of the Paulding County Board of Commissioners, including Chairman Jerry Shearin; members of the Paulding County Board of Education, including Chairman Sammy McClure; Superintendent of Paulding County School District, Trudy Sowar; and others.

Perry Lee, president of the Paulding County Builders Association, said that many counties have come to regard impact fees as a solution to

What is the current state of the Paulding County School District?

- Currently, the Paulding County School District is the 16th largest district in the state of Georgia.
- The Paulding County School District will serve more than 25,700 students during the 2006-07 school year.
- Paulding County School District students make up 20% of the county's overall population and 30% of county residents are under the age of 18.
- There are currently about 280 mobile units (classrooms) in use throughout the Paulding County School District. That means 6,500 students are attending elementary, middle, and high school classes in mobile units.
- The school district currently has (includes the north Paulding middle school campus – which is being built) 1,272 classrooms, excluding mobile units.
- The school district needs 766 new classrooms, in addition to the 1,272 and the 283 mobile classrooms currently in use, to meet the demands of growing student enrollment.

county issues, but quite often that is not the case as impact fees are frequently misunderstood.

To ensure understanding of impact fees among county decision makers, the Builders Association invited Deron R. Hicks, an attorney with Page Scrantom, Sprouse, Tucker & Ford, P.C., to talk about current state legislation regarding impact fees.

Read on for some of the highlights from Mr. Hicks' speech...

Continued... See Impact Fees on page 5)

Inside this issue:

<i>County Transportation and Comprehensive Plans</i>	2
<i>Government Accomplishments Align with Planning for Paulding Goals</i>	3
<i>County Growth and Development</i>	4
<i>Calendar</i>	5
<i>School District Revises Five-Year Facility Plan</i>	6
<i>New Industrial Parks Coming</i>	8
<i>Hiram's Future Shines Bright</i>	9
<i>Welcome New Chamber President and CEO</i>	11

How can you register to vote?

1. Visit the Paulding County Registrar's Office Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The office is located at: 120 East Memorial Drive, Suite B, Dallas, Georgia 30132.
2. Visit the Department of Public Safety (driver's license locations) or libraries.
3. Mail applications to the Paulding County Registrar's Office or the Georgia Secretary of State. Applications can be located at the Georgia Secretary of State website (<http://www.sos.state.ga.us/>). Scroll over the "Elections" link, select "Voter Registration," then select "Voter Registration Application" from the left-hand navigation bar.

Planning for Paulding, Inc. Funding Partners

Diamond Level

*



Platinum Level

Gold Level

*Community Trust Bank
Georgia Power Company
*HomeTown Bank

Silver Level

Jeriel Investment, Inc.
*Temco Associates

Bronze Level

Cobb EMC
Regions Bank
Rountree Law Firm

Friends Level

Arrowhead Development
Ellis Astin Grading Company
Elrod Garden Center
Georgia State Bank
Park West Realty, Inc.
Paulding Quick Bail
Raker Construction Co.
Jaydee Austin Smith
SouthTrust Bank
Sunbelt Fasteners, Inc.

* Indicates **Commitment to Success Partners** who have pledged support over five years.

Paulding County Transportation Plan in Development

The Paulding County Department of Transportation (DOT) is working with a consulting firm, Reynolds, Smith and Hill, Inc., to perform a 25-year comprehensive transportation plan study. The plan will include a list of recommended projects, transportation policies and strategies, and a master plan for trails and greenways.

The Paulding DOT formed a Transportation Plan Stakeholder Committee comprised of citizens and representatives from the business community, civic groups, Paulding County Airport Authority, Paulding Chamber of Commerce, school system, and faith-based and non-profit groups. The Transportation Plan Stakeholder Committee will provide input to Reynolds, Smith and Hill as they prepare the 25-year transportation plan.

Reynolds, Smith and Hill will also work closely with a Technical Committee consisting of Paulding County DOT Director, Scott Greene; the

Paulding County Community Development Department; the Georgia Department of Transportation; the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA); Douglas County DOT; Cobb County DOT; the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC); and representatives from Hiram, Dallas, and Braswell.

At a joint meeting of the Transportation Plan Stakeholder Committee and the Technical Committee, Paulding County DOT Director, Scott Greene explained that the county has a unique opportunity for proactive planning and to ensure that environmental values are protected. He added that the project team would be asking committee members for their perspective throughout the year-long plan development process.

Paulding County Board of Commissioners Chairman, Jerry Shearin, will speak at the Planning for Paulding Town Hall Meeting on Monday, March 5th at 7 p.m. at Chattahoochee Technical College.

The public is invited to attend.

Paulding County Community Development Department Prepares a 20-Year Comprehensive County Plan

The Paulding County Community Development Department is in the process of preparing a 20-year comprehensive plan as required by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. The Act requires all county and municipal governments in the state of Georgia to develop a comprehensive plan that includes the following elements:

Population
Economic Development
Housing
Natural Resources
Cultural Resources
Community Facilities and Services
Intergovernmental Coordination
Transportation
Land Use

The cities of Braswell, Dallas, and Hiram will be included in the plan.

The Paulding County Community Development Department recently prepared a major update to the comprehensive plan in 2002-03 with revisions in 2005. The Community Development Department is currently working with the Coosa Valley Regional Development Commission to complete a plan that will span from 2006 through 2026.



County Government's Accomplishments Align with Planning for Paulding's Goals

by Jerry Shearin, Chairman of the Board of Commissioners



Paulding County Board of Commissioners Chairman, Jerry Shearin

“Planning for Paulding had a dream to make our county a better place to live and work in the future. County government shares these ideals and is working to implement many, if not all, of the goals and strategies for our future.”

Jerry Shearin

Planning for Paulding, Inc. (PfP) is almost four years old. Many of you remember how this all began. I sure do. A group of interested citizens came to see me in 2002 to ask for help from county government. Not monetary help mind you, but support, both informational and morale.

Over the next two years there were public meetings, data gathering, planning, more public meetings, goals set, dates for these goals to be met, and finally a last public meeting where all of these plans were presented to the citizen working-group. Every step of the way elected officials and/or staff of the county government were present to answer questions, clarify county policy, and listen to citizens' ideas. Hundreds of citizens spent thousands of hours formulating plans for the future of this county.

It is amazing how the final plan effectively laid-out PfP's goals. Also, it put into a working document the dreams and aspirations of a present and future GREAT county. Since these meetings, many of the goals have been met. Clearly, many more are on the horizon. Things like a community that provides jobs for our residents, better roads, more parks, and green space. Also mentioned during these meetings were a future airport and reservoir. All of these things are now in sight.

Every few years the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC) predicts business growth for the foreseeable future. They gather data and use their crystal ball to predict trends, etc. Last year they predicted that Paulding would lead metro-Atlanta in business growth through 2025.

This is no small achievement, considering where we have come from (almost dead last). This echoes a major goal of PfP - job creation.

Paulding's roads and traffic continue to be much discussed. Surface streets and county roads receive the lion's share of our local tax dollars. State and federal money for their roads is starting to come in too. PfP discussed roads and traffic extensively. The consensus was that county and state officials should push for funding to unclog their roads.

Since the final PfP meeting we have completed the Bill Carruth Parkway, which cost in excess of \$13 million. Design and engineering for the East Hiram Parkway is almost complete with its +/- \$20 million price tag. Plans are underway for major up-grades to almost every state and federal road, as well as a potential connector to a new I-75 interchange (which will serve Paulding residents almost exclusively). When it's all said and done, we will receive over \$100 million in road improvements through state and federal grants in the next few years.

Parks and green space dominated the news in 2006. We built a new park in Hiram (Leggett Park), a new equestrian center (The Arena at Paulding Meadows), purchased land for our next mega-park (Burnt Hickory Park at Cochran Farm), and of course the voters approved a bond issue for more than 7,000 acres of green space. The green space will create a green-belt on the west side of the county, which will be protected in perpetuity. PfP envisioned this very thing. In fact,

three members of PfP's original cast of characters (Cathy Dameron, Ted Paris, and Adam Gregory) served on the green-space committee that helped pass the referendum. Their efforts and the efforts of many others will be a catalyst toward ensuring Paulding will be the "greenest" county in metro-Atlanta forever.

The airport's construction finally began and phase I will be completed by December 2008. PfP recognized the need for this important business development center. The "Airport Plan" envisions a live-work-play environment in excess of 10,000 acres. There will be green-belts, commercial and business parks, retail areas, and some limited high-end residential areas. Every bit of this will be facilitated with federal and state dollars, and public/private partnerships.

The Richland Creek Reservoir is getting closer to reality every day. Our consultants believe we will have a Federal Reservoir Permit in-hand by summer 2008. If so, we will have cut the time in half of most permits received. PfP recognized the importance of Paulding having a water supply of our own. The county has worked diligently to make this reservoir a reality through our consultants in Atlanta and Washington. We continue to push for the permit that allows its construction.

PfP had a dream to make our county a better place to live and work in the future. County government shares these ideals and is working to implement many, if not all, of the goals and strategies for our future.

County Growth and Development: A Planning for Paulding Perspective

It has been almost a year since I became executive director of Planning for Paulding, Inc. I feel privileged to be able to work in a position where I can serve the residents of the community. I truly believe in the Vision that the citizens of the county laid out for Planning for Paulding, Inc. nearly four years ago. I am proud of the way that our business, community, education, faith-based, government, and non-profit leaders work with the best interests and welfare of county residents as their priority. Many of their efforts align with the goals of Planning for Paulding, Inc.

Planning for Paulding, Inc.'s Four Key Benchmarks are:

- To improve education for all ages.
- To reduce the gap between Paulding County and the Atlanta Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) in the area of per capita income. Per capita income is the total amount of income in the county divided by the number of people in the county. (Basically, we want the residents of the county to have opportunities to earn higher wages.)
- To increase business investment and jobs in the county in order to reduce pressure on residential taxes.
- To reduce the number of Paulding County residents who commute outside of the county to work each day.

Each of Planning for Paulding, Inc.'s key benchmarks has a vision statement and strategies to support moving it from a vision to becoming a reality.

Key Benchmark 1: Education

One strategy that Planning for Paulding, Inc. adopted in the area of improving education is to encourage Paulding County citizens, government, the school district, and the Board of Education; as well as state government, to eliminate overcrowding in schools. The school district and Board of Education is attempting to do that with a new five-year facilities plan that will help accommodate a rapidly growing student population. This plan makes the best use of existing properties and facilities, while maximizing state government contributions for new facilities and additions and renovations to existing facilities. (Please see related articles on page 1 and page 6.) However, the school district needs funds – \$237 million – to implement the five-year facility plan. So, they are asking citizens to vote for a \$125 million bond that will allow them to begin construction of new schools.

(Continued... See County Growth page 7)

Planning for Paulding, Inc. Advisory Board

Planning for Paulding, Inc. has recently formed an Advisory Board comprised of members of the community who support the organization's 20-year Vision Plan. Members of the Advisory Board include:

Ellis Astin, Ellis Astin Grading Company
 Pope Cleghorn, HomeTown Bank
 Charlie Watts, former member of Georgia House of Representatives
 Henry Luke, Luke Planning, Inc. (Facilitator)

The Steering Committee will continue to direct the daily activities of Planning for Paulding, Inc. Members of the Steering Committee include:

Chairman Tommie Graham, Jeriel Investment, LLC
 Vice Chairman Calvin Earwood, Sunbelt Fasteners, Inc.
 Alen Brown, Saint Laurence Education
 Joe Brownlee, Georgia Power
 Ed Cahill, GreyStone Power Corporation
 Sam Elrod, Elrod Garden Center
 T. Ruth Huggins, Park West Realty
 Lee Paris, Arrowhead Development
 Jaydee Austin Smith, Keller-Williams Realty
 Roy Lee Strickland, COMPANY NAME
 Jamie White, Court Appointed Special Advocate (CASA) Association

YOU'RE INVITED!
Town Hall Meeting
March 5, at 7 p.m.
Chattahoochee Technical College

Calendar of Events: March

- 3/1 — Chamber of Commerce First Thursday Forum, Paulding Community Center, 11:30 a.m. networking, noon lunch and speaker
- **3/5 — Planning for Paulding Town Hall Meeting, Chattahoochee Technical College, 7 p.m.**
- 3/5 — Dallas City Council Meeting, City Hall, 7 p.m.
- 3/6 — Hiram City Council Meeting, City Hall, 6:30 p.m.
- 3/7 — Home Builders' Association Meeting, Creekside Golf and Country Club, 11:30 a.m.
- 3/13 — Board of Education Meeting, 6:15 p.m.
- 3/13 — Board of Commissioners Meetings, Chamber of Commerce, 10 a.m. work session and 2 p.m. board meeting
- 3/14 — Planning for Paulding Steering Committee Meeting, Chamber of Commerce, 4 p.m.
- 3/15 — Planning for Paulding Faith-Based Alliance Meeting, St. Vincent de Paul, 9:30 a.m.
- 3/16 — Domestic Violence Task Force Meeting, Chamber of Commerce, noon
- 3/20 — **VOTE**
- **3/21 Tentative** — Airport Authority Meeting and Industrial Building Authority Meeting at the Chamber of Commerce, 11 a.m. and noon
- 3/26 — Meth Alliance Paulding (MAP), Hiram Community Center, 11:30
- 3/27 — Board of Education Meeting, 8:15 a.m.
- 3/27 — Board of Commissioners Meetings, Chamber of Commerce, 10 a.m. work session and 7 p.m. board meeting
- 3/28 — Collaborative for Children and Families, Chamber of Commerce, 9 a.m.

Paulding County Builders Association Hosts Meeting to Discuss Impact Fees

(continued from page 1)

What is an impact fee? Mr. Hicks explained that an impact fee is a fee paid by developers for system improvements to serve new growth and development. These fees can not be collected any earlier than upon issuance of a building permit.

Who can impose an impact fee? In the state of Georgia, only counties or municipalities may impose an impact fee. School boards and development authorities can not impose impact fees.

What can impact fees be used for? Impact fees can only be used for system improvements for the community at large. The idea is that the burden of system improvements will be distributed among many developers. However, project improvements that affect a single project are still attributable to the developer of that specific project.

Impact fees can be used for public facilities only:

- Water supply production, treatment, and distribution facilities
- Waste water collection, treatment, and disposal facilities
- Roads, streets, and bridges
- Parks and recreation areas
- Public safety facilities, such as fire and police stations
- Libraries

Impact fees can only be used for an improvement that has a lifespan greater than 10 years. However, the fees must be used within six years of collection or they must be refunded. Impact fees can not be used to cover the costs of operations, personnel, or maintenance for any facilities. Impact fees can not be used for schools.

How are impact fees adopted?

Develop a Comprehensive County Plan: In order to adopt impact fees, a county or municipality must adopt a comprehensive county plan with a capital improvements element. The plan must include a minimum of a five-year work plan. Essentially, the county or municipality must provide a plan detailing exactly what the county's needs are, the associated costs, and plans for implementation.

Form an Advisory Committee: This committee meets with experts on impact fees, gathering as much knowledge as they can in order to make a recommendation to the county or municipality.

Hold Public Hearings: The county or municipality must hold at least two public hearings that are at least two weeks apart. Typically, three to four public meetings are held.

(Continued... See Impact Fees on page 10)



Visit our website:
www.planningforpaulding.org

Paulding County School District Revises Five-Year Facility Plan

The Paulding County School District recently submitted a revised preliminary five-year facility plan to the members of the Paulding County Board of Education for review.

The revised preliminary five-year facility plan will be submitted to a Georgia Department of Education (DOE) facility survey team for approval on February 27, 2007. The results will be available on March 13, 2007. If the facility survey team accepts the plan, the members of the Paulding County Board of Education will vote to accept or decline the plan at the March 13, 2007 Board of Education Meeting. Then, the plan will be submitted to the Georgia State Board of Education for approval.

The revised preliminary five-year facility plan spans from school year 2006-07 to school year 2010-11. The Paulding County School District projects that student enrollment will increase by nearly 9,000 students during this five-year time frame. The current population of 25,774 students is projected to grow to 34,563 students.

- Elementary school enrollment is expected to increase by 3,917 students – from 12,690 students in SY2006-07 to 16,607 in SY2010-11.
- Middle school enrollment is expected to increase by 2,526 students – from 6,067 students in SY2006-07 to 8,593 in SY2010-11.
- High school enrollment is expected to increase by 2,346 students – from 7,017 students in SY2006-07 to 9,363 in SY2010-11.

The former five-year facility plan called for:

- Construction of six new elementary schools
- Construction of two new middle schools
- Construction of one new high school

Total cost: \$257 million

The new five-year facility plan calls for:

- Construction of five new elementary schools
- Additions at a minimum of two elementary schools
Modifications of elementary school media centers
Construction of two new middle schools
- Additions at a minimum of five middle schools
- Additions at four high schools

Total cost: \$237 million

There is a \$20 million difference which primarily is due to maximizing use of existing facilities through additions and renovations rather than purchasing land, developing the land, and building a new high school facility.

After the unsuccessful bond referendum in September of 2006, the Paulding County School District asked Dr. Jerry Rochelle, former director of facilities for the State of Georgia, to review the plan. The school district requested that Dr. Rochelle assess facility needs in light of the defeat of the bond. Based on his recommendations, the school district developed an updated five-year facility plan that could maximize use of existing facilities and help maximize access to state funding.



**Superintendent of
Paulding County Schools,
Trudy Sowar**

Marty Turner, Executive Director of Facilities for the school district says, "We were able to save more than \$20 million. We are being financially responsible with taxpayer dollars. We plan to make additions to current sites that we already own, saving money on the cost of land and development. We're building up instead of out whenever we can."

Mr. Turner says the plan calls for two-story facilities at Herschel Jones Middle School, South Paulding Middle School, East Paulding High School, and Hiram High School. North Paulding High School and South Paulding High School are already two-story facilities.

In addition to providing capacity for the growth in the student population, the new five-year plan also helps to make middle and high school facilities more comparable. Once construction is completed, all middle schools will be able to support a population of 900 students with 57 classrooms at each school. All high schools will be able to support a population of 1,800 students with 94 classrooms at each school. New elementary schools will support 925 students with 60 classrooms at each new school. However, many of the older schools were built in the 1950s and even with additions, could not accommodate such a high student population. It is often the case that there is not enough land available to accommodate new buildings.

If the bond referendum is not successful in March, Mr. Turner predicts double sessions in six elementary schools by 2008 and the addition of mobile units at all schools district-wide. Mr. Turner cautions, "We will also have to revisit double sessions at middle schools and high schools. Hosting the north Paulding high school freshman class at the north Paulding middle school campus will only be a band-aid for a couple of years... It is not a permanent solution."

(Continued... See Facility Plan page 7)

Facility Plan (continued from page 6)

When asked for comment, Trudy Sowar, Superintendent of Paulding County School District, said, "In 2006, more than 4,500 lots were platted and building permits were granted for more than 2,800 single-family homes. More families are coming to Paulding County. That means more students are coming. Paulding County is a wonderful place to live, work, and raise a family. The citizens of the county need to ensure that we remain able to provide quality education in a sound, safe environment."

Facility Plan Comparison Chart

FORMER FIVE-YEAR FACILITY PLAN	NEW FIVE-YEAR FACILITY PLAN
Total cost: \$257 million	Total cost: \$237 million
Elementary Schools	\$105 million
Construction of six new elementary schools	Construction of five new elementary schools
	Additions at a minimum of two elementary schools
	Modifications of elementary school media centers
Middle Schools	\$70 million
Construction of two new middle schools	Construction of two new middle schools
	Additions at a minimum of 5 middle schools
High Schools	\$61 million
Construction of one new high school	Additions at four high schools

County Growth and Development: A Planning for Paulding Perspective

In September of 2006, the school board's bond referendum (also for \$125 million) was defeated. However, it is important to note that only 11.3% of the residents voted. I urge you to get the facts about the school district and its plan, so that you can make an informed decision and vote on March 20th.

Key Benchmarks 2, 3, and 4:

- Increase Per Capita Income and Jobs;
- Distribute Ad Valorem Property Tax Burden More Equitably Between Residential and Commercial Base;
- Decrease Commuting

The Planning for Paulding, Inc. strategy that addresses these key benchmarks is simple: encourage and support the creation and expansion of businesses and industries within the county. Bringing more business and industry – especially the right kinds of business and industry – into the county will provide residents with higher wage-earning opportunities, shift some of the tax burden from residential property owners (Paulding's tax base is currently 79.66% residential), and allow residents to work where they live (68% of citizens commute outside the county to work).

There are several groups within the county that are trying to attract new business and industry into the county: Paulding County Chamber of Commerce (see article on page 11), the Paulding County Board of Commissioners (see article on page 3), the Paulding County Industrial Building Authority, the Paulding County Regional Airport Authority, and several private partnerships.

What are the industries and businesses that are currently in our county?

The top five industries in Paulding County:

Industry	% in County	Avg. Annual Wage
Retail Trade	18.7%	\$22,437
Educational Svcs.	17.5%	\$32,555
Construction	13.8%	\$36,216
Hotel & Food Svcs.	10.6%	\$11,613
Manufacturing	5.7%	\$40,934

(Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics, Annual Industry Distribution of Jobs and Average Wage in 2005(NAICS))

The top 10 employers (for profit businesses) in Paulding County:

- | | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| 1. Wal-Mart | 6. Target |
| 2. WellStar Health System | 7. Kroger |
| 3. Aiken Grading Company | 8. Publix |
| 4. BellSouth | 9. Home Depot |
| 5. Metromont Prestress Company | 10. Sam's Club |

(Source: Paulding County Chamber of Commerce)

There are several things to note about the existing industries and businesses in our county. Retail trade is the number one industry in our county and six of the top ten employers are retailers. Retailers have located to our county because of the growth. Wal-Mart and Target would not have located in Paulding County without our population growth and we would not have so many restaurants to choose from either. However, as you see from the chart, retailers and hotel and food service industries offer a lower wage than other types of businesses.

Educational services is the second highest industry in the county. While the employment chart above lists the top 10 for profit businesses, the top two employers in the county are the Paulding County school District

(Continued... See County Growth page 10)

New Industrial Parks Coming to Dallas and Hiram

New Business Park to be Built in Dallas

A group of local residential developers and businessmen, Lee Paris, Ted Paris, and Brian Stover, have joined forces to form West Paulding Land Group, LLC. The group has begun development of a 200-acre business and industrial park (tentatively named West Paulding Business Park) within the city limits of Dallas.

The group recognized the need for diversification of development within the county and the need to bring more industry and jobs to the county. "We made a deliberate decision to develop for industry rather than to develop a subdivision," says Mr. Paris. "This land could have yielded 500 home lots... Instead, we have created a plan for a business and industrial park."

The business park should attract diverse businesses. The initial phase of the business park is approximately 25 acres. Seven acres (of the 25 acres), is designed to accommodate restaurants and retailers. There will also be 18 acres (of the 25 acres) that will be developed for small- to mid-sized businesses. The remainder of the property, 175 acres, will be available to accommodate larger business such as light manufacturing.

The group expects to construct several "spec. buildings" within the first year and already has commitments from several businesses that are anxious to locate on the site. A "spec. building" is a building that is already constructed and has is ready for occupancy. The size of each "spec. building" will range from 6,500 square feet to 12,000 square feet. The business park site will be large enough that it could encompass a building as large as 500,000 square feet.

The park will be centrally located between the new Paulding County Regional Airport and the new Paulding County Government Complex. Construction of the airport is already underway with the terminal area and runway opening in late 2008 and completion expected in 2010. The Paulding County Government Complex is

expected to be complete in late 2008.

The group says, "We want to make it easy for small, local business owners -- especially those who will serve the downtown Dallas area, the new airport and county government complex -- to be successful. In addition, we want to provide space for larger national and international companies who want to take advantage of all that Paulding County has to offer. We want to offer a turn-key product for them. We will do all the work so they don't have to find land, develop it, get zoning, find a builder, justify financing, and all that. They can just pick the lot and keep running their business in the meantime."



West Memorial Business Park

New Business Park to be Built in Hiram

Lee Paris is also part of another group, Hiram Communities, LLC., that he formed with his brothers, Ben and Ted Paris, and another local residential developer, Stan Stephens. This group plans to develop a business and industrial park within the Hiram city limits. This park will be located across from Metromont and other established industry-related business in Hiram.

The first phase of this development will encompass about 57 acres. That amount of acreage could have yielded about 200 home sites. The Hiram Communities group also plans to build several "spec. buildings" within the first year. These buildings will be similar in size and construction to the "spec. buildings" at the Dallas business park. However, the Hiram business park will not be developed for retail establishments. The group is hoping to attract light industry and distribution businesses.

The business park's proximity to the Whitaker Intermodal Terminal in Austell (about seven miles) makes it an ideal location for businesses that use tractor trailer-to-rail car transportation systems. From the terminal, business will also have access to the port of Savannah and overseas freighters. The group is hoping to offer direct rail access, too. It will also be working with Norfolk Southern Railroad to close two of the most dangerous railroad crossings in the state and replace them with a new, safer, state-of-the-art signaled crossing.

Hiram's Future Shines Bright

It appears that the city of Hiram is alive and well. Beginning with the election of a new mayor — Mayor Carmen Rollins — many positive changes have taken place in Hiram over the past year, both internally and externally. It was apparent to all who visited the city during several first annual Hiram community events in 2006 that changes were on the horizon.

Community Events:

Olde Towne Hiram Day in September hosted an estimated 10,000 visitors who enjoyed a day filled with great food, entertainment, and crafts. Later in the fall the streets of downtown Hiram were again lined with spectators for the 2006 *Hiram High School Homecoming Parade*.

And last but not least, downtown Hiram shined with its 1st *Annual Olde Towne Hiram Tree Lighting* event. The town was decked out in lights, garland, and bows as Santa and Mrs. Claus arrived by horse and carriage to greet delighted children of all ages. The downtown merchants offered up holiday goodies as the crowd was entertained with an outdoor showing of the movie "The Polar Express". The festivities concluded with Mayor Carmen Rollins and Chief Johnny Shirley lighting the beautifully adorned 35-foot tree.

Community Improvements:

In October, *Hiram Elementary School* received some much deserved attention. Through combined efforts and cooperation from the City of Hiram, Keep Paulding Beautiful, The Home Depot and Kaboom, and hundreds of volunteers; the school, which educates over 500 Hiram students each year, shines brighter than ever. Volunteers landscaped the front entrances, built a complete playground with an outdoor learning center, arbor, and picnic tables. The city of Hiram used Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) funds to pave a large area in front of the school to allow traffic to flow unimpeded at the intersection of Seaboard Avenue and Oak Street.

Hiram Rosenwald School Museum/Community Center was also renovated this year thanks to funds contributed by the City of Hiram and Paulding County. The museum hosted its first outdoor music and art festival in the summer of 2006.

Ben Hill Strickland Park also received improvements in 2006. Picnic pavilions received new tin roofs, tennis courts were resurfaced, and many more facility and landscaping improvements are planned for the coming year.

Infrastructure Improvements:

The city used SPLOST funds to resurface the roadway on *Dallas Street* and also to replace deteriorating waterlines. This was only the first of many improvements of this type planned for Hiram in

the future under Mayor Carmen Rollins administration.

Work was performed in *Echo Point Subdivision* to correct storm water drainage issues through a coordinated effort of the City of Hiram and Paulding County's storm water division. Numerous other drainage, water, and street related issues were also addressed last year and similar projects are planned for 2007.

Hiram Police Department:

To keep pace with the continuing growth of Hiram, its police department reorganized under the leadership of its new chief, Johnny Shirley. Safety and efficiency was increased with the addition of several new positions. The department now has 14 mandated officers including a captain, two sergeants, and two full-time investigators. They also received much needed equipment, including five new state-of-the-art patrol vehicles and updated uniforms. The police department is working hard to make Hiram a safer place through increased patrols and comprehensive training. They are also striving to better serve the citizens of Hiram through their involvement in community programs and events such as Meth Alliance of Paulding (M.A.P.), Hiram Elementary D.A.R.E. program, and Neighborhood Watch programs.

Community Involvement

Mayor Rollins has made it clear that she welcomes community involvement. The public is encouraged to attend the monthly city council meetings held at City Hall on the first Tuesday of each month at 6:30. There has been a noticeable increase in the number of citizens attending. It appears that people are realizing that their opinions are important to this administration and that they will be given an opportunity to be heard.

It was an exciting year in the City of Hiram and according to Mayor Carmen Rollins, the city is planning many more events, improvements, and updates for the year ahead. The future is looking bright for the City of Hiram.



County Growth and Development

(continued from page 7)

and Paulding County Government. The school district employs more than 3,000 employees (about 53% are teachers) and the government employs about 850 employees.

Construction is the third highest industry in the county comprising nearly 14% of jobs within the county. And, of the top three industries, construction provides the highest average annual wage (\$36,216).

There are also many businesses in our county that support the construction industry. I am currently enrolled in the Leadership Paulding program offered by the Chamber of Commerce. Jonathon Jones, of Elite Engineering, P.C., and Elite Development Services, Inc. is also participating in Leadership Paulding. I recently asked him how growth in the county had impacted his business. He explained that after he graduated from Georgia Tech, he worked for a civil engineering company for a few years but had always wanted to establish his own business. In 2002, he started Elite Engineering with only himself and two others and began offering land planning, civil engineering, and surveying services. Today, he has two companies, both located in Paulding, and employs nearly 30 people. At first, his projects were located in Forsyth and Fulton counties; today, much

“The number one impact on the success of my company was residential growth.”

*Travis Ragsdale,
WADE Waste And
Disposal Experts*

of his business is in Paulding County. Jones says, “I want to ensure that new growth is properly and safely designed and developed.” He adds, “Growth is the generator for the local economy. With growth, there are growing pains, but what growth also brings is financial support for government and education through property and sales taxes. With smart, controlled growth, growing pains can be lessened and managed.”

Travis Ragsdale, of WADE Waste And Disposal Experts, is another member of the Leadership Paulding program and an entrepreneur whose business has been positively impacted by growth in the county. Ragsdale started his business in 1991 with just himself and a pickup truck. Today, his company employs more than 20 people and he has ten refuse trucks and services about 16,000 residences a week. “The number one impact on the success of my company was residential growth,” Ragsdale says.

In recent years, Paulding County has been going through some “growing pains,” but that same growth brings many opportunities for existing and new residents. I hope that as you read the articles in this newsletter you will recognize the efforts of our county leadership to manage our growth in positive ways that continue to make Paulding County a highly desirable place to call home.

Paulding County Builders Association Hosts Meeting to Discuss Impact Fees

(continued from page 5)

How are impact fees calculated?

Impact fees are calculated based upon a set “level of service standard.” That simply means that you can’t provide services that are intended for new residents (remember, impact fees are only to be used for new growth and development) that are either higher or lower than the services provided for current residents. Counties and municipalities must maintain the same standards for all residents and these standards should match real-world service levels.

Impact fees are based on population projections for a specific area of the county or municipality. Counties and municipalities must determine the facilities that are needed, the cost of the facilities, and determine the amount of the costs that are directly attributable to new growth and development. Then, they must divide the cost by the projected population to get the cost per new resident. This will become the maximum amount allowable for the impact fee. The county or municipality may elect to impose an impact fee at a lesser amount.

Some facts about impact fees:

- Impact fees can not be used to build schools.
- It does not matter how long you may have lived in a county or municipality, if you move to an impact fee area (an area of new growth and development, even if it is within the same area you

reside) you will incur an impact fee.

- All taxpayers pay for the costs that are not covered by impact fees such as the operations, personnel, and maintenance of new facilities.
- Impact fees don’t slow growth, they typically encourage residential growth because they provide funds for system improvements that make an area desirable.
- Impact fees can hinder business and industrial growth. If impact fees are waived for business or industry, the cost of the impact of the new growth and development is passed on to the taxpayer.

Questions to Consider Before Imposing Impact Fees

- How long is the growth expected to continue?
- What will the impact be on residential, commercial, and industrial development?
- What are traditional funding sources? Are they successfully providing funds for system-wide services?
- How will the county or municipality manage the additional costs to administer impact fees?
- How will the taxpayers pay for the operations, personnel, and maintenance costs that aren’t eligible for impact fee funding?

Welcoming a New President to the Paulding County Chamber of Commerce

Planning for Paulding, Inc. is pleased that the Paulding County Chamber of Commerce has recently acquired a new President, Carolyn Delamont. We asked Mrs. Delamont to introduce herself and tell us a little about what we can expect from the Chamber in the coming year.

Please allow me to introduce myself. I am Carolyn Delamont, and I am honored to have been selected to be the new President of the Paulding County Chamber of Commerce. I have come with great anticipation of the wonderful opportunities for growth and development here, as well as for the exciting challenges that we are facing together.

Here is just a little bit of information about me that may be interest to you:

- I have over 20 years of progressive experience as a Chamber of Commerce executive and management professional.
- I am honored to have a notable record of success in community development, business development, community-assets marketing, fiscal accountability, team-building, staff development, and problem-solving.
- In my previous position as president of the Barrow County (Georgia) Chamber, I was able to guide that

organization to triple its membership, increase its annual budget by over 300%, raised over \$500,000 to fund economic development, and develop and implement several successful new programs and fund-raising projects.

- Among other credentials, one that is particularly significant to Paulding County is that I am a recent graduate of the Atlanta Regional Commission Leadership Institute, which covers twenty selected counties in the Greater Atlanta area, including Paulding.

Some of the county-specific goals that I will be working towards are:

- Building stronger intra-county relationships by working very closely with the County and cities in Paulding County.
- Promoting new industrial development and growth, particularly emphasizing the exciting new Paulding County Airport scheduled to open in 2008.
- Encouraging, supporting, and assisting the Paulding County School District with it's unprecedented growth.

Some of the Chamber-specific goals that I have already begun planning towards are:

- Evaluating and updating the 3-5 year long-range vision and plan for growing the

Paulding County Chamber into an award-winning, world-class organization.

- Building and expanding Chamber membership to the standards and quality that will make it an even more powerful force in both county and regional affairs.
- Developing and implementing viable programs and additional value benefits for our members and optimize the impact of the Chamber throughout our whole community, and across the entire region.

Some of the Chamber activities that are scheduled for this year's business plan are:

- Monthly "First Thursday Forums" are scheduled with outstanding and informative speakers.
- The 2007 legislation session is being observed to ensure good business practices for growing businesses.
- Completion and implementation of the "Entrepreneur Friendly" state-designation program.
- The Third-Annual Sporting Clay Tournament on March 18th.
- The 46th Annual Chamber Membership Celebration on May 10th.
- The Annual Chamber of Commerce Golf Tournament.



Carolyn Delamont,
Paulding County
Chamber of Commerce
President and CEO

I want to thank to thank all those who have made it possible for me to be a part of the most exciting period of growth this county has ever seen. I would also like to extend an invitation, not only to businesses and organizations, but also to all of the fine citizens of Paulding County to come and visit us at our lovely Chamber facility at 455 Jimmy Lee Smith Parkway - Highway 278. We would be delighted to meet with you, give you a tour, and provide you with a wealth of information about Paulding County. I can promise you that once you see first-hand what your Paulding County member-businesses and organizations are doing, you too will become an avid "cheer-leader" for this wonderful place that we call home!



**By and For the Citizens of
Paulding County**

Planning for Paulding, Inc.
P.O. Box 368
Dallas, Georgia 30132
Phone: 678-363-3332
Fax: 678-363-3392
info@planningforpaulding.org

www.planningforpaulding.org

What is Planning for Paulding, Inc. ?

Planning for Paulding Inc., is a non-profit (501(c)(3)) community organization comprised of citizens, organizations, businesses, civic groups, government entities, churches, etc. who are dedicated to ensuring the best possible future for Paulding County and its citizens.

What does Planning for Paulding, Inc. do?

Planning for Paulding Inc. worked with county residents as they identified issues of concern and developed a long-term strategy for addressing those issues. This long-term strategy is supported by mid-term strategies that concentrate on six key areas: economic development, education, infrastructure, quality of life, government, and private sector leadership. Planning for Paulding, Inc. brings together stakeholders from within the community and challenges them to make the vision for the county come to life.

**Planning for Paulding Invites You to Attend our Town Hall Meeting
Monday, March 5 at Chattahoochee Technical College
Doors open at 6 p.m., Speakers begin at 7 p.m.**

Speakers include:

Dean Paul Benson, Chattahoochee Technical College, Paulding Campus

John Hall, Chairman of the Board of Directors, Paulding County Chamber of Commerce

Jerry Shearin, Chairman, Paulding County Board of Commissioners

Trudy Sowar, Superintendent, Paulding County School District

Blake Swafford, Executive Director of the Industrial Building Authority and Director of the Paulding County Regional Airport

Question and answer session to be moderated by: Henry Luke of Luke Planning, Inc.

Sign Up to Receive the Planning for Paulding Newsletter

Name

Phone

Organization/Business Name

Fax

Address

E-mail

City, State, ZIP

Web site

Send to: Planning for Paulding, Inc., P.O. Box 368, Dallas, Georgia 30132

E-mail: info@planningforpaulding.org

Fax: 678-363-3392