



# **Rainbow City Comprehensive Plan Rainbow City, Alabama**

**Adopted September 25, 2007**



**Prepared by the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission**

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# **CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION**

## **Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan**

The primary purpose of the comprehensive plan is to provide direction for local public policy and planning implementation necessary for increasing quality of life and livability for a community's residents and visitors both presently and in the future. The comprehensive plan, also called a master plan, is the most basic public policy guide for a community and its development. All other plans, studies, and land use codes and ordinances should be adopted in accordance with the comprehensive plan and toward the promotion and advancement of its goals and objectives. A comprehensive plan consists of the following components:

1. an inventory and assessment of population and economic trends and community resources (such as schools, roads, public buildings, undeveloped land, constrained land, and natural resources);
2. a summary of community needs and goals; and
3. a coordinated strategy for the management or improvement of community resources and the future growth and development of the city.

The comprehensive plan serves two major purposes: to help local officials better understand growth and development trends and community problems; and to develop strategies to use available resources effectively when addressing local problems and building capacity for future growth. If the growth and development of a city can be compared to the construction of a house, then the comprehensive plan is the blueprint. It contains a list of building tools and materials (the inventory and assessment component), instructions on how to put the pieces together and in what order (the statement of goals, objectives, and policy recommendations), and a picture or image of the desired product (the conceptual future land use map).

## **The Benefits of the Comprehensive Plan**

A plan can provide many benefits to a community. For example, a comprehensive plan can and does:

1. draw attention to important community problems or needs;
2. promote the city to outside development interests;
3. communicate public policies to residents of the community;
4. help prioritize and coordinate investments in public improvements;
5. help minimize wasteful spending of tax dollars;
6. identify sources of funds that can be used to address local needs; and
7. serve as a guide for local zoning ordinances and other development codes.

Although a plan can offer many benefits to a community, it is important to remember that the plan is only as good as the information it contains, and can only benefit the community if it is used by the city and updated regularly to reflect changing needs and conditions. It is recommended that a community adopt a new comprehensive plan once every 10 years in order to accommodate changes in growth and development patterns and the most recent needs and desires for the community.

## Legal Authority

Alabama law requires that every municipal Planning Commission prepare and adopt a plan for the community (Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 8 of the Code of Alabama, 1975). Although the comprehensive plan is adopted by the Planning Commission, it should serve as the primary guide for the formulation of local public policy and for coordinating the future growth and development of the community. Therefore, the governing body of the community should be involved in the plan preparation process, or should be afforded an opportunity to review and comment on the draft plan before its adoption by the Planning Commission. In some communities, the City Council also has adopted the plan after its adoption by the Planning Commission. However, Alabama law recognizes only the Planning Commission's action on the plan, so adoption of the plan by a City Council cannot substitute for adoption by the Planning Commission.

According to Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 10 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, the Planning Commission may adopt a comprehensive plan in its entirety, or it may adopt individual sections or chapters of the plan as they are prepared. Before the plan or any section or portion of it may be adopted by the Planning Commission, a public hearing must be conducted. Alabama law does allow the Planning Commission to dispense with the public hearing, if the City Council conducts a public hearing on the plan or plan section prior to its adoption by the Planning Commission. Once the comprehensive plan has been adopted by the Planning Commission, an attested copy of the plan must be certified to the City Council and the Probate Judge.

The law also requires local zoning to be prepared in accordance with the comprehensive plan (Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 72 of the Code of Alabama, 1975). Some communities interpret this provision of law to mean that the zoning map and the future land use map in the comprehensive plan must be identical. However, this interpretation of the relationship between the zoning map and the comprehensive plan only constrains the plan's ability to guide future growth and development. The future land use map contained in the plan should be developed as a general depiction of desired local development patterns at the end of the planning period, which may be ten to twenty years into the future. Therefore, it should identify areas that will be more desirable for more intensive development after the supporting infrastructure improvements have been completed to allow such development. On the other hand, zoning should guide land uses and development to occur in areas that are suitable given existing conditions and limitations. This distinction between the future land use map contained in the comprehensive plan and the zoning map gives the zoning map legal authority to regulate current development, and allows the plan to serve as a guide for future zoning changes to provide for new growth and development.

The adoption of a comprehensive plan also gives the Planning Commission authority to review and approve the construction of public streets and squares, parks, public buildings, and public utilities (Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 11 of the Code of Alabama, 1975). If the Planning Commission determines that a proposal to construct such public facilities is not consistent with the comprehensive plan, it may disapprove the proposal and provide written notice of its findings to the City Council or the applicable governing authority. The City Council or applicable governing authority can overturn the Planning Commission's disapproval by a two-thirds majority vote of its entire membership.

## **Planning Process**

The comprehensive plan is a part of an ongoing process. A great comprehensive plan is the result of a team effort, attributed to the involvement of community leaders, citizens, community stakeholders, and the Planning Commission. The plan must involve a mechanism through which community needs, issues, concerns, and solutions are address and thoroughly examined. In the spring of 2005, the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) contracted with the City of Rainbow City to create a comprehensive plan in order to guide and direct land use and development in a logical manner, consistent with city goals and objectives.

To begin the planning process, an initial public hearing was called and conducted on April 25, 2005 in the Rainbow City Hall City Council Chambers. The meeting was used as an introductory planning session to inform City Council and the general public on the nature, benefits, and processes involved in creating and using a comprehensive plan for future land use and development in the city. The meeting also was used to gather public input about community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in what is referred to as a SWOT analysis. This information, along with statistical data, was recorded by staff and used as a foundation for the plan to build upon.

After the initial public hearing, EARPDC staff conducted a series of working sessions with the Rainbow City Planning Commission (RCPC) on a bi-monthly basis in order to keep RCPC updated on the plan's progress and for EARPDC staff to receive guidance and direction in the planning process.

## **Location**

Rainbow City is located in southern Etowah County at the junction of AL Highway 77 and US Highway 411, approximately 5 miles from Interstate 59 and the City of Gadsden. Convenient access to major economic markets and prominent highway routes should encourage economic prosperity. Approximately half the land in the city is undeveloped, leaving ample of room for growth and expansion.

## **General Information**

Rainbow City (pop. 8,607. 2000 Census) was incorporated on May 29, 1950. A rainbow is a symbol of beauty, hope, promise, growth, and prosperity, all of which have been characteristic of Rainbow City. Since its incorporation, the city has grown and prospered as an important commercial center and remains, today, one of the fastest growing cities in the state in both business and residential growth. As a major retail center, Rainbow City offers a variety of shops and stores to meet community needs and promote and enhance the shopping experience. Close proximity to Gadsden, a major metro market, and Interstate 59 should further stimulate commerce and open opportunities for new development.

According to the 2000 US Census, Rainbow City is one of the wealthiest communities in Alabama in terms of median household income and average housing costs. Approximately 45% of all

households earned a median household income of \$45K or above per year, while the county and state earned somewhat less at 33% and 37%, respectively. Census data also shows that approximately 52% of all housing in Rainbow City is valued over \$100,000 compared to 24% in the county, and 33% in the state.

Education rates high in Rainbow City as well. According to Census 2000 data, approximately 25% of the city's population earned a bachelor or graduate/professional degree, compared to 13% in the county and 15% in the state. John Jones Elementary School received awards for excellence in education from the Alabama State Department of Education and serves as an Alabama Reading Initiative School training site.

The city offers numerous opportunities for indoor and outdoor recreation. The community center, organizes a wide variety of social and recreational activities for people of all different ages and backgrounds. The bordering Coosa River offers choices for outdoor recreation such as boating, swimming, and fishing. Lake Henry Neely, located approximately 3 miles to the south on AL Highway 77 is considered one of the best fishing lakes in the state.

In summary, Rainbow City offers residents the comforts of small town living, with convenient access to the larger community of Gadsden, close proximity to important highway routes in the state, recreational opportunities, high quality housing, and high quality of life appeal.

## **Historical Background**

Prior to European influence the area of Rainbow City was home to the Creek Indian Nation, a Confederation of Indian Tribes banded together for the well-being and protection of its members. Around 1200 A.D the Creek Indians migrated from the southwest to occupy large regions of present day Georgia and Alabama and by 1500 spread throughout most of the southeast. The early 18<sup>th</sup> century marked the beginnings of European contact and the Creek began trading relations with Spanish, French, and British nationalities, however, the British eventually won primary influence and many tribes allied with the English against Cherokee and other Indian rivals. This period of peace between settlers and the Creek lasted until 1783 when, in an attempt to form a binding treaty, two Creek Chiefs, Tallassee and Cussetta, ceded land to the newly formed United States. This treaty spurred division among tribes and a war with the U.S., which eventually led to the end of the Creek Indian Nation in 1827. The decisive battle of this conflict was at Horseshoe Bend, located in north central Tallapoosa County, where on March 27, 1814 General Andrew Jackson lead a group of 5,000 volunteers, along with allied Cherokee and Creek Indians, to defeat a powerful Creek faction called the "Red Sticks". Today the battleground is a National Military Park reserved in commemoration of this historic event.

Etowah County and the Rainbow City area were first explored in 1540 by the Spanish voyager Hernando DeSoto on an expedition from Tali, in Marshall County to Sesqui, in St. Clair County. Today a bridge stands where the Pensacola Trading Path crossed the Coosa River in remembrance of DeSoto.

The first white settlers came to the county much later, in 1810, when the Coosa River and Big Wills Creek formed the boundary of the Cherokee Indian nation. From 1813 to 1814, during the Creek Indian War, General Andrew Jackson built a military road from the Tennessee River to the Upper Creek country in the location of present day Rainbow City. A paved highway there now marks the path that was laid by General Jackson on his way to fight the Creek Indians at Horseshoe Bend.

Around 1818, not long after Jackson's victory, settlers arrived from Georgia and the Carolinas and established farms, home sites, and trading posts near the Coosa River in an area known as Coosa Bend. The Coosa River played an important role in the settlement and development of the area. Influence from the industrial revolution spurred steel and iron production as stern wheelers and barges transported raw materials and finished products to and from the region's mills.

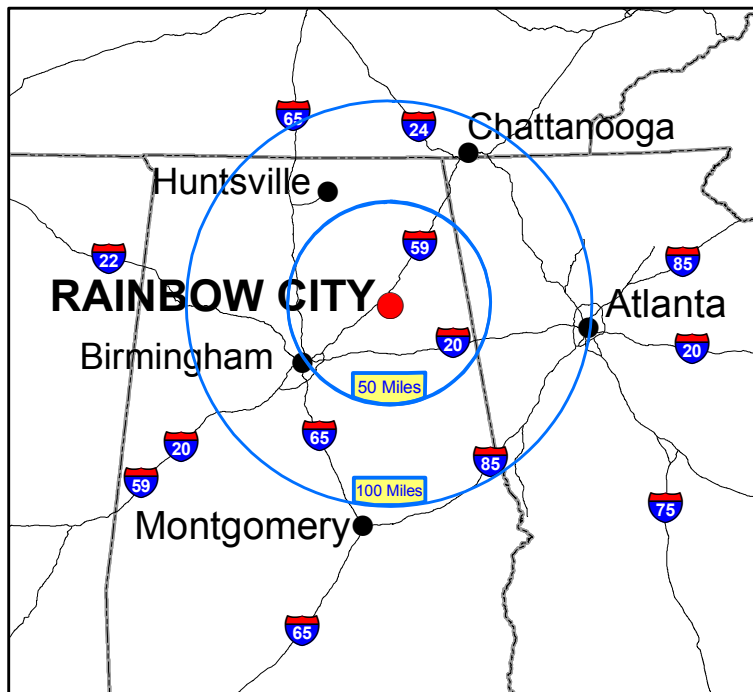
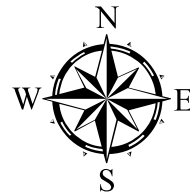
Etowah County was first named Bain County on December 7, 1866, but shortly thereafter, in 1868, it was abolished and re-established under its present name Etowah, which in the Cherokee language means "good tree" or "well-bearing tree". Two major trading routes in the region, Lister's Ferry Road and Gilberts Ferry Road, intersected at the Morgan's Crossroads Community (former Coosa Bend), present day Rainbow City. Morgan's Crossroads became a highly successful and self-sustaining community due to this prime location.

The Morgan's Crossroads Community became officially incorporated as Rainbow City on May 29, 1950. The Rainbow City origin remains debatable. Some people say the city was named after Rainbow Drive, which runs through the middle of the city. Others say the name was derived in commemoration of Alabama's Rainbow Division that fought in World War I. Mayor W.R. Smith was elected Rainbow City's first mayor in 1950. The next year a volunteer fire brigade was formed to provide fire protection for residents.

Today, Rainbow City is a vibrant, sustainable community. Quality of life ranks high as the city grows and prospers.



# MAP 1 LOCATION

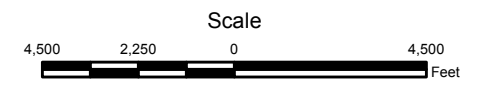


SOUTHEASTERN U.S.








# MAP 2 BASE MAP RAINBOW CITY ALABAMA

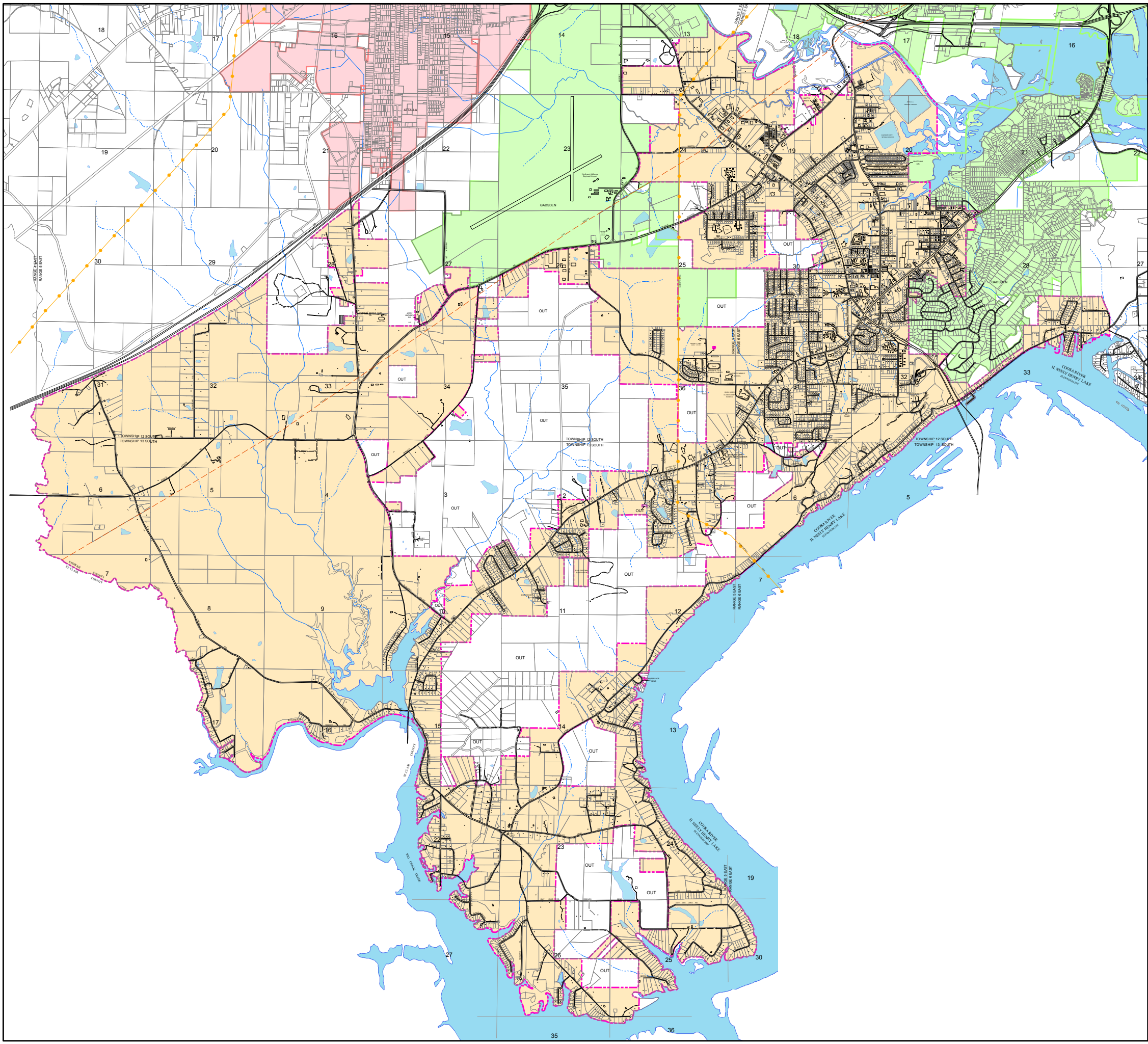


Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2006.

## Legend

-  Rainbow City Municipal Limits
-  Gadsden Municipal Limits
-  Attalla Municipal Limits

- REVISIONS:
- ORD. 349, 7/14/97
  - ORD. 362, 1/11/99
  - ORD. 363, 1/11/99
  - ORD. 364, 1/25/99
  - ORD. 365, 1/25/99
  - ORD. 366, 1/25/99
  - ORD. 367, 2/23/99
  - ORD. 368, 2/22/99
  - ORD. 375, 7/12/99
  - ORD. 376, 9/27/99
  - ORD. 384, 9/25/00
  - ORD. 385, 11/27/00
  - ORD. 398, 1/13/03
  - ORD. 390, 1/14/02
  - ORD. 402, 8/28/03
  - ORD. 403, 8/28/03
  - ORD. 405, 8/25/03
  - ORD. 406, 8/25/03
  - ORD. 407, 8/25/03
  - ORD. 408, 9/08/03
  - ORD. 417, 12/13/04
  - ORD. 420, 2/14/05
  - ORD. 422, 4/25/05
  - ORD. 424, 6/27/05
  - ORD. 430, 11/14/05
  - RESOLUTION 06-09, 10/23/06
  - ORD. 439, 11/13/06
  - ORD. 457, 12/10/07





## CHAPTER II: POPULATION

Population characteristics and trends play a pivotal role in the planning effort. Since people constitute a city, the general population creates a city’s identity, distinguishing it from other communities. Changes in population influence land use decisions, economic spending patterns and employment, public services, and needs for public improvements. Therefore, a clear understanding of existing population characteristics and trends are important. They also give guidance to city officials for making the most informed and effective decisions in meeting growth and development needs in a diverse and changing community. The purpose of this chapter is to gain an understanding of city population trends and composition in order to explore public policy decisions and planning implementation strategies, which will best serve present and future residents. This chapter examines population trends pertaining to historic population trends, place of birth, and place of residence, and population composition pertaining to age, race and gender distributions, and population density. Finally, a list of policy implications concludes the chapter.

### Population Trends

#### Historic Population Trends

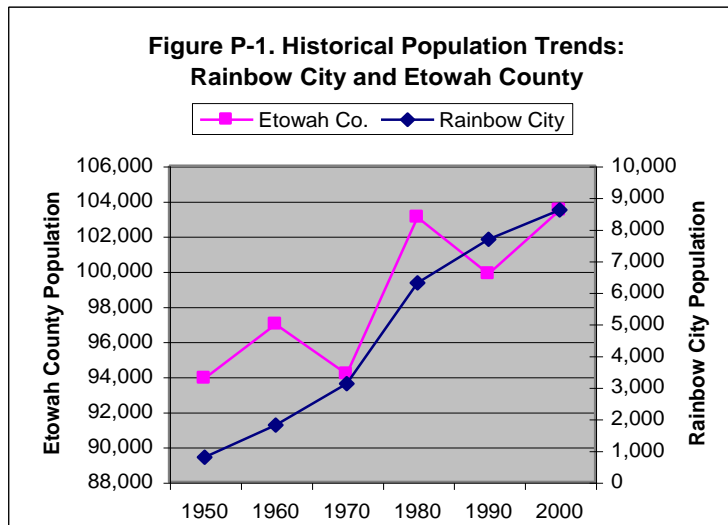
All community populations change to some degree over a given span of time. Historic population trends are useful in showing when and to what degree population has increased, decreased, or stabilized over a given length of time. Major trends usually identify and reflect the goals and values of our nation as a whole and how communities respond to changing times and historical events. Although unfit for predicting the future, this information is useful for planning by understanding how and why population and social demographics have historically shaped the city, making it what it is today.

Rapid population growth has been the trend in Rainbow City. Historically, Rainbow City has consistently grown in population at significantly higher rates than both Etowah County and Alabama. From 1950 to 2000, there were no population losses in the city and the state. Table P-1, below, shows historic population trends for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1950 and 2000.

Year	Rainbow City	% Change	Etowah County	% Change	Alabama	% Change
1950	786	NA	93,892	29.4%	3,061,743	8.1%
1960	1,800	129.0%	96,980	3.3%	3,266,740	6.7%
1970	3,107	72.6%	94,144	-2.9%	3,444,165	5.4%
1980	6,299	102.7%	103,057	9.5%	3,893,888	13.1%
1990	7,673	21.8%	99,840	-3.1%	4,040,587	3.8%
2000	8,607	12.2%	103,459	3.6%	4,447,100	10.1%

Source: U.S. Census of Population 1990 and 2000 STF 3, Rainbow City Comp Plan 1972

Rainbow City’s most significant growth occurred between 1950 and 1980, as the city increased from 786 people to 6,299, a percent increase of 701%. During this time, the county increased in population by 9% and the state by 27%. In 1960 and 1980 the city more than doubled in population from the previous decade. In a more recent timeframe, 1980 to 2000, Rainbow City slowed considerably in population growth to 36%, but still retained a somewhat higher growth rate than both the county (0.4%) and state (14%). Figure P-1, below, illustrates information on historic population trends for Rainbow City and Etowah County between 1950 and 2000. Notice how Etowah County sustained sharp, contrasting gains and losses in population, while Rainbow City steadily increased in size with no loss.



Population gains in Rainbow City could be attributed to the high quality of life with high-quality schools, public services, and parks and recreation. Rapid population growth could have also occurred due to increases in military employment at the nearby weapons disposal facilities. From 1950 to 1970 nation-shaping events such as the Korean War and Vietnam War assisted in economic growth and population increases. The Anniston Army Depot in neighboring Calhoun County could have drawn additional military employees and

their families to Rainbow City and Etowah County in wartime efforts, thus spurring population growth. Decreases in population gains from 1980 to 2000 could be attributed to economic globalization as a large percentage of manufacturing and other types of blue-collar employment became more available and feasible in other countries and many establishments consolidated their resources in larger U.S. cities. As a result, workers and their families were relocated to other communities or sought employment opportunities elsewhere.

## Place of Birth

Place of birth is defined as: The State, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Island Area, or foreign country in which a person is born (U.S. Census Glossary). This data is useful in determining population trends through migration patterns in the city’s population, based on where individuals were born. Examination of this data will show if the city is drawing in or losing population born in other states and other countries and if the population is predominantly Alabama-born.

The majority of Rainbow City residents were born in Alabama, 75% in 1990 and 78% in 2000, indicating minor inward migration from other states and countries. In 2000, approximately 18% of Rainbow City residents were from another state. The majority of those people (60%) were from another southern state. Approximately 24% were from a midwestern state and 9% were from a northeastern state. A slight 2% of the population in 2000 were born outside the U.S. Eighty-four percent of those individuals were foreign-born. Overall, the data suggests little in-migration from

other places than Alabama or outside the southern states. Table P-2, below, displays Place of Birth information for Rainbow City from 1990 to 2000.

Table P-2. Place of Birth: Rainbow City, 1990 to 2000					Change 1990-2000	
Born in	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total	#Change	%Change
State of Residence	5,814	75.8%	6,782	78.8%	968	16.6%
Another State	1,769	23.1%	1,603	18.6%	-166	-9.4%
A Northeastern State	130	7.3%	156	9.7%	26	20.0%
A Midwestern State	553	31.3%	392	24.5%	-161	-29.1%
A Southern State	1,017	57.5%	961	60.0%	-56	-5.5%
A Western State	69	3.9%	94	5.9%	25	36.2%
Born outside U.S.	90	1.2%	222	2.6%	132	146.7%
Puerto Rico	0	0.0%	6	2.7%	6	100.0%
U.S. Island Areas	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Abroad of U.S. Parents	20	22.2%	29	13.1%	9	45.0%
Foreign-born	70	77.8%	187	84.2%	117	167.1%
Total	7,673		8,607		934	12.2%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 SF 3

## Place of Residence

Place of Residence is defined as: The area of residence 5 years prior to the reference date of those who reported moving to a different housing unit (U.S. Census Glossary). Information collected in 1990 and 2000, as the reference date indicated, showed how many people resided in the same place or a different place in 1985 and 1995. Consequently, individuals less than 5 years of age cannot be accounted for. Place of Residence information is useful to determine city migration patterns. Examination of this data will verify if the city has been gaining or losing in population previously living in other states and countries, and if the city's residents have been fairly stationary or mobile. Table P-3, below, examines Place of Residence data for Rainbow City between 1990 and 2000.

Table P-3. Place of Residence: Rainbow City					Change 1990-2000	
Resided in	1985	% of Total	1995	% of Total	#Change	%Change
Same House in...	3,728	51.4%	4,995	61.7%	1,267	34.0%
Different House in....	3,527	48.6%	3,107	38.3%	-420	-11.9%
Same County	2,048	58.1%	1,973	63.5%	-75	-3.7%
Same State	762	21.6%	584	18.8%	-178	-23.4%
Other State	639	18.1%	454	14.6%	-185	-29.0%
Northeastern State	19	3.0%	24	5.3%	5	26.3%
Midwestern State	176	27.5%	38	8.4%	-138	-78.4%
Southern State	430	67.3%	362	79.7%	-68	-15.8%
Western State	14	2.2%	30	6.6%	16	114.3%
Puerto Rico	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
U.S. outlying area	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Foreign Country	78	2.2%	96	3.1%	18	23.1%
Total	7,255		8,102		847	11.7%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 SF 3

From 1990 to 2000, Rainbow City residents were significantly stationary, living in the same house. Residents living in the same house the previous 5 years grew from 3,728 individuals (51% of the total population) in 1990 to 4,995 (61%) in 2000, a 34% increase. Residents who lived in a different housing unit decreased considerably from 3,527 (48%) in 1990 to 3,107 (38%) in 2000, showing less housing transition and migration. The majority of these people (58% in 1990 and 63% in 2000) moved in from other parts of Etowah County. Meanwhile, residents from other counties in or out of state decreased significantly by 52%. Most people from other states moved in from another southern state, while prior mid westerners decreased significantly, showing that the majority of residents moved in from other areas of Alabama or from other states in reasonable proximity.

## Population Composition

### Age Distribution

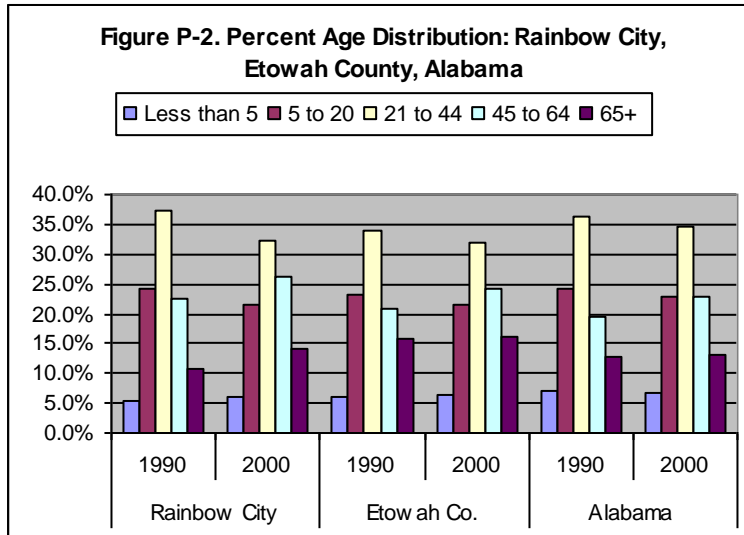
Age distribution is a critical element in any population study. A community must structure their budget and resources to meet a wide variety of residents' needs. Needs tend to differ significantly from one age group to another, therefore a proper understanding of age distribution in the community is necessary. For the purposes of this study, age distributions were classified as followed: Toddlers (Less than 5 years in age), Youths (5 to 20), Young adults (21 to 44), Middle age (45 to 64), and Seniors (65 and above). Table P-4, below, shows age distribution for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

Age Group	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	%Change
<b>Less than 5</b>	418	505	20.8%	5,973	6,686	11.9%	280,785	294,822	4.5%
% of Total	5.4%	5.9%		6.0%	6.5%		6.9%	6.6%	
<b>5 to 20</b>	1,853	1,849	-0.2%	23,067	22,110	-4.1%	981,123	1,024,554	-2.1%
% of Total	24.1%	21.5%		23.1%	21.4%		24.3%	23.0%	
<b>21 to 44</b>	2,856	2,780	-2.7%	33,794	33,181	-1.8%	1,470,475	1,535,034	8.5%
% of Total	37.2%	32.3%		33.8%	32.1%		36.4%	34.5%	
<b>45 to 64</b>	1,733	2,247	29.7%	20,978	24,895	18.7%	785,598	1,012,662	29.7%
% of Total	22.6%	26.1%		21.0%	24.1%		19.4%	22.8%	
<b>65+</b>	813	1,226	50.8%	15,876	16,587	4.5%	522,606	580,028	10.9%
% of Total	10.6%	14.2%		15.9%	16.0%		12.9%	13.0%	
<b>Total</b>	7,673	8,607	12.2%	99,840	103,459	3.6%	4,040,587	4,447,100	10.1%
<b>Median Age</b>	34.4	39	13.4%	36	38.3	6.4%	33	35.8	8.5%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 SF 1 and 3

The largest age group in Rainbow City was young adult between 1990 (37%) and 2000 (32%). Young adult was also the largest age group for the county (32%) and state (34%) as well in 2000. Combined young adult and youth populations comprised the majority of the population in 1990 (61%) and 2000 (53%), even though their numbers declined slightly. Seniors represented the fastest growing portion of the population in the city, increasing from 813 (10%) in 1990 to 1,226

(14%) in 2000, a percent increase of 50%. Middle age and senior populations combined displayed the fastest growth at 80%, accounting for 33% of the population in 1990 and 40% in 2000. Comparatively, Rainbow City has shown substantially faster growth in these populations than in the county (23%) and the state (40%), indicating that the city has been serving a rapidly increasing elder population and slightly declining youth. In 2000, the median age in Rainbow City (39) was slightly higher than the county (38) and state (35). Figure P-2, below, illustrates percent age distribution for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.



Between 1990 and 2000, losses in any particular age group were minor. The most significant loss was in young adult populations showing a slight decrease of -2%, yet still remaining the dominant age group. The county also showed minor loss in young adults (-1%), however, the state gained by 8%. Toddler populations increased significantly in the city (20%) and county (11%) and somewhat in the state (4%). This indicated a slight inclination toward natural increase in the population or in-migration of young families.

## Race Distribution

A general understanding of racial diversity is necessary for a community to better serve its residents. Communities with varying races tend to have differing cultural and ethnic needs, however, these factors can spur greater opportunities for growth within the community.

Similar to many communities in Alabama, Rainbow City has been a predominantly white community. In 2000, Rainbow City white populations comprised 93%, which was somewhat higher than Etowah County at 82%, and significantly higher than Alabama at 71%. Minority groups such as black accounted for 3%, and “others” (American Indians, Asians, and Pacific Islanders) 2%. Although white populations remained the majority, they did not grow as quickly as black or “other” groups. Between 1990 and 2000, whites in the city grew by 8%, while blacks and “others” grew by 161% and 153%, respectively. Even though white populations increased substantially more numerically in Rainbow City, smaller minority groups attributed higher percent growth, largely due to initially small population size. The same census data also indicated that both the county and state had high percent increases in other race groups. This could be due to a census form change, which allowed individuals of closely varying racial backgrounds to mark multiple races as opposed to primary. Etowah County increased marginally 0.4% in whites, and somewhat more substantially in blacks at 6%. Alabama increased by 6% in whites and 13% in blacks, with significantly larger portions of blacks, suggesting conclusively higher racial diversity in the state than in both the county and city. Table P-5, below, presents race distribution figures for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

<b>Table P-5. Racial Distribution: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama</b>									
Racial Characteristics	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
White	7,459	8,054	8.0%	85,274	85,640	0.4%	2,975,797	3,162,808	6.3%
% of Total	97.2%	93.6%		85.4%	82.8%		73.6%	71.1%	
Black	125	327	161.6%	13,799	14,672	6.3%	1,020,705	1,155,930	13.2%
% of Total	1.6%	3.8%		13.8%	14.2%		25.3%	26.0%	
Other	89	226	153.9%	767	3,147	310.3%	44,085	128,362	191.2%
% of Total	1.2%	2.6%		0.8%	3.0%		1.1%	2.9%	
Total	7,673	8,607	12.2%	99,840	103,459	3.6%	4,040,587	4,447,100	10.1%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 SF 3

## Gender Distribution

In typical American communities females tend to slightly outnumber males, due primarily to higher male mortality rates and longer female life expectancy. Rainbow City closely followed this pattern, as well as Etowah County and Alabama communities, in general. Rainbow City's population in 2000 comprised 47% male and 52% female. The county indicated similar results at 47% male and 52% female, while the state showed 48% and 51%, respectively. Between 1990 and 2000, the city's male and female populations increased at considerably similar rates, 12.1% and 12.2% respectively, indicating well-rounded growth. Although females slightly outnumber males, male populations have been growing at a slightly greater rate than female in both the county and state. Etowah County increased in males by 5% and 2% females, while the state climbed by 10% and 9% respectively. Table P-6, below, shows gender distribution for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

<b>Table P-6. Gender Distribution: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama</b>									
Geographic Area	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Male	3,633	4,074	12.1%	47,065	49,433	5.0%	1,935,936	2,144,463	10.8%
% of Total	47.3%	47.3%		47.1%	47.8%		47.9%	48.2%	
Female	4,040	4,533	12.2%	52,775	54,026	2.4%	2,104,651	2,302,637	9.4%
% of Total	52.7%	52.7%		52.9%	52.2%		52.1%	51.8%	
Total	7,673	8,607	12.2%	99,840	103,459	3.6%	4,040,587	4,447,100	10.1%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 SF 3

## Population Density

Every community desires to grow in size and population, competitively. Population density measures this growth and examines how population changes affect city growth. Density is defined and calculated as: The total number of housing units within a geographic entity divided by the land area of that entity measured in square kilometers or square miles (U.S. Census Glossary).

Population density and growth has been moderate in Rainbow City. Between 1990 and 2000, the city grew slightly in population density (4%) and land area (4%) and significantly in housing units



(14%) and total population (12%), indicating balanced growth and development. Rainbow City is one of the largest cities in Etowah County in land area (25 sq. mi.), with substantial population density at 333 people per square mile in 2000. Both Attalla and Southside had substantially higher population densities, but considerably less land area for development. Despite having less land and population, surrounding communities have been growing at similar or faster rates, suggesting that Rainbow City has considerable space to grow and develop along with the population base needed to support it. Table P-7, below, displays total area (which includes both land and bodies of water) total land area, population per square mile, housing units per square mile, and total population for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and the neighboring communities of Attalla, Glencoe, and Southside between 1990 and 2000.

<b>Table P-7. Population Density and Area: Rainbow City and Vicinity</b>					
<b>Geographic Area</b>	<b>Total Area</b>	<b>Total Land Area</b>	<b>Pop. Per sq. mile</b>	<b>Housing Units Per sq. mile</b>	<b>Total Population (1990 to 2000)</b>
<b>Rainbow City</b> 1990	24.3	24.1	318.4	131.6	7,673
2000	25.3	25.1	333.0	151.1	8,607
%Change	4.1%	4.1%	4.6%	14.8%	12.2%
<b>Attalla</b> 1990	6.0	6.0	1,143.2	479.0	6,859
2000	6.6	6.6	988.0	436.8	6,677
%Change	10.0%	10.0%	-13.6%	-8.8%	-2.7%
<b>Glencoe</b> 1990	14.3	14.2	298.0	113.6	4,663
2000	16.1	16.0	319.5	132.2	4,936
%Change	12.6%	12.7%	7.2%	16.4%	5.9%
<b>Southside</b> 1990	18.6	18.4	295.4	106.5	5,556
2000	19.1	18.9	368.3	145.7	7,057
%Change	2.7%	2.7%	24.7%	36.8%	27.0%
<b>Etowah County</b> 1990	548.8	534.8	186.7	78.1	99,840
2000	548.8	534.8	188.5	83.8	103,459
%Change	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	7.3%	3.6%

Source: U.S. Census, 1990 SF 3, EARPDC database, 2000

## Policy Implications

1. Rapid population growth has been the trend in Rainbow City. Historically, Rainbow City has consistently grown in population at significantly higher rates than both Etowah County and Alabama. Much of this growth could be attributed to economic development, quality education and public services, and opportunities for recreation.
2. The majority of Rainbow City residents were born in Alabama, 75% in 1990 and 78% in 2000, indicating minor inward migration from other states and countries. In 2000, 18% of Rainbow City residents were from another state. The majority of those people (60%) were from another southern state. Rainbow City has been drawing in people much closer to home, suggesting a more self-sustaining population.
3. From 1990 to 2000, Rainbow City residents were significantly stationary, living in the same house. Residents living in the same house the previous 5 years grew from 3,728 individuals (51% of the total population) in 1990 to 4,995 (61%) in 2000, a 34% increase. This also suggests a self-sustaining population.
4. Residents who lived in a different housing unit decreased considerably from 3,449 (47%) in 1990 to 3,011 (37%) in 2000, showing less housing transition and migration. The majority of these people (59% in 1990 and 65% in 2000) moved in from other parts of Etowah County. Meanwhile, residents from other counties in or out of state decreased significantly by 25%.
5. The largest age group in Rainbow City was young adult (21 to 44) between 1990 (37%) and 2000 (32%). This could be attributed primarily to high quality schools and recreation attracting and retaining young families. Young adult was also the dominant age group for the county (32%) and state (34%) as well in 2000.
6. Seniors (65+) represented the fastest growing portion of the population, increasing from 813 (10%) in 1990 to 1,226 (14%) in 2000, an increase of 50%. Middle age (45 to 64) and Senior populations combined displayed the fastest growth at 80%, accounting for 33% of the population in 1990 and 40% in 2000. Such rapid growth could be attributed to increases in quality public services, particularly medical and transportation.
7. Rainbow City is a predominantly white community. In 2000, Rainbow City white populations comprised 93%, which was somewhat higher than Etowah County at 82%, and significantly higher than Alabama at 71%. Minority groups such as black accounted for 3%, and “others” (American Indians, Asians, and Pacific Islanders) 2%. This suggests that racial diversity is much lower in Rainbow City than most other places in the county and state.
8. Rainbow City’s population, in 2000 comprised 47% male and 52% female. The county indicated similar results at 47% male and 52% female, while the state showed 48% and 51% respectively, suggesting similar trends at all levels and a substantial gender balance.

9. Population density and growth has been moderate in Rainbow City. Between 1990 and 2000, the city grew slightly in population density (4%) and land area (4%) and significantly in both housing units (14%) and total population (12%), indicating balanced growth and development.
10. Rainbow City had considerable space to grow and develop and the population base needed to support it. Population density data revealed that in 2000, the city had more land area and population than other neighboring communities and similar or less population density.



## CHAPTER III: ECONOMY

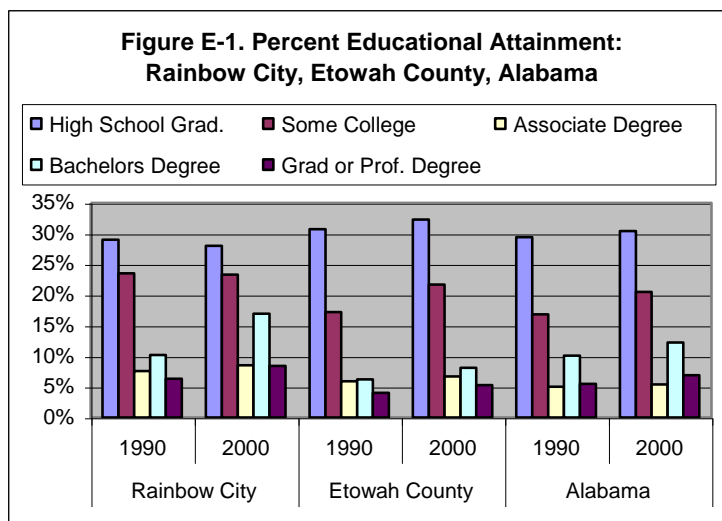
The economy directly affects a community’s growth and prosperity. The state of the local economy i.e. how well it creates and maintains employment opportunities, handles production, and distributes goods and services greatly influences population, housing, transportation, and land use. Therefore, a clear understanding of the local economy is a vital factor for community growth and development as well as a sustainable comprehensive planning effort.

This chapter of the comprehensive plan examines the following economy related elements: educational attainment, household income, commuting patterns, labor force participation and unemployment, industrial composition, occupational status, poverty status, public assistance, and economic development potential. Located near the City of Gadsden, Rainbow City has beneficial proximity to major metro markets and convenient highway connections with US Hwy 431, Interstate 59 and I-759. State route 77 and US Hwy 411 intersect at the city center, further enhancing commercial trade.

### Educational Attainment

Education is a vital factor for community growth and development. A high quality education system prepares and empowers individuals within the community to be productive, successful leaders in their respective fields of training and expertise. This qualifies individuals for greater earning potential, allowing more money to be reinvested into the community, building the local economy.

Rainbow City ranked reasonably high in educational attainment, somewhat higher than both Etowah County and Alabama, generally. Between 1990 and 2000, the city increased significantly in receivers of bachelors and graduate/professional degrees (154%). While Etowah County (80%) and Alabama (76%) also reported significant growth in higher education attainment, they fell considerably short of Rainbow City. In 2000, approximately 25% of the city’s residents had achieved a bachelor or graduate/professional degree, compared to the county (13%) and state (15%), indicating overall higher education attainment. Figure E-1, below, illustrates percent educational attainment for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.



Rainbow City also showed comparable representation and growth in recipients of associate degrees and college participants with no degree. From 1990 to 2000, the city increased in associate degree holders and college participants, with no degree by a combined 50%, while the county increased by 53% and the state by 61%. In 2000, approximately 31% of all residents carried associate degrees or participated in college, yet received no degree. Meanwhile, the county recorded 28% in this attainment

category and the state 25%, again indicating a larger portion of the city’s population attaining a higher education. Recipients achieving less than a completed high school education declined considerably in the city, county, and state, further suggesting a growing importance placed on higher attainment. Table E-1, below, examines educational attainment for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama.

<b>Table E-1. Educational Attainment: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama</b>									
<b>Educational Level</b>	<b>Rainbow City</b>			<b>Etowah County</b>			<b>Alabama</b>		
	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%Change</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%Change</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>%Change</b>
Less Than 9th Grade	364	225	-38.2%	9,516	6,023	-36.7%	348,848	240,333	-31.1%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	7.3%	3.8%		14.5%	8.6%		13.7%	8.3%	
9th to 12 Grade, No Diploma	794	653	-17.8%	14,072	12,092	-14.1%	494,790	473,748	-4.3%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	16.0%	11.1%		21.4%	17.3%		19.4%	16.4%	
High School Graduate	1,436	1,647	14.7%	20,194	22,531	11.6%	749,591	877,216	17.0%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	29.0%	28.0%		30.7%	32.3%		29.4%	30.4%	
Some College, No Degree	1,163	1,372	18.0%	11,301	15,137	33.9%	427,062	591,055	38.4%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	23.5%	23.3%		17.2%	21.7%		16.8%	20.5%	
Associate Degree	378	499	32.0%	3,900	4,674	19.8%	126,450	155,440	22.9%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	7.6%	8.5%		5.9%	6.7%		5.0%	5.4%	
Bachelors Degree	507	994	96.1%	4,076	5,679	39.3%	258,231	351,772	36.2%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	10.2%	16.9%		6.2%	8.1%		10.1%	12.2%	
Graduate or Professional	314	497	58.3%	2,613	3,693	41.3%	140,997	197,836	40.3%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	6.3%	8.4%		4.0%	5.3%		5.5%	6.9%	
Persons 25 Years and Over	4,956	5,887	18.8%	65,672	69,829	6.3%	2,545,969	2,887,400	13.4%
% of Total Population	64.6%	68.4%		65.8%	67.5%		63.0%	64.9%	

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000

## **Income**

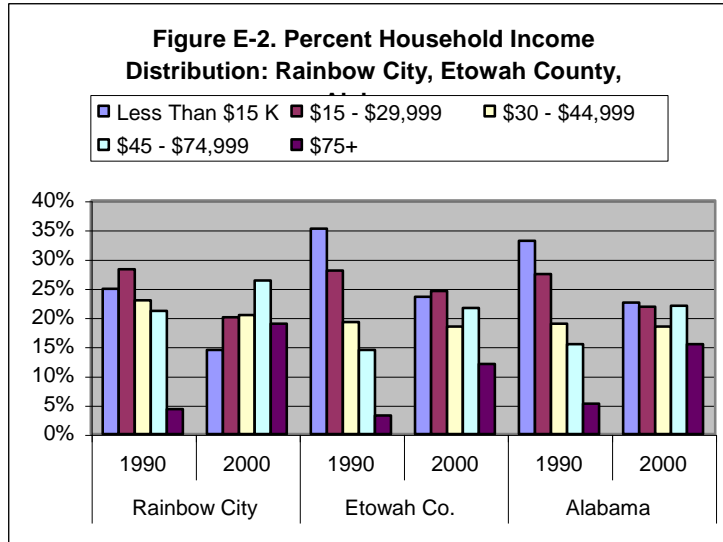
Monetary income is a primary factor in determining community wealth and prosperity. Higher incomes promote higher standards of living and more return investment into the community, while lower incomes suggest lower standards and less investment. Therefore, a comprehensive economic study requires a thorough understanding of household income.

### **Household Income**

Household income (HHI) is the most basic and generalized variable in measuring community income. A household is considered a dwelling unit in which one or more individuals live. Therefore, the HHI is the accumulation of all income generated within a specified household. Median household income (MHI), which is characterized as the exact middle (median) point monetary amount of household incomes collected, was examined as the determining factor.

Rainbow City ranked considerably high in household income earnings. From 1990 to 2000, city households earning \$75 K or more showed the greatest growth at 433%, compared to Etowah County at 302% and Alabama at 238%. Also during this time, households attaining such income increased significantly from 4% to 18% of all households. In 2000, approximately 45% of all

households earned \$45 K or more, while the county and state reported considerably less at 33% and 37%, respectively, suggesting that Rainbow City has been a reasonably wealthy community, living above county and state income levels. Figure E-2, below, illustrates percent household income distribution for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.



While gaining in higher income households, Rainbow City lost an equally substantial number of lower income households. The city declined in households earning less than \$30 K by 45%, while the county and state showed considerably less decline at 32% and 29%, respectively. Such shifts in income distribution reflect increases in higher paying, stable jobs and employment opportunity. Every community desires to offer high-paying quality jobs. However, severe imbalance toward higher income households could result in economic

decline since many employers rely on and develop their workforce on low-skill, low cost labor. Therefore a fairly balanced income distribution is necessary for sustainable economic development. Notice in Figure E-2, above, Rainbow City's substantially higher balance in higher income households than both the county and the state in 1990 and 2000. This suggests that the city should consider policy to improve lower-income labor force development, in order to attract employers and create opportunity for lesser-skilled workers and lower paying employment. Median household income information for Rainbow City at \$40 K was substantially higher than the county (\$31K) and state (34K), further verifying these findings. Table E-2, below, displays household income distribution for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

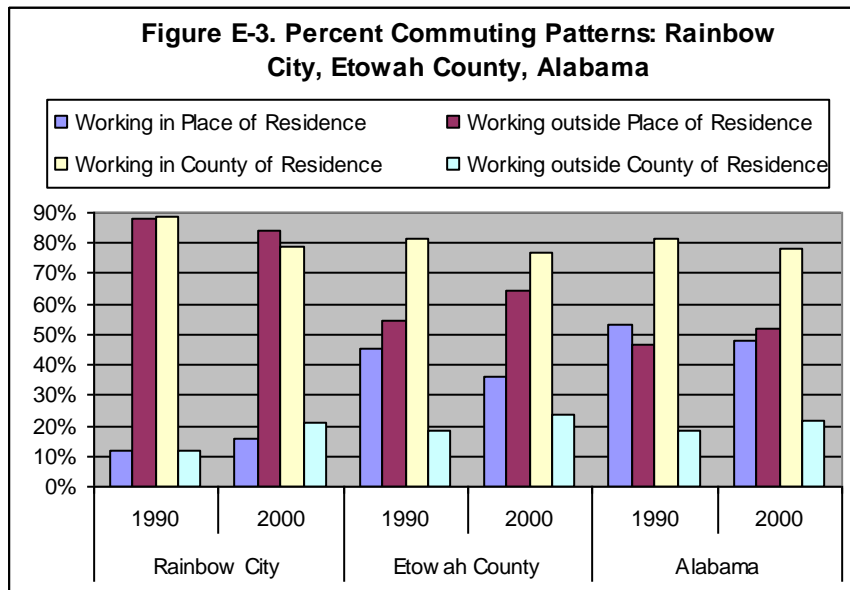
Income Level	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	%Change
Less Than \$15 K	749	519	-30.7%	13,519	9,787	-27.6%	498,957	391,406	-21.6%
% of Total	24.9%	14.4%		35.2%	23.5%		33.1%	22.5%	
\$15 - \$29,999	846	723	-14.5%	10,772	10,199	-5.3%	412,393	378,264	-8.3%
% of Total	28.2%	20.0%		28.0%	24.5%		27.4%	21.8%	
\$30 - \$44,999	687	738	7.4%	7,401	7,673	3.7%	284,506	318,861	12.1%
% of Total	22.9%	20.4%		19.2%	18.4%		18.9%	18.4%	
\$45 - \$74,999	634	951	50.0%	5,521	8,981	62.7%	231,304	381,959	65.1%
% of Total	21.1%	26.3%		14.4%	21.6%		15.4%	22.0%	
\$75+	128	683	433.6%	1,240	4,994	302.7%	78,849	266,895	238.5%
% of Total	4.3%	18.9%		3.2%	12.0%		5.2%	15.4%	
Total Households	3,004	3,614	20.3%	38,453	41,634	8.3%	1,506,009	1,737,385	15.4%
Median Income	\$29,049	\$40,216	38.4%	\$22,314	\$31,170	39.7%	\$23,597	\$34,135	44.7%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 SF 3

## Commuting Patterns

Commuting patterns can be used to gauge how far away people in a community live from their place of work and how much time was spent in transition to and from home and the workplace. These patterns are useful in recognizing places for job development and retention as well as alleviating long commuting time and travel distances in the city and its surrounding municipalities, thus advancing the local economy.

A national trend between 1990 and 2000 has been increasing commutes to work in both time and distance. Etowah County and Alabama have followed this trend, decreasing in laborers working in their place (city) of residence by -20% and -4% respectfully. Rainbow City, however, showed a different pattern. During this time, the city increased in laborers working in their place of residence by a considerable 47%. Figure E-3, below, illustrates percent commuting patterns for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama from 1990 to 2000. Notice in Rainbow City how the portion of



employees working in their place of residence increased slightly, while the portion of employees working outside their place residence decreased. This indicates that slightly more people started living and working within Rainbow City than other people in other communities throughout Etowah County and Alabama during this time. In 2000, the substantial majority (84%) of workers in Rainbow City worked outside their place of residence and commuted outside the city to

work each day. Comparatively, the city had a significantly greater portion of laborers working outside their place of residence than did the county (64%) and the state (52%), indicating that the city was lagging behind in creating job opportunities near where employees lived.

Commuters from inside and outside the county also played a pivotal role in Rainbow City's economy. The city lost a few laborers in the county, but gained significantly more from outside, suggesting that Rainbow City has been drawing workers from surrounding counties. Rainbow City would benefit greatly from a fairly stationary labor force and concentrated economy. The city would save time and money on highway infrastructure improvements and expansion as a result of employees living closer to their place of work. Other infrastructure costs such as electrical, sewer, and water would be reduced considerably. Workers should have the option of living closer to work and have the incentive to do so. Housing construction should follow economic development patterns, in order to create necessary and suitable living arrangements for workers. This would also promote other forms of transportation such as biking and walking, thus alleviating automobile dependency. As the city grows and expands, it should continue to seek employees from other



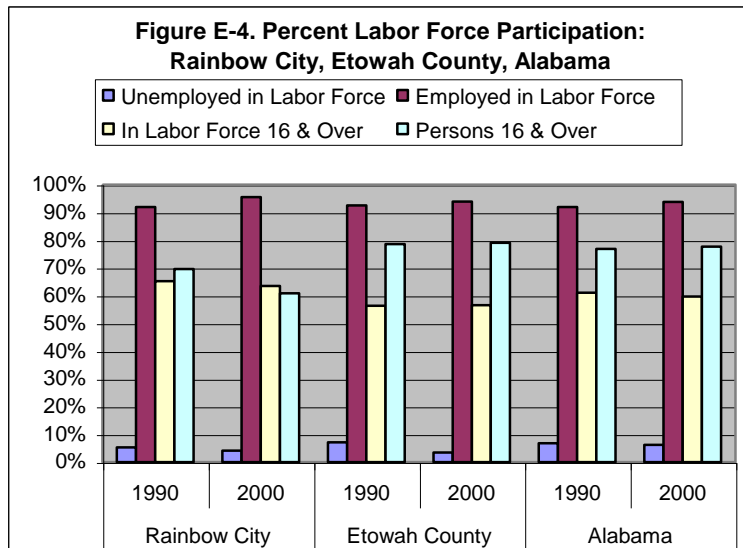
surrounding counties, states, and countries in order to better diversify its employment base and promote new ideas and options for growth and development. For optimal growth to occur commuters should have the reasonable option of living closer to their place of employment. Table E-3, below, shows commuting patterns for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

Table E-3. Commuting Patterns: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama									
Geographic Area	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Working in Place of Residence	443	653	47.4%	13,592	10,840	-20.2%	596,516	569,905	-4.5%
% of Total	12.1%	15.9%		45.4%	35.9%		53.2%	47.8%	
Working outside Place of Residence	3,210	3,459	7.8%	16,365	19,351	18.2%	525,480	621,853	18.3%
% of Total	87.9%	84.1%		54.6%	64.1%		46.8%	52.2%	
Total Place	3,653	4,112	12.6%	29,957	30,191	0.8%	1,121,996	1,191,758	6.2%
Working in County of Residence	3,227	3,223	-0.1%	32,370	32,082	-0.9%	1,363,133	1,421,356	4.3%
% of Total	88.5%	78.8%		81.5%	76.6%		81.5%	78.0%	
Working outside County of Residence	418	868	107.7%	7,328	9,800	33.7%	310,438	400,437	29.0%
% of Total	11.5%	21.2%		18.5%	23.4%		18.5%	22.0%	
Total County	3,645	4,091	12.2%	39,698	41,882	5.5%	1,673,571	1,821,793	8.9%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

## Labor Force Participation and Unemployment

Labor force participation is based on how many individuals ages 16 and over are a part of the labor force, and if they are employed or unemployed as civilian or armed forces. Businesses desiring to relocate or expand seek communities with a strong labor force from which to draw sufficient, qualified employment. To do this they must estimate approximately how many candidates are available to fill positions required to perform necessary operations. Therefore, a proper understanding of a community's labor force is critical to a comprehensive planning effort.



Rainbow City's labor force proved competitive from 1990 to 2000, ranking similarly equal to Etowah County and Alabama participation levels. During this time, the city's labor force grew by 9%, while the county grew by 4% and the state by 8%. Figure E-4, left, shows percent labor force participation for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

In 2000, the city had a participation rate of 63%, which was somewhat

higher than the county and state at 56% and 59%, respectively.

Employment in the city labor force was similarly high as well, accounting for 95% in 2000. Comparatively, both the county and state recorded 93%. Rainbow City ranked reasonably low in labor force unemployment in 2000 at 4%, which was slightly higher than Etowah County (3%) and slightly lower than Alabama (6%). Although employment was high in the city at this time, larger middle age and senior populations (as shown in age distribution in the previous chapter) indicated a larger portion of residents not in the labor force due to either retirement or disability. Rainbow City showed a significant increase of residents not in the labor force (18%), compared to the Etowah County increase at 3% from 1990 to 2000. Alabama increased in persons not in labor force by 15%. Given these circumstances, the city should seek employment for declining youth populations and meet the needs of a growing retiree community. Table E-4, below, displays labor force participation for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

Labor Classification	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Total Persons 16+	6,055	6,825	12.7%	78,517	81,735	4.1%	3,103,529	3,450,542	11.2%
In Labor Force	3,948	4,334	9.8%	44,211	46,225	4.6%	1,895,361	2,061,169	8.7%
% in Labor Force	65.2%	63.5%	-2.6%	56.3%	56.6%	0.5%	61.1%	59.7%	-2.3%
Armed Forces	31	5	-83.9%	117	45	-61.5%	24,980	14,069	-43.7%
% in Armed Forces	0.8%	0.1%	-85.3%	0.3%	0.1%	-66.7%	0.9%	0.7%	-22.2%
Civilian Labor Force	3,917	4,329	10.5%	44,094	46,180	4.7%	1,870,381	2,047,100	9.4%
Employed	3,708	4,148	11.9%	40,902	43,426	6.2%	1,741,794	1,920,189	10.2%
Unemployed	209	181	-13.4%	3,192	2,754	-13.7%	128,587	126,911	-1.3%
% Unemployed	5.3%	4.2%	-21.6%	7.2%	3.4%	-52.8%	6.8%	6.2%	-45.5%
Not in Labor Force	2,107	2,491	18.2%	34,306	35,510	3.5%	1,208,168	1,389,373	15.0%

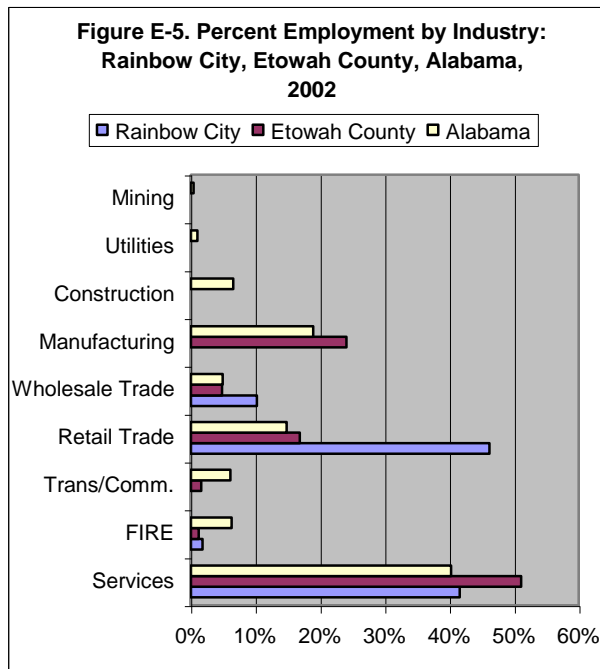
Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

## Industrial Composition

An economically prosperous community will have a diverse and self-sustaining economic base, offering a variety of job opportunities, goods, and services to its population. As markets change and demand for specified goods and services increase or decrease, industrial sectors will vary in size and in their influence on the overall industrial composition and economic welfare of the community. Therefore, a proper examination of industrial composition is necessary to plan for economic development and opportunities. This section of the economy chapter focuses on industrial composition through employment by industry data and establishment by industry data. For categorization purposes, industries have been separated into 9 separate industrial sectors, which included: mining, utilities, construction, manufacturing, wholesale trade, retail trade, transportation and communications (Trans/Comm), FIRE (Finance, Insurance, Real-Estate), and services (which entails professional, administrative, arts, education, healthcare, and food accommodation). The following figures and tables were collected from 2002 Economic Census profiles.

## Employment by Industrial Sector

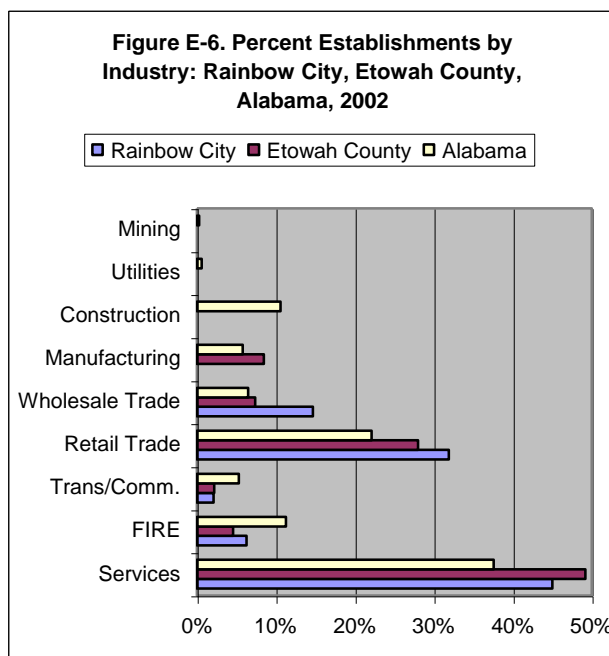
A study of employment in the city, county, and state is useful in determining the probable direction of job growth and opportunity. The 2002 Economic Census simply records the number of people



working in each industrial sector, apart from their place of residence. In 2002, the significant majority of city employment was in retail trade (46%) and services (41%), together accounting for 87% of all city labor. The services industry was the biggest employer in the county and state, at 51% and 40%, respectfully, followed by manufacturing and retail trade. Information for mining, utilities, construction, and transportation and communications was not available at the municipal or county level. City manufacturing was too small to be recorded. Figure E-5, left, illustrates percent employment by industry in Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama in 2002. Both Etowah County and Alabama have a more diverse employment base than Rainbow City, suggesting a more stable and self-sustaining economy. As a part of its plan for economic development, Rainbow City should

promote goals and policy to diversify its economy, creating a wider range of opportunity for job growth and economic development. With a highly educated and wealthy population, as previously mentioned, Rainbow City could bolster new opportunities in other industries, as well as keeping retail trade and services strong.

## Establishments by Industrial Sector



A study of business establishments is useful follow-up to employment patterns. As companies grow and expand they need new and better facilities for operation. Following employment trends, the majority of Rainbow City's establishments consisted of retail trade (31%) and services (45%) together accounting for 76% of all city establishments. Meanwhile, Etowah County recorded similar results at 28% retail and 49% in services. Alabama showed 22% and 37%, respectfully. Figure E-6, left, shows percent establishments by industry for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama in 2002.

Wholesale and FIRE represented a somewhat substantial portion of business establishments in the city at 14% and 6%, respectively. The county recorded 7% wholesale trade and 4% FIRE, and the state 6% and 11% in these sectors. Table E-5, below, displays information on establishments and employment by industry for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama in 2002. Industries marked with an X indicated that the pertinent data was not applicable. Mining, utilities, and construction were marked with an X as this data was only applicable at the state level. Industries marked with a Z indicated that the data was at 0 or below the publication threshold, as shown for manufacturing in Rainbow City.

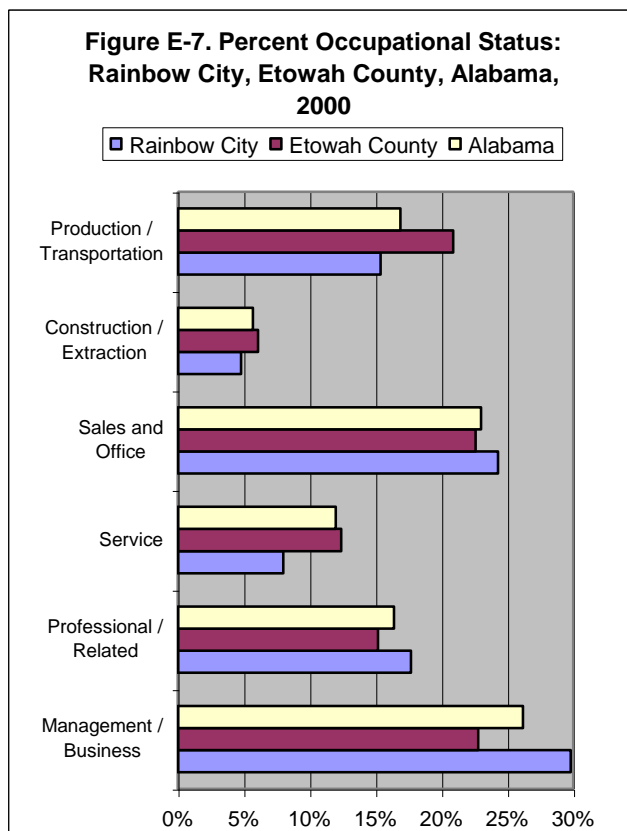
Industry	Rainbow City		Etowah County		Alabama	
	Est.	Emp.	Est.	Emp.	Est.	Emp.
Mining	X	X	X	X	282	7,508
% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.5%
Utilities	X	X	X	X	503	16,014
% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	1.1%
Construction	X	X	X	X	9,345	98,555
% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.6%	6.6%
Manufacturing	Z	Z	138	6,504	5,119	284,127
% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	8.5%	24.1%	5.8%	19.0%
Wholesale Trade	28	192	119	1,333	5,747	74,915
% of Total	14.7%	10.3%	7.4%	4.9%	6.5%	5.0%
Retail Trade	61	858	454	4,581	19,608	222,416
% of Total	31.9%	46.2%	28.0%	16.9%	22.1%	14.9%
Trans/Comm.	4	X	36	452	4,731	91,960
% of Total	2.1%	0.0%	2.2%	1.7%	5.3%	6.2%
FIRE	12	36	75	350	9,971	95,551
% of Total	6.3%	1.9%	4.6%	1.3%	11.3%	6.4%
Services	86	773	797	13,807	33,257	600,844
% of Total	45.0%	41.6%	49.2%	51.1%	37.6%	40.3%
Totals	191	1,859	1,619	27,027	88,563	1,491,890

Source: U.S. Economic Census, 2002

## Occupational Status

Every economically viable community has a variety of job occupations through which services are performed and money is circulated. A study of occupational status shows what kind of labor is being utilized in a community. This is useful for determining where job opportunities exist and where job growth is most or least likely to occur. For categorization purposes, occupational status has been divided into 6 categories, which included: 1) Management / Business—which constituted business and financial operators, farmers and farm operators, and financial specialists, 2) Professional / Related—which consisted of architects, engineers, legal occupations, computer specialists, social services, and technical healthcare occupations. 3) Services—healthcare support, firefighting and law enforcement, ground and building maintenance, food accommodation, and personal care services, 4) Sales / Office—sales and related, and administrative, 5) Construction / Extraction—construction trade workers, extraction workers, and supervisors, 6) Production /

Transportation—production occupations, transportation and moving occupations, aircraft and traffic control operations, motor vehicle operators, rail, water, and other transportation related occupations.



Rainbow City’s major occupations were in management/business at 29%, and sales and office at 24%, together accounting for the majority (53%) of occupations. Both Etowah County and Alabama had a slightly smaller fraction in these occupations. The county recorded 22% in management/business and also 22% in sales and office occupations, while the state showed 26% and 23%, respectively. This information indicated that the city offered slightly more business management and sales and office opportunities than most other communities in the county and state. Figure E-7, left, illustrates percent occupational status for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama for 2000.

Overall, the city, county and state had a fairly even and relatively similar distribution of occupations. The county and state had somewhat larger portions of production/transportation, construction/extraction, and services, while the city showed somewhat more representation in management/business, professional/related, and sales and office, suggesting that Rainbow City specialized in more skilled, managerial, and professional labor than the county and state in general.

Overall, the city, county and state had a fairly even and relatively similar distribution of occupations. The county and state had somewhat larger portions of production/transportation, construction/extraction, and services, while the

Occupational status data was collected from the 2000 U.S. Census. Provisions for job overlap in each category and individual multiple occupations were not taken into consideration. The information collected is useful in giving a broad indication of occupational status in the defined areas. Table E-6, below, shows occupational status for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama in 2000.

**Table E-6. Occupational Status: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama, 2000**

Occupation	Rainbow City	% of Total	Etowah County	% of Total	Alabama	% of Total
Management / Business	1,428	29.8%	10,967	22.8%	566,325	26.2%
Professional / Related	845	17.7%	7,312	15.2%	354,456	16.4%
Service	383	8.0%	5,969	12.4%	259,106	12.0%
Sales and Office	1,161	24.3%	10,846	22.6%	497,262	23.0%
Construction / Extraction	230	4.8%	2,909	6.1%	122,667	5.7%
Production / Transportation	739	15.4%	10,062	20.9%	365,441	16.9%
Total	4,786		48,065		2,165,257	

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 2000 STF 3

## Poverty Status

Poverty status shows the economic welfare of a community and can be used to assess a community's need for public assistance. According to the U.S. Census glossary, poverty is measured in accordance with monetary income, excluding capital gains or losses, taxes, non-cash benefits, and whether or not a person lives in a family or non-family household, compared to the selected poverty threshold for the respective community. People who cannot be included in poverty studies include: unrelated individuals under 15, and people in institutional group quarters, college dormitories, military barracks, and living conditions without conventional housing and who are not in shelters.

Poverty status was classified according to age classes. The majority of Rainbow City's poverty existed in the 18 to 64 aged range at 58% in 2000, which was slightly larger than the county (52%) and state (53%). Poverty in the city's senior age class, 65 and above, ranked similarly to the county and state in 2000, suggesting that the city had similar portions of older people in poverty as the county and state.

Rainbow City overall ranked well in mitigating poverty. Between 1990 and 2000 the city decreased its poverty rate (% of people below the poverty mark) substantially from 12% to 8%. During this time the county decreased marginally from 16% to 15% and the state declined from 18% to 16%, indicating that the city fared significantly better in mitigating poverty and in keeping poverty low than both the county and state during this time. Table E-7, below, shows poverty status for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama from 1990 to 2000.

Poverty Status by Age	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
5 and under	133	72	-45.9%	1,832	2,024	10.5%	87,462	82,914	-5.2%
% of Total	13.8%	10.0%		11.3%	12.7%		12.1%	11.9%	
6 to 17	198	136	-31.3%	3,215	3,359	4.5%	166,174	154,967	-6.7%
% of Total	20.5%	18.8%		19.8%	21.1%		23.0%	22.2%	
18 to 64	555	424	-23.6%	8,030	8,388	4.5%	350,179	373,940	6.8%
% of Total	57.6%	58.6%		49.4%	52.6%		48.4%	53.6%	
65 and above	78	91	16.7%	3,165	2,167	-31.5%	119,799	86,276	-28.0%
% of Total	8.1%	12.6%		19.5%	13.6%		16.6%	12.4%	
Total	964	723	-25.0%	16,242	15,938	-1.9%	723,614	698,097	-3.5%
% Below Poverty Level	12.6%	8.4%	-4.2%	16.5%	15.7%	-0.8%	18.3%	16.1%	-2.2%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

## Public Assistance

Public assistance income supports households below the pre-determined poverty threshold. An examination of public assistance income is useful in determining how many people are in need of receiving public monetary support and if that need is being met. To determine levels of need, public assistance status was measured against below poverty level information.

Rainbow City ranked well with both low public assistance giving and poverty rates. From 1990 to 2000, Rainbow City decreased assistance by -59% and poverty by -4%. In comparison, Etowah County decreased assistance by -72%, yet poverty decreased by only -0.8%. Alabama showed similar results, decreasing by -70% and -2% respectfully. In 2000, city assistance was at 1%, while the county and state both recorded 2%. This information suggests that Rainbow City was slightly more successful in alleviating poverty and in 2000 spent slightly less on public assistance in order to meet needs. Table E-8, below, examines public assistance status for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

Status	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Public Assistance Income	131	53	-59.5%	3,468	944	-72.8%	130,616	38,964	-70.2%
% of Total	4.3%	1.5%		9.0%	2.3%		8.7%	2.2%	
No Public Assistance Income	2,913	3,561	22.2%	34,985	40,690	16.3%	1,375,393	1,698,421	23.5%
% of Total	95.7%	98.5%		91.0%	97.7%		91.3%	97.8%	
Totals	3,044	3,614	18.7%	38,453	41,634	8.3%	1,506,009	1,737,385	15.4%
% Below Poverty Level	12.6%	8.4%	-4.2%	16.5%	15.7%	-0.8%	18.3%	16.1%	-2.2%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

## **Economic Development Potential for Rainbow City**

Economic development potential for Rainbow City is promising. Location is a key factor in promotion of economic development. The city’s geographic location is reasonably suitable for sufficient economic development. Being in close proximity to Interstate 59, Highway 431, and Gadsden, Rainbow City has convenient access to major economic markets. The natural beauty of the mountains, Lake Henry Neely, and the Coosa River can be utilized to promote and encourage community recreation and tourism.

Rainbow City’s labor force is strong. The city has a highly skilled, educated, and participatory labor force, thus enhancing productivity and the economic environment. Most occupations in Rainbow City involve business management, professional services, and sales and office, demanding a highly trained and skilled workforce. Commuting patterns show that the city has been drawing a substantial workforce from other areas of the county and from surrounding counties. Also, a slight increase of workers commuting inside their place of residence (city) indicate that the city has been attracting residents desiring to live and work in the community as well.

Household income levels also ranked considerably high in the city, indicating that more wealth was available. The city has a viable opportunity to build high-class commercial establishments in the area, thus inviting residents and visitors to invest more dollars back into the community. Retail and services were the largest employers in Rainbow City. The city could capitalize on a strong

retail and services base, offering an exceptional variety and selection of goods and services to the east Alabama region. The city also has lower poverty rates than the county and state.

As Rainbow City grows and develops, it should consider enhancing and promoting diverse economic development near appropriate housing development, in order to create economic stability and mitigate long commuting times and travel. Development in terms of retail and service incubation should be established at nodal intersections with high traffic volumes, instead of in business parks on the outskirts of the city, somewhat far distance from the general population. Proper highway access management should remain a high priority in order to enhance traffic flow and improve safety.



## Policy Implications

1. Between 1990 and 2000, Rainbow City increased significantly in receivers of bachelors and graduate/professional degrees (154%), while Etowah County (80%) and Alabama (76%) reported significant growth in higher education attainment, but fell considerably short of Rainbow City. In 2000, approximately 25% of the city's residents had achieved either bachelor or graduate/professional degrees, compared to the county (13%) and state (15%), indicating higher educational standards in the city than in the county and state. Rainbow City could benefit from a highly educated population by promoting and creating skilled labor force training and development opportunities.
2. From 1990 to 2000, city households earning \$75 K or more showed the greatest growth at 433%, compared to the county at 302% and the state at 238%. Also during this time, households attaining such income increased significantly from 4% to 18% of all households. In 2000, approximately 45% of all households earned \$45 K or more, while the county and state reported considerably less at 33% and 37% respectfully, suggesting that Rainbow City has been a considerably wealthy community, living above state average standards. Rainbow City could capitalize on this valuable attribute by providing high class retail and service establishments that invite residents to invest more back into the community.
3. Rainbow City had a substantially higher balance in higher income households than both Etowah County and Alabama in 1990 and 2000. This suggests that the city should balance the economy by considering policy to promote and improve lower-income labor force development, in order to attract employers and create opportunity for lesser-skilled workers. Also in 2000, median household income in the city at \$40 K was substantially higher than both the county (\$31K) and state (34K).
4. The substantial majority (84%) of laborers in Rainbow City in 2000 worked outside their place of residence and commuted in to work each day. Comparatively, the city had a significantly greater portion of laborers working outside their place of residence than did the county (64%) and the state (52%). This information indicates that the city was lagging behind in creating job opportunities near where employees lived.
5. Rainbow City's labor forced proved competitive from 1990 to 2000, ranking similarly equal to Etowah County and Alabama participation levels. During this time, the city's labor force grew by 9%, while the county grew by 4% and the state by 8%. In 2000, the city had a participation rate of 63%, which was somewhat higher than the county and state at 56% and 59%, respectfully. Rainbow City should take advantage of this participation by creating opportunities for attracting new business development and incubation.
6. Rainbow City ranked reasonably low in labor force unemployment in 2000 at 4%, which was slightly higher than Etowah County (3%) and slightly lower than Alabama (6%), showing that most city labor force participants have been successful in finding work.
7. In 2002, the significant majority of Rainbow City employment was in retail trade (46%) and services (41%), together accounting for 87% of all city labor. The services industry was the

biggest employer in the county and state, at 51% and 40%, respectfully, followed by manufacturing and retail trade. Rainbow City should focus on keeping retail trade and services strong, yet actively promote other industrial sectors in order to better diversify the economy and create choices in employment opportunities.

8. The majority of Rainbow City's establishments was in retail trade (31%) and services (45%) together accounting for 76% of all city establishments. Meanwhile, Etowah County recorded similar results at 28% retail and 49% in services. Alabama showed 22% and 37%, respectfully. This information suggested that Rainbow City had enough facilities to accommodate retail and service employment and expansion.
9. Rainbow City's major occupations were in management/business at 29%, and sales and office at 24%, together accounting for the majority (53%) of occupations. Both Etowah County and Alabama had a slightly smaller fraction in these categories. The county recorded 22% in management/business and also 22% in sales and office occupations, while the state showed 26% and 23%, indicating that somewhat larger employment opportunities in the city existed in business management, sales, and administrative services than in other communities in the county and state.
10. The majority of Rainbow City's poverty existed in the 18 to 64 aged range at 58% in 2000, which was slightly larger than the county (52%) and state (53%). Poverty in the city's senior age class, 65 and above, ranked similarly to the county and state in 2000, suggesting that the city had a larger portion of older people in poverty than the county and state.
11. Rainbow City overall ranked well in mitigating poverty. Between 1990 and 2000, the city decreased its poverty rate (% of people below the poverty mark) from 12% to 8%. During this time the county decreased from 16% to 15% and the state from 18% to 16%, indicating that the city fared significantly better in mitigating poverty and in keeping it low.
12. From 1990 to 2000, Rainbow City decreased public assistance by -59% and poverty by -4%. In comparison, Etowah County decreased public assistance by -72%, yet poverty decreased by only -0.8%. Alabama showed similar results, decreasing by -70% and -2% respectfully. In 2000, city public assistance was at 1%, while the county and state both recorded 2%. This information suggests that poverty is not a significant problem in Rainbow City.

# CHAPTER IV: HOUSING

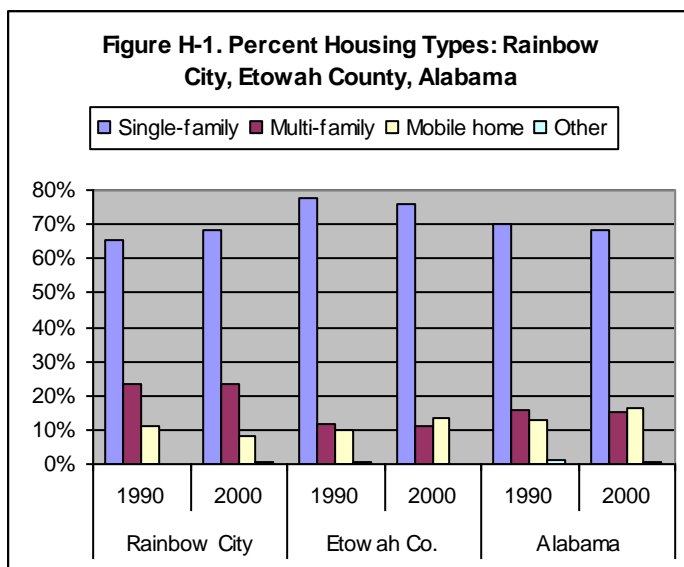
Housing is one of the most fundamental elements of community needs. In order for a community to grow and prosper there must be a diverse and satisfactory amount of quality housing available. A housing examination is useful in determining housing types, existing housing conditions, availability, and affordability, in order to identify and meet city housing needs. Rainbow City recognizes these needs and has taken action to address concerns. This chapter examines housing characteristics such as housing types, occupancy status and tenure, vacancy status, housing conditions such as housing age and physical conditions, housing value, and affordability.

## Housing Inventory

### Units by Type

Housing comes in many forms and styles, each aiming to satisfy a wide range of residents with changing demands and needs. A community that champions a variety of housing types has an advantage in that it offers many housing options with which to choose from, thus attracting more people to the community. An examination of unit types reveals the most and least common housing options available, expressing trends in housing development. Rainbow City’s housing consists of the following types: 1) Single-family—one unit attached or detached structures housing one family, primarily a house 2) Multi-family—contains two or more units within one structure with one family per unit; these include apartments, town homes, garden/patio homes, and duplexes, 3) Manufactured—a transportable structure which is three hundred-twenty or more square feet, when installed, to be used as a dwelling with or without a foundation, 4) Other—any living accommodations occupied as a housing unit that does not fit the previous types, such as houseboats, railroad cars, campers, and vans.

The substantial majority of housing types in Rainbow City has been single-family, as also demonstrated in Etowah County and Alabama. In 2000, approximately 68% of all city housing units were single-family, while the county showed 75%, and the state 68%. In both 1990 and 2000, multi-family units



accounted for 23% in the city, which was a significantly larger representation than both the county and state at 10% and 15%, respectively. Figure H-1, left, illustrates percent housing types for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000. Notice that single-family housing in the city, county, and state followed a similar pattern, however, multi-family units represent a substantially larger portion of the housing stock in the city, than in the county and state. Greater investment in multi-family

housing could be the result of increases in population density and housing, as well as an increasing senior population, that could demand smaller, more efficient housing (See Chapter I: Population for more detail). Table H-1, below, displays information on housing types for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

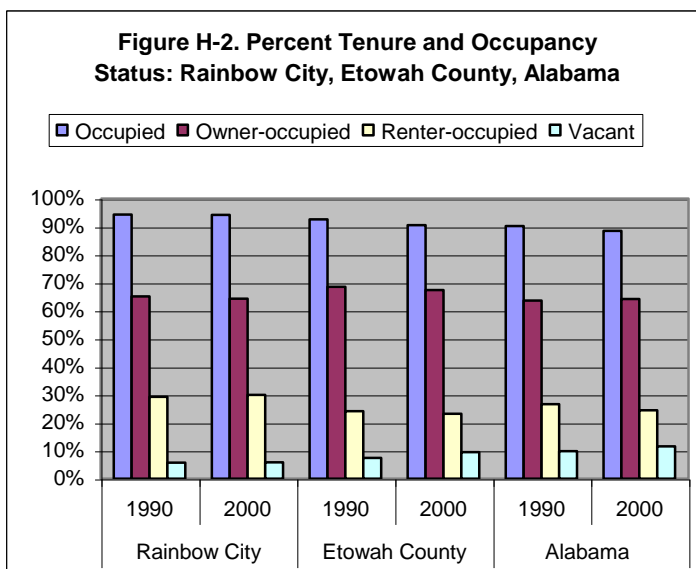
Table H-1. Housing Types: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama									
Housing Types	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
Single-family	2,075	2,642	27.3%	32,378	34,855	7.7%	1,171,201	1,338,832	14.3%
% of Total	65.4%	68.6%		77.5%	75.8%		70.1%	68.2%	
Multi-family	743	894	20.3%	4,902	5,011	2.2%	266,351	300,569	12.8%
% of Total	23.4%	23.2%		11.7%	10.9%		15.9%	15.3%	
Mobile home	354	304	-14.1%	4,166	6,056	45.4%	217,784	319,212	46.6%
% of Total	11.2%	7.9%		10.0%	13.2%		13.0%	16.3%	
Other	0	10	100.0%	341	37	-89.1%	15,043	5,098	-66.1%
% of Total	0.0%	0.3%		0.8%	0.1%		0.9%	0.3%	
Total Units	3,172	3,850	21.4%	41,787	45,959	10.0%	1,670,379	1,963,711	17.6%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 SF 3.

## Tenure and Occupancy Status

Housing occupancy and ownership patterns change as a result of the housing market and population growth or decline. A study of housing ownership patterns is useful in analyzing housing needs and guiding policies toward better housing development.

Rainbow City closely followed tenure and occupancy patterns of Etowah County and Alabama. The majority of city housing (64%), in 2000, was owner-occupied, consistent with the county at 67% and state at 64%. Occupancy rates for the city (94%) were slightly higher than the county (90%) and state (88%) during this time. Figure H-2, below, illustrates percent tenure and



occupancy status for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000. Notice that city occupancy rates were slightly higher than the county and state. Also, city renter-occupied units comprised a slightly greater majority of units, a reasonable explanation for larger portions of multi-family units as previously discussed. Renter-occupied units also comprised the greatest growth for the city between 1990 and 2000, with a 24% increase. Comparatively, the county and state increased in renter-occupied units by 5% and 7%, indicating greater demand

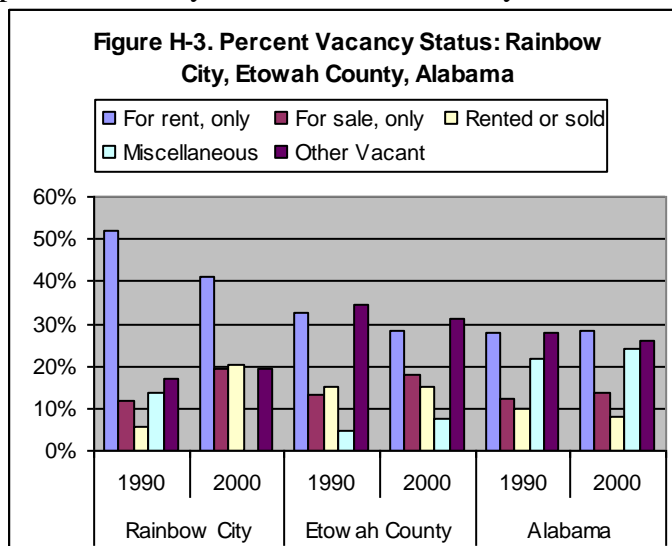
for rental property in Rainbow City. Increases in multi-family units tend to contribute to more housing choices for a diverse population with different needs. However, the city could have sufficient multi-family housing to suit its purposes. Table H-2, below, examines tenure and occupancy status for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

Table H-2. Tenure and Occupancy Status: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama									
Tenure & Occupancy	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Occupied	2,991	3,626	21.2%	38,675	41,615	7.6%	1,506,790	1,737,080	15.3%
% of Total	94.3%	94.2%		92.6%	90.5%		90.2%	88.5%	
Owner-occupied	2,066	2,475	19.8%	28,612	30,957	8.2%	1,062,148	1,258,686	18.5%
% of Total	65.1%	64.3%		68.5%	67.4%		63.6%	64.1%	
Renter-occupied	925	1,151	24.4%	10,063	10,658	5.9%	444,642	478,394	7.6%
% of Total	29.2%	29.9%		24.1%	23.2%		26.6%	24.4%	
Vacant	181	224	23.8%	3,112	4,344	39.6%	163,589	226,631	38.5%
% of Total	5.7%	5.8%		7.4%	9.5%		9.8%	11.5%	
Total Units	3,172	3,850	21.4%	41,787	45,959	10.0%	1,670,379	1,963,711	17.6%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 SF 1.

## Vacancy Status

Vacancy status is applicable in determining how vacant housing has been utilized. Any unoccupied housing unit at the time of enumeration is considered vacant. Vacancies can also be occupied houses for rent, sale, or for seasonal or recreational use only, so long as the primary occupants usually reside elsewhere. Five basic categories were selected to identify how vacant housing was being used, these included: 1) for sale only units, 2) for rent only units, 3) rented or sold, but not occupied, 4) miscellaneous—this includes units used for seasonal, recreational, occasional use, or migrant workers, 5) other—which entails other non-specified uses. Figure H-3, below, illustrates percent vacancy status for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.



The primary vacancy use in Rainbow City was for rent only accounting for 41% of all vacant units in 2000, which was a substantially higher portion than Etowah County and Alabama, both at 28%. Notice in Figure H-3, to the left, significant rent only representation, which was more than double, for sale only units in 2000. This suggests that renting tended to be a more profitable option for vacant housing than selling and other alternatives.

Miscellaneous vacancy status dropped in the city from 13% to 0% in 2000, while for sale units and rented or sold units increased, indicating that many units used for those purposes were sold or rented out instead. Meanwhile, miscellaneous uses increased considerably in the county (119%) and state (52%). As

trends continue and housing needs diversify, Rainbow City can expect to decrease in vacant rental units and gain in units for sale, rented or sold, and vacant for other purposes. Table H-3, below, displays information on vacant housing status for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

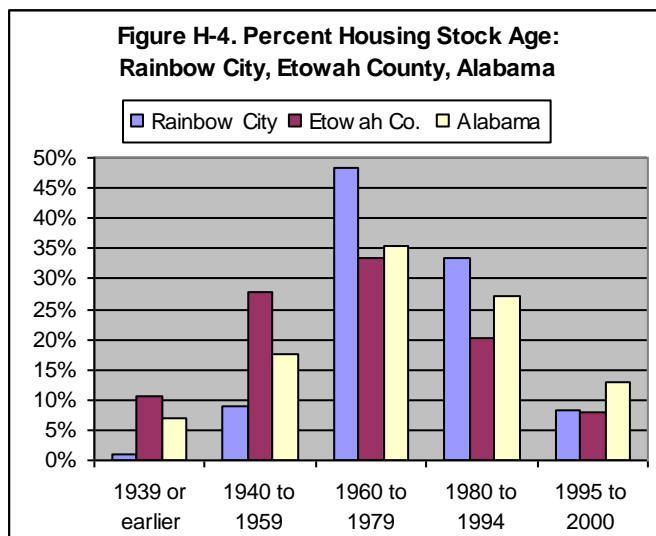
Table H-3. Vacant Housing Status: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama									
Vacancy Status	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
For rent, only	94	92	-2.1%	1,010	1,239	22.7%	45,871	64,037	39.6%
% of Total	51.9%	41.1%		32.5%	28.5%		28.0%	28.3%	
For sale, only	21	43	104.8%	414	781	88.6%	19,845	31,121	56.8%
% of Total	11.6%	19.2%		13.3%	18.0%		12.1%	13.7%	
Rented or sold	10	45	350.0%	463	655	41.5%	16,058	18,507	15.3%
% of Total	5.5%	20.1%		14.9%	15.1%		9.8%	8.2%	
Miscellaneous	25	0	-100.0%	147	322	119.0%	35,904	54,593	52.1%
% of Total	13.8%	0.0%		4.7%	7.4%		21.9%	24.1%	
Other Vacant	31	44	41.9%	1,078	1,347	25.0%	45,911	58,373	27.1%
% of Total	17.1%	19.6%		34.6%	31.0%		28.1%	25.8%	
Total Vacant	181	224	23.8%	3,112	4,344	39.6%	163,589	226,631	38.5%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 STF 1 and 2000 STF 3

## Housing Conditions

### Housing Stock Age

Housing age is an indicator of housing conditions and needs. A general study of housing age can be used to assess probable housing conditions and needs within the community. Nearly half (48%) of Rainbow City's housing stock was built between 1960 and 1979, with only about 10% of its housing being built beforehand. This could be due to the fact that Rainbow City was not incorporated until 1950, and significant housing growth did not occur until a decade later. Both Etowah County and Alabama had a much larger portion of housing built prior to 1960 than Rainbow City, 38% and 24% respectfully.



Approximately 41% of the city's housing stock was built between 1980 and 2000. The county built 28% of its housing stock at this time and the state 40%, indicating that the majority of Rainbow City's housing stock was of significantly newer construction than the county and of similar age with the state. Figure H-4, left, illustrates percent housing stock age for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama, dating prior to 1939 to 2000.

As housing deteriorates with age, older structures will be harder to maintain than new, thus spurring demolition, and

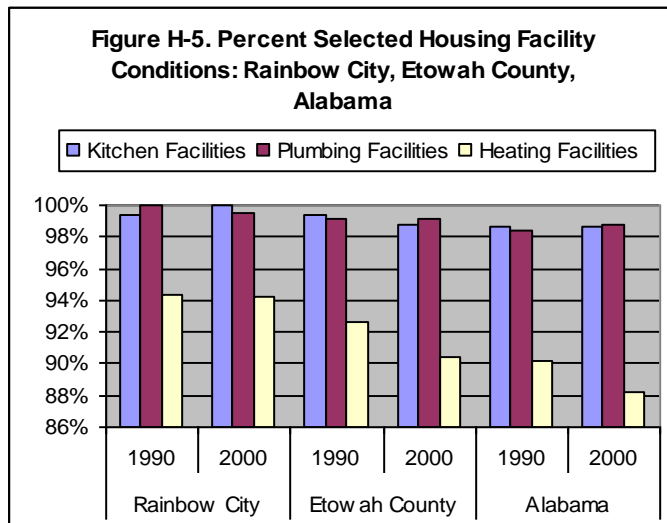
replacement with new construction. Since the vast majority of homes in Rainbow City were built post 1960, the city can focus housing development toward new construction as opposed to demolition or reconstruction of older structures. The city would benefit by concentrating its resources on maintaining and updating more recently built homes. In order to compete with the state, the city should focus more exclusively on new housing development. Table H-4, below, examines housing stock age for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama from 1939 and prior to 2000.

Table H-4. Housing Stock Age: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama						
Housing Stock	Rainbow City		Etowah County		Alabama	
	Number	%Change	Number	%Change	Number	%Change
1939 or earlier	44	NA	4,824	NA	139,227	NA
% of Total	1.1%		10.5%		7.1%	
1940 to 1959	343	679.5%	12,831	166.0%	341,735	145.5%
% of Total	8.9%		27.9%		17.4%	
1960 to 1979	1,855	440.8%	15,364	19.7%	692,480	102.6%
% of Total	48.2%		33.4%		35.3%	
1980 to 1994	1,283	-30.8%	9,246	-39.8%	534,533	-22.8%
% of Total	33.3%		20.1%		27.2%	
1995 to 2000	325	-74.7%	3,694	-60.0%	255,736	-52.2%
% of Total	8.4%		8.0%		13.0%	
Total Units	3,850		45,959		1,963,711	
Median Year Structure Built	1977		1968		1975	

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

## Selected Physical Conditions

Quality physical housing conditions play an important role in serving the general population and in attracting new people to the community. For the most part, physical conditions entail structural integrity, however, this data was not available; instead the focus of this study was selected housing facilities such as plumbing, kitchen, and heating. Information for physical housing conditions was collected from the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Census and examined the following physical conditions: 1) complete plumbing facilities, 2) complete kitchen facilities, 3) complete heating facilities.



Between 1990 and 2000, Rainbow City housing facilities were in good condition. In 2000, approximately 100% of all homes reported complete kitchen facilities, 99% complete plumbing, and 94% complete heating. Both Etowah County and Alabama reported similar plumbing and kitchen conditions to Rainbow City at 98% or above. However, the county and state lagged behind in providing complete heating facilities, showing 90% and 88%, respectively. Figure H-5, left, illustrates percent selected housing facility conditions

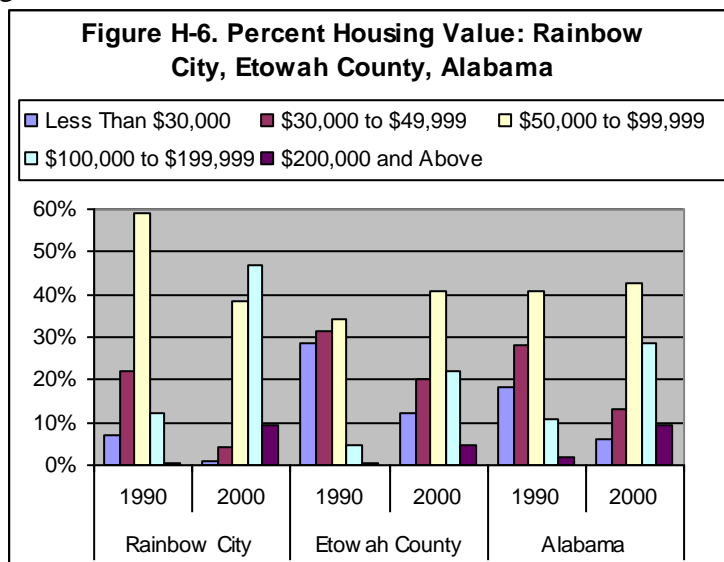
for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000. Table H-5 below, shows physical housing conditions for Rainbow City, Calhoun County, and Alabama in 2000.

Table H-5. Selected Housing Conditions: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama									
Housing Conditions	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Complete Kitchen Facilities	3,152	3,850	22.1%	41,519	45,410	9.4%	1,648,290	1,937,261	17.5%
% of Total	99.4%	100.0%		99.4%	98.8%		98.7%	98.7%	
Complete Plumbing Facilities	3,172	3,832	20.8%	41,471	45,573	9.9%	1,642,879	1,939,344	18.0%
% of Total	100.0%	99.5%		99.2%	99.2%		98.4%	98.8%	
Heating Facilities	2,991	3,626	21.2%	38,675	41,549	7.4%	1,506,790	1,732,744	15.0%
% of Total	94.3%	94.2%		92.6%	90.4%		90.2%	88.2%	
Total Units	3,172	3,850	21.4%	41,787	45,959	10.0%	1,670,379	1,963,711	17.6%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

## Housing Value

Housing value is a critical element of a comprehensive housing study. Every community desires housing with high resale value and growing equity. The information provided focuses chiefly on housing value (value being defined as the respondent’s estimate of how much the property (house and lot) would sell for if it was for sale) for specified owner-occupied housing, being the primary form of housing in the community. Specified owner-occupied housing is defined by the US Census as: “The total number of owner-occupied housing units described as either a one-family home detached from any other house or a one-family house attached to one or more houses on less than 10 acres with no business on the property.” (Census 2000 Glossary) The city recognizes the need to promote and encourage quality housing development and has been active in preparing for such growth.



Rainbow City owner-occupied housing values fared considerably well. From 1990 to 2000, homes valued at \$100,000 and above increased substantially in number from 202 to 1,172, accounting for over half (56%) of all city housing in 2000. In the same year, both Etowah County and Alabama showed considerably smaller representation in homes of this value, reporting 26% and 38%, respectively. Figure H-6, left, displays percent owner-occupied housing value for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama from 1990 to 2000. Notice the city’s considerable representation

in homes valued at \$100,000 to \$199,999, comprising 47% of the total housing stock. Also in 2000, the substantial majority (94%) of the city’s housing was worth \$50,000 and above. In



comparison, both the county (67%) and state (80%) reported significantly less representation in this value bracket, indicating lower housing values. Rainbow City's median housing value (MHV) grew significantly from \$63,900 in 1990 to \$108,200 in 2000, an increase of \$44,300. This was substantially greater value growth than Etowah County's MHV, which grew from \$42,700 to \$71,200 an increase of \$28,500. Alabama MHV grew by \$31,400. Table H-6, below, shows housing value of owner-occupied units for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

Housing Value	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Less Than \$30,000	108	17	-84.3%	6,266	2,928	-53.3%	138,101	57,528	-58.3%
% of Total	6.8%	0.8%		28.8%	12.4%		18.1%	6.3%	
\$30,000 to \$49,999	348	92	-73.6%	6,869	4,745	-30.9%	214,835	118,659	-44.8%
% of Total	21.8%	4.4%		31.6%	20.1%		28.1%	12.9%	
\$50,000 to \$99,999	942	805	-14.5%	7,407	9,649	30.3%	313,210	392,400	25.3%
% of Total	58.9%	38.6%		34.1%	40.8%		41.0%	42.7%	
\$100,000 to \$199,999	194	980	405.2%	1,028	5,226	408.4%	82,341	264,879	221.7%
% of Total	12.1%	47.0%		4.7%	22.1%		10.8%	28.8%	
\$200,000 and above	8	192	2300.0%	150	1,089	626.0%	16,239	85,104	424.1%
% of Total	0.5%	9.2%		0.7%	4.6%		2.1%	9.3%	
Total Units	1,600	2,086	30.4%	21,720	23,637	8.8%	764,726	918,570	20.1%
Median Value	\$63,900	\$108,200	69.3%	\$42,700	\$71,200	66.7%	\$53,700	\$85,100	58.5%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

## **Housing Affordability**

Rainbow City recognizes the need to establish and maintain housing, which is affordable and suitable to its residents. According to the Alabama Housing Finance Authority, the generally accepted affordability standard for housing cost is no more than 30 percent of household income. Rainbow City housing satisfies this requirement. Housing affordability is examined through changes in contract rent, gross rent, and housing value. Contract rent is, as described in the US Census as: "The monthly rent agreed to or contracted for, regardless of any furnishings, utilities, fees, meals, or services that may be included" (Census 2000 Glossary). Gross rent is also explained in the US Census as: "The amount of the contract rent plus the estimated average monthly cost of utilities (electricity, gas, and water and sewer) and fuels (oil, coal, kerosene, wood, etc.)." (Census 2000 Glossary).

Housing has been fairly expensive in Rainbow City. Between 1990 and 2000, the cost of living in Rainbow City was somewhat higher than the average in Etowah County and Alabama. Median contract rent in the city rose from \$258 to \$409, while the county reported a rise from \$186 to \$280. Alabama reported an increase from \$229 to \$339. Median gross rent was similarly high in Rainbow City at \$489 in 2000, which was \$94 greater than Etowah County at \$395 and \$42 greater than Alabama at \$447.

Between 1990 and 2000, Rainbow City housing valued at greater than \$100,000 increased substantially from 12% of the housing market to 56%, while Etowah County increased in this value range more slowly from 6% to 26%. Alabama increased from 13% to 38%, indicating that during this time overall housing costs in both rental and home ownership were considerably higher in the Rainbow City than in the county and state. Table H-7, below, examines housing value and cost for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama from 1990 to 2000.

Ownership Status	Rainbow City		Etowah County		Alabama	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Median Contract Rent	\$258	\$409	\$186	\$280	\$229	\$339
Median Gross Rent	\$357	\$489	\$281	\$395	\$325	\$447
Median Value Owner-Occupied	\$63,900	\$108,200	\$42,700	\$71,200	\$53,700	\$85,100
% Units > \$100,000	12.6%	56.2%	6.0%	26.7%	13.2%	38.1%
Total Housing Units	3,172	3,850	41,787	45,959	1,670,379	1,963,711

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

## Affordability of Owner-occupied Housing

Affordability of owner-occupied housing is vitally important in maintaining housing occupancy and population growth within the community. The relative affordability of owner-occupied housing was determined by examining selected monthly owner costs as a percentage of household income. As a common goal, communities should strive to make housing more affordable to their residents without sacrificing structural quality, working facilities, and aesthetic appeal. Table H-8, below, shows selected monthly owner costs as percentage of household income for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama from 1990 to 2000.

Percent of Income	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Less than 20%	966	1,360	40.8%	14,452	15,285	5.8%	482,702	556,093	15.2%
% of Total	60.4%	65.2%		66.5%	64.7%		63.1%	60.5%	
20 to 24%	221	181	-18.1%	2,376	2,396	0.8%	93,693	110,978	18.4%
% of Total	13.8%	8.7%		10.9%	10.1%		12.3%	12.1%	
25 to 29%	149	153	2.7%	1,511	1,453	-3.8%	56,044	67,849	21.1%
% of Total	9.3%	7.3%		7.0%	6.1%		7.3%	7.4%	
30 to 34%	38	112	194.7%	837	990	18.3%	33,671	42,840	27.2%
% of Total	2.4%	5.4%		3.9%	4.2%		4.4%	4.7%	
35% or more	173	269	55.5%	2,341	3,151	34.6%	91,195	127,930	40.3%
% of Total	10.8%	12.9%		10.8%	13.3%		11.9%	13.9%	
Not computed	53	11	-79.2%	203	362	78.3%	7,421	12,880	73.6%
Total Households	1,600	2,086	30.4%	21,720	23,637	8.8%	764,726	918,570	20.1%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

Housing in Rainbow City has been relatively affordable to residents. Home-owners have spent minimal portions of their income on housing, despite above average housing costs (costs above county and state averages, as previously mentioned). In 1990, approximately 60% of Rainbow City home-owners spent less than 20% of their household income on housing costs, and in 2000, that figure rose to 65%. In this same category, Etowah County reported 66% in 1990 and 64% in 2000, while Alabama reported 63% and 60%. This information indicates that affordability increased slightly in Rainbow City and decreased slightly in Etowah County and Alabama during this time. This could be attributed to above average city household incomes and low unemployment.

### Affordability of Renter-Occupied Housing

Renting has often been an attractive alternative to owning a home. Home ownership is generally more expensive and houses often require greater maintenance than apartments, town homes, or condominiums. Although home ownership, nationally, is much more popular and highly regarded, renter-occupied housing is needed to meet the needs of a diverse population, requiring a variety of housing choices.

Renting has been an affordable option in Rainbow City. From 1990 to 2000, the percent of city households spending less than 20% of their income on rent rose from 46% to 50%. In Etowah County this income category rose minimally from 35% to 36% and remained stationary in Alabama at 32%. There were also considerably less city households paying 35% or more of their income on renting in 2000 (20%) than in the county (25%), and state (27%). This information indicates that city rent has been substantially more affordable than county and state. Although housing values are substantially higher in Rainbow City (as previously indicated) than in Etowah County, and Alabama, affordability remains high because residents have sufficient income levels. Table H-9, below, shows gross rent as a percentage of household income for Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama between 1990 and 2000.

<b>Table H-9. Gross Rent As A Percentage of Household Income: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama</b>									
Percent of Income	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Less than 20%	419	577	37.7%	3,485	3,852	10.5%	139,708	153,017	9.5%
% of Total	46.7%	50.6%		35.8%	36.9%		32.6%	32.6%	
20 to 24%	71	90	26.8%	1,016	937	-7.8%	52,569	51,356	-2.3%
% of Total	7.9%	7.9%		10.4%	9.0%		12.3%	10.9%	
25 to 29%	100	106	6.0%	983	926	-5.8%	42,333	41,425	-2.1%
% of Total	11.1%	9.3%		10.1%	8.9%		9.9%	8.8%	
30 to 34%	33	30	-9.1%	598	532	-11.0%	28,501	29,476	3.4%
% of Total	3.7%	2.6%		6.1%	5.1%		6.7%	6.3%	
35% or more	209	239	14.4%	2,516	2,610	3.7%	117,289	128,349	9.4%
% of Total	23.3%	20.9%		25.8%	25.0%		27.4%	27.4%	
Not computed	66	99	50.0%	1,147	1,574	37.2%	47,624	65,506	37.5%
Total	898	1,141	27.1%	9,745	10,431	7.0%	428,024	469,129	9.6%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

## Policy Implications

1. The substantial majority of housing types in Rainbow City has been single-family, as also demonstrated in Etowah County and Alabama. In 2000, approximately 68% of all city housing units were single-family, while the county showed 75%, and the state 68%. In both 1990 and 2000, multi-family units accounted for 23% in the city, which was a significantly larger representation than both the county and state at 10% and 15% respectively. The city should continue to promote small-scale multi-family housing in order to create more living options and arrangements for its residents.
2. Rainbow City closely followed tenure and occupancy patterns of Etowah County and Alabama. The majority (64%) of city housing in 2000 was owner-occupied, consistent with the county at 67% and state at 64%. Occupancy rates for the city (94%) were slightly higher than the county (90%) and state (88%) during this time.
3. Renter-occupied units comprised the greatest growth for the city between 1990 and 2000, with a 24% increase. Comparatively, the county and state increased in renter-occupied units by 5% and 7%, indicating greater demand for rental property in the city than in the county and state. Rainbow City should focus on diversifying in small-scale multi-family housing through condo, duplex, or garden/patio home development in place of apartments.
4. The primary vacancy use in Rainbow City was for rent only, accounting for 41% of all vacant units in 2000, which was a substantially higher portion than Etowah County and Alabama, both at 28%.
5. Nearly half (48%) of Rainbow City's housing stock was built between 1960 and 1979, with only about 10% of its housing being built beforehand. Both Etowah County and Alabama had a much larger portion of housing built prior to 1960 than Rainbow City, 38% and 24% respectfully. Approximately 41% of the city's housing stock was built between 1980 and 2000, while the county built 28% of its housing stock at this time and the state 40%, indicating that the majority of Rainbow City's housing stock is of significantly newer construction the county and of similar age with the state.
6. Between 1990 and 2000, Rainbow City housing facilities were in good condition. In 2000, approximately 100% of all homes reported complete kitchen facilities, 99% complete plumbing, and 94% complete heating. Both Etowah County and Alabama reported similar plumbing and kitchen conditions to Rainbow City (at 98% or above). However, the county and state lagged behind in providing complete heating facilities, showing 90% and 88%, respectfully.
7. Rainbow City owner-occupied housing values fared considerably well. From 1990 to 2000, homes valued at \$100,000 and above increased in number from 202 to 1,172, accounting for over half (56%) of all housing in 2000. In the same year, both Etowah County and Alabama showed considerably smaller representation in homes of this value, reporting 24% and 33%, respectfully.

8. Rainbow City's median housing value (MHV) grew significantly from \$63,900 in 1990 to \$108,200 in 2000, an increase of \$44,300. This was substantially greater value growth than Etowah County's MHV, which grew from \$42,700 to \$71,200 an increase of \$28,500. Alabama MHV grew by \$31,400.
9. Housing has been fairly expensive in Rainbow City. Between 1990 and 2000, the cost of living in Rainbow City was somewhat higher than the average in Etowah County and Alabama. Median contract rent in the city rose from \$258 to \$409, while the county reported a rise from \$186 to \$280. Alabama reported an increase from \$229 to \$339. Median gross rent was similarly high in Rainbow City at \$489 in 2000, which was \$94 greater than Etowah County at \$395 and \$42 greater than Alabama at \$447.
10. Rainbow City housing has been relatively affordable to residents. Home-owners have spent minimal portions of their income on housing, despite above average housing costs (costs above county and state averages, as previously mentioned). In 1990, approximately 60% of Rainbow City home-owners spent less than 20% of their household income on housing costs, and in 2000, that figure rose to 65%. In this same category, Etowah County reported 66% in 1990 and 64% in 2000, while Alabama reported 63% and 60%, respectfully.
11. Renting has been an affordable option in Rainbow City as well. From 1990 to 2000, the percent of city households spending less than 20% of their income on rent rose from 46% to 50%. In Etowah County this affordability category rose minimally from 35% to 36% and remained stationary in Alabama at 32%.



# CHAPTER V: COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Community facilities are crucial to the planning effort, affecting growth and development throughout the city. Accessibility to community facilities and the extent to which they serve the community has significant influence on land use patterns and development trends within the city. Properties with direct access to utilities such as municipal water, sewer, and power can develop at reduced costs and safely support larger developments than properties in more remote and unserviceable areas. Also, a city creates additional opportunities for growth and development by upgrading and extending their services to other areas of the city. Community facilities must have plans for conducting continued maintenance while ensuring quality service, meeting the needs of a diverse and changing population. The purpose this chapter is to inventory existing community facilities and services, assess their capacity to serve existing and future needs, and suggest improvements and expansions for meeting these needs.

## City Administration

### City Council

Rainbow City's Municipal Building is located at the corner of Rainbow Drive and AL Hwy 77 in the central area of the city and houses the offices of the Mayor, City Clerk, Fire Chief, Police Chief, Revenue Officer, Parks and Recreation, Water Department, Street and Sanitation Department, and Building Department.

The city uses a mayor-council form of government, with all law-making officials elected by city residents. The council consists of five representatives, elected at large. In addition to determining the city budget the council also makes decisions regarding city departments. The mayor sits on city council to make recommendations, introduce issues, and to vote on ordinances and resolutions. An ordinance or resolution must have the mayor's signature to be passed. Should the mayor decide not to sign an ordinance or resolution the council may still pass it with a second vote. The role of the city clerk is to arrange the council's agenda for meeting, determine rules of order, keep records of meetings, and sit in on budget meetings. City council meetings are conducted in City Hall on the first and third Monday of each month.

City Council has created broad goals for the city. These goals are separated into long term and short term and are listed as follows:

General long term goals:

1. Provide for the public health, safety, and welfare of the community.
2. Create a positive economic environment
3. Encourage diverse recreational, educational, and cultural opportunities and maintain a full range of efficiently provided municipal services.
4. Provide a positive work environment which encourages teamwork, initiative, productivity, individual development, and creativity.
5. Commit to excellence in leadership and management skills to instill confidence in the integrity of city government.

6. Promote orderly growth while minimizing negative impacts on the community and its environment.

General short term goals include:

1. Enhance police and fire protection in the community.
2. Identify, prioritize, and fund capital improvement projects for the community.

City council also has goals for economic development and legislative activities. These goals are as follows:

Economic development goals:

1. Continue to work with the Economic Development Foundation (EDF) to implement its strategic plan.
2. Continue aggressive annexation program.

Legislative Activities:

1. Continue our involvement with federal, county, state, and local elected officials.
2. Develop opportunities for local citizens to serve at the state level.
3. Continue our involvement with the national and state municipalities league.

## **Planning Commission**

The City Planning Commission consists of an eight member board appointed by the Mayor, who serves as an Ex Officio member only. Appointed members have 6 years to the length of their service. The Planning Commission meets in the City Council Chambers in City Hall on the fourth Tuesday of each month.

The top three things that city administration would need to meet these goals and provide better services to its residents are more money, employees, and improved facilities.

## **Public Safety**

### **Fire and Rescue**

Rainbow City's Fire Department is dedicated to providing the most effective and efficient fire and rescue services possible. With a continuing mission to "dedicate our efforts to ensuring the safety, satisfaction, and well-being of the people we serve" the department takes a proactive stance on fire mitigation and prevention, meaning their efforts focus primarily on providing information necessary to prevent, reduce, and avoid emergency situations, rather than lessening response time to control emergencies as they happen. As its vision, the Fire Department ensures its customers it "will be a leading fire organization aggressively pursuing new opportunities to provide and diversify services in order to exceed the public's expectations." According to the Insurance Services Office (ISO) the department has been given a 5 rating, indicating high quality fire prevention and mitigation.

The Fire Department operates through a combination of paid (25 Full-time) and voluntary (10) workers. Emergency calls are brought from Etowah County 911 to the dispatch center where they



are transferred to radio throughout the Fire Department's 25 mile jurisdiction. Emergency Medical Staffing services are coordinated through the Fire Department. At this time, approximately 16 firefighters have completed paramedic training and one has started. New equipment is also needed. The department is planning on purchasing 2 new fire trucks with Fire district funding.

According to Rainbow City's Fireman Study Report, the city exceeds national, regional, and local performance measures in service delivery. However, the Fire Department per capital expenditures are high when compared to the other city departments. This higher cost can be attributed to excessive overtime expenditures, as opposed to more staff. Therefore, in order to keep costs down, yet still retain the same high level of service, the Consultants of Condrey and Associates (Report's consultants) advise the following recommendations:

1. Phase out the position of Lieutenant through attrition to bring the department closer to state and national staffing ratios related to supervision.
2. Adopt a career ladder policy allowing firefighters to move from the position of Firefighter I to Firefighter II based on professional development criteria.
3. Recruit certified fire personnel to serve on an as-needed, part-time basis. This policy will reduce overtime costs associated with shift absences.
4. Allow the Department to fill shift absences with positions of lower rank. For example, a Fire Captain would act as Assistant Chief on an assigned shift instead of calling in another Assistant Chief to fill the shift vacancy. Such a policy will allow for the further professional development of Department personnel while reducing overtime expenditures.
5. Consider a paid on-call status as a means of covering shift absences.
6. Switch to a 28-day pay cycle as allowed by the *Fair Labor Standards Act*.
7. The City Attorney, in consultation with a labor attorney specializing in *FLSA* compliance, should consider whether or not the position of Assistant Fire Chief is exempt from overtime compensation as outlined in the *Fair Labor Standards Act* guidelines issued August 2004.

*(Fireman Study Report, 2005)*

According to the Community Facilities Survey the top 3 things the Fire Department needs in order to provide better services are a new training facility, computer-aided dispatch and record keeping system, and more training.

## **Law Enforcement**

Rainbow City's Police Department is dedicated to protecting and serving its residents. The city employs approximately 11 full time officers, 7 supervisors, 7 dispatchers, 1 administrator, and 1 animal control officer for active duty. The department is equipped with an E-911 system and in-house enhanced dispatching capabilities to route calls throughout the police jurisdiction. Burglaries and thefts are the most prevalent crimes in Rainbow City and the department takes a proactive stance on these issues through regular patrolling and crime prevention programs. The Police Department utilizes approximately 10 police vehicles.

The Police Department is involved in proactive programs such as Neighborhood Watch, D.A.R.E (Drug Awareness and Resistance Education) and G.R.E.A.T (Gang Resistance Education and Training). These programs inform and educate citizens on how to recognize and take preventative measures to mitigate and/or neutralize criminal occurrences.

***D.A.R.E***

The Drug Awareness and Resistance Education program began in Los Angeles in 1983 and spread throughout the U.S. and into more than 43 different countries. The program has been so successful that approximately 75 percent of the nation’s schools implement the D.A.R.E program. This officer-lead program guides students grades K-12 through a series of classroom lessons designed to teach them how to resist peer pressure and live productive drug and violence-free lives.

***G.R.E.A.T***

Similar to D.A.R.E the Gang Resistance Education and Training program is also officer-lead through classroom instruction. The program’s primary objective is prevention against delinquency, youth violence, and gang membership. Lessons focus on teaching students life skills to help them avoid delinquent behavior and violence and to solve problems in a peaceable manner.

***Neighborhood Watch Institute***

The Neighborhood Watch Institute is an organization dedicated to providing citizens with educational materials and products for building crime observation and reporting skills, as well as signage warning of the presence of crime prevention activities in neighborhoods. These materials and products include training materials, work sheets, window warning decals, and quality street signs.

## Educational Facilities

The Rainbow City public school system offers high quality education to students grades 1 through 8. In 2001 John Jones Elementary School received the National Blue Ribbon School Award for excellence in education and in 2005-2006 became an Alabama Reading Initiative School ARI training site. In 2006 the school won the Accountability Award from the Alabama State Department of Education. John Jones is one of 11 schools in the Etowah County School district and serves approximately 711 students grades 1-5.

Rainbow City Middle School serves approximately 668 students grades 6-8. Both the Middle and Elementary Schools in the city are accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools. Table C-1, below, shows public educational facilities for Rainbow City in 2006.

Table C-1. Educational Facilities: Rainbow City, 2006							
School	Teachers Available		# Students	# Classrooms	Programs		
	Full	Part			Band room	Gym	Library
John Jones Elementary (1-5)	50	0	711	30	0	1	1
Rainbow Middle (6-8)	40	0	668	30	0	1	1

Source: Rainbow City School Board, 2006

## **Public Library Services**

The Rainbow City public library serves the community by offering a variety of materials and services which include reference, inter-library loans, story time, and summer reading program. The library provides approximately 56,427 volumes, 2,759 audio tapes and CDs, 2,231 DVDs, 80 periodical subscriptions, and 2 newspapers. Furthermore, the library offers internet connected computers and the Alabama Virtual Library system. Library staff consists of 4 full-time and 4 part-time workers. Funding is attained primarily by the city, but also through a small amount from the state and an annual allocation from the Etowah County Library Committee.

## **Parks and Recreation**

Rainbow City offers a wide variety of opportunities for indoor and outdoor recreation. Parks and Recreation services is dedicated to enhancing the quality of life of all city residents by maintaining quality recreational facilities and organizing recreational, cultural, educational, and entertainment activities throughout the year. The Parks and Recreation Department has 5 full-time staff—1 director, 1 night shift, 3 groundskeepers, and 1 part-time groundskeeper.

Two major parks are located in the city. Rainbow City Park consists of about 5 acres and is located on the corner of Park Lane and Williams Avenue. Rainbow Landing is situated on 4 acres on the corner of hwy 77 and Lakeshore Drive, along the Coosa River, and provides fishing piers and a boat launch for fishermen or boaters. Planned future expansions to the city park system include a nature trail/disc golf course, sports complex, a walking trail, and practice fields.

The city also offers a Community Center which hosts a wide array of activities such as Lions Club, Greeters Readers, Greeters Painters, Senior Citizens Club, RSVP Income Tax Assistance, Bridge (Help) Class, Bridge Club, and Seniors Card Playing. The Community Center provides a banquet room and kitchen facilities for community use. Numerous sports leagues are organized through the Parks and Recreation Department as well, such as Little League, Rookie League, Coach Pitch, Tee-ball, Girls Softball, Babe Ruth Baseball, Pee-wee Football, Soccer, and Basketball.

## **Utilities Department**

The Rainbow City Public Utilities Department strives to provide quality and professional public services to its residents in a manner that exemplifies its motto: Pride in Service.

The department consists of 3 major divisions: 1) Engineering Services Division, 2) Environmental Services Division, 3) Operations and Maintenance Division.

Rainbow City distributes electric energy, gas, and water service to its residents. Alabama Power provides the city's electrical service and gas. Bell South is the city's telephone carrier and Comcast provides cable services. The top needs of the utilities department regarding water infrastructure include looping existing lines, upgrading older and smaller lines, and relocating lines that may be under roadways.

## **Street and Sanitation Department**

Rainbow City Street and Sanitation Department is responsible for maintaining a quality environment in the city. This includes upkeep and improvements to city roadways, streets, and bridge infrastructure in order to assure efficient travel, safety, and accessibility. The department also maintains street lighting and provides street cleaning, garbage collection, and disposal. The city collects solid waste which is disposed in Three Corners Landfill in Piedmont, Alabama.

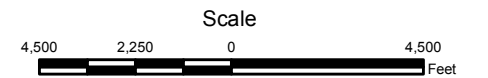
Major street improvements needed include construction of Black Creek Parkway and widening Steele Station Road from Sutton Bridge to AL Hwy 77 to four lanes. Also US Hwy 411 to the south of AL Hwy 77 needs extra lanes added from AL 77 to Lumley Road.

## **Policy Implications**

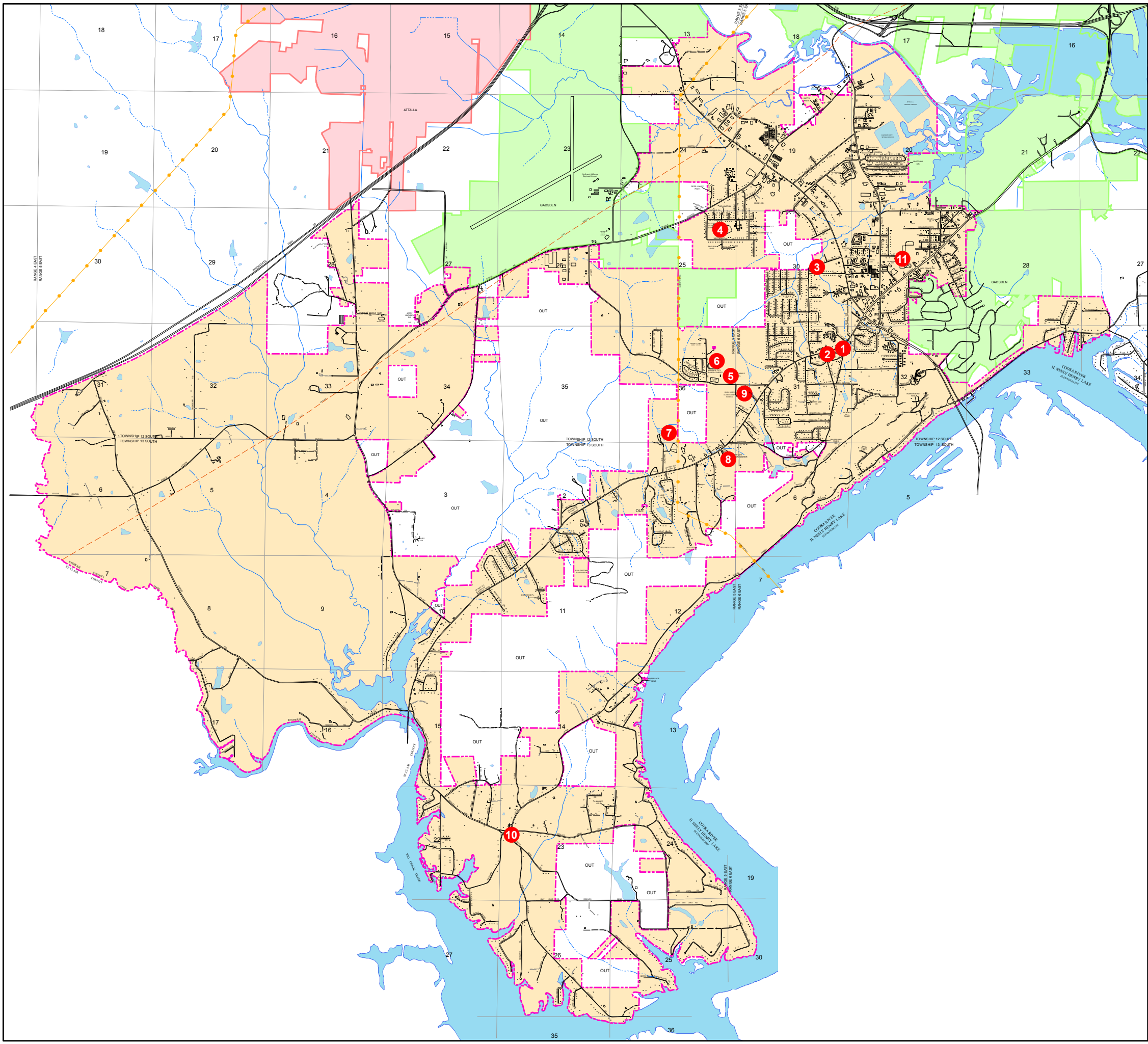
1. Rainbow City should consider constructing a new Fire Department training facility and an updated computer aided dispatch and record keeping system in order to enhance service to the community.
2. Expansions and improvements to the city park system include a nature trail/disc golf, sports complex, and practice fields.
3. The utility board should construct a sewage treatment plant or share resources with Gadsden in order to promote and encourage development throughout the city. The city should also regularly update water and sewage line maps to promote and guide development throughout the city.
4. The Street and Sanitation Department should regularly update road project and construction maps to guide and direct transportation improvements throughout the city.
5. The city should continue to promote the county school system in their tradition of educational excellence in their school system through school programs and educational training.



# MAP 3 COMMUNITY FACILITIES RAINBOW CITY ALABAMA



Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2006.



## Legend

- Rainbow City Municipal Limits
- Gadsden Municipal Limits
- Attalla Municipal Limits
- 1** CITY HALL / POLICE / FIRE DEPT.
- 2** LIBRARY / COMMUNITY CENTER
- 3** CITY PARK / W.T. VINYARD COMMUNITY CENTER
- 4** WESTBROOK CHRISTAIN SCHOOL
- 5** RAINBOW MIDDLE SCHOOL
- 6** RAINBOW CITY SPORTS COMPLEX
- 7** CITY PARK
- 8** RAINBOW CITY RECREATION CENTER
- 9** JOHN JONES ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
- 10** FIRE STATION # 2
- 11** POST OFFICE





## CHAPTER VI: TRANSPORTATION

Transportation is an essential element and must be carefully planned and developed to best meet the needs of the community. As America continues to grow in population and more people rely on vehicular travel, transportation planning for the automobile will continue to be of major importance. Efficient traffic flow and mobility influences the economic welfare and overall quality of life within a community. Routes with high traffic concentrations need to be identified and properly planned in order to accommodate present traffic conditions and anticipated future growth. Traffic patterns also direct locations for growth and development. Industries and businesses desiring visibility and accessibility to the public and to their suppliers tend to locate along major traffic routes. A well-planned transportation system should save business and the general population time and money by allowing its users to deliver goods, services, and other resources as efficiently and safely as possible. Therefore, it is important to analyze a city's existing transportation infrastructure and outline efforts for improving their local transportation network.

The purpose of this chapter is to provide information on existing traffic conditions and recommend actions to further enhance the transportation infrastructure in Rainbow City. Traffic volumes along 2 major routes, AL Hwy 77 and US Hwy 411, through Rainbow City have been used to calculate maximum capacity and future traffic growth projections. A transportation plan and policy implications at the chapter end outline practical actions proposed to improve city transportation.

### Definitions

When studying road transportation it is useful to classify roads and streets according to their function. Road classifications can be used to identify road characteristics and whether or not roads are eligible for federal funding. The highway functional classification system is organized into a hierarchical structure with interstates designated as the highest traffic carriers, followed by arterials—principal and minor, collectors—major and minor, and local roads. The following roadway definitions of the functional classification of roads and streets are described by the Alabama Highway Department of Transportation. To view locations of streets and street functions in the city see Map 4: *Functional Street Classifications*.

#### ***Interstates***

Interstates are divided highways with full control of access and grade separation at all intersections. The controlled access of interstates results in high-lane capacities, enabling these roadways to carry up to three times the amount of traffic per lane as arterials. Interstates move traffic at relatively high speeds. Rainbow City has convenient access to Interstate 59, traversing northeast to Chattanooga, Tennessee and southwest to Birmingham, and Interstate 759, extending through Gadsden.

#### ***Arterial Streets***

Arterial streets are designed to handle large volumes of traffic, but considerably less than interstates. Arterials serve primarily as feeders to the interstate system and act as major connectors between land-use concentrations. With a suggested lane width of twelve feet, this class of roadway may be separated by a median. A secondary purpose of an arterial is to provide some access to

adjacent property. The use of a curb lane along arterials for parking, loading, and unloading should not be permitted because it interferes with the flow of traffic. There are two classifications of arterials: principal and minor. Principal arterial highways connect communities to freeways and expressways while minor arterial highways connect with principal arterial highways and collectors. Arterials could also be urban or rural in character. Arterials streets in Rainbow City include AL Highway 77, running north and south, and Rainbow Drive, extending east to west.

### ***Collector Streets***

Collector streets serve the purpose of collecting and distributing traffic from local streets to the arterials. With a suggested lane width of twelve feet, collectors are important for serving adjacent property and loading and unloading goods. Typically, collectors have lower volumes of traffic in order to accommodate shorter distance trips.

### ***Local Streets***

Local streets, designed to provide access to abutting property, are usually no wider than twelve feet. Most residential streets and alleys are considered local streets.

## **Administrative Street Classification**

Streets are classified by ownership as well as function. Through an administrative street classification system, governments are able to identify which entity is responsible for a particular roadway and designate project funding accordingly. The administrative street classification categories are listed as follows:

### ***Federal Highways***

Federal highways are owned and funded by the U.S. Department of Transportation; the State Department of Transportation coordinates improvements on these roadways. US Hwy 411 is designated as a US highway and passes through Rainbow City, traveling east and west.

### ***Other Federal Roads***

These roads are owned and maintained by other federal agencies, such as the U.S. Department of the Interior. Examples of these roadways include national forest roads and national park service roads. These routes are not present in Rainbow City.

### ***State Highways***

State Highways are owned and maintained by the State Department of Transportation both in unincorporated portions of a county and within municipal corporate boundaries. The major state highway running through the city is AL Hwy 77.

### ***County Roads***

County roads can be divided into two types: (1) roads owned and maintained by the county; and (2) roads owned by the county but maintained by the municipality under written agreement with the county.

### ***Municipal Streets***

Municipal streets consist of all other public roads inside city boundaries (excluding private roads). All roads in Rainbow City not listed in the other classifications fall into this category.

### ***Private Roads***

Private roads are not publicly funded but should be considered when planning future municipal street network expansions. This classification includes subdivision roads that have not been dedicated to the city and long, shared driveways.

## **Traffic Volumes and Capacity**

Traffic volumes are useful to determine traffic flow throughout a community, identify areas of high, medium, and low traffic volumes, and how traffic flow has been directed and changed over time. This information can be used to direct where road improvements, property access, and land developments should occur and the extent to which these occurrences should be administered. Traffic data was collected from strategically placed traffic counters, which are identified by their mile marker positions. Traffic volumes are measured from Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) counts at these positions. Annual Average Daily Traffic is not a precise measurement of traffic flow, but is simply an indicator of the approximate number of vehicles traveling on a particular section of roadway on any particular day for a given year. Actual volumes could be much higher or lower on any given day, however, for the purposes of this study AADT measurements have been used to give a general overview of traffic conditions.

After AADT is determined, it is compared to practical capacity to check if present volumes can adequately serve the public or not. Capacities are calculated by ALDOT using three data inputs: functional classification, number of lanes, and type of developments adjacent to the roadway. The *Calhoun County Area Transportation Plan 2025 Update Plan* provides a list of functional highway classifications and their respective maximum capacities.

In order to determine how many more vehicles a particular portion of roadway can adequately serve the formula  $V/C$  ( $V$ = Traffic Volume and  $C$ = Traffic Capacity) is calculated to produce a ratio. If the ratio is less than 1 then capacity is adequate for that road and improvements are not mandatory. However, if the ratio is 1 or more than 1 then capacity is surpassing or has surpassed the maximum number of vehicles the road is designed to properly serve. For example, a rural principal arterial in an undeveloped area may adequately serve up to 32,500 vehicles per day. Should the AADT be 25,000 then:  $V/C$  calculates as 0.76. Next:  $100 - 0.76 = 0.24\%$  capacity available.

Another method used to determine if present volumes are adequate or not is to compare traffic volumes along a road type with Level of Service (LOS). The Alabama Department of Transportation has provided definitions for LOS, which are as follows:

Level of Service A	Free traffic flow
Level of Service B	Stable traffic flow
Level of Service C	Stable traffic flow
Level of Service D	High-density stable traffic flow

Level of Service E            Capacity level traffic flow  
 Level of Service F            Forced or breakdown traffic flow

Ideal traffic flow is service level A, but levels B and C permit adequate traffic flow as well. Service level D is high-density stable traffic flow. Upon reaching this level plans to accommodate higher traffic volumes should be taken into strong consideration. Plans to accommodate more traffic are mandatory should traffic volumes meet or exceed levels E and F.

## AL Highway 77

Alabama Highway 77 runs northwest and southeast through Rainbow City and is classified as a principal arterial highway throughout. Southeast of the Coosa River AL Hwy 77 is an undivided two-lane principal arterial until crossing the bridge where it transitions to 4-lane principal arterial forward on into Rainbow City. At its junction with US Hwy 411, the highway transforms back to 2-lane rural running northwest onward to Interstate 59 and into Attalla. Table T-1, below, shows traffic volumes for AL Hwy 77 from 1995 to 2005. Traffic count stations are identified in parenthesis and LOS is also shown in the far right column. See Map 5: *Transportation Plan* for the exact locations where traffic count data was collected.

Traffic Count Location	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	# Change	% Change	LOS
S. of I-59 (97)	13,130	13,390	15,010	14,980	16,110	16,840	3,710	28.3%	B
N. of Steel St. road (99)	11,460	12,300	12,620	13,520	14,020	14,650	3,190	27.8%	D
S. of Park Lane (101)	12,670	13,370	14,110	14,820	16,520	17,040	4,370	34.5%	D
S. of Church Str. (102)	19,530	20,810	21,530	21,770	24,150	23,790	4,260	21.8%	D

Source: ALDOT website: Traffic Data, Statewide Traffic Volume Map

Between 1995 and 2005, city traffic volumes along this route increased by a considerable 21% or higher. The greatest growth occurred in the section just to the northwest of the Rainbow Drive/AL Hwy 77 junction with an increase from 12,670 to just over 17,000, a percent increase of 34%.

Level of Service along AL Hwy 77 is characterized as level D (High Density) throughout, with the exception of section near Interstate 59. This information, combined with traffic volume growth, indicates that road improvements will be needed in the near future in order to maintain efficient traffic flow.

## US Highway 411

US Hwy 411 stretches southwest to northeast through Rainbow City. This route is classified as a 2-lane principal arterial northeast into Rainbow City then transforms to 4-lane principal arterial at the intersection of AL Hwy 77 and continues northeast toward Interstate 759 and Gadsden. Increased traffic volumes in the northeast section call for a larger roadway to accommodate additional traffic congestion. Traffic volumes along US Hwy 411 have been increasing significantly. Between 1995 and 2005 the greatest growth along this route occurred along the southwestern portion of the city, increasing from 4,720 AADT to 5,780, a percent change 22%. The greatest decrease in traffic occurred closer to the junction with AL Hwy 77 at the city center, declining from 11,420 AADT to

10,730, a decrease of 6%. Table T-2, below, shows traffic volumes for US Hwy 411 between 1995 and 2005.

Traffic Count Location	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	# Change	% Change	LOS
S. of Canoe Creek (18)	3,250	3,590	3,440	3,590	3,930	3,890	640	19.7%	A
N. of Pleasant Valley rd (104)	4,720	5,330	5,080	4,900	5,670	5,780	1,060	22.5%	A
N. of Bob Lee rd. (105)	5,910	6,560	6,130	5,880	6,570	6,280	370	6.3%	A
BTW. Williams Ave. and L. Ferry rd. (107)	11,420	11,980	12,010	11,560	11,700	10,730	-690	-6.0%	B
BTW. Sutton & Silvey Str. (109)	24,050	24,190	25,340	26,440	29,060	27,510	3,460	14.4%	D
N. Country Club rd. (110)	26,070	26,470	27,150	26,660	28,780	26,430	360	1.4%	D
S. of I-759 (112)	34,530	33,590	33,910	32,760	34,030	33,700	-830	-2.4%	E

Source: ALDOT website: Traffic Data, Statewide Traffic Volume Map

Level of Service has been fairly stable (LOS A and B) along the southwest portion of US Hwy 411, but reached high density (LOS D) in the northeast area from the AL Hwy 77 intersection. The far northeast portion near the I-759 interchange registered LOS E capacity level. Modifications and enhancements should be a top priority in this area in order to maintain efficient traffic flow.

## Traffic Projections

Traffic projections are used to give an indication of future traffic counts given current conditions occurring at the same rate for the same span of time. It is important to remember that these projections are not used to adequately predict future traffic volumes. They only provide a general demonstration of what should happen if current trends and conditions remain the same.

An example of how traffic count projections are calculated for a 10-year period is shown below:

1. Calculate the difference between the traffic volumes in the past 10 years.  
2005 AADT at 6,280 - 1995 AADT at 5,910 is  $6,280 - 5,910 = 370$ .
2. Second, the difference is divided by the earliest AADT examined, which is 1995 data.  
Difference is  $370 / \text{AADT } 1995 \text{ at } 5,910 = 370 / 5,910 = 6.3$ , which is the growth rate for the 10-year period.
3. Third, the growth rate is multiplied by the traffic volume of the most recent year.  
Growth rate is  $6.3 \times \text{AADT } 2005 \text{ at } 6,280 = 6.3 \times 6,280 = 393$ , which is the estimated increase over the next 10-year period, given conditions remain the same.
4. Lastly, the estimated increase and the most recent AADT are summed.  
Estimated increase  $393 + \text{AADT } 2005 \text{ is } 393 + 6,280 = 6,673$ , which is the projected traffic count on this section of road for 2015.

Traffic Projections along routes US Hwy 411 and AL Hwy 77 demonstrate high density to capacity level traffic flow by the year 2015. Under current trends and conditions and without necessary upgrades and expansion, traffic flow can be expected to meet and exceed capacity along large portions of these two roadways. Alabama Hwy 77 would meet or exceed capacity throughout

most of its stretch through the city and US Hwy 411 would meet capacity near the AL Hwy 77 intersection and in the northeast city area. In the near future significant expansion of these roadways or alternative routes will be needed in order to accommodate increased traffic flow. Table T-3, below, shows Annual Average Daily Traffic Projections for routes US Hwy 411 and AL Hwy 77 between 1995 and 2015.

<b>Table T-3. Annual Average Daily Traffic Projections, 1995-2015</b>				
<b>Location of Traffic Count</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2005</b>	<b>2015</b>	<b>2015 LOS</b>
<b>US Highway 411 (Rainbow Drive)</b>				
S. of Canoe Creek (18)	3,250	3,890	4,656	A
N. of Pleasant Valley rd (104)	4,720	5,780	7,078	A
N. of Bob Lee rd. (105)	5,910	6,280	6,673	A
BTW. Williams Ave. and L. Ferry rd. (107)	11,420	10,730	10,081	B
BTW. Sutton & Silvey Str. (109)	24,050	27,510	31,467	E
N. Country Club rd. (110)	26,070	26,430	26,795	D
S. of I-759 (112)	34,530	33,700	32,890	E
<b>AL Highway 77</b>				
S. of I-59 (97)	13,130	16,840	21,598	C
N. of Steel St. road (99)	11,460	14,650	18,728	E
S. of Park Lane (101)	12,670	17,040	22,917	E
S. of Church Str. (102)	19,530	23,790	28,979	F

Source: ALDOT website: Traffic Data, Statewide Traffic Volume Map

## **Transportation Plan**

As a growing and thriving community, Rainbow City needs to plan for effective and efficient transportation. The primary form of transportation throughout the city is personal vehicular with most traffic generation along the two main routes, AL Hwy 77 and US Hwy 411, intersecting at the city center. Traffic improvements, through road widening and expansion, prove useful in mitigating traffic congestion, however, once capacity is reached more lanes will be required to once again maintain effective and efficient traffic flow. As a part of its transportation plan Rainbow City should not only promote road expansion, but also encourage alternative traffic routes throughout the city. These alternative routes would enhance connectivity of roadways creating a greater variety of options for drivers to use in reaching destinations. This strategy reduces dependency on a select few roads resulting in numerous benefits which include alleviated traffic congestion, reduced driving time and gas consumption, more expedient delivery of goods and services, and the improvement of overall quality of life. Alternative roads also open opportunities for new development, utility expansion, and land use. See Map 5: *Transportation Plan* for a comprehensive overview of traffic counts and the overall transportation plan.

Rainbow City presents numerous opportunities for transportation improvement. An abundance of open and undeveloped land allows for more attainable and accessible route connections. Alternative routes between AL Hwy 77 and US Hwy 411 would greatly enhance traffic flow throughout the community. There are also numerous possibilities in creating more direct

connections between Steel Station Road in the north with parallel US Hwy 411 in the south. The following are proposed practical actions to improve city transportation:

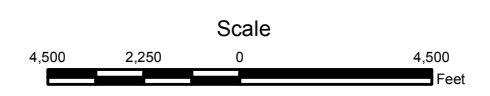
- Improve traffic flow along US Hwy 411 by widening the section from AL Hwy 77 intersection to intersection with Lumley Road from 2-lane to 4-lane.
- Improve highway access at US Hwy 411 and Lumley Road intersection by adding turning lanes.
- Improve traffic flow along Steel Station Road by widening the section from Sutton Bridge to AL Hwy 77 from 2 lanes to 4 lanes.
- Construct a new road connecting AL Hwy 77 in the north portion of the city (near Steel Station Rd. intersection) to US Hwy 411 at intersection of Lumley Road.
- Connect Steel Station rd. to Interstate 759.
- Construct new routes connecting Steel Station Road in the north to US Hwy 411 in the south.
- Connect US Hwy 411 to Lister Ferry Road to the south.

## Policy Implications

1. As a growing and thriving community, Rainbow City needs to plan for effective and efficient transportation. The primary form of transportation throughout the city is personal vehicular with most traffic generation along the two primary routes, AL Hwy 77 and US Hwy 411, intersecting at the city center. Therefore, in addition to widening, the city should plan for alternative roads, making necessary connections for improved traffic flow throughout the community.
2. According to the Alabama Department of Transportation (ALDOT) traffic data, traffic volumes along AL Hwy 77 throughout the city indicate Level of Service (LOS) D which is characterized as high density stable. This suggests that traffic volumes along this section highway are nearing capacity and improvements should be considered for the near future.
3. Traffic count data indicated that US Hwy 411 northeast of the AL Hwy 77 interchange at LOS D and improvements to widen from 4-lane to 6 or create an alternative route should be strongly considered.
4. Federal route US Hwy 411 to the southeast of the AL Hwy 77 interchange showed primarily LOS A—free traffic flow with LOS B—stable traffic flow closer to State Route 77. This data alone suggests that traffic congestion along this stretch is not a major concern, however, due to growth in the city center and substantial traffic congestion accumulated from the schools, road widening improvements from Lumley Road to AL Hwy 77 are highly recommended.
5. Alternative road construction, to alleviate dependency on the main routes and make better connections, throughout the city is highly recommended. One major consideration is to construct a new road connecting AL Hwy 77 in the north portion of the city (near Steel Station Rd. intersection) to US Hwy 411 at the Lumley Road intersection. This would provide an alternative route from AL Hwy 77 to the elementary and middle schools on Lumley Road and relieve traffic congestion along US Hwy 411.
6. Connecting Steel Station rd. to Interstate 759 would enhance highway access in the northeastern portion of the city.
7. Constructing new routes connecting Steel Station Road in the north to US Hwy 411 in the south would alleviate traffic congestion along AL Hwy 77 in the city center.
8. Connecting US Hwy 411 to Lister Ferry Road to the south would create a more direct route to the waterfront and communities in that area.
9. Improve traffic flow along Steel Station Road by widening the section from Sutton Bridge to AL Hwy 77 from 2 lanes to 4 lanes.



# MAP 4 FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION OF STREET RAINBOW CITY ALABAMA

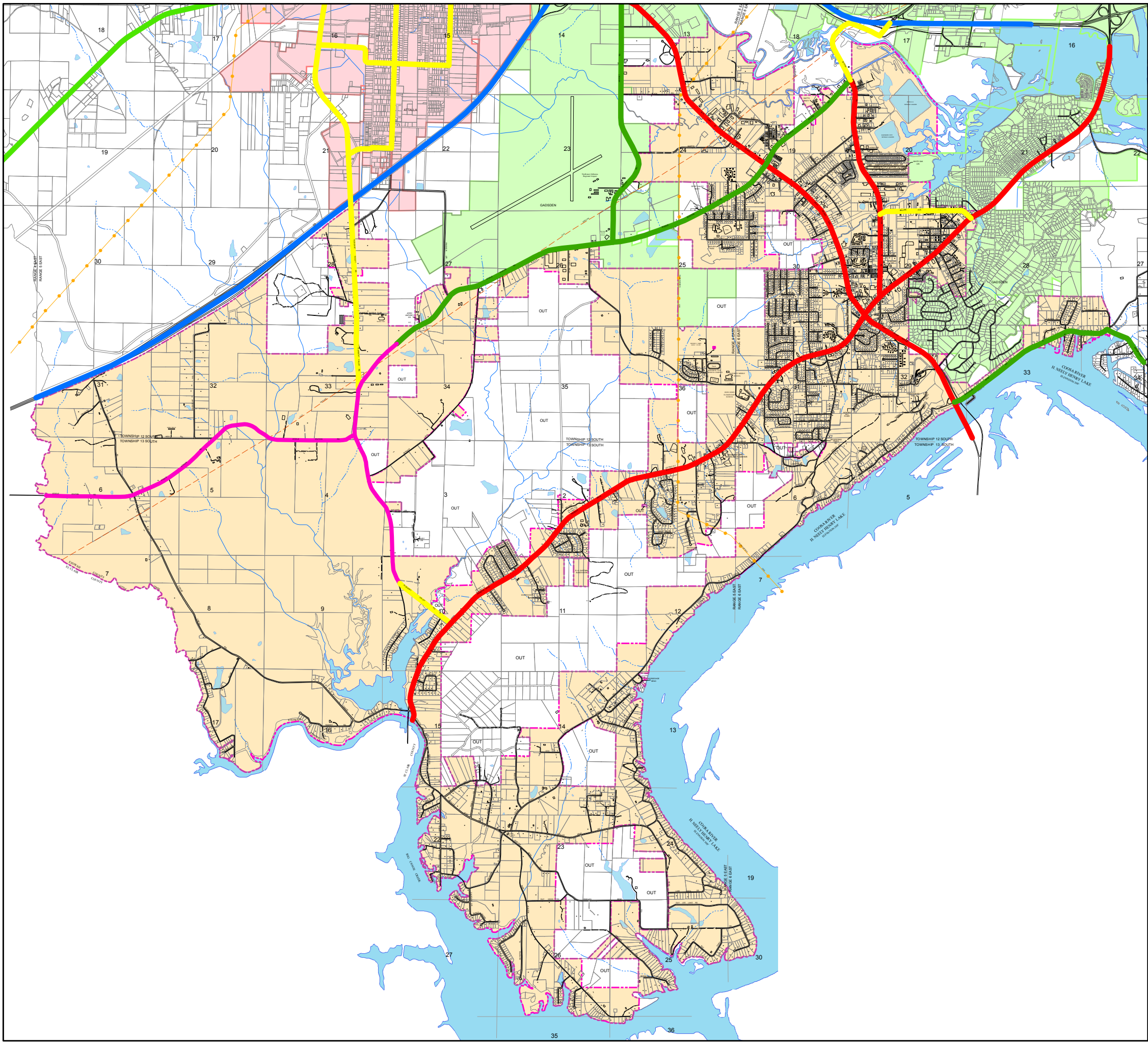


Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2006.

Note: Functional Street Classifications Obtained From The Gadsden-Etowah MPO 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan Update, January 2005.

## Legend

- Rainbow City Municipal Limits
- Gadsden Municipal Limits
- Attalla Municipal Limits
- Rural Major Collector
- Interstate
- Principal Arterial
- Minor Arterial
- Urban Collector

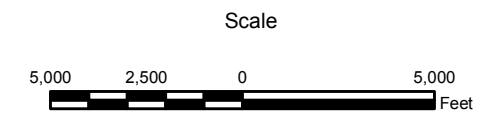
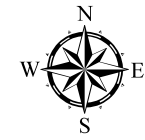




# MAP 5

## TRANSPORTATION PLAN

### Rainbow City Alabama



Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission

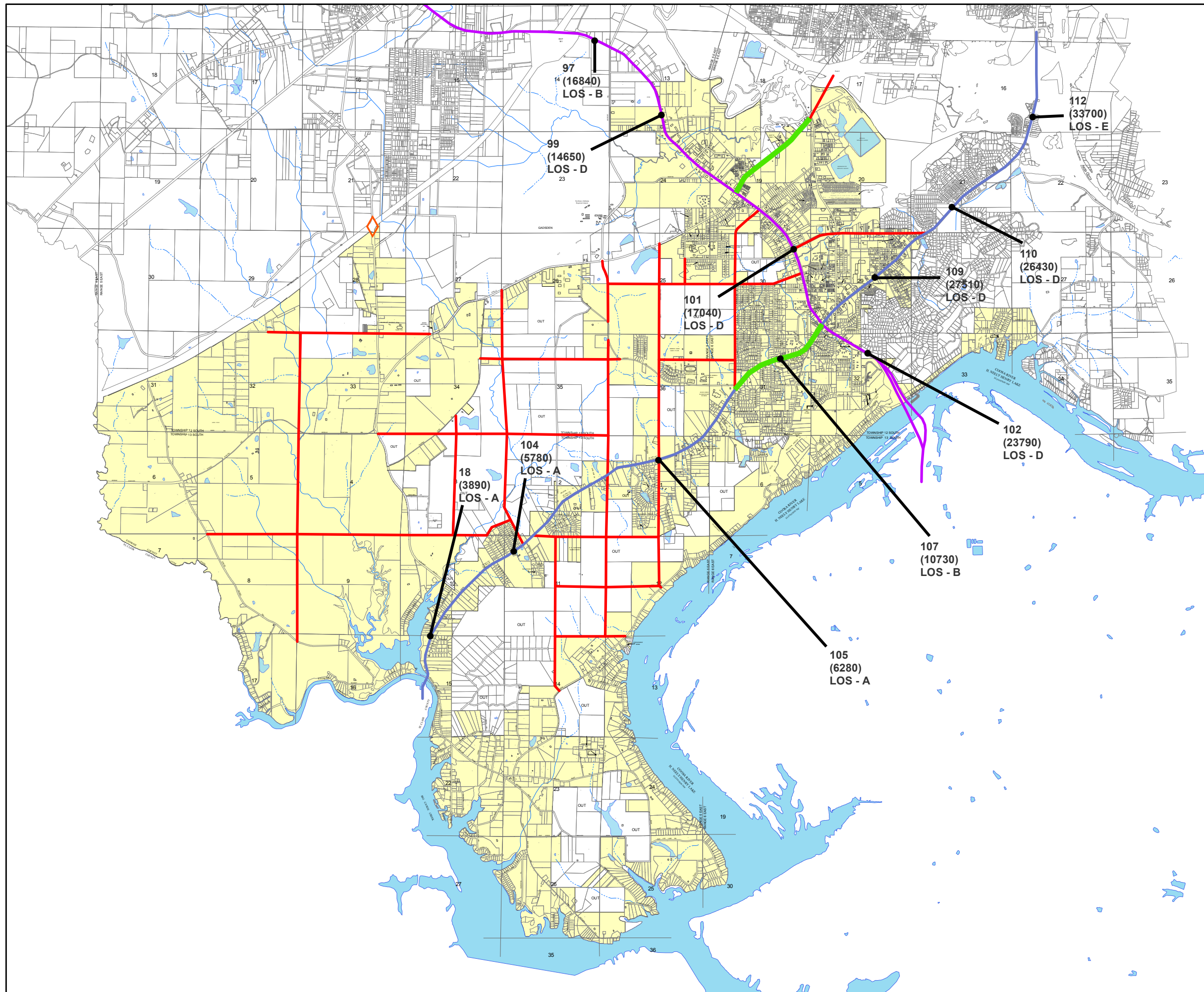
### Traffic Count Stations

(2005) Traffic Counts  
Level of Service

#### Legend

- LOS A - Free Flow
- LOS B - Stable Traffic
- LOS C - Stable
- LOS D - High Density
- LOS E - Capacity Level
- LOS F - Forced Breakdown

- Proposed New Routes
- U. S. Hwy 411
- AL Hwy 77
- Proposed Widening
- Proposed Interstate Access





## **CHAPTER VII: ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES**

Environmental features play an important role in the development and planned growth of any community. These features determine and direct what kind of development is most suitable for any given area and how much building is feasible. With modern engineering and construction equipment, developing in areas once thought impossible are now viable options. Environmental constraints such as floodplains, wetlands, sinkholes, steep slopes, areas of low soil strength, and areas unfit for septic systems must be identified and carefully considered when deciding where development and what type of development is to occur in the city. Appropriate measures must be taken to assure land is properly maintained. Through careful planning and preservation natural disasters should be mitigated and land values increased. This chapter describes community natural resources such as water resources, nature parks, and wildlife habitats. It also pays special attention and consideration to environmental constraints. Environmental constraints are based on an analysis of soil characteristics examining strength, shrinkage, and permeability as quantitative barriers. Policy implications, at the chapters end, outline steps to be taken to maintain and improve the natural landscape and develop the city accordingly.

### **Overview of Natural Resources**

Rainbow City and surrounding Etowah County sustains a variety of natural resources. As in many parts of the northeast and eastern regions of Alabama, the county offers a natural landscape comprised of beautiful mountains, lakes, streams, and rivers. One of the greatest natural assets in the county is Lake Neely Henry, located just south of Rainbow City and forming a portion of the border between Etowah and St. Clair Counties. With 11,200 acres of water and 333 miles of shoreline, Neely Henry is one of the largest lakes in Alabama. The lake is beautiful and is one of Alabama's best bass fishing lakes. Neely Henry is fed by the Coosa River, traversing south from Rome, Georgia to Mobile, Alabama. Situated along the lake banks is the James D. Martin Wildlife Park and Walking Trail, named in honor of James D. Martin, Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Natural Resources. The park was opened in 1991 and serves as a much appreciated venue for hikers, bicyclers, and others who enjoy the outdoors. Other natural resources in Etowah County include Noccalula Falls, rated Alabama's number one tourist attraction, and Historic Paseur Park, both located in Gadsden. Horse Pens 40, located near Steele, Alabama, is a historic outdoor nature park showcasing beautiful and unique rock formations. It also offers rock climbing, hiking, and camping.

Located along the banks of the Coosa River, Rainbow City provides numerous opportunities for outdoor water recreation. Rainbow Landing, near AL Hwy 77, provides boat launching onto the Coosa and a pier for fishing.

### **Soil Characteristics**

Proper knowledge and understanding of soil characteristics is useful in determining environmental constraints and land suitability for a specified development intensity. Soil types and classifications are extensively numerous and any given community could discover a myriad of samples to

categorize. Therefore the scope of this soil characteristics study is to examine only the most commonly associated soil types, distinguishing environmental constraints such as steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, weak soils, and areas unfit for septic systems in the city. Rainbow City's land area is composed of four broad soil classifications: 1) Nella-Allen-Rock Outcrop, 2) Conasauga-Firestone, 3) Minvale-Dewey-Bodine, and 4) Holston-Cloudland-Cedarbluff. The *Environmental Constraints Map* (Map 6) identifies environmental constraints based on these and other soil classifications in order to guide and direct land use and development decisions accordingly. Soil information for Rainbow City was made available through the *Soil Survey of Etowah County, 1978*. The following is a list of environmental constraints along with their associated soil series, characteristics, and pertaining development limitations:

- **Steep Slope—Nella Series.** Series is characterized by deep, well drained, moderately permeable soils on uplands. Slopes range from 2 to 25 percent, but is dominated by 2 to 10 percent (for more detail on slopes see next section). Areas should be restricted to low intensity development such as agricultural or single-family residential for most proper land use.
- **Floodplains/Wetlands—Gaylesville Series.** Characterized by deep, poorly drained, slowly permeable soils formed in clayey alluvium. Slope ranges from 0 to 2 percent. Development should be constructed only with shallow excavations. Dwellings with basements should be restricted in this area.
- **Septic Restrictive—Conasauga Series.** Characterized as moderately deep, moderately well drained, slowly permeable soils on uplands. Slopes range from 1 to 35 percent, but dominantly 1 to 5 percent. Due to slow percolation and low depth to bedrock areas with these soils are unfit for septic systems.
- **Low Strength—Firestone Series.** Characterized as moderately deep, well drained, slowly permeable soils with clayey subsoil. Slope ranges from 2 to 45 percent, but is dominantly 2 to 15 percent. Soil strength in this series is undermined by clayey subsoil, causing rapid shrinking and expanding, thus making the land unfit for major development projects.

## **Steep Slopes**

Steep slopes are an environmental constraint worthy of attention. Many slopes have weak or loose soils unfit for development. Modern engineering practices may be able to overcome these obstacles, but not without major costs, significant time, and careful planning. Development along steep slopes also exacerbates storm-water runoff, as paved ground is less capable of absorbing rain and other water based elements. Although criterion for slope development varies, the following general thresholds are used in planning and engineering to determine acceptable and non-acceptable developments:

### ***3 percent***

Generally accepted limit for railroads

**8 percent**

Generally accepted limit for highways, although grades of 6 percent or less are desirable for highways intended to accommodate heavy truck traffic.

**10 percent**

Generally accepted limit for driveways

**15 percent**

Point at which engineering costs for most developments become significant and extensive anchoring, soil stabilization, and stormwater management measures must be applied.

**25 percent**

Generally accepted limit for all development activity.

Rainbow City development is significantly limited by steep slopes. The single greatest concentration of steep slopes in the city is on the southern portion between US Hwy 411 and the banks of the Coosa River (See Environmental Constraints Map for more details). Much of the land here is at or above 15 percent slope, substantially restricting major development.

## **Floodplains**

Floodplains are areas highly susceptible to flood conditions occurring during extreme rainfall and should thus be reserved for minimal development. Buildings constructed in floodplains should be placed on significantly tall foundations or built so as to redirect water flow into more suitable areas of the floodplain. As a general rule, development in floodplains should be avoided so as to allow the floodplain to absorb water and in turn recharge groundwater resources. If properly maintained and preserved floodplains can be a valuable resource. Floodplains are rich in nutrients continually cycled through rivers, streams, and lakes, which makes the land primarily suitable for farming and pastureland. The floodplain, secure in its natural state, serves to protect our drinking water, conserve the beauty of our natural resources, and sustain our local ecosystems.

Floodplains are divided into three zones. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, zones for floodplains are specified as followed:

**Zone A**

Areas of 100-year base flood elevations and flood hazard factors not determined. These areas are of dark color on the FEMA floodplain map.

**Zone B**

Areas between limits of the 100-year flood and 500-year flood, or certain areas subject to 100 year flooding with average depths less than one (1) foot or where the contributing drainage area is less than one square mile, or areas protected by levees from the base flood. These areas are of a lighter color than Zone A on the floodplain map

### ***Zone C***

Zone C areas are areas of minimal flooding. These areas are not indicated by color on floodplain maps.

Floodplains are a considerable environmental constraint in Rainbow City. These flood-prone areas are extensively interspersed throughout the city in greater to lesser concentrations. The greatest concentrations of floodplain extend into the peninsula between the Coosa River and Big Canoe Creek and to the northeast near Interstate 759. Flood prone areas shown on the Environmental Constraints Map encompass both 100 yr. and 500 yr. flood zones.

## **Water Resources**

Water resources serve a variety of positive functions for the community. A clean and beautiful aquatic environment not only benefits residents environmentally, but also economically. Eco-tourism adds to local revenue and attracts businesses. Developing in a manner that best utilizes this highly valued resource is in the best interest of any community. Overall, quality water resources enhance quality of life.

Rainbow City's primary water resource is the Coosa River, running south from Rome, GA to Mobile, AL. The Coosa River forms the southern bank of the city. High cliff sides along these banks afford spectacular views of river landscape, promoting high value real-estate and residential development. The river itself is beautiful, clean and offers numerous opportunities for outdoor water recreation.

The Alabama Environmental Management Act authorizes the Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) to establish and enforce water quality standards, regulations and penalties in order to maintain state and federal water quality provisions. From this authorization, the ADEM Administrative Code prohibits the physical, chemical, or biological contamination of state waters through source and non-point source pollution. Point source pollution is defined as pollution originating from a definable source such as a ditch, pipe, concentrated animal feed lot, or container. Non-point source pollution does not originate from a defined source, but can be attributed to agricultural and construction related runoff, and runoff from lawns and gardens.

## **Wetlands**

Since the passage of the Clean Waters Act (CWA) in 1977, wetland preservation has gained momentum and national attention. More than 100 million acres of wetlands in the continental U.S. and Alaska have been preserved. Wetlands function as a vital aquatic system contributing to habitat diversity, flood control, and the recharging and cleaning of polluted water. They also provide open green space for a community, which drives up neighboring property values. There currently is no solid definition of a wetland. Environments such as ponds, bogs, marshes, swamps, estuaries, or bottomland forest could be considered wetlands, however, identification can also be based on hydrology, soil conditions, and vegetation types. Such a broad understanding has led to miscommunication, resulting in the protection of many normally "dry" lands as wetland.



Wetlands are protected nationally under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act, which requires permits for the discharging and dredging of defined “wetlands.” Section 404 is jointly administered by the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The Corps administers permits, while the EPA maintains the right to veto any permit issued. Developers should always contact the nearest Corps officials before disturbing considered wetland areas.

Rainbow City has numerous and extensive wetland areas. Most of these areas follow and accompany floodplains and rivers. The greatest wetland concentrations in the city occur along the Coosa and Big Canoe Rivers and extend substantially further inland. There is also a large wetland area near Interstate 759 in the northeast section of the city.

## **Wildlife Habitats**

Every year millions of people across the U.S. spend time and monetary resources viewing wildlife and enjoying the great outdoors. Nature serves as an escape and refuge from the busy and congested urban environment. The city should consider identifying lands sensitive to environmental degradation and working with the Alabama Land Trust to adequately reserve and manage land for wildlife preservation. ALT is a cooperative organization that helps landowners protect and manage their land through Land Protection and Land Stewardship Programs and has protected over 3,560 acres in Alabama in 2005 alone. These programs allow landowners, through the use of conservation easements, to set aside or protect areas from encroaching development, protecting valuable farm and forestland, ecologically significant areas, water sources, and natural view-sheds.

Although Rainbow City does not have any recognized wildlife preserves, opportunities for this type of land use could be considered in areas where environmental constraints and ecological sensitivity are the most severe.

## **Threatened and Endangered Species**

National environmental policies protect this country’s natural resources and amenities. The Endangered Species Act (ESA), passed by Congress in 1973, was established to protect species of plants and animals from extinction. Plants and animals listed as threatened or endangered species by the U.S. Department of Interior are to be protected on both public and private land. Endangered species are defined, according to the ESA, as: “any species which is in danger of extinction throughout all or a significant portion of its range.” Threatened species are defined as: “any species that are likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future.” Plant and animal species may be placed on the threatened and endangered species list if they meet one or more of the following scientific criterion: (1) current or threatened destruction of habitat, (2) overuse of species for commercial, recreational, scientific, or educational purposes (3) disease or predation, (4) ineffective regulatory mechanisms, and (5) other natural or manmade factors affecting the species’ chances of survival. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is charged with the responsibility of enforcing ESA regulations. Although most forest and lake related activities would not affect endangered species, developers, loggers, and other land-owners should review their

plans with the USFWS or the Alabama Department of Natural Resources to verify ESA compliance.

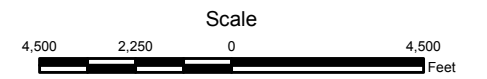
Etowah County is home to a diverse population of plants and animals. Many of these species are ESA listed as threatened and endangered and should be considered for preservation purposes. Threatened species in the county include the following: Flattened Musk Turtle, Mohr's Barbara's Buttons, and Fine-lined Pocketbook Mussel. Endangered species include: Green Pitcher Plant, Alabama Leather Flower, and a variety of invertebrates such as: Southern Clubshell Mussel, Triangular Kidneyshell Mussel, Southern Acornshell Mussel, Ovate Clubshell Mussel, Southern Combshell Mussel, Southern Pigtoe Mussel, and Cumberland Combshell. As a part of policy to preserve the natural environment and inherent species diversity, Rainbow City should implement best management practices for forestry, maintained and updated by the Alabama Forestry Commission, taking the above mentioned species into account. Best Management Practices for Forestry include preservation and maintenance procedures of the following: 1) Streamside Management Zones, 2) Stream Crossings, 3) Forest Roads, 4) Timber Harvesting, 5) Reforestation/Stand Management, 6) Forested Wetland Management, 7) and Revegetation/Stabilization.

## Policy Implications

1. Rainbow City offers an abundance of vacant land on which to develop, however, environmental constraints such as floodplains, wetlands, steep slopes, areas of weak soils, and areas unfit for septic place considerable limitations on development. Based on these limitations the city should focus the most intensive development in areas where the soil is most suitable, namely along the major routes of US Highway 411 and AL Highway 77.
2. Steep slopes are the most prevalent in the southern section of the city along the Coosa River. As a development limitation, this area should be reserved for agricultural and single-family development. Development restrictions would also preserve wildlife habitats and the natural beauty of the mountains and river views.
3. Floodplains and wetlands are spread significantly throughout the community. Although it is not feasible to totally restrict development from these areas, development plans should be minimal. Implementation strategies for mitigating water retention and/or redirecting it into more suitable areas are highly recommended. The city should strive to implement Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) standards for stormwater runoff mitigation in order to prevent flooding and improve property value.
4. Rainbow City should identify undeveloped areas with the most severe floodplain, wetland, and steep slope limitations and use them as an opportunity to enhance outdoor recreation. These areas could be used for wildlife preserves and boating marinas.
5. Areas of low soil strength are substantially less prevalent than other constraints throughout the city. This constraint is the most restrictive due to clayey subsoil which expands and shrinks in very wet or very dry conditions making the soil unstable. Major developments on this land should be strictly prohibited. These areas would be best used for low intensity uses such as agriculture, wildlife preserves or parks and recreation.
6. Rainbow City should implement best management practices for forestry, maintained and updated by the Alabama Forestry Commission, taking ESA listed threatened and endangered plant and animal species into account. These practices would promote the survival and proliferation of the county's threatened and endangered species.



# MAP 6 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSTRAINTS RAINBOW CITY ALABAMA

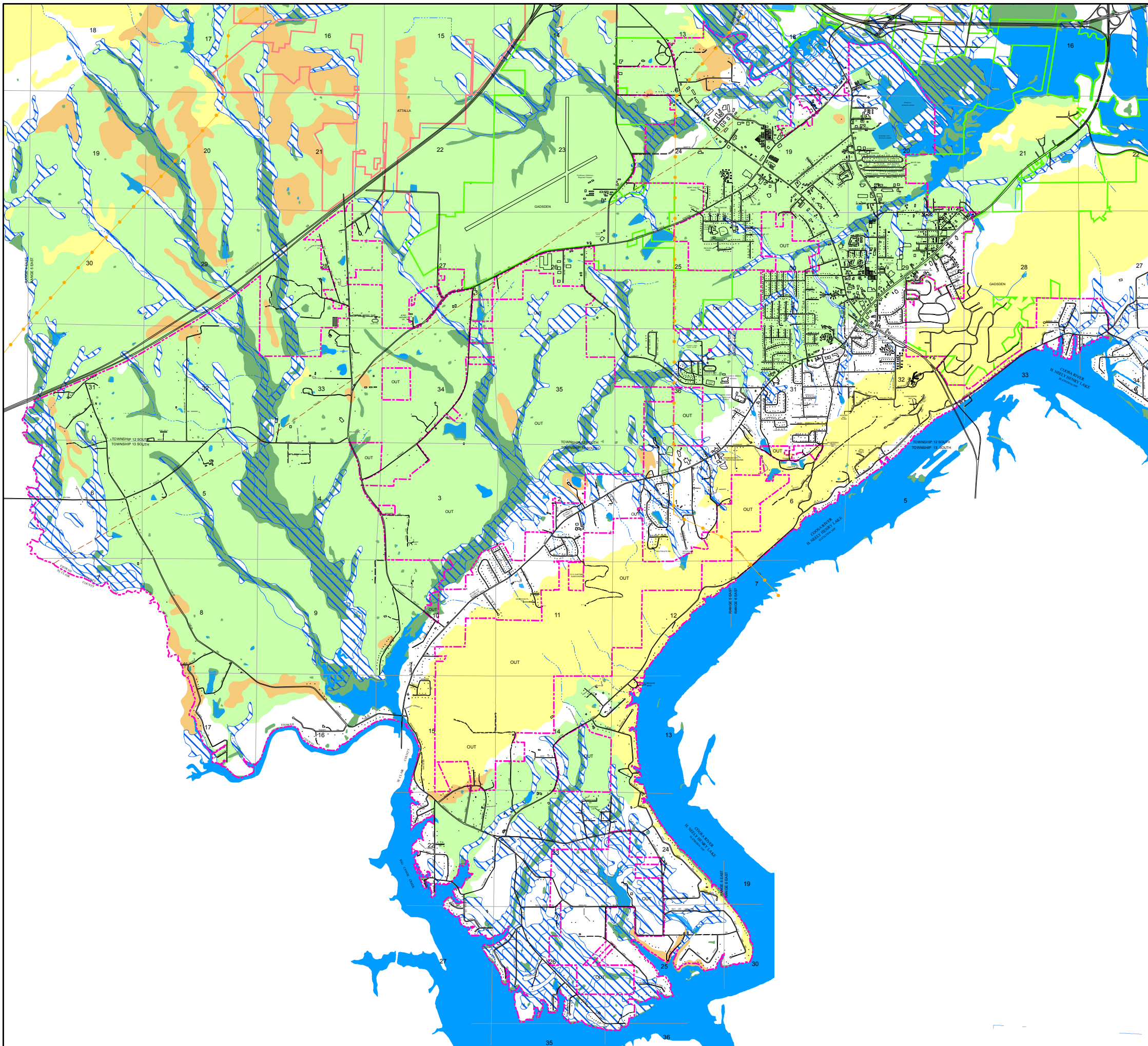


Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2006.

## Legend

-  Low Strength
-  Areas Requiring Sewer
-  Steep-Slope Areas
-  Water
-  Wetlands
-  Flood Prone Areas
-  Rainbow City Municipal Limits
-  Gadsden Municipal Limits
-  Attalla Municipal Limits

NOTE: Soils Data Obtained From The Natural Resources Conservation Service, United States Department Of Agriculture, U.S. General Soil Map For Alabama.





## **CHAPTER VIII. LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT**

A comprehensive plan must explore existing land use, development trends, and zoning patterns in order to understand how the city has developed, why it developed as it did, and what development will most likely occur given the current trends. A proper understanding of land use, zoning, and development patterns allows officials to make informed decisions affecting the orderly growth and development of their city.

The purpose of the land use chapter is to guide and direct development with the goal of sustaining orderly and coordinated development in accordance to changing needs, presently and in the future. This chapter examines existing land use, zoning patterns, compares existing land use and zoning patterns, and proposes a future land use plan which gives recommendations for coordinating better land use within the city. The future land use plan and accompanying future land use map (Map 9) is a conceptual future plan guiding zoning and development decisions. It is not intended to be used as a zoning map or even to reflect similarities to the zoning map, rather it is to be used as a conceptual vision for the community's future.

### **Definitions**

The following land use categories are described below for use in the Rainbow City Comprehensive Plan.

#### ***Single-Family Residential***

Areas intended for detached homes designed to house one family on individual lots.

#### ***Multi-Family Residential***

Areas intended for structures that contain two or more independent housing units, including duplexes, townhouses, and apartment buildings.

#### ***Manufactured Home Park***

Areas intended for manufactured homes.

#### ***Commercial***

Areas intended for shopping centers, free-standing stores, service establishments, offices, and in some cases residential uses.

#### ***Industrial***

Areas intended for manufacturing and research and development facilities

#### ***Public and Semi Public***

Areas intended for public and semi-public uses including city governmental offices, public schools, churches and cemeteries.

### ***Parks and Recreation***

Public areas intended for recreational use including athletic fields, playgrounds, and nature areas.

### ***Agriculture***

Areas actively engaged or suited for farm production as defined by the Rainbow City Zoning Ordinance.

### ***Mixed Use***

Land used in combination with commercial, light manufacturing, and residential development. Due to a mixture of uses this type of development tends to be more compact and intensive than simple commercial or residential zoning would allow.

### ***Undeveloped/Forestry***

Includes private and vacated land upon which no development or active use is apparent. Included in this category is roadway, railroad, and utility rights-of-way and forested land, which may or may not be actively engaged in timber production.

## **Existing Land Use**

Existing land use information assists communities in determining how a city will develop and what types of development it favors and does not favor. The East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission records data on land use calculations. Total land available for the city comprises approximately 14,744 acres with about 6,789 acres developed and 7,955 undeveloped. The city limits, which includes roads and water surfaces, is approximately 16,134 acres. Since most of the land is undeveloped, the city has substantial room for growth and development. Table LU-1, below, examines existing land use data for Rainbow City in 2006.

<b>Table LU-1. Existing Land Use Acreage: Rainbow City, 2006</b>			
<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>Acres in City</b>	<b>% of Total Land Area</b>	<b>% of Developed Land Area</b>
Agricultural	2,929	19.9%	43.1%
Commercial	428	2.9%	6.3%
Industrial	143	1.0%	2.1%
Single-Family Residential	2,786	18.9%	41.0%
Multi-Family Residential	128	0.9%	1.9%
Park and Recreation	105	0.7%	1.5%
Public	270	1.8%	4.0%
Undeveloped	7,955	54.0%	0.0%
Total Land Area	14,744		
Total Developed Land	6,789	46.0%	100.0%

Source: EARPDC database 2006

Agriculture is the largest land use in the city with approximately 2,929 acres (19% of the total land area). Most of this land use is spread fairly evenly throughout the community and intermixed with single family residential use. This is due primarily to environmental constraints such as



floodplains, wetlands, and steep slopes which significantly limit development throughout much of the city (See Environmental Chapter). Substantial growth in Rainbow City can be expected to occur as highway commercial along highways AL Hwy 77 and US Hwy 411. This expansion is promoted on both the zoning map and future land use map. The commercial center of the city can be expected to continue growing primarily as highway commercial, interspersed with single and multi-family residential. Quality land (land with few environmental constraints) along the interstate should be planned for highway commercial and industrial uses. As the city grows in land use and development, various trends can be expected to continue. The following land uses highlight these respective trends.

## **Commercial**

Highway commercial growth is expected to concentrate along the major city routes, AL Hwy 77 traveling north and south and US Hwy 411 traveling east and west. Properties adjacent to these routes provide the best opportunities in the city for commercial development, being convenient to chief roadways and providing environmentally suitable land for intensive use. The city center at the intersection of AL Hwy 77 and US Hwy 411 can be expected to increase in commercial land use with highway commercial as the most common zoning. There are approximately 428 acres of commercial land use in the city, representing 2.9% of the total land area.

## **Residential**

The greatest concentration of Rainbow City's residential land use is predicted to expand along the Coosa River and on the peninsula between Big Canoe Creek and the Coosa River. Significant portions of the peninsula should transition from agricultural to single family residential as real-estate value increases and population growth occurs in this area. Multi-family residential will most likely continue growing in and around the city center where the most intensive land uses exist. Single family residential land use consists of 2,786 acres (18.9% of the total land area and 41% of the developed land area), while multi-family comprises substantially smaller acreage at 128 (0.9% and 1.9% respectively)

## **Industrial**

Although not a major factor in Rainbow City, industrial growth is most likely to develop at the city's north end along Interstate 59 and I-759, near Gadsden's Municipal Airport. Industrial land use comprises 143 acres (1% of the total land area).

## **Agricultural**

Agriculture comprises Rainbow City's major land use, due chiefly to environmental constraints and development concentration chiefly along the two major highways. Despite increases in development, most of the land along the steep slopes and in floodplains and wetlands can be determined to remain agricultural and intermixed with single-family residential. Agriculture represents approximately 19.9% of the total land area.

## **Public and Semi-Public**

The majority of public and semi-public land is used for administrative offices and the schools. Public and semi-public land use expansion is planned for on the future land use map. John Jones Elementary and Rainbow City Middle School could expand along Lumley Road toward US Hwy 411 or to the south of John Jones Elementary.

## **Parks and Recreation**

Parks and recreation comprise a small portion of the city. Future public needs in parks and recreation should be achieved with recent expansions to the city park system and recreational facilities.

## **Mixed Use**

There are currently few provisions for mixed use zoning in Rainbow City. However, the city could benefit from some form of mixed use in the center city area. Mixed use does not, by any means, restrict commercial or residential development, however, the zoning allows properties to be used for both purposes simultaneously should the developer/land owner choose to do so. Most mixed use developments are planned with residential units placed directly above a store to accommodate the shop keeper, land owner, or a tenant. These neighborhoods tend to create more convenience for the owner while compact development involved allows the option for more development or public open space.

## **Undeveloped/Forested**

Slightly more than half (54%) of Rainbow City's land is undeveloped. A substantially large portion of this land is located along steep slopes, floodplains, and wetlands, causing significant setbacks for intensive development.

## **Zoning Patterns**

Zoning plays an important role in the growth and development of the city and its citizens. The zoning ordinance is created to promote desirable standards in land use, prevent land use conflicts, and maintain and guide growth and development in accordance to the comprehensive plan and its goals and objectives for the city. A properly prepared zoning ordinance clarifies to property owners what can and cannot be developed on their property, so as not to interfere with the rights and privileges of their neighbors. The city's zoning ordinance should be periodically updated to insure it represents the goals, objectives, and policies best suited for the future growth and development of the community as a whole.

The vast majority of land in Rainbow City is zoned either agricultural (53%) or single-family residential (32%), together comprising 85% of the total zoned land in the city. The remainder of land is zoned commercial (9%), manufacturing (2%) multi-family residential (2%) or some other form of residential such as patio and townhouse, planned unit development, or manufactured

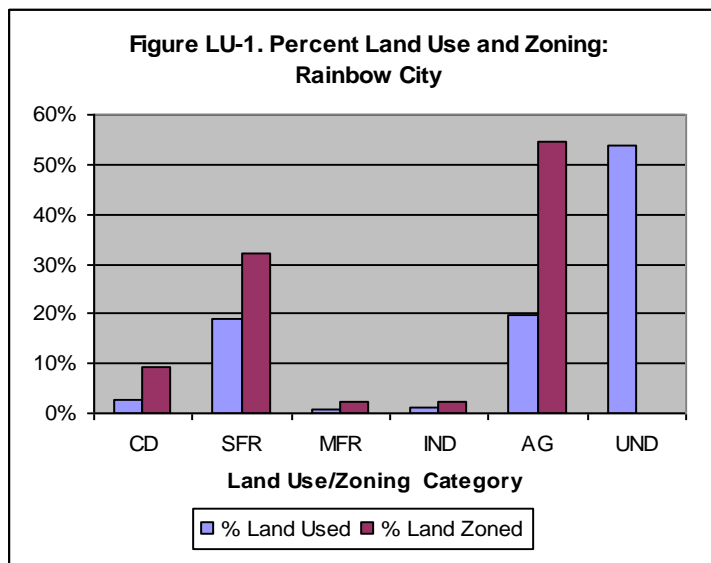
housing. Total residential zoning represents 34% of all zoned land, while commercial comprises 9%. Highway Commercial-L district has been established with the intent to allow the sale and distribution of alcohol on commercial establishment premises. For more detail on zoning districts please consult Rainbow City’s 2001 Zoning Ordinance. Table LU-2, below, shows the current zoning acreage and percent of total zoning acreage for Rainbow City in 2006.

Table LU-2. Current Zoning Acreage and Percent of Total: Rainbow City, 2006					
Zoning	Use Classification	Acres Zoned	% of Total	Acres Zoned	% of Total
H-C	Highway Commercial	1,481	9.2%	1,522	9.4%
HC-L	Highway Commercial-L	29	0.2%		
NS	Neighborhood Shopping	12	0.1%		
R-1	Single Family Residential	5,214	32.3%	5,616	34.8%
R-2	Patio Home and Townhouse	84	0.5%		
R-3	Multi-Family Residential	226	1.4%		
PUD	Planned Unit Development	29	0.2%		
MHP	Manufactured Home Park	63	0.4%		
M-1	Manufacturing	390	2.4%	390	2.5%
AG	Agriculture	8,606	53.3%	8,606	53.3%
	Total Zoning Acreage	16,134	100.0%		100.0%

Source: EARPDC database, 2006

## Existing Land Use and Zoning Patterns

A comparison of land use and zoning is beneficial in determining land use and zoning patterns. Zoning should reflect community needs and guide land use and development throughout the city. Comparing these elements of the plan based on percent of land used and zoned for specific purposes is useful in determining current development patterns and directing how the city should grow. Figure LU-1., below, illustrates percent land use and zoning for Rainbow City in 2006.



Agriculture (AG), based on zoning data, has been established as the primary growth directive for the city. Although existing land use shows agriculture accounting for nearly 20%, city zoning allows this use for over 50% of available city land.

Considerable growth of single-family residential (SFR) should continue. Almost 20% of existing land use is used for single-family and zoned land in this category accounts for over 30%, allowing for substantial development. Multi-family residential (MFR), which

includes all residential zoning except single-family, represents a small portion of land use and

zoning in Rainbow City, as does industrial (IND) indicating that multi-family and industrial uses are not a major development concerns. Commercial development (CD) in the form of highway commercial comprises a somewhat small portion of land use (2%) and zoning (9%) suggesting that the city's major commercial growth should occur adjacent to major highway routes.

## **Future Land Use Plan**

As a community grows and expands, a future land use plan is critical for guiding and directing development in a manner that logically and efficiently meets city goals and objectives. Rainbow City desires to grow in a manner that effectively and efficiently utilizes land and community resources. The city has an abundance of land on which to develop, however, environmental constraints such as floodplains, wetlands, and steep slopes are a major consideration and substantially restrict development throughout much of the community. The most conducive land for intensive development in the city is located along the two major highways, US Hwy 411 and AL Hwy 77. State Route 77 travels north and south through the city while US Hwy 411 traverses east and west. The city center is where these two routes intersect and is also where the most intensive development has occurred and is expected to continue. The city should plan to accommodate increased highway commercial development adjacent these two major routes as the city grows and expands.

The city center sustains a mixture of highway commercial and single-family and multi-family residential land uses. As a part of the future land use plan, the land immediately adjacent to the major highways (US Hwy 411 and AL Hwy 77) in this area should be promoted as highway commercial with a mixed use district in close proximity. The mixed use district should be zoned as a new central business district with permitted development somewhat less intense (i.e. less permissive) than highway commercial, but with somewhat higher intensity (i.e. more permissive) than a neighborhood shopping district. The central business district intent would be as follows: *The purpose of this district shall be to create and promote an economically viable, compact, intensively developed central business district consisting of mixed commercial, cultural, entertainment, and institutional uses, with limited small-scale accessory residential uses.* Development uses allowed in the district would follow those permitted in both neighborhood shopping and highway commercial, but expressively deny light scale industrial, as permitted in highway commercial. The central business district would also permit (without special conditions) small-scale residential in the form of upper story loft, efficiency, and studio housing. Other residential developments permitted could include duplex, garden/patio home, single or two-family group homes in existing structures approved for such residential use. By promoting a slightly more flexible mixture of commercial and residential uses in a designated central business district the city could more efficiently utilize valuable commercial property and diversify land use choices. Properties in the district would sustain permitted commercial usage and value, even in existing residential state. The district would benefit the city by giving land owners more personal options, diversifying development types and businesses establishments, and consolidating land uses throughout the city center. The *Future Land Use Map* (Map 11) establishes a suitable central location for the district.

Single-family residential development is expected to increase substantially adjacent to commercial development along US Hwy 411 and AL Hwy 77. These developments should be encouraged to continue in support of businesses locating there as well. The banks of the Coosa River in the

southern portion of the city can also be expected to increase in single-family residential. Although primarily used and zoned as agriculture, the peninsula between Big Canoe Creek and the Coosa River should increase in single-family as rising property costs intensify development in this area.

Industrial development is not a major factor in Rainbow City's economy, but should still be planned for as a contributing factor. The most suitable location for industry in the city is near major supply routes, namely Interstate 59 to the northwest of the city, adjacent to the Gadsden Municipal Airport and the neighboring City of Attalla.

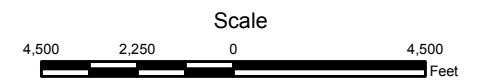
Public and Semi-public expansion should be encouraged to occur near John Jones Elementary and Rainbow City Middle School along Lumley Road.

As a part of the land use plan, the city should identify areas with the most severe development limitations and reserve them for agriculture, wildlife preserve, or parks and recreation.

## **Policy Implications**

1. The city has an abundance of land on which to develop, however, environmental constraints such as floodplains, wetlands, and steep slopes are a major consideration and substantially restrict development throughout much of the community. The most conducive land for intensive development in the city is located along the two major highways, US Hwy 411 and AL Hwy 77. US Hwy 411 travels northeast/southeast through Rainbow City, while AL Hwy 77 traverses north and south. The city core is where these two routes intersect and is also where the most intensive development has occurred and is expected to continue.
2. Commercial development should be sustained and encouraged to locate along US Hwy 411 and AL Hwy 77 since this land is the most suitable for intensive development.
3. Rainbow City should promote and encourage mixed use as a developmental option in its city core through a new central business district. This district would create more efficient use of land by permitting land owners the choice of using their property for commercial or residential or commercial and residential simultaneously. Mixed use would also promote garden/patio home development which is a multi-family housing goal for the city.
4. Single-family residential should be promoted and encouraged near highway commercial, in order to support business establishments, and to the south portion of the city along the Coosa River and Big Canoe Creek. As real-estate in the southern portion of the city increases, agricultural and undeveloped land in this area can be expected to transition to single-family.
5. Industrial development is not a major factor in Rainbow City's economy, but should still be planned for as a contributing factor. The most suitable location for industry in the city is near major supply routes, namely Interstate 59 to the northwest of the city, adjacent to the Gadsden Municipal Airport.
6. Public and semi-public expansion should be encouraged to occur near John Jones Elementary and Rainbow City Middle School along Lumley Road.
7. The city should identify areas with the most severe development limitations and reserve them for either agriculture, wildlife preserve, or for parks and recreation.

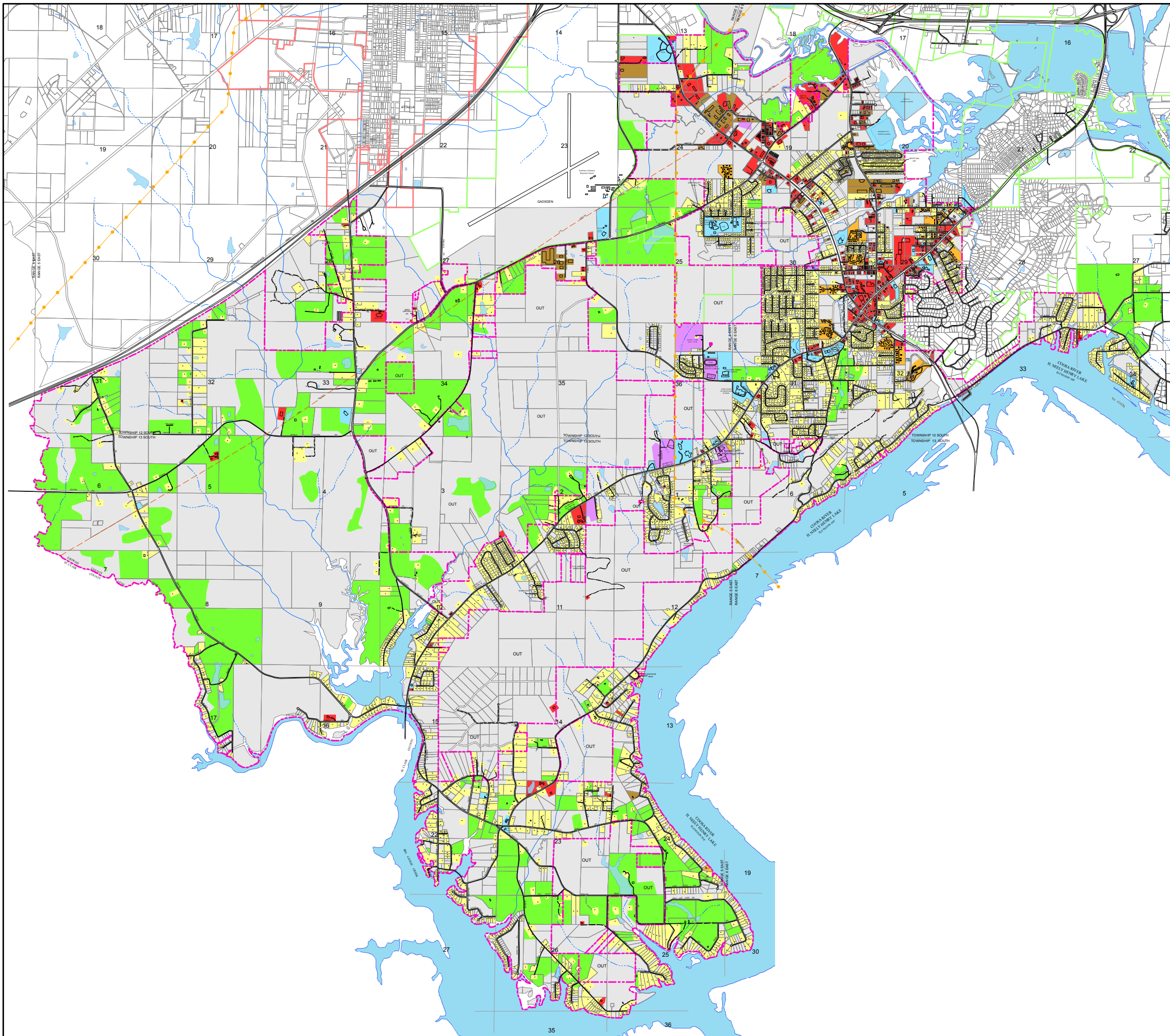
# MAP 7 EXISTING LAND USE RAINBOW CITY ALABAMA



Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2006.

## Legend

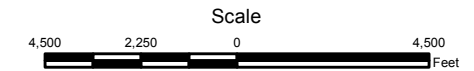
- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Multi-Family Residential
- Park / Recreational
- Public
- Single Family Residential
- Undeveloped
- Rainbow City Municipal Limits
- Gadsden Municipal Limits
- Attalla Municipal Limits







# MAP 8 ZONING RAINBOW CITY ALABAMA



Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2006.

NOTE: REFER TO THE NATIONAL FLOOD INSURANCE RATE MAPS (JANUARY 6, 1982) FOR DETAILED INFORMATION

NOTE: HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL H-C ALONG U.S. 411 IS 250 FEET EACH SIDE OF CENTER LINE OR NEAREST PROPERTY LINE

THIS IS THE OFFICIAL ZONING MAP OF THE CITY OF RAINBOW CITY, ALABAMA, ADOPTED APRIL 10, 1995 BY ORDINANCE NO. 324, SUPERSEDING PREVIOUS ZONING MAP ADOPTED BY ORDINANCE NO. 247.

*Sue L. Glidewell*

SUE L. GLIDEWELL, MAYOR

*Barbara T. Wester*

BARBARA T. WESTER, CITY CLERK

### REVISIONS

SEPTEMBER	1997 - CITY LIMITS AND ZONING ORD. 349
DECEMBER	1997 - ZONING ORD. 352
JUNE	1998 - ZONING ORD. 355, 356
OCTOBER	1998 - ZONING ORD. 358, 359
JANUARY	1999 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 362, 363, 364, 365, 366
FEBRUARY	1999 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 367, 368
APRIL	1999 - ZONING ORD. 371, 372
JUNE	1999 - ZONING ORD. 374
JULY	1999 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 375
SEPTEMBER	1999 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 376
APRIL	2000 - ZONING ORD. 380
SEPTEMBER	2000 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 384
NOVEMBER	2000 - ZONING ORD. 385
JANUARY	2002 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 390
APRIL	2002 - ZONING ORD. 391
AUGUST	2002 - ZONING ORD. 394
SEPTEMBER	2002 - ZONING ORD. 396
JANUARY	2003 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 398
MARCH	2003 - ZONING ORD. 399
MAY	2003 - ZONING ORD. 401
AUGUST	2003 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 402
AUGUST	2003 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 403
AUGUST	2003 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 405
AUGUST	2003 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 406
AUGUST	2003 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 407
SEPTEMBER	2003 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 408
OCTOBER	2003 - ZONING ORD. 410
SEPTEMBER	2004 - ZONING ORD. 414
SEPTEMBER	2004 - ZONING ORD. 415
DECEMBER	2004 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 417
DECEMBER	2004 - ZONING ORD. 418
DECEMBER	2005 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 420
FEBRUARY	2005 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 422
APRIL	2005 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 424
JUNE	2005 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 424
JULY	2005 - ZONING ORD. 425
NOVEMBER	2005 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 430
APRIL	2006 - ZONING ORD. 432
SEPTEMBER	2006 - ZONING ORD. 435
OCTOBER	2006 - DEANNAEXED RESOLUTION 06-09
NOVEMBER	2006 - ZONING ORD. 437
NOVEMBER	2006 - CITY LIMITS 439
NOVEMBER	2006 - ZONING ORD. 440
NOVEMBER	2006 - ZONING ORD. 441
JANUARY	2007 - ZONING ORD. 442
JANUARY	2007 - ZONING ORD. 444
FEBRUARY	2007 - ZONING ORD. 445 (AMENDING ORD. 437)
	2007 - ZONING ORD. 447
JUNE	2007 - ZONING ORD. 448
JUNE	2007 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 449
AUGUST	2007 - ZONING ORD. 451
SEPTEMBER	2007 - ZONING ORD. 453
SEPTEMBER	2007 - ZONING ORD. 454
DECEMBER	2007 - DEANNAEXATION ORD. 457
APRIL	2008 - ZONING ORD. 459
JULY	2008 - ZONING ORD. 461
SEPTEMBER	2008 - ZONING ORD. 462
OCTOBER	2008 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 463
OCTOBER	2008 - ZONING ORD. 464
MARCH	2009 - ZONING ORD. 467
APRIL	2009 - CITY LIMITS & ZONING ORD. 468
FEBRUARY	2010 - ZONING ORD. 470

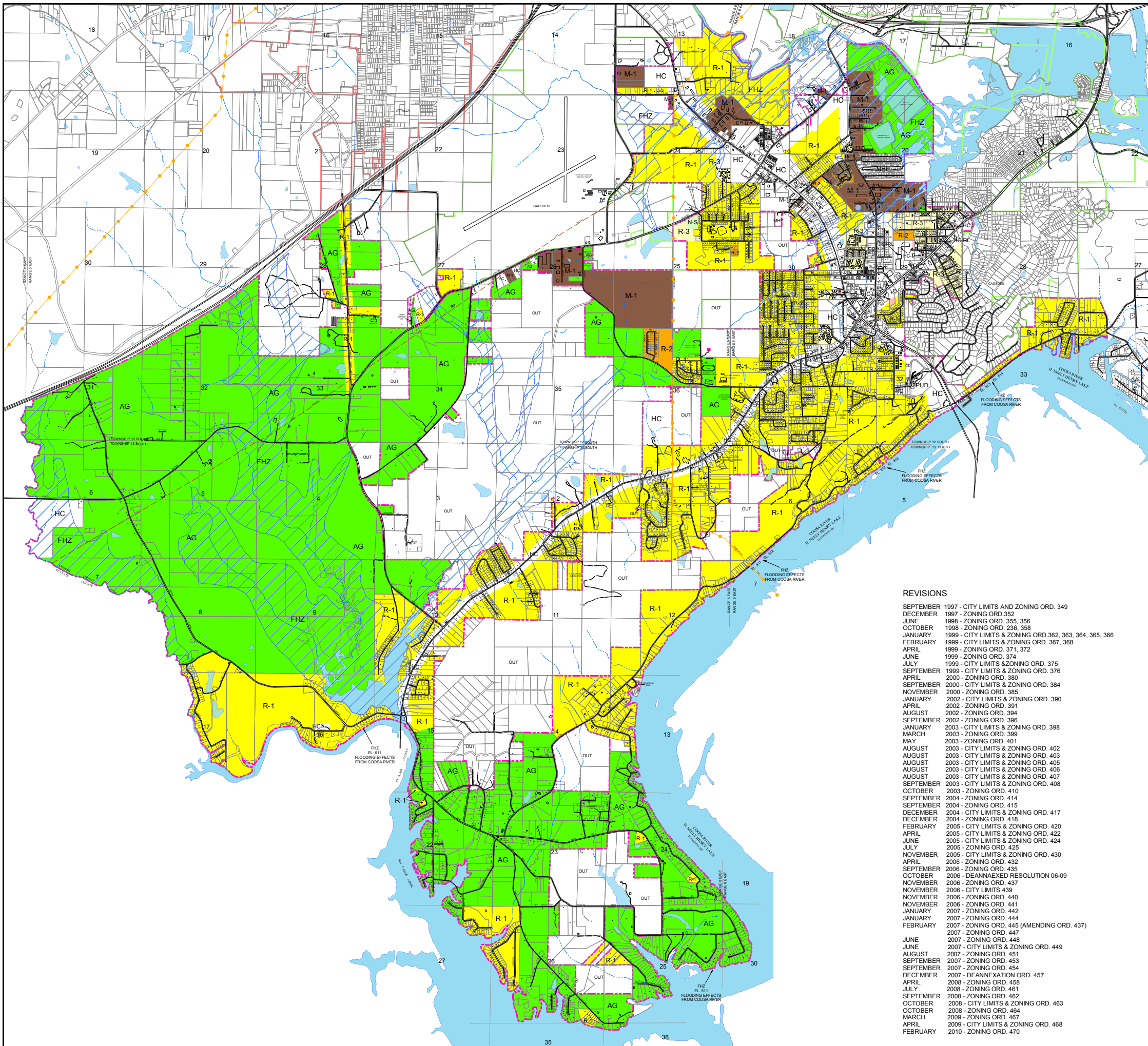
### ZONING DISTRICTS

- AG AGRICULTURAL
- R-1 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- R-2 PATIO HOME AND TOWNHOUSE
- R-3 MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- NS NEIGHBORHOOD SHOPPING
- H-C HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL
- HC-L HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL-LIQUOR
- M-1 MANUFACTURING

### SPECIAL PURPOSE DISTRICTS

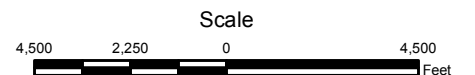
- PUD PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT
- MHP MANUFACTURED HOME PARK
- FHZ FLOOD HAZARD ZONE

- Rainbow City Municipal Limits
- Gadsden Municipal Limits
- Attalla Municipal Limits

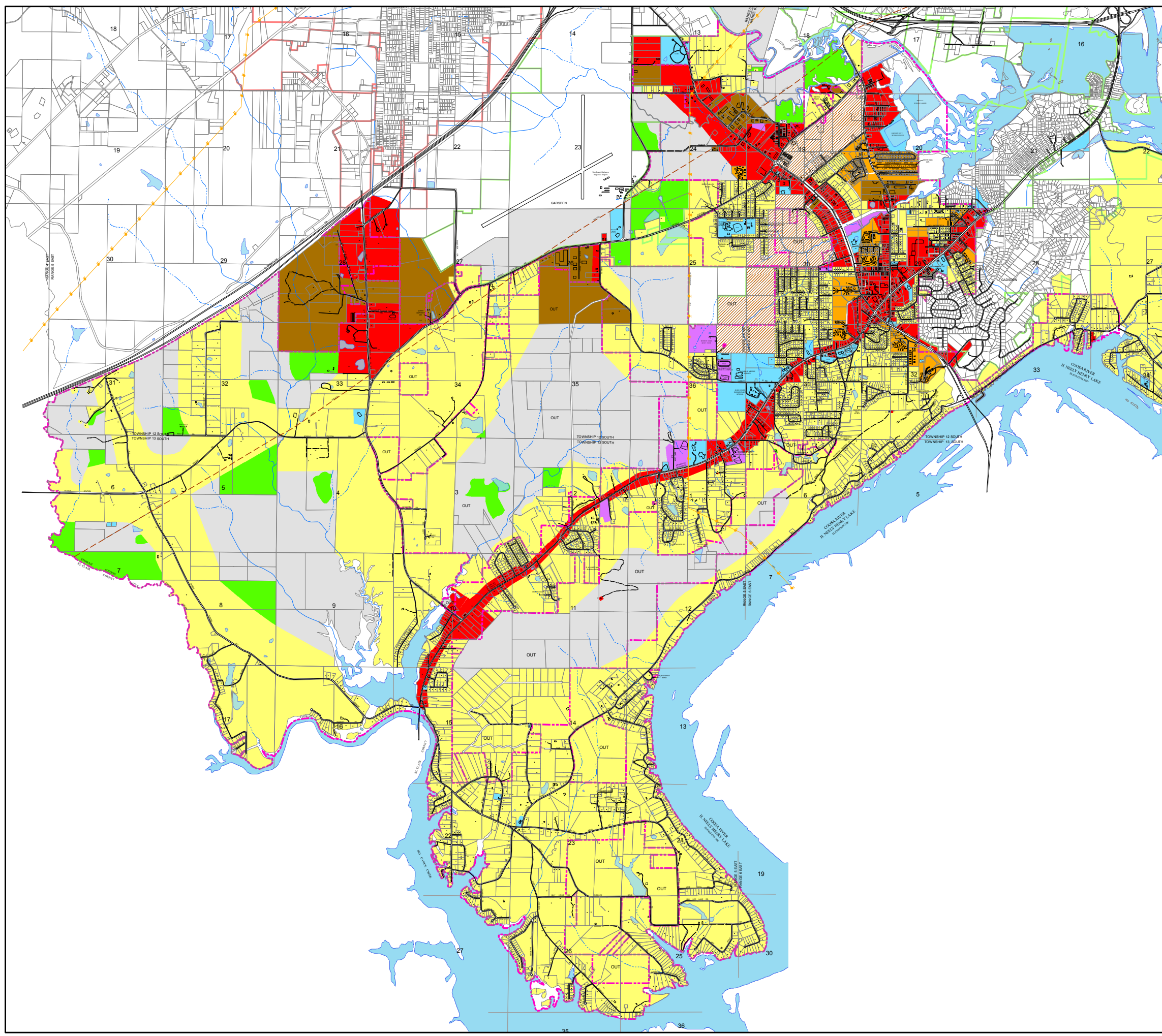




# MAP 9 FUTURE LAND USE RAINBOW CITY ALABAMA



Prepared By The East Alabama Regional Planning And Development Commission, 2006.



**Legend**

- Agriculture
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Central Business District
- Multi-Family Residential
- Park / Recreational
- Public
- Single Family Residential
- Undeveloped
- Rainbow City Municipal Limits
- Gadsden Municipal Limits
- Attalla Municipal Limits

- REVISIONS:
- ORD. 349, 7/14/97
  - ORD. 362, 1/11/99
  - ORD. 363, 1/11/99
  - ORD. 364, 1/25/99
  - ORD. 365, 1/25/99
  - ORD. 366, 1/25/99
  - ORD. 367, 2/23/99
  - ORD. 368, 2/22/99
  - ORD. 375, 7/12/99
  - ORD. 376, 9/27/99
  - ORD. 384, 9/25/00
  - ORD. 385, 11/27/00
  - ORD. 398, 1/13/03
  - ORD. 390, 1/14/02
  - ORD. 402, 8/28/03
  - ORD. 403, 8/28/03
  - ORD. 405, 8/25/03
  - ORD. 406, 8/25/03
  - ORD. 407, 8/25/03
  - ORD. 408, 9/08/03
  - ORD. 417, 12/13/04
  - ORD. 420, 2/14/05
  - ORD. 422, 4/25/05
  - ORD. 424, 6/27/05
  - ORD. 430, 11/14/05
  - RESOLUTION 06-09, 10/23/06
  - ORD. 439, 11/13/06



# **CHAPTER IX: GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

## **Introduction**

Rainbow City is a prosperous and self-sustaining community. Located ideally close to major highways and surrounded by beautiful Alabama countryside, Rainbow City has much to offer in terms of natural beauty, economic vitality, and quality of life. The city also has significant large areas of land available for development, the monetary resources to fund quality developments, and adequate community facilities to serve and maintain them.

Highway access management and traffic congestion have been significant concerns. Traffic congestion along Rainbow Drive and AL Hwy 77 is increasing significantly. Highway access from Rainbow Drive (US Hwy 411) and Lumley Road needs to be enhanced. EARPDC recommends the city conduct a highway access management study with the Gadsden Metropolitan Planning Organization to determine alternate routes in order to mitigate congestion at this intersection. Highway access management could be enhanced in other areas of the city in order to create optional routes, improve traffic flow, and open opportunities for development.

Rainbow City excels in housing development. Some of the most spectacular homes in Alabama can be seen along the beautiful hillsides of the Coosa River at the city's southern bank. In Rainbow City, as in most Alabama communities, single-family housing dominates the market. However, the city is seeking to diversify housing choices by constructing garden/patio homes. These small-scale, one level houses are more conducive to individuals who desire a single-family home with higher accessibility and much less upkeep. As populations have aged in place this option has become more attractive to upper middle-age and senior citizens.

Finally, the city should seek to diversify its commercial base by establishing a central business district which would expand opportunities for mixed use commercial and small-scale residential development in the city center.

## **Goal-Setting Process**

In April 2005, the East Alabama Regional Planning and Development Commission (EARPDC) and the Rainbow City Planning Commission began work on the comprehensive plan update. The first meeting conducted was an initial public meeting in which the planning process was introduced and a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) Analysis for the community was performed. From this analysis, EARPDC and the planning commission formed a basis in which to determine community needs and establish goals and objectives. EARPDC and the planning commission then met on a bi-monthly basis in order to establish goals and objectives and to subsequently generate a future land use plan and map to guide land use and development in the city.

## Goals and Objectives

The establishment of goals and objectives for land use and development is the primary directive of the comprehensive plan. The goals and objectives listed below, as well as their subsequently outlined implementation tools have been established and approved by the Rainbow City Planning Commission, with assistance from EARPDC staff, as a complete implementation strategy.

The goals and objectives were followed up with accompanying implementation tools such as strategies, strategy considerations, and performance indicators. These tools are useful in fully initiating the goals implementation process. The strategies outlined below provide a mechanism for accomplishing the above stated objectives. Considerations are expressed as useful guidance toward the objective, but are not of primary importance. The performance indicators are quantitative targeted goals measuring the success or non-success in attaining the main goal. Importance of goals or reasoning was also an important factor and has been explained for each goal in this section as well. A goal's reasoning explains the basic need for the goal and purpose. The following goals and objectives and implementation tools have been established (in no particular order) with direction and guidance from Rainbow City Planning Commission:

### **Goal#1: Promote and Encourage Garden/Patio Home Development**

**Objective:** Promote and encourage garden/patio home development through land use and zoning.

- **Strategy:** Designate areas for garden/patio home development on the Future Land Use map
- **Strategy:** Allow garden/patio home development in a broader range of residential districts
- **Strategy:** Establish a special district for garden/patio home development.

**Performance Indicator:** Two (2) garden/patio home developments by 2012

**Reasoning:** Rainbow City needs to diversify its housing options. The city has plenty of single-family housing and apartment units, but few other choices. Garden/patio homes, with only one level, are more accessible than other housing types and require less upkeep. These developments would meet the needs of a rapidly aging population choosing to retire and age in place.

### **Goal#2: Promote and Encourage Quality Affordable Housing**

**Objective:** Promote and encourage quality affordable housing by using quality construction materials such as brick or stone masonry.

- **Strategy:** Designate areas on the Future Land Use Map in the comprehensive plan for quality affordable housing
- **Strategy:** Conduct a study to inventory housing condition status and determine housing improvement needs.

- **Consideration:** Make provisions for brick and stone masonry in the zoning ordinance. One method for accomplishing this is to introduce new regulations stating that each housing unit in designated residential areas be constructed with a specified percentage of brick or stone masonry.
- **Consideration:** Educate developers and public on the benefits of building quality affordable housing with quality materials such as brick and stone masonry.
- **Consideration:** Rainbow City’s housing authority could work with trade associations such as Brick SouthEast to consider adopting and implementing a masonry ordinance.

**Performance Indicator:** 20% increase in the number of new homes under \$150,000 using a percentage of quality building material such as brick or stone masonry by 2012.

**Reasoning:** There is demand for quality affordable housing to meet the needs of families and individuals with moderate to low incomes.

**Goal#3: Conduct a Highway Access Management Study**

**Objective:** Conduct a highway access management study to determine access needs and make plans accordingly.

**Strategy:** The Planning Commission could work with the Gadsden MPO to conduct the study

**Performance Indicator:** Conduct study and complete study by 2012.

**Reasoning:** Traffic congestion is a major concern for Rainbow City. Rainbow City should consider a variety of options for improving highway access throughout the community.

**Goal#4: Promote and Encourage Quality Housing (Accessibility Housing) for Disabled Residents**

**Objective:** Promote and encourage developers to build homes more readily accessible to elderly and disabled residents. Requirements include accessibility basics such as:

- One zero step entrance
- All main floor interior doors with 36 inches of clearance passage
- At least a half bath, preferably a full bath, on the main floor with ample moving space
- At least one bedroom on main floor

- **Strategy:** Designate areas for accessibility housing on the Future Land Use Map.
- **Consideration:** Create provisions in the zoning ordinance that encourage or enforce that new single family housing developments incorporate a percentage of accessibility housing.
- **Consideration:** Create an incentive package for developers to construct accessibility housing.

- **Consideration:** Offer an educational packet for developers interested in accessibility housing.

**Performance Indicator:** Approximately 10% of homes in new housing developments to be built with accessibility standards.

**Reasoning:** Rainbow City and many other communities in Etowah County have increasingly larger middle age and elderly populations. As more and more of these residents decide to age in place, demand for accessible housing will increase. Building new homes with accessibility already in place is much easier and cheaper than retrofitting and does not cost considerably more than standard construction.

### **Goal#5: Promote and Encourage a Wide Variety of Commercial and Residential Development in the City Center.**

**Objective:** Establish a central business district in the city center.

- **Strategy:** Establish a central business district in the city center that would promote and encourage mixed used commercial and small-scale residential development.
- **Consideration:** Permit upper story small scale residential uses such as loft, efficiency, and studio housing.
- **Consideration:** Allow for single or two-family group homes, patio homes, and duplex units under special conditions.
- **Consideration:** Permit all land uses allowed in highway commercial zoning, with the exception of small-scale industrial.

**Performance Indicator:** Create provisions for a central business district in the zoning ordinance and mark the district on the City Zoning Map.

**Reasoning:** Rainbow City has two commercial districts: highway commercial, with the most intensive development allowed, and neighborhood shopping with limited intensity allowed. The city would benefit by incorporating another commercial district permitting different forms of commercial and residential in order to create new business and development opportunities.

### **Goal#6: Improve and Expand City Infrastructure.**

**Objective:** Build a sewage treatment plant and extend a city sewage line system into areas unfit for septic or build sewage lines to connect with Gadsden's sewage system.

**Reasoning:** Rainbow City currently has a limited sewage system. A workable and efficient sewage system would benefit the city considerably.



## **APPENDICES**



## **APPENDIX A: DETAILED POPULATION STATISTICS**

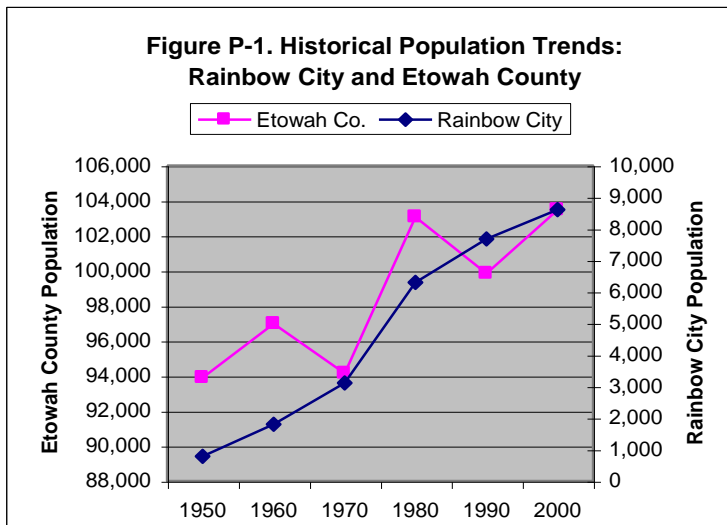


## Historic Population Trends

**Table P-1. Historical Population Trends: Rainbow City, Etowah County, and Alabama**

Year	Rainbow City	% Change	Etowah County	% Change	Alabama	% Change
1950	786	NA	93,892	29.4%	3,061,743	8.1%
1960	1,800	129.0%	96,980	3.3%	3,266,740	6.7%
1970	3,107	72.6%	94,144	-2.9%	3,444,165	5.4%
1980	6,299	102.7%	103,057	9.5%	3,893,888	13.1%
1990	7,673	21.8%	99,840	-3.1%	4,040,587	3.8%
2000	8,607	12.2%	103,459	3.6%	4,447,100	10.1%

Source: U.S. Census of Population 1990 and 2000 STF 3, Rainbow City Comp Plan 1972



## Place of Birth

Table P-2. Place of Birth: Rainbow City, 1990 to 2000					Change 1990-2000	
Born in	1990	% of Total	2000	% of Total	#Change	%Change
State of Residence	5,814	75.8%	6,782	78.8%	968	16.6%
Another State	1,769	23.1%	1,603	18.6%	-166	-9.4%
A Northeastern State	130	7.3%	156	9.7%	26	20.0%
A Midwestern State	553	31.3%	392	24.5%	-161	-29.1%
A Southern State	1,017	57.5%	961	60.0%	-56	-5.5%
A Western State	69	3.9%	94	5.9%	25	36.2%
Born outside U.S.	90	1.2%	222	2.6%	132	146.7%
Puerto Rico	0	0.0%	6	2.7%	6	100.0%
U.S. Island Areas	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Abroad of U.S. Parents	20	22.2%	29	13.1%	9	45.0%
Foreign-born	70	77.8%	187	84.2%	117	167.1%
Total	7,673		8,607		934	12.2%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 SF 3

## Place of Residence

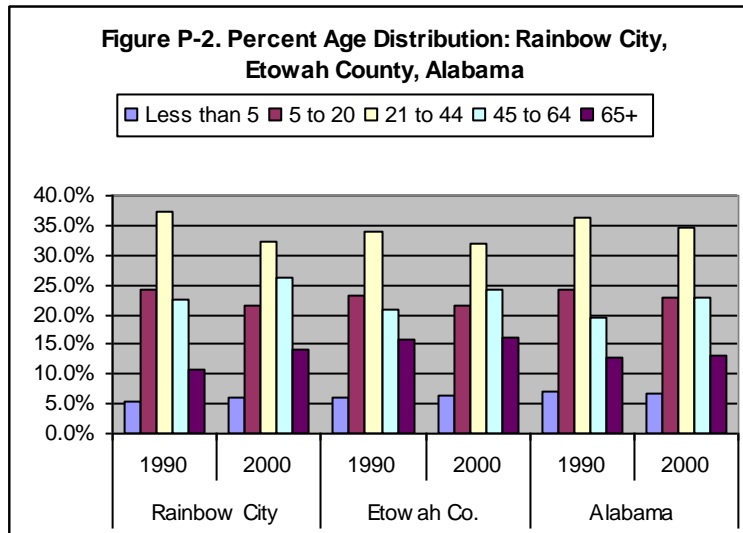
Table P-3. Place of Residence: Rainbow City					Change 1990-2000	
Resided in	1985	% of Total	1995	% of Total	#Change	%Change
Same House in...	3,728	51.4%	4,995	61.7%	1,267	34.0%
Different House in....	3,527	48.6%	3,107	38.3%	-420	-11.9%
Same County	2,048	58.1%	1,973	63.5%	-75	-3.7%
Same State	762	21.6%	584	18.8%	-178	-23.4%
Other State	639	18.1%	454	14.6%	-185	-29.0%
Northeastern State	19	3.0%	24	5.3%	5	26.3%
Midwestern State	176	27.5%	38	8.4%	-138	-78.4%
Southern State	430	67.3%	362	79.7%	-68	-15.8%
Western State	14	2.2%	30	6.6%	16	114.3%
Puerto Rico	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
U.S. outlying area	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Foreign Country	78	2.2%	96	3.1%	18	23.1%
Total	7,255		8,102		847	11.7%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 SF 3

## Age Distribution

Age Group	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	%Change
<b>Less than 5</b>	418	505	20.8%	5,973	6,686	11.9%	280,785	294,822	4.5%
% of Total	5.4%	5.9%		6.0%	6.5%		6.9%	6.6%	
<b>5 to 20</b>	1,853	1,849	-0.2%	23,067	22,110	-4.1%	981,123	1,024,554	-2.1%
% of Total	24.1%	21.5%		23.1%	21.4%		24.3%	23.0%	
<b>21 to 44</b>	2,856	2,780	-2.7%	33,794	33,181	-1.8%	1,470,475	1,535,034	8.5%
% of Total	37.2%	32.3%		33.8%	32.1%		36.4%	34.5%	
<b>45 to 64</b>	1,733	2,247	29.7%	20,978	24,895	18.7%	785,598	1,012,662	29.7%
% of Total	22.6%	26.1%		21.0%	24.1%		19.4%	22.8%	
<b>65+</b>	813	1,226	50.8%	15,876	16,587	4.5%	522,606	580,028	10.9%
% of Total	10.6%	14.2%		15.9%	16.0%		12.9%	13.0%	
<b>Total</b>	7,673	8,607	12.2%	99,840	103,459	3.6%	4,040,587	4,447,100	10.1%
<b>Median Age</b>	34.4	39	13.4%	36	38.3	6.4%	33	35.8	8.5%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 SF 1 and 3



## Race Distribution

<b>Table P-5. Racial Distribution: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama</b>								
<b>Geographic Area</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>White</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>Black</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>Other</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Rainbow City</b>	1990	7,459	97.2%	125	1.6%	89	1.2%	7,673
	2000	8,054	93.6%	327	3.8%	226	2.6%	8,607
<b>%Change</b>	1990-2000	8.0%	-3.6%	161.6%	2.2%	153.9%	1.5%	12.2%
<b>Etowah Co.</b>	1990	85,274	85.4%	13,799	13.8%	767	0.8%	99,840
	2000	85,640	82.8%	14,672	14.2%	3,147	3.0%	103,459
<b>%Change</b>	1990-2000	0.4%	-2.6%	6.3%	0.4%	310.3%	2.3%	3.6%
<b>Alabama</b>	1990	2,975,797	73.6%	1,020,705	25.2%	44,085	1.1%	4,040,588
	2000	3,162,808	71.1%	1,155,930	25.9%	128,362	2.8%	4,447,101
<b>%Change</b>	1990-2000	6.3%	0.0%	13.2%	0.0%	191.2%	0.0%	10.1%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 SF 3

## Gender Distribution

<b>Table P-6. Gender Distribution: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama</b>						
<b>Geographic Area</b>	<b>Year</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>Female</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Rainbow City</b>	1990	3,633	47.3%	4,040	52.7%	7,673
	2000	4,074	47.3%	4,533	52.7%	8,607
<b>%Change</b>	1990-2000	12.1%	0.0%	12.2%	0.0%	12.2%
<b>Etowah Co.</b>	1990	47,065	47.1%	52,775	52.9%	99,840
	2000	49,433	47.8%	54,026	52.2%	103,459
<b>%Change</b>	1990-2000	5.0%	0.6%	2.4%	-0.6%	3.6%
<b>Alabama</b>	1990	1,935,936	47.9%	2,104,651	52.1%	4,040,587
	2000	2,144,463	48.2%	2,302,637	51.8%	4,447,100
<b>%Change</b>	1990-2000	10.8%	0.3%	9.4%	-0.3%	10.1%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 SF 3



## Population Density

<b>Table P-7. Population Density and Area: Rainbow City and Vicinity</b>					
<b>Geographic Area</b>	<b>Total Area</b>	<b>Total Land Area</b>	<b>Pop. Per sq. mile</b>	<b>Housing Units Per sq. mile</b>	<b>Total Population (1990 to 2000)</b>
<b>Rainbow City</b> 1990	24.3	24.1	318.4	131.6	7,673
2000	25.3	25.1	333.0	151.1	8,607
%Change	4.1%	4.1%	4.6%	14.8%	12.2%
<b>Attalla</b> 1990	6.0	6.0	1,143.2	479.0	6,859
2000	6.6	6.6	988.0	436.8	6,677
%Change	10.0%	10.0%	-13.6%	-8.8%	-2.7%
<b>Glencoe</b> 1990	14.3	14.2	298.0	113.6	4,663
2000	16.1	16.0	319.5	132.2	4,936
%Change	12.6%	12.7%	7.2%	16.4%	5.9%
<b>Southside</b> 1990	18.6	18.4	295.4	106.5	5,556
2000	19.1	18.9	368.3	145.7	7,057
%Change	2.7%	2.7%	24.7%	36.8%	27.0%
<b>Etowah County</b> 1990	548.8	534.8	186.7	78.1	99,840
2000	548.8	534.8	188.5	83.8	103,459
%Change	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	7.3%	3.6%

Source: U.S. Census, 1990 SF 3, EARPDC database, 2000



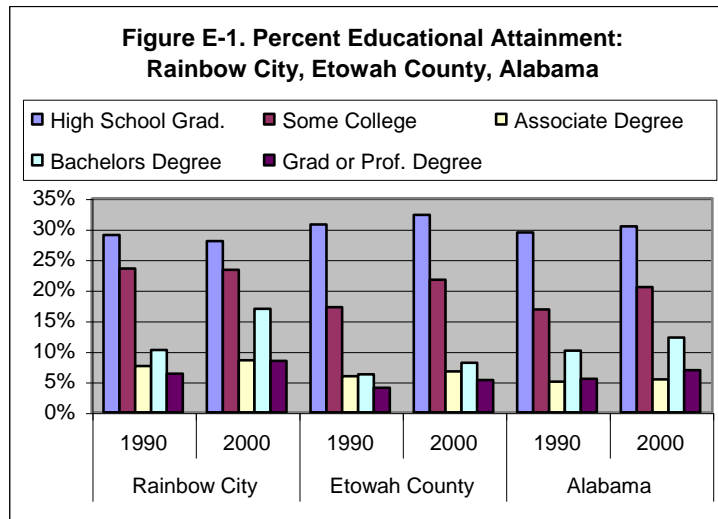
## **APPENDIX B: DETAILED ECONOMIC STATISTICS**



## Educational Attainment

Educational Level	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Less Than 9th Grade	364	225	-38.2%	9,516	6,023	-36.7%	348,848	240,333	-31.1%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	7.3%	3.8%		14.5%	8.6%		13.7%	8.3%	
9th to 12 Grade, No Diploma	794	653	-17.8%	14,072	12,092	-14.1%	494,790	473,748	-4.3%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	16.0%	11.1%		21.4%	17.3%		19.4%	16.4%	
High School Graduate	1,436	1,647	14.7%	20,194	22,531	11.6%	749,591	877,216	17.0%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	29.0%	28.0%		30.7%	32.3%		29.4%	30.4%	
Some College, No Degree	1,163	1,372	18.0%	11,301	15,137	33.9%	427,062	591,055	38.4%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	23.5%	23.3%		17.2%	21.7%		16.8%	20.5%	
Associate Degree	378	499	32.0%	3,900	4,674	19.8%	126,450	155,440	22.9%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	7.6%	8.5%		5.9%	6.7%		5.0%	5.4%	
Bachelors Degree	507	994	96.1%	4,076	5,679	39.3%	258,231	351,772	36.2%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	10.2%	16.9%		6.2%	8.1%		10.1%	12.2%	
Graduate or Professional	314	497	58.3%	2,613	3,693	41.3%	140,997	197,836	40.3%
% of Total Pop. 25 Years +	6.3%	8.4%		4.0%	5.3%		5.5%	6.9%	
Persons 25 Years and Over	4,956	5,887	18.8%	65,672	69,829	6.3%	2,545,969	2,887,400	13.4%
% of Total Population	64.6%	68.4%		65.8%	67.5%		63.0%	64.9%	

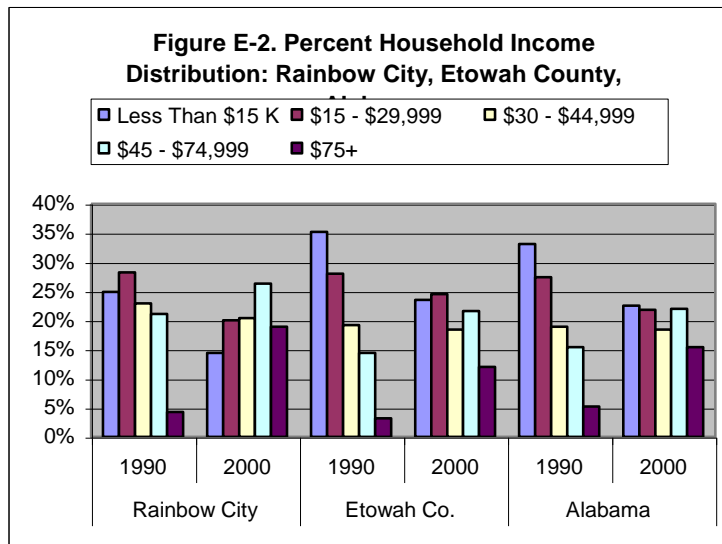
Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000



## Income

Table E-2. Household Income Distribution: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama									
Income Level	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	%Change
Less Than \$15 K	749	519	-30.7%	13,519	9,787	-27.6%	498,957	391,406	-21.6%
% of Total	24.9%	14.4%		35.2%	23.5%		33.1%	22.5%	
\$15 - \$29,999	846	723	-14.5%	10,772	10,199	-5.3%	412,393	378,264	-8.3%
% of Total	28.2%	20.0%		28.0%	24.5%		27.4%	21.8%	
\$30 - \$44,999	687	738	7.4%	7,401	7,673	3.7%	284,506	318,861	12.1%
% of Total	22.9%	20.4%		19.2%	18.4%		18.9%	18.4%	
\$45 - \$74,999	634	951	50.0%	5,521	8,981	62.7%	231,304	381,959	65.1%
% of Total	21.1%	26.3%		14.4%	21.6%		15.4%	22.0%	
\$75+	128	683	433.6%	1,240	4,994	302.7%	78,849	266,895	238.5%
% of Total	4.3%	18.9%		3.2%	12.0%		5.2%	15.4%	
Total Households	3,004	3,614	20.3%	38,453	41,634	8.3%	1,506,009	1,737,385	15.4%
Median Income	\$29,049	\$40,216	38.4%	\$22,314	\$31,170	39.7%	\$23,597	\$34,135	44.7%

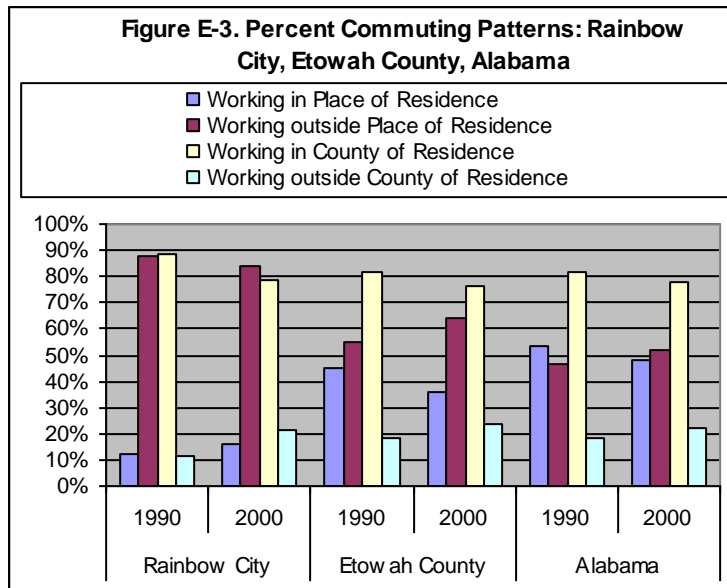
Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 SF 3



## Commuting Patterns

Table E-3. Commuting Patterns: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama									
Geographic Area	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Working in Place of Residence	443	653	47.4%	13,592	10,840	-20.2%	596,516	569,905	-4.5%
% of Total	12.1%	15.9%		45.4%	35.9%		53.2%	47.8%	
Working outside Place of Residence	3,210	3,459	7.8%	16,365	19,351	18.2%	525,480	621,853	18.3%
% of Total	87.9%	84.1%		54.6%	64.1%		46.8%	52.2%	
Total Place	3,653	4,112	12.6%	29,957	30,191	0.8%	1,121,996	1,191,758	6.2%
Working in County of Residence	3,227	3,223	-0.1%	32,370	32,082	-0.9%	1,363,133	1,421,356	4.3%
% of Total	88.5%	78.8%		81.5%	76.6%		81.5%	78.0%	
Working outside County of Residence	418	868	107.7%	7,328	9,800	33.7%	310,438	400,437	29.0%
% of Total	11.5%	21.2%		18.5%	23.4%		18.5%	22.0%	
Total County	3,645	4,091	12.2%	39,698	41,882	5.5%	1,673,571	1,821,793	8.9%

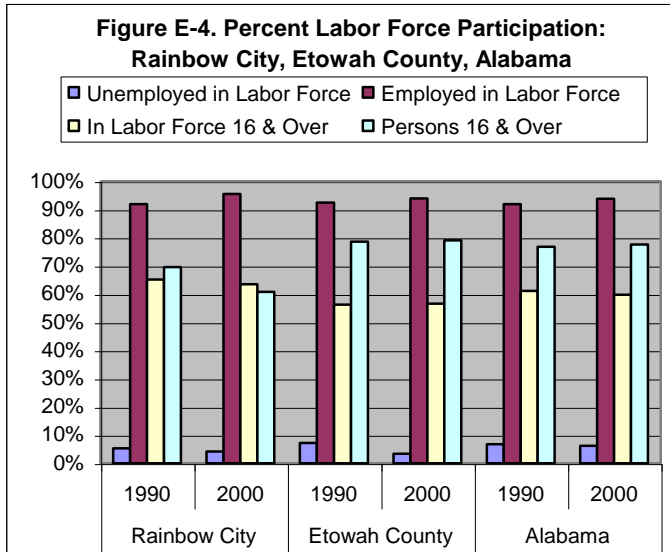
Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3



## Labor Force Participation and Unemployment

Labor Classification	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Total Persons 16+	6,055	6,825	12.7%	78,517	81,735	4.1%	3,103,529	3,450,542	11.2%
In Labor Force	3,948	4,334	9.8%	44,211	46,225	4.6%	1,895,361	2,061,169	8.7%
% in Labor Force	65.2%	63.5%	-2.6%	56.3%	56.6%	0.5%	61.1%	59.7%	-2.3%
Armed Forces	31	5	-83.9%	117	45	-61.5%	24,980	14,069	-43.7%
% in Armed Forces	0.8%	0.1%	-85.3%	0.3%	0.1%	-66.7%	0.9%	0.7%	-22.2%
Civilian Labor Force	3,917	4,329	10.5%	44,094	46,180	4.7%	1,870,381	2,047,100	9.4%
Employed	3,708	4,148	11.9%	40,902	43,426	6.2%	1,741,794	1,920,189	10.2%
Unemployed	209	181	-13.4%	3,192	2,754	-13.7%	128,587	126,911	-1.3%
% Unemployed	5.3%	4.2%	-21.6%	7.2%	3.4%	-52.8%	6.8%	6.2%	-45.5%
Not in Labor Force	2,107	2,491	18.2%	34,306	35,510	3.5%	1,208,168	1,389,373	15.0%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

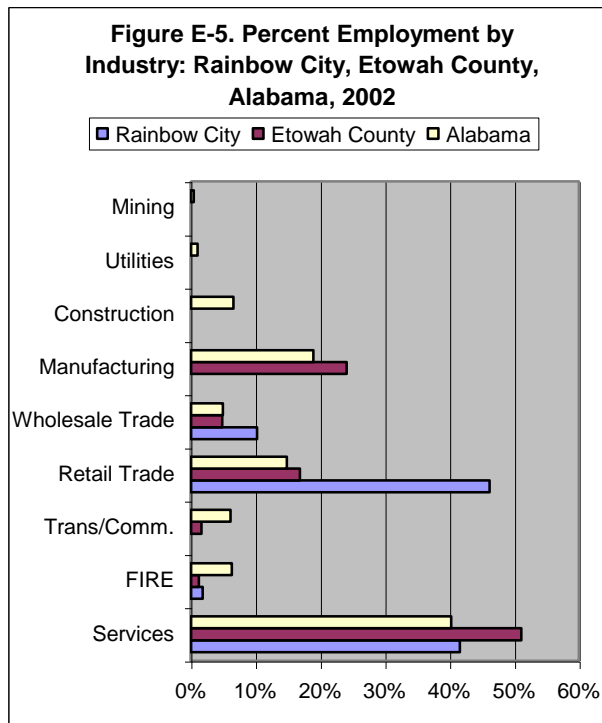


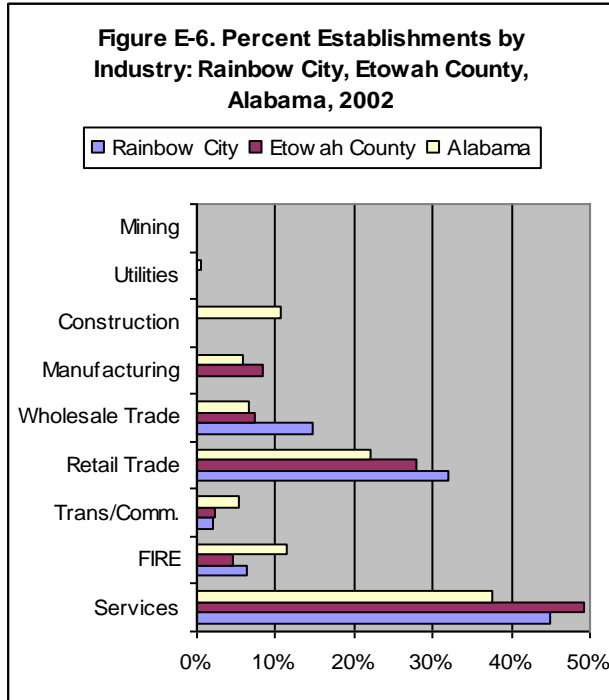


## Employment and Establishments by Industrial Sector

Industry	Rainbow City		Etowah County		Alabama	
	Est.	Emp.	Est.	Emp.	Est.	Emp.
Mining	X	X	X	X	282	7,508
% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.3%	0.5%
Utilities	X	X	X	X	503	16,014
% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	1.1%
Construction	X	X	X	X	9,345	98,555
% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.6%	6.6%
Manufacturing	Z	Z	138	6,504	5,119	284,127
% of Total	0.0%	0.0%	8.5%	24.1%	5.8%	19.0%
Wholesale Trade	28	192	119	1,333	5,747	74,915
% of Total	14.7%	10.3%	7.4%	4.9%	6.5%	5.0%
Retail Trade	61	858	454	4,581	19,608	222,416
% of Total	31.9%	46.2%	28.0%	16.9%	22.1%	14.9%
Trans/Comm.	4	X	36	452	4,731	91,960
% of Total	2.1%	0.0%	2.2%	1.7%	5.3%	6.2%
FIRE	12	36	75	350	9,971	95,551
% of Total	6.3%	1.9%	4.6%	1.3%	11.3%	6.4%
Services	86	773	797	13,807	33,257	600,844
% of Total	45.0%	41.6%	49.2%	51.1%	37.6%	40.3%
Totals	191	1,859	1,619	27,027	88,563	1,491,890

Source: U.S. Economic Census, 2002

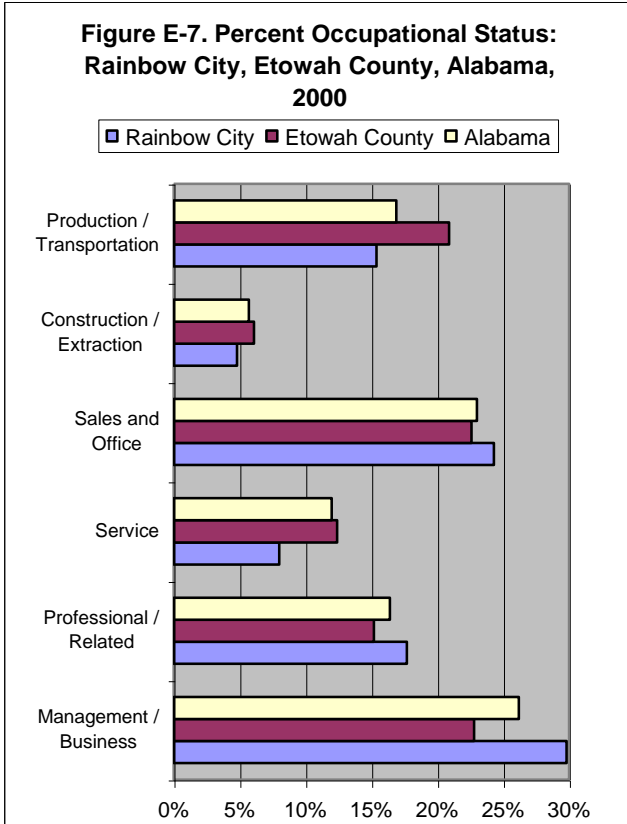




## Occupational Status

Occupation	Rainbow City	% of Total	Etowah County	% of Total	Alabama	% of Total
Management / Business	1,428	29.8%	10,967	22.8%	566,325	26.2%
Professional / Related	845	17.7%	7,312	15.2%	354,456	16.4%
Service	383	8.0%	5,969	12.4%	259,106	12.0%
Sales and Office	1,161	24.3%	10,846	22.6%	497,262	23.0%
Construction / Extraction	230	4.8%	2,909	6.1%	122,667	5.7%
Production / Transportation	739	15.4%	10,062	20.9%	365,441	16.9%
Total	4,786		48,065		2,165,257	

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 2000 STF 3



**Poverty Status**

**Table E-7. Poverty Status: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama**

Poverty Status by Age	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
5 and under	133	72	-45.9%	1,832	2,024	10.5%	87,462	82,914	-5.2%
% of Total	13.8%	10.0%		11.3%	12.7%		12.1%	11.9%	
6 to 17	198	136	-31.3%	3,215	3,359	4.5%	166,174	154,967	-6.7%
% of Total	20.5%	18.8%		19.8%	21.1%		23.0%	22.2%	
18 to 64	555	424	-23.6%	8,030	8,388	4.5%	350,179	373,940	6.8%
% of Total	57.6%	58.6%		49.4%	52.6%		48.4%	53.6%	
65 and above	78	91	16.7%	3,165	2,167	-31.5%	119,799	86,276	-28.0%
% of Total	8.1%	12.6%		19.5%	13.6%		16.6%	12.4%	
Total	964	723	-25.0%	16,242	15,938	-1.9%	723,614	698,097	-3.5%
% Below Poverty Level	12.6%	8.4%	-4.2%	16.5%	15.7%	-0.8%	18.3%	16.1%	-2.2%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

## Public Assistance

<b>Table E-8. Public Assistance Status: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama</b>									
Status	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Public Assistance Income	131	53	-59.5%	3,468	944	-72.8%	130,616	38,964	-70.2%
% of Total	4.3%	1.5%		9.0%	2.3%		8.7%	2.2%	
No Public Assistance Income	2,913	3,561	22.2%	34,985	40,690	16.3%	1,375,393	1,698,421	23.5%
% of Total	95.7%	98.5%		91.0%	97.7%		91.3%	97.8%	
Totals	3,044	3,614	18.7%	38,453	41,634	8.3%	1,506,009	1,737,385	15.4%
% Below Poverty Level	12.6%	8.4%	-4.2%	16.5%	15.7%	-0.8%	18.3%	16.1%	-2.2%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3



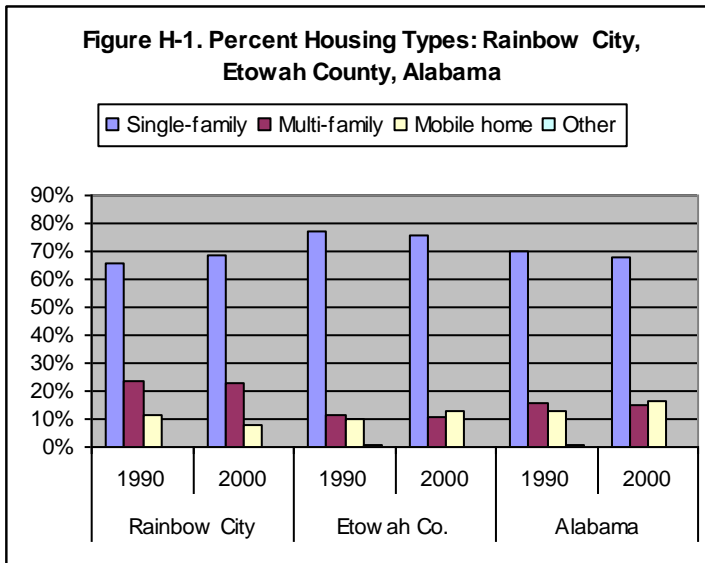
## **APPENDIX C: DETAILED HOUSING STATISTICS**



## Units by Type

<b>Table H-1. Housing Types: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama</b>									
Housing Types	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
Single-family	2,075	2,642	27.3%	32,378	34,855	7.7%	1,171,201	1,338,832	14.3%
% of Total	65.4%	68.6%		77.5%	75.8%		70.1%	68.2%	
Multi-family	743	894	20.3%	4,902	5,011	2.2%	266,351	300,569	12.8%
% of Total	23.4%	23.2%		11.7%	10.9%		15.9%	15.3%	
Mobile home	354	304	-14.1%	4,166	6,056	45.4%	217,784	319,212	46.6%
% of Total	11.2%	7.9%		10.0%	13.2%		13.0%	16.3%	
Other	0	10	100.0%	341	37	-89.1%	15,043	5,098	-66.1%
% of Total	0.0%	0.3%		0.8%	0.1%		0.9%	0.3%	
<b>Total Units</b>	<b>3,172</b>	<b>3,850</b>	<b>21.4%</b>	<b>41,787</b>	<b>45,959</b>	<b>10.0%</b>	<b>1,670,379</b>	<b>1,963,711</b>	<b>17.6%</b>

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 SF 3.

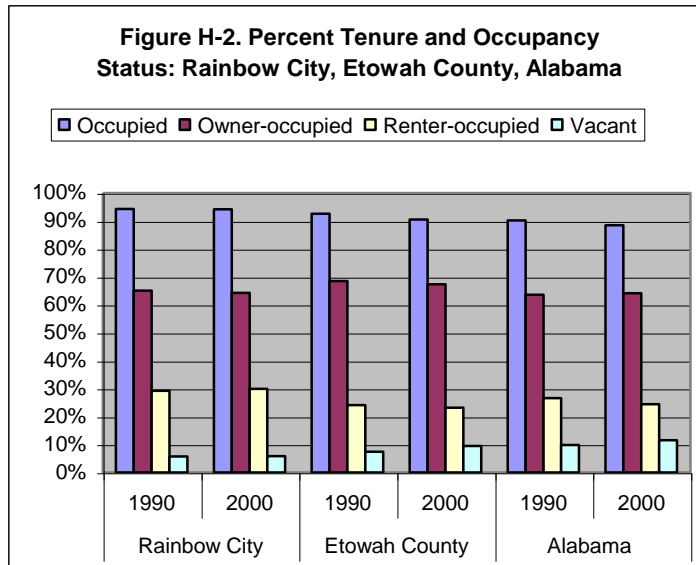




## Tenure and Occupancy Status

Table H-2. Tenure and Occupancy Status: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama									
Tenure & Occupancy	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Occupied	2,991	3,626	21.2%	38,675	41,615	7.6%	1,506,790	1,737,080	15.3%
% of Total	94.3%	94.2%		92.6%	90.5%		90.2%	88.5%	
Owner-occupied	2,066	2,475	19.8%	28,612	30,957	8.2%	1,062,148	1,258,686	18.5%
% of Total	65.1%	64.3%		68.5%	67.4%		63.6%	64.1%	
Renter-occupied	925	1,151	24.4%	10,063	10,658	5.9%	444,642	478,394	7.6%
% of Total	29.2%	29.9%		24.1%	23.2%		26.6%	24.4%	
Vacant	181	224	23.8%	3,112	4,344	39.6%	163,589	226,631	38.5%
% of Total	5.7%	5.8%		7.4%	9.5%		9.8%	11.5%	
Total Units	3,172	3,850	21.4%	41,787	45,959	10.0%	1,670,379	1,963,711	17.6%

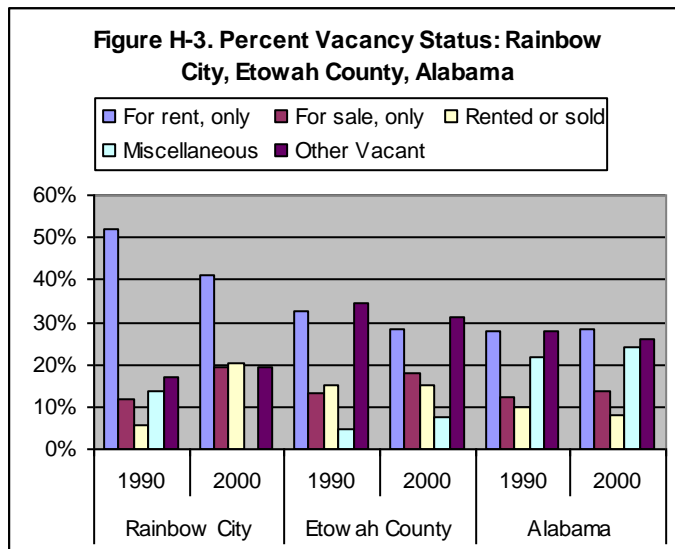
Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 SF 1.



## Vacancy Status

Table H-3. Vacant Housing Status: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama									
Vacancy Status	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change	1990	2000	% Change
For rent, only	94	92	-2.1%	1,010	1,239	22.7%	45,871	64,037	39.6%
% of Total	51.9%	41.1%		32.5%	28.5%		28.0%	28.3%	
For sale, only	21	43	104.8%	414	781	88.6%	19,845	31,121	56.8%
% of Total	11.6%	19.2%		13.3%	18.0%		12.1%	13.7%	
Rented or sold	10	45	350.0%	463	655	41.5%	16,058	18,507	15.3%
% of Total	5.5%	20.1%		14.9%	15.1%		9.8%	8.2%	
Miscellaneous	25	0	-100.0%	147	322	119.0%	35,904	54,593	52.1%
% of Total	13.8%	0.0%		4.7%	7.4%		21.9%	24.1%	
Other Vacant	31	44	41.9%	1,078	1,347	25.0%	45,911	58,373	27.1%
% of Total	17.1%	19.6%		34.6%	31.0%		28.1%	25.8%	
Total Vacant	181	224	23.8%	3,112	4,344	39.6%	163,589	226,631	38.5%

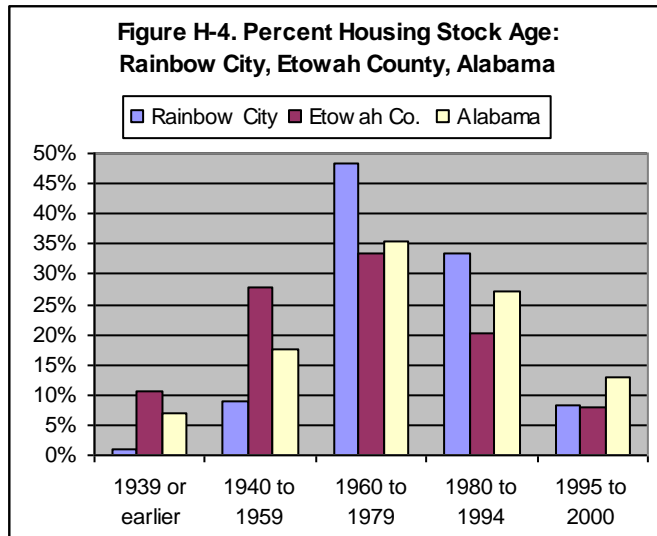
Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 STF 1 and 2000 STF 3



## Housing Stock Age

Table H-4. Housing Stock Age: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama						
Housing Stock	Rainbow City		Etowah County		Alabama	
	Number	%Change	Number	%Change	Number	%Change
1939 or earlier	44	NA	4,824	NA	139,227	NA
% of Total	1.1%		10.5%		7.1%	
1940 to 1959	343	679.5%	12,831	166.0%	341,735	145.5%
% of Total	8.9%		27.9%		17.4%	
1960 to 1979	1,855	440.8%	15,364	19.7%	692,480	102.6%
% of Total	48.2%		33.4%		35.3%	
1980 to 1994	1,283	-30.8%	9,246	-39.8%	534,533	-22.8%
% of Total	33.3%		20.1%		27.2%	
1995 to 2000	325	-74.7%	3,694	-60.0%	255,736	-52.2%
% of Total	8.4%		8.0%		13.0%	
Total Units	3,850		45,959		1,963,711	
Median Year Structure Built	1977		1968		1975	

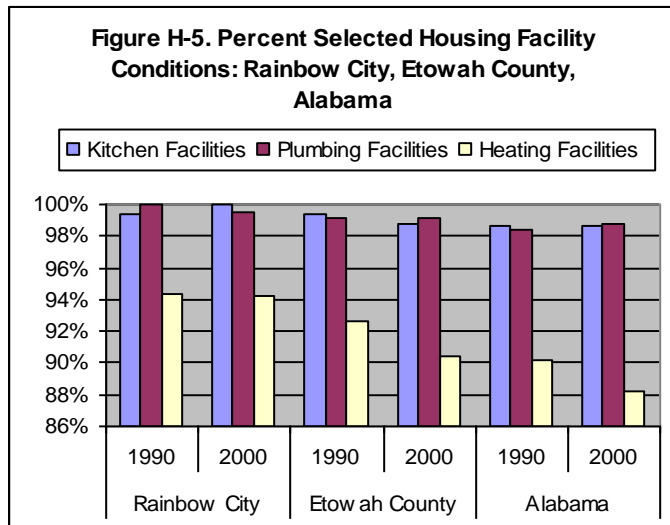
Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3



## Physical Conditions

<b>Table H-5. Selected Housing Conditions: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama</b>									
Housing Conditions	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Complete Kitchen Facilities	3,152	3,850	22.1%	41,519	45,410	9.4%	1,648,290	1,937,261	17.5%
% of Total	99.4%	100.0%		99.4%	98.8%		98.7%	98.7%	
Complete Plumbing Facilities	3,172	3,832	20.8%	41,471	45,573	9.9%	1,642,879	1,939,344	18.0%
% of Total	100.0%	99.5%		99.2%	99.2%		98.4%	98.8%	
Heating Facilities	2,991	3,626	21.2%	38,675	41,549	7.4%	1,506,790	1,732,744	15.0%
% of Total	94.3%	94.2%		92.6%	90.4%		90.2%	88.2%	
Total Units	3,172	3,850	21.4%	41,787	45,959	10.0%	1,670,379	1,963,711	17.6%

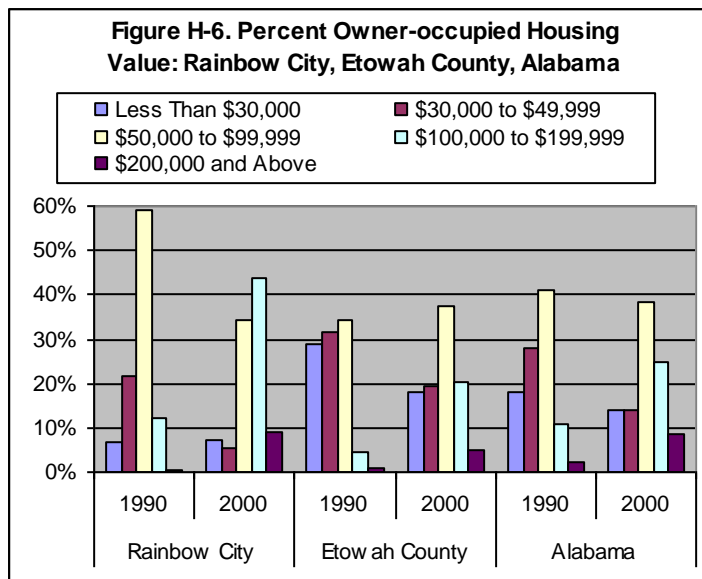
Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3



## Housing Value

Table H-6. Housing Value of Owner-occupied Units: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama									
Housing Value	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Less Than \$30,000	108	177	63.9%	6,266	5,557	-11.3%	138,101	179,243	29.8%
% of Total	6.8%	7.2%		28.8%	18.0%		18.1%	14.2%	
\$30,000 to \$49,999	348	139	-60.1%	6,869	6,061	-11.8%	214,835	178,233	-17.0%
% of Total	21.8%	5.6%		31.6%	19.6%		28.1%	14.2%	
\$50,000 to \$99,999	942	851	-9.7%	7,407	11,631	57.0%	313,210	482,541	54.1%
% of Total	58.9%	34.4%		34.1%	37.6%		41.0%	38.3%	
\$100,000 to \$199,999	194	1,083	458.2%	1,028	6,215	504.6%	82,341	310,939	277.6%
% of Total	12.1%	43.8%		4.7%	20.1%		10.8%	24.7%	
\$200,000 and above	8	225	2712.5%	150	1,493	895.3%	16,239	107,730	563.4%
% of Total	0.5%	9.1%		0.7%	4.8%		2.1%	8.6%	
Total Units	1,600	2,475	54.7%	21,720	30,957	42.5%	764,726	1,258,686	64.6%
Median Value	\$64,300	\$103,900	61.6%	\$42,400	\$66,500	56.8%	\$53,200	\$76,700	44.2%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3



## Housing Affordability

<b>Table H-7. Housing Value/Cost: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama</b>						
Ownership Status	Rainbow City		Etowah County		Alabama	
	1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
Median Contract Rent	\$258	\$409	\$186	\$280	\$229	\$339
Median Gross Rent	\$357	\$489	\$281	\$395	\$325	\$447
Median Value Owner-Occupied	\$64,300	\$103,900	\$42,400	\$66,500	\$53,200	\$76,700
% Units > \$100,000	12.6%	52.9%	5.4%	24.9%	12.9%	33.3%
Total Housing Units	1,600	2,475	21,720	30,957	1,670,379	1,963,711

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

## Affordability of Owner-Occupied Housing

<b>Table H-8. Selected Monthly Owner Costs As A Percentage of Household Income: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama</b>									
Percent of Income	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Less than 20%	966	1,360	40.8%	14,452	15,285	5.8%	482,702	556,093	15.2%
% of Total	60.4%	65.2%		66.5%	64.7%		63.1%	60.5%	
20 to 24%	221	181	-18.1%	2,376	2,396	0.8%	93,693	110,978	18.4%
% of Total	13.8%	8.7%		10.9%	10.1%		12.3%	12.1%	
25 to 29%	149	153	2.7%	1,511	1,453	-3.8%	56,044	67,849	21.1%
% of Total	9.3%	7.3%		7.0%	6.1%		7.3%	7.4%	
30 to 34%	38	112	194.7%	837	990	18.3%	33,671	42,840	27.2%
% of Total	2.4%	5.4%		3.9%	4.2%		4.4%	4.7%	
35% or more	173	269	55.5%	2,341	3,151	34.6%	91,195	127,930	40.3%
% of Total	10.8%	12.9%		10.8%	13.3%		11.9%	13.9%	
Not computed	53	11	-79.2%	203	362	78.3%	7,421	12,880	73.6%
Total Households	1,600	2,086	30.4%	21,720	23,637	8.8%	764,726	918,570	20.1%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3

## Affordability of Renter-Occupied Housing

<b>Table H-9. Gross Rent As A Percentage of Household Income: Rainbow City, Etowah County, Alabama</b>									
Percent of Income	Rainbow City			Etowah County			Alabama		
	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change	1990	2000	%Change
Less than 20%	419	577	37.7%	3,485	3,852	10.5%	139,708	153,017	9.5%
% of Total	46.7%	50.6%		35.8%	36.9%		32.6%	32.6%	
20 to 24%	71	90	26.8%	1,016	937	-7.8%	52,569	51,356	-2.3%
% of Total	7.9%	7.9%		10.4%	9.0%		12.3%	10.9%	
25 to 29%	100	106	6.0%	983	926	-5.8%	42,333	41,425	-2.1%
% of Total	11.1%	9.3%		10.1%	8.9%		9.9%	8.8%	
30 to 34%	33	30	-9.1%	598	532	-11.0%	28,501	29,476	3.4%
% of Total	3.7%	2.6%		6.1%	5.1%		6.7%	6.3%	
35% or more	209	239	14.4%	2,516	2,610	3.7%	117,289	128,349	9.4%
% of Total	23.3%	20.9%		25.8%	25.0%		27.4%	27.4%	
Not computed	66	99	50.0%	1,147	1,574	37.2%	47,624	65,506	37.5%
Total	898	1,141	27.1%	9,745	10,431	7.0%	428,024	469,129	9.6%

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000 STF 3





**APPENDIX D: DETAILED COMMUNITY FACILITIES  
STATISTICS**



## Educational Facilities

<b>Table C-1. Educational Facilities: Rainbow City, 2006</b>							
<b>School</b>	<b>Teachers Available</b>		<b># Students</b>	<b># Classrooms</b>	<b>Programs</b>		
	<b>Full</b>	<b>Part</b>			<b>Band room</b>	<b>Gym</b>	<b>Library</b>
John Jones Elementary (1-5)	50	0	711	30	0	1	1
Rainbow Middle (6-8)	40	0	668	30	0	1	1

Source: Rainbow City School Board, 2006



## **APPENDIX E: DETAILED TRANSPORTATION STATISTICS**



## AL Highway 77 Traffic Volumes

<b>Table T-1. Traffic Volumes: City of Rainbow City. AL Hwy 77</b>									
Traffic Count Location	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	# Change	% Change	LOS
S. of I-59 (97)	13,130	13,390	15,010	14,980	16,110	16,840	3,710	28.3%	B
N. of Steel St. road (99)	11,460	12,300	12,620	13,520	14,020	14,650	3,190	27.8%	D
S. of Park Lane (101)	12,670	13,370	14,110	14,820	16,520	17,040	4,370	34.5%	D
S. of Church Str. (102)	19,530	20,810	21,530	21,770	24,150	23,790	4,260	21.8%	D

Source: ALDOT website: Traffic Data, Statewide Traffic Volume Map

## US Highway 411 Traffic Volumes

<b>Table T-2. Traffic Volumes: City of Rainbow City. US Hwy 411 (Rainbow Drive)</b>									
Traffic Count Location	1995	1997	1999	2001	2003	2005	# Change	% Change	LOS
S. of Canoe Creek (18)	3,250	3,590	3,440	3,590	3,930	3,890	640	19.7%	A
N. of Pleasant Valley rd (104)	4,720	5,330	5,080	4,900	5,670	5,780	1,060	22.5%	A
N. of Bob Lee rd. (105)	5,910	6,560	6,130	5,880	6,570	6,280	370	6.3%	A
BTW. Williams Ave. and L. Ferry rd. (107)	11,420	11,980	12,010	11,560	11,700	10,730	-690	-6.0%	B
BTW. Sutton & Silvey Str. (109)	24,050	24,190	25,340	26,440	29,060	27,510	3,460	14.4%	D
N. Country Club rd. (110)	26,070	26,470	27,150	26,660	28,780	26,430	360	1.4%	D
S. of I-759 (112)	34,530	33,590	33,910	32,760	34,030	33,700	-830	-2.4%	E

Source: ALDOT website: Traffic Data, Statewide Traffic Volume Map

## Traffic Projections

<b>Table T-3. Annual Average Daily Traffic Projections, 1995-2015</b>				
Location of Traffic Count	1995	2005	2015	2015 LOS
<b>US Highway 411 (Rainbow Drive)</b>				
S. of Canoe Creek (18)	3,250	3,890	4,656	A
N. of Pleasant Valley rd (104)	4,720	5,780	7,078	A
N. of Bob Lee rd. (105)	5,910	6,280	6,673	A
BTW. Williams Ave. and L. Ferry rd. (107)	11,420	10,730	10,081	B
BTW. Sutton & Silvey Str. (109)	24,050	27,510	31,467	E
N. Country Club rd. (110)	26,070	26,430	26,795	D
S. of I-759 (112)	34,530	33,700	32,890	E
<b>AL Highway 77</b>				
S. of I-59 (97)	13,130	16,840	21,598	C
N. of Steel St. road (99)	11,460	14,650	18,728	E
S. of Park Lane (101)	12,670	17,040	22,917	E
S. of Church Str. (102)	19,530	23,790	28,979	F

Source: ALDOT website: Traffic Data, Statewide Traffic Volume Map





## **APPENDIX F: DETAILED LAND USE STATISTICS**



## Existing Land Use

<b>Table LU-1. Existing Land Use Acreage: Rainbow City, 2006</b>			
<b>Land Use Category</b>	<b>Acres in City</b>	<b>% of Total Land Area</b>	<b>% of Developed Land Area</b>
Agricultural	2,929	19.9%	43.1%
Commercial	428	2.9%	6.3%
Industrial	143	1.0%	2.1%
Single-Family Residential	2,786	18.9%	41.0%
Multi-Family Residential	128	0.9%	1.9%
Park and Recreation	105	0.7%	1.5%
Public	270	1.8%	4.0%
Undeveloped	7,955	54.0%	0.0%
Total Land Area	14,744		
Total Developed Land	6,789	46.0%	100.0%

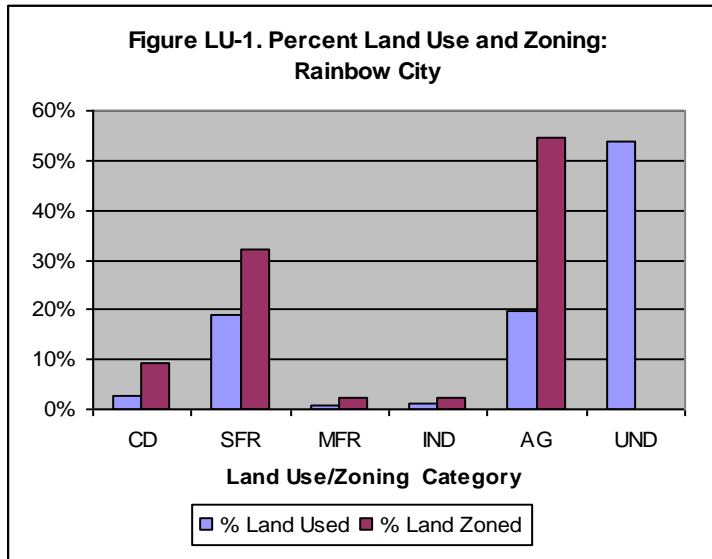
Source: EARPDC database 2006

## Zoning Acreage

<b>Table LU-2. Current Zoning Acreage and Percent of Total: Rainbow City, 2006</b>					
<b>Zoning</b>	<b>Use Classification</b>	<b>Acres Zoned</b>	<b>% of Total</b>	<b>Acres Zoned</b>	<b>% of Total</b>
H-C	Highway Commercial	1,481	9.2%	1,522	9.4%
HC-L	Highway Commercial-L	29	0.2%		
NS	Neighborhood Shopping	12	0.1%		
R-1	Single Family Residential	5,214	32.3%	5,616	34.8%
R-2	Patio Home and Townhouse	84	0.5%		
R-3	Multi-Family Residential	226	1.4%		
PUD	Planned Unit Development	29	0.2%		
MHP	Manufactured Home Park	63	0.4%		
M-1	Manufacturing	390	2.4%	390	2.5%
AG	Agriculture	8,606	53.3%	8,606	53.3%
	Total Zoning Acreage	16,134	100.0%		100.0%

Source: EARPDC database, 2006

## Land Use and Zoning



**RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**



## RESOLUTION

**A RESOLUTION BY THE RAINBOW CITY PLANNING COMMISSION APPROVING THE 2007 CITY OF RAINBOW CITY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT, PROVIDING FOR AN EFFECTIVE DATE OF SAID PLAN AMENDMENT, AND FORWARDING SAID PLAN AMENDMENT TO THE CITY COUNCIL FOR ITS CONSIDERATION AS AN ADVISORY POLICY DOCUMENT.**

WHEREAS, Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 8 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended, authorizes the Planning Commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any areas outside of its boundaries which, in the Planning Commission's judgment, bear relation to the planning of the municipality and, from time to time, to amend, extend or add to the plan; and

WHEREAS, the City of Rainbow City, Alabama recognizes the vulnerability of its resources, property and operation to the potential impacts of future growth and development and, therefore, desires to exercise its planning powers in accordance with Alabama law; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on September 27, 2007 to solicit final public comments on the 2007 City of Rainbow City Comprehensive Plan Amendment in accordance with Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 10 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE CITY OF RAINBOW CITY, ALABAMA:**

SECTION 1. That the 2007 City of Rainbow City Comprehensive Plan Amendment, and all maps contained therein, are hereby approved in accordance with the authority granted to the Planning Commission by Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 8 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended.

SECTION 2. That the aforementioned plan amendment shall become effective upon the date of approval by the Planning Commission.

SECTION 3. That the aforementioned plan amendment shall be forwarded to the Rainbow City, City Council for its consideration as an advisory policy document.

ADOPTED, this 25 day of September, 2007.

  
Chair, Rainbow City Planning Commission

ATTEST:

  
Secretary, Rainbow City Planning Commission

**RESOLUTION NO. 08-02**

**CITY OF RAINBOW CITY  
COUNTY OF ETOWAH  
STATE OF ALABAMA**

**A RESOLUTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RAINBOW CITY APPROVING THE 2007 CITY OF RAINBOW CITY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AMENDMENT AS AN ADVISORY POLICY DOCUMENT.**

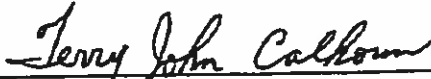
**WHEREAS**, Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 8 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended, authorizes the Planning Commission to make and adopt a master plan for the physical development of the municipality, including any areas outside of its boundaries which, in the Planning Commission's judgment, bear relation to the planning of the municipality and, from time to time, to amend, extend or add to the plan; and

**WHEREAS**, the City of Rainbow City, Alabama recognizes the vulnerability of its resources, property and operation to the potential impacts of future growth and development and, therefore, desires to exercise its planning powers in accordance with Alabama law; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on September 25, 2007 to solicit final public comments on the 2007 City of Rainbow City Comprehensive Plan Amendment in accordance with Title 11, Chapter 52, Section 10 of the Code of Alabama, 1975, as amended, and subsequently adopted a resolution approving the aforementioned plan amendment, providing an effective date thereof, and forwarding the plan amendment to the City Council for its consideration as an advisory policy document.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RAINBOW CITY, ALABAMA** that the 2007 City of Rainbow City Comprehensive Plan Amendment, and all maps contained therein, are hereby approved as an advisory document to guide the City in policy formulation and implementation.

**ADOPTED**, this 14<sup>th</sup> day of January, 2008.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Terry John Calhoun, Mayor

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Barbara T. Wester, City Clerk