

MPC - Resources Protection Committee



Status Report to the Metropolitan Planning Commission

May 9, 2006



MPC - Resources Protection Committee

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the MPC - Resources Protection Committee is to apply a broad, interdisciplinary perspective to the identification of environmental resources, focusing on sensitive lands throughout Chatham County for protection, conservation, or rehabilitation of those areas.

History of the Committee

- MPC Executive Director requested staff to establish the Resources Protection Committee in November of 2004 as a result of environmental issues raised by the Terra Firma zoning application, and has held regular monthly meetings ever since.
- The 32 members of the committee represent a diverse spectrum of individuals associated with the preservation of natural, historical and cultural resources, including: non-profit organizations such as land trusts and conservation groups, for-profit engineering and planning firms, local government staff members, educators, developers, and private citizens.

History of the Committee

- The current committee traces its origins back to the Open Space Committee, originally appointed by the Chatham County Commission in 1994.
- The current committee was able to build upon the work that had already been completed by previous committees. This proved to be of great help in expediting the process.

Site Selection Methodology

- Review of previous committees resulted in a base list of properties to be considered for protection or acquisition.
- The results of this review then combined with suggestions from committee members to produce the full list of potential properties.
- A more involved process then focused on one area of the County at a time, one site at a time, identifying additional sites.
- At the end of the review process, each site was reviewed a final time, and the committee voted on each site to assign it to one of three categories: hot list, watch list, and removal.

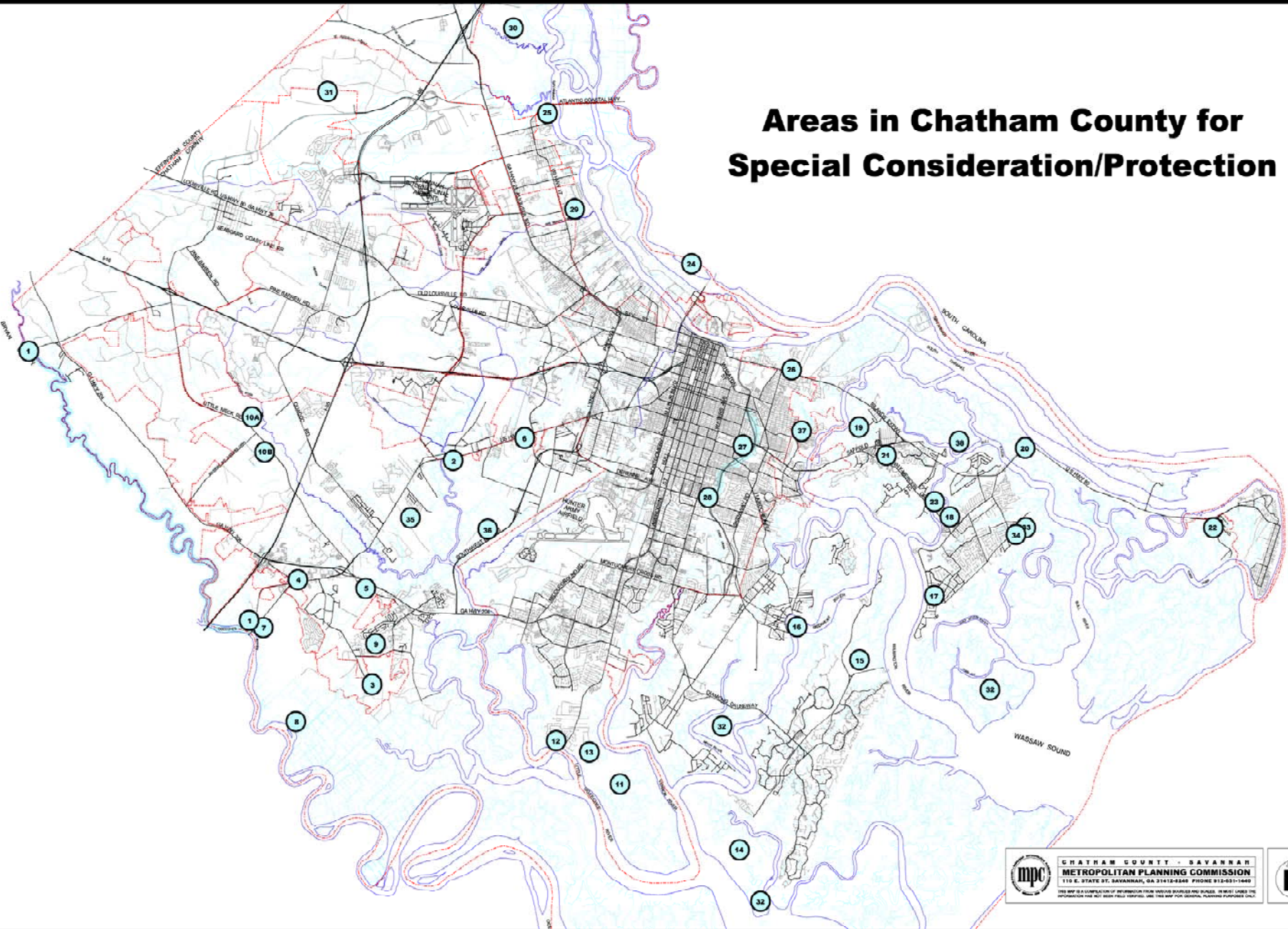
Site Selection Results

The MPC - Resources Protection Committee has identified approximately 171 properties on 38 sites in Savannah and Unincorporated Chatham County that are in need of protection.

Site Selection Results

1. Highway 17 / Ogeechee River recreational corridor w/ Morgan's Bridge
2. Oakland Plantation
3. Valambrosa Plantation
4. Coastal Gardens/Bamboo Farms
5. Grove Point Road areas
6. Redgate Farms area
7. Hwy. 17 near Ogeechee River
8. Mitigation area near Chevis Road
9. Wild Heron property
- 10A. S&O Canal & the adjacent property
- 10B. L. Scott Stell Park
11. Rose Dhu Island
12. Little Ogeechee property
13. Schley Avenue and Back Street area of Coffee Bluff
14. Green Island
15. Skidaway Island Property
16. Burnt Pot Island
17. Wilmington Island Park Lift Station area
18. Terra Firma
19. Oatland Island Education Center
20. McQueen's Island and trail
21. Demere Tract and associated hammocks
22. Battery Halleck
23. Turner's Rock fishing/shrimping site
24. Pennyworth Island
25. Houlihan Bridge park and boat ramp
26. President Street property
27. Truman Parkway trail
28. Memorial Health/Jenkins High School swampy area
29. Whitehall Plantation area at Ga. Ports entrance
30. Mulberry Grove
31. Highlands wetland area
32. Hammocks
33. Brevard Point Tract #1
34. Brevard Point Tract #2
35. Lebanon Plantation
36. Rockingham
37. Roberd's Dairy area
38. Whitmarsh Island Battery

Areas in Chatham County for Special Consideration/Protection



Next Steps: Conservation of Identified Properties

- Fee Simple Ownership
- Purchase of Development Rights
- Transfer of Development Rights
- Conservation Donation
- Zoning: Conservation Subdivision Design and Conservation Zoning

Next Steps: Leveraging Additional Funding for Land Conservation

- SPLOST
- Georgia Land Conservation Program (GLCP)
- Grants
- Loans

Next Steps: Identifying Additional Properties for Conservation

- Opportunities for resource conservation also exist in Chatham County's other municipalities
- This will mean inviting individuals from these other municipalities into the Resource Protection Committee, and going through a process of identification and prioritization for their jurisdiction.

Next Steps:

This effort will be a continuous process with new properties and funding sources being identified, and working with local governments and conservation agencies to protect the properties that have been identified.

Next Steps:

- MPC - Resources Protection Committee would like to request that the Chatham County Commission include \$10 million in 2008-2013 SPLOST funds for “green space, open space, and bikeways.” This funding request is consistent with the projects identified in the County's 5-Year Capital Improvement Plan.
- Staff is requesting MPC Board endorsement of a letter stating this request to the County Commission.



In the end, the ultimate goal will be for all parties to work together to create an effective, unified greenspace protection program that serves all of Chatham County.

