



facts and figures  
Douglas County, Georgia  
2016

**2016** STATE Of The  
**20** COUNTY



DOUGLAS COUNTY  
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# DOUGLAS COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS



District 1  
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III



District 2  
Kelly Robinson



Chairman  
Tom Worthan



District 3  
Mike Mulcare  
Vice-Chairman



District 4  
Ann Jones  
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Mark Teal,  
P. E., County  
Administrator



Ken Bernard,  
Esquire,  
Attorney



Lisa Watson,  
County  
Clerk



Total Population: Douglas County	U. S. Census 2013 Estimates		U. S. Census 2014 Estimates		State of Georgia 2014 Estimates
<b>By Gender</b>	<b>136,379</b>		<b>138,776</b>	<b>+4.9%</b>	<b>+4.2%</b>
Male	65,598	48.1%	66,474	47.9%	48.8%
Female	70,781	51.9%	72,302	52.1%	51.2%
<b>By Age</b>					
Under 19	41,901	30.7%		26.9%	24.7%
20 - 24	8,076	5.9%			
25 - 34	17,457	12.8%			
35 - 44	21,983	16.1%			
45 - 54	20,341	14.9%			
55 - 64	14,347	10.5%			
65 and Over	12,274	9.0%		10.3%	12.4%
Median Age	35.3 years				
<b>By Race/Ethnicity</b>					
Caucasian	72,280	53.0%		51.8%	62.1%
African-American	57,961	42.5%		43.5%	31.5%
Asian	2,318	1.7%		1.7%	3.8%
American Indian/Alaska Native	545	0.4%		0.4%	0.5%
Hispanic or Latino	12,138	8.9%		8.9%	9.3%
Identified by two or more	3,137	2.3%		2.4%	2.0%
Veterans			10,690		690,208
Median Household Income			\$52,691		\$49,179
Housing Units			51,861		4,151,190
Home Ownership				69.8%	65.1%
Median Value of Housing Unit			\$135,700		\$151,300
Number of Firms			11,400		901,105
High School Graduate or Higher				87.2%	84.7%

*The data in this document is taken from multiple sources. Data for certain subject areas is not available every year. This booklet is not a legal document, but was developed as a resource and information tool for Douglas County residents. Every reasonable effort has been made to assure accurate information.*

Juvenile Court	2015
Delinquent Cases	713
Children in Need of Services	349
Termination Cases	28
Dependency Cases	283
Traffic Cases	120
Special Cases	124
Superior Court Cases	10

*Douglas County Juvenile Court added a full-time Judge in 2015 to handle the complex issues concerning delinquent juveniles. In 2016, a reading room with children's books will be created adjacent to the Juvenile Court to promote early learning and literacy with children who come to Court in dependency cases. The Juvenile Court now has the capability for children to testify remotely to lessen their trauma.*

DUI/Drug Court Treatment Program	2015
DUI Court Graduations	27
Misdemeanor Drug Court Graduations	5
New Participants in Program	32
Status Court Sessions	48
Program Grant Received	\$56,320
2016 Participant Goal	75
Drug Screens Conducted	5200

DOUGLAS COUNTY E-911	2014	2015
Total Number of Calls <i>Douglas County E-911 averages a call into its center every 28 seconds</i>		247,140
911 Calls	108,326	114,304
Fire Calls	3,690	3,773
Emergency Medical Calls	12,705	12,865
Sheriff's Department Calls	34,433	35,832
Georgia State Patrol Calls	134	143

*E-911 Director Greg Whitaker is serving his 3rd term as President of the Georgia 911 Directors Association, and works with State legislators to write and pass legislation to improve 911 operations State-wide. E-911 implemented SMS to Texting Service in 2015 with all 4 major wireless providers to that persons in distress can text situations to E-911 when a voice call may put them in danger. E-911 installed and implemented the Weather Warn automatic tornado weather siren activation system in 2015.*

*The DUI/Drug Court Treatment Program is a division of State Court, and is administered by Judges W. O'Neal Dettmering and Eddie Barker.*

Juvenile Programs Administration	2015	provides evidence-based services to youth and their families involved in the Douglas County Juvenile Court
Evening Reporting Center	24 youth and families	for youth at risk of deeper involvement in the juvenile justice system
Low Risk/Prevention Planning	41 families	Positive Action Program designed to increase positive behaviors and decrease negative behaviors
Strengthening Families	41 families	evidence-based parenting skill training
Parenting - the Incredible Years	11 families	parenting that focuses on younger children
Intake	321 new youth	58% were diverted from Court
Intensive Supervision	34 youth	youth with substance abuse problems
Truancy Services	26 families	to reduce absenteeism
Children In Need of Services	351 families	children charged with unruly/runaway charges
Mentoring	21 males	
Family Dependency Treatment Program	91 families/180 children	operational for 8 years
Guardian ad litem Services	213 children	advocates for children in deprivation cases
LINK	69 families	serving children with severe mental and behavioral issues

**2015 ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

**JAIL**

- A Jailer on the floor walks over 6 miles a day during his 12-hour shift.
- 10,523 inmates were booked into the Jail in 2015.

**PATROL**

- Approximately 1.3 million miles were patrolled on County roads in 2015.
- 145,042 gallons of fuel were used for the Patrol Division.
- Sheriff's Department was awarded 2nd place in the Governor's Challenge for its traffic enforcement efforts.
- K-9 Unit held 65 public demonstrations for the Public.

**INMATE WORK CREWS**

- 643 City and County offices cleaned
- 145 tons of trash picked up from County/City roads

**ADMINISTRATION**

- Zuercher Technologies report management system purchased with drug funds and implemented
- Approximately 7500 citizens attended the Sheriff's Department's Trunk-or-Treat.
- 665 applications were submitted for 38 open positions in the Department.

**TRANSPORT DIVISION**

- 21,900 civil papers served
- 250,000 miles traveled while transporting prisoners

**IT DEPARTMENT**

- Over 5 million hits on the Sheriff's Department web site
- 15,483 "likes" on the Facebook page
- 1,260 Twitter followers

**COURT SERVICES**

- 186 warrant arrests
- 5,598 inmates transported to Court

**TRAINING**

- 156 training classes held
- 39,072 total training hours
- 16 CLEA graduates
- 65 public handgun students

**CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY PATROL**

- 3 stolen handguns taken off street
- 6 felony arrests for drugs
- 3 armed robbers apprehended
- 6 warranted persons arrested
- 10 DUI arrests
- 1 burglar arrested
- 1 attempt thwarted to commit armed robbery

**2016 GOALS**

- Body cameras
- Active shooter classes for the Public



Douglas County Fire/EMS provides fire services to unincorporated Douglas County and by contract to the City of Douglasville and the Douglas County portion of the City of Villa Rica. Douglas County Fire/EMS provides emergency medical services throughout Douglas County, including its cities.

**2016 Budgeted Improvements**  
 Replacement of Self-contained Breathing Apparatus  
 Completion of Replacement Turnout Gear  
 2 New Ambulances/Rescue Units  
 1 New Fire Truck  
 Establishment of Additional Ambulance Crew (Station 6)  
 Mobile Hotspot Capability for All Apparatus  
 10 New Thermal Imaging Cameras  
 New Extrication Tools  
 New Computer Tablets and Accessories

**2015 Grant Funds Received**  
 GEMA for Georgia Search & Rescue Equipment Cache: \$25,000  
 Firehouse Subs Public Safety Foundation: \$18,480  
 Georgia Trauma Care Network: \$15,811  
 Cobb and Douglas Board of Health: \$1,764

	Speeding Citations	DUI Arrests	Traffic Fatalities	Traffic Injuries	Seatbelt/ Child Restraint
2005	4,188	496	26	2,392	654
2006	4,466	544	21	2,057	874
2007	5,648	590	16	2,201	1,706
2008	8,129	565	16	1,353	2,334
2009	6,431	564	14	1,435	1,944
2010	5,396	582	13	1,144	2,692
2011	5,630	396	13	1,144	2,651
2012	6,163	473	22	1,223	2,736
2013	5,843	214	19	1,118	2,138
2014	5,413	224	13	1,036	1,450
2015	10,021	431	29	1,946	1676



Honorable Phil D. Miller, Sheriff



Fire/EMS Purchases	2005 - Present	
June 2005	Fire Engine/Pumper	\$336,335
June 2005	Fire Engine/Pumper	\$335,042
May 2006	Fire Engine/Pumper	\$336,335
May 2006	Fire Engine/Pumper	\$336,335
May 2006	Rescue/Ambulance	\$94,499
May 2006	Rescue/Ambulance	\$94,499
May 2006	Rescue/Ambulance	\$94,499
December 2006	Fire Engine/Pumper	\$346,345
December 2006	Fire Engine/Pumper	\$346,425
June 2007	Quint (engine and ladder)	\$486,965
August 2010	Rescue/Ambulance	\$122,728
October 2010	Air and Light Truck	\$367,552
October 2010	Rescue/Ambulance (Used)	\$42,900
July 2012	Squad	\$315,991
December 2012	Bariatric Rescue/ Ambulance	\$179,776
December 2012	Bariatric Rescue/ Ambulance	\$179,776
May 2015	Fire Engine/Pumper	\$380,686
February 2016	Rescue/Ambulance	\$138,886
February 2016	Rescue/Ambulance	\$138,886
April 2016	Rescue/Ambulance	\$138,886
April 2016	Rescue/Ambulance	\$138,886

DOUGLAS COUNTY FIRE/EMS DEPARTMENT	2014	2015
Structure Fires	144	128
Vehicle Fires	89	91
Grass and Rubbish Fires	180	117
Other Fires	21	5
Explosions and Overheating/No Fire	16	20
Emergency Medical Calls	11,316	11,800
Hazardous Conditions/No Fire	301	323
Service Calls	1,455	1,206
Welfare/Non-Emergency Assistance	1,329	1,123
False Alarm/False Call	786	814
Severe Weather and Natural Disaster	28	10
Special Incident Type	114	14
Investigations	113	109
Arson Suspicious	30	24
Convictions	8	10
Fire Safety Inspections	1,896	1,419
Construction Plan Reviews	286	272
Blasting Permits		18
Fire Safety Education Classes		95
Impact Study Reviews	8	25
Complaints Investigated	14	28
Inspection Violations Discovered	1,675	1,839
Inspection Violations Corrected	1,447	1,409
Training Conducted		
Cardiac Hours		542
Educator Hours		12
General EMS Hours		2,214
ISO Company Training Hours		14,072
ISO Driver Hours		70
ISO Training Complex Hours		104
ISO Company Officer Hours		95
State Fire Certification Hours		11,774
Trauma Hours		25
Pediatric Hours		117

Development Services includes building permits and inspections, occupational tax/business licenses, planning and zoning, engineering, and code enforcement.

**2015 Accomplishments**

Addition of a 3rd Code Enforcement Officer  
 ARC Community Choices Study for Ga Hwy 166 Corridor  
 James Worthington named Development Services Director/County Engineer  
 Travis McDonald named Assistant Director/Development Control Manager

Development Services	2014	2015
<b>Building Permits and Inspections</b>		
Subdivision Preliminary Plats	3	4
Subdivision Construction Plans	1	0
Subdivision Final Plats	9	30
Commercial/Industrial Plan Review	19	56
Architectural Reviews	19	
Building Plan Reviews	99	85
Commercial Land Disturbance Permits	24	37
Commercial Building Permits	5	4
Residential Grading Permits	184	255
Residential Building Permits	157	186
<b>Occupational Tax/Business Licenses</b>		
New Business Licenses	406	348
Business License Renewals	2,467	2,350
Beer, Wine, and Liquor Licenses	129	
<b>Planning and Zoning/Code Enforcement</b>		
Re-zoning Applications	8	4
Code Enforcement Cases Investigated	932	1,413
Code Enforcement Court Cases	59	57
Pounds of Illegal Signs Disposed	645	360
<b>Neighborhood Stabilization Program</b>		
Homes Purchased	5	4
Homes Sold	6	4
Homes Under Contract	7	5
Sidewalks Constructed (linear feet)		5,750
Asphalt Topping (linear feet)		8,000

	2014	2015
Pieces of Mail Sent	184,103	183,475
Postage Cost	\$118,934.07	\$122,279.25
Number of Purchase Orders Issued	9,790	9,172
Amount of Purchase Orders Issued	\$27,271,613.08	\$27,715,874.55



**Douglas County Library**  
 6810 Selman Drive  
**Lithia Springs/Betty Hagler Library**  
 7100 Turner Drive  
**Dog River Library**  
 6100 Georgia Highway 5

Douglas County Public Libraries	2014	2015
Circulation	567,865	527,300
Circulation per capita	4.16	3.83
Visitors	386,623	211,290
Programs Conducted	413	658
No. of People Attending Library Programs	13,708	23,604
PC Usage and Wi-Fi Passes	63,236	61,855
Reference Transactions	13,911	14,202
Interlibrary Loans: Other Libraries		42,067
Interlibrary Loans: Patrons		32,727

Douglas County owns and operates the Cedar Mountain Landfill and Camp Road Transfer Station. The Landfill accepts construction and demolition debris and recyclables; household garbage is transferred to a disposal landfill in another county. All solid waste programs are funded through the Landfill Enterprise Fund which is supported by user fees. No tax dollars are used for solid waste operations.

DOUGLAS COUNTY LANDFILL	2014	2015
Number of Customer Transactions	74,321	83,819
Solid Waste Disposed	35,711 Tons	42,316 Tons
Solid Waste Recycled	11,306 Tons	16,373 Tons
Percent Recycled	31.7%	38.7%
Construction/Demolition Waste		17,756 Tons
Vegetative Waste		4,140 Tons
Total Revenue Generated		\$1,764,473

Douglas County Board of Elections conducts all elections for the County, its cities and the Board of Education.

Voter Registration	2014	2015
Number of Registered Voters	83,031	85,738

Douglas County Animal Services provides animal control and shelter services to unincorporated Douglas County and by contract to the City of Douglasville and the Douglas County portion of the City of Villa Rica.

Animal Services instituted a new program in 2015 where they drive animals home when they have ID displayed or microchip.

Animal Services	2014	2015
Animals Received	2,971	2,903
Animals Adopted/Returned to Owner	2,121	1,786
Animals Returned to Owner		580
Animals Euthanized	616	400
Bite Cases Investigated	238	223
Miles Logged by Animal Control		88,686

Douglas County Employees	2015		2016	
Judicial/Courts	178	15%	183	17%
Fire/EMS	168	14%	171	16%
Sheriff's Department	356	30%	355	34%
E-911	24	2%	25	2%
Emergency Management	2	0.2%	2	0.2%
Administration	453	38%	315	30%
Total	1,181		1,051	



In 2015, the Douglas County Emergency Management helped plan and participated in a Department of Homeland Security-mandated Strategic National Stockpile drill that simulated the dispensing of life-saving medications to County residents in the case of an emergency. Emergency Management, Communications and Community Relations, Fire/EMS, Sheriff's Department, and DOT participated with Cobb-Douglas Public Health and the City of Douglasville in the exercise.



Records Management ensures that all County documents are catalogued for future access and retained in accordance with State law. In addition, it is digitally imaging all historical documents (deeds dating back to 1870, building permits, etc.). The Department staff handles all Open Records requests from the Public.

Aubrey Britt was named Director in 2015. Lena Hardy was employed as Electronic Records and Information Coordinator.

	Open Records Requests	Records Center Retrieval Requests (files needed for Court)	Files Filed	Cubic Feet Transmitted	Cubic Feet Destroyed	Documents Prepared, Scanned, and Indexed (imaged for access)	Documents/Files Transferred to Archives for Retention
2013	729	1,227	3,194	683	475	7,763	
2014	535	1,605	3,556	1,012	430	10,000	
2015	695	2,130	2,224	1,149	506	51,747	43,835

Fleet Management is a County department that maintains most County vehicles and equipment, including Sheriff's patrol cars, Fire/EMS engines and rescue units, DOT equipment, and Rideshare vans. It also maintains the County's gas station.

**2015 Accomplishments**

The first ASE and EVT certifications were earned by a Fleet emergency vehicle technician. Implemented manufacturer's diagnostic software including wireless laptop computers.

COUNTY FLEET	2014	2015
Cars and SUVs	257	229
Vans and Buses	132	151
Heavy Trucks	33	26
Light Trucks	133	119
Fire Trucks & Support Units	18	19
Rescue Units, Squads & Support Units	13	17
Heavy Equipment and Implements	194	139
Small Equipment	449	510
Fuel Transactions	14,974	14,978
Gallons of Gas Used	154,115	160,232
Gallons of Diesel Used	109,228	114,996
Work Orders	2,851	3,268
Man-hours Expended	8,574	9,804
Preventive Maintenance Services	1,082	1,325
Road Calls	81	118
Repair Orders	3,146	3,268
On-line Surplus Auction Proceeds (non-productive vehicles and equipment)	\$67,462	\$114,337

Douglas County Senior Services	2014	Serving	2015	Serving
Home-delivered Meals	34,428	229 homebound seniors	34,252	227 homebound seniors
On-site Meals	16,377	serving 172 seniors	16,106	serving 178 seniors
One-way Passenger Trips	24,422	serving 226 seniors	24,575	serving 233 seniors
Hours of Respite Care	2,148	serving 32 caregivers	2,289	serving 34 caregivers
In-home Support Services	1,912	serving 57 seniors	1,793	serving 53 seniors
Service Inquiries/Request for Information	2,944		2,888	

Senior Services placed four 21-passenger buses purchased with a Federal grant matched by County funds that will ensure that seniors continue to have access to the nutritional and educational programs offered at the Fairburn Road Senior Center and other medical, recreational, and shopping trips. The Board of Commissioners provided the matching funds to purchase a new handicapped-accessible van in 2016 to provide demand/response medical transportation.

DOUGLAS COUNTY RIDESHARE	2014	2015
Average Number of Vanpool Riders per Month	482	432
Average Number of GRTA Xpress Bus Riders per Month	13,981	10,572
Total Number of Rideshare Participants	689	716
Number of Vanpool Routes	60	52
Total Vanpool Passenger Miles	5,871,960	5,500,000
Vanpool One-Way Trips	155,484	113,490
Vanpool Passenger Fares Collected	\$428,241	\$264,685
GRTA Xpress Bus Fares Collected	\$130,235	\$113,490



Douglas County Property Management is the in-house department that keeps County facilities working instead of using outside maintenance firms and contractors. In 2014, Property Management performed maintenance work that would have cost approximately \$300,000 if awarded to outside firms.

HVAC Units	198
Backflow Testing & Maintenance	148
Work Requests	680
Generator Maintenance	15
Fire Alarm Systems	8
New Construction	2
Renovations & Improvements	9
Water Heater Installations	7
Lighting and Ballasts Replacement	\$9,000
HVAC Unit Replacements	4

Douglas County Rideshare is the only County-operated vanpool program in the State of Georgia.

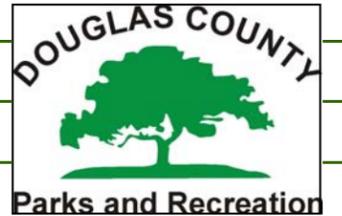
In 2015, Rideshare completed a Transportation Services Study which offered recommendations on mobility programs that can be expanded or added to give County residents better options of how they get from one place to the other. A \$1.7 million Federal Transit Administration grant will help implement some of the recommendations beginning in 2016.

The Transportation Voucher Program received a \$62,500 Federal grant. Transportation Center and park and ride lot upgrades were completed with the help of \$175,000 in grants. 17 new vans in 2015 with 10 more coming in 2016 will keep the vanpool inventory safe, and new on-board technology will soon be implemented to make the ride safer.

	Major Project Status	
Interstate 20/Lee Road Interchange	Completed 2015	
Lee Road Widening, Interstate 20 to Fairburn Road	Summer 2016	4 Lanes with Turn Lanes
Bankhead Highway/Mann Road/Post Road Intersection	Underway	Realignment, Turn Lanes, Traffic Lights
Highway 54/70/92/166 Intersection	Design	Roundabout, 2017 Construction
Intelligent Transportation System Expansion	Underway	Fiber Optic Cable, CCTV, IT to connect 24 traffic signals
Thornton Road Congestion Reduction Projects	Design	Turn Lanes, Signage
Roadway Resurfacing	Underway	25.31 miles in 2015; 43.67 miles in 2016



Parks and Recreation	
Tennis Courts	11 all-weather courts
Athletic Fields	58
Picnic Shelters	13
Trails	25 miles
Playgrounds	12 playgrounds, 8 of which are disabled-accessible
Bocce Courts	6
Parks	1,887 acres
Recreation Division	<p>Youth Athletic Programs (ages 3 - 18): 1,000 participants in recreational basketball, baseball, softball, track and field, cheerleading, and sports camps</p> <p>Douglas County Night with the Atlanta Braves at Turner Field: 1,000 participants</p> <p>Douglas County Night with the Atlanta Hawks at Philips Arena: 72 participants</p> <p>Winston Park: 700 participants</p> <p>2015 Dizzy Dean District 5 Champions: 11U, 10U, 9U, 7U, 6U</p> <p>Park hosted 4 All-Star Baseball Tournaments</p> <p>Lithia Springs Park:</p> <p>12U Dizzy Dean Girls Softball Champions</p> <p>Youth Track and Field: 70 participants</p> <p>103 awards in the District 5 Georgia Recreation &amp; Parks Association meet</p> <p>22 participants received 41 State medals, 9 of which were 1st place finishes</p> <p>Adult Athletic Programs (ages 17 - 65)</p> <p>Women's Indoor Kickball: 320 participants</p> <p>Pickleball being introduced in 2016 to active adults, seniors, and Special Needs athletes</p>
Therapeutic Programs (Special Needs)	<p>Special Olympics Winter, Summer, and Fall Games</p> <p>Valentine's, Spring and Christmas Dances</p> <p>Masters Bowling</p> <p>Summer Camps</p> <p>Car Show</p> <p>2016 Goals: Explore Georgia field trips; weekly comedy clubs; exercise to music; monthly movie nights; mobile library; pickleball; model car building club; equine therapy; cycling; and zombie run</p>
Community Programs and Special Events	<p>Fairy Princess Ball</p> <p>Flashlight Egg Hunt</p> <p>Fishing Derby</p> <p>Mother/Son Flashlight Hike</p> <p>A Deer Lick Christmas</p> <p>Zumba, Piano, Tae Kwando, Yoga and Fitness Classes</p> <p>Eggstravaganza</p> <p>Easter Egg Hunt</p> <p>Spring Break Arts Camp</p> <p>Summer Camps</p> <p>Family Camporee</p>
Maintenance	<p>Repair of backstops and dugouts at Winston Park</p> <p>Installation of new scoreboards at Post Road and Winston Parks</p> <p>Paving of parking lots at Deer Lick Park, and installation of street lights</p> <p>Construction of play garden and kiosk for bike, walking and horse trails at Clinton Preserve</p> <p>561 tons of infield mix distributed to all ball park fields</p>
Boundary Waters Aquatic Center	<p>New land-based fitness class "Body by You"</p> <p>Swim participation increase, including private, high school, and Special Olympics programs</p> <p>Exceeded revenue goals by \$12,000 without increasing fees</p> <p>Overhaul of chlorination system at no cost to taxpayers</p> <p>Acquisition and installation of new water quality control boards</p> <p>900+ private swim lessons taught</p> <p>150+ BSA swim tests performed</p> <p>3,500+ hours open to the Public</p> <p>1,200+ SEALs lessons taught</p> <p>5,000 pounds of Chlorine used</p> <p>73 lifeguard certifications issued</p>
Boundary Waters Park	<p>New disc golf course opened</p> <p>Phase I, Football field construction completed</p> <p>New irrigation system installed with all water from spring-fed pond</p>



Douglas County's Fiscal Year is the same as the calendar year. The property tax millage rate is adopted in late July of each year. Tax bills are usually mailed in September with tax payments due in November.

The Cities of Austell, Douglasville, and Villa Rica, and the Douglas County Board of Education adopt their own separate property tax millage rates. The Douglas County Tax Commissioner collects taxes on behalf of all governmental entities.

	General Fund Budget	County Millage Rate	Digest	Value of One Mil
2005	\$60,339,952	7.349	\$8,237,797,993	\$3,295,120
2006	\$59,100,384	8.240	\$9,088,935,145	\$3,635,575
2007	\$66,471,005	7.861	\$10,197,641,048	\$4,079,056
2008	\$80,244,439	7.826	\$10,750,662,048	\$4,300,265
2009	\$78,766,720	7.932	\$10,784,332,225	\$4,313,733
2010	\$75,774,720	9.990	\$9,342,148,268	\$3,736,859
2011	\$78,215,000	9.990	\$9,054,398,205	\$3,621,759
2012	\$77,350,365	9.990	\$8,772,130,000	\$3,508,852
2013	\$73,414,046	12.250	\$8,643,086,635	\$3,457,235
2014	\$89,403,693	12.153	\$8,592,881,420	\$3,437,153
2015	\$88,215,599	11.809	\$8,905,322,500	\$3,562,129
2016	\$90,095,300			

There are 53,995 property parcels in Douglas County.

	Industrial Value of the County Digest	Percentage of the County Digest
2005	\$498,355,770	5.4%
2010	\$817,738,322	7.9%
2011	\$844,045,463	8.4%
2012	\$800,502,213	8.25%
2013	\$852,607,623	9.86%
2014	\$912,436,175	9.48%
2015	\$940,988,068	10.57%

**County's Bond Ratings (Credit Ratings)**  
 Moody's: Aa2  
 Standard & Poor's: AA  
 This is the highest rating counties the size of Douglas County can attain - extremely strong. Douglas County has no long-term debt.

Superior Court is the Court of general jurisdiction handling both civil and criminal law actions, including misdemeanors, contract disputes, premises liability, divorce, land titles, and felonies involving jury trials, including death penalty cases. Douglas County has 3 Superior Courts.

State Court handles all misdemeanor criminal and traffic offenses. Douglas County has 2 State Courts. Probate Court establishes the validity of wills, documents the administration of estates, appoints a guardian when none has been established, maintains vital records (birth and death certificates, marriage licenses), and issues gun permits.

Magistrate Court (Small Claims) handles claims under \$15,000 and garnishment actions, holds preliminary hearings and sets bond, and hears ordinance violations.

The Clerk of Superior and State Court handles deed and property recording, UCC recording, lien recording, plat recording, civil and domestic court filing and processing, DD-214 recording, juries, staff for the Courts, and passport applications, among numerous other duties.

Clerk of Superior Court	2014	2015
Warrants	4,186	4,094
Adoptions	47	35
Documents Entered	146,143	223,625
Real Estate Documents	16,376	17,197
Liens	15,060	14,154
Plats	120	88
UCC	2,504	2,365
Passport Applications	2,329	3,116
Clerk of State Court	2014	2015
Warrants	2,156	1,837
Traffic	11,893	11,997
On-line Ticket Payments		4,136

**Clerk of Superior Court 2015:**

- Deeds going back 50 years in the Record Room have been scanned and indexed and are available on-line
- Converted to a new Case Management System
- E-filing civil cases and criminal transcripts

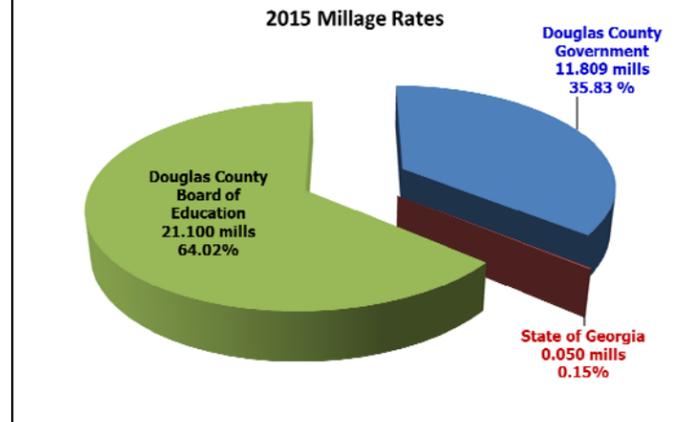
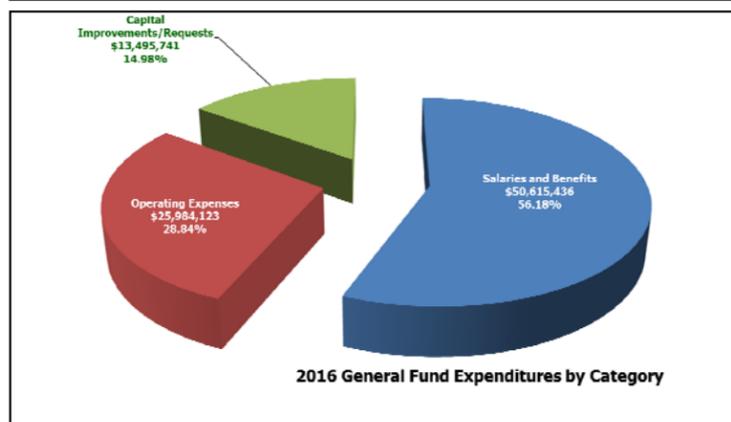
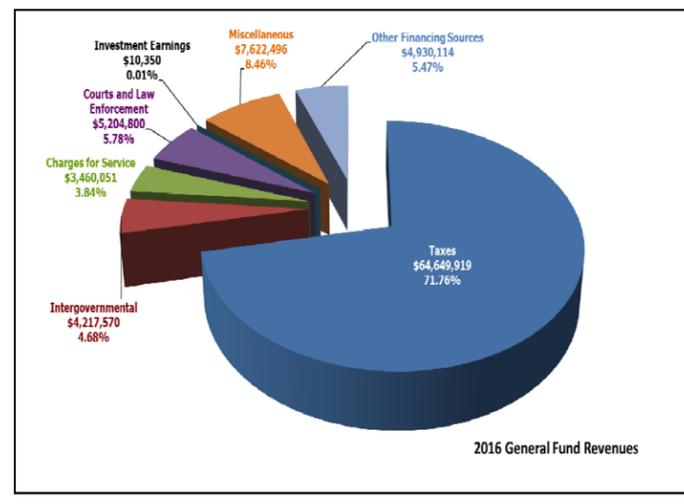
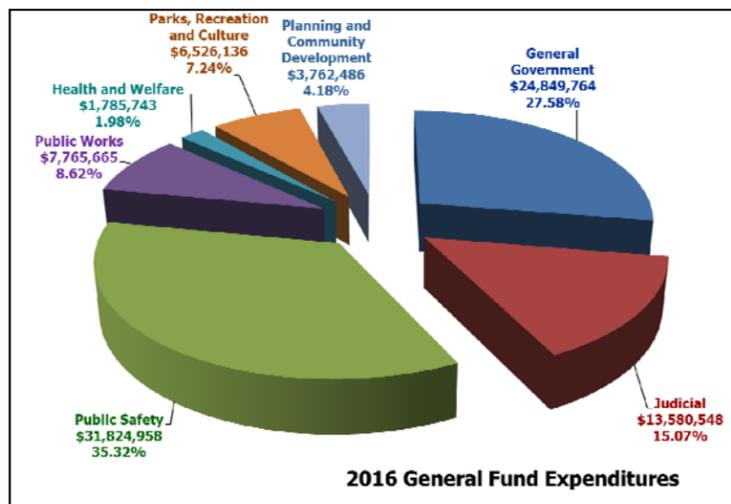
**Clerk of Superior Court 2016 Goals:**

- Scan and index the remaining 1/3 of the Record Room deeds dating back to 1871
- E-file child support cases
- Scan and index DD-214 books
- Scan and index all Minute Books

Superior Court	2014	2015
Criminal Filings	1,602	1,573
Civil Filings	3,173	3,027
State Court	2014	2015
Criminal Filings	1,604	1,504
Civil Filings	570	500
Non-traffic Misdemeanors		1,498
Serious Traffic		377
Other Traffic		11,597
Probation Revocations		2,256

Magistrate Court	2014	2015
Dispossessories	5,321	5,256
Small Claims	3,134	2,788
Abandoned Motor Vehicles	231	226
Personal Property Foreclosures	77	64
Distress Warrants	5	0
Continuing Garnishments	188	174
One-Time Garnishments	43	28
Ordinance Violations	265	133
Motions for Contempt	258	434
First Appearance/Bond Hearings	4,563	
Felony Warrants Issued	2,890	
Misdemeanor Warrants Issued	3,349	
Search Warrants Issued	114	159

Probate Court	2014	2015
Estate Filings	337	535
Birth Certificates	428	721
Death Certificates	818	837
Concealed Weapon Permits	2,752	3,274
Marriage Licenses	1,135	1,139





The Museum of History and Art and the Visitor Information Center in the Old Douglas County Courthouse opened full-time in May 2015. It is now open Tuesdays - Saturdays.

4,215 documented guests in 2015 in addition to the estimated 5,500 attendees at the Penny McHenry Hydrangea Festival  
216 Museum Collections with over 10,000 Items  
Christmas Season Decorator Show House  
Development of first County tourism brochure

**2016 Goals**

New Museum and VIC Message Board  
Quarterly rotating exhibits in the Museum Gallery  
Implementation of PastPerfect museum collection inventory software



Annual Calendar



Town Hall Meetings



Public Information Officer



The September Saturdays Festival is held annually on the last two Saturdays in September at the Douglas County Courthouse, and is the largest annual festival in the County, drawing an estimated 40,000 people. It features a community marketplace, concerts, rides, exhibits, and night movie.

Tax Commissioner	2014	2015
Tags Issued	122,213	123,834
Titles Issued	22,249	22,352
Tag Transfers		1,950
On-line Tag Sales		8,422
On-line Tax Payments		2,315
Phone Calls Received (Tag)	83,686	81,860
Phone Calls Received (Tax)		25,016

**Tax Commissioner in 2015:**

- Worked to enact new law to issue one-time temporary registration permits to vehicles that fail emissions test to give owners time to correct problems
- Only Tax Commissioner in the State serving on the Driver Record and Integrated Vehicle Enterprise System project to allow faster access to a driver's records & registration to save time and money

**Tax Commissioner Goal for 2016:**

- Will install a 24/7/365 kiosk in the Hospital Drive Kroger for vehicle registration renewals

The County web site, dctv23, social media, emergency management notifications and other communication efforts are the responsibility of the Douglas County Department of Communications and Community Relations. The Department also oversees the Courthouse Art Gallery, Douglas County Museum of History and Art, and the efforts of Douglas County Tourism. The Department produces the Veterans Day Lighted Parade, September Saturdays Festival, the Penny McHenry Hydrangea Festival, the Great Douglas County Shredding Event, County Government Day, and numerous other annual events.



<a href="http://www.CelebrateDouglasCounty.com">www.CelebrateDouglasCounty.com</a>	2014	2015
Web Site Hits	4,073,853	4,800,770
Web Site Hits per Day	11,161	13,153
Pages on Web Site	1,311	1,032
Documents on Web Site	1,581	1,886
Douglas County Happenings Newsletter Subscribers	9,940	9,385
Douglas County Happenings facebook "likes"	7,833	9,202



the programs of dctv23, the Douglas County government access TV channel  
Channel 23 on Xfinity/Comcast  
Channel 99 on AT&T U-Verse  
Always on at [www.dctv23.com](http://www.dctv23.com)



Commission Chairman Tom Worthan  
March 3, 2016



Southerners are known to be great storytellers.

We tell stories to help us understand each other. We tell stories to give an example of how or why we feel a particular way. It is a way of finding common ground and sharing experiences.

**This is our County's story.**

**It is a story of resiliency and perseverance.**

In 2008, we were dealt a big blow with the recession. It took us until last year to come out of the hole that others created, but we did. We are resilient. We had the capacity to re-invent our County after the recession, and we did. Construction was the Number One industry in Douglas County before the recession, and when it hit, almost all of those jobs went away. Our unemployment rate soared. Due in part to the unemployment rate, foreclosures in our County also soared, and we spent many months near the top of these lists in the State of Georgia.

Most of that has now ended. Our unemployment rate is now 5½%. That means that 94½% of our residents who want to work are working. Construction has somewhat come back, but we have diversified our employment base since the recession, and we have added jobs in manufacturing, health care, and service industries - all of which are more stable than construction.

We have worked hard to bring in new industries and to encourage existing ones to expand. We continue to evolve from a rural and suburban area to the economic hub of west Georgia, and we have chosen smart growth.

This past year, Google announced a \$300 million expansion to its data center on Riverside Parkway. It is one of only 13 Google data centers in the world. This new expansion will create at least 25 new full-time jobs in addition to the more than 350 employees who already work there.

Keurig Green Mountain announced the construction of a \$337 million facility in Douglas County, and this will create approximately 550 new jobs. The new manufacturing center will support the production of pods for the company's new cold brewing system which will give consumers a convenient way to quickly produce their favorite cold beverage.

Industrial materials giant McMaster-Carr Supply Company is moving its regional headquarters to and building an e-commerce center in Douglas County. It will bring 600 current employees and create at least 200 new jobs in the next several years, with an eventual goal of 1,000 employees on this campus. The company carries more than 500,000 building products and order fulfillment will be the primary function of the new project.

Southwire expanded its Douglas County facility and added 60 jobs with a \$10 million investment.

King of Pops Handcrafted Popsicles purchased the Daniell Nursey property in Fairplay and will use the land to grow fresh ingredients, as well as hosting farm-to-table events. Their popsicles will spread our County's name far and wide.

Douglas County has been ahead of the curve in metro Atlanta when it comes to luring film productions to the State. The Killing Season, The Last Punch, Kill the Messenger, Firelight and the Founder, as well as many other movies, are bringing people, business, resources and positive reputation to our County. While they are here, they spend money in local businesses, restaurants, and gas stations.

We desire and seek the creation of jobs and investment in our County. We have to compete with every other county in the State, and in surrounding states, for these jobs. Business and industry have their choice of where they want to locate, and they look for the best deals that they can get. Every city and county that is serious about economic development offers incentives to get the jobs and investment into their jurisdiction.

If we don't offer incentives, the jobs and investment will go elsewhere. That's a proven fact.

We offer confidential site selection assistance, and we work with the State of Georgia on job tax credits. Companies are able to receive a tax credit for the creation of 15 full-time jobs in a calendar year. We have commercial and industrial districts identified as opportunity zones, and companies that locate there receive State tax credits. We help with temporary office space, expedited permitting, and taxable and tax-exempt bond financing on projects that often result in below-market rates.

Because many of these incentives are State-wide, we also offer local tax incentives and abatements for new or expanding businesses and industries. These incentives require higher wages and higher investment by the industry. We receive less taxes from them over the short term, but we get the jobs, the investment, the sales tax, the utility usage, and many other positive benefits that make it worthwhile for our residents.

Due to these policies, industries now make up 10.6% of the County property tax digest. In 2005, industries composed only 5.4%. In addition, industries participating in the abatement program pay taxes in the amount of 5.3% of the total County budget. In 2005, they paid only 1.4%. We are definitely moving in the right direction. A total of 4,769 jobs have been created in the past 11 years through this program. That is measureable success.

We are also tapping into the lucrative tourism market.

Sweetwater Creek State Park is the 3<sup>rd</sup> most visited State park, and we want those visitors - as well as others - to stay in a local hotel, eat in one of our restaurants, shop in our stores, and gas up at our stations. We improved and opened up the Douglas County Museum of History and Art this past May, and it has already attracted over 4,000 visitors. We have a new Tourism Director who will be putting together visitor information with places to see, go and stay. This is clean industry that brings dollars into our community.

#### **Our County's story is one of financial responsibility and fiscal conservatism.**

The value of all property in Douglas County took a major hit during the recession, and nothing was as valuable as it once was. Nobody wants to pay taxes, but they are necessary to provide the services that our residents tell us they want and need.

There will be no property tax increase for 2016. There hasn't been one since 2013.

We are financially sound and living within our means, and we have no long-term debt. Not many governments can say that. We have a balanced budget. I am a father and a grandfather, and I don't want my children and my grandchildren shouldering County debt that I incurred, so we have no debt. We have earned the highest bond rating that counties the size of Douglas County can obtain, and that is a strong indication of our financial stability.

With property values rebounding after the recession, and our continuing recruitment of smart industries, we are positioning ourselves to strengthen our financial position even more. More industrial development means more jobs and a greater share of the property tax burden lifted off residential homeowners. By not borrowing money, and instead paying our bills, buying equipment and constructing projects as money is available, we save wasting money on interest. We can use that money to continue to provide needed services.

#### **Our County's story is one of reinvention.**

Just as we have worked hard to diversify our employment base, we continue to reinvent County government and strive to make it better. We are working to embody efficient and effective government. We continually review and revise regulations and policies that get in the way of creating jobs.

We are creating better access to critical programs and information by the use of technology. The Sheriff's Department won a National achievement award for its smartphone mobile app. Over 4,000 traffic tickets were paid on-line last year saving time and money.

Residents who need can now send text messages to 9-1-1 if they are in a situation where they cannot speak because it may put them in danger.

We have an advance warning system for weather and other emergencies that notifies residents of possible and impending serious situations. We have just implemented a comprehensive emergency management web site that combines all information in one place from the County Emergency Management, the Fire Department, the Sheriff's Department, E-9-1-1, the School System, and the City Police Department so that it is easily and quickly accessible.

In January, we added a 7<sup>th</sup> ambulance crew to the Fire/EMS Department. Seven of our 10 stations now have rescue units, and the remaining 3 all have advanced life support on the engines. Since 2005, we have purchased 10 new pieces of fire equipment, 6 new ambulances, and 1 used ambulance to serve our residents, including 2 ambulances and 2 fire trucks in 2015. This year, we have funded a replacement fire truck, ambulance, turn-out gear, thermal imagers, and self-contained breathing apparatus.

Tax Commissioner Todd Cowan is the only Tax Commissioner in the State who is working on the new Driver Record and Integrated Vehicle Enterprise System that will allow faster access to an individual's driving record and vehicle registrations, resulting in a simplified process and a reduction in transaction times for customers. It is an innovative system that will save everyone time and money. The Tax Commissioner will also install a kiosk inside Kroger on Hospital Drive this year that will allow our residents the ability to renew their vehicle registration 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. This is in addition to on-line renewals which already are available.

Our new Transportation Voucher program for senior adults and disabled individuals helps provide quality of life trips to keep residents from becoming prisoners in their own homes, and able to visit the doctor, the mall, or see friends and family.

Times quickly change, and we adapt as quickly as we can to be the responsive and responsible government that you deserve.

#### **Our County's story includes planning for the future.**

We want to be an ideal community for all to call home whether one is looking to start a career, raise a family, or retire. We all desire a good quality of life.

The County's vision for the future is based on a pattern of continued growth, focused on corridors and character areas that discourage urban sprawl, inefficient use of infrastructure, and land use incompatibility. It is the County's intent through the Future Land Use Plan to create Douglas County as a vibrant live, work and play center, while maintaining the County's small town feel. The Future Land Use Plan, in essence, is the County's road map to the future. Part of this is the preservation of open space.

The Board of Commissioners recently accepted the donation of 85 acres of forest land - the Douglas Boot Nature Preserve - from the Southeastern Trust. This land will forever be protected from development, ensuring a great place for future generations to enjoy.

We have a 25-year Comprehensive Transportation Plan that serves as a blueprint for transportation investments for the County and its cities for the foreseeable future. This will better enable us to pursue Federal and State funding for projects to increase capacity, allow for better flow, and hopefully less traffic jams. Funding for road projects is hard to obtain, but we take advantage of every opportunity we have to get one of our projects on the regional list. Many of our residents may not realize that Douglas County is part of the Atlanta Regional Commission, which is the planning agency for the 10 Metro Atlanta counties. We are mandated by Federal law to be part of the Atlanta Regional Commission, and our roadway funding requests have to funnel through them as well as the Georgia DOT.



I currently serve as Chairman of the ARC's Transportation Committee so that I can work to get us the funding for roads that we need and deserve. Having the Comprehensive Transportation Plan helps us let others know that we have thought about our future, so it is easier for them to award us funds as opposed to those who do not have a plan in place.

The Board of Commissioners has also funded \$4.2 million in the Capital Transportation Fund that will be used to match the Federal and State grants. If the matching funds are not available, the grants go to someone else.

Major transportation projects this year include:

- the realignment and reconstruction of the Bankhead Highway/Mann Road/Post Road intersection area to remove sight problems, to construct turning lanes, and to install traffic signals;
- the widening of Lee Road between Interstate 20 and Fairburn Road to four lanes; and
- the reconstruction and repaving of 44 miles of roads this summer.

We have an estimated \$145 million of road and transportation projects in the ARC process at the present time. Future projects in the pipeline include:

- the widening of Highway 166 from Fairburn Road to Fulton Industrial Boulevard;
- the construction of truck-friendly lanes to alleviate traffic problems on Thornton Road;
- the widening of Chapel Hill Road to 4 lanes to Dorsett Shoals Road;
- extending Douglas Boulevard from Chapel Hill Road to Fairburn Road; and
- Intelligent Transportation System improvements throughout the County to help with traffic flow.

We will soon break ground on our new Animal Shelter and Animal Services Building at Deer Lick Park. This new facility should serve us well for many years to come. We will pay for this construction from General Fund revenues as the bills come due. We will not borrow money for this project. We will remain debt-free.

The County recently purchased the former Bleakley RV building on Fairburn Road so that we can serve you better. Later this year we will move the Tax and Tag Offices, Appraisal Department, GIS, some of Fleet Management, and possibly some of DOT into that building. This will allow the Court system to expand in the current Courthouse, and relieve the current parking congestion on Court days. Additional security access points will be installed in the Courthouse, making the wait time less.

This gives us some room to grow without having to build any new County offices, and takes advantage of a nearby property that had stayed vacant for a long time. We bought the Bleakley RV building at about 20% of the original asking price, so we were good stewards of tax dollars with this purchase.

We just completed a Transportation Services Study which offers recommendations on mobility programs to give residents better options on how we get from one place to another. We will be looking at these recommendations that should make life easier for all of us.

Six years ago, Douglas County voters approved a 1-cent Special Purpose Local Option Sales Tax for the construction of the new law enforcement center and jail. That complex is now open and the last payment on that project will be made soon after the 1-cent SPLOST completes its run this March.

In November, the Board of Commissioners most likely will put before you a renewal of that 1-cent SPLOST so that we can continue to fund capital projects that are needed, including fire trucks, ambulances and more road projects. Between now and then, we will be hosting multiple public meetings so that you can tell us what construction projects you want.

#### **Our County's story is one of communication and responsibility.**

We strive to be a builder of families, of neighborhoods, of communities, and of bridges - not walls. I host a monthly open conversation town hall meeting with residents - my "Chats with the Chairman". I held Chat #92 in the series in February. The Board of Commissioners hold numerous meetings during the year to talk with the public. We will continue to do so. We build trust with our citizens through openness with them. We make the effort.

This year brings a new opportunity for communication and the building of bridges. The City of Douglasville has elected a new Mayor and she has promised an open door for communication and cooperation. We will meet monthly to discuss transportation efforts because roads do not begin or end at City limits. We will work to remove barriers to economic development by disassembling multiple and duplicate authorities and efforts. We will have an ongoing discussion on how City and County programs, services, ordinances, and regulations may be able to better mirror each other - and some possibly combine - for better government.

It is our responsibility to strive for betterment. We will not settle for mediocrity. We will build a community for tomorrow's generation.

Leadership does not need to be dramatic. Leadership comes from integrity. The "don't's" of our current political environment locally and Nationwide are counterproductive, and this behavior should not be recognized or encouraged.

The County's web site is Celebrate Douglas County, and there is a reason for that.

**It's our story - and the State of our County - one of celebration - celebrating what is good and positive about our County, and working to make it better. May God continue to bless us.**

*Tom*

