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Reappraisal of the Industrial Site Situation Along and Near the Chattahoochee River in Southwest Early County, Georgia

Prepared for
BLAKELY-EARLY COUNTY
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

by George I. Whitlatch
and Winfred G. Dodson
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Project A-1223

Engineering Experiment Station
GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
Atlanta, Georgia
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ALONG AND NEAR THE CHATTAHOOCHEE RIVER
IN SOUTHWEST EARLY COUNTY, GEORGIA

Prepared for
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Industrial Development Division
Engineering Experiment Station
GEORGIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
March 1970
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INTRODUCTION

In the summer of 1963, a survey of the industrial site possibilities along the Early County part of the Chattahoochee River was made by the Industrial Development Division of Georgia Tech's Engineering Experiment Station.

The stimulus for that survey, as pointed out in the report of findings, was the approaching completion of the Columbia Dam, near Hilton, Georgia, and of a multimillion-dollar paper mill then under construction along the river a short distance downstream from the dam, both projects being in the southwestern part of the county. (See map, Figure 1.) The nine-foot navigation channel, extending upstream to Columbus, which was to result on completion of the dam, had created hope locally for making Early County an inland port. Although the latter anticipation has not yet materialized, the new paper mill has had a tremendous economic impact on Early County and adjacent areas. In addition to the mill, four other industrial plants have been established in the area (three of which are satellite operations), and new employment has been provided for about 1,200 persons.

Of even greater importance than the successful establishment of this new industrial complex is its significance to the future development of this part of Early County. To accommodate the paper mill and other industries, it has been necessary to meet their operational needs for power, fuel, and transportation. Now that an electric power substation, a natural gas transmission line, and a short-line railroad have been developed in the area and the feasibility of river shipping proved by the paper mill, the stage is set for the further industrial promotion and development of this part of Early County.

Recognizing the importance of this changed situation, the Blakely-Early County Chamber of Commerce again has sought the assistance of the Industrial Development Division in the reexamination and evaluation of the industrial site possibilities. This is the purpose of the present report. It differs in emphasis from the initial 1963 survey, which was focused primarily on the availability of site lands along the Chattahoochee River. Although this interest

1/ George I. Whitlatch and Roger K. Sund, Survey of Industrial Sites Along the Chattahoochee River in Early County, Georgia, Industrial Development Division, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia, 1963.
Figure 1. Index map to area surveyed for industrial sites in Early County, Georgia
still continues and is so indicated in the present report, more attention is
given here to the additional site possibilities resulting from the completion
of the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad and from the availability of natural
gas service along that railroad. Also contributing to the potential of site
areas adjacent to the railroad is the paralleling hard-surfaced county highway
which has been added since 1963. An additional feature of the present report
is a suggested plan of development for a part of the extensive holdings of the
Great Northern Paper Company in the vicinity of its present paper mill opera-
tions. (See map, Figure 3.)

Scope of Study

The areas along the river north of Georgia Highway 62 have been largely
omitted from this report inasmuch as the 1963 study indicated little possibility
for substantial industrial development there, due to lack of a major paved road
and to topographic conditions that preclude easy access to the river and exten-
sion of rail service into that part of the county. South of Georgia Highway
62, the site areas contiguous to the river are reviewed only briefly, since
that situation was sufficiently covered in the initial report and essentially
no changes have occurred there, downstream to the paper mill site. South of
the mill operations, the Great Northern Paper Company, since 1963, has acquired
most of the lands adjacent to the river and other large acreages along the
county road and Georgia Highway 363, down to the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad1/
and U. S. Highway 84. Because of the possibilities this situation offers for
a unified industrial development under single ownership, special attention has
been given that part of the study area and a development plan proposed. (See
Figure 3.) The remainder of the study area, especially those lands bordering
the railroad and the paralleling paved county road north from Georgia Highway
363 Spur to Hilton (see map, Figure 2), has been evaluated as to the effect of
these newly developed transportation services on the industrial potential of
that part of the area.

As in the earlier investigation, the field work of this study has been
greatly facilitated by use of excellent large-scale aerial-photo property maps
obtained through the Early County tax appraisal office.

1/ This is the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad of the earlier report. The
name change is due to a merger of that railroad and the Seaboard Air Line Rail-
road.
Basis of Site Evaluations

In those parts of the study area adjacent to the Chattahoochee River, heavy types of industry, particularly large-volume users of water such as chemical plants, are most likely to be attracted, especially any that can take advantage of river transportation. For this type of industry, substantial site areas of 500 acres or upwards are desirable, as well as ready access to major highway routes and railroads. Adequate protection from flooding also must be afforded to any selected site and, in the study area, the 100-foot contour level represents the lowest elevation that will provide relative safety to plant structures. (See p. 19.) However, any construction along the river should be at the highest elevation possible on the selected site.

Of the more inland parts of the study area, the principal criteria for evaluating the industrial potential of the lands are frontages on railroad and highway or relatively short and easy access to such transportation services, topographic conditions permitting economic turnout and extension of railroad lead tracks into individual properties, and sufficiently cleared areas on an individual tract to determine the extent of poorly drained or swampy areas.

As in the earlier site report, the fact that certain lands are cited here because of their apparent industrial-use potential is in no way intended to suggest their availability for purchase, excepting only such parts of the Great Northern Paper Company holdings embraced by the development plan as shown in Figure 3.
INDUSTRIAL GROWTH AND RESOURCES OF THE AREA

Industries

Since the initial site survey was made in southwestern Early County in the summer of 1963, a paper mill then in the early stages of construction near Cedar Springs has been completed and is now a successful operation under the ownership of the Great Northern Paper Company (no. 6). An affiliate of this company, Great Northern Plywood Corporation, has established on the mill site property a pine plywood plant (no. 7), and adjacent to the west side of the site the Tennessee Corporation has a liquid alum plant (no. 8) that pumps this chemical over to the paper mill. Immediately to the south of the mill site is the Jackson Tubing & Conduit Division plant of Magna Tech Corporation (no. 3) which manufactures electrical conduit tubing. A short distance east of the mill is the Gulf Fibre Products Company plant (no. 45) that supplies fiber cores, paper tubes, and paper roll plugs to the Great Northern paper mill. This last plant is along the Hilton-Saffold county road, near its crossing of Georgia Highway 363 Spur. The paper mill and other plants are served by the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad, except the Gulf Fibre plant, which is on a nonrail site.

Because the Great Northern paper mill has been responsible for the development in this area of the various services essential to industrial operations and is the nucleus around which additional industries have centered, the following details on the mill are appropriate to illustrate its magnitude and continuing importance to the further industrialization of this part of Early County.

Paper Mill. On October 20, 1960, the Southern Land, Timber and Pulp Corporation, organized by Georgia interests in 1957, broke ground for a paper mill on a 1,380-acre mill site the company had acquired along the Chattahoochee River, near the village of Cedar Springs. (See map, Figure 2.) Prior to completion of the mill on September 30, 1963, Southern Land negotiated a joint venture with the Great Northern Paper Company for its operation. Subsequently, the mill properties were obtained by Great Northern through a stock exchange, and that company now operates the mill as a part of its Southern Division.

1/ Identifying numbers for individual properties mentioned or described throughout this report are keyed to the property ownership map, Figure 2.
Figure 2. Industrial site areas in southwest Early County, Georgia. (For identification of property minerals, refer to Appendix at end of report.)
The mill currently is engaged in the production of linerboard and corrugating medium, using both pine (90%) and hardwoods (10%). One 1,000-ton paper machine and one 700-ton machine are operated on linerboard and one 380-ton machine on corrugating medium. Total daily output amounts to about forty carloads. Approximately 800 persons are employed in the mill operations.

The mill's equipment permits usage of coal, natural gas, bunker C oil, and powdered bark for fueling purposes. In early 1970 bunker C oil replaced coal for boiler heating, except as a standby fuel. Natural gas continues to be used in the heating of rotary kilns for the production of quicklime. Approximately 23 million gallons of water, pumped from the Chattahoochee River, are required for the daily operation of the mill. Cooling waters are discharged directly back to the river, but all process waters receive extensive treatment before passing back to the river. The latter waters are first sent through a clarifier which removes a high percentage of the solids (mainly wood fibers that are returned to the mill), and then these effluents move through a 130-acre series of lagoons, some of which are equipped with aerators, before final discharge to the river.

Fuel and Power Services

Electric Power. Standby electric power is supplied by the Georgia Power Company to the Great Northern paper mill, and the power for the other nearby industries comes from a substation on the mill site that is fed out of a 115-kv transmission network system of that utility through its substation at Blakely. A 44-kv line, also fed from the latter substation, is available for emergency service.

Of possibly more than incidental interest in the future industrialization of this part of Early County is the nuclear power plant recently announced by the Alabama Power Company for location nearby, across the Chattahoochee River. (See map, Figure 2.) Completion of the plant is scheduled for 1972.

Fuels. Natural gas is supplied to the paper mill and other industries of the survey area from a 6-inch high-pressure transmission line of the South Georgia Natural Gas Company (headquartered at Thomasville, Georgia). This line comes southwest from Blakely to a point near the Hilton terminus of the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad and thence parallels the rail line and/or the Hilton-Saffold highway route southward to the vicinity of Saffold, where
it turns east to Donalsonville. A metering station with a 4-inch service lateral to the Great Northern complex is along the county road some 250 yards north of its crossing by Georgia Highway 363 Spur. A similar metering station with a 3-inch lateral serving the Magna Tech plant is at the entrance of the access road to that plant. The pipeline capacity between Blakely and Donalsonville is 7-million cubic feet per day, based on an assumed fixed pressure of 550 psig at the latter city. While South Georgia Natural Gas presently serves all direct customers on an interruptible basis, the company will consider a combination firm-interruptible service, with the interruptible portion available approximately 200 days of the year.

The coal used to fuel the boilers of the paper mill from its establishment until early in 1970 when replaced by oil, as noted above, moved from Alabama sources. The present freight rate on coal from the Warrior Coal Basin of Alabama is $3.37 per ton, applicable notably to the Cedar Springs mill destination but also to the Hilton and Saffold stations on the Central of Georgia and Seaboard Coast Line railroads, respectively. Fuel oil is barged from Gulf Coast sources up the Chattahoochee River to the mill, which recently installed unloading facilities at the mill site. The current shipping rate on this barge movement between the paper mill and Gulf Coast points is about $0.20 per barrel.

**Railroads**

The Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad, a separate corporation affiliated with the Great Northern Paper Company, was organized to provide the paper mill with essential railroad connections to the Central of Georgia Railway and the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad. This railroad, over which the first shipment to the mill site moved on December 18, 1961, operates as a common carrier under certification of the Interstate Commerce Commission and the Georgia Public Service Commission. From its connection with the Central of Georgia Railway at Hilton on the north, the main line extends southward a total of 15.4 miles, through the paper mill site, to Saffold where connection is made to the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad. (See map, Figure 2.) Marshalling yards, totaling 10

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1/ psig - per square inch gauge.

2/ Communication from South Georgia Natural Gas Company, January 12, 1970.
miles, are located near each of the terminal connections and in the vicinity of the paper mill. The headquarters offices and shops for maintenance of the railroad's two diesel locomotives and other rolling stock are on Georgia Highway 363, about 1½ miles north of Saffold Junction.

Being a publicly certificated common carrier, the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad provides service to the paper mill and the other nearby industries and can extend similar service to any other industries that may locate along its route. The availability of freight service by this railroad has been a major consideration in the developmental design plan for the Great Northern Paper Company holdings south of its mill operations (see Figure 3) and in the selection of other potential site areas farther north in the present study area.

Highways

The improvement of highway routes in this part of Early County since the paper mill's establishment also has added greatly to the industrial potential of the area. The county road that goes southward from Georgia Highway 62 at Hilton and parallels most of the railroad route is now paved to its junction with Georgia Highway 363, which connects to U. S. Highway 84 at Saffold. Also paved since 1963 is the road between Cedar Springs and the Great Northern mill, this now being designated Georgia Highway 363 Spur. Both this latter section of highway and that portion of Georgia Highway 363 between Blakely and Saffold which passes through Cedar Springs are now planned for reconstruction to a heavy-duty type highway on a 130-foot right-of-way.

U. S. Highway 84 is expected to be converted to a four-lane route between the Chattahoochee River and Donalsonville, Georgia, within the next three years or so, according to the Georgia State Highway Department. Further eastward extension of such four-lane improvement currently has not been budgeted and must be considered a long-range development.

Federal Interstate Highway 10, the nearest of such routes to this southwest Early County area, is projected for construction across northern Florida (see map, Figure 1), but its completion even as far east as Tallahassee appears to be at least five years away, according to the U. S. Bureau of Public Roads. Completion as far east as Florida Highway 81 is expected in approximately two years. That point is 43 miles west of Marianna, Florida, the nearest
connecting point for traffic from southwest Early County to Interstate 10, via Dothan, Alabama, a distance of about 70 miles.

**River**

The Chattahoochee River unites with the Flint River near the Georgia-Florida line to form the Apalachicola River in Florida. At present, this river system is in the final stages of comprehensive navigation and power development. To provide a 9-foot navigation channel from the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway to Columbus, Georgia, a series of three dams, with locks, has been provided. These are (1) the Jim Woodruff Lock and Dam, with hydropower installation, on the Georgia-Florida line, below the junction of the Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers; (2) the Columbia Lock and Dam, a navigation structure, near Columbia, Alabama, and Hilton, Georgia, in Early County; and (3) the Walter F. George Lock and Dam, with power generation facilities, near Fort Gaines, Georgia.

As is shown in Figure 1, the Early County part of the Chattahoochee River includes the upper reaches of the Jim Woodruff Dam reservoir and a major portion of the Columbia reservoir. Normal pool level in the Jim Woodruff reservoir is 77 feet above mean sea level (msl); in the Columbia reservoir the normal pool level is 102 feet msl; and above the Walter F. George Dam the normal pool level varies from 185 feet msl during the months of December through April to 190 feet msl during the months of June through October.\(^1\)

In the Early County stretch of the Chattahoochee River from the vicinity of Saffold, near the south county line, to the Columbia Dam, the level of the maximum flood of record, that of March 1929, varied from elevation 105 feet msl at the lower end to 125 feet msl at the upper end.\(^1\) The Corps of Engineers advises that this record level is still valid, since no flood control features have been built into the Columbia and Fort Gaines structures. Nevertheless, the Jim Woodruff pool seldom exceeds 80 feet msl.

When hydro-power is generated at the Walter F. George Dam at Fort Gaines, the level of the pool above the Columbia Dam has daily fluctuations ranging from two to six feet, except over the weekends when the hydro plant is not in operation. According to the Corps of Engineers' plan of operation, discharge

\(^1\) Data furnished by U. S. Corps of Engineers, South Atlantic Division, Atlanta, January 20, 1970.
of water from the Columbia Dam reservoir starts early each weekday morning, and this drawdown continues until the normal pool level has been lowered by some two to six feet. Later in the day, the subsequent discharge from the power plant of the Walter F. George Dam again raises the pool level of the Columbia Dam reservoir. Hence, any docking facilities in this or the Woodruff Reservoir have to be of the hinged or elevator types to permit accommodation to these pool fluctuations.

The minimum average weekly flow of water below the Columbia Dam is at the rate of 3,200 cubic feet per second (cfs) or about 2,048 million gallons daily (mgd). However, peaks of 28,000 cfs (at the rate of 18,088 mgd) are reached during periods of maximum operation of the Fort Gaines power plant, with consequent rise in the pool level of the Jim Woodruff reservoir. This fluctuation of pool level in these upper reaches of the reservoir may be as much as 15 feet above the 77-foot normal pool level.\(^1\) There can be periods of zero flow at short intervals, especially over weekends when the power operations are shut down.

A dock and public warehouse of the Alabama State Docks Authority are along the Alabama side of the Chattahoochee River, immediately north of the Georgia Highway 62 bridge, between Hilton, Georgia, and Columbia, Alabama. (See map, Figure 2.)

Wells

For potable water, the Great Northern paper mill obtains its supply from a drilled 8-inch well of 480-foot depth that has a yield of 324,000 gallons per day. Such production of groundwater supplies is easily obtained in Early County because the entire county is underlain by a regional limestone-sand aquifer composed of the Clayton limestone (Paleocene-Midway group) and the overlying Tuscahoma sand (Eocene-Wilcox group). Wells in the Clayton formation have yielded around 2,000 gallons per minute (gpm),\(^2\) but in this part of Early County, wells in the Clayton at Jakin and Kolomokee State Park have

\(^1\) Data furnished by U. S. Corps of Engineers, South Atlantic Division, Atlanta, January 20, 1970.

yields up to 900 gpm. Water from this aquifer is usually of good quality, having a low iron content and hardness ranging from soft to hard. An 809-foot well owned by the City of Blakely has a hardness of only 26 parts per million (ppm).\(^1\)

River Site Areas

The river site possibilities in the area south of the main line of the Central of Georgia Railway to the vicinity of the Great Northern paper mill operations are essentially unchanged since the initial investigation, except for the completion of the Columbia Dam and the resultant 9-foot navigation channel upstream to Columbus. The opening of this channel naturally has enhanced the several site areas identified earlier along this stretch of the Chattahoochee River. (See pp. 16-20 of earlier report.)

Probably the best of these site areas is on the J. H. Williams, Jr., lands at Shackleford Landing (no. 11), just north of the Great Northern mill property. This site can be served by the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad by construction of only a mile or so of lead track but, at present, the only road to the property is unpaved and about 1½ miles to the east. A similar distance would be involved in developing highway access from the Georgia Highway 363 Spur that serves the paper mill.

Considerably larger site areas exist farther upstream, near Columbia Dam, on the Grist (no. 13) and Freeman (no. 14) properties. While the sites areas here have much shorter access to a road -- especially the Freeman tract, which, in part, is only about one-half mile south of the paved access road into the Columbia Dam reservation -- both are fairly distant from the railroads serving this part of the study area. To obtain service from the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad would involve construction of two miles or more of lead track along the approximate route indicated on the map, Figure 2. Only a very large heavy industry generating substantial rail freight traffic could justify the cost of such a long rail extension.

Although the above site areas presently are not close to the natural gas transmission line serving the study area, this is no particular disadvantage to their industrial development. South Georgia Natural Gas obviously would be cooperative in extending service laterals to meet future industrial needs that may be developed at these several sites.

1/ Identifying numbers for individual properties described are keyed to the property ownership map, Figure 2.
Docking facilities could be developed at any of the above site areas.

**Railroad Site Areas**

No effort was made in 1963 to evaluate the industrial potential of the lands along the east side of the study area, between Georgia Highway 62 at Hilton on the north and the paper mill property then being developed some 5½ miles to the south. At that time, this part of the area was traversed only by unpaved roads, one of which subsequently served as part of the route of the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad, then only projected through the area. However, the later completion of the railroad and the construction of a paralleling paved county highway, along with the eventual extension through the area of South Georgia Natural Gas Company's high-pressure transmission line (which generally and closely parallels these transportation routes), have all combined to open up this part of the study area to future industrialization.

The lands here are typical of the Coastal Plain region of which the study area is a part. Topographically, the land surface ranges from a high degree of flatness to gently rolling, with some low ridges where local elevation differences usually amount to only 10 or 15 feet. Much of the land is lightly to heavily timbered, principally by pines. Areas of planted pine are not uncommon since the advent of the paper mill. While a relatively high percentage of the lands is well drained, due, in part, to the sandy soils and underlying sandy geologic formations, limited low, poorly drained, wet to swampy areas are not uncommon, notably in the timberlands along or near the numerous small streams and drainage lines.

Because of the favorable topography of the lands here and their extraordinarily long frontage on rail and highway, the selection of site areas has been mainly limited to sizable cleared acreages adjacent to those transportation routes. This insures identification of industrially acceptable land of sufficient acreage to accommodate the larger industries that may be expected to locate in this kind of rural situation. The selections, while limited to tracts with rail and highway frontages, do not preclude the industrial utility of some of the wooded areas, both those along the transportation routes and others somewhat more distantly removed.

Where possible, selections have been made of those tracts lying east of the paved county road since this obviates the necessity for crossing the
railroad in gaining access to the selected tract. However, desirable tracts to the west of the railroad also have been noted, despite the danger to which workers are subjected when it is necessary to leave a highway and cross a railroad in entering a plant site. Because of the infrequency of trains along the route of the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad, such danger is minimal.

The road bed of the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad, in its traverse of the lands between the Hilton terminus and some 4 3/4 miles farther south to where it turns west to the paper mill, often is at or near grade with the highway and adjacent lands over relatively long distances. Even where the railroad grade is maintained through cuts and fills, these have depths usually of five feet or less. Consequently, at almost any site area selected along the railroad, the extension of a rail lead into it would be feasible. However, ease of rail lead access has been a major factor in the selection of the properties reviewed below.

Although water for industrial operations that may be established in this part of the study area should be readily obtainable from drilled wells, due to the aquifer underlying Early County (see p. 11), care should be exercised in selecting land which will be the site of substantial water users. This part of the area does not have many streams of size, a condition that, in conjunction with the relatively flat topography, can pose substantial disposal problems. The scope of the present investigation did not permit exploration of this factor in relation to the selected site areas.

In the vicinity of Hilton, good industrial site areas immediately to the south along the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad are rather limited because of a combination of multiple ownerships, relatively low and sometimes swampy areas, and passage of the rail line through cuts up to some six or seven feet deep. The latter two factors, cuts and elevation differences, make rail lead accesses difficult, if not impossible. Of the three properties cited here in the 1963 report, one has since been acquired by the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad, whose marshalling yards are along the east side of this tract (see no. 32).

The first sizable site area south of Hilton includes the Ivey Chambers property (no. 78) and the adjoining John P.-James W. Chambers (no. 77) and C. A. Bell (no. 76) farms, embracing a total of over 700 acres on the east side of the railroad. These lands are largely cleared fields and, topographically, are generally flat to rolling but rise eastward to a low, rounded ridge
that ranges up to some 10 to 20 feet above highway and rail levels. Somewhat low and possibly wet areas occur near the west sides of the Chambers tracts, but these are limited and should not adversely affect either the overall development of the properties or the extension of rail leads into them. The east flank of the low ridge slopes to a drainage line that extends southeasterly across the Ivey Chambers farm. These properties, being east of the railroad, with the highway between, afford the proper rail-highway access relationship.

Less than three-fourths mile farther south are the 16-acre farm of Ivey Chambers (no. 75) east of the highway and some 120 acres of the R. C. Howell property (no. 12) directly west across the highway and railroad. Both properties have been largely cleared and, in part, replanted to pine. Adjoining the Chambers tract on the south is the 133-acre Johnny W. Grier property (no. 74), of which approximately the western half is cleared field land. All of these lands, in general, are flat to slightly rolling, and seem to drain satisfactorily except possibly in a small, lower part of the northwest corner of the Chambers tract. Although limited shallow cuts and fills occur along the railroad near the south boundary of the Chambers property, the land and railroad elsewhere along these several properties are near enough at grade to present no problem in bringing lead tracks into them.

Over the next 2½ miles southward, heavy timber coverage, multiple ownerships, and considerable swampiness along the railroad combine to eliminate a large part of these lands from consideration for industrial usage. Not until near the point where the railroad and highway diverge (see Figure 2) do the lands again appear to be suitable for the present considerations. Among the best of the possibilities here is the area of cleared fields and planted pines, estimated to embrace around 100 acres, lying mainly west of the railroad on the J. H. Williams, Jr., property (no. 11). Highway access here, however, would be across the western quarter of the Johnny and Myrtle Williams property (no. 41), over an existing unpaved road that extends northward from the highway along a part of the eastern side of the cleared area. The railroad here curves westward toward the paper mill and is only a few hundred feet south of the cleared area, affording ready rail extension into that relatively flat area.

Adjoining the Johnny and Myrtle Williams property on the south is a lightly timbered 120-acre tract of H. E. Hightower, Sr. (no. 42). This property is crossed by the county highway and its western half is cut by a small
branch, so that only the lands east of the highway offer reasonably favorable development possibilities. Near the south line of this property, west of the highway, is the metering station of the South Georgia Natural Gas service lateral to the Great Northern paper mill, almost 1½ miles southwest.

Adjoining the above Hightower tract on its southeast corner is the 73.8-acre Odell Odum property (no. 43), which is bordered on the east by the 220-acre Billy Wilson farm (no. 44); the latter tract, in turn, is adjoined along its south boundary by the 51.2-acre tract of J. C. Hodge (no. 46) and a part of the Leon E. Baughman property (no. 5), estimated at 70 acres. Most of this area, ranging from distinctly flat to slightly rolling, is cleared field land, excepting the more northerly and eastern parts of the Wilson land, which are lightly wooded and may have a limited low, wet area. The west side of the Odum tract has some frontage along the paved county highway; the plant of Gulf Fibre Products (No. 45) fronts on this highway, about one-quarter mile farther south. Both the Baughman and Hodge properties on their south sides front along Georgia Highway 363 Spur.

West of the county highway, across from the above Odum and Gulf Fibre properties, is an estimated 50 acres of slightly rolling land, planted to pine, that is bounded to the west by a drainage line; this is a part of the extensive Great Northern Paper Company holdings that here embrace the mill site (no. 6). South, across Georgia Highway 363 Spur, is more of the Leon E. Baughman property, which totals 345 acres. Most of the acreage here is cleared, slightly rolling land, as is the remainder of the property east across the county highway, which there has more than 3,000 feet of frontage along Georgia Highway 363 Spur. Of that frontage, over 75% is along cleared field areas ranging up to 1,200 feet in depth. All of this topographically excellent land, including additional Great Northern acreage, can be served by the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad since it bounds the south side of that part of the Baughman property lying west of the county highway. Extension of rail leads through the Baughman property to others of the above-described tracts (nos. 43, 44 and 46) would appear to be feasible if the magnitude of any project could justify the cost of installing such long lead tracks.

Sites North of Hilton

Although the industrial land possibilities, especially large acreages, are limited south of Hilton along the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad in
the immediate vicinity of its terminus, several hundred acres of rail-served site areas could be developed to the north and east of the Central of Georgia Railway-Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad junction at Hilton. There, about one-half mile north of the junction, are the lands of Walter H. Bryan (no. 87), Mrs. Lucy H. Maddox (No. 88), and Stanley Causey (no. 89), which adjoin successively eastward, with most of the 256 acres of the Causey tract lying east of the Central of Georgia tracks. Of the more than 850 acres embraced by these three properties, it is estimated that around 500 acres are largely cleared. With the generally flat to slightly rolling topography, this area affords a good situation for the development of industrial operations, especially on the Maddox and Causey tracts, which have long frontages on both the railroad and the paralleling Georgia Highway 62.

As suggested in the 1963 survey, a rail lead can be extended into the western part of the above area by taking off at or near the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad terminus and going directly north parallel to the paved road that goes from Georgia Highway 62 to the abandoned Hilton elementary school building. Such lead would be through a largely wooded 98-acre tract of the Mrs. Sara H. Houston Estate (no. 84). This tract and the small Hilton school property (no. 85) which adjoins to the north would, of themselves, provide a suitable site for a substantial industrial operation. Equally accessible to rail extensions are smaller areas of cleared flat land, north of the school tract on the Bryan property, lying on each side of the unpaved Cohelee Creek road.

\[1/\] Whitlatch and Sund, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 22.
SITES OF THE SOUTHERN SECTION

Since the 1963 report was limited principally to investigation of river sites, the evaluations in the southern part of the study area were confined to the lands lying downstream from the paper mill site, with the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad forming the eastern boundary. However, as the present study also embraces the additional potential for rail-served industrial sites, the southern portion of the study area has been considerably expanded east of the railroad route. (See map, Figure 2.)

As established in the earlier study, the lands adjacent to the Chattahoochee River are subject to flood, at least up to the 100-foot elevation; flooding to that level is reported to have occurred as recently as the early 1960's. (See also p. 4.) Consequently, only lands above the 100-foot contour were considered for industrial sites. Although this restriction still left substantial acreages available south of the paper mill holdings at that time, the crossing of that part of the area by Sawhatchee Creek eliminated approximately 200 acres that are subject to flooding by the creek's backwaters during periods of high water on the river.

The part of this area above the 100-foot contour ranges from relatively flat to rolling land, with some low, rounded ridges rising locally between 20 and 30 feet above the general level. This higher ground intermittently persists southeasterly, and is exhibited by the low ridge crossed on Georgia Highway 363 just north of Saffold. Similar rolling topography is encountered in the lands east of Saffold along the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad and northward between Georgia Highway 363 and the unpaved road that parallels it about one-half mile to the east. About the latitude of where the railroad turns northwest (see map, Figure 2), the land rises eastward to a low, flat ridge that crests some 20 feet above rail level; the east flank of the ridge slopes into a series of east-trending valley heads that give a rolling effect to the north-south unpaved road that crosses them (the road dips amount to as much as 20 feet). As a consequence of these varying topographic situations in this more easterly part of the study area, the selection of site areas is quite restricted, especially in the absence of paved road access.
River Site Areas

Since the establishment of the paper mill, Great Northern Paper Company has acquired several thousand acres of land in this part of Early County, mainly south and southeast of the 1,380-acre tract (no. 6) that was originally acquired by the Great Southern Land and Paper Company for the mill site.

These later land acquisitions have included all of the river site areas described in the 1963 report under the "Forester-Brunson" and "J. W. Brunson" ownerships and that part of the Leon H. Baughman property between the river and railroad. This last acreage now is largely occupied by one of the mill's effluent lagoons. A subsequent sale of 88.4 acres made in this part of the area is the industrial site now occupied by the plant of the Jackson Tubing & Conduit Division of Magna Tech Corporation (no. 3). Thus, in the area south of the mill operations to the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad and between the river and the railroad, the paper company holdings currently amount to approximately 1,600 acres, excluding the Magna Tech acreage and including a strip between the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad and Georgia Highway 363 north of Saffold (no. 2). An additional 1,600 acres, between the county road and Georgia Highway 363 (the larger part of no. 4), and 211.8 acres along the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad and U. S. Highway 84 immediately east of Saffold (no. 1) also are owned in this part of the area by the Great Northern Paper Company.

Of these several paper company holdings, that part lying north of the Magna Tech property between the river and the railroad, embracing an estimated 400 acres, has excellent potential as an industrial site area. Essentially all of this acreage is above the 100-foot contour, thus insuring against its flooding, and the land is topographically good, with access into it already established by the paved road to the Magna Tech plant site which forms the south boundary of this site area. A gas metering station and marshalling yards of the railroad are along its east boundary. Most of the area is cleared or planted to pine. With more than 4,000 feet of frontage along the river, development of docking facilities should present no problem.

South of the Magna Tech property, lying between the river and Sawhatchee Creek (see no. 2), is a long tongue of cleared land estimated to contain 100

1/ Identifying numbers for individual properties described or mentioned are keyed to the property ownership map, Figure 2.
acres. Although this land presently cannot be used as a plant site because it is shut off from rail and highway access by the Magna Tech property, the possibilities for bringing a rail lead across the Magna Tech plant site and for bridging the creek with an access road are explored below in connection with the proposed industrial district. (See p. 28.)

It is east of Sawhatchee Creek that this part of the Great Northern holdings (no. 2) has its maximum potential for industrial development. Here, above the 100-foot contour, is a broad strip of some 700 acres, ranging between 1,000 and 4,000 feet wide, that lies west of Georgia Highway 363 and south of the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad and its paralleling county road. East of the state highway is an elongated 115-acre strip of very flat land extending to the railroad. At the junction of the state highway and county road are the headquarters offices and shops of the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad on a 45.5-acre tract. Northwest across the county road is the greater part of the 2,067-acre holding of the Great Northern Paper Company (no. 4).

The combined acreages of Great Northern land lying south of the railroad on both sides of Georgia Highway 363 at this point are included in the design plan (see Figure 3) for the industrial district suggested for development here and discussed in detail below. Much of the industrially usable acreage here is cleared or planted to pine. The land ranges from flat to rolling, but within a half-mile northwest of the highway junction, the land is essentially at grade with both the railroad and paved county road, so that a rail lead can be readily extended into the property. Somewhat farther northwest, the railroad goes through a shallow cut but leaves it before reaching the bridge over Sawhatchee Creek. However, in the vicinity of the bridge, the land is below rail level and slopes away from the railroad, so that installation here of a rail lead would be impractical.

Most of the potential site land here is about the maximum distance from the river for any large-volume pumpage of water and possibly too far removed to permit economical use of the river for extensive shipping, unless Sawhatchee Creek could be sufficiently widened and deepened to permit movement of barges into the property. However, the creek does offer a drainage route for plant effluents.
Railroad Site Areas

Various rail-served sites can be developed in the above-described area no. 2, as shown in the industrial district plan proposed for that area (see Figure 3) and discussed in a following section of this report. In addition, there are other potential rail site areas elsewhere in this southern part of the study area.

A site area with particularly good potential is the J. W. Hunter land which adjoins the headquarters property of the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad (no. 56). Immediately to the north of the latter property, across an unpaved road, is the Hunter farmstead tract (no. 53), consisting of an estimated 125 acres of quite flat and largely cleared land, with the west side of the property fronting on Georgia Highway 363. Adjoining the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad property on the east are an additional 60 acres in the Hunter ownership; this also is cleared land that rises gradually eastward to crest near the middle of the tract into a low, rounded ridge that rises some 20 feet above the level of the tracks at the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad shops.\(^1\) Although a rail lead across this ridge would appear impractical, it could be readily extended through the western part of this property and north across the unpaved road to serve the larger homestead tract. Or, for service only to the latter, the lead could go directly north past the railroad shops. While the 60-acre tract suffers the disadvantage of lack of major highway frontage, it is possible that a suitable access to Georgia Highway 363 could be obtained through the railroad property.

South from the above Hunter tract are, in order, the properties of Tom Tolbert, 74.3 acres (no. 57), and of John Hunter, 72.5 acres (no. 58), the latter adjoining to the east of the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad marshalling yards. Both of these properties are largely cleared lands with slightly rolling topography; a small drainage line crosses the Hunter tract in a south-easterly direction. The properties are sufficiently at grade at points appropriate for extension of rail leads into them. The chief handicap to their present development is lack of frontage on a paved highway.

The 211.8-acre holding of the Great Northern Paper Company along the north side of the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad (no. 1), mainly east of the

\(^1\) See reference to this ridge on p. 19.
Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad turnout at Saffold, is insufficiently clear of timber to properly evaluate its industrial site potential. Nevertheless, even though the land may be topographically suitable, the takeoff of a lead track from either the Chattahoochee Industrial or Seaboard Coast Line Railroad would appear to offer difficulties because of excessive grades. However, immediately adjoining to the east are cleared lands of the B. C. Williams, Sr., property (no. 63), and a lead track takeoff here would be feasible just west of the unpaved road that leads off U. S. Highway 84. Such rail lead probably could service any part of this 218.3-acre property, which is almost entirely cleared fields of flat to rolling topography. Maximum relief is limited to about 10 feet.

The single largest holding in this southern part of the study area is a 2,067.6-acre tract of the Great Northern Paper Company (no. 4) lying mainly east and north of the railroad and the paralleling paved county highway and west of Georgia Highway 363. Sawhatchee Creek flows southward across the approximate middle of the tract, most of which is wooded. In that part between the creek and Georgia Highway 363, there are several limited low, wet to swampy areas near the highway, especially in the corner formed by the junction of the two highways. Over much of its frontage along the county highway, the tract has a rolling topography that brings the land surface, in places, some five feet above the railroad, while elsewhere the railroad rises three to four feet above the highway, making extension of a rail lead into the property a matter of careful selection of the turnout point. As Sawhatchee Creek bridge is approached, the railroad enters cuts which deepen, with the paralleling highway rising well above the tracks, thus precluding takeoff of a rail lead into that part of the tract. This is especially unfortunate since the only extensive cleared area, a north-trending strip about 1,000 feet wide and 3,000 feet long (some 70 acres), parallels the creek just north of the major highway curve south of the creek bridge.

Although rail service might be extended to some depth into the eastern part of this large tract, industrial site needs probably would not require rail lead extensions to depths of more than 500 feet from the highway.

Northwest, beyond the Sawhatchee Creek crossing, the railroad continues to stay in cuts and/or is below highway level as much as five feet, making a rail lead into this western half of the tract practically impossible. However,
there is a cleared area of about 50 acres just about opposite the point where the railroad turns west to the paper mill. Since the marshalling yards are here, just across the highway, this tract might be attractive because of its proximity to the yards.
PROPOSED INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT

The possibilities for an industrial district in a selected area of the large Great Northern Paper Company holdings in this part of Early County have been explored in the present study, to the extent of creating a design plan for such unified development. The plan is not to engineering detail.

The Area

The area selected for the design plan is approximately 1,300 acres to the south of the paper mill operations, with the Chattahoochee River forming the west boundary and the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad bounding the north and east sides; the main line of the Seaboard Coast Line Railroad and the paralleling U. S. Highway 84 form the south boundary. Traversing the area north-south near its east side is Georgia Highway 363, and a paved county road parallels the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad in their northwesterly routes along the north side. Sawhatchee Creek flows south to the river in the western part of the property, with only limited acreage lying between this creek and the river; the property of the Magna Tech Corporation bounds this riverside strip on the north. (See Figure 3.)

Only land lying at or above the 100-foot contour is sufficiently safe from flooding to be considered for inclusion in the design plan. Approximately one-fifth of the total area is subject, in part, to overflow by backwaters up Sawhatchee Creek during flood stages of the Chattahoochee River. This flooding, in addition to the reduction of usable acreage within this proposed district, also has created certain problems in developing the design plan.

Flexibility of Design

The present design plan seeks to provide as much flexibility as practicable in the subdivision of the land into individual sites. Since the writer believes that in the rural situation in which this proposed district would be located, most of the site demands will be for fairly large acreages, especially in the initial states of development, provision has been made for several sites ranging between 50 and 100 acres (sites A to E of design plan). However, as indicated by the dotted property line across tracts B and C and rail leads, these lands can be offered in smaller units; tracts D and E could be similarly divided by extensions of rail spurs into them. However, this latter pattern
Figure 3
Design Plan for Industrial District Proposed for Development in Southwest Early County, Georgia

All acreage figures are approximate, being developed by planimeter.

Base map and contours taken from Sheet 8 of U. S. Corps of Engineers Topographic Survey of Chattahoochee River, Georgia and Alabama, Mobile Office, 1943.
of subdivision obviously would necessitate an access street between tracts B, C, D, and E, as shown on plan by dashed lines south from service road exit.

It is apparent that an alternate location for the turnout of the main lead could be at the midpoint of the north boundary of tract C, depending on initial land demands.

Or, should there be a demand for larger tracts, B and C can be offered as a unit. Similar flexibility is afforded in tracts G to Q since these can be marketed either as individual units or in multiples of two or more. These smaller sites may be particularly in demand when the district has acquired several major plants and smaller supplier industries want to locate nearby. The warehouse area (see T of plan, Figure 3) also would provide sites for those supplier industries needing only that type of facility. And, should that type of demand not eventuate, the rail lead and access street need not be built, and this land, as subdivided, can be offered as small industry sites. Both this warehouse area and the acreage directly west across Georgia Highway 363 (tracts N to Q) have a prestige location value because of their highway frontage.

Access Streets-Rail Service

The need for good traffic circulation within an industrial area of this type has been a controlling factor of the design plan. Nevertheless, it should be understood that neither the access streets nor the rail leads all have to be installed at one time. The district development should be done in stages, with the initial installations being made so as to keep the investment at a minimum. To illustrate, tracts A, B, and C each initially can have direct access to the paved highway, but eventually, the individual exits should be closed and a service road built parallel to the railroad and highway in order to channel all traffic from these several tracts to the single exit to the highway. Extensions of the main rail lead, which has its turnout farther east off the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad, obviously will be in response to sales, as also applies for access road extensions. The extension of an access street into tract H is definitely questionable because the site land available here possibly would not warrant the cost of the street. An access street here may be especially costly to install because a large amount of fill across low flood-subject stretches would be necessary. Both areas H and I, as noted
below, may be more valuable as locations for oxidation ponds and/or sewage treatment plants.

The proposed street exits at tract N and of the warehouse area (T) onto Georgia Highway 363 will require the permission of the State Highway Department,\(^1\) and similar permission probably will be required from the county government for the proposed service road exit onto the county road between tracts B and C.

**Reserved Tracts**

Two tracts are especially reserved. These are R and the small triangular plot at the county and state highways' intersection. Tract R is the present location of Great Northern Paper Company's guest house and their ultimate intentions for this facility are unknown. The other small tract should be reserved as an area for a service station, restaurant, branch bank, or other service facilities catering to the day-to-day needs of the district's employees.

**River Site**

The only land in this area that is adjacent to the river is a strip of about 100 acres lying between Sawhatchee Creek and the Chattahoochee River. (See tract U.) Although a fairly sizable industrial plant could be accommodated here, the land presently is cut off from both highway and railroad access by the Magna Tech Corporation property which adjoins it to the north. The design plan suggests a proposed route for a rail lead into this river site, but such route would require passage across the Magna Tech land. Whether or not the necessary right-of-way easement could be obtained from that company is not known. Street access would best be obtained by bridging the creek and tying directly into the main street system on the east side of the creek.

The long river frontage of this tract would permit ready development of dock facilities. In anticipation of possible future need for dock and terminal facilities for general use by the district tenants, a part of the river frontage acreage should be reserved for this purpose.

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\(^1\) See Rules and Regulations for the Control and Protection of State Highway Rights-of-Way, Georgia State Highway Department, August 15, 1963.
Grading

Because the greater part of the lands included in the proposed development is relatively flat to gently rolling, their subdivision and extension of rail leads into them have presented no special problems in the design plan and their ultimate development should be economically accomplished. This conclusion is supported by the fact that only minimal grading and/or fill work would be required, notably on tracts D, G, and, in part, F, J, and K.

Utilities

Natural gas from the transmission line of the South Georgia Natural Gas Company which is along the county highway (see map, Figure 2) can readily be tapped for servicing this proposed industrial district.

Electric power would be available from the Georgia Power Company system which supplies this area.

Most of the tracts in this proposed industrial district are beyond economic reach of the Chattahoochee River as a source of water supply, excepting possibly tracts D and E. As a general rule, pumpage of water in volume over distances in excess of one mile is not economical and the feasible distance shortens with the increase in hydrostatic head. Nevertheless, there should be no particular difficulty in producing plentiful supplies of water from drilled wells. (See p. 11.)

Disposal of the sanitary and industrial wastes that would be generated by the plant operations in the proposed district might be accomplished in several ways, the choice being dependent upon the findings of engineering surveys. In the initial stages and for the smaller industries, it is possible that package treatment plants or septic disposal fields might suffice. However, the ultimate, complete development of the district would best be served by the installation of a sewer system and centralized treatment facilities. The latter would require the construction of either a treatment plant or oxidation lagoons or possibly a combination of these two types of facilities.

For the lagoons, the land in tracts H and I might be utilized. Detailed engineering studies would be required to determine the most satisfactory and economic disposal system for the district, but, regardless of the procedure adopted, Sawhatchee Creek provides a convenient drainage line for any effluents of the district.
Transportation Facilities

This proposed industrial district would afford direct rail shipments over the Chattahoochee Industrial Railroad with interchange between the Seaboard Coast Line and Central of Georgia (Southern System) railroads at Saffold and Hilton, respectively. The river site would permit direct access by barge to the Gulf section of the Intracoastal Waterway and from there to the Mississippi River and other interior waterway systems of the United States. Georgia Highway 363 connects to U. S. Highway 27 at Blakely and U. S. Highway 84 at Saffold, with the paved county highway connecting to Georgia Highway 62 at Hilton. As pointed out recently in another consultant's report on this area, "a possible adverse factor . . . might be the relative distance from one or more Interstate routes (Interstate 75 is about 110 miles east, Interstate 65 and 85 about the same distance to the north and west, and projected Interstate 10 about 70 miles to the south)." (See also p. 9.)
## Appendix

### LISTING OF PROPERTY OWNERSHIPS OF AREA

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