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# education

The education of Prattville children and youth is a major concern to almost all residents and is an issue which has received significant attention during the last two to five years. During 1993, the City Council established the Education Oversight Committee (EOC) whose purpose was to conduct a study of the educational facilities and services available and to provide a report with conclusions and recommendations by the beginning of the 1993-94 school year. The information provided in this section of the Plan was obtained from that report or directly from the Autauga County Board of Education or the State of Alabama Board of Education. It should be noted, however, that the EOC worked closely with the Autauga County Board of Education to prepare their report.

A very small portion of Prattville children attend school in Elmore County. These children live in the Elmore County portion of the City of Prattville. This element will only study the Autauga County School System, since it by far affects the greatest majority of Prattville children. It should be noted, however, that the fact that

children who live in the Elmore County portion of Prattville do not attend school in the city has deterred residential development in that area.

## *autauga county* *school system*

Prattville is served by the Autauga County School System. The Autauga County Board of Education operates 12 schools, six of which are rural schools. The six schools which serve Prattville residents include Prattville Kindergarten, Prattville Primary School, Prattville Elementary School, Prattville Intermediate School, Prattville Junior High School, and Prattville High School. The facilities for each school are summarized here and shown in Figure 38 entitled Autauga County School System Inventory.

According to the report from the EOC, all Prattville schools are in danger of becoming overcrowded even with only minimal growth. The County Board of Education determines a school's enrollment capacity based on the "Smith Bill", which

states that there can be no more than 25 students per regular classroom available. According to these standards, the Board of Education has calculated that all Prattville schools are currently just below enrollment capacity levels. The grade distribution and enrollment for each school is as follows:

| <u>School</u>           | <u>Grade Distribution</u> | <u>1993-94 Enrollment</u> |
|-------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Prattville Kindergarten | Kindergarten              | 446                       |
| Prattville Primary      | 1st -2nd                  | 927                       |
| Prattville Elementary   | 3rd -4th                  | 844                       |
| Prattville Intermediate | 5th - 6th                 | 878                       |
| Prattville Junior High  | 7th - 8th                 | 925                       |
| Prattville High School  | 9th - 12th                | 1,397                     |

Based on population projections by age, shown in Figure 37, the number of children of school age is expected to continue to rise. Even so, the proportion of the Prattville population which is of school age is decreasing.

*prattville kindergarten school*

Built in 1939, the Prattville Kindergarten School was last added onto in 1992 and is still in good condition with a remaining useful life between 25 and 50 years. The school is located on a 6.4 acre site, of which approximately 3.6 acres are available for recreational use. The Kindergarten has 22 regular classrooms with an enrollment capacity of 550. Facilities available at the school include a

gym and auditorium, a large instructional area, a media center, a cafeteria, a teacher resource center, a handicapped center, and a center for the gifted.

*prattville primary school*

The Prattville Primary School serves first and second grades in 41 regular classrooms and three special classrooms. Enrollment capacity is 975 students. The building was originally built in 1927, and later added onto during the summer of 1991. The building, which is still in good condition, is expected to be available for use for another 50 to 75 years. Facilities available include a gym, a media center, and a cafeteria. The school site encompasses 16 acres of which approximately nine acres are available for recreational use. Recreational facilities at the school include community ball fields.

*prattville elementary school*

Serving third and fourth grades, the Prattville Elementary School has 36 regular classrooms and two special classrooms. The enrollment capacity is 900 students. Located on a 20 acre site, the school has approximately 15 acres available for recreational use. Built in 1966, and modified in 1992, the school is in excellent shape and can be expected to last between 25 and 50 years. The school has a cafeteria and a media center.

*prattville intermediate school*

Located on a 20 acre lot, with 15 acres available for recreation, the Prattville Intermediate School is in excellent condition. It was built in 1961 and most recently modified in 1993. The school

Figure 37

| Prattville Population Projections By Age                                                                                                                                                                                                              |                |        |            |        |            |        |            |        |            |        |            |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|--------|------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                | 1970   | % of total | 1980   | % of total | 1990   | % of total | 2000   | % of total | 2010   | % of total |
| Under 5 Years                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Projection     | 1,289  | 9.8        | 1,405  | 7.5        | 1,458  | 7.4        | 1,451  | 6.2        | 1,334  | 5.0        |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Constant Share |        |            |        |            |        |            | 1,732  | 7.4        | 1,975  | 7.4        |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Average        |        |            |        |            |        |            | 1,592  | 6.8        | 1,655  | 6.2        |
| 5 to 19 Years                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Projection     | 4,557  | 34.7       | 5,550  | 29.8       | 4,734  | 24.2       | 4,448  | 19.06      | 3,683  | 13.8       |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Constant Share |        |            |        |            |        |            | 5,665  | 24.2       | 6,458  | 24.2       |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Average        |        |            |        |            |        |            | 5,057  | 21.6       | 5,070  | 19.0       |
| 20 to 44 Years                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Projection     | 4,495  | 34.3       | 6,980  | 37.4       | 7,418  | 37.9       | 9,271  | 39.6       | 11,047 | 41.4       |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Constant Share |        |            |        |            |        |            | 8,873  | 37.9       | 10,113 | 37.9       |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Average        |        |            |        |            |        |            | 9,060  | 38.7       | 10,567 | 39.6       |
| 45 to 64 Years                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Projection     | 2,006  | 15.3       | 3,334  | 17.9       | 4,131  | 21.1       | 5,619  | 24.0       | 7,152  | 26.8       |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Constant Share |        |            |        |            |        |            | 4,940  | 21.1       | 5,631  | 21.1       |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Average        |        |            |        |            |        |            | 5,291  | 22.6       | 6,351  | 23.8       |
| 65 Years and Older                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Projection     | 769    | 5.9        | 1,378  | 7.4        | 1,846  | 9.4        | 2,622  | 11.2       | 3,469  | 13.0       |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Constant Share |        |            |        |            |        |            | 2,201  | 9.4        | 2,508  | 9.4        |
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | Average        |        |            |        |            |        |            | 2,411  | 10.3       | 3,042  | 11.4       |
| Total                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                | 13,116 | 100.0      | 18,647 | 100.0      | 19,587 | 100.0      | 23,411 | 100.0      | 26,685 | 100.0      |
| NOTES:                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                |        |            |        |            |        |            |        |            |        |            |
| 1. Projections were made using mathematical methodology based on 1970, 1980, and 1990 Census information to obtain proportions of population for each age category. These proportions were then applied to the adjusted total population projections. |                |        |            |        |            |        |            |        |            |        |            |
| 2. Constant share projections were made by applying the proportions of the population in each age category from the 1990 Census to the adjusted population projections for 2000 and 2010.                                                             |                |        |            |        |            |        |            |        |            |        |            |

Figure 38

| Autauga County School System Inventory                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Kindergarten              | Primary                   | Elementary                | Intermediate              | Junior High               | High School               |
| Grades                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Kindergarten              | 1-2                       | 3-4                       | 5-6                       | 7-8                       | 9-12                      |
| Date Built                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | 1939                      | 1927                      | 1966                      | 1961                      | 1957                      | 1977                      |
| Building Condition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Good                      | Good                      | Excellent                 | Excellent                 | Good to Excellent         | Excellent                 |
| Date of Last Addition                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 1992                      | 1991                      | 1992                      | 1993                      | 1988                      | 1993                      |
| Remaining Useful Years                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 25-50                     | 25-75                     | 25-50                     | 25-50                     | 25                        | 25-50                     |
| # Regular Classrooms                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 22                        | 41                        | 36                        | 36                        | 31                        | 57                        |
| # Special Classrooms                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 0                         | 3                         | 2                         | 2                         | 4                         | 0                         |
| Current Enrollment                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | 446                       | 927                       | 844                       | 878                       | 925                       | 1,682                     |
| School Capacity                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | 550                       | 975                       | 900                       | 900                       | 992                       | 1,682                     |
| Service Area                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Good                      | Good                      | Good                      | Good                      | Good                      | Good                      |
| Adequacy of Location                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Good                      | Good                      | Excellent                 | Excellent                 | Excellent                 | Excellent                 |
| Property Acreage                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | 6.4                       | 6.0                       | 20.0                      | 20.0                      | 20.0                      | 52.0                      |
| Recreational Acreage                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | 3.6 acres                 | 9 acres                   | 15 acres                  | 15 acres                  | 15 acres                  | 35 acres                  |
| Recreational Facilities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Gym, dooutr s             | Gym, dooutr s             | dOoutr s                  | dOoutr s                  | Gym, dooutr s             | Gym, dooutr s             |
| Adequacy of Facilities                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Good                      | Good                      | Fair                      | Good                      | Excellent                 | Excellent                 |
| Off-Street Parking                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Good                      | Good                      | Excellent                 | Excellent                 | Excellent                 | Excellent                 |
| Expenditure Per Child*                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | \$2,951.08/<br>\$2,791.00 | \$2,951.08/<br>\$2,400.00 | \$2,951.08/<br>\$2,100.00 | \$2,951.08/<br>\$1,900.00 | \$2,951.08/<br>\$2,000.00 | \$2,951.08/<br>\$2,200.00 |
| <b>Special Facilities:</b><br>Kindergarten      Teacher resource center, handicapped center, center for gifted<br>Primary              Community ball fields<br>Elementary        None<br>Intermediate       Community baseball fields and football field<br>Junior High        Community ball parks<br>High School        Community ball parks |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| * The top number is from the Autauga County Board of Education, the bottom number was provided in the report by the Educational Oversight Committee.                                                                                                                                                                                            |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |
| Source: Autauga County Board of Education, State Board of Education, Educational Oversight Committee Report                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |                           |

utilizes 36 regular classrooms and two special classrooms to serve 878 students in the fifth and sixth grades. Facilities include a media center and a cafeteria. The school's enrollment capacity is 900 students. Community baseball fields and a football field are located at the school.

#### *prattville junior high school*

Built in 1957 and modified in 1988, Prattville Junior High School has 31 regular classrooms and four special classrooms. The school, which will accommodate 992 students, serves seventh and eighth grades. The building is in good to excellent condition and is expected to be in service for another 25 years. Of the 20 acre site, approximately 15 acres are available for recreational use. Community ball parks are located on the school site. Elective programs include home economics and band/choral.

#### *prattville high school*

The High School serves ninth through twelfth grades. It has 57 regular classrooms and has an enrollment capacity of 1,682 students. Built in 1977 and in excellent condition, the date of the school's last addition was 1993. Prattville High School has the largest site of any of the Prattville schools, at 52 acres of which approximately 35 acres are available for recreational use. Facilities available include a science laboratory, an agribusiness center, a band/choral department, a media center, a cafeteria, and a weight room.

### *funding*

Funding for Autauga County schools is received through federal, state, county

and municipal funds. There is, however, a severe shortage of funds with which to operate the schools. According to the State Board of Education records, the state average expenditure per child during the 1991-92 school year was \$3,561.04. The average expenditure per child in Autauga County during that same year was considerably less at \$2,951.08. It is easy to see why the Autauga County School System is ranked financially as one of the poorest school systems in the state, at 125 out of 129 systems.

Although Prattville residents recognize that local support for the county school system is exceptionally low, there is some strong opposition to increasing the local funds. The reason for this is that the funds received by the Autauga County Board of Education are distributed equally among all schools in the system, rural and urban. Prattville residents contend that since Prattville schools serve a greater proportion of the population, then Prattville schools should receive a larger proportion of the total funding. In their report submitted to the City Council, the EOC concluded that the per pupil expenditure was much higher for rural students than for urban (Prattville) students. And, that the student-teacher ratio was much higher in the urban schools than in the rural schools. The relative results are shown in Figures 39 and 40. It is clearly apparent in these illustrations that there is some strife between the City of Prattville and the Autauga County Board of Education. The question is how to come to an equitable solution, so that the City of Prattville may continue to grow. This is a dilemma for both Prattville

and the County Board of Education, for they are the ones who must supply adequate facilities. Prattville residents, however, are

looking for a more than adequate solution to further enhance the city as a choice for living and business locations.

Figure 39

| Comparison of Per Pupil Expenditures in Rural and Urban Schools of Autauga County, 1993-94 School Year                                                                 |                |                        |                               |                         |                         |                    |                         |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|
| Urban Schools                                                                                                                                                          |                | Prattville High School | Prattville Junior High School | Prattville Intermediate | Prattville Elementary   | Prattville Primary | Prattville Kindergarten |
|                                                                                                                                                                        | Operation Cost | \$3.2 Million          | \$1.9 Million                 | \$1.7 Million           | \$1.9 Million           | \$2.3 Million      | \$1.3 Million           |
|                                                                                                                                                                        | Enrollment     | 1,428                  | 901                           | 873                     | 852                     | 918                | 451                     |
|                                                                                                                                                                        | Per Pupil Cost | \$2,274                | \$2,188                       | \$1,990                 | \$2,286                 | \$2,579            | \$2,912                 |
| Rural Schools                                                                                                                                                          |                | Autauga Elementary     | Autauga High School           | Billingsley Elementary  | Billingsley High School | Marbury Elementary | Marbury High School     |
|                                                                                                                                                                        | Operation Cost | \$1.0 Million          | \$1.1 Million                 | \$.9 Million            | \$.8 Million            | \$.8 Million       | \$.9 Million            |
|                                                                                                                                                                        | Enrollment     | 324                    | 298                           | 380                     | 285                     | 386                | 278                     |
|                                                                                                                                                                        | Per Pupil Cost | \$3,340                | \$3,749                       | \$2,245                 | \$3,004                 | \$2,163            | \$3,082                 |
| <p>Source: 1. Report on the Autauga County Schools, October 1993 conducted by the Prattville Educational Oversight Committee. 2. Autauga County Board of Education</p> |                |                        |                               |                         |                         |                    |                         |

Figure 40

| Resource Comparison of Secondary Education in Autauga County (Grades 7-12)                                    |               |               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|
|                                                                                                               | Urban         | Rural         |
| Students                                                                                                      | 2,329 (73%)   | 876 (27%)     |
| Teachers                                                                                                      | 93 (68%)      | 43 (31%)      |
| Student-Teacher Ratio                                                                                         | 25:1          | 20:1          |
| Total Expenditure                                                                                             | \$5.1 Million | \$2.8 Million |
| Per Pupil Cost                                                                                                | \$2,226.00    | \$3,227.00    |
| <p>Source: Report on the Autauga County Schools, October 1993, Prattville Educational Oversight Committee</p> |               |               |

## *testing results*

Recent test scores in the Autauga County School System reinforce the need for improved educational facilities and resources. It should be noted, however, that this is a need for almost every school system in Alabama, not just the Autauga County school system. In 1994, the national Stanford Achievement Test results for the fourth and eighth grades showed that Prattville students tested lower than the national average in almost every category. But, also according to the test results, the scores of Prattville students were higher than the corresponding rural schools of the Autauga County School System. And, in most categories, the Prattville students did as well or better than the State average.

## *education analysis*

The education analysis is in the form of a list of assets, liabilities, opportunities and constraints.

### *assets and opportunities*

Overall, the Prattville community is very concerned and interested in educational opportunities and resources. Therefore, residents are willing to invest time and efforts towards making educational improvements.

Prattville school sites, with the exception of Prattville Kindergarten, have adequate acreage to meet growth and expansion demands.

Currently, Prattville schools are able to meet the basic education needs of students.

According to the national Stanford Achievement Test results, Prattville students scored as well or better than the state average.

The City of Prattville can use its educational resources to increase economic growth and encourage continued residential development.

### *liabilities and constraints*

There is a lack of funding to improve educational resources, facilities, and opportunities.

Prattville schools are reaching a point of being over-crowded, and therefore, risk not qualifying for some state funding.

Students who live in the Elmore county portion of Prattville must travel outside the city to attend school.

There is tension between Prattville residents and the Autauga County Board of Education due to funding decisions.

According to the national Stanford Achievement Test results, Prattville students scored lower than the national average in almost every category.

## *issues and conclusions*

As a result of the study and discussion of education facilities and conditions, it was possible to define issues with which the City of Prattville is now confronted, or may be confronted with in the future. In the following section, each of these issues is recognized, along with a summary of findings related to the issue.

### *issue: quality education*

As a community, Prattville residents feel that it is their responsibility to insure that Prattville children receive a quality education.

In the 1994 Standard Achievement Tests (4th and 8th grades), Prattville students scored better than the other Autauga County schools in all areas, and scored as well or better than the state in most areas. However, Prattville students are scoring less than the national average in almost all areas.

The basic education fundamentals are not enough to prepare Prattville students with the tools they need to effectively compete with today's global technology.

Quality education, resulting in a skilled and responsible labor force, is a necessity for continued economic and residential growth.

Although an absolute correlation cannot be made between the quality of education and the amount of money spent on each pupil, there is a strong relationship between quality education and well-funded schools. The average expenditure per child in the Autauga County school system during the 1991-92 school year was \$2,951.08, compared to the state average expenditure of \$3,561.04 in the same year.

In Prattville, 80 percent of the high school graduates will not go on to college.

The Autauga County school system is ranked 125 out of 129 schools as one of the poorest school systems in the state.

Efforts to provide quality education should encompass a broad spectrum -- from an expanded curriculum to increased technological resources to state-of-the-art vocational tools.

### *issue: meeting growth demands*

The Smith Act requires that the student teacher ratio remain at or under 1:25 in grades K through 3rd presently. This ratio is expected to continue to move through grades at a rate of one-half of a grade per year. The impact of this requirement on Prattville will continue to increase each year and with continued enrollment increases.

Although the proportion of the Prattville population which is school age (5 to 19 years old) is decreasing, the number of children in this age bracket is increasing.

Local officials (municipal and county) and the Autauga County Board of Education members are working together to address the ways and means of meeting growth demands.

### *issue: proximity and accessibility to schools*

Those children who live in the Elmore County portion of Prattville must attend school in Millbrook rather than the nearby Prattville schools.

Prattville children do not have access to safe and secure paths to schools other than vehicular (car/bus) transportation.

The elementary, intermediate, high school and vocational schools have limited access due to inadequate roads and site design.

*issue: maintenance of education facilities*

Funds are lacking for the continued maintenance, repair, and/or replacement of school facilities, such as busses and playgrounds.

Funds are not available to build larger schools to meet growing demands.

## ***goals and objectives***

After defining the issues, it was possible to establish goals and objectives to direct the City's plans for recreation and education. The last part of this section provides specific recommendations to help the City of Prattville attain its goals and fulfill its purpose and vision statements.

### ***goal***

**Insure that educational resources, facilities and opportunities exceed national educational standards and provide continual support for the on-going improvement of education.**

### ***objectives***

Create a positive climate in which Prattville residents encourage academic achievement, increased student participation and enhanced instructional resources.

Upgrade school facilities, grounds, and student transportation by assisting in securing increased financial resources.

Strengthen community involvement and communications.

Augment the economic climate through the improvement and expansion of educational resources and opportunities.

### ***recommendations***

Forge a bond between the City of Prattville and the Autauga County Board of Education so that efforts to provide quality education may be concentrated and have better results.

Encourage efforts to provide quality education to consider the entire spectrum of educational opportunities.

Encourage community involvement and awareness in the educational system.

Promote educational resources and opportunities as a means to attract economic growth and retain a greater proportion of high school graduates.

Develop community programs to inspire teachers to be inspirations; in other words, to help students reach beyond the basics to realize their potential.

Increase elective offerings at secondary level to cover all aspects of advanced scholastic potential.

Constantly seek alternative funding resources so that necessary educational facilities can be provided.

**Planning Prattville Into The 21st Century**

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Encourage open meetings and/or town meetings to bring educational issues to light.

Continue to make facility repairs or improvements as funding becomes available.

Continually work to improve testing scores in Prattville schools.