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Jenna S. Mashburn, Chair

Laura M. Mathis, Executive Director

March 31, 2026

Mr. Jon West  
Georgia Department of Community Affairs  
Community Development Division  
60 Executive Park South, NE  
Atlanta, GA 30329

Re: Annual Report of Regional Plan Implementation

Dear Mr. West:

Middle Georgia Regional Commission (MGRC) has completed an annual report of accomplishments and an update of local government performance standards based on the 2024 Middle Georgia Regional Plan. This annual report is enclosed for review by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

I certify that MGRC held the required public hearing on this submission during the regularly scheduled MGRC Council meeting on March 12, 2026, at 5:30 pm. A draft of the minutes from this meeting has been included as evidence of this public hearing. No comments were received on the report.

I also certify that MGRC staff followed the requirements of the Standards and Procedures for Regional Planning, Chapter 110-12-6, dated October 1, 2017. This report considers other statewide and regional planning efforts, including but not limited to Georgia's Strategic Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan, Upper Oconee Regional Water Plan, Middle Ocmulgee Regional Water Plan, Middle Georgia Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), Macon Area Transportation Study (MATS), Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Warner Robins Area Transportation Study (WRATS) Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), and the regional plans of all regional commissions adjacent to Middle Georgia.

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Greg Boike, Director of Planning and Public Administration, at (478) 751-6160 or [gboike@mg-rc.org](mailto:gboike@mg-rc.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Laura M Mathis'.

Laura M. Mathis  
Executive Director

Enclosures



# 2024 – 2029 MIDDLE GEORGIA REGIONAL PLAN

*Live, Innovate, & Thrive  
in Middle Georgia*

2026 Annual Implementation Report

## REPORT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

Middle Georgia consists of 11 counties and 20 cities located within approximately one hour of the geographic center in Macon-Bibb County. Each of these counties and associated cities have resources, challenges, and opportunities that cross their individual borders. The regional plan is mandated by the Georgia Planning Act (O.C.G.A. 45-12-200, et seq., and 50-8-1, et seq), and has been drafted under the standards established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). Among the planning regulations is a requirement that the Middle Georgia Regional Commission (MGRC) provide recommendations of both Essential Standards and Excellence Standards for which local governments should strive.

A summary of local government statuses as of March 31, 2026, can be seen in the table below.

Jurisdiction	Standards Met	Notes/Comments
Baldwin County		Delinquent on FY24 Audit and FY23 Hotel Motel Tax Report
City of Milledgeville		Delinquent on FY25 Audit and FY24 Hotel Motel Tax Report
Crawford County	Essential Standards	Current GICH Participant
City of Roberta	Essential Standards	
Houston County	Community of Excellence	
City of Centerville	Community of Excellence	GICH Certified Alumni
City of Perry	Community of Excellence	PlanFirst Designee; GICH Certified Alumni
City of Warner Robins	Community of Excellence	PlanFirst Designee; GICH Certified Alumni
Jones County	Community of Excellence	
City of Gray	Community of Excellence	
Macon-Bibb County	Community of Excellence	
Monroe County	Essential Standards	
City of Culloden		City lacks a website
City of Forsyth	Community of Excellence	
Peach County	Essential Standards	
City of Byron	Community of Excellence	
City of Fort Valley		Delinquent on FY23-FY24 Audits, FY24 Hotel-Motel Tax Report
Pulaski County		Delinquent on FY24 Audit
City of Hawkinsville	Community of Excellence	PlanFirst Designee
Putnam County	Community of Excellence	SolSmart Designee
City of Eatonton	Community of Excellence	GICH Certified Alumni
Twiggs County	Essential Standards	
Town of Danville	Essential Standards	
City of Jeffersonville		Delinquent on FY22-FY24 RLGf, FY19-FY24 Audits
Wilkinson County	Essential Standards	
City of Allentown	Essential Standards	
City of Gordon	Essential Standards	
City of Irwinton	Essential Standards	
City of Ivey	Essential Standards	
City of McIntyre	Essential Standards	
Town of Toombsboro	Essential Standards	

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## MGRC ASSISTANCE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

The Middle Georgia Regional Commission is dedicated to ensuring that every local government is able to meet all Essential (minimum) Standards of the Regional Agenda. Regional Commission staff will assist local governments with any tasks necessary to attain the Essential Standards at minimal or no cost. As of March 31, 2026, twenty-five of the thirty-one local governments have achieved either the Essential or Excellence Standards. The full list of Excellence Standards can be found in the 2024 Regional Plan. The Essential Standards are reproduced below:

- ✓ Local Comprehensive Plans shall be updated with all required elements on their respective timelines, as approved by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.
- ✓ A Service Delivery Strategy shall be negotiated and agreed upon as required under state law.
- ✓ Local governments shall participate in the development of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Middle Georgia Region.
- ✓ Local governments shall comply with all Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria.
- ✓ A pre-disaster mitigation plan shall be approved by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) and adopted by each local government in accordance with state guidelines.
- ✓ Local governments shall comply with Georgia Department of Community Affairs State Reporting Requirements, particularly the Government Management Indicators Survey, the Report of Local Government Finance, and (if applicable) the Hotel/Motel Tax Report.
- ✓ All local governments shall comply with the appropriate audit requirements set forth in O.C.G.A. §36-81-7.
- ✓ Each local government shall periodically review its expenses and revenues and adopt a budget that balances projected revenues and expenditures, consistent with the timeframe required by its local Charter, Code of Ordinances, or other relevant regulations.
- ✓ All local governments shall comply with the federal work authorization program (E-Verify).
- ✓ Each city and county shall have a functioning, up-to-date website, which provides basic contact information for local government staff and elected officials.

The 2017 changes to the Regional Planning Requirements (Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia Chapter 110-12-6) eliminated penalties associated with communities that do not reach the Essential Standards set forth in the Regional Plan. However, MGRC still recognizes a responsibility to assist local governments however possible in the attainment of these standards. MGRC is currently undertaking the following activities to assist local governments in the attainment of the Essential Standards:

- MGRC staff transmits regular messages to all local governments that are delinquent on Department of Community Affairs (DCA) reports, including the Report of Local Government Finance (RLGF) and Government Management Indicators (GOMI) survey. MGRC also serves as a liaison between local communities and the DCA Office of Research and Surveys, as necessary.
- MGRC provides reminders of audit due dates and assists in preparing requests for qualifications (RFQs) for auditing services and can assist in evaluating these proposals.
- MGRC has offered website development services to the City of Culloden.

## IMPLEMENTATION OF REGIONAL PLAN

The 2024-2029 Middle Georgia Regional Plan was adopted on August 8, 2024. As part of the annual assessment of the plan's progress, MGRC staff reviewed the current Vision Statement and Regional Goals as enumerated in the Regional Plan. As of this year's report, MGRC believes that the vision and goals continue to represent the strategic direction for the region. These policy statements can be found below.

### VISION STATEMENT

Through the public planning process of stakeholder engagement, a shared vision for Middle Georgia was determined. The shared vision reflects regional values and desired future outcomes of achieving an innovative, thriving, community for all. The final vision statement for the region is:

*Middle Georgia is a diverse region of opportunity where people want to live, innovate, and thrive. We are a region united by pride and mutual respect, where cooperation and collaboration expand the region's economic prosperity, provide an exceptional education for all residents, and ensure that every Middle Georgian has a high quality of life through the provision of effective local government services and the preservation of natural and cultural assets.*

### LIST OF REGIONAL GOALS

Where the regional vision is an aspirational, desired outcome, the regional goals start to sketch the most basic map toward achieving that vision. Regional goals are intended to generate pride and enthusiasm for the future, ensuring stakeholders work toward achieving the regional vision. A goal for each of the plan's topic areas is listed below in the priority order ranked by those who completed the regional plan survey.

#### Economic Development Goal:

*Middle Georgia supports a growing and diverse regional economy. Workers are prepared for a variety of high-quality jobs that reflect the region's position as a hub of creativity and innovation.*

#### Utility Infrastructure Goal:

*All Middle Georgians have access to quality and affordable utility services to ensure a basic quality standard of living.*

#### Housing Goal:

*All residents in the region will have access to quality, safe, and affordable housing.*

#### Transportation Goal:

*Communities across Middle Georgia are well connected and benefit from an accessible multimodal transportation network that meets the needs of all its users and serves to expand economic opportunities throughout the region.*

#### Healthcare and Aging Goal:

*Older at-risk individuals, families, and caregivers will be provided excellence in care and services for assistance in living healthy and vibrant lives.*

**Natural and Cultural Resources Goal:**

*The region is recognized for the uniqueness of its natural and cultural resources and is a greater draw for visitors who value its rich and diverse assets.*

**Community Facilities and Services Goal:**

*Community facilities and services will support efficient growth and development that protect and enhance the quality of life in Middle Georgia.*

**Land Use Goal:**

*Land will be managed efficiently and sustainably to protect the health of citizens, improve economic vitality, and protect the natural resources of Middle Georgia.*

**Public Administration and Regional Cooperation Goal:**

*Middle Georgia leaders prioritize strong regional collaboration while ensuring that each city and county can provide quality services in a professional manner.*

**Broadband and Technology Goal:**

*Public services will be made more efficient and information will be widely accessible through innovation and technology, which will improve quality of life and economic vitality.*

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**REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The Middle Georgia Regional Implementation Program contains action items for the Middle Georgia Regional Commission and its regional partners for the purpose of promulgating the opportunities and vision developed by stakeholders for the Regional Plan. The report on the following pages details accomplishments of the Regional Implementation Program through March 6, 2026. Projects are either listed as complete, underway, canceled, or ongoing (items that represent a continuous process for MGRC rather than a one-time project). Additional comments are provided in some areas where available.

## REGIONAL WORK PROGRAM

Action	Partners	Implementation Status
<b>Economic Development</b>		
<b>Priority Need (ED-1): Greater economic diversification, both within counties and across the entire region.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Undertake long-term planning to ensure the availability of resources for economic development.</i>		
Research, prepare, and administer grants and loans to support economic development.	MGRC	Ongoing – MGRC is administering EDA grants for the City of Byron and Mid-State Energy Commission.
Assist with the implementation of projects identified in the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region.	MGRC, EDA	Ongoing
Assist with the implementation of projects identified in the State Strategic Plan for the Southeast Crescent Regional Commission (SCRC).	MGRC, SCRC	Ongoing – MGRC assisted in preparing five pre-applications for SCRC funding in the past year. Two grants were awarded to Hawkinsville and Twiggs County.
Assist the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Partnership and its efforts to support Robins Air Force Base, its activities, expansion efforts, and new missions.	MGRC, 21st Century Partnership	Ongoing
Support the work of the Middle Georgia Innovation Project as part of the larger GA-AIM Partnership.	MGRC, 21st Century Partnership, Ga. Tech, DAHC, EDA	Ongoing – MGRC assists the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Partnership with program administration and is working directly with Georgia Tech on regional pilot projects related to AI.
<i>Strategy: Identify appropriate businesses for targeted industry recruitment and expansion efforts, based on strategic assets.</i>		
Provide technical assistance to local governments, development authorities, and chambers of commerce for economic development and industrial recruitment.	MGRC, EDA, GDEcD	Ongoing
Conduct economic impact analyses to determine cost-benefit for economic development projects.	MGRC, SCRC	Ongoing – statewide data update complete. The tool remains available for use.
<b>Priority Need (ED-2): Revitalization of both commercial corridors and historic downtowns.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Pursue appropriate funding opportunities to support economic development initiatives, locally and regionally.</i>		
Apply for and administer grants for the assessment, cleanup planning, and remediation of brownfield sites.	MGRC, EPA, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC received a regional assessment coalition grant and is working with its environmental engineer to complete Phase I and Phase II Environmental Site Assessments in Baldwin and Macon-Bibb counties.
Administer an EDA Revolving Loan Fund to provide much-needed capital to businesses in Middle Georgia.	MGRC, EDA	Ongoing
<i>Strategy: Develop focused strategies with state and federal partners to meet community needs for reinvestment.</i>		
Provide technical assistance for the creation of state Opportunity Zones, Rural Zones, local Enterprise Zones, and Redevelopment Plans.	MGRC, DCA	Ongoing

Action	Partners	Implementation Status
Assist with development of downtown development or redevelopment plans, and special tax districts.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
<b>Priority Need (ED-3): Solve the workforce labor crunch that has employers struggling to find workers.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Provide tools and assistance to develop the workforce for the region's existing industries.</i>		
Support work of the Middle Georgia Consortium (MGC) to provide workforce development services.	MGRC, MGC	Ongoing
Study and analyze workforce data to provide information on current workforce trends, needs, and opportunities.	MGRC, MGC	Ongoing
Utilize and market the resources from the Living in Middle Georgia initiative to attract new prospective employees into the region.	MGRC, MGEA, 21st Century Partnership	Ongoing
Identify and help to provide or connect people to potential wraparound services such as transportation or childcare.	MGRC, Local Governments, MGC	Ongoing
Implement Economic and Community Impact (ECO) recommendations from the Middle Georgia-RAFB Sustainability Plan.	MGRC, OLDCC, RAFB, 21st Century Partnership, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC assistance to the City of Warner Robins through its CDBG program is helping to improve the quality of life for prospective RAFB employees.
<b>Utility Infrastructure</b>		
<b>Priority Need (U-1): Regular system maintenance, repairs, and upgrades.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Monitor infrastructure conditions to identify when repairs or upgrades are necessary.</i>		
Assist local governments in efforts to upgrade and/or extend water/sewer infrastructure.	MGRC, DCA, USDA, GEFA, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC is administering ARPA and/or CDBG water and sewer grants currently in Crawford County, City of Forsyth, City of Hawkinsville, City of Ivey, Jones County, and Twiggs County. Sewer work in the City of McIntyre is also continuing.
Assist local governments with improvements to stormwater management and drainage infrastructure.	MGRC, DCA, USDA, GEFA, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC is administering a CDBG award for stormwater improvements in the City of Eatonton. MGRC is also assisting the City of Culloden and City of Gordon with similar grants.
Assist local governments in efforts to upgrade and/or extend natural gas infrastructure.	MGRC, USDA, DOT, DCA, EDA, Local Governments	Ongoing – Administrative work is in the process of concluding an EDA grant to the Mid-State Energy Commission.
Assist communities with grant funding to support critical utility infrastructure.	MGRC, FEMA, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC is administering a grant in Ivey that would replace critical infrastructure at the Lake Tchukolako dam, which was damaged during a previous failure.
Assist communities with the process of identifying and securing grant funds to replace lead service lines.	MGRC, Local Governments, GEFA, EPA, Engineers	Ongoing – current CDBG grants will address any lead service lines identified.
Implement Security (S) and Infrastructure (I) recommendations from the Middle Georgia-RAFB Sustainability Plan.	MGRC, CGJDA, OLDCC, RAFB, 21st Century Partnership, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC is partnering with the City of Warner Robins to study and address stormwater concerns in downtown Warner Robins and near RAFB, as identified in the Sustainability Plan. Georgia Power and the Central Georgia Joint Development Authority also continue to collaborate on energy resilience for RAFB, including the development of battery energy storage systems (BESS).

Action	Partners	Implementation Status
<b>Priority Opportunity (U-5): Increase utility capacity to ensure access for new developments.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Coordinate infrastructure expansion and land use plans to ensure priority development sites have utility service.</i>		
Pursue funding avenues to aid in providing infrastructure to industrial parks and sites.	MGRC, DCA, OneGA, GEFA, USDA, SCRC, Local Governments	Ongoing – Two OneGeorgia Equity projects have been completed for sewer improvements to industrial sites in Twiggs County and Jones County.
Pursue funding avenues to aid in providing infrastructure to potential sites for new housing development.	MGRC, DCA, OneGA, GEFA, USDA, SCRC, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC is administering a Rural Workforce Housing grant for the City of Hawkinsville.
<b>Housing</b>		
<b>Priority Need (H1): Improvements to substandard housing and the removal or remediation of structures in disrepair.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Create plans and partnerships to support code enforcement activities.</i>		
Perform housing assessments, focusing on both urban and rural areas, and data collection, as requested.	MGRC, DCA, Local Governments	Ongoing
Assist local governments with the preparation of housing-focused Urban Redevelopment Plans.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
Assist communities with developing and implementing blight reduction strategies.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
<i>Strategy: Participate in programs that support quality and accessible housing.</i>		
Provide technical assistance to local Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) communities.	MGRC, DCA, UGA	Ongoing – MGRC is currently assisting Crawford County and several Certified Alumni communities.
Promote, encourage, and participate in housing-related workshops, conferences, and symposia.	MGRC, DCA, Local Governments, Housing Authorities	Ongoing
Assist local governments with identifying resources and funding options (such as the LIHTC, DDRLF, and CDBG programs) to support affordable infill housing development.	MGRC, DCA, GMA, Local Governments, Housing Authorities	Ongoing – MGRC developed rubric to assist communities in awarding their “GICH Point” for LIHTC projects and continues to evaluate these projects. MGRC also assists in CDBG administration related to housing for the City of Warner Robins.
Partner with local governments, housing authorities, social service agencies, non-profits, etc. to promote housing options for those most in need.	MGRC	Ongoing
Assist in planning and implementing energy efficiency and weatherization improvements for low-income households.	MGRC, MGCAA, Overview, EPA, DOE	Ongoing
<b>Priority Opportunity (H-5): Increase the number and variety of available units in the regional housing stock.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Leverage vacant properties to create new housing opportunities.</i>		
Assist local governments with the creation and management of Land Banks.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
<i>Explore the possibility of a regional land bank authority.</i>	<i>MGRC, Local Governments, Existing Land Banks</i>	<i>Postponed – project has not had time to begin yet.</i>

Action	Partners	Implementation Status
Assist housing authorities, community land trusts, and nonprofit housing developers with efforts to construct new affordable housing.	MGRC, Local Governments,	Ongoing
<i>Strategy: Examine barriers to new housing development.</i>		
Provide technical assistance to local governments in reviewing and updating zoning codes to remove barriers to appropriate housing development.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing. MGRC completed zoning code work with Baldwin County; is currently supporting the City of Forsyth, City of Jeffersonville, and City of Roberta with various zoning updates; and will soon launch work in Peach County to coincide with the county's comprehensive plan update.
<b>Transportation</b>		
<b>Priority Need (T-1): Address regular roadway maintenance</b>		
<i>Strategy: Improve the condition of the region's road network, with attention to the condition of high-priority roads.</i>		
Assist local governments with identifying and prioritizing bridges, culverts, and unimproved roads for future investment.	MGRC, GDOT, DOT, Local Governments	Ongoing
Support local governments in finding innovative solutions for transportation investments.	MGRC	Ongoing
Assist local governments with efforts to beautify transportation corridors, particularly community gateway entrances, including wayfinding and placemaking.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
Implement the Transportation (T) recommendations from the Middle Georgia-RAFB Sustainability Plan.	MGRC, OLDCC, RAFB, 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Partnership, Local Governments	Ongoing – Regional Transit Development Plan highlighted potential opportunities to further support RAFB, in alignment with the Sustainability Plan recommendations.
<i>Strategy: Coordinate with the Georgia Department of Transportation, State Road and Tollway Authority, and other state and federal agencies for roadway funding.</i>		
Serve on the Technical Coordinating and Policy Committees for the Macon Area Transportation Study and Warner Robins Area Transportation Study.	MGRC, MATS, WRATS	Ongoing
Assist local governments, MPOs, and other entities in understanding federal funding opportunities.	MGRC, Local Governments, MATS, WRATS	Ongoing
Identify and accelerate projects to improve connectivity across the region (especially across the Ocmulgee River).	MGRC, GDOT, DOT, Local Governments	Ongoing
<b>Priority Need (T-2): More easily accessible, efficient, and convenient public transit services.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Enhance services and programs for residents with a person-centric (mobility management) mindset.</i>		
Complete Transit Development Plan updates for all rural communities.	MGRC, GDOT, Local Governments	Ongoing – Baldwin County TDP was completed within the last year. Plan development is underway in Pulaski County and in Twiggs County.
Enhance the Middle Georgia Regional Mobility Manager program.	MGRC, GDOT, Local Governments	Ongoing

Action	Partners	Implementation Status
Pursue expanded transit service and options for special population groups, as identified and recommended by the Regional Transit Development Plan.	MGRC, GDOT, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC Council adopted a Regional Transit Development Plan on March 13, 2025. MGRC staff continues to evaluate options for implementation.
<i>Administer the Georgia Department of Human Services (DHS) Coordinated Transportation Program in the Middle Georgia region.</i>	<i>MGRC, DHS, Third-Party Operator(s)</i>	<i>Complete – Contract ended on 12/31/2025</i>
<b>Priority Opportunity (T-5): Invest in a greater network of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Develop plans with a focus on complete streets.</i>		
Prepare Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans for interested communities.	MGRC, Local Governments, GDOT	Ongoing – MGRC is evaluating opportunities for an update to the regional bike-ped plan.
Perform Safe Routes to School walk safety audits or travel plans for elementary and middle schools.	GDOT, MGRC, Local Schools	Ongoing
Coordinate with other Regional Commissions and local governments in determining US Bike Routes through Middle Georgia.	MGRC, GDOT	Ongoing
Assist GDOT in implementing the state's Complete Streets Policy throughout the region.	MGRC, GDOT	Ongoing
<i>Strategy: Promote alternative transportation choices.</i>		
Provide technical assistance to bicycle and pedestrian stakeholder groups, including Bike Walk Macon, Macon Pedestrian Safety Review Board, CGRTA, Oconee Greenway Board, Wilkinson Bike Friendly Committee, etc.	GDOT, MGRC, Local Stakeholders	Ongoing – MGRC is a partner with Safe Streets for All planning grants in Macon-Bibb County and Jones County while continuing to support these organizations.
Update the Middle Georgia Bicycle and Pedestrian website.	MGRC, GDOT	Ongoing – an update is currently underway
Facilitate Complete Streets and other training for local communities.	GDOT, MGRC, Local Stakeholders	Ongoing – MGRC prepared its first complete streets report for WRATS in 2025.
Incorporate policies and strategies in local comprehensive plans that link land use and transportation improvements.	MGRC, DCA, GDOT, Local Governments	Ongoing
<b>Priority Opportunity (T-6): Connect Middle Georgia to Atlanta, Savannah, and the Southeast U.S. by passenger rail.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Participate in regional planning processes for rail development.</i>		
Promote the viability and economic benefits of passenger rail service between Macon-Bibb and Atlanta.	MGRC, TRRC, ARC, I-75 CCC, MGAC, Georgians for Passenger Rail	MGRC and I-75 CCC are actively collaborating on stakeholder meetings for the GDOT Atlanta-Savannah Passenger Rail Study.
Promote and support the efforts of the I-75 Central Corridor Coalition, including planning for smart growth and transit-oriented development—highlighted by passenger rail service opportunities within the corridor.	MGRC, TRRC, ARC, I-75 CCC, MATS, WRATS, GDOT, DOT Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC supports the I-75 Central Corridor Coalition administratively. Key areas of focus include prioritizing investments in smart growth along a future rail corridor through the region.

Action	Partners	Implementation Status
<b>Priority Opportunity (T-7): Prepare for the electrification of vehicles with adequate infrastructure.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Pursue state and federal funding streams to address identified gaps in the regional EV charging network.</i>		
Coordinate with GDOT on the implementation of the National Electrical Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program in Middle Georgia.	MGRC, MGCAC, GDOT, Clean Cities	Ongoing
Nominate additional corridors in Middle Georgia for consideration as alternative fuel corridors to improve eligibility for NEVI funding.	MGRC, MGCAC, GDOT, Clean Cities	Ongoing
<i>Apply for large-scale grants to systematically address EV charging system gaps at the community charging (level 2) level.</i>	<i>MGRC, MGCAC, GDOT, DOT, EPA</i>	<i>Completed in 2024. Next phase of implementation currently on hold.</i>
Pursue microgrants and technical assistance to address unique charging demands in rural communities.	MGRC, MGCAC, GDOT, EPA, GEFA, Local Governments	Ongoing
<b>Healthcare and Aging</b>		
<b>Priority Need (HA-1): Access to nutritional services and preventative health care.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Invest in wellness initiatives to reduce the number and severity of medical visits necessary.</i>		
Conduct Wellness Program activities, providing education, health screenings, nutrition information, exercise, disease management and prevention, and safe usage of medication to seniors and persons with disabilities.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
Administer Chronic Disease Self-Management Education (CDSME) program.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
Administer the Matter of Balance fall prevention program.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
<i>Strategy: Address social determinants of health outcomes.</i>		
Ensure that vulnerable residents have access to healthcare services, including mental health counseling—especially in traditionally disadvantaged communities.	DHS, DCH, DBHDD, MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
Utilizing both economic incentives and zoning regulations, develop policies to limit the preponderance of vice marts and ensure access to fresh and healthy food.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
Implement drive-thru farmers markets for seniors and persons with disabilities to connect farmers with customers who need healthy food.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing

Action	Partners	Implementation Status
<b>Priority Need (HA-2): Resources to support aging in place, particularly as the population of seniors grows.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Encourage a person-centered approach to service provision.</i>		
Operate as fully functioning Aging and Disability Resource Connection and No Wrong Door service provision system.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
Complete eligibility assessments for the Elderly and Disabled Waiver Program, which helps elderly and/or individuals with disabilities remain in their homes and communities and prevents seniors from being prematurely institutionalized.	DCH, MGRC	Ongoing
Function as Local Contact Agency for nursing home residents seeking to transition to the community. Offer Options Counseling to assist residents in locating community resources.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
Administer the Nursing Home Transition for the Department of Community Health to allow individuals to return to their communities.	DCH, DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
Maintain an Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan to serve as lead as notified by Department of Human Services, Division of Aging Services, or by a localized emergency team in the Middle Georgia counties, to assist seniors and/or persons with disabilities.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
<i>Strategy: Remember the quickly growing senior population during planning efforts.</i>		
Encourage local governments to incorporate universal design concepts and account for their aging populations in comprehensive plans.	DCA, MGRC	Ongoing
Provide local governments with information regarding grant funding opportunities for senior housing.	DCA, MGRC	Ongoing
<i>Pursue a regional age-friendly designation.</i>	<i>MGRC, AARP</i>	<i>Completed in 2024</i>
<b>Priority Need (HA-3): Caregiver support resources, aid, and techniques to improve the capacity of providing care.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Focus on the long-term sustainability of aging services programs and build capacity for greater care.</i>		
Market the Area Agency on Aging in all counties in the Middle Georgia region through community education programs and health fairs.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
Administer in-home case management program for non-Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services clients.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing

Action	Partners	Implementation Status
Administer the Elder Abuse Prevention Program by providing public education and outreach to identify and prevent elder abuse, neglect, and exploitation.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
Administer the National Family Caregiver Support Program.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
Maintain, update, and secure new resources for inclusion in the statewide Empowerline Pro database.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
Provide programmatic and fiscal training, technical assistance, and monitoring to Area Agency on Aging subcontractors.	DHS, MGRC	Ongoing
<b>Natural and Cultural Resources</b>		
<b>Priority Need (NCR-1): Continue improvements in the regional air quality.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Consider air quality impacts of new projects and developments, working toward more sustainable solutions.</i>		
Provide technical assistance and staff support to the Middle Georgia Clean Air Coalition and take actions to improve air quality.	MGCAC, MGRC, EPA, EPD, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC is regularly managing all monthly meetings of the MGCAC. The EPA Advance program sunset in 2025.
Pursue SolSmart designation for the region.	MGCAC, MGRC	Ongoing – MGRC hosted trainings to support achieving this designation in 2025.
Apply for and administer funding to further clean energy solutions within the region.	MGCAC, MGRC	Ongoing
<b>Priority Opportunity (NCR-4): Host the nation’s 64th national park at Ocmulgee Mounds.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Utilize the presence of natural, cultural, and historic resources to tell the region’s story.</i>		
Engage in planning processes and funding opportunities that support the designation of a new national park with supporting infrastructure in the community.	ONPPI, MGRC, Knight Foundation, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC worked with ONPPI to select Kimley Horn as a prime contractor for a strategic plan which will be completed in the first half of 2026.
Supporting the Ocmulgee National Park and Preserve Initiative, providing technical assistance wherever possible.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
<i>Represent the interests of the regional community on the Ocmulgee Mounds National Park and Preserve Advisory Council.</i>	<i>MGRC</i>	<i>Postponed – Work is subject to the passage of legislation in the United States Congress.</i>
Assist in the acquisition of lands as necessary and beneficial to support the park and preserve expansion efforts.	MGRC, CGJDA, ONPPI, Conservation Non-Profits, RAFB, GA Sentinel Landscape	Ongoing
Pursue additional federal and state funding to promote the conservation mission in the area and support educational efforts.	MGRC, DNR, ONPPI	Ongoing
Implement Environmental and Cultural Resources (ENV) recommendations from the Middle Georgia-RAFB Sustainability Plan.	MGRC, CGJDA, OLDCC, RAFB, 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Partnership, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC and CGJDA continue work related to land conservation around RAFB, including partnership with the Sentinel Landscape program and utilizing REPI funds to purchase priority lands.

Action	Partners	Implementation Status
<b>Priority Opportunity (NCR-5): Leverage tourism to support a growing regional economy.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Expand access to natural, cultural, and historic resources</i>		
Provide technical assistance to the Ocmulgee Water Trail Partnership, the Lower Oconee Water Trail group.	MGRC, DCA, GDOT, Local Governments	Ongoing
Provide technical assistance to the Central Georgia Rail to Trail Association for the development of the rail trail between Macon-Bibb and Milledgeville.	MGRC, DCA, GDOT, Local Governments	Ongoing - MGRC secured funding for Jones County to initiate a route scoping study for the Central Georgia Rail Trail to begin in FFY 2028.
Provide assistance to local governments and other community organizations in promoting small farms and small communities through the "Georgia Grown" and "Celebrating Rural Georgia" programs.	MGRC, DCA, Georgia Dept of Agriculture, Local Governments, Community Organizations	Ongoing
Assist with planning and development efforts to enhance Balls Ferry State Park in Wilkinson County so it can attract overnight visitors.	MGRC, DNR, Local Governments	Ongoing
Actively support the Middle Georgia tourism industry and provide technical assistance to entities aiming to develop the tourism product.	MGRC, GDEcD, CVBs, Local Governments	Ongoing
<b>Priority Opportunity (NCR-6): Better preserve regional culture through preservation of historic sites and districts.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Invest in capacity building to identify and protect resources.</i>		
Conduct and comment on Section 106 undertakings involving historic resources.	MGRC, HPD	Ongoing
Provide outreach, training, and technical assistance on Historic Preservation to local governments and other interested parties.	MGRC, HPD	Ongoing
Conduct historic resources inventories for local governments.	MGRC, HPD, Local Governments,	Ongoing
Provide technical assistance to local Historic Preservation Commission, Historical Societies, and other organizations.	MGRC, HPD, Local Governments	Ongoing
Assist local governments with activities related to the Certified Local Government program; assist in the preparation and adoption of local preservation ordinances.	MGRC, HPD	Ongoing
Assist communities with state and federal historic preservation initiatives and programs including the Main Street Program and the Preserve America Institute.	MGRC, HPD, DCA	Ongoing

Action	Partners	Implementation Status
<b>Community Facilities and Services</b>		
<b>Priority Need (CF-1): Crime prevention and public safety resources, especially where high rates of violent crime exist.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Provide community support for law enforcement agencies.</i>		
Assist local efforts to upgrade or develop new law enforcement facilities and services.	MGRC, DOJ, USDA, Local Governments	Ongoing
Ensure law enforcement have sufficient equipment and supplies, particularly protective equipment, to safely serve the community	MGRC, DOJ, USDA, Local Governments	Ongoing
Implement Security (S) recommendations from the Middle Georgia-RAFB Sustainability Plan.	MGRC, OLDCC, RAFB, 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Partnership, Local Governments	Ongoing
<i>Strategy: Utilize and strengthen community and police partnerships to reduce crime through nontraditional methods.</i>		
Support and help secure funding for community-led efforts to interrupt cycles of violent crime and address causes of crime.	MGRC, DOJ, Macon Violence Prevention, Local Communities	Ongoing
Support and help secure funding for community-oriented policing strategies.	MGRC, DOJ, Local Communities	Ongoing
Support and help secure funding for mental health co-responders who can assist law enforcement in performance of their duties.	MGRC, DOJ, DBHDD, Local Communities	Ongoing
<b>Priority Need (CF-2): Improve fire protection, especially in rural areas.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Support firefighters and communities with strategies that will lower ISO ratings.</i>		
Assist local efforts to upgrade or develop new fire protection and prevention facilities, equipment, and services.	MGRC, FEMA, USDA, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC submitted a congressionally-directed spending application for a new facility in Danville.
Ensure firefighters have sufficient equipment and supplies, particularly protective equipment, to safely serve the community	MGRC, FEMA, USDA, Local Governments	Ongoing
Support communities with the process of reducing dependence on volunteer firefighters, including with hiring new full-time staff.	MGRC, FEMA, Local Governments	Ongoing
<b>Priority Opportunity (CF-4): Expand recreational programs, parks, trails, facilities, and greenspace.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Pursue funding sources for both maintenance and new construction of facilities.</i>		
Assist local governments with preparation of applications and grant administration for the Recreational Trails Program.	MGRC, DNR, FWHA, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC is administering grants for the City of Eatonton and Jones County.
Assist local governments with preparing and administering Land and Water Conservation Fund grants.	MGRC, DNR, NPS, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC is administering grants for Monroe County, Peach County, and the City of Byron. Work was completed at Liberty Park in Jones County in 2025.

Action	Partners	Implementation Status
Assist local efforts to upgrade or develop new recreational facilities and services.	MGRC, DNR, NPS, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC assists with several other recreational grants as needed to expand services. These include administration of an ARPA grant in Peach County and a GOSP grant for Jones County. MGRC also submitted a GOSP application for Houston County in 2025.
Assist local efforts to upgrade or develop new community facilities, such as Senior Centers, Head Start, Boys and Girls Clubs, Libraries, etc.	MGRC, DCA, USDA, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC is administering a grant for a new Senior Center in Pulaski County and working on an application for new Senior Centers in Byron and Houston County. MGRC also worked with Crawford County to secure a Congressionally-Directed Spending grant for a new Youth Center and will work on securing matching funds.
<b>Priority Opportunity (CF-5): Enhance community resilience and disaster response efforts.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Plan for potential disruptions to the community and proactively harden critical facilities.</i>		
Develop risk assessment reports and assist in the local hazard mitigation and pre-disaster mitigation planning.	MGRC, GEMA, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC is currently assisting Twiggs County, and Monroe County with PDMP updates. Completed drafts are currently under FEMA review for both Houston County and Jones County.
Assist communities with grant funding to support disaster resilience.	MGRC, FEMA, Local Governments	Ongoing
Assist local governments with development and preparation of Solid Waste Management Plans, as requested.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
Assist local governments with planning or funding efforts to upgrade or develop new government administration facilities.	MGRC, USDA, Local Governments	Ongoing
<b>Land Use</b>		
<b>Priority Opportunity (LU-4): Encourage sustainable development and redevelopment practices to minimize sprawl.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Utilize smart growth principles.</i>		
Assist local governments in the preparation/ modification and adoption of land use ordinances, zoning ordinances, and/or development regulations.	MGRC, DCA, Local Governments	Ongoing – currently working with several communities on zoning updates: Forsyth, Jeffersonville, and Roberta.
Promote growth and development in areas that can be efficiently served by existing infrastructure.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
Assist with land development ordinances or implementation of impact fees to reduce potential losses from new service provision.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
Encourage the placement of new community facilities near existing infrastructure.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
Support planning efforts for transit-oriented development/redevelopment.	MGRC, I-75CCC, MGCAC	Ongoing
<i>Strategy: Protect sensitive areas where unplanned sprawl negatively affects the economy.</i>		
Acquire and/or otherwise protect lands surrounding Robins Air Force Base within the REPI boundary, so as to protect and sustain the mission set.	MGRC, CGJDA, DNR, Conservation Non-Profits, RAFB, GA Sentinel Landscape	Ongoing – MGRC continues to work through CGJDA and local communities to implement the REPI program both protecting sensitive areas while also managing effective patterns of growth around the installation.

Action	Partners	Implementation Status
Implement Land Use (LU) and Airspace (A) recommendations from the Middle Georgia-RAFB Sustainability Plan.	MGRC, OLDCC, RAFB, 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Partnership, Local Governments	Ongoing
<b>Public Administration and Regional Cooperation</b>		
<b>Priority Need (PAR-1): Strong professional, technical, and administrative support staff for local governments</b>		
<i>Strategy: Invest in qualified, professional personnel and continue to ensure they receive training.</i>		
Develop personnel systems with modern policies, benefits, and compensation systems to attract and retain talented personnel.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
Aid local governments in hiring key staff personnel positions.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC continues to assist with hiring key personnel for local governments, including Peach County, Fort Valley, and Centerville.
Partner with other regional and statewide associations to ensure that local officials receive quality and timely training.	MGRC, GARC, CVIOG, GMA, ACCG, Local Governments	Ongoing
Assist communities with preparation, adoption, and monitoring of budgets.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
Assist communities with updates to codes of ordinances, charters, and organizational documents.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
<b>Priority Need (PAR-2): Ensure local governments remain compliant with all state and federal reporting requirements, particularly as relevant for securing grant funding.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Focus on the attainment of Essential Standards set forth under this Regional Plan.</i>		
Provide regular reminders of all upcoming reporting deadlines for local governments on a recurring basis.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
Aid communities in completing necessary reporting and registrations as required.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
Assist cities and counties with being prepared for annual audits so as to stay up to date with their financial reporting.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
<b>Priority Opportunity (PAR-3): Continue to build a shared regional identity through close collaboration.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Create forums for regional thinking and where regional actions can be taken.</i>		
Facilitate the Middle Georgia Regional Leadership Champions program.	MGRC, UGA, Georgia Power	Ongoing – the seventh cohort of the MGRLC program concluded in December 2025 with alumni engagement planned for calendar year 2026.
Provide technical assistance and support to the Middle Georgia Economic Alliance.	MGRC, MGEA	Ongoing
Provide technical assistance and staff support to the Central Georgia Joint Development Authority.	MGRC, CGJDA	Ongoing
Promote, encourage, and engage in initiatives of joint development authorities.	MGRC, CGJDA, FLRDA, MGRDA	Ongoing

Action	Partners	Implementation Status
<i>Strategy: Build collaboration among local governments for more effective and efficient services.</i>		
Promote and provide technical assistance for public-private partnerships between Robins Air Force Base and the surrounding communities.	MGRC, 21 <sup>st</sup> Century Partnership	Ongoing
Conduct Intergovernmental Review of Federal Programs (Executive Order 12372) to ensure consistency of proposed projects with regional and local planning documents.	MGRC	Ongoing
Review local service delivery strategies and assist communities with negotiation processes, as necessary.	DCA, MGRC	Ongoing
<i>Strategy: Coordinate land use planning across jurisdictions for more consistency in development patterns.</i>		
Review and comment on long-range transportation plans for consistency with the Regional Plan.	MGRC	Ongoing
Review and comment on developments in close proximity to resources identified in the Regional Resource Plan.	MGRC	Ongoing
Review all Developments of Regional Impact submitted by Regional Commissions that adjoin Middle Georgia.	MGRC	Ongoing
Review statewide plans and programs for local and regional application.	MGRC	Ongoing
Prepare and review local comprehensive plans.	DCA, MGRC	Ongoing – MGRC has initiated planning work for Hawkinsville and Pulaski County; Roberta and Crawford County; Centerville, Warner Robins, and Houston County; and Byron, Fort Valley, and Peach County. MGRC is also serving on the steering committee for the Macon-Bibb County Comprehensive Plan update.
<b>Broadband and Technology</b>		
<b>Priority Need (BT-1): Improved digital connectivity and broadband services to unserved locations.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Utilize public-private partnerships across the region to develop new infrastructure,</i>		
Assist with the planning and (if applicable) grant writing to coordinate installation of new broadband services by private providers.	MGRC, Local Governments, DCA	Ongoing
Assist with planning efforts under the Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program to expand service coverage.	MGRC, Local Governments, DCA	Ongoing
Partner with DCA on any challenges to federal broadband maps and with securing data however possible.	MGRC, Local Governments, DCA	Ongoing

Action	Partners	Implementation Status
<b>Priority Opportunity (BT-3): Enhance technological literacy in the region, particularly for local government staff.</b>		
<i>Strategy: Evaluate technological options for lowering the costs of service delivery and improving efficiency.</i>		
Assist communities with the adoption of smart city technologies to improve service delivery and attract high-skill workers to the region.	MGRC, OLDCC, MGEA, GTA, Ga. Tech, Local Governments	Ongoing
Create, maintain, promote, and host web pages for local governments, development authorities, and other regional entities.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC continues to host about 36 websites for local governments, authorities, and partnering agencies.
Develop strategies for enhancing social media and communications capabilities for MGRC and local governments	MGRC	Ongoing
<i>Strategy: Develop Geographic Information Systems (GIS) capabilities.</i>		
Create, maintain, and promote internet-based map services.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing
Create road and structure point data layers to support E-911 mapping services.	MGRC, GEMA, Local Governments	Ongoing
Explore the feasibility of acquiring highly accurate elevation (LiDAR) data and region-wide ortho-aerial photography.	MGRC, USGS, NOAA, FEMA, GIO, Local Governments	Ongoing
Provide tax parcel maintenance service.	MGRC, Local Governments	Ongoing – MGRC continues to provide for two counties.
Provide Geographic Information Systems (GIS) digital mapping and Global Positioning System (GPS) data collection services to local governments	MGRC, GIO	Ongoing