

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF CHESTER TO APPROVE AND ADOPT AN AMENDMENT TO THE CHESTER COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM SECTION OF THE DODGE COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, *DODGE COUNTY: AN EXCEPTION TO THE RURAL* (2021); TO SET AN EFFECTIVE DATE; AND FOR OTHER LAWFUL PURPOSES.

WHEREAS, the Town has previously adopted the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan, Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural (2021), as its official local comprehensive plan pursuant to the Georgia Planning Act of 1989;

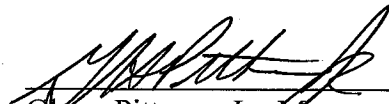
WHEREAS, the Town now desires to amend the Chester Community Work Program section of said Plan by adding a new applicable Community Work Program action;

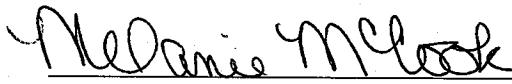
WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council find it in the best interest of the Town of Chester for planning the future development of the Town to amend its said plan with a Community Work Program update, as depicted and described in Exhibit A, attached hereto and incorporated herein by this reference.

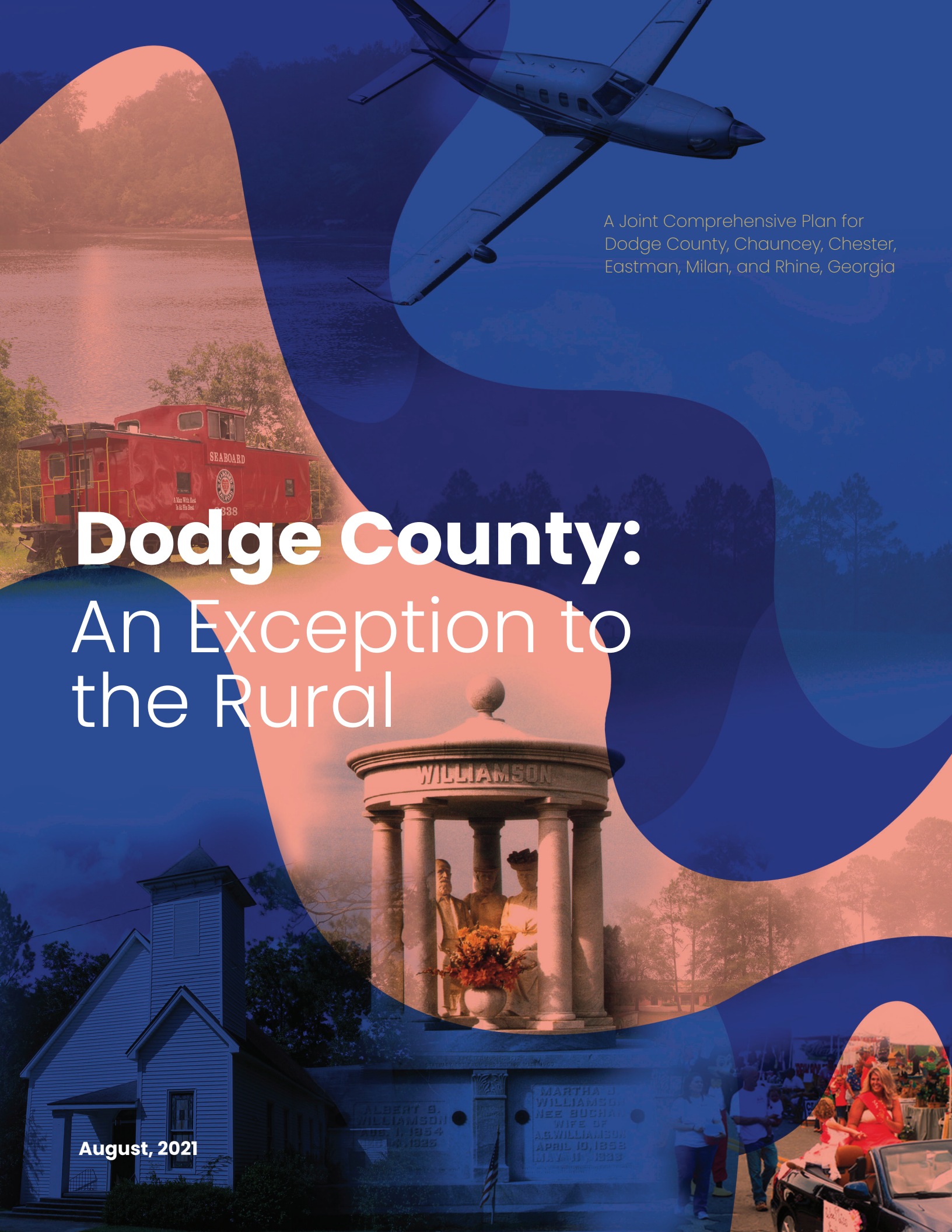
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Town Council of the Town of Chester hereby approve and amend said plan to include that section of the Chester Community Work Program to be as depicted and described in Exhibit A attached hereto.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Resolution shall have immediate effect upon its adoption.

SO RESOLVED, this 6th of April, 2026 by a vote of (3) FOR and (0) AGAINST.


Glynn Pittman, Jr., Mayor

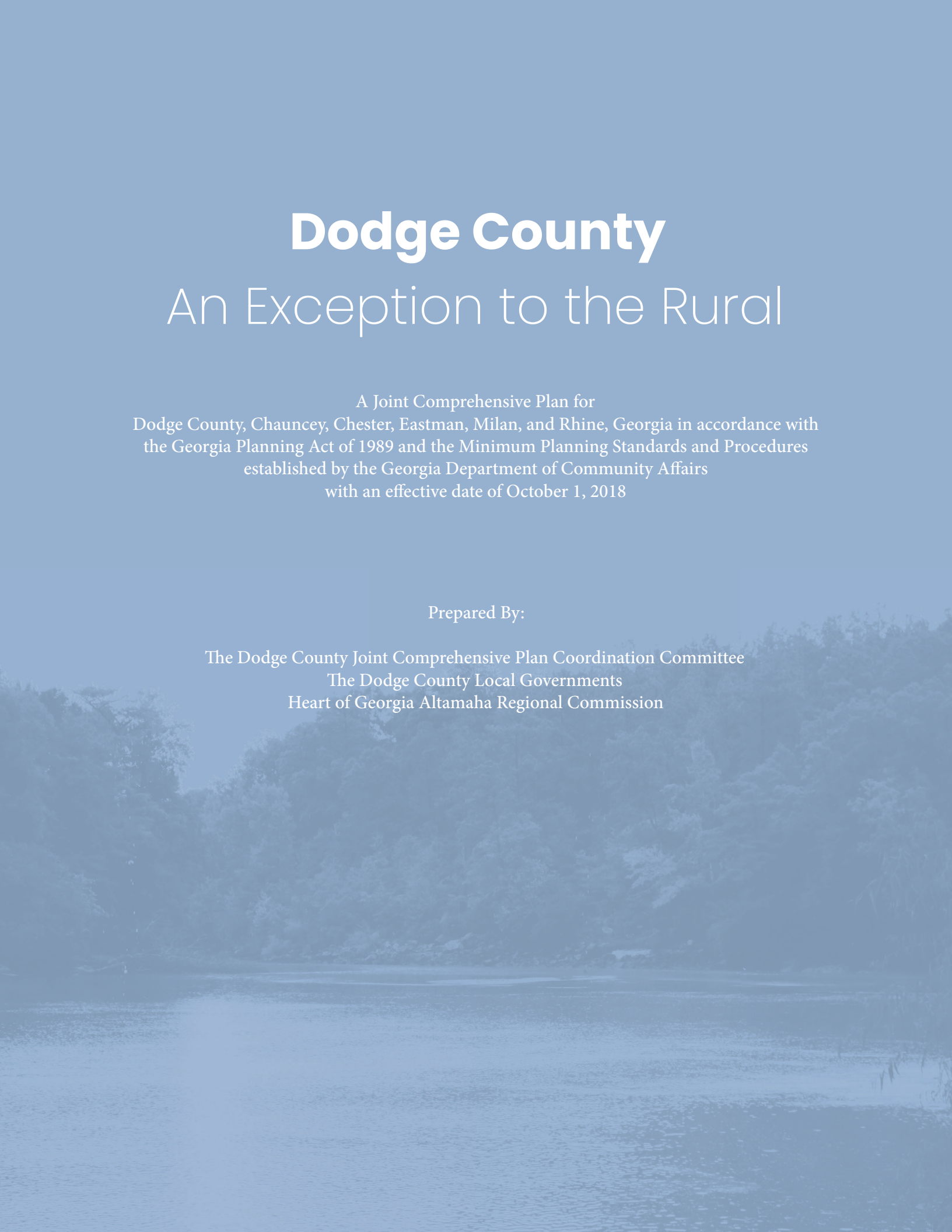

Melanie McCook, Town Clerk



A Joint Comprehensive Plan for
Dodge County, Chauncey, Chester,
Eastman, Milan, and Rhine, Georgia

Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural

August, 2021



Dodge County

An Exception to the Rural

A Joint Comprehensive Plan for
Dodge County, Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine, Georgia in accordance with
the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 and the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures
established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs
with an effective date of October 1, 2018

Prepared By:

The Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee
The Dodge County Local Governments
Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission

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INTRODUCTION & EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural -- The Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan is a comprehensive plan prepared under the current Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 adopted by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) with an effective date of October 1, 2018. It is a joint plan for Dodge County and its municipalities – the City of Chauncey, the Town of Chester, the City of Eastman, the City of Milan, and the City of Rhine.

Dodge County is a rural county of about 20,000 persons located in the heart of central south Georgia. The community today boasts an impressive array of top-notch facilities and services which would be the envy of much larger, and even metro, communities. Even more impressive, the community has a progressive, can-do attitude



from leaders and citizens alike to work together for continuing improvement and advancement, to adapt to change and move forward, to establish a unique and innovative identity, and to facilitate an extraordinary quality of life in a comforting and scenic rural environment. The community is now the focal point of Georgia's leading aviation and aerospace education and training university at a world-class level. Innovative agriculture growth has turned a once predominately cotton driven economy into diverse, scenic olive farms and large scale vegetable harvesting operations. Known in previous decades as the "South's Candy Capital," the community has overcome the loss of the legendary Stuckey's enterprise, and replaced it with an outstanding array and diversity of industry. Home to much local talent and homegrown bands, the Arts Guild is highly supported along with Music On Main. The show is held each year to increasing notoriety and attention. Tourism is based around historic aspects of the community, agricultural in nature and boasts of outdoor amenities for all. Historic landmarks from various periods of time and active trails align with the goal of increasing tourism in the community. Transportation serves all modes of travel within the community, including a rural public transit system, excellent pedestrian routes and multi-lane highways connect communities. The local airport has left far behind its humble general aviation beginnings and has been transformed into a facility with extraordinary physical features which accommodates modern business jets, serves as the centerpiece of world-class aviation and aerospace education and research, and attracts complementary and supportive business concerns. Local schools and the hospital boast award-winning facilities and services. All of this and more contributes to an extraordinary community and quality of life for local citizens



Rural Scene, Dodge County

The community continues to improve itself and move forward, nurture its many assets, and build upon its extraordinary amenities and quality of life. Its industry and agribusiness are expanding, and its educational offerings and status are growing. The community continues to invest in education, infrastructure, families, and its culture. Dodge County truly is an



exceptional rural community with innovative facilities and services, and a progressive spirit of cooperation. It wants others to see it as a unique, interesting, and especially attractive place for rural living, an opportunity for entrepreneurship and investment; an envious and coveted place to live, do business, work, or visit; and an inspired environment where many can participate and take flight.



U Downtown Eastman **L** Airplane **R** Rustic Pines

While there is much to celebrate and be optimistic about future growth and development within the community, there are issues to monitor and a continued need for improvement. Over seventeen (17.2) percent of Dodge Countians are 65 or older, compared to about 13 percent in Georgia. While down from 25.9 percent in 2015, 21.8 percent of the population lives in poverty, compared to 13.3 percent in Georgia. Incomes overall are low. Per capita money income in the county, as measured by the Census Bureau from 2015-2019, has increased (\$20,216 from \$17,771 in 2014) but remains about 65 percent that of Georgia (\$31,067). The county median household income for the same period (\$39,302) is also about 63 percent that of Georgia (\$61,980). Unemployment in the county lowed to 6.0 percent, as an annual average in 2021, lower than the surrounding area, and significantly lower than the national rate of 8.1 percent. Such statistics have resulted in Georgia still ranking Dodge County as a 2021 Job Tax Tier 1 county. While this ranking is for Georgia's bottom 40 percent or so of counties needing an economic boost, it has the advantage of offering Georgia's largest tax



breaks for job creation within Dodge County, and thus a big incentive for business job creator entities and further economic improvement. Dodge County does have significant assets and stimulators to utilize for future growth and development, including a Federal Opportunity Zone.



L Historic Railway Depot, Milan **R** Historic Residence, Eastman

The future Dodge County will continue to take advantage of its assets and opportunities, and address its issues. It will continue to be at the forefront of rural exceptionalism and a high quality of life with progressive leadership, and a recognized uniqueness of extraordinary rural Georgia life. Growth will be well managed and guided to locate near the existing infrastructure and services of Eastman, and will be respectful and protective of existing character, and the community's fields, forests, open spaces, and its unique and abundant natural and cultural resources. Many will enjoy living, working, studying, playing, and doing business in Dodge County, and reach new heights both personally and as a community.

The Dodge County community wants to protect its heritage and rural character; enhance its growing and diversifying economy, utilize its airport and aviation and aerospace educational offerings, conserve its fields and forests and natural splendor; improve its infrastructure; attract new residents and retirees; locate complementary businesses and compatible jobs; utilize and celebrate its natural resources and heritage; and grow tourism, among its guiding aims and principles outlined herein. The community truly wants to be a recognized exceptional bastion of extraordinary rural life and a widely known address for its unique and coveted overall high quality-of-life.

Previous Plans. This comprehensive plan is the fourth within the County prepared under the auspices of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. The first was adopted in 1993, the second in 2010 and most recently in 2016. The first two previous plan efforts were intensively data and state requirement driven, although local objectives are outlined and portrayed. The second plan does contain some local information which may not easily be found elsewhere and may remain of use. These last plans should remain, at least in hard copy, available from the Dodge County local governments and the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission. At the time of this plan preparation, the 2016 plan is available in digital format on the state (www.georgiaplanning.com) and region (www.hogarc.org) websites.



Data. The emergence of the world wide web with its vast data repositories accessible through free search engines allows anyone easy access to significant amounts and a wide variety of data, and profiles of any jurisdiction, including Dodge County and its municipalities. For this reason, this comprehensive plan includes only limited data to depict or illustrate points. The current DCA planning standards actually encourage such non-inclusion of data. Almost any data depicted at a moment in time quickly becomes dated, and maybe irrelevant. The world wide web offers the opportunity of more relevant and up-to-date data at the time of access.



L *Pondtown Festival, Rhine* **R** *Rural Scene, Dodge County*

There are a variety of reliable public and private sources of data. Of course, the traditional source of official community data is the U.S. Census Bureau. Data on Dodge County, its municipalities, or any other jurisdiction is quickly accessed at quickfacts.census.gov which will provide a summary community profile on many popular data items, and links to even more data. Another quality source of data is the website, www.statsamerica.org, which provides a compilation of primarily government data on many items for any county in any state of the U.S. The site is maintained by Indiana University in partnership with the federal Economic Development Administration. The University of Georgia maintains a website, www.georgiadata.org, where county level data for nearly 1,300 variables related to a wide variety of subjects on population, labor, natural resources, government, health, education, and crime can be accessed. The data can be compared to other counties and the state as well as on a historical change basis, among various user options. The data is compiled from The Georgia County Guide and the Farmgate Value Report prepared by UGA's Extension Service. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs has available data for cities and counties under "Community Planning Resources," and will also prepare community data reports when requested under "Other Resources." The State of Georgia has official labor and economic data in its Georgia Labor Market Explorer as organized by the Georgia Department of Labor at explorer.gdol.ga.gov. Additional state sponsored economic data is available at www.georgia.org. Excellent overall private data sources include www.city-data.com, datausa.io, and www.usa.com, while www.headwaterseconomics.org is an excellent source for socioeconomic information, including data and interpretation through its economic profile system.



Population Projections. The official 2020 Census population of Dodge County was 19,925, down by 8.5 percent from 2010's 21,796. This decline followed a general trend of rural Georgia counties losing population and was lagging behind the state's growth rate of 10.2%. The national growth rate for the same period was 7.3%. This population decline suggests a lack of attention to rural counties for new growth and an aging population. Dodge County's location; its rich history; exceptional community facilities and services; progressive community spirit, leadership, and cooperation; abundant and outstanding natural resources; many fields and pine forests; existing businesses and entrepreneurship; its significant education resources; high quality of life, and easy access to larger metro areas and Georgia's ports are positive factors and influences for future growth and development. The 2020 lower Census population is a concern for the community and will be addressed with talent retainment and industry development.



L First United Methodist Church, Eastman **R** Historic Peabody School

While past and present population levels are readily available on the world wide web, population projections are not so easily accessed. The Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) is responsible for generating official state population projections for Georgia counties. Current OPB projections for Dodge County from 2020 are 20,416 persons in 2030 and 19,936 persons in 2040, essentially expecting a loss of population and may be a cause for concern and further examination. The OPB 2040 projection is actually less than the Census 2019 estimate of 20,829. The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission (HOGARC) also prepares population projections which have proven to be relatively accurate in the past. HOGARC's population projections for Dodge County, as noted in the 2017 Regional Plan, show significantly higher projection population levels than the current OPB projections. More recent Regional Commission projections, which take into account lower 2019 Census estimates continue to project significant growth. These latest Regional Commission projections include 24,883 in 2030 and 26,944 in 2040. The OPB projections indicating population loss do not seem realistic.



Population Projections, Dodge County

	2010	2020	2021	2025	2030	2035	2040
OPB, 2020	21,796	20,489	20,445	20,446	20,416	20,239	19,936
HOGARC Regional Plan	21,796	22,047	-	22,815	23,610	-	25,284
Regional Commission	21,796	22,979	-	23,912	24,883	25,893	26,944

Sources: State Office of Planning and Budget, 2021; Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission Regional Plan, 2019; Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission staff projection using Microsoft Excel GROWTH formula, 2021; Excel Forecast method using the AAA version of the Exponential Smoothing (ETS) algorithm at a 95% confidence interval.

Coordination with Other Plans. Dodge County has an approved and adopted hazard mitigation plan prepared for the Federal Emergency Management Agency to remain eligible for federal disaster assistance. This Hazard Mitigation Plan's preparation was coordinated with past comprehensive plan preparation. It is clear that the two most prominent hazards facing Dodge County that can be influenced by the comprehensive plan are the hazard mitigation plan goals to reduce damage from flood hazards and wildfire, and thereby protect life and health. The comprehensive plan objectives to conserve the county's river and stream corridors, to maintain healthy working forests and fields (including employing proper management techniques), to improve fire/emergency management and other public safety services, and to enhance growth management/code enforcement regulation are generally consistent with, and offer implementation to, the hazard mitigation plan.

The Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan is also consistent with the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The Strategy's goals and objectives to develop industrial parks; develop/improve local infrastructure; enhance telecommunications infrastructure; retain existing businesses/industry; attract new industry; and spur non-traditional economic development, like tourism and downtown development, are repeated as principal goals in the Dodge County Comprehensive Plan. The local plan is similarly supportive of espoused state economic goals.

Regional Water Plan and Environmental Planning Criteria Consideration. Dodge County is part of the Altamaha Regional Water Planning Council. The adopted regional water plan, *Altamaha Regional Water Plan* (2011, updated 2017), was considered by the Dodge County Local Plan Coordination Committee and the local governments in preparation of this plan. This local comprehensive plan's objectives to maintain viable agriculture/forestry uses, protect/conserve natural resources, to enhance intergovernmental coordination and government/efficiencies, and upgrade local infrastructure all help implement, and maintain consistency with, the regional water plan. The vision of the regional water plan, "to wisely manage, develop and protect the region's water resources...to enhance quality of life..., protect natural systems..., and support the basin's economy," is inherent in this comprehensive plan's community vision and goals.



Similarly, the Environmental Planning Criteria were also considered in the development of this comprehensive plan. The local governments of Dodge County, including Dodge County, the City of Chauncey, the Town of Chester, the City of Eastman, the City of Milan, and the City of Rhine, are in compliance with the Environmental Planning Criteria, having adopted implementing, consistent ordinances in 1999. The local governments, with the assistance of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, adopted the Region's model "Environmental Conservation, On-Site Sewage Management, and Permit" Ordinance.

Consistency with Quality Community Objectives. In 2011, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs changed its Quality Community Objectives to a more general listing and summary of the 10 objectives. These include: Economic Prosperity, Resource Management, Efficient Land Use, Local Preparedness, Sense of Place, Regional Cooperation, Housing Options, Transportation Options, Educational Opportunities, and Community Health.

The Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan directly espouses (many of) these objectives and therefore, is very consistent with, and supportive of them. This comprehensive plan has goals to achieve a brighter future and better community for Dodge County, which is consistent with a quality community and the DCA Quality Community Objectives. The Dodge County Local Plan Coordination Committee reviewed and considered these Quality Community Objectives at one of its meetings.



L Eastman Industrial Building **R** Eastman City Hall

Community Involvement. Throughout the planning process, the City of Chauncey, Town of Chester, City of Eastman, City of Milan, City of Rhine and members of the plan coordination committee actively collected and incorporated input from community members. Creating civic engagement was an essential component to developing the comprehensive plan. Several opportunities, including stakeholder meetings, a community survey, and community drop-in session, were provided to the community in order to gain as much input as possible.

To accomplish this, they created a steering committee, the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee, of all local stakeholders who could be envisioned to help guide this plan's de-



velopment, and make the community a better place to live, work, recreate, and learn. This committee did include elected and appointed members from the governing authorities, local economic development practitioners, and local government staff, as well as many others concerned with community and economic development and other issues within the entire community. This Coordination Committee had notable participation; was actively involved in the development of all facets of this comprehensive plan; and had numerous opportunities to both help develop, review, and revise all components. The first orders of business at any Coordination Committee meeting were review of any revisions to previous elements based on committee input, and chances to return to and modify earlier elements, if desired. The initial meeting of the Local Plan Coordination Committee included a formal identification of strengths and weaknesses of the community, including opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis). This identification was utilized in developing all plan elements. A total of five stakeholder meetings were held throughout the planning process.



L Pine Tree Forest **R** Old Stuckey Candy Company Postcard

In addition to holding regular stakeholder meetings, several other opportunities were given to the community to participate in the planning process. An initial public hearing was held on April 1, 2021 and was advertised in the newspaper in order to make citizens aware of the plan update and the planning process. On April 13, 2021, a community input drop-in session was held in order to provide citizens with another opportunity to discuss their opinions on what changes they would like to see with the plan and with their community. Several residents attended and an open discussion occurred. In addition, a final public hearing was held on September 1, 2021, in order to provide the public with the opportunity to review the updated final comprehensive plan draft.

1. Interactive Website

In order to provide the community with a clear understanding of how the planning process would work and to keep residents updated throughout the process, an interactive website was developed. Through the website, citizens could access documents and notes from each stakeholder meeting and could submit responses to the survey questions at any time throu-



ghout the planning process. In addition, a planning timeline was made available on the website so that community members were always aware of when different meetings and planning sessions were occurring.

2. SWOT Analysis

An initial steering committee meeting was held on March 4th, 2021. During this meeting, members of the steering committee participated in a SWOT analysis where they identified strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in Dodge County. Figure 1 shows the results of the SWOT analysis. This activity provided a starting point in identifying the overall needs and opportunities of Dodge County, which are addressed in "Needs and Opportunities".



L Dodge County High School **R** Dodge County Public Library

The SWOT analysis showed that one of Dodge County's biggest strengths is its education system. The high graduation rate and the local colleges in the county contribute to creating a highly educated workforce. Other strengths that were identified included Dodge County's anchor institutions such as the local hospital and the airport. Dodge County also takes pride in its ability to be a historic and welcoming community where residents can enjoy a low cost of living while engaging in a variety of civic clubs, hunting organizations, churches, fishing, and performing art activities.

During the SWOT analysis, several weaknesses of Dodge County were discussed. A key concern for the county is the number of 18 to 35-year-olds who are leaving the area and choosing to reside elsewhere. A likely reason for this is due to the lack of amenities and entertainment options within the county. There is also a lack of housing options such as high-end units and housing for college students. Another concern for the county is the amount of infrastructure damage that occurs due to logging and commercial trucks.

The next portion of the SWOT analysis pertained to identifying opportunities in Dodge County. With the County having an airport and an aviation training program, there is the opportunity to attract more aviation industries. By attracting more industries and employers, there is the potential that more recent graduates will choose to stay within Dodge County and



contribute to the local economy. There is also an opportunity to create more housing options for college students and to revitalize downtown Eastman. Another opportunity for the county is to create a centralized park where community members can gather to socialize and relax. The final portion of the SWOT analysis included the discussion of possible threats to Dodge County. Several major threats that were identified included the lack of a paid fire department, the lack of broadband, and the need to upgrade sewer and water infrastructure. Each of these elements pose a threat to industries and residents looking to locate within the County.

3. Community Survey

With the help of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, Dodge County, and its municipalities, developed a survey to distribute to community members. The survey consisted of nine questions and the goal of the survey was to gain additional public input on the needs and opportunities of the community, which are addressed in "Needs and Opportunities". The survey was distributed to community members through email, through paper copies, and was made available on the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan Update webpage. Results of the survey were discussed at a later stakeholder meeting where the needs and opportunities community were being addressed. A copy of the survey can be found in Appendix A.

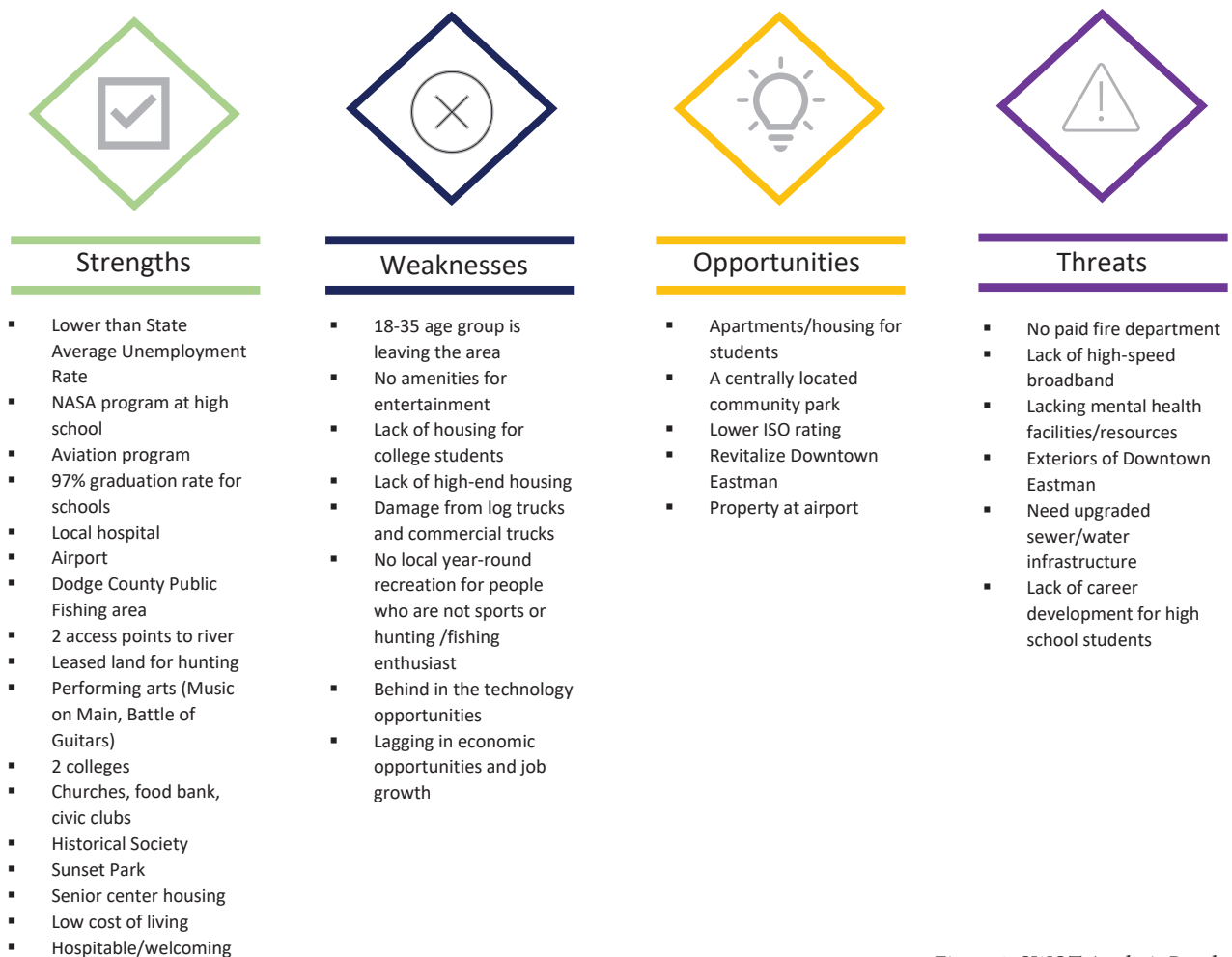


Figure 1. SWOT Analysis Results



COMMUNITY GOALS



The Community Goals Element is described in the State Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive planning as the most important part of the comprehensive plan. It is a concise summary of future community desires and wishes, and is an easily referenced roadmap for community leaders and all concerned with growth and development of the community and its future.

The Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan includes three of the four possible components detailed in the Minimum Standards for the required element. These include: a general Community Vision, separate municipal descriptions/visions, listing of Community Goals, and a description of Long Term Community Policies. These components seek to paint a picture of the desired future community, and answer the planning question, **“Where does the community wish to go?”** To some degree, the Long Term Community Policies also outline guidance strategy of, **“How are we going to get where we desire to go, and also, what do we desire for other development parties to pursue?”**





Community Vision

The Dodge County community is committed to the pursuit of progress and growth within the next 20 years. At the forefront of Dodge County's vision is becoming a regional hub for commerce and industry, efficient in drawing a young, skilled, workforce and patrons from surrounding counties. Dodge County sees its future self as a unique growth center of Southern charm and diverse economic growth centered around outstanding community, educational, and industrial resources, but offered in a dramatic backdrop of interesting, tangible history, and inviting natural resources and outdoor landscape. Practical utilization and promotion of the community's existing resources, assets, features, history, as well as the strategic improvement and expansion the community's infrastructural capabilities and educational programs will serve to further enhance the quality of life for current residents and future generations.



Economic Development

Industry and entrepreneurship will be innovative, well-served, and supported. Dodge County intends to capitalize on its central location for logistics strategy, to invest in various types of infrastructure to prepare industrial areas for growth and occupancy, to incorporate creative methods for attracting diverse types of industry (not limited to industry related to aviation), and to expand promotion and growth outlook in existing industries. Negotiations with industries offering well-paying jobs with benefits will be pursued aggressively by local economic developers.

Workforce support programs in leadership, apprenticeship, career-development, and worker support programs will be established to train and empower members of the current workforce and to recruit and encourage younger generations to become and remain members of the Dodge County workforce. A business incubator model will be established to grow and develop local businesses. The community will be a national leader in avionics education and industry because of the Middle Georgia State University Aviation Campus, and the Heart of Georgia Regional Airport. Dodge County institutions and agencies will continue to collaborate with representatives of the Middle Georgia State University Aviation Campus and the Heart of Georgia Regional Airport to grow airport capacity and capability. The community will expand on this opportunity by establishing pilot career/cooperative programs at local schools and seeking related industry and entrepreneurs. Dodge County High School will prioritize and expand educational offerings in technical and vocational fields as well as in State-of-the-Practice Educational System (STEM, FRC). Local options for technical and vocational training and certification at the post-secondary level will be sought and made available. Middle Georgia State University will forge stronger cooperative relationships with residents of Dodge County.



L Music On Main **R** Terry Coleman Center for Aviation and Technology

Eastman will remain the principal center of commercial, governmental, social, educational, and civic life in the county, although the small towns will be vital centers and nodes of activity and services for rural Dodge County, and desired destinations. Intense commercial, indus-



trial, and other high-density uses will concentrate in or near Eastman in the Greater Eastman Growth Area, primarily because of infrastructure availability and the existing concentration of growth and its support structure. Additional retail, hospitality, entertainment, and other public and private services facilities and infrastructure will be supported, incentivized, and added to appropriately serve the population, tourist sector, and the resulting economic growth. This will further improve the levels of service and the overall quality of life. The City of Eastman will promote of downtown events, offer incentives to downtown businesses and building owners, create policy to encourage façade improvement, historic preservation, and discourage blight, seek funding to install and repair infrastructure, and nurture downtown activity and business development overall.



L Rural Scene, Dodge County **M** Historic Residence, Eastman **B** Dodge County Court House **R** Downtown Eastman

Dodge County will ensure agriculture/agribusiness and forestry will remain mainstays within the community. Through local support, cooperation, collaboration, and promotion of this industry to younger generations through educational institutions and community, this industry will continue to thrive and contribute heavily to the local economy. The robust natural environment in Dodge County will be marketed, emphasizing ideal locations and accommodations for outdoor sports and recreation. Promotion and support of forestry and agriculture, both through viable agricultural, agribusiness, and forestry enterprises and active agritourism, as well as protection of the county's rural character and outdoor landscape will be fostered. There will be greater access to the Ocmulgee River, Dodge County Public Fishing Area, and other natural resources of the county.



Community/Recreation

Local community facilities will be first-rate, including outstanding schools, an innovative hospital known for quality and services far beyond a rural level, top-notch fire and law enforcement departments and other services in the rural parts of the county, unique and accomplished recreational facilities, biking and hiking trails, public parks and green space, and other access to outdoor adventure and local natural resources. The community will have enhanced and more developed retail and entertainment sectors and facilities with greater variety. Improved aesthetics will be a focus and part of the community culture, resulting in the appearance of a well kempt and respected town with quaint, rehabilitated historic properties, gleaming new ones, and a litter-free environment. The unique history of the county will be told through well-preserved landmarks, revitalized downtowns, active tourism promotion, resident and retiree attraction, hospitality development, and interpreted sites.



Dodge County Public Fishing Area

The small towns of the county will be thriving, growing villages with expanded community facilities as necessary to attract further growth and support the populace. Representatives in the public and private sector will strive to decrease litter and provide a range of recreational infrastructure, outlets, public spaces, and activities for families. Diverse, community-wide events will be curated and promoted through the participation of public institutions, faith-based organizations, businesses, civic clubs, and educational organizations. The small towns will be further examples of preserved history in a modern, functional setting, adding additional dimension and character to the outstanding quality of life in Dodge County.



Public Service

Given both great strengths and challenges, Dodge County fully comprehends that only with sufficient and high-quality public services as a solid foundation for supporting various community endeavors will the visions and goals stand an opportunity to be realized.

Dodge County is committed to improve existing infrastructure with quality, sustainable materials that will not only help improve travel experience, upgrade community image but is also necessary to attract further growth and potential investment. Starting with developing maintenance schedule and standards to help change persistent litter habit, keep the roads and streets clean and stay at a good quality level, Dodge County seeks to create a better-developed system in general to support a mix of travel modes including sidewalks, bike lanes, as well as more roadside trees and public green space for all age groups to enjoy. Also, the abundant natural resources present in Dodge County provide excellent opportunities for the making of high-quality public space as soon as the accesses to the lake and river are put in place as the county envisioned. The county will also establish and enforce animal ordinances to ensure better animal control. To further create a strong sense of active community, blighted properties, outdated hotels will be improved or removed, historic buildings will be properly rehabilitated, landscaping elements in downtown will be added to make the community attractive to residents and businesses.



L Heart of Georgia Regional Airport **B** Rural Scene, Dodge County **R** Williamson Mausoleum, Orphans Cemetery



Exodus of younger generation due to minimal job opportunities, difficulties to bring in quality people to work in the area is a major challenge facing the county now. In addition to assistance to help local entrepreneurship grow by supporting incubators, matching grants, helping with advertisement, etc., the county is also willing to provide a diverse range of opportunities for citizens to influence decision making processes in government and economic development. The county will encourage leadership development and community empowerment, enhance trust between citizens and public employees/officials, thus, improving collaborative community efforts, offer a variety of ways to involve different sectors of the community. Along with the loss of younger generations, serious crimes such as drug-use and gang activities pose another serious challenge to the community. As a reply, Dodge County shows a strong resolution in pursuing more effective actions to reduce and deter drug-use, addiction, gang activities, and other crimes in the community.



U Dodge County Public Fishing Area **BL** Milan Municipal Building **BR** Milan Fire Department

To guarantee good and efficient service to the public, the county will refresh its technology in administrative, public safety departments and other communication and operation systems on a regular basis to keep up with modern technology programs and practices.

Dodge County will be a unique example of a rural growth center utilizing its history, character, charm, and natural resources to support a 21st century economy of innovative industry and special educational opportunities with outstanding community facilities and an unparalleled quality of life. The community will be a nationally known center of aviation, avionics, and aerospace training, research, and manufacturing. In a return to its roots in some manner, Dodge County will again be known for its commerce and industry, location, transportation



resources, natural resources, and tourism. There will be new chapters of innovation, history, and uniqueness written to join and further highlight the fascinating and visible facets of unique past endeavors, and the vivid natural tapestry of the county's rural landscape. The community will truly continue to take flight together and further enhance its reputation as an exceptional center of progress and quality of life, truly unsurpassed and unexpected in a beautiful rural setting. Dodge County will maintain its uniqueness in level of services, economic development, education, and other facets of an outstanding quality of life. The community will be a thriving, growing, truly special rural place which will be very attractive for living, working, doing business, visiting, or recreating.



L Historic Residence **R** Community Decoration

Healthcare

To better meet the needs of everyone in the community, Dodge County will expand access to specialty healthcare to address mental health issues that is very much needed in the community. The community voiced inconvenience and lack of access to hospital/critical care due to the strict working hours of doctors who mostly work from 8 to 5. To address the issue, the county will suggest and encourage the hospital and doctors' offices to stay open for more accommodating hours and provide longer time services to the community.

Housing

Dodge county also needs more affordable housing for its seniors and students. The county will seek to create more retirement community housing for its elderly people and encourage a diverse housing mix to accommodate people with different needs.



City of Chauncey

Description

The City of Chauncey is a small community of about 325 persons located in southeastern Dodge County along U.S. 341 and Georgia Highway 165. The picturesque hometown is the location of a still thriving Langdale Forest Products pole plant. Chauncey was established as Station Number 12 on the Macon and Brunswick Railroad in the late 1860s. Its early history was very much associated with the burgeoning timber and turpentine industries. It is said to have been named in honor of a timberman from New Hampshire who promised to erect a town church but died before that was accomplished. The first resident of the town was Methodist Minister William K. Bussey, a Civil war veteran, who was appointed as the first railroad agent. Timbermen did come through for the town as Summer, Mullin, and Hill built a large shingle mill in Chauncey in 1873, named the Mullinger Mill. Summer and Mullin did build the town a church for all denominations in 1874, which also became the first town school a year later. The Town of Chauncey was formally incorporated in September 1883. The first mayor was Owen W. Bush. L.M. Curry built the first two-story brick building in 1883, with the bottom floor serving as a store and the upper one with rooming apartments and a public hall. A separate Methodist Church was built in 1882, followed by the Missionary Baptist in 1884, and the Primitive Baptist in 1885.

The heyday of Chauncey occurred in the town's first decades as its population zenith was 683 in 1890. Local history notes that many families and businesses moved away from 1895-1905 as many timbermen and turpentiners left as nearby timber supplies were exhausted. The town did not give up and looked to schools and merchandising to rejuvenate itself. Many of the current brick buildings on Main Street were constructed around 1910. James Mullin is said to have established Georgia's first telephone in 1880-1885. The local telephone exchange was created in 1912. Chauncey has long been associated with schools. A town resident and minister James D. Miller, who organized the Baptist Church in the 1880s, was one of the principal proponents and planners of Ebenezer Baptist College, which was established in Cochran, Georgia and was the forerunner of Middle Georgia College. The Town of Chauncey had itself rechartered in 1912 to allow it to issue bonds for a public school. As a result, Chauncey became the first municipality in Georgia to construct and equip a modern school building. The Chauncey School was completed in 1914 for \$10,000 and featured six classrooms, a state-of-the art science laboratory, and an upper story auditorium. A Valedictorian of Chauncey High School, a Mrs. Harrell, is said to have become one of the first women air traffic controllers in World War II. The City of Chauncey acquired the school in 1990 and the school now serves as The City of Chauncey's City Hall/Municipal Complex. The Town of Chauncey was reincorporated as the City of Chauncey in 1937.



Vision

The City of Chauncey wants to be a thriving small town which retains its warm, caring hometown feel and values, and which maintains its proud history and character. Continual upgrades and installments will support and enrich the quality of life for residents of Chauncey. Remaining committed to providing a high standard of public service in the community, Chauncey will acquire funding to improve infrastructure, construct a new fire station facility, and install a walking track and parking at the City ballfield. The Chauncey School will be restored to its early splendor and will be the center of the town's governmental and social life.

Needs	Opportunities
Municipal Complex (Chauncey School) Renovation	Chauncey School
City Gym improvements	U.S. 341
Water system improvements	Historic building stock
Sewage system	City ballfield
Street improvements	City gym
New businesses/Dollar Store	
Recreation improvements	
New fire station	



L Chauncey Municipal Center **R** Chauncey United Methodist Church



Town of Chester

Description

The Town of Chester is located in the northeastern corner of Dodge County with Georgia Highway 126 passing east/west through town as Main Street. The nearby towns of Cochran in Bleckley County is located about 13 miles west on GA 126 and Cadwell in Laurens County, about 8 miles southeast on GA 126. Georgia Highway 257 passes northeast/southwest through town. Dexter, also in Laurens County, is about 7 miles northeast of Chester. Chester is the only current municipality in Dodge County retaining a “town” designation. The town is the location of Dodge State Prison which results in a total Census population of nearly 1,600 persons. Town population outside of prisoners has remained mainly between 300-400 persons throughout its history. Chester was created as a result of the Empire Lumber Company of Chattanooga, Tennessee constructing the Empire and Dublin Railroad in 1889 to transport timber to its Empire sawmill. The railroad was reconstructed as the Oconee and Western in 1892 and acquired by the Wrightsville and Tennille Railroad in 1897. The community was said to be located in one of the most fertile sections of the county, and was founded by June Williams, a turpentine man and H.M. Hancock, a merchant. One of the first businesses was the J.P. Williams Company, peach growers. This legacy continues today with Tom Sawyer Farms, Dodge County’s sole remaining peach farm, located along Georgia 257 south of town between Chester and Empire.

Another interesting fact of history for Chester is that its first postmaster was John Hall, an African American. The town was formally incorporated in December 1902 as a one-half mile circle from the depot of the Wrightsville and Tennille Railroad. The town received a new charter in 1916. The railroad was abandoned in 1941. Chester has remained a flourishing community despite many setbacks primarily because of its school and banks. The first public school was organized in 1901, and later the town was the location of the Chester Consolidated School which remained one of five high schools in the county until the creation of Dodge County High School in 1957. It remained in use as an elementary school until 1990. The school is now owned by the town and is the center of community recreation. The Chester Banking company was first organized in 1909 and was attributed as much help to the economy of the surrounding county section. A branch of the Colony Bank remains active within the town at present. A Dollar General store opened within the community in 2016, improving access to food and common home goods.



Vsion

The Town of Chester wishes to remain a small town attractive for rural residential living which is peaceful and quiet with local amenities and necessities, but with convenient location near other larger communities with more urban opportunities. The community desires to provide amply upgraded streets and infrastructure for public use while exuding a more aesthetically pleasing clean, green, and well-maintained appearance.

Needs	Opportunities
Downtown revitalization	Location
Blight removal	Dodge State Prison
Housing improvements	Chester School
Street improvements	
Economic development	
Recreation improvements	
Drainage improvements	
Sewage system improvements	
Water system improvements	



L Chester Gymnasium **R** Sweet Home Primitive Baptist Church



City of Eastman

Description

The City of Eastman is located in the center of Dodge County, is the county seat, has a population of about 5,500 persons, and is by far the largest municipality of Dodge County. Eastman is clearly the governmental, educational, commercial, industrial, and civic center of the county, and is a progressive community boasting amenities, facilities, and quality-of-life quite unique and unexpected for a rural community its size. Contributing to its exceptional history and unique persona, the community was established, initially developed, and named for Northern Capitalists, William E. Dodge and William Pitt Eastman. Dodge was the president of both the Macon and Brunswick Railroad and the Georgia Land and Lumber Company. The Macon and Brunswick Railroad came through the area in the late 1860s, and Dodge County was established in 1870. W.P. Eastman, an associate of W.E. Dodge, provided the land for the town which had been known as Station No. 13 on the railroad, and it was incorporated in October 1870. Eastman quickly became the center of Georgia's early timber industry supported by rail. Eastman and Dodge were also prominent in providing public facilities, including the town's first school, and promoting local culture. They were also behind promotions of Eastman for the loveliness of its scenery, its beautiful undulating topography, its perfectly drained firm soils, and the salubriousness of its climate highlighted by abundant pure water and the healing balm of soothing, soft pine air. Dodge built the 150 bed upscale Uplands Hotel and promoted Eastman as the optimum winter resort for both tourists and invalids. As a consequence of the town's development, promotion, and resulting culture, Eastman in its early days was known as "The Paris of the South." Eastman was reincorporated as a city in 1905. Its population consistently increased Census to Census all the way to 1970's 5,416 despite Dodge County reaching a population zenith in 1920. Eastman received additional fame when W.S. Stuckey established a local pecan business in the 1930s, constructing the first Stuckey's store in 1937, and building a 1940s candy plant in town, all of which grew into a nationwide chain, Stuckey's. This led many to label Eastman as the "Candy Capital of the South." W.S. Stuckey also led the effort to establish the local airport in 1966, which has transitioned into the community's signature Heart of Georgia Regional Airport. Forestry and farming remain important components of a well diversified local economy.

Today, the City of Eastman is located in the heart of Dodge County which itself is in the heart of central South Georgia and remains a progressive and innovative small town with impressive community amenities and facilities, and an exceptional quality of life. The city is traversed by the major U.S. highways central to intrastate Georgia travel, U.S. 23, and U.S. 341, and is also intersected by Georgia highways 46, 87, and 117. The community heralds a thriving 94 bed hospital with state-of-the-art equipment, many advanced services, and a critical care unit, all uncommon in a rural community. The Dodge County Hospital has been appropria-



tely recognized as one of the top ten rural hospitals in the State of Georgia. The local school system has technically up-to-date, modern schools and facilities, and has similarly been recognized as a medal winning “top Georgia high school.” The community also boasts of top public safety facilities, ample water/sewer systems, and well developed industrial parks and sites served by an active Class 1 railroad on the Norfolk Southern System (the successor to the Macon and Brunswick Railroad). A number of impressive industrial concerns, including Alcoa, have plants in Eastman. Perhaps the most important and impressive local community facilities include the Heart of Georgia Regional Airport with a nearly 6,600 foot runway, a 12,000 square foot terminal, and technical facilities rivaling those offered by much larger metro areas. Adjacent to the Regional Airport, is a 22-acre campus of Middle Georgia State University. This Eastman Aviation campus is Georgia’s only public university campus offering primarily aviation and aerospace offerings, and these offerings are on a world-class level. The Eastman campus has an Institute for Aerospace Research which already has an established international reputation and accomplished groundbreaking work in designing and creating components for NASA. Georgia Military College operates a postsecondary campus in Eastman. The community continues to herald extraordinary cultural opportunities, inclu-



L Heart of Georgia Regional Airport **R** Downtown Eastman

ding many active civic clubs, churches of all denominations, an involved Arts Guild, and an acclaimed Music On Main which regularly has performances in a renovated downtown 1942 Magnolia Theater which are simulcast on the radio. The community is also supported by a very active Eastman-Dodge Chamber of Commerce with a state-of-the-art conference center with 10,000 square feet of event space and catering capabilities. All of Eastman’s exceptionalism and outstanding municipal offerings are provided in the still stunning surrounding pastoral beauty of the rolling countryside of farms and verdant pine forests and the nearby outdoor adventure and fun afforded by the mystic and historic Ocmulgee River. Eastman truly is an unexpected and unequaled rural center of extraordinary offerings, quality of life, and unique potential.



Vision

Eastman will continue to be the governmental, educational, commercial, industrial, and civic center of Dodge County, while remaining a progressive and innovative rural leader with unexpected, unequaled, and unsurpassed amenities, community facilities, and overall quality of life. Eastman will remain a charming and involved small town with a supportive and family-friendly atmosphere conducive to expanding residents and businesses alike. The community will continue to be a leader in agriculture, education, healthcare, and human and aviation technology. Leadership programs will be implemented to engage and empower citizens. Downtown Eastman will be a revitalized center of expanded retail and service offerings, events, gathering areas, and only one of many sources of expanded jobs and business and industry concerns within the community. Downtown structures will be attractive, bustling with activity, sidewalks complete with landscaping elements and installments for public use, and the downtown area will offer pleasant public spaces, parks and events for locals and visitors to enjoy. Infrastructure upgrades and additions will be prioritized for optimized efficiency and service. The Eastman Aviation Campus of Middle Georgia State University will remain an expanding bastion of world class aviation and aerospace offerings with an enhanced world-wide reputation.



L Eastman Farmers Market

R Georgia Military College, Eastman Campus



Needs	Opportunities
Downtown revitalization and development	Eastman Aviation Campus at Middle Georgia State University
New industry	Heart of Georgia Regional Airport
Housing improvements	Existing industry
Technology advancements	Dodge County Hospital
Water system improvements/upgrades	Dodge County School System
Sewer system improvements	Ocmulgee River
Street/streetscape improvements	Farmer's Market/Agriculture
Aesthetic improvements	Magnolia Theater/Arts Guild
Upgrades to Government facilities	Music On Main
Upgraded public facilities	Historic building stock



L Dodge County Hospital
R Eastman Veterans Memorial Park
B Middle Georgia State University, Eastman Aviation Campus



City of Milan

Description

The City of Milan is located at the southern boundary of Dodge County which passes through the center of town, which means the municipality is also a Telfair County municipality. Milan is located along U.S. 280 about eight miles west of Helena (now McRae-Helena). The community has an interesting history, first arising as a train stop on the Savannah, Americus, and Montgomery (SAM) Railway in the 1880s. It was named, like many SAM Railway towns, after the European city in Italy. Milan is often incorrectly listed as the location of a “Civil War Bull Pen,” but this is a confused spelling of the Confederate prisoner of War Camp Lawton in Millen, Georgia. The Town of Milan was first incorporated in October 1891 as a one-half circle from the SAM Railway depot. For some reason, Milan’s town charter was repealed by the Georgia General Assembly in 1893, only to be reinstated in 1906. Early on Milan was described as a serene and peaceful village surrounded by rich farmlands with a train depot. A 1906 Georgia gazetteer noted Milan had “a money order post office, express and telegraph offices, some merchantile interests, schools, churches, etc. and a 1900 population of 112.” Reflecting the incorporation changes, the official Census numbers of Milan do not start until 1910, when it had a reported population of 287. The Town of Milan’s incorporation was officially changed to The City of Milan in August 1916 after a July 1916 referendum. The city limits were described by that charter as “one-half mile from the northwest corner of the Seaboard Air Line Railway passenger station.” The City continued to flourish and its population grew to 630 in 1930. A 1932 Dodge County history described Milan as one of the best small business towns in this section. It was depicted as having several brick business houses, an up-to-date bank, a modern school building, and a splendid brick hotel, two cotton gins, and three cotton warehouses.

Unlike many of the small towns in Dodge County, Milan has shown more adaptability to changing times and events and continued to exhibit steady population growth until 1980 (1,115). Even today the 2010 Census population of 700 for Milan, makes it the second largest Dodge municipality behind Eastman. The community was able to have Milan State Prison locate in the community in 1989, although it was shuttered by the state in December 2008. After the state prison closure, City officials worked with the private Youth Services International company to open a contracted Youth Development Center at the old state prison site. This facility was closed in 2015. More recently the community has worked hard to open a transition center for veterans at the facility in conjunction with a nonprofit, named the Milan Sanctuary Project. The original SAL Railway depot remains and is being renovated for community use. The railroad itself is now owned by the Georgia Department of Transportation, operated by the Heart of Georgia Shortline Railroad, and has growing use because of connections with the Port of Savannah and the inland port at Cordele. Likewise, the Old



Milan School is utilized for community purposes. Milan also has its own Milan Development Authority, a site marketed for industrial purposes, and holds an annual Milan Harvest Fest in the fall. The community has also supported the development of a local farmers market and countywide aquaponics farming operation. The community continues to have a functioning bank with a branch location of Wilcox County State Bank operating in the city. In 2016, Milan made some interesting new history and national news when Georgia's last original WWII Merrill's Marauder, Vincent Melillo, was buried at Midway United Methodist Church in Milan beside his wife, the former Frankie Doris Thompson of Milan.



L Millan Aquaponics **R** Historic Milan Depot **B** Historic Caboose



Vision

The City of Milan desires to remain a serene and peaceful small town which exhibits a progressive leadership and ethic, while nurturing a caring, family-friendly atmosphere, and while developing a supportive hometown with expanding facilities, amenities, and opportunities. The community will encourage and support additional housing and business opportunities for its citizens, and will seek the jobs, industry, and downtown investment which will provide greater economic stability. City infrastructure improvements will expand capacity for local service provision and public use and additional recreational development will offer community a variety of opportunities for outdoor activity. Local structural treasures will be restored to preserve local history and to impart younger generations with the knowledge of Milan's rich cultural and historical heritage. Milan wishes to be a great American small town with a big heart and expanding opportunities.



Downtown Milan



Needs	Opportunities
Downtown revitalization	Railroad depot
Industrial development	Old Milan School
Housing improvements	Milan Development Authority
Milan Theater renovation	Industrial site
Railroad depot renovation	Heart of Georgia Railroad
Recreation/park improvements	Milan Sanctuary Project/Old Milan State Prison
Blight removal/aesthetic improvements	Aquaponics project
Street/streetscape improvements	Milan Harvest Fest
Water system improvements	Farmer's market
Drainage improvements	ISO 4 rating
Sewage system improvements	Milan Theater



City of Rhine

Description

The City of Rhine is a historic small town located in the southwest corner of Dodge County near Wilcox and Telfair counties. The community of about 400 persons is located along U.S. 280 and is also intersected by Georgia Highway 117 in its center. Abbeville, the county seat of Wilcox County, is only six miles west along U.S. 280, while the City of Milan, split by Dodge and Telfair counties, is eight miles east along U.S. 280. Eastman is located 15 miles north on U.S. 117. Georgia Highway 165 branches off Georgia 117 in the northern edge of town leading to Chauncey 11 miles northeast. Rhine was established as a railroad town in 1886 in a rich agricultural and timber section of Dodge County when the Savannah, Americus, and Montgomery (SAM) Railway was completed through Dodge County. Like many towns along the SAM Railway, the town was named for a European place, the Rhine River of Germany, by the Railway's president. Early in its history the community was described as a thriving and enterprising little town and good trade center.

Rhine was established on lands owned by J.M. Swymer, G.W. and D.M. Ryals opened the first general store, and three brothers named Robitzsch established a large turpentine still. The town quickly flourished and was formally incorporated as the Town of Rhine in September 1891 as a one-half mile circle in every direction from J.M. Swymer's store. The community was not initially allowed to regulate the sale of liquors, but the charter was quickly amended in 1893 to allow town regulation of liquor sales. The town received a new charter in 1917 (effective January 1, 1918) which more particularly described town limits as "one-half mile from the east corner of a certain brick building owned by Mrs. Mamie Maloy, now occupied by King and Brown, bankers." Banking and schools have been important in keeping Rhine viable as a municipality until present. The Rhine Banking Company was chartered in 1918 and was described as one of the strongest banks in that section of the state. Even today the Citizens Bank and Trust Company operates a Rhine branch location. Rhine was the location of one of five consolidated schools in early Dodge County school history. While Rhine High School closed in 1957 with the opening of Dodge County High School, the school continued to be operated as an elementary school until 1990. The community has celebrated a "Pon-town Festival" since 1976 when Mayor J.T. Williams first wanted the town to participate in a fun way with the nation's 200th birthday. The festival has continued due to community interest and love of its citizens. The town's railroad, while enduring a number of ebbs and flows, is still present and is now enjoying a growing comeback. It became part of the Seaboard Air Line Railway in 1900, and later was picked up as part of the Georgia Southwestern Shortline Railroad in 1989. When the Rhine to Rochelle section was formally abandoned in 1994, the Georgia Department of Transportation purchased the railroad. It is now operated as the Heart of Georgia Short line Railroad and has been given new life as part of the rail con-



nection between the Port of Savannah and the inland port at Cordele. The Town of Rhine became one of Georgia's newest cities in 2009 when Rep. Jim Pruett authored H.B. 265 which rechartered Rhine as the City of Rhine as "a one-mile circle from the 1917 charter center point, later known as the Williams Banking Company." Rhine's population was 191 persons at 1900 in its first Census and quickly grew to 321 in 1910, and had more than doubled to 396 by 1920. After that time slow, modest growth continued to 1950 when town population reached 514 persons. This was followed by slow decline until 1970 when the population dipped to 471. There was a resurgence in population from 1970 to 1980 when the town reached a historic population zenith of 590 persons. Since that time, the community has slowly declined in population each Census reaching 394 in 2010. The 2019 American Community Survey population estimate shows a population growth by slightly 100 to 315 people.



L Downtown Rhine **R** Historic Methodist Church

Vision

The City of Rhine desires to remain a quaint but thriving small hometown which is family-friendly and where community spirit and caring is strong. Community amenities, facilities, infrastructure, and services would continue to be improved and expanded, and more supportive businesses opened. The old Rhine School and the Pondtown Festival would continue to be sources of community pride and spirit.

Needs	Opportunities
Water system improvements	Old Rhine School/Gym
Old Rhine School improvements	Heart of Georgia Railroad
Recreational Park improvements	Pondtown Festival
Sewage system establishment	Welcome Center/Museum
Fire protection upgrades	
Downtown revitalization/street banners	
Street improvements	
Farmers Market	



Community Goals

Economic Development



1. Nurture existing businesses/industries/entrepreneurs
2. Develop/implement economic development incentives/marketing strategy
3. Utilize/support the Eastman-Dodge Chamber of Commerce, the Dodge County Eastman Development Authority, the Ocmulgee Regional Joint Development Authority, and other local/regional/state agencies
4. Develop/extend/maintain infrastructure to facilitate/guide development
5. Seek county-wide broadband/fiber availability/capacity upgrades and maintain state-of-the-art communications technology
6. Seek diversified economic development
7. Recruit compatible new businesses/industry/jobs
8. Support entrepreneurial/small business development
9. Address continuing education/job skills improvements
10. Improve adult literacy rate
11. Continue support for Middle Georgia State University and its local Aviation Campus and Georgia Military College's Eastman campus
12. Improve transportation access/quality
13. Develop U.S. 341 Eastside Bypass/truck route around Eastman
14. Continue to develop/maintain existing and new industrial parks through technological, infrastructure, and other enhancements
15. Enhance/grow tourism
16. Support continued downtown revitalization of Eastman and county's smaller municipalities
17. Continue support for state/private correction facilities in Dodge County
18. Maintain economic viability/support/enhance agriculture/forestry land uses
19. Seek additional traditional and alternative enterprises/venues/markets supportive of agriculture/forestry
20. Retain local graduates
21. Guide/direct appropriate development/landscaping along U.S. 341 Bypass/Terry Coleman Parkway and new U.S. 23 Spur
22. Support local leadership programs





Natural & Cultural Resources

1. Protect significant natural resources of Dodge County
2. Conserve/protect Ocmulgee River and its corridor
3. Support expansion of Ocmulgee Mounds National Park to include preserve status
4. Conserve existing agricultural/forestry land uses
5. Seek compatible utilization/recreational development supportive of existing rural character/quality of life
6. Utilize existing and new public infrastructure to guide desired growth and development
7. Identify/encourage protection of important plant/animal habitats and natural areas of Dodge County
8. Conserve/protect/promote Dodge County Public Fishing Area
9. Increase public access to Ocmulgee River through park/natural development initiatives
10. Maintain/utilize/preserve/promote/adaptively use historic resources/heritage of Dodge County
11. Support existing/encourage development of new nature-based, heritage, recreation, and agri-tourism opportunities
12. Seek increased public education/awareness of county's important natural/cultural resources
13. Improve community's appearance/aesthetics





Historic Residence, Chauncey

Housing



1. Encourage use of state/federal programs
2. Improve housing quality/appearance
3. Seek to encourage more diverse housing mix
4. Encourage/support neighborhood revitalization/conservation
5. Conserve historic residential properties
6. Support/utilize Eastman Housing Authority

Land Use



1. Plan/manage/guide future growth and development
2. Encourage compatible development/utilization
3. Preserve rural, small town character/quality of life
4. Develop/implement/enforce county-wide land use planning/subdivision/manufactured housing/growth management/housing and building code regulations
5. Continue downtown central business district revitalization in Eastman and county's smaller municipalities
6. Explore feasibility of annexation into Eastman
7. Conserve/protect significant natural/cultural resources through compatible development/utilization
8. Maintain agriculture/forestry as viable economic land uses through traditional and alternative means
9. Improve community's appearance/aesthetics





Community Facilities and Services



1. Maintain/improve Eastman-Dodge regional recreation facility and other existing recreation facilities countywide and develop new parks/recreation facilities/activities as needed
2. Support further development of Dodge Connection's facilities/programs
3. Improve public access to Ocmulgee River
4. Continue to support Eastman-Dodge County Chamber of Commerce/welcome center and Terry Coleman Conference Center
5. Develop U.S. 341 Eastside Bypass/truck route around Eastman
6. Guide/direct appropriate development/landscaping along U.S. 341 Bypass/Terry Coleman Parkway and new U.S. 23 Spur
7. Improve/promote transportation access/quality for all modes of travel
8. Develop overall transportation improvement plan
9. Continue to improve fire/public safety/emergency medical facilities/services countywide
10. Continue to support/improve Dodge County Hospital and local medical services
11. Provide/maintain adequate governmental facilities/services
12. Develop animal control/rescue facilities/services countywide
13. Maintain/upgrade/expand water/sewer and other infrastructure facilities and service, as needed
14. Utilize existing and planned infrastructure location to guide compatible growth/development
15. Improve countywide communications technology, such as broadband technology/fiber access availability
16. Upgrade countywide solid waste management
17. Maintain/utilize/promote/preserve/adaptively use historic resources/heritage of Dodge County
18. Promote/utilize mass emergency alert program for severe weather threats/other disasters
19. Continue support for Dodge County Library/Ocmulgee Regional Library System Headquarters
20. Maintain/upgrade quality local educational facilities/programs/technology
21. Continue support for local post-secondary education opportunities, including Middle Georgia State University and Georgia Military College





Intergovernmental Coordination

1. Continue to maintain/upgrade joint E-911 program/facility/equipment with Wilcox County
2. Maintain/enhance local, regional, state cooperation
3. Continue to seek sharing/cooperation/consolidation in service delivery
4. Cooperate in coordinated land use planning/regulation/code enforcement
5. Support local leadership programs, such as Leadership Dodge and those targeting its alumni and youth



U Olive Orchard **R** Pine Trees and Rainbow, Dodge County



Long Term Community Policies



Economic Development

1. The community will support and promote programs for the retention of existing local industries and entrepreneurs in its support and quest of business/industry retention and additional job opportunities
2. The community will work to develop and implement economic development incentives/marketing strategy to attract business/industry
3. The community will utilize the Eastman-Dodge County Chamber of Commerce, the Dodge County Eastman Development Authority, and other existing development organizations to assist small cities of Dodge County in enlarging their economic base
4. The community will work to develop, extend, and maintain the necessary infrastructure to facilitate, guide, and accommodate future development
5. The community will pursue capacity improvements to Internet access/service and facilities supportive of state-of-the-art communications, fiber-optics, and broadband technology
6. The community will seek diversified economic development with jobs and wages of all levels
7. The community will continue to actively recruit new industry and commercial/retail development compatible with, and supportive of, the resources, infrastructure, existing economy, and the natural environments of the county
8. The community will work to support entrepreneurial/small business development to promote job diversification
9. The community will work together to improve educational and skills levels to ensure a better qualified workforce for existing and future employers, including development of a local workforce development/training center near the airport
10. The community will collaboratively support efforts to improve the county's adult literacy rate through cooperative efforts with the school system and educational outreach programs
11. The community will continue to support local post-secondary education opportunities and their expansion, including Middle Georgia State University and Georgia Military College, as needed, through infrastructure upgrades, increased program offerings, and other means
12. The community will continue to support Middle Georgia State University's Aviation Campus and its future expansion, as needed, including infrastructure (technology and otherwise) upgrades and/or additions
13. The community will support Dodge Connection: A Communities in Schools Approach collaborative
14. The community will continue to seek transportation improvements (highway, airport, rail, bicycle, and pedestrian) to enhance and support economic development efforts



15. The community will continue to advocate development of a U.S. 341 Eastside Bypass/truck route around Eastman
16. The community will work to develop and maintain the necessary infrastructure and other improvements at the Eastman-Dodge County Industrial Park and new Airport Industrial Park to facilitate and accommodate desired economic growth
17. The community will work cooperatively to increase promotion and marketing of tourist facilities/services and attractions located in the community, and otherwise grow tourism as an important component of the local economy
18. The community will continue downtown revitalization efforts in Eastman and the county's smaller municipalities through the use of the Downtown Development Authority, Chamber of Commerce, and other local, state, and federal incentives, and means, as appropriate
19. The community will continue to support existing state and private detention centers/prisons (Dodge State Prison, YDC, RYDC) and their expansion, as needed, as well as construction of additional such facilities
20. The community will support technological advancements to facilitate and promote agricultural production
21. The community will support and facilitate the maintenance of agriculture and forestry as viable, functioning economic land uses
22. The community will support and facilitate the ongoing viability of a local farmer's market, and the development of a local aquaponics industry
23. The community will maintain agriculture/forestry as viable economic uses through traditional and alternative enterprises, such as agri-tourism, nature-based tourism, hunting/fishing, and related venues
24. The community will pursue development of an officially designated Georgia Grown Trail highlighting local agricultural products, such as peanuts, peaches, berries, olives, and others
25. The community will work together to develop, support, and promote programs that will enhance opportunities for local graduates to both live and work in the community upon graduation from high school, advanced technical training/technical college, and/or college
26. The community will work to guide and direct appropriate development and landscaping along the U.S. 341 Bypass/Terry Coleman Parkway and the new U.S. 23 Spur
27. The community will continue to advocate for widening of U.S. 23 to Macon and other desired highway/road improvements
28. The community will continue to advocate completion of U.S. 280 widening and promote the route's use as an east-west route across Georgia
29. The community will increase promotion of U.S. 341/Golden Isles Parkway for its direct access to coast/port at Brunswick
30. The community will continue to participate in and support efforts to enhance the annual Peaches to Beaches yardsale along U.S. 341 and support development of a similar multi-county yardsale along U.S. 280
31. The community will utilize and support the Eastman-Dodge County Chamber of Commerce, Dodge County Eastman Development Authority, and other agency programs/resources to further develop/grow the county's economy





Natural and Cultural Resources

1. The community will seek to conserve and protect the Ocmulgee River Corridor, the county's significant groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, floodplains, other important natural and cultural resources (such as Devil's Den and Stuckey's Mill Pond), and the open spaces and landscapes of the county while promoting compatible utilization and recreational development
2. The community will work to conserve its existing prime farmland and forest areas while seeking development compatible with its existing rural character and quality of life
3. The community will support technological advancements to facilitate and promote agricultural production
4. The community will maintain agriculture/forestry as viable economic land uses through traditional and alternative enterprises
5. The community will manage its growth and development through public infrastructure location/community investment and county-wide land use planning and appropriate regulations
6. The community will work to identify and encourage protection of important, unique plant/animal habitats and natural areas
7. The community will seek to conserve and protect the Dodge County Public Fishing Area and promote its use
8. The community will work to increase access to the Ocmulgee River through local and/or state park/Ocmulgee Mounds National Park expansion/natural development initiatives
9. The community will maintain, utilize, promote, and preserve its heritage, and will seek to encourage public and private adaptive use/reuse of its historic buildings, historic districts, and landmark structures and pursue listing in the National Register of Historic Places, as appropriate
10. The community will work to utilize and promote the county's historic, natural, and agricultural sites and venues for compatible, appropriate heritage, nature-based, and agri-tourism development
11. The community will seek to increase public education/awareness of the county's important natural/cultural resources and their conservation
12. The community will work to improve its appearance and aesthetics, including elimination of green boxes county-wide and otherwise upgrade solid waste management, including increased recycling





Housing

1. The community will encourage the use of state and federal programs to improve availability of quality housing for all residents
2. The community will address substandard housing and concentrations of blight, including manufactured housing developments, and will cooperatively upgrade their quality and appearance through rehabilitation, removal, code enforcement and regulation
3. The community will seek to encourage a diverse mix of safe, quality housing, including affordable, rental, elderly, starter homes, and compatible workforce housing
4. The community will encourage and support neighborhood revitalization/conservation efforts to stabilize and upgrade declining residential areas
5. The community will work to conserve historic residential properties, whenever possible
6. The community will utilize the Eastman Housing Authority to provide and maintain affordable housing options and meet special needs



Land Use

1. The community will plan, manage, and guide its future growth and development, and encourage growth compatible with its existing rural, small town character
2. The community will cooperate to develop, implement, and enforce county-wide land use regulations, subdivision/manufactured housing regulations, growth management, and housing and building codes
3. The community will continue downtown/central business district revitalization efforts in Eastman and the county's smaller municipalities through use of the Downtown Development Authority, Chamber of Commerce, and local, state, and federal incentives, as appropriate
4. The community will work together to explore the feasibility of annexation into Eastman where appropriate and desired
5. The community will seek to conserve and protect the county's significant natural and cultural resources through their compatible development/utilization
6. The community will work to protect/conservate its existing rural character/landscape and quality of life, and will promote appropriately compatible development
7. The community will seek to improve its appearance and aesthetics through litter prevention/education and control, landscaping/beautification, and other means



8. The community will maintain agriculture/forestry as viable economic land uses through traditional and alternative enterprises



Community Facilities and Services

1. The community will maintain and improve the Eastman-Dodge regional recreation facility and other existing parks/recreation facilities county-wide and work to establish additional such facilities and activities to serve existing and future populations
2. The community will continue to support further development of Dodge Connection's facilities and programs as needed
3. The community will continue to seek to provide improved access to the Ocmulgee River
4. The community will continue to work together to support the Eastman-Dodge County Chamber of Commerce, its programs, and the local welcome center, and the Terry Coleman conference Center
5. The community will continue to advocate for development of a U.S. 341 Eastside Bypass/truck route around Eastman
6. The community will work to guide and direct appropriate development and landscaping along the Eastman/U.S. 341 Bypass/Terry Coleman Parkway and the new U.S. 23 Spur
7. The community will continue to seek transportation improvements (highway, airport, rail, bicycle, and pedestrian) to enhance and support community and economic development efforts, and overall quality of life
8. The community will continue to seek resources to maintain existing paved roads/streets, and to pave additional dirt and connector roads, and for appropriate planning, and investment prioritization of these improvements
9. The community will continue to advocate for completion of U.S. 280 widening
10. The community will continue to pursue widening of U.S. 23 through Dodge County and on to Macon
11. The community will seek widening of GA 46 to the airport/industrial park, and then to I-16
12. The community will pursue improvements to GA 117 and other state highways
13. The community will continue to improve local roads and improve traffic flow through paving, resurfacing, and other means
14. The community will develop an overall transportation improvement plan
15. The community will work to improve fire and police services county-wide, including equipment maintenance, replacement, and upgrades, adequate training of personnel, and facility improvements as needed
16. The community will continue to work together to improve and support the advancement of its local hospital and medical services
17. The community will seek to continue to improve public safety services and facilities
18. The community will provide and maintain adequate government facilities/services, including city and county administrative facilities and courthouse judicial facilities



19. The community will cooperate to support development of animal control/rescue facilities/services countywide
20. The community will maintain, upgrade, and expand its existing infrastructure and services to enhance the quality of life, and to attract/guide desired, compatible growth and development
21. The community will pursue development/upgrades to communications and broadband technology facilities and services countywide
22. The community will work to establish county-wide solid waste convenience centers and otherwise upgrade solid waste management, including increased recycling
23. The community will maintain, utilize, promote, and preserve its heritage, and will seek to encourage public and private adaptive use/reuse of historic landmark structures, buildings, and historic districts county-wide and pursue listing in the National Register of Historic Places, as appropriate
24. The community will promote and utilize a mass emergency alert program and educational efforts to ensure the safety of citizens in the event of severe weather threats or other disasters
25. The community will continue to support the Dodge County Library and the Ocmulgee Regional Library System Headquarters through facility, equipment, staffing, program, and other improvements/expansion, as needed
26. The community will seek to enhance local educational and technological opportunities by continuing to support, maintain, and upgrade its local educational system facilities and programs
27. The community will continue to support local post-secondary education opportunities and their expansion, including Middle Georgia State University and Georgia Military College, as needed, through infrastructure upgrades, increased program offerings, and other means



Intergovernmental Coordination

1. The community will continue to work with Wilcox County to maintain and upgrade the joint E-911 program, facility, and equipment, as needed, to provide quality service to residents of both counties
2. The community will continue to cooperate locally, regionally, and on the state level to improve, develop, and plan for the desired future of Dodge County
3. The community will continue to seek ways to cooperate and coordinate efforts in the delivery of services, and will investigate the possibility of shared and consolidated services where appropriate and feasible
4. The community will cooperate in coordinated land use planning and regulation and code enforcement to manage and guide its future growth and development
5. The community will support local leadership programs, including Leadership Dodge and those targeting youth and Leadership Dodge alumni, as well as involved citizenry through active local civic organizations and other means



NEEDS & OPPORTUNITIES



The Needs and Opportunities Element is required of all local governments by the Minimum Standards and Procedures. The community needs are those weaknesses or liabilities which have to be addressed, changed, or mitigated to help achieve the desired community future. The community opportunities are strengths and assets which can be utilized as starting points and foundations to easily accentuate or capitalize on to move the community forward on its desired future path.

The Needs and Opportunities Element generally answers the planning question, **“Where are we currently?”** The answers can provide the compass point guidance necessary to begin and advance along the improvement journey. The Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan identifies each community goal as an issue for improvement, and further identifies local needs and opportunities, as appropriate, for each issue.





Economic Development

Opportunities:

1. Certified Literate Community
2. Heart of Georgia Regional Airport
3. Dodge County Hospital
4. Graduation of 98% in Dodge County Schools
5. Unemployment lower than state average
6. Fiber optic/world class technology available
7. Heart of Georgia Regional Airport
8. Class I railroad
9. Existing industries, such as Alcoa
10. Support for existing Youth Detention Center
11. Business leadership
12. Advanced/innovative research
13. Educational opportunities, including postsecondary
14. Middle Georgia State University, Aviation Campus
15. Georgia Military College
16. Location—proximity to Atlanta, Macon, and ports in Savannah and Brunswick
17. Healthy financial institutions
18. Chamber of Commerce/Development Authority
19. Small town feel
20. Hospitable character
21. Low Cost of Living
22. T-Splott/E-Splott
6. Attraction of new economic development
7. No active local Leadership alumni group
8. Need for increased awareness/usage/availability (hours of operation) of local transit systems
9. Need workforce innovation development level improvements
10. Business and industry retention/expansion/growth
11. Need truck route
12. Transportation improvements
13. Downtown revitalization/vacancies
14. Small business/entrepreneurial development
15. Public Relations/image problem
16. No liquor store
17. Lack of restaurants/retail
18. Need jobs for local college graduates
19. Infrastructure expansion/maintenance/upgrade to promote future development
20. Tourism development/promotion
21. Agriculture/Agribusiness promotion
22. Exodus of people aged 18-35
23. Need of more aviation-related industry
24. Need career development program and NASA program at Dodge County High School
25. Improvements/repairs/additions required for sewer and water infrastructure
26. Need more downtown development and improved downtown exteriors in Eastman
27. Lacking available property at airport
28. Need for business incubator model partnership
29. Need a leadership development program
30. Blight
31. Lacking available airport property
32. Coordinated revitalization initiative and downtown marketing plan

Needs:

1. Education level/job skills improvement
2. Improve adult literacy
3. Need broadband infrastructure - high speed internet access
4. (residential/ commercial/industrial)
5. Need natural gas expanded





Natural & Cultural Resources

Opportunities:

1. Natural resources conservation/protection
2. Historic resources utilization/preservation
3. Downtown revitalization/vacancies
4. Valuable agricultural lands and timberlands
5. County-wide land use planning and regulations
6. Local 4H programs, Local UGA Extension Office
7. Local USDA farm service office
8. Nature-based and heritage tourism attraction
9. Recreation opportunities (organized and natural resources)
10. Dodge Historical Society
11. Recreation - Sunset Park/ Recreation Department
12. Dodge County public fishing area/ Lake Destiny
13. Ocmulgee River
14. Two accesses to Ocmulgee River
15. Leasing land available for hunting
16. Performing Arts - Music on Main, Battle of Guitars

17. Two colleges - Georgia Military College and Middle Georgia State University
18. Farmers Market
19. Aquaponics business in Milan
20. Dodge County Library

Needs:

1. Tourism development/promotion
2. Agriculture/Agribusiness promotion
3. Infrastructure expansion/maintenance/upgrade to promote recreational opportunities
4. Improvements/repairs/additions required for sewer and water infrastructure
5. Need more entertainment amenities and diverse community events, especially for younger generations and families
6. Development of trails and campsites
7. Need to upgrade existing public spaces, development of additional parks and public spaces
8. Need a centrally-located community park
9. Need for public Wi-Fi in downtown and in other public areas



Intergovernmental Coordination

Opportunities:

1. Local, regional, and state cooperation
2. Local leadership
3. Youth leadership (program in works)
4. Services sharing/cooperation/consolidation/joint delivery
5. Annexation
6. Chamber of Commerce/Development Authority

Needs:

1. Coordinated planning/growth management
2. Leadership Dodge Alumni group needed
3. Need a paid fire department and new fire department facility
4. Need a community policing plan
5. Need broadband infrastructure - high speed internet access (residential/ commercial/ industrial)





Housing

Opportunities:

1. Utilization of state/federal programs
2. Public housing
3. Senior Center Housing
4. Low Cost of Living
5. Hospitable character of area

Needs:

1. Diversify housing types - Need for smaller housing/mixed use/student housing
2. Lack of Downtown housing
3. Lack of student housing/young family housing

4. Need for subdivision/manufactured housing ordinances and code enforcement countywide (Eastman has)
5. Housing inventory needs improvement
6. Neighborhood revitalization
7. Blight across communities
8. Improve substandard housing quality/eliminate blight
9. Improve ISO rating
10. Need a community policing plan
11. Need broadband infrastructure - high speed internet access
12. Coordinated housing improvement initiative and plan



Land Use

Opportunities:

1. Quality of life preservation
2. Annexation
3. Rural landscape/character preservation
4. County-wide land use planning and regulations

Needs:

1. Need for coordinated land use/subdivision/mobile home regulation and code enforcement
2. Commercial and Industrial business addition/expansion

3. Community appearance/aesthetics/gateway improvements
4. Compatible development of natural/cultural resources
5. Need infill development
6. Need land use management/control sprawl
7. Need for design overlay/signage ordinances
8. Lacking available airport property
9. Blight
10. Need to upgrade existing public spaces, development of additional parks and public spaces
11. Need a centrally-located community park
12. Need more downtown development and improved downtown exteriors in Eastman





Community Facilities and Services

Opportunities:

1. T-Splost/E-Splost
2. Class I railroad
3. Proposed Veteran's sanctuary at former Milan Prison
4. Healthy financial institutions
5. Available senior care-nursing home/personal care homes
6. "Distinguished" status for local school board, seeking "Exemplary" status
7. Regional library headquarters/Dodge County Library
8. Fiber optic/world class technology available/opportunities
9. Postsecondary education opportunities
10. Two colleges - Georgia Military College and Middle Georgia State University
11. Non-Profits including local churches, area foodbank, Boys and Girls Club, Family Connection, and various civic clubs
12. Dodge Historical Society
13. Recreation - Sunset Park/ Recreation Department
14. Recreation opportunities (organized and natural resources)
15. Dodge Historical Society
16. Dodge County public fishing area/ Lake Destiny
17. Multiple access points to Ocmulgee River
18. Performing Arts - Music on Main, Battle of Guitars
19. Dodge Hospital recognized as one of Top 20 Rural Hospitals in Georgia
20. Annexation
21. Heart of Georgia Regional Airport
22. Graduation of 98% in Dodge County Schools
23. Unemployment lower than state average
24. Fiber optic/world class technology available
25. Support for existing Youth Detention Center
26. Middle Georgia State University, Aviation Campus
27. Georgia Military College
28. Healthy financial institutions
29. Chamber of Commerce/Development Authority
30. Small town feel
31. Hospitable character
32. Low Cost of Living

Needs:

1. Old infrastructure
2. Upgrade water/sewer facilities
3. Transportation improvements
 - Highway improvements/upgrades
 - Need truck route
 - Need more county road/city street improvements (condition/dirt roads)
 - Airport improvements/future facility improvements
 - U.S. 341 Bypass/need full loop
 - New U.S. 23 Spur
4. Need natural gas expanded
5. Need for public Wi-Fi in downtown and in other public areas
6. Public safety facilities/services improvements/expansion
7. Need to seek national/state accreditation for police department/fire department
8. Improve ISO rating
9. Need a community policing plan
10. Need career development program and NASA program at Dodge County High School
11. Improvements/repairs/additions required for sewer and water infrastructure
12. Damaged streets related to log trucks/commercial vehicles
13. Need a paid fire department and new fire department facility
14. Increased crime prevention
15. Health care services/equipment/facilities improvements
16. Improved recreational facilities/parks
17. Need green space/passive parks in cities
18. Need parks for young children
19. Need a centrally-located community park
20. Enhanced governmental services/facilities
21. Emergency notification alert/programs
22. County-wide convenience centers
23. Education facilities/programs/services improvements
24. Need broadband infrastructure - high speed internet access (residential/ commercial/industrial)
25. Cultural facilities/opportunities
26. Increase recycling program



BROADBAND SERVICES



Since the discovery of electricity, people all over the world have dreamed about the exciting possibilities of technology sure to be right around the corner. Each new invention or innovation brought increased excitement. What made electricity service vital to people and industry of the United States in the 20th century will make broadband service a necessity in the 21st century. We recognize high speed technology has developed in disparity across the nation and the state of Georgia largely due to population densities and cost-return on infrastructure investments. It is Dodge County's goal to determine the broadband infrastructure shortfall within the county and seek ways to improve its current position.

Broadband is defined by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as a minimum of 25 megabits per second (Mbps) download speed and 3 Mbps upload speed. It should be noted the broadband definition has changed twice since its inception in 1996 due to technology advancements. The definition is likely to change in the future and will be welcomed as it is much desired by the community to achieve broadband capabilities reaching speeds of 1 gigabit per second



(1,000 Mbps) across the entire county. Broadband delivery methods include, but are not limited to, digital subscriber lines, cable modems, fiber, wireless, broadband over power lines, and satellites. The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region, within which Dodge County is located, was determined in a 2015 Digital Economy Plan to rank 12 out of 12 areas of Georgia for technological capability. It is significant to note the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Region is the only region of Georgia without a metropolitan area included. Nationally, 99.1 % of the population have access to either fixed terrestrial service at 25 Mbps/3 Mbps or mobile LTE at 10 Mbps/3 Mbps; this percentage drops to 94.9% in rural areas. Rural areas in the State of Georgia are 80.3% served with broadband capability as compared to 97.9% in the urban communities. Also in the FCC's 2020 Broadband Deployment Report, it is reported 65.1% of the population in Dodge County have access to fixed broadband technology served by DSL, Cable, and Fiber networks.



L Downtown Eastman **R** Shopping Center, Eastman

DSL service is available with a speed up to 25 Mbps in an area within and around the cities of Chauncey, Eastman, Milan and Rhine. Various blocks in the unincorporated county have access to DSL technology with download speeds up to 6 Mbps. Cable line access is available within Eastman and blocks near the city limits in each direction. The areas served by cable service have download speeds meeting 25 Mbps. As of the 2020 FCC Broadband Deployment Report, multiple Census blocks are served by a fiber optic network in Dodge County. The blocks are located within the incorporated and unincorporated areas of Dodge County.

Data reported by the State of Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative's (GBDI) 2020 Broadband Report and accompanying map indicates less coverage for broadband than the FCC data. This data varies due to the methodology of calculating the locations unserved. The FCC data considers an entire census block and population within as served if one location is served within the block. The data presented by the GBDI reports only consider a census block served





if 80 percent of locations are served with broadband capable speeds. Areas of Dodge County without broadband capable technology are located generally south of Chester with exception of the Cities of Chauncy, Eastman, Milan, and few blocks within Rhine. The areas unserved blankets the entire area primarily considered rural. Within this unserved area, 4,324 locations or 44 percent of Dodge County are considered unserved by the State of Georgia. Agricultural interests within the County may benefit from improved internet capabilities; the farming operations to see the greatest benefit are located in the unserved areas.

Other avenues of broadband service technologies available in the community are through either satellite or wireless 4G LTE service. Satellite service speeds are generally slower download speeds compared to wired infrastructure and are prone to weather related outages. Wireless 4G LTE technology is widely available throughout the State of Georgia and is used by smartphones and tablets to download content reliably, although speed is determined by proximity to a communications tower and the speed at which the tower is capable. Dodge County has a reported 4G LTE coverage area over the entire county. This avenue of service is generally sufficient for a homeowner or cell service subscriber; however, according to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission's Digital Economy Plan in 2015, service reliability can be an issue with this technology.

An industry desiring an improved communications network will likely seek a fixed connection service provider and will need at minimum 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload speeds. The community considers the minimum speeds to be inadequate for the future development needs of Dodge County and will strive to complete a broadband network capable of reaching 1 Gigabit throughout the entire county. According to data provided by the Georgia Technology Authority (GTA), National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA), and the FCC, the infrastructure for broadband services is located in portions of Dodge County; however, the fixed broadband technology fails to reach 44 percent of homes in the county (see Figure 1). Increased competition among providers may also decrease the cost charged to the consumer. According to FCC data, three fixed network providers operate within Dodge County; the providers include Progressive Rural Telephone Cooperative, Inc (Fiber), Windstream (Cable/Fiber), and AT&T (DSL). Wireless 4G LTE in the county meets minimum speeds of wireless broadband, but it is inadequate for industry seeking to locate in the county. The need for broadband service in Dodge County is critical as it is determined to be underserved by both fixed broadband technology and wireless broadband technology. Dodge County and the municipalities of Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan and Rhine desire to be fully served by broadband capability through broadband deployment with service areas reaching the minimum speeds to be considered "Broadband Service."



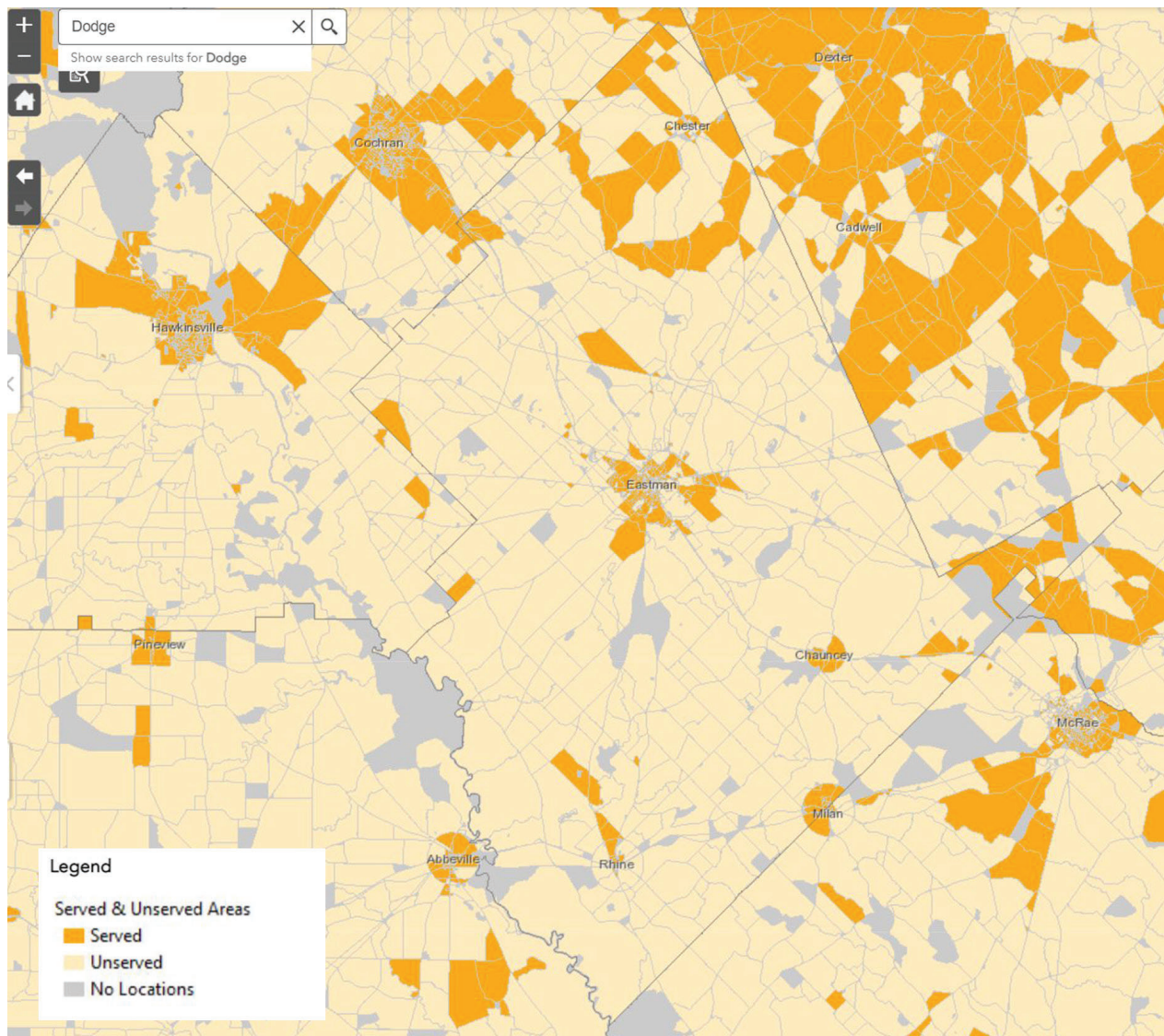


Figure 1: Broadband Availability within Dodge County; Source: Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative 2021; <https://broadband.georgia.gov/maps/gbdi-unserved-county>

1. Develop and maintain an inventory of Community Anchor Institutions (schools, library, medical and healthcare providers, public safety entities, and higher education facilities) within the community to determine areas of greatest broadband need.
2. Develop or otherwise enact a model ordinance which determines a contact person for any broadband projects within the community, outlines a streamlined permit process for broadband projects, keeps broadband project permit fees reasonable, and ensures equal treatment for applicants applying for use of jurisdictional rights-of-way.
3. Apply to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for certification as a “Broadband Ready Community” or similar certification by the State of Georgia.
4. Partner with state agencies (Georgia Technology Authority, Department of Community Affairs, and Department of Economic Development) and area local governments to promote broadband deployment in the community, region, and state.
5. Identify broadband deployment projects eligible for OneGeorgia Authority funding and/or other state and federal grant or loan opportunities.



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



Economic prosperity is a key to community improvement. A community's comprehensive plan seeks at its core to make the community a better place to live, work, and recreate. To improve quality of life, there is a need for income and an increased tax base to help enhance the ability to afford needed and desired improvements, and afford better housing and a higher standard of living. Commerce and economic development have a major influence on overall population growth and development. The relationship is quite evident in Dodge County and has been throughout its history. The Ocmulgee River and the forested lands of Dodge provided avenues of exploration and access to life sustaining wildlife populations both to Native Americans and European explorers long before the county's formal establishment. The County to a major degree became the center of Georgia's timber industry. One of the largest sawmills in the world during its time was established near Eastman in 1881. Railroads also allowed the community and its climate to be marketed for tourism. Significant economic influence ensued for Eastman and Dodge County. Dodge County's population grew from less than 1,000 in 1870 at its establishment to over 5,000 in 1880, and nearly 12,000 in 1890. The heyday of Dodge County population (over 22,500) to date is actually 1920 at the height of railroad and timber operations.



Dodge County today is a growing, progressive rural community of almost 22,000 persons which has suffered through the decline of the lumber industry, the decline of railroads, the Great Depression, and the devastation of the cotton crop by the boll weevil, only to adapt and bounce back with renewed vigor. The rise and fall of the Stuckey's pecan business is a more recent economic injury which the community has overcome. The county, which experienced a long period of slow population loss from 1920 all the way to 1970, has steadily shown population increases each Census since then, culminating in a 2010 population of 21,796 persons.



L Chauncey Gymnasium **R** Chauncey Historic Store Front

Dodge County is located on U.S. highways 23, 280, and 341, as well as State highways 46, 87, 117, 165, and 257, and between I-16 and I-75. With the recent expansion of highway 341 and state routes, this allows for easy access to Macon, Robins Air Force base, and Georgia's other metro areas and ports. The community's railroad remains active as a Class I rail line of the Norfolk Southern System. The local airport has grown into an economic development stimulus of its own as the Heart of Georgia Regional Airport. It has a 6,600 foot runway with a large terminal and state-of-the-art facilities/accessories. A number of aviation-related businesses/industry are adjacently located. Another neighbor of the airport is the Eastman Aviation Campus of Middle Georgia State University. This campus is Georgia's only public university with aviation/aerospace concentration, and it already enjoys a world-class reputation. The community also wants to develop a workforce development/training center at the airport to improve local worker skills and assure local industries of top-notch, trained workers. Local community facilities are also top-notch and enjoy a level of service much beyond that expected or normal for a rural community the size of Dodge County, with both the local hospital and school system consistently ranked among the best in state. The community is also surrounded by much natural beauty, including the Ocmulgee River and Dodge Public Fishing Area. There is much local cooperation and cohesiveness as shown by the many civic clubs, churches, and very active Chamber of Commerce. As throughout its history, culture continues to be valued as shown by the local Arts Guild, local festivals, the renovated Mag-



nolia Theater, new Downtown Eastman Amphitheater and the acclaimed Music On Main. All of these assets and local exceptionalism, as well as existing industries like Kencoa, Arconic, Mondi Bags, and a still strong agricultural sector now supported by the Dodge County Farmer's Market Authority, portend well for Dodge County's economic future and overall continued growth and development.

For all of Dodge County's economic and community successes it remains Georgia Job Tax Credit Tier 1, meaning it remains in the bottom 40 percent of counties on factors including unemployment rate, per capita income, and percentage of residents below the poverty level. This is primarily a function of being a rural county in south Georgia, and such status does allow a business creating new jobs to claim Georgia's highest job creation tax credit (~\$4,000/job). It also conceals the fact that Dodge County has more assets and a better foundation to build upon than many of its surrounding rural neighboring counties. A Census Tract within the county was designated as a Federal Opportunity Zone in 2018 and can attract outside investment to the area seeking to defray federal capital gains whether it is for corporate or individual purposes. This also provides an attractive foundation and economic development draw to the community.



L Eastman Depot **R** Chester City Hall

There are certainly continuing needs for Dodge County's economic development. The lower 2019 Census population estimate are such indicators. The per capita money income in Dodge County as reported by the Census Bureau for 2015-2019 is \$20,216, about 65% that of Georgia as a whole (\$31,067). Median household income is \$39,302, also about 63% that of Georgia (\$61,980). More than one-fifth of Dodge County citizens are in poverty (21.8%), compared to only 13.3% in Georgia as a whole. This high poverty has persisted for a number of decades, however since 2015 the county has improved nearly 5 percentage points. There are needs for more high earning jobs. Unemployment in the county was 6.0% in 2020, compared to 6.5% in the state, and much lower than the national rate of 8.1%. The circumstances surrounding a higher national rate is likely attributed to the impacts felt across the nation during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Rural areas may see longer term impacts from the pandemic investment and added response cost but may also be able to capture the attention



of new citizens seeking to escape the much more population dense metropolitan areas for working at home in rural Georgia. A redeeming statistic is that about 53 percent of county workers do work inside Dodge County, although wages are relatively low. Job skills of local residents remain a concern but have improved. For individuals over 25 years of age, 14.4 percent are without a high school diploma, a near even statistic with the statewide average of 12.9 percent. Transfer payments represent about 31% of total personal income compared to about 17% statewide. Home ownership in the county has improved from 63.6% to 69.7%, surpassing the Georgia rate of 63.3%. The median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2015-2019, was \$76,300 in Dodge County as compared to \$176,000 in Georgia, and median gross rents, 2015-2019, were \$620 in the County as compared to \$1,006 in Georgia.



Rustic Pines



There are opportunities and cause for optimism for future economic development in Dodge County as well. There are currently more than 6,000 jobs within the county and employment within the county is strong within the government, healthcare, and manufacturing sectors, and there is relative employment stability as a result. There remain many unrealized opportunities related to the abundant fields and forests and outstanding natural resources of the county. The Heart of Georgia Regional Airport and the Middle Georgia State University Aviation Campus offer even greater potential for expansion and economic growth. The cost of living in Dodge County is relatively very low, the crime rate is low, the community enjoys outstanding schools and other facilities, there is an exceptional cultural atmosphere, and an envious overall extraordinary quality of life which make it even more attractive as a place to locate for families and new residents and retirees as well as business. The county's location, its outstanding community facilities, its scenic landscape punctuated by outstanding natural and cultural resources, the almost limitless outdoor recreation opportunities, the low cost



of living, the family-friendly atmosphere, and the adaptive community spirit and leadership present locally provides even more opportunity and platform for success.

The Dodge County community has chosen a multi-faceted approach and strategy to improve its economic status and further economic development in the county. The following goals and objectives were chosen to address identified economic development issues in Dodge County.

Address Educational Levels/Improve Jobs Skills

Dodge County has a long history of educational leadership, and will continue to support its school system, its Middle Georgia State University Eastman Aviation Campus and programs, the Georgia Military College campus, expansion of local Oconee Fall Line Technical College facilities/programs, and regional Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs. It will develop a new workforce development/training center to further develop local worker skills and training, and will establish public/private partnerships through its Chamber of Commerce, civic groups, and continuing intergovernmental cooperation.



L Rural Scene **R** Historic Residence: the Eastman House

Support/Enhance/Maintain Viability of Agriculture/Forestry Uses

The community will support efforts to create additional markets, explore alternative crops, and seek value-added businesses which keep such uses viable and profitable. The marketing and development of agri-tourism and nature-based tourism are other means. The development of farmers markets in Eastman and Milan, the development of a local aquaponics industry, and the support of existing agricultural operations such as the Langdale Forest Products pole plant are positive steps and tremendous assets and opportunities.



Address/Improve Infrastructure/Broadband Needs

The Dodge County community will jointly work to solve any infrastructure deficiencies, including highway needs, and otherwise address water/sewer, drainage and other needs, particularly for fire protection. The lack of appropriate broadband telecommunications access will also be addressed using state designations and grant money available to increase availability. Each local government within Dodge County will seek to be a Broadband Ready Community as determined by the State of Georgia.



L Rhine City Hall **R** Milan Theatre

Nurture Existing Businesses/Entrepreneurs/Industries

This has been a local hallmark critical to past successes, and will continue with passion. The Dodge County community will work through its Development Authorities and Chamber of Commerce, and in cooperation with Oconee Fall Line Technical College and state agencies, to meet local needs and encourage expansions and new local business development. Special efforts will be made for agricultural/forest interests.

Attract New Businesses/Jobs

The Dodge County community, through its Development Authorities, Chamber of Commerce, and intergovernmental cooperation, will seek compatible business and industrial development. The community will participate in state designation programs, and will cooperate in providing appropriate funds in making full-time economic development efforts more efficient and effective. State tax credits and local tax incentives for job creation will be marketed. Enhancing existing industrial sites and developing a new airport industrial park will assist. The location of several major highways, and the rail and airport facilities are major assets and calling cards. The family-friendly atmosphere, many natural and cultural amenities, and overall high quality of life will attract more than people.



Enhance/Grow Tourism

Dodge County's extraordinary outdoor amenities and splendor; including the Ocmulgee River and Ocmulgee River Water Trail, the Dodge County Public Fishing Area, a miniature botanical garden on the grounds of the historic county courthouse; the many local historic structures; remarkable and unique existing and potential festivals centered around the new Downtown Eastman Amphitheater; community location along U.S. 341 (the Golden Isles Parkway) and U.S. 280; the Peaches to Beaches Yard Sale; the Magnolia Music and Music On Main; high ranking among outdoorsman for hunting and fishing including the McCranie Quail Plantation as well as its farms and scenic countryside offer much more potential to increase visitors.

Improve Transportation Access/Quality

The Regional T-SPLIST will result in many needed local resurfacing and other road improvements, including the new State Route 87 spur and widening, which will enhance the community as a place to live and work. It may open up other opportunities for job creation, as well. These and other improvements, particularly the development of an U.S. 341 Eastside truck route around Eastman, could enhance local travel and make business markets more accessible. It would also make it easier to live in Dodge, but work in nearby urban growth centers. Promotion of trails, bicycling, and other tourism would also help quality of life and economic development. The expansion of Georgia's ports will make the Norfolk Southern Railroad even more important. The Regional Airport and its continued improvement is critically important.



L A Commercial Property **R** Dodge County Botanical Gardens

Revitalize Downtown

The historic fabric and available buildings in Eastman, as well as those in Milan and the other small towns, allow for much opportunity. Their historic nature allows for development incentives, preservation of unique character, and enhanced quality of life. Community projects in historic structures create civic pride and community cooperation. They also can stimulate private investment.



Develop/Improve Local Industrial Parks/Sites

The community has a number of available sites and buildings to market. The existing airport industrial park needs further improvement and aims to develop as a GRAD site in the near future. There is a need to further market the existing main industrial park to continue and build on past and recent successful efforts in industrial expansion and location. The industrial park/sites in Milan also require further attention and marketing to highlight it is rail served.

Promote Quality of Life/Civic and Community Pride/Location

Dodge County has additional opportunities to promote its small town and rural character and quality of life through its Chamber and other means. The welcoming, family atmosphere; low crime rate; low cost of living; the outdoor recreation opportunities; the interesting local festivals; local museums, and other cultural outlets; the Magnolia Music and Music On Main; the Garden Club; the many, active civic clubs including Lions, Freemasons, Rotary, and Dodge County Historical Society; the general outdoor fun; and the landscape and outdoor amenities are all easy selling cards. The overall county location, exceptional community schools and facilities, and easy access to larger urban areas further contribute and facilitate promotion of the county as an excellent place to live, visit, or do business.

Enhance Intergovernmental Cooperation

Community efforts working together both within the county, and through neighbors, the region, and state agencies can only facilitate success and scope of effort. This will build on, and take advantage of, the strong tradition of local cooperation and adaptive leadership. An active chamber of commerce and many civic groups can only make public/private partnerships easier to achieve and more successful. Active participation in regional economic, tourism, and natural resource partnerships offers much potential and benefit.

Address Growth Management/Rural Character Preservation

A well planned community and one which appears neat, orderly, and attractive supports and encourages additional investment. The community has developed limited individual land use regulations to address specific issues and nuisances, but more stronger, general, and coordinated efforts and joint code enforcement are needed. The community can also utilize infrastructure location and civic organizations and programs to assist.

Enhance Economic Development Marketing

Dodge County has been noted in the past for its local leadership and community cooperation. Reenergized efforts supported by the local governments, local chamber, and local civic groups can accomplish much to help the community cooperate and advance in economic development. Participation in regional and state partnerships and utilizing state designation programs can help. State job tax credits and recently developed local tax incentives can be highlighted.



Support Existing Industries/Entrepreneurs

Existing industries and local entrepreneurs have been principal contributors to past success and a stabilized local economic base. The community needs to be vigilant to support and ensure these pillars and foundations for other growth remain strong and vibrant. The expansion of airport related concerns are recent examples of how this strategy can pay off. The outstanding natural resource outlets within the county offer similar potential for support and marketing.

Maintain/Increase Retail Trade/Service Sectors

These local sectors are underrepresented and lacking diversity given the relative high numbers of goods producing industries locally. These are also sectors which would require expansion to help grow tourism. While the attraction of more families and retirees would facilitate and make easier this effort, so would additional promotion and marketing. Downtown revitalization, new job creation, and the overall marketing of the community to make more people aware of the rural oasis the community is and the opportunities that exist will also help. Efforts to become a state designated Rural Zone would help attract investment to the downtown area with tax incentives.

Continue Support for Local Higher Education

Post secondary education opportunities on a local level encourage the development of improved local workforce skills and the community's young leadership to remain closer to home. The location of a Georgia Military College campus to Eastman is a positive step. Development of a new local workforce development/training center for advanced skills training, and expansion of Oconee Fall Line Technical College facilities and programs would also provide increased opportunities.

Support/Enhance the Eastman Aviation Campus of Middle Georgia State University

It goes without saying that the Aviation College is important to Dodge County. It has already been one of the more prominent economic development attractors and stimuli in recent years, and continues to bring attention and development to the community. It is a critical and key component to assist the community in "taking flight together." The community should remain vigilant in its promotion, and to make sure it receives proper nurturing and investment, particularly when it is now positioned as only a branch campus of a larger university, and not a separate institution.



LAND USE



The landscape and the way land is used is often visible and tangible evidence of planning or the lack thereof. It reveals the pattern of growth and development, and how we relate to the natural environment. It often defines what we view as the character of our community, and is a major component in our determination of quality of life. As science evolves, we realize with greater certainty that the way our land is used and managed has definite implications for air and water quality, and the diversity and health of our ecosystems.

The awareness of the impacts and consequences of the way land is used illustrate the need for wise use of our finite supply of land, and the necessity of sound decisions in its development or protection. The need for sustainable growth and development, which accommodates our development needs while maintaining balance and control, and limiting impacts on the natural and built environment, is recognized in the state quality community objectives.



Sound, quality growth and development results from effective and balanced land use planning that anticipates, prepares, and exercises control over development decisions. It guides and directs growth and development into a desirable and efficient pattern of land use to achieve compatibilities in use, proper return and effective use of public investments in infrastructure and services, and minimal impacts to environmentally or aesthetically important natural and cultural resources.

The lack of planning, on the other hand, can result in uncontrolled and unmanaged growth which can wreak havoc on community desires and plans, negatively impact property values, degrade the environment and landscape, and foster other detrimental effects or burdens in a short period of time. It can destroy important natural functions and treasured views or other parts of the landscape. It can cause new public tax or service burdens while lowering return or lessening use of public infrastructure already paid for or invested in. Public desires or future plans or options can be precluded or prevented by such uncontrolled growth, while other ill-advised consequences or burdens upon the general public can result.



Olive Orchard



A community's land use planning efforts are an attempt to provide a policy guide and framework or blueprint for desired growth and development. Sound planning provides for managed growth and development, allowing for necessary land use and development, but guiding it in such a manner that balances and protects resources, systems, and other aspects of the landscape important to the community. Such planning tries to lessen, mitigate, or avoid inconsistencies, inefficiencies, or conflicting land use efforts. Existing patterns and trends of land uses, community investment in and location of facilities and services, important natural and cultural constraints, and overriding community desires are considered and accommodated in developing and delineating the desired pattern of growth and development.



Dodge County, Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine are united in their vision and desires for growth. It is a rural county with exceptional community facilities, abundant natural and cultural resources, great natural beauty, enviable location, excellent transportation access, and many assets for growth. The community has a long history of balancing agriculture and attracting industry, preserving and celebrating past heritage while advancing the new, utilizing and conserving natural and cultural resources, and exhibiting entrepreneurial and community leadership. As a result, the community continues to enjoy growth, albeit slow, and a high quality of life unusual for a rural area. The community's vision for its future growth and development is one that maintains this growth and balance, and one that protects and utilizes its natural and cultural resources and landscape to continue growth and development conducive and compatible with such beauty, family fun, outdoor adventure, and overall high quality of life. Land uses would continue to look similar to those existing, and the small-town, family-friendly rural character would be maintained. Infrastructure and ameni-



L Cake Judging **R** Rustic Pines

ties would be maintained at the exceptional levels currently enjoyed and would be expanded and developed to support and attract both population and business growth, primarily in or adjacent to the existing municipalities and developed areas. Agricultural and forestry uses would be kept viable and remain the principal land uses of the county. The outstanding natural and cultural resources would be protected and utilized for increased tourism. These rural open landscapes would be an integral component of the economy of the county, and the preservation of rural character supportive of open space and natural and cultural resource protection. Commercial and industrial growth would be compatible and supportive of continued agricultural/forestry uses, and would maintain the high quality of life and small-town, rural character while providing additional jobs and economic opportunity. All of this would be components of a concerted strategy to attract new residents, retirees, and economic development supportive and complementary to existing uses and character which further adds to the quality of life.



While technically only the cities of Eastman and Milan are required, because of their zoning ordinances, to have a Land Use element in its comprehensive plan under the current DCA planning standards, all local governments in the county have chosen to participate and include the element in this joint comprehensive plan. Existing land use maps visually convey to all concerned the current landscape and correlation of extant development. Future land use maps illustrate to all concerned the community's vision and desires for additional growth and development. Such depictions also lend credence and supporting background information important to understanding and illustrating official local government policy in designating lands unsuitable for solid waste handling facilities in local solid waste management plans. Land use maps do provide official display of community desires and goals for compatible future growth and development.



L Rural Scene, Dodge County **R** Downtown Eastman

The community's land use maps are, however, a general policy guide and framework, not necessarily a rigid or unchangeable picture of future growth and development. Not all growth or developments can be foreseen, and other events could necessitate a change in community vision or desires. The depicted pattern of desired future growth and development displayed on future land use maps is a current statement and reflection of community expectations and desires. It provides a context, framework and background for the public and private sector to utilize to plan, evaluate, shape, guide, and evaluate proposed developments and other decisions affecting the use of the land and community growth and development. The plan provides a context for forethought, examination of impacts and consequences, and mitigation of land use decisions on the community's growth and development and desired future patterns and community vision.



Existing Land Uses

Existing land use patterns for Dodge County and its municipalities are depicted on the following maps. A table depicting the existing distribution of land use acreages is shown below.

Land use categories utilized in the development of this plan and in the land use maps are the standard categories established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and defined in the planning standards as below.

Residential. The predominant use of land within the residential category is for single-family and multi-family dwelling units.

Commercial. This category is for land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities, located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building.

Industrial. This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction activities, or other similar uses.

Public/Institutional. This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Government uses include government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc. Examples of institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc.

Transportation/Communications/Utilities. This category includes such uses as major transportation routes, public transit stations, power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, telephone switching stations, airports, port facilities or other similar uses.

Park/Recreation/Conservation. This category is for land dedicated to active or passive recreational and conservation uses. These areas may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, other wild lands, golf courses, recreation centers or similar uses.

Agriculture. This category is for land dedicated to farming (fields, lots, pastures, farmsteads, specialty farms, livestock production, etc.), agriculture, or similar rural uses.

Forestry. This category is for land dedicated to commercial timber, pulpwood production, or other woodland use.



Existing Land Use Distribution, Dodge County, 2021 (Acres)

Land Use Category	Acreage	Percent of Total
Agriculture	61,252	19.02
Commercial	1,459	0.45
Forestry	227,642	70.68
Industrial	282	0.09
Park/Recreation/Conservation	665	0.21
Public/Institutional	1,973	0.61
Residential	20,039	6.22
Transportation/Communications/Utilities	8,761	2.72
Total	322,073	100.00

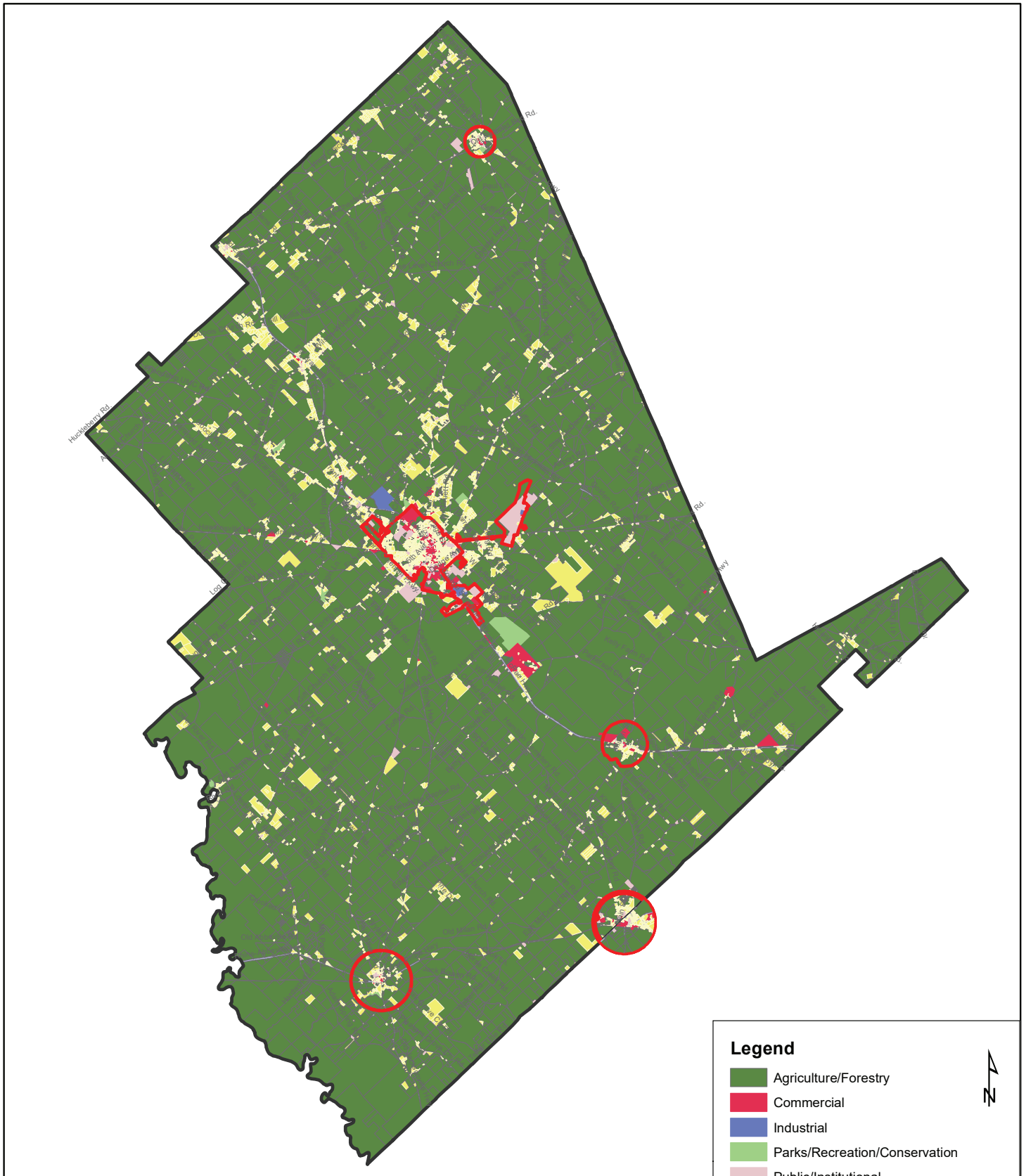
Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission Geographic Information System, 2021.

Dodge County is a rural county in central south Georgia and was created as result of railroad and timber industry development. It has a long history of growth and development because of its fertile fields, abundant Southern pine forests, compelling landscape, outstanding natural resources, and exceptional educational and community facilities. The county is located adjacent to the historic and mystic Ocmulgee River. Dodge County is a unique blend of agriculture, industry, tranquil natural and cultural beauty, and exceptional community and educational facilities.

Dodge was first settled because of its forests, fertile lands, and proximity to the Ocmulgee River. However, it was the Macon and Brunswick Railroad construction in the late 1860s and the subsequent timber industry development which brought county creation, the establishment of Chauncey and Eastman, rapid growth, and the development of additional railroads and the other municipalities. Substantial growth soon followed as a result of the wealth of the area's timber resources. The area had numerous naval stores and timber related businesses, including one of the largest sawmill operations in the world to locate near Eastman. Most growth was centered in and around Eastman even during this time. The development of Eastman by Northern capitalists also led to local tourism production. The associated development of banks and schools in the smaller communities was the pivotal point which allowed them to continue to prosper even after the railroads and timber interests declined. The development of agriculture was also a sustaining influence and led eventually to the emergence of Stuckey's, which brought the critical airport as well as much local growth.

Since the 1930s much of the force behind the county's development can be attributed to its location on U.S. 341, an important east-west commercial route, and the utilization of other transportation resources. The old Macon and Brunswick railroad remains an active Class I railroad operated by the Norfolk Southern system, and has functioned as an important ad-





Legend

- Agriculture/Forestry
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Residential
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- City Limits
- County Boundary

0 0.75 1.5 3 Miles

Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC, 2021

Dodge County Existing Land Use





Legend

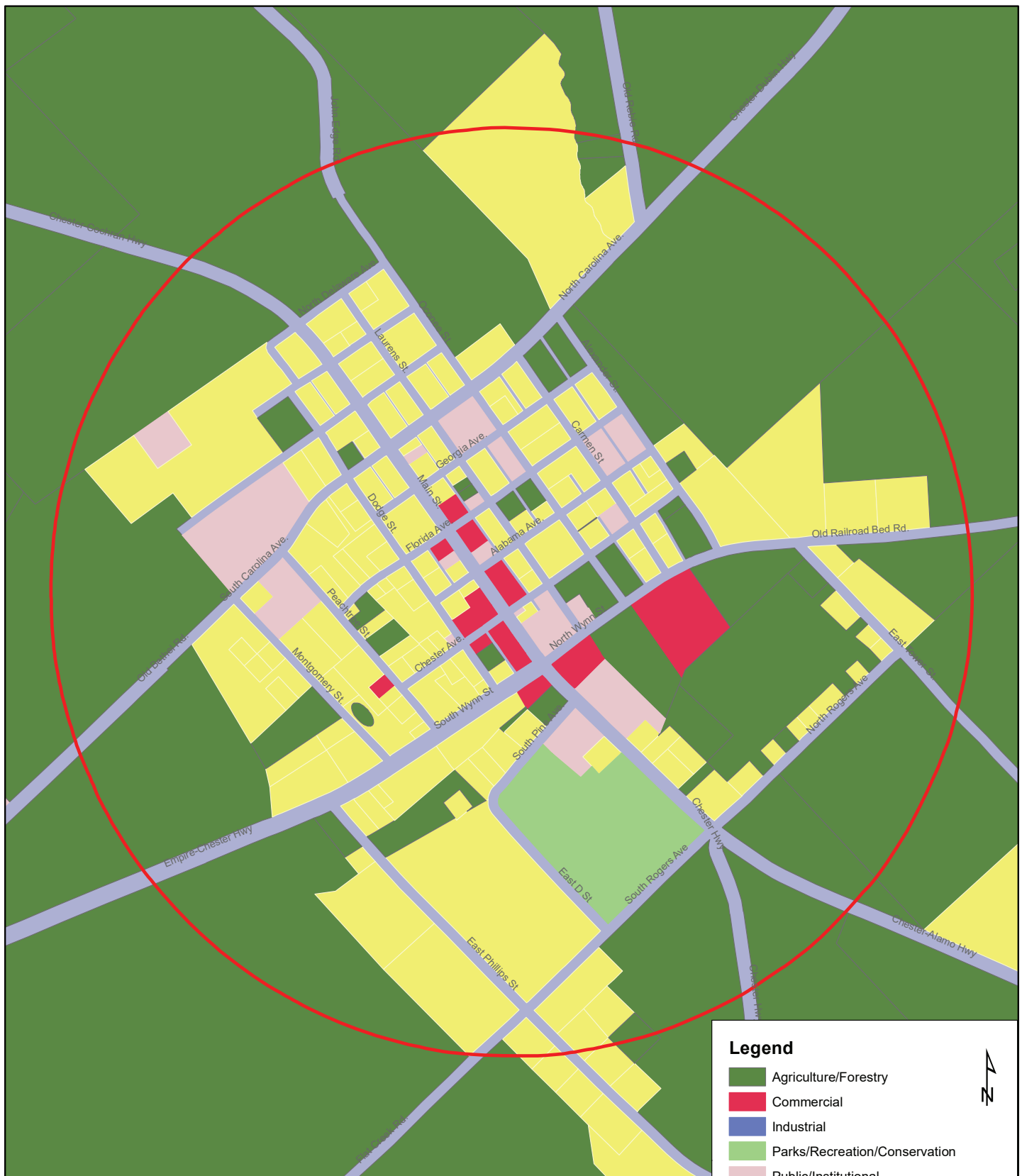
- Agriculture/Forestry
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Residential
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- City Limits
- County Boundary

0 0.0375 0.075 0.15 Miles

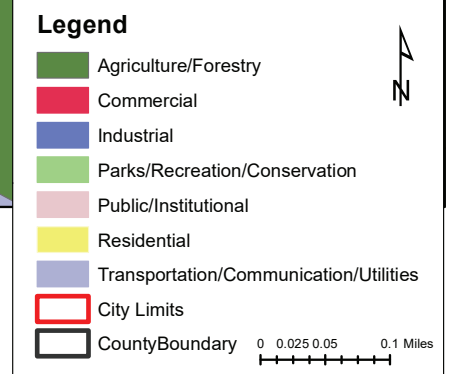
Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC, 2021

City of Chauncey Existing Land Use



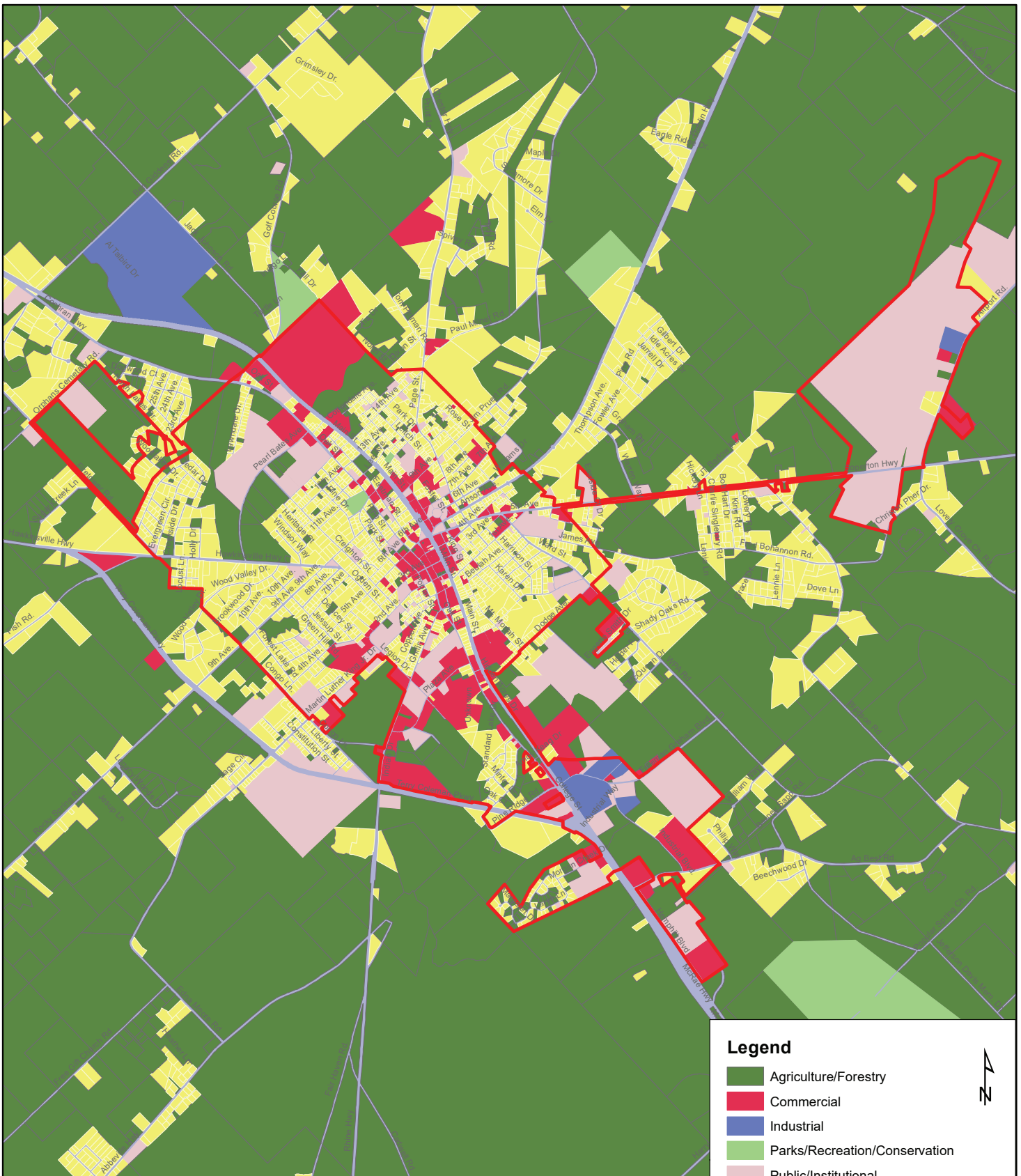


Town of Chester Existing Land Use



Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC, 2021





Legend

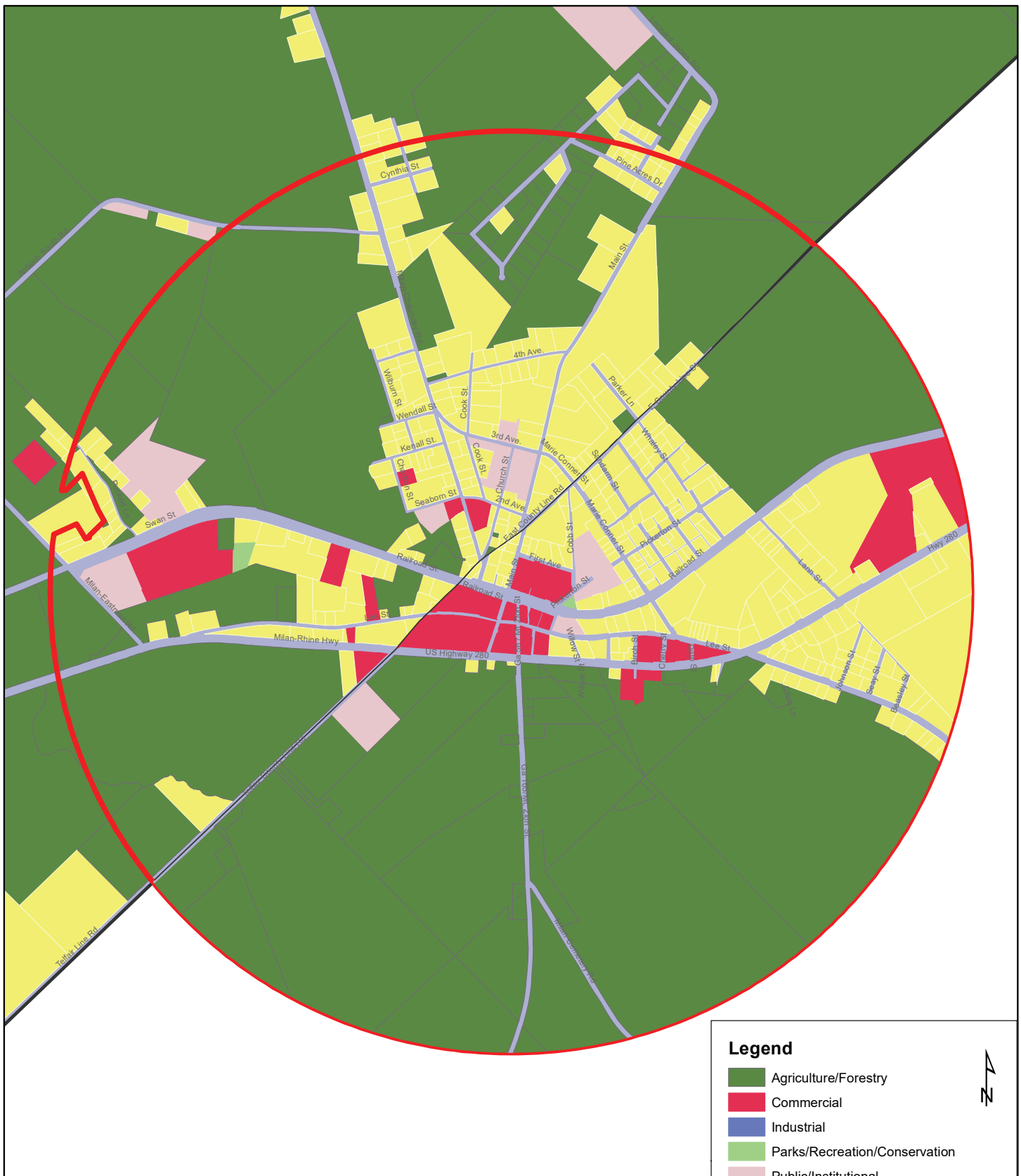
- Agriculture/Forestry
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Residential
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- City Limits
- County Boundary

0 0.1250.25 0.5 Miles

City of Eastman Existing Land Use



Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC, 2021

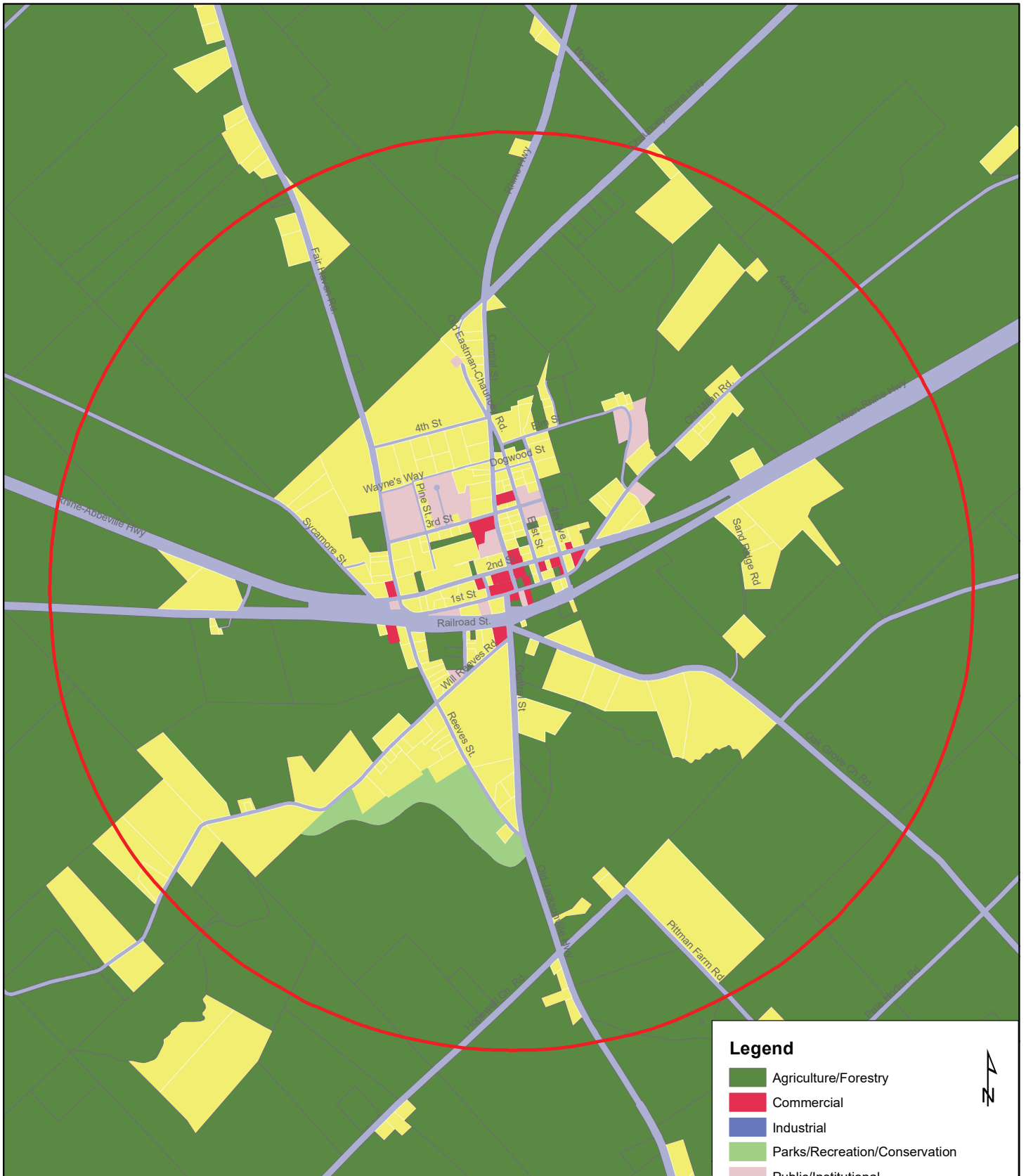


City of Milan Existing Land Use



Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC, 2021





City of Rhine Existing Land Use



Legend

- Agriculture/Forestry
 - Commercial
 - Industrial
 - Parks/Recreation/Conservation
 - Public/Institutional
 - Residential
 - Transportation/Communication/Utilities
 - City Limits
 - County Boundary
-

Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC, 2021



ditional economic stimulus. The establishment of a local airport in 1966, and local nurturing and support which grew it into the Heart of Georgia Regional Airport has also proven to be a cornerstone of more recent growth. Other critical factors have been committed leadership, a cooperative spirit, the adaptive use of its natural assets, and progressive leadership which has succeeded in developing exceptional community and educational facilities. Community development of a local technical college which grew into a world-class aviation college, and now university, campus was also instrumental in furthering community growth and development.



Heart of Georgia Airport

These same assets and adaptive traits have allowed Dodge County to continue with remarkable slow, but steady growth despite globalization, the mechanization of agriculture, the decline of individual manufacturing concerns, or recessionary periods which have devastated many rural communities. The community still has many assets for growth, including location, transportation facilities, exceptional community and educational facilities, progressive leadership, community cooperation, unwavering entrepreneurial spirit, and outstanding and abundant natural and cultural resources. The community continues to invest in its infrastructure, public facilities, community culture, and other amenities to encourage, support, and attract compatible future growth and development. Success continues to follow. The community is the home to major industrial plants, awarded local schools and local hospital, a cutting-edge airport and the only public university campus in Georgia, which concentrates in aviation and aerospace offerings and enjoys a world-class reputation.

Similar growth and development trends are expected to continue as a result. There continues to be much potential for additional residential and business growth and more diverse economic development by embracing and augmenting its backdrop of facilitating community resources, impressive culture and heritage, outstanding quality of life, abundant natural resources, and great natural beauty.

As noted previously, Dodge County's unique history is importantly related to the frontier of Georgia and its yellow pine forests, entrepreneurship, and the establishment of lumber and railroad interests. Currently as the existing land use acreages show almost 90 percent of county land area remains utilized for agriculture or forestry. However, amidst this scenic



landscape of pastoral beauty and outdoor wonder, is a bustling and growing community with innovative and modern public, educational, and government facilities, and impressive array of industries and businesses.



L Williamson Mausoleum, Orphans Cemetery **R** Dodge County Court House

Most current growth is concentrated in Eastman and in the greater area surrounding the City of Eastman. More intense development, especially general commercial, industrial, and multi-family residential growth, are expected to continue within the City of Eastman as infill development primarily near existing such uses. These areas include along western Oak Street/Cochran Highway, the Walmart Supercenter on U.S. 341/Eastman Bypass, Pearl Bates Avenue, and the airport for commercial infill and the airport and industrial park for industrial growth. Additional commercial and industrial growth is projected along the major highways (U.S. 341 Bypass, U.S. 341 West and East, U.S. 23, GA 46 East) and near the airport and existing industrial park, as well as the planned new industrial park west of the airport, all located in the Greater Eastman Area. Residential growth is occurring primarily in the rural transitioning area outside the city limits in all directions, but many of the more recent and planned subdivisions are located west of Eastman toward Hawkinsville and Cochran including the Legacy Woods and Rocky Springs subdivisions. This Greater Eastman Area is expected to be the principal growth area for intense land uses because of the availability of water/sewer infrastructure and because it is the existing location of most facilities, services, and economic development. Future growth will likely continue to concentrate in the Greater Eastman Area, and to a lesser extent around the county's small towns, and western Dodge County where it has been occurring recently. Future expansion of sewer utilities to the Peabody neighborhood are desired. Further redevelopment within the City of Eastman should be anchored by the reestablishment of a Boys and Girls Club.



Dodge County's smaller municipalities (Chauncey, Chester, Milan, and Rhine) all currently have large percentages of agriculture/forestry lands (ranging from about 48 to 72 percent) within their jurisdictions. This means that they have ample room for desired growth within their existing city limits. Milan, in particular, foresees future industrial growth adjacent to the old tire recycling facility and development of a new industrial park area along U.S. 280.

These development trends and growth patterns are expected to continue. The county's future land uses will closely resemble existing land uses. Agricultural, forestry, and conservation uses will continue to predominate the landscape, and maintain the outstanding existing small-town and rural character and appealing high quality of life.

Future land use maps for Dodge County, Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine are included following this description.

Land Use Goals

Dodge County and its municipalities seek future growth and development respective of its small-town and rural character, abundant natural and cultural resources and agricultural/forestry/conservation uses, and the existing high quality of life. It desires balanced growth patterns which maintain and keep viable existing agricultural, forestry and conservation uses, which sustain its heritage, abundant natural and cultural resources, which support its high quality of life, and which are otherwise compatible and complementary of existing uses and scale of development. The community has chosen the following land use goals to help bring about its desired future and delineated community vision.

Address Growth Management/Guide Compatible Development

A well planned community and one which appears neat, orderly, and attractive supports and encourages additional investment. Outside of Eastman, the community has developed only limited individual land use regulations to address specific issues and nuisances, but more general and coordinated efforts and joint code enforcement are needed. The community can also utilize infrastructure location; improvement of facilities and services; support of agricultural, forestry, and conservation uses; downtown revitalization; and involvement of its citizenry to assist.

Improve Subdivision/Manufactured Housing/Land Use Regulation/Code Enforcement/Permitting

As noted above, Dodge County has only limited, rudimentary land use regulations, road acceptance/subdivision ordinances, a manufactured home ordinance, and others to address specific issues or nuisances. Only Eastman and Milan have zoning ordinances and limited building code enforcement. These ordinances need update, expansion, coordination, and joint collaboration/code enforcement/countywide development permitting to initiate a more comprehensive and coordinated approach for land use management.

Maintain Open Spaces/Agricultural/Forestry Uses/Rural Character/Quality of Life

Development of new markets, supporting creation of alternative crops and uses, celebrating the heritage of these uses, providing professional support, and attracting compatible agribusiness or other supportive economic development ventures all can help achieve this. The location of the new farmers markets in



Eastman and Milan and facilitating the continued development of a local aquaponics industry are excellent examples of needed support. Developing and supporting outdoor events/facilities/festivals, making the Ocmulgee River more accessible, improving marketing of the Dodge County Public Fishing Area, and encouraging tourism will also help.

Develop/Improve Recreation/Leisure Use Facilities and Encourage Utilization/Access/Tourism for Natural/Cultural Resources

The Ocmulgee River, the Dodge County Public Fishing Area, the Magnolia Theater, Downtown Eastman Amphitheater, the Eastman and Stuckey houses, the Orphans Cemetery and many more sites all have much history and much more potential for recreation and tourism within the county. Increased recreational and outdoor usage through continued park development, promotion, and growth of tourism of many kinds offers much unrealized potential to both enhanced economic utilization and conservation of the county's significant natural and cultural resources. It can also attract more visitors, and more residents, and build a larger audience of citizen support for protection and enhancement of these resources. Further promotion of U.S. 341, the Golden Isles Parkway, also holds additional promise. The successful Peaches to the Beaches Annual Yard Sale, initiated through local efforts along U.S. 341, continues to grow in economic impact. Improvement of local recreational facilities, museums and other cultural events, enhancement of events or festivals, and development of local trails and bicycling paths could also reap benefits. Despite past success, there is even more unrealized major potential.

Encourage Infill Development/Downtown Revitalization

It only makes sense to utilize lands and buildings where taxpayers and private interests have invested in providing costly infrastructure and construction in the past before extending additional infrastructure or incurring completely new construction costs. There are an abundance of available vacant commercial, industrial and residential structures within the community, as well as areas with readily available infrastructure. Available historic buildings located in downtown Eastman and the other municipalities or elsewhere are avenues for preservation of character and heritage and opportunities for economic and community development utilizing existing served areas. Attractive and relatively low-cost historic homes are a potential attraction for retirees and families alike. Annexation of existing growth areas around Eastman could also facilitate appropriate infill development.

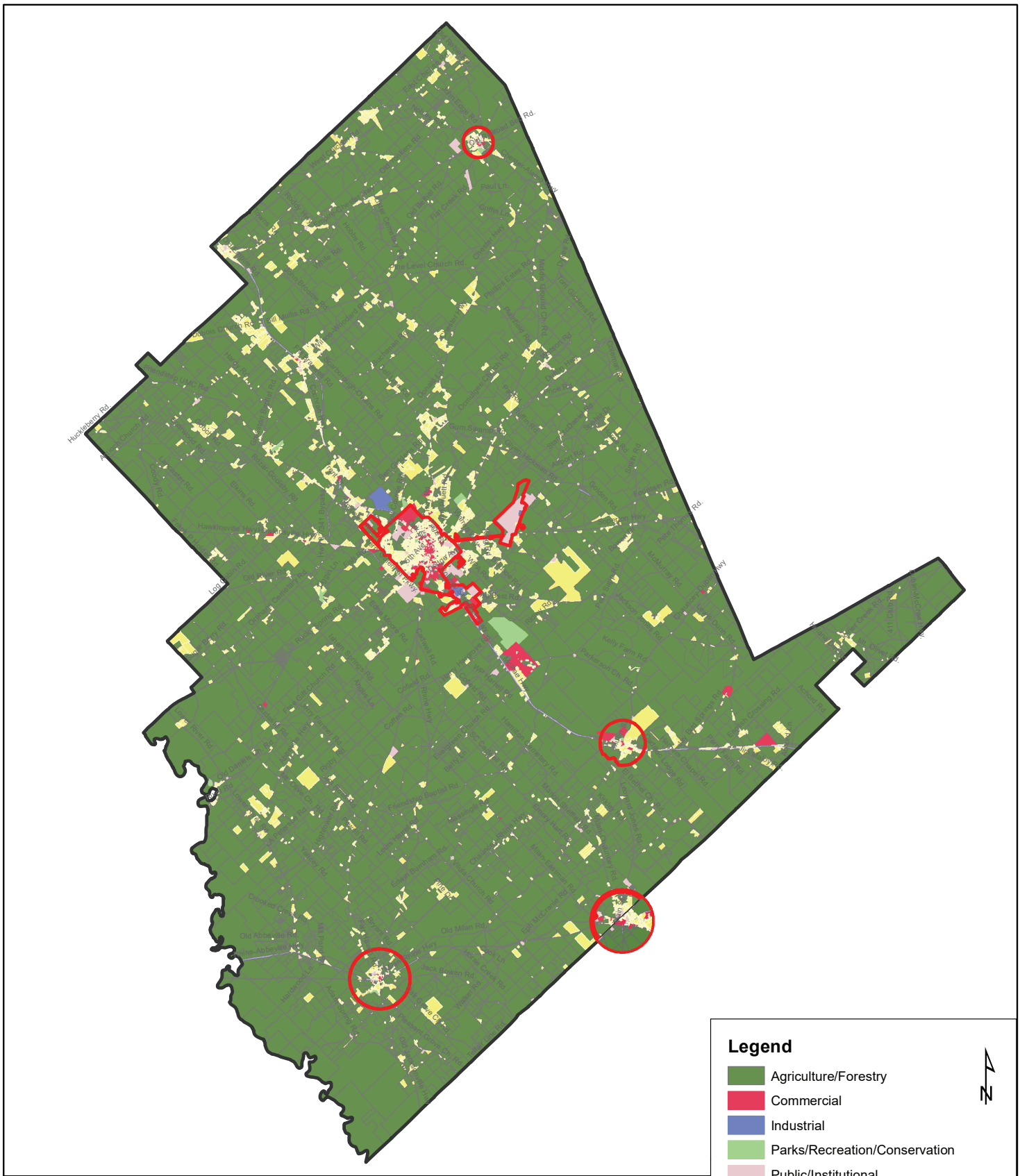
Improve Community Appearance

Dodge County and its municipalities have much history, intrinsic natural and cultural beauty, and Old South and family-friendly charm attractive to residential location and tourism. Landscaping/beautification efforts, general clean-up, and rehabilitation/upgrade of existing structures/areas will serve to accent and highlight this.

Seek Compatible Development/Utilization

Growth supportive, not disruptive through use, scale, or intensity, of the community's existing rural character, small-town atmosphere, extant heritage, abundant natural and cultural resources, and current agricultural/forestry/conservation uses is desired. Further educational and industrial development of the Regional Airport, including continued facility improvement of the airport itself, would complement and implement community desires and goals.





Dodge County Future Land Use



Legend

- Agriculture/Forestry
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Residential
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- City Limits
- County Boundary

0 0.75 1.5 3 Miles

Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC, 2021



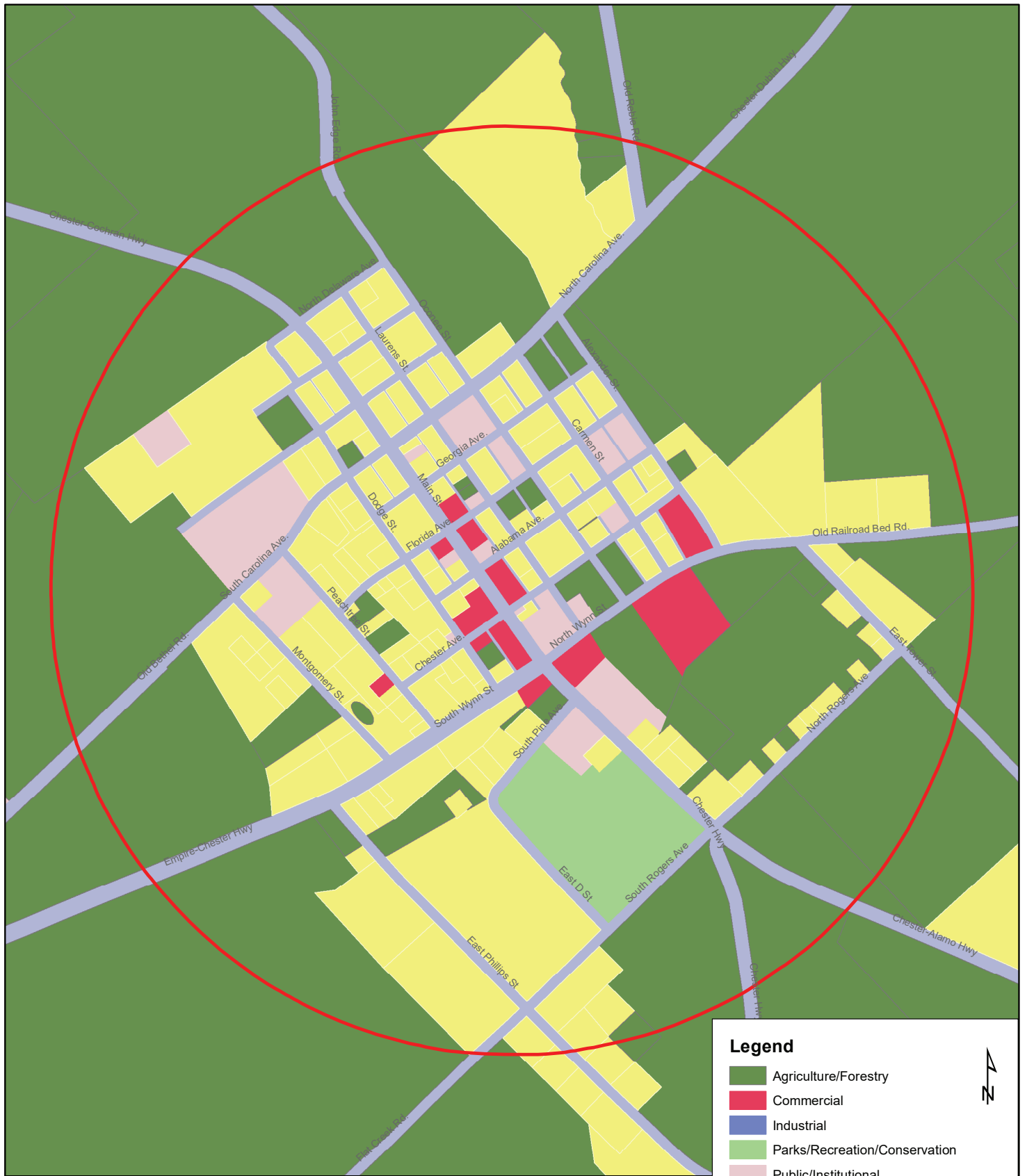


City of Chauncey Future Land Use



Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC, 2021





Town of Chester Future Land Use



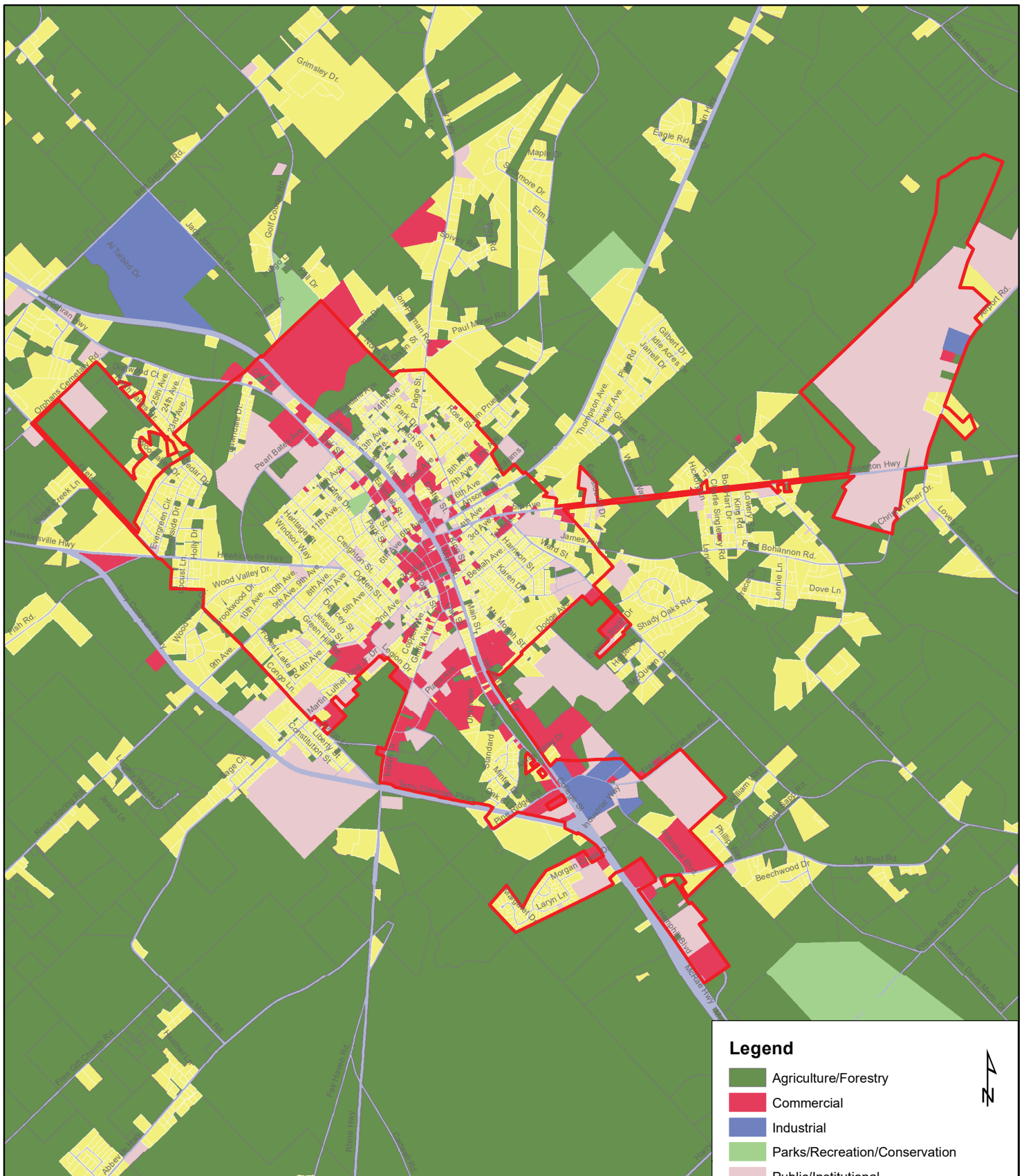
Legend

- Agriculture/Forestry
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Residential
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- City Limits
- County Boundary

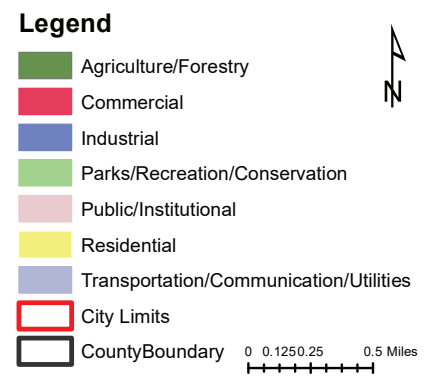
0 0.025 0.05 0.1 Miles

Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC, 2021



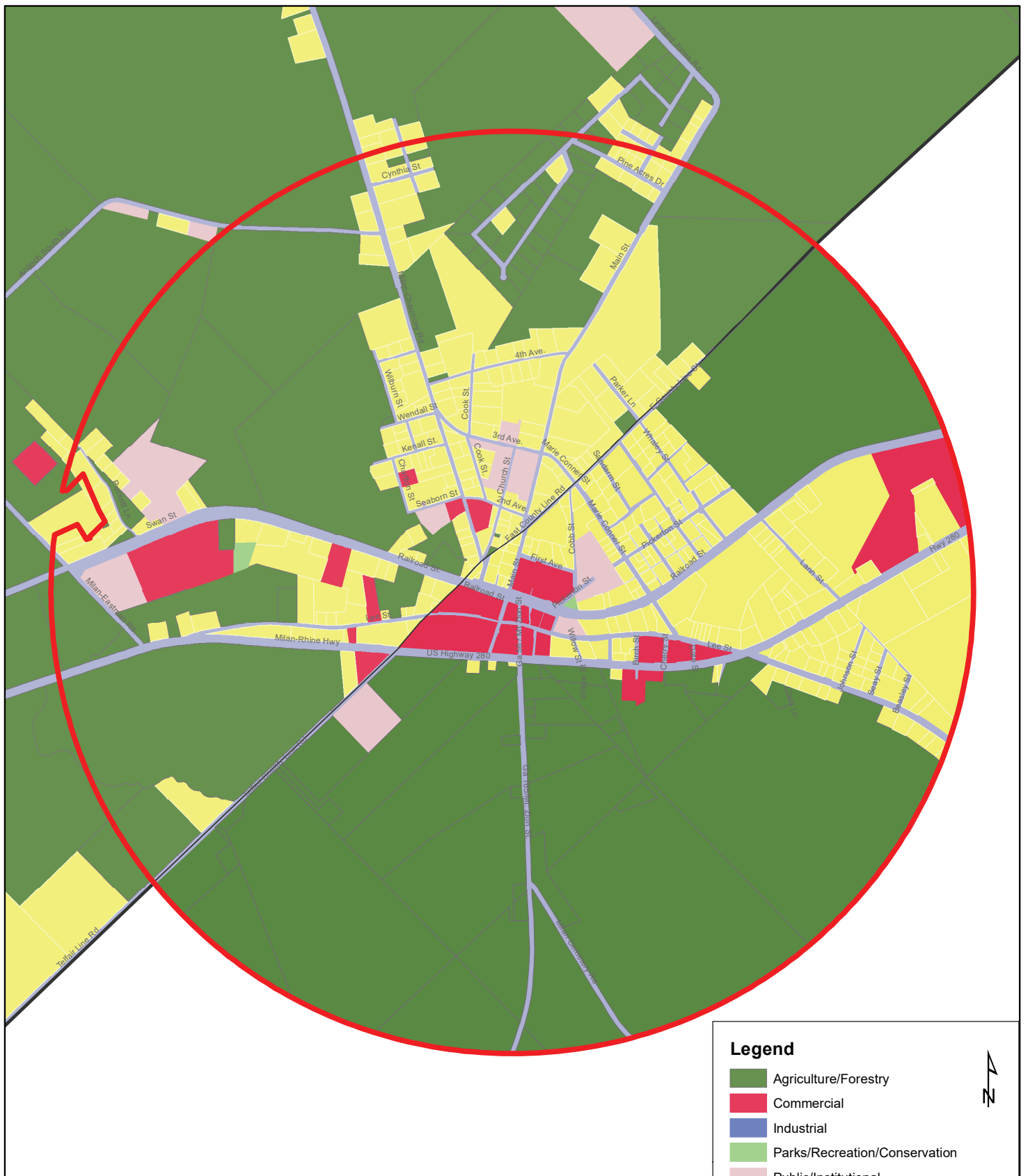


City of Eastman Future Land Use



Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC, 2021





Legend

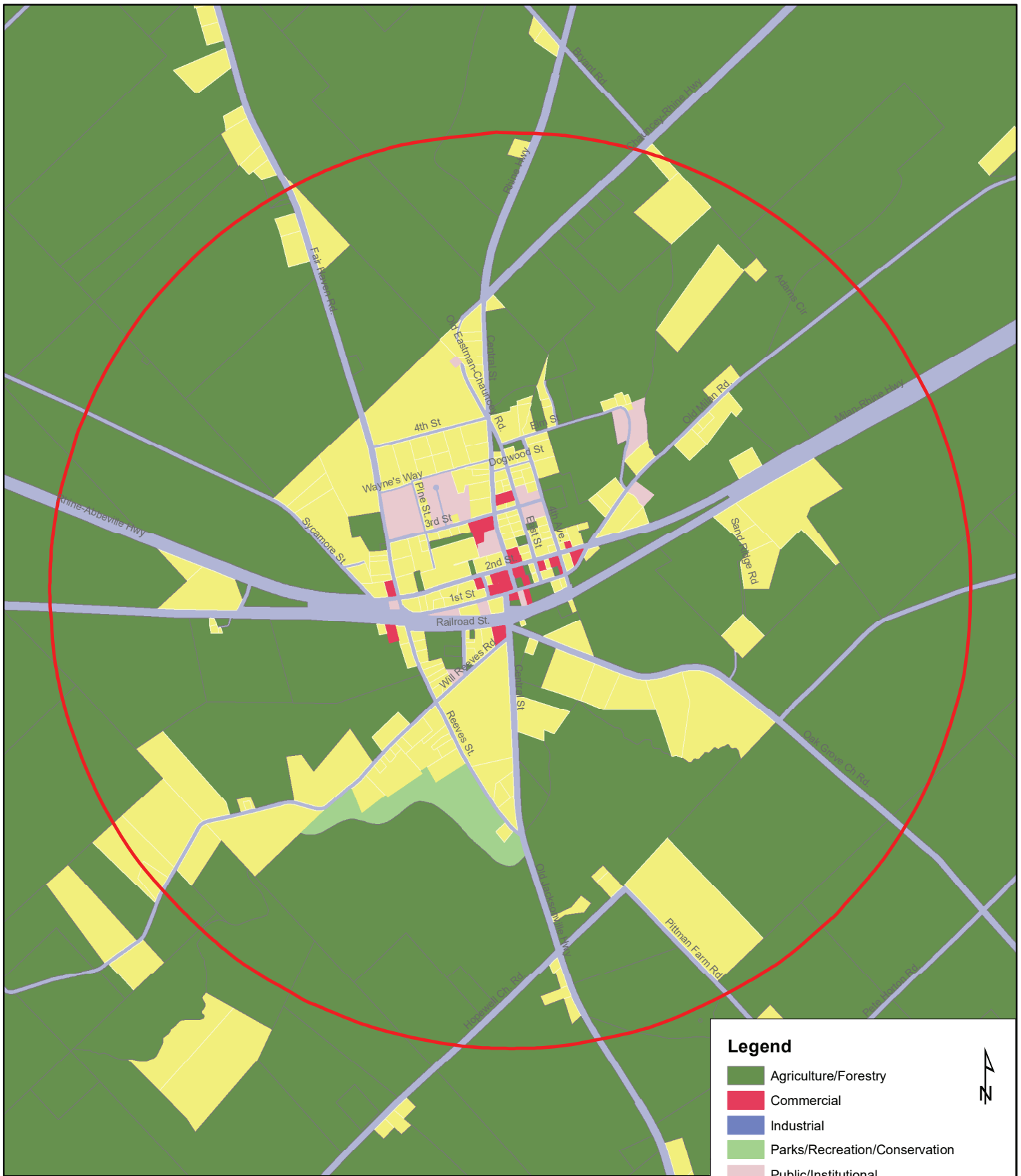
- Agriculture/Forestry
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Residential
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- City Limits
- County Boundary

0 0.05 0.1 0.2 Miles

City of Milan Future Land Use



Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC, 2021



Legend

- Agriculture/Forestry
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Residential
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- City Limits
- County Boundary

0 0.05 0.1 0.2 Miles

North Arrow

City of Rhine Future Land Use



Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC, 2021

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAMS



The Community Work Program Element is the chosen implementation strategy which the community has identified to begin its path toward improvement and its desired future growth and development. These are the immediate steps the community has chosen to address identified community issues, needs, and opportunities, and begin the journey to achieve the desired community vision.

This plan element answers the questions, **“How are we, as a community, going to get where we desire, given where we are?”** The Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan includes a separate community work program for each local government involved, as well as a report of accomplishments on their previous work program. The Long Term Policies identified under the Community Goals element identifies implementation activities and ideals which may take longer than five years, or because of circumstances involved, including finances, are not envisioned to begin in the near future.



Dodge County

Community Work Programs



Dodge County Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program

Report of Accomplishments

Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
		Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
2018	Seek the development of community welcome signs along the bypass, gateways and corridors into Eastman	Y	2018						Action was completed in 2018.
2018	Pursue the development of a local history museum, possibly as an addition to the Ocmulgee Regional Library					Y	2025		Action has been postponed as there has been no property acquired for project yet.
2019	Consider rehabilitating the old jail for community use							Y	Action has been dropped due to the building being condemned.
2017	Pursue paving and drainage improvements in needed areas, such as Shady Oak subdivision, et al	Y	2018						Action was completed in 2018
2018	Renovate the old Georgia National Guard building to house EMS operations and personnel.	Y	2018						Action was completed in 2018
2020	Pursue funding as appropriate to develop an Agriculture and Expo Center					Y	2025		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2019	Continue to pursue the development and enforcement of manufactured home/park regulations countywide					Y	2026		Action has been postponed due to zoning.
2017	Purchase tractor for right-of-way mowing	Y	2020						Action was completed in 2020.



Dodge County Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program

Report of Accomplishments

Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
		Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
2017	Purchase trash collection truck	Y	2019						County purchased a trash collection truck in 2019.
2017	Purchase two ambulances	Y	2020						County purchased two ambulances in 2020.
2017	Upgrade E-911 System					Y	2026		Moving to Next GEN Migration, waiting on State.
2017	Replace two culverts on Milan-Chauncey Road	Y	2019						Action was completed in 2019.
2018	Improve streets and drainage in the area of 9 th Ave., Jim Pruitt Road, and James Ave.					Y	2026		Looking to apply for a CDBG to complete project.
2017	Complete projects listed on the TIA Band 2 List (East Chicken Rd., Milan Chauncey Rd., Rocky Springs Rd., Middle Ground Church Rd., Edna Moore Rd.)	Y	2019						Action was completed in 2019.
2020	Complete projects listed on the TIA Band 3 List (Roddy Highway, Horne Rd., Jim Ross Rd.)	Y	2020						Action was completed in 2020.
2017	Resurface approximately 10 miles of roadway	Y	2020						Action was completed in 2020.
2017	Obtain GRAD Certified status for industrial site			Y	2023				Action is currently underway.
2020	Rehabilitate/resurface streets and improve drainage in the target area of Liberty Street			Y	2023				Action is currently underway.



Dodge County Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Community Work Program 2022 to 2026

Activity	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Each Year	Beyond 2026	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Pursue the development of a local history museum, possibly as an addition to the Ocmulgee Regional Library				X				X		Historical Society, Library Board	\$100,000	X	X		
Pursue funding as appropriate to develop an Agriculture and Expo Center				X				X	Eastman	BOE	\$400,000	X			
Continue to pursue the development and enforcement of manufactured home/park regulations countywide					X			X		HOGA RC	\$1,000 (Enforcement)	X			
Upgrade E-911 System					X			X		Wilcox County	\$500,000	X	X	X	
Improve streets and drainage in the area of 9 th Ave., Jim Pruitt Road, and James Ave.					X			X		DCA (CDBG)	\$750,000	X	X	X	
Obtain GRAD Certified status for industrial site		X						X	Eastman	Development Authority	\$500,000	X	X		
Rehabilitate/resurface streets and improve drainage in the target area of Liberty Street		X						X		DCA (CDBG)	\$750,000	X	X	X	
Establish new solid waste convenience centers	X							X		DNR	\$100,000	X	X		
Expand recreation department, upgrade lighting, fix fencing, add walking trails, splash pad, competitive gaming		X						X		LWCF, DNR, SPLOST	\$750,000	X	X	X	X
Establish County rural fire department	X							X		FEMA, GEMA	\$2,000,000	X	X	X	



Dodge County Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Community Work Program 2022 to 2026

Activity	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Each Year	Beyond 2026	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Seek Funding for National Guard Building to house E-911			X					X		USDA, GEMA	\$100,000	X	X	X	
Pursue paving of 10 miles of dirt roads annually						X		X		TSPLOST	\$1,000,000	X	X		
Continue to resurface 10 miles of roadway						X		X		GDOT LMIG	\$1,000,000	X	X		
Rehabilitate, with possible expansion, Dodge County Court House	X							X		SPLOST, USDA	\$10,000,000	X	X		
Purchase three fire apparatus		X	X	X				X		GEMA	\$750,000	X	X	X	
Seek funding for new inert landfill					X			X		USDA	\$5,000,000	X	X	X	
Adopt the DCA Broadband Model ordinance	X							X		DCA, Regional Commission	N/A	X	X		
Seek to become designated as a Broadband Ready Community	X							X		DCA, Regional Commission	N/A	X	X		



City of Chauncey

Community Work Programs



City of Chauncey Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

		Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	
Initiation Year	Description	Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	Status/Comments
2018	Repave Durham Street and S. Railroad Avenue			Y	2025				Durham Street was completed but S. Railroad Avenue has not been accomplished. New work program action reflects this change to only include S. Railroad Avenue.
2017	Pursue the acquisition of a second city well to serve as a backup well							Y	Action was dropped due to lack of interest.
2018	Locate new fire hydrants on N. Railroad Street					Y	2023		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2018	Replace the carpet in the city gymnasium					Y	2023		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2019	Construct a facility to house a fire truck on the north side of the railroad							Y	Action was dropped due to lack of funds.
2017	Build a new equipment shelter					Y	2024		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2019	Construct a walking track and additional parking at the city ballfield					Y	2024		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2017	Seek CDBG and other funding, as needed, to maintain and upgrade the water system, including replacing existing water lines			Y	2023				Applied for CDBG in 2021, waiting to see if funded.
2018	Pursue the paving of Cemetery Street	Y	2021						Action was completed in 2021.
2019	Construct a new fire station					Y	2025		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2018	Pursue funds to pave Kizzie Lane and Bussy Street					Y	2025		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2017	Complete TIA Band 2 Projects (Bush Ave.)	Y	2018						Action was completed in 2018.
2020	Complete TIA Band 3 Projects (Durham Street)	Y	2021						Action was completed in 2021.



City of Chauncey Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Community Work Program 2022 to 2026

Activity	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Each Year	Beyond 2026	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Repave S. Railroad Avenue				X					X	DOT, LMIG	\$150,000	X	X	X	
Locate new fire hydrants on N. Railroad Street		X							X	DCA (CDBG)	\$190,000	X	X	X	
Replace the carpet in the city gymnasium		X							X		\$15,000	X			
Build a new equipment shelter			X						X		\$5,000	X			
Construct a walking track and additional parking at the city ballfield			X						X	DNR	\$25,000	X	X	X	
Seek CDBG and other funding, as needed, to maintain and upgrade the water system, including replacing existing water lines		X							X	DCA (CDBG), GEFA, USDA Rural Dev't	\$1,000,000	X	X	X	
Construct new fire station				X					X		\$80,000	X			
Pursue funds to pave Kizzie Lane and Bussy Street				X					X	DCA (CDBG)	\$300,000	X	X	X	
Adopt the DCA Broadband Model ordinance	X							X	X	DCA, Regional Commission	N/A	X	X		
Seek to become designated as a Broadband Ready Community	X							X	X	DCA, Regional Commission	N/A	X	X		



Town of Chester

Community Work Programs



Town of Chester Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

		Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	
Initiation Year	Description	Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	Status/Comments
2019	Pursue drainage improvements (new curb and gutter, etc.) to areas of need, such as Caroline Ave. and Chester Ave.					Y	2024		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2018	Upgrade/renovate the Land Application System (LAS) for consistent wastewater treatment.	Y	2016						Action was completed in 2016 using a GEFA loan.



Town of Chester Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Community Work Program 2022 to 2026

Activity	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Each Year	Beyond 2026	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Pursue drainage improvements (new curb and gutter, etc.) to areas of need, such as Caroline Ave and Chester Ave.			X						X	DCA (CDBG)	\$400,000	X	X	X	
Demolish old school lunchroom			X						X		\$150,000	X			
Pave roads near schoolhouse parking lot				X					X		\$150,000	X	X	X	
Seek funding for sewage pond improvement, bar screen upgrade			X						X	PCA, CDBG, GEFA	\$750,000	X	X	X	
Seek funding for spray field, clear cut, new sprinkler system	X								X	GEFA	\$600,000	X	X	X	
Adopt the DCA Broadband Model ordinance	X							X	X	DCA, Regional Commission	N/A	X	X		
Seek to become designated as a Broadband Ready Community	X							X	X	DCA, Regional Commission	N/A	X	X		
Improve sewer lines in west Chester, including those along Wynne St. S., Chester Ave. S., Florida Ave. S., Alabama Ave. S., Carolina Ave. S., Main St. W., Dodge St., Charles Parker Ave., and Montgomery St.					X		X		X	DCA (CDBG)	\$1,000,000	X	X	X	



City of Eastman

Community Work Programs



City of Eastman Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program

Report of Accomplishments

Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
		Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
2018	Further expand and fully develop water and sewer infrastructure within the Airport Industrial Park	Y	2017						Action was completed in 2017.
2021	Promote the development of upscale loft apartments in downtown			Y	2026				Action is underway, estimated to be completed in 2026.
2019	Pursue funding as appropriate to develop an Agriculture and Expo Center					Y	2026		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2018	Continue the rehabilitation of the old Eastman Bus Station for community use					Y	2026		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds and asbestos in building.
2018	Complete the renovation of the 9 th Avenue metal storage building at the fire department			Y	2023				Action is underway, estimated to be completed in 2023.
2020	Purchase new vehicles for police department	Y	2021-2022						Action was completed in 2021 and in 2022.
2017	Seek funding as needed for water tank improvements	Y	2021						Action was completed in 2021.
2018	Seek funding for upgrades and operating expenses for the fire station at the airport					Y	2026		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2021	Continue to conduct needed changing out of fire hydrants throughout the city			Y	2022				3 hydrants were replaced in 2021.



City of Eastman Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

		Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	
Initiation Year	Description	Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	Status/Comments
2021	Pursue funding to construct a new municipal complex to house the police department and a fire station			Y	2023				Purchased the old Goody's Building.
2021	Seek funding as needed to upgrade sewerage services to all unserved residents of Eastman			Y	2024				Looking to use GEFA funds.
2018	Upgrade or replace existing water and sewer lines to prevent infiltration					Y	2024		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2018	Seek funding as needed for drainage improvements in identified areas of need such as Bacon Heights, Griffin and Cooper, and Neese Street	Y	2016						Action was completed in 2016 using CDBG funds.
2020	Pursue drainage improvements between 10 th and 11 th Streets					Y	2026		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2018	Investigate the feasibility of extending the City of Eastman's city limits					Y	2026		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2017	Conduct needs assessment for existing park infrastructure	Y	2021						Action was completed in 2021.
2019	Update, replace, and install new recreation equipment at Sunset Park					Y	2022		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2019	Develop a pocket park, passive park, green-space in downtown Eastman	Y	2019						Action was completed in 2019.
2018	Develop a branding initiative to include signage and marketing components	Y	2017						Action was completed in 2017.



City of Eastman Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

		Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	
Initiation Year	Description	Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	Status/Comments
2020	Install new entrance signage at each gate-way	Y	2019						Action was completed in 2019.
2017	Replace 500 water meters each year with Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) enabled meters			Y	2023				Action is underway, estimated to be completed by 2023.
2021	Implement a streetscape project for side streets in downtown Eastman					Y	2023		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2017	Develop a vacant commercial site inventory for infill and redevelopment to be updated bi-annually	Y	2017						Action was completed in 2017.
Beyond 21	Identify existing substandard structures and take appropriate measures			Y	2026				Action is underway, estimated to be completed by 2026.
2018	Redevelop downtown property with public/private lease purchase agreements			Y	2026				Action is underway, estimated to be completed by 2026.
2019	Develop a Main Street Market in the downtown area to coincide with the annual Peaches to Beaches event					Y	2023		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2017	Hold a joint City of Eastman/Dodge County work session each January					Y	2022		Action has been postponed to 2022.
2021	Create a Citizen Academy program to graduate City Ambassadors					Y	2022		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2018	Host a town hall meeting each year to educate citizens of issues and local ordinances	Y	2018						Action was completed in 2018.
2018	Develop a Safe Routes to School study at the middle and high schools			Y	2023				Action is underway, estimated to be completed by 2023.



City of Eastman Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
		Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
2018	Update the zoning ordinance of the City to consider infill housing development regulations			Y	2023				Action is underway, estimated to be completed by 2023.
2020	Increase the City's public profile and information distribution by utilizing social media applications	Y	2021						Action was completed in 2021.
2017	Update the City's website	Y	2021						Action was completed in 2021.
2021	Provide public wi-fi throughout the downtown area			Y	2023				Action is underway, estimated to be completed by 2023.
2018	Digitize City ordinances and publish on-line once complete	Y	2015						Action was completed in 2015.
2019	Organize community trips and workshops for citizen education on high density development in other areas of the State					Y	2023		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2020	Construct a new City Hall facility			Y	2023				Action is underway, estimated to be completed by 2023.
2017	Remove the automatic disqualifier for criminal history on all city employment applications	Y	2018						Action was completed in 2018.
2017	Complete Projects Listed in TIA Band 2 (33 Projects)	Y	2021						Action was completed in 2021.
2020	Complete Projects Listed in TIA Band 3 (44 Projects)	Y	2021						Action was completed in 2021.
2017	Rehabilitate water lines in the Cottondale community			Y	2023				Action is underway, estimated to be completed by 2023.
2017	Obtain GRAD Certified status for industrial site			Y	2023				Action is underway, estimated to be completed by 2023.



City of Eastman Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Community Work Program 2022 to 2026

Activity	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Each Year	Beyond 2026	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Promote the development of upscale loft apartments in downtown					X				X	Chamber, Private Developers	\$5,000 (local facilitation)	X			X
Pursue funding as appropriate to develop an Agriculture and Expo Center					X			X	X	BOE	\$400,000	X			X
Continue the rehabilitation of the old Eastman Bus Station for community use					X				X	DOT (TE)	\$200,000	X	X	X	
Complete the renovation of the 9 th Avenue metal storage building at the fire department		X							X		\$35,000	X			
Seek funding for upgrades and operating expenses for the fire station at the airport					X				X	FEMA	\$700,000	X			
Continue to conduct needed changing out of fire hydrants throughout the city	X								X		\$20,000	X			
Pursue funding to construct a new municipal complex to house the police department and a fire station		X							X	SPLOST	\$2,000,000	X			
Seek funding as needed to upgrade sewerage services to all unserved residents of Eastman			X						X	DCA (CDBG), USDA Rural Dev't	\$2,500,000	X	X	X	
Upgrade or replace existing water and sewer lines to prevent infiltration			X						X	DCA (CDBG), USDA Rural Dev't	\$3,000,000	X	X	X	
Pursue drainage improvements between 10 th and 11 th Streets					X				X		\$100,000	X			



City of Eastman Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Community Work Program 2022 to 2026

Activity	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Each Year	Beyond 2026	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Investigate the feasibility of extending the City of Eastman's city limits					X				X		N/A				
Update, replace, and install new recreation equipment at Sunset Park	X								X	LWCF, SPLOST	\$400,000	X			X
Replace 500 water meters each year with Automatic Meter Reading (AMR) enabled meters	X	X							X	GEFA	\$400,000	X	X		
Implement a streetscape project for side streets in downtown Eastman		X							X	GDOT, DDA	\$200,000	X	X		
Identify existing substandard structures and take appropriate measures					X				X		\$5,000	X			
Redevelop downtown property with public/private lease purchase agreements					X				X	DDA	\$25,000	X			
Develop a Main Street Market in the downtown area to coincide with the annual Peaches to Beaches event		X							X	Chamber of Commerce	N/A				
Hold a joint City of Eastman/Dodge County work session each January	X							X	X	DDA, Chamber of Commerce, Airport Authority	N/A				
Create a Citizen Academy program to graduate City Ambassadors	X								X	Chamber of Commerce	\$5,000	X			X
Develop a Safe Routes to School study at the middle and high schools		X							X	GDOT, RC	\$10,000	X	X		
Update the zoning ordinance of the City to consider infill housing development regulations	X	X							X		\$1,000	X			
Provide public wi-fi throughout the downtown area	X	X							X		\$10,000	X	X		



City of Eastman Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Community Work Program 2022 to 2026

	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
Activity	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Each Year	Beyond 2026	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Organize community trips and workshops for citizen education on high density development in other areas of the State		X							X		\$10,000	X			
Construct a new City Hall facility		X							X	SPLOST	\$1,000,000	X			
Rehabilitate water lines in the Cottondale community		X							X	DCA (CDBG)	\$500,000	X	X	X	
Obtain GRAD Certified status for industrial site		X							X	Development Authority	\$500,000	X	X		
Seek funding to develop a municipal park		X							X	LWCF	\$500,000	X	X	X	
Develop a comprehensive stormwater management plan				X					X		\$100,000	X	X		
Develop a maintenance plan for roads				X					X		\$50,000	X			
Adopt the DCA Broadband Model ordinance	X							X	X	DCA, Regional Commission	N/A	X	X		
Seek to become designated as a Broadband Ready Community	X							X	X	DCA, Regional Commission	N/A	X	X		



City of Milan

Community Work Programs



City of Milan Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
		Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
2017	Seek the reopening and/or additional usage of Milan Detention Center			Y	2026				Half of the building is now the Telfair County Jail.
2020	Seek to attract retail businesss to downtown					Y	2023		Action has been postponed due to lack of new business attraction.
2018	Seek to continue theater renovations, including a concession stand					Y	2026		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds and COVID-19 concerns.
2018	Acquire the necessary land and expand the softball field					Y	2026		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2019	Clean up identified condemned lots			Y	2026				Half of the lots have been cleaned up.
2019	Pursue the reconstruction of sidewalks					Y	2024		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2020	Seek to renovate old city well to provide an alternative water source for the City water system			Y	2022				Construction is underway, CDBG used.
2019	Seek funding for the development of a new recreational area that includes a walking track, 2 ballfields, and a shelter/concession area					Y	2023		Location was identified. Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2018	Seek funding to pave Chris Lane and Swain Street			Y	2023				In process of using LMIG funds.
2020	Develop a program for housing rehabilitation and/or new construction					Y	2026		Looking to put on other side of the prison.
2018	Facilitate City infrastructure improvements to expand capacity of the recycling machinery repair business as needed					Y	2026		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2017	Replace culverts on Pikerton Street and regrade drainage ditches throughout city			Y	2023				Looking to use LMIG funds.
2017	Seek funding to support planned events coordinated by the "Small Town Events Group"	Y	2020						Have hosted events and is an active group.
2020	Expand the Milan Farmer's Market and aquaponics project					Y	2026		No new changes. Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2020	Repair/upgrade Land Application System sprinklers and plumbing			Y	2022				CDBG funds being used for project.
2018	Seek funding to restore the Milan Depot interior and utilize it for a local history museum					Y	2026		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.



City of Milan Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Community Work Program 2022 to 2026

Activity	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Each Year	Beyond 2026	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Seek the reopening and/or additional usage of Milan Detention Center					X				X	Veterans Affairs, Private	\$1,000,000	X	X	X	X
Seek to attract retail business in downtown		X							X		\$10,000	X			X
Seek to continue theater renovations, including a concession stand					X				X		\$25,000	X			
Acquire the necessary land and expand the softball field					X				X	DNR (LWCF)	\$60,000	X	X	X	
Clean up identified condemned lots					X				X		\$5,000	X			
Pursue the reconstruction of sidewalks			X						X		\$50,000	X	X		
Seek to renovate old city well to provide an alternative water source for the City water system	X								X	DCA (CDBG), GEFA	\$220,000	X	X	X	
Seek funding for the development of a new recreational area that includes a walking track, 2 ballfields, and a shelter/concession area		X							X	DNR (LWCF)	\$150,000	X	X	X	
Seek funding to pave Chris Lane and Swain Street		X							X	LMIG	\$200,000	X	X	X	
Develop a program for housing rehabilitation and/or new construction					X				X	DCA (CDBG) CHIP	\$300,000	X	X	X	
Facilitate City infrastructure improvements to expand capacity of the recycling machinery repair business as needed					X				X	DCA, One Georgia, USDA	\$200,000	X	X	X	X
Replace culverts on Pikerton Street and regrade drainage ditches throughout city		X							X	LMIG	\$500,000	X	X	X	
Expand the Milan Farmers Market and aquaponics project.					X				X	Milan Development Authority	\$50,000	X			
Rehabilitate the LAS System and purchase the land on which it is located					X		X		X	DCA (CDBG)	\$1,000,000	X	X	X	



City of Milan Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Community Work Program 2022 to 2026

	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
Activity	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Each Year	Beyond 2026	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Seek funding to restore the Milan Depot interior and utilize it for a local history museum					X				X		\$50,000	X			
Adopt the DCA Broadband Model ordinance	X							X	X	DCA, Regional Commission	N/A	X	X		
Seek to become designated as a Broadband Ready Community	X							X	X	DCA, Regional Commission	N/A	X	X		



City of Rhine

Community Work Programs



City of Rhine Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
		Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
2019	Construct and implement a citywide water and sewer system with industrial capacity					Y	2026		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2018	Complete the installation of new meters for city water					Y	2026		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2018	Seek funding and construct a new park on the site of the old Rhine Elementary School, including amenities such as benches, lighting, gazebo, and walking track					Y	2025		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2018	Purchase a new pumper for the fire department					Y	2026		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2018	Extend the fire station by adding a bay for the new pumper					Y	2026		Action has been postponed for lack of funding.
2017	Purchase body cameras for each police officer							Y	Action was dropped since the City no longer has a police department.
2017	Purchase downtown street light banners					Y	2025		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2019	Renovate historic city gym with new windows, HVAC system and lighting					Y	2025		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2018	Repave First Street	Y	2018						This project was completed in 2018.
2019	Construct a new farmers market					Y	2023		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2018	Repaint and reline the elevated water storage tank					Y	2022		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2020	Install new bleachers and lighting at city ballfield					Y	2024		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.
2019	Install signs at city ballfield					Y	2024		Action has been postponed due to lack of funds.



City of Rhine Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Community Work Program 2022 to 2026

Activity	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026	Each Year	Beyond 2026	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Construct and implement a citywide water and sewer system with industrial capacity.					X				X	GEFA, USDA, DCA CDBG	\$2,000,000	X	X	X	
Complete the installation of new meters for city water.					X				X	DCA (CDBG)	\$700,000	X	X	X	
Seek funding and construct a new park on the site of the old Rhine Elementary School, including amenities such as benches, lighting, gazebo, and walking track.				X					X	GA DNR, LWCF, SPLOST	\$200,000	X	X	X	
Purchase a new pumper for the fire department.					X			X	X	FEMA, GEMA, GA Forestry	\$150,000	X	X	X	
Extend the fire station by adding a bay for the new pumper.					X			X	X	SPLOST	\$25,000	X	X	X	
Purchase downtown streetlight banners.				X					X		\$30,000	X			X
Renovate historic city gym with new windows, HVAC system, and lighting.				X					X	SPLOST	\$300,000	X	X	X	
Construct new farmers market.		X							X	USDA	\$80,000	X		X	
Repaint and reline the elevated water storage tank.	X								X	DCA (CDBG)	\$200,000	X	X	X	
Install new bleachers and lighting at city ballfield			X						X		\$15,000	X			
Install signs at city ballfield			X						X		\$10,000	X			
Pave 4 th Avenue and East Street.		X							X	LMIG	\$200,000	X	X	X	
Adopt the DCA Broadband Model ordinance	X							X	X	DCA, Regional Commission	N/A	X	X		
Seek to become designated as a Broadband Ready Community	X							X	X	DCA, Regional Commission	N/A	X	X		



Appendix A

- **Community Involvement**
- **Public Hearing Notice 1**
- **News Release**
- **Comprehenisve Plan Website**
- **Community Vision Survey**
- **Public Hearing Notice 2**
- **Meeting Agendas**
- **Stakeholders Invited to Participate**
- **Active Participants**



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Local Planning Requirements established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) encourage and require that each element of the comprehensive plan “be prepared with considerable opportunity for involvement and input from stakeholders, local leadership, and the general public.” The Dodge County local governments took this requirement to heart and placed increased emphasis on getting community leaders, stakeholders, and the general public involved. The need for strong community involvement from a broad spectrum of stakeholders was emphasized by the Regional Commission in communications with the local governments. As a result, the local governments put forth considerable effort for broad community involvement and participation in this comprehensive plan’s development.

The local governments coordinated establishment of a steering committee which they called the “Local Plan Coordination Committee” approximately one to two months ahead of the scheduled first committee meeting, and invited through formal e-mail and direct contact as many stakeholders and community leaders as they could envision. Regional Commission planning staff had previously counseled the local governments to make such efforts a priority a number of times, including a plan implementation meeting held in January, 2021. The Regional Commission offered plan preparation assistance in a letter, and as much in direct communication and follow-up for plan development organization. DCA’s Suggested Community Plan Stakeholder List, some specific known local candidates, and a model invitation for stakeholder participation were provided for local government use. In addition to local government direct contact, the local governments involved local media and their public meetings to notify the general public and any other interested parties to participate. The official public advertising of the required public hearing further invited all those interested to participate. Similar efforts by the local media and local governments occurred prior to the final committee meeting and public hearing to review the draft plan prior to its formal submittal.

These considerable efforts for achieving meaningful community involvement were considered a success by the local governments. The committee meetings participation did include numerous appointed and elected local officials, local economic development practitioners, other local agencies and organizations, and many others. The first committee meeting, as well as the first public hearing, included a strengths/weakness (SWOT analysis) exercise. The results of these strengths/weaknesses exercises were also reviewed at the second committee meeting. In standard practice, the first order of business at each committee meeting was to review all prior committee inputs and their summary by staff for committee amendment before moving to the next input topic. Much community involvement and input was provided in all facets and elements of the comprehensive plan’s development. The local governments were very pleased both with the community involvement/input and the results.

The actual documents utilized or published during the community involvement and comprehensive plan preparation process are provided in this appendix. These include the local government stakeholder invitation, the local government official public hearing advertisements, and the Local Plan Coordination Committee meeting agendas. A list of stakeholders invited to participate in the comprehensive plan preparation process and a list of active participants on the Local Plan Coordination Committee and involved in plan preparation are also included.



PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan “The Future of All of Dodge County”

The local governments of Dodge County and the municipalities of Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine are in the initial stages of a process to develop a new joint comprehensive plan in accordance with state law. It is desired that this plan not only meet state requirements, but also truly express the Community’s wishes for the future growth and development of the Community.

Please come to this meeting and express your desires about the Community’s future vision, the issues and opportunities facing the Community, and what should be done to make Dodge County and its municipalities better places to live and work. What should be the Community’s guiding principles, and what can be done to generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of all of Dodge County?

PUBLIC HEARING DATE AND TIME: Thursday, April 1, 2021 at 5:00 p.m.

**LOCATION OF PUBLIC HEARING: Dodge County Commissioners Board Room,
Eastman**

Please attend, voice your opinions, and be involved. Help your community be proud about its future. All persons with a disability or otherwise needing assistance should contact Dodge County Board of Commissioners, 5016 Courthouse Circle, Suite 102, Eastman, Georgia, or call 478-374-4361.



HEART OF GEORGIA ALTAMAHA

Regional Commission

331 West Parker Street
Baxley, GA 31513
Phone: 912-367-3648
Fax: 912-367-3640

5405 Oak Street
Eastman, GA 31023
Phone: 478-374-4771
Fax: 478-374-0703



NEWS RELEASE

PUBLIC INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN DROP-IN SESSION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS' COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

DATE: Tuesday, April, 13, 2021 4:00 – 6:00 PM

LOCATION: Eastman First United Methodist Church Social Hall
5324 Anson Avenue

Are you concerned about the future of Dodge County, Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine? Do you have thoughtful ideas on what needs to be done to make the community a better place? What do you consider to be pressing needs and issues in the community?

The local governments of Dodge County, the Dodge County Board of Commissioners, and the municipalities of Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine, are in the process of updating their comprehensive plan required by state law. The current joint comprehensive plan dates from 2016, and is the principal guide to the long-term growth and development of Dodge County and its municipalities. The new update will focus on achieving a vision set by the community on what it wants to be, and addressing identified needs and opportunities.

You are cordially invited to get involved and to participate in this plan update process. You may do so by attending a public drop-in session concerning the comprehensive plan update to be held at the Eastman First United Methodist Church Social Hall at 5324 Anson Avenue from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, April 13, 2021. The session is designed to be informal, to answer any questions you may have, and to allow for one-on-one input at your convenience. Planning staff from the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission will be on hand to discuss the plan and its process, and to receive your input and ideas. There will be no formal presentation. The event is designed as a drop-in at whatever time is convenient for those wishing to participate or learn more.

Please attend and voice your ideas. We want to hear them. Let us know what you think. Do your part in making Dodge County an even better place to live, work, and play.





Welcome!

Welcome to the home of the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan Update. The County and the municipalities of Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine are currently undergoing strategic planning meetings to guide the future growth and development for the community. Issues discussed include economic development, community facilities, natural and cultural resources, housing, intergovernmental coordination, and other important concerns. In a series of meetings, to be held March-August, local government leadership will be seeking citizen input and participation concerning these topics. This page will provide periodic updates and working documents from the Comprehensive Plan Steering Committee.





TAKING FLIGHT TOGETHER

A Joint Comprehensive Plan for Dodge County, Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine, Georgia

August, 2016

Download a Copy of the 2016 Plan Here!

WHY IS THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IMPORTANT?

Effective planning ensures that future development will occur where, when, and how the community and local government wants. There are several important benefits to the entire community that result from the planning process:

- Quality of life is maintained and improved.
- There is a vision, clearly stated and shared by all, that describes the future of the community.
- Private property rights are protected.
- Economic development is encouraged and supported.
- There is more certainty about where development will occur, what it will be like, when it will happen, and how the costs of development will be met.

To encourage local governments' engagement in comprehensive planning, Georgia incentivizes it by allowing cities and counties with DCA-approved comprehensive plans access to a special package of financial resources to aid in implementing their plans. This includes Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), water and sewer loans from the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA), economic development funding from the OneGeorgia Authority, and a variety of other programs from DCA and partner agencies (a detailed list is available in the "Fact Sheets" section, below). Eligibility for this package of incentives is called Qualified Local Government (QLG) status.

<https://dca.ga.gov/local-government-assistance/planning/local-planning/local-comprehensive-planning>



DODGE COUNTY 2021 JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN TIMETABLE

- Thursday, 3.4.2021, 10:30 AM - Initial Meeting/Strengths/Weaknesses (SWOT)
- Thursday, 4.1.2021, 10:30 AM - Community Vision/Needs and Opportunities
- Thursday, 4.1.2021, 5:00 PM - Initial Public Hearing
- Tuesday, 4.13.2021, 4:00-6:00 PM - Community Input Drop-In
- Thursday, 5.6.2021, 10:30 AM - Needs and Opportunities/Goals/Policies/Economic Development
- Thursday, 6.3.2021, 10:30 AM - Goals/Policies/Economic Development/Broadband/Land Use
- Wednesday, 9.1.2021, 3:00 PM - Draft Plan
- Wednesday, 9.1.2021, 5:00 PM - Final Public Hearing
- September, 2021 - Local Government Submittal

[Click to View Files From First Planning Meeting 3.4.21](#)

[Click to View Files From Second Planning Meeting 4.1.21](#)

[Click to View Files From Third Planning Meeting 5.6.21](#)

[Click to View Files From Fourth Planning Meeting 6.3.21](#)

[Click to View Files From Fifth Planning Meeting 9.1.2021](#)



OUR VISION

The Dodge County community is committed to the pursuit of progress and growth within the next 20 years. At the forefront of Dodge County's vision is becoming a regional hub for commerce and industry, efficient in drawing a young, skilled, workforce and patrons from surrounding counties. Dodge County sees its future self as a unique growth center of Southern charm and diverse economic growth centered around outstanding community, educational, and industrial resources, but offered in a dramatic backdrop of interesting, tangible history, and inviting natural resources and outdoor landscape. Practical utilization and promotion of the community's existing resources, assets, features, history, as well as the strategic improvement and expansion the community's infrastructural capabilities and educational programs will serve to further enhance the quality of life for current residents and future generations.



WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO SEE?



FOR MORE INFORMATION REGARDING THE 2021 DODGE COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING PROCESS, CONTACT US:

331 West Parker Street - Bailey, GA 31513

912-367-3648

dcmz@hogarc.org



COMMUNITY VISION SURVEY

1. How would you describe your community, particularly to someone who knows nothing about it?
2. What makes your community unique and special as a place to live?
3. What improvement(s) to your community would you most like to see happen?
4. What are the greatest strengths or assets of your community?
5. What are your community's greatest needs, especially long-term?
6. What specific projects/improvements are critically needed in the short term?
7. What opportunities for positive change/improvement/growth are there in your community?
8. How do you think your community change/grow in the next five to ten years?
9. What three words do you hope people use 10 years from now when they describe what Dodge County is like as a community-the values that define the people who live there?



FINAL PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan

The local governments of Dodge County and the Cities of Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine are in the final stages of a process to develop a new joint comprehensive plan in accordance with state law.

The comprehensive plan outlines a community vision, identifies needs and opportunities, and delineates long term policies and a community work program to provide a guide and blueprint for future growth and development within the community jurisdictions. The plan is in draft finalization before submittal to the state for review.

The purpose of the hearing is to brief the community on the content and strategies outlined in the draft comprehensive plan, to address the issues and opportunities facing Dodge County and the Cities of Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine, obtain any final citizen input, and notify the community of the pending submittal of the comprehensive plan for state and regional review.

PUBLIC HEARING DATE AND TIME: Wednesday, September 1, 2021, at 5:00 p.m.

LOCATION OF PUBLIC HEARING: Dodge County Annex Board Room, 643 Pearl Bates Avenue, Eastman

All persons with a disability or otherwise needing assistance should contact Dodge County Board of Commissioners, 643 Pearl Bates Avenue, Eastman, Georgia, or call 478-374-4361.

All persons are invited to attend the public hearing and voice your opinion to help your community achieve a better future. If you would like more information, please contact James Pope at the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, 912-367-3648 or pope@hogarc.org.



**DODGE COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
LOCAL PLAN COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING
EASTMAN-DODGE COUNTY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, EASTMAN,
GA
March 4, 2021
AGENDA**

Introductions

Background/Committee's Purpose

Proposed Timetable for Plan Development

Community Strengths/Weaknesses Identification (SWOT)

Community Vision Input

Next Meeting

Draft Community Vision Review

Needs and Opportunities Input



**DODGE COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
LOCAL PLAN COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING
Eastman Dodge Community Meeting Room, Eastman, GA
April 1, 2021
AGENDA**

Introduction

Community Vision Input/Group Breakout

Plan Title

Draft Issues and Opportunities

Goals/Policies

Next Meeting – Tuesday, March 31, 2020, 10:30 a.m.

Revised Draft Community Vision Review

Revised Draft Issues and Opportunities Review

Goals/Policies Input

***Public Hearing – Thursday, April 1, 2021, 5:00 p.m., Dodge County Commissioners Board Room**

***Community Input Drop-In Session on Tuesday, April 13, 2021, 4-6 p.m., location needs to be determined**



**DODGE COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
LOCAL PLAN COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

Terry Coleman Conference Center, Eastman, GA

May 6, 2021

AGENDA

Draft Community Vision Review

Plan Title

Revised Draft Issues and Opportunities Review

Goals/Policies

Broadband

***Community Input Drop-In Session held on Tuesday, April 13, 2021, 4-6 p.m.,
First Methodist Church, Eastman, GA**



**DODGE COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
LOCAL PLAN COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING
EASTMAN DODGE COMMUNITY MEETING ROOM
EASTMAN, GA**

**June 3, 2021
AGENDA**

Introduction

Plan Title

Draft Community Vision Review

Draft Broadband Element

Economic Development Element

Plan Coordination

Land Use Element

Next Meeting – Date to be determined to review draft plan, including Community Work Program.



**DODGE COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
LOCAL PLAN COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING
DODGE COUNTY COURTHOUSE ANNEX BOARD ROOM
EASTMAN, GA
SEPTEMBER 1, 2021
AGENDA**

Draft Plan Review

Submittal Discussion

Submittal Letter

Public Hearing – Wednesday, September 1, 2021, 5:00 p.m.



Stakeholders Invited to Participate in Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan Preparation Process

Dodge County Board of Commissioners
City of Chauncey
Town of Chester
City of Eastman
City of Milan
City of Rhine
Dodge County Board of Education
Middle Georgia State University
Oconee Fall Line Technical College
Dodge County Eastman Development Authority
Eastman-Dodge County Chamber of Commerce
Eastman Downtown Development Authority
Milan Development Authority
Dodge County Farm Bureau
Dodge County Cooperative Extension
Georgia Power
Ocmulgee EMC
Georgia Forestry Commission
Dodge County Fire/Emergency Management Agency
Local Fire Departments
Eastman Police Department
Stuckey Timberland, Inc.
Alcoa
Aremac Heat Treating
Dynamic Paint Solutions
Heart of Georgia Metal Crafters
Mondi Bags USA
Dodge County Sheriff's Department
Local Banks
Local Churches
Local Civic Clubs
Dodge County Health Department
Dodge County Hospital
<i>The Dodge County News</i>
Dodge County Board of Assessors
Dodge County Library/Ocmulgee Regional Library



Active Participants in Dodge County Local Plan Coordination Committee Meetings and Plan Preparation

Dodge County Board of Commissioners
Brian Watkins, Commissioner
Terry Niblett, Commissioner
Sharon Cobb Flanagan, Commissioner
Conner Bearden, County Manager
City of Chauncey
Harrell Burch, Mayor
City of Chester
Melanie McCook, City Clerk
City of Eastman
Spencer Barron, City Manager
Chase Walker, Part-Time Employee
Jesse Bearden, Project Manager
Ivelyn Lampkin, City Clerk
April Sheffield, Deputy City Clerk
Scotty Whitten, Fire Chief
City of Milan
Alisa Walker, City Clerk
City of Rhine
Susie Jones, City Clerk
Dodge County Chamber of Commerce
Ted Goshorn, Chairman
Paula McCain, Manager
Dodge County-Eastman Development Authority
George Smith, Project Manager
Diedra Barton, CFO
Charles M. Williams, Interim Director
Georgia State Patrol
Kevin Sykes, Assistant Post Commander
Greene Acres Farm
Leigh Ann Greene, Business Owner
Local Citizens
Michell Coffee, Jr.
Nylan Hinson
Mel Frerking
Kayla Johnson
Sherita Thomas
Katina Young
Tom Peacock

Note: Both elected and appointed local government and local economic development officials participated.



RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 requires all local governments in Georgia to prepare a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," effective October 1, 2018, under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 for coordinated and comprehensive planning, including standards and procedures for the preparation of local comprehensive plans and implementation thereof, community involvement, and coordinated review; and

WHEREAS, Dodge County, Georgia has participated with the municipalities of Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine in a coordinated and comprehensive planning process under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning through the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee, and with the assistance of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, to update its existing adopted comprehensive plan with a new full plan update; and

WHEREAS, this coordinated and comprehensive planning process has resulted in the development of a new joint comprehensive plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, for Dodge County and its municipalities; and

WHEREAS, the new joint comprehensive plan has been previously submitted to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review; and

WHEREAS, the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, has now been certified by this review as adequately addressing the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning and meeting all requirements as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; and

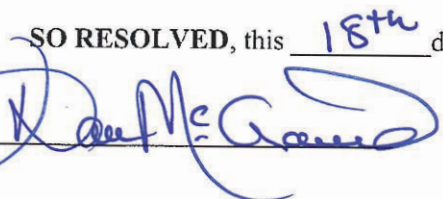
WHEREAS, Dodge County is now desirous of adopting *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural* as its official comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and as a general policy guide to its future growth and development;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Dodge County Board of Commissioners hereby approves and adopts the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, as Dodge County's official local comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, as amended, and thus replacing its previous comprehensive plan adopted in 2016.

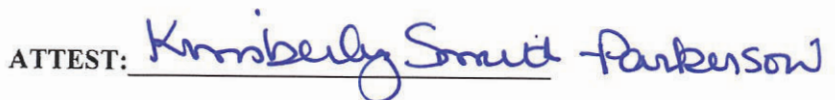
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Dodge County Board of Commissioners hereby instructs and directs that formal notification of said adoption be forwarded to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and to other agencies, as appropriate.

SO RESOLVED, this 18th day of October, 2021.

BY:



ATTEST:



RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 requires all local governments in Georgia to prepare a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," effective October 1, 2018, under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 for coordinated and comprehensive planning, including standards and procedures for the preparation of local comprehensive plans and implementation thereof, community involvement, and coordinated review; and

WHEREAS, the City of Chauncey, Georgia has participated with Dodge County and the municipalities of Chester, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine in a coordinated and comprehensive planning process under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning through the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee, and with the assistance of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, to update its existing adopted comprehensive plan with a new full plan update; and

WHEREAS, this coordinated and comprehensive planning process has resulted in the development of a new joint comprehensive plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, for Dodge County and its municipalities; including the City of Chauncey; and

WHEREAS, the new joint comprehensive plan has been previously submitted to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review; and

WHEREAS, the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, has now been certified by this review as adequately addressing the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning and meeting all requirements as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; and

WHEREAS, the City of Chauncey is now desirous of adopting *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural* as its official comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and as a general policy guide to its future growth and development;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Chauncey hereby approve and adopt the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, as the City of Chauncey's official local comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, as amended, and thus replacing its previous comprehensive plan adopted in 2016.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Chauncey hereby instruct and direct that formal notification of said adoption be forwarded to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and to other agencies, as appropriate.

SO RESOLVED, this 26th day of October, 2021.

BY: Harold Bush

ATTEST: Kerry K. Graham

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 requires all local governments in Georgia to prepare a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," effective October 1, 2018, under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 for coordinated and comprehensive planning, including standards and procedures for the preparation of local comprehensive plans and implementation thereof, community involvement, and coordinated review; and

WHEREAS, the Town of Chester, Georgia has participated with Dodge County and the municipalities of Chauncey, Eastman, Milan, and Rhine in a coordinated and comprehensive planning process under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning through the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee, and with the assistance of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, to update its existing adopted comprehensive plan with a new full plan update; and

WHEREAS, this coordinated and comprehensive planning process has resulted in the development of a new joint comprehensive plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, for Dodge County and its municipalities; including the Town of Chester; and

WHEREAS, the new joint comprehensive plan has been previously submitted to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review; and

WHEREAS, the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, has now been certified by this review as adequately addressing the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning and meeting all requirements as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; and

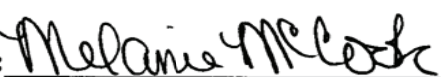
WHEREAS, the Town of Chester is now desirous of adopting *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural* as its official comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and as a general policy guide to its future growth and development;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Town Council of the Town of Chester hereby approve and adopt the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, as the Town of Chester's official local comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, as amended, and thus replacing its previous comprehensive plan adopted in 2016.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Town Council of the Town of Chester hereby instruct and direct that formal notification of said adoption be forwarded to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and to other agencies, as appropriate.

SO RESOLVED, this 18th day of October, 2021.

BY: 

ATTEST: 

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 requires all local governments in Georgia to prepare a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," effective October 1, 2018, under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 for coordinated and comprehensive planning, including standards and procedures for the preparation of local comprehensive plans and implementation thereof, community involvement, and coordinated review; and

WHEREAS, the City of Eastman, Georgia has participated with Dodge County and the municipalities of Chauncey, Chester, Milan, and Rhine in a coordinated and comprehensive planning process under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning through the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee, and with the assistance of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, to update its existing adopted comprehensive plan with a new full plan update; and

WHEREAS, this coordinated and comprehensive planning process has resulted in the development of a new joint comprehensive plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, for Dodge County and its municipalities; including the City of Eastman; and

WHEREAS, the new joint comprehensive plan has been previously submitted to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review; and

WHEREAS, the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, has now been certified by this review as adequately addressing the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning and meeting all requirements as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; and

WHEREAS, the City of Eastman is now desirous of adopting *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural* as its official comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and as a general policy guide to its future growth and development;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council Chair and City Council of the City of Eastman hereby approve and adopt the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, as the City of Eastman's official local comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, as amended, and thus replacing its previous comprehensive plan adopted in 2016.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council Chair and City Council of the City of Eastman hereby instruct and direct that formal notification of said adoption be forwarded to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and to other agencies, as appropriate.

SO RESOLVED, this 14th day of October, 2021.

BY:

B. Pittman

ATTEST:

Gail Sheppard



RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 requires all local governments in Georgia to prepare a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," effective October 1, 2018, under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 for coordinated and comprehensive planning, including standards and procedures for the preparation of local comprehensive plans and implementation thereof, community involvement, and coordinated review; and

WHEREAS, the City of Milan, Georgia has participated with Dodge County and the municipalities of Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, and Rhine in a coordinated and comprehensive planning process under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning through the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee, and with the assistance of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, to update its existing adopted comprehensive plan with a new full plan update; and

WHEREAS, this coordinated and comprehensive planning process has resulted in the development of a new joint comprehensive plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, for Dodge County and its municipalities; including the City of Milan; and

WHEREAS, the new joint comprehensive plan has been previously submitted to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review; and

WHEREAS, the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, has now been certified by this review as adequately addressing the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning and meeting all requirements as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; and

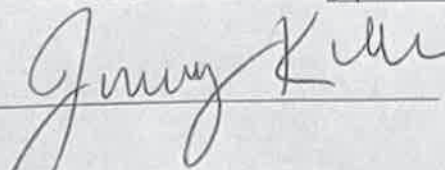
WHEREAS, the City of Milan is now desirous of adopting *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural* as its official comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and as a general policy guide to its future growth and development;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Milan hereby approve and adopt the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, as the City of Milan's official local comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, as amended, and thus replacing its previous comprehensive plan adopted in 2016.

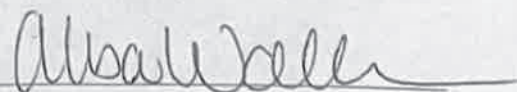
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Milan hereby instruct and direct that formal notification of said adoption be forwarded to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and to other agencies, as appropriate.

SO RESOLVED, this 25th day of Oct, 2021.

BY:



ATTEST:



RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 requires all local governments in Georgia to prepare a comprehensive plan; and

WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established "Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," effective October 1, 2018, under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 for coordinated and comprehensive planning, including standards and procedures for the preparation of local comprehensive plans and implementation thereof, community involvement, and coordinated review; and

WHEREAS, the City of Rhine, Georgia has participated with Dodge County and the municipalities of Chauncey, Chester, Eastman, and Milan in a coordinated and comprehensive planning process under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning through the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee, and with the assistance of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, to update its existing adopted comprehensive plan with a new full plan update; and

WHEREAS, this coordinated and comprehensive planning process has resulted in the development of a new joint comprehensive plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, for Dodge County and its municipalities; including the City of Rhine; and

WHEREAS, the new joint comprehensive plan has been previously submitted to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review; and

WHEREAS, the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, has now been certified by this review as adequately addressing the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning and meeting all requirements as established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; and

WHEREAS, the City of Rhine is now desirous of adopting *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural* as its official comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and as a general policy guide to its future growth and development;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Rhine hereby approve and adopt the Dodge County Joint Comprehensive Plan, *Dodge County: An Exception to the Rural*, as the City of Rhine's official local comprehensive plan under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, as amended, and thus replacing its previous comprehensive plan adopted in 2016.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and City Council of the City of Rhine hereby instruct and direct that formal notification of said adoption be forwarded to the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and to other agencies, as appropriate.

SO RESOLVED, this 21 day of October, 2021.
BY: [Signature] ATTEST: [Signature]



Dodge County

Joint Comprehensive Plan