





The Town of Thunderbolt Comprehensive Plan 2021-2031 (2026 Update)

Acknowledgement

We would like to thank all those who participated in and assisted with developing the Town of Thunderbolt Comprehensive Plan 2026. This Plan is the result of a year-long process involving Town staff, stakeholders, and representatives, as well as a series of public meetings. We are extremely grateful for the support we received during the process and look forward to implementing this Plan.

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Executive Summary

The Town of Thunderbolt, the Stakeholder Committee, and the Coastal Regional Commission worked together to prepare the 2026 Town of Thunderbolt Comprehensive Plan Update. Comprehensive planning is an important tool for promoting strong and healthy communities in the State of Georgia. Comprehensive Plans are centered around a vision and goals that express a desired future. Through the vision, goals, and work programs, Thunderbolt intends to utilize this Plan to continue to create a thriving community.

Thunderbolt is defined not by its geographic boundaries but by the strong sense of shared values that its residents hold dear. At the heart of Thunderbolt are principles such as small-town values, thoughtful growth, and the preservation of its rich historical, cultural, and natural heritage. These guiding values form the foundation of what makes Thunderbolt a truly special place to live. This Plan outlines a vision for the Town's future, focusing on maintaining the Town's unique sense of place while strengthening existing assets and honoring Thunderbolt's maritime character to guide intentional growth.



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1 Introduction

1.1 Purpose

In the interest of providing healthy and successful communities that are vital to the State's economic prosperity, the State of Georgia requires all local jurisdictions to coordinate and conduct Comprehensive Planning activities through the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. The State has given authority to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) to set the minimum standards for Local Comprehensive Planning and to provide oversight of the planning process. The purpose of the minimum standards is to provide a framework for the development, management, and implementation of Local Comprehensive Plans.

The purpose of Comprehensive Planning at the community level is to bring together all sectors within the Town, including residents, the business community, and non-profit organizations to develop a strategy with the intent to make Thunderbolt an attractive place to invest, conduct business, visit, and raise a family. A Comprehensive Plan is intended to provide policy direction and guidance for elected officials, appointed officials, and the public in decision-making processes. The Plan articulates the Town's vision for the future and creates a roadmap for residents, property owners, investors, businesses and industries, and interested parties in the Town's plans and goals. The Plan is also intended to assist in recognizing the need for, and the subsequent implementation of, important economic development and revitalization initiatives. Finally, maintaining the Comprehensive Plan allows the Town to maintain its Qualified Local Government status, making the Town eligible for selected state funding and permitting programs.

1.2 Planning Scope

The Town of Thunderbolt's 2026 Comprehensive Plan Update was prepared by Town staff and the Coastal Regional Commission with invaluable input from stakeholders and the public. This document was prepared to exceed the minimum requirements of the Georgia Department of Community Affair's Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning which became effective in March 2014.

In this Plan, the Town addresses the following required elements: community goals, needs and opportunities, broadband, and community work program. As a community that has adopted zoning, the Town is required to adopt a Comprehensive Plan that addresses land use. This Plan also addresses the planning element of transportation due to the Town of Thunderbolt being located within a Metropolitan Planning Organization.

This Plan continues the Town's planning tradition and sets the stage for the Town as a great place to live, work, play, and visit. Growth within and around the Town is inevitable, but reasoned and thoughtful planning that forms the basis of this Plan will allow the Town to manage its growth, maximize benefits for its residents in the community, and fulfill the Town's vision.

As part of the requirement, the Coastal Georgia Regional Water Plan and the rules for Environmental Planning Criteria established by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources were considered during the planning process.

1.2.1 Regional Water Plan

Thunderbolt is part of the Coastal Georgia Regional Water Planning Council (Coastal Council). The Coastal Council was established in 2009 as part of the statewide planning process to help address water resource challenges and prepare for the water demands expected from growth in the next 40 years. The Coastal Council developed a Coastal Regional Water Plan that was initially completed in 2011 and subsequently

updated in 2017 and 2023. The plan outlines short-term and long-term strategies to meet water needs through 2060. The Town of Thunderbolt and the Steering Committee gave careful consideration to the Regional Water Plan while preparing for this Plan. The Town considered the 8 goals established by the Coastal Council for the region:

1. Manage and develop high-quality water resources to sustainably and reliably meet domestic, commercial, industrial, and agricultural water needs.
2. Identify fiscally responsible and implementable opportunities to maximize existing and future supplies, including promoting water conservation and reuse.
3. Optimize existing water and wastewater infrastructure, including identifying opportunities to implement regional water and wastewater facilities.
4. Protect and maintain regional recreation, ecosystems, and cultural and historic resources that are water-dependent to enhance the quality of life of our current and future residents and help support tourism and commercial activities.
5. Identify and utilize the best available science and data and apply principles of various scientific disciplines when making water resource management decisions.
6. Identify opportunities to manage stormwater to improve water quantity and quality, while providing wise land management, wetland protection, and wildlife sustainability.
7. Actively outreach to stakeholders to encourage awareness, collaboration, and implementation of the regional water plan.
8. Identify opportunities to prepare for and respond to climate variability and extremes as it relates to water resources and providing resiliency.

The Coastal Regional Water Plan's vision to conserve and manage water resources to sustain and enhance Coastal Georgia's unique environment and economy is inherent to this Plan's goals, needs, and opportunities.

1.2.2 Environmental Planning Criteria

The Environmental Planning Criteria (O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) stated: "for the promulgation of minimum standards and procedures for the protection of natural resources, environment, and vital areas of the state; stream and reservoir buffers." This was considered during the Plan development. The Town of Thunderbolt has adopted several ordinances that comply with O.C.G.A. 12-2-8, including water supply and sewer disposal, wetlands, stormwater discharge, soil erosion, and conservation subdivision ordinances. These ordinances protect the natural resources in the Town of Thunderbolt.

1.3 Community Engagement

Through this Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Thunderbolt reaffirms its commitment to preserving its distinctive character while proactively shaping a future that reflects the needs and aspirations of its residents. This Plan is intended to embrace the special character of the Town while encouraging economic development and improving the quality of life of the Town's residents. To accomplish this, a series of community engagement sessions were conducted.

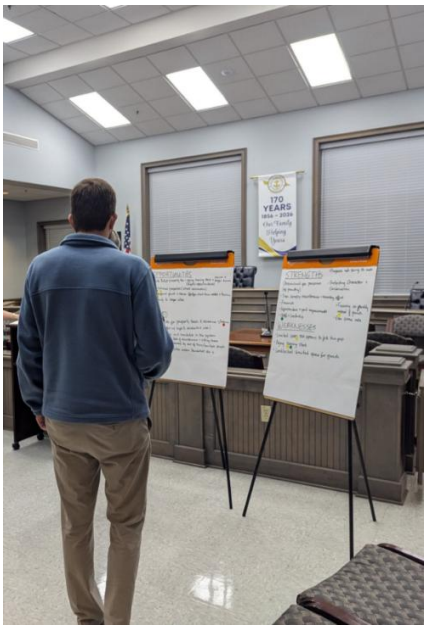
1.3.1 Stakeholder Committee

Through community engagement, the Stakeholder Committee identified priority goals, strategies, and action items that have been incorporated into this Plan. A list of stakeholders can be found in Appendix A.

A total of three individual stakeholder meetings were held throughout the planning process. The dates of the meetings and topics covered are summarized below.

Table 1. Stakeholder meetings schedule and discussion topics.

Date	Topic
February 10, 2026	This meeting was to introduce and inform the stakeholders of their purpose in the planning process. The committee discussed the vision and participated in the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats analysis for the Town.
March 5, 2026	The Committee reviewed the draft vision updates from previous meeting and discussed the goals and the community work program.
April 1, 2026	The meeting focused on reviewing the changes in the Character Area Map, descriptions, and regulations.





1.3.2 Public Hearings

The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) minimum planning standards require two public hearings to be held throughout the Comprehensive Planning process, at the beginning and end of the planning process. The first public hearing was held on January 14, 2026, and the second public hearing was held on August 12, 2026.

2 Community Profile

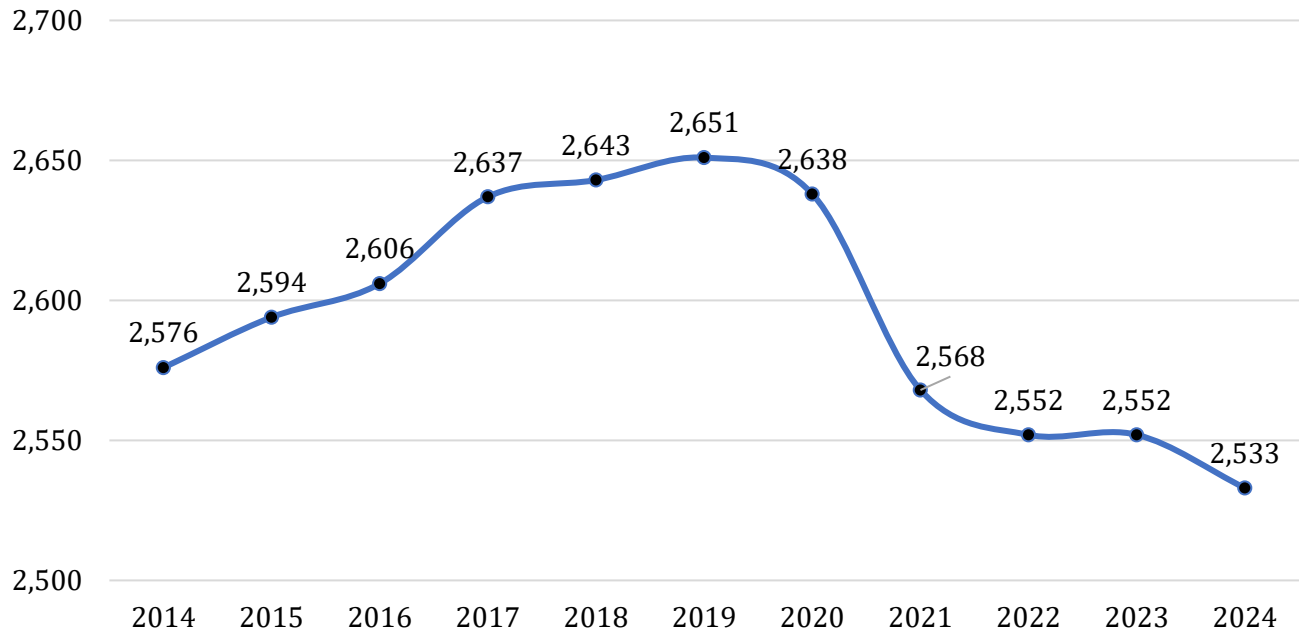
Located in Chatham County in southeastern Georgia, the Town of Thunderbolt was established on March 13, 1733. Initially serving as a small military-agrarian outpost that warned Savannah of the Spanish invasion, the Town later acted as a shipping point for local plantation needs. Located along the Wilmington River, the Town of Thunderbolt thrived as a fishing community, with shrimp being the primary seafood product.

Thunderbolt's location makes it an access point between Savannah and the Chatham County islands. The Town is largely encircled by the City of Savannah on the mainland but also includes a portion of the neighboring island known as Isle of Armstrong. Today, Thunderbolt remains a quiet, close-knit community with deep maritime heritage, serving as residential and commercial areas and a contributor to the broader Chatham County economy.

2.1 Population

The dynamics of Thunderbolt's population trends and projections provide essential information in the decision-making process for certain plans and projects.

Figure 1. Total population 2014-2024.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. "Age and Sex." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table S0101, 2024.

According to the 2024 American Community Survey (ACS) five-year estimates published by the U.S. Census Bureau, the total population for Thunderbolt was estimated at 2,533, representing a 2 percent decrease since 2014. Most of the decrease took place between 2020 and 2024, which can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the Stakeholder Committee meetings, conversations and dialogue also suggested that the younger population (Under 18 years old) within Thunderbolt are coming of age and not staying in the area.

While city-specific population projections are not currently available for Thunderbolt, population forecasts prepared by the Georgia Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) provide insight into broader regional growth trends. OPB utilizes the Cohort-Component Projection Method, which incorporates factors such as fertility, mortality, migration patterns, and group quarters population to project future population growth.

Table 2. Chatham County Population Projection

2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	2032	2033	2034	2035	2036
313,774	316,914	319,947	322,849	325,637	328,295	330,811	333,193	335,435	337,562	339,579

Source: Georgia Governor's Office of Planning and Budget. "County Residential Population 2025 Long-Term Population Projections."

Chatham County's population is projected to increase from 313,774 residents in 2026 to 339,579 residents in 2036, representing growth of approximately 8.2 percent, or 0.8 percent annually. While this projection method is widely accepted and grounded in historical data, it assumes continuity in past trends and demographic behavior. As such, it may not fully capture recent or emergency factors that could accelerate or decelerate population growth.

Figure 2. Population pyramid of Thunderbolt.

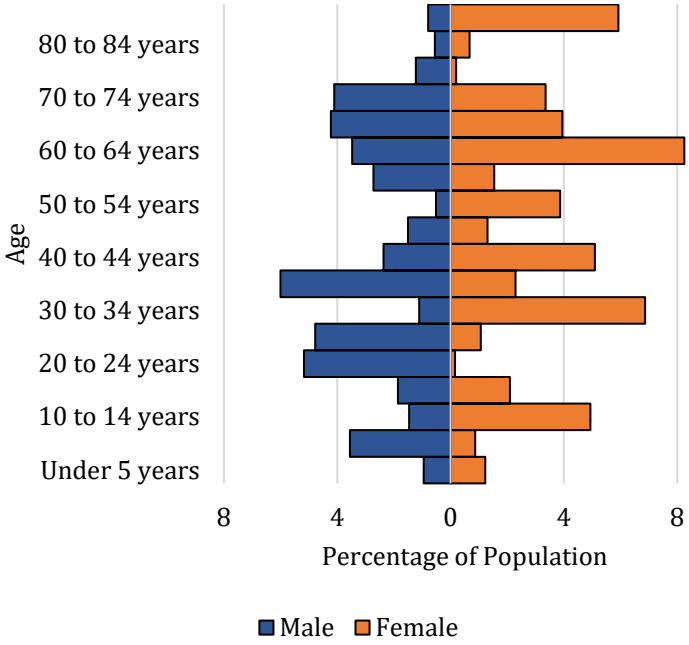
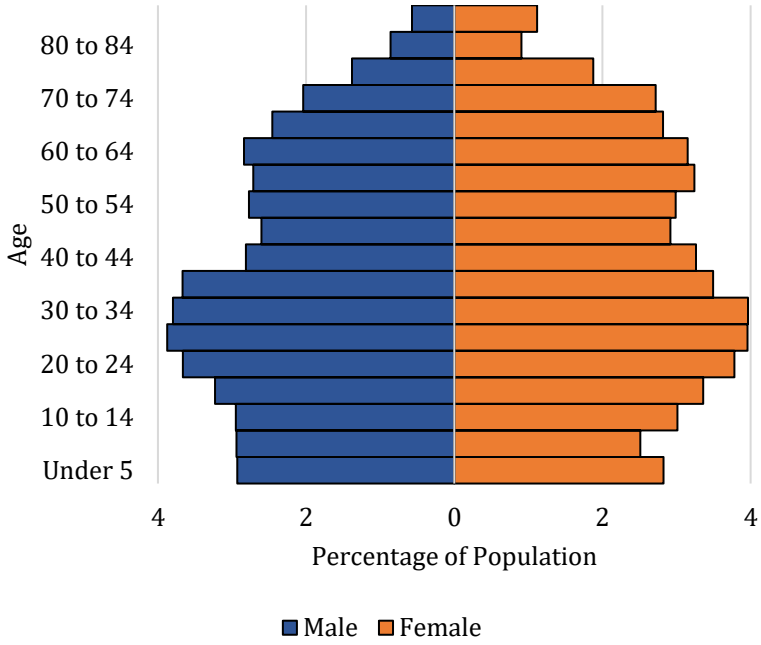


Figure 3. Population pyramid of Chatham.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. "Age and Sex." American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables. Table S0101. 2024.

The median age in the Town of Thunderbolt is 43.9 according to ACS. This is higher than the median age of 37 in Chatham County and Georgia. Thunderbolt's population pyramid is characterized by a relatively narrow base and a larger concentration of middle-aged and older adults, indicating a smaller proportion of children and an aging population. This suggests potential needs for accessible housing and infrastructure, healthcare, and transportation.

Key Findings

- Population decreased from 2,651 to 2,533 between 2019 and 2024, which does not align with the trend from surrounding areas.
- Median age (43.9) exceeds county and state averages.
- Residents aged 60 and older comprise a growing share of the population.

PLANNING NOTES

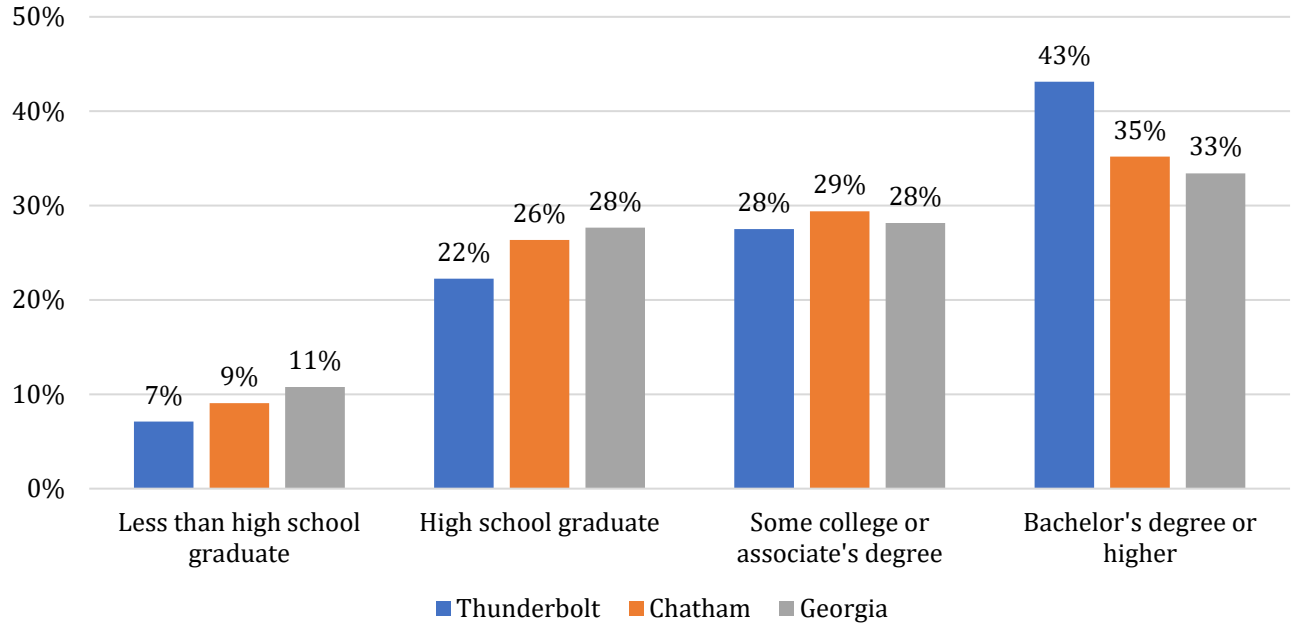
- Decreasing population may allow the Town to focus on quality service delivery.
- Aging residents may increase demand for accessible housing, healthcare, and transportation.

2.2 Education

Public education in Thunderbolt is administered by the Savannah-Chatham County Public School System. Thunderbolt is within three elementary school zones (Shuman Elementary, Marshpoint Elementary, and Humanities at Juliette Gordon Low Elementary), three middle school zones (Hubert Middle, Coastal Middle,

and Myers Middle), and two high school zones (Johnson High, and Islands High). Other educational institutions include Charles Ellis K-8 Montessori, Garrison School of Visual and Performing Arts, Savannah Classical Academy, and Woodville-Tompkins Technical and Career High School. In addition, Georgia Southern University (Armstrong Campus), Savannah State University, Savannah Technical College, and Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) are located within Chatham County, offering a variety of higher education opportunities, including dual enrollment, career and technical programs, and degree programs.

Figure 4. Educational attainment.

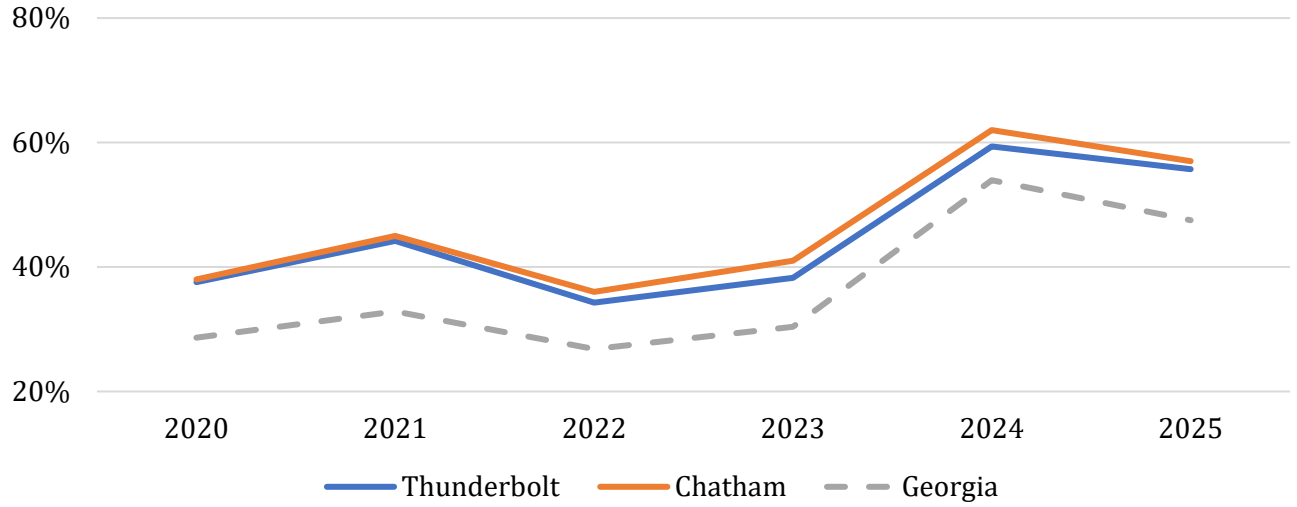


Source: U.S. Census Bureau. "Educational Attainment." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1501, 2024.

According to the 2024 ACS five-year estimates on educational attainment, 22 percent of the population 18 years or older had a high school diploma or an equivalent GED as their highest level of education, 28 percent attended some college or earned an associate's degree, and 43 percent had a bachelor's degree or higher. Thunderbolt has a higher percentage of population with a bachelor's degree or higher than the region in general.

The Governor's Office of Student Achievement (GOSA) measures poverty levels of students through Direct Certification (DC). Direct certified students include students living in a family unit receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistant Program (SNAP) food stamp or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) benefits, and students identified as homeless, unaccompanied youth, foster, or migrant.

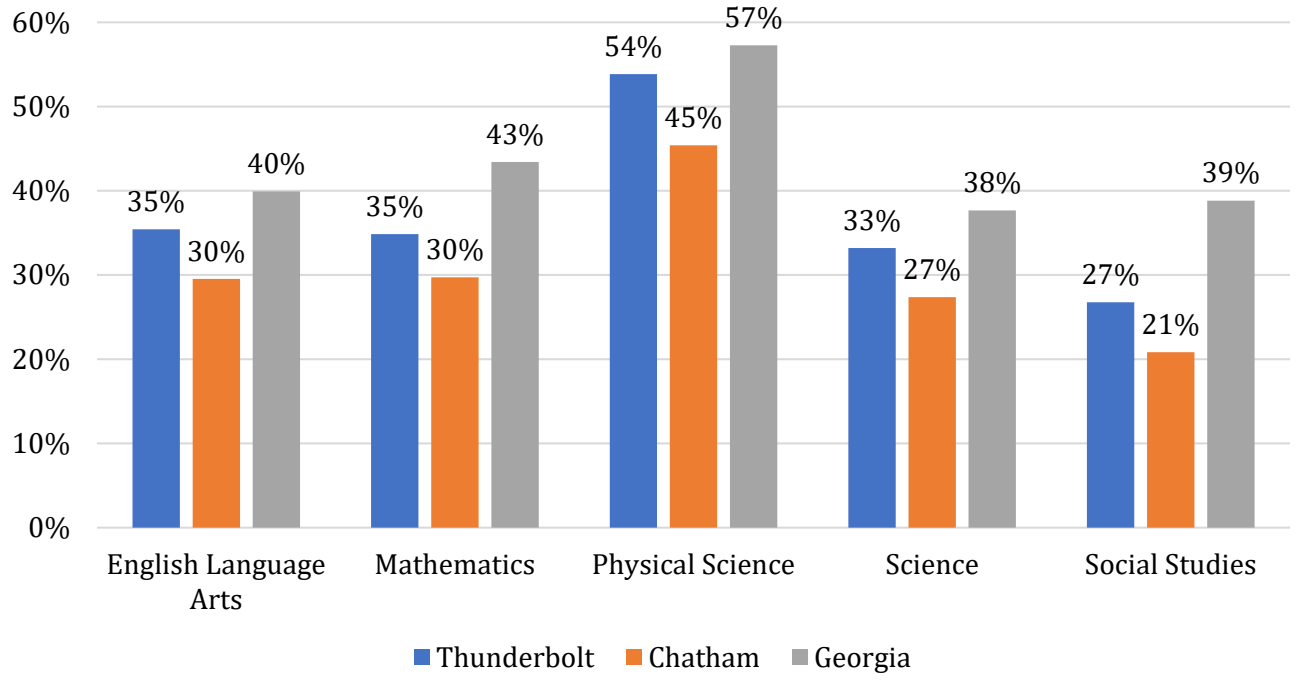
Figure 5. Direct Certification.



Source: The Governor's Office of Student Achievement. "Direct Certification (School Level)." Fiscal year 2020-2025.

In the last two years, there have been over 55 percent of students classified as direct certified in Thunderbolt. In 2024, GOSA added in its DC definition to include students living in a family unit with Medicaid income that does not exceed free or reduced-price lunch eligibility standards. With the new definition, direct certified students reached 59 percent in 2024, which reflected a 21 percent increase from 2023. In general, Thunderbolt has a similar percent of direct certified students as Chatham County, which is about 10 percent higher than Georgia.

Figure 6. Proficiency rate for all grades.



Source: The Governor's Office of Student Achievement. "Georgia Milestones End of Grade (EOG) assessments." School year 2024-2025.

According to GOSA data for school year 2024-2025, Thunderbolt students have a higher proficiency rate than Chatham County but a lower proficiency rate than Georgia in all five subjects. The Direct Certification Report released by GOSA for school year 2024-2025 highlighted a strong correlation between student poverty, student achievement, and rate of absenteeism. Limited access to resources, such as books, technology, and high-quality early learning opportunities, can negatively impact students' academic performance.

Key Findings

- Compared to Chatham County and Georgia, the Town has a higher proportion of residents with a bachelor's degree or advanced degree.
- Thunderbolt students have a higher proficiency rate than Chatham County.

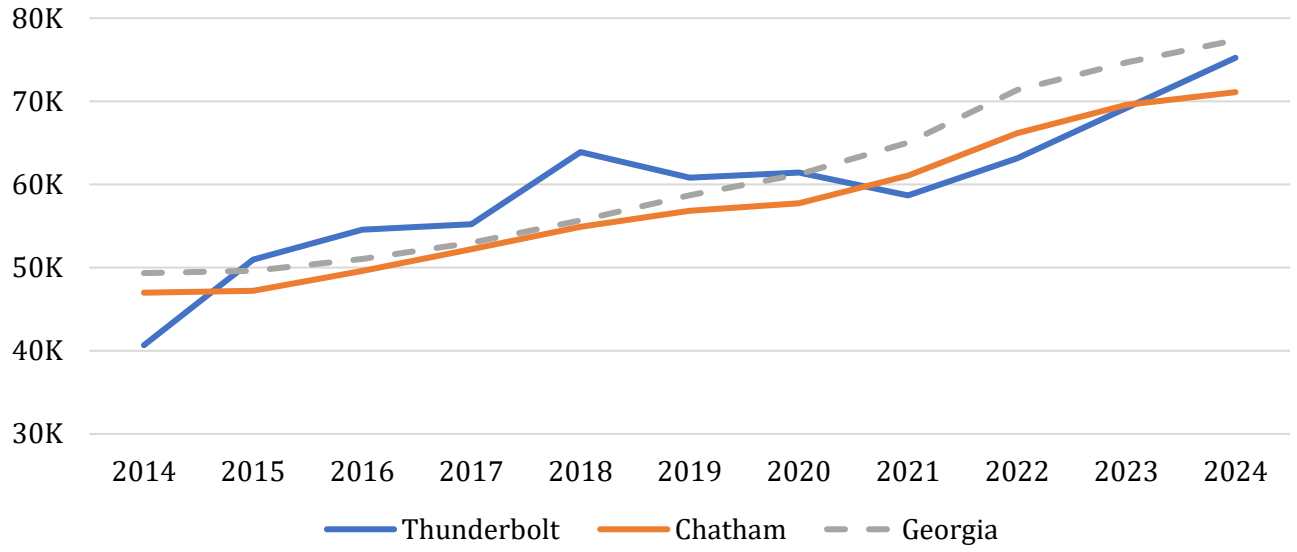
PLANNING NOTES

- A highly educated population can be an asset for attracting employers seeking skilled workers.
- Continued investment in educational quality is important to maintain competitiveness and community appeal.

2.3 Economic Development

Key indicators of the economic health of Thunderbolt are household income, employment, and employment and unemployment trends.

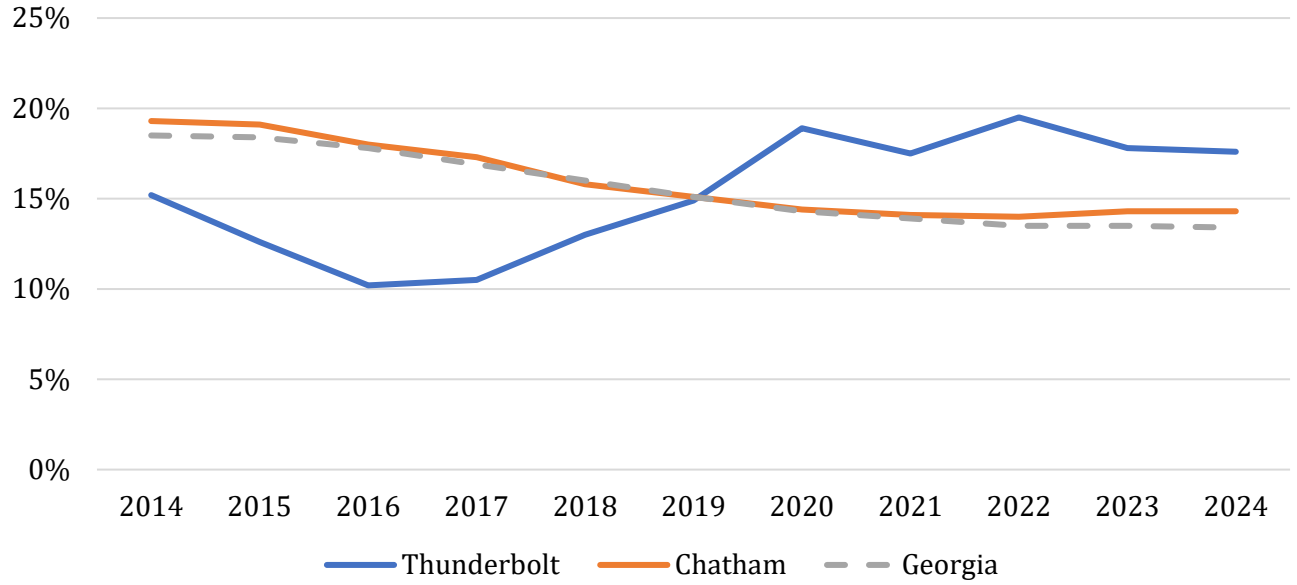
Figure 7. Median Household income since 2014.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. "Income in the Past 12 Months (in 2024 Inflation Adjusted Dollars)." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1901, 2014-2024.

The median household income in Thunderbolt is $75,234, which is slightly higher than Chatham County's $71,097 and slightly lower than Georgia's $77,353. Because Thunderbolt has only a few thousand residents, the ACS estimates have a larger margin of error and can fluctuate more from year to year compared to Chatham County and Georgia. The decline in median household income observed between 2020 and 2021 coincides with the economic disruptions resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic.

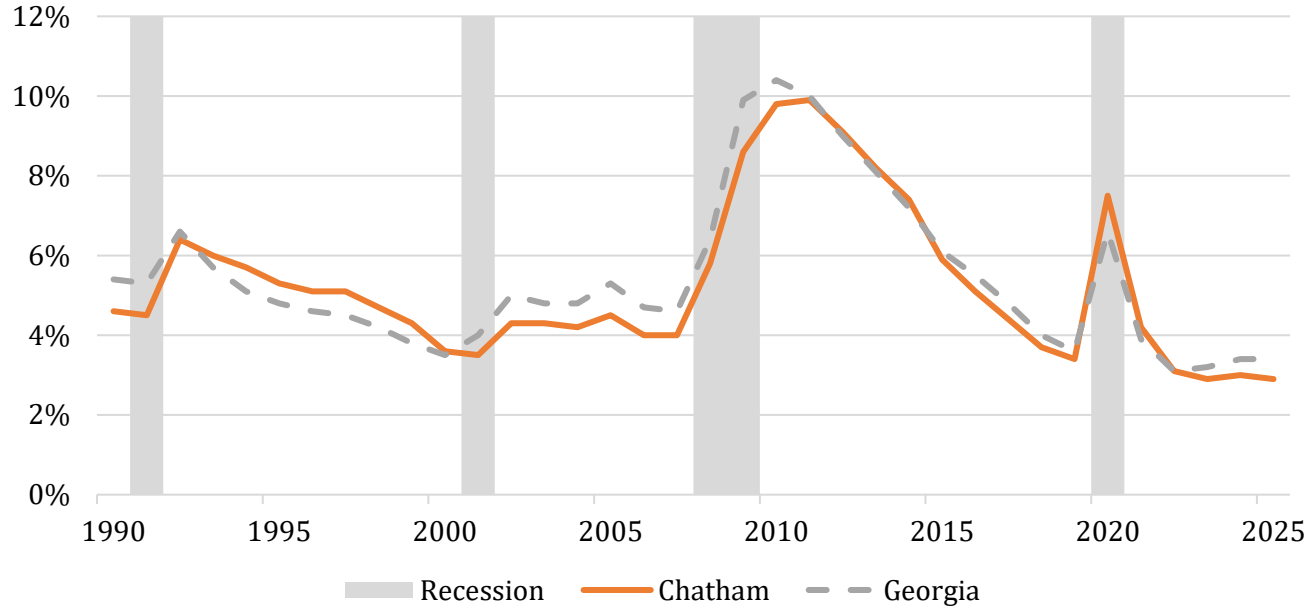
Figure 8. Poverty status since 2013.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. "Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table 1701, 2014-2024.

In 2024, the U.S. Census Bureau defined the poverty threshold as an income of $16,320 or less for an individual under 65 years old and an income of $32,130 or less for a family of four. In 2024, ACS estimated 18 percent of Thunderbolt's population lived below the poverty level. This is higher than Chatham County's 14 percent and Georgia's 13 percent.

Figure 9. Unemployment rate in Chatham County since 1990.



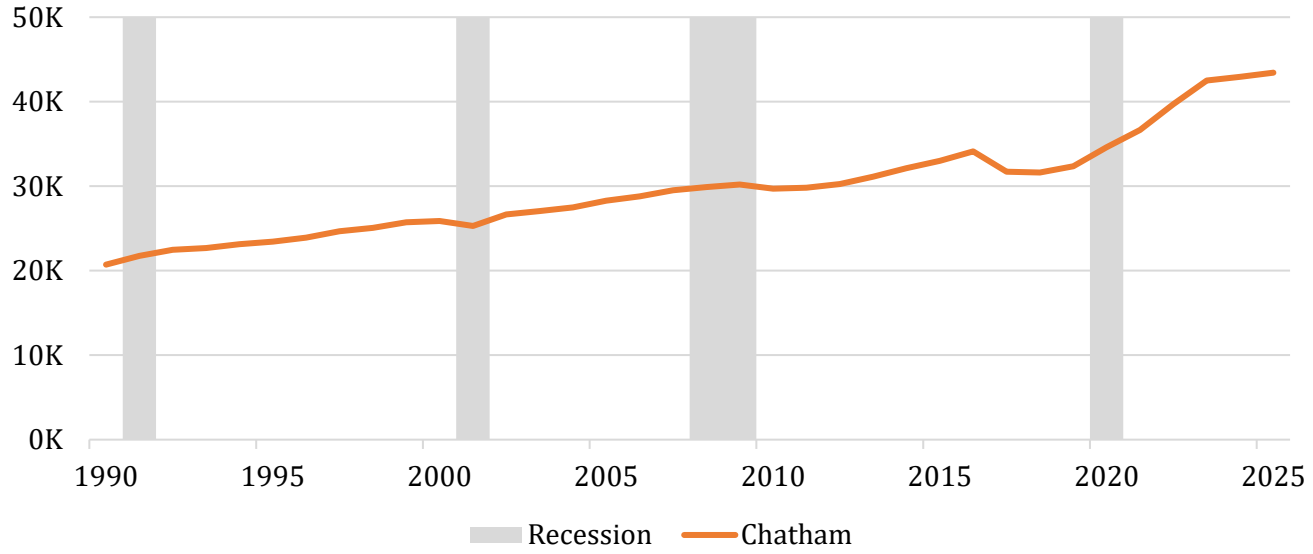
Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Unemployment Rate in Chatham County and Georgia, retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

Although unemployment rate data is not available for Thunderbolt, according to the Georgia Department of Labor Workforce Statistics Division, the unemployment rate in May 2026 (not seasonally adjusted) was 2.9 percent in Chatham County and 3.4 percent in Georgia.

PLANNING NOTES

- Despite the high educational achievements, the Town's poverty rate suggests needs to better connect residents to quality employment opportunities and career advancement pathways.

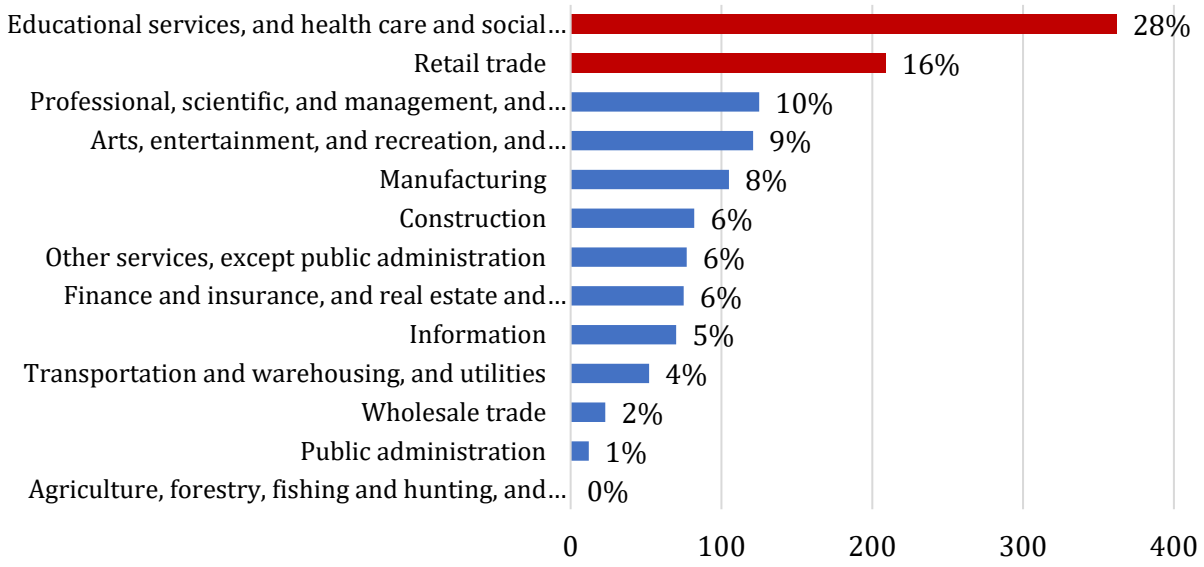
Figure 10. Private establishments for all industries in Chatham County.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Number of Private Establishments for All Industries in Chatham County, retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics defines an establishment as an economic unit, such as a factory, store, or office, that produces goods or services. Over the past decade, Chatham County has seen notable growth in private establishments across a range of industries, driven by strategic economic development efforts and its advantageous location near major transportation routes. Further growth is expected with the Hyundai Metaplant in the neighboring Bryan County. This trend may provide increased employment opportunities for Thunderbolt's residents and stimulate the establishment of small and local businesses. However, these opportunities could result in higher demands for housing and infrastructure in the Town.

Figure 11. Industry of civilian employment.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. "Industry by Occupation for the Civilian Employed Population 16 Years or Over." American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S2405, 2024.

It is estimated that 1,313 civilians over 16 years old were employed in Thunderbolt in 2024. The majority of the population was employed in educational services, health care, and social assistance. The main industry in the Town is retail trade.

Approximately 98 percent of Thunderbolt's residents work within the County with 77 percent people driving to work alone. The mean travel time to work in Thunderbolt is about 21 minutes, which is slightly lower than Georgia's average of 28 minutes. The percentage of people working from home has increased significantly in the last decade from 1 percent in 2014 to 14 percent in 2024.

Key Findings

- Thunderbolt has a higher percentage of population (18%) living below the poverty level compared to Chatham County and Georgia.
- Education and retail are the major industries where the Town's residents are employed at.

3 Vision and Goals

This section of the Plan presents the desired direction for Thunderbolt's growth and quality of life over the next ten years and beyond.

3.1 Vision

A consistent, locally generated vision can spark economic opportunity and social cohesiveness. Thunderbolt has adopted the following vision to guide future development and decision making.

"The Town of Thunderbolt will provide a high quality of life as a safe, vibrant, and beautiful small-town community, rooted in a distinctive maritime legacy shaped by river trade, a proud shrimping heritage, and a tradition of yacht racing along the Wilmington River. Committed to thoughtful

progress, the Town of Thunderbolt preserves its character and working waterfront identity while embracing strategic solutions that ensure a resilient and prosperous future"

3.2 Goals and Policies

Goals	Policies
Economic Development	
Encourage economic growth by supporting local businesses and industries, focusing development within Town boundaries.	• Invest in the mixed-use districts along River Drive and Victory Drive. • Promote local businesses, cultural programming, and tourism efforts that celebrate and reinforce the community. • Support Chamber of Commerce to actively recruit retail commercial and appropriate industries to the Town. • Promote partnerships with local businesses, schools, and regional organizations to create job training opportunities and workforce development programs.
Natural and Cultural Resources	
Promote efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas	• Preserve, protect, and promote its natural environment as one of its primary assets. • Manage development in an environmentally conscious way.
Cultivate, safeguard, and take great pride in the small-town maritime character	• Encourage redevelopment that complements the town's historic maritime identity. • Support efforts to document and preserve local history, landmarks, and cultural resources.
Land Use and Development	
Promote thoughtful land use patterns that preserve Thunderbolt's historic small-town character	• Protect established neighborhoods and encourage compatible redevelopment with the existing community footprint. • Encourage mixed-use developments along the Victory Drive District and River Drive District. • Maintain green space and community parks. • Maintain and periodically update the zoning ordinance and ensure consistent administration and enforcement.
Local Preparedness	
Strengthen community trust and local preparedness by improving public understanding of government operations	• Develop educational materials and outreach programs that explain local government functions, planning processes, public hearings, budgeting, and decision-making responsibilities. • Promote proactive communication and responsive public service practices that reduce misinformation and strengthen the relationship between the local government and the community.

Goals	Policies
	• Support efficient and secure operations by advancing cybersecurity safeguards, protecting digital assets, and regularly updating cyber related policies.
Sense of Place	
Promote and enhance public engagement.	• Promote community events and placemaking initiatives that celebrate Thunderbolt's traditions and heritage. • Create opportunities for residents to gather, celebrate local traditions, and participate in community life to strengthen community ties encourage long-term residency. • Encourage policies that help long-term residents remain in place and preserve intergenerational homeownership.
Regional Collaboration	
Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs	• Actively participate in regional organizations. • Strengthen partnerships with neighboring municipalities, counties, and institutions to address shared infrastructure, environmental, and economic development challenges.
Housing	
Strengthen community trust and local preparedness by improving public understanding of government operations	• Increase awareness of housing-related resources by providing educational materials and outreach on heir property resolution, estate planning, and property maintenance.
Transportation	
Address the transportation needs, challenges, and opportunities of all community residents	• Prioritize roadway improvements that improve traffic flow, safety, and connectivity for residents and visitors. • Ensure signage is properly placed that educates truck drivers on where they are not allowed to pass through. • Develop pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure to ensure residents and visitors can make use of those transportation options comfortably and safely.
Enhance walkability and safety	• Ensure pedestrian and cyclist safety by discouraging non-residents from taking shortcuts through residential areas.
Community Health	
Ensure community residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, have access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and excellent work opportunities	• Maintain parks and open space for residents to have the opportunity to socialize and engage with their community that improves social and physical health. • Support policies that encourage neighborhood improvements that enhance public safety, cleanliness, property maintenance, and overall quality of life for residents.

4 Needs and Opportunities

This section provides a list of needs and opportunities the Town has identified through this planning process. The Town intends to address these needs and opportunities through corresponding measures in the community work program. This list was developed with assistance from the stakeholder committee through a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (S.W.O.T.) analysis and evaluation of demographics and economic data.

4.1 Economic Development

The Town's goal of economic development emphasizes enhancing the quality of the existing community, while promoting local businesses, cultural programming, and tourism efforts that celebrate the Town's heritage. This objective also includes investing in the mixed-use districts along River Drive and Victory Drive.

NEEDS

1. **Diversification and expansion of local revenue opportunities**

   Limited sales tax opportunities create challenges for expanding the Town's revenue. The Town needs to focus on supporting small businesses, commercial activity, and tourism.

2. **Housing reinvestment and neighborhood stabilization**

   Aging housing stock diminishes community vitality. The Town needs to maintain safe and attractive housing conditions to support the local workforce.

3. **Preparing for legislative or regulatory changes**

   Impacts from future state and federal legislation may affect local decision-making. The Town needs to ensure local preparedness so that it can effectively respond to any changing regulatory conditions.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Development processes**

   The Town's responsive approach to governance and streamlined permitting processes create opportunities to attract new businesses, encourage private investment, and support ongoing economic development.

2. **Regional proximity**

   The Town's proximity to larger cities presents an opportunity for the Town to attract visitors, residents, and businesses seeking regional amenities and the coastal community.

4.2 Quality of Life

Improving quality of life is a central goal of the Town to protect and enhance the community's unique qualities that are important to the community's character. This involves preserving and protecting the Town's historic and culturally significant areas.

NEEDS

1. **Community spaces**

   As the Town and community expectations evolve, the Town needs to continue to maintain and enhance the public parks and open space used as gathering spaces for the community.

2. **Homeownership**

   The Town needs to offer education, outreach, and coordination efforts related to property ownership to decrease the number of unresolved heir properties.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Community education**

   There are opportunities for the Town to expand education and public awareness related to local government processes, which continues to ensure trust in government staff and local officials, strengths transparency, and improves civic engagement.

2. **Community character**

   The Town's focus on quality of services and infrastructure over expansion creates an opportunity to preserve its unique heritage and sense of place while focusing on enhancing current local businesses, neighborhoods, and way of life.

3. **Existing infrastructure**
   There are opportunities for the Town to continue to make strategic infrastructure investments and strengthen the functionality of services.

4.3 Land Use

The Town's goal is to promote thoughtful land use patterns that preserve Thunderbolt's historic small-town character. This involves protecting established neighborhoods and encouraging compatible redevelopment within the existing footprint.

NEEDS

1. **Managed growth**

   The Town needs to manage growth through thoughtful planning and ordinance regulations, in order to reinforce the Town's identity.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Housing stock**
   There are opportunities for the Town to encourage compatible redevelopment and improve community appearance while preserving the Town's historic character and supporting long-term residential sustainability.

4.4 Transportation

The Town's goal of transportation is to address the transportation needs, challenges, and opportunities of all community residents.

NEEDS

1. **Traffic flow**

   The Town needs to coordinate with surrounding jurisdictions and the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to develop strategies for addressing current traffic concerns.

2. **Parking Capacity**

   The Town needs to evaluate the parking demand and create strategic parking solutions necessary to improve circulation and accessibility without compromising its small-town character.

3. **Roadway signage**

   The transportation system should maintain efficient traffic flow while prioritizing the safety of all users. Increased public adherence to all traffic signs and regulations is needed to support safe roadway operations.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Regional Collaboration**

   There are opportunities to participate in regional transportation initiatives.

2. **Walkability and multimodal transportation**

   There are opportunities to explore walkability and multimodal transportation to improve public health, community interaction, and quality of life.

4.5 Intergovernmental/Inter-Agency Coordination

The Town's goal of county and regional coordination is intended to strengthen partnerships with neighboring municipalities, counties, and institutions to address shared infrastructure, environmental, and economic development challenges.

NEEDS

1. **Communication and collaboration**

   The Town needs to enhance open communication with other local governments and agencies to work on common goals and address issues that can hinder growth, cause loss of natural and cultural resources, or negatively impact the quality of life.

OPPORTUNITIES

1. **Shared services and facilities**

   There are opportunities to share or consolidate services across jurisdictions to reduce costs while maintaining a reasonable level of service capacity and quality.

2. **Formal agreement and partnerships**

   There are opportunities for the Town to establish agreements and partnerships with agencies and organizations that focus on similar tasks to plan towards common goals.

5 Land Use

According to the minimum standards and procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, communities with zoning or similar development regulations are required to include a land use element within their Comprehensive Plan. The table below outlines the zoning districts in Thunderbolt.

Table 3. Zoning Districts.

Category	District	District Name	District Summary
Residential	R-1	One-Family Residential	Area where one-family dwellings are permitted.
	R-2	Two-Family Residential	Area for two-family dwellings with compatible nonresidential uses.
	R-3	Multi-Family Residential	Area for multi-family dwellings with compatible nonresidential uses.
	R-M-H	Residential-Mobile Home	Area to permit the development of mobile homes and single-family residences and certain non-residential uses.
Mixed-Use	RDD	River Drive Mixed-Use District	Entry into Thunderbolt and serves as the "main street" reflecting the Town's unique character.
Commercial	B	Business	Area for businesses providing the retailing of goods and furnishing of services.
Industrial	I	Industrial	Area set aside and situated to be well adapted to industrial and commercial development, but where proximity to residential and commercial districts will not be undesirable.
	L-I	Light Industrial	Limited industrial operations where the proximity to residential and commercial districts makes it desirable.
	W-I	Waterfront Industry	Create and protect areas for commercial fishing operations and other activities dependent upon waterfront location.
Hotel-Motel	H-M	Hotel-Motel	Area devoted to the development of hotels or motels.
Public/Institutional	I-P	Institutional-Professional	Area set aside to be well adapted to professional and institutional development.
Conservation	M-C	Marsh Conservation	Public and private uses and developments of the marshlands.
Overlay	P	Planning District	Area within which comprehensive development plans shall be prepared and reviewed by the planning and zoning commission in order to secure an orderly development pattern.

	VDD	Victory Drive Mixed-Use District	Recognize Victory Drive "main street" prominence and manage and encourage specific types of development.

5.1 Related Goals

- Promote thoughtful land use patterns that preserve Thunderbolt's historic small-town character.
- Protect established neighborhoods and encourage compatible redevelopment with the existing community footprint.
- Encourage mixed-use developments along Victory Drive District and River Drive District.
- Maintain green space and community parks.

5.2 Character Areas

The Character Area Map is defined by the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) as a specific geographic area or district within a community that possesses unique or special characteristics that should be preserved or enhanced, such as a downtown, historic district, neighborhood, or transportation corridor. It may also represent an area with the potential to evolve into a distinctive area through intentional guidance of future development, facilitated by adequate planning and implementation, like a strip commercial corridor that could be revitalized into a more attractive village development pattern. Additionally, a character area may require special attention due to unique development issues, including rapid changes in development patterns or economic decline.

The Town has defined the following character areas, which are shown on the map in this chapter.

- Commercial
- Industrial
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Public/Institutional
- Residential
- River Drive District
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- Victory Drive District

Commercial

Thunderbolt's commercial area is concentrated primarily along Victory Drive at the Town's western gateway from Savannah, near Thunderbolt Marina at the southern edge of town, and within the Isle of Armstrong. The commercial area provides a mix of retail, service, dining, marina-supporting, and neighborhood-oriented businesses that serve the community. Smaller-scale commercial uses are also interspersed throughout the community in logical and convenient locations.

Regulations

- Designated for development of, and occupied exclusively by, businesses providing for retailing of goods and the furnishing of services.

Compatible Zoning Districts

- *B (Business)*
- *I-P (Institutional - Professional)*





Industrial

The area reflects Thunderbolt's longstanding maritime heritage and its specialized role within the coastal economy. This area supports water-dependent industrial and commercial activities. Thunderbolt offers unique access for maritime industries while remaining separate from the larger-scale operations in Savannah. In addition, this area accommodates and encourages recreational boating, watersports, and related waterfront activities.

Regulations

- Support marine-related industrial uses such as ship fitting, vessel repair, shrimping operations, and waterfront commercial activities.
- Compliance with Thunderbolt's development standards related to setbacks, permeable surface requirements, signage, and lighting.
- Site development plan review requirements including building placement, open space, landscaping, buffering, infrastructure impacts, and parking analysis.
- Compatibility considerations intended to preserve Thunderbolt's character and prevent industrial uses from negatively impacting adjacent areas.

Compatible Zoning Districts

- *I (Industrial)*
- *L-I (Light Industrial)*
- *W-I (Waterfront – Industry)*





Parks/Recreation/Conservation

This area includes Thunderbolt's parks, recreation facilities, greenspaces, community gathering spaces, and conservation areas. These areas serve important recreational, environmental, and cultural functions. Conservation of natural resources including marshlands, tree canopy, and open spaces, should be balanced with recreational opportunities.

Regulations

- Ensure preservation and incorporation of greenspace and permeable surfaces within parks and recreational spaces.
- Promote pedestrian accessibility, sidewalks, and connectivity between parks, neighborhoods, commercial areas, and waterfront resources.
- Encourage recreational amenities and public gathering spaces as part of redevelopment and community improvements efforts.
- Require landscaping and tree preservation requirements intended to enhance community aesthetics and environmental quality.
- Allow for lighting, signage, and design standards intended to create safe, attractive, and pedestrian-friendly public spaces.
- Protection of environmentally sensitive areas, including marshlands, wetlands, waterways, and flood-prone lands.

Compatible Zoning Districts

- *M-C (Marsh Conservation)*





Public/Institutional

Thunderbolt's public/institutional areas include properties and facilities dedicated to civic, governmental, educational, cultural, religious, and public safety functions that serve the residents of the community. Public and institutional uses are distributed throughout Thunderbolt in locations that provide accessible and equitable services while supporting neighborhood stability and community identity.

Regulations

- Sidewalks, pedestrian access, and connectivity requirements encourage safe and accessible public facilities throughout Thunderbolt.
- Requires landscaping, tree preservation, and buffering standards that are intended to minimize impacts on adjacent areas.
- Off-street parking and loading requirements apply based on use type and anticipated occupancy.
- Encourage compatibility with Thunderbolt's historic small-town character.

Compatible Zoning Districts

- *I-P (Institutional – Professional)*





Residential

The residential area is characterized by a diverse mix of housing types, architectural styles, and development patterns. Residential development throughout Thunderbolt includes historic homes dating back to the late 1800s alongside modern construction. Residential uses include mobile home communities, townhomes, apartments, and single-family housing.

Regulations

- Support a range of housing types, including single-family homes, duplexes, townhomes, multifamily developments, and manufactured homes subject to site specific regulations.
- Maintain dimensional standards that regulate minimum lot size, setbacks, lot width, building height, and density to ensure compatibility with surrounding areas.
- Encourage residential development to maintain Thunderbolt's historic small-town character and waterfront identity.
- Require landscaping, buffering, and tree preservation, along with off-street parking requirements.
- Promote signage and lighting regulations that preserve the residential character.

Compatible Zoning Districts

- *R-1 (One-family Residential)*
- *R-2 (Two-family Residential)*
- *R-3 (Multifamily Residential)*
- *R-M-H (Residential – Mobile Home)*





River Drive District

The River Drive District serves as Thunderbolt's traditional mixed-use corridor and community focal point along River Drive, commonly recognized as the Town's "Main Street." This district is a blend of commercial, residential, civic, and waterfront-oriented uses. This area is intended to guide compatible infill development and redevelopment while encouraging locally serving businesses and public-gathering spaces. River Drive District is an important aspect in preserving and enhancing the Town's small-town identity, waterfront heritage, and sense of place.

Regulations

- Pedestrian comfort shall be a primary consideration along River Drive, conflicts between vehicular and pedestrian movement shall generally be in favor of the pedestrian.
- Each lot with frontage along River Drive shall front River Drive. Facades shall be built parallel to the principle frontage, with the primary building entrance facing River Drive.
- Dumpsters, outside storage, mechanical equipment, etc. shall not be visible from the public right-of-way and shall be screened by a landscape wall high enough to visually conceal equipment, storage, and/or service areas located behind. The minimum height of the wall shall be the actual height required to screen the object from view.
- Drive-throughs are prohibited.
- In case of a conflict with other provisions of the code, the River Drive District shall apply.
- Special exceptions of design standards may be granted by the Planning and Zoning Commission based on exceptional merit of the project to exceed the provisions of the intent of the district and application of the guiding principles.

Compatible Zoning Districts

- *RDD (River Drive District)*
- *H-M (Hotel-Motel)*
- *W-I (Waterfront Industry)*
- *I-P (Institutional – Professional)*
- *Residential Districts (R-1, R-2, & R-3)* – conditional approval





Transportation/Communication/Utilities

This area encompasses the transportation network, utility easements, drainage systems, communication infrastructure, and public service facilities that support the connectivity of Thunderbolt. These areas provide essential infrastructure necessary for mobility and community development.

Regulations

- Encourage accessibility between neighborhoods, commercial areas, public facilities, parks, and waterfront resources.
- Design and locate communication infrastructure to minimize impacts on surrounding areas.
- Promote safe vehicle and pedestrian movement throughout Thunderbolt with rights-of-way, access management requirements, and driveway standards.

Compatible Zoning Districts

- *I-P (Institutional – Professional)*



Victory Drive District

This area serves as Thunderbolt's primary commercial corridors and a major gateway connecting the Town to the Greater Savannah area. This area is characterized by a mix of commercial businesses, service-oriented establishments, offices, and restaurants. Victory Drive District is recognized as a "Main Street" area.

Regulations

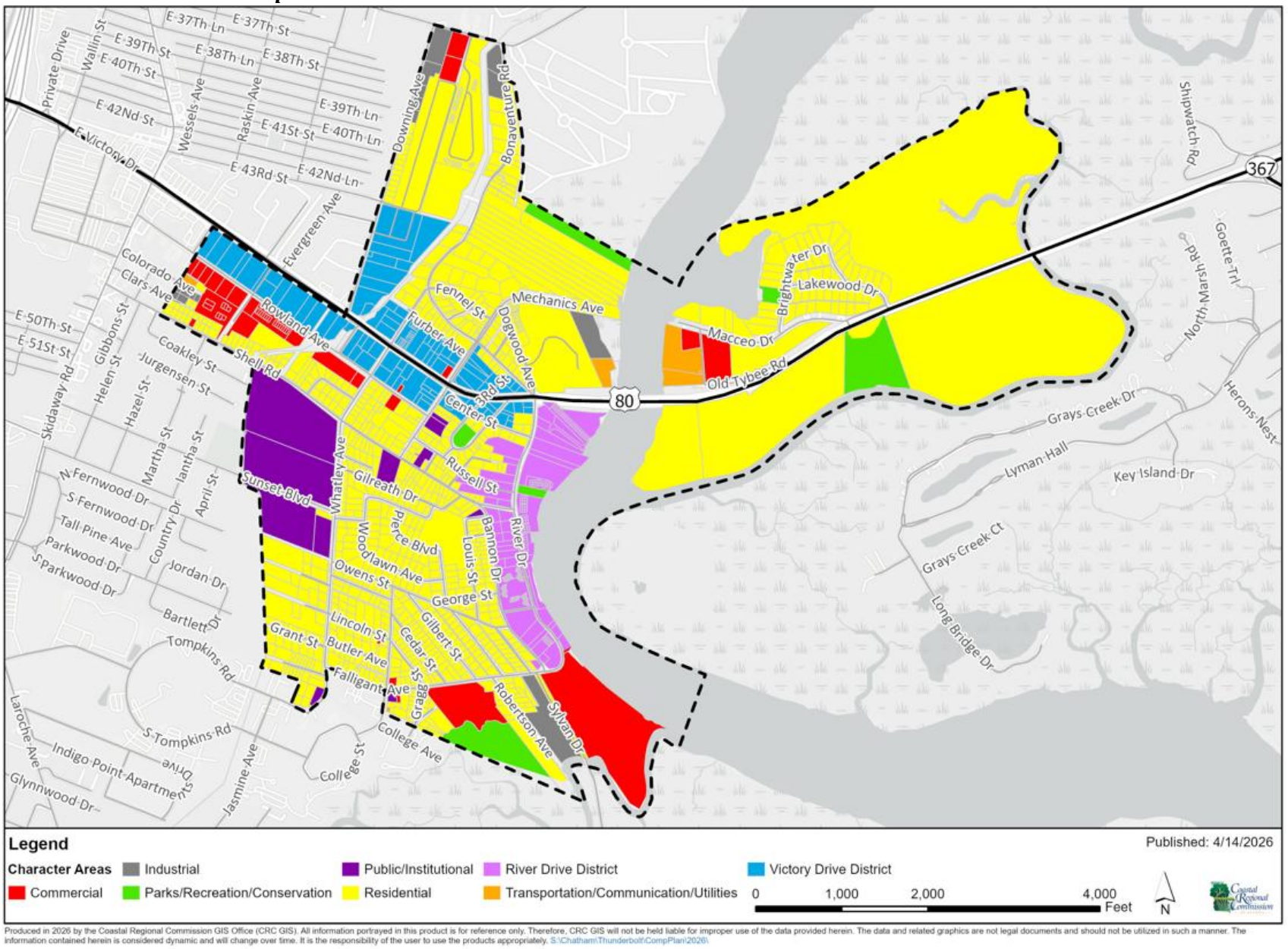
- Encourage commercial, office, service, and limited mixed-use developments that provide goods, services, employment opportunities, and amenities for residents and visitors.
- Promote access management strategies, shared driveways, and coordinated entrances to improve traffic flow and reduce conflicts along the corridor.
- Require appropriate buffering, screening, lighting controls, and site design measures where commercial uses adjoin residential properties.

Compatible Zoning Districts

- *B (Business)*
- *VDD (Victory Drive District)*



Figure 12. Character Areas map.



6 Transportation

The transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan evaluates all modes of transportation operating within the Town, including vehicular travel, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian.

6.1 Related Goals

- Prioritize roadway improvements that improve traffic flow, safety, and connectivity for residents and visitors.
- Ensure signage is properly placed that educates truck drives on where they are allowed and not allowed to pass through.
- Ensure pedestrians and cyclists' safety by discouraging nonresidents from taking shortcuts through residential areas.

6.2 Existing Transportation Network

6.2.1 Roadways

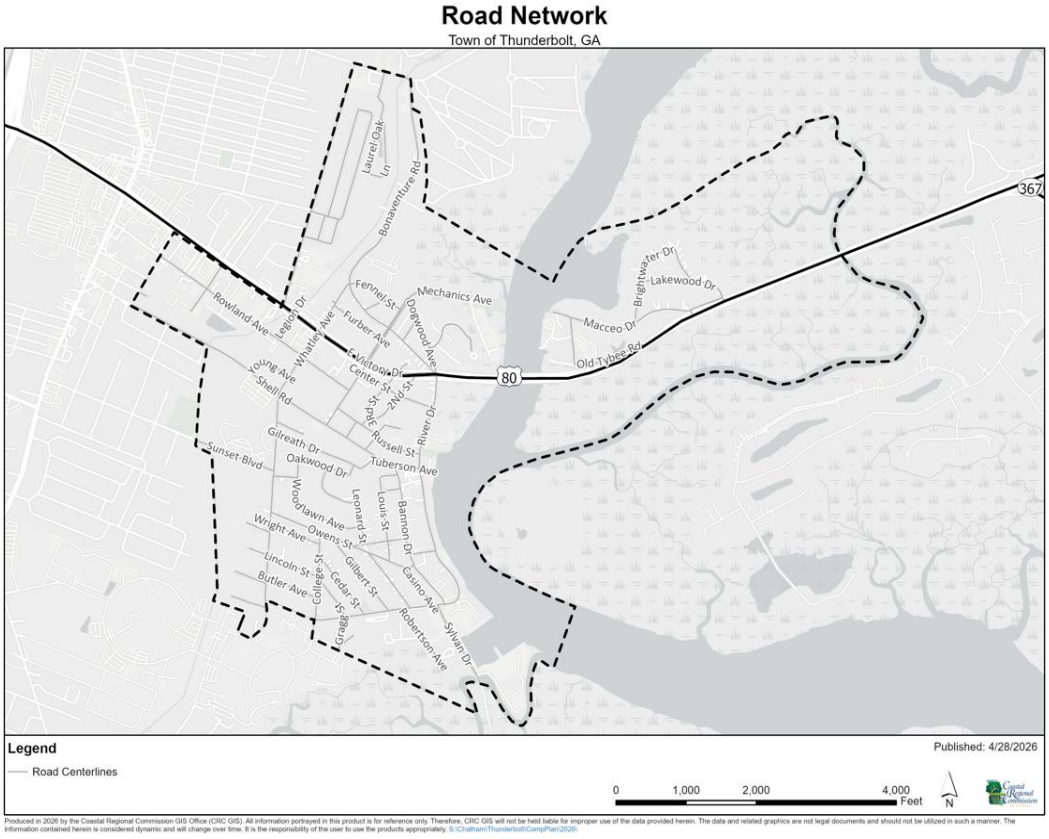
Thunderbolt's roadway system consists of a network of federal, state, and local facilities, each with a functional classification determined by the Federal Highway Administration. Function classifications group roadways into classes or systems according to the character of service they are intended to provide, and the amount of traffic carried. Functional classifications include arterials, collectors, and local roads.

- Arterials are roadways with the most access control. They are designed to carry large volumes of traffic at high speeds and are typically for long-distance travel. Based on the amount and type of traffic, arterial roads are further stratified as principal or minor arterials.

- Collectors are designed to carry medium traffic levels at lower speeds for distances between arterials and local roads. These roadways collect traffic from the local network, provide access to the arterial system, and balance access and mobility.

- Local roads are the most common roads. They are designed specifically to be highly accessible and to connect to collectors and arterials. They are typically utilized for local trips rather than through traffic.

Thunderbolt has approximately 18.8 miles of roadways, including 2.9 miles of arterials (E Victory Drive/ US Highway 80) and 15.9 miles of local roads.



6.2.2 Public Transit

The Coastal Regional Commission operates a regional rural public transit system serving 10 counties and 35 municipalities within the coastal region, including Thunderbolt. The Coastal Coaches service is a demand-response, advanced-reservation, regional rural public transit program. The service operates Monday through Friday from 7am to 5pm. Coastal Coaches vehicles are fully accessible and equipped to accommodate passengers with disabilities, including those who use wheelchairs.

The Chatham Area Transit (CAT) network offers fixed route services and paratransit services. CAT's fixed route network of buses links historic downtown with greater Savannah, providing an easy, efficient, safe, and inexpensive mode of transportation. While CAT's paratransit service is designed to transport eligible persons with disabilities in Chatham County in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

6.2.3 Moving Forward Together 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

In August 2024, Chatham County, including the Town of Thunderbolt, adopted the Moving Forward Together 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), with Thunderbolt actively participating as a Board member, and in the Technical Coordinating Committee and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. The 2050 MTP identified existing and anticipated transportation issues and proposes solutions and opportunities that are feasible and supportive of the community priorities. The goals and objectives identified in the 2050 MTP are listed in the table below.

Figure 13. Coastal regional (CORE) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) area.

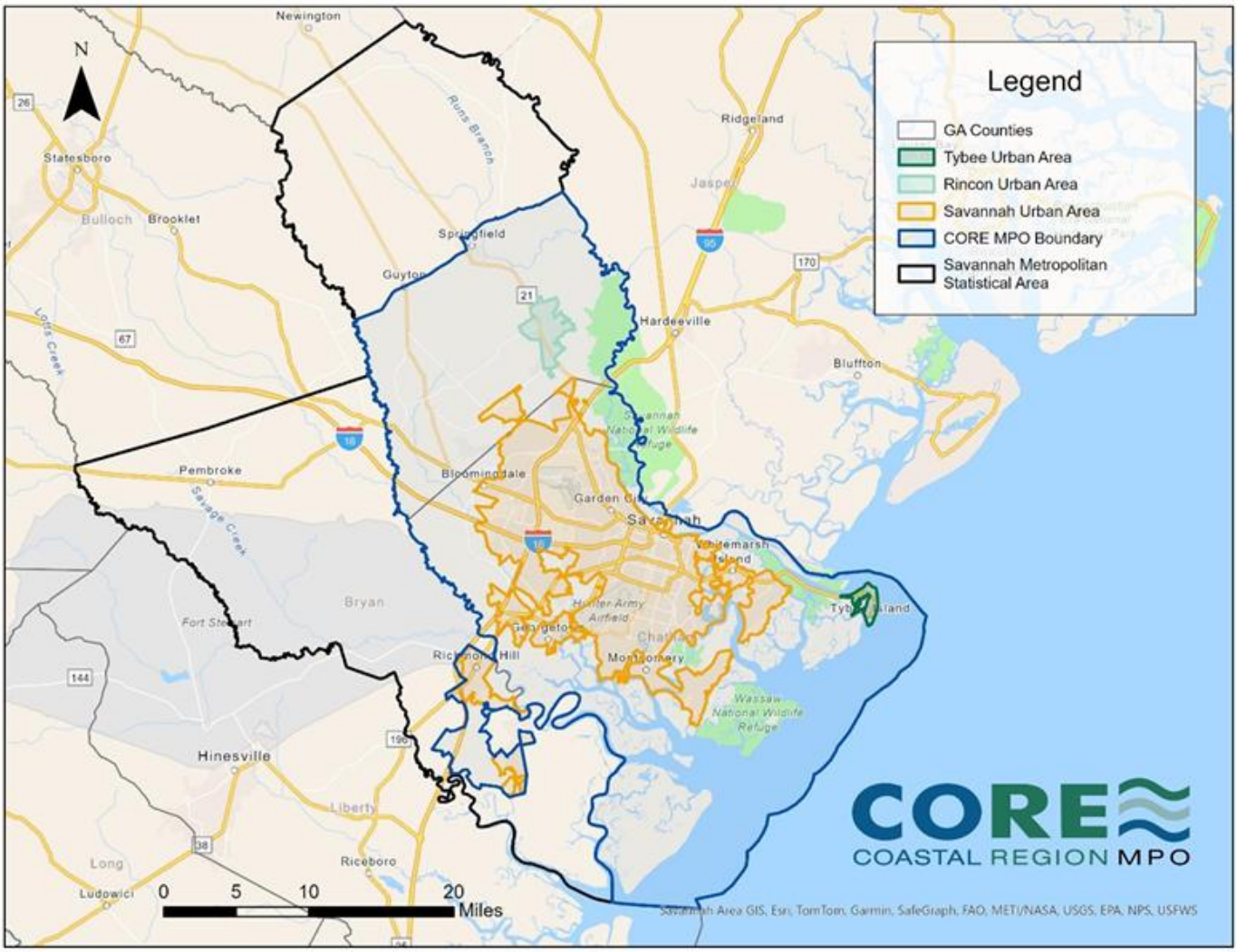


Table 4. 2050 MTP goals.

Goals	Description
Safety & Security Provide a safe and secure transportation system for all users.	• Reduce the rate, frequency, and severity of crashes, injuries, and fatalities for all modes and freight and at-grade rail crossings. • Improve emergency response and incident clearance times. • Increase the resiliency of infrastructure to risks helping prepare for, respond to, and recover from emergencies, including extreme weather and environmental conditions. • Increase resilience of infrastructure to reduce flooding on roadways.
Performance and Reliability Enhance transportation system efficiency and freight movement.	• Enhance and expand the region's ITS, adaptive and actively managed traffic systems. • Improve travel time reliability for vehicles, transit, and freight on the transportation system.

Goals	Description
	• Reduce travel time and congestion for vehicles, transit, and freight. • Maximize efficiency of signalized intersections and coordination.
Stewardship Strategically maintain and improve the transportation system through coordination, economic competitiveness, and resource management.	• Capitalize on common goals and needs in the region to reduce costs, promote efficiency in transportation improvements, and increase data sharing. • Participate in transportation-related planning efforts initiated by other agencies and organizations throughout the region. • Improve accessibility to regional employment centers. • Support the region's economic competitiveness through the efficient movement of freight. • Prioritize projects that provide the greatest cost-benefit. • Improve project delivery for all modes.
System & Environmental Maintain and preserve the transportation system and natural environment.	• Meet industry, state, and national standards for infrastructure and asset quality, condition, and performance for all public transportation and transit infrastructure. • Support funding for transportation maintenance. • Reduce emissions and energy consumption. • Increase the application of green infrastructure in projects. • Reduce stormwater impacts of surface transportation. • Maintain and improve our existing roads and transportation infrastructure.

Source: Moving Forward Together 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

7 Broadband

In 2018, Georgia launched the Georgia Broadband Deployment Initiative to provide high-speed internet to rural communities and underserved areas statewide. Georgia defines broadband services as a minimum of 25 Mbps download and 3 Mbps upload speed. The Georgia Broadband Map identifies homes and businesses that do not have access to broadband services. This helps local communities and providers to direct investment to reach the unserved areas.

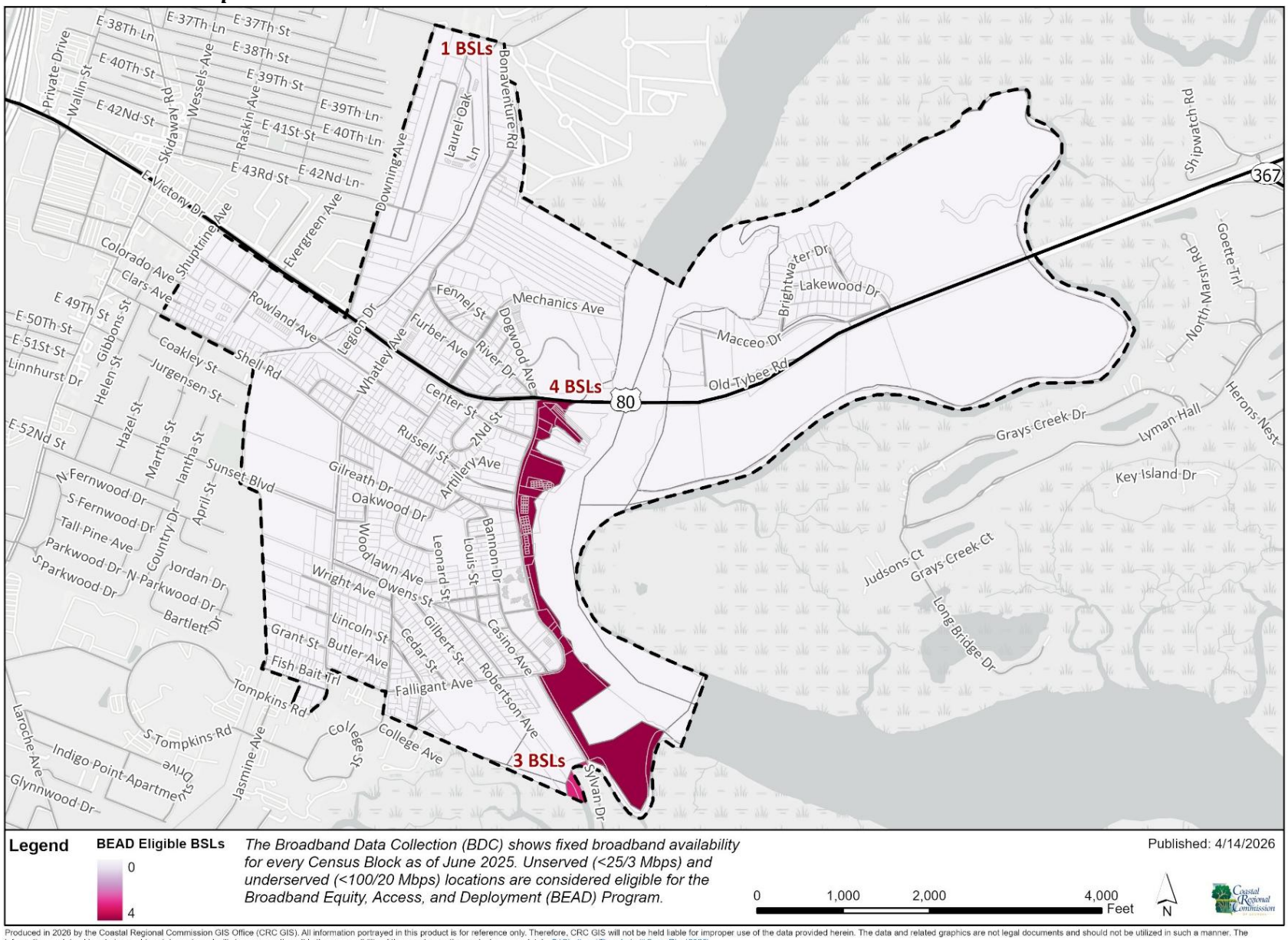
7.1 Benefits

Access to broadband internet is one of the most crucial elements for a community looking to grow its economy, develop its workforce, and improve the overall quality of life for residents. With the younger and more educated workforce coming to the community, fast and reliable internet services are expected.

7.2 Current Access

According to the June 2025 Federal Communications Commission (FCC) Broadband Data Collection (BDC), 99 percent broadband serviceable locations in Thunderbolt have low-latency fiber, cable, copper, or licensed terrestrial fixed wireless offering the speed of at least 100/20 Mbps.

Figure 14. Broadband Map.



8 Community Work Program

The community work program (CWP) presents specific action items designed to address the needs and opportunities identified in Section 4. It is important to note that the implementation of these elements is dependent on variables, such as future developments, federal and state programs, legislation, etc.

Action Item	Timeframe					Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031			
Community Facilities								
Increase cyber-security by improving server protections and implementing an updated cyber policy.	x	x	x	x	x	Administration	$6,000	General Fund
Develop and implement a Townwide customer service program that includes participation from all departments.	x	x	x	x	x	Administration, Police, Public Works, Fire	$1,000	General Fund
Facilitate funding for the Senior Citizen Center.	x	x	x	x	x	Administration	$65,000	General Fund
Host town hall meetings to support water tower and pump maintenance program, Neighborhood Crime Watch, and keeping streets clean by soliciting support on the Town's official website.	x	x	x	x	x	Administration & Public Works Department	$20,000/year	Water & Sewer Fund

Beautify the Town by planting trees, shrubs and plants.	x	x	x	x	x	Public Works Department	$1,000/year	General Fund/ Grants
Improve sanitary sewer lines throughout Town.	x	x	x	x	x	Public Works Department	$750,000/year	SPLOST/ Water & Sewer Fund
Explore and install disaster recovery equipment for IT purposes.	x	x	x	x	x	Administration	TBD	General Fund
Create biannual workshops for residents and visitors on understanding government operations.	x	x	x	x	x	Administration	Staff Time	General Fund
Dedicate staff time to monitor and explore possible funding opportunities.	x	x	x	x	x	Administration	Staff Time	General Fund
Prioritize the sewer force main upgrade in capital improvement planning efforts and pursue funding opportunities and implementation strategies.	x	x	x	x	x	City of Savannah	Staff Time	SPLOST/ Water & Sewer Fund
Economic Development								
Encourage commuters and tourists to support the local economy by providing way-finding signage to local service-oriented businesses.	x	x				Administration	Staff Time	General Fund

Support community events such as the National Night Out though local outreach and hosting updates on the Town's official website.	x	x	x	x	x	Town	Up to $4,000/year based upon funding availability	General Fund
Complete a feasibility study for improved water access, restaurants, and entertainment to capitalize on its waterfront location.	x	x				Administration	Staff Time	General Fund
Housing								
Create an inventory of heir properties and host workshops on the legal processes.	x	x	x	x	x	Administration	Staff Time	General Fund
Land Use								
Remove or rehabilitate dilapidated buildings.	x	x	x	x	x	Administration	$30,000	General Fund
Eliminate incompatible land uses which negatively impact neighborhood quality of life.	x	x	x	x	x	Administration	Staff Time	General Fund

Natural, Cultural, and Historic Resources								
Implement and enforce NPDES Phase I MS4 permit through compliance with the Countywide TMDL Monitoring Plan.	x	x	x	x	x	Administration	$17,500/year	General Fund
Participate in the Community Rating System (CRS) and National Floodplain Insurance Program (NFIP) offered by FEMA by ensuring development activities comply with the floodplain management regulations.	x	x	x	x	x	Administration	$1,000/year	General Fund
Encourage natural resource protection by promoting local events and educational programs.	x	x	x	x	x	Administration	Staff Time	General Fund
Promote water conservation by distributing water-saving kits and educating the public on efficient water use practices.	x	x	x	x	x	Administration	$1,000/year	General Fund
Improve participation in the current Recycling Program.	x	x	x	x	x	Administration	Staff Time	Enterprise Fund

Develop and maintain inventories of historic and natural resources to support their protection and preservation.	x	x	x	x	x	Administration	$3,000	General Fund & Grants
Cooperate with the tourism industry to promote a greater emphasis on environmental protection, education, and preservation of local natural resources in order to promote the area as an ecotourism center.	x	x	x	x	x	Administration	Staff Time	General Fund
Public Safety – Police Department								
Purchase new cruisers and outfitting.	x	x	x	x	x	Police Department	$150,000	General Fund/ SPLOST
Purchase new cameras.	x	x	x	x	x	Police Department	$10,000/year	General Fund/ SPLOST
Purchase new light bars	x	x	x	x	x	Police Department	$5,000	General Fund/ SPLOST
Perform public safety training for all new officers.	x	x	x	x	x	Police Department	$1,000/year	General Fund/ SPLOST
Public Safety – Fire Department								
Perform public safety training for all Fire Department staff.	x	x	x	x	x	Fire Department	$1,000/year	General Fund/ SPLOST
Perform replacement of personal protective equipment.	x	x	x	x	x	Fire Department	$100,000	General Fund/ SPLOST

Public Works								
Continue to upgrade and maintain Town parks.	x	x	x	x	x	Public Works Department	$100,000	General Fund
Upgrade water lines.	x	x	x	x	x	Public Works Department	TBD	Water & Sewer/ SPLOST
Maintain fire hydrants.	x	x	x	x	x	Public Works Department	$3,000/year	Water & Sewer/ SPLOST
Create an infrastructure master plan.	x	x	x	x	x	Public Works Department	Administration	General Fund/ SPLOST
Transportation								
Continue to maintain local roads.	x	x	x	x	x	Public Works Department	$40,000/year	SPLOST/ LMIG/ TSPLOST
Install ADA compliant sidewalks.	x	x				Public Works Department	$60,000	General Fund/ SPLOST/ TSPLOST
Assess and prioritize locations for traffic calming devices and measures.	x	x	x			Public Works Department	Staff Time	General Fund/ SPLOSTS/ TSPLOST

9 Report of Accomplishments

Action Item	Status	Comments
Natural, Cultural and Historic Resources		
Implement and enforce NPDES Phase I MS4 permit through compliance with the Countywide TMDL Monitoring Plan.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Participate in the National Flood Insurance Program by enforcing floodplain management regulations	Underway	This activity was merged with the next one in the new work program.
Participate in the Community Rating System (CRS) program offered by FEMA by ensuring development activities comply with the floodplain management regulations.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity. The item was changed to include the National Floodplain Insurance Program (NFIP).

Action Item	Status	Comments
Encourage natural resource protection by promoting local events and educational programs.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Support water conservation programs such as the indoor and outdoor water-saving kits.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity. This item was changed to promote water conservation by distributing water-saving kits and educating the public on efficient water use practices.
Improve participation in the current Recycling Program.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Take proactive measures to protect valued historic and natural resources through inventories.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity, however the Tree and Sidewalk inventories are completed. This item was changed to develop and maintain inventories of historic and natural resources to support their protection and preservation.
Cooperate with the tourism industry to promote a greater emphasis on environmental protection, education, and preservation of local natural resources in order to promote the area as an ecotourism center.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Economic Development		
Support Chamber of Commerce to actively recruit retail commercial and appropriate industries to the Town by utilizing data from ESRI Business Online.	Postponed	Moved to become an Economic Development goal as this item is postponed for the foreseeable future.
Encourage commuters and tourists to support the local economy by providing way-finding signage to local service-oriented businesses.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Support community events such as the National Night Out thought local outreach and hosting updates on the Town's official website.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Complete a feasibility study for improved water access, restaurants, and entertainment to capitalize on its waterfront location.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.

Community Facilities		
Support water tower and pump maintenance program by hosting and soliciting support on the Town's official website.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Beautify the town by planting trees, shrubs and plants.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Improve sanitary sewer lines throughout Town with the use of SPLOST to fund Water and Sewer projects.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Explore and install disaster recovery equipment for IT purposes.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Install combination operating system.	Completed	
Increase cyber-security by improving server protections and implementing an updated cyber policy.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Initiate a Thunderbolt program that incorporates all departments into a customer service focus.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity. This item was renamed to develop and implement a townwide customer service program that includes participation from all departments.
Continue to maintain interior roads.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity. This item was moved to the Transportation subheading and renamed to continue to maintain local roads.
Support the Senior Citizens' Center.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity. This item was renamed to facilitate funding for the Senior Citizen Center.
Public Safety – Police Department		
Purchase new cruisers and outfitting.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Purchase new cameras.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity. Camera contract will renew in FY 27, and all cameras will be upgraded.
Purchase new light bars	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Purchase new radars.	Completed	
Perform public safety training for all new officers.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity; officers are sent to the most needed training first that benefits the department.
Public Safety – Fire Department		
Construct new fire training classroom.	Completed	
Perform public safety training for all Fire officers.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Perform replacement of personal protective equipment.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.

Parks and Recreation		
Continue to upgrade and maintain Town parks.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity. This item was moved under the Public Works subheading.
Receive an overall park plan.	Completed	
Public Works		
Upgrade water lines.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Maintain fire hydrants.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Install ADA compliant sidewalks.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity. This item was moved under the Transportation subheading.
Purchase new vehicles	Completed	
Create an infrastructure master plan.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Transportation		
Capitalize on the Town's access to water for recreational use or commercialized boat use.	Completed	
Housing		
Remove or upgrade dilapidated buildings.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.
Encourage a sense of neighborhood pride in keeping property and streets clean by hosting and soliciting support on the Town's official website	Completed	This item was merged with hosting a town hall and solicitating supporting on the Town's official website under Community Services.
Upgrade and enforce zoning ordinance.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity. This item was moved to Land Use & Development subheading and was renamed review, update and enforce zoning ordinance.
Support the Neighborhood Crime Watch community program by hosting and soliciting support on the Town's official website.	Completed	This item was merged with hosting a town hall and solicitating supporting on the Town's official website under Community Services.
Eliminate incompatible land uses which negatively impact neighborhood quality of life.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity.

Land Use		
Review land use and zoning regulations.	Completed	This activity has been moved to a policy statement under the Land Use and Development Goal.
Intergovernmental Coordination		
Improve communication and coordination with the County and surrounding municipalities.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity. This item was renamed to conduct regular coordination meetings with Chatham County.
Improve coordination with other agencies such as DNR on enforcement issues related to marine safety.	Underway	This is an ongoing activity. This item was renamed to Conduct regular coordination meetings with other agencies such as DNR on enforcement issues related to marine safety.

Appendix A: Community Engagement Supplements

First Public Hearing Advertisement.

LOCALiQ

The Augusta Chronicle
Athens Banner-Herald
Savannah Morning News

PO Box 631697 Cincinnati, OH 45263-1697

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

Jan LeViner
Town Of Thunderbolt
2821 River DR

Thunderbolt GA 31404-3200

STATE OF GEORGIA, COUNTY OF CHATHAM

The Savannah Morning News, a daily newspaper published and of general circulation in Chatham County; and personal knowledge of the facts herein state and that the notice hereto annexed was Published in said newspapers in the issues dated or by publication on the newspaper's website, if authorized, on:

SAV Savannah Morning News 12/30/2025
SAV savannahnow.com 12/30/2025

and that the fees charged are legal.
Sworn to and subscribed before on 12/30/2025

Mayor and Council of the Town of Thunderbolt will hold a Public Hearing on January 14, 2026, 6:30PM, Town Hall, 2821 River Drive, Thunderbolt, GA to hear a short overview presentation of the Comprehensive Plan process for the Town of Thunderbolt. For questions, please reach out to Jan LeViner, Town Clerk, Town of Thunderbolt, 912.629.4655.

11939372

Legal Clerk

Notary, State of WI, County of Brown

6/30/2029

My commission expires

Publication Cost:	$20.00
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AMY KOKOTT
Notary Public
State of Wisconsin

Second Public Hearing Advertisement.

USA TODAY CO.

LocaliQ

PO Box 631697 Cincinnati, OH 45263-1697

AFFIDAVIT OF PUBLICATION

Jan LeViner
Town Of Thunderbolt
2821 River DR

Thunderbolt GA 31404-3200

STATE OF GEORGIA, COUNTY OF CHATHAM

The Savannah Morning News, a daily newspaper published and of general circulation in Chatham County; and personal knowledge of the facts herein state and that the notice hereto annexed was Published in said newspapers in the issues dated or by publication on the newspaper's website, if authorized, on:

SAV Savannah Morning News 07/21/2026
SAV savannahnow.com 07/21/2026

and that the fees charged are legal.
Sworn to and subscribed before on 07/21/2026

Mayor and Council of the Town of Thunderbolt will hold a Public Hearing on August 12, 2026, 6:30PM, Town Hall, 2821 River Drive, Thunderbolt, GA to conduct the second reading of the proposed Comprehensive Plan for the Town of Thunderbolt. For questions, please reach out to Jan LeViner, Town Clerk, Town of Thunderbolt, 912.462.6455.

Legal Clerk

Notary, State of WI, County of Brown

My commission expires 6/28/2029

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AMY KOKOTT
Notary Public
State of Wisconsin

Table 5. Steering Committee roster

Name	Organization	Title
Dana Williams	Town of Thunderbolt	Mayor
Brooke Barbaree	Town of Thunderbolt	Mayor Pro-Tem & Council
David Crenshaw	Town of Thunderbolt	Council
Dr. Edward M. Drohan, III	Town of Thunderbolt	Council
Dawn Williams	Town of Thunderbolt	Council
Lawrance (Larry) Ward	Town of Thunderbolt	Council
Bethany Skipper-Greer	Town of Thunderbolt	Council
Bob Fischer	Town of Thunderbolt	Building Inspector
Hailey Greene	Town of Thunderbolt	Planning & Zoning Chairperson
Charlie Barrow	Town of Thunderbolt	Attorney

Table 6. Stakeholder roster.

Name	Organization	Title
Bob Fischer	Town of Thunderbolt	Building Inspector
Hailey Greene	Town of Thunderbolt	Planning & Zoning Chairperson
Charlie Barrow	Town of Thunderbolt	Attorney
Seth Hawkins	GA Forestry Commission	U&CF Coordinator
Matt Herrington	Herrington Tree Services	Owner/ Tree Maintenance
Patti King	United Community Bank	
Caila Brown	Bike Walk Savannah	Executive Director
President Dr. Jermaine Whirl	Savannah State University	President of SSU
LeAndrea Mikell	Savanah State University	Executive Director, Government Relations & Community Engagement
Judge Jen Davenport	Savannah Chamber of Commerce	Vice President of Community Affairs and In House Counsel
Dani Caton	Bahia Blue	Operations Manager
Ernie D'Alto	Thunderbolt Marine Inc.	Operations Manager
Michael Kaigler	Chatham County	Chatham County Manager
Heath Lloyd	City of Pooler	City Manager
Joseph Melder	City of Savannah	City Manager
Jeff Notrica	Despositos	Owner
Erica Davis	Erica Davis Catering	Owner
Ansley Williams	Tubbys Tankhouse	Owner
Christina Dolan	GMC	Senior Environmental Specialist
Ed D'Timasso	GMC	Vice President, Environmental
Ashley Goodrich	Ashley Goodrich	Consultant
Bill Lucus	Lucus & Associates	Insurance Agent
Chuck		Park and Tree Consultant
Pastor Young or Smalls		
Hinckley Maine	Chris Dalessio	
Maine Max	Jim Lynes	
Stephanie Kaple	ICH	

Roger Moss	Chatham County Board of Education	
Brooks Barbaree	Board of Education	Resident
Danny McIntosh		Realtor
Nicholas Patrick	Community Improvement Association	
Bryan Ray		Home Builder
Shannon Brett		Resident and CPA
John Sawyer		
Sam Smith	Georgia Forestry Commission	Regional Community Forester

Stakeholder Meeting #1 Sign-In Sheet.

Coastal Regional Commission

Serving the Cities and Counties of Coastal Georgia since 1964

Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Project:	The City of Thunderbolt Comprehensive Plan Update	Date:	2/10/26	Location:	2821 River Drive Thunderbolt, GA 31404

Name	Title	Organization	Email
Nicholas Patrick	Planning Comm		NICKANDLEPATRICK@GMAIL.COM
Ashley Goodrich	Resident		ARGOODRIC@GMAIL.COM
Charlie Barrow	Town Atty		cbarrow@gm-llp.com
Dana Williams	Mayor		dwilliams@Thunderbolt Ga.org
Matthew Walker	Town Administrator	Town of Thunderbolt	mwalker@thunderboltga.org

Stakeholder Meeting #2 Sign-In Sheet.

Coastal Regional Commission

Serving the Cities and Counties of Coastal Georgia since 1964

Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Project:	Thunderbolt Comprehensive Plan update	Date:	3/5/2026	Location:	2821 River Drive Thunderbolt, GA 31404

Name	Title	Organization	Email
Dawn Williams	Council Woman		
Ashley Goodrich	Resident		argoodric@gmail.com
Jodi Sawyer	Consultant		JLSAWYER79@GMAIL.COM
Nick Patrick	Planning Comm		NICKANDLEPATRICK@GMAIL.COM
Larry Ward	Councilmen		LAWSP53@COMCAST.NET
Edward Donovan			edonovan@thunderboltga.org
Matthew Walker	Town Administrator		mwalker@thunderboltga.org
Brooks Barbaree	Councilman		

Stakeholder Meeting #3 Sign-In Sheet.

Coastal Regional Commission

Serving the Cities and Counties of Coastal Georgia since 1964

Meeting Sign-In Sheet

Project:	Town of Thunderbolt Comprehensive Plan Update	Date:	4/1/2026	Location:	2821 River Drive Thunderbolt, GA 31404

Name	Title	Organization	Email
Larry Wood	Councilman		LPWSR3@comcast.net
Dawn Williams	Councilwoman		dbwilliams@thunderboltga.org
Geneva Golden	Citizen		ggolden29@comcast.net
Edward Drake	Councilmember	T'bolt	edrake@thunderboltga.org
Matthew Walker	Town Administrator	T'bolt	mwalker@thunderboltga.org
Robert Morgan			revbob2006@yahoo.com
Linda Morgan	Thunderbolt Counseling		lindagmorg@gmail.com
Lynn Fogarty	Planning Board		fog51262@yahoo.com
Jeffrie Dickerson	Citizen		dickersonsr@Comcast.net
Nicholas Patrick	Planning Comm	T-Bolt	NATHANIELPATRICK1@gmail.com
Catherine Clarke	Citizen	TCTA	clarke8catherine82@yahoo.com
Robert Greeberg		CIA	Sleeberg007@gmail.com

Appendix B: Transmittal Letter & Adoption Resolution

DANA WILLIAMS
MAYOR

MATTHEW D WALKER
TOWN ADMINISTRATOR
JAN LEVINER, MMC
TOWN CLERK
ZONING ADMINISTRATOR
CHARLES W. BARROW
TOWN ATTORNEY

COUNCIL MEMBERS

BETHANY
SKIPPER-GREER
BROOKS BARBAREE
DAVID P. CRENSHAW
DAWN B. WILLIAMS
EDWARD M. DROHAN, III
LAWRENCE WARD

August 12, 2026

Coastal Regional Commission
1181 Coastal Dr SW
Darien, GA 31305

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

The Town of Thunderbolt has completed an update of its comprehensive plan and is submitting it with this letter for review by the Coastal Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs.

I certify that we have held the required public hearings and have involved the public in development of the plan in a manner appropriate to our community's dynamics and resources. Evidence of this has been included with our submittal.

I certify that appropriate staff and decision-makers have reviewed both the Regional Water Plan covering our area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) and taken them into consideration in formulating our plan.

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Matthew Walker, Town Administrator at (912)629-4655 or mwalker@thunderboltga.org

Sincerely,

Dana Williams, Mayor
Town of Thunderbolt

Enclosures

TOWN OF THUNDERBOLT, GEORGIA
RESOLUTION NO. 2026-4
A RESOLUTION ADOPTING THE TOWN OF THUNDERBOLT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2021–2031, UPDATED 2026; AUTHORIZING TRANSMITTAL OF THE ADOPTED PLAN

WHEREAS, the Town of Thunderbolt recognizes the importance of comprehensive planning to guide its future growth, development, and preservation; and

WHEREAS, the Town's Comprehensive Plan establishes a framework for addressing community needs, setting priorities, and guiding decisions concerning land use, housing, economic development, infrastructure, public services, and natural and cultural resources; and

WHEREAS, the Comprehensive Plan was approved by Mayor and Council on August 12, 2026, at a public hearing; and

WHEREAS, the Town has prepared a 2026 update to its Comprehensive Plan for the planning period of 2021 through 2031; and

WHEREAS, Mayor and Council have reviewed the updated Comprehensive Plan and find that its adoption serves the best interests of the Town and its residents;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE GOVERNING AUTHORITY OF THE TOWN OF THUNDERBOLT, GEORGIA IN A REGULAR MEETING ASSEMBLED AND PURSUANT TO LAWFUL AUTHORITY THEREOF, AS FOLLOWS:

Section 1. Implementation.
The Town Administrator and appropriate Town staff are authorized and directed to use the adopted Comprehensive Plan as a guide in preparing recommendations, establishing priorities, and carrying out planning activities. Projects and expenditures identified in the Plan remain subject to applicable budget appropriations and any additional approvals required by law.

Section 2. Transmittal and Public Availability.
The Town Clerk is authorized and directed to provide an executed copy of this Resolution and the Comprehensive Plan as adopted to the Coastal Regional Commission for notification to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs. The Town Clerk shall maintain the adopted Plan with the Town's official records and make it available for public inspection.

Second 3. Effective Date. This Resolution hereto shall become effective immediately upon its adoption by the Town Council

BE IT FURTHER ROSOLVED that the Resolution herein authorizes **ADOPTED** by the Mayor and Council of the Town of Thunderbolt, Georgia, this 14 day of October, 2026.

Dana Williams, Mayor
Town of Thunderbolt

ATTEST:

Jan LeViner, Town Clerk