

2025 GREATER IRWIN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FOR

IRWIN COUNTY and the CITY OF OCILLA

DEC 29 2003

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2025 GREATER IRWIN COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE

The purpose of the 2025 Greater Irwin Comprehensive Plan is to provide elected and advisory officials with a range of tools to manage and guide future growth and development of the county/city through the year 2025. The Plan represents joint county and city participation in and contribution to the coordinated planning process as set forth by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. By meeting the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures established as part of the legislation, the Greater Irwin Comprehensive Plan establishes a planning process for the provision of public facilities and services. In addition, the comprehensive plan will serve as the basis for local government decision making regarding the future land use pattern, environmental protection, and economic development.

PLANNING PROCESS

The 2025 Greater Irwin Comprehensive Plan was prepared using the basic planning process required by Georgia's Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures. This process is summarized below:

PART I - WHERE ARE WE?

Inventory and Assessment: Background information on such factors as population, economic development, natural and historic resources, community facilities and services, housing, land use, and intergovernmental coordination was collected and analyzed. An assessment of these factors was conducted to determine their adequacy in light of projected population changes and anticipated future development patterns.

PART II - WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE?

Statement of Impacts and Opportunities, Goals and Policies: Based upon the inventory and assessment, problems and needs were identified. Goals and policies were developed to meet identified needs and to document the future aspirations of the city and the county. The Plan's goal statements are consistent with, and supportive of the statewide planning goals as set forth in the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures. These statewide goals are:

- (a) **Economic Development:** To achieve a growing and balanced economy, consistent with the resources of this state and its various regions, that equitably benefits all sections of the state and all segments of the population.
- (b) **Natural and Historic Resources:** To conserve and protect the environmental, natural and historic resources of Georgia's communities, regions and the state.
- (c) **Community Facilities and Services:** To ensure that public infrastructure facilities serving local governments, the region and the state have the capacity and are in place when needed to support and attract growth and development and/or maintain and enhance the quality of life of the residents of the state.
- (d) **Housing:** To ensure that all people within the state and its various regions and communities have access to adequate and affordable housing.

- (e) **Land Use:** To ensure that the land resources of the state are allocated for uses required to promote and sustain growth and economic development; to conserve and protect the natural, environmental and historic resources of the state; and to protect and promote the quality of life of the people of Georgia's communities, regions, and the state.

PART III - HOW DO WE GET THERE?

Implementation: Based upon the Impacts and Opportunities/ Goals and Policies (found in Part II) of the Plan, a strategy to put the plan into action was prepared. Part III of the Plan includes a Five-Year Short-Term Work Program that outlines projects and programs that need to be undertaken and/or completed by the year 2008 to meet existing needs and achieve future goals, as well as a seamless Future Land Use Plan for Irwin County and the City of Ocilla.

PLAN PRODUCTS

As stated previously, the 2025 Greater Irwin Comprehensive Plan was prepared following the guidelines in the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures. This Plan provides an inventory and assessment of existing conditions of Irwin County and Ocilla, and an implementation strategy consisting of impacts and opportunities, goal and policy statements, and a Five-Year Short-Term Work Program, and a future land use plan for each unit of government.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

In accordance with the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures, a public hearing was held on November 5, 2003, prior to the preparation of the Plan. A second public hearing was conducted to receive input on the 2025 Greater Irwin Comprehensive Plan on December 11, 2003.

CHAPTER ONE: CULTURAL RESOURCES

The conservation of cultural, historic and archeological resources can have positive impacts on Irwin County's quality of life, visual appeal, tourism potential, downtown revitalization, and overall economic development potential. In addition, the preservation of historic properties and landscapes is an important aspect of maintaining a community's sense of place and pride. Continued interest in local heritage is essential in retaining a community vision with an understanding of its past.

HISTORY OF IRWIN COUNTY

Irwin County was one of seven counties created on Dec. 15, 1818, by an act of the General Assembly (Ga. Laws 1818, p. 27). Surveyed in 1818 on lands ceded to the State of Georgia by the Creek Indians, the county first held court in private homes near the Ocmulgee River on the county's original northern boundary.¹ From 1825 to 1906, portions of Irwin County's original boundaries were used to create the following counties: Lowndes and Thomas (1825), Worth (1853), Coffee (1854), Berrien (1856), Wilcox (1857), Tift and Turner (1905), and Ben Hill (1906).

Irwin County was Georgia's 41st county and was named for Governor Jarred Irwin, a native of North Carolina. Mr. Irwin arrived in Georgia at the age of seven and later represented Washington County in the legislature, became president of the Senate, and in 1796, the General Assembly elected Irwin governor.

The December 21, 1819 act organizing Irwin County authorized the five justices of the county's first inferior court to select the location of the county's seat of government, which was to be "as near the centre thereof as convenience will admit" (Ga. Laws 1819, p. 65). Until a county seat was selected and a courthouse built, county courts were to meet in the home of David Williams. Irwin County's inferior court was unable to decide on where the county seat should be located, so on December 21, 1820, the legislature authorized the inferior court to select a temporary county seat until a permanent one could be designated (Ga. Laws 1820, p. 28).

On December 24, 1825, the legislature authorized courthouse commissioners to select a county seat for Irwin County and to purchase land, have lots laid off, and sell the lots (Ga. Laws 1825, p. 55). The act further provided that once a site had been chosen, the inferior court was then responsible for contracting to have a courthouse and jail built. However, the commissioners could not agree on where to locate Irwin's county seat, therefore on December 19, 1827, the legislature appointed new commissioners to select a county seat (Ga. Laws 1827, p. 187).

The legislature ultimately stepped in on December 23, 1830, and designated the location of Irwin County's seat of government as land lot 225 in the fourth district of the county (Ga. Laws 1830, p. 216). If that lot could not be purchased, the act authorized the purchase of any lot within two miles of lot 225 for use as the county seat. The legislature also directed that the county seat be named Irwinsville.

For an unknown reason, the legislature on December 22, 1831 changed the location of Irwin's county seat to land lot 39 in the third district, though again directing that it be named Irwinsville (Ga. Laws 1831, p. 81). The act named Robert H. Dixon, Jacob Young, William Bradford, Daniel Look, and Reuben Marsh as commissioners with authority to lay out and sell town lots and to contract for building a courthouse and jail. On December 22, 1857, the legislature incorporated Irwin County's seat of government as "Irwinville", not "Irwinsville" as directed in the 1830 and 1831 acts (Ga. Laws 1857, p. 179).

In approximately 1880, Ocilla developed around 10 miles southeast of Irwinville. (The name Ocilla was of Creek

¹ Wilber W. Caldwell, *The Courthouse and the Depot: The Architecture of Hope in an Age of Despair, A Narrative Guide to Railroad Expansion and Its Impact on Public Architecture in Georgia, 1833-1910* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2001) 528.

origin, and was the name of a local River...Ochile, now known as the Ocmulgee.) Built around timber and turpentine, Ocilla grew rapidly after the railroad from Fitzgerald was completed in 1897. That same year, the legislature incorporated Ocilla on November 24 (Ga. Laws 1897, p. 282).

The railroad was soon extended southward, connecting Ocilla to major railroads. Within 10 years, the town's population tripled. Meanwhile, Irwinville declined as residents and businesses moved to Ocilla and Fitzgerald.

On April 29, 1907, a petition to change the county seat from Irwinville to Ocilla was signed by two-fifths of the voters of Irwin County and was submitted to the county ordinary (probate judge). That same day, the ordinary directed that an election be held on June 12, 1907. In the election, over two-thirds of the vote supported removal of the county seat, therefore on August 19, 1907, the legislature designated Ocilla as the new county seat of Irwin County (Ga. Laws 1907, p. 307). A new courthouse in Ocilla was not completed until 1910, as a result Irwinville may have continued as de facto county seat from 1907 to 1910 due to the fact that the county courthouse was located there.

Irwin County's current boundaries were created after the formation of Ben Hill County in 1906. Early maps of Irwin County show several historic settlements. The 1915 Hudgins' Map of Georgia shows Irwin County having the following communities: Abba, Arp, Brisbron, Fletcher, Frank, Harding, Hansen, Horten, Irwinville, Launcelot, Mystic, Mirion, Mixon, Ocilla, Osierfield, Pinetta, Tapley, Thurman, Whitley, and Wray. Several of these settlements occurred in response to the Georgia and Florida Railway and the Atlanta, Birmingham and Atlantic Railroad. Branch lines of these railroads linked towns in Irwin County to cities throughout Georgia and beyond. The creation of the highway and latter Interstate eventually decreased the need for the extensive railroad system and thus Irwin's small towns fell to oblivion. Traces of these noteworthy transportation webs remain evident and are revealed by clusters of historic buildings, scattered homesteads, and scenic vistas.

IDENTIFICATION OF RESOURCES

An initial inventory of historic resources was conducted. Data collection utilized Geographical Position Satellites (GPS) technology to map the historic resources. Information collected regarding each resource was limited to locational information (latitude/longitude) and type of resource. Map 1-1 shows points of residential, commercial/industrial, institutional, transportation-related, agricultural, and archaeological resources. This inventory is a basis for a comprehensive survey and should also assist in planning for new development as well as determining areas for National Register or Local Historic Districts.

INVENTORY OF RESOURCE TYPES

Residential

Concentrations of historic resources exist in the Cities of Ocilla, Mystic and Irwinville. Scattered residential resources are also located throughout the unincorporated areas of the county.

Commercial / Industrial

Historic commercial and industrial resources are primarily found within the City of Ocilla. Individual commercial buildings, such as grocery stores and service stations, were located in Holt, Osierfield, Irwinville, and Mystic. An occasional building historically constructed for a rural grocer are located along roads in unincorporated areas. The Red Chimney Hotel, constructed in 1885, remains in Irwinville as an example of rural vernacular architecture.

Institutional

The regional Historic Rural Schools Initiative has identified nine extant historic school buildings in Irwin County

(Map 1-2). Numerous historic church buildings are located throughout the county. Located within the potential Ocilla Historic District is a former fraternal lodge. Irwinville's Masonic Lodge #212 remains nearly unaltered from when it was constructed in 1856.

Transportation-Related

The Georgia Department of Transportation Historic Bridge Management and Preservation Database identified two historic bridges in Irwin County. Both bridges were constructed in 1954, one spanning the Willacoochee River and the other crossing Little Brushy Creek. The Historic American Engineering Record (HAER) documented a continuous-stringer type bridge that was completed in 1939 to span Sand Creek on State Route 32 in the Irwinville vicinity.

The Old Coffee Road was one of the first routes built through the region that was financed by the state of Georgia. The road was constructed in 1823 under the supervision of General John Coffee and Thomas Swain. The road began at Swain's Ferry on the Ocmulgee River and passed through present-day Lax and then on southwestward to the Florida line. The Coffee Road was a major trade route which local products were carried to the Gulf Coast and traded for imported goods. In addition to trade, the road made the area more accessible to settlers.

Remnants of the former Georgia and Florida Railway and the Atlanta, Birmingham and Atlantic Railroad exist in Irwin County. Many small settlements that once thrived from the railroad remain evident in Arp and Osierfield. Individual residential buildings were constructed to front the tracks, most likely due to the fact that the trains were the most dependable form of transportation. The Osierfield Depot, which was constructed in 1900, was moved over two miles from its original location in 1974 and is being reused as a house. Although the majority of the original lines have been removed, patterns of development that surrounded the lines are clearly visible and provide scenic vistas.

Agricultural

Agricultural sites are patterns in the land and the related structures created by human activity. Although no landscapes appear exactly as they did in the past, they often retain significant characteristics. Agricultural sites in Irwin County typically have the following aspects: individual buildings for separate functions (dwelling, smokehouse, livestock barns, equipment buildings, etc.); path for access, frequently shaded by trees; and fields that are irregularly arranged and follow natural topography. Irwin County's agricultural resources are extensive and include numerous types of buildings and landscapes.

Archaeological Sites

The earliest known human inhabitants of the region now known as Irwin County came into the area approximately ten thousand years ago, at the end of the last Ice Age. European settlers began to enter the area in the early nineteenth century and were probably somewhat established in present-day Irwin County by the time the land was officially ceded by the Creek Indians in 1814. Over the last ten thousand years, humans have left a substantial material record of their lives. The study of this material record forms the basis of *archaeology* and the basic unit of this record is the *archaeological site*. To date, there have been only thirty archaeological sites recorded in Irwin County; however, this likely reflects a lack of archaeological research, not a lack of sites. Archaeological sites in Irwin County range from locations where hunters manufactured stone tools 10,000 years ago to small late nineteenth/early twentieth century farmsteads.

Archaeological sites, like historic buildings, are considered *cultural resources* and, if they meet eligibility requirements set forth in the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA), *historic properties*. Unlike historic buildings, however, archaeological sites are not always evident to the untrained eye. While some archaeological sites have obvious above ground indicators such as earth mounds, or chimney remnants, most consist of *artifacts* (object made or modified by humans such as stone tool, pottery, bottle glass) and *features* (post holes, trash pits, stone hearths, human burials, etc.) that are *underground*.

How do you know if an area contains an archaeological site? The only sure way to know is to have a professional archaeologist sample, or *survey*, the area. There are, however, some general criteria you can apply to help prioritize areas. Prehistoric (Indian) sites are most commonly located near water sources such as streams, springs, or lime sinks. Historic (Euro/Afro-American) sites are commonly located close to old/historic roads. Both prehistoric and historic sites are generally located on level to gently sloping ground and on well-drained soils. Previous disturbance can also affect a location's potential to contain archaeological sites. For example, road/utilities right-of-way has usually been subjected to heavy disturbance and is not likely to contain any intact archaeological deposits. Cultivation, however, does not necessarily destroy archaeological sites and does not, by itself, indicate a low potential area. Such criteria, even when developed into a formal predictive model, should only be used as a tool at the most basic planning level. Hiring a professional archaeologist/consultant is an effective way of streamlining the compliance process and insuring that archaeological resources are being treated according to the law.

While cultural resources work is most often done in response to Section 106 of the NHPA, meaning that there is some federal involvement (i.e., federal funds, permits, etc.), it is important to remember that there are also state laws to consider. Official Code of Georgia Annotated (OCGA) 12-3-621 states that a person who is **not** operating under Section 106 must have written landowner permission to conduct archaeology on private property and **must** provide written notification to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) at least five (5) business days prior to excavation. Other code sections apply more generally to human remains, but are relevant because of the possibility of discovering such remains at archaeological sites. OCGA 31-21-6 requires notification of local law enforcement upon the disturbance of human remains. If law enforcement determines that it is not a crime scene, DNR is notified of the discovery.

Key points to remember when considering archaeology in development and compliance:

- Humans have been in the area now known as Irwin County for at least 10,000 years, so the potential for finding evidence of past human activity (i.e., archaeological sites) is generally high.
- Unlike historic buildings, archaeological sites often have no above ground components that would indicate their presence.
- While factors such as distance to water and/or old roads, slope, soil drainage, and previous disturbance can help prioritize areas of archaeological concern, the only sure way to know whether an area contains archaeological sites is to conduct an archaeological survey.
- Most archaeology is done in compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and regulations implementing that act (36 CFR Part 800). These laws insure that projects receiving federal funds (CDBG/EIP grants, FDIC loans, etc) or requiring federal permits (e.g., Section 404 of Clean Water Act) take affects to archaeological resources into account.
- In addition to federal laws, there are state laws to consider as well. Official Code of Georgia Annotated (OCGA) 12-3-621 requires written landowner permission and DNR notification of intent to conduct **non**-Section 106 archaeology on private property. OCGA 31-21-6 requires notification of local law enforcement upon discovery or disturbance of human remains.

ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT AND FUTURE NEEDS

Today the county remains rich with natural resources in addition to abundant cultural, historic, and archaeological resources. Several individual sites are located in the unincorporated areas of the county. Sites such as the Jefferson Davis Historic Site and the historic Irwinville community have cultural, historical, as well as, archeological significance. Additional cultural resources include school buildings and similar public facilities, agricultural sites and scenic landscapes, historic transportation routes, and historic communities. Historic resources include: concentrations of historic buildings such as the potential National Register Historic District in Ocilla, Mystic and Irwinville depicted on Maps 1-3, 1-4 and 1-5; individual historic buildings located in unincorporated

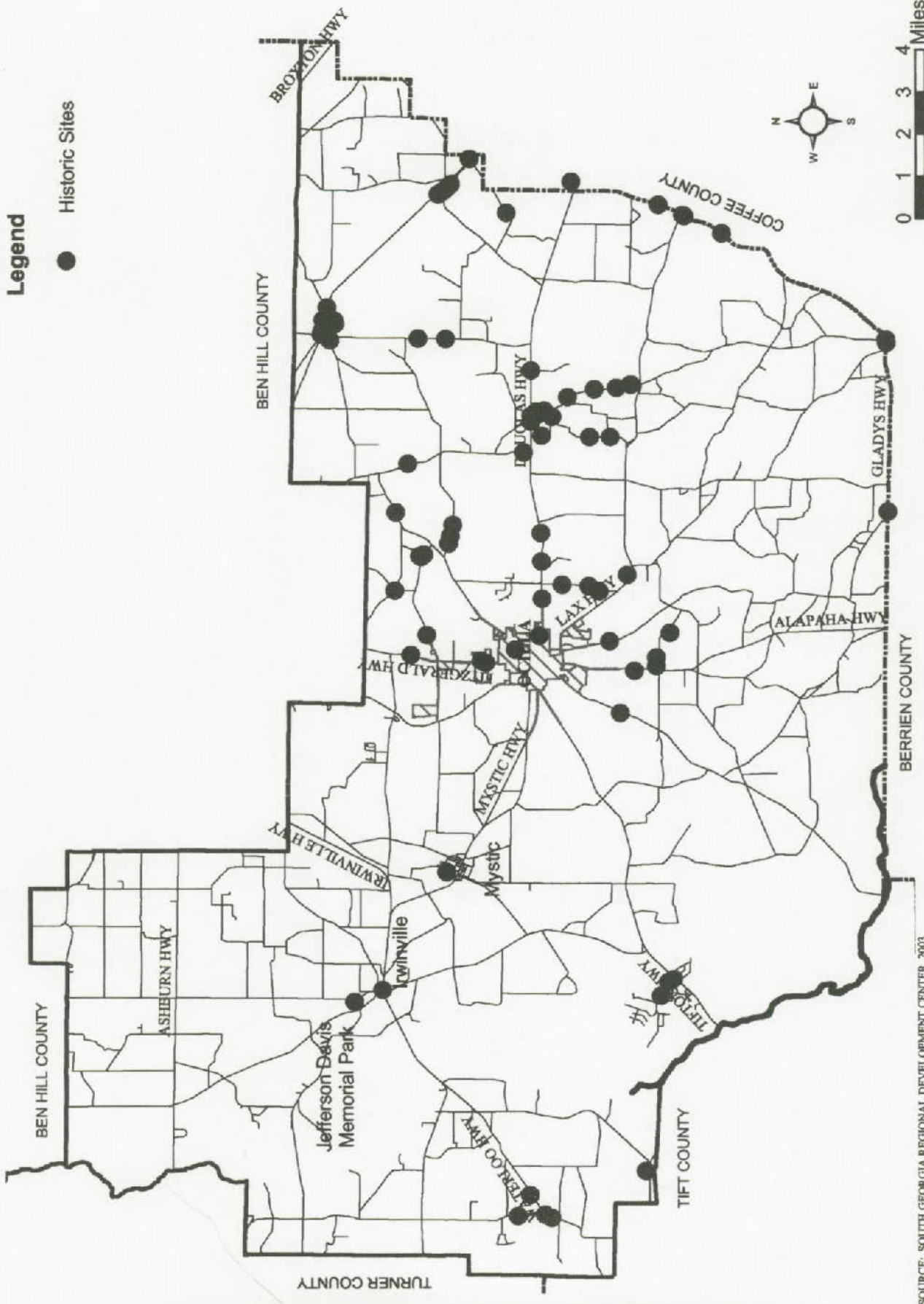
areas; railroad-related structures; and historic bridges. Archeological sites may include cemeteries, Native American camps, Civil War battle sites, as well as, historic farms. While Map 1-1 depicts an initial inventory of these resources, it should be noted that a comprehensive survey of all cultural, historic, and archaeological resources is necessary.

Conservation of cultural, historic, and archaeological resources should begin with a comprehensive countywide survey. At this point, a partial inventory has been done which includes approximately 225 resources, but it is incomplete. Funding is available through the Historic Preservation Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources to assist with the completion of a Historic Resources Survey.

Currently the only two resources are listed on the National Register of Historic Places – the Jefferson Davis Capture Site and the Irwin County Courthouse; the former Ocilla Public School is currently under review for listing on the National Register. Several additional resources including individual sites and districts in Irwin County are eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The National Register of Historic Places not only identifies significant properties and districts for general planning purposes, but it also qualifies certain properties eligible to receive specific federal and state tax incentives for private property owners to rehabilitate historic buildings. The National Register also makes available historic preservation grants to assist local governments in accomplishing preservation projects.

Due to the extensive number of agricultural resources in the county, it is essential to develop a public education program to promote awareness of these significant resources as well as encourage sensible development that will enhance and protect these resources.

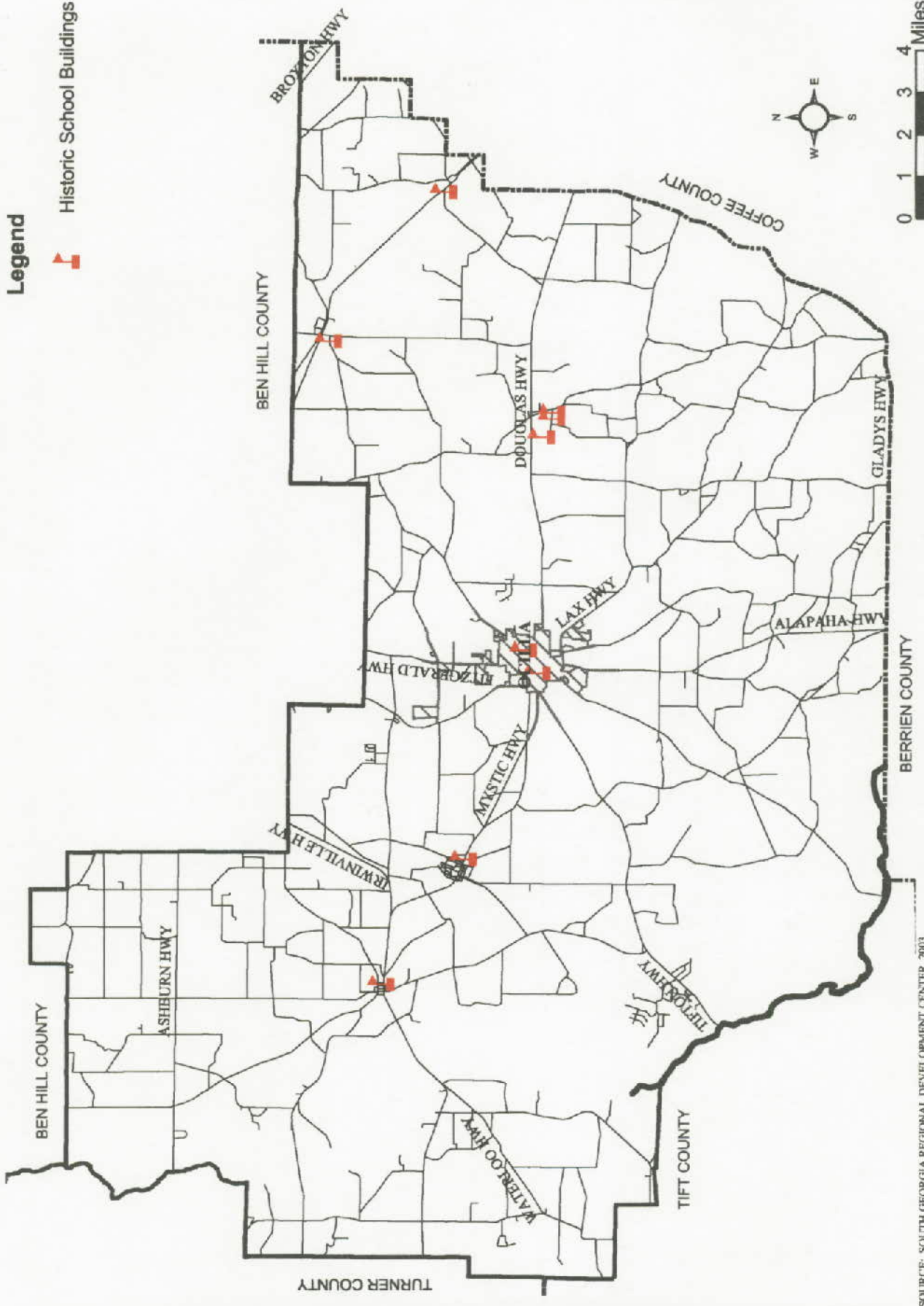
Legend
● Historic Sites



SOURCE: SOUTH GEORGIA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER, 2003

MAP 1-1
IRWIN COUNTY HISTORIC SITES

Legend
Historic School Buildings




SOURCE: SOUTH GEORGIA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER, 2003

MAP 1-2 IRWIN COUNTY HISTORIC SCHOOL BUILDINGS

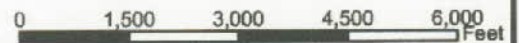


Legend

 CONCENTRATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES



SOURCE: SOUTH GEORGIA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER, 2003

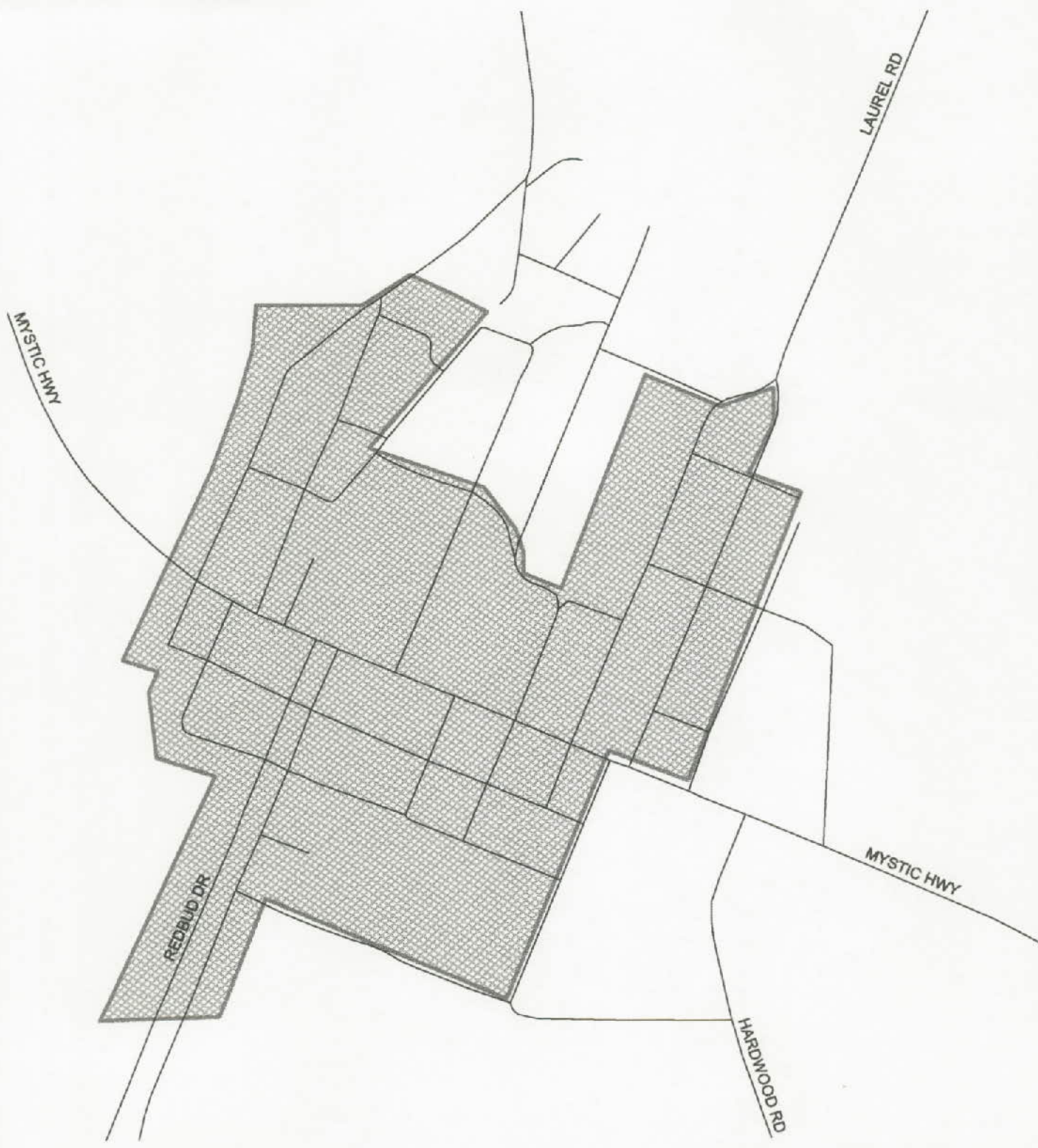


MAP 1-3
CONCENTRATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES, CITY OF OCILLA



Legend

 CONCENTRATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES



SOURCE: SOUTH GEORGIA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER, 2003 SURVEY UPDATE



MAP 1-4
CONCENTRATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES, MYSTIC



Legend

 CONCENTRATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES

JEFFERSON DAVIS
MEMORIAL PARK



JEFF DAVIS RD

BIG CREEK RD

THOMAS RD

WASHINGTON RD

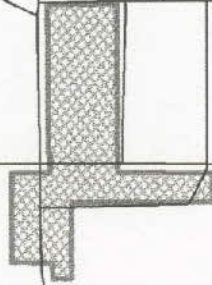
JACKSON RD

WASHINGTON RD

IRWINVILLE HWY

WISTERIA DR

SYCAMORE HWY



SOURCE: SOUTH GEORGIA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER, 2003 SURVEY UPDATE

0 500 1,000 1,500 2,000 Feet

MAP 1-5
CONCENTRATION OF HISTORIC RESOURCES, IRWINVILLE

CHAPTER TWO: POPULATION, HOUSING AND ECONOMY

POPULATION TRENDS

An understanding of Greater Irwin's (Irwin County and Ocilla's) past and future population changes, characteristics and distribution provides insight about future needs in utilities, streets, schools, housing, police, fire protection and emergency services, recreation, and other public services and facilities.

Between 1970 and 2000, the entire county gained 1,901 persons, a 23.7% increase in total population. The rural portions of Irwin County increased the most persons, 1,816, which amounted to a 37.4% gain over the last thirty years. The City of Ocilla rose and fell in total population with a net gain of just 85 persons (2.7%) in the 1970-2000 period. Table 2-1 shows the numerical and percentage changes in population and Table 2-2 shows the births, deaths, natural increase (births minus deaths), and provide the components that fostered the population changes. Net migration has become the predominant factor in the population increases.

The rate of population changes between 1970 and 2000 show Greater Irwin gaining in concert with the 10 county region. The rate of increase is less than the gains shown by the State of Georgia. The unincorporated areas in Irwin County have been home for 60-67% of the total county population between 1970 and 2000. The City of Ocilla has remained nearly static during the thirty-year period in terms of population changes.

**TABLE 2-1
1970 - 2000 TOTAL POPULATION FOR IRWIN COUNTY AND OCILLA**

	1970	1980	1990	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Greater Irwin	8,036	8,988	8,649	9,293	9,422	9,550	9,679	9,809	9,937
Ocilla	3,185	3,436	3,182	3,226	3,234	3,243	3,252	3,261	3,270
Irwin, unincorp.	4,851	5,552	5,467	6,067	6,187	6,307	6,427	6,547	6,667
RDC	157,500	186,200	195,448	211,434	214,631	217,839	221,026	224,223	227,421
State	4,605,600	5,486,800	6,508,585	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	8,229,820

Numerical and Percentage Change

	1970-1980		1980-1990		1990-2000		1970-2000	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
Greater Irwin	952	11.8	- 339	- 3.8	1,288	14.9	1,901	23.7
Ocilla	251	7.9	- 254	- 7.4	88	2.8	85	2.7
Irwin, unincorp.	701	14.5	- 85	- 1.5	1,200	21.9	1,816	37.4
RDC	28,700	18.2	9,248	5.0	31,973	16.4	69,921	44.4
State	881,600	19.1	1,021,685	18.6	1,721,235	26.4	3,624,220	78.7

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 1970 - 2000.

TABLE 2-2
BIRTHS, DEATHS, & NATURAL INCREASE IN GREATER IRWIN 1968 - 1999

Year	Births	Deaths	Natural Increase
1968	136	102	34
1969	136	95	41
1970	133	96	37
1971	168	96	72
1972	123	102	21
1973	143	105	38
1974	125	108	17
1975	113	98	15
1976	105	92	13
1977	151	91	60
1978	127	93	34
1979	133	82	51
1980	154	99	55
1981	129	85	44
1982	145	84	61
1983	148	95	53
1984	121	97	24
1985	146	94	52
1986	143	106	37
1987	135	96	39
1988	103	78	25
1989	125	115	10
1990	106	90	16
1991	118	105	13
1992	118	100	18
1993	105	103	2
1994	121	120	1
1995	120	101	19
1996	115	123	8
1997	122	101	21
1998	103	118	-15
1999	115	96	19

Source: Georgia Vital Statistics 1960-1999.

COMPONENTS OF POPULATION CHANGE FOR GREATER IRWIN

Population	1960	9,211	
Population	1950	11,973	
Population Change - 1950-1960		-2,762	
Births	1950-1959	2,830	
Deaths	1950-1959		838
Natural Increase - 1950-1960		+1,992	
Net Migration Loss		-4,754	(-39.7%)
Population	1970	8,036	
Population	1960	9,211	
Population Change - 1960-1970		-1,175	
Births	1960-1969	1,920	
Deaths	1960-1969		917
Natural Increase - 1960-1970		+1,003	
Net Migration Loss		-2,178	(-23.6%)
Population	1980	8,988	
Population	1970	8,036	
Population Change - 1970-1980		+ 952	
Births	1970-1979	1,321	
Deaths	1970-1979		963
Natural Increase - 1970-1980		+ 352	
Net Migration Gain		+ 594	
Population	1990	8,649	
Population	1980	8,988	
Population Change - 1980-1990		- 339	
Births	1980-1989	1,349	
Deaths	1980-1989		949
Natural Increase - 1980-1989		+ 400	
Net Migration Loss		- 739	(- 8.2%)
Population	2000	9,937	
Population	1990	8,649	
Population Change - 1990-2000		+ 1,228	
Births	1990-1999	1,143	
Deaths	1990-1999	1,057	
Natural Increase 1990-1999		+ 86	
Net Migration Gain		+ 1,202	

Source: Georgia Vital Statistics Reports, 1960-1999, and "Overall Economic Development Program for Irwin County Redevelopment Area", 1966, with calculations by South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2003.

Between 1960 and 1990 Greater Irwin has suffered from continual net out-migration. The largest exodus came in the 1950-1960 decade, continued in the 1960-1970 decade, showed a gain in population in the 1970-1980 decade, which actually was a national overcount by the Bureau of the Census, and showed signs of leveling off in the 1980-1990 decade. In the 1990-2000 period there was a 1,202 person increase due to net migration. The natural increase average per year has dropped significantly from 32 to 10 in the 30-year period. The average number of births per year have declined from 192 in 1960's; 134 in the 1980's, and 114 in the 1990's. During the last ten years (1990-1999) the births per year have averaged 114, deaths 105 and natural increase amounted to 10 persons per year. Growth in Greater Irwin via natural increase is approaching the zero level. The overriding issue that has plagued Irwin and most South Georgia counties is how to reduce the out-migration of its resident population.

Out-migration negatively impacts the labor market, potential leadership, and has contributed to a pessimistic attitude toward progress. There are a host of contributing factors that have evolved over the past forty or more years and they are summarized in the following five categories:

- (1) Changing agricultural practices, markets and crop allotments. In the past the major agricultural dependency of the County has been peanuts, cotton, and tobacco, crops that have acreage allotment controls. Decreasing percentage of acreage allotments, dependency upon price supports, and rising costs have discouraged the small farmer and contributed greatly to the loss of population in the County.
- (2) Mechanization of agricultural procedures call for higher capital requirements for profitable farming, resulting in larger land holdings and a decreasing dependency upon unskilled hand labor.
- (3) In 1960, 25% of the population over 25 years of age had less than 4 years of education and were considered functionally illiterate. In 1990, 21% of the population over 25 years of age had less than an 8th grade education. By 2000, just 12.6% had less than an 8th grade education. Whether this is a resultant or a cause of out-migration is impossible to determine. Now in 2000, 68% of the 25+ population completing high school it does impact and influence the labor market. The Ben Hill/Irwin Technical Institute created in 1966 has greatly improved the skill and educational levels of the Irwin County labor force.
- (4) In 1960, nearly 65% of the families earned less than \$3,000 per year, compared to a state figure of 35.6%. In 1990, 23% of the families in Irwin County earned comparable dollars and 27.2% of the population was below the poverty level. By 2000, 17.8% of the population was below the poverty level. Within the ten county region Irwin County ranks fourth for the lowest percent persons below the poverty level. Neighboring counties have the following percentages for population below the poverty level: Ben Hill 22.3%; Tift 19.9%; Berrien 17.7% and Cook 20.7%.
- (5) The close proximity of a more fully developed secondary growth center, in the City of Fitzgerald, nine miles north of Ocilla.

AGE COMPOSITION

One characteristic, which influences population changes, is age composition. In Tables 2-3 and 2-4 for Irwin County and Ocilla, note the percentage decrease in the 0-4 age group and an increase in the 25-44 and 65 plus age groups. The projections for Irwin County age groups seem to be premised on a reversal of past trends. For instance the 0-4 age group adds 200 persons above those born between 1980-1985. This in-migration of over 200 0-4 age group persons in 1985 sends a false multiplier into each successive five-year age group on through 2015. The user of this data should be cautioned about these built in assumptions and adjust the information

according to other available data. Within the City of Ocilla between 1980- 2000 the 45-64 age groups have consistently lost population. The 65 and over age group during this same twenty year period remained static in 1980 and 1990, but dropped in 2000. Their percentages were 17.1% in 1980; 18.2% in 1990 and 15.8% in 2000.

TABLE 2-4: 1980 - 2000 OCILLA POPULATION BY AGE (number of persons)

	1980	%	1990	%	2000	%
0 to 4	308	9.0	308	9.7	220	6.7
5 to 14	609	17.7	576	18.1	553	16.9
15 to 24	550	16.0	460	14.5	679	20.8
25 to 34	416	12.1	412	12.9	358	10.9
35 to 44	302	8.8	316	9.9	371	11.9
45 to 54	293	8.5	263	8.3	323	9.9
55 to 64	372	10.8	267	8.4	248	7.6
65 & up	586	17.1	580	18.2	518	15.8
Total	3,436		3,182		3,270	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000.

SEX AND RACE CHARACTERISTICS

The percentage of males and females has remained fairly constant in Irwin County in 1990 and 2000. In 1990, the county has less males and more females than the South Georgia Region and the State of Georgia. By 2000 these differences are next to even. Table 2-5 shows the breakdowns, and the unincorporated areas exhibit a nearly 50/50 split between males and females. The City of Ocilla has more females than males in both 1990 and 2000 with 57% of the population being of the female gender in 1990 and 52% in 2000.

TABLE 2-5: 1990 - 2000 POPULATION BY SEX FOR IRWIN COUNTY AND OCILLA

Unit	1990				2000			
	Males	%	Females	%	Males	%	Females	%
Irwin Co.	4,069	47.0	4,580	53.0	4,880	49.1	5,051	50.9
Ocilla	1,367	43.0	1,815	57.0	1,571	48.0	1,699	52.0
Irwin, unincorp.	2,702	49.4	2,765	50.6	3,309	49.7	3,352	50.3
Region	94,391	48.3	101,075	51.7	103,435	49.1	107,222	50.9
State	3,333,713	48.5	3,333,713	51.5	4,027,113	49.2	4,159,340	50.8

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 and 2000. 2000 Region numbers are for nine counties.

Tables 2-6 and 2-7 show the racial composition today and tomorrow for Irwin County, the City of Ocilla, and the unincorporated areas (persons outside Ocilla). The overall breakdown varies very little from 67% white, 33% black and less than one percent for other. The future racial composition (2000-2025) projection for all of Irwin County and Ocilla pegs the breakdown at 66.6% white, 32.1% black and 1.0% other. Within the City of Ocilla the racial composition has changed from a near 50/50 split between white and black in 1970 to 39.6% white, 60.0% black, and 0.4% other in 2000. By factoring out the city numbers from the total county numbers found in Table 2-6, there are fewer blacks in the unincorporated areas in 1990 and 2000 than there were in 1970. In 1970 the breakdowns there were 76.3% white, 23.7% black and by 2000 there were 90.3% white, 9.4% black and 0.3% other. Projected racial composition in Ocilla will follow existing trends, which by 2025 will have 35% white and 65% nonwhite (black and other combined). Racial composition in the unincorporated areas will have 90% white and 10% nonwhite ratio by 2025. Hispanic populations will increase from 33 persons in 1980 to 522 persons by 2025 in Greater Irwin.

**TABLE 2-6: 1980 - 2025 GREATER IRWIN POPULATION BY RACE AND ETHNIC BACKGROUND
(number and percent of persons)**

	1980	%	1990	%	1995	%	2000	%
White	6,173	69.3	5,955	69.5	6,365	70.9	7,148	73.3
Black	2,776	30.6	2,600	30.3	2,573	28.7	2,570	26.3
Other	6	0.2	19	0.2	39	0.4	196	0.4
Hispanic	33	ND	52	ND	132	ND	202	ND
Total	8,844		8,574		8,977		9,729	
	2010	%	2015	%	2020	%	2025	%
White	7,805	70.9	8,043	69.4	8,361	68.2	8,687	66.9
Black	3,106	28.2	3,452	29.8	3,789	30.9	4,175	32.1
Other	99	0.9	99	0.9	113	0.9	128	1.0
Hispanic	320	ND	375	ND	452	ND	522	ND
Total	11,010		11,594		12,263		12,990	

Source: Woods and Poole Economics, Inc., 2002. Percent calculations by South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2003.
 Note ND in "Hispanic" denotes an ethnic origin, not a race, so no percentage calculations were made. Persons of Hispanic origin are also counted in the White, Black and Other totals.

**TABLE 2-7
1980 - 2000 OCILLA AND UNINCORPORATED IRWIN COUNTY POPULATION BY RACE
(number and percent of persons)**

	Ocilla						Irwin Co. Unincorporated					
	1980	%	1990	%	2000	%	1980	%	1990	%	2000	%
White	1,677	48.8	1,248	39.2	1,294	39.6	4,496	81.3	4,779	86.8	5,854	90.3
Black	1,759	51.2	1,928	60.6	1,962	60.0	1,017	18.4	710	12.9	608	9.4
Other	0	--	6	0.2	14	0.4	6	0.1	14	0.3	25	0.3
Hispanic	ND		ND		58		ND		ND		144	ND
Total	3,436		3,182		3,270		5,519		5,503		6,483	

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000.

POPULATION AND HOUSEHOLD PROJECTIONS

Population projections are systematically determined forecasts of future levels of population within a given area. They are used to forecast county and city facilities and services. Population projections also fuel how many acres within the study area should be reserved for various needed land uses.

Various methods can be used to predict population changes. Most of them take a known base year population and apply formulas representing assumptions about rates of change to this base number. Usually the most current U.S. census count, taken nationwide every ten years, is used as the base year projection. Generally, the larger the study area, the more reliable will be the projections. This is true in a small community, a major economic change like an unexpected closing of a large manufacturing plant, can render the most carefully prepared population projections inaccurate. One projection method was used to generate population change scenario for the Greater Irwin Comprehensive Plan:

Woods and Poole Methodology

In 2002, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs commissioned Woods and Poole Economics, Inc., a private forecasting company, to produce county data for use in local planning efforts across the state. Woods and Poole uses information from the Bureau of the Census and the Bureau of Economic Analysis as a basis for its forecasts and "enhances" this data by using inter-census estimates prepared by the Census Bureau, along with additional information and statistical techniques to prepare their estimates and projections of population and economic projections which might be expected to affect migration rates.

TABLE 2- 8: 2000 - 2025 GREATER IRWIN POPULATION PROJECTION

Unit	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Greater Irwin	9,937	10,586	11,302	11,969	12,715	13,512

Source: Woods and Poole Economics, Inc., 2002.

Scenario One:

Scenario One uses trend-line assumptions of births, deaths, natural increase, net migration and local input to arrive at the projected population. During the last thirty years Irwin County and Ocilla have:

- Gained 23.7% (1,901 persons) of their total population;
- Gained 11.8% (952 persons) between 1970 and 1980;
- Lost 3.8% (339 persons) between 1980 and 1990;
- Lost a total of 1,460 persons who migrated to other counties;
- Seen the per year natural increase drop from 75 to 10.

A concerted effort has been undertaken to stem the outward flow of population, which averaged 77 persons per year in 1990, and dropped to 49 persons per year by 2000. With declining birth rates and a slight increase in the death rate, which drops the natural increase rate, continual declines will be the norm, unless out-migration can be reversed, for Irwin County and Ocilla between 2000 and 2025. Scenario One premises its projections on the above trends and notes success if in the 2000-2010 decade further declines are erased and a 1.5% per year population growth rate becomes a reality during the 2000 to 2025 era. We do not anticipate unpredictable changes, which could significantly alter the predicted size and pattern of development.

The future population outlook for Irwin County/Ocilla recognizes the assumptions for Scenario One and is shown in Table 2-9.

TABLE 2-9: 2000 - 2025 IRWIN COUNTY / OCILLA POPULATION PROJECTION

Unit	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Greater Irwin	9,937	10,586	11,302	11,969	12,715	13,512
Ocilla	3,270	3,323	3,382	3,436	3,497	3,562
Unincorp.	6,667	7,263	7,920	8,533	9,218	9,950

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002, and South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2003.

TABLE 2-10: 2000 - 2025 POPULATION PROJECTIONS IRWIN COUNTY/OCILLA, SOUTH GEORGIA REGION, and STATE OF GEORGIA

Unit	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	
Greater Irwin	9,937	10,066	10,195	10,324	10,454	
Ocilla	3,270	3,281	3,291	3,302	3,312	
Unincorp.	6,667	6,786	6,905	7,024	7,143	
Region	211,176	213,243	215,311	217,378	219,446	
State	8,229,820	NA	NA	NA	NA	
Unit	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	
Greater Irwin	10,586	11,302	11,969	12,715	13,512	
Ocilla	3,323	3,382	3,436	3,497	3,562	
Unincorp.	7,263	7,920	8,533	9,218	9,950	
Region	221,514	232,085	243,361	255,122	267,730	
State	8,784,650	9,349,660	9,940,380	10,550,700	11,185,100	
	2000 - 2010 Numerical Change	%	2010 - 2020 Numerical Change	%	2000 - 2025 Numerical Change	%
Greater Irwin	1,365	13.7	1,413	12.5	3,575	36.0
Ocilla	112	3.4	115	3.4	292	8.9
Unincorp.	1,253	18.8	1,298	16.4	3,283	49.2
Region	20,909	9.9	23,276	10.0	56,553	26.8
State	1,119,840	13.6	1,201,040	12.8	2,955,280	35.9

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000; and South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2003.

By the year 2025, Irwin County population will total 13,512 and Ocilla will have 3,562 persons.

HOUSEHOLD AND INCOME CHARACTERISTICS

According to Woods and Poole Economics Inc., the number of occupied housing units in Irwin County increased 20.7% (628 units) between 1980 and 2000. Table 2-11 shows the 1980 to 2025 occupied housing unit trends and projections for Irwin County, Ocilla, the unincorporated area, the ten county region and the state. The state and Greater Irwin numbers and percentages, in the projected years, show increases greater those of the Region. Irwin County's population trends are and projections dictate future housing unit needs and during the 1990 to 2000 decade. There will be a reversal of past trends and increases in occupied housing units within the City of Ocilla.

TABLE 2-11: 1980 - 2025 NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS

Unit	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Greater Irwin	3,028	3,161	3,656	3,926	4,183	4,425	4,637	4,828
Ocilla	1,148	1,124	1,099	1,118	1,150	1,178	1,203	1,229
Unincorp.	1,880	2,032	2,557	2,908	3,033	3,246	3,434	3,600
Region	61,783	66,061	76,532	81,006	85,293	89,313	92,652	95,275
State	1,888,550	2,380,830	3,022,410	3,265,030	3,501,380	3,727,580	3,929,140	4,108,410

Numerical and Percent Change

Unit	1980 - 2000		1990 - 2000		2000 - 2010		2010 - 2020		2000 - 2025	
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
Greater Irwin	628	20.7	495	15.7	527	14.4	454	10.9	1,172	32.1
Ocilla	-49	-4.2	-25	-2.2	51	4.6	53	4.6	129	11.7
Unincorp.	677	36.0	525	25.8	476	18.6	401	13.2	1,043	40.8
Region	14,749	23.9	10,471	15.9	8,761	11.4	7,359	8.6	18,743	24.5
State	1,133,860	60.0	641,580	26.9	478,620	15.8	427,760	12.2	1,086,000	35.9

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc.; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000; and South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2003.

	2000 - 2005	2005 - 2010	2010 - 2015	2015 - 2020	2020 - 2025	TOTAL 2000-2025
Greater Irwin	270	257	242	212	191	1,172
Ocilla	19	32	29	24	25	129
Unincorporated	251	225	213	188	166	1,043

Table 2-12 Persons Per Housing Unit exhibits the decreasing number of persons per housing unit from 1980 to 2000. Thereafter the numbers are projected to nearly flat line. All units of government exhibit nearly the same persons per housing unit.

TABLE 2-12: 1980 - 2025 PERSONS PER HOUSING UNIT — IRWIN COUNTY & OCILLA

	1980	1990	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Greater Irwin	2.91	2.69	2.62	2.61	2.60	2.59	2.59	2.58	2.58	2.57	2.59	2.63
Ocilla	2.88	2.72	2.64	2.64	2.64	2.64	2.64	2.64	2.62	2.60	2.60	2.60
Unincorp.	2.95	2.69	2.61	2.61	2.61	2.60	2.59	2.59	2.57	2.56	2.58	2.66
Region	3.00	2.78	2.63	2.62	2.62	2.62	2.61	2.61	2.60	2.61	2.64	2.70
State	2.83	2.66	2.65	2.64	2.63	2.63	2.62	2.61	2.59	2.59	2.60	2.63

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000; Woods & Poole Economics, Inc; and South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2003.

Table 2-13 lists average household income and per capita income from 1980 to 2025. Be advised that all of these figures are shown in **1996 constant dollars** and can be validly compared. Irwin County household and per capita incomes dropped between 1970 and 1980, and rebounded considerably by 1990. The farm economy suffered severe setbacks in the late 1970's and heavily influenced the 1980 income levels. However, by 1995 household and per capita income reached a peak and begins to nearly flat line on into 2025. Comparable data is not available for Ocilla, but the 2000 numbers indicate far less household and per capita income than noted for Irwin County. The metropolitan and urban economies of the state with wage levels far higher than rural South Georgia makes comparison impossible. The projections made by Woods and Poole to 2025 are premised upon population increases to 13,512 persons, with manufacturing and service employment and income rising slightly.

TABLE 2-13: AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD & PER CAPITA INCOME 1980 – 2025

Unit	1980		1985		1990	
	Household \$ Income ('96 \$)	Per Capita \$ Income ('96 \$)	Household \$ Income ('96 \$)	Per Capita \$ Income ('96 \$)	Household \$ Income ('96 \$)	Per Capita \$ Income ('96 \$)
Irwin Co.	\$25,693	\$8,082	\$40,786	\$14,477	\$44,124	\$15,127
Ocilla	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
State	26,448	15,353	50,831	18,512	55,400	20,715
Unit	1995		2000		2005	
	Household \$ Income ('96 \$)	Per Capita \$ Income ('96 \$)	Household \$ Income ('96 \$)	Per Capita \$ Income ('96 \$)	Household \$ Income ('96 \$)	Per Capita \$ Income ('96 \$)
Irwin Co.	\$47,012	\$17,422	\$47,580	\$18,050	\$49,694	\$19,074
Ocilla	NA	NA	35,516	12,836	NA	NA
State	59,452	22,287	67,688	25,433	70,892	26,975
Unit	2010		2015		2020	
	Household \$ Income ('96 \$)	Per Capita \$ Income ('96 \$)	Household \$ Income ('96 \$)	Per Capita \$ Income ('96 \$)	Household \$ Income ('96 \$)	Per Capita \$ Income ('96 \$)
Irwin Co.	\$52,004	\$19,992	\$54,575	\$21,039	\$57,584	\$21,978
State	74,448	28,549	78,485	30,141	83,241	31,767
Unit	2025					
	Household \$ Income ('96 \$)	Per Capita \$ Income ('96 \$)				
Irwin Co.	\$60,896	\$22,855				
State	88,621	33,413				

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980-2000; Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002.

Tables 2-14 and 2-15 show the 2000 number and percent distribution of household incomes in Irwin County, Ocilla, the unincorporated area and the state. Fifty-four percent of Ocilla households and thirty-six percent of the unincorporated area have incomes less than \$25,000. In the \$25K - \$50K range, Ocilla has 32.7% of its households and there are 28% of the unincorporated households. The urban/metro fueled economies of the state shows that the comparison is purely informative.

TABLE 2-14
2000 NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME
FOR IRWIN COUNTY, OCILLA AND UNINCORPORATED AREA

	Number Households		
	County	City	Unincorporated
Households with income less than \$ 10,000	625	255	370
Households with income \$ 10,000 - \$ 14,999	281	140	141
Households with income \$ 15,000 - \$ 24,999	615	185	430
Households with income \$ 25,000 - \$ 34,999	611	161	450
Households with income \$ 35,000 - \$ 49,999	593	137	456
Households with income \$ 50,000 - \$ 74,999	543	100	443
Households with income \$ 75,000 - \$ 99,999	243	63	180
Households with income \$100,000 - \$149,999	116	12	104
Households with income \$150,000 - \$199,999	32	5	27
Households with income \$200,000 or more	32	7	25

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000; and South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2003.

TABLE 2-15
PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS BY INCOME - 2000 FOR
IRWIN COUNTY, OCILLA, UNINCORPORATED AREAS AND STATE

	Percent of Households by Income			
	County	City	Uninc Irwin Co.	State
Households with income less than \$ 10,000	16.9%	23.9%	14.1%	6.4%
Households with income \$ 10,000 - \$ 14,999	7.6%	13.1%	5.4%	4.5%
Households with income \$ 15,000 - \$ 24,999	16.7%	17.4%	16.4%	10.9%
Households with income \$ 25,000 - \$ 34,999	16.6%	15.1%	17.4%	11.9%
Households with income \$ 35,000 - \$ 49,999	16.1%	12.9%	17.4%	17.0%
Households with income \$ 50,000 - \$ 74,999	14.7%	9.4%	16.9%	22.1%
Households with income \$ 75,000 - \$ 99,999	6.6%	5.9%	6.9%	12.2%
Households with income \$100,000 - \$149,999	3.1%	1.1%	4.0%	9.4%
Households with income \$150,000 - \$199,999	0.9%	0.5%	1.0%	2.7%
Households with income \$200,000 or more	0.9%	0.7%	1.0%	2.9%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000; and South Georgia Regional Development Center, 2003.

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

The following four tables provide information on education in Irwin County. Table 2-16 shows census statistics on the number of adults with various levels of formal education. The twenty-year trend shows that more adults are completing more years of formal education. In 1970 nearly half the adult population had less than an eighth grade education; 34% in 1980; by 1990 just 21%; and 12.6% in 2000.

**TABLE 2-16: 1980-2000 IRWIN CO./OCILLA EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT
(Number of adults, age 25 and over)**

	Irwin						Ocilla					
	1980	%	1990	%	2000	%	1980	%	1990	%	2000	%
Elementary School (0-8 years)	1,782	34.3	1,121	21.0	783	12.6	821	41.7	579	29.7	300	16.1
High School (1-3 years)	1,363	26.2	1,390	26.0	1,218	19.7	529	26.9	543	27.8	454	24.3
High School (4 years)	1,307	25.1	1,762	32.9	2,384	38.5	326	16.6	483	24.8	619	33.2
College (1-3 years)	453	8.7	634	11.9	1,200	19.3	156	7.9	177	9.1	313	16.8
College (+4 years)	296	5.7	443	8.3	611	9.9	137	7.0	168	8.6	180	9.6

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000.

TABLE 2-17: 1980 - 2000 EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT FOR THE SOUTH GEORGIA REGION

Unit	1980 Educational Attainment						1990 Educational Attainment						2000 Educational Attainment					
	Adults, age 25 and over	Elem. Grades 1-8	High School		College		Adults, age 25 and over	Elem. Grades 1-8	High School		College		Adults, age 25 and over	Elem. Grades 1-8	High School		College	
			No Diploma	Graduate	No Degree	Graduate			No Diploma	Graduate	No Degree	Graduate			No Diploma	Graduate	No Degree	Graduate
Ben Hill	11,175	32.3%	24.5%	25.2%	8.1%	9.9%	10,990	18.5%	24.8%	35.6%	23.6%	7.6%	4,520	12.9%	21.3%	37.2%	19.1%	9.6%
Berrien	9,581	32.8%	26.1%	27.9%	5.9%	7.3%	8,782	20.4%	22.1%	34.7%	15.2%	7.5%	10,451	11.8%	22.2%	34.6%	22.0%	9.4%
Brooks	10,235	36.8%	23.7%	24.5%	7.5%	7.4%	9,363	19.1%	22.3%	36.0%	13.6%	9.1%	10,445	12.0%	20.6%	37.1%	19.1%	11.3%
Cook	9,276	34.9%	26.4%	25.7%	5.7%	7.4%	8,231	20.9%	23.9%	34.6%	14.1%	6.5%	9,876	12.9%	22.6%	36.0%	20.5%	8.2%
Echols	1,487	33.8%	25.2%	31.4%	3.9%	5.8%	1,396	18.3%	20.7%	45.3%	10.9%	4.7%	2,167	17.9%	21.7%	35.6%	16.5%	8.4%
Irwin	6,322	34.3%	26.2%	25.1%	5.7%	8.7%	5,350	21.0%	26.0%	32.9%	11.9%	8.3%	6,196	12.6%	19.7%	38.5%	19.4%	9.8%
Lanier	3,760	35.0%	25.7%	24.1%	5.3%	10.0%	3,332	21.9%	26.8%	29.9%	16.0%	5.4%	4,487	10.7%	22.3%	34.2%	24.0%	8.8%
Lowndes	40,400	22.3%	20.6%	30.8%	13.2%	13.1%	43,540	11.3%	18.9%	31.7%	21.7%	16.3%	54,237	6.6%	15.8%	30.6%	27.4%	19.7%
Tift	21,073	31.5%	23.0%	22.9%	11.5%	11.1%	20,829	17.2%	21.5%	27.0%	20.3%	14.0%	23,433	11.7%	20.4%	30.3%	21.9%	15.6%
Turner	6,175	35.1%	25.0%	23.5%	7.8%	8.5%	5,170	19.2%	25.5%	35.1%	13.0%	7.2%	5,707	10.5%	21.8%	38.7%	18.5%	10.5%
United States	144,384,211	17.5%	13.9%	36.8%	17.0%	14.8%	158,868,436	10.4%	14.4%	30.0%	24.9%	20.3%	182,211,639	7.5%	12.1%	28.6%	27.3%	24.4%
Georgia	3,560,283	23.7%	19.6%	28.5%	14.6%	13.3%	4,023,420	12.0%	17.2%	29.6%	22.0%	19.3%	5,185,965	7.6%	13.8%	28.7%	25.6%	24.3%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1980, 1990, 2000.

TABLE 2-18: 1995 - 2001 IRWIN COUNTY EDUCATION STATISTICS

Category	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
H.S. Graduation Test Scores (All Components)	75%	75%	51%	64%	51%	62%	41%
H.S Dropout Rate	9.1%	12.4%	6.1%	7.4%	8.8%	10.5%	8.4%
Grads Attending Georgia Public Colleges	38.8%	35.7%	50%	44.2%	39.2%	NA	NA
Grads Attending Georgia Public Technical Schools	9.4%	2.9%	8.3%	15.8%	15.8%	25.3%	NA

Source: Georgia Department of Education

From the regional perspective Irwin County has made progress almost equal to its neighboring counties. The high rates of out-migration between 1950 and 1970 have influenced the levels of educational attainment. By 2000, Irwin County ranks ninth out of ten counties with 67.7% of its adult population have a high school or greater education. In 1970 Irwin County ranked third with 28% of its adult population having high school or greater educational attainment. In 2000, Georgia and the United States exhibit a 78.6 and 80.3% respectively in the high school or greater educational attainment level. The remaining two tables 2-18 and 2-19 show data about achievement test scores for high school students in Irwin County and the state; and a decade of enrollments, and dropout rates for the county and the state.

**TABLE 2-19
1991 - 2001 AVERAGE ENROLLMENT AND SCHOOL DROPOUTS
FOR IRWIN COUNTY AND GEORGIA
(Number of students, dropout percentages)**

	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Enrollments	1,675	1,747	1,816	1,808	1,862
Dropouts	Na	Na	Na	9.1%	12.4%
County %	na	na	na	na	na
Georgia %	na	na	na	na	na
	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01
Enrollments	1,839	2,007	1,983	1,984	1,957
Dropouts	6.1%	7.4%	8.8%	10.5%	8.4%
County %	na	na	na	na	na
Georgia %	na	na	na	na	na

Source: Georgia Department of Education, various years.

The Irwin County Board of Education and the parents have made excellent progress through programs that have focused their children to graduate from high school and gain post-secondary training and education. Between 1970 and 2000 there has been a ninety-five percent increase of adults attaining a post-secondary education. Dropout percentage data are figured by schools per school year, but the State uses a different time frame, so the data is not comparable.

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

It is important to take a close look at the existing housing supply in Irwin County and Ocilla to determine the types of housing needed in the next twenty years. A tabular summary of state, county and city housing data is presented to familiarize the reader with comparable and contrasting housing data and trends.

TABLE 2-20: 1980-2000 STATE OF GEORGIA HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Category	1980	1990	2000	%	Number Change '80-2000	% Change
Total Units	2,012,640	2,638,418	3,281,737		1,269,097	63.1
Single Family	1,525,070	1,801,627	2,291,837	69.8	766,767	50.3
Multi-Family	334,622	508,903	681,019	20.8	346,397	103.5
Manufactured Homes	152,948	305,055	394,938	12.0	241,990	158.2
Owner Occupied Units	1,216,459	1,536,759	2,029,293	61.8	812,834	66.8
Renter Occupied Units	655,913	829,856	977,076	29.8	321,163	49.0
Vacant Units	140,988	271,803	275,378	8.4	134,380	95.3
Owner to Renter Vacancy Rate	NA	0.32	0.51	-	-	-
Owner Vacancy Rate	NA	2.36	2.24	-	-	-
Renter Vacancy Rate	NA	12.36	8.46	-	-	-
Built before 1939	296,662	212,294	192,972	5.9	-103,690	-35.0
Lacking complete plumbing	35,769	28,462	29,540	0.9	-6,229	-17.4
Median Property Value	\$23,100	\$71,278	\$100,600	-	\$77,500	336.0
Median Rent	\$153	\$365	\$505	-	\$352	230.0
All other Units	4,289	22,833	4,313	-	-	-

Source: US Bureau of Census 1980, 1990, and 2000. NA = Not Available NR = Not Reported

TABLE 2-22
1980-2000 UNICORPORATED IRWIN HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Category	ALL UNITS			%	1990 - 2000	
	1980	1990	2000		# Change	% Change
Total Units	2,113	2,234	2,880		646	28.9
Single Family	1,888	1,626	1,738	60.2	112	6.8
Multi-Family	48	40	24	0.8	-16	-40.0
Manufactured Homes	247	660	1,123	39.0	463	70.2
Owner Occupied Units	1,340	1,567	2,130	74.0	563	35.9
Renter Occupied Units	565	441	429	14.9	-12	-2.7
Vacant Units	250	226	326	11.3	100	44.2
Owner to Renter Vacancy Rate	NR	NA	NA	-	-	-
Owner Vac. Rate	NR	NA	NA	-	-	-
Renter Vac. Rate	NR	NA	NA	-	-	-
Built before 1939	690	362	265	9.2	-97	-61.6
Lacking complete plumbing	195	29	90	3.1	61	210.3
Median Property Value	NA	NA	NA	-	-	-
Median Rent	NA	NA	NA	-	-	-
All other Units	NR	18	0	-	-	-

Source: US Bureau of Census 1980, 1990, and 2000. NA = Not Available NR = Not Reported

TABLE 2-21: 1980-2000 IRWIN COUNTY HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Category	ALL UNITS			%	1990 - 2000	
	1980	1990	2000		# Change	%
Total Units	3,326	3,480	4,149		669	19.2
Single Family	2,895	2,569	2,711	65.3	142	5.5
Multi-Family	147	96	108	2.6	12	12.5
Manufactured Homes	354	897	1,330	32.1	433	48.3
Owner Occupied Units	2,120	2,305	2,798	67.4	493	21.4
Renter Occupied Units	893	838	846	20.4	6	-.07
Vacant Units	313	337	505	12.2	168	49.9
Owner to Renter Vacancy Rate	NR	1.21	0.26	-	-	-
Owner Vac. Rate	NR	1.50	1.69	-	-	-
Renter Vac. Rate	NR	3.34	17.70	-	-	-
Built before 1939	1,104	519	402	9.7	-117	-22.5
Lacking complete plumbing	287	41	112	2.8	71	173.2
Median Property Value	\$25,200	\$40,900	\$58,100	-	\$17,200	42.1
Median Rent	\$62	\$125	\$343	-	\$ 218	174.4
All other Units	NR	28	0	-	-	-

Source: US Bureau of Census 1980, 1990, and 2000. NA = Not Available NR = Not Reported

TABLE 2-23: 1980-2000 OCILLA HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

Category	ALL UNITS			%	1990 - 2000	
	1980	1990	2000		# Change	%
Total Units	1,213	1,246	1,264		18	1.4
Single Family	1,007	943	973	77.0	-30	-3.2
Multi-Family	99	56	84	6.6	28	50.0
Manufactured Homes	107	237	207	16.4	-30	-12.7
Owner Occupied Units	780	738	668	52.8	-70	-9.5
Renter Occupied Units	328	397	417	33.0	20	5.0
Vacant Units	63	111	179	14.2	68	61.3
Owner to Renter Vacancy Rate	NR	0.96	0.17	-	-	-
Owner Vacancy Rate	NR	3.25	2.34	-	-	-
Renter Vac. Rate	NR	5.26	18.40	-	-	-
Built before 1939	414	157	137	10.8	-20	-12.7
Lacking complete plumbing	92	12	22	1.7	10	83.3
Median Property Value	\$21,600	\$35,813	\$48,100	-	\$12,287	34.3
Median Rent	\$61	\$157	\$193	-	\$ 36	22.9
All other Units	NR	10	0	-	-	-

Source: US Bureau of Census 1980, 1990, and 2000. NA = Not Available NR = Not Reported

Types of Housing in Georgia

Interpreting housing statistics from the Census Bureau is complicated by changes in definitions and reporting standards. In 1970 and 1980, housing characteristics were presented only for year-round housing units. In 1990 and 2000 housing characteristics are shown for all housing units, which includes year-round units plus seasonal, migratory, and recreational units. Also note that the Bureau of Census changed the way it reports seasonal, migratory, and recreational units in 1990. Care should be utilized in interpreting these statistics.

Condition of Housing in Georgia

Table 2-20 reviews two traditional indicators of housing quality. The "Built before 1939" statistic summarizes the inventory of older houses. Obviously, this is an incomplete indicator since some older houses may have been restored and/or remodeled. The "Lacking Complete Plumbing" value is probably more indicative of substandard housing.

Housing Costs in Georgia

Table 2-20 provides insights into the cost of owning and renting housing in Georgia. Median values for owner-occupied housing and median rent for rented units reported in the 1980, 1990, and 2000 Censuses are listed. Note that these figures are estimates provided by owners and renters filling out census questionnaires.

The median (e.g. the "middle" value), useful insights into the cost of housing can be obtained. Note that these dollar values are in the "actual dollars" of the year reported, not in "constant dollars" that removes the effects of inflation.

Types of Housing in Irwin County

The 1990 to 2000 increase in year-round housing units totaled 669 units for all of Irwin County, including Ocilla. (Refer to Tables 2-21 - 2-23) Of the total increase in units, 64.7% (433) were manufactured homes. During this same 10-year period 142 single-family homes and 12 multi-family units were added to the Irwin County housing stock. Manufactured homes constituted just 4.9% of the housing supply in 1970 and now in the 2000's they represent 32.1%. Statewide, manufactured homes make up 12.0% of all housing units. The vast majority (84.4%) of the manufactured homes are located outside the City of Ocilla in the unincorporated areas of Irwin County.

Single-family housing units have dropped from 91.1% of the total housing units in 1970; 70.8% in 1990 to 65.3% in 2000. Irwin County/Ocilla have added an average of four single-family homes and 49 manufactured homes per year since 1970. Manufactured homes have increased 976 units, or 275.7% from 1980 to 2000. Statewide, the number of manufactured homes increased 158.2% in the same 20-year period. Multi-family units have increased from 96 in 1990 to 108 in 2000, a 12.5% increase. In the 1990's the split between county and city for multi-family units was 42%/58% respectively. By 2000 these percentages widened with 78% of the multi-family units being located in the City of Ocilla.

Owner occupancy has risen slightly (57.8% to 67.4%) between 1970 and 2000 in all of Irwin County and a similar trend has occurred in Georgia. Common to most of rural Georgia is the placement of a manufactured home as a permanent residence. Unincorporated Irwin County is no exception, where owner occupancy is 74%. The level of personal income allows the residents to purchase an affordable mobile home and this has triggered the rise of owner occupancy in Irwin County. However, owner occupancy in Ocilla has dropped from 64% in 1980 to 53% in 2000. There has been a corresponding decrease of thirty manufactured homes between 1990-2000.

Rental occupancy has correspondingly dropped between 1990 and 2000 in Georgia, unincorporated Irwin County, but has remained nearly constant at 32% in the City of Ocilla. There have been several shifts in population and the number of renter occupied units have steadily decreased (136 renter occupied units between 1980-1990) in the unincorporated area (Table 2-22) and increased in the City of Ocilla (Table 2-23) by 20 in the 1990's. This trend is not uncommon in South Georgia; those least able to own their own home will rent within an incorporated city, where infrastructure (water, sewer, gas, etc.,) and services are provided.

Housing Value and Condition

The cost of housing is reflected by the median value of owner occupied units and the median rents paid by renters. Irwin County and Ocilla median housing unit values rose between 1990 and 2000 at a rate quite similar to Georgia. However, comparisons with Georgia numerical housing values and median rents is not possible due to the metropolitan influences of extremely high land values, higher wage and personal incomes and more persons able to mortgage long-term high value housing. Tables 2-21 and 2-23 show owner median value houses rising by 42.1% in Greater Irwin and 34.3% in Ocilla. The base year, 1990, had an owner median value of \$40,900 in the county and \$35,813 in Ocilla and these values rose to \$58,100-County and \$48,100-City. During the same ten years renter median rent rose from \$125 in the County to \$343. Median rent in the City rose from \$157 to \$193 between 1990-2000. The median rent throughout Georgia in 2000 was \$505.

Tables 2-20, 21, 22, and 23 show that Irwin County/Ocilla having a greater percentage of housing "built before 1939" than Georgia in 1980 - 2000. The rural farm and non-farm housing units in Irwin County have been maintained and passed on to succeeding generations especially in the community settlements of Mystic, Irwinville and Holt. In the category of housing condition-"lacking complete plumbing" the percentage increase between 1990-2000 is opposite to the decrease shown by State numbers. Irwin County had a 71-unit increase in this category: 61 in unincorporated Irwin and 10 in Ocilla. Units lacking complete plumbing contribute to substandard housing due to electrical, antiquated heating systems, and deterioration still exists, especially in the northeastern section of the city. The age of housing differences between Irwin County and the State start from economics, out-migration and the inability of the remaining population to replace their aging housing stock as rapidly as the statewide urbanizing areas. Land use surveys in 1993 and 2003 have found several historic structures within Irwin County and the City of Ocilla. These historic resources should be investigated further and preserved for future generations.

Housing Vacancy

In Table 2-20, between 1980 - 2000 the statewide total of vacant housing units rose from 140,988 to 275,378, a 95% increase. In 2000 Georgia had a homeowner vacancy rate of 2.24% and a renter vacancy rate of 8.46%. Irwin County and Ocilla have a 1.69% and 2.34% homeowner vacancy rate in 2000. The renter vacancy rates for Irwin County and Ocilla are 17.7% and 18.4% respectively. The population declines/increases due to out-migration and natural increase has prompted no over-building of housing units and consequently new housing starts are for residents and the number and percent of vacant structures remains low. Tables 2-21 and 2-23, Irwin County and Ocilla Housing Characteristics show vacancy rates declining in the unincorporated areas, but increasing in Ocilla for owner/renter units from 1990 and 2000.

PUBLIC HOUSING

Within Ocilla, 165 housing units have been developed for low/moderate income persons, the elderly, and handicapped persons. Such housing units are at fair market or below fair market rent levels according to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Section 8 standards. The following list of public housing units are owned and managed by the Ocilla Housing Authority:

Project 1-A (1957) - Bounded by Beech Street, Valdosta Avenue, Alder Street and Dismuke Avenue.	18 units	Three 1-bedrooms, Six 2-bedrooms, Eight 3-bedrooms, One 4-bedroom
Project 1-B (1957) - Bounded by Oak Street, First Street, and Pine Street	20 units	Three 1-bedrooms, Seven 2-bedrooms, Eight 3-bedrooms, Two 4-bedrooms
Project 2-A (1966) - Bounded by Cargile Road, Dismuke Avenue, and Alder Street	16 units	Two 1-bedrooms, Eight 2-bedrooms, Four 3-bedrooms, Two 4-bedrooms
Project 2-B (1966) - Bounded by Pine Street	16 units	Two 1-bedrooms, Six 2-bedrooms, Six 3-bedrooms, Two 4-bedrooms
Project 4-A (1980) - Bounded by Valdosta Avenue	24 units	Twelve 1-bedrooms, Two 2-bedrooms, Ten 3-bedrooms
Project 4-B (1980) - Bounded by Alder Street and Eighth Street	21 units	Twelve 1-bedrooms, Four 2-bedrooms, Five 3-bedrooms
Project 006 (1982) - Bounded by Highway 32 and Rutherford Drive	50 units	Fourteen 1-bedrooms, Sixteen 2-bedrooms, Sixteen 3-bedrooms, Four 4-bedrooms

ECONOMY

The primary purpose of the economic element is to gain some perspective of the existing and future potential of the Irwin County/Ocilla. The economic base can provide the stimulus for population growth, improve the quality of life and allow residents to raise families and retire in Irwin County. The economic element directly impacts all other elements of the comprehensive plan, especially goals and policies, future land use plans, and the five-year short-term work programs.

Irwin County's economic history has relied upon the agricultural sector to be its mainstay with apparel and manufactured home manufacturing providing the highest levels of employment. But after 1990, when the largest manufacturing employer closed its doors, Irwin County residents sought employment outside the county. Nearly 40% of the labor force has been employed in previous years in Ben Hill, Tift, Berrien, and Coffee Counties. Greater Irwin is adjacent to the City of Fitzgerald, which has a very diversified industrial base and is a secondary growth center within the South Georgia Economic Development District. The rural farm and non-farm population increases and decreases per the cyclical gains and losses within the agricultural and manufacturing sectors. Consequently small settlements prosper and fade depending upon the upward/downward

cycle of employment. Out-migration is a serious problem as young and middle aged persons leave the county and seek economic opportunities elsewhere.

Irwin County and Ocilla share a Chamber of Commerce and an Industrial Development Authority and an industrial park. This organizational and facility base provides services for existing industries and prospects for new industries and businesses.

To comprehend past trends and future expectations Tables 2-24 through 2-55 (found at the end of this chapter) have been prepared for the following subjects: earned income, type of income, employment by sector, sector earnings, average weekly wages, unemployment, labor force characteristics and participation rates, occupations, tourist expenditures, and general economic indicators. In most instances the county data and trends are compared to state and national trends. The user of this data should be cautioned because the projections utilize Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. forty-four percent increase in population to 13,512 by 2025, and this dictates changes in all the data categories.

Income By Type

The sources of personal income by type for Irwin County and Ocilla are identified and compared to the state and the nation in Tables 2-24 through 2-29. It may not be clear what the data for personal income by type means, so the following definitions seek to explain the terminology:

- **Wage and Salary** - measures total income earned as compensation for working or rendering services.
- **Other Labor Income** - measures total employer contributions to private pension or worker's compensation funds.
- **Proprietor's Income** - measures total profits earned from partnerships and proprietorships.
- **Dividend, Investment, Rent and Interest Income** - measures the total income from investments and rental property.
- **Transfer Payments** - measures total income from payments by the government under many different programs, including Social Security, unemployment insurance, food stamps, veteran's benefits, etc.,
- **Residence Adjustment** - measures the net amount of personal income of residents of the county that is earned outside the county. For example, a person who earns income in one county but lives in a different county would have their income counted as follows:

The income would be added to the appropriate income category (e.g., Wage and Salary, etc.) of the county in which it was earned.

The same figure would be added to the Residence Adjustment of the county in which it was earned as a negative number.

This same income figure would be added to the Residence Adjustment of the county in which the person lived as a positive number.

Therefore, Residence Adjustment is a net number for each county: if it is a negative it means that the amount of income earned in the county by non-residents is greater than the amount of income earned outside the county by residents of the county; if it is positive it means that the amount of income earned outside the county by residents is greater than the amount of income earned in the county by non-residents of the county.

Tables 2-24 through 2-29 show the ways Irwin County differs from the state and the nation in the "income by type". The percentage tables clearly portray the agricultural based economy, with low numbers percentage wise of wage and salary incomes and higher than state and nation percentages in the proprietor's income through 2025. There are strong earnings in the wage and salary class by the mid-1980's and 1990's, when local industries were at peak

employment, but these have moderate by 2000 and are projected to represent 28% of personal income to 2025. In all years transfer payments have been higher than the state and the nation and these payments tend to increase during high levels of unemployment. The resident adjustment for Irwin County has been positive for the last twenty years, meaning more persons work outside the county. There was a hint that the reverse would be the case in the 1983-1988 era, when high employment brought workers from neighboring counties into Irwin County and this drove the residence adjustment factor to the near negative level.

The projections from 2000 to 2025 indicate minor change of the income earned from proprietorships and wage and salary categories. As shown in Tables 2-30 and 2-31 this is premised upon a thirty-two percent increase in manufacturing employment. This balance of income types would become more closely aligned to those projected for the state and the nation.

Economic Sectors

The next twelve tables (2-30 through 2-41) exhibit existing and future employment and earnings for thirteen economic sectors, namely Farming; Agricultural Services; Mining; Construction; Manufacturing; Transportation, Communication, Public Utilities (TCPU); Wholesale Trade; Retail Trade; Financial, Insurance, & Real Estate (FIRE); Services; Federal Civilian Government (Gov FC); Federal Military Government (Gov FM); and State and Local Government (Gov SL). Comparisons are made with the State of Georgia, the United States, and nearby counties. Similar data and projections were not available for Ocilla, so the county information must suffice. The employment and earnings figures represent jobs located in Irwin County regardless of the residence of the jobholder. Likewise, Irwin County residents who work in other counties are not included in the totals for the Irwin County tables.

The user of this data is once again cautioned that the Woods and Poole projections are based upon a thirty-six percent increase in population by 2025, a 33% increase in the number of persons employed between 2000-2025, and a 32% increase in manufacturing employment. Within this scenario the overall gain of employment between 1980 and 2000 was 25% (824), with a 1,404 decrease between 1985 and 1990 and a 684 increase from 1990-1995. Farming and Retail Trade lost employment during the last twenty years and all other economic sectors show net gains in the same period. The modest overall gain with a loss in the farming sector mirrors most rural agrarian-oriented South Georgia counties.

The twenty-five year projected outlook 2000-2025 for Irwin County shows a net increase of 1,351 new jobs (54/year). The percentage distribution shows farming continuing to have less jobs (-26%), and with the exception of manufacturing, all other sectors maintaining the same ratios throughout the 25 years. Manufacturing is projected to increase by 225 jobs or 32% over the 2000 level. The Service sector will nearly double in employment from 934 to 1,387. The projected Irwin County scenario compares in part to the state or the nation. The state and the nation show continual growth in retail, wholesale, and services sectors and a slight drop in the manufacturing sector. Irwin County will gain in the manufacturing sector. There is a diversified balance in the state and national figures with modest gains, while the Irwin County employment projections seem to maintain their economic base solely upon manufacturing employment increases.

Earnings by Sector

The earnings by economic sector data contained in Tables 2-36 through 2-41 shows existing and projected total wages, salaries, and other earned income paid to persons working for businesses or industries in each economic sector that are located in Irwin County. The figures for the Agricultural Services sector include earnings from establishments involved in forestry (timber harvesting) and agricultural services (crop services, veterinary services, etc.).

Overall between 1980 and 2000 there was a 192% gain countywide in total earnings in Irwin County. Major gainers in percentage order by economic sector are: Agricultural Services - 464%, Construction - 399%, TCPU - 142%, Services - 129%, State and Local Government - 87%, FIRE - 72%, Federal Military Government - 72%, Manufacturing - 60%, Farm (1985-2000) - 43%, and Federal Civilian Government - 9%. Economic sectors, which showed declines in earnings between 1980 and 2000 are: Wholesale Trade -31%, and Retail Trade -10%.

Declines in earnings between 1980 and 2000 showed up in two economic sectors, namely: Wholesale Trade -

31% and Retail Trade -10%. The Wholesale and Retail sectors in Irwin County have been eroded by big-box businesses in Tift and Ben Hill Counties.

Earnings for Irwin County are projected to increase by 66% from 2000 - 2025. Services will lead the sectors with a 91% increase in earnings, followed by State and Local Government at a 89% increase and Finance, Insurance and Real Estate, a 78% increase. The other sectors are as follows: Manufacturing – 76%, Construction – 61%, Agricultural Services – 61%, TCPU – 57%, Retail Trade – 46%, Federal Military Government – 30%, Federal Civilian Government – 26% and Wholesale Trade – 22%. The smallest percentage gain at 21% is projected for the Farming sector.

While the County posted a 192% gain in earning the state and nation showed 141% and 76% gains respectively. The Services sector at the state and national levels showed the largest gain in earnings with a 313% and 180% gain respectively in the last 20 years, and the Manufacturing sector posted a 59% gain in Georgia and only a 16% gain for the United States. The 2000-2025 projected earnings for the state amount to a 76% gain and the nation will experience a 68% increase. The Service sector will post the largest percentage earning gains of all economic sectors at the state and national levels between 2000 and 2025.

Average Weekly Wages

Table 2-42 shows the 1989 -1999 Average Weekly Wages by sector for Irwin County and the State of Georgia. During this eleven-year period weekly wages for all persons increased 43% in the county and 57% for the state. However, Irwin County's average weekly wage in 1999 is just 61% of the state weekly wage, so comparisons are next to impossible. It is a case of the rural wage rates not keeping pace with the urban-metropolitan wage structure.

Unemployment Rates

Between 1990 and 2000 Irwin County's unemployment rate was less than the state in each year except 1990, 1993, 1996 - 2000 (See Table 2-46). The County's rate exceeded the national rate in 1990, and 1997-2000. Irwin County ranges from a 4.5% rate to 6.0% rate of unemployment and exhibits the mid-range of unemployment when compared to the other nine counties of the South Georgia region.

Labor Force Characteristics

The percentage of private wage and salary workers has remained unchanged between 1970-1990. Comparable data is not available for 2000. Government workers have increased slightly, but the self-employed workers have remained steady. The residents commuting to work outside the county has risen from 23% in 1970; 40% in 1980; 49% in 1990; and 56% in 2000. (See Table 2-47) That amounts to a 254% increase of the work force commuting outside Irwin County between 1970 and 2000. The majority of these commuting workers end up in Ben Hill County (1,079) and Tift County (750).

Tables 2-48 through 2-55 show the 1990 and 2000 rate of labor force participation in various categories by total labor force, male labor force, and female labor force for Irwin County, the City of Ocilla, the State of Georgia and the United States. A side note to the user the "not in labor force" category for Irwin County includes those persons not shown to be in the Armed Forces and consequently Irwin's rate of participation is slightly skewed when compared the state and national rates. Irwin County male and female participation rates are more similar to the U S rates than they are to the State of Georgia. The female participation rate has increased dramatically between 1970 and 1990 from 37.3% to 52.8%, but has decreased to 50.8% in 2000. In Ocilla, between 1990-2000 the female participation rate declined from 40.2% to 36%. The male participation rate dropped between 1970 and 1980; then moved slightly upward to the 72% level in 1990, and back down by 2000 to 67% in Irwin County. A similar situation exists in Ocilla, where in 1990 the male participation rate fell from 66% to 54% by 2000. The female gender in Irwin County and Ocilla had a higher unemployment rate than the state and nation. The male gender compared favorably with the state and the nation from an unemployment perspective. The difference may lie in the trades, which employ the majority of females in Irwin County or more may not be counted due to service in the military.

Tables 2-52 through 2-55 do not provide in-depth information; they can be used to gain insight into the work-related skills and backgrounds of Irwin County residents. The work skill categories of "professional and

technical specialty and clerical & administrative support" garner the most persons in the state and the nation. Irwin County residents place these two categories at the 3rd and 1st level. Ocilla places these two categories 1st and 4th. The one and two skill level categories in Irwin County in 2000 are "clerical and administrative support" and "precision production, craft and repair". The one and two skill level categories in Ocilla in 2000 are "professional and technical specialty" and "precision production, craft and repair".

Comparative Economic Indicators

The statewide master economic rank compares all 159 counties in Georgia. (see Table 2-56) It is a measure of economic health based on personal income, sales tax receipts, and motor vehicle tags and assessed property value. Table 2-56 illustrates how Irwin County compares to six adjacent and neighboring counties, namely Berrien, Brooks, Cook, Colquitt, Lowndes and Tift. Irwin's master economic rank ranged from a high of 118 in 1979 to a low of 131 in 1990. (1 is the highest and 159 being the lowest) Total taxable sales in Irwin County increased by 48% between 1979 and 1990. Brooks County had a 52% increase and the five counties increases ranged from 63% to 109%. The statewide increase in total taxable sales was 76%. Consequently the local tax revenues from sales taxes suffer in Irwin County.

Household and per capita incomes, in 1996 constant dollar, compared to the state are shown in Table 2-13. Irwin County's per capita income compared to the state did not proportionately change between 1980 and 2000. With a slight increase shown in 1985 the per capita income in Irwin County has not kept pace with the state and the nation over the last ten years. Of the ten counties of the South Georgia region Irwin County has the 4th highest per capita income in 2000.

Inventory and Assessment of Economic Base

(Refer to Tables 2-30, 2-31, 2-36, and 2-37)

Farming and Agricultural Services - The farming sector in the 1980's employed 31% of the labor force, but by 2000 it accounted for 11.9%. The number of farms has decreased and by 2025 employment and earnings will drop to 6.6% and 12.0% respectively and play a minor role in the overall economy of Irwin County. Agricultural Services rose to a peak in employment and earnings by 2000, and earnings share will stabilize through 2025.

Mining - The tabular summaries show no employment and consequently no earnings derived from the mining sector.

Construction - Construction has risen from 2.5% in 1980; 9.7% in 1990, and 5.8% by 2000 in employment. Earnings and employment will likely average 6-6.5% from 2000-2025.

Manufacturing - This sector has ranged from 13% to 40% from an employment perspective between 1980 and 1985, fell to 11% in 1990, and rose to 17% by 2000. Employment projections for the next 25 years have manufacturing pegged at 17.5% of the total employment base of Irwin County. Manufacturing will then account for 17.1% of total earnings in 2025. This scenario reinforces current trends that show greater than half of the employment work force commuting outside the county to primary and secondary growth centers in Tifton and Fitzgerald for employment.

Local leaders can provide the land, water, sewer services, etc., but Irwin County has a strong agricultural base and processing facilities that promote agriculture. Most durable manufacturing establishments have been located in the Ben Hill/Fitzgerald secondary growth center and consequently this growth center area attracts half of the Irwin County work force. The diversified secondary growth center will in all probability be targeted for expansions in employment base over the next twenty-five years.

Transportation, Communications, & Public Utilities - This sector provides up to 4.6% of the employment base in 2000 and 6.5% of the earnings. The twenty-five year forecast brings the employment percentage to 4.5% and slightly drops the earnings to 6.1% of the total.

Wholesale Trade - The wholesale trade sector reached its peak in employment and earnings by 1980 and is projected to decline slightly to 2.3% for employment and 2.0% for earnings by 2025.

Retail Trade - The retail trade sector held 9.9% of the employment and 15.8% of earnings in 1980, but then fell to 8.2% for employment and 4.9% for earnings in 2000. The projected future retail trade will become a minor employer and income earner in Irwin County. One can surmise that when half one's work force works outside the county often or not they will shop outside the county and negatively impact the retail sector of the home county. The "pull factor" is a measurement of a county's retail buying power that incorporates the effect of income and population on a county's retail sales activity. A high pull factor (>1.00) can indicate that dollars are flowing into the county, and a low pull factor (<1.00) can indicate that dollars are flowing out of the county. Irwin County's pull factor in 2000 was 0.39. Adjacent counties have the following pull factors: Ben Hill-1.14, Tift-1.38, Cook-0.91, Berrien-0.66, and Coffee 1.74.

Finance, Insurance and Real Estate - The FIRE sector plays a key, but minor role in the total employment base. Total employment will rise slightly and earnings for this sector will amount to 3.2% by 2025.

Services - The services sector is number one in employment and earnings in 2000. The services sector includes motels, restaurants, business services, automotive repair, amusement and recreation businesses, health, legal and social services. The service sector is projected to account for 25.4% of total employment and 23.9% of earnings 2025.

State and Local Government - This sector includes teachers, hospital and nursing home employees, city, county and state employees, and public and safety personnel. The employment share ranged from 14.7% to 17.2% between 1980 and 2000, and is projected to rise to 20.7% level by 2025. The next twenty-five years show a slight increasing share of the income earned for the state and local government employees; it will rise from 17.2% to 20.7% of total earned income by 2025.

Special or Unique Economic Sectors - There are no special or unique economic sectors in Irwin County.

Planned Major Economic Activities

City and County economic development efforts will include significant economic activities in the coming years. In December of 2000 the governments of Ocilla and Irwin County formed a joint development authority (JDA) with the governments of Fitzgerald and Ben Hill County. The primary goal of the JDA is to establish and oversee the Millennium Technology Pointe, a technology park under construction in Irwin County adjacent to East Central Technical College. The college is building a \$15 million-dollar Rural Telecommunications Technical Center, expected to support an additional 38 teachers and accommodate approximately 600 new students. The concept will be unique in that students from the City and County will be trained at the center and work in the adjacent park. The local Industrial Development Authority is also looking at acquisition of additional property for its Ocilla-Irwin North Industrial Park, including improvement of available infrastructure. This two-tiered approach will help the City and County address job employment needs in the technology and manufacturing sector for their citizens.

The City and County are also participating in a joint project with other member communities of the South Georgia Regional Development Center to catalogue all of its industrial sites in an accessible on-line database. The project is funded through the Economic Development Administration, and will assist Ocilla and Irwin County in recruitment and retention activities.

LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

Ocilla-Irwin County Chamber of Commerce & Industrial Development Authority

The Ocilla/Irwin County Chamber of Commerce actively maintains the community and county economic profiles, maintains lines of communication open for new prospects, and addresses the needs of existing

industries. The Chamber is staffed by one appointed executive director and one administrative assistant. The Ocilla-Irwin County Industrial Development Authority (IDA) negotiates the contractual agreements needed to consummate the needed transactions. The IDA has issued tax-free revenue bonds to purchase land, buildings, machinery and equipment for several existing industries. The Authority has an excellent track record, and could apply its expertise if and when needed.

Education and Training Opportunities

East Central Technical College (ECTC) was established in 1966, and has since offered a wide range of educational programs ranging from adult and basic education to highly technical occupational skills. These schools, as well as the ones located in Valdosta, Douglas, Tifton and Moultrie, have the capacity to retrain those persons displaced by technological changes. The school can train them for new jobs in partnership with new and existing industry needs. The new technology training initiative by ECTC is described above in the "Planned Major Economic Activities" section. The Joint Development Authority has also been awarded federal grant funds for equipment connectivity between the two countywide educational systems and ECTC via a Video Learning System (VLS). The curriculum for the VLS, developed by Georgia Tech, is being used to encourage advanced post-secondary students to get an early start on technical certification programs.

RDC Economic Development Tools and Programs

Specific programs and financing mechanisms for industrial development and business financing handled by the South Georgia Regional Development Center include:

- Economic Development Administration – Revolving Loan Program
- Economic Development Administration – Public Works Grant Program
- Small Business Administration 504 Loan Program
- Small Business Administration 7A Loan Program
- Rural Development Intermediary Relending Program
- Rural Development Rural Business Enterprise Grant Program
- Rural Development Business and Industry Guaranteed Loan Program
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs Employment Incentive Program
- Georgia Department of Community Affairs Redevelopment Fund Program
- One Georgia Authority Equity Fund Program
- One Georgia Authority EDGE Fund Program

TABLE 2-24: 1980—2025
Irwin County Personal Income by Type
(Thousands of '96 Constant Dollars)

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	\$78,875	\$128,556	\$130,485	\$158,874	\$179,367	\$201,919	\$225,945	\$251,810	\$279,446	\$308,818
Wages & Salaries	\$31,390	\$58,465	\$34,616	\$45,824	\$51,234	\$57,837	\$64,603	\$71,708	\$79,043	\$86,490
Other Labor Income	\$3,394	\$7,681	\$5,180	\$6,792	\$5,675	\$6,307	\$6,938	\$7,584	\$8,232	\$8,870
Proprietors Income	(\$5,754)	\$14,552	\$18,213	\$20,961	\$27,776	\$30,954	\$34,342	\$37,883	\$41,514	\$45,176
Dividends, Interest, & Rent	\$20,490	\$24,623	\$25,510	\$24,520	\$31,262	\$35,346	\$39,729	\$44,409	\$49,375	\$54,615
Transfer Payments to Persons	\$16,930	\$19,448	\$22,922	\$32,908	\$36,295	\$41,826	\$48,181	\$55,471	\$63,845	\$73,477
Less: Social Ins. Contributions	\$1,748	\$4,095	\$2,631	\$3,758	\$4,243	\$4,975	\$5,781	\$6,645	\$7,550	\$8,474
Residence Adjustment	\$14,173	\$7,882	\$26,675	\$31,627	\$31,368	\$34,624	\$37,933	\$41,400	\$44,987	\$48,664

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002.

TABLE 2-25: 1980—2025 Irwin County Income by Type (%)

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %
Wages & Salaries	39.80%	45.48%	26.53%	28.84%	28.56%	28.64%	28.59%	28.48%	28.29%	28.01%
Other Labor Income	4.30%	5.97%	3.97%	4.28%	3.16%	3.12%	3.07%	3.01%	2.95%	2.87%
Proprietors Income	-7.30%	11.32%	13.96%	13.19%	15.49%	15.33%	15.20%	15.04%	14.86%	14.63%
Dividends, Interest, & Rent	25.98%	19.15%	19.55%	15.43%	17.43%	17.51%	17.58%	17.64%	17.67%	17.69%
Transfer Payments to Persons	21.46%	15.13%	17.57%	20.71%	20.24%	20.71%	21.32%	22.03%	22.85%	23.79%
Less: Social Ins. Contributions	2.22%	3.19%	2.02%	2.37%	2.37%	2.46%	2.56%	2.64%	2.70%	2.74%
Residence Adjustment	17.97%	6.13%	20.44%	19.91%	17.49%	17.15%	16.79%	16.44%	16.10%	15.76%

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002

**TABLE 2-26: 1980--2025 Georgia Personal Income by Type
(Thousands of '96 Constant Dollars)**

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	\$84,202,100	\$110,382,000	\$134,782,000	\$163,230,000	\$209,309,000	\$236,962,000	\$266,921,000	\$299,617,000	\$335,164,000	\$373,728,000
Wages & Salaries	\$53,972,900	\$68,598,800	\$81,355,600	\$96,422,800	\$128,049,000	\$144,760,000	\$162,812,000	\$182,588,000	\$204,172,000	\$227,684,000
Other Labor Income	\$7,079,350	\$9,626,200	\$11,702,300	\$14,092,000	\$14,308,000	\$15,909,500	\$17,605,100	\$19,429,500	\$21,384,600	\$23,476,200
Proprietors Income	\$5,484,850	\$7,694,690	\$9,584,280	\$12,998,900	\$18,105,400	\$20,196,600	\$22,501,700	\$25,001,500	\$27,696,800	\$30,597,400
Dividends, Interest, & Rent	\$10,987,000	\$17,428,300	\$23,366,900	\$26,625,000	\$35,169,000	\$39,713,000	\$44,582,200	\$49,772,600	\$55,274,600	\$61,073,900
Transfer Payments to Persons	\$9,867,380	\$11,841,300	\$14,749,800	\$20,606,700	\$23,300,900	\$26,662,000	\$30,514,500	\$34,921,900	\$39,972,800	\$45,770,200
Less: Social Ins. Contribut.	\$2,978,190	\$4,527,880	\$5,839,730	\$7,270,250	\$9,397,990	\$11,070,600	\$12,973,800	\$15,086,600	\$17,406,500	\$19,929,400
Residence Adjustment	(\$211,163)	(\$279,790)	(\$136,775)	(\$245,276)	(\$224,740)	\$791,423	\$1,879,200	\$2,989,750	\$4,070,240	\$5,055,280

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002.

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %
Wages & Salaries	64.10%	62.15%	60.36%	59.07%	61.18%	61.09%	61.00%	60.94%	60.92%	60.92%
Other Labor Income	8.41%	8.72%	8.68%	8.63%	6.84%	6.71%	6.60%	6.48%	6.38%	6.28%
Proprietors Income	6.51%	6.97%	7.11%	7.96%	8.65%	8.52%	8.43%	8.34%	8.26%	8.19%
Dividends, Interest, & Rent	13.05%	15.79%	17.34%	16.31%	16.80%	16.76%	16.70%	16.61%	16.49%	16.34%
Transfer Payments to Persons	11.72%	10.73%	10.94%	12.62%	11.13%	11.25%	11.43%	11.66%	11.93%	12.25%
Less: Social Ins. Contributions	3.54%	4.10%	4.33%	4.45%	4.49%	4.67%	4.86%	5.04%	5.19%	5.33%
Residence Adjustment	-0.25%	-0.25%	-0.10%	-0.15%	-0.11%	0.33%	0.70%	1.00%	1.21%	1.35%

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2003.

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	\$4,191,050,000	\$4,928,110,000	\$5,705,390,000	\$6,325,130,000	\$7,614,100,000	\$8,463,820,000	\$9,386,120,000	\$10,405,800,000	\$11,533,600,000	\$12,781,600,000
Wages & Salaries	\$2,481,760,000	\$2,795,900,000	\$3,204,070,000	\$3,494,530,000	\$4,378,830,000	\$4,880,410,000	\$5,421,190,000	\$6,021,340,000	\$6,687,710,000	\$7,427,760,000
Other Labor Income	\$330,851,000	\$389,213,000	\$447,932,000	\$503,672,000	\$485,146,000	\$532,800,000	\$583,175,000	\$638,256,000	\$698,515,000	\$764,459,000
Proprietors Income	\$320,866,000	\$376,316,000	\$445,140,000	\$508,508,000	\$648,028,000	\$712,266,000	\$783,615,000	\$862,239,000	\$948,720,000	\$1,043,870,000
Dividends, Interest, & Rent	\$691,279,000	\$961,616,000	\$1,151,530,000	\$1,188,510,000	\$1,440,790,000	\$1,602,780,000	\$1,776,320,000	\$1,961,370,000	\$2,157,660,000	\$2,364,600,000
Transfer Payments to Persons	\$506,765,000	\$593,452,000	\$694,571,000	\$904,851,000	\$993,690,000	\$1,121,230,000	\$1,267,840,000	\$1,435,930,000	\$1,628,900,000	\$1,850,780,000
Less: Social Ins. Contributions	\$139,443,000	\$187,538,000	\$236,989,000	\$274,028,000	\$332,391,000	\$385,662,000	\$446,021,000	\$513,321,000	\$587,902,000	\$670,042,000
Residence Adjustment	(\$822,281)	(\$849,381)	(\$860,673)	(\$912,198)	\$2	\$12	\$16	\$17	(\$9)	\$6

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002.

TABLE 2-29: 1980-2025 United States Income by Type (%)

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %
Wages & Salaries	59.22%	56.73%	56.16%	55.25%	57.51%	57.66%	57.76%	57.87%	57.98%	58.11%
Other Labor Income	7.89%	7.90%	7.85%	7.96%	6.37%	6.30%	6.21%	6.13%	6.06%	5.98%
Proprietors Income	7.65%	7.64%	7.80%	8.04%	8.51%	8.42%	8.35%	8.29%	8.23%	8.17%
Dividends, Interest, & Rent	16.49%	19.51%	20.18%	18.79%	18.92%	18.94%	18.92%	18.85%	18.71%	18.50%
Transfer Payments to Persons	12.09%	12.04%	12.17%	14.31%	13.05%	13.25%	13.51%	13.80%	14.12%	14.48%
Less: Social Ins. Contributions	3.33%	3.81%	4.15%	4.33%	4.37%	4.56%	4.75%	4.93%	5.10%	5.24%
Residence Adjustment	-0.02%	-0.02%	-0.02%	-0.01%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	-0.00%	0.00%

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2003.

TABLE 2-30: 1980 - 2025 Irwin County Employment by Sector

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	3,276	4,381	2,977	3,661	4,100	4,388	4,672	4,946	5,209	5,451
Farm	1,023	803	664	534	488	448	417	392	374	361
Agricultural Services, Other	43	56	75	167	175	183	192	202	213	224
Mining	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Construction	83	115	289	248	236	279	299	313	326	339
Manufacturing	422	1,743	320	448	707	772	830	877	911	932
Trans, Comm, & Public Utilities	90	98	154	208	190	202	214	225	235	244
Wholesale Trade	154	119	127	127	113	117	120	122	123	124
Retail Trade	323	366	251	269	334	355	378	400	419	435
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	102	89	101	115	155	167	179	190	201	210
Services	483	488	434	878	934	1,007	1,096	1,191	1,289	1,387
Federal Civilian Government	36	31	37	31	30	30	31	31	31	32
Federal Military Government	37	41	38	36	35	36	36	36	36	37
State & Local Government	480	432	487	600	703	792	880	967	1,051	1,126

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002.

TABLE 2-31: 1980—2025 Irwin County Employment by Sector (%)

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %
Farm	31.23%	18.33%	22.30%	14.59%	11.90%	10.21%	8.93%	7.93%	7.18%	6.62%
Agricultural Services, Other	1.31%	1.28%	2.52%	4.56%	4.27%	4.17%	4.11%	4.08%	4.09%	4.11%
Mining	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Construction	2.53%	2.62%	9.71%	6.77%	5.76%	6.36%	6.40%	6.33%	6.26%	6.22%
Manufacturing	12.88%	39.79%	10.75%	12.24%	17.24%	17.59%	17.77%	17.73%	17.49%	17.10%
Trans. Comm. & Public Utilities	2.75%	2.24%	5.17%	5.68%	4.63%	4.60%	4.58%	4.55%	4.51%	4.48%
Wholesale Trade	4.70%	2.72%	4.27%	3.47%	2.76%	2.67%	2.57%	2.47%	2.36%	2.27%
Retail Trade	9.86%	8.35%	8.43%	7.35%	8.15%	8.09%	8.09%	8.09%	8.04%	7.98%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	3.11%	2.03%	3.39%	3.14%	3.78%	3.81%	3.83%	3.84%	3.86%	3.85%
Services	14.74%	11.14%	14.58%	23.98%	22.78%	22.95%	23.46%	24.08%	24.75%	25.44%
Federal Civilian Government	1.10%	0.71%	1.24%	0.85%	0.73%	0.68%	0.66%	0.63%	0.60%	0.59%
Federal Military Government	1.13%	0.94%	1.28%	0.98%	0.85%	0.82%	0.77%	0.73%	0.69%	0.68%
State & Local Government	14.65%	9.86%	16.36%	16.39%	17.15%	18.05%	18.84%	19.55%	20.18%	20.66%

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2003

TABLE 2-32: 1980—2025 Georgia Employment by Sector

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	2,747,310	3,224,300	3,690,610	4,229,290	4,859,970	5,235,630	5,623,650	6,029,160	6,451,320	6,890,350
Farm	96,559	82,370	74,286	68,780	67,356	64,877	62,438	60,240	58,297	56,584
Agricultural Services, Other	16,432	24,574	31,487	44,659	54,829	60,079	65,359	70,538	75,465	80,033
Mining	8,808	10,241	10,590	9,408	9,522	9,645	9,813	10,047	10,324	10,653
Construction	139,233	196,913	212,342	236,159	296,572	316,876	333,895	349,870	365,279	380,526
Manufacturing	528,812	565,278	572,477	603,394	613,992	632,106	649,864	665,184	677,683	687,263
Trans. Comm. & Public Utilities	152,583	177,746	216,343	241,886	296,267	322,804	347,846	371,521	392,902	411,295
Wholesale Trade	174,084	214,310	228,213	242,508	276,326	300,312	322,310	344,504	367,022	389,992
Retail Trade	407,627	520,232	606,608	724,946	816,701	893,996	973,979	1,055,500	1,138,660	1,223,640
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	199,887	225,090	244,947	269,183	345,923	369,137	392,407	416,440	440,943	465,714
Services	502,841	664,476	876,597	1,125,360	1,391,460	1,532,290	1,692,630	1,873,380	2,074,950	2,298,230
Federal Civilian Government	84,599	92,561	102,981	98,336	92,262	91,889	91,883	92,089	92,439	92,936
Federal Military Government	92,295	98,319	90,745	94,733	93,789	95,235	96,403	97,224	97,709	97,839
State & Local Government	343,553	352,189	422,991	469,941	504,969	546,388	584,820	622,628	659,644	695,636

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2003.

TABLE 2-33: 1980—2025 Georgia Employment by Sector (%)

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %
Farm	3.51%	2.55%	2.01%	1.63%	1.39%	1.24%	1.11%	1.00%	0.90%	0.82%
Agricultural Services, Other	0.60%	0.76%	0.85%	1.06%	1.13%	1.15%	1.16%	1.17%	1.17%	1.16%
Mining	0.32%	0.32%	0.29%	0.22%	0.20%	0.18%	0.17%	0.17%	0.16%	0.15%
Construction	5.07%	6.11%	5.75%	5.58%	6.10%	6.05%	5.94%	5.80%	5.66%	5.52%
Manufacturing	19.25%	17.53%	15.51%	14.27%	12.63%	12.07%	11.56%	11.03%	10.50%	9.97%
Trans. Comm. & Public Utilities	5.55%	5.51%	5.86%	5.72%	6.10%	6.17%	6.19%	6.16%	6.09%	5.97%
Wholesale Trade	6.34%	6.65%	6.18%	5.73%	5.69%	5.74%	5.73%	5.71%	5.69%	5.66%
Retail Trade	14.84%	16.13%	16.44%	17.14%	16.80%	17.08%	17.32%	17.51%	17.65%	17.76%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	7.28%	6.98%	6.64%	6.36%	7.12%	7.05%	6.98%	6.91%	6.83%	6.76%
Services	18.30%	20.61%	23.75%	26.61%	28.63%	29.27%	30.10%	31.07%	32.16%	33.35%
Federal Civilian Government	3.08%	2.87%	2.79%	2.33%	1.90%	1.76%	1.63%	1.53%	1.43%	1.35%
Federal Military Government	3.36%	3.05%	2.46%	2.24%	1.93%	1.82%	1.71%	1.61%	1.51%	1.42%
State & Local Government	12.51%	10.92%	11.46%	11.11%	10.39%	10.44%	10.40%	10.33%	10.22%	10.10%

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002.

TABLE 2-34: 1980--2025 United States Employment by Sector

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	114,231,000	124,512,000	139,427,000	149,359,000	166,168,000	176,602,000	187,343,000	198,813,000	211,062,000	224,148,000
Farm	3,798,000	3,466,000	3,153,000	3,106,000	3,175,210	3,140,230	3,082,700	3,022,620	2,960,180	2,895,580
Agricultural Services, Other	908,981	1,152,320	1,452,950	1,789,100	2,091,200	2,226,860	2,357,990	2,493,920	2,634,560	2,779,880
Mining	1,277,600	1,385,000	1,044,090	883,860	789,502	827,217	865,976	905,691	946,461	988,196
Construction	5,654,200	6,465,520	7,260,790	7,731,500	9,435,370	10,017,500	10,522,800	11,039,300	11,566,000	12,102,300
Manufacturing	20,781,100	19,778,600	19,697,200	19,186,300	19,293,300	19,454,200	19,650,900	19,854,900	20,066,600	20,286,100
Trans. Comm. & Public Utilities	5,672,110	5,894,890	6,568,620	7,076,200	8,103,400	8,540,080	8,952,030	9,376,140	9,812,210	10,260,100
Wholesale Trade	5,741,680	6,136,100	6,711,510	6,930,520	7,607,260	8,140,740	8,618,440	9,111,380	9,618,920	10,140,300
Retail Trade	17,883,900	20,261,800	22,920,500	25,204,200	27,206,600	28,629,500	30,131,600	31,706,500	33,357,400	35,087,700
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	8,756,010	9,491,990	10,712,600	11,037,800	13,194,100	13,937,200	14,673,000	15,442,200	16,245,900	17,085,500
Services	24,999,600	31,241,500	38,709,600	44,768,300	52,754,000	57,868,500	63,417,200	69,489,800	76,134,900	83,405,800
Federal Civilian Government	2,993,990	3,008,000	3,233,000	2,946,000	2,790,270	2,821,890	2,851,960	2,882,070	2,912,160	2,942,240
Federal Military Government	2,501,010	2,746,000	2,718,000	2,293,000	2,074,010	2,106,070	2,131,770	2,150,020	2,160,680	2,163,540
State & Local Government	13,263,000	13,484,000	15,245,000	16,406,000	17,654,100	18,891,600	20,087,100	21,338,100	22,645,800	24,011,000

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002.

TABLE 2-35: 1980-2025 United States Employment by Sector (%)

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %
Farm	3.32%	2.78%	2.26%	2.08%	1.91%	1.78%	1.65%	1.52%	1.40%	1.29%
Agricultural Services, Other	0.80%	0.93%	1.04%	1.20%	1.26%	1.26%	1.26%	1.25%	1.25%	1.24%
Mining	1.12%	1.11%	0.75%	0.59%	0.48%	0.47%	0.46%	0.46%	0.45%	0.44%
Construction	4.95%	5.19%	5.21%	5.18%	5.68%	5.67%	5.62%	5.55%	5.48%	5.40%
Manufacturing	18.19%	15.88%	14.13%	12.85%	11.61%	11.02%	10.49%	9.99%	9.51%	9.05%
Trans. Comm. & Public Utilities	4.97%	4.73%	4.71%	4.74%	4.88%	4.84%	4.78%	4.72%	4.65%	4.58%
Wholesale Trade	5.03%	4.93%	4.81%	4.64%	4.58%	4.61%	4.60%	4.58%	4.56%	4.52%
Retail Trade	15.66%	16.27%	16.44%	16.87%	16.37%	16.21%	16.08%	15.95%	15.80%	15.65%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	7.67%	7.62%	7.68%	7.39%	7.94%	7.89%	7.83%	7.77%	7.70%	7.62%
Services	21.89%	25.09%	27.76%	29.97%	31.75%	32.77%	33.85%	34.95%	36.07%	37.21%
Federal Civilian Government	2.62%	2.42%	2.32%	1.97%	1.68%	1.60%	1.52%	1.45%	1.38%	1.31%
Federal Military Government	2.19%	2.21%	1.95%	1.54%	1.25%	1.19%	1.14%	1.08%	1.02%	0.97%
State & Local Government	11.61%	10.83%	10.93%	10.98%	10.62%	10.70%	10.72%	10.73%	10.73%	10.71%

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002.

TABLE 2-36: 1980--2025 Irwin County Earnings by Sector ('96 Constant Dollars)

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	\$29,030,000	\$80,698,000	\$58,009,000	\$73,577,000	\$84,685,000	\$95,098,000	\$105,883,000	\$117,175,000	\$128,789,000	\$140,536,000
Farm	(\$10,223,000)	\$9,739,000	\$13,658,000	\$15,977,000	\$13,973,000	\$14,221,000	\$14,619,000	\$15,182,000	\$15,922,000	\$16,866,000
Agricultural Services, Other	\$456,000	\$572,000	\$872,000	\$2,188,000	\$2,574,000	\$2,817,000	\$3,104,000	\$3,421,000	\$3,765,000	\$4,139,000
Mining	\$0	\$28,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Construction	\$1,054,000	\$1,709,000	\$6,567,000	\$6,092,000	\$5,263,000	\$6,370,000	\$6,995,000	\$7,492,000	\$7,972,000	\$8,466,000
Manufacturing	\$8,560,000	\$37,953,000	\$5,218,000	\$8,415,000	\$13,678,000	\$15,951,000	\$18,226,000	\$20,398,000	\$22,375,000	\$24,073,000
Trans. Comm. & Public Utilities	\$2,259,000	\$2,900,000	\$4,008,000	\$5,004,000	\$5,470,000	\$6,045,000	\$6,658,000	\$7,294,000	\$7,935,000	\$8,570,000
Wholesale Trade	\$3,300,000	\$2,792,000	\$2,548,000	\$2,512,000	\$2,273,000	\$2,398,000	\$2,508,000	\$2,612,000	\$2,703,000	\$2,776,000
Retail Trade	\$4,595,000	\$5,048,000	\$2,851,000	\$3,265,000	\$4,135,000	\$4,502,000	\$4,904,000	\$5,310,000	\$5,699,000	\$6,056,000
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	\$1,458,000	\$1,078,000	\$1,851,000	\$2,164,000	\$2,515,000	\$2,887,000	\$3,264,000	\$3,661,000	\$4,066,000	\$4,466,000
Services	\$7,669,000	\$8,356,000	\$8,453,000	\$13,534,000	\$17,555,000	\$19,981,000	\$22,896,000	\$26,156,000	\$29,711,000	\$33,551,000
Federal Civilian Government	\$1,201,000	\$1,171,000	\$1,320,000	\$1,266,000	\$1,304,000	\$1,369,000	\$1,437,000	\$1,506,000	\$1,575,000	\$1,644,000
Federal Military Government	\$257,000	\$486,000	\$422,000	\$406,000	\$444,000	\$471,000	\$499,000	\$526,000	\$553,000	\$579,000
State & Local Government	\$8,444,000	\$8,866,000	\$10,241,000	\$12,754,000	\$15,501,000	\$18,086,000	\$20,773,000	\$23,617,000	\$26,513,000	\$29,350,000

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002.

TABLE 2-37: 1980-2025 Irwin County Earnings by Sector (%)

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %	100.00 %
Farm	-35.22%	12.07%	23.54%	21.71%	16.50%	14.95%	13.81%	12.96%	12.36%	12.00%
Agricultural Services, Other	1.57%	0.71%	1.50%	2.97%	3.04%	2.96%	2.93%	2.92%	2.92%	2.95%
Mining	0.00%	0.03%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Construction	3.63%	2.12%	11.32%	8.28%	6.21%	6.70%	6.61%	6.39%	6.19%	6.02%
Manufacturing	29.49%	47.03%	9.00%	11.44%	16.15%	16.77%	17.21%	17.41%	17.37%	17.13%
Trans, Comm, & Public Utilities	7.78%	3.59%	6.91%	6.80%	6.46%	6.36%	6.29%	6.22%	6.16%	6.10%
Wholesale Trade	11.37%	3.46%	4.39%	3.41%	2.68%	2.52%	2.37%	2.23%	2.10%	1.98%
Retail Trade	15.83%	6.26%	4.91%	4.44%	4.88%	4.73%	4.63%	4.53%	4.43%	4.31%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	5.02%	1.34%	3.19%	2.94%	2.97%	3.04%	3.08%	3.12%	3.16%	3.18%
Services	26.42%	10.35%	14.57%	18.39%	20.73%	21.01%	21.62%	22.32%	23.07%	23.87%
Federal Civilian Government	4.14%	1.45%	2.28%	1.72%	1.54%	1.44%	1.36%	1.29%	1.22%	1.17%
Federal Military Government	0.89%	0.60%	0.73%	0.55%	0.52%	0.50%	0.47%	0.45%	0.43%	0.41%
State & Local Government	29.09%	10.99%	17.65%	17.33%	18.30%	19.02%	19.62%	20.16%	20.59%	20.88%

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002

Table 2-38: Georgia Earnings by Sector (millions of '96 constant dollars)

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	\$66,537.1	\$85,919.7	\$102,642	\$123,514	\$160,462	\$180,866	\$202,919	\$227,019	\$253,253	\$281,758
Farm	\$106.153	\$1,087.67	\$1,391.28	\$1,733.67	\$1,565.76	\$1,682.76	\$1,802.91	\$1,933.34	\$2,075.97	\$2,233.02
Agricultural Services, Other	\$244.855	\$350.797	\$475.908	\$660.059	\$943.559	\$1,086.06	\$1,239.33	\$1,400.73	\$1,566.55	\$1,733.32
Mining	\$429.934	\$413.933	\$373.738	\$359.779	\$438.244	\$445.441	\$456.347	\$471.301	\$489.686	\$510.946
Construction	\$3,765.5	\$5,647.56	\$5,975.27	\$6,661.07	\$9,630.13	\$10,606.8	\$11,506	\$12,401.4	\$13,309	\$14,242.9
Manufacturing	\$14,997.8	\$17,211.7	\$17,973.7	\$20,801.4	\$23,849.5	\$26,143.5	\$28,510.6	\$30,854.7	\$33,129.1	\$35,298.6
Trans. Comm. & Public Utilities	\$6,208.77	\$7,604.7	\$8,981.39	\$11,643.9	\$15,867.7	\$18,059.6	\$20,304.9	\$22,610.4	\$24,909	\$27,140
Wholesale Trade	\$5,900.69	\$7,766.5	\$9,090.69	\$10,085.4	\$13,549.2	\$15,124.9	\$16,662.4	\$18,269.6	\$19,955.5	\$21,729.7
Retail Trade	\$6,870.37	\$9,141.23	\$9,413.85	\$11,216.7	\$14,426	\$16,215.3	\$18,126.5	\$20,144.9	\$22,276.7	\$24,530.8
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	\$3,617.31	\$4,803.43	\$6,600.85	\$8,476.15	\$12,153.7	\$13,862.8	\$15,688.5	\$17,666	\$19,784.2	\$22,033.1
Services	\$10,401.9	\$14,915.7	\$22,532.2	\$30,044.9	\$42,959.7	\$50,244	\$58,890.8	\$69,107.3	\$81,084.5	\$95,046.2
Federal Civilian Government	\$3,751.39	\$4,391.1	\$4,780.64	\$5,147.37	\$5,442.79	\$5,621.59	\$5,826.3	\$6,051.6	\$6,295.2	\$6,556.75
Federal Military Government	\$2,475.23	\$3,160.12	\$2,765.14	\$3,080.3	\$3,297.82	\$3,501.76	\$3,705.55	\$3,907.32	\$4,105.5	\$4,298.44
State & Local Government	\$7,767.21	\$9,425.3	\$12,287.5	\$13,602.9	\$16,338.3	\$18,271.3	\$20,198.7	\$22,200.7	\$24,272.2	\$26,403.7

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002

TABLE 2-39: 1980—2025 Georgia Earnings by Sector (%)

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Farm	0.16%	1.27%	1.36%	1.40%	0.98%	0.93%	0.89%	0.85%	0.82%	0.79%
Agricultural Services, Other	0.37%	0.41%	0.46%	0.53%	0.59%	0.60%	0.61%	0.62%	0.62%	0.62%
Mining	0.65%	0.48%	0.36%	0.29%	0.27%	0.25%	0.22%	0.21%	0.19%	0.18%
Construction	5.66%	6.57%	5.82%	5.39%	6.00%	5.86%	5.67%	5.46%	5.26%	5.06%
Manufacturing	22.54%	20.03%	17.51%	16.84%	14.86%	14.45%	14.05%	13.59%	13.08%	12.53%
Trans. Comm. & Public Utilities	9.33%	8.85%	8.75%	9.43%	9.89%	9.99%	10.01%	9.96%	9.84%	9.63%
Wholesale Trade	8.87%	9.04%	8.86%	8.17%	8.44%	8.36%	8.21%	8.05%	7.88%	7.71%
Retail Trade	10.33%	10.64%	9.17%	9.08%	8.99%	8.97%	8.93%	8.87%	8.80%	8.71%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	5.44%	5.59%	6.43%	6.86%	7.57%	7.66%	7.73%	7.78%	7.81%	7.82%
Services	15.63%	17.36%	21.95%	24.33%	26.77%	27.78%	29.02%	30.44%	32.02%	33.73%
Federal Civilian Government	5.64%	5.11%	4.66%	4.17%	3.39%	3.11%	2.87%	2.67%	2.49%	2.33%
Federal Military Government	3.72%	3.68%	2.69%	2.49%	2.06%	1.94%	1.83%	1.72%	1.62%	1.53%
State & Local Government	11.67%	10.97%	11.97%	11.01%	10.18%	10.10%	9.95%	9.78%	9.58%	9.37%

Source: Woods & Pool Economics, Inc., 2002.

**TABLE 2- 40: 1980--2025 United States Earnings by Sector
(Thousands of '96 Constant Dollars)**

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	\$3,133,270,000	\$3,561,430,000	\$4,097,140,000	\$4,506,710,000	\$5,512,010,000	\$6,125,480,000	\$6,787,980,000	\$7,521,840,000	\$8,334,940,000	\$9,236,090,000
Farm	\$38,586,500	\$43,719,200	\$51,249,600	\$37,483,500	\$43,689,700	\$47,857,500	\$51,907,100	\$56,099,200	\$60,413,900	\$64,828,800
Agricultural Services, Other	\$13,875,800	\$18,083,100	\$25,894,000	\$28,538,900	\$37,867,900	\$42,138,400	\$48,574,600	\$51,364,000	\$56,520,400	\$62,056,700
Mining	\$65,932,800	\$59,186,700	\$42,579,100	\$40,302,500	\$45,540,300	\$48,440,800	\$51,461,500	\$54,611,200	\$57,890,800	\$61,300,600
Construction	\$193,519,000	\$220,510,000	\$241,731,000	\$243,138,000	\$322,690,000	\$352,152,000	\$379,842,000	\$409,052,000	\$439,801,000	\$472,104,000
Manufacturing	\$758,592,000	\$763,829,000	\$777,101,000	\$807,717,000	\$877,790,000	\$932,794,000	\$990,395,000	\$1,049,510,000	\$1,110,000,000	\$1,171,680,000
Trans. Comm. & Public Utilities	\$232,755,000	\$248,374,000	\$266,311,000	\$303,367,000	\$372,145,000	\$407,808,000	\$444,234,000	\$483,380,000	\$525,331,000	\$570,292,000
Wholesale Trade	\$205,960,000	\$221,496,000	\$258,219,000	\$275,724,000	\$341,651,000	\$374,537,000	\$406,039,000	\$439,532,000	\$475,077,000	\$512,729,000
Retail Trade	\$306,453,000	\$361,053,000	\$375,489,000	\$405,467,000	\$489,059,000	\$527,296,000	\$568,405,000	\$612,558,000	\$659,971,000	\$710,869,000
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	\$182,810,000	\$214,835,000	\$264,928,000	\$358,925,000	\$506,185,000	\$572,351,000	\$642,912,000	\$719,984,000	\$803,853,000	\$894,770,000
Services	\$573,750,000	\$760,538,000	\$1,038,030,000	\$1,220,240,000	\$1,607,450,000	\$1,873,830,000	\$2,179,800,000	\$2,532,800,000	\$2,940,370,000	\$3,410,190,000
Federal Civilian Government	\$140,121,000	\$148,845,000	\$160,018,000	\$167,212,000	\$172,986,000	\$181,506,000	\$190,237,000	\$199,308,000	\$208,727,000	\$218,504,000
Federal Military Government	\$61,484,200	\$86,435,500	\$79,856,700	\$69,637,100	\$69,114,400	\$73,365,300	\$77,610,500	\$81,811,100	\$85,934,100	\$89,945,400
State & Local Government	\$359,434,000	\$414,422,000	\$495,935,000	\$548,953,000	\$625,852,000	\$691,400,000	\$758,756,000	\$831,842,000	\$911,057,000	\$996,817,000

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002.

TABLE 2-41: 1980—2025 United States Earnings by Sector (%)

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025
Total	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
Farm	1.23%	1.23%	1.25%	0.83%	0.79%	0.78%	0.76%	0.75%	0.72%	0.70%
Agricultural Services, Other	0.44%	0.51%	0.63%	0.63%	0.69%	0.69%	0.69%	0.68%	0.68%	0.67%
Mining	2.10%	1.66%	1.04%	0.89%	0.83%	0.79%	0.76%	0.73%	0.69%	0.66%
Construction	6.18%	6.19%	5.90%	5.40%	5.85%	5.75%	5.60%	5.44%	5.28%	5.11%
Manufacturing	24.21%	21.45%	18.97%	17.92%	15.93%	15.23%	14.59%	13.95%	13.32%	12.69%
Trans. Comm. & Public Utilities	7.43%	6.97%	6.50%	6.73%	6.75%	6.66%	6.54%	6.43%	6.30%	6.17%
Wholesale Trade	6.57%	6.22%	6.30%	6.12%	6.20%	6.11%	5.98%	5.84%	5.70%	5.55%
Retail Trade	9.78%	10.14%	9.16%	9.00%	8.87%	8.61%	8.37%	8.14%	7.92%	7.70%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	5.83%	6.03%	6.95%	7.96%	9.18%	9.34%	9.47%	9.57%	9.64%	9.69%
Services	18.31%	21.35%	25.34%	27.08%	29.16%	30.59%	32.11%	33.67%	35.28%	36.92%
Federal Civilian Government	4.47%	4.18%	3.91%	3.71%	3.14%	2.96%	2.80%	2.65%	2.50%	2.37%
Federal Military Government	1.96%	2.43%	1.94%	1.55%	1.25%	1.20%	1.14%	1.09%	1.03%	0.97%
State & Local Government	11.47%	11.64%	12.10%	12.18%	11.35%	11.29%	11.18%	11.06%	10.93%	10.79%

Source: Woods & Poole Economics, Inc., 2002.

**TABLE 2-42: 1989-1999 IRWIN COUNTY AND GEORGIA
AVERAGE WEEKLY WAGES BY SECTOR (Actual Dollars)**

	Irwin County											State of Georgia										
	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999
All Industries	\$267	\$276	\$281	\$281	\$223	\$285	\$306	\$336	\$344	\$356	\$382	\$404	\$424	\$444	\$471	\$480	\$488	\$509	\$531	\$562	\$598	\$626
Agri, Forestry, Fishing	152	153	159	NA	NA	NA	228	244	239	236	272	267	276	285	297	304	312	322	336	347	373	390
Mining	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	561	589	605	NA	NA	698	734	741	781	832	866
Construction	NA	347	303	332	425	397	445	443	419	459	483	NA	434	439	451	461	479	508	534	556	590	623
Manufacturing	NA	228	264	247	227	221	293	362	353	366	398	NA	450	473	503	511	531	555	588	620	656	684
Transportation, Comm, Utilities	NA	353	375	353	427	392	384	417	435	479	526	NA	603	635	689	709	720	737	769	805	842	895
Wholesale	NA	291	308	314	323	320	343	359	404	396	396	NA	603	632	669	695	711	729	762	809	873	932
Retail	NA	171	174	181	196	183	180	185	212	218	198	NA	236	244	255	260	267	275	286	299	318	335
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	452	506	509	492	543	567	NA	544	569	627	648	648	693	741	799	872	900
Services	NA	272	276	283	248	230	258	289	278	285	325	NA	414	439	464	471	475	501	519	551	580	611
Federal Gov	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	543	584	612	651	667	666	701	774	791	808
State Gov	NA	397	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	451	462	460	471	NA	493	517	533	561	579
Local Gov	NA	206	226	210	237	253	254	275	278	276	306	NA	387	401	401	410	420	440	461	480	506	523

Source: U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, various years.

Category	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Labor Force	3,900	3,709	3,859	4,074	4,118	4,195	4,390	4,593	4,790	4,970	5,028
Employed	3,668	3,534	3,630	3,831	3,921	4,006	4,173	4,333	4,537	4,738	4,741
Unemployed	232	175	229	243	197	189	217	260	253	232	287
Unemployment Rate	5.9%	4.7%	5.9%	6.0%	4.8%	4.5%	4.9%	5.7%	5.3%	4.7%	5.7%

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

Category	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
Labor Force	3,300,380	3,263,876	3,353,566	3,467,191	3,577,505	3,617,165	3,738,850	3,904,474	4,014,526	4,078,263	4,173,274
Employed	3,118,253	3,099,103	3,119,071	3,265,259	3,391,782	3,440,859	3,566,542	3,727,295	3,845,702	3,916,080	4,018,876
Unemployed	182,127	164,772	234,495	201,932	185,722	176,306	172,308	177,179	168,824	162,183	154,398
Unemployment Rate	5.5%	5.0%	7.0%	5.8%	5.2%	4.9%	4.6%	4.5%	4.2%	4.0%	3.7%

Source: Georgia Department of Labor, 2003.

Category	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Labor Force (thousands)	125,840	126,346	128,105	129,200	196,814	132,304	133,943	136,297	137,673	139,368	140,863	141,815
Employed (thousands)	118,793	117,718	118,492	120,259	123,060	124,900	126,708	129,558	131,463	133,488	135,208	135,073
Unemployed (thousands)	7,047	8,628	9,613	8,940	7,996	7,404	7,236	6,739	6,210	5,880	5,655	6,742
Unemployment Rate	5.6%	6.8%	7.5%	6.9%	6.1%	5.6%	5.4%	4.9%	4.5%	4.2%	4.0%	4.8%

Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2003.

**TABLE 2- 46: 1990 - 2000 UNEMPLOYMENT RATES
UNITED STATES, GEORGIA AND SOUTH GEORGIA RDC COUNTIES**

	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000
United States	5.6%	6.8%	7.5%	6.9%	6.1%	5.6%	5.4%	4.9%	4.5%	4.2%	4.0%
Georgia	5.5%	5.0%	7.0%	5.8%	5.2%	4.9%	4.6%	4.5%	4.2%	4.0%	3.7%
Ben Hill	6.4%	5.5%	7.0%	7.3%	6.2%	5.2%	6.4%	6.8%	6.1%	6.4%	6.2%
Berrien	7.4%	5.4%	7.7%	7.8%	6.1%	5.9%	5.2%	4.8%	4.8%	6.7%	5.6%
Brooks	3.8%	3.3%	4.9%	4.5%	3.8%	3.9%	3.9%	5.3%	6.0%	4.5%	5.7%
Cook	6.5%	7.1%	7.5%	6.9%	4.9%	3.6%	3.9%	5.2%	4.8%	5.0%	5.1%
Echols	5.0%	3.5%	5.5%	7.4%	5.5%	3.6%	3.2%	3.6%	3.9%	4.4%	4.7%
Irwin	5.9%	4.7%	5.9%	6.0%	4.8%	4.5%	4.9%	5.7%	5.3%	4.7%	5.7%
Lanier	4.8%	4.1%	5.6%	5.3%	3.7%	4.0%	5.3%	3.5%	2.9%	4.1%	5.7%
Lowndes	4.8%	3.9%	6.2%	5.4%	4.4%	3.9%	3.7%	4.0%	4.0%	4.4%	5.6%
Tift	7.4%	5.6%	7.5%	7.4%	6.0%	5.8%	5.5%	5.7%	5.6%	4.9%	4.6%
Turner	7.9%	5.3%	8.8%	7.5%	6.6%	7.2%	7.3%	11.1%	12.1%	10.1%	8.8%

Source: Georgia Department of Labor, 2003.

TABLE 2- 47: 1970-2000 Irwin County Labor Force by Place of Work				
Category	1970	1980	1990	2000
Worked in County of Residence	2,081	1,794	1784	1744
Worked outside county of Residence	637	1,186	1704	2257

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2003.

TABLE 2-48: 1990 - 2000 Irwin County Labor Force (numbers & %)

Category	1990	%	2000	%
TOTAL Males and Females	6435	100.00%	7487	100.00%
In Labor Force	3965	61.61%	4367	58.32%
Civilian Labor Force	3965	61.61%	4367	58.32%
Civilian Employed	3630	56.41%	4107	54.86%
Civilian Unemployed	335	5.21%	260	3.47%
In Armed Forces	0	-	0	-
Not in Labor Force	2470	38.38%	3120	41.67%
TOTAL Males	2937	100.00%	3565	100.00%
Male In Labor Force	2104	71.63%	2374	66.59%
Male Civilian Labor Force	2104	71.63%	2374	66.59%
Male Civilian Employed	1987	67.65%	2265	63.53%
Male Civilian Unemployed	117	3.98%	109	3.06%
Male In Armed Forces	0	-	0	-
Male Not in Labor Force	833	28.36%	1191	33.41%
TOTAL Females	3498	100.00%	3922	100.00%
Female In Labor Force	1861	53.20%	1993	50.82%
Female Civilian Labor Force	1861	53.20%	1993	50.82%
Female Civilian Employed	1643	46.97%	1842	46.97%
Female Civilian Unemployed	218	6.23	151	3.85%
Female In Armed Forces	0	-	0	-
Female Not in Labor Force	1637	46.80%	1929	49.18%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2003.

TABLE 2-49: 1990 – 2000 Ocilla Labor Force (numbers & %)				
Category	1990	%	2000	%
TOTAL Males and Females	2312	100.00%	2368	100.00%
In Labor Force	1302	56.31%	1117	47.17%
Civilian Labor Force	1302	56.31%	1117	47.17%
Civilian Employed	1146	49.56%	1014	42.82%
Civilian Unemployed	156	6.75%	103	4.35%
In Armed Forces	0	-	0	-
Not in Labor Force	1010	43.69%	1251	52.83%
TOTAL Males	975	100.00%	1076	100.00%
Male In Labor Force	647	66.36%	582	54.09%
Male Civilian Labor Force	647	66.36%	582	54.09%
Male Civilian Employed	608	62.36%	548	50.93%
Male Civilian Unemployed	39	4.00%	34	3.16%
Male In Armed Forces	0	-	0	-
Male Not in Labor Force	328	33.64%	494	45.91%
TOTAL Females	1337	100.00%	1292	100.00%
Female In Labor Force	655	49.00%	535	41.40%
Female Civilian Labor Force	655	49.00%	535	41.40%
Female Civilian Employed	538	40.24%	466	36.07%
Female Civilian Unemployed	117	8.75%	69	5.34%
Female In Armed Forces	0	-	0	-
Female Not in Labor Force	682	51.00%	757	58.59%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2003.

TABLE 2- 50: 1990 – 2000 Georgia Labor Force (number & %)				
Category	1990	%	2000	%
TOTAL Males and Females	4939774	100.00%	6250687	100.00%
In Labor Force	3353372	67.89%	4129666	66.07%
Civilian Labor Force	3280314	66.41%	4062808	65.00%
Civilian Employed	3092374	62.60%	3839756	61.43%
Civilian Unemployed	187940	3.80%	223052	3.57%
In Armed Forces	73058	1.48%	66858	1.07%
Not in Labor Force	1586402	32.11%	2121021	33.93%
TOTAL Males	2357580	100.00%	3032442	100.00%
Male In Labor Force	1807053	76.65%	2217015	73.11%
Male Civilian Labor Force	1741609	73.87%	2159175	71.20%
Male Civilian Employed	1652016	70.07%	2051523	67.65%
Male Civilian Unemployed	89593	3.80%	107652	3.55%
Male In Armed Forces	65444	2.78%	57840	1.91%
Male Not in Labor Force	550527	23.35%	815427	26.89%
TOTAL Females	2582194	100.00%	3218245	100.00%
Female In Labor Force	1546319	59.88%	1912651	59.43%
Female Civilian Labor Force	1538705	59.59%	1903633	59.15%
Female Civilian Employed	1440358	55.78%	1788233	55.57%
Female Civilian Unemployed	98347	3.81%	115400	3.59%
Female In Armed Forces	7614	0.29%	9018	0.28%
Female Not in Labor Force	1035875	40.12%	1305594	40.57%

Source: U. S. Bureau of Census, 2000

TABLE 2- 51: 1990 - 2000 US Labor Force (number & %)				
Category	1990	%	2000	%
TOTAL Males and Females	191293337	100.00%	217168077	100.00%
In Labor Force	124882409	65.28%	138820935	63.92%
Civilian Labor Force	123176636	64.39%	137668798	63.39%
Civilian Employed	115431436	60.34%	129721512	59.73%
Civilian Unemployed	7745200	4.05%	7947286	3.66%
In Armed Forces	1705773	0.89%	1152137	0.53%
Not in Labor Force	66410928	34.72%	78347142	36.08%
TOTAL Males	91866829	100.00%	104982282	100.00%
Male In Labor Force	68417853	74.48%	74273203	70.75%
Male Civilian Labor Force	66897041	72.82%	73285305	69.81%
Male Civilian Employed	62639048	68.18%	69091443	65.81%
Male Civilian Unemployed	4257993	4.63%	4193862	3.99%
Male In Armed Forces	1520812	1.66%	987898	0.94%
Male Not in Labor Force	23448976	25.52%	30709079	29.25%
TOTAL Females	99426508	100.00%	112185795	100.00%
Female In Labor Force	56464556	56.79%	64547732	57.54%
Female Civilian Labor Force	56279595	56.60%	64383493	57.39%
Female Civilian Employed	52792388	53.10	60630069	54.04%
Female Civilian Unemployed	3487207	3.51%	3753424	3.35%
Female In Armed Forces	184961	0.19%	164239	0.15%
Female Not in Labor Force	42961952	43.21%	47638063	42.46%

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2003.

TABLE 2-52: 1990- 2000 Irwin County Employment by Occupation (number & %)

Category	1990	%	2000	%
TOTAL All Occupations	3637	100.00%	4107	100.00%
Executive, Administrative and Managerial (not Farm)	293	8.06%	434	10.57%
Professional and Technical Specialty	348	9.57%	537	13.08%
Technicians & Related Support	100	2.75%	NA	NA
Sales	254	6.98%	342	8.33%
Clerical and Administrative Support	324	8.91%	642	15.63%
Private Household Services	0	0.00%	NA	NA
Protective Services	24	0.66%	NA	NA
Service Occupations (not Protective & Household)	375	10.31%	455	11.08%
Farming, Fishing and Forestry	476	13.09%	97	2.36%
Precision Production, Craft, and Repair	458	12.59%	595	14.49%
Machine Operators, Assemblers & Inspectors	513	14.11%	479	11.66%
Transportation & Material Moving	296	8.14%	416	10.13%
Handlers, Equipment Cleaners, helpers & Laborers	176	4.84%	NA	NA

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2003.

TABLE 2- 53: 1990-2000 Ocilla Employment by Occupation (number & %)				
Category	1990	%	2000	%
TOTAL All Occupations	1051	100.00%	1014	100.00%
Executive, Administrative and Managerial (not Farm)	NA	NA	53	5.23%
Professional and Technical Specialty	88	8.37%	156	15.38%
Technicians & Related Support	42	4.00%	NA	NA
Sales	88	8.37%	80	7.89%
Clerical and Administrative Support	79	7.52%	128	12.62%
Private Household Services	0	0.00%	NA	NA
Protective Services	4	0.38%	NA	NA
Service Occupations (not Protective & Household)	156	14.84%	139	13.71%
Farming, Fishing and Forestry	94	8.94%	18	1.78%
Precision Production, Craft, and Repair	119	11.32%	150	14.79%
Machine Operators, Assemblers & Inspectors	181	17.22%	108	10.65%
Transportation & Material Moving	113	10.75%	114	11.24%
Handlers, Equipment Cleaners, helpers & Laborers	87	8.28%	NA	NA

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2003.

TABLE 2- 54: 1990 – 2000 Georgia Employment by Occupation (number & %)				
Category	1990	%	2000	%
TOTAL All Occupations	3,092,057	100.00%	3,839,756	100.00%
Executive, Administrative and Managerial (not Farm)	378,984	12.28%	538,647	14.03%
Professional and Technical Specialty	383,012	12.39%	717,312	18.68%
Technicians & Related Support	110,766	3.58%	NA	NA
Sales	379,746	12.28%	446,876	11.64%
Clerical and Administrative Support	494,823	16.00%	581,364	15.14%
Private Household Services	15,882	0.51%	NA	NA
Protective Services	52,596	1.70%	NA	NA
Service Occupations (not Protective & Household)	302,084	9.77%	444,077	11.57%
Farming, Fishing and Forestry	68,111	2.20%	24,489	0.64%
Precision Production, Craft, and Repair	366,819	11.86%	346,326	9.02%
Machine Operators, Assemblers & Inspectors	262,930	8.50%	415,849	10.83%
Transportation & Material Moving	142,189	4.60%	245,642	6.63%
Handlers, Equipment Cleaners, helpers & Laborers	134,115	4.34%	NA	NA

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2003.

TABLE 2- 55: 1990 - 2000 US Employment by Occupation (number & %)

Category	1990	%	2000	%
TOTAL All Occupations	115,452,905	100.00%	129,721,512	100.00%
Executive, Administrative and Managerial (not Farm)	14,227,916	12.32%	17,448,038	13.45%
Professional and Technical Specialty	16,287,187	14.11%	26,198,693	20.20%
Technicians & Related Support	4,251,007	3.68%	NA	NA
Sales	13,606,870	11.79%	14,592,699	11.25%
Clerical and Administrative Support	18,769,526	16.26%	20,028,691	15.44%
Private Household Services	520,183	0.45%	NA	NA
Protective Services	1,981,723	1.72%	NA	NA
Service Occupations (not Protective & Household)	12,746,927	11.04%	15,575,101	12.01%
Farming, Fishing and Forestry	2,835,950	2.46%	951,810	0.73%
Precision Production, Craft, and Repair	13,077,829	11.33%	11,008,625	8.49%
Machine Operators, Assemblers & Inspectors	7,886,595	6.83%	12,256,138	9.45%
Transportation & Material Moving	4,715,847	4.08%	7,959,871	6.14%
Handlers, Equipment Cleaners, helpers & Laborers	4,545,345	3.94%	NA	NA

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 2000.

CHAPTER THREE: NATURAL RESOURCES AND EXISTING LAND USE

NATURAL RESOURCES

Consideration of natural resources is an important item in planning future growth patterns for any community. For Greater Irwin, the characteristics of the natural environment including soils, topography, climate, water supply, and wildlife habitats is essential information in defining the county's existing attributes and potential areas of improvement. An understanding of these will guide county and city leaders in maintaining a high quality of life and protecting the community's future. Numerous times in this chapter the community will be advised to consult the enclosed maps for making basic determinations about land uses and location of developments relative to the boundaries of environmentally sensitive areas. To assist the community with making more accurate determinations at more reasonable scales, this data has been integrated into the community's Geographic Information System (GIS) housed at South Georgia Regional Development Center (SGRDC). This data is also available for viewing and query at numerous GIS-capable terminals throughout the city and county.

Irwin County is located in south-central Georgia and has a land area of 232,252 acres, or about 363 square miles. It is within the Middle South Georgia Soil and Water Conservation District and the Southern Coastal Plain Major Land Resource Area. Most of the land is well-drained and most of the county is extremely well-suited for agriculture. The physical landscape is fairly homogenous with no outstanding physical features. Much of the land is used for agricultural purposes, including commercial timber production. The natural resource areas have been examined and surveyed as they pertain to Greater Irwin.

PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Irwin County is located within the Southern Coastal Plain physiographic province. More specifically however, the western two-thirds is located within the "Tifton Uplands" and the eastern third is within the westernmost portion of the "Bacon Terraces". The county's land surface is nearly level to gently sloping and is dissected by numerous shallow rivers and streams, which generally flow from northwest to southeast. The largest of these are the Alapaha River, which forms the county's northwestern and southwestern borders with Turner and Tift Counties, and the Willacoochee and Satilla Rivers located in the eastern portion of the county.

Irwin County's lowest elevation is about 220 feet along the county's southeastern border where the Satilla River enters neighboring Coffee County. Other low elevations include the points at which the other major rivers exit the southern county boundary; Willacoochee at 232 feet and Alapaha at 235 feet. The highest elevations are a little greater than 400 feet along several broad hilltops in the northwestern part of the county. Most all of the City of Ocilla is above 330 feet. The lowest elevations within Ocilla are around 300 feet along Stump Creek in the southeastern part of the city and a little less than 300 feet near the sewage ponds along south US 129. The highest elevations in the interior part of the city are a little more than 350 feet in downtown, near the hospital, and in the northeastern residential area. The highest overall elevation is 360 feet along the Old Fitzgerald Highway running northwestward from the city. The community of Irwinville is approximately 334 feet, Osierfield 339 feet, Mystic 368 feet, and Waterloo 369 feet.

The county's topography is such that notable views and vistas are not prevalent. The Alapaha River is a scenic river (but non-designated) containing a dense tree canopy and broad floodplain, but is navigable by canoe only part of the year.

Irwin County's bedrock is composed of Pliocene-Miocene-Oligocene sedimentary rocks, which were formed mostly during the Cenozoic Era (up to 70 million years ago). Below this, the rocks are Eocene and Paleocene sedimentary rocks. The sediments which formed these rocks originated in the "ancient" Appalachian Mountains, which have been eroded to form the present day Piedmont and remnant mountains.

Irwin County's climate is classified as humid-mesothermal (Cfa) according to the Köppen climate classification system. Winters are short and mildly cool with periodic cold spells moderating in 1-2 days. Summers are hot and humid. Annual precipitation typically ranges from 45 to 50 inches and is spread evenly throughout the year (2-5 inches each month). Measurable snowfalls are very rare with a less than 5% probability each year. When they occur, snowfall amounts are most always less than one inch and melt quickly. In winter, the average minimum daily temperature is 39 degrees. In summer, the average maximum daily temperature is 90 degrees. Irwin County's growing season ranges from 8-9 months with an average of 260 days that have daily minimum temperatures greater than 32 degrees. The first winter freeze typically occurs in early November and the last freeze typically occurs in mid-March.

WATER RESOURCES

Annual precipitation runoff for Irwin County is about 10-11 inches, which equals approximately 8.86 billion cubic feet (66.27 billion gallons) of water. This represents the volume of water directly entering the county's rivers and streams. The remaining water either evaporates or is absorbed by the ground. Surface drainage within Irwin County is directed by a dendritic (branching tree-like) pattern, which flows generally southeastward. The county is divided into three (3) 8 digit Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) watersheds: Alapaha (HUC 03110202), Ocmulgee (HUC 03070104) and Satilla (HUC 03070201). Map 3-1 depicts these watersheds within Irwin County. Approximately three-fourths of Irwin County (most all of the central and western portion of the county) drains via the Alapaha and Willacoochee Rivers to the Suwannee River, which empties into the Gulf of Mexico. (It should be noted that the Willacoochee River is actually a tributary of the Alapaha and it flows southward for 10 miles before it merges with the Alapaha.) Most of the remaining one-fourth is in the eastern and northeastern part of the county, which drains into Coffee County and reaches the Atlantic via the Satilla River. A small portion of the extreme northwestern part of the county is drained by the South Prong Little House Creek, which flows northeastward across Ben Hill County into the Ocmulgee River and eventually into the Atlantic.

PUBLIC WATER SUPPLY SOURCES

Typical of coastal plain areas, all of Irwin County's consumer water comes from underground aquifers which are porous underground rock layers containing water. The main aquifer beneath Irwin County is the Floridan aquifer, which consists of confined limestone, dolostone, and calcareous sand. This aquifer serves all of Irwin County's municipal/community water systems as well as many agricultural irrigation systems. Beneath the Floridan aquifer are the Claiborne and Clayton aquifers. The Floridan aquifer is principally recharged immediately south of the Fall Line, which stretches across central Georgia from Columbus to Macon to Augusta. This is the point at which streams from harder rock formations of the Piedmont cross into softer rock formations of the Coastal Plain. Most sedimentary rock formations of the Coastal Plain begin at the ground surface just south of the Fall Line, therefore this is where most aquifer water originates.

Total groundwater consumption in Irwin County averages approximately 3,890,000 gallons per day. Irrigation is by far the heaviest user at 2,650,000 gallons per day (68%) with more than 14,000 acres being irrigated. The public water systems are the second heaviest user at 690,000 gallons (18%) and these are for mostly domestic use. The vertical distance from the ground surface to the top of the first major subterranean reservoir varies from about 200 feet in the western part of the county to about 300 feet in the northeastern part of the county. Most wells in the county range from 200-500 feet deep. Groundwater throughout the county is typically hard. Surface water in Irwin County is only used for irrigation and this practice is becoming increasingly popular. Many farm fields contain small ponds which result from dammed up local streams.

WATER SUPPLY WATERSHEDS

All public and private drinking water in Irwin County is withdrawn from groundwater supplies. As such, water supply watershed planning standards are not applicable to Greater Irwin.

ENVIRONMENTAL SENSITIVE AREAS

In 1989, the Georgia Planning Act encouraged each local government to develop a comprehensive plan to guide its activities. In order to provide the local governments with a guideline so that they could prepare their comprehensive plan, the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) developed a set of minimum requirements that each local plan must meet known as the "Minimum Planning Standards." Part of the "Minimum Planning Standards" is the Part V Environmental Planning Criteria that specifically deals with the protection of water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas and wetlands. River corridors and mountain protection standards were added through separate act in 1991. In order for a comprehensive plan to meet the "Minimum Planning Standards," it must identify whether any of these environmentally sensitive areas exist within the local government's jurisdiction and they must prepare, adopt and enforce local regulations to protect the resources.

GROUNDWATER RECHARGE AREAS

Groundwater recharge areas can occur at points where the aquifer updips to become closer to the surface allowing water from streams, sink holes, and ponds to permeate through more shallow ground into the aquifer. Groundwater recharge areas in Irwin County are mostly limited to narrow strips running parallel to the easterly banks of the Alapaha River, Reedy Creek, Willacoochee River, Big Creek and Little Brushy Creek. Map 3-2 depicts the groundwater recharge areas within Irwin County. In the field, the most easily recognizable among these is the sandy "belt" paralleling the east side of the Alapaha River. This area contains more than 30 limesink depressions ranging from a few thousand square feet to more than 30 acres in size. All aquifer recharge areas are vulnerable to both urban and agricultural development. Pollutants from stormwater runoff and septic tanks in urban areas and excess pesticides and fertilizers in agricultural areas can access a groundwater aquifer more easily through these recharge areas. Once in the aquifer, pollutants can spread uncontrollably to other parts of the aquifer thereby decreasing or endangering water quality for an entire region. Therefore, development of any kind in these areas, including installation of septic tanks, should be restricted.

Irwin County has both adopted the state recommended Groundwater Recharge Area Development standards as part of their zoning regulations. The City of Ocilla is not subject to these standards as it contains no identified groundwater recharge areas.

WETLANDS

Freshwater wetlands are defined by federal law to be "those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under certain circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions." Wetlands generally include bogs, marshes, wet prairies, and swamps of all kinds. Under natural conditions, wetlands help maintain and enhance water quality by filtering out sediments and certain pollutants from adjacent land uses. They also store water, reduce the speed and magnitude of flood waters, and serve as an important and viable habitat for plant and animal species.

Wetlands play an important role in mankind's environment and should be preserved for this purpose. A National Wetland Inventory dataset for the geographic extent of Irwin County has been constructed by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service and integrated into the county's Geographic Information System (GIS). Map 3-3 depicts the location of generalized wetlands areas for Greater Irwin County and Map 3-4 depicts the location of generalized wetlands for the Ocilla area. Developing parcels that are within these depicted areas, or suspected of having wetlands, should have a detailed wetlands survey and follow all applicable requirements under Section 404 of the Federal Clean Water Act.

Over the past several decades, expansion of both agricultural and urban development has caused a steady reduction of wetlands acreage. This has resulted in the destruction of valuable plant and animal habitats, increased the magnitude of flood waters, and the removal of natural filters for surface water drainage thereby endangering water quality throughout the county, region and state. Stronger efforts should be made to protect remaining wetlands areas.

Irwin County and the City of Ocilla have both adopted state recommended Local Wetlands Policy standards as part of their development regulations.

PROTECTED MOUNTAINS

Greater Irwin contains no Protected Mountains.

PROTECTED RIVERS

In Irwin County, the only river affected by the state's River Corridor Protection standards is the portion of the Alapaha River located downstream from the entrance of Hat Creek. Map 3-5 depicts the affected portion of the Alapaha River. When following the generally winding stream channel, the length of the corridor along the Alapaha River is approximately 24 miles.

With exception of a few road bridges and power line crossings, field surveys indicate only natural (mostly riverine wetlands) vegetation associated with river floodplains to be located within 100 feet of the river banks which is the state's minimum corridor width. There are no other land uses currently within this area along the affected portion of the Alapaha River.

Irwin County adopted the state recommended Protected River Corridor development standards as part of their initial land development regulations.

COASTAL RESOURCES

Irwin County does not contain Coastal Resources.

FLOOD PLAINS

Flood events along the major rivers and streams, as well as their numerous tributaries, typically occur in late winter and early spring. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) has not yet prepared official flood area maps (FIRMs -- Flood Insurance Rate Maps) for either the City of Ocilla or unincorporated Irwin County. These FIRMs have been requested and will be implemented once they are received. Based on the county's topography and abundance of rivers and streams, flood hazards do exist and these should be considered when making development decisions.

SOIL TYPES

Soils in Irwin County have been identified and grouped into 30 different soil names (group types) with varying degrees of occurrence throughout the county. Individual soil types are typically found in smaller pockets and usually located near other specific soil types. For ease of description and analysis, the various soil types have been grouped into the following nine (9) major soil associations. The location of these soil associations is shown on Map 3-6.

1. Tifton-Carnegie-Fuquay Association

These are well drained, gently sloping and sloping soils found on dissected upland ridges, generally parallel to the floodplains of the major rivers and streams. This association is used mostly for woodland and due to strong slopes and erosion potential, it is fairly limited for cultivated crops. However, this association has only slight to moderate limitations for non-farm uses.

2. Swamp-Osier-Bibb Association

These are swampy areas with very poorly and poorly-drained soils found on nearly level floodplains along

the Alapaha River and its major tributaries. This association contains mostly woodlands and is rarely used for cultivated crops or commercial timber. Due to wetness and frequent flooding, this association has severe limitations for non-farm uses.

3. Tifton-Alapaha-Carnegie Association

These are well-drained and poorly drained, very gently sloping and gently sloping soils found on dissected upland areas in all parts of the county. This association is often used for cultivated crops and has only slight to moderate limitations for non-farm uses. The rural communities of Holt and Irwinville lie entirely within this association.

4. Troup-Kershaw-Plummer Association

These are excessively drained, very gently sloping and sandy soils found on broad upland ridges as well as poorly drained, sandy soils found in drainageways and flatwoods in the western part of the county to the east of the Alapaha River. Because most of these soils are excessively drained and droughty, most of the association is used for woodland (including commercial timber production) and very little is used for cultivated crops. Outside the drainageways, these soils generally have only slight to moderate limitations for non-farm uses.

5. Ocilla-Plummer-Alapaha Association

These are somewhat poorly drained and poorly drained, nearly level soils found in higher broad flatwoods areas. Most of this association is used for a variety of cultivated crops. The rural community of Osierfield is located entirely within this association. The major soils in this association have moderate to severe limitations for non-farm uses.

6. Tifton-Alapaha-Fuquay Association

These are well-drained and poorly drained, nearly level and very gently sloping soils found on broad ridges and minor drainageways at higher elevations of the county. Most of this association is used for a variety of cultivated crops. The entire City of Ocilla as well as the rural community of Mystic lies within this association. Most soils in this association have only slight to moderate limitations for non-farm uses.

7. Carnegie-Cowarts-Alapaha Association

These are well-drained, gently sloping and sloping, eroded soils found on choppy ridges, as well as poorly drained soils found in drainageways. This association is mainly along the sharp breaks adjacent to and east of the Satilla River and Hunters Creek flood plain, and adjacent to and south of the Reedy Creek flood plain. Most of this association is used for woodland with only a small portion used for cultivated crops. Most soils in this association have only slight to moderate limitations for non-farm uses.

8. Osier-Bibb Association

These are very poorly drained to somewhat poorly drained, nearly level soils found along the flood plains of the Satilla and Willacoochee Rivers and their major tributaries. Most all of this association consists of natural tree stands, generally wetlands. Due to wetness and frequent flooding, most all of these soils have severe limitations for non-farm uses.

9. Fuquay-Cowarts-Plummer Association

These are well-drained, gently sloping and sloping soils found on narrow ridges and knobs in the extreme northwest portion of the county. Most all of this association is used for commercial timber production and

very little is used for cultivated crops. The dominant soils in this association have only slight to moderate limitations for non-farm uses.

STEEP SLOPES

The topography of Irwin County is such that steep slopes, other than adjacent to limited areas along the Alapaha River do not exist.

PRIME AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST LAND

For purposes of this Comprehensive Plan, the nine general soil associations have been classified in terms of land development capability for both agricultural and urban uses. Table 3-1 depicts these classifications. The terms "good", "fair", and "poor" have been used to describe their relative capabilities. Agricultural yields per acre were used in determining agricultural capacity, and limitations on building site development were used in determining urban capability. Map 3-7 depicts the county's land capability for agriculture, and Map 3-8 depicts the county's land capability for urban development.

As can be seen by these maps, most of the county consists of good soil for either agricultural or urban uses. Poor soils for these uses are generally limited to the river floodplains.

**TABLE 3-1
SUMMARIZED LAND CAPABILITY FOR GREATER IRWIN COUNTY**

Soil Type Association	Agricultural Uses			Urban Uses		
	Good	Fair	Poor	Good	Fair	Poor
Tifton-Carnegie-Fuquay	X			X		
Swamp-Osier-Bibb			X			X
Tifton-Alapaha-Carnegie	X			X		
Troup-Kershaw-Plummer		X		X		
Ocilla-Plummer-Alapaha		X				X
Tifton-Alapaha-Fuquay	X			X		
Carnegie-Cowarts-Alapaha		X			X	
Osier-Bibb			X			X
Fuquay-Cowarts-Plummer		X		X		

Source: Soil Survey of Ben Hill and Irwin Counties, Georgia, 1969; U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Soil Conservation Service.

It should be noted that each soil association consists of individual soil types with varying degrees of capability for agricultural or urban uses. For example, a soil association containing soil types with a particularly high agricultural production may also contain soil types with a particularly low production. Therefore, the land capability ratings are generalized on the total composition of the soil association.

Table 3-2 depicts the various individual soil types and their proportionate share of the county. It also depicts those soils identified by the USDA as being "prime farmland" or "farmland having statewide importance" which are based on underlying soil types. Prime farmland is defined as land that is best suited to producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to economically produce sustained high crop yields if acceptable farming methods are used. Prime farmland produces the highest yields with minimal inputs of energy and money. The use of prime farmland for agricultural purposes results in the least damage to the environment. The supply of high quality farmland is limited and should be used with wisdom and foresight.

**TABLE 3-2
GREATER IRWIN'S USDA FARMLAND CLASSIFICATION AND SOIL EXTENT**

Soil Name (mapping symbols)	Farmland Classification		# Acres	% County
	Prime	Important		
Alapaha (AtA)			39,316	16.9
Albany (AdA, AsA)		X	1,776	.8
Ardilla (AqA)		X	426	.2
Carnegie (CoB2, CoC)	X		3,903	1.7
Carnegie (CoC2)		X	7,054	3.0
Carnegie (CkC3, CoD2)			1,019	.4
Cowarts (CqB, CqB2, CqC)	X		5,840	2.5
Cowarts (CqC2)		X	1,145	.5
Dothan (DaA, DaB)	X		1,719	.7
Esto (EnB)	X		53	< .1
Esto (EnB2)		X	13	< .1
Esto (EnC2, EnD2)			234	.1
Fuquay (FqB, FqC, FsA, FsB, FsC)		X	14,590	6.2
Grady (Gra)			1,559	.7
Irvington (IjA)	X		2,478	1.1
Kershaw (KkC)			6,230	2.7
Leefield (LsA)		X	7,006	3.0
Ocilla (OhA)		X	12,807	5.5
Ona (ObA)			696	.3
Osier-Bibb Complex (Obs)			18,564	8.0
Plummer (PeA)			17,684	7.6
Rains (RfA)			1,057	.5
Stilson (SeA)		X	3,075	1.3
Sunsweet (ShC2)		X	261	.1
Sunsweet (ShD2)			340	.1
Susquehanna (SiB)		X	98	< .1
Susquehanna (SiC2)			35	< .1
Swamp (Swa)			6,394	2.8
Tifton (TqA, TqB, TqB2, TqC, TqC2)	X		68,795	29.6
Troup (TpB, TpC)		X	8,221	3.5
TOTAL ACREAGE	82,788	56,472	232,252	
TOTAL PERCENTAGE	35.6	24.3		100.0

Source: Soil Survey of Ben Hill and Irwin Counties, Georgia, 1969; U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Soil Conservation Service
 Prime Farmland Soils of Georgia, 1987, USDA Soil Conservation Service
 Additional Lands of Statewide Importance, 1992, USDA Soil Conservation Service

Farmland of "statewide importance" consists of soils that are nearly "prime farmland" in quality and are still important to agriculture in the county. They will economically produce high crop yields when treated and managed according to acceptable farming methods. Many of these soils are well-suited to commercial timber production and are often used as such.

As shown in Table 3-2, 35.6% of Irwin County is classified as "prime farmland" and another 24.3% is classified as having "statewide importance." Therefore, nearly 60% of Irwin County is recognized as being able to best support agricultural uses. Map 3-9 depicts the generalized location of these soils.

Consideration of septic tank percolation fields was also included in the determination of land capability for urban uses. Although five (5) soil associations appear to be "good" for overall urban usage, only two (2) are considered "good" for septic tanks. Table 3-3 depicts the soil association ratings for septic tank usage.

**TABLE 3-3
LAND CAPABILITY FOR SEPTIC TANK ABSORPTION FIELDS**

Soil Type Association	Septic Tank Absorption Fields		
	Good	Fair	Poor
Tifton-Carnegie-Fuquay		X	
Swamp-Osier-Bibb			X
Tifton-Alapaha-Carnegie		X	
Troup-Kershaw-Plummer	X		
Ocilla-Plummer-Alapaha			X
Tifton-Alapaha-Fuquay		X	
Carnegie-Cowarts-Alapaha		X	
Osier-Bibb			X
Fuquay-Cowarts-Plummer	X		

Source: Soil Survey of Ben Hill and Irwin Counties, Georgia 1969; U. S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Soil Conservation Service.

When evaluating by individual soil types, only Dothan, Fuquay and Troup soils have a "good" rating (slight limitations) for septic tank drain fields and these comprise only 10% of the county. Only 44% of the individual soils have a marginally "fair" rating (moderate limitations) and all other soils (46%) have a "poor" rating (severe limitations). The use of septic tanks in "fair" soils requires expensive modifications to the drain field. The use of septic tanks in "poor" soils is cost prohibitive. Therefore, the effective use of septic tanks in Irwin County is not compatible with natural soil conditions and the use of municipal sewers should be required in developing areas.

PLANT AND ANIMAL HABITATS

Both the Georgia and U.S. Department of Natural Resources have inventoried plant and animal species in the State of Georgia. Table 3-4 depicts plants and animals that are on the "possible endangered" or "threatened" species lists for the State and Federal governments. Current local regulations should adequately protect habitats for these plant and animal species.

**TABLE 3-4
ENDANGERED OR THREATENED PLANT AND ANIMAL SPECIES**

SPECIES	GEORGIA		FEDERAL
	Threatened	Endangered	Endangered
PLANTS			
Myriophyllum laxum -- Water Milfoil	X		
Oxypolis canby -- Canby Dropwort	X		X
Physostegia Veronciformis -- False Dragon-Head	X		
Sarracenia flava -- Yellow Pitcherplant	X		
Sarracenia rubra -- Red/Sweet Pitcherplant		X	
Sarracenia minor -- Hooded Pitcherplant	X		
Sarracenia psittacina -- Parrot Pitcherplant	X		
ANIMALS			
Alligator mississippiensis -- American Alligator	X		X
Drymarchon carais coreperi -- E. Indigo Snake	X		X
Falco peregrinum -- Peregrine Falcon		X	X
Felis concolor caryi -- Florida Panther		X	X
Haliaeetus leuccephalus -- Southern Bald Eagle		X	X
Mycteria americana -- Wood Stork			X
Picoides borealis -- Red Cockaded Woodpecker		X	X
Vermivora bachmanii -- Bachman's Warbler		X	X

MAJOR PARK, RECREATION AND CONSERVATION AREAS

As noted in the land use inventory, Greater Irwin has only 202 acres of park, recreation and conservation lands. Large parks include the Ocilla Country Club, Lions Club Park and the Jefferson Davis Memorial Park north of Irwinville. Remaining acreages are in local parks located in Ocilla, Mystic and Waterloo.

SCENIC VIEWS AND SITES

As detailed earlier in this Chapter, Irwin County's limited topographic relief largely precludes scenic views and vistas. Scenic sites are detailed under Cultural Resources.

*No Hwy
arent*

EXISTING LAND USE

Consideration of existing land use is very important to planning future growth patterns for any community. For Greater Irwin County, existing land use patterns and densities have been inventoried and analyzed and this information will provide community leaders with data needed to develop and refine goals and strategies for future growth patterns, as well as to protect and preserve vulnerable natural and historic resources while respecting individual property rights. Existing land use patterns have a direct impact on a county and city's future growth, and the preparation and analysis of existing land use maps and data are important in understanding land use relationships within and between Ocilla and Irwin County.

METHODOLOGY

In 1993, planning staff from the South Georgia Regional Development Center (SGRDC) conducted an initial land use inventory for all of Irwin County, including the City of Ocilla. The inventory methodology was primarily by aerial photography interpretation using current Irwin County tax parcel maps. These maps contained 1990 aerial photography overlaid with current tax parcel boundaries. In the City of Ocilla and other more intensely developed areas of the county, field (windshield) survey was used to verify all land uses parcel-by-parcel. This inventory was prepared as part of the development of the city and county's initial comprehensive plan.

In the late summer of 2003, working jointly with Irwin County Tax Assessor Karen Davis and County Zoning Administrator Lydia Johnson, RDC staff prepared a comprehensive update of the countywide land use inventory. South Georgia RDC worked with local technical staff to prepare a graphic depiction of the Irwin County Tax Offices WinGap data, a tax appraisal software which included a rudimentary land use classification system. With the assistance of the tax office, property designations not consistent with the revised Minimum Planning Standards, Rules of Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Chapter 110-12-1, effective January 1, 2004, were reclassified and then the resulting land use inventory was field checked for accuracy. Upon completion and editing of the inventory, the land use data was digitized as polygons and depicted graphically using the SGRDC's Geographic Information System (GIS) in cooperation with the Rural Geospatial Innovations-South Georgia. This digitized information will be ultimately transmitted to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to be included in the statewide database. The land use data was analyzed and assessed to include tabulated acreages for each land use category in both the City of Ocilla and unincorporated Irwin County. During the assessment, special consideration was given to historical factors and market forces which have led to current land use patterns, blighted and transitional areas, incompatible mixtures of land use in a given area, and areas of environmentally sensitive land.

Designation of agricultural and forested lands was included in the inventory. However, due to typically large tracts of land containing both agriculture and forest, parcel-based information alone could not accurately determine acreages for either category. Therefore, special techniques developed by RGIS-South Georgia were used to distinguish these land use features. (RGIS-South Georgia is a federally funded project at SGRDC. RGIS project material is based upon work supported by the Cooperative State Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture. Any opinions, findings or conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the view of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.) These techniques involved the reading of spectral images from satellite photography, with land "cover" data being converted to base mapping prepared by SGRDC's GIS staff.

For purposes of analysis, land use inventory data was classified into eight (8) major categories which are defined by standards currently established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs ("Minimum Standards and Procedures for Comprehensive Planning", as effective January 1, 2004). The major land use categories are defined as follows:

RESIDENTIAL: The predominant use of land within the residential category is for single-family dwelling units organized into general categories of net densities.

COMMERCIAL: This category is for land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities, organized into general categories of intensities. Commercial uses may be 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, organized into general categories of intensity.

PUBLIC / INSTITUTIONAL: This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Government uses include city halls and 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. Facilities that are publicly owned, but would be classified more accurately in another land use category, are not included in this category. For example, publicly owned parks and/or recreational facilities have been placed in the Park/Recreation/Conservation category; landfills are included in the Industrial category; and general office buildings containing government offices have been placed in the Commercial category.

TRANSPORTATION / COMMUNICATION / 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, public utility facilities or other similar uses.

PARK / RECREATION / CONSERVATION: This category is for land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. These areas may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers or similar uses.

AGRICULTURE: This category is for land dedicated to agriculture, farming (fields, lots, pastures, farmsteads, specialty farms, livestock production, etc.) or other similar rural uses such as pasture land not in commercial use.

FORESTRY: This category is for land dedicated to commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting or other similar rural uses such as woodlands not in commercial use.

To make the land use inventory and assessment more meaningful for local planning needs, Irwin County and RDC staff established five additional land use subcategories. Under the residential classification, a subcategory hobby farm was established for residential land uses located on parcels of at least ten and less than thirty acres whose primary use was large lot rural residential uses, generally not associated with the agricultural or forestry economy. All parcels less than 10 acres in the county on which residences are located were classified in the residential category. Also under the residential category, a separate residential multiple classification was created and a residential vacant classification was added. Vacant classifications were also created for both commercial and industrial land uses.

It was felt that the separate computation of the vacant residential, commercial and industrial lands would allow for a better assessment of future needs and encourage infill of existing areas now having public services.

IRWIN COUNTY, (IN GENERAL)

Irwin County is a rural county located in south central Georgia that is bordered by Ben Hill, Berrien, Coffee, Tift and Turner Counties. The City of Ocilla is the only active municipality and serves as the county seat and hub of urban activity. However, Ocilla is only a minor urban center when compared to the larger communities of Douglas, Fitzgerald and Tifton located in adjacent counties. Most major highways in Irwin County radiate outward from Ocilla and serve as connectors to these and other urban centers. The major highways include US 129, US 319, and State Routes 32, 90, 107, 125 and 206. Interstate 75 is located approximately 20 miles to the west in Tift and Turner Counties and is accessed via US 319, SR 32, or SR 125. CSX Railroad has active railroads running through the northwestern and northeastern corners of the county on their way to and from the City of Fitzgerald. Ocilla was once served by a rail line from Fitzgerald but it was closed in 1991.

Development in Irwin County first started as a result of a tram-type railroad system that supported the lumber trade and land clearing activities largely following the Civil War. The railroads once accessed many areas of the county and development clustered in small communities along these lines. Today, these communities are only remnants of prior development but they still contain a small mixture of uses. Their names are still locally well known and include Arp, Holt, Irwinville, Lax, Mystic, Osierfield, Waterloo and Wray. Irwinville was the county seat of the original Irwin County that now comprises 22 counties in south and southwest Georgia. Other counties were later split off of Irwin County and the county seat was ultimately moved to Ocilla. Today, only Ocilla remains as a functioning city and urban center. The decrease in the supply of lumber, the removal of railroads, and the increasing growth of urban centers outside Irwin County, such as Fitzgerald and Tifton, have since caused the decline of all these communities. Since the demise of the rail system and with the advent of the automobile and an extensive road system, development has spread to many rural areas of the county. The exception to this trend is the Our Town/Paradise Lakes community located in the southwestern part of the county off US 319. This area is primarily residential and relatively new with most of its development occurring in the past fifteen to twenty years.

Table 3-5 shows a tabulation of Greater Irwin existing land use acreages. These numbers represent totals for both the unincorporated portions of Irwin County and the City of Ocilla combined. Greater Irwin County contains more than 13,480 acres of developed land. Most of the development is spread evenly across the county with the highest single concentration of development being in Ocilla and containing only 9.7% of the total.

The fact that Ocilla's developed land area totals only 9.7 % of the total developed land in the county and that only 5.8% of the county's area is developed is indicative of the county's primarily rural nature.

**TABLE 3-5
GREATER IRWIN EXISTING LAND USE ACREAGES**

Land Use Category	# Acres	% Developed, Land	% Total Land
Residential	4,956.6	36.8	2.1
Hobby Farm	3,269.3	24.3	1.4
Residential Multi-Family	57.6	.4	<.1
Commercial	119.8	.9	.1
Industrial	373.6	2.8	.2
Public/Institutional	345.6	2.6	.1
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	202.3	1.4	.1
Transportation/Communication/Utilities	4,156.1	30.8	1.8
Total Developed Land	13,480.9	100.0	5.8
Agriculture	119,206.0		51.3
Forestry	98,681.6		42.5
Residential Vacant	181.5		.1
Commercial Vacant	380.7		.2
Industrial Vacant	321.7		.1
GRAND TOTAL	232,252.4		100.0

Source: Irwin County WinGap and spectral imagery analysis, field survey, South Georgia RDC and RGIS South Georgia, September 2003.

IRWIN COUNTY (Unincorporated)

Map 3-10 graphically depicts the existing land use patterns found in unincorporated Irwin County. Table 3-6 presents a tabulation of acreages for the various land use categories.

As can be seen, there are vast amounts of agricultural farmland spread among forested areas in all portions of the county. There are also many small clusters of urban development as well as a scattering of individual urban uses throughout the county. These clusters and individual uses may range from less than one acre to in excess of 300 acres in size.

Unincorporated Irwin County consists of about 230,704 acres that is about 99.3% of the county. In the unincorporated area, 217,888 acres (94.4%) are devoted to agriculture or forestry uses. Most of the farmland is located on higher elevations between the floodplains of the numerous rivers and streams. Since these floodplain areas are suitable to neither agricultural nor urban development, farmers have learned over the course of time to leave these areas undisturbed and use them as valuable natural windbreaks. Many of the small streams have been dammed to create small ponds for irrigation and recreational purposes and these have been included in the agricultural acreage.

Irwin County's native tree stands are mostly limited to floodplains and those areas along the perimeter of floodplains. There are also large areas of commercial forestry throughout the county. The largest concentrations of these are located in the eastern half of the county and adjacent to the Alapaha River.

**TABLE 3-6
IRWIN COUNTY (unincorporated) EXISTING LAND USE ACREAGES**

Land Use Category	# Acres	% Developed Land	% Total Land
Hobby Farm	3,269.3	26.6	1.4
Residential	4,530.2	36.8	2.0
Residential (Multi-Family)	16.9	.1	<.1
Commercial	47.5	.4	<.1
Industrial	216.2	1.8	.1
Public / Institutional	217.2	1.8	.1
Parks / Recreation / Conservation	165.8	1.3	.1
Transportation / Communication / Utilities	3,831.3	31.2	1.6
Total Developed Land	12,294.4	100.0	5.3
Agriculture	119,145.5		51.6
Forestry	98,645.4		42.8
Residential Vacant	65.5		<.1
Commercial Vacant	346.9		.2
Industrial Vacant	206.7		.1
GRAND TOTAL	230,704.4		100.0

Source: Irwin County WinGap and spectral imagery analysis, field survey, South Georgia RDC and RGIS South Georgia, September 2003.

Developed lands in unincorporated Irwin County consist of more than 12,294 acres that is only 5.3% of the total unincorporated area. It should be noted that a large portion of this (3,831 acres or 31.2 percent) is for transportation/communication/utilities, which is largely composed of road rights-of-way.

Of the developed lands, residential land uses occupy a total of 7,816 acres or 63.5% of the unincorporated county's developed land. The county's 203 hobby farms total 32.69 acres (26.6%) of this area and 4,530 acres are devoted to residential use on parcels of less than 10 acres. Representing only .1% of the county's developed land area, 16.9 acres are devoted to residential multi-family. This land use category contains one duplex and the remainder is in mobile home parks just north of the Ocilla city limits on U. S. 129. Conventional farmhouses and single mobile homes located on individual parcels of farmland of 30 acres or more were inventoried as agricultural land use since the primary use of the land is considered to be agricultural, not residential. Most residential land uses are clustered in the old rural communities, or in several newly developing residential subdivisions. The rest are scattered along the county's main roads, particularly those roads leading outward from Ocilla. Irwinville and Mystic are the largest of the rural

communities and are about 80 acres and 200 acres respectively. They are about 80-85% built-out and much of the remaining acreage is vacant. The newly developing subdivisions are comparable to the overall size of Irwinville or Mystic and located mostly in the western half of the county. The largest of these include the Pleasure Lake - Jones Subdivision area (Our Town community, about 450 acres, SW county), the area in and around the Clayton Jay Subdivision (about 300 acres, NW county), and the Springhill Plantation Subdivision (175 acres, E of Ocilla). Other rural residential developments include Coleman Pond Subdivision, Sizland Acres, and Forest Estates. Most of these have only developed in the last 10-15 years and are only partially built out. With exception of the Pig Out BBQ in the Our Town community, these developing subdivisions are exclusively residential with lots being generally one to five acres in size.

Commercial land uses in the unincorporated areas total 47 acres that is only 0.4% of the developed lands. More than half of this acreage is along the US 129/319 corridor north of Ocilla and elsewhere around Ocilla's perimeter. Outside Ocilla, commercial uses are typically limited to an occasional convenience/general store or BBQ restaurant. Irwinville and Mystic each have about 5 acres of commercial land use and the remainder is scattered as small parcels in other parts of the county. Only one commercial use, Hunter's BBQ, is not located near Ocilla or in one of the several other rural communities mentioned earlier.

Industrial uses in the unincorporated areas total 216.2 acres that is 1.8% of the developed lands. The largest single industrial use is the county's old public landfill (82 acres) located on SR 32 just east of Holt. Most other industrial uses are agriculture related, such as processing facilities for peanuts and grain, and these are located along the US 129/319 corridor north of Ocilla, in Irwinville and Mystic, and a few are rurally isolated along major roads. Other industrial uses include a few salvage yards, body shop and an abattoir.

Public/Institutional uses total 217.2 acres which is 1.8% of the developed lands. Most all of this consists of churches and cemeteries in the rural communities and scattered throughout rural parts of the county. Many of these are very old and have long been a focal point for activities in the rural area. Other uses include local community centers in Irwinville and Waterloo, rural post offices in Irwinville, Mystic and Wray, several volunteer fire departments, and the Georgia Forestry Commission watch tower west of Holt. There are no active medical or educational facilities in the unincorporated areas. Several decades ago, most of the rural communities each had their own school, but all of these have now been converted to church/community uses or simply left abandoned.

Parks/Recreation/Conservation uses total 165.8 acres which is 1.3% of the developed non-agricultural lands. Large parks include the Ocilla Country Club (86 acres) and Lions Club Park (32 acres), that are north of Ocilla and the Jefferson Davis Memorial Park (12 acres) located about 2 miles north of Irwinville. The remaining acreage is for local parks in the communities of Mystic and Waterloo.

Irwin County's second largest developed land use category is Transportation/Communication/Utilities. Transportation/Communication/Utilities totals about 3,831 acres and represents 31.2% of the developed lands and 1.6% of all lands in the unincorporated area. Railroad and street rights-of-way make up the vast majority of this and is mostly in the form of unpaved roads. The largest non-right-of-way Transportation/Communication/Utilities uses include land for the Ocilla sewer oxidation ponds and sprayfield and a portion of the Fitzgerald-Ben Hill County Airport. The remaining acres are occupied by community water tanks and wells, a private landing strip, and a few electrical substations and radio transmission towers scattered throughout the rural area.

The residential vacant category, which comprises some 65 acres is less than .1% of the total land area of Irwin County. Most of the acreage is in developing subdivisions or within the larger rural communities of Irwinville and Mystic.

Commercial vacant lands, totaling nearly 347 acres, are less than .2% of the county's total land area. This

acreage is strongly skewed due to the fact that the Crystal Lake Amusement Park Facility, which is over 344 acres, is now vacant. The remaining commercial vacant lands are one parcel in Irwinville and one in Mystic.

Industrial vacant lands total 206.7 acres and represent .1% of the county's total land area. These lands fall primarily in the north central part of the county adjacent to the East Central Technical Institute, and are part of the Millennium Technology Pointe Industrial Park.

CITY OF OCILLA

Ocilla is Irwin County's only incorporated city and it is located near the center of the county at the intersection of several major roads. Ocilla is about eight miles south of the City of Fitzgerald in neighboring Ben Hill County. The two cities are connected by US 129/319, and this road corridor has seen most of the city and county's new urban development during the past 50 years. Many of the workers living in and around Ocilla work in Fitzgerald and Ocilla is becoming increasingly dependent on Fitzgerald for advanced levels of shopping and urban services.

In 1964, an existing land use survey was conducted for the City of Ocilla. At that time, the city contained approximately 940 acres and was about 71% built-out. The railroad was still present and there were far greater numbers of commercial and industrial establishments in the city than there are today. Since 1964, the city has grown to approximately 1,548 acres with the annexation of major road rights-of-way for about one mile in all directions, and annexation of additional lands south and north of the city for new industrial park and a new public school/park complex. Many of the commercial and industrial uses have gone, particularly with the closing of the railroad spur from Fitzgerald. However, the amount of residential acreage has increased with the addition of new housing developments in the southern part of the city and to the north along US 129/319. The only major annexation that occurred in the 1993-2003 era was the Greenbriar Estates Subdivision, located west of U. S. 129/319, north of the city's core. The basic land use pattern however, has not changed except for a marked increase in public/institutional development in the far southeastern part of the city. Map 3-11 graphically depicts the existing land use patterns found in the City of Ocilla. Table 3-7 shows the current tabulation of acreages for the various land use categories.

Developed lands in Ocilla consist of more than 1,186 acres that is 76.7% of the city's total land area. This makes Ocilla the largest single mass of urban development anywhere in the county.

Agricultural land use in Ocilla consists of about 60 acres that is only about 3.9% of the city's total land area. It is mostly in the form of row crops and most of this acreage is located in the eastern part of the city south of SR 32, and in the undeveloped portions of the south industrial park. Forestry land use consists of about 36 acres that is only about 2.3% of the city's total land area. This is natural forest and is located near the city cemetery and just north of the south industrial park.

**TABLE 3-7
OCILLA EXISTING LAND USE ACREAGES**

Land Use Category	# Acres	% Developed Land	% Total Land
Residential	426.4	35.9	27.5
Residential Multi-Family	40.7	3.4	2.6
Commercial	72.3	6.1	4.7
Industrial	157.4	13.3	10.2
Public / Institutional	128.4	10.8	8.3
Parks / Recreation / Conservation	36.5	3.1	2.4
Transportation / Communication / Utilities	324.8	27.4	21.0
Total Developed Land	1,186.5	100.0	76.7
Agriculture	60.5		3.9
Forestry	36.2		2.3
Residential Vacant	116.0		7.5
Commercial Vacant	33.8		2.2
Industrial Vacant	115.0		7.4
GRAND TOTAL	1,548.0		100.0

Source: Irwin County WinGap and spectral imagery analysis, field survey, South Georgia RDC and RGIS South Georgia, September 2003.

Residential land uses in Ocilla total 249.8 acres that is 39.3% of the total developed lands. This indicates a predominantly residential community. Most of this acreage is in the form of single-family development, however, there are several multi-family developments, all but one of which are associated with public housing. Residential multi-family totals 40.7 acres, 3.4 percent of the city's developed area. Residential land uses are found in all parts of the city with the greatest numbers of houses located in the northeast and southwest quadrants. Most of the older houses are located closer to downtown and the newer homes are located in new subdivisions off Brushy Creek Church Road (southeast) and in the far northern parts of the city.

Commercial land uses total 72.3 acres which is only about 6.1% of the city's total developed lands. Most of this is clustered in the central downtown and mainly along the US 129/319 corridor beginning about one mile north of downtown. There are no large scale commercial uses in Ocilla and existing uses include: two grocery stores, two banks, two funeral homes, several gas stations, a few small restaurants, and assorted retail in the downtown area. Heavy commercial, with outside storage, is clustered along the US 129/319 corridor.

Industrial land uses total 157.4 acres which is about 13.3% of the total developed lands. Most of this acreage is located in the old northern industrial park along the US 129/319 corridor and in the south industrial and the new industrial park on Old Whitley Road west of US 129/319. However, there are still several industrial uses (such as the large warehouses) still in existence along the former railroad right-of-way bisecting the heart of the city on a northwest-southeast axis. The largest single industrial use is the Ocilla Gin (38 acres) located in

the south industrial park. Other industrial uses include peanut processing, propane distribution, salvage yard, welding/machine shops, manufactured housing and a cold storage house.

Public/Institutional uses total 128.4 acres which is 10.8% of the total developed lands. Most of this consists of educational facilities such as the Irwin County High School, Irwin Elementary School, and the new Middle/High School complex which is located in the southeastern corner of the city. Other uses include several churches, the Irwin County Hospital/Palemon Gaskins Nursing Home, Osceola Nursing Home, city cemetery, county courthouse/library, city municipal building, city barn and fire department, county jail, post office, County Health Department and Health Center, and offices for DFCS, USDA, and the Irwin Community Service Center (Coastal Plain EOA). All of these other uses are scattered throughout the city.

Parks/Recreation/Conservation uses total 36.5 acres which is 3.1% of the developed non-agricultural lands. Most of this is in the Lax Road Park in the southeastern part of the city. The remaining acreage is for Cumbee Park and College Hill Park. Cumbee Park is mostly passive in nature whereas the others are for active recreation. Excluding schools, the City of Ocilla contains no indoor recreation facilities nor any designated conservation areas.

Transportation/Communication/Utilities totals 324.8 acres and represents 27.4% of the developed lands and 21% of the city's total lands. Most all of this (319.2 acres, 98.2%) is for street right-of-way. Local paved roads make up 56% of this, federal/state roads 36%, and local unpaved roads make up the remaining 8%. It should be noted that Ocilla has annexed unusually long lengths of all the major public rights-of-way extending approximately one mile beyond the central core of the city. This was done in the early 1970's in an effort to gain annexation of private lands that might be well-outside the city and otherwise ineligible for annexation. These external right-of-way annexations total 76 acres and represent 23% of the land use category. This has created a very unusual shape to the city boundary that makes mapping and jurisdictional issues more difficult. Other land uses within this category include the Irwin EMC building on the city's western edge, the city utilities buildings, city water tanks, sewer lift station and wastewater treatment facilities, and an electrical substation.

The Residential Vacant category totals 116 acres and represents 7.5 % of the city's total land area. These lots are primarily found in newly developing subdivisions at the perimeter of the city, but a fair number are found in older residential neighborhoods and afford a unique opportunity for in-fill residential development.

Commercial Vacant properties comprise 33.8 acres, or 2.2 % of the city's total land area. The majority of these parcels are found along US 129/319 north, at the site of the old A. T. Fuller Lumber Company and along Georgia 32, east of the city's downtown.

Industrial Vacant lands comprise 115 acres, or 7.4% of the city's total land area. With the exception of one parcel south of the city's old downtown industrial area, the remainder of the city's vacant industrial lands are located in their planned northwest and south industrial parks.

Irwin County Land Use Assessment

In the early years of Irwin County's growth, rail transportation access dictated development location.

Since the demise of the rail lines and the growing emphasis on public roads and highways, growth rapidly dispersed to all areas of the county with single individuals making development decisions which would impact Irwin County for years to come.

The development of an initial comprehensive plan in 1993 pursuant to the Georgia Planning Act may well prove to be the single most important study/legislative action ever undertaken by Irwin County leaders. The

preparation of the plan's elements, notably the land use element, allowed leaders to see the extreme pattern of scatteration and poor quality development that was occurring in their county, and most often this development reeked havoc on the county budget due to location along substandard dirt roads or in areas lacking little, if any, services.

As a response to plan findings and recommendations, in less than seven years the county has established and continually maintained a countywide planning commission (1998), adopted the Georgia mandatory codes and established a local permitting and inspection process (1999), adopted a land subdivision ordinance which dictates design standards and minimum improvements to be provided by the developer and public review and inspection of the same before sale and development (2000), and a zoning ordinance to direct growth into areas consistent with plan findings and recommendations (2000).

Additionally, county leaders have adopted the state recommended Part V Environmental Planning Standards (as part of the above-referenced development ordinances), which should greatly enhance protection of the county's groundwater recharge areas, wetlands and protected river corridor.

Irwin County, other than roads maintenance, rural fire protection and sheriffs patrols, provides no significant level of services to support urban scale development outside of the Mystic community water system.

The adoption of the county zoning regulation is having a major impact on the Paradise Lakes/Our Town community that has largely developed in the county's largest groundwater recharge area. Zoned A-U (5 acre minimum lot size) and subject to the county's groundwater recharge area standards, the new six and one-quarter acre lot minimum should provide substantial environmental protection to this area.

The area along US 129/319 from Tillman Street north to Frank Church Road contains a number of older commercial/industrial structures in serious need of rehabilitation. This not only presents an overall negative picture to visitors to the Greater Irwin community, but has a negative impact on adjacent and nearby land uses. As the city and county limits are intertwined here, city and county coordination will be required to resolve this issue.

City of Ocilla Land Use Assessment

As noted earlier, the City of Ocilla contains, 1,186 developed acres and is the largest single mass of urban development in the county. The city has a number of land use issues that need to be addressed.

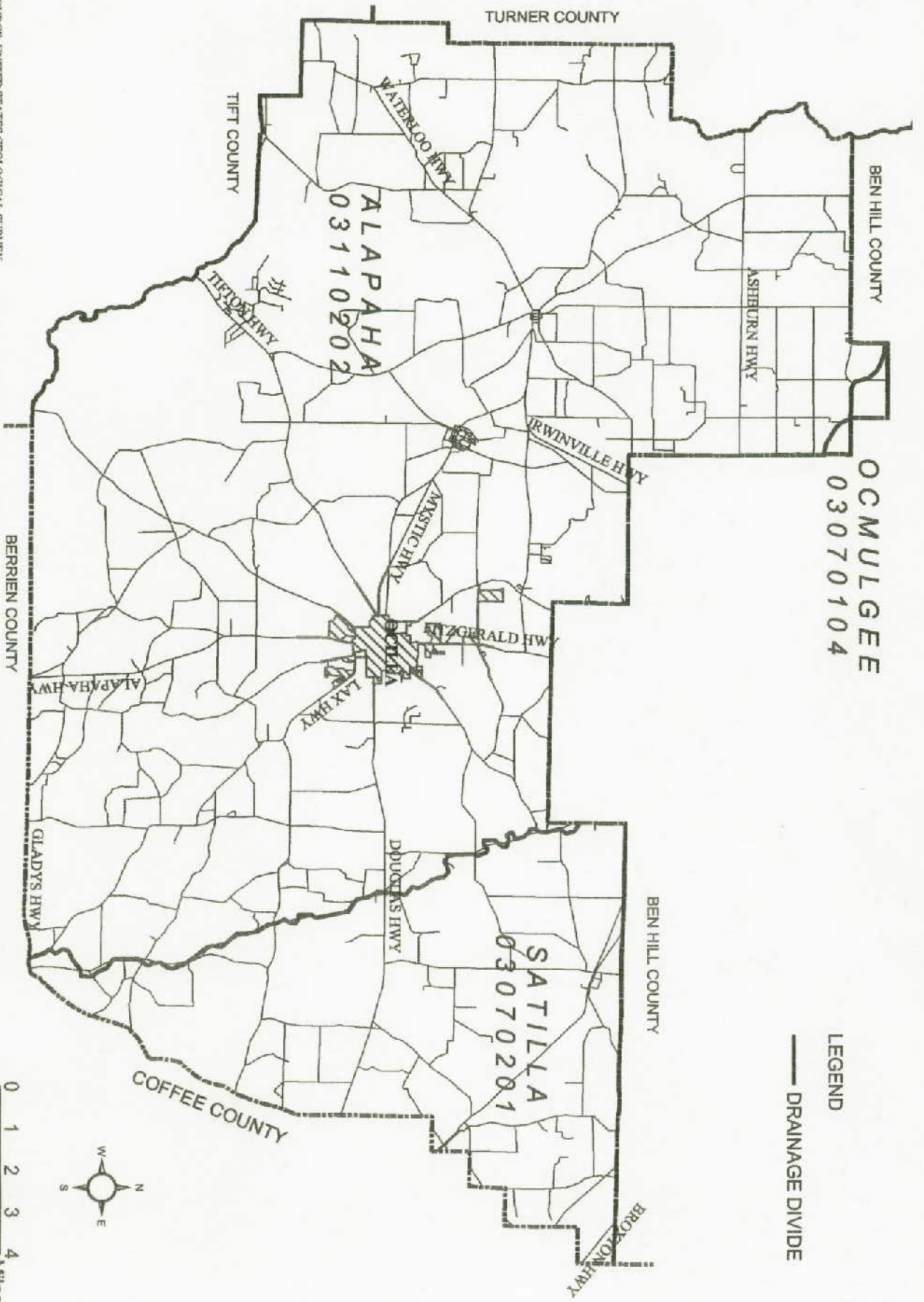
The first and probably most pressing is the incidence of substandard housing. Largely confined to the northeast and southeast quadrants of town, this problem will require establishment of a long term program to address.

The city's second challenge is maintenance of its downtown historic commercial district, with community out-shopping being one of its greatest challenges to overcome. Meeting these revitalization challenges, as well as addressing their historic residential districts, should be considered by Ocilla leaders and residents.

The city has an adopted building code, land subdivision ordinance and zoning codes program and these should continue to be supported by the planning commission and city leaders. In 2000, the city zoning ordinance was amended to include the Part V Environmental Planning Standards, and protection standards for wetlands is routinely part of the local development review process.

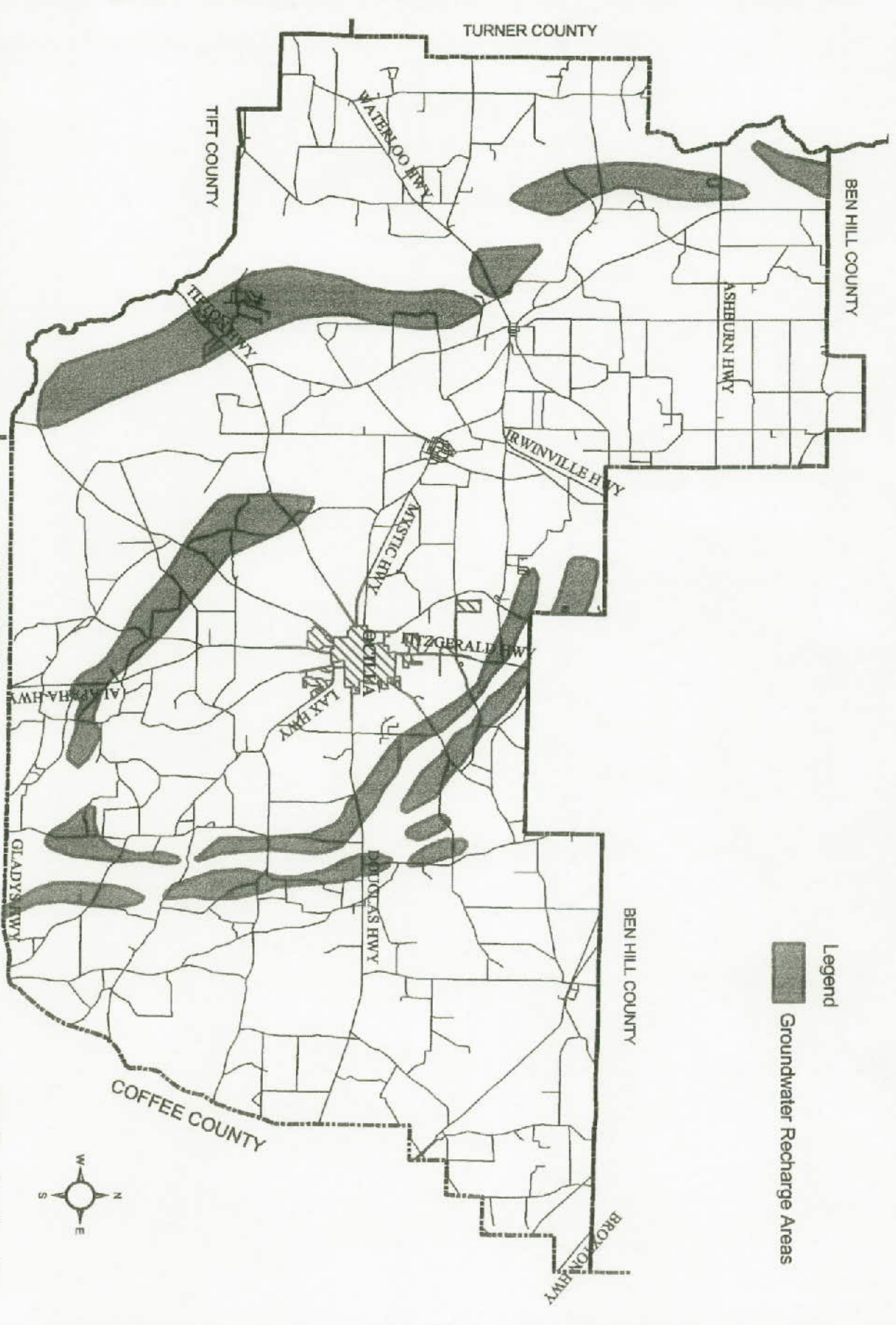
Both the city and Irwin County has formally applied to the Federal Emergency Management Agency for floodplain study and mapping.

SOURCE: UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



LEGEND
—— DRAINAGE DIVIDE

MAP 3-1
IRWIN COUNTY HUC 8 WATERSHEDS



SOURCE: "SIGNIFICANT GROUNDWATER RECHARGE AREAS OF GEORGIA"
 MAP: GEORGIA GEOLOGICAL SURVEY AND USGS, GEORGIA DISTRICT, 1990

MAP 3-2
 IRWIN COUNTY GROUNDWATER RECHARGE AREAS

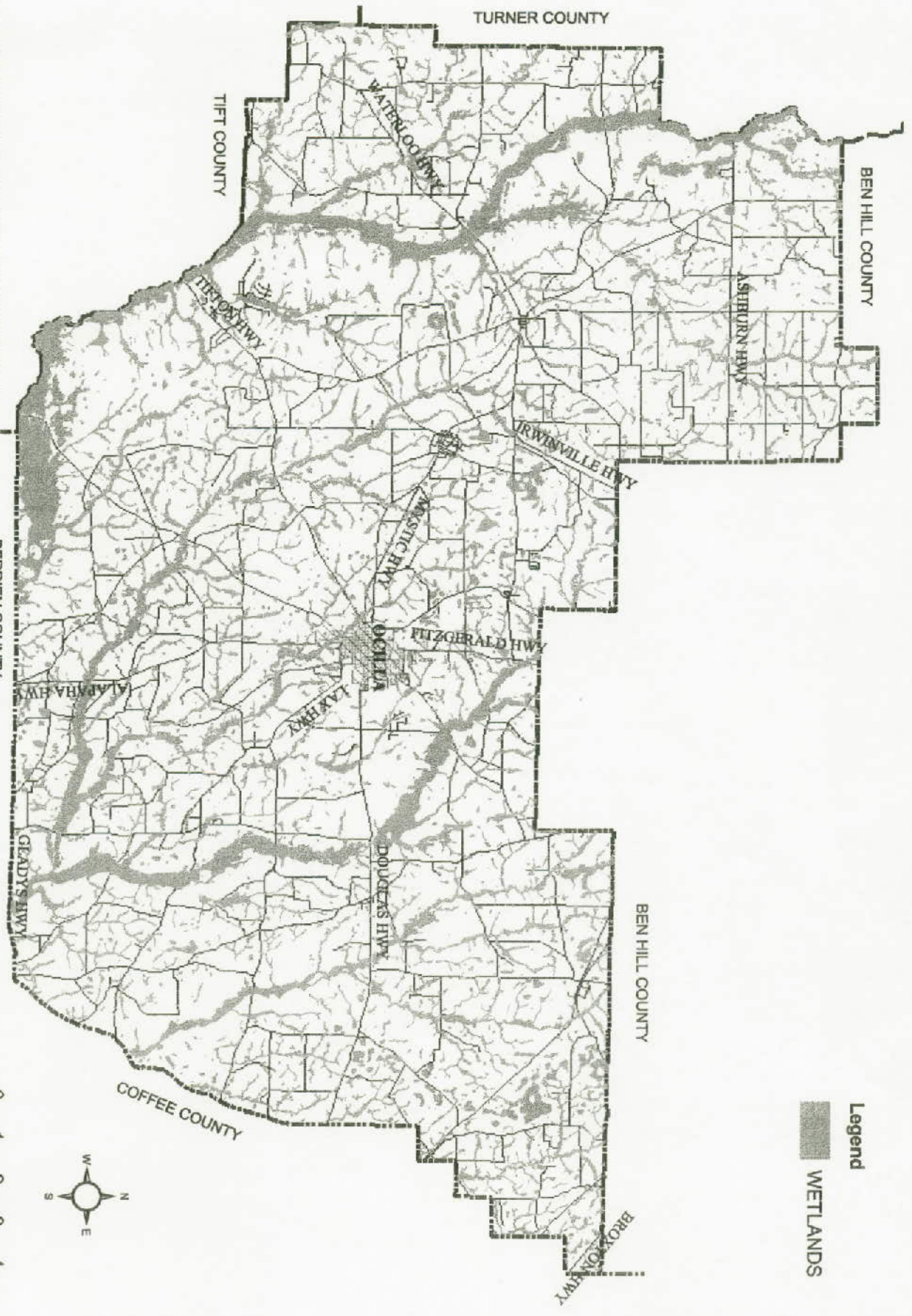
SOURCE: SOUTH GEORGIA RDC, NATIONAL WETLANDS INVENTORY 1999

BERRIEN COUNTY

0 1 2 3 4 Miles



MAP 3-3 IRWIN COUNTY WETLANDS



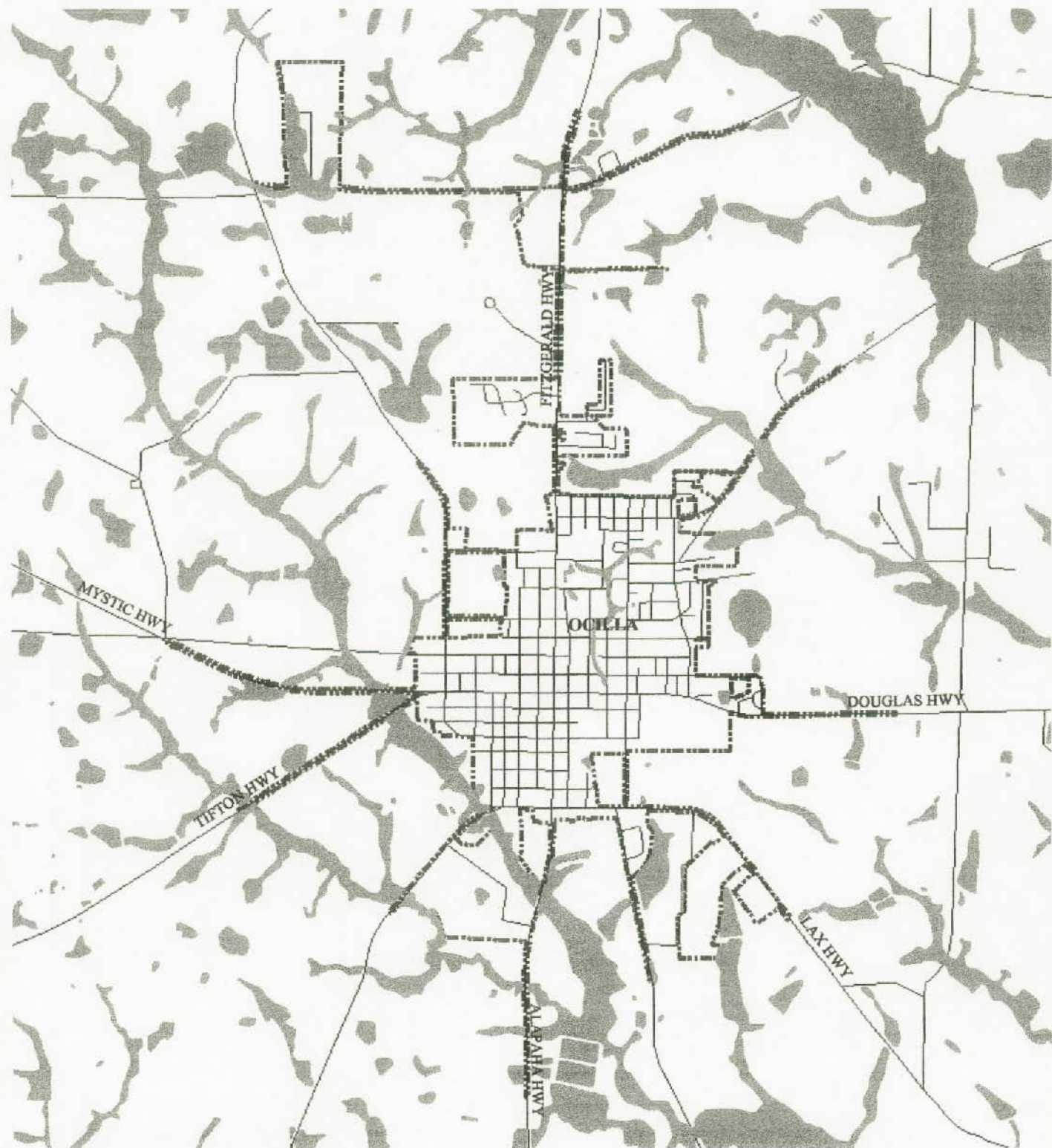
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WETLANDS



Legend

 WETLANDS

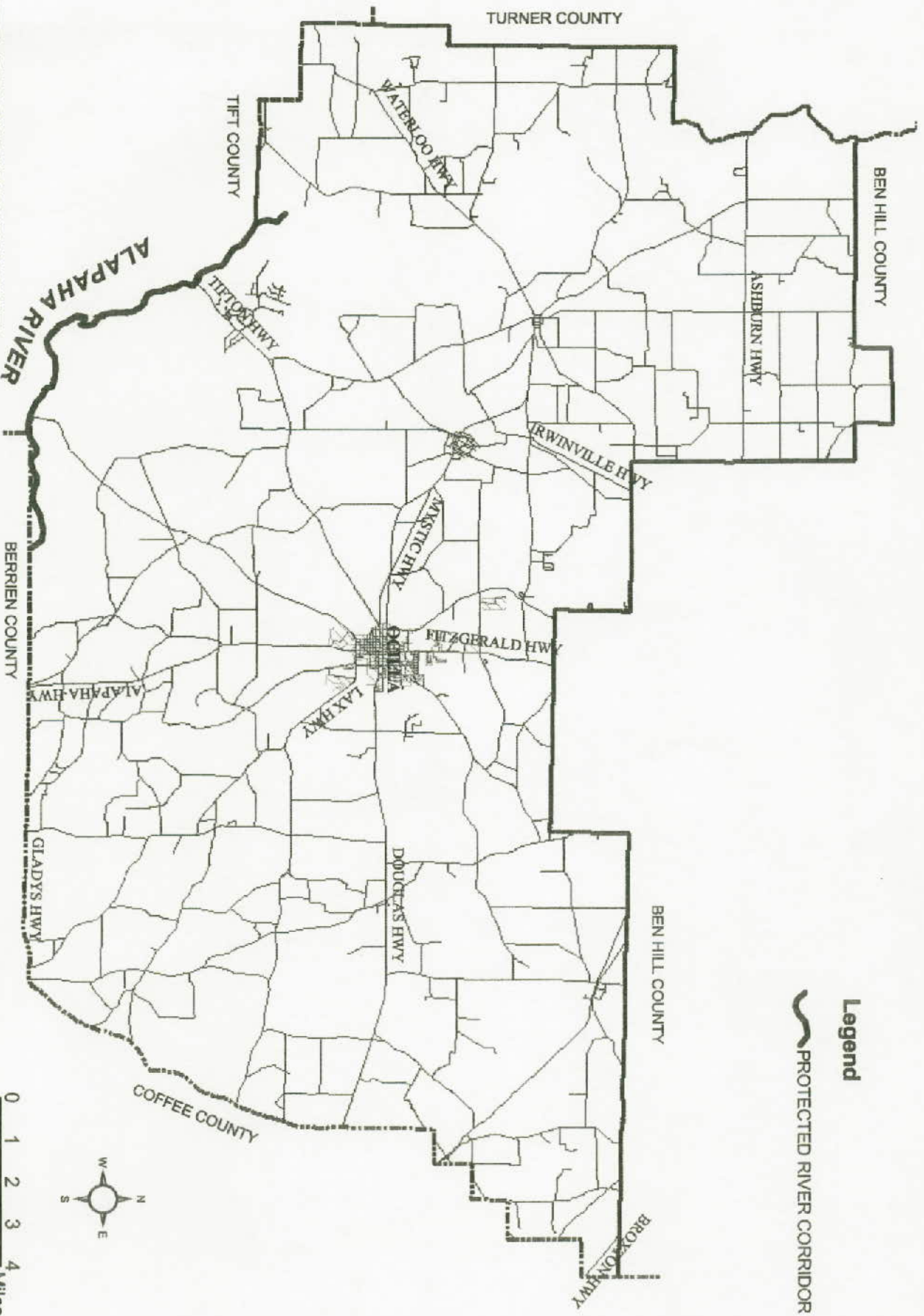


SOURCE: SOUTH GEORGIA RDC, NATIONAL WETLANDS INVENTORY 1999

0 1,500 3,000 4,500 6,000 Feet

MAP 3-4
OCILLA AREA WETLANDS

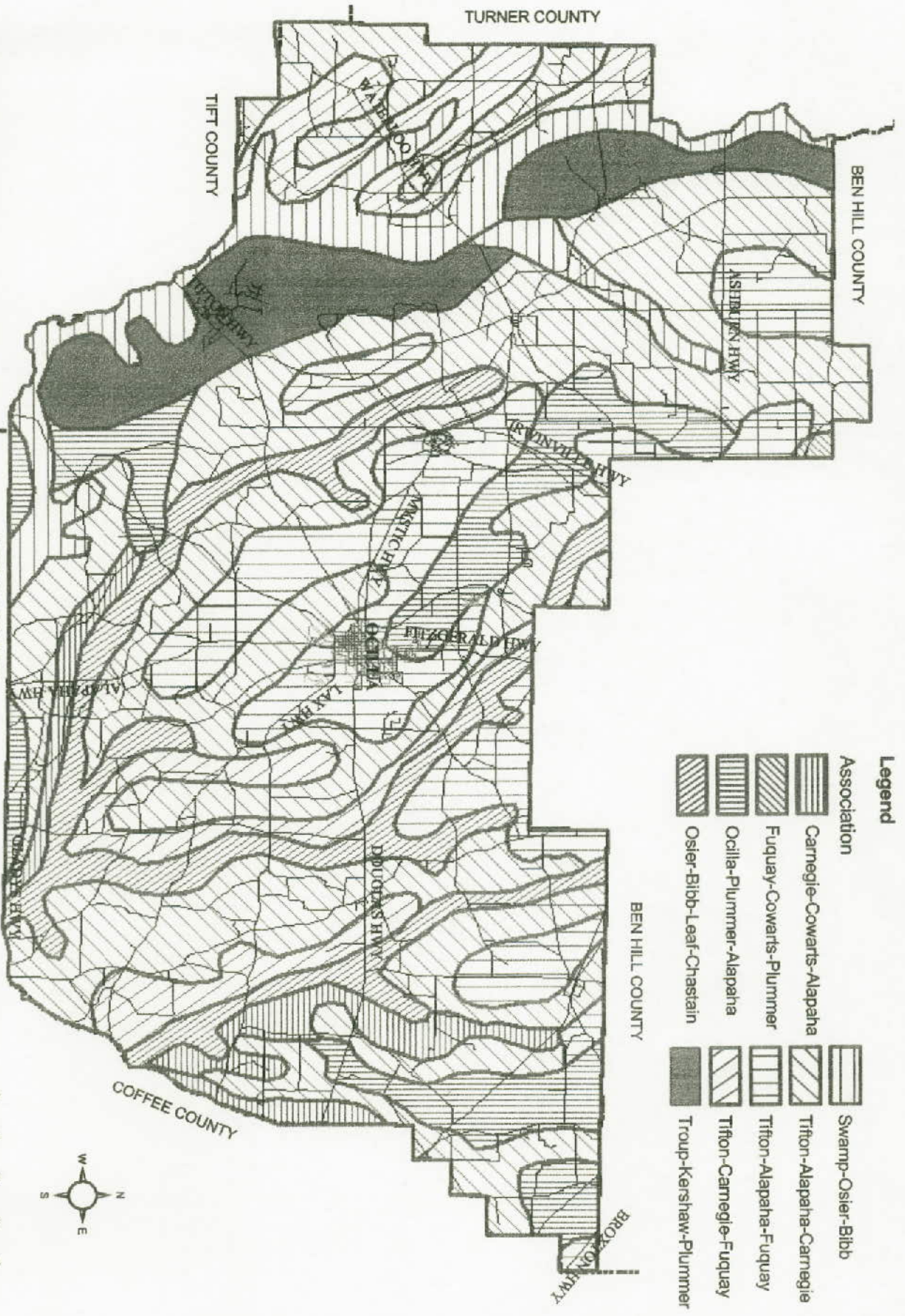
SOURCE: GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES



Legend

~ PROTECTED RIVER CORRIDOR

MAP 3-5
IRWIN COUNTY PROTECTED RIVER CORRIDOR

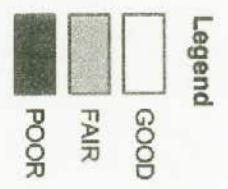
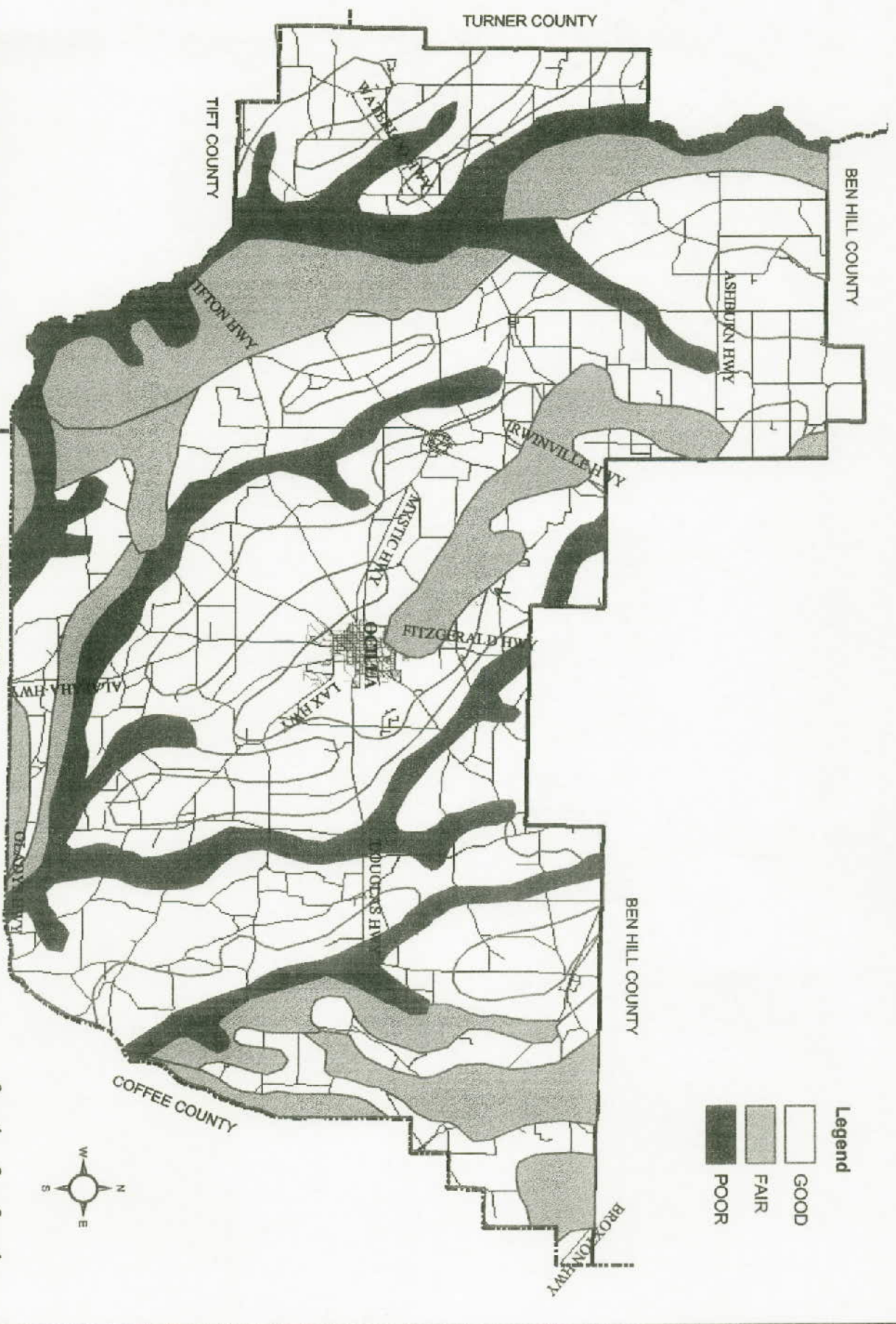


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| Association | | Association | |
| [Hatched pattern] | Carnegie-Cowarts-Alapaha | [Hatched pattern] | Swamp-Osier-Bibb |
| [Hatched pattern] | Fuquay-Cowarts-Plummer | [Hatched pattern] | Tifton-Alapaha-Carnegie |
| [Hatched pattern] | Ocilla-Plummer-Alapaha | [Hatched pattern] | Tifton-Alapaha-Fuquay |
| [Hatched pattern] | Osier-Bibb-Leaf-Chastain | [Hatched pattern] | Tifton-Carnegie-Fuquay |
| [Hatched pattern] | | [Hatched pattern] | Troup-Kershaw-Plummer |

SOURCE: SOUTH GEORGIA RDC, GENERALIZED FROM 1969 SOIL SURVEY OF BEN HILL AND IRWIN COUNTIES, GA., U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE (USDA) SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

MAP 3-6
IRWIN COUNTY GENERALIZED SOIL ASSOCIATIONS






SOURCE: SOUTH GEORGIA RDC, GENERALIZED FROM 1969 SOIL SURVEY OF BEN HILL AND IRWIN COUNTIES, GA., U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE (USDA) SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

MAP 3-7
IRWIN COUNTY LAND CAPABILITY - AGRICULTURE



Legend

	GOOD
	FAIR
	POOR

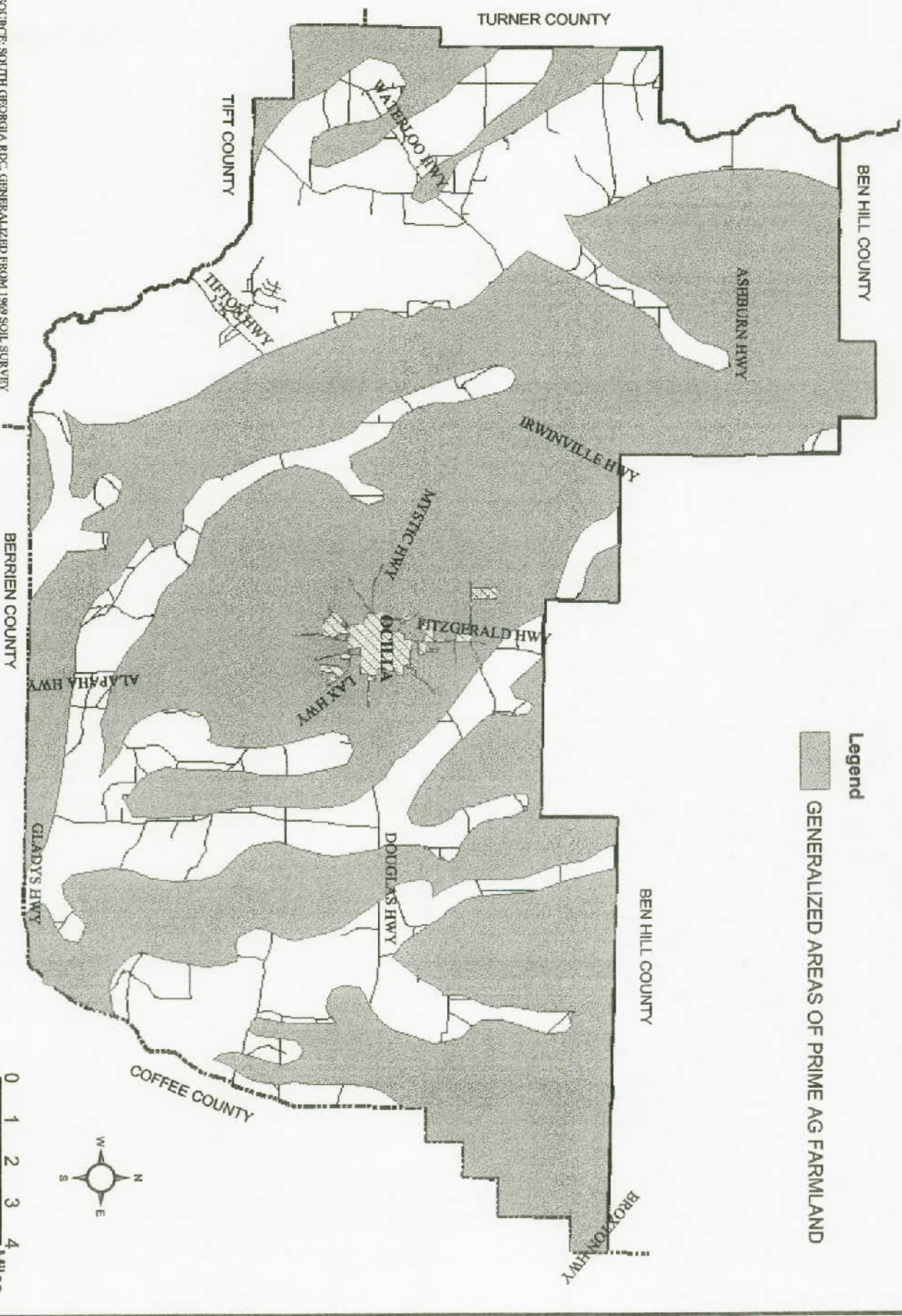


0 1 2 3 4 Miles

SOURCE: SOUTH GEORGIA RDC, GENERALIZED FROM 1969 SOIL SURVEY OF BEN HILL AND IRWIN COUNTIES, GA., U.S. DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE (USDA) SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

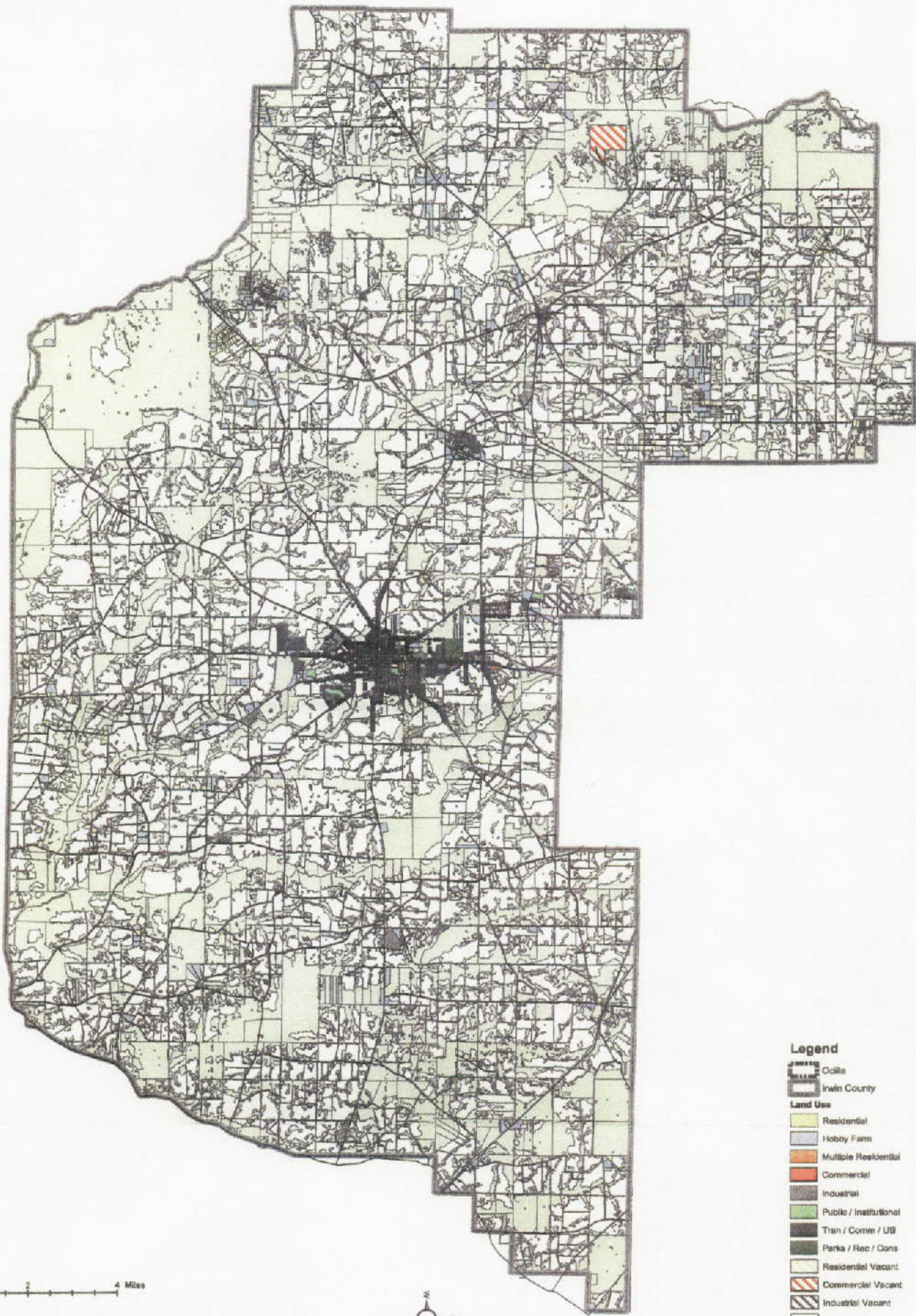
MAP 3-8
IRWIN COUNTY LAND CAPABILITY - URBAN

SOURCE: SOUTH GEORGIA RDC, GENERALIZED FROM 1989 SOIL SURVEY OF BEN HILL AND IRWIN COUNTIES, GA., U.S. DEPT OF AGRICULTURE (USDA) SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE



MAP 3-9

IRWIN COUNTY GENERALIZED PRIME FARMLAND SOILS



0 1 2 4 Miles

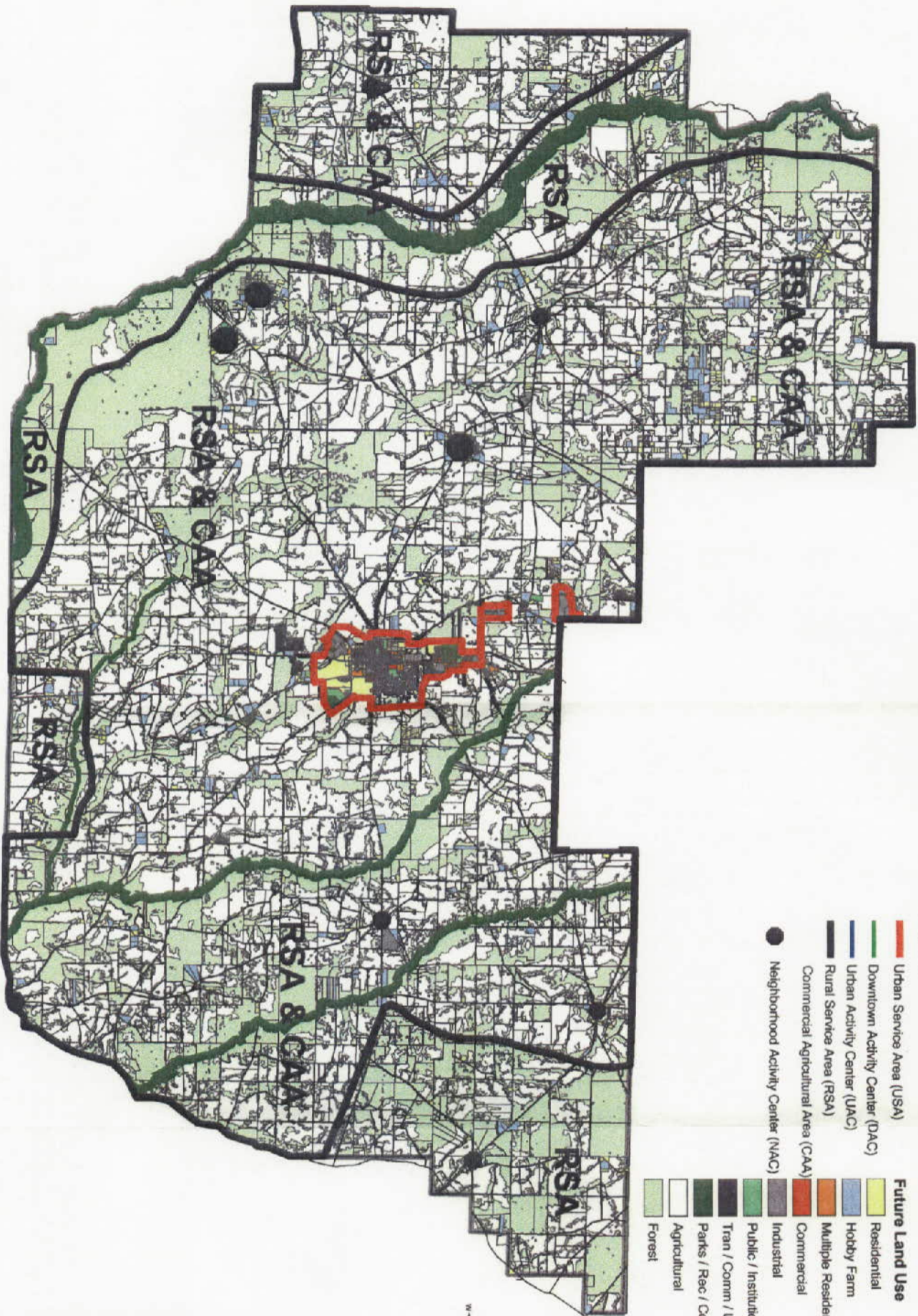
Source: Irwin County WinGap and spectral imagery analysis, field survey, SGRDC and RGIS - South Georgia; September, 2003.



Legend

- Ocilla
- Irwin County
- Land Use**
- Residential
- Hobby Farm
- Multiple Residential
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public / Institutional
- Tran / Comm / UBI
- Parks / Rec / Cons
- Residential Vacant
- Commercial Vacant
- Industrial Vacant
- Agricultural
- Forest

MAP 3-10
IRWIN COUNTY EXISTING LANDUSE



Legend

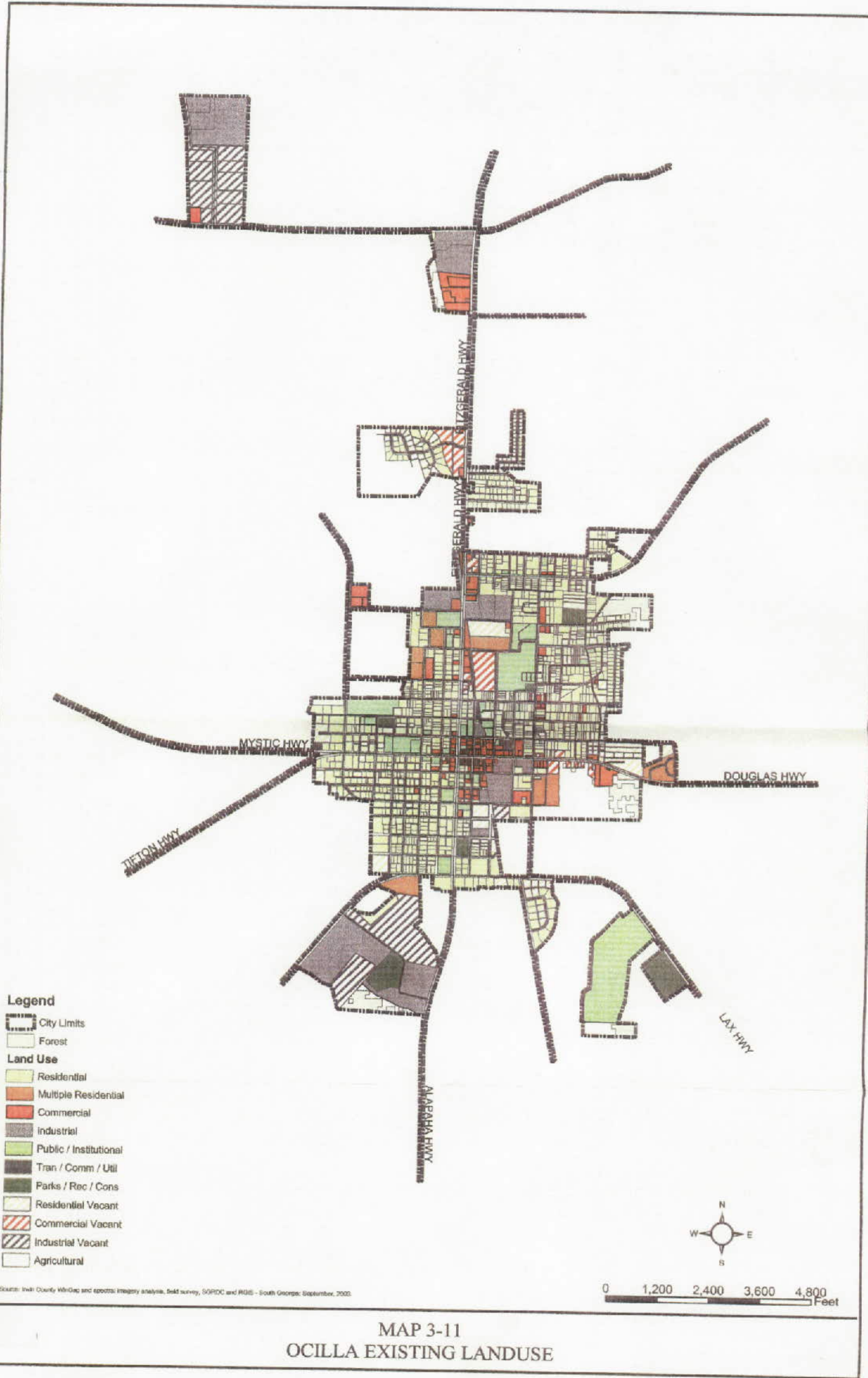
- █ Urban Service Area (USA)
- █ Downtown Activity Center (DAC)
- █ Urban Activity Center (UAC)
- █ Rural Service Area (RSA)
- █ Commercial Agricultural Area (CAA)
- Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC)

- Future Land Use**
- █ Residential
 - █ Hobby Farm
 - █ Multiple Residential
 - █ Commercial
 - █ Industrial
 - █ Public / Institutional
 - █ Tran / Comm / Util
 - █ Parks / Rec / Cons
 - █ Agricultural
 - █ Forest

Source: Irwin County WinGap and spectral imagery analysis, field survey, SGRDC and RGIS - South Georgia; September, 2003.



**MAP III-1
IRWIN COUNTY FUTURE LAND USE**



Source: Infil County W/Geo and spool(s) Imagery analysis, field survey, SOPDC and RGS - South Georgia, September, 2003.

MAP 3-11
OCILLA EXISTING LANDUSE

CHAPTER FOUR: COUNTY AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

INTRODUCTION

The location and quality of the facilities and services provided by Irwin County and the City of Ocilla are as important to the county and city as its industries, farms, commercial and residential areas. The facilities and services not only enhance the well being of the area's residents, but along with the quality of shopping facilities and housing, largely determine the "livability" of the city and county.

County and city facilities and services as defined herein are those facilities, usually public or semi-public in nature, which primarily serve residents with such services as schools, recreation, administrative offices, libraries, hospitals, water and sewer systems, solid waste system, police and fire protection. The various facilities and services discussed in this chapter are analyzed in relation to such factors as location, condition, capacity, present demands and future needs. The individual locations of these facilities are shown on Maps 4-1 and 4-2.

COUNTY AND CITY GOVERNMENTAL SERVICE BUILDINGS

Irwin County Courthouse

The Irwin County Courthouse was constructed in 1905 or 1906. It is located in Ocilla at 301 South Irwin Avenue. The property consists of a block of land that includes approximately four acres. The courthouse is cited in the center of the block with parking around the periphery. Also located on the property is the Irwin County Public Library.

The building is three stories tall with a basement and clock tower. It was put on the National Register of Historic Places in 1980 because of its significance of event, architecture, and engineering. The building is constructed of brick with decorative metal and wood details. It is a very attractive Classical Revival Style building that was originally built on a cross plan with an entrance on the north, south, east, and west sides.

Today, the building remains close to its original state with only a few changes such as lowered ceilings, paneling, and window unit air conditioners. Two of the entrances have been closed off to create office space. The court room has been somewhat remodeled with lowered ceilings and paneling. The balcony has been enclosed to make a storage area. Otherwise, the courthouse has had little other alterations.

The building has had some maintenance over the years, but has not had any major updates such in the areas of plumbing, electrical, or heating and cooling. The building has recently had a new roof put on, but that is just the beginning of what needs to be done. The electrical system needs to be thoroughly examined to determine if it is possibly overloaded. Central heating and air conditioning needs to be installed to replace the current gas space heaters and window unit air conditioners. Another urgent need is restroom facilities not only for the handicapped, but for others as well. There are no restrooms on the main floor of the building which is the only floor which has handicap access. There are restrooms located downstairs and upstairs, but they are in need of total renovation. The entire facility needs a comprehensive study to determine a plan of action for necessary renovations to make the building safer and more usable as well as bringing it in compliance with ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) standards.

Though the building is in need of much renovation, it is well used by the county. The courthouse houses the County Commissioner's Office, Tax Commissioner, Magistrate Judge, Tax Assessor, Sheriff's Department, the Clerk of the Court, Registrar, Probate Judge, the County Extension Service and Soil Conservation Service as well as the Court Room, Jury Room and District Attorney's Office.

Assessments:

- The Irwin County Courthouse needs a complete study of its structure and systems to determine what actions need to be taken to renovate and repair the building.
- The departments and space requirements for each need to be evaluated to determine where changes need to occur.
- By 2003, the Courthouse was within a year and a half of being completely renovated at a cost of \$1.1M.

Ocilla Municipal Services Building

Ocilla's Municipal Services Building (City Hall) is located at 111 N. Irwin Avenue. This building was completed in 1986 and appears to be in good condition. The staff reports that there are no major problems with the building or its systems and that it is equipped to serve the handicapped. The only reported problem with this building is the need for additional storage space for records.

This building houses many offices and offers many services. The Mayor has an office there as well as office space for the four staff members that run the office. The City Clerk and the Building Official also have offices located in the building. There is also a conference room that is mainly used for City Council meetings.

Some of the services provided by this office include: Collecting utility bills for water, gas, and garbage. The office also distributes business licenses and collects property taxes. The department works with the citizens on utility hookups and disconnections. The staff also handles requests from the Mayor and City Council as well as for the City Clerk. The office also handles bills and insurance for the city and maintains city personnel records and many other duties dealing with city officials, residents, visitors and other duties relating to record keeping, filing, and money handling.

Assessment:

- The building is in good condition and the office space is sufficient, but more storage space for records, files, etc. is needed.

Ocilla City Barn

The Ocilla City Barn was constructed in 1988 and is located in the 200 block off of Fifth and Elm Streets. The building is one story with an upstairs for storage only. It also contains an office, a shop, a supply room, storage room, and a shelter for equipment. The building consists of approximately 3,825 sq. ft. and a total of 8 people who maintain the streets and sanitation system.

The building is relatively new and therefore has no structural or system problems. It is handicap accessible and complies with AWDA standards. There are no proposed additions or remodeling scheduled for this building, but there is a need for more space and a concrete floor for the shelter area.

County Road Department (Public Works)

The Road Department Office is located off of Highway 90, a short distance from Ocilla, (see Map 4-2). This land and building has always served as the county farm. In the past it was used for the chain gang. Today, the land and buildings are used for service and storage of road buildings and maintenance equipment. There are 17 full time employees that work for this department, which works between the hours of 7:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The Road Department uses an approximately 20,000 sq. ft. one-story building for office and equipment. The building is plenty large for all services that are provided by this department, but the building is in need of a new roof and a heating system. The roof is in poor condition with many leaks and the only heat source for the shop is an old wood stove. The employees need a better work environment. The roof and heating system are the most pressing issues with this facility.

Assessment:

- Plans should be made to replace the roof on the county barn as well as for a heating system.

Irwin County Chamber of Commerce

The Irwin County Chamber of Commerce is located on Irwin Avenue south of the courthouse. The building is a relatively new one-story building. It contains two offices, a conference room with kitchen area and a restroom. The building is in good shape with no immediate physical problems. The Irwin County Chamber Of Commerce office will serve the citizen's needs throughout the twenty-year planning period.

Irwin County Department of Family and Children Services (DFCS)

The Irwin County Department of Family and Children Services is located at 108 North Irwin Avenue across from the City Hall. The facility is located in a historic building that once served as a hospital and a building that was a doctor's office. Over the years, part of the old hospital was turned into a motel. The Irwin County Department of Family and Children Services occupies the entire building. The building consists of approximately 6, 121 sq. ft. of floor space. Of this, DFCS is funded by the state to use 5, 171 sq. ft. while 950 sq. ft. is not presently funded by the state.

The building is in good condition due to renovations by the owner and DFCS. Over time, the entire building has been refurbished on the interior. The current space is adequate for now and for the future and the building has no wiring or plumbing problems. Part of the heating/air conditioning system has recently been replaced and the other part is in need of replacement. The only real problem with the building is a small amount of leaking due to some roof problems. The only staff problem is that there is a lack of staff. The State of Georgia has cut over four jobs in the DFCS Office last year.

The location of the facility is great. It is in downtown Ocilla right across from the Municipal Services Building. Citizens without transportation can pay their bills at the city office and then just walk across the street to receive services from DFCS. The health department is just behind the DFCS building within walking distance also. This combination makes for a good location for all three services. A problem with this location, though, is parking. The number of parking spaces is inadequate for the volume of clients served by the facility.

The Department provides many programs that are beneficial to lower income residents of Ocilla and Irwin County. These programs are: AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children), Food Stamp Program, Energy Assistance Program, Subsidized Child Care, PEACH (Positive Employment and Community Help, Medical Assistance Program, Medical Assistance Only Program, ARM Program, Claim Management Program, Non-Emergency Transportation Program, and the FEMA (Federal Emergency Assistance Program. In addition to these programs, DFCS also provides for day care of young children, foster parents for children, a Child Abuse Protocol Committee, A Child Support Recovery Unit, Adoption Services, Homemaker Services, Nursing Homes Placement Services, Child Protective Services, Adult Protective Services, and Preventative and Supportive Services as well as many special programs and teaching seminars for members of Ocilla and Irwin County.

Irwin Community Service Center (Coastal Plain EOA)

The Irwin Community Service Center of the Coastal Plain EOA was constructed in 1971 (added onto a building constructed in 1946) and is located in the northeastern part of Ocilla at 420 N. Oak Street. The facility targets programs for low-income residents but also functions as a general neighborhood community center. The building consists of approximately 8,000 square feet with a seating capacity of approximately 500 in the main room. It is staffed by a director and 7 full-time personnel. The facility provides a nutrition program for the elderly which includes daily lunches, and a Head Start program which functions as a pre-school for 4-year-old children of low-income parents. The facility also serves as a meeting place for a Youth Alliance program which meets everyday and a parole officer who is there every Wednesday. In addition, the facility also provides services for funerals, neighborhood dances/socials, and high school proms. The center is centrally located in a predominantly low-income

neighborhood and has no parking problems. Despite its age, the building is still in fairly good condition. There have been recent minor repairs to the roof and one of the 3 central air conditioning units has been recently replaced. The building is handicap accessible and complies with AWDA standards. As with other active community centers, there is always a need for more volunteers and more community support.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Both the Ocilla Police Department and the Irwin County Sheriff's Department are set up along traditional functional lines. The City Police Department has a 16-member staff, which consists of a police chief, one plainclothes investigator, a records clerk, one captain, one lieutenant, one sergeant, five uniformed patrolmen, one patrolman/dispatcher, two auxiliary patrolmen, and four dispatcher/jailers. All personnel, except two jailers, are certified.

An elective sheriff who serves as the county's chief law enforcement officer, jailer, and the chief administrative officer of the courts heads the Irwin County Sheriff's Department. Five other personnel are a records clerk/secretary, one deputy assigned to investigative duties and three deputies assigned to general police service duties. All personnel are certified.

The City of Ocilla and Irwin County share and staff the use of a common detention facility, the Irwin County Jail, which is located at 400 South Irwin Avenue, in Ocilla. The structure was constructed in 1974 and has approximately 3,400 square feet. This facility also serves as the headquarters location for city and county enforcement officials. Under an agreement between the city and county, reached at a meeting on December 12, 1974, the City Police Department operate the Irwin County Jail under the general supervision of the county sheriff. The terms of the agreement obligate each unit of government to provide its own vehicles and the maintenance thereon; to share equally the cost of communications, radio equipment and utility costs. Each unit of government pays the cost of meals for its own prisoners. The County pays and provides janitorial services for the jail, while the City provides around-the-clock radio dispatch, jailer services, and acts as the centralized dispatcher for fire and ambulance services. The Irwin County Jail has a designed capacity of 20 prisoners and an average daily occupancy of twelve.

Review of the 1989 Criminal Justice Data for Georgia Cities and Counties shows that the "index crimes" of murder, rape, robbery aggravated assault accounted for 10.6 percent of reported crimes. Property crimes, including burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft and arson accounted for 89.4 percent of reported crimes. The statewide average is 70 offenses per 1,000 population and the rate in Irwin County/Ocilla is 32 offenses per 1,000 population. While crimes of any classification, occurring at any defined rate are of concern to every community, crime in this community occurs less frequently than in the state at large and offenses are generally less severe. According to the U.S. Justice Department and the International City Management Association standards, there should be at least 2.7 sworn law enforcement officers per 1,000 population. Irwin County and Ocilla collectively meet these standards with 23 sworn officers.

A new 335-bed medium security detention facility was completed in 1992 and is located in the South Industrial Park. This prison is a private enterprise, which meets state and federal detention standards. Irwin County through a contractual arrangement was suppose to operate the facility and the prisoners would come from other jurisdictions. The facility would require 60 persons to operate. At present there have been administrative/contractual problems and the facility remains vacant. Between 1995-2001 the facility was under contract and operated. It remained idle in 2002 and 2003, and is under contract to be operated in 2004. It is in the county's economic interests to foster a cooperative program to market this detention facility, and keep it operating.

Irwin County and the City of Ocilla conducted a management study in 1991 to meet the required level of police protection services with effective and efficient control over the costs involved. The study conclusions provided four optional manpower strategies that would all combine the management under a single countywide police department with two coverage zones that would provide effective police protection services on a 24-hour basis. The report, "The Administration of Laws and Law Enforcement in Irwin County and Ocilla, Georgia" sets up the foundation and discusses the parameters that need to be investigated when public officials seriously want to overhaul an existing law enforcement system. Greater Irwin can provide the coverage and meet the public safety needs without additional manpower throughout the 20-year planning period.

FIRE PROTECTION

The City of Ocilla operates a volunteer fire department. The fire station is located on Fifth Street adjacent to the City Barn. The Fire Department has the following pumpers: 1 - 1987 GMC 1,000 GPM Pumper with a 1,000 gallon tank and 1 - 1970 Ford 750 GPM Pumper with a 500 gallon tank. Fire calls are transmitted by a siren system and beepers are used to notify the 16 volunteers. This is coordinated through the Ocilla Police Department on a 24-hour basis.

The Ocilla Fire Chief has gained City Council permission to respond to fires within a five mile radius of Ocilla. The City sends their older truck outside the corporate limits and serves at no cost. The Fire Chief was not familiar with any mutual aid agreements existing with other units of government. The Fire Chief places a high priority on fire training and is seeking three full-time firemen, so there is always one person operational for fire calls. The Insurance Service Office (ISO) rates each fire department's capacity to fight fires and their rating (from 10 to 1, with 1 being the best and 10 the worst) determines a public protection classification, which may be used to develop advisory property insurance premium calculations. The individual business, industrial, and public domain property owner is well advised to understand the ISO rating for the area in which they reside. Insurance premiums can decrease 10 to 15 percent by an ISO class change of one step. The City of Ocilla had an ISO rating of 9 in 1988. The rating is based on several factors: manpower, training, equipment, location of fire station(s), availability of water at fire hydrants, and pumping capacity, to name a few. Oftentimes the investment of a few thousand dollars can save several thousands of dollars in insurance premiums. The Insurance Service Office can evaluate your water and fire protection systems and make suggestions to help the city improve their ISO rating.

In 1986, Irwin County requested the Georgia Forestry Commission to prepare a "Master Plan For Fire Protection, Irwin County, Georgia". The Plan proposed three fire stations at Irwinville, County Work Camp and the third at the City/County Landfill east of Ocilla. The plan suggested the County appoint one coordinator to oversee the general fire protection program, construct and equip the fire stations, maintain equipment, setup fire training systems and gain direction from a panel of board members appointed by the County Commission. The estimated start-up costs for buildings and equipment was \$189,949 with another \$25,000 needed annually to operate the countywide fire department. The County has submitted two public facility community development block grant applications (1986 & 1989), but they were unable to secure the needed funding to provide countywide fire protection services. The protection of lives and property from fire is of grave importance. Until 1990, the City of Ocilla was the only provider of fire protection services to its residents within the two square mile incorporated area. Irwin County took the state mandate to form an "emergency management agency" and under its guidance they have formed a unified countywide fire department with fire stations in Holt, Irwinville, Tucker (SR 90), and Waterloo. These four stations have six pumpers and one fire knocker and 100 volunteers. The ISO rating within the four fire station service areas is a Class 9. The County budgets approximately \$6,000 per year per station and numerous fund raising events and activities raise dollars for needed equipment, vehicles, maintenance and training. Each fire station has a five mile radius service area shown on Map 4-3. A fifth fire station service area is being considered for the southwest part of the county near the Pleasure Lake - Our Town area, and in 1999 a new fire station was constructed, which means all of Irwin County has fire protection services. The Emergency Management Agency director serves as the County's coordinator for fire and rescue services and in that capacity, is updating and preparing mutual aid agreements with neighboring counties and communities. Irwin County is in the process of gaining property owner permissions and constructing "dry hydrants" for fire protection water supplies throughout the county. There are plans to have 41 dry hydrant sites on line by 1997.

The Irwin County Emergency Management Agency (EMA) has 20 certified hazardous materials rescue personnel and a truck to respond on a first-alert basis. They also have two persons trained and certified for radiological monitoring services. The Haz-Mat team is beginning to purchase the necessary clothing and equipment so they can function beyond the level of identification and crowd control.

HEALTH CARE

Irwin County Hospital

Irwin County constructed the 34-bed hospital in 1953 and it is located in Ocilla at 710 North Irwin Avenue. The one-story structure currently has a total floor area of 12,600 square feet. The hospital is now a private facility and has recently initiated a two-phase expansion/renovations program. These include the addition of an outpatient wing, 40 new parking spaces, expansions to the emergency room and administrative offices, and renovations to the remainder of the facility. Phase I of this program is scheduled to be completed in 1994. When both phases are completed, the size of the facility will have increased to more than 20,000 square feet. The hospital has a management contract with Memorial Health Services of Adel, which has proved beneficial.

Irwin County Hospital has maintained an 85% occupancy rate and its total admissions were 4,387 in 1992. Nineteen percent of the total admissions were "inpatients" and 81% (3,540) were "outpatients". This percentage difference is common to most other South Georgia community hospitals. Irwin County Hospital differs from other hospitals by being able to maintain a high inpatient occupancy rate.

Irwin County Hospital has five full-time physicians, three part-time physicians and ten specialty physicians visit the facility regularly. The hospital has eighteen full-time nurses and sixteen part-time nurses. There are a total of 100 staff employed at Irwin County Hospital and another 41 persons employed in the adjacent 30-bed nursing home. The existing facility, with its expansion/renovations program, will be adequate for the 20-year planning period.

Irwin County Health Center

The Irwin County Health Center was constructed in 1963, and is located on West Fourth and Beech Streets (see Map 4-2). The primary structure has 2,982 square feet and a secondary facility located three blocks away on the corner of Third and Cherry Streets has 1,200 square feet. The secondary facility houses the Shapp Clinic and the Aftercare clinic. These services are located at this alternate site because of lack of space at the primary center. The primary structure was designed to serve 562 patients per year and in 1992 they served 3,087 clients.

The need for public health services has increased dramatically over the past thirty years. The original intent was to provide services to the schools for immunizations, screening examinations and provide skilled nursing care to persons in their homes. As the number of programs grew from 10 in 1963, to 22 in 1993, the County Health Department has tripled to 6 employees and another 17 employees of the State Board of Health have to share this space too. The County has submitted applications in 1992, 1993, and 1994 to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to construct a 6,250 square-foot health center and combine all 22 programs and staff under one public health center roof. The 1994, an application for CDBG funds helped Irwin County construct their new Health Center on West Fourth Street. All health service programs are operated out of this new facility, and this facility will be adequate for the 20-year planning period.

EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES

The Irwin County Emergency Medical Service commenced operations in 1972 and presently answer 600 emergency calls per year. Base operations are at 107 East Third Street, Ocilla, which is an office. The average response time in the city is 3.4 minutes and 14 minutes throughout the county. The Irwin County EMS fleet consists of the following:

- 1985 Ford Van Ambulance
- 1988 Ford Van Ambulance
- 1991 Ford Modual Ambulance

The staff of the Irwin County EMS includes one full-time and one part-time advanced life support certified paramedics, and four full-time and four part-time basic life support emergency medical technicians. The EMS has an excellent record of responding to calls and collecting on accounts, but has never provided roofed storage of their vehicles and equipment. In the next five years they intend to replace the 1985 ambulance with a modual ambulance.

PUBLIC WATER SYSTEMS

City of Ocilla

Ocilla's public water distribution system is depicted on Map 4-4. The maintenance building for the water system (and other city utilities) was constructed in 1905 and is located near the downtown water tank and adjacent to the city's main well. The building is currently in poor condition and it should be re-designed and re-constructed to meet the city's current and future needs. The city's main well is located out in the open with little or no protection from vandalism or the elements. A protective shelter for the well should be included in the re-design of the adjacent utilities building.

The water service area includes all developed portions of the city limits as well as some of the adjacent county enclave areas where there is already development, or development is likely to occur. The system was originally designed in the 1950's by J.E. O'Toole Engineering, Inc. from Birmingham, Alabama. The current engineer is Tribble & Richardson, Inc. in Macon, Georgia who designed the most recent major system improvements in 1981. In general, the water quality has been good and the existing lines have required only minor maintenance. However, there have been reports of "rusty water" and this is believed to be caused by older pipes which may need replacing. Unfortunately, there are only a few as-builts on file and these are only for the more recent expansions and upgrades. The lack of a comprehensive set of system drawings, including an overall map, has made it difficult to inventory, maintain, or upgrade the system due to lack of existing information.

Water is provided by three deep wells (approximately 600' deep) with a combined pumping capacity of 2,600 gpm. These feed into two elevated storage tanks with a combined storage capacity of 310,000 gallons. The main well/tank site is located in the northeastern part of downtown near the corner of Elm Street and Fifth Street. This site contains a 60,000-gallon tank with the old well pump (200 gpm) on the west side of Elm Street and a new well pump (1,200 gpm) located on the east side of Elm Street. The other site is located in the northern part of the city along the north side of Pine Street, one block east of Irwin Avenue. It consists of a 250,000-gallon water tank and a 1,200 gpm well pump. The distribution system consists of 12" lines running from the elevated tanks then dropping down to 10" and 8" as the lines disperse to all parts of the city. The north industrial area and the new Southside industrial park are both served directly by 12" major lines even though they are in far corners of the service area. This is in order to help give these industrial properties the higher required water flows for fire protection. Fire hydrants are spaced throughout the system. In 1998, water and forced main sanitary sewer was extended one-mile west of Irwin Avenue on Sly Hill Road to service a forty-acre industrial park, which was producing frames for manufactured homes. The City plans to add a water supply well, 500K gallon elevated storage tank, and 43 more acres of land with EDA/One Georgia funding assistance on this \$1.3M project.

The overall system serves approximately 1,200 metered customers and there are only a very few residences in the city that are not connected. Total average daily consumption is approximately 100,000 gallons. As could be expected by the existing land use pattern, residential consumption averages approximately twice the commercial/industrial consumption. If all three wells pumped at full capacity for just one hour, they could meet the city's total daily requirement. Therefore in terms of water production, there is still a lot of available capacity. In

terms of water pressure, the system is faced with the problem of many long dead-end lines with diminishing water pressure. This could create fire protection problems where the pressure is too low. A good solution may be to loop these lines where possible to gain more flow and pressure. If further development occurs in the Southside industrial park, it may become necessary to add a third elevated tank in the southern part of the city.

Irwinville Water Works, Inc.

Irwinville's community water distribution system is fairly small and depicted on Map 4-5. The water service area includes all developed areas of Irwinville. The water system was first installed in 1935 with federal funds for public water systems in rural areas. In 1949, the system was sold to Hubert Godwin and became a private system. By 1968, the system had been losing money for Mr. Godwin and it was sold back to the community of Irwinville. A loan was received from FmHA to rehabilitate existing lines and add several new ones. The community is still paying back the loan in annual installments and it will be paid-off by around the year 2000. In 1984, the system plan drawings had deteriorated and these were redrawn (traced) by a local draftsman. The system has no current "engineer" although the 1968 system improvements were designed by Tribble & Associates Engineering from Macon, Georgia. If a problem occurs that is too advanced to be repaired locally, Tidwell Well Service in Tifton is contacted for assistance.

Water is provided by one large capacity pump (6" connection line) and a small backup pump (4" connection line). The pumping capacities for these two pumps is not known. However due to the small size of the system and the infrequency at which the pump runs, it is believed to be operating at well-below capacity. The pumps feed into a 10,000 gallon elevated storage tank that is 60' high. Current distribution lines include the old 6" trunk lines running east and west from the tank. A looped network of newer 2" lines run off of the trunk lines. These generally follow all of the interior streets as well as running west along SR 32/125 for about a quarter mile. Fire hydrants are spaced throughout the system but are not very effective when located on smaller diameter lines.

The water system presently has 57 customers which includes 8 businesses and 2 churches. Only a very few eligible customers within the service are not connected to the system. The total number of customers has been slowly but steadily decreasing over the years and is beginning to threaten the necessary revenues needed to make payments on the FmHA loan. The present typical monthly water consumption (system total) ranges from about 150,000 gallons during the month of May to about 320,000 gallons during the month of July.

The system currently has difficulty achieving greater than 30 psi pressure anywhere in its network. This could be caused by blockages in its main distribution lines and would pose a problem in case the system's water was needed for fire fighting. The interior part of the service area has looped lines but there are also several meandering dead-end lines that could be easily looped. This would increase the overall flow and pressure throughout the system. Another area of concern is the system's decreasing customer base which could eventually cause financial hardship on the remaining system customers.

Mystic Public Water, Inc.

Mystic's community water distribution system is fairly small (but larger than Irwinville's) and depicted on Map 4-6. The water service area includes all areas of Mystic within its internal street system. The system was built in 1969 with funds from an FmHA loan (\$37,000) which is being repaid in monthly installments until about the year 2000. The system was originally designed by Bahr, Wilson & Associates, Inc. from Savannah, Georgia and these as-built drawings are currently on file. However, these drawings are not well-protected from the elements and the overall system drawing has faded beyond recognition. It should be noted that construction of the system was not professionally supervised and there is no guarantee that the as-built details are accurate with what currently exists. The system has no current "engineer" and so far all maintenance has been performed locally.

Water is provided by one large capacity pump (installed 1976) with no backup. The water is pumped through a hypochlorinator into a 5,000 gallon hydropneumatic pressure storage tank which sits near ground level. Both of these are centrally located next to each other near Mystic's main intersection of SR 32 and Tift Street. Distribution lines include a 6" line running from the tank which connects to smaller lines that disperse water to all parts of the community. Fire hydrants are spaced throughout the system but are not very effective when located on the smaller diameter lines.

The water system presently has 112 customers and this number has remained fairly steady in recent years. In terms of customer base, the current size is approximately equal to the design capacity and any significant growth within Mystic may require a major upgrade to the existing water system. None of the existing water lines are currently looped and this has unnecessarily caused reduced water pressure. By 1998, a new well and water supply lines were constructed and an elevated tank was added. This was accomplished under a '94 CDBG multi-public facility application. Irwin County took over the operation and maintenance of the Mystic Public Water system.

SANITARY SEWER SYSTEM

City of Ocilla

Ocilla's public sewer system is depicted on Map 4-7 and is the only public sewer within Irwin County. The sewer service area includes all developed portions of the city limits as well as some of the adjacent county enclave areas where there is already development, or development is likely to occur. The system was originally designed in the early 1900's and has been expanded and rehabilitated numerous times since. The original system designer/engineer is unknown. The current engineer is Tribble & Richardson, Inc. from Macon, Georgia who has designed the more recent system expansions. There are only a few as-builts on file and these are only for the more recent expansions and upgrades. The lack of a comprehensive set of system drawings, including an overall map, has made it difficult to maintain or upgrade the system due to lack of existing information.

Sewage is collected by a gravity system consisting of many pipes feeding into a series of 6 lift stations. It is then pumped by force main, usually to another set of collection lines, and then eventually into a pair of treatment/oxidation ponds (48 acres total). From here, the treated wastewater is discharged through a nearby spray irrigation field (87 acres). The city's main lift station (at Stump Creek) is currently under a "consent order" for repairs and restoration, and these are currently in process. System users currently consist of 947 residential and 164 commercial/industrial for a total of 1,111. More than 96% of Ocilla's households have sanitary sewer service available.

The treatment facility is permitted and designed to treat a maximum of 850,000 gallons per day. The actual amount treated averages approximately 100,000 gallons per day. However during the rainy season, the treatment flow may be in excess of 500,000 gallons per day due to sewer line infiltration. The oxidation ponds are not presently large enough to handle this much water volume and during periods of heavy rain, the ponds will outfall into Stump Creek.

Some of the older collection lines are clay and need to be replaced with newer lines. (These are possibly a major source for the line infiltration.) There have been recent expansions to the system in the far northeastern part of the city. Because of a sloping underground gravity collection system and their long distance from the lift station, these lines are fairly shallow in their placement. Any additional expansions in this area will require a new lift station to service deeper lines. Also, one of the existing lift stations (on Fourth Street) will need rebuilding soon.

The City of Ocilla completed a \$2M sanitary sewer renovation program in 2000, which addressed renovations to three lift stations and the replacement of a majority of the clay collection lines.

NATURAL GAS SERVICE

City of Ocilla

The City of Ocilla maintains its own natural gas distribution system in a service area that is nearly as large as either its water or sewer service areas. The only significant portions of the city limits that do not have available service are the Pinewood Subdivision off of US 129/319 north, the east side of the south industrial park and some of the new developments off of Lax Road and Brushy Creek Church Road in the southeastern part of the city.

Natural gas is purchased from Southern Natural Gas Company and is metered through a single regulator station where the feed line connects to the city system just northwest of the city. There are currently only about 520 customers, which represent less than half of the possible customers within the service area. This is due to lack of connections to existing facilities rather than lack of facilities themselves. There is an apparent preference for propane gas over natural gas among the residents of Ocilla. There are currently no plans for system expansion.

ELECTRIC DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

Irwin County's electricity is provided by either Georgia Power Company or Irwin County Electric Membership Corporation (EMC). Map 4-9 depicts the designated service areas for these two providers as well as the location of major transmission lines across the entire county. As depicted on this map, Georgia Power serves the entire City of Ocilla as well as part of the Our Town Community and a corridor running northward from Ocilla toward Fitzgerald. Irwin County EMC has a very large service area which includes all of the remainder of Irwin County as well as the following: all of unincorporated Ben Hill and Turner Counties, northern Tift County, northeastern Berrien County, southeastern Wilcox County, and the western edge of Coffee County.

Georgia Power serves approximately 1,426 customers inside Ocilla plus about 60 customers outside the city. Most all of the customers are residential as indicated by the existing land use pattern. All remaining electrical consumers are served by Irwin County EMC.

SOLID WASTE

The Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act of 1990 required all local governments in Georgia to develop a ten-year solid waste management plan. Irwin County and the City of Ocilla, along with the counties and cities in the following counties: Ben Hill, Berrien, Brooks, Cook, Lanier, Lowndes, Tift and Turner have jointly prepared and gained Georgia Departments of Natural Resources and Community Affairs concurrence on the "South Georgia Multi-Jurisdictional Solid Waste Management Plan" on September 18, 1992. To meet the ten-year update requirements Irwin County and Ocilla have prepared the "2004-2013 Irwin County / Ocilla Solid Waste Management Plan".

TRANSPORTATION - Streets and Roads

The Georgia Department of Transportation has prepared a functional classification system for all roadways in Irwin County and the City of Ocilla. The functional classification system provides a useful tool for public management in that road systems are classified according to the character of service they provide. Roads provide two basic functions: access to property and corridors for the movement of people and goods. Map 4-10 depicts the functional classification of streets and roads in Irwin County and Map 4-11 depicts classifications in and around the City of Ocilla. The functional classifications applicable to Ocilla and Irwin County are defined as follows:

Arterial: These roadways are designed to carry relatively large traffic volumes throughout the community and to major trip-generating destinations such as centers of employment and large shopping districts. In typically rural counties such as Irwin, these roadways are usually federal and state maintained highways which link to other communities in surrounding counties.

Collector: These roadways are designed to collect traffic from the local street system and carry it to arterial roadways. While experiencing greater volumes and speeds than the local road network, these roadways also

Revised
Section
2-4-04

IRWIN/OCILLA CP - CORRECTIONS/ADDITIONS (underlined)

Page 4-10 SOLID WASTE

The Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act of 1990 required all local governments in Georgia to develop ten-year solid waste management plans. Irwin County and the City of Ocilla, along with the counties and cities in the following counties: Ben Hill, Berrien, Brooks, Cook, Echols, Lanier, Lowndes, Tift and Turner have jointly prepared and gained Georgia Departments of Natural Resources and Community Affairs concurrence on the "South Georgia Multi-Jurisdictional Solid Waste Management Plan" on September 18, 1992.

New local comprehensive planning standards and procedures and solid waste management planning standards and procedures became effective in 2004. Irwin County and Ocilla opted to prepare separate ten-year updated documents for their joint local comprehensive plan and their solid waste management plan.

Irwin County and Ocilla have a private contractor collect solid waste on a door-to-door basis in the City and from green boxes in the county. There are no public or private disposal facilities within the county. All solid waste is disposed in the Tifton/Tift County Landfill and there are assurances in writing that these wastes can be disposed for ten years. The waste collection system is evaluated on an annual basis and is adequate throughout the planning period. The proposed "2004-2013 Irwin County / Ocilla Solid Waste Management Plan" includes programs and strategies to more effectively reduce the amount of solid waste and intensify recycling efforts.

provide direct access to adjacent properties.

Local: These roadways are intended to be relatively low-volume with a primary function of providing direct access to property.

There are 9 federal or state highways which cross all or portions of Irwin County; linking it to Interstate 75 (10 miles to the west) and other communities such as Ashburn, Douglas, Fitzgerald and Tifton. US 129 bisects the county on a north-south axis, passing through the city of Ocilla and linking it with the City of Fitzgerald to the north and Berrien County to the south. US 319 connects Ocilla with the City of Tifton to the southwest and is combined with US 129 running north to Fitzgerald. SR 32 crosses the county on an east-west axis passing through Ocilla as well as the rural communities of Holt, Irwinville and Mystic. SR 90 is combined with US 129/319 running north from Ocilla to Fitzgerald. It also runs southeastward from Ocilla to the rural community of Lax, then onward to the small town of Willacoochee. SR 107 runs east-west across the northwestern part of the county and connects Fitzgerald with I-75 in Turner County. SR 125 crosses the western part of the county (merging with SR 32 for part of the distance) and passes through the rural communities of Irwinville and Waterloo. It primarily serves as the connector between Fitzgerald and Tifton. SR 135 and SR 206 cross the extreme northeastern corner of the county and serve as a link between Fitzgerald and Douglas. SR 158 runs eastward from US 129 along the southern county border to the rural community of Lax and then continues eastward to Douglas.

In the City of Ocilla, federal/state right-of-way totals 10.8 miles (half of this is outside the compact urban core), local paved right-of-way totals 24.6 miles and unpaved right-of-way totals 3.8 miles. This gives a total of nearly 40 miles of right-of-way that is maintained within the city limits. In the unincorporated portions of the county, federal/state right-of-way totals about 80 miles, local paved right-of-way totals more than 150 miles, and local unpaved totals more than 400 miles. Maintenance for all of these roads includes shoulder mowing, bridge inspection and replacement, occasional resurfacing, and periodic grading of unpaved roads. The many miles of county unpaved roads and low number of road graders means that road crews are constantly busy. The Georgia Department of Transportation has created a 3-year Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). In Irwin County, projects include several bridge widenings, repavings, addition of lanes, etc.

Traffic volumes in greater Irwin County are comparatively low and these are depicted on Map 4-12 for Irwin County and on Map 4-13 for the Ocilla area. The highest traffic volumes are found on US 129/319 running north from Ocilla and along SR 32 running through the center of Ocilla. These road segments have between 5,000 and 10,000 average annual daily trips (AADT). Roads that have between 1,000 and 5,000 AADT are generally the other county arterials as well as Old Fitzgerald Highway and part of Frank Road.

TRANSPORTATION - Railroad Service

Railroads in Irwin County are limited to CSX Railroad tracks running through the far northwestern and northeastern rural areas and passing through the rural communities of Osierfield and Wray. These tracks are through-lines connecting Fitzgerald with Cordele and Douglas, and contain no rail customers inside Irwin County. Until 1991, there was a spur line running southward from Fitzgerald through the center of Ocilla and dead-ending on the south side of the city. This track served several industrial businesses that used to be located in Ocilla. The railroad was removed due to the loss of rail customers. Many years ago, railroads also served the communities of Irwinville and Mystic and were mostly responsible for their early prosperity. However, the tracks have long since been removed and these communities have decreased in size and population.

TRANSPORTATION - Aviation

The Fitzgerald Municipal Airport located on the south side of Fitzgerald provides general aviation service.

Approximately 46 acres of this facility are actually located inside Irwin County. The airport includes a 5,000-foot paved runway (100' wide) and 3,400-foot grass runway (300' wide). The airport contains only locally based aircraft with no commercial passenger service. Irwin County's closest scheduled air passenger service is located approximately 50 miles away in either Albany or Valdosta.

RECREATION

The Park and Recreation Committee, a joint Irwin County and Ocilla venture provide recreational opportunities at six sites and a local service club provides three lighted baseball fields on 31.9-acre site called Lions Park. Most of the county/city active recreation programs for youth and adult softball and baseball are conducted at a 13-acre Lax Road Park. Cumbee Park, is a one-half acre picnic and playground facility located adjacent to the Chamber of Commerce/Recreation complex on South Irwin Avenue; College Hill Park on the northeast side of Ocilla is a 4.3 acre facility with one ballfield, one lighted and paved and two grass basketball courts with a restroom, picnic and playground area; an old elementary school park on west Fourth Street has two grass basketball courts and a paved track on 2.5 acres; and the Jefferson Davis Museum and picnic area located on 11.7 acres in Irwinville are attractive and high use passive recreation areas. The community of Waterloo has a community center building, and a one-third mile walking track with plans to construct baseball fields and a basketball court. These facilities are located on a 2.5 acre site next to the Waterloo Fire Station.

The private country club and commercial recreation area (Crystal Beach) were not factored into the public sector recreation facilities. Current national and state standards suggest ten acres of public recreation for each 1,000 population, so for Irwin County there should be 85.5 acres. The six county and city parks and the Lions Park total 66.4 acres, which means there is a need for another 19.1 acres of recreation land to meet the standard. Applying facility standards to Irwin County\Ocilla shows all baseball\softball and basketball court needs are met; but they need four tennis courts and one swimming pool.

The county and city policies toward recreation are voter directed and therefore they have provided the ballfields and been able for \$10,000 per year and lots of volunteer help to provide many recreational opportunities. The rural nature of Irwin County with vast woodlands, ponds, rivers and open space have allowed the residents to personally fulfill their own recreational pursuits. With population and employment declines and instability, recreation has not been a high priority among the resident voters, so consequently the elected officials chose to provide the basic needs for recreation. During the next five years the county and city plan to maintain the status quo in recreational facilities.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Irwin County Public Library

The Irwin County Public Library is located in Ocilla on the Courthouse Square at 310 South Beech Street. The building is one story and consists of 7,080 square feet of space. This building was renovated in 1986. It has a full time staff of three and a part time staff of three and is open 40 hours per week.

The library is funded by the City, County, and the State of Georgia. It houses a large collection of books, which numbers over 20,000, and a collection of video volumes. It also subscribes to 24 different periodicals. In addition to the collection of books and periodicals, the library offers an Adult Class for Study and a Genealogy Room.

The building is in good condition with no major problems. It also complies with the AWDA standards for the Handicapped. This facility will be adequate throughout the twenty-year planning period.

Ocilla Community House

The Ocilla Community House is located in the southern part of Ocilla at the northwest corner of Irwin Avenue and West Boulevard. It was constructed in 1938-39 by the City of Ocilla and "The Works Progress Administration". The building totals 3,280 square feet of floor area, including 2,090 square feet for a main meeting room. The building is maintained by the city, has an operations budget of nearly \$5,000, and is made available to local citizens on a reservation basis. It is currently used periodically by the local Lions Club and Rotary Club. However, the

building is also used occasionally for family reunions, special community events, etc.. The building is handicap accessible and complies with AWDA standards. The facility has been well-maintained over the years and is still in generally good condition. However, the roof contains several patches and is showing signs of its age. It will probably need to be replaced within the next few years.

Jefferson Davis Museum and Park

The Jefferson Davis Museum and Park is located north of Irwinville on County Road 264. The park is located on the site of the capture of President Jefferson Davis of the Confederate States shortly after the Civil War. The park consists of 12.66 acres and includes a monument surmounted by a bronze bust of Davis located on the exact spot where Davis was captured, a museum that contains Confederate documents and other relics from the Civil War, a picnic shelter and 12.5 acres of grounds. The facility is closed on Sunday and Monday, but is open Tuesday through Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. This site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

The museum contains 1,500 square feet of floor area and is in need of additional space. It has just undergone the installation of a new heating and cooling system and is currently in the process of being painted inside and outside. The building is handicap accessible and complies with AWDA standards and is in good shape except for the need of additional space, upgraded wiring, and upgraded lighting.

EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

Irwin County Board Of Education

The Irwin County Board of Education is located at 210 Apple Street in a building that was originally constructed by county prisoners as a Girl Scout hut. The building was later used by a training center for the handicapped. The building is one story in height and consists of 5090 sq. ft. The Irwin County Board of Education moved into the building in 1978 and added extra office space and a Board Room during the 1980's.

The building is in pretty good condition with only some plumbing problems. The roof, wiring, and systems are in good condition. The building complies with AWDA standards for the handicapped. Besides the plumbing problems, no other problems were reported except for the lack of needed extra space.

At present, the Irwin County Board of Education has three schools in operation with plans for a fourth. Irwin County Elementary School is located on Lax Road (Highway 90) and has grades preschool through 5. There are 65 teachers and 8 support staff at this facility. The Irwin Middle School is located at 310 North Almond and contains grades 6 through 8. There are 21 teachers there with 9 support staff. The Irwin County High School is also located at 310 North Almond and contains grades 9 through 12. This school has 29 teachers and 11 support staff. The Irwin County Board of Education is building a new Middle/High School that will include 60 classrooms and 10 laboratories totaling 130,000 sq. ft. This school will feature total technology with 550 computers, eight in each classroom and one in each office with a central hub of multi-media production. The Local Area Network will distribute via ten-base-T wiring and fiber optic interactive learning packages, full motion video in many cases and will be linked to wide area network features. Multimedia instruction, perhaps the most exciting area of a technology environment, will allow teachers to organize and present instruction in a new format.

The total enrollment for the system has fluctuated over the years from 1,733 in 1983 to 1,628 in 1987 to 1,816 in 1993. The average dropout rate is 30%, but the school has implemented some programs to help lower this figure. The school has implemented the Youth Alliance Project, the Chapter 1 Community Program, and the Fun Factory. An alternative program of education is offered through the Ben Hill - Irwin Technical Training Program. Of these programs, the Fun Factory was selected as a model program for Georgia and the Chapter 1 adult education program was selected as a State Model.

The average number of students attending post-secondary schools from Irwin County is 25%. These students have several choices for post-secondary education that is offered within an hour's drive from Irwin County. The choices include Ben Hill - Irwin Technical School which is located on the county line divided between Irwin and Ben Hill Counties. Abraham Baldwin College and South Georgia Colleges are two-year schools that are located close to

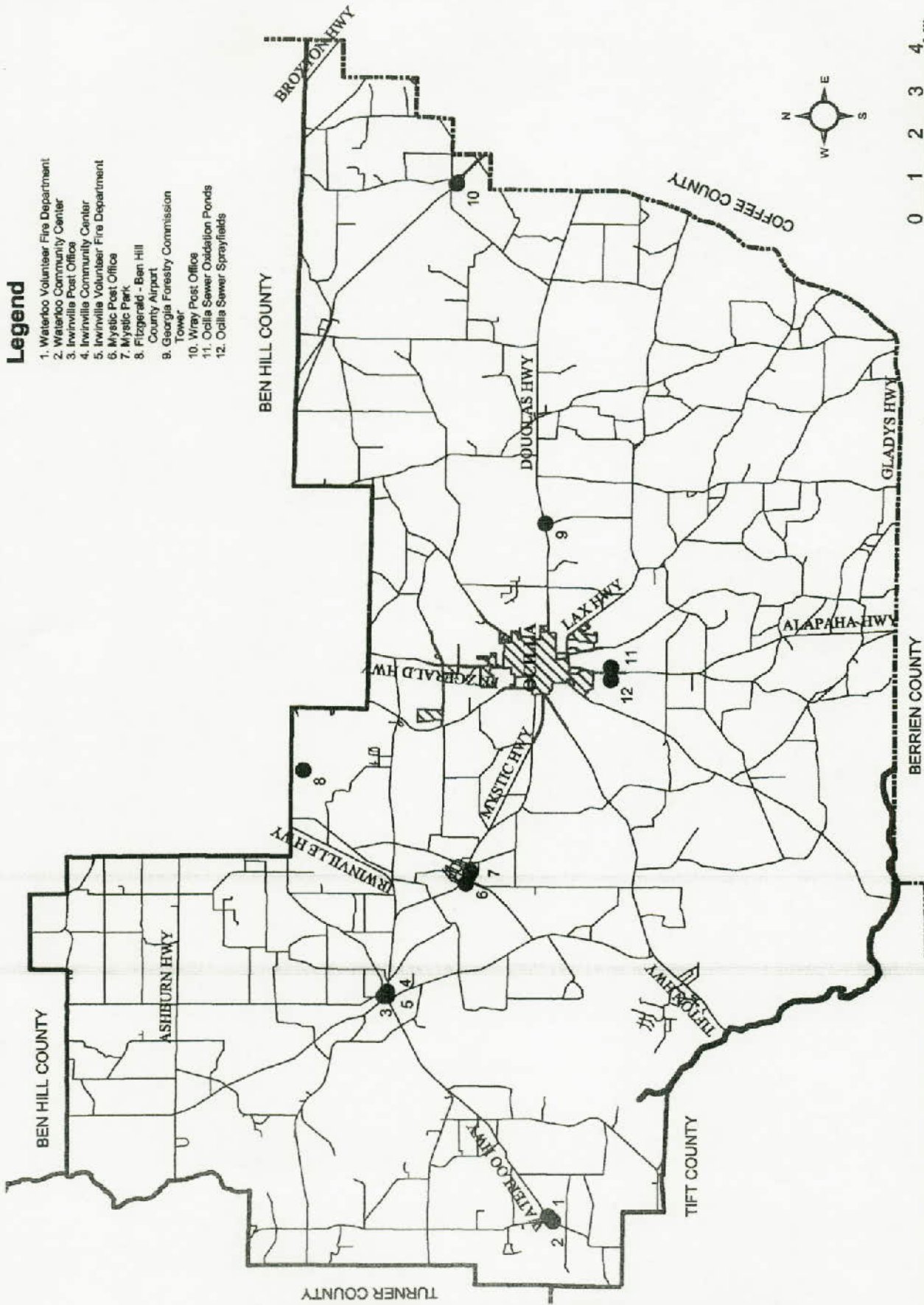
Irwin County and Valdosta State University is but a little over an hour away.

Assessments:

- The Irwin County Board of Education Office is in good condition except for a small amount of plumbing problems and the need of some additional space and two additional personnel.
- The Irwin County Elementary School is in need of eight additional classrooms.
- Irwin County Board of Education needs to make better provisions for usable auditorium space for student use as well as public use. The present auditorium at the old Elementary School in Ocilla has a seating capacity of 660. This auditorium has possibilities of being a fine facility for school use and community use, but is in need of renovation. The county owns this building, but the school system controls its use.
- In 2002, a strategic building renovation/use plan was prepared for vacated Elementary School/auditorium. A \$10,000 SHPO Heritage Grant funded this study. A second Heritage Grant for \$20,000 awarded in 2002-3 will begin to address repairs to the roof and replacement of all the windows.

Legend

- 1. Waterloo Volunteer Fire Department
- 2. Waterloo Community Center
- 3. Irwinville Post Office
- 4. Irwinville Community Center
- 5. Irwinville Volunteer Fire Department
- 6. Mystic Post Office
- 7. Mystic Park
- 8. Fitzgerald - Ben Hill County Airport
- 9. Georgia Forestry Commission Tower
- 10. Wray Post Office
- 11. Ocala Sewer Oxidation Ponds
- 12. Ocala Sewer Sprayfields



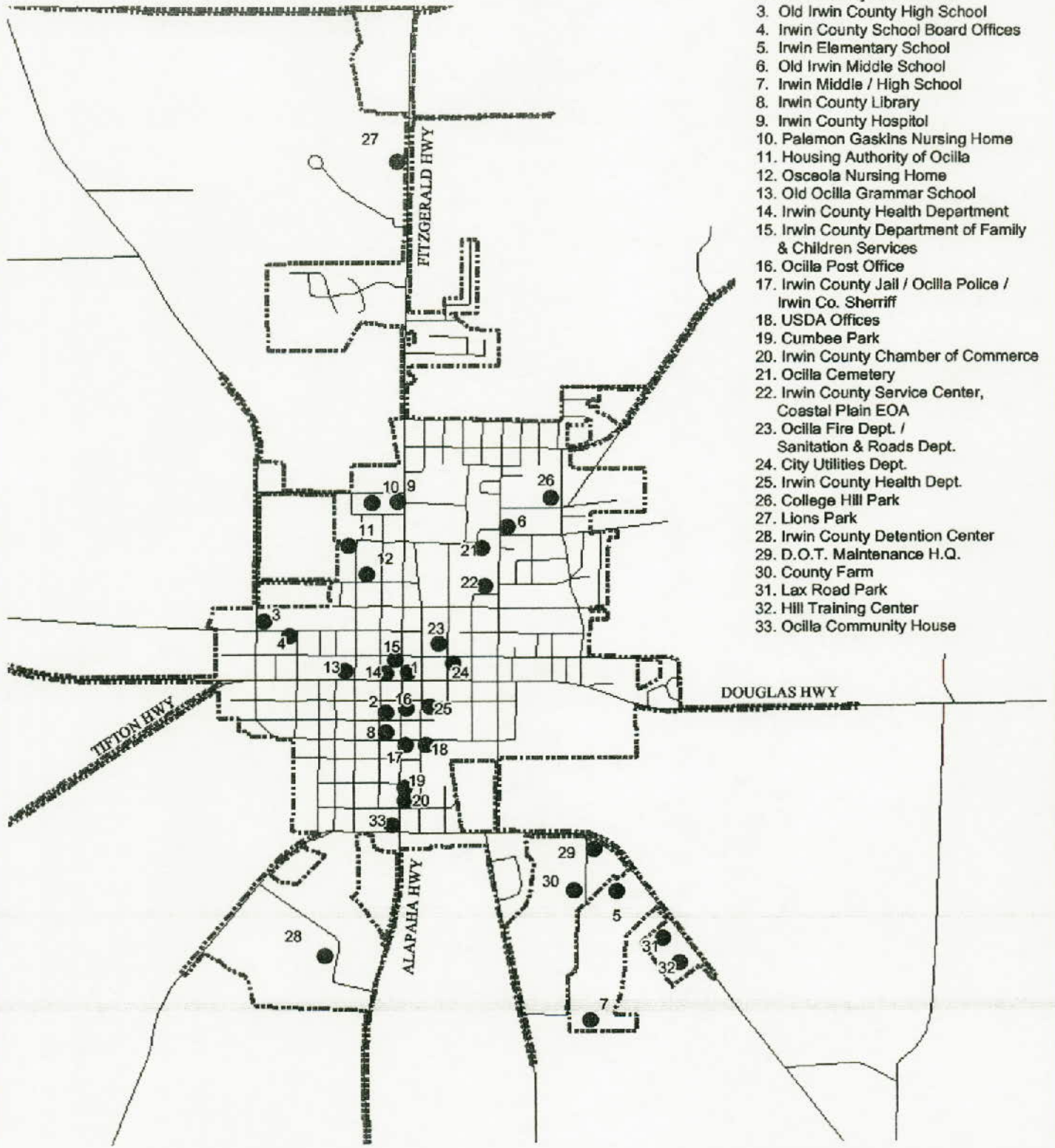
SOURCE: SOUTH GEORGIA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER, 2003

**MAP 4-1
IRWIN COUNTY FACILITIES & SERVICES**



Legend

1. Ocilla City Hall
2. Irwin County Courthouse
3. Old Irwin County High School
4. Irwin County School Board Offices
5. Irwin Elementary School
6. Old Irwin Middle School
7. Irwin Middle / High School
8. Irwin County Library
9. Irwin County Hospital
10. Palemon Gaskins Nursing Home
11. Housing Authority of Ocilla
12. Osaola Nursing Home
13. Old Ocilla Grammar School
14. Irwin County Health Department
15. Irwin County Department of Family & Children Services
16. Ocilla Post Office
17. Irwin County Jail / Ocilla Police / Irwin Co. Sherriff
18. USDA Offices
19. Cumbee Park
20. Irwin County Chamber of Commerce
21. Ocilla Cemetery
22. Irwin County Service Center, Coastal Plain EOA
23. Ocilla Fire Dept. / Sanitation & Roads Dept.
24. City Utilities Dept.
25. Irwin County Health Dept.
26. College Hill Park
27. Lions Park
28. Irwin County Detention Center
29. D.O.T. Maintenance H.Q.
30. County Farm
31. Lax Road Park
32. Hill Training Center
33. Ocilla Community House



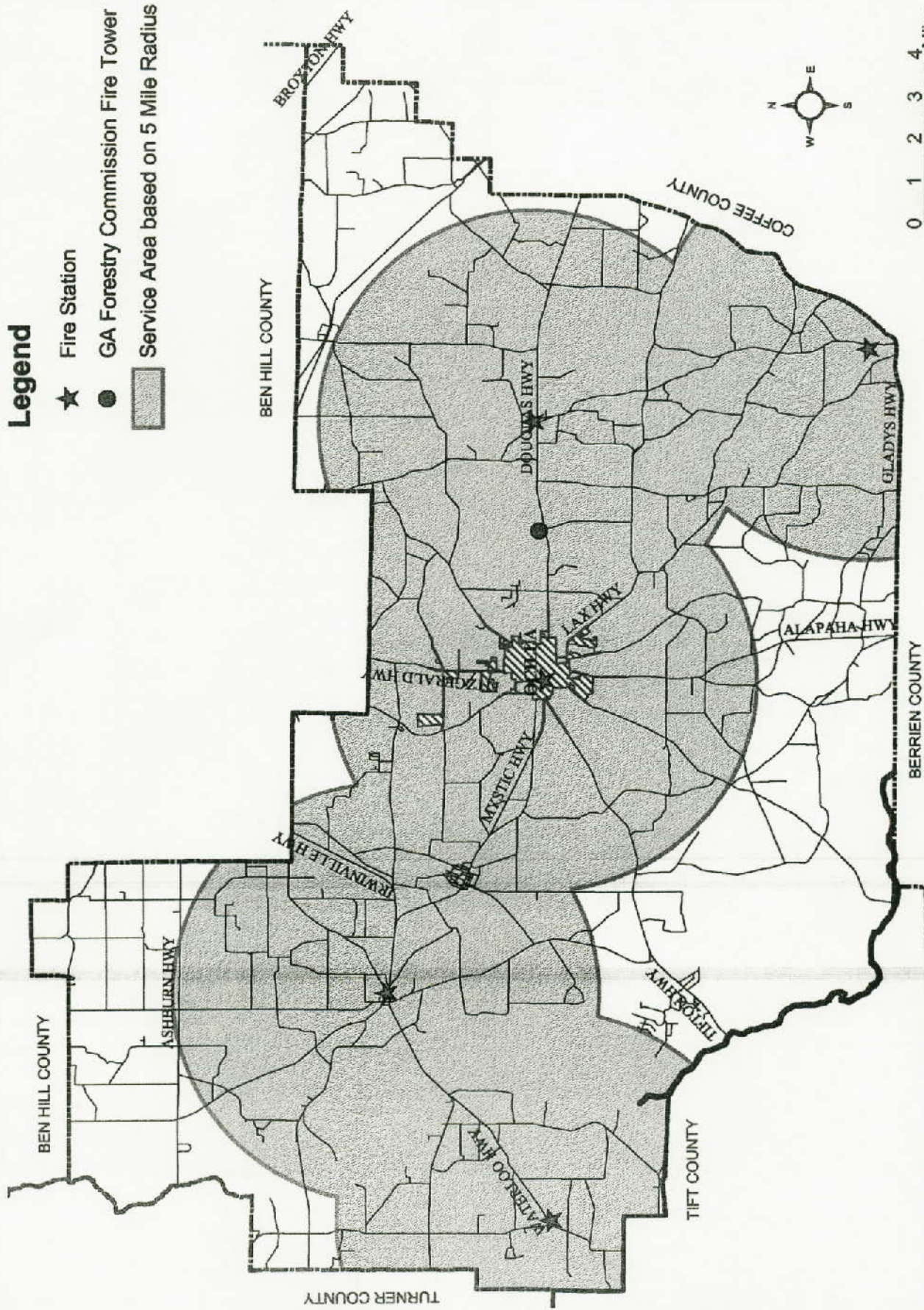
SOURCE: SOUTH GEORGIA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER, 2003

0 1,500 3,000 4,500 6,000 Feet

MAP 4-2
OCILLA AREA FACILITIES & SERVICES

Legend

- ★ Fire Station
- GA Forestry Commission Fire Tower
- ▨ Service Area based on 5 Mile Radius



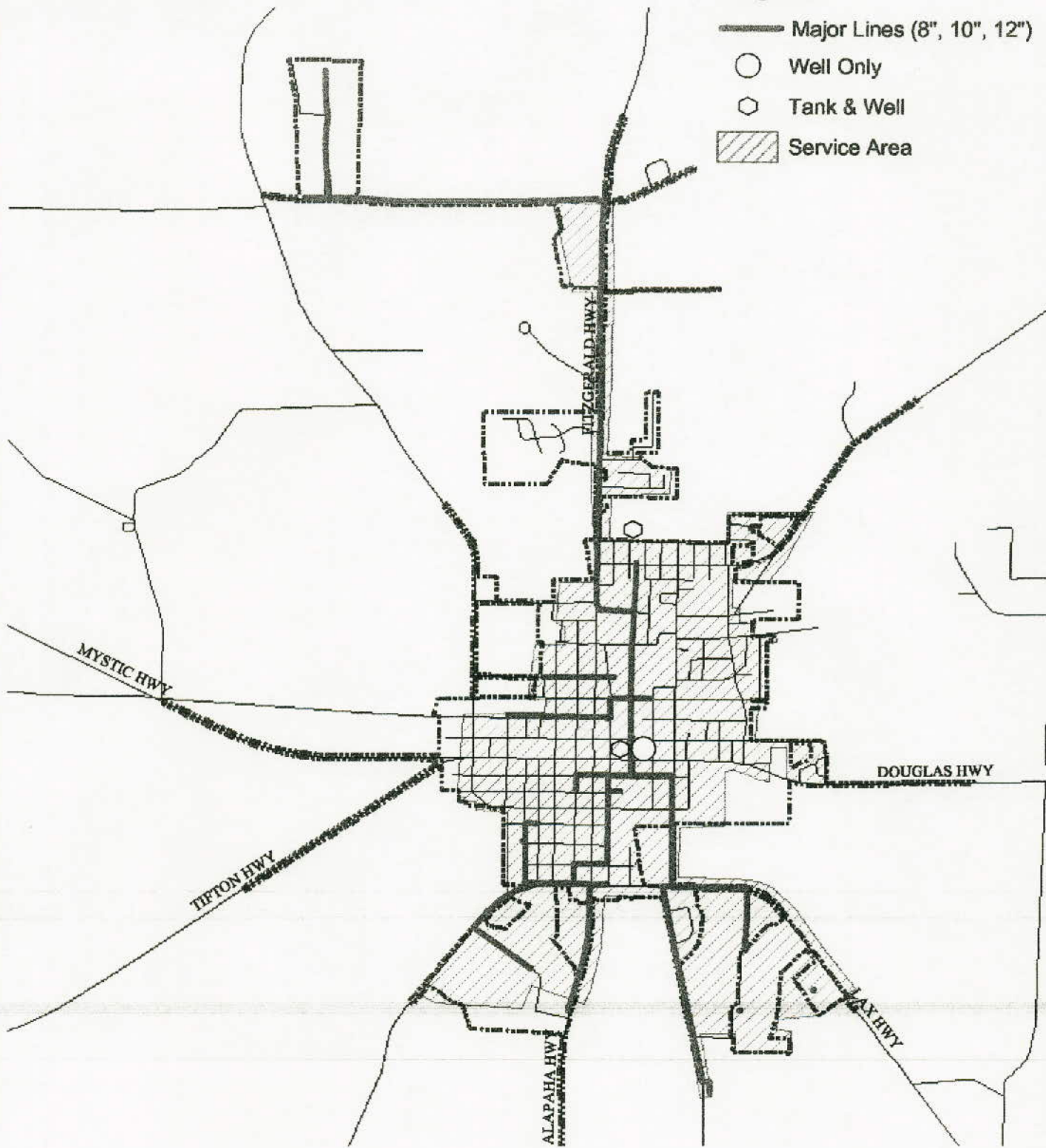
SOURCE: SOUTH GEORGIA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER, 2003

**MAP 4-3
IRWIN COUNTY FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICTS**

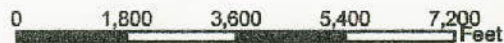


Legend

- Major Lines (8", 10", 12")
- Well Only
- ⊙ Tank & Well
- ▨ Service Area



SOURCE: OCILLA WATER & SEWER SUPERINTENDENT, 2003

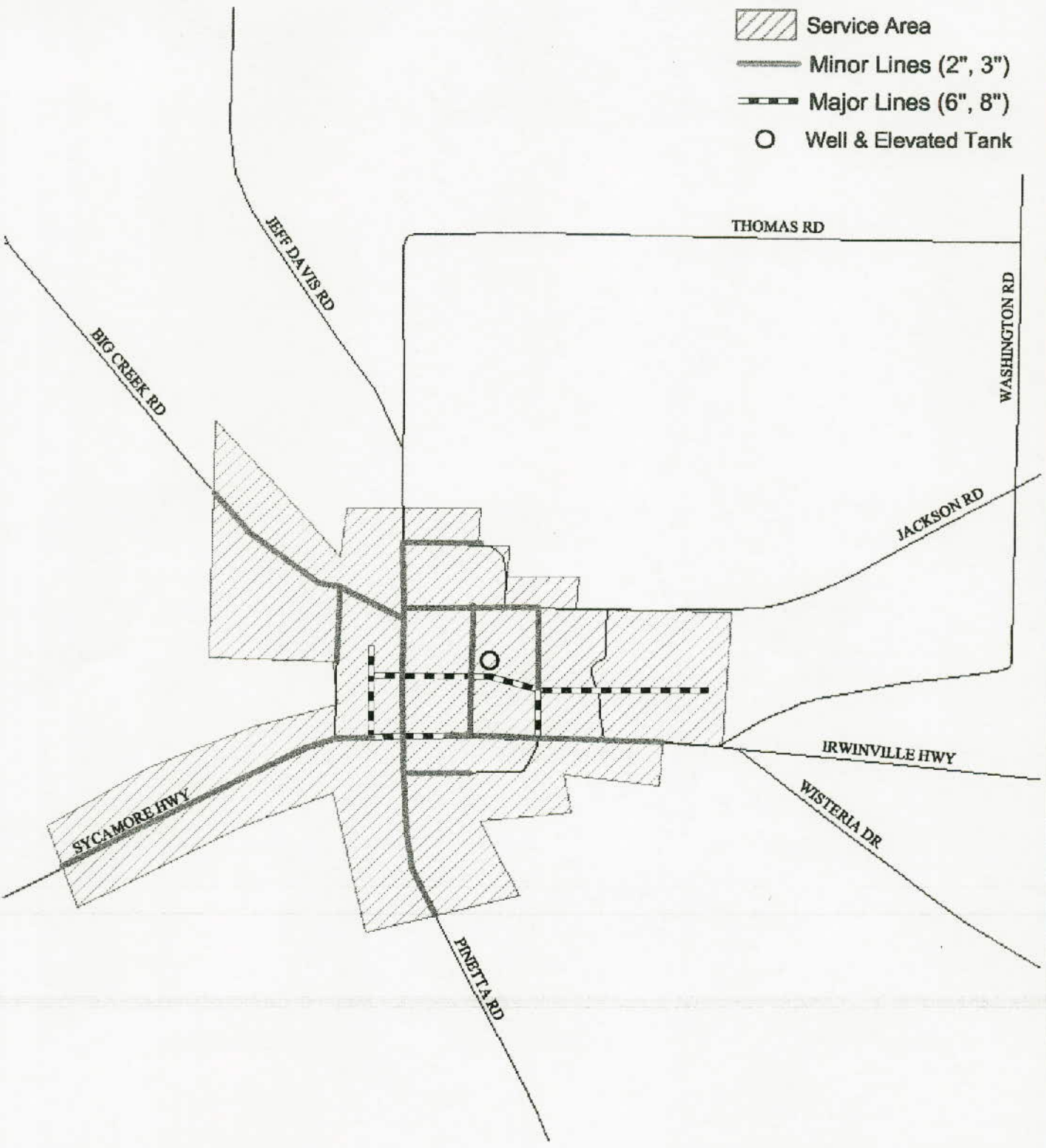


MAP 4-4
OCILLA WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM



Legend

-  Service Area
-  Minor Lines (2", 3")
-  Major Lines (6", 8")
-  Well & Elevated Tank



SOURCE: IRWINVILLE WATER WORKS, INC. 2003

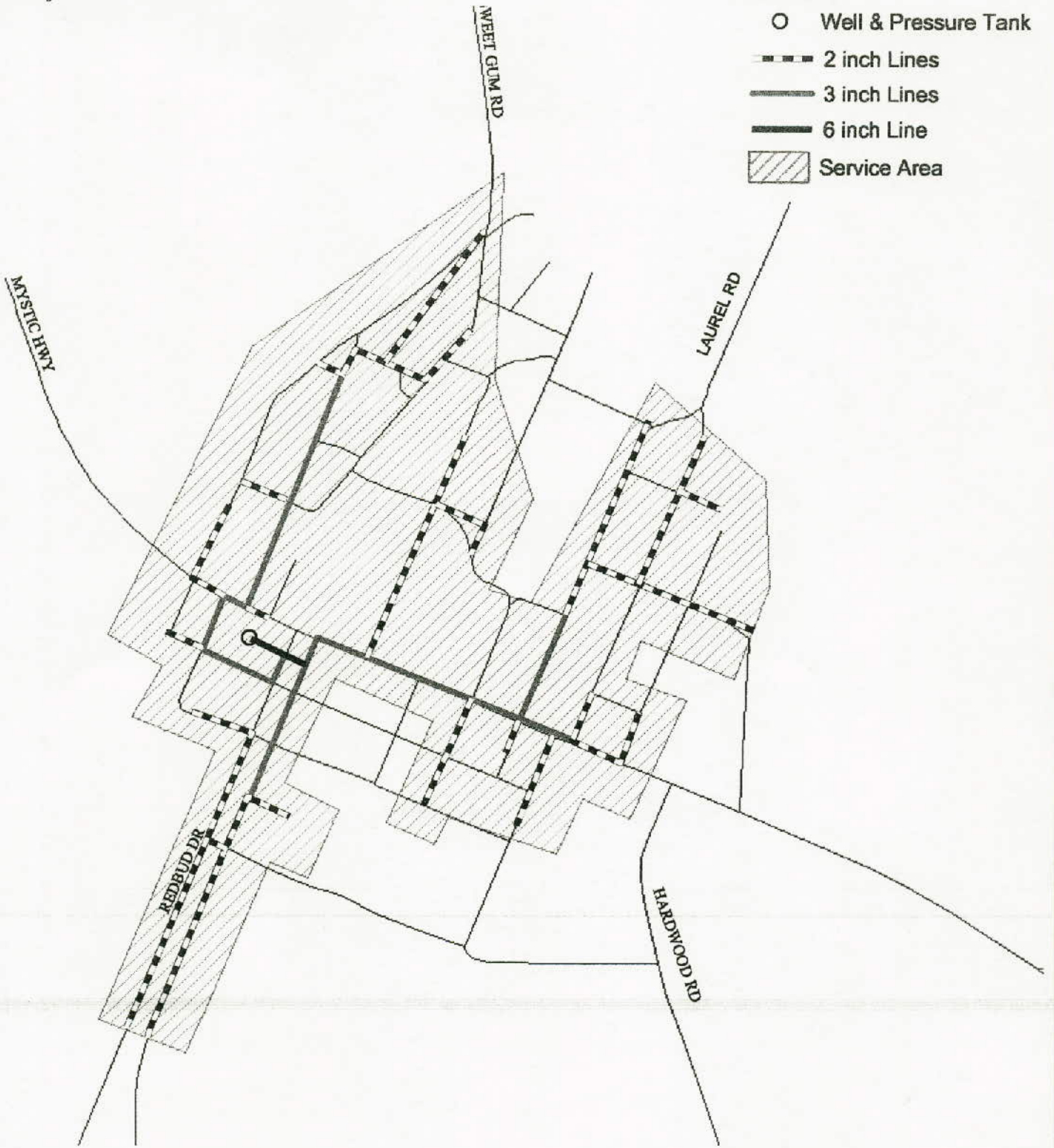


MAP 4-5
IRWINVILLE WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM



Legend

- Well & Pressure Tank
- 2 inch Lines
- 3 inch Lines
- 6 inch Line
- ▨ Service Area



SOURCE, MYSTIC WATER SUPERINTENDANT 2003



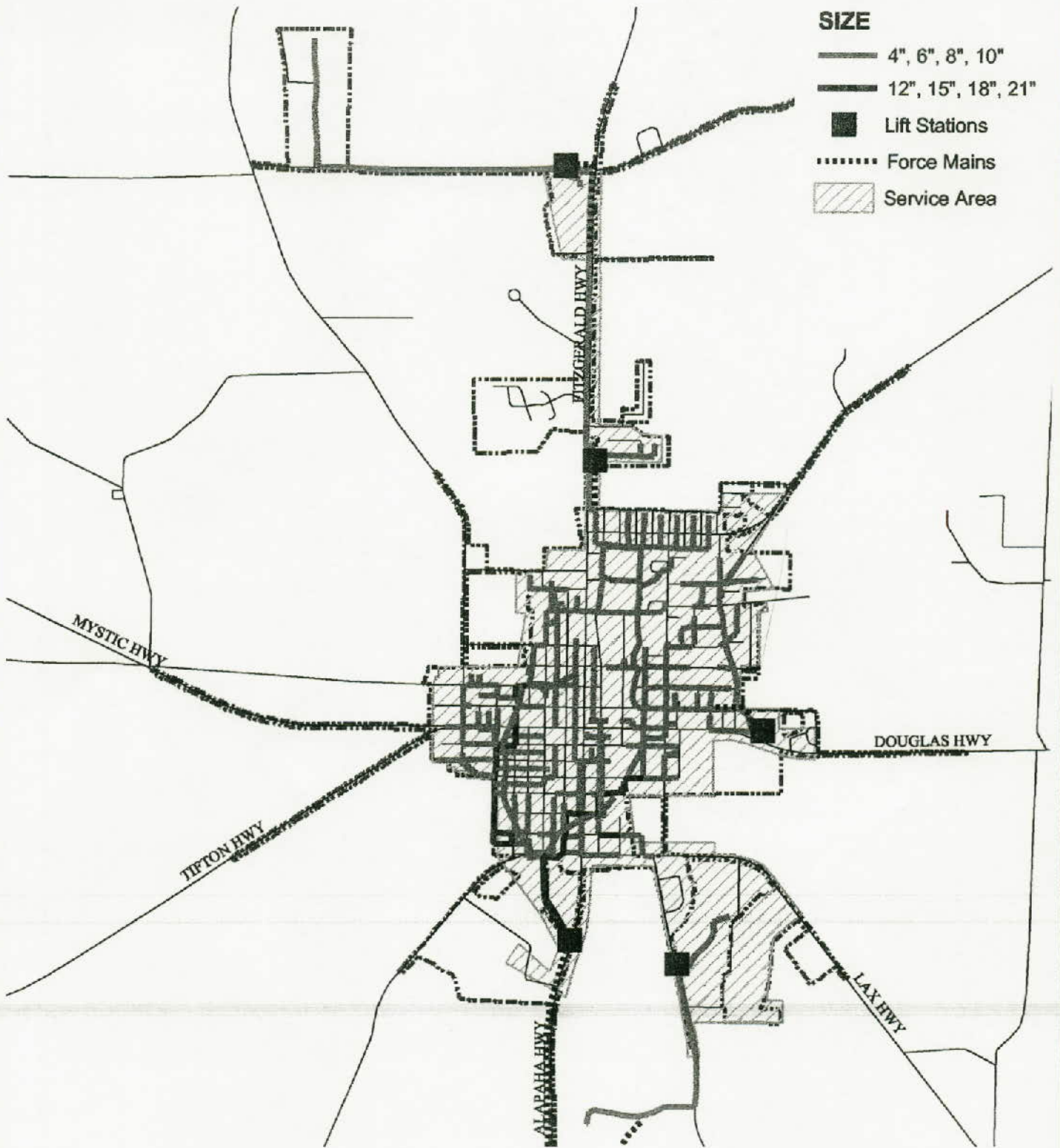
MAP 4-6
MYSTIC WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM



Legend

SIZE

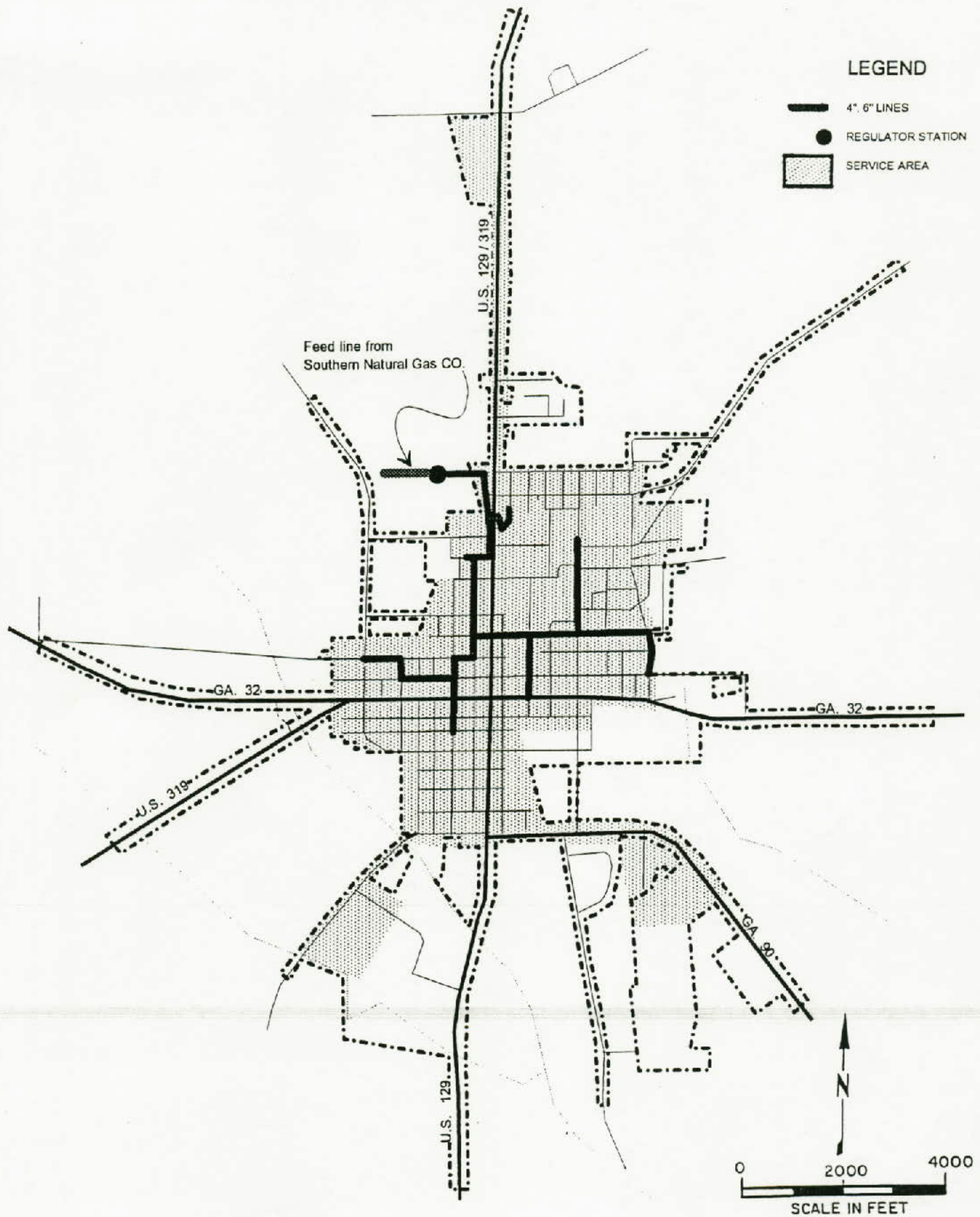
- 4", 6", 8", 10"
- 12", 15", 18", 21"
- Lift Stations
- Force Mains
- ▨ Service Area



SOURCE: OCILLA WATER & SEWER SUPERINTENDENT, 2003



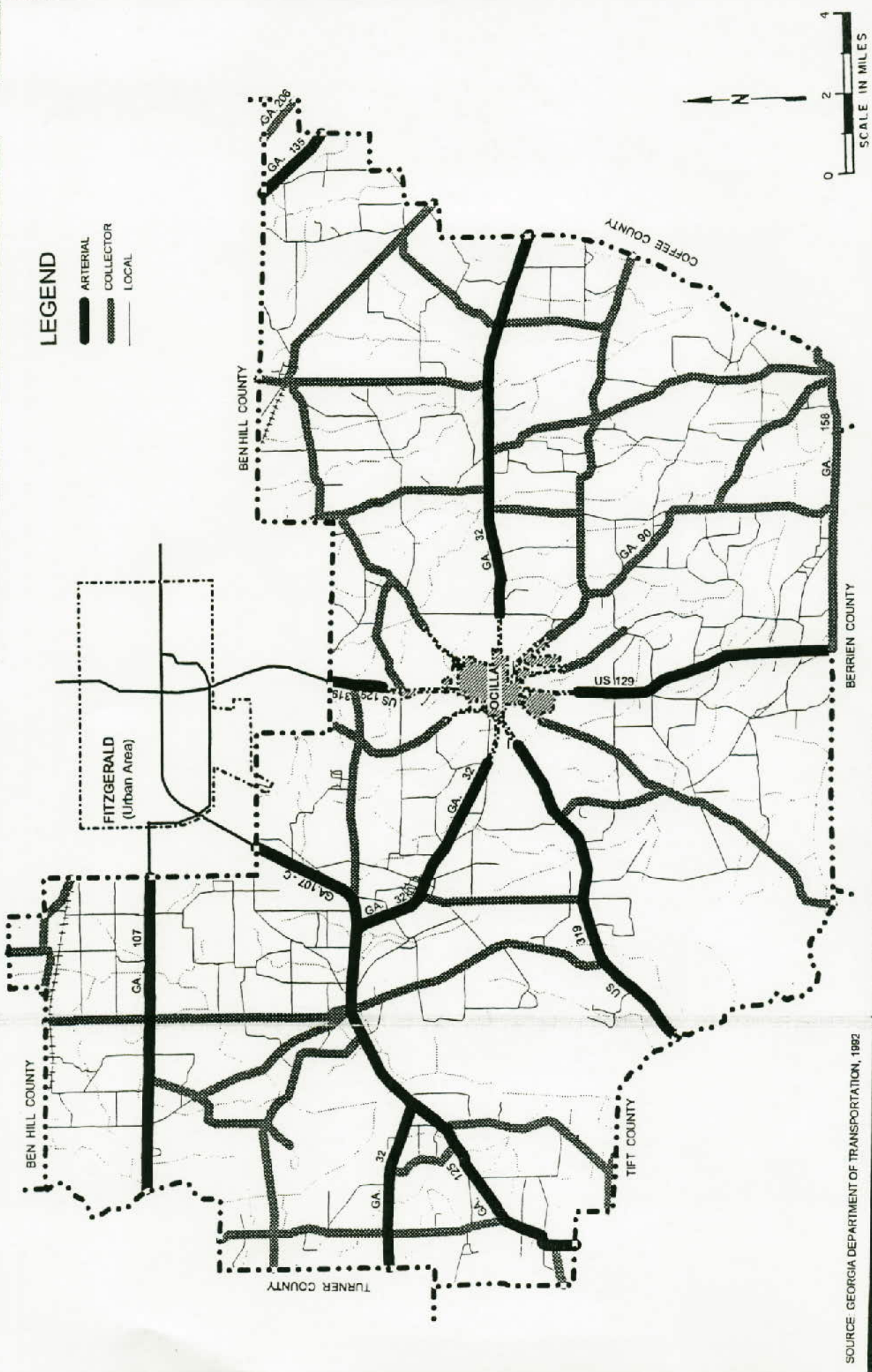
MAP 4-7
OCILLA SEWER SYSTEM



SOURCE: OCILLA NATURAL GAS SUPERINTENDENT, JUNE 1993

MAP 4 - 8

OCILLA NATURAL GAS DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM



LEGEND

- ARTERIAL
- - - COLLECTOR
- LOCAL

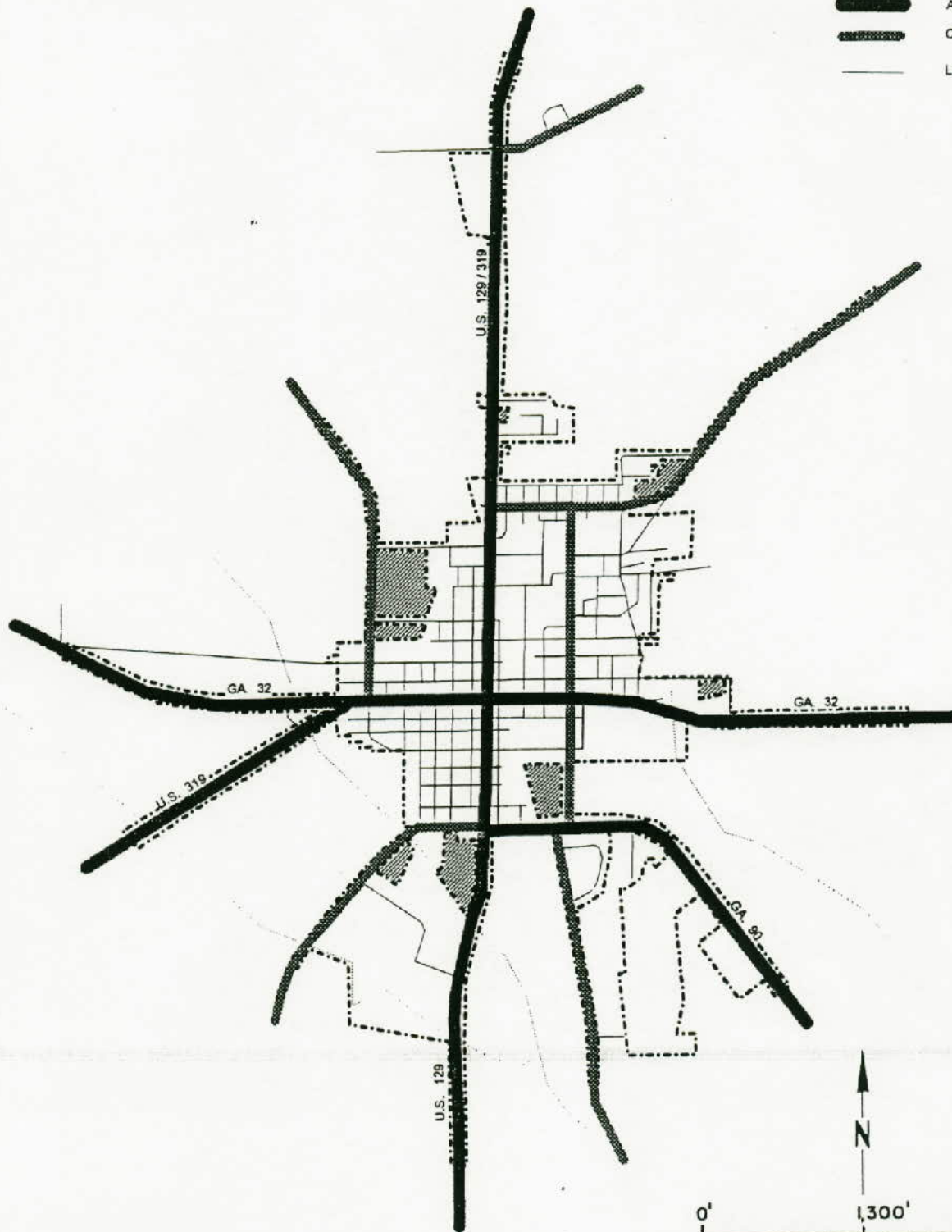
MAP 4 - 10

IRWIN COUNTY STREET AND ROAD CLASSIFICATIONS

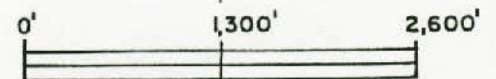
SOURCE: GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, 1992

LEGEND

-  ARTERIAL
-  COLLECTOR
-  LOCAL

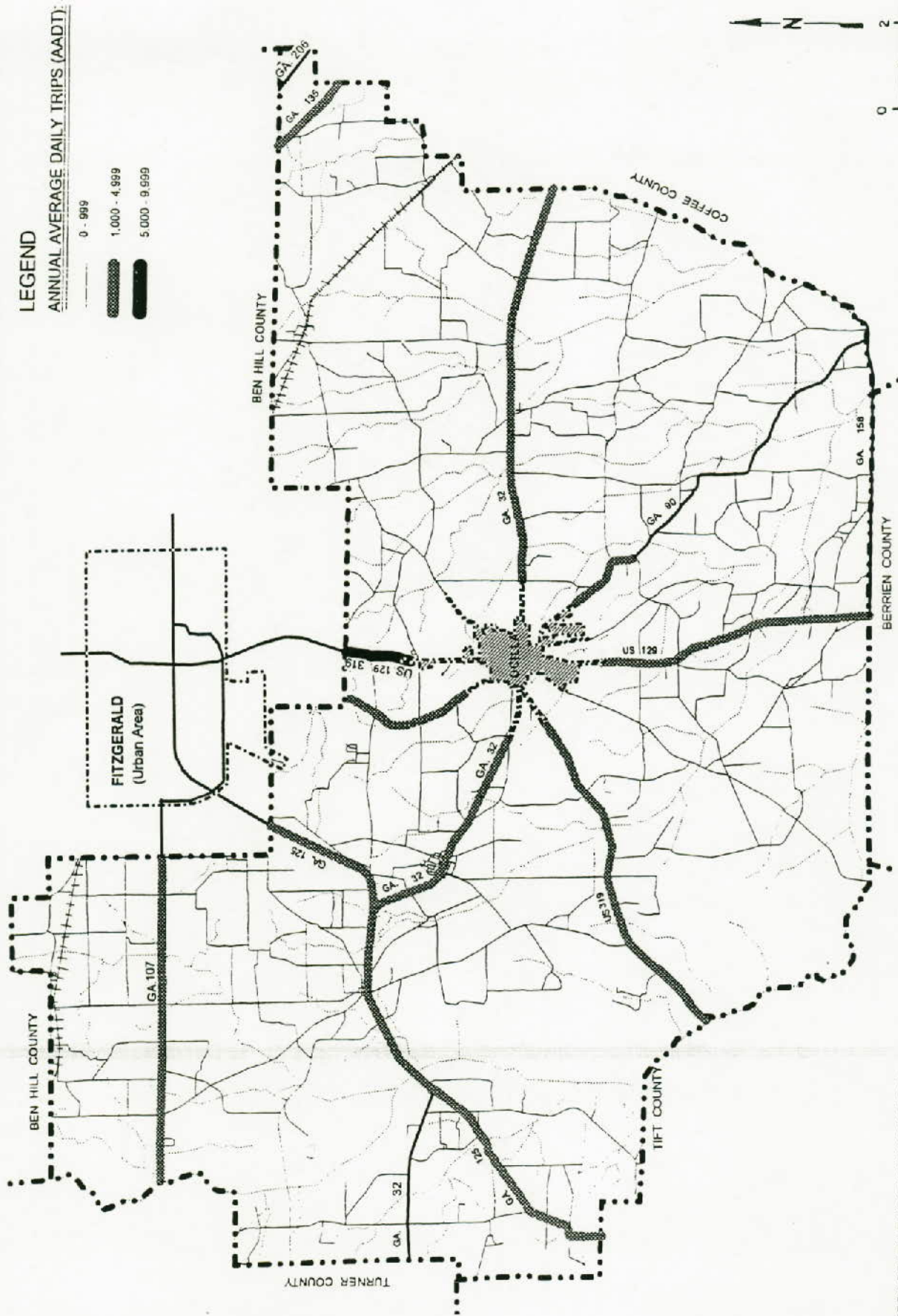


SOURCE: GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, 1992



SCALE 1" = 1,300'

MAP 4 - 11 OCILLA AREA STREET AND ROAD CLASSIFICATIONS



LEGEND

ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRIPS (AADT)

- 0 - 999
- 1,000 - 4,999
- 5,000 - 9,999

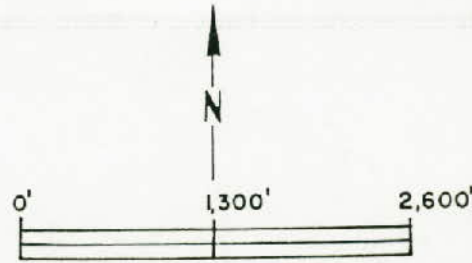
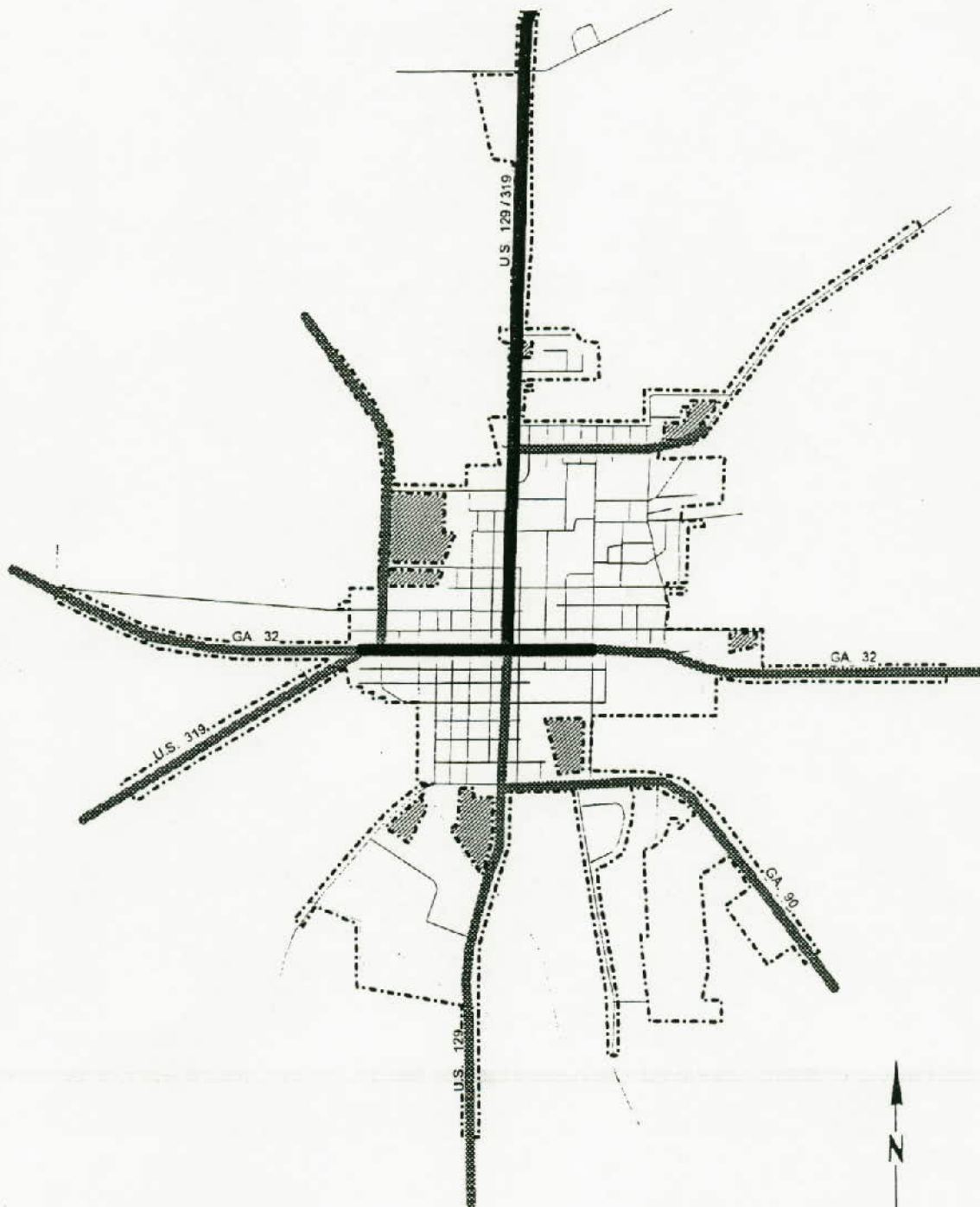
MAP 4 - 12
IRWIN COUNTY TRAFFIC VOLUMES

SOURCE: GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
1992 COVERAGE COUNTS FOR IRWIN COUNTY

LEGEND

ANNUAL AVERAGE DAILY TRIPS (AADT):

- 0 - 999
- ▨ 1,000 - 4,999
- 5,000 - 9,999



SOURCE: GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION.
1992 COVERAGE FOR IRWIN COUNTY

MAP 4 - 13
OCILLA AREA TRAFFIC VOLUMES

CHAPTER 5 INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

As detailed in the previous four chapters, the number of functional areas, issues and services that must be addressed by local government in order to effectively plan for its future is immense. Adding complexity to this situation is the fact that the actions of other local governments, other governmental entities and even local authorities can have profound impacts on the implementation of local governments' comprehensive plans. The purpose of this plan section is to inventory and address the adequacy and suitability of existing coordination mechanisms and policies to serve the current and future needs of Greater Irwin as it seeks to implement community goals and objectives that in many cases involve multiple governmental entities.

REGIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Irwin County, including the City of Ocilla, are member governments served by the South Georgia Regional Development Center. As such, all state, federal and local governmental actions subject to the Georgia State Clearinghouse Intergovernmental Review Process are distributed for review to potentially affected governments/parties subject to the nature of the activity being undertaken. This review coordinating mechanism covers a large array of local, state and federal development projects and affected local jurisdictions are afforded the opportunity for comment on proposals in the planning stage.

A second strength for fostering local intergovernmental coordination is the design of the local planning function. By choice, and recognizing the need for local coordination, Ocilla and Irwin County have a single countywide planning commission that serves in an advisory capacity. As much, local planning efforts have been "seamless" since the creation of the joint Growth Strategies Advisory Committee in 1992. When the initial comprehensive plan was adopted in 1993, a countywide planning commission was formed and challenged to help the city and county reach their identified goals.

COORDINATION MECHANISMS WITH ADJACENT LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

The City of Ocilla and the City of Fitzgerald have developed and executed Memorandums of Agreement with Irwin County concerning the potential for intergovernmental conflicts for Land Use Intensity Subject to Annexation. The Fitzgerald/Irwin County agreement has only limited application as a minor portion of the Fitzgerald/Ben Hill County Airport projects into Irwin County, and there are currently no plans for runway extension.

As noted above, Ocilla and Irwin County are served by a joint planning commission, and have a seamless future land use plan. All actions for annexation/rezoning are subject to the intergovernmental agreement addressed as part of the local Service Delivery Strategy agreement. Potential for other development affecting Greater Irwin would be addressed by the Developments of Regional Impact Review Process contained within the Georgia Planning Act.

SCHOOL BOARD COORDINATION

Irwin County and Ocilla are served by a single school system, the Irwin County Board of Education. Both local land development ordinances call for siting approval for new facilities from the respective governmental jurisdiction, and all countywide public schools are located within the Ocilla Urban Service Area.

The chairman of the Board of Education has been a member of the Ocilla-Irwin County Planning Commission for some six years, which affords an additional opportunity for local coordination and communication.

PART II: WHERE DO WE WANT TO BE ?

IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES & GOALS AND POLICIES

IMPACTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Part I, Inventory and Assessment, provides large volumes of information in seven categorical areas; namely Cultural Resources, Population, Housing, Economic Development, Natural Resources, Existing Land Use, and Community Facilities and Services. The sections below highlight key impacts and opportunities for local officials to make conscious decisions about the future of Greater Irwin.

CULTURAL RESOURCES

Irwin County, as the cultural resources inventory and assessment in Chapter One explains, has a rich heritage. Many early communities in the county developed because of the railroad and due to the abundance of timber and agricultural resources. Some of these original communities remain and represent the progression of Irwin County, while others diminished with the decline of the railroad. The evolution of Irwin County, from one of south Georgia's original seven counties to now one of 159, has resulted in significant sites of cultural, historic, and archaeological importance. Irwin County and Ocilla have benefited from historical events which have left a legacy of resources. It is essential to identify, maintain, and protect these invaluable resources for the benefit of future generations and economic prosperity.

An initial step toward protecting cultural, historic, and archaeological resources would be the formation of a countywide citizen advisory committee. The first goal of this committee should be the completion of a comprehensive inventory of historic resources. The survey will be an essential document that will aid in the identification of appropriate locations to plan for new development as well as assisting with identifying potential National Register districts. The advisory committee could also utilize the inventory data to educate property owners on the importance of protecting these resources by illustrating the relationship of the cultural resources and natural resources to potential conflicts when planning for future development.

Conservation of Irwin County's cultural, historic, and archaeological resources will require a commitment to a long-term effort, such as the creation of a citizen advisory committee. Many accomplishments can be achieved if local governments, business owners, and community residents participate with the advisory committee. It should be noted that for the goals to be implemented, the county and city governments must support efforts to preserve identified resources and by appointing representatives to serve on the advisory committee.

POPULATION AND ECONOMY

Greater Irwin's population, social, economic and environmental profile has been and will continue to be tempered by three major factors: (1) Greater Irwin leans heavily on the City of Fitzgerald, Coffee and Tift Counties as its employment and commercial trade centers, and the negative impact results in disinvestment in Ocilla and Irwin County; (2) Rural farm population continues to decline due to mechanization, competition, and costs. The small unincorporated communities that were dependent on agricultural trade have remained static and declined in population and services; and (3) net-migration to larger urban centers is expected to even out through the planning period.

Current data from Chapter Two provides evidence that the economy of Greater Irwin is lagging behind the regional growth centers of Valdosta, Tifton, and Fitzgerald, as well as the State of Georgia and the USA. Out-migration is a problem as young people seek economic opportunities elsewhere. Further, the county has lost major manufacturing enterprises, but in the past 10 years small companies have chosen Irwin County and

the future is brighter. Therefore a majority of the work force must commute to jobs outside Irwin County.

The static labor force and shortage of new jobs has a deep personal meaning to the residents of Greater Irwin. This means that 22.8% of Greater Irwin's total residents are below the poverty level, which is significantly higher than Georgia's average of 14.7% and the U.S. average of 13.1%. This also means that in the past decade Greater Irwin's per capita income has fallen relative to state and national per capita income, so that in 2000 it was just 70.9% of the state average and 66.9% of the United States per capita income average. Coupled with Greater Irwin's educational attainment level of only 67.7% of the 25-years and older population having a high school or higher education (Georgia's educational attainment average is 70% and the U.S. average is 75%), these two problems demand attention and consideration if Greater Irwin is to prosper, grow and improve its quality of life. Greater Irwin must seek to improve the training and education level of its labor force, and pursue the establishment of higher-paying employment centers in order to retain more higher-skilled workers within the county area.

The Irwin County Board of Education has taken a farsighted outlook and is constructing a new middle/high school. This new school facility will be equipped with over 400 computer work stations and cable-linked for education programs. This investment in local education will provide the students with the foundation to prepare them for the 21st century. Prospective industries target their investments toward progressive local educational systems, which provide the educational opportunities for the future work force to easily adapt to a company's working environment. Irwin County has taken positive steps in vocational education since 1966 to tailor training efforts and improve the skill levels of its work force. Many persons have taken advantage of post-secondary education opportunities offered at Ben Hill/Irwin Technical Institute, Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College in Tifton, and Valdosta State University in Valdosta. Greater Irwin has become pro-education and seeks every opportunity to encourage learning and personal development to foster a skilled labor force for existing and future industries and improve the quality of life for its residents.

HOUSING

The housing element of the plan is based to a large extent on the findings of the population element. Population projections indicate moderate growth over the next 25 years; about 1,430 persons per decade. Within the housing element, Greater Irwin needs to consider the following factors while formulating goals and strategies for their comprehensive plan:

1. The City of Ocilla and Irwin County have continuing programmatic efforts to redevelop and rehabilitate substandard housing through the use of state and federal housing rehabilitation programs. While there appear to be very few units requiring exterior rehabilitation, there are ample units that need electrical and mechanical upgrades to meet housing and building codes.
2. The proportion of persons in the 65 and above age groups is expected to increase at a faster rate than the total population growth. This trend often accounts for a decrease in the number of persons per dwelling unit. Together these trends have implications for the provision of rental housing, because elderly housing has to address the special needs of elderly homeowners and renters. Besides being on a fixed income, they have physical limitations and often need supportive services.
3. A majority of the current rental housing stock is provided by the public sector for low/moderate and elderly renters. Most of the rental units are within the corporate limits of Ocilla. The high level of poverty in Ocilla has prompted community leaders to provide decent, safe and sanitary housing at a variety of locations in Ocilla. The Ocilla Housing Authority will continue to meet these needs and when funding is available, will add units as demand exceeds supply.
4. Greater Irwin's housing mix has been shifting toward a higher percentage of manufactured homes which have become the dominantly attractive means of affordable housing. With a slow-growth population, and a proportionately low acreage of developed commercial and industrial lands, this has resulted in a declining residential tax base which largely affects the overall tax base. If left

unchanged, this trend could have alarming impacts on fiscal resources. However, without adequate enforcement subdivision controls, development regulations, and strategies for infill development and rehabilitation of existing site-built housing, this trend will not change.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The inventory and analysis found in Chapter Three thoroughly explains the attributes of the soils, surface waters, wetlands, floodplains, aquifers and groundwater recharge areas, prime farm/forest land, scenic views and sites. The capability of local soils to support a myriad of uses has been analyzed and several baseline maps have undergone review by the Growth Strategies Planning Advisory Committee. The needs are as follows:

1. The Land Use Plans should guide development, not using public sewer and water facilities, to suitable soil associations that are capable of supporting such development. If future development is steered away from soil associations with severe constraints and to soil associations that are suitable for the proposed developments, then a win-win exists for man and the environment.
2. Greater Irwin has a farming/forestry economy that has adjusted to market forces by growing in size, and its impact on jobs and earnings will continue to be a positive force in the Greater Irwin economy throughout the 20-year planning period. It is the responsibility of government to recognize that there are 82,788 acres of prime farm/forestlands in Greater Irwin and take whatever measures necessary to protect this natural resource for future generations.
3. The groundwater recharge areas depicted on Map 3-2 are highly sensitive natural resources. Irwin County enacted development regulations in 2000 in conformance with Georgia's environmental criteria to protect these areas.
4. Wetlands fall under Section 404 of the federal Clean Water Act of 1977. This Act prohibits the discharge of dredge or fill materials into the water bodies or wetlands of the United States unless a permit is granted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. When a landowner applies for a development permit, he or his builder shall be required to obtain a Section 404 Permit for any project that may impact a wetlands. Irwin County and Ocilla have adopted a wetland protection ordinance in 2000.
5. Irwin County has prepared and adopted a "River Corridor Protection Ordinance" that meets the criteria mandated by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources in 2000.
6. Both the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have inventoried plant and animal species that are on the "possible endangered" or "threatened" lists for the state and federal governments.
7. The City of Ocilla and Irwin County do not have floodplain maps. Both units of government have requested the Federal Emergency Management Agency and the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers to undertake the necessary floodplain studies and initiate the needed enforcement programs so that their constituents can purchase flood insurance. As soon as the FIRM maps are prepared, Irwin County and Ocilla will adopt floodplain management ordinances.

LAND USE

In theory, a local government should consult its comprehensive plan when making land development decisions or reacting to state and federal mandates to ensure or test whether their decisions are in harmony with the goals and policies articulated in its Comprehensive Plan. The implementation of the Comprehensive Plan can be achieved with the help of a number of tools. The pattern, standards and timing of development within any community can be influenced and guided in accordance with the comprehensive plan in several ways. A variety of measures are applied in Greater Irwin. Non-regulatory measures include the use of

incentives to promote certain types of uses, educational programs, voluntary persuasive measures, intergovernmental coordination, and capital improvement programs. Regulatory measures, such as adopting a zoning ordinance, health code, building code, electrical code, plumbing code, housing code, and subdivision regulations are common actions taken to influence and safeguard local land use patterns.

While land use controls such as zoning and subdivision regulations are often viewed as restrictions on private property, they do have positive benefits for land investment, besides protecting the public health, safety and general welfare. These regulations insure that all property owners develop their land according to the same standards. The land investment value perceived lost when private development options are limited often is returned to the property owner when the limitations prevent neighboring properties from being developed for incompatible uses.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Chapter Four has inventoried, analyzed and made recommendations concerning the county/city facilities and services. The essence of a community's ability to exist depends upon the capability of providing public infrastructure and services. These include: county and city governmental service buildings, public safety, fire protection, emergency medical service, health care, public water and sanitary sewer systems, natural gas systems, electric distribution systems, solid waste collection and disposal, transportation (streets, roads, railroads, & aviation), outdoor recreation, cultural resources and educational facilities. In most cases community facilities and services tend to be a reflection of a community's values and priorities, and therefore plays an important role in supporting growth and establishing the community's form of development.

For any business to be successful in the long-term it has to operate in a fiscally sound manner, and it must prepare an annual and long-range business plan. Cities and counties are "public corporations" which are intended to last a long time and should plan accordingly. Each of Greater Irwin's two governments vary in size, facilities and services, but when all of the infrastructure and services are inventoried, the total magnitude of the investment for each of these are apparent; larger than many private businesses. Since the benefactors of each of these public corporations are not a small group of private individuals, but rather all of Greater Irwin's citizens, then it is essential for their public corporations to be managed responsibly.

However, the City of Ocilla and Irwin County do not currently have the mind-set (institutional policies and framework) for the preparation and implementation of a long-term capital improvement program, which is one method of long-range business planning for local governments. Consequently on an annual basis with whatever information is readily available, a budget is prepared and priorities are selected and constructed. Without preliminary engineering and architectural studies with complete cost estimates for each and every project which show total long-term revenue needs, each unit of government annually prepares a budget that addresses its most immediate and known needs and no long-range strategies are developed.

With a known scarcity of fiscal resources and a multitude of needed facilities and services it becomes necessary to institute a capital improvement program process at the county and city levels. The Georgia Planning Act of 1989 sets out the parameters that allows the units of government to begin such a capital budgeting process and Irwin County and Ocilla should use their individual five year short-term work programs as the springboard for their capital improvement programs.

SUMMARY

The Georgia Planning Act of 1989 and subsequent guidelines within the minimum planning standards, procedures, and environmental criteria gave each local unit of government in Georgia a choice: (1) Prepare and adopt an individual or joint comprehensive plan according to the guidelines and maintain "qualified local government status", or (2) take everything under advisement and do nothing. The latter option places the local government in a status that will jeopardize its chances to receive state and federal grant assistance.

Irwin County met this challenge in 193, adopted their plan, and has worked consistently to implement its findings. This update is prepared in continuing this positive spirit and effort.

GOALS AND POLICIES

INTRODUCTION

The Greater Irwin Growth Strategies planning process has reached the stage where the citizens and staff committees have reviewed the problems and needs and recommended the preparation of goals and policies that will provide the general framework for the 2025 Greater Irwin Comprehensive Plan. The Impacts and Opportunities summary recommends further studies be undertaken which could turnaround the slow population and economic growth trends. The Greater Irwin Goals and Policies will address these findings and actual programs will be included in the Five Year Short-Term Work Programs, which will make investments to strengthen Greater Irwin's long-term economic base.

A goal should be viewed as an outcome or end towards which the eventual realization of plans, development policies and programs are targeted. An example of a land use goal could be a statement that would call for the "wise use, protection, or rational development" of a given county or city characteristic. The goal is carried to fruition through enforcement of the land use plan, zoning and other ordinances, and by carrying out scheduled public construction projects.

A policy is a definite strategy or course of action which will ensure that the goals are realized. By nature, a policy becomes a tool embodied in both the plan and the ordinances derived to carry out the plan. However, policies are useful only so long as they are well formulated and carefully reflect county and city goals. A well-conceived list of policies provides a basic framework for decision makers.

Finally, it is assumed that some persons reviewing the goals and policies contained in this document will feel they are "pie in the sky" types of statements. Without specific program objectives which are presented in the five year short-term work programs, this would be an accurate statement. As someone once said, "When you don't know where you're going, any road will get you there". The goals and policies provide the definition of where we're trying to go in Greater Irwin.

The goals and policies are premised on two changes within Greater Irwin, namely:

- (1) Irwin County and Ocilla have organized and empowered a "Greater Irwin Planning Commission" and this board will provide advisory comments to each respective commission and council prior to final action on zoning requests, subdivision plat review, and similar actions. The South Georgia RDC will provide technical assistance services on an ongoing basis to help Greater Irwin implement its comprehensive plan.
- (2) Functional plans like the Irwin County Solid Waste Management Plan will be coordinated and reviewed by the Greater Irwin Planning Commission. The Greater Irwin Planning Commission could also provide leadership to foster the development of the Historic Preservation Task Force.

GOAL 1:

Irwin County and the City of Ocilla should consist of an Urban Service Area and a Rural Service Area. Urban services (public water and sanitary sewers, etc.) will be provided within the Urban Service Area. Persons choosing a rural lifestyle should not expect to receive urban services outside of these planned Urban Service Areas.

URBAN SERVICE AREA (USA)

One of the main purposes of the "2025 Greater Irwin Comprehensive Plan" is to determine general priorities for county and city investments. To provide guidelines in setting county/city priorities, the county and city will have an Urban Service Area (USA) within which county and city systems for existing and proposed sanitary sewers, water systems, and highways will be provided. Urban density development should be encouraged to occur in the Urban Service Area to ensure that maximum use is made of public and private investments. The alternative of a rural lifestyle, including commercial forestry and agriculture, should also be available in Irwin County. Persons who live in the Rural Service Area (RSA) should not expect to receive an urban level of services.

The City of Ocilla, whose corporate limits include both urban and rural lands, has the responsibility to set the boundary between the Urban Service Area and the Rural Service Area within their own community. The City should stage their growth adjacent to existing activity and service areas for as long as practical, and they should consider allowing the continuance of agricultural activities, especially those on prime agricultural lands in areas not planned for urban services.

Considerable development has already occurred in the Urban Service Areas. This development is concentrated in Ocilla and there several acres of unused tracts of land. Many of these lands are provided with a range of urban services, and as a result, constitute a large capital investment in under-utilized public facilities.

In spite of the under-utilized facilities in the urbanized areas, development of unserved land continues both there and in the Rural Service Areas. Federal, state and county roads have made employment and shopping highly accessible. Consequently, the entire county is subject to increasing pressures for urbanization.

Although the highway system has contributed to current development trends putting country living within easy commuting time for employment centers, there are other reasons for the county's pattern of scattered development. Two of the most important of these are the desire of a large portion of the population to live in a low density, semi-rural environment and the relatively low initial cost of rural housing. Housing in the rural areas is less expensive partially because of the lack of urban services and amenities such as sewer and water systems, paved streets, full-time police and fire departments, and recreation programs. Rural areas also often have fewer regulatory requirements than those in urban areas, and this means that housing can be built less expensively. Land can be less expensive in rural areas, so that larger lots can often be obtained at the same prices as smaller urban or suburban lots. However, people moving to rural areas are usually urban oriented, and they soon desire urban related services. These urban services were not necessary to support a truly rural population primarily engaged in farming and forestry.

Public investments in new facilities are wasteful to the extent that existing utilities, roads, and schools have adequate capacity to accommodate growth. In addition, development contiguous to present development, rather than scattered across the countryside, is more economical to serve with electricity, telephone, cable television, parks and roads. The extra costs of scattered development are not borne entirely by the owners of scattered housing because many of the costs are spread throughout the county and state in the form of higher sales taxes, utility fees, and gasoline taxes. Persons choosing to live in semi-rural environment do so without paying the full cost of their choice because many of the utilities and public improvements are subsidized by other residents of the county and state.

RURAL SERVICE AREA (RSA)

In the Rural Service Area, agriculture and commercial forestry land uses should be given first priority. This Rural Service Area can contain other secondary uses including specialized agricultural uses such as processing facilities, sod farms, truck farms, nurseries, plant farms, recreational areas, and forested

tracts. The Rural Service Area promotes the concentration of neighborhood activity centers (NAC) in existing and proposed subdivisions at densities which range from lots with private wells to lots that are serviced by a community-type domestic water supply, but not a joint sanitary sewer collection and treatment system. These NAC's function for those persons who prefer larger than urban lot sizes and densities, and they never require the public provision of the full range of urban services. It becomes imperative that future NAC's in the RSA be developed on soils which have few to no limitations for septic tanks and drain fields.

Commercial Agricultural Uses

A large part of the Rural Service Area contains prime farm and forest land, and these areas need to be protected. The agricultural economy remains strong; there is a large investment in farming; and farmers desire to continue the agricultural use of the land. Some of the land in the rural area, however, is of poor quality and more suited to forestry. Both the excellent and poorer quality areas should be protected from urban encroachment; a favorable social and economic climate is necessary if farm families are to make the heavy investment and take the risks necessary to keep their farm business viable.

To avoid these problems, agriculture should be considered an exclusive land use. Agricultural areas which have prime farmland and substantial agricultural investments should be identified as **Commercial Agricultural Areas (CAA)** and protected from further encroachment by non-agricultural uses. Protection from encroachment should involve actions on many fronts including exclusive-use zoning, restrictions on public works projects that are unrelated to agriculture and forestry, and relief from special assessments not related to public health and safety.

GOAL 2:

Increase an intensive mixture of employment, goods, services, and residential use in Activity Centers; link high intensity Activity Centers; provide a wide variety of residential and employment alternatives both inside and outside Activity Centers; and achieve the highest standards of quality in the urban environment.

Policy 2.1:

The City and County have developed their future land use plan to include three classifications of Activity Centers: Downtown Activity Center, Urban Activity Center, and Neighborhood Activity Center. These are depicted on the respective Future Land Use Maps for the city and the county.

Policy 2.1.1:

Activity Centers are intended to fulfill the following purposes:

- (a) **Downtown Activity Center (DAC)** - This is the central business and service center of Ocilla. Areas should be allocated for concentrated residential, commercial, office, institutional, recreational and cultural facilities at a scale which serves the entire area, and at the highest intensities to be found anywhere in the county. Pedestrian-oriented streets containing clusters of retailing, personal services, eating and entertainment are important attributes of downtown. The policies and requirements of this Activity Center are intended to retain the character of these areas by assuring that new development provides active uses on ground floor levels, and other design features conducive to pedestrian activity.
- (b) **Urban Activity Center (UAC)** - This area provides for concentration of residential, commercial, office, industrial, recreational and cultural facilities serving the Ocilla urban area at intensities significantly higher than in surrounding neighborhoods. Although some Urban Activity Centers may be composed of a single type of use, a mixture of

land uses is specifically encouraged. These activity centers are intended for locations where the highest level of thoroughfares are available, providing access between other counties and complimenting the primary arterial transportation system.

- (c) **Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC)** - This area provides for concentration of neighborhood-serving commercial, office, residential, recreational and cultural facilities, at intensities compatible with surrounding neighborhoods. Although some Neighborhood Activity Centers may be composed of a single type of use, a mixture of land uses is specifically encouraged. These activity centers are intended for locations where lower level thoroughfares and collectors are available, providing access to adjacent activity centers and the surrounding neighborhood.

Policy 2.2:

Community development should be responsive to the social, economic and environmental needs of the County. For this reason, the County and City should prepare and implement plans consistent with the following guidelines:

- (a) Local communities should accommodate their share of urban growth, as indicated by the comprehensive plan, and located within the Urban Service Area.
- (b) Local services, such as schools, police and fire protection, public streets, water and drainage facilities, and parks should be planned to be adequate for the population and employment densities anticipated. Areas of the community where local services are available should be developed first. New land should be opened for urbanization in a staged, contiguous manner through a coordinated program of public service extensions. Existing facilities, including schools, should be used to full capacity. Cooperative arrangements between service districts should be made. Where practical, investment in all services, including schools, shall be consistent with City and County land use plans.
- (c) Community development should be compatible with features of the natural environment, including the soils, hydrologic system, and not intrude into prime farm and forest lands.
- (d) Community development should provide a variety of housing types for all income levels and located convenient to employment, shopping and services.
- (e) Business activities should be located in the Downtown, Urban or Neighborhood Activity Centers and planned industrial parks. Major Activity Centers should be developed through a clustering of shopping, service, cultural, entertainment, business office, governmental and high density residential facilities in concentrated, highly accessible locations. The centers should be designed for good pedestrian mobility and landscaped to accommodate people and vehicles. Where major activity centers have already developed in a spread out or disconnected pattern, joint public/private programs should be developed to plan transportation systems to link the activity centers together so that the entire subarea may function as a single major activity center.
- (f) Density of development should be planned by local authorities to be consistent with the capacity of the City's utilities, state and federal environmental standards; and the continuation of agricultural activities on prime farmland not programmed for urban expansion.
- (g) Encourages the redevelopment and renewal of blighted areas.
- (h) Encourages the elimination or reduction of uses consistent with the community's character and future land use.

- (i) Ensures the protection and preservation of historic and cultural resources.
- (j) Discourages urban sprawl and leap frog development patterns.
- (k) Ensures the availability of suitable land for utility facilities necessary to support proposed development.
- (l) Protects viable and stable neighborhoods from uses not in keeping with their established character and use.

GOAL 3:

Create and maintain long-term, meaningful employment opportunities sufficient to establish a sound and balanced economic base in which average per capita income and employment levels are consistently comparable to those of the State and Nation.

Policy 3.1:

Private sector economic investments should be encouraged and fostered through the availability of financial and technical assistance.

Policy 3.2:

Public sector financed economic developments should be encouraged and used as a tool to stimulate or leverage private sector economic investments.

Policy 3.3:

Products and raw materials available in the region should be given first consideration for use in manufacturing in the area.

Policy 3.4:

Diversification of the economic base should be fostered and maintained. The development of recreational, educational and health care facilities and services should be considered as legitimate economic development activities by virtue of their strong tendency to generate employment, economic, and industrial development.

GOAL 4:

Encourage economic development through business/industry recruitment and/or expansions that capitalize on and are compatible with the natural attributes of the county.

Policy 4.1:

Economic developments should be compatible with environmental standards.

Policy 4.2:

In cases where development is incompatible with the environment, such developments should be located where environmental and social costs are minimized.

GOAL 5:

Create and maintain a well-trained work force of professional, technical, and skilled workers capable of accommodating new industry and maintaining existing industry.

Policy 5.1:

Training programs, vocational and technical, should be designed to correlate with anticipated industrial and commercial growth and needs.

Policy 5.2:

Training and manpower programs should be designed which are readily accessible to the unemployed and underemployed.

Policy 5.3:

Programs should be developed which encourage local college and technical school graduates to seek employment within the county.

Policy 5.4:

Industries, both existing and new, should initiate on-the-job training programs for the benefit of themselves and their employees.

GOAL 6:

Develop and maintain public services and facilities to accommodate existing economic development and to encourage future economic growth.

Policy 6.1:

Industrial growth and expansions should be located within or adjacent to developed industrial parks and sites to readily access public utilities.

Policy 6.2:

The development of cultural, historic and educational services and facilities should be considered as legitimate economic development activities by virtue of their strong tendency to generate employment, economic, and industrial development.

Policy 6.3:

Public investments in services and facilities for economic development should be reflected in the short-term work program.

GOAL 7:

Ensure that all people within Greater Irwin have access to adequate and affordable housing.

Policy 7.1:

Housing development agenda in Ocilla and Irwin County should address needs of the elderly, low and moderate income families, minorities, handicapped, and developmentally disabled persons.

GOAL 8:

Ensure in a equitable manner that existing residential structures and neighborhoods are preserved, improved and maintained.

Policy 8.1:

Local housing development agendas should give priority to projects involved in preservation and maintenance of existing infrastructure: streets, sidewalks, curbs, water, sewer and drainage systems, lighting and bridges.

Policy 8.2:

Neighborhood redevelopment projects should seek to conserve, rehabilitate, or relocate existing housing structures, in lieu of demolition, whenever it is feasible.

Policy 8.3:

The city and county are encouraged to adopt, enforce, revise and update building codes where applicable as to permit new concepts in building technology.

Policy 8.4:

Low interest loans and tax reduction activities or other alternatives should be developed to promote rehabilitation of existing housing.

GOAL 9:

Design and maintain a network of thoroughfares for safe and efficient movement of people and goods which are linked to and coordinated with rail, air, and other transportation terminals.

Policy 9.1:

The carrying capacity of roadways should preserve the functional purpose of the road system to assure that the transportation network functions as originally intended.

Policy 9.2:

Land development, access, and circulation should be closely coordinated in the design of highway and street facilities in order to preserve the traffic carrying ability/safety aspects of highways and streets.

Policy 9.3:

Early acquisition of needed highway rights-of-way and access controls should be sought to minimize land costs, prevent undesirable development, and preclude land speculation.

Policy 9.4:

Costs of roadway construction should be justified by utilization and need.

Policy 9.5:

Frontage roads should be constructed to avoid proliferation of curb cuts to high volume arterial streets and highways.

Policy 9.6:

Increased off-street parking should be encouraged to maximize the traffic carrying capacity of roadways, reduce congestion and ensure safe, efficient, traffic flow.

GOAL 10:

Keep a well maintained system of rail lines which facilitate safe and efficient movement of goods and serves the economic needs of the county and region.

Policy 10.1:

Grade separation should be provided on major arterials and collectors to eliminate traffic tie-ups, emergency vehicle delays and to enhance vehicle and pedestrian safety.

Policy 10.2:

Where rail abandonment is imminent, corridor maintenance and potential reuse should be evaluated to avoid unnecessary permanent loss of rights-of-way.

GOAL 11:

Establish and maintain conservation of areas where natural processes would be endangered by development (i.e. in floodplains, wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, protected river corridors etc.).

Policy 11.1:

Areas where critical natural processes would be endangered by development should be avoided. The areas most directly impacted include drainageways, floodplains, wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and protected river corridors.

Policy 11.2:

An adequate minimum flow and water quality should be maintained in all rivers and streams to ensure a productive fish habitat and protection of aquatic life and scenic qualities.

Policy 11.3:

Development should not pollute, exhaust or interfere with the natural replenishment cycles of groundwater.

Policy 11.4:

State or federal agency rules and regulations mandating local enforcement programs should be accompanied with adequate staff and financial assistance to help local units in their implementation programs. These include local floodplain management requirements, soil and sedimentation control requirements, wetlands protection, river corridors, groundwater recharge areas, and similar laws designed to prevent degradation of the natural environment.

Policy 11.5:

Development should not grossly impair the functioning of vital natural systems. Land use should be primarily determined by natural characteristics, suitability of the land, and the availability of urban services.

Policy 11.6:

Lands that are not suitable for on-site absorption systems should not be subdivided/developed unless public sewers are available or other provisions are made for the handling of sewage.

Policy 11.7:

Treatment facilities should be available for the discharge of septic tank, holding tank and recreational vehicle pumpage.

Policy 11.8:

Soil resources should be managed in a manner that is consistent with maintaining and enhancing water quality.

Policy 11.9:

Land management practices that minimize siltation and pollution should be utilized. These practices include, but are not limited to:

- (a) Approval of grading, filling, and excavation plans by the city and county to ensure that erosion and siltation are minimized. (Examples: sodding, seeding, re-vegetation schedules, etc.).
- (b) Provide and maintain strategically located settling basins to remove silt and debris from surface water runoff.

GOAL 12:

Commercial, industrial and residential developments should locate in Greater Irwin's Urban Service Areas on existing/proposed water and sewer systems.

Policy 12.1:

Allocate with the Land Use Plan an adequate amount of properly serviced lands to meet projected land use demands.

Policy 12.2:

Commercial growth and redevelopment should be restricted to existing and planned commercial districts.

Policy 12.3:

Industrial expansion should occur in the existing industrial parks.

Policy 12.4:

In general, redevelopment in vacant and redevelopable areas that are already serviced with water and sewer utilities should be strongly encouraged.

Policy 12.5:

Local implementation devices should include a building code, subdivision control and zoning

ordinances in the city and the county.

Policy 12.6:

Lands shall be deemed unsuitable for any proposed development by the local unit of government if the land is largely affected by any of the following:

- protected river corridors
- wetlands
- groundwater recharge areas
- flood hazards
- inadequate drainage
- adverse soil conditions
- severe erosion potential
- unfavorable topography
- inadequate water supply or sewerage disposal capabilities
- any other feature likely to be harmful to the health or welfare of the future residents of the proposed development

Policy 12.7:

Irwin County should limit development in their Rural Service Areas to uses and intensities which would not require the county to provide urban or suburban levels of utilities and services.

GOAL 13:

Identify, conserve and protect the broad range of cultural resources in Greater Irwin County.

Policy 13.1:

Individual cultural resources, historic districts, and historic communities that contributed to the evolution and development of Irwin County should be formally identified and designated by appropriate city and county authorities. State and Federal historic preservation programs including the Georgia Historic Resources Survey, the National Register of Historic Places, the Certified Local Government Program, and Historic Preservation Tax Programs should be utilized as resources to maintain and preserve all of the county's cultural resources.

Policy 13.2:

An ongoing public awareness and education program, such as the Georgia Trust's Heritage Education Program, should be developed to encourage participation in historic preservation and cultural activities.

Policy 13.3:

Appropriate funding sources should be identified and utilized to encourage the continual use and rehabilitation of significant cultural and historic resources.

Policy 13.4:

Special planning activities should be conducted to encourage sensible development that will enhance and protect the county's cultural, historic, and archeological resources.

GOAL 14:

Preserve lands suitable for all agricultural pursuits, including farming, forestry and soil conservation.

Policy 14.1:

Where soil productivity is high and where conditions are better suited for agriculture than urban uses, measures should be developed to preserve such land for agricultural use.

Policy 14.2:

Non-agricultural-forestry uses, which generally includes a broad range of urban land use types, should not intrude into rural areas best suited for agricultural/forestry uses.

PART III: HOW DO WE GET THERE ?

FUTURE LAND USE PLANS & SHORT-TERM WORK PROGRAMS

FUTURE LAND USE PLANS

A future land use plan reflects the consensus of city and county growth management strategies that are inherent in goal and policy statements. The future land use plan is designed to provide a summary of recommended growth patterns which are depicted on the respective future land use maps. For Irwin County and the City of Ocilla, the recommendations are designed to reflect goals and policies with strong emphasis on local government's provision of basic services: water, sewer and transportation. (The land use goals and policies are detailed in "Part II - Where Do We Want To Be ?".) These plan concepts propose land use patterns which take advantage of existing and planned infrastructure. This prevents undue hardship on local governments to provide unnecessary infrastructure improvements or additions. When growth is planned in a logical and straightforward manner and takes advantage of public investments, there will be positive benefits for all with an increase in long-term economic stability.

GREATER IRWIN FUTURE LAND USE (IN GENERAL)

The concepts discussed in this section will apply to the future land use plans of both Irwin County and the City of Ocilla.

The Goals and Policies define and emphasize a distinct separation between an Urban Service Area (USA) and a Rural Service Area (RSA). Greater Irwin, for future land use purposes, is divided into these two major service areas and they are graphically depicted on Maps III-1 and III-2. The USA represents the centralized growth center (Ocilla area) where there is already existing infrastructure and concentrated urban services to accommodate urban style development. All future urban development should locate in this area. The RSA comprises all of the remaining portions of the unincorporated county. This area should retain a dominantly rural character.

Within the major service areas there also exists subareas for the various Activity Centers and a special Commercial Agriculture Area; all of which are described in the Goals and Policies. In general from a countywide perspective, the Urban Service Area (USA) and its activity centers represent three levels of existing or proposed urban density. The Downtown Activity Center (DAC) will maintain the highest density, followed by the Urban Activity Center (UAC) and then the remaining portion of USA. Within the Rural Service Area (RSA) there are special Commercial Agriculture Areas (CAA) which are based on the presence of concentrated prime farmland and prime forestland soils. Exclusive agriculture, agribusiness, and commercial forestry uses will be promoted in these areas.

The RSA also contains Neighborhood Activity Centers (NACs) which represent small clusters of urbanized development, centrally located within a generally rural area. Any additional urban development in the rural area will be encouraged to locate in the NACs and future county infrastructure and facility investments should be targeted to these areas.

Greater Irwin contains an abundance of existing vacant uses and subdivided lands or new areas adjacent to the existing utility systems of Ocilla which far exceed the anticipated needed acreage for development throughout the 20-year planning period. Therefore infill development and development of areas contiguous to the city limits will be encouraged and regarded as a priority for any new development.

Many areas within Greater Irwin contain environmentally sensitive features which must be considered when making development decisions. Therefore, all new development or redevelopment shall be subject to the following development constraints: floodplains, wetlands, soil suitability, and groundwater recharge areas. These constraints shall be reviewed on a site-by-site basis and shall take precedence when making development or land use approvals/decisions. The future land use maps should be consulted when reviewing

land use changes or proposed development and redevelopment. However, land use designations on the future land use map are for general purposes and will be considered secondary to these development constraints.

IRWIN COUNTY (Unincorporated) FUTURE LAND USE

In general, Irwin County contains a dominant pattern of active agriculture/forestry uses which will continue through the 20-year planning period. The City of Ocilla represents the county's center of urban activity and there are also several smaller satellite communities scattered through the rural area. Over the years, all of these have had a slow decrease in urban intensity and this pattern is projected to continue through the planning period. There is an abundance of vacant land in and adjacent to the City of Ocilla (both urban and rural areas) and those lands located in and adjacent to Ocilla should be developed first since infrastructure improvements already exist to serve them. Therefore, future land use designations for unincorporated portions of Irwin County are generally the same as existing with most vacant lands being given a future land use designation appropriate to their surroundings. Map III-1 depicts future land use designations as well as USA, RSA and NAC boundaries for Irwin County.

The Urban Service Area (USA) portion of unincorporated Irwin County is located around the perimeter of Ocilla's city limits where there are already public water and sewer services available or nearby. Many of these areas are county enclaves completely surrounded by the city limits, in most cases partially surrounded by annexed rights-of-way.

Most of unincorporated Irwin County will fall into a Rural Service Area (RSA) since there are no existing or proposed public water and sewer services outside the Ocilla area. (Irwinville and Mystic each have a community water system but no sewer system.) However, within this area there are eight Neighborhood Activity Centers (NACs) that represent small clusters of existing urban development and these are scattered evenly across the rural area. Some of these were independent cities whose governments have gone inactive but all of them still retain their local identity and many are rich with historic resources. The NAC designation is intended to cluster any rural area development in these existing nodes of activity and help preserve their identity.

The designated NACs include the rural communities of Holt, Irwinville, Lax, Mystic, Osierfield, Waterloo, Wray, and the Our Town/Pleasure Lake community. All of these contain an existing mixture of land uses which include residential, commercial, and public-institutional (usually one or two churches). Irwinville and Mystic are the largest of these and are located along SR 32 in the west-central portion of the county. They both have water distribution systems, local community centers, and a small amount of industrial land use. Irwinville also has a volunteer fire department and Mystic has a local park. Waterloo is located along SR 125 in the far western part of the county and also contains a volunteer fire department, community center, and local park. Holt is located along SR 32 in the east-central portion of the county and contains a volunteer fire department. It also contains the county's solid waste transfer station (located at the landfill site which has been closed) and an abandoned school site which might possibly be re-adapted for community use. Lax also contains a volunteer fire department and is located in the southeastern corner of the county. Half of this community lies within Coffee County. Osierfield and Wray are located along the railroad track in the northeastern part of the county and contain only churches, residential and commercial uses. The Our Town/Pleasure Lake community covers a broad area (more than 500 acres) and is located along US 319 in the southwestern part of the county. It contains one commercial use and two large developing residential subdivisions.

Also within the RSA there are large areas designated as Commercial Agricultural Area (CAA). These will promote exclusive development for agriculture, agribusiness and commercial forestry in an effort to protect the valuable natural resource (prime farmland and forestland soils) from intrusion and destruction. All agriculture and forestry uses should utilize best farming methods and procedures and locate where soil conditions, drainage, etc.. is best suited for their use. Other development constraints such as wetlands and groundwater recharge areas should also dictate their location. Non-agriculture/forestry uses will be encouraged to locate inside an NAC or outside the CAA area.

There are several large platted subdivisions for residential use within the rural area, far from any designated NAC. Further development of these should be secondary to development of the NACs. Some are not suitable for development due to poor soils, wetlands, or groundwater recharge areas, and these should revert back to their original agriculture/forest usage. The county has adopted land subdivision regulations that address these priorities.

Future Commercial and Public/Institutional uses in particular should locate in either the Ocilla USA or a NAC. Consequently there are no additional uses in these categories shown on the future land use map outside the USA or NAC areas.

Future Agribusiness related industrial land uses should either locate adjacent to existing industrial land uses in the Ocilla UACs or adjacent to industrial land uses in the county NACs. It is highly recommended that the new Millennium Technology Pointe Industrial Park be reserved for technology based industry and this area is planned as an upscale office/industrial park with design control standards. It is projected that its 216 acres will far exceed demands beyond the twenty-year planning period.

Future Parks/Recreation/Conservation uses include existing uses plus an added "protected river corridor" along the Alapaha River (as mandated by Georgia Law). For future land use purposes, this is a conservation corridor which extends 1,000 feet on either side of the main stream channel. Additional conservation corridors are designated along all of the Satilla and Willacochee Rivers, as well as the portion of Reedy Creek south of US 319. Corridor widths are 500 feet on either side of the stream channel for the two rivers and 300 feet on either side of Reedy Creek. Uses other than passive recreation will be prohibited within these corridors.

Future Transportation/Communication/Utilities will remain significantly the same as existing. Due to projected slow growth and encouraged concentration of new development in designated USAs, no other significant expansions of the road system are anticipated in the unincorporated area through the 20-year planning period. Existing public rights-of-way within the county USA should be paved in accordance with proper urban standards and all public rights-of-way will continue to be maintained.

OCILLA FUTURE LAND USE

In general, the City of Ocilla's future land use pattern will be similar to its existing pattern with all vacant lands being shown as developed generally in accordance with surrounding existing uses. Ocilla will continue to be the main urban center and focal point for all major commercial, industrial and governmental activity in Irwin County. Map III-2 depicts future land use designations, service areas and activity center boundaries for the City of Ocilla and the adjacent unincorporated areas.

Ocilla's Urban Service Area (USA) generally corresponds with that of its existing water and sewer service areas. Ocilla's Downtown Activity Center (DAC) corresponds with the locally designated and visually recognizable downtown district which already functions under a separate zoning category. This area will continue to be the urban core of the city with the highest density of uses. Pedestrian-oriented development will be encouraged in this area. There are four Urban Activity Centers (UACs) which also contain a high urban density. The central UAC is situated around the DAC. It extends a short distance outward in all directions from downtown, mainly along Fourth Street (SR 32) and Irwin Avenue (US 129 and 319), and also includes the warehouse area immediately southeast of downtown. This area already contains most of Ocilla's governmental uses and additional development of this kind will be encouraged to locate in either the DAC or central UAC. Due to the limited size and existing development pattern of the downtown area, large lot commercial and industrial development will be directed to one of the other UACs. One northern UAC is situated along the US 129/319 north corridor and contains mostly commercial or industrial uses with some residential or abandoned commercial uses. This corridor presently contains the highest traffic volumes and serves as Ocilla's major link to the larger community of Fitzgerald just 7 miles to the north in adjacent Ben Hill County. This corridor is therefore expected to maintain its predominantly commercial/industrial

character. The southern and northwestern UACs consists of the Southside industrial park located west of US 129, south of Stump Creek and the industrial park off Crossings Road west of US 129/319. These two areas are currently less than 50% built out but contains two viable industrial uses plus the Irwin County Detention Center which is currently vacant. Due to its size, highway access, and availability of water and sewer services, this area will be promoted for new industrial development. The remaining portions of Ocilla's USA will generally function as a Neighborhood Activity Center (NAC) as defined in the Goals and Policies.

Within Ocilla's USA, there are more than sufficient acreages of vacant undeveloped land or abandoned uses to accommodate projected growth during the 20-year planning period. These vacant lands are in all parts of the city and are adjacent to all land use categories. Therefore these vacant lands will receive first priority for new development in any of the land use categories. The recommended pattern for infill development is depicted on the future land use map.

Future residential land use will generally mirror that of existing residential except for those marginal areas within the UACs that are shown as future commercial or industrial. New residential development will continue in the developing subdivisions along the city's perimeter areas. Most of these subdivisions are less than 50% built out and most of the existing vacant platted lots should develop before additional large subdivisions are approved.

Future commercial development should locate in the DAC or UACs with abandoned vacant properties receiving first priority for development. Also, additional commercial development may occur in areas designated for industrial land use.

Future industrial land use is mostly confined to the four UACs based on existing concentrations of industrial activity. The two established industrial parks (northwest UAC and south UAC) will receive the higher priority for industrial development.

Future Public/Institutional uses are generally depicted as existing. However, additional governmental service facilities should locate within the central UAC where there is already a concentration of these facilities. The extreme southeastern part of the city contains a rapidly developing educational complex and additional development in this area should be compatible with these uses. Also, former education facilities should be adapted and productively reused for some kind of community purpose. Additional P/I uses may otherwise locate in areas designated for future commercial.

Future Parks/Recreation/Conservation and Transportation/Communication/Utilities uses are depicted as existing with no significant expansions anticipated.

Future agriculture and forestry uses within the city limits are generally depicted as existing and limited to the perimeter areas. These areas should be protected from urban encroachment for as long as possible in order to promote infill development.

Based on population projections and household size trends detailed in Chapter 2, Greater Irwin is expected to gain some 3,575 persons (a 36% change) by the year 2025. This population change, coupled with declining family unit size forecasts a growth of 1,172 households, 129 projected for the City of Ocilla and an increase of 1,043 residential units projected for unincorporated Irwin County.

Local leaders, through their comprehensive plan strategies, local infrastructure investment actions and land regulatory efforts hope to reverse this rural growth trend and encourage more residential growth to occur in or adjacent to the Ocilla USA or in the rural NACs. The city's vacant 116 acres could easily provide space for 230 to 360 residential units, and vacant/agricultural lands adjacent to the USA limits or in rural NACs are more than sufficient for the planning period. Any multi-family growth would also reduce residential acreage demand.

Vacant commercial (33.8 acres) and industrial vacant lands in Ocilla (115 acres), plus the 216 acres available in the Millennium Technology Pointe Industrial Park are more than sufficient for commercial and industrial needs for the planning period.

FY 2004 - FY 2008 SHORT-TERM WORK PROGRAMS

The purpose of the Short-Term Work Program is to provide a detailed listing of the various projects and programs recommended by Irwin County and the City of Ocilla for implementation during the first five years covered in the 2025 Greater Irwin Comprehensive Plan. By scheduling major county and city initiatives and capital expenditures in advance over a period of years, the five-year work program will assist the county and city in undertaking activities to implement their individual plans and achieve their goals.

The Short-Term Work Program should be linked to and coordinated with the county and city annual operating budgets. The majority of the elements of the work program require direct county and city expenditures or indirect costs through allocation of county and city employees. Therefore, implementation of the Plan's goals, policies, and recommendations are tied to each annual budget. Attempts to implement the Plan should: (1) review recommendations in the Short-Term Work Program for the upcoming year; (2) revise the recommendations based on current information; and (3) transfer the recommended items that require local funding to the respective annual operating budget. With this approach, Irwin County and the City of Ocilla will be able to systematically implement their comprehensive plan.

Irwin County: Short Term Work Program Update

Community Facilities				
Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Complete the major renovation of the Irwin County Courthouse	2004	County Commission	\$2.1M (loan/grant)	Rural Development Adm/County
Irwinville Water System Improvements; Prepare preliminary engineering to establish needs and cost estimates	2004, 2005	County Commission	\$100,000	CDBG / GA Rural Water Assoc.
Road Repaving: (a) Falcom Road; (b) Cypress Road; (c) Pleasant Grove Church Road	2004, 2005	County Commission	(a) \$114,000 (b) \$80,000 (c) \$65,000	DOT/County
Continue participation in the LARP Program of GA DOT	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	County Commission	Na	County/GA DOT
Continue program of systematic culvert and small bridge replacement for county right-of-ways to increase roadway weight capabilities	2004, 2005, 2007, 2008	County Commission	\$20/year	County
Continue to work with GA DOT in the preparation of engineering plans to gain linkage to I-75 and the provision of a truck by-pass around Ocilla	2004, 2005, 2006	County Commission/Planning Advisory Commission	Na	County/GA DOT
Construct a 250,000 gallon elevate tank; a new water supply well; and purchase additional industrial park land and service with roads/infrastructure	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007	County Commission/ City of Ocilla/Industrial Development Authority	\$1.4M	EDA, EIP, ONE GEORGIA

Economic Development				
Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Continue to foster all Chamber of Commerce job prospecting, marketing of vacant buildings and land; and job training / education programs	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	County Commission/Planning Advisory Commission	NA	County
Continue to support the Industrial Development Authority and the JDA efforts to prepare financial packages for existing and new businesses / industries in Greater Irwin	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	County Commission/Planning Advisory Commission	NA	County/City

Land Use				
Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
After receipt of FEMA floodplain maps for Irwin County integrate them into their GIS system and develop an enforcement program.	2004, 2005, 2006	County Commission/Planning Advisory Commission	NA	County
Prepare annual reports of building permits, new subdivisions, zoning ordinance amendments/special exceptions and variances.	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	Planning Advisory Commission	NA	County

Natural and Historic Resources				
Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Continue to support the implementation activities fostered by the Irwin County Preservation Association	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	County Commission/Planning Advisory Commission	NA	County
Conduct a county-wide historic resources inventory	2006, 2007	County Commission, City of Ocilla	\$8,000	SHPO, County/City
Begin the rehabilitation of the old elementary school/auditorium with roof and window replacement and foster new uses for the vacant	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007	County Commission, City of Ocilla	\$40,000	LDF, County, City

classrooms

Other Considerations

Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Continue to investigate the need and funding for a county manager	2006, 2007	County Commission	\$25-40,000	County
Continue to implement provisions of the Joint Services Delivery Strategy which promotes functional consolidation	2004, 2005, 2007, 2008	County Commission	NA	County

General Planning

Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Annually re-evaluate the Irwin County Short-Term Work Program	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	County Commission/Planning Advisory Commission	NA	County
Participate in all updates to the 2025 Greater Irwin Comprehensive Plan	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	County Commission/Planning Advisory Commission	NA	County
Prepare all loan and grant applications (CDBG, EIP, EDA, RD, etc.,) after conducting a needs assessment and public hearing to ascertain which project has the highest priority	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	County Commission	NA	County
Direct the Ocilla/Irwin County Planning Advisory Commission to be the 'plan keepers' and recommend changes and additions.	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	County Commission/Planning Advisory Commission	NA	County

Ocilla city: Short Term Work Program Update

Community Facilities				
Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Construct a 250,000 gallon elevated tank; a new water supply well; and purchase additional industrial park land and service with roads/infrastructure.	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007	City of Ocilla/County Commission/Industrial Development Authority	\$1.4M	EDA, EIP, ONE GEORGIA
Prepare plans and construct a youth activity center.	2005	City Council	\$500,000	CDGBG, City
Coordinate with GA DOT and Irwin County in the design/engineering plans for needed improvements for I-75 linkage to & thru Ocilla, including a truck by-pass around Ocilla	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	City of Ocilla/County Commission/Planning Advisory Commission	Na	GA DOT
Continue participation in the LARP program of GA DOT	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	City Council	Na	GA DOT
Develop feasibility plans to construct a new swimming pool or renovate the existing swimming pool at 412 North Oak Street	2004, 2005	City Council	Na	RD/loans/grant
Annually update the water, sanitary sewer and natural gas system GIS data base and maps	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	City Council	\$500/y	City
Promote increased customer base of the city's natural gas distribution system	2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	City Council	\$200/y	City

Economic Development				
Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Continue to foster all Chamber of Commerce job prospecting, marketing of vacant buildings and land; and job training / education programs	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	City Council/Planning Advisory Commission	NA	City
Continue to support the Industrial Development Authority and the JDA efforts to prepare financial packages for existing and new businesses / industries in Greater Irwin	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	City of Ocilla/County Commission	NA	City/County
Continue to foster implementation activities of the Ocilla Clean Community Program	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	City Council	NA	City

Housing				
Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Implement current CHIP application, and apply for new / rehab house as needed to upgrade housing supply	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	City Council	\$250,000	CDBG

Land Use				
Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
After receipt of FEMA floodplain maps for Ocilla integrate them into their GIS system and develop an enforcement program	2004, 2005, 2006	City Council/Planning Advisory Commission	NA	City
Prepare annual reports of building permits, new subdivisions, zoning ordinance amendments/special exceptions, and variances	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	City Council/Planning Advisory Commission	NA	City

Natural and Historic Resources				
Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Continue to support the implementation activities fostered by the Irwin County Preservation Association	2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	City Council/Planning Advisory Commission	NA	City/County
Conduct a county-wide historic resources inventory	2006, 2007	City of Ocilla/County Commission	\$8,000	SHPO, County/City
Begin the rehabilitation of the old elementary school/auditorium with roof and window replacement, and foster new users for the vacant classrooms	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007	City of Ocilla/County Commission	\$40,000	LDF, County, City

Other Considerations				
Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Implement provisions of the Joint Service Delivery Strategy which supports functional consolidation of services	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	City Council	NA	City
Re-activate the Clean Community Program Committee, and establish annual work program	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	City Council	Na	City

General Planning				
Activity	Years	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Annually re-evaluate the Ocilla Short-Term Work Program	2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	City Council/Planning Advisory Commission	NA	City
Participate in all updates to the 2025 Greater Irwin Comprehensive Plan	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	City Council/Planning Advisory Commission	NA	City
Prepare all grant/loan applications (CDBG,EDA,EIP,RD, etc.) after conducting a needs assessment and public hearing to ascertain which project has the highest priority	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	City Council	NA	City
Direct the Ocilla / Irwin County Planning Advisory Commission to be the 'plan keepers' and recommend changes and additions	2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008	City Council/Planning Advisory Commission	NA	City

Irwin County: Report of Accomplishments

Community Facilities		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Implement the major renovation of the Irwin County Courthouse, which includes a county-wide referendum for a General Obligation Bond	Underway	
Assist Irwinville to upgrade their water system to ensure an adequate water service for domestic use and fire protection	Postponed	An application for funds was not successful. Some remedial improvements were undertaken, but just to keep the system operational.
The following County Roads will be addressed through County State Aid contracts: -Jones Road (ROW acquisition/utilities moved) -Roberts Road (ROW acquisition/utilities moved) -Sand Ridge Lane (ROW acquisition/utilities moved)	Completed	
Continue participation in the LARP program of GA DOT	Completed	
State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Maintenance work on SR 32 from west of unnamed street in Ocilla 16.74 miles to east of CR 289 in Coffee County	Completed	
Continue program of systematic culvert and small bridge replacement for county rights-of-way to increase roadway weight capabilities	Underway	
Seek GA DOT assistance to design and prepare engineering plans for needed improvements for linkage to I-75 to and thru Irwin County and environs; including a truck bypass around Ocilla. This feasibility study will require subsequent amendments to the "2015 Greater Irwin Comprehensive Plan" prior to implementation	Underway	
Irwin County will participate in the construction of a new fire station in the southwestern part of the county, if the residents organize a volunteer fire department and request county assistance	Completed	

Economic Development		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Continue to foster all Chamber of Commerce job prospecting, marketing of vacant buildings and land; and job training/education programs	Completed	
Continue to support the Industrial Development Authority's efforts to prepare financial packages for existing and new businesses/industries in Greater Irwin	Completed	

Land Use		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Adopt a resolution to provide a county construction codes enforcement program, which utilizes the eight mandatory State Construction Codes	Completed	
Prepare and adopt a subdivision ordinance	Completed	
Prepare and adopt a zoning ordinance which assists in implementing the Irwin County Future Land Use Plan	Completed	
Prepare and adopt amendments to all applicable existing county regulatory ordinances to meet the provisions of the "Mountain and River Corridor Protection Act of 1991"	Completed	
After receipt of FEMA floodplain maps for Irwin County develop an enforcement program	Postponed	Have not received the FEMA floodplain maps.
Develop the Irwin County Geographic Information System, starting with parcels and roads and adding		

layers for floodplains, soils, zoning and existing and future land use	Underway
Amend or adopt codes and ordinances, where applicable, to address the environmentally sensitive resources identified in Part I. Identify and adopt wetland protection measures	Completed
Adopt groundwater recharge area protection measures	Completed

Natural and Historic Resources		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Continue to support the implementation activities fostered by the Irwin County Preservation Association	Completed	
Conduct a county-wide historic resources inventory	Postponed	The focus was directed to other individual historic structures and consequently the survey was postponed until 2006.
Complete a master restoration/rehabilitation plan for the old elementary school and auditorium	Completed	

Other Considerations		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Intergovernmental Coordination: Develop a strategy to select and hire a county manager	Postponed	Downturn in the economy has decreased county revenues and a manager position is not feasible at this time.
Intergovernmental Coordination: Implement provisions of the Joint Service Delivery Strategy which promote functional consolidation of services	Underway	
Intergovernmental Coordination: Utilizing the Ocilla/Irwin County Service Delivery Strategy of 1999 revisit the Police/Sheriff Depts consolidation study and pursue an implementation program	Postponed	Without a county manager to focus time and effort on this program, the county has been unable to get this program accomplished.

General Planning		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Annually re-evaluate the Irwin County Short-Term Work Program	Completed	
Participate in all updates to the 2015 Greater Irwin Comprehensive Plan	Completed	
Prepare all grant and loan applications (CDBG, EDA, RD, etc.,) after conducting a needs assessment and public hearing to ascertain which project has the highest priority	Completed	
Program increased responsibilities for the Ocilla/Irwin County Planning Advisory Commission	Completed	

Ocilla city: Report of Accomplishments

Community Facilities		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Annually update the water, sanitary sewer and natural gas system GIS maps and data base	Completed	
Implement the sanitary sewer improvement program	Completed	
Repave East Fifth Street from Roosevelt Drive to Tankersley Circle	Not Accomplished	Funding was denied due to number of houses to be served
Prepare a T-21 application for sidewalks along Oak Street from SR 32 to Eighth Street	Underway	Application involves curb, gutter, and paving.
Coordinate with Irwin County to gain GA DOT assistance to design and prepare engineering plans for needed improvements for linkage to I-75 to and thru Ocilla; and including a truck by-pass around Ocilla. These feasibility studies will require subsequent amendments to the "2015 Greater Irwin Comprehensive Plan" prior to implementation	Underway	
Continue participation in the LARP program of GA DOT	Completed	
State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) Maintenance work on SR 32 from west of unnamed street in Ocilla 16.74 miles to east of CR 289 in Coffee County	Completed	
Make major renovations to the Neighborhood Center swimming pool at 412 North Oak Street	Postponed	Funding sources were not found and applications were not filed. The project will be reconsidered in 2004-2006
Make applications for a new water supply well and elevated tank for the NW Industrial Park	Completed	Applications were not funded.
Promote increased customer base of the city's natural gas distribution system	Completed	

Economic Development		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Continue to foster all Chamber of Commerce job prospecting, marketing of vacant buildings and land; and job training / education programs	Completed	
Investigate participation requirements in the Clean Community Program and establish a local committee	Underway	
Continue to support the Industrial Development Authority's efforts to prepare financial packages for existing and new businesses / industries in Greater Irwin	Completed	

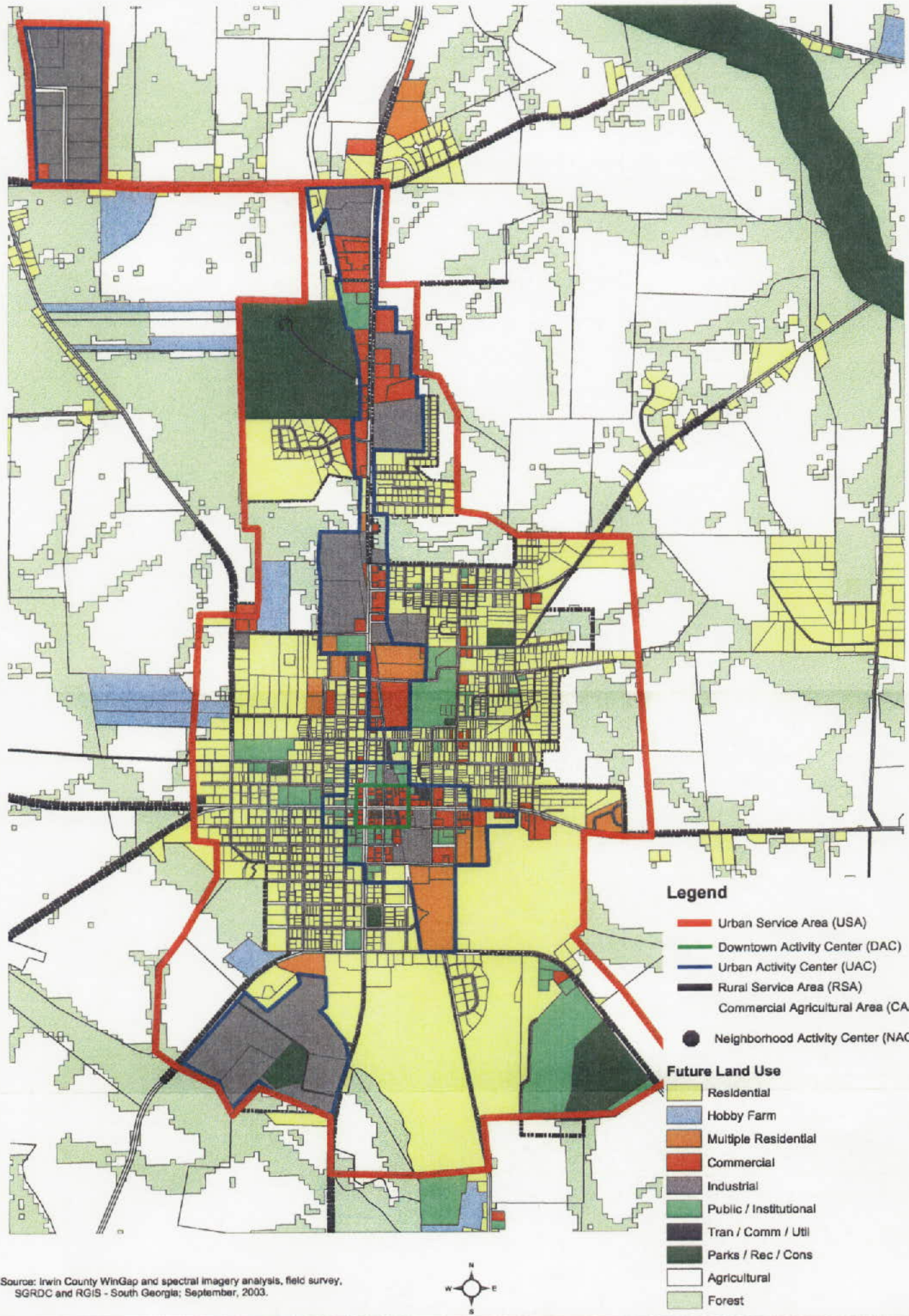
Housing		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Prepare CHIP application for new / rehab houses	Completed	

Land Use		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Amend the Zoning Ordinance to implement the Future Land Use Plan and adopt a land subdivision ordinance	Completed	
After receipt of FEMA floodplain maps for the City of Ocilla develop an enforcement program and tie the floodplain map as another lay into the City's Geographic Information System	Postponed	Have not received the FEMA floodplain maps.
Amend or adopt codes and ordinances, where applicable, to address the environmentally sensitive resources identified in Part I. Identify and adopt wetlands protection measures	Completed	

Natural and Historic Resources		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Continue to support the implementation activities fostered by the Irwin County Preservation Association	Completed	
Participate in the preparation of a county-wide historic resources inventory	Postponed	Other priorities came first and the City will assist the county in 2006 on this historic resource inventory
Complete a master restoration / rehabilitation plan for the old elementary school and auditorium	Completed	

Other Considerations		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Intergovernmental Coordination: Develop a strategy to select and hire a City Manager	Underway	
Implement provisions of the Joint Service Delivery Strategy which support functional consolidation of services	Underway	
Prepare job descriptions / personnel policies program	Completed	
Intergovernmental Coordination: Utilizing the Ocilla / Irwin County Service Delivery Strategy of 1999, revisit the Police / Sheriff Depts consolidation study and pursue an implementation program	Postponed	Negotiations have stalled, and it is not likely to be revisited.

General Planning		
Activity	Status	Explanation
Annually re-evaluate the Ocilla Short-Term Work Program	Completed	
Participate in all updates to the 2015 Greater Irwin Comprehensive Plan	Completed	
Prepare all grant/loan applications (CDBG, EDA, RD, etc.) after conducting a needs assessment and public hearing to ascertain which project has the highest priority	Completed	
Program increased responsibilities for the Ocilla/ Irwin County Planning Advisory Commission	Completed	



MAP III-2
OCILLA & ENVIRONS FUTURE LAND USE