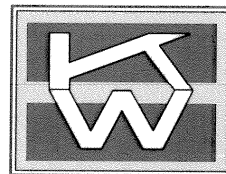


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PARTIAL UPDATE  
CITY OF SPARTA COMPREHENSIVE  
PLAN  
2008 - 2011



KECK & WOOD, INC.

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June 19, 2008

**RESOLUTION**

**ADOPTING**

**THE CITY OF SPARTA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Sparta, Georgia, has prepared an interim Comprehensive Plan for the years 2008 – 2011; and

**WHEREAS**, the Comprehensive Plan update was prepared in accordance with the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning established by the Georgia Planning Act;

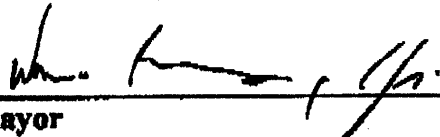
**WHEREAS**, two (2) public hearings on the planning process and draft plan were held at Sparta City Hall on April 17, 2008 and June 19, 2008; and

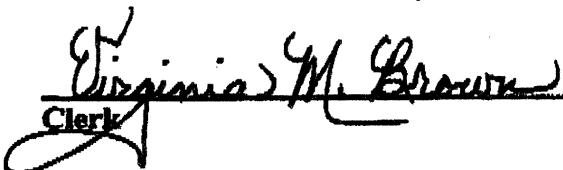
**WHEREAS**, the plan was approved by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs on June 25, 2008.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City of Sparta does hereby adopt the City of Sparta Comprehensive Plan update as approved by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

**ADOPTED**, this 14th day of October, 2008.

**BY:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk

**A RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE TRANSMITTAL OF THE  
CITY OF SPARTA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PARTIAL UPDATE  
TO THE CENTRAL SAVANNAH RIVER REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT  
CENTER FOR REVIEW AND APPROVAL**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Sparta, Georgia, has prepared a Partial Update of its Comprehensive Plan covering the for the years 2008 – 2011; and

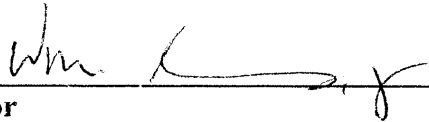
**WHEREAS**, the Comprehensive Plan update was prepared in accordance with the *Requirements for a Partial Update to the Local Government Comprehensive Plan* as developed by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA).

**WHEREAS**, a Public Hearing on the draft plan was held at Sparta City Hall on June 19, 2008.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED**, that the City of Sparta does hereby submit the draft Comprehensive Plan Partial Update to the Central Savannah River Regional Development Center for review in accordance with DCA requirements.

**APPROVED**, this 19th day of June, 2008.

**BY:**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Mayor**

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
**Clerk**

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## **PURPOSE AND SCOPE**

In 1993, the City of Sparta, Georgia, participated in a joint comprehensive planning effort with Hancock County that resulted in the *Hancock/Sparta Comprehensive Plan 1993-2013*. Since the adoption of that plan in 1993, Sparta prepared and adopted Short Term Work Program updates in 1998 and 2004, as required by the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning.

As a result of changes to the *Comprehensive Plan Recertification Schedule*, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) is requiring that Sparta prepare and adopt a “Partial Update” of its Comprehensive Plan that will provide interim policy guidance for local officials until a new plan is prepared and adopted in 2011. The Partial Update contained in this document has been prepared in accordance with the *Requirements for a Partial Update to the Local Government Comprehensive Plan, March 2007* as promulgated by DCA.

The City of Sparta conducted a series of meetings during the planning process to obtain community input. A Public Hearing was conducted on June 19, 2008, to present the “draft” Partial Update report and receive any additional community input prior to submitting it to the Central Savannah River Regional Development Center (CSRRDC) and DCA for review and approval.

## **QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES**

The following addresses the Quality Community Objectives (QCOs) requirement contained in the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures. The *Quality Community Objectives Local Assessment Tool* provided by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs was used as the basis of the following analysis. A copy of the Assessment is included in the Appendix.

### ***Development Patterns***

Traditional neighborhoods, infill development, sense of place, regional identity, and transportation alternatives are Quality Community Objectives relating to development patterns. Sparta’s zoning ordinance currently does not contain provisions for mixed-use developments, traditional neighborhood developments, or infill development. Sense of place is facilitated through efforts to revitalize the city’s historic downtown area. In 2006, the city completed its first streetscape improvement project. The project, funded entirely by with city funds, seeks to improve pedestrian safety and the overall appearance of the downtown area. The city recently received Transportation Enhancement Program (TE) funding from the Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT) for additional downtown streetscape improvements.

### ***Resource Conservation***

Heritage preservation, open space preservation, and environmental protection are Quality Community Objectives that relate to resource conservation. Due to the rural nature of the city and limited growth over the past few years, the city does not have a greenspace ordinance or regulations for conservation subdivisions. The city is actively engaged in historic preservation

efforts within the downtown area. A number of historic homes within the downtown area have been appropriately maintained while many others are in need of extensive repairs. The elimination of dilapidated abandoned homes will be needed if revitalization efforts are to be successful.

### ***Social and Economic Development***

Growth preparedness, appropriate businesses, employment options, housing choices, and educational opportunities are key components to social and economic development. Sparta is a small, rural city that has been experiencing declines in both population and economic development. It is anticipated that the city will address the magnitude and types of economic development it desires in future years when it begins work on the new Comprehensive Plan in 2011.

### ***Governmental Relations***

Local self-determination combines regional cooperation to form the governmental relations objective. Over the years, Sparta has enjoyed a good working relationship with Hancock County. The city is currently updating its Service Delivery Strategy in cooperation with the county.

## **AREAS REQUIRING SPECIAL ATTENTION**

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs has identified the following special conditions and requires that they be addressed if warranted:

- Natural or cultural resources;
- Areas where rapid development is likely to occur;
- Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of public facilities and services;
- Redevelopment areas;
- Large abandoned structures or sites;
- Infill development opportunities; and
- Areas of significant disinvestments and/or underutilized areas.

Local officials conducted a review of existing conditions and determined that the following areas within Sparta warrant special attention:

### ***Significant Natural and Cultural Resources***

Sparta's historic downtown area shown on the *Areas Requiring Special Attention Map* in the Appendix is a cultural resource worthy of protection and enhancement. The city has been increasingly active over the past few years in planning and implementing improvements within the area. The lack of growth in Sparta has resulted in an abundance of vacant downtown storefronts and buildings in disrepair. The Sparta Historic Society, a local group active in historic preservation efforts, has conducted an inventory of the city's historic resources. Natural resources, such as floodplains, groundwater recharge areas, and streams are present throughout

Sparta. Local officials realize the importance of protecting and preserving these resources and plan to highlight this importance when the new Comprehensive Plan is prepared in 2011.

### ***Areas with Significant Infill Development Opportunities***

Opportunities exist within downtown Sparta for infill development. There are numerous vacant properties and deteriorating residential structures within the core downtown area that, given the appropriate market conditions, would facilitate infill development. An emphasis in infill development, particularly mixed-use development, within the area would serve to create a more vibrant downtown.

### ***Areas of Disinvestment, Needing Redevelopment, or Improvements to Aesthetics or Attractiveness***

The majority of any disinvestment and/or redevelopment opportunities (residential and commercial) within Sparta are located within the downtown area and along major transportation routes such as State Route 15 and State Route 22.

### ***Large Abandoned Structures or Sites***

There are several large abandoned structures within Sparta's downtown area that may be worthy of rehabilitation.

## **ISSUES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

The following Issues and Opportunities were identified using DCA's *Quality Community Objectives Local Assessment Tool* and *Typical Issues and Opportunities*. The complete update of Sparta's Comprehensive Plan scheduled for 2011 will provide a much more detailed analysis of demographics; housing; economic development; land use; community facilities and services; intergovernmental coordination; transportation; and natural and cultural resources. The complete update will also employ the use of an appropriate Community Participation Program that will assist local officials in issue identification, goal formulation, and implementation priorities.

### **GROWTH**

The City of Sparta is not experiencing rapid population growth. According to data obtained from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, Sparta's population has been steadily decreasing since 1980. Projections obtained from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs indicate that Sparta's population will continue to decrease through the year 2030. Local officials plan to thoroughly address the lack of growth and development during the process of preparing a new comprehensive plan in 2011.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Sparta's economy is quite limited and relies heavily on nearby cities for employment and services. As a result, the city's primary focus is to retain the major employers that are located within the city and support any expansion efforts aimed at creating additional jobs.

### *Economic Development Plan*

In general, Sparta lacks a sufficient number of jobs and economic opportunities for its residents. In an effort to encourage economic development, the city should develop a plan to facilitate the retention and expansion of existing businesses and industries. Such a plan would also identify businesses and industries that should be recruited to locate in Sparta. Even without much in the way of projected population increases, the city should still be pro-active in the event that trends reverse course in future years. The city should continue efforts at reestablishing a downtown development authority (DDA) and participate in joint economic development efforts Hancock County.

### *Redevelopment Opportunities*

As stated previously, there are opportunities for redevelopment within the city, particularly in the downtown area. The city has been active in downtown revitalization efforts and was recently awarded Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds for downtown streetscape improvements. The goal is to improve pedestrian access and the general appearance of downtown in an effort to facilitate a revitalized downtown area. Redevelopment will be a primary point of discussion as the Full Comprehensive Plan Update is undertaken in 2011.

### *Community Pride*

Local officials feel that it is important to maintain the city's small-town atmosphere and use it as an economic development recruitment tool. In order to do this, the city should explore methods to get the community involved in city-sponsored events and activities aimed at enhancing pride in the community.

## NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

### *Historic Resources Inventory*

The Sparta Historic Society has inventoried most of the city's historic properties and resources. This inventory will be used during the process of preparing Sparta's new Comprehensive Plan in 2011.

### *Natural Resources*

Natural resources are in abundance within Sparta. It is the goal of the city to encourage economic development and redevelopment that preserves and protects important natural resources.



## FACILITIES & SERVICES

### *Growing Demand for Public Services*

In general, existing public services adequately meet the needs of existing residents and, with improvements, should be adequate in future years. Since population growth is not expected to affect future demand for city services, the city's primary emphasis will be on maintaining and enhancing existing service levels. The city is applying for an increase in the allowed water withdrawal permit levels for water supply from Lake Sinclair as a means of ensuring future water supply.

### *Water and Sewer*

According to local officials, Sparta has adequate water and sewer services. The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) is requiring that the city upgrade the land application system for the wastewater treatment plant. EPD is also requiring that the city close the abandoned wastewater lagoon site and construct a replacement pump station to pump the wastewater to the city's new treatment plant. Sparta has applied for funding (USDA-Rural Development) to assist in project financing and expects to have the project complete by 2010. These two projects are projected to cost between 2 and 4 million dollars.

### *Capital Improvements Planning*

No capital improvements planning is currently performed by the city. In order to adequately schedule and finance future capital improvements, the city should prepare and use a Capital Improvements Program & Budget.

### *Neighborhood Revitalization*

Sparta possesses several neighborhoods that are in need of revitalization due to dilapidated housing stock.

## LAND USE

### *Infill and Redevelopment*

There are numerous residential and commercial properties within Sparta's downtown area that present opportunities for infill development and redevelopment.

### *Public Spaces*

Sparta lacks adequate public spaces that would serve as gathering places for events and social functions. There are areas within the downtown area that could be redeveloped for such uses. As stated previously, Sparta has been active in planning for new sidewalks within the area as part of its streetscape improvement program. Pedestrian improvements and aesthetic improvements

resulting from streetscape improvements can be used to facilitate the establishment of public gathering places downtown.

## TRANSPORTATION

### *Transportation Choices*

Since no public transportation exists in Sparta, the automobile is the primary transportation choice available to Sparta residents. Sparta recently received funding through the Georgia Department of Transportation's Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program to design and construct streetscape improvements within the downtown area.

### *Pedestrian Network*

In general, Sparta's pedestrian network is aging and in need of improvement. Sidewalk repair and construction of new sidewalks are important components of the city's upcoming streetscape improvement project.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

Coordination between the City of Sparta and the Hancock County Board of Commissioners is generally considered good and has improved greatly over the past few years. Such coordination will be required in order for each local government to achieve long-range goals.

## **IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM**

### *Short Term Work Program*

The following Short Term Work Program identifies the specific implementation actions that the City of Sparta intends to undertake during the interim planning period. Priority projects and program initiatives resulting from the overall planning process are listed in the Short Term Work Program for each of the five years and are grouped under the planning element headings. Each recommendation should be undertaken and/or completed in the year under which it falls unless otherwise noted. In addition to the scheduling of priority items for the city, the work program provides guidance to the city regarding cost estimates and potential sources of financing. By scheduling major city initiatives and capital expenditures in advance over a period of years, the work program will assist the city in undertaking activities to implement the plan and achieve its goals.

### *Previous Short Term Work Program Status*

A status report on Sparta's 2004-2009 Short Term Work Program is included in the Appendix. In general, the city has done a commendable job implementing the various projects and programs recommended in the previous comprehensive plan. Projects that were not implemented have been transferred to the updated Short Term Work Program for implementation.

## *Policies*

### *Economic Development*

- Encourage and support the redevelopment and revitalization of downtown Sparta.
- Work cooperatively with Hancock County and other agencies involved in local economic development activities.
- Support programs for the retention, expansion, and creation of businesses that will enhance the city's economic well-being.
- Encourage economic development and redevelopment activities.
- Target reinvestment in declining, existing neighborhoods to further encourage private sector redevelopment.
- Promote the establishment and maintenance of public gathering sites within the downtown area to serve as focal points for the city.

### *Natural and Cultural Resources*

- Encourage and support the redevelopment and revitalization of downtown Sparta.
- Protect and conserve Sparta's natural and cultural resources.
- Encourage new development in suitable locations in order to protect natural resources, cultural resources, and environmentally-sensitive areas.

### *Facilities and Services*

- Make efficient use of existing infrastructure as well as future investments and expenditures for capital improvements and long-term operation and maintenance costs.
- Coordinate public facilities and services with land use planning to promote more compact development.
- Protect existing infrastructure improvements by encouraging infill, redevelopment, and compact development.

### *Housing*

- Actively seek appropriate state and federal grants for housing improvements.
- Strive to eliminate substandard and dilapidated housing with Sparta.
- Encourage infill housing in existing viable neighborhoods.
- Promote walkable, safe neighborhoods.

### *Land Use*

- Encourage Traditional Neighborhood Development.
- Promote efficient use of land by encouraging well-designed, pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use development patterns.
- Use the Comprehensive Plan in the review of rezoning applications and other development proposals.

- Keep the zoning ordinance and other development regulations up-to-date.
- Support the redevelopment and revitalization of vacant and/or underutilized commercial and industrial areas within the downtown area.
- Support opportunities for residential and non-residential infill development that enhances the character of existing neighborhoods.
- Employ innovative planning concepts to achieve desirable and well-designed neighborhoods, protect the environment, preserve open space, improve traffic flow, and enhance the quality of life in Sparta.

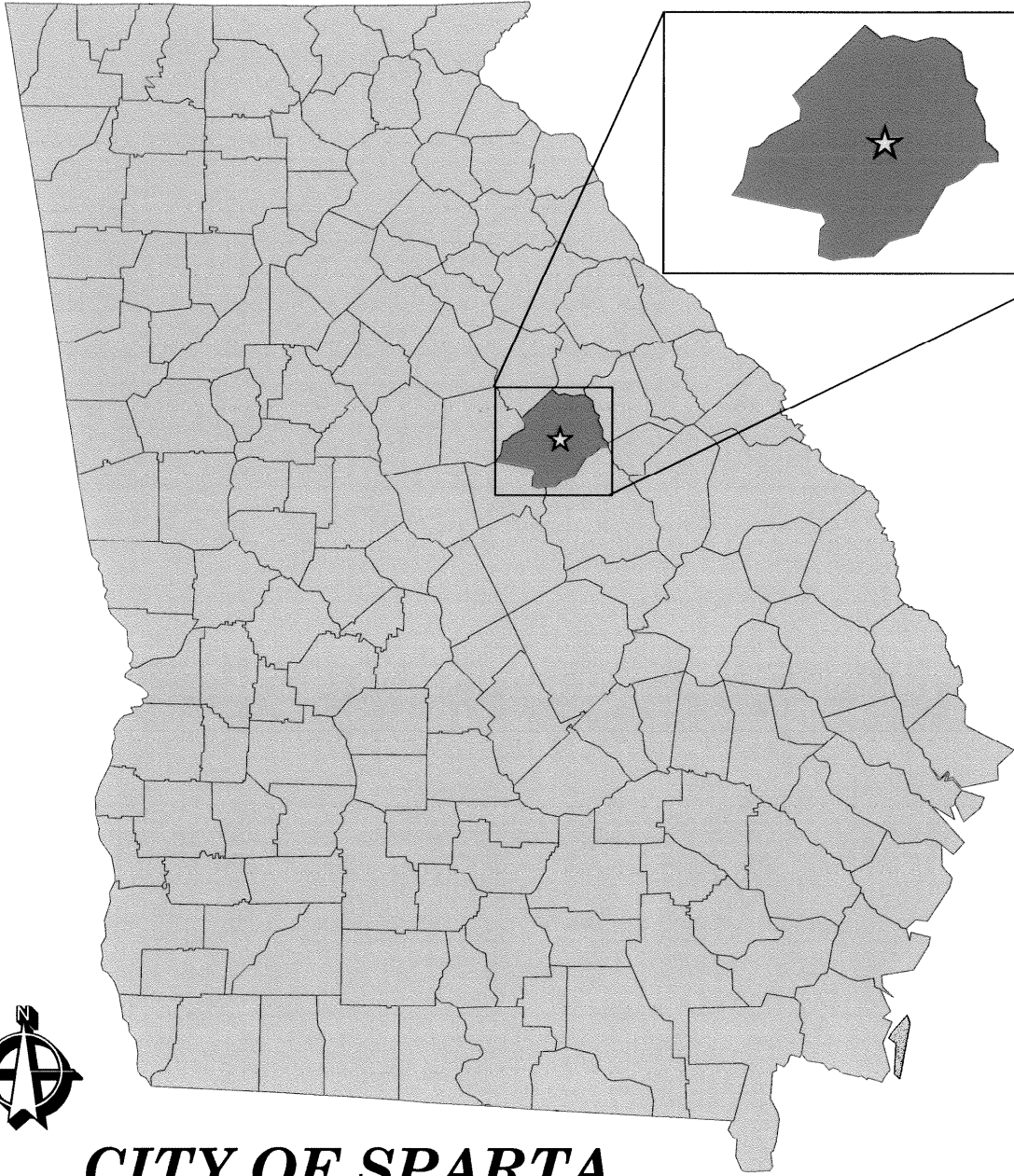
#### *Transportation*

- Continue participation in the Georgia Department of Transportation's Transportation Enhancement (TE) Program.
- Encourage alternative modes of transportation within the city.
- Maintain existing and planned transportation facilities (streets, roadways, sidewalks, etc.).

#### *Intergovernmental Coordination*

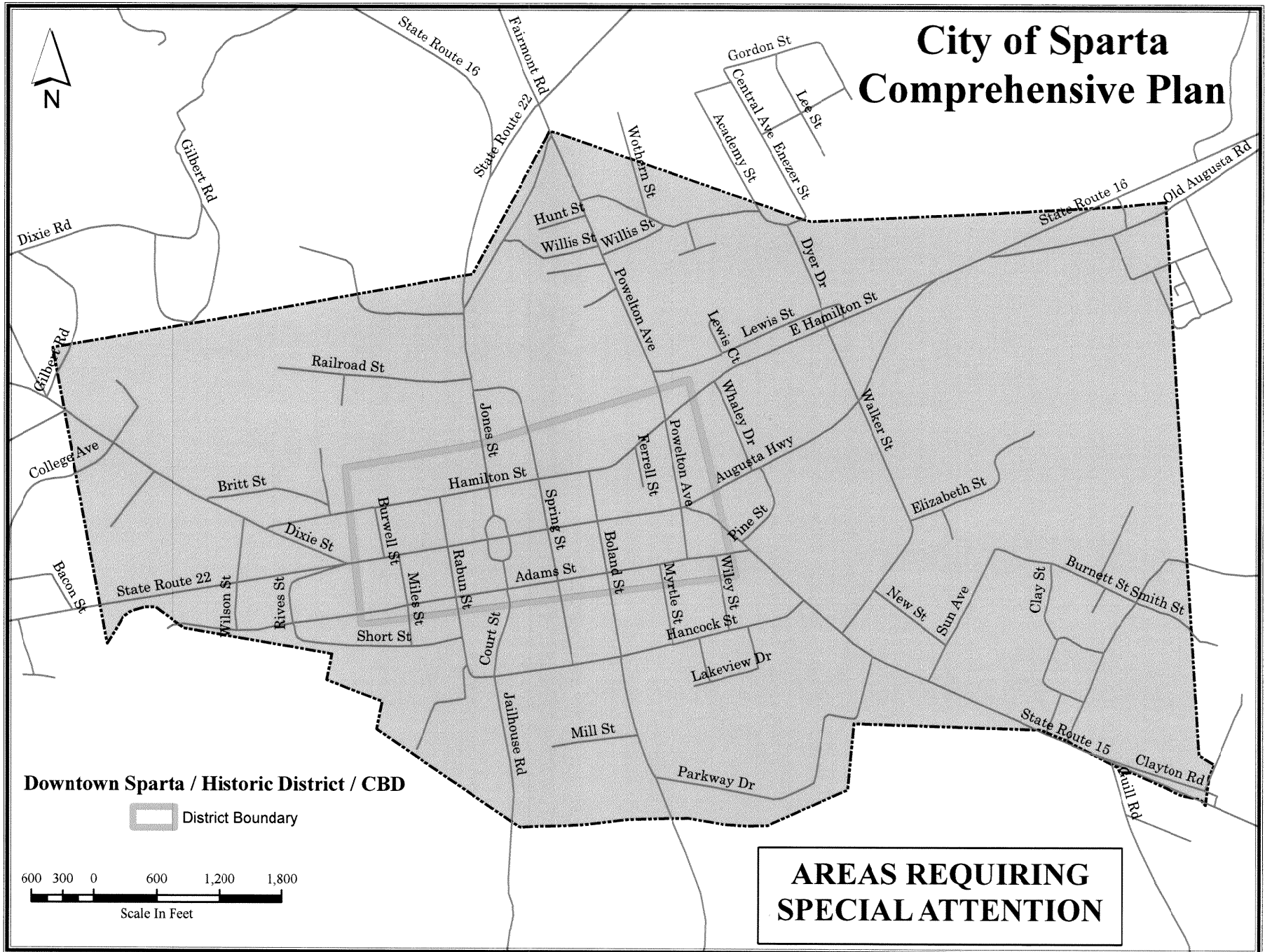
- Work cooperatively with Hancock County and other agencies regarding public services, planning, and development.

## **APPENDIX**



***CITY OF SPARTA  
HANCOCK COUNTY, GEORGIA***

# City of Sparta Comprehensive Plan



## **City of Sparta Short Term Work Program 2008 - 2011**

<b>Project</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>
1. Plan & Design Downtown Streetscape Improvements	x	x			\$60K	Sparta/Consultant	Local
2. Construct Streetscape Improvements			x	x	\$350K	Sparta	Local/TE Funds
3. Review & Amend Zoning Ordinance As Appropriate		x			Varies	Sparta/Consultant	Local/DCA
4. Re-establish Downtown Development Authority	x	x			N/A	Sparta	N/A
5. Continue Working Cooperatively with Hancock County Regarding Economic Development Issues & Programs	x	x	x	x	N/A	Sparta	N/A
6. Continue Seeking Grant Funds for Downtown Improvements	x	x	x	x	Varies	Sparta	Local
7. Prepare GIS-Based Stormwater System Inventory				x	Varies	Sparta	Local/EPD
8. Seek grant funding for infrastructure improvements	x	x	x	x	N/A	Sparta	Local/DCA
9. Prepare Major Comprehensive Plan Update			x	x	\$30,000	Sparta/Consultant	Local
10. Develop a consistent and appropriate incentives package to offer prospective businesses and industries		x			N/A	Sparta/Consultant	Local/DCA
11. Adopt Part V Environmental Ordinances			x		Varies	Sparta/Consultant	Local
12. Complete Wastewater Lagoon Project			x		\$1M	Sparta/Consultant	Local/USDA
13. Complete Land Application System Upgrade				x	\$1M	Sparta/Consultant	Local



## Report of Accomplishments - Sparta 2004-2008 Short Term Work Program

<i>Project or Activity from Previous STWP</i>	STATUS			<i>Not Completed</i>	<i>Comments</i>
	<i>Completed</i>	<i>Underway</i>	<i>Postponed</i>		
<b>ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>					
Develop a consistent and appropriate incentives package to offer to prospective businesses and industries.				x	Included in updated STWP
Create Downtown Development Authority and establish training.		x			Included in updated STWP
Utilize Redevelopment Revolving Loan Fund to finance downtown revitalization and renovation of commercial store fronts.		x			
Recruit new local businesses.		x			On-going activity.
Pursue Downtown Streetscape Project to attract new downtown businesses and for safety purposes.	x				Awarded TE grant. Design begins 2008.
<b>NATURAL &amp; HISTORIC RESOURCES</b>					
Pursue training for the Historic Preservation Commission.		x			On-going activity.
Remove oxidation pond and establish city park.		x			
Upgrade of wells for water and methane testing and maintain closed landfill.	x				
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES</b>					
Renovate City Hall and Police Department facilities.					
Upgrade water/sewer meters for radio and GPS.	x				
Upgrade gas meters for radio or GPS read.	x				
Continue maintenance and upgrade of road paving and drainage systems.		x			On-going activity.
Purchase street sweeper.	x				
Purchase police cars.	x				
Purchase playground equipment for city park.	x				
<b>LAND USE</b>					
Review/revise land use regulations.			x		Included in updated STWP.
<b>HOUSING</b>					
Pursue rehabilitation of low-moderate income housing/new units.		x			On-going activity.
Pursue homebuyer education program.		x			On-going activity.
Remove/demolish dilapidated structures.		x			On-going activity.

## *Quality Community Objectives Local Assessment*

In 1999 the Board of the Department of Community Affairs adopted the Quality Community Objectives (QCOs) as a statement of the development patterns and options that will help Georgia preserve its unique cultural, natural and historic resources while looking to the future and developing to its fullest potential. The Office of Planning and Quality Growth has created the Quality Community Objectives Local Assessment to assist local governments in evaluating their progress towards sustainable and livable communities.

This assessment is meant to give a community an idea of how it is progressing toward reaching these objectives set by the Department, but no community will be judged on progress. The assessment is a tool for use at the beginning of the comprehensive planning process, much like a demographic analysis or a land use map, showing a community that “you are here.” Each of the fifteen Quality Community Objectives has a set of yes/no statements, with additional space available for comments. The statements focus on local ordinances, policies, and organizational strategies intended to create and expand quality growth principles.

A majority of “yes” answers for an objective may indicate that the community has in place many of the governmental options for managing development patterns. “No” answers may provide guidance in how to focus planning and implementation efforts for those governments seeking to achieve these Quality Community Objectives.

Some assessors may be able to answer these questions without much research, particularly in communities with few or no land use controls. Others may need to review land use ordinances and zoning regulations to find the answers, but this initial assessment is meant to provide an overall view of the community’s policies, not an in-depth analysis. There are no right or wrong answers to this assessment. Its merit lies in completion of the document, and the ensuing discussions regarding future development patterns, as governments undergo the comprehensive planning process.

Should a community decide to pursue a particular objective, it may consider a “yes” to each statement a benchmark toward achievement. Please be aware, however, that this assessment is only an initial step. Local governments striving for excellence in quality growth may consider additional measures to meet local goals. For technical assistance in implementing the policies, ordinances and organizational structures referenced in the assessment, please refer to [OPOG’s Assistance with Planning and Quality Growth](#).

Congratulations on your community and economic development efforts, and thank you for your dedication to Georgia’s citizens and resources.

**Quality Community Objectives  
Local Assessment**

<b>Development Patterns</b>			
<b>Traditional Neighborhoods</b>			
<b>Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, compact development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.</b>			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.		✓	
2. Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development "by right" so that developers do not have to go through a long variance process.		✓	
3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.		✓	
4. Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer.		✓	
5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.		✓	
6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.	✓		TE STREETSCAPE PROJECT UNDERWAY
7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.	✓		
8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.	✓		
9. Some of our children can and do bike to school safely.	✓		
10. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community.	✓		

**Quality Community Objectives**  
**Local Assessment**

<b>Infill Development</b>			
<b>Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.</b>			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.		✓	MOST ARE IN DOWNTOWN AREA HISTORIC DISTRICT
2. Our community is actively working to promote brownfield redevelopment.		✓	
3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment.		✓	
4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road).		✓	
5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses.		✓	
<b>Sense of Place</b>			
<b>Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.</b>			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics.		✓	
2. We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage, and have taken steps to protect those areas.	✓		DOWNTOWN EFFORTS UNDERWAY
3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.		✓	
4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.		✓	

**Quality Community Objectives  
Local Assessment**

5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.		✓	
6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.		✓	
<b>Transportation Alternatives</b>			
<b>Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes, and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.</b>			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. We have public transportation in our community.		✓	
2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.	✓		
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.	✓		
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.		✓	
5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.		✓	
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.		✓	
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.	✓		
<b>Regional Identity</b>			
<b>Each region should promote and preserve a regional "identity," or regional sense of place, defined in terms of traditional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.</b>			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.	✓		

***Quality Community Objectives  
Local Assessment***

2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.	✓		
3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.).	✓		
4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development's regional tourism partnership.		✓	
5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.		✓	
6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.	✓		

***Resource Conservation***

**Heritage Preservation**

**The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community's character.**

	Yes	No	Comments
1. We have designated historic districts in our community.	✓		HISTORIC DOWNTOWN DISTRICT
2. We have an active historic preservation commission.	✓		BEING REACTIVATED
3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure this.		✓	

***Quality Community Objectives  
Local Assessment***

<b>Open Space Preservation</b>			
<b>New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of encouraging this type of open space preservation.</b>			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community has a greenspace plan.		✓	
2. Our community is actively preserving greenspace, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.		✓	
3. We have a local land conservation program, or we work with state or national land conservation programs, to preserve environmentally important areas in our community.		✓	
4. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.		✓	
<b>Environmental Protection</b>			
<b>Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.</b>			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.		✓	
2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.		✓	
3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.		✓	
4. Our community has passed the necessary "Part V" environmental ordinances, and we enforce them.		✓	
5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced.		✓	
6. Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.		✓	

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7. We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development.		✓	
8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).		✓	
<b><i>Social and Economic Development</i></b>			
<b>Growth Preparedness</b>			
<b>Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.</b>			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.	✓		
2. Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.	✓		
3. Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.	✓		
4. We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.		✓	
5. We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.		✓	
6. We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth, and these areas are based on a natural resources inventory of our community.		✓	
7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.		✓	



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8. We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.		✓	
9. We have procedures in place that make it easy for the public to stay informed about land use issues, zoning decisions, and proposed new development.		✓	
10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.		✓	
<b>Appropriate Businesses</b>			
<b>The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects for expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.</b>			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets and weaknesses, and has created a business development strategy based on them.		✓	
2. Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit businesses and/or industries that will be compatible.		✓	
3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products.	✓		
4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy.		✓	
<b>Employment Options</b>			
<b>A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.</b>			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.		✓	
2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.		✓	
3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	✓		

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4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs.	✓		
<b>Housing Choices</b>			
<b>A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.</b>			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.	✓		
2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.	✓		
3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average).		✓	
4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks.		✓	
5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or “neo-traditional” development.		✓	
6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.	✓		
7. We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.	✓		
8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.		✓	
9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.		✓	
10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.		✓	

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<b>Educational Opportunities</b>			
<b>Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.</b>			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens.		✓	
2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.		✓	
3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	✓		
4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.		✓	
<b><i>Governmental Relations</i></b>			
<b>Regional Solutions</b>			
<b>Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.</b>			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.		✓	
2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.		✓	
3. We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services, such as public transit, libraries, special education, tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security, etc.	✓		

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4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.		✓	
<b>Regional Cooperation</b>			
<b>Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.</b>			
	Yes	No	Comments
1. We plan jointly with our cities and county for comprehensive planning purposes.		✓	
2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.	✓		
3. We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft regionwide strategies.	✓		
4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.	✓		