



**Partial Update To The
2024 Greater Irwin County Comprehensive Plan
For
Irwin County And The City Of Ocilla**

February 2009

Prepared by:

Irwin County
City of Ocilla
And
South Georgia RDC

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I. Instructions and Procedures

The following procedures for this process were copied from the website of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Office of Planning and Quality Growth "Requirements for a Partial Update to the Local Government Comprehensive Plan, March 2007".

<http://www.dca.state.ga.us/development/PlanningQualityGrowth/programs/documents/PartialUpdateGuidanceDocument-March2007II.PDF>

Purpose

The purpose of the Partial Update to the Comprehensive Plan is to provide a document for use as a policy guide to the City of Ocilla and Irwin County in the interim period and the full update of their Joint Comprehensive Plan which will be due in February of 2014.

The Partial Update is designed to generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of the community, engage the interest of citizens in implementing the plan; and to provide a guide for everyday decision making for local government officials and community leaders.

The Partial Update will help the community to identify current critical issues and opportunities which have arisen since their last full Comprehensive Plan update in 2004.

Required Components

Since the last full Joint Comprehensive Plan for Ocilla and Irwin County was prepared under the 2004 and prior Minimum Planning Standards, the following are the required components for this Update:

1. A Quality Community Assessment.

A Stakeholder Group consisting of local government officials, staff, other community leaders and interested citizens was convened to identify issues and opportunities within Greater Irwin County that would assist in adapting local activities, development patterns and implementation practices to the Department of Community Affairs' (DCA) Quality Community Objectives which were applicable to Greater Irwin County. The assessment tool provided by DCA was utilized to accomplish this task.

2. An Analysis of Areas Requiring Special Attention

The same Stakeholder Group coordination with SGRDC staff evaluated the existing land use patterns and trends within Greater Irwin County to identify and map the following areas:

- a. Areas of significant natural or cultural resources
- b. Areas where rapid development or change of land uses are likely to occur.
- c. Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services
- d. Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness
- e. Large abandoned structures or sites
- f. Areas with significant infill development opportunities
- g. Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or employment substantially higher than average levels for the community as a whole.

3. Identification of Issues and Opportunities

The Stakeholder Group identified a variety of issues and opportunities relating the various elements of their existing 2004 Joint Comprehensive Plan that have arisen in the meantime. The identified issues and opportunities have been addressed in the following section. It has been recognized that many of these issues have arisen due to the current economic situation and will need to be revisited as the overall situation changes.

4. An Updated Implementation Program

a. Short Term Work Program

Specific implementation actions, items and initiatives by the City of Ocilla and/ or Irwin County and other local entities have been identified which would help to implement the Update of this Plan. The Short Term Work Program includes the following information:

- i. Brief description of the activity
- ii. Estimated timeframe for undertaking the activity
- iii. Responsible party for implementing the activity
- iv. Estimated cost (if any) of implementing the activity
- v. Funding source, if applicable.

5. Policies

This Joint Update includes policies which the City of Ocilla and Irwin County plan to or have adopted to provide ongoing guidance and direction to the City Council and County Commission in order to make decisions which will assist in addressing the identified issues and opportunities.

6. A Report of Accomplishments

This report identifies the status of each activity in the previous Short Term Work Program by indicating whether the activities have been completed, are currently underway, have been postponed or are no longer on the agenda.

Procedural Requirements

1. Transmittal and Review of Partial Update

Upon completion the local government must submit its Partial Update to the SGRDC for review.

a. Required Public Hearing

The required public hearing must be held once the draft Partial Update has been made available for public review, but prior to its transmittal to the SGRDC. The purpose of the hearing is to brief the community on the identified issues and opportunities that will be addressed through the updated implementation program, allow the community an opportunity to comment, and notify the community of when the plan components will be transmitted to the SGRDC. Once public comments have been addressed, the Partial Update must be transmitted to the SGRDC by resolution of the governing body.

b. Completeness Check

The SGRDC shall determine whether the Partial Update is complete, within seven days of the receipt. A Partial Update that does not meet the standard for completeness shall be deemed incomplete and shall not be accepted for further review by the SGRDC or be forwarded to the Department for review. The SGRDC shall notify Ocilla and Irwin County of its findings regarding the completeness of the submittal and identify items that must be submitted, if any, prior to further processing. The SGRDC shall forward a complete submittal to the Department immediately upon making the completeness finding.

c. Notification of Interested Parties

Once the SGRDC has determined that the Partial Update is complete, it shall immediately notify any interested parties of the availability of the submittal for review and comment, providing the name of the local government, the general nature of the submittal and a deadline by which comments must be received. At a minimum, interested parties shall include:

- i. Local governments inside or outside the SGRDC's region that are contiguous to Ocilla and Irwin County, and other local governments that are likely to be affected by the Partial Update
- ii. Any local authorities, special districts, or other entities identified in evaluating intergovernmental coordination mechanisms and processes (if applicable)
- iii. Regional Development Centers that are contiguous to Ocilla and Irwin County or that are likely to be affected by the Partial Update
- iv. Affected state agencies including the Department of Transportation, the Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority and the Department.

d. Regional Hearing

Within 25 days after certification of the completeness of the Partial Update the SGRDC may at its sole discretion conduct a hearing at which any local government, RDC, or other local, regional or state agency may present its views on the Community Agenda.

e. Regional Development Center Review:

The SGRDC shall review the partial update for potential conflicts with plans of neighboring jurisdictions, opportunities for inter-jurisdictional/regional solutions to common issues, and consistency with the adopted Regional Agenda for the SGRDC's region.

f. Department Review

The Department shall review the partial Update for compliance with the planning requirements. This review may result in identification of deficiencies that must be satisfactorily resolved by Ocilla and Irwin County in order for the Partial Updated to be found "inc compliance" with the planning requirements. The Department may also offer advisory comments for improving the Partial Update for consideration by the local government. The Department's findings and recommendations resulting from its review, including advisory comments, shall be transmitted to the SGRDC for inclusion in the final report within 35 days after certification of the completeness of the Partial Update.

g. Final Report of Findings and Recommendations

Within 40 days after certification of the completeness of the Partial Update, the SGRDC must transmit a final report of its findings and recommendations to the local government and to the Department. The report must include"

- i. Comments submitted by interested parties that reviewed the Partial Update and if applicable a summary of the regional review hearing, detailing any significant issues raised at the hearing
- ii. The SGRDC's findings from its Intergovernmental and Consistency review of the Partial update and its recommendations for addressing such findings
- iii. A copy of the Department's findings and recommendations resulting from its review of the Partial Update.

h. Petition for Reconsideration

Within ten days after the SGRDC's findings and recommendations are made public, a submitting local government that disagrees with the recommendations may petition the SGRDC for a "reconsideration hearing". This hearing shall be scheduled and held by the SGRDC within 15 days after receipt of such a request. Within 10 days after the reconsideration hearing, the Department and the SGRDC shall either continue or modify the original findings and recommendations and provide written notice of the decision to the submitting local government.

i. Conflict Mediation

Informal or formal mediation of conflicts relating the Partial Update may be initiated in accordance with the Rules for Mediation of Inter-jurisdictional Conflicts adopted by the Board of Community Affairs.

j. Adoption of the Partial Update

Once the Partial Update has been found by the Department to be in compliance with the planning requirements, the governing body may adopt the Partial Update with or without any recommendations for improvement included in the Final Report of Findings and Recommendations. However, in no event shall a local government take any official action to adopt a Partial Update prepared in accordance with the planning requirements until 60 days after the Partial Update has been certified by the SGRDC as complete. If the local government has petitioned for reconsideration, this mandatory review period shall be 90 days. In order to maintain Qualified Local Government certification, the local government must adopt the approved partial Update prior to its recertification date, but in no case later than one year after completion of the mandatory review period for the Partial Update.

k. Notification of Local Adoption

Within seven days of local adoption of a Partial Update that has been found by the Department to comply with the planning requirements, the local government shall notify the SGRDC in writing. Within seven days of receipt of this written notice, the SGRDC shall notify the Department that the Partial Update found in compliance with planning requirements has been adopted by the local government.

I. Qualified Local Government Certification

Once the Department has been notified by the SGRDC that a local government has adopted a Partial Update that complies with the planning requirements, the Department may issue a letter certifying this local government as a Qualified Local Government. Qualified Local Government certification shall automatically expire approximately five years from the previous recertification date, unless otherwise specified. To retain Qualified Local Government certification, a local government must remain in compliance with the requirements outlined in these planning requirements and O.C.G.A. 50-8-2(a)(18).

m. Publicizing the Partial Update

Once adopted by the local government, the availability of the Partial Update must be publicized by the local government for public information. This requirement may be met by providing notice in the Ocilla Star identifying where a complete copy of the Partial Update may be reviewed.

II. Consistency with Quality Community Objectives

The purpose of this section is to evaluate the City of Ocilla's and Irwin County's current policies, activities and development patterns for consistency with the Quality Community Objectives in Section 110-12-1-06(3) of the Local Planning Requirements. For this analysis the assessment tool provided on the Department's website was utilized in order to identify any issues and opportunities that have developed since the adoption of the last Joint Comprehensive Plan in 2004 and to utilize the findings to identify local activities, development patterns and implementation practices to these Quality Community Objectives.

1. Development Patterns

Issues, opportunities and policies effecting development patterns are found in the Housing, Land Use, Economic Development, Community Facilities, Natural Resource and Cultural Resource Elements of the Comprehensive Plan and this Partial Update.

Traditional Neighborhoods			
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.			
	Yes	No	Assessment and Comments
1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.	x		
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.		x	Neo-traditional subdivision design does not appear to be in demand in the smaller rural areas and in the smaller village centers is actually already in existence through historic mix of uses and use of back roads
3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade bearing trees appropriate to our climate.		x	A formal tree ordinance is not in existence, but the City of Ocilla has a tree planting program where the City plants 200 – 300 trees per year. Some revisions to the Zoning Code are desired to encourage a greater participation by the private sector.
4. Our community has an organized tree planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer.	x		See comment above.
5. We have a program to keep poor public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.	x		The City of Ocilla has a clean-up program in place in coordination with many volunteer groups such as the 4H groups.
6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would chose.	x		The City of Ocilla has a maintenance program in place and has worked in coordination with GDOT to provide more handicap access on sidewalks. Sidewalks are not a factor in unincorporated Irwin County.
7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.	x		
8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.		x	The schools are not located in residential neighborhoods where younger children live.
9. Some of our children can and do bike to school safely.		x	See comment above.
10. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community.		x	See comment above.

Recommendations:

- The City of Ocilla’s and Irwin County’s Zoning Ordinance adequately address development patterns that are appropriate for the area. Development requests as they occur will be monitored and the zoning ordinances may be amended as necessary.
- Future schools should be located near expected demand if feasible.

Infill Development			
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.			
	Yes	No	Assessment & Comments
1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.	x		The Chamber of Commerce has an up to date inventory of such sites and buildings and uses it to promote economic development in Irwin County and the City of Ocilla.
2. Our community is actively working to promote brownfield redevelopment.	x		The Chamber of Commerce and other economic development entities are actively promoting redevelopment of brownfields.
3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield redevelopment.		x	No greyfields exist in Greater Irwin County.
4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road).	x		Development is naturally occurring compacted around intersections. That is an inherent trait to rural village evolution.
5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses.	x		Small lot development is permitted for grandfathered lots as long as they receive Health Department approval or water and sewer hook-up.

Recommendations:

- The City of Ocilla’s Zoning Ordinance allows for commercial and residential infill development where applicable and should in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce develop a menu of incentives to encourage the development of scattered vacant lots.
- Continue to promote infill sites.

Sense of Place			
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.			
	Yes	No	Assessment & 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.		x	Irwin County is a typical South Georgia rural community with the historical architecture and development pattern.
2. We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage, and have taken steps to protect those	x		The City of Ocilla and Irwin County recognize that there is a strong historical tradition and many historical structures in the County. A Historic Preservation Commission is being formed as part of this process and the need for a county wide historic survey has been

areas.			recognized.
3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.		x	This has been recognized as a weakness and will be addressed through future revisions to the zoning ordinance.
4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.	x		The City of Ocilla and Irwin County both have adopted sign ordinances.
5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.		x	This could be incorporated into a Historic Preservation Ordinance, which is where most of the concern about incompatible architecture is.
6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.	x		Farming is a valuable economic resource in Irwin County and the zoning ordinance has provisions to protect agriculturally zoned properties.

Recommendations:

- The City of Ocilla and Irwin County need to create a Historic Preservation Commission to protect and encourage the preservation and rehabilitation of the many historic structures in the county.
- Locally significant architectural guidelines need to be defined and incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance in order to encourage private participation in creating a local Sense of Place and Identify.
- Compatibility between existing and future agricultural operations and non-agricultural rural development needs to be closely monitored and the zoning ordinance should be amended if necessary to provide for an enforceable "Right To Farm" clause.

Transportation Alternatives			
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.			
	Yes	No	Assessment & Comments
1. We have public transportation in our community.	x		Irwin County just completed its Rural Transit Plan is working on implementing some of the recommendation as far as financially feasible. Other transit exists in the form of Senior Transportation Services and through Sunnydale, a special needs school.
2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.		x	
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.	x		A good network of sidewalks exists especially in downtown Ocilla.
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.		x	
5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.		x	
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.	x		A bicycle route plan exists for the State Routes. A motorized golf cart ordinance has just been advertised for adoption for the City of Ocilla.
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.	x		The current zoning ordinances allow for shared parking.

Recommendations:

- Continue to seek funding to implement the Rural Transit Plan and encourage location of development at locations that would increase participation in ridership.
- Cooperation with Ben Hill County and the City of Fitzgerald should also be considered because they are significant commuting destinations.

Regional Identity

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.

	Yes	No	Assessment & Comments
1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.	x		Greater Irwin County is similar in architecture and heritage to surrounding counties developed during the same era. Examples are the Irwin County Courthouse building and the old elementary school.
2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.	x		Regional connections exist to several areas, specifically to the Cities of Fitzgerald, Tifton, Douglas and Nashville.
3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on our regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, coastal, etc.)	x		Examples of such businesses are Paulk Vineyards, the CASE Farm Center, Don Tucker Catfish Farm and many more.
4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development’s regional tourism partnership.	x		The Chamber of Commerce has just recently joined Magnolia Midlands, a regional tourism organization, to advance local and regional tourism.
5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.	x		Local tourism is promoted through the Chamber of Commerce, but it has been recognized that this area has such a rich history which needs to be promoted and utilized at a much larger scale.
6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.	x		

Recommendations:

- The City and County need to coordinate with the Chamber, the proposed Historic Preservation Commission and other appropriate organizations to actively promote local and regional historic events and locations.
- The Jefferson Davis Memorial Historic Site should be better promoted to generate increased interest and tourism in the local history and historic preservation.
- Additional sites need to be considered for the placement on the National Register of Historic Places and added to tourism generating local historic tours.

2. Resource Conservation

Issues, opportunities and policies effecting development patterns are found in the Land Use, Economic Development, Community Facilities, and Natural Resource Elements of the Comprehensive Plan and this Partial Update.

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	Assessment & Comments
1. We have designated historic districts in our community.		x	The establishment of a Historic Preservation Commission and subsequent development of a Historic Preservation Ordinance and designation of a Historic District will be initiated out of this Comprehensive Plan Update.
2. We have an active historic preservation commission.		x	See above comment.
3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure this.		x	Complementary development regulations in areas adjacent to historic districts will be suggested in the Comprehensive Plan.

Recommendations:

- The City and County should establish a joint Historic Preservation Commission.
- The City and County should establish one or more local historic districts.
- Establish a Historic Preservation Ordinance that provides guidelines for redevelopment and construction in the Historic District.

Open Space Preservation

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

	Yes	No	Assessment & Comments
1. Our community has a green space plan.		x	This is not applicable, due to its agricultural and rural nature, Irwin County and the City of Ocilla contain and protect an abundance of green and open space.
2. Our community is actively preserving green space, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.	x		Green space and open space is actively protected in concert with the protection of agricultural and rural land uses.
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.	x		Examples of such programs are the wetlands protection program, groundwater recharge area protection and river corridor protection programs which have all been adopted in Irwin County.
4. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.		x	

Recommendations:

- The City's and County's development patterns provide for sufficient open space preservation, but any development trends should be closely monitored to amend the zoning ordinance if necessary.

Environmental Protection			
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.			
	Yes	No	Assessment & Comments
1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.	x		Irwin County in conjunction with the SGRDC developed an inventory for wetlands, ground water recharge areas and river protection corridors. Additional inventories need to be completed for endangered & threatened animal and plant habitats.
2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.	x		Irwin County does not have final Floodplain maps, which are needed to help discourage development in the flood areas.
3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.	x		
4. Our community has passed the necessary "Part V" environmental ordinances, and we enforce them.	x		
5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced.	x		The community has an active tree planting program, and has recognized the need for a tree preservation ordinance to encourage private participation.
6. Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.		x	
7. We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development.	x		Managed through the Erosion & Sedimentation Control Act, but official guidelines should be included in the City and County zoning ordinances.
8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).	x		The zoning ordinances for both the City and the County include provisions for example that require larger lots in the flood areas.

Recommendations:

- Continue to apply and enforce the existing environmental regulations, especially regarding wetlands and river corridor protection.
- Establish a tree preservation ordinance to increase private participation in tree preservation and mitigation.
- After receiving the final FEMA Flood Plain maps, review and amend the zoning ordinances with regard to the protection of the flood plain and amend the zoning ordinance if necessary.

3. Social and Economic Development

Issues, opportunities and policies effecting development patterns are found in the Housing, Land Use, Economic Development, Community Facilities, and Cultural Resource Elements of the Comprehensive Plan and this Partial Update.

Growth Preparedness

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, and 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.

	Yes	No	Assessment & Comments
1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.	x		Population projections from the Census and the current Comprehensive Plan are utilized specifically to plan for infrastructure capacity.
2. Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.	x		Yes, but the school age population is declining.
3. Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.	x		
4. We have reviewed our development regulations and /or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.	x		The Planning & Zoning Commission is tasked to continually review the Zoning Ordinance and provide suggestions for needed improvements.
5. We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.		x	A capital improvement program per se does not exist, however the annual budget is updated with continuing or new capital improvements expenditures.
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.	x		Yes, these areas specifically include Highway 32 east towards Douglas and the area north-west of Ocilla where water and sewer are available.
7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.	x		
8. We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.	x		All City and County meetings are open to the public and are utilized to provide training for citizens. The Rotary Club also provides citizen education programs and articles in the newspaper.
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.	x		All public information is clearly advertised in the newspaper and available at City and County meetings.
10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.	x		A comprehensive public awareness program includes the use of public meetings and fliers and articles in the newspapers.

Recommendations:

- Continue to monitor development trends in the City and County and propose amendments to the appropriate zoning ordinances if necessary.
- Continue to provide education and awareness programs for elected officials, staff and the public and continue to provide opportunities for the public to become involved in the planning and development process.

Appropriate Businesses

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-skills job opportunities.

	Yes	No	Assessment & 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.	x		The Chamber of Commerce has identified suitable locations for businesses and has an economic and tourist development program for Greater Irwin County.
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.	x		The Chamber of Commerce is taking the lead on recruiting desirable businesses and evaluating business inquiries for Irwin County.
3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products.	x		
4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy.	x		The mix of employers includes educational, manufacturing, some retail and agriculture, however, in a small county the loss of one employer still hurts the economy.

Recommendations:

- Continue to work with the Chamber of Commerce, the Joint Development Authority and the Industrial Development Authority to promote the City of Ocilla and Irwin County to businesses that are compatible with and provide benefit to the area.

Employment Options

A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.

	Yes	No	Assessment & Comments
1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.	x		
2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.	x		
3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	x		
4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs.	x		

Recommendations:

- Continue to work with local businesses to provide job opportunities for all educational and age levels of the workforce.

Housing Choices

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.

	Yes	No	Assessment & Comments
1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.	x		Accessory dwelling units are permitted if they are pre-existing and grandfathered or through a variance from the City or the County.
2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.	x		
3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above average).	x		
4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks.	x		
5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or "neo-traditional" development.		x	The rural character of the area does not support neo-traditional or downtown concepts. As for loft apartments, the City of Ocilla only has one two story building and it does have an apartment co-located with a business.
6. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily housing.	x		Vacant land is available but will need to be formally rezoned to ensure compatibility with surrounding areas.
7. We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.	x		The zoning code provides for multi-family housing, any targeted properties will need to be formally rezoned to ensure compatibility with surrounding areas.
8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.	x		
9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.	x		Examples are Camelot Court and the apartments for special needs residents on Brush Creek Road.
10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.	x		

Recommendations:

- Continue to monitor demand and supply of housing to ensure that adequate housing for all income levels is provided.
- Establish consistent regulations in the City's and County's Zoning Ordinances to define minimum value and age for locating manufactured homes in order to maintain a safe and sanitary level of housing condition for all income levels.

Educational Opportunities

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.

	Yes	No	Assessment & Comments
1. Our community provides workforce training options for its	x		East Central Technical College is the main provider of such workforce training.

citizens.			
2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.	x		
3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	x		East Central Technical College is the main provider for higher education opportunities for the community. Residents as well as City and County Officials are greatly concerned about the impact that the pending merger with Valdosta Tech may have on the quality and quantity of the programs in Irwin County.
4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.		x	There are some opportunities in Irwin County, but there also appears to be an unmet need for additional professional job opportunities.

Recommendations:

- Closely monitor the proposed merger of East Central Technical College and Valdosta Technical College for adverse impacts on the Greater Irwin County area on quality and quantity of educational opportunities and on the ability to provide a skilled workforce in order to attract suitable industry.
- Continue to pursue businesses that could provide additional professional jobs in the area for local graduates.

4. Governmental Relations

Issues, opportunities and policies effecting development patterns are found in the Land Use, Economic Development, Community Facilities, Natural Resource Elements of the Comprehensive Plan and this Partial Update.

Regional Solutions			
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.			
	Yes	No	Assessment & Comments
1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.	x		Chamber of Commerce, Industrial Development Authority, Joint Development Authority, Magnolia Midlands, SGRDC
2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.	x		Upper Suwannee Conservation Tillage Alliance, SGRDC
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.	x		City of Ocilla and Irwin County jointly provide several of those services.
4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.	x		The regional airport is located in both Irwin and Ben Hill Counties.

Recommendations:

- Continue to pursue regional cooperation to increase competitive advantage over other regions for economic development and quality of life.

Regional Cooperation

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.

	Yes	No	Assessment & Comments
1. We plan jointly with our cities and county for comprehensive planning purposes.	x		
2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.	x		
3. We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to raft region-wide strategies.	x		Irwin County and the City of Ocilla coordinate through the South Georgia Regional Development Center to address regional development and other issues.
4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.	x		Irwin County and the City of Ocilla coordinate through the South Georgia Regional Development Center to address regional development and other issues.

Recommendations:

- Continue active local participation with the SGRDC and with adjacent local governments such as Ben Hill County, City of Fitzgerald, Coffee County, City of Douglas, Tift County and City of Tifton.
- Monitor and participate in the merger of South Georgia RDC and South-East Georgia RDC into a new Regional Commission.

III. Analysis of Areas Requiring Special Attention

The purpose of this section is to evaluate the existing land use patterns and trends within Greater Irwin County to identify any areas which will likely require special attention in the near future, including:

1. Areas of significant natural or cultural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon, or otherwise impacted, by development;

There are several historic structures and places within Ocilla and Mystic and throughout Irwin County will be one of the primary goals and activities resulting from this update. However, due to the concentration of historic structures in Mystic and Ocilla, both will be designated an Area of Significant Cultural Resources.

Areas of significant natural resources as identified on the map, are the protected river corridors, floodplains and groundwater recharge areas. These areas will require special consideration to protect them from unsuitable development.

2. Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur;

Not applicable

3. Areas where the pace of development has or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services;

Not applicable

4. Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors);

The area around the old hotel in Ocilla should be considered an area in need of investment and improvements to aesthetics, because it is in the center of the City of Ocilla and easily seen by passing visiting motorists or residents of Irwin County. This particular area in town could be a nice central attraction within downtown Ocilla contributing to tourist and economic development as well as historic preservation.

5. Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated;

There is a large junkyard off Hwy 319, which may pose environmental contamination threat to the environment due to contamination with chemicals that may have leaked into the groundwater during its longtime existence in the county. The junkyard operation appears to be inactive at this time, but it is located on one of the two main highways in Irwin County and also one of the first things motorists see when they are coming in from the north or the last thing they see of Irwin County when driving north. At a minimum, fencing and landscaping should be installed to improve the aesthetics of the site and an environmental assessment initiated.

6. Areas with significant infill opportunities (scattered vacant sites);

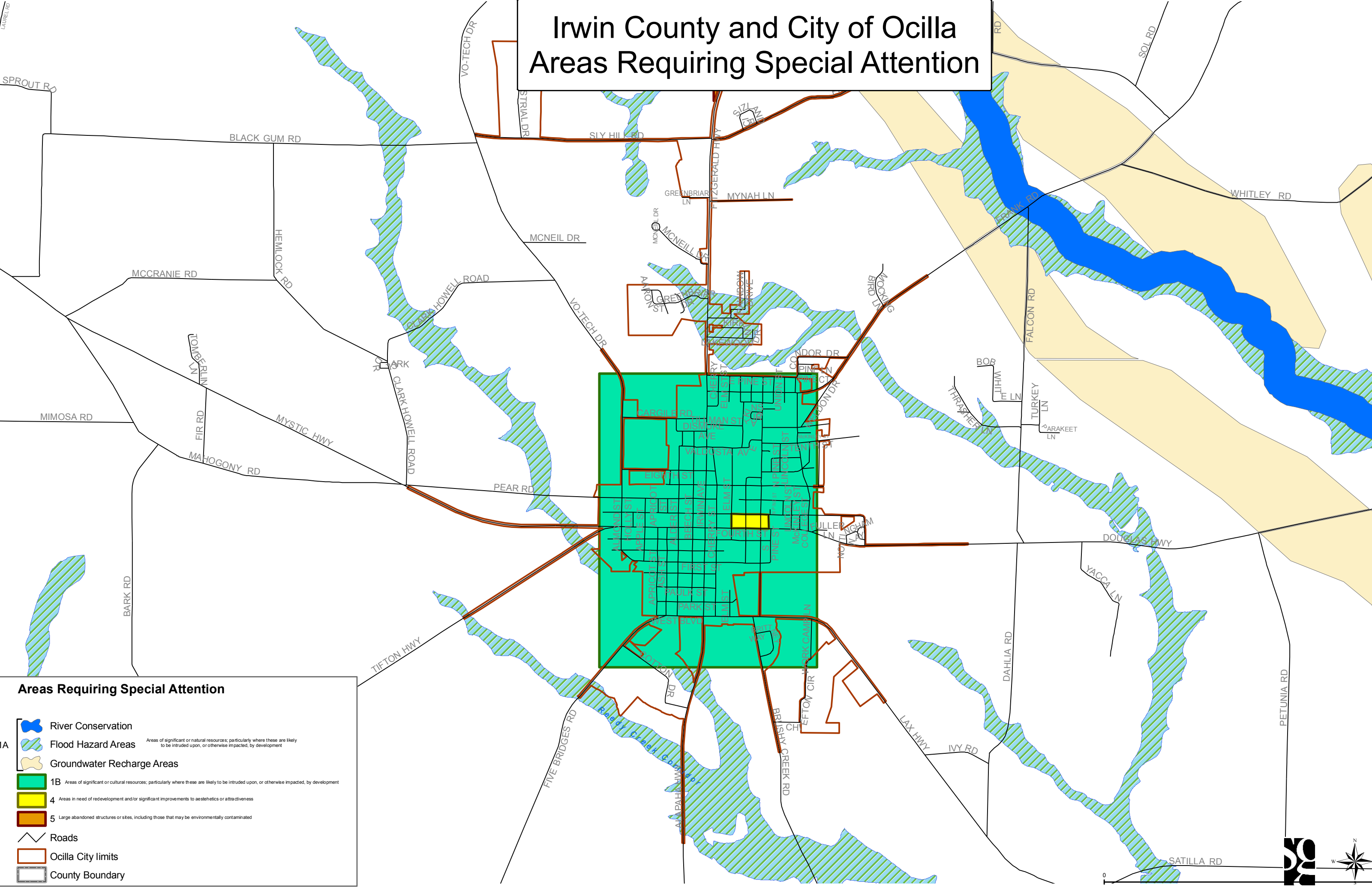
Not applicable.

7. Areas of significant disinvestment. Levels of poverty and /or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the community as a whole.

Not applicable.

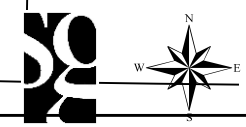
Map of Areas Requiring Special Attention County-Wide

Irwin County and City of Ocilla Areas Requiring Special Attention

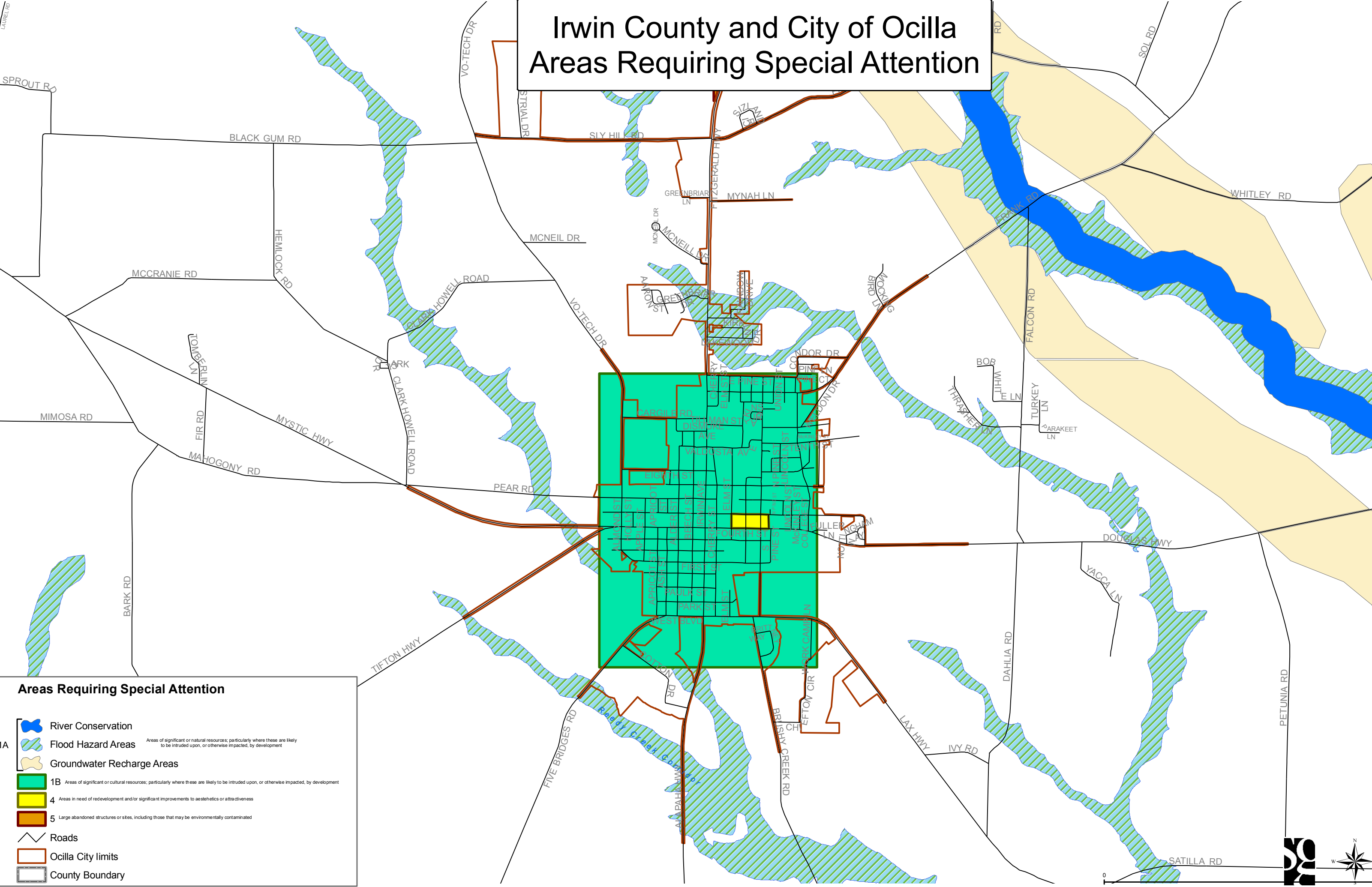


Areas Requiring Special Attention

- 1A River Conservation
- Flood Hazard Areas Areas of significant or natural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon, or otherwise impacted, by development
- Groundwater Recharge Areas
- 1B Areas of significant or cultural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon, or otherwise impacted, by development
- 4 Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness
- 5 Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated
- Roads
- Ocilla City limits
- County Boundary

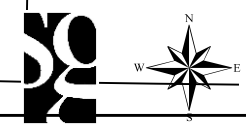


Irwin County and City of Ocilla Areas Requiring Special Attention



Areas Requiring Special Attention

- 1A River Conservation
- Flood Hazard Areas Areas of significant or natural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon, or otherwise impacted, by development
- Groundwater Recharge Areas
- 1B Areas of significant or cultural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon, or otherwise impacted, by development
- 4 Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness
- 5 Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated
- Roads
- Ocilla City limits
- County Boundary



IV. Identification of Issues and Opportunities

These issues and opportunities were identified by local residents and elected officials during the Quality Community Assessment and the Analysis of Areas Requiring Special Attention in a series of workshops and meetings. The different elements are organized as they appear in the existing 2025 Greater Irwin County Comprehensive Plan.

Each of the following issues and opportunities is followed up with corresponding implementation measures in the Short Term Work Program and with corresponding policies.

1. Cultural Resources

Issues

- There are many historical structures and places, including cemeteries, in Irwin County that are not identified nor inventoried.
- There are not sufficient resources available to protect and rehabilitate local historical structures.
- Irwin County and Ocilla are home to many renowned local artists and musicians but no official registry or recognition of these cultural resources exists.
- Irwin County and Ocilla also contain many non-physical historical treasures and stories that need to be identified and promoted.
- The old Elementary School is in need of renovations.

Opportunities

- Actively identify, inventory and promote the historic and cultural resources in Irwin County and the City of Ocilla, including historic structures, music and the arts.
- Develop a committee or an organization that will be tasked with preserving the cultural treasures in Irwin County and the City.
- Develop a definition of "historic" that reflects and is applicable to the local history.
- Develop an Irwin County/City of Ocilla Website that will actively promote local history for tourism and economic development and capture a larger share of the tourism industry.
- Encourage applications for State and Federal funding to complete needed historical renovations.

2. Economic Development

Issues

- There are not many job opportunities available, and particularly not for higher income jobs.
- Development of more value-added products and diversification is needed for agri-business and other industry.
- Sustainable management of water as a resource especially for agri-business is required.
- The pending merger of ECTC with Valdosta Tech raises concerns about local access to quality programs and continuing education for the working population.

Opportunities

- Promote and support existing and expanding local businesses and industries.
- Expand recruitment of businesses that will hire local graduates from the Quick Start training program and graduates from the trades' certification programs at ECTC.
- Promote and encourage sustainable and innovative agri-business opportunities.
- Promote tourism by expanding promotion of local historic structures, events and festivals.
- Research grants that are available to assist businesses and tourism and pursue them where feasible.

3. Housing

Issues

- There are some blighted homes and properties in the local area.
- There is no landscaping ordinance to define and private responsibility for maintenance of properties and landscaping in the City or the County.

Opportunities

- Include definitions in the City and County Ordinances for acceptable ages and years of construction for Manufactured Homes.
- Continue to pursue CHIPS and CDBG funds to renovate appropriate housing.
- New homes that are being constructed in the City need to blend with the character of the area and neighborhood.
- Develop a code enforcement program that will support homeowners in the maintenance and upkeep of blighted homes and properties.

4. Natural Resources

Issues

- Flood plain maps are needed to protect flood areas, river corridors and groundwater recharge areas from development.
- The two creeks through Ocilla should be considered for a proposal to be ditched and landscaped.

Opportunities

- Encourage citizen education and awareness through articles and workshops on using drought tolerant plants to encourage water conservation

5. Land Use

Issues

- Non-agricultural rural residents complain about noise and odor from existing agricultural operations.
- Location of mainly manufactured (mobile) homes in agricultural areas.
- The zoning code needs to have more enforcement capabilities.
- The County does not have a “minimum value” limit for manufactured homes, whereas the City has a minimum value of \$10,000.
- The current age limit for manufactured homes is 1976; it needs to be more recent.
- The fact that the City and County have separate zoning ordinances causes confusion among residents as to which apply.
- The proposed runway expansion for the Fitzgerald Municipal Airport produces too many adverse impacts on Irwin County and its residents without having any benefit to Irwin County

Opportunities

- Regulate the minimum value for manufactured homes in the County.
- Research opportunities where the City and County Zoning Ordinances could be combined.
- Need a “right-to-farm” clause to protect existing agricultural operations from encroaching non-agricultural rural residents.

6. Community Facilities and Services

Issues

- The City of Ocilla needs new potable water well. One of the two existing wells is still in service; the second well has to be abandoned due to high sulfur content.

- The City's existing water and sewer lines are very old and many of the pipes are rusty and leaking.
- Lack of funding to repair water and sewer system.
- Lack of complete inventory of water and sewer system including valves, meters and manholes makes identification of problems and solutions including budgeting for improvements very difficult and more expensive.
- Some GIS inventory is existing, but cannot be completed due to lack of funding.
- Two bridges on Frank Road over the Willacoochee River and the Willacoochee Overflow need to be replaced, they are no longer safe for traffic. Both are on the federal replacement list, but there is a lack of funding.
- The Recreations Department has no full-time staff and is relying on volunteers to do the work.
- Need traffic barriers for the Sweet Potato Festival to increase public safety.
- Additional police cars are needed.

Opportunities

- Public finances are scarce to undertake the much needed improvements to the public infrastructure. Need more opportunities for applications for state and federal funding sources to provide for the improvements.
- Research and implement sufficient private/public funding sources to act as local match for any state and Federal grants to increase the chances for grants being awarded to Irwin County and the City of Ocilla
- Build on the active partnership between the local Schoolboard and the City and County.
- Encourage volunteer opportunities and increase the local volunteer program.

V. Updated Implementation Program

1. Short Term Work Program

This section lists specific implementation actions that the City of Ocilla and Irwin County intend to take during the next five years to address the issues and opportunities as listed in Section IV.

The implementations include, but are not limited to, revision or creation of ordinances, administrative actions such as site plan review or design review, community improvements and investments, financing programs, or other similar initiatives and programs. The following information is shown for each activity:

- Brief description of each activity
- Timeframe for undertaking the activity
- Responsible party for implementing the activity
- Estimated cost (if applicable) for the activity
- Funding sources (if applicable) for the activity

City of Ocilla 2009 – 2013 Short Term Work Program Update

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Cultural Resources								
Establish a county wide Historic Preservation Committee	x					City/County	n/a	City/County
Develop a Historic Preservation Ordinance	x					City	\$5,000	City
Conduct a city-wide inventory of historic resources		x				City	\$7,500	DNR grant with local match
Complete the renovation of the Elementary School to serve as a Community Center		x				City	\$400,000	CHIP, CDBG
Develop a Historic Tourism Website as part of the Chamber Website	x					City/Chamber	n/a	City/Chamber/County
Develop a Historic Tourism Program		x	x			City/Chamber/County	n/a	City/Chamber/County

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Economic Development								
Continue to support the Chamber of Commerce's activities for job retention, marketing and job training/education programs	x	x	x	x	x	Chamber/ City/ County	n/a	Chamber/ City/ County
Continue to develop the Chamber's website to promote Irwin County in economic development	x	x	x	x	x	Chamber/ City/ County	n/a	Chamber/ City/ County
Develop marketing programs and brochures to market Greater Irwin County's economic advantages and historic tourism opportunities	x	x	x	x	x	Chamber/ City/ County	n/a	Chamber/ City/ County
Continue to foster the Work Ready Program with East Central Technical College	x	x	x	x	x	Chamber/ City/ County	n/a	Chamber/ City/ County
Continue to promote and implement the job training/education program with the High School	x	x	x	x	x	Chamber/ City/ County	n/a	Chamber/ City/ County
Continue to develop a program to market available lands for industry	x	x	x	x	x	Chamber/ City/ County	n/a	Chamber/ City/ County
Continue to develop a program to market available lands for residential development	x	x	x	x	x	Chamber/ City/ County	n/a	Chamber/ City/ County
Tear down Jonathan Able's old building for downtown redevelopment		x				City	\$3,000	City

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Housing								
Implement current CHIP applications and apply for new/rehab housing as needed to upgrade housing supply	x	x	x	x	x	City	n/a	CHIP, City
Implement current CDBG applications and apply for new/rehab housing as needed to upgrade housing supply and its infrastructure (roads, water & sewer system)	x	x	x	x	x	City	n/a	CDBG, City
Continue to monitor the Urban Redevelopment Plan for opportunities to renovate homes	x	x	x	x	x	City	n/a	n/a
Develop and adopt revisions to the City Zoning Ordinance to address landscaping and other property maintenance issues	x					City	n/a	City
Apply for CDBG Program to upgrade the water system to provide city neighborhoods with sufficient fire flow		x				City	\$150,000	General funds

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Natural Resources:								
Continue the city-wide tree planting program and encourage private participation in the program	x	x	x	x	x	City	n/a	City

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Land Use:								
Prepare annual reports of building permits, new subdivisions, zoning ordinance amendments/special exceptions, and variances	x	x	x	x	x	City, Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	City
Monitor the City's Zoning Ordinance for the need to revise the ordinance to encourage compatible land uses consistent with the Comprehensive Plan	x	x	x	x	x	City, Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	City
Monitor the Comprehensive Plan's Future Development Area and enact amendments where necessary to provide for appropriate land use	x	x	x	x	x	City, Planning Advisory Commission, SGRDC	N/a	City
Prepare for the full Comprehensive Plan Update due in February of 2014				x	x	City, County, Planning Advisory Commission, SGRDC	\$65,000	City, County, DCA

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Community Facilities:								
Inventory existing water, sewer and gas facilities and conditions	x	x				City/SGRDC	\$20,000	City
Sewer Main Repairs Alder Street	x					City	\$500,000	CDBG, City
Primary Pump Station Repairs Hwy 129 South	x					City	\$20,000	ITAD, CDBG, City
Water Main Extension Vo-Tech Drive				x		City	\$625,000	CDBG, City
Park Street Water Improvements			x			City	\$100,000	CDBG, City
Repair sidewalks along 4 th Street from Irwin Ave West	x					City	TBA	City, GDOT
Replace Well Motor and Pump	x					City	\$50,000	City
Construct Water Main Loop in South Industrial Park				x		City	TBD	CDBG, City
Purchase three Police Vehicles		x				City	TBD	TBD, City
Purchase two Utility Trucks	x					City	TBD	TBD, City
Complete TE Grant Project Downtown	x					City	TBD	GDOT, City
New City Well				x		City	\$1.0 Million	Federal, State, City
Utilize LARK Program to resurface City Roads	x	x	x	x	x	City	n/a	State, City
Implement grading and maintenance program for alleyways within the City of Ocilla	x	x	x	x	x	City	n/a	City, County

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Miscellaneous:								
Purchase additional trees for the City's Tree Planting Program	x	x	x	x	x	City, Private Parties	\$150/tree	City/ Private
Annually evaluate and update the City's and County's Short Term Work Program	x	x	x	x	x	County, City, SGRDC	TBD	TBD
Improvements to the two City Parks, the Community Center and the Community House as needed	x	x	x	x	x	City	Varies by project	TBD

Irwin County Short Term Work Program 2009 - 2014

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Cultural Resources:								
Establish a county-wide Historic Preservation Committee	x					City/County	n/a	City, County
Develop a Historic Preservation Ordinance	x					City, County	\$5,000	City
Conduct a county-wide inventory of historic resources		x				City, County	\$7,500	DNR grant with local match
Develop a Historic Tourism Website as part of the Chamber Website	x					City, County, Chamber	n/a	City, Chamber, County
Develop a Historic Tourism Program		x	x			City, County, Chamber	n/a	City, Chamber, County

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Economic Development:								
Continue to support the Chamber of Commerce's activities for job retention, marketing and job training/education programs	x	x	x	x	x	Chamber/ City/ County	n/a	Chamber/ City/ County
Continue to develop the Chamber's website to promote Irwin County in economic development	x	x	x	x	x	Chamber/ City/ County	n/a	Chamber/ City/ County
Develop marketing programs and brochures to market Greater Irwin County's economic advantages and historic tourism opportunities	x	x	x	x	x	Chamber/ City/ County	n/a	Chamber/ City/ County
Continue to foster the Work Ready Program with East Central Technical College	x	x	x	x	x	Chamber/ City/ County	n/a	Chamber/ City/ County
Continue to promote and implement the job training/education program with the High School	x	x	x	x	x	Chamber/ City/ County	n/a	Chamber/ City/ County
Continue to develop a program to market available lands for industry	x	x	x	x	x	Chamber/ City/ County	n/a	Chamber/ City/ County
Continue to develop a program to market available lands for residential development	x	x	x	x	x	Chamber/ City/ County	n/a	Chamber/ City/ County
Develop a marketing program to promote agricultural products from local Farms	x	x	x	x	x	Chamber/ City/ County	n/a	Chamber/ City/ County
Develop an agri-tourism program to support local agricultural businesses	x	x	x	x	x	Chamber/ City/ County	n/a	Chamber/ City/ County

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Housing:								
Develop and maintain an inventory for housing conditions				x		County	\$4,500	County
Implement current CHIP applications and apply for new/rehab housing as needed to upgrade housing supply	x	x	x	x	x	County	n/a	CHIP, County

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Natural Resources:								
Develop and maintain an inventory for Environmentally Sensitive areas in the county					X	County	\$4,500	County

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Land Use:								
Encourage designation of agricultural and industrial land uses to protect such uses from incompatible land uses	x					County	n/a	n/a
Prepare annual reports of building permits, new subdivisions, zoning ordinance amendments/special exceptions, and variances	x	x	x	x	x	County, Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	County
Monitor the County's Zoning Ordinance for the need to revise the ordinance to encourage compatible land uses consistent with the Comprehensive Plan	x	x	x	x	x	County, Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	County
Monitor the Comprehensive Plan's Future Development Area and enact amendments where necessary to provide for appropriate land use	x	x	x	x	x	City, County, Planning Advisory Commission, SGRDC	N/a	County
Prepare for the full Comprehensive Plan Update due in February of 2014				x	x	City, County, Planning Advisory Commission, SGRDC	\$65,000	City, County, DCA

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Community Facilities & Services:								
Inventory Fire Department Equipment needs and apply for grants for equipment purchases	x	x	x	x	x	County/Fire Department	Varies by project	County, Department of Homeland Security
Ambulance and Equipment for EMS	x	x	x	x	x	County	Varies by project	County
Purchase 8 AED's for County facilities	x					County	\$300/AED	County
Construct EMS Building	x					County	\$160,000	County
Upgrade County offices	x	x	x	x	x	County	\$10,000/year	County
Upgrade 2 Sheriff's Dept vehicles per year	x	x	x	x	x	County	\$42,000/year	County, USDA
Hire Recreation Department Staff	x	x	x	x	x	County	n/a	County
Reconstruct 2 Franks Road Bridges		x				County, GDOT	TBD	GDOT, FHWA

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Miscellaneous:								
Annually evaluate and update the City's and County's Short Term Work Program	x	x	x	x	x	County, City, SGRDC	TBD	TBD

2. Policies

This section includes any policies that the City of Ocilla and Irwin County will adopt to provide ongoing guidance and direction to their local government officials for making decisions that are consistent with addressing the Issues and Opportunities identified earlier in this document.

Cultural Resources

- Goal 1:** To encourage the protection and conservation of the rich historic heritage in the City of Ocilla and Irwin County.
- Policy 1.1:** Establish a Historic Preservation Commission to develop and implement a joint historic preservation program and ordinance for the City of Ocilla and Irwin County.
- Policy 1.2:** Conduct a comprehensive survey which identifies all local historic buildings, places, potential historic districts, historic events and historic communities.
- Policy 1.3:** Identify and utilize available funding sources to implement the Historic Preservation Program.
- Policy 1.4:** Conduct a comprehensive survey which identifies all other cultural resources in Greater Irwin County including local artists that could be used to promote the area's tourism.

Economic Development

- Goal 2:** Create and maintain a long-term sustainable and diverse economic base.
- Policy 2.1:** Promote and support private economic investment from existing and new industry and businesses through financial and technical assistance in order to improve job opportunities.
- Policy 2.2:** Promote and support development of diverse and innovative agri-business related industries.
- Policy 2.3:** Support vocational and technical training programs that will provide a workforce serving the needs of existing and future industry in Irwin County and Ocilla and ensure a strong, viable and local presence of the Technical College.
- Policy 2.4:** Prioritize public investments in services and facilities that will encourage economic development and are compatible with the environment.
- Policy 2.5:** Expand the role of tourism in economic development by promoting regional festivities, events and historical heritage.
- Policy 2.6:** Develop an Ocilla/Irwin County website that will also promote historic and cultural resources for the area.

Housing

- Goal 3:** Ensure that all residents within Greater Irwin County have access to quality and affordable housing.
- Policy 3.1:** Neighborhood development and redevelopment should concentrate on rehabilitating, renovating and improving existing homes, especially those with a historic heritage.

- Policy 3.2: Revise the City of Ocala's and Irwin County's existing zoning ordinances and/or building codes to include a minimum value or age restriction for manufactured homes and/or buildings in order to provide safe and sanitary housing conditions for the residents.
- Policy 3.4: Include in the City's and County's zoning ordinances landscaping provisions that will provide for establishment and maintenance of greenspace and yards in neighborhoods.
- Policy 3.5: Continue to pursue CDBG grants to upgrade water and sewer public infrastructure in existing neighborhoods.
- Policy 3.6: Promote the preservation of historically significant homes.
- Policy 3.7: Continue to pursue Code Enforcement within neighborhoods to clean up trash, demolish unsafe and abandoned buildings and manufactured (mobile) homes and require that homeowners and landlords be responsible for the upkeep of their property.
- Policy 3.8: Continue participation in the Community Home Investment Program.

Natural Resources

Goal 4: Establish and maintain conservation and protection of natural areas, where those areas would be endangered by development. These areas include, but are not limited to, floodplains, wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, protected river corridors, and forested hardwood areas, and areas where Georgia and Federally Endangered species and habitat exist.

- Policy 4.1: Natural areas that most likely will be damaged by development should be avoided and any negative impact should be mitigated.
- Policy 4.2: An adequate minimum water flow and water quality need to be maintained in all rivers and streams.
- Policy 4.3: Development should not pollute, exhaust or interfere with the natural replenishment cycle of the groundwater resource.
- Policy 4.4: Education and awareness programs should be developed to encourage a wide range of private and public residential and non-residential water conservation measures.

Land Use

Goal 5:

- Policy 5.1: Land development and traffic capacity should be closely monitored to preserve capacity on roadways and highway safety concurrent with development.
- Policy 5.2: Lands that are not suitable for on-site septic systems should not be subdivided or developed unless public sewer system is available.
- Policy 5.3: Industrial, commercial and residential growth should occur in areas where adequate public facilities such as water, sewer and roads are provided.
- Policy 5.4: Preserve lands that are suitable for farming and protect existing farming operations from the encroachment of incompatible uses and ensure right-to-farm for existing operations.
- Policy 5.5: Combine the City and County Zoning Ordinances where feasible in order to simplify compliance for residents and enforcement of its regulations.

Policy 5.6 Ensure that the proposed runway extension for Fitzgerald Municipal Airport does not adversely impact Irwin County and its residents, be it through added noise, relocation of powerlines and economic impacts to residents and the County through condemnation of private property and removing it from the tax rolls.

Community Facilities and Services

Goal 6: Develop and maintain public services and facilities to accommodate existing development and to encourage future sustainable growth in areas where community facilities and services are provided at adequate capacities.

Policy 6.1: Develop an inventory of the entire water and sewer system with information on location, size and condition of lines, valves, meters, manhole cover, fire hydrants etc in order to determine security and public health hazards.

Policy 6.2: Continue to research and apply for grants and other funding to repair and update any deficiencies in the existing water and sewer system and provide for future adequate capacity.

Policy 6.3: Research opportunities and funding sources to install full-time personnel for a joint Recreation Department.

Policy 6.4: Research opportunities and funding sources to provide for the needed renovation of the County Courthouse.

Policy 6.5: Research opportunities and pursue funding sources to provide for the needed additional police cars.

Policy 6.6: Continue to pursue with Federal Highway Administration and Georgia Department of Transportation the repair and replacement of the two bridges over Frank Road to ensure safety for public traffic.

blank

3. Report of Accomplishments

This Section identifies the current status of each activity as listed in the previous Short Term Work Program (STWP). The Report of Accomplishments indicates whether an activity:

- Has been completed
- Is currently underway
- Has been postponed
- Has not been accomplished and is no longer intended to be undertaken.

City of Ocilla Short Term Work Program 2004-2008 Report of Accomplishments

Activity	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Status
Community Facilities:									
Construct a 250,000 gallon elevated tank; a new water supply well; and purchase additional industrial park land and service with roads/infrastructure	x	x	x	x		City, County, IDA	\$1.4M	EDA, EIP, ONE Georgia, CDBG	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The water tank is almost complete and is in the final stages of painting The sewer lines at the expanded industrial park are complete The new water supply well has not been done due to lack of funding
Prepare plans and construct a youth activity center	x	x				City	\$500,000	CDBG, City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A smaller than originally planned youth center has been constructed with the help of volunteers.
Coordinate with GDOT and Irwin County in the design/engineering plans for needed improvements for I-75 linkage to & through Ocilla, including a truck by-pass around Ocilla	x	x	x	x	x	City	N/a	GDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GDOT has not appropriate any funding and eliminated the project from its list
Continue participation in the LARP program of GDOT	x	x	x	x	x	City	N/a	GDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
Develop feasibility plans to construct a new swimming pool or renovate the existing swimming pool at 412 N. Oak St	x	x				City	N/a	RD Loans grants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The study determined the project too expensive... The pool was backfilled for public safety reasons and is now used as a basketball court.
Annually update the water, sanitary sewer and natural gas system GIS data base and maps	x	x	x	x	x	City	\$500/yr	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project is ongoing, additional \$23,000 are needed to complete it.

Promote increased customer base of the city's natural gas distribution system		x	x	x	x	City	\$200/yr	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing – two peanut drying operations were added recently
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Activity	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Status
Economic Development:									
Continue to foster all Chamber of Commerce job prospecting, marketing of vacant buildings and land; and job training/education programs	x	x	x	x	x	City/Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ongoing
Continue to support the IDA and the JDA efforts to prepare financial packages for existing and new businesses/industries in Greater Irwin	x	x	x	x	x	City/County	N/a	City County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ongoing
Continue to foster implementation activities of the Ocilla Clean Community Program	x	x	x	x	x	City	N/a	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ongoing

Activity	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Status
Housing:									
Implement current CHIP application, and apply for new/rehab housing as needed to upgrade housing supply	x	x	x	x	x	City	\$250,000	CDBG City local match	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ongoing

Activity	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Status
Land Use:									
After receipt of FEMA floodplain maps for Ocilla integrate them into their GIS system and develop an enforcement program	x	x	x			City, Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Final FEMA maps are expected in February 2009.
Prepare annual reports of building permits, new subdivisions, zoning ordinance amendments/special exceptions, and variances	x	x	x	x	x	City/Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing

Activity	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Status
Natural and Historic Resources:									
Continue to support the implementation activities fostered by the Irwin County Preservation Association		x	x	x	x	City/ Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	City County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incomplete. A joint Historic Preservation Commission is in the process of being designated.
Conduct a county wide historic resources inventory			x	x		City/County	\$8,000	SHPO City County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An inventory of historic cemeteries has been completed. The remainder requires additional funding.
Begin the rehabilitation of the old elementary school/auditorium with roof and window replacement, and foster new users for the vacant classrooms	x	x	x	x		City/County	\$40,000	LDF City County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The windows, roof and bathrooms have been replaced, central heat & air has been installed, part of it has been repainted, but an additional \$150,000 are needed to finish the old school.

Activity	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Status
Other Considerations:									
Implement provisions of the Joint service Delivery Strategy which supports functional consolidation of services	x	x	x	x	x	City	N/a	City	• ongoing
Re-activate the Clean Community Program Committee, and establish annual work program	x	x	x	x	x	City	N/a	City	• Completed – Code Enforcement is assisting with implementation – need more volunteers to conduct education and awareness program

Activity	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Status
General Planning:									
Annually re-evaluate the Ocilla Short Term Work Program		x	x	x	x	City/ Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	City	• Ongoing
Participate in all updates to the 2025 Greater Irwin Comprehensive Plan	x	x	x	x	x	City/ Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	City	• Ongoing
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	x	x	x	x	x	City	N/a	City	• Ongoing
Direct the Ocilla/Irwin County Planning Advisory Commission to be the “plan keepers” and recommend changes and additions	x	x	x	x	x	City/Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	City	• Ongoing

Irwin County Short Term Work Program 2004-2008 Report of Accomplishments

Activity	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Status
Community Facilities:									
Complete the major renovation of the Irwin County Courthouse	x					County	\$2.1M	Rural Development Adm County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed
Irwinville Water System Improvements; Prepare preliminary engineering to establish needs and cost estimates	x	x				County	\$100,000	CDBG GA Rural Water Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed
Road Repaving: a)Falcom Rd; B0 Cypress Rd; c) Pleasant Grove Church Rd	x	x				County	a)\$114,000 b)\$80,000 c)\$65,000	GDOT County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed
Continue participation in the LARP Program and GDOT	x	x	x	x	x	County	N/a	County GDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing
Continue program of systematic culvert and small bridge replacement for county right-of-ways to increase roadway weight capabilities	x	x		x	x	County	\$20/yr	County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing with emphasis on bridges on Frank Road
Continue to work with GDOT in the preparation of engineering plans to gain linkage to I-75 and the provision of a truck by-pass around Ocilla	x	x	x			County Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	County GDOT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project has been terminated by GDOT.
Construct a 250,000 gallon elevated tank; a new water supply well; and purchase additional industrial park land and service with roads	x	x	x	x		County City IDA	\$1.4M	EDA, EIP, One Georgia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The water tank is almost complete and is in the final stages of painting The sewer lines at the expanded industrial park are complete The new water supply well has not been done due to lack of funding

Activity	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Status
Economic Development:									
Continue to foster all Chamber of commerce job prospecting, marketing of vacant buildings and land; and job training/education programs	x	x	x	x	x	County Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	County	• Ongoing
Continue to support the IDA and the JDA efforts to prepare financial packages for existing and new businesses/industries in Greater Irwin	x	x	x	x	x	County Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	County City	• Ongoing

Activity	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Status
Land Use:									
After receipt of FEMA floodplain maps for Irwin county integrate them into their GIS system and develop an enforcement program	x	x	x			County Planning Advisory Commission	n/a	County	• Final Floodplain maps are expected from FEMA in February 2009
Prepare annual reports of building permits, new subdivisions, zoning ordinance amendments, special exceptions and variances	x	x	x	x	x	Planning Advisory Commission	n/a	County	• Ongoing

Activity	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Status
Natural and Historic Resources:									
Continue to support the implementation activities fostered by the Irwin County Preservation Association	x	x	x	x	x	County Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incomplete. A joint Historic Preservation Commission is in the process of being designated.
Conduct a county-wide historic resources inventory			x	x		County City	\$8,000	SHPO City County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An inventory of historic cemeteries has been completed. The remainder requires additional funding.
Begin the rehabilitation of the old elementary school/auditorium with roof and window replacement and foster new uses for the vacant classrooms	x	x	x	x		County City	\$40,000	LDF County City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The windows, roof and bathrooms have been replaced, central heat & air has been installed, part of it has been repainted, but an additional \$150,000 are needed to finish the old school.

Activity	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Status
Other Considerations:									
Continue to investigate the need and funding for a county manager			x	x		County	\$25,000- \$40,000	County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed/ not needed.
Continue to implement provisions of the Joint Services Delivery Strategy which promotes functional consolidation	x	x		x	x	County	N/a	County	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing

Activity	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source	Status
General Planning:									
Annually re-evaluate the Irwin County Short Term Work Program	x	x	x	x	x	County Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	County	• Ongoing
Participate in all updates to the 2025 Greater Irwin Comprehensive Plan	x	x	x	x	x	County Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	County	• Ongoing
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	x	x	x	x	x	County	N/a	County	• Ongoing in cooperation with the SGRDC
Direct the Ocilla/Irwin County Planning Advisory Commission to be the “plan keepers” and recommend changes and additions	x	x	x	x	x	County Planning Advisory Commission	N/a	County	• Ongoing

IRWIN COUNTY & CITY OF OCILLA


**RESOLUTION TO TRANSMIT the
*Partial Update to the 2024 Greater Irwin County Comprehensive Plan
for Irwin County and the City of Ocilla***

WHEREAS, the Irwin County Board of Commissioners and the City of Ocilla City Council have completed the Partial Update to the 2024 Greater Irwin County Comprehensive Plan for Irwin County and the City of Ocilla.


WHEREAS, this document was prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective May 1, 2005 and established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the required public hearing was held on January 27, 2009.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Irwin County Board of Commissioners and the City of Ocilla City Council do hereby transmit the Partial Update to the 2024 Greater Irwin County Comprehensive Plan for Irwin County and the City of Ocilla to the South Georgia Regional Development Center and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review.

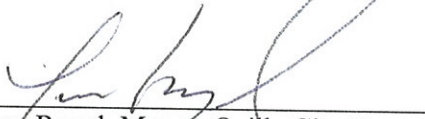
Adopted this day of January 27, 2009.



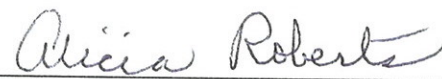
Joey Whitley, Chairman, Irwin County Commission



ATTEST: Yvette White, County Clerk



Lamar Royal, Mayor, Ocilla City Council



ATTEST: Alicia Roberts, City Clerk

**IRWIN COUNTY &
THE CITY OF OCILLA**

**RESOLUTION TO ADOPT
2009 JOINT IRWIN COUNTY/CITY OF OCILLA
PARTIAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

WHEREAS, the Irwin County Board of Commissioners and City of Ocilla City Council have completed the 2009 Joint Irwin County/City of Ocilla Partial Comprehensive Plan Update; and

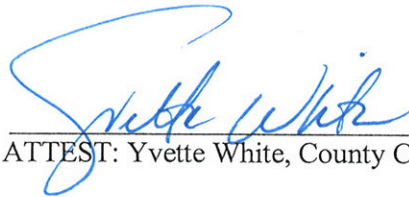
WHEREAS, this document was prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective May 1, 2005 and established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989,.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Irwin County Board of Commissioners and City of Ocilla City Council does hereby adopt the 2009 Joint Irwin County/City of Ocilla Partial Comprehensive Plan Update.

Adopted this 12th day of February, 2009

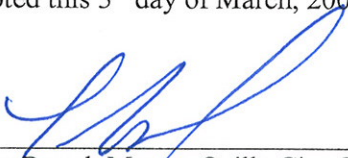


Joey Whitley , Chairman, Irwin County Commission



ATTEST: Yvette White, County Clerk

Adopted this 3rd day of March, 2009



Lamar Royal, Mayor, Ocilla City Council



ATTEST: Alicia Roberts, City Clerk