2014 Greater Irwin County Comprehensive Plan

For Irwin County

And The City Of Ocilla

Adopted February 5, 2014

Prepared by:
Irwin County
City of Ocilla
Southern Georgia Regional Commission

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I. Chapter 110-12-1 Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning

1. Introduction

The 2014 Greater Irwin County Comprehensive Plan was prepared in accordance with the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Chapter 110-12-1, Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning.

As required by the Local Comprehensive Planning Standards, the 2014 Greater Irwin County – City of Ocilla Comprehensive Plan consists of the following elements:

1. Community Goals

2. Needs and Opportunities

3. Community Work Program

4. Economic Development Element
(as a community included in the Georgia Job Tax Credit Tier 1 category)

5. Land Use Element
(as a community with zoning or land development regulations subject to the Zoning Procedures Law)

2. Community Involvement

All of the required elements have been developed with extensive opportunity for involvement and input from stakeholders throughout the county and cities. The following steps were taken to ensure that this plan reflected the full range of needs and opportunities from the many stakeholders and residents in the county:

The public hearing kicking off the comprehensive plan process was held on August 8, 2013 at the County Commission chambers in Ocilla. It was held for the purpose to make any potential stakeholders and residents aware that the comprehensive plan update and review was now under way, to explain the purpose of the update and to encourage residents and other stakeholders to actively participate in the plan update.

3. Identification of Stakeholders

A comprehensive list of potential stakeholders was put together with input from the Chamber of Commerce, Development Authority, elected officials, and residents. A complete list of all the stakeholders is included in this plan in the Appendix.

4. Identification of Participation Techniques

The following participation techniques were utilized during the update process:
Public Hearings
Workshops
Extensive e-mail correspondence with stakeholders
Special Webpage on SGRC website as well as County and City Website
Dissemination of Information in the newspaper
Fliers

5. Conduct Participation Program

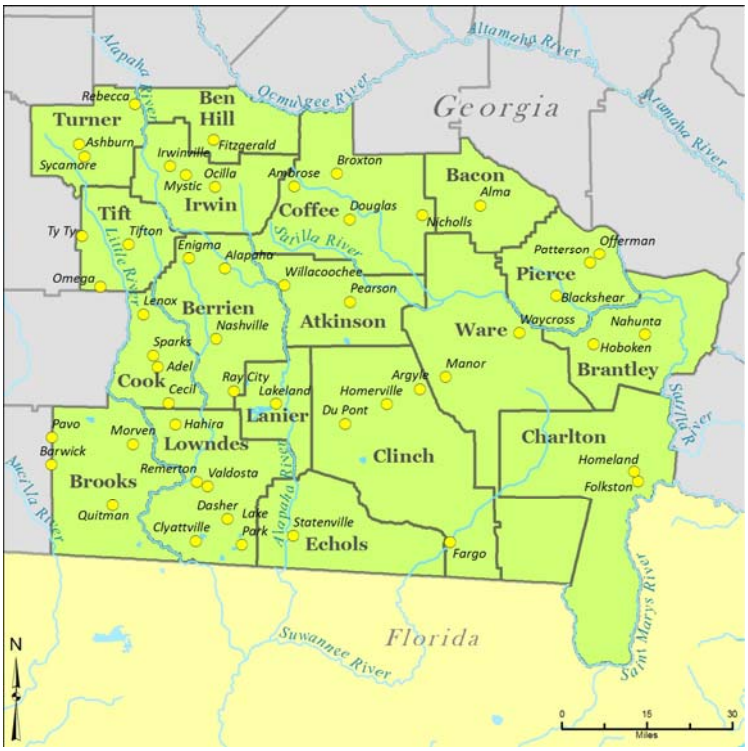
A foundational principle utilized by the Southern Georgia Planning Commission in all of its planning projects is public and stakeholder participation from and coordination with multiple and diverse interest groups. Due to the small size of the County and City, the entire stakeholder group was utilized as the steering committee, ensuring the broadest buy-in and diversity of input into the comprehensive plan update. Outreach to the public, local governments and other stakeholders and interested parties was accomplished by e-mail correspondence, direct communication, Facebook postings, project website, and updates provided at workshops and other group meetings. Opportunity for public comment was provided at public hearings and city and county commission meetings.

6. Consideration of Regional Water Plan and Environmental Planning Criteria

During the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, the local governments must review both the Regional Water Plan covering its area and the GDNR Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria as laid out in Chapter 391-3-16 to determine whether any local implementation practices or development regulations need to be adapted to be consistent with both.

Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan

Irwin County is within the area of the Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan which was adopted in September 2011.



Source: CDM Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan

The Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan had identified 13 goals, listed below, to implement its vision of managing water resources in a sustainable manner under Georgia's regulated riparian and reasonable use laws to support the state's and regions' economy, to protect public health and natural resources, and to enhance the quality of life for all citizens; while preserving the private property rights of Georgia's landowners, and in consideration of the need to enhance resource augmentation and efficiency opportunities.

Goals:

1. Manage and develop water resources to sustainably and reliably meet domestic, commercial, industrial water needs including all agricultural sectors (including agro forestry).

2. Manage ground and surface water to encourage sustainable economic and population growth in the region.

3. Manage the Region's and State's water resources in a manner that preserves and protects private property rights.

4. Ensure an adequate water supply of suitable quality to meet current and future human needs, while protecting environmental resources.

5. Identify opportunities to optimize existing and future supplies, and water and wastewater infrastructure.

6. Promote efficient use and management of surface and groundwater resources to allow for sufficient supplies for current and future generations.

7. Protect and manage surface and groundwater recharge areas to ensure sufficient long-term water supplies for the region.

8. Protect, maintain and where appropriate and practicable, identify opportunities to enhance water quality and river base flows.

9. Protect and maintain regional water – dependent recreational opportunities.

10. Identify opportunities to manage storm water to improve water quality and quantity.

11. Identify and implement cost effective water management strategies.

12. Seek to provide economically affordable power and water resource service to all citizens in the region.

13. Identify and implement actions to better measure and share water use data and information.

In addition the Regional Water Plan has adopted several Short-Term Water Quantity and Water Quality Management Practices, which the local comprehensive plan should include in order to manage water resources in a sustainable manner through the planning period and beyond:

The most significant issues in the Suwannee-Satilla Region are surface water availability gaps driven by agricultural usage. As such, the majority of water supply management practices are intended to address agricultural surface water use.

Short Term Water Quantity Management Practices (0-10 Years)

1. Utilize surface water and groundwater sources within the available resource capacities
2. Water conservation
3. Data Collection and research to confirm the frequency, duration, severity, and drivers of surface water gaps
4. Evaluate and ensure that current and future surface water permit conditions do not contribute to 7Q10 low flow concerns (1 in 10 year 7 day low flow condition
5. Encourage sustainable groundwater use as a preferred supply in regions with surface water 7Q10 low flow concerns and adequate groundwater supply

6. Identify incentives and a process to sustainably replace a portion of existing agricultural surface water use with groundwater use to address 7Q10 low flow concerns
8. Evaluate the potential to use existing storage to address 7Q10 low flow concerns
9. Education to reduce surficial aquifer groundwater use impacts to 7Q10 low flow concerns

Short-Term Water Quality Management Practices (0 – 10 Years):

1. Point Sources:
- Support and fund current permitting and waste load allocation process to improve treatment of wastewater and increase treatment capacity
- Data collection and research to confirm discharge volumes and waste concentrations as well as receiving stream flows and chemistry

2. Non-Point Sources:
- Data collection to confirm source of pollutants and causes; encourage storm water ordinances, septic system maintenance, and coordinated planning
- Ensure funding and support for Best Management Practices Programs by local and state programs, including urban/suburban, rural, forestry and agricultural b
Best Management Practices

3. Non-point Source Existing Impairments:
- Total maximum daily load listed streams: Improve data on source of pollutant and length of impairment; Identify opportunities to leverage funds and implement non-point source Best Management Practices

Longer Term (20 – 40 years) water quantity and quality management practices include:

- Improve infiltration and management of wetlands
- Evaluate incentive based programs to manage, increase and restore wastewater and storm water returns
- Identify potential/feasibility of a multi-purpose reservoir
- Identify feasibility of regional inter-basin transfer
- Continue wastewater and storm water master planning

Chapter 391-3-16, Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria

The Environmental Planning Criteria that are part of the Minimum Planning Standards deal specifically with the protection of water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, river corridors and mountains, the latter not quite applicable in this region. These criteria were developed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as mandated in Part V of the Georgia Planning Act and in the Mountains and River Corridor Protection Act.

The criteria require that local governments shall identify existing and future water supply watersheds and adopt a water supply watershed protection plan for their jurisdiction.

Some uses may be grandfathered such as land uses existing prior to the adoption of a watershed plan, mining activities permitted by DNR, certain utilities placements, special forestry or agricultural services.

The Environmental guidelines also spell out criteria for the delineation of small and large water supply watersheds, for the protection of groundwater recharge areas, for the protection of wetlands, and for the protection of river corridors which shall be incorporated into this comprehensive plan and addressed specifically and in more detail through local ordinances and land development code regulations.

7. Consideration of DCA Community Quality Objectives

DCA crafted a series of objectives dealing with a broad range of aspects that concern local governments. The objectives, which are listed below, are only recommendations, but provide local governments with a tool to guide them in the assessment of their needs and opportunities and in the development of their implementation activities. If they are used as such a tool by many of the local governments in their planning efforts, these objectives also have the potential to result in consistent planning projects and goals, which may translate into greater efficiency and a better quality of life for the residents.

1. Economic Prosperity
Encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community. Factors to consider when determining suitability include job skills required; long-term sustainability; linkages to other economic activities in the region; impact on the resources of the area; or prospects for creating job opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse local workforce.

2. Resource Management
Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. This may be achieved by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; encouraging green building construction and renovation; utilizing appropriate waste management techniques; fostering water conservation and reuse; or setting environmentally sensitive areas aside as green space or conservation reserves.

3. Efficient Land Use
Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the traditional core of the community; designing new development to minimize the amount of land consumed; carefully planning expansion of public infrastructure; or maintaining open space in agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.

4. Local Preparedness
Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer) to support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.

5. Sense of Place
Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

6. Regional Cooperation
Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. This may be achieved by actively participating in regional organizations; identifying joint projects that will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer; or developing collaborative solutions for regional issues such as protection of shared natural resources, development of the transportation network, or creation of a tourism plan.

7. Housing Options
Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing in the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood; promoting programs to provide housing for

residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds, including affordable mortgage finance options; instituting programs to address homelessness issues in the community; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community

8. Transportation Options
Address the transportation needs, challenges and opportunities of all community residents. This may be achieved by fostering alternatives to transportation by automobile, including walking, cycling, and transit; employing traffic calming measures throughout the community; requiring adequate connectivity between adjoining developments; or coordinating transportation and land use decision-making within the community.

9. Educational Opportunities
Make educational and training opportunities readily available to enable all community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, manage their finances, or pursue life ambitions. This can be achieved by expanding and improving local educational institutions or programs; providing access to other institutions in the region; instituting programs to improve local graduation rates; expanding vocational education programs; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure an adequately trained and skilled workforce.

10. Community Health
Ensure that all community residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, have access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities. This may be achieved by providing services to support the basic needs of disadvantaged residents, including the disabled; instituting programs to improve public safety; promoting programs that foster better health and fitness; or otherwise providing all residents the opportunity to improve their circumstances in life and to fully participate in the community.

II. PLAN ELEMENTS

1. Community Goals

The purpose of the Community Goals Element is to lay out a road map for Irwin County's and the City of Ocilla's future; to generate local buy-in to the plan and to ensure that the plan is implemented. Communities are encouraged to amend and update the goals as becomes necessary.

Goal 1: To encourage the protection and conservation of the rich historic heritage in the City of Ocilla and Irwin County.

Goal 2: Create and maintain a long-term sustainable and diverse economic base.

Goal 3: Ensure that all residents within Greater Irwin County have access to quality and affordable housing.

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.

Goal 5: 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.

2. Needs and Opportunities

The Needs and Opportunities as shown in this Section were developed in meetings through discussions with stakeholders and residents, experiences by stakeholders and residents, analysis of statistical data and information, and review and revision as applicable of the issues and opportunities identified in the 2010 Partial Update for Irwin County and the City of Ocilla. Each of the following needs and opportunities is addressed by corresponding implementation measures in the Community Work Program.

Analysis of Data and Information

Reviewing the household data shows that the majority of households are family households (75%) with 25% non-family households. 20% are households with people living alone and half of those are over 65. This indicates that even though the majority of housing and infrastructure should be geared towards families, 1/8 of all households are over 65 with very different housing needs and service needs. Care should be taken to evaluate and incorporate the interests and needs of the entire population.

Reviewing the educational attainment data shows that the majority of residents in Irwin County have a high school degree and some college, but no higher education (62%). 14.1% have an associate's degree, bachelor's degree or graduate or professional degree. In order to improve the economic development status within the county, additional efforts should be undertaken to raise the educational level of the residents (including professional and vocational training) to raise income levels, quality of life, and attract jobs to the area.

99% of the current residents were born in Irwin County, indicating a remarkable stability in population movement and attachment to the County which should enable a strong willingness and participation in any efforts to implement positive change in the County.

In July 2013, the U.S. unemployment rate stood at 7.6 percent according to the Department of Labor Statistics. The State of Georgia is almost 2 percentage points higher at 9.3% unemployment rate and

Irwin County showed a 12.3% unemployment rate for the same time frame. This is reflected in the average annual wage of $28,236 for Irwin County, compared with $48,204 for Georgia and $52,000 for the U.S. (Source: Georgia Labor Market Explorer – Labor Market Services – Area Profile – Summary). Health Care and Social Assistance, Public Administration, and Retail Trade are the top three employers in the Irwin County, all sectors with lower salaries for the majority of their employees. The high unemployment rate and low average salary also reflects the large portion of the residents without a higher education. Research and studies have shown repeatedly that higher wages and employment are a result of better education. In order to attract higher paying jobs, Irwin County must address the issue of education in the community and increase high school and college graduation rates. Along with this issue, Irwin County must develop incentives to attract companies to the area then that will employ these graduates and develop incentives to keep these residents in the County. Currently the average travel time to work is approximately 25 minutes (US Census DP03), which indicates that many residents of Irwin County work in Tift County, specifically in the City of Tifton.

Currently Irwin County has lists 4,047 housing units, of which nearly 22% are vacant. The majority are single family residences and 28.4% are mobile homes. Only 7.5% of the housing stock has been constructed since 2000 and about 25% are renter occupied. These numbers are derived from the US Census Bureau DP 04. A recommendation for Irwin County would be to undertake a housing survey to specifically identify those units that are vacant, the reasons for the vacancies and the condition of the older housing stock in general. This could serve as a basis for increased rehabilitation efforts and grants to improve the housing stock and decrease the vacancy rate in Irwin County.

Needs and Opportunities

Development Patterns - Housing

Issues
- There are still a few 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
- 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.
- Pursue a grant program with ABAC (Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College) students
- Continue a code enforcement program that will support homeowners in the maintenance and upkeep of blighted homes and properties.
- City of Ocilla is actively cleaning up blighted homes and properties to revitalize neighborhoods and improve values.

Development Patterns - Land Use

Issues
- 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 fact that the City and County have separate zoning ordinances causes confusion among residents as to which apply.

Opportunities
- Develop uniform regulations in the City and the County for the location of manufactured homes in the County and the City.
- Research opportunities where the City and County Zoning Ordinances could be combined and develop recommendations for consolidation.
- Develop a county wide Greenspace Program

Resource Conservation - 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.
- Local protection of historic and cultural resources is inadequate.

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.
- Partner with ABAC to 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, possible partnership with ABAC.
- Pursue grant opportunities to complete needed historical renovations.

Resource Conservation - Natural Resources

Issues

- Correct existing flood plain maps are needed to replace the current maps, which are inaccurate by as much as eleven feet, to protect flood areas, river corridors and groundwater recharge areas from development.
- Need to review existing regulations to ensure adequacy in reducing the amount of future development in identified flood hazard areas.
- Seek funding to develop and implement a countywide Master Drainage Plan

Opportunities

- Encourage citizen education and awareness through articles and workshops to encourage water conservation
- Explore NFIP (National Flood Insurance Program) membership for City of Ocilla and Irwin County.
- Promote more efficient use of surface irrigation and better water management to ensure long term opportunities for sustainable development and quality of life for residents.
- Implement storm water retention ponds, wetlands, and bio-retention areas to manage runoff quality and flow rate and help support river flows

Community Facilities and Services

Issues

- 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 more data needs to be developed.
- Two bridges on Frank Road over the Willacoochee River and the Willacoochee Overflow need to be replaced, they are no longer safe for traffic. Construction is expected to continue within 1 year.
- The Recreations Department has one full-time staff and is relying on volunteers to do the work.
- Additional volunteers for Recreation Department are needed.
- Seek funding for a countywide Early Warning Communication/Notification System
- Find grant funding for and implements the "Community Emergency Response Team" (CERT) program.
- Seek funding to acquire more fire tankers.
- Need to install auxiliary generators for all designated evacuation and emergency shelters and community water systems
- Need to install lightning warning and protection equipment at outdoor recreational facilities countywide.
- Need to improve wildland fire training at the local fire department level.

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.
- Become a designated "Firewise Community"
- Enforce building, fire and safety codes
- Become a "Storm Ready Community".

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.
- There is not enough innovative economic development taking place.
- We lack sufficient jobs or economic opportunities for local residents.

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 Wiregrass.
- 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.

Governmental Relations

- Maintain the excellent working relationship between the City and the County.

Community Policies

The following policies, numbered to coincide with the Community Goals, were developed in conjunction with all stakeholders and are intended to provide a qualitative guidance to address the Needs and Opportunities as identified above and to provide a framework for the development of the Community Work Program. The Community Work Program then addresses the Needs and Opportunities through specific action items detailing the projects, participants, anticipated cost and time frame.

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.

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.

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 Ocilla'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.

Policy 4.1: Natural areas that most likely will be damaged by development should be avoided and any negative impact should be mitigated. Encourage land use practices that sustain and protect aquifer recharge areas for the aquifers that are in the region.

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. Implement soil erosion and sediment control measures

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.

Policy 4.5: Contribute to water conservation by developing measures to control water loss such as meter irrigation systems, inspections of pipes and plumbing.

Policy 4.6: Issue future surface water permits only if future surface water uses will not contribute to frequency or magnitude of gaps.

Policy 4.7: Support water conservation, storm water education, and septic system maintenance and encourage coordinated environmental, land use, storm water and wastewater planning

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: 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 5.7: 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 5.8: Research opportunities and funding sources to provide for the needed renovation of the County Courthouse.

3. Community Work Program

City of Ocilla FY2009 – FY2013 Short Term Work Program Update Report of Accomplishments

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	ROA
Cultural Resources						
Establish a county wide Historic Preservation Committee	x					Ongoing
Develop a Historic Preservation Ordinance	x					Ongoing
Conduct a city-wide inventory of historic resources		x				Ongoing
Complete the renovation of the Elementary School to serve as a Community Center		x				Ongoing
Develop a Historic Tourism Website as part of the Chamber Website	x					Ongoing
Develop a Historic Tourism Program		x	x			Ongoing
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	Ongoing
Continue to develop the Chamber's website to promote Irwin County in economic development	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing

Activity	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**ROA**
Develop marketing programs and brochures to market Greater Irwin County's economic advantages and historic tourism opportunities	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Continue to foster the Work Ready Program with East Central Technical College	x	x	x	x	x	Delete Work Ready programs no loner current
Continue to promote and implement the job training/education program with the High School	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Continue to develop a program to market available lands for industry	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Continue to develop a program to market available lands for residential development	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Tear down Jonathan Able's old building for downtown redevelopment		x				Complete
Housing						
Implement current CHIP applications and apply for new/rehab housing as needed to upgrade housing supply	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
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	Ongoing

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	ROA
Continue to monitor the URP for opportunities to renovate homes	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Develop and adopt revisions to the City Zoning Ordinance to address landscaping and other property maintenance issues	x					Ongoing
Apply for CDBG Program to upgrade the water system to provide city neighborhoods with sufficient fire flow		x				Ongoing
Natural Resources:						
Continue the city-wide tree planting program and encourage private participation in the program	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Land Use:						
Prepare annual reports of building permits, new subdivisions, zoning ordinance amendments/special exceptions, and variances	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
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	Ongoing
Prepare for the full Comprehensive Plan Update due in February of 2014				x	x	City, County, Planning Advisory Commission, SGRC

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	ROA
Community Facilities:						
Inventory existing water, sewer and gas facilities and conditions	x	x				Ongoing
Sewer Main Repairs Alder Street	x					Complete
Primary Pump Station Repairs Hwy 129 South	x					Complete
Water Main Extension Vo-Tech Drive				x		Ongoing
Park Street Water Improvements			x			Ongoing
Repair sidewalks along 4th Street from Irwin Ave West	x					Complete
Replace Well Motor and Pump	x					Complete
Construct Water Main Loop in South Industrial Park				x		Ongoing
Purchase three Police Vehicles		x				Ongoing
Purchase two Utility Trucks	x					Ongoing
Complete TE Grant Project Downtown	x					Ongoing
New City Well				x		Ongoing
Utilize LARK Program to resurface City Roads	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing, change LARK to LMIG
Implement grading and maintenance program for alleyways within the City of Ocilla	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Miscellaneous:						
Purchase additional trees for the City's Tree Planting Program	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Annually evaluate and update the City's and County's Short Term Work Program	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	ROA
Improvements to the two City Parks, the Community Center and the Community House as needed	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing

3. Community Work Program

Irwin County FY2009 - FY2013 Short Term Work Program Update Report of Accomplishments

Activity	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	ROA
Cultural Resources:						
Establish a county-wide Historic Preservation Committee	x					Ongoing
Develop a Historic Preservation Ordinance	x					Ongoing
Conduct a county-wide inventory of historic resources		x				Ongoing
Develop a Historic Tourism Website as part of the Chamber Website	x					Ongoing
Develop a Historic Tourism Program		x	x			Ongoing
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	Ongoing
Continue to develop the Chamber's website to promote Irwin County in economic development	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Develop marketing programs and brochures to market Greater Irwin County's economic advantages and historic tourism opportunities	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Continue to foster the Work Ready Program with East Central Technical College	x	x	x	x	x	Delete no longer current
Continue to promote and implement the job training/education program with the High School	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Continue to develop a program to	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing

market available lands for industry						
Activity	**2009**	**2010**	**2011**	**2012**	**2013**	**ROA**
Continue to develop a program to market available lands for residential development	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Develop a marketing program to promote agricultural products from local Farms	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Develop an agri-tourism program to support local agricultural businesses	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Housing:						
Develop and maintain an inventory for housing conditions				x		Ongoing
Implement current CHIP applications and apply for new/rehab housing as needed to upgrade housing supply	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Natural Resources:						
Develop and maintain an inventory for Environmentally Sensitive areas in the county					x	Ongoing
Land Use:						
Encourage designation of agricultural and industrial land uses to protect such uses from incompatible land uses	x					Ongoing
Prepare annual reports of building permits, new subdivisions, zoning ordinance amendments/special exceptions, and variances	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Monitor the County's Zoning Ordinance for the need to revise the ordinance to encourage compatible	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing

land uses consistent with the Comprehensive Plan						
Monitor the Comprehensive Plan's Future Development Area and enact amendments where necessary to provide for appropriate land use	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Prepare for the full Comprehensive Plan Update due in February of 2014				x	x	Complete
Community Facilities & Services:						
Inventory Fire Department Equipment needs and apply for grants for equipment purchases	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing
Ambulance and Equipment for EMS	x	x	x	x	x	Complete
Purchase 8 AED's for County facilities	x					Ongoing
Construct EMS Building	x					Complete
Upgrade County offices	x	x	x	x	x	Complete
Upgrade 2 Sheriff's Dept. vehicles per year	x	x	x	x	x	Complete
Hire Recreation Department Staff	x	x	x	x	x	Complete
Reconstruct 2 Franks Road Bridges		x				Ongoing, change to 1 per year
Miscellaneous:						
Annually evaluate and update the City's and County's Short Term Work Program	x	x	x	x	x	Ongoing

3. Community Work Program

City of Ocilla FY2015 – FY2019 Community Work Program

Activity	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Goal	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Cultural Resources									
Establish a county wide Historic Preservation Committee	x					1	City of Ocilla and Irwin County	Staff time	City/County
Develop a Historic Preservation Ordinance	x					1	City of Ocilla	$5,000	City
Conduct a city-wide inventory of historic resources		x				1	City of Ocilla	$7,500	DNR grant with local match
Develop a Plan to consolidate City and County Offices in the old Elementary School	x					1, 5	City of Ocilla and Irwin County	Staff Time	City/County
Complete the renovation of the Elementary School to serve as a Community Center		x				1, 5	City of Ocilla	$400,000	City / County/EDA
Develop a Historic Tourism Website as part of the Chamber Website	x					1, 2	Chamber of Commerce	$1,000	City/Chamber/ County
Develop a strategy to keep the Jeff Davis Memorial Park Open	x					1, 5	City of Ocilla/Chamber of Commerce	$45,000/year	City/County/ State

Activity	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Goal	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Economic Development									
Financially support the Chamber of Commerce's activities for job retention, marketing and job training/education programs	x	x	x	x	x	2	Chamber/ City/ County	$500/year	Chamber/ City/ County
Continue to support the Chamber's website to promote Irwin County in economic development	x	x	x	x	x	2	Chamber/ City/ County	$1,000/year	Chamber/ City/ County
Design a brochure to market Greater Irwin County's economic advantages and historic tourism opportunities		x				1, 2	Chamber/ City/ County	$750	Chamber/ City/ County
Develop an inventory of available lands for commercial/industrial development			x			2	Chamber/ City/ County	$1,000	Chamber/ City/ County
Develop an inventory of available lands for residential development		x	x			2	Chamber/ City/ County	$1,000	Chamber/ City/ County
Tear down old Osceola Motel for downtown redevelopment	x					2	City	$2,000	City/Private

Activity	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Goal	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	3	City	$1,000 per year plus Staff time	CHIP, City
Implement current CDBG applications and apply for new/rehab housing as needed to upgrade housing supply and its infrastructure (roads, water	x	x	x	x	x	3	City	$1,000 per year plus Staff time	CDBG, City

& sewer system)									
Renovate 5 homes	x	x	x	x	x	3	City	$1,000/ home per year plus Staff time	General funds
Revise the City Zoning Ordinance	x					1 - 5	City	$10,000 plus Staff time	City
Apply for CDBG Program to upgrade the water system to provide city neighborhoods with sufficient fire flow		x				2, 5	City	$150,000	General funds

Activity	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**Goal**	**Responsible Party**	**Estimated Cost**	**Funding Source**
Natural Resources:									
Plant 5 trees downtown every year	x	x	x	x	x	4	City	$500/year	City
Design and implement a countywide Master Drainage Plan to address issues identified in the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan			x	x	x	4, 5	City/County	$1,000 Staff time ($200,000)	General funds (PDM project)

Activity	**2015**	**2016**	**2017**	**2018**	**2019**	**Goal**	**Responsible Party**	**Estimated Cost**	**Funding Source**
Land Use:									
Participate in the SGRC bi-annual Assessment meetings	x		x		x	5	City, SGRC	$1,000 Staff	State, Local
Develop a countywide Green Space Program				x		4, 5	City, County, SGRC	$3,000 Staff	General funds

Activity	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Goal	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Community Facilities:									
Inventory existing water, sewer and gas facilities and conditions	x	x				5	City/SGRC	$20,000	City
Extend the Water Main on Vo-Tech Drive to include all development				x		2, 5	City	$625,000	CDBG, City
Improve and Update the water main on Park Street			x			2, 5	City	$100,000	CDBG, City
Construct Water Main Loop in South Industrial Park				x		2, 5	City	$50,000	CDBG, City
Purchase two Police Vehicles	x	x				5	City	$50,000	Grants, City
Purchase two Utility Trucks	x					5	City	$25,000 each	SPLOST, City, SPLOST
Complete the TE Grant Project for Downtown	x					1	City	$500,000	GDOT, City
Construct a new City Well				x		5	City	$1.0 Million	Federal, State, City
Utilize LMIG Program to resurface City Roads	x	x	x	x	x	5	City	Staff time	State, City
Implement a grading and maintenance program for alleyways within the City of Ocilla	x	x	x	x	x	5	City	Staff time	City, County
Construct the West 2nd street and water improvements	x					5	City	$50,000	CDBG, City
Construct the TE sidewalk Hwy 32 Pedestrian safety lane	x					5	City	$500,000	TE grant
Seek funding for a countywide Early Warning Communication/Notification System		x	x			5	City/County	Staff time	City, County (PDM Project)
Install auxiliary generators for all designated evacuation and emergency shelters and community water systems				x	x	5	City/County	$100,000	City, County (PDM Project)
Install lightning warning and protection equipment at	x					5	City/County	$50,000	City, County (PDM Project)

outdoor recreational facilities countywide.									
Fund and implement the "Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)		x	x			5	City/County	$75,000	City, County (PDM Project)
Become a designated "Storm Ready Community"	x					5	City/County	$5,000, Staff time	City, County (PDM Project)
Improvements to the two City Parks as needed , siding for the Community Center and new roof for the Community House			x			5	City	$15,000	City, County, SPLOST

Irwin County FY2015 - FY2019 Community Work Program

Activity	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Goal	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Cultural Resources:									
Establish a county-wide Historic Preservation Committee	x					1	City/County	$500	City, County
Develop a Historic Preservation Ordinance	x					1	City, County	$5,000	City
Conduct a county-wide inventory of historic resources		x				1	City, County	$7,500	DNR grant with local match
Develop a Historic Tourism Website as part of the Chamber Website	x					1, 2	City, County, Chamber	$1,000	City, Chamber, County

Activity	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Goal	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Economic Development:									
Design a marketing program and a brochure to market Greater Irwin County's economic advantages and historic tourism opportunities	x					2	Chamber/ City/ County	$1,000 Staff	Chamber/ City/ County
Develop an inventory of available lands for industry		x				2	Chamber/ City/ County	Staff	Chamber/ City/ County
Develop an inventory of available lands for residential development		x				2	Chamber/ City/ County	Staff	Chamber/ City/ County
Design a marketing program to promote agricultural products from local Farms	x					2	Chamber/ City/ County	Staff	Chamber/ City/ County
Design an agri-tourism program to support local agricultural businesses			x			2	Chamber/ City/ County	Staff	Chamber/ City/ County

Activity	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Goal	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Housing:									
Implement a housing survey for housing conditions				x		3	County	$4,500	County
Implement current CHIP applications and apply for new/rehab housing as needed to upgrade housing supply	x					3	County	$300,000	CHIP, County

Activity	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Goal	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Natural Resources:									
Develop and maintain an inventory for Environmentally Sensitive areas in the county				x		4	County	$4,500	County
Seek funding to develop and implement a countywide Master Drainage Plan to address issues identified in the Pre-Disaster (PDM) Plan			x	x	x	4, 5	City/ County	$1,000 Staff	General funds (PDM Project)

Activity	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Goal	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Land Use:									
Develop a county-wide Green Space Program				x		4	City, County, , SGRC	$3,000 Staff	General funds

Activity	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Goal	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source
Community Facilities & Services:									
Purchase 8 AED's for County facilities	x					5	County	$300/AED	County
Reconstruct 2 Franks Road Bridges	x					5	County, GDOT	TBD	GDOT, FHWA
Upgrade 1 Sheriff's Dept vehicles per year	x	x	x	x	x	5	County	$21,000 per year	County, USDA
Seek funding for a countywide Early Warning Communication/Notification System		x	x			5	City/County	Staff time	City, County (PDM Project)
Install auxiliary generators for all designated evacuation and emergency shelters and community water systems			x			5	City/County	$100,000	City, County (PDM Project)
Install lightning warning and protection equipment at outdoor recreational facilities countywide.		x				5	City/County	$50,000	City, County (PDM Project)
Fund and implement the "Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)			x			5	City/County	$75,000	City, County (PDM Project)
Become a designated "Storm Ready Community"	x					5	City/County	$5,000, Staff time	City, County (PDM Project)

4. Economic Development Element

The September 2012 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) as developed by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission under a grant from the US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration is hereby incorporated by reference into this Comprehensive Plan to serve as the Economic Development Element for Irwin County and the City of Ocilla.

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission's (SGRC) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen the regional economy. The SGRC CEDS analyzed the regional economy and serves as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives, a regional plan of action, and the investment priorities and funding sources.

As a performance-based plan, this CEDS plays a critical role in adapting to global economic conditions by fully utilizing the region's unique advantages to maximize economic opportunity for its residents by attracting the private investment that creates jobs. The SGRC CEDS is a regionally-owned strategy that is the result of a continuing economic development planning process developed with regional public and private sector participation. This plan sets forth the goals and objectives necessary to solve the economic development problems of the Southern Georgia region and clearly defines the measures of success.

The Southern Georgia CEDS gives an overview of the region briefly describing geography, population, economy, labor and workforce development and use, education, transportation access, environment, and regional resources. It reviews the state of the Regional Economy and provides a list of achievable Goals and Objectives for the region, a Plan of Action to ensure success, and Performance Measures used to evaluate the Southern Georgia Regional Commission's successful development and implementation of the 2013-2018 CEDS. Implementation of the goals identified in this plan is significant to the economic future of the SGRC District.

Policies, issues and opportunities, and Short-term Work Program implementation strategies located in the current Comprehensive Plans for each of our 18 county region were used extensively to develop the CEDS Goals and Objectives, Vital Projects and Problems and Opportunities.

Included below are goals and objectives from the CEDS which are aligned with the current economic development goals of Irwin County and the City of Ocilla:

Goal:
Improve/upgrade the educational levels and labor force skills within the region.

Objective:
Develop and support community based efforts to address improved educational levels and labor force skills.

Objective:
Support the continued improvement of the educational system in addressing educational/skills improvement and ensure WIA coordination.

Goal:
A well trained workforce, professional, technical and skilled, capable of accommodating new industry and maintaining existing industry.

Objective:
Improve educational attainment by reducing high school drop-out rates.

Goal:
Public services and facilities adequate to accommodate existing and future growth.

Objective:
Industrial Parks/properties with all necessary infrastructure and transportation links, to attract new and expanding businesses and industries to the region.

Objective:
Availability of speculatively built and other buildings to attract new and expanding businesses and industries in the region.

Objective:
Availability of adequate financing and/or financial incentives to attract new and expanding businesses and industries to the region.

Goal:
Maintenance and improvement of existing and future housing and the elimination of the region's substandard housing conditions.

Objective:
Assist local governments with the development of a Building Inspection Program.

Objective:
Encourage local governments to participate in CHIP, CDBG, and USDA housing programs.

Objective:
Work with local governments to develop ordinances for manufactured home usage and placement.

Goal:
Provide affordable housing options for low-to-moderate income persons.

Objective:
Develop homebuyer programs for low-to-moderate income persons

Goal:
Conservation, maintenance and improvement of existing/future housing and neighborhoods, and the elimination of substandard housing conditions in the region.

Objective:
All cities and counties should be encouraged to establish and maintain an annual housing condition inventory; and adopt or revise and update building and housing codes, using applicable state or national models.

Objective:
All substandard housing units, which are inventoried and suited for rehabilitation, should be scheduled for rehabilitation in a manner consistent with the local comprehensive plan.

5. Land Use Element

AGRICULTURAL/FORESTRY

These are areas intended for detached single-family residential uses and prime agriculture areas that maintain a rural character. Residential lots should be large (no less than 1 acre) or homes should be clustered on smaller lots to preserve large tracts of natural areas and open space. Setbacks and residential landscaping, and site design should endeavor to maintain a rural character of open space and wooded areas. Irwin County is approximately 95% Agriculture, made up of land dedicated to farming, including fields, lots, pastures, livestock production and specialty farms.

Allowable zoning districts in this category are: agriculture

RESIDENTIAL

Development in this land use is predominantly residential development, ranging from single family densities to multi-family densities. Uses also allowed within this district allow public and private schools, churches and other uses as allowed in the zoning districts allowed under this land use.

Allowable zoning districts in this category are: single-family residential, multi-family/mixed family

INDUSTRIAL

Development in this category includes manufacturing and wholesale as well as warehousing or similar uses. The two industrial parks are located under this land use as is the land fill.

Allowable zoning districts in this category include: heavy or light industrial uses.

COMMERCIAL

This land use is intended for areas in Irwin County or the City which contain retail uses, office uses, highway commercial or other similar uses. These are mainly retail sales or service uses that can function independently of adjoining development.

Allowable zoning districts in this category include: a Commercial Zoning District.

CONSERVATION

Land under this category is dedicated for active or passive recreational uses and for areas that require special protection from development due to unique historical or natural resources and characteristics. Jeff Davis Memorial Park is located in this land use.

MIXED USE

The mixed land use covers activity centers in Irwin County and the City of Ocilla, which have a balanced intricate mix of uses contributing to a working balance for smaller geographic areas. Greater regulatory flexibility is intended to encourage innovative creative design and high quality development and redevelopment.

Allowable land uses include residential, commercial and other compatible uses

The City of Ocilla Future Land Use consists of industrial flanking the city on the north and south ends, and the center of the city is mixed use surrounded by residential. The residential category is for both single and multi-family dwelling units and encompasses approximately 50% of land use in City of Ocilla. The remaining 50% is divided between Industrial, which is for manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing, etc., and Mixed Use, which contains Commercial office ,service, retail sales and entertainment facilities which are usually located as a single use in one building, and Public/Institutional, which consists of the County Courthouse, libraries, schools, post office, fire and police stations. Unincorporated towns of Mystic and Irwinville are 100% mixed use, with single family residential approximately 75% with commercial, industrial making up the other 25%.

Future Land Use	Net Residential Density	Allowable Zoning Classifications
Agricultural/Forestry		AU
Residential		R1, R14, R1A, R20, R8, R8M, RC, RP, RR, MR
Industrial		WLI, HI
Commercial		CBD, GB, NC
Conservation		SA
Mixed Use		SA, R1, R14, R1A, R20, R8, R8M, RC, RP, RR, MR, CBD, GB, NC

III. Future Land Use Maps for the City of Ocilla and Irwin County

(11 X 17)

IRWIN COUNTY

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT THE 2014
JOINT IRWIN COUNTY – CITY OF OCILLA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, the Irwin County Board of Commissioners, together with the City of Ocilla have completed the 2014 Joint Irwin County – City of Ocilla Comprehensive Plan.

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

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the Irwin County Board of Commissioners does hereby adopt the 2014 Joint Irwin County – City of Ocilla Comprehensive Plan.

Adopted this 5th day of February, 2014

Joey Whitley, Chair, County Commission

ATTEST: Yvette White, County Clerk

CITY OF OCILLA

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT
2014 JOINT IRWIN COUNTY – CITY OF OCILLA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WHEREAS, the City of Ocilla together with Irwin County have completed the 2014 Joint Irwin County – City of Ocilla Comprehensive Plan.

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

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the City of Ocilla does hereby adopt the 2014 Joint Irwin County – City of Ocilla Comprehensive Plan.

Adopted this 4th Day of February, 2014.

Horace Hudgins, Mayor City of Ocilla

ATTEST: Lucile Middlebrooks, City Clerk