



# 2017-2022 REGIONAL AGENDA

Southwest Georgia Regional Commission



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## On the Cover:

Downtown Albany music festival: Photo courtesy of VisitAlbany

Decatur County Solar Farm I, Bainbridge, Georgia: Photo courtesy of Duke Energy

Moultrie Growing: Photo courtesy of Moultrie Growing

Camilla Georgia Gnat Days Bike Ride: Photo courtesy of Camilla, Georgia Chamber of Commerce.

# 1. Introduction

Regional plans describe how a region shapes and guides growth and development. A successful regional planning strategy begins with preparation, planning, evaluating and assessing the current conditions in the region. This is not as easy task since we do not live in every city or county in the region, that is why it is extremely important to involve the public on every level and whenever the opportunity presents itself. The Regional Plan not only assists local governments in making decisions but it also assist stakeholders and those considering economic development opportunities. The plan clearly states the future of your community and how it is growing and most importantly about where development will occur, what it will be, when it will happen and how much will it cost

The Regional Plan is required by the rules for Regional Planning (110-12-6-.06(3)) established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) under the provisions of Georgia state law 50-8-1 and those that follow.

The purpose of the Regional Plan is to:

- Articulate the vision for the future of the region
- Generate pride and enthusiasm about the future of the region
- Engage the interest of regional policy makers and stakeholders in implementing the Plan; and
- Provide a guide to everyday decision-making for use by government officials and other regional leaders

The Regional Plan also seeks to help advance the state's planning goals of:

- A growing and balanced economy
- Protection of environmental, natural and cultural resources
- Provision of infrastructure and services to support efficient growth and development patterns
- Access to and provision of adequate and affordable housing for all residents
- Coordination of land use planning and transportation planning to support sustainable economic development: and
- Coordination of local planning efforts with other local service providers and authorities, neighboring communities and state and regional plans

# Parts of the Regional Plan

## The Regional Assessment

It is essential to have accurate, current information on the region as it is now, to be able to plan to maintain or change the current situation. This information and data was objectively collected without extensive stakeholder input and was the first step in the planning process. This first part of the Regional Plan is called the Regional Assessment (Assessment) and is the foundation from which the rest of the Regional Plan is prepared. The Assessment is an evaluation of the current conditions of the region and its most significant issues and opportunities, and was used in the development of the Regional Agenda portion of the Regional Plan, along with the participation of the public and regional stakeholders.



Flint River Bridge, Albany  
Photo courtesy of Visit Albany

The Regional Assessment includes:

- A list of potential issues and opportunities the region may wish to take action to address ;
- An analysis of projected regional development patterns;
- An evaluation of current policies, activities, and development patterns in the region for consistency with DCA’s Quality Community Objectives (QCOs); and
- An analysis of data and information to check the validity of the above evaluations and the potential Issues and opportunities

The Regional Assessment was transmitted to DCA by the Southwest Georgia Regional Council, along with the Stakeholder Involvement Program in December 2016, and DCA determined that the documents adequately addressed the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Regional Planning.

## The Stakeholder Involvement Program

The second part of the regional plan is the Stakeholder Involvement Program (SIP) that describes the Regional Commission’s strategy for ensuring adequate public and stakeholder involvement in the preparation of the Regional Agenda.

The following public participation techniques were used to gather input and are further described in the separate Stakeholder Involvement Program:

- A committee of the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission (RC) Council served as the steering committee for the development of the Regional Agenda. The committee provided feedback and direction to staff, and reviewed all elements of the Regional Agenda before they were presented to the full Council. The committee met as needed and the entire Council was informed at each meeting on the progress of the plan.

- Stakeholder feedback sessions regarding the Issues & Opportunities and potential Performance Standards were presented to existing regional committees and to the chief elected officials in each county for their feedback and input.
- Regional meetings were held in seven counties for public input on the plan. The public could drop in at any time to discuss the plan individually or collectively with RC staff. During these meeting, communities had the opportunity to aid in the development of the Regional Vision, provide feedback on the Regional Issues and Opportunities and to learn about the Performance Standards and how they could potentially impact communities.
- The performance standards were discussed during face to face contacts with more than 40 local government officials.
- The Regional Plan and elements of the plan were on the RC's website for review and comment. A survey was also available for anyone that visited the site.
- The Quality Community Objectives (QCO's) were presented to each RC Council member and they were all asked to complete a survey about their community. The QCO's were also emailed to more than 100 members of the Regional Partners Network (RPN), a nonprofit arm of the RC, to stimulate discussion on a particular element or issue of the Regional Agenda. The QCO's were also posted on the Regional Commission's Facebook Page.
- An art photography contest was held with schools in the region to allow the students to have their photos featured throughout the Regional Plan.
- Public service announcements were distributed to local newspapers and articles included in the RC quarterly newsletter.
- Newspaper press releases were sent to all regional newspapers to advertise the Regional Plan meetings.
- Articles appeared in the Regional Commission's quarterly newsletter.

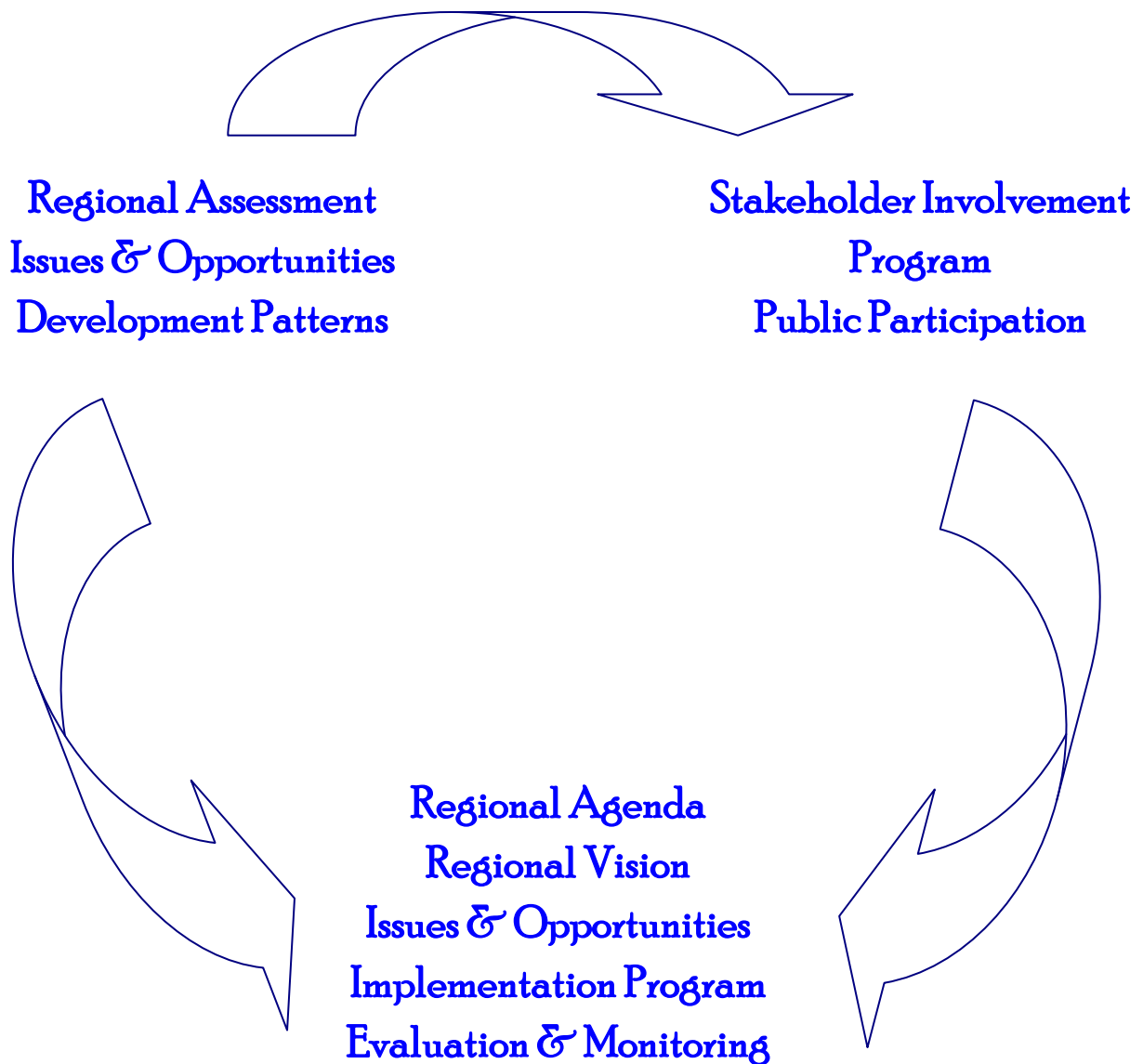
## Regional Agenda

The Regional Agenda is the most important part of the plan, for it includes the region's vision for the future, key issues and opportunities it chooses to address during the planning period, and its implementation program for achieving this vision and addressing the identified issues and opportunities. The Regional Agenda is intended to generate pride and enthusiasm about the future of the region, to help encourage stakeholders to implement the plan.



Sylvester Splash Pad  
Photo Courtesy of the City of Sylvester





The Regional Agenda includes four main components:

- Regional Vision
- Regional Issues and Opportunities
- Implementation Program
- Evaluation and Monitoring Program

The Regional Agenda provides the path for moving forward, but it will require cooperation by all regional stakeholders. The Regional Commission will conduct annual assessments and surveys to ensure we stay on track.

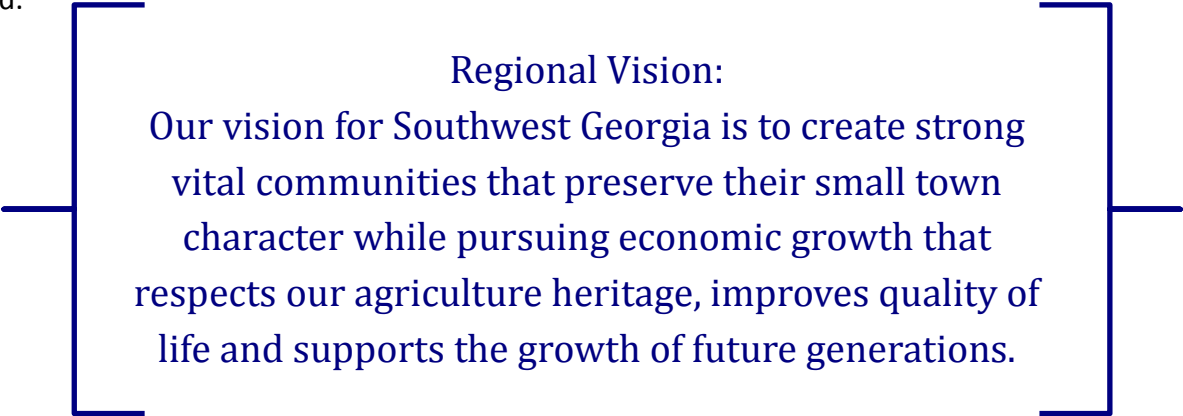
# 2. Regional Vision

The Vision statement for a region tells everyone that reads it about the future of the community and what they intend to be. It also clearly states how the region will make the future reality. The Regional Vision describes a picture of what the region desires to become, and includes the following components:

- Vision Statement
- Regional Development Map
- Defining Narrative

## Vision Statement

The vision statement helps define the direction in which to proceed, and helps keep stakeholders motivated.



**Regional Vision:**  
Our vision for Southwest Georgia is to create strong vital communities that preserve their small town character while pursuing economic growth that respects our agriculture heritage, improves quality of life and supports the growth of future generations.

## Regional Development Map

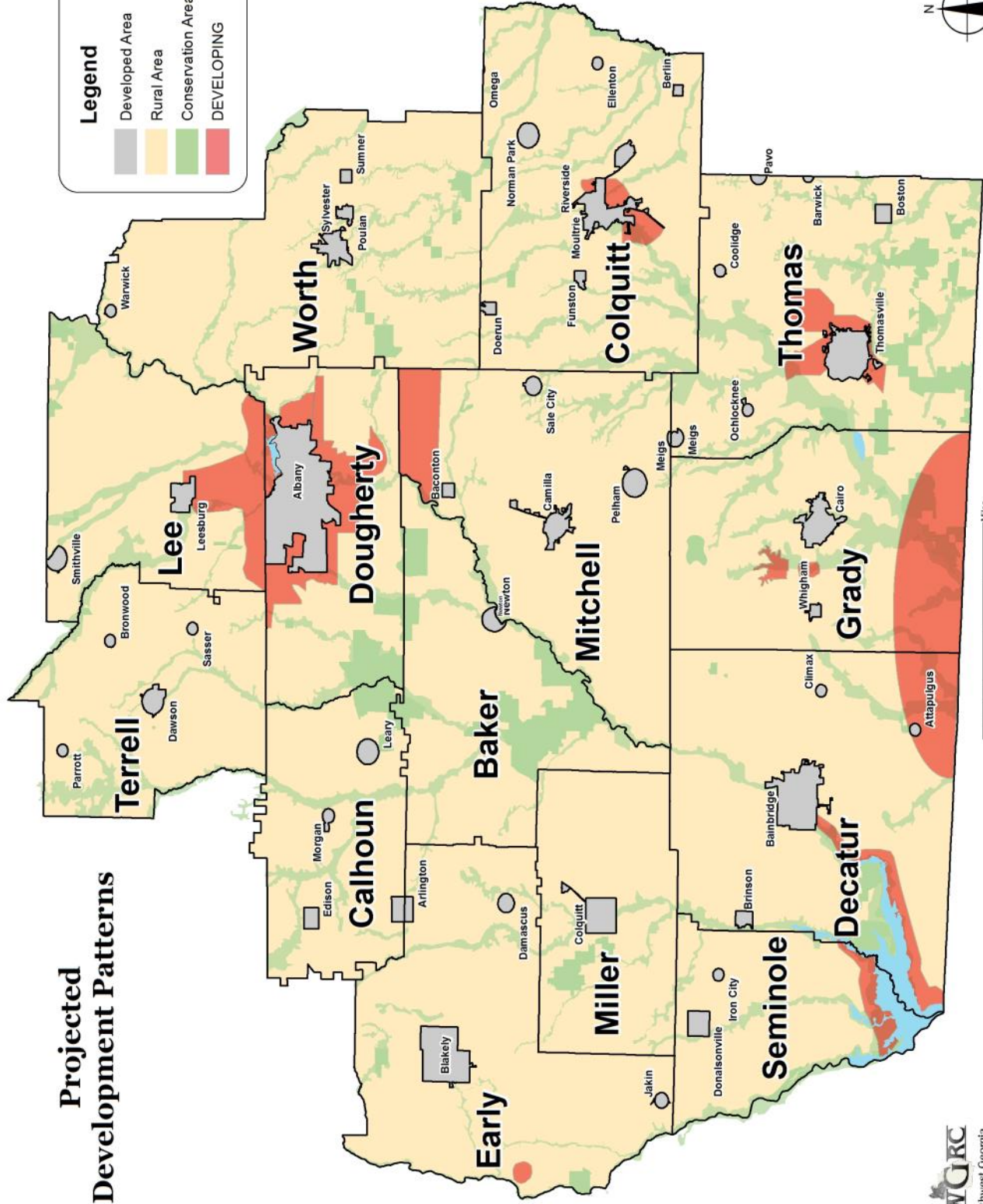
The Regional Development Map illustrates desired or projected future land use patterns using the following categories:

- Conservation. Areas to be preserved in order to protect important resources or environmentally sensitive areas of the region. Areas shown as conservation correspond to the Regionally Important Resource Map for the region.
- Rural. Areas not expected to become urbanized or require provision of urban services during the planning period.
- Developed. Areas exhibiting urban type development patterns and where urban services (i.e., water, sewer, etc.) are already being provided.
- Developing. Areas that will likely become urbanized and require provision of new urban services (i.e., water, sewer, etc.) during the planning period.

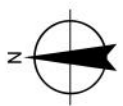
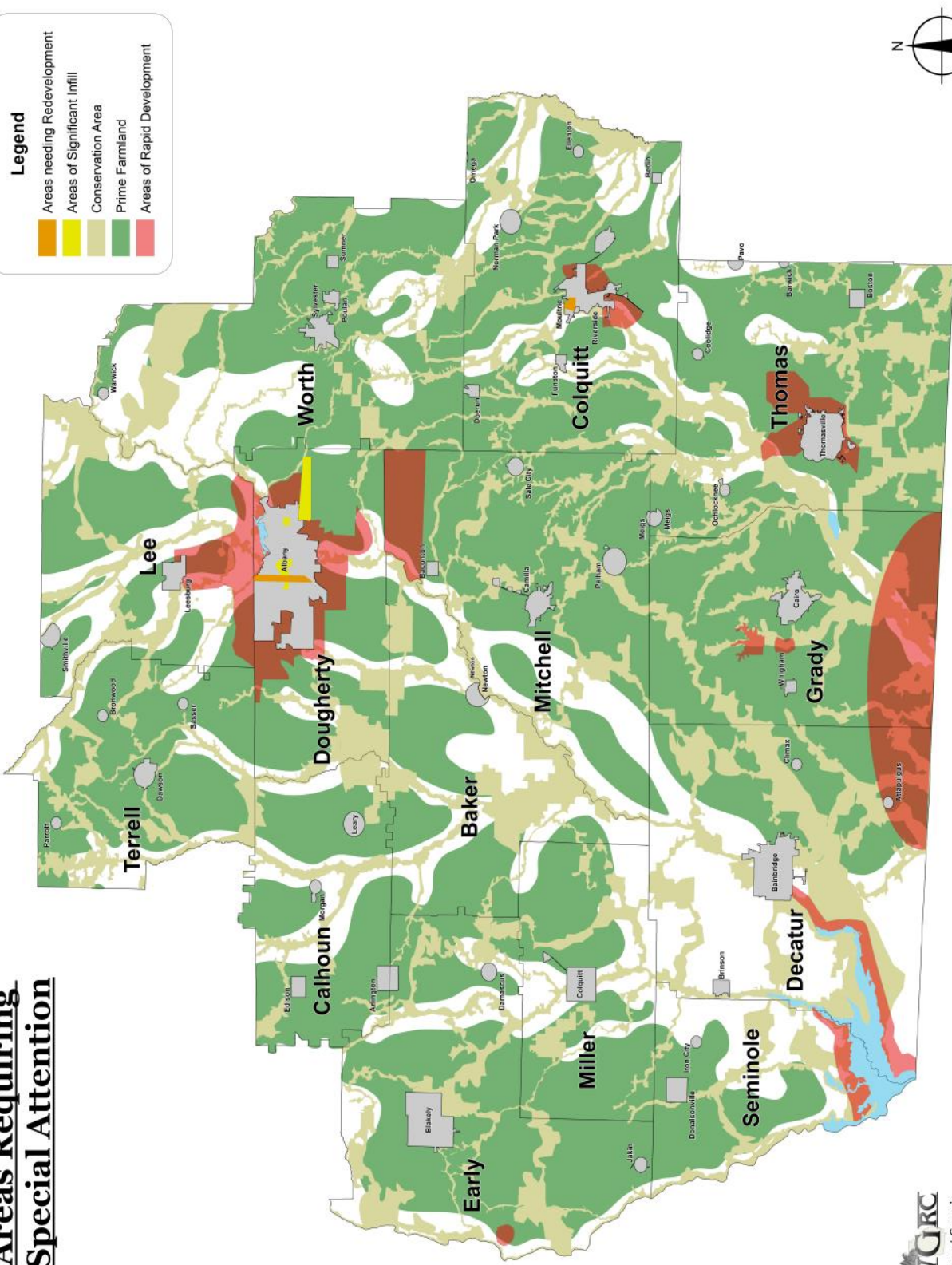
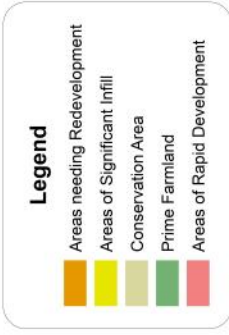
The following maps include [Regional Development Patterns and Areas Requiring Special Attention:](#)



# Projected Development Patterns



# Areas Requiring Special Attention



# 3. Quality Community Objectives Analysis

Quality Community Objectives (QCO) are adapted from generally accepted community development principles to fit the unique qualities of Georgia’s communities. It is a widely accepted principle that if a community implements these principles it will result in greater efficiency, cost savings, and a higher quality of life for residents.

The Quality Community Objectives:

## 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, 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.



Lapham Patterson House

Photo courtesy of Instagram User: Christina X Miranda

## 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 taxpayers; 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 socio- economic 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.

To help determine how consistent Southwest Georgia's development is with the Department's Quality Community Objectives (QCOs), we invited all 57 of our governments to evaluate themselves with the help of the Quality Growth Assessment Tool. Coupled with the insights of Regional Commission staff, this section will assess how well Southwest Georgia is developing sustainable and livable communities

### 1. We encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that meet the job skills for our community?

	Number of Response (s)	Response Ratio
Yes	80	87.9%
No	10	10.9%
No Responses	1	1.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 2. We encourage development or expansion of business and industries that meet the needs of a diverse local workforce?

	Number of Response (s)	Response Ratio
Yes	81	89.0%
No	10	10.9%
No Responses	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 3. We promote the efficient use of natural resources?

	Number of Response (s)	Response Ratio
Yes	79	86.8%
No	12	13.1%
No Responses	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 4. We identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community?

	Number of Response (s)	Response Ratio
Yes	72	79.1%
No	14	15.3%
No Responses	5	5.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 5. We promote energy efficiency and renewable energy sources and encourage green building?

	Number of Response (s)	Response Ratio
Yes	60	65.9%
No	29	31.8%
No Responses	2	2.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 6. We maximize the use of existing infrastructure by encouraging development or redevelopment closer to the downtown area of the community?

	Number of Response (s)	Response Ratio
Yes	70	76.9%
No	21	23.0%
No Responses	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

### 7. We maintain open space in agriculture, forestry, or conservation uses?

	Number of Response (s)	Response Ratio
Yes	77	84.6%
No	11	12.0%
No Responses	3	3.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>



**8. We use infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support or direct new growth?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	78	85.7%
No	11	12.0%
No Responses	2	2.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**9. We have ordinances or regulations to manage the growth we desire?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	72	79.1%
No	18	19.7%
No Responses	1	1.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**10. We have leadership and staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	71	78.0%
No	19	20.8%
No Responses	1	1.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**11. We have leadership that can respond to a disaster and take the necessary steps to safeguard the community?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	78	85.7%
No	10	10.9%
No Responses	3	3.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**12. Our downtown is the focal point of our community?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	54	59.3%
No	35	38.4%
No Responses	2	2.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**13. Our downtown has sidewalks and is a mixture of businesses, residential, and cultural areas?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	60	65.9%
No	30	32.9%
No Responses	1	1.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**14. We share one or more services with neighboring jurisdictions?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	67	73.6%
No	22	24.1%
No Responses	2	2.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**15. We work with other governments on joint projects that result in greater efficiency and less cost to citizens?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	73	80.2%
No	17	18.6%
No Responses	1	1.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**16. We have a range of safe, affordable housing for all income levels?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	50	54.9%
No	38	41.7%
No Responses	3	3.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**17. We encourage the development of a variety of housing types, sizes and costs?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	69	75.8%
No	19	20.8%
No Responses	3	3.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**18. We have a written housing plan or housing strategy?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	37	40.6%
No	48	52.7%
No Responses	6	6.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**19. Our zoning ordinances have a provision that requires developers to make a percentage of housing units in new residential developments available to low and moderate-income households?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	29	31.8%
No	54	59.3%
No Responses	8	8.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**20. We have sidewalks in our neighborhoods?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	45	49.4%
No	43	47.2%
No Responses	3	3.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**21. We provide safe ways for residents to walk and bicycle throughout the community?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	38	41.7%
No	50	54.9%
No Responses	3	3.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**22. Does your community have public transportation?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	37	40.6%
No	52	57.1%
No Responses	2	2.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**23. We have speed humps, neighborhood traffic circles and narrow roadways in our communities to reduce traffic and speed?**

	Number of Response (s)	Response Ratio
Yes	42	46.1%
No	45	49.4%
No Responses	4	4.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**24. We have access to schools, colleges, or universities in our community to enable all residents to improve their job skills or further their education?**

	Number of Response (s)	Response Ratio
Yes	71	78.0%
No	18	19.7%
No Responses	2	2.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**25. We have a graduation rate of 70% or more?**

	Number of Response (s)	Response Ratio
Yes	57	62.6%
No	28	30.7%
No Responses	6	6.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**26. We prepare our students for the workforce by training them for jobs available in our communities?**

	Number of Response (s)	Response Ratio
Yes	54	59.3%
No	34	37.3%
No Responses	3	3.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**27. We have access to critical goods and services such as gas, food, and healthcare?**

	Number of Response (s)	Response Ratio
Yes	84	92.3%
No	6	6.5%
No Responses	1	1.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>100%</b>

**28. We have services in our community for the disabled and elderly residents?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	65	71.4%
No	25	27.4%
No Responses	1	1.0%
<b>Total</b>	91	100%

**29. We have access to programs and services that promote fitness and a healthy lifestyle?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	63	69.2%
No	27	29.6%
No Responses	1	1.0%
<b>Total</b>	91	100%

**30. We have access to recreational facilities such as parks, gymnasiums, fitness centers, etc...?**

	<b>Number of Response (s)</b>	<b>Response Ratio</b>
Yes	77	84.6%
No	14	15.3%
No Responses	0	0.0%
<b>Total</b>	91	100%

## 4. Defining Narrative for Areas Requiring Special Attention

### Areas In Need of Redevelopment

Redevelopment is generally appropriate when properties have been lying vacant or underutilized for a long period of time, when deterioration is significant and when there is buy-in from the local government, especially in partnership with private-sector investment. Albany continues to have commercial corridors such as Slappey Boulevard that have lost its aesthetic appeal and fallen into disrepair over the years. The recent storms have devastated the community and caused this problem to be compounded. The recovery and redevelopment of many of these areas will take several years. This economic impact will be felt by all and so many whose homes have been damaged or lost are already relocating due to the lack of available, affordable housing. Another example is Northwest Moultrie where significant dilapidation and abandonment of homes continues to be a problem. Many homes are condemned, and many more need to be. The City developed an Urban Redevelopment Plan and is in the process of developing a Revitalization Area Strategy (RAS). These are steps in the right direction but more work is needed. Even smaller communities like Donalsonville are not immune to this issue.

### *Desirable Patterns of Development for Areas In Need of Redevelopment*

- New development should match densities typically found in the older centers of communities.
- New industry or other major employers should be located close to town when possible, making jobs accessible to all residents by transit, walking, or bicycling.
- Consider restrictions on the number and size of signs and billboards to enhance visual appeal.
- Structures (shopping, warehouses, offices, etc.) should be located near street fronts, with parking in rear of buildings, to make corridors more attractive and more pedestrian-friendly.
- Parking areas should be landscaped to minimize visual impact on adjacent streets and uses.



Georgia & Florida Railway, LLC—Rail Lines in Thomasville, Georgia  
Photo courtesy of Instagram User: JaJa\_vanessainsta

- Where possible, locate parking at the rear or side of buildings to minimize the visual impact of parked cars from the street.
- Reduce parking requirements for commercial and residential developments, particularly when nearby parking alternatives or public transit is available.
- Shared parking should be encouraged to reduce overall parking needs.

### *Land Uses for Areas In Need of Redevelopment*

- Commercial
- Public /Institutional
- Mixed Uses



# ***Quality Community Objectives for Areas In Need of Redevelopment***

## **Efficient Land Use**

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.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Efficient Land Use*

- Big box redevelopment. Abandoned stores should be reused, rather than lingering as eyesores while new sprawl pushes out into undeveloped areas. Local governments and other agencies can find new uses for these large and flexible buildings, or they may provide incentives for private developers to do so.
- Adaptive use. The conversion of a disused building, usually abandoned and/or historic, into a functional building with a new use. This is often a better practice than demolishing buildings in order to build brand-new ones, but sometimes it needs to be encouraged by tax breaks, code changes, or other regulatory means. Adaptive use can be especially valuable for popular historic buildings, but it is also an important tool for regenerating deteriorating areas.

## **Economic Prosperity**

Communities should encourage development and expansion of businesses and industries that can be sustained by the current workforce and are suitable for the community.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Economic Prosperity*

- Promote mixed-use development strategies as a means of enhancing economic development.
- Encourage street designs that reduce speed, creating a safer and more comfortable environment for pedestrians and bicyclists.
- Support business incubators to give entrepreneurs a means to create viable and profitable companies. Incubators foster the growth of small businesses.

## **Sense of Place**

Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. 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. Historic areas should be protected and revitalized; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Sense of Place*

- Offer incentives to owners of aging shopping centers with consistently high vacancy rates or visible deteriorating physical conditions.
- Create and design a variety of spaces, including intimate, personal, social and public into design space to accommodate and provide areas for the different levels of interaction that people need sociologically. This includes vegetation, seating, sidewalks and street width, goods and services, personalized storefronts and permeability between storefronts and the street.

- Encourage new construction, additions, and infill development to be compatible, but not identical to, historic buildings.
- Develop standards or codes for the adaptation of existing buildings for compatible new uses to meet continuing or changing uses while retaining historic character.
- Ensure upgrades to infrastructure meet modern building requirements and codes.

## **Areas of Significant Infill Potential**

Infill is a planning strategy that recycles vacant or underutilized lands within cities and suburbs with construction and rehabilitation to make these areas desirable. It focuses on the reuse of obsolete or underutilized buildings and sites. This type of development is essential to renewing blighted neighborhoods. These sites, with existing infrastructure in place, should be used for new development before new development on greenfield sites occurs. Examples include the Marine Corps Logistic Base in Dougherty County, Radium Springs and East Albany. The recent storms in January 2017 have increased the number of properties significantly but Albany/Dougherty County has seen the greatest impact.

### **Desired Patterns of Development for Areas of Significant Infill Potential**

- Neighborhood commercial centers on appropriate infill sites could serve surrounding neighborhoods.
- Homes, shops, small businesses, and institutions could be grouped together in villages or attractive mixed use centers when possible to serve adjacent neighborhoods.
- Buildings in centers should be architecturally integrated with the site and with surrounding structures, and developed at an appropriate scale.
- Redevelopment should occur in older strip commercial centers before new construction occurs.
- Improvements of sidewalks and enhancements to street appearance should be emphasized.
- Allow development to matching densities typically found in older community centers.
- New major employers should be located as close to town as possible, to make jobs accessible to all by way of transit, walking, or bicycling.
- Infill development should blend into existing neighborhoods by disguising its density when possible.
- Situating commercial structures near street fronts, and offering parking in rears of buildings, makes streets more attractive and pedestrian-friendly, and should be encouraged.
- Traffic calming measures, such as narrower street widths, raised pedestrian crossings, or rough pavement materials should also be encouraged where possible to make areas more pedestrian friendly.
- Accessory housing units or “in-law suites” or “granny flats”, are independent, complete living units created from surplus space, or added in inconspicuous ways, within single family homes or detached structures encourage mixed-income housing at virtually no public expense and should be encouraged.
- When houses are located near the street with large front porches, interaction with neighbors is encouraged.

- New development that reflects traditional neighborhood design (TND) principles, such as smaller lots, orientation to street, mix of housing types, pedestrian access to neighborhood commercial center should be encouraged.
- Residential development that offers a mix of housing types and prices should be encouraged.
- Residential development with a healthy mix of uses such as corner groceries, barber shops, drugstores, etc. within easy walking distance of residences should be encouraged.
- Addition of new uses to single-use sites (e.g. restaurants and shopping added to office parks) should be encouraged.



City of Pelham raises flag to honor police officers  
Photo courtesy of City of Pelham, Georgia

### ***Land Uses to Be Encouraged for Areas of Significant Infill Potential***

- Housing
- Parks/Open Spaces
- Commercial on a scale appropriate to the neighborhood.
- Mixed Uses

### ***Quality Community Objectives for Areas of Significant Infill Potential***

#### **A. Efficient Land Use**

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.

#### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Efficient Land Use*

Strategies for re-use of brownfields, greyfields and greenfields. Re-using sites such as abandoned shopping centers for transit-oriented or mixed-use development.

- A comprehensive strategy for encouraging infill development, while also regulating development to assure the quality of life is maintained.
- Developing or revising local development review process to make the process of obtaining permits easier, particularly for projects that support quality growth.
- Establish a redevelopment district or plan to provide for public financing for redevelopment activities and to position communities to apply for grants and finally to obtain incentives and other tax credits.

## **B. Sense of Place**

Compact, walkable, mixed use 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.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Sense of Place:*

- Review and revise local land use regulations (e.g. comprehensive plans and zoning regulations) if necessary to ensure that they encourage the design and development of traditional developments.
- Take measures to implement subdivision and zoning codes that include measures to facilitate new development, infill development, and adaptive use, which will ensure the character of the community remains strong without vacant lots and dilapidated buildings to detract from it.
- Encourage the development of pedestrian-scaled streets with attractive and interesting amenities; a recognizable center of community life where people gather, meet, shop with government offices located within the center.
- Maintain existing street grid patterns and uniform alignment of facades in new construction by orienting new structures at similar setbacks and lot configurations, that are similar in mass and scale to existing traditional cultural resources.

## **Transportation Options**

Transportation needs, challenges and opportunities for all residents should be addressed.

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.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Transportation Options*

- Encourage installation of bike lanes and bike racks.
- Improve deteriorating corridors rather than encouraging sprawl in undeveloped areas.

## **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.

### *Implementation Measure to Achieve Regional Identity*

Review and revise local land use regulations (e.g. comprehensive plans and zoning regulations) if necessary to ensure that they encourage designs that preserve and enhance the region’s distinctive identity.

## Resource Management

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.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Resource Management*

- Encourage the maintenance of all heritage buildings, sites, structures, districts, and objects and their adaptive reuse, when appropriate.
- Encourage new construction, additions, and infill development to be compatible, but not identical to, historic buildings.
- Review and revise ordinances that protect and preserve cultural and historical resources.

## Housing Options

A range of safe, affordable, inclusive 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, to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs. Promote programs that provide housing for residents of all socio-economic backgrounds; instituting programs to address homelessness and coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Housing Options*

- Develop a regional land bank or partner with land banks to acquire, manage and redevelop tax-foreclosed properties, with the long-term interest of the community and surrounding property owners in mind.
- Support policies that support walking, biking and public transit so that families can live close to their daily destinations.
- Review and revise current regulations and land use policies that support mixed use developments, increased density and making public spaces and green spaces priorities for redevelopment.



## Conservation Areas (Natural and Cultural Resources)

Conservation areas include both public and private lands that are under some form of land conservation program. Conservation areas vary greatly in their nature and character. They range from the centers of historic towns, cities and parks to historic transport links and their surroundings, such as stretches of waterways. Rural Communities are very different from urban ones; however they are of vital importance for community development. Areas in the region such as Radium Springs in Albany and Tired Creek in Grady County are among those protected. Our Regionally Important Resource Plan designates important natural and cultural resources. A Regionally Important Resource (RIR) is any natural or cultural resource identified for protection by a Regional Commission (RC), following the minimum requirements established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). In the end, conservation of rural areas is of vital importance due to food production. Georgia ranked first in the nation's production of young chickens, blueberries, peanuts and pecans. Equity a chicken processing plant in Camilla/Mitchell County is one such producer. There are numerous poultry farms throughout the region that bring a great economic benefit to our area. This region is rich with agricultural resources.

### ***Desired Patterns of Development for Conservation Areas***

- Nodal or village developments with buildings clustered at center, with a clearly defined edge surrounded by open space should be encouraged to help preserve open space.
- Very large minimum lot size requirements (25+ acres) limits development density and protects farmland, open space and rural character.
- Infrastructure availability may be used to steer development away from areas of natural, cultural, and environmentally sensitive resources.
- The protection of water quality, the maintenance of appropriate stream buffers and prohibition of uses that are prone to pollution should be a priority.
- Opportunities for passive recreation use such as canoeing, fishing, hunting, hiking, etc. should be provided where possible.
- Conservation subdivisions should be encouraged
- Maintain and strengthen, where appropriate, regulations and incentives that protect the region's cultural resources from inappropriate infill development, incompatible alterations or destruction.

### ***Land Uses To Be Encouraged for Conservation Areas***

- Cropland/Pasture
- Natural, Cultural, and Historic Parks and Sites
- Forest/Undisturbed/Natural
- Rural Parks/Wildlife Management Areas
- Low Impact Rural Residential
- Wildlife Management Areas





**Quality Community Objectives for  
Conservation Areas**



**Regional Cooperation**

Each region should promote and preserve shared natural resources; participate in regional organizations, identifying joint projects that will result in greater efficiency and loess cost to tax payers.

*Implementation Measures to achieve Regional Cooperation*

- Review and revise local land use regulations (e.g. comprehensive plans and zoning regulations) if necessary to ensure that they encourage the design and development of traditional developments

**Resource Management**

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.

*Implementation Measures to Achieve Resource Management*

- Implement Low Impact Development through land planning and design practices that conserve and protect natural resource systems and reduce infrastructure costs.
- Adoption of environmentally -friendly agriculture methods and business.

**Efficient Land Use**

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.

*Implementation Measures to Achieve Efficient Land Use*

- Discourage future development of rural residential patterns (unsewered lots of 2.5 or less) and where opportunities exist, plan for rural development densities not greater than 1 unit per 10 acres.
- Conservation easements involve donation of private property development rights in exchange for income tax, property or estate tax benefits, for the protection of natural resources.

## 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.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Environment Protection*

- Communities should plan development patterns that will protect natural resources and water quality and quantity and maintain and protect the environment.
- Encourage development practices that protect the quantity and quality of the region's surface and groundwater resources and natural resources
- Require strips of land along banks of streams and rivers to be set aside from development to protect water quality.
- Protect water supply, watersheds and provides safe drinking water and wastewater treatment services.
- Protect environmentally sensitive areas and prevent mass grading and clear cutting.

## 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.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Heritage Preservation*

- Encourage and support increased development of historic sites as tourist attractions, when practical and appropriate.
- Encourage the maintenance of all heritage buildings, sites, structures, districts, and adaptive reuse of objects , when appropriate.
- Support recognition of exemplary preservation, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of heritage resources.
- Support and cooperate with federal, state, and local historic preservation agencies, commissions, and organizations in their efforts to preserve and protect Southwest Georgia's cultural resources.



Sunset at Radium Springs  
Photo Courtesy of Visit Albany

## Prime Farmland

Prime farmland, as defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is land that has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops and is available for these uses. Prime farmland has the best combination of physical and chemical characteristics for producing food, feed, forage, fiber, and oilseed crops. It has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce economically sustained high yields of crops. Prime farmlands have an adequate and dependable water supply from precipitation or irrigation, a favorable temperature and growing season, acceptable acidity or alkalinity, acceptable salt and sodium content, permeable soils, and few or no rocks. Prime farmlands are not excessively erodible or saturated for long periods of time, and do not flood. Agriculture has long been one of the most significant economic bases in the region, and the preservation of prime farmland is crucial for economic reasons as well as for maintaining the rural character of Southwest Georgia.

According to USDA National Agriculture Statistics Service (USDA-NASS) Census of Agriculture (COA), nationwide, 2.1 million farms cover 914,657 acres. The majority of this land is used for farming and ranching. In 2012, farms and ranches generated more than 394.6 billion in agricultural sales, up 32.8 % from 2007. Even though farming is big business, the number of beginning farms has reached a 30-year low; the number of beginning farmers dropped 20%. These numbers may be dropping because farmers are taking their farms out of active production; which makes them vulnerable to development pressures. It is therefore extremely important in Southwest Georgia to recognize that farming and the preservation of farmland is essential to our food production and overall survival.

### ***Desired Patterns of Development for Prime Farmland***

- Riparian and aquatic buffers between waterways and new development should be used to protect on-site wetlands.
- Natural growth, especially mature trees, should be preserved where possible, and ground disturbance should be minimized to the extent possible.
- Strategies to preserve green space such as conservation easements, fee simple acquisition and conservation tax credits will be encouraged.
- Landscaping should be done using low impact native species where possible.
- Bioretention and biodetention basins should be used to help contain, retain and filter water.



Growing Garden

Photo submitted by Instagram user: BekaRays

- Infiltration basins should be used where possible.
- Urban growth or service boundaries that discourage/prohibits development outside border are encouraged.
- Very large minimum lot size requirements (25+ acres) to limit development density and protect farmland and rural character.
- Discourage the extension of public utilities into these areas.

### ***Land Uses for Prime Farmland***

- Cropland
- Pasture
- Forest
- Rural Parks/Wildlife Management Areas
- Rural Residential

### ***Quality Community Objectives for Prime Farmland***

#### **Regional Cooperation**

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.

#### ***Implementation Measures to Regional Cooperation***

- Review and revise zoning ordinances for minimum and maximum lot sizes in non-farmland areas that will meet community preservation goals.
- Partner with land trusts, conservation organizations, and neighboring local governments to protect priority natural areas.



- Provide for the linkage of environmental and recreational open space.

Cattle: Photo submitted by Instagram user: STX\_10\_





Sunset:

Photo submitted by Instagram User: KateTouch\_Dis

## 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.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Heritage Preservation*

- Follow Best Management Practices outlined by the Georgia Forestry Commission in the design and maintenance of rural roads.
- Prepare or refer to inventories of all significant environmental resources for use in land use decision making.
- Encourage partnerships between environmental and conservation agencies and the development and business community.

## Efficient Land Use

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.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Efficient Land Use*

- Developments, when necessary, should be planned so that the natural or existing drainage patterns and natural flood flows are preserved or approximately reproduced, and open space requirements are encouraged.
- Encourage the use of conservation easements to set aside open space

## 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.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Environmental Protection*

- Educate the public on the benefits and practices of environmental stewardship.
- Encourage partnerships between environmental and conservation agencies and the development and business community.
- Natural areas containing floodplains and other areas unsuitable for development should be restricted from development except for agricultural, recreational and similar uses.
- Encourage the preservation and protection of natural areas in all development proposals.
- Provide for protection of groundwater supplies including well-head protection programs.
- Prepare, adopt, and implement ordinances that address the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Environmental Planning Criteria and local water resources (water supply watersheds, river corridors, significant groundwater recharge areas, and wetlands).
- Follow the Best Management Practices outlined by the Georgia Forestry Commission in the design and maintenance of rural roads near Regionally Important Natural Resources.

## **Areas of Rapid Development**

- ◆ Areas where farmland and other environmentally important resources are threatened, usually by residential development.
- ◆ Areas along the borders of Decatur and Grady Counties as a result of development pressure from Leon, Gadsden and Jefferson Counties in Florida.
- ◆ As the population of Albany expands, the areas in Dougherty County around Albany will continue to see development pressure.
- ◆ Lee County south of Highway 32 and Leesburg has developed significantly over the past 15 years as people moved from neighboring Dougherty County to take advantage of the Lee County school system, while still having access to Albany and the amenities it has to offer.
- ◆ Areas in Lee, Mitchell, Decatur and Thomas County directly influenced by new or the expansion of county schools systems
- ◆ Areas around the Highway 319 bypass adjacent to Moultrie in Colquitt County have experienced steady development and are situated for potential annexation.
- ◆ Areas in Thomas County on the periphery of Thomasville, particularly to the north have shown significant development pressure recently, which is expected to continue.
- ◆ Areas along the Flint River and Lake Seminole between Bainbridge and Florida, and areas around Lake Seminole in Seminole County.

## Desired Patterns of Development for Areas of Rapid Development

- Neighborhood commercial centers on appropriate infill sites could serve surrounding neighborhoods.
- Buildings in centers should be architecturally integrated with the site and with surrounding structures, and developed at an appropriate scale.
- Redevelopment in older strip commercial centers before new construction occurs.
- Improvements of sidewalks and enhancements to street appearance.
- New major employers should be located as close to town as possible, to make jobs accessible to all by way of transit, walking, or bicycling.
- Infill development should blend into existing neighborhoods by disguising its density when possible.
- Accessory housing units or “in-law suites” or “granny flats” added in inconspicuous ways, within single family homes or detached structures
- Residential development that offers a mix of housing types and prices.
- Residential development with a healthy mix of uses such as corner groceries, barber shops, drug-stores, etc. within easy walking distance of residences.

## Land Use Types for Areas of Rapid Development

- Housing
- Parks/Open Spaces
- Commercial on a scale appropriate to the neighborhood.
- Residential

### *Quality Community Objectives for Areas of Rapid Development*

#### **Efficient Land Use**

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.

#### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Efficient Land Use*

- Promote, encourage and ensure that land regulations allow infill development.



Sasser Calaboose

Submitted by Instagram user: Bekarays



## **Housing Options**

An adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive and resource efficient housing should be available in the community. 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.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Housing Options*

- Allow mixed use development.
- Ensure new development is sensitive to context.

## **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.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Sense of Place*

- Promote infill development.
- Allow mixed use development.
- Ensure new development is sensitive to context.
- Establish Main Street and Better Hometown revitalization programs.

## **Transportation Options**

Transportation need and challenges should be addressed. 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.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Transportation Options*

- Encourage alternative forms of transportation.

## **Regional Cooperation**

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. Communities should cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs and participate in regional organizations.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Regional Cooperation*

- Build upon the region’s strong agribusiness potential.
- Assist with local historic preservation efforts.

## Sense of Place

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.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Sense of Place*

- Ensure new development is sensitive to context.
- Provide technical assistance in developing revitalization plans, regulations and programs.

## Housing Options

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, to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.

### *Implementation Measures to Achieve Housing Options*

- Host, coordinate workshops that educate first-time homebuyers on barriers to homeownership and available housing resources.
- Work with local governments and factory-built housing manufacturers to develop affordable and compatible housing to use as infill development.
- Work through the Housing Task Force to promote programs which rehabilitate existing housing



Pitcher Plan Bog

Submitted by Instagram user: BekaRays

stock.

## Areas of Significant Disinvestment

Disinvestment and decline occur in every community throughout the region and are not concentrated in any particular place. The process is often associated with poverty, high crime, and abandonment of housing stock and out-migration. Southwest Georgia is characterized and has documented evidence of high rates of poverty. These areas are not mapped due to the fact that they are found in every county in the region and are not concentrated in any particular area. With the recent downturn of the economy, many businesses have closed and residents have lost their jobs. These circumstances only exacerbate the situation in areas already experiencing decline.



Moss Farms Diving Complex  
Moultrie, Georgia

The only county in our region that has experienced significant growth in recent years is Lee County. In fact, most counties in our region are classified as “persistent poverty” areas as defined by a University of Georgia study. 20% of the population has been below the poverty threshold for three decades as measured by the Census. Regional examples of these declining areas are East Albany, Northwest Moultrie and Northwest Cairo (an area commonly referred to by the locals as “The Hot Bed”).

### Desired Patterns of Development for Areas of Significant Disinvestment

- Residential Development that offers a mix of housing types and mix of uses such as grocery stores, drug stores and corner stores.
- New development that maximizes the use of existing public facilities and infrastructure.
- Foster alternatives to transportation by automobile to create vibrant, walkable communities and neighborhood centers.
- Infill development that blends into the character of the neighborhood.
- Improvement of sidewalks to encourage walkability and improve the appearance of the street.
- New major employers within the neighborhood that make jobs available/accessible to all residents by transit, walking or bicycling.
- New development that focuses on the uniqueness of the neighborhood and on local conditions that cannot be addressed by conventional zoning

### Land Uses to Be Encouraged for Areas of Significant Disinvestment

- Mixed Uses
- Commercial
- Residential
- Parks/Open Spaces

## **Quality Community Objectives for Areas of Disinvestment**

### **Economic Prosperity**

The business and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, linkages to other economic activities in the region, impact on the resources of the area, and future prospects of expansion and creation of higher-skill job opportunities.

#### Implementation Measure to Achieve Economic Prosperity

- Support business incubators to give entrepreneurs a means to create viable and profitable companies. Incubators foster the growth of fledgling "home-grown" enterprises.
- Determine community needs by examining what businesses exist in the community, what assets are available to build on, and which industries show promise based on national and international trends.

### **Housing Options**

Quality housing and a range of housing size, cost, and density would be provided in each community, to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community.

#### Implementation Measure to Achieve Housing Options

- Allow a mix of housing sizes, types, and income levels within neighborhoods.
- Support development patterns that encourage walkability and interaction with neighbors.
- Locate affordable housing throughout the community so that people live close to where they work.
- Support inclusionary zoning that allow some affordable units in new residential developments.
- Grant developers additional incentives (i.e. density increases) in exchange for the provision of amenities such as affordable housing units, public spaces, infrastructural improvements, or green space.

### **Efficient Land Use**

Communities should maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the conversion of undeveloped land at the urban periphery by encouraging development of sites closer to the downtown or traditional urban core of the community.



## Implementation Measure to Achieve Efficient Land Use

- Make use of existing public facilities and infrastructure, thereby reducing local government costs to support new development.
- Provide incentives and public improvements to encourage infill development.
- Reduce sprawl by first developing vacant areas closer to downtown.
- Strengthen older neighborhoods by bringing in new residents and investment.
- Encourage Comprehensive Plan and zoning ordinances that support infill development.
- Utilize Infill Development Programs to determine a comprehensive strategy for encouraging infill development in particular areas of the community, while also regulating development to ensure protection of quality of life in affected neighborhoods.

## Community Health

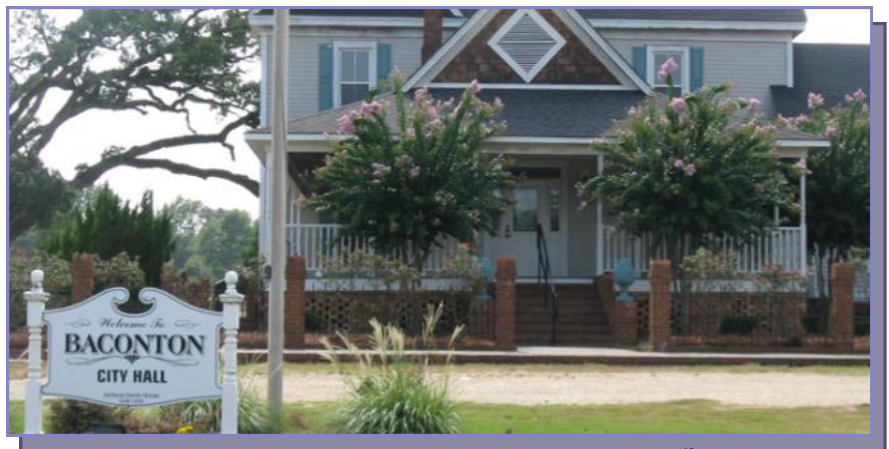
All residents should have access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities.

### *Implementation Measure to Achieve Community Health*

- Support programs that educate communities on healthy lifestyles, chronic disease prevention and management.
- Increase opportunities for physical activity and work with schools to increase physical education classes.
- Encourage development of Neighborhood Plans that promote health and access to safe, clean neighborhoods and good work opportunities.

## Transportation Options

Communities should encourage and support alternatives to transportation by automobiles, including walking, cycling, and transit; employing traffic calming measures throughout the community and increase connectivity.



Jefferson Davis House 1898

Photo Courtesy of the City of Baconton

- Provide sidewalks, bike lanes and landscape buffers and narrower streets to calm traffic and encourage walkability.
- Require a rewrite of the local development regulations to incorporate TND principles. TND's typically includes small lot single-family homes, multi-family residences, and neighborhood commercial developments, all within easy walking distance of one another.

# 5. Regional Issues & Opportunities

The following is a compilation of regional issues and opportunities found in the comprehensive plans of cities and counties in the Region 10.

## Housing

### Issues

- ◆ Current zoning does not permit mixed uses
- ◆ Few credit-worthy applicants
- ◆ Few programs/funds for housing rehabilitation
- ◆ Few housing choices
- ◆ Poor collaboration between cities and community housing development organizations
- ◆ Weak or non-existent code enforcement
- ◆ High numbers of manufactured homes which are usually taxed as personal property
- ◆ Substandard housing and overcrowded housing in most counties

### Opportunities

- ◆ Infill Development
- ◆ Provide more affordable housing options for low-income families
- ◆ Address dilapidated and substandard properties
- ◆ Provide education about housing programs
- ◆ Collaboration and Community Building

## Transportation

### Issues

- ◆ Approved Department of Transportation projects throughout the region currently delayed
- ◆ Roadway designs discourage pedestrian and bike activity
- ◆ Inadequate public transportation
- ◆ Limited access to services, goods, economic development programs, healthcare and recreational facilities
- ◆ Lack of state funding for road and street improvements

### Opportunities

- ◆ Much of the region has convenient access to state highways and to railroads
- ◆ Link transportation options
- ◆ Collaboration and shared funding
- ◆ Implement or develop Complete Street policies and strategies
- ◆ Increase access to public transportation and rural transit
- ◆ Accommodate and target a larger segment of the population (older adults, mentally and physically challenged)



## **Community Facilities**

### **Issues**

- ◆ Governments lack funds to replace or repair aging infrastructure
- ◆ Limited recreation facilities
- ◆ Inadequate public facility capacity to support significant new development
- ◆ Additional after-school programs needed
- ◆ Cost of providing public services and facilities for new development typically exceeds the revenue from these developments
- ◆ Lack of capital to fund public services (animal control, police protection, fire protection etc.)
- ◆ Potable water and sanitary sewer systems in need of repair/replacement
- ◆ Need for additional recycling centers
- ◆ Low revenue streams from the tax base and low utility fees make it difficult for governments to balance their budgets

### **Opportunities**

- ◆ Ample groundwater resources
- ◆ Minimize replication of services
- ◆ Presence of regional medical centers
- ◆ Develop and upgrade aging infrastructure
- ◆ Collaboration and sharing of services and facilities
- ◆ Increase services for senior and the disabled
- ◆ Create more green space/open space/parks
- ◆ Develop community pride and enthusiasm
- ◆ Review zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations
- ◆ Develop and conduct preventative maintenance programs

## **Intergovernmental Coordination**

### **Issues**

- ◆ Lack of communication between local governments, boards, and authorities
- ◆ Lack of new ideas in current leadership
- ◆ There is little regional coordination and cooperation

### **Opportunities**

- ◆ Improve regional collaboration
- ◆ Improve service delivery
- ◆ Strengthening intergovernmental relations
- ◆ Share power and resources
- ◆ Identify and assess what can be coordinated

## **Natural and Cultural Resources**

### **Issues**

- ◆ Limited public access to natural resources
- ◆ Limited public awareness of natural and cultural resources and their significance
- ◆ Farmland, rural scenery and environmentally sensitive areas are disappearing in areas of rapid development
- ◆ Inadequate protection of rivers, lakes, ponds, streams, and aquifers
- ◆ Allowing development in floodplains
- ◆ Septic tanks in groundwater recharge areas

### **Opportunities**

- ◆ Multiple Prime Farmland (as designated by the United States Department of Agriculture) areas in the region
- ◆ Abundant forest, farmland and rural scenery

## Economic Development

### Issues

- ◆ Low educational attainment
- ◆ High property crime rates
- ◆ Economic development efforts favor new development over redevelopment
- ◆ Business retention is not active, successful or is underfunded
- ◆ High poverty levels
- ◆ Lack of job diversification
- ◆ Few skilled workers and jobs for skilled workers
- ◆ Few amenities to attract new businesses
- ◆ Lack of Interstate highways in the region
- ◆ Too few commercial airports in the region

### Opportunities

- ◆ Higher education options
- ◆ Ample water resources
- ◆ Competitive utility rates
- ◆ Entrepreneurship
- ◆ Support small business growth and development
- ◆ Develop critical infrastructure
- ◆ Develop human capital
- ◆ Attract new business or industry

## Land Use

### Issues

- ◆ Differing opinions on the need for zoning and land-use ordinances
- ◆ Lack of a sidewalk requirement for new development and no connectivity requirement for sidewalks
- ◆ Many zoning ordinances are outdated
- ◆ Need for design guidance for new development throughout the region
- ◆ Large acreage plantations
- ◆ Solar Farms
- ◆ Poultry Houses

### Opportunities

- ◆ Develop attractive subdivisions
- ◆ Review and update zoning ordinances and subdivision regulations
- ◆ Preservation of natural areas



First Mate

Photo submitted by Instagram User: MK\_Walton21

- ◆ Protection of natural resources

## 6. Implementation Program

The best plans are nothing but good ideas or thoughts if they are not implemented. All plans involve change and moving or transforming from something familiar to something new. Our region is constantly changing and a program of implementation is vital to any plan or project. Even changing requires planning. The Regional Agenda provides important information that can give us insight on how to work together to achieve successful outcomes.

The Implementation program describes how to achieve the regional vision and how to addressing the identified regional issues and opportunities. It identifies specific measures to be undertaken by the regional leaders to implement the plan and provides guidance to developers, local governments, and other public agencies to help achieve the Regional Vision.

### Guiding Principles

Guiding principles are policies that provide guidance and direction to regional leaders for making decisions consistent with achieving the regional vision or addressing regional issues and opportunities. Principles give us direction much like a map or Global Positioning System (GPS). They both can provide direction, if we follow them. The same is true for guiding principles. Local leaders must allow decisions to be made with these principles in the forefront of the decision making process. The Regional Agenda is a tool that can encourage the use of “best practices” and will give leaders insight on where and how growth and development will occur.

### Housing Guiding Principles

#### Housing

- H1 Expand state and local funding for affordable housing preservation and production, including housing trust funds.
- H2 Develop local strategies for de-concentrating public and assisted housing.
- H3 Improve and expand services for residents of particular projects, including work readiness, job training, and job retention services.
- H4 Participate in the implementation of local public housing demolition and redevelopment projects so they enhance the well-being of current and future residents.
- H5 Support state and local initiatives that make low-wage workers better able to afford housing, including minimum wage laws and supplemental earned income tax credits.
- H6 Create, adopt, and regularly update an affordable housing strategy that examines the tools and mechanisms to facilitate affordable housing. The strategy should be developed in partnership with local citizens and developers, and should be implemented and monitored.
- H7 Promote a wide range of housing choices, and variety of dwelling types in all neighborhoods.
- H8 Allow mother-in-law suits by right.

- H9 Develop in areas already served by municipal or regional infrastructure.
- H10 Update zoning ordinances to allow mixed uses where appropriate.
- H11 Adequately fund code enforcement for local governments
- H12 Implement design standards for manufactured housing.
- H13 Tax manufactured housing as real estate where appropriate.
- H14 Utilize federal and state rehabilitation programs, loans or grants assistance programs for maintenance assistance, home equity conversion mortgage programs, shared housing programs and smaller affordable low and moderate income housing units to meet housing challenges.

## Transportation

- T1 Locate new development in already developed areas, so that activities are close together. The effect will be to reduce average trip distances, and encourage walking, cycling and transit travel.
- T2 Concentrate activities where possible. Encourage pedestrian and transit travel by creating “nodes” of high-density, mixed development that are linked by convenient transit service. Concentrate commercial activities in these areas. Retain strong downtowns and central business districts.
- T3 Encourage shared parking.
- T4 Create a network of well-connected streets and paths, with short blocks and minimal cul-de-sacs. Keep streets as narrow as possible, particularly in residential areas and commercial centers. Use traffic management and traffic calming measures to minimize vehicle impacts rather than dead-ends and cul-de-sacs.
- T5 Improve sidewalks, paths, crosswalks, protection from fast vehicular traffic, and provide street amenities (trees, awnings, benches, pedestrian-oriented lighting, etc.). Improve connections for non-motorized travel, such as trails that link dead-end streets.
- T6 Provide traffic calming and other measures that lower automobile speeds which improves conditions for walking, bicycling and transit in residential areas.
- T7 Participate in and support the Transportation Investment Act.
- T8 Participate in and support the regional transit system.
- T9 Identify potential transportation programs to meet public transportation needs.



## **Community Facilities**

- C1 Identify and pursue infrastructure and expansion needed to support future demands.
- C2 Regularly update comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances (if applicable).
- C3 Regularly update Hazard Mitigation Plans to help ensure the protection of public health and safety.
- C4 Identify and secure funding for infrastructure improvement projects.
- C5 Ensure that utility rates adequately cover maintenance and replacement needs by service providers.
- C6 Maintain, upgrade, or expand existing facilities to support and encourage growth in desired areas.
- C7 Develop recreation plans.
- C8 Support after-school youth programs.
- C9 Add additional recycling centers.

## **Intergovernmental Coordination**

- I1 Regularly update of the Service Delivery Strategy to help ensure the efficient delivery of services.
- I2 Share information between local governments for greater efficiency.
- I3 Train local government officials through opportunities offered by the Carl Vinson Institute, Georgia Municipal Association, Association County Commissioners of Georgia or others to enhance their leadership abilities.

## **Economic Development**

- E1 Facilitate communication between businesses, public agencies, residents and economic development entities to create an environment that supports retention and expansion of industry.
- E2 Promote the importance of agriculture to the local economy and the maintenance of farming as a viable industry.
- E3 Support local economic and workforce development entities.
- E4 Periodically review the strategies outlined in the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).
- E5 Support and promote Chambers of Commerce activities.
- E6 Seek regional program grants or other resources that could be utilized for business expansion, infrastructure, etc., needed to develop the region.
- E7 Develop and implement a variety of strategies to make the region attractive to retirees.
- E8 Participate in Quick Start, Georgia Work Ready, and other training programs. 43.

## **Land Use**

- L1 Adopt appropriate Part V. environmental ordinances
- L2 Soil erosion, sedimentation and pollution control measures and practices shall conform to the minimum requirements outlined by the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Service.
- L3 Regularly update of the comprehensive plan and zoning ordinances (if applicable).
- L4 Require sidewalk connectivity in new development.
- L5 Encourage and support innovative design practices that preserve open space.
- L6 Promote mixed use development and redevelopment.
- L7 Development design guidelines and make available to developers. These guidelines in some cases should be mandatory.

## **Natural and Cultural Resources**

- N1 Follow Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) to protect streams and lakes.
- N2 Adopt appropriate Part V. Environmental ordinances.
- N3 Ensure soil erosion, sedimentation and pollution control measures and practices conform to the minimum requirements outlined by the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Service should be promoted.
- N4 Require parks and open space requirements in new developments.
- N5 Preserve historic and cultural sites
- N6 Work with local planning commissions, the Southwest Georgia Historic Preservation Advisory Committee, Georgia Trust, SHPO, and private property owners to designate historic properties and scenic byways.
- N7 Promote Adopt-A-Stream activities on all streams not meeting water quality standards.
- N8 Support and promote funding for the study of the region's surface and groundwater resources.
- N9 Participate in the National flood Insurance Program.
- N10 Work with GEMA in the development of Hazard Mitigation Plans.





# 7. Performance Standards

Minimum Standards are activities local governments must undertake for consistency with the Regional Plan. The intent is to ensure a consistent and predictable basic level of local requirements across the region. All local governments in the region will be expected to attain the Minimum Standard or risk losing Qualified Local Government (QLG) status.

Jurisdictions are separated into two tiers with a corresponding set of Minimum Standards. Tier 1 jurisdictions are city governments with fewer than 1,000 residents, and county governments with fewer than 10,000 residents. Tier 2 jurisdictions include city governments with 1,000 resident or greater, and county governments with 10,000 residents or greater.

## Minimum Standards

### **Minimum Standards for Tier 1 Governments:**

The following activities must be met to achieve the Minimum Standard for Tier 1 governments:

1. Our clerk is certified.
2. Our newly elected officials attend required training.
3. We do not permit development in areas not identified in the comprehensive plan's future development map.
4. We update our service delivery strategy (SDS) as required by state law, and have written agreements for these services that are on file and available for public review.
5. We have and enforce a public nuisance ordinance to control nuisances such as loud noises, stagnant water, abandoned vehicles, the accumulation of junk, excessively tall weeds and grass, etc.
6. As required under DCA's rules, we have an approved Comprehensive Plan.
7. As required by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA) we have an approved hazard mitigation plan.
8. We may be reached via email, and we have the ability to send and receive attachments.
9. We have a unified code of ordinances, so that all ordinances and resolutions that have the effect of law are contained in one document.

### **Minimum Standards for Tier 2 Governments:**

All of the Performance Standards for Tier 1 Governments, plus the following:

1. We adopted the appropriate DNR Part V. Environmental Planning Criteria (Part Two of DCA's Alternative to Zoning Model Ordinance). Includes Protection of Groundwater Recharge Areas, Wetlands Protection, water supply watershed protection and River Corridor Protection.
2. We adopted administrative procedures to enforce the state minimum standard building codes (Building, Residential, Fire, Plumbing, Mechanical, Fuel Gas, Electric and Energy Conservation).
3. We have subdivision regulations.

# Excellence Standard

## Requirements:

To achieve the Excellence Standard, local governments must already have in place at least two standards from each of the seven areas (Community Facilities, Intergovernmental Coordination, Natural and Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Housing, Land Use and Transportation). To maintain this status, one standard from any of the seven (7) areas must be implemented each year or the Excellence Standard designation will be lost.

Performance Standards included in the Standards of Excellence:

## Excellence Standards:

### Community Facilities

1. We are a Water First Community.
2. We require connection to public water and sewer systems for new construction where they are available, and at the natural time of replacement when septic systems fail.
3. We have water and sewer revenues that adequately cover the maintenance and operation of the systems (see EPA's Environmental Finance Center).
4. Our police, fire fighters and paramedics are all certified.
5. Our gas operators, landfill operators, wastewater operators are all certified
6. Our downtown development directors (board members) are all certified.
1. We have a written maintenance and replacement plan for infrastructure (water, sewer, electric, etc.).
8. We have an adopted utility expansion plan.
9. We have a written and adopted recreation plan.
10. We have a searchable up-to-date inventory of private wells and septic systems in our jurisdiction.
11. We have a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for improving public facilities.
12. We make maintenance of existing infrastructure a priority before extending new infrastructure into additional areas.
13. In some cases, we allow manufactured housing to be taxed as real estate and not as personal property.
14. We operate our utilities as enterprise funds.

## Intergovernmental Coordination

15. We are a Plan First Community.
16. Our department heads actively review the Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program (CWP) at least quarterly.
17. We plan and meet with local governments outside our county at least quarterly.
18. We have a combined zoning ordinance.
19. We share a code enforcement officer with another municipality/county.
20. We have one or more combined department for the administration of public services (fire, public work, water system).
21. We have a website.
22. We actively support a mentoring or leadership program such as 4-H or F.F.A., etc.
23. We have a mutual aid agreement with another local government.

## Natural and Cultural Resources

24. We organize or participate in a stream clean-up program such as Adopt-A-Stream or Rivers Alive.
25. We have a litter prevention ordinance.
26. We have a locally designated historic district and an active historic preservation commission.
27. We are a certified local government under the Georgia Historic Preservation Division.
28. We have National Register listed properties or districts.
29. We have and enforce a tree ordinance.
30. We have a "pay per throw" (unit-based or variable rate structure) structure for solid waste disposal so households are charged according to the amount they dispose of.
31. We have adopted and enforce design guidelines for new construction.
32. We provide incentives for green subdivision design, such as conservation or cluster subdivisions.
33. We require agricultural buffers where non-agricultural land abuts agricultural land.
34. We have an area-specific plan (such as a downtown development plan) to address a specific part of our jurisdiction.
35. We have an environmental resource inventory that maps the community's environmentally sensitive areas (such as floodplains, wetlands, significant stands of old growth trees, etc. in order to make rational decisions about areas best suited to set aside as open space, or for areas of development.
36. We are a Keep Georgia Beautiful affiliate.
37. We offer or contract to provide curbside collection of solid waste.
38. We provide a staffed collection center for solid waste and recyclables.
39. We adopted one or more permissive codes (International Property Maintenance Code, or International Existing Building Code).

# Economic Development

41. We are a Work Ready Community (<http://workreadycommunities.org>).
42. We are an Entrepreneur Friendly Community.  
(Georgia Department of Economic Development Program)
43. We have a website with start-up business information.
44. Our ordinances are available on-line, such as with Muni-code.
45. We are actively involved with a chamber of commerce.
46. We have conducted a Business Retention and Expansion Process (BREP) Survey, or an Existing Industry Program (EIP) Survey in the last five years.
47. We have an Urban Redevelopment Plan.
48. We attend annual Economic Development Authority (EDA) or Georgia Academy training.
49. We have a written inventory of existing businesses.
50. We have a written inventory of sites available for commercial and manufacturing.
51. We are a Main Street Community or a Better Hometown Community.
52. We have an Enterprise Zone or similar program that offers incentives such as tax or fee exemptions to attract new business.
53. We have an Opportunity Zone (Georgia tax credit program) in our jurisdiction
54. We regularly conduct a Labor Market Information (LMI) Analysis to identify industry sectors best suited to a local community's available workforce, and what training might be required to attract potential employers.
55. We participate in multi-county economic development efforts.
56. We have a Neighborhood Watch program in our community to help prevent crime and vandalism.
57. We meet at least quarterly with an active Joint County Development Authority (JDA).
58. We have a unified development code (all our ordinances relating to development are in one place), to help streamline the development process.



# Housing

59. We have a written housing plan or strategy.
60. We have completed a housing inventory and/or housing assessment.
61. We have a written plan for the demolition of unsafe or abandoned properties.
62. We streamline the review process, or otherwise provide an incentives to developers when developments include affordable housing.
63. We have a housing trust fund to provide a stable source of revenue reserved solely for affordable homes.
64. We have tax exempt programs for mixed-income developments and low income home owners.
65. We are a Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) alumni or program participant.
66. Our zoning ordinance allows very small lot sizes (1/4 acre or smaller) for single-family houses.
67. We encourage mixed-income housing to attempt to ensure that developments contain some affordable housing.
68. Our zoning ordinance has an inclusionary provision that requires developers to make a percentage of housing units in new residential developments available to low and moderate-income households.

# Land Use

69. We have a zoning ordinance.
70. Our zoning ordinance allows one of the following: accessory housing units by right (mother-in-law suites, carriage houses, garage apartments, etc. mixed uses (such as allowing residential and commercial together in the same district) planned unit developments (PUDS).
71. Our zoning ordinance accommodates the reuse of closed, decommissioned or obsolete (greyfields) uses.
72. Our zoning ordinance includes manufactured home compatibility standards that ensures architectural compatibility of manufactured homes with adjacent single-family residences.
73. Our zoning ordinance has a floating or more permissive overlay zone to provide greater Flexibility.
74. Our zoning ordinance requires that new infill development is compatible with its neighborhood and maintains the harmony and character of existing areas.
75. We have green space requirements in our subdivision regulations.
76. We have a landscape and buffer requirement in our land use regulations.
77. We require sidewalks in new housing developments (subdivisions) over a certain size.
78. We have a process or procedure to allow construction on existing substandard lots.

79. We allow clustered subdivisions by right.
80. We have a designated code enforcement officer.
81. We require new construction to be at least three feet above FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) designated floodplains.
82. We participate in annual code enforcement training.
83. We have a legal sign ordinance.
84. We require our planning commissioners to attend training at least annually.
85. We have an annual meeting of the planning commission and elected officials.
86. We have an impact fee ordinance.
87. We encourage road connectivity between adjacent subdivisions for better traffic flow.
88. We have a geographic information system (GIS) that is available to the public and share with other local government entities such as fire, police department and public works.
89. We participate in Federal Emergency Management Agency's Community Rating System (CRS) program to reduce flood losses, to facilitate accurate insurance ratings and to promote the awareness of flood insurance.
90. We analyze the financial impacts of growth before allowing residential development (subdivisions) over a certain size.

## Transportation

91. We encourage traffic calming measures such as raised crosswalks, narrower traffic lanes, fewer lanes, on-street parking, bump-outs, pedestrian refuges, and landscaped medians, etc.
92. We have adopted a complete street policy that encourages the safe operation and design of streets for all users, regardless of age, ability or mode of transportation
93. We require connectivity between parking lots where appropriate.
94. We allow shared parking in commercial areas.
95. We participate in a public transit program.



"Carnival Girl"

Submitted by Instagram User: Christina X Marianda



# 8. Strategies and Regional Work Program to Implement the Regional Plan

It takes several partners to make a strategy work. The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission is just one partner in the implementation of the Regional Agenda. This section includes charts under each development heading with a brief description of the proposed activity, by which the activity will be completed and the estimated cost of completion and the funding source(s). These strategies are actions the RC and other regional actors will take to implement the Regional Plan.

The Regional Work Program (RWP) will be monitored by the Regional Commission (RC). The RC will assist local governments and other partners with the activities that must be carried out within the five year review period. They will do this by providing technical support and education as needed and recommended. The RC will also review and comment on activities included in the Regional Work Program.

The implementation measures belong to one of two categories:

### Planning and Coordination Activities

Will be performed by the Regional Commission to assist local governments and other regional actors to act consistently with the regional plan.

### Review Activities

Activities by other actors in the region that require review and comment by the Regional Commission. The findings from the review are advisory in nature.

## Acronyms Defined

AD - Addictive Diseases	HS Agencies- Human Service Agencies
BOS - Business Outreach Services	HTF - Housing Task Force
COC - Chamber of Commerce	ITOS - Information Technology Outreach Services
DCA- Georgia Department of Community Affairs	KAB - Keep America Beautiful
DCH - Department of Community Health	MH - Mental Health
DD - Developmental Disabilities	NESPAL - Nationally Environmentally Sound Production Agriculture Laboratory
DECD - Department of Economic and Community Development	NPO - Nonprofit Organization
DFACS - Department of Family and Children Services	NRCS - Natural Resources Conservation Services
DNR - Department of Natural Resources	PH - Public Health
EDA - Economic Development Authority	RAC - Regional Advisory Council
EPD - Environmental Protection Division	RC - Regional Commission
Ext Service - Extension Service	RPN - Regional Partners Network
FC - Family Connection	SOWEGACAC - Southwest Georgia Community Action Council
Flint River S & WCD - Flint River Soil and Water Conservation District	SWGATA - Southwest Georgia Tourism Association
GDOT PAC - Georgia Department of Transportation Planning Advisory Committee	TMDL – Total Daily Maximum Load
GEFA - Georgia Environmental Finance Authority	UGA - University of Georgia
Golden Triangle RC & D - Golden Triangle Research Conservation and Development	USDA - United States Department of Agriculture
HPAC - Historic Preservation Advisory Council	USGS - United States Geological Survey
HPD - Historic Preservation Division	

## **9. Southwest Georgia Report of Accomplishments 2016-2020**

Housing									
Activity	Category (Planning or Review)	Timeframe	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues & Opportunities Addressed	Status	
Provide Planning and technical assistance to the Housing Task Force, existing community development organizations and local governments to develop an affordable housing strategy through monthly meetings.	Planning	2016-2020	HTF, RC,	\$5,000	N/A	H6	H5, H7, H9	Underway - Completion Date 2021	
Host regional housing conference/submit targeting local governments, developers and nonprofits which highlights best practices that encourage collaborative partnerships that increase the supply of affordable housing	Planning	2016-2020	HTF, RC,	\$5,000	DCA contract, Agency budgets, sponsorship	H1, H8, H9, H10, H11, H12, H13	H5, H11, H7	Complete	
Work with Credit Counseling agencies, nonprofits, and community based organizations to host, coordinate workshops that educate first-time homebuyers on barriers to homeownership and provide available housing resources.	Planning	2016-2020	RC, HTF, FC	\$4,000	RC, DCA, Grants, Local Banks	H2	H2, H5	Complete	
Utilize federal and state rehabilitation programs, loans or grants assistance programs for maintenance assistance, mortgage programs, shared housing programs and smaller affordable low and moderate income housing units to meet housing challenges.	Planning	2016-2020	RC, local governments, USDA, SOWEGA CAC	Dependent upon project	CDBG, CHIP, local governments	H1	H2, H3	Underway - Completion Date 2021	
Explore the feasibility of a Regional Land Bank to improve and increase housing development and increase economic development.	Planning	2016-2020	RC	\$5,000	Agency budgets	H1	H8, H11	Underway - Completion Date 2021	
Work with the Regional Collaborative, RPN and other nonprofits to provide technical assistance to resolve housing issues through a region wide community event.	Planning	2016-2020	RC, RPN, HTF,	\$2,000	DCA contract, Agency budgets	H6, H7, H14	H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H11	Underway - Completion Date 2021	
Transportation									
Activity	Category (Planning or Review)	Timeframe	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues & Opportunities Addressed	Status	
Work with local governments to update regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and address this element in local comprehensive plans.	Planning	2016-2020	RC,	\$20,000	RC Dues, Fee For Service, DCA Contracts, GDOT Planning	T4, T5	T2, T3	Underway - Completion Date 2021	

Provide technical assistance to support regional transportation planning.	Planning	2016-2020	RC, Local Governments	\$2,000	GDOT and DCA Contracts, RC Dues	T7, T8, T9	T3, T4, T6	Underway - Completion Date 2021
Work with local governments and other stakeholders to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the coordinated transit program to provide increased access to medical/healthcare services and employment work sites.	Planning	2016-2020	RC	Unknown	DCH/DOT/DCA	T8	T3, T4	Completion Date 2021
Continue to partner and support the Historic Dixie Highway Scenic Byway Committee.	Planning	2016-2020	RC, Local Governments	\$2,000	GDOT Planning, HPD	T9	T7	Completed
<b>Community Facilities</b>								
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Category (Planning or Review)</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Funding Source(s)</b>	<b>Guiding Principles Addressed</b>	<b>Issues &amp; Opportunities Addressed</b>	<b>Status</b>
Provide technical assistance in Capital Improvement Planning and budgeting for local government officials	Planning	2016-2020	RC,	\$2,000	RC, DCA	C1, C2, C3, C5, C7	C1, C6	Underway - Completion Date 2021
Provide technical assistance to local governments in the provision of general governmental services, operations and facilities.	Planning	2016-2020	RC, State Agencies, Colleges	Varies	RC Dues, Fees,	C1, C2, C3, C5, C5	C5,C6,C7	Postponed - low priority
Provide planning and technical assistance to regional human service agencies through RPN to develop human infrastructure and highlighting best practices for duplication.	Planning	2016-2020	RC, RPN, CLCP, Human Services Agencies	\$5,000	RC fees, DCA Contract, Grants	C1, C7, C8	C2, C4	Completed
<b>Intergovernmental Coordination</b>								
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Category (Planning or Review)</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Funding Source(s)</b>	<b>Guiding Principles Addressed</b>	<b>Issues &amp; Opportunities Addressed</b>	
Work with governments to develop a method for the sharing of information between local governments for greater efficiency.	Planning	2016-2020	Local Governments	Varies	RC Dues	11, 12	11, 13, 14	Postponed - low priority
Work with local government officials to identify training opportunities offered by Carl Vinson, Georgia Municipal Association, Association of County Commissioners of Georgia to enhance leadership skills and meet achieve/meet performance standards.	Planning	2016-2020	Local Governments	None	N/A	13	11, 12, 13	Postponed - low priority

Economic Development									
Activity	Category (Planning or Review)	Timeframe	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues & Opportunities Addressed	Status	
Provide technical assistance in the preparation of Employment Incentives Program (EIP), Small Business Administration (SBA) 504 Loan, Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) and other program applications for business expansion or start up.	Planning	2016-2020	RC	\$75,000	EDA	E1, E3	E4	Underway - Completion Date 2021	
Promote the use of Economic Development Administration (EDA) planning studies, which identify compatible industrial mixes.	Planning	2016-2020	SWGACOC, RC, Dec	\$500	EDA	E3	E4, E8	Underway - Completion Date 2021	
Provide technical assistance and preparation of One Georgia, EIP and EDA grant applications	Planning	2016-2020	RC	\$1,500	EDA	E3, E7	E4, E6, E9	Underway - Completion Date 2021	
Promote the use of Georgia Tech's Local Government Fiscal Impact Analysis (LOCI) and Univ. of Ga.'s computer models for cost benefit analysis of potential business ventures.	Planning	2016-2020	RC, DEcD	\$500	EDA, agency budgets	E1	E9	No longer being considered - no demand from businesses	
Increase the capability of GIS as a tool for economic developers in the Region.	Planning	2016-2020	RC, ITOS	\$35,000	Dues, Contracts	E3	E7, E9	Underway - Completion Date 2021	
Provide technical assistance in developing revitalization plans, regulations and programs.	Planning	2016-2020	RC, Forestry Comm.	\$3,000 yr.	HPD Contract	E5	E3, E9	Underway - Completion Date 2021	
Provide resources through an annual conference for high school students that encourages leadership and supports economic development.	Planning	2016-2020	RC, DOL, Albany Tech, other agencies	\$5,000	DCA Contract, Grants and Sponsorship	E3, E8	E1, E7, E9	Completed	
Collaborate with state agencies to provide training and technical assistance to the public and private agencies to increase capacity and create an economic vision and plan	Planning	2016-2020	RC; DEcD, Local Governments	Varies	RC fees, DCA Contract, Grants	E1, E3	E1, E7, E9	Completed	
Land Use									
Activity	Category (Planning or Review)	Timeframe	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source (s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues & Opportunities Addressed	Status	
Review local land use plans to identify potential land use conflicts and provide technical assistance in resolving the issues of incompatible uses or zoning districts when requested.	Review	2016-2020	RC	\$5,000	DCA, Dues, Quality Growth Program	L3	L3	Underway - Completion Date 2021	

Work with individual planning commissions to educate members on the relationship between planning and zoning.	Planning	2016-2020	RC	None	None	L5, L6	L1, L4	Underway - Completion Date 2021
<b>Natural and Cultural Resources</b>								
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Category (Planning or Review)</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Funding Source(s)</b>	<b>Guiding Principles Addressed</b>	<b>Issues &amp; Opportunities Addressed</b>	<b>Status</b>
Provide technical assistance in the nomination of historic structures to the National Register.	Planning	2016-2020	RC	\$5,000	HPD Contract	R5, R6	R3	Underway - Completion Date 2021
Assist local governments in creating and following preservation plans for significant historic resources within their jurisdiction.	Planning	2016-2020	RC	\$5,000	DCA, HPD Dues, Fees	R5, R6	R3	Underway - Completion Date 2021



# **10. Southwest Georgia Regional Work Program 2017-2021**

# Southwest Georgia Regional Work Program 2017-2021

Housing							
Activity	Category (Planning or Review)	Timeframe	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues & Opportunities Addressed
Provide Planning and technical assistance to the Housing Task Force, existing community development organizations and local governments to develop an affordable housing and rehabilitation strategy through monthly meetings.	Planning	2017-2021	HTF/RC	\$5,000	Grants/DCA	H1, H6, H14	Housing
Host regional housing fair or summit targeting homeowners, potential homeowners which highlights resources for homeownership and rehabilitation in an effort to preserve housing and ultimately increase the supply of affordable housing	Planning	2017-2021	HTF, RC,	\$5,000	DCA contract, Agency budgets, sponsorship	H1, H5, H6, H7, H14	Housing
Provide education to local government on federal and state rehabilitation programs, loans or grants assistance programs for maintenance assistance, mortgage programs, shared housing programs and smaller affordable low and moderate income housing units to meet housing challenges.	Planning	2017-2021	RC, local governments, USDA, SOWEGA CAC	Dependent upon project	CDBG, CHIP, local governments	H14	Housing
Work with communities to explore the feasibility of a Regional Land Bank to improve and increase housing development and increase economic development.	Planning	2017-2021	RC	\$5,000	Agency budgets	H4, H7, H11	Housing
Work with RPN and other nonprofits to provide technical assistance to build capacity and resolve housing issues through a region wide community event.	Planning	2017-2021	RC, RPN, HTF,	\$2,000	DCA contract, Agency budgets	H6, H14	Housing
Work with local communities to educate local builders and contractors on state housing programs/grants and the state certification process.	Planning	2017-2021	RC, RPN, HTF,	\$2,000	DCA Contract, Agency budgets, Sponsorship	H6, H7	Housing

Work with local communities and other state agencies in disaster efforts by distributing housing information and resources.	Planning	2017-2021	RC, RPN, HTF	\$3,000	DCA Contract, Agency Budget	C3, C4, H14	Housing
<b>Transportation</b>							
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Category (Planning or Review)</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Funding Source(s)</b>	<b>Guiding Principles Addressed</b>	<b>Issues &amp; Opportunities Addressed</b>
Work with local governments to update regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan and address this element in local comprehensive plans.	Planning	2017-2021	RC,	\$20,000	RC Dues; Fee For Service, DCA Contracts, GDOT Planning	T5, T6, T7, T9	Transportation
Provide technical assistance to support regional transportation planning.	Planning	2017-2021	RC, Local Governments	\$2,000	GDOT and, DCA Contracts, RC Dues	T1 through T9	Transportation
Work with local governments and other stakeholders to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the coordinated transit program to provide increased access to medical/healthcare services and employment work sites.	Planning	2017-2021	RC	Unknown	DCH/DOT/DCA	T1, T2, T7, T8	Transportation
<b>Community Facilities</b>							
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Category (Planning or Review)</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Responsible Party</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Funding Source(s)</b>	<b>Guiding Principles Addressed</b>	<b>Issues &amp; Opportunities Addressed</b>
Provide technical assistance in Capital Improvement Planning and budgeting for local government officials	Planning	2017-2021	RC,	\$2,000	RC, DCA	C1, C4	Community Facilities
Provide technical assistance to local governments, community based organizations and nonprofits in the provision of general human services and health care disparities issues	Planning	2017-2021	Local Governments	\$5,000	General Funds, Grants, RC Dues	C1, C4, C7, C8	Community Facilities
Provide technical assistance to local governments in the provision of general governmental services, operations and facilities.	Planning	2017-2021	RC, State Agencies, Colleges	Varies	RC Dues, Fees,	C1 through C9	Community Facilities

## Intergovernmental Coordination

Activity	Category (Planning or Review)	Timeframe	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues & Opportunities Addressed
Work with governments to develop a method for the sharing of information between local governments for greater efficiency.	Planning	2017-2021	Local Governments	Varies	RC Dues	11, 12	Intergovernmental Coordination
Work with local government officials to identify training opportunities offered by Carl Vinson, Georgia Municipal Association, Association of County Commissioners of Georgia to enhance leadership skills and meet achieve/meet performance standards.	Planning	2017-2021	Local Governments	\$3,000	RC Dues	13	Intergovernmental Coordination
Work with local governments as they collaborate with nonprofits, businesses, healthcare agencies, and local school systems in service provision and planning for growth and development.	Planning	2017-2021	Local Governments, RC, Nonprofits, Schools, Businesses	\$4,000	RC Dues, General Funds, Grants	11, 12	Intergovernmental Coordination

## Economic Development

Activity	Category (Planning or Review)	Timeframe	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues & Opportunities Addressed
Provide technical assistance in the preparation of Employment Incentives Program (EIP), Small Business Administration (SBA) 504 Loan, Revolving Loan Fund (RLF) and other program applications for business expansion or start up.	Planning	2017-2021	RC	\$75,000	EDA	E1 through E8	Economic Development

Conduct Economic Development Administration (EDA) planning studies, which identify compatible industrial mixes.	Planning	2017-2021	SWGA COC, RC, Dec	\$500	EDA	E3, E4, E6	Economic Development
Provide technical assistance and preparation of One Georgia, EIP and EDA grant applications	Planning	2017-2021	RC	\$1,500	EDA	E6	Economic Development
Provide education to local governments to increase the capability of GIS as a tool for economic development in the Region.	Planning	2017-2021	RC, ITOS	\$35,000	Dues, Contracts	E1, E3, E4, E6	Economic Development
Provide technical assistance in developing revitalization plans, regulations and programs.	Planning	2017-2021	RC, Forestry Comm.	\$3,000 yr.	HPD Contract	E1, E2, E3, E7	Economic Development
Conduct a regional event targeting high school students that builds capacity for leadership opportunities and supports job training and entrepreneurship opportunities for youth.	Planning	2017-2021	RC, DOL, Albany Tech, other agencies	\$5,000	DCA Contract, Grants and Sponsorship	E1, E3, E5	Economic Development
Provide education and technical assistance to promote Agritourism as an economic stimulator .	Planning	2017-2021	RC, USDA, SBA, Farming Groups	\$7,000	Grants, EDA Planning Contract	E2, E3, E6	Economic Development

## Land Use

Activity	Category (Planning or Review)	Timeframe	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues & Opportunities Addressed
Review local land use plans to identify potential land use conflicts and provide technical assistance in resolving the issues of incompatible uses or zoning districts when requested.	Review	2017-2021	RC	\$5,000	DCA, Dues, Quality Growth Program	L1 through L7	Land Use
Work with individual planning commissions to educate members on the relationship between planning and zoning.	Planning	2017-2021	RC	None	None	L3	Land Use

## Natural and Cultural Resources

Activity	Category (Planning or Review)	Timeframe	Responsible Party	Estimated Cost	Funding Source(s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues & Opportunities Addressed
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Provide technical assistance in the nomination of historic structures to the National Register.	Planning	2017-2021	RC	\$5,000	HPD Contract	N1, N2, N3, N5, N6	Natural & Cultural Resources
Assist local governments in creating and following preservation plans for significant historic resources within their jurisdiction.	Planning	2017-2021	RC	\$5,000	DCA, HPD Dues, Fees	N1, N2, N3, N5, N6	Natural & Cultural Resources



# 11. Evaluation and Monitoring

According to the Georgia Regional Planning requirements the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission must ensure that the Regional Agenda is successfully implemented and accomplishing the desired results.

The RC will conduct quality growth assessments to determine the effectiveness of the implementation of the performance standards described in the Regional Agenda. Each local government will have a quality growth effectiveness assessment conducted no less than once every two years during the Plan Implementation Assessment Meetings.

The RC presents the following procedures as one way to conduct monitoring and evaluation. These procedures are based on the planning requirements as described in the Regional Agenda.

The RC will provide the Georgia Department of Community Affairs with an annual monitoring report as a part of the annual update of the Regional Work Program that will include: a description and results of the monitoring activities and evaluation procedures undertaken over the course of the previous year and identification of any modifications or amendments needed to enhance the Plan's effectiveness resulting from the evaluation and monitoring findings.

RC staff will review the performance standards, Comprehensive Plan and other mandated items under the Georgia Planning Act. At that time, local governments will be informed about the minimum and excellence standards requirements. Local governments may at any time elect to pursue the excellence standards, but will be informed that all governments must meet the minimum standards or may risk losing their Qualified Local Government (QLG) status.

RC staff has developed a checklist that includes the performance standards and acceptable evidence that the standard has been met. The checklist will be used to prepare a "snap shot" of the local programs, and the finding will serve as documentation that the review process was held. In addition, RC staff has developed a checklist of other topics that will be discussed during the assessment (See Appendix).

At the conclusion of the review, a copy of the performance standards checklist will be provided to the local government and a copy available to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (upon request). The checklist will include the performance standards, a description of what is required to meet the minimum or excellence standard, the review strategy, the compliance standard, whether or not the standard was met, and reason standard was not met, if applicable. An additional checklist will include other planning topics that were discussed and require signatures of those present. This will also serve as additional documentation. Copies of both checklists are included in the appendix.

For governments that are unable to meet the minimum performance standard requirement, RC staff will provide technical support and make recommendations on any training necessary to complete by specific deadlines.

RC staff will prepare a letter concerning its findings and recommendations for local government to ensure follow-up and compliance with performance standards.

As a part of the annual update of the Regional Work Program, any changes and developments in the region will be reported at that time. This information will be forwarded to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs as part of the annual update of the Regional Work Program. Local governments will be encouraged to share the outcome of the Plan Implementation meetings on its local website or through the local newspaper or media.

Those local governments meeting the excellence standards will be recognized locally and regionally in monthly newsletters and other RC publications.

## 12. Glossary

### **Accessory Housing Units**

Garage apartments, "granny flats," "in-law apartments," "carriage houses," or similar secondary housing units located on the same lot with a single family residence. Encouraging accessory housing units is one means to bring affordable housing into all neighborhoods of the community.

### **Adopt-A-Stream**

Georgia Adopt-A-Stream (AAS) is housed in the Non-Point Source Program in the Water Protection Branch of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division. The program is funded by a Section 319(h) Grant. The goals of Georgia Adopt-A-Stream are to (1) increase public awareness of the State's nonpoint source pollution and water quality issues, (2) provide citizens with the tools and training to evaluate and protect their local waterways, (3) encourage partnerships between citizens and their local government, and (4) collect quality baseline water quality data.

### **Agricultural Buffers**

To minimize future potential conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses and to protect public health, safety, and general welfare, all new non-agricultural development adjacent to designated agricultural land shall be required to provide an agricultural buffer.

### **Annual Business resource Fair**

An event held to share business resource information in effort to inform both existing businesses and potential start-up businesses of resources that are available.

### **Area-Specific Plan**

A plan used, such as a downtown development plan or a neighborhood redevelopment plan, to address a specific part of your jurisdiction.

### **Bike Plan**

A bike plan offers a blueprint for improving conditions for bicycling and establishes policies for further integrating bicycling into the existing transportation system.

### **Business Incubator**

A business incubator gives entrepreneurs in a particular location sufficient support to create viable and profitable companies. Incubators foster the growth of fledgling "home-grown" enterprises, and they have gained in popularity as an alternative to pursuing relocations.

## **Business Retention and Expansion Program (BREP)**

(see EIP)

## **Buy Local Campaign**

Typically organized by nonprofit networks of entrepreneurs, the idea is to convince consumers to spend their money at independent businesses in their own communities. The number of these campaigns has roughly doubled since 2005.

## **By-Right**

Those uses that are automatically allowed by the zoning code. They are allowed “as a matter of right,” and are therefore not subject to special review and approval by a local government.

## **Capital Improvement Program (CIP)**

A long-term program for developing or improving public facilities that brings predictability to the location and extent of future public facility expansions. Developers should respond by locating projects in areas where the community is planning for new development.

## **Certified Literate Community Program (CLCP)**

Created in 1990 by the Technical College System of Georgia (TCSG) and the Georgia Council on Adult Literacy (GCAL), CLCP asks a community to establish a non-profit collaborative to promote, support and enhance community literacy efforts locally. Communities participating in the program analyze community needs, create awareness of the needs, ensure that learning opportunities are offered and evaluate progress so that the majority of citizens needing to improve their skills do so within 10 years. A network is formed to coordinate business, church, volunteer, social service, local government and schools, media and other efforts in the community to reach, influence and support those who want to improve their education.

## **Certified Local Government**

Preservation partnership between local, state and national governments focused on promoting historic preservation at the grass roots level. The program is jointly administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) in each state, with each local community working through a certification process to become recognized as a Certified Local Government (CLG).

## **Chamber of Commerce**

A Chamber of Commerce is a voluntary organization to promote the community, civic, commercial, and industrial progress in a community.

## **Clustered Subdivisions**

Commercial, residential or mixed-use developments in which a significant portion of the site is set aside as undivided, permanently protected open space, while the buildings (houses, shops, etc.) are clustered on the remainder of the property.

## **Combined Planning Commission**

A planning commission that serves two or more local governments.

## **Combined Zoning Ordinance**

A zoning ordinance shared by two or more local governments.

## **Conservation Subdivisions**

Conservation subdivisions are residential or mixed-use developments in which a significant portion of the site is set aside as undivided, permanently protected open space, while houses are clustered on the remainder of the property. A Conservation Subdivision Ordinance authorizes the development of new conservation subdivisions on sites proposed by a developer, provided the development plans meet certain criteria specified in the ordinance.

## **Community Rating System (CRS)**

The National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) is a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements. As a result, flood insurance premium rates are discounted to reflect the reduced flood risk.

## **Comprehensive Plans**

The purpose of a Comprehensive Plan is to provide a framework that will involve all segments of the community in developing a vision for the community's future; generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of the community; engage the interest of citizens in implementing the plan; and provide a guide to everyday decision-making for use by local government officials and other community leaders.

## **DCA**

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) was created in 1977 to serve as an advocate for local governments. On July 1, 1996, the Governor and General Assembly merged the Georgia Housing and Finance Authority (GHFA) with the Department of Community Affairs. Today, DCA operates a host of state and federal grant programs; serves as the state's lead agency in housing finance and development; promulgates building codes to be adopted by local governments; provides comprehensive planning, technical and research assistance to local governments; and serves as the lead agency for the state's solid waste reduction efforts.

## **Density**

The number of dwellings or buildings per acre.

## **DNR Part V. Environmental Planning Criteria**

The Georgia Planning Act of 1989 encourages each local government in the state to develop a comprehensive plan to guide its activities over a 20-year planning horizon. In order to provide local governments with guidelines to use in preparing their comprehensive plans, the Act called for the Georgia Departments of Community Affairs and Natural Resources to develop a set of minimum requirements to be met in each local plan. These minimum requirements are known as the “Minimum Planning Standards.” The environmental planning criteria are the part of the Minimum Planning Standards that deals specifically with the protection of water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, river corridors, and mountains. 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 Corridors Protection Act.

## **Enterprise Fund**

In governmental accounting, fund that provides goods or services to the public for a fee that makes the entity self-supporting, much like a commercial enterprise. An example is a government-owned utility.

## **Entrepreneur Friendly Community**

The Georgia Department of Economic Development (GDEcD) provides a community-based program that helps create an entrepreneur environment, building entrepreneur and small business strategy into the community’s overall economic development strategies.

## **Enterprise Zone (EZ)**

Enterprise Zones encourage development in blighted neighborhoods through tax and regulatory relief to entrepreneurs and investors who launch businesses in the area. EZs are areas where companies can locate free of certain local, state, and federal taxes and restrictions.

## **Environmental Finance Center (EFC)**

The University of North Carolina’s EFC reaches local communities through the delivery of interactive applied training programs and technical assistance. The EFC sees one of its major roles as increasing the capacity of other organizations to address the financial aspects of environmental protection and service delivery. In addition to direct community outreach, the EFC works with decision makers to assess the effectiveness of environmental finance policies at a regional or state level, and to improve those policies as a way of supporting local efforts. Georgia water rate dashboard found at: <http://www.efc.unc.edu/RatesDashboards/GARatesDashboard5k.swf>



## **Environmental Resource Inventory**

Comprehensive mapping of the community's environmentally sensitive areas (such as floodplains or steep slopes) in order to make rational decisions about areas best suited to be set aside as open space. This should be the first step in crafting a local strategy for open space preservation.

## **Employment Incentive Program (EIP)**

An economic development financing mechanism that seeks to create employment and business opportunities for rural communities.

## **Existing Industry Program (EIP)**

An EIP focuses on supporting the specific businesses that already exist in a community. It also more broadly seeks to create the conditions that will encourage local business improvement, growth and competitiveness. A Business Retention and Expansion Program (BREP) is similar in some respects to an EIP.

## **Floating Zone**

In content, a floating zone is the same as a conventional zone. It describes the permitted uses, setback requirements, and other standards to be applied in the district. Unlike conventional zoning districts, however, the floating zone is not designated on the zoning map. Once enacted into law it "floats" over the community until, upon approval of an application, it is "brought down to earth" to be affixed to a particular parcel through an amendment to the zoning map. The floating zone allows for locating use types which cannot be anticipated but which the plan would like to provide for. For instance, a community may have an anti-industry policy and no industrial zone in its local ordinance. It may, however, be amenable to a high technology, low-impact industry under certain conditions. The floating zone allows this kind of control and flexibility.

## **4-H**

4-H is a youth organization administered by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), with the mission of "engaging youth to reach their fullest potential while advancing the field of youth development." The name represents four personal development areas of focus for the organization: head, heart, hands, and health.

## **Future Development Map/Future Land Use Map**

A component of the Comprehensive Plan Agenda that shows desired specific future land uses.

## **Future Farmers of America (FFA)**

The National FFA Organization is an American youth organization known as a Career and Technical Student Organization, based on middle and high school classes that promote and support agricultural education. The organization was founded in 1928 as Future Farmers of America, but in 1988 the name was changed to the National FFA Organization, now commonly referred to as simply FFA, to recognize that the organization is for those with diverse interests in the food, fiber and natural resource industries, encompassing science, business and technology in addition to production agriculture.

## **Geographic Information System (GIS)**

A GIS or geographic information system is a set of tools that captures, stores, analyzes, manages, and presents data that are linked to location(s). In the simplest terms, GIS is the merging of cartography, statistical analysis, and database technology, and may be used in remote sensing, land surveying, public utility management, natural resource management, precision agriculture, urban planning, emergency management, navigation, aerial video, and localized search engines. In a general sense, the term describes any information system that integrates stores, edits, analyzes, shares, and displays geographic information for informing decision making. GIS applications are tools that allow users to create interactive queries (user-created searches), analyze spatial information, edit data, maps, and present the results of all these operations.

## **Georgia Academy**

Started in 1993, the Georgia Academy's mission is to assist Georgia's leaders in their economic development efforts by providing an understanding of the critical processes, strategies and components involved in improving their local and regional economies and achieving economic success in today's global economy. The Academy is a 501(c) (3) non-profit organization, with a Board of Directors representing over 20 statewide economic development organizations.

## **Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA)**

GEMA's mission is to provide a comprehensive and aggressive all-hazards approach to homeland security initiatives, mitigation, preparedness, response, recovery and special events in order to protect life and property and prevent and/or reduce negative impacts of terrorism and natural disasters in Georgia.

## **Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH)**

The Georgia Initiative for Community Housing is a partnership of the University of Georgia Housing and Demographics Research Center, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and the Georgia Municipal Association. Implementation partners include Georgia Electric Membership Corporation (EMC) and the UGA Archway Partnership Program. The Initiative offers communities in Georgia a three-year program of collaboration and technical assistance in addressing their housing and neighborhood revitalization needs.

## **Georgia Water Stewardship Act**

A comprehensive proposal that will encourage water conservation, reduce wasteful loss and incentivize innovation in both increasing water supply and lessening demand. Many of the proposals in the Georgia Water Stewardship Act of 2010 are based on recommendations from the Governor's Water Contingency Task Force, which met in the fall and winter and featured more than 80 business, government and environmental leaders from around Georgia. The legislation also instructs eight different state agencies to look at local government and water provider grant and loan programs to develop incentive criteria that would encourage retrofit programs on existing construction. For example, a community could receive an interest rate discount for a Georgia Environmental Facilities Authority (GEFA) loan or be able to apply for Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) annually instead of every two years. These incentive programs could range from retrofitting water fixtures to installing drought resistant landscapes to using grey water and implementing conservation pricing.

## **Green Space Requirements**

The requirement that public or private land that would be set aside to provide relaxation or recreation to all residents within a specific subdivision. Green space may be used for active or passive activities. It may be an open field, or it may or may not have improvements such as benches, shade structures, playground equipment, or trails located within the boundaries of the property.

## **Green Subdivision Design**

A green development that can help communities preserve open space and natural areas in residential housing developments. By reformulating the approach to conventional subdivision design, a green subdivision might strategically concentrates home construction on the development site in order to protect sensitive and valuable open space, habitat, and other environmental resources for the purpose of: protected water quality, protected wildlife habitat, reduced infrastructure construction costs, reduced maintenance costs and reduced demand for publicly funded greenspace.

## **Greyfields**

Greyfield land is a term used to describe economically obsolescent, outdated, failing, and/or underutilized real estate assets or land. The term was coined in the early 2000s as a way to describe the sea of empty asphalt that often accompanied these sites. The term has historically been applied to formerly viable retail and commercial shopping sites (such as regional malls and strip centers) that suffer from lack of reinvestment and have been "outclassed" by larger, better designed, better anchored malls or shopping sites.

## **Growth Boundaries**

A growth boundary, is a regional boundary, set in an attempt to control urban sprawl by mandating that the area inside the boundary be used for higher density urban development and the area outside be used for lower density development. A growth boundary circumscribes an entire urbanized area and is used by local governments as a guide to zoning and land use decisions. If the area affected by the boundary includes multiple jurisdictions a special urban planning agency may be created by the state or regional government to manage the boundary.

## **Hazard Mitigation Plan**

Hazard mitigation plans form the foundation for a community's long-term strategy to reduce disaster losses and break the cycle of disaster damage, reconstruction, and repeated damage. The planning process is as important as the plan itself. It creates a framework for risk-based decision making to reduce damages to lives, property, and the economy from future disasters. Hazard mitigation is sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to people and their property from hazards.

## **Historic Preservation Commission**

A local historic preservation commission is often responsible for ensuring any new development or redevelopment within the Local Historic District is consistent with the locally adopted design guidelines and recommending historic properties for local historic designation.

## **Housing Inventory**

An inventory of existing housing stock and its condition in a community. The inventory can be used to create and enforce a minimum housing code, and the data can also be used to target funding sources in the future.

## **Housing Plan or Strategy**

In its broadest form, a housing strategy focuses on issues of housing supply, affordability, and quality to ensure that housing is available and affordable for families at all income levels. Some communities choose to take a comprehensive and strategic approach to developing a housing plan to assist a more specific population, such as the homeless, the elderly, or working families.

How-to-guide for starting a local business/small business start up guide/small business checklist

A guide designed to walk a new business owner through the key steps in starting a business to provide them with the essential necessary information.

## **Inclusionary Provision in Zoning Ordinance**

Inclusionary zoning refers to the wide array of zoning schemes that encourage developers to set aside a proportion of housing units in new projects for low- and moderate-income residents. The provisions may be either mandatory or optional, and may be adopted by a municipality, a county or statewide. When inclusionary zoning is optional, developers receive incentives for participation such as allowances to build denser and larger projects. The benefits from these allowances are intended to outweigh the costs of constructing the below-market rate units.

## **Impact Fee Ordinance**

A fee imposed on property developers by municipalities for the new infrastructure that must be built or increased due to new development.

## **Infill Development**

Development of vacant parcels of land in otherwise built out areas.

## **Infrastructure**

Facilities such as roads, water and sewer lines, schools, power plants and communication systems.

## **Joint County Development Authority**

An organization that seeks to diversify the economy, encourage business retention and expansion, to promote employment, by working with public and private sector representatives. Development authorities also serve as moderators between business and individual interests.

## **Keep Georgia Beautiful**

Created in 1978, Keep Georgia Beautiful became the first state affiliate of Keep America Beautiful. Housed in a state agency, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs to build and sustain community environmental activities and behaviors resulting in a more beautiful Georgia.

## **Labor Market Information (LMI) Analysis**

The Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) collects, analyzes, and publishes a wide array of information about the state's labor market. This information provides a snapshot of Georgia's economy, job market, businesses, and its workforce. Data on jobs and workers, including labor force, employment and unemployment, industrial growth, occupational trends, and wage rates, are increasingly important to remaining competitive in the global marketplace.

## **Land Bank**

Governmental or nongovernmental nonprofit entities that focus on the conversion of vacant, abandoned properties into productive use. Land bank issues long-term loans on real estate in return for mortgages.

## **Landscape and Buffer Requirement**

Required planting areas to mask unattractive land uses or to provide a visual and sound barrier between incompatible adjacent uses, increase aesthetic values, and protect water and quality of rivers and streams.

## **Litter Prevention Ordinance**

An ordinance that makes littering and litter illegal and imposes fines for those caught dumping trash on public or private property. It may also require business owners and operators to keep adjacent public areas such as sidewalks and alleys free of litter, require litter receptacles at locations frequented by the public; and allow for removal of litter by the county at the owner's expense in instances where the property owner is unwilling or unable to remove accumulations of litter.

## **Locally Designated Historic District**

A historic district is a group of buildings, properties or sites that have been designated by one of several entities on different levels as historically or architecturally significant. The local historic district offers, by far, the most legal protection for historic properties because most land use decisions are made at the local level. Local districts are generally administered by the county or municipal government.

## **Main Street Community**

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs' Office of Downtown Development (ODD) coordinates the Georgia Main Street and Better Hometown programs. These programs assist Georgia cities and neighborhoods in the development of their core commercial areas. Assistance provided by the Office of Downtown Development emphasizes community-based, self-help efforts grounded in the principles of professional, comprehensive management of core commercial districts.

## **Maintenance and Replacement Plan**

A plan that inventories, assesses and projects future infrastructure maintenance needs.

## **Manufactured Homes**

Manufactured housing (also known as prefabricated housing) is a type of housing unit that is largely assembled in factories and then transported to sites of use. Includes "trailers," prefabricated housing and other types of factory built housing.



## **Mixed-Income Housing**

Mixed-income housing offers benefits to residents, neighborhoods and owners. Financially and socially, mixed-income properties may prove to be a more sustainable approach to multifamily housing.

## **Mixed Uses**

Mixed-use development is the practice of allowing more than one type of use in a building or set of buildings. In planning zone terms, this can mean some combination of residential, commercial, industrial, office, institutional, or other land uses. The concept of "mixed-use" as a discrete zone is predicated on the relatively recent practice of single-use zoning wherein uses in all other parts of a community are widely separated by legislative mandate.

## **Multi-Unit Buildings**

Multi-unit buildings include duplexes, triplexes, apartments or any other residential building that contains more than one unit.

## **Muni-Code**

The Municipal Code Corporation codifies municipal laws and ordinances and publishing the material on the Internet.

## **Mutual Aid Agreement**

In emergency services, mutual aid is an agreement among emergency responders to lend assistance across jurisdictional boundaries. This may occur due to an emergency response that exceeds local resources, such as a disaster or a multiple-alarm fire. Mutual aid may be ad hoc, requested only when such an emergency occurs. It may also be a formal standing agreement for cooperative emergency management on a continuing basis, such as ensuring that resources are dispatched from the nearest fire station, regardless of which side of the jurisdictional boundary the incident is on.

## **National Register**

The National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) is the United States government's official list of districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects deemed worthy of preservation. Having a property on the National Register, or located within a National Register Historic District, could result in its eligibility for tax incentives derived from the total value of expenses incurred preserving the property.

## **Neighborhood Redevelopment Plan**

An area-specific plan to address issues found in a specific neighborhood.

## **Neighborhood Watch Program**

The Neighborhood Watch Program (also known as the USAonWatch) is a neighborhood watch program that focuses on residential areas through citizen involvement. Originally developed in the late 1960s, the National Sheriff's Association (NSA) officially created the National Neighborhood Watch Program in 1972 to assist citizens and law enforcement.

## **Opportunity Zone**

Opportunity Zones are credits available for areas for new or existing businesses which create two or more jobs are credits which can be taken against the business's income tax liability and state payroll withholding. Local governments which undertake redevelopment and revitalization efforts in certain older commercial and industrial areas can now qualify those areas for the State's maximum state job tax credit of \$3,500 per job.

## **Overlay Zoning**

Overlay zoning is a regulatory tool that creates a special zoning district, placed over an existing base zone (s), which identifies special provisions in the underlying base zone. The special provisions are usually more restrictive, but they may be less restrictive if a certain use or form is desired.

## **Pay-Per-Throw**

(Also called pay as you throw, unit pricing, variable rate pricing, or user-pay) is a usage-pricing model for disposing of municipal solid waste. Users are charged a rate based on how much waste they present for collection to the municipality or local authority.

## **Pedestrian Master Plan**

A long-term action plan that establishes the policies, programs, design criteria, and projects that will further enhance pedestrian safety, comfort, and access in an area or region.

## **Performance Standards**

The new rules for Regional Planning now require the establishment of Performance Standards for all local governments. The Minimum Standard must be met by all local governments. All local governments in the region will be expected to attain the Minimum Standard within three years of adoption of the Regional Plan, or risk losing Qualified Local Government (QLG) status.

## **Planned Unit Developments (PUD)**

Revising land development regulations to encourage developers to propose planned mixed-use developments for sites they choose in the community. Developer's plans are approved only if they meet specified community standards.

## **Public Nuisance Ordinance**

A set of regulations to keep the area clean, remove unsightly conditions, and prevent unhealthy and unsafe situations from occurring to encourage a clean, healthy, and satisfying environment free of nuisances, eyesores, and unhealthy, unsafe, or devaluating conditions.

## **Quality Community Objectives (QCO)**

Objectives that elaborate statewide goals based on growth and development issues.

## **Recycling Program**

A program that diverts any or all basic recyclables, such as paper, cardboard, aluminum, glass and plastic from the landfill.

## **Regionally Important Resources (RIR)**

Natural and cultural resources area identified throughout the region. Include areas of conservation and/ or recreational value, historic and cultural resources, and areas of agricultural and/ or scenic value.

## **Revolving Loan Fund (RLF)**

Source of money from which loans are made for multiple small business development projects. The fund gets its name from the revolving aspect of loan repayment, where the central fund is replenished as individual projects pay back their loans, creating the opportunity to issue other loans to new projects.

## **Rivers Alive**

Rivers Alive is Georgia's annual volunteer waterway cleanup event that targets all waterways in the state including streams, rivers, lakes, beaches, and wetlands. The mission of Rivers Alive is to create awareness of and involvement in the preservation of Georgia's water resources.

## **Road Connectivity**

Creating more direct road connections shortens travel time and actively brings people closer to their destinations.

## **Safe Routes to School**

Safe Routes to School programs enable community leaders, schools and parents across the United States to improve safety and encourage more children, including children with disabilities, to safely walk and bicycle to school. In the process, programs are working to reduce traffic congestion and improve health and the environment, making communities more livable for everyone.

## **Scenic Byway Designation**

Designates segments of scenic roads for special protection measures. Measures may include litter control, sign regulations, design guidelines, land use controls or other measures intended to maintain the rural character of the roadway. Measures are described in a corridor management plan that must be approved by the State Department of Transportation.

## **Service Delivery Strategy (SDS)**

The SDS is intended to minimize inefficiencies resulting from duplication of services and competition between local governments and to provide a mechanism to resolve disputes over local government service delivery, funding equity, and land use in the form of an agreement describing which local governments will provide which service in specified areas within a county and how provision of such services will be funded.

## **Shared parking**

Shared parking means that parking spaces are shared by more than one user, which allows parking facilities to be used more efficiently. It is a type of parking management. Shared parking takes advantage of the fact that most parking spaces are only used part time by a particular motorist or group, and many parking facilities have a significant portion of unused spaces, with utilization patterns that follow predictable daily, weekly and annual cycles.

## **Community Work Program (CWP)**

The Community Work Program formally known as the Short Term Work Program is the part of the comprehensive plan that describes the specific implementation actions the local government intends to take during the first five-year time frame of the planning period. This includes any ordinances, administrative systems (such as site plan review, design review, etc.), community improvements or investments, financing arrangements, or other programs or initiatives to be put in place to implement the plan.

## **Small Business Administration's 504 Loan**

The 504 Loan program is designed to provide financing for the purchase of fixed assets, which usually means real estate, buildings and machinery, at below market rates. The 504 loan works by distributing loan among three parties: business owner, conventional lender and a Certified Development Company (CDC).

## **Solid Waste Management Plan**

The legislature has provided that solid waste management planning by the State, local governments, and Regional Commissions within the State is necessary to prevent environmental degradation, to manage resources, and to effectively reduce and manage solid waste for the State and its residents. The State has an interest in promoting and sustaining an effective comprehensive solid waste management strategy that addresses waste reduction, collection, transfer, and disposal.

## **Special-Purpose Local-Option Sales Tax (SPLOST)**

A SPLOST can be levied by any county, for the purpose of funding the building and maintenance of parks, schools, roads, and other public facilities. Georgia's state sales tax is currently 4% (groceries and prescription drugs exempted), with the counties allowed to add up to 2% more for SPLOST. A SPLOST is passed by a county commission and voted up or down by residents in a referendum, usually during the next scheduled election. A SPLOST only lasts five years. At that time, if the funds are still needed, it must be voted upon again.

## **Sprawl**

Or “urban sprawl” or “suburban sprawl,” is a multifaceted concept, which includes the spreading outwards of a city and its suburbs to its outskirts to low-density and auto-dependent development on rural land, high segregation of uses (e.g. stores and residential), and various design features that encourage car dependency.

## **State Minimum Standard Building Codes**

Georgia law further dictates that eight codes are "mandatory" (are applicable to all construction whether or not they are locally enforced). The codes are the:

### **Building Code**

Standard One and Two Family Dwelling Code

Fire Code

Plumbing Code

Mechanical Code

Gas Code

Electrical Code

Energy Code

Since Georgia law gives the enumerated codes statewide applicability, local governments should not adopt the mandatory codes themselves. Local governments must, however, adopt administrative procedures in order to enforce them (O.C.G.A. Section 8-2-25(a)). However, the local government can choose which of the mandatory codes it wishes to locally enforce.

## **Subdivision Regulations**

Subdivision regulations control the pattern of development—the way land is divided up to accommodate land uses and supporting infrastructure such as roads and utilities. Subdivision regulations may be adopted in the absence of zoning, but are most effective when tied to related dimensional and density requirements typically found in zoning regulations. In the simplest sense, subdivision regulations are meant to ensure that the division of land into smaller units results in lots or parcels that are useable and safe and reflect the physical characteristics of the site.

## **Sub-Metering**

Utility sub-metering is the implementation of a system that allows a landlord, property management firm, condominium association, homeowners association, or other multi-tenant property to bill tenants for individual measured utility usage. The approach makes use of individual water meters, gas meters, or electricity meters for the relevant utility.

## **Substandard Lots**

In any zoning district lots or parcels which do not meet present requirements for minimum lot area or lot dimensions.

## **Total Maximum Daily Load**

Regulatory term in the U.S. Clean Water Act (CWA), describing a value of the maximum amount of a pollutant that a body of water can receive while still meeting water quality standards. Alternatively, TMDL is an allocation of that water pollutant deemed acceptable to the subject receiving waters.

## **Traffic Calming Measures**

Traffic calming is intended to slow or reduce motor-vehicle traffic in order to improve safety for pedestrians and bicyclists and improve the environment for residents. Physical devices include speed humps, speed cushions, and speed tables, sized for the desired speed.

## **Tree Ordinance**

Tree ordinances are among the tools used by communities striving to attain a healthy, vigorous, and well-managed community forest, and provide the authorization and standards for management activities. A tree ordinance often requires preservation of a significant portion of the trees on a new development site, particularly the larger, more mature specimens.

## **Unified Code of Ordinances**

Having all ordinances contained in one volume or in one place on the Internet.

## **Urban Redevelopment Plan**

A plan that describes local governments' actions to redevelop blighted or threatened areas of the community. The plan articulates goals and objectives, describes strategies for accomplishing them, and identifies essential tools.

## **Utility**

A public utility is an organization that maintains the infrastructure for a public service such as water, sewer, electric and cable TV.

## **Very Small Lot Sizes**

Very small lot sizes and “cottage housing” developments are an attractive choice for homebuyers looking for an alternative to both multifamily and traditional single-family homes. These developments—usually located in existing neighborhoods—are made up of small, single-family homes clustered together around a commons area, often with shared parking. Generally less than 1,000 square feet in size, they offer the privacy and character of a single family home, with the low maintenance aspect of a condominium. Very small lot sizes help increase the housing supply while limiting the consumption of land.

## **Work Ready Community**

Georgia Work Ready was launched in August 2006 by Governor Sonny Perdue and the Georgia Chamber of Commerce to improve the job training and marketability of Georgia's workforce and drive future economic growth for the state through a partnership between a state government and state chamber of commerce, ensuring that companies can more reliably match the right people with the right jobs. Work Ready is based on a skills assessment and certification for job seekers and a job profiling system for businesses.

## **Zoning Ordinance**

A zoning ordinance is the formal codification of land use policies for a city, district, county, or other unit of government. The goal of a zoning ordinance is to establish permitted uses for land covered by the ordinance, and to distinguish between different types of uses which may be incompatible. In addition to defining specific types of land use, zoning ordinances also usually divide a region into “zones” where certain types of permitted use can occur.



# Appendix

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The Post-Searchlight

# SCHOOLS

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WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 4, 2017 • 5A

## **Regional Plan & Community Economic Development Strategy Meeting Scheduled**

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission  
is inviting all:

### **LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS, ELECTED OFFICIALS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

to a drop-by Community Meeting addressing these and other  
regional issues:

**Housing, Community and Economic Development, Trans-  
portation, Southwest Georgia Strengths and Weaknesses**

The Regional Commission staff will be giving information  
about these issues and more and are asking for the input of  
all Southwest Georgia to assist in formulating an  
over-all assessment of the region.

Drop-in any time between 10AM-2PM on  
COLOUITT or

January 11, 2017 at Roderberry Memorial Library in Cam, Georgia

Contact the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission with  
any questions 229.522.3552

**Regional Plan & Community Economic  
Development Strategy Meeting Scheduled**

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission  
is inviting all:

**LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS  
ELECTED OFFICIALS  
& COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

to a drop-by Community Meeting addressing these and other  
regional issues:

Housing, Community Development, Transportation,  
Southwest Georgia Strengths and Weaknesses, &  
Natural and Cultural Resources

The Regional Commission staff will be giving information  
about these issues and more and are asking for the input of  
all Southwest Georgia to assist in formulating an  
overall assessment of the region.

Drop-in any time between 10AM-2PM on  
January 18, 2017 at the Community Action Council Building

Contact the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission with  
any questions: 228-532-2932

**Regional Plan & Community Economic  
Development Strategy Meeting Scheduled**

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission  
is inviting all:

**LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS, ELECTED  
OFFICIALS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

to a drop-by Community Meeting addressing these and other  
regional issues:

Housing, Community and Economic Development,  
Transportation, Southwest Georgia Strengths and Weaknesses

The Regional Commission staff will be giving information  
about these issues and more and are asking for the input of  
all Southwest Georgia to assist in formulating an  
overall assessment of the region.

Drop-in any time between 10am-2pm on  
January 18, 2017 at the Community Action Council Building

January 18, 2017 at the Community Action Council Building

4, 2017

albanyherald.com

# Simplified



om

229-888-9333

Toll Free: 1-800-627-7355

### Regional Plan & Community Economic Development Strategy Meeting Scheduled

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission  
is inviting all:

**LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS  
ELECTED OFFICIALS  
GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE  
EMPLOYEES & COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

to a drop-by Community Meeting addressing these and  
other regional issues:

**Housing, Community Development, Transportation,  
Southwest Georgia Strengths and Weaknesses, &  
Natural and Cultural Resources**

The Regional Commission staff will be giving information  
about these issues and more and are asking for the input of  
all Southwest Georgia to assist in formulating an over-all  
assessment of the region.

Drop-in any time between  
10AM-2PM on January 12, 2017 at the  
Leesburg City Hall

Contact the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission with  
any questions: 229-522-2682

[albanyherald.com/newsletters.](http://albanyherald.com/newsletters)



# BUSINESS

## Regional Plan & Community Economic Development Strategy Meeting Scheduled

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission is inviting all:

**LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS  
ELECTED OFFICIALS  
& COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

to a drop-by Community Meeting addressing these and other regional issues:

**Housing, Community Development, Transportation, Southwest Georgia Strengths and Weaknesses, &**

Early County News • Jan. 4, 2017 PAGE 7

## Regional Plan & Community Economic Development Strategy Meeting Scheduled

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission is inviting all:

**LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS  
ELECTED OFFICIALS  
GOVERNMENT AND PRIVATE  
EMPLOYEES & COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

to a drop-by Community Meeting addressing these and other regional issues:

**Housing, Community Development, Transportation, Southwest Georgia Strengths and Weaknesses, & Natural and Cultural Resources**

The Regional Commission staff will be giving information about these issues and more and are asking for the input of all Southwest Georgia to assist in formulating an over-all assessment of the region.

Drop in any time between 10AM-2PM on January 17 at the Miller County Family Resource Center (red brick building adjacent to the Sheriff's Office)

Contact the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission with any questions: 229-522-3552

# Lifestyle

The Camilla Enterprise, Wednesday, January 4, 2017 - Page 19

## Regional Plan & Community Economic Development Strategy Meeting Scheduled

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission is inviting all **LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS ELECTED OFFICIALS & COMMUNITY MEMBERS** to a drop-by Community Meeting addressing these and other regional issues: **Housing, Community Development, Transportation, Southwest Georgia Strengths and Weaknesses, & Natural and Cultural Resources**

The Regional Commission staff will be giving information about these issues and more and are asking for the input of all Southwest Georgia to assist in formulating an over-all assessment of the region.

Drop in any time between 10AM-2PM on January 10 at the DeSoto Trail Library in Camilla, Georgia

Contact the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission with any questions 229.522.3552

**AMANDA BEARD & KEVIN BASS**

May 6, 2017

## Moseley Drug Company

Johnson Street (229) 995-2126

## Regional Plan & Community Economic Development Strategy Meeting Scheduled

The Southwest Georgia Regional Commission is inviting all:

**LOCAL BUSINESS OWNERS  
ELECTED OFFICIALS  
& COMMUNITY MEMBERS**

to a drop-by Community Meeting addressing these and other regional issues:

**Housing, Community Development, Transportation, Southwest Georgia Strengths and Weaknesses, & Natural and Cultural Resources**

The Regional Commission staff will be giving information about these issues and more and are asking for the input of all Southwest Georgia to assist in formulating an over-all assessment of the region.

Drop-in any time between 10AM-2PM on March 8, 2017 at the USDA Rural Development Office (955 Forrester Dr.)

Contact the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission with any questions: 229.522.3552

These products are available every Tuesday. For more information, call the library.

## Animal Supply Through

A supply of animal supplies is currently available at the Dawson Rehabilitation Center. According to the center, the drive is scheduled for March 24.

"We will have a number of items including leashes, strollers, buckets, dog washcloths, and puppy lines reported."

"Cash donations are accepted," and items should be brought to the Dawson Rehabilitation Center.

IT'S MOW AND BLOW TIME FOR YOU

# THOMASVILLE TIMES-ENTERPRISE

\*\*\*  
SW REGIONAL DEVELOP CEN  
PO BOX 346  
CAMILLA, GA 31730-0346  
0000000016

TUESDAY, APRIL 25, 2017

THE PULSE OF THE COMMUNITY

SEVENTY-FIVE CENTS

### Notice of Public Hearing for Regional Agenda

Please be advised that the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission will host a regional hearing to brief the public on the contents of the Regional Agenda, and to allow the public to make final suggestions, additions, or revisions.

10:00AM—May 4, 2017

Southwest Georgia Regional Commission  
181 E. Broad Street—Camilla, Georgia 31730

A copy of the Regional Agenda is available for review on our website at: [www.swgrc.org/regionalagenda](http://www.swgrc.org/regionalagenda)

Contact Barbara Reddick at (229) 522-3552 or [breddick@swgrc.org](mailto:breddick@swgrc.org) if there are any questions or comments.



# *Regional Agenda*

## *Regional Hearing*

Meeting Location: 181 E. Broad Street, Camilla, GA - 10:00 AM

**May 4, 2017**

Introductions  
Regional Plan & Plan Requirements  
Regional Assessment  
Stakeholder Involvement Program

**Discussion, Review, Changes - Regional Agenda (Handout)**

**Next Steps**

**Adjourn**



Regional Agenda Regional Hearing  
 Thursday, May 4, 2017 @ 10:00 AM  
Sign In Sheet

Name	Phone Number	Email Address	Agency or Organization
Barbara Sells	(709) 522-3552	bredsells@swgrc.org	RC
<del>Barbara Sells</del>	229 522 3552	rsilver@swgrc.org	RC

# **Resolution to Transmit**

**A Resolution by the  
Southwest Georgia Regional Commission  
to Transmit the *Regional Agenda* portion of the  
*Southwest Georgia Regional Plan***

*Whereas*, the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission has found it necessary to update its *Regional Plan* as required by the rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs; and

*Whereas*, the *Regional Plan* is vital to directing the activities within State Service Delivery Region 10 to the benefit of the region as a whole; and

*Whereas*, the *Regional Agenda* is the final element in the *Regional Plan* and is being prepared with adequate input from stakeholders and the general public;

*Now, therefore be it resolved*, that the Regional Council of the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission hereby authorizes the transmittal of the *Regional Agenda* to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for official review once the public hearing and review and comment requirements have been met.

Duly enacted this 27<sup>th</sup> day of April at a regular session of the Regional Council.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Glenda Battle,  
Regional Council Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert McDaniel  
Executive Director

# **Resolution to Submit**

**A Resolution by the  
Southwest Georgia Regional Commission  
to Adopt the  
*Southwest Georgia Regional Plan***

*Whereas*, the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission has found it necessary to update its *Regional Plan* as required by the rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs; and

*Whereas*, the *Regional Plan* is vital to directing the activities within State Service Delivery Region 10 to the benefit of the region as a whole; and

*Whereas*, the *Regional Plan* was prepared with adequate input from stakeholders and the general public; and

*Whereas*, the *Regional Plan* was duly submitted for review by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, and has been found to be in compliance with the planning requirements and consistent with Department regulations for said plans;

*Now, therefore be it resolved*, the Regional Council of the Southwest Georgia Regional Commission hereby adopts the *Regional Plan*, as approved for regulatory conformance with Department of Community Affairs under the Georgia Planning Act of 1989.

Duly enacted this 27<sup>th</sup> day of July 2017 at a regular session of the Regional Council.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Glenda Battle,  
Regional Council Chairman

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Robert McDaniel Secretary and  
Executive Director

Nathan Deal  
Governor



Camila Knowles  
Commissioner

July 11, 2017

Mr. Robert McDaniel, Executive Director  
Southwest Georgia Regional Commission  
P O. Box 346  
Camilla, Georgia 31730 – 0346

Dear Mr. McDaniel:

Thank you for submitting your Commission's Regional Plan Agenda for the Southwest Georgia region. Our staff has reviewed this draft and has determined that the document with the minor revisions, adequately addresses the requirements of the Minimum Standards and Procedures for Regional Planning. Additionally, we did not receive any comments during our interested parties review.

We congratulate your Commission on its accomplishment. We are aware of the considerable time, effort and resources that have gone into developing this plan, and we want you to know that we appreciate the good work. The regional plan can now be adopted by your Council. Please let us know when the adoption has taken place and provide a digital copy of the final, adopted versions (including appropriate GIS data) by saving the files in your SharePoint folder.

We look forward to continuing our partnership to successfully implement the Regional Plan. Please let us know how we can assist you further in this important planning effort. As always, we welcome your suggestions on how we can work together to improve regional planning in Georgia.

If you have any questions, please contact Elizabeth Smith at 404-679-0666 or [Elizabeth.smith@dca.ga.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.smith@dca.ga.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Brian Johnson".

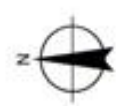
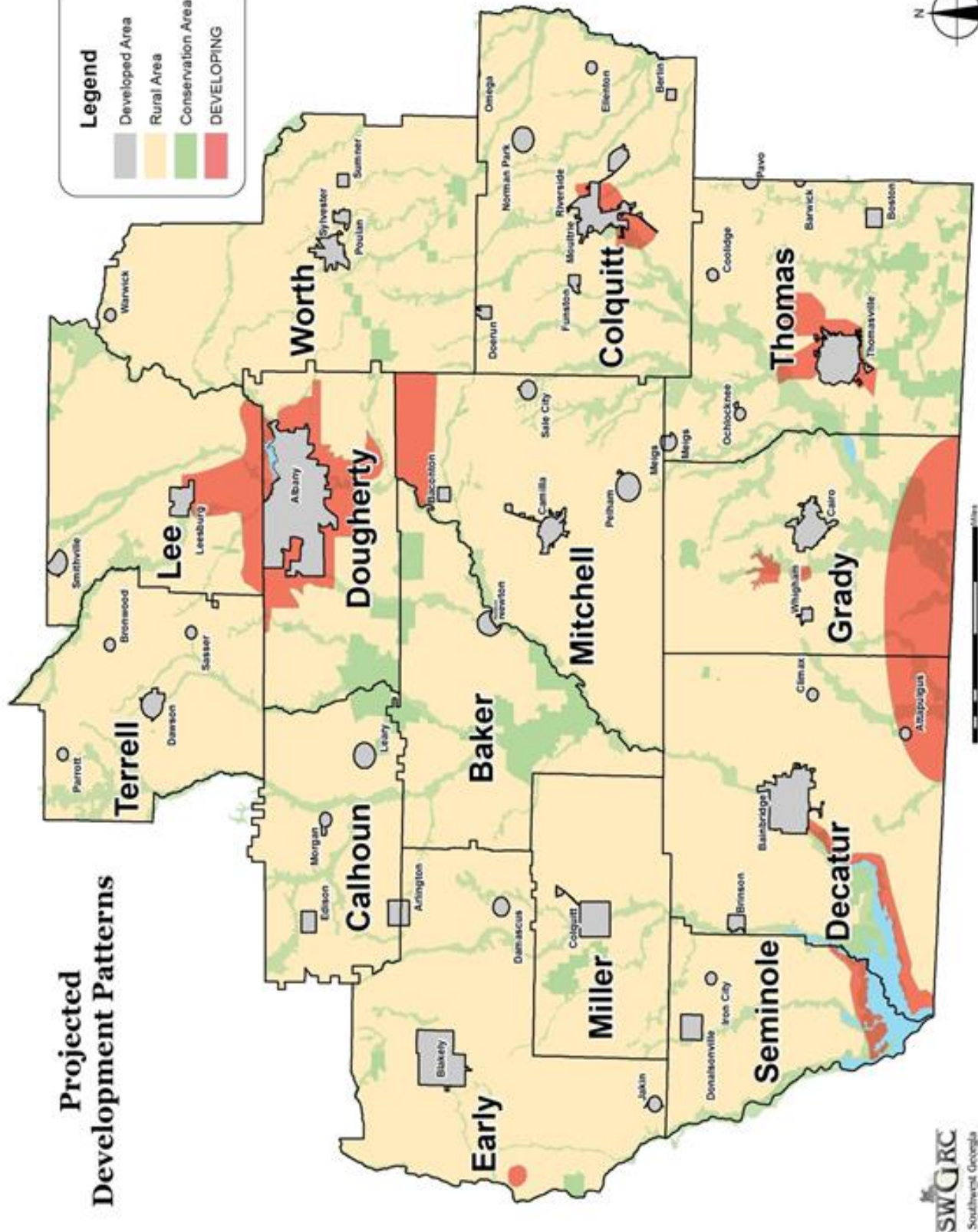
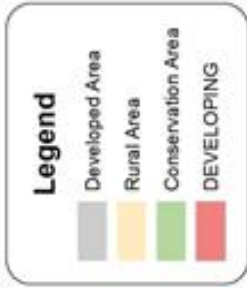
Brian Johnson, Director  
Office of Planning and Environmental Management

BJ/esh  
cc: Barbara Reddick





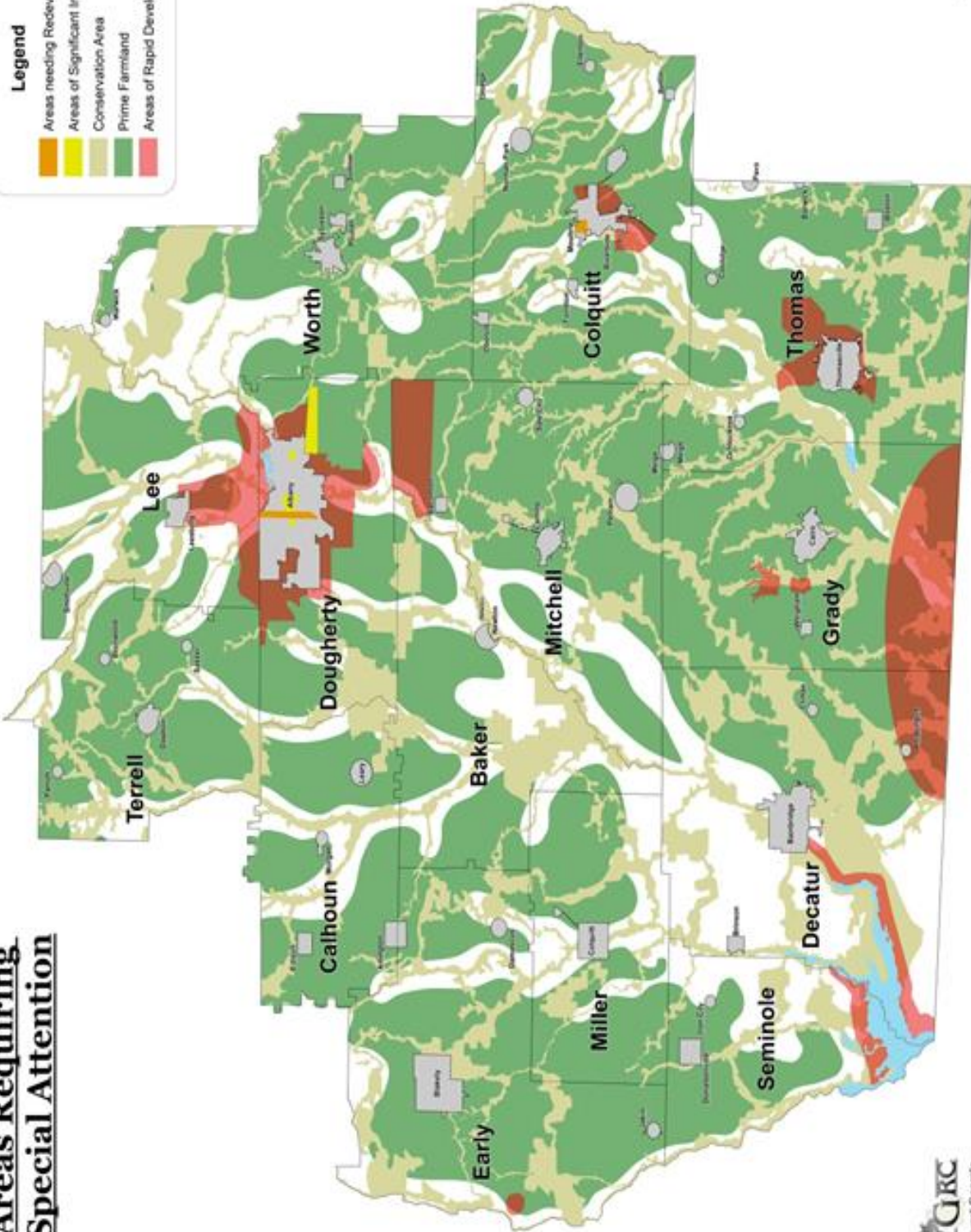
# Projected Development Patterns



# Areas Requiring Special Attention

**Legend**

- Areas needing Redevelopment
- Areas of Significant Infill
- Conservation Area
- Prime Farmland
- Areas of Rapid Development



**SWGRC**  
Southwest Georgia  
Regional Commission

# Checklists



www.swgrc.org  
30 West Broad Street  
PO Box 346  
Camilla, GA 31730  
229-522-3552  
229-522-3558(fax)



**Plan Implementation Assistance Meeting (PIA) Checklist**

Municipality: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Contact (Telephone, Email, In Person): \_\_\_\_\_

**RC Staff:** \_\_\_\_\_

In order to facilitate effective local and regional planning and implementation of those plans the following required activities should be performed and communicated regularly with local governments in the region as reference in DCA Rules (Chapters 110-12-04; Chapter 110-12-6):

- Regional Plan (Performance Standards)
- Local Government Issues & priorities / State Issues and Priorities
- Regional Priorities (Must be important, current, actionable)
- Regional Success Stories/Best Practices
- Regional Work Program (Activities in current year and next year)
- Housing
- Economic Development
- Transportation
- 
- Regionally Important Resources (Best Practices)
- Local Comprehensive Plan & Implementation (Recent Plan & any Updates)
- Assistance with planning implementation & upcoming deadlines
- Mapping & GIS needs
- Environmental

Signature & Comments:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## Performance Standards Checklist

**Minimum Standards** are activities local governments must undertake for consistency with the regional plan. The intent is to ensure a consistent and predictable basic level of local requirements across the region. All local governments in the region will be expected to attain the Minimum Standard within three years of adoption of the regional plan, or risk losing Qualified Local Government status.

Jurisdictions are separated into two tiers with a corresponding set of Minimum Standards. Tier 1 jurisdictions are city governments with fewer than 1,000 residents, and county governments with fewer than 10,000 residents. Tier 2 jurisdictions include city governments with 1,000 resident or greater, and county governments with 10,000 residents or greater.

Minimum Standard for Tier 1 Governments			
STANDARD	YES	NO	DOCUMENTATION
1 Our clerk is certified			Copy of certification
2 Our newly elected officials are certified			Copy of certification
3 We do not permit development in areas not identified in the comprehensive plan's future development map			Ordinances and Future Development Map
4 We update our service delivery strategy (SDS) as required by state law, and have written agreements for these services that are on file and available for public review			Copy of SDS
5 We have and enforce a public nuisance ordinance to control nuisances such as loud noises, stagnant water, abandoned vehicles, the accumulation of junk, excessively tall weeds and grass, etc.			Copy of ordinance
6 We have an approved solid waste management plan			Copy of plan
7 We have an approved hazard mitigation plan			Copy of plan
8 We may be reached via email, and we have the ability to send and receive attachments			Email address
9 We have a unified code of ordinances, so that all ordinances and resolutions that have the effect of law are contained in one document			Copy of ordinance
Minimum Standard for Tier 2 Governments All of the Performance Standards for Tier 1 Governments, plus the following:			
STANDARD	YES	NO	DOCUMENTATION
1 We adopted the appropriate DNR Part V. Environmental Planning Criteria (Part Two of DCA's Alternative to Zoning Model Ordinance). Includes Protection of Groundwater Recharge Areas, Wetlands Protection, and River Corridor Protection			Adoption Resolution, Copy of ordinance
2 We adopted administrative procedures to enforce the state minimum standard building codes (Building, Residential, Fire, Plumbing, Mechanical, Fuel Gas, Electric and Energy Conservation)			Copy of administrative procedures
3 We have subdivision regulations			Copy of subdivision regulations

**Excellence Standard**

To achieve the Excellence Standard, local governments must already have in place at least two standards from each of the seven areas (Community Facilities, Intergovernmental Coordination, Natural and Cultural Resources, Economic Development, Housing, Land Use and Transportation). To maintain this status, one standard from any of the seven (7) areas must be implemented each year.

<b>Excellence Standard</b>			
<b>Community Facilities</b>			
<b>STANDARD</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>DOCUMENTATION</b>
1			Georgia Department of Community Affairs approval
2			Copy of ordinance
3			Copy of budget
4			Copy of certification
5			Copy of certification
6			Copy of certification
7			Copy of plan
8			Copy of plan
9			Copy of plan
10			Copy of inventory
11			Copy of CIP
12			Copy of regulation or ordinance
13			Confirmation from tax office
14			Copy of budget

<b>Intergovernmental Coordination</b>			
<b>STANDARD</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>DOCUMENTATION</b>
15			GA DCA designation
16			Agendas, meeting minutes
17			Review of comprehensive plan
18			Copy of ordinance
19			Copy of contract or agreement
20			Copy of contract or agreement
21			Web address
22			Agendas, meeting minutes
23			Copy of contract or agreement



<b>Natural and Cultural Resources</b>			
<b>STANDARD</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>DOCUMENTATION</b>
24			Agendas, meeting minutes
25			Copy of ordinance
26			Adoption resolution, map of district, Member list
27			Verification of certifying agency
28			Copy of Register listing
29			Copy of ordinance
30			Copy of waste plan or ordinance
31			Copy of guidelines
32			Copy of sub-regs or design standards
33			Copy of land use regs
34			Copy of plan
35			Copy of inventory
36			None
37			Copy of contract or waste plan
38			Address of facility
39			Adoption resolution
40			Copy of comp plan, land use regs
<b>Economic Development</b>			
<b>STANDARD</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>DOCUMENTATION</b>
41			Verification of certifying agency
42			Verification of certification by Ga Dept. of Economic Development
43			Web address
44			None
45			Meeting minutes
46			Copy of BREP
47			Copy of plan
48			Certificate of completion
49			Copy of inventory
50			Copy of inventory
51			Certification from designating authority
52			Adoption Resolution, map



53	We have an Opportunity Zone (Georgia tax credit program) in our jurisdiction			Adoption Resolution, map
54	We regularly conduct a Labor Market Information (LMI) Analysis to identify industry sectors best suited to a local community's available workforce, and what training might be required to attract potential employers			Copy of LMI
55	We participate in multi-county economic development efforts			Meeting minutes
56	We have a Neighborhood Watch program in our community to help prevent crime and vandalism			Police department verification, signage
57	We meet at least quarterly with an active joint county development authority (JDA)			Agenda, minutes, notifications
58	We have a unified development code (all our ordinances relating to development are in one place), to help streamline the development process			Copy of or link to code
<b>Housing</b>				
<b>STANDARD</b>		<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>DOCUMENTATION</b>
59	We have a written housing plan or strategy			Copy of the plan
60	We have completed a housing inventory and/or housing assessment			Copy of the plan
61	We have a written plan for the demolition of unsafe or abandoned properties			Copy of the plan
62	We streamline the review process, or otherwise provide an incentives to developers when developments include affordable housing			Review of the approval and review process
63	We have a housing trust fund to provide a stable source of revenue reserved solely for affordable homes			Copy of budget
64	We have tax exempt programs for mixed-income developments and low income home owners			IRS Tax Exempt Status
65	We are a Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) alumni or program participant			DCA verification
66	Our zoning ordinance allows very small lot sizes (1/4 acre or smaller) for single-family houses			Copy of ordinance or resolution
67	We encourage mixed-income housing to attempt to ensure that developments contain some affordable housing			Copy of ordinance or resolution
68	Our zoning ordinance has an inclusionary provision that requires developers to make a percentage of housing units in new residential developments available to low and moderate-income households			Copy of ordinance or resolution
<b>Land Use</b>				
<b>STANDARD</b>		<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>DOCUMENTATION</b>
69	We have a zoning ordinance			Copy of ordinance, adoption resolution
70	Our zoning ordinance allows one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ accessory housing units by right (mother-in-law suites, carriage houses, garage apartments, etc.</li> <li>▪ mixed uses (such as allowing residential and commercial together in the same district)</li> <li>▪ planned unit developments (PUDS)</li> </ul>			Copy of ordinance(s)
71	Our zoning ordinance accommodates the reuse of closed, decommissioned or obsolete (greyfields) uses			Copy of ordinance
72	Our zoning ordinance includes manufactured home compatibility standards that ensures architectural compatibility of manufactured homes with adjacent single-family residences			Copy of ordinance
73	Our zoning ordinance has a floating or more permissive overlay zone to provide greater flexibility			Copy of ordinance

74	Our zoning ordinance requires that new infill development is compatible with its neighborhood and maintains the harmony and character of existing areas			Copy of ordinance
75	We have green space requirements in our subdivision regulations			Copy of ordinance
76	We have a landscape and buffer requirement in our land use regulations			Copy of ordinance
77	We require sidewalks in new housing developments (subdivisions) over a certain size			Copy of ordinance
78	We have a process or procedure to allow construction on existing substandard lots			Copy of ordinance
79	We allow clustered subdivisions by right			Copy of ordinance
80	We have a designated code enforcement officer			Name of officer
81	We require new construction to be at least three feet above FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) designated floodplains			Copy of ordinance
82	We participate in annual code enforcement training			Certificates
83	We have a legal sign ordinance			Copy of ordinance
84	We require our planning commissioners to attend training at least annually			Certificates
85	We have an annual meeting of the planning commission and elected officials			Meeting minutes
86	We have an impact fee ordinance			Copy of ordinance
87	We encourage road connectivity between adjacent subdivisions for better traffic flow			Copy of ordinance
88	We have a geographic information system (GIS) that is available to the public and share with other local government entities such as fire, police department and public works			Demonstration
89	We participate in Federal Emergency Management Agency's Community Rating System (CRS) program to reduce flood losses, to facilitate accurate insurance ratings and to promote the awareness of flood insurance			FEMA letter, verification of program fees
90	We analyze the financial impacts of growth before allowing residential development (subdivisions) over a certain size			Copy of ordinance
<b>Transportation</b>				
<b>STANDARD</b>		<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>DOCUMENTATION</b>
91	We encourage traffic calming measures such as raised crosswalks, narrower traffic lanes, fewer lanes, on-street parking, bump-outs, pedestrian refuges, and landscaped medians, etc.			Copy of ordinance, design guidelines.
92	We have adopted a complete street policy that encourages the safe operation and design of streets for all users, regardless of age, ability or mode of transportation			Copy of ordinance, design guidelines
93	We require connectivity between parking lots where appropriate			Copy of ordinance, design guidelines
94	We allow shared parking in commercial areas			Copy of ordinance, design guidelines
95	We participate in a public transit program			Certification letter from DOT