



Regional Plan 2018 - 2038



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Resolution

WHEREAS, the Georgia State Law and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs rules require each Regional Commission to prepare a Regional Plan and Regional Work Program; and

WHEREAS, the River Valley Regional Commission transmitted the River Valley Regional Plan and Regional Work Program to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for review on September 25, 2018; and

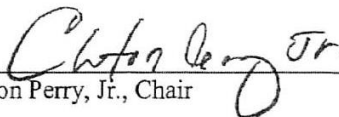
WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs certified the document complete on September 26, 2018 and notified interested parties of the availability of the River Valley Regional Commission's Regional Plan for review; and


WHEREAS, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs has approved the River Valley Regional Commission's Regional Plan.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the River Valley Regional Commission Council hereby adopts the River Valley Regional Plan 2019 – 2039 and the Regional Work Program 2019 – 2023.

Duly considered and approved the Chairman and Regional Council of the River Valley Regional Commission this 26th day of September, 2018.




Clinton Perry, Jr., Chair


Patricia P. Cullen
Executive Director


Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Secretary



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REGIONAL PLAN

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Background and Description

The River Valley Regional is a large, mostly rural region located in the Piedmont and Upper Coastal Plain areas of west central Georgia. The region covers approximately 5,315 square miles, an area slightly smaller than the State of Connecticut, and the region spans from the Alabama border eastward to US Interstate 75. The region is made up of 16 counties and 35 municipalities with a total population of over 375,000. The counties within the River Valley Region are Chattahoochee, Clay, Crisp, Dooly, Harris, Macon, Marion, Muscogee, Quitman, Randolph, Schley, Stewart, Sumter, Talbot, Taylor, and Webster. The Chattahoochee and Flint Rivers run north-south through the region; all 16 counties fall within the drainage basins of these two rivers.



One Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) exists in the region: The Columbus, Georgia MSA (Chattahoochee, Harris, Marion and Muscogee Counties in Georgia, along with Russell County, Alabama). Two Micropolitan Statistical Areas (μ SA) exist in the region: The Americus μ SA (Sumter and Schley Counties) and the Cordele μ SA (Crisp County). Outside of the anchor cities for these statistical areas (Columbus, Americus, and Cordele), population density in the region is relatively low, with forests and farmland abundant throughout the region.

The River Valley Regional Commission is the state authorized regional planning agency for the River Valley Region. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs, under authority of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, requires each regional commission to develop, adopt, and implement a regional plan. This document is a full update of the previous River Valley Regional Commission Regional Plan adopted in 2013.

Stakeholder Involvement

The River Valley Regional Commission council members volunteered to participate on the steering committee at the beginning of the process. This group consisted of a combination of elected officials, government staff, and local citizens with at least one representative from each

county. The steering committee developed a list of stakeholders from whom to solicit input regarding the regional plan update.

RVRC staff developed an online survey to solicit input from stakeholders and residents of the region in regards to the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats the area faces. The survey was visually appealing, interactive and easily accessible to residents of the region. The survey was placed on the RVRC Facebook page and the RVRC website. E-mail invitations with a link to the survey were distributed to RVRC Council members, local elected officials, and the Family Connections Coordinators within the region with the request to forward the invitation to others. RVRC staff also held a drawing for two tickets to Columbus Whitewater events for survey respondents.

In addition to the online survey, the Commission reviewed each community's current comprehensive plan for information regarding regional needs and opportunities. RVRC staff also held five in-person listening sessions in conjunction with SWOT analyses at each session to gather information from the public. Each meeting was held in a different county to collect as much input as possible from as wide a variety of people as possible. RVRC staff held meetings in Buena Vista (Marion County), Columbus (Muscogee County), Cuthbert (Randolph County), Americus (Sumter County), and Vienna (Dooly County).

Together with the steering committee, RVRC staff used the information gathered from the comprehensive plans, from the survey, from the listening sessions, and from the steering committee meetings to develop the regional vision statement and a list of regional needs and opportunities. The RVRC Council then utilized an audience response system to vote on the needs and opportunities that they felt should be the priorities of the Commission during the next five years. Once the Commission established their priorities, RVRC staff and steering committee members developed strategies and activities that would use regional strengths to maximize opportunities, minimize weaknesses, and take advantage of opportunities to overcome regional weaknesses and threats.

Regional Vision

The mission of the RVRC shall be to create, promote, and foster the orderly growth and economic prosperity for our region.

The vision of the RVRC is a region where current and future generations succeed at home, at work, and in their communities.

Priority Needs and Opportunities and Key Strategies

The RVRC Regional Council identified the following as priorities for the Commission to address during the next five years. Below each priority are key strategies/actions the Commission has identified that will allow the RVRC to make quantifiable progress toward achieving these goals.

- Priority: Update Ordinances, Land Use Regulations, and Guidelines.
 - Strategy: Develop tools to assist local governments manage development.
 - Action: Provide zoning administration technical assistance and training to 6 local governments.
- Priority: Protection of Historic Neighborhoods and Buildings.
 - Strategy: Provide technical assistance to local governments in their preservation activities.
 - Action: Provide monthly technical assistance and staff review for Certificate of Appropriateness to the Columbus Board of Historic and Architectural Review.
- Priority: Preservation of Prime Agricultural/Forestry Lands.
 - Strategy: Educate local elected officials, industries, developers, youth, and the public on the importance of natural resource protection.
 - Action: Write local government comprehensive plans.
- Priority: Grow the Agricultural Resources in the Region.
 - Strategy: Promote the production and sale of locally grown foods.
 - Action: Identify a local partner to complete a feasibility study for a joint-use commercial kitchen.
- Priority: Protection of Groundwater Recharge Area/Aquifer.
 - Strategy: Increase education and outreach programs directed toward improving water quality.
 - Action: Coordinate 8 training opportunities for the Georgia Adopt-a-Stream program and educational seminars regarding water quality issues.
- Priority: Maintain Environmental Integrity in the Region.
 - Strategy: Create a balance between protection of natural resources and development.
 - Action: Implement Watershed Management Plans for Pataula Creek, Kinchafoonee Creek, and Mountain Oak Creek.
- Priority: Provide Safe, Standard, Affordable Housing Options for All Residents of the Region.
 - Strategy: Support local housing efforts through planning and technical assistance.
 - Action: Assist 2 local governments to identify GICH team community partners.
- Priority: Improve Broadband/Internet Capacity.
 - Strategy: Identify and address telecommunications deficiencies in the region.

- Action: Write Broadband Ready ordinances for local governments.
- Priority: Improve Old or Inadequate Infrastructure Systems.
 - Strategy: Assist local governments to identify and address deficiencies of infrastructure systems.
 - Action: Write grant applications for 10 local governments based on grant eligibility and identified community needs.
- Priority: Provide a Diverse Offering of Recreation Options for All Ages.
 - Strategy: Develop and expand trail networks to connect the region's green and blue infrastructure.
 - Action: Coordinate quarterly meetings between Bicycle Columbus, DNR, and volunteers regarding the development of mountain bike trails and hiking trails at Standing Boy State Park.
- Priority: Road Maintenance and Expansion.
 - Strategy: Assist local governments to identify key transportation needs and issues.
 - Action: Provide 2 Complete Streets trainings.
- Priority: Increase Awareness of Rural Transit Options.
 - Strategy: Improve the region's mobility by offering alternative means of transportation.
 - Action: Develop 1 county transit plan per year.
- Priority: Support Continuation of Regional TSPLOST.
 - Strategy: Work with local elected officials on the development of a successful second TSPLOST initiative.
 - Action: Work with 51 local communities to market the successes of the current TIA program through printed materials, media articles, and presentations.
- Priority: Diversify and Strengthen the Region's Economy.
 - Strategy: Foster community leadership.
 - Action: Coordinate 4 lunch and learn opportunities to teach downtown development best practices.
- Priority: Provide Quality, Genuine Places and Experiences for Visitors.
 - Strategy: Market special events and the unique aspects of the region.
 - Action: Provide 1 training opportunity for local Camera Ready contacts annually.
- Priority: Train the Regional Workforce.
 - Strategy: Provide on On-the-Job-Training (OJT) and Incumbent Worker Training (IWT).
 - Action: Provide OJT services for 40 individuals each year.
 - Action: Provide IWT services for 2 individuals each year.
- Priority: Educate the Region's Workforce.

- Strategy: Provide GED prep and soft skills development services for the region's youth.
 - Action: Provide basic literacy skills, financial literacy education, and follow-up services to 100 individuals 17-24 years of age.
- Priority: Create a Statewide Focus on Reaching Underserved Persons.
 - Strategy: Develop and implement training for community partners to aid in outreach and service provision to underserved populations.
 - Action: Host 1 training annually.
- Priority: Expand Efforts to Support Individuals to Remain in Their Desired Residence as Long as Possible.
 - Strategy: Increase home modification/home repair services access statewide.
 - Action: Provide home modification/home repair services to 5 consumers annually.
- Priority: Increase Professional Capacity of Georgia's Aging Network to Better Meet the Needs of Family Caregivers and At-Risk Adults.
 - Strategy: Facilitate trainings for health and wellness coordinators and caregiver specialists.
 - Action: Give presentations at 10 churches and/or civic organizations to identify individuals willing to become Master Trainers in the "Powerful Tools for Caregivers" program.
- Priority: Create a Balanced Sustainable Region.
 - Strategy: Work with local governments, community organizations, and businesses to improve efficiency in delivery of services.
 - Action: Host 1 regional meeting of city and county clerks and managers annually.

RVRC CORE VALUES

Accountability

Leadership
Ownership
Consistency
Celebration

Innovation

Empowerment
Fun
Risk Taking
Education/Training
Broadband
Jobs

Collaboration

Sustainability
Excellence
Local Colleges &
Universities
Broadband

Diversity

Balance
Education
Passion
Incentives
Vibrant

Community

Safety
Service Excellence
Professionalism
Healthy
Citizen Participation
Vibrant
Clean

Integrity

Respect
Quality
Natural/Historic
Resources
Communication

Good Stewardship

Empathy
Dependable
Efficiency
Healthcare Access
Downtowns

Purpose

The regional planning process, at its inception and culmination, is a vision for the future. The ultimate aim of the process is to develop a linked group of strong communities. In order to achieve that objective, a meaningful planning process must solicit and integrate the input of citizens, government officials, and commission staff. The result will be a well-balanced regional plan addressing the issues of today, the opportunities of tomorrow, and outlining the steps necessary to bring about positive change over the next five (5) years. The intent of the River Valley Regional Plan Update process is to encourage as much public participation, open dialogue, and communication as possible among the region's residents. By using proven community participation strategies, RVRC staff will build consensus among River Valley residents as to key regional priorities and specific actions to be pursued that will result in better government decisions and greater community agreement with those choices.

Regional Planning Process

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs updated the Standards and Procedures for Regional Planning in 2017 (O.C.G.A. 110-12-6). These updates included a list of required and elements each region was encouraged to use to supplement their planning efforts.

Elements required by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for each region include:

- Stakeholder Involvement—An initial and final public hearing plus three public listening sessions in three different counties;
- Goals and Policies—A review of the region's vision and goals;
- Needs and Opportunities—A list of potential regional needs and opportunities;
- Development Maps—Maps that illustrate the desired future development patterns with associated defining narratives;
- Implementation Program—A list of the Performance Standards establishing thresholds for local governments in the region and the commission's action plan for the next five years;
- SWOT Analysis—the results of stakeholder participation in the development of the plan identifying the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing the region;
- Analysis of Consistency with Quality Community Objectives—An evaluation of the

region's current policies, activities, and development patterns in relation to the State's Quality Community Objectives; and

- Analysis of Data and Information—an evaluation of regional data and information aimed at identifying potential needs and opportunities as well as development patterns.

The Regional Plan is intended to be a policy guide relating to land use, community infrastructure, housing, transportation, health and human services, and economic development activities. This document should generate regional pride and enthusiasm, engage interest in the implementation of action items, and become a handbook to guide daily decision making for the regional commission staff and local community leaders.

Identification of Stakeholders

The River Valley Regional Commission council members volunteered to participate on the steering committee at the beginning of the process. This group consisted of a combination of elected officials, government staff, and local citizens with at least one representative from each county. The steering committee developed a list of stakeholders from whom to solicit input regarding the regional plan update (See Stakeholder Involvement Report for documentation).

Participation Techniques

The State of Georgia Standards and Procedures for Regional Planning in 2017 (O.C.G.A. 110-12-6) require that two (2) public hearings and three listening sessions be held in association with the development of the Regional Plan Update. The initial public hearing was held Wednesday, August 23, 2017 in Buena Vista (Marion County) to inform the RVRC Council and the public that the planning process was underway, to go over the plan's timeline, and to discuss how the public could be of help during the planning process (See Stakeholder Involvement Report for documentation).

In addition to the two required public hearings, five listening sessions were held in various locations around the region. Public meetings were held Thursday, September 21, 2017 in Columbus (Muscogee County), Thursday, October 12, 2017 in Cuthbert (Randolph County), Thursday, January 11, 2018 in Americus (Sumter County), Wednesday, January 24, 2018 in Buena Vista (Marion County), and Wednesday, February 21, 2018 in Vienna (Dooly County) (See Stakeholder Involvement Report for documentation). An online survey was also developed to solicit input from residents of the region in regards to the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats the area faces. This survey was distributed to the Family Connections Coordinators within the region.

A final public hearing was held on Wednesday, April 25, 2018 at the River Valley Regional Commission Council meeting in Buena Vista (Marion County). At this time, draft materials were distributed to all parties with time allotted to review the documents and answer questions (See Stakeholder Involvement Report for documentation). A deadline of April 30, 2018 was given for formal written comments.

Consideration of Regional and Statewide Plans

RVRC staff reviewed the following local, regional, and plans in the effort to analyze the current needs and opportunities and development patterns of the region and surrounding area:

- Local Comprehensive Plans from RVRC Communities
- Georgia's Strategic Comprehensive Outdoor Recreation Plan
- Flint Regional Water Plan
- Chattahoochee Regional Water Plan
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy
- Columbus Metropolitan Planning Organization Transportation Plan
- Three Rivers Regional Commission Regional Plan
- Southwest Georgia Regional Commission Regional Plan
- Middle Georgia Regional Commission Regional Plan
- Heart of Georgia-Altamaha Regional Commission Regional Plan
- Southern Georgia Regional Commission Regional Plan



Regional Plan Steering Committee Meeting

REGIONAL VISION, GOALS AND POLICIES

Regional Vision

The mission of the RVRC shall be to create, promote, and foster the orderly growth and economic prosperity for our region.

The vision of the RVRC is a region where current and future generations succeed at home, at work, and in their communities.

Core Values:

- Accountability ● Collaboration ● Community ● Innovation ● Diversity ●
- Integrity ● Good Stewardship ●

Regional Goals and Policies

Natural and Cultural Resources

Goal

The RVRC will not only promote the protection of natural resources within the Region by encouraging sustainable development practices, but will also work to educate local governments and citizens on the importance of protecting natural resources within individual communities, and the Region as a whole.

Regional Policies

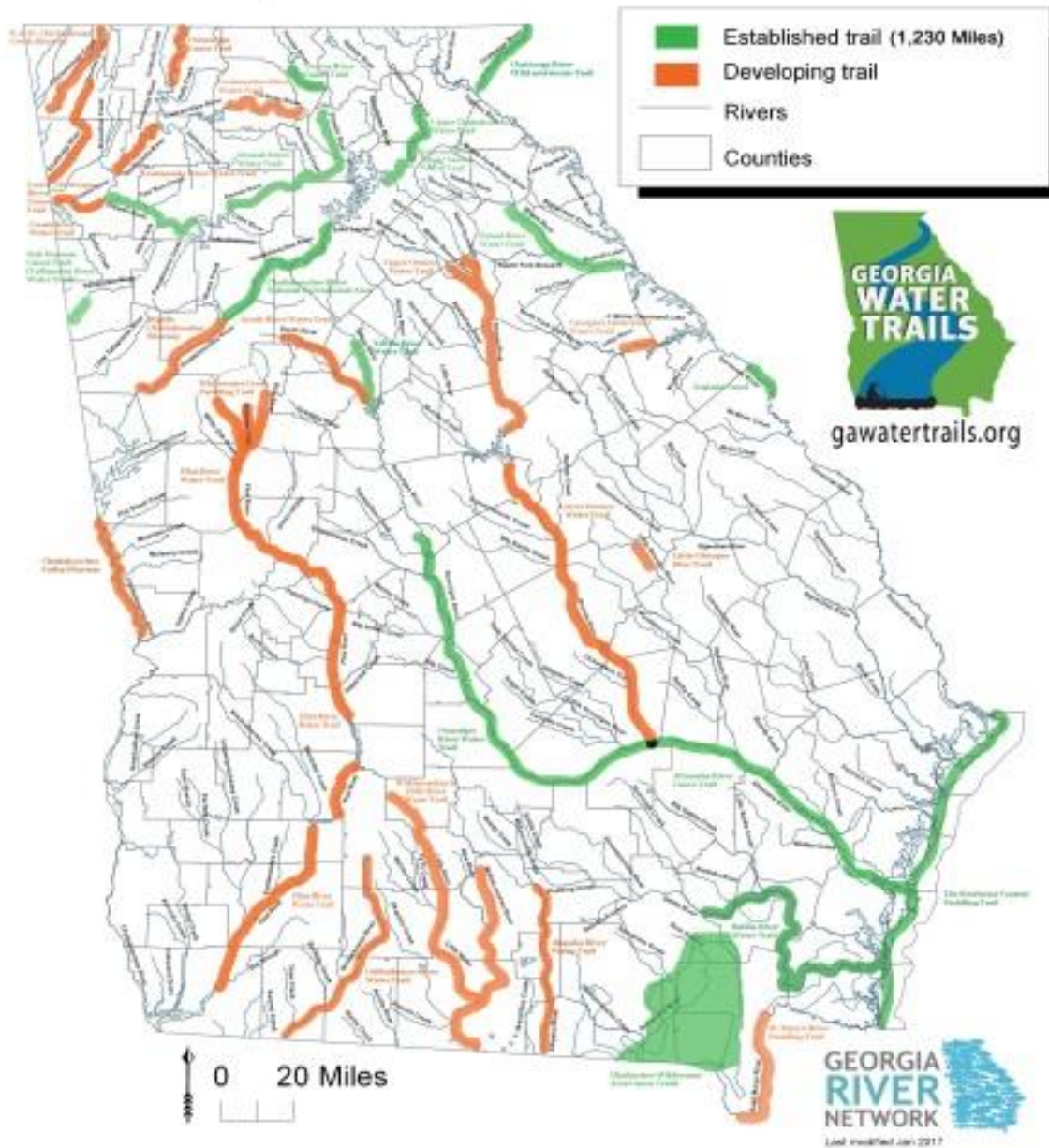
- Educate local governments to ensure soil erosion, sedimentation and pollution control measures and practices conform to the minimum requirements outlined by the Georgia Soil and Water Conservation Service.
- Promote adopt-a-stream activities on all streams not meeting water quality standards.
- Support and promote funding for the study and protection of the region's surface and groundwater resources.
- Participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.



RVRC Staff Sampling Stream for Water Quality

- Celebrate the region’s agricultural heritage by continuing economic assistance efforts to rejuvenate agricultural industries within the region.
- Work with the federal, state, regional, county and city agencies to conserve and enhance our valuable water resources as an economic, recreational and natural asset.

Georgia Water Trails Network



Land Use

Goal

The RVRC will employ both proven and modern planning techniques to encourage and facilitate sustainable development practices, compact development, strong traditional and alternative transportation options, housing choices for all citizens, green space protection/development, et al. These different elements will in turn work together to foster sustainable and healthy communities.

Regional Policies

- Promote the development, adoption and implementation of land use regulations that will result in a fiscally responsible quality living environment.
- Develop design guidelines and make available to local merchants, builders, etc.
- Provide alternative transportation in new development and retrofit for alternative transportation in developed areas.
- Update zoning ordinances to allow mixed uses and higher density development where appropriate.
- Encourage and create innovative design practices that preserve open space.
- The River Valley Regional Commission will work to preserve the region's cultural and historic resources and use these assets to develop and sustain the tourism industry.
- Work with local Land Banks to get properties cleared and back on the tax roll.



Gopher Tortoise: Endangered Species in 15 of the 16 River Valley Counties.



Relict Trillium: Endangered Species in 11 of the 16 River Valley Counties.

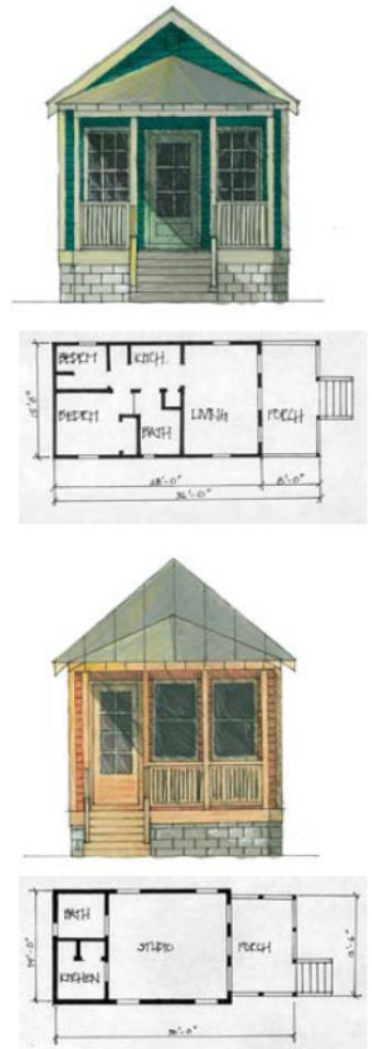
Housing and Neighborhood Development

Goal

The RVRC will promote development of sustainable neighborhoods that provide a variety of housing choices, parks, green space, schools, and retail opportunities interconnected with a well-developed traditional and alternative transportation infrastructure.

Regional Policies

- Educate residents on home ownership. Also 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.
- Promote a higher density and range of housing choices and a variety of dwelling types in all neighborhoods that have appropriate infrastructure.
- Develop in areas already served by municipal or county utilities and streets.
- Change zoning ordinances to accommodate loft living and mother-in-law suites.
- Work with counties and cities in the region to implement residential code enforcement including health and safety standards for manufactured homes.
- Tax manufactured housing as real property where appropriate.
- Utilize federal, state and non-profit rehabilitation loan and grant 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.
- Work with state agencies, federal agencies, and local governments to help preserve existing housing stock and promote the development of quality affordable housing in the region by seeking local, state and federal funding.
- Develop a regional code enforcement and building inspection program.



Examples of Historically Appropriate Affordable Housing

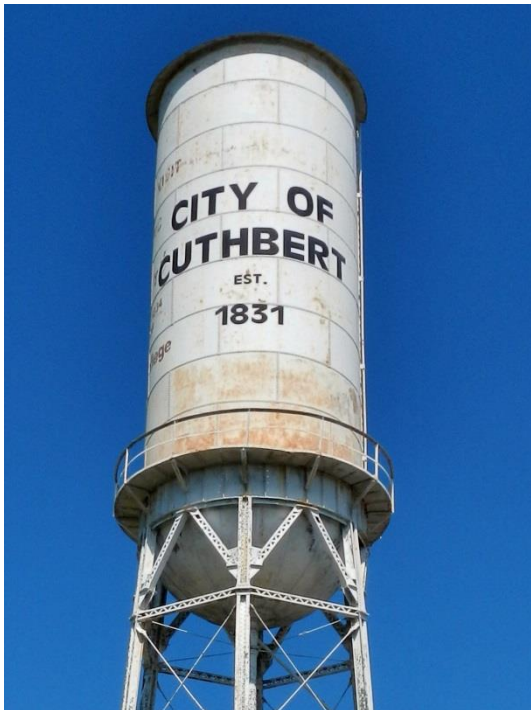
Community Facilities and Services

Goal

The RVRC will work to ensure the provision of community facilities and services throughout the region to support efficient growth and development patterns that will protect and enhance the quality of life for all the region's residents.

Regional Policies

- Conduct infrastructure and facility expansions assessment to support future demands.
- Keep Hazard Mitigation Plans current to help ensure continued protection of public health and safety.
- Use existing facility systems to direct growth to appropriate areas.
- Utilize state, federal, and local funding sources to fund infrastructure projects, (e.g. water, sewer, gas, streets, parks) for city and county governments.
- Work with local telecommunication provider to identify telecommunication needs and enhance the level of telecommunication services within the Region.
- Pursue Broadband access throughout the region.



Cuthbert Water Tower



Transportation

Goal

By encouraging proper maintenance and efficient expansion of existing transportation infrastructure and development of alternative transportation options, the RVRC will promote a varied and versatile transportation system within communities and the region.

Regional Policies

- Concentrate activities where possible. Encourage pedestrian and transit travel by creating ‘nodes’ of high density, mixed development that are linked by convenient transit service. Retain strong downtowns and CBD’s by concentrating commercial activities in these areas.
- Encourage shared parking.
- Create a network of well-connected lots, blocks streets and paths. Keep streets narrow and use traffic calming measures to minimize vehicle speeds.
- Participate in and support the regional transit system.
- Identify potential transportation programs to meet public transportation needs.
- Work with local governments, state agencies and federal agencies to implement TIA and other programs to improve the transportation network in the region.
- Assist local government’s efforts with RC staff support, including GIS support, to receive state and federal funding to provide and maintain transportation and facility infrastructure capable of meeting community needs.
- Promote initiatives aimed at the development and implementation of alternative transportation options as a means of increasing connectivity, walkability, bike-ability, and health.



Example of Pedestrian and Bicycle Pathway



Example of a Sharrow for bicycle paths



Americus Bike to Work Day

- Provide alternative transportation in new development and retrofit transportation infrastructure in existing developed areas.
- Assist local governments to improve existing rail lines in the region to allow for freight and passenger trains.
- Pursue high-speed rail linkage between Columbus and Atlanta.

Economic Development

Goal

Develop the People Resources of the Region. Sustain and Improve the Land Assets of the Region.

Regional Policies

- Provide quality, genuine places and experiences for visitors.
- Assist the Workforce of the region gain the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for regional jobs in the 21st Century.
- Support the Recruitment, Retention and Expansion of Businesses in the region.
- Assist the region in sustaining and improving Quality of Life.
- Foster Community Leadership.
- Support Agriculture.
- Improve Infrastructure.
- Support Main Street and Downtown Improvements.
- Improve Housing Stock.
- Maintain environmental integrity in the region.
- Market the Revolving Loan Fund programs throughout the region.



Main Street Downtown Americus



Agritourism in South Georgia

Workforce Development

Goal

The Middle Flint Workforce Development area will provide educational and training opportunities to eligible individuals to increase knowledge and skill levels that can lead to personal self-sufficiency and meeting the needs of business and employers. Collaborate with the businesses and employers to identify their needs and coordinate with area community resources (Technical Colleges, Universities, Colleges, etc...) To align educational, programs of study, and training services to meet those needs. By increasing educational and skills levels, the area seeks to attract new business and industry into the local area to provide more available job opportunities.

Regional Policies

- Improve educational and skill levels to provide more job opportunities.
- Provide array of services that is valuable to customers and employers to meet their needs.
- Collaborate with partners, economic development agencies, employers, community resources to develop a workforce system that is responsive to employers and individuals.
- Promote awareness of educational opportunities and occupational skilled trades, demand and growth job sectors to prepare individuals for employment. Utilizing labor market information and data as a tool to make informed decisions.
- Provide work based learning opportunities for individuals with barriers to employment and limited work experience to improve skill levels.



LPN student training



Technical College student learning HVAC repair

Education

Goal

By fostering programs and initiatives that aim to increase educational opportunities within the region, the RVRC will promote increased educational attainment among citizens of the region, which will lead to a stronger workforce, greater economic development opportunities, and opportunities to attract new citizens to the region, resulting in more sustainable and healthy communities.

Regional Policies

- Work with local and school officials, colleges, chambers of commerce, etc. to develop programs/activities to elevate the region's educational attainment to a level comparable with the State of Georgia.
- Participate with agencies to develop workforce-training activities.



Health and Human Services

Goal

The AAA ADRC – Aging and Disability Resource Connection will collaborate with community organizations to create and sustain a livable community that promotes health and well-being for older adults and disabled. This will be achieved through information, education, and accessibility to services and resources.

Regional Policies

- Be consumer oriented in answering the needs and questions to our community and respect the self-worth of all people.
- Have the forethought to be proactive in the evolving future of change.
- Keep the database updated and accurate in providing the best screening and assessments possible.
- Respond to the changing needs of our community and advocate in their behalf.
- Actively pursue new partnerships and continue to establish trust and commitment from those in existence.
- Promote the use of prevention benefits in securing a healthy future and in ensuring everyone has the opportunity to “Age in Place.”
- Strive for excellence.
- The River Valley AAA continually stays abreast of the core values of the Division of Aging Services and the Administration on Aging. These values are incorporated into our principles providing the roadmap as we strive to live and age well.



RVRCAAA Staff at a Health Fair.



RVRCAAA Staff Teaching Tai Chi.

Regional Cooperation

Goal

The RVRC will foster cooperation between neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. This may be achieved by actively participating in regional organizations, identifying joint projects that will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer, or developing collaborative solutions for regional issues.

Regional Policies

- Update Service Delivery Strategies to help ensure the efficient delivery of services.
- Share information between local governments to enhance efficiency.
- Train local government officials through opportunities offered by the Carl Vinson Institute, Georgia Municipal Association, Association of County Commissioners of Georgia, Georgia Planning Association, Georgia Association of Zoning Administrators or others to enhance their leadership abilities.



River Valley Regional Commission, monthly council meeting

REGIONAL NEEDS, OPPORTUNITIES, AND PRIORITIES

RVRC staff together with the regional plan steering committee used information gathered from community comprehensive plans, from the online survey, from listening sessions held around the region, and from the steering committee meetings to develop the regional needs and opportunities. The RVRC Council then utilized an audience response system to vote on the needs and opportunities that they felt should be the priorities of the Commission during the next five years.

This section groups the identified needs and opportunities into eight (8) categories. Each category has an overarching regional policy followed by the list of needs and opportunities and, finally, by the highlighted priorities.

Economic Development

To achieve a growing and balanced economy, consistent with the prudent management of the region's resources, that equitably benefits all segments of the population.

Needs

- Lack of affordable housing
- Infrastructure deficiencies
- Lack of labor force training opportunities
- Lack of community amenities
- Vacant main streets, town centers and/or shopping
- Declining industries
- Lack of access to capital
- Flight of younger generation from the region
- Ineffective existing government
- A well trained workforce
- Access/proximity to markets
- Renewable energy potential
- Strong existing businesses
- Effective economic development organization
- Place-based economic incentives
- Technology/communications
- Quality local/regional school system
- Housing options

Opportunities

- Transportation network
- Raw materials/natural resources
- Tourism assets
- Strong community leadership
- Local health care facilities
- Attractive, livable communities
- Available Land
- Tourism attractions, including agritourism
- Attractive quality of life
- Availability of water resources
- Access to transportation, air, highway, rail

Regional Priorities

- Diversify and Strengthen the Region’s Economy.
- Provide Quality, Genuine Places and Experiences for Visitors.
- Train the Regional Workforce.

Housing and Neighborhood Development

To ensure that all residents of the region have access to adequate and affordable housing.

Needs

- More stick-built homes instead of mobile homes
- Dilapidated property (often heir property)
- Need a regional land bank
- Affordable housing in good shape
- Too few rental units
- Code enforcement
- Lack of jobs perpetuates substandard housing conditions
- Positive growth from BRAC
- Better job opportunities bring better housing options
- Lack of money
- Lack of people
- Lack of jobs
- Generational cycle of problems
- Lack of knowledge
- Absentee owners

Opportunities

- Affordable
- Variety--Rental or Owner-occupied
- Character variety of neighborhoods within cities
- Land banks (Muscogee & Sumter)
- Good housing programs (Vienna)
- Land is reasonably priced
- Quality development of waterfront property around the region’s lakes
- Land bank
- Regional building inspector to improve condition of housing stock
- Cheap and vacant land
- Regional Housing Authority
- Reforestation opportunities
- Farm-to-table
- Rehab and demolition programs
- Code enforcement
- Homeowner education
- Housing programs
- GICH
- Partnerships with Habitat for Humanity

Regional Priorities

- Provide Safe, Standard, and Affordable Housing Options for All Residents of the Region.

Community Facilities and Services

To ensure the provision of community facilities and services within the region to support efficient growth and development patterns that will protect and enhance the quality of life of the region's residents.

Needs

- Age of infrastructure
- Small lots (prevent septic/well)
- Some places cannot afford public sewage, and not enough people to support
- Small local governments
- Non-participation
- No cooperation
- Lack of fiber optic network
- Lack of rural broadband
- Keeping membership in volunteer Fire Departments
- Lack of fire stations in some rural areas.
- Old sewer/water infrastructure
- Ems is challenged by hospital distance
- Education
- Decline in population
- Skewed demographics- large senior citizen population
- Lack of money
- Lack of education (Pre-K – 12)
- Lack of people
- Loss of federal money

Opportunities

- Amount of natural gas
- Faith-based organizations
- Volunteer Fire Departments
- State Parks
- Andrew College
- SOWEGA STEM
- Lake Walter F. George
- Façade work in Richland
- Randolph County Welcome Center
- Purchasing of housing by hunters
- Broadband (rural; possibly EMC run)
- RV park
- Housing for hunters and families
- New programs at Andrew College
- Albany Tech

Regional Priorities

- Improve Broadband/Internet Capacity.
- Improve Old or Inadequate Infrastructure Systems.
- Provide a Diverse Offering of Recreation Options for All Ages.

Transportation System

To ensure the coordination of land use planning and transportation planning throughout the region in support of efficient growth and development patterns that will promote sustainable economic development, protection of natural and cultural resources and provision of adequate and affordable housing.

Needs

- East to West linkages need help
- Rural transit connections
- Macon County = no four lane access
- Passing lanes on two lane
- Commuter rail
- Condition of rail lines
- Bridges
- Lack of usage of Pataula transit
- Signage on Hwy 27
- Condition of rail
- Lack of money
- State and National funding
- Stresses on existing infrastructure
- Lack of funds
- Cooperation among local governments and GDOT
- Prepare for new TSPLOST vote

Opportunities

- Road network= good roads
- Easy access to airports
- Inland port
- Active rail lines
- North to South links= good
- Rural transit services
- I-185 and I-75
- Bike routes = Great
- Bus systems
- Every county covered by Safe Routes to School
- Pataula transit authority
- 4-lane of Hwy 27
- Commuter Rail
- T-SPLOST
- Vacant land around inland port
- Expand the bike routes
- Publicizing/marketing of transit routes and how to use it
- Bike/Pedestrian plan
- New signage

Regional Priorities

- Road Maintenance and Expansion.
- Increase Awareness of Rural Transit Options.
- Support Continuation of a Regional TSPLOST.

Natural Resources, Cultural Resources, and Land Use

To conserve and protect the environmental, natural and cultural resources of the region's communities ensuring efficient growth and development patterns that will promote sustainable economic development and provision of adequate and affordable housing.

Needs

- Lack of infrastructure
- Lack of Code Enforcement
- Heir properties/ Absentee owners
- Absentee land owners
- Heir properties
- Lack of industrial parks
- Lack of sewer/water in groundwater recharge areas
- Lack of skilled workers for rehab of buildings
- Heir property/ Absentee owners
- Population decline
- Sprawl
- Rural areas
- Funding
- More engagement from local residents

Opportunities

- Lots of land
- Inexpensive
- Variety of topography
- Beautiful viewsheds
- Unique downtowns= Revitalization
- State and National Parks
- Rivers
- Wildlife Areas
- Ag/Forestry (Weyerhaeuser)
- Arts council
- Art gallery
- Good historic buildings
- Historic preservation council in Randolph
- Festivals
- Regional Land Banks
- Regional Code Enforcements
- Housing
- Festivals/tourism
- Driving tours
- Rehab of historic buildings

Regional Priorities

- Preservation of Prime Agricultural/Forestry Lands.
- Grow the Agricultural Resources in the Region.
- Protection of Groundwater Recharge Area/Aquifer.
- Maintain Environmental Integrity in the Region.
- Update Ordinances, Land Use Regulations, and Guidelines.
- Protection of Historic Neighborhoods and Buildings.

Health and Human Services

To ensure that all regional 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 fully participate in the community.

Needs

- Improve local Medical and Dental care
- Reduce, and where possible eliminate, high rates of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, gang and criminal activity, and abuse of prescribed and illicit drugs.
- The long-term decline in population and economic conditions along with the presence of hospitals in larger adjoining communities has contributed to the loss of access to local health care facilities.
- Lack of medical care services available after business hours in rural areas
- Increase public knowledge of Health and Wellness programming and activities in the region
- Increase public knowledge of Outpatient Dietitian services and Health and Wellness programming at regional clinics
- More partners and training for partners to reach senior citizens
- Recruitment of internal medicine and primary care providers to offer disease management
- Create fitness programs and opportunities for healthy activities and educate parents and children on exercise and healthy life choices
- Greater access to health department services; extended hours/expanded outreach

Opportunities

- Emergency or Urgent Medical Care Facilities
- Existing health care infrastructure (SGRMC and West Georgia Public Health Department) for public health care and dietary programs
- Home health and transit services for the elderly
- Develop program/partners to perform minimum home repair/handicap ramps for senior citizens

Regional Priorities

- Create a Statewide Focus on Reaching Underserved Persons.
- Expand Efforts to Support Individuals to Remain in Their Desired Residence as Long as Possible.
- Increase Professional Capacity of Georgia's Aging Network to Better Meet the Needs of Family Caregivers and At-Risk Adults.

Educational Opportunities

Make educational and training opportunities readily available to enable all residents in the region 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.

Needs

- Greater community support for strong tutoring and mentoring programs to keep children in school through graduation, subsequent completion of a technical and/or college education and promotion of GED
- The community has a poor perception of the quality of local education and as a result is not supportive of the system.
- There is a local need for additional secondary and post-secondary educational opportunities better tuned to local career training.
- Much of the adult population is not computer literate
- Increase education attainment levels and reduce the dropout rate
- Coordination of program initiatives with local colleges and universities
- Continue to support the GED program
- Encourage parental involvement in schools by assisting the Boys and Girls Club, Family Connections and other civic organizations
- Established workforce training programs in local schools
- Determine future needed workforce skills
- The legacy of low educational attainment has hindered efforts to recruit higher-paying industries because of the more highly skilled work force they demand and require. However, the community has an adult education infrastructure, highly performing two year, four- year, and university level post-secondary education institutions to facilitate improvement in educational attainment.

Opportunities

- The community has access to numerous ‘out-of-town’ sources of post-secondary education.
- Partnerships between schools, businesses and civic organizations to create internship/ mentorship/job training opportunities
- Continue support of the Town and Gown program
- Encourage partnerships between schools, businesses and civic organizations to create internship/mentorship opportunities
- Support the establishment of a College and Career Academy
- Improve on the job training opportunities/career pathways to encourage students to stay following graduation
- Communicate and publicize available jobs
- Expand after-school programs
- Promote greater involvement/expand mentoring program (Scouting, Junior Achievement)
- Continued GED/adult literacy offerings
- Increased support for Family Connections programs

Regional Priorities

- Educate the Region’s Workforce.

Regional Cooperation

To encourage local governments to cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. This may be achieved by the following: actively participating in regional organizations; identifying joint projects that will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer; and/or developing collaborative solutions for regional issues.

Needs

- More and better citizen participation
- Scheduled, joint meetings of local elected bodies
- Local, public entity websites maintained with current information
- Utilize current technology including social media to engage the community in council/commission meetings, planning efforts, and civic volunteering opportunities
- Stay abreast of Fort Benning activities and programs. Manage development in military base buffer areas
- Better coordination with E-911 services and invoicing/receiving payment from neighboring communities using this service.
- Coordinate closely with neighboring counties and cities to meet the State and Federal storm water management requirements.
- Water availability and impact of development on local and regional infrastructure systems and natural and cultural resources.
- Cost of transportation and development of mass transit in areas outside of Columbus/ Muscogee County.
- Align elected officials, local government staff, community based organizations and citizen leaders around implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Keep line of communication open with neighboring jurisdictions.
- Improved communication with citizens.
- Actively participate in regional planning efforts.

Opportunities

- Mutually beneficial relationship with Fort Benning
- Greater public recognition and appreciation of community achievements, success
- Additional opportunities for organized, scheduled constituent/government conversation
- With projected growth for area counties and cities; an opportunity exists for communities to develop stronger working relationships and to share resources when necessary
- Increase the number of business/civic leadership meetings held annually
- Service Delivery Strategy will need to be updated as part of the Comprehensive Plan process.
- Maintain the existing city, county, Chamber of Commerce, and Authority partnerships on projects that cross jurisdictional lines to insure cost-effective use of resources
- Continue to work with regional entities on leadership and economic development
- Participate in the semi-annual Tribal Consultation facilitated by Fort Benning.
- Regular meetings between decision-making entities: county, city, local boards, commissions and authorities
- Hold regularly scheduled local government town hall meetings

Regional Priorities

- Create a Balanced Sustainable Region.



Middle Chattahoochee Water Planning Council



Upper Flint Water Planning Council

Regional Land Use Defining Narrative

The Regional Development Map was developed by combining the Regionally Important Resources Map, the Areas Requiring Special Attention Map and utilizing local comprehensive plan information, aerial photography, RVRC staff and citizen knowledge. The aforementioned resources were used to define four regional future development land use patterns: Developed, Developing, Conservation, and Rural. These resources were also used to further define the future development patterns by addressing areas requiring special attention within the River Valley region.

Regional Development Pattern Descriptions

Developed

Areas exhibiting increasingly dense development patterns and where higher levels of public services (i.e. water, sewer, etc.) are already being provided.

In general, developed areas in the rural portions of the River Valley region include all areas within the city limits in each town or city. Within these areas, the greatest issue will be to encourage revitalization and renovation of existing structures. This will serve to both capitalize on the existing infrastructure, and to curb sprawling development patterns along the rural/urban fringes. Infill and redevelopment of existing structures add value to infrastructure, public facilities, and neighborhoods. Utilizing the existing lots, blocks, and streets of River Valley's rural communities and major cities minimizes the need for the expansion of water, sewer, and street construction, which is critical in maintaining a community's urban core. By focusing on infill development as well, communities will be better equipped to protect rural lands, and maintain their agricultural heritage.

Developing

Areas that will exhibit increasingly dense development patterns and will require provision of new public services (i.e. water, sewer, etc.).

Developing areas are land areas that will likely become urbanized and require the provision of new urban services (i.e. water, sewer, etc.) during the next twenty years. Developing areas in non-metropolitan areas of the region are adjacent to city/town limits, along major federal and state transportation routes, and intersections with major and minor collector roads. The City of Columbus is the region's largest metropolitan area. The metropolitan growth area of the City of Columbus extends north to the Harris County line and east to the Talbot County line. Growth pressures in Columbus come from a number of fronts: the expansion of Columbus State University and existing manufacturing businesses, development in the hospitality industry, and the growing financial and insurance industries. In addition, Harris County faces increased residential, commercial, and industrial development due to the Kia automotive plant and its suppliers located in the northwestern portion of the county. Other growth areas in the region are the City of Cordele, which will face development pressure related to the continued growth and success of the inland port. As more and more goods are shipped through the area, the population is expected to rise, as workers will be needed to operate the facility move to the area. As a result, the highway corridor along I-75 through Dooly and Crisp County is expected to develop further. In addition, the highway corridor running east/west on US 280 will also experience greater traffic and continued development. These two corridors should be given special attention, perhaps with corridor management plans to effectively handle the growth. In general, future development with access to public water and sewer should be primarily nodal, higher-density development with mixed-use residential, appropriate businesses and access to public facilities like schools, recreational facilities, pedestrian/bicycle facilities, and employment. A new development should not only have inter-connectivity but intra-connectivity with other new developments.

Rural

Areas not expected to become developed or require increased provision of public services.

Rural areas are characterized by sparsely developed non-urban areas where the land is primarily used for agriculture, forestry, very low density residential, or open spaces. The rural areas identified on the Projected Development Map encompass 2,378,120 acres of the River Valley area, or 70% of the total 3,403,045 acres in the region. Many of the River Valley counties have water lines extended into areas defined as rural. However, this fact alone does not mean that

those areas with municipal/county water supply will develop over the next twenty years. Local efforts are needed to maintain the rural character of the River Valley Region. Counties are encouraged to protect rural areas by promoting scenic corridor protection; rural landscapes (i.e. landscaping buffers along roadways) tree preservation plans and sign control in scenic areas.

Conservation

Areas to be preserved in order to protect important regional resources or environmentally sensitive areas of the region.

Conservation and Development Map areas to be preserved in order to protect important regional resources or environmentally sensitive areas of the RVRC Region include: the Chattahoochee River Corridor and Oak Bin Pond. A portion of Upatoi Creek is also defined as conservation (See Appendix: Data Analysis and Mapping for Composite Regionally Important Resources Map). The Flint River Corridor is depicted as conservation in the Conservation and Development Map as is Lake Blackshear.

Next to the river corridors are many Georgia State Parks and a few Federal Parks. These facilities are listed in our Regionally Important Resources Plan and are listed on the River Valley Conservation and Development Map. Next to the Chattahoochee River Corridor you will find the Blanton Creek WMA. Standing Boy Creek State Park, Florence Marina State Park, Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge and George T. Bagby State Park. Along the Flint River Corridor conservation areas include Sprewell Bluff Recreation Area, Big Lazer Creek WMA/PFA, Montezuma Bluffs Natural Area, Flint River WMA, and Georgia Veterans Memorial State Park. Other areas listed as conservation include FDR State Park, Fall Line Sandhill Natural Area, Hannahatchee Creek WMA, Jimmy Carter NHS, Andersonville NHS, and Providence Canyon Recreation Area.

The Conservation and Development Map also depicts a greenway corridor that extends from the southwest corner of the Chattahoochee River to the northeast culminating at the Flint River. This greenway system accounts for approximately 20% of the region's land area and has been identified as among the nation's greatest concentrations of biotic diversity. These green linkages connect natural and cultural resources together and form the basis for a green infrastructure network. These corridors connect large areas of highly diverse ecosystems and existing parks, preserves, or natural, cultural, recreational sites. This area includes RIR resources such as wetlands, river and stream corridors, flood plains, and ground water recharge areas of high pollution susceptibility, and endangered species habitat. These natural resources are all listed as part of the Southeastern Ecological Study done in the 1970's. These areas are too vast and diverse at this point and time to list individually. These areas also currently have Federal

protection (wetlands) and state/local protection via ordinances or policy guidance as adopted by local jurisdictions, and provide a layer of protection.

The Greenway Corridor area also has several owners that hold very large tracks of land, that are currently used for agricultural and timber purposes, where hopefully some portions of their land could be used together to help create a Chattahoochee River to the Flint River Greenway network. In the future, areas within this greenway network will be further prioritized for conservation and coupled together to create a more defined greenway network.

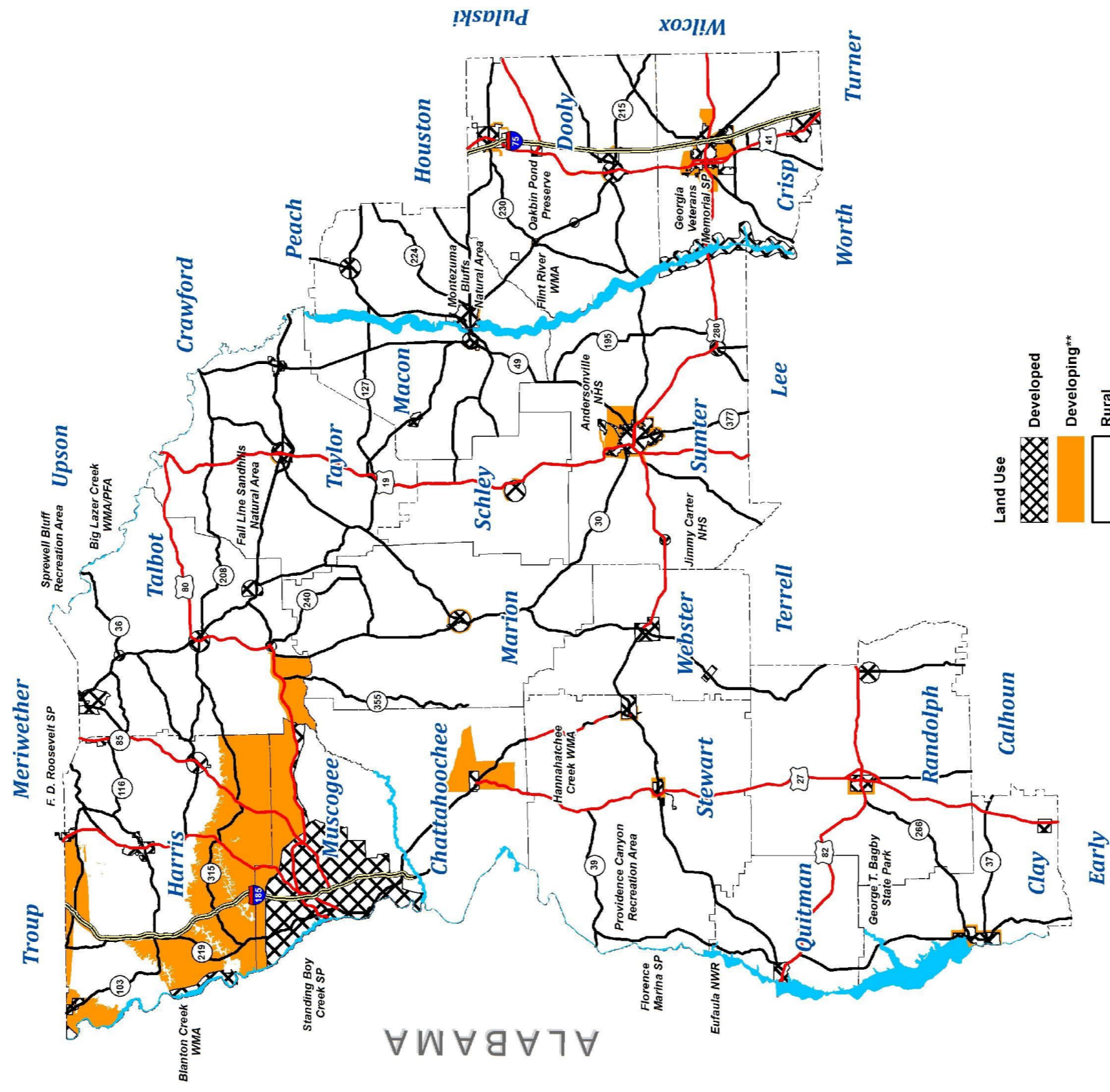


Chattahoochee River



Spider Shoal Lilies on the Flint River

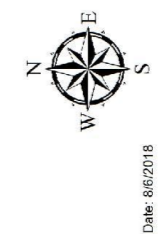
River Valley Regional Commission Region's Regional Land Use Map



Land Use

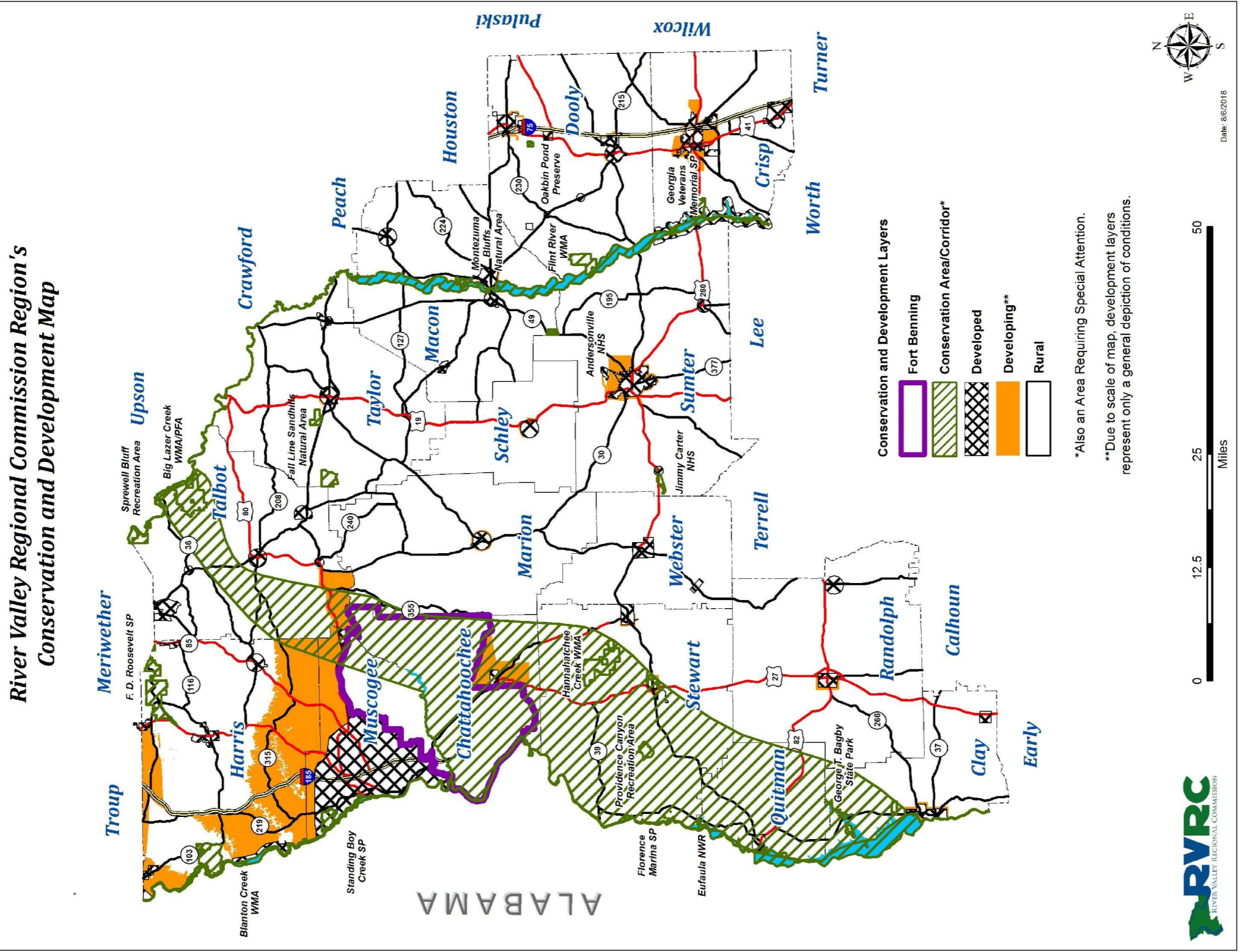
- Developed
- Developing**
- Rural

*Also an Area Requiring Special Attention.
 **Due to scale of map, development layers represent only a general depiction of conditions.



Date: 8/6/2018

Regional Land Use Map



Areas Requiring Special Attention Defining Narrative

Threatened Regionally Important Resources

Vision: Maintain a harmonious, mutually beneficial visual, physical, and economic relationship between development activities and the natural and cultural Regionally Important Resources of the River Valley Region.

The River Valley Region's natural resources are a vital part of the economy, history, and future of this area and should be cherished. The environmental and natural resources within the region include national parks, protected rivers, lakes, and wildlife management areas. These areas are not only valuable to the region, but are also susceptible to damage caused by different human activities.

The large areas of undisturbed vegetation and natural habitats found throughout the River Valley Region improve the environmental health of the area in a variety of ways, such as providing sun and wind protection, mitigating stormwater runoff and reducing flooding, and improving air quality by reducing carbon dioxide and releasing oxygen into the atmosphere. These areas also play a large role in the quality of life for the residents of the region. Parks and recreational areas not only provide access to the natural beauty of the region, but also serve as an important contributor to the local tourism industry by drawing visitors and residents alike, which in turn contributes to the economy of the region.

The region's natural resources need to be protected, not only for their value to the ecological and environmental health of the region, but also as a way of protecting the heritage and character of the River Valley Region. Ensuring the protection of lands located in environmentally sensitive areas from encroaching development or growth will allow these areas to continue to contribute to the health of the region and be available for recreational use by future generations.

The Regionally Important Resources included on the Threatened Regionally Important Resources map include one area located north of Ft. Gaines along the Chattahoochee River, two overlapping areas in Harris County along the Chattahoochee River and one area in Montezuma where a developing area meets the Flint River. The aforementioned areas are depicted on the Threatened Regionally Important Resources Map.

The following best management practices are recommended, as applicable, for use by developers and landowners when designing and developing sites located around Regionally Important Natural Resources identified in this section.

- Appropriate land uses include: Agriculture, Low-density single-family residential.
- Survey environmental features (topography, soils, hydrology, trees, vegetation, wildlife habitat, historical and cultural sites) in the planning stage to identify sensitive areas and plan for their preservation as parks, trails, or greenbelts.
- Site plans and building designs should be sensitive to the site's natural features, e.g. woodlands, steep slopes, wetlands, floodplains.
- Minimize site clearance, grading, and disturbance to the construction footprint as a way of preserving natural features, e.g. trees, soils that minimize runoff by absorbing precipitation.
- Implement compact and mixed-use development practices to minimize land consumption.
- Link new development to existing, compatible developments appropriately, e.g. trails, greenspace, street network.
- Use riparian or landscaped buffers as natural boundaries separating new development from waterways and protecting on-site wetlands.
- To allow underlying soil to absorb and filter rainfall of pollutants and reduce runoff:
 - Maximize design flexibility for utility services and infrastructure to minimize impervious surfaces, i.e. roofs, pavement.
 - Use porous paving materials wherever possible.
 - Substitute paved turnarounds with vegetated soil.



Example: Walking Trail through wetlands

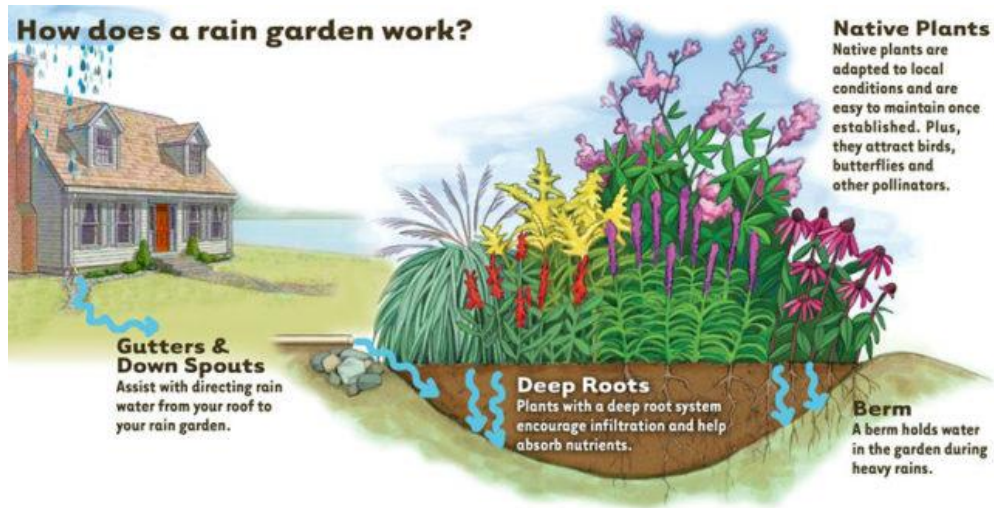


Example: Conservation Subdivision

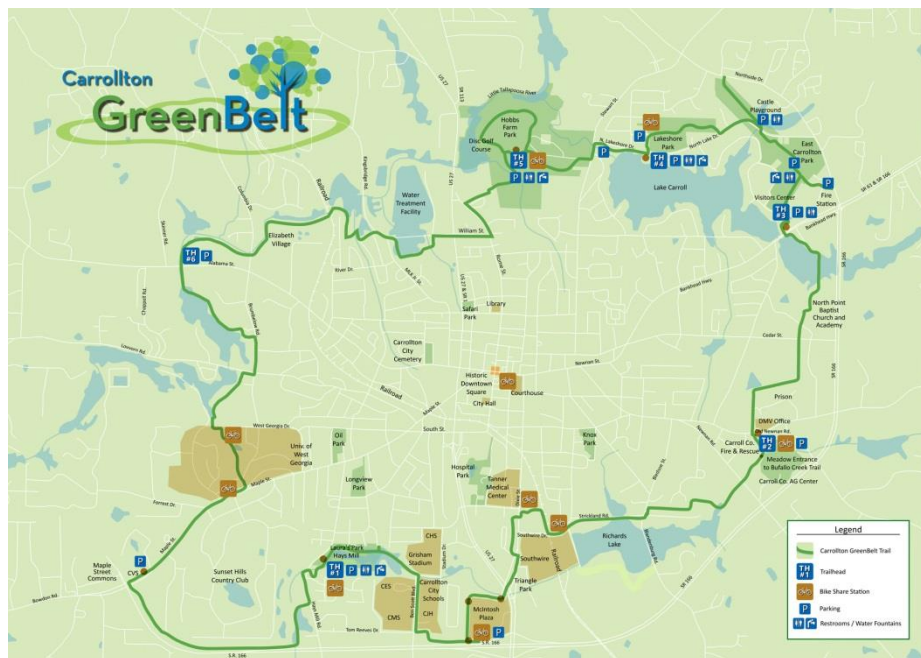


Example Porous Pavers

- Substitute curbs, gutters and drainage pipes with swales.
- Construct bio-retention areas or rain gardens to facilitate rainwater absorption and infiltration of pollutants on-site.
- Reduce parking requirements and street widths to the minimum feasible to minimize site clearance.
- Establish natural landscape buffers along the periphery of the development site.



Example: Diagram of a Rain Garden



Example: Greenbelt Trails Connecting Neighborhoods

Areas of Rapid Development

Vision: Preserve the rural character through open space preservation while providing sufficient designated growth areas of mixed-use residential and commercial development and conservation subdivisions which have access to public water and sewer services.

Areas of Rapid Development are limited to a few locations within the River Valley Region. Rapid development areas can be found in Harris County and in Muscogee County. The growth in both counties has the potential to affect the Chattahoochee River and existing state wildlife management areas. These natural resources are especially vulnerable to the impacts of human activity. The Best Management Practices (BMP) listed below focus on minimizing the adverse environmental impacts that unchecked growth can cause.

The following land uses and Best Management Practices (BMP's) are recommended, as applicable, for use by developers and landowners when designing and developing sites located around Regionally Important Natural Resources identified in this section.

- Single-family residential, multi-family residential, commercial, office, and retail space.
- Survey environmental features (topography, soils, hydrology, trees, vegetation, wildlife habitat, historical and cultural sites) in the planning stage to identify sensitive areas and plan for their preservation as parks, trails, or greenbelts
- Site plans and building designs should be sensitive to the site's natural features, e.g. woodlands, steep slopes, wetlands, floodplains.
- Minimize site clearance, grading, and disturbance to the construction footprint as a way of preserving natural features, e.g. trees, soils that minimize runoff by absorbing precipitation.
- Implement compact and mixed-use development practices to minimize land consumption.



Example: Riparian Buffer

- Link new development to existing, compatible developments appropriately, e.g. trails, greenspace, street network.
- Link new development to existing, compatible developments appropriately, e.g. trails, greenspace, street network.
- Use riparian and landscaped buffers as natural boundaries separating new development from waterways and to protecting on-site wetlands.
- To allow underlying soil to absorb and filter rainfall of pollutants and reduce runoff:
 - Maximize design flexibility for utility services and infrastructure to minimize impervious surfaces, i.e. roofs, pavement
 - Use porous paving materials wherever possible
 - Substitute paved turnarounds with vegetated soil
 - Substitute curbs, gutters and drainage pipes with swales
- Construct bio-retention areas or rain gardens to facilitate rainwater absorption and infiltration of pollutants on-site.
- Reduce parking requirements and street widths to the minimum feasible to minimize site clearance.
- Establish natural landscape buffers along the periphery of the development site.



Example: Typical Subdivision Site Plan



Example: Conservation Subdivision Site Plan



Example: Bioswale

Areas of Redevelopment

Vision: The downtowns of the River Valley Region will be the focal point for the communities, offering a concentration of activities including general retail, professional offices, loft housing, and appropriate public/open space uses that are easily accessible by pedestrians. The town centers will be an attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly place where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing and entertainment. Maintaining the region's downtowns is key to maintaining a unique sense of place and must be protected from architecturally incompatible development.

While there are areas of redevelopment located along the Chattahoochee River in Harris County and Muscogee County, most areas of disinvestment are located within the cities of the River Valley Region. These areas include central business districts, commercial corridors, and residential neighborhoods that are in the process of being revitalized or are in need of improvement.

The communities of the River Valley Region work diligently to target areas of blight and disinvestment. However, the lack of population, lack of government staff, and lack of funds makes the task difficult. Many communities in the region benefit from state and federal programs to assist with redevelopment efforts.

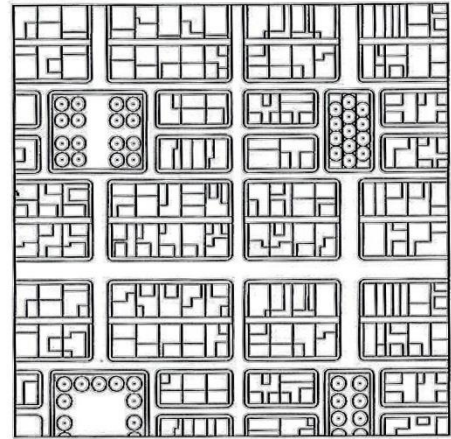
Communities that have adopted Urban Redevelopment Plans include Butler, Cordele (multiple areas), Cuthbert, Richland, Americus (multiple areas), and Vienna. These communities are using the power of public-private partnerships to address blighted areas within their jurisdictions.

The City of Cuthbert and Columbus-Muscogee County are the only communities in the region that have State Opportunity Zone designations. These designations allow potential business owners to not only access, but maximize tax credits for every job created.

Federal Opportunity Zone designations have recently been given to census tracts in eight River Valley Region counties: Crisp, Dooly, Macon, Muscogee, Randolph, Stewart, Sumter, and Taylor. These designations allow businesses and investors in these census tracts to access capital from new sources, Opportunity Funds.

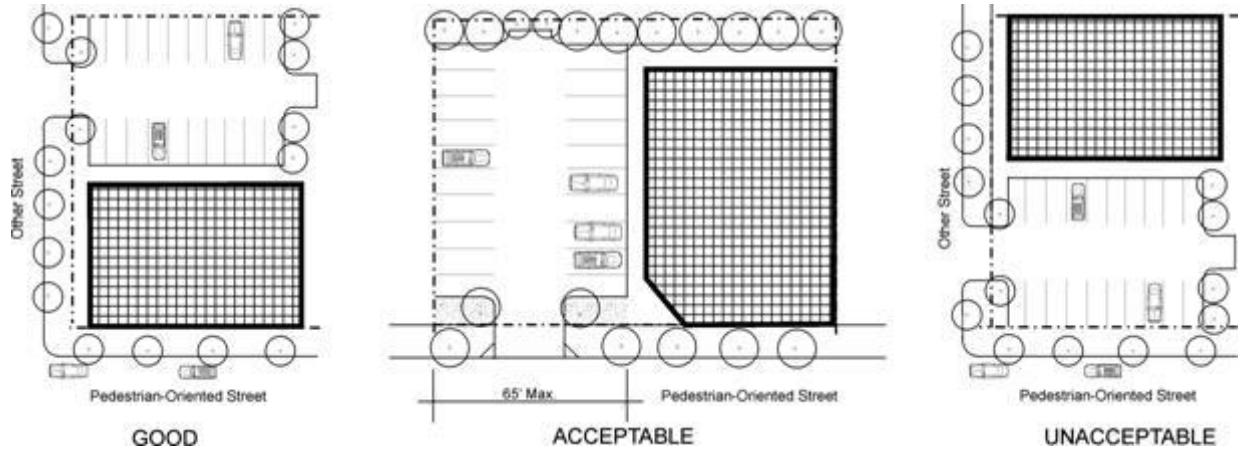
Provided below is a list of appropriate land uses and recommended best management practices for development/redevelopment areas. Recommended practices are also included for redevelopment/development in historic areas and are intended to guide all parties designing development activities around important historic resources.

- Areas targeted for infill development should include the following land uses: mixed residential, commercial, public/institutional, bike/pedestrian facilities, mixed-use, and traditional neighborhoods.
- New infrastructure should be developed in a pattern complimentary to the existing street grid to steer development away from areas of natural, cultural, historic, and environmentally sensitive resources.
- Maintain existing street grid patterns and uniform facade alignment in new construction by orienting new structures at similar setbacks and lot configurations as existing structures, i.e. parallel to lot lines, not at an angle; orienting primary facades toward the street; aligning building front at street edge, etc.
- Preserve the character of historic downtowns by constructing new and infill development similar in appearance in mass and scale to existing historic structures.
- Site plans, building design, and landscaping should be sensitive to the cultural and natural features of the site, such as topography and views, and should employ cluster development practices and techniques to preserve open space.
- The location, materials, and screening of parking areas should minimize visual and environmental impacts of surrounding properties making the areas more attractive and pedestrian-friendly.

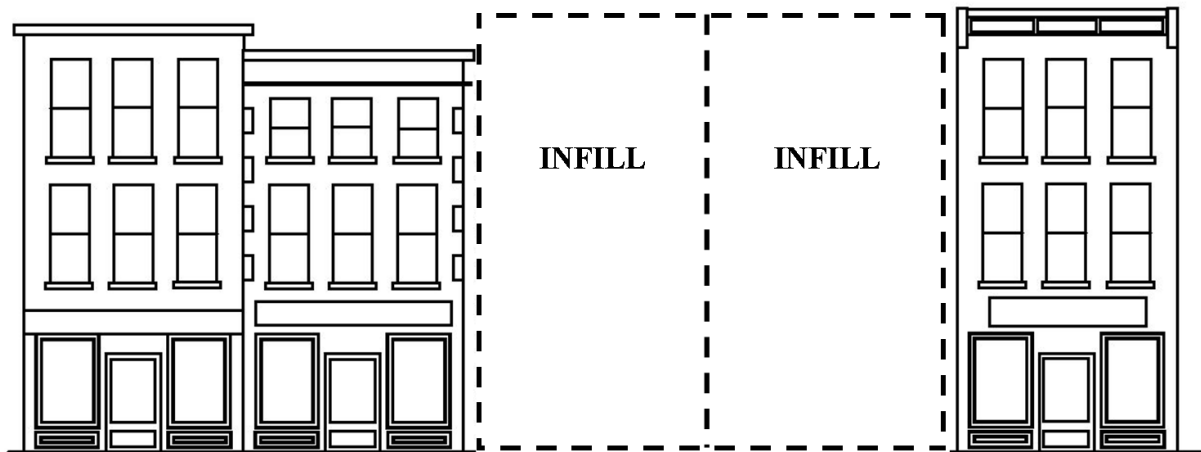


Example: Traditional Downtown Development

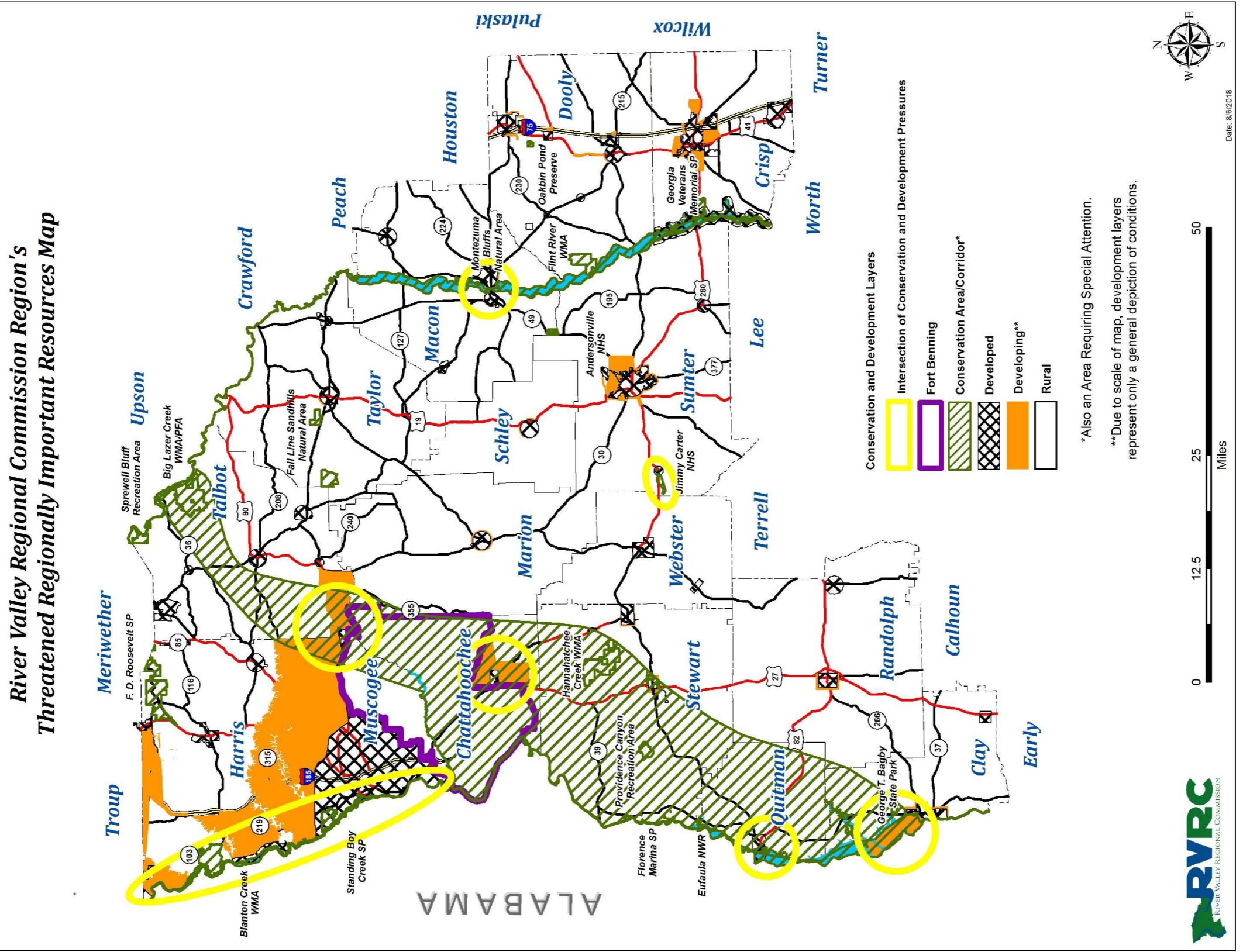
- Take advantage of significant site features, e.g. viewshed, trees, and existing heritage resources, as amenities to blend new, infill, and redevelopment into the historic context.



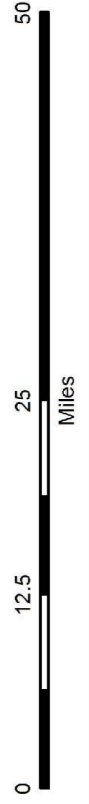
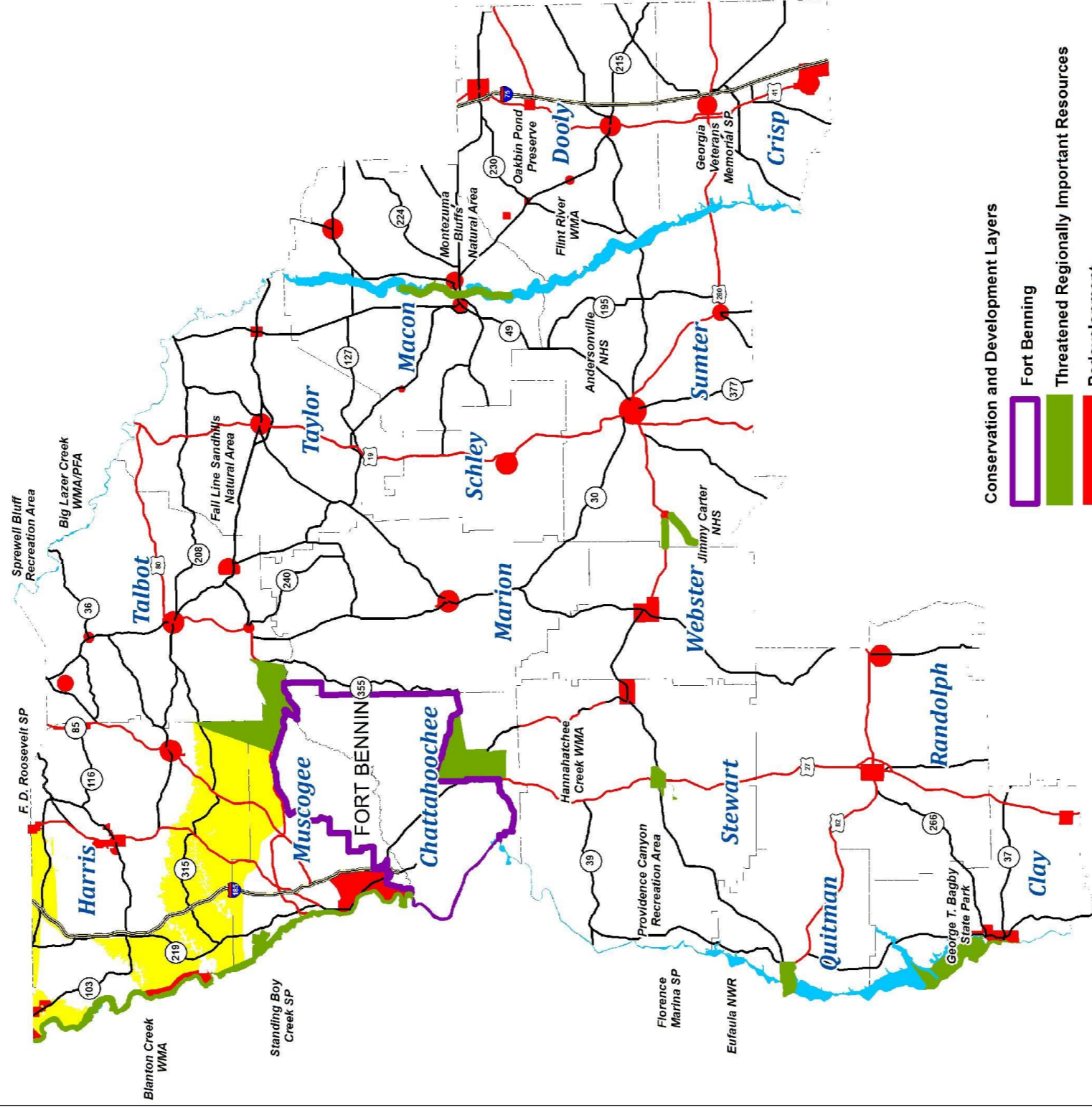
Example: Parking Placement Options for Commercial Buildings



Example: Infill in a historic downtown should have similar verticality to adjacent buildings



River Valley Regional Commission Region's Areas Requiring Special Attention Map



Date: 5/16/2018

REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

Implementation of the regional plan occurs in two parts: through implementation of the Regional Work Program and through adherence to the Local Government Performance Standards. The Regional Work Program (RWP) includes actions the Commission undertakes as a result of state/federal laws and contracts. Other activities in the RWP include Best Management Practices (BMP's) the Commission carries out on behalf of the city and county governments of the region.

The Local Government Performance Standards are divided into Minimum Performance Standards or Excellent Performance Standards. The Minimum Performance Standards are based on laws the Georgia General Assembly has enacted over the last few decades that established minimum required levels for local government capacity and performance. Some of these laws are tier-based (based on number of staff hours worked), while others have universal application. There are also minimum training levels and certifications required as a condition of employment for some local government staff positions.

Beyond these minimum standards are advanced certifications whereby local governments and their personnel receive official recognition for higher proficiencies in pursuit of excellence in local government administration and management. These accreditations are listed as the Excellent Performance Standards. Recognition of local government excellence includes designations such as PlanFirst, WaterFirst, or a Certified Local Government, adoption of Complete Streets policies, participation in the Main Street program, participation in the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing, and implementation of development and/or tax incentive programs. Many of these certifications are required for local governments to be eligible for certain state and federal funds or to receive bonus points on funding applications.

The intent of the Local Government Performance Standards is to ensure a reliable level of service across the region and consistent execution of the Regional Plan.

Local Government Performance Standards

These Performance Standards establish two achievement thresholds, a Minimum Standard and an Excellent Standard. These benchmarks were developed by identifying specific ordinances, programs, or requirements that may be implemented by local governments in order to realize the Regional Vision and/or address the Regional Needs and Opportunities.

Minimum Performance Standards

The region's Minimum Performance Standards provide a base level of local government capacity and performance that contribute to the implementation of the regional plan. The intent is to ensure a consistent and predictable basic level of governance across the region. All local governments in the region are expected to maintain the Minimum Standards found within the regional plan. Jurisdictions are separated into three levels, each with a corresponding set of Minimum Standards. Level 1 jurisdictions are city governments with fewer than 1,000 residents and county governments with fewer than 10,000 residents in the unincorporated areas. Level 2 jurisdictions include city governments with 1,000 – 20,000 residents and county governments with 10,000 – 50,000 residents in the unincorporated areas. Level 3 jurisdictions include city governments with 20,000 residents or more and county governments with 50,000 residents or more in the unincorporated areas.

Level 1 Governments

Level 1 Governments are those cities with fewer than 1,000 residents and those counties with fewer than 10,000 residents. The following activities must be met in order for a local government to achieve the *Minimum Standard* for Level 1 Governments:

- The clerk is certified by the University of Georgia's (UGA) Carl Vinson Institute of Government.
- Newly elected officials are certified by the UGA Carl Vinson Institute of Government.
- The local comprehensive plan has been updated as required by state law and the document is available for public review.
- The service delivery strategy (SDS) has been updated as required by state law and written agreements for these services are on file and available for public review.
- There is an approved solid waste management plan.
- There is an approved pre-disaster hazard mitigation plan as required by the Georgia Emergency Management Agency (GEMA).
- The local government has a general email address and has the ability to send and receive email attachments.

Level 2 Governments

Level 2 Governments are those cities with 1,000 – 20,000 residents and those counties with 10,000 – 50,000 residents. In order to achieve the *Minimum Standards* for a Level 2 Government, all of the performance standards for Level 1 Governments must be met, plus the following:

- The local government has adopted the appropriate Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Part V. Environmental Planning Criteria (Part Two of DCA's Alternative to Zoning Model Ordinance and includes Protection of Groundwater Recharge Areas, Wetlands Protection, and River Corridor Protection).
- The local government has adopted administrative procedures to enforce the state minimum standard building codes (Building, Residential, Fire, Plumbing, Mechanical, Fuel Gas, Electric, and Energy Conservation).
- The local government has adopted subdivision regulations.

Level 3 Governments

Level 3 Governments are those cities with more than 20,000 residents and those counties with more than 50,000 residents. In order to achieve the *Minimum Standards* for a Level 3 Government, all of the performance standards for Level 1 and Level 2 Governments must be met, plus the following:

- The local government has adopted a Unified Planning Work Program in the last twelve months.
- The local government has completed a Congestion Management Process in the last five years.
- The local government has completed a Long Range Transportation Planning Process in the last five years.

Excellent Performance Standards

To achieve the Excellent Performance Standard, local governments must implement an additional performance standard each year. When a local government has implemented at least 60% of the additional performance standards conceivable from each category, (for example if a jurisdiction has no sanitary sewer system or landfill those standards would not apply) no further activities are required to maintain the Standard of Excellence. The performance standards are as follows:

Housing and Neighborhood Development

- The local government has a written housing plan or strategy.
- The local government has a written housing inventory.
- The local government has a written plan for the demolition of unsafe or abandoned properties.
- The local government has a written neighborhood redevelopment plan.

- The local government has a streamlined review process, or otherwise provides incentives to developers, when developments include affordable housing.
- The local government has a housing trust fund to provide a stable source of revenue reserved solely for affordable homes.
- The local government has tax-exempt programs for mixed-income developments and low-income homeowners.
- The local government participates in the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) program.
- The local government zoning ordinance allows very small lot sizes (1/4 acre or smaller) for single-family houses.
- The local government encourages mixed-income housing to attempt to ensure that developments contain some affordable housing.
- Local government staff or elected officials attend housing training annually.

Transportation

- The local government requires sidewalk connectivity.
- The local government encourages traffic calming measures such as raised crosswalks, narrower traffic lanes, fewer lanes, on-street parking, bump-outs, pedestrian refuges, and landscaped medians, etc. in our downtowns and traditional neighborhoods
- The local government requires development of pedestrian facilities, such as sidewalks and walking paths.
- The local government has a pedestrian master plan and a bike plan.
- The local government is a Safe Routes to School partner.
- The local government encourages development of bicycling facilities and amenities such as designated bike lanes and placement of bike racks.
- The local government has a designated path for joggers, bicyclists, and/or pedestrians that serves a valuable purpose for recreation, fitness use, or as a transportation alternative.
- The local government requires connectivity between parking lots where appropriate.
- The local government allows shared parking in commercial areas.
- The local government participates in a public transit program.
- The local government promotes Bike to Work Day Events.
- The local government has adopted a Complete Streets Policy.

Community Facilities and Services

- As required under the Georgia Water Stewardship Act, beginning in July 2012, the local government requires sub-metering in new multi-unit buildings so that each unit receives consumption reports and has incentive to practice conservation measures.
- As required under the Georgia Water Stewardship Act, beginning in January 2011, the local government restricts residential outdoor irrigation to the hours between 4pm to 10am.
- The local government requires 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 in our urban areas.
- The local government has water and/or sewer revenues that adequately cover the maintenance and operation of the systems (see Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Environmental Finance Center.
- The local government is a WaterFirst Community.

Note: The following 12 statements (if the positions apply to the local government) require state mandated minimum levels of training to become certified:

- The local government chief of police is certified.
- The local government downtown development directors (board members) are all certified.
- The local government emergency medical technicians are all certified.
- The local government gas operators are all certified.
- The local government firefighters are all certified.
- The local government landfill operator is certified.
- The local government municipal court judge is certified.
- The local government paramedics are all certified.
- The local government law officers are all certified.
- The local government wastewater lab analyst is certified.
- The local government wastewater operator is certified.
- The local government water operator is certified.
- The local government has a written maintenance and replacement plan for infrastructure (water, sewer, electric, etc).
- The local government has a written utility expansion plan.

- The local government has a written recreation plan.
- The local government has a searchable up-to-date inventory of private wells and septic systems in our jurisdiction.
- The local government requires new development to provide a storm water mitigation and management plan.
- The local government operates utilities as enterprise funds.
- The local government has a capital improvement program (CIP) for improving public facilities.
- The local government makes maintenance of existing infrastructure a priority before extending new infrastructure into additional areas.
- The local government supports youth activities or facilities.
- In some cases, The local government allows manufactured housing to be taxed as real estate and not as personal property.
- The local government reports to the National Fire Incident Reporting System.

Regional Cooperation

- The local government has implemented more than half of the community work program (CWP).
- The local government department heads actively review the comprehensive plan CWP at least three times a year.
- The local government develops the comprehensive plan in conjunction with neighboring local governments.
- The local government plans with local governments outside the county.
- The local government meets with neighboring local governments at least three times a year.
- The local government shares at least one service (water, sewer, police, etc.) with a neighboring local government.
- The local government shares a code enforcement officer.
- The local government has a combined recreation department.
- The local government has a website with general government information.
- The local government actively supports a mentoring or leadership program such as 4-H, F.F.A., etc.
- The local government has a mutual aid agreement with another local government.

Economic Development

- The local government supports or encourages a Buy Local campaign.
- The local government has developed a how-to guide for starting a local business.
- The local government has a website with business information.
- The local government ordinances are available on-line, such as with Municode.
- The local government hosts an annual business resource fair.
- The local government is actively involved with a chamber of commerce.
- The local government has conducted a Business Retention and Expansion Process (BREP) Survey, or an Existing Industry Program (EIP) Survey in the last five years.
- The local government has an Urban Redevelopment Plan.
- The local government participates in the Certified Literate Community Program (CLCP) under the Georgia Department of Technical and Adult Education.
- The local government meets all Certified Literate Community Program (CLCP) county goals.
- At least one local government staff person or elected official has attended the Georgia Academy training offered by the Georgia Academy for Economic Development.
- A local government representative attend annual Economic Development Authority (EDA) training.
- The local government has a written inventory of existing businesses.
- The local government has a written inventory of sites available for commercial and manufacturing.
- The local government is a Main Street Community.
- The local government has an Enterprise Zone or similar program that offers incentives such as tax or fee exemptions to attract new business.
- The local government has an Opportunity Zone (Georgia tax credit program) in the jurisdiction.
- The local government has adopted Tax Allocation Districts.
- The local government is a designated Georgia Rural Zone community.
- The local government has a business incubator program.
- The local government regularly conducts a Labor Market Information (LMI) Analysis to identify industry sectors best suited to our local community's available workforce, and what training options might be required to attract potential employers.

- The local government participates in multi-county economic development efforts.
- The local government meets at least quarterly with an active joint county development authority (JDA).
- The local government has a GDOT designated Scenic Byway.

Land Use

Zoning

- The local government has a zoning ordinance or development code in place.
- The local government zoning ordinance allows accessory housing units by right (mother-in-law suites, carriage houses, garage apartments, etc).
- The local government zoning ordinance allows mixed uses (such as allowing residential and commercial together in the same district).
- The local government zoning ordinance allows planned unit developments (PUDs).
- The local government zoning ordinance accommodates the reuse of closed, decommissioned, or obsolete (greyfields) uses.
- The local government zoning ordinance includes manufactured home compatibility standards that ensure architectural compatibility of manufactured homes with adjacent single-family residences.
- The local government zoning ordinance has a floating or more permissive overlay zone to provide greater flexibility.
- The local government zoning ordinance requires that new infill development is compatible with its neighborhood and maintains the harmony and character of existing areas.

Land Use Regulations

- The local government has subdivision regulations.
- The local government has green space requirements in the subdivision regulations.
- The local government has a landscape and buffer requirement in its land use regulations.
- The local government has a process or procedure to allow construction on existing substandard lots.

Code Enforcement

- The local government has a certified code enforcement officer.
- The local government participates in annual code enforcement training.

Training & Public Involvement

- The local government requires planning commissioners and staff to attend training at least annually.
- The local government has an annual meeting of the planning commission and elected officials.

Design

- The local government encourages road connectivity between adjacent subdivisions for better traffic flow.
- The local government requires sidewalks in new housing developments (subdivisions) over a certain size.
- The local government requires new construction to be at least three feet above FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) designated floodplains.
- The local government has a legal sign ordinance.
- The local government analyzes the financial impacts of growth before allowing residential development (subdivisions) over a certain size.

Geographic Information Systems

- The local government collects and stores geographic information system (GIS) data.
- The local government shares GIS data with other local government entities such as fire and police protection, public works, etc.
- The local government shares GIS data with the public.

Other

- The local government participates 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.
- The local government is a PlanFirst community.

Natural and Cultural Resources

- The local government has adopted the appropriate DNR Part V. Environmental Planning Criteria (Part Two of DCA's Alternative to Zoning Model Ordinance). Including Protection of Groundwater Recharge Areas, Wetlands Protection, and River Corridor Protection.
- The local government organizes or participates in a stream clean-up program such as Adopt-A-Stream or Rivers Alive.

- The local government has a litter prevention ordinance.
- The local government participates in recycling program.
- The local government has locally designated historic properties or districts.
- The local government has an active historic preservation commission.
- The local government participates in the certified local government program of the National Park System.
- The local government has National Register listed properties or districts.
- The local government has and enforces a tree ordinance.
- The local government has a "pay per throw" (unit based or variable rate structure) structure for solid waste disposal so households are charged according to the amount of waste disposed.
- The local government has adopted and enforces design guidelines for new construction.
- The local government provides incentives for green subdivision design, such as conservation or cluster subdivisions.
- The local government requires agricultural buffers where non-agricultural land abuts agricultural land.
- The local government has an area-specific plan (such as a downtown development plan) to address a specific part of its jurisdiction.
- The local government has 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 which areas are best suited to set aside as open space or for development.
- The local government supports a local environmental conservation organization that champions issues.
- The local government is a Keep Georgia Beautiful affiliate.
- The local government provides a staffed collection center for solid waste and recyclables.
- The local government has adopted administrative procedures to enforce the state minimum standard building codes (Building, Residential, Fire, Plumbing, Mechanical, Fuel Gas, Electric, and Energy Conservation).
- The local government has adopted one or more permissive codes (International Property Maintenance Code, or International Existing Building Code).

Evaluation and Monitoring

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs 2017 Standards and Procedures for Regional Planning require the River Valley Regional Commission to ensure the execution of the Regional Plan. In order to appropriately evaluate and monitor progress toward implementation of the Regional Plan, both the Commission and local governments of the region must partner .

As part of the evaluation and monitoring process for the Commission’s performance, staff will annually survey developments in regards to the regional work program and will solicit local government responses to determine whether the regional vision is being implemented effectively, and is having the desired impact on regional development patterns. Based on the results of this survey RVRC staff will identify impediments to execution, possible solutions, and whether amendment(s) to the regional plan are needed.

As part of the evaluation and monitoring process for local government performance, the Commission staff will schedule periodic reviews with each jurisdiction commensurate to the nature and scale of the local government compliance efforts. Checklists and timelines used in the meetings will identify appropriate policies and ordinances to be used to assess progress toward achieving either the minimum or excellent performance standards. Commission staff will document review findings with possible recommendations in written communications to the local government. Additionally, local government progress will be included as part of the agenda at biennial plan assessment meetings held with each local government at the request of the Commission.

Local Government Performance Standards Update

In 2013, the Commission inventoried existing policies and ordinances related to implementation of the Regional Vision and developed a baseline of local governance with which to measure the progress of jurisdictional improvement. As of January 2018, the following local governments have not yet documented compliance with the Minimum Planning Performance Standards established by the RVRC in 2013.

Local Government Performance Standards Update

Local Government	Minimum Performance Standard(s) Not Met	Specific Action Steps taken to Assist Government (Optional: Also, identify resources that may aid LG achievement)
Chattahoochee County	Groundwater Recharge Area Ord Wetlands Protection Ord River Corridor Protection Ord	Provided sample ordinances/reminders
Byromville (Dooly Co)	Groundwater Recharge Area Policies Wetlands Protection Policies	Provided sample policies/reminders
Dooling (Dooly Co)	Groundwater Recharge Area Policies Wetlands Protection Policies	Provided sample policies/reminders
Lilly (Dooly Co)	Groundwater Recharge Area Policies Wetlands Protection Policies	Provided sample policies/reminders
Unadilla (Dooly Co)	Groundwater Recharge Area Ord Wetlands Protection Ord Subdivision Regulations	Provided sample ordinances/reminders Suggested the city work with the county on subdivision regulations and enforcement
Oglethorpe (Macon Co)	Groundwater Recharge Area Ord Wetlands Protection Ord Flint River Protection Ord River Corridor Protection Ord	Provided sample ordinances/reminders
Lumpkin (Stewart Co)	Groundwater Recharge Area Ord Wetlands Protection Ord	Provided sample ordinances/reminders
Richland (Stewart Co)	Groundwater Recharge Area Ord Wetlands Protection Ord	Provided sample ordinances/reminders
De Soto (Sumter Co)	Groundwater Recharge Area Policies Wetlands Protection Policies	Provided sample policies/reminders
Reynolds (Taylor Co)	Groundwater Recharge Area Ord Wetlands Protection Ord Subdivision Regulations Implement State Building Codes	Provided sample ordinances/reminders Suggested the city work with county on subdivision regulations and building codes and contract with county for enforcement of both

Report of Accomplishments

Natural Resources									
Activity	Category	Time Frame	Responsible Party(ies) and Partners	Cost	Funding Source(s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues / Opportunities Addressed	Performance Standard(s) Addressed	Accomplishments CY 2017
1. Educate local elected officials, industries, developers, youth, and the public on the importance of natural resource protection, including scenic views, by utilizing brochures, maps, nature trails, and/or outdoor learning centers.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DCA DNR EPD GDEcD	\$20,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DCA DNR EPD GDEcD	NR.2	CF.I.1 CF.I.9 I.I.1- I.I.2 ED.O.9 I.O.5 LU.O.10 T.O.3 LU.I.2- LU.I.3 LU.O.1	NCRE.15 NCRE.16	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
2. Promote the development of Keep America Beautiful affiliates and regular "Clean-up" campaigns in each county.	Review	2016-2020	Local Gov'ts KAB EPD	\$15,000	Local Gov'ts KAB EPD	NR.3 NR.4	LU.I.1 LU.I.3	L1M.4 NCRE.2 NCRE.3 NCRE.15 NCRE.16	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
3. Promote safe disposal of potential hazardous materials and encourage recycling activities within the Region.	Review	2016-2020	Local Gov'ts KAB EPD	\$15,000	Local Gov'ts KAB EPD	NR.1 NR.5	LU.O.5 CF.I.9	L1M.4 NCRE.4 NCRE.18	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.

4. Assist local governments with development and adoption, as needed, of DNR Part V Environmental Planning Standards.	Planning	2016-2020	Local Gov'ts KAB EPD	\$40,000	Local Gov'ts KAB EPD	NR.1	LU.O.5	L2M.1 NCRE.1	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
5. Market local products to other parts of the state through programs such as Georgia Made, Georgia Grown.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC COC Dev Auth GDEcD USDA	\$12,000 \$1350	Member Dues USDA COC Dev Auth GDEcD USDA	NR.7	ED.O.9 I.O.5		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
6. Support the development of value added processing industries, farmers markets and neighborhood groceries supplied by local farmers to provide fresh food in the region.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC GDAG GDEcD Local HD USDA	\$50,000	Member Dues GDAG GDEcD DCA USDA	NR.7	CF.I.11 LU.O.4 ED.O.9		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

7. Develop ordinances to protect the Chattahoochee and Flint River corridors for proper land use, and implement/enforce the Flint River Drought Protection Act, Flint River Basin Water Development and Conservation Plan, the Georgia Stormwater Management Manual, and Tier 1-4 non-farm water and agricultural conservation practices.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts ACOE Water Councils EPD GDAG GA Conserv TPL	\$50,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts ACOE EPD GDAG GA Conserv TPL	NR.5 NR.6	LU.O.4 LU.I.15 I.I.1		POSTPONED lack of staff and financial resources
8. Support the development of Green Belts along the Flint and Chattahoochee Rivers.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts ACOE DNR GA Conserv TPL	\$40,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts ACOE DNR GA Conserv TPL	NR.5 NR.6	LU.O.10 I.O.2		POSTPONED lack of staff and financial resources
9. Support and promote activities and actions that maintain the navigation of the Chattahoochee River from south Columbus to the Florida state line.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC ACOE GDOT RWS	\$30,000	Member Dues ACOE GDOT	NR.8	LU.I.19		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

10. Identify and assess non-point stressors in watersheds with the objective to monitor and provide data and Best Management Practice strategies to local governments that will reduce sources of pollution.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts EPD EPA	\$60,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts EPD EPA	NR.4 NR.5 NR.8	LU.I.10 LU.I.16 LU.I.20 LU.I.21	CFE.21	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
11. Investigate the feasibility of developing a wetland bank and conservation land program to increase stream buffers in perpetuity.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DNR EPD GA Conserv TPL	\$60,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DNR EPD GA Conserv TPL	NR.1 NR.6 NR.8	H.O.7 LU.I.19 LU.O.4	LUE.11	NOT COMPLETE No known activity during period. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.
12. Encourage studies to improve water resource management information, water return ratios for land application and septic systems, modeling scenarios under extreme conditions.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts Water Councils EPD	\$50,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts EPD	NR.5	LU.I.16 LU.I.19- LU.I.21 I.I.2		NOT COMPLETE No known activity during period. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.
13. Evaluate storage options for flow augmentation in dry periods by considering direct pumping from aquifers, Aquifer Storage and Recovery, farm ponds and/or additional storage reservoirs.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts Water Councils EPD USDA	\$50,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts EPD USDA	NR.5 NR.8	LU.O.8 LU.I.15 LU.I.18- LU.I.19I.I.2		NOT COMPLETE No known activity during period. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.

14. Educate non-participating communities of the advantages of the National Flood Insurance Program and assist them with applications for enrollment and flood damage prevention ordinances.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts USGS	\$30,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts USGS	NR.6	CF.I.8	LUE.25	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
15. Encourage all water providers to consider conservation-oriented rate structures at the time of refinancing or recapitalization.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC GA RWA GEFA	\$20,000	Member Dues GEFA	NR.5 NR.8	I.I.1	CFE.4	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
16. Encourage use of point discharges for wastewater treatment effluent disposal for major facilities (greater than one million gallons per day).	Review	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts Water Councils EPD	\$40,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts EPD	NR.5 NR.8	LU.I.16 LU.I.20		NOT COMPLETE No known activity during period. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.
17. Increase education and outreach programs directed toward improving water quality.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Svc Providers Water Councils	\$20,000	Member Dues Svc Providers EPD	NR.3 NR.4 NR.5	LU.O.4		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
18. Encourage interconnection of regional supply systems for reliability.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts	\$20,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts	NR.5 NR.8	I.I.8	L1M.3 ICE.4 ICE.6	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

19. Encourage local providers to prepare drought contingency plans.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts	\$40,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts EPD	NR.5 NR.8	LU.I.1 LU.I.15	ICE.4 ICE.11	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This activity will be undertaken by the Regional Water Councils.
20. Utilize and improve upon reservoir release quantity and timing in the Chattahoochee River to maintain and/or improve water quality in the Chattahoochee River below the Columbus Planning Node.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC ACOE	\$50,000	Member Dues ACOE	NR.5 NR.8	LU.I.19		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

Land Use									
Activity	Category	Time Frame	Responsible Party(ies) and Partners	Cost	Funding Source(s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues / Opportunities Addressed	Performance Standard(s) Addressed	Accomplishments CY 2017
1. Provide zoning technical assistance by updating zoning ordinances to comply with current laws and to allow for more compact and mixed-use development.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DCA	\$40,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DCA	LU.1 LU.2 LU.4 LU.5	LU.I.5 LU.I.11 LU.O.11 LU.1.12	HE.9 HE.10 LUE.1- LUE.4 LUE.6 LUE.7 LUE.8 LUE.21	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
2. Provide zoning administration technical assistance and training to local governments.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC DCA CUIOG	\$40,000	Member Dues DCA	LU.1 LU.4	LU.I.12	LUE.7 LUE.8 LUE.21	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
3. Develop recommended land use standards to be adopted by the local governments, to include but not be limited to subdivision regulations, sign ordinances and tree ordinances.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC	\$20,000 per year	Member Dues	LU.1 LU.2 LU.4 LU.5	LU.I.11 T.I.4	LUE.1- LUE.12 NCRE.9 NCRE.15	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
4. Host strategy/visioning workshops and/or leadership programs at the county level involving community stakeholders and the general public.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC DCA	\$10,000	Membership Dues DCA	LU.1	LU.0.10	LUE.14	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

5. Facilitate regional land banking	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts SWGA United DCA	\$40,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DCA	LU.1	LU.I.6 H.O.7 H.I.4	EDE.22	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
6. Work with communities to incorporate planning tools such as traditional neighborhoods, stream buffers, etc. into existing regulations.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DCA EPD	\$50,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DCA EPD	LU.1 LU.4 LU.5	LU.O.2 LU.O.3	HE.3 HE.9- HE.10 TE.1- TE.10 LUE.5 LUE.9- LUE.12 LUE.17- LUE.18 NCRE.1 NCRE.11- NCRE.13	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
7. Encourage the use of resource management planning when siting new developments to protect resources (i.e. natural, agricultural, environmental, historic and cultural resources) from encroachment.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DCA DNR EPD	\$20,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DCA EPD	LU.1 LU.4 LU.6	LU.I.1 LU.I.2 LU.I.3 LU.O.5 LU.O.7 LU.O.9	L2M.1 CFE.21 LUE.17- LUE.18 LUE.8 NCRE.15	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
8. Work with local governments to improve the quality of alternative transportation options, including sidewalks, trails, bike lanes, transit and promote their use.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DCA GDOT	\$40,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DCA GDOT	LU.3 LU.4	LU.O.10 T.I.12 LU.I.7	TE.1- TE.7 TE.10- TE.11	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

9. Expand the Safe Routes to School program to encourage the development of safe walking environments for children.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts Local BOE GDOT	\$20,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts Local BOE GDOT	LU.3 LU.4	LU.I.13 T.I.1	TE.5 TE.3 TE.2	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
10. Support marketing campaigns that promote bicycling and pedestrian activities and opportunities within the community, such as available trails and bike plans, and bike races and events.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts GDOT	\$1,500	Member Dues Local Gov'ts GDOT Sponsors	LU.3	LU.I.13 LU.I.7	TE.6 TE.7 TE.2	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
11. Ensure that infrastructure provides necessary accessibility for people with disabilities such as parking and ramps.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DCA GDOT	\$10,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DCA GDOT	LU.1 LU.3	LU.0.7		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
12. Promote development and assist with implementation of historic preservation ordinances and design guidelines; promote and facilitate historic resource inventories.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DNR DCA	\$30,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DNR DCA	LU.1 LU.2 LU.6	LU.I.3 LU.I.4	NCRE.5 NCRE.6 NCRE.7 NCRE.8	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
13. Provide information and present programs educating the general public of the benefits of historic preservation.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC DNR DCA	\$10,000	Member Dues DNR DCA	LU.1 LU.6	LU.0.6	NCRE.5 NCRE.6	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

14. Assist interested parties with tax credits and other historic preservation incentive programs.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DNR DCA	\$10,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DNR DCA HUD	LU.6	LU.O.6 H.I.5	EDE.17 EDE.10	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
15. Create an ongoing and active education program about historic and cultural resource conservation and protection for the public, local elected officials, developers, etc.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DNR DCA	\$15,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DNR DCA	LU.1 LU.6	LU.O.6	NCRE.5 NCRE.6	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
16. Assist communities secure Better Hometown/Main Street designation and provide technical assistance to implement revitalization programs.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DNR DCA	\$15,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DNR DCA HUD DCA	LU.1 LU.2 LU.5 LU.6	LU.O.6 LU.O.7 ED.O.2 ED.O.13 CF.O.3 I.O.4 T.I.2	EDE.17	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
17. Encourage communities in their efforts to obtain Certified Local Government designation; provide training and technical assistance to historic preservation commissions.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DNR DCA	\$15,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DNR	LU.1 LU.6	LU.O.6		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

18. Encourage conservation of the Old Federal Road	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DNR DCA	\$15,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DNR DCA	LU.1 LU.6	LU.O.6	NCRE.5 NCRE.6	NOT COMPLETE No known activity during period. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.
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Housing and Neighborhood Development

Activity	Category	Time Frame	Responsible Party(ies) and Partners	Cost	Funding Source(s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues / Opportunities Addressed	Performance Standard(s) Addressed	Accomplishments CY 2017
1. Promote intergovernmental agreements between governments that have existing code enforcement staff and those that do not.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts	\$5,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts	H.5	I.I.8 LU.I.12 H.I.2	ICE.7	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
2. Develop a general maintenance program for the Region's existing housing stock coordinating with community outreach and volunteer organizations targeting at-need populations.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DCA USDA GICH SWGA United NeighborWorks Habitat House of Heroes Fuller Center	\$40,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DCA USDASWGA United, NeighborWorks, Habitat, House of Heroes, Fuller Center	H.1 H.5 H.7	H.O.6 H.I.5	HE.4 HE.6	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

<p>3. Support and continue to partner with ROSS Elderly/Persons which is the Resident Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency program. The program promotes our mission for self-sufficiency and independence by allowing people to remain in their home and age in place.</p>	<p>Planning</p>	<p>2016-2020</p>	<p>RVRC Local Gov'ts DCA DHS USDA GICH SWGA United Neighbor Works Habitat House of Heroes Fuller Ctr</p>	<p>\$20,000</p>	<p>Member Dues Local Gov'ts DCA DHS USDA SWGA United Neighbor Works Habitat House of Heroes Fuller Ctr</p>	<p>H.1 H.2 H.3 H.4 H.7 H.8</p>	<p>H.I.5 H.I.6 CF.I.7</p>	<p>HE.6</p>	<p>COMPLETED The grant for this activity ended. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.</p>
<p>4. Provide educational seminars and counseling for residents on subjects related to home ownership, such as credit and mortgages, home maintenance, and financing.</p>	<p>Review</p>	<p>2016-2020</p>	<p>RVRC DCA SWGA United Neighbor Works USDA</p>	<p>\$20,000</p>	<p>Member Dues DCA SWGA United Neighbor Works USDA</p>	<p>H.1</p>	<p>LU.I.12 H.I.7</p>	<p>HE.7</p>	<p>COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.</p>
<p>5. Seek opportunities to diversify the housing mix to include quality multi-family and single-family attached units.</p>	<p>Planning</p>	<p>2016-2020</p>	<p>RVRC Local Gov'ts DCA USDA GICH</p>	<p>\$20,000</p>	<p>Member Dues Local Gov'ts DCA USDA SWGA United</p>	<p>H.7</p>	<p>H.I.2 H.I.5</p>	<p>HE.8</p>	<p>POSTPONED lack of staff and financial resources</p>

6. Support and, where possible, coordinate housing efforts with housing organizations such as NeighborWorks, Habitat for Humanity, House of Heroes, and the Fuller Center.	Planning	2016-2020	SWGA United Neighbor Works Habitat House of Heroes Fuller Center	\$20,000	Neighbor Works Habitat House of Heroes Fuller Center				COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
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Transportation and Infrastructure									
Activity	Category	Time Frame	Responsible Party(ies) and Partners	Cost	Funding Source(s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues / Opportunities Addressed	Performance Standard(s) Addressed	Accomplishments CY 2017
1. Inventory and map all available land and buildings to evaluate possible infill and redevelopment opportunities within the region.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts COC Dev Auth EDA	\$60,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts COC Dev Auth EDA	T.1 T.3	H.O.7 LU.O.1 LU.O.5 H.O.3	EDE.10 EDE.16 LUE.5 LUE.8	NOT COMPLETE No known activity during period. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.
2. Make transportation and infrastructure GIS information readily available through a website or other digital media.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts	\$30,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts	T.7	I.O.1	LUE.22 LUE.23 LUE.24	POSTPONED lack of staff and financial resources
3. Work to expand the Pataula Transit System into other counties by introducing new routes and expanding operational hours to better serve the communities.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts FTA LCRTA	\$20,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts FTA LCRTA JARC	T.4 T.5 T.6	T.O.1 I.I.3 I.I.5	ICE.4 ICE.6 ICE.10	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
4. Work with transit providers to identify operating inefficiencies and promote coordination between metropolitan and rural systems to enhance service delivery.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts Svc Providers	\$20,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts Svc Providers JARC	T.4 T.5 T.6	I.O.1 I.I.5 T.O.1 T.I.12	TE.10 ICE.4 ICE.6	POSTPONED lack of staff and financial resources.

5. Encourage the re-establishment of intercity passenger rail service (Columbus-Atlanta), preservation of existing interstate and rail line right-of-way to facilitate passenger rail service, and the preservation/expansion of rail freight service.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts GDOT FTA	\$30,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts GDOT FTA	T.6	T.I.8 T.I.9 T.I.11	TE.10	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
6. Assist local governments to comply with FHWA traffic sign restoration reflectivity requirements.	Planning	2013	RVRC Local Gov'ts GDOT FHWA	\$20,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts GDOT FHWA	T.5 T.6	T.I.3 T.I.5	LUE.20	NOT COMPLETE No known activity during period. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.
7. Work to coordinate local and regional bike, multi-use, and walking trails with larger regional systems.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DCA GDOT USDA	\$50,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DCA GDOT USDA	T.1 T.3	I.I.3 T.I.1 T.I.6 H.O.4 LU.I.7	TE.3 TE.4 TE.6 TE.7	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
8. Expand the Safe Routes to School program to encourage the development of safe walking environments for children.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts Local BOE GDOT	\$30,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts GDOT	T.1 T.3 T.5 T.8 T.10	T.I.1 T.I.6	TE.5 TE.2 TE.1 TE.3	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

9. Conduct marketing campaigns that promote bicycling and pedestrian activities & opportunities within the community, such as available trails and bike plans, & bike races & events.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DCA GDOT	\$25,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DCA GDOT	T.1 T.3 T.8 T.10	T.I.1 T.I.6	TE.5 TE.11 TE.6 TE.7	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
10. Support and work with DHS Coordinated Transportation and continue to provide educational information on Medicaid transportation services.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRCAAA DHS	\$25,000	RVRCAAA DHS	T.1 T.6 T.7	I.I.3 I.I.5	TE.10	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
11. Identify and address telecommunications deficiencies in the region.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts SWGA United DCA	\$30,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts SWGA United DCA	T.7 T.9	CF.I.2 ED.O.7 ED.I.10	L1M.6	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

Economic Development

Activity	Category	Time Frame	Responsible Party(ies) and Partners	Cost	Funding Source(s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues / Opportunities Addressed	Performance Standard(s) Addressed	Accomplishments CY 2017
1. Support the economic importance of the in-land port in Cordele by promoting multi-modal transportation within the region as a way to import and export manufacturing goods and stimulate growth.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts SWGA United DCA USDA GDOT	\$50,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts SWGA United DCA USDA GDOT	ED.1	T.I.7 T.I.8 T.I.9 ED.O.2 ED.I.11	EDE.22	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
2. Coordinate efforts with local broadband providers and cities/counties/local organizations to identify and address key issues.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DCA GTA	\$30,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DCA GTA	ED.6 T.10	I.I.7 ED.0.7 ED.O.11		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
3. Identify communities in the Region with current access to broadband services and refer back to Georgia Technology Authority.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DCA GTA	\$15,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DCA GTA	ED.6	ED.0.7		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

4. Coordinate in-land port activities with barge traffic along the Chattahoochee River as another way to transport goods throughout the Region.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts SWGA United GDOT	\$40,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts SWGA United GDOT	ED.1	T.I.7 T.I.8		POSTPONED pending market demand
5. Work to broaden the CEDS stakeholder group to diversify input and increase coordination between organizations.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts Private Citizens	\$40,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts	ED.1	ED.I.2 ED.I.6 ED.I.7		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.
6. Assist local communities in the development and marketing of available industrial facilities.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts COC Dev Auth	\$40,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts COC Dev Auth	ED.4	H.O.7 LU.O.1 L.O.4	EDE.15 EDE.16	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
7. Provide assistance such as business research and market analysis to potential entrepreneurs within the Region to support the development of successful businesses.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC COC GDEcD SBA SBDC	\$50,000	Member Dues COC GDEcD SBA SBDC	ED.4	LU.O.7 H.I.3	EDE.16 EDE.18 EDE.19 EDE.20 EDE.21	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
8. Increase local job opportunities that do not require access to transportation by supporting in-fill development in existing urban areas.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts MS/BHT COC DCA	\$50,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts MS/BHT COC DCA	ED.4	ED.O.1 ED.O.5 H.I.1 ED.O.2	LUE.5 LUE.8 EE.10	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.

9. Increase the visibility of the River Valley Region as a location for film/video production.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts COC MS/BHT GDEcD	\$20,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts COC MS/BHT GDEcD	ED.3	ED.O.8 ED.O.6 ED.O.5 ED.O.2 ED.O.13 CF.O.3	EDE.26	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
10. Aim to provide a local, skilled workforce to meet the needs of commercial growth related to local and regional military contractors.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC COC WIOA Bd	\$50,000	Member Dues COC GOWD	ED.2	P.O.1 ED.I.13 ED.O.12	EDE.21	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
11. Encourage the nomination of Scenic Byways in the region and assist with designation MARKETING and Corridor Management Plans.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts COC MS/BHT GDOT	\$30,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts COC MS/BHT GDOT	ED.3	T.I.4 ED.O.4 ED.O.6 ED.O.13 CF.O.3	NCRE.17 EDE.25	NOT COMPLETE USDOT's decreased support has made it more difficult to generate local initiatives for Scenic Byways. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.
12. Promote the use of current and new technologies to increase tourism (e.g. geocaching).	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts COC MS/BHT GDEcD	\$5,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts COC MS/BHT GDEcD	ED.3 ED.5	C.F.O.3	LUE.22	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
13. Promote partnerships among various jurisdictions and organizations to increase tourism (i.e. regional tours or trails).	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts COC MS/BHT GDEcD	\$5,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts COC MS/BHT GDEcD	ED.3 ED.5	C.F.O.3	ICE.8 ICE.4	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

14. Promote the use of the region by film, music and digital entertainment agencies.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts COC MS/BHT GDEcD	\$5,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts COC MS/BHT GDEcD	ED.4	LU.O.7 ED.O.4 ED.O.5		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
15. Support the White Water Project in Columbus.	Planning	2013 - 2017	RVRC Local Gov'ts COC CVB RWS HCC	\$5,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts COC CVB RWS HCC	ED.5	LU.O.9		COMPLETED This activity will be removed from the Work Program.
16. Promote and encourage the use of State Parks in the River Valley Region.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts COC RWS HCC	\$5,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts COC RWS HCC	ED.3 ED.5	LU.O.9	NCRE.16	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
17. Support/assist with the development of a Marina in Georgetown-Quitman County.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts RWS HCC	\$5,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts RWS HCC	ED.5	LU.O.9		NOT COMPLETE No known activity during period. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.
18. Support/assist existing businesses within communities, especially those in downtowns through marketing campaigns and programs, such as a "buy local" initiative, and the "Georgia Made, Georgia Grown" initiative.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC COC MS/BHT Dev Auth GDEcD	\$15,000	Member Dues COC MS/BHT Dev Auth GDEcD	ED.4	ED.O.9 LU.I.3 ED.I.3 ED.I.4 ED.I.11 ED.O.2 ED.O.13 CF.O.2 CF.O.3	EDE.2 EDE.4 EDE.5	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

19. Market/promote after hour's activities in downtowns, such as extended hours, art walks, and sidewalk festivals to increase community involvement and support locally owned businesses.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC MS/BHT GDEcD	\$10,000	Member Dues MS/BHT GDEcD	ED.4	ED.O.6 LU.I.6 LU.O.1	EDE.10	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.
20. Market downtowns as attractive places to start new businesses by coordinating with the Chamber of Commerce, Downtown Development Authorities, or Better Hometown and Mainstreet Programs, and Economic Development Authorities.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC COC MS/BHT Dev Auth DCA GDEcD	\$20,000	Member Dues COC MS/BHT Dev Auth DCA GDEcD	ED.4	LU.O.1 LU.O.6 LU.O.7 L.O.4	EDE.2 EDE.4 EDE.16 EDE.17 EDE.18 EDE.19 EDE.20	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
21. Assist communities with preservation and adaptive re-use of downtown buildings through programs such as façade improvements, etc.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC COC MS/BHT GDEcD	\$10,000	Member Dues COC MS/BHT GDEcD	ED.4	ED.O.6 LU.I.3 LU.I.6 LU.O.1	EDE.10 LUE.3	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

22. Support the Georgia Made, Georgia Grown initiative and assist local businesses pursuing designation.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Dev Auth GDEcD GDAG USDA	\$20,000	Member Dues Dev Auth GDEcD GDAG USDA	ED.3 ED.5	ED.O.9	EDE.3	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
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Education									
Activity	Category	Time Frame	Responsible Party(ies) and Partners	Cost	Funding Source(s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues / Opportunities Addressed	Performance Standard(s) Addressed	Accomplishments CY 2017
1. Coordinate with Family Connections and other local partners to raise high school graduation rates and prevent later social problems by improving basic literacy levels of elementary students through home visits and after school programs.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC Fam Conn Local BOE WIOA Bd	\$20,000	Member Dues Fam Conn Local BOE GOWD	E.1	P.I.5 I.O.3 ED.O.3 ED.I.2	EDE.1 EDE.11 EDE.12	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.
2. Coordinate with local technical colleges to create technical training programs and dual enrollment programs within the Region's high schools.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC Local BOE Local Colleges	\$40,000	Member Dues Local BOE Local Colleges and Universities GOWD	E.1	I.O.5 ED.I.2	EDE.21	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
3. Support local community's efforts to attain designation as Certified Literate Community.	Review	2016-2020		\$15,000	Member Dues Local BOE	E.1	ED.I.1 ED.I.2	EDE.11 EDE.12	POSTPONED No known local initiatives this period.

4. Provide funding to expose students to cultural and fine art subjects such as art, music, literature, and religion through partnerships with cultural organizations.	Planning	2016-2020	Local BOE Local Colleges and Universities	\$20,000	Member Dues Local BOE Local Colleges and Universities	E.1	ED.I.1 P.I.5		NOT COMPLETE No known activity during period. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.
5. Work with local 4-H Programs and Chambers of Commerce to encourage the development of Youth Leadership Programs.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC COC Ext Svc	\$15,000	Member Dues COC Ext Svc	E.1	ED.I.1 ED.I.2 ED.O.3	ICE.10	NOT COMPLETE No known activity during period. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.
6. Promote broadband development within the Region to support distance learning, dual enrollment and virtual learning centers.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts Local BOE DCA GTA Local Colleges and Universities	\$30,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts Local BOE DCA GTA Local Colleges and Universities	E.1	ED.O.7 I.I.7		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
7. Support and assist in finding additional funding to perform Work Ready testing in high schools to better prepare students for the workforce, by providing skills assessments and, if necessary, gap training.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local BOE Local Colleges and Universities	\$30,000	Member Dues Local BOE Local Colleges and Universities	E.2	ED.I.2 ED.I.12 ED.O.3	EDE.1	NOT COMPLETE No known activity during period. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.

8. Assist with development of facilities to address literacy, computer skills and technical skills for people in the region	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local BOE WIOA Bd DCA Local Colleges and Universities	\$50,000	Member Dues Local BOE GOWD DCA Local Colleges and Universities	E.2	ED.O.3 ED.O.7	EDE.1	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
9. Establish literacy training (and learning centers) throughout the region.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC Local BOE DCA WIOA Bd Local Colleges and Universities	\$80,000	Member Dues Local BOE GOWD DCA Local Colleges and Universities	E.1 E.2	P.I.5 ED.I.1 ED.O.11	EDE.11 EDE.12	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
10. Develop programs within the local school systems that prepare students for the workforce.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC Local BOE WIOA Bd Local Colleges and Universities	\$30,000	Member Dues Local BOE GOWD Local Colleges and Universities	E.2	ED.I.1 ED.I.2 ED.I.4	EDE.1	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
11. Support the efforts of regional technical colleges and high schools to provide work force/vocational training in high schools for youth.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC Local BOE WIOA Bd Local Colleges and Universities	\$30,000	Member Dues Local BOE GOWD Local Colleges and Universities	E.2	ED.I.1 ED.I.2 ED.O.11 ED.O.3	EDE.1	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
12. Educate local industries on the existing training and education programs.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC WIOA Bd Local Colleges and Universities	\$30,000	Member Dues GOWD Local Colleges and Universities	E.2	ED.O.3 CF.I.8	EDE.5	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

13. Encourage Technical Colleges to offer training programs in the communities.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC WIOA Bd Local Colleges and Universities	\$30,000	Member Dues GOWD Local Colleges and Universities	E.1 E.2	ED.O.3	EDE.1	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
14. Support the establishment of preschool and adult day care centers in the region.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC Fam Conn DFACS DHS	\$60,000	Member Dues Fam Conn DFACS DHS	E.1	P.I.5	CFE.25	NOT COMPLETE No known activity during period. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.
15. Support and advocate workforce training for medical healthcare professionals to address critical shortages in rural areas.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Colleges and Universities WIOA Bd	\$40,000	Member Dues Local Colleges and Universities	E.2	ED.I.2 P.I.6		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
16. Promote the development of additional leadership programs.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC COC Ext Svc Local Colleges and Universities	\$40,000	Member Dues COC Ext Svc Local Colleges and Universities	E.1	ED.O.10 ED.O.9		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
17. Utilize Plan Assessment meetings to reactivate regional meetings of city and county clerks and managers.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts	\$10,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts		ED.O.11 I.I.8	ICE.5	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

18. Support the development of children's day care centers with "extended stay" where needed.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC Fam Conn DFACS	\$60,000	Fam Conn DFACS	E.1	P.I.5	CFE.25	NOT COMPLETE No known activity during period. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.
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Community Facilities									
Activity	Category	Time Frame	Responsible Party(ies) and Partners	Cost	Funding Source(s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues / Opportunities Addressed	Performance Standard(s) Addressed	Accomplishments CY 2017
1. Using GPS technology, capture the various visible and underground components of the region's water, sanitary sewer and storm sewer infrastructure	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DCA USDA	\$100,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DCA USDA	CF.1	LU.I.1 LU.O.4 CF.I.1 CF.O.1	L1M.3 CFE.1 CFE.2 CFE.3 CFE.4 CFE.20	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
2. Assist local governments in their pursuit of funding to maintain and extend utility services, as needed.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DCA GA RWA GEFA USDA	\$50,000	Member Dues/ Contracts Local Gov'ts DCA GA RWA GEFA USDA	CF.1 CF.4	CF.O.1 CF.I.1 LU.I.9 CF.I.6	L1M.3 CFE.3 CFE.24	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
3. Work with local governments to implement best management practices in relation to storm water management.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DCA EPD	\$20,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DCA EPD	CF.1 CF.3	CF.I.1		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
4. Promote the adoption and utilization of Capital Improvement planning and budgeting in all communities within the region.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC	\$15,000	DCA	CF.1 CF.3 CF.4		CF.I.4	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.

5. Provide technical assistance to local governments in the development of infrastructure improvement plans supported by grant and loan assistance	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC	\$25,000	Member Dues Contracts	CF.1 CF.4		CF. I. 8 I.O.1 P.I.2	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
6. Provide grant assistance to local governments in the provision of needed governmental facilities.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC	\$15,000	Member Dues Contracts	CF.4		CF. I. 8 I.O.1 P.I.2	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
7. Provide planning and technical assistance to local governments in the development of community and regional parks.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC	\$20,000	Member Dues Contracts	CF.1 CF.4		CF. I. 8 I.O.1 P.I.2	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
8. Provide planning technical assistance in the planning, development and financing of new library facilities.	Planning	2016-2020	Regional Library Rural Library Project	\$10,000	Member Dues Contracts	CF.1 CF.4		CF. I. 8 I.O.1 P.I.2	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
9. Advocate regional infrastructure planning through the Service Delivery Strategy process and during comprehensive plan updates and Plan Assessment meetings over the planning horizon.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC	\$25,000	Member Dues	CF.1		ED.O.11 I.O.1 I.O.4	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

10. Provide planning for special infrastructure needs in identified target areas.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC	\$10,000	Member Dues	CF.1 CF.2 CF.3		I.O.1	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
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Human Services

Activity	Category	Time Frame	Responsible Party(ies) and Partners	Cost	Funding Source(s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues / Opportunities Addressed	Performance Standard(s) Addressed	Accomplishments CY 2017
1. Coordinate with local governments to apply for funding to purchase necessary equipment, make repairs, and update facilities.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts FEMA USDA	\$60,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts FEMA USDA	HS.1	I.I.8 P.I.1	ICE.6	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
2. Assist local governments with disaster preparedness activities such as pre-disaster mitigation plans.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts GEMA FEMA	\$40,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts GEMA FEMA	HS.1	CF.I.1	LUE.25 L1M.5	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
3. Promote broadband development within the Region to allow for telemedical services, as well as to expand educational opportunities for local medical professionals.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DCA USDA GTA	\$50,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DCA USDA GTA	HS.1	I.I.7 ED.O.7 ED.I.10		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

4. Partner with local colleges and universities, as well as technical colleges, to build capacity in existing health and medical programs to allow more residents to enter available educational programs.	Review	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts Local Colleges and Universities	\$30,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts Local Colleges and Universities	HS.1	ED.O.9		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
5. Provide information, assistance and referrals for older adults, persons with disabilities and caregivers.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRCAA Fam Conn DHS	\$40,000	Member Dues Fam Conn DHS	HS.1	CF.I.8		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
6. Provide information and educational material to caregivers through designated senior centers in the region.	Planning	2016-2020	RRCAA DHS	\$40,000	Member Dues DHS	HS.1	CF.I.8 ED.O.7		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
7. Develop and teach programs on health and wellness that are evidenced based: including CDSMP (Chronic Disease Self-Management Program), Powerful Tools for Caregivers and Fall Prevention (Matter of Balance).	Planning	2016-2020	RVRCAA DHS	\$40,000	Member Dues DHS	HS.1	ED.O.9 P.I.5		COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

8. Promote and identify community lay leaders for the advancement of Tai Chi	Planning	2016-2020	RVRCAAA DHS		Member Dues DHS	HS.1	CF.I.7 CF.I.8		NOT COMPLETE No known activity during period. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.
9. Support senior farmers markets in providing fresh foods to seniors within the region. Identify additional farmers in the region willing to participate in the senior farmers markets.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRCAAA Fam Conn DHS	\$40,000	Member Dues Fam Conn DHS	HS.1	ED.O.9 CF.I.11 LU.I.14	EDE.3	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
10. Provide planning and technical assistance to local governments in the development of community and regional parks, recreational facilities and community centers.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts DNR DCA	\$50,000	Member Dues Local Gov'ts DNR DCA	HS.1	LU.O.10 T.O.3 T.I.6 CF.I.4 T.I.14	ICE.8	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
11. Support local health fairs, festivals, bike rides and other wellness initiatives.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC DHS GDOT	\$30,000	Member Dues DHS GDOT	HS.1	CF.I.8	TE.5 TE.11	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.

12. Establish a fee-for-service business plan for sustainability. This plan will be established for options counseling and consumer choice.	Planning	2016-2020	Division of Aging Services RVRC AAA X-Factor Consultants Carl Vinson Institute Fanning Institute Private Consultant	\$40,000	DAS				COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
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Intergovernmental									
Activity	Category	Time Frame	Responsible Party(ies) and Partners	Cost	Funding Source(s)	Guiding Principles Addressed	Issues / Opportunities Addressed	Performance Standard(s) Addressed	Accomplishments CY 2017
1. Support the update of the Service Delivery Strategy to help ensure the efficient delivery of services.	Planning	2016-2020	RVRC Local Gov'ts	Part of comp plan update fee Part of AAA Admin funding	DCA	I.1	CF.I.1, I.O.1	CFE.4 CFE.17 CFE.20	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
2. Utilize Plan assessment meetings to improve upon the sharing of information between local governments for greater efficiency and intergovernmental coordination.	Planning	2016-2020	Local Gov'ts	\$25,000	DCA	I.2	I.O.1 I.I.4 I.I.5	ICE.4 ICE.5 ICE.6 ICE.7 ICE.8	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This is an ongoing effort.
3. Notify local government officials on training opportunities offered by the Carl Vinson Institute, Georgia Municipal Association, Association of County Commissioners of Georgia, Georgia Planning Association, GAZA or others to enhance their leadership abilities.	Review	2016-2020	Local Gov'ts	\$1,000		I.3	I.O.1	CFE.5-CFE.16	COMPLETED... activity for the year. This activity will be removed from the Work Program.

Regional Work Program 2018 – 2022

Land Use									
Strategy	Action	Partners	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Priority: Update Ordinances, Land Use Regulations, and Guidelines.									
Develop tools to assist local governments manage development	Update 2 zoning ordinances to comply with current laws and to allow for more compact and mixed-use development.	RVRC Local Govts DCA	\$40,000	\$40,000					
	Provide zoning administration technical assistance and training to 6 local governments.	RVRC DCA CVIOG	\$27,000	\$27,000	\$27,000	\$27,000	\$27,000		
Priority: Protection of Historic Neighborhoods and Buildings.									
Provide technical assistance to local governments in their preservation activities	Provide monthly technical assistance and staff review for Certificate of Appropriateness to the Columbus Board of Historic and Architectural Review.	RVRC Local Govts DNR DCA	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	\$30,000	
	Provide information and present 2 programs educating the general public of the benefits of historic preservation.	RVRC DNR DCA		\$10,000					
	Assist 1 community to pursue Certified Local Government designation	RVRC Local Govts DNR			\$20,000				
	Provide staff review of CDBG funded housing rehab and demolition for the City of Columbus annually.	RVRC Local Govts			\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	
Support Main Street and Downtown Improvements	Administer 3 streetscape/ TE funded programs	RVRC GDOT GTIB Local Govts	\$50,000	\$50,000					

Natural and Cultural Resources									
Strategy	Action	Partners	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Priority: Preservation of Prime Agricultural/Forestry Lands.									
Educate local elected officials, industries, developers, youth, and the public on the importance of natural resource protection	Write local government comprehensive plans.	RVRC Local Govts DCA DNR EPD	\$175,000 (14 plans)	\$150,000 (10 plans)	\$75,000 (7 plans)	\$75,000 (7 plans)	\$160,000 (12 plans)		
Promote production and sales of locally grown foods.	Identify suitable locations and funding sources for value added processing industries, farmer's markets and neighborhood groceries.	RVRC GDAG GDEcD Local Govts USDA GA Organics Food Oasis			\$50,000	\$50,000			
Priority: Grow the Agricultural Resources in the Region.									
Promote the production and sale of locally grown foods.	Identify a local partner to complete a feasibility study for a joint-use commercial kitchen	RVRC GDAG USDA				\$50,000	\$50,000		
Priority: Protection of Groundwater Recharge Area/Aquifer.									
Increase education and outreach programs directed toward improving water quality.	Coordinate 8 training opportunities for the Georgia Adopt-a-Stream program and educational seminars regarding water quality issues.	RVRC Mid Chatt Water Council EPD GDAG 2 Rivers RC&D		\$50,000	\$30,000				

Strategy	Action	Partners	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Priority: Maintain environmental integrity in the region									
Create a balance between protection of natural resources and development.	Apply for a regional brownfield redevelopment grant for 4 local governments.	RVRC GA Brownfield Assn EPA		\$20,000					
	Implement Watershed Management Plans for Pataula Creek, Kinchafoonee Creek, and Mountain Oak Creek.	RVRC EPD GADAg 2 Rivers RC&D GC&SU GA Forestry Com UGA Extension Local Govts Health Dept	\$220,424	\$220,424					
	Write Watershed Management Plan for Long Cane Creek.	RVRC EPD Mid Chatt Water Council 2 Rivers RC&D Local Govts	\$26,985	\$26,985					

Housing and Neighborhood Development									
Strategy	Action	Partners	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Priority: Provide safe, standard, and affordable housing options for all residents of the region.									
Develop a regional building inspection/ code enforcement program.	Apply for grant funding to hire a regional building inspector and code enforcement officer.	RVRC Local Govts DCA		\$5,000					
Support local housing efforts through planning and technical assistance	Assist 2 local governments to identify GICH team community partners.	RVRC DCA	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000				
	Meet with 2 local governments to identify locally-driven housing solutions.	RVRC DCA	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000				
	Write grant applications for 2 local governments to implement locally-driven housing solutions.	RVRC DCA USDA GICH Local Govts Local Housing Auth	\$5,000 Per application	\$5,000 Per application	\$5,000 Per application				

Community Facilities and Services									
Strategy	Action	Partners	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Priority: Improve Broadband/Internet Capacity.									
Identify and address telecommunications deficiencies in the region.	Write Broadband Ready ordinances for local governments.	RVRC DCA Local Govts		\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000			
Priority: Improve Old or Inadequate Infrastructure Systems.									
Assist local governments to identify and address deficiencies of infrastructure systems.	Write grant applications for 10 local governments based on grant eligibility and identified community needs.	RVRC Local Govts DCA GEFA		\$5,000 Per application	\$5,000 Per application	\$5,000 Per application	\$5,000 Per application		
Priority: Provide a Diverse Offering of Recreation Options for All Ages.									
Develop and expand trail networks to connect the region's green and blue infrastructure.	Coordinate quarterly meetings between Bicycle Columbus, DNR and volunteers regarding the development of mountain bike trails and hiking trails at Standing Boy State Park.	RVRC CVA SORBA IMBA Local Govts	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000				
	Procure construction cost estimates and potential designs for trails at Standing Boy State Park.	RVRC CVA SORBA IMBA Local Govts		\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000			
	Facilitate a public forum for Bicycle Columbus, DNR, and adjoining property owners of Standing Boy State Park.	RVRC CVA SORBA IMBA Local Govts		\$3,000					

Strategy	Action	Partners	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Expand the Safe Routes to School program to encourage the development of safe walking environments for children.	Coordinate 2 Bike Rodeo events annually.	RVRC Local Govts Local BOE GDOT	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000		
	Complete walkability audits for 2 schools annually.	RVRC Local BOE GDOT	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000		
	Plan a Bike to School Day event for 1 school annually.	RVRC Local BOE GDOT	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000		
Market the region as a premier outdoor recreation destination.	Update ActiveValley.org website monthly to show new events and partnerships.	RVRC	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000		
	Coordinate 2 local Bike-to-Work week events and 3 regional Bike rides	RVRC Local Govts DCA GDOT USDA	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000	\$50,000		

Transportation									
Priority: Road Maintenance and Expansion.									
Strategy	Action	Partners	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Assist local governments to identify key transportation needs and issues.	Provide 2 Complete Streets training.	RVRC GA Bikes GDOT Local Govts		\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000		
	Provide technical assistance to 2 communities that have adopted Complete Streets policies to implement the program.	RVRC GA Bikes GDOT Local Advocacy grps Local Govts		\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000		
	Write a bicycle and pedestrian plan for the City of Reynolds.	RVRC GA Bikes GDOT Local Govt		\$20,000					
	Verify road data from local sources and provide to GDOT including: roadway ownership, operation, number of lanes, surface type, median type, road names, traffic lights, and stop/yield signs.	RVRC GDOT ITOS		\$60,000	\$60,000	\$50,000	\$50,000		
Priority: Increase Awareness of Rural Transit Options.									
Improve the region's mobility by offering alternative means of transportation.	Host 4 Regional Transit Coordinating Council meetings annually.	RVRC DHS	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000		
	Develop 1 county transit plan per year.	RVRC GDOT		\$21,000	\$21,000	\$21,000	\$21,000		

Strategy	Action	Partners	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Priority: Support Continuation of Regional TSPLOST.									
Work with local elected officials on the development of a successful second TSPLOST initiative.	Work with 51 local communities to market the successes of the current TIA program through printed materials, media articles, and presentations.	RVRC GDOT Local Govts		\$10,000					
	Coordinate meetings with local elected officials to discuss the potential project lists.	RVRC GDOT Local Govts			\$50,000	\$50,000			
	Prepare the amendment to be presented on the 2022 ballot.	RVRC GDOT Local Govts					\$1,000		

Economic Development									
Strategy	Action	Partners	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Priority: Diversify and Strengthen the Region's Economy									
Support the Recruitment, Retention and Expansion of Businesses in the region.	Facilitate at least 1 local loan annually from the revolving loan fund	RVRC Dev Auth	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000		
Foster Community Leadership	Coordinate 4 lunch and learn opportunities to teach downtown development best practices	RVRC DCA		\$2,500	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000		
Priority: Provide quality, genuine places and experiences for visitors									
Market special events and the unique aspects of the region.	Provide 1 training opportunity for local Camera Ready contacts annually	RVRC Local Dev Auth Tourism Assn Local Tourism Bd		\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000		
Improve infrastructure needed for industrial development.	Get 3 industrial parks listed as GRAD certified sites	RVRC Local Dev Auth			\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000		

Workforce Development									
Strategy	Action	Partners	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Priority: Train the Regional Workforce.									
Provide On the Job Training (OJT) and Incumbent Worker Training (IWT).	Provide OJT services for 40 individuals each year.	RVRC WIOA Bd Local Colleges & Universities	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$40,000		
	Provide IWT services for 2 individuals each year.	RVRC WIOA Bd Local Colleges & Universities	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000		
Provide work based learning services (WEX) for individuals with limited work history to enhance existing skills.	Provide hands-on work experience with local area participating businesses/ employers for 30 individuals.	RVRC WIOA Bd Providers	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000		
Individual Training Accounts	Provide ITA's for 60 individuals each year.	RVRC WIOA Bd Local Colleges & Universities	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000	\$60,000		

Education									
Priority: Educate the Region's Workforce.									
Strategy	Action	Partners	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Provide GED prep and soft skills development services for the region's youth.	Provide basic literacy skills, financial literacy education, and follow-up services to 100 individuals 17-24 yrs. age.	RVRC Fam Conn Local BOE WIOA Bd	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000		

Health and Human Services									
Strategy	Action	Partners	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Priority: Create a Statewide Focus on Reaching Underserved Persons									
Develop and implement training for community partners to aid in outreach and service provision to underserved populations.	Host 1 training annually.	Family Connections Hispanic Outreach Coalition Churches	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000		
Priority: Expand Efforts to Support Individuals to Remain in Their Desired Residence as Long as Possible									
Increase home modification/home repair services access statewide.	Provide home modification/home repair services to 5 consumers annually.	RVRCAA Habitat for Humanity	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$5,000		
Priority: Increase Professional Capacity of Georgia's Aging Network to Better Meet the Needs of Family Caregivers and At-Risk Adults									
Facilitate trainings for Health and Wellness coordinators and caregiver specialists.	Give presentations at 10 churches and/or civic organizations to identify individuals willing to become Master Trainers in the "Powerful Tools for Caregivers" program.	RVRCAA DAS Rosalynn Carter Institute (RCI) Alzheimer's Assoc. Care-Net	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000		

Regional Cooperation									
Priority: Create a Balanced Sustainable Region.									
Strategy	Action	Partners	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Work with local governments, community organizations, and businesses to improve efficiency in delivery of services.	Host 1 regional meeting of city and county clerks and managers annually.	RVRC Local Govts	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500	\$2,500		
	Utilize the SDS update to ensure the efficient delivery of services.	RVRC Local Govts	\$42,000 (14 plans)	\$30,000 (10 plans)	\$21,000 (7 plans)	\$21,000 (7 plans)	\$36,000 (12 plans)		
	Facilitate Plan Assessment meetings for 8 counties a year.	RVRC Local Govts	\$16,000	\$16,000	\$16,000	\$16,000	\$16,000		
	Update the Regional Plan	RVRC Local Govts						+/- \$100,000 (full plan)	

APPENDIX: DEFINITIONS OF ACRONYMS

ACCG	Association of County Commissioners of Georgia
ACOE	Army Corps of Engineers
ACUB	Army Compatibility Use Buffer
ADRC	Aging and Disability Resource Connection
BCBSGA	Blue Cross Blue Shield of Georgia
BOE	Board of Education
CDBG	Community Development Block Grant
CMS	Centers for Medicare Services
COC	Chamber of Commerce
CSU	Columbus State University
CVB	Convention and Visitors Bureau
DAS	Division of Aging Services
DCA	Georgia Department of Community Affairs
Dev Auth	Development Authority
DFACS	Department of Family and Children Services
DHS	Department of Human Services
DNR	Georgia Department of Natural Resources
DOD	U.S. Department of Defense
DOJ	U.S. Department of Justice
EDA	U.S. Economic Development Administration
EPA	U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
EPD	Georgia Environmental Protection Division
Ext Svc	Cooperative Extension Service
FAA	Federal Aviation Administration
Fam Conn	Family Connections
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FTA	Federal Transit Administration
GA Acad	Georgia Academy for Economic Development
GA Cons	Georgia Conservancy
GDag	Georgia Department of Agriculture
GDEcD	Georgia Department of Economic and Community Development
GDOT	Georgia Department of Transportation
GEFA	Georgia Environmental Finance Authority
GEMA	Georgia Emergency Management Agency
GICH	Georgia Initiative for Community Housing
GA Tech	Georgia Institute of Technology
GMA	Georgia Municipal Association
GA Pwr	Georgia Power
GARC	Georgia Association of Regional Commissions
GA RWA	Georgia Rural Water Association

GTC	Georgia Transmission Corporation
GOWD	Governor's Office of Workforce Development
HCC	Historic Chattahoochee Commission
HD	Health Department
Housing	Housing Authorities
HPD	Georgia Historic Preservation Division (State Historic Preservation Office)
HUD	U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Hwy 27	Highway 27 Association
ITOS	Information Technology Outreach Services
JARC	Job Access Reverse Commute
KAB	Keep America Beautiful
LCRTA	Lower Chattahoochee Regional Transit Authority
LWCF	Georgia Land and Water Conservation Fund
MS	Main Street Program
OneGA	OneGeorgia Fund
NPO	Non-Profit Organization
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Services
RCDI	Rural Community Development Initiative
RCI	Rosalyn Carter Institute
RWS	Riverway South, Inc.
RVRC	River Valley Regional Commission
RVRCAA	River Valley Regional Commission Area Agency on Aging
SBA	Small Business Administration
SBDC	Small Business Development Center
SWGA United	Southwest Georgia United (Empowerment Zone)
TE	Transportation Enhancement Program
TPL	Trust for Public Land
UGA	University of Georgia
USDA	U.S. Department of Agriculture
USGS	U.S. Geological Survey
WIOA Bd	Workforce Investment Opportunity Act Board

S.W.O.T. Analysis

The following are the strengths, weaknesses, opportunity, and threat results from the four Regional Plan listening sessions (for meeting dates and list of meeting participants, see Appendix: Public Meeting Documentation).

Community Facilities

Strengths

- State Parks
- Andrew College
- SOWEGA STEM
- Lake Walter F. George
- Façade work in Richland
- Randolph County Welcome Center
- Purchasing of housing by hunters
- Amount of natural gas
- Faith-based organizations
- Volunteer Fire Departments

Weaknesses

- Old sewer/water infrastructure
- Ems is challenged by hospital distance
- Education
- Age of infrastructure
- Small lots (prevent septic/well)
 - Some places cannot afford public sewage, and not enough people to support
- Small local governments
 - Non-participation
 - No cooperation
- Lack of fiber optic network
- Lack of rural broadband
- Keeping membership in volunteer Fire Departments
- Lack of fire stations in some rural areas.

Opportunities

- Broadband (rural; possibly EMC run)
- RV park
- Housing for hunters and families
- New programs at Andrew College
- Albany Tech

Threats

- Lack of money
- Lack of education (Pre-K – 12)
- Loss of federal money
- Decline in population
- Skewed demographics- large senior citizen population
- Lack of affordable training for law enforcement, fire, etc.

Housing

Strengths

- Affordable
- Variety
 - Rental
 - Owner-occupied
- Character variety of neighborhoods within cities
- Land banks (Muscogee & Sumter); good housing programs (Vienna)
- Regional Housing Authority

Weaknesses

- Large number of mobile homes
- Dilapidated property (often heir property)
- Need a regional land bank
- Affordable housing in good shape
- Too few rental units
- Code enforcement
- Lack of jobs perpetuates substandard housing conditions

Opportunities

- Land bank
- Regional building inspector

- Cheap land
- Vacant land
- Waterfront property
- Reforestation opportunities
- Farm-to-table
- Rehab and demolition programs
- Code enforcement
- Homeowner education
- Housing programs
- GICH
- Partnerships with Habitat for Humanity

Threats

- BRAC
- Big business closures
- Lack of money
- Lack of people
- Lack of jobs
- Generational cycle of problems
- Lack of knowledge
- Absentee owners

Land Use

Strengths

- Lots of land
- Inexpensive
- Variety of topography
- Beautiful viewsheds
- Unique downtowns= Revitalization
- State and National Parks
- Rivers
- Wildlife Areas
- Ag/Forestry (Weyerhaeuser)
- Arts council
- Art gallery
- Good historic buildings
- Historic preservation council in Randolph
- Festivals

Weaknesses

- Lack of infrastructure
- Lack of Code Enforcement
- Heir properties/ Absentee owners
- Lack of industrial parks
- Lack of sewer/water in groundwater recharge areas
- Lack of skilled workers for rehab of buildings

Opportunities

- Regional Land Banks
- Regional Code Enforcements
- Housing
- Festivals/tourism
- Driving tours
- Rehab of historic buildings

Threats

- Heir property/ Absentee owners
- Population decline
- Sprawl
- Rural areas
- Funding
- More engagement from local residents

Transportation

Strengths

- Road network= good roads
- Easy access to airports
- Inland port
- Active rail lines
- North to South links= good
- TIA/TSPLOST
- Rural transit services
- I-185 and I-75
- Bike routes = Great
- Bus systems
- Every county covered by Safe Routes to School
- Pataula transit authority

- 4-lane of Hwy 27

Weaknesses

- East to West linkages need help
 - Rural transit connections
- Macon County = no four lane access
- Passing lands on two lane roads
- No Commuter rail
- Condition of rail lines
 - Bridges
- Lack of usage of Pataula transit
- Signage on Hwy 27

Opportunities

- Commuter Rail
- T-SPLOST
- Vacant land around inland port
- Expand the bike routes
- Publicizing/marketing of transit routes and how to use it
- Bike/ped plan
- New signage

Threats

- Condition of rail
- Lack of money
- State and National funding
- Stresses on existing infrastructure
- Cooperation among local governments and GDOT
- Potential loss of TSPLOST

Regional Issues Identified in Local Comprehensive Plans

The following lists highlight regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats and were found in the currently adopted Community Comprehensive Plans of the River Valley local governments. This list aims to point out items from the local plans that are significant on the regional scale.

Strengths

- Many infill housing opportunities
- Increase in civilian and military populations
- Flint River
- Good infrastructure in place to facilitate the development and growth of businesses (water, sewer, power, natural gas, etc.)
- Existence of Pataula Transit system which currently serves Georgetown-Quitman and provides transportation to local job sites.
- Good state highway system.
- Many natural resources/Callaway Gardens.
- Available and affordable land
- Affordable housing prices
- Available industrial sites
- Low labor cost
- Availability of labor training
- Availability of higher education
- Timber availability
- Strong agricultural infrastructure
- Abundant historic and natural resources for tourism promotion
- Railroad

Weaknesses

- Better maintenance of roads and pavement repair
- Proper drainage on county dirt roads
- Need more industry
- Need more publicity of community activities to encourage tourism
- Need to improve local medical and dental care
- Need more police presence
- Lack of additional, dependable funding sources to finance transportation improvements
- The kinds and number of employment opportunities that enable workers to secure long-term employment and reduce, and to the degree possible eliminate, poverty in the community
- Need more affordable and diverse housing choices

- Need greater community support for strong tutoring and mentoring programs to keep children in school through graduation, subsequent completion of a technical and/or college education and promotion of GED
- Growth limited due to lack of infrastructure (water, sewer)
- Need more jobs
- There are erosion, sedimentation, and storm water runoff problems.
- The economic climate hampers local government ability to maintain public infrastructure
- Cell phone and internet services are spotty in certain areas of the community
- Heir properties impede/preclude code enforcement/revitalization efforts
- We have residents occupying substandard housing
- Greater employment diversity
- Small retail market limits consumer variety and economic viability
- Quality of the work force (education/skills/work ethic/drug use)
- Increase of older mobile home units in the last twenty (20) years, which are unsafe and not up to code.
- Limited number of local incentives to attract businesses and other industries such as tax breaks, breaks on utilities, land donation, and free trash pickup.
- There is no on-going and active education about resource conservation and protection for the public, local elected officials, developers, economic developers, etc.
- Historic resource conditions are endangered and/or declining.
- No plan to protect designated farm land.
- Rising housing costs.
- No Business and Retention Plan.
- Lack of local continuing education opportunities
- Renovating or removing dilapidated structures.
- No ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.
- Water availability and impact of development on local and regional infrastructure systems and natural and cultural resources.
- Cost of transportation and development of mass transit in areas outside of Columbus/Muscogee County.
- Internet and other telecommunications services are lacking in much of the community due, in large part, to the small and declining population base.
- Need for new housing
- Special housing needs: addicts, battered women, homeless, released prisoners
- Deterioration of the tax base reduces the service delivery capabilities of local governments – utilities, transportation, et al.
- The long-term decline in population and economic conditions along with the presence of hospitals in larger adjoining communities, among other factors, have contributed to the loss of access to local health care facilities

- There is a local need for additional secondary and post-secondary educational opportunities better tuned to local career training.
- Lack of work opportunities/options contributes to self-worth/work ethic issues for the young
- “Brain drain” - too few of our high school graduates return home after college
- There are not any medical care services available after business hours
- Much of the adult population is not computer literate
- Children and teens with too much unstructured time
- Need for increased civic involvement in community affairs
- Need to update Emergency Systems (Sirens and Generators)
- Need to address dilapidated and abandoned residential structures city-wide
- Improve access and options to broadband/internet, especially Wi-Fi
- Aging population
- Low education attainment
- Need better means of communication between local governments, the business community, local civic groups, youth development organizations, and groups that respond to specific community needs, etc.
- The community does not have overnight accommodations for travelers/visitors
- Enhanced code enforcement is needed citywide to resolve blighting influences of dilapidated structures, mobile home parks, etc.
- There is not enough affordable/workforce housing. This effects business recruitment because new employees cannot move to the area. They must commute from out of the county.
- Code enforcement needs to be more strictly enforced.
- Need to pay more money to first responders to reduce turnover
- Need to reduce crime rate
- Lack of local incentives to attract industry.
- The community has potentially contaminated brownfield/greyfield properties.
- Limited recreation opportunities
- Capacity of fire-rescue service
- Low per capita income
- Lack of awareness of historic resources
- Potential for sprawl development along 19/96
- Need for home health and transit services for the elderly
- Need for primary care center
- Need for urgent care facility

Opportunities

- Solar farm
- Increased usage of Bagby State Park
- Partner with Bagby State Park to develop Golfing and Fishing Tournaments
- More youth activities
- Tutoring for youth
- More community education opportunities
- Well-maintained and expanded utility infrastructure (water, sanitary sewer, storm sewer, natural gas, electrical) to meet the demand for an expanding industrial base
- Greater cooperation between governing entities, including possible coordination/consolidation of at least some public services
- Improved presence and security (facilities) and capabilities (personnel, equipment/ vehicles) in public and emergency services
- Need for enhancements that make the community more inviting to tourists
- Need program to help those with prison records enter the workforce; overcome the barrier to housing and employment often resulting from a corrections record
- Need for creation of a seamless “skill track” that exposes young children to civic and work opportunities, exposes teens to a strong work ethic and work experiences for greater awareness of employment/career opportunities, and provides incentives and opportunities for college graduates to remain/return home to satisfying employment
- Higher levels of communication, cooperation and coordination between our local governments, and communication between the public and private (civic) sectors
- Need to provide incentives necessary to attract/facilitate redevelopment of our historic downtowns
- Scheduled, joint meetings of local elected bodies
- Additional opportunities for organized, scheduled constituent/government conversation
- Columbus (Public Transportation) Metra Service to Cusseta-Chattahoochee County
- Explore possibility of developing pick-up and drop-off sites for Pataula Transit Facility
- Job training and adult education programs provided by high school and area technical colleges.
- Make sure the general public and developers have adequate access to regulations concerning natural and cultural community resources and the location of those resources.
- Land use mix is heavily favored towards agricultural use and residential use need to diversify land use base with more commercial development
- Encourage traditional neighborhood/compatible development around historic structures or districts.
- Establish and designate bike routes
- After hours transit service
- Undeveloped/vacant sites for infill
- Possible creation of land bank authority

- Vacant industrial acreage with utilities
- Additional acreage available for industrial development
- Existing industries to support, generate spinoff enterprises
- Agri-tourism potential
- Hunter potential
- Growth provides an opportunity to look at various fees, (Impact fees, Subdivision Review fees or Service Tax Districts) to compensate for new growth.
- Diversify housing mix from predominantly single family site built and manufactured housing units to quality multi-family and single-family attached (town house, condominiums).
- Increase home ownership opportunities through grants and other state and/or federal housing programs.
- Local participation in the yearly Georgia Academy for Economic Development.
- Improve, enhance, and promote natural and cultural resources.
- Set aside environmentally sensitive areas of the community, such as stream banks, floodplains, or steep hillsides from development.
- Develop a local bike/pedestrian plan to compliment the Regional Bike Plan. Link local trail systems with state designated bike routes and existing trails in neighboring communities.
- Develop programs that encourage brownfield/greyfield redevelopment.
- Work with developers, land owners, and conservation groups to preserve open space around the county and in the cities.
- Encourage traditional neighborhood development. Traditional neighborhoods should be required when developing adjacent to or within a historic district.
- With projected growth for area counties and cities; an opportunity exists for communities to develop stronger working relationships and to share resources when necessary
- Coordinate closely with neighboring counties and cities in meeting the State and Federal storm water management requirements.
- Diversifying population.
- Expanding tax base from new residential, commercial and industrial growth.
- Expanding local job opportunities.
- Expanding community investment.
- Increase in civilian and military populations.
- Create pedestrian and vehicular Gateways
- Metra service from Columbus to Harris County
- Good state highway system.
- New tourism product development to encourage longer stays (eg. new museum, restaurants, outdoor activity and identification of historic points of interest that focus on unique historical assets of the area).
- Capitalize on expanding public facilities and services to attract commercial development.

- Downtown Revitalization programs
- Link local trail systems with state designated bike routes and existing trails in neighboring communities.
- Consider developing a greenspace plan.
- The community is not capitalizing on the value-added processing potential of locally produced commodities
- Development of an Emergency Shelter
- Improved Emergency Response System and Preparedness
- Institute a yearly bicycle ride from Cuthbert to Lake Walter F. George and back to Cuthbert
- Grow the Lower Chattahoochee Regional Airport
- Transportation services at the regional airport (Use Pataula Transit)
- Coordination of program initiatives with Andrew College and Albany Tech
- Partnerships between schools, businesses and civic organizations to create internship/mentorship/job training opportunities
- Utilize current technology including social media to engage the community in council/commission meetings, planning efforts, and civic volunteering opportunities
- The East-West Railroad lines are owned by the Georgia Department of Transportation but are leased to the Heart of Georgia Railroad Company, a short-line railroad company. The lines are currently in-active and in need of repair. The North-South lines have been abandoned and the tracks pulled up. The rail bed is owned by the Georgia Southwestern Railroad.
- Create accessible and low-cost services to transport workers directly to job sites.
- Enforcing building codes in Stewart County will remove developments that are blighting the community.
- Actively participate in regional planning efforts.
- Evaluate the expanding utility services to spur development in areas of dense housing
- Develop/redevelop Lake Blackshear for multi-family and/or increase recreation/leisure use
- Recruit support businesses for recreation and eco-tourism (i.e. bike shops and sporting goods stores)
- Partnership between Business Expansion Center at SGTC and the Center for Business and Economic Development at GSW
- Partner with the Flint Riverkeeper regarding water quality issues
- Designate water trails along the Flint River, Lake Blackshear and create a Muckalee Creek Kayak Trail and Rec Area
- Utilize current technology including social media to engage the community in council/commission meetings, planning efforts and civic volunteering opportunities
- Increase the number of civic leadership meetings held annually

- Regional Transportation Facility to serve Harris, Muscogee, Chattahoochee, Marion, and Taylor County.
- Strengthen and enforce resource protection regulations.
- Identify and promote infill development opportunities.
- Identify site for and develop public fishing area
- Preservation of scenic vistas
- Scenic Byway/Corridor designation
- Concentration of rural residential development to preserve rural character, better justify road improvements, and control cost of road maintenance
- Develop e-commerce assistance for small business
- Develop resources to market the community to nature enthusiasts (rare species), hunting enthusiasts, river enthusiasts, etc
- Develop tourist attractions and court cycle enthusiasts from nearby metropolitan areas
- Increased support for Family Connections programs
- Expand after-school programs
- Regular meetings between decision-making entities: county, city, local boards, commissions and authorities
- Tourism promotion (sites, museum development (farm implements, artifacts, sell local products), hunting, farm visits

Threats

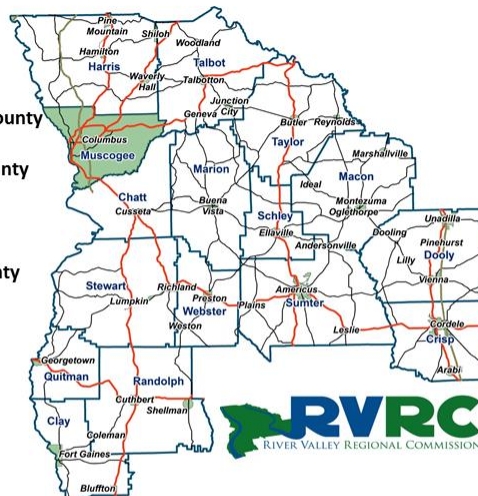
- Clean up or move public housing so that it does not contribute to blight
- Lack of emergency medical care
- Need better policing of drugs
- Need to remove dilapidated buildings that contribute to blight.
- Need to resolve issues contributing to truancy, juvenile delinquency, and a disproportionately large at-risk population
- Need increased code enforcement activities addressing housing conditions and blighting influences
- Need to reduce, and where possible eliminate, high rates of teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases, gang and criminal activity, and abuse of prescribed and illicit drugs.
- Historic resource conditions are endangered and/or declining.
- The additional time required to satisfy volunteer fireman certification is whittling away at the ranks of local departments, and hampering recruitment of replacement/ additional firemen
- There are potential water pollution problems.
- In the course of pursuing increased industrial development, retention of the small town feel and family-oriented character will be critical to maintaining the local quality-of-life.
- Potential for degradation of natural and cultural resources
- Potential degradation of scenic vistas

Online Survey Results

RVRC staff developed an online survey to solicit input from stakeholders and residents of the region in regards to the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats the area faces. The survey was visually appealing, interactive and easily accessible to residents of the region. The survey was placed on the RVRC Facebook page and the RVRC website. E-mail invitations with a link to the survey were distributed to RVRC Council members, local elected officials, and the Family Connections Coordinators within the region with the request to forward the invitation to others. RVRC staff also held a drawing for two tickets to Columbus Whitewater events for survey respondents.

Where Do You Live?

0%	Clay County
1.8%	Crisp County
0%	Cusseta-Chattahoochee County
1.8%	Dooly County
0%	Georgetown-Quitman County
58.2%	Harris County
0%	Macon County
1.8%	Marion County
9.1%	Columbus-Muscogee County
1.8%	Randolph County
9.1%	Schley County
1.8%	Stewart County
5.5%	Sumter County
7.3%	Talbot County
1.8%	Taylor County
0%	Webster County



Do you live within a city or in the unincorporated county?

32.7% CITY LIMITS

67.3% UNINCORPORATED AREA

Are You Over the Age of 60?

41.8% YES

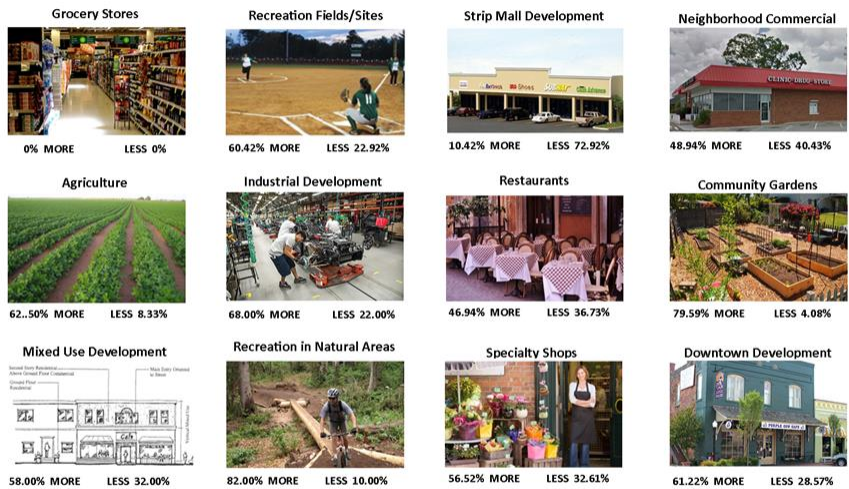
58.2% NO

What are the top 5 issues that should be a local government priority?

- 70.91% Crime Prevention/ Policing
- 60.00% Emergency Medical Services
- 43.64% Water Quality
- 34.55% Old or Inadequate Sewage Treatment/ Drinking Water Facilities
- 27.27% Pollution of Lakes, Rivers and Streams
- 58.18% Fire Protection
- 54.55% Economic Development
- 16.36% Habitat Conservation for Endangered Species
- 5.45% Development in Flood Prone/ Wetland Areas
- 45.45% Recreation Facilities
- 5.45% Air Quality
- 5.45% Reduction of Pollution from Cars/ Industries
- 10.91% Renewable Energies
- 27.27% Preservation of Prime Agriculture/ Forestry Lands
- Other _____



Do you feel the River Valley Region needs more or less of these land uses?



How would you rate the roads in the River Valley Region?

30.61% GOOD 46.94% SOMEWHAT GOOD 16.33% SOMEWHAT BAD 6.12% BAD

How would you rate the sidewalks in your community?

10.64% GOOD 38.30% SOMEWHAT GOOD 31.91% SOMEWHAT BAD 19.15% BAD

Are bicycle and/or pedestrian facilities (sidewalks & trails)

ADA compliant (safe and easy to access)? 21.74% YES 78.26% NO

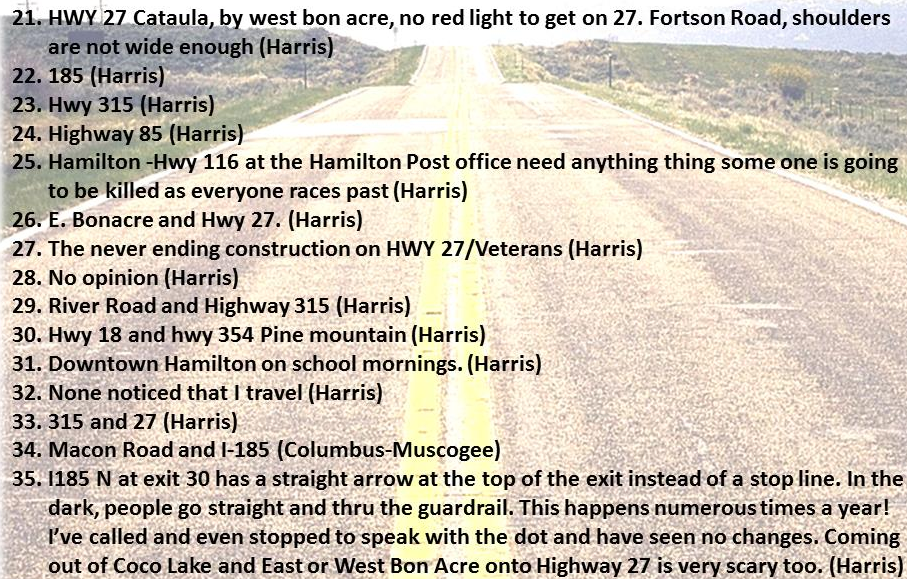
Do you need access to a car to do everything you want to do in your community?

87.76% YES 12.24% NO

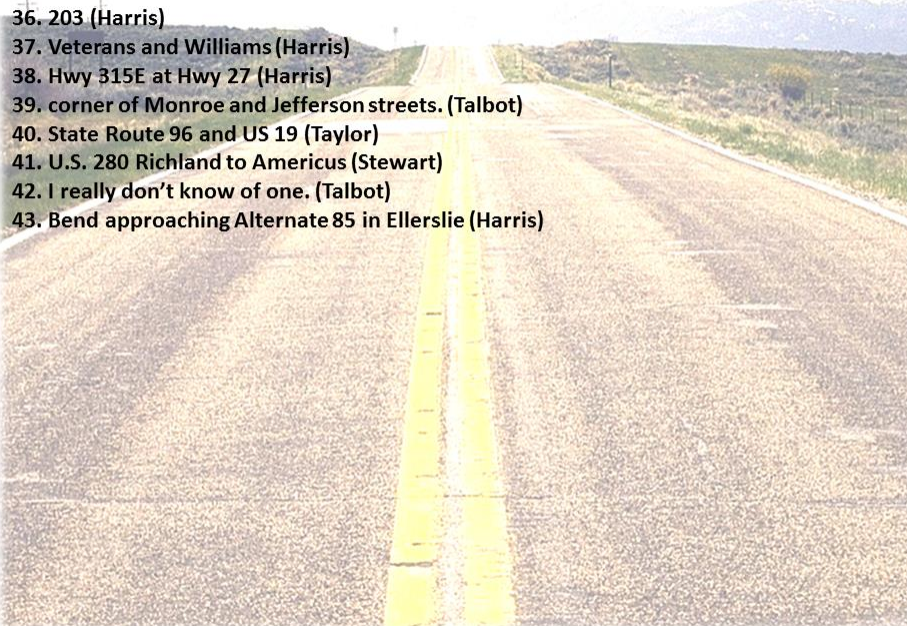
What do you feel is the most dangerous road or intersection in your community?

1. Hwy 19 & Hwy 26 intersection (Schley)
2. Hwy 19 and Hwy 26 (4 lane) (Schley)
3. All the railroad crossings inside the city are the most dangerous. (Schley)
4. It was the intersection of Hwy. 19 and Hwy. 26 (Schley)
5. 82 and 27 (Randolph)
6. Hwy 49 (Sumter)
7. Pot holes (Sumter)
8. US 41 & US 280 intersection (Crisp)
9. Take your pick (Columbus-Muscogee)
10. Intersection of GA Hwy 41S & US Hwy 80 W near City Limits of Geneva (Talbot)
11. Don't know (Columbus-Muscogee)
12. Na (Harris)
13. 208 and 27 (Harris)
14. Ga. Hwy. 219 - miles 1-15 (Harris)
15. Georgia Highway 208 and Georgia Highway 27 (Harris)
16. None (Harris)
17. Hwy 208 & Hwy 27 (Harris)
18. To many to pick just one (Harris)
19. Wooldridge Rd/U.S. 27 (Harris)
20. Hudson Mill Rd. (Harris)

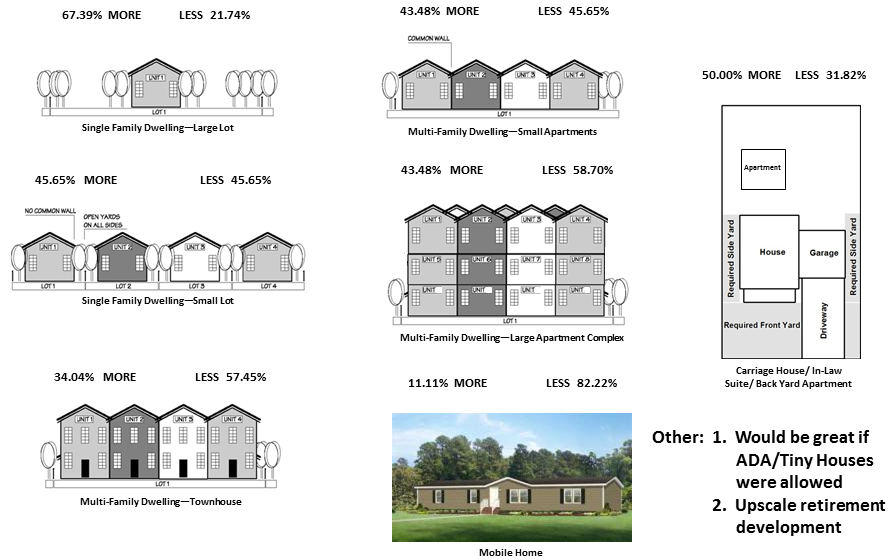
What do you feel is the most dangerous road or intersection in your community?

- 
21. HWY 27 Cataula, by west bon acre, no red light to get on 27. Fortson Road, shoulders are not wide enough (Harris)
 22. 185 (Harris)
 23. Hwy 315 (Harris)
 24. Highway 85 (Harris)
 25. Hamilton -Hwy 116 at the Hamilton Post office need anything thing some one is going to be killed as everyone races past (Harris)
 26. E. Bonacre and Hwy 27. (Harris)
 27. The never ending construction on HWY 27/Veterans (Harris)
 28. No opinion (Harris)
 29. River Road and Highway 315 (Harris)
 30. Hwy 18 and hwy 354 Pine mountain (Harris)
 31. Downtown Hamilton on school mornings. (Harris)
 32. None noticed that I travel (Harris)
 33. 315 and 27 (Harris)
 34. Macon Road and I-185 (Columbus-Muscogee)
 35. I185 N at exit 30 has a straight arrow at the top of the exit instead of a stop line. In the dark, people go straight and thru the guardrail. This happens numerous times a year! I've called and even stopped to speak with the dot and have seen no changes. Coming out of Coco Lake and East or West Bon Acre onto Highway 27 is very scary too. (Harris)

What do you feel is the most dangerous road or intersection in your community?

- 
36. 203 (Harris)
 37. Veterans and Williams (Harris)
 38. Hwy 315E at Hwy 27 (Harris)
 39. corner of Monroe and Jefferson streets. (Talbot)
 40. State Route 96 and US 19 (Taylor)
 41. U.S. 280 Richland to Americus (Stewart)
 42. I really don't know of one. (Talbot)
 43. Bend approaching Alternate 85 in Ellerslie (Harris)

What types of housing would you like to see more of in the River Valley Region?



What housing price point would be affordable for the people in your community?

0%	< \$25,000	21.74%	\$150,001 - \$200,000
6.52%	\$25,001 - \$50,000	15.22%	\$200,001 - \$250,000
25.09%	\$50,001 - \$100,000	4.35%	\$250,001 - \$300,000
26.09%	\$100,001 - \$150,000	0%	> \$300,000

Are there enough homes available in this price range? 28.26% YES 71.74% NO

Do you rent or own your home? 12.77% RENT 87.23% OWN

If you rent would you like to own your home? 21.74% YES 0% NO 78.26% N/A

Do you spend more than 30% of your household income on housing costs? 33.33% YES 66.67% NO

Are the interior spaces of your home wide enough to accommodate the use of a walker/wheelchair as you age? 56.25% YES 43.75% NO

Does your community offer facilities for all the types of recreation you wish to pursue? **28.26% YES 71.74% NO**

What are the top 5 most desired recreation facilities for your community?



Does the River Valley Region/community offer all the life activities you enjoy? **63.04% YES 36.96% NO**

If not, what is missing?

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Shopping/Parks | 6. N/A | 11. Better grocery store | 16. N/A |
| 2. More conveniences in my community | 7. Walking tracks | 12. Pickleball & safe walking trails | 17. Fine Dining Restaurants/ Arts & Cultural Activities |
| 3. More activities for children | 8. Bingo centers | 13. /Mini golf/ Bowling/Art classes | 18. Healthcare facilities |
| 4. Food/Nightlife/Arts/Good Shopping | 9. Grocery/Doctor/Dept Store/Movies | 14. More for older people | |
| 5. More places to ride bikes/walk | 10. Pools | 15. Paved walking/biking trails | |

Check all that apply. In the past year have you driven more than 30 miles from your community to ...

53.49%	Participate in Educational Activities	18.60%	Go to Church
62.79%	Go to the Grocery Store	41.86%	Attend a Concert
88.37%	Go Shopping	53.49%	See a Play/Show
72.09%	Visit the Doctor	48.84%	Go to the Movies/Cinema
76.74%	Go to Eat at a Restaurant	32.56%	Go to Work

Are you satisfied with the length of time it takes you to participate in the above activities? **54.55% YES 45.45% NO**

How would you rate your health status?

38.64% Excellent 45.45% Good 15.91% Fair 0% Poor

Do you suffer from a chronic disease? If so, which one? Check all that apply.

28.57%	Heart Disease	7.14%	Cancer
57.14%	Hypertension	14.29%	Diabetes
7.14%	Stroke	42.86%	Arthritis
7.14%	Asthma/COPD	Other:	1. Hidradenitis suppurativa 2. Celiac Disease

Do you have access to preventive health services in your community? Check all that apply.

90.91%	Vaccinations	48.48%	Eye Exams
39.39%	Cancer Screenings	69.70%	Dental Exams
51.52%	Cholesterol Screenings	Other:	In Columbus (Respondent from Talbot County) 15 miles away which is fine with me (Respondent from Harris County)
48.48%	A1C/Blood Sugar Testing		

Do you have access to fresh fruits, fresh vegetables and lean proteins?

77.27% YES 22.73% NO

Do you have access to exercise?

77.27% YES 22.73% NO

Do you have access to necessary community infrastructure? Check all that apply.

79.07%	Public Water	46.51%	Cable TV
32.56%	Public Sewer	95.35%	Cellular Service
11.63%	Public Natural Gas	83.72%	Accessible Roads
53.49%	Broadband/ Internet		
20.93%	Recycling		

- Other:
1. Windstream is the only internet available and it is horrible!!!
 2. Cable and broadband/internet is terrible!
 3. Broadband/internet service is terrible.
 4. Internet is only 1 provider. Would be nice if there would be more. DO NOT WANT public sewer.
 5. Cellular spotty in this area. No high speed internet.

Is there community infrastructure you need, but do not have access to? Check all that apply.

17.24%	Public Water	51.72%	Cable TV
44.83%	Public Sewer	10.34%	Cellular Service
37.93%	Public Natural Gas	6.90%	Accessible Roads
72.41%	Broadband/ Internet		
0%	Recycling		

- Other:
1. The internet needs to greatly improve if Schley County is ever going to get any industry to come here.
 2. Would like to see more variety of service providers in the community. The broadband/internet service is not very good at all.
 3. Recycling program.
 4. Where we live there is very spotty cell service.
 5. We are fortunate as there is ONE internet provider for our subdivision – but if you drive out of it there are no providers. That is terrible in this day and age.

If you had the opportunity to move from the River Valley Region would you?

31.71% YES 31.71% NO

If Yes, what would entice you to stay?

1. Better community government
2. Affordable housing, preferably senior living facility or apartment
3. Better quality of living, grocery store, pharmacy, local physicians
4. Better government/government services
5. The People
6. The capital needs to focus more attention, resources and \$\$\$ to the River Valley Region.
7. Better salary
8. Better hospitals
9. Family
10. More broadband options
11. Better Infrastructure
12. I have only lived here for years, but the trash on the highways and all of the blighted homes with trash around them aren't what I want to live near. Crime in Columbus is much too high as well. I am looking for a job outside of the area specifically because of the aforementioned reasons.
13. Lower crime
14. Schools
15. Not sure
16. High speed internet, better cellular coverage
17. Nothing. My field is narrow though wide. I would have to leave this area to take a promotion.

If No, What Do You Love About the River Valley Region?

1. I love that the community is safe
2. I love the challenge of getting others to help and get involved in moving this community to the next level.
3. I love the area. Love the people, history and the opportunity to work with others to make a difference in the River Valley Region.
4. It's my home
5. Rural Area
6. Family
7. My family has lived on the same land here since 1827. Overall the quality of life is superb. I do not need infrastructure two minutes from my home - we are largely rural and live here by choice.
8. living in the country where it is quiet
9. The relaxing, natural environment full of trees. The land needs to be preserved with less housing, less shops, less retail, etc...
10. Easy access to everything
11. Family near by
12. I moved here to get out of the "city"-- it is rural living and i hope it stays that way
13. Being away from town. Our family thrives living in our small country community.
14. The atmosphere.
15. the secure peacefulness
16. The people and the weather.
17. Job
18. Space
19. Rural living

If No, What Do You Love About the River Valley Region?

- 20. We live in a safe (crime free) county
- 21. Small-town atmosphere/community. Access to what we need within 30 miles.
- 22. Natural environment and personal space
- 23. Its home.
- 24. Diverse areas with different landscapes. We have a variety of housing, job opportunities and quality of life. The people of River Valley Region also make it special.
- 25. It's home and I love it. It's close to Atlanta and the airport. We are close to the mountains and the beach.
- 26. Even though I am in a non-serviceable area and have to use satellite for TV and Internet I would not move I enjoy the quiet country life.



Priorities Identified by the RVRC Council

RVRC staff compiled the regional issues gathered from the local comprehensive plans, from the survey, and from the listening sessions to develop a list of regional needs and opportunities. The RVRC Council then utilized an audience response system to vote on the needs and opportunities that they felt should be the priorities of the Commission during the next five years.



Regional Plan Priorities

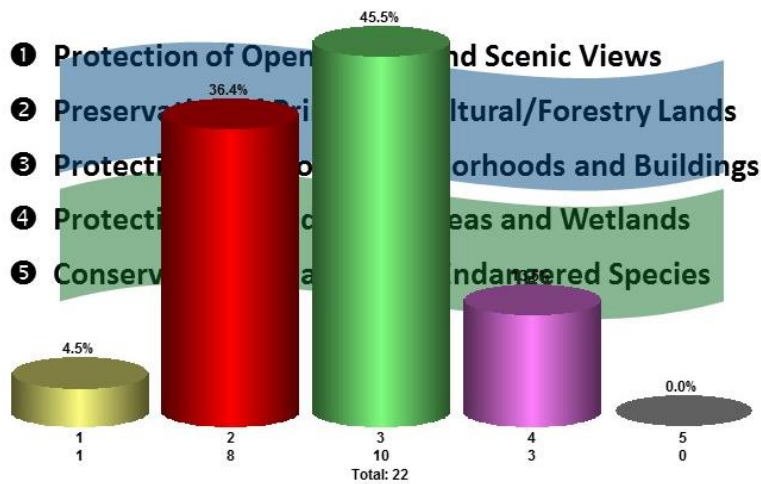
Land Use Priorities

Protection and Preservation

- ① Protection of Open Spaces and Scenic Views
- ② Preservation of Prime Agricultural/Forestry Lands
- ③ Protection of Historic Neighborhoods and Buildings
- ④ Protection of Flood Prone Areas and Wetlands
- ⑤ Conservation of Habitat for Endangered Species

Land Use Priorities

Protection and Preservation



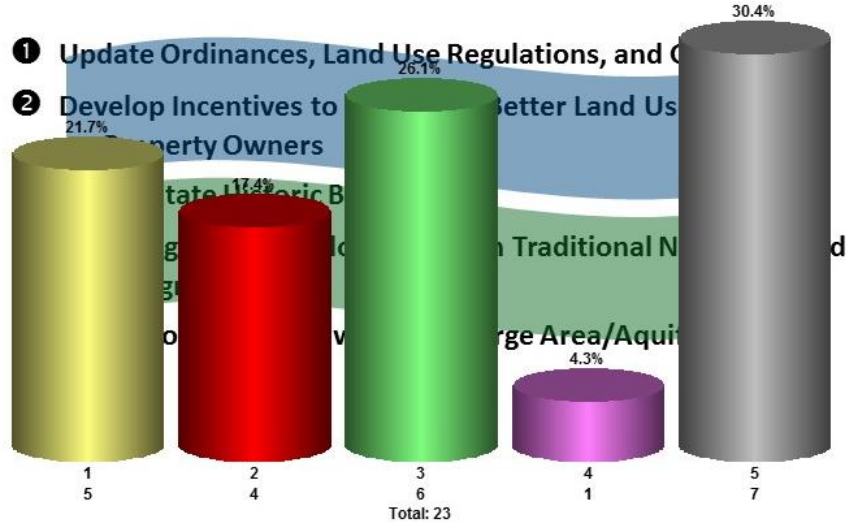
Land Use Priorities

Protection and Preservation

- ① Update Ordinances, Land Use Regulations, and Guidelines
- ② Develop Incentives to Encourage Better Land Use by Property Owners
- ③ Rehabilitate Historic Buildings
- ④ Encourage Infill Development with Traditional Neighborhood Design
- ⑤ Protection of Groundwater Recharge Area/Aquifer

Land Use Priorities

Protection and Preservation



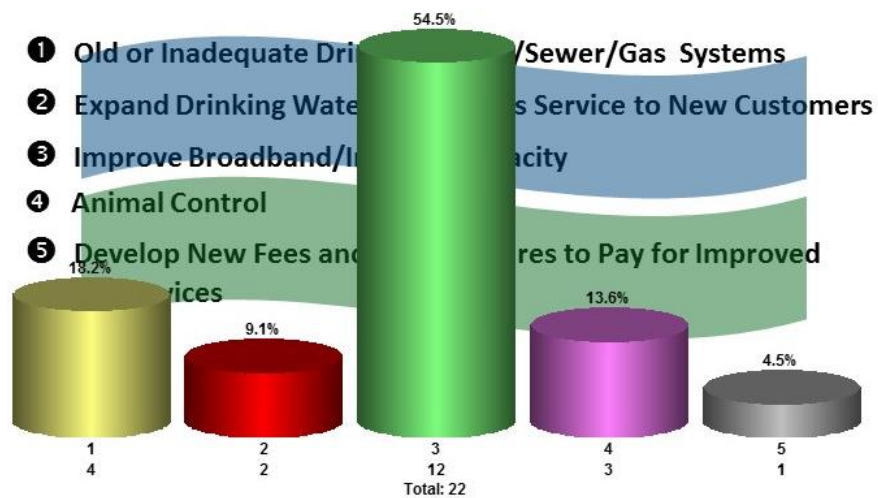
Community Facilities and Services Priorities

Water, Sewer, Gas, Broadband/Internet, and Animal Control

- ① Old or Inadequate Drinking Water/Sewer/Gas Systems
- ② Expand Drinking Water/Sewer/Gas Service to New Customers
- ③ Improve Broadband/Internet Capacity
- ④ Animal Control
- ⑤ Develop New Fees and Tax Structures to Pay for Improved Services

Community Facilities and Services Priorities

Water, Sewer, Gas, Broadband/Internet, and Animal Control



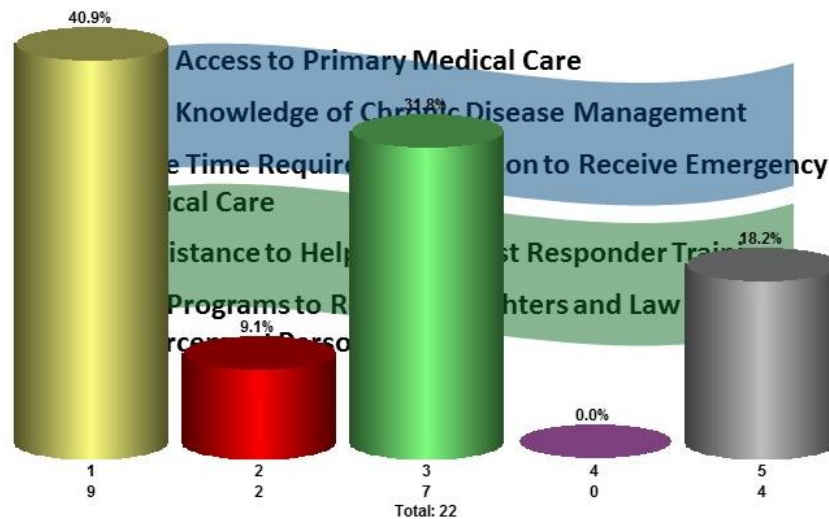
Community Facilities and Services Priorities

Medical Care, EMS, Fire, and Law Enforcement

- ① Improve Access to Primary Medical Care
- ② Increase Knowledge of Chronic Disease Management
- ③ Decrease Time Required for a Person to Receive Emergency Medical Care
- ④ Find Assistance to Help Pay for First Responder Training
- ⑤ Develop Programs to Retain Firefighters and Law Enforcement Personnel

Community Facilities and Services Priorities

Medical Care, EMS, Fire, and Law Enforcement



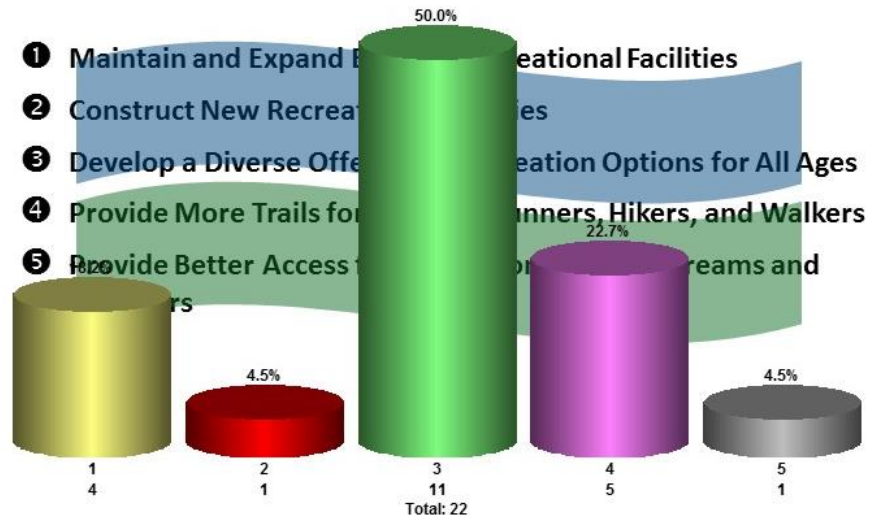
Community Facilities and Services Priorities

Recreation

- ① Maintain and Expand Existing Recreational Facilities
- ② Construct New Recreational Facilities
- ③ Develop a Diverse Offering of Recreation Options for All Ages
- ④ Provide More Trails for Bicycles, Runners, Hikers, and Walkers
- ⑤ Provide Better Access for Recreation on Local Streams and Rivers

Community Facilities and Services Priorities

Recreation



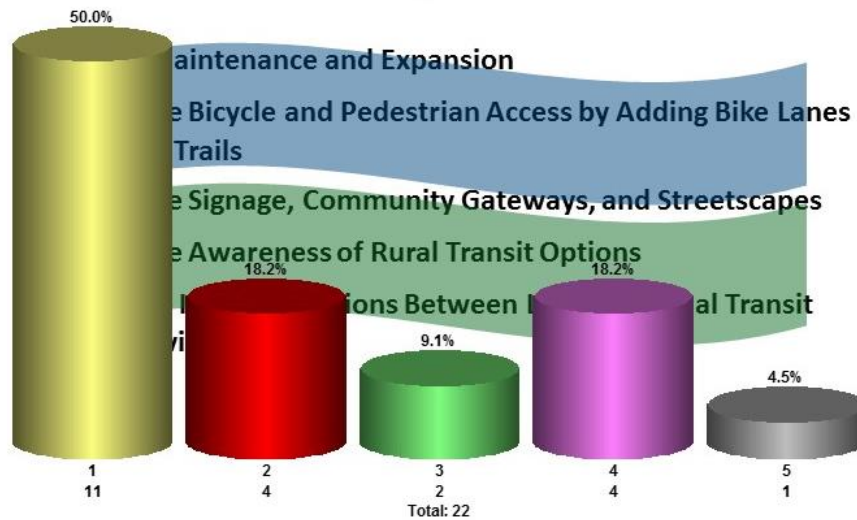
Transportation Priorities

Roads, Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit

- ① Road Maintenance and Expansion
- ② Improve Bicycle and Pedestrian Access by Adding Bike Lanes and Trails
- ③ Improve Signage, Community Gateways, and Streetscapes
- ④ Increase Awareness of Rural Transit Options
- ⑤ Provide Interconnections Between Local/Regional Transit Providers

Transportation Priorities

Roads, Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Transit



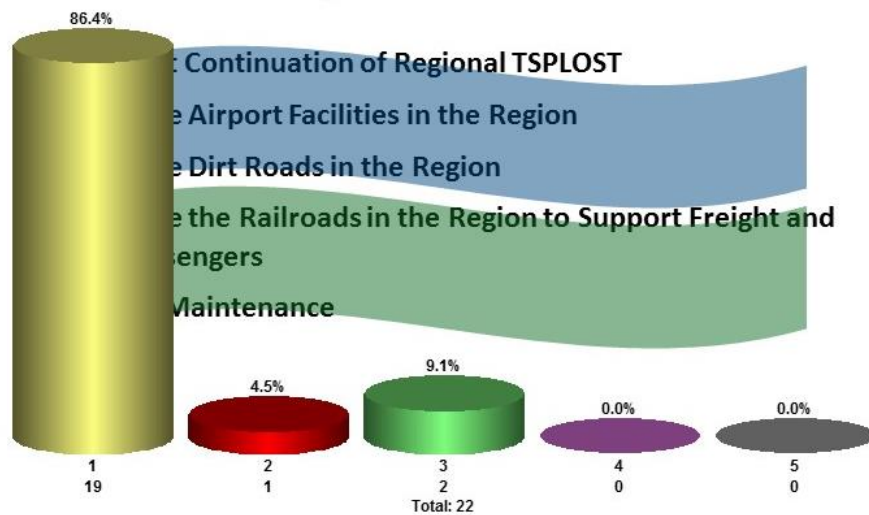
Transportation Priorities

Transportation Facilities

- ① Support Continuation of Regional TSPLOST
- ② Improve Airport Facilities in the Region
- ③ Improve Dirt Roads in the Region
- ④ Improve the Railroads in the Region to Support Freight and Passengers
- ⑤ Bridge Maintenance

Transportation Priorities

Transportation Facilities



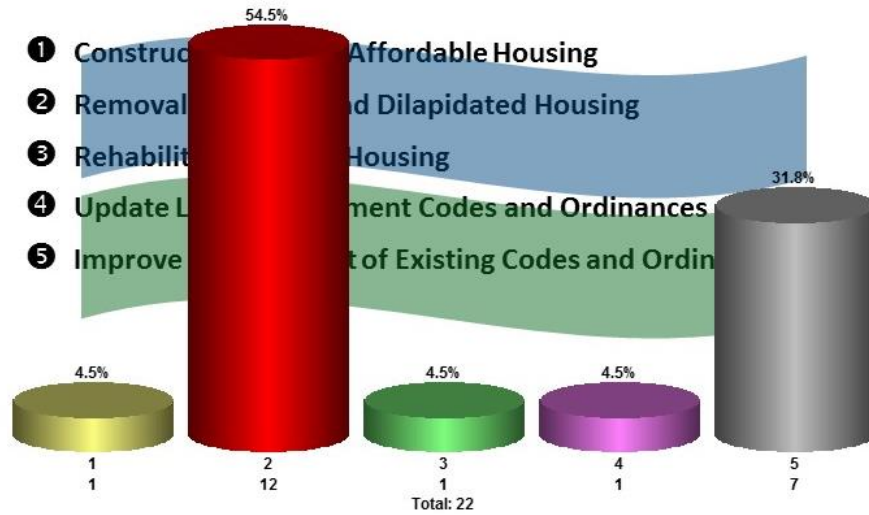
Housing Priorities

Housing Stock

- ① Construction of New Affordable Housing
- ② Removal of Vacant and Dilapidated Housing
- ③ Rehabilitate Existing Housing
- ④ Update Local Government Codes and Ordinances
- ⑤ Improve Enforcement of Existing Codes and Ordinances

Housing Priorities

Housing Stock



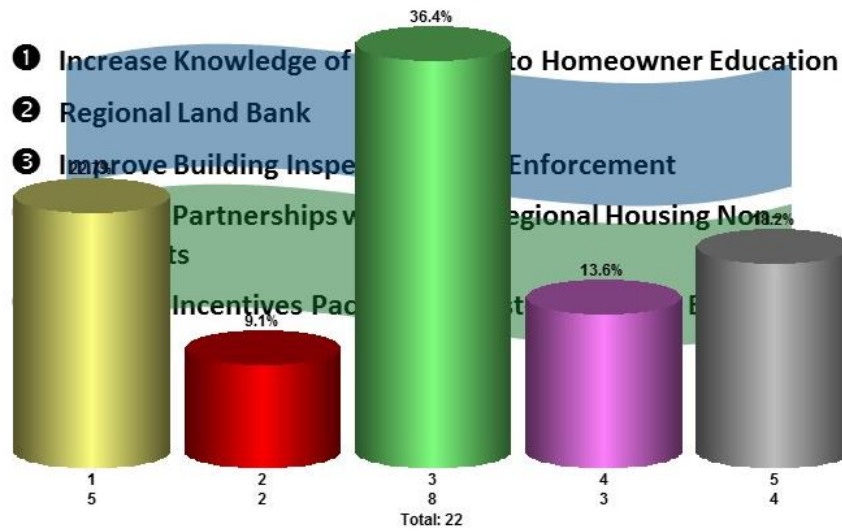
Housing Priorities

Housing Programs

- ① Increase Knowledge of and Access to Homeowner Education
- ② Regional Land Bank
- ③ Improve Building Inspection/Code Enforcement
- ④ Develop Partnerships with Local/Regional Housing Non-Profits
- ⑤ Develop Incentives Package for First-Time Home Buyers

Housing Priorities

Housing Programs



Economic Development Priorities

Develop the People Resources of the Region

- ① Assist the Workforce of the region gain the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for regional jobs in the 21st Century
- ② Support the Recruitment, Retention and Expansion of Businesses in the region
- ③ Assist the region in sustaining and improving Quality of Life
- ④ Foster Community Leadership
- ⑤ Provide quality, genuine places and experiences for visitors

Economic Development Priorities

Sustain and Improve the Land Assets of the Region

- ① Support Agriculture
- ② Improve Infrastructure
- ③ Support Main Street and Downtown Improvements
- ④ Improve Housing Stock
- ⑤ Maintain environmental integrity in the region

APPENDIX: QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs created the Quality Community Objectives by adapting “generally accepted community development principles” (Quality Community Objectives Fact Sheet, Georgia Department of Community Affairs). The River Valley Regional Commission has evaluated the policies, activities, and development patterns found throughout the region for consistency with these Quality Community Objectives. In turn, the RVRC has used this analysis to identify potential needs and opportunities for the region.

This section is organized with a broad statement defining each Community Planning Objective followed by an evaluation of the policies, activities, and development patterns of the River Valley Region for consistency with that objective.

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.

Analysis

While communities throughout the region often have jobs available, locally, for unskilled labor, many of these communities lack an adequate number of both skilled and managerial/professional jobs to meet the demands of the citizens living in the community. As a result, many residents are forced to commute to regional job centers leaving a local job base that is not adequately diversified to ensure community resiliency if a major employer closed.

This is an opportunity for many communities in the region to capitalize on the skills of the residents living within the community to expand and diversify the local job base.

Other measures, such as considering existing businesses when recruiting new enterprises, and supplementary appropriate business development strategies should be employed to also increase the diversity of the job base.

The extension of broadband services within the region would positively impact economic development as well by allowing residents the option to work from home, versus commuting daily to regional job centers.

The RVRC will continue to work with chambers of commerce and other development authorities to help attract businesses from a broad range of sectors to broaden the business base in communities throughout the River Valley region.

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.

Analysis

Throughout the region, local governments have consistently worked to not only inventory and assess their natural resources, but have also taken the necessary measures to protect them. For example, most communities in the River Valley Region have passed Part V Environmental Ordinances, which include provisions for protection of water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands protection, river corridor protection, and use other land use regulatory measure aimed at protecting natural resources. However, all local governments within the region should consider adopting Part V ordinances.

Additionally, other natural resource protection tools that would benefit the communities of the River Valley Region include greenspace plans, conservation subdivision developments, and tree ordinances. The RVRC will continue to work with local communities to establish these planning tools prior to the appearance of developments that might threaten the region's natural resources.

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.

Analysis

One major issue that needs to be addressed region-wide is the lack of consistent zoning codes and enforcement throughout the region. Most of the communities do have zoning ordinances and other land use regulations; however, many of the existing codes are not comprehensive, or are in need of updating. Some communities have expressed interest in amending land use codes to allow for more flexible and non-traditional development, such as downtown loft living and more compact development types. Another opportunity for efficient land use is the promotion of in-fill development in areas that have ready access to water and sewer infrastructure. Due to the rural nature of the River Valley communities, many parcels prime for redevelopment are either very small, have potential hazards, or are in poor condition. The RVRC aims to work with communities in the future to encourage redevelopment of problem properties that might otherwise continue to remain vacant and underutilized and encourage appropriate enforcement of land use regulations and building codes to prevent such deficiencies in the future.

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.

Analysis

Every local government in the River Valley Region has an adopted Pre-Disaster Hazard Mitigation Plan. These documents are required to be updated every five years.

Another tool that would assist local governments to be more resilient is the development of a Capital Improvements Program. A Capital Improvements Program would assist local governments to identify and address deficiencies within their infrastructure systems. Such a document would provide elected officials with the information needed to spur future growth and guide development.

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.

Analysis

While the River Valley region is very rich in historic character, local governments throughout the region have taken few steps to specifically protect historic resources. Few local governments have designated historic districts within their communities, and only four have an active historic preservation commission. While many communities expressed interest in new development complementing existing historic structures, only nine of the communities in the region have passed ordinances making this a requirement.

Throughout the River Valley region, communities have been consistently working to strengthen their sense of place and identity through a variety of strategies, including improvements to traditional downtowns and neighborhoods, protecting greenspace and rural lands from encroachment, and promoting tourism within their communities. The RVRC has aided in these efforts by providing downtown design trainings, updating zoning ordinances, providing technical support for grant applications and tourism efforts, and marketing efforts to promote available services.

Regional Cooperation

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

Analysis

Coordination between jurisdictions provides local governments opportunities to partner with one another in ways that have profound impacts on the success of local community goals and objectives. Officials of the local governments of the River Valley area are actively involved in

regional planning undertakings with the RVRC including the successful implementation of the current Transportation Investment Act and in the preparation for the next transportation sales tax.

Another opportunity that communities of the River Valley Region should strongly consider is the impact of regional environmental conservation issues related to the longleaf pine ecosystem and endangered habitats of the gopher tortoise and red cockaded woodpecker. Partnering with neighboring jurisdictions to ensure conservation of natural resources can spur growth in the outdoor recreation industry and be a powerful economic engine for local communities.

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 providing information regarding 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.

Analysis

Within the region, housing prices are generally affordable; however, many communities report the need for additional housing options. Diversifying the housing base to include choices other than stick-built, single-family detached units or manufactured housing units could assist in this endeavor. Duplex and Townhome housing types will provide affordable rental choices. Modular housing brings the affordability of manufactured housing units with the longevity and value appreciation of stick-built housing that local elected officials desire.

The RVRC will work with local governments to update zoning codes to allow for more flexible housing options for local residents. RVRC staff will also work with local governments to improve programs throughout the region that will provide safe and affordable housing for residents.

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.

Analysis

The majority of the River Valley region is rural with the exception of the City of Columbus. Cycling and walking as a means of non-motorized transportation is limited because travel distances tend to be lengthy. In addition to lengthy travel distances, rural communities in the region do not have adequate roadways and pedestrian facilities to provide for bicycle and pedestrian activity in their community. This means that the large number of rural residents without access to cars must rely on rural transit services or rides from relatives and friends. Serving as the regional center for the River Valley, Columbus has a higher population density and can therefore provide many opportunities for bicycle and pedestrian activity. Continuous improvements of existing streets in both Midtown and in Uptown Columbus that incorporate sidewalks into residential developments, and the continued growth of educational institutions is leading to a greater interest in cycling and walking as an alternative transportation method. However, just as in the rural communities, most commuters depend on motorized transportation as a means of getting to and from their destination. RVRC staff will continue to work with groups such as Bicycle Columbus and Sumter Cycling to encourage connectivity and non-motorized transportation.

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.

Analysis

Workforce development activities in the area include state initiatives, the work of the Lower Chattahoochee and the Middle Flint WIOAs and their partners, the work of Columbus Technical College and South Georgia Technical College as well as an increased attention to workforce issues by the Greater Columbus Chamber of Commerce, One Sumter, and the Cordele Industrial Board among others. These combined resources are being coordinated and deployed throughout the region.

The RVRC area has three state universities (Georgia Southwestern State University (Americus), Columbus State University (Columbus), Albany State University (Cordele), and part of the Georgia University System). Also, there are ten private colleges/universities within the Region. The Region also includes Columbus Technical College (Columbus), South Georgia Technical College (Americus), and Miller-Motte Technical College (Columbus).

There are two designated One-Stop Centers (Americus and Columbus). In addition, public libraries and other access points are available within the region for individuals to receive career information. RVRC staff also provides Individual Training Accounts (ITAs) services with area colleges and technical colleges and other approved eligible training providers as well as Case Management and Training, On Job Training (OJT), and GED PLUS services.

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.

Analysis

Many factors contribute to a community's overall health and wellness, but the communities of the River Valley Region face challenges specific to current available housing, employment opportunities, access to and availability of community exercise opportunities, abundance of healthy, cost-effective food choices, and neighborhood and community safety. With healthy growth of the economy and fostering smart business and growth, the employment rates, household median income levels, improved medical provider access and coverage rates, means to access of healthy food choices, and other related improvements can significantly impact the current health challenges of the community. Recognition of these current challenges and the subsequent

hardships on its residents will allow community leaders and affiliated partnerships to focus efforts on short term goals which help contribute to and attain the larger established goals of the region.

Quality of Life

Enhance daily living with wholesome food and clean air and water, enjoyment of unfettered open spaces and bodies of water, conservation of wildlife and natural resources, security from crime, and protection from toxic substances.

Analysis

The current quality of life for residents of the River Valley Region can be attributed to several criteria. While the definition of and factors impacting quality of life could vary substantially from one individual to another based on personal interests or hardships, the term can be used to describe the health of an economy or community which is evaluated on the positive features it boasts and impacts it can have on residents and visitors. Some of the broad spectrum dynamics a community can expect to impact residents' quality of life are community involvement and awareness, neighborhood and community safety, employment opportunities and economic stability, as well as the availability and ease of access to community amenities, public facilities and utilities, healthy and cost-effective food choices, quality education and enrichment programs, and healthcare systems and information.

Creating and investing in the River Valley Region's quality of life will continue to benefit all facets of planning and development within our communities.

APPENDIX: DATA ANALYSIS AND MAPPING

Population Analysis

Total Population

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the region saw an increase in population by 5% from 2000 to 2010. During the same time period, the population of the state of Georgia increased from 8,186,453 to 9,687,653, an 18.3% increase. The following table shows the population of the region by county for 2000, 2010, estimated population in 2016, and projected population for 2040.

Region Population				
County	2000 Population	2010 Population	2016 Population Estimate	2040 Projected Population
Chattahoochee	14,882	11,267	11,882	13,921
Clay	3,357	3,183	3,068	2,462
Crisp	21,996	23,439	23,061	23,348
Dooly	11,525	14,918	14,089	11,921
Harris	23,695	32,024	32,992	44,141
Macon	14,074	14,740	13,846	10,901
Marion	7,144	8,742	8,646	8,459
Muscogee	186,291	189,885	200,303	233,750
Quitman	2,598	2,513	2,095	2,154
Randolph	7,791	7,719	7,224	5,090
Schley	3,766	5,010	5,089	7,028
Stewart	5,252	6,058	5,791	4,938
Sumter	33,200	32,819	31,070	25,669
Talbot	6,498	6,865	6,373	4,368
Taylor	8,815	8,906	8,354	6,730
Webster	2,390	2,799	2,672	1,699
RVRC Total	353,274	370,887	376,555	406,579
Georgia	8,186,453	9,687,653	10,099,320	14,709,321

2000/2010 Population Source: Decennial Census
 2016 Population Source: US Census American Community Survey Estimates
 2040 Projections Source: Georgia Governor's Office of Planning and Budget

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the 2016 population for the region was an estimated 376,555 people. Based on estimates from the Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget, the population for the region in 2040 is projected to increase by about 8% to 406,579 people. This increase is significantly lower than the state of Georgia’s projection, a 45.6% gain in the same period. Given the rural nature of much of the region and population trends worldwide showing a global migration to urban areas, the region’s population projections being lower than the state as a whole is unsurprising. The already massive and still rapidly growing Atlanta metropolitan area alone is responsible for most of the population growth in the state. Similarly, most of the growth in the region is anticipated to come from the River Valley’s largest metropolitan area, Columbus-Muscogee County and its neighbors. Considerable population decline is anticipated in many of the small, rural counties of the region. However, many of these counties are so low in population that a single new industry moving into one of these counties could result in considerable population growth.

Population Changes Over Time			
County	2000-2010	2010-2016	2016-2040 proj.
Chattahoochee	-24.29%	5.46%	17.16%
Clay	-5.18%	-3.61%	-19.75%
Crisp	6.56%	-1.61%	1.24%
Dooley	29.44%	-5.56%	-15.39%
Harris	35.15%	3.02%	33.79%
Macon	4.73%	-6.07%	-21.27%
Marion	22.37%	-1.10%	-2.16%
Muscogee	1.93%	5.49%	16.70%
Quitman	-3.27%	-16.63%	2.82%
Randolph	-0.92%	-6.41%	-29.54%
Schley	33.03%	1.58%	38.10%
Stewart	15.35%	-4.41%	-14.73%
Sumter	-1.15%	-5.33%	-17.38%
Talbot	5.65%	-7.17%	-31.46%
Taylor	1.03%	-6.20%	-19.44%
Webster	17.11%	-4.54%	-36.41%
RVRC Total	4.99%	1.53%	7.97%
Georgia	18.34%	4.25%	45.65%

Age Distribution

The United States Census Bureau makes county age distribution data available in 5-year groups, starting with 0-4 years old, 5-9 years of age, and so forth up to the 80-84 year old range. All persons over the age of 85 are grouped as one. The region's population is skewing toward an older age range, especially in the rural counties. In 9 of the 16 counties, the largest age bracket represented is 50-54 or higher. Much of this can be attributed to the Baby Boomer generation growing older. Additionally, the trend of young professionals moving to more urbanized areas and the "brain drain" phenomenon of rural children leaving for college and not returning home after finishing contributes to the higher amount of older people in rural counties.

Chattahoochee County exhibited the greatest percentage of persons 20-24 years of age at 22%. While this is considerably higher than every other county in the region, it is likely attributed to the Fort Benning Military Reservation and its large number of soldiers and their families residing in the portion of the base in Chattahoochee County. Similarly, the same age group is one of Muscogee County's largest groups, and much of this can be attributed to Fort Benning.

Distribution of Population by Age Group, 2016 (largest age groups bolded)

2016 Age Distribution	Chattahoochee	Clay	Crisp	Dooley	Harris	Macon	Marion	Muscogee	Quitman	Randolph	Schley	Stewart	Sumter	Talbot	Taylor	Webster	GEORGIA
Total Population	11,882	3,068	23,061	14,089	32,992	13,846	8,646	200,303	2,095	7,224	5,089	5,791	31,070	6,373	8,354	2,672	10,099,320
Under 5 years	8.8%	7.1%	6.7%	4.2%	4.9%	5.2%	5.5%	7.4%	2.8%	10.7%	4.7%	4.4%	6.8%	3.7%	5.2%	4.4%	6.5%
5 to 9 years	6.4%	6.5%	8.0%	6.0%	7.0%	5.1%	8.8%	6.6%	4.0%	7.1%	8.6%	4.4%	7.5%	5.7%	6.0%	6.7%	7.0%
10 to 14 years	5.5%	5.9%	5.6%	5.6%	6.2%	6.1%	5.3%	6.8%	6.7%	5.1%	9.1%	2.9%	5.8%	5.7%	6.1%	8.5%	7.0%
15 to 19 years	14.4%	6.1%	7.6%	7.2%	7.3%	6.3%	6.1%	7.2%	7.3%	6.0%	6.4%	6.1%	7.7%	5.3%	7.4%	6.6%	7.0%
20 to 24 years	22.0%	6.6%	6.3%	6.3%	5.2%	8.1%	4.6%	8.1%	4.0%	4.7%	6.2%	9.6%	10.0%	6.4%	6.8%	6.3%	7.2%
25 to 29 years	13.8%	5.0%	5.7%	4.8%	4.7%	6.8%	5.9%	8.6%	4.8%	5.6%	4.4%	9.8%	6.3%	4.3%	4.9%	4.5%	6.9%
30 to 34 years	7.4%	5.2%	5.8%	5.9%	4.7%	5.9%	4.8%	7.6%	6.9%	4.3%	7.3%	9.0%	5.9%	2.9%	5.1%	6.1%	6.8%
35 to 39 years	4.4%	4.9%	5.6%	6.7%	6.5%	6.2%	7.3%	6.4%	4.3%	5.7%	5.0%	7.8%	5.5%	3.8%	5.7%	7.5%	6.7%
40 to 44 years	4.3%	4.1%	6.6%	8.0%	6.5%	7.4%	5.1%	6.1%	5.3%	4.1%	6.9%	6.4%	5.2%	8.0%	6.3%	2.1%	7.0%
45 to 49 years	3.8%	6.2%	6.0%	6.3%	7.7%	6.5%	6.0%	5.8%	7.4%	5.4%	8.2%	5.0%	6.0%	6.7%	6.2%	5.8%	6.3%
50 to 54 years	2.0%	3.5%	6.8%	8.4%	8.1%	7.1%	8.3%	6.3%	5.9%	8.2%	6.6%	7.5%	6.5%	9.4%	7.7%	8.5%	5.4%
55 to 59 years	1.8%	7.1%	7.6%	7.5%	8.9%	8.5%	7.1%	6.2%	6.7%	6.5%	5.8%	6.5%	6.5%	10.3%	7.6%	8.0%	6.3%
60 to 64 years	1.4%	8.1%	6.4%	7.4%	6.2%	6.5%	7.8%	5.0%	8.5%	8.2%	5.6%	5.3%	5.5%	8.4%	7.0%	7.5%	5.4%
65 to 69 years	1.7%	7.7%	5.0%	5.3%	5.8%	6.0%	8.9%	3.8%	8.5%	5.0%	5.5%	5.1%	4.9%	7.3%	7.3%	6.5%	4.4%
70 to 74 years	1.3%	6.0%	3.9%	4.5%	4.7%	3.5%	3.1%	2.9%	6.3%	3.2%	5.0%	2.8%	4.0%	4.9%	3.5%	4.9%	3.1%
75 to 79 years	0.4%	3.8%	2.8%	2.3%	2.5%	1.8%	2.7%	1.9%	5.7%	3.7%	2.1%	4.1%	2.3%	3.7%	3.9%	3.4%	2.1%
80 to 84 years	0.4%	3.8%	1.7%	2.1%	1.4%	1.7%	1.5%	1.8%	2.6%	2.7%	1.8%	1.3%	1.5%	2.2%	1.6%	2.1%	1.4%
85 and older	0.1%	2.5%	2.1%	1.4%	1.8%	1.4%	1.1%	1.6%	2.3%	3.8%	0.9%	1.9%	2.1%	1.6%	1.8%	0.7%	1.2%

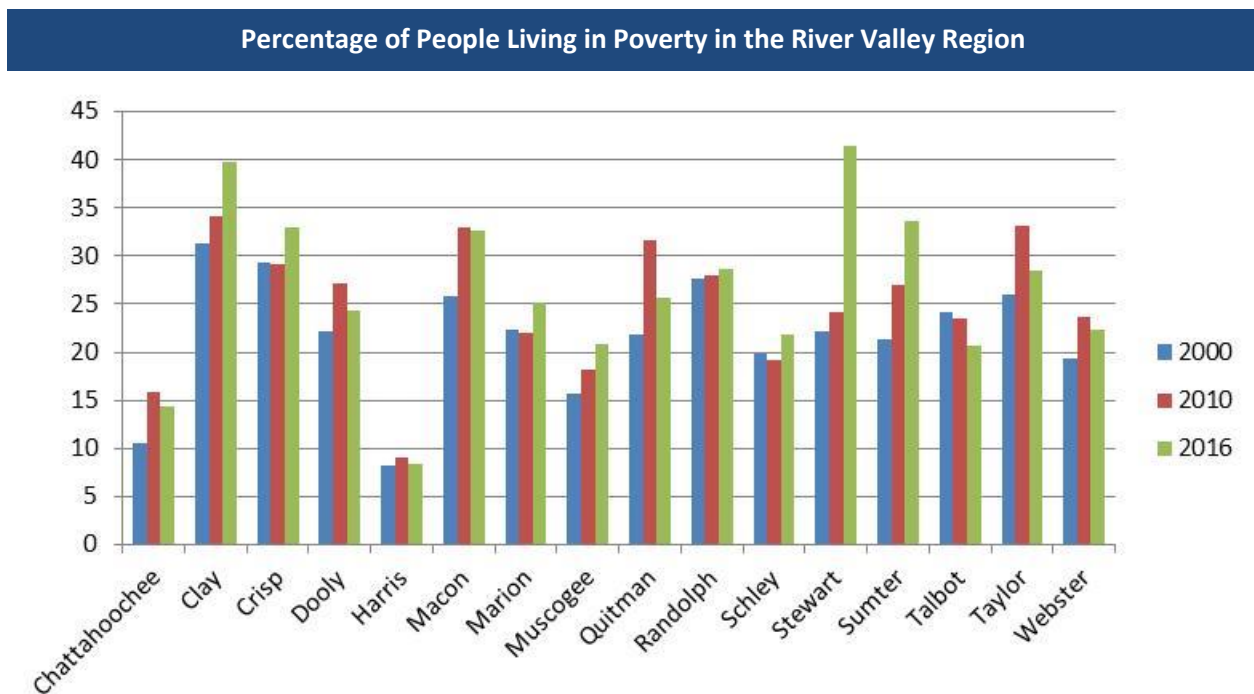
Source: U.S. Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2016

Race/Ethnicity in the River Valley Region, 2016																
2016 Race/Ethnicity	Chattahoochee	Clay	Crisp	Dooly	Harris	Macon	Marion	Muscogee	Quitman	Randolph	Schley	Stewart	Sumter	Talbot	Taylor	Webster
White	60.0%	29.1%	50.8%	42.6%	77.4%	32.9%	59.3%	41.8%	48.2%	35.0%	68.7%	26.8%	39.9%	39.9%	57.9%	49.4%
Black	17.5%	62.3%	43.1%	48.9%	15.7%	59.0%	36.1%	44.5%	48.9%	62.5%	26.4%	47.5%	51.9%	57.1%	38.9%	49.5%
American Indian/Alaska Native	0.7%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.1%	0.5%	0.0%	0.3%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Asian	3.0%	0.0%	1.3%	0.1%	0.9%	1.7%	0.2%	2.3%	0.6%	1.8%	0.0%	2.3%	1.2%	0.5%	0.7%	0.0%
Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0.2%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Other	0.3%	0.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.9%	0.4%	0.5%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Two or More Races	3.4%	3.1%	1.3%	1.1%	2.5%	1.0%	1.8%	3.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.1%	0.6%	1.4%	0.2%	0.2%	0.0%
Hispanic/Latino of any Race	14.8%	5.1%	3.2%	7.3%	3.1%	4.0%	1.6%	7.4%	1.0%	0.6%	4.8%	22.4%	5.3%	2.2%	2.2%	1.1%
Total Population	11,882	3,068	23,061	14,089	32,992	13,846	8,646	200,303	2,095	7,224	5,089	5,791	31,070	6,373	8,354	2,672
Data: U.S. Census Bureau 2016 American Community Survey																

Race and Ethnicity

The table above shows race and ethnic distribution in the region in 2016. Six counties (Chattahoochee, Crisp, Harris, Marion, Schley, and Taylor) had majority white populations. Five counties (Clay, Macon, Randolph, Sumter, and Talbot) had majority black populations. Finally, while no racial/ethnic group was 50% or higher, the other five counties (Dooly, Muscogee, Quitman, Stewart, and Webster) had a plurality black population.

Stewart County had the highest Hispanic/Latino percentage of any county at 22.4%, and Chattahoochee was significantly ahead of the rest of the region with 14.8% of its residents being Hispanic/Latino. Chattahoochee County also had the highest percentage of Asian (3.0%) and multiracial (3.4%) people in the region. Much of Chattahoochee County's diversity can be attributed to its high military population in Fort Benning, which draws people from all over the country.



Data: 2000 US Census; 2010 and 2016 US Census American Community Survey

Income

The region's income distribution shows that the highest percentages of households were in the income distribution brackets of (0-\$9,999), (\$10,000-\$24,999), and (\$25,000-49,999). For the state of Georgia and the U.S., the highest percentages of households were in the income distribution brackets (\$25,000- 49,999) and (\$100,000+).

River Valley Region Income: 2015								
County	Per Capita Income	Median House-hold Income	Income Distribution by percentage of Households					
			0 - \$9,999	\$10,000 - \$24,999	\$25,000- 49,999	\$50,000 - \$74,999	\$75,000 - \$99,999	\$100,000 +
Chattahoochee	\$19,487	\$43,378	2.4%	14.9%	41.0%	23.0%	11.5%	7.2%
Clay	\$12,790	\$20,438	18.4%	38.9%	23.0%	8.8%	6.9%	4.0%
Crisp	\$19,439	\$31,615	16.1%	25.9%	24.7%	13.5%	9.4%	10.4%
Dooly	\$14,295	\$28,696	15.9%	28.3%	29.3%	13.8%	6.5%	6.1%
Harris	\$30,386	\$63,824	9.5%	26.2%	25.7%	17.0%	8.9%	12.6%
Macon	\$13,431	\$28,684	20.2%	26.1%	28.3%	14.5%	7.6%	3.2%
Marion	\$19,077	\$36,242	11.3%	24.0%	29.7%	13.5%	11.2%	10.3%
Muscogee	\$23,318	\$42,306	10.7%	19.8%	25.8%	19.3%	10.4%	14.1%
Quitman	\$17,334	\$31,487	11.5%	26.8%	33.3%	18.2%	7.8%	2.4%
Randolph	\$26,031	\$28,377	15.9%	28.9%	30.0%	13.7%	4.1%	6.8%
Schley	\$19,858	\$39,375	12.5%	23.4%	23.7%	18.4%	10.5%	11.7%
Stewart	\$13,721	\$21,118	21.1%	35.0%	19.2%	14.8%	7.2%	2.6%
Sumter	\$17,404	\$32,758	16.5%	24.8%	25.4%	15.3%	6.7%	11.2%
Talbot	\$18,971	\$34,078	18.9%	22.2%	27.2%	15.0%	8.7%	8.0%
Taylor	\$16,857	\$28,143	16.2%	28.4%	28.3%	13.2%	6.7%	7.3%
Webster	\$18,767	\$37,063	9.8%	26.5%	26.6%	19.0%	9.6%	8.4%
RVRC	\$23,032	\$49,782	25.6% *		24.5%	22.8%	13.7%	13.3%
Georgia	\$25,737	\$49,620	8.7%	16.9%	24.8%	18.0%	11.4%	20.4%
US	\$28,930	\$53,889	7.2%	15.9%	23.5%	17.8%	12.1%	23.5%

*RVRC data only available for combined 0-24,999 income distribution by percentage of households

Source: U.S. Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program, American Community Survey, 2015 U.S. Census Bureau

Per Capita Income 2017

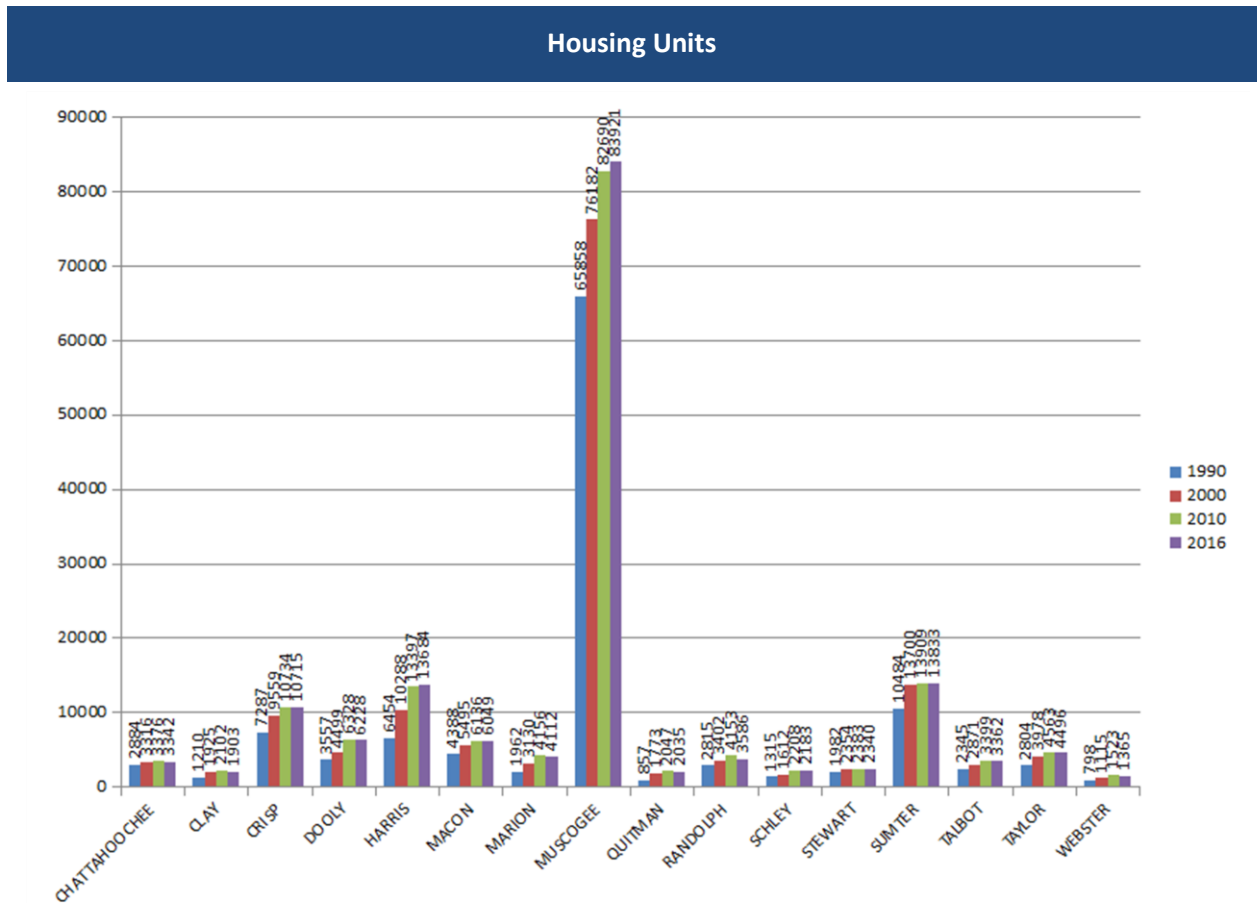
For the year 2017, the entire region, with the exception of Harris County, is below the state per capita personal income. This is the same in regards to the region's comparison to the U.S. per capita income. Harris County's per capita personal income is \$31,073, with Georgia's \$26,810 and U.S.'s \$29,979.

PER CAPITA INCOME IN RIVER VALLEY COUNTIES, 2017			
County	Per Capita Personal Income	As a % of Georgia's Per Capita Income	As a % of U.S.'s Per Capita Income
Chattahoochee	\$19,259	70%	62%
Clay	\$16,812	61%	55%
Crisp	\$20,414	74%	66%
Dooly	\$17,700	64%	57%
Harris	\$34,129	123%	111%
Macon	\$15,941	58%	52%
Marion	\$20,458	74%	66%
Muscogee	\$24,796	90%	80%
Quitman	\$15,902	57%	52%
Randolph	\$18,831	68%	61%
Schley	\$19,652	71%	64%
Stewart	\$15,164	55%	49%
Sumter	\$19,098	69%	62%
Talbot	\$18,643	67%	60%
Taylor	\$17,363	63%	56%
Webster	\$20,994	76%	68%
Georgia	\$27,671	100%	90%
U.S.	\$30,820	111%	100%

Source(s): ESRI Business Analyst 2017 Forecast

Housing Analysis

The River Valley Region has experienced moderate growth from 1990 to 2016, as new residents continued to move to the area. However, between 2010 and 2016, the number of housing units leveled off in the region, with only modest gains and even some decreases in housing units (especially in the smallest counties) in that time period.



Housing Types and Mix

All counties in the River Valley region except for Chattahoochee, Quitman, and Webster Counties show a housing stock predominantly made up of single-family stick-built homes. Chattahoochee has a large proportion of multi-family homes, likely due to the housing on the military base in Fort Benning. A majority (63.1%) of homes in Quitman County are manufactured homes. Webster has an almost identical percentage of single-family detached (48%) and manufactured homes (48.1%). A few counties have small populations living in non-traditional arrangements (boats, RVs, vans, etc.)--the majority of these are likely people residing in RVs on a permanent basis on campgrounds.

Total Housing Units and Unit Types - 2016					
County	Total Units	Single Family 1-unit, detached	Multi-Family	Manufactured Houses	Others (Boats, RVs, Vans, etc.)
Chattahoochee	3,342	37.5%	45.9%	16.6%	0%
Clay	1,903	57.7%	7.4%	34.6%	0.3%
Crisp	10,715	62.5%	13.5%	24.0%	0%
Dooly	6,228	59.7%	11.2%	29.0%	0.1%
Harris	13,684	87.9%	4.2%	7.9%	0%
Macon	6,049	61.9%	11.9%	26.2%	0%
Marion	4,112	54.4%	8.4%	37.3%	0%
Muscogee	83,921	65.5%	33.0%	1.5%	0%
Quitman	2,035	36.3%	0.6%	63.1%	0%
Randolph	3,566	68.0%	6.4%	25.2%	0.4%
Schley	2,183	54.1%	7.2%	38.7%	0%
Stewart	2,340	60.9%	6.6%	32.5%	0%
Sumter	13,833	60.2%	22.8%	17.0%	0%
Talbot	3,362	60.3%	4.9%	34.8%	0%
Taylor	4,496	52.6%	6.8%	40.6%	0%
Webster	1,365	48.0%	3.9%	48.1%	0%
RVRC	163,154	--	--	16.6%	--
Georgia	4,156,518	66.3%	24.3%	9.3%	0.1%

Source: US Census Bureau 2016 American Community Survey

Housing Age

In the River Valley region, new housing construction went through a region wide slump following the recession in the 2000s. Since 2014, only a few counties have shown much new housing construction at all, with Harris County having the greatest percentage of new homes constructed after that date at 0.9%. Harris County's large percentage of newer housing goes back a couple decades as Columbus began to sprawl northward. Some more minor sprawl from Columbus may have influenced new construction in Marion, Talbot, and Chattahoochee Counties as well. In general, counties that have experienced the most rapid growth in the past 30 years have the newest housing stock overall. The smallest counties with the least change in population over time, on the other hand, generally have older housing stock.

Age of Housing in the River Valley Region, 2016								
Total housing units	Chattahoochee	Clay	Crisp	Dooly	Harris	Macon	Marion	Muscogee
		3,342	1,903	10,715	6,228	13,684	6,049	4,112
Built 2014 or later	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
Built 2010 - 2013	0.9%	0.0%	0.5%	1.4%	3.1%	0.2%	1.5%	4.4%
Built 2000 - 2009	10.3%	11.7%	11.1%	8.2%	23.4%	9.6%	19.9%	15.6%
Built 1990 - 1999	11.3%	24.6%	14.9%	21.0%	26.8%	17.5%	22.3%	12.1%
Built 1980 - 1989	10.5%	12.5%	18.3%	14.6%	15.9%	18.3%	17.4%	12.3%
Built 1970 - 1979	20.0%	18.7%	19.6%	16.6%	11.2%	16.4%	18.2%	14.6%
Built 1960 - 1969	17.1%	8.0%	12.6%	11.7%	5.9%	12.7%	10.1%	15.5%
Built 1950 - 1959	6.5%	5.0%	10.3%	9.3%	4.9%	9.3%	1.5%	13.2%
Built 1940 - 1949	6.0%	7.0%	7.3%	5.9%	1.3%	6.0%	0.5%	6.1%
Built 1939 or earlier	17.2%	12.5%	5.5%	11.2%	6.6%	10.0%	8.7%	5.7%
	Quitman	Randolph	Schley	Stewart	Sumter	Talbot	Taylor	Webster
	2,035	3,586	2,183	2,340	13,833	3,362	4,496	1,365
Built 2014 - later	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%
Built 2010 - 2013	0.0%	2.7%	2.4%	0.8%	1.5%	1.0%	2.0%	0.0%
Built 2000 - 2009	15.9%	6.1%	19.3%	3.4%	11.6%	13.3%	10.9%	9.4%
Built 1990 - 1999	28.6%	22.8%	19.1%	15.0%	20.7%	21.8%	21.9%	27.0%
Built 1980 - 1989	19.0%	16.0%	14.8%	13.4%	19.0%	20.8%	19.4%	15.8%
Built 1970 - 1979	20.0%	10.1%	24.1%	20.9%	15.2%	13.1%	17.7%	23.3%
Built 1960 - 1969	3.4%	11.5%	6.3%	17.8%	11.9%	9.4%	12.3%	10.1%
Built 1950 - 1959	4.9%	5.5%	2.6%	13.0%	7.1%	4.7%	6.1%	4.5%
Built 1940 - 1949	5.8%	6.9%	2.2%	4.3%	3.6%	3.7%	4.4%	3.1%
Built 1939 or earlier	2.4%	18.6%	9.1%	11.4%	9.4%	12.1%	5.3%	6.9%

Data Source: US Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey

Condition, Occupancy, and Cost of Housing

Housing conditions vary across the River Valley region. Generally speaking, the counties with the highest incomes and fastest, most recent growth have the most favorable housing conditions. Many communities hit their population and development peaks alongside the development of railroad lines in Georgia, and as these communities have lost population, the local housing stock has aged and deteriorated. While there are many well-preserved older housing structures throughout the region, in some areas, such older housing has fallen into disrepair. Additionally, the demand for low-cost housing in the region has led to many people turning to manufactured housing units over traditional stick-built homes to meet this need. Manufactured housing units are depreciating assets and tend to deteriorate more quickly than stick-built homes; with 12 of the 16 counties in the region having housing stocks made up of 20% or more manufactured homes, this can present problems in meeting future housing needs in the region. Communities in the region have responded to growing pockets of substandard housing by taking part in programs to improve housing quality like the Community Home Investment Program (CHIP), the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH), and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program.

Housing costs vary greatly in the region, though in general, most counties have fairly low housing costs. Harris County is the biggest outlier in the region with its median value for owner-occupied housing being over \$200,000. Muscogee (\$138,600) and Marion (\$103,300) Counties are the only other two areas with median housing values over \$100,000. Most counties in the region have a majority of their homes falling in one of two ranges: less than \$50,000 or between \$50,000 and \$99,999.

In terms of rental units, Chattahoochee has the highest median rent at \$1,272/month, with Harris County and Muscogee County having the next highest median rents at \$872/month and \$844/month, respectively. No other county in the region has a median rent exceeding \$700/month, and some even have median rents lower than \$500/month.

Occupancy ratings vary considerably in the region. Dooly, Harris, Muscogee, Sumter, and Talbot Counties all have occupancy ratings over 80%. The remainder have occupancy ratings in the 70-80% range except for Clay (61%) and Quitman (45%) Counties. These two counties have such a low occupancy rate because a large percentage of their housing stock consists of seasonal and recreational homes with owners having primary residence elsewhere.

Home Occupancy and Values								
Owner-Occupied Housing Units	Chattahoochee	Clay	Crisp	Dooley	Harris	Macon	Marion	Muscogee
		780	743	4,876	3,296	9,776	2,822	2,206
Less than \$50,000	34.4%	38.4%	23.9%	30.6%	5.6%	35.3%	24.2%	8.4%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	38.3%	23.6%	29.7%	30.4%	14.0%	37.5%	24.6%	22.7%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	14.7%	10.6%	15.0%	18.2%	14.1%	15.5%	19.0%	23.5%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	6.8%	12.4%	11.0%	11.3%	16.2%	4.6%	9.1%	18.3%
\$200,000 - \$299,999	1.8%	6.1%	9.3%	7.1%	29.8%	3.4%	16.2%	15.7%
\$300,000 - \$499,999	1.7%	5.9%	7.2%	1.9%	14.8%	2.9%	4.4%	7.8%
\$500,000 - \$999,999	1.2%	3.1%	3.4%	0.3%	4.9%	0.7%	2.0%	2.9%
\$1,000,000 or more	1.2%	0.0%	0.5%	0.3%	0.5%	0.0%	0.6%	0.7%
Median (dollars)	\$66,400.00	\$71,400.00	\$91,000.00	\$83,600.00	\$200,200.00	\$69,800.00	\$103,300.00	\$138,600.00
	Quitman	Randolph	Schley	Stewart	Sumter	Talbot	Taylor	Webster
	678	1,624	1,260	1,109	6,528	2,229	2,316	831
Less than \$50,000	39.5%	31.4%	24.9%	46.6%	23.3%	29.6%	41.5%	49.5%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	29.8%	33.1%	25.4%	33.1%	32.1%	32.7%	26.6%	24.2%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	14.7%	14.5%	16.5%	6.6%	12.9%	16.1%	15.6%	10.1%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	5.6%	5.8%	14.4%	7.8%	14.3%	8.5%	5.2%	4.8%
\$200,000 - \$299,999	6.0%	7.9%	13.8%	2.5%	9.9%	8.7%	8.6%	4.9%
\$300,000 - \$499,999	1.6%	4.2%	2.6%	2.2%	4.8%	3.5%	1.8%	4.8%
\$500,000 - \$999,999	1.9%	3.0%	2.4%	1.2%	1.7%	0.5%	0.3%	1.7%
\$1,000,000 or more	0.7%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	0.4%	0.5%	0.0%
Median (dollars)	\$69,700.00	\$71,600.00	\$99,300.00	\$52,200.00	\$86,900.00	\$75,000.00	\$60,200.00	\$50,700.00

Data Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2016

Rental Occupancy and Values								
Occupied units paying rent	Chattahoochee	Clay	Crisp	Dooly	Harris	Macon	Marion	Muscogee
		1,729	229	3,272	1,606	1,674	1,474	653
Less than \$500	6.9%	63.8%	29.4%	47.4%	14.3%	34.8%	47.2%	14.8%
\$500 to \$999	18.9%	31.9%	64.4%	49.8%	52.4%	62.2%	46.1%	53.1%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	47.6%	4.4%	6.0%	2.3%	26.7%	2.4%	6.7%	23.9%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	24.3%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	3.8%	0.5%	0.0%	6.6%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.9%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.6%
\$3,000 or more	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%
Median (dollars)	\$1,272.00	\$413.00	\$627.00	\$521.00	\$872.00	\$566.00	\$521.00	\$844.00
	Quitman	Randolph	Schley	Stewart	Sumter	Talbot	Taylor	Webster
	186	889	523	513	4,755	333	827	134
Less than \$500	16.1%	28.7%	31.5%	54.4%	31.1%	32.4%	37.8%	34.3%
\$500 to \$999	81.2%	71.3%	62.3%	40.0%	60.4%	63.1%	56.6%	65.7%
\$1,000 to \$1,499	2.7%	0.0%	5.2%	4.3%	8.1%	4.5%	4.0%	0.0%
\$1,500 to \$1,999	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	1.4%	0.3%	0.0%	1.6%	0.0%
\$2,000 to \$2,499	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
\$2,500 to \$2,999	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
\$3,000 or more	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Median (dollars)	\$676.00	\$588.00	\$659.00	\$482.00	\$643.00	\$563.00	\$593.00	\$563.00

Data Source: US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2016

Cost-Burdened Households

The definition of affordable housing is one of the most difficult to relay because of the negative stigma attached to the term. Affordable housing relates to the supply of housing available for the residents of the jurisdiction, whether they are highly educated professionals, minimum wage retail employees, or retired senior citizens. Assessing affordability is a measure of the housing cost burden that is placed on households. More specifically, federal standards consider a household to be cost-burdened if it pays more than 30% of its gross income on housing. The following figure shows the percentage of cost burdened homes within the region for the year 2016.

Cost Burdened Households in the River Valley Region, 2016	
County	Percentage
Chattahoochee	43.60%
Clay	21.30%
Crisp	36.40%
Dooly	29.80%
Harris	27.90%
Macon	33.40%
Marion	29.70%
Muscogee	37.50%
Quitman	33.90%
Randolph	31.20%
Schley	24.60%
Stewart	33.20%
Sumter	34.90%
Talbot	29.70%
Taylor	30.50%
Webster	20.40%

Source: 2016 U.S. Census American Community Survey

Special Housing Needs

When examining the housing needs of the region, an additional aspect to be considered is the amount of service required by the special needs residents within the region. There were 1400 cases of HIV/AIDS reported in the region during 2014. In 2010, there were 510 police actions of domestic violence reported in the region. Additionally, no county has fewer than 14.7% of its population living with some sort of disability, and in one county, Quitman, over a quarter of the residents live with a disability. Also, there are homeless people throughout the region, though most are located in the largest cities. The following tables show residents with HIV/AIDS, percentage of people with disabilities, and number of homeless people in each county.

Number of People in River Valley Region Living with Diagnosed HIV, 2014			
County	Number	Rate per 100,000 People	Possible Data Skewing for Rate
Chattahoochee	13	135	CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES
Clay	15	579	CORRECTIONAL
Crisp	107	567	CORRECTIONAL
Dooly	47	384	
Harris	38	136	CORRECTIONAL
Macon	44	371	
Marion	18	243	CORRECTIONAL
Muscogee	890	540	CORRECTIONAL
Quitman	10	493	SMALL NUMBER OF CASES CORRECTIONAL
Randolph	33	532	CORRECTIONAL
Schley	6	143	SMALL NUMBER OF CASES CORRECTIONAL
Stewart	34	657	CORRECTIONAL
Sumter	107	413	
Talbot	15	270	CORRECTIONAL
Taylor	23	320	
Webster	N/A	N/A	
TOTAL	1400	385.5333333	

Source: <http://map.aidsvu.org/map?state=GA>

Percentage of Residents with a Disability, 2016	
County	Percentage
Chattahoochee	15.5%
Clay	18.6%
Crisp	18.8%
Dooly	17.2%
Harris	17.1%
Macon	20.0%
Marion	18.6%
Muscogee	18.7%
Quitman	27.0%
Randolph	18.8%
Schley	16.7%
Stewart	23.0%
Sumter	14.7%
Talbot	19.3%
Taylor	16.2%
Webster	18.9%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2016 American Community Survey

Total Homeless Population, 2017	
County	Number
Chattahoochee	0
Clay	1
Crisp	8
Dooly	5
Harris	14
Macon	6
Marion	3
Muscogee	371*
Quitman	1
Randolph	3
Schley	2
Stewart	1
Sumter	11
Talbot	3
Taylor	4
Webster	1
TOTAL	434

Source: DCA Report on Homelessness, 2017

* Muscogee County Data is 2015

Jobs-Housing Balance

Jobs-housing balance is a measure of the relationship between housing units and employment in a county, city, or community. Jobs-housing balance is measured by a jobs/housing ratio, which is the number of jobs in a geographic area (i.e. county, city, region) divided by the number of housing units in that geographic area. Jobs-housing balance seeks a geographic equilibrium between housing and jobs. The underlying theory is that as jobs and housing are more evenly distributed and mixed, people will be able to live closer to their jobs, and traffic congestion and vehicular traffic will be reduced. A balanced community generally has a jobs-housing ratio of 1.25 to 1.75, with 1.4 considered ideal. A low jobs-housing ratio indicates a bedroom community, while a high ratio indicates an area of employment opportunities.

The following table illustrates the jobs-housing ratio within each county of the RVRC region. The least favorable jobs-housing ratio for 2010 was located in Quitman County at 0.184. The most favorable jobs-housing ratio was located in Muscogee County at 1.109.

Jobs-Housing Balance			
County	Jobs	Housing Units	Jobs-Housing Ratio
Chattahoochee	2,234	3,342	0.668
Clay	542	1,903	0.285
Crisp	8,007	10,715	0.747
Dooly	3,654	6,228	0.587
Harris	4,599	13,684	0.336
Macon	2,763	6,049	0.457
Marion	1,125	4,112	0.274
Muscogee	93,050	83,921	1.109
Quitman	375	2,035	0.184
Randolph	1,849	3,566	0.519
Schley	958	2,183	0.439
Stewart	1,156	2,340	0.494
Sumter	10,793	13,833	0.780
Talbot	751	3,362	0.223
Taylor	2,292	4,496	0.510
Webster	464	1,365	0.340
RVRC	134,612	163,154	0.825
Georgia	4,262,937	4,156,518	1.026

Source: US Department of Labor Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, 2016; US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2016

Economic Development Analysis

RVRC Industry Mix

The top industry category for the region in 2008 and 2017 is the service industry. The service industry had (6,155) establishments in the first quarter of 2008, whereas the management, professional and related industry had the fewest with (588). In 2017, the service industry had the most establishments with (5,842), whereas the management, professional and related industry had the fewest again with (579).

RVRC Industry Mix- 1st Quarter of 2017					
	Management, Professional and Related	Service	Sales and Office	Natural Resource, Construction, and Maintenance Occupations	Production, Transportation, and Material Moving
Average Number of Establishments	579	5,842	1,835	656	922
Average Monthly Employment	6,644	85,275	20,621	5698	18,780
Average Monthly Percent %	5	64	15.4	4.3	14.1
Average Weekly Wages	3,940	811	2,150	1490	959

Source : Georgia Department of Labor

Labor Force

In the region, the highest employed occupation is in the management, professional and related category (31.4%). The next highest is the Sales and Office employment category (24.9%), followed by the service occupation (19.5%) and production, transportation, and material moving (15.4%). The occupation with the least amount employment is in the natural resources, construction, and maintenance occupations (8.8%).

County Employment by Occupation 2015							
Jurisdiction	Management, Professional and Related	Service	Sales and Office	Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	Construction Extraction, Maintenance	Production, Transportation, and Material Moving	Total Employed
Chattahoochee	28.6%	18.8%	21.5%	1.3%	10.4%	19.4%	2,204
Clay	23.1%	20.8%	16.7%	7.0%	17.8%	14.6%	848
Crisp	29.9%	19.6%	25.5%	1.5%	10.5%	13.0%	8,633
Dooley	21.7%	17.9%	20.2%	3.6%	8.2%	28.4%	4,895
Harris	36.6%	13.3%	25.9%	0.3%	9.6%	14.2%	15,071
Macon	20.5%	20.4%	19.5%	3.1%	8.7%	27.8%	4,461
Marion	26.0%	11.7%	20.3%	4.9%	15.2%	22.0%	3,219
Muscogee	32.9%	20.9%	26.8%	0.1%	6.6%	12.5%	78,531
Quitman	14.5%	20.8%	27.0%	0.7%	8.4%	28.7%	753
Randolph	26.8%	19.5%	20.7%	2.1%	7.6%	23.4%	2,503
Schley	28.4%	14.3%	23.4%	2.9%	10.9%	20.1%	1,964
Stewart	30.0%	20.8%	20.6%	2.2%	7.7%	18.7%	1,485
Sumter	33.0%	20.0%	21.0%	1.5%	6.4%	18.2%	11,392
Talbot	19.9%	24.2%	20.1%	0.3%	8.9%	26.5%	2,513
Taylor	25.7%	18.3%	21.0%	1.8%	15.6%	17.6%	2,869
Webster	30.9%	15.9%	23.7%	5.3%	6.0%	18.3%	1,139
Georgia	35.9%	16.9%	24.8%	0.6%	8.6%	13.2%	4,388,274

Source: U.S. Economic Census 2015

During the span of 2008-2017, the entire region experienced a bell-shaped like trend. During the years 2008-2012, the region experienced an increase in the unemployment rate. During the years 2012-2017, the region experienced a decrease in the unemployment rate.

UNEMPLOYMENT RATES FOR RIVER VALLEY COUNTIES, 2008-2017

County	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Chattahoochee	12.2%	15.0%	10.7%	11.9%	12.4%	12.0%	10.3%	9.1%	8.6%	7.6%
Clay	7.2%	8.5%	11.7%	11.5%	12.6%	10.8%	11.6%	12.2%	10.0%	9.4%
Crisp	7.7%	11.7%	13.7%	14.4%	12.4%	12.1%	9.1%	7.2%	6.0%	5.9%
Dooly	6.7%	9.6%	10.9%	12.9%	11.3%	11.9%	9.8%	7.4%	5.9%	5.4%
Harris	4.7%	7.0%	7.9%	7.8%	8.1%	7.2%	6.5%	5.7%	5.1%	4.7%
Macon	8.5%	12.1%	12.8%	13.4%	13.3%	12.5%	12.5%	9.3%	7.8%	6.9%
Marion	6.2%	9.6%	10.5%	10.8%	10.4%	9.4%	7.9%	9.7%	7.3%	6.1%
Muscogee	6.2%	8.8%	10.2%	10.7%	10.5%	10.0%	8.9%	7.8%	7.0%	6.5%
Quitman	8.6%	11.2%	9.2%	10.8%	10.3%	9.3%	9.8%	7.6%	6.8%	6.9%
Randolph	8.5%	11.7%	11.5%	13.3%	13.2%	10.8%	10.6%	9.7%	8.9%	7.4%
Schley	6.6%	12.4%	12.3%	11.8%	10.9%	9.9%	7.9%	7.3%	6.4%	6.1%
Stewart	7.8%	10.3%	10.7%	10.0%	9.6%	9.1%	7.5%	7.4%	6.4%	6.5%
Sumter	7.7%	12.6%	13.4%	13.0%	12.4%	11.8%	10.0%	8.7%	7.7%	7.3%
Talbot	6.6%	9.1%	10.4%	10.7%	11.3%	10.2%	8.2%	8.2%	6.7%	6.4%
Taylor	7.5%	11.5%	14.1%	14.7%	14.5%	11.4%	9.9%	9.1%	6.0%	8.3%
Webster	5.2%	9.4%	13.1%	11.5%	10.2%	9.7%	9.4%	10.8%	8.9%	8.3%

Source(s): 2008-2017 from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Economic Resources

The RVRC area has three public state universities (Georgia Southwestern State University (Americus), Columbus State University (Columbus), and Albany State University (Cordele). There are also ten private colleges/universities within the Region. Additionally, the Region includes Columbus Technical College (Columbus), South Georgia Technical College (Americus), and Miller-Motte Technical College (Columbus).

The RVRC region is fortunate to have these educational resources, as they are a critical part of the overall workforce development strategy. These resources provide training through a wide range of programs. The Technical College Adult Education programs offer basic skills literacy improvement training which strengthens individual's educational level. The WIOA funded GED/Work Readiness/Work Experience activity as well as other WIOA programs help build the area workforce by focusing on educational improvement, development of soft skills training, and by providing work based learning opportunities.

The two public Technical College systems have developed strong partnerships with local/regional employers such as Pratt Whitney, KODAK, AFLAC, Blue Cross Blue Shield, John Deere, Caterpillar, Kauffman Tire, Weyerhaeuser, Tyson Foods, and Metro Power. Training is available through Columbus Technical College and the South Georgia Technical College for these business partnerships leading to employment opportunities with higher rates of pay. The South Georgia Technical College also offers the Business Enterprise Center (BEC), which is available to assist businesses during the crucial start-up phase by allowing entrepreneurs to use facility space, computers, and equipment.

The River Valley region also has several initiatives such as the Columbus 2025 Chamber initiative, the One Sumter Chamber initiative, as well as Crisp County Industrial Development Authority that are studying the economic issues facing their communities in order to better prepare for the future growth and prosperity of the Region.

The many organizations in the RVRC region offer opportunities for personal growth, education, and career/job employment success. Georgia Department of Labor (GDOL) Career Centers are focusing on new strategies that help place employees in the right job or help individuals assess training options to build skills for long-term job retention. The regional WIOA board has partnered with Paxen Learning to implement the Georgia BEST program which allows the Paxen staff to include soft skills training with their existing Work Readiness activities.

Economic Trends

Existing and Emerging In-Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

Top employers in the region include one of the US Army's largest training bases as well as two Fortune 1000 Companies. This is the largest concentration of Fortune 1000 Companies in Georgia

outside of Atlanta, and one of the largest concentrations of large companies in the Southeastern United States. Together, Ft. Benning, AFLAC and TSYS employ nearly 50% of all workers in the metropolitan Columbus area. These are also three of the largest employers in the region.

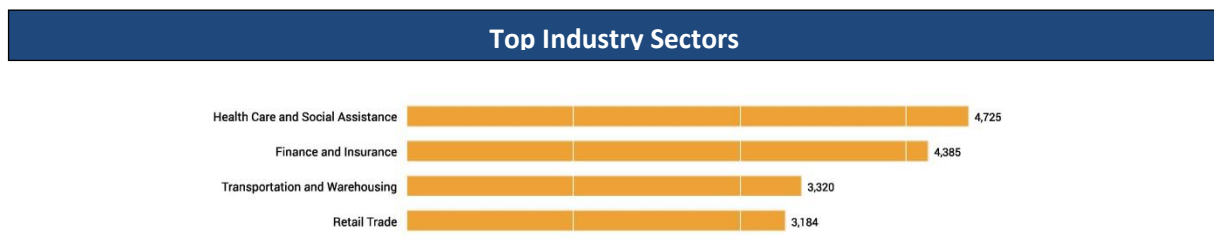
Other major employers in the region include Blue Cross/Blue Shield, Synovus (and Columbus Bank and Trust), local hospitals in Columbus, Cuthbert, Americus and Cordele, the public school systems in each of the 16 counties in the region, and the local universities. These colleges and universities include Columbus State University, Georgia Southwestern State University, Albany State University (all three a part of the University System of Georgia) as well as Andrew College, and private institutions in Columbus. There are also two technical colleges based in the region – Columbus Technical College and South Georgia Technical College in Americus. There are also two other technical colleges that serve the area: Albany Technical College and Southern Crescent Technical College.

The number of advanced manufacturers in Columbus is also significant with KIA Suppliers, NCR and Pratt and Whitney in the local industrial sectors. Other major employers in the region include Norboard in Cordele as well as Eaton-Cooper Lighting and Habitat for Humanity in Americus. In the rural counties, the industry mix includes agricultural and other manufacturing sectors. Despite these strengths, there is a need to grow and diversify further the industries represented in the area.

Employment Needs of Employers in Those Industry Sectors and Occupations

The following analysis of industrial sectors draws from data provided by Burning Glass (BGLI)– a private data provider that pulls information about job postings.

Most job postings for regional data in Burning Glass are in Healthcare and Social Assistance (4,725) followed by Finance and Insurance (4,385 positions available). Most of these Finance and Insurance positions are in the Columbus area; Columbus has over 4,000 of these listed jobs in the Lower Chattahoochee data. This matches anecdotal evidence from the companies in that sector (TSYS, AFLAC) that they are always on the search for qualified candidates to work. Another notable needed top industry sector that WIOA organizations often focus on is Transportation and Warehousing (3,320 jobs advertised in the region according to the Burning Glass database).



Source: Burning Glass - BGLI

Listing of Occupations in Demand within the Region

Top Occupations in demand by far for Region 8 were for truck drivers (3,263) followed by Registered Nurses (1,595). Software Developers had a notable 628 positions available. Most of these positions are available in the Columbus market only. The top three occupations in demand that were listed were identical in both the Lower Chattahoochee and Middle Flint areas, as well as within the region.



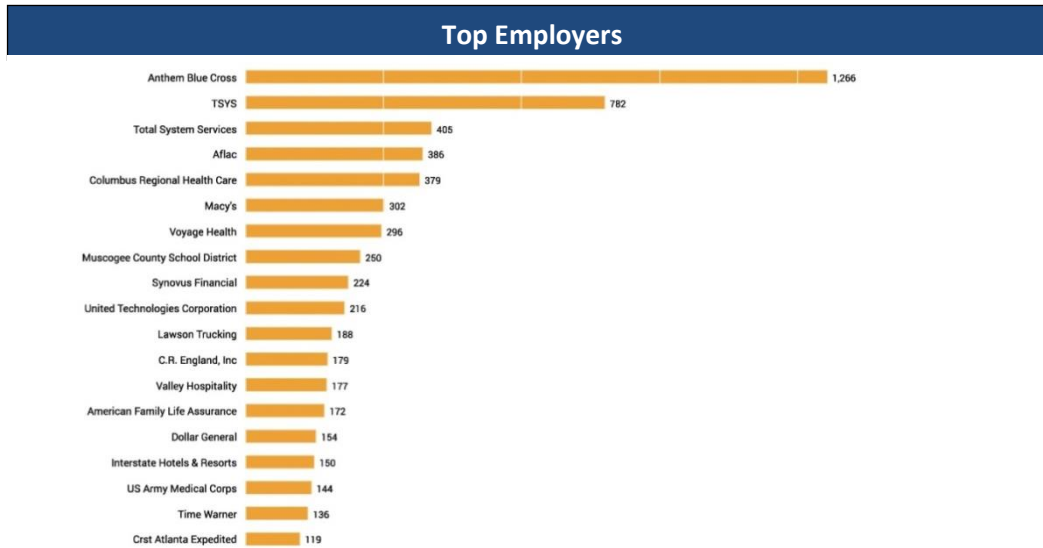
Source: Burning Glass - BGLI

Employment Needs in In-Demand Industry Sectors and Occupations

A 2013 analysis conducted by the Columbus Chamber of Commerce and Columbus Technical College indicates that the local workforce area is facing the following key workforce issues as it continues to prepare for economic and population growth: 1- Recruitment of Skilled Workers, 2- Gaps in Work Ethic and Basic Skills, 3- Inadequate Support Services. Each of these issues is addressed here, followed by a discussion of the in-demand sectors and occupations.

The company with the largest recent demand for workers is Anthem Blue Cross (1,266). This is because Anthem Blue Cross recently opened a new call center facility in the Columbus Technology Park and are actively hiring for that facility. Other major employers in Columbus routinely have openings available and are searching for employees - TSYS (782), AFLAC (386) and Synovus (224). It is indicative of the size of the Columbus job market that most of the largest employers are located there. Those companies looking for employees outside of the Columbus market are trucking companies like C.R. England and Crst Atlanta. The other major employers looking for employees are service, retail and healthcare-related companies.

In the Lower Chattahoochee Area plan, there is a significant discussion of the employment needs of the IT and FinTech companies based in Columbus. The Columbus area has become an important center of activity for these businesses with several Fortune 1000 companies headquartered there. It is critical for the regional economy that these businesses have the employees they need to be successful. Recommendations in this report included building the digital skills of citizens in the region to prepare for a 21st century workforce needs, as well as a targeted effort to ensure that the Fortune 1000 companies in the region are able to attract, and critically, to retain top engineering talent.



Source: Burning Glass - BGLI

Community Facilities and Services Analysis

Community Facilities includes buildings/sites and services that support efficient growth and development patterns that protect and enhance quality of life. These amenities are often the most direct connection between the citizens, the elected government, and the public servants. Often new visitors judge a community by the appearance or availability of the community facilities. An efficient system is both economical for existing residents and an incentive to attract new residents. If the public amenities are well-maintained and attractive, potential residents are encouraged to become part of the community and participate in the growth of the area. The following sections are a description of the community facilities operated by the local governments of the River Valley Region.

Utilities

Water

River Valley Regional Commission has three primary sources of water: the Chattahoochee River, the Flint River, and an abundant supply of ground water consisting of four recharge areas (including the Claiborne, Clayton, Floridian/Jackson and the Cretaceous-Tertiary). The Cretaceous-Tertiary covers the most acreage of the four aquifers in the River Valley region. The four aquifers in total cover 58% of the land area in the River Valley region. All municipal and individual potable water supplies in the region are supplied by the Chattahoochee River or from one of the four aquifers. There is a surface water impoundment fed by Big Lazer Creek, located in Talbot County, owned by the city of Manchester, that supplies water to Manchester residents and serves as a back-up water supply to Talbot County. No county or city in the River Valley area currently uses the Flint River as a water source. Surface and groundwater is utilized for municipal,

commercial, industrial and agricultural use within the region. All the cities have municipal water supply and distribution systems. The unincorporated areas, with the exception of Harris County, Talbot County, and Chattahoochee County, usually have water in the urban fringe areas and at industrial parks. The aforementioned counties have water service in 60% to 80% of the unincorporated area. Numerous suppliers of public water in the River Valley area provide service outside of their jurisdictional boundaries. For the most part, these cities or counties offer limited service to residential and commercial developments adjacent to city limits or to another county's boundary.

Many local water systems need major improvements. Many infrastructure systems are relatively old and are in need of repair. Many municipalities and counties depend solely on CDBG funding to make upgrades to improve lines, which is a very competitive process that is not guaranteed. Due to very low water and sewer rates in the River Valley Region, many municipalities and counties cannot afford the large capital improvement that is necessary to upgrade and repair the systems. USDA and GEFA loans are often overlooked due to the necessity of raising water rates to an already impoverished region. The majority of homes and businesses within the unincorporated portions of the Region not served by county or city water systems are served by private wells.

Water Usage & Storage Information (by County)

Chattahoochee-Cusseta County

	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served by Public Supply	Connections
County	450,000	150,000	3,150,000	N/A	Ground	650 gpm	3,400	1,400
TOTAL:	450,000	150,000	3,150,000	N/A	Ground	650 gpm	3,400	1,400

Clay County

	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served by Public Supply	Connections
County	400,000	33,000	400,000	N/A	Ground	450 gpm	800	*
City of Bluffton	62,000	15,000	301,000	N/A	Ground	535 gpm	132	*
City of Fort Gaines	400,000	250,000	100,000	300,000	Ground	717 gpm	1,107	516
TOTAL:	862,000	298,000	801,000	300,000	Ground	1702 gpm	2,039	516

Crisp County

	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served by Public Supply	Connections
County	1,000,000	227,789	600,000	N/A	Ground	850 gpm	3,297	1,319
City of Arabi	130,000	100,000	200,000	N/A	Ground	425 gpm	589	200
City of Cordele	8,000,000	1,900,000	1,800,000	500,000	Ground	8,000,000 gpm	11,500	6,850
TOTAL:	9,130,000	2,227,789	2,600,000	500,000	Ground	8,001,275 gpm	15,386	8,369

Dooly County								
	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served by Public Supply	Connections
County	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
City of Byromville	*	*	100,000	N/A	Ground	350 gpm	452	*
City of Dooling	*	*	50,000	N/A	Ground	90 gpm	187	*
City of Pinehurst	475,200	87,097	150,000	N/A	Ground	150 gpm	405	127
City of Lilly	*	*	100,000	N/A	Ground	300 gpm	220	83
City of Unadilla	2,304,000	400,000	750,000	N/A	Ground	1600 gpm	3,522	766
City of Vienna	2,609,000	1,900,000	1,105,000	N/A	Ground	5030 gpm	4,311	1,283
TOTAL:	5,388,200	2,387,097	2,255,000	N/A	Ground	7520 gpm	9,097	2,259
Harris County								
	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served by Public Supply	Connections
County	3,000,000	1,790,000	4,225,200	N/A	Surface	4,000,000 gpm	21,130	8,127
City of Hamilton	200,000	98,650	575,000	N/A	Ground	447840 gpm	1,016	556
City of Pine Mountain	240,000	180,566	100,000	100,000	Ground	240,000 gpm	1,374	800
City of Shiloh	244,800	32,000	130,000	N/A	Ground	244800 gpm	510	*
City of Waverly Hall	316,800	67,000	275,000	N/A	Ground	316,000 gpm	759	300
Pine Mountain Valley	440,000	500,000	300,000	300,000	Ground	310,000 gpm	1,200	430
TOTAL:	4,441,600	2,668,216	5,605,200	400,000	Ground/Surface	5,558,640 gpm	25,989	10,213

Macon County								
	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served by Public Supply	Connections
County	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
City of Ideal	100,000	40,000	100,000	N/A	N/A	240 gpm	480	220
City of Marshallville	300,000	150,000	150,000	125,000	Ground	1,000 gpm	1,400	450
City of Montezuma	890,000	360,000	840,000	N/A	Ground	1,500 gpm	3,789	*
City of Oglethorpe	650,000	450,000	750,000	100,000	Ground	3,000 gpm	3,000	*
TOTAL:	1,940,000	1,000,000	1,840,000	225,000	Ground	5,740 gpm	8,669	670
Marion County								
	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served by Public Supply	Connections
County	3,000,000	1,200,000	1,050,000	200,000	Ground	850 gpm	6,200	1,830
City of Buena Vista	2,700,000	400,000	650,000	1,000,000	Ground	1,650,000 gpm	1,800	*
TOTAL:	5,700,000	1,600,000	1,700,000	1,200,000	Ground	1,650,850 gpm	8,000	*
Muscogee County								
	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served by Public Supply	Connections
Columbus-Muscogee	98,000,000	35,000,000	25,200,000	13,500,000	Surface	90,000,000 gpm	252,807	65,865
TOTAL:	98,000,000	35,000,000	25,200,000	13,500,000	Surface	90,000,000 gpm	252,807	65,865

Quitman County								
	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served by Public Supply	Connections
Quitman County	360,000	50,000	200,000	N/A	Ground	*	933	359
City of Georgetown	324,000	70,000	200,000	N/A	Ground	*	988	380
TOTAL:	684,000	120,000	400,000	N/A	Ground	3,010 gpm	1,921	739
Randolph County								
	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served by Public Supply	Connections
County (Coleman Water Authority)*	500,000	20,000	100,000	N/A	Ground	350 gpm	149	*
City of Cuthbert	4,430,880	550,000	1,000,000	N/A	Ground	2,660 gpm	3,500	*
City of Shellman	504,000	165,547	250,000	N/A	Ground	350 gpm	985	*
TOTAL:	5,434,880	735,547	1,350,000	N/A	Ground	3360 gpm	4,634	*
Schley County								
	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served by Public Supply	Connections
County	1,000,000	500,000	600,000	N/A	Ground	1,000,000 gpm	5,000	544
City of Ellaville	65,000	200,000	350,000	100,000	Ground	600 gpm	1,800	1,067
TOTAL:	1,065,000	700,000	950,000	100,000	Ground	1,000,600 gpm	6,800	1,611

Stewart County								
	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served by Public Supply	Connections
County	600,000	263,000	450,000	N/A	Ground	1,230 gpm	600	*
City of Lumpkin	350,000	180,000	375,000	N/A	Ground	450 gpm	1,665	*
City of Richland	720,000	544,300	750,000	N/A	Ground	800 gpm	1,789	*
TOTAL:	1,670,000	987,300	1,575,000	N/A	Ground	2,480 gpm	4,054	*
Sumter County								
	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served by Public Supply	Connections
County	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
City of Americus	7,000,000	3,000,000	1,360,000	1,640,000	Ground	1,500 gpm	17,700	*
City of Andersonville	N/A	25,000	100,000	N/A	Ground	150 gpm	255	150
City of DeSoto	*	*	*	*	*	*	195	*
City of Leslie	*	*	60,000	N/A	Ground	250 gpm	422	*
City of Plains	593,000	120,000	200,000	N/A	Ground	450 gpm	354	*
TOTAL:	7,593,000	3,145,000	1,720,000	164,000	Ground	2,350 gpm	18,926	150

Talbot County								
	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served by Public Supply	Connections
County	1,177,000	470,000	1,200,000	N/A	Surface	400 gpm	8,579	1,350
City of Geneva	* (included in County)	16,000	50,000	N/A	Surface	*	250	
Junction City	432,000	17,000	25,000	N/A	Ground	300 gpm	177	
City of Talbotton	230,000	85,000	100,000	N/A	Ground	160 gpm	738	348
City of Woodland	58,000	40,800	50,000	N/A	Ground	40 gpm	408	
TOTAL:	1,897,000	628,800	1,425,000	N/A	Ground/ Surface	900 gpm	10,152	1,698
Taylor County								
	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served by Public Supply	Connections
County	*	10,000	50,000	N/A	Ground	*	100	*
City of Butler	1,512,000	650,000	450,000	N/A	Ground	1,050 gpm	2,875	*
City of Reynolds	1,000,000	100,000	200,000	60,000	Ground	800 gpm	1,086	500
TOTAL:	2,512,000	760,000	700,000	60,000	Ground	1,850 gpm	4,061	500
Webster County								
	Water Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Consumption (gal/day)	Elevated Storage Capacity	Ground Storage Capacity	Water Source	Cumulative Pumping Capacity	Population Served by Public Supply	Connections
County	500,000	123,600	250,000	N/A	Ground	740 gpm	1,236	*
TOTAL:	500,000	123,600	250,000	N/A	Ground	740 gpm	1,236	*

Most of the River Valley Region is located within a Significant Groundwater Recharge Area and most of that area is considered to have a High Pollution Susceptibility. Given the extent of this sensitive environmental area, the lack of centralized sanitation serving individual residential developments within the region must be considered as an important regional issue. It is expected that EPD will adjust point source permit limits over time as needed to address pollution issues.

The State of Georgia has been involved in a tri-state water debate with Alabama and Florida, which remains unresolved. The implications of the outcome of these water issues leave the use and utilization of water in Georgia hard to define. Many of the issues related to future water use and allocation in the Region are related to the dynamics between the surface water flows and the groundwater in the Apalachicola-Chattahoochee-Flint river basins and the surface water flow across the State line into the Apalachicola River and Bay in Florida. Flow targets, lake levels, and environmental flows along the rivers are not agreed upon between the three states. The Army Corps of Engineers' operating practices for the river systems and uses of the projects have been challenged in State and Federal court. Rulings issued by Federal Courts indicate much of the Corps' current operating plans are inadequate and new plans are under development.

Sewer

In general, the unincorporated areas, aside from urban fringe areas and industrial parks, are not served by sanitary sewer systems. Septic systems are used in areas not served by sanitary sewer systems. Although septic systems can cause groundwater pollution problems, they are generally not an issue in the region due to the lack of population density where the systems are utilized.

Sewage treatment is provided by the cities of Fort Gaines, Cordele, Byromville, Pinehurst, Unadilla, Vienna, Georgetown-Quitman County, Hamilton, Pine Mountain, Ideal, Marshallville, Montezuma, Oglethorpe, Buena Vista, Columbus-Muscogee County, Cuthbert Shellman, Ellaville, Lumpkin, Richland, Americus, Andersonville, Plains, Talbotton, Butler and Reynolds. The majority of the city systems have ample reserve capacity. In the region's unincorporated areas, the septic tank provides the solution to waste disposal. Planned sewage system improvements will meet the needs of the community over the planning period. The provisions of service in the larger cities are adequate to meet the projected growth. Development of sewage treatment facilities in smaller cities is often financially prohibitive as a result of customer base. However, the provision of sewer treatment would be beneficial in terms of attracting commercial and industrial development. The use of individual septic tanks is proliferating throughout the region, particularly in response to residential development in the unincorporated areas. There are numerous concentrated areas of residential development in the region, that could become environmentally sensitive issues over the planning period.

The current level of municipal service provided within each community is generally adequate, although there are certainly areas where extensions and improvements to local systems are warranted. For the most part, however, individual systems will grow with their populations. If

greater emphasis is placed on promoting growth in urban centers, the need for improved and extended systems will follow annexations and/or updated service delivery strategies. Nearly every industrial park in the region has adequate water and sewer capacity to keep up with the demand for growth.

Sewage Treatment System Capabilities (by County)		
Chattahoochee-Cusseta County		
	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
County	septic	septic
TOTAL:	septic	septic
Clay County		
	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
County	N/A	N/A
City of Bluffton	N/A	N/A
City of Fort Gaines	150,000	100,000
TOTAL:	150,000	100,000
Crisp County		
	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
County	N/A	N/A
City of Arabi	N/A	N/A
City of Cordele	5,000,000 Design/ 7,500,000 Hydraulic	2,250,000
TOTAL:	5,000,000 Design/ 7,500,000 Hydraulic	2,250,000

Dooly County		
	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
County	N/A	N/A
City of Byromville	*	*
City of Dooling	N/A	N/A
City of Pinehurst	125,000	30,000
City of Lilly	N/A	N/A
City of Unadilla	540,000	143,000
City of Vienna	750,000	2,250,000
TOTAL:	1,415,000	2,423,000
Harris County		
	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
County	N/A	N/A
City of Hamilton	250,000	80,000
City of Pine Mountain	380,000	300,000
City of Shiloh	N/A	N/A
City of Waverly Hall	N/A	N/A
Pine Mountain Valley	N/A	N/A
TOTAL:	630,000	380,000
Macon County		
	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
County	N/A	N/A
City of Ideal	*	*
City of Marshallville	120,000	*
City of Montezuma	1,950,000	666,000
City of Oglethorpe	750,000	347,000
TOTAL:	2,820,000	1,013,000
Marion County		
	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
County	N/A	N/A
City of Buena Vista	300,000	225,000
TOTAL:	300,000	225,000

Muscogee County		
	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
Columbus-Muscogee	42,000,000	26,900,000
TOTAL:	42,000,000	26,900,000
Quitman County		
	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
Georgetown-Quitman County	330,000	60,000
TOTAL:	330,000	60,000
Randolph County		
	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
County (Coleman Water Authority)*	N/A	N/A
City of Cuthbert	600,000	350,000
City of Shellman	150,000	20,000
TOTAL:	750,000	370,000
Schley County		
	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
County	N/A	N/A
City of Ellaville	400,000	83,000
TOTAL:	400,000	83,000
Stewart County		
	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
County	N/A	N/A
City of Lumpkin	500,000	200,000
City of Richland	300,000	276,000
TOTAL:	800,000	476,000

Sumter County		
	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
County	N/A	N/A
City of Americus	5,500,000	2,000,000
City of Andersonville	30,000	8,000
City of DeSoto	N/A	N/A
City of Leslie	N/A	N/A
City of Plains	120,000	40,000
TOTAL:	5,650,000	2,048,000
Talbot County		
	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
County	N/A	N/A
City of Geneva	N/A	N/A
Junction City	N/A	N/A
City of Talbotton	100,000	700,000
City of Woodland	N/A	N/A
TOTAL:	100,000	700,000
Taylor County		
	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
County	N/A	N/A
City of Butler	500,000	225,000
City of Reynolds	400,000	100,000
TOTAL:	900,000	325,000
Webster County		
	Sewage Plant Capacity (gal/day)	Load (gal/day)
County	N/A	N/A
TOTAL:	N/A	N/A

Solid Waste

Municipal solid waste facilities are located in Muscogee County, Crisp County, Taylor County and Macon County. All facilities also handle construction and demolition (C&D) material. Municipal solid waste permitted capacity is adequate to meet the regions needs over the planning period. The C&D landfills in Muscogee County and Macon County have only 13 years and 12 years of capacity left, respectively. All counties have inert landfills.

Storm Water

The majority of counties and cities in the region use ditches to handle storm water, with many of the cities having minor curb and gutter systems.

Fire Protection

The International Standard for Standardization (ISO) collects information on municipal fire-protection efforts in communities throughout the United States, analyzes the data, and assigns a Public Protection Classification from 1 to 10. Class 1 represents superior property fire protection, and Class 10 indicates that the area's fire-suppression program does not meet ISO's minimum criteria. These criteria include but are not limited to fire station service areas, station staffing, the availability of public water, pumping and storage capacity among others. The class in which a community is placed plays a major role in determining individual fire insurance rates. According to the ISO, a fire station should have an efficient service area of five miles in any direction from the station. The ISO recommends that each non-reserve piece of equipment should be staffed with six firefighters.

Fire protection is one of the greatest concerns when developing land use regulations. In the long run, land use regulations can improve the efficiency of fire protection service and reduce the impact of fire, if and when one occurs. For the Southwest Georgia Region, the larger cities typically have paid professional fire departments and for the most part, the smaller unincorporated areas have volunteer fire departments. The majority of the fire departments (both professional and volunteer) have informal mutual agreements for back up protection services.

FIRE PROTECTION OF COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES IN THE REGION			
COUNTY	Fire Classification Rating (ISO)	Number of Fire Stations	Paid/Volunteer Firefighters
CHATTAHOOCHEE			
Unified Government	4	2	Volunteer
CLAY			
Bluffton	7	1	Volunteer
Fort Gaines	7	1	Paid
Unincorporated Co.		4	Volunteer
CRISP			
Arabi	5	1	Paid
Cordele	3	2	Paid
Unincorporated Co.	6	6	Paid & Volunteer
DOOLY			
Byromville			
Dooling	9	1	Volunteer
Lilly	7	1	Volunteer
Pinehurst	4	1	Volunteer
Unadilla	4	3	Volunteer
Vienna	3	1	Volunteer
Unincorporated Co.	9	7	Volunteer
HARRIS			
Hamilton	4	1	Volunteer
Pine Mountain	5	1	Volunteer
Shiloh	6	1	Volunteer
Waverly Hall	5	1	Volunteer
Unincorporated Co.	6	17	Volunteer
MACON			
Ideal	6	1	Volunteer
Marshallville	4	2	Volunteer
Montezuma	4	2	Paid & Volunteer
Oglethorpe	5	1	Volunteer
Unincorporated Co.	5	7	Volunteer

COUNTY	Fire Classification Rating (ISO)	Number of Fire Stations	Paid/Volunteer Firefighters
MARION			
Buena Vista	6	1	Volunteer
Unincorporated Co.	5	6	Volunteer
MUSCOGEE			
Consolidated Government	2	14	Paid
QUITMAN			
Unified Government	7	4	Volunteer
RANDOLPH			
Cuthbert	4	1	Paid
Shellman	5	1	Volunteer
Unincorporated Co.	9	8	Paid & Volunteer
SCHLEY			
Ellaville	6	1	Volunteer
Unincorporated Co.	9	1	Paid & Volunteer
STEWART			
Lumpkin	6	1	Volunteer
Richland	8	1	Volunteer
Unincorporated Co.	7		Volunteer
SUMTER			
Americus	2	3	Paid
Andersonville	4	1	Paid & Volunteer
Desoto	4	1	Paid & Volunteer
Leslie	5	1	Paid
Plains	4	1	Paid & Volunteer
Unincorporated Co.	4		Paid & Volunteer
TALBOT			
Geneva	8	1	Volunteer
Junction City	8	1	Volunteer
Talbotton	5	1	Volunteer
Woodland	6	1	Volunteer
Unincorporated Co.	5	7	Volunteer

COUNTY	Fire Classification Rating (ISO)	Number of Fire Stations	Paid/Volunteer Firefighters
TAYLOR			
Butler	4	1	Volunteer
Reynolds	6	1	Volunteer
Unincorporated Co.	9	6	Volunteer
WEBSTER			
Unified Government	6	3	Volunteer
<i>2017 Government Management Indicators Survey, Georgia Department of Community Affairs</i>			

Law Enforcement

Generally, police functions are handled by municipal police departments in the incorporated areas, and county sheriff’s departments in unincorporated areas. In several of the smaller cities there are no police departments and the cities depend on the county sheriff’s department.

The Georgia constitution allows for each county to maintain certain services. In the area of law enforcement, the Sheriff and their deputies are primarily responsible for the court system and operating and maintaining the county jail facilities. Additional duties include providing security at the courthouse and serving judicial warrants. The local Sheriff’s Departments and jail facilities are considered to be of regional significance in that they serve all of the unincorporated areas within the County. As criminal trends continue to rise, opportunities exist for public safety entities to study the potential for cross-training safety personnel.

Police Departments are not of regional significance; however, they do contribute to the overall public safety and welfare of the local communities. The Georgia Bureau of Investigations (GBI) and the Georgia State Patrol Offices serve as resources for the local law enforcement agencies. Often the GBI and the Georgia State Patrol Officers offer technical assistance and back-up support to smaller jurisdictions that need assistance in investigating crimes, assessing crime scenes, and drug enforcement. There are several smaller jurisdictions that do not have police departments and depend on the Sheriff, other local municipalities, or the state, for assistance.

LAW ENFORCEMENT OF COUNTIES AND MUNICIPALITIES IN THE REGION			
COUNTY	Law Enforcement Department	Number of Certified Officers	Number of Vehicles in Use
CHATTAHOOCHEE			
Unified Government	Chattahoochee County Sheriff Department	7 FT	7
CLAY			
Bluffton	Clay County Sheriff Department	—	—
Fort Gaines	Fort Gaines Police Department	5 PT	4
Unincorporated Co.	Clay County Sheriff Department	4 FT / 2 PT	6
CRISP			
Arabi	Crisp County Sheriff Department	—	—
Cordele	Cordele Police Department	2 FT / 30 PT	38
Unincorporated Co.	Crisp County Sheriff Department		
DOOLY			
Byromville			
Dooling	Dooly County Sheriff Department	—	—
Lilly	Dooly County Sheriff Department	—	—
Pinehurst	Dooly County Sheriff Department	—	—
Unadilla	Dooly County Sheriff Department	—	—
Vienna	Vienna Police Department	7 PT	7
Unincorporated Co.	Dooly County Sheriff Department	33 FT / 2 PT	41

COUNTY	Law Enforcement Department	Number of Certified Officers	Number of Vehicles in Use
HARRIS			
Hamilton	Hamilton Police Department	1 FT/ 2 PT	3
Pine Mountain	Pine Mountain Police Department	9 FT/ 4 PT	9
Shiloh	Shiloh Police Department	2 PT	2
Waverly Hall	Waverly Hall Police Department	3 FT/ 1 PT	4
Unincorporated Co.	Harris County Sheriff Department	53	61
MACON			
Ideal	Ideal Police Department	1 PT	2
Marshallville	Marshallville Police Department	4 PT	4
Montezuma	Montezuma Police Department	11 PT	13
Oglethorpe	Oglethorpe Police Department	4 PT	5
Unincorporated Co.	Macon County Sheriff Department	11 FT	9
MARION			
Buena Vista	Buena Vista Police Department	5 FT	6
Unincorporated Co.	Marion County Sheriff Department		
MUSCOGEE			
Consolidated Government	-	324 FT	66
QUITMAN			
Unified Government	Quitman County Sheriff Department	6 FT	7

COUNTY	Law Enforcement Department	Number of Certified Officers	Number of Vehicles in Use
RANDOLPH			
Cuthbert	Cuthbert Police Department	5 FT / 2 PT	6
Shellman	Randolph County Sheriff Department	–	–
Unincorporated Co.	Randolph County Sheriff Department	15 FT / 2 PT	16
SCHLEY			
Ellaville	Ellaville Police Department	5 PT	1
Unincorporated Co.	Schley County Sheriff Department	3 FT / 1 PT	3
STEWART			
Lumpkin	Lumpkin Police Department	5 PT	6
Richland	Richland Police Department	8 PT	5
Unincorporated Co.	Stewart County Sheriff Department		5
SUMTER			
Americus	Americus Police Department	30 PT	30
Andersonville	Sumter County Sheriff Department	–	–
Desoto	Sumter County Sheriff Department	–	–
Leslie	Leslie Police Department	2 PT	4
Plains	Plains Police Department	1 PT	2
Unincorporated Co.	Sumter County Sheriff Department		47

COUNTY	Law Enforcement Department	Number of Certified Officers	Number of Vehicles in Use
TALBOT			
Geneva	Talbot County Sheriff Department	—	—
Junction City	Talbot County Sheriff Department	—	—
Talbotton	Talbotton Police Department	3 PT	4
Woodland	Woodland Police Department		
Unincorporated Co.	Talbot County Sheriff Department	10 FT / 2 PT	12
TAYLOR			
Butler	Butler Police Department	5 PT	5
Reynolds	Reynolds Police Department	6 PT	6
Unincorporated Co.	Taylor County Sheriff Department	12 FT	12
WEBSTER			
Unified Government	Webster County Sheriff Department	4 FT	1
<i>2017 Government Management Indicators Survey, Georgia Department of Community Affairs</i>			

Emergency Medical Service

Emergency Medical Service (EMS) is an important component of public safety as well. These services are a fundamental part of public safety and should be considered along with fire and police protection. EMS provides pre-hospital care and transportation to hospitals. All of the counties in the River Valley Region have Emergency Medical Services and participate with E-911.

Broadband Service Analysis

Due to lack of population density, certain market tools that are available in urban centers are unavailable in most of the River Valley region. The lack of broadband in much of the region is an especially large hindrance to economic development opportunities in the region. The absence of reliable, fast internet limits the development of human capital as well as the world becomes increasingly digital in nature. The lack of reliable internet prevents access to vast amounts of information and educational opportunities. This is especially troublesome as colleges offer more and more online classes, putting gifted rural high school students at a disadvantage by limiting their dual enrollment opportunities. Additionally, it prevents traditional college age students in rural areas from having distance-based learning opportunities. While high speed internet may seem like a luxury, it essentially amounts to a quality of life issue as rural residents do not always have the same access to information and educational opportunities that their urban counterparts have.

Georgia SB 402, the “Achieving Connectivity Everywhere (ACE) Act,” which was signed into law on May 7, 2018, states: “Broadband services' means a wired or wireless terrestrial service that consists of the capability to transmit at a rate of not less than 25 megabits per second in the downstream direction and at least 3 megabits per second in the upstream direction to end users...” This definition coincides with the Federal Communications Commission’s definition of broadband as of its 2015 Broadband Progress Report, when the agency voted to increase downstream speed standards from 4 megabits per second to 25 megabits per second and upstream speed standards from 1 megabit per second to 3 megabits per second.

The River Valley Region has several pockets where broadband internet service is completely unavailable. In three counties (Chattahoochee, Clay, and Quitman), over a third of the residents have no broadband service available. While broadband is available in much of the region, there is a distinct lack of competition in many places—6 counties (Chattahoochee, Clay, Harris, Quitman, Stewart, and Webster) have a majority of their population living in an area with only one choice for broadband access. Only half the region’s counties have a majority of their residents living in an area with 2 or more options for broadband. The following table shows the availability of broadband services equal to or greater than 25 megabits per second downstream and 3 megabits per second upstream for each county in the River Valley Region.

Percentage of Population Served by Fixed Residential Broadband Providers (Speeds ≥ 25/3Mbps)				
County	3 or more providers	2 providers	1 provider	0 providers
Chattahoochee	0%	3.41%	61.62%	34.97%
Clay	0%	1.38%	52.2%	46.42%
Crisp	0%	68.89%	31.11%	0%
Dooly	22.56%	42.42%	35.02%	0%
Harris	10.28%	24.3%	52.2%	13.23%
Macon	5.02%	55.09%	39.89%	0%
Marion	16.68%	42.05%	41.26%	0%
Muscogee	27.68%	62.81%	7.83%	1.67%
Quitman	0%	2.69%	52.67%	44.64%
Randolph	22.28%	41.27%	36.4%	0.04%
Schley	30.3%	39.8%	29.89%	0%
Stewart	0%	5.03%	78.43%	16.54%
Sumter	0%	71.87%	28.13%	0%
Talbot	14.27%	28.67%	46.25%	10.8%
Taylor	0.11%	85.89%	14%	0%
Webster	0%	33.31%	66.69%	0%

Data source: FCC Fixed Broadband Deployment Maps, December 2016

Internet speed and reliability remains a large complaint during the comprehensive planning process for many rural areas of the River Valley Region. Many of these rural areas are served by satellite. While satellite providers can offer broadband speeds, there are reliability issues with satellite internet since service can be disrupted by weather events (cloudiness, precipitation, and sun spots). Such interruptions are not conducive for homes and businesses in an increasingly digital world. The following table shows broadband availability excluding satellite/other services (satellite makes up the vast majority of these). In 9 counties, over a third of residents have no broadband options aside from satellite; in Stewart County, nearly the entire population has no choice but satellite for broadband.

Percentage of Population Served by ADSL, Cable, Fiber, and Fixed Wireless Broadband Providers (Speeds ≥ 25/3Mbps; Satellite/Other Services Excluded)				
County	3 or more providers	2 providers	1 provider	0 providers
Chattahoochee	0%	2.62%	52.71%	44.66%
Clay	0%	1.38%	49.67%	48.95%
Crisp	0%	0%	68.89%	31.11%
Dooly	0%	22.56%	42.42%	35.02%
Harris	10.28%	24.3%	52.2%	13.23%
Macon	0%	5.02%	55.09%	39.89%
Marion	0%	16.68%	42.05%	41.26%
Muscogee	27.68%	62.81%	7.83%	1.67%
Quitman	0%	2.69%	50.41%	46.9%
Randolph	0%	22.28%	41.52%	36.19%
Schley	0%	30.3%	39.8%	29.89%
Stewart	0%	0%	5.3%	94.7%
Sumter	0%	0%	71.87%	28.13%
Talbot	0%	17%	63.34%	19.66%
Taylor	0%	0.11%	85.89%	14%
Webster	0%	0%	33.31%	66.69%

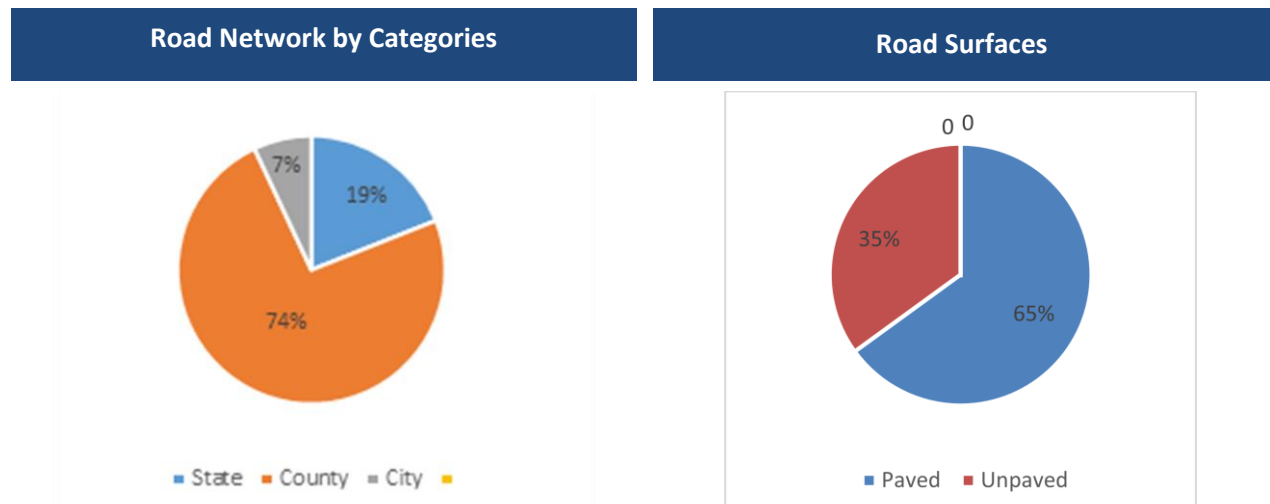
Data source: FCC Fixed Broadband Deployment Maps, December 2016

Transportation System Analysis

The River Valley Region’s transportation network, which plays an important role in the region’s economic and infrastructural growth, is composed of a mix of U.S highways, state highways, interstates, and county and city roads. These networks also include paved and unpaved roads. Alternative modes of transportation in the River Valley Region, to include walking and cycling, have become more popular in recent years, which are leading to increased usage of the region’s various bicycle and pedestrian paths and trails. In addition to roads used for conventional transportation and paths used for alternative commuting, the region also has various railroads, trucking facilities, port facilities, and airports.

Road Network

The Region’s road network consists of 8,350 miles of roadway, with state routes accounting for 19% of the total;¹ five percentiles higher (equivalent to 400 miles) than the proportion statewide. The balance, i.e., local routes, is comprised of county roads (74%) and city streets (7%). All roadways in the four unified/consolidated jurisdictions² are categorized as county roads. Muscogee/Columbus, the region’s only county with a population above 35,000, accounts for 14% of county roads. Thirty-five percent of the local network is unpaved; the rate statewide is 27%. The region lags the local paving rate across the state by 550 miles. The regional network carries a traffic load of 12.7 million daily vehicle miles traveled, with state routes bearing two-thirds of this volume.



¹ This is inclusive of 88 miles of interstate and freeway miles maintained by the Georgia Department of Transportation and accounting for 1% of the region’s roadway network.

² Chattahoochee, Muscogee, Quitman and Webster Counties

Unpaved roads represent undeveloped areas without vehicular connectivity. Not having access to motor vehicles represents additional costs in new developments, as well as additional planning regarding the transport of materials, personnel, and technology. Providing adequate road connectivity is a crucial factor in assessing growth opportunities; therefore, although mostly rural, this may affect economic growth in certain parts of the region.

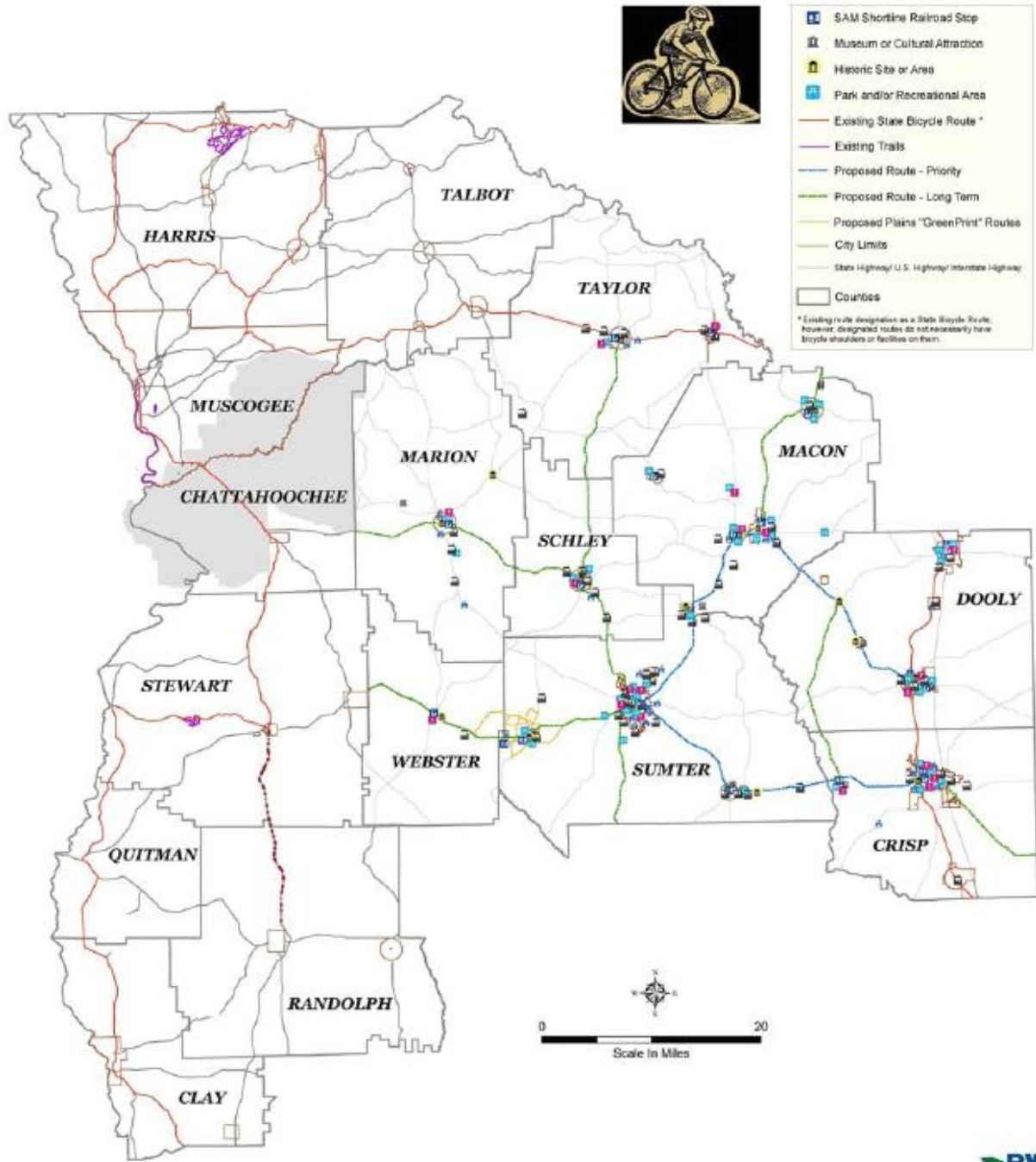
Alternative Modes

The River Valley Region's current bicycle and pedestrian system is comprised of 15 routes, totaling approximately 350.7 miles in length. Of these 15 routes, 4 are on state highways that make up approximately 277.6 miles of the region's 350.7 miles of bike paths. The remaining 11 routes are existing bicycle and pedestrian trails and pathways throughout the region totaling approximately 73.1 miles.

Facilities in the region include sidewalks, crosswalks, paved shoulders, and bike lanes already incorporated in the current transportation system. These facilities also include 14 miles of the Columbus River Walk and 7 miles of the Columbus Fall Line Trace which combined make up the Dragonfly Trail Network for Columbus, with an additional 26.6 miles of trail expected to be completed by 2021.

With the exception of the City of Columbus (Muscookee County), the Region is predominantly rural. Within that much larger environment cycling and walking, as the primary modes of transportation, are not generally practical because of issues concerning weather, distance and time, among others. In addition, rural communities lack adequate roadways and complimentary features to accommodate cyclist and pedestrian safety needs. Population and development densities in Columbus, however, are conducive to developing and maintaining an infrastructure supportive of non-motorized transportation. Maintenance and incremental improvements and enhancements to the conventional transportation infrastructure provides windows of opportunity to incorporate non-traditional features into a system more responsive to increased demands for alternative transportation. Increasing interest among residents and tourists, and the continued growth and expansion of educational institutions are generating greater interest in cycling and walking. Nevertheless, in large part due to issues mentioned above, the motorized vehicle will continue to be the primary mode of transportation.

Regional Map of Existing Bicycle Pedestrian Facilities



Route Mileage: River Valley Region	
Route –Trail Number and Name	Total Mileage
5- Chattahoochee Trace	148.1
40- TransGeorgia GA HWY 96	72.7
15- Central Route US. 41/GA 7	38
Pine Mountain Trail	23
45- Little White House	18.8
Columbus Riverwalk	14
Columbus Fall Line Trace	11
Discovery Bicycle Trail	10
Phenomenon Trail	6
Harris County Palmetto Creek Pedestrian and Biking Trail	4.6
Woodland Pedestrian and Bike Trail	1
Waverly Hall Walking Trail	1
GA Veterans Memorial Park Walking/Hiking Trail, Crisp County	1
Shiloh Walking Trail	1
Shellman Walking Trail	1
Total Mileage	350.7

Source: River Valley Regional Commission 2016 Bicycle-Pedestrian Plan

Railroads, Trucking, Port Facilities, and Airports

Two of the nation’s eight major railroads, Norfolk Southern and CSX Transportation, traverse the region with significant rail yards in Columbus, Americus and Cordele. A shortline freight carrier, the Heart of Georgia rail operated by Wyoming Genossee, also serves the area, primarily and increasingly linking the inland port at Cordele with the large port facility at Savannah. It is along this same track that the tourist excursion train, the SAM Shortline, the state’s only mobile state park, operates between Cordele and Plains. The Heart of Georgia track is in need of major rehabilitation locally and track and bridge improvements east of the region to increase efficiency of operations for the inland port.



There are also two proposed passenger rail systems in the State GDOT Rail Plan:

1. First Priority Corridors (Macon to Albany via Americus)
2. Second Priority (Atlanta to Columbus via Griffin)

There are also plans for a high-speed passenger rail corridor from Columbus to Atlanta identified in the State Rail Plan. A Feasibility study has been completed and finds that the project would be financially self-sufficient once built with operation rations to sustain its long-term operation.

Ports

Ownership of the Port of Columbus is being transferred from the Ports to the City of Columbus. That facility is no longer in use. The Cordele Inland Port is active and growing, providing greater capacity for the Port of Savannah for container traffic. It provides an import and export market for the region and a close, convenient way to get rail containers to ships at the Savannah port.

Airports

There are nine operating airports in the RVRC region, with the Columbus Airport serving as a connecting hub for major airline companies. The remaining airports serve mostly commercial and agricultural purposes. Considering the size and population of the RVRC region, it provides a well-established network of airports, allowing commercial, passenger and agricultural access for air transportation. The vast majority of the RVRC region is rural, which provides an open market opportunity for businesses, such as crop dusting and aerial photography. Furthermore, with the presence of Fort Benning Military Reservation, this adds an additional airport that strictly provides services to the Department of Defense, and allows for better and more efficient transport of troops between the various United States Military Bases.

Transportation and Land Use Connection

Many land use practices result in long distances between origin and destination points, requiring an automobile for most trips. Zoning for high densities of employment, housing and mixed-use development places origin and destination points closer together, creating a more pedestrian and bicycle friendly environment. New developments can more easily incorporate such practices, but established areas can also be retrofitted with appropriate neighborhood commercial zoning.

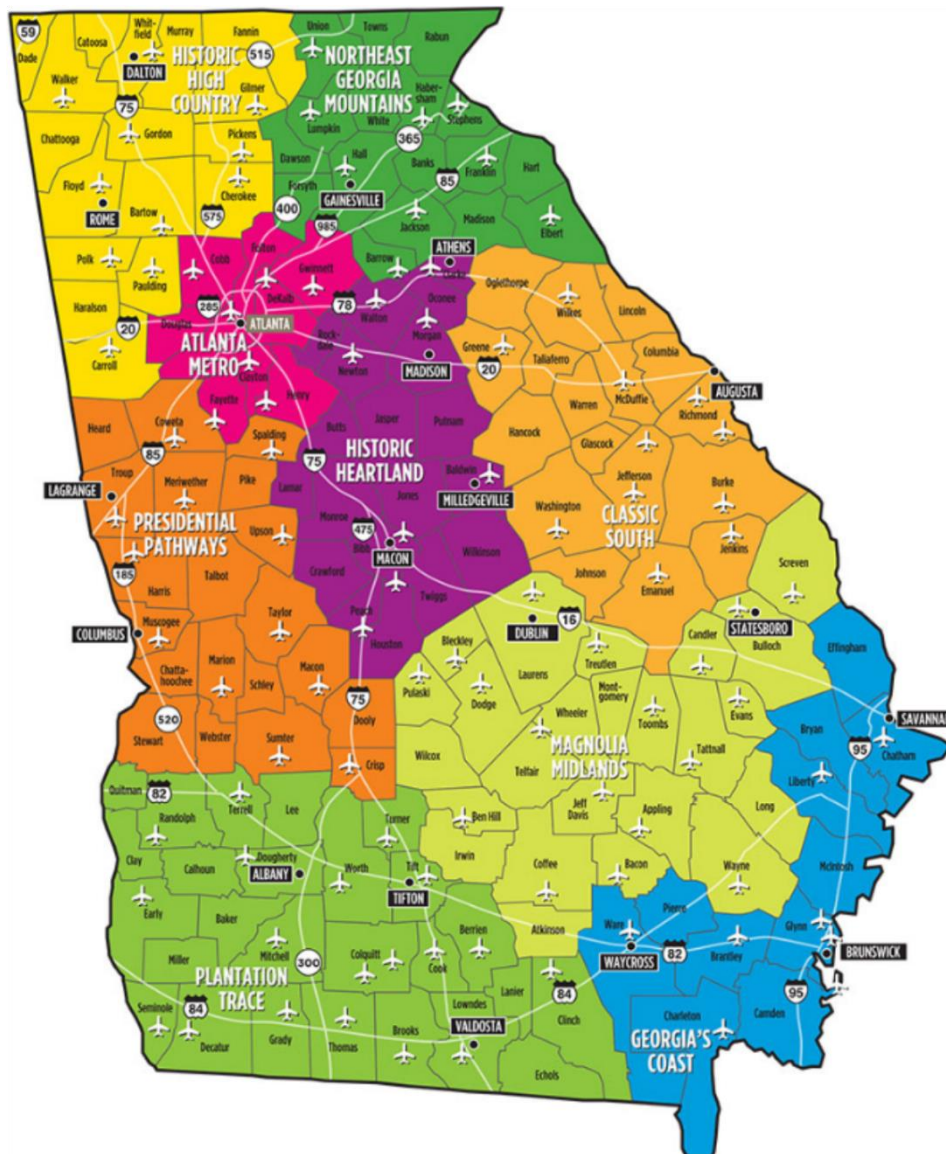
Disconnected streets and cul-de-sacs can also create long travel distances. While the actual distance from origin to destination may be fairly short, lack of linkages makes walking and bicycling impractical. A gridded street system provides continuity for pedestrians and bicyclists along the shortest routes. If gridded street patterns do not exist, paths can be developed to tie disconnected areas.

The majority of the River Valley region is rural with the exception of the City of Columbus. As a result, cycling and walking as a means of non-motorized transportation is limited because travel distances tend to be lengthy. Additionally, rural communities in the region often do not have adequate roadways and pedestrian facilities to provide for bicycle and pedestrian activity in their community.

Due to higher population densities, Columbus and Americus, however, are able to accommodate non-motorized transportation for bicyclists and pedestrians. Continuous improvements of existing streets in both Midtown and in Uptown Columbus that incorporate sidewalks into residential developments and the continued growth of educational institutions is leading to a greater interest in cycling and walking as an alternative transportation method. In Americus, Sumter Cycling and the local Main Street organization are partnering to establish linkages between Georgia South Western University and the central business district.

RVRC staff will continue to assist local communities to further connectivity and enhance opportunities for economic growth, tourism, improving quality of life, and reducing the wear and tear on roadways throughout the region.

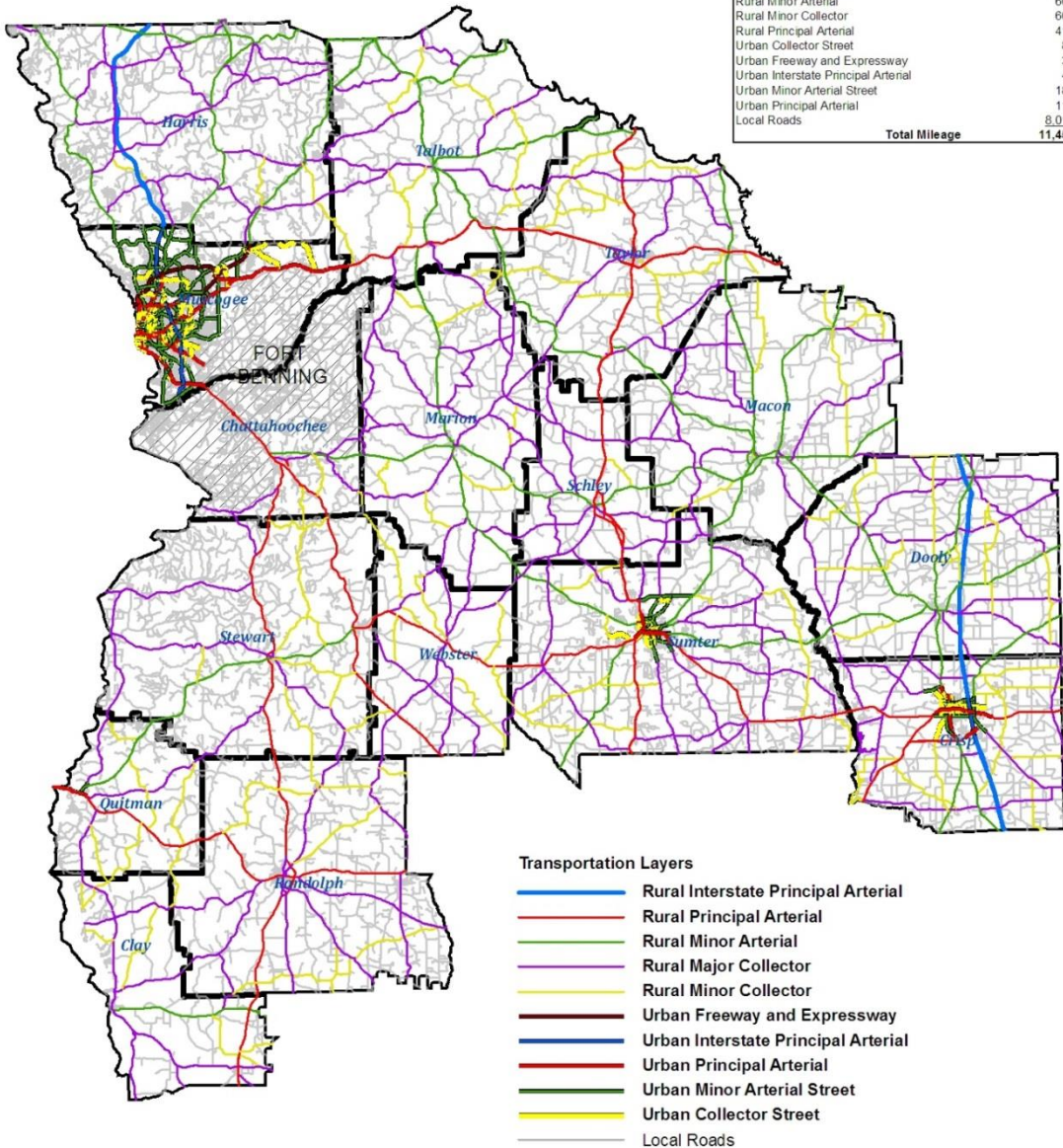
Map of Existing Airports



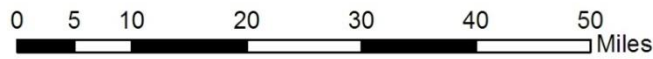
Transportation Map

River Valley Regional Commission Region's Transportation Map

ROADS BY FUNCTION	LINEAR MILES
Rural Interstate Principal Arterial	110.95
Rural Major Collector	1,241.33
Rural Minor Arterial	604.88
Rural Minor Collector	608.13
Rural Principal Arterial	411.37
Urban Collector Street	87.94
Urban Freeway and Expressway	38.20
Urban Interstate Principal Arterial	48.01
Urban Minor Arterial Street	188.98
Urban Principal Arterial	110.64
Local Roads	8,010.62
Total Mileage	11,459.04



- Transportation Layers**
- Rural Interstate Principal Arterial
 - Rural Principal Arterial
 - Rural Minor Arterial
 - Rural Major Collector
 - Rural Minor Collector
 - Urban Freeway and Expressway
 - Urban Interstate Principal Arterial
 - Urban Principal Arterial
 - Urban Minor Arterial Street
 - Urban Collector Street
 - Local Roads

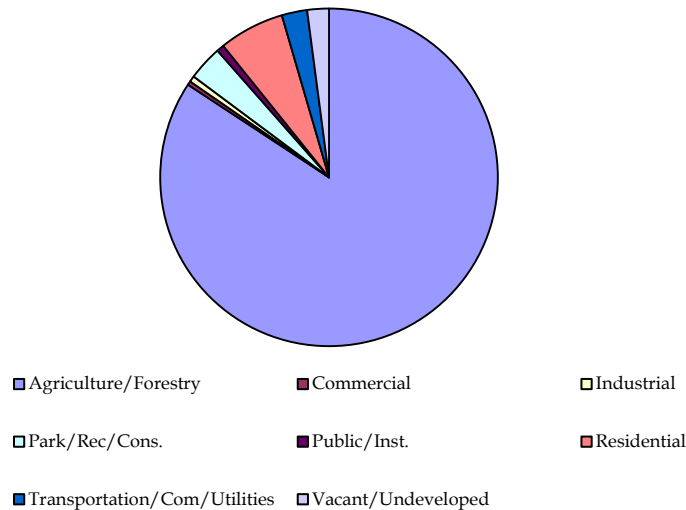


Regional Land Use Analysis

As the River Valley Region is characterized by rural lands, it will be an important part of the future development of the area to embrace economic development practices for the protection of cultural and natural resources. Key challenges throughout the sixteen counties include protecting natural resources while encouraging residential and light industrial development, as well as establishing new commercial development while maintaining the viability of existing downtowns. Another critical segment of the region's development is integrating alternative transportation options by increasing walking and biking opportunities throughout local communities. This will increase connectivity between future and existing neighborhoods. Finally, it is also vital that a balance be struck between extending water and sewer infrastructure into developing areas. This infrastructure not only invites greenfield development, it also protects the water quality of significant groundwater recharge areas.

Existing Land Use

Existing Land Use



Source: RVRC Staff, local governments 2011

Acreege of Parks, Recreation, Conservation Lands (by County)			
COUNTY	Total Park, Recreation, Conservation Landuse (Acres)	Designated Wildlife Management Areas, State Parks, Natural Areas (Acres)	Local Parks and Conservation Areas (Acres)
Clay	1,824.60	1,066.56	758.04
Chattahoochee	151.60	0.00	151.60
Crisp	2,074.00	1,652.28	421.72
Dooly	2,642.00	2,387.98	254.02
Harris	25,468.70	21,131.53	4,337.17
Macon	2,032.00	976.24	1,055.76
Marion	16.20	0.00	16.20
Muscogee	6,351.00	1,581.37	4,769.63
Quitman	0.00	284.30	-284.30
Randolph	850.80	0.00	850.80
Schley	490.20	0.00	490.20
Stewart	7,707.40	6,972.47	734.93
Sumter	6,781.70	0.00	6,781.70
Talbot	7,688.60	7,059.70	628.90
Taylor	986.80	882.25	104.56
Webster	7.40	0.00	7.40
Total:	65,073.00	43,994.67	21,078.33

Source: RVRC Staff 2011; Conservation Acreege may include some wetland and floodplain areas.

Existing Land Use		
Purpose	Acreege	Percentage
Agriculture/Forestry	2,709,824	84.25
Commercial	11,745	0.37
Industrial	18,347	0.57
Park/Recreation/Conservation	106,844	3.32
Public/Institutional	22,701	0.71
Residential	201,759	6.27
Transportation/Communication/Utilities	78,035	2.43
Vacant/Undeveloped	67,041	2.08
TOTAL:	3,216,296	100.00

Agricultural Trends in the River Valley Region				
County	Number of Farms	Total Acreage	Acres of Harvested Cropland	Percent Harvested
Chattahoochee	13	4,081	-	-
Clay	70	40,000	15,984	40%
Crisp	244	117,251	76,916	66%
Dooly	290	126,856	76,456	60%
Harris	252	32,435	3,972	12%
Macon	279	101,126	46,706	46%
Marion	203	47,370	9,780	21%
Muscogee	22	4,273	-	-
Quitman	21	9,103	-	-
Randolph	197	119,235	53,671	45%
Schley	92	35,434	4,926	14%
Stewart	108	59,254	12,699	21%
Sumter	369	160,353	79,141	49%
Talbot	90	33,885	2,040	6%
Taylor	224	61,501	16,404	27%
Webster	102	48,056	19,813	41%
RVRC	4,588	1,002,225	418,508	-
Georgia	42,257	96,20,836	3,609,788	-

Source: 2017 -Georgia County Guide (data is from 2012)

Regional Cooperation

Service Delivery Strategy

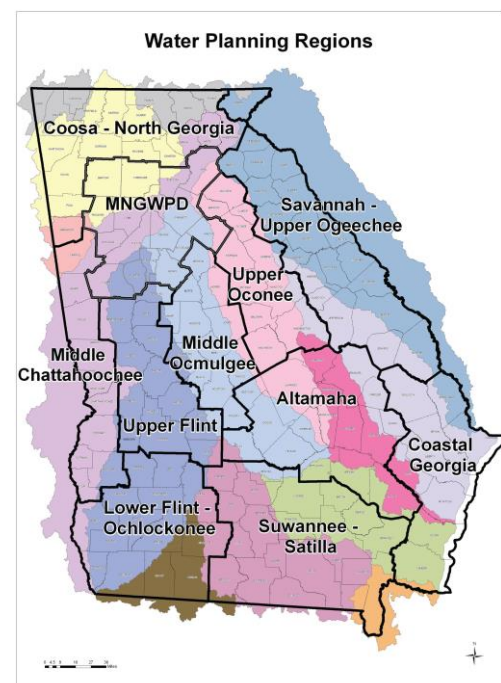
There is one Service Delivery Strategy for each of Georgia's 159 counties. The Strategy is a state-mandated but flexible framework within which local governments within each county cooperatively develop a customized system for delivery of local government services. It serves as a framework for intergovernmental coordination whereby general purpose local governments identify who will provide which services and where. It is intended to minimize inefficiencies otherwise resulting from duplication and competition between jurisdictions, and to provide a mechanism to resolve disputes over local government service areas, funding equity and land use. The Strategy is subject to review and revision at local discretion, and upon the update of comprehensive plans and redistribution of certain local government revenues.

Economic Development

River Valley's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is an economic roadmap updated every five years. Commission staff works with local public and private sector leaders to establish regional goals and objectives, to identify investment priorities and fund sources, and to develop and implement a regional plan of action for a more diversified and stronger regional economy. The CEDS document is key to establishing and maintaining a robust economic ecosystem by helping to build regional capacity (physical and human assets) to participate successfully in an increasingly competitive global economy.

Regional Water Plans

The 2004 Comprehensive State-wide Water Management Planning Act authorized development of the State Water Plan, which, adopted in 2008, provided for the establishment of water planning regions across the state. Planning activities of each region were guided by a regional council comprised of member-residents of each respective region, the geographical boundaries of which were coterminous with watersheds of the state's major rivers. The majority of the land area of the two water planning regions is located within River Valley. Seven of the eleven counties which comprise the Middle Chattahoochee water planning region line the west boundary of the RVRC (Chattahoochee, Clay, Harris, Muscogee, Quitman, Randolph, and Stewart), and nine of the thirteen counties in the Upper Flint water planning region account for the east "half" of the RVRC (Crisp,



Dooly, Macon, Marion, Schley, Sumter, Talbot, Taylor, and Webster). The planning councils were charged with preparation of regional water development and conservation plans to manage water resources in a sustainable manner, “...to support the state’s economy, to protect public health and natural systems, and to enhance the quality of life for all citizens” through 2050. The implementation elements of these respective plans include local government as among the numerous responsible parties critical to successful plan implementation.

Regional Transit

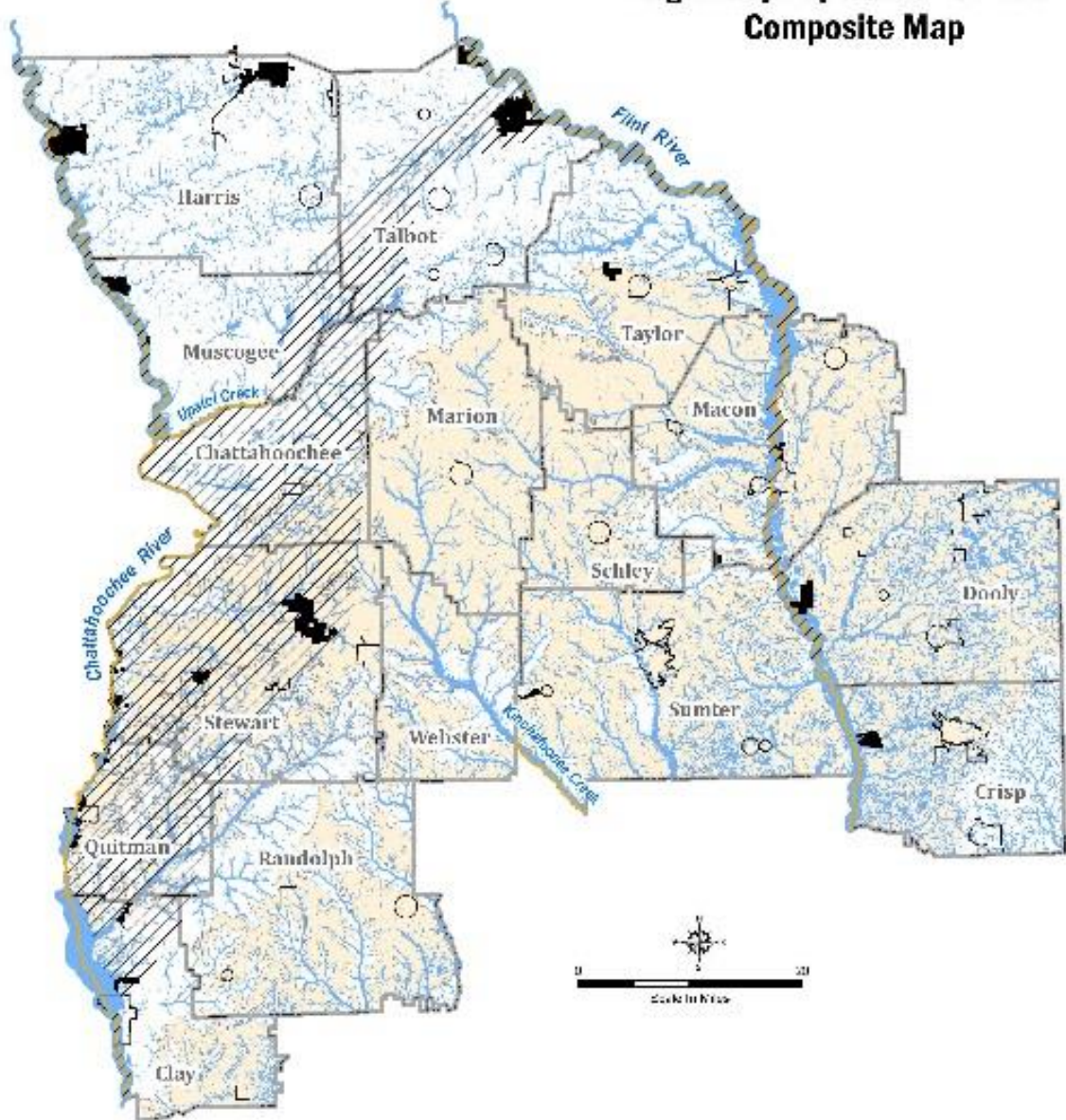
River Valley aggressively promotes mobility management, the effort to coordinate more efficient (and expanded) delivery of transit service across the region. Local transit service for the general public is available in, all but five area counties. Few, if any, of these local services would be available in absence of large federal and state subsidization of transit system capital and operating expenses. Even so, the remaining costs of service delivery are a burden on severely constrained local government budgets. There are, however, numerous public service programs that reimburse transportation costs for eligible clientele: Aging Services, Americans with Disabilities, Behavioral Health and Development Disabilities, Family and Children Services, and Vocational Rehabilitation. For most local transit systems the aggregated value of transportation reimbursements through these services would be sufficient to significantly reduce local government costs of providing their independent public transit services, and even support increased and/or enhanced service. Greater economies-of-scale have been realized, sometimes enabling an expanded level of service, where similar systems have coordinated or merged their separate transit systems. One such coordinated/merged system serving three River Valley counties has operated successfully since 2012. Efforts continue to achieve more intergovernmental coordination of transit services.

Regionally Important Resources


The Regional Resource Plan (2011), commonly known as Regionally Important Resources (RIR), identified natural and cultural resources which have significance beyond the jurisdiction of presence and in need of protection from future development. The effort raised public awareness of these resources, fostered consideration of and planning for the potential for adverse impacts of unregulated and under-regulated development within one mile of the resource, and provided for improved local, regional and state level coordination in protecting and managing these significant resources.

The plan includes recommended local government policies, protective measures and development practices that can protect these resources from potentially adverse impacts of new development.

Regionally Important Resources Composite Map



-  Greenway Network
-  Areas of High Pollution Susceptibility
-  Jurisdictional Wetlands
-  Protected River Corridors (4)

 Other RIR
 These resources are located and identified on separate natural resources and aquatic resources maps



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APPENDIX: PROJECTS AND SERVICES, 2018-2022

Natural and Cultural Resources

Priority: Preservation of Prime Agricultural/Forestry Lands

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Educate local elected officials, industries, developers, youth, and the public on the importance of natural resource protection	Provide brochures and maps of nature trails, and/or outdoor learning centers.	RVRC Local Govts DCA DNR EPD GDEcD			\$20,000
	Encourage the use of resource management planning to protect resources by writing local comprehensive plans, developing zoning ordinances, and other land use regulations.	RVRC Local Govts DCA DNR EPD			\$30,000
Promote production and sales of locally grown foods.	Assist local governments by identifying locations and funding sources for the development of value added processing industries, farmer's markets and neighborhood groceries.	RVRC GDAG GDEcD Local Govts USDA GA Organics Food Oasis			\$50,000

Priority: Grow the Agricultural Resources in the Region

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Promote the production and sale of locally grown foods.	Partner with Georgia Organics to promote local food sources in the region	RVRC GDAG USDA			\$50,000
	Find a local partner to create a joint-use commercial kitchen	RVRC GDAG USDA		\$100,000	
	Develop an agri-tourism trail	RVRC GDAG USDA			\$50,000

Priority: Protection of Groundwater Recharge Area/Aquifer

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Increase education and outreach programs directed toward improving water quality.	Provide 8 training opportunities for the Georgia Adopt-a-Stream program and educational seminars regarding water quality issues.	RVRC Local Govts Middle Chattahoochee Water Councils EPD GDAg 2 Rivers RC&D	\$80,000		
	Participate in the Middle Chattahoochee and Upper Flint Regional Watershed Planning Councils.	RVRC			\$20,000
Work with local governments and water authorities to show benefits of intergovernmental connections.	Partner with Columbus Waterworks on producing a regional water system management plan	RVRC Local Govts Water Auth			\$100,000

Priority: Maintain environmental integrity in the region

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Create a balance between protection of natural resources and development.	Assist 4 local governments with identification and redevelopment of brownfields	RVRC GA Brownfield Assn EPA			\$100,000
	Implement Watershed Management Plan for Pataula Creek, Kinchafoonee Creek, and Mountain Oak.	RVRC, EPD GADAg 2 Rivers RC&D GC&SU GA Forestry Commission UGA Extension Local Govts Health Dept	\$440,848		
	Write Watershed Management Plan for Long Cane Creek.	RVRC, EPD Middle Chatt. Water Council 3 Rivers RC&D Local Govts	\$53,971		

Land Use

Priority: Update Ordinances, Land Use Regulations, and Guidelines.

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Develop tools to assist local governments manage development	Assist 10 local governments with development, adoption and enforcement of the DNR Part V Environmental Planning Standards.	Local Govts KAB EPD	\$60,000		
	Update 2 zoning ordinances to comply with current laws and to allow for more compact and mixed-use development.	RVRC Local Govts DCA			\$40,000
	Provide zoning administration technical assistance and training to 6 local governments.	RVRC DCA CVIOG			\$40,000
	Host strategy/visioning workshops and/or leadership programs at the county level involving community stakeholders and the general public for 15 counties.	RVRC DCA	\$580,000		
	Facilitate creation of a regional land bank for Crisp County and Cordele	RVRC Local Govts CA			\$40,000
	Write Urban Redevelopment Plans as requested	RVRC DCA			\$50,000

Priority: Protection of Historic Neighborhoods and Buildings

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Provide technical assistance to local governments in their preservation activities	Provide monthly technical assistance and staff review for Certificate of Appropriateness to the Columbus Board of Historic and Architectural Review.	RVRC Local Govts DNR DCA	\$150,000		
	Provide information and present 2 programs educating the general public of the benefits of historic preservation.	RVRC DNR DCA	\$10,000		

	Assist 1 community to pursue Certified Local Government designation	RVRC Local Govts DNR DCA	\$20,000
	Provide staff review of CDBG funded housing rehab and demolition for the City of Columbus annually.	RVRC Local Govts	\$60,000
Support Main Street and Downtown Improvements	Administer 3 streetscape/ TE funded programs	RVRC GDOT GTIB Local Govts	\$100,000

Housing and Neighborhood Development

Priority: Provide safe, standard and affordable housing options for all residents of the region.

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Develop a regional building inspection/ code enforcement program.	Apply for grant funding to establish a regional building inspector and code enforcement program.	RVRC Local Govts DCA	\$80,000		
Support local housing efforts through planning and technical assistance	Assist 2 local government participation in the GICH program through grant writing and administration.	RVRC DCA	\$90,000		
	Apply for CDBG and CHIP grants for interested local governments.	RVRC DCA USDA GICH Local Govts Housing Auth	\$25,000		

Community Facilities and Services

Priority: Improve Broadband/Internet Capacity

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Identify and address telecommunications deficiencies in the region.	Assist local governments to be designated as a Broadband Ready Community.	RVRC DCA Local Govts	\$150,000		

Priority: Improve Old or Inadequate Infrastructure Systems

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Assist local governments to identify and address deficiencies of infrastructure systems.	Apply for grants for local governments to maintain and extend utility services.	RVRC Local Govts DCA GEFA	\$20,000		
	Apply for grants to assist E-911 systems with necessary updates.	RVRC USDA Middle Flint Reg E911 Local Govts	\$20,000		

Priority: Provide a Diverse Offering of Recreation Options for All Ages.

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Develop and expand trail networks to connect the region's green and blue infrastructure.	Apply for grants to develop 2 Green Corridors and 1 Waterway Trail along the Flint and Chattahoochee Rivers.	RVRC Local Govts ACOE DNR GA Cons TPL	\$15,000		
	Apply for grants, facilitate meetings, and coordinate volunteers to develop mountain bike trails and hiking trails at Standing Boy State Park.	RVRC CVA SORBA IMBA Local Govts	\$30,000		
	Identify funding sources to implement historic preservation mitigation efforts for Harris County's rails to trails project.	RVRC Local Govts GDOT DNR	\$30,000		

Expand the Safe Routes to School program to encourage the development of safe walking environments for children.	Work with 1 local school system to perform walkability audits and encourage participation in the National Walk to School Day and bike rodeos.	RVRC Local Govts Local BOE GDOT	\$50,000
Market the region as a premier outdoor recreation destination.	Maintain the ActiveValley.org website.	RVRC	\$25,000
	Coordinate 2 local Bike-to-Work week events and 3 regional Bike rides	RVRC Local Govts DCA GDOT USDA	\$250,000

Transportation

Priority: Road Maintenance and Expansion.

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Assist local governments to identify key transportation needs and issues.	Provide 2 Complete Streets training to local government, public works and road departments as a means to equip local communities with the necessary tools to rethink the design and use of local and state roads; with the ultimate goal of accommodating as many road users as possible	RVRC GA Bikes GDOT Local Govts	\$100,000		
	Provide technical assistance to 2 communities that have adopted Complete Streets policies to implement the program	RVRC GA Bikes GDOT Local Advocacy grps Local Govts	\$60,000		
	Write a bicycle and pedestrian plan for the City of Reynolds.	RVRC GA Bikes GDOT Local Govt	\$20,000		
	Implement MAP 21 efforts as requested by GDOT	RVRC GDOT ITOS	\$200,000		

Priority: Increase Awareness of Rural Transit Options.

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Improve the region's mobility by offering alternative means of transportation.	Administer DHS Coordinated Transportation program and host 4 meetings annually	RVRCAAA DHS	\$125,000		
	Develop 1 county transit plan per year	RVRC GDOT	\$84,000		

Priority: Support Continuation of Regional TSPLOST.

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Work with local elected officials on the development of a successful second TSPLOST initiative.	Work with 51 local communities to market the successes of the current TIA program and develop a list of next generation projects.	RVRC GDOT Local Govts	\$10,000		
	Coordinate meetings with local elected officials to discuss the potential project lists.	RVRC GDOT Local Govts	\$100,000		
	Prepare the amendment to be presented on the 2022 ballot.	RVRC GDOT Local Govts	\$1,000		

Economic Development

Priority: Diversify and Strengthen the Region's Economy

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Support the Recruitment, Retention and Expansion of Businesses in the region.	Facilitate at least 1 local loan annually from the revolving loan fund	RVRC Dev Auth	\$25,000		
Foster Community Leadership	Create and distribute information and resources on best practices in business and leadership online, in newsletters, and through other communication tools	RVRC CVIIOG DCA	\$20,000		
	Provide 4 lunch and learn opportunities to learn best practices	RVRC DCA	\$17,500		

Priority: Provide quality, genuine places and experiences for visitors

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Market special events and the unique aspects of the region.	Create flyers to advertise regional festivals and events and maintain the latest information on the RVRC website and Facebook pages	RVRC Dev Auth Local Tourism Bd Local Govts	\$25,000		
	Provide 1 training opportunity for local Camera Ready contacts annually	RVRC Local Dev Auth Tourism Assn Local Tourism Bd	\$4,000		
Improve infrastructure needed for industrial development.	Get 3 industrial parks listed as GRAD certified sites	RVRC Local Dev Auth	\$15,000		

Workforce Development

Priority: Train the Regional Workforce.

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Provide On the Job Training (OJT) and Incumbent Worker Training (IWT).	Provide OJT services for 40 individuals each year.	RVRC WIOA Bd Local Colleges & Universities	\$200,000		
	Provide IWT services for 2 individuals each year.	RVRC WIOA Bd Local Colleges & Universities	\$25,000		
Provide work based learning services (WEX) for individuals with limited work history to enhance existing skills.	Provide hands-on work experience with local area participating businesses/ employers for 30 individuals.	RVRC WIOA Bd Providers	\$300,000		
Individual Training Accounts	Provide ITA's for 60 individuals each year.	RVRC WIOA Bd Local Colleges & Universities	\$300,000		

Education

Priority: Educate the Region's Workforce

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Provide GED prep and soft skills development services for the region's youth.	Provide youth services to individuals 17-24 yrs. age including basic literacy skills enhancement, financial literacy education, work readiness education, resume development, assistance with enrollment into post-secondary education, work experience training, On-The-Job Training (OJT), job search /placement assistance, and follow-up services for 100 individuals.	RVRC Fam Conn Local BOE WIOA Bd	\$500,000		

Health and Human Services

Priority: Focus on Sustainability to Ensure Programs and Services Remain Available for Those in Need

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Expand fee-for-service program model	Develop a minimum of 3 new funds sources to support service provision annually.	RVRCAAA	\$125,000		

Priority: Create a Statewide Focus on Reaching Underserved Persons

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Identify and prioritize potential underserved populations.	Increase percentage of underserved individuals served by 10% annually.	RVRCAAA Family Connections Hispanic Outreach Coalition Churches	\$125,000		
Develop partnerships that facilitate outreach for underserved populations.	Increase number of partner cooperatives by 10% annually.	RVRCAAA Family Connections Hispanic Outreach Coalition Churches	\$125,000		
Develop and implement training for community partners to aid in outreach and service provision to underserved populations.	Increase number of trainings.	Family Connections Hispanic Outreach Coalition Churches	\$125,000		

Priority: Expand Opportunities for Transportation in Underserved Areas of Georgia

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Develop volunteer transportation programs.	Increase number of volunteer programs by 10% each year.	Barber's Driving School	\$25,000		

Build partnerships with transportation organizations to develop transportation options for vulnerable populations.	Increase number of corporate partnerships by 10% each year.	RVRCAAA	\$25,000		
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Priority: Expand Efforts to Support Individuals to Remain in Their Desired Residence as Long as Possible

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Increase home modification/home repair services access statewide.	Increase number of consumers receiving home modification/home repair services by 40% annually.	RVRCAAA Habitat for Humanity	\$25,000		

Priority: Maximize the Variety of Approaches to Support Consumer Control and Choice

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Implement an assistive technology program.	Increase number of consumers using Assistive Technology Lab by 25% annually.	Senior Centers PSOA Family Connections civic clubs	\$250,000		

Priority: Increase Professional Capacity of Georgia's Aging Network to Better Meet the Needs of Family Caregivers and At-Risk Adults

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Facilitate conference calls and webinars between Health and Wellness coordinators and caregiver specialists to increase cross referrals between programs.	Identify class leaders and Master Trainers for "Powerful Tools for Caregivers."	Rosalynn Carter Institute DAS			\$50,000

Priority: Increase Participation in and the Sustainability of Evidence-Based Health and Wellness Programs Offered Across the State

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Present available evidence-based programs to health care professionals via association meetings, conference calls, workshops, etc.	Increase the number of people served through evidence-based health and wellness programs by 20%.	RVRCAAA	\$250,000		
	Increase the number of counties offering evidence-based health and wellness programs to 90% of RVRC counties.	RVRCAAA Family Connections	\$250,000		

Regional Cooperation

Priority: Create a Balanced, Sustainable Region.

Strategy	Action	Partners	Short Term 1-5 YRS	Long Term 6-10 YRS	Ongoing
Work with local governments, community organizations, and businesses to improve efficiency in delivery of services.	Utilize Plan Assessment meetings to reactivate regional meetings of city and county clerks and managers.	RVRC Local Govts			\$10,000
	Utilize the Service Deliver Strategy/ Comp Plan process and Plan Assessment meetings for 8 counties per year to advocate regional infrastructure planning.	RVRC Local Govts			\$25,000
	Utilize the update of the Service Delivery Strategy to help ensure the efficient delivery of services.	RVRC Local Govts			\$50,000
	Utilize Plan Assessment meetings for 8 counties a year to improve the sharing of information between local governments for greater efficiency and intergovernmental coordination.	RVRC Local Govts			\$25,000
	Update Comprehensive Plans for local communities	RVRC Local Govts			+/- \$80,000 /yr
	Update the Regional Plan	RVRC Local Govts			+/- \$100,000 (full plan)

APPENDIX: STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

The regional planning process, at its inception and culmination, is a vision for the future. The ultimate aim of the process is to develop a linked group of strong communities. In order to achieve that objective, a meaningful planning process must solicit and integrate the input of citizens, government officials, and commission staff. The result will be a well-balanced regional plan addressing the issues of today, the opportunities of tomorrow, and outlining the steps necessary to bring about positive change over the next twenty (20) years. The intent of the River Valley Regional Plan Update process is to encourage as much public participation, open dialogue, and communication as possible. The process seeks to build consensus among residents of the River Valley region as to policies and goals that will result in better government decisions and greater community agreement.

The major challenge in developing a successful plan for the River Valley Region is convincing its citizens that the Regional Plan belongs to each and every citizen of the River Valley Region, and that broad based public participation is necessary to obtain citizen ownership of the plan. It is also necessary to educate plan participants that the plan should represent a balance of community interest, defined by a give-and-take process that seeks local opinion and knowledge on planning issues. The end result is a community consensus (a Vision) in regards to future development policies and practices. Successful communities first create a vision, and then agree upon a course of action to achieve the vision, and finally take the steps necessary to implement the vision.

Steering Committee

Composed of members of the River Valley Regional Commission Council, the RVRC Executive Committee, and local citizens, this Regional Steering Committee aided RVRC staff in the formulation of the Regional Plan. This committee, consisting of at least one representative from each county, provided feedback, advised the planning team, and shaped the overall planning process. The first Steering Committee Meeting was held on Wednesday, October 25, 2017 at the Marion County Board of Commissioners' building (See Appendix: Public Meeting Documentation for further information). Following that meeting, the Steering Committee Members met on a monthly basis with RVRC Staff, prior to regularly scheduled RVRC council meetings, to discuss progress and development of the regional plan, as well as address lingering questions and concerns. Steering Committee members were asked to attend Stakeholder Meetings in order to ensure adequate representation of both the RVRC Council and regional stakeholders.

Steering Committee Members

Clay County

Shirley Christian
Lee Hubbard

Crisp County

Jeannie Barte

Cusseta-Chattahoochee County

Jim Lawrence
Walt Rosso

Dooly County

Terrell Hudson
Janet Joiner

Georgetown-Quitman County

Carvel Lewis
Danny Blackman

Harris County

Harry Lange
Angela Farley

Macon County

Mickey George

Marion County

Richard McCorkle
Debby Ford

Muscogee County

Dr. Carole Rutland
Nicholas Bolden

Randolph County

Patricia Goodman

Schley County

Jason Hoch

Stewart County

Chip Jones
Debbie Stone

Sumter County

Randy Howard

Talbot County

Pam Jordan
Knox Blackmar

Taylor County

Tom Queen

Webster County

Tony Kennedy

Identification of Stakeholders

An essential element in implementing a Regional Plan is to recognize other organizations and interested parties that could provide information and support. These groups, or stakeholders, have a vested interest in the successful growth and development of the River Valley Region, and are therefore an integral part of the community planning process.

The community participation process included tools to identify and engage representatives who have a present or future stake in the community. The steering committee developed a list of stakeholders from whom to solicit input regarding the regional plan update. Key stakeholders included community residents representing a diverse range of backgrounds and interests, as well as business and industry leaders, civic leaders, the development community, real estate professionals, media representatives, city and county staff, and elected officials. Other important participants include agriculture and forestry interests, banks, religious institutions and leaders, civic clubs, students, tourism officials, service organizations, and military leaders and members of the military with interest in the community. Local groups, property owners, and local business owners were also identified as crucial.

Stakeholders are vital to the planning process. They are not only affected by change, they also create change. Participation of these individuals helps foster community understanding and support for the Regional Plan document, as well as provides fuel for the implementation of the plan. In order to ensure that all interested parties have a voice in the process, local government officials were utilized to encourage participation and guide the planning process.

Participation Techniques

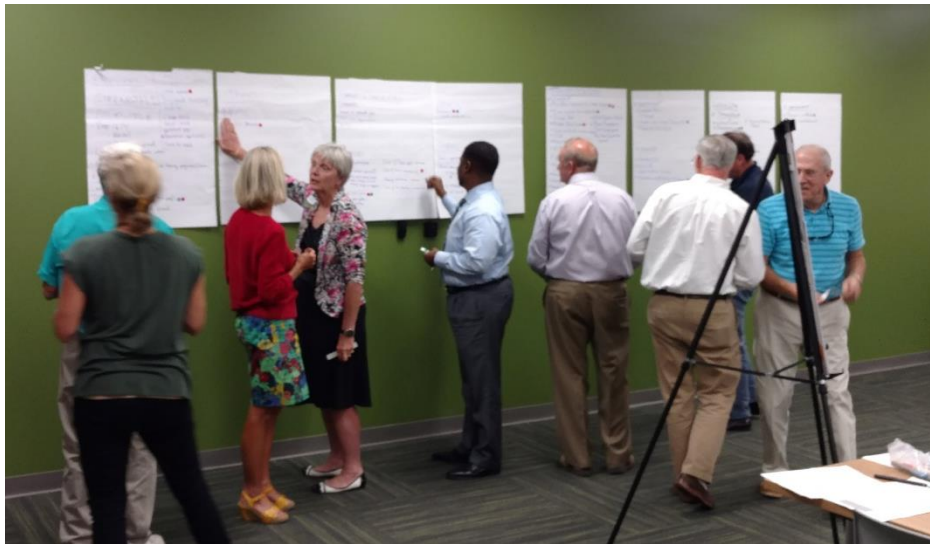
The State of Georgia Standards and Procedures for Regional Planning in 2017 (O.C.G.A. 110-12-6) require that two (2) public hearings and three listening sessions be held in association with the development of the Regional Plan Update. The initial public hearing was held Wednesday, August 23, 2017 in Buena Vista (Marion County) to inform the RVRC Council and the public that the planning process was underway, to go over the plan's timeline, and to discuss how the public could be of help during the planning process (See Appendix: Public Meeting Documentation for further information).

In addition to the two required public hearings, five listening sessions were held in various locations around the region. These public meetings were held Thursday, September 21, 2017 in Columbus (Muscogee County), Thursday, October 12, 2017 in Cuthbert (Randolph County), Thursday, January 11, 2018 in Americus (Sumter County), Wednesday, January 24, 2018 in Buena Vista (Marion County), and Wednesday, February 21, 2018 in Vienna (Dooly County). During meetings where SWOT analysis was done, interactive participation was used by giving meeting attendees stickers to affix to the SWOT items of highest importance to them (See Appendix: Public Meeting Documentation for further information). One meeting that took place before the RVRC Council also utilized an audience response system to gauge the priorities of the council.

An online survey was also developed to solicit input from residents of the region in regards to the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats the area faces. The survey was visually appealing, interactive and easily accessible to residents of the region. The survey was placed on

the RVRC Facebook page and the RVRC website. E-mail invitations with a link to the survey were distributed to RVRC Council members, local elected officials, and the Family Connections Coordinators within the region. RVRC staff also held a drawing for two tickets to Columbus Whitewater events for survey respondents.

A final public hearing was held on Wednesday, April 25, 2018 at the River Valley Regional Commission Council meeting in Buena Vista (Marion County). At this time, draft materials were distributed to all parties with time allotted to review the documents and answer questions. A deadline of April 30, 2018 was given for formal written comments (See Appendix: Public Meeting Documentation for further information).



SWOT Analysis Meeting, Columbus, September 21, 2017.



SWOT Analysis Meeting, Cuthbert, October 12, 2017

APPENDIX: PUBLIC MEETING DOCUMENTATION



Regional Plan 2018–2022 Schedule

Meeting	Elements	Work Session Agenda	Date
Kick-Off Meeting	Leadership Team Stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan Update Process/Meeting Schedule. Identify Leadership Team and Stakeholders. 	Wed., August 23, 2017 RVRC Council Meeting Buena Vista, GA
SWOT Analysis Western Counties	SWOT Needs/Opps Priorities Policies Goals Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use SWOT Analysis to identify Regional Needs and Opportunities. Identify Priority Needs and Opportunities. Identify Regional Policies, Goals and Key Strategies. 	Th., September 21, 2017 RVRC Office Columbus, GA 6:00 p.m.
SWOT Analysis Southern Counties	SWOT Needs/Opps Priorities Policies Goals Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use SWOT Analysis to identify Regional Needs and Opportunities. Identify Priority Needs and Opportunities. Identify Regional Policies, Goals and Key Strategies. 	Th., October 12, 2017 Southern Council of Govts Cuthbert United Methodist Church 10:00 a.m.
Leadership Committee Meeting #1	Needs/Opps Priorities Policies Goals Strategies Vision	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review SWOT results. Identify Priority Needs and Opportunities. Identify Goals, Policies and Key Strategies. Develop Regional Vision Statement. 	Wed., October 25, 2017 Prior to RVRC Council Meeting Buena Vista, GA 9:00 a.m.
Leadership Committee Meeting #2	SWOT Needs/Opps Priorities Policies Goals Strategies Population	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review SWOT results. Identify Priority Needs and Opportunities. Identify Goals, Policies and Key Strategies. Review Population Section. 	Wed., November 29, 2017 Prior to RVRC Council Meeting Buena Vista, GA 9:30 a.m.
SWOT Analysis Eastern Counties	SWOT Needs/Opps Priorities Policies Goals Strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use SWOT Analysis to identify Regional Needs and Opportunities. Identify Priority Needs and Opportunities. Identify Regional Policies, Goals and Key Strategies. 	Th., January 11, 2018 RVRC Office Americus, GA 6:00 p.m.
Leadership Committee Meeting #3	SWOT Needs/Opps Priorities Policies Goals Strategies Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review SWOT results. Develop Regional Goals and Policies. Identify Priority Needs and Opportunities. Identify Goals, Policies and Key Strategies. Review Housing Section. 	Wed., January 24, 2018 Prior to RVRC Council Meeting Buena Vista, GA 9:30 a.m.
SWOT Analysis Review	SWOT Needs/Opps Priorities Policies Goals Strategies Econ. Dev.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review SWOT results. Review Regional Goals and Priorities and Key Strategies. Review Priority Needs and Opportunities. 	Wed., January 24, 2018 RVRC Council Meeting Buena Vista, GA 9:30 a.m.
Leadership Committee Meeting #4	Land Use Maps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Economic Dev. Section. Review Regional Land Use Map. Review Regional Conservation and Development Map. 	Wed., February 28, 2018 Prior to RVRC Council Meeting Buena Vista, GA 9:30 a.m.
Leadership Committee Meeting #5	Transportation Comm. Facs ARSA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Transportation Section. Review Community Facilities Section. Review Regional Areas Requiring Special Attention Map 	Wed., March 28, 2018 Prior to RVRC Council Meeting Buena Vista, GA 9:30 a.m.
Leadership Committee Meeting #6	Work Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Regional Work Program. 	Wed., April 25, 2018 Prior to RVRC Council Meeting Buena Vista, GA 9:00 a.m.
Present Final Draft to RVRC Council			Wed., April 25, 2018 RVRC Council Meeting Buena Vista, GA
Submission to DCA for Review			Mon., April 30, 2018
RVRC Council Adoption			Wed., June 27, 2018 RVRC Council Meeting Buena Vista, GA

Notes:

- **Plan Date of Adoption June 27, 2018**
- 1 Representative from each County will act as the Leadership Committee.
- Each County will email a list of stakeholders to the RVRC.
- RVRC is responsible for scheduling and documenting 2 public hearings and 3 listening sessions during comp plan update process.

#874

AROUND TOWN

Schools open, learn to figure skate

River Valley Council Meetings

River Valley Regional Commission Council meetings for FY18 will be held at the Marion County Commission office, 100 East Burkhalter Ave., Buena Vista, Ga. at 10:30 a.m. Dates are for 2017: August 23, September 27, October 25, November 9 and for 2018: January 24, February 28, March 28, April 25, May 23 and June 27. Call Debbie Zwaga at 706-256-2910 for more details.



Adopt Me!
706-565-0035
PAWS Pet Photography

Connie Foxe TAC Pet Photography

FREE PET ADOPTIONS

PAWS Humane is offering free pet adoptions all this

steady and unpredictable. Slow down and allow at least three feet of passing distance between your vehicles and the bicycle. If your child rides a bike to school, require that they wear a properly fitting bicycle helmet on every ride. Find videos, expert advice and safety tips at ShareTheRoad.AAA.com.

• Look for AAA School Safety Patrollers: Nationwide, more than 654,000 AAA School Safety Patrollers stand guard at 34,500 schools. When you see one, a school zone is likely nearby.

Security Cameras Removed

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Mobile District has removed security cameras from the list of items prohibited on permitted private floating facilities at Lake Sidney Lanier. The decision fol-

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BUENA VISTA Meeting Dates: River Valley Regional Commission Council meeting for FY18 will be held at 10:30 a.m. at the Marion County Commission office, 100 E. Burkhalter Avenue, Buena Vista, according to the following schedule below unless otherwise advertised: July no meeting, Aug. 23, Sept. 27, Oct. 25, Nov. 29, December no meeting, Jan. 24, Feb. 28, March 28, April 25, May 23, June 27.

CORDELE

Free Service: Americus Fire & Emergency Services offers free blood pressure checks from 8 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday through Friday at Station 1 (South Lee Street).



says Patti. Edward and Jenny Greene of Leslie, among the most dedicated vendors at Lenny's, were enjoying a brisk business. They offer a wide selection of seasonal vegetables and fruits as well

2017 CHILDREN'S HEALTH FAIR
Saturday, July 22 | 9 a.m. – 2 p.m.
The Columns Building at Boone Park
408 Rucker Street in Americus

FREE Screenings for ages 5 - 17: Weight, BMI, Blood Pressure & Blood Sugar

(finger stick - be sure your children do not eat after midnight the night before for accurate blood sugar screening)

Soil Screening: Bring a soil sample in a one-quart Ziploc plastic bag, and Rural Georgia Healthy Housing will screen it for lead.

- Music & Games: Zumba, kickball & more!
- Dance Contest & Young Chefs Cooking Contest

Healthy lunch will be provided to children participating



www.rivervalleyrc.org

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Americus, GA 31709
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Fax (229) 931-2917

Toll Free (877) 819-6348

**RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL
Marion County Commission Office
100 East Burkhalter Avenue
Buena Vista, Georgia
August 23, 2017
10:30 A.M.**

AGENDA

- I. Welcome/Recognition of Visitors Clinton Perry, Chair
- II. Invocation Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Vice Chair
- III. Pledge of Allegiance Randy Howard, Secretary
- IV. Review/Approval of June 28, 2017 Minutes* Clinton Perry, Chair
- V. Kick-Off for the 2018-2028 Regional Plan Allison Slocum, Senior Planner, RVRC
- VI. "What is Your Why? Todd Carlisle, Business Consultant, UGA
Small Business Development Center
- VII. Appointment of Private Sector Council Members* Sarah Walls, Assistant Director
- VIII. Tools For Life Katie Howard, AAA Director

**GARC Annual Conference
will be held November 8-10, 2017
at St. Simons, Georgia**

*Requires Council Action

Chattahoochee | Clay | Crisp | Dooly | Harris | Macon | Marion | Muscogee
Quitman | Randolph | Schley | Stewart | Sumter | Talbot | Taylor | Webster

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RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

Marion County Commission Office

100 East Burkhalter Avenue

Buena Vista, Georgia

Minutes

August 23, 2017

Members Attending/Representing

(Representing 16 Counties)

A.J. Rivers, Crisp County
 Bruce Hill, City of Oglethorpe
 Carlton Wilson, City of Ellaville
 Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman County
 Cecil "Butch" McMickle, Marion County
 Chip Jones, Stewart County
 Clinton Perry, Jr. Taylor County, RVRC Chair
 Debbie Stone, Stewart County
 Doug Etheridge, Harris County
 Dr. Carole Rutland, Muscogee County
 Dr. Edward Lee, Cusseta-Chattahoochee County
 Fred Gordon, Muscogee County
 Freeman Montgomery, Talbot County
 Harry Lange, Harris County
 Hobby Stripling, City of Vienna
 James Morton, Cusseta-Chattahoochee County
 James R. "Bump" Welch, Marion County
 Jason Hoch, Schley County
 Jeanie Bartee, City of Cordele
 Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Muscogee County
 Jim Lawrence, Cusseta-Chattahoochee County
 Jimmy Bradley, Randolph County
 Joe Lee Williams, Stewart County
 Knox Blackmar, City of Talbotton
 Lee Hubbard, Clay County
 Melvin Crimes, Webster County
 Mickey George, Macon County
 Pam Jordan, Talbot County
 Patricia Goodman, Randolph County
 Ralph Brown, City of Buena Vista
 Randy Howard, Sumter County
 Richard McCorkle, Marion County
 Shirley Ann Christian, City of Fort Gaines
 Terrell Hudson, Dooly County, ACCG
 Tommy McKenzie, Macon County

Tony Kennedy, Webster County
 Wally Summers, Sumter County

Members Not Present

Barry Whitley, City of Butler
 Danny Blackman, Georgetown-Quitman County
 Evelyn Turner Pugh, Muscogee County
 Greg Barineau, Schley County
 Jayson Griffin, Macon County
 Maggie McGruther, Sumter County
 Nelson Brown, City of Americus
 Rebecca Chambers, City of Hamilton
 Sam Farrow, Jr., Crisp County
 Steve Whatley, City of Cuthbert
 Tameka Harris, Taylor County
 Tom Queen, Taylor County

Others Present

Sarah Lee Crumbs, Georgetown-Quitman County Family
 Connections Coordinator
 Elaine Gillispie, Congressman Bishop's Representative
 Susan Gallagher, New Horizons
 Scotty Mashburn, Dooly EDC
 Edwina Turner, Stewart County Family Connections
 Casey Beane, DCA Representative, Region 8
 Candy Head, GA Department of Labor, Region 8
 Paul Farr, South Georgia Technical College
 Laura Gower, Representative for Senator Johnny Isakson
 Todd Carlisle, Business Consultant, UGA
 Michelle Griffin, Consultant, SBDC
 Patti Cullen, Executive Director
 Sarah Walls, Assistant Executive Director
 Katie Howard, AAA Director
 Gerald Mixon, Planning Director
 Allison Slocum, Senior Planner
 Jim Livingston, Community & Economic Development Dir.
 Becky Holmes, Office Manager

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 Quitman | Randolph | Schley | Stewart | Sumter | Talbot | Taylor | Webster

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Welcome and Recognition of Visitors

Chair Clinton Perry, Jr., Chair, brought the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. He welcomed everyone and requested Jerry “Pops” Barnes, Secretary, to lead the council in prayer. Randy Howard, Vice Chair, led the council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Review and Approval of Minutes*

Council reviewed the minutes of the June 28, 2017 council meeting, which were mailed or emailed to council members the previous week for their review.

Harry Lange, Harris County, made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; Melvin Crimes, Webster County, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Kick-Off for the 2018-2028 Regional Plan

Allison Slocum, Senior Planner, explained that it is time to update the Regional Plan which is required every five (5) years. She presented the schedule for the update and explained that the completion date is June 27, 2018. Allison requested one volunteer from each county to serve on the Steering Committee and requested council members email a list of stakeholders to her. She noted that the first meeting for the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) Analysis, for the western counties, will be held on Thursday, September 21st at the Columbus River Valley Regional Commission (RVRC) office. The SWOT for the southern counties will be held on October 12th. The location will be announced at a later date.

“What is Your Why?”

Patti Cullen, Executive Director, introduced Todd Carlisle, Business Consultant for the University of Georgia’s Small Business Development Center. He said the consultants meet with business owners of industries and businesses to help them understand how to begin or expand their business. He explained that the Small Business Development Center has seventeen (17) offices and sixty (60) consultants across the State of Georgia.

Susan Gallagher, New Horizons, reminded the council that New Horizons located in Columbus and serves residents of Chattahoochee, Clay, Harris, Muscogee, Randolph, Stewart, Talbot, and Quitman counties. Ms. Gallagher explained that their program is geared to adults seeking outpatient mental health and substance abuse services. She invited everyone to attend the Run4Recovery Street Party to be held Saturday, September 9th, 2017 at the Woodruff Riverfront Park in Columbus in order to show support to those individuals who are recovering from mental illness and addiction.

Appointment of Private Sector Council Members*

Sarah Walls, Assistant Executive Director, explained that it was time to appoint the Private Industry Council Members for the 2017-2018 year. Recommendations were Bump Welch, Marion County; Chip Jones, Stewart County; Doug Etheridge, Harris County; Fred Gordon, Muscogee County; Clinton Perry, Taylor County; Edward Lee, Chattahoochee County; Tom Queen, Taylor County; Tommy McKenzie, Macon County; Wally Summers, Sumter County; Patricia Goodman, Randolph County; Jayson Griffin, Macon County; Jason Hoch, Schley

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Quitman | Randolph | Schley | Stewart | Sumter | Talbot | Taylor | Webster

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County; and Pam Jordan, Talbot County. She explained that the above members had been contacted and agreed to continue to serve on the council, if appointed.

Terrell Hudson, Dooly County, made a motion to appoint the recommended people to serve as Private Sector Council Members; Harry Lange, Harris County, seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Tools For Life

Katie Howard, Area Agency on Aging Director, explained that a “Tools for Life” lab would be setup in the Columbus and Americus office. This lab will be used to expose people to assistive technology. Katie explained that assistive technology is any item that helps a person to remain independent and makes day-to-day living easier. She gave examples such as a tool to help put socks on and a tool to help button buttons. There was also a table set up in the back of the room with many samples to view. She invited everyone to stop by the table and look at the samples. Staff was available to demonstrate the use of the items.

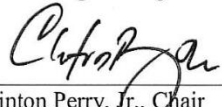
Patti Cullen, Executive Director, explained that staff reports would not be given at this meeting because we want people to visit the assistive technology table.

She also announced that the Georgia Association of Regional Commission’s (GARC) Conference will be held November 8th -10th at St. Simons Island. She urged all that could attend to start making plans. Patti said the CEDS document will be presented for review and adoption at the September council meeting.

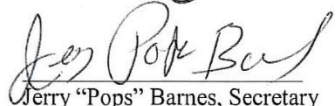
ADJOURN

There being no further business to come before the council, Harry Lange, Harris County, made a motion to adjourn; Dr. Fred Gordon, seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.

September 27, 2017
Date



Clinton Perry, Jr., Chair



Jerry “Pops” Barnes, Secretary

Chattahoochee | Clay | Crisp | Dooly | Harris | Macon | Marion | Muscogee
Quitman | Randolph | Schley | Stewart | Sumter | Talbot | Taylor | Webster

Equal Opportunity Employer



SIGN-IN SHEET

Project: RVRC Council Meeting

Meeting Date: August 23, 2017

Facilitator: Clinton Perry, Jr., Chair

Place/ Room: Josh Gibson Center

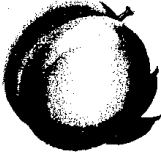
Name	Phone
Randy Howard	229-591-4077
Bruce Hill	478 952 8981
Richard McPhee	229 314 0295
* Edwina Turner	229-321-2167
Lee Hubbard	229-641-2675
A. J. Rivers (cell 229-942-8570)	229-273-4715-
Adrian Cernis	229-886-8692
Hobby Stripling	229-938-7320
Tranny McKenzie	478-952-6665
ERIKINA LLC	706 459 2931
Secret to me on table	4
Janice Bartee	229-273-4553
JOE LEE williams	229-942-3149
Chip Jones	229-887-3433
Clinton Perry	478-951-4450
Pham Jordan	706-570-1966
Harry Lange	706-888-2185
Doug EThoridge	706 663 2700
* Candy Head (GDOI)	404-859-6008



SIGN-IN SHEET

Project:	RVRC Council Meeting	Meeting Date:	August 23, 2017
Facilitator:	Clinton Perry, Jr., Chair	Place/Room:	Josh Gibson Center

Name	Phone
* Paul Farr -SGTC	229-942-4127
James R (Boney) Walker	
Carol C. Lewis	229-221-8709
Fred Cook	
Mickey George	
Kay Blackmar	
* Laura Bower	706 566 2134
* Elsie Collette	706 - 380-9477



SIGN-IN SHEET

Project:	RVRC Council Meeting	Meeting Date:	August 23, 2017
Facilitator:	Clinton Perry, Jr., Chair	Place/Room:	Josh Gibson Center

Name	Phone
Debbie Stone	229-321-8545



SIGN-IN SHEET

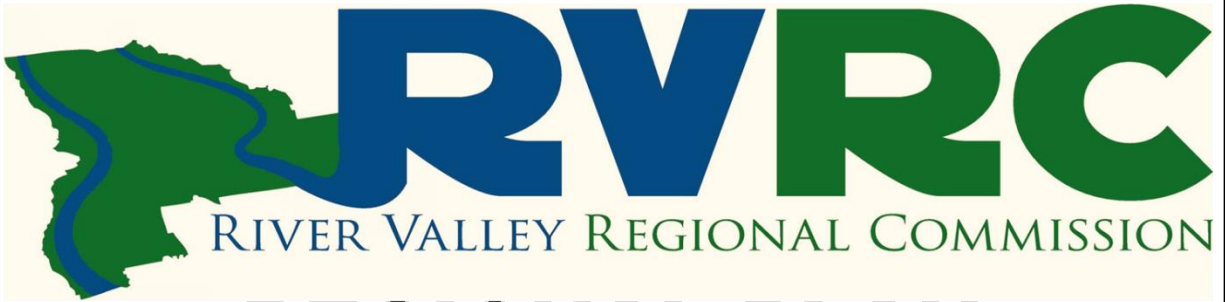
Project: RVRC Council Meeting

Meeting Date: August 23, 2017

Facilitator: Clinton Perry, Jr., Chair

Place/ Room: Josh Gibson Center

Name	Phone
Jimmy P. Bradley	229-870-6727
JIM LAWRENCE	
JAS. A. MORTON	
* Sara Lee Crumbs	229-334-7553
CARLTON WILSON	229 937 2934
FREEMAN MONTGOMERY	706 249 5770
Tony Kennedy	
Jason Hoch	229-314-9835
Shirley Christian	229-768-3128
Carole Rotland	706 5365673
* Susan Gallagher ^{New} ^{Houngons}	706-332-1522
* ? ^{John} ^B ^W	706-442-0249
* Casey W. Beau ^{Beau} ^{det}	404-227-2860
Patricia Gordon	229-881-5223
Terrell Hudson	478/201-4961
* Scotty Mark Bunn	Dool EDC
Ralph T. Brown Jr	(229) 649-7888



REGIONAL PLAN DEVELOPMENT MEETING

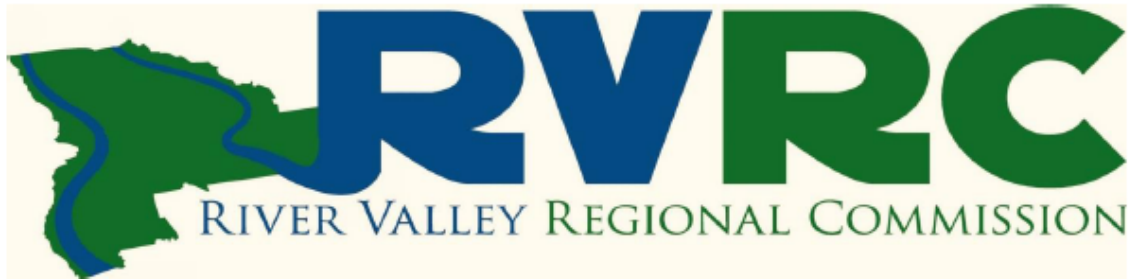
TH, SEPTEMBER 21, 2017

6:00 p.m.

RVRC Columbus Office

**710 Front Avenue, Suite A
Columbus, GA 31902**

For More Information, Contact Allison Slocum or Joel Hanif (706) 256-2910



AGENDA

Regional Plan

SWOT Analysis

September 21, 2017

710 Front Avenue, Suite A

Columbus, Georgia

6:00 p.m.

- I. Welcome**
 - A. Announcements
 - B. Introductions

- II. Review of Regional Planning Process**
 - A. Plan Elements
 - B. Plan Schedule and Benchmarks
 - C. Identification of Leadership Team
 - D. Identification of Stakeholders
 - E. Public Participation Techniques

- III. Develop Current List of Needs and Opportunities**
 - A. Strengths
 - B. Weaknesses
 - C. Opportunities
 - D. Threats

- IV. Questions and Answers**

- V. Adjourn**



**REGIONAL PLAN
September 21, 2017**

Name	Contact Information Email/Phone No.	Group or Community Representing
Kevin Herritt	kherritt@columbusga.org	Columbus
Pete Cullen	pcullen@rivervalleyrc.org	Regional
Candy Head	candacehead@gdol.ga.gov	Regional
Joel Hanif	jhanif@rivervalleyrc.org	CSG
Lucia Swift	cs@columbus@gmail.com	CSG
Harry Lange		CSU
Nicholas Bilder		Region
Rick Morris	RURC	Talbot County
Paul Higginbotham		



**REGIONAL PLAN
DEVELOPMENT MEETING**

**TH, OCTOBER 12, 2017
10:00 A.m.
FELLOWSHIP HOME AT COTTON HILL
HWY 82
Cuthbert, GA**

For More Information, Contact Allison Slocum or Joel Hanif (706) 256-2910

AGENDA
SOUTHERN LOWER CHATTAHOOCHEE
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENT
OCTOBER 12, 2017
10:00 AM

Welcome and Introduction of Guests

Approve Minutes of Past Meeting

Treasurer's Report

Old Business

New Business

Update Executive Committee Contact List

Allison Slocum - RVRC

① Population

Loan Review

② Housing

Current Loans

③ Transportation

Other:

④ CEDS

Rural Business Enterprise Grant

\$26,264.60 available (RBEG)loan ⑤ Land Use

• Nat'l Res

• Cult'l Res

④ Community Facilities

• Water

• Sewer

• Gas

• Broadband

10/12/2017 Sign-In Sheet

Alecia Brown

Sara Lee Crumbs

Patricia Bruma

WALTER MATTHEW

RONALD CROSSER

Eddie Watson

Jim Livingston

Edwin G. Sumner - Stewart County

Allison Alcorn



RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION

**REGIONAL PLAN
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wed. , OCTOBER 25, 2017
9:00 a.m.**

Marion County's Board of Commissioners' Office

**100 E. Burkhalter Avenue
Buena Vista, GA 31803**

For More Information, Contact Allison Slocum or Joel Hanif (706) 256-2910



Columbus Office
710 Front Avenue
P. O. Box 1908
Columbus, GA 31902
Phone (706) 256-2910
Fax (706) 256-2908

Americus Office
228 West Lamar Street
Americus, GA 31709
Phone (706)256-2910
Fax (229) 931-2745
Fax (229) 931-2917

TDY (706)256-2944
Toll Free (877)819-6348

AGENDA
Regional Plan
Steering Committee
October 25, 2017
Buena Vista, GA
9:00 a.m.

- I. Welcome
 - A. Announcements
 - B. Introductions
- II. Review of Regional Planning Process
 - A. Plan Schedule and Benchmarks
 - B. Identification of Leadership Team
 - C. Identification of Stakeholders
 - D. Public Participation Techniques
- III. Develop Regional Vision Statement
- IV. Develop Current List of Needs and Opportunities
 - A. Review SWOT Results
 - B. Identify Priority Needs and Opportunities
 - C. Identify Goals, Policies and Key Strategies
- V. Questions and Answers
- V. Adjourn

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

Allison Slocum
aslocum@rivervalleyrc.org
(706) 256-2910

Patti Cullen
pcullen@rivervalleyrc.org
(706) 256-2910

Joel Hanif
jhanif@rivervalleyrc.org
(706) 256-2910

Chattahoochee | Clay | Crisp | Dooly | Harris | Macon | Marion | Muscogee
Quitman | Randolph | Schley | Stewart | Sumter | Talbot | Taylor | Webster



REGIONAL PLAN

October 25, 2017

Name	Contact Information Email/Phone No.	Group or Community Representing
Mickey George	mdgeo@windstream.net 478-396-8595	MAcon County Commission
Tim Lawrence	522-646946@ATTI.net 706-572-9010	CHATCO. County
Ranley Howard	rhoward@sumnercountyga.us 224-591-4077 706-570-8851	Sumter Co.
Debby Ford	ford.debb@windstream.net	Marion Chamber
Joel Harif		RVRC
Patti Cullen		RVRC
Ryan McEl	R.McEl@CHHFL7.org	Marion County
Patricia Bradman	ppbradman@hotmail.com 229-881-5023	Handolph Co.
Pam Jordan	pj450@aol.com 706-570-1966	Talbot
Tom Queen	tqueen@maai.net 706-323-6780	Taylor
Chip Jones	chipov@bellsouth.net	Stewart
Shirley Christian	56250@windstream.net	Clay
DANNY BLACKTON	dblckmnc@NSM.COM	Quitman
Carbel Lewis	celewis@aol.com	Quitman
Harrey Lange	tealidada.h@gmail.com 706-888-2185	Harris



RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION

**REGIONAL PLAN
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

**Wed. , NOVEMBER 29, 2017
9:30 a.m.**

Marion County's Board of Commissioners' Office

**100 E. Burkhalter Avenue
Buena Vista, GA 31803**

For More Information, Contact Allison Slocum or Joel Hanif (706) 256-2910



Columbus Office
710 Front Avenue
P. O. Box 1908
Columbus, GA 31902
Phone (706) 256-2910
Fax (706) 256-2908

Americus Office
228 West Lamar Street
Americus, GA 31709
Phone (706)256-2910
Fax (229) 931-2745
Fax (229) 931-2917

TDY (706)256-2944
Toll Free (877)819-6348

AGENDA
Regional Plan
Steering Committee
November 29, 2017
Buena Vista, GA
9:30 a.m.

- I. Welcome
 - A. Announcements
 - B. Introductions
- II. Review of Regional Planning Process
 - A. Review Plan Schedule and Benchmarks
 - B. Review of Leadership Team
 - C. Review of Stakeholders
 - D. Update on Public Participation Techniques
- III. Review Regional Vision Statement
- IV. Develop Current List of Needs and Opportunities
 - A. Review SWOT Results
 - B. Identify Priority Needs and Opportunities
 - C. Identify Goals, Policies and Key Strategies
- V. Review of Population Section
- VI. Questions and Answers
- VII. Adjourn

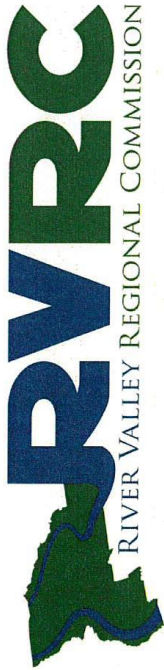
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

Allison Slocum
aslocum@rivervalleyrc.org
(706) 256-2910

Patti Cullen
pcullen@rivervalleyrc.org
(706) 256-2910

Joel Hanif
jhanif@rivervalleyrc.org
(706) 256-2910

Chattahoochee | Clay | Crisp | Dooly | Harris | Macon | Marion | Muscogee
Quitman | Randolph | Schley | Stewart | Sumter | Talbot | Taylor | Webster



**REGIONAL PLAN
November 29, 2017**

Name	Contact Information Email/Phone No.	Group or Community Representing
Angela Farley	706 3154243 afarley@a.yaho.com	Harris County
Debbie Ford	ford.debbie@windstream.net 706-570-8257	Main Chamber of Comm
Mickey George	478-396-8595	mdgeo@windstream.net
Shirley Christman	229-768-3128	Fort Gaines, City
Tom Queen	706 323 6780	Taylor County
Zany Kinnel	229-224-5776 webster CO @ windsTream.net	webster Co
Alfred Arone	229-521-8145 msdebars@yaho.com	St Lukes City
Carole Pittend	cristand@knology.net	Misses
Beth Mc	RMC@charlottesville.com	Miss
Pam Janda	pij456@aol.com 706-570-1966	Talbot



**REGIONAL PLAN
DEVELOPMENT MEETING**

**TH, JANUARY 11, 2018
6:00 p.m.
RVRC Americus Office
228 W. Lamar Street
Americus, GA 31709**

For More Information, Contact Allison Slocum or Joel Hanif (706) 256-2910



Columbus Office

710 Front Avenue
P. O. Box 1908
Columbus, GA 31902
Phone (706) 256-2910
Fax (706) 256-2908

Americus Office

228 West Lamar Street
Americus, GA 31709
Phone (706)256-2910
Fax (229) 931-2745
Fax (229) 931-2917

TDY (706)256-2944
Toll Free (877)819-6348

AGENDA

Regional Plan
SWOT Analysis
January 11, 2018
228 West Lamar Street
Americus, GA 31709
6:00 p.m.

- I. Welcome
 - A. Announcements
 - B. Introductions

- II. Review of Regional Planning Process
 - A. Plan Elements
 - B. Plan Schedule and Benchmarks
 - C. Identification of Leadership Team
 - D. Identification of Stakeholders
 - E. Public Participation Techniques

- III. Develop Current List of Needs and Opportunities
 - A. Strengths
 - B. Weaknesses
 - C. Opportunities
 - D. Threats

- IV. Questions and Answers

- V. Adjourn

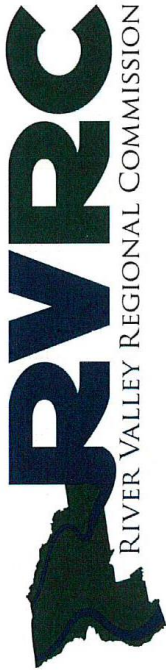
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

Allison Slocum
aslocum@rivervalleyrc.org
(706) 256-2910

Patti Cullen
pcullen@rivervalleyrc.org
(706) 256-2910

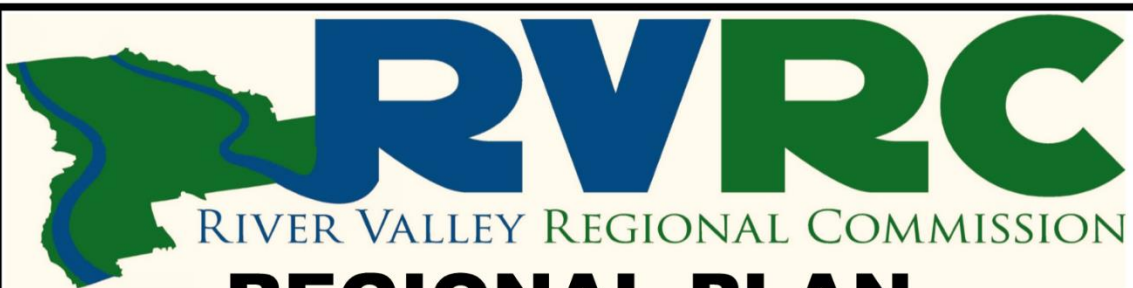
Joel Hanif
jhanif@rivervalleyrc.org
(706) 256-2910

Chattahoochee | Clay | Crisp | Dooly | Harris | Macon | Marion | Muscogee
Quitman | Randolph | Schley | Stewart | Sumter | Talbot | Taylor | Webster



REGIONAL PLAN January 11, 2018

Name	Contact Information Email/Phone No.	Group or Community Representing
Valery Davis	valeriedavis@cityofmarshallville.org (478)967-2535	City of Millie.
Janet Joiner	janet.joiner@cityofvienna.org 229-268-4420	City of Vienna



**REGIONAL PLAN
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

WED. , FEBRUARY 28, 2018

9:30 a.m.

Marion County's Board of Commissioners' Office

**100 E. Burkhalter Avenue
Buena Vista, GA 31803**

For More Information, Contact Allison Slocum or Joel Hanif (706) 256-2910



Columbus Office
710 Front Avenue
P. O. Box 1908
Columbus, GA 31902
Phone (706) 256-2910
Fax (706) 256-2908

Americus Office
228 West Lamar Street
Americus, GA 31709
Phone (706)256-2910
Fax (229) 931-2745
Fax (229) 931-2917

TDY (706)256-2944
Toll Free (877)819-6348

AGENDA
Regional Plan
Steering Committee
February 28, 2018
Buena Vista, GA
9:30 a.m.

- I. Welcome
 - A. Announcements
 - B. Introductions
- II. Review of Regional Planning Process and Benchmarks
 - A. Community Facilities Updates
 - B. Intergovernmental
 - C. Transportation
- III. Questions and Answers
- IV. Adjourn

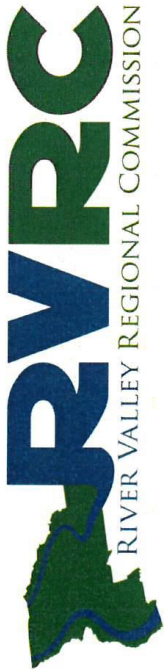
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

Allison Slocum
aslocum@rivervalleyrc.org
(706) 256-2910

Patti Cullen
pcullen@rivervalleyrc.org
(706) 256-2910

Joel Hanif
jhanif@rivervalleyrc.org
(706) 256-2910

Chattahoochee | Clay | Crisp | Dooly | Harris | Macon | Marion | Muscogee
Quitman | Randolph | Schley | Stewart | Sumter | Talbot | Taylor | Webster



REGIONAL PLAN February 28, 2018

Name	Contact Information Email/Phone No.	Group or Community Representing
Patti Cullen	River Valley RC	
Chip Jones	Stewart Co	Stewart/Richmond
Patricia Gardner	229-881-5823 pauldphpp@stewartco.net	Randolph
Danny Blackmon	Georgetown - Quitman	dblckmn@msn.com 334-6
CAROL LEMIS	GEOGETOWN - QUITMAN	clemwise@aol.com 229-334-8923
Harry Lange		
Tom Cullen		
Debbie Ford		
Jan Gardner		



REGIONAL PLAN February 28, 2018

Name	Contact Information Email/Phone No.	Group or Community Representing
Debbie Stone	madelstone@jordan.com 299-321-8345	City of Sumpter
Tom Queen	tqueen@nrai.net 7063236780	Taylor County
Richard Myrtle	richmyrtle@charthill.com 229-214-0295	Macon Co
Leah Hubbard	308-5368	Clay County
Barry Waters	229 768 2943	FORT GEORGE MEYER



RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION

**REGIONAL PLAN
STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING**

**WED. , MARCH 28, 2018
9:30 a.m.**

Marion County's Board of Commissioners' Office

**100 E. Burkhalter Avenue
Buena Vista, GA 31803**

For More Information, Contact Allison Slocum or Joel Hanif (706) 256-2910



Columbus Office
710 Front Avenue
P. O. Box 1908
Columbus, GA 31902
Phone (706) 256-2910
Fax (706) 256-2908

Americus Office
228 West Lamar Street
Americus, GA 31709
Phone (706)256-2910
Fax (229) 931-2745
Fax (229) 931-2917

TDY (706)256-2944
Toll Free (877)819-6348

AGENDA
Regional Plan
Steering Committee
March 28, 2018
Buena Vista, GA
9:30 a.m.

- I. Welcome
 - A. Announcements
 - B. Introductions
- II. Review of Regional Planning Process and Benchmarks
 - A. Regional Land Use Map
 - B. Community Facilities Updates
 - C. Intergovernmental
 - D. Transportation
- III. Questions and Answers
- IV. Adjourn

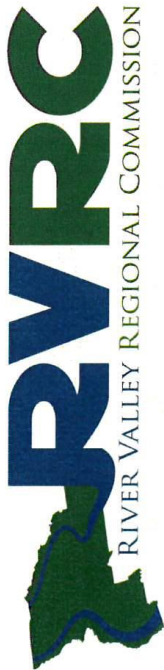
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

Allison Slocum
aslocum@rivervalleyrc.org
(706) 256-2910

Patti Cullen
pcullen@rivervalleyrc.org
(706) 256-2910

Joel Hanif
jhanif@rivervalleyrc.org
(706) 256-2910

Chattahoochee | Clay | Crisp | Dooly | Harris | Macon | Marion | Muscogee
Quitman | Randolph | Schley | Stewart | Sumter | Talbot | Taylor | Webster



REGIONAL PLAN

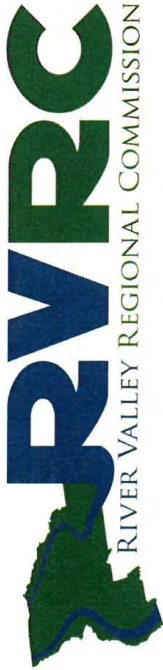
March 28, 2018

Name

Contact Information
Email/Phone No.

Group or Community
Representing

Harry Lange
Randy Howard
~~Robert Howard~~
Walter Howard
Chip Jones
Katie Mc
Katherine H. Ford
Zoe By



REGIONAL PLAN
March 28, 2018

Name	Contact Information Email/Phone No.	Group or Community Representing
Patti Cullen	pcullen@rivervalleyrc.org	RVRC
Joel Hank	jhanke@rivervalleyrc.org	RVRC



Columbus Office
710 Front Avenue, Ste. A
P. O. Box 1908
Columbus, GA 31902
Phone (706) 256-2910
Fax (706) 256-2908
TDY (706)256-2944

Americus Office
228 West Lamar Street
Americus, GA 31709
Phone (706) 256-2910
Fax (229) 931-2745
Fax (229) 931-2917

Toll Free (877) 819-6348

**RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL
MARION COUNTY COMMISSION OFFICE**

100 East Burkhalter Avenue

Buena Vista, Georgia

April 25, 2018

10:30 a.m.

AGENDA

- I. Welcome and Recognition of Visitors Clinton Perry, Jr., Chair
- II. Invocation Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Secretary
- III. Pledge of Allegiance..... Randy Howard, Vice Chair
- IV. Review and Approval of March 28, 2018 Minutes* Clinton Perry, Jr., Chair
- V. LightHouse-CAC (Children's Advocacy Center) Amy Boney, Director
LightHouse Children's Advocacy Center
- VI. Resolution To Enter Contract With DHS for the Provision of
Regional Hunger Coalition Services* Katie Howard, AAA Director
- VII. Approval of Care Coordination ContractKatie Howard, AAA Director
- VIII. Transmittal of the 2018-2022 Regional Plan* Allison Slocum, Senior Planner
- IX. Budget Amendment* Emily Chambers, Finance Officer
- X. Staff Reports Emily Chambers, Finance Officer
Katie Howard, AAA Director
Jim Livingston, Community & Economic Development Director
Janice West, WIOA Director
Gerald Mixon, Planning Director

Chattahoochee | Clay | Crisp | Dooly | Harris | Macon | Marion | Muscogee
Quitman | Randolph | Schley | Stewart | Sumter | Talbot | Taylor | Webster

Equal Opportunity Employer



SIGN-IN SHEET

Project: RVRC Council Meeting

Meeting Date: April 25, 2018

Facilitator: Clinton Perry, Jr., Chair

Place/Room: Marion County Commission Office

Name	Phone
Jean "Bump" Vela	229-649-9888
Debbie Stone	229-321-8545
Lee Hubbard	229-641-2675
Elaine Collispe	706-320-9477
WALT CROSS	706 989 3255
Mickey George	478-396-8595
Melvin Crines	229-886-8692
Amy Boney	229-931-4486
Bruce Hill	on file
DANNY BLACKMAN	334-695-4619
Jayson Giffi	229-937-1113
Clinton Perry	478-951-4454
Randy Howard	229-591-4077
Orde Potland	706, 536, 5673
Joe Bell	706-442-0289
Denise M. Grier	706-665-8542
Justin M. Johnson	706-457-1857



SIGN-IN SHEET

Project:	RVRC Council Meeting	Meeting Date:	April 25, 2018
Facilitator:	Clinton Perry, Jr., Chair	Place/ Room:	Marion County Commission Office

Name	Phone
Barry Waters	229 768 2443
Patricia Gordon	229-881-5023
Tom Jordan	706-570-1966



SIGN-IN SHEET

Project: RVRC Council Meeting

Meeting Date: April 25, 2018

Facilitator: Clinton Perry, Jr., Chair

Place/Room: Marion County Commission Office

Name	Phone
Edward Lee	706 949 3931
Maggie McEntuer	
Tommy King	229-828-5775
CARLTON WILSON	229 937 2934
Fred Gordon	706-507-8799
Jimmy P. Bradley	229-732-6214
Tommy Stark	209-314-9835
Dong Etheridge	706 249 2203
Jerrill Harlow	478 244 4861
Harry Lange	
A.P. Niveas	229-942-8570 cell 229-213-4715



www.rivervalleyrc.org

Columbus Office
710 Front Avenue, Suite A
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Columbus, GA 31902
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Fax (706) 256-2908
TDY (706)256-2944

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Toll Free (877) 819-6348

RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COUNCIL MEETING

Marion County Commission Office
100 East Burkhalter Avenue
Buena Vista, Georgia
April 25, 2018

MINUTES

Members Attending/Representing

(Representing 15 Counties)
A.J. Rivers, Crisp County
Barry Waters, City of Ft. Gaines
Bruce Hill, City of Oglethorpe
Carlton Wilson, City of Ellaville
Clinton Perry, Jr. Taylor County,
RVRC Chair
Danny Blackmon, Georgetown-Quitman
Dr. Carole Rutland, Muscogee County
Dr. Edward Lee, Cusseta-Chattahoochee
Doug Etheridge, Harris County
Fred Gordon, Muscogee County
Harry Lange, Harris County
James R. "Bump" Welch, Marion Co.
Jason Hoch, Schley County
Jayson Griffin, Macon County
Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Muscogee Co.,
RVRC Secretary
Jimmy Bradley, Randolph County
Lee Hubbard, Clay County
Maggie McGruther, Sumter County
Melvin Crimes, Webster County
Mickey George, Macon County
Pam Jordan, Talbot County
Patricia Goodman, Randolph County

Ralph Brown, City of Buena Vista
Randy Howard, Sumter County,
RVRC Vice Chair
Terrell Hudson, Dooly County, ACCG
Tony Kennedy, Webster County
Walt Rosso, Cusseta-Chattahoochee Co.

Members Not Present

Barry Whitley, City of Butler
Carvel Lewis, Georgetown-Quitman Co.
Cecil "Butch" McMickle, Marion Co.
Chip Jones, Stewart County
Evelyn Turner Pugh, Muscogee County
Freeman Montgomery, Talbot County
Greg Barineau, Schley County
Hobby Stripling, City of Vienna
James Morton, Cusseta-Chattahoochee
Jeanie Barteel, City of Cordele
Jimmy Babb, City of Lumpkin
Joe Lee Williams, Stewart County
Knox Blackmar, City of Talbotton
Nelson Brown, City of Americus
Rebecca Chambers, City of Hamilton
Richard McCorkle, Marion County
Sam Farrow, Jr., Crisp County
Steve Whatley, City of Cuthbert

Tameka Harris, Taylor County
Tom Queen, Taylor County
Wally Summers, Sumter County

Others Present

Elaine Gillispie, Congressman Bishop's
Representative
Amy Boney, Director Lighthouse
Children's Advocacy Center
Denise Grier
Justin Johnson
Debbie Stone, City of Lumpkin

Staff Present

Patti Cullen, Executive Director
Sarah Walls, Assistant Executive Dir.
Katie Howard, AAA Director
Emily Chambers, Finance Officer
Rick Morris, Planning Director
Allison Slocum, Senior Planner
Jim Livingston, Comm. & Eco. Dev. Dir.
Gerald Mixon, Planning Director
Janice West, WIOA Director
Joel Hanif, Community Developer
Becky Holmes, Office Manager

Chattahoochee | Clay | Crisp | Dooly | Harris | Macon | Marion | Muscogee
Quitman | Randolph | Schley | Stewart | Sumter | Talbot | Taylor | Webster

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Welcome and Recognition of Visitors

Clinton Perry, Jr. brought the meeting to order. He welcomed everyone and asked if there were any visitors. He then asked Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Secretary, to lead the council in prayer and Randy Howard, Vice Chair, then lead the council in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Review and Approval of Minutes*

Council reviewed the minutes of the March 28, 2018 council meeting that was mailed or emailed to council members the previous week for their review.

There being no additions or changes, Chair Perry, requested a motion to approve the March 28, 2018 council minutes. Barry Waters, Ft. Gaines, made a motion to approve the minutes as presented; Harry Lange, Harris County, seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

LightHouse-CAC (Children's Advocacy Center)

Maggie McGruther, Sumter County, introduced guest speaker Amy Boney, Director of LightHouse Children's Advocacy Center. Ms. Boney gave a slideshow presentation explaining how the LightHouse Children's Advocacy Center provides services for children that are victims or suspected victims of sexual abuse, severe physical abuse, witness to violence, commercialization and sexual exploitation and other cases requesting assistance by law officials and DFACS. Ms. Boney also announced that a Pediatric/Adolescent & Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner Training Course, for registered nurses, will be held June 4-8, at Georgia Southwestern State University. The course will be free of charge for those willing to commit to serve the Southwestern Circuit for at least one year. For more information call 229-931-4488 or email Nikki Still at nikki@sowegachildren.org.

Resolution to Enter Contract with DHS for the Provision of Regional Hunger Coalition Services*

Katie Howard, Director of the Area Agency on Aging, requested council approval to enter into a contract with the Department of Human Services for the Provision of Regional Hunger Coalition Services. This contract will provide funds to develop a regional coalition to bring together the aging network with for-profit, nonprofit, faith-based, civic, healthcare and other organizations that serve older adults and their caregivers. These coalitions, established across the state, will address a number of areas of concern identified in the Senior Hunger Plan for the State of Georgia.

Harry Lange, Harris County, made a motion to approve the resolution; Walt Rosso, Cusseta Chattahoochee County, seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

Approval of Care Coordination Contract*

Katie Howard, Director of the Area Agency on Aging, requested council approval of the Care Coordination Contract. This program provides telephonic case management services and will be provided under a contract with the Central Savannah River Area (CSRA) Regional Commission/Area Agency on Aging.

Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Muscogee County, made a motion to approve the contract; Walt Rosso, Cusseta Chattahoochee County, seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

Transmittal of the 2018-2022 Regional Plan*

Allison Slocum, Senior Planner, presented the Regional Plan for council review and requested approval to submit the 2018-2022 Regional Plan to the Department of Community Affairs. She noted that there will be more additions and corrections before the plan will be submitted. Ms. Cullen asked that all comments on the plan be submitted by Monday, April 30th.

Barry Waters, Ft. Gaines, made a motion to approve the transmittal of the 2018-2022 Regional Plan, Patricia Goodman, Randolph County, seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

Budget Amendment*

Emily Chambers, Finance Director, presented the second budget amendment for FY18. She stated the primary need for the budget amendment was that we had received additional funds of \$222,204 from the Department of Human Services Transportation contract. The amended budget has a projected overall increase in fund balances of \$33,479, an increase of \$7,693 over the last budget amendment. The General Fund has an increase in Fund Balance of \$5,893, with the remaining \$1,800 increase in the Proprietary Funds. There were no changes to the Indirect Cost Plan. She explained that the Finance Committee had met and reviewed the amendment before the council meeting and that the Finance Committee recommended approval of the amendment. Emily then requested council approval of the Budget Amendment.

Terrell Hudson, Dooly County, made a motion to approve the Budget Amendment; Harry Lange, Harris County, seconded the motion. The motion passed with no opposition.

Staff Reports

Emily Chambers, Finance Officer, gave the financial report for February, stating that there was an overall net increase in fund balance of \$49,719. She said that the operating expenditures were right on target with the budget and that the fringe and indirect rates were still below fifty percent.

Katie Howard, Area Agency on Aging Director, reported that several bills were passed in the 2018 Georgia General Assembly that benefits senior citizens. She said no new funds were allocated but there also were no funding cuts. Katie said staff held an Open House at the RVRC Americus office March 23rd to showcase the Assistive Technology (AT) Lab for seniors. The lab will be staffed the first Friday of each month from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. With increased interest the hours may be extended. Both the Columbus and Americus' AT labs are open by appointment. She said staff is available for demonstrations at local civic and church groups. Over 30 people attended the 2018 Engage with Co-Age meeting at the Columbus RVRC office. They learned about Co-Age and how they can work with senior advocates thru out the state.

Jim Livingston, Community and Economic Development Director, explained that his department had submitted nine (9) Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA) April 2nd, in addition to managing twenty (20) other projects. Staff made comments to DCA's Consolidated Plan. Primarily we suggested to (1) simplify the CDBG process (2) allow funds to be used for code enforcement and (3) allow modular/stick-built housing to be competitive when replacing mobile homes under the CDBG program. Georgia Department of Transportation hosted an open house on the replacement of the Lee Street Bridge and another meeting is scheduled for May 10th. He urged everyone in attendance to attend the meeting. An application to the Georgia Transportation Infrastructure Bank (GTIB) was submitted for Buena Vista for streetscape improvements to the Courthouse Square.

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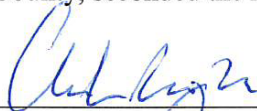
Janice West, WIOA Director, gave the staff report for her department. She explained that Harvey's Grocery Store in Montezuma would be closing on or before April 30th. Harvey's employs 40 full and part-time employees. Staff met with Harvey's employees and provided them with information about services available to them thru the WIOA program. Janice also noted that the unemployment rate for the eastern counties decreased from 7.2% to 5.8% for the month of February and also decreased from 6.7% to 5.6% in the western counties.


Gerald Mixon, Planning Director, reported the input sessions for the Comprehensive Plan Update for Taylor County, Butler and Reynolds continue. Harris County, Hamilton, Pine Mountain, Shiloh and Waverly Hall had a kick-off meeting April 24th at the Harris County Courthouse, to begin work on their Comprehensive Plan Update. He reported that GIS staff has merged about a dozen address lists from local utility customers, electrical utilities and E-911 address lists to compile a comprehensive list of residential addresses for the 2020 Census. As lists are completed they will be forwarded to the Census Bureau for an initial review before the local review is completed. Staff is reviewing road data in Harris County under the Map-21 program. This data will include local road names, ownership, median types, one-way and reversible lanes and surface types. Gerald said staff reviewed four cases for the Board of Historic Architecture Review (BHAR) in Columbus during April. The Prison to Peanuts Ride was held in Americus April 14th and was a great success with 132 riders from across the state participating in the event. Bicycle Week will begin in Columbus with a Pedaling for Kids event May 12th, Ride with the Mayor on May 15th, Ride of Silence on May 16th and Bike to Work Day on May 18th. Staff continues to compile information needed by the State Historic Preservation Office so construction can continue on the Andersonville Depot rehabilitation project.

Ms. Cullen announced that the May Council meeting would be the Annual Legislative Luncheon and would be held at the Josh Gibson Center.

Terrell Hudson, Dooly County, moved to adjourn; Harry Lange, Harris County, seconded the motion.

May 23, 2018
Date


Clinton Perry, Jr., Chair


Jerry "Pops" Barnes, Secretary