**SOUTHERN GEORGIA
REGIONAL PLAN
2020 ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM REPORT
ADOPTION RESOLUTION**

A RESOLUTION BY THE SOUTHERN GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION TO ADOPT THE 2020 REGIONAL PLAN ANNUAL IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM REPORT AND SUBMIT NOTIFICATION TO THE GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

WHEREAS, the Southern Georgia Regional Commission recognized the need to prepare the 2020 Annual Implementation Program Report for the Regional Plan;

WHEREAS, the 2020 Annual Implementation Program Report for the Regional Plan was prepared in accordance with the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures for Regional Planning, and has been approved by the Department of Community Affairs on September 17th, 2020;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the 2020 Annual Implementation Program Report for the Regional Plan for the Southern Georgia Regional Commission be adopted and submitted to the Department of Community Affairs (DCA).

DULY RESOLVED THIS 22nd **DAY OF** October , 2020.

SOUTHERN GEORGIA REGIONAL COMMISSION

Joyce Evans, Chair

REGIONAL PLAN ANNUAL REPORT AND UPDATE 2020

sgrc SOUTHERN GEORGIA
REGIONAL COMMISSION

INTRODUCTION

The Southern Georgia Region is a vast, rural region spanning the Upper and Lower Coastal Plains of south-central Georgia. The mostly forested and agricultural region is comprised of approximately 7,810 square miles, with a 2019 Census Bureau population estimate of 415,624, encompassing 18 counties and 45 municipalities. Counties included are Atkinson, Bacon, Ben Hill, Berrien, Brantley, Brooks, Charlton, Clinch, Coffee, Cook, Echols, Irwin, Lanier, Lowndes, Pierce, Tift, Turner, and Ware. The Region contains one entire metropolitan statistical area (Valdosta), one partial metropolitan statistical area (Brantley County is part of the Brunswick MSA), and four micropolitan statistical areas (Douglas, Fitzgerald, Tifton, and Waycross). The Region contains some unique natural features, including the Okefenokee Swamp, which, at 438,000 acres, is the largest "blackwater" swamp in North America. There are also four state parks. Agriculture, forestry, manufacturing, and retail trade are all essential pillars of the Region's economy. The Region is home to 18 colleges and university campuses, including a major state university in Valdosta. In the western part of the Region, much of the population and economic activity is broadly concentrated around the Interstate 75 corridor.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

Minimum Standards are essential activities local governments must undertake for consistency with the Regional Plan. The intent is to ensure a consistent and predictable basic level of local requirements across the Region.

Minimum Standards encompass specific ordinances, programs, or requirements that may be implemented by local governments to realize the Regional Vision and address the Regional Needs and Opportunities.

Minimum Standards to be achieved by All Governments in the Region.

1. All elected City and County Officials must obtain minimum certification by Regional Commission through UGA Carl Vinson Institute or an equivalent Certification Program.
2. All County and City Clerks obtain certification through UGA Carl Vinson Institute or equivalent Certification Program.
3. All Planning Commission Board members must attend planning commission training within one year of appointment.
4. Update and adopt the Hazard Mitigation Plan as required by State guidelines.
5. Develop, update, maintain and implement zoning standards or land development regulations.
6. Develop, update, maintain and implement at a minimum the International Building Code including applicable administrative procedures, and put a program in place that a certified Building Inspector does all inspections.
7. Participate in comprehensive planning efforts including the development of Community Work Programs.
8. Annually update the local Community Work Program in coordination with SGRC to assess progress in implementing the local comprehensive plans.

9. Active participation in Best Practices Workshops and other training sessions offered by the SGRC, and develop skills to participate in the census.
10. Participate and submit in annual surveys administered by DCA.
11. Maintain QLG by submitting all required reports, certifications, and other updates as needed by DCA.

Local Government Performance Standards Update

The following list of governments have not achieved the regional commission's established regional plan minimum performance standards.

Local Government	Minimum Performance Standard(s) Not Met	Specific Action Steps taken to Assist Government (Optional: Identify resources that may aid LG achievement)
Bacon County	#6 A certified building inspector is not currently completing inspections.	During the regular Planning Assistance meeting, the RC suggested the County could work with the City of Alma for building inspections. It appears this was the regular practice in previous years.
Broxton	#10, 11 RLGF	The City has been encouraged by the RC to submit the delinquent RLGF.
Cecil	#10, 11 RLGF	The City has been encouraged by the RC to submit the delinquent RLGF reports.
Du Pont	#5	The RC has offered technical assistance to the City to create land development regulations.
Enigma	#10,11 GOMI	The RC has met with and spoken over the phone with the City on multiple occasions to encourage the submittal of this report.
Nahunta	#10, 11 RLGF	The City has been encouraged by the RC to submit the delinquent RLGF.
Quitman	#10, 11 RLGF	The City has been encouraged by the RC to submit the delinquent RLGF.

Regional Work Program 2018 – 2022

Priority Need/Opportunity	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs.)	Status
ED-1: Broadband accessibility throughout the Region is not consistent.	Increase the number of households in the region with broadband access	Develop a comprehensive GIS Inventory of infrastructure in the region, including but not limited to broadband, water, sewer, and natural gas	▪ Local governments ▪ Utility companies ▪ Broadband providers ▪ GTA	Yr. 1-5 $30,000		*In Progress*
		Develop local model ordinances or policies to encourage and facilitate the installation of broadband infrastructure	▪ Local governments	Yr. 1-3 $30,000		*Completed by others; The State drafted a model ordinance which the RC promotes*
ED-4: The younger population is leaving the Region to find higher paying job opportunities in metropolitan areas which results in "brain drain" for the area.	Increase the number of higher paying jobs in the Region	Update the regional comprehensive economic development strategy	▪ DCA ▪ Local Governments ▪ EDA	Yr. 3 $50,000		*On track to begin in Yr. 3*

Priority Need/Opportunity	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs.)	Status
N/C-1: The region's lakes and rivers have a lack of safe, clean public access points such as boat ramps, landings, and public beaches.	Improve water quality of streams and rivers	Create a GIS inventory of boat ramps, landings, public beaches, and other public water access points.	• Local governments • DNR • Nonprofit organizations	Yr. 1-5 $20,000		*Complete*
N/C-2: The Region has a severe lack of funding for preserving historic and cultural resources, which further restricts the marketing of these resources as another part of the Region's high quality of life.	Increase the number of local historic and cultural resource projects	Develop model ordinances that encourage private investment in historic properties	• Local governments	Yr. 1-5 $30,000		*In Progress*
		Develop an electronic Historic Resources Guide for the Region	• Local governments • DNR • GSA/NRHP	Yr. 1-5 $30,000		*In Progress*
N/C-7: A regional eco-tourism marketing program for natural resources (such as the Okefenokee Swamp, Grand Bay, various water bodies, and state parks) could help to increase the utilization and funding of these resources.	Increase the utilization and funding of eco-tourism resources in the Region	Develop an electronic Eco-tourism Guide for the Region	• Local governments • DNR • Nonprofit organizations	Yr. 1-5 $30,000		*Guide is complete; maintenance of the guide will continue*
		Develop a region-wide attractions map (bicycle route map). Each year complete a different segment of the Region.	• VLMPO • GDOT	Yr. 1-5 $20,000		*In Progress, Data has been acquired, on track to begin in Yr. 4*

Priority Need/Opportunity	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs.)	Status
N/C-8: Any possibility that provides the region with expanded public outdoor recreation—such as greenway trails, canoe trails, and other amenities—should be explored.	Increase the number of recreational opportunities in the Region	Create and manage a list of funding and opportunities for expanded public outdoor recreation.	▪ Local governments	Yr. 1-5 $10,000		*In Progress*
CFS-1: Many communities in the Region have aging infrastructure (water, sewer, roads, bridges), but lack funding to address those problems.	Increase the number of grant-funded infrastructure projects in the Region	Create a regional list of priority infrastructure projects to target for funding identification.	▪ Local governments	Yr. 1-5 $2,000/yr.	Yr. 6-10 $2,000/yr.	*In Progress*
H-1: More housing in downtown areas is needed.	Increase the number of housing units in downtown areas	Develop a model ordinance for downtown housing	▪ Local governments ▪ DCA	Yr. 2-3 $20,000		*In Progress; will be modified to a Fact Sheet as opposed to an ordinance*
		Develop a priority list of downtowns to be targeted for housing compatibility studies	▪ DCA ▪ Local Governments	Yr. 1-5 $35,000		*Complete*
H-2: Loss of historic landmark homes due to lack of investment in renovating historic housing.	Increase the number of historic homes preserved and reduce the number of historic homes lost	Develop a priority list of historic landmarks to be targeted for funding identification	▪ Local governments	Yr. 1-5 $10,000		*Complete*

Priority Need/Opportunity	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs.)	Status
H-8: Develop programs, and maximize use of existing programs, to assist homeowners in the maintenance and upkeep of homes and properties to avoid/minimize blight.	Reduce the number of blighted properties in the Region	Develop a model ordinance to assist homeowners in the maintenance and upkeep of homes and properties to avoid/ minimize blight	▪ DCA ▪ Local Governments	Yr. 4 $2,500		*On track to begin in Yr. 4; will be modified to development of guidance for Code Enforcement staff*
		Develop a model demolition template to remove condemned houses in order to improve local housing stock	▪ DCA ▪ Local Governments	Yr. 3 $20,000		*On track to begin in Yr. 3*
LUT-1: The Region is experiencing increasing development pressures on environmentally sensitive lands and farmland; new development needs to be steered more into the urban areas.	Reduce the acreage of environmentally sensitive land and farmland that is developed each year	Develop a GIS application for Land Use, which will provide information such as conservation, affordable housing, lots suitable for development, etc.	▪ DCA ▪ Local Governments	Yr. 1-3 $35,000		*In Progress, looking to identify funding opportunities*

Priority Need/Opportunity	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs.)	Status
LUT-9: Develop a regional public transportation plan including incentives for private investment to increase public transportation.	Increase private investment in public transportation	Develop a regional public transportation plan including incentives for private investment to increase public transportation.	▪ GDOT ▪ Local Governments	Yr. 2-3 $30,000		*Plan is complete, Implementation has not yet begun*
LUT-10: Location and proximity of major ports (Savannah, Brunswick, and Jacksonville), interstates (I-75 and I-10), and federal highways (US-82, US-84, and US-1) are major opportunities to integrate land use planning, transportation, and economic growth.	Produce studies and plans that integrate land use, transportation, and economic growth	Perform a study to determine feasibility and strategies of enhancing railroad and airport facilities through complementary surrounding land uses	▪ DCA ▪ Local Governments ▪ GDOT ▪ EDA	Yr. 3-4 $40,000		*In Planning Phase*
IC-1: Insufficient coordination and information sharing between local governments	Initiate events that lead to information sharing and coordination between local governments and other relevant stakeholders	Hold quarterly meetings of City and County Managers and Clerks	▪ Local Governments	Yr. 1-5 $20,000	Yr. 6-10 $20,000	*Ongoing*
		Develop a Post-Disaster Response Plan for Business Communities	▪ Local Governments ▪ GEMA ▪ FEMA ▪ Businesses	Yr. 1-2 $50,000		*Complete*

Priority Need/Opportunity	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs.)	Status
IC-6: Provide regional intergovernmental leadership training to provide a consistent knowledge base and forge connections.	Initiate intergovernmental training events for local leaders	Provide at least 1 training workshop each year for local leaders on planning, zoning, and intergovernmental coordination. Target attendance: 10 local leaders.	▪ Local Governments ▪ Carl Vinson Institute ▪ DCA	Yr. 1-5 $20,000	Yr. 6-10 $20,000	*Ongoing*
IC-7: Local governments can take advantage of the resources available through the Regional Commission for joint regional projects.	Provide resources to local governments for joint regional projects	Conduct plan implementation assistance meetings with each local government in the region no less than once every thirty months	▪ Local Governments	Yr. 1-5 $20,000	Yr. 6-10 $20,000	*Ongoing*
EDU-10: Increase accessibility of schools.	Reduce the number of crashes that occur in school zones	Conduct a study of transportation safety in and around school zones	▪ GDOT ▪ Local schools ▪ Local governments	Yr. 1-5 $15,000		*In Progress*
	Increase the number of students who walk or bike to school	Provide one workshop a quarter to local School Boards and other community leaders on topics such as Best Management Practices, School Siting, Planning & Zoning, Land Use, and Transportation	▪ DCA ▪ Local Governments ▪ Local BOEs ▪ GDOT	Yr. 1-5 $10,000		*In planning phase*

Priority Need/Opportunity	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs.)	Status
EDU-11: More coordination with businesses and industries to establish workforce training programs.	Increase the number of businesses or industries involved in regional workforce development programs	Hold bi-monthly meetings of the Southern Georgia Workforce Development Board to promote increased coordination of businesses and industries for workforce training programs	▪ Workforce Development Board ▪ Private sector	Yr. 1-5 $10,000	Yr. 6-10 $10,000	*Ongoing*
SA-1: The senior population continues to grow rapidly, which produces a greater demand for services. The housing, transportation, recreation, and health needs of this population are not adequately addressed.	Increase the number of recreational opportunities available to seniors	Update and distribute regional Senior Walking Route Maps	▪ GDOT	Yr. 1 $6,000		*Complete*
	Increase the number of transportation options for seniors	Complete a study to determine the needs of seniors in the Region regarding transportation in coordination with land use (housing, recreation, access to health facilities etc.)	▪ DCA ▪ Local Governments ▪ GDOT	Yr. 2-3 $25,000		*Complete*
SA-10: Health transportation providers could provide greater access to services.	Increase utilization of health transportation providers	Develop a regional public transportation plan including incentives for private investment to increase public transportation.	▪ GDOT ▪ Local Governments	Yr. 2-3 $30,000		*Complete*

Priority Need/Opportunity	Strategy	Action	Partners	Short-Term (1-5 yrs.)	Long-Term (6-10 yrs.)	Status
LUT-1: The Region is experiencing increasing development pressures on environmentally sensitive lands and farmland; new development needs to be steered more into the urban areas.	Inform residents and visitors of the many agricultural products available to build appreciation and support for farming and its impact to the regional economy and rural way of life	**New for 2020 Update**: Develop an electronic Agri-tourism Guide for the Region	▪ Local governments ▪ GDA, GDEcD ▪ Nonprofit organizations	Yr. 3-5 $20,000		**New item for 2020 Update**

Elizabeth Backe

From:	Graham, Tyler <TGraham@dot.ga.gov>
Sent:	Monday, September 14, 2020 4:45 PM
To:	Elizabeth Backe
Cc:	Delgadillo Canizares, Marlene V.; McQueen, Thomas
Subject:	Re: Regional Plan Annual Implementation Program Report Submittal
Follow Up Flag:	Follow up
Flag Status:	Flagged

Good afternoon,

Thank you for submitting the **Regional Plan Annual Report and Update 2020** to the GDOT Office of Planning. The Office of Planning thanks you for coordinating the development of your plan with GDOT.

The Office of Planning has reviewed transportation-related elements of your plan and submits no comments at this time.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Tyler Graham
Planner Consultant, Southeast Georgia Branch

GDQT Georgia Department of Transportation

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Vote daily for Columbus Riverwalk, on the banks of the Chattahoochee River, as the People's Choice. Riverwalk was named a top twelve finalist in AASHTO's 2020 America's Transportation Awards. The People's Choice Award is decided by online popular vote. Help GDOT bring home national recognition and a $10,000 award that will be donated to charity. Vote online once a day per device (laptop, tablet or mobile) through Oct. 25. Ask your coworkers, family and friends to vote too. Visit www.dot.ga.gov for a direct voting link.