

2017 Bacon County Comprehensive Plan Update

For Bacon County and the City of Alma



ADOPTED July 18, 2017

Prepared for:
Bacon County
City of Alma



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

1. Introduction

The 2017 Bacon County Comprehensive Plan was prepared in accordance with the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Chapter 110-12-1, Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning.

As required by the Local Comprehensive Planning Standards, the 2017 Bacon County/City of Alma Comprehensive Plan consists of the following elements:

1. Community Goals
2. Needs and Opportunities
3. Community Work Program
4. Land Use Element
(as a community with zoning or land development regulations subject to the Zoning Procedures Law)

2. Community Involvement

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

- a) Stakeholders were identified. These included the local governments; local businesses and industries; law enforcement; the consolidated Alma-Bacon Fire Department; the Bacon County Emergency Management Agency; the Board of Education; the Bacon County Hospital; the Bacon County Development Authority; and the general public.
- b) Participation techniques were identified. Techniques used included a kick-off public information meeting, printed public information in local newspapers, and information on the Southern Georgia Regional Commission's website and local government websites. A steering committee was formed to oversee and participate in planned development, including representatives from the stakeholders mentioned above.
- c) A participation program was conducted. Identified stakeholders were invited and attended, yielding specific input in plan content. The steering committee held regular meetings to provide input and feedback.

The public hearing kicking off the comprehensive planning process was held on Jan. 17, 2016 at the Bacon County Courthouse. It was held for the purpose of making any potential stakeholders and residents aware that the comprehensive plan update and review was now underway; to explain the purpose of the update; and to encourage residents and other stakeholders to actively participate in the plan update.

3. Identification of Stakeholders

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

4. Identification of Participation Techniques

The following participation techniques were utilized during the update process:
Public Hearings

Workshops

Extensive e-mail correspondence with stakeholders

Special Webpage on SGRC website as well as the local government websites

Dissemination of information in the newspaper

Fliers

5. Participation Program

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

In addition to the two required public hearings, SGRC held a series of four workshops to discuss several elements of the plan. Copies of the sign-in sheets are provided in the appendix along with public hearing notices. The first and second workshops were used to develop the goals and review the community vision, issues, and opportunities. The method used to develop the issues and opportunities was as follows: Through open discussion, a consensus was reached as to what the new community goals should be and what changes and updates should be made to the existing vision, issues, and opportunities from the prior Comprehensive Plan, and notes taken by SGRC staff during the workshop were used to update these sections of the plan document. The Community Policies and Report of Accomplishments were developed in the third workshop, along with the draft of the updated Community Work Program. The Community Work Program was developed by the participants to include specific action items and projects that would be feasible for the individual communities to implement, should funding be available. The fourth workshop was utilized to update the Land Use Element and Maps.

6. Consideration of Regional Water Plan and Environmental Planning Criteria

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

Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan

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



Source: CDM Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan

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

Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan Goals:

1. Manage and develop water resources to sustainably and reliably meet domestic, commercial, and industrial water needs, including all agricultural sectors (including agro-forestry).
2. Manage ground and surface water to encourage sustainable economic and population growth in the region.
3. Manage the Region's and State's water resources in a manner that preserves and protects private property rights.
4. Ensure an adequate water supply of suitable quality to meet current and future human needs, while protecting environmental resources.
5. Identify opportunities to optimize existing and future supplies, and to optimize water and wastewater infrastructure.
6. Promote efficient use and management of surface and groundwater resources to allow for sufficient supplies for current and future generations.
7. Protect and manage surface and groundwater recharge areas to ensure sufficient long-term water supplies for the region.
8. Protect, maintain, and, where appropriate and practicable, identify opportunities to enhance water quality and river base flows.

9. Protect and maintain regional water-dependent recreational opportunities.
10. Identify opportunities to manage stormwater so as to improve water quality and quantity.
11. Identify and implement cost-effective water management strategies.
12. Seek to provide economically affordable power and water resource services to all citizens in the region.
13. Identify and implement actions to better measure and share water use data and information.

In addition, the Regional Water Plan has adopted several Short-Term Water Quantity and Water Quality Management Practices, which the local comprehensive plan should include in order to manage water resources in a sustainable manner through the planning period and beyond. The most significant issues in the Suwannee-Satilla Region are surface water availability gaps driven by agricultural usage. As such, the majority of water supply management practices are intended to address agricultural surface water use.

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

1. Utilize surface water and groundwater sources within the available resource capacities
2. Conserve water
3. Collect data and research to confirm the frequency, duration, severity, and drivers of surface water gaps
4. Evaluate and ensure that current and future surface water permit conditions do not contribute to 7Q10 low flow concerns (the period of lowest stream flow during a seven-day interval that is expected to occur once every 10 years)
5. Encourage sustainable groundwater use as a preferred supply in regions with surface water 7Q10 low flow concerns and adequate groundwater supply
6. Identify incentives and a process to sustainably replace a portion of existing agricultural surface water use with groundwater use to address 7Q10 low flow concerns
8. Evaluate the potential to use existing storage to address 7Q10 low flow concerns
9. Education to reduce surficial aquifer groundwater use impacts to 7Q10 low flow concerns

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

1. Point Sources:

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

2. Non-Point Sources:

- Data collection to confirm source of pollutants and causes; encourage stormwater ordinances, septic system maintenance, and coordinated planning
- Ensure funding and support for local and state Best Management Practices programs, including urban/suburban, rural, forestry, and agricultural Best Management Practices

3. Non-point Source Existing Impairments:

- Total maximum daily load listed streams: Improve data on source of pollutant and length of impairment; identify opportunities to leverage funds, and implement non-point source Best Management Practices

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

- Improve infiltration and management of wetlands

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

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

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

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

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

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

II. Plan Elements

1. Community Vision and Goals

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

Vision

Alma/Bacon County has been and will continue to be a good place to raise a family, maintain and preserve its laid-back rural lifestyle, pursue consolidation of City and County government services in order to improve quality and efficiency, increase the tax base, keep property taxes low, become nationally known for blueberry production and marketing, provide quality educational and recreational opportunities, promote a proactive growth plan, and work with local law enforcement and neighborhood associations to create safe, family-friendly neighborhoods.

Goals

1. Economic Development

We will undertake proactive growth and marketing efforts, with a focus on our greatest strengths such as blueberry production, in order to increase business development and jobs in the community.

2. Cultural Resources

We will protect Alma/Bacon County's unique cultural character and sense of place, including historic sites and unique community events.

3. Natural Resources

We will preserve the unique natural resources of Alma and Bacon County, including soils, rivers, and lakes.

4. Community Facilities and Services

We will efficiently provide high quality infrastructure; provide and improve upon community services with a particular focus on youth development; and continue to have a choice primary healthcare system.

5. Housing

We will provide a range of housing options to all residents, including active living for senior citizens and affordable housing for low/moderate-income residents; work to eliminate blight; and promote infill development.

6. Land Use

We will guide or direct patterns of land development through the planning process.

7. Transportation

We will provide a safe, efficient transportation system with a range of options to meet the needs of all residents, and work to improve connectivity to the state transportation system.

8. Intergovernmental Coordination

We will maintain and continue to improve upon existing intergovernmental cooperative efforts; and continue to pursue collaboration with other communities throughout the region for a full range of governmental services.

2. Issues and Opportunities

The Issues and Opportunities listed in this section were developed through discussions with stakeholders and residents; from the experiences of stakeholders and residents; through analysis of statistical data and information; and through review and revision as applicable of the issues and opportunities identified in the 2007 Bacon County Comprehensive Plan. Each of the following issues is addressed by corresponding policies in the “Community Policies” section.

1. Economic Development

Issues

- 1.1. Bacon County, the City of Alma, the Development Authority, and other stakeholders need to incorporate a proactive Growth and Marketing Plan.
- 1.2. An increase in average wages in the community is still needed.
- 1.3. Continued workforce development is still needed in order to match the local workforce to the available jobs.
- 1.4. Improvements are needed for the educational system, including addressing high dropout rates.
- 1.5. Education on “soft skills” is needed.
- 1.6. Need to increase the tax base of the County and City

Opportunities

1. The County and City have an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/ or infill development.
2. Build on established reputation for being the Blueberry Capital of Georgia and push to become nationally known for blueberry production and marketing.
3. Capitalize on amenities that can make Alma/Bacon County attractive as a retirement destination.
4. The Inn at Blueberry Plantation offers a unique sense of place, with 27 rooms, a 75-person capacity conference center, and a 75-person seating capacity restaurant.
5. Bacon County and Alma offer a good quality of life, with a low crime rate, excellent climate, and close proximity to all amenities.
6. Increased opportunities for youth are offered by the graduation coach for the elementary and middle schools and by after-school tutoring.
7. Create a Youth Entrepreneurship program to train and encourage area youth to start new businesses as a career option.
8. Educate the local industrial community about opportunities for reimbursement for employee training costs.
9. The auditorium at the Welcome Center could be a venue for after school programs and activities.
10. Raise awareness of the potential of on-the-job training for employers coming into the community; emphasize that our workforce is ready to be trained.
11. Pursue retail development.
12. The airport has expanded and continues to expand, with a 5,000-foot runway; new property for additional hangars purchased; and Business Class status, which should be maintained.

2. Cultural Resources

Issues

- 2.1. Need to conduct a historical resource survey to identify historical assets located in the City of Alma and Bacon County
- 2.2. Historic buildings, such as the Welcome Center, Old Alma Hotel, etc., need to be renovated.

Opportunities

1. The Historical Society is a resource for preserving historic documents, photos, etc.

3. Natural Resources

Issues

- 3.1. There is a need for a comprehensive natural resources inventory.

- 3.2. There is a need for more greenspace and parkland in our community.
- 3.3. There is a need for a community greenspace plan.
- 3.4. River corridors, wetlands, and flood plains need to be protected against intrusion.
- 3.5. Littering and illegal dumping are detrimental to our community's natural resources.

Opportunities

1. Our community will explore developing a greenspace plan.
2. Future development of a passive-use tourism and recreation lake project.

4. Community Facilities and Services

Issues

- 4.1. The County and City need to analyze the impact of proposed development projects on public facilities, including but not limited to parks and recreation, schools, roads, water, and sewer.
- 4.2. Coastal Pines Technical College has been expanded with upgraded facilities, but still needs marketing and recruiting to attract more students.

Opportunities

1. The Hospital has continually improved, and is keeping its technology and marketing current in order to keep up with changing times and the challenges rural hospitals face.
2. Police, educational, and fire service will meet current needs and are capable of expanding to meet future development and industrial needs.
3. The airport has expanded and continues to expand, with a 5,000-foot runway; new property for additional hangars purchased; and Business Class status, which should be maintained.
4. The capacity and capability of water and sewer for future growth is continually improving.
5. Assemble a GRAD certified site with the possibility of a spec building; identify an inventory of smaller sites that could be available for new and expanded business.

5. Housing

Issues

- 5.1. We need a variety of housing options to be available.
- 5.2. The City of Alma has too many obsolete public housing units.
- 5.3. There is a shortage of good quality housing for rent or sale.

Opportunities

1. There could be a market for more multifamily housing units in our community.
2. We have vacant and developable land available for multifamily and single family usage.
3. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.
4. County and City will/should promote middle- to upper-income housing.

6. Land Use

Issues

- 6.1. Downtown Alma still has a large percentage of vacancies and needs to attract more private investment.

Opportunities

1. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.
2. Our downtown is attractive and thriving, and offers the opportunity to develop more growth in available properties.
3. Use the 4-lanings of US-1 and GA-32 to guide commercial and residential growth (mainly commercial) and to develop a sense of place, allowing visitors to know when they have arrived.
4. Availability of land for development at a reasonable price.

7. Transportation

Issues

- 7.1. The County needs additional resources, such as a passage of the TSPLOST, to improve roads and bridges and to pave dirt roads.
- 7.2. The County and City need to resurface and maintain roads and streets to a proper standard.
- 7.3. The City of Alma needs additional resources for maintaining and repairing existing sidewalks and for providing new sidewalks.

Opportunities

1. Opportunities will be provided by the 4-lanings of (in order of priority): GA-32 west to Douglas; GA-32 east to Brunswick; and US-23 north to Hazlehurst.
2. The airport has expanded and continues to expand, with a 5,000-foot runway; new property for additional hangars purchased; and Business Class status, which should be maintained.
- 3.

8. Intergovernmental Coordination

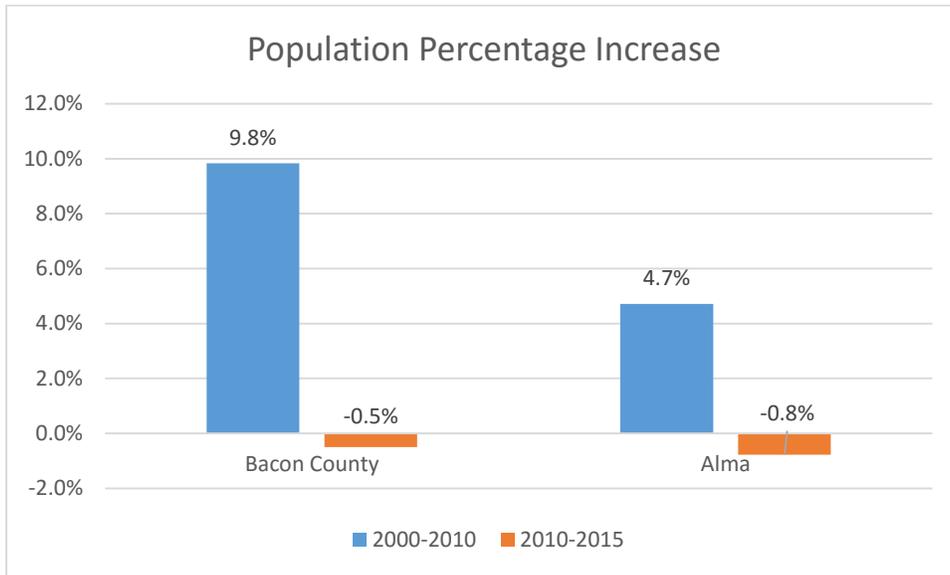
Issues

(None identified.)

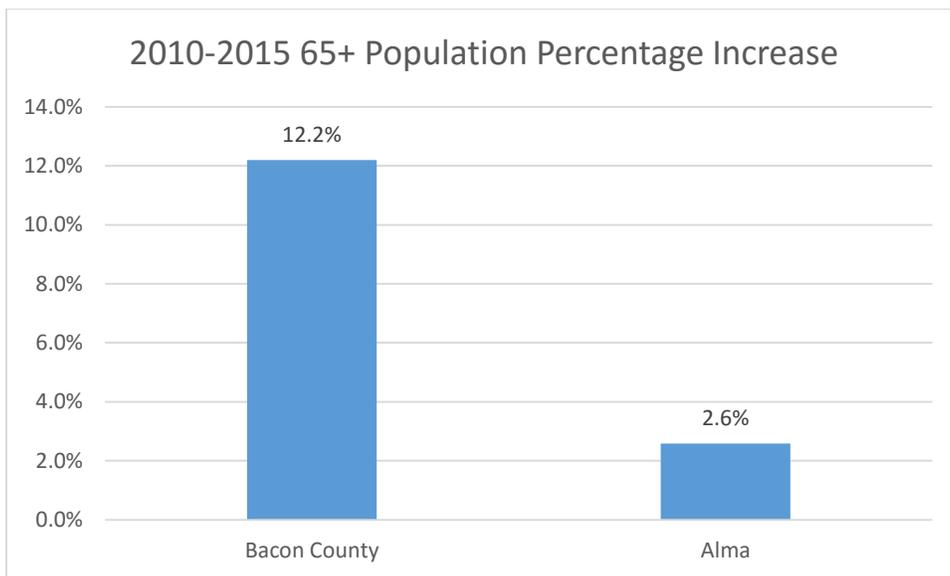
Opportunities

1. We monitor demographic data to make plans for the future.
2. A Capital Improvements Program could provide guidance for current and future growth.
3. Consolidation of City and County governmental services could improve efficiency and effectiveness.

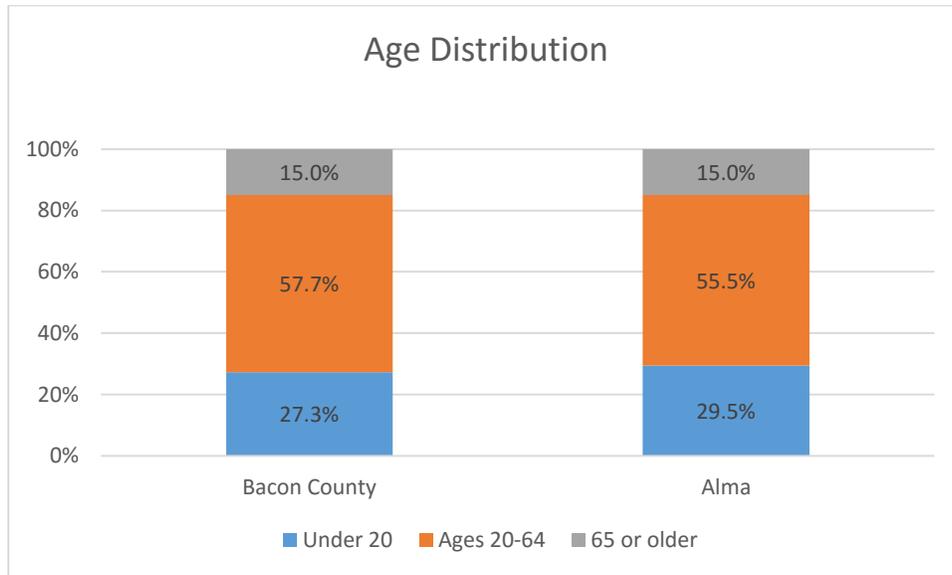
3. Analysis of Data and Information



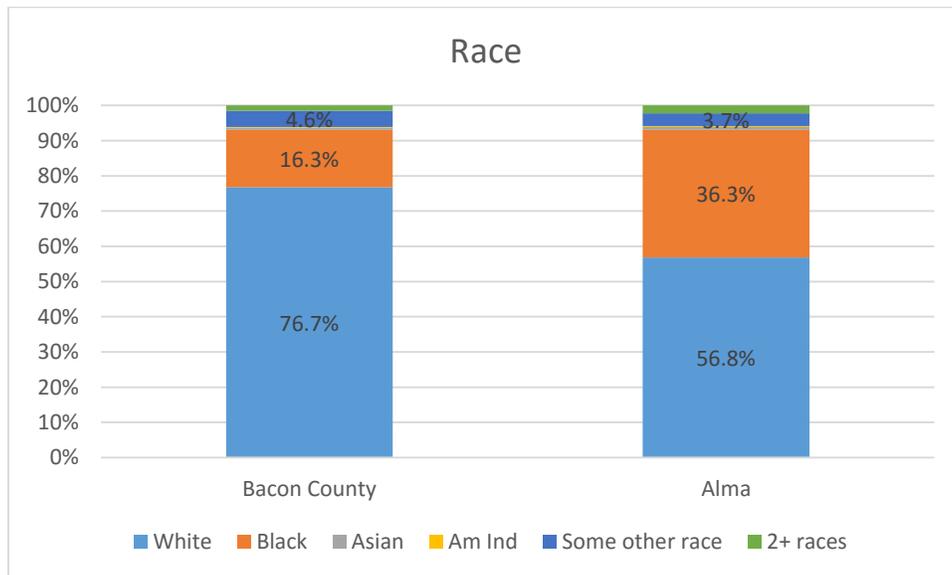
The 2015 population of Bacon County is 11,040, a decrease of 0.5% since 2010. The City of Alma’s 2015 population is 3,439, a 0.8% decrease since 2010. Both jurisdictions gained population from 2000 to 2010 (9.8% for Bacon County and 4.7% for the City of Alma).



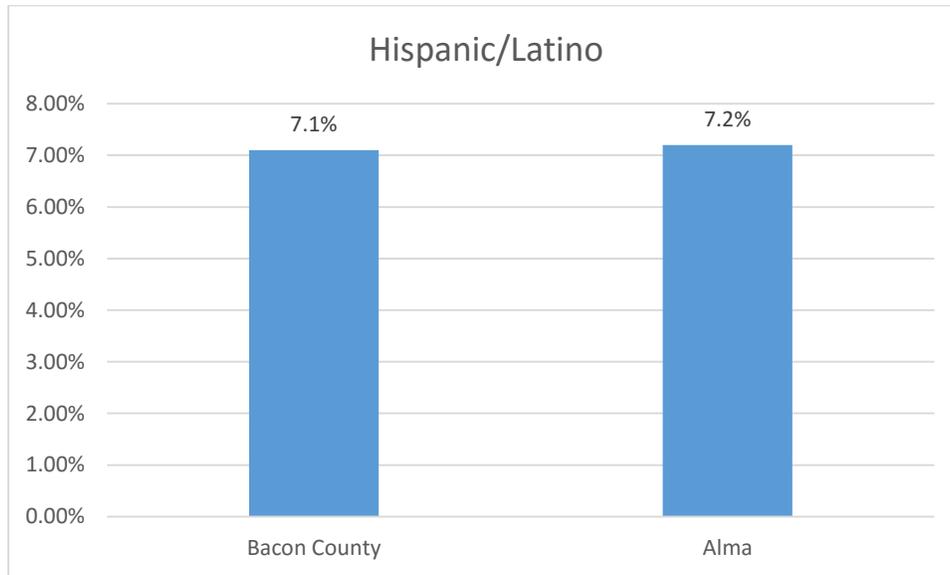
However, the percentage of the population aged 65 and older has increased, by 2.6% in the City of Alma and 12.2% in Bacon County.



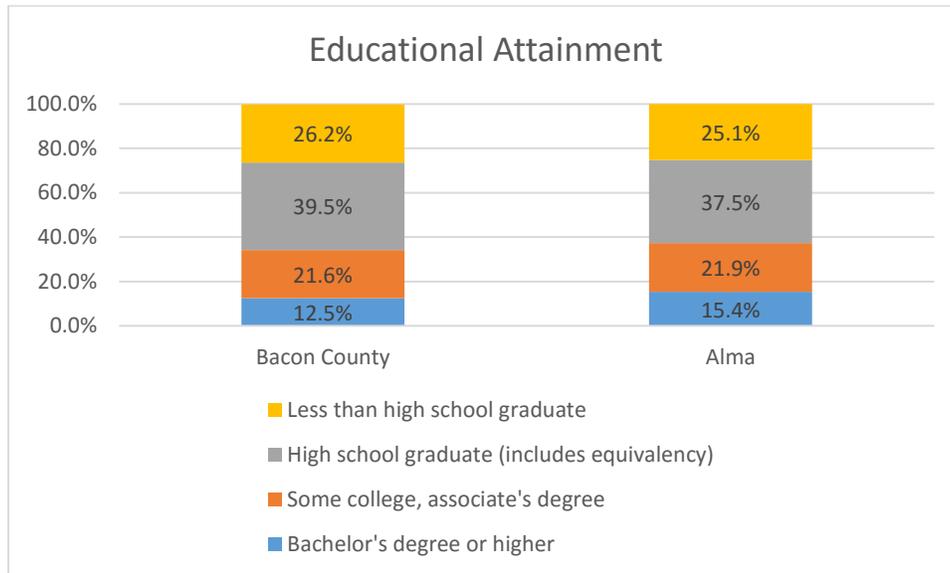
According to 2015 estimates, the age distribution in Bacon County is 15.0% over 65, 57.7% ages 20-64, and 27.3% under 20. In the City of Alma, the age distribution is 15.0% over 65, 55.5% ages 20-64, and 29.5% under 20. Bacon County’s population is 50.5% female and 49.5% male, and the City of Alma’s population is 51.8% female and 48.2% male.



The population of Bacon County is 76.7% White/Caucasian, 16.3% Black/African American, 4.6% some other race, 1.5% two or more races, 0.6% Asian, and 0.2% Native American. The City of Alma’s population is 56.8% White/Caucasian, 36.3% Black/African American, 3.7% some other race, 2.2% two or more races, 0.8% Asian, and 0.2% Native American.



Bacon County’s population is 7.1% Hispanic/Latino of any race, and the City of Alma’s population is 7.2% Hispanic/Latino of any race.



Among persons aged 25 or older, in Bacon County, 26.2% have no high school diploma, 39.5% are high school graduates (includes equivalency) with no further education, 21.6% have an associate’s degree or some college, and 12.5% have a bachelor’s or higher degree. Among persons aged 25 or older in the City of Alma, 25.1% have no high school diploma, 37.5% are high school graduates (includes equivalency) with no further education, 21.9% have an associate’s degree or some college, and 15.4% have a bachelor’s or higher degree.

The median household income in Bacon County is \$37,698 and the median household income in the City of Alma is \$33,019. An estimated 20.4% of Bacon County’s population and 32.7% of the City of Alma’s population lives below the federal poverty level. In Bacon County, 27.6% of persons under age 18 live below the poverty level and in the City of Alma 48.2% of persons under age 18 live below the poverty level. Bacon County’s estimated unemployment rate is 2.7% and the City of Alma’s unemployment rate is 3.2%. Among adults aged 16 and older, the rate of labor force participation is 54.3% in Bacon County and 48.4% in the City of Alma.

Data source: U.S. Census Bureau (www.census.gov)

4. Consideration of DCA Community Quality Objectives

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

1. Economic Prosperity

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

Best Practices recommended for Bacon County and the City of Alma:

- **Downtown Program** - Actively support and participate in programs that promote healthy business downtown such as Downtown Development Authorities, Better Hometown, and MainStreet.
- **Workforce Training** - Provide access to training opportunities for the local workforce. These can include formal educational institutions, private providers, and specialized programs from a department of labor. Such training resources are especially critical in this era of technology and rapid change.

2. Resource Management

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

Best Practices recommended for Bacon County and the City of Alma:

- **Green Space Plan** - Develop, adopt, and implement a green space plan that provides for connectivity of permanently protected green space throughout the community. Setting aside the greenspace can be done through direct purchase by the local government, purchase of the development rights to the land only, or by working with local land trusts to focus their efforts to acquire conservation easement in the areas identified in the local greenspace plan.

3. Efficient Land Use

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

Best Practices recommended for Bacon County and the City of Alma:

- **Adaptive Reuse** - Create incentives such as tax breaks, code changes or other regulatory tools to encourage property owners to rehabilitate underutilized or vacant structures so that they can be put to new uses.

4. Local Preparedness

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

Best Practices recommended for Bacon County and the City of Alma:

- **Capital Improvement Program** - Develop an infrastructure investment plan that clearly spells out what public services and infrastructure your community will provide where, and when, so that

your community grows in a rational and organized manner. This should accompany the comprehensive plan and indicate to developers and citizens where the community desires new development to be located. A capital improvement program brings predictability to the location and extent of future public facility expansions, so that residents and developers can plan their investments accordingly.

5. Sense of Place

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

Best Practices recommended for Bacon County and the City of Alma:

- **Historic Preservation Program** - Begin by identifying and mapping the visual, cultural, and historical assets your community most values. Then adopt a local historic preservation/protection ordinance to protect and enhance the places, districts, sites, buildings, structures, and works of art identified in the inventory of assets. This ordinance should be adopted under the auspices of Georgia Historic Preservation Act, which establishes a local Historic Preservation Commission to provide oversight on administration of the local ordinance and provide guidance on aesthetic changes to historic structures within locally designated districts.

6. Regional Cooperation

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

Best Practices recommended for Bacon County and the City of Alma:

- **Regional Economic Development Efforts** - Join and participate in joint development authorities or other regional economic development organizations to work together to market regional assets to potential industry, coordinate recruitment efforts, etc..

7. Housing Options

Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource-efficient housing in the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood; promoting programs to provide housing for residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds, including affordable mortgage finance options; instituting programs to address homelessness issues in the community; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community.

Best Practices recommended for Bacon County and the City of Alma:

- **Georgia Initiative for Community Housing** - Participate in the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing program. This program helps communities establish an effective local program and strategy for providing affordable housing in the community.
- **Land Bank** - Establish a local land bank empowered to acquire and assemble available properties in areas of the community in need of redevelopment, then offer these properties to private developers as sites for new development of affordable or infill housing. Land banking is a proven strategy for effective revitalization of declining areas of the community.

8. Transportation Options

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

Best Practices recommended for Bacon County and the City of Alma:

- **Complete Streets** - Adopt a "Complete Streets" philosophy in designing and building local streets that specifies that "users" of a street includes pedestrians, bicyclists and public transportation passengers of all ages and abilities, as well as trucks, buses and automobiles. This

approach should be applied to both new and retrofit projects, and involves use of sidewalks, street trees, etc.

9. Educational Opportunities

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

Best Practices recommended for Bacon County and the City of Alma:

- **Work Ready Program** - Participate in the Georgia Work Ready program, which helps citizens build their work skills, certify their preparedness for particular types of jobs, and match workers with employers looking for their particular skills.
- **Educational Resource Center** - Develop and maintain a listing and referral service to help citizens understand and access available educational and training opportunities in your community. These can include formal educational institutions, private providers, and specialized programs from a department of labor. Publicize its availability and make list available at government facilities, and on the web.
- **Childhood Development Programs** - Access the services of state and federal organizations and programs that helps children achieve literacy, complete school, and be prepared to work. These include Head Start, Communities in Schools and Americorps' Great Future Kids

10. Community Health

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

Best Practices recommended for Bacon County and the City of Alma:

- **Community Health Resource Center** - Develop and maintain a comprehensive listing and referral service to help citizens understand and access available local community health and social welfare assistance resources such as Department Family and Children Services, Peachcare, Family Connections, County Health Departments., Schools, Public Hospitals, etc.

5. Community Policies

The following policies, organized according to the community's Issues, were developed in conjunction with all stakeholders and are intended to provide a qualitative guidance to address the Issues and Opportunities identified in this Plan, and to provide a framework for the development of the Community Work Program. The Community Work Program then addresses the Issues and Opportunities through specific projects, for each of which the participants, anticipated cost, and time frame are identified.

1. Economic Development

Issue 1.1: Bacon County, the City of Alma, the Development Authority, and other stakeholders need to incorporate a proactive Growth and Marketing Plan.

- **Policy 1.1.1: Programs for retention, expansion, and creation of businesses that enhance our economic well-being should be supported**

Issue 1.2: An increase in average wages in the community is still needed.

- **Policy 1.2.1: Economic development and redevelopment should be encouraged.**

Issue 1.3: Continued workforce development is still needed in order to match the local workforce to the available jobs.

- **Policy 1.3.1: Efforts should be made to educate the local industrial community about opportunities for reimbursement for employee training costs.**
- **Policy 1.3.2: Efforts should be made to raise awareness of the potential of on-the-job training for employers coming into the community and to emphasize that the local workforce is ready to be trained.**

Issue 1.4: Improvements are needed for the educational system, including addressing high dropout rates.

- **Policy 1.4.1: A Youth Entrepreneurship program should be created to train and encourage area youth to start new businesses as a career option.**

Issue 1.5: Education on "soft skills" is needed.

- **Policy 1.5.1: Increased opportunities should be offered for youth through the graduation coach for the elementary and middle schools and through after-school tutoring.**

Issue 1.6: Need to increase the tax base of the County and City

- **Policy 1.6.1: New development should be accommodated, while also enhancing existing local assets.**
- **Policy 1.6.2: Retail development should be pursued.**
- **Policy 1.6.3: The activities of the Bacon County Development Authority, Downtown Development Authority, Tri-County Development Authority, and Chamber of Commerce should continue to be supported by the local governments.**
- **Policy 1.6.4: Alma/Bacon County should continue to be promoted as a retirement community.**
- **Policy 1.6.5: Economic development should continue to be fostered by applying for grants such as EIP, CDBG, OneGeorgia, etc., when available.**
- **Policy 1.6.6: Niche marketing, using local products grown or produced in Bacon County, should be promoted.**

2. Cultural Resources

Issue 2.1: Need to conduct a historical resource survey to identify historical assets located in the City of Alma and Bacon County

- **Policy 2.1.1: The historical resource inventory should be created and periodically updated and maintained.**

Issue 2.2: Historic buildings, such as the Welcome Center, Old Alma Hotel, etc., need to be renovated.

- **Policy 2.2.1: Preservation of publicly owned historic buildings should be encouraged, depending on funding availability.**

- **Policy 2.2.2: Private owners should be encouraged to take advantage of tax incentives and other funding opportunities to preserve and/or renovate historic buildings.**

3. Natural Resources

Issue 3.1: There is a need for a comprehensive natural resources inventory.

- **Policy 3.1.1: The natural resources inventory should be created and periodically updated and maintained.**

Issue 3.2: There is a need for more greenspace and parkland in our community.

- **Policy 3.2.1: The connection, maintenance, and enhancement of greenspace should be encouraged in all new development.**

Issue 3.3: There is a need for a community greenspace plan.

- **Policy 3.3.1: The development of a greenspace plan should be explored.**

Issue 3.4: River corridors, wetlands, and flood plains need to be protected against intrusion.

- **Policy 3.4.1: Plans and policies that promote conservation of river corridors, wetlands, and flood plains and/or prevent development of these sensitive areas should be encouraged.**

Issue 3.5: Littering and illegal dumping are detrimental to our community's natural resources.

- **Policy 3.5.1: Enhanced solid waste reduction and recycling initiatives should be supported.**

4. Community Facilities and Services

Issue 4.1: The County and City need to analyze the impact of proposed development projects on public facilities, including but not limited to parks and recreation, schools, roads, water, and sewer.

- **Policy 4.1.1: The use of existing facilities and services should be maximized.**
- **Policy 4.1.2: Efficient use should be made of existing infrastructure as well as future investments and expenditures for capital improvements and long-term operation and maintenance costs.**
- **Policy 4.1.3: Investments should be made in parks and open space to encourage private reinvestment in urban centers.**
- **Policy 4.1.4: Planned infrastructure should be used to support areas identified as suitable for development.**
- **Policy 4.1.5: Existing (i.e. already paid for) infrastructure investments should be protected by encouraging infill, redevelopment, and compact development.**
- **Policy 4.1.6: When a development is proposed, a study should be conducted to analyze the impact on public facilities.**

Issue 4.2: Coastal Pines Technical College has been expanded with upgraded facilities, but still needs marketing and recruiting to attract more students.

- **Policy 4.2.1: Marketing and recruiting to attract more students should be encouraged.**

5. Housing

Issue 5.1: We need a variety of housing options to be available.

- **Policy 5.1.1: Development should provide for a variety of residential types and densities.**

Issue 5.2: The City of Alma has too many obsolete public housing units.

- **Policy 5.2.1: There should be a continual emphasis on the enforcement of the Property Maintenance Code and the Existing Buildings Code in order to address substandard and dilapidated housing in our community.**

Issue 5.3: There is a shortage of good quality housing for rent or sale.

- **Policy 5.3.1: Our diverse population should be accommodated by encouraging a harmonious mixture of housing types and uses.**
- **Policy 5.3.2: Affordable housing opportunities should be created to ensure that all those who work in the community have a viable choice or option to live in the community.**

6. Land Use

Issue 6.1: Downtown Alma still has a large percentage of vacancies and needs to attract more private investment.

- **Policy 6.1.1: Recreation, greenspace, and conservation areas should become an integral facet of our community's land use.**
- **Policy 6.1.2: Patterns of land development should be guided and directed through the planning process.**
- **Policy 6.1.3: Meaningful and predictable standards should be established for the use and development of land, as well as meaningful guidelines for the content of more detailed land development and use regulations.**
- **Policy 6.1.4: The rural character of the community should be preserved, along with the opportunity for agricultural and forestry activities to remain a vital part of our community.**
- **Policy 6.1.5: Opportunities should be supported for residential and non-residential in-fill development that positively influences the character of existing neighborhoods.**
- **Policy 6.1.6: The use of landscaping, lighting, signage, underground utilities, and building design should be encouraged in order to add value to our community.**
- **Policy 6.1.7: Our regulations should contribute to, not detract from, our community's character and sense of security.**
- **Policy 6.1.8: Our gateways and corridors should create a "sense of place" for our community.**
- **Policy 6.1.9: Land planning and development concepts that may be new to our area, but have been successful in other places, should be explored.**

7. Transportation

Issue 7.1: The County needs additional resources, such as a passage of the TSPLOST, to improve roads and bridges and to pave dirt roads.

- **Policy 7.1.1: TSPLOST, SPLOST, and other funding resources should be pursued, and the public should be educated about their benefits.**

Issue 7.2: The County and City need to resurface and maintain roads and streets to a proper standard.

- **Policy 7.2.1: Roads, streets, and bridges should be maintained to a proper standard.**

Issue 7.3: The City of Alma needs additional resources for maintaining and repairing existing sidewalks and for providing new sidewalks.

- **Policy 7.3.1: Transportation corridors that support multiple modes of transportation and enhance the aesthetics of the community should be encouraged.**
- **Policy 7.3.2: Vehicular traffic should not harm the residential nature of our neighborhoods.**
- **Policy 7.3.3: Transportation facilities, corridors, and sites should be protected and enhanced to ensure that they can fulfill their identified functions.**
- **Policy 7.3.4: Walking, biking, car-pooling, and sustainable transportation choices should be encouraged.**

8. Intergovernmental Coordination

(No issues were identified.)

- **Policy 8.1: Services and information should be shared with other public entities within the community.**
- **Policy 8.2: Coordination mechanisms should be established with adjacent local governments to provide for the exchange of information.**
- **Policy 8.3: Joint processes should be pursued for collaborative planning and decision-making.**
- **Policy 8.4: Existing educational institutions should be supported, and development of new opportunities to educate our citizens should be encouraged.**
- **Policy 8.5: The Service Delivery Strategy should be updated as required, or as circumstances change.**
- **Policy 8.6: Jail capacity and service should be provided in the best manner possible.**

6. Community Work Program

Report Of Accomplishments: 2012-2016 Short-Term Work Program

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST / FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBILITY	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16
NATURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES								
Incorporate landscaping guidelines to create a unified and pleasing visual environment for the Bacon County Hospital.	\$10,000 (local)	Bacon and Alma	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
`Fee Simple` purchase of land in order to permanently protect natural resources, open space, or farmland	\$10,000 (grants)	Bacon, Alma, DCA	Discontinued; no longer needed	x	x	x	x	x
Preserve open/greenspace	\$1,000 (Local)	Bacon and Alma	Complete; continued as Policy 4.1.3	x	x	x	x	x
Analyze impact of additional traffic flow	\$60,000 (local, GDOT)	Bacon, Alma, GDOT	Complete	x	x	x	x	x
Identify and plan for improvement needs along the corridor.	\$25,000 (Local)	Bacon and Alma	Complete	x	x	x	x	x
Implement traffic calming measures at and around hospital, especially a traffic light.	\$50,000 (GDOT, local)	Bacon, Alma, GDOT	Complete	x	x	x	x	x
County and City will annually review their Service Delivery Strategy	\$1,500 (local)	Bacon and Alma	Complete; continued as Policy 8.5	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to improve downtown	\$500,000	Alma, GDOT	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to improve downtown theatre	\$50,000 Fox Institute	Alma	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT								
Develop programs in conjunction with other agencies to market the area in order to expand the business base for economic development purposes	\$10,000 (local, private)	Development Authority	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST / FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBILITY	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16
Develop programs in conjunction with other agencies to pursue academic excellence and eliminate illiteracy for economic development purposes.	\$150,000 (Fed, State, Local)	BOE, OTC, Family Connection	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue with efforts to provide adequate infrastructure for industrial and residential development	\$200,000 (US Ag, FHA, DCA, OTH, Local, Private)	Bacon, Alma, EDA	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to support the construction of a 300-acre fishing lake for economic development purposes.	\$8 Million (DNR, Local)	Bacon, EDA, Chamber, DNR	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Support BCDA, DDA, and Chamber of Commerce	\$100,000 (Local)	Bacon & Alma	Complete; continued as policy 1.6.3	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to upgrade industrial park infrastructure.	\$2 Million (DCA, Local, Ag, FHA, USDA, OTH)	Bacon, Alma, EDA	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to promote area as retirement community.	\$100,000 (DCA, Local, Private)	Chamber of Commerce	Complete; continued as policy 1.6.4	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to support Tri-County Industrial Development Authority (Appling, Bacon, Jeff Davis)	\$10,000 (local)	EDA, Chamber, Bacon, Alma	Complete; continued as policy 1.6.3	x	x	x	x	x
Create a Youth Entrepreneurship program to train and encourage area youth to start new businesses as a career option.	\$2,500 (DOE, DCA, Local, Private)	Chamber of Commerce	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Incorporate a Pro Active Growth Plan by the city and county.	\$10,000 (DCA, USDA, Local, Private)	Bacon and Alma	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to foster economic development by applying for grants such as EIP, CDBG, One Georgia, etc. when available.	\$200,000 (EIP, One GA, CDBG)	Bacon and Alma	Complete; continued as policy 1.6.5	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST / FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBILITY	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16
Find/identify training opportunities to match the need of the local workforce	\$25,000 (DCA, Local, Private)	Bacon and Alma	Complete	x	x	x	x	x
Promote niche marketing using local products grown or produced in Bacon County	\$1,500 (local)	Chamber, Bacon, Alma	Complete; continued as policy 1.6.6	x	x	x	x	x
Identify industries likely to thrive in the local economy.	\$5,000 (local, private)	Chamber & Development Authority	Complete	x	x	x	x	x
Create a teenage drug prevention program	\$8,000 a year	Bacon and Alma	Ongoing as part of project #1.6 in the new work program	x	x	x	x	x
Continue education efforts with the National Exchange Club	Cost TBD	Bacon and Alma	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
HOUSING								
Continue to eliminate blight areas throughout county and city through condemnation and rehabilitation projects.	\$50,000 (FHA, DCA, CDBG, Local)	Alma Code Enforcement	Complete; continued as Policy 5.2.1	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to work with public and private institutions to increase quality rental housing stock for incoming projects	\$10,000 (local, private)	Bacon, Alma, Building and Planning Dept.	Complete; continued as Policies 5.3.1 and 5.3.2	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to work with public and private institutions to increase the number of owner occupied housing units through the availability of affordable housing.	\$10,000 (FHA, CHIP, DCA, CDBG, local, Private)	Bacon, Alma, Building & Planning Dept.	Complete; continued as Policy 5.3.2	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to explore and support methods for renters of public housing and other properties to purchase their units through affordable housing programs.	\$500,000 (FHA, DCA, CDBG, USDA, local, private)	Alma Code Enforcement	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Hire a code enforcement officer for Bacon County	Cost TBD	Bacon County	Discontinued; no longer needed	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST / FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBILITY	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16
LAND USE								
Work with SGRC Planning Staff to establish countywide land use regulations, land development codes and a land use management organization	\$5,000 (Grants, DCA, local)	Zoning and Code Enforcement	Discontinued due to lack of interest	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to advertise, teach and encourage best management practices	\$25,000 (UGA, DCA, local)	County Ext. Agent	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to identify old Indian sites and other historic resources through surveys and other methods.	\$10,000 (DCA, DNR, Local)	Historical Society, Alma and Bacon	Complete	x	x	x	x	x
Establish historic resource protection ordinances within the county	\$10,000 (DCA, DNR, Local)	Historical Society, Alma and Bacon	Discontinued due to lack of interest	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to work on the establishment of a downtown historic district and the creation of a historic resources commission	\$15,000 (DCA, DNR, Local)	Bacon, Alma, Historic Society	Discontinued due to lack of interest	x	x	x	x	x
Establish environmental protection regulations by developing and implementing land development codes	\$10,000 (DCA, Local)	Bacon and Planning Commission	Discontinued due to lack of interest	x	x	x	x	x
Encourage infill development in abandoned housing surrounding the hospital which can be used to accommodate additional medical facilities.	\$75,000 (USDA, CDBG, DCA)	Bacon and Alma	Discontinued due to lack of interest	x	x	x	x	x
Adopt codes and enforce them.	\$3,500 (USDA, CDBG, DCA)	Bacon and Alma	Complete	x	x	x	x	x
Develop conservation ordinances and consistently enforce them.	\$5,000 (local, EPD, DCA)	Bacon and Alma	Discontinued due to lack of interest	x	x	x	x	x
Address the growing number of unregulated mobile homes moving into the County when adopting codes and/or zoning	\$1,500	Bacon County	Discontinued due to lack of interest	x	x	x	x	x
COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES								
Improve recreation programs and facilities associated with the countywide recreation department.	\$180,000 (DCA, SPLOST)	Bacon Rec. Dept.	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST / FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBILITY	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16
Support the four-laning of SR 32 from I-75 to I-95	Cost TBD	Bacon, Alma, GDOT	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Lobby GA DOT and legislators for L.A.R.P. funding.	\$10,000	Bacon and Alma	Complete	x	x	x	x	x
Create master fire plan and identify \$40,000 for funding.	Cost: Staff Time (DCA)	Alma, Bacon, & Fire Dept	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to pave roads within the City.	\$800,000 (GDOT & Grants)	Alma Public Works & GDOT	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to integrate parents, teachers, principals and the business community into school curriculum planning and school activities.	\$10,000 (GA DOE)	Board of Education	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to seek funds to upgrade systems, extend hours of operation, expand programming and upgrade/expand jobs at Bacon County Library.	\$5,000 (SPLOST)	County Library & School Board	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to collect and dispose of inert materials	\$100,000 (local)	Alma Public Works	Ongoing as project #4.8 in the new work program	x	x	x	x	x
Continue to contract with private agency to collect and dispose of solid waste.	\$500,000 yearly (local)	Bacon and Alma	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Upgrade fire department vehicles, breathing gear, turnout gear and other firefighting equipment as needed.	\$90,000 (DCA, OTH, FEMA, SPLOST, Local)	Alma, Bacon, Fire Dept.	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Support scholarships as well as educational classes in family living and other life skills	\$20,000 (DOE, Local)	BOE	Ongoing as part of project #1.4 in the new work program	x	x	x	x	x
Conduct a study to analyze the impact of proposed development on public facilities	\$10,000 (DCA, Local, Private)	Bacon and Alma	Complete; continued as Policy 4.1.6	x	x	x	x	x
Analyze financial impact of new growth in the county and evaluate various financing methods for creating new infrastructure.	\$10,000 (Local DCA)	Bacon, Alma, & Development Authority	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
New airport terminal	\$900,000 TIA SPLOST	County	Ongoing		x	x	x	x
Improve recreation through providing additional services	\$1,000,000	Alma and Bacon	Ongoing as part of project #4.3 in the new work program		x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST / FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBILITY	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16
Increase cemetery capacity	\$250,000	Alma	Ongoing		x	x	x	x
Increase the presence of Police Department through hiring employees and adding locations	\$100,000	Alma	Complete		x	x	x	x
Improve wastewater treatment capacity	\$6,000,000 SBA Grant, GEFA, and SPLOST	City of Alma	Ongoing		x	x	x	x
Red light at the hospital	Cost TBD	Alma and Bacon	Complete (yellow light was installed; traffic did not warrant red light)	x	x	x	x	x
Landscape US 1 North and South	\$40,000	City of Alma	Complete	x	x	x	x	x
Improve the nursing home	\$2.5 Million	Alma and Bacon	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Provide training for the fire department, build an additional fire station and buy firefighter equipment	Cost TBD (Fire Grants)	SGRC and Fire Dept.	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Identify potential gaps in fire services and lower the ISO rating from 8	Cost TBD	Alma, Bacon, Fire Dept.	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Purchase police cars when needed	Cost TBD (Police Grants)	SGRC and Police Dept.	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
Purchase radios and cameras for police cars	Cost TBD (Police Grants)	SGRC and Police Dept.	Complete	x	x	x	x	x
Purchase cameras for the jail	Cost TBD (Police Grants)	SGRC and Police Dept.	Complete	x	x	x	x	x
Pursue and secure funding (approx. \$2.5 million) for a new County Jail	Staff Time	Police Dept.	Discontinued; no longer needed	x	x	x	x	x
Make improvements to Swamp Road, Sanderling Road, Ohio River Road, and Liberty Church Road.	Cost TBD	Alma and Bacon	Ongoing as part of project #7.2 in the new work program	x	x	x	x	x
Pursue land (10 – 14 acres) to locate a youth community center within Bacon County or the City of Alma.	Cost TBD	Bacon, Alma, and Development Authority	Ongoing as project #4.4 in the new work program	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST / FUNDING SOURCE	RESPONSIBILITY	REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS	FY 12	FY 13	FY 14	FY 15	FY 16
Construct a youth community center within Bacon County or the City of Alma that will include a gym, outdoor pool, track, baseball field, etc.	\$200,000	Bacon, Alma, and Development Authority	Ongoing as project #4.4 in the new work program			x	x	x
Purchase new computers for the library	Cost TBD	Bacon and Alma	Ongoing as part of project #4.7 in the new work program	x	x	x	x	x
Renovate the auditorium at the old school	\$100,000	Bacon and Alma	Ongoing	x	x	x	x	x
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION								
(No projects were listed)								

Bacon County and City of Alma Joint 5-Year Community Work Program Update
(2018 - 2022)

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT									
1.1. Continue to improve Downtown Alma	\$500,000	City of Alma, GDOT	City of Alma, grants, GDOT	1	x	x	x	x	x
1.2. Develop programs in conjunction with other agencies to market the area in order to expand the business base for economic development purposes	\$10,000	Development Authority	Local, Private	1	x	x	x	x	x
1.3. Develop programs in conjunction with other agencies to pursue academic excellence and workforce development (including ESL programs) for economic development purposes.	\$150,000	Development Authority, Coastal Pines, Board of Education, Family Connection	Federal, State, Local	1	x	x	x	x	x
1.4. Develop programs and scholarships for "soft skills" training, family living, and other life skills, in order to prepare students for success in the workforce	\$150,000	Development Authority, Coastal Pines, BO Board of Education E, Family Connection	Federal, State, Local	1	x	x	x	x	x
1.5. Continue to upgrade industrial park infrastructure.	\$2 Million	Development Authority, Bacon County, City of Alma	Federal, State, Local, USDA, other grants/loans	1	x	x	x	x	x
1.6. Create a Youth Empowerment program (including drug prevention) and facility to train and encourage area youth to start new businesses as a career option.	\$500,000	Development Authority, Bacon County, City of Alma, nonprofits	Federal, State, Local, Private	1	x	x	x		
1.7. Incorporate a Proactive Growth Plan for the City and County.	\$10,000	Development Authority, Bacon County, City of Alma, nonprofits	Federal, State, Local, Private	1	x	x			
1.8. Continue education efforts with the National Exchange Club	Staff time	Board of Education, Bacon County, City of Alma	Federal, State, Local, Private	1	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
2. CULTURAL RESOURCES									
2.1. Continue to improve the Downtown Theatre	\$50,000	City of Alma	City of Alma, Fox Institute, other grants/loans	2	x	x			
3. NATURAL RESOURCES									
3.1. Incorporate landscaping guidelines to create a unified and pleasing visual environment for the Bacon County Hospital.	\$10,000	Bacon County Hospital	Local	3	x	x	x	x	x
3.2. Continue to advertise, teach and encourage best management practices	\$25,000	County Extension Agent	UGA, DCA, Local	3	x	x	x	x	x
4. COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES									
4.1. Continue with efforts to provide adequate infrastructure for industrial and residential development	\$1 million	Development Authority Bacon County, City of Alma,	Federal, State, Local, Private	4	x	x	x	x	x
4.2. Improve wastewater treatment capacity	\$6 million	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local, Grants	4	x	x	x		
4.3. Continue to support the construction of a 300-acre fishing lake for economic development purposes.	\$8 million	Development Authority, Bacon County, DNR	DNR, Local	4	x	x	x		
4.4. Acquire land (10 – 14 acres) and construct a youth community center within Bacon County or the City of Alma (including gym, outdoor pool, track, baseball field, etc.).	\$5 million	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local, Grants	4			x	x	x
4.5. Continue operating, improving, and expanding recreation programs, services, and facilities associated with the countywide recreation department.	\$1,180,000	Bacon County	DCA, SPLOST, Local	4	x	x	x	x	x

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
4.6. Continue to integrate parents, teachers, principals and the business community into school curriculum planning and school activities.	\$10,000	Board of Education	GA DOE, Local	4	x	x	x	x	x
4.7. Upgrade systems, extend hours of operation, expand programming, upgrade/expand jobs, and purchase computers at Bacon County Library.	\$50,000	Regional Library System, County Library, Board of Education	Local, Grants, SPLOST	4	x	x	x	x	x
4.8. Continue to regularly collect and dispose of yard waste.	\$100,000	City of Alma	Local	4	x	x	x	x	x
4.9. Continue to contract with a private company to regularly collect residential solid waste and to collect and/or operate drop-off center for "brown goods" and "white goods" (furniture, mattresses, appliances, etc.).	\$500,000 per year	City of Alma, Bacon County	Local	4	x	x	x	x	x
4.10. Create Master Fire Plan.	\$40,000	Bacon County Fire Department	Local, Grants	4	x				
4.11. Upgrade fire department vehicles, breathing gear, turnout gear, and other firefighting equipment as needed.	\$90,000	Bacon County Fire Department	Federal, State, Local, Grants	4	x	x	x	x	x
4.12. Provide training for the fire department, and build an additional fire station.	\$1 million	Bacon County Fire Department	Federal, State, Local, Grants	4		x	x	x	
4.13. Identify potential gaps in fire services and lower the ISO rating.	Staff time	Bacon County Fire Department	Federal, State, Local, Grants	4		x	x	x	
4.14. Purchase police cars when needed.	\$100,000	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local, Grants	4	x		x		x
4.15. Construct a new airport terminal.	\$900,000	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local, Grants	4, 7	x	x	x		
4.16. Expand the cemetery.	\$250,000	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local, Grants	4	x	x	x		

PROJECTS	ESTIMATED COST	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	FUNDING SOURCE	GOAL	FY 18	FY 19	FY 20	FY 21	FY 22
4.17. Improve the nursing home.	\$2.5 million	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local, Grants	4, 5	x	x	x		
4.18. Renovate the auditorium at the old school	\$100,000	City of Alma, Bacon County	Federal, State, Local, Grants	4	x	x	x		
5. HOUSING									
5.1. Continue to explore and support methods for renters of public housing and other properties to purchase their units through affordable housing programs.	\$500,000 (FHA, DCA, CDBG, USDA, local, private)	Alma Housing Authority	Federal, State, Local, Private	5	x	x	x	x	x
6. LAND USE									
(No projects identified)									
7. TRANSPORTATION									
7.1. Support the four-laning of SR 32 from I-75 to I-95	Staff time	GDOT, Bacon County, City of Alma	GDOT, Local	7	x	x	x	x	x
7.2. Continue to pave, resurface, and repair roads, bridges, and sidewalks within the City and County.	\$6,500,000	Bacon County, City of Alma, GDOT	Federal, State, Local, Grants	7	x	x	x	x	x
8. INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION									
8.1. Conduct an analysis of the financial impact of new growth in the community, and evaluate various financing methods for creating new infrastructure.	\$10,000	Development Authority, Bacon County, City of Alma	Federal, State, Local, Grants	8	x	x			

7. Land Use Element

Character Areas

In keeping with State Minimum Planning Standards, every part of Bacon County and the City of Alma was delineated into specific Character Areas. Character areas are intended to serve as guidance for future land use and land development. Each of the following character area narratives was developed based on stakeholder input, existing land uses, anticipated development, planned infrastructure improvements and expansions, and guidance found in the *State Planning Recommendations*. As with the Plan in general, these character area descriptions and goals should not be considered final. As the community gains a greater understanding of the role and value of character areas, their descriptions should be fine-tuned. Additionally, as the community continues to grow, specific character area depictions may need adjusting.

Each Character Area narrative has a unique **Description** stating either the existing or desired qualities for that area. (Please note the associated picture for each area represents the current state of the specific area and should not be construed to necessarily represent the desired state, although for some descriptions this may be the case.) The stated **Development Strategy** should serve as a guide for all development and redevelopment taking place in the Character Area. Adherence to these development strategies will ensure consistent and complimentary development, which promotes a greater sense of place and overall improved quality of life. The listing of **Permitted Zonings** provides guidance as to the type of land uses encouraged within each Character Area. While many of the differences between uses can be masked through site design and development standards, there are certain uses which are incompatible with surrounding uses and should not be permitted. As required by the State, the **Quality Community Objectives** demonstrate the unique ideals established for each Character Area. While there is certainly a value to regional planning, planning on the neighborhood (or character area) level allows for greater implementation of specific objectives, which ultimately promotes an improved quality of life. The **Implementation Measures** are the specific activities or programs which could take place within each of the Character Areas. While the suggested list of measures may or may not currently exist in Bacon County and the City of Alma, their implementation in appropriate areas would help achieve the established objectives and overall development strategy for each Character Area. In most cases, these measures should be considered joint efforts between the local government, development community, and citizens alike.

Agriculture/Forestry Character Area



This Character Area consists of rural agricultural land devoted to forestry, farming, and other agricultural activities, along with associated residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, and recreational land uses at an intensity level appropriate for an agricultural area. Blueberry farming is an essential component of the Bacon County economy, and it is a priority for the community to maintain, expand, and improve production and marketing, bringing it closer to the national stage.

Vision

Bacon County will capitalize on its local and state recognition as the Blueberry Capital of Georgia, becoming nationally known as a leading blueberry producer and marketer.

Permitted Zonings

- Agricultural (*Unincorporated Bacon County does not have land use regulations or zoning.*)

Development Strategy

Use large minimum lot size requirements to limit development density and protect farmland and rural character. Development should preserve scenic views and be encouraged near rural communities and other existing developed land. Steer development away from areas of natural, cultural, and environmentally sensitive resources. Enlist significant farmland as amenity that shapes identity and character of development.

Quality Community Objectives

Economic Prosperity

- The annual Blueberry Festival promotes tourism opportunities. Connect to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.

Resource Management

- Identify key natural resources and take steps to protect them.

Implementation Measures

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote methods of permanently protecting farmland, such as conservation easements. • Reduce and preempt conflict between agricultural and non-agricultural land uses.
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of trails and/or greenways

Bacon County Airport Character Area



Photos: Alma/Bacon County Chamber of Commerce; University of Georgia

The Bacon County Airport consists of a 5,000-foot radio controlled lighted runway, open 24 hours daily. The Airport provides aircraft maintenance and has 100 LL gas and Jet A fuel available. Approximately 16 aircraft are based at the airport and 10-12 flights of both transit and business occur on a daily basis.

The Airport is also adjacent to Blueberry Plantation, which provides high-quality amenities for visitors traveling by air to Bacon County and the City of Alma.

Permitted Zonings

- Public/Institutional

Development Strategy

Encourage the expansion of the airport to foster economic development and redevelopment, while providing guidelines to minimize adverse impacts on neighborhoods and the environment.

Quality Community Objectives

Local Preparedness

- Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve.

Economic Prosperity

- Encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community.

Implementation Measures

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capitalize on the proximity of the airport to Blueberry Plantation
Community Facilities and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a transportation system that provides a range of options to meet the needs of all residents and visitors.

Bacon County Hospital Character Area**Statement from Bacon County Hospital and Health System**

We are very proud of the excellent healthcare that has been delivered by the Bacon County Hospital and Health System day after day and year after year. We look forward to caring for the community and being a part of economic growth in the future.

The financially successful Health System is comprised of the Bacon County Hospital and Health System (25-bed Critical Access Hospital), Twin Oaks Convalescent Center (88 beds), ABC Child Development Center (average daily census, 153 children), ABC Early Head Start, Bacon County Community Care Center, Bacon County Rehabilitation Center, and South Georgia Physician's Group. The System has been Joint Commission accredited since 1995. The CEO has 12 years of experience in hospital administration and has been with the System since 1981.

In 2006, the citizens of Bacon County voted to pass a SPLOST referendum that included \$1 million for expanding and modernizing the current facility. On June 17, 2008, A Ground Breaking Ceremony began the long awaited dream of a three phase project beginning with a new Second Story Patient Care Area. Construction began in July of 2008 on our healthcare system, which would enhance both patient care, as well as comfort.

Phase one of the new story consisted of 25 beds with all private patient rooms; a 4-bed postpartum unit, 13 patient rooms, 4 critical care ICU rooms, and 4 step-down rooms. The second floor also includes a 4-bed nursery, an in-patient waiting area, and an ICU waiting area. This phase was completed in May of 2009.

Phase two began the renovations to accommodate and to update Diagnostic Imaging and to include renovations to the Laboratory Department and the 14-bed observation unit. In February of 2008, Diagnostic Imaging went to Digital Mammography. The hospital opened up a MRI unit with 64-slice Toshiba technology in July of 2009 and a Nuclear Medicine unit in October of 2009. Upon receiving a grant for \$985,000.00, we upgraded our CT to 160-slice Toshiba technology in February of 2011, making our radiology department rated among the most advanced in the state. The Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the completions of Phases one & two were held on May 19, 2009.

Phase three of the construction project included two new state-of-the-art surgical suites, an Ambulatory Surgery entrance and waiting room, two digital ENDO suites, and a 4-bed Post Anesthesia Care Unit. The Ribbon Cutting Ceremony for the completion of Phase III was held on March 12, 2010. Our CT is now 320 slice and our MRI is now 1.5 Tesla and is the widest bore on the market.

On January 17th of 2013, Bacon County Hospital broke ground for a building/expansion program for the nursing home. The project included 28 private rooms and baths for our residents. Each room is large, sunny, beautifully furnished and equipped with a nice private bathroom. The Rehabilitation Department was expanded for patients receiving short and long term rehabilitation services. The new expansion also included a special hospice room for end of life issues that accommodates the resident as well as their family, new nurse’s stations throughout the facility, and a beautiful chapel for worship and praise services.

Permitted Zonings

- Public/Institutional

Development Strategy

Locate medical facilities and doctor offices in a central location surrounding the hospital.

Quality Community Objectives

Transportation Options

- We have a demand-response rural public transit system in our community.

Economic Prosperity

- Encourage recruitment of medical facilities and jobs.
- Our community has jobs for skilled labor and unskilled labor. Our community has professional and managerial jobs.

Educational Opportunities

- Our community has higher education opportunities, and is close to communities that have further opportunities. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.

Implementation Measures

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find training opportunities to match the needs of the local workforce.
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage infill development in abandoned housing surrounding the hospital. Vacant buildings can be adaptively reused to accommodate additional medical facilities.
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze impact of additional traffic flow. • Identify and plan for improvement needs along major transportation corridors. • Implement traffic calming measures where necessary.
Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a unified and pleasing visual environment through landscaping, especially at community gateways.

Blueberry Plantation Character Area



Blueberry Plantation is a multifaceted character area that includes an 18-Hole Golf Course, a rapidly growing residential area, and the new Blueberry Plantation Inn. The golf course was designed by Larry Hinson and opened in 1993. The course was built on wetlands and has natural water hazards that come into play on forty percent of the holes. The greens are moderately elevated and very firm. Local and area tournaments are played here. The Inn at Blueberry Plantation features hotel rooms, a conference center, and a restaurant. This Character Area is also adjacent to the Bacon County Airport. Blueberry Plantation provides high-quality amenities for visitors traveling by air to Bacon County and the City of Alma.

Permitted Zonings (Unincorporated Bacon County does not have land use regulations or zoning)

- Residential
- Commercial
- Public/Institutional

Development Strategy

Construct well-organized pedestrian/bicycle and walking trails linking residential areas to the Inn, golf course, and airport. Plant trees throughout the community to enhance appearances and provide shade for pedestrians and bicyclists. Provide a generous amount of open space. Building design and landscaping should be sensitive to the natural features of the site, including topography and views.

Quality Community Objectives

Sense of Place

- The Blueberry Plantation area can serve as a focal point of Alma and Bacon County, providing a venue for people to gather for socializing and entertainment.
- Encourage development patterns to include more human-scale development, mixing uses within easy walking distance of one another and facilitating pedestrian activity.

Transportation Options

- Greater use of alternative transportation should be encouraged, including bike paths and walking trails.

Open Space Preservation

- Set aside land for use as public parks and preserves.

Implementation Measures

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide connectivity to residential neighborhoods ensuring that bicycling is a convenient, safe, and practical means of transportation.
Community Facilities and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze financial impact of new subdivision growth in county.

Central Business District Character Area



This character area consists of the traditional Downtown area of the City of Alma, including attractions such as the Bacon Theater.

Permitted Zonings

- Commercial
- Public/Institutional
- Residential

Development Strategy

Continue renovation and rehabilitation of historic buildings. Encourage a mix of local businesses that will appeal to visitors while also providing needed amenities to residents. Continue developing a pedestrian-friendly environment with landscaping, shade trees, and crosswalks. Consider mixed use development that may include some residential uses in the future.

Quality Community Objectives

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.

Implementation Measures

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify industries likely to thrive in the local economy. • Promote niche marketing using local products grown or produced in Bacon County.
Cultural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform a historic resource survey within the community.
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage infill development. • Encourage the development of parks, open spaces, and other opportunities for outdoor recreation.

Commercial/Industrial Character Area



These areas are intended to provide an environment suitable for light manufacturing, wholesale, and warehousing activities as well as highway-oriented commercial business activities.

Permitted Zonings

- Commercial
- Industrial

Development Strategy

Provide guidelines and infrastructure to enhance the connectivity and accessibility of these areas in order to ensure business success while minimizing adverse impacts on neighborhoods and the environment.

Quality Community Objectives

Economic Prosperity

- The City of Alma and Bacon County have worked to develop a Community Economic Development Readiness Assessment.

Implementation Measures

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify industries likely to thrive in the local economy. • Promote niche marketing using local products grown or produced in Bacon County.
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze impact of additional traffic flow. • Identify and plan for improvement needs along key transportation corridors.

Developing Traditional Neighborhood Character Area



This area consists of established residential areas within the City of Alma as well as some areas in unincorporated Bacon County. Land use is mostly single-family residential, with some multi-family, and may include limited commercial and public/institutional uses such as neighborhood-scale businesses, schools, churches, and parks. Homes are in good condition overall with moderate rates of homeownership and some homes in need of repair.

Permitted Zonings (*Unincorporated Bacon County does not have land use regulations or zoning.*)

- Residential
- Public/Institutional
- Commercial

Development Strategy

Encourage revitalization and infill development of vacant lots. Continue to develop the sidewalk network in order to improve conditions for pedestrians. Create neighborhood focal points by locating schools, community centers, or well-designed small-scale commercial activity centers at suitable locations within walking distance of residences.

Quality Community Objectives

Transportation Options

- Greater use of alternative transportation should be encouraged, including bike paths and walking trails.

Sense of Place

- Encourage development patterns to include more human-scale development, mixing uses within easy walking distance of one another and facilitating pedestrian activity.

Open Space Preservation

- Set aside land for use as public parks and preserves.

Implementation Measures

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the development of parks, open spaces, and other opportunities for outdoor recreation.
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a transportation system that provides a range of options to meet the needs of all residents and visitors.

Existing Traditional Neighborhood Character Area



This area consists of residential areas on the northwest side of the City of Alma with high rates of homeownership and well-maintained housing. Land use is mostly single-family residential, with some limited commercial and public/institutional uses such as neighborhood-scale businesses, schools, churches, and parks.

Permitted Zonings

- Residential
- Public/Institutional
- Commercial

Development Strategy

Continue to encourage homeownership and good maintenance of properties. Encourage development of parks, community centers, and limited commercial hubs as neighborhood focal points that offer competitive amenities to residents, making Alma/Bacon County a desirable place to live. Use tools such as traffic calming to provide a pedestrian-friendly environment. Continue to expand the sidewalk network and provide bicycle/pedestrian connections. Capitalize on natural features such as Lake Lure to continue creating an appealing community with many recreational opportunities.

Quality Community Objectives

Transportation Options

- Greater use of alternative transportation should be encouraged, including bike paths and walking trails.

Sense of Place

- Encourage development patterns to include more human-scale development, mixing uses within easy walking distance of one another and facilitating pedestrian activity.

Open Space Preservation

- Set aside land for use as public parks and preserves.

Implementation Measures

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the development of parks, open spaces, and other opportunities for outdoor recreation.
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a transportation system that provides a range of options to meet the needs of all residents and visitors.

Historic Bacon County Primary School Character Area



The historic Bacon County Primary School will serve as a multi-purpose facility. The current plan is to relocate the Bacon County Senior Center to the school and designate the building as a trail head and future community center.

Permitted Zonings

- Public/Institutional

Development Strategy

Activity centers connected with community greenspace/trails system. Infill development or vacant or under-utilized sites.

Quality Community Objectives

Efficient Land Use

- Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development

Sense of Place

- We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage and have taken steps to protect those areas.
- We have an active historical society.

Transportation Options

- We have a demand-response rural public transit system in our community.

Implementation Measures

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Cultural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Perform a historic resource survey within the community.
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage infill development • Use code enforcement as a tool for the reduction and elimination of blight.
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze impact of additional traffic flow • Identify and plan for improvement needs along the corridor.

Future Infill Development Character Area



Several sites around Alma offer potential for infill development. The Brasswell-Deen site offers acreage for a potential community center, neighborhood store, etc.

Permitted Zonings

- Public/Institutional
- Commercial
- Residential

Development Strategy

Focus development toward areas within the City of Alma that are vacant and/or underused. Encourage appropriate new infill development that will provide amenities for the surrounding neighborhood or for the community as a whole. Connect activity centers to community greenspaces and future trail system.

Quality Community Objectives

Efficient Land Use

- Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.
- Alma-Bacon County has population projections for the next 20 years that are used when making infrastructure decisions.

Economic Prosperity

- The Alma-Bacon County Chamber and Development Authority has considered the community's strengths, assets, and weaknesses and has created a business development strategy based on them.

Implementation Measures

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify industries likely to thrive in the local economy. • Promote niche marketing using locally grown or produced products.
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage infill development. • Use code enforcement as a tool for the reduction and elimination of blight.
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze impact of additional traffic flow. • Identify and plan for improvement needs along major corridors.
Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a unified and pleasing visual environment through landscaping, especially at community gateways.

Mixed Commercial Character Area



This is an area on the west side of the City of Alma centered along Georgia Highway 32. Although highway-oriented commercial land uses are predominant, there are also some residences, along with some light industrial, agricultural, and forestry uses. Most lots are large and there is generally adequate buffering between uses.

Permitted Zonings

- Commercial
- Industrial
- Residential
- Public/Institutional
- Agricultural

Development Strategy

Provide guidelines and infrastructure to enhance the connectivity and accessibility of these areas in order to ensure business success while minimizing adverse impacts on neighborhoods and the environment. Continue to ensure adequate buffering between uses. Endeavor to strike a balance between encouraging economic development and preserving agricultural land and open space.

Quality Community Objectives

Economic Prosperity

- The City of Alma and Bacon County have worked to develop a Community Economic Development Readiness Assessment.

Implementation Measures

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify industries likely to thrive in the local economy. • Promote niche marketing using local products grown or produced in Bacon County.
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze impact of additional traffic flow. • Identify and plan for improvement needs along key transportation corridors.

Open Space/Recreation Character Area



This area consists of undeveloped land reserved for conservation and/or recreation, as well as recreational facilities such as the Alma-Bacon County Recreational Complex and open space areas such as cemeteries.

Permitted Zonings (*Unincorporated Bacon County does not have land use regulations or zoning.*)

- Public/Institutional

Development Strategy

Provide connectivity to other passive and active recreation areas. Encourage the development of trails. The natural, rural character should be maintained by not allowing any new development and promoting use of conservation easements.

Quality Community Objectives

Community Health

- Ensure that all community residents have access to high-quality outdoor recreational opportunities.

Resource Management

- Identify key natural resources and take steps to protect them.

Implementation Measures

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote methods of permanently protecting open space, such as conservation easements.
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of trails and/or greenways

Residential Redevelopment Character Area



This is an area that has most of its original housing stock in place, but has comparatively low rates of homeownership and some vacant and/or poorly maintained housing. This area presents an opportunity for revitalization and redevelopment. Land use is mostly single- and multi-family residential, with some limited commercial and public/institutional uses such as neighborhood-scale businesses, schools, churches, and parks.

Permitted Zonings

- Residential
- Public/Institutional
- Commercial

Development Strategy

Focus on infill development of vacant lots and revitalization/redevelopment of deteriorating properties, while preserving the neighborhood character. Continue to provide a range of housing options such that all residents can find an affordable place to live. Continue to build out the sidewalk network to facilitate pedestrian traffic. Encourage the development and regular maintenance of neighborhood parks and other amenities that provide recreational opportunities to the community.

Quality Community Objectives

Transportation Options

- Greater use of alternative transportation should be encouraged, including bike paths and walking trails.

Sense of Place

- Encourage development patterns to include more human-scale development, mixing uses within easy walking distance of one another and facilitating pedestrian activity.

Open Space Preservation

- Set aside land for use as public parks and preserves.

Implementation Measures

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage the development of parks, open spaces, and other opportunities for outdoor recreation. • Use code enforcement as a tool for the reduction and elimination of blight.
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a transportation system that provides a range of options to meet the needs of all residents and visitors.

State Recreational Lake Character Area



This approximately 100-acre lake, to be located in the north of Bacon County, will provide outdoor recreation, such as fishing, boating, and camping, for the residents of Bacon County and surrounding communities.

Permitted Zonings

- *(Unincorporated Bacon County does not have land use regulations or zoning.)*

Quality Community Objectives

Regional Cooperation

- Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.

Resource Management

- We are actively preserving greenspace.

Development Strategy

Preserve environmentally sensitive areas by creating public recreational areas. Include site plans, building design, and landscaping that are sensitive to the natural features of the site.

Implementation Measures

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote methods of permanently protecting natural resources, such as conservation easements.
Community Facilities and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide high-quality outdoor recreational opportunities within the community.

US-1/GA-32 Character Area



US Highway 1 and State Highway 32 intersect Bacon County, going north-to-south and east-to-west respectively. Development along these central transportation corridors will contribute to the local economy by drawing in business not only from local residents, but also from people traveling through the community.

Permitted Zonings (*Unincorporated Bacon County does not have land use regulations or zoning*)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public/Institutional • Commercial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industrial • Residential
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Development Strategy

Encourage appropriate commercial development. Through aesthetics, amenities, and street design, create a community where travelers will want to stop and explore rather than just driving through. Create a pedestrian-friendly environment by minimizing curb cuts, providing sidewalks and crosswalks, planting street trees and other landscaping, and providing connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods and other areas.

Quality Community Objectives

Sense of Place

- The City of Alma has zoning, and the Downtown area is the community’s chief focal point.

Economic Prosperity

- The Bacon County Chamber and Development Authority has considered the community’s strengths, assets, and weaknesses and has created a business development plan based on them.

Transportation Options

- We have a demand-response rural public transit system in our community.

Implementation Measures

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify industries likely to thrive in the local economy. • Promote niche marketing using local products grown or produced in Bacon County.
Land Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage infill development. • Use code enforcement as a tool for the reduction and elimination of blight.
Transportation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze impact of additional traffic flow. • Identify and plan for improvement needs along key transportation corridors.
Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a unified and pleasing visual environment through landscaping, especially at community gateways.

Valene Bennett Bacon County Industrial Park Character Area



The location and availability of land in the Valene Bennett Bacon County Industrial Park offers the county a chance to recruit diverse industry. These industries will provide jobs to local citizens and will stimulate the local economy.

Permitted Zonings

- Industrial (*Unincorporated Bacon County does not have land use regulations or zoning.*)

Development Strategy

Smaller parking lots that incorporate on-site stormwater mitigation or retention features. Infill development on vacant or under-utilized sites. New development on the edge of the urbanized area that minimizes undesirable impacts on surrounding rural/agricultural uses.

Quality Community Objectives

Economic Prosperity

- The City of Alma and Bacon County have worked to develop a Community Economic Development Readiness Assessment.

Implementation Measures

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Community Facilities and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively use the Service Delivery Strategy. • Evaluate various financing methods for new infrastructure. • Gain community acceptance of quality growth by keeping citizens informed and involved in public processes.
Intergovernmental Coordination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insure consistency between the Service Delivery Strategy and the Comprehensive Plan.
Economic Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activate Bacon Leadership Classes. • Conduct public meetings and workshops to identify needed workforce training resources.

WilderNest Subdivision Character Area



WilderNest Subdivision is a residential area of rural character offering a variety of housing choices. Most of WilderNest falls within the City of Alma, with a small acreage located in the unincorporated County.

Permitted Zonings (*Unincorporated Bacon County does not have land use regulations or zoning*)

- R-1A (residential)

Development Strategy

Clustering of development should be encouraged to preserve open space. Development should be steered away from natural, cultural, and environmentally sensitive resources. Design residential subdivisions for adequate emergency vehicle access, including at least two entrances/exits to the subdivision. Provide pedestrian connectivity at the ends of cul-de-sacs.

Quality Community Objectives

Transportation Options

- Bicycle routes and path connectivity should be made available to encourage alternatives to transportation by car.

Sense of Place

- New development should be encouraged to protect the scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

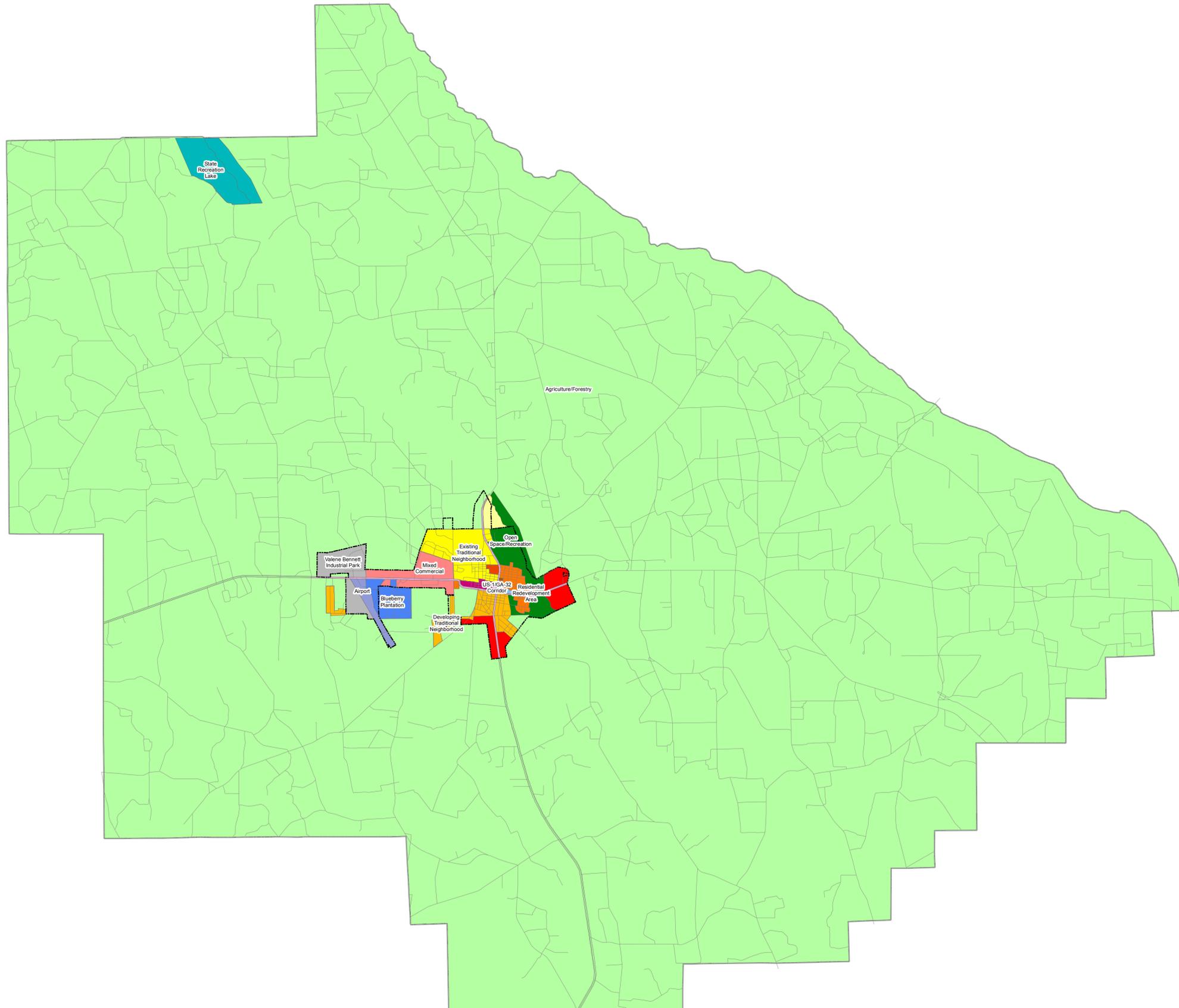
Resource Management

- Preserve the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of the development area to maintain the character of the community.

Implementation Measures

GOALS	IMPLEMENTATION MEASURES
Community Facilities and Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyze financial impact of new subdivision growth in county.

Bacon County Character Areas

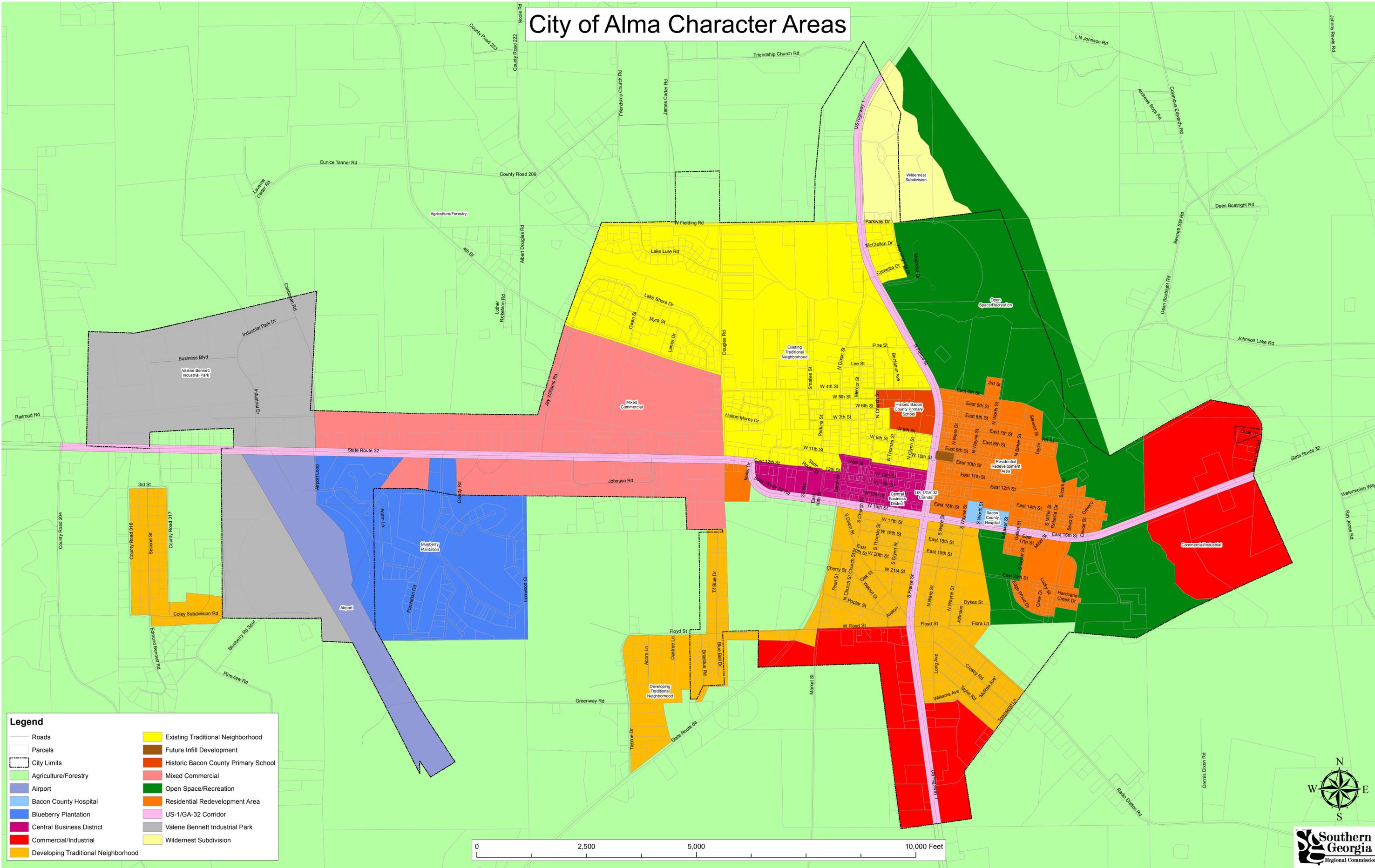


Legend

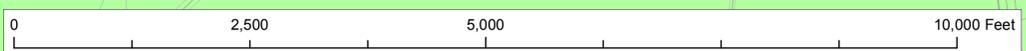
- Roads
- City Limits
- Agriculture/Forestry
- Airport
- Bacon County Hospital
- Blueberry Plantation
- Central Business District
- Commercial/Industrial
- Developing Traditional Neighborhood
- Existing Traditional Neighborhood
- Future Infill Development
- Historic Bacon County Primary School
- Mixed Commercial
- Open Space/Recreation
- Residential Redevelopment Area
- State Recreation Lake
- US-1/GA-32 Corridor
- Valene Bennett Industrial Park
- Wilderrest Subdivision
- County



City of Alma Character Areas



- Legend**
- Roads
 - ▭ Parcels
 - ▭ City Limits
 - ▭ Agriculture/Forestry
 - ▭ Airport
 - ▭ Bacon County Hospital
 - ▭ Blueberry Plantation
 - ▭ Central Business District
 - ▭ Commercial/Industrial
 - ▭ Developing Traditional Neighborhood
 - ▭ Existing Traditional Neighborhood
 - ▭ Future Infill Development
 - ▭ Historic Bacon County Primary School
 - ▭ Mixed Commercial
 - ▭ Open Space/Recreation
 - ▭ Residential Redevelopment Area
 - ▭ US-1/GA-32 Corridor
 - ▭ Valene Bennett Industrial Park
 - ▭ Wilderrest Subdivision



Appendix

Sign-In Sheets
Public Hearing Notices
Transmittal Letters
Adoption Resolutions
Public Comments

The Alma Times • Tuesday, January 31, 2017

The Alma Times
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The Alma Times • Tuesday, May 23, 2017 • Page 11

PUBLIC NOTICE

A public hearing to review and transmit the Joint 2017 Bacon County and City of Alma Comprehensive Plan Update to the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for review will be held at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 20th, 2017 at the County Commission Meeting Room #1, Bacon County Courthouse, 502 W 1th St., Alma, GA 31510. Residents are invited to attend and participate in the planning process. Copies of the Plan Update are available for public review at the County Commission office and at the City Hall of each city, and for download at the SGRC website: <http://www.sgrc.us/community-and-economic-development.html>.

Persons with special needs relating to disability access or foreign language should contact Bacon County at (912) 632-5214. Persons with hearing disabilities may consider using the Georgia Relay Service, at (Voice) 1-800-255-0135.

All persons are invited to attend the public hearing. If you would like more information, please contact Ariel Godwin, SGRC Planner, at (229) 333-5277.

**KICK OFF
 JOINT PUBLIC HEARING**

**For Bacon County and the City of Alma
 Comprehensive Plan Update**

A public meeting will be held at 5:00 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 21, 2017 at the Bacon County Courthouse to announce the beginning of the 2017 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update for Bacon County and the City of Alma. The purpose of this hearing is to brief the community on the process to be used to develop the Comprehensive Plan, announce opportunities for public participation in development of the plan, and obtain input on the proposed planning process.

Persons with special needs relating to disability access or foreign language should contact the Bacon County Commission Office at 912-632-5214. Persons with hearing disabilities may consider using the Georgia Relay Service, at 1-800-255-0135.

All persons are invited to attend the public hearing. If you would like more information, please contact the Bacon County Commission Office at 912-632-5214 or contact Ariel Godwin at the Southern Georgia Regional Commission, 229-333-5277.

Southern Georgia Regional Commission
 Bacon County and the City of Alma
 Comprehensive Plan Update – Kick-off
 February 21, 2017

Name	Organization	Phone	Email
Charly Medsker	EMA/Read Dept	281-7916	emmedsker@baconcounty.org
Angie Stewart	Hanna Council	387-2143	
June Medsker	EMA/EMS/Fire	218-1134	medsker@baconcounty.org
Al Green	City of Alma	633-8092	algreen@cityofalma.com
Dorey Turner	EMA § 911 Director	387-5904	turner@baconcounty.org
Deanna Reynolds	City of Alma	218-3935	deanna@cityofalma.com
Gregory Mills	Bacon Co. Chairman	282-4537	andy@baconcounty.org
Debbie Lawler	County Attorney	632-8845	alma.lawler@gmail.com
Robert [unclear]	County Commission	632-5728	
Ray King	County Commission	632-5093	
Levy Martin	County Commission	632-0173	
Margie Sweet	County Clerk	632-5214	margie@baconcounty.org
Angie Joyler	BART CPAs, LLC	632-7171	1gf@bart.com
Ahmed Goduk	SGRC	333-5277	agoduk@sgrc.us
Lee Holman	AMA Computer	672-3292	leeholman@gmail.com
Scott Taylor	Bacon Co. BOE	632-7363	scott.taylor@baconcounty.org
Bernita Lewis	City of Alma	912-281-3066	bernita55@me.com

Southern Georgia Regional Commission
 Bacon County and the City of Alma
 Comprehensive Plan Update – Workshop #1
 February 23, 2017

Name	Organization	Phone	Email
Ariel Godwin	SGRC	229-333-5277	agodwin@sgrc.us
Dany Turner	EMA & 911 Director	387-5504	dturner@baconcounty.org
Charley Medders	EMA / Road Supv.	281-7916	Cmedders@baconcounty.org
Bradley Taylor	Fire/EMS Chief/Director	548-5752	btaylor@baconcounty.org
Karen McParty	Bacon Co. Hospital	258-9432	kmcparty@bchs.org
Marylee Sweat	Bacon County Clerk	632-5214	marylee@baconcounty.org
Andy Hutto	Bacon Co. Chairman	282-4537	andy@baconcounty.org
LEE A. HAGANUS	Bacon Co. Commissioner	278-7736	lee.haganus@access.afz.net
AL GRACE	City of Alma	712-692-8072	AL.GRACE@ALMA.GA
Tune Medders	EMA/EMS/ Fire	912-218-1134	tmedders@baconcounty.org

Southern Georgia Regional Commission
 Bacon County and the City of Alma
 Comprehensive Plan Update – Workshop #42
 March 9, 2017

Name	Organization	Title	Email
Deony E. Turner	EMA Bacon Co - Alma	Director	dturner@baconcounty.org
Ariel Godwin	SGRC	Planner	agodwin@sgrc.us
Marylee Sweet	Bacon County Commissioners	County Clerk	mksylvee@baconcounty.org
Charley Medders	ZMA / Bacon County	Road Supv	cmaddis@baconcounty.org
Andy Hutto	Bacon County Commission	Chairman	andy@baconcounty.org
LEE A. HAGGARD	" "	Commissioner	leehaggard@accessatc.net
John L. Thomas	" "	Commissioner	
Bradley Taylor	Alma Bacon Co. Sims	Chief	BTaylor@baconcounty.org
A.C. GARCIA	CITY of Alma	CITY MANAGER	Tarcia
Darryl Murphy	City of Alma	Mayor	dcmurphy@cityofalma.org
Jimmie Medders	EMA Sims Full	Admin Assist.	jmedders@baconcounty.org

Southern Georgia Regional Commission
 Bacon County and the City of Alma
 Comprehensive Plan Update – Workshop #3
 April 13, 2017, 10:00 a.m.

Name	Organization	Title	Email
Danny Turner Arl Godwin	Alma-Bacon Co. EMA SGRC	Director Planner	clturner@baconcounty.org agodwin@sgrc.us
Al Grace	City of Alma	City Manager	A.Grace@ata.cc
Bernita Lewis	City of Alma	City Council	bernita@cm.cem
Charley Medders	Bacon Co. Comm.	Roads/Police/EMA	cmrdders@baconcounty.org
Marylee Sweet	Bacon County Comm.	County Clerk	Marylee@baconcounty.org
Andy Kettle	Bacon Co. Comm.	Chairman	andy@baconcounty.org
Kevin Ellis	Bacon Co. Dev. Auth.	Director	kevinellis@ata.cc
Chris Brady	Bacon Co. Fire/EMS	EMT/Fire Fighter	Chris.Brady1585@gmail.com
Justin Swann	Bacon Co. Fire/EMS	EMT/Paramedic	
Karen McCarthy	Bacon Co. Hospital	Safety/LED Core	Kmccarthy@bchs.org
Jane Medders	Alma Bacon Co. EMA-EMS-Fire	Admin Assist for FEMA/EMA	jmedders@baconcounty.org
Michelle Todd	Bacon Co. Fire/EMS		mtodd@baconcounty.org
Robert White	Bacon Fire/EMS	Asst. Chief	Rwhite@baconcounty.org
Jimmy Murphy	City of Alma	Mayor	Jimmy@ata.cc
Lee A. Hagans	Bacon Co. Comm.	Commissioner	leehagans@accessata.net
Teresa Curran	PCA	Account Outreach Coordinator	teresa.curran@dcga.gov

Southern Georgia Regional Commission
 Bacon County and the City of Alma
 Comprehensive Plan Update – Workshop #4
 May 11, 2017, 10:00 a.m.

Name	Organization	Title	Email
Charley Medders	Bacon Co. EMA/Road Dept	Road Supl.	Cmedders@baconcounty.org
Denny Turner	Bacon Co. EMA	Director	dturner@baconcounty.org
Ariel Godwin	SGRC	Planner	agodwin@sgrc.us
Ar Cruse	City of Alma	CITY MANAGER	Ar.Cruse@ate.ec
Marylee Sweet	Bacon County Clerk	County Clerk	Marylee@baconcounty.org
Andy Hutto	Bacon County Comm	Chairman	andy@baconcounty.org
Scott Taylor	Bacon Co. BOE	Operations Director	scott.taylor@bocraiders.com
Bernita Jean	City of Alma	Councilmember	bernta55@me.com

From: Satilla Riverkeeper <riverkeeper@satillariverkeeper.org>
Sent: Thursday, April 13, 2017 7:53 AM
To: Ariel Godwin
Subject: Re: Reminder: Bacon County Comp Plan Next Workshop

Hi Ariel,

I won't be able to make it to this meeting today, but I did have a couple comments for the Community Policies section that you might bring up to the group:

Natural Resources

Issue 3: There is a need for a comprehensive natural resources inventory.

- Policy: ... **I would suggest We will work with governmental agencies and natural resource experts to take inventory of the community's natural resources.**

Issue 4: River corridors, wetlands, and flood plains need to be protected against intrusion.

- Policy: We will support enhanced solid waste reduction and recycling initiatives. **(This policy doesn't seem to fit with the issue. I would suggest We will support land use plans and (zoning policies??) that will promote conservation of river corridors, wetlands, and flood plains and/or prevent development of these sensitive areas. I think the policy should be moved to another issue, something like:**

Issue 5: Littering and illegal dumping causes detriment to our community's natural resources, and causes blight.

Policy: We will support enhanced solid waste reduction and

recycling initiatives.)

Land Use

Policy: Recreation and greenspace will become an integral facet of our community's land use. **I would suggest adding Recreation, greenspace, AND CONSERVATION AREAS.**

Please encourage anyone to reach out to me with questions or for more information.
Thank you!

Laura Early

Laura Early

Office: (912) 510-9500

Toll-Free: (866) 472-8452

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BACON COUNTY
Blueberry Capital of Georgia



Board of Commissioners

502 West 12th Street, Suite 200

P.O. Box 356

Alma, Georgia 31510

Ph# 912-632-5214

Fax# 912-632-2757

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Vice-Chairperson	Asst. Clerk
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Board Members	Attorney
Roy King	Jennifer E. Carver
Larry Smith	
Lee Hagans	
Jerry J. Turner	

June 20, 2017

To: Southern Georgia Regional Commission
327 West Savannah Avenue
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

Bacon County has completed an update of its Comprehensive Plan and is submitting it with this letter for review by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs.

I certify that we have held the required public hearings and have involved the public in development of the plan in a manner appropriate to our community's dynamics and resources. Evidence of this has been included with our submittal.

I certify that appropriate staff and decision-makers have reviewed both the Regional Water Plan(s) covering our area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) and taken them into consideration in formulating our plan.

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Mary Lee Sweat, County Clerk, at (912) 632-5214 or marylee@baconcounty.org.

Sincerely,

Andy Hutto, Chair
Bacon County Board of Commissioners



Georgia Blueberry Capital
City of Alma
P.O. Box 429; Alma, GA 31510
912-632-8072

MAYOR
PEGGY MURPHY

CITY COUNCIL
JOHN HUGHES
ROSIE WILLIAMS
GLOVER SCOTT
JERRY SWEAT
BERNITA LEWIS

CITY MANAGER
AL CRACE

June 20th, 2017

To: Southern Georgia Regional Commission
327 West Savannah Avenue
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

The City of Alma has completed an update of its comprehensive plan and is submitting it with this letter for review by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs.

I certify that we have held the required public hearings and have involved the public in development of the plan in a manner appropriate to our community's dynamics and resources. Evidence of this has been included with our submittal.

I certify that appropriate staff and decision-makers have reviewed both the Regional Water Plan(s) covering our area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) and taken them into consideration in formulating our plan.

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Al Crace, City Manager, at (912) 632-8072 or al.crace@alc.cc.

Sincerely,

Peggy Murphy, Mayor
City of Alma



Board of Commissioners

502 West 12th Street, Suite 200
P.O. Box 356
Alma, Georgia 31510
Ph# 912-632-5214
Fax# 912-632-2757

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Board Members	Attorney
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Jerry J. Turner	

BACON COUNTY

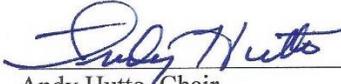
**RESOLUTION TO ADOPT
2017 JOINT BACON COUNTY
AND CITY OF ALMA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE**

WHEREAS, Bacon County has completed the 2017 Joint Bacon County and City of Alma Comprehensive Plan Update;

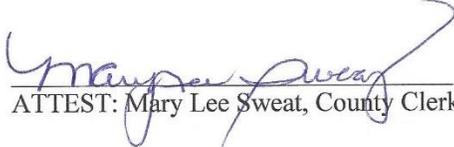
WHEREAS, this document was prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning as established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that Bacon County does hereby adopt the 2017 Joint Bacon County and City of Alma Comprehensive Plan Update.

Adopted this 18th day of July, 2017.



Andy Hutto, Chair
Bacon County Commission



ATTEST: Mary Lee Sweat, County Clerk

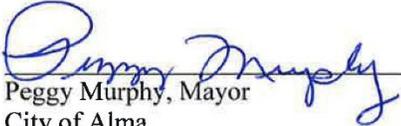
CITY OF ALMA
RESOLUTION TO ADOPT
2017 JOINT BACON COUNTY
AND CITY OF ALMA
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

WHEREAS, the City of Alma has completed the 2017 Joint Bacon County and City of Alma Comprehensive Plan Update;

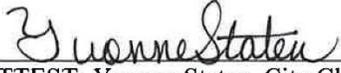
WHEREAS, this document was prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning as established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the City of Alma does hereby adopt the 2017 Joint Bacon County and City of Alma Comprehensive Plan Update.

Adopted this 7th day of Aug., 2017.



Peggy Murphy, Mayor
City of Alma



ATTEST: Yvonne Staten, City Clerk