

Miller County Agenda

Vision Statement

A small town environment that provides quality of life through the enhancement of economic and social vitality and the integration of a cooperative, creative and innovative spirit.

Community Vision

To ensure both City and County become an ideal home for retiree's with a flourishing arts/knowledge/culture based economy by capitalizing on existing community attributes and by enhancing the necessary social and physical infrastructure to attract appropriate forms of development.

Issues and Opportunities:

1. Shifts in the age structure of population: There are two distinct and related trends within the Miller County and the City of Colquitt's demographic profile. The first is increasing numbers of aging and aged citizens; the second is the relatively high numbers of young people. These trends reflect not only the broader US demographics, but are exacerbated by the relative shortage of young adults in the 18 to 30 age range.

The relative shortage of young adults points to both the relatively high number of adolescents that graduate from the high school and go on to post secondary education and then simply never return, and those who move out of the county to find both employment and available housing. The movement of young adults out of the area, particularly those that are best equipped to work within the contemporary knowledge based economy, can only be stemmed by offering similar employment options in the area and access to less expensive housing.

Simply focusing on providing better employment and housing options will only address one half of the problem, the other half is the serious racial divide in educational attainment. Tackling education and educational attainment issues is a long term project. It appears that the difference between the educational attainment of Caucasians and African Americans in Miller County is a product of powerful historic and generational expectations. As such, it is expected that the current distinctions will decline over the planning period, particularly if the support levels for the Regional Partners Network and CLCP remains constant. The changing age structure of the population of the City and County poses 7 specific and related challenges that will need to be addressed over the planning period.

Public Health Infrastructure:

- ◆ To attract retiree's to the area, access to primary and secondary medical treatment is a key consideration. Currently, the Miller County Hospital is expanding the number of rooms and beds available.
- ◆ Children and young adults have different medical needs than the elderly. Youth generally suffers more trauma than disease.

Implementation Steps:

- ◆ Maintain support for existing Medical Facilities. Identify potential Helipad sites. Identify potential challenges for such a facility in an urban area, such as fuel storage, protective cover and mechanical support structures.
- ◆ Examine the possibility of using Eminent Domain to acquire the necessary property if none is available on the market.
- ◆ City to complete study and report findings to Council and citizens by September 2007.
- ◆ Develop additional funding sources to support hospital growth and maintenance such as a city wide garage sale, with the proceeds split between different facilities, including recreation department, police department, fire department and EMT's.
- ◆ Develop fundraising activities that are linked to Swamp Gravy schedule to capitalize on presence of tourists this could include Swamp Gravy Merchandise, such as T-shirts, key rings, knick-knacks, glasses, Coozies etc. Each should bear the slogan of the current year's production. Naturally this will have to be negotiated with Miller County Arts Council. Negotiations should be complete by the end of 2008.
- ◆ In coordination with the hospital, the City and County should examine the possibility of offering a tuition scholarship for medical school for any local student who would agree to serve a residency and a number of years as a practicing MD in the Colquitt hospital. This will require defining the scope of the scholarship, eligibility requirements, extent of recipient obligations. Report of finding should published by the oversight committee by January 2008.

Public Safety Infrastructure

- ◆ The most significant crime problems in Miller County stem from the Methamphetamine boom and are mostly limited to possession, creation and petit theft. Young males are the primary perpetrators of crime thus programs that serve to curb juvenile substance abuse and general delinquency must be strengthened.

Implementation Steps

- ◆ Continued support for SPLOST referenda.
- ◆ Examine grant and other funding options from the Department of Homeland Security.
- ◆ Develop a perk based compensation package to encourage and increase retention of existing employees, using such tools as land tax and utility payment reduction, vehicle subsidies and other creative options.

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- ◆ Maintain and expand after school programs such as sports, homework assistance and other outreach efforts for 'at risk' youth.
- ◆ Expand the neighborhood watch program.
- ◆ Use repossessed property as a means of increasing general operational funding.

Recreational Options

- ◆ This area has a very active and responsible Recreational Department. The combination of aging and youthful populations requires that the Department meet two, almost, mutually exclusive demands for passive and active recreational facilities.

Implementation Steps:

- ◆ Improve spring creek park facilities, to allow for greater use of and access to the spring. Signage that detailed the possible kayak routes from the city to lake Seminole, along with an increased number of boat ramps may boost the use of the creek by private citizens. A posted route map and markers along the path would also encourage some tourism.
- ◆ Improve advertising and access to the local Wildlife Management area. At the very least, set some directional signposts to the entrances in the city.

Commercial Options

- ◆ Currently there are two main commercial districts within the city and county; the city square and the Highway 27 corridor. The 27 corridor features the more homogeneous commercial activities while the mix of businesses on the square is a little more idiosyncratic. Encouraging the development of a wide variety of retail, service and restaurant businesses in the city center is vital to attracting both retirees and encouraging the young adults to remain in the region. In defining the ideal mixture of businesses for the city center, an effort should be made to ensure a variety of operational times, to accommodate different schedules and to encourage evening consumers.
- ◆ Currently the Georgia Department of Transportation is expecting to complete the process of widening Highway 27 from the border of Tennessee in the north to the Florida line in the south around 2015. This project is expected to significantly increase the amount of traffic through the county and city. The city must begin preparing regulations to control the development of commercial activity along this corridor, particularly with regard to architectural aesthetics, parking and signage. This must be done to protect the city from the blight that often attends highway commercial development.

Implementation Steps:

- ◆ Develop zoning ordinance that will encourage specific types of business in the city center and along Highway 27. The existing ordinance is a solid base, however, there is a need for a stricter form based code for the city center and commercial corridor. One that would feature design controls for commercial buildings to ensure future development is context sensitive. This ordinance needs to be written and adopted by the city government within the next 3 years.
 - ◆ Identification of stakeholders, public hearings to develop list of citizen's concerns, study of existing and preferred architectural styles and code enforcement mechanisms.
 - ◆ Identification of potential businesses that would be ideal in the area. Identification of existing unmet local demand for goods or services (Geriatric or other kinds of private nurses).
 - ◆ Creation/expansion of business incubator activities.

Economic Infrastructure

- ◆ Labor intensive industry in the area is contracting and will continue to do so for the foreseeable future as long as the national economic trends remain constant. While the capital that creates labor intensive industries is footloose, the manufacturing operations are geographically constrained. The movement of the labor force tends to be much more restricted. The current situation is essentially of a labor force that has been left behind by changes in the structure of the local, regional, state, national and international economies.
- ◆ The City and County have adopted a two pronged approach to change the uniform nature of the local economic structure. The first is to attract retirees to the area and the second is to expand the range arts/knowledge based economic activities begun and fostered by the Miller County Arts Council and Swamp Gravy. Unfortunately, retail business is likely to follow a customer base rather than draw people to a particular area. To overcome this disparity the City and County must look to other facilities and attributes that retirees find attractive.
- ◆ The majority of jobs in Miller County are directly or indirectly related to public rather than private economic sector. To encourage non traditional, arts/knowledge based economic activities along with the service sector jobs that underpin the preferred social activities of knowledge workers, the City and County must identify the cultural and social disincentives in the area that will work against their efforts to develop and attract a more 'cosmopolitan' workforce and industry. In essence, the public sphere must, apparently at least, become more inviting and hospitable to diverse groups and ideas.

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Implementation Steps:

- ◆ Identify facilities and attributes that existing successful retiree communities elsewhere possess and determine how to bring such attributes to Miller County. Specific attention should be paid to; lot size, house size, road width, the presence of sidewalks, the presence of mixed residential and commercial districts, mixture of housing types within residential districts, the presence of medical facilities, the proximity of basic grocery stores and other commercial enterprises. A complete overhaul of the existing zoning and subdivision ordinances may be necessary.
- ◆ Tie economic development with educational attainment by creating a school to work program which matches high school students with area employers.
- ◆ Identify the attributes that make places attractive to young professionals whose work need not be site specific, in the case of Miller/Colquitt emphasis should be placed on "creative" economic actors such as designers, architects, writers and artists. The presence of Swamp gravy, the soundstage and South West Georgia Film Commission should be leveraged and cross linked to entice more creative workers to remain in the region.

Educational Opportunities

- ◆ The Miller County School System is not only putting up new buildings, the schools have consistently met and exceeded the Annual Yearly Progress criteria of the No Child Left Behind Mandate. The proximity of neighboring Colleges should be exploited by expanding the close ties of schools with specific industries and activities in the area and corresponding post secondary education establishments that offer pertinent courses, particularly with programs that relate to media development and content production, the business of selling art and antiques, home renovation, historic preservation, architecture and the creative industries themselves.

Implementation Steps:

- ◆ The Miller County School District may consider and should at least prepare a study on merging with surrounding school districts to increase the underlying tax base for region's educational programs. A cost benefit analysis of such an action must be presented to the County Commissioners and the City Council by August 2008.
- ◆ Develop close ties with existing colleges and focus on cultivating relationships with professors and businesses that have an acknowledged expertise in the areas of media production, art and antique providence and evaluation, home renovation and historic preservation.

Housing Options

- ◆ The primary obstacle to the expansion of housing choices available in the City and County, aside from low market pressure, is the refusal of large landowners to subdivide existing property holdings. While this behavior encourages infill development within the available incorporated territory, it also raises housing costs by artificially restricting residential development.
- ◆ The absence of county wide land development regulations that serve to separate incompatible land uses also militates against residential development as potential homeowners have very limited governmental protection of their investment.

Implementation Steps:

- ◆ Rezone all the agricultural land within the city limits as Residential and waive some of the subdivision costs to increase the availability of buildable lots.
- ◆
- ◆ Support the activities of the Community Development Corporation.
- ◆ City and County should work together to identify areas immediately adjacent to the current city limits that would be ideal for residential development. One obvious target location is immediately proximate to the schools that are currently under construction. Future sub divisions in that area particularly must include sidewalks and offer walking paths to the school buildings.

2. The absence of comprehensive Development Management Ordinance in the unincorporated County. The lack of development management regulations in the unincorporated county is a double edged sword, and as such it cuts both ways. On the one hand, local landowners are allowed a remarkable amount of leeway in their development options, on the other hand, there is no way to protect landowners from the potentially harmful activities of unscrupulous neighbors. Until now, land use changes within the county were relatively few and, for the most part, protagonists were well known throughout the community and due to this informal methods of limiting the development of incompatible uses arose.

The lack of development management ordinances also effects the availability of the range of housing options available to existing and potential residents and, furthermore, has an impact on the county's tax digest.

The presumption that the current status quo will prevail throughout the planning horizon is, at best, short-sighted if not actually detrimental to the future of the county. Given the proactive nature of the local governments and the natural attributes of the County and City, changes in county wide land use patterns are going to occur. How and where, has as much to do with the government as it does with the landowners and the broader market. In order to attract the desired market segment, the county must take action to protect peoples' property investments (it is, after all, rather difficult to convince someone to invest in an expensive property, if someone can just come along a put a manufactured home on a lot immediately adjacent.), and assure the efficient provision of social services.

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Land use patterns dominate the scope of human habitats. Decisions today, will, for the most part affect future generations' choices and options. While Commercial developments usually have a life of approximately 20 years (a function of investment patterns, short term profit taking and barely adequate construction), a residential lot platted today is most likely to remain unchanged in 100 years. Balancing the demands for commercial and residential spaces is something that the City of Colquitt must focus it's attention on in the future, particularly with regard to the expansion of the Highway 27 corridor.

The primary physical asset that the County possesses is its rural character. Agriculture in the County is facing a slow but inexorable decline in the number of family farms and encroaching residential development of greenfield sites. To protect both current residents and farmers from incompatible activities, as well as minimizing the costs associated with the provision of services, the County should consider taking steps to curtail the growth of residential land uses in the unincorporated territory.

Implementation Steps

- A. Should the Government decide to pursue some kind of development regulation in the unincorporated territory, the necessary implementation steps would be;
A complete land use survey rather than a windshield survey,
The creation and maintenance of a Geographic Information System at the tax parcel level and the development of an official map,
The creation, adoption and equitable enforcement of appropriate land use regulations, (a process that would entail the identification of stakeholders, public input meetings, public notification, public hearings, adoption by resolution and the designation of an enforcement body).
- B. Update the existing subdivision regulations to ensure future developments reflect the positive aspects of the existing traditional neighborhoods, (narrow streets, sidewalks and street trees) as well as offering developers the option of more 'progressive' subdivision designs that incorporate open space, clustered housing and the conservation of recreational spaces. Subdivision Regulations should also allow for the construction of townhouses, apartments and other small multi family dwelling types that will be attractive to the retiree demographic. A complete review of existing ordinances and regulations should be completed by both City and County by December 2007.
- C. In conjunction with one another, City and County must employ a qualified building inspector/ code enforcement officer. County must only permit bonded contractors to work within the County.
- D. The new ordinances should provide the basis for the development of new housing options and opportunities.
- E. City and County will support the efforts to renovate the movie theater and recreate the Classical Courthouse.

3. Economic Diversification, Youth Retention and Attracting Retiree's

Although, these issues and opportunities appear to be separate, possible solution are holistic as each challenge is a separate facet of the transition from an agriculture based economy to one that dovetails with the prevailing economic trends. Overall the idea is to develop a coherent series of logically connected, mutually reinforcing goals and policies to guide the actions of local authorities and build the social and physical infrastructure to create a supportive climate for diverse economic activities.

The Economic Development Sub Committee; County Commission Chair, India Taylor, City Manager, Cory Thomas, County Commissioner Howard Smalls and Chamber of Commerce president, Veryl Cockey, identified 4 distinct but related strands of the City and County's overall economic development, youth retention and retiree attraction strategy; Image Development, Physical Infrastructure Improvements, Synergizing Arts and Culture Activities and Educational Scholarships.

A. Image Products

1. To position the City of Colquitt as a retirement community.
2. Package City and County as a 'Quality of Life' community.
3. Market Geographic Advantages.
4. Particularly the County and City's rural setting.
5. Capitalize on northern flight of Floridians and proximity to Tallahassee.
6. Hire marketing professional to develop Colquitt/Miller County brand and collateral image products.

B. Physical Infrastructure improvements

- ◆ Upgrade sewer/waste management systems, upgrade water system.
- ◆ Build a second alternative senior care center.
- ◆ Develop community asset pool and land bank.
- ◆ Develop a consolidated County and City Capital Improvements Program and fund.
- ◆ To achieve this, City and County governments will need to develop a payment plan, a capital improvement project list.
- ◆ Develop regulations that promote the development of a diverse range of housing stock alongside with Mobile Home controls and form/aesthetic standards.

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C. Arts and Culture

Make Miller County and The City of Colquitt an Arts and Culture destination.

- ◆ Develop niche market products and boutique retail space, particularly on the square.
- ◆ Possible areas of interest may include; Art supplies, Antiques, Art- Galleries and Studio space, textile design, framers, books, coffee, other bistro/bijou activities. Alternative or bohemian activities could be encouraged in specific areas of town. Value Added Agricultural products such as the Mayhaw Jelly firm need to be supported.
- ◆ Develop and create a business retention program to support existing businesses and promote the creation of new ones in conjunction with the Department of Community Affairs and the South West Georgia Regional Development Center.
- ◆ Identify other supporting economic niches and actively recruit businesses to fill them.
- ◆ Synergize and strategically deploy heritage connections between Swamp Gravy, Murals, Tourist Activities and potential Soundstage Spin offs in the retail and service industry sectors.
- ◆ Schedule regular quarterly meetings with Local Government, Arts Council, Chamber of Commerce, Lions Club, Board of Education, Community Development Corporation, DFCs and hospital board. The South West Georgia Regional Development Center may facilitate these meetings.
- ◆ Leverage soundstage activities by cross hatching academic programs with soundstage activities like set design, production values etc.
- ◆ Develop/encourage agri-tourism and eco-tourism activities.
- ◆ Use golf course development as an economic engine.

D. Education and Youth

1. Develop a scholarship fund that is tied to a post graduation service provision through a community foundation and the procedures and protocols for its administration.

2. Explore the possibilities of bringing a classroom annex of one of the local colleges, (such as Bainbridge or Troy), into the City.

Political Goals

1. Work with other local governments to consolidate regional political and service structures.

The Character of Miller County and the City of Colquitt (Defining Narrative)

In conjunction with members of the public who attended the different open work sessions, the steering committee identified the following 9 distinct character areas in Miller County and The City of Colquitt:

1. Agricultural
2. Forested
3. Creek Corridor
4. Residential
5. Industrial
6. Town Square
7. Arts District
8. Hamlet
9. Commercial

In addition to these character areas, 2 areas of Special Interest in the city were identified; the Judge Drake Subdivision and the Crooked Oak Golf Course.

Over 85% of the County's 181,200 square acres are used for either agricultural or cultural activities. While the County government has adopted a number of specific use regulations to control activities such as the placement of Poultry Houses, and all the Part V environmental protection ordinances, currently there are no comprehensive land use regulations to guide development. Furthermore, there appears to be widespread opposition to the adoption of land use regulations within the unincorporated territory. The City of Colquitt has an enforced zoning ordinance, a historical district overlay and will upgrade their regulations over the planning period.

1-2. Agricultural and Forested Character Areas:

Unsurprisingly, these character areas are defined by the predominance of either agriculture or silviculture. Within these areas, there is scattered ribbon residential development along the major thoroughfares. Due to the biodiversity involved in the Agricultural and Forested Character Areas, a variety of primarily agricultural land uses should be encouraged within these territories and residential development ought to be discouraged, however, in the absence of county wide land development regulations, there is no mechanism in place to guide future land use activities in the unincorporated county.

Should the County Commissioners and Residents decide to adopt some kind of Land Development Regulations during the planning period, they should protect these territories by severely limiting the options for residential development by only allowing very large lot subdivisions, (>25 acres).

By adopting appropriate land use regulations that help to maintain and protect the cohesive nature of the Agricultural and Forested Character Areas, the local government would be pursuing the Heritage Preservation, Environmental Protection, Appropriate Businesses and Regional Identity Quality Growth Objectives in so far as the county's heritage and economy is agricultural.

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Should the Government decide to pursue some kind of development regulation in the unincorporated territory, the necessary implementation steps would be;

- ◆ A complete land use survey rather than a windshield survey,
- ◆ The creation and maintenance of a Geographic Information System at the tax parcel level and the development of an official map,
- ◆ The creation, adoption and equitable enforcement of appropriate land use regulations, (a process that would entail the identification of stakeholders, public input meetings, public notification, public hearings, adoption by resolution and the designation of an enforcement body).

3. Creek Corridor

The River Corridor Character Area consists of a narrow strip, no greater than 150 ft, on either side of the County's major water course, Spring Creek. This Character area is denoted in some places with thicker than otherwise brush or forest growth. It is also marked by the presence, in places, of significant wetland resources.

If the residents of the County move to adopt development regulations, they should impose environmental protection rules on the riverbanks to curtail residential or commercial development along the currently pristine waterfronts.

By adopting and enforcing the above mentioned land use regulations, the local governments would be pursuing the Environmental Protection, Heritage Preservation, Shared Solutions and Infill Development Quality Community Objectives.

In this case by adopting more stringent standards the governments are participating in both Environmental Protection and Shared Solutions -water resource issues are always intra and inter regional-Heritage Protection and Infill Development by maintaining the rural and agricultural nature of the County, and infill development by further limiting the land available for residential development within the unincorporated territory.

4. Residential Character Area:

For the most part this character area is limited to the City of Colquitt where there is sufficient housing density. It should be noted, however that over 55% of the city's incorporated land is currently zoned and used for agricultural activities.

Unlike many towns in the region, Colquitt has experienced a limited amount of automobile related development, which means that while there is a distinct commercial corridor running alongside Highway 27 which is marked by a variety of auto accessible retail outlets, there has been no distortion of the city's 3 mile square limits on the southern edge. The city's limits were extended recently about 2 miles northeast when the local government gained control of the Crooked Oak Golf Club.

Within the residential districts the City should encourage the development of mixed use neighborhoods which combine traditional single family units with denser housing forms such as townhouses, condominiums and appropriate retail options. The city must also consider undertaking a serious connectivity study to enhance the walkability of the city. By adopting Mixed Use zoning, alongside a carefully considered form based code for central city development, the City would be pursuing the Heritage Preservation, Sense of Place, Environmental Protection, Infill Development, Regional Development, Traditional Neighborhood and Transportation Alternatives Quality Community Objectives.

Implementation steps include:

- ◆ Conduct study of existing retirement communities to determine the ideal mix of land uses, recreation options and facilities to attract the targeted retirement market segment. Particular attention should be paid to the need for smaller and denser housing options, proximity and connectivity to recreation facilities such as parks, community centers, medical facilities and shopping opportunities.

- ◆ Updating the existing zoning ordinance
 - ◆ A complete land use survey,
 - ◆ A design charrette,
 - ◆ Open house meetings with all the stakeholders and public to identify best uses and different activities,
 - ◆ Focused residential densification close to the center of the city and community facilities such as the hospital and senior center,
 - ◆ Creating buffers between industrial and residential uses.

Industrial Character Area:

The industrial Character Area, is limited to the city and refers primarily to the Peanut Processing area east of the city center and other activities adjacent to the rail line that runs from north to south on the eastern edge of the city. These areas are currently zoned as industrial and should remain so for the foreseeable future. By maintaining the current uses and structures the governments are pursuing the Appropriate Business, Employment Options, Heritage Preservation, Regional Identity and Environmental Protection Quality Community Objectives.

Implementation steps include:

- ◆ Updating the existing zoning ordinance
 - ◆ A complete land use survey,
 - ◆ A design charrette,
 - ◆ Open house meetings with all the stakeholders and public to identify best uses and different activities,
 - ◆ Focused residential densification close to the center of the city and community facilities such as the hospital and senior center,
 - ◆ Creating buffers between industrial and residential uses.

Town Square Character Area:

This character area is focused on the central square of the City of Colquitt and particularly on the buildings that face onto the square itself. It should be noted that this Character Area overlaps that of the Arts District and shares many of the same distinguishing features. At the center of the Square is the County Courthouse. The current architecturally inconsistent courthouse replaced the original in the early 1970s and mars the overall aesthetics of the city square. Plans are being developed to replace the existing courthouse with a more context sensitive building.

The town square is undoubtedly one of the City of Colquitt's greatest built attributes and serves as an administrative and retail hub.

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Late 19th and early 20th century storefronts enclose the square on 3 sides, while the 4th and southernmost edge houses more recent businesses and buildings which also detract from favorable aspect of the area.

Mixed residential, retail and governmental uses are already encouraged in this area. The City Government will over the planning horizon continue to encourage architecturally sensitive mixed use development in this area via the continued enforcement and the upgrading of its zoning code.

By enforcing its own ordinance, encouraging specific forms of boutique and/or arts related retail as well as residential options, the City will be pursuing the Heritage Preservation, Sense of Place, Appropriate Businesses, Regional Identity and Employment Options Quality Community Objectives.

Implementation steps include:

- ◆ Redrawing the historic district overlay.
- ◆ Close coordination between the Chamber of Commerce, Private Investors, the Miller County Arts Council, Private Investors and local governments to identify and pursue the appropriate businesses for this area.
- ◆ Maintaining the existing BREP and other business retention programs.
- ◆ Updating the existing zoning ordinance
 - ◆ A complete land use survey,
 - ◆ A design charrette,
 - ◆ Open house meetings with all the stakeholders and public to identify best uses and different activities,
 - ◆ Focused residential densification close to the center of the city and community facilities,
 - ◆ Creating buffers between industrial and residential uses.

7. Arts District Character Area

The Arts District Character Area is centered on Cotton Hall, home of Swamp Gravy, one block east of the City Square. This district also includes Miller County Arts Council offices that face Cotton Hall, the Southwest Georgia Film Commission Offices one block north, sundry other buildings in the immediate vicinity and will include the soundstage, currently under construction within the Industrial park.

The social and economic impact of arts related activities, such as tourism, on the region is hard to underestimate and the potential for future expansion is strong. A combination of private sector initiatives and local government support for things such as the Mural Painting program and Swamp Gravy (an oral folk life play) and Henny Penny Studios/the Southwest Georgia Film Commission office has created the basic infrastructure for drawing both tourists and the elusive 'creative' knowledge based workers into the city and region. Both Arts Council and Film Commission have developed ties with regional educational facilities to help foster an indigenous workforce with the necessary skills to work within related industries.

Given this area overlaps that of the town square, at least on the north eastern edge, it is important to ensure that land uses and regulations for both are compatible.

By enforcing its own ordinance, encouraging specific forms of boutique and/or arts related retail as well as residential options, the City will be pursuing the Heritage Preservation, Sense of Place, Appropriate Businesses, Regional Identity and Employment Options Quality Community Objectives.

Implementation steps include:

- ◆ Redrawing the historic district overlay.
- ◆ Close coordination between the Chamber of Commerce, Private Investors, the Miller County Arts Council, Private Investors and local governments to identify and pursue the appropriate businesses for this area.
- ◆ Maintaining the existing BREP and other business retention programs.
- ◆ Updating the existing zoning ordinance
 - ◆ A complete land use survey,
 - ◆ A design charrette,
 - ◆ Open house meetings with all the stakeholders and public to identify best uses and different activities,
 - ◆ Focused residential densification close to the center of the city and community facilities,
 - ◆ Creating buffers between industrial and residential uses.

8. Hamlet:

This character area can be found in the unincorporated county and are small clustered groups of homes often found focused on crossroads. These maybe the historical residue of labor intensive agriculture or the more recent subdivision of larger land holdings for residential development within the county.

Although these small communities currently lack the population to effectively incorporate, should the County Government decide to adopt geographically based land use regulations, a mixture of residential and small scale commercial/retail uses should be encouraged in these locales.

By adopting appropriate land use regulations that help to maintain and protect the Crossroad Communities, the local government would be pursuing the Heritage Preservation, Environmental Protection, Appropriate Businesses and Regional Identity Quality Growth Objectives.

Should the Government decide to pursue some kind of development regulation in the unincorporated territory, the necessary implementation steps would be;

- ◆ A complete land use survey rather than a windshield survey,
- ◆ The creation and maintenance of a Geographic Information System at the tax parcel level and the development of an official map,
- ◆ The creation, adoption and equitable enforcement of appropriate land use regulations, (a process that would entail the identification of stakeholders, public input meetings, public notification, public hearings, adoption by resolution and the designation of an enforcement body).

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9. Commercial Character Area:

The Commercial Character Area is limited to the strip facing Highway 27 within the city limits. While this not the sole site of commercial activity within the county and city, this is the primary one and the businesses within it are are designed to service automobile traffic by providing large parking lots adjacent to the road and setting the building back on the lot.

The City's zoning code designates this area for commercial use and should continue to do so over the planning horizon. The County's low population density and low incomes means that many of these businesses are operated within very tight margins which may dissuade other entrepreneurs from locating in this district.

By enforcing its own ordinance, developing stricter aesthetic standards and encouraging specific forms of commercial activity the City will be pursuing the Heritage Preservation, Sense of Place, Appropriate Businesses, Regional Identity and Employment Options Quality Community Objectives.

Implementation steps include:

- ◆ Close coordination between the Chamber of Commerce, Private Investors, the Miller County Arts Council, Private Investors and local governments to identify and pursue the appropriate businesses for this area.
- ◆ Maintaining the existing BREP and other business retention programs.
- ◆ Updating the existing zoning ordinance
 - ◆ A complete land use survey,
 - ◆ A design charrette,
 - ◆ Open house meetings with all the stakeholders and public to identify best uses and different activities,
 - ◆ Focused residential densification close to the center of the city and community facilities.

Areas of Special Interest:

Judge Drake Subdivision:

A dilapidated post war subdivision in the northeast quadrant of the city that should be targeted for infrastructure upgrades.

Crooked Oak Golf Course:

The publicly owned course has been annexed by the city and zoned for large lot single family residential development. The city should consider setting aside some of the as yet undeveloped land for denser residential development. Territory in the immediate vicinity of the golf course has been targeted for future residential development.

In the absence of county wide land development regulations, there is no mechanism in place to guide future land use activities in the unincorporated county.

Goals and policies

Population

- ◆ Miller County and Colquitt should join forces with the County Extension Service to provide parenting classes and the prevention of teenage pregnancy.
- ◆ Adult education should be supported through such programs as the Georgia Peach Program and the JTPA Program.
- ◆ Miller County and Colquitt should address the lack of employment opportunities and limited transportation access to outside employment.
- ◆ It is apparent by the low per capita income figures, poverty levels, and the high usage of transfer payments that supporting employment programs are necessary.
- ◆ Emphasis on education is important to Colquitt and Miller County. Programs which address continuing education, skills assessment, higher scores achievement, and various other educational attainments are warranted.

HOUSING GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Goal 1: To promote the creation, beautification and preservation of new and existing residential neighborhoods which are safe, affordable, wholesome, attractive and free from blight in all Miller County and the City of Colquitt.

Objective 1: To promote efforts to improve the condition of the Miller County and the City of Colquitt housing stock through new construction of replacement units; and the renovation, rehabilitation, and demolition of existing stock.

Policy 1: To increase the use of demolition programs as warranted throughout each community in Miller County and the City of Colquitt to remove dilapidated and substandard housing.

Policy 2: To promote the development of new low income and moderate income housing units in each Miller County community through the concentrated efforts of the public, private and non-profit sectors and the acquisition of housing assistance, grants and low interest loan programs

Policy 3: To encourage housing maintenance and rehabilitation by promoting the acquisition of grants, low interest loans, elderly assistance programs and promotion of rehabilitation programs by local churches and civic organizations throughout Miller County in order to curb the dilapidation process.

Goal 2: To encourage the provision of housing of all types, densities and price ranges for current and future residents of Colquitt and Miller County.

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Objective 2: To expand and diversity the housing opportunities available in Miller County and Colquitt by the year 2015.

Policy 1: To encourage the development of housing targeted toward the elderly i.e., group homes, assisted living units, retirement communities, companion matching programs, etc.

Policy 2: To promote the development of cluster dwellings for small households.

Policy 3: To promote infill development in residential neighborhoods and redevelopment of blighted areas through the city and county.

Policy 4: To encourage residential development in areas where supporting infrastructure is available.

Policy 5: To promote "mixed use development" allowing housing to be integrated with higher density uses in Colquitt's activity centers.

Objective 3: To promote the stability and viability of neighborhoods throughout the county.

Policy 1: Periodically survey Miller County communities for housing conditions to assess the need for further demolition, nuisance ordinances or rehabilitative housing measures.

Policy 2: Locate public infrastructure improvements, including parks, paved roads and water, sewer and drainage improvements in neighborhoods, so as to attract, maintain and encourage home ownership and the maintenance of rental property in Miller County and the City of Colquitt.

Policy 3: To encourage the protection and restoration of historically valued residential properties and neighborhoods throughout the city and county.

Policy 4: To assist with the rehabilitation and adaptive re-use of historically significant housing by promoting technical assistance and economic assistance programs.

Policy 5: To promote the designation of residential historic districts in the City of Colquitt and to investigate the potential for the development of residential historic districts in the unincorporated areas of Miller County.

Policy 6: To continue infrastructure improvement plans in low income-minority "target" neighborhoods in the city and county.

Policy 7: To encourage the development of neighborhood cleanup and beautification programs in Miller County and the City of Colquitt.

Goal 4: To promote the development of a county wide housing task force.

Objective 4: To develop an organization that will be knowledgeable on housing issues, the State Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy (CHAS), and the availability of housing assistance programs offered by HUD, RECD, the Federal Home Loan Bank, GHFA, and other agencies, as well as to make recommendations for community self help neighborhood improvement programs.

Policy 1: To address the housing needs and concerns of special sectors of Miller County and the City of Colquitt including senior citizens, first-time home buyers, low and moderate income households, and other special groups.

Policy 2: To encourage the public and private sectors to provide low and moderate income housing through the expansion of rental assistance programs, government financed home ownership programs, public housing programs, and creative housing development partnerships.

Goal 5: To encourage the development of public-private partnerships between local developers, lenders, non-profits, and the public sector which aim to promote quality residential development and improvement in Miller County and the City of Colquitt.

Objective 5: To support state and federal policies prohibiting discrimination in the acquisition and rental of housing in Miller County and the City of Colquitt.

Policy 1: Educate the public and staffs of the local jurisdictions on the Fair Housing Act.

Policy 2: To promote fair lending practices in Miller County.

Goal 6: To provide regulatory guidance where necessary throughout Miller County to protect residential development and to provide for well planned developments.

Objective 6: To periodically review the amount, type and impact of development occurring in the county to determine if additional regulations are needed to insure that compatible and well developed subdivisions and residential areas are created.

Policy 1: To upgrade subdivision regulations in the City of Colquitt and develop regulations for the unincorporated portions of Miller County.

Policy 2: To insure that adequate tracts of land are zoned for residential zoning districts in the City of Colquitt.

Natural Resource Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: To maximize the long-term usefulness of Miller County's and the City of Colquitt's natural resources for agricultural, economic development, aesthetic, recreational, wildlife habitat and other functional environment reasons.

Objective 1: To maintain the quality of the natural systems in Miller County and the City of Colquitt throughout the planning period.

Policy 1: To utilize development regulations as warranted by development or natural constraints to direct land uses to the most suitable environments.

Policy 2: To protect sensitive environmental areas and habitats.

Objective 2: To promote the conservation of natural habitats of endangered and protected species in Miller County and the City of Colquitt.

Miller County Agenda

Policy 1: To encourage landowners in each community to identify natural habitats of endangered species on private lands.

Policy 2: To increase countywide education on laws protecting local endangered species and habitats through school programs, media reports and local governmental staff training.

Policy 3: To encourage local residents and organizations to participate in the Freshwater Wildlife and Heritage Inventory.

Policy 4: To promote the use of conservation easements throughout the county and city to protect sensitive natural environments and plant and animal habitats.

Objective 3: To encourage the protection of prime farmland and other agriculturally important soils throughout Miller County.

Policy 1: To support the Best Management Practices of the CFSA, NRCS, and the Georgia Forestry Commission.

Policy 2: To actively provide education on and advocate the enforcement of the Georgia Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Act.

Objective 4: To protect wetlands as important natural resources in Miller County and the City of Colquitt.

Policy 1: To promote county-wide awareness of the Federal 404 permitting process and the legal ramifications of non-compliance.

Policy 2: To provide for a wetland identification check in any land development regulations developed during the planning period.

Policy 3: To promote protection of significant wetland areas.

Objective 5: To encourage the protection of the city and county surface water and ground water resources.

Policy 1: To ensure the protection of wellhead areas in the city and county to protect potable groundwater supplies.

Policy 2: To promote county-wide awareness on the Georgia Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Act.

Policy 3: To enforce local administrative capabilities to issue Georgia Soil Erosion and Sedimentation permits during the long term planning period at the county level.

Policy 4: To promote the protection of quality groundwater resources by promoting the enforcement of existing agricultural regulations in the county.

Policy 5: To continue to monitor the Tri-State ACT/ACT Water Study and River Basin Management Plan and any other regional water studies throughout the planning period at the city and county level.

Policy 6: To promote river corridor protection measures and the use of conservation easements to maintain necessary buffers along significant creek corridors in the city and county.

Objective 6: To promote the preservation of scenic vistas and landscapes throughout the city and county.

Policy 1: To continually locate and define scenic vistas of importance in the city and county which are subject to the impacts of development pressures.

Policy 2: To promote effective land use measures and conservation measure necessary to maintain important landscape features which provide a sense of place in Miller County and the City of Colquitt.

Historic and Archaeological Resources Goals, Objectives and Policies

Goal 1: To enhance the quality of life in Miller County and the City of Colquitt through the identification, preservation, protection, development, and promotion of historic and archaeological resources. As well as, stimulate related economic development and tourism activities.

Objective 1: Strengthen or revitalize the historic preservation commission in order to be eligible for the Certified Local Government Program.

Policy 1: To issue and deny certificates of appropriateness in the local historic district.

Policy 2: To initiate the acquisition of a survey and planning grant from the Historic Preservation Division of the DNR. The grant would be used to fund a comprehensive survey of both unincorporated Miller County and the City of Colquitt.

Policy 3: To identify national register eligible sites within the county and prioritize a list for making nominations.

Policy 4: To make nominations to the national register.

Policy 5: To become a certified local government.

Policy 6: To encourage historic preservation by educating the public on available funding and tax incentive programs.

Objective 2: To promote the development heritage tourism and other economic development activities related to historic and archaeological resources.

Policy 1: To support the development of a Chamber of Commerce Heritage Tourism Committee.

Policy 2: To encourage grant acquisition to develop a brochure listing points of historical interest in Miller County and the City of Colquitt.

Miller County Agenda

Policy 3: To establish annual events such as home tours, cultural events, heritage days, etc., which would highlight historic resources and Colquitt/Miller County's rich past.

Policy 4: To develop stronger relationships with the Georgia Department of Industry, Tourism and Trade, the Plantation Trace Historic Region, the State Historic Preservation Office, and the RDC Historic Preservation Planner.

Objective 3: To promote heritage education throughout Miller County.

Policy 1: To encourage heritage education in all Miller County Schools.

Policy 2: To encourage adult heritage education programs through the county.

Policy 3: To support heritage workshop training for local teachers in conjunction with other communities and/or counties.

Policy 4: To pursue available funding for heritage education.

Objective 4: To preserve rural resources including archaeological sites, turpentine stills, grist mills and dwellings.

Policy 1: To encourage volunteers to preserve rural antebellum structures.

Policy 2: To incorporate rural sites into heritage tourism and education.

Policy 3: To inventory and document all historic structures that is being lost due to neglect.

Objective 5: To produce a document which describes Miller County's history in relation to its' historic resources.

Policy 1: To incorporate all comprehensive surveys into this document.

Policy 2: To publish a book based on this research.

Economic Development Goals, Policies and Objectives

Overall Goal

To promote economic development in Miller County and the City of Colquitt by enhancing the diversification of economic sectors through the promotion of such abundant natural resources as water, fertile soil, and sunshine. Provide for the expansion and retention of existing business, and the attraction of new businesses. To this effort the City of Colquitt and Miller County will utilize a wide range of economic development resources and tools to promote industry location, community infrastructure, marketing potential, local labor force skills, and thereby enhancing Miller County's quality of life.

Objective 1: To continue to support the Colquitt-Miller County Chamber of Commerce, the Development Authority, and other local agencies dedicated to improving the economic livelihood and the quality of life in Miller County and the City of Colquitt.

Policy 1: Encourage economic development agencies to coordinate development programs with city and county officials.

Policy 2: To encourage local businesses, schools and training centers to actively work with these agencies.

Policy 3: To support continued staff development.

Objective 2: To encourage industrial development in Miller County and the City of Colquitt, emphasizing the retention and expansion of existing industry, the recruitment of additional industries, the continued development of a balanced industrial mix, and job growth.

Policy 1: To promote the development of an industrial park and speculative buildings as needed throughout the planning period.

Policy 2: To work with the Georgia Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism to promote industrial development programs.

Policy 3: To effectively promote the utilization of all tax credit programs, job training programs, and other incentives targeted at attracting new industries.

Policy 4: To encourage the development of agricultural processing practices and agricultural marketing strategies which would increase industrial development throughout the city and county.

Policy 5: To work with local industries to improve the skills and training of the labor force as needed.

Policy 6: To promote awareness of national policies affecting local industrial concerns.

Policy 7: To encourage local industries to explore the potential for competing in global markets.

Objective 3: To support economic development programs aimed at improving the retail and services sector.

Policy 1: To support focused marketing approaches and the development of media products designed to encourage Miller County and the City of Colquitt residents and businesses to increase purchasing of goods and services locally.

Policy 2: To develop advertising and marketing tools which will increase the use of local businesses by residents of adjacent and regional counties.

Policy 3: To encourage the development of specialized retail sectors such as antiques, artists or craft shops, etc., which would attract visiting shoppers.

Policy 4: To encourage historic preservation activities in Miller County and the City of Colquitt to further the area's tourism potential.

Miller County Agenda

- Policy 5:** To support and promote special events and festivals, such as the Mayhaw Festival, Swamp Gravy, the Annual Flower Show, and Harvest Days which are designed to boost visitor and local spending, as well as provide entertainment in the city and county.
- Policy 6:** To continue to promote the establishment of a coordinated look around the Courthouse Square through attention to landscaping, flower and tree planting, wreaths, seasonally decorative displays and design standards.
- Policy 7:** To activate a Miller County-City of Colquitt Keep America Beautiful Commission, to develop beautification programs for commercial and industrial areas in the city and county.
- Policy 8:** To continue education on and the promotion of excellence in customer service.
- Objective 4:** To encourage diversification of the local economic sectors.
- Policy 1:** To promote focused efforts on promoting tourist attractions by working with the Historic Preservation Society, the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism and the Plantation Trace Tourism Region Office on marketing and promotion.
- Policy 2:** To facilitate the development of self-guided walking and driving tours of historic and scenic sites in Miller County and the City of Colquitt.
- Policy 3:** To strengthen the county's tourism potential through preservation of historic resources and heritage education programs.
- Policy 4:** To encourage and promote music, art, theater, and other cultural activities in the city and county that can be used as drawing cards for regional visitation.
- Policy 5:** Promote the development of health care facilities and services in the county.
- Policy 6:** Promote small business development.
- Policy 7:** Encourage the development of private transportation services.
- Policy 8:** Encourage the development of private recreation facilities.
- Policy 9:** Promote the use of Bed and Breakfasts and hunting/farming lodging in the city and county.
- Policy 10:** To utilize the Southwest Georgia Chamber newsletter and other media publications to advertise commercial, service, industrial or other vacancies of opportunities.
- Policy 11:** To promote the county as an affordable and enjoyable retirement center by promoting the development of specialized recreation activities, housing, and facilities.
- Objective 5:** To promote education excellence, training programs and educational incentive programs throughout the city and county.

Policy 1: To create a "Life Long Learning Center" in the Ella Sheffield building located on Main Street in Colquitt. This proposed center will house telecommunications/ interactive learning, an alternative school, various training programs, GED classes, literacy courses, and computer skills development classes. The second floor of the Sheffield building will house the Swamp Gravy Offices, rehearsal space, art classes and the Swamp Gravy Institute.

Policy 2: Continue to support existing programs and groups such as the School Improvement Committee that are effective and facilitate the development of needed programs.

Policy 3: Address at risk youth problems, such as teenage pregnancies and dropout rates, utilizing all grants and community resources necessary.

Policy 4: Encourage public-private partnerships in developing educational programs, scholarships and career guidance.

Policy 5: Encourage the development of better access to regional vocational schools and colleges.

Policy 6: Promote the use of education incentive programs by governmental administrations and local businesses.

Objective 6: To promote the development of local funds, the use of state and federal grants, loan and tax credit programs and other incentives offered by public utilities and agencies to encourage economic development.

Policy 1: To encourage local banks to act faithfully with local community developers on the Community Reinvestment Act.

Policy 2: To encourage the development of revolving loan funds to initiate façade improvement programs in the city and county.

Policy 3: To ensure that prospective business interests acquire information on all economic development incentives.

Objective 7: To ensure that local infrastructure is enhanced to promote the economic development potential in the city and county.

Policy 1: Encourage development highways in the Southwest Georgia Region.

Policy 2: Provide infrastructure assistance to proposed industrial parks or speculative buildings.

Policy 3: Continue to work with the Southwest Georgia Regional Solid Waste Authority to establish economical solid waste services in the area.

Policy 4: To utilize ISTE, LDF, CDBG and other grant sources when appropriate to better infrastructure or facilities which may improve the city's and county's economic development potential.

Miller County Agenda

Objective 8: To identify and build a committed leadership base that is representative of all Miller County residents.

Policy 1: Mobilize volunteer services by: 1) creating a community profile toward establishing a volunteer network; 2) involving youth in community activities; and 3) soliciting community wide participation in political support for Southwest Georgia candidates.

Community Facilities Goals, Policies and Objectives

Overall Goal

To provide excellent community facilities and services in Miller County and the City of Colquitt so as to enhance the quality of life of existing and future residents and to prepare for future growth and economic development opportunities.

Law Enforcement

Goal 1: To provide efficient and effective public safety services in Miller County and the City of Colquitt.

Objective 1: To improve the effectiveness of law enforcement activities through staff development and expansion, upgrading of communications other equipment, and the progressive use of special programs.

Policy 1: Continue upgrading and coordinating the dispatching system and radio systems.

Policy 2: To enhance computer operations by upgrading current systems.

Policy 3: To promote innovative law enforcement programs targeting decreases in domestic violence, drug traffic and thefts.

Policy 4: To continually upgrade the in-house training program for law personnel and to promote cross-training where sensible.

Policy 5: To study innovative methods of staff expansion including cross training of public safety personnel, use of auxiliary forces and the investigation of supplemental force grant funding.

Policy 6: To improve community awareness of conflict resolution measures.

Policy 7: To expand the "Neighborhood Watch" program throughout the County, particularly in the City of Colquitt.

Policy 8: To improve coordination between other public safety departments, the courts and social services.

Policy 9: To develop better outreach between the Sheriff's Department and communities throughout the county.

Fire Protection

Goal 1: To enhance fire protection services and equipment in Miller County and the City of Colquitt for the purpose of reducing the ISO rating of each fire station thereby lowering community insurance rates.

Objective 1: To provide adequate water supplies and hydrants network necessary to lower ISO ratings.

Policy 1: To maintain and promote the installation of dry hydrants as needed throughout the county.

Policy 2: To upgrade city water systems as needed to provide excellent water supplies.

Objective 2: To provide adequate space in fire stations and upgrade training and other physical facilities as needed to improve the fire departments of Colquitt/Miller County.

Policy 1: To remodel and construct additions onto the existing stations.

Policy 2: To construct a burn house for training purposes.

Policy 3: To provide adequate training facilities during the planning horizon.

Objective 3: To upgrade fire fighting equipment in each station so as to effectively contribute to lower ISO ratings.

Policy 1: To replace equipment on a priority basis as needed insuring increased water carrying and pumping capacity.

Policy 2: To upgrade hoses on each vehicle.

Policy 3: To increase the Department's potential by purchasing specified equipment.

Objective 4: To improve communications system during emergencies.

Policy 1: To continually upgrade the communications system and equipment including radios, pagers and beepers as needed.

Policy 2: To support enhance communications of emergency services through the use of Enhanced 911.

Objective 5: To encourage professional training and development of a sufficient number of fire fighters in each community.

Policy 1: To continually recruit and train new volunteers.

Policy 2: To establish a Colquitt-Miller County Hazardous Materials Tem and training program.

Miller County Agenda

Water Systems

Goal: To ensure that public water supply systems are adequately maintained and upgraded to meet the needs of the communities for potable water, economic development activities, fire protection and other community needs.

Objective 1: To maintain and improve aged or deteriorating system infrastructure.

Policy 1: To routinely budget for cleaning, painting and other maintenance of the water tank.

Policy 2: To develop new wells to meet community needs for everyday use including backup systems.

Policy 3: To provide for additional storage tanks required to support future economic development activities.

Objective 2: To protect groundwater supplies around well sites.

Policy 1: To develop well head protection ordinances in the City of Colquitt.

Sanitary Sewer Treatment

Goal: To provide sanitary sewer services to all residents of Colquitt and provide new service dictated by future growth.

Objective 1: To upgrade system infrastructure as needed to maintain an efficient operation.

Policy 1: To rehabilitate or replace aging sewer lines as needed to insure adequacy.

Policy 2: To provide an adequate number of lift stations in the City of Colquitt to allow for system growth.

Policy 3: To promote the extension of services to areas of new growth or annexed areas.

Utilities

Goal: To provide utilities to all possible customers in the City of Colquitt service area through the long range planning period.

Objective 1: To continue to plan for system growth.

Policy 1: Plan for additional substations in the long term planning period.

Policy 2: To upgrade services by making transmission improvements when necessary and rephrase upgrades.

School Facilities and Services

Goal: To enhance educational facilities, programs, and services in Miller County so as to provide the opportunities needed to improve education and skills levels necessary to obtain a successful labor force.

Objective 1: To continue with plans to modernize Miller County Public Schools.

Policy 1: To enhance the computer resources with additional hardware and software at both the Elementary and High School.

Policy 2: To physically expand with the addition of new programs such as the Pre Kindergarten Program at the Elementary School.

Policy 3: To modernize classrooms, furnishings, sports, equipment and equipment for special needs students.

Objective 2: To develop a Life Long Learning Center.

Policy 1: To promote the use of telecommunications (distance learning) in education.

Policy 2: To provide advanced learning opportunities for all students.

Policy 3: To provide a permanent location for the PEACH program, Adult Literacy classes, and other continuing education courses which may be offered.

Objective 3: To maximize the acquisition of state and federal funding for educational programs of all types and to promote the acquisition of grants for special needs populations.

Policy 1: To encourage the expansion of education programs to meet the needs of all residents of Miller County.

Objective 4: To promote community involvement in the development of local education activities and strategies.

Policy 1: Utilize the Collaborative Committee, a broad based community task force, to address local educational and employment issues.

Policy 2: To encourage businesses to support local school programs and participate in drives to raise scholarships, develop mentoring and apprentice programs as well as other special programs.

Libraries and Cultural Facilities

Goal: To support libraries and cultural arts organizations throughout Miller County and the City of Colquitt in an effort to expand cultural arts opportunities for local residents and to attract audiences from other counties.

Objective 1: To support growth in the public library holdings.

Miller County Agenda

Policy 1: To further diversify the media forms available at James W. Merritt Jr. Library.

Policy 2: To promote local events to raise donations for local libraries and for the renovation of cultural facilities.

Objective 2: To support the Colquitt Miller County Arts Council.

Policy 1: To maintain Cotton Hall and support the museum.

Policy 2: To promote Swamp Gravy and the Mayhaw Festival.

Health Services

Goal: To provide the City of Colquitt and Miller County residents with adequate health care through the Miller County Health Department, the Miller County Hospital, the Miller County Emergency Medical Services, the Miller County Nursing Home and the Miller County Department of Mental Health.

Objective 1: To manage health care service delivery in an effective manner, meeting all state standards.

Policy 1: To develop and upgrade personnel training and equipment.

Policy 2: To modernize equipment and services offered, especially for the Emergency Medical Service.

Objective 2: To make transportation available to health care users in need of this service.

Policy 1: Research transportation options for Medicaid recipients in need of this service.

Policy 2: Research transportation options for all other health care users in Miller County and the City of Colquitt.

Land Use Goals, Policies and Objectives

Overall Goal

To provide adequate protection of residential neighborhoods, commercial, industrial, and environmentally sensitive areas and all other areas from encroachment by non-compatible land uses. To achieve a desirable arrangement of land uses which will promote efficient delivery of public services in Miller County and the City of Colquitt.

Objective 1: To facilitate the promotion of good land management practices designed to protect the county's traditional agricultural and forestry industries.

Policy 1: To support the use of land and soil conservation programs sponsored by the CFSA and NRCS.

Policy 2: To promote countywide education and public awareness of EPAs 404 permitting process and the State Soil and Sedimentation Act requirements.

Policy 3: Encourage the clustering of future residential, commercial and industrial land uses in the unincorporated areas to avoid the scattered break up of large agricultural lands.

Policy 4: Develop land use regulations to protect sensitive environmental and prime agricultural lands as needed.

Objective 2: To protect and preserve existing residential areas and to promote the orderly development of new residential areas throughout the city and county.

Policy 1: To encourage infill development in residential areas in the City of Colquitt and the unincorporated communities of Miller County to insure efficient infrastructure and service delivery.

Policy 2: To encourage the development of adequate buffers between incompatible land uses and residential areas when developing new land use regulations.

Policy 3: To encourage re-development in the identified blighted areas located in both the city and the county.

Policy 4: To promote the development of neighborhood parks throughout the county.

Objective 3: To encourage aesthetically pleasing development along the US 27 and all entrances to the City of Colquitt.

Policy 1: To review zoning ordinance regulations along major corridors in the city and to develop special design standards as applicable.

Policy 2: To solicit grants for the purpose of improving the entrances of the city.

Objective 4: To provide adequate land to encourage the development of commercial and industrial areas near existing public services.

Policy 1: To promote industrial development in parks and clusters.

Policy 2: To encourage infill development in the city's central business districts and existing shopping areas.

Objective 5: To coordinate land development regulations on the fringes of the incorporated and unincorporated areas and to monitor fringe area development for annexation purposes.

Policy 1: To support coordinated planning on fringe area development.

Policy 2: To annex land adjacent to Colquitt when the service demand warrants such action.

Objective 6: To provide an adequate amount of land for all land use categories to meet the needs of the existing and future population of Miller County and the City of Colquitt.

Miller County Agenda

Policy 1: To encourage the long-term development of parks and open space throughout Miller County communities.

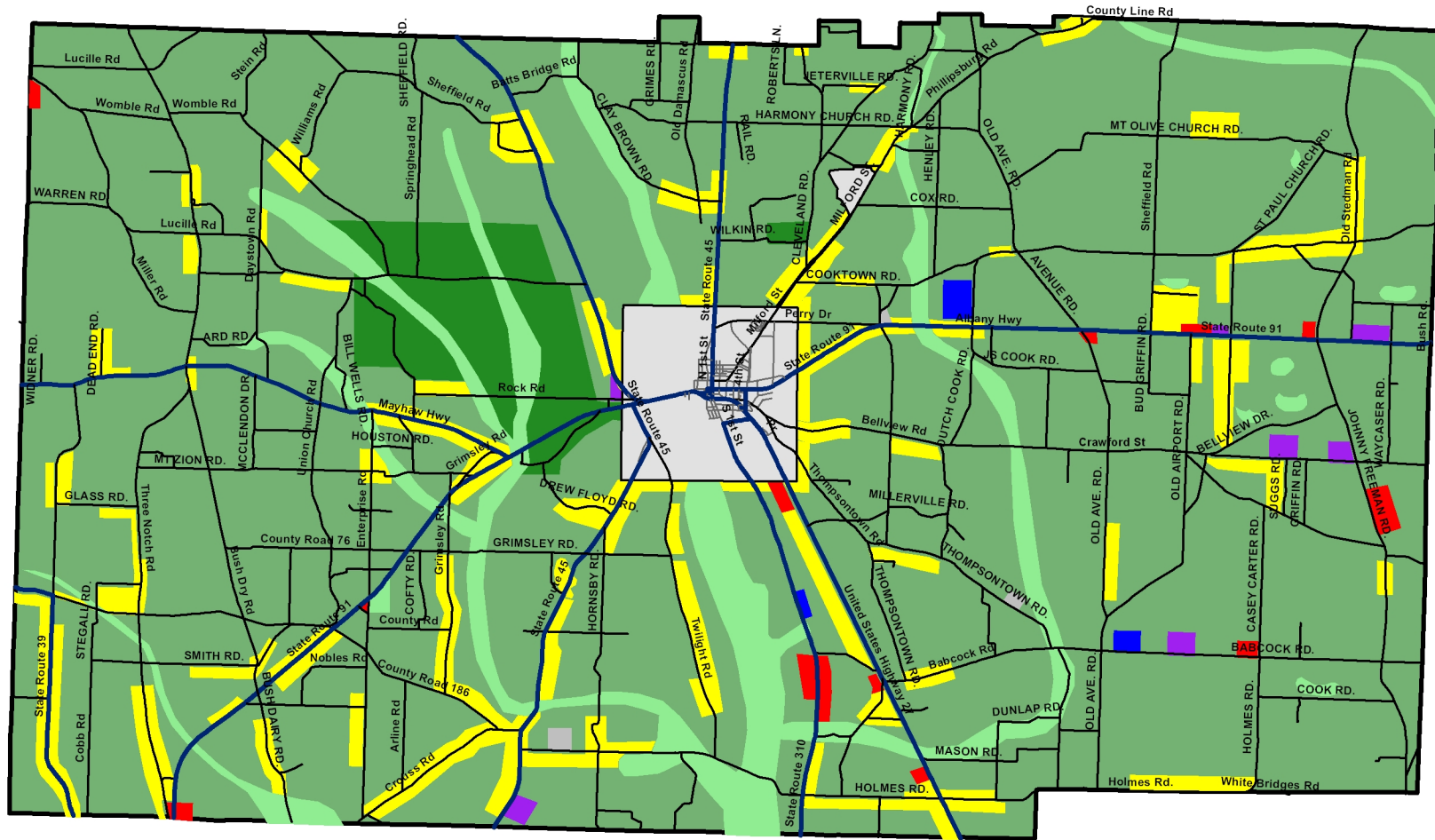
Policy 2: To encourage the conversion of agricultural lands within municipalities where services may best be developed and offered efficiently so as to protect the agricultural lands throughout the county.

Policy 3: To develop an industrial park.

Policy 4: To promote infill commercial development or re-development in areas suitable to commercial use.

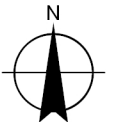
Miller County

Future Development Map



Legend

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial Residential Agricultural/Forestry Transportation/Utility/Communication 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Park/Recreation/Conservation Industrial Public/Institutional
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City of Colquitt

Future Development Map



Legend

-  Agricultural/Forestry
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Parks/Recreation/Conservation
-  Public/Institutional
-  Residential
-  Transportation/Utility/Communication

