

Community Assessment



Seminole County, Donalsonville, and Iron City Consolidated Comprehensive Plan 2007-2027



Community Assessment

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INTRODUCTION

Seminole County and the Cities of Donalsonville and Iron City have collaborated to form the 10th year update to its 20 year Comprehensive Plan. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs defines why the Community Assessment portion of the comprehensive plan exists as- the purpose of the Assessment is to present factual and conceptual foundation upon which the remainder of the 2027 Comprehensive Plan will be built. The Assessment is a document that shows what is currently in existence and plans for growth, development, or demolition of current structure, rules, etc. This plan belongs to the entire community and is a living document.

CONTENT

The Community Assessment contains four basic components as identified in the Department of Community Affairs Planning Recommendations:

- 1) Identification of Potential Issues and Opportunities related to population, economic development, housing, natural and cultural resources, community facilities and services, intergovernmental coordination and transportation
 - 2) Analysis of Existing Development Patterns, Character Areas and Land Use
 - 3) Analysis of the community's consistency with Quality Community Objectives
- 4) Analysis of supporting data and information to check validity of potential issues and opportunities, and character areas (Supporting data and information is located in the Technical Addendum)



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The data that has been collected and analyzed is meant solely for the purpose of presenting it to the public and officials in a clear, concise format. It will also generate discussion for the Community Agenda which is the action and implementation portion of the plan.



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Statewide Planning Goals

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs has established the following goals to guide communities in developing and implementing their Comprehensive Plan. These goals will serve as a guide for the development of the Seminole County, Donalsonville, and Iron City Consolidated Comprehensive Plan.

- (a) **Economic Development Goal:** To achieve a growing and balanced economy, consistent with the prudent management of the state's resources, that equitably benefits all segments of the population
- (b) **Natural and Cultural Resources Goal:** To conserve and protect the environmental, natural and cultural resources of Georgia's communities, regions and the state
- (c) **Community Facilities and Services Goal:** To ensure the provision of community facilities and services throughout the state to support efficient growth and development patterns that will protect and enhance the quality of life of Georgia's residents
- (d) **Housing Goal:** To ensure that all residents of the state have access to adequate and affordable housing
- (e) **Land Use and Transportation Goal:** To ensure the coordination of land use planning and transportation planning throughout the state in support of efficient growth and development patterns that will promote sustainable economic development, protection of natural and cultural resources and provision of adequate and affordable housing
- (f) **Intergovernmental Coordination:** To ensure the coordination of local planning efforts with other local service providers and authorities, with neighboring communities and with state and regional plans and programs

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POPULATION

Population Issues

Migration of Youth

In most rural communities, retaining the “best and brightest” students is very difficult to do. Seminole County is no different. Many young people leave the area to attain a post secondary education or employment and do not return.

Population Opportunities

Growing Population

	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000
Donalsonville	2621	2907	3320	2761	2796
Iron City	298	351	403	319	321
Unincorporated	3883	3801	5334	5930	6252
Seminole County	6802	7059	9057	9010	9369

2000 United States Census Bureau

The last 40 years of Census Data shows a fluctuating population for the Cities of Donalsonville and Iron City. The City of Donalsonville had its peak in population in the 1980’s but declined in the 1990’s. Iron City has also lost population over the years peaking during the 1980 census and declining in the 1990’s. Seminole County has maintained a pattern of growth over the last ten years. There was a slight decline in population in the 1990’s – though numbers were higher than ever in 2000. Seminole County has grown from 6,802 (1960 census) to 9,369 (2000 census) which is an increase of approximately 27%.

Aging Population

The population of Seminole County is beginning to experience significant aging. Trends are showing an increased number of persons 65 years and older for Seminole County. The last 15 years has shown a 5% increase in this population. The 50+ population has grown even more with 33% of Seminoles’ population being in this category. Due to the increasing number of the aging population more services will become necessary to maintain the quality of life for this population.

Retirement Community Potential

With the current population aging and an influx of Floridians, Seminole can become a retirement community. By having services, recreation, and programs geared toward seniors, it could be an ideal place for people to retire.



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Children's Population

21% of the population is 14 years old or younger; many of which attend the public school system. This is a valuable asset for the community. Through proper planning, a plan may be derived to retain this population in the community.



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ECONOMICS

Existing Businesses

Seminole County has about 215 established businesses within the County and Cities. In 2004 there were 2,256 employees within Seminole County. The top five (non-governmental) employers were American Peanut Growers Group LLC., Donalsonville Hospital, JH Harvey Co, LLC, Lewis Carter Manufacturing, and Three Notch Electric Membership.

(Note: These statistics are acquired from the Georgia Department of labor and represent employment covered by unemployment insurance excluding all government agencies with the exception of correctional institutions, state and local hospitals, state Colleges and Universities. Data shown is for the Third Quarter of 2006. Employers are listed alphabetically by area, not by the number of employees)

Prospective Businesses

Seminole County and the Cities are actively seeking new business to locate or relocate there. The Industrial Park currently has 18 acres available for prospective businesses.

Economic Issues

Poverty/Income Rates

23.2% of the County's population live below the poverty level with 35.1% of the children under the age of 18 being below the poverty level. Per capita personal income was \$22,783 compared to \$29,782 for Georgia in 2004. Median household income of \$27,094 was also lower than the states average of \$42,433.

Emergency services near lake

Additional emergency services are needed near the lake where there has been an increase in population and residential growth. Services that might be examined are water systems, septic systems, hydrants and satellite ambulance services.

Educational Level and Workforce Development

Seminole County's drop out rate between 2001 and 2005 was 11.2%. The percent of the population over the age of 25 that did not graduate from high school is 32.1%.

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Economic Opportunities

Current Business Base

There are currently about 215 active businesses in Seminole County that account for a significant number of tax dollars. There are opportunities for expansion of current businesses and for creation of partnerships with businesses on various projects.

Retain Current Business

Seminole County and the Chamber of Commerce should work together to increase efforts to retain the current business base within the county.

Attracting Additional Seniors

Seminole County has the opportunity to become a retirement community. There are already award winning medical facilities in place. Other opportunities will be explored in the Community Agenda.

Local peanut Co-op

American Peanut Growers Group is a locally owned and operated Co-op that allows farmers to work together to provide products at a marketable cost. They have grown to become one of the top five employers for Seminole County.

Expansion of Agricultural Base

Much of Seminole County has been deemed by the United States Department of Agriculture as prime farmland. Innovative uses of agricultural land and products could expand agricultural profitability.



Promote Ecotourism

Seminole County features several significant ecological resources. This includes the State Parks, bike routes, and Lake Seminole. Seminole County should develop a strategy to promote the area's ecological resources. Ecotourism provides a means of protecting ecologically important sites while also providing economic benefit.

Retail/Restaurants

Adding more retail and restaurants would give the citizens of Seminole County the opportunity to shop at home thereby boosting the economy.



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Marina for Lake Seminole

A Marina will be placed at Cummings Landing. This will be an economic boost and add an element of user friendliness to the Lake.

Vertical Business Growth

Encouraging businesses to grow, produce, manufacture and sell everything from one location will encourage more economic development in Seminole County.

Tourism Attraction

Tourism is one of the greatest forms of economic development. Tourists spend money and leave without the County and Cities having to provide services for them, thus creating a win-win situation.

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Completion of 4 Lanes for Highway 27

Georgia Department of Transportation will complete the widening of Highway 27 in the future which could afford more opportunity for tourism and commercial development for Seminole. Highway 27 does not bisect Seminole County; however, traffic and tourist could be diverted through Seminole County.

Industrial Park

There is an Industrial Park available in Seminole County that should attract additional industries. There are currently 18 acres that are available.

Local Airport

Seminole County owns one of the very few self-supporting airports in Georgia. This facility is jet capable, has 5,000 feet of bituminous runway, aircraft tie down, hangar and lighted runway.





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NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Resource Awareness

Natural and Cultural Resources have to be marketed effectively. It would benefit Seminole County to plan an Education/Marketing piece to educate the public about natural and cultural events that are available.

Resource Issues:

Master Plan for Lake Seminole

There is a Land Use Development Plan for Lake Seminole that was created in 1977. This plan is in need of being updated in order to address the new developments and changes that are occurring on the land surrounding Lake Seminole.

Preservation of Plantations and Agricultural Land

Seminole County must preserve the rural character of the area through preservation of prime agricultural/forestry land and plantations. This can be accomplished by centering growth near town centers and areas that are already developed.

Resource Opportunities:

Olive Theatre

This historic renovated theatre provides approximately four (4) shows per year for family entertainment. There is potential to expand the Theatre and possibly do tour bus viewings for the shows that are produced throughout the year. Pre-selected annual show dates may be required in order to maintain an active audience.

Harvest Festival

Downtown Donalsonville is the home of the Annual Harvest Festival that is held in October of each year. It celebrates agriculture and has arts, crafts, a parade, food and competitions.

Historic Preservation Ordinance

Seminole County and the Cities of Donalsonville and Iron City should explore the development of a historic preservation ordinance that would interconnect a series of historic sites and encourage the renovations of sites if it is economically feasible. This ordinance would help to preserve those structures that have architectural or historic significance to the community, state, and world.



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Iron City

Iron City has several homes that are historically significant, as are many of the original buildings in the downtown area.

Lake Seminole, Chattahoochee River, Flint River, Creeks/Streams

Seminole County must protect and preserve the waterways through wetland and stream buffer protection ordinances and comprehensive erosion and sedimentation rules. The County should continue to follow the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Environment Protection Divisions recommendations for protection of the waterways. The rivers and lake could be utilized for canoeing or kayaking. Seminole State Park offers picnic sites, a swimming beach, camping, cottages, and fishing docks to its visitors. The Jim Woodruff Lock and Dam creates the lake and 500-mile-long shoreline of Lake Seminole. Lake Seminole is one of the most highly regarded fishing lakes in North America.

Promotion of Fishing and Hunting

Seminole County should continue to collaborate with the Bass and Fishing Tournaments that currently take place on Lake Seminole. This area is renowned for its fishing, hunting, and other water activities. County and Cities should partner with the Fish and Wildlife Agency to get an inventory of natural resources in the community.

Community Center

There is not a large meeting facility (200+ people) other than the High School Auditorium/Cafeteria or Middle School Auditorium for arts and cultural activities to take place. A large Community Center would be a great opportunity to host many local events. This venue could be used for housing exhibits, teaching classes, holding meetings/conferences, and family reunions.

Keep Seminole Beautiful Program

The Keep America Beautiful Program helps communities understand the importance of appearance. The Program encourages local clean-ups and code enforcement. Seminole County and the Cities should support this program.

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COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Facility Issues:

Fire/Emergency Services

Currently there is not adequate service provided throughout the county, but due to concern for new buildings and additional personnel, additional coverage has not been sought.

Facility Opportunities:

Schools

Seminole County has two public schools with 121 teachers, 1,675 students and 92 high school graduates in 2005. The Middle/High School was recently built, however the elementary school was not. There may be an opportunity in the next 10 years for a new elementary school.



Senior Center

The new Senior Center that was built meets the needs of seniors throughout the County. They provide meals and regular activities for seniors to enjoy.

Donalsonville Hospital

The Donalsonville Hospital is an Award Winning Hospital that has 65 beds and recently added a women's center and a new Emergency Room. The Hospital also manages a 75 bed nursing home named Seminole Manor. This medical facility provides much needed medical care to the rural area.

Iron City Community Center

The Community Center is a green space area right near the heart of Iron City. There is a walking track and playground equipment located in the park. There is potential for a new gazebo in the park along with the resurfacing of the walking track.



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HOUSING

Housing Issues:

Affordable Rentals

There is currently a lack of available housing that is affordable to the workforce and median income citizens in Seminole County.

Distressed Housing

Unfortunately, both direct and indirect data sources suggest that sub par housing exists in Seminole County. Both City and County governments should coordinate their efforts to strengthen code enforcement and the regulations for subdivisions, manufactured housing, and lot sizes throughout the County.

Housing Opportunities:

Downtown Housing

Seminole has the opportunity to have housing in downtown Donalsonville and Iron City. Many of the stores that are downtown do have second stories that are currently being used as storage in many cases. If owners are willing, there is potential for Downtown living. Attractive to both young people and empty nesters, downtown residents could help revitalize older buildings, support new businesses and maintain a 24-hour presence.

Infill Housing

Seminole County should continue residential development in areas with existing infrastructure and minimize the use of undeveloped land at the rural perimeter by encouraging development of sites closer to the downtown and traditional neighborhoods.

Non Profit groups interested in Housing

Seminole County should consider working with non-profit agencies that are interested in housing. This partnership could open doors for grant funds that are available to build more affordable housing throughout the community. Home-buyer education and code enforcement education should begin now.



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LAND USE

Land use Issues:

The Zoning Ordinances

Seminole County and the Cities should review zoning ordinances at least once every five to ten years to assure that the regulations still meet current requirements and development trends. Iron City has just recently updated the zoning ordinance.

Ground water recharge land

Seminole County sits atop one of the largest aquifers in the United States and has Lake Seminole. Ground water recharge land should be protected and conserved. Part of this is handled by the Corp of Engineers.

Land Use Opportunities:

Revitalization

Many of the traditional neighborhoods have started to decline in Seminole County. To avoid losing neighborhoods, a revitalization plan should be developed to encourage new development and rehabilitation.

Special Protection Areas

Seminole has an abundance of natural beauty that must be preserved. Lake Seminole, agricultural land, conservation land, and the aquifer are areas that require special attention and protections. Soil conservation and timber management should also be considered in this plan.

Preserve Sense of Place

Seminole County is traditionally an agricultural based community. While growth is sought, it does not have to come at the detriment of agricultural land. Town centers should be just that; centers that encourage growth in centralized areas. Seminole County has to determine its character and pursue it in marketing.

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TRANSPORTATION

Current and Future Conditions

Currently Seminole County participates with the Rural Transit Advisory Committee for planning and implementing Transportation Services.

Transportation Opportunities:

Alternative Transit Methods

Seminole County should consider providing additional bicycle and pedestrian trails along with motorized lanes for mopeds or power chairs.





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INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

Intergovernmental Issues:

Animal Control

There is no formal animal control within Seminole County. Due to budgetary constraints it is not currently funded. The County and Cities need to pursue funding opportunities for animal control.

Intergovernmental Opportunities:

Working Relationship

Currently, the County and Cities have a very good working relationship with each other. They offer aid and assistance to each other on a regular basis. This relationship is to be applauded and nurtured.

Working with Surrounding Governments

Seminole County should consider working with neighboring communities to improve on regional projects and grant opportunities. The current mutual aid and automatic aid that is provided for surrounding Counties should be continued.



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Analysis of Existing Development Patterns

The following analysis aims to provide a succinct understanding of the physical environment of Seminole County and the cities of Donalsonville and Iron City. The following Analysis examines three aspects of the existing development pattern in Donalsonville, Iron City and Seminole County.

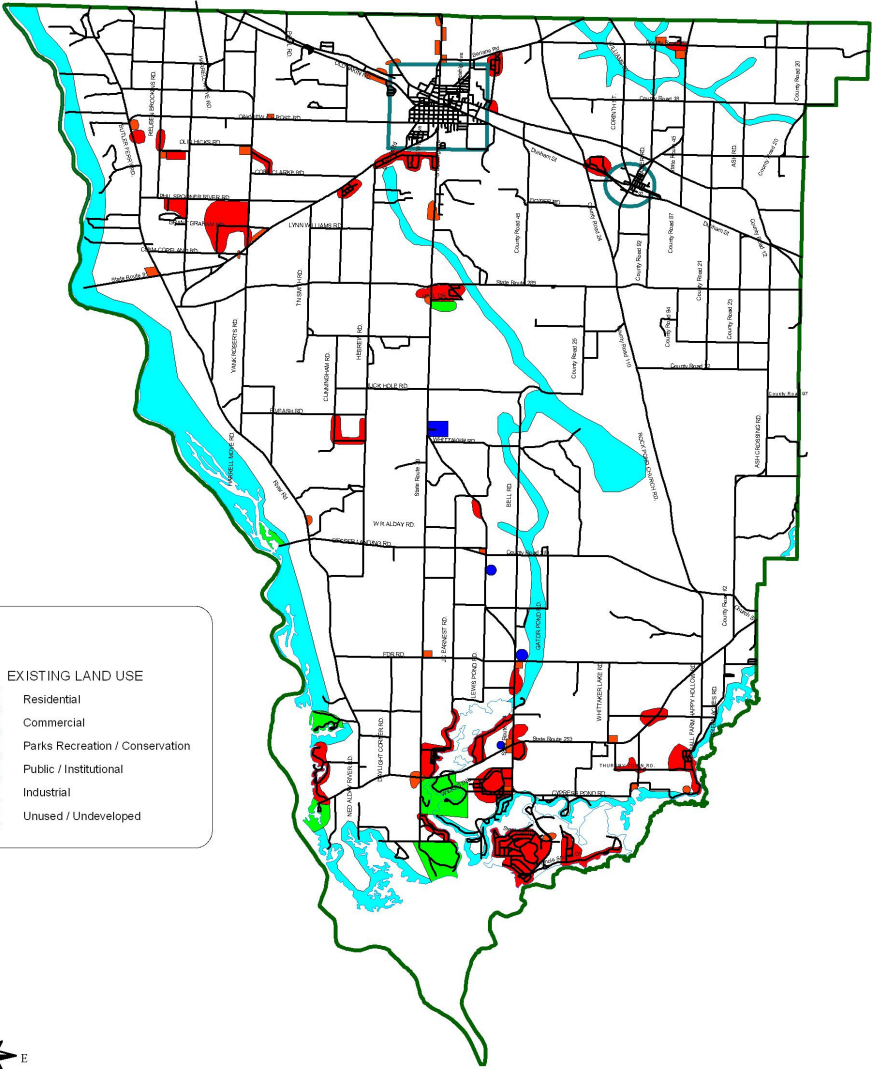
Existing Land Use

Existing Land use Maps are provided on the next three pages. These maps provide an important representation of what is currently on the ground. For the purpose of this analysis, the existing land use maps contain information on the uses of the current land in Seminole County.

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Agricultural/Forestry	Land used for agricultural purposes such as cropland or livestock production and all land used or potentially used for commercial timber production
Commercial	Commercial and office uses, including strip malls, big box retail outlets, auto related businesses, restaurants, convenience stores and office buildings
Industrial	Industrial Uses
Parks/Recreation/Conservation	Land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. These areas may be either publicly or privately-owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers or similar uses.
Public/Institutional	These are community, general government, and institutional facilities that are available for public use. Examples include schools, public safety stations, city halls, courthouses, jails, health facilities, churches, libraries, and cemeteries. Utilities are specifically excluded from this category.
Residential	Residential includes any area that has single family or multi family homes.
Transportation/Communication/Utilities	Land used for major transportation routes, public transit stations, power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, telephone switching stations, airports, or other similar uses
Undeveloped/Vacant	Land served by typical urban services (water, sewer, etc.) but not developed for a specific use or developed for a specific use that has since been abandoned.

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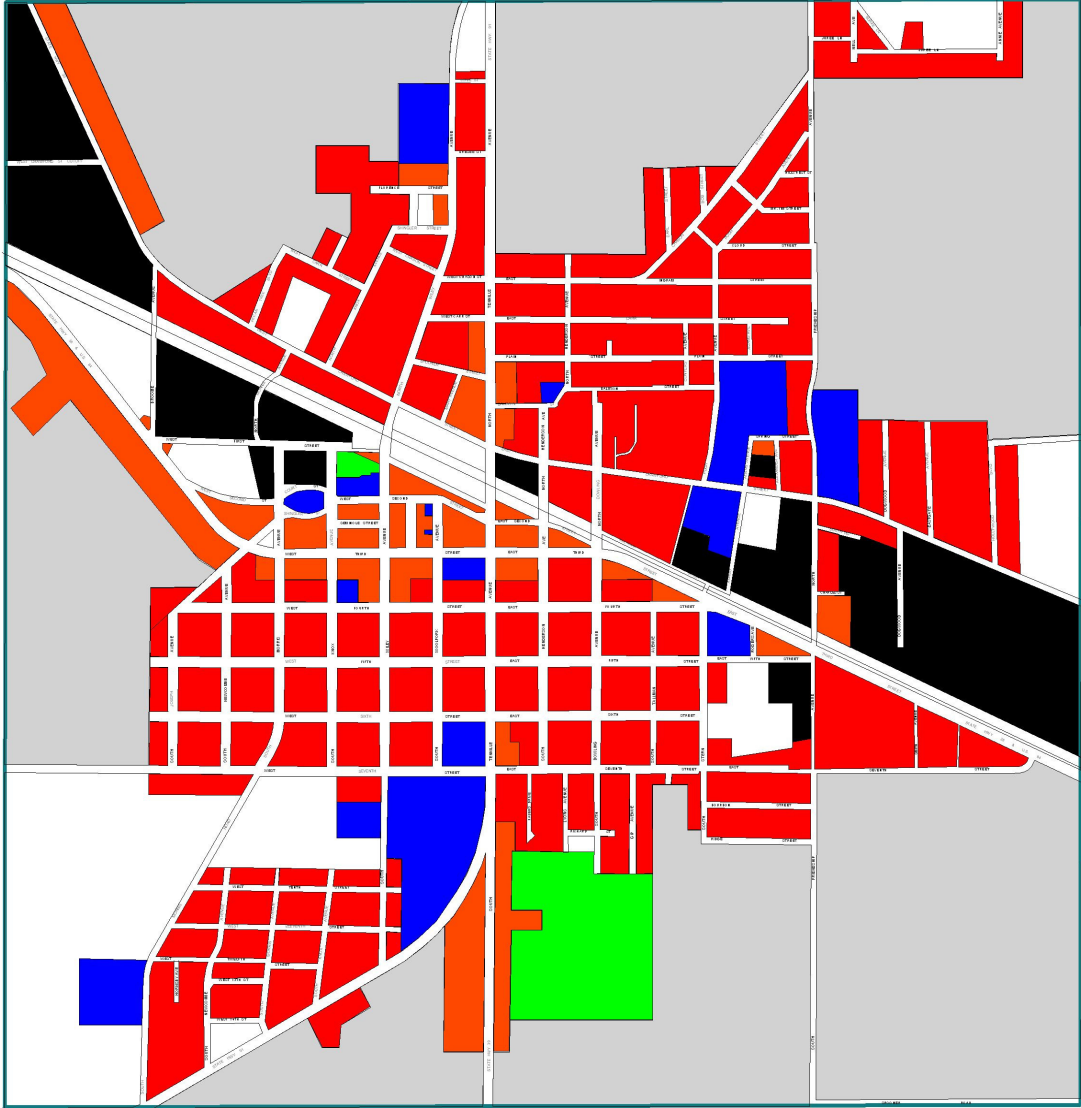
EXISTING LAND USE

- Residential
- Commercial
- Parks Recreation / Conservation
- Public / Institutional
- Industrial
- Unused / Undeveloped



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER	EXISTING LAND USE	SEMINOLE COUNTY
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EXISTING LAND USE

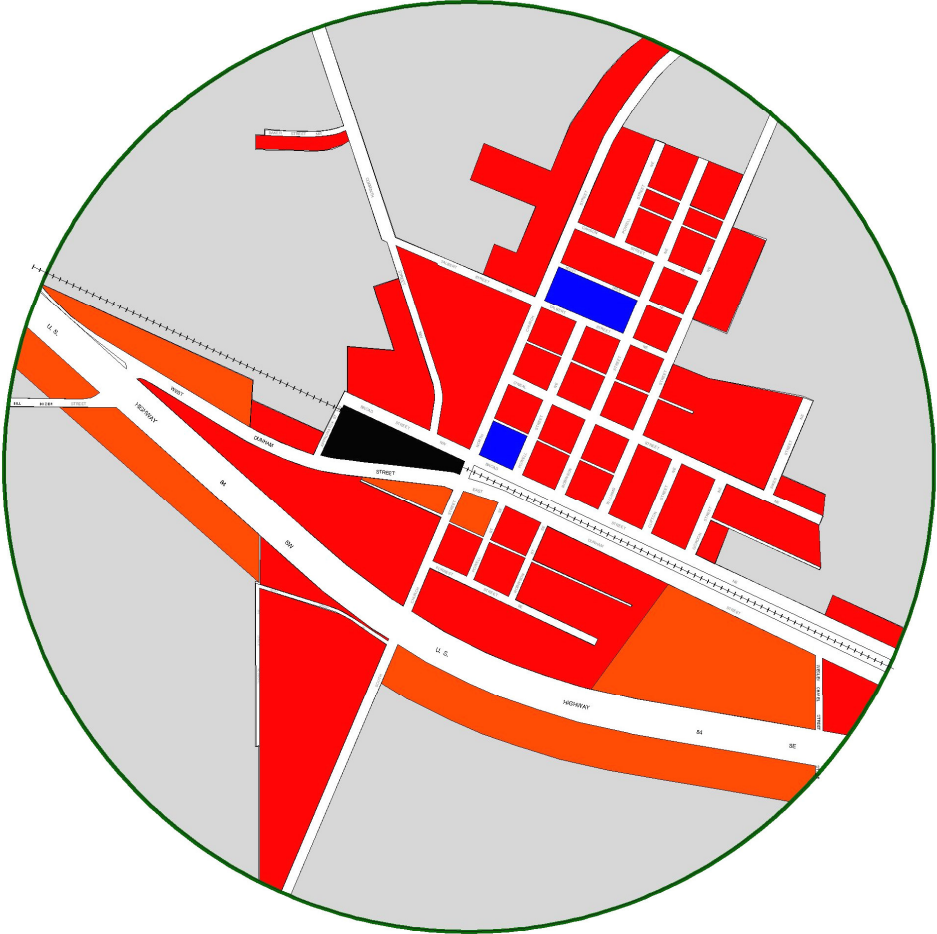
EXISTING LAND USE

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



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT CENTER	<h2>Existing Land Use</h2>	CITY OF DONALSONVILLE
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LEGEND

EXISTING LAND USE

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



SOUTHWEST GEORGIA
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
CENTER

EXISTING LAND USE

CITY OF
IRON CITY

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Areas Requiring Special Attention

Continued development in Seminole County and the Cities will have significant impacts on the existing residents, natural and cultural resources, community services and facilities and infrastructure. This section summarizes the likely impacts of growth, including areas where growth should be avoided. Also included are areas in need of additional investment due to aesthetics, pollution or disinvestment.

Areas of Prime Farmland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Areas where agriculture is predominate • Areas of hi-quality farmland/forest with relatively large amounts of prime or unique farmland • Especially areas where suburban sprawl would encroach upon • Farms • Plantations and other large tracts of land for conservation or wildlife management
Areas of Significant Natural Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lake Seminole, wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, Flint River, Chattahoochee River, and other creeks and streams
Areas with Potential Infill Development Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While the City of Donalsonville and Iron City are mostly built out, there are infill opportunities in many of the City's neighborhoods, industrial park and in the immediate area around downtown in the traditional neighborhoods
Reinvestment Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are some redevelopment areas within the County and the Cities • This is particularly true in areas containing older housing stock that have not been well maintained or fail to meet current building codes • Redevelopment or master plans for these areas are encouraged
Scenic Corridors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transportation corridors with scenic views may want to be considered for special land use controls • Seminole County should consider pursuing rural and scenic byway designation for many of its corridors. Hwy 253 and River Road are Bike Routes.

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Historic Districts and Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are several historic sites and possibilities for districts in Seminole County.• Local protections could be put into place to keep these resources available. Many of the resources are privately owned which involves an educational prerequisite.
Rural Character	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Though Seminole County is growing, its rural character should still be maintained.
Areas of Historic Value	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The crossroad community of Little Hope, the Commissary at Lela, Donalsonville Hospital, Downtown Historic District and Three Notch Road are some examples of historic areas in Seminole County.



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Recommended Character Areas

A character area is defined as a specific geographic area within the community that:

Has unique or special characteristics to be preserved or enhanced (such as a Downtown, a historic district, a neighborhood, or a transportation corridor);

Has potential to evolve into a unique area with more intentional guidance of future development through adequate planning and implementation (such as strip commercial corridor that could be revitalized into a more attractive village development pattern); or

Requires special attention due to unique development issues (rapid change of development patterns, economic decline, etc.)

Each character area is a planning sub-area where more detailed, small-area planning and implementation of certain policies, investments, and/or incentives may be applied in order to preserve, improve, or otherwise influence its future development patterns and ensure consistency with our community's vision.

On the following pages is a list of **potential** character areas. This list will be modified, added to, or subtracted from during the *Community Agenda* development process based on steering committee and stakeholder perspectives about current and future development patterns.

The Potential Character Areas for Seminole County and the Cities of Donalsonville and Iron City are as follows:

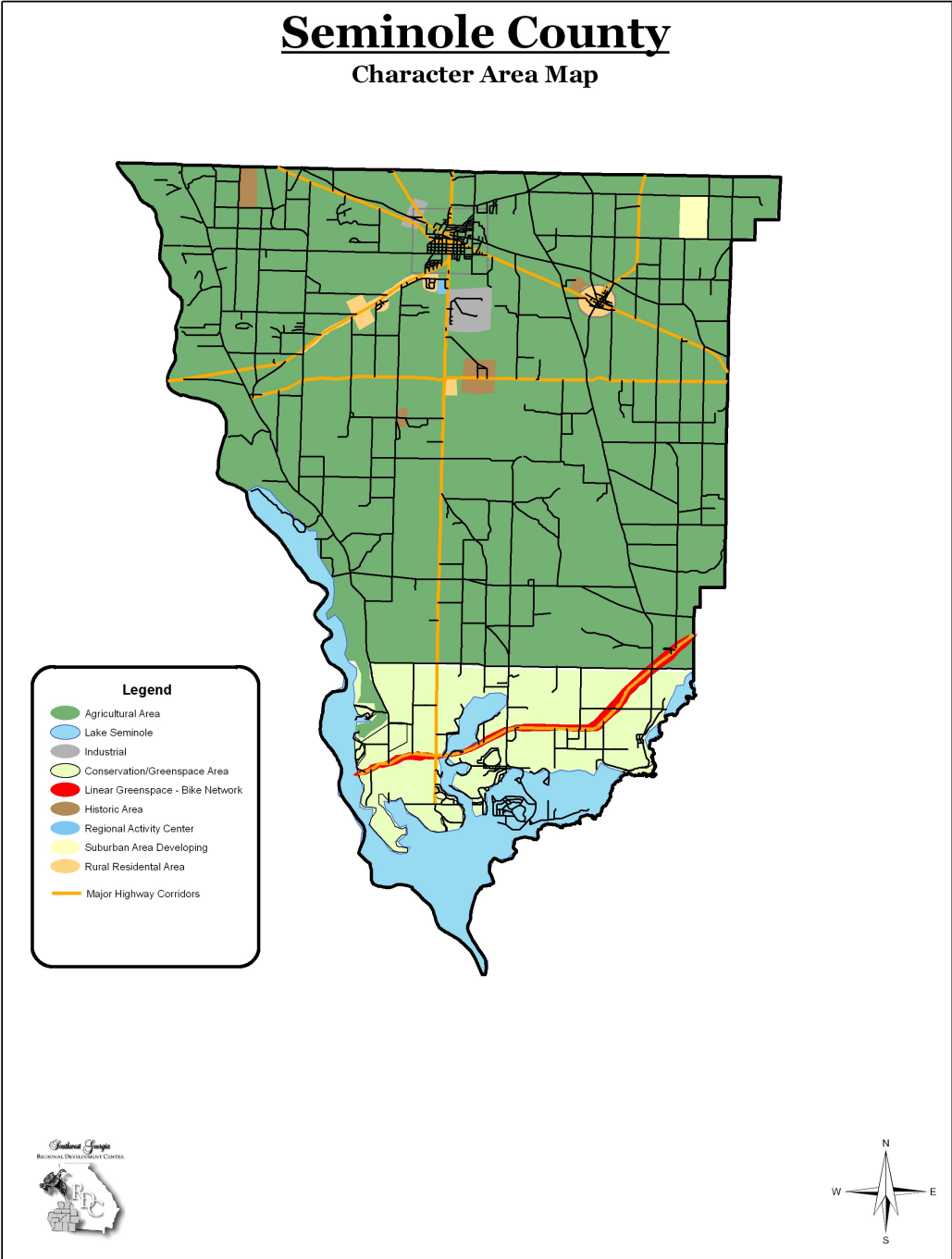
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Conservation Area and Green space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Primarily undeveloped natural lands and environmentally sensitive areas not suitable for development e.g. scenic views, coast, steep slopes, flood plains, wetlands, watersheds, wildlife management areas and other environmentally sensitive areas
Linear Green space, Trail And Pedestrian Bike Network	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area of protected open space that follow natural and manmade linear features for recreation, transportation and conservation purposes and links ecological, cultural and recreational amenities
Agricultural Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lands in open or cultivated state or sparsely settled including woodlands and farm lands
Rural Residential Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural undeveloped land likely to face development pressures for lower density (one unit per 2+ acres) residential development Typically will have low pedestrian orientation and access, very large lots, open space, pastoral views, and high degree of building separation
Suburban Area Developing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area where pressures for the typical types of suburban residential subdivision development are greatest (due to the availability of water and sewer) Without intervention, this area is likely to evolve with low pedestrian orientation, little or no transit, high open space, high to moderate degree of building separation, predominantly residential with scattered civic buildings and varied street patterns, often curvilinear
Traditional Neighborhood Stable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A neighborhood having relatively well-maintained housing, possess a distinct identity through architectural style, lot and street design and has higher rates of homeownership Location near declining areas of town may also cause this neighborhood to decline over time
Traditional Neighborhood Declining	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An area that has most of its original housing stock in place but housing conditions are worsening due to low rates of homeownership and neglect of property maintenance There may be a lack of neighborhood identity and gradual invasion of different type and intensity of use that may not be compatible with the neighborhood residential use
Neighborhood Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A neighborhood focal point with a concentration of activities such as general retail, service, commercial, professional office, higher-density housing, and appropriate public and open space uses easily accessible by pedestrians

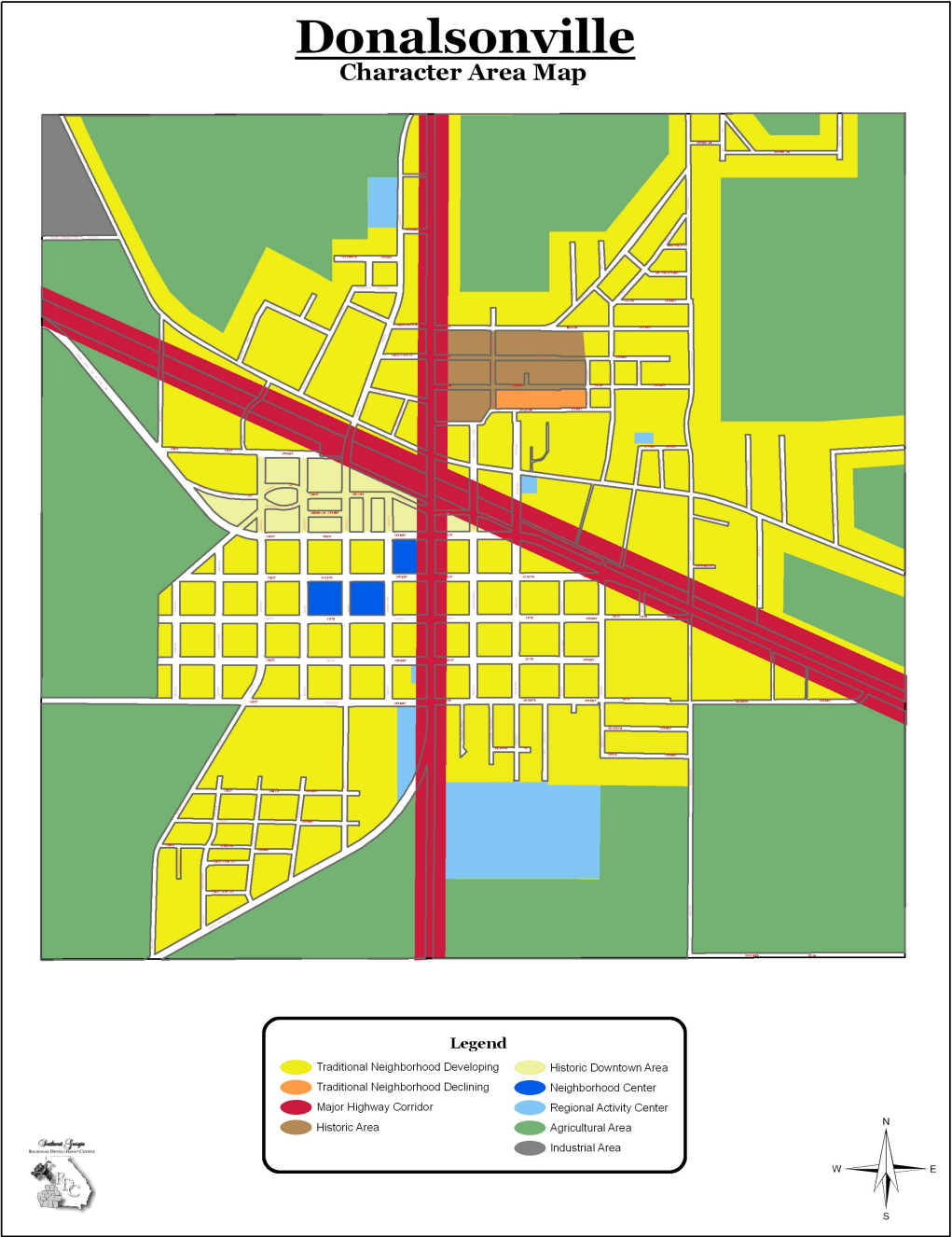
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Historic Downtown	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The traditional central business district and immediately surrounding commercial, industrial or mixed use areas that have been designated as an historic area
Regional Activity Center	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concentration of regionally marketed commercial and retail centers, office and employment areas, higher-education facilities, sports and recreational complexes These areas are characterized by high degree of access by vehicular traffic, and high transit use, including stops, shelters, and transfer points; on-site parking; low degree of internal open space; high floor area ratio; large tracts of land, campus or unified development
In-Town Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed or undeveloped land on both sides of designated high-volume transportation facility Characteristics include orientation of building to highway; high transit, including stops and shelters; on-site parking; and large set-backs for buildings
Scenic Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed or undeveloped land paralleling the route of a major thoroughfare that has significant natural, historic, or cultural features, and scenic or pastoral views
Major Highway Corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developed or undeveloped land on both sides of designated high-volume transportation facility, such as arterial roads and highways
Light Industrial Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Area used in low intensity manufacturing, wholesale trade, and distribution activities that do not generate excessive noise, particulate matter, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors, radiation, or other nuisance characteristics
Industrial Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Land used in higher intensity manufacturing, assembly, processing activities where noise, particulate matter, vibration, smoke, dust, gas, fumes, odors, radiation or other nuisance characteristics are not contained on site
Historic Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Historic district or area containing features, landmarks, civic or cultural uses of historic interest Characteristics may vary based on size location and history of the community
Rural Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural, undeveloped land likely to face development pressures for lower density (one unit per 2+ acres) residential development. Typically will have low pedestrian orientation and access, very large lots, open space, pastoral views and high degree of building separation

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Analysis of Consistency with Quality Community Objectives (QCO's)

The Department of Community Affairs adopted the Quality Community Objectives (QCOs) as statements of the development patterns and options that will help Georgia preserve its unique cultural, natural and historic resources while looking to the future and developing to its fullest potential.

The Quality Community Objectives Local Assessment will be used to evaluate the progress of Seminole County and the Cities of Donalsonville and Iron City in developing their Comprehensive Plan to provide sustainable and livable communities.

The Quality Community Objectives are divided into four elements of community development:

- Development Patterns
- Resource Conservation
- Social and Economic Development
- Governmental Relations

Traditional Neighborhood Objective:

Traditional neighborhood development patterns should be encouraged, including use of more human scale development, mixing of uses within easy walking distance of one another, and facilitating pedestrian activity.

Seminole County and the Cities of Donalsonville and Iron City meet this objective. Each Community in Seminole County has its own zoning ordinance that for the most part has separate commercial, residential and retail uses.

Infill Development Objective:

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

Seminole County and the Cities of Donalsonville and Iron City do encourage development and redevelopment of sites that are near the center of the community. There are developments that are occurring close to the Lake Seminole area which is not served by water or sewer.



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Sense of Place Objective:

Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where this is not possible, the development of activity centers that serve as community focal points should be encouraged. These community focal points should be attractive, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly places where people choose to gather for shopping, dining, socializing, and entertainment.

Seminole County and the Cities of Donalsonville and Iron City all have sense of place. The City of Donalsonville has a strong, historic downtown. Iron City is working to revitalize its downtown and Lake Seminole serves as a focal point for the county.

Transportation Alternatives Objective:

Alternatives to transportation by automobile, including mass transit, bicycle routes and pedestrian facilities, should be made available in each community. Greater use of alternate transportation should be encouraged.

There are sidewalks throughout the City of Donalsonville and some in Iron City that allow a degree of pedestrian mobility, there are few other alternatives to motor vehicle transportation. The City and County do participate in a rural public transit program.

Regional Identity Objective:

Regions should promote and preserve an “identity,” defined in terms of traditional regional architecture, common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.

The Region is full of rich and vibrant natural beauty. Seminole County is no different with the Lake and State Parks as a focal point. There are two State bike routes that run through the County and historic places throughout the County. The Southwest portion of the State is driven by Agriculture as the majority of Seminole County is also.

Heritage Preservation Objective:

The traditional character of the community should be maintained through preserving and revitalizing historic areas of the community, encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community, and protecting other scenic or natural features that are important to defining the community’s character.

The Agricultural Heritage of Seminole County is still apparent today and will remain for years to come.



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Open Space Preservation Objective:

New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set aside from development for use as public parks or as green-belts/wildlife corridors.

Seminole County and the Cities of Donalsonville and Iron City meet or exceed this objective.

Environmental Protection Objective:

Air quality and environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development. Environmentally sensitive areas deserve special protection, particularly when they are important for maintaining traditional character or quality of life of the community or region. Whenever possible, the natural terrain, drainage, and vegetation of an area should be preserved.

Both Cities and County Government have adopted all necessary Environmental Regulations.

Growth Preparedness Objective:

Each community should identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These may include housing and infrastructure (roads, water, sewer and telecommunications) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances to direct growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities.

The Cities and County have population projections for the next 20 years that are referred to when making infrastructure decisions. There are areas within communities where we would like to see growth. There is an age distribution issue that is changing with more residents aging into the over 65 range.

Appropriate Businesses Objective:

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

While there are limited job opportunities in the Cities the existing business base is appropriate for the community with many businesses focusing on agriculture and social services.



Community Assessment

Employment Options Objective:

A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.

Again job opportunities are appropriate for the area and are limited. However surrounding communities do offer an array of job opportunities to those with many

Housing Opportunities Objective:

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

There are new subdivisions being built in Seminole County; however there are limited rental properties and a few areas of housing in the City that should be rehabilitated. Many of the newer homes are in the higher price range which could cause a shortage of houses available to the workforce.

Educational Opportunities Objective:

Educational and training opportunities should be readily available in each community – to permit community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, or to pursue entrepreneurial ambitions.

There are two schools in the Seminole County School System. There are a number of community colleges, technical schools and universities within driving distance of Seminole.

Regional Solutions Objective:

Regional solutions to needs shared by more than one local jurisdiction are preferable to separate local approaches, particularly where this will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer.

Seminole County and the Cities of Donalsonville and Iron City meet this objective.

Regional Cooperation Objective:

Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources.

Seminole County and the Cities of Donalsonville and Iron City meet this objective.