

MARION COUNTY - BUENA VISTA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

March, 2010

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Marion County Board of Commissioners

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George Neal, Jr., Chairman
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Mary Jo Page
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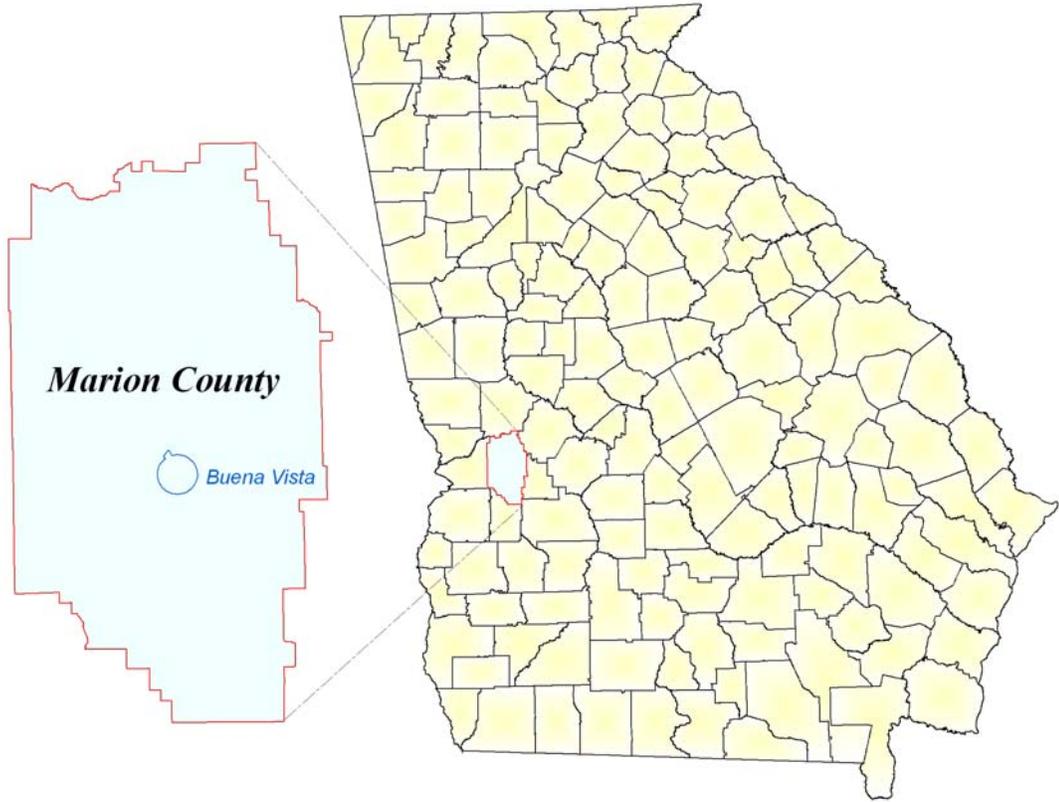
Buena Vista Mayor and City Council

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Jill Deslauriers
Stacey Thomas Martinez
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Gladys Thomas

Brenda McAllister, City Clerk

Assistance provided by
River Valley Regional Commission
228 West Lamar Street
Americus, Georgia 31709

SITE LOCATION MAP



RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION
COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION ELEMENTS
GREATER MARION COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2011-2031

WHEREAS; Marion County and the City of Buena Vista are working jointly to prepare a comprehensive plan in accordance with the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning prepared by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs pursuant to provisions of O.C.G.A. 50-8-1 et seq; and

WHEREAS; said Standards and Procedures provide for separate submissions of the distinct plan elements; the Community Assessment and Community Participation Elements to be submitted jointly, to be followed by submission of the Community Agenda; and

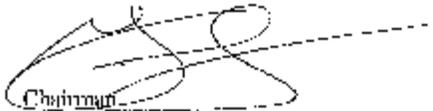
WHEREAS; the draft Community Assessment and Community Participation Elements have been completed; and

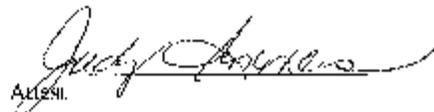
WHEREAS; the public hearing requirement for the Community Assessment and Community Participation elements as stipulated at 110-12-1-.08 (1) (6) of said Standards and Procedures has been satisfied.

THEREFORE; in accordance with specific provisions of the state Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, the Board of Commissioners of Marion County hereby authorizes submission of the Community Assessment and Community Participation Elements of the Marion – Buena Vista Comprehensive Plan 2011-2031 for state-mandated regional and state reviews.

Duly considered and approved in session this 9th day of March, 2010.

MARION COUNTY
BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS


Chairman


At-Large

RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING SUBMISSION
COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION ELEMENTS
MARION – BUENA VISTA COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2011-2031

WHEREAS; the City of Buena Vista and Marion County are working jointly to prepare a comprehensive plan in accordance with the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning prepared by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs pursuant to provisions of O.C.G.A. 50-8-1 et seq, and

WHEREAS; said Standards and Procedures provide for separate submissions of the distinct plan elements; the Community Assessment and Community Participation Elements to be submitted jointly, followed by submission of the Community Agenda, and

WHEREAS; the draft Community Assessment and Community Participation Elements have been completed, and

WHEREAS; the public hearing requirement for the Community Assessment and Community Participation elements as stipulated at 110-12-1-.98 (1) (a) of said Standards and Procedures has been satisfied.

THEREFORE; in accordance with specific provisions of the state Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning, the Buena Vista City Council hereby authorizes submission of the Community Assessment and Community Participation Elements of the Marion – Buena Vista Comprehensive Plan 2011-2031 for state-mandated regional and state reviews.

Duly considered and approved in session this 2nd day of March, 2010.

CITY OF BUENA VISTA



Mayor



Attest.

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Introduction

Georgia's first comprehensive planning law for local governments took effect in 1991. Marion County and Buena Vista's first comprehensive plan prepared pursuant to state planning requirements was adopted in September, 1995, and was scheduled to be updated by October, 2006. Major revisions to the state-mandated Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning took effect May, 2005. The community complied with the revised planning standards and deadline by preparing and adopting a Partial Update, an abbreviated and short-lived version of the larger comprehensive plan, in September, 2007. This document represents the community's development of a twenty-year comprehensive plan as prescribed in the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning. The plan consists of three components.

Community Assessment

The Community Assessment is an objective and professional assessment of data and information about the community prepared without extensive direct public participation. The Community Assessment includes:

- A list of potential issues and opportunities the community may wish to address,

- Analysis of existing development patterns, including a map of recommended character areas for consideration in developing an overall vision for future development,
- Evaluation of current community policies, activities, and development patterns for consistency with Quality Community Objectives, and
- Analysis of data and information to check the validity of the above evaluations and potential issues and opportunities.

The purpose of the Community Assessment is to present a factual and conceptual foundation upon which the rest of the Community Agenda is built. The initial list of potential issues and opportunities is intended to be an all-inclusive list for further study, and as necessary, modification in preparation of the Community Agenda. Preparation of the Community Assessment is largely a staff or professional function of collecting and analyzing data and information about the community and presenting the results in a concise, easily understood format, such as an executive summary, for consideration by the public and decision-makers involved in subsequent development of the Community Agenda.

Community Participation Program

The Community Participation Program describes the local strategy for ensuring adequate public and stakeholder involvement in the preparation of the Community Agenda

portion of the plan. Upon completion, the local government transmits both the Community Assessment and Community Participation Program to the Middle Flint Regional Development Center for initiation of regional and state reviews.

Community Agenda

The Community Agenda portion of the comprehensive plan is the most important, for it includes the community's vision for the future as well as its strategy for achieving the vision. Because the Community Agenda provides guidance for future decision-making about the community, it must be prepared with input from stakeholders and the general public.

The Community Agenda consists of three major components:

- a community vision for the future physical development of the community, expressed in the form of a map indicating unique character areas, each with its own strategy for guiding future development patterns,
- a list of issues and opportunities identified by the community for further action, and
- an implementation program for achieving the community's vision for the future and addressing the identified issues and opportunities.

This document consists of the Community Assessment and Community Participation elements.

Executive Summary

1. Marion County ended the previous century with fewer residents than when it began. Buena Vista netted a population increase, averaging 23% of total county population.
2. The 28% population increase during the 1990s was the greatest numeric and percentage change during the century.
3. Estimates suggest the population decreased 2000-2008: Marion County 2.5%, Buena Vista 1.3%.
4. Population change over the next twenty years is expected to be positive, but small and gradual.
5. In absence of change in the local economic environment, median age of the community is expected to continue increasing.
6. A significant shift in racial composition occurred between 1980 and 2000. The black population was essentially static, the number of white residents increased by 1,512 during the 1990s. The black proportion decreased from almost half (46%) to one-third (34%) of the community's total population. The white distribution increased from 54% to 61%.
7. The community recorded a greater proportional improvement in poverty conditions than the surrounding area and state 1980-2000.
8. The community recorded a greater improvement in the number of households in the lowest income bracket between 1990 and 2000 than the surrounding area and state.
9. The community recorded the greatest percentage increase (257%) in per capita income 1980-2000.
10. Recent censuses credited the community and larger study areas with similar improvements in the proportion of households lacking an automobile. Conditions worsened in Buena Vista; increasing from one-quarter to almost one-third of households.
11. Among the jurisdictions studied, the community made the greatest improvement in educational attainment, primarily at the lower attainment levels. Between 1980 and 2000, the proportion of adult residents lacking a high school diploma decreased by 29 percentiles.
12. Despite marked improvement during the 20-year period, the community still had a higher percentage of residents lacking a high school diploma, and a lower percentage with a post-secondary education than the surrounding area.
13. In the one year (2007-2008) high school drop-out data is currently available for cross-county comparison and Marion was again operating as a single-county system, only one surrounding county had a (fractionally) lower drop-out rate. Marion's rate was half the state rate.

14. Between 1980 and 2000 the conventionally constructed, site-built, single-family residence decreased from $\frac{3}{4}$ to 48% of the local housing inventory. Mobile homes increased from 16% to 47% of the housing supply.
15. The median age of housing in 2000 was 17 years for Marion and 20 years statewide. Fourteen percent of Buena Vista's housing supply was constructed prior to WW II.
16. The community's homeownership rate averaged approximately eight percentiles higher than the state between 1980 and 2000.
17. The community's 15% vacancy rate (2000 Census) would seem to suggest the availability of an attractive number of units for housing choice. However, the majority of these units are not on the market.
18. The housing market appears to be generally affordable for the community as a whole. Local renters pay a larger share of household income for housing than homeowners.
19. While the numbers within some special housing needs categories may be small, in the aggregate, they are present in numbers sufficient to warrant special attention.
20. Local unemployment has compared very favorably in recent years with surrounding counties.
21. Three industrial sectors comprised the majority (54%) of employment in 2000, with manufacturing continuing to be the largest local sector.
22. Local employment in the Management.... category was recorded to be one dozen percentiles lower than the level statewide, while local employment in the Production.... category was fifteen percentiles higher than the state level. These employment levels testify to the historically low educational attainment level of local residents.
23. For the past twenty years the average weekly wage has been equivalent to 60% of the state average, and there have usually been fewer than ten counties with lower wages.
24. The 1990 Census reported 82% of personal income in the community and surrounding area came from active earnings; wage or salary or self-employment income. By 2000 this had decreased to 79% for both areas. The state reduction was from 85% to 84%.
25. According to worker commuting patterns from the 2000 Census, 787 people commuted from out-of-county to jobs in Marion County.
26. A high percentage of local residents work out-of-county. The increased number of Marion County residents commuting to jobs out-of-county (1,592) between 1980 and 2000 exceeded the increased number in-commuting (526) by a ratio of more than three-to-one.
27. Fifty percent of the road network over which the county has jurisdiction remains unpaved, compared to 47% in the surrounding area and 33% across the state.
28. Of the transportation network over which the city has jurisdiction 1.5% are not paved, compared to 2% of city routes in the surrounding area and 3.3% across the state.

Identification of Potential Issues and Opportunities

Housing

Issues

Physical condition and neighborhood blight
Inadequate options, especially for special needs populations
High incidence of mobile homes (maintenance, tax base impact, storm susceptibility)

Opportunities

Enhanced housing (including environmental) and building code enforcement
Establishment of housing development/redevelopment programs, including special needs
Promotion of homeownership (Buena Vista)

Community Facilities and Services

Issues

Maintenance/expansion of local government infrastructure (diminishing property tax base)
Inadequate local government (administrative and storage) floor space (for general government and special services)
Retention/enhancement of health care services
Public recreation opportunities

Opportunities

Develop appropriate, adaptive reuse(s) for vacated (middle and high) schools
Develop dynamic (shared or separate) local government web site
Work toward development of “year-round” recreation program
Proactive measures to protect critical facilities from disasters

Economic Development

Issues

Low education attainment (and numerous resultant social issues)
 Competitive disadvantage in economic development
 Limited employment options - low incomes
 At-risk youth population
 Child abuse/neglect
 Parental involvement
 Illegal and illicit drug use
 Work ethics
Vacant downtown storefronts
Easily accessible, marketable industrial park

Communication/cooperation between industry and community
Investment capital for business start-up

Opportunities

Increased community support for adult education, Family Connections, et al.
Increased anti-drug message
Expansion of mentoring programs, tutoring, after-school programs
Develop additional youth development opportunities such as scouting, Junior Achievement, etc.
Community support for adult and youth leadership programs
Pursue business/industrial incubator
Identify site for industrial park development
Prepare for/construct speculative industrial building
Expand marketing campaign (hunter-appreciation event, etc.)
Restoration and expansion of economic activity downtown
Marketing of airport as an economic development tool

Natural and Cultural Resources

Issues

Potential degradation/loss of natural and cultural resources

Opportunities

Definitive location and regulatory protection of:
 Historic and archaeological resources; plant and animal species of special concern
Protect largest concentration of prime farmland from encroachment
Develop public fishing area/Kinchafoonee Lake

Land Use

Issues

Potential for misdirected growth (and adverse impact on community's commercial core)
General blighting influences/aesthetics

Opportunities

Wholesale review (and revision as necessary) of land use plans/zoning ordinances
Maintain viable, compact and intact municipal area

Transportation

Issues

Lack of community identity
North-south traffic flow through Buena Vista
Need for public transit

Opportunities

Develop community gateways/entranceways
Development of a financially self-sustaining transit service
Buena Vista west-side connector

Support Interstate 14 proposal to follow current route of GA 26

Intergovernmental

Issues

Local communications

Opportunities

Meetings between decision-making entities: county, city, boards, commissions, authorities

Regular town hall meetings

Analysis of Existing Development Patterns

This component documents existing land use patterns and trends for the purpose of identifying areas requiring special attention.

Two of the state's most heavily travelled Indian trails were well developed when Marion County was created in 1827; merely two years after lands in this area of the state were ceded by Indians. The Creek Federal Road provided passage between the county's northeast and west-central boundaries. The path of Barnard's Trail was very similar to the entire east-west route of today's Georgia Highway 26 through the county and Buena Vista. Buena Vista developed on this route, was chartered in 1850 and before the end of the century the railroad was paralleling the same route of Bernard's Trail. The Tazewell community developed in the east-central portion of the county, but was not economically viable because of distance from the railroad. It last appeared as an incorporated area in the 1970 Census credited with a population of 120.

Marion is among the least developed of Georgia's 159 counties. With 8.5 housing units per square mile of land area, only six counties had a lower housing density at the time of the 2000 Census. Only eleven counties had fewer than 19.5 persons per square mile. The community is also one of the most heavily forested counties in the state, with 81% of its land area in woodland.

Until the 1990s the population was relatively evenly balanced between two census tracts which generally divide the county into northern and southern halves. It was at that time the county experienced its largest population shift in over a century as residents of adjoining counties to the north and west migrated in. The new residents were attempting to escape escalating land costs and taxes stimulated by development pressures by relocating in a county which, at that time, was not regulating development. The influx resulted in concentrations at a couple sites near the northern reaches of the county that begin to rival that of the only city in the county.

Land Use Inventory

During calendar year 2009, tax parcel data and recent (2006) aerial photography were studied, and field surveys performed to document land uses based on land use categories

and definitions found in current *Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning*.¹ The categories are defined below followed by existing land use maps.

RESIDENTIAL

Land used primarily for single-family or multi-family dwelling units organized into general categories of net densities. Farm residences and other singular dwellings secondary to another land use on the same parcel of land are classified with the other land use.

COMMERCIAL

Land used primarily for non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together as part of a commercial complex.

INDUSTRIAL

Land used primarily for manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing, wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction, publicly- or privately-owned landfills or other similar uses.

PUBLIC/INSTITUTIONAL

Land used primarily by federal, state or local governments or institutions. Government uses include city halls, government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc. Institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc. Some publicly-owned facilities and lands are classified under land use categories.

TRANSPORTATION/COMMUNICATION/UTILITIES

Land used primarily for transportation (road, street and railroad) and their rights-of-way, railroad facilities, public transit stations, power generation plants, radio towers, telephone switching stations, airports, public/private utilities, or other similar uses.

PARKS/RECREATION/CONSERVATION

Land used primarily for active or passive recreation. These may include playgrounds, parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers or other similar uses either publicly- or privately-owned.

AGRICULTURE/FORESTRY

Land used primarily for farming (fields, pastures, animal lots, livestock production, specialty farms, farmsteads, etc.), aquaculture, or commercial timber or pulpwood production, including natural stands of timber.

UNDEVELOPED/VACANT

Lots, parcels or tracts of land served by typical urban public services (water and/or sanitary sewer, etc.) but have not been developed for a specific use, or were developed for a specific use that has since been abandoned.

Marion County Existing Land Use

All-inclusive

¹ State standards for local comprehensive planning

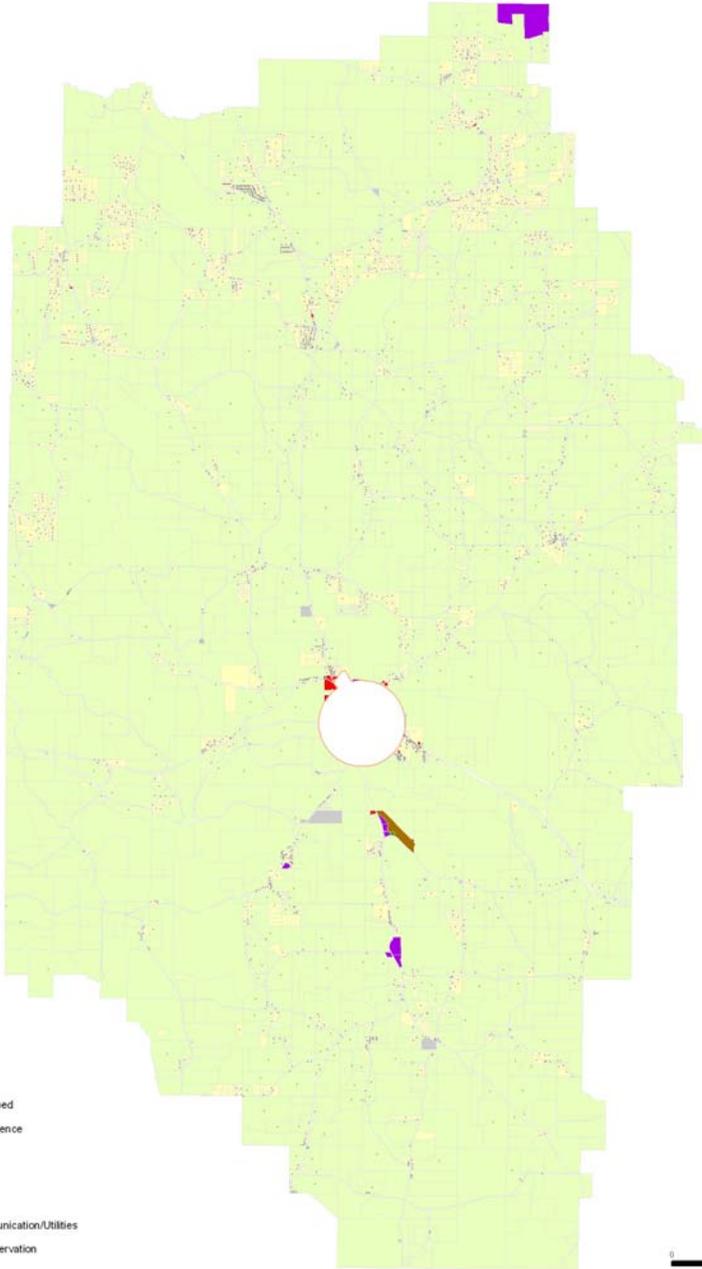
Land Use Classification	Acreage	Percent
Agriculture/ Forestry	212,136	89.2
Commercial	267	.1
Industrial	715	.3
Park/Recreation/Conservation	17	-
Public/Institutional	815	.3
Residential *	18,259	8
Transportation/ Communication/ Utilities	5519	2
Undeveloped/Vacant	16	-
Total	237,744	99.9

* Includes 9,257 acres not currently occupied by a residence but because of parcel/lot size, configuration and/or proximity to existing residences has been classified as residential for present purposes. Existing development is highlighted on the accompanying map.

Source: River Valley Regional Commission 2010

Separate tabular data and existing land use maps for the incorporated and unincorporated areas are presented on the following pages.

Existing Land Use January 2010



Legend

- Residential Undeveloped
- Residential with Residence
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Public/Institutional
- Transportation/Communication/Utilities
- Park/Recreation/Conservation
- Agriculture/Forestry



Unincorporated Area Existing Land Use

Land Use Classification	Acreage	Percent
Agriculture/Forestry	211,127	90
Commercial	208	.08
Industrial	652	.3
Park/Recreation/Conservation	6	-
Public/Institutional	730	.3
Residential *	17,567	7
Transportation/ Communication/ Utilities	5,368	2
Undeveloped/Vacant		
Total	235,658	99.7

* Includes 8,877 acres not currently occupied by a residence but because of parcel/lot size, configuration and/or proximity to existing residences has been classified as residential for present purposes. Existing development is highlighted on the accompanying map.

Source: River Valley Regional Commission 2010

Inventory of available buildings may be helpful, having specifications on each would be valuable when locals have the opportunity to meet with potential developers/investors.

2. Our community is actively working to promote brownfield redevelopment.

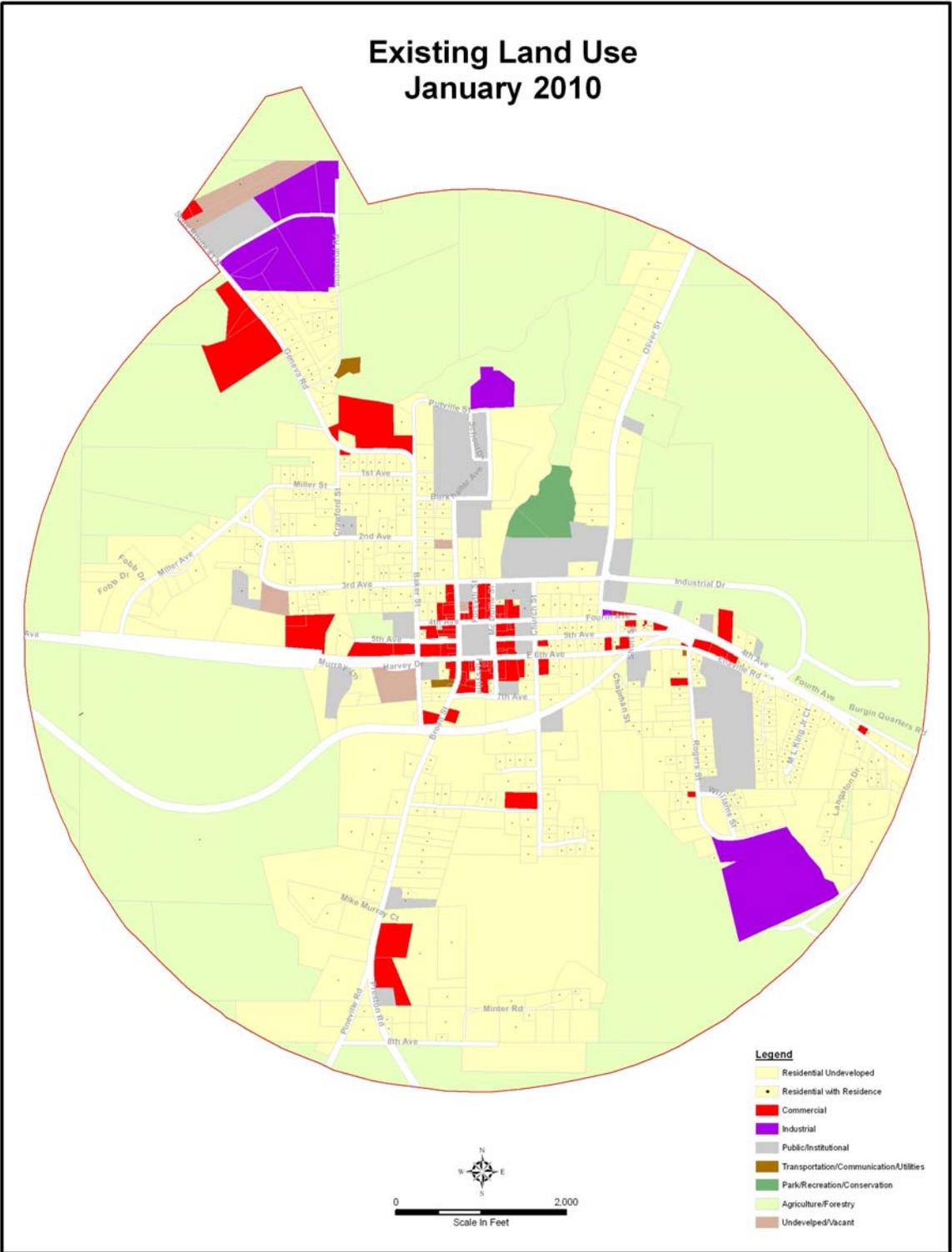
X The limited level of development experienced to-date has saved the community Buena Vista Existing Land Use

Land Use Classification	Acreage	Percent
Agriculture/ Forestry	1,009	48
Commercial	59	3
Industrial	63	3
Park/Recreation/Conservation	11	1
Public/Institutional	85	4
Residential *	692	33
Transportation/ Communication/ Utilities	151	7
Undeveloped/Vacant	16	1
Total	2086	100

* Includes 380 acres not currently occupied by a residence but because of parcel/lot size, configuration and/or proximity to existing residences has been classified as residential for present purposes. Existing development is highlighted on the accompanying map.

Source: River Valley Regional Commission 2010

Existing Land Use January 2010



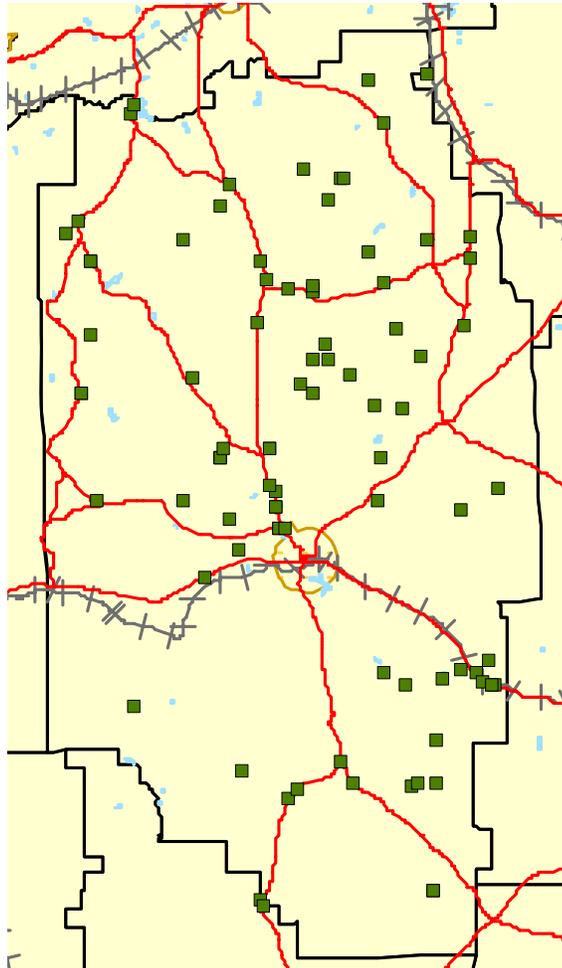
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Areas Requiring Special Attention

Areas of significant natural or cultural resources

Historic and cultural resources are buildings, sites, districts, objects or structures associated with events or persons significant in our past, or which embody unique or distinctive construction or artistic value, or have yielded or are likely to yield information important in prehistory or history. Such resources must generally be at least fifty years of age to be considered historically significant.

A resource survey performed in 2008 resulted in the identification of 89 potentially historic structures/sites throughout the unincorporated area.¹ Of these rural area resources 54 were single dwellings, twenty were cemeteries, eight were church/religious structures, three were general stores and one school, department store, duplex and mill processing/manufacturing facility were identified. These structures are generally located in the following graphic.

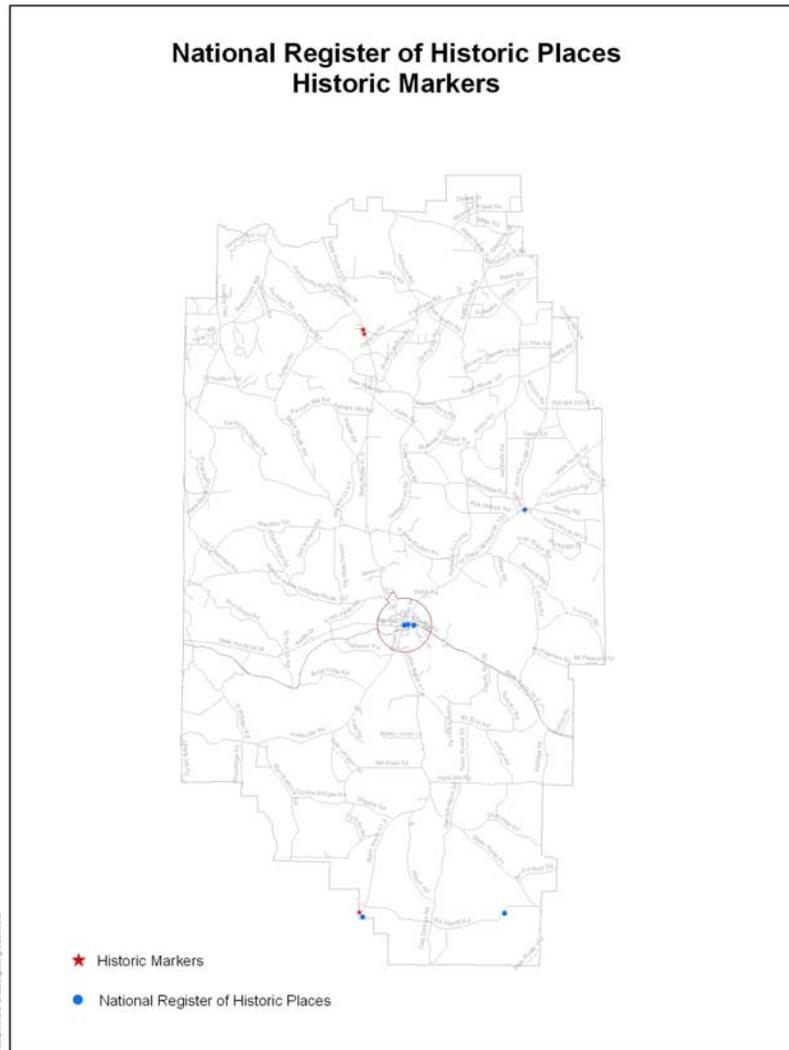


¹ [Find It](#), an electronic database of field surveys of structures and sites which, based on a preliminary assessment, appear to be of historic significance maintained by the Georgia Historic Preservation Division of the Department of Natural Resources.

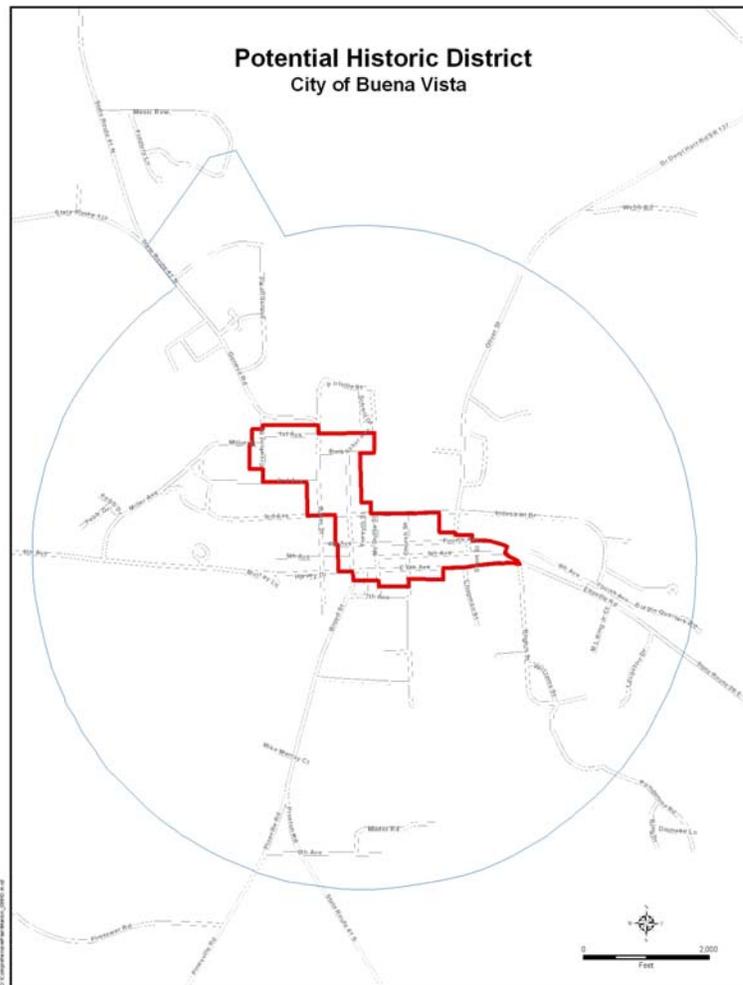
The National Register of Historic Places is formal recognition of a property's historical, architectural, or archaeological significance based on national standards. NR designation insures that protection of these properties will be considered in the planning of state or federally assisted projects. NR listing does not place obligations on private property owners, nor does it place restrictions on the use, treatment, transfer, or disposition of private property. The community currently has eight resources listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Alfred and Jane Ables House	Marion County Courthouse
Champion-McGarrah Plantation	Old Marion County Courthouse
Drane-Stevens House	Pasaquan
Fort Perry	Shiloh-Marion Church at Church

There are five markers which identify historic sites in the community; Fort Perry, Old Federal Road, New Courthouse, Old Courthouse and Church Hill .



Several other properties are eligible for listing on the National Register, including districts comprising downtown Buena Vista and peripheral residential areas within the city limits.



Thirty local archaeological sites have, to date, been documented in the Georgia Archaeological Site File. Such sites are most typically discovered as development occurs, and since the vast majority of the community is undeveloped there is potential for more sites to be identified. Information about the location of known sites and the artifacts found are maintained in the state database and released to only “authorized” parties on an as-needed basis to reduce the potential for vandalism. Consequently, these sites cannot be mapped for present purposes.

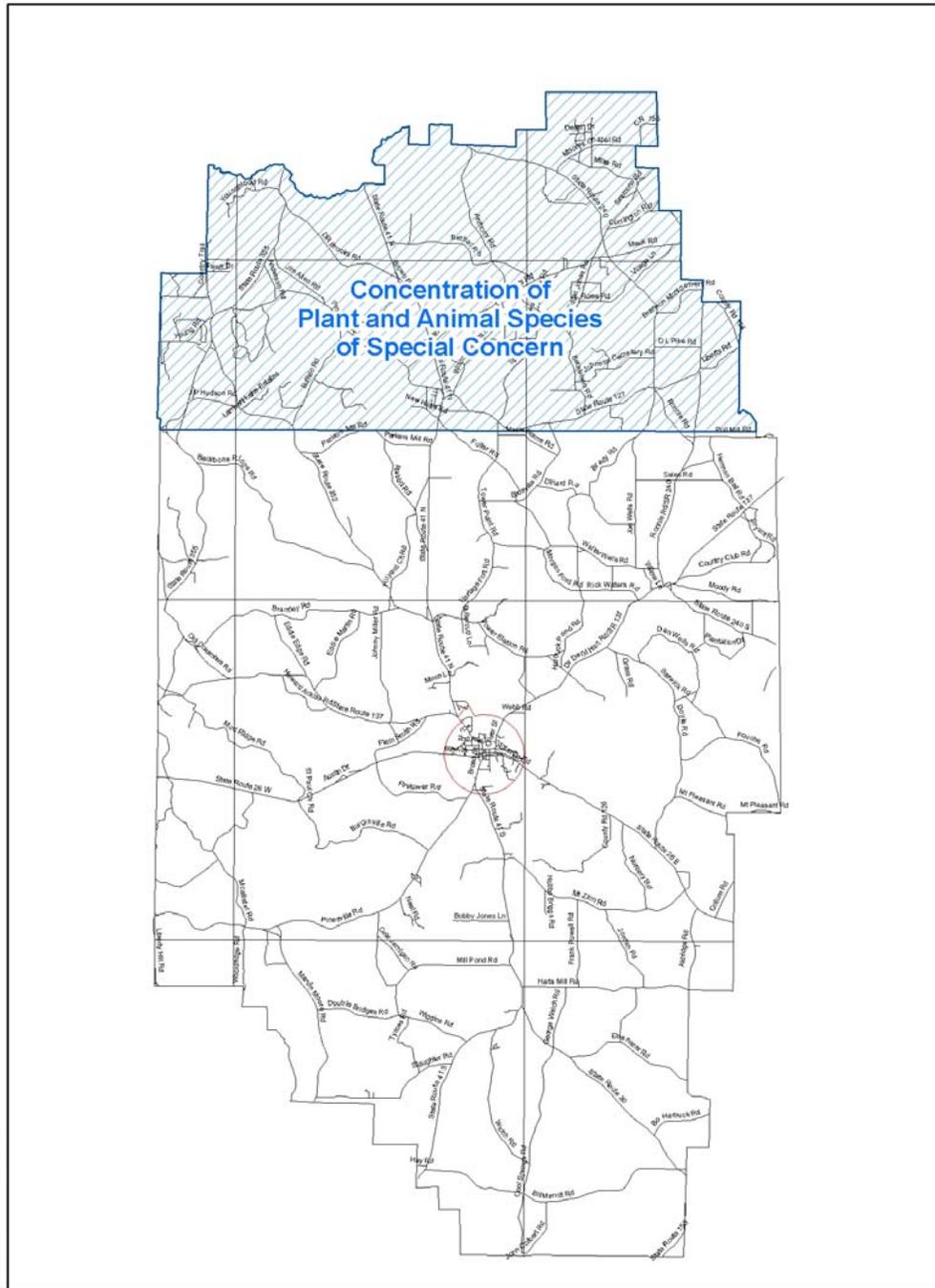
Kinchafoonee Creek originates in and drains the southwest quadrant of the county. It flows south into Webster County through the proposed site of Kinchafoonee Lake. Originally proposed as a recreational lake, the development has been eyed in recent years as a flood control facility. A short run of backwater from the open lake would extend into Marion.

According to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Wildlife Resources Division's Nongame Wildlife Program, there are a significant number of plants and

animals of Special Concern located in the northern third of the county (see the following graphic). Because of proximity to the geologic fall line dividing the Piedmont region from the Coastal Plains, plant and animal species common to both regions have habitats in this section of the community. Species believed to be present are identified below:

<u>Plants</u>	<u>Animals</u>
Atlantic White-cedar*	Eastern Tiger Salamander
Bog Sneezeweed	Southern Coal Skink
Carolina Bogmint*	Southern Hognose Snake*
Indian Olive*	Gulf Coast Waterdog
Narrow-fruit Swamp Sedge	Sly Crayfish*
Clearwater Butterwort	Gopher Frog*
Sweet Pitcherplant*	Gopher Tortoise*
Sandhill Golden-aster*	
Chapman Yellow-eyed Grass	
Lax Water-milfoil*	
Pickering's Morning-glory*	

There are believed to be fifteen Special Concern plants and twelve Special Concern animals present in Marion County. The eleven plants and seven animals shown above are believed to be present in the highlighted area shown on the accompanying map. The seven plant and four animal species highlighted above (*) are of such significance they are protected species in Georgia. Although not believed to be present in this same section of the county, three additional species have federal (and consequently state-) protection status. This area of heaviest concentration of protected and Special Concern species is also the area attracting the greatest concentration of new residents. While protected plant species generally become the property of the landowner, there is the potential that federal and/or state penalties and sanctions could be levied against those who destroy protected animals or their habitats. The county needs additional information identifying specific sites/locations of these natural resources to promote good environmental stewardship, help prevent residents from destroying critical resources, and to help protect residents from the potential of legal action that could possibly result from habitat destruction. This information would be valuable in helping to determine whether the county zoning ordinance should be revised to afford protection measures.



Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur

The strongest current trend is conversion of agriculture and forest acreages to single-family residential development, and is by far most pronounced in the northern third of the county. This development is depicted clearly in the county's existing land use map. The

trend started after the Census of 1990, and the 2000 Census credited the affected census tract with 84% of the county's population increase. This increase resulted from development pressures in nearby Muscogee and Harris counties, and the absence at the time of any land use controls in Marion County. The population surge in this confined area was so significant that it resulted in a 28% population increase for the county, one of the highest county growth rates in the state; although the numeric increase was only in the hundreds.

A significant number of mobile homes was placed in the northwest corner of the county, offering new residents the shortest commute to jobs in Muscogee and Harris Counties. During the decade, and since, this growth migrated eastward, attracted in part by development of a county water system. A public water system now serves virtually all but the southwest quadrant of the county, although housing development continues to be most heavily concentrated in the northern third. Because of proximity to jobs out-of-county, and availability of rural water service, this area is expected to continue to experience the greatest demand for housing.

Marion is still very rural, and the current zoning ordinance does provide some nodes for residential development. Additional, strategically located residential nodes should be provided for, promoting smaller lot sizes than currently allowed. This will serve the purposes of concentrating development to better facilitate delivery of public services, increase the availability of affordable acreage for residential development and preserve more of the natural landscape expressly desired by residents.

Since the 2000 Census, a couple subdivisions of conventionally constructed housing for middle and higher-income families have been/are being developed. Although these are not in or adjoining the City of Buena Vista, they are proximate to the northern and southern city limits.

The more direct response to this question is that "rapid" development and/or change in land use is not expected or likely to occur. Population projections presented later suggest a very low rate of growth over the next twenty years. Continuation or recurrence of the population surge experienced in the 1990s referenced above is not anticipated. While the developments described above are expected to continue at some level, rapid development is not expected. Urban-type development should be encouraged for areas within Buena Vista to reduce sprawl that has occurred naturally along topographic ridges, and to take advantage of existing infrastructure.

Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation

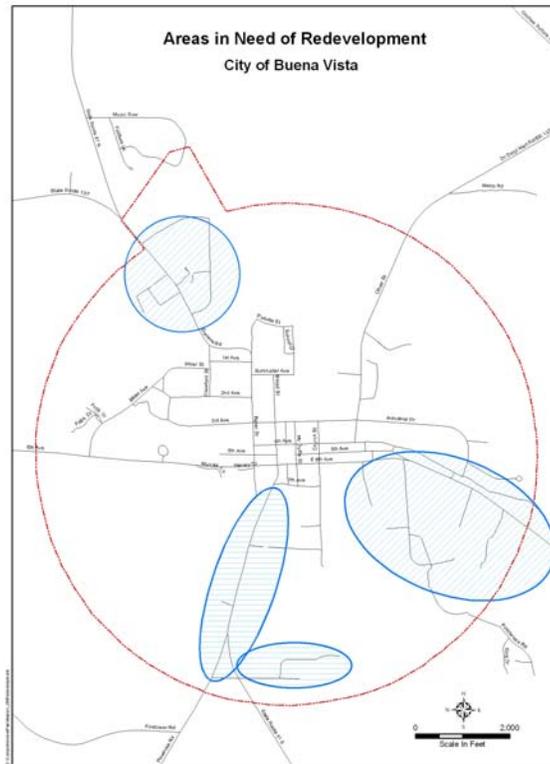
Currently, the county's greatest concern is maintaining adequate water pressure in the northern part of the county. The rural system is apparently in need of an elevated tank to provide and maintain proper pressure. The county's first response has been to link the system with the rural water system of an adjoining county to effectively preclude a loss of service, i.e., emergency use. This action bought the county time to identify the best long-term solution. The county service is also linked to the Buena Vista water system,

where water and sanitary sewer service issues are related more to maintenance of an aged infrastructure than to development.

Placement of significant numbers of manufactured housing and the long-term impact on the property tax base is giving rise to concerns about the continued ability of local government to maintain delivery of the numerous public services, which includes public safety communitywide. The nature of the property tax is such that manufactured housing and more conventionally constructed housing of identical, initial, market values do not generate equal property tax revenues for local government.

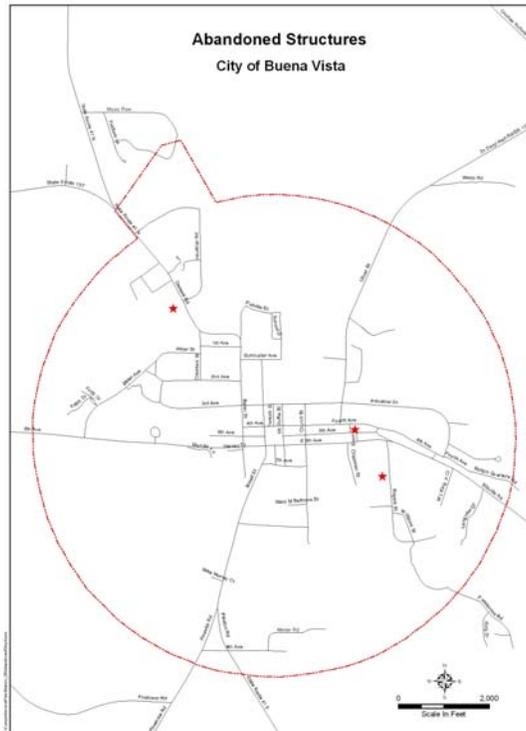
Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness

There is a general need for such attention throughout the community that can be addressed through enforcement of a housing/environmental code. These include some small, residential pockets disbursed widely throughout the unincorporated area. However, concentrations of such conditions are most evident in three areas of the city: Georgia Highway 26 E. and its local feeder streets, and Georgia Highway 41 both north and south. All three areas exhibit numerous factors contributing to unattractive, substandard and blighted residential and other development and warrant redevelopment activities.



Large abandoned structures or sites

Having experienced limited development to date, this is not a significant feature in the community. There are some vacant structures but they are few in number and relatively small. A $\pm 40,000$ square foot industrial building sits vacant on a site adjoining the airport, but is marketed to industrial prospects. There are some vacant storefronts in downtown Buena Vista and small “warehouse” type facilities just off the town square. These facilities would need enhancements for occupancy, but are not abandoned. The nearest examples of abandoned structures are located on three sites in the city; small, adjoining buildings on Rodgers Street, a building on Fifth Avenue, and metal building near the northwest city limits.

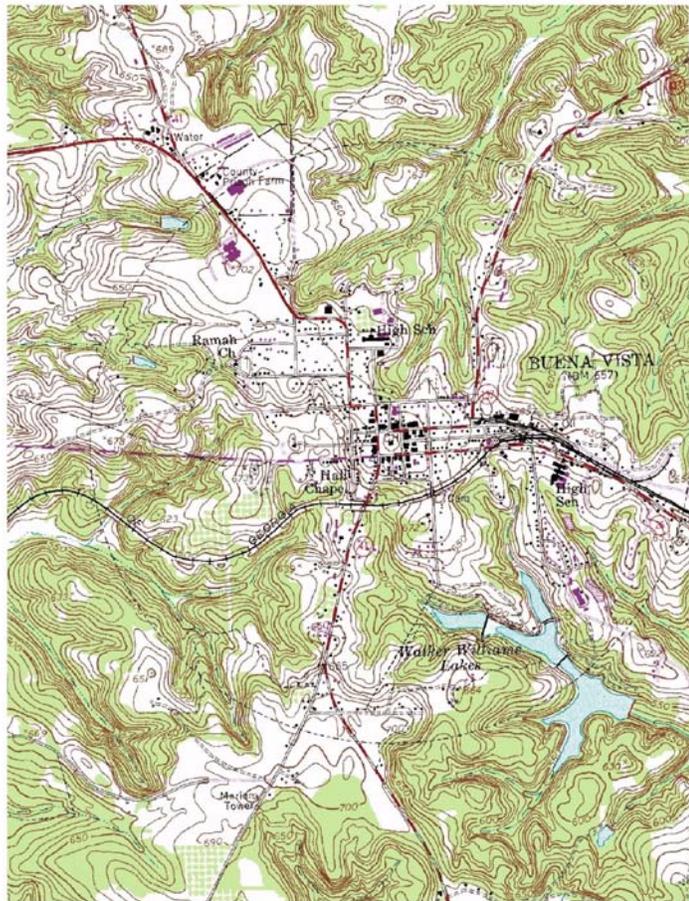


Areas with significant infill development opportunities

So much of the incorporated area is not conducive to development, by local standards, because of topography (see following graphic). Consequently, much of the development is linear, concentrated along narrow ridges, in many instances with single-lot depths. These ridges generally do not intersect; virtually all streets in the south half of the city run north-south with very limited connectivity. Because of limited acreage there are relatively few infill development opportunities. Parcels along these ridges and around the geographic center of the city, an area of relatively level terrain, are developed. Individual vacant lots are relatively few, small, scattered, and consequently difficult to map. The single greatest acreage for “infill” development is in the northwest quadrant of the city, south and west of state route 41. This undeveloped area is itself justification for the city to develop a subdivision ordinance. Additional access will be needed, and in the long-term a state route (north-south) connector in this vicinity would facilitate the flow of

transient traffic through the city. Most new development will require renovation of existing structures and demolition and site clearance, and in that respect there is significant infill development opportunity. These areas are along Georgia Highway 26 E. and Georgia Highway 41 north and south and have already been identified in previous text.

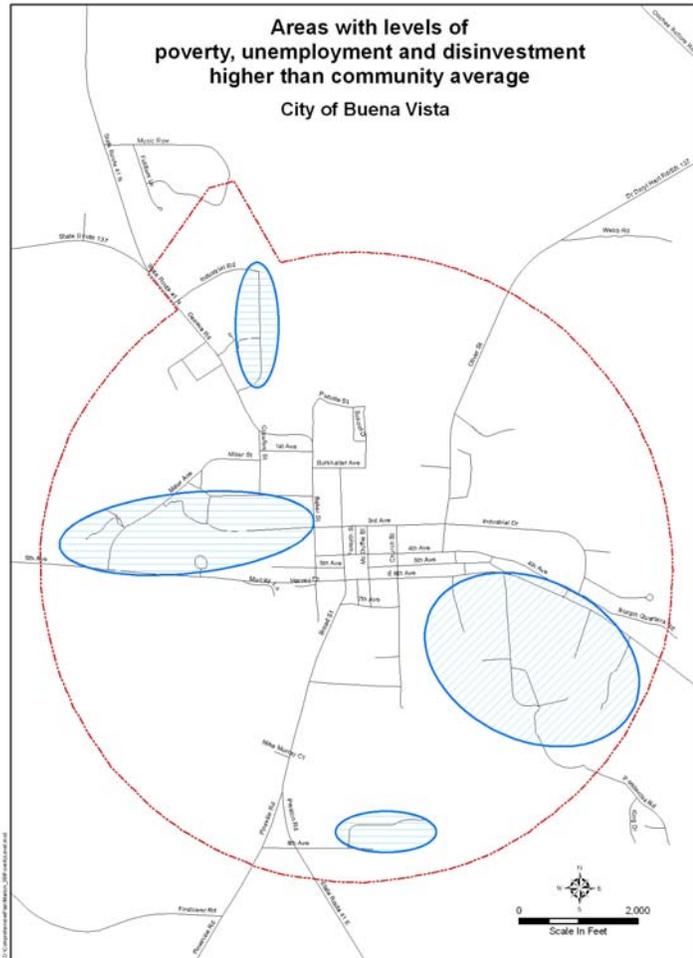
Incorporated area with most attractive topography for development northwest quadrant of city



Areas of significant disinvestment, levels of poverty, and/or unemployment substantially higher than average levels for the community as a whole

Approximately 22% of the local population reportedly lives below the poverty level, and most reside within the city to take advantage of the greater number of public services. These concentrations, and the greatest incidence of disinvestment, primarily related to

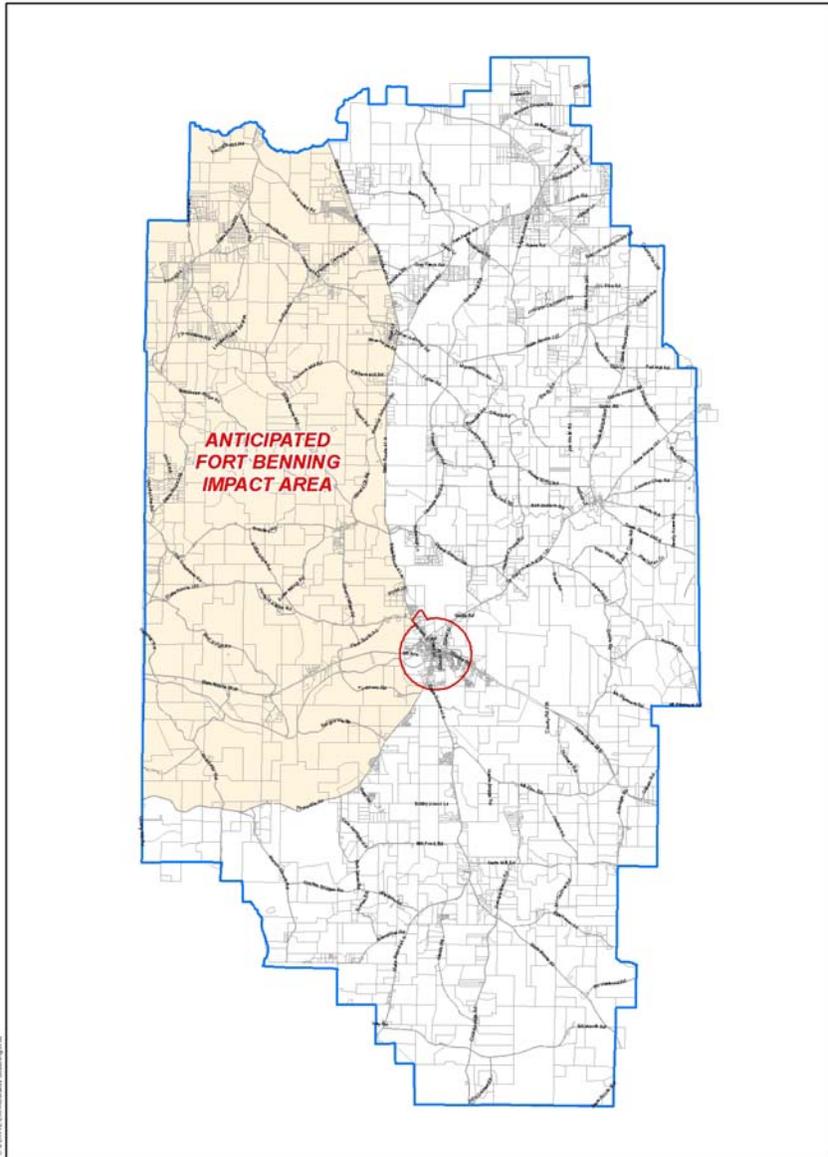
housing conditions, are depicted in the following graphic. The community has maintained attractive employment levels, historically. The greatest levels of unemployment, a contributing factor to disinvestment, are also concentrated in the neighborhoods highlighted in the following graphic.



Areas with other unique pressures

Fort Benning military reservation abuts the county's western boundary. As a result of the Base Realignment and Closure process, this base has been targeted to receive a greatly expanded military mission, resulting in approximately 30,000 additional military personnel and civilians relocating into the region. It is not known how many of these may choose to live in Marion County or Buena Vista, or how many employment opportunities may be created in the community as an outgrowth of the base expansion. The Army has been suggesting that jurisdictions contiguous to the base carefully review currently permitted land uses in those areas nearest the military reservation. Noise, dust

and other impacts generated by training activities will be recorded several miles beyond the reservation into Marion County. Consequently, the military is encouraging limited development in those areas nearest the military base. Based on the information provided to-date, the following graphic depicts an area of the county where only sparse development should be permitted, limited primarily to large lot development, silviculture and certain agricultural activities, open-air recreation, etc. The minimum lot size should be significantly larger than allowed in other areas of the county. Of the ±1700 parcels within the highlighted area, the average parcel size is ±45 acres. At a minimum, the county should stipulate that prior to any and all transactions involving property located in this area property owners must document that they have provided the prospective buyer formal, written notice of the probability that the property in question can be expected to experience certain, specified impacts as a result of activities on Fort Benning.



Recommended Character Areas

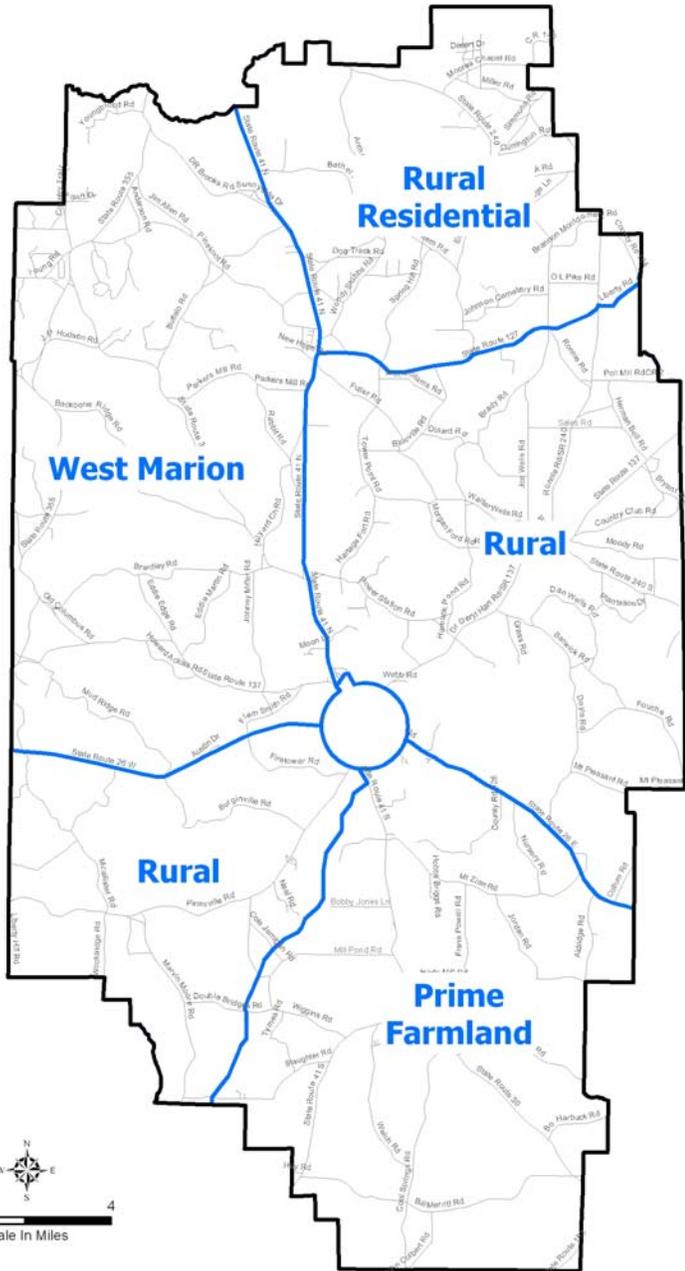
Character Areas are defined as specific geographic areas that meet the following criteria:

- Have unique or special characteristics to be preserved or enhanced (such as a downtown historic district, a neighborhood, or transportation corridor)
- Have potential to evolve into a unique area when provided with specific and intentional guidance regarding future development possibilities (such as a strip commercial corridor that could be revitalized into more attractive village development pattern)
- Require special attention due to unique development issues (rapid change of development patterns, economic decline, sprawl, etc.).

Each character area is a planning sub-area within the community where more detailed planning and implementation of certain policies, investments, incentives, or regulations may be applied in order to preserve, improve, or otherwise influence future development patterns in a manner consistent with the community vision. Typically, character areas are based on form and pattern of buildings and streetscapes, and are not completely dependent on individual use.

Each individual character area is most often identified by prevailing characteristics, not uniformity of form or pattern. The character areas identified on the following pages have varying degrees of internal homogeneity and diversity of form and pattern. Variations occur most noticeably near the outer limits of each area where they often blend or merge with prevailing characteristics of adjoining character areas.

Marion County Recommended Character Areas



County Character Area Descriptions

Prime Farmland

Prime farmland is defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as lands that produce the highest agricultural yields with minimal inputs of energy and money, and farming such lands result in the least damage to the environment. Although there is some acreage meeting this definition located along Ga. Highway 41 extending a few miles north of Buena Vista, the largest concentration is in the southeast corner of the county.

Rural

East-central Marion County has a combination of soils generally well-suited to urban development, field crops and hay and pasture. It is historically undeveloped and has a residential density of approximately 1 residence per 110 acres. There are few concentrations of development as housing is most commonly distributed along the roadways. The southwest corner of the county has soils well-suited for urban development and moderately-suited for hay and woodland. Residential development in this section of the county is even more sparse, but also most commonly distributed along the roadway. Both areas are heavily wooded.

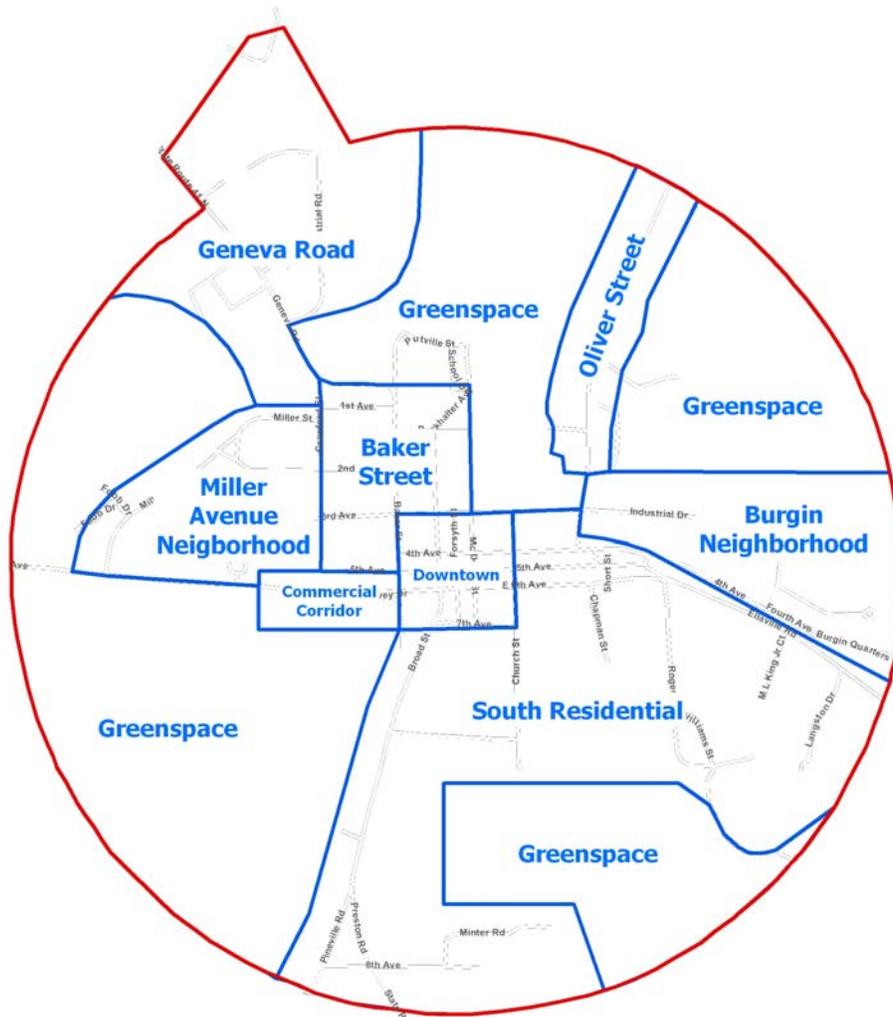
Rural Residential

Soils in the northeast corner are generally well-suited for urban development. This area attracted an influx of residents between 1990 and 2000. As a result, it is among the most developed areas of the unincorporated county, averaging approximately one residence per 70 acres. Mobile homes/manufactured housing comprise much of the housing supply.

West Marion

West Marion exhibits the greatest contrast among recommended character areas. The northern third became home to a large percentage of the population surge of the 1990s, resulting in the highest density level in the county; currently averaging one residence/40 acres. The balance of the area is the least developed in the county; currently averaging approximately one residence/180 acres. This character area is recommended as a means of preparing the community for the expanded military role of Fort Benning.

City of Buena Vista Recomended Character Areas



Buena Vista Character Area Descriptions

Baker Street

Baker Street is a stable neighborhood characterized by well-maintained houses, ranging from late nineteenth to mid-twentieth century, small, tree-shaded lots with shallow setbacks. This area is potentially eligible for historic district designation.

Burgin Neighborhood

The Burgin Neighborhood is an area of proposed new residential construction. Never an attractive site for its originally intended use as an industrial park, the area does have good potential for residential development.

Commercial Corridor

Located adjacent to downtown along the east-west thoroughfare, this corridor is intended to accommodate larger commercial acreage needs that cannot be satisfied in Downtown.

Downtown

The community has preserved the commercial core, but there are vacant storefronts around the courthouse square. This area is also eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as a commercial district.

Geneva Road

Redevelopment is proposed for the city's northwest gateway; an area with a large "abandoned" property and scattered blight. The recommended character area extends beyond the boundary of the "Area Requiring Special Attention" to incorporate attractive development acreage to the east and west.

Greenspace

Marion County is located on the southern boundary of the Fall Line, the transition between two distinct geologies. Development has occurred on linear ridges where the limited flat/level acreage is concentrated. These areas are generally not conducive to development because of higher site preparation costs. Terrain in these areas retain natural cover.

Miller Avenue Neighborhood

Neighborhood and housing conditions are declining in the west-central area of the city. The tree-shaded neighborhood has a moderate degree of building separation.

Oliver Street

Located along the northeast gateway, this residential area consists of contemporary, mid-twentieth century housing with deep setbacks and shaded lots.

South Residential

Housing in the south half of Buena Vista is a mix of various conditions; new and old, conventional construction and mobile homes, various orientations, varying setbacks, standard, substandard and dilapidated, all interspersed with conditions of blight. Redevelopment is proposed for the large area.

Quality Community Objectives

The following section is the local assessment of how the community measures up against state-established development patterns and options intended to ensure Georgia will preserve its unique cultural, natural and historic resources while simultaneously developing to its maximum potential. The assessment is a tool for use, much like a demographic analysis or a land use map, showing a community that “you are here”.

Each of the fifteen Quality Community Objectives has a set of yes/no statements; and some are, as appropriate, supplemented with local comments. The statements focus on local ordinances, policies, and organizational strategies intended to create and expand quality growth principles.

A majority of “yes” answers to the statements under any objective may indicate the community has in place many of the governmental options for managing development patterns. A “yes” to each statement under any objective may be considered a benchmark toward achievement. This assessment is only an initial step; however, as additional measures may be needed to meet local goals in pursuit of excellence in quality growth. “No” answers may provide guidance in how to focus planning and implementation efforts to achieve the state’s Quality Community Objectives.

This initial assessment is meant to provide an overall view of the community’s policies, not an in-depth analysis. There are no right or wrong answers to this assessment. Its merit lies in completion of the assessment and the ensuing community discussions regarding future development patterns.

Quality Community Objectives Development Patterns

Traditional Neighborhoods

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.

Pattern	Yes	No	Comments
1. If we have a zoning code, it does not separate commercial, residential and retail uses in every district.	X		The county ordinance identifies different residential and one commercial zone. Commercial has essentially been reserved for the city. But the ordinance is incomplete, lacking required attention to
2. Our community has ordinances in place that allow neo-traditional development "by right" so developers do not have to go through a long variance process.		X	
3. We have a street tree ordinance that requires new development to plant shade-bearing trees appropriate to our climate.		X	The county's subdivision ordinance has a tree ordinance. Buena Vista is a sixteen-year participant in the program. One of the program requirements is a tree
4. Our community has an organized tree-planting campaign in public areas that will make walking more comfortable in the summer.	X		Because the community is so heavily wooded, we have an organized tree planting campaign (other
5. We have a program to keep our public areas (commercial, retail districts, parks) clean and safe.		X	No special program beyond conventional
6. Our community maintains its sidewalks and vegetation well so that walking is an option some would choose.		X	The sidewalks that exist are concentrated in the downtown area and are relatively well maintained.
7. In some areas several errands can be made on foot, if so desired.	X		
8. Some of our children can and do walk to school safely.		X	All local schools serve the community area. Hence, the board of education must provide for the distances involved, very few students
9. Some of our children can and do bike to school safely.		X	All local schools serve the community area. Hence, the board of education must provide for the distances involved, very few students
10. Schools are located in or near neighborhoods in our community.		X	Because the population base can justify a middle and high school, and there are so few walking/biking distance, the board of education provides transportation for students

Infill Development

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

Pattern	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community has an inventory of vacant sites and buildings that are available for redevelopment and/or infill development.		X	The number of vacant buildings is so small and concentrated, their availability is almost completely. A written inventory of available buildings with detailed specifications on each would be valuable. There is an opportunity to meet with potential developers
2. Our community is actively working to promote brownfield redevelopment.		X	The limited level of development experience has prevented the community from significant instances of brownfield contamination needing reclamation.
3. Our community is actively working to promote greyfield		X	The limited level of development experience

redevelopment.			community from significant instances of contamination needing reclamation.
4. We have areas of our community that are planned for nodal development (compacted near intersections rather than spread along a major road).	X		The county zoning ordinance includes some greater densities or residential development in the community, but more are needed.
5. Our community allows small lot development (5,000 square feet or less) for some uses.		X	The city has allowed small lot development for mobile homes.

Sense of Place

Traditional downtown areas should be maintained as the focal point of the community or, for newer areas where 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.

Pattern	Yes	No	Comments
1. If someone dropped from the sky into our community, he or she would know immediately where he or she was, based on our distinct characteristics.		X	The community is part of a vast undeveloped area of the state, with little in the way of landmarks between counties.
2. We have delineated the areas of our community that are important to our history and heritage, and have taken steps to protect those areas.		X	
3. We have ordinances to regulate the aesthetics of development in our highly visible areas.		X	

4. We have ordinances to regulate the size and type of signage in our community.		X	
5. We offer a development guidebook that illustrates the type of new development we want in our community.		X	
6. If applicable, our community has a plan to protect designated farmland.		X	

Transportation Alternatives

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

Pattern	Yes	No	Comments
1. We have public transportation in our community.		X	
2. We require that new development connects with existing development through a street network, not a single entry/exit.		X	
3. We have a good network of sidewalks to allow people to walk to a variety of destinations.		X	Sidewalk is not a common local feature. Sidewalks are provided on the city's thoroughfares (state routes).
4. We have a sidewalk ordinance in our community that requires all new development to provide user-friendly sidewalks.		X	
5. We require that newly built sidewalks connect to existing sidewalks wherever possible.		X	
6. We have a plan for bicycle routes through our community.		X	No local plan; routes are included in the county plan.
7. We allow commercial and retail development to share parking areas wherever possible.	X		By default

Regional Identity

Each region should promote and preserve a regional "identity," or regional sense of place, defined in terms of common economic linkages that bind the region together, or other shared characteristics.

Pattern	Yes	No	Comments
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1. Our community is characteristic of the region in terms of architectural styles and heritage.	X		
2. Our community is connected to the surrounding region for economic livelihood through businesses that process local agricultural products.	X		
3. Our community encourages businesses that create products that draw on regional heritage (mountain, agricultural, metropolitan, etc.).	X		The community does not have a formal p natural element of local recruitment.
4. Our community participates in the Georgia Department of Economic Development's regional tourism partnership.	X		
5. Our community promotes tourism opportunities based on the unique characteristics of our region.		X	
6. Our community contributes to the region, and draws from the region, as a source of local culture, commerce, entertainment and education.	X		

Resource Conservation

Heritage Preservation

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

Pattern	Yes	No	Comments
1. We have designated historic districts in our community.		X	
2. We have an active historic preservation commission.		X	
3. We want new development to complement our historic development, and we have ordinances in place to ensure this.		X	Complementary development in Buena V district is desirable, but there is no ordina

Open Space Preservation

New development should be designed to minimize the amount of land consumed, and open space should be set for use as public parks or as greenbelts/wildlife corridors. Compact development ordinances are one way of en open space preservation.

Pattern	Yes	No	Comment
1. Our community has a greenspace plan.		X	
2. Our community is actively preserving greenspace, either through direct purchase or by encouraging set-asides in new development.	X		The county has a conservation subdivis
3. We have a local land conservation program, or we work with state or national land conservation programs to preserve environmentally important areas in our community.	X		Numerous local properties have been re conservation-use program.
4. We have a conservation subdivision ordinance for residential development that is widely used and protects open space in perpetuity.		X	The county has a conservation subdivis development is very limited.

Environmental Protection			
Environmentally sensitive areas should be protected from negative impacts of development, 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.			
Pattern	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community has a comprehensive natural resources inventory.		X	
2. We use this resource inventory to steer development away from environmentally sensitive areas.		X	
3. We have identified our defining natural resources and taken steps to protect them.		X	
4. Our community has passed the necessary “Part V” environmental ordinances, and we enforce them.	X		Both jurisdictions have adopted the applicable ordinances; wetland protection and groundwater recharge area protection.
5. Our community has a tree preservation ordinance which is actively enforced.	X		The county’s conservation subdivision ordinance and the city’s tree preservation ordinance are both enforced.
6. Our community has a tree-replanting ordinance for new development.	X		The county has a conservation subdivision ordinance.
7. We are using stormwater best management practices for all new development.		X	Local stormwater management is limited to city and county maintenance of open drainage ditches along roadsides.
8. We have land use measures that will protect the natural resources in our community (steep slope regulations, floodplain or marsh protection, etc.).	X		Both jurisdictions have adopted flood damage prevention ordinances.

<i>Social and Economic Development</i>			
Growth Preparedness			
Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.			
Pattern	Yes	No	Comments
1. We have population projections for the next 20 years that we refer to when making infrastructure decisions.		X	
2. Our local governments, the local school board, and other decision-making entities use the same population projections.		X	

3. Our elected officials understand the land-development process in our community.	X		Because of the limited scale of development, guidelines for new development are relatively modest, facilitating an understanding of the land development process by both the public and private sectors
4. We have reviewed our development regulations and/or zoning code recently, and believe that our ordinances will help us achieve our QCO goals.		X	
5. We have a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.		X	
6. We have designated areas of our community where we would like to see growth, and these areas are based on a natural resources inventory of our community.		X	
7. We have clearly understandable guidelines for new development.	X		Because of the limited scale of development, guidelines for new development are relatively modest, facilitating an understanding of the land development process by both the public and private sectors
8. We have a citizen-education campaign to allow all interested parties to learn about development processes in our community.		X	
9. We have procedures in place that make it easy for the public to stay informed about land use issues, zoning decisions, and proposed new development.	X		
10. We have a public-awareness element in our comprehensive planning process.	X		
<p>Appropriate Businesses The businesses and industries encouraged to develop or expand in a community should be suitable for the community in terms of job skills required, long-term sustainability, 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.</p>			
Pattern	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our economic development organization has considered our community's strengths, assets and weaknesses, and has created a business development strategy based on them.	X		Informal strategy
2. Our economic development organization has considered the types of businesses already in our community, and has a plan to recruit businesses and/or industries that will be compatible.	X		Informal strategy
3. We recruit firms that provide or create sustainable products.	X		
4. We have a diverse jobs base, so that one employer leaving would not cripple our economy.	X		Major private-sector employment is well-suited to the employability of residents, and the largest of these use locally renewed resources in their respective industrial processes. They are also diversified, but because

			of their large size loss of any of them would seriously cripple the local economy.
Employment Options			
A range of job types should be provided in each community to meet the diverse needs of the local workforce.			
Pattern	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our economic development program has an entrepreneur support program.		X	The community has earned the state's Entrepreneur Friendly Community designation.
2. Our community has jobs for skilled labor.		X	The small population base, low educational attainment level of residents, amenities of a nearby metropolitan area and proximity to a much larger work force (metropolitan Columbus) make it difficult for the community to attract the kind of industry(ies) that can offer residents attractive employment options
3. Our community has jobs for unskilled labor.	X		The fact that employment options are heavily concentrated in lower skilled and unskilled industrial sectors is a major quality-of-life issue.
4. Our community has professional and managerial jobs.		X	
Housing Choices			
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 (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choice to meet market needs.			
Pattern	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community allows accessory units like garage apartments or mother-in-law units.		X	
2. People who work in our community can also afford to live in the community.	X		
3. Our community has enough housing for each income level (low, moderate and above-average).		X	Housing options are limited. Assisted and subsidized housing apartments, all in the city, maintain full occupancy. Starter homes and housing for middle-income families are not generally available, while speculative housing for the \$200,000 and higher market is available. This latter housing is in subdivision development on the city periphery.
4. We encourage new residential development to follow the pattern of our original town, continuing the existing street design and maintaining small setbacks.		X	
5. We have options available for loft living, downtown living, or "neo-traditional" development.		X	
6. We have vacant/developable land available for multifamily housing.	X		

7. We allow multifamily housing to be developed in our community.	X		Yes, but municipal wastewater collection infrastructure is not available beyond the city limits. These developments should be concentrated in the municipal area.
8. We support community development corporations that build housing for lower-income households.	X		Beyond the city's short-lived housing rehabilitation program of the early 1980s and long-standing assisted and subsidized housing, neither jurisdiction is involved with housing-related activity. The community has supported Habitat for Humanity developments, however.
9. We have housing programs that focus on households with special needs.		X	Nothing other than that cited above.
10. We allow small houses built on small lots (less than 5,000 square feet) in appropriate areas.		X	The city has allowed small lot developments; they are dotted with mobile homes.

Educational Opportunities

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.

Pattern	Yes	No	Comments
1. Our community provides workforce training options for its citizens.		X	In light of the community's relatively low educational attainment, GED classes have been offered locally for a decade. Classes are currently available at two locations; in Buena Vista and in the northern part of the community. Training is also available through the regional workforce development program.
2. Our workforce training programs provide citizens with skills for jobs that are available in our community.	X		This training is available through the regional workforce development program.
3. Our community has higher education opportunities, or is close to a community that does.	X		Marion is located equidistant (30-35 miles) between two technical colleges and two universities, all in Americus and Columbus. Some even travel to a satellite campus in a neighboring county sponsored by a third college. The technical colleges in Americus and Columbus are both investigating opening satellite campuses in Buena Vista.
4. Our community has job opportunities for college graduates, so that our children may live and work here if they choose.		X	There are few employment opportunities for college graduates.

Governmental Relations

Regional Solutions

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.

Pattern	Yes	No	Comments
1. We participate in regional economic development organizations.	X		
2. We participate in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.	X		
3. We work with other local governments to provide or share appropriate services, such as public transit, libraries, special education, tourism, parks and recreation, emergency response, E-911, homeland security, etc.	X		The county's rural water system is linked not only with the City of Buena Vista, but with a neighboring, rural county water system. Community leaders have worked with leaders from several other counties to establish the state's largest E-911 service area. Marion has maintained fire and emergency response mutual aid agreements with adjoining counties for several years.
4. Our community thinks regionally, especially in terms of issues like land use, transportation and housing, understanding that these go beyond local government borders.	X		For a quarter-century Marion participated in a regional (Tri-County) high school located in the south half of the county.

Regional Cooperation

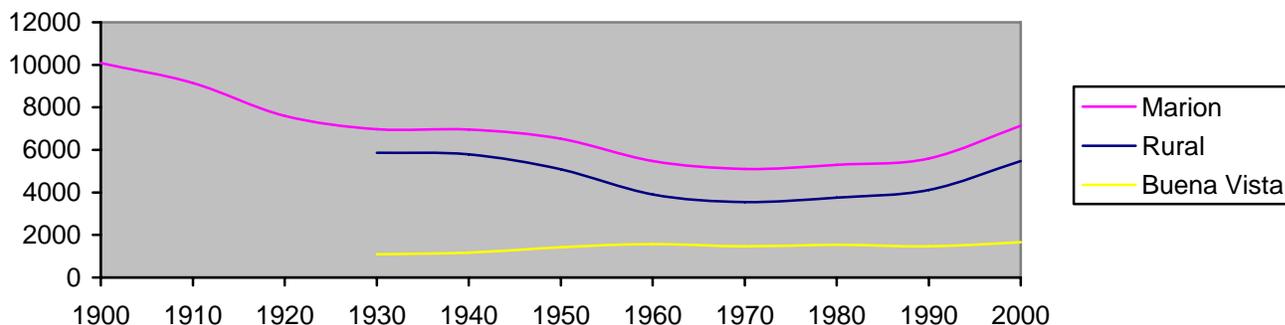
Regional cooperation should be encouraged in setting priorities, identifying shared needs, and finding collaborative solutions, particularly where it is critical to success of a venture, such as protection of shared natural resources or development of a transportation network.

Pattern	Yes	No	Comments
1. We plan jointly with our cities and county for comprehensive planning purposes.	X		
2. We are satisfied with our Service Delivery Strategy.	X		Original SDS is currently undergoing review.
3. We initiate contact with other local governments and institutions in our region in order to find solutions to common problems, or to craft region wide strategies.	X		The county's rural water system is linked not only with Buena Vista's municipal system, but with the rural system of a neighboring county for system backup.
4. We meet regularly with neighboring jurisdictions to maintain contact, build connections, and discuss issues of regional concern.	X		Regional Commission, Valley Partnership

Data Supplement

Population

Marion County ended the previous century with fewer residents than when it began. After 1900 the population decreased with each successive census through 1970, for a cumulative loss of half the population. The community recorded uninterrupted increases for the remainder of the century; however, rising to 71% of the 1900 level.



10,080	9,147	7,604	6,968	6,954	6,521	5,477	5,099	5,297	5,590	7,144	Marion
-	-	-	5,871	5,793	5,093	3,903	3,541	3,753	4,118	5,480	Rural
-	-	-	1,097	1,161	1,428	1,574	1,468	1,544	1,472	1,664	Buena Vista

Population loss during this lengthy period was not unique to Marion County, as the majority of surrounding counties experienced a similar fate. Taylor County netted a 10% loss, Schley County lost one-third, Talbot one-half, Stewart and Webster both lost two-thirds. The two exceptions to the trend were Sumter, which increased 27%, and Chattahoochee, which increased 157%. The latter increase was influenced greatly by the presence of soldiers residing in group quarters while in basic training at Fort Benning. Even with adjustment for this dynamic, Chattahoochee County still recorded a 72% increase during the period.¹



Buena Vista, benefitting from being the community's only incorporated area throughout the century, netted a population increase. Despite losses in two decades, the city recorded a 52% increase for the seventy-year period for which statistics could be found. Between 1930 and 1970

¹ At the time of the 1970 Census, 66% of Chattahoochee County residents were in military group quarters. In 1980-1990-2000 this percentage averaged 40%, with the proportions decreasing from 48% to 33%. During the 1980-1990-2000 timeframe residents of military housing averaged 10% of the seven county total; decreasing from 14% to 6%.

the city increased by 34% (371), while the rural area population decreased 40% (2,330). The net change for the balance of the century was positive for both the incorporated and unincorporated areas; the city 13% (196), the rural area 55% (1,939). Throughout this period Buena Vista averaged 23% of total county population; the same proportion as recorded with the 2000 Census.

Although the county ended the century with an increase in population, the underlying dynamics were not positive. Population increases during the 70s and 80s were less than 200 and 300, respectively. The 28% increase during the 90s, the greatest numeric and percentage change during the century, was not a response to favorable, local developments. Rather, virtually all the new residents were fleeing increased land costs and land use controls spawned by development pressures in counties on and near the community's northwest boundary. Land in Marion County was comparatively less expensive and at that time “unfettered” by local development standards and regulations. The new residents continued to commute to their places of employment across the county line, and with the exception of school activities typically had little involvement in the civic, social and political affairs of the greater community.

Earlier Census estimates suggest the community’s population increase experienced during the 1970s occurred in the first half of the decade; the 1975 estimate was higher than the 1980 Census. Thus, the ’80 Census marked the beginning of two decades of growth; 6% in the 80s and another 28% in the 90s. Total growth for the twenty-year period was 35%.

Buena Vista’s resident population increased by 8% between 1980 and 2000; accounting for 6% of total community growth. The number of rural residents increased 46%; contributing 93% to the growth. The rural increase was concentrated north of Buena Vista; for reasons already stated in the northern third of the county. Eighty-six percent of total county growth between 1980 and 2000 occurred in the north half of the county².

Population Trends 1980-2000					
Jurisdiction	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000
Marion	5,297	5,539	5,590	6,501	7,144
Buena Vista	1,544	1,508	1,472	1,568	1,664
Rural	3,753	4,031	4,118	4,933	5,480
Area	77,200	75,016	72,833	73,818	74,803
Georgia	5,463,105	5,962,661	6,478,149	7,328,413	8,186,453

Source: U.S. Census data, Georgia Department of Community Affairs. River Valley Regional Commission

The surrounding area recorded a net loss of 3% 1980-2000; primarily attributable to the reduced military presence in Chattahoochee County.³ Adjustment for the military presence results in a 5% increase in population for the period. Georgia experienced a 50% increase as it rode an economic boom concentrated in metropolitan Atlanta, placing the state among the fastest growing in the nation.

² North Buena Vista Census Division

³ The military’s presence in Chattahoochee County, both in terms of actual residents and proportion of county population, at least those reported in group quarters, has been decreasing in recent decades; 1970-66%, 1980-48%, 1990-38%, 2000-33%. For the period 1980-2000, these personnel averaged 40% of Chattahoochee County’s total population.

Annual population estimates prepared by the Census Bureau suggest Marion County netted a population loss of 2.5% (-180) between 2000 and 2008; a 1.3% (-22) loss in Buena Vista. Both losses are below the estimated 3% decrease in the surrounding area, where only Schley County was credited with an increase (13%). The state is estimated to have increased 18% as the economy around Atlanta continued to expand.

Population Estimates 2001-2008									
Jurisdiction	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Marion	7144	7144	7076	7021	6991	6999	7013	6980	6964
Buena Vista	1664	1654	1639	1625	1627	1634	1645	1648	1642
Rural Area	5480	5490	5437	5396	5364	5365	5368	5332	5322
Georgia	74,803	75,773	78,817	76,795	76,503	74,911	72,057	72,803	72,468
	8.2M	8.4M	8.6M	8.7M	8.9M	9.1M	9.3M	9.5M	9.7M

Source: U. S. Census

There are three significant regional dynamics in play (at this writing) which will greatly influence the local population level over the next two decades. Fifteen miles to the east (of Buena Vista) widening of U. S. 19 to four lanes is nearing completion. This is the last segment of the 275 mile route between Atlanta and Tallahassee to be widened. The improved route is expected to divert some north-south traffic from I-75, increasing community access and exposure for the three neighboring cities to the northeast, east and southeast. This enhanced thoroughfare will place Marion County at a competitive disadvantage in economic recruitment efforts.

Fort Benning's training mission is expanding as the result of military realignment and Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) decisions made in 2005/2006. Base enhancement is expected to attract 30,000 additional military personnel, military family members and civilian workers by 2011. Marion County comprises much of the east boundary of the military reservation; consequently, developable land is essentially non-existent several miles west of Marion County. This tends to isolate the community from metropolitan Columbus, but because of proximity base expansion could, nevertheless, offer some potential for local population growth.

This potential is mitigated significantly; however, by the 2009 opening of a major automobile manufacturer approximately sixty miles north of Fort Benning. Hundreds of employment opportunities available at this manufacturing facility and the additional jobs spin-off developments generate will tend to draw more of the new area residents northward away from Marion County than might have occurred in absence of the automotive manufacturer.

There are not any developments visible on the horizon, internal or external, believed to be of sufficient strength and duration to overcome these larger, natural dynamics located on the east and west of the community. The future trend is not expected to be as robust as the decennial growth documented by the 2000 Census, nor negative as the 2001-2008 Census estimates suggest. Population change over the next twenty years is expected to be positive, but small and

gradual, and more reflective of natural increase (birth/death rates) than in-migration. The city projection is a flat 23% of the county total, based on the past, long-term record.

Population Projection: 2010-2030						
Jurisdiction	2000	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Marion	7,144	6,948	7230	7340	7424	7492
Buena Vista	1,664	1,598	1,663	1,688	1,708	1,723
Rural	5,480	5,350	5,567	5,652	5,716	5,769
Georgia	8,186,453	9,550,897	10,233,118	10,915,340	11,597,562	12,279,784

Source: River Valley Regional Commission

All four age groups depicted in the following table netted population increases between 1980 and 2000. The school age population increased by approximately 200 despite a numerical loss during the 1980s and a proportional decrease from 36% to 29%. Young workers increased by approximately 500, while retaining relative consistency in proportion. Older workers accounted for the greatest shift in population, increasing by approximately 1,000 and resulting in an increase from 23% to 31% of total population. The proportional decrease of elderly residents masked a numerical increase of approximately 150.

Population by Age												
	1980				1990				2000			
	<1-18	19-39	40-64	65+	<1-18	19-39	40-64	65+	<1-18	19-39	40-64	65+
Marion	36%	29%	23%	12%	30%	31%	26%	13%	29%	29%	31%	11%
B.V.	36%	47%*		18%	31%	29%	21%	19%	35%	31%	21%	14%
Area	34%	39%	17%	9%	30%	38%	21%	11%	29%	35%	25%	11%
Georgia	32%	35%	23%	9%	28%	36%	26%	10%	28%	33%	29%	10%

Source: U. S. Census

In absence of change in the local economic environment, the median age of the community is expected to continue increasing. Elderly residents should increase in number as a result of longevity, the presence of an elderly care facility attracting residents from out-of-county, and older workers reaching retirement age. Many younger residents entering the labor force can be expected to relocate in search of greater employment opportunities out-of-county. Their absence and the aging of the labor force that remains will have the effect of maintaining (or a possible small reduction in) the school age population. Development of this scenario will result in, in the long-term, less need for investment in larger acreage recreational and school facilities, and perhaps law enforcement, and greater investment in health care facilities/services and a shift in housing needs.

The community recorded a significant shift in racial composition between 1980 and 2000. While the black population was essentially static over the course of the two decades, decreasing by 16 (<1%), the number of white residents increased by 1,512 (53%). The overwhelming majority of

this increase occurred in the northern half of the community⁴ during the 1990s, the result of an in-migration of families escaping land costs and regulatory controls in neighboring counties to the north and west. With these changes the black proportion decreased from almost half (46%) to one-third (34%) of the community's total population. The white distribution increased from 54% to 61%. Other races aggregated are credited with an increase of 350 residents; a proportional increase from .2% to 5%. These changes in composition have not had any significant impact on the community, and considering the limited population growth predicted no significant impacts are expected.

Population by Race									
Jurisdiction	1980			1990			2000		
	Black	White	Other	Black	White	Other	Black	White	Other
Marion	2,450	2,835	12	2,306	3,250	34	2,434	4,347	363
Buena Vista	999	544	1	952	514	6	1,055	430	179
Rural	1,451	2,291	11	1,354	2,736	28	1,379	3,917	184
Area	33,652	41,531	2,017	32,579	38,214	2,040	34,017	37,560	3,226
Georgia	1.5M	3.9M	.05M	1.7M	4.6M	.1M	2.3M	5.3M	.4M

Source:

Within the city black residents increased in number (56) but lost proportionate share (65% to 63%), while white residents decreased in both absolute number (114) and share (35% to 26%). These proportional changes were the result of an increased presence of (predominantly) lower-skilled workers of "other" races attracted to the community because of the availability of manufacturing jobs. The Census credits their aggregate numbers with virtually identical increases in the city and unincorporated area between 1980 and 2000. Proportional share increased from essentially 0 in both the city and larger community to 5% in Buena Vista and 11% throughout the county. The overwhelming majority of this increase occurred during the 1990s.

The largest numerical change in the surrounding counties was the loss of almost 4,000 white residents, resulting in a decreased proportion from 54% to 50%. The black population netted a nominal 365 resident increase, and a proportional increase from 44% to 45%. Residents of other races aggregated recorded an increase of 1,200 which, within the context of the larger population changes was sufficient for an increase from 3% to 4% of the area total. Population increased statewide by 2.6 million; whites accounting for 53%, blacks 34% and other races 14% of the change. The 2000 Census documented the distribution statewide at 65% white, 29% black and 5% other races.

⁴ Census Tract 9801

The community recorded the greatest proportional improvement in poverty conditions relative to the surrounding area and state 1980-2000. The Census credited the community with an 8 percentile reduction in residents living at or below the federal poverty level. Buena Vista also fared better than the area or state, with a five percentile improvement. Nevertheless, more than one-third of the municipal population was below the poverty level in 2000.

Population in Poverty			
Jurisdiction	1980	1990	2000
Marion	30%	28%	22%
Buena Vista	40%	37%	35%
Area	23%	23%	21%
GA.	17%	15%	13%

Source: U. S. Census

The community recorded greater improvement in the number of households in the lowest income bracket between 1990 and 2000 than either of the larger areas. Across the county, the proportion with an income of less than \$10,000 decreased by thirteen percentiles, from 32% to 19%; a decrease of almost half. The city percentage improved by eleven points; the surrounding area nine, the state seven.

The proportion of households in the four lowest brackets decreased nineteen percentiles, from 71% to 52%; the city improved by ten percentiles, 80% to 70%. The surrounding area and state both improved by seventeen percentiles. However, the 2000 Census credited Buena Vista with median household income 6% than in 1990.

Household Income - Proportional Distribution								
Income Distribution	1990				2000			
	Marion	Buena Vista	Area	Georgia	Marion	Buena Vista	Area	Georgia
Total households	1,945	522	22,614	2.4M	2,685	666	25,082	3M
Less than \$10,000	32%	45%	26%	17%	19%	34%	17%	10%
\$10,000-\$14,999	10%	11%	11%	9%	9%	10%	8%	6%
\$15,000-\$19,999	12%	10%	11%	9%	8%	10%	8%	6%
\$20,000-\$29,999	17%	14%	19%	17%	16%	16%	17%	13%
\$30,000-\$34,999	7%	5%	8%	8%	7%	2%	7%	6%
\$35,000-\$39,999	7%	4%	6%	7%	6%	4%	6%	6%
\$40,000-\$49,999	5%	3%	8%	11%	11%	10%	11%	11%
\$50,000-\$59,999	3%	5%	5%	8%	8%	6%	8%	9%
\$60,000-\$74,999	3%	2%	4%	7%	6%	3%	7%	10%
\$75,000-\$99,999	2%	1%	2%	5%	6%	3%	6%	10%
\$100K-\$124,999	1%	0%	<1%	2%	3%	1%	2%	5%
\$125K-149,999	<1%	0%	<1%	1%	<1%	<1%	1%	3%
\$150K and above	1%	1%	<1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	5%
Median	\$18,343	\$18,840	-	\$27,561	\$29,145	\$17,672	-	\$41,901

The community also recorded the greatest percentage increase (257%) in per capita income 1980-2000, amounting to more than \$10K. The state's 230% improvement; however, yielded a larger numerical increase (\$15,000) than the community. The area's 205% improvement equated

to less than \$10,000. The city's 212% increase amounted to a \$7,700 increase. Application of the recent rate of change in per capita income yields the following projections.

Per Capita Income			
Jurisdiction	1980	1990	2000
Marion	\$3,933	\$9,779	\$14,044
Buena Vista	\$3,660	\$7,306	\$11,406
Area	\$4,817	\$9,115	\$14,690
GA.	\$6,402	\$13,631	\$21,154
Projections			
Jurisdiction	2010	2020	2030
Marion	19,112	24,180	29,248
Buena Vista	15,279	19,152	23,025

Source: U. S. Census; DCA Dataviews

Recent censuses credited the community and larger study areas with similar improvements in households lacking an automobile for the sole use of occupants of the residence. Within Buena Vista; however, the condition worsened during the 90s. According to the Census, households in the city lacking a vehicle increased by 100; increasing from one-quarter to almost one-third of municipal households.

Proportion of Households No Vehicle Available				
Year	Marion	Buena Vista	Area	Ga.
1990	16%	24%	16%	10%
2000	13%	31%	13%	8%

Among the jurisdictions studied, the community made the greatest improvement in educational attainment, primarily at the lower attainment levels. Between 1980 and 2000, the proportion of adult residents who did not have a high school diploma decreased by 29 percentiles. Buena Vista recorded the second best improvement, with a decrease of 24 percentiles. The surrounding area and state recorded decreases of 21 and 23 percentiles, respectively. The community's poor standing in 1980 served as a foundation for the strong improvement. At that time 2/3 of local adult residents had not graduated from high school.

In the attainment level of most frequent comparison, high school diploma, the community again recorded the greatest improvement. The county improved by 13 percentiles, Buena Vista by 16; twice the improvement credited to the surrounding areas. Georgia increased by 1 percentile. In the first two years of post secondary studies, the community's performance was comparable to the surrounding area and state. Community wide the number with some college and an Associates degree increased by 13 percentiles, Buena Vista by 11. The number in the surrounding area and throughout the state increased 11 and 13, respectively. The state clearly recorded the greatest improvement at the college graduate and higher level, marking an increase of 9 percentiles; three times the local and area rates.

Despite marked improvement during the 20-year period, at the end, the community still had a higher percentage of residents lacking a high school diploma, and a lower percentage with a post-secondary education than the surrounding area.

Educational Attainment					
Year	Jurisdiction	less than HS diploma	HS diploma/ GED	Some college/ Assoc's. Deg.	Bachelor's and higher
1980	Marion	64%	23%	7%	6%
	Buena Vista	66%	18%	5%	11%
	Area	50%	26%	11%	13%
	GA.	44%	28%	13%	15%
1990	Marion	45%	36%	14%	5%
	Buena Vista	48%	32%	12%	8%
	Area	37%	31%	19%	13%
	GA.	29%	30%	22%	19%
2000	Marion	35%	36%	20%	9%
	Buena Vista	42%	34%	14%	10%
	Area	29%	33%	22%	16%
	GA.	21%	29%	26%	24%

Source: U. S. Census

There is only one year of available data with which to compare high school drop-out rates between counties. Prior to the 2007-2008 school year, students from out-of-county were attending the local school system, and in absence of detailed data it could not be determined how many of the drop-outs in any year were residents of Marion County. In that one year that drop-out data is currently available and Marion was again operating as a single-county system, only one surrounding county had a (fractionally) lower drop-out rate. Marion's rate was half the state rate.

Housing

Recent decades have seen a major shift in the type housing placed in the community. The Census documented the addition of 1,289 houses to the local housing inventory between 1980 and 2000; 1,161 of which were mobile homes. The trend in Buena Vista was similar, where 80% of 218 additional units were of mobile home construction. This type housing diminishes local government's ability to generate the revenue needed to fund public services. The conventionally constructed, built-on-site single-family residence has decreased from 3/4 to 48% of the local housing inventory. The same trend is evident in the surrounding area, but not as strong. At the state level the trend is even weaker. The community's proportion of multi-family housing is less than half that of the surrounding area, suggesting the need for additional units of this type.

Housing Type												
Type	Marion			Buena Vista			Area			Georgia		
	'80	'90	'00	'80	'90	'00	'80	'90	'00	'80	'90	'00
	1,841	2,152	3,130	527	575	745	22,642	25,142	28,946	2.0M	2.6M	3.3M
Single Family	76%	60%	48%	74%	61%	49%	72%	64%	59%	70%	65%	67%
Multi-Family	8%	6%	5%	15%	20%	20%	17%	14%	13%	22%	23%	21%
Mobile Home/ Other	16%	34%	47%	11%	18%	31%	11%	22%	28%	8%	12%	12%

Source: U.S. Census data, Georgia Department of Community Affairs

According to the 1990 Census, 28% of the local housing stock was built in the ten year period immediately preceding the Census; the state rate was 32%. As shown below, the 2000 Census reported 35% of the local housing supply was constructed during the decade immediately preceding the Census; the state rate was 28%. The area statistic for this latter period was 20%.

Age of Housing - 2000				
Year of Construction	Marion	Buena Vista	Area	Georgia
# occupied units	3,130	745	28,946	3.3M
1990-Mar. 2000	35%	26%	20%	28%
1980-1989	21%	24%	18%	22%
1970-1979	16%	12%	22%	18%
1960-1969	12%	17%	14%	13%
1950-1959	7%	7%	8%	9%
1940-1949	2%	4%	5%	4%
< 1940	6%	10%	11%	6%
Median Year Built	1983	1980	-	1980

Source: U. S. Census Table H36, H37

The median age of housing in 1990 was 19 years for Marion and 17 years for the state; in 2000 17 years for Marion and 20 years statewide. The population surge of the 1990s had a significant impact on the age of the community's housing inventory. Between 1990 and 2000, the local housing supply increased 45%; statewide-24%. A significant percentage (14%) of Buena Vista's housing supply was constructed prior to WW II.

In absence of detailed housing information, Census data revealing the number of housing units lacking complete plumbing or kitchen facilities is often referred to as an indicator of housing conditions. Between 1990 and 2000 both local jurisdictions recorded improvements in the numbers and percentages of households lacking complete kitchen and plumbing facilities. Buena Vista's improvements were nominal, single-digits in both categories. Subtraction of city numbers from the county totals indicates virtually identical qualitative rates in both the city and unincorporated area. Most recently (2000 Census), 2% of city households were lacking either (or both) of these facilities; community wide the incidence was 1%. Statewide, the percentage was 1% in both 1990 and 2000, despite small numerical increases in both categories.

Condition of Housing: 1990-2000							
Total Housing Units		Marion		Buena Vista		Georgia	
		1990	2000	1990	2000	1990	2000
		2,152	3,130	575	745	2.6M	3.3M
Plumbing Facilities	Complete	1,998	3,090	558	730	2.6M	3.3M
	Lacking	154	40	17	15	28,462	29,540
Kitchen Facilities	Complete	2,062	3,106	560	733	2.6M	3.3M
	Lacking	90	24	15	12	24,014	31,717

The community's homeownership rate averaged approximately eight percentiles higher than the state between 1980 and 2000; though the difference was only half that in 2000. All of the community's multi-family rental housing is located in Buena Vista, a factor which contributes to a much lower homeownership rate in the city; most recently (2000) twenty-one percentiles below the county level. The 2000 Census documented a 74% homeownership in the unincorporated portion of the county; 87% in the surrounding area (this data not presented below).

The county's 15% vacancy rate documented by the 2000 Census would seem to suggest the availability of an attractive number of units for housing choice among current residents or to accommodate prospective residents. However, the majority of these units are in use (designated "other"), though perhaps not year-round, and not on the market (see table footnote). The 2000 Census documented only 88 available/vacant residential units throughout the community; 54 for sale and 34 for rent. Buena Vista was credited with a dozen each for sale or rent. Although these have not been specifically identified for present purposes, based on housing conditions throughout much of the community many would likely classify as generally less desirable, because of physical condition, or even substandard. On this basis, there is a market for owner and renter housing for current and prospective residents.

Occupancy Characteristics: 1980-2000									
Units	Marion			Buena Vista			Georgia		
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000
Total Housing	1,841	2,152	3,130	527	575	756	2M	2.6M	3.3M
Owner-Occupied	66%	72%	66%	59%	57%	45%	60%	58%	62%
Renter-Occupied	26%	19%	19%	37%	36%	40%	32%	31%	30%
Vacant:	8%	9%	15%	4%	7%	15%	7%	10%	8%
...for sale	10%	4%	12%	0	10%	14%	15%	12%	14%
...for rent	8%	15%	7%	16%	36%	15%	39%	42%	32%
...other ¹	82%	81%	81%	84%	54%	71%	46%	46%	54%

¹ rented or sold but not occupied; for seasonal, recreational or occasional use; for migrant workers or other use.
Source: U. S. Census

According to worker commuting patterns from the 2000 Census, there were 787 people commuting from out-of-county to jobs in Marion County. As housing vacancy data show, the existing housing supply is not sufficient to accommodate these commuters should they decide to relocate in the community.

Based on the Census data presented in the following table, the local housing market appears to be generally affordable for the community as a whole. The generally accepted “safe” home mortgage ratio of housing price to annual income is approximately 2.5:1.⁵ Applying the community’s 2000 median household income of \$29,145⁶ to median property value yields a 2.4:1 ratio. (The 1990 ratio was 2.1:1.) The 2000 Census reported that monthly owner costs of housing units with a mortgage averaged 21% of household income⁷ (18% in 1990); another positive indicator of affordable, owner-occupied housing. Homeownership accounts for two-thirds of the community housing market.

Application of Buena Vista’s 2000 median household income of \$17,672 to the value of owner-occupied housing in the city yields a ratio of 3.4:1, a high range owner-cost ratio. (The 1990 ratio was 2.1:1.) The 2000 Census reported monthly owner costs of housing units with a mortgage were 17% of household income⁸ (24% in 1990); a positive indicator of affordable, owner-occupied housing.

Another analysis of housing affordability substitutes wages paid for jobs in the community for median household income. The average weekly wage for jobs located in Marion County in 1999 (the same time period as the referenced Census data) was \$338,⁹ yielding an annual average wage of \$17,576. Application of this single income to the community’s median property value

⁵ This ratio applies to any locale as long as local values and income are used. A 2005 Goldman Sachs study placed the national historic ratio for home loans at 2.7:1.

⁶ Computed from Household Income Distribution table in Population section

⁷ 2000 Census, Table H95

⁸ 2000 Census, Table H95

⁹ Georgia Department of Labor, “Employment and Wages 2000 Averages”

in 2000 yields a 4.0:1 ratio. It would take the addition of a second wage-earner increasing the household income 50% to yield a 2.7:1 loan ratio; 2.3 for the median value of housing in the city.

Housing Costs 1990 - 2000				
Category	Marion		Buena Vista	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Median Property Value	\$37,700	\$70,400	\$40,500	\$60,700
Median Gross Rent:	\$205	\$317	\$191	\$282
as percentage of household income	28%	31%	-	31%

Source: 2000 Census Table H76-value; Table H70-rent; 1990 Census Table H061A-value; Table H043A-rent

Rent consumes a larger share of household income in Buena Vista and across the community in general. The 2000 Census reported that median gross rent was 31% of household income the county as a whole and the city. This is most significant in Buena Vista where, according to the 2000 Census, 40% of housing is renter-occupied.

The number of households considered to be cost-burdened, i.e. paying 35% or more of household income on housing costs, increased 83% between 1990 and 2000. The most recent Census statistics indicate 10% of households throughout the community, and 16% within Buena Vista were burdened. Renters comprise the greatest share of these; 55% of burdened households throughout the community, 80% of the burdened households in Buena Vista.

Housing Costs Greater Than 35% of Household Income			
Category	1990	2000	
	Marion	Marion	Buena Vista
Occupied Households	2152	3130	745
Number of Households	169	309	116
Percent Burdened	8%	10%	16%

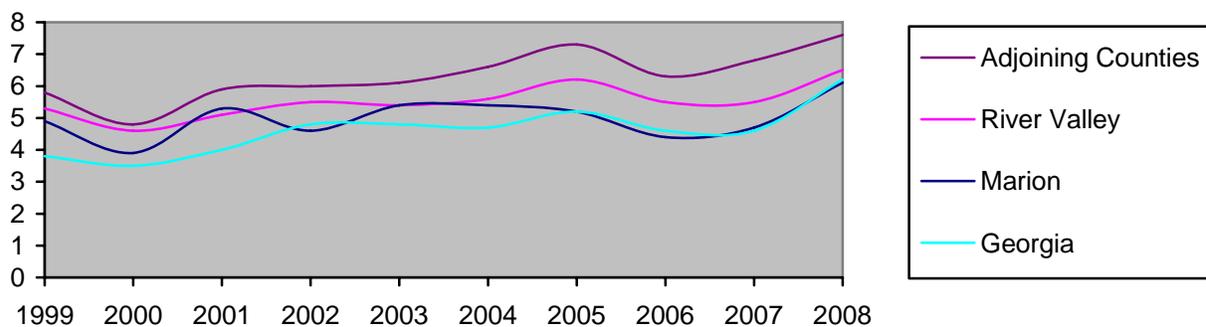
Source: 2000 Census, Tables H73 and H 97; 1990 Census, Tables H050 and H059 (all data from SF3-Census sample data)

The community has forty-three units of USDA subsidized rural housing for elderly (62 and older) and/or disabled residents. Two separate complexes of 18 and 25 units under separate ownership maintain a backlog of applicants, which, because of very limited housing options includes the homeless, drug offenders, AIDS patients and victims of domestic violence. While the numbers within some of these special needs categories may be small, in the aggregate they are present in numbers sufficient to warrant attention. The community does not have a significant migrant farm worker population.

Economic Development

The labor force consists of persons sixteen years of age and older in the civilian labor force (employed or unemployed non-military employees or business owners), and active-duty members of any branch of the armed forces. The Georgia Department of Labor collects civilian labor force information and generates monthly and annual employment and unemployment rates.

Local unemployment has compared very favorably in recent years with surrounding counties and with counties in the larger River Valley Region. Marion County's annual unemployment rate for the ten-year period 1999-2008 averaged 5.0%. The seven adjoining counties averaged 6.3%, none of which recorded an annual rate lower than Marion during the period studied. The annual rate for the sixteen-county River Valley Region averaged 5.5%. One county (Harris) recorded a rate lower than Marion each of the ten years; another (Clay) was credited with a rate lower than Marion three of the ten years. Statewide, unemployment averaged 4.6% for the period.



The decennial census collects data on armed forces participation rates (following table), and that typically runs at less than one percent in all jurisdictions (see foot note in the following table). The balance of the sixteen and over population is considered not to be in the labor force (students, housewives, retired, seasonal workers not looking for work, inmates, etc.). According to the 1990 Census, this described 44% of the local population, three percentage points (133 residents) higher than the area. By 2000, the local proportion was marginally smaller than the surrounding area. Approximately one-third of the state population over sixteen years of age is not in the labor force.

Employment Status								
Labor Force	1990				2000			
	Marion	Buena Vista	Area ¹	Georgia	Marion	Buena Vista	Area ¹	Georgia
Totals	4,184	1,086	41,730	4.9M	5,348	1,204	45,479	6.25M
Civilian Labor Force	55%	51%	59%	67%	59%	53%	58%	66%
Employed	89.6%	83.3	91.3%	94.3%	96.4%	95.6%	92.6%	94.5%
Unemployed	10.4%	16.7	8.7%	5.7%	3.6%	4.4%	7.4%	5.5%
Armed Forces	.7%	.3%	.1%	1.5%	.3%	.3%	.08%	1%
Not in Labor Force	44%	48%	41%	32%	41%	47%	42%	34%

¹ Exclusive of Chattahoochee County. While Chattahoochee's civilian unemployment rate is virtually identical to that of the Area, the inordinately high Armed Forces participation rate (+60%) relative to the other jurisdictions (<1%) skews area totals. Inclusion of Chattahoochee data decreases the Area "Not in Labor Force" rate from 42% to 37%. Source: U. S. Census

According to the 1980 Census, two industrial sectors (Manufacturing and Educational, Health and Social Services) accounted for a majority (55%) of local employment (jobs located in the community). As a result of a sharp decline in Manufacturing employment during the '80s, it took three sectors to account for a majority (56%) of local jobs by the time of the 1990 Census. With a 100% increase in Retail Trade employment, the 1990 Census reported this as the third largest local sector. These same three sectors comprised the majority (54%) of employment in 2000, with only one point shifts in employment levels from 1990. At all three times, Manufacturing remained the largest local employment sector.

The economic base of the surrounding area was more balanced throughout the period studied, as it took (the same) three sectors to account for a majority of employment (58%-57%-54%). The surrounding base was better balanced also in the sense that there was less difference in the size of the first and third largest sectors.

Progressively greater employment balance was documented statewide. By the 2000 Census the same three sectors accounted for only 45% of the economic base. A fourth sector (Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative and Waste Management Services) was only one point short of having a double-digit share of total employment. Although U. S. statistics are not shown, employment levels are very similar (same three sectors) to the state, with decreasing differences in size between the larger and smaller sectors. Outside Marion County Manufacturing is no longer the largest sector. The 2000 Census (1990 for the U. S.) credited Educational, Health and Social Services as the largest employment sector.

Employment by Industry												
Industry	1980				1990				2000			
	Marion	Buena Vista	Area	GA.	Marion	Buena Vista	Area	GA.	Marion	Buena Vista	Area	GA.
Total Civilian Employed	1875	500	23219	2.3M	2075	463	24547	3.1M	3015	608	26509	3.8M
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing, Hunting, Mining	11%	2%	8%	3%	13%	6%	6%	3%	7%	5%	4%	1%
Construction	5%	8%	7%	6%	6%	3%	7%	7%	9%	4%	7%	8%
Manufacturing	39%	30%	29%	24%	28%	26%	26%	19%	27%	48%	20%	15%
Wholesale Trade	3%	3%	4%	5%	3%	3%	4%	5%	3%	1%	3%	4%
Retail Trade	7%	6%	13%	15%	13%	17%	14%	16%	12%	6%	11%	12%
Transportation, Warehousing and Utilities	4%	3%	5%	n/a	3%	5%	6%	9%	6%	2%	5%	6%
Information	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1%	<1%	2%	3%
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	2%	3%	4%	6	4%	4%	4%	7%	4%	2%	4%	7%
Professional, Scientific, Management, Administrative, Waste Management Services	1%	2%	2%	n/a	3%	2%	3%	5%	4%	3%	4%	9%
Educational, Health and Social Services	16%	26%	16%	15%	15%	18%	17%	15%	15%	16%	23%	18%
Arts, Entertainment Recreation, Accommodation and Food Services	4%	8%	5%	n/a	<1%	1%	<1%	1%	4%	3%	5%	7%
Other Services	3%	2%	2%	n/a	3%	5%	7%	9%	4%	6%	6%	5%
Public Administration	6%	7%	6%	6%	8%	9%	6%	5%	4%	3%	6%	5%

Source: U. S. Census

Changes in the definitions of occupations used by the U. S. Census Bureau hinder true comparisons over time, so only the most recent Census data is presented in the following table.

Employment by occupation is a general measure of skill level of the labor force, or at least an indication of the skills being utilized. It describes the kind of work a person does on the job regardless of the location (including out-of-county) or industry of employment. The occupations listed on the first and last rows of the following table exemplify this best. Employees in Management, Professional and Related occupations are, in general, required to exercise more creativity and employee discretion than most of the other categories. It is common for college degrees to be required of such workers. Conversely, work requirements of Production, Transportation and Material Moving occupations are generally more routine with less opportunity for creativity and worker discretion.

It is in these two occupational categories that the 2000 Census documented the greatest differences in local and state employment levels. Employment in the Management.... category was recorded to be one dozen percentiles lower than the level statewide, while local employment in the Production.... category was fifteen percentiles higher than the state level. These employment levels testify to the historically low educational attainment level of local residents.

Employment by Occupation - 2000				
Occupation	Marion	Buena Vista	Georgia	U. S.
Management, Professional and Related	21%	14%	33%	34%
Services	13%	15%	13%	15%
Sales and Office	18%	11%	27%	27%
Farming, Fishing, and Forestry	4%	6%	1%	1%
Construction, Extraction, Maintenance	14%	11%	11%	9%
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving	31%	43%	16%	15%

Source: U. S. Census

The Georgia Department of Labor (DOL) compiles and releases average weekly and annual wage data. For the past twenty years the average weekly wage has been equivalent to 60% of the state average, and during much of that time there have usually been fewer than ten Georgia counties with wages lower than Marion. After 2003, the county's position relative to the other 158 counties improved slightly, and although the local wage remained at 60% of the state average, twice as many counties were credited with average wages lower than Marion.

DOL sometimes uses different industry classifications complicating wage comparisons over time. Data from two recent years for which industrial definitions are virtually identical are presented below comparing local wages with statewide data. With but one exception, local industrial wages lag significantly those across the state.

Local places of employment in the Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting sector pay wages averaging one-two percentage points higher than their counterparts across the state. This is one of the smaller ($\pm 6\%$) local employment sectors, but wages do average 6%-8% higher than the average wage for all local industries. Employees at any of the local Accommodation and Food

Service establishments reportedly receive virtually the same wage as their counterparts across the state, but they are equivalent to $\pm 60\%$ of the average wage for all local industries. This sector employs approximately 4% of the local labor force.

The worst performing sectors in the local economy are Professional, Scientific and Technical Services, paying approximately one-quarter the sector wage across the state, and Other Services, with wages approximately one-third the sector average statewide. The 2008 survey reported single digit local employment levels in both sectors. Government establishments in Marion county pay, on average, higher wages than the private sector; across Georgia the private sector averages higher wages.

Average Weekly Wages				
Industry	2005		2008	
	Marion	Georgia	Marion	Georgia
Goods Producing	\$479	\$788	\$501	\$870
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting	\$479	\$472	\$528	\$517
Construction	\$535	\$768	\$574	\$860
Manufacturing	\$453	\$811	\$465	\$894
Services Producing	\$351	\$752	\$387	\$816
Retail Trade	\$326	\$473	\$358	\$491
Finance and Insurance	\$670	\$1,205	\$725	\$1,339
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	\$347	\$1,187	\$280	\$1,325
Health Care and Social Assistance	\$390	\$746	\$442	\$811
Accommodation and Food Service	\$255	\$278	\$299	\$301
Other Services (Except Public Administration)	\$175	\$518	\$178	\$588
Total Private Sector	\$437	\$760	\$468	\$827
Total Government	\$489	\$711	\$555	\$780
Federal	\$868	\$1,134	\$917	\$1,236
State	\$432	\$656	\$480	\$725
Local	\$452	\$632	\$516	\$697
All Industries	\$451	\$752	\$490	\$819

Source: Georgia Department of Labor

The 1990 Census reported 82% of personal income in the community and surrounding area came from active earnings; wage or salary or self-employment income. By 2000 this had decreased to 79% for both areas. The state was credited with a reduction also, but only from 85% to 84%. Buena Vista recorded a much more significant decrease, from 75% to 67%. This decrease cannot be attributed to loss of employment, as the documented unemployment level in 2000 was at the lowest point at any time during a ten-year period. The loss mirrors the decrease in median household income the city experienced between 1990 and 2000.

Household Income by Type								
Type of Income	1990				2000			
	Marion	Buena Vista	Area	Georgia	Marion	Buena Vista	Area	Georgia
Wage or Salary	77%	71%	74%	79%	74%	62%	73%	78%
Self-employment	5%	4%	8%	6%	5%	5%	6%	6%
Interest, Dividends, Net Rental	3%	6%	5%	6%	3%	9%	6%	5%
Social Security	6%	9%	6%	4%	7%	10%	7%	4%
Public Assistance	3%	4%	2%	1%	<1%	1%	<1%	<1%
Retirement	3%	6%	4%	3%	7%	7%	6%	5%
Other	3%	1%	1%	1%	3%	5%	2%	2%

Source: U. S. Census

Marion County has maintained a significantly higher percentage of local residents working out-of-county than the larger areas studied. By the time of the 2000 Census over half of employed residents of the community commuted to work sites located outside Marion County. The local increase (twelve percentiles) over the past twenty years was similar to that experienced in the surrounding area (fourteen percentiles) and state (ten percentiles). The increase in number of Marion County residents commuting to jobs out-of-county (1,592) between 1980 and 2000 exceeded the increased number in-commuting (526) by a ratio of more than three-to-one.

Cross-County Commuting to Work						
Jurisdiction	1980		1990		2000	
	Worked In County of Residence	Worked Outside County of Residence	Worked In County of Residence	Worked Outside County of Residence	Worked In County of Residence	Worked Outside County of Residence
Marion	58%	42%	53%	47%	46%	54%
Area	80%	20%	67%	33%	66%	34%
GA.	68%	32%	62%	38%	58%	42%
Marion in-commuters	261		616		787	

Source: U. S. Census, Commuting Worker Flow Files

Trends

The local economy has not experienced any significant shifts in economic trends recently, no significant change in employment. Prior to the national economic downturn of 2009 local speculative housing development ceased as some units went unsold for a period of time. Manufacturing remains the largest industrial sector, providing employment opportunities in food

processing, wood product manufacturing and furniture manufacturing. On a positive note these industries/employers (in aggregate) reported a net increase in employment over the past decade. As this document is being written a major build-up, in both investment capital and manpower, is taking place on the county's western boundary at Fort Benning. For reasons explained earlier in this text, local economic impacts are expected to be relatively nominal for the foreseeable future.

Resources

The community has numerous means of facilitating economic development activity. Bond financing and other assistance can be secured through the Marion County Development Authority. Similar assistance can also be arranged through the multi-county Valley Partnership Development Authority based out-of-county. Numerous loan and revolving loan programs capitalized by the Economic Development Administration, U. S. Department of Agriculture and Small Business Administration are accessible for local development activities through the River Valley Regional Commission (RC), a member organization.

The local resource base is being enhanced through participation in numerous state-sponsored programs; Leadership Development, Entrepreneur Friendly Community and Georgia Work Ready. Free adult literacy classes are also available, including free accessibility to computers. Beyond these local resources, the RC assists the community/local developers secure access to economic development programs administered by numerous state economic development agencies, which includes investment capital and human resource development. Development of a business incubator would be a good complement to the local Entrepreneur Friendly designation.

Community Facilities and Services

Transportation

Marion County has 450 miles of public roadway; 3.5% of which is in Buena Vista. Twenty-eight percent of the roadways are state routes, 70% are county roads and 2% are city streets. Throughout Georgia these percentages are 15%, 72% and 12%, respectively. The presence of a single incorporated area contributes to a significantly smaller proportion of city streets than the state average. Fifty percent of the road network over which the county has jurisdiction remains unpaved, compared to 47% in the surrounding area and 33% across the state. Of the transportation network over which the city has jurisdiction 1.5% are not paved, compared to 2% of city routes in the surrounding area and 3.3% across the state. Topography hinders connectivity of a half-dozen streets in the southeast quadrant of Buena Vista.

Roads and Streets (in miles)				
Jurisdiction	Route	Paved	Unpaved	Total
Marion County	State	127	0.00	127
	County	158	156	313
	City	9	<1	10
	Subtotal	294	156	450
Buena Vista	State	5	0	5
	County	<1	.16	1
	City	9	.14	10
	Subtotal	15	.30	16
Rural	State	122	0.00	122
	County	157	156	312
	City	0	0	0
	Subtotal	279	156	434
Area	State	100%	0%	685
	County	53%	47%	1944
	City	97%	3%	194
	Subtotal	-	-	-

Source: Ga. Dept of Transportation December, 2008; 441 Report (county level) and 449 Report (municipal level). Rural data is balance of county-city totals.

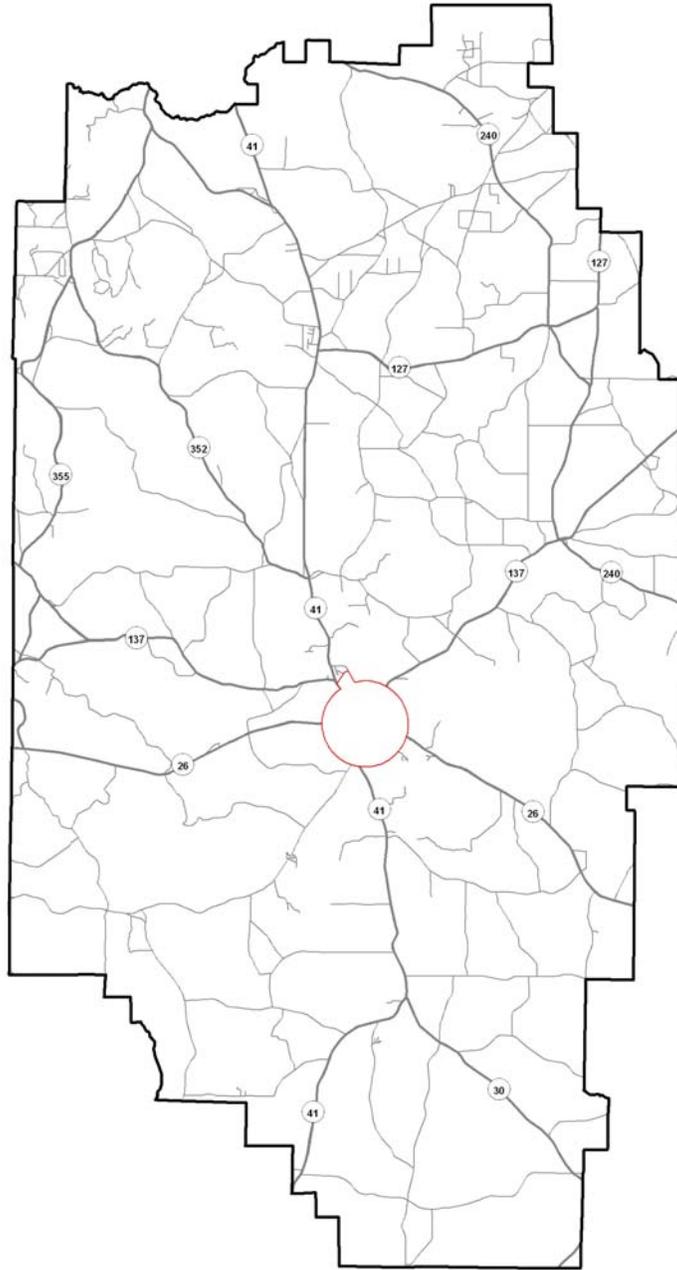
At this writing Georgia 26 across the breadth of the county and Georgia 41 north of Buena Vista are the only routes approved by the Georgia Department of Transportation (DOT) for use by twin-trailer transport trucks.

The county and city have nine-man and four-man public works, water, road/street departments, respectively, which keep county and city rights-of-way mowed and apply cold patch asphalt to pot-holes. County personnel also mow airport property.

The county uses three motor graders ('92, '96, '04), several mowers, two dump trucks, five pickup trucks ('83, '97, '02, '07, '09), two bulldozers, a backhoe and front-end loader to perform roadway maintenance and other public works functions. Equipment maintenance and minor repairs are performed by department personnel at the maintenance barn located adjacent to the county jail on Buena Vista's northwest city limit. The maintenance barn is a metal facility with a 30 x 30 repair shop and four-bay shed.

The city has one small tractor on which a rotary mower is mounted and three large lawn mowers to mow rights-of-way. Routine maintenance and minor repairs are performed on all city equipment at the municipal shop located on east Fifth Avenue. The city's equipment inventory also includes three pick-up trucks and one dump truck used by all municipal departments on an as-needed basis. The two newer model pickups are in good condition; the dump truck is an older model in fair condition.

County Roads



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Norfolk Southern Railroad has an eighteen mile segment of track which roughly parallels state route 26 on its east-west route through Marion County. Approximately 2.4 miles of this track is in Buena Vista. Because of the absence of freight origination or destination points in or near the county, Norfolk Southern trains have been diverted to other routes. Service along this line has been contracted to Georgia Southwestern Railroad, an independent short-line carrier.

On a 206 acre tract approximately two miles south of Buena Vista, the county owns one of 104 general aviation, public-owned, public-use airports in the state. The asphalt runway, 75 feet by 3200 feet, is 682 feet above mean sea level. The airport is unattended and the only service is tie-down for transient aircraft. There are no aircraft based at the airport.

The fact that the proportion of unpaved county roads is higher than the average among surrounding counties and the county average across the state should not be a significant concern. Marion is one of the state's most heavily forested counties (80% vs. 66% of Georgia),¹⁰ even four percentiles higher than the seven surrounding counties. The low level of development and small population base preclude the need for a high ratio of paved roads providing access to all areas of the community. Nevertheless, roadway improvements should continue with attention paid to where they can be most beneficial. The community must also maintain a good relationship with the Georgia Department of Transportation to further enhance the highway transportation network as road and bridge maintenance become an increasing financial burden on the community.

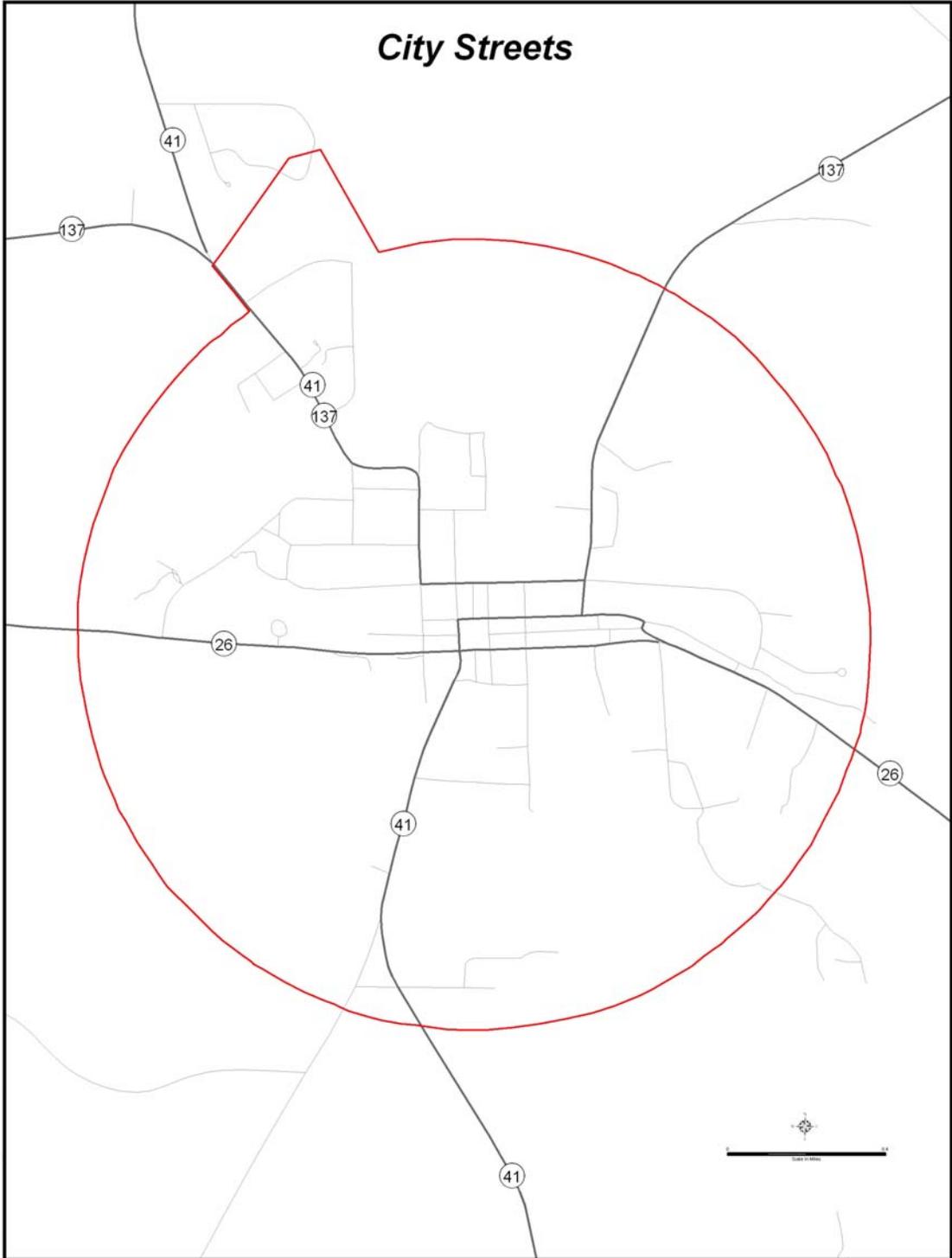
The condition of much of the equipment used by the public works departments can be described as high-use. By performing equipment repair in-house each jurisdiction is able to extend the useful life of rolling stock at a reasonable cost for each individual repair. Application of cost-accounting principles; however, might reveal many of the motorized items in inventory have exceeded their cost efficiency to local government. The municipal shop and storage area is undersized.

The Georgia Department of Transportation has authorized funding for sidewalk improvements in Buena Vista (\$279K Transportation Enhancement and \$334K special Congressional appropriation) and resurfacing eleven miles of GA 137 (\$1.8M) and thirteen miles of GA 41 (\$2.1M). These projects are identified in the current State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Sidewalks are essentially limited to state routes through the city. There are not any bicycle facilities, and there is not a local public transit service. The 2000 Census reported approximately one-third of households in the city lacked access to a vehicle for the sole use of occupants.

Industrial projections suggest an increased reliance on railroads for freight shipments. It is important local officials be diligent to capitalize on any opportunities to maintain an active rail line in the community. This is an amenity the community can offer industrial prospects. There are not any local truck-freight facilities.

Commercial development in the downtown could stress parking capacity. Off-square parking would be needed to alleviate congestion. The greatest parking area improvement (resurfacing) needs are at the Josh Gibson Youth and Family Center.

¹⁰ Forest Statistics for Georgia, USDA



Industrial truck traffic through Buena Vista is becoming increasingly problematic. The majority of trucks which pass through the city must negotiate a tight turn at the busiest and only signalized intersection in the community, Georgia Highways 26 and 41 on Buena Vista's downtown square, and additional turns along 41 north through the city. With the possible exception of a caution light at the exit point of the new high school, no other signalization is believed to be needed in the community. It has become common for transfer trucks to detour off the roadway at the 26/41 intersection across a corner lot and re-enter the traffic pattern. Industrial-sized trucks transport poultry, logs and solid waste through Buena Vista's downtown. Ambient odors from live poultry, poultry renderings and solid waste trucks, and the lingering stench of spillage from the latter are not an inviting environment for downtown.

It is important that the county continue to maintain and where possible enhance services at the airport, including runway extension. Because of proximity to metropolitan Columbus, it could be an alternative site for business/industrial and other general aviation use. This facility can be a very valuable asset in the community's economic development program.

Stormwater Management

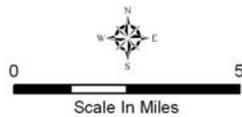
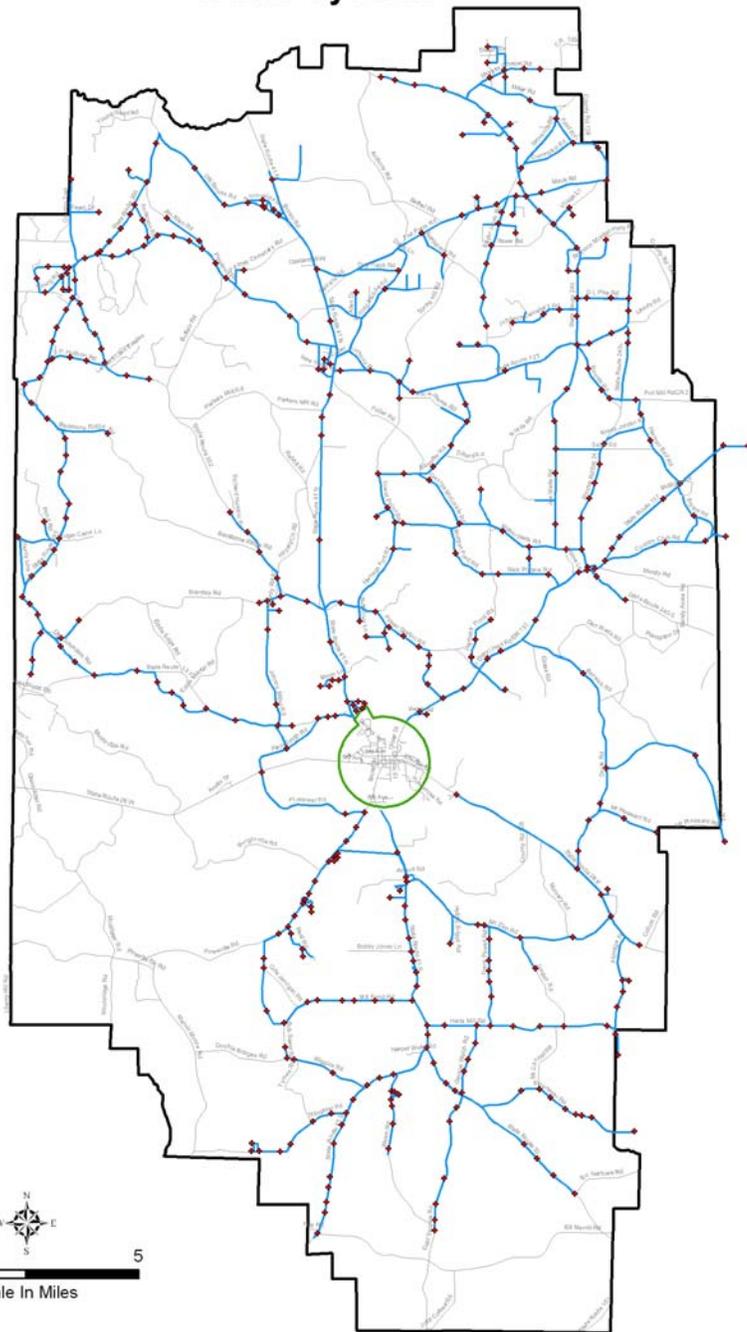
The local stormwater management system consists of open drainage channels paralleling the public road/street network. Maintenance of a system to properly receive and discharge storm flow covering approximately 370 square miles is increasingly burdensome, with possible threats of costly non-point source pollution regulations.

Water Supply and Treatment

As defined in the Georgia Rules for Safe Drinking Water, a public water system is a system that provides piped water to the public for human consumption, if such system has at least fifteen (15) service connections, or regularly serves an average of twenty-five (25) individuals at least sixty days out of the year. According to the state database and at this writing there are three, state-permitted, public water systems in Marion County. The smallest is Unimin Georgia Company L.P., a company mining construction sand and gravel. The system services approximately forty employees.

Marion County initiated rural water service in 1999. The Upper Cretaceous Aquifer is the source of water for the system. Two wells, both located south of Buena Vista, have capacities of 1,150 and 950 gallons per minute. The system is permitted by the state regulatory agency to withdraw an annual average of up to 1.0 million gallons per day (MGD), and a monthly peak of 1.3 MGD. As of this writing, maximum demand has been $\pm 700,000$ gallons per day.

Marion County Water System



A water treatment plant, located adjacent to the wells, adds chlorine for disinfection and fluoride and lime for pH adjustment. After treatment, the water is pumped to a 250,000 gallon ground storage tank/clearwell. One hundred horsepower high speed service pumps, capable of delivering $\pm 1,500$ gallons per minute, charge the distribution system and elevated storage tanks. The system has two elevated storage tanks; a 250,000 gallon tank at the water treatment plant and a 400,000 gallon tank at a site in north-central Marion County. The system pumps an average of 700,000 gallons per day, peaking at 1,000,000 gallons in 2008.

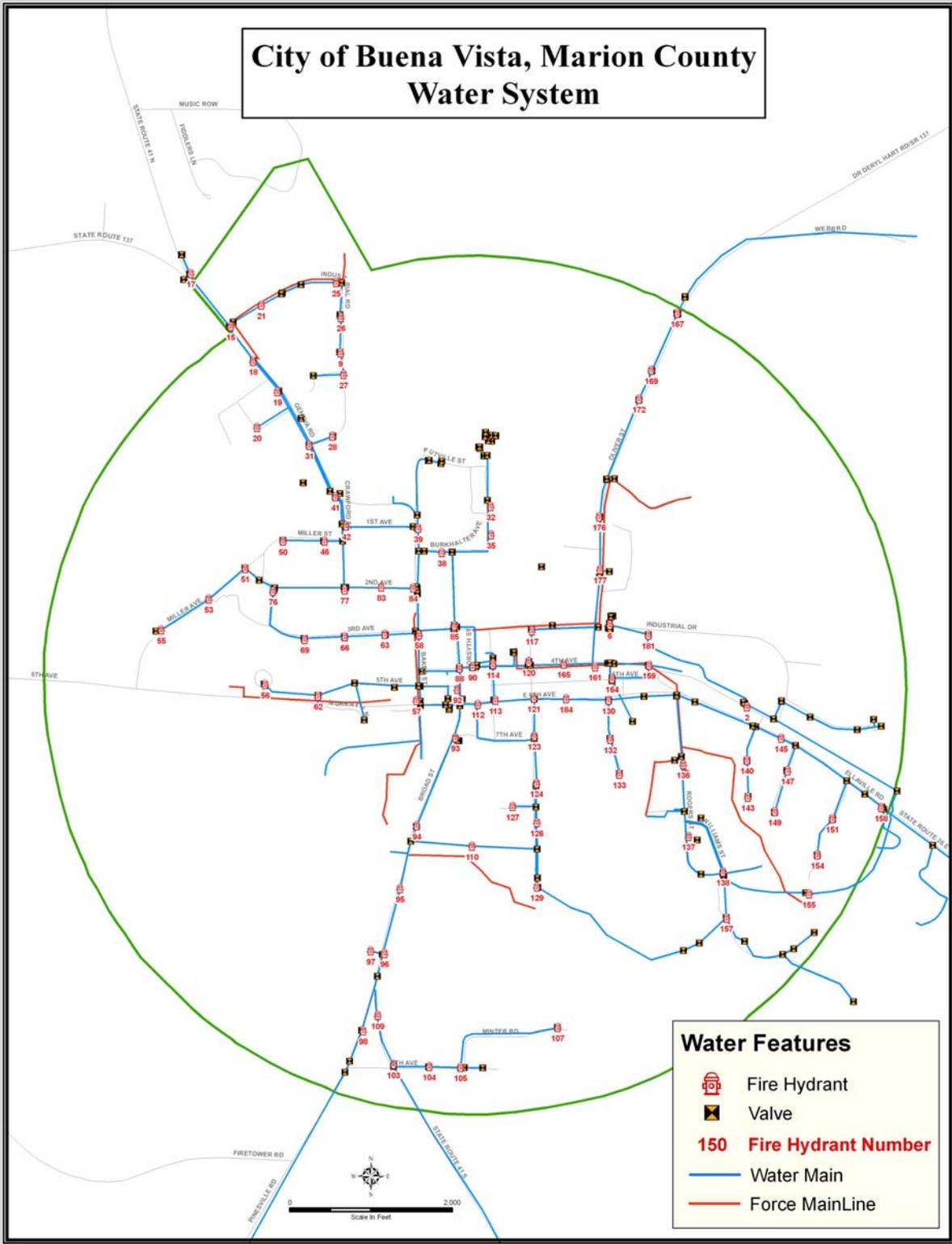
The distribution system is a mixture of 6", 8" and 10" lines with smaller lines on short, dead-end runs. The 10" main serves an area along U. S. 41 north from the water treatment plant, and portions of Pineville, Murray Farm and Butts Town Roads. 8" lines serve portions of S. R. 137, S. R. 41 north of Buena Vista, Providence Church, Blueville, James Rogers and Murray Welch Roads. The majority of the county is served by 6" mains.

In the event of failure of the county's main/larger pump, the smaller pump could satisfy the average daily demand with 17.5 hours of continuous pumping, and peak monthly demand with 22.8 hours of continuous pumping. Under current operating conditions, system storage capacities are believed to be sufficient to meet average and peak demands and fire flow demand. Current emergency reserve is marginally adequate, however. Application of a 15% reserve yields less than one day's storage. Problems with both wells simultaneously could prevent the system from meeting the emergency requirement. The northern part of the system experiences significant supply and pressure deficiencies during normal daily usage. During periods of peak demand storage in the larger, north tank is depleted and the high speed service pumps at the treatment plant are left to supply the entire system.

A summary of infrastructure needs for the county water system includes construction of a new well some distance from the existing water plant, increasing the size of the water main from the water plant to the north water tower, increasing the size of the water main serving the northeast part of the county, and extension of water service to Marvin Moore Road area.

Due to the water supply needs of Tyson Foods, Buena Vista has a large municipal water system for a city its size. Six deep wells with a collective capacity of 2.0 MGD pump raw water collected from the Upper Cretaceous Aquifer to the water treatment facility constructed in 1982. Treatment consists of aeration followed by injection of lime, fluoride, phosphate and chlorine. Treated water is pumped into the system by means of three, 1,000 gpm pumps for storage in either of two 150,000 gallon elevated tanks, one 500,000 gallon elevated tank or a 500,000 gallon ground storage tank. Water is distributed throughout the city through 13 miles of 12", 10", 8", 6" and smaller diameter water mains.

City of Buena Vista, Marion County Water System



Of the city's six permitted wells, at this writing two are completely inoperable, two need severe rehabilitation and two need additional wellhead protection measures, new valves and controls. Because of this diminished capacity, two of the four operable wells are in service for much longer durations than recommended.

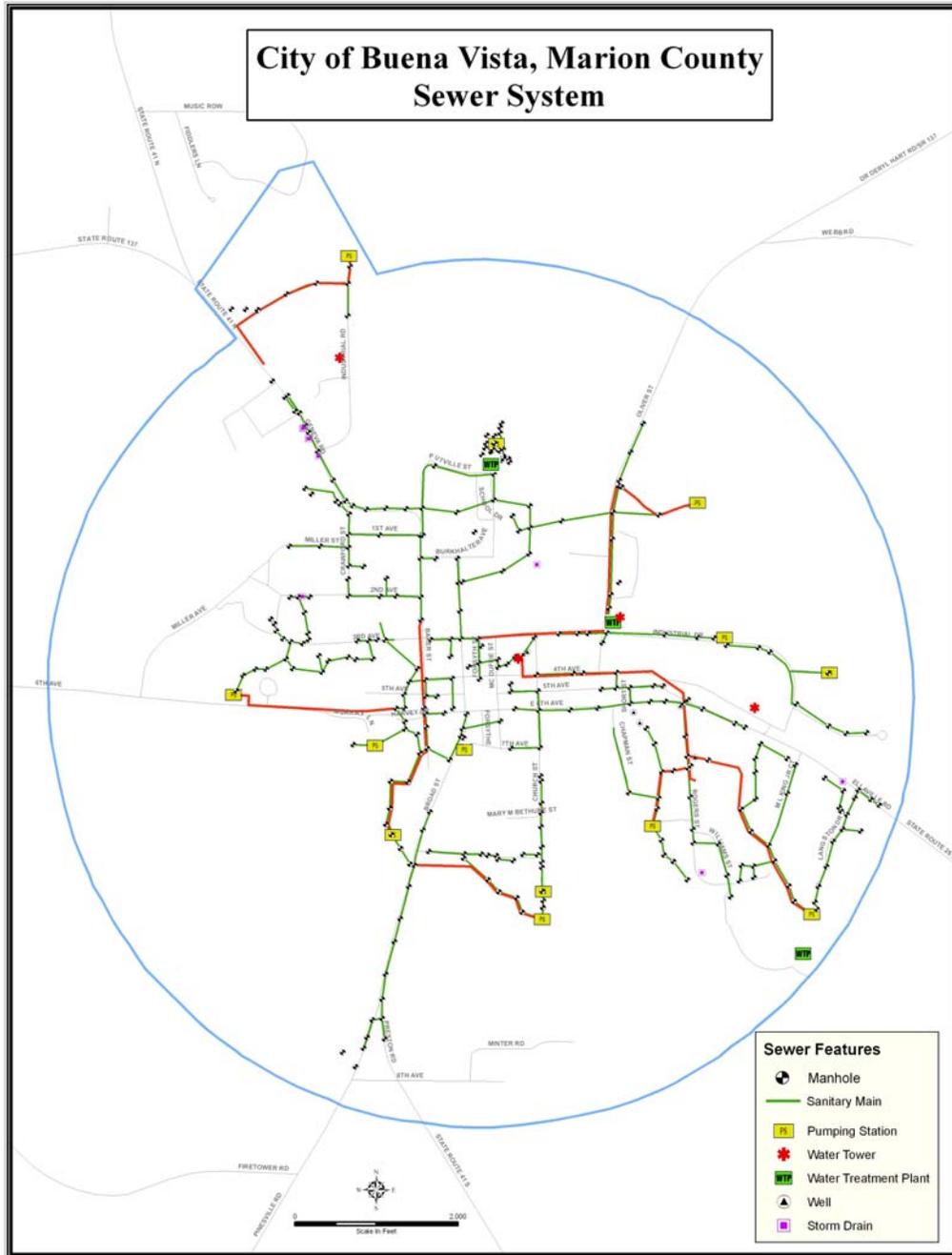
Many elements of the distribution system are forty years old and have exceeded design life in several areas of the city. The quality of service is hampered further by numerous undersized and dead-end lines. Considering their severe degradation, the dead-end lines pose a high degree of health risk. Dead-end lines allow for water to become stagnant and chlorine residuals to dissipate, allowing for the introduction of biological activates and elevated health risks. Protection of public health in light of the increasing emphasis on public water supply treatment and the current condition of the system is questionable. Significant rehabilitation and/or major replacement of deteriorated and undersized lines are needed to maintain the current level of service.

Regional groundwater levels declined significantly in recent years. If this decline continues, it will eventually affect some domestic and municipal wells, particularly those constructed 20 or 30 years ago as is the case in Buena Vista. Exacerbating this decline are recurrent periods of drought that do not provide for annual recharge of the aquifers. Another consequence of drought is that dry soil conditions require more irrigation pumpage. If the projected water level decline were to occur, nearly all domestic water wells would be affected. Municipal production wells would also be impacted because as pumping levels in these well areas lowered, there would be a resultant lowered pumping rate, meaning wells capacities would be less. This might require additional wells to make up this lost capacity.

A summary of infrastructure needs for the city water system includes renovation and upgrade of the water treatment plant (replace pumps, install valves, drain/clean clear well, install iron removal equipment, replace lime injection system and telemetry systems for wells, towers and water plant), replace industrial park well and enlarge water main to Tyson Foods plant.

Wastewater

Buena Vista collects raw wastewater from approximately 85 percent of municipal residents. Topography makes service cost prohibitive in some developed areas of the city. Service does not extend beyond the corporate limits. There are approximately 10.5 miles of gravity flow and force main sewers. Seven pumping stations enable collection in areas of lower elevation. All wastewater flows through a single facility for treatment prior to discharge to the receiving creek. Using an activated sludge process, the facility is permitted to discharge up to 1.5 mgd. Waste solids are thickened prior to dewatering in seven drying beds. Biosolids generated by the wastewater treatment process are aerobically digested for stabilization and then managed by off-site disposal to permitted facilities.



A summary of infrastructure needs for the city’s wastewater treatment system includes: Collection – renovation of the Church St. pump station and upgrading the force main from the U. S. Hwy 41 S. pump station; Treatment - replace headworks, installation of aeration equipment in second oxidation ditch, equipment replacement in both clarifiers, construction of a second sludge digester, replacement of sludge drying beds and sludge handling pumps, and replacement of sludge digester blowers.

Marion County High School has a small wastewater treatment facility on site and there are a very few business locations outside the city with small septic systems. Otherwise, wastewater treatment

is performed by individual septic tanks. According to the 2000 Census, there were approximately 2400 housing units distributed across approximately 235,000 acres of unincorporated Marion County. There is presumably one septic tank at each dwelling site.

Solid Waste

There is not an active municipal solid waste landfill in the community. The board of commissioners ceased accepting waste at the county landfill in June, 1991. The county landfill continues to be monitored through the post-closure process.

Both jurisdictions have multi-year contracts for collection with the same private waste hauler; TransWaste Services, LLC. The county terminated its program of county-collection from green box containers September 30, 2006, in favor of a contract for residential curbside collection throughout the unincorporated area. Per agreement with the hauler, at least one, thirty cubic yard roll-off container is maintained at a county site within the city's northern corporate limit for drop-off of bulky items, such as furniture. All geographical areas of the county are provided solid waste collection. The City of Buena Vista extended a pre-existing agreement with TransWaste effective March 2, 2005. The contract is for city-wide service and covers all residential collection. All but two commercial/industrial accounts are negotiated through the city.

Under terms of both agreements, TransWaste provides the personnel and equipment necessary for once-a-week collection and hauling of municipal solid waste which, as currently defined in Georgia law, does not require special handling or further processing, and to deliver same to a fully regulated and permitted Subtitle D landfill for subsequent disposal. Yard waste and construction and demolition debris are excluded from both service agreements. Municipal employees collect yard waste at curbside for city residents, and the latter is collected under special arrangements by private waste haulers.

Both jurisdictions are pleased with their collection and disposal programs and intend to maintain privatized collection.

Law Enforcement

The Marion County sheriff's department and jail is located on the city's northwest city limit. The current facility was constructed in 1975 in front of the previous, antiquated prison camp. Quarters for two of the thirty beds were designed for female prisoners. The county is under court pressure to construct a new facility if the county maintains a jail. Patrol cars are not on a regular replacement schedule, but are replaced as needed. The sheriff has four POST certified deputies, six full-time and one part-time jailers.

The Buena Vista police department, housed in city hall, is staffed by six full-time police officers, one of which is funded by a three-year federal COPS grant. There is no secretarial or support staff. The department operates on 12 hour shifts and is currently using six vehicles; '07, '05 and four 1999 model police cruisers. These vehicles are serviced commercially. The department has one base radio station and each police cruiser has a mobile radio. All officers have portable radios to receive dispatches which come through the E-911 Center.

Both agencies are staffed below industry recommendations, but both officials indicate the staffing level is adequate. The sheriff does admit some difficulty adequately patrolling the outer

reaches of the county with current staff. Several vehicles, older model mobile radios, the oldest video cameras and radar units all need to be replaced.

Fire Protection

There are one municipal and six rural, volunteer fire departments serving the community. Buena Vista's metal fire hall was built in 1991 adjacent to city hall. Eleven hundred square feet are dedicated to housing two fire apparatus, and an additional 500 square feet are used as training. Because the majority of the volunteer firefighters are employed outside the city, few are available on weekdays to respond to a fire call. The department has received some hazardous materials training, but training, maintaining and equipping a HazMat team is cost prohibitive for a community this size. Departmental personnel are reasonably well equipped to fight fires.

County assistance to the rural departments has been in the form of monthly gas allowances, insurance coverage and minor equipment purchases. Volunteer firefighters and community residents participate in fund-raising efforts and donate materials and services for maintenance and operation funding, purchase equipment, construct fire stations, etc.

The most pressing volunteer fire department needs include: (1) apparatus replacement (five vehicles at this writing), (2) ladder truck-City of Buena Vista, (3) Station construction in Brantley Community near new middle/high school, (3) replacement stations at Oakland and Fort Perry, (4) floor space addition in Buena Vista, (5) station maintenance, (6) self-contained breathing apparatus and fill stations, (7) rescue tools and (8) general appliances and nozzles. Increased funding is needed to place numerous items on a replacement schedule, e.g., hoses, nozzles, breathing apparatus, radios, beepers, etc.

The community has a need for enhanced/expanded rural fire protection. Increased residential development in the northern third of the county by families accustomed to the availability of fire service in their former communities is expected to increase citizen pressure for fire protection. Financial assistance is needed to better equip all departments and to reduce the burden regular fund-raisers place on volunteer personnel. The two jurisdictions must continue to coordinate fire protection programs and develop and maintain a sufficient volunteer base so each department can respond appropriately when called upon - at all hours of the day. Governing bodies should investigate the possibility of offering incentives to aid in the recruitment and retention of volunteer firemen.

Volunteer Fire Departments		
Department	Personnel	Apparatus
Buena Vista	<u>17 certified Firefighters</u> * 12 Module 1 certified 2 Module 2 certified 5 first class Firefighters 6 cadets NFPA NPQ 3/1001 and 2/1002 23 haz/mat training 20 extrication certified 20 NFIRS 4 wildland interface 2 Life Safety Educators 6 First Responder (3 EMT-I, 2 EMT-Paramedic, 1 Nurse) 1 survival Spanish	1995 1,000 gal. Class A pumper (1250 gpm) Ford E-One 1989 1,000 gal. Class A pumper (1250 gpm) Ford E-One 1984 750 gal. Class A pumper (1000 gpm) Chevrolet ¹
<u>Oakland</u> county station # 1	<u>11 certified Firefighters</u> 11 Module 1 certified 5 extrication certified	1982 500 gal. Class A Pumper (1250gpm) Sanford ¹ 1997 750 gal. Class A Pumper (1,500 gpm) International E-One
<u>Tazewell</u> county station #2	<u>6 certified Firefighters</u> 1 Module 1	1976 1,500 gal. Class A Pumper (750 gpm) Chevrolet ¹ 1971 1,000 gal. Tanker, Ford ¹
<u>Draneville</u> county station # 3	<u>9 certified Firefighters</u> 8 extrication certified 5 haz/mat awareness	1975 750 gal. Class A Pumper, Ford 1972 1,000 gal. Class A Pumper, Ford ¹ 1985 1,000 gal. Tanker, Ford
<u>Brown Springs</u> county station # 4	<u>9 certified Firefighters</u> 8 extrication certified 2 paramedics 1 level 4 haz/mat certified 3 haz/mat awareness	2004 1,000 gal. Class A Pumper (1250 gpm) Freightliner 1986 2,000 gal. Tanker (750 gpm), Ford
<u>Doyle</u> County station # 5	<u>7 certified Firefighters</u> 7 extrication certified	1983 750 gal. Class A Pumper, Ford 1984 1,250 gal. Tanker, Ford
<u>Fort Perry</u> county station #6	<u>11 certified Firefighters</u> 5 hazardous/materials certified 4 extrication certification 1 currently in modular1 training	1995 500 gal. Class A Pumper, Ford E-One 1977 1,200 gal. Tanker, Ford 1976 500 gal. Tanker, Ward LaFrance 1995 650 gal. Tanker, Ford
* several members have multiple NPQ certifications: FF 1, FF 2, FSE 1, WWF 1, Hazmat Awareness, Operations & Technician, Fire Instructor 1, Fire Inspector 1, Fire Officer 1, Fire Officer 2 ¹ most urgent apparatus replacement needs (5) at this writing		

Emergency Medical Service

The Marion County Emergency Medical Service (EMS) relocated from the rear of the county jail to the Marion County Government Office building on Baker Street in the fall of 1994. Emergency medical services are currently provided by 17 paramedics and 7 Emergency Medical Technicians, all of whom are part-time employees. All twenty-four are accessible at any time via two-way radio. The service averages seventy-five emergency transport calls per month. Since the Marion County

hospital closed in 1991, EMS patients are taken to hospitals in Americus, Richland and Columbus. The EMS currently has three ambulances, 1999, 2004 and 2006 models, all equipped with advanced cardiac life support. Emergency medical services are funded by the county and the local hospital authority.

The community is well-served by EMS within significant capacity limitations. All service personnel are part-time, and the only station is located in Buena Vista. While the greater number of emergency calls still comes from the city, population growth has been occurring in the northern third of the county. Because of the distances involved, some response times are lengthy. The department has had significant maintenance/service problems with the current fleet of emergency response vehicles. The community should work toward securing some full-time personnel in the department and placement of a substation in the northern part of the county.

Recreation

County facilities include three lighted baseball fields, one unlighted softball field, a four-court tennis complex and concession/restrooms covering less than half of the twenty-three acre site adjacent to the airport two miles south of Buena Vista. The city has a five acre recreation area located on the north end of Rosa B. Williams Lane. Facilities include two tennis courts, one basketball court, children's playground equipment, four picnic shelters, a water fountain and restroom facilities.

Facility needs at both facilities include lighting enhancements to increase and extend use. Recreation facilities (such as softball/baseball fields) are needed in the northern half of the county in response to population growth in the area. Long term needs include securing and operating a multi-use recreation center. A recreation director is needed to operate a year-round program.

General Government

Direction and oversight of county operations are provided by a five member, part-time board of commissioners elected by district, with the chair elected by and among the elected commissioners. The commission manages thirty-five county employees and an annual operating budget of approximately \$2 million. A county clerk operating as the chief administrative official works at the pleasure of the commission handling daily receipts, disbursements, correspondence, reports, payroll, meeting agenda, etc.

Because of crowded office conditions in the county courthouse the board of commissioners renovated a county-owned building located on Baker Street for administrative offices of the commission/county clerk, EMS, county water department and voter registrar. This complex was opened in the fall of 1994. On adjoining parcels are located the Health Department/Department of Family and Children Service/County Extension Office, and the Senior Citizens Center. Marion County issues building permits and enforces zoning and subdivision ordinances. The courthouse, constructed on the downtown square in 1850 continues to house the constitutional offices of Probate Judge, Clerk of Superior Court and Tax commissioner and the Superior Courtroom.

Buena Vista is governed by a five member, part-time city council and a part-time mayor. Council members are elected by post. The Mayor is elected at large and appoints members of council to oversee specific municipal departments. Collectively, they manage the activities of eighteen city employees and implementation of an annual operating budget of approximately \$2.75 million.

City Hall (1990) is a 2,000 square feet facility housing the city's general administrative offices, mayor's office and police department. The city clerk serves at the pleasure of the mayor and council

handling utility billings, daily receipts and disbursements, correspondence, reports, payroll, meeting agenda, etc.

General governmental operations of the city and county appear to be functioning well. Despite a 1500 square feet office expansion in 1994, county offices still have inadequate space. The Department of Family and Children Services and Health Department also need additional space. The county's public works facilities appear to be adequate for the next 5-10 years. The courthouse needs some general maintenance and physical repair. All county facilities are believed to be accessible to the handicapped with the exception of the second floor of the courthouse. Thus far, Superior Court judges have agreed to hold court proceedings at another appropriate location when necessary to accommodate handicapped persons. This has saved the county the significant expense of retrofitting the historic courthouse with an elevator.

Municipal offices, which include the police department, are cramped for space. Both city and county staffing levels appear marginally adequate. Both jurisdictions should, however, give serious consideration to adopting and maintaining a capital budget to plan for the best and most efficient use of equipment and facilities. While the city has adopted a zoning ordinance it is incomplete and lacks appropriate attention to land development requirements.

Educational Facilities

The Marion County School System operates three schools: L. K. Moss Primary School, Marion Middle School, and Marion County High School. In October, 2009 total student enrollment was 1,403; 59% were eligible for free meals (compared to 48% statewide) and an additional 12% were eligible for reduced-price meals (compared to 8% statewide).

In the fall of 1994, the electorate passed a school bond referendum to construct new classrooms for kindergarten through second grade. This facility was constructed on a 140-acre site approximately 1 ¼ mile south-southwest of the City of Buena Vista. The school opened in January, 1997, as L. K. Moss Primary School. With the addition of 18 classrooms in 2002 the 88,808 square feet complex now houses Pre-K through 4th grade.

The current Marion Middle School (formerly Marion Elementary) was built on Burkhalter Avenue in Buena Vista in 1951 on a 73-acre site and houses grades 5-8. The building has undergone several additions and renovations. Because of changes in instructional techniques, methods, and tools, the 52,033 square feet building is not an efficient educational facility.

The current Marion County High School campus started as Tri-County High School, Georgia's first consolidated, comprehensive high school, in 1976 to serve students in grades 8 through 12 from Marion, Schley, and Webster Counties. After expiration of the twenty-five year consolidation agreement Schley and Webster Counties withdrew, and only 9th-12th grade students from Marion attend the school. The 122,962 square foot complex is located approximately seven miles south-southeast of Buena Vista on a 57-acre tract.

According to state data local schools are performing well in comparison with other systems. Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) is one of the cornerstones of the federal No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. It is intended to serve as a measure of year-to-year student achievement on statewide assessments. The 2008-2009 school term was the seventh consecutive year L. K. Moss Primary School was credited with AYP, and the fifth consecutive year for Marion Middle School. The high

school also earned AYP that year; among the 56% of high schools statewide earning the designation.

In response to a number of factors affecting school operations, the electorate passed a school bond referendum in 2009 to construct a middle/high school. The combined campus is expected to be open for classes with the beginning of the 2011-2012 term. The 147,000 square feet facility will be located a couple miles north of Buena Vista, centrally located and nearer the population growth area of the community. Left in the wake of this relocation will be two, large, older, specially-built facilities, one located in a remote area of the community. These facilities offer the community both significant opportunities and challenges. Both sites offer large floor space and acreage for adaptive reuse, but at significant costs of redevelopment/renovation.

Medical Facilities

After closing of the local hospital in 1991, the Marion County Hospital Authority leased the building to Columbus Regional Health Care Systems, Inc. This enabled an expansion of the Marion Memorial Nursing Home to seventy beds. The facility is licensed for skilled care and intermediate care patients, most of whom come from Marion, Schley, Talbot and Webster Counties.

Loss of the local hospital was a significant blow to the community. The nearest hospital is approximately twenty-five miles south of Buena Vista, the county's population center, and is the smallest of the hospitals used by the community. The nearest larger hospitals are thirty-five miles away from the county seat. The community should be responsive to opportunities to further expand the availability of local health care services.

Absence of a local hospital places additional importance on the value of the county's emergency medical service; personnel, training, scheduling, equipment and vehicle maintenance, etc. The community must be responsive to departmental needs if this service is to meet the emergency care needs of residents.

Library and Other Cultural Facilities

The Marion County Public Library is one of 8 locations known as the Chattahoochee Valley Libraries (CVL), part of the organizational structure through which the Georgia Department of Education dispenses state funds for public libraries and their operations. The 4,300 square feet facility was constructed (opened in 1991) as the result of a 90% grant received from the state Department of Education; the city and county shared in the 10% cash match. The library is operated 32 hours per week by a Branch Manager, library assistant and part time assistant. The local governing board consists of seven members, three appointed by the county, and two each by the city and Board of Education. The library has a forty-two seat conference room available for public, non-profit meetings.

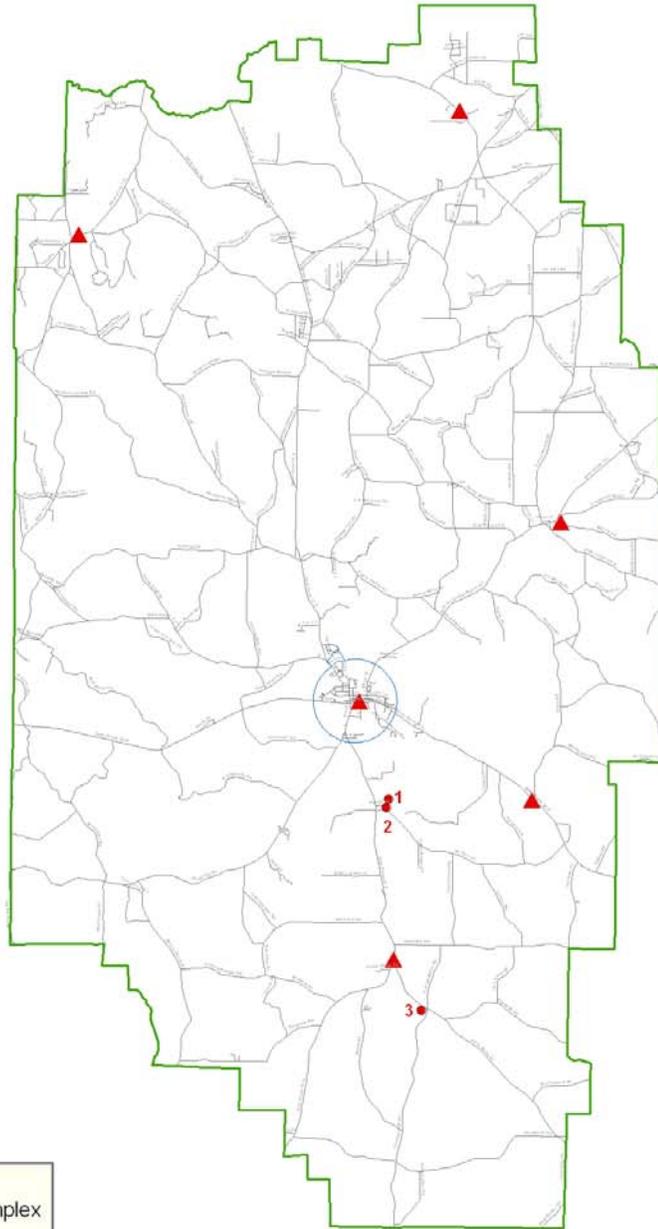
The library is completely computerized with one catalogue computer, sixteen public access computers with internet for free public use, free Wi-Fi, and one Downloadable Audio Book computer where patrons can download books to a jump drive or disc. In addition to more than 10,000 items available on local shelves (print materials, movies and DVD's, music CD's, books on tape and books on CD, newspapers and magazines) patron's have access to 400,000 items system-wide; requested and new materials are delivered three times per week. Annual circulation topped 43,000 in fiscal year 2008/2009.

Computer classes, homework assistance, and help with resumes and job applications is also available. The library's website offers a wide variety of free study guides and practice testing for the GED, ASVAB, nursing, police, and fire fighters, and assistance with job searches for career transitions and learning a second language. Monthly story-times and programming, movie days and Teen Wii Gaming Days and state-wide Vacation Reading Program for children and teens are offered each summer. The Marion County Library also hosts an annual Santa Claus Toy/Book Giveaway each Christmas. During the early weeks of 2011 the library will host the NASA funded traveling exhibit, "Visions of the Universe". During the 8 weeks exhibition school field trips and public programs will be offered geared towards the exhibit.

The community is well-pleased and well-served by the local library.

Community Facilities

Marion County



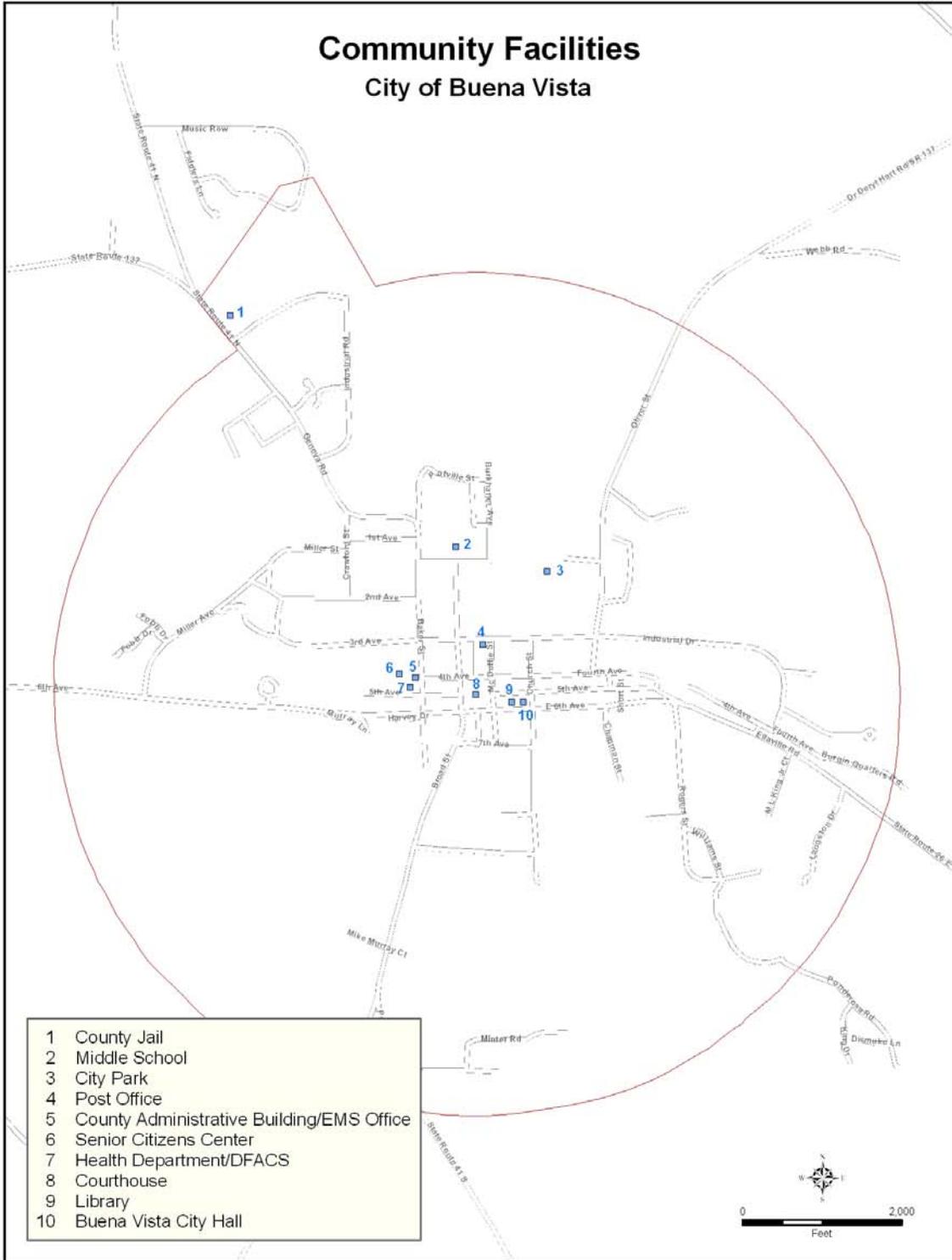
- 1 County Airport
- 2 Recreation Complex
- 3 High School
- ▲ Fire Station



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Community Facilities

City of Buena Vista



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Intergovernmental Coordination

Marion County and the City of Buena Vista agreements:

Service Delivery Strategy (currently under review for update)

fire service

water service

county jail

Marion County has an intergovernmental agreement with:

Middle Flint Regional E-911 Authority. By virtue of this agreement the county has mutual aid agreements with:

Taylor - law enforcement, fire protection and EMS.

Schley - law enforcement, fire protection and EMS

Sumter - law enforcement, fire protection and EMS

Webster - law enforcement, fire protection and EMS

Marion also has water service agreements with:

Marion County Board of Education

Schley County.

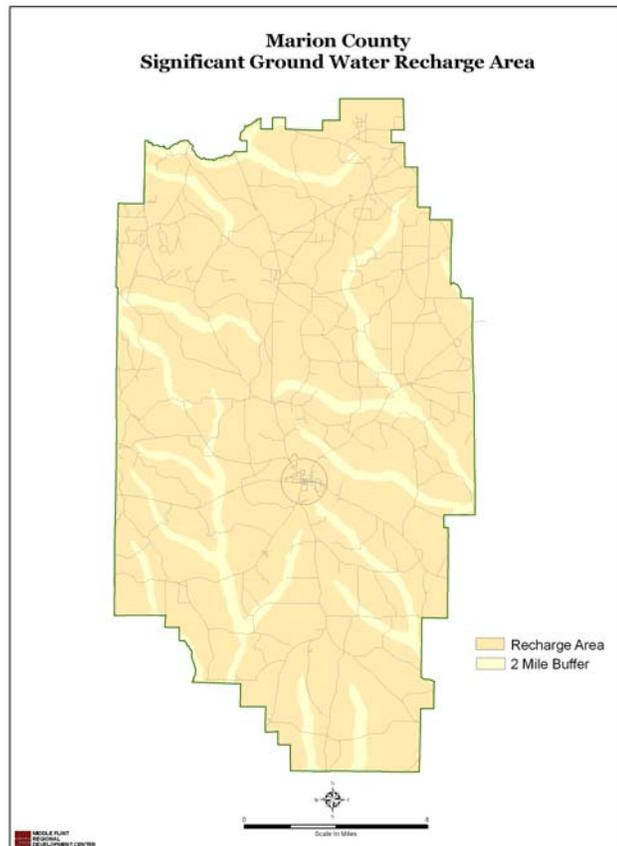
Marion has an agreement with the Valley Partnership Development Authority

The chief elected officials of Marion County and the City of Buena Vista have primary responsibility for coordinating their respective agreements. These agreements appear to be working well for the community. One exception is general communications between the board of education and the general purpose local governments.

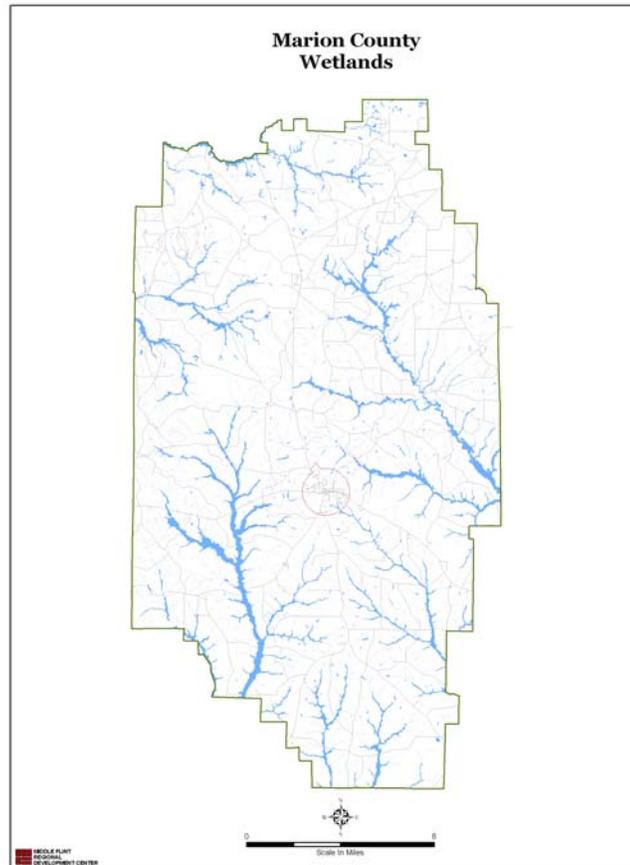
Natural and Cultural Resources

The state has implemented Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria affecting five natural resources; groundwater recharge areas, water supply watersheds, protected mountains, protected rivers and wetlands. According to state definitions groundwater recharge and wetland areas both are present in the community. Both jurisdictions have adopted state-approved regulatory ordinances.

Groundwater recharge is the process by which precipitation, primarily in the form of rain, infiltrates soil and rock to add to the volume of water stored in pores and other openings within them. Aquifers are soils or rocks that will yield water to wells. Recharge areas are among those regions in Georgia likely to have the greatest vulnerability to pollution of groundwater from the surface and near surface activities of man. Virtually the community's entire land area overlies a portion of the state's significant groundwater recharge area. The only exceptions are banks along small watercourses where precipitation typically drains into the nearby waterway rather than being absorbed into the soil. Both jurisdictions adopted groundwater recharge area protection ordinances late in 2001.



Wetlands are defined as areas inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes and bogs. This natural resource accounts for approximately three percent of the community's incorporated and unincorporated land area, and is, of course, heavily concentrated along creeks. Wetlands protection ordinances were adopted by both jurisdictions late in 2001. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act provides a federal permit process that may allow activities in wetlands after a public interest review. Most activities in wetlands will require a Section 404 permit from the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers. Under current federal policy, alterations or degradations of wetlands should be avoided unless it can be demonstrated that there will be no long-term adverse impacts or net loss of wetlands. Section 401 of the Clean Water Act requires certification by the State of any permit issued under Section 404. Other state and federal laws are also applicable to wetlands and wetlands protection.



Other Environmentally Sensitive Areas

There are not any public water supply reservoirs in the community. All water used for human consumption is withdrawn from groundwater aquifers. Per state definition (25% or greater gradient), steep slopes are essentially non-existent in the community. The U. S. Geologic Survey has mapped nominal acreages ($\pm 1,000$ acres) in three scattered locations of the community; the majority approximately 3.25 miles east of Buena Vista and a smaller balance approximately five miles northwest of the city. The Natural Resource Conservation Service has identified five local soils with slopes of up to 25%, but none reportedly exceed the threshold. However, erosion is a hazard if slope is more than 2%. This characteristic complicates stormwater management for the county and agricultural production for farmers. Marion County is ± 175 miles from the nearest coast; there are not any coastal resources in the community.

Floodplains

The community has only recently been mapped for floodplains. Draft maps of these resource areas have been prepared for review, but have not yet been released for duplication and insertion here. The community plans to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program.

MARION STAKEHOLDER LIST

1	Agricultural/forestry interests	Kim Welch, Ricky Maxwell, Eddie McKay
2	Banks	Randy McCorkle
3	Bicycle, hiking clubs	Robert McKay
4	Business owners, managers	Jeff Murray, Ralph Blue
5	Churches	David Chapman, John Homer, Chris Hess, Larry Franklin
6	Chamber of commerce	Libby Wells,
7	City/county planners, consultants	Stephen White, Jerry Baxter
8	Community development corporations	Walker Williams
9	Community residents - diversity	Gloretta King, Kim Kahn, Mulkey McMichael
10	Community service organizations	Betty Ellis, Ann Howell, Mark Taylor, Alex Peavy
11	Convention and Visitors Bureaus/tourism officials	Janet Dillard, Ransom Briggs,
12	County commission and city council members	Eleven elected officials
13	County/regional authorities, agencies, and key staff	Ken Clark, Bump Welch, Kay Hagler
14	Developers and related planning/design consultants	Dan Currington
15	Downtown or area business people	Dawn Welch, Paul Thomas
16	Entrepreneurs	Bernard McVey, Joe Rodeheaver
17	Environmental organizations	Brant Slay
18	Ethnic and minority groups	April Smith,
19	Federal, state, regional agencies w/local jurisdiction	Gail Smith, Billy McCullough, Lewis Folkes
20	High school/college student representatives	Brooke Elliott, Melissa Summers, Marcus Wilson
21	Immigrant groups	Jose Guterrez,
22	Insurance companies	Bobby Jones, Lynn Taylor
23	Land trusts	Mead, Wells Timberlands, Plumb Creek
24	Library boards	Cassandra Tymes, Sivan Walker Dixon
25	Local Family Connection Collaborative	Philip Moore, James Kinsey
26	Local/regional news media	Tri-County Journal, Patriot Citizen
27	Local/regional tourism officials	Janet Dillard, Maggie Potter
28	Low-income groups	Donna Tennison, Geraldine Blackshear, Judy Selle, Betty Ellis
29	Major employers	Jaime Willis, Wesley Weaver, Sammy Taylor
30	Military base planners	James D. Benefield
31	Municipal entities (transit, housing, PW, ED)	Burton Wight, Demetrius Lemons
32	Neighborhood organizations	Debra Ayers
33	Planning/preservation commissions, zoning boards	Rick Waters, Tina Mayer, Norman Royal
34	Preservation organizations and historical societies	John Rogers, Gladys Thomas, Beverly Woods
35	Property owners, including major land holders	Bill Becker, Joe Hilliard, Steve Vaughn
36	Public/private school systems, colleges/universities	Ricky McCorkle, Roger Sinyard
37	Public and Private Utility Boards/Directors	Bob Jernigan, Ronnie Morgan
38	Public/Community Health officials	Renee Barrett, Dr. Catrett, Dr. Hagler
39	Public Safety officials	Horace Snider, Ray Sales
40	Real estate professionals	John Daniels, Gary Wells
41	Regional office of the Georgia EPD	Dewey Richardson, Brannon Rufo
42	School boards	Ann Watson, Debra Graham
43	State agencies with substantial local facilities	Billy McCullough
44	Trade associations (Homebuilders, etc.)	Dan Snavelly, Bill Addison, Pete Weber
45	Under-represented, marginalized groups	Judy Selle, Mary King, Melanie Thomas
46	Universities, private higher education	Not applicable
47	Urban, suburban, and rural area business leaders	Gary Powell, Ray Rustin

Community Participation Techniques*

TYPE	TECHNIQUE	DESCRIPTION
Informative	Printed Public Information	Flyers, newspaper inserts, brochures, or newsletters providing information on the progress of the plan, proposed maps, and announcement of future public meeting opportunities. This information may be mailed, made available at public locations, such as libraries or city hall, or both.
Public Input	Public Hearings	A hearing is a formal meeting of the elected body where the public may comment or provide testimony on the matter presented for voting. This is used during approval of the completed draft Community Assessment and the Community Participation Program for transmittal to the RDC for review and again during approval of the completed draft Community Agenda for transmittal to the RDC for review.
Interactive	Vision Goals and Objectives Meetings	Facilitated meetings to determine answers to the three key planning questions - "What do you have?" "What do you want?" and "How will you get it?"
Partnerships	Stakeholder Meetings	The stakeholder group should be representative of the demographic diversity (race, income, etc.) of the area. Stakeholders should include local elected and appointed officials, key property owners, neighborhood leaders, chamber and other economic development professionals, community service providers, area residents, and others with strong opinions and some stake in the future development of the area.

* These techniques will be supplemented with the public involvement process employed during recent preparation of the Critical Needs Assessment of Marion County by the University of Georgia, Carl Vinson Institute of Government. This process employed town hall meetings, interviews (face-to-face, telephone and e-survey), and a random-dial telephone survey.

Schedule for Completing Community Agenda *

Activity		March	April	May		June	July	August	September	October
Assessment Transmittal Resolution		BV 3/2 MC 3/9								
Completeness Review		3/12								
Assessment Review			review							
Community Agenda	Vision Narrative			vision						
	Issues and Opportunities				I&O					
	Future Development Map					map				
	STWP						STWP			
Agenda Available/Public Hearing							hearing			
Transmittal Resolution							7/6 and 13			
Completeness Review							7/16			
Agenda Review								review		
Adoption										10/5 and 12

* This schedule will be facilitated as the result of published findings of the recently prepared Critical Needs Assessment of Marion County by the University of Georgia, Carl Vinson Institute of Government.