

STRENGTHENING A WELCOMING HOMETOWN



A Joint Comprehensive Plan for Appling County, City of Baxley,
City of Graham, and City of Surrency, Georgia



July, 2017

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and Surrency, Georgia

A Joint Comprehensive Plan for Appling County, the City of Baxley, the City of Graham, and
the City of Surrency, Georgia, in accordance with the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 and the
Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures established by the Georgia Department of
Community Affairs with an effective date of March 1, 2014

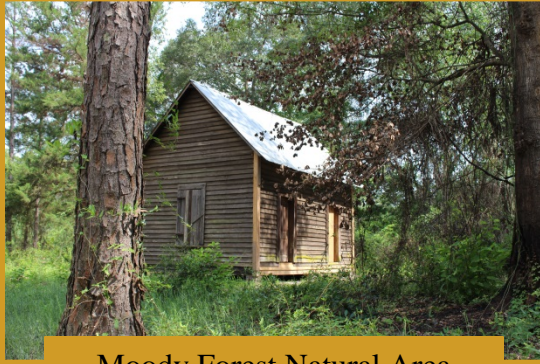


Prepared By:

The Appling County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee
The Appling County Local Governments

Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission

July, 2017



Moody Forest Natural Area



Appling County Heritage Center



Appling County Agricultural Scene



Southeastern Gin & Peanut



Graham United Methodist Church



Historic Residence, Surrency



Lawter Plant, Baxley



FRAM Fuels, Appling Pellet Plant

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INTRODUCTION AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Strengthening a Welcoming Hometown -- The Appling County Joint

Comprehensive Plan is a comprehensive plan prepared under the current Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989 adopted by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) first with an effective date of January 1, 2013, and after minor changes, an effective date of March 1, 2014. It is a joint plan for Appling County and its municipalities, the cities of Baxley, Graham, and Surrency.

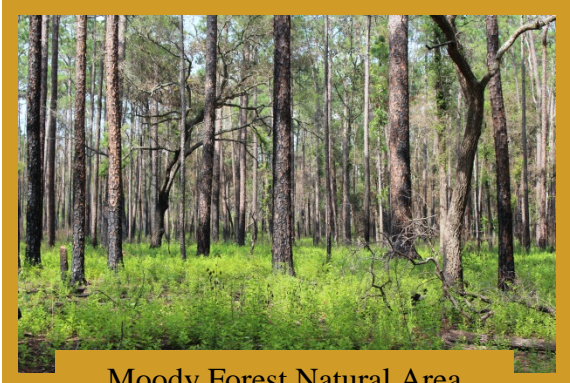
Appling County is a rural community of almost 20,000 persons located in the heart of Southeast Georgia along the major transportation arterial thoroughfares, the four-laned U.S. Highways 1 and U.S. Highway 341. Important Georgia Highway 15, the Traditions Highway, and Georgia Highway 121, the historic Woodpecker Trail, also traverse the county. The community's location is less than an hour away from Georgia's coast and Interstate highways I-16 and I-95. There is much more than location to Appling County which makes it welcoming and remarkably appealing to business, industry, residents, and visitors alike. The community is a true treasure with a rich history, world-class natural beauty, almost limitless economic opportunity, top-notch facilities, and maybe best of all, a laid-back, comforting life-style and truly caring, family-friendly atmosphere. Old South hospitality, community caring, and cooperative attitudes permeate and punctuate civic endeavors. Yet this ethos is not anachronistic. The community's amazing spirit easily functions with available modern conveniences and amenities, and only serves to make the already outstanding community even more special, and to further enhance an extraordinary quality of life. Appling County has experienced continuing recent economic success, and is a bustling rural small town community with expanding economic diversity and opportunity. The comforting, welcoming persona of the community is made more appealing given that the exceptional community is nestled in such a stunning and soothing bucolic landscape.

Appling County includes three municipalities, the cities of Baxley, its county seat, Graham, and Surrency. Baxley is the center of local commerce, government, education, and social community life, and has a population of about 5,000 persons. The heart of Baxley lies at the crossroads of U.S. 1 and U.S. 341. Graham and Surrency are both located on U.S. 341 about 8-10 miles from Baxley (west and east, respectively), and both are engaging small towns of less than 300 persons. All three towns began as railroad towns in the late 1800s, and have all been influenced by the county's never-ending green forests of Southern pines and their bounty, whether for naval stores, lumber, or other products. Graham and Surrency's heydays as centers of commerce relate back to the late 19th and early 20th centuries, but they still retain much charm and residential appeal.

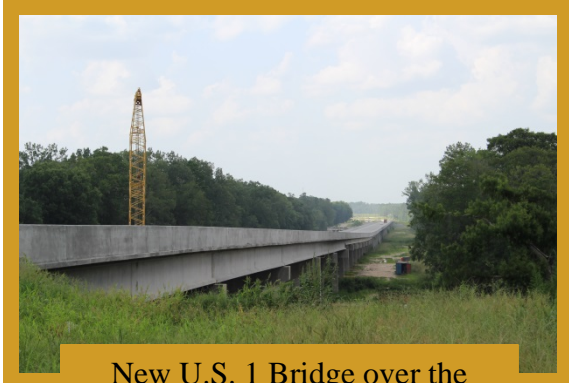
Appling County was an early Georgia county established in 1818 from Indian Treaty lands. Its initial settlement and economic activity relied on subsistence farming, raising livestock, and the timber/naval stores industry. The Altamaha River first provided access to Coastal Georgia markets through water borne transportation. The county was at the center of Georgia's enormously successful and profitable turpentine/naval stores industry. It was the home to the first commercial turpentine still, the first fire still, probably produced more rosin/turpentine products than any one area in the South, and the largest individual turpentine operator in the world. Even today, Baxley is known as "The Turpentine City," and was home to the last large-scale commercial turpentine producer in the United States, with production not ceasing until the early 2000s. Lumber and other wood products from pine trees have also been important economic outlets of much importance to the county throughout its history and continues to be so today. Surrency, in the early 1900s, was known as "The Crosstie Capital of the World," and today a pine lumber sawmill and wood pellet plant operate with significant economic impact. Other agricultural interests, from cotton to dairies to vegetable production, remain with significant economic impact. Appling County continues to diversify economically with a varied set of industry and a rapidly expanding retail/service sector. There has been slow, but steady, population growth in the county since 1970. The location of Plant Hatch, one of two Georgia nuclear power generation plants; the four-laning of U.S. 1 and U.S. 341; the geographic location near the Georgia Coast and ports; the opening of a local Walmart Supercenter in the early 2000s; the development of auto dealership superstores in the 2010s by a local entrepreneur; the

unparalleled natural beauty; the genuine hometown atmosphere; and the overall quality of life are all positive factors which have, and will continue to, influence and stimulate further growth and development. The natural beauty of the community includes not only soothing pastoral scenes of open spaces and agricultural uses, towering trunks of seemingly never ending evergreen pines, but the national park-worthy Moody Forest Nature Preserve and the incredible wildness of the Altamaha River. Moody Forest contains 200-300 year old growth longleaf pines, tupelo-cypress considered more than 600 years old, and the last known example of the longleaf pine-blackjack oak ecosystem. The Altamaha River is considered Georgia's "Amazon," its most ecologically diverse ecosystem, and has much historical importance. It is largely undisturbed, and has been labeled by The Nature Conservancy as one of the last 75 Great Places on Earth. Both of these wonderful resources, as well as others in the county, are open to the public for astounding outdoor fun and adventure. Appling County is truly welcoming on many levels, and is an outstanding, almost without parallel, place to do business, work, live, play or visit, especially in rural Georgia. Not surprisingly, is the fact that the local Chamber of Commerce invites people through a "welcome to Appling County, where hometown friendliness still shines through a spectacular setting," or that the Georgia Tourism website notes that the community is "the ideal place to leave troubles behind, canoe the pristine Altamaha River, or just enjoy the laid back hometown atmosphere."

The community continues to modernize and improve facilities, and to make itself an even more accommodating and welcoming hometown and place to do business. The old Macon and Brunswick Railroad continues to be a vital logistics center, as it is a Class I railroad of the Norfolk Southern System. There is also a Level II general aviation airport with a 5,500 foot runway, and a new terminal building which looks and feels like a home. There are all new schools within Baxley, and two renovated, modernized elementary schools in the outlying countryside, all managed to award-winning levels. Other outstanding infrastructure and services include, but certainly are not limited to, a solar-powered wastewater treatment plant, an updated local hospital, a new health department, a new senior citizens/Head Start facility, a regional recreation complex, and several industrial parks, including a new rail-served one east of Baxley. The community operates a heritage center, has an active Arts Council, and many involved civic clubs and churches. Cooperation, collaboration, and caring have long been community



Moody Forest Natural Area



New U.S. 1 Bridge over the
Altamaha River



Zoar United Methodist Church



County Farm Plant Company



Water Works Park, Baxley



Appling Healthcare System

hallmarks. Appling County truly does strive to maintain its appealing character and small town atmosphere, to expand its economic capability and opportunity, and to further strengthen itself as a welcoming hometown for all.

While there is much to celebrate and be optimistic about both existing and future growth and development within the community, there are issues requiring attention. About seventeen (16.5) percent of Appling Countians are 65 or older, compared to about 13 (13.1) percent in Georgia. Almost a fourth (22.5 percent) of the population lives in poverty, compared to 17 percent in Georgia. Incomes overall are low. Per capita money income in the county, as measured by the Census Bureau from 2011-2015, (\$19,178) is about three-fourths (74.5 percent) that of Georgia (\$25,737). The county median household income for the same period (\$37,135) is also about 75 (74.8) percent that of Georgia (\$49,620). Unemployment in the county was 6.4 percent, as an annual average in 2016, relatively high compared to the surrounding area, and a full percentage point higher than Georgia's 5.4 percent, but employment within the county did post gains in 2016 after being relatively flat since 2012. Such statistics have resulted in Georgia still ranking Appling County as a 2017 Job Tax Tier 1 county. While this ranking is for Georgia's bottom 40 percent or so of counties needing an economic boost, it has the advantage of offering Georgia's largest tax breaks for job creation within Appling County, and thus a big incentive for business job creator entities and further economic improvement. Appling County's economic future does have many positive factors which hold much promise.

The future Appling County will continue to take advantage of its assets and opportunities, and address its issues. It will continue to be at the forefront of rural family-centric living, hometown pride, a high quality of life with progressive hometown and collaborative leadership, and an involved and caring citizenry. The community will be a desired address for both business and residential growth, and an outstanding place to live, work, recreate, or visit. Growth will be well managed and guided to locate near the existing infrastructure and services of Baxley, and will be respectful and protective of existing character, and the community's fields, forests, open spaces, and its unique and special natural and cultural resources. The community will truly be recognized as a unique and special place of rural development and life known for its enviable and coveted quality of life, its urban-like amenities, its progressive and collaborative leadership, its

hometown appeal, and its growing economy which respects and maintains its outstanding character and small town atmosphere. Many more will enjoy living, working, playing, and doing business in Appling County as it continues to become an even more welcoming hometown.

The current DCA planning standards reduced and simplified requirements seeking to engender local plans more attentive to individual needs and generating more local pride, ownership, and use. This Appling County Joint Comprehensive Plan was developed with this as an overarching objective. It was intended to be a locally driven plan principally addressing local needs and cultivating widespread community interest, support, and buy-in, while meeting state standards. Even the title of this plan was chosen carefully to stimulate and encourage interest, reading, and implementation. “Strengthening a Welcoming Hometown” widely captures reference to Appling County’s well-deserved reputation of caring and friendly hospitality and warmth and to its future aspirations to further capitalize on the community’s rich history and heritage, natural and historic resources, its advantageous location, its superior transportation resources, and to make itself an even better place to live or work. This certainly should generate more curiosity and interest, and hopefully, more ownership and utilization, than the more bland “The Joint Appling County Comprehensive Plan.” The Appling County community, including its municipalities, wants to protect its heritage and rural character; enhance its growing and diversifying economy, conserve its fields and forests and natural splendor; maintain its warmth and caring; improve its infrastructure; attract new residents and retirees; locate businesses and compatible jobs; utilize and celebrate its natural resources and heritage; and grow tourism, among its guiding aims and principles outlined herein. The community truly wants to be a recognized address of exceptional rural life, overall quality-of-life, and progressive, collaborative leadership welcoming of business, residents, families, and visitors alike.

Previous Plans. This comprehensive plan is the third within the County prepared under the auspices of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. The first was adopted in 1991, and the second in 2007. Both of these previous plan efforts were intensively data and state requirement driven, although local objectives are outlined and portrayed. The second plan does contain some local information which may not easily be found elsewhere and may remain of use. These last plans should remain, at least in hard copy, available from the Appling County local governments and

the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission. At the time of this plan preparation, the 2007 plan is available in digital format on the state (www.georgiaplanning.com) and region (www.hogarc.org) websites.

Data. The emergence of the world wide web with its vast data repositories accessible through free search engines allows anyone easy access to significant amounts and a wide variety of data, and profiles of any jurisdiction, including Appling County and its municipalities. For this reason, this comprehensive plan includes only limited data to depict or illustrate points. The current DCA planning standards actually encourage such non-inclusion of data. Almost any data depicted at a moment in time quickly becomes dated, and maybe irrelevant. The world wide web offers the opportunity of more relevant and up-to-date data at the time of access.

There are a variety of reliable public and private sources of data. Of course, the traditional source of official community data is the U.S. Census Bureau. Data on Appling County, its municipalities, or any other jurisdiction is quickly accessed at census.gov/quickfacts which provides a summary community profile on many popular data items, and links to even more data. Another quality source of data is the website, www.statsamerica.org, which provides a compilation of primarily government data on many items for any county, city, or town of any size in any state of the U.S. The site is maintained by Indiana University in partnership with the federal Economic Development Administration. The University of Georgia maintains a website, georgiadata.org, where county snapshots, detailed county profiles, and county level data for nearly 1,300 variables related to a wide variety of subjects on population, labor, natural resources, government, health, education, transportation, crime and more can be accessed. The data can be compared to other counties and the state as well as on a historical change basis, among various user options. The data is compiled from a variety of sources, including *The Georgia County Guide and the Farmgate Value Report* prepared by UGA's Extension Service. The Georgia Department of Community Affairs has available data for cities and counties under "Community Planning Resources," and will also prepare community data reports when requested. The State of Georgia has official labor and economic data in its Georgia Labor Market Explorer as organized by the Georgia Department of Labor at explorer.gdol.ga.gov. Additional state sponsored economic data is available at www.georgia.org. Excellent overall private data

sources include www.city-data.com, www.usa.com, and datausa.io; while headwaterseconomics.org is an excellent source for socioeconomic information, including data and interpretation through its economic profile system.

Population Projections. The official 2010 Census population of Appling County was 18,236, up by a modest nearly five (4.7) percent from 2000's 17,419. This growth was much less than that of Georgia's 18.3%, and not quite half that of the national U.S. rate of 9.7%. This continues the slow, but steady growth of the county since 1970. Appling County's location; its transportation resources; its proximity to I-16, I-95, and the Georgia ports; its current economic base; its outstanding natural and historic resources; its family-friendly, caring atmosphere; its progressive and collaborative leadership; and its high overall quality of life portend well for the future. The U.S. Census Bureau estimate for 2016 Appling County population is 18,428, up by 192 from 2010. This suggests stability and very little current growth, but unlike many rural places, does a show positive upward nudge to continue current and past trends. The high mark of population in Appling County is now, having grown steadily since 1970 (and Plant Hatch). Before 1970, the only time period of decline in the county was from 1940 to 1970 (and 1910-1920) in county history. Appling County's location, its rich history, progressive and collaborative leadership, community spirit, outstanding natural and cultural resources, strong agricultural economy, existing businesses and entrepreneurship, high quality of life, and excellent transportation access to Georgia's ports and interstate highways are positive factors and influences for continued future growth and development.

While past and present population levels are readily available on the world wide web, population projections are not so easily accessed. The Governor's Office of Planning and Budget (OPB) is responsible for generating official state population projections for Georgia counties. Current OPB projections for Appling County from 2015 are 20,429 persons in 2030 and 21,341 persons in 2040, showing continuing growth. The Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission (HOGARC) also prepares population projections which have proven to be relatively accurate in the past. HOGARC's population projections for Appling County, as noted in the 2013 Regional Assessment of its Regional Plan, show higher projection population levels than the current OPB projections. More recent Regional Commission projections, which take

into account lower 2016 Census estimates, project similar, but slightly lower, growth levels, than the OPB projections. These latest Regional Commission projections include 20,064 in 2030 and 21,159 in 2040. Relatively slow, but steady, population growth should be expected and taken into planning account.

Population Projections, Appling County

	2010	2016	2020	2025	2030	2035	2040
OPB, 2015	18,236	N/A	19,311	19,896	20,429	20,896	21,341
HOGARC Regional Plan	18,236	N/A	19,808	20,549	21,318	22,116	22,943
Regional Commission	18,236	18,428	19,026	19,538	20,064	20,604	21,159

Sources: State Office of Planning and Budget, 2015, Meaghan Ryan email, 2017; Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission Regional Plan, Regional Assessment, 2013; Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission staff projection, 2017.

Coordination with Other Plans. Appling County has an approved and adopted hazard mitigation plan prepared for the Federal Emergency Management Agency to remain eligible for federal disaster assistance. This Hazard Mitigation Plan’s preparation was coordinated with past comprehensive plan preparation. It is clear that the two most prominent hazards facing Appling County that can be influenced by the comprehensive plan are the hazard mitigation plan goals to reduce damage from flood hazards and wildfire, and thereby protect life and health. The comprehensive plan objectives to conserve the county’s river and stream corridors, to maintain healthy working forests and fields (including employing proper management techniques), to improve fire/emergency management and other public safety services, and to enhance growth management/code enforcement regulation are generally consistent with, and offer implementation to, the hazard mitigation plan.

The Appling County Joint Comprehensive Plan is also consistent with the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission’s Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The Strategy’s goals and objectives to develop industrial parks; develop/improve local infrastructure; enhance telecommunications infrastructure; retain existing businesses/industry; attract new industry; and spur non-traditional economic development, like tourism and



Railroad Mural, Downtown Baxley



Lake Mayers Picnic Area



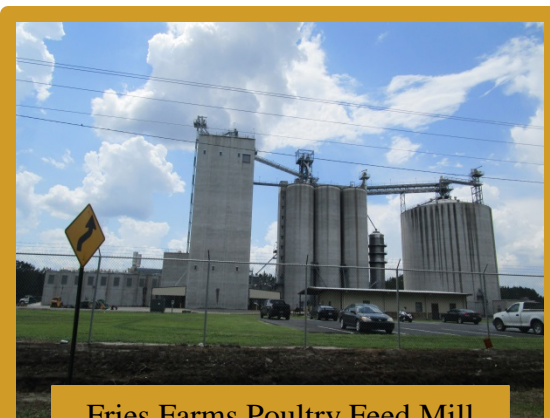
County Farm Plant Company



Agricultural Scene



Baxley Municipal Airport Terminal



Fries Farms Poultry Feed Mill

downtown development, are repeated as principal goals in the Appling County Comprehensive Plan. The local plan is similarly supportive of espoused state economic goals.

Regional Water Plan and Environmental Planning Criteria Consideration. Appling County is part of the Altamaha Regional Water Planning Council. The adopted regional water plan, *Altamaha Regional Water Plan* (2011), and its 2017 update was considered by the Appling County Local Plan Coordination Committee and the local governments in preparation of this plan. This local comprehensive plan's objectives to maintain viable agriculture/forestry uses, protect/conservate natural resources, to enhance intergovernmental coordination and government/efficiencies, and upgrade local infrastructure all help implement, and maintain consistency with, the regional water plan. The continuing vision of the regional water plan, "to wisely manage, develop and protect the region's water resources...to enhance quality of life..., protect natural systems..., and support the basin's economy," is inherent in this comprehensive plan's community vision and goals. In the Regional Water Planning Council's 2014 implementation report, Appling County's CDBG for water and sewer improvements was specifically cited as a supportive implementation activity. Other water/sewer improvements in the county's municipalities would also be supportive implementation.

Similarly, the Environmental Planning Criteria were also considered in the development of this comprehensive plan. The local governments of Appling County, including Appling County, the City of Baxley, the City of Graham, and the City of Surrency, are not currently in compliance with the Environmental Planning Criteria, as they have not yet adopted implementing, consistent ordinances. The local governments, with the assistance of the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, have plans to adopt the Region's model "Environmental Conservation, On-Site Sewage Management, and Permit" Ordinance to gain compliance and to comply with the Regional Commission's Minimum Local Government Performance Standards.

Consistency with Quality Community Objectives. In 2011, the Georgia Department of Community Affairs changed its Quality Community Objectives to a more general listing and summary of the 10 objectives. These include: Economic Prosperity, Resource Management,

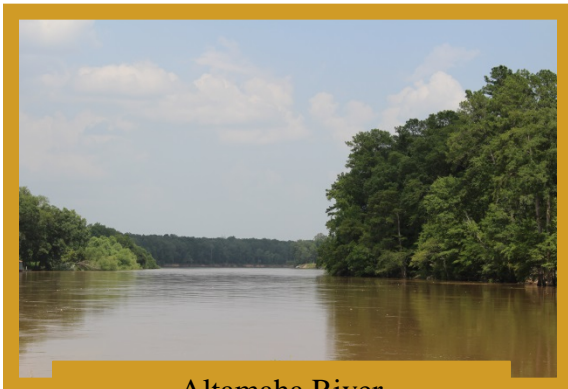
Efficient Land Use, Local Preparedness, Sense of Place, Regional Cooperation, Housing Options, Transportation Options, Educational Opportunities, and Community Health.

The Appling County Joint Comprehensive Plan directly espouses (many of) these objectives and therefore, is very consistent with, and supportive of them. This comprehensive plan has goals to achieve a brighter future and better community for Appling County and its municipalities, which is consistent with a quality community and the DCA Quality Community Objectives. The Appling County Local Plan Coordination Committee reviewed and considered these Quality Community Objectives at one of its meetings.

Community Involvement. As noted earlier, the Appling County Board of Commissioners and the municipalities of Baxley, Graham, and Surrency clearly wanted to take advantage of the new DCA planning standards to develop a broad-based community plan which would involve and excite all concerned, both public and private, with the future growth and development of Appling County and its municipalities. To accomplish this, they created a steering committee, the Appling County Joint Comprehensive Plan Coordination Committee, of all local stakeholders who could be envisioned to help guide this plan's development, and make the communities better places to live, work, recreate, and learn. This committee did include elected and appointed members from the governing authorities, local economic development practitioners, and local government staff, as well as many others concerned with community and economic development and other issues within the entire community. This Coordination Committee had notable participation; was actively involved in the development of all facets of this comprehensive plan; and had numerous opportunities to both help develop, review, and revise all components. The first orders of business at any Coordination Committee meeting were review of any revisions to previous elements based on committee input, and chances to return to and modify earlier elements, if desired. The initial meeting of the Local Plan Coordination Committee included a formal identification of strengths and weaknesses of the community, including opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis). This identification was utilized in developing all plan elements. The general public was offered the chance to participate at the two required public hearings (and with the Coordination Committee, if desired, after the initial public hearing). These hearings were advertised through unique wording to specifically generate interest and participation. The initial

public hearing was held near the beginning of the plan development process to explain the process, offer opportunity for further participation, and solicit input on an improved community vision and local issues/opportunities. The final public hearing was held after a plan draft was developed and reviewed by the Coordination Committee to allow citizen review, solicit any final input, and inform of pending submittal. In addition to the required public hearings, the community and general public were provided the opportunity to participate in a community drop-in session held at the Baxley City Hall from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m., which was both publicly posted and announced in the local newspaper and on a local community website. A more detailed summary of community involvement is included in an appendix.

Strengthening a Welcoming Hometown is truly a locally developed guide to, and framework for, future growth and development of Appling County and its municipalities designed to generate local pride and enthusiasm, to accentuate assets and improve weaknesses, and ultimately bring about a desired future which makes the Appling County community an improved place to live and work with an outstanding and enhanced quality of life. It is realized that to take advantage of opportunities and to make a difference will take time and considered effort, but it is felt this plan is pragmatic and practical in outlining a course and roadmap for steps and actions which can be achieved and which will move the community forward. The plan continues with delineation of the Community Goals element and an overall Community Vision which essentially and succinctly summarizes the community's aspirations and plan's objectives, and also includes a separate description, vision, and needs and opportunities section for each municipality, among other sections.



Altamaha River



Max Deen Memorial Park, Baxley

COMMUNITY GOALS

The Community Goals Element is described in the State Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive planning as the most important part of the comprehensive plan. It is a concise summary of future community desires and wishes, and is an easily referenced roadmap for community leaders and all concerned with growth and development of the community and its future. The Appling County Joint Comprehensive Plan includes three of the four possible components detailed in the Minimum Standards for the required element. These include: a general Community Vision, separate municipal descriptions/visions, listing of Community Goals, and a description of Long Term Community Policies. These components seek to paint a picture of the desired future community, and answer the planning question, “Where does the community wish to go?” To some degree, the Long Term Community Policies also outline guidance strategy of, “How are we going to get where we desire to go, and also, what do we desire for other development parties to pursue?”

COMMUNITY VISION

Strengthening a Welcoming Hometown

Appling County is a rural community located in the heart of southeast Georgia with a current population of almost 20,000 residents. Its geographic location, on the south bank of Georgia's impressive Altamaha River, along U.S. highways U.S. 1 and U.S. 341, and less than an hour away from Georgia's coast and Interstate highways I-16 and I-95, offers much for businesses and residents alike. The community is nestled in an appealing and soothing bucolic landscape of family farms and seemingly never-ending green forests of tall Southern pines. Municipalities include Baxley, the county seat, with about 5,000 residents, and the much smaller municipalities of Graham and Surrency, all located along U.S. Highway 341, also known as the Golden Isles Parkway. Baxley is actually located at the crossroads of U.S. 1 and U.S. 341. Both of these highways are now four-laned through the county, and are part of Georgia's designated developmental highway system, the Governor's Road Improvement Program. Other important highways traversing the county include Georgia Highway 15, now known as Traditions Highway and a designated developmental highway as well, and Georgia Highway 121, also known as the historic Woodpecker Trail.

Appling County today is a welcoming and growing hometown community. It is a smalltown of friendly people and expanding economic diversity and opportunity. Hometown is a theme echoed by the community's history, social life, and the current Chamber of Commerce promotion. The promotion, a "welcome to Appling County, where hometown friendliness still shines through a spectacular setting," encapsulates the small town feeling of friendly people and the enthralling, scenic landscape. The City of Baxley's website encourages businesses and people to find out more about a hometown of "quiet streets, downtown shopping, excellent schools, clean air and water,...and friendly people." Even the state tourism website notes that Baxley is "the ideal place to leave troubles behind, canoe the pristine Altamaha River, or just enjoy the laid back hometown atmosphere." Although the community is a welcoming and comforting hometown treasure, it has been home to many outstanding firsts, and key economic fortunes. While the community retains its small town appeal and the tranquil pastoral openness

of being engulfed in a sea of pines and farmland, it offers an abundance of urban-like amenities and an expanding array of businesses, industries, and job opportunities. Since 1970, the community has exhibited slow, but steady population growth, and expanding economic diversity.

Appling County was created in 1818, and its original boundaries stretched from the Altamaha River south to the St. Mary's River. The county was established from Creek Indian territory ceded in the 1814 Treaty of Fort Jackson and the 1818 Treaty of the Creek Agency. In appropriate spirit of Appling County's hometown image, Appling County is the home parent county for all or part of 12 current Georgia counties. It was certainly a principal component of the so-called wiregrass or Pine Barrens region of South Georgia. As impressive as Appling County's current natural resources are, the county was once the home of the Okefenokee Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, one of the world's largest freshwater ecosystems.

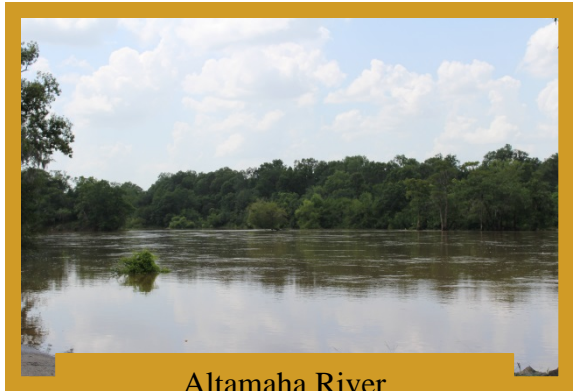
Appling County's early settlement and economic activity primarily relied on subsistence farming, raising livestock, and the timber/naval stores industry. The county, to a large extent, utilized waterborne transportation on the Altamaha River to reach Coastal Georgia markets. Appling County has a long history with turpentine/naval stores. The first commercial turpentine still in Georgia was established from 1858 to 1861 by two brothers from North Carolina at the site of old Fort James in Appling County, which is now in Wayne County and known as Tar Landing. The first fire still in Georgia was said to be located at Pine Grove. One of the largest turpentine operations in Georgia was established by another North Carolinian, Adrian Van Bokkelyn, in the 1870s at Pine Grove. His operation included two stills under one roof, and produced over 100,000 casks of gum spirits within 10 years. Pine Grove is reported to have produced more turpentine and pine rosin than any one spot in the South, with stills having been in continuous operation for more than 70 years. The Van Bokkelyn stills burned in the 1880s, but were rebuilt by L. A. Johnson and later came under the ownership of Miles and Dunn, and operated until the 1940s. According to the local history, in 1925, the largest individual turpentine operator in the world was J. E. Dyal of Appling County. Mr. Dyal also was instrumental in pine reforestation, and the establishment of the paper company industry in Georgia. Filtered Rosin Products established a naval stores plant in Baxley in 1940, and this plant's successor became the last large-scale commercial turpentine producer in the United States. This natural turpentine operation closed in the early 2000s, but the company's successor remains in operation today as a

synthetic chemical producer. Even today, the City of Baxley uses the moniker, “The Turpentine City.”

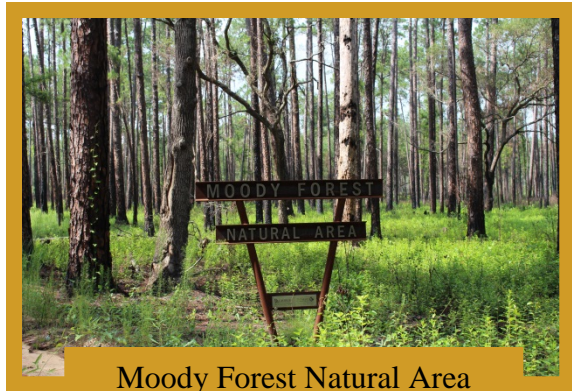
Lumber from the tall pines was also an important part of the Appling County economy from its beginnings, and remains so today. The hand-hewn lumber was utilized locally by the farmers as they cleared land, then through log rafts down the Altamaha, and after the railroads, through major sawmill operations mostly established by northern investors and prominent local businessmen. In the early 1900s, the City of Surrency became known as “The Crosstie Capital of the World,” as it shipped as many as five train carloads of railroad crossties a day. Interestingly, the source for the crosstie production was principally pine trees felled by the Great Georgia Hurricane of 1898. Even today, the Interfor Baxley sawmill, a pine lumber sawmill operated by a Canadian company after acquisition from Rayonier in 2013, is the county’s fifth largest employer.

Tall pines and their verdant sea of green landscape not only continue to contribute greatly to the local economy, but also remain a sentinel component of the abundant natural resources and open spaces of Appling County. The Moody Forest Natural Area, located in northern Appling County along the impressive Altamaha River, is a national park caliber nature preserve with varied habitats of bottomland hardwood forests, river swamp, and virgin longleaf pine forests. This one-of-a-kind treasure now consists of 4,500 acres in a preserve which boasts some of the nation’s last remaining old-growth longleaf forests and tupelo-cypress swamps. Some of the pines are estimated to be 200-300 plus years old, while some of the tupelo-cypress are considered more than 600 years old. The preserve contains the last known example of the longleaf pine-blackjack oak ecosystem. Moody Forest is jointly owned and operated by The Nature Conservancy and the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. In 2001, the two entities purchased most of the property at auction from the Moody family in the first public-private cooperative conservation effort in the State of Georgia. That the outstanding natural resource remained intact is testament to hometown pride, collaboration, caring, and stewardship of the Moody family, even at a price of personal sacrifice.

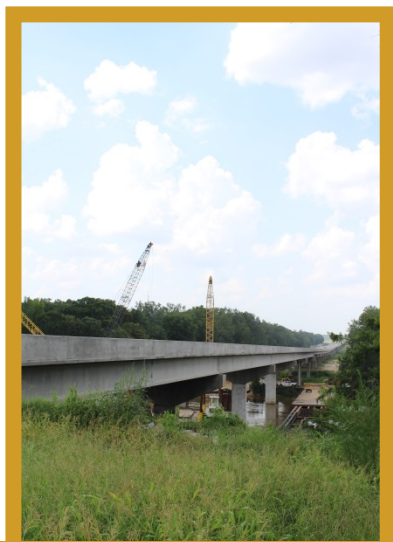
The treasured landscape of Moody Forest is appropriately part of the Altamaha River ecosystem and valley which has contributed much, and continues to contribute today, to the history, charm, economy, and natural beauty of Appling County. The Altamaha River is a central



Altamaha River



Moody Forest Natural Area



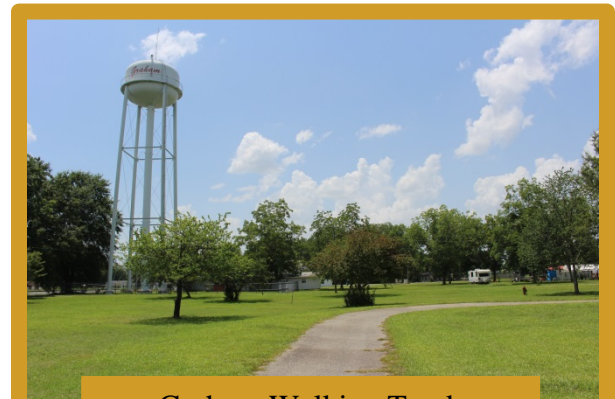
New U.S. 1 Bridge over the
Altamaha River



Interfor Sawmill, Baxley



Lake Mayers Picnic Area



Graham Walking Track

component of Appling County, Georgia, and U.S. history, development, and environmental quality. The Altamaha River has a long history of great natural beauty, and ecological and historical significance. The largely undisturbed Altamaha has been labeled by The Nature Conservancy as one of the last 75 Great Places on Earth. It is Georgia's most ecologically diverse ecosystem, is home to numerous rare and endangered species, and offers a wide array of outstanding outdoor adventure opportunities. Other outdoor fun and adventure opportunities in Appling County also contribute to its peace and beauty, and unrushed small, rural hometown lifestyle. Bullard Creek Wildlife Management Area offers nearly 14,000 acres in Appling and Jeff Davis counties for hunting, fishing, camping, hiking, and other activities along the Altamaha River. The community's 170 acre Lake Mayers and 50 acre Lake Tara provide the public with fishing, swimming, skiing, picnicking, and many other family activities. Further access to the majestic Altamaha River and family fun activities is provided by a 26 acre Falling Rocks Park, which includes a campground, picnic area, and boat landing. Four other public landings are located along the river, several with facilities, and all providing recreational access available throughout the year.

The peace, contentment, and uncrowded spaces afforded by the tall pine landscapes, family farms, and outstanding natural resources of Appling County only solidify and confirm the family-friendly, hometown atmosphere of the community. The community boasts of numerous churches, civic clubs, and a caring populace where the people truly come together as a family, and are as warm as the weather. Collaboration and cooperation between people and their governing bodies are not just a lip-synced anachronism of the Old South and Southern Hospitality, but a way of life in Appling County. Parades to celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr., High School Homecoming, or other events are held where it seems the entire town turns out, and traffic on the major highways through town is made to pause and delay. Every March, the community is a major stop and participant in Georgia's largest yard sale, the annual Peaches to Beaches Yard Sale. Long standing traditions are focal points throughout the year and include pancake breakfasts and chicken plate fundraisers for civic causes, or for those in need; sharing local produce or selling it at the Farmer's Market; Fourth of July fireworks; homecoming potluck dinners on the grounds; and cooking for those with family losses or suffering. The community truly functions where the entire town is considered family. The community honors its fascinating history, folklore, and Southern Hospitality. Community collaboration and pride is apparent by the organization of the community maintained and volunteer staffed Appling County Heritage

Center. The community also has a local Arts Council supported by many individuals and volunteers. Arts Council volunteers have in recent years presented a local production, concentrating on local vignettes with a changing focus each year, entitled “In the Pines.” It is with little wonder that Baxley/Appling County and its hometown atmosphere and environment have been the spark plug that led to a Pulitzer Prize winning book (Caroline Miller’s *Lamb in His Bosom*), and more recently an award-winning environmental author (Janisse Ray’s *Ecology of a Cracker Childhood*, et al.). Cooperation, collaboration, and hometown pride and loyalty are also displayed by the local governments and school system through joint ventures and funding/use of facilities. Baxley and Appling County pioneered a groundbreaking Municipal Services Agreement long before the state mandated a formal Service Delivery Strategy for service delivery cooperation. Baxley and Appling County truly practice and exhibit a hometown ethic which is deeply engrained into its soul and everyday life.

Appling County’s development history is, and its future may well too, be tied to transportation, pine forests, and the hometown and natural appeal. The county grew steadily from its beginnings in the early 1800s and the use of the Altamaha River for transportation and commerce until the turn of the century, with a particularly strong surge of growth in the 1890s because of the Macon and Brunswick Railroad’s development. All three current municipalities trace their beginnings to the railroad’s location and completion in 1870. They were designated Station numbers 6, 7, and 8, respectively. Baxley soon was designated the County Seat, instead of the earlier Holmesville, and was officially granted state incorporation in 1875. The town had been named for log and general store proprietor, Wilson Baxley, who sold the right-of-way near his store for the railroad. Surrency, Station Number 6, was named for A.P. Surrency, a large landowner and State Representative who was largely responsible for the selected location of the Macon and Brunswick Railroad through the county. In the late 1800s, Surrency gained notoriety for the Surrency Ghost, widely reported poltergeist activities at the A.P. Surrency house. Even the railroad advertised the Surrency Ghost and offered special tourist trains to Surrency to view the phenomenon. Surrency was formally incorporated locally in 1904, but was first granted a state charter of incorporation in 1911. Its heyday was during the aforementioned crosstie boom. Graham became important as the railroad shipping location for the Pine Grove turpentine stills, and incorporated locally in 1897. Graham was not formally incorporated by the Georgia General Assembly until 1991.

The Macon and Brunswick rail line, now part of the Norfolk Southern Railway, remains active and one of the most important in Georgia, connecting the Georgia ports and Atlanta. All three municipalities are now located on U.S. 341 as well. After the surge of growth near the turn of the century, growth continued slowly, but was relatively stable until WWII. After the war, there was slow decline until the 1970s and the location of the Edwin I. Hatch Nuclear Power Plant along the Altamaha River. The growth of the 1970s was stabilized in the 1980s and has been slow, but steady since 1990 because of the county's location, transportation access, and small business economic diversification. Growth appears to be accelerating in the early 2000s due to the location of a Wal-Mart Supercenter, other continued economic growth, the two U.S. highways, and resident in-migration. In the 2010s, a home-grown entrepreneur, Woody Folsom, developed a wide-ranging small business presence in Baxley, and has made the community a major auto-shopping superstore with the development of four new car dealerships for most major brands along U.S. 341. This has spurred additional retail/service developments.

The community continues to improve its facilities and infrastructure to support growth and be a better, more welcoming hometown. It has constructed new schools within Baxley, and has renovated two older outlying elementary schools to better serve its children and the surrounding countryside. The community has invested in its general aviation airport through both aviation modernization, runway extension, and construction of a new terminal with a comforting home-like appearance and appeal. There is also a new health department, a functioning and improved local hospital, a new senior citizens/Head Start facility, DFCS center, and many other similar civic improvements. Again, as a testament to local and regional cooperation and collaboration, and in a somewhat unique arrangement to formally share both costs and revenues, the community joined with two neighboring counties to develop one of Georgia's first regional industrial parks. It is now called Sweetwater Industrial Park, located near Pine Grove and adjacent to both U.S. 341 and the railroad. A wood pellet plant utilizing and supporting local pine timberland production is the current occupant. Property has been purchased to develop a new rail-served industrial park east of Baxley. The community also continues to develop its family-oriented recreational and leisure facilities, including a passive Water Works Park complete with picnicking, splash pad, and public gathering space in downtown Baxley. Water Works Park downtown was also chosen as the location of a new, formal Farmer's Market building constructed in 2016/2017 to further promote and make available locally grown produce. An important event in the community each year in early December is a "Winter Wonderland"



Farmer's Market, Baxley



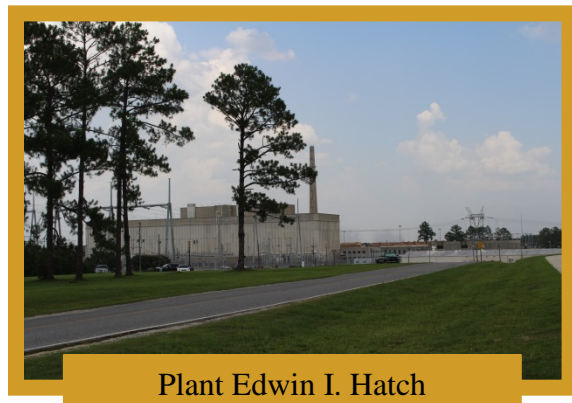
Appling County Heritage Center



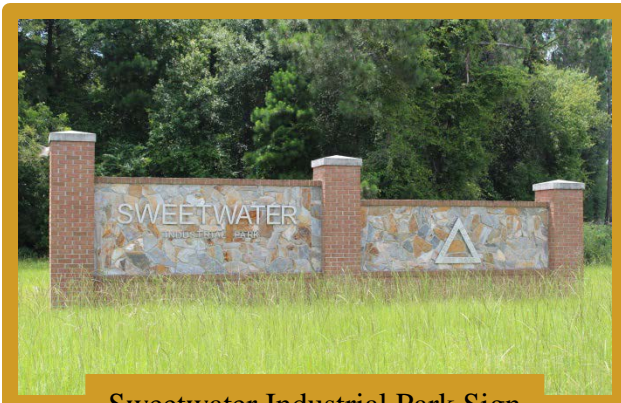
Appling County High School



Appling Healthcare System



Plant Edwin I. Hatch



Sweetwater Industrial Park Sign

sponsored by the City of Baxley where artificial snow and a small sliding slope is created to bring joy and fun to local children who rarely get to experience natural snow given the warm climate. It is no wonder that Baxley was designated by the state in 2000 as a “Better Hometown.”

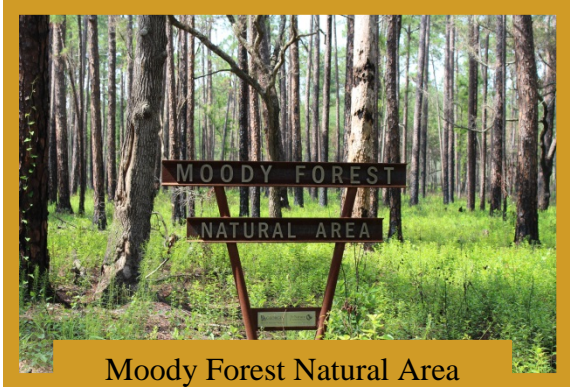
Appling County views itself as experiencing increasing growth because of its highway locations, particularly on U.S. 341 and U.S. 1, its access to Georgia’s ports and Florida, its abundant natural resources, its quality of life, and outstanding hometown appeal. Commercial and industrial growth will concentrate in and near Baxley along the two major highways and west along U.S. 341 to the Jeff Davis County line and Hazlehurst. Residential growth will accelerate, particularly south and west of Baxley. This growth may be gaining momentum because of recent local economic growth; improving transportation assets and access; burgeoning Georgia ports and Coastal Georgia growth; expanding markets for pine timber; Hispanic in-migration; greater attention to quality of life; and the overall hometown appeal.

Appling County wants this growth to be managed, planned, and controlled. The future Appling County will be known as a progressive rural growth leader with a high quality of life and hometown appeal. This appeal will be enhanced and supported by beautiful, scenic greenspaces, protected natural resources which attract respective economic development, quality residential developments, and increasing tourism. The high quality of life will be further enriched by improved educational opportunities, upgraded and enhanced infrastructure, better healthcare, quality local jobs, economic diversity for all ethnic groups, and a healthy local retail and service sector. All the while, the small town and rural character enhanced by the continuing cooperation, collaboration, caring and special hometown spirit will be maintained and strengthened.

The future Appling County will be a rural, regional commercial and financial hub located in an aesthetically pleasing community surrounded by a verdant landscape of protected greenspace, outstanding natural resources, and a comforting, caring populace. The resulting outstanding quality of life which balances bustling economic growth and development with environmental uniqueness and natural beauty and hometown appeal will be the envy of many. Appling County will be a desired address for living, working, and operating a business, and will be a destination for many tourists and visitors. The county will be known nationally as the access

point for the mighty Altamaha River. Moody Forest will be a national drawing card, and the many travelers along a revitalized Woodpecker Trail, Georgia’s Traditions Highway, the Golden Isles Parkway, and U.S. 1 will mark Appling County as a can’t miss stop. The county’s agriculture and forests will remain important components of the county’s economy, both traditionally and through alternative enterprises. The county will be a recognized leader in both nature-based tourism and agritourism. Downtown Baxley will be a bustling, revitalized area of quaint shops, restaurants, and successful entrepreneurship.

Appling County will be widely known as a progressive, beautiful, and even safer, family-friendly community with an emphasis on a rich quality of life, attractive environment, improved services, high-quality housing, and better paying jobs. The desired community would be proactive with proper attention to continued public investment in facilities, services, and economic development; solid long-range planning; and well-managed land use regulation. Appling County will continue to be a welcoming and fulfilling hometown for its residents, visitors, and new businesses and industries that want to be a part of the exceptional community, Appling County, Georgia!



Moody Forest Natural Area



Water Works Park,
Baxley



Downtown Baxley
Streetscape

Baxley

Description

The City of Baxley is a welcoming small town of about 4,500 persons in an accommodating location of Southeast Georgia at the intersection of U.S. highways 1 and 341. Both of these highways are four-laned highways designated as important Georgia developmental highways, providing access and highlighting the community's strategic central location between Georgia Interstate highways I-16, I-75, and I-95. Economic development has always been an important part of community history, and today Baxley is a teeming and growing community of both business and people alike. As a result, Baxley appears to be a community larger than its stated population, and certainly one with more traffic and economic activity. The community boasts of outstanding schools, impressive and modern facilities and infrastructure, extensive park and recreation facilities, a community hospital named Georgia's Community Hospital of the Year in 2013, four industrial parks with ongoing and diverse businesses, an impressive general aviation airport, other attractive amenities, and most importantly, a caring and cohesive populace and leadership. Baxley truly is a welcoming hometown in a number of aspects, and to make it even more appealing, is nestled in a comforting and scenic panorama of much pastoral and outdoor beauty. There is a wide array of outdoor adventure and outlets for fun and activities for relaxation. It is no surprise that hometown friendliness is a theme embraced and expressed directly and indirectly by the community. The City of Baxley and the local chamber of commerce websites both encourage outsiders to explore and discover the special hometown characteristics exhibited by the community. It is no wonder that the State of Georgia officially proclaimed Baxley one of its "Better Hometowns," or that the state tourism website notes that "Baxley is the ideal place to leave troubles behind,... or just enjoy the laid back hometown atmosphere." The City of Baxley is truly a hometown of much appeal and small town friendliness and caring, but which offers an abundance of urban-like amenities and an expanding array of businesses, industries, and economic opportunities. The community has exhibited slow, but steady population growth since 1970, and expanding economic diversity. Baxley is the county seat of Appling County,

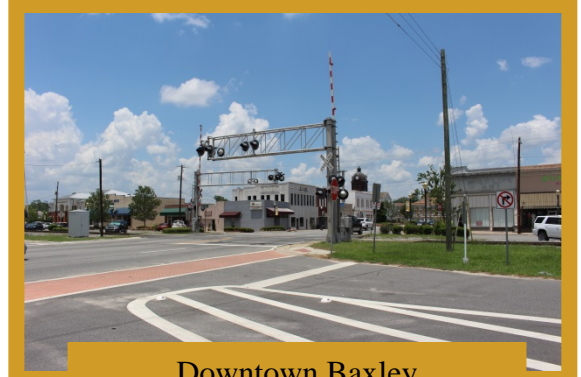
and is its economic, social, cultural, educational, and governmental center. It is the principal location for economic activity within the county.

Baxley was founded after completion of the Macon and Brunswick Railroad in 1870, and was first known as railroad stop Station Number 7. It was named in honor of Wilson Baxley, who came to Appling County in the 1820s, and was a successful cattle farmer and one of the first men to carry cattle to Savannah for sale. Wilson Baxley sold the land for the railroad right-of-way, and opened a store just south along what is now Main Street. The town was named by Dr. Phillip Ketterer, who was one of the area's first physicians and became the town's first postmaster. Because of the railroad, Appling Countians quickly voted in 1872 to move the county seat and courthouse from Holmesville, despite Baxley having a less desirable physical geography described as encompassing many ponds. Drainage in the city remains somewhat of an ongoing concern today. Baxley was formally incorporated as a town in February, 1875 as a one-half mile circle from the railroad depot. In December, 1896 the Georgia General Assembly revised the charter for Baxley transforming it from a town to a city, and allowing the city council to extend the corporate boundaries to "not exceed more than a mile circle from the Southern Railway depot if deemed in the best interest." The Georgia General Assembly again granted a modernized new charter in 1911, and has several times again since. Baxley's population was recorded as only 110 at its first official census in 1880, but had grown to 337 by 1890, 488 by 1900, 831 by 1910, 1,142 by 1920 and 2,122 by 1930. Despite the Great Depression, Baxley's population continued to grow every decade until 1960, and not withstanding a slight dip between 1960-1970, has again grown every decade since 1970 to a current all-time high of 4,400 in 2010. This is a testament to its agricultural heritage, diverse economy, its location, and its cohesive, progressive leadership.

As Wilson Baxley had been a leader in cattle farming, Baxley and Appling County became a leader in turpentine production and lumbering, with nearby Pine Grove a production center. Agricultural row crops surged, particularly cotton, corn, sweet potatoes, and tobacco, as pine tree production waned. Baxley and Appling County made quite a name for itself in agricultural plant and seed production. W.H. Morris was a major supplier of tomato plants to the Campbell Soup Company, and the Fosset Plant Company brought national attention to the community through the production and shipment of millions of sweet potato plants in the



City Hall



Downtown Baxley



Downtown Baxley Mural



Water Works Park



Southeastern Business Machines



Historic Residence, Baxley

1920s and early 1930s. The sweet potato plant business was so successful that it caused the Baxley Post Office to move from a fourth class to a second class status. In 1933, the local Kiwanis Club celebrated “Sweet Potato Day,” and presented the City of Atlanta with over a million sweet potato plants to relieve Great Depression unemployment. Georgia Governor Eugene Talmadge and Atlanta Mayor James L. Key were speakers. Baxley/Appling County was also the location for the only certified tobacco seed producers in Georgia, at least in 1948 and 1965. Baxley Frozen Foods was Georgia’s fourth largest chicken freezing plant when it opened in 1945. Morris Canning Company opened in 1940 in Baxley and patented a “Monteen Morris Soup Mix” which utilized tomatoes, okra, and corn. The company was packing 1.3 million cans of the soup mix at its sale in 1972. The first Georgian to grow more than 200 bushels of corn per acre was L.W. Hutchinson of Appling County. Mr. Hutchinson was also the national champion in production of soybeans in 1975, producing 76.004 bushels per acre when the Georgia average was only 42 bushels per acre.

Baxley/Appling County’s agricultural heritage and leadership continues today. Baxley is now called “The Turpentine City” both in honor of its heritage, and the fact that the last commercial turpentine plant in the U.S. operated in the city from its beginnings as Filtered Rosin Products in 1940 to the early 2000s. County Farm Plant Company located near the city, is now a major plant nursery and vegetable plant wholesaler, and is one of the largest in Georgia. Interfor, the largest lumber producer in Georgia, operates a Baxley sawmill. Fram Fuels operates a wood pellet plant, and Fries Farms, Inc. has recently constructed a large poultry feed grain mill in the county. Baxley in 2017 has completed a Farmers Market adjacent to its downtown Water Works Park to allow its farmers additional sources of income, and its citizens more accessibility to fresh, locally grown produce.

Baxley today has an outstanding quality of rural, small town life and an economy which continues to diversify and expand. There are persisting improvements to its facilities and infrastructure, including new, modern schools, a new health department constructed in 2017, a new farmers’ market adjacent to a much used downtown water works park, recent upgrades to its community hospital, and many others. The community has approved plans to expand its recreational facilities; construct a new agricultural event center; upgrade its airport, roads, and streets; and develop a fourth rail-served industrial park and business center. Private business

continues to expand as well, particularly in the retail and service sectors. A local entrepreneur has made Baxley a regional auto shopping hub with four new dealerships constructed in recent years, and there are expanding new restaurants, hotels, and shops being constructed, primarily along U.S. 341 (Parker Street) and near the Walmart Supercenter. The community has a number of active civic clubs, many churches, a local food pantry, a Goodwill store, and other outlets of a very caring citizenry quick to lend support and a helping hand for individuals and causes alike. Baxley truly is a welcoming hometown where the entire community comes together and feels like family in thoughts and actions. Further support and comfort is afforded by the seemingly never-ending sea of tall, green pines, and other pastoral serenity which envelops the community. The nearby Altamaha River, Bullard Creek Wildlife Management Area, and Moody Forest Natural Area/Wildlife Management Area offer easily accessed, and unparalleled natural beauty and environments of a national park and world class level. Baxley, on many levels, is unquestionably a family friendly welcoming hometown without much equal, and with much to offer resident, visitor, or entrepreneur alike.

Vision

The City of Baxley will continue its position and status as the heart and soul of a most welcoming and caring hometown community, and an expanding economy. The community will continue to modernize and upgrade its infrastructure, facilities, and amenities to better serve both existing and new residents and visitors, and to continue to grow its economy. There will be multi-faceted efforts to attract more families, visitors, and new business and industry, but all the while retaining the cohesive and caring attitudes and leadership which make the community a special hometown family. The intrinsic beauty, rural character, and natural appeal will be maintained, and agriculture and forestry will continue to be supported as viable economic and quality of life uses. Many more will recognize Baxley as a special and welcoming hometown with an appealing high quality of life on many levels.

Needs

- Continuing water/sewer infrastructure and service improvements

- Continuing drainage improvements
- Continuing street improvements
- Truck route/overpass
- Continuing recreational facilities improvements
- Airport improvements
- Tourist development/expansion
- Sidewalk/bicycle/multi-modal improvements
- New industrial park development

Opportunities

- TIA funding
- Expanding retail/service sector
- Water Works Park
- Farmers Market
- New Ag Center development
- Altamaha River
- Moody Forest Natural Area
- Wildlife management areas
- Location
- Coastal Pines Technical College
- Cooperative/collaborative leadership
- Civic groups/churches
- Appling Heritage Center
- Arts Council of Appling County



Downtown Baxley Streetscape



Appling County Health Department



Water Works Park

Graham

Description

The City of Graham is a small town of about 300 people located along U.S. Highway 341 in western Appling County adjacent to the Jeff Davis County line. The tranquil little town is noted today by a simple, relatively new city hall and fire station, with a water tank and park visible immediately behind them and adjacent to the railroad. There is a new Dollar General just east and across the road, both it and City Hall facing the five-laned U.S. Highway 341 near the center of town. There is one caution light in town located at the crossroads of the Graham Methodist Church/Graham-Zoar Road and U.S. 341 west of City Hall. There is a Citgo service station/convenience store just west and north of this intersection, the only cross-street intersection along U.S. 341. Graham does appear from U.S. 341 to be sparsely settled, to have few residences, and to be a sleepy place easily overlooked. In fact, Graham was only incorporated by the Georgia General Assembly in 1991, but the community does have a colorful and long history and heritage dating all the way back to the early settlement of Appling County. There are understandable reasons the local government's website notes that the City of Graham is "a wonderful place to call home."

The first settler in the present Graham area was Seaborn Hall, born in Tattnall County only 12 miles across the Altamaha River from Graham. Seaborn Hall held extensive land holdings from the Altamaha to the Graham area. Hall was not only one of the county's early settlers, but one of Appling County's leaders and most influential citizens. He is listed as one of the earliest postmasters of Appling County as the 1834 postmaster of "Camp Ground." Hall also served as a State Representative, State Senator, was a delegate to Georgia's Secession Convention in 1861, and a delegate to the State Constitutional Convention in 1877. He opened a general store in what became Graham in 1866, knowing and influencing that the Macon and Brunswick Railroad would come through there. Hall was listed as Appling County's largest individual landowner in 1876. Graham and Seaborn Hall also played an interesting role in the Civil War. After the last Confederate Cabinet meeting in Washington, Georgia in early May, 1865, Cabinet members split up to try and avoid capture. While Jefferson Davis was captured

in Irwin County on May 10, John C. Breckinridge, a General and then the Confederate Secretary of War, traveled farther south and crossed the Altamaha at Towns Bluff and was hosted by Seaborn Hall at his home. Hall's home was likely at "Camp Ground," where he was postmaster in 1834, and which was the training ground of the "Appling Grays," and had long been a training area for the local militia. After learning of Davis' capture, Hall assisted and escorted Breckinridge in escaping to Florida, where he boarded a steamer and made good an escape first to Cuba, then England, and Canada. Hall, although too old for service in the War, did captain a riverboat on the Ocmulgee and Altamaha rivers between Hawkinsville and Doctortown. Breckinridge has an interesting history himself as he was, and still is, the youngest person to ever serve as Vice President of the United States. He also was a Presidential candidate in the Election of 1860 as a Southern Democrat, winning 11 states and actually finishing second in electoral votes to Abraham Lincoln. He continued to serve in the U.S. Senate during the early part of the War in 1861 as a Kentucky Senator, only resigning in the fall of 1861 after Kentucky formally seceded from the Union. He then became a Confederate General with notable roles in the Shenandoah Valley campaigns, and participation with General Jubal Early on the bold Confederate raid on Washington.

The Macon and Brunswick Railroad was completed in 1870, and Station Number 8 was constructed in Graham. The land for this railroad station was donated by Middleton Graham, the son-in-law of Seaborn Hall, who was married to Hall's daughter, Adeline. Naval stores and lumber interests caused Graham to prosper. Seaborn Hall owned one of three sawmills in Graham in 1878 and Alexander Sessoms, from North Carolina, who leased and then bought a large tract of land from Hall, began a large naval store operation there in 1879. Station Number 8 became an important shipping point for Adrian Van Bokkelyn's large operation and other naval store operations in nearby Pine Grove. Graham was formally incorporated locally by the Superior Court after an election held March 6, 1897. The town limits were described as one mile in each direction from the Southern Railway Depot. Graham was described in the 1906 "*Georgia: Comprising Sketches of Counties, Towns...*" as "a village of Jeff Davis [sic] county located on the line of the Southern railway, about half-way between Hazlehurst and Baxley. It has a money-order post office, express and telegraph service, school and church priveleges [sic], some merchantile interests, and is a shipping point of some importance. The population in 1900 was 290."



City Hall



Fire Station



Water Tower



New Dollar General



Walking Track



Graham United Methodist Church

Graham's 2010 population was recorded by the Census as 291, but things have not remained the same. Only a couple of old homes from Graham's heyday at the turn of the century remain. The local school closed in 1955 upon consolidation with Baxley. One significant historic structure that does remain is the often photographed Graham United Methodist Church. Land for this church and cemetery was donated by Adeline Hall Graham (Seaborn's daughter and Middleton's wife) in 1881. A local sawmill owner, Lemuel Johnson, donated both the materials for the building and the services of his English architect, William Armitage, and his master builders from England, Scotland, and Sweden. The Graham United Methodist Church was organized in 1885, and the beautiful building constructed in 1885-86. Another important story in the history of Graham is also associated with the still standing and functioning Graham United Methodist Church. For a period of nearly 20 years from the early 1980s to the late 1990s, Graham UMC members held an annual "Buffalo Tro" as a fundraiser. A "Buffalo Tro" is an event of cooking steaks placed directly on red-hot coals which memorializes Plains Indians techniques of cooking buffalo meat directly on burning buffalo chips. Graham UMC utilized pecan wood to limit any ash residue getting on the meat. The event was ended when the crowds grew too large and the organizers too old.

Graham today is a relatively new small town first incorporated in 1991 by the General Assembly upon request by local citizens primarily to enable the town to obtain a cable franchise. Since that time, the small city has built a city hall; installed a water system, through USDA assistance; constructed a park with pavilion and walking track; and enlarged its fire station. The Graham water system has been extended to serve the regional Sweetwater Industrial Park east of town along U.S. 341. City Hall was burned by arson during a period of conflict with former City officials in 2012, but was quickly rebuilt in less than three months. The railroad through town remains an active and important Class I railroad of the Norfolk Southern Railway with increasing use. The City of Graham launched its first website in January, 2017. In this website, the City appropriately described itself as "A Place to Call Home." The website details, "In the City of Graham, we are defined less by boundaries on a map than by the sense of shared values our residents hold dear. Small town values, guided growth, preservation of historical, cultural, and natural heritage are just a few of the core principles that make the City of Graham a wonderful place to call home."

Vision

The City of Graham wishes to remain a small town which attracts and supports those who would live or do business in a caring community in an excellent location with easy access to nearby larger towns and more urban amenities. The community will continue to honor its history and heritage while improving its facilities and services and advancing the overall well-being of its citizens and economy. The caring, small-town atmosphere will be retained and nurtured. Graham will continue to be a “wonderful place to call home.”

Needs

- Continuing water system improvements
- City park improvements
- Street and sidewalk improvements
- City vehicle
- Public works equipment

Opportunities

- Water system
- U.S. 341/location
- History/heritage/Graham UMC
- Lake Mayers



City Hall and Community Shelter



Graham United Methodist Church

Surrency

Description

The City of Surrency is a quiet, unassuming, and appealing small town located at the intersection of Georgia Highway 121, the historic Woodpecker Trail, and U.S. Highway 341, the now four-laned Golden Isles Parkway. Today, most travelers view Surrency as the location of a large Parker's Convenience Store at this intersection, one of the first stores for this growing regional chain. There are also a number of stately and charming historic residences which do give some clue to Surrency's celebrated past and intriguing notoriety. It can truly be said there is much more to the town beyond or below its superficial appearance.

Surrency was founded by Allen Powell Surrency from Tattnall County, who settled in the area in the 1850s, after marrying Wealthia Roberson of Appling County. A.P. Surrency constructed a 10-horse power sawmill in what later became the town, as well as a general store which was said to be the only one between Wayne County and the Forks of the Ocmulgee and Oconee rivers. He served as the local tax collector, sheriff, the first State Representative from Appling County, and as county tax receiver during the 1855-1866 time period. Mr. Surrency was truly instrumental in putting the town on the map in more than one way. He was chiefly responsible for routing the Macon and Brunswick Railroad through Appling County and his Surrency property, and the areas which became Surrency, Baxley, and Graham, both by providing land to, and purchasing land for, the railroad. The area near his home, sawmill, and store became Station Number 6, and Mr. Surrency was the railroad's first agent. The railroad was completed in 1870.

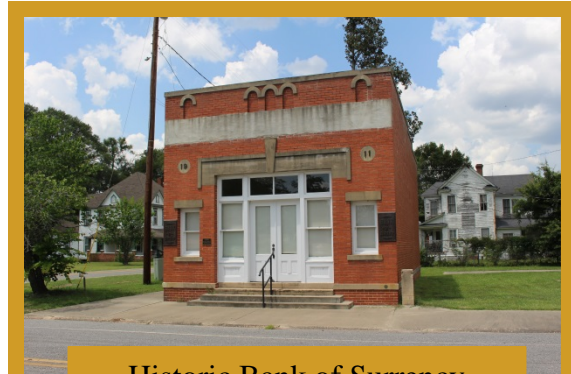
In 1872, A.P. Surrency and Station Number 6 gained widespread notoriety because of supernatural occurrences at his home, which also served as a boarding house. Mr. Surrency wrote a letter describing strange occurrences happening at his home to the *Savannah Morning News* and the *Macon Telegraph and Messenger*. The strange occurrences included flying books, falling kitchenware, clocks striking and moving abnormally, locked doors swinging open, and other objects (including brick bats) dropping randomly. One of Surrency's daughters

reported later to have seen a male apparition approaching the house from the railroad. The poltergeist activities at the Surrency house were recounted by reporters from all the major newspapers of the state, and resulted in many curious visitors. The railroad even booked special trains to travel to Station Number 6 to accommodate the hundreds of intrigued tourists. The “Surrency Ghost” has been written about extensively in many types of media since that time, and is noted by some as America’s most famous haunted house and ghost story. The Surrency family did eventually abandon the house and move to a farm outside town. A.P. Surrency died in 1877, and the famous ghost house burned in 1925. Even today, the internet is replete with recantings about the famed “Surrency Ghost,” and that is not the only supernatural, or maybe more appropriately preternatural, phenomenon associated with the town. There have been many reported sightings of a “Surrency Spook Light,” a mysterious yellow orb of light which purportedly floats along the railroad. In 1985, scientists discovered a geologic anomaly, apparently fluid in nature, located about nine miles deep in the earth’s crust directly below Surrency. It is said to be unlike anything else in the world, and not easily explained by current scientific hypotheses. The anomaly has been labeled the “Surrency Bright Spot” because of its high reflectivity of radio waves.

In 1879, John J. McDonough opened a sawmill in the town which was a major economic component until about 1889. The *Georgia State Gazeteer and Business Directory* of 1879-1880 gave the population of Surrency as only 75, and listed J.J. McDonough as owning a store and grist mill, and G. Thigpen as having a store and a still. By 1888-1889, the population was listed by the *Gazeteer and Directory* as 175. Surrency’s heydays came about in the early 1900s as a result of the Great Hurricane of 1898, which downed most of the remaining timber of Appling County. Colonel Ezekiel P. (Zeke) Padgett traveled to Washington and convinced the Southern Railway to concentrate their crosstie buying in the storm swept area. Surrency soon became the “Crosstie Capital of the World,” and shipped as many as five carloads of crossties a day. Surrency was incorporated as a town in 1904 upon local petition to the Appling County Superior Court in March, and after an April election in which all voters cast votes in favor of incorporation without even one negative vote against. In the 1906 “Georgia Sketches...,” Surrency was described as “a town of Appling County, on the Macon and Brunswick division of the Southern Railroad, twelve miles east of Baxley. It has a money order post office, express and telegraph offices, important shipping interests, several stores doing a



City Hall



Historic Bank of Surrency



Surrency United Methodist Church



Historic Residence



Old Surrency School



Fire Station

good business, and in 1900 had a population of 190.” Surrency’s first Census population in 1910 showed 259 persons and reached a height of 445 in 1930, when the crosstie boom was coming to an end, and the Great Depression occurred. The only remaining reminder of Surrency’s rather fabled past, other than a number of fine old homes, is the railroad which remains active as a Class I line operated by the Norfolk Southern Railway, and the former Bank of Surrency building. This bank, now owned by the City of Surrency and utilized as a museum/community meeting space, was built in 1911, and operated as a branch of the Baxley Banking Company until its closure in 1921. The Surrency Bank also served as the town’s post office from 1926 until 1960. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Today, Surrency’s peaceful image belies much of its colorful past. Its 2010 Census population of 201 persons has fallen back to about the level at its formal establishment in 1904. The once proud Surrency High School constructed in 1926, but abandoned and consolidated to Baxley in the early 1960s, is now also City-owned and in need of repair. Surrency has had street lights since 1949, a public water system since 1965, and has long had a local recreation park with an active ballfield. There are several small businesses in town, including Southern Metal Works and the large Parker’s Convenience Store. Fries Farms, Inc. has constructed a large poultry feed mill east of the city limits along the railroad in recent years, and Everett Dykes Grassing Company has an asphalt plant west of town. Surrency, which remained a town for more than 100 years, received a new charter from the Georgia General Assembly in 2016, and on May 3, 2016 officially transformed into the “City of Surrency, Georgia.”

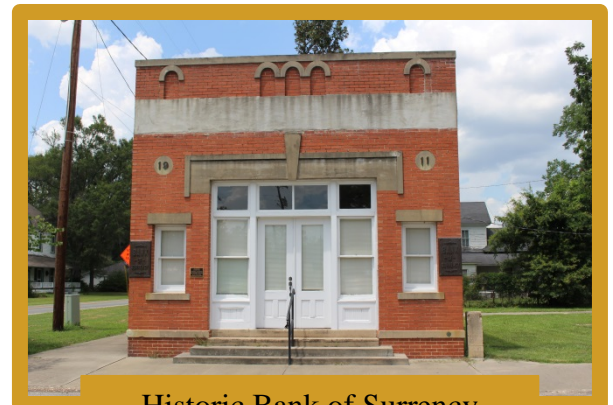
Surrency remains a charming little town and a close-knit community of family-friendly, caring individuals who know and look out for one another. Its location, conveniences, and atmosphere offer much to those who do and would choose to call Surrency home. Surrency is a shining example of Southern charm and comforting rural small town atmosphere and life. It can truly be said that even though Surrency has a spooky past, it now is a bright spot in South Georgia!

Vision

The City of Surrency wishes to remain a haven of rural, smalltown charm and a community replete with character, and preserved old homes and history. The community would continue to be an oasis of family-oriented and caring people who look after one another and take pride in their community. There would be further growth in amenities and small businesses to invite others to share in this special and unique community, and to enhance the quality of life.

Needs

- Street improvements
- Drainage improvements
- Water system improvements
- Park/ballfield improvements
- Historic Surrency School rehabilitation
- Bank of Surrency improvements
- Surrency Day expansion



Historic Bank of Surrency

Opportunities

- Location
- Ghostly heritage/Surrency Bright Spot
- Railroad
- Historic Surrency School
- Bank of Surrency
- Ballfield/Park
- Historic homes
- Available land/space
- Woodpecker Trail
- Golden Isles Highway



Parker's, U.S. 341

Community Goals

Economic Development

- Continued support of enhanced youth/adult leadership programs
- Continued local/regional/state agency coordination/cooperation
- Ongoing continuing education/job skills improvements
- Retention/expansion of existing businesses/industries
- Attraction of new business/industry/jobs
- Support of local entrepreneurship
- Continued improvement/enhancement of infrastructure to accommodate desired economic growth and improve service
- Proactive infrastructure/other improvements at existing industrial parks/sites
- Development of a new rail-served industrial park
- Broadband/fiber access/service improvements
- Improved access to and quality of transportation of all kinds
- Continued downtown revitalization of Baxley
- Increased local/regional tourism development/promotion
- Enhanced nature-based, heritage, and agri-tourism efforts
- Planned/managed compatible growth and development
- Compatible development supportive of community's rural character/quality of life
- Continued economic viability of agricultural/forestry land uses



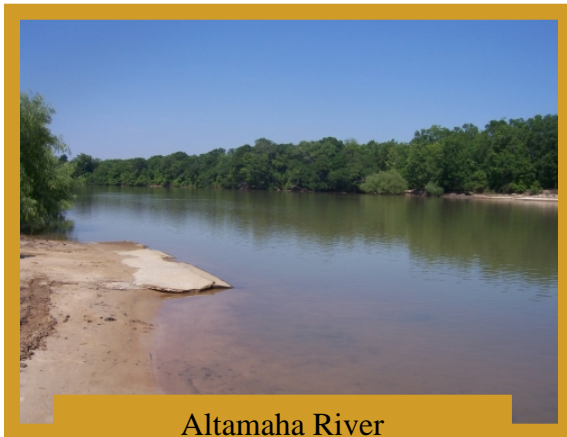
Everett Dykes Grassing
Company Asphalt Plant



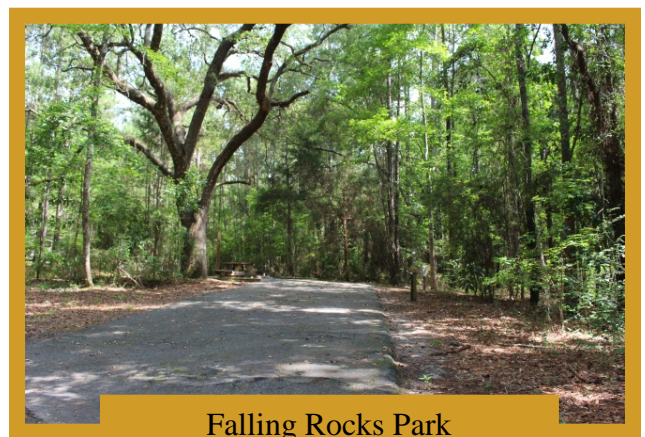
Interfor Sawmill, Baxley

Natural and Cultural Resources

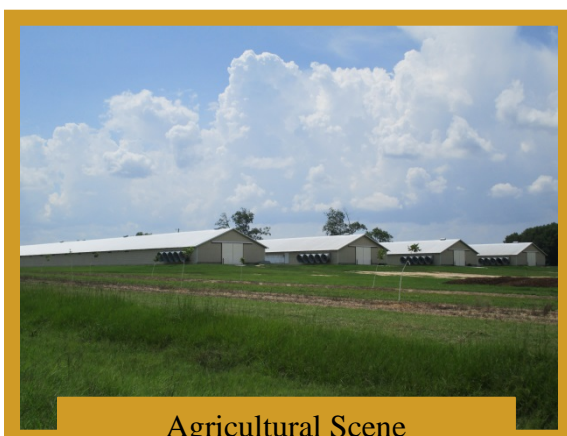
- Compatible, supportive development of existing rural character/quality of life
- Growth management/natural and cultural resources protection, including compatible economic utilization, as appropriate
- Conservation/protection of Appling County's significant natural resources, including Altamaha River Corridor
- Wildlife management and natural area/outdoor recreation protection/enhancement/promotion
- Continued economic viability of agricultural/forestry/open space land uses
- Utilization/preservation/adaptive use of historic resources/heritage of Appling County
- Continued heritage/culture celebration and promotion
- Promotion/expansion of nature-based, heritage, and agri-tourism



Altamaha River



Falling Rocks Park



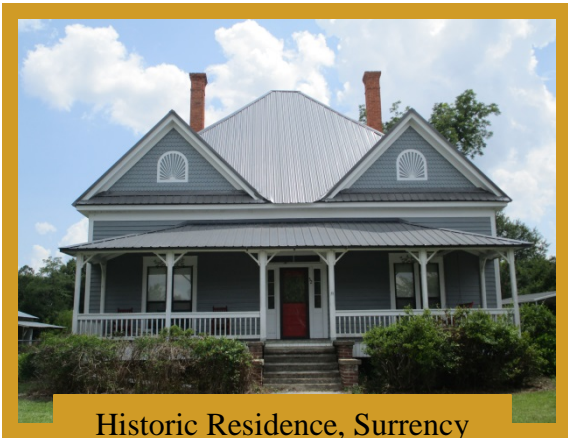
Agricultural Scene



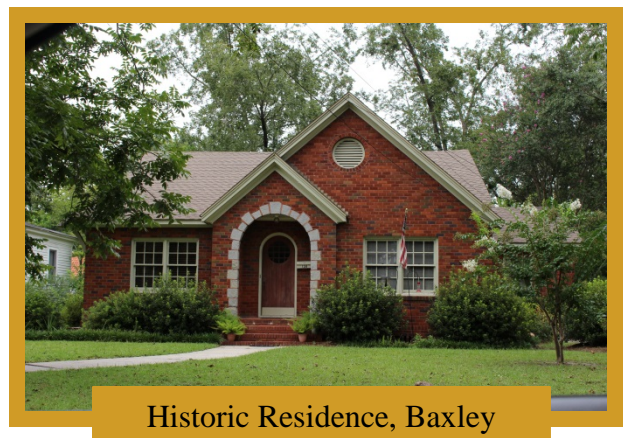
Historic Baxley Post Office
(Magistrate Court)

Housing

- Improved quality of existing and new housing
- Development of a more diverse housing mixture
- Utilization of available state/federal programs
- Guided/planned/compatible residential development
- Community aesthetics/appearance improvements
- Substandard housing upgrades and blight removal



Historic Residence, Surrency



Historic Residence, Baxley



Appling County Residence



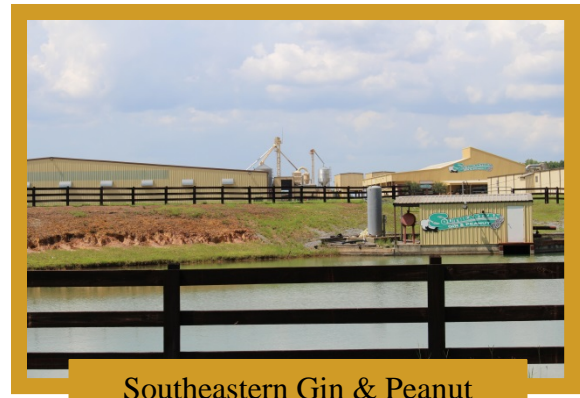
Appling County Residence

Land Use

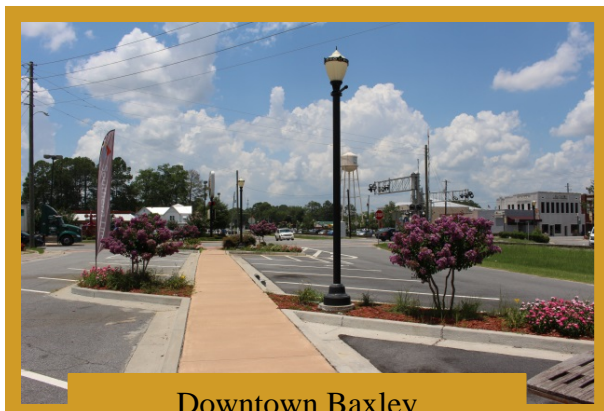
- Planned/managed compatible growth and development
- Rural character/quality of life preservation
- Protection of existing agricultural/forestry/open space land uses
- Continued promotion of infill development/location of use management
- Utilization of existing and new infrastructure to guide desired growth/development
- Community aesthetics/appearance/gateway improvements
- Continued downtown revitalization of Baxley
- Attraction/management of growth in Graham and Surrency
- Compatible enhancement/development of recreation facilities
- Implementation of coordinated, comprehensive land use planning regulations and code enforcement



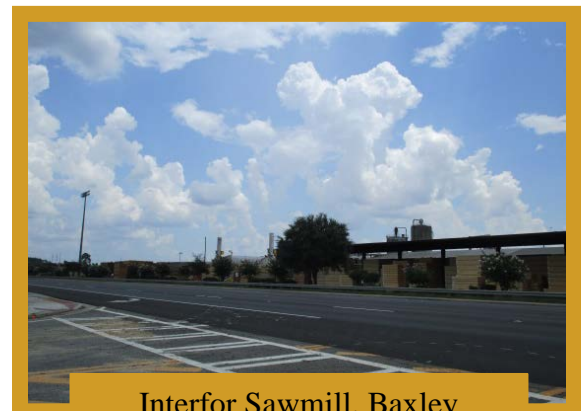
Agricultural Scene



Southeastern Gin & Peanut



Downtown Baxley



Interfor Sawmill, Baxley

Community Facilities and Services

- Infrastructure and services expansion/maintenance/upgrades, as needed
- Utilization of infrastructure to guide desired growth
- Transportation access/quality improvements of all types and their promotion
- Maintenance/promotion/upgrade of local Appling Healthcare System and critical healthcare services, as needed
- Continued upgrades to public safety/fire/emergency medical facilities/services, as needed
- Continued educational facilities/services/technology maintenance and enhancements, as needed
- Park/recreational facilities/activities maintenance/improvement/development, as needed
- Continued support/promotion of local agriculture through provision of needed facilities
- Continued support for and enhancement of cultural facilities/opportunities
- Provision/maintenance of adequate local governmental facilities/services
- Continued development/provision of appropriate solid waste management services/facilities



Intergovernmental Coordination

- Maintenance/enhancement of local, regional, and state cooperation
- Services sharing/cooperation/consolidation where appropriate and feasible
- Coordinated land use growth management planning/regulation/code enforcement
- Support of public/private partnership for service enhancement where appropriate



Appling County High School



Appling County Healthcare System



Farmer's Market, Baxley



Baxley Municipal Airport Terminal

Long Term Community Policies

Economic Development

The community will support enhanced leadership programs, such as Appling Leads, Junior Statesman, and others to cultivate involvement and commitment

The community will continue to foster local cooperation/collaboration with Appling governments, school system, and civic/faith-based organizations

The community will continue to cooperate and coordinate with existing local, regional, and state agencies to improve all of Appling County

The community will work together to improve the educational and skills levels and ensure a better qualified workforce for existing and future employers

The community will continue to support local post-secondary education opportunities and their expansion, including Coastal Pines Technical College's Baxley Campus, as needed, through infrastructure upgrades, increased program offerings, and other means

The community will work together to continue to reduce the school drop-out rate within the county and retain as many youth in local schools as possible

The community will support and promote programs for the retention and expansion, as needed, of existing local industries and business in its support and quest for their retention and additional job opportunities

The community will continue to support the continuing operation of Plant Hatch Nuclear Power Plant in Appling County and any future expansions, such as the addition of a new unit

The community will actively recruit new industry and business development compatible with the resources, infrastructure, existing economy, and natural environments of the county

The community will support the development and expansion of local entrepreneurship efforts, and the continued development/expansion of the local retail/service sector

The community will support the development of new businesses in Graham and Surrency

The community will work to develop, extend, and maintain the necessary infrastructure improvements to facilitate and accommodate desired commercial, industrial, and residential growth

The community will continue to cooperate to develop and maintain the necessary infrastructure improvements at the Park East, Park West, and Sweetwater Creek industrial parks to support desired economic growth

The community will develop a new rail-served and GRAD certified industrial park at the recently acquired site east of Baxley near U.S. 341

The community will support development of the Oglethorpe Power property east of Baxley and adjacent to the planned new community rail-served industrial park

The community will seek improvements to Internet access/service and facilities supportive of state-of-the-art communications, fiber-optics, and broadband technology

The community will continue to seek and promote transportation improvements (highway, airport, rail, public, and multi-modal/Complete Streets) to further encourage, guide, and accommodate desired growth and development

The community will work together to maintain its modern Level II airport and seek improvements as necessary

The community will promote to economic prospects its 4-lane transportation access via U.S. 341 and U.S. 1, its central geographic location between three interstates, and the availability of rail access in close proximity to Georgia's ports

The community will continue to revitalize/maintain Downtown Baxley as a vibrant, functioning commercial, governmental, and social center

The community will work cooperatively to increase promotion and marketing of tourist attractions and facilities/services located in Appling County, and otherwise grow tourism as an important component of the local economy, including agri-tourism, nature-based, and heritage tourism

The community will continue to support and grow local participation in the annual Golden Isles Peaches to Beaches Yard Sale, as well as to organize and develop other local festivals or events

The community will seek to attract new residents and retirees through promotion of its climate, location, quality of life, recreation opportunities, active civic organizations, caring people, and other amenities

The community will direct, manage, and guide its future growth and development through coordinated planning, land use regulation, increased code enforcement, and nuisance regulations

The community will preserve its unique landscapes and natural beauty and foster development compatible with its existing rural character and quality of life

The community will encourage and promote the continued economic viability of agriculture and forestry through traditional and alternative enterprises, including nature-based and agri-tourism, development of the new Agricultural Center, and continued support for the local farmer's market

The community will utilize and support the Baxley-Applying County Chamber of Commerce, the Development Authority of Applying County, and other agency programs/resources to further develop/grow the local economy

The community will continue to celebrate and promote its heritage and provide for cultural outlets through support of the Applying County Heritage Center, the Arts Council of Applying County, the Applying County Library, and other outlets

Natural and Cultural Resources

The community will work to promote growth and development which is compatible with and maintains the existing rural character, open spaces, and landscapes of Applying County

The community will seek development which is respectful of and compatible with the environment and natural and cultural resources of Applying County

The community will work to conserve and protect the Altamaha River Corridor, the county's significant groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, floodplains, and other important natural and cultural resources, while promoting compatible utilization and recreational development

The community will continue to maintain, enhance, and promote Lake Mayers and Lake Tara for public recreational use

The community will support protection, expansion of uses, and promotion of the Bullard Creek and Moody Forest Natural Area wildlife management areas, including multi-modal access

The community will seek to promote and develop greater compatible economic use and tourism of its parks, lakes, river, and other natural and cultural resources

The community will encourage the protection of its greenspaces and landscapes, especially through promotion of the continued economic viability of agriculture and forestry

The community will seek to rehabilitate, utilize, and encourage public and private adaptive use/reuse of historic buildings, places, and landmark structures to enhance its sense of place and unique character, and to further tourism/economic development

The community will continue to support and help maintain the Applying County Heritage Center in its mission to preserve, interpret, and promote local history

The community will celebrate and promote its heritage and culture through development and support of facilities, festivals, special events, plays, exhibits, and activities, and the support of the Arts Council of Applying County activities

The community will support efforts to increase nature-based, heritage, and agri-tourism

Housing

The community will work toward both improving the quality of existing and new housing

The community will seek to encourage a diverse mix of housing, including additional affordable, rental, elderly, retiree, and compatible workforce housing, as needed

The community will support and encourage the development of additional assisted living facilities

The community will encourage the use of state and federal programs to improve availability of quality housing, and to encourage homeownership

The community will seek to encourage and manage new residential location within Appling County which is compatible with its community vision and rural character

The community will provide guidance to and for location of compatible housing developments through planning, infrastructure location, and regulation

The community will continue to support the Baxley Housing Authority and utilize public/private partnerships to improve housing quality and opportunities

The community will upgrade its appearance and the quality of its housing developments through the adoption and use of coordinated construction codes, increased code enforcement, subdivision regulations, nuisance ordinances, and other land use regulation

Land Use

The community will plan/direct future growth and development, and encourage growth compatible with its community vision and existing character

The community will encourage growth which preserves its rural character and maintains forestry and agriculture as viable, functioning land uses

The community will continue to encourage infill and intense development/land uses to locate in Baxley and its fringes, and the U.S. 341 West Corridor, where appropriate and easily served by the community's infrastructure

The community will seek to encourage and guide development of U.S. 341 and U.S. 1 and all of Baxley's gateways/corridors to create a sense of place and to invite/attract people/visitors

The community will seek to encourage development which will enhance/redevelop existing commercial areas and maintain Baxley as a center of economic, social, and governmental activity within Appling County

The community will cooperate to maintain and further the development of the cities of Graham and Surrency as vibrant and growing small towns

The community will enhance existing recreation facilities and develop new facilities/uses which will complement/promote tourism and the community's character/vision

The community will support the expansion of public access to the Bullard Creek Wildlife Management Area, the Moody Forest Natural Area/Wildlife Management Area, the Altamaha River, and other local natural resources, while advocating and supporting their protection

The community will cooperate to implement coordinated, comprehensive land use regulation and code enforcement to implement its community vision and protect its rural character and quality of life

Community Facilities and Services

The community will maintain, upgrade, and expand its existing infrastructure and services to enhance the quality of life, to facilitate its community vision, and to attract desired, compatible growth and development

The community will guide growth and development to areas of existing infrastructure and will plan and develop expansions to help bring about its community vision and desired patterns of growth

The community will continue to upgrade or develop local government facilities/services to better serve local citizens, attract economic development, and/or improve the quality of life

The community will pursue, develop, and promote transportation improvements of all types, including paving of dirt roads, resurfacing of existing paved roads, addressing traffic congestion, overpass and truck route development, public transportation, sidewalk improvements, bicycle trails, multi-modal/Complete Streets, and others, that are compatible with and supportive of Appling County's desired economic development, future growth, and quality of life

The community will work together to maintain its modern Level II airport and seek improvements as necessary

The community will continue to support the viability and usage of the Appling Healthcare System facilities and services, the Appling County Health Department, and the expansion of critical local healthcare services conducive to economic development and a high quality of life

The community will maintain, and enhance as appropriate, its emergency management and emergency medical facilities and services

The community will support the continued development/provision of needed solid waste management facilities/services, as appropriate

The community will continue to support and upgrade, as needed, its local public safety facilities and services

The community will seek to enhance local educational opportunities by continuing to maintain and upgrade its educational facilities and programs, both local and post-secondary, as needed

The community will enhance, expand, and promote existing parks and establish new parks/recreational facilities and programs to serve existing and future populations, and to further cultivate/support tourism in accordance with the community's character/vision

The community will continue to enhance Water Works Park as a passive park and focal point for community events

The community will support development of youth facilities/after-school and summer programming through reactivation of the local Boys and Girls Club or other efforts

The community will continue to support and promote local agriculture through the Farmer's Market, development of the new Agricultural Center, increased agri-tourism, and other means

The community will encourage and support the promotion of existing cultural facilities and opportunities, and will further develop cultural facilities and assets to pursue and promote additional venues/activities, such as an amphitheater

The community will continue to support the Appling County Public Library, the Appling County Heritage Center, and the Arts Council of Appling County

The community will seek development of additional public meeting space

Intergovernmental Coordination

The community will continue to cooperate and collaborate locally and regionally to improve, develop, expand, grow, and plan for the desired future Appling County expressed and outlined in its community vision and comprehensive plan

The community will continue to coordinate efforts in the delivery of services and will investigate the possibility of shared and consolidated services where appropriate and feasible

The community will cooperate in coordinated land use planning and regulation to manage and guide its future growth and development

The community will support public/private partnership for facility development or service enhancement where appropriate

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The Needs and Opportunities Element is required of all local governments by the Minimum Standards and Procedures. The community needs are those weaknesses or liabilities which have to be addressed, changed, or mitigated to help achieve the desired community future. The community opportunities are strengths and assets which can be utilized as starting points and foundations to easily accentuate or capitalize on to move the community forward on its desired future path. The Needs and Opportunities Element generally answers the planning question, “Where are we currently?” The answers can provide the compass point guidance necessary to begin and advance along the improvement journey. The Appling County Joint Comprehensive Plan identifies each community goal as an issue for improvement, and further identifies local needs and opportunities, as appropriate, for each issue.

Needs and Opportunities

Needs:

- Continuing support for and enhancement of local leadership groups, including Appling Leads, Junior Statesman, and others (Economic Development (ED), Natural and Cultural Resources (NCR), Housing (HO), Land Use (LU), Community Facilities and Services (CFS), Intergovernmental Coordination (IC))
- Continued fostering of local cooperation/collaboration among Appling governments, school system, civic/faith based organizations, private entrepreneurs, and others (ED, CFS, IC)
- Continuing local, regional, and state agency cooperation/coordination (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Continuing education/job skills improvements (ED)
- Support for local post-secondary education resources, including Coastal Pines Technical College, Baxley Campus (ED, CFS, IC)
- Continuing support for the excellent local school system and increasing its high school graduation rate (ED, CFS, IC)
- Existing business/industry/entrepreneur support (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Support continuing operation of Plant Hatch Nuclear Power Plant in Appling County, including any future expansions (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- New business/industry/jobs attraction/creation (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Support of retail/service/hospitality sector expansion (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Maintenance/extension/development of infrastructure necessary for desired growth (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Development/enhancement/maintenance of needed infrastructure upgrades at Park East, Park West, and Sweetwater Creek industrial parks (ED, CFS, IC)
- Construction of solar array and deep well in Industrial Park West (ED, CFS, IC)

- Site preparation, development, and GRAD certification of new rail-served industrial park east of Baxley near U.S. 341 (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Support development of Oglethorpe Power property east of Baxley (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Seek development of industry-wide shared rail-served loading dock site (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Improvements to Internet/broadband access/service/facilities (ED, CFS, IC)
- Continued improvements/promotion of all kinds of transportation access/quality, including highway, airport, rail, public, pedestrian, bicycle, and multi-modal/Complete Streets (ED, CFS, IC)
- Continuing street and road improvements, including paving and resurfacing projects utilizing TIA and other funding (ED, CFS, IC)
- Completion of TIA Band 3 projects (ED, CFS, IC)
- Address traffic congestion in/near Baxley through construction of truck route, railroad overpass, and/or other means (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Enhancements to pedestrian pathways in/around Baxley and Appling County (ED, CFS, IC)
- Road safety improvements per GDOT safety audit and state mandates along county roads, such as signage, widening, striping, and others (ED, CFS, IC)
- Completion of sidewalk expansion along GA Highway 15 south from Satilla Church Road to Appling County Middle School in Baxley (ED, CFS, IC)
- Development of local bicycle facilities (ED, CFS, IC)
- Street and drainage improvements in Baxley, including equipment acquisition, and in the Thomas/Wildes streets target area in Surrency (CFS, IC)
- Continuing upgrades to Baxley Airport to maintain its modern, Level II status, including additional instrument approaches, completing clearing of approach path, widening/overlaying runway, and others as needed (ED, CFS, IC)
- Promotion/marketing of 4-lane transportation access via U.S. 1 and U.S. 341/central location between three interstates/proximity to Savannah and Brunswick ports (ED, IC)
- Continued downtown Baxley revitalization support (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)

- Local/regional tourism enhancement/growth through events, such as Baxley’s Winter Wonderland and Surrency Day; recreation/leisure activities; heritage tourism; agri-tourism; nature-based tourism; and other means (ED, NCR)
- Increased promotion/marketing of local/regional tourist attractions, including the Altamaha River; Appling County Heritage Center; the Moody Forest Natural Area/Wildlife Management Area; the Bullard Creek Wildlife Management Area; Appling Farmer’s Market and other local produce and farm market businesses; the new Agricultural Center; Woodpecker Trail; Traditions Highway; and others (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Additional local lodging, dining, entertainment, and retail options (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Continuing support/increased participation in Peaches to Beaches Yard Sale and development of other events/festivals (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Utilization of coordinated planning, land use regulations, increased code enforcement, and nuisance regulations to direct/manage/guide future growth/development (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Compatible development supportive of community’s unique landscapes; natural and cultural resources; and rural character/quality of life (ED, NCR, LU, CFS)
- Agricultural/forestry land uses economic viability support and increased marketing (ED, NCR, LU, IC)
- Development of new Agricultural Center (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Continued support for local farmers’ market (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Continued utilization/support of Baxley-Appling County Chamber of Commerce, the Development Authority of Appling County, and others (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Development of new marketing materials and branding for Appling County Economic Development (ED, CFS, IC)
- Altamaha River Corridor conservation/protection, including water level (ED, NCR, IC)
- Continuing protection of Appling County’s significant natural and cultural resources (ED, NCR, LU, IC)
- Adoption/enforcement of model ordinance based on Georgia DNR’s Part V Environmental Planning Criteria for significant wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and protected river corridors (NCR, LU, CFS, IC)

- Development of countywide floodplain management control ordinance (NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Adoption of local soil erosion and sedimentation ordinance (NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Compatible development/utilization of natural and cultural resources, as appropriate (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Continued maintenance/enhancement/promotion of Lake Mayers and Lake Tara for public recreation (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Bullard Creek and Moody Forest wildlife management areas protection/use expansion/promotion, including multi-modal access (ED, NCR, LU, IC)
- Promotion/development of greater compatible economic use/tourism of parks, lakes, river, other natural/cultural resources (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Historic resources preservation/reuse/promotion, such as former school as Appling County Heritage Center and Caroline Miller House for Arts Council activities (ED, NCR, HO, CFS, IC)
- Continued stewardship and local government use of National Register-listed historic Appling County Courthouse (ED, NCR, CFS)
- Continued support/maintenance of Appling County Heritage Center (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Celebration/promotion of local heritage/culture through plays/facilities/exhibits/activities/festivals (ED, NCR, CFS)
- Existing and new housing quality/appearance improvements through rehabilitation, removal, code enforcement, and regulation (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Matching funds for repair of occupied, blighted housing in Graham (NCR, HO, CFS, IC)
- Support for diverse housing mix, including additional affordable, rental, elderly, retiree, and compatible workforce housing, as needed (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Development of additional assisted living facilities (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- State/federal housing programs utilization (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)

- Coordinated countywide land use planning/subdivision/manufactured housing regulations/increased code enforcement/nuisance ordinances/growth management implementation and enforcement (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Utilization of existing and new infrastructure location to guide desired/compatible residential growth/development supportive of community's vision/rural character (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Continued promotion of infill and intense development/land uses in Baxley and its fringes, U.S. 341 West Corridor, and where appropriate/easily served by community infrastructure (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- U.S. 1 and U.S. 341 and all community gateways appearance improvements/beautification (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Redevelopment/enhancement of existing commercial areas and maintenance of Baxley as hub of economic/social/governmental activity in Appling County (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Further development of Graham and Surrency to maintain them as vibrant/growing small towns (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Enhancement of existing recreation/leisure facilities and development of new facilities/programs as needed to complement community's character and promote tourism (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Promotion of available land for economic development/residential attraction (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Development of zoning and other supportive countywide land use regulations (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Total update of Baxley's existing zoning ordinances (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Completion of installing radio-read water system meters citywide in Baxley (CFS, IC)
- Retire Baxley Wastewater Treatment Plant solar array debt (CFS, IC)
- Continue pursuit of solar power options when feasible by City of Baxley (CFS, IC)
- Replacement of elevated water tank at Water Works Park (NCR, CFS, IC)
- Acquisition of new sewer vacuum truck and Gradall for City of Baxley (CFS)
- Replacement of curtain at Baxley Wastewater Treatment Plant (CFS)

- Funding to replace ¾ inch water lines along Clemens Lane in Graham (CFS, IC)
- Acquisition of new vehicle, tractor, and backhoe for City of Graham (CFS)
- Acquisition of mosquito control chemical spraying truck and new lawnmower for City of Surrency (CFS)
- Construction of new Appling County Road Department facility (LU, CFS, IC)
- Continued maintenance/promotion/upgrades, as needed of Appling Healthcare System facility and other local healthcare facilities/services (ED, CFS, IC)
- Construction of new SPLOST-funded addition for Geriatric Behavioral Health Unit (ED, CFS, IC)
- Continued improvements to excellent local public safety services, equipment, and facilities, as needed (CFS, IC)
- Purchase of trucks, suits, equipment, and other necessities for Appling County and city fire departments (CFS, IC)
- Complete installation of full-time Baxley Fire Department (CFS, IC)
- Acquisition of three (3) new ambulances for Appling County EMS (CFS, IC)
- Obtain used vehicle and additional equipment (vests, dashboard cameras, weapons, etc.) for Graham Police Department (CFS, IC)
- Construction of addition to Appling County Detention Center (CFS, IC)
- Construction of new Appling County Judicial complex (LU, CFS, IC)
- Continued maintenance/upgrades to retain excellent quality local educational facilities/services/technology (ED, CFS, IC)
- Parks/recreation facilities/activities maintenance/improvements/development (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Continued enhancement of Downtown Baxley's Water Works Park as passive park/focal point for community events (ED, CFS)
- Further development of Falling Rocks Park to help improve Altamaha River access, including campsite upgrades, such as individual dump stations (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Construction of new indoor pool for year round use (ED, LU, CFS, IC)

- Construction of two (2) additional multi-purpose athletic fields and other facility upgrades at Appling County Recreation Complex (ED, CFS, IC)
- Replace roof on City of Graham’s pavilion (CFS)
- Funding to renovate/improve Surrency Ballfield and Surrency Park (CFS, IC)
- Development support for local youth facilities/after-school/summer programs through possible reactivation of the Appling County Boys and Girls Club or other efforts (CFS, IC)
- Continued maintenance and provision of adequate local governmental facilities/services (ED, CFS, IC)
- Complete construction of new Senior Center/Head Start facility (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Establishment of community garden (CFS, IC)
- Development of new community center/additional public meeting space (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Continued support for and enhancement of cultural facilities/programs/events (NCR, CFS, IC)
- Construction of a community amphitheater (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Continued support for local Appling County Public Library through facility, equipment, staffing, program, and other improvements/expansions, as needed (ED, CFS)
- Renovations to the National Register-listed Bank of Surrency building (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Flooring renovations at the historic Surrency School (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Continued maintenance/enhancement of local, regional, state cooperation (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Continued efforts to seek sharing/cooperation/consolidation in delivery of services (ED, CFS, IC)

Opportunities:

- Existing adult and youth leadership programs, such as Appling Leads and Junior Statesman (ED, CFS, IC)
- Excellent local collaboration among Appling governments, school system, civic/faith based organizations, and others (ED, CFS, IC)
- Continuing existing local, regional, and state agency cooperation/coordination (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Heart of Georgia Altamaha Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Program (ED, IC)
- Access to Georgia Quick Start Program (ED, IC)
- Post-secondary education access locally at Coastal Pines Technical College, Baxley Campus and other nearby institutions (ED, IC)
- Excellent local schools, including new and renovated facilities, and technology (ED, CFS, IC)
- Increasing local high school graduation rate (ED)
- Existing businesses/industries, such as Plant Hatch, Lawter, Walmart Supercenter, Woody Folsom Auto Group, Down to Earth Trailer, Interfor, and others (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Diverse mix of existing small local and corporate businesses (ED, CFS, IC)
- Existing agricultural/forestry uses such as Miles Berry Farm, County Farm Plants, Fram Fuels wood pellet plant, Southeastern Gin & Peanut, Wright's Dairy, Gardner's Apiaries/Spell Bee Company (ED, NCR, LU, IC)
- New Dollar General stores in Graham and north of Baxley (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Infrastructure in place for growth/development (ED, CFS, IC)
- Graham's new backup well (CFS, IC)
- 3 GRAD certified industrial parks (Park East, Park West, and Sweetwater Creek) (ED, CFS, IC)
- New rail-served industrial park site east of Baxley near U.S. 341 (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Oglethorpe Power industrial site near Baxley (ED, LU, CFS, IC)

- Transportation improvements, including 4-laned U.S. 1 and U.S. 341 through county and TIA funded resurfacing, paving projects, and new U.S. 1 Altamaha River Bridge (ED, CFS, IC)
- Sidewalk expansion along GA Highway 15 South to middle school in Baxley (ED, CFS, IC)
- Level II Baxley Airport and ongoing upgrades (ED, CFS, IC)
- Norfolk Southern Railroad crossing Appling County (ED, CFS, IC)
- Central location between I-16, I-95, and I-75 and proximity to Georgia ports (ED, CFS, IC)
- Downtown Baxley revitalization, including streetscape improvements (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Local/regional tourism events/venues, such as Winter Wonderland in Baxley, Appling Heritage Center, Surrency Day, and Peaches to Beaches Yardsale (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Nature-based, agri-tourism, recreation, and other tourism venues, including the Altamaha River, Moody Forest Nature Preserve; Bullard Creek and Moody Forest wmas, Falling Rocks Park, Lake Mayers, Lake Tara, Appling County Farmers' Market, local produce and farm markets/businesses; Woodpecker Trail, and Traditions Highway (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- New Sleep Inn motel under construction (ED, CFS, LU, IC)
- New planned local restaurants (ED, CFS, LU, IC)
- Local cultural/historic resources, such as Appling County Courthouse, Appling Heritage Center, Caroline Miller House, Graham Methodist Church, Bank of Surrency building, and Surrency School (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Appling Heritage Center's planned SPLOST-funded maintenance/repairs (NCR, CFS, IC)
- Community's rural character/quality of life/vision (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Planned new Agricultural Center (ED, NCR, LU, CFS, IC)
- Strong local governments/leadership/partnerships, such as Baxley-Appling County Chamber of Commerce; Development Authority of Appling County; and others (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)

- Significant natural resources, including Altamaha River Corridor, Moody Forest Natural Area/Wildlife Management Area, Bullard Creek Wildlife Management Area, and others (ED, NCR, LU, IC)
- Recreation resources, such as Lake Mayers, Lake Tara, Falling Rocks Park, Altamaha River landings, Moody Forest and Bullard Creek wildlife management areas
- Ample undeveloped land (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Lower cost of living and housing costs (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Existing zoning in Baxley (ED, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Land available for sale (ED, NCR, HO, LU, CFS, IC)
- Continued use of historic Appling County Courthouse (NCR, CFS)
- Award-winning Appling Healthcare System and other local medical facilities, including planned new Geriatric Behavioral Health Unit (ED, CFS, IC)
- New Appling County Health Department (CFS, IC)
- Soon to be completed new Senior Center/Head Start facility (ED, LU, CFS, IC)
- Water Works Park in Downtown Baxley (ED, CFS, IC)
- Renovated former Junior High Gymnasium (CFS, IC)
- Active civic organizations, such as Lions Club and Rotary (ED, CFS, IC)
- Strong local public safety/enforcement and low crime rate (CFS, IC)
- Graham's public safety improvements, including replacing fire truck and hiring additional police officer (CFS, IC)
- Existing cultural facilities/services (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Appling County Library (ED, CFS, IC)
- Arts Council of Appling County (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- "In the Pines" local history production (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)
- Appling County Fine Arts Center (CFS, IC)
- Stewardship of historic Surrency School and Bank of Surrency building (NCR, CFS, IC)
- 2010 TIA funded improvements, including completion of Band 1 and some Band 2 Local Projects (ED, CFS, IC)

- Existing local, regional, and state partnerships, including Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission, others (ED, NCR, CFS, IC)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic prosperity is a key to community improvement. A community's comprehensive plan seeks at its core to make the community a better place to live, work, and recreate. To improve quality of life, there is a need for income and an increased tax base to help enhance the ability to afford needed and desired improvements, and afford better housing and a higher standard of living. Commerce and economic development have a major influence on overall population growth and development. The relationship is quite evident in Appling County and has been throughout its history. The Altamaha River and the forested lands of Appling provided avenues of exploration and access to life sustaining wildlife populations both to Native Americans and European explorers long before the county's formal establishment. The area's settlement in the early 1800s related to Indian treaties and land lotteries for persons seeking new lives, fortunes, and religious expression. The first county development related to waterborne commerce on the Altamaha River, and then to the opening of stagecoach routes and early public roads, and general stores to serve the surrounding countryside. The completion of the Macon and Brunswick Railroad in the late 1800s led to the establishment and growth of Baxley, Graham, and Surrency. The railroad also opened up markets and fierce competition over the county's abundant yellow pine forests, lumber resources, and agricultural products. Significant economic influence ensued for Baxley, Graham, and Surrency, particularly as service and processing centers for naval stores, turpentine, and area agriculture. The resulting economic influence and prosperity led to more market availability and local development. Similarly, the decline of turpentine and the cutting of the large pine trees, and then the railroads, as highways and the flourishing of larger regional service centers led to local stagnation or decline, particularly in Graham and Surrency. The location of U.S. 1 and U.S. 341 in Baxley served to soften these blows there. The opening of Plant Hatch in the county in the 1970s was a new economic stimulus, as have diversifying industry, Walmart, and the Woody Folsom Auto Group. Economic attributes and transportation continue to impact the Appling County community's future. The county's highways, the active Class I Railroad, and the community's airport have had many positive impacts on Baxley/Appling County. The location of Plant Hatch turned around a long period of decline for Appling County after WWII until the 1970s. Location, transportation

resources, local entrepreneurship and leadership; agriculture; proximity to Georgia's ports and interstates; abundant and outstanding natural and cultural resources; the continuing civic consciousness and caring of the community; the continuing importance and local attention to education; and the overall family-friendly quality of life within the county remain key factors and attractors in future growth and development. Because of its economic history and successes, its progressive leadership, its cooperative spirit, its significant cultural and natural resources, and its overall quality of life, Appling will continue to be a thriving and welcoming hometown. As a result, the community continues to enjoy slow, but steady growth and development.

Appling County is a rural community located in the heart of southeast Georgia with a current population of almost 20,000 residents. Its geographic location, on the south bank of Georgia's impressive Altamaha River, along U.S. highways U.S. 1 and U.S. 341, and less than an hour away from Georgia's coast and Interstate highways I-16 and I-95, offers much for businesses and residents alike. The community is nestled in an appealing and soothing bucolic landscape of family farms and seemingly never-ending green forests of tall Southern pines. Municipalities include Baxley, the county seat, with about 5,000 residents, and the much smaller municipalities of Graham and Surrency, all located along U.S. Highway 341. Baxley is actually located at the crossroads of U.S. 1 and U.S. 341. Both of these highways are now four-laned through the county, and are part of Georgia's designated developmental highway system, the Governor's Road Improvement Program. Other important highways traversing the county include Georgia Highway 15, also known as Traditions Highway and a designated developmental highway as well, and Georgia Highway 121, also known as the historic Woodpecker Trail.

Appling County remains an agrarian-based economy but one with much diversification in a number of small businesses, separate industries, and a rapidly expanding retail and service sector. The community's fields and forests remain a vital and vibrant part of community life through functioning farms and related industries such as dairies, blueberry producers, a regional plant nursery, pine straw concerns, a Canadian-owned sawmill, and a wood fuel pellet plant, amongst others. The Altamaha River is now a world class and widely recognized natural paradise, but once was the heart of the local economy. The community's countryside now

reflects endless rows of planted pines which provide both mesmerizing color and dimension to an evergreen landscape as well as much economic contribution. These same pine trees were the source of much of the county's economic influence and rapid growth in the late 1800s. They led to Appling County being the center of Georgia's naval stores/turpentine industry, and to Graham and Surrency's heyday, including Surrency being the "Crosstie Capital of the World." The community's bucolic and appealing landscapes and world class natural resources are worthy of national park or greater status. These resources not only offer economic outlets and potential, but also offer solace, comfort, and appeal, as well as outdoor fun and adventure for the human psyche.

After WWII, the local economy lost ground to many factors, including mechanization, growth of larger and metro retail centers, and greater influence of the automobile. As a result, Appling County suffered slow, but gradual decline in population and an economic wane. The location of Plant Hatch, the first Georgia nuclear power plant, along the Altamaha River in the 1970s turned these trends around. The four-laning of U.S. 1, and then U.S. 341, has accelerated this turnaround. The growth trend has been supported by a diversifying economy known for many small companies and not reliance on a single large concern. The opening of a Walmart Supercenter in the 2000s, and now the development of an automotive dealership megastore by local entrepreneur Woody Folsom in the 2010s has served to solidify and magnify these positive economic influences. This has also led to further expansion of the retail/service sectors, particularly the location of new restaurants.

During all of this expansion, Appling County has maintained a well-deserved reputation for cooperative and collaborative leadership and a caring, involved populace which makes for a true hometown treasure. The community is full of welcoming, family-friendly people, activities, and authentic Southern charm and hospitality. These attitudes and atmosphere keep the community moving forward to modernize facilities, and welcome and support facility and service improvements, business, and both visitors and new residents. This down-home authenticity provides even more support and appeal for continued growth and development and progress in all its aspects. There are resulting award winning schools, top-notch facilities, and cultural outlets, among many avenues for progress. All this serves to further enhance the

superlative local quality of life, and to reinforce community attractiveness and appeal for additional growth and development.

As a result, the Appling County community enjoys a functioning balance and a family-oriented high quality of life as well as continuing economic success. The community's hometown atmosphere, progressiveness, and economic appeal and success are evident. After rapid population growth and economic influence from 1870 to 1960 associated with the railroad development, then a short period of decline from 1900-1920 and a short growth spurt from 1920-1940, there was a period of slow decline from WWII to 1970. Since the 1970s (and the opening of Plant Hatch), the county has realized relatively steady growth, although this growth may have slowed slightly here in the 2010s. The community does appear to be nicely recovering from the 2008 Great Recession. Location, transportation, natural and cultural resources, and community leadership and hometown appeal are key to this growth as they have been since the community's inception, although the specific avenues have changed with the times.

For all of Appling County's relative economic successes it remains in Georgia Job Tax Credit Tier 1, meaning it remains in the bottom 40 percent of counties on factors including unemployment rate, per capita income, and percentage of residents below the poverty level. This is primarily a function of being a rural county in Southeast Georgia, and such status does allow a business creating new jobs to claim Georgia's highest job creation tax credit (~\$4,000/job). It also conceals the fact that Appling County has more attractive assets for growth and is better off in many respects than a number of the surrounding regional counties.

There are certainly continuing needs for Appling County's economic development. The per capita money income in Appling County as reported by the Census Bureau for 2011-2015 is \$19,178, only about three-fourths (74.5 percent) that of Georgia as a whole (\$25,737). Median household income is \$37,135, also about 75% that of Georgia (\$49,620). Nearly one-fourth of Appling County citizens are in poverty (22.5%), compared to only 17.0% in Georgia as a whole. This high poverty has persisted for a number of decades. There are needs for more jobs, and higher paying jobs. Unemployment in the county was 6.4% in 2016, compared to 5.4% in the state, and this is slightly above the Appling Area average of 6.3%. The county average weekly

wage is \$771, above the regional average of \$677, but well below the state average of \$993. A rather positive statistic is that only about one quarter (24.3%) of county workers have to travel outside Appling County for work according to the American Community Survey (2011-2015). Job skills of local residents are also a concern; about 25% of local residents are without a high school diploma compared to 15% statewide. Transfer payments represent almost 29% of total personal income compared to about 18% statewide. On a more positive note, there is more home ownership in the county (69.8%) than Georgia (63.3%), and housing costs are cheaper within the county. The median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2011-2015, was \$72,300 in Appling County as compared to \$148,100 in Georgia, and median gross rents, 2011-2015, were \$499 in the County as compared to \$879 in Georgia. Compared to the rest of the country, Appling County's cost of living is 18.1% lower than the U.S. average.

There are other opportunities and cause for optimism for future economic development in Appling County beyond housing and cost of living advantages. Employment within the county is concentrated within the government, manufacturing, retail trade/services, and agriculture sectors, and there is relative employment stability, with advances in 2016. There remain many unrealized opportunities related to the abundant fields and forests and outstanding natural resources of the county, as well as its location. The cost of living in Appling County is relatively very low, and the crime rate is low making it even more attractive as a place to live for families and new residents and retirees, especially given the appealing quality of life. Continuing population growth is anecdotal evidence that the outstanding quality of life, local culture, outdoor fun, and community location are contributing to attraction success. The county's location, its pastoral landscapes punctuated by world class natural and cultural resources, the abundant outdoor recreation opportunities, the low cost of living, the wonderful family-friendly hometown atmosphere, and the progressive and collaborative community spirit and leadership present locally provides even more opportunity for success.

The Appling County community has chosen a multi-faceted approach and strategy to improve its economic status and further economic development in the county. The following goals and objectives were chosen to address identified economic development issues in Appling County.

Address Low Educational Levels/Improve Jobs Skills

Appling County has a long history of educational leadership, and will continue to support its outstanding school system, its Coastal Pines Technical College campus, and regional Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act programs. It will develop public/private partnerships through its Chamber of Commerce, civic groups, the technical college, and continuing intergovernmental cooperation.

Support/Enhance/Maintain Viability of Agriculture/Forestry Uses

The community will support efforts to create additional markets, explore alternative crops, and seek value-added businesses which keep such uses viable and profitable. The marketing and development of agri-tourism and nature-based tourism are other means. The support of the new Farmers' Market, existing agricultural operations and outlets, the development of the new Agricultural Center, and others are tremendous assets and opportunities.

Address/Improve Infrastructure/Facilities

The Appling County community will jointly work to solve any infrastructure and facility deficiencies or needs, including highway needs, and otherwise address water/sewer, drainage and other needs, particularly for fire protection. The new Health Department, Senior Center, Farmers' Market, Agricultural Center, and planned recreation improvements are all evidence that the community is committed to this policy.

Nurture Existing Businesses/Entrepreneurs/Industries

This ongoing effort has been critical to past successes, and will continue with passion. The Appling County community will work through its Development Authority and Chamber of Commerce, and in cooperation with Coastal Pines Technical College and state agencies, to meet local needs and encourage expansions and new local business development. Special efforts will be made for agricultural/forest interests. The Woody Folsom Automotive Group development is an excellent example of recent success, and has stimulated other local economic development.

Attract New Businesses/Jobs

The Appling County community, through its Development Authority, Chamber of Commerce, and intergovernmental cooperation, will seek compatible business and industrial development. The community will participate in state designation programs, and will cooperate in providing appropriate funds in making full-time economic development efforts more efficient and effective. State tax credits and local tax incentives for job creation will be marketed. The GRAD certification of local industrial parks is another important and valuable tool in community marketing. Further enhancing existing industrial sites and developing the new rail served industrial park east of Baxley will assist. The U.S. Highway 1/341 crossroads location and the rail and airport facilities are major assets and calling cards. The location, family-friendly hometown atmosphere, many natural and cultural amenities, and overall high quality of life will attract more than people. The success of such efforts have born witness in recent retail/service expansions.

Develop/Enhance Tourism

Appling County's extraordinary natural and heritage resources, outdoor amenities and splendor, starring the Altamaha River and Moody Forest Natural Area; unique existing and potential festivals; its location along important highways; as well as its farms and scenic countryside offer much more potential to increase visitors.

Improve Transportation Access/Quality

The Regional T-SPLOST, which will result in many needed local resurfacing and other road improvements, will enhance the community as a place to live and work. It may open up other opportunities for job creation, as well. The new U.S. 1 Bridge and planned four-laning of U.S. 1 in Toombs County will be of much benefit. These and other improvements could enhance local travel and make business markets more accessible. They will also make it more attractive to live in Appling County, but work elsewhere. Promotion of trails and bicycling and other nature-based or heritage tourism would also help quality of life and economic development. The

expansion of Georgia's ports will make the county location even more attractive, especially given the railroad availability. The local airport and its continued improvement is also important.

Revitalize Downtown

The historic fabric and available buildings in Baxley allow for much opportunity. Their historic nature allows for development incentives, preservation of unique character, and enhanced quality of life. Community projects in historic structures create civic pride and community cooperation. They also can stimulate private investment.

Develop/Improve Local Industrial Parks/Sites

The community has a number of available industrial parks, sites, and buildings to market. The existing industrial parks need further improvement, and the new rail-served park east of Baxley and the Oglethorpe Power site await development. There is further need to continue and build on recent successful efforts in industrial expansion and location.

Promote Quality of Life/Civic and Community Pride/Location

Appling County has additional opportunities to promote its small town and rural character, hometown atmosphere, and overall quality of life through its Chamber and other means. The welcoming, family-centric hometown atmosphere; low crime rate; low cost of living; the world-class natural areas; the local charm and history; the heritage center, active arts council, and other cultural outlets; the many, active churches and civic clubs; the general outdoor fun; and the landscape and outdoor amenities are all easy selling cards. The overall county location and easy access to larger urban areas further contribute and facilitate promotion of the county as an excellent place to live, visit, or do business.

Enhance Intergovernmental Cooperation

Community efforts working together both within the county, and through neighbors, the region, and state agencies can only facilitate success and scope of effort. This will build on, and take advantage of, the strong tradition of local cooperation and adaptive and progressive leadership. An active chamber of commerce and many civic groups can only make public/private partnerships easier to achieve and more successful. Active participation in regional economic, tourism, and natural resource partnerships offers much potential and benefit. Broadband service improvements, in particular, lend themselves to public/private partnership efforts.

Address Growth Management/Rural Character Preservation

A well planned community and one which appears neat, orderly, and attractive supports and encourages additional investment. The community has developed limited individual land use regulations to address specific issues and nuisances, but more stronger, general, and coordinated efforts and joint code enforcement are needed, beyond those in Baxley. The community can also utilize infrastructure location and civic organizations and programs to assist.

Enhance Economic Development Marketing

Appling County has long been noted for its progressive local leadership and community cooperation and collaboration. Reenergized efforts supported by the local governments, local chamber, and local civic groups can accomplish much to help the community cooperate and advance in economic development. Participation in regional and state partnerships and utilizing state designation programs can help. State job tax credits and recently developed local tax incentives can be highlighted.

Continue Support of Adult/Youth Leadership Programs

Progressive, cooperative leadership with a strong civic consciousness and concern for the greater good has long been a hallmark of Appling County. There is always a need to nurture new leadership and continue the tradition as times does not stop for anyone. The Appling Leads program and the Junior Statesman youth program need to be further nurtured and improved.

Attract New Residents/Retirees

Appling County has much to offer both business and residents alike from location, to built and natural environment, to family-friendly hometown atmosphere, low cost of living, an extraordinary quality of life and much opportunity. To grow the economy and tax base which allows better incomes and the ability to afford improved services, there is a need for more people. Marketing the community and allowing others to realize how truly unique and special the community is can help accomplish this.

LAND USE

The landscape and the way land is used is often visible and tangible evidence of planning or the lack thereof. It reveals the pattern of growth and development, and how we relate to the natural environment. It often defines what we view as the character of our community, and is a major component in our determination of quality of life. As science evolves, we realize with greater certainty that the way our land is used and managed has definite implications for air and water quality, and the diversity and health of our ecosystems.

The awareness of the impacts and consequences of the way land is used illustrate the need for wise use of our finite supply of land, and the necessity of sound decisions in its development or protection. The need for sustainable growth and development, which accommodates our development needs while maintaining balance and control, and limiting impacts on the natural and built environment, is recognized in the state quality community objectives.

Sound, quality growth and development results from effective and balanced land use planning that anticipates, prepares, and exercises control over development decisions. It guides and directs growth and development into a desirable and efficient pattern of land use to achieve compatibilities in use, proper return and effective use of public investments in infrastructure and services, and minimal impacts to environmentally or aesthetically important natural and cultural resources.

The lack of planning, on the other hand, can result in uncontrolled and unmanaged growth which can wreak havoc on community desires and plans, negatively impact property values, degrade the environment and landscape, and foster other detrimental effects or burdens in a short period of time. It can destroy important natural functions and treasured views or other parts of the landscape. It can cause new public tax or service burdens while lowering return or lessening use of public infrastructure already paid for or invested in. Public desires or future

plans or options can be precluded or prevented by such uncontrolled growth, while other ill-advised consequences or burdens upon the general public can result.

A community's land use planning efforts are an attempt to provide a policy guide and framework or blueprint for desired growth and development. Sound planning provides for managed growth and development, allowing for necessary land use and development, but guiding it in such a manner that balances and protects resources, systems, and other aspects of the landscape important to the community. Such planning tries to lessen, mitigate, or avoid inconsistencies, inefficiencies, or conflicting land use efforts. Existing patterns and trends of land uses, community investment in and location of facilities and services, important natural and cultural constraints, and overriding community desires are considered and accommodated in developing and delineating the desired pattern of growth and development.

Appling County and its municipalities are united in their vision and desires for growth. It is a rural county with abundant and exceptional natural and cultural resources, great pastoral and natural beauty, envious location, excellent transportation access, and many assets for growth. The community has a long history of balancing agriculture and industry, preserving and celebrating past heritage while advancing the new and modern, utilizing and conserving natural and cultural resources, and exhibiting community caring and cooperative leadership for the general good. For these reasons, particularly with the impetus of Plant Hatch, the four-laning of U.S. 1 and U.S. 341, and the diversifying economy and growing retail/service outlets, the community has enjoyed and continues to enjoy steady growth somewhat unusual in its consistency for a rural area since 1970. The community's vision for its future growth and development is one that maintains and builds upon this growth while protecting the existing character and atmosphere. This growth would protect and utilize the community's exceptional natural and cultural resources and scenic landscapes, while continuing to grow and develop in a manner conducive and compatible with such beauty, family fun, outdoor adventure, community caring, and overall high quality of life. Land uses would continue to look similar to those existing, and the small-town, family-friendly rural character and atmosphere would be maintained. Infrastructure and amenities would be expanded and developed to support and attract both population and business growth, primarily in or adjacent to the existing municipalities and

developed areas. Agricultural and forestry uses would be kept viable and remain the principal land uses of the county. The superlative natural and cultural resources would be protected and utilized for increased tourism and recreational uses. These rural open landscapes would be an integral component of the economy of the county, and the preservation of rural character supportive of open space and natural and cultural resource protection. Commercial and industrial growth would be compatible and supportive of continued agricultural/forestry uses, and would maintain the high quality of life and small-town, rural character while providing additional jobs and economic opportunity. All of this would be components of a concerted strategy to attract new residents, retirees, and economic development supportive and complementary to existing uses and character which further adds to the quality of life.

While technically only the City of Baxley is required, because of its zoning ordinance, to have a Land Use element in its comprehensive plan under the current DCA planning standards, all Appling County local governments have chosen to include the element in this joint comprehensive plan. Existing land use maps visually convey to all concerned the current landscape and correlation of extant development. Future land use maps illustrate to all concerned the community's vision and desires for additional growth and development. Such depictions also lend credence and supporting background information important to understanding and illustrating official local government policy in designating lands unsuitable for solid waste handling facilities in local solid waste management plans. Land use maps do provide official display of community desires and goals for compatible future growth and development.

The community's land use maps are, however, a general policy guide and framework, not necessarily a rigid or unchangeable picture of future growth and development. Not all growth or developments can be foreseen, and other events could necessitate a change in community vision or desires. The depicted pattern of desired future growth and development displayed on future land use maps is a current statement and reflection of community expectations and desires. It provides a context, framework and background for the public and private sector to utilize to plan, evaluate, shape, guide, and evaluate proposed developments and other decisions affecting the use of the land and community growth and development. The plan provides a context for forethought, examination of impacts and consequences, and mitigation of land use decisions on

the community's growth and development and desired future patterns and community vision.

Existing Land Uses. Existing land use patterns for Appling County and the cities of Baxley, Graham, and Surrency are depicted on the following maps. A table depicting the existing distribution of land use acreages is shown below.

Land use categories utilized in the development of this plan and in the land use maps are the standard categories established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and defined in the planning standards as below.

- **Residential.** The predominant use of land within the residential category is for single-family and multi-family dwelling units.
- **Commercial.** This category is for land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities, located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building.
- **Industrial.** This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction activities, or other similar uses.
- **Public/Institutional.** This category includes certain state, federal or local government uses, and institutional land uses. Government uses include government building complexes, police and fire stations, libraries, prisons, post offices, schools, military installations, etc. Examples of institutional land uses include colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc.
- **Transportation/Communications/Utilities.** This category includes such uses as major transportation routes, public transit stations, power generation plants, railroad facilities, radio towers, telephone switching stations, airports, port facilities or other similar uses.
- **Park/Recreation/Conservation.** This category is for land dedicated to active or passive

recreational and conservation uses. These areas may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, other wild lands, golf courses, recreation centers or similar uses.

- **Agriculture.** This category is for land dedicated to farming (fields, lots, pastures, farmsteads, specialty farms, livestock production, etc.), agriculture, or similar rural uses.
- **Forestry.** This category is for land dedicated to commercial timber, pulpwood production, or other woodland use.

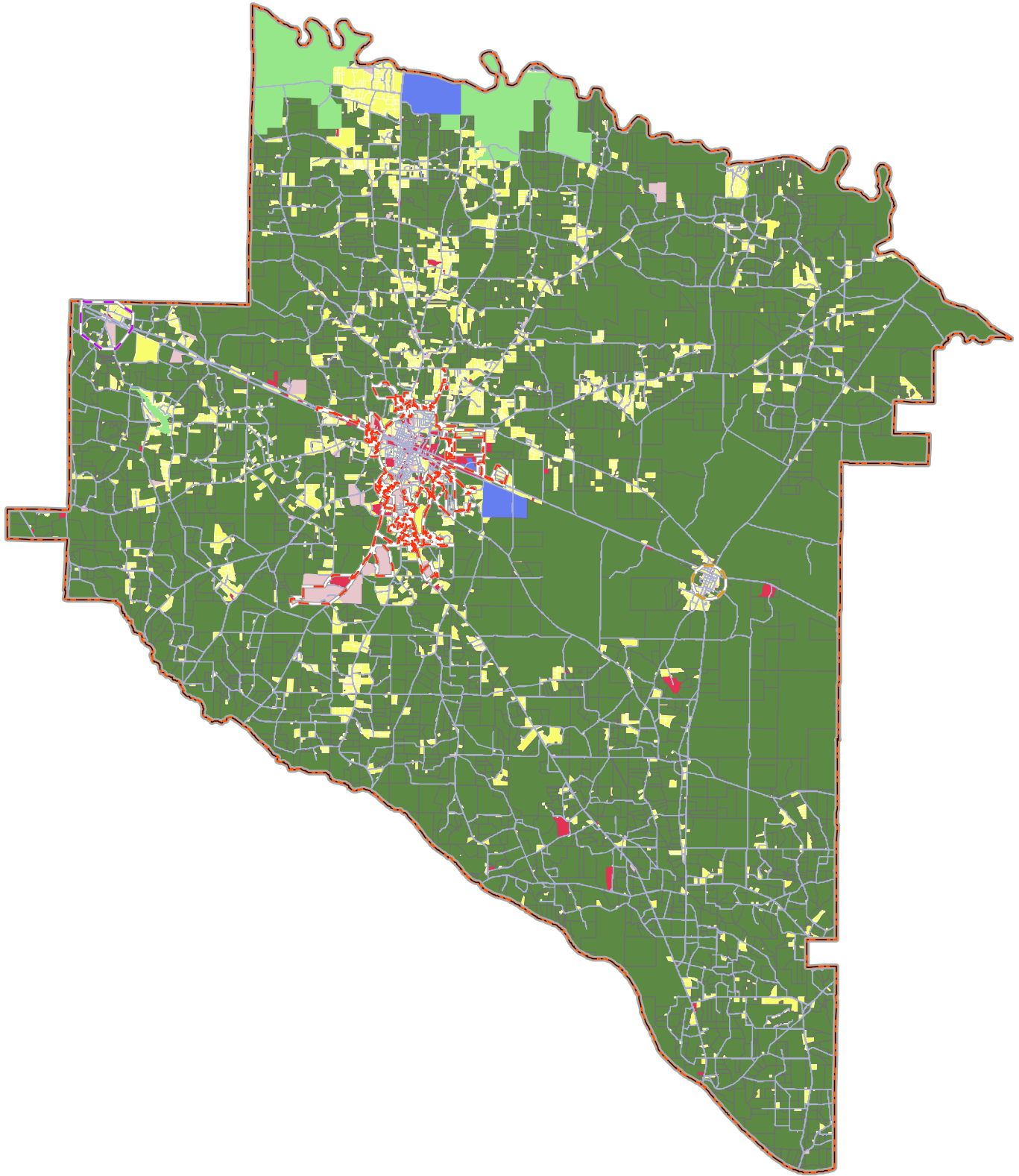
**Existing Land Use Distribution, 2017
(Acres)**

Appling County

Land Use Category	Acreage	Percent of Total
Agriculture	121,183	36.98
Commercial	1,945	0.59
Forestry	151,487	46.23
Industrial	1,899	0.58
Park/Recreation/Conservation	9,515	2.90
Public/Institutional	2,863	0.87
Residential	31,347	9.57
Transportation/Communications/Utilities	7,458	2.28
Total	327,697	100.00

Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission Geographic Information System, 2017.

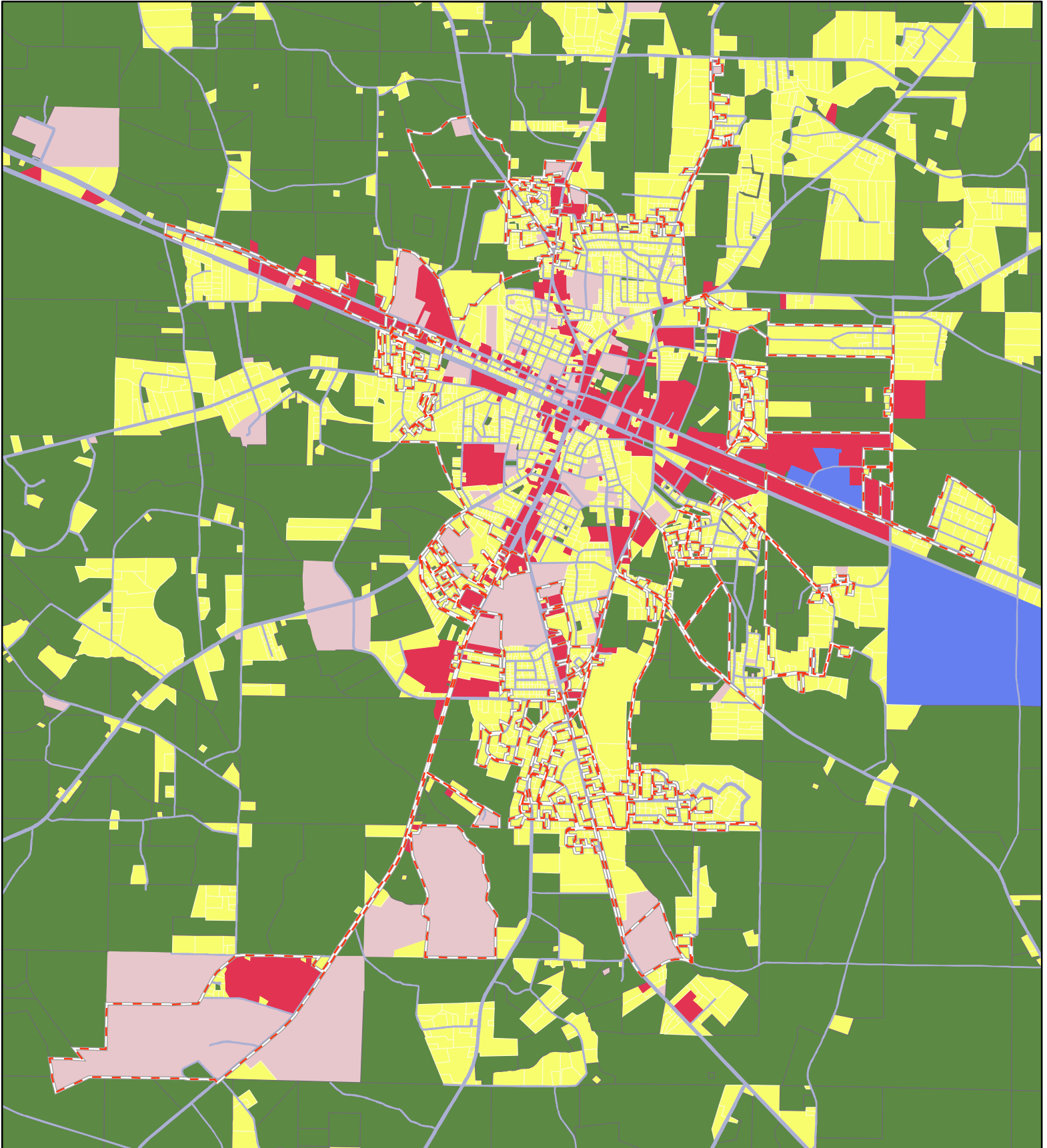
Appling County is a rural community located in the heart of southeast Georgia with a current population nearing 20,000 persons and continuing to grow. The community enjoys many assets for even more growth and development. First, the community enjoys a fortuitous geographic location at the crossroads of two of Georgia’s developmental highways, U.S. 1 and U.S. 341, both now four-laned through the county. These highways afford easy access to Georgia’s ports, its coast, and Georgia’s metropolitan centers. Both I-16 and I-95 are less than an



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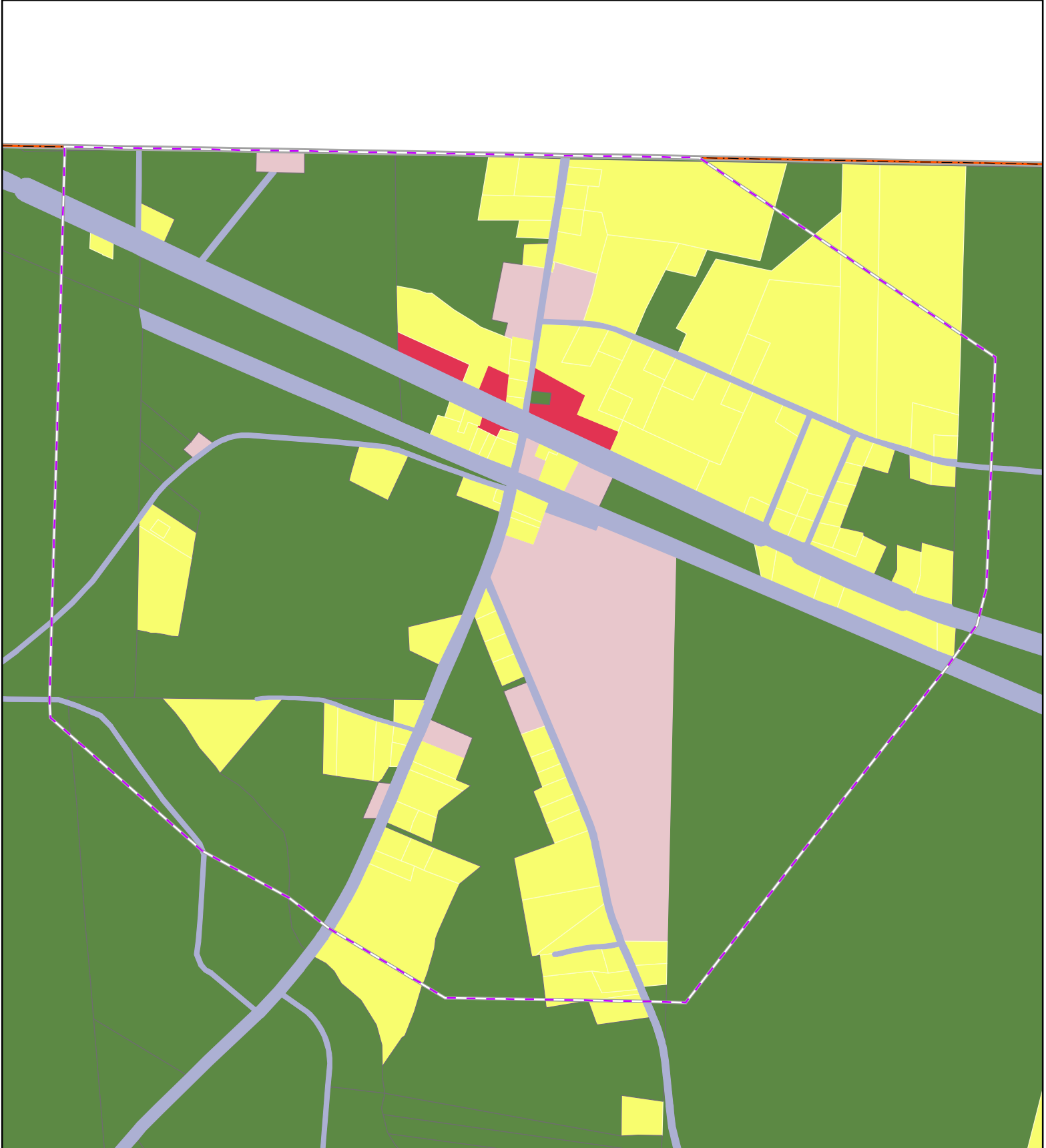




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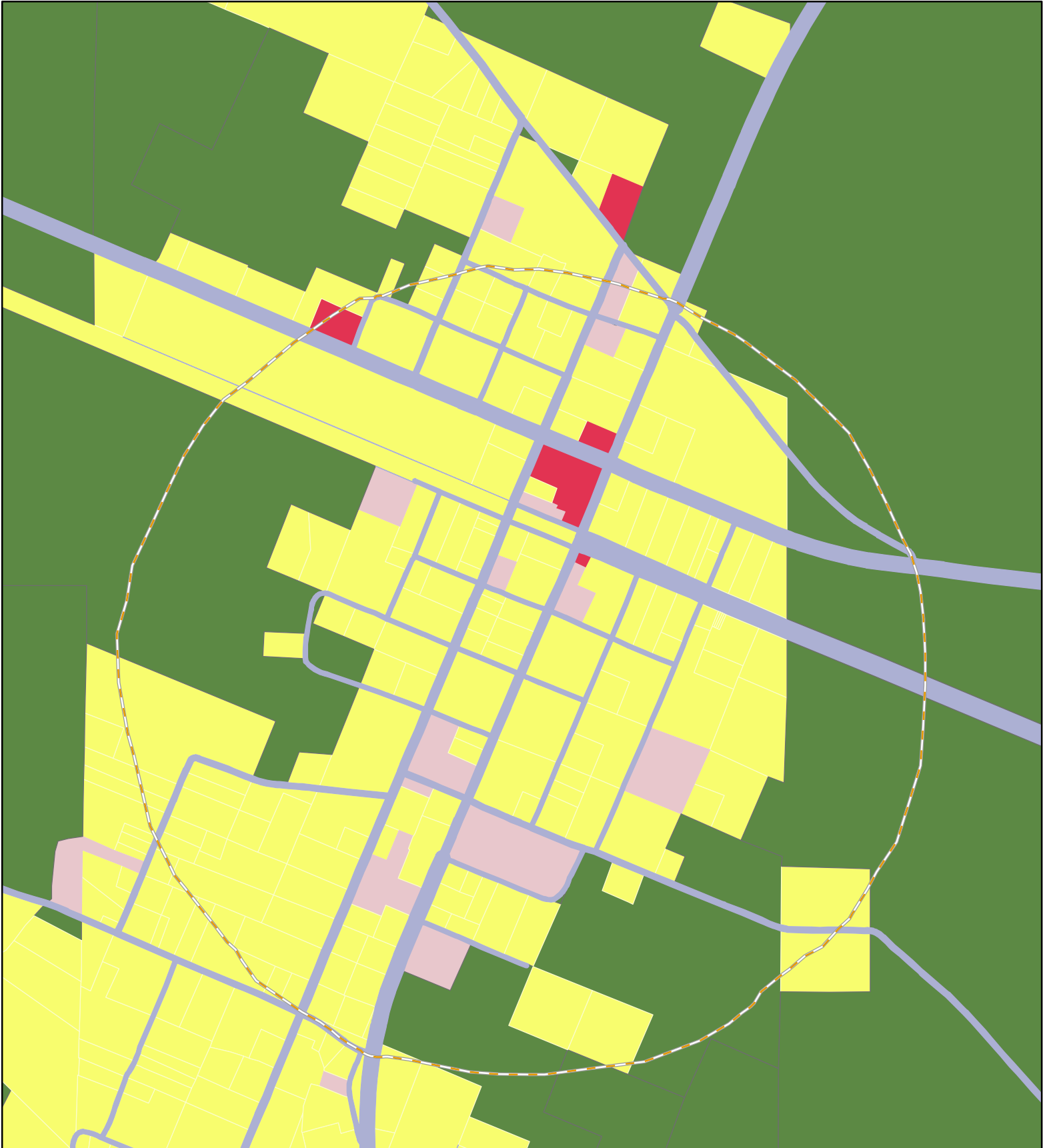





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|  Commercial |  Residential |
|  Industrial |  Transportation/Communication/Utilities |
|  Park/Recreation/Conservation | |

hour's drive away. Other important highways also serve Appling County, including Georgia Highway 15, also known as Traditions Highway, which is another designated Georgia developmental highway serving much of interior Georgia with connection to Florida and North Carolina. Georgia Highway 121, the historic Woodpecker Trail, also traverses the county and has interstate connection from South Carolina to Florida. Other important transportation assets for the county include the Class I Norfolk Southern Railway. This railroad is the successor to the old Macon and Brunswick Railroad which led to the initial establishment of all three current Appling County municipalities, and precipitated much of the late 19th century/early 20th century growth in the county. The Norfolk Southern Railway now provides important economic connection to both Atlanta and the Georgia ports. The community also has a Level II general aviation airport with a 5,500 foot runway, fuel depot, inviting homestyle terminal, and up-to-date modern appurtenances.

Another important asset for Appling County growth is its impressive natural resources. The community is seemingly engulfed in a mesmerizing and beautiful green sea of evergreen tall pines, lush pastures, and verdant agricultural fields. These scenic landscapes, while reassuring and soothing to the soul, remain important economic contributors. Agriculture and forestry are a mainstay of the economy, both directly and through value-added concerns, including a large sawmill and a modern wood fuel pellet plant. There are also local natural resources of extreme ecological, recreational, and tourism importance and potential. These include the national park-caliber Moody Forest Natural Area with unique old-growth trees and ecosystem, and the Altamaha River with ecosystem and historic importance on a worldwide level. This is not surprising given that the county's pine trees were a principal component of its early economic development and growth through lumber and naval stores. Appling County was the center of Georgia's naval stores/turpentine industry, the home of the last U.S. commercial turpentine plant (which operated to the 2000s), and the City of Baxley is still known as "The Turpentine City."

Other assets for Appling County community growth include its existing industry and economic base. Commerce and industry are steadily growing within the community, particularly along U.S. 341 in Baxley. Relative economic stagnation, and even population decline, were reversed with the location of Plant Hatch, a Georgia Power nuclear power plant in the 1970s.

These positive growth influences were strengthened by a diverse group of small business and industries established or located within the county, including a number which were homegrown. The completion of U.S. 341 four-laning, the opening of a Walmart Supercenter in the 2000s, and the development of an auto market megastore in the 2010s by a local entrepreneur (all on U.S. 341) have only solidified and magnified the strong trends of growth.

One would be remiss if the caring and welcoming family atmosphere and the cooperative and collaborative attitudes and practices of both the Appling County leadership and its citizenry were not mentioned as contributing influences to the positive growth which the community enjoys. These selfless attributes strengthen an ingrained community ethos which benefits all, works for the common good, and facilitates a more advantageous quality of life. Appling County is truly a hometown treasure of which others have recognized, and which is an integral part of the community's statewide reputation. This only further adds to community appeal and development success. Appling County should continue to nurture these many assets, and as a result, positive growth and expanding development will likely be sustained.

These assets and admirable traits have allowed Appling County to continue with remarkably steady growth despite globalization, the mechanization of agriculture, the decline of individual manufacturing concerns, or recessionary periods which have devastated many rural communities. The community exhibits relatively strong growth now, and still has many assets for continued growth and development. These include location, transportation facilities, cooperative and collaborative leadership, undaunted community spirit and caring, and outstanding natural and cultural resources. The community continues to invest in its infrastructure, public facilities, and other amenities to encourage, support, and attract compatible future growth and development.

Similar growth and development trends are expected to continue as a result. There continues to be much potential for additional residential and business growth and more diverse economic development by embracing and augmenting its backdrop of facilitating community resources, impressive heritage, abundant cultural and natural resources, and overall quality of life. The community truly should continue to enjoy success and expanding growth and

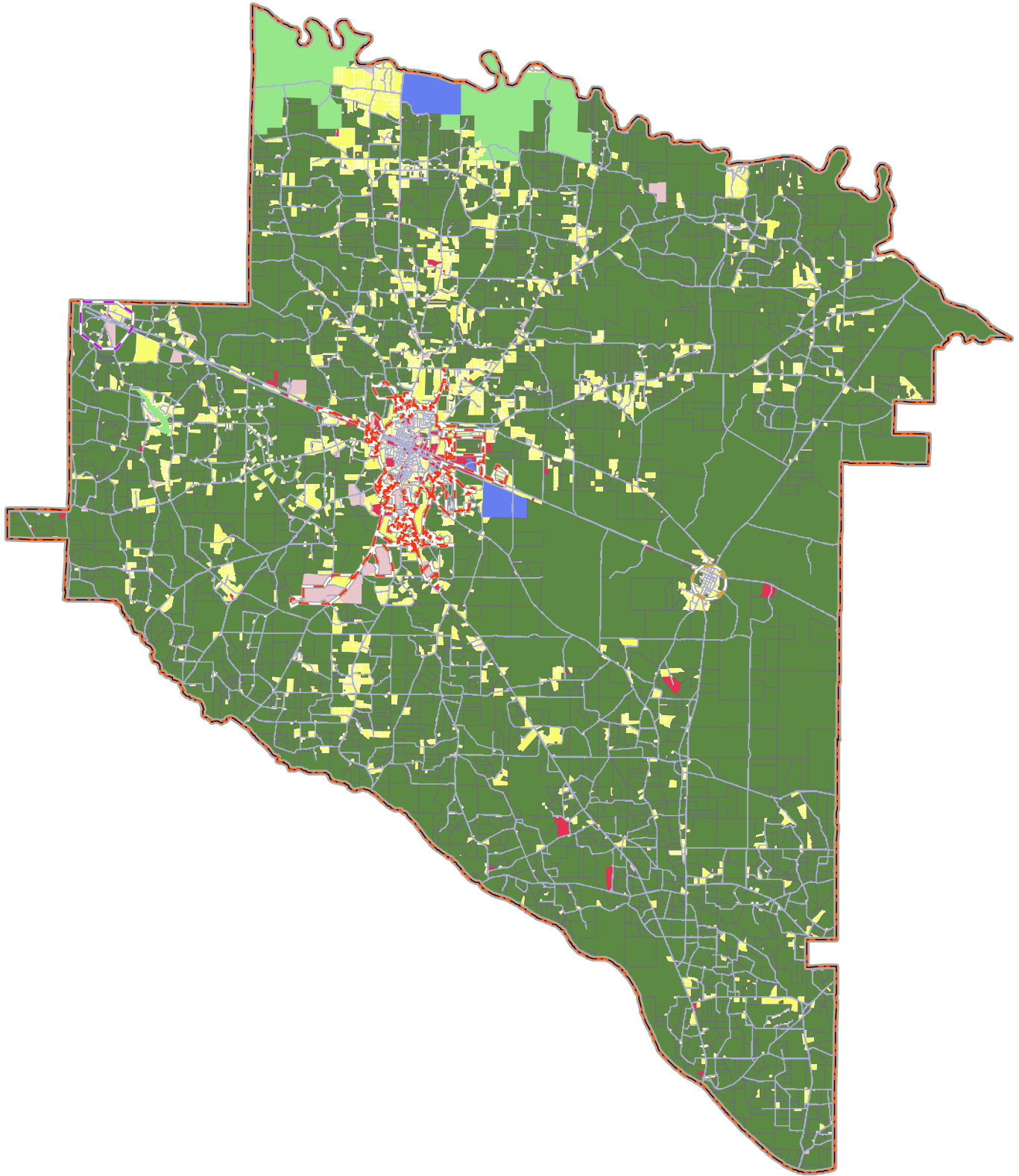
development by utilizing its many assets to continue to welcome even more people, business, and industry.

Most current growth is concentrated in or near Baxley, including residential, commercial, and industrial. Commercial development has concentrated in Baxley, particularly along U.S. 1, and even moreso along U.S. 341, especially west of downtown. The industrial park areas near Baxley have been, and will likely be, the home of most industrial development. There is also the regional Sweetwater Industrial Park in western Appling County along U.S. 341 and the railroad, and the new rail-served industrial park to be developed east of Baxley adjacent to the railroad and near U.S. 341. The Oglethorpe Power site is also located just east of Baxley and adjacent to the new community rail-served industrial park. Graham and Surrency could also see some limited commercial growth. Residential growth within the county has been relatively limited, and not particularly concentrated. It has been scattered single-family housing, predominantly manufactured housing, within existing agricultural/forest uses, but again more generally near or north and west of Baxley off and between U.S. 1 and U.S. 341. This is west towards Graham and north towards the river. There has been only limited growth in Graham and Surrency, although both have land available for development.

These development trends and growth patterns are expected to continue. The county's future land uses will closely resemble existing land uses. Agricultural, forestry, and conservation uses will continue to predominate the landscape, and maintain the outstanding existing small-town and rural character and appealing high quality of life.

Future land use maps for Appling County, Baxley, Graham, and Surrency are included following this description.

Land Use Goals. Appling County and the municipalities of Baxley, Graham, and Surrency seek future growth and development respective of the small-town and rural character, abundant natural and cultural resources and agricultural/forestry/conservation uses, and the existing high quality of life. The community desires balanced growth patterns which promote economic development, but maintain and keep viable existing agricultural, forestry and

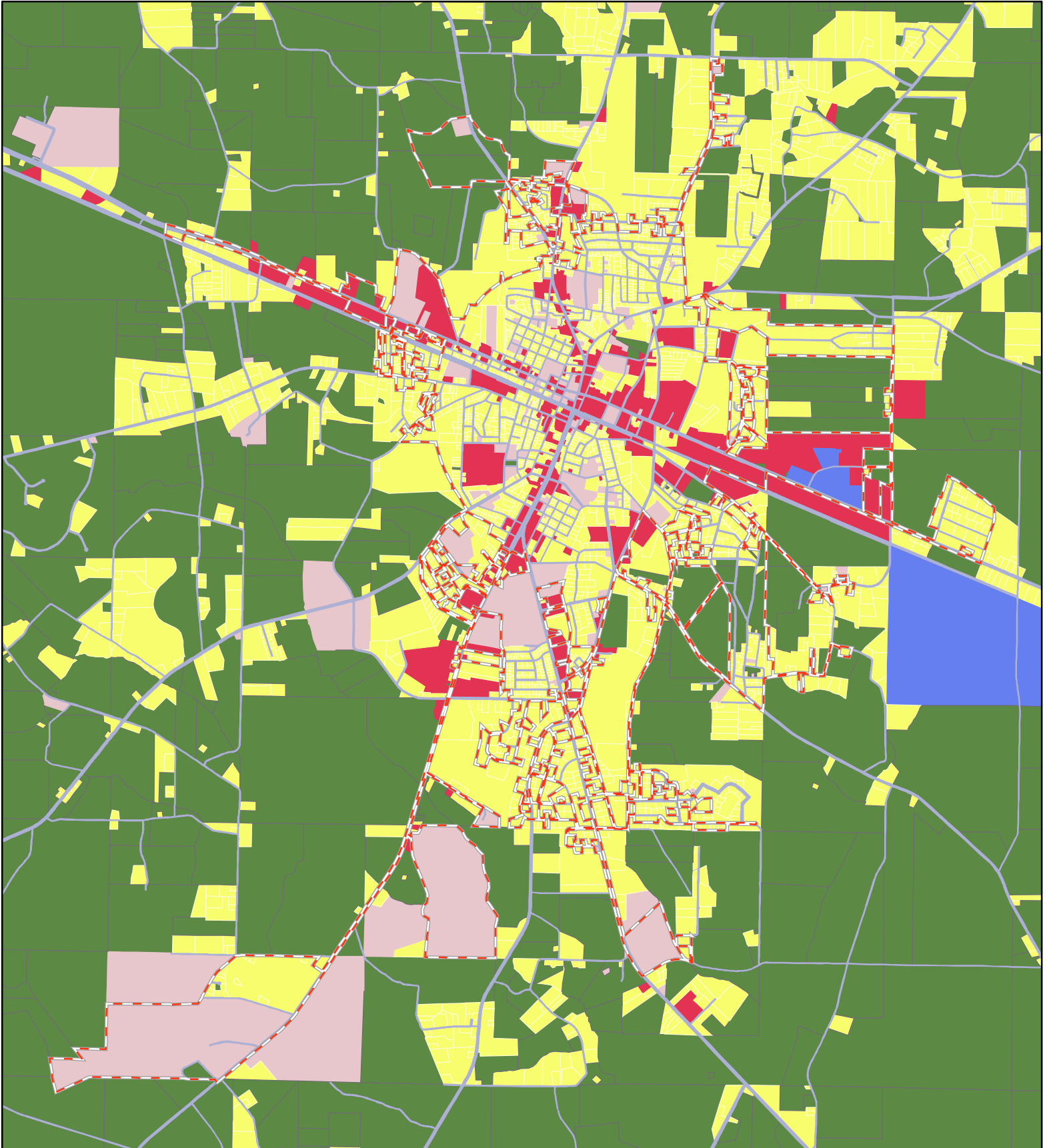


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|  Agriculture/Forestry |  Public/Institutional |
|  Commercial |  Residential |
|  Industrial |  Transportation/Communication/Utilities |
|  Park/Recreation/Conservation | |

Source: Heart of Georgia Altamaha RC, 2017

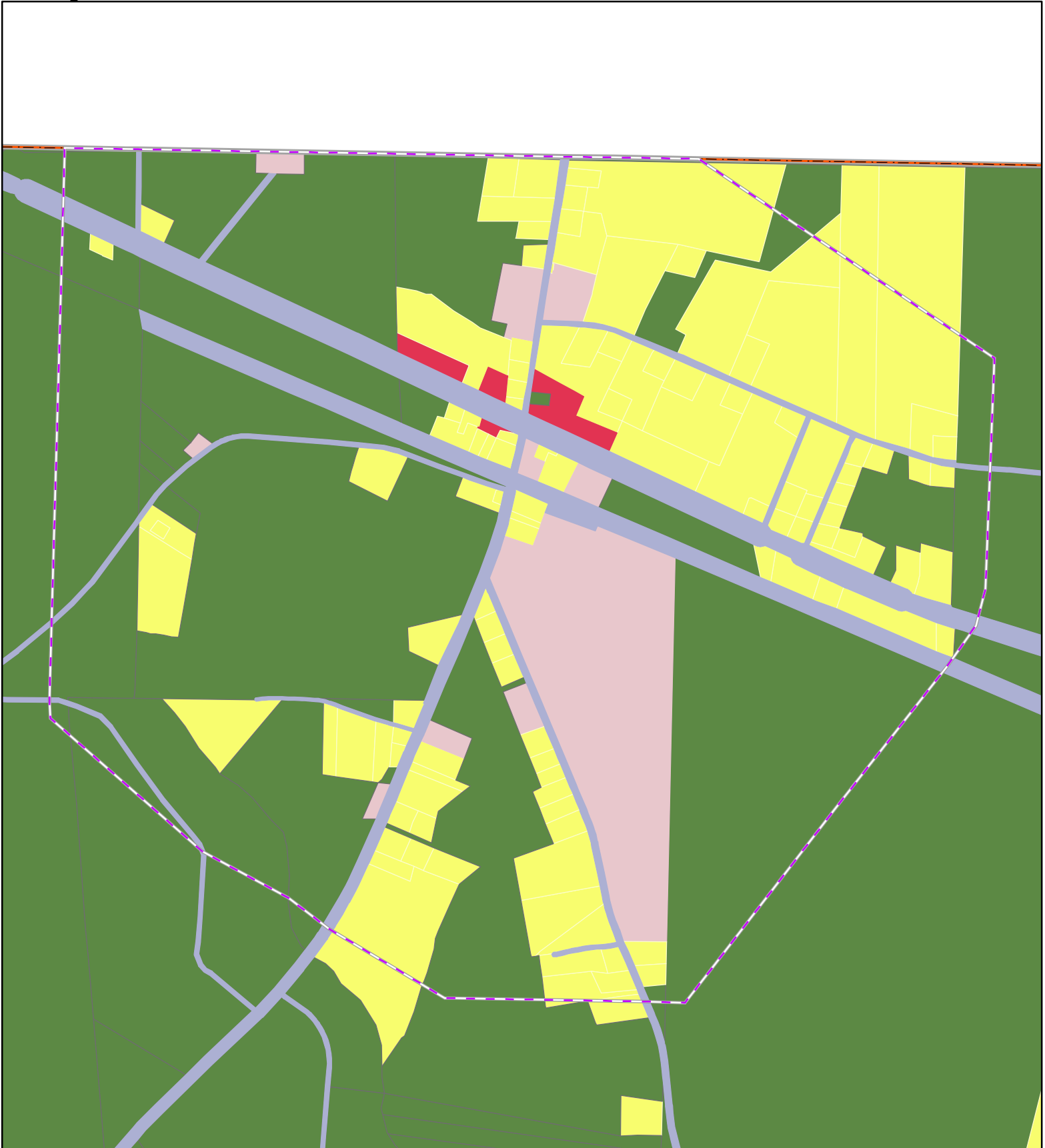




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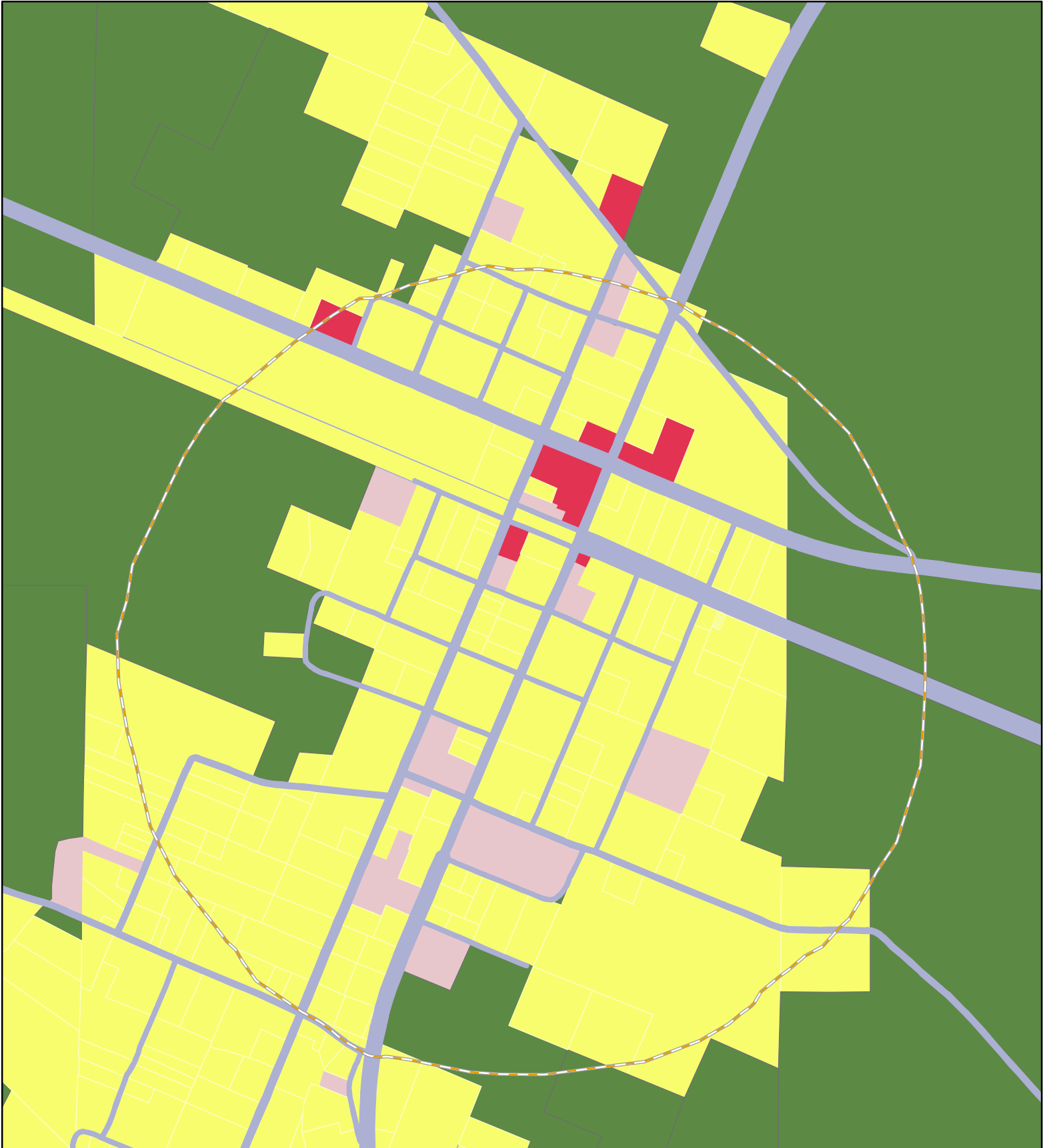




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|  Industrial |  Transportation/Communication/Utilities |
|  Park/Recreation/Conservation | |

conservation uses, which sustain its heritage, abundant natural and cultural resources, and which are otherwise compatible and complementary of existing uses and scale of development. The community has chosen the following land use goals to help bring about its desired future and delineated community vision.

Address Growth Management/Guide Compatible Development

A well planned community and one which appears neat, orderly, and attractive supports and encourages additional investment. The community has developed zoning only in Baxley, and otherwise has only limited individual land use regulations to address specific issues and nuisances, but more general and coordinated efforts and joint code enforcement are needed. The community can also utilize infrastructure location; improvement of facilities and services; support of agricultural, forestry, and conservation uses; downtown revitalization; and involvement of its citizenry to assist. Baxley plans to update and modernize its zoning ordinance, and could possibly contract code enforcement to others, to assist with furthering these goals.

Maintain Open Spaces/Agricultural/Forestry Uses/Rural Character/Quality of Life

Development of new markets, supporting creation of alternative crops and uses, celebrating the heritage of these uses, providing professional support, and attracting compatible agribusiness or other supportive economic development ventures all can help achieve this. Support and facilitation of existing local outlets, like the new Farmers' Market and others, and creation of new avenues and outlets like the planned Agricultural Center will also help. Developing and supporting outdoor events/facilities/festivals, and encouraging more tourism will provide additional support.

Encourage Infill Development

It only makes sense to utilize lands and buildings where taxpayers and private interests have invested in providing costly infrastructure and construction in the past before extending additional infrastructure or incurring completely new construction costs. There are an abundance

of available vacant commercial, industrial and residential structures within the community, as well as areas with readily available infrastructure. Available historic buildings located in downtown Baxley, the smaller municipalities, or elsewhere are avenues for preservation of character and heritage and opportunities for economic and community development utilizing existing served areas. Attractive and relatively low-cost historic homes are a potential attraction for retirees and families alike.

Improve Community Appearance/Aesthetics

Appling County and its municipalities have much intrinsic natural and cultural beauty and Old South and family-friendly charm attractive to residential location and tourism. Landscaping/beautification efforts, general clean-up, and rehabilitation/upgrade of existing structures/areas will serve to accent and highlight this.

Seek Compatible Development/Utilization

Growth supportive, not disruptive through use, scale, or intensity, of the community's existing rural character, small-town atmosphere, extant heritage, abundant natural and cultural resources, and current agricultural/forestry/conservation uses is desired.

Utilize Infrastructure to Guide Growth/Development

It only makes investment sense to utilize infrastructure and areas where the community has already invested tax dollars to the extent possible to realize greater returns and avoid disruption of agriculture/forest or other lands important to the economy or character of the community. If necessary, the extension of new infrastructure and facilities can steer development to areas desired by the community for new growth to occur.

Protection of Local Property Values/Existing Open Space Land Uses

The location of non-compatible land uses out of character and scale to existing uses can become uncontrollable cancers which destroy the desired character and change the surrounding current land use by making them economically infeasible, impossible to continue, or degrading their resale value. Guiding growth and protecting and encouraging the viability of existing uses can mitigate such impacts. The rural character and small town atmosphere is a critical community feature to retain and maintain.

Protect Altamaha River Corridor

The community is known for the Altamaha River and its access, the Moody Forest Natural Area/WMA, and the Bullard Creek Wildlife Management Area, and other outdoor splendor and adventure. All are in the Altamaha River Corridor. Protection of this corridor from degradation of inappropriate development is to everyone's advantage. Pristine natural and scenic beauty is a cornerstone advantage for quality of life and economic development within the county. Increased utilization and improved access for tourism and recreation are compatible uses when properly designed and managed.

Encourage Tourism

Appling County has a rich history, much of it related to its superlative natural and cultural resources and its pastoral landscapes. Certainly the Altamaha River and Moody Forest are world-class assets with much unrealized potential for increased recreation and tourism within the county. There is extensive history and heritage related to naval stores and agriculture which begs for attention and promotion. In addition to utilization as an economic development venue, such tourism can build larger audiences and citizen support for further protection and enhancements of these special resources themselves. Agritourism, the Peaches to Beaches Annual Yard Sale, and similar efforts like the Agricultural Center, also hold much promise for increased visitors. Trail and bicycle path development connecting resources/venues within the county, and on a regional basis, also has much potential. The built environment and its historic

structures, the Heritage Center, Arts Council activities, and festivals also offer much potential for more tourism.

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAMS

The Community Work Program Element is the chosen implementation strategy which the community has identified to begin its path toward improvement and its desired future growth and development. These are the immediate steps the community has chosen to address identified community issues, needs, and opportunities, and begin the journey to achieve the desired community vision. This plan element answers the questions, “How are we, as a community, going to get where we desire, given where we are?” The Appling County Joint Comprehensive Plan includes a separate community work program for each local government involved, as well as a report of accomplishments on their previous work program. The Long Term Policies identified under the Community Goals element identifies implementation activities and ideals which may take longer than five years, or because of circumstances involved, including finances, are not envisioned to begin in the near future.

APPLING COUNTY

APPLING COUNTY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
ED, IC	2013	Seek the re-establishment of and participate in a local Leadership Appling program	Y	2016						Appling LEADS program began in 2016 under the direction of the Chamber of Commerce.
ED, IC	2013	Seek the assistance of the local school system, Cooperative Extension and other entities as appropriate to develop/establish a youth leadership program(s) in conjunction with a Leadership Appling program	Y	2015						The Junior Statesman program was created with assistance from the Appling Board of Education.
ED, CFS, LU, IC	2013	Continue to pursue improvements to the Baxley Airport, including additional instrument approaches, widening and overlaying the runway, constructing new T-Hangars, and additional clearing of the approach path			Y	2020				An additional T-Hangar was purchased in 2016. Clearing the approach path was partially completed in 2015 and will be completed in late 2017. Widening and overlaying the runway is anticipated to be completed as funding becomes available in 2020.
ED, NCR, HO, LU, IC	2017	Pursue the development of zoning and other supportive countywide land use regulations							Y	Action has been dropped because it is viewed as a long term policy. To conform to the latest planning standards, this action will be moved to the long-term policies section.
ED, NCR, CFS, LU, IC	2015	Pursue funding as appropriate to further develop Falling Rocks Park to help improve access to the Altamaha River for camping and other recreational activities					Y	2020		Action has been postponed due to lack of funding.
NCR	2014	Adopt and enforce a model ordinance based on the Georgia DNR's Part V Environmental Planning Criteria for wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and river corridors			Y	2018				A model ordinance is being revised to meet current criteria and will be adopted in late 2017 or early 2018.

APPLING COUNTY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments	
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N		
NCR	2014	Pursue the development of a countywide floodplain management control ordinance						Y	2022		Action has been postponed due to lack of interest. Action will be revisited in 2022.
NCR	2016	Seek to adopt a local soil erosion and sedimentation ordinance						Y	2020		Action has been postponed due to lack of interest. Action will be revisited in 2020.
CFS, LU, IC	2017	Seek funding to replace traffic congestion in/near Baxley through the construction of a truck route, railroad overpass, and/or other means						Y	2022		Action has been postponed due to lack of funding. Project studies and funding will be pursued on an ongoing basis.
CFS	2013	Construction of a new Senior Center/Head Start facility			Y	2018					Project is underway with the award of a CDBG grant. Anticipated completion is late 2017 or early 2018.
CFS	2013	Seek to construct a new building for the Health Department	Y	2016							Project was completed in 2016.
CFS	2013	Pursue the construction of two new ballfields at the Recreation Complex	Y	2016							Project was completed in 2016.
CFS	2013	Pursue renovations to the former Junior High Gymnasium	Y	2014							Project was completed in 2014.
CFS	2016	Construct an addition to the Detention Center			Y	2018					Project is underway and is expected to be completed in 2018.
CFS	2014	Pursue the establishment of a recycling center								Y	Item was dropped due to lack of funding and minimal interest by the county.
CFS	2013	Replace the SR 4/US 1 bridge over the Altamaha River	Y	2017							Project was completed ahead of schedule in 2017 as a regional TSPLOST project.
CFS	2013	Resurface Zoar Road	Y	2015							Project was completed in 2015 as a local Band 1 TSPLOST project.

APPLING COUNTY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
CFS	2016	Resurface Red Oak Church Road	Y	2017						Project was completed in 2017 as a local Band 2 TSPLOST project.
HO, IC	2016	Pursue the adoption of Georgia's Uniform Construction Codes countywide, including the development of a coordinated and unified housing/ codes enforcement program							Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
HO, LU, IC	2015	Seek the development of countywide manufactured home/park regulations							Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2014	Establish a countywide planning committee or formal planning commission to assist in growth management education, guidance and evaluation of regulation options							Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2015	Conduct a public education and information gathering campaign to discuss the need and benefits of land use regulation							Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2016	Develop specific new ordinances identified by the Planning Committee or otherwise as needed to protect existing resources and development, to prevent nuisances and uses disruptive to the community's plans and vision, and to encourage quality growth							Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2017	Seek to consolidate the various county land use regulations and separate ordinances into a more comprehensive and unified land development ordinance							Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2017	Develop comprehensive land use management or zoning ordinances in the smaller municipalities compatible with zoning and other land use regulations developed countywide and in the City of Baxley							Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.

APPLING COUNTY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
2018-2022

Activity	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Each Year	Beyond 2022	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Continue to pursue improvements to the Baxley Airport, including additional instrument approaches, and widening and overlaying the runway			X					X	Baxley	FAA	\$250,000	X		X	
Pursue funding as appropriate to further develop Falling Rocks Park to help improve access to the Altamaha River for camping and other recreational activities (ex: individual dump stations at camp sites)			X					X			\$20,000	X	X		
Adopt and enforce a model ordinance based on the Georgia DNR's Part V Environmental Planning Criteria for wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and river corridors	X							X	All	HOGARC	NA				
Pursue the development of a countywide floodplain management control ordinance					X			X	All		\$1,000	X			
Seek to adopt a local soil erosion and sedimentation ordinance			X					X			\$1,000	X			
Seek funding to replace traffic congestion in/near Baxley through the construction of a truck route, railroad overpass, and/or other means					X			X	Baxley	GDOT	N/A (Current GDOT Estimate is not available)	X	X		
Construction of a new Senior Center/Head Start Facility	X							X		DCA (CDBG), SPLOST	\$1,250,000	X	X	X	

APPLING COUNTY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
2018-2022

Activity	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Each Year	Beyond 2022	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Construct an addition to the Detention Center	X							X		SPLOST	\$2.5 million	X			
Enhancements to pedestrian pathways in and around the City of Baxley and Appling County						X		X	Baxley		\$200,000	X	X		
Conduct road safety improvements along county roads (signage, widening, striping, etc.)						X		X	Baxley	SPLOST	\$500,000	X	X		
Continue countywide road resurfacing						X		X		SPLOST	\$1 million	X	X		
Construct a new judicial complex							X	X			\$4 million	X			
Pursue funding to complete sidewalk expansion along GA Highway 15 South from Satilla Church Road to Appling County Middle School			X					X		GDOT, SPLOST, TSPLOST	\$100,000	X	X		
Development of a new community center			X					X	Baxley	CDBG	\$1 million	X	X	X	
Establish a community garden	X							X			\$10,000	X	X		
Pursue site prep and development of a rail-served industrial park			X							Development Authority	\$2.5 million	X	X	X	
Pursue development of an industry-wide shared rail-served loading dock site					X					Development Authority, Norfolk Southern	\$5 Million	X			X

APPLING COUNTY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
2018-2022

Activity	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Each Year	Beyond 2022	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Develop new marketing materials and branding for Appling County Economic Development	X									Development Authority	\$25,000	X			
Complete TIA Band 3 Project: Altamaha School Road Resurfacing			X	X	X			X		GDOT TIA	\$900,000	X	X		

CITY OF BAXLEY

CITY OF BAXLEY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
ED, IC	2013	Seek the re-establishment of and participate in a local Leadership Appling program	Y	2016						Appling LEADS program began in 2016 under the direction of the Chamber of Commerce.
ED, IC	2013	Seek the assistance of the local school system, Cooperative Extension and other entities as appropriate to develop/establish a youth leadership program(s) in conjunction with a Leadership Appling program	Y	2015						The Junior Statesman program was created with assistance from the Appling Board of Education.
ED, CFS, LU, IC	2013	Continue to pursue improvements to the Baxley Airport, including additional instrument approaches, widening and overlaying the runway, constructing new T-Hangars, and additional clearing of the approach path			Y	2020				An additional T-Hangar was purchased in 2016. Clearing the approach path was partially completed in 2015 and will be completed in late 2017. Widening and overlaying the runway is anticipated to be completed as funding becomes available in 2020.
ED, NCR, HO, LU, IC	2017	Coordinate with the county and the smaller municipalities for the development of zoning and other supportive countywide land use regulations							Y	Action has been dropped because it is viewed as a long term policy. To conform to the latest planning standards, this action will be moved to the long-term policies section.
NCR	2013	Adopt and enforce a model ordinance based on the Georgia DNR's Part V Environmental Planning Criteria for wetlands			Y	2018				A model ordinance is being revised to meet current criteria and will be adopted in late 2017 or early 2018.
NCR	2014	Pursue the development of a countywide floodplain management control ordinance						Y	2022	Action has been postponed due to lack of interest. Action will be revisited in 2022.
CFS, LU, IC	2017	Seek funding to replace traffic congestion in/near Baxley through the construction of a truck route, railroad overpass, and/or other means						Y	2022	Action has been postponed due to lack of funding. Project studies and funding will be pursued on an ongoing basis.

CITY OF BAXLEY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments	
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N		
CFS	2013	Complete the installation of a full-time fire department to reduce ISO rating						Y	2022		Action has been postponed until funding becomes available. The City lowered the ISO rating from 6-5 in 2012.
CFS	2013	Seek to implement a priority list for street resurfacing	Y	2012							City personnel have produced a priority list for street resurfacing. The City consults the list on a consistent basis to develop resurfacing projects.
CFS	2015	Pursue the implementation of a radio-read water system			Y	2020					The City is currently using Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) water meters to replace meters as needed.
CFS	2013	Pursue opportunities for recycling improvements								Y	Action will be pursued when the recycling market is economically sensible. Item will be placed in the long term policy section.
CFS	2013	Resurface Barnes Street (Segment 1)	Y	2015							Project was completed in 2015 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2013	Resurface Lee Street (Segment 1)	Y	2015							Project was completed in 2015 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2013	Resurface Miles Street	Y	2015							Project was completed in 2015 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2013	Resurface Thomas Street (Segment 1)	Y	2015							Project was completed in 2015 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2013	Resurface East Weaver Street	Y	2015							Project was completed in 2015 as a local TSPLOST project.

CITY OF BAXLEY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
CFS	2013	Resurface NE Park Avenue	Y	2015						Project was completed in 2015 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2013	Resurface NFL Drive	Y	2015						Project was completed in 2015 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2013	Resurface Third Street	Y	2015						Project was completed in 2015 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2013	Resurface Pine Street Extension	Y	2015						Project was completed in 2015 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2013	Resurface East Allen Street	Y	2015						Project was completed in 2015 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2013	Resurface Heritage Drive	Y	2015						Project was completed in 2015 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2013	Resurface East Ivey Street	Y	2015						Project was completed in 2015 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2013	Resurface Page Street	Y	2015						Project was completed in 2015 as a local TSPLOST project.

CITY OF BAXLEY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
CFS	2013	Resurface Crosby Street (Segment 1)	Y	2015						Project was completed in 2015 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2013	Resurface SE Park Avenue	Y	2015						Project was completed in 2015 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2016	Resurface Anthony Street	Y	2016						Project was completed in 2016 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2016	Resurface Copeland Avenue	Y	2016						Project was completed in 2016 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2016	Resurface MLK Avenue (Segment 1)	Y	2016						Project was completed in 2016 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2016	Resurface Harley Street	Y	2016						Project was completed in 2016 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2016	Resurface Foundry Street	Y	2016						Project was completed in 2016 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2016	Resurface Kenny Lane	Y	2016						Project was completed in 2016 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2016	Resurface MLK Avenue (Segment 2)	Y	2016						Project was completed in 2016 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2016	Resurface Johnson Street	Y	2016						Project was completed in 2016 as a local TSPLOST project.

CITY OF BAXLEY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
CFS	2016	Resurface Lackawanna Street (Segment 1)	Y	2016						Project was completed in 2016 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2016	Resurface Pine Street	Y	2016						Project was completed in 2016 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2016	Resurface SW Park Avenue	Y	2016						Project was completed in 2016 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2016	Resurface North Lee Street Extension	Y	2016						Project was completed in 2016 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2016	Resurface Spruce Street	Y	2016						Project was completed in 2016 as a local TSPLOST project.
CFS	2016	Resurface Fair Street			Y	2018				Project is underway and is expected to be completed in early 2018.
CFS	2016	Resurface Holmesville Avenue	Y	2016						Project was completed in 2016 as a local TSPLOST project.
HO, IC	2016	Pursue the adoption of Georgia's Uniform Construction Codes countywide, including the development of a coordinated and unified housing/codes enforcement program							Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
HO, LU, IC	2015	Coordinate with the county and the cities of Graham and Surrency for the development of countywide manufactured home/park regulations							Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.

CITY OF BAXLEY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
LU	2014	Establish a countywide planning committee or formal planning commission to assist in growth management education, guidance and evaluation of regulation options							Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2015	Conduct a public education and information gathering campaign to discuss the need and benefits of land use regulation							Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2016	Develop specific new ordinances identified by the Planning Committee or otherwise as needed to protect existing resources and development, to prevent nuisances and uses disruptive to the community's plans and vision, and to encourage quality growth							Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2017	Seek to consolidate the various county land use regulations and separate ordinances into a more comprehensive and unified land development ordinance							Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2017	Coordinate with the cities of Graham and Surrency to develop comprehensive land use management or zoning ordinances compatible with zoning and other land use regulations developed countywide and in the City of Baxley							Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.

CITY OF BAXLEY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
2018-2022

Activity	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Each Year	Beyond 2022	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Continue to pursue improvements to the Baxley Airport, including additional instrument approaches, and widening and overlaying the runway			X					X	Baxley	FAA	\$250,000/yr.	X		X	
Adopt and enforce a model ordinance based on the Georgia DNR's Part V Environmental Planning Criteria for wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and river corridors	X							X	All	HOGARC	NA				
Pursue the development of a countywide floodplain management control ordinance					X			X	All		\$1,000	X			
Seek funding to replace traffic congestion in/near Baxley through the construction of a truck route, railroad overpass, and/or other means					X			X	Baxley	GDOT, SPLOST	NA (no GDOT estimate available)	X	X		
Complete the installation of a full-time fire department to reduce ISO rating					X				X		\$200,000	X			
Pursue the implementation of an AMI (radio-read) water meter reading system			X						X		\$100,000	X			
Resurface Fair Street	X								X		\$133,218	X	X		
Continue to pursue solar power when it is feasibly attractive (including construction of solar array in Industrial Park West – Deep Well)			X			X			X	SPLOST	\$300,000	X			
Retire Waste Water Treatment Plant Solar Array Debt		X							X	SPLOST	\$1.8 million	X			

CITY OF BAXLEY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
2018-2022

Activity	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Each Year	Beyond 2022	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Replace elevated tank at Water Works Park			X						X	SPLOST	\$800,000	X			
Complete safety upgrades per DOT safety audit and state mandates			X						X	SPLOST	\$150,000	X			
Purchase new sewer vac truck			X						X	SPLOST	\$400,000	X			
Purchase new Gradall			X						X	SPLOST	\$300,000	X			
Curtain replacement at waste water treatment plant			X						X	SPLOST	\$350,000	X			
Street and draining improvements (and acquiring related equipment)			X						X	SPLOST	\$1.625 million	X			
Pursue a total update of the City's zoning ordinances					X				X		\$5,000	X			
Complete Projects Listed in TIA Band 3 (17 Projects)			X	X	X				X	TIA GDOT	\$540,904	X	X		

CITY OF GRAHAM

CITY OF GRAHAM
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
ED, IC	2013	Seek the re-establishment of and participate in a local Leadership Appling program	Y	2016						Appling LEADS program began in 2016 under the direction of the Chamber of Commerce.
ED, IC	2013	Seek the assistance of the local school system, Cooperative Extension and other entities as appropriate to develop/establish a youth leadership program(s) in conjunction with a Leadership Appling program	Y	2015						The Junior Statesman program was created with assistance from the Appling Board of Education.
ED, NCR, HO, LU, IC	2017	Pursue the development of zoning and other supportive countywide land use regulations							Y	Action has been dropped because it is viewed as a long term policy. To conform to the latest planning standards, this action will be moved to the long-term policies section.
NCR	2014	Adopt and enforce a model ordinance based on the Georgia DNR's Part V Environmental Planning Criteria for wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and river corridors			Y	2018				A model ordinance is being revised to meet current criteria and will be adopted in late 2017 or early 2018.
NCR	2014	Pursue the development of a countywide floodplain management control ordinance						Y	2022	Action has been postponed due to lack of interest. Action will be revisited in 2022.
NCR	2016	Seek to adopt a local soil erosion and sedimentation ordinance						Y	2020	Action has been postponed due to lack of interest. Action will be revisited in 2020.
CFS	2016	Seek funding to install a backup well	Y	2017						Project was completed in early 2017 with the aid of Community Development Block Grant funding from the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

CITY OF GRAHAM
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
CFS	2013	Acquire a tractor and backhoe	Y	2013						The City repaired an existing tractor to satisfy the demand for this item.
CFS	2015	Pursue funding to replace ¾ inch water lines along Clemens Lane with new, expanded lines			Y	2018				The City is in the pre-construction phase of the project with an anticipated completion date of early 2018.
CFS	2015	Seek to replace roofing at the City's pavilion			Y	2018				The project is underway and is expected to be complete in early 2018.
CFS	2014	Pursue funding to replace the City's fire truck	Y	2016						The City purchased a fire truck in fiscal year 2016.
CFS	2013	Purchase a used vehicle for the police department			Y	2018				The City anticipates purchasing a police vehicle in early 2018, and is currently comparing costs of vehicle options.
CFS	2013	Hire an additional part-time officer	Y	2013						The City hired an additional part-time officer in 2013.
CFS	2013	Seek to acquire additional equipment for the police department, including vests, dashboard cameras, weapons, etc.			Y	2019				The City received bulletproof vests in 2013. Additional equipment purchases are budgeted each year and initial upgrades will be completed in 2019.
CFS	2014	Seek to hire an additional full-time police officer							Y	The City considered hiring an additional officer in 2014, however, determined it was financially infeasible. Item was dropped due to lack of funding and demand.

CITY OF GRAHAM
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments	
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N		
CFS	2014	Purchase a vehicle for the city						Y	2018		Item has been postponed until 2018 due to lack of funds.
HO, IC	2016	Pursue the adoption of Georgia's Uniform Construction Codes countywide, including the development of a coordinated and unified housing/codes enforcement program								Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
HO, LU, IC	2015	Seek the development of countywide manufactured home/park regulations								Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2014	Establish a countywide planning committee or formal planning commission to assist in growth management education, guidance and evaluation of regulation options								Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2015	Conduct a public education and information gathering campaign to discuss the need and benefits of land use regulation								Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2016	Develop specific new ordinances identified by the Planning Committee or otherwise as needed to protect existing resources and development, to prevent nuisances and uses disruptive to the community's plans and vision, and to encourage quality growth								Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2017	Seek to consolidate the various county land use regulations and separate ordinances into a more comprehensive and unified land development ordinance								Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2017	Develop comprehensive land use management or zoning ordinances in the smaller municipalities compatible with zoning and other land use regulations developed countywide and in the City of Baxley								Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.

CITY OF GRAHAM
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
2018-2022

Activity	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Each Year	Beyond 2022	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Adopt and enforce a model ordinance based on the Georgia DNR's Part V Environmental Planning Criteria for wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and river corridors	X								X	HOGARC	N/A	X			
Pursue the development of a countywide floodplain management control ordinance					X			X	All		\$1,000	X			
Seek to adopt a local soil erosion and sedimentation ordinance			X						X		N/A	X			
Pursue funding to replace ¾ inch water lines along Clemens Lane with new, expanded lines	X								X	DCA (CDBG)	\$500,000	X	X	X	
Seek to replace roofing at the City's pavilion	X								X		\$10,000	X			
Purchase a used vehicle for the police department	X								X		\$16,000	X			
Seek to acquire additional equipment for the police department, including vests, dashboard cameras, weapons, etc.	X	X							X	US DOJ, Private/non-profit donations	\$13,000	X	X	X	X
Purchase a vehicle for the city	X								X		\$20,000	X			
Purchase a new tractor and backhoe					X				X		\$25,000	X			
Pursue funding to aid in match fund for repair of occupied blighted housing in city limits		X							X	GA DCA	\$500,000	X	X	X	

CITY OF SURRENCY

CITY OF SURRENCY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
ED, IC	2013	Seek the re-establishment of and participate in a local Leadership Appling program	Y	2016						Appling LEADS program began in 2016 under the direction of the Chamber of Commerce.
ED, IC	2013	Seek the assistance of the local school system, Cooperative Extension and other entities as appropriate to develop/establish a youth leadership program(s) in conjunction with a Leadership Appling program	Y	2015						The Junior Statesman program was created with assistance from the Appling Board of Education.
ED, NCR, HO, LU, IC	2017	Pursue the development of zoning and other supportive countywide land use regulations							Y	Action has been dropped because it is viewed as a long term policy. To conform to the latest planning standards, this action will be moved to the long-term policies section.
NCR	2014	Adopt and enforce a model ordinance based on the Georgia DNR's Part V Environmental Planning Criteria for wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and river corridors			Y	2018				A model ordinance is being revised to meet current criteria and will be adopted in late 2017 or early 2018.
NCR	2014	Pursue the development of a countywide floodplain management control ordinance						Y	2022	Action has been postponed due to lack of interest. Action will be revisited in 2022.
NCR	2016	Seek to adopt a local soil erosion and sedimentation ordinance						Y	2020	Action has been postponed until politically feasible.
CFS	2015	Seek funding as needed to renovate the historic Surrency School as a community asset	Y	2015						The City replaced the metal roof on the Surrency School building in 2015.

CITY OF SURRENCY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments	
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N		
CFS	2016	Pursue funding to renovate and improve the Surrency Ballfield						Y	2019		Project has been postponed due to lack of funding.
CFS	2016	Pursue funding to upgrade and improve Surrency Park						Y	2020		Project has been postponed due to lack of funding.
CFS	2013	Resurface Cemetery Street	Y	2015							Cemetery Street resurfacing project was completed in 2015.
CFS	2016	Resurface Andrews Street	Y	2016							Andrews Street resurfacing project was completed in 2016.
HO, IC	2016	Pursue the adoption of Georgia's Uniform Construction Codes countywide, including the development of a coordinated and unified housing/codes enforcement program								Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
HO, LU, IC	2015	Seek the development of countywide manufactured home/park regulations								Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2014	Establish a countywide planning committee or formal planning commission to assist in growth management education, guidance and evaluation of regulation options								Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2015	Conduct a public education and information gathering campaign to discuss the need and benefits of land use regulation								Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.

CITY OF SURRENCY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
Report of Accomplishments

Element	Initiation Year	Description	Accomplished		Underway		Postponed		Dropped	Status/Comments
			Y/N	Year	Y/N	Est. Comp. Date	Y/N	Est. Int. Date	Y/N	
LU	2016	Develop specific new ordinances identified by the Planning Committee or otherwise as needed to protect existing resources and development, to prevent nuisances and uses disruptive to the community's plans and vision, and to encourage quality growth							Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2017	Seek to consolidate the various county land use regulations and separate ordinances into a more comprehensive and unified land development ordinance							Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.
LU	2017	Develop comprehensive land use management or zoning ordinances in the smaller municipalities compatible with zoning and other land use regulations developed countywide and in the City of Baxley							Y	Action item has been dropped due to lack of community interest.

CITY OF SURRENCY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
2018 – 2022

Activity	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Each Year	Beyond 2022	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Adopt and enforce a model ordinance based on the Georgia DNR's Part V Environmental Planning Criteria for wetlands, groundwater recharge areas, and river corridors	X								X	HOGARC	NA				
Pursue the development of a countywide floodplain management control ordinance					X			X	All		\$1,000	X			
Seek to adopt a local soil erosion and sedimentation ordinance			X					X	X		\$1,000	X			
Pursue funding to renovate and improve the Surrency Ballfield		X							X	DNR (LWCF)	\$30,000	X	X	X	
Pursue funding to upgrade and improve Surrency Park			X						X		\$20,000	X			
Purchase a mosquito control chemical spraying truck		X							X	USDA	\$60,000	X		X	
Conduct street and drainage improvements in Thomas Street and Wildes Street target area.		X							X	DCA (CDBG)	\$550,000	X	X	X	
Purchase new lawnmower	X								X	TSPLOST	\$15,000	X			
Renovate Surrency Bank building				X					X	DNR (HPD)	\$75,000	X			
Resurface Norwood Street			X	X	X				X	GDOT TSPLOST	\$33,600	X			

CITY OF SURRENCY
Comprehensive Plan Community Work Program
2018 – 2022

Activity	Years							Responsibility			Estimated Cost	Funding Source			
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Each Year	Beyond 2022	County	City	Other		Local	State	Federal	Private
Renovate the flooring in the historic Surrency School			X						X	DNR (HPD)	\$50,000	X			

APPENDIX

APPENDIX

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The Local Planning Requirements established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) encourage and require that each element of the comprehensive plan “be prepared with considerable opportunity for involvement and input from stakeholders, local leadership, and the general public.” The Appling County local governments took this requirement to heart and placed increased emphasis on getting community leaders, stakeholders, and the general public involved. The need for strong community involvement from a broad spectrum of stakeholders was emphasized by the Regional Commission in communications with the local governments. As a result, the local governments put forth considerable effort for broad community involvement and participation in this comprehensive plan’s development.

The local governments coordinated establishment of a steering committee which they called the “Local Plan Coordination Committee” approximately one to two months ahead of the scheduled first committee meeting, and invited through formal e-mail and direct contact as many stakeholders and community leaders as they could envision. Regional Commission planning staff had previously counseled the local governments to make such efforts a priority a number of times, including in a plan implementation meeting held in December, 2016, in the letter offering Regional Commission plan preparation assistance, and in direct communication and follow-up for plan development organization. DCA’s Suggested Community Plan Stakeholder List, some specific known local candidates, and a model invitation for stakeholder participation were provided for local government use. In addition to local government direct contact, the local governments involved local media and their public meetings to notify the general public and any other interested parties to participate. The official public advertising of the required public hearing further invited all those interested to participate. Similar efforts by the local media and local governments occurred prior to the final committee meeting and public hearing to review the draft plan prior to its formal submittal.

In another attempt to reach out to the general public and to provide further opportunity for community involvement and input outside of the formal public hearing setting, an open community-wide drop-in session was held from 2:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m. where people could attend at their convenience, receive a one-on-one explanation and introduction to the planning process, and offer their input. Notice of this extra effort to invite community stakeholder involvement and participation was reported in the newspaper and officially posted, as well as announced on the community website, MyBaxley.com.

These considerable efforts for achieving meaningful community involvement were considered a success by the local governments. The committee meetings participation did include numerous appointed and elected local officials, local economic development practitioners, other local agencies and organizations, and many others. The first committee meeting, as well as the first public hearing, included a strengths/weakness (SWOT analysis) exercise. The results of these strengths/weaknesses exercises were also reviewed at the second committee meeting. In standard practice, the first order of business at each committee meeting was to review all prior committee inputs and their summary by staff for committee amendment before moving to the next input topic. Much community involvement and input was provided in all facets and elements of the comprehensive plan's development. The local governments were very pleased both with the community involvement/input and the results.

The actual documents utilized or published during the community involvement and comprehensive plan preparation process are provided in this appendix. These include the local government stakeholder invitation, the local government official public hearing advertisements, the community drop-in session notice, and the Local Plan Coordination Committee meeting agendas. A list of stakeholders invited to participate in the comprehensive plan preparation process and a list of active participants on the Local Plan Coordination Committee and involved in plan preparation are also included.

Appling County Stakeholder Invitation

The Appling County Board of Commissioners, in conjunction with the cities of Baxley, Graham, and Surrency is initiating a process to prepare a new countywide joint comprehensive plan in accordance with Georgia law. While this plan is necessary to maintain local government eligibility for state grants, loans, and permits, it is also an important blueprint for addressing local concerns, and establishing a guide for community growth and development. We need the assistance and involvement of the entire community, both public and private.

You have been identified as someone involved and important to Appling County and its future. You are invited and encouraged to participate on the Appling County Local Plan Coordination Committee which will help develop our new joint comprehensive plan. The first meeting of this Committee will be in late January/early February, 2017 at the Appling County Commissioners Meeting Room. The plan development process will involve about five (5) meetings of the Committee over the next few months.

Please participate in this important process with us, or send someone else from your organization in your stead.

If you have any questions, please call Lee Lewis at 912-367-8189. Please RSVP to the same number if you are willing to assist us in this important endeavor.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Appling County Joint Comprehensive Plan “The Future of All of Appling County”

The local governments of Appling County and the municipalities of Baxley, Graham, and Surrency are in the initial stages of a process to develop a new joint comprehensive plan in accordance with state law. It is desired that this plan not only meet state requirements, but also truly express the Community’s wishes for the future growth and development of the Community.

Please come to this meeting and express your desires about the Community’s future vision, the issues and opportunities facing the Community, and what should be done to make Appling County and all its municipalities better places to live and work. What should be the Community’s guiding principles, and what can be done to generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of all of Appling County?

Other topics to be covered will be the ongoing preparation of an update to the countywide joint solid waste management plan, also in compliance with state law.

PUBLIC HEARING DATE AND TIME: Thursday, February 16, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.

LOCATION OF PUBLIC HEARING: County Commissioners Meeting Room, Appling County Courthouse Annex

Please attend, voice your opinions, and be involved. Help your community be proud about its future. All persons with a disability or otherwise needing assistance should contact Appling County Board of Commissioners, 69 Tippins Street, Suite 201, Baxley, Georgia, or call (912) 367-8100.



**HEART OF GEORGIA ALTAMAHA
REGIONAL COMMISSION**

NEWS RELEASE

PUBLIC INVITED TO PARTICIPATE IN DROP-IN SESSION ON LOCAL GOVERNMENTS' COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

DATE: **Tuesday, February 21, 2017 2:00 – 7:00 PM**

LOCATION: **Baxley City Hall Council Chambers**

Are you concerned about the future of Appling County, Baxley, Graham and/or Surrency? Do you have thoughtful ideas on what needs to be done to make the community a better place? What do you consider to be pressing needs and issues in the community?

The local governments of Appling County, the Appling County Board of Commissioners and the cities of Baxley, Graham, and Surrency, are in process of updating their comprehensive plan required by state law. The current joint comprehensive plan dates from 2007, and is the principal guide to the long-term growth and development of Appling County and its municipalities. The new update will focus on achieving a vision set by the community on what it wants to be, and addressing identified needs and opportunities.

You are cordially invited to get involved and to participate in this plan update process. You may do so by attending a public drop-in session concerning the comprehensive plan update to be held at Baxley City Hall Council Chambers from 2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, February 21, 2017. The session is designed to be informal, to answer any questions you may have, and to allow for one-on-one input at your convenience. Planning staff from the Heart of Georgia Altamaha Regional Commission will be on hand to discuss the plan and its process, and to receive your input and ideas. There will be no formal presentation. The event is designed as a drop-in at whatever time is convenient for those wishing to participate or learn more.

Please attend and voice your ideas. We want to hear them. Let us know what you think. Do your part in making Appling County an even better place to live, work, and play.

PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE

Appling County Joint Comprehensive Plan “Strengthening a Welcoming Hometown”

The Appling County Board of Commissioners and municipalities of Baxley, Graham, and Surrency are in the process of finalizing a new joint comprehensive plan in accordance with state law.

The comprehensive plan is titled “Strengthening a Welcoming Hometown” to generate interest and enthusiasm, and to summarize its aspirations. The plan outlines a community vision, identifies needs and opportunities, and delineates long term policies and a community work program to provide a guide and blueprint for future growth and development within the community jurisdictions. The plan is in draft finalization before submittal to the state for review.

The purpose of the hearing is to brief the community on the content and strategies outlined in the draft comprehensive plan, to address the issues and opportunities facing Appling County and the municipalities of Baxley, Graham, and Surrency, obtain any final citizen input, and notify the community of the pending submittal of the comprehensive plan for state and regional review.

PUBLIC HEARING DATE AND TIME: Thursday, August 10, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.

LOCATION OF PUBLIC HEARING: Appling County Commissioners’ Meeting Room

Please attend and voice your opinions. Help your community achieve a better future. All persons with a disability or otherwise needing assistance should contact Appling County Board of Commissioners, 69 Tippins Street, Suite 201, Baxley, Georgia 31513, or call (912) 367-8100.

**APPLING COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
LOCAL PLAN COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING
Appling County Annex, Baxley, GA**

January 31, 2017

AGENDA

Introductions

Background/Committee's Purpose

Proposed Timetable of Plan Development

Community Strengths/Weaknesses Identification (SWOT)

Community Vision Input

Next Meeting

**Draft Community Vision Review
Issues and Opportunities Input**

**APPLING COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
LOCAL PLAN COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING
Appling County Commissioners Meeting Room, Baxley, GA**

March 2, 2017

AGENDA

Introduction

Draft Community Vision Review

Possible Plan Title

Issues and Opportunities Input

Next Meeting – Thursday, March 30, 2017, 5:30 p.m.

Revised Draft Community Vision Review

Draft Issues and Opportunities Review

Goals/Policies Input

**APPLING COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
LOCAL PLAN COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING
Appling County Commissioners Meeting Room, Baxley, GA**

March 30, 2017

AGENDA

Revised Draft Community Vision Review

Revised Draft Issues and Opportunities Review

Long Term Policies Input

Next Meeting – Tuesday, April 25, 2017 at 5:30 p.m.

Revised Community Vision Review

Revised Issues and Opportunities Review

Revised Draft Long Term Policies Review

Economic Development/Land Use/Plan Coordination

**APPLING COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
LOCAL PLAN COORDINATION MEETING
Appling County Commissioners Meeting Room, Baxley, GA**

May 11, 2017

AGENDA

Draft Community Vision Review

Draft Issues and Opportunities Review

Draft Long Term Policies Review

Economic Development Issues/Goals Input

Next Local Plan Coordination Committee Meeting – Late June/July. Date to be determined. Draft Plan Review.

**APPLING COUNTY JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
LOCAL PLAN COORDINATION COMMITTEE MEETING
Baxley City Hall, Baxley, GA**

August 2, 2017

AGENDA

Draft Plan Review

Submittal Discussion

**Public Hearing – Thursday, August 10, 2017, Appling County Commissioners’
Meeting Room, 5:30 p.m.**

Stakeholders Invited to Participate in Appling County Joint Comprehensive Plan Preparation Process

Appling County Board of Commissioners	WBYZ Radio
City of Baxley	Appling County Tax Commissioner
City of Graham	Appling County Tax Assessor
City of Surrency	Appling County Probate Judge
Appling County Board of Education	Appling County Surveyor
Coastal Pines Technical College	Appling County Clerk of Court
Appling County Development Authority	Appling County Magistrate Court
Baxley-Appling County Chamber of Commerce	Appling County Recreation Department
Appling County Farm Bureau	Appling County Registrar
Appling County Cooperative Extension	
Georgia Power	
Satilla EMC	
AT&T Southeast	
Georgia Forestry Commission	
Appling County Emergency Management Agency	
Southern Nuclear/Plant Hatch	
International Press and Shear (IPS)	
Southeastern Business Machine	
Other Local Businesses	
Appling County Sheriff's Department	
Local Attorneys	
Local Banks/Credit Union	
Local Insurance Agents	
Local Churches	
Local Civic Clubs	
Appling Healthcare System	
<i>The Baxley News Banner</i>	

Note: Both elected and appointed local government and local economic development officials participated.

**Active Participants in Appling County Local Plan
Coordination Committee Meetings and Plan Preparation**

Appling County Board of Commissioners
Lewis Parker, Chairman
Ronald Rentz, County Commissioner
Lee Lewis, County Manager

Appling County Cooperative Extension
Becky Collins, County Extension Agent
Shane Curry, County Agent
Kaye Lynn Hataway

City of Baxley
Jeff Baxley, City Manager

Interstate Credit Union
Ann Miller, Manager

City of Graham
Don Rentz, Mayor

Pineland Bank
Shiela Elliott
Ashley Davenport

City of Surrency
Pat Webster, Mayor
Betty Moody, City Clerk

Southeastern Gin & Peanut
James Clark
Roger Branch

Appling County Board of Education
Dr. Scarlett Copeland, School Superintendent
Dr. Aretha Virgil, Board Member
Norma Nunez-Cortes, Title IA/Migrant Director/ESOL
Jonathan Hickox, Band Director
Charles Vann, Transportation Director

International Press and Shear (IPS)
Sidney Wildes, Owner

GDOT, Appling County Area Office
Amos Cash

Appling County Development Authority
Dale Atkins, Director
Sidney Wildes, Member

Appling County Sheriff's Department
Mark Melton, Sheriff

Appling County EMA
Darrell Holcomb

Baxley-Appling County Chamber of Commerce
Peggy Miles, Board Chair
Norma Nunez-Cortes, Board Vice Chair
Danita Hayes, Board Member
James Clark, Board Member
Ann Miller, Board Member

Southern Nuclear/Plant Hatch
Sara Waters

AT&T Southeast
Jeff Switzer, Engineer

Baxley News Banner
Jamie Gardner, Editor

Appling County Officials
Jerry Tomberlin, Surveyor
Marsha Thomas, Clerk of Court
Hayden Rozier, Road Department Head
Ronnie Lewis, Magistrate Judge
Myrna Taylor, Tax Assessor's Office
Donna Carter, Chief Registrar

WBYZ Radio
Peggy Miles, Manager

Appling Healthcare System
Ray Leadbetter, CEO/CFO
Peggy Miles, Hospital Authority Chairman

Appling County Heritage Center
Peggy Miles, Chairman