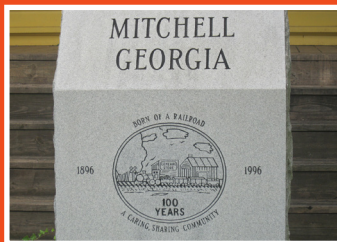


TOWN OF MITCHELL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2015-35



Mitchell Comprehensive Plan

Produced for: Town of Mitchell

Produced by: Central Savannah River Area
Regional Commission

December 2014



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INTRODUCTION



The Mitchell Comprehensive Plan 2015-2035 represents the community's long-term plan for the future. It is a blueprint for creating the type of community residents want to see in the coming decades.

Mitchell is located in Glascock County, which sits in East-Central Georgia, approximately 35 miles west of Augusta and 115 miles east of Atlanta. The town is a member of the Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission (RC) located in Augusta. Formed in 1870 from parts of Warren and Jefferson Counties as Georgia's 122nd county, Glascock County's traditional importance to the state is evidenced by the significant historic sites and structures throughout the community – ranging from Colonial times through Reconstruction.

While recent growth in Mitchell and Glascock County has been moderate, the conditions exist to attract additional investment. Residential growth is gradually taking place, with many residents commuting to work outside the county. In addition, there exist adequate community facilities and infrastructure that provide the basis for reviving not only manufacturing, but a number of other employment opportunities in the county. In preparing this plan, Mitchell recognizes that there are a number of assets that can be marketed to attract growth and that there also exists the opportunity to develop mechanisms that will shape future development in a manner that does not compromise the community's historic identity or rural quality of life.

The purpose of the Mitchell Comprehensive Plan is to provide the local elected officials of Mitchell with a tool to manage and guide the future growth of the town through the year 2035. The plan also represents Mitchell's participation in the statewide coordinated planning program created by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. The plan, which meets the Minimum

INTRODUCTION

Planning Standards and Procedures established by the Act, is intended to provide guidelines that the town can follow when making decisions about providing future public facilities and services. Further, the plan should guide local government decision-making regarding economic development, environmental protection, and future land use.

WHY PLAN?

Successful communities don't just happen – they must be continually shaped and guided. A community must actively manage its land use, infrastructure and resources, and respond to changing circumstances if it is to continue to meet the needs of its residents. Mitchell residents value the character and diversity of their communities, the strong sense of identity, and the lifestyle associated with rural communities.

Concern about promoting economic development, providing for adequate infrastructure and ensuring adequate recreational and educational opportunities for its old and new citizens are issues that all the county and its communities are continuously trying to address. Comprehensive planning, based on good data and public consultation, will assist the town in addressing these and many other concerns.

WHAT IS THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

The comprehensive plan is the official guiding document for the future of Glascock County. It is designed to formulate a coordinated, long-term planning program. The plan lays out a desired future and guides how that future is to be achieved. It serves as a guide to both the public and private sector by providing a picture of how land will develop, how housing will be made available, how jobs will be attracted and retained, how open space and the environment will be protected, how public services and facilities will be provided, and how transportation facilities will be improved. Further, the plan guides elected and appointed officials as they deliberate community development issues and convey policy and intended programs of action to residents. In short, the comprehensive plan is a unified document providing a consistent policy direction.

The comprehensive plan is structured to be a dynamic document, subject to amendment when conditions within the county or a community change significantly. Periodic updates are needed to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of the citizens of Mitchell. The previous comprehensive plan for Mitchell was prepared in 2010. Over the years, some of the items recommended for implementation in the plans were completed or became irrelevant due to changing circumstances. The current planning effort addresses changes in Mitchell since the last comprehensive plan and new or evolving priorities among residents and community leaders.

HOW TO USE THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The comprehensive plan is a guide to action. It is intended to serve as a reference point for potential users. For example, a commission or council may use the plan's policies to decide whether to approve a proposed rezoning of land. A number of companion planning documents should be used in conjunction with this comprehensive plan. These include the Glascock County Joint Solid Waste Management Plan, the comprehensive and solid waste plans of surrounding jurisdictions, and other local and state regulatory documents.

Unlike sector or single issue planning documents, however, which only generally refer to issues such as transportation, economic development, parks and recreation, annexation, and community services, the comprehensive plan addresses these issues in a coordinated manner. When in doubt, decisions should follow the comprehensive plan. If at some point the plan no longer reflects a consensus about the path to follow, it should be amended.

PLANNING DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

The development of the comprehensive plan involved a largely joint planning process that, in addition to the Town of Mitchell, also included Glascock County and the other two county municipalities, Edgehill and Gibson. The intent of the joint effort was to increase intergovernmental collaboration and allow for the sharing of information and ideas. Although much of the process took place jointly, including several joint meetings, discussions with individual local governments also took place as needed. Also, while the plan included a joint development process, individualized plan documents were created for each community.

Steering Committee

Preparations for the comprehensive plan began with the creation of a joint Steering Committee. The primary purpose of the committee was to oversee and assist in the process of drafting the comprehensive plan. The committee was composed of elected officials from each of the local governments, government employees, and residents. The committee's roles included communicating the concerns of interested groups regarding the development of the community; providing a forum for discussion of differing views; developing statements of the community's vision and goals; and recommending goals, policies, and implementation measures.

During 2014, staff from the CSRA RC collected background information about the planning area through historical research, site visits, and information gathered from local officials. The Steering Committee then provided direction and guidance by discussing the various issues raised at committee meetings. RC staff then drafted the plan document and

COMMUNITY AGENDA

provided it to the committee for review.

Public Consultation

The plan's development is subject to a comprehensive public involvement process. Public involvement serves to educate community leaders about planning issues and to build constituency support – both necessary ingredients for any successful comprehensive plan. Each person at the table represents many others and offers insight on something overlooked by planners. By involving the public as a partner during the planning process, the message sent is that people's ideas matter. When the citizenry sees the quantifiable effect they can have on the plan, it gives them a sense of ownership over the plan; it is not just a plan document mandated by a government agency. When there is real public consultation, the citizens are likely to become advocates for its implementation.

In this case of this plan, required public hearings bookended the planning process, allowing residents to comment both on the process and the eventual substance of the plan. However, the plan involved other opportunities for the public to participate as well, most notably a joint public workshop during which a visual preference survey allowed residents to register their opinions on their desired future for the county.

PLAN COMPONENTS

The process and the content of the Mitchell Comprehensive Plan conforms to the requirements established by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs' "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning." Specifically, the document includes the following primary sections:

- **Needs and Opportunities.** This is a topic-by-topic list, developed through steering committee meetings and a public workshop, of important needs and opportunities in Mitchell.
- **Community Goals.** This section includes written goals and policies as well as a "Character Areas" – a vision for desired land use and development within the town.
- **Community Work Program.** This is the heart of this plan – a specific list of projects Mitchell intends to undertake during the next five years, along with cost estimates and responsible parties.
- **Economic Development Element.** This element, contained in Appendix I, is required of communities in Georgia Tax Credit Tier I and includes economic development needs and strategies.
- **Natural Resources Element.** This element, also contained in Appendix I, focuses on water resources and is aimed at ensuring the Regional Water Plan and state Environmental Planning Criteria are addressed.

IDENTIFYING PRIORITIES



The Mitchell Comprehensive Plan process involved the creation of a list of community needs and opportunities – important issues to address or possibilities to pursue. The intent of the process was to take a long look inward and assess the state of the community – and potential means for improvement.

This list of needs and opportunities was generated by stakeholders during conversations about the county's future. While the list from the prior 2010 plan served as a starting point, the planning process emphasized the need to take a fresh look at what was working – and what wasn't – in Mitchell.

The creation of the list involved both general public input and the specific involvement of the steering committee, and was created in conjunction with a thorough review of relevant data. This data included information on population and economic growth, housing trends, land development and more. Detailed discussions followed about the issues facing and possibilities available to Mitchell. With the objective data in mind, the committee went through a SWOT-style analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) aimed at focusing on the most pressing needs and the best opportunities facing the county.

While quantifiable data served as a foundation for analysis, the efforts of community stakeholders – and their ability as local leaders to apply their knowledge of relative community strengths and weaknesses and anticipated or ongoing challenges – provided the insight to create a truly meaningful and relevant list of issues and opportunities. Once generated, the needs and opportunities were distributed to stakeholders for review before finalizing the list.

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

In addition to data review and stakeholder input, the following additional factors contributed to the compilation of the final list of needs and opportunities:

- Review of information in the previous comprehensive plan.
- Review of DCA's Supplemental Planning Requirements
- Evaluation of DCA's Quality Community objectives.

The needs and opportunities list contained in the following pages has been used to shape the Community Goals and Community Work Program. Also, where a particular need or opportunity listed is identified as a priority (shown in bold), one or more corresponding implementation activities has been included in the Community Work Program.

It also should be noted that some of the needs and opportunities derived from the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, a separate regional process that nonetheless involved relevant considerations for Mitchell. Finally, while much of this plan was developed through a joint process involving Glascock County and its three municipalities, this list is specific to Mitchell.

Note: Priority items are listed in italics. These items, as well as some other items, have one or more corresponding actions in the Community Work Program.

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES: *ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT*

Need	<i>1) We need additional employment opportunities</i>
Need	<i>2) We need more businesses in our downtown storefronts</i>
Need	<i>3) We need additional marketing opportunities for local businesses</i>
Need	<i>4) We need additional infrastructure to assist in attracting industry</i>
Need	<i>5) We need more small businesses</i>
Need	<i>6) We need broadband internet service</i>
Opportunity	<i>7) We serve as a center of activity in the county</i>
Opportunity	<i>8) We have relatively low energy costs</i>
Opportunity	<i>9) We have affordable housing costs</i>
Opportunity	<i>10) The regional economy continues to grow</i>

Note: Several of these Needs and Opportunities came from the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the CSRA region.

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES: *HOUSING*

Opportunity	<i>1) We have a distinct character that can attract residents seeking that environment</i>
Opportunity	<i>2) We have a potentially strong market for mid-range housing</i>

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES: *COMMUNITY FACILITIES*

Need	1) We have limited access to the internet
Need	2) We have park facilities that need updating
Opportunity	3) We have great first responders
Opportunity	4) We have a good nursing home
Opportunity	5) We have an effective transit service
Opportunity	6) We have been considering a regional ambulance service
Opportunity	7) We have low crime rates

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES: *NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES*

Need	1) We need to ensure historic buildings are preserved
Opportunity	2) We have a historic downtown
Opportunity	3) We have a cultural attraction in the depot/historic museum

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES: *LAND USE*

Need	1) We have issues stemming from a lack of land use regulation
Need	2) We have appearance and other issues caused by a lack of code enforcement
Opportunity	3) We have avoided the negative aspects (traffic, appearance) of urban sprawl

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES: *TRANSPORTATION*

Need	1) We need to make create additional trails for bicycling and walking
Need	2) Some roads need sidewalks
Opportunity	1) We have a downtown easily accessible from surrounding neighborhoods

NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES: *INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION*

Need	1) We have some overlapping services between local governments
Opportunity	2) We have the potential to reduce costs by reviewing delivery of services



COMMUNITY GOALS



The planning process resulted in the creation of a clear vision for Mitchell. This vision has been expressed in this plan in two primary ways, both contained in this chapter. They are:

- Community Goals. This is a list of broad goals and more specific policies aimed at accomplishing these goals.
- Character Areas. While the goals cover a range of topics, the Character Areas in this plan deal with the physical environment, both natural and built. The Character Areas are a means of expressing a vision for how the community should look and function in the future. While they cover different areas of the county, including all of Mitchell, they are not like zoning in that they do not focus on specific uses, but are concerned more with the form and function of neighborhoods, cities and rural areas.

In both instances, these sections are advisory in nature and are intended to be used as a guide for making decisions about investments, regulations (or the elimination of regulations) or other government or community actions. Taken together, they express a specific, attainable future for the Town of Mitchell.

COMMUNITY GOALS

COMMUNITY GOALS AND POLICIES: *ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT*

Goal	Strengthen Mitchell's economy in the near term and long term.
Policy	We will consider infrastructure investments where they could provide a return on investment.
Goal	Strive to improve the quality of life for all citizens of Mitchell
Policy	We will continue to support and look for ways to improve services to our aging population.

COMMUNITY GOALS AND POLICIES: *HOUSING*

Goal	Improve housing conditions and increase housing options
Policy	We will work to increase housing options for residents.
Policy	We will promote affordable housing options.
Policy	We will work toward reducing substandard or dilapidated housing in our community.

COMMUNITY GOALS AND POLICIES: *COMMUNITY FACILITIES*

Goal	Provide adequate facilities and cost-effective services that meet the needs of residents
Policy	Our community will make efficient use of existing infrastructure and public facilities in order to minimize the need for costly new/expanded facilities and services.
Policy	We will invest in parks and open space to enhance the quality of life for our citizens.
Policy	We will make maintenance of existing infrastructure a priority rather than expansion.

COMMUNITY GOALS AND POLICIES: *NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES*

Goal	Maintain Mitchell's unique natural and cultural heritage
Policy	We will ensure that protection and conservation of our community's resources will play an important role in the decision-making process when making decisions about future growth and development.
Policy	We will collaborate with various stakeholders to ensure that significant natural and cultural resources are protected and preserved for future generations.

COMMUNITY GOALS AND POLICIES: *LAND USE*

Goal	Maintain Mitchell's sense of place
Policy	We will make decisions about development that will contribute to, not take away from, our community's character and sense of place.
Policy	We will work to ensure that our community's entrances and main roads will create a sense of place.
Policy	We will encourage the development of downtown as a vibrant center of the community in order to improve overall attractiveness and local quality of life.
Policy	We will ensure that we have adequate land use regulation to meet community goals.
Policy	We will address problem properties through increased code enforcement.

COMMUNITY GOALS

COMMUNITY GOALS AND POLICIES: *TRANSPORTATION*

Goal	Focus on maintaining transportation network and expanding transportation options
Policy	We will improve roads as needed.
Policy	We will look to add sidewalks and other pedestrian facilities as needed.

COMMUNITY GOALS AND POLICIES: *INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION*

Goal	Make decisions in a cooperative manner and look for efficiencies in service provision
Policy	We will seek opportunities to share services and facilities with neighboring jurisdictions and avoid overlapping services when mutually beneficial.
Policy	We will work jointly with neighboring jurisdictions on developing solutions for shared regional issues (such as growth management, watershed protection).
Policy	We will consult other public entities in our area when making decisions that are likely to impact them and provide input when they are making decisions that are likely to have an impact on our community.
Policy	We will engage in cooperative planning between the local government and local school board in regard to the appropriate location and use of schools as community facilities.

CHARACTER AREAS

CHARACTER AREAS

The Comprehensive Plan incorporates a Character Area Map as its principal means by which long-term land use goals and policies are expressed. As Mitchell is a relatively compact town, one character area was created to cover the town, with a slight extension beyond municipal boundaries.

Decisions made by one government can affect others. For instances, a decision by the town to extend infrastructure might affect the Countryside character area beyond its borders. Similarly, a decision by Glascock County with respect to road improvements might affect areas in Mitchell. For this reason, the Countryside Character Area, which lies just beyond town limits, is included in this plan as well.

CHARACTER AREA KEY

Countryside



Watershed

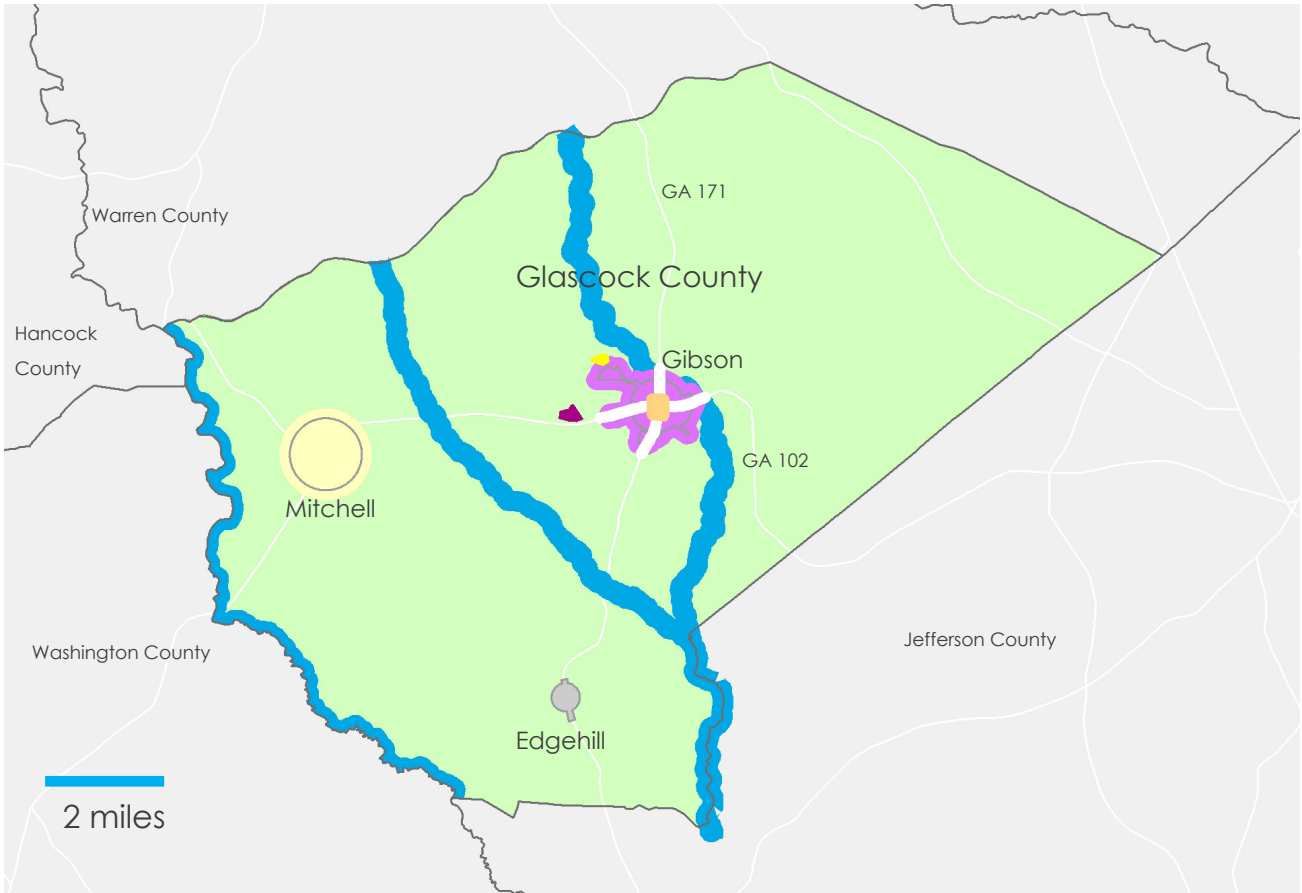


Mitchell

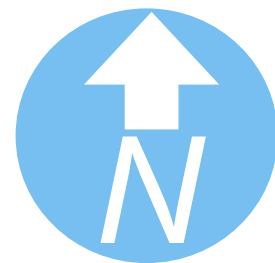
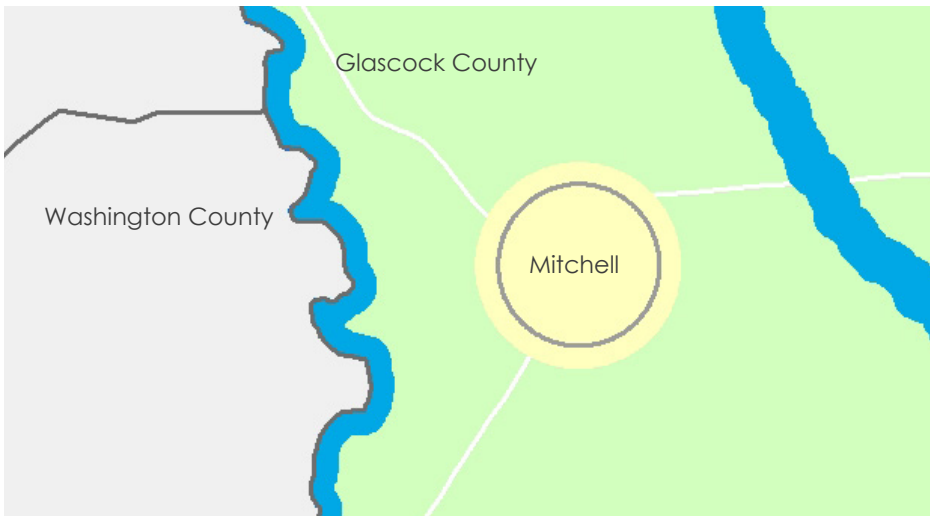


CHARACTER AREAS

CHARACTER AREA MAP: OVERALL



CHARACTER AREA MAP: MITCHELL



CHARACTER AREAS

CHARACTER AREA: MITCHELL

OVERVIEW:

This character area includes the entire town, which includes a small downtown, residential streets, a crossroads, and undeveloped land. The town has well-maintained roads and walkable streets with sidewalks. Vacancies exist in the commercial properties downtown and at the crossroads.

Strategies largely involve ensuring that new development fits into the existing context of the town, less in terms of architectural design than in terms of continuing the pattern of a connected street grid, sidewalks and parking not in front of buildings.

EXISTING CHARACTER:

- Historic downtown character still intact
- Includes some underutilized or vacant properties
- Low density residential and supporting community uses
- Mixture of traditional and modern style of neighborhood development
- Large undeveloped tracts on the periphery of character area
- High level of interconnectivity within developed areas



Traditional neighborhoods and housing, combined with sidewalks and roads designed for low speeds, characterize Mitchell.



Downtown Mitchell offers historic storefronts and pedestrian amenities, but vacancy rates have been an issue.

CHARACTER AREA: MITCHELL

DEVELOPMENT PATTERN RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Continued emphasis on single family development, particularly along or connecting to developed streets
- More bike/pedestrian transportation options for linkages to community facilities
- Continue interconnected street pattern as new parcels are developed
- Abate building and property nuisances through codes and code enforcement
- Encourage new development to respect the walkable, small town, context in terms of site design, signage, connections to sidewalks and other essential considerations.



Additional street trees can make a significant difference in the attractiveness of downtown Mitchell..



Adding sidewalks to primary streets such as GA 102/Main Street (left) can provide more options for residents, as shown on Warren Street (right).

CHARACTER AREAS

CHARACTER AREA: COUNTRYSIDE

OVERVIEW:

The Countryside character area is predominantly rural, undeveloped land that is used for agriculture or rural residential. Future development in the Countryside character area should strive to retain this rural character through the preservation of open spaces. Very large lot residential, clustered or conservation residential subdivisions and agricultural uses should continue to be the preferred development pattern within the area.

EXISTING CHARACTER:

- Mix of rural uses including forestry, agriculture, and low density residential
- Commercial uses primarily limited to convenience enterprises at major intersections
- Location of current industrial park operations
- Increasing amount of subdivision and large lot residential development
- Targeted areas of public water and sewer expansion



Rolling hills and scenic vistas are an important part of the Glascock County landscape.



Agriculture and timber production help define the character of the Countryside Character Area.

CHARACTER AREA: COUNTRYSIDE

DEVELOPMENT PATTERN RECOMMENDATIONS:

- Emphasize cluster subdivision design that incorporates a significant amount of open space
- Apply natural resource zoning district standards to majority of character area to significantly increase lot sizes for residential uses
- Encourage compatible architecture to maintain regional rural character
- Whenever possible connect to network of trails or bike routes particularly those located within the watershed reserve.
- Focus infrastructure investment on maintenance rather than expansion in order to retain rural character



Homes on larger lots, a typical characteristic of this area currently, should continue to define this part of the county.



Where subdivisions are built, homes should be clustered, leaving significant green space (left), rather than spreading out in a uniform manner (right).



TEHELL

WATER TOWER
TEHELL

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM



The Community Work Program provides a list of priority activities the town intends to undertake within the next five years.

While prior portions of the plan examined and described issues, general goals and an overall vision, the Community Work Program is a specific list of projects. It is aimed at addressing needs and opportunities, realizing goals and moving the county closer to the vision expressed in the plan.

This list is not set in stone, and priorities may change over time. However, the intent of the county is to carry out these actions over the coming five years. If significant new projects are envisioned, the Community Work Program should be amended to recognize the changes.

The Community Work Program includes the following information:

- A brief description of the project.
- A time frame for undertaking the activity.
- Responsible Party for implementing activity.
- Estimated cost (if any) of implementing the activity.
- Funding source, where applicable.
- A reference to any priority Needs and Opportunities addressed.

WORK PROGRAM

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM: MITCHELL

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Work Program Projects	Time Frame					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Fund Source
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019			
Collaborate with Glascock County to create and maintain a website marketing the area as a place to live, visit or invest in. (ED 1,3)	x					Mitchell Town Council	Staff Time	General Fund

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Work Program Projects	Time Frame					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Fund Source
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019			
Add and upgrade equipment and amenities at the Depot, including lights, seating and other elements.	x	x	x			Mitchell Town Council	\$10,000	General Fund/ Grant

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Work Program Projects	Time Frame					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Fund Source
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019			
Make improvements to ball field in Mitchell. (CF 2)		x	x	x	x	Glascock County/Town of Mitchell	\$50,000	Gen. Funds/ donations

LAND USE

Work Program Projects	Time Frame					Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Fund Source
	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019			
Prepare and adopt a land development ordinance. (LU 1)	x	x	x			Glascock County	Staff time	General Fund
Discuss and consider property maintenance/building codes. (LU 2)	x	x	x			Glascock County	Staff time	General Fund
Enter into partnership with other local governments to provide code enforcement.	x	x	x			Glascock County	\$1,000/year	General Fund

WORK PROGRAM

COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM: MITCHELL

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

<i>Work Program Projects</i>	<i>Time Frame</i>					<i>Responsible Party</i>	<i>Cost Estimate</i>	<i>Fund Source</i>
	<i>2015</i>	<i>2016</i>	<i>2017</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2019</i>			
Review the delivery of services with municipalities and identify ways to eliminate duplicative services.	x					Mitchell Town Council	Staff time	General Fund



KITCHENS

CLAYTON KITCHENS
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REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS



This section of the plan includes an assessment of the status of Mitchell's projects in the previous joint Glascock County plan. The intent of this section is to provide an assessment of progress. Are new strategies needed to address some issues? Are some projects simply not feasible? Implementing a vision requires that these questions sometimes be asked.

Specifically, the projects contained in the prior plan's work program have been reviewed in order to determine the project status, with each project categorized as one of the following:

- **Completed:** the identified project has been concluded.
- **Ongoing:** the identified project has started and has been continuing through the five-year period.
- **Postponed:** the identified project has not been started or was halted for a given reason.
- **Not accomplished:** the identified project has not been implemented.

Projects listed as completed or not accomplished have been removed from the updated work program, while projects that were postponed have been continued. In some cases, projects described as ongoing were more of general policy statements than specific projects, and were removed from the new work program and added to the policy section of this document. In other cases, they were revised and added to the new work program.

This report is structured to adhere to the state comprehensive planning standards administered by the Georgia Department of Community Affairs.

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS: MITCHELL

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

<i>Project</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Establish facilities and services that will enhance the development of an educated, motivated workforce.	Completed	Jointly accomplished with county. Provided by Family Connections/Communities in Schools Non-Profit. Modified and moved to Goals and Policies section of updated plan.
Promote Glascock County as a day trip destination for people in the surrounding counties and metro areas.	Completed	Jointly accomplished with county. Glascock County is on classic courthouse driving tour. Modified and moved to Goals and Policies section of updated plan.
Actively promote support of locally grown and produced agricultural products.	Completed	Jointly accomplished with county. The county has supported a farmers' market. Modified and moved to Goals and Policies section of updated plan.
Pursue targeted expansion of infrastructure in areas deemed appropriate to support new industrial growth.	Ongoing	Modified and moved to Goals and Policies section of updated plan.

HOUSING

<i>Project</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Actively work to increase quality multi-family options in areas identified as appropriate.	Not accomplished	Mitchell does not restrict multifamily development. No other actions deemed necessary. Deleted from updated Community Work Program.
Establish local programs for small scale home maintenance loans, down payment assistance to improve the overall quality of housing stock in the smaller urban and unincorporated areas.	Not accomplished	Financial constraints. Deleted from updated Community Work Program.
Work with local non-profit groups to increase the number and quality of housing for elderly residents in all jurisdictions.	Completed	Family Connections/Communities in Schools Non-Profit provides assistance with housing costs.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

<i>Project</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Expand and enhance the water system in Mitchell to decrease dependence on ground water sources.	Completed	

POPULATION

<i>Project</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Establish Complete Count Committee to increase awareness about and promote participation in the 2010 Decennial Census.	Completed	Formal committee not established, but efforts made to increase participation in count.
Utilize established social networks to build good will and positive dialogue between Glascock County diverse racial and ethnic groups.	Completed	
Assess current level of service to aging population to determine where services are lacking and can be expanded.	Completed	
Continue to support and engage local non-profit organizations that aim to address child and family welfare.	Completed	

LAND USE

<i>Project</i>	<i>Status</i>	<i>Comments</i>
Prepare and adopt a Land Development Ordinance	Postponed	No political consensus. Still on the table.
Prepare and adopt a Manufactured Housing ordinance.	Completed	City already had an ordinance. Removed from updated Community Work Program

APPENDIX 1: ADDITIONAL TOPICS



Two critical elements involved in a community's vitality and long-term health include economic development and natural resources. While this comprehensive plan includes assessments of and goals and strategies for a range of topics, including housing, transportation, intergovernmental coordination and more, this section provides additional information on the local economy and protecting natural resources.

The economic development section discusses current data related to the local economy. It also discusses the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the region, which serves as the base of the economic development portion of this plan. The natural resources section focuses on water resources and includes detailed mapping efforts aimed at identifying sensitive areas.

Inclusion of these topics also ensures both that this plan meets state standards for planning and that significant prior planning efforts on these topics are incorporated into this document.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

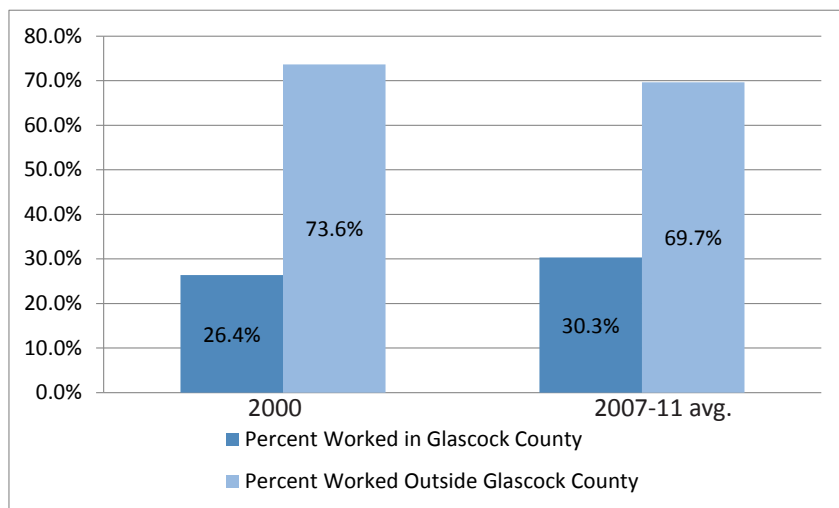
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Economic development is an essential element of planning for the future. Creating a sustainable economy that meets the needs of residents is a crucial part of a healthy community. A strong local economy that balances residential with non-residential growth and can rely on multiple industry sectors for employment will be better equipped to keep pace with current public service demands, and meet long-term maintenance responsibilities.

The purpose of the Mitchell Comprehensive Plan's economic development component is to analyze past trends and current conditions in the area in order to assess strengths and weaknesses in the local economy. Using fundamental economic metrics and drawing on prior plans, this section aims to provide a look at the current economy and provide strategies for improvement. This plan uses the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region as its economic development plan, and recommendations from that document have been incorporated throughout this plan, including in the Community Goals and Community Work Program sections. This section aims to add some additional local data and targeted recommendations.

Recent unemployment data suggests that the so-called Great Recession has had a significant and lasting impact on the local community. The Glascock County unemployment rate rose from the 4 to 6 percent range throughout most of the 2000s to a high of 14 percent in 2011. That has since dropped to between 10 and 12 percent in recent years, but both federal and state employment data sets indicate a county unemployment rate that remains a few percentage points higher than that for the state as a whole.

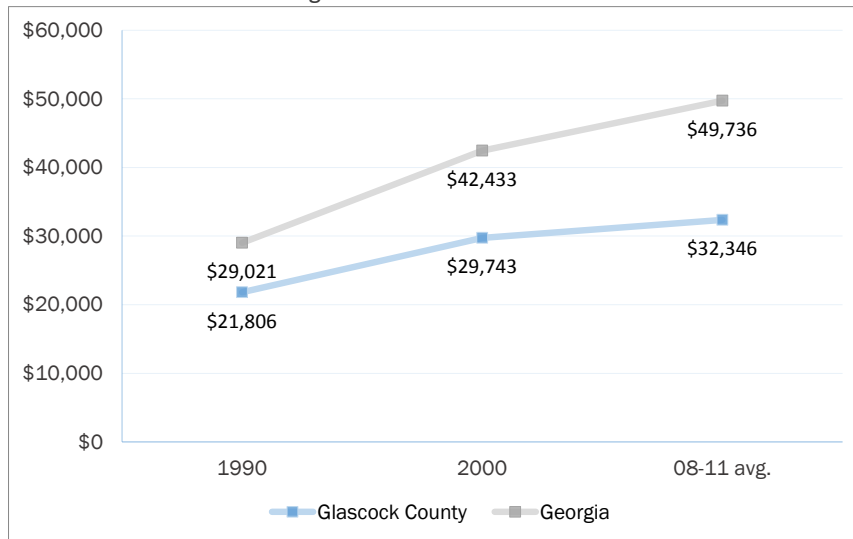
Figure A: Location of Employment



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The chart below illustrates the percentage of Glascock County residents who work outside the county and the change in that number over time. Generally speaking, having employment opportunities available nearby is desirable for a number of reasons, including creating a stronger tax base and reducing transportation costs for residents. While the percentage of residents who work outside the county is high, at nearly 70 percent in the 2007-11 American Community Survey, that figure does represent a slight decrease from 2000. Given its nature as a rural county on the border of a larger metropolitan area, Glascock County is likely to continue to export significant amounts of labor in the future, but that amount can be reduced.

Figure B: Mean Household Income

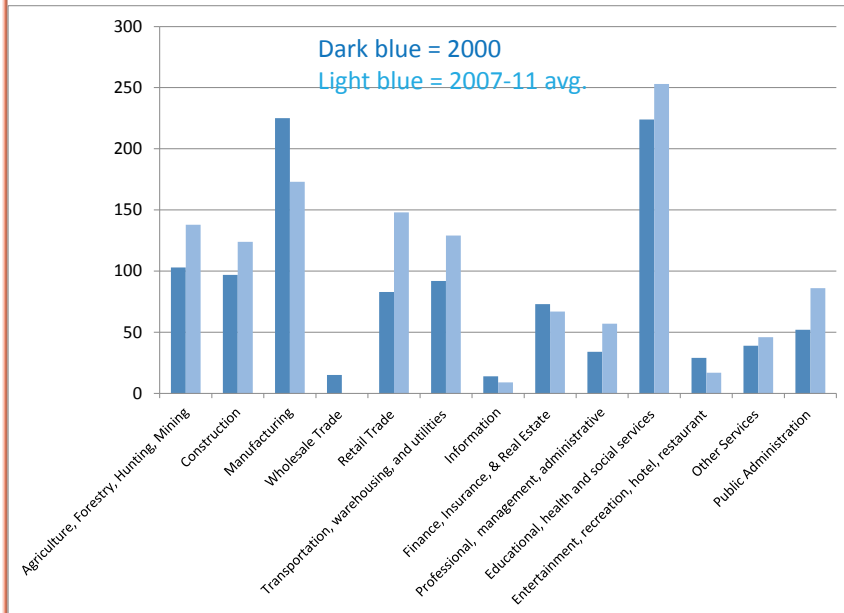


Changes in household income are shown in the chart above. The median income in Glascock County is well below that of the state as a whole, which again is expected in a largely rural county. However, the trend since 2000 is not positive, with the rate of increase in Glascock County well below that for the state as a whole. Again, in part this reflects the continuing trends toward urbanization that have been in place for decades, not just in Georgia but across the country, but it does illustrate the challenges facing Glascock County as it works to provide a higher standard of living for residents.

Finally, the chart on the following page shows changes in the levels of employment by industry. A decrease in manufacturing employment is shown, along with increases in retail trade, transportation and warehousing, education and public services. This pattern of ongoing shifts from the manufacturing to the service sector is not uncommon and is found across the country. Despite that, Glascock does possess a solid sector of manufacturing, construction, and mining, with the latter two categories adding jobs in recent years.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Figure C: Employment by Industry



CONCLUSIONS

This plan uses the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the region as its economic development plan. The CEDS document offers a sound outline for economic development throughout the region and in Mitchell and Glascock County and should be referred to in considering economic development decisions. That said, this plan does include specific strategies drawn from the CEDS plan. Key recommendations, dealt with in more detail in the Community Goals and Community Work Program sections of this plan, include:

- More aggressively marketing the county to potential residents and investors.
- Protecting the area's strengths, including its natural landscape and strong sense of place.
- Pursuing targeted infrastructure development with clear prospects for a strong return on investment.
- Working to retain younger workers and develop leadership skills in future leaders.

NATURAL RESOURCES

This section is primarily focused on the area's water resources. It is aimed at ensuring that those resources are adequately protected from development and are available to serve both current and future residents.

Environmental Planning Criteria

As part of the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR) developed the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria for use by local communities. The Criteria establish recommended minimum planning standards for the protection of water

NATURAL RESOURCES

supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, river corridors and mountains. This chapter identifies those applicable resources that are found in Glascock County and its municipalities. Because there are no protected river corridors or protected mountains in close proximity to Glascock County, those specific items are not addressed by this plan.

Water Supply Watershed

Water supply watersheds are defined by DNR as the areas of land upstream of a governmentally owned public drinking water intake. There are many different factors that determine the volume of water in a stream or other body of water. These factors include the amount of precipitation, land cover, slope, soil type, and capacity and speed of absorption into the soil. Any water that is not absorbed by the soil, detained on the surface by lakes or ponds, or used by vegetation, runs off of the land as overflow, or surface runoff. Water that is later released by the soil adds to this overflow to produce what is known as total runoff. As runoff flows to areas of lower elevation, it collects in drainage areas, the boundaries of which form watersheds. Runoff from these watersheds flows into streams which serve as outlets for water in the watersheds. The removal of vegetation and the introduction of roads, parking lots and other impervious surfaces increase the total runoff on a site which in turn increases erosion, flooding, and sedimentation of water sources.

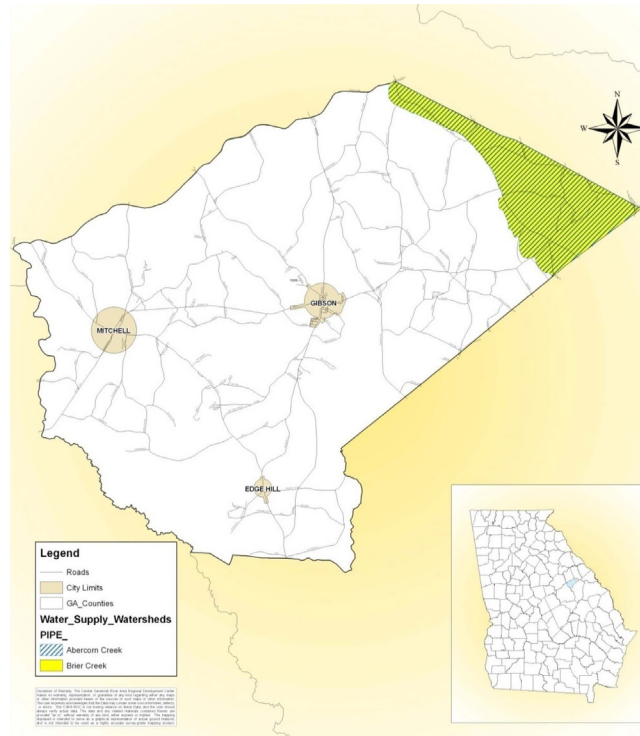
To protect drinking water supplies downstream, DNR has recommended buffer requirements and impervious surface limitations to be applied to certain watersheds. For watersheds with an area less than 100 square miles, all perennial streams within seven miles upstream of a public water supply intake have a required 100 foot buffer on each side within which no development can occur. (150 feet for impervious surfaces and septic tank drainfields) Beyond seven miles upstream, 50 foot buffers are required within which no development can occur (75 feet for impervious surfaces and septic tank drainfields).

Currently, the City of Gibson withdraws 100 percent of its water from three groundwater wells, the Town of Mitchell withdraws 100 percent of its water from three groundwater well, and City of Edgehill withdraws 100 percent of its water from two groundwater well. The unincorporated Glascock County does not have public water service. Therefore, since portions of Glascock County lie within a public or private surface water supply watershed, the DNR buffers and impervious surface limitations are necessary in Glascock County or its three cities.

Glascock County is located within the Ogeechee River drainage basin. Within this basin, portions of two major watersheds can be found in Glascock County: the Abercorn Creek Watershed and the Brier Creek Watershed. This plan makes note of these "water supply watersheds" because they require additional resource protection to ensure a safe supply of public drinking water. DNR's Rules for Environmental Planning

NATURAL RESOURCES

Map A: Water Supply Watersheds



Criteria define a water supply watershed as an area of land upstream from a governmentally owned public drinking water intake. Glascock County water supply watersheds can be found on Map A.

In part to address the problem of runoff, the Criteria establish a recommended set of standards to protect surface water supplies including the use of buffer zones around streams and specifying allowable impervious surface densities within such watersheds. At less than 100 square miles in size, the Glascock County water supply watershed is considered “small water supply watershed” and is subject to DNR’s “small watershed criteria.” Small watersheds are theoretically more vulnerable to contamination by land development.

Minimum Criteria for Small Water Supply Watersheds

The perennial stream corridors of a small water supply watershed within a seven-mile radius upstream of a governmentally owned public drinking water supply intake or water supply reservoir are protected by the following criteria:

- A buffer shall be maintained for a distance of 100 feet on both sides of the stream as measured from the stream banks.
- No impervious surface shall be constructed within a 150 foot setback on both sides of the stream as measured from the stream banks.
- Septic tanks and septic tank drainfields are prohibited in the setback area.

NATURAL RESOURCES

The perennial stream corridors within a small water supply watershed and outside a seven mile radius upstream of a governmentally owned public drinking water supply intake or water supply reservoir are protected by the following criteria:

- A buffer shall be maintained for a distance of 50 feet on both sides of the stream as measured from the stream banks.
- No impervious surface shall be constructed within a 75 foot setback area on both sides of the stream as measured from the stream banks.
- Septic tanks and septic tanks drainfields are prohibited in the setback areas.

The following criteria apply to all locations in a small water supply watershed:

- New sanitary landfills are allowed only if they have synthetic liners and leachate collection systems.
- New hazardous waste treatment or disposal facilities are prohibited.
- The impervious surface area, including all public and private structures, utilities, or facilities, of the entire water supply watershed shall be limited to 25 percent, or existing use, whichever is greater.
- New facilities which handle hazardous materials of the types and amounts determined by DNR, shall perform their operations on impermeable surfaces having spill and leak collection systems as prescribed by the DNR.

Groundwater Recharge

Groundwater recharge areas are portions of the earth's surface where water infiltrates the ground to replenish an aquifer, which is any stratum or zone of rock beneath the surface of the earth capable of containing or producing water from a well. In order to avoid toxic and hazardous waste contamination to drinking water supplies, groundwater or aquifer recharge areas must be protected. While recharge takes place throughout almost all of Georgia's land area, the rate or amount of recharge reaching underground aquifers varies from place to place depending on geologic conditions.

According to data provided by DNR on the Groundwater Pollution Susceptibility Map of Georgia, Hydrologic Atlas 20 (Map B), most of the Glascock County area is served by the Cretaceous Aquifer. This aquifer is primarily a system of sand and gravel and serves as a major source of water for East Central Georgia. GNR has mapped all of the recharge areas in the state which are likely to have the greatest vulnerability to pollution of groundwater from surface and near surface activities of man. Map B (attached) graphically displays the locations of the major aquifer recharge areas within the boundaries of Glascock County and its three cities.

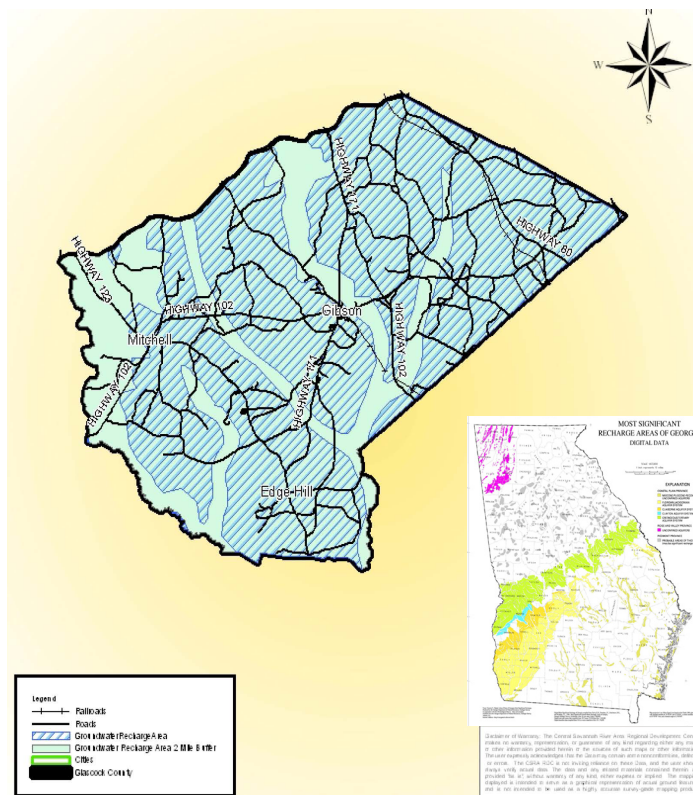
Development in these areas should be limited to very low impact development in which little to no area is covered with impervious surfaces

NATURAL RESOURCES

such as roads, parking lots and building pads. The subsurface integrity of these areas should also be maintained by avoiding development that may contaminate water supplies (i.e. landfills). The Georgia DNR has recommended that local government adopt minimum criteria for groundwater protection as part of their land use regulations. These recommended criteria (see Appendix B) would apply to new development in the aquifer recharge areas identified in Map B. However, due to the fact that very limited development is expected within Glascock County and the municipalities of Edgehill, Gibson and Mitchell during the planning period, the county and its cities do not foresee a need for any additional land use regulations for protection of groundwater.

Federal law defines freshwater wetlands as those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs and similar

Map B: Groundwater Recharge



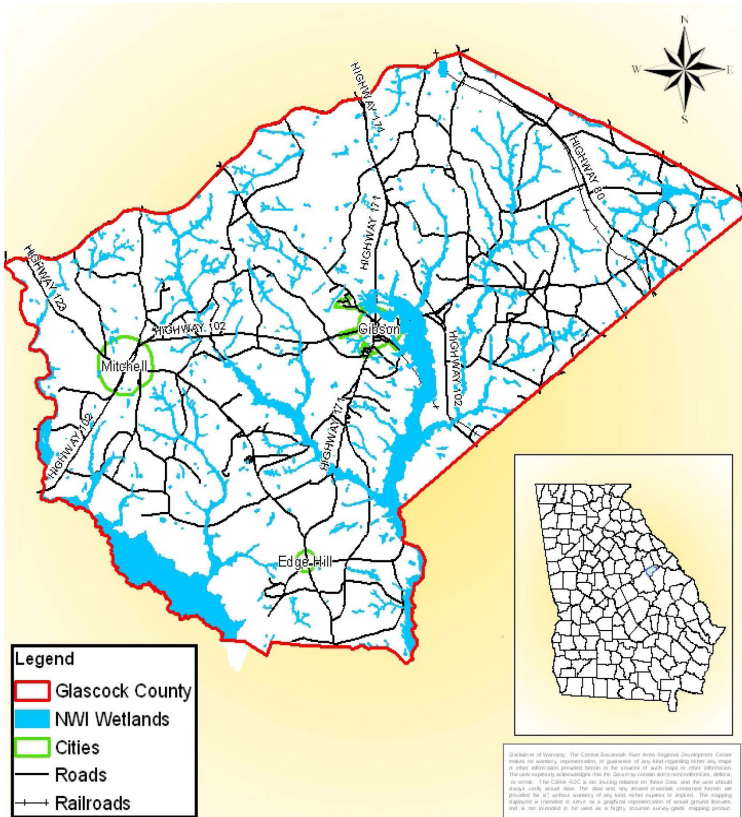
areas. Under natural conditions wetlands help to maintain and enhance water quality by filtering out sediments and other nonpoint source pollutants from adjacent land uses. In addition to this, they store water and provide habitat for a variety of plant and animal species.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Wetlands are currently being mapped by DNR. Until these maps are available, however, please refer to Map C (attached) for approximate wetland locations. This map is based upon the location of soil associations which contain many of the characteristics found in a wetland environment.

Preservation of wetlands is vital because of the many important functions they serve. They are among the world's most biologically productive ecosystems and serve as crucial habitats for wildlife. Wetlands can help maintain water quality or improve degraded water by performing functions similar to a wastewater treatment plant, filtering sediment, toxic

Map C: Wetlands



substances and nutrients. Wetland vegetation filters and retains sediments which otherwise enter lakes, streams and reservoirs often necessitating costly maintenance dredging activities. Wetlands are also important to flood protection, as they act as water storage areas, significantly reducing peak flows downstream, and the meandering nature of wetlands combined with abundant vegetation reduce flood velocities.



APPENDIX 2: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION



The development of the Mitchell Comprehensive Plan aimed to be an inclusive process that reflected a broad spectrum of community perspectives. The plan process also put a premium on intergovernmental collaboration, with meetings generally taking place jointly between Glascock County and the municipalities of Edgehill, Gibson and Mitchell.

Specifically, the process included two public hearings, four steering committee meetings and a public workshop. The workshop was designed to be interactive, with participants invited to give thoughts about an array of images representing different places and elements of the area.

This Appendix is included as a means of documenting the plan development process. It contains lists of steering committee members, meeting dates and attendance, and other supporting materials.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

STEERING COMMITTEE

Lori Boyen, Glascock County Board of Commissioners

Audrey Chalker, Glascock County Board of Commissioners

Greg Johnson, Glascock County Board of Education

Scott Usry, resident, Gibson

Michael Todd, resident, Mitchell

Barbara Hadden, Glascock County Board of Commissioners

Sarah Brooks, resident, Gibson

Lewis Berry, Mitchell Town Council

D'Ann Simpson, clerk, Town of Mitchell

Dean Reese, Gibson City Council

Brandi Pritchett, clerk, City of Gibson

Gary Kitchens, Edgehill Town Council

Dewey Belcher, mayor of Edgehill

PUBLIC HEARINGS

July 1, 2014, Glascock County Courthouse

December ??, 2014, Glascock County Courthouse

STEERING COMMITTEE MEETINGS

August 7, 2014, Glascock County Courthouse

- Introduction, data review, needs and opportunities

September 18, 2014, Glascock County Courthouse

- Goals/vision/Character Areas

October 27, 2014, Glascock County Courthouse

- Community Work Program

December 11, 2014, Glascock County Courthouse

- Review, implementation tools

PUBLIC WORKSHOP

August 28, 2014, Glascock County Courthouse

- Visioning, needs and opportunities

Needs and Opportunities worksheet

Issues and Opportunities

Place of residence (Edgehill/Gibson/Mitchell/unincorporated Glascock County)

Economic Development

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Housing

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Natural and Cultural Resources (rivers, forests, historic buildings)

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Community Facilities (parks, government facilities, senior centers)

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Transportation (roads, sidewalks, trails)

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Land Use

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

Other

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Public workshop flier

PLAN YOUR COMMUNITY!

What: Community planning workshop

When: Thursday, August 28 at 7 p.m.

Where: Glascock County Courthouse, Gibson

What if you could help plan the future of Glascock County (and Edgehill, Gibson and Mitchell)? What would you say?

Well, you can!

What is the meeting for?

- Glascock County, Edgehill, Gibson and Mitchell are updating their comprehensive plans - guides for how the community should grow and develop in the future. To do this right, we need community input.

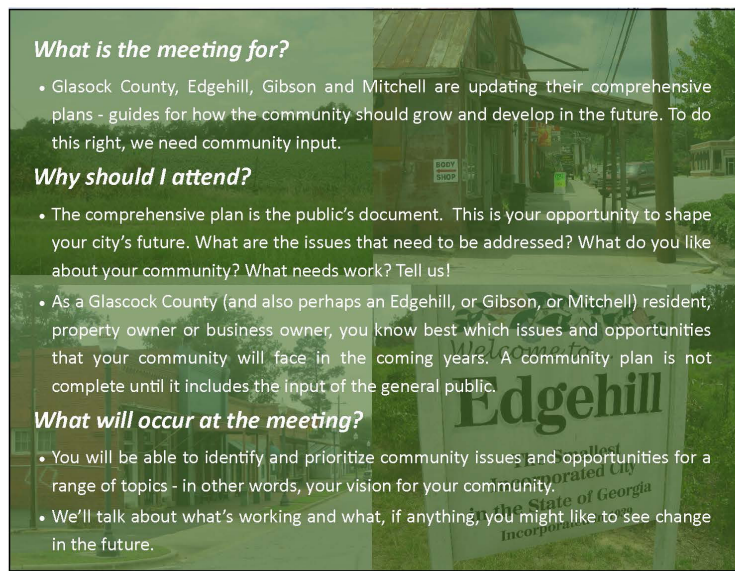
Why should I attend?

- The comprehensive plan is the public's document. This is your opportunity to shape your city's future. What are the issues that need to be addressed? What do you like about your community? What needs work? Tell us!
- As a Glascock County (and also perhaps an Edgehill, or Gibson, or Mitchell) resident, property owner or business owner, you know best which issues and opportunities that your community will face in the coming years. A community plan is not complete until it includes the input of the general public.

What will occur at the meeting?

- You will be able to identify and prioritize community issues and opportunities for a range of topics - in other words, your vision for your community.
- We'll talk about what's working and what, if anything, you might like to see change in the future.

Can't make it? Stay tuned for more updates on the plan in the coming months. Contact Jason Hardin at the CSRA Regional Commission for more information: jhardin@csrarc.ga.gov or 706-210-2009




Public workshop visual survey/worksheet

THE PLAN UPDATE: ISSUES

WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS?

16)

Do you like this place?
Would you like more places like this?
What do you like about it?
Other thoughts?



GLASCOCK COUNTY AND MUNICIPALITIES
JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Plan Your Community: The Glascock County Comprehensive Plan Workshop For the communities of: Glascock County Edgehill Gibson Mitchell

My community (please circle one): Edgehill Gibson Mitchell Unincorporated Glascock County

- 1) Do you like this place/building/scene? _____ Would you like more places like this in your community? _____
What do you like (or dislike) about it? _____
Other thoughts? _____
- 2) Do you like this place/building/scene? _____ Would you like more places like this in your community? _____
What do you like (or dislike) about it? _____
Other thoughts? _____
- 3) Do you like this place/building/scene? _____ Would you like more places like this in your community? _____
What do you like (or dislike) about it? _____
Other thoughts? _____
- 4) Do you like this place/building/scene? _____ Would you like more places like this in your community? _____
What do you like (or dislike) about it? _____
Other thoughts? _____
- 5) Do you like this place/building/scene? _____ Would you like more places like this in your community? _____
What do you like (or dislike) about it? _____
Other thoughts? _____
- 6) Do you like this place/building/scene? _____ Would you like more places like this in your community? _____
What do you like (or dislike) about it? _____
Other thoughts? _____
- 7) Do you like this place/building/scene? _____ Would you like more places like this in your community? _____
What do you like (or dislike) about it? _____
Other thoughts? _____
- 8) Do you like this place/building/scene? _____ Would you like more places like this in your community? _____
What do you like (or dislike) about it? _____
Other thoughts? _____
- 9) Do you like this place/building/scene? _____ Would you like more places like this in your community? _____
What do you like (or dislike) about it? _____
Other thoughts? _____

TOWN OF
MITCHELL
COMPREHENSIVE
PLAN
2015-35





Mitchell Comprehensive Plan

Produced for: Town of Mitchell

Produced by: Central Savannah River Area
Regional Commission

December 2014



A Resolution of the Town of Mitchell for the Adoption of the Mitchell Comprehensive Plan 2015-2035

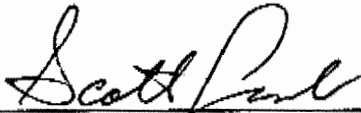
WHEREAS, the Town of Mitchell has prepared the *Mitchell Comprehensive Plan 2015-2035*; and,

WHEREAS, the *Mitchell Comprehensive Plan 2015-2035* was prepared in accordance with the Rules and Procedures of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs; and,

WHEREAS, the *Mitchell Comprehensive Plan 2015-2035* has been reviewed by the Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs and found to be in compliance with the minimum "Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning";

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mitchell Town Council that the *Mitchell Comprehensive Plan 2015-2035* is hereby adopted and that a copy of this resolution shall be provided to the Central Savannah River Area Regional Commission.

Adopted this 14th day of December, 2015



Scott Lamb, Mayor
Town of Mitchell

ATTEST:



Gail Berry, Interim Town Clerk