

# City of Offerman Comprehensive Plan



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## **Offerman Vision Statement**

Offerman is a community of thoughtful and intelligent growth focusing on efficient transportation and greenspace preservation throughout. Offerman will provide an atmosphere that gives its citizens a defined rural historical sense of place, in a safe, friendly and uniquely appealing community with an unsurpassed quality of life.

## INTRODUCTION

### Purpose

Figure 1



The purpose of the City of Offerman Comprehensive Plan is to provide the Offerman with a tool to manage and guide future growth and development of the city through the year 2026. This Plan represents Offerman's participation in and contribution to the coordinated planning process as set forth by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989. By meeting the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures established as part of the legislation, Offerman's Comprehensive Plan serves as a basis for decision making regarding economic development, environment, environmental protection, provision of community and public facilities and services, adequate and affordable housing and the pattern of future land-use.

The Plan was developed under the rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, Chapter 110-12-1, Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning. In accordance with the "Local Planning Requirements" the Georgia Department of Community Affairs, or DCA, allowed the City to plan at the minimal planning level.

### Citizen Participation

Public participation was an integral part of the Planning process. A public hearing was held June 6, 2006 to inform the local citizens of preparation of the plan, and to include their input in the community vision and Future Development Map.

### Location

Offerman is located in the seam of two abutting Coastal Plain provinces; the Okefenokee Basin, characterized by low relief and numerous swamps and the Barrier Island Sequence, characterized by a step-like progression of terraces with marshes and poorly drained low areas. The three maritime terraces found in the Offerman vicinity are the Penhloway, the Hawthorn and the Sunderland, all formed primarily by alluvium washed from the uplands. Offerman exhibits two major soil classifications. The Leefield-Robertsdale-Pelham association is somewhat poorly drained and poorly drained soils on low uplands, on broad flats and in slight depressions. The Irvington-Robertsdale-Leefield association is nearly level to gently sloping, moderately well drained and somewhat poorly drained soils on uplands. Cradled between the Satilla and Little Satilla Rivers, Offerman lies adjacent to a broad flood plain that includes much of the southwestern portion of Pierce County.

### Community Profile

Figure 1 shows Offerman straddling U.S. Highway 84. Offerman is approximately twelve-miles from Blackshear in Pierce County and encompasses approximately 3.14 miles. Offerman was first incorporated as a town in August of 1906 but the chapter was repealed through legislative action in 1916. Through the years Offerman remained a viable, albeit unchartered township that has maintained its self-identify and sense of uniqueness as a community. A grassroots effort begun in 1995, led by a nucleus of concerned citizens, resulted in the reinstatement of Offerman's charter and then return of its status as a "city" on July



## **City of Offerman Comprehensive Plan 2007-2026**

1, 1996.

In 1886, the Southern Pine Company setup operations in the area called Kingsville in Pierce County and began construction of a rail line connecting Nicholls and Savannah, for the purpose of transporting timber via rail to the harbor.

The town of Offerman, known then as Kingsville, was established in 1887. By 1902 the rail line connected Savannah to Offerman, and Offerman to Nicholls. Offerman served as a junction for the ABC (east-west) and the ACL (north-south) railroads with one of the largest (at the time) lumber mills in South Georgia.

A grits mill and cotton gin were also in operation as were several mercantile establishments. By 1905 the lumber mill was closed but Offerman survived and in 1906 was issued a charter by the state legislature. Without the lumber mill and associated businesses, the people relied on the rural nature of the community to provide food staples and marketable goods and produce. Cotton and tobacco provided economic viability along with turpentine and cane syrup production. Offerman, through the ensuing decades, typified the hundreds of small, rural towns and communities that dot the South Georgia landscape.

### **Aquifers**

Precipitation is the main source of ground water in the southeast Georgia region. Recharge is the process by which precipitation infiltrates soil and rock and adds to the volume of water stored in pores and other openings within them. Aquifers are solid rocks that will yield water to wells. Recharge occurs throughout most of Georgia's land area--the rate or amount of recharge reaching underground aquifers varies from location-to-location depending upon geologic conditions. The principal source of water supply for most of southeast Georgia is contained in the Floridan aquifer located in the limestone deposits of the upper and middle Eocene strata. This aquifer is one of the most productive in the world and a natural resource for the region.

Some of the sediments that underlie the area are more conducive to recharging than others. These "permeable" sediments, which are easily recharged by precipitation, are known as ground water recharge areas. These areas have the greatest vulnerability to pollution of ground water from the surface and near surface activities of man. Pollution from sources located within the recharge area has the potential of not only polluting ground water in the immediate vicinity but affecting a significant portion of the aquifer. The principal recharge areas for the Floridan aquifers are generally located north and west of Offerman. One recharge area is in close proximity to Offerman beginning approximately ten miles to the east of Wayne County and stretching north-northeast across much of Wayne County into Long County. Strict criteria should be established for any development planned on or adjacent to recharge areas.

### **Ground Water**

There is a large supply of ground water throughout the Satilla River Basin. The ordinary ground water source is the principal artesian aquifer, which is contained in the limestone of the middle Eocene and Oligocene age. This aquifer system is normally divided into two water-bearing zones. The upper zone includes the Oligocene Series and the upper portion of the Ocala Limestone formation. The lower zone includes the basal portion of the Ocala Limestone formation. The lower zone included the basal portions of the Ocala Limestone and the Avon Park Limestone. The quality of water from this system is usually hard to very hard, slightly alkaline and moderately high in dissolved solids. The entire town of Offerman and its respective businesses use either shallow or deep wells for all water needs as there is no public water systems. Pollution of this available resource would have a catastrophic effect on the availability of fresh water in Offerman. Another potential cause for such disruption would be from salt-water intrusion which

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has already occurred in the area around Brunswick, The explosion of growth in the narrow coastal band increased the utilization on the existing water resources and as a general lowering of ground levels.

### **Wetlands**

Fresh-water wetlands, as defined by federal law, are "those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and 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 areas. Wetlands are important ecosystems valued as wildlife habitat and nurturing areas for many avian species. They also provide storage for excess storm water and function as reservoirs for surface water supplies. Wetlands are defined by three criteria: soil composition, soil hydrology and associative vegetation. U.S. Department of the Interior National Wetlands Inventories maps delineates Pierce County wetlands. These maps should be used by local governments for land-use management if.

- A land parcel is designated on the Wetlands Inventories (based on two of the three identifying criteria), the designation is absolute.
- Areas outside the wetlands delineation must be visually inspected for wetlands-related vegetation before absolute determination can be made.

Procedures for protection of wetlands are defined in the Department of Natural Resources, Environmental Protection Division Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria section 391-3-16-.03. Pierce County and its respective municipalities including Offerman for land-use management of wetlands must follow these rules.

### **Flood Plains**

Flood plains are defined as a water channel and the relatively flat areas adjoining the channel which have been or may be covered by floodwater. All rivers (Little Satilla) and streams near Offerman are bordered by wide flood plains. In Pierce County, these flood-prone lands constitute 38 percent of the county providing favorable conditions for the growth of pine and hardwood forests. Flood plains are delineated in the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Flood Insurance Rate Maps. Construction is limited in the flood plains by both Federal and State regulations. Septic tank systems are prohibited in the flood plains by the Georgia Department of Human Resources' "Rules and Regulations for On-Site sewage Management Systems."

### **Flood Control Strategies**

The following strategies can help in local flood hazard management:

- Local ordinance regulating new construction in flood plains should stress design standards to limit changes in flood storage and prescribe flood proofing practices to reduce flood caused property damage;
- The control approach should not only look to eliminate future development within the flood plains in the long term, but also controls development outside flood plains that also affect storm water runoff;
- All development applications should be required to incorporate the use and maintenance of

## *City of Offerman Comprehensive Plan 2007-2026*

natural systems for flood control and storm water management to the maximum extent possible;

- Developers should be encouraged to build at higher elevations and when necessary require that the developer have a certified engineer submit a certificate of project feasibility;
- Local governments should ensure the provision of adequate flood insurance for existing development in flood plains and flood-prone areas while discouraging new development and redevelopment that requires increased flood insurance coverage.

Offerman is a stable community and its existence is widely supported by its citizens. Offerman's location and size are the predominant factors around which to shape an effective comprehensive plan. As aforementioned, the prevalence of wetlands and moderately to poorly drained soil types will dictate much of Offerman's future development.

Some forms of commercial and industrial endeavors will not be acceptable should they threaten the current water table with pollution or reduce the capacity of water available to residents through high volume usage for production.

The absence of a public water and sewerage system is of singular importance; this problem must be studied and a plan formulated that will, at the minimum, outline a process through which these services can be provided. Future residential development will also be affected by these same parameters.

Offerman's population of approximately 406 people is a constraining factor when considered as a tax base and as a potential work force pool. Little change is expected for the population through the next five-years although models that reflect countywide trends project some growth. With this relatively static population and limit infrastructure, Offerman would do well to critically examine its structure and invest accordingly.

The current government of Offerman has demonstrated great resourcefulness in coping with the immediate day-to-day operations and services in a fiscally responsible manner. This mode of responsible government must continue for Offerman to be a viable community.

## **FUTURE DEVELOPMENT**

### **Purpose**

Future development is the concern of comprehensive planning. Planning for future growth depends in part on effective planning for future land-use. Effective land-use planning is guided by public policy, and public policy is guided by a vision.

### **Future Development**

Offerman is similar to other rural communities in South Georgia in that the absence of public water and wastewater treatment systems dictates that great care should be taken to maintain the integrity of the ground water system in the area.

Offerman's current building permit and code enforcement program is a step towards a more comprehensive land-use strategy. Offerman's current land-use pattern is residential area south of US 84, a commercial "strip" area along and slightly to the north of US 84 and the remaining area north of US 84 as agricultural/forestry. Most of the residential sites are on, what has been agricultural land.

The need for controlled residential development will be necessary to augment the initiation of public water and sewerage service. An effort should be made to cluster future commercial growth along the existing corridor on U.S. 84. Any industrial development should be controlled with respect to encroachment of existing residential areas. Also great care should be taken to ensure that any industrial development would in no way jeopardize the land in terms of pollution or inappropriate usage.

Since Offerman's current land-use sectors are relatively discrete it would be logical to continue this pattern. The residential nucleus south of US 84 should be the hub for future residential development. Although three other distinct residential areas exist on the north side of U.S. 84 the potential for supplying public services to them may be lower than the central residential district due to distance. Care should be taken so that disjointed pockets or clusters of houses don't occur in isolated sites, if it occurs it will work to the detriment of local government's ability to provide services. This does not imply a moratorium on building outside of established residential areas, only that care should be taken in placement of new homes if water and sewerage services are to be provided in the future.

The existing commercial strip along US 84 is well situated and will be able to absorb more businesses. The availability of water and sewerage will dictate whether this area continues to grow or stagnate. Future development of the existing Commercial strip would be a logical step achieved through the expansion of the zone in either direction along US 84. This would be of minimal impact to the adjoining residential areas.

The previously discussed City Hall and municipal park complex will be a good hub for public/institutional land-use. Currently there is room to expand if the need for such should occur.

When fiscal parameters allow there is certainly abundant open spaces in Offerman that could be developed into public recreation sites. Certainly, in spite of many obstacles, the government of Offerman has demonstrated its commitment to providing quality, safe public recreation facilities

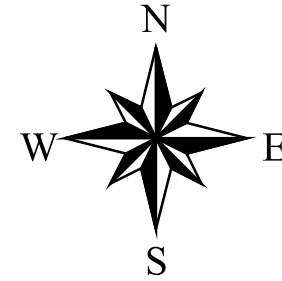
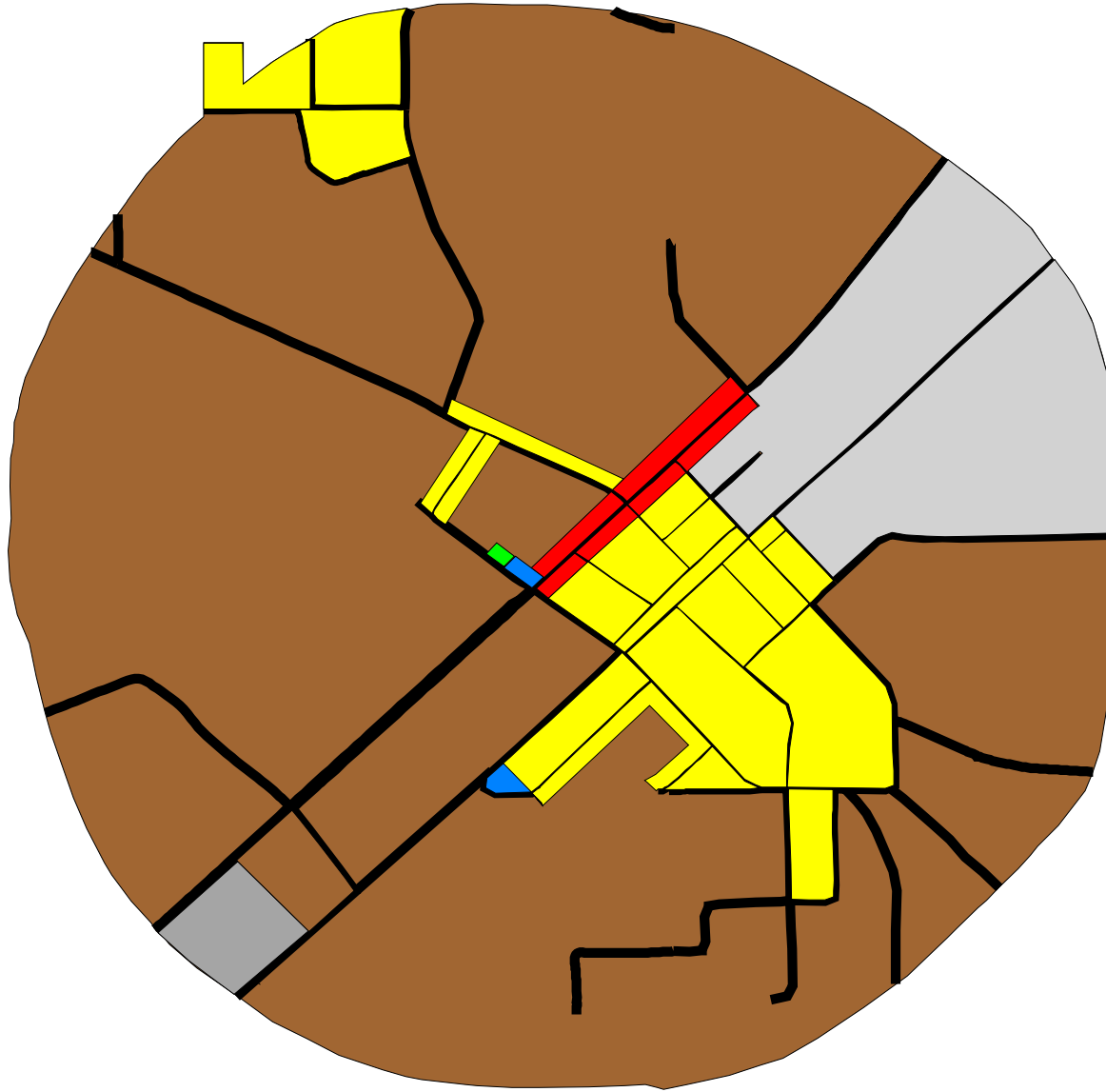
The vast majority of land area in and around Offerman falls under the Agricultural/Forest category. Although only four (4) residents are listed as agriculturists they own or sublet a large portion of the total amount of the Ag/F lands. Several fields are fallow, due either to rotational crop schedules or owner's








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choice.

Currently there are two areas of industrial land-use, east of midtown off US 84 is the ITT wood chipping facility. Due west of midtown is C and F Locomotive Services. Any future industrial development should occur in proximity to these established areas of Industrial land-use. Any land, in the future, deemed to be suitable for industrial uses should not be located in or adjacent to wetlands. Also, care should be given to utilizing land for industrial purposes that would be isolated from future water and sewerage services.

# City of Offerman Future Development Map



-  Transportation
-  Parks
-  Institutional
-  Agriculture/Forest
-  Industrial
-  Commercial
-  Residential

0.6      0      0.6      1.2 Miles

A horizontal scale bar with four segments. The first segment is labeled 0.6, the second 0, the third 0.6, and the fourth 1.2 Miles.

Developed by the City of Offerman  
for general planning purposes only

Date: June 1, 2006

*Defining Narrative for Character Areas*

**Residential**

The predominant use of land within this category is for single-family and multi-family dwelling units. Low-density housing development is encouraged in the residential character area to maintain Offerman's rural atmosphere. Offerman will encourage infill development, utilization of vacant sites within residential areas for new development if available, and when appropriate encourage clustering if community water, public or private, is available. New residential construction will take street proximity and connectivity, along with commercial area proximity into consideration to maintain a safe interactive community atmosphere where residents will have access to the town's facilities and commercial developments. No specific Quality Community Objectives are being addressed.



**Figure 2**

**Agricultural/Forestry**

Agriculture and forestry land-uses are the predominant uses of lands within the city limits of Offerman. The City needs to review current zoning ordinances to ensure that the regulations are flexible enough to give consideration to Low Impact Development Designs, Smart Growth Techniques, and incentive type of programs that promote the development of greenspace and openspace.





**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. Offerman is not highly engaged in industrial activities so careful consideration must be given to what types and how large any industrial facilities constructed within this area are so as not to interfere with the safe, rural small town environment characteristic which Offerman defines itself by. Redevelopment of existing industrial areas in lieu of new construction will be firstly considered. No specific Quality Community Objectives are being addressed.



**Figure 4**

**Commercial**

This category is for land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, and service and entertainment facilities. As with the industrial area, Offerman will carefully consider any commercial development. Offerman will encourage redevelopment within existing commercial areas. Future commercial structures will be located near US 84. No specific Quality Community Objectives are being addressed.



**Offerman's Assets**

- Safe community
- Ample greenspace
- Low-density residential development
- Comprehensive building and inspection codes
- Post office for town
- Fire station for the town
- Garbage service
- Community Education Center
- Major thoroughfare
- Railroad spur

**Major issues facing Offerman**

- Zoning Ordinance
  - Current Zoning Ordinance needs to be revised to allow for more flexible development regulations that give consideration to Low Impact Development Designs, Smart Growth Techniques, and incentive type of programs that promote the development of greenspace and openspace.
  - Develop zoning map and print mylar for signature.
- Lack of private or public water system

## **The City of Offerman's Comprehensive Plan**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of the Implementation element is to provide direction and recommendations for implementation of the City of Offerman's Comprehensive Plan and for continued planning.

Planning is a continuous process. Completion of the Comprehensive Plan is by no means an end in itself. The City of Offerman's Comprehensive Plan is a living document and must be constantly scrutinized to ensure that its goals, objectives and policy statements continue to reflect changing community needs and attitudes. Above all, it must be used.

The Comprehensive Plan is the community's guide for government officials and citizens in making decisions about land-use and development. The Comprehensive Plan is *comprehensive* in the manner that it identifies the myriad of factors related to future community growth; analyzes the relationships between these factors; proposes what needs to be done about them; and recommends *goals and objectives* for using the community's resources in the most efficient and effective ways.

An aggressive, yet realistic, program for implementing the Comprehensive Plan has been established by the local government units.

The Comprehensive Plan is a tool that should be reviewed and updated periodically so that the goals, objectives and policy statements of the Comprehensive Plan are put into action.

### **Commitment to Implementation**

It is important to note that successful implementation of this plan relies on many non-traditional resources. The many hours committed by citizens to shaping the Comprehensive Plan attest to their desire for attaining their vision/mission statement for the City of Offerman.

### **Implementation**

The City of Offerman's Comprehensive Plan

### **Proposed Implementation Actions**

Perhaps the most important method of implementing the City of Offerman's Comprehensive Plan comes from the day-to-day commitment by elected and appointed officials, staff members and citizens.

The City of Offerman's Comprehensive Plan must be understood as a useful and capable tool to direct the County's future. Officials, staff and citizens display the Comprehensive Plan on the Georgia Department of Community Affairs web site for viewing and reference. The Comprehensive Plan should continually be referenced in planning studies and zoning case reports as well as informal discussion situations.

High visibility will make the plan successful, dynamic and a powerful tool for guiding Offerman's future growth. A series of proposed implementation actions were developed after reviewing the goals and objectives described in the plan elements.

These specific steps should be taken to better implement the plan. These actions were synthesized by

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analysis of the goals and objectives. Some proposals may call for the formation of a new committee, or identify the need for a specific study. In addition to such "new" initiatives, the continuation of ongoing local policies and programs is recommended in many instances.

The following implementation goal will guide the proposed objectives and actions. These objectives and actions are described in each of the chapters. While the proposed implementation actions are not legally binding like the zoning code and subdivision regulations, the proposals are tremendously important to the plan's successful implementation, and are a vital supplement to its goals, objectives and policies.

### **Implementation Goal**

Encourage the use of the Offerman Comprehensive Plan as the implementation tool for the City of Offerman.

## HOUSING

### GOALS & IMPLEMENTATION

#### Goal 1

Ensure that residents of Offerman have access to adequate and affordable housing with a suitable living environment for all residents.

##### Objective 1.1

Prevent the deterioration of neighborhoods and when appropriate support rehabilitation plans and encourage the replacement of dilapidated structures.

##### Policy 1.1.1

Support programs that encourage ownership and pride in neighborhoods.

##### Objective 1.2

Ensure safe and livable condition for the citizens of Offerman.

##### Policy 1.2.1

Support the building and code enforcement program.

##### Objective 1.3

The City shall use local ordinances, grants and housing standards to eliminate substandard housing.

##### Policy 1.3.1

The City shall address the need for affordable housing by utilizing the following potential funding sources:

##### Grants

- a. Volunteer efforts
- b. State and federal projects

##### Policy 1.3.2

The City shall implement housing rehabilitation through the Community Development Block Grants, CHIP funds and other funding sources that may become available.

**Policy 1.3.3**

The City shall continue to identify, apply for and administer grant funding to improve housing stock for low-income families. This may be accomplished either internally or through the services of an outside consultant.

**Policy 1.3.4**

Develop programs and ordinances to prevent blighted areas within the City of Offerman through condemnation and rehabilitation initiatives.

- a. Develop an ordinance requiring a fix foundation for all structures.

## **NATURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES**

### **GOALS & IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **Goal 1**

To preserve the abundant natural resources, particularly the purity of the aquifer, ground water and arable land through aggressive enforcement of wetlands codes and building site applications.

##### **Objective 1.1**

Enforcement of City and State Codes

###### **Policy 1.1.1**

Continue to support the Code Enforcement Program.

##### **Objective 1.2**

Protect the 100-year flood plains of Offerman from development that would negatively affect water quality.

###### **Policy 1.2.1**

Develop a Growth Management Plan to limit growth in potential flood areas and that recognizes the significant cultural and natural resources

###### **Policy 1.2.2**

Enforce the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Part V Ordinances.

##### **Objective 1.3**

Identify and protect wetlands in Offerman from development that would have a negative impact on water quality.

##### **Objective 1.4**

Protect fresh water including the water quality of the Satilla River and tributary creeks by controlling erosion and sediment runoff.

###### **Policy 1.4.1**

Develop a program to stabilize and pave dirt roads that are a large source of runoff and produce large amounts of sediment.



**Policy 1.4.2**

Identify and protect Offerman's wetland areas from developments that would have any adverse impact.

**Objective 1.5**

Ensure future development occurs only in areas with soil types that will be compatible with the prescribed use.

**Policy 1.5.1**

Encourage the Soil Conservation Service to complete a soil survey for the City of Offerman.

**Objective 1.6**

Support Programs and agencies that promote and protect the historical resources of the City of Offerman.

**Policy 1.6.1**

Study the cost-effectiveness of establishing a "pioneer days" themed attraction that would spotlight Offerman's historic past.

**Policy 1.6.2**

Implement a Historic Resources Survey

**Policy 1.6.3**

Encourage owners of historical sites to rehab and place them on the National Register

**Objective 1.7**

Achieve designation as a Certified Local Government (CLG)

**Policy 1.7.1**

Restrict the density of development in all areas not served by adequate water facilities.

**Goal 2**

To maintain compliance with the Georgia Solid Waste Management Act through privatization of collection and disposal for all residential and commercial customers.

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

### **GOALS & IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **Goal 1**

Ensure the delivery of cost effective services that will match the future needs of the residents, businesses and industries of Offerman.

##### **Objective 1.1**

Support the development of infrastructure systems that will encourage and support growth.

###### **Policy 1.1.1**

The city council will encourage clustered and infill types of developments.

###### **Policy 1.1.2**

Annually review and inventory government services and facilities.

##### **Objective 1.2**

Encourage and support efforts to plan and coordinated the development of infrastructure and public facilities within the county.

###### **Policy 1.2.1**

Support and coordinate development with the Pierce County Planning Commission.

##### **Objective 1.3**

Continue to support the Pierce County Public Library and ensure appropriate, cost effective facilities for arts and cultural activities as Offerman continues to grow.

###### **Policy 1.3.1**

Increase the public funding of the City's library when possible to reflect increasing demands for services.

##### **Objective 1.4**

Ensure excellence in public safety, public works and health services as Offerman continues to grow in an efficient and cost effective manner.

###### **Policy 1.4.1**

Develop a joint hazardous materials public safety team.

**Policy 1.4.2**

Continue to upgrade all emergency services equipment when possible.

**Policy 1.4.3**

Purchase, repair or replace equipment and property as required.

**Policy 1.4.4**

Maintain or constructed new facilities to improve or meet current LOS.

**Policy 1.4.5**

Encourage jointly develop public safety facilities, programs, and share resources when appropriate.

**Objective 1.5**

When feasible provide adequate park and recreation areas for all citizens of Offerman, utilizing the natural environment and existing resources to the maximum extent.

**Policy 1.5.1**

Study the possibility of developing a Subdivision Ordinance to allow the development of High Density Subdivisions that would require recreation space.

**Policy 1.5.2**

When possible ensure that special needs groups (elderly, children/youth, physically impaired, etc.) have available to them those amenities, services and a safe environment that will provide the maximum quality of life possible. We accept that it is incumbent upon us to be alert for opportunities to enhance or create programs, activities, facilities, etc., to accomplish this general goal.

**Goal 2**

A safe, convenient and efficient motorized and non-motorized transportation system shall be available for all residents of Offerman.

**Objective 2.1**

Provide for safe and efficient transportation systems that support desired growth patterns

**Policy 2.1.1**

Encourage developers to connect roadways when feasible.

**Policy 2.1.2**

Encourage developers to connect bicycle paths and walking systems to existing systems.

**Policy 2.1.3**

Support and encourage GDOT to maintain the current LOS for transportation routes.

**Policy 2.1.4**

Develop and enforce standards for the construction and maintenance of transportation systems and drainage systems.

**Policy 2.1.5**

Continue to support drainage and paving unpaved roads as funding is available.

**Policy 2.1.6**

Support rural public transportation systems.

**Policy 2.1.7**

Support the Joint Pierce and Ware County Transportation Committee

**Goal 3**

Provide for an efficient, economical and environmentally sound solid waste disposal system.

**Objective 3.1**

Support and encourage the development of strategies to management waste.

**Policy 3.1.1**

Develop a Solid Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan.

## **INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION**

### **GOALS & IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **Goals 1**

Expand intergovernmental relationships with local municipalities state and federal governmental units and other units of government.

#### **Objective 1.1**

Develop policies, cooperative agreements and working relationships promoting intergovernmental cooperation, sharing of information and sharing of services with other governmental units.

#### **Policy 1.1.1**

Pursue intergovernmental cooperation when it is cost effective.

#### **Policy 1.1.2**

When appropriate and cost effective promote the sharing of services.

#### **Policy 1.1.3**

Participate in committees, groups and organizations promoting intergovernmental cooperation.

## **LAND USE**

### **GOAL & IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **Goal 1**

Promote Offerman as an excellent place to live. Ensure the preservation and the improvement of the quality of life that currently exists through the expansion of economic development. Ensure the orderly and efficient development of land, water and other unique resources in and around Offerman. Preserve our heritage and small town values.

##### **Objective 1.1**

The City shall make available or schedule for availability public facilities for future growth and urban development as to manage growth and to study urban intensities for impact within the Cities.

###### **Policy 1.1.1**

The City of Offerman will develop “Land-use Codes” to guide and regulate growth.

###### **Policy 1.1.2**

The City shall examine the impact of residential, industry and commercial developments and limit or suggest locations that are appropriate for the intensity level.

###### **Policy 1.1.3**

The city shall examine the possibility of developing policies to regulate density and intensity levels within the jurisdictional boundaries of Offerman.

###### **Policy 1.1.4**

Offerman will examine the feasibility of establishing and enforcing special development districts and regulations to promote infill development, for areas targeted for new development.

###### **Policy 1.1.5**

The City of Offerman will maintain a balance between economic development and housing by monitoring and requesting impact statements when appropriate.

##### **Objective 1.2**

Offerman will continue to support and encourage land-uses that are supportive of the future development map.

**Policy 1.2.1**

Develop instruments to ensure coordination between population densities and land-use patterns.

**Policy 1.2.2**

The City of Offerman shall regulate the location of land development consistent with topography and soil conditions and the availability of facilities and services.

**Policy 1.2.3**

Offerman will restrict development within unsuitable areas prone to flooding, improper drainage or other areas as identified within the Part V ordinances or maps located in the Historical and Cultural Resources Element.

**Objective 1.3**

Offerman shall continue to identify and designate blighted areas that are feasible for redevelopment or renewal.

**Policy 1.3.1**

Offerman shall request federal and state funds to redevelop and renew any identified blighted areas, where the local government units find there is a competitive feasibility to receive such funding.

**Objective 1.4**

Offerman shall continue to coordinate, through established processes, with agencies responsible for the implementation of any regional or state resource planning and management plan.

**Policy 1.4.1**

Offerman shall require that all proposed developments subject to the provisions of any regional or state resource planning and management plan shall be consistent with such plan.

**Objective 1.5**

Offerman shall protect all endangered flora and fauna from adverse impacts due to loss of critical habitat in accordance with state and federal regulations.

## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **GOALS & IMPLEMENTATION**

#### **Goal 1**

To create an economic climate that promotes economic diversity and growth by encouraging a stable local economy compatible with planned growth, economic opportunities, and prosperity for all residents with an improved quality of life.

##### **Objective 1.1**

Offerman with the support of local organizations will continue to promote employment opportunities for community residents.

##### **Policy 1.1.1**

The City of Offerman will promote the availability of employment for all that desire it. This shall be accomplished by:

- a. Coordinating with public and private agencies to identify and help individuals requiring special assistance to obtain and maintain employment;
- b. Encouraging local employers to provide labor market information; and
- c. Encouraging public schools and local community colleges to determine what vocational and professional training is necessary and available for the current and future labor market needs with the possibility of setting up satellite programs in or near the community.

##### **Objective 1.2**

The City of Offerman will continue to encourage cooperation and assist with private and public efforts to attract new employers and expand existing business firms in the community.

##### **Policy 1.2.1**

The City of Offerman should continue to sponsor economic activities that will enhance the local economy. Incentives should be consider as a provision for job creation when appropriate.

##### **Objective 1.3**

The City of Offerman shall encourage the conservation and enhancement of the natural and cultural resources of the City.

##### **Policy 1.3.1**

The City of Offerman will pursue economic development without endangering the quality of life in the City.



**Objective 1.4**

A business corridor should be developed along US Hwy 84.

**Objective 1.5**

The City of Offerman will cooperate with local community organizations to formulate an economic development strategic plan.

**Policy 1.5.1**

Both a short-term and long-term economic development plan should be formulated that is separate, but compliments the City of Offerman's Comprehensive Plan.

- a. If possible, submit a list of projects, when feasible, that includes their relative priority, timing and cost.
- b. Each project should have an impact statement that takes into consideration the City of Offerman's Comprehensive Plan.
- c. Businesses should be encouraged to locate in areas that maximize the use of existing infrastructure.

**Objective 1.6**

The City of Offerman will support organizations that enhance economic development/growth and/or develop implementation strategies.

**Policy 1.6.1**

Support economic development authorities.

**Policy 1.6.2**

Support the Chambers of Commerce

**Objective 1.7**

Encourage and support programs and the development of programs that attract businesses that are compatible with the city's goals, natural resources and unique geological features.

**Policy 1.7.1**

Support programs that attract businesses that are compatible with our goals, natural resources and unique geological features.

## **SUMMARY**

### **Purpose**

The city of Offerman and its elected officials recognize the need for short-term assessment and evaluation of the Plan and its accompanying Short Term Work Program. In addition to the prescribed five-year update, it will be in the best interest of Offerman to perform a yearly review of all projects included in the Short Term Work Program. Due to the incipient nature of Offerman, the sequence in which issues are addressed will be dictated by the primary need for Infrastructure and community facilities. It should also be noted that due to the limited resources available at the current time and the formative nature of governmental services in Offerman a five-year work program may prove too unwieldy to be effective. To this end, a yearly review and list of accomplishments should be completed and attached as an addendum to the Plan for each of the first five-years. As projects are completed, new projects may be added to the STWP through the appropriate channels. At the time of this five-year update the Council can decide whether or not to continue the yearly updates over the second five-year period of the Plan.

### **Short Term Work Program 2007-2011**

The efficacy of a joint planning effort is contingent on the items set forth in the plan that in turn reflect the direction the community has chosen to follow. Developing a viable plan in the dynamic political, fiscal, social and physical environment is challenging to say the least.

It is hoped that the new goals set forth by this update serve to provide a framework of future decision making with regard to multiple issues in Pierce County and its associated communities.

The Short Term Work Program update and Report of Accomplishments both deal with specific goals, policies and objectives within the confines of general categories of interest entitled: Housing, Economic Development, Public Facilities and Infrastructure, Natural and Historic Resources, and Land-use. These categories are set forth by the Georgia Planning Act and are the basic chapters for all comprehensive-planning efforts in the state. In the Report of Accomplishments, several projects not specifically mentioned in the original work program are included to show various unplanned accomplishments made in the area. Many of these additional accomplishments helped to set the stage for the new Short Term Work Program.

### **Implementation Goal**

Encourage the use of the Offerman Comprehensive Plan as the implementation tool for the City of Offerman.

**Offerman: STWP Report of Accomplishments 2002-2006**

**Public Facilities and Infrastructure**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Explanation</b>
<b>1</b> Conduct a study to determine the most cost-effective manner in which to establish and maintain a public water system.	Not Accomplished	Not Accomplished: Funds were not available to start project.
<b>2</b> Prioritize roads for paving or appropriate improvements	Completed	
<b>3</b> Formulate a paving schedule	Completed	
<b>4</b> Form a transportation committee to facilitate the improvement of the transportation infrastructure.	Not Accomplished	Not Accomplished: Participate in the Joint Ware & Pierce Joint Transportation Committee.
<b>5</b> Purchase needed items for fire department: eight beepers, four sets of turnout gear, two lanterns with batteries and charges, and one chainsaw.	Completed	
<b>6</b> Purchase a 200-gallon tank and small pump for first response truck.	Not Accomplished	Not Accomplished: Funds were not available to start project.

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<b>7</b>	Purchase fire department equipment maintenance items. (Battery charges, replacement cartridges, cleaning implements, etc.)	Completed	
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<b>8</b>	Place two signs on U.S. 84 designation location of fire station	Completed	
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<b>9</b>	Form a committee to study the possibilities for a primary care clinic being located in Offerman.	Completed	
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<b>10</b>	Expand recreational opportunities available in Offerman.	Not Accomplished	Not Accomplished: No land available to expanded recreational opportunities.
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<b>11</b>	Conduct a study to determine the most cost-effective manner by which to place sidewalks on both sides of U.S. 84 from the U.S. Post Office to Jasmine Trail.	Not Accomplished	Not Accomplished: Project was not cost effective.
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<b>12</b>	Construct a multi-purpose building to provide educational services, senior citizen programs, health screening, and after-school programs. The facility would also be used as a public information center and for community events.	Not Accomplished	Not Accomplished: Did not receive grant to start project.
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**Short Term Work Program 2007-2011**

***Housing***

<b>Project Number/Policy</b>	<b>Annual Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Implementation Year</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>1. Policy 1.3.1, 1.3.2 &amp; 1.3.3</b> Aggressively pursue grants for housing rehabilitation and renewal.	\$100,000	<b>CHIP/CDBG, USDA AND HUD GRANTS</b>	<b>2007-2011</b>	City of Offerman
<b>2. Policy 1.2.1</b> Provide funding for the building and code enforcement program.	\$3,000	\$1,000 Fees \$2,000 General Funds	2007-2011	City of Offerman
<b>3. Policy 1.1.1</b> Develop a Keep Offerman Beautiful Program.	\$500	General Funds	2007-2011	City of Offerman

***Community Facilities***

<b>Project Number/Policy</b>	<b>Annual Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Implementation Year</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>6. Policy 1.4.4</b> Construct a multipurpose building to provide educational services, senior center programs and after school programs. Also to be used as a public information center and for community events	\$500,000	General Funds, CDBG	2007-2011	City of Offerman
<b>7. Policy 1.4.4</b> Purchase land for future city projects	\$50,000	General Funds	2007-2011	City of Offerman
<b>8. Policy 1.4.3, 1.5.2</b> Purchase recreational equipment for park	\$5,000	DNR, General Funds	2007-2011	City of Offerman
<b>9. Policy 2.1.4, 2.1.5</b> Drainage and Street improvements	\$500,000	General Funds, CDBG	2007-2011	City of Offerman
<b>10. Policy 1.4.3</b> Purchase equipment to help maintain streets and right-of-ways	\$50,000	General Funds	2007-2011	City of Offerman

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<b>11. Policy 1.4.2</b> Purchase equipment for fire department	\$20,000	General Funds, Local assistance grants, Homeland Security Grants	2007-2011	City of Offerman
<b>12. Policy 1.4.4</b> Study to determine the feasibility of developing a private/public joint venture to develop a water system	\$5,000	General Funds, Local assistance grants, USDA, DCA	2007-2011	City of Offerman

***Natural and Historic Resources Element***

<b>Project Number/Activity</b>	<b>Annual Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Implementation Year</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>13. Policy 1.6.2</b> Conduct inventory to determine historic resources.	\$1000	General Funds	2007-2011	City of Offerman

***Land-use Element***

<b>Project Number/Activity</b>	<b>Annual Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Implementation Year</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>14. Policy 1.1.1</b> Develop Land-use Codes to guide and regulate growth	\$7,500	Quality Growth Grant	<b>2007-2011</b>	City of Offerman, DCA, SEGARDC

***Intergovernmental Coordination***

<b>Project Number/Activity</b>	<b>Annual Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Implementation Year</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>15. Policy 1.1.1</b> Purse intergovernmental cooperation when cost effective.	N/A	N/A	2007-2011	City of Offerman
<b>16. Policy 1.1.2</b> When appropriate and cost effective promote the sharing of services.	N/A	N/A	2007-2011	City of Offerman

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<b>17. Policy 1.1.3</b> Participate in committees, groups and organizations promoting intergovernmental cooperation.	N/A	N/A	2007-2011	City of Offerman
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***Economic Development***

<b>Project Number/Policy</b>	<b>Total Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Funding Source</b>	<b>Implementation Year</b>	<b>Responsibility</b>
<b>18. Policy 1.6.1</b> Provide funding for the Pierce County Development Authority.	\$5,000	General Funds	2007-2011	City of Offerman
<b>19. Policy 1.7.1</b> Provide funding for programs that attract businesses that are compatible with our goals, natural resources and unique geological features.	\$5,000	General Funds	2007-2011	City of Offerman
<b>20. Policy 1.4.2</b> Provide funding for initiatives that promote the revitalization of the City of Offerman to support economic growth.	\$10,000	General Funding and Quality Growth Grants	2007-2011	City of Offerman

**TECHNICAL ADDENDUM**



## POPULATION

### Purpose

Population is a critical element of comprehensive planning. Every aspect of planning, whether it is transportation and roadway enhancement, utilization of natural resources or future land-use, involves population data. It is necessary to understand a community's past and present population to effectively project future population trends that will facilitate the planning process.

### Past Trends

One of the fundamental pieces of information to be learned from the population analysis is the long-term trend in population. Growth is a fundamental concern for Offerman. One way of measuring this is to determine absolute growth or decline, which is calculated by comparing the number of residents in one census to the number of residents in one census to the number of residents in the previous census. The lack of census information for Offerman's makes it difficult to establish trends. It would be accurate to state that the population, in general, has remained constant and continues to grow slowly.

The average growth rate for Offerman from 1996-2000 has been approximately 1.7 percent. **Table 1** shows the 2005 population at approximately 406.

### Current Population Overview

It is difficult to assess the validity of any population projections as extrapolative values due to the unique nature of Offerman. While the City of Offerman may well follow the general pattern of slow to slow-to-moderate (1.5% per year) growth forecast for the region, Offerman might also exhibit characteristics atypical to the normal distribution curve in terms of population growth.

The projected trend of slow growth will impact the economic development, community facilities and housing goals established by the City of Offerman. All of these elements will be driven by economies of scale directly linked to the size and age of Offerman's population.

Historically, there is no evidence that the established, rather static population will vary much over the next decade. East of Offerman, closer to the coast, a population surge has occurred that is associated with the explosive growth along the Georgia shoreline. Offerman may well feel a ripple effect from this growth around them but it is difficult to forecast how much of an impact it will have, if any.

In terms of comprehensive planning the slow growth model seems best suited to describe future conditions in Offerman. The previously noted lack of accumulated data concerning population makes it more difficult to establish past trends with any merit for any of the population-related categories. However, accurate data for 2000 has been gathered and will be used as baseline data throughout the Plan.

### Future Trends

One of the most important factors to consider for local government planning is the anticipated future size and composition of the population. Future growth within the community was simply projected based on current information, and the cohort method was used to examine age groups. The least effort method, in-migration and out-migration, of predicting future growth was not used because many people will move into or out of the community over the planning period because of economic factors.

**Table 2** using the Georgia Department of Community Affairs forecasted numbers shows an approximately 5 percent growth rate in Pierce County from 2010-2030. It would be unwise to assume the

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same rate of growth for Offerman. It is the intent and purpose of this Plan to present accurate baseline data in order to formulate a clear profile of the existing nature of Offerman with more emphasis on empirical data than conjectured trends. In this case, a less than rigid format is used to fully address the challenge of establishing a clear profile, demographically, of Offerman. Official census data is limited; however, historical data does exist and is used sparingly.

**Chart 1** shows Offerman’s average growth from 2010-2030 to be approximately 1.7 percent. This growth rate will continue unless a significant event occurs.

Georgia’s overall average growth rate from 2010-2030 is estimated at approximately 6.6 percent. The average growth rate annually from 1980-2005 for Georgia was estimated at approximately 9.9 percent. Georgia will continue to out pace the growth rate of Offerman. Current trends and projections indicate that the rate of growth in Offerman will not experience dramatic changes, and will continue to remain at levels substantially lower than the State’s growth rates.

**Table 1**  
**Total Population**  
**1980-2005**

Category	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000	2005
<b>Georgia</b>	5,457,566	5,967,891	6,478,216	7,332,335	8,186,453	8,868,675
<b>Pierce</b>	11,897	12,613	13,328	14,482	15,636	16,571
<b>Offerman</b>	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	403	406
<b>Blackshear</b>	3,222	3,243	3,263	3,273	3,283	3,298
<b>Patterson</b>	763	695	626	627	627	593
<b>Waycross</b>	19,371	17,891	16,410	15,872	15,333	14,324

Source: 2000 U.S. Census & Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. Analysis: Georgia DCA

**Table 2**  
**Population Projection**  
**2210-2030**

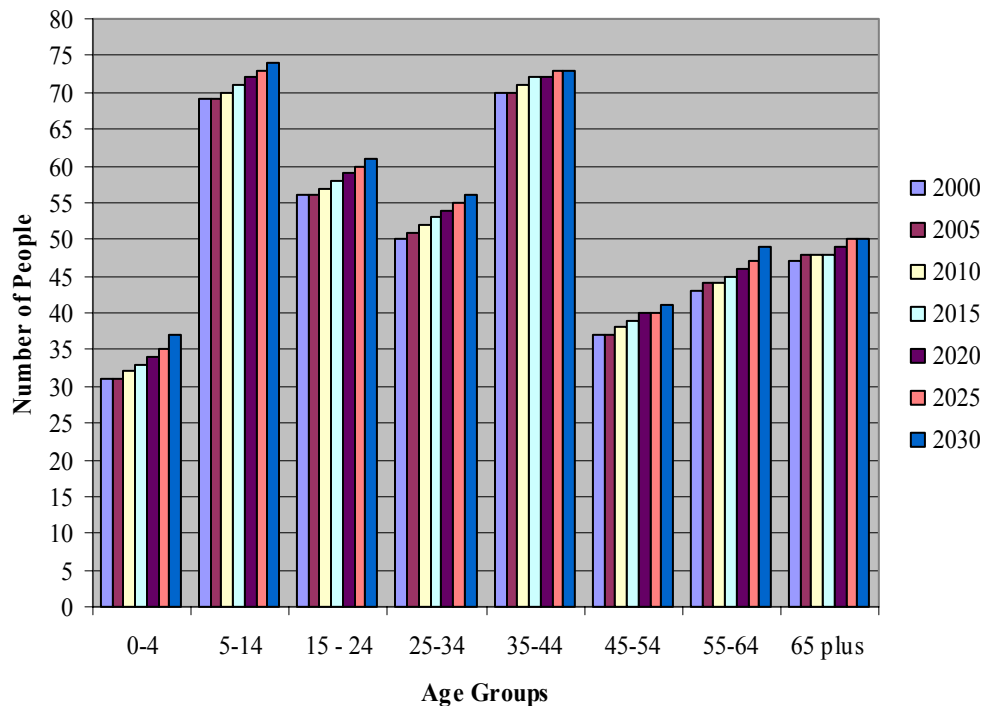
Category	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
<b>Georgia</b>	9,550,897	10,233,118	10,915,340	11,597,562	12,279,784
<b>Pierce</b>	17,506	18,440	19,375	20,310	21,245
<b>Offerman</b>	412	419	426	433	441
<b>Blackshear</b>	3,314	3,329	3,344	3,359	3,375
<b>Patterson</b>	559	525	491	457	423
<b>Waycross</b>	13,314	12,305	11,295	10,286	9,276

Source: 2000 U.S. Census & Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. Analysis: Georgia DCA

Offerman, as much of the southeast Georgia region, will experience an increase in people 40 and over as baby boomers mature. The population in Offerman will remain stable and grow slowly as shown in **Chart 1**.

**Population by Age Projection**

**Chart 1**

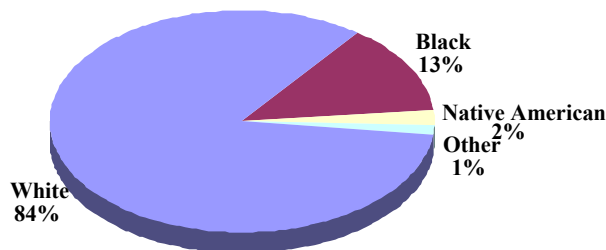


*Source: 2000 U.S. Census & Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. Analysis: Georgia DCA*

**Chart 2** shows that in 2000, 377 Caucasians, 51 Black or African-Americans, 9 Native Americans, 1 Asian, 1 Pacific Islander, and 4 Hispanics resided in Offerman. No specific population data exist that would indicate the 2005 population in Offerman other than estimates. The only US Census data that exist for Offerman is the 2000. This fact makes it difficult to make comparisons between Offerman, Pierce County and the State of Georgia. The City would do well to collect demographical data used in grant preparation for updating information contained in this section. This data would be utilized in development of accurate projections based on true data and not estimates.

**Offerman's Racial Makeup 2000**

**Chart 2**



*Source: 2000 US Census*

Historically, Pierce County demonstrated a slight edge in population for females as evidenced by the 1970 Census (51.2% Female to 48.8% male) and the 1980 Census (51.5% to 48.5%). **Table 3** shows that by 1990, a change had occurred with males holding the slight edge at 50.7 percent to 49.3 percent. Offerman in 1998 had a population split of 52.5 percent females to 47.5 males. **Charts 3, 4, and 5** depicts

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graphically that this trend will likely continue over the twenty-year period of the Plan.<sup>1</sup>

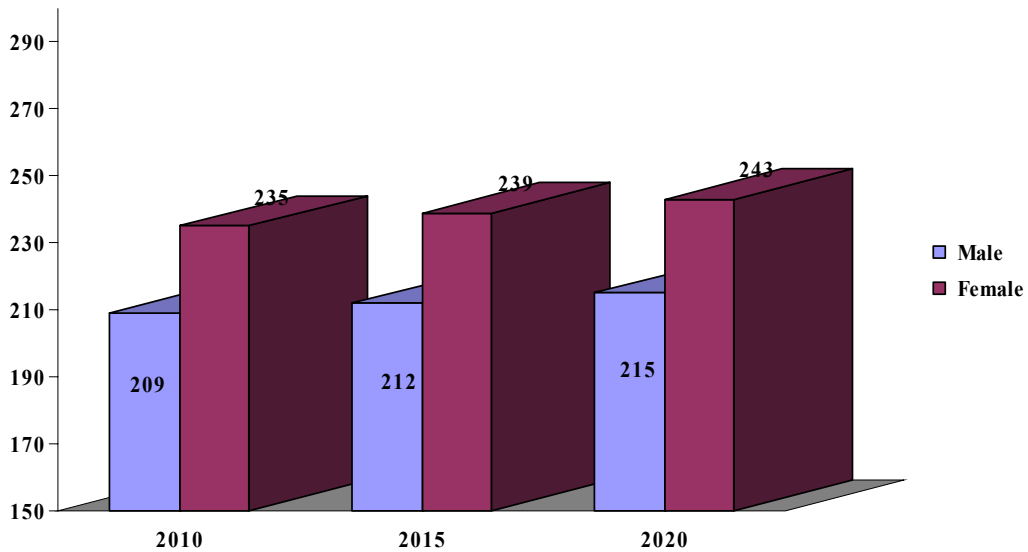
**Table 3  
Population by Sex**

<b>Offerman</b>	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>	<b>2005</b>
<i>Male</i>	No data	200	203	206
<i>Female</i>	No data	224	227	231
<b>Pierce</b>				
<i>Male</i>	6,715	6,815	6,917	7,021
<i>Female</i>	N/A	7,219	7,327	7,437
<b>Georgia</b>				
<i>Male</i>	3,382,864	3,595,984	3,811,531	4,063,350
<i>Female</i>	3,582,675	3,808,383	4,048,311	4,303,354

*Source: Woods & Poole Economics. Inc.*

**Offerman's Population by Sex 2010-2020**

**Chart 3**

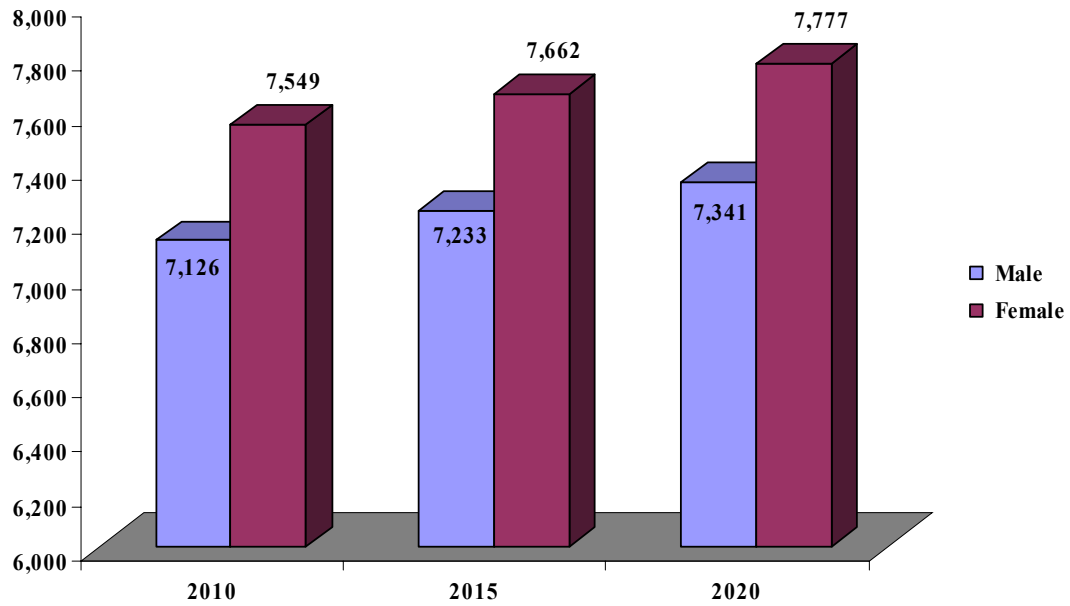


*Source: 2000 U.S. Census & Woods & Poole Economics. Inc. Analysis: Georgia DCA*

<sup>1</sup> This subsection, population by sex, was not updated. Table 3 was modified and charts used to depict 2010-2020.

Pierce County's Population by Sex 2010-2020

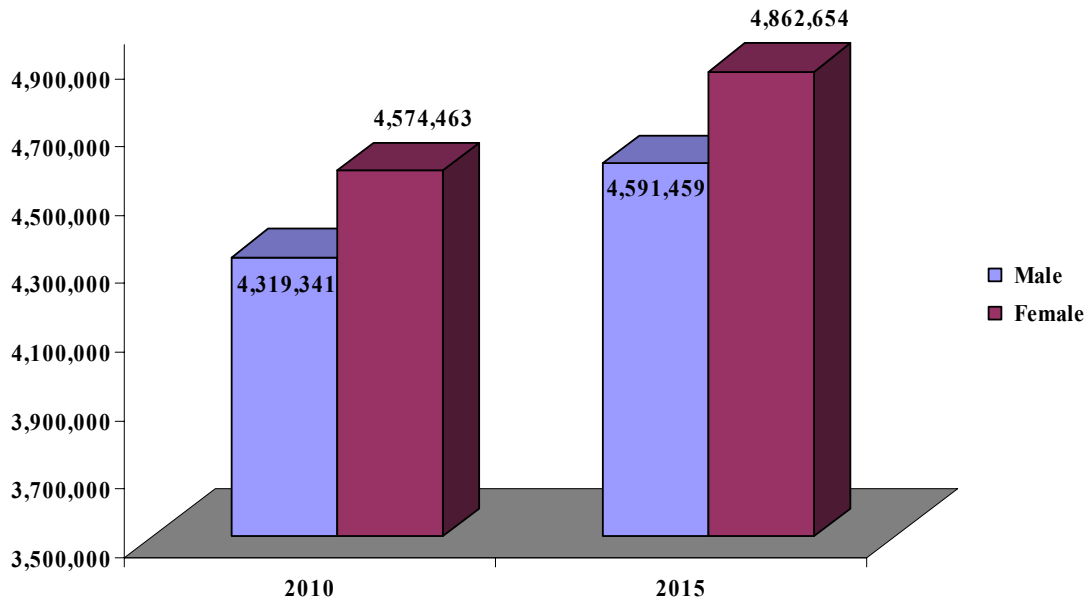
Chart 4



Source: 2000 U.S. Census & Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. Analysis: Georgia DCA

Chart 5

Georgia's Population by Sex 2010-2015



Source: 2000 U.S. Census & Woods & Poole Economics, Inc. Analysis: Georgia DCA

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Data on educational attainment are derived from a single question that asks, "What is the highest grade of school completed, or the highest degree received?" This subsection contains information on education found within Pierce County, adjacent counties and the state of Georgia. Students living in the City of Offerman attend Pierce County schools. According to the Service Delivery Strategy, the Pierce County Board of Education is the entity that is charged with education all citizens within Pierce County.

Educational attainment for residents of Offerman, Pierce County and Georgia is shown in **Tables 4–5**. Offerman compares favorably to Pierce County, surrounding counties and the state in educational attainment. More students are staying in the school system longer. Approximately sixty-three percent of Offerman’s residents in 2000 had a High School Diploma or GED, and approximately five-percent have attended college. Within the City of Offerman alone, approximately seventy-percent of adults have a High School Diploma/GED or higher.

The education attainment levels in the city are a good match with the skills, knowledge and abilities needed to participate in the work force. The Pierce County Board of Education has worked hard to provide an excellent technical curriculum for individuals who are pursuing industrial programs or college.

**Table 4**  
**Offerman: Education Attainment**

Category	1980		1990		2000	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Less than 9th grade	N/A		N/A		28	16.8
9th to 12 grade	N/A		N/A		22	13.2
High school graduate (includes GED)	N/A		N/A		105	62.9
Some College	N/A		N/A		8	4.8
Associate degree	N/A		N/A		1	0.6
Bachelor's degree	N/A		N/A		3	1.8
Grad/Professional Degrees	N/A		N/A		0	0.0

2000 US Census

**Table 5**  
**Educational Attainment Comparison**  
**For Persons Age 25 and Over**

Category	Persons Age 25 and Over			% With High School Diploma or Higher			% With Bachelor’s Degree or Higher		
	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000	1980	1990	2000
	Atkinson	3,322	3,679	4,503	24.5	51.5	57.2	N/A	6.4
Bacon	5,203	5,730	6,525	29.5	58.1	67.6	N/A	6.6	6.6
Berrien	7,779	8,782	10,451	27.9	57.5	66	N/A	7.5	9.4
Brantley	4,715	6,609	9,282	36.9	64.1	72.4	N/A	5.8	6.2
Charlton	3,804	5,002	6,404	30.7	56.2	65.1	N/A	6.4	6.4
Clinch	3,552	3,652	4,380	21.8	46.2	58.8	N/A	6.7	10.5
Coffee	14,527	17,427	22,798	23.5	58	65	N/A	11.1	10.1
Pierce	6,676	8,266	10,131	30.5	60	69.8	N/A	6.3	10.1
Ware	21,359	22,611	23,380	26.7	61.1	70.4	N/A	10.4	11.1
Offerman	N/A	N/A	240	N/A	N/A	65.4	N/A	N/A	1.3
Georgia	4,023,420	4,023,420	5,179,487	27.4	70.9	78.6	N/A	19.3	23.4

Source: SEGRDC 2004 Technical Staff Report & 2000 US Census

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The Georgia Department of Education 2003-2004 Annual Report Card on K-12 Public Schools indicates that the 2002-2004 dropout rates in Pierce County are similar to the State rates. The years of education completed across the board in Pierce County has continued to increase from approximately thirty-percent to approximately seventy-percent in 2000. This trend will continue well into the planning horizon.

The 2003-2004 Annual Report Card on K-12 Public Schools shows SAT scores were below the State and National average. This may be reflective of cultural (rural VS. urban) differences rather than a deficiency in the overall educational system.

As would be expected, **Table 6** shows that the City of Offerman's per capita income level is below regional and State norms. This is reflective of the level of educational attainment across the board for the work force en masse as well as the lack of good paying, quality jobs in the immediate vicinity.

**Table 6**  
**Per Capita Income 1991-2000**  
**In Current Dollars**

	<b>1990</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>2000</b>
<b>Atkinson</b>	12,264	16,727	19,725
<b>Bacon</b>	11,819	16,037	19,582
<b>Berrien</b>	13,504	16,599	19,775
<b>Brantley</b>	11,086	14,036	16,961
<b>Charlton</b>	10,692	12,792	15,600
<b>Clinch</b>	10,723	15,961	18,178
<b>Coffee</b>	13,775	17,402	21,304
<b>Pierce</b>	12,593	16,308	20,491
<b>Ware</b>	12,847	16,536	20,402
<b>Offerman</b>	6,989	7,826	11,393
<b>State</b>	17,123	25,433	27,346
<b>Nation</b>	18,666	26,988	29,018

*Source: SEGARDC Technical Staff Report 2004 & Source Woods & Poole Economics. Inc. 1994*

**Table 7** depicts that the number of households in the City of Offerman will increase, but at a slower rate than is predicted for the county, region and state. **Table 8** depicts that the average size per household will continue to slowly decrease. As the average size of households decrease the need for housing will increase. The location of new housing units should be regulated with concern for future water and sewerage service. In addition, future residential land-use development should be coordinated with existing land-use in terms of proximity to current residential land-use.

**Table 7  
Number of Households 1996-2020**

<b>Year</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>State</b>
<b>1996</b>	159	5,062	1,641,303
<b>1997</b>	159	5,125	2,746,239
<b>1998</b>	160	5,191	2,746,239
<b>1999</b>	160	5,161	2,806,239
<b>2000</b>	164	5,326	2,913,536
<b>2005</b>	169	5,616	3,201,910
<b>2010</b>	174	5,932	3,507,181
<b>2015</b>	180	6,277	3,830,086
<b>2020</b>	185	6,342	4,102,319

*Source: Woods a Poole Economics, Inc. 1994: Analysis: Georgia DCA*

**Table 8  
Average Size of Household 1970-2010**

<b>Year</b>	<b>City</b>	<b>County</b>	<b>Region</b>	<b>State</b>
<b>1970</b>	N/D	3.4	3.5	3.3
<b>1980</b>	N/D	3.2	3.0	2.8
<b>1985</b>	N/D	2.9	2.9	2.7
<b>1990</b>	N/D	2.8	2.9	2.7
<b>1995</b>	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.6
<b>2000</b>	2.6	2.6	2.7	2.6
<b>2005</b>	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5
<b>2010</b>	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.4

*Source: Pierce County Comprehensive Plan 2010*



## **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Purpose**

The economic development element of the Plan will provide an inventory and assessment of the labor force and economic base existing in Offerman, with comparisons to regional and state figures. The purpose for this data will be to establish baseline information that will facilitate the targeting of future needs for training, outline the employment status of residents and assess the labor force available for future economic development. Economic development is rarely an isolated mechanism, but rather a component of a complexity of factors that generally fall within a regional context. Thus the economic development of Offerman is contingent upon the economic development of the surrounding region.

### **Economic Profile**

Offerman has relied historically on agriculture and timbering with a preponderance of small farms and self-employed timbermen. The overall demise of small farms during the past six decades in Georgia is reflected in Offerman where, prior to 1950, most residents did sustain some form of farming endeavor. Through the years Offerman has not been able to secure an anchoring commercial or industrial facility with which to generate either jobs or a tax base. Farming ventures have tapered to the point where more of the population must seek employment in other towns or counties. This situation creates a liability that must be overcome if Offerman is to develop any sustained commercial or industrial interests.

### **Economic Base**

The economic-base is that part of the local economy that brings in money from outside of the community. Although the computation of the economic base is complex, understanding the principal is not. Any business that brings in dollars from consumers outside the community is an economic-base industry. Any business that simply recycles local money is not part of the economic-base. Offerman's economic-base is limited because it is a commuter town. A commuter town is a community that is primarily residential in character, with most of its residents commuting to a nearby town or city to earn their livelihood.

### **Economic by Sector**

Because of growth within the region and quick access to excellent transportation systems, the city has a higher percentage of individuals working in the construction, manufacturing, and public sector than the state.

At the county and regional level agriculture and agriculture-related services decreased, continuing the trend of the last three decades. Manufacturing, retail trade and services showed the most gain regionally. Offerman relies heavily on out-of-town jobs and the market forces that drive those sectors. Until an anchoring commercial interest or major industry locates in Offerman with the accompanying employment base the local work force will be at the mercy of the aforementioned market forces and commercial trends.

### **Unemployment**

Offerman exhibits a seasonal shift in unemployment associated with the construction and forestry industries. Historically, countywide unemployment has been above the state's average. Data is lacking for Offerman in this category.

## **Commuting**

Pierce County, historically, has evidenced a significant percentage of persons commuting to work outside the county. By 1990, more than 56.4 percent of the work force was employed outside of Pierce County. Exact commuting data for Offerman is lacking but it can be assumed that the percent amount is at least 50 percent, but probably more due to the relatively few jobs in Offerman proper. The seasonal shifts in the construction sector also contribute to a fluctuating data base for commuters.

## **Economic Climate**

The City's investment capital is limited and effects should be made to stimulate or recruit industry and commerce that have low risk/high yield expenditure of resources. In conjunction with enhancing existing business sectors, two non-traditional sectors, tourism and retirement services, may offer some possibilities for establishing new jobs and recruiting new residents. However, any such efforts will have to be coordinated with an improvement of existing community facilities and services, primarily water and sewerage. Without this commitment by the City of Offerman, to provide basic infrastructure and community facilities, little can be expected in the manner of significant, long-term economic development.

Offerman's one commercial interest, an ITT Rayonier wood-chipping yard, does not provide significant employment opportunities beyond a few jobs. Offerman also has three cabinet shops and several small retail businesses, but in and of themselves, they do not comprise a "central business area" or a "shopping district", so a nucleus from which to develop and expand is lacking at the current time. Again, the development of basic services and expanded community facilities must be a precursor for economic development to occur.

## **Training Resources**

There are two traditional technical schools within commuting distance of Offerman; Okefenokee Tech in Waycross, approximately 35 miles away and Altamaha Tech in Jesup, approximately 25 miles away. Waycross College, a two-year unit of the University of Georgia system offers post secondary educational studies as does Georgia Southern, a four year institute in Statesboro some 70 miles from Offerman and 90 miles to the west is Valdosta State University. To ensure that Offerman's workforce is prepared Okefenokee Tech has an off-site computer training center located within the Offerman City Hall.

The existing transportation network does provide adequate access to educational and training opportunities for those with personal transportation. A generally unskilled labor force will be viewed as a negative factor for any incoming industrial or commercial interests. The need for continued education, in not only Offerman but the entire region, is a high priority if the successful recruitment of business is to occur.

## **Economic Development Resources and Tools**

The City of Offerman does not have an organized development authority through which to establish a concerted effort to recruit new business and industry. Currently, the Pierce County Chamber of Commerce and the Pierce County Industrial Development and Building Authority offer services to Offerman as well as the other municipalities in Pierce County. Recently within Pierce County local leaders have implemented the "Leadership Pierce." This type of program has been very successful in neighboring counties and encourages coordination, cooperation and the sharing of resources.

The Southeast Georgia Regional Development Center administers a regional small business development

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center located in Waycross. This agency provides economic development assistance to cities, counties, industries, and individuals throughout the region through such functions as grant writing and administration, revolving loan programs, small business incubator programs and planning and development assistance for local governments. The Southeast Georgia Financial Services, housed at the Southeast Georgia Regional Development Center, administers the SBA 504 Loan Program, Community Development Block Grant Employment Incentive Program (CDBG-EIP) Loan Funds, a Rural Economic and Community Development Revolving Loan Fund, and an Economic Development Administration (EDA) Revolving Loan Fund.

### **Economic Development Assessment**

Offerman is at a distinct crossroads in terms of economic development. Emerging from decades of labor intensive agribusiness and timbering into a scenario where manufacturing, processing and services have become prevalent; Offerman is faced with making this transition in a positive manner. Concurrent with diversification is the increasing need for a well-educated and technically proficient work force. This is true of not only Offerman, but the entire region. It is difficult to predict to what extent the swelling tide of change sweeping the region will have on Offerman. If the slow - to - moderate growth model is accepted then some "ripple effect" can be expected across the board, effecting both population and economic elements. The availability of land in and around Offerman offers some leverage in attracting new residents as well as business.

As previously noted, some forms of development will not be easily accommodated due to existing soil types and drainage factors. So although there is an availability of land there will also be pre-existing constraints that will influence land-use with relation to economic development.

Pierce County's status as a "commuter community" is projected to continue into the next century. Generally such communities are top heavy with residents and housing units but lacking a broad base of industrial commercial support that is typically the foundation of the tax structure. This is currently the situation in Offerman and will grow worse if population and housing growth is not balanced with similar progress in business and industry or at the minimum, job availability. A solid tax base will not develop without the synergistic effect of growth in all aspects of the community and the establishment of water and sewerage services.

The sectors that appear to be strongest countywide are services (e.g., motels and lodging, auto-repair, health and social services); manufacturing (e.g., Julie Hat Co., Gilman Building Products, and several egg processing plants); and construction. The weakest sectors countywide, at the current time, are wholesale, agricultural services and retail.

Offerman must use smart growth strategies to maximized growth. The city must consider clustering of homes and encourage developers to built water systems to maximum usage of their property. If clustering of homes and water systems are to be used a standard must exist for both development and watering systems. The city must work with the Georgia Water Association, Department of Community Affairs and the United States Department of Agriculture to develop standards for those types of water system to ensure a smooth transition from cluster systems to a municipal water system. Currently the population density per square mile does not support the development of a municipal water system.

In summary, economic development will be co-dependent on local government's ability to develop and maintain infrastructure. This commitment performs three critical functions: 1) demonstrates government's commitment to provide services; 2) encourages existing businesses to expand and; 3) maintains a superior quality of life which encourages workers to live in the area.

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Another priority item is road improvement which needs to occur concurrently with the development of water and sewerage services to ensure adequate transportation routes for all residents.

## **NATURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this element will be to provide an inventory and assessment of local natural and historic resources to determine the manner in which they may best be utilized in order to yield maximum long-range benefits to the community.

### **Natural Resources**

The most valuable natural resources found in the Offerman area are arable land, soils favorable to timber production and agriculture, and good availability of fresh water.

Historically, Offerman has utilized these resources in a judicious and prudent manner reflective of its tradition as a predominantly farming and agriculturally-oriented community.

As aforementioned, Offerman residents rely solely on shallow or deep wells for all watering needs. This has never posed a problem in the past, however, great care should be taken in the future to protect the water table from any pollution associated with, not only industrial development, but residential as well. At some point in time, if the population density should increase without the advent of a public water system and accompanying sewerage system, the carrying capacity of the localized shallow water pockets may not be able to provide enough water without the introduction of more deep wells.

A more significant problem will be an overabundance of septic tanks. In an area that has poor to moderate drainage and is in close proximity to a flood plain, an excessive amount of septic tanks may lead to ground water pollution or contamination of existing shallow wells. This would also be the case if any industrial or commercial interests located in Offerman put unusually high demands on the water available to the extent that the general populace would be left short or, through contamination, render wells useless.

Although an abundance of land is present, soil types favorable to timbering and some agriculture may hinder other forms of development. Offerman's forested lands, wetlands, commercial timber tracts and farm lands support a wide variety of wildlife.

No unique plant or animal habitats within the Offerman city limits were identified during the compilation of the Pierce County Comprehensive Plan.

### **Inventory of Specific Natural Resource Items**

#### **Water Supply Watershed**

There are no water supply watersheds in Offerman or Pierce County.

#### **Groundwater Recharge Areas**

The closest significant groundwater recharge area is due east of Offerman in Wayne County. This area runs in a northeasterly direction throughout the length of Wayne County. Another recharge area is in Pierce County at the extreme western end near the Ware County line.

## **Wetlands**

USGS topographical maps (Screven Quadrangle) show that within the Offerman city limits and the adjacent land to it there is a considerable amount of wetlands forming an arc running from the northwest through due north to the northwest. Offerman is situated at the southern tip of an upland oblong of land that ends to the north where it abuts the banks of the Little Satilla River. Due south and east of Offerman is a vast stretch of wetlands known as Zero Bay which extends to the Pierce and Wayne Counties line and beyond. To the west upland pine forest habitat is the predominant eco-habitat.

## **Protected River Corridors**

There are none in the Offerman city limits or adjacent to it.

## **Flood Plains**

Although the flood plain associated with the Little Satilla River is relatively close, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development flood insurance maps show Offerman to be excluded from the 500-year event sites.

## **Soil Types**

Offerman exhibits two major soil classifications:

- Leefield-Robertsdale-Pelham and Irvington-Robertsdale-Leefield. (See Location section for more soil information.)

## **Steep Slopes**

There are no steep slopes in the Offerman area.

## **Prime Agricultural and Forest Land**

These are lands defined as areas which primarily include productive agricultural land with long term economic viability to produce crops, timber, livestock, poultry, and dairy or nursery products. In Offerman while there is arable land suitable for some crop production and grazing the two major soil types exclude it from being classified as having prime agricultural land.

## **Plant and Animal Habitats**

Offerman's rural nature, forested lands, wetlands and farms provides an abundance of habitat for a variety of wildlife indigenous to the region. There is no currently recognized unique plant or animal habitats in Offerman or Pierce County.

## **Major Park, Recreation and Conservation Areas**

There are no federal, state, or regional parks in the Offerman area. The Little Satilla River Wildlife Management Area's eastern border at some points is less than two (2) miles from the Offerman city limits.

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### **Scenic Views and Sites**

There are no currently recognized scenic views or sites in Offerman or the adjacent area.

### **Historic Resources**

As would be expected in a community with a one-hundred year history Offerman has several historically interesting structures. Most are small vernacular structures situated near the CSX rail line. Unfortunately, there do not appear to be enough to form a historic district.

Time has also taken its toll as many buildings from the early decades of the century have been destroyed by fire or decay.

A review of specific items to be addressed:

### **Residential Resources**

With the exception of the aforementioned houses there are no notable residential structures.

### **Commercial Resources**

None

### **Industrial Resources**

None

### **Institutional Resources**

None

### **Rural Resources**

Some older farm-related structures exist.

### **Historic, Archaeological and Cultural Resources**

Several cemeteries date back to the nineteenth century. There are no historical landscapes, battlegrounds or historical ruins within the city limits.

### **Offerman**

Although Offerman has a colorful history associated with the timber boom of the early 1900's and the accompanying development of the rail network, little remains to mark this era.

The Offerman depot was destroyed by fire, thought to be arson, on the morning of October 26, 1910.

The Offerman Hotel, built in 1907 is gone. There are no reminders of the various saw mills, cane grinding operations or tobacco barns prevalent during the same era. A bid to locate the district agricultural college in Offerman failed; Douglas prevailed and that institution is now South Georgia College. By 1915 the

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boom times had faltered, like a wildfire out of fuel, and Offerman fell victim to the vicissitudes of a rapidly shifting economy. One year later Offerman's charter was repealed by legislative action.



## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this element is to provide an inventory of public facilities and services; to assess their adequacy for serving present and future population and economic needs; to identify future needs and goals; and to outline a strategy for providing the desired level of public facilities and services throughout the planning period.

### **Community Facilities Overview**

Offerman is faced with a variety of challenges that a nascent community must address. The lack of most public services is a major hurdle to be cleared with water and sewerage at the head of the list. It is doubtful that any significant economic development will manifest itself without the availability of these two basic services. Any population growth will also hinge on the availability of water and sewerage as well as affordable housing, proximity to employment sectors, educational opportunities, adequate public safety, and recreational facilities.

### **Specific Items to be addressed:**

#### **Transportation Network**

Offerman is located on U.S. Highway 84 which gives access to the neighboring towns of Waycross and Jesup and either Brunswick or Savannah. Intersecting U.S. 84 near Offerman, SR 32 offers access to Brunswick and Douglas. Interstate 95, accessible via S.R 32, is 40 miles to the east. In terms of road classification, U.S. 84 is the only arterial in the Offerman area. Three roads, Birmingham Avenue, Lincoln Loop and Offerman Loop serve as collectors and the remainder; generally unpaved roads are at best Local Function roads. The local transportation infrastructure consists of many unimproved roadways and several paved roads. The prevalence of unimproved roads and the ensuing maintenance costs associated with them dictates that the improvement of these byways should be a priority. The obvious benefits would be less maintenance costs and safer transit.

#### **Water Supply and Treatment**

No public water supply or treatment system is currently in existence. All local watering needs are provided by private wells.

#### **Sewerage System and Wastewater Treatment**

All sewerage is handled by septic tanks.

#### **Solid Waste Management**

Offerman has complied with the Georgia Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Act of 1990 and currently has privatized pickup via Southland Waste. Offerman was included, as a municipality of Pierce County in the recent Pierce County Solid Waste Management Plan update and Short Term Work Program 2002-2007.

## **Public Safety**

Law enforcement services are currently provided by the Pierce County Sheriffs Department. The Georgia State Patrol, operating on major highways such as U.S. 84 is available for assistance under a mutual aid agreement with Pierce County. Emergency 911 services must be initiated by calling the Sheriffs dispatcher located at the County Jail in Blackshear some twelve-miles away.

## **Fire Protection**

Offerman is served by one (Big Creek), of eight, county fire districts which are staffed by volunteers. Offerman's fire protection insurance rating is nine. The Offerman city hall also houses some fire department equipment.

### **Offerman/Big Creek Volunteer Fire Department Inventory**

- 1984 GMC Pickup
- 1990 Kenworth T400 Model Truck W/tanker unit
- 1985 Chevrolet Fire Truck W/ Tanker Pump
- 1981 GMC Class A Engine Pumper
- Floating pump
- 2 Smoke removal fans

Currently, the City has a fifteen member volunteer” **Community Emergency Response Team”** (CERT) that is certified. Six members of the CERT are volunteer firefighters. All CERT members have had hazmat, disaster medical operations, disaster team organization, Fire and rescue training.

## **Hospitals and Public Health Facilities**

There are no hospital facilities in Pierce County. The closest to Offerman is Wayne Memorial County Hospital in Jesup. Also serving the Offerman area is Satilla Regional Medical Center in Waycross and the Southeast Georgia Medical Center in Brunswick. The Pierce County Health Department in Blackshear also provides services accessible by Offerman’s citizens.

## **Recreation**

Offerman has recently completed a multi-use recreation area on land adjacent to the city hall. The Pierce County Recreation Department also provides services such as softball, basketball and football leagues open to residents of all county municipalities.

## **General Government**

The City of Offerman has a mayor and a six-member city council. The legislative authority of the city is vested in this assemblage. The Chief Executive's (Mayor) powers and duties are to preside at all meetings of the council, be city's official representative for all procedural or ceremonial purposes, to take affidavits and administer oaths, sign, on behalf of the city, all written and approved contracts, ordinances, and other instruments executed by the city which by law are required to be in writing, vote on all matters brought before the council and be counted toward a quorum as any other council member, prepare and submit to council a recommended annual operating and capital budget and to fulfill other executive or administrative duties as the council shall, by ordinance, establish.

## **Educational Facilities**

There are no schools in Offerman. Offerman is within the jurisdiction of the Pierce County Board of Education. The Patterson Elementary School provides education for K-5, Pierce County's Middle School and High School provides secondary education for all residents of Offerman.

## **Libraries and Cultural Facilities**

The City of Offerman has a small library at City Hall and the Pierce County Library in Blackshear is available. The Okefenokee Regional Library in Waycross offers the most comprehensive library services in the area.

## **Community Center**

Serving as the hub for future community facilities is the new Offerman city hall completed December 1998. A true reflection of Offerman's "can do" spirit and the essence of small towns everywhere this facility is a product of the people, by the people and for the people.

The construction of the city hall was accomplished with a minimal expenditure of funds (\$25,000) and a maximum of citizen participation in both supplies and labor donated. The entire complex contains city hall and the fire department, a walking track, basketball court, park benches, covered picnic shelter and a baseball/softball field.

City hall contains a small library, computer work stations for public use. This municipal center marks a singular advancement for Offerman and local government's ability to provide community facilities for the population. Modest by many standards, it nonetheless demonstrates government's commitment to solidifying a cohesive infrastructure capable of responding to the needs of the people.

The community facilities currently being provided by the City of Offerman are adequate for the needs of the community. Fire protection (all volunteer) is acceptable because of the City's efforts to constantly modernize fire fighting equipment, vehicles, and station house.

The most pressing problem, in terms of community facilities, is the lack of a private and/or public water and sewage removal system. The community is currently working with the Georgia Water Association to determine if clustering of well systems would aid in the development of a future municipal water system.

Although the transportation network is adequate for the initial segment of the Plan, improvements do need to be made. These transportation improvements are being address with LARP funding.

## LAND USE

### Purpose

The purpose of this element is to provide Offerman the opportunity to inventory existing land-use patterns and trend; to determine future patterns of growth, based on community needs and desires; and to develop goals, policies, and strategies for land-use that strike a balance between effective and efficient delivery of public services, protection/preservation of vulnerable natural and historic resources, and respect for individual property rights. The accepted land-use categories sanctioned by the State of Georgia are:

- **Residential** - single-family and multi-family dwelling units
- **Commercial** - non-industrial business uses including retail sales, office, service and entertainment
- **Industrial** - manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing, etc.
- **Public/Institutional** - city halls, police and fire stations, libraries, post offices, schools, etc. and institutional - colleges, churches, cemeteries, hospitals, etc.
- **Transportation/Communication/Utilities** - power plants, Rail Road facilities, radio towers, telephone switching stations, etc.
- **Parks/Recreation/Conservation** - public or private - playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, Wildlife Management Areas, national forests, golf courses, recreational centers, etc.
- **Agriculture/Forestry** - farming (fields, lots, pastures, farmsteads, livestock production), aquaculture or commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting.
- **Undeveloped** - woodlands or pasture (not in crop use, livestock or timber production), undeveloped portions of residential subdivisions and industrial parks, water bodies, etc.

### Future Development Land Needs

**Figure 9**

<b>Category</b>	<b>Acreage</b>
Agricultural	1246
Commercial	58
Industrial	42
Public/Institutional	4
Recreational	4
Residential	634
Trans/Comm/Util	14
Undeveloped	0

# HOUSING ELEMENT

## Purpose

The purpose of this element is to provide Offerman the opportunity to inventory and assess its existing housing stock; to assess its adequacy and suitability for serving the current and future population and economic development needs; to determine future housing needs and goals; and to formulate a strategy for the adequate provision of housing for all sectors of the population.

The majority of housing is either manufactured or site-built. Approximately 102 homes in the City are post seventies. This would indicate that minor repairs are needed to a large portion of them.

There are approximately twenty-one homes that date pre-1939. Generally these homes are in fair condition and fit for human habitation, but need minor repair. Approximately twenty-five units are wood frame houses built in the 1940's and 1950's, and approximately twenty-eight units are brick, and were built in the early 1960's to late and 1960's.

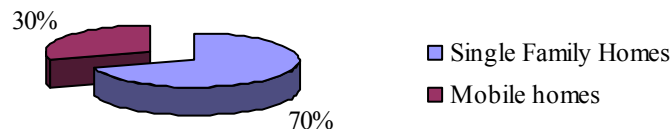
Countywide, the median dollar value of housing units in 2000 was \$64,300. Whereas in Offerman the median dollar value of homes was approximately \$57,000. The dollar value within the City of Offerman would reflect only structural appraisal because, due to the unusually large lots of land associated with many units, the total value of property including land and structure would be greater than \$57,000.

## Current Housing Assessment

The 176 individual households form a centralized residential section south of U.S. 84 that continues on toward the city limits in a southerly direction. These housing units are predominantly site built with a large number of large double-wide manufactured homes. Noteworthy is the surprisingly high number of manufactured housing units which goes against the current trend of surrounding cities. Although a concentrated nucleus of residential units does exist there is markedly little subdivision-style residential lots which is indicative of the lack of public water and sewerage services available at the current time. The average residential plot is reminiscent of older rural farm sites comprised of a house and several outbuildings that serve as either livestock shelters or crop storage facilities. Every residence must rely on a well(s) for all watering needs and a septic tank for sewerage disposal.

Housing in Offerman

Chart 7



Source: 2000 U.S. Census Bureau

Housing in Offerman is typical of most small farming communities. Generally, older houses are found on large tracts that include some agriculture or livestock uses along with an abundance of personal gardens. A centralized hub does exist centered around the backdrop of the old rail depot. Although the population has remained relatively stable with little growth since the development of current comprehensive plan, there is a need to continue to support construction codes and guidelines, particularly with respect to flood plains and wetlands for future housing sites. As stated elsewhere in this plan Offerman is located beyond the 500-year event of the adjacent flood plain of the Little Satilla River.

Due to the large amount of wetlands and poorly drained soil types within Pierce County septic tank failure during wet periods is not unusual. While it is possible to meet the state guidelines (Rules and Regulations for On-site sewage Management Systems) for installation of a septic tank system in a wetlands area there is a high frequency of failure due to soil saturation. The future placement of septic tanks in Offerman should be carefully controlled. In terms of not only wetlands but uncontrolled placement may well result in soil saturation due to density problems associated with overcrowding.

The Georgia Uniform Codes Act of 1989 established eight mandatory codes that are effective state-wide. These codes are: Standard Building Code, Standard Gas Code, Standard Mechanical Code, Standard Plumbing Code or Georgia State Plumbing Code, National Electrical Code, Georgia State Energy Code for Buildings, CABO One and Two Family Dwelling Code, Standard Fire Prevention Code, Georgia Energy Code and the Water Conservation Act. Local governments are not required to adopt the codes by ordinance, however, they are required to adopt an agency, administrative procedures and penalties for enforcement. Any new construction in Offerman should meet all state-mandated standards and existing countywide standards where appropriate.

### **Future housing Assessment**

The quality and availability of housing units in Offerman is above average. There is ample space for more housing, however, due to the reliance on wells and septic tanks, the choice of where to build new housing is significant. While there are advantages to a cluster-mode of building with an eye towards the future in terms of providing water and sewerage services there is also a threshold for existing wells and septic tanks. For example, if too many new units are constructed in areas where density is already high before the initiation of water and sewerage services, then a risk of contamination from the over abundance of septic tanks is high. This situation should be conducive for affecting a controlled and selective manner in which to approve new site applications for building residential units.

All manufactured housing should be carefully inspected to ensure compliance with all state codes and safety regulations. Evaluate the tax structure for mobile homes to ensure they are assessed and taxed at the proper value. Rigid enforcement of Georgia's "Rules and Regulations for On-Site Sewage Management Systems" will prohibit installation of septic systems in the flood plains; allow placement of septic tank systems only in suitable soils; and ensure adequate spacing for the proper functioning of septic tank systems.

