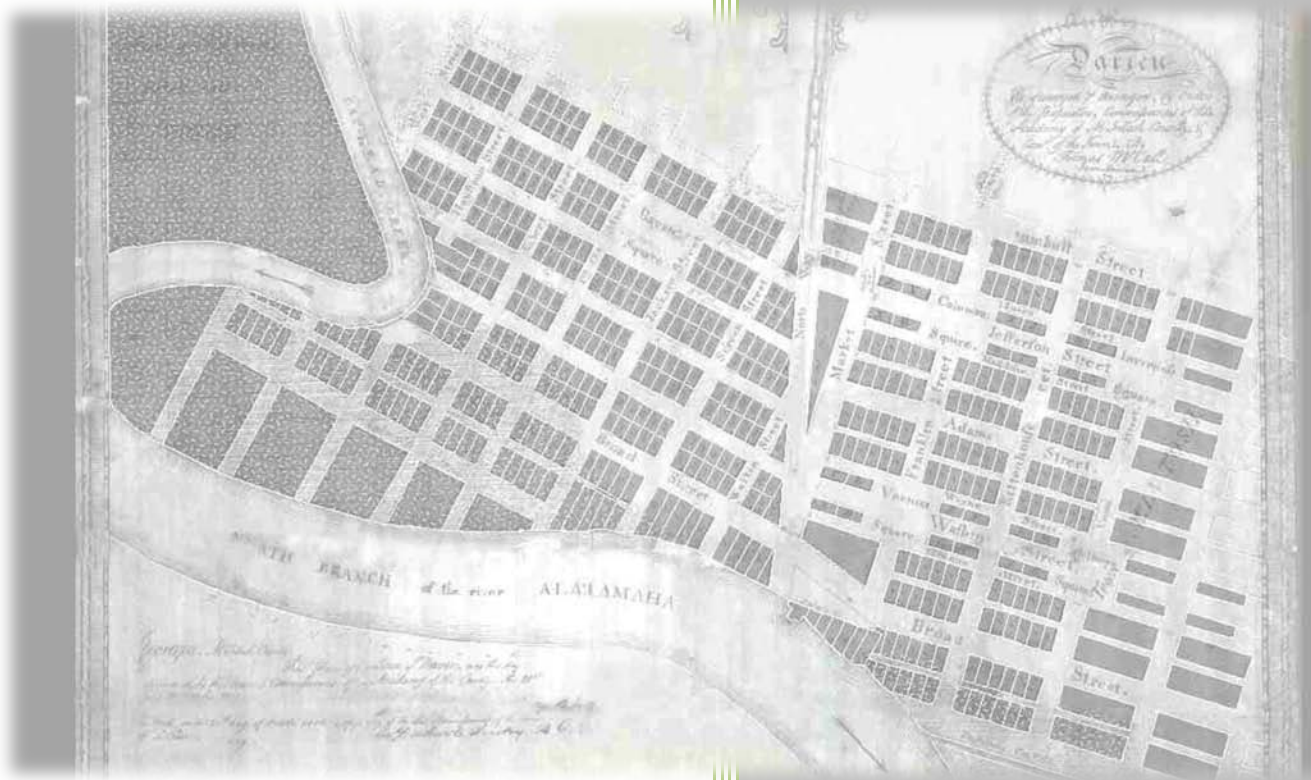


COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PARTIAL UPDATE

CITY OF DARIEN



SUBMITTED TO:
DEPARTMENT OF
COMMUNITY AFFAIRS

BY:
CITY OF DARIEN
JULY 2008

Ecological
Planning
Group

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INTRODUCTION

The City of Darien is experiencing significant development pressure and must address issues related to ongoing development in order to ensure that the City can continue to grow without creating an adverse impact on community resources, citizens, and infrastructure. The purpose of this Comprehensive Plan Partial Update is to outline a plan of action for the City to support sustainable economic and residential growth.

The City's community vision, which was created to both guide the development of this plan and to help guide future planning and decision making, is:

“To balance sustainable economic development and personal property rights with environmental preservation.”

The image below depicts the relationship between sustainable economic growth, land use and environmental protection. It is a wheel – with each element leading to the next, thereby creating a continuous cycle of economic development and environmental sustainability.



BACKGROUND

The Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA), Office of Planning and Quality Growth is the governing body responsible for administering planning efforts at the local level for the State of Georgia. The requirements for a partial update to the local government comprehensive plan were updated in March 2007. Under the guidelines produced by the DCA, the partial update is designed to do the following:

- Generate local pride and enthusiasm about the future of the community,
- Engage the interest of citizens in implementing the plan, and
- Provide a guide to everyday decision making for use by local government officials and community leaders.



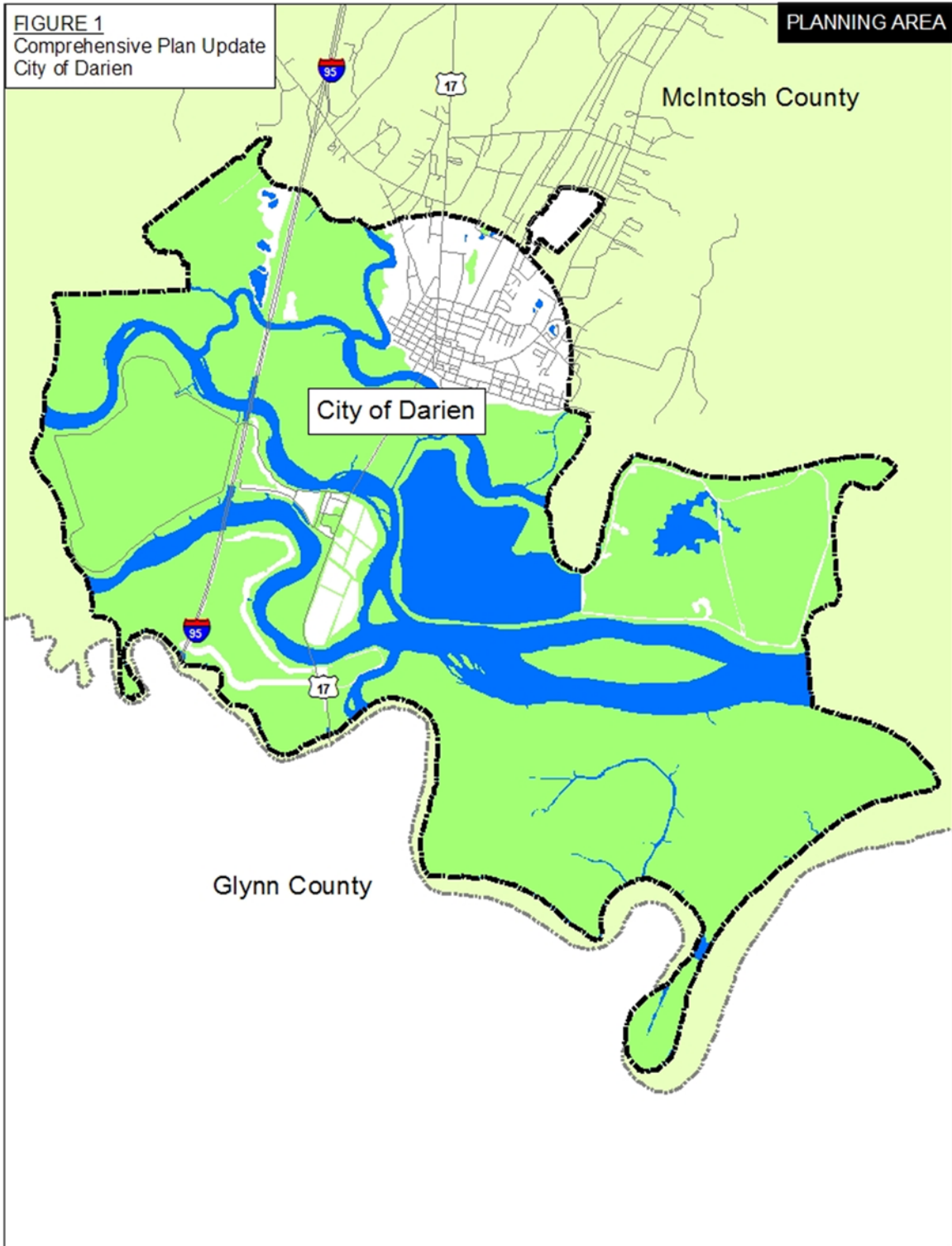
The partial update to the comprehensive plan is designed to provide the City with a document that addresses community issues and opportunities and sets near-term goals for the period prior to developing a new city-wide comprehensive plan.

The updated guidelines for completing the partial update to the City's comprehensive plan require at a minimum an assessment of Quality Community Objectives (QCOs), an analysis of Areas Requiring Special Attention (ARSA), identification of issues and opportunities facing the community, and an implementation program.

This document is the partial update for the City of Darien. The planning area for this report is illustrated in Figure 1 below. The plan is being submitted to the DCA at least 60 days in advance of the mandated deadline required to give the state ample time to review the document and provide comments prior to the plan going before City Council in October 2008 for adoption. The format of this document used the minimum planning standards outline produced by DCA and consists of four chapters.

- Chapter 1. The City of Darien conducted an evaluation that examined existing policies, activities, and development patterns to measure their consistency with the DCA's Quality Community Objectives.
- Chapter 2. Darien identified and illustrated "Areas Requiring Special Attention" based on natural and cultural resources, redevelopment potential, areas in need of infrastructure improvements, and other elements based on planned and future development pressures in the City.
- Chapter 3. This chapter includes identification of issues and opportunities for the community. This is largely based on the QCO analysis in Chapter 1 and other goals related to future development within the community.
- Chapter 4. Chapter 4 contains an Implementation Plan that includes a Short-term Work Program, formulation of policies related to land use, and a report of accomplishments.





COASTAL GEORGIA REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE PLAN AGENDA

In recognition of the importance of the resources of Coastal Georgia to the economy of the State, and the projected impact of population growth over the next ten to twenty years, Governor Perdue signed an Executive Order on February 11, 2005, which called for the development of a Coastal Comprehensive Plan. The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) was charged with developing this plan with input from regional stakeholders and a broad-based advisory group.

The plan contains the following components applicable to the City of Darien (as written in the plan):

Vision Statement: The vision of Coastal Georgia is to be a unique and cohesive region based upon innovation and excellence in all we do to preserve, nurture, enhance and develop our abundant human, natural, historic, cultural and economic resources. It is this vision statement which serves as the overarching guidance for the entire plan, and which those implementing the plan should strive to attain.

Regional Assessment: This section contains the data and fact section which presents a picture of the Coast as it is currently and includes preliminary issues and opportunities identified in the comprehensive plans of the region's governments, current development patterns in the region, data including population (existing and projected), and economic drivers for the region.

Regional Agenda: This document is the heart of the plan. It includes the following sections:

- **Regional Issues:** Regional Issues were identified in each of the following categories: Infrastructure, Intrinsic Resources, Economic Development, and Regional Growth Management.
- **Guiding Principles:** Guiding Principles are provided for managing development in the region. These are necessary to evaluate local plans, make appropriate and feasible development decisions, and guide the issuance of state/federal permits consistent with the Plan.
- **Performance Standards:** These standards establish applicable minimal and exceptional levels of performance. Incentives are identified for local governments and other entities that are performing exceptionally well at implementing this plan.
- **Implementation Strategy:** This section identifies specific initiatives that will be undertaken (and the entities responsible for initiating these actions) to bring this plan to fruition.

In conjunction with the development of this plan, the DCA conducted a Quality Growth Audit of all the local governments in the six-county area addressed by the Coastal Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of the audit was to assess how well each jurisdiction incorporates quality growth principles into their land use regulations. According to the Audit, "questions [were asked] from a broad range of planning and development issues related to land use, natural resources, transportation, housing, intergovernmental coordination, and community character. The results

of the audit were also compared with draft performance standards developed for the Coastal Comprehensive Plan to assess how each government would currently measure up to regional minimum standards. Through this analysis, the audit also provides a measure for achieving consistency and clarity in regulating development across the coastal region.”

The City of Darien was granted a total score of 52 points based on the criteria set forth by the DCA and was second of only 10 local governments that achieved compliance with the excellence standards of the Coastal Comprehensive Plan.



1. AREAS REQUIRING SPECIAL ATTENTION

As the City of Darien grows, impacts on the existing infrastructure, natural and cultural resources, and community facilities are imminent. These impacts should be given special consideration during the planning process in order to maintain the unique characteristics and preserve the public resources of the City. The following criteria, as established by DCA, have been used in identifying the Areas Requiring Special Attention within the City of Darien.

Criteria for Areas Requiring Special Attention (ARSA):

The Areas Requiring Special Attention within the City of Darien are consistent with the following criteria:

- Areas of significant natural or cultural resources, particularly where these are likely to be intruded upon or otherwise impacted by development;
- Areas where rapid development or change of land uses is likely to occur;
- Areas where the pace of development has and/or may outpace the availability of community facilities and services, including transportation;
- Areas in need of redevelopment and/or significant improvements to aesthetics or attractiveness (including strip commercial corridors);
- Large abandoned structures or sites, including those that may be environmentally contaminated;
- Areas with significant infill development opportunities (scattered vacant sites);



NATURAL RESOURCES

City of Darien consists of approximately 13,380 acres of land area. The City contains significant natural resources, including wetlands and floodplains that are located throughout the City as well as adjacent to its boundaries. Based on the current City limits of the City, roughly 92% (over 12,000 acres) of the City falls within the 100-year flood zone as defined by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

However, this number can be somewhat deceiving and is not necessary a fair representation of the existing conditions within the City. The City's recent annexation of the Altamaha Wildlife Management area, which is primarily marshland, is responsible for high percentage of land area in the regulatory flood plain. Based on the former area of the City (1,270 acres), a more representative 22% falls within the boundaries of the FEMA 100-year flood zone. This number better reflects the conditions for Darien since the majority of developable land falls within boundaries of the former City limits.



The same trend applies to wetlands within the City. Using the current City limits, it was calculated that 68% of the City falls within wetlands as defined by the National Wetlands Inventory (NWI). When using the former City limits as the basis for the analysis, it was calculated that only 22% of the City falls within the NWI wetlands boundary. The City of Darien is intersected by the Miocene/Pliocene groundwater recharge area, which spans 448 acres or 3.4% of the total area of the City. The City also contains a protected river corridor that extends 2.5 miles along Cathead Creek and the Darien River to the west and southwest of the City's downtown. The City has recently adopted a Water Resources Protection Ordinance, consistent with the Part V Environmental Planning Criteria, which addresses the protected river corridor, wetlands, and groundwater recharge areas.

The City of Darien's waterfront area provides beautiful views of the marsh and boat access for local waterways. In addition, the waterfront area provides docking space and facilities for the shrimping industry and as well as dockage for recreational boaters. As previously stated, the City has recently annexed the Altamaha Wildlife Management Area (AWMA). This area includes the remains of an old rice plantation, and the historic tide gate/canal system is managed by the State of Georgia to benefit waterfowl and other wildlife species. The AWMA includes several viewing platforms, trails, and public boat access points. The City has recently assumed responsibility for the maintenance of the Champney River Park, a public boat access point within the AWMA. Several regional trails run through Darien and the AWMA and incorporate many of the natural & cultural resources within the area, these trails include:

- Coastal Georgia Greenway
- Highlander Trail
- Altamaha Heritage Trail
- Colonial Coast Birding Trail
- Altamaha Scenic Byway

- South Georgia Parkway
- Dixie Highway
- Gullah-Geechee Heritage Corridor
- Southern Passage

The City is currently working on a project to develop a Masterplan for a multi-use trail system that ties all of these resources and regional efforts together.

The City should continue to develop policies to protect these natural areas. Natural resources in Darien are shown in Figure 2.

CULTURAL RESOURCES



OGLETHORPE RECEIVED AT DARIEN.

City of Darien was established in 1736 by Highland Scots recruited to staff a military outpost to protect the new settlement of Savannah. They landed at Fort King George and originally called their settlement New Inverness. Fort King George was constructed by general Barnwell in 1721 and was the first English settlement in coastal Georgia. The fort was established to protect English interests against French and Spanish expansion into the Altamaha region. With more than 250 years of history, there is no doubt that the City is rich with a wealth of historic and cultural resources and events.



Next to Savannah, Darien is the second oldest planned City in the state of Georgia. The town was planned General James Edward Oglethorpe in the summer of 1736 on a high bluff overlooking the river about one mile west of Ft King George. The plan included squares laid out with commons on the east and north and acreage lots to the west of Fort King George

The Fort King George site is listed on the National Registry of Historic Places and acts as a major attraction to tourists. The fort was reconstructed using old records and drawings and contains a museum and a variety of different structures open for public tours. Some of the structures at Fort King George include officers' quarters, a guardhouse, blockhouse, moat, and palisades. In addition to the various buildings located at the site, there are also the remains of tabby ruins and sawmills. The site is also part of the Colonial Coast Birding Trail and the Altamaha Scenic Byway.

City of Darien also contains a number of historic churches and other significant landmarks. The First African Baptist Church, Methodist Church, Saint Andrews Episcopal Church and Cemetery, Darien Presbyterian Church are among the many religious landmarks located in the City. The Butler Island Rice Plantation is located south of the Darien River and was recently annexed into the City. This site dates back to the late 18th century and is now owned by the Nature Conservancy. The plantation is open to the public for picnicking, fishing, and bird watching.



Downtown Darien has a number of historic sites that include the Tabby Ruins, Adam Strain Building, Old City Hall, the Grant House, and a number of historic cemeteries. In addition to the individual structures scattered throughout the downtown, the City contains two nationally listed historic districts. The Vernon Square-Columbus Square Historic District is roughly bounded by Market Street, Trumbell, Rittenhouse, and Fort King George Drive. The Old Town Historic District covers one full block and three half blocks; with its center near the intersection of Jackson Street and 1st Street West (See Figure 2 Insert).

The continued preservation and restoration of the various cultural sites in the City is critical for protecting the unique history of the City. The historic and cultural resources in Darien are illustrated in Figure 2 and listed in Table 1 below.

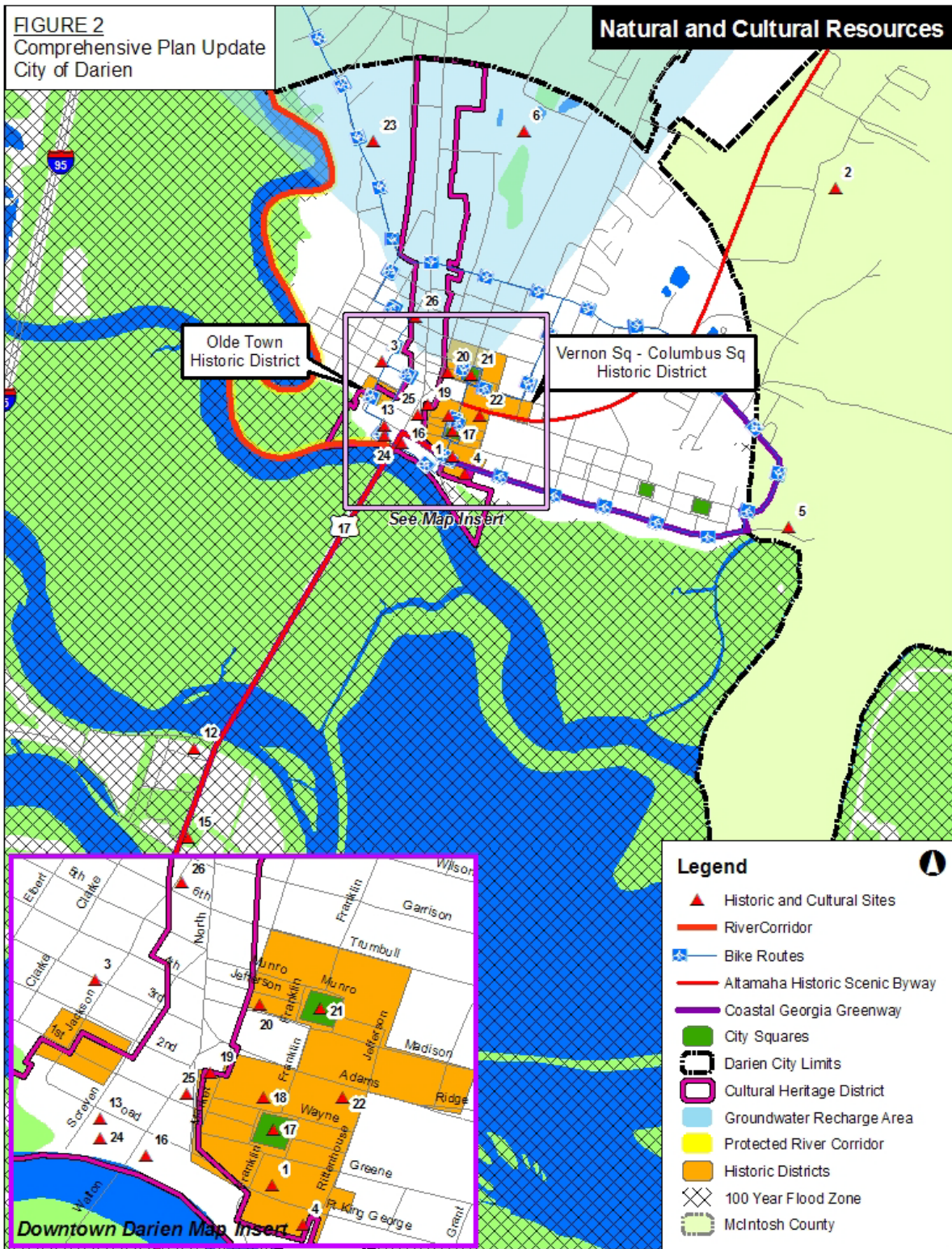


TABLE 1 - HISTORIC AND CULTURAL SITES

Site ID	Name	Site ID	Name
1	Saint Andrews Episcopal Church	14	Harris Neck Wildlife Refuge
2	Saint Andrews Cemetery	15	Dairy Barn
3	Darien Presbyterian Church	16	Visitors Center
4	Saint Cyprians Episcopal Church	17	Vernon Square
5	Fort King George	18	Old City Hall
6	Ashantilly	19	McIntosh County Courthouse
7	Sapelo Island Visitors Center	20	First African Baptist Church
8	Troup Cemetery	21	Columbus Square
9	Fort Barrington	22	Grant House
10	South Newport Baptist Church	23	Upper Mills Cemetery
11	Hofwyl Plantation	24	Tabby Ruins
12	Butler Island Rice Plantation	25	City Hall
13	Adam Strain House	26	St. John Baptist Church

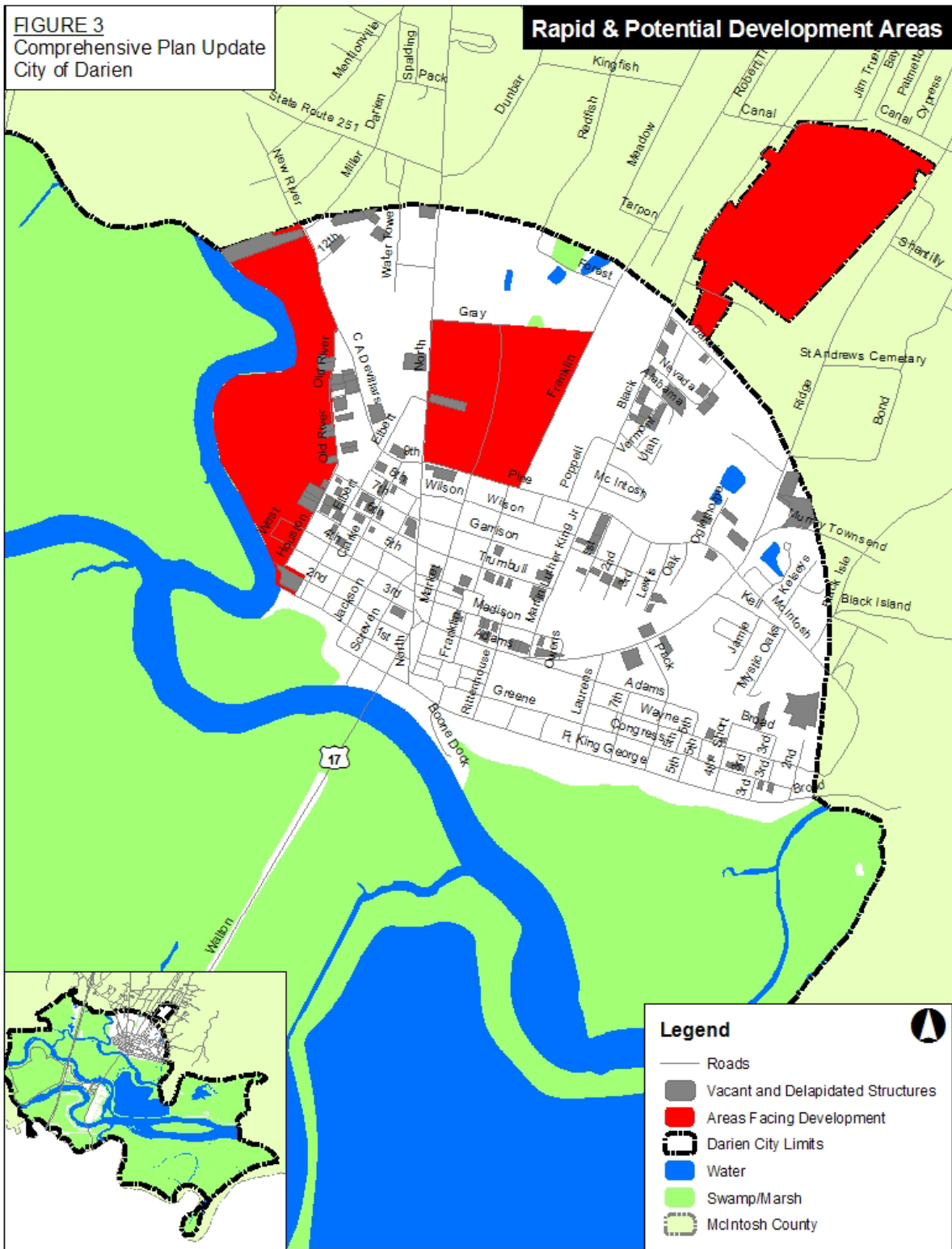
AREAS FACING RAPID DEVELOPMENT

In recent years, the City of Darien has experienced an increase in population growth and residential development in certain areas throughout the City. There is pressure for residential development in water and marsh front areas with scenic views of the water as well as in areas directly adjacent to the City limits with access to City services.

In an effort to address the potentially negative effects of unmanaged development, the City has adopted a Planned Unit Development (PUD) ordinance, Subdivision Regulations, and Construction Standards, and is moving toward promoting mixed use residential development that is compatible with the environmentally sensitive areas. Figure 3 shows areas the City has identified as currently facing rapid development.

VACANT & UNDERUTILIZED STRUCTURES

The City has completed a digital inventory of the vacant and dilapidated structures throughout the City. As the City grows, there is a great opportunity for redevelopment and adaptive reuse. There are significant vacancies in the commercial structures along Highway 17 that are prime for redevelopment. The City should expand on this inventory to include a condition assessment, land use analysis, and prioritization schedule for redevelopment of these properties. The vacant and underutilized structures within the current inventory are illustrated in gray in Figure 3.

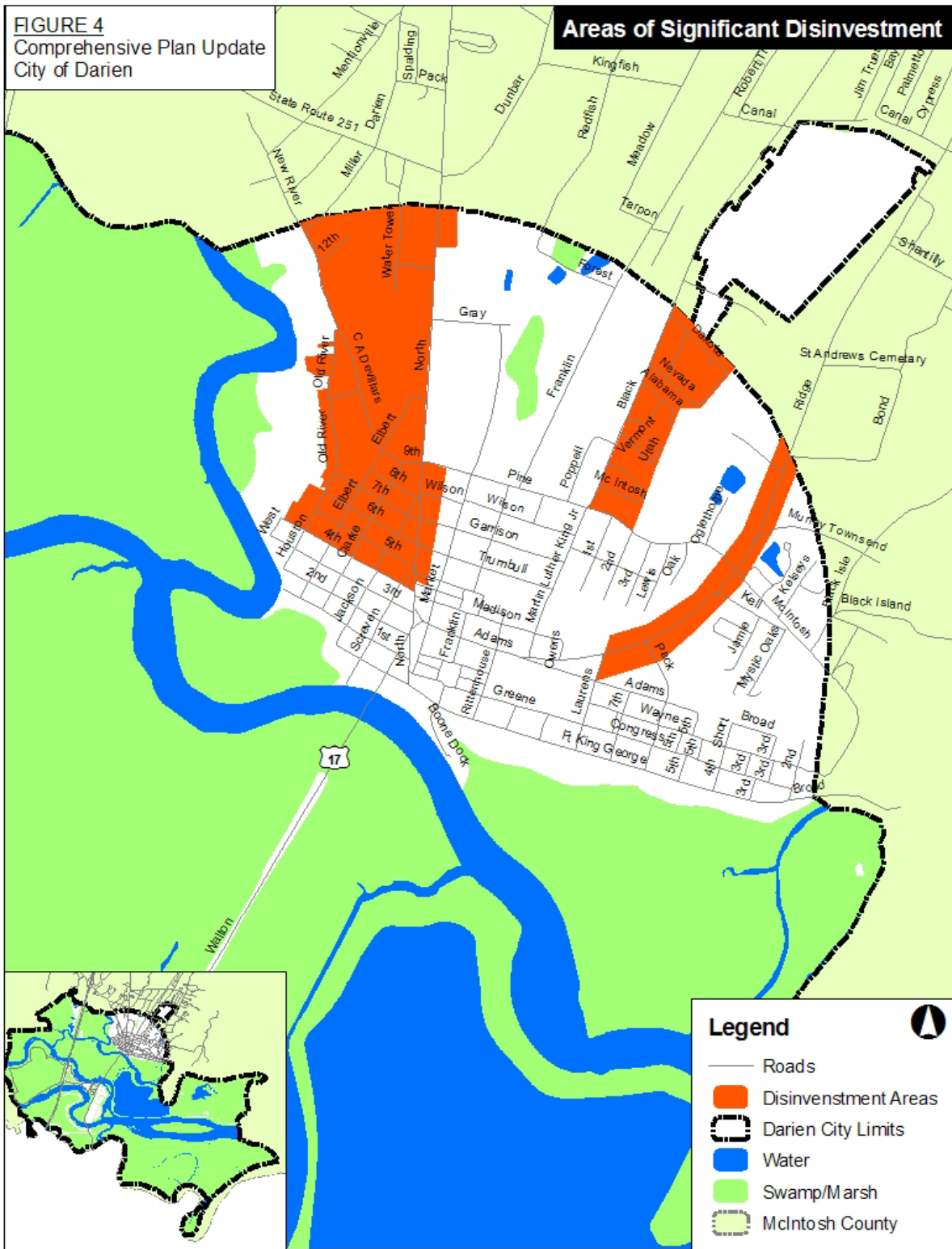


AREAS OF SIGNIFICANT DISINVESTMENT

Areas of Significant Disinvestment generally contain low income households, poverty, poorly maintained structures, and/or high rates of unemployment. Darien has identified a number of disinvestment areas in the City and is pursuing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds to assist with structural improvements as well as improvement to the existing infrastructure in these areas. These areas are illustrated in Figure 4. In addition to seeking grants to improve these blighted areas, the City should expand its Urban Redevelopment Plan to address other City-wide issues such as building façade appearance, preservation of neighborhood architectural styles, sidewalk/pedestrian environment improvements, park improvements, neighborhood gardens, and general aesthetics.

INFILL AREAS

According to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs website, infill development is defined as “new construction on scattered vacant or underutilized lots in the established neighborhoods and business districts of a community. These infill sites are typically located closer to the center of a community and are already served by public infrastructure, such as roads, water and sewer lines”. There are infill opportunities throughout the city of Darien especially within the areas of disinvestment and along Highway 17.

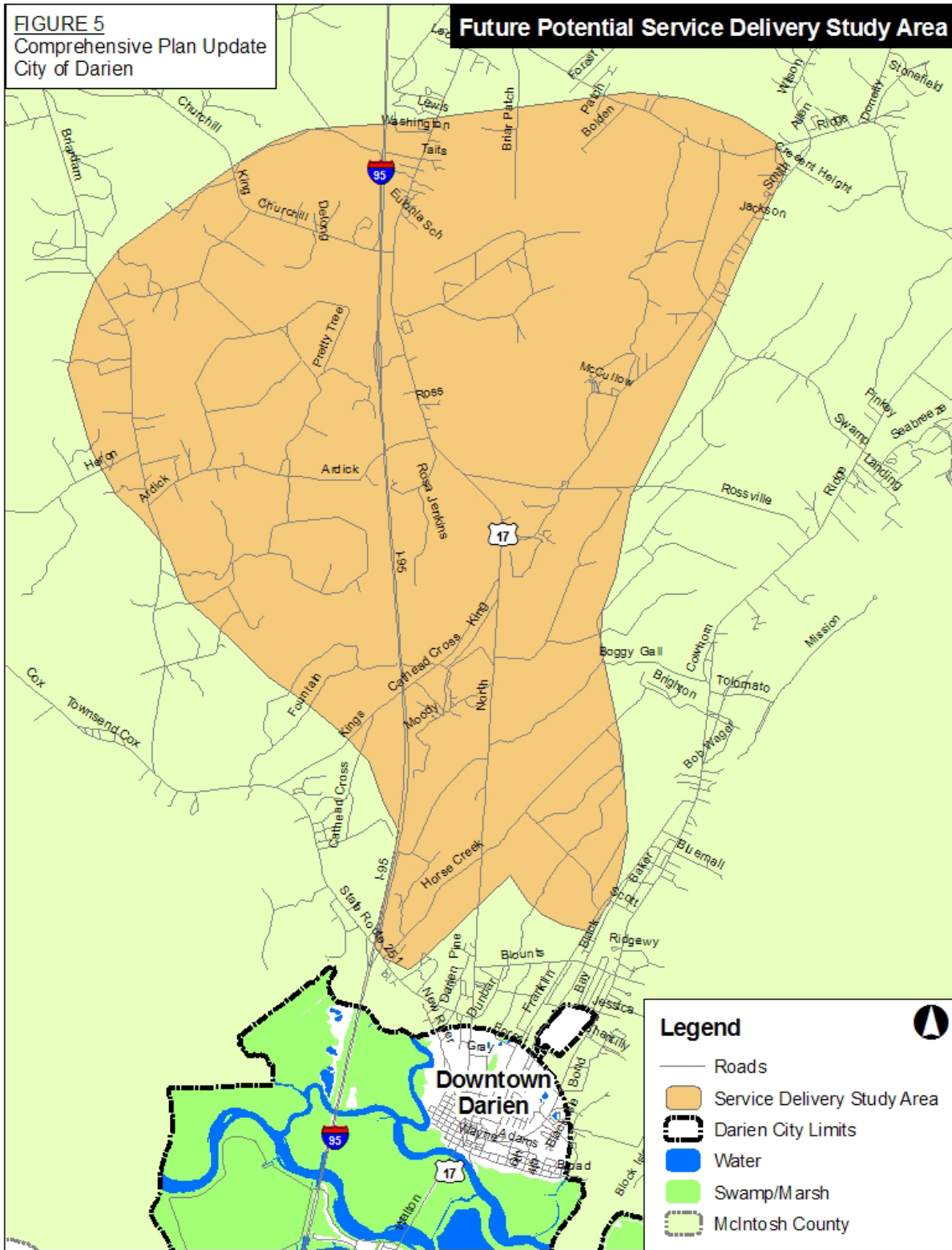


FUTURE POTENTIAL SERVICE DELIVERY EXPANSION

Potential expansion of the service delivery area for the City of Darien can only happen to the north of the existing City limits. The City has identified a study area to examine the potential for the City to provide services to these areas. The study area is illustrated in Figure 5.

AREAS WHERE THE PACE OF DEVELOPMENT MAY OUTPACE THE AVAILABILITY OF PUBLIC FACILITIES & SERVICES

Areas in need of infrastructure improvements are an issue for Darien as is the need for services in areas adjacent to the City limits. As growth occurs, the City will need to have in a place a Capital Improvements Plan for construction, rolling stock, infrastructure improvements and expansion. The City should consider impact fees for new developments in order to recover some of the costs associated with updating and expanding the current level of service.



2. ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

The following assessment was conducted to address the Quality Community Objectives (QCOs), adopted by the Board of the DCA highlighting the development patterns and policies that will help local governments protect their unique cultural, natural and historic resources as their communities continue to grow. The following assessment used the QCO Assessment tool created by the Office of Planning and Quality Growth as a model. A status report is included below to highlight the City's strengths and needs as they relate to local zoning, ordinances, and policies. In most cases, the City has already begun to address the QCOs, and will continue to work towards fully achieving the quality growth goals set forth by the DCA.

TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOODS

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

The City of Darien has many traditional and historic neighborhoods throughout the City. Development within the City has grown around a traditional grid street pattern, original designed by General Oglethorpe in 1736 to mimic the square/grid street pattern of the City of Savannah. There are a number of the original pedestrian squares remaining, interspersed within the traditional neighborhoods around the downtown area. The City promotes and supports infill development and restoration within these areas and wishes to preserve the existing character of each area by encouraging new development to be consistent with the existing neighborhood fabric.

Strengths:

- Small lot sizes with short front yard setbacks encourage traditional/neo-traditional development patterns, and provide the residential density necessary to support local businesses.
- Grid street patterns in conjunction with the existing sidewalk network encourage connectivity and improve walkability of the community. It also ensures easy connections to other areas of the City.

Needs:

- Streetscape improvements should be examined to make pedestrian movement safer and more appealing.
- The City should encourage restoration of historic homes in traditional neighborhoods
- The City should work to restore and improve the pedestrian squares scattered around the City
- The City should provide incentives for desirable redevelopment and infill projects.

- The City should develop design standards so new development is consistent with the existing neighborhood.

INFILL DEVELOPMENT

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

There are many areas throughout the City that have potential for residential and commercial infill development. In addition, the City is pursuing Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds for redevelopment in a number of areas in the downtown core. The phase I CDBG application is for redevelopment and enhancement of the City’s west side along the Old River Road corridor. The City has identified project areas throughout the City to seek grant funding to assist with redevelopment and infill development goals. . These properties are illustrated in the Areas Requiring Special Attention section (Figures 4).

Strength:

- There are both the opportunity and support for redevelopment and infill development projects in the City.
- The City has created a Redevelopment Plan consistence with the Redevelopment Act.
- The City is actively pursuing CDBG, CHIP, and RAS funding assistance to implement the Redevelopment Plan.

Needs:

- The inventory of vacant buildings and underutilized properties to target redevelopment and/or infill development should be prioritized.
- The City should encourage redevelopment and infill development projects by providing incentives.

SENSE OF PLACE

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

The City of Darien contains a wealth of unique features that add to the City’s sense of place. The surrounding wetlands, distinctive waterfront, historical landmarks, and the general downtown charm contribute to the identity of the City.

Strengths:

- The City already contains a significant amount of unique features.
- A tourism industry already exists within the region.
- Unique natural, cultural, and historical resources add to the City's sense of place.

Needs:

- There is a need for revitalization and façade improvements in the City.
- The City needs to better market the various resources and activities available in the area for visitors.

TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

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



The City of Darien is dedicated to providing and improving the pedestrian/cycling environment by offering alternative transportation modes. The City is currently working on a multi-use trail masterplan to expand the existing trail system and provide an improved pedestrian level connection to the various cultural and recreational activities in the area. Traffic congestion is not a major concern in Darien. Although, the speed of traffic moving through the City on Highway 17 needs to be addressed in order to improve safety along this corridor. A safe environment for pedestrian movement throughout the downtown and

alternative modes of transportation for visitors are the major goals of the City in terms of transportation.

Strengths:

- The City has received a grant to develop a Masterplan for a Multi-Use Trail that includes multi-use trails, bike lanes, shared roadways, scenic corridors, etc.

Needs:

- Traffic movement along arterial roadways (Highway 17) needs to be slower in areas with a higher concentration of pedestrians.

- Improvements need to be made along Highway 17 in the downtown area north of the bridge to create a safer area for pedestrian traffic.
- The existing tourism industry creates a need for improvements to the overall pedestrian environment.
- The City needs to make historical landmarks more accessible by biking and multi-use trails.
- Sidewalk improvements need to be scheduled and completed around the City.
- The City should plan for alternative modes of transportation including scooters and golf carts.

REGIONAL IDENTITY

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

The City of Darien is closely connected with the surrounding communities in the area. The shared history of the Georgia Coast has left a wealth of facts, events, and landmarks that help identify the region as a whole.

Strengths:

- The combined characteristics of the Georgia Coast and barrier islands offer a variety of activities for visitors.
- The tourist industry is already well established in the region.
- The City holds events such as the “blessing of the fleet” to draw people from the region to the area.

Needs:

- The City needs to better market available activities in the region



HERITAGE PRESERVATION

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

The City recognizes the importance of its historic features as a means of restoring the past and adding to the destination appeal of the City. There are a number of historic sites located

throughout the City. However, the locations of many historic landmarks in the City are not clearly defined. A GIS inventory of historic sites would assist the City in identifying these sites and determining the best approach for calling attention to them.

Strengths:

- The history of the region creates an added value for the historic features located in the City.
- There are many important historic locations and sites.
- The City is already planning for the restoration of the Adam Strain House and Tabby Ruins as well as general improvements to the entire Waterfront Park area.



Needs:

- There needs to be more public education with regard to the historic structures in the City.
- A digital inventory of historic structures and sites needs to be completed, maintained and prioritized.
- Restoration/rehabilitation of historic structures needs to be encouraged.
- The City should consider adding wayfinding signage to better highlight the locations of significant features.
- The City needs to identify partners and funding sources to assist with the restoration of the Adam Strain Building and Waterfront Park.

OPEN SPACE PRESERVATION

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

There is not a significant amount of dedicated openspace or public parks within the City of Darien. There are however, some smaller parks within the City and the potential to revitalize some of the original squares located in and around the downtown area. With an increased demand for residential development within the City, there is a great opportunity for the City to require openspace and park space to be set aside and/or included as part of any proposed site plan.

Strengths:

- The City prohibits development in the coastal marshlands.
- The framework exists for the City to improve existing parks in the downtown area.

- A large percentage of the land area in the City is not developable for intense uses, which presents the opportunity for protection and passive uses.
- The City is already working on a multi-use trail plan that provides a connection between openspace areas and other natural features.

Needs:

- Development of an ordinance requiring openspace preservation and set asides in proposed residential developments
- The City should implement a greenspace plan.
- Develop and enforce a landscape ordinance/plan.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

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



The City mainly made up of coastal marshlands, wetlands, and waterways and is home to a variety of different plant and animal species. The Altamaha Wildlife Management Area, which falls within the City limits of Darien, is a historic rice plantation currently managed by the State to provide habitat to a variety of different bird species, animals, and aquatic life. The Refuge also acts as a recreational destination for bird watchers, hikers, kayakers, etc. Environmental protection is critical for the sustainability of this unique

natural environment and the economy of the City, which is dependent on the associated fisheries and eco-tourists.

Strength:

- The City has recently adopted a Water Resources Ordinance that addresses stormwater, erosion & sedimentation control, and Part V Environmental Criteria.
- The Wildlife Management Area is managed by the State and is protected from encroaching development.

Needs:

- The City need to ensure development does not adversely impact the natural resources of the area.

GROWTH PREPAREDNESS

“Each community should identify and put in place the pre-requisites for the type of growth it seeks to achieve. These might include infrastructure (roads, water, sewer) to support new growth, appropriate training of the workforce, ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired, or leadership capable of responding to growth opportunities and managing new growth when it occurs.”

The City of Darien needs to ensure new growth occurs in a manner that is consistent with the goals established in this plan. The City should also conduct a condition assessment of the existing infrastructure network to determine the need for immediate improvements.

Strength:

- The City has adopted a number of ordinances designed to regulate development and to prevent adverse impacts to the City’s current residents and existing resources.

Needs:

- New development has the potential to put a strain on existing City infrastructure.
- The City needs to address wastewater and water service and capacity issues.
- The City needs to work with the Census Bureau to ensure that the 2010 census provides information that is accurate for the City.

APPROPRIATE BUSINESSES



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

Current business patterns within the City are in the professional, public, and services related sectors. There is not currently a great deal of opportunity for development in the City for industrial, manufacturing, and

warehousing sectors. The City should continue to develop economic development programs that focus on retention of existing businesses and promoting the opportunities for professionals and service related businesses to support the local workforce as well as tourists.

Strength:

- The downtown area is a desirable location for small service and retail businesses that serve tourists and residents alike.
- The City is currently developing a regional airport that will provide for industrial growth and new jobs.

Needs:

- The City should develop an economic development strategy for the airport project.
- The City should implement a recruitment and retention program for small businesses.
- Establish a plan for commercial development and redevelopment along the Highway 17 corridor throughout the downtown area based on the Darien Cultural and Heritage Tourism District Codes.

EMPLOYMENT OPTIONS

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

The City of Darien does not currently provide a great deal of flexibility in terms of job balance. However, the close proximity to both McIntosh County and Glynn County offer residents of Darien an opportunity to find jobs at various skill levels and educational backgrounds.

Strength:

- The tourist and fisheries industries provide jobs for Darien residents.
- The planned regional airport will bolster the existing job market.

Need:

- There is a need for more and a wider variety of jobs in the City.

HOUSING CHOICES

“A range of housing size, cost, and density should be provided in each community to make it possible for all who work in the community to also live in the community (thereby reducing commuting distances), to promote a mixture of income and age groups in each community, and to provide a range of housing choices to meet market needs.”

The City of Darien contains a wide collection of housing types and price points for people with a broad range in income levels. The City offers traditional, historic, and newly developed housing types at varying of densities. However, current housing trends have the potential to make housing less affordable for people with lower household incomes.

Strengths:

- A variety of housing types and price points exists in the City.
- New developments within the City are marketing the area to a diverse regional market while still promoting the downtown charm of the City.
- The price of housing is generally affordable for a wide range of incomes.



Needs:

- There is a need for infill development and redevelopment within neighborhoods in the downtown area.
- New development should be done in a manner this is consistent with the character of the City.
- The City needs to ensure that housing remains affordable for existing residents and new residents with lower household incomes.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

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

There are no educational opportunities of significance in the City of Darien.

Strengths:

- The City is aware of the need for educational opportunities and workforce development.

Need:

- The City must plan for workforce development in association with the construction of the regional airport and the jobs it will create.
- The City should encourage the creation of more jobs for educated/skilled workers.
- The City should explore bringing in professionals to conduct training sessions and professional development classes.
- The City should consider becoming a Certified Literate Community.

REGIONAL SOLUTIONS

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

The City of Darien must continue to work to build its relationship with McIntosh County and coordinate efforts for shared projects that extend beyond political boundaries.

Strengths:

- There is an established working relationship between the City and County.
- The City and County are currently working together on a County-wide Solid Waste Management Plan.

Need:

- There is potential for better coordination between City and County for shared projects and planning efforts.

REGIONAL COOPERATION

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

The City of Darien has a good working relationship with McIntosh County, the Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center (RDC), and other neighboring jurisdictions.



Strength:

- The City works closely with neighboring jurisdiction and regional agencies where applicable.

Need:

- The City will need to coordinate planning efforts with those of the RDC and the Coastal Comp Plan to ensure consistency on overlapping issues and opportunities.

3. ISSUES & OPPORTUNITIES

The following section includes issues and opportunities developed by the City of Darien based on the eight main planning elements. The City has organized the issues and opportunities by the major functional element. For each element, specific issues and related opportunities are presented. Section 4 assesses the opportunities developed in this section and establishes land use policies or specific implementation measures the City will undertake to address these issues.

POPULATION

Trend: The City of Darien needs to prepare for the projected population growth and new development.

Issues:

- There is significant pressure for future development.
- There has not been an accurate count and projection for population in the City and County.
- Anticipated population growth could outpace the City's ability to provide services.



Opportunities:

- The City should work with the Census bureau to ensure that the 2010 census provides as accurate as of a population assessment as possible.
- The City should proactively plan for infrastructure improvements and expansion of City services and facilities to accommodate future population growth.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Major Trend: The City of Darien needs to outline a strategy for economic development that includes the development of the regional airport and places more focus on drawing and retaining appropriate businesses.

Issues:

- The Chamber of commerce is not focused on helping small businesses in Darien become successful.
- The City has no representation on the McIntosh County Development Authority and it is not responsive to the City's economic development needs.

- The downtown commercial business district does not have a sufficient number and variety of service oriented businesses to serve both residents and tourists.
- There needs to be more support for the entrepreneur support program.
- The City has limited meeting space to service larger groups.
- The job base and workforce base within the City is limited.
- Darien does not have many living-wage job opportunities for college graduates.
- Limited jobs for skilled and unskilled workers exist within the City.
- There are a significant number of abandon strip shopping centers and other large vacant buildings along the Hwy 17 commercial corridor.
- The City has not fully explored its potential as a center for eco-tourism and cultural heritage tourism.
- The City has not utilized the services and assistance available through the Better Hometown Community program.
- growth and development could potentially threaten the shrimping and aquaculture industries within the city due to non-point source pollution.



Opportunities:

- The City should staff its Better Hometown Community program and begin implementation of the program goals.
- The Downtown Development Authority needs to become more effective at recruiting a diversity of businesses compatible with the historic character of the City.
- The City should develop and implement a recruitment and retention program for compatible businesses.
- The City should work with S.C.O.R.E. and S.B.A. to provide services for small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- The Downtown Development Authority should work to encourage local economic expansion and is working on expanding limited local employment opportunities.
- The City should inventory and develop a plan that includes incentives for redevelopment and restoration of vacant and underutilized buildings in the downtown commercial district.

- The City should develop a brand and market itself as a center for eco-tourism, cultural heritage tourism and waterfront activities.
- The City should work to recruit and retain businesses that will further expand the City's eco-tourism, cultural heritage tourism, and water activity based economies.
- The City should work to ensure that land uses within the City do not adversely affect the shrimping and aquaculture industries.
- The Downtown Development Authority (DDA) should continue working with the City, County, and Regional partners to create a regional airport with a paved runway and fixed base operations.

NATURAL & CULTURAL RESOURCES

Trend: Development is diminishing ecological integrity, historic integrity, and cultural significance of community resources.

Issues:

- Development along the Altamaha Scenic Byway is entirely regulated by a corridor overlay district.
- The historic development pattern of traditional neighborhoods surrounding community squares has been compromised by development.
- Future development has the potential to adversely impact the City's abundance natural and cultural resources.



Opportunities:

- The City should an inventory of natural and cultural resources to steer development away from these sensitive areas.
- The City should continue to enforce its natural resources related ordinances.
- The City should continue to review and update the natural resources related ordinances as necessary to protect its resources.
- The City of Darien should develop a masterplan for the restoration of Jefferson Square, Franklin Square and the Mustering Grounds, to re-establish the historic development pattern throughout the city and to further expand the historic development pattern in new development.
- The City should rezone all of the historic squares as Open Space/ Parks.
- The City should review the zoning directly adjacent to the squares to ensure that it encourages appropriate development.
- The City should considered allowing small, neighborhood-based service businesses around appropriate squares to make them more of a gathering place/destination for residents and tourists.

- The City should consider the implementation of a Stormwater Utility to allow for the implementation of an expanded stormwater program.

FACILITIES & SERVICES

Major Trend: Development in the City has put a strain on existing facilities and services.

Issues:

- Future anticipated growth could potentially outpace the City's ability to provide adequate services and facilities.
- The City has identified areas where water and sewer service or expansion is needed.

Opportunities:

- The City should plan to upgrade and expand the wastewater treatment plant as necessary to adequately provide for future growth.
- The City should plan to upgrade and expand its water supply system to adequately provide for future anticipated growth.
- The City should assess the adequacy of its existing parks and make provisions for additional active and passive recreational areas in new development.
- The City should continue to develop and implement the Multi-Use Trail Masterplan.
- The City should develop a Capital Improvements Program that supports current and future growth.
- The City should work with the County to update the service delivery strategy.
- The City should consider the implementation of impact fees.
- The City should consider the creation of a Recreation Department and creation of recreational programming for children and adults.
- The City should consider the creation of a regional community recreation center/gym.
- The City should pursue Community Development Block Grants to support necessary infrastructure improvement.

HOUSING

Major Trend: There is a need for greater diversity in the housing stock within the City.

Issue:

- The cost of housing has increased significantly in the last several years.
- Property values are rising which may eventually make it less affordable for the current, service-oriented workforce to live in Darien.
- There are limited programs that focus on special needs housing for the elderly and disabled.

- options are needed to provide opportunities for all the City residents.

Opportunities:

- Vacant and developable land exists within the City limits that could be used for multi-family and affordable housing.
- Historic structures could be restored to provide for residential housing needs.
- The City should ensure that it's zoning ordinance and development codes allow for a variety of housing types and price points.
- The City should encourage the development of an assisted living-type development to provide for an aging population.



LAND USE

Major Trend: New development has not always been consistent with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Issues:

- City ordinances do not regulate building materials in highly visible areas outside of historic districts.
- Differences between the County's zoning and the City's zoning hinder the development of a unified standard that would promote a regional sense of place.

Opportunities:

- The City should review and update its development ordinances and construction standards to ensure that they adequately address architectural and design standards as appropriate.
- The City should work with the County to make land use zoning and development regulation more consistent between jurisdictions.

TRANSPORTATION

Major Trend: The existing transportation network in the City needs to place more focus on safe and accessible pedestrian movement.

Issues:

- There is no public transportation option currently available in the City of Darien.
- New development threatens the historic street grid pattern.

Opportunities:

- The Downtown Development Authority should continue working with the City, County, and Regional partners to create a regional airport with a paved runway and fixed base operations.
- The City should implement the plan for bicycle routes through the City of Darien.
- The City should continue to develop and implement the Multi-Use Trail Masterplan.
- The City should work to restore and extend the historic street grid, complete with squares, into areas of new development.



INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

Major Trend: Darien could benefit from more coordination with other local, county, and State governments/agencies, regional agencies, private agencies, the business community, and the public.

Issues:

- There is an increased need for Darien to think regionally, especially in issues like land use, transportation, and housing; understanding that these go beyond local government borders.

Opportunities:

- The City participates in regional environmental organizations and initiatives, especially regarding water quality and quantity issues.
- Darien and McIntosh County should participate in regional economic development organizations.

4. IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

implementation program is the overall approach the City will take to address the issues identified in this plan. The implementation program defines specific tasks the City will undertake in order to achieve the goals defined in the previous chapters of this plan. In addition to defining specific tasks, the implementation program also determines a schedule for the task to be completed, the person responsible for implementing the task, and a potential funding source. The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) requires the following elements be included as part of the implementation program for a partial comprehensive plan update:



- **Short-term Work Program (STWP):** The DCA requires a short-term work program be developed and implemented by the City as part of the partial update. The short-term work program consists of the first five years of the implementation program. The DCA requires the STWP to be submitted every five years (minimum), in an effort to ensure the City is moving forward with implementation of the plan. The following information must be included as part of the short-term work program:
 - Description of activity or task
 - Timeframe for implementation
 - Person responsible for implementing the activity
 - Estimated cost of implementing the activity
 - Potential funding source (grants, general fund, etc.)
- **Land Use Policies:** Policies are developed to provide guidance and assistance to local officials. The policies section will help officials make decisions that are consistent with the goals developed in the plan.
- **Report of Accomplishments:** The report of accomplishments is an assessment of the City's existing short-term work program. This requirement gives the City the opportunity to evaluate how many of the tasks previously defined have been implemented and eliminate activities that are no longer desirable or feasible for the City to pursue.

SHORT-TERM WORK PROGRAM

	YEAR STARTING	YEAR COMPLETED	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	COST ESTIMATE	FUNDING SOURCE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT					
Hire a qualified candidate for the Better Hometown Community Program to facilitate implementation of program goals	2010	2013	City	\$25,000	General Fund, Grants, DCA
Consider the separation of the Better Hometown Program coordination responsibilities from the DDA.	2010	2010	DDA, City	Staff time	General Fund
Conduct an inventory of available business assets.	2009	2009	DDA	\$2,000	General Fund
Develop and implement a business recruitment and retention program	2009	2013	DDA	\$10,000	General Fund, Grants
Develop a marketing campaign to brand the City as a center for eco-tourism, cultural heritage, and waterfront activities	2010	2013	DDA	\$5,000	General Fund, Grants
Develop a plan for restoration and adaptive reuse of historic structures within the City	2011	2013	Historic Preservation Commission	\$3,500	General Fund, Grants
Implement the Urban Redevelopment Plan	2008	2013	DDA, City	\$1.5 million	CDBG, Private Investment, General Fund,
Coordinate with S.C.O.R.E and S.B.A to provide services to small businesses and start-up companies.	2009	2013	DDA	Staff Time	General Fund
NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES					

	YEAR STARTING	YEAR COMPLETED	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	COST ESTIMATE	FUNDING SOURCE
Inventory natural and cultural resources and restrict development within these areas	2008	2013	City	\$5,000	General Fund
Review and update ordinances related to protecting natural resources	2009	2009	City	Staff Time	General Fund
Apply to become a Tree City	2009	2013	City	Staff Time	General Fund
Appoint and support a Tree Board	2009	2013	City	\$4,000	General Fund
Perform study to determine feasibility of restoration of the Mustering Grounds, Jefferson Square, and Franklin Square	2010	2011	City	\$10,000	General Fund
Finalize the lease and begin restoration of the Dairy Barn as a cultural/environmental interpretive center.	2008	2013	City	\$100,000	General Fund, Grants
Seek funding sources for the restoration of the Adam Strain Building	2008	2013	City	Staff Time	General Funds, Grants
FACILITIES AND SERVICES					
Explore implementation of a stormwater utility	2010	2011	City	\$50,000	Grants
Upgrade and expand the wastewater treatment plant to accommodate growth	2008	2013	City	\$6-8 Million	Tap Fees, Enterprise Fund, General Fund
Implement the new water withdrawal permit requirements	2008	2009	City	\$100,000	Enterprise Fund, General Fund, Grants
Conduct an assessment of existing parks and openspace, including a	2009	2010	City	\$10,000	General Fund, Grants

	YEAR STARTING	YEAR COMPLETED	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	COST ESTIMATE	FUNDING SOURCE
digital inventory and a needs assessment for new park development					
Implement the Multi-use Trail Masterplan Recommendations	2009	2013	City	TBD	Grants, General Fund
Develop a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) to plan for infrastructure improvements	2013	2013	City	\$100,000	General Fund, SPLOST, Enterprise Fund
Work with the County to update the Service Delivery Strategy	2011	2011	City	Staff Time	General Fund
Conduct a study to determine the cost-benefit of charging impact fees	2010	2011	City	\$25,000	General Fund
Conduct a cost-revenue analysis to examine the potential for development of a community supported recreation center	2012	2013	City	Staff Time	General Fund
Pursue CDBG funds for areas of disinvestment and for infrastructure improvements	2008	2008	DDA	Staff Time	CDBG
Implement plans for City Dock restoration	2008	2009	DDA	\$100,000	Grants, General Fund
HOUSING					
Conduct a condition assessment of housing in the City.	2010	2012	City, Census Bureau	Staff time	Census Bureau, General Fund
LAND USE					
Review and update development related ordinances and construction standards to incorporate architectural and design standards.	2010	2011	City	\$12,500	General Fund, Grants
Rezone all squares in the City to an openspace / parks classification	2008	2009	City	Staff Time	General Fund

	YEAR STARTING	YEAR COMPLETED	RESPONSIBLE PARTY	COST ESTIMATE	FUNDING SOURCE
Review and update Zoning & Subdivision Ordinances to ensure their conformity to this plan.	2009	2010	City	\$7,500	General Fund, Grants
TRANSPORTATION					
Implement the plan for bicycle routes through the City	2008	2010	City	TBD	Grants
Implement TE Grant for streetscape on Hwy 17	2008	2013	City, GDOT	\$500,000	TE Grant
Conduct a condition assessment of sidewalk and prioritize areas in need of improvements	2011	2011	City	\$10,000	General Fund
Adopt and ordinance to allow for scooters and golf cart transport in appropriate areas.	2009	2010	City	Staff Time	General Fund
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION					
Coordinate with McIntosh County to provide services to residents	2008	2013	City, McIntosh County	Staff Time	Tax Digest
Ensure coordinated efforts between the Downtown Development Authority, Chamber, City, and County.	2008	2013	City	Staff Time	General Fund

LAND USE POLICIES

This section includes a list of policies that the City of Darien staff and City Council can use when making decisions with regard to land use and zoning. The main goal of the State Planning Act for a Comprehensive Plan is not only that plans be developed, but that these plans get implemented and actively used by local governments. The policies developed in this section will provide guidance to City staff and officials to ensure the future decisions reflect and consider the goals set forth in this plan.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT



OBJECTIVE: A strong economic development program with improve the overall quality of life for residents in the City of Darien. By drawing appropriate businesses, the City can create new jobs, increase the tax base, and provide better services to residents and tourists that visit the City. Future economic development in Darien calls for a plan that focuses on improvements to the Highway 17 business corridor, recruitment and retention of existing retail/service businesses, and development of the regional airport. In addition, the City will work to create a City rich with cultural activities for

visitors while providing for the needs of full-time residents.

POLICIES FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Support programs that promote business retention and recruitment.
- Seek new business development consistent with the goals of this plan.
- Support redevelopment and infill development in the downtown area.
- Consider local and regional impacts of new development projects prior to permitting.
- Consider the impacts on existing infrastructure and natural resources when considering new development projects
- Support economic development projects that enhance to quality of life for full-time residents as well as tourists.
- Support the Downtown Development Authority (DDA) as they seek to expand employment and business development opportunities.

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

MAIN OBJECTIVE: Protection and enhancement of natural and cultural resources is a top priority for the City of Darien as they move forward with implementation of this plan. In an effort to achieve this goal, the City is working to identify all historic landmarks in the City and will encourage preservation of these structures. As the development continues, it is critical that the City have in place a plan for preservation. The City also contains an abundance of natural

resources, which contribute to the City's sense of place. Continued protection of natural resources and development regulation in environmentally sensitive areas is vital.

POLICIES FOR NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

- Consider compact urban development as a means to preserve greenspace and openspace.
- Promote the protection of significant (old) trees in proposed developments.
- Restrict development in environmentally sensitive areas.
- Promote sidewalks, trails, and other connections between new and existing developments.
- Promote the development of a Parks Assessment & Plan.
- Support acquisition of greenspace and permanent preservation of openspace
- Continue to enforce the City's Water Resources Ordinance.
- Consider development of a Stormwater Utility
- Encourage restoration and adaptive reuse of historic structures.
- Support programs to emphasis and improve connections between historic landmarks within the City
- Consider a new signage program that better identifies historic, cultural, and environmental sites and activities in the City



FACILITIES AND SERVICES

OBJECTIVE: The City of Darien needs to consider population growth and development in relation to the availability of services provided by the City. It is important that the City continue to provide quality services to residents, and that adequate infrastructure is available to accommodate new development.

POLICIES FOR FACILITIES AND SERVICES

- Ensure that infrastructure can handle new development.
- Support creation of a Recreation Department.
- Support infill development as a means to reduce the costs of expanding existing infrastructure.
- Ensure that City services remain efficient and reliable as the population grows.



HOUSING

MAIN OBJECTIVE: The City of Darien is projected to see an increase in population during the planning period of this report. The City will need to provide a mix of housing options to accommodate this growth while still meeting the current demands of existing residents.

POLICIES FOR HOUSING

- Support multi-family and affordable housing developments on vacant and underutilized sites.
- Support historic preservation and restorations projects.
- Encourage development of assisted living facility.
- Encourage and support a mix of housing types and price points.
- Support home ownership programs for low to moderate income households.

LAND USE

MAIN OBJECTIVE: Darien has seen an increase in development in recent years and this trend is likely to continue. The unique waterfront and downtown charm of the City provides a great opportunity for the City to foster its niche in the tourism market that already exists in coastal Georgia. Quality developments that focus on connectivity, appropriate commercial development, infill development, and a mix of uses will enhance the City's existing sense of place.

POLICIES FOR LAND USE

- Ensure that decisions related to land use are consistent with the goals of the City's Comprehensive Plan.
- Support developments with landscaping, sidewalks, desired architecture, and other elements that contribute to the City's sense of place.
- Promote adaptive re-use of vacant and underutilized structures.
- Support changes in zoning that allow for a mix of uses in areas in and around the downtown district.
- Support changes in land use, where appropriate, that create housing options and job creation for resident with low to moderate incomes.

TRANSPORTATION

MAIN OBJECTIVE: When examining transportation, the main goal for Darien is improvement of the pedestrian environment. In an effort to address this, the City has placed focus on the development of multi-use trails, bicycle routes, and pedestrian paths to provide connection to various local attractions. The City will also consider alternative forms of transportation to minimize the reliance on the automobile.

POLICIES FOR TRANSPORTATION

- development of a city-wide trail system that links neighborhoods and commercial areas.
- Ensure that new road construction accommodates multiple modes of transportation (ie. Shared roads, sidewalks, trails, etc.)
- Support implementation of the Multi-Use Trail Masterplan.
- Encourage alternative transportation options in the City.
- Support projects along major arterials that created a safer and more attractive pedestrian environment.



INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

MAIN OBJECTIVE: The City of Darien needs to develop a sound working relationship with surrounding governments to effectively coordinate planning efforts at a local and regional level.

POLICIES FOR INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

- Support and participate in coordinated planning with neighboring jurisdictions and other regional entities for programs affecting the City.
- Support the efforts of other agencies doing work that will benefit the City.

REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

COMMUNITY FACILITIES		
ACTIVITY	STATUS	EXPLANATION
Continue to improve basic public service standards through grant-funded projects.	Underway	City continues to do this through grants and general fund as well as through improvements to the City codes.
Continue to coordinate and cooperate with school board on issue of mutual interest, such as development of infrastructure (see also Economic Development).	Completed	City worked with the School Board to gain ownership and operational control of the infrastructure that serves the High School.
Develop proposals for community facility projects and set priorities within project classifications. Continue to seek grant funding to support individual projects.	Underway	
Investigate alternative ways to increase the level of services to elderly residents.	Underway	
Update joint comprehensive plan.	Not Accomplished	The City will be doing a City-specific Partial Update.
Complete Phase II pedestrian access improvements.	Completed	
Continue to pursue facade grants under Darien Better Hometown program.	Completed	
Develop master plan for streetscape and downtown parking study.	Completed	
Improve 911 services.	Underway	City worked to improve its ISO rating.
Investigate the development of a community arts center	Completed	
Investigate the feasibility of developing additional community meeting facilities.	Underway	
Continue to investigate way to attract another full time doctor.	Underway	
Continue to keep public squares and other recreational areas in good repair with maximum public access.	Underway	
Continue to work in coordination with McIntosh County in an effort to increase allocation of beds in nursing homes.	Not Accomplished	City is unaware of any such facility.
Continue to work with school board and other agencies to facilitate providing adult education.	Completed	
Continue to improve roads and drainage system.	Postponed	City needs funding to complete this task.
Install lighting of compatible historical design in parks and on streets.	Completed	

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
ACTIVITY	STATUS	EXPLANATION
Complete a plan for projects under the Darien Better Hometown Program and update as necessary.	Completed	
Continue to develop programs to enhance and promote cultural and historic resources to the public as a regional economic development tool.	Underway	
Continue to pursue funding for cultural/historical museums, such as a maritime museum.	Underway	Darien has received grants for the Art Association building and a Trail Masterplan.
Continue to develop and maintain a marketing program for tourism.	Underway	
Continue to coordinate with appropriate organizations to improve workforce training and readiness in support of economic development efforts	Underway	The facility & programming has been developed.
Participate in the US 17 Heritage Corridor project by the CGRDC and scenic and heritage byway programs	Underway	

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT		
ACTIVITY	STATUS	EXPLANATION
to enhance tourism using natural, cultural, and historic resources. Attract nature-based economic development initiatives consistent with natural resource conservation and protection.		
Support increased allocation of nursing home capacity for County and City residents.	Not Accomplished	This facility does not exist.
Continue to implement a unified economic development program.	Underway	The McIntosh Development Authority is a joint agency that works towards this goal.
Continue to pursue funding sources to implement Darien Better Hometown Program improvements.	Underway	
Support innovative methods of improving the quality and diversity of public education such as those set up under the articulation agreements.	Underway	

HOUSING		
ACTIVITY	STATUS	EXPLANATION
Continue to assist prospective developers of low and moderate income housing in getting technical information on site development, financing, building requirements, etc.	Underway	
Adopt and implement regulations that require the removal of dilapidated structures.	Completed	
Continue support for Habitat for Humanity projects and other such programs that encourage housing structures for elderly and low-income persons.	Underway	CDBG grant application includes Habitat for Humanity.
Continue to review and, as appropriate, upgrade manufactured housing standards.	Completed	

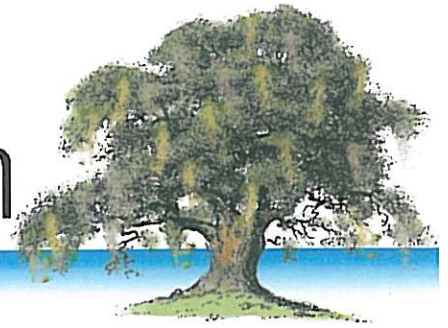
LAND USE		
ACTIVITY	STATUS	EXPLANATION
Continue to develop and improve methods for maintaining land use related data.	Underway	City has developed a GIS database
Continue to develop and improve methods for maintaining data regarding community facilities and facilities management.	Underway	City has applied for a CIG grant to perform a GIS inventory.
Continue to consider appropriate factors (such as traffic access, proximity to facilities, etc.), during the rezoning process.	Underway	
Continue working with Downtown Development Authority and Darien Better Hometown Program to offer appropriate development and redevelopment incentives.	Underway	
Continue to improve design control ordinances. Enact a separate sign ordinance apart from design standards for both Darien and McIntosh County.	Completed	

NATURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES		
ACTIVITY	STATUS	EXPLANATION
Continue to pursue financial resources for protection and restoration of historic buildings.	Underway	
Continue to pursue financial resources to support a comprehensive downtown redevelopment appearance	Underway	

NATURAL AND HISTORIC RESOURCES		
ACTIVITY	STATUS	EXPLANATION
plan emphasizing landscaping and visual quality.		
Continue to designate historic districts, unique landmarks, and to protect natural resources following DNR/HPD guidelines.	Underway	
Continue to promote designated historic sites and natural resources through events, projects, public education, and recognition programs.	Underway	
Continue to support historic district designation of western downtown area of Darien, across U.S. 17 from City Hall.	Completed	
Continue to work through Darien Better Hometown Program to develop impact and design standards within historic districts.	Completed	
Continue to seek grant funding for protection and enhancement of historic sites and resources.	Underway	Darien continues to pursue CIG funding for this purpose.
Continue to develop and distribute promotional materials in support of history based tourism.	Underway	
Adopt DNR Part V environmental protection ordinances as required.	Completed	
Continue to investigate all opportunities for conservation of protected animal and plant habitats, achievement of water quality standards and management of water resources, conservation of freshwater and saltwater marshlands, and protection of aquifer recharge areas.	Underway	
Continue to develop and enhance local ordinances which facilitate resource protection.	Completed	
Continue to pursue adoption and implementation of tree ordinance.	Completed	
Continue cooperation with the Darien Better Hometown Program and other organizations to refine a preservation program focusing on revolving fund and sympathetic new construction in historic districts.	Underway	
Continue promotional efforts for tourism possibilities of the historic districts	Underway	

City of Darien

G E O R G I A



Mayor Kelly Spratt
Mayor Pro-Temp Joel Williams
Councilwoman Eunice Moore
Councilman Joe Malbasa
Councilwoman Karen Clark

C. Brett Cook, City Manager
Colleen Jolley, Clerk & Treasurer
Gary Moore, City Attorney
Frank Feild, Comm. Dev. Director
Art Crews, Building Inspector

DARIEN CITY COUNCIL DARIEN, GEORGIA

Resolution Number: 2008-15
Reading and Adoption:

At the special called meeting of the Darien City Council, held in the Darien City Hall, Darien, Georgia:

Present:

Kelly Spratt, Mayor
Karen Clark, Councilwoman
Joe Malbasa, Councilman
Eunice M. Moore, Councilwoman
Joel Williams, Councilman

On the motion of Councilman Malbasa, which carried unanimously the following Resolution was adopted:

RESOLUTION TO ADOPT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PARTIAL UPDATE

WHEREAS, the City of Darien Council has completed a Partial Update to the City's 20- year Comprehensive Plan;

WHEREAS, these documents were prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning effective May 1, 2005 and established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, and the required public hearing was held on July 15, 2008;

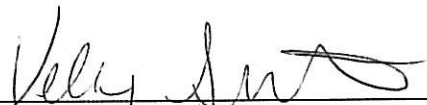


BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, that the City of Darien Council does hereby adopt the 20-year Comprehensive Plan Partial Update and pledge support for its implementation.


This Resolution shall be effective upon adoption

This the 16th day of September, 2008.

DARIEN CITY COUNCIL

By: 
KELLY SPRATT, MAYOR

ATTEST:


COLLEEN JOLLEY, CITY CLERK
CITY OF DARIEN, GEORGIA

