



**2015 Joint Charlton County  
Comprehensive Plan Update**  
for  
**Charlton County**  
and  
**The Cities of Folkston and Homeland**

**Adopted 4/23/2015**

**Prepared For:**  
Charlton County  
The City of Folkston  
The City of Homeland

Prepared by the



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# **I. Chapter 110-12-1. Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning**

## **1. Introduction**

The 2015 Joint Charlton County, City of Folkston, and City of Homeland Comprehensive Plan Update was prepared in accordance with the Rules of the Georgia Department of Community Affairs Chapter 110-12-1, Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning.

As required by the Local Comprehensive Planning Standards, the 2015 Joint Charlton County, City of Folkston, and City of Homeland Comprehensive Plan Update consists of the following elements:

1. Community Goals – review and amend if appropriate
2. Needs and Opportunities – review and update
3. Community Work Program – report of accomplishments and update
4. Economic Development Element – review and amend if appropriate  
(As a community included in the Georgia Job Tax Credit Tier 1 category)
5. Land Use Element – City of Folkston – update  
(As a community with zoning or land development regulations subject to the Zoning Procedures Law)

## **2. Community Involvement**

All of the required elements have been developed with extensive opportunity for involvement and input from stakeholders throughout the county and cities. The following steps were taken to ensure that this plan reflected the full range of needs and opportunities from the many stakeholders and residents in the county.

The public hearing kicking off the comprehensive plan process was held on September 16, 2014, at the County Administration Building in Folkston, Georgia. It was held for the purpose of making any potential stakeholders and residents aware that the comprehensive plan update and review was now underway, explaining the purpose of the update, and encouraging residents and other stakeholders to actively participate in the plan update.

## **3. Identification of Stakeholders**

A comprehensive list of potential stakeholders was put together with input from the Chamber of Commerce, Development Authority, elected officials, and residents. A complete list of all the stakeholders is included in this plan in the Appendix.

## **4. Identification of Participation Techniques**

The following participation techniques were utilized during the update process:

Public Hearings  
Workshops  
Extensive e-mail correspondence with stakeholders  
Special webpage on SGRC website as well as County and Cities' websites  
Dissemination of Information in the newspaper

## **5. Participation Program**

A foundational principle utilized by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission in all of its planning projects is public and stakeholder participation from and coordination with multiple and diverse interest groups. In order to ensure the broadest buy-in and diversity of input into the comprehensive plan update,

all participants were included in the stakeholder group. Outreach to the public, local governments, and other stakeholders and interested parties was accomplished by e-mail correspondence, direct communication, Facebook postings, the project website, and updates provided at workshops and other group meetings. Opportunity for public comment was provided at public hearings and city and county commission meetings.

In addition to the required public hearings, SGRC held a series of three workshops to discuss several elements of the plan. The first workshop reviewed the existing issues and opportunities and, in the form of a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis, updated the list of issues and opportunities to meet current needs. The Report of Accomplishments was developed in the second workshop along with the draft of the updated Community Work Program. The third workshop was utilized to update the Land Use Element and Maps as desired by the local governments.

## 6. Consideration of Regional Water Plan and Environmental Planning Criteria

During the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, the local governments must review both the Regional Water Plan covering its area and the GDNR Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria as laid out in Chapter 391-3-16 to determine whether any local implementation practices or development regulations need to be adapted to be consistent with both.

### Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan

Charlton County is within the area of the Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan, which was adopted in September 2011.



Source: CDM Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan

The Suwannee-Satilla Regional Water Plan has identified 13 goals, listed below, to implement its vision of managing water resources in a sustainable manner under Georgia's regulated riparian and reasonable use laws to support the state's and regions' economy, to protect public health and natural resources, and to enhance the quality of life for all citizens; while preserving the private property rights of Georgia's landowners, and in consideration of the need to enhance resource augmentation and efficiency opportunities.

#### Goals:

1. Manage and develop water resources to sustainably and reliably meet domestic, commercial, and industrial water needs, including all agricultural sectors (including agro-forestry).
2. Manage ground and surface water to encourage sustainable economic and population growth in the region.
3. Manage the Region's and State's water resources in a manner that preserves and protects private property rights.
4. Ensure an adequate water supply of suitable quality to meet current and future human needs, while protecting environmental resources.
5. Identify opportunities to optimize existing and future supplies, and water and wastewater infrastructure.
6. Promote efficient use and management of surface and groundwater resources to allow for sufficient supplies for current and future generations.
7. Protect and manage surface and groundwater recharge areas to ensure sufficient long-term water supplies for the region.
8. Protect, maintain, and, where appropriate and practicable, identify opportunities to enhance water quality and river base flows.
9. Protect and maintain regional water-dependent recreational opportunities.
10. Identify opportunities to manage stormwater to improve water quality and quantity.
11. Identify and implement cost-effective water management strategies.
12. Seek to provide economically affordable power and water resource service to all citizens in the region.
13. Identify and implement actions to better measure and share water use data and information.

In addition, the Regional Water Plan has adopted several Short-Term Water Quantity and Water Quality Management Practices, which the local comprehensive plan should include in order to manage water resources in a sustainable manner through the planning period and beyond:

The most significant issues in the Suwannee-Satilla Region are surface water availability gaps driven by agricultural usage. As such, the majority of water supply management practices are intended to address agricultural surface water use.

#### **Short Term Water Quantity Management Practices (0 – 10 Years)**

1. Utilize surface water and groundwater sources within the available resource capacities
2. Water conservation
3. Data Collection and research to confirm the frequency, duration, severity, and drivers of surface water gaps
4. Evaluate and ensure that current and future surface water permit conditions do not contribute to 7Q10 low flow concerns (1 in 10 years 7 day low flow condition)
5. Encourage sustainable groundwater use as a preferred supply in regions with surface water 7Q10 low flow concerns and adequate groundwater supply
6. Identify incentives and a process to sustainably replace a portion of existing agricultural surface water use with groundwater use to address 7Q10 low flow concerns
8. Evaluate the potential to use existing storage to address 7Q10 low flow concerns

9. Education to reduce surficial aquifer groundwater use impacts to 7Q10 low flow concerns

**Short-Term Water Quality Management Practices (0 – 10 Years):**

1. Point Sources:

- Support and fund current permitting and waste load allocation process to improve treatment of wastewater and increase treatment capacity
- Data collection and research to confirm discharge volumes and waste concentrations as well as receiving stream flows and chemistry

2. Non-Point Sources:

- Data collection to confirm source of pollutants and causes; encourage storm water ordinances, septic system maintenance, and coordinated planning
- Ensure funding and support for Best Management Practices Programs by local and state programs, including urban/suburban, rural, forestry, and agricultural Best Management Practices

3. Non-point Source Existing Impairments:

- Total maximum daily load listed streams: Improve data on source of pollutant and length of impairment; identify opportunities to leverage funds, and implement non-point source Best Management Practices

Longer Term (20 – 40 years) water quantity and quality management practices include:

- Improve infiltration and management of wetlands
- Evaluate incentive-based programs to manage, increase, and restore wastewater and stormwater returns
- Identify potential/feasibility of a multi-purpose reservoir
- Identify feasibility of regional inter-basin transfer
- Continue wastewater and stormwater master planning

**Chapter 391-3-16: Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria**

The Environmental Planning Criteria that are part of the Minimum Planning Standards deal specifically with the protection of water supply watersheds, groundwater recharge areas, wetlands, river corridors, and mountains, the last of these not being applicable in this region. These criteria were developed by the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) as mandated in Part V of the Georgia Planning Act and in the Mountains and River Corridor Protection Act.

The criteria require that local governments shall identify existing and future water supply watersheds and adopt a water supply watershed protection plan for their jurisdiction.

Some uses may be grandfathered, such as land uses existing prior to the adoption of a watershed plan, mining activities permitted by DNR, certain utilities placements, special forestry, or agricultural services.

The Environmental guidelines also spell out criteria for the delineation of small and large water supply watersheds, for the protection of groundwater recharge areas, for the protection of wetlands, and for the protection of river corridors which shall be incorporated into this comprehensive plan and addressed specifically and in more detail through local ordinances and land development code regulations.



## **II. Plan Elements**

### **1. Community Goals**

The purpose of the Community Goals Element is to lay out a road map for Charlton County's and its Cities' future; to generate local buy-in to the plan; and to ensure that the plan is implemented. The Goals as listed below were developed in the 2010 Comprehensive Plan through several community workshops. These Goals were reviewed individually during the first workshop of this 2015 comprehensive plan update and deemed to still be applicable to Charlton County. Therefore, no changes were made.

#### **Goal 1 (Social and Economic Development):**

Improve the greater Charlton County economy by diversifying and establishing an economic and cultural climate that will allow greater Charlton County to become a regional center for eco-tourism for Jacksonville, Kings Bay, and other coastal area oriented businesses, and provide quality housing for families and retirees.

#### **Goal 2 (Housing):**

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

#### **Goal 3 (Natural Resources):**

The natural resources of Greater Charlton County should be protected, appropriately used, or conserved in a manner that maximizes their functions and values.

#### **Goal 4 (Cultural Resources):**

Greater Charlton County takes pride in and values its historic and cultural resources. In order to effectively protect, preserve, and promote these resources, Charlton County and the Cities of Folkston and Homeland should consider the adaptive reuse of vacant historic buildings; the development of heritage tourism and public education programs focusing on historic preservation; the identification and inventory of existing cultural resources; and the protection of cultural resources through local regulation and other initiatives.

#### **Goal 5 (Community Facilities and Infrastructure):**

Provide needed community facilities, including digital broadband communications, water, sewer, solid waste, police, fire, and EMS, in a manner that will ensure that the current and future needs of the residents and businesses of Charlton County and the Cities of Folkston and Homeland are met.

#### **Goal 6 (Land Use):**

Ensure a high-quality living environment through a mixture of compatible land uses that reflects the needs and desires of the local residents and businesses and their vision for Charlton County.

#### **Goal 7 (Transportation):**

Provide a safe, efficient, integrated, multi-modal transportation system that addresses the future needs of Charlton County businesses and residents.

#### **Goal 8 (Governmental Relations):**

Establish effective coordination measures among all pertinent public and quasi-public entities in order to best maintain and improve Charlton County's quality of life and resources.

## **2. Issues and Opportunities**

The initial Needs and Opportunities, as shown in this section, were developed and identified in the 2010 Update for Charlton County and the Cities of Folkston and Homeland. For this comprehensive plan update, the issues and opportunities were reviewed in the first of three workshops. Each of the previous issues and opportunities were reviewed and discussed by the participants, and then either deleted, amended, or retained, as deemed applicable to Charlton County and the two cities. This was done utilizing a strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) analysis with stakeholders and residents, analysis of statistical data and information, and review and revision as applicable of the issues and opportunities. Each of the following needs and opportunities is addressed by corresponding implementation measures in the Community Work Program.

### **DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS**

#### **Housing**

##### ***Issues***

1. Charlton County has a countywide shortage of affordable good-quality housing for all income groups.
2. A significant portion of the properties and housing stock is in a serious state of neglect. Lack of property maintenance and housing maintenance are serious issues.
3. Only a small proportion of property owners pay property taxes, due to the low value of the housing stock and because of the large percentage of manufactured homes, which are not homesteaded and therefore are depreciated.
4. A significant portion of the housing for the elderly and for families with young children is substandard.
5. Rents are very high compared to similar housing stock in surrounding areas.

##### ***Opportunities***

- ❖ Raise the standards for manufactured homes to meet proper building codes and pass inspections.
- ❖ Code Enforcement encourages increased property and housing maintenance and reduces the amount of trash.
- ❖ The private market could take the opportunity to provide more housing choices in a small market.

#### **Land Use**

##### ***Issues***

1. The City of Folkston has a zoning ordinance, while the unincorporated county does not. Some development standards need to be put in place countywide to protect the existing quality of life while still allowing new residential and non-residential development.
2. The County is 54 miles long and, due to its length, has developed into two distinct portions: North Charlton County and South Charlton County. An overall sense of community is minimal, and the unique characteristics of each area need to be addressed separately.
3. Charlton County does not permit septic tanks in flood plain areas, and as a result, septic tanks are installed without permits.

##### ***Opportunities***

- ❖ Code Enforcement provides an effective tool to provide flood plain protection.

## **RESOURCE CONSERVATION**

### **Cultural Resources**

#### ***Issues***

1. Charlton County has an existing Historical Society, but it is inactive.

#### ***Opportunities***

- ❖ Both Charlton County and the City of Folkston have historic properties surveys, which can be used to identify and protect historic resources.
- ❖ The County and the City of Folkston own most of the historic properties and structures. They utilize public investment to preserve and maintain these resources, and encourage the private sector to do the same.

### **Natural Resources**

#### ***Issues***

1. The St. Marys River and the Satilla River both need to have their existing public access points upgraded with proper oversight.
2. Enforcement is vital at river access points in order to keep up maintenance and minimize dumping of trash, which both rivers are experiencing.
3. The St. Marys River and the Satilla River both have existing grandfathered septic tanks that are located within the flood plain.

#### ***Opportunities***

- ❖ Possibilities to upgrade and improve existing access points at the rivers include installing dumpsters, running garbage trucks, and continuing with the Spring River Cleanup.
- ❖ Charlton County now has accurate 2014 flood plain maps, which can be used for permitting.
- ❖ Continue the working relationship with DNR.

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

#### ***Issues***

1. The length of the County (54 miles) poses logistical issues for providing sufficient coverage for law enforcement, EMS, and fire.
2. The Cities of Homeland and Folkston only have small-scale utilities. Federal and state regulations, including a periodic water quality testing fee, redirect needed monetary resources from provision of services to regulatory expenditures.
3. Lack of sufficient digital broadband coverage in large areas of Charlton County limits education and economic development opportunities and causes communication problems for police, fire, and EMS.

#### ***Opportunities***

- ❖ All five volunteer fire stations were brought under the control of a professional paid Fire Chief to improve compliance, effectiveness, and the ISO rating for the County and Cities.
- ❖ Improve the capacity for responding to brushfires.

### **Transportation**

#### ***Issues***

1. There is a lack of local and state funding to support resurfacing and maintenance of local roads.
2. There is a lack of state funds and maintenance on existing state roads.

## **SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

### **Economic Development**

#### ***Issues***

1. Lack of certified industrial area to attract industry and jobs.
2. Lack of coordinated tourism marketing program to effectively market the area, including marketing opportunities specific to the Wildlife Refuge, Railwatch, and St. Marys River, among others.
3. Lack of younger, educated workforce and lack of skilled labor.
4. Loss of population due to a lack of local available jobs.

#### ***Opportunities***

- ❖ A tourism roundtable could coordinate many marketing opportunities.
- ❖ The Airport Authority is evaluating the need and market for a general business class aviation airport, which could present an economic opportunity for Charlton County.
- ❖ Connection of the tourism program with the coastal tourism program could provide for additional economic development opportunities.
- ❖ A non-profit foundation could coordinate marketing programs and events for natural and historic resources.
- ❖ Attraction of retirees, especially military retirees, could diversify the population and the workforce.
- ❖ An increase in job opportunities could stem the population out-migration.

## **GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS**

#### ***Issues***

1. There is a lack of coordination with State agencies and too much disconnect from the higher levels of government.
2. There is a lack of coordination and cooperation between state and federal agencies to market and operate the Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge, creating a responsibility vacuum.

#### ***Opportunities***

- ❖ The school system has created a real fabric of unity, especially with the success of sports teams, the band, and its music program.
- ❖ The school system has done an exceptional job with improving their facilities, outreach, and programs.

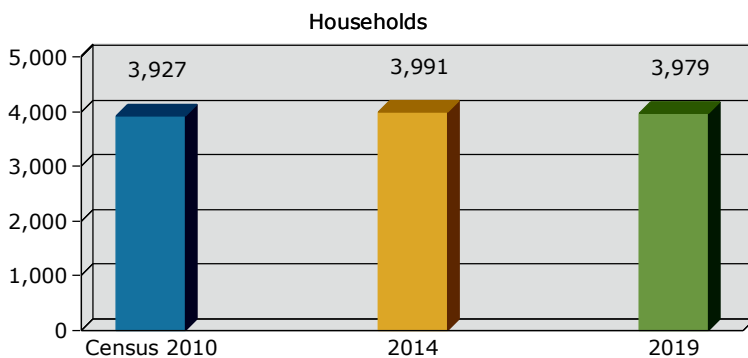
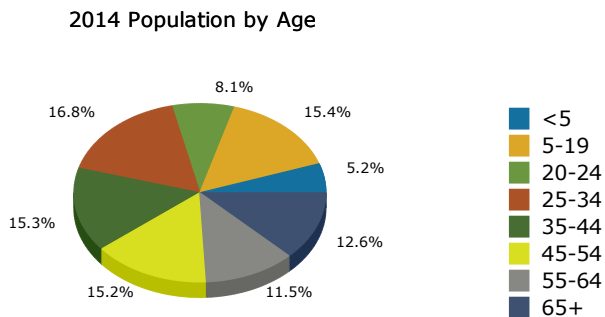
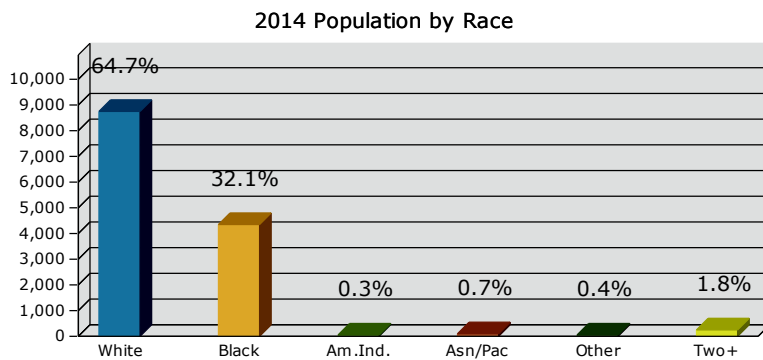
### 3. Analysis of Data and Information

The following brief summarization of data for Charlton County, the City of Folkston, and the City of Homeland serves as a visual profile of the area. Data were provided by ESRI 2014 and 2019 forecasts, based on the US Census Bureau's 2010 Census data.

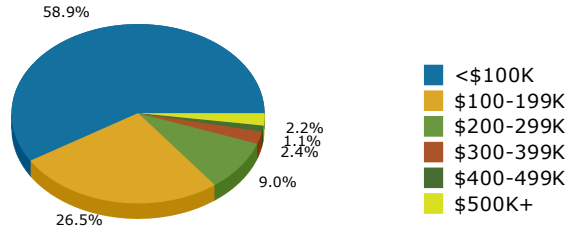
#### Charlton County

The 2014 population of Charlton County is 13,549. The estimated increase for 2019 is 0.12%, indicating a fairly stable population. This is further confirmed by only a slight increase in the number of households in the area. Approximately two-thirds of the population is white and one-third is black; other racial/ethnic groups form only a very small part of the population.

The median age in Charlton County is 38, compared with a median US age of 37.7.

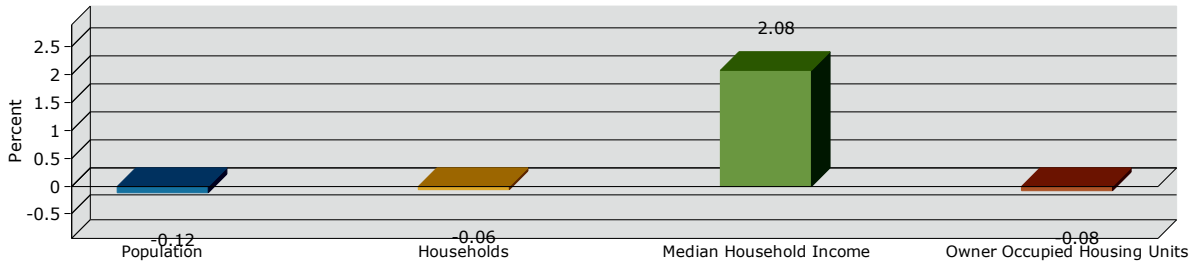


### 2014 Home Value

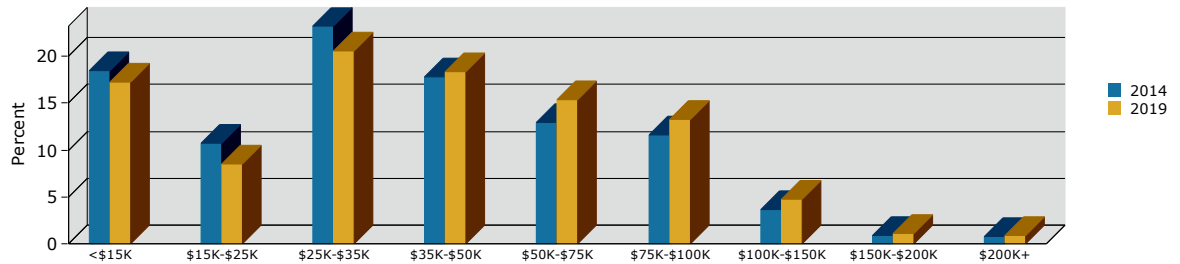


More than half of all homes in Charlton County are valued at less than \$100,000, about one-quarter are valued between \$100,000 and \$200,000, and only about 15% of the housing stock is valued at more than \$200,000. The majority are owner-occupied, about one-quarter are rentals, and about 13.8% of the housing stock is vacant.

### 2014-2019 Annual Growth Rate



### Household Income

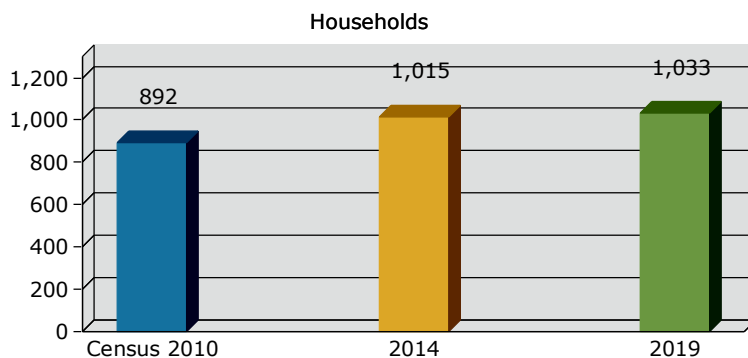
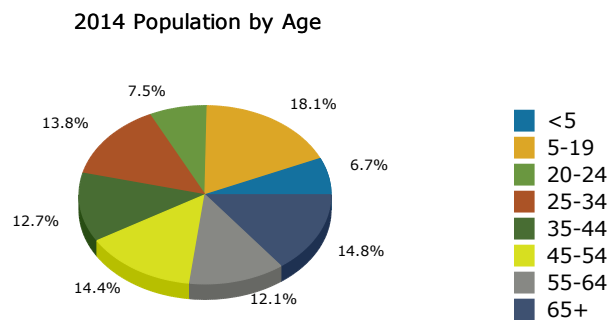
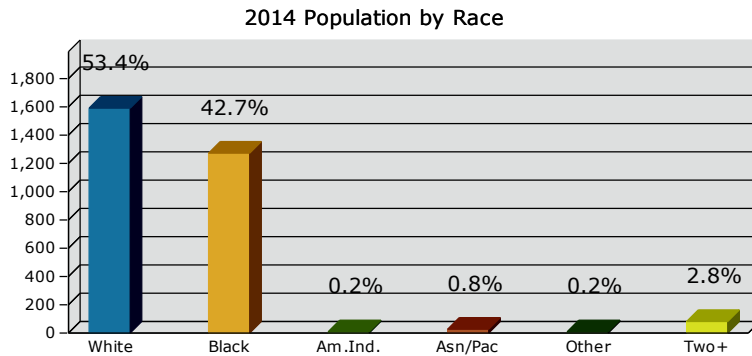


Average household income has been increasing, reaching a level of about \$35,000. However, wages are expected to decline in the next five years due to a flight of higher-income jobs to nearby areas such as Waycross and Jacksonville. The average household income for Charlton County is \$44,234.

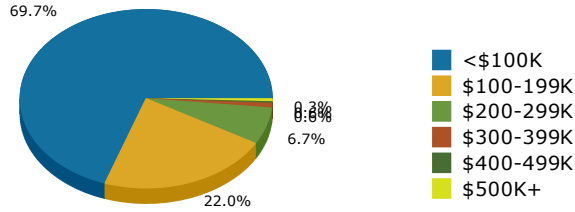
## City of Folkston

The 2014 population of the City of Folkston is 2,972. The estimated increase for 2019 is 0.17%, again indicating a fairly stable population. This is further confirmed by only a slight increase in the number of households in the city. Approximately half of the population in the City of Folkston is white and half is black; other racial/ethnic groups make up only a very small part of the population.

The median age in the City of Folkston is 38.3, compared with a median US age of 37.7.

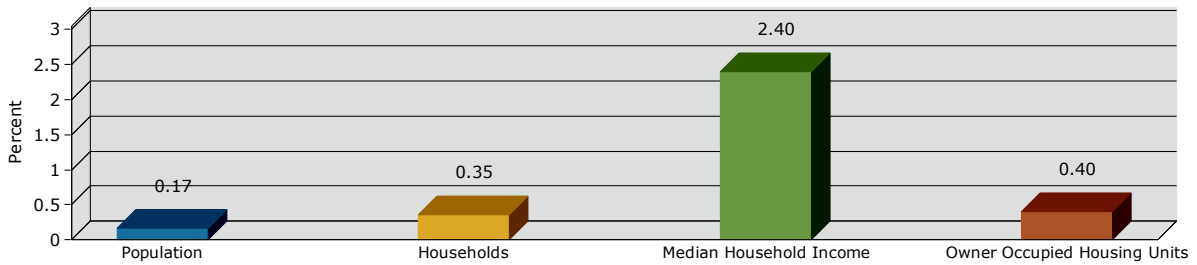


### 2014 Home Value

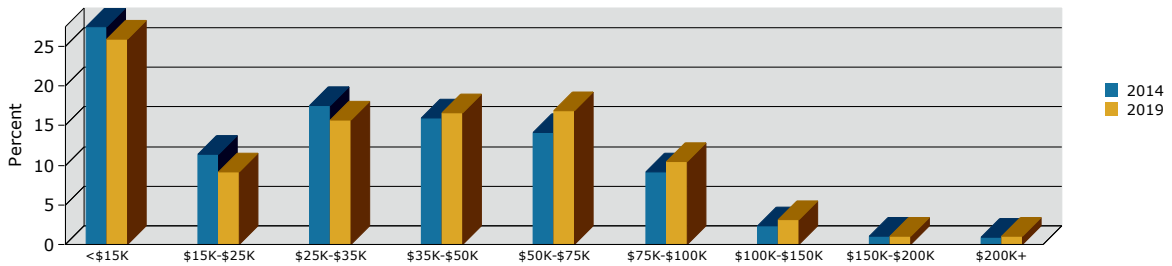


Roughly two-thirds of the homes in the City of Folkston are valued at less than \$100,000, about one-quarter are valued between \$100,000 and \$200,000, and only about 8% of the housing stock is valued at more than \$200,000. The majority are owner-occupied, about one-third are rentals, and about 10% of the housing stock is vacant.

### 2014-2019 Annual Growth Rate



### Household Income



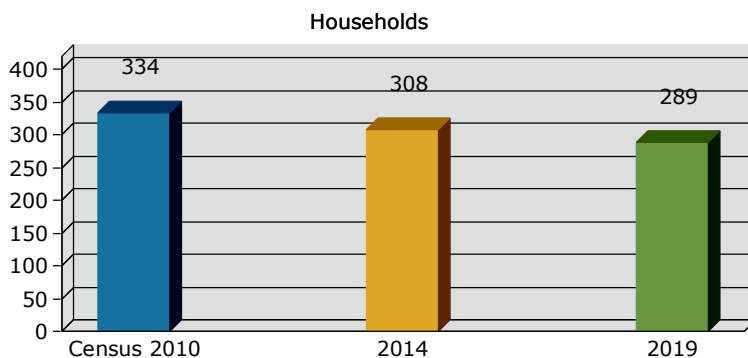
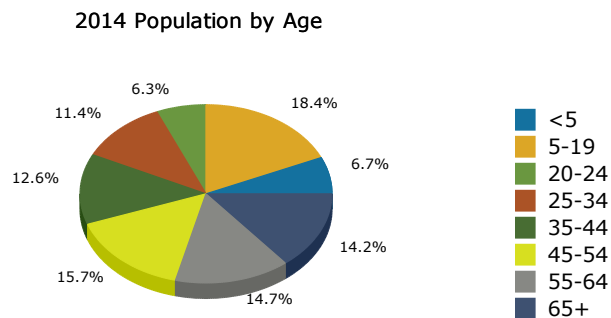
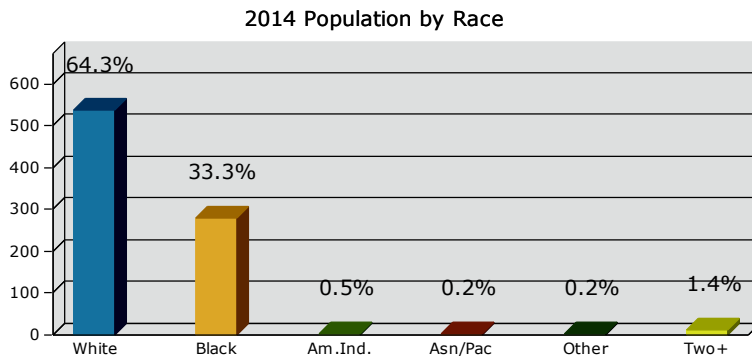
As in the unincorporated area of the county, average household income has been increasing, reaching a level of about \$35,000. The percentage of salaries above \$35,000 is expected to increase by 2019, indicating a concentration of higher-paying jobs within the incorporated boundaries of the county. The average household income for the City of Folkston is \$40,131.



## City of Homeland

The 2014 population for the City of Homeland is 838, reflecting a continuing decreasing trend from 910 in 2010 to 782 in 2019. The estimated change for 2019 is -1.37%, reflecting a natural decrease in the largely retirement-aged population without an influx of younger residents. This is further confirmed by a slight decrease in the number of households in the city. As is the case for Charlton County, the City of Homeland's population is approximately two-thirds white and one-third black; other racial/ethnic groups make up only a very small part of the population.

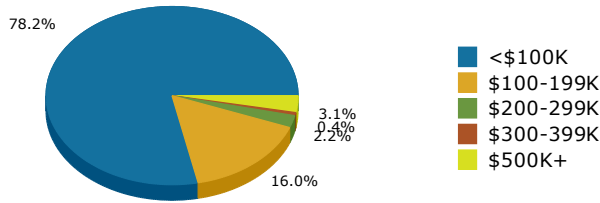
The median age for the City of Homeland is 41.1, compared with a median US age of 37.7.



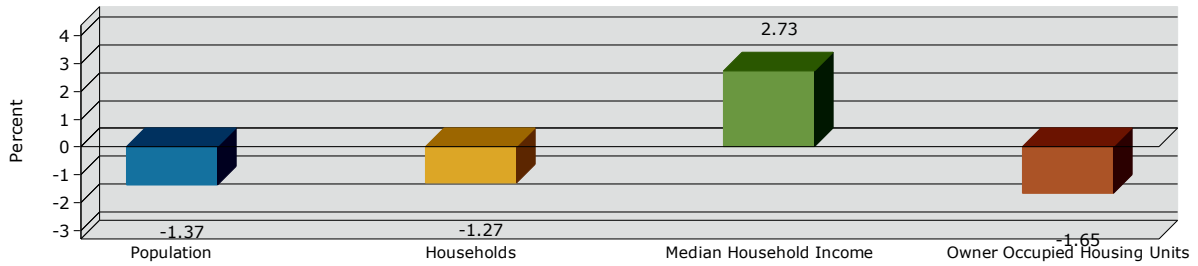
Roughly three-quarters of the houses in the City of Homeland are valued at less than \$100,000, about one-quarter are valued between \$100,000 and \$200,000 and only about 5% of the housing stock is

valued at more than \$200,000. Roughly half of the homes are owner-occupied, the remainder are rentals, and about 10% of the housing stock is vacant.

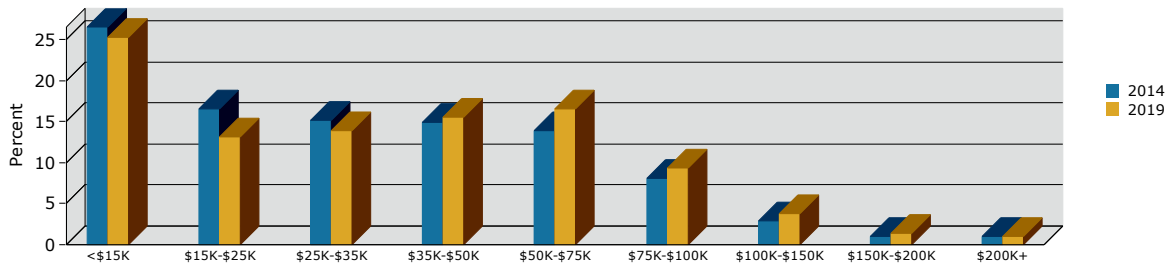
2014 Home Value



2014-2019 Annual Growth Rate



Household Income



As in the unincorporated area of the county, average household income has been increasing, reaching a level of about \$35,000. The percentage of salaries above \$35,000 is expected to increase by 2019, indicating a concentration of higher-paying jobs within the incorporated boundaries of the city. The average household income for the City of Homeland is \$39,503.

## **4. Consideration of DCA Community Quality Objectives**

### **DCA Quality Community Objectives:**

#### **1. Economic Prosperity**

Encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community. Factors to consider when determining suitability include job skills required; long-term sustainability; linkages to other economic activities in the region; impact on the resources of the area; and prospects for creating job opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse local workforce.

#### **2. Resource Management**

Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. This may be achieved by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; encouraging green building construction and renovation; utilizing appropriate waste management techniques; fostering water conservation and reuse; or setting environmentally sensitive areas aside as green space or conservation reserves.

#### **3. Efficient Land Use**

Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the traditional core of the community; designing new development to minimize the amount of land consumed; carefully planning expansion of public infrastructure; or maintaining open space in agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.

#### **4. Local Preparedness**

Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer) to support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.

#### **5. Sense of Place**

Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

#### **6. Regional Cooperation**

Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. This may be achieved by actively participating in regional organizations; identifying joint projects that will result in greater efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer; or developing collaborative solutions for regional issues such as protection of shared natural resources, development of the transportation network, or creation of a tourism plan.

#### **7. Housing Options**

Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource-efficient housing in the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood; promoting programs to provide housing for residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds, including affordable mortgage finance options; instituting programs to address homelessness issues in the community; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community.

#### **8. Transportation Options**

Address the transportation needs, challenges, and opportunities of all community residents. This may be achieved by fostering alternatives to transportation by automobile, including walking, cycling, and transit; employing traffic calming measures throughout the community; requiring adequate connectivity between adjoining developments; or coordinating transportation and land use decision-making within the community.

## **9. Educational Opportunities**

Make educational and training opportunities readily available to enable all community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, manage their finances, or pursue life ambitions. This can be achieved by expanding and improving local educational institutions or programs; providing access to other institutions in the region; instituting programs to improve local graduation rates; expanding vocational education programs; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure an adequately trained and skilled workforce.

## **10. Community Health**

Ensure that all community residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, have access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities. This may be achieved by providing services to support the basic needs of disadvantaged residents, including the disabled; instituting programs to improve public safety; promoting programs that foster better health and fitness; or otherwise providing all residents the opportunity to improve their circumstances in life and to fully participate in the community.

## 5. Community Policies

### Development Patterns

#### Housing

**Goal 2:** Ensure that all residents of Charlton County have access to adequate and affordable housing with a suitable living environment for all residents.

**Issue 1:** Charlton County has a countywide shortage of affordable good-quality housing for all income groups.

**Policy 1.1** Encourage construction of affordable, good-quality housing for all income groups. Incentives may include density bonuses, one-stop permitting, or other in-kind measures.

**Issue 2:** A significant portion of the properties and housing stock is in a serious state of neglect. Lack of property maintenance and housing maintenance are serious issues.

**Policy 1.2** Encourage maintenance and cleanup of vacant lots and properties.

**Policy 1.3** Provide regulations that will require property owners to remove dilapidated, illegally placed mobile homes.

**Issue 3:** Only a small proportion of property owners pay property taxes, due to the low value of the housing stock and because of the large percentage of manufactured homes, which are not homesteaded and therefore are depreciated.

**Policy 1.4** Maintain older neighborhoods that are also perceived as providing quality and character to the area. Housing preserved in good condition will raise the value of housing stock.

**Policy 1.5** Continue to use the Code Enforcement Inspector Program. Low value, substandard, dilapidated housing presents a danger to the welfare, health, and safety of the public. It should be eliminated through demolition or removal and replaced with higher value, better quality, affordable housing stock.

**Issue 4:** A significant portion of the housing for the elderly and for families with young children is substandard.

**Policy 1.6** Consider the location of support businesses such as good-quality grocery stores and other businesses that support neighborhoods, in order to encourage the construction of quality housing and build complete neighborhoods.

**Policy 1.7** Pursue public-private partnerships to build and market affordable infill housing in areas of need, as identified in the countywide housing survey.

**Issue 5:** Rents are very high compared to similar housing stock in surrounding areas.

**Policy 1.8** Provide a menu of incentives for developers of rental housing with affordable rents, such as: allowing a mix of housing sizes while maintaining the same quality of housing; funding contributions for off-site construction of affordable housing in exchange for incentives; or off-site or on-site construction of affordable housing in exchange for pre-determined incentives.

#### Land Use

**Goal 6:** Ensure a high-quality living environment through a mixture of compatible land uses that reflects the needs and desires of the local residents and businesses and their vision for Charlton County.

**Issue 1:**        **The City of Folkston has a zoning ordinance, while the unincorporated county does not. Some development standards need to be put in place countywide to protect the existing quality of life while still allowing new residential and non-residential development.**

**Policy 2.1**        Develop a sense of purpose and intent and a geographic sense of space for the various areas of Charlton County and encourage innovative development practices.

**Policy 2.2**        Encourage and request that any proposed development will be compatible with the underlying “Character Areas” as shown in the Comprehensive Plan.

**Policy 2.3**        Provide adequate buffering and setbacks between agricultural and non-agricultural uses to protect any agricultural/forestry uses from adverse impacts associated with the encroachment of non-agricultural development and to protect agricultural/forestry uses from nuisance complaints. Ensure that Agricultural Best Management Practices and Forest Best Management Practices are used in maintaining the county’s agricultural and forest areas.

**Policy 2.4**        Develop some limited land development standards to plan for the future in order to steer development and economic growth where Charlton County would like to see it, provide for compatible development, preserve the area’s rural quality of life with close proximity to a major metro area, and improve the area’s current status as bedroom community.

**Policy 2.5**        Encourage new residents to locate within the Mixed-use Preferred Development Character areas in order to ensure adequate services with infrastructure and minimize the cost to the County for road maintenance.

**Policy 2.6**        Create an inventory of available developable land (Homeland has 16 acres and the County has 7 acres in the Industrial Park) and promote commercial and industrial development in those areas.

**Policy 2.7**        Promote developing standards for landscaping and land use based on best management practices for the prevention of wildfires (specifically in areas adjacent to the county’s timbered areas and the Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge) in coordination with the Georgia Forestry Commission, which is in the process of developing a Community Wildfire Protection Plan that will provide recommendations for the appropriate types and methods of fuel reduction and structure ignitability reduction that will protect this county’s residents and essential infrastructure.

**Policy 2.8**        To ensure walkability and safety, coordinate with the School Board on Future Land Use designations in order to locate schools in areas where residential development is desirable and/or in areas near to existing or future residential neighborhoods.

**Issue 2:**        **The County is 54 miles long and, due to its length, has developed into two distinct portions: North Charlton County and South Charlton County. An overall sense of community is minimal, and the unique characteristics of each area need to be addressed separately.**

**Policy 2.9**        Create pro-active planning projects to address the character of each character area and provide focal points for community action.

**Issue 3:**        **Charlton County does not permit septic tanks in flood plain areas, and as a result, septic tanks are installed without permits.**

**Policy 2.10**       Properties with industrial uses should have both water and sewer services available, concurrent with development, in order to provide sufficient protection to the health and safety of the public, avoid groundwater contamination, and provide for sufficient fire protection.

**Policy 2.11**       Encourage increased code enforcement actions to prevent illegal septic tanks in flood plain areas.

## **Resource Conservation**

### **Cultural Resources**

**Goal 4:** Greater Charlton County takes pride in and values its historic and cultural resources. In order to effectively protect, preserve, and promote these resources, Charlton County and the Cities of Folkston and Homeland should consider the adaptive reuse of vacant historic buildings; the development of heritage tourism and public education programs focusing on historic preservation; the identification and inventory of existing cultural resources; and the protection of cultural resources through local regulation and other initiatives.

**Issue 1:** Charlton County has an existing Historical Society, but it is inactive.

**Policy 3.1** Resurrect the Charlton County Historical Society and encourage increased activity and volunteer work.

**Policy 3.2** Task the Charlton County Historical Society to research and write the rich history of Charlton County in order to develop more pride in the history and culture of Charlton County and keep the momentum going.

**Policy 3.3** Encourage the establishment of a historical museum and archive for Greater Charlton County. This museum should be used for the storage and display of historic papers, books, photographs, textiles, and other historic and cultural memorabilia. Information pertaining to the history of Greater Charlton County's historic and cultural resources, such as historic resources surveys, should also be kept there.

### **Natural Resources**

**Goal 3:** The natural resources of Greater Charlton County should be protected, appropriately used, and conserved in a manner that maximizes their functions and values.

**Issue 1:** The St. Marys River and the Satilla River both need to have their existing public access points upgraded with proper oversight.

**Policy 4.1** Research options for public or private management of public river access points and their immediate vicinities (either as public parks or through concessions) in order to increase security and reduce crime and vandalism.

**Issue 2:** Enforcement is vital at river access points to keep up maintenance and minimize dumping of trash, which both rivers are experiencing.

**Policy 4.2** Coordinate with the Sheriff's Department, DNR, and volunteers to enforce speed limits in residential subdivisions adjacent to public river access points. Increase fines for offenders to finance administration of such a program.

**Policy 4.3** Participate and assist in the annual river cleanups.

**Policy 4.4** Support DNR, the Satilla Riverkeeper, and the St. Marys River Management Committee with projects to protect and enhance these valuable natural resources and take advantage of their economic value for the area.

**Policy 4.5** Encourage the County to investigate sample ordinances that could help maintain the environmental character of the rivers, their banks, and the river corridors.

**Policy 4.6** Encourage local governments and agencies to seek out funding for grants and other assistance to help clean up the rivers.

**Issue 3:**      **The St. Marys River and the Satilla River both have existing grandfathered septic tanks that are located within the flood plain.**

**Policy 4.7**      Encourage implementation and enforcement of regulations for septic system setbacks for the St. Marys and Satilla Rivers and the OWR.

**Policy 4.8**      Encourage proper maintenance of septic systems within the river corridors and tributaries through increased education.

**Policy 4.9**      Investigate and encourage alternate methods of waste disposal other than septic tanks in order to protect the quality of the groundwater.

**Policy 4.10**     Consider incentives that will ensure that existing and proposed uses are compatible and that proposed uses are appropriate and compatible with the natural and cultural uses surrounding them.

**Policy 4.11**     Continue to pursue state and federal grants and other public funding sources to purchase some of the most environmentally sensitive lands in the county.

### **Community Facilities and Infrastructure**

**Goal 5:**      **Provide needed community facilities, including digital broadband communications, water, sewer, solid waste, police, fire, and EMS, in a manner that will ensure that the current and future needs of the residents and businesses of Charlton County and the Cities of Folkston and Homeland are met.**

**Issue 1:**      **The length of the County (54 miles) poses logistical issues for providing sufficient law enforcement coverage for the Sheriff, EMS, and Fire.**

**Policy 5.1**      Encourage supplemental medical transport other than EMS to provide sufficient coverage, including research of alternatives, cost, and feasibility.

**Policy 5.2**      Investigate and consider developing a fee-for-services menu to provide for payment for non-emergency services.

**Issue 2:**      **The Cities of Homeland and Folkston only have small-scale utilities. Federal and state regulations, including a periodic water quality testing fee, redirect needed monetary resources from provision of services to regulatory expenditures.**

**Policy 5.3**      Plan and guide growth via the provision of water and sewer lines and tie the services to the appropriate land use.

**Policy 5.4**      Prevent or redirect development that is not supported by infrastructure.

**Policy 5.5**      Encourage clustered-type developments where they will encourage the provision of water and sewer and protect natural resources.

**Policy 5.6**      Continue, in coordination with the Regional Commission, to apply for CDBGs and other applicable grant and loan funding to construct and rehabilitate necessary infrastructure in the county.

**Policy 5.7**      Pursue CDBG grants for water and sewer for the St. George area in order to protect groundwater and surface waters from the impact of septic tanks, and to allow for smaller lot sizes (¼ to ½ acre) within the St. George Character Area.

**Policy 5.8**      Monitor development pressure coming from growth caused by the outmigration of Florida residents in order to ensure a timely response to impacts to local community facilities and services.



**Issue 3:** Lack of sufficient digital broadband coverage in large areas of Charlton County limits education and economic development opportunities and causes communication problems for police, fire, and EMS.

**Policy 5.9** Continue to market Charlton County to cell phone and broadband providers in an effort to increase coverage in order to fill gaps of coverage for emergency services and broadband services.

## **Transportation**

**Goal 7:** Provide a safe, efficient, integrated, multi-modal transportation system that addresses the future needs of Charlton County businesses and residents.

**Issue 1:** There is a lack of local and state funding to support resurfacing and maintenance of local roads.

**Policy 6.1** Continue to pursue and lobby for additional funding to improve local roads, from sources including CDBG and SPLOST funds.

**Issue 2:** There is a lack of state funds and maintenance on existing state roads.

**Policy 6.2** Continue to raise awareness of maintenance issues on existing state roads among local and state elected officials and staff.

## **Social and Economic Development**

**Goal 1:** Improve the greater Charlton County economy by diversifying and establishing an economic and cultural climate that will allow greater Charlton County to become a regional center for eco-tourism for Jacksonville, Kings Bay, and other coastal area oriented businesses, and provide quality housing for families and retirees.

**Issue 1:** Lack of certified industrial area to attract industries and jobs.

**Policy 7.1** Create a favorable environment toward developing a certified industrial area by implementing strategies in coordination with Folkston and all economic development agencies and authorities and the SGRC.

**Issue 2:** Lack of coordinated tourism marketing program to effectively market the area, including marketing opportunities specific to the Wildlife Refuge, Railwatch, and St. Marys River, among others.

**Policy 7.2** Encourage the formulation of a short-term and a long term use and marketing plan to target tourism opportunities presented by the Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge and the St. Marys and Satilla Rivers, but without exceeding the carrying capacity of those areas.

**Policy 7.3** Promote hunting and fishing tourism in the county.

**Policy 7.4** In coordination with the City of Folkston and the Chamber of Commerce, set a goal for a Downtown Master Plan and develop incentives for businesses to locate in downtown Folkston. The Train Watching Platform, with its web presence and huge marketing potential, has the potential to encourage more train- and tourism-related businesses to locate in the City, including art- and artisan-oriented businesses.

**Policy 7.5** Support an agricultural/forestry small business sector for niche farming, forestry, and agriculture-related businesses such as specialty foods, farmer's market products, and food processing industries, which would build upon and expand the county's existing agricultural culture.

**Policy 7.6** Work with the Chamber of Commerce and other economic development organizations to develop a set of incentives to attract investors and encourage public/private partnerships, including financial and density bonuses.

**Policy 7.7** Investigate the potential for developing a master-planned retirement community within the county that would include a full range of services and facilities, including a community center, a health center, and restaurants.

**Issue 3**      **Lack of younger, educated workforce and lack of skilled labor**

**Policy 7.8** Support non-cash incentives for military personnel and supporting businesses to locate in Charlton County.

**Policy 7.9** Strengthen volunteer programs.

**Policy 7.10** Encourage new work opportunities for the younger generation.

**Policy 7.11** Increase coordination with the School Board and the local Chamber to provide additional education programs to raise the educational level of the workforce, relating specifically to reading and writing as well as basic business skills.

**Policy 7.12** Work with private businesses in the community to provide internships for the younger workforce to learn business and working skills and gain experience.

**Policy 7.13** Develop a program in coordination with the School Board to identify higher education opportunities, either through long-distance learning methods or in nearby metro areas, and make them accessible to local residents of all ages who wish to obtain a higher level of education.

**Policy 7.14** Increase outreach to existing businesses and industry.

**Policy 7.15** Promote location and expansion of internet and broadband infrastructure in the county, as well as the education of the workforce in internet applications and skills.

**Issue 4:**      **Loss of Population due to a lack of local available jobs.**

**Policy 7.16** Work towards a step-by-step implementation plan to provide for a job center in the County.

**Policy 7.17** Research how the rise in elderly population may enhance the county's economic base and provide a largely untapped base of knowledge and experience for the labor market.

**Policy 7.18** Promote the rural quality of life and low density of the area to residents of the Jacksonville area and other metro areas who may seek a more peaceful way of life.

**Policy 7.19** Promote the Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge and the St. Marys and Satilla Rivers in order to attract residents to the area who are looking for an improved quality of life close to world-class natural resources.

**Policy 7.20** Support a marketing campaign emphasizing Charlton's better quality of life, low crime, lower cost of living, and lower property taxes. This will allow the County to better compete with areas Florida, despite Florida's having no state income tax.

**Governmental Relations**

**Goal 8:**      **Establish effective coordination measures among all pertinent public and quasi-public entities in order to best maintain and improve Charlton County's quality of life and resources.**

**Issue 1:**      **There is a lack of coordination with State agencies and too much disconnect from the higher levels of government.**

**Policy 8.1** Encourage participation in committees, groups, and organizations promoting intergovernmental cooperation at the state and regional level.

**Issue 2:** There is a lack of coordination and cooperation between state and federal agencies to market and operate the Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge, creating a responsibility vacuum.

**Policy 8.2** Encourage state and federal entities to cooperate with local groups and include them or their communities in state and federal planning and projects.

## 6. Community Work Program

### Charlton County Short-Term Work Program – Report of Accomplishments

Community Facilities/ Transportation	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Revenue Source	Status
Purchase five new fire trucks (one each year).	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$625,000	General Funds, SPLOST, grants	Complete
Renovation and expansion of courthouse	x	x	x			Charlton County	\$3.5 Million	SPLOST	Complete
Purchase new wildfire turn out gear each year	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$4,000 to \$5,000 per year	General Funds, grants	Complete
Purchase three new police cars	x	x	x			Charlton County	\$30,000 each	SPLOST, General Funds	Complete
Acquire Community Center for Boys and Girls Club. Old Bethune School Gym is possibility		x	x	x	x	Charlton County	Operating Costs	General Funds	Discontinued
Pave Newell Road and Farley Burnsed Road			x	x	x	Charlton County	\$1,000,000	General Funds, SPLOST, DOT	Farley Burnsed Complete; Newell underway
Construct new jail administration building	x					Charlton County	\$2,000,000	SPLOST	Complete
Continue maintenance of streets, curbs and gutters	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$1,725,000 per year	General Funds, LARP, DOT, CDBG	Underway with concentration on roads and bridges
Continue funding/support of library programs	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$46,000 annually	General Funds	Underway
Continue with plans to pave Grace Chapel road	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$200,000	General Funds, SPLOST, DOT	Underway (included under general paving and maintenance of roads and bridges)
Finishing the remaining 10% of addressing for 911 system	x	x				Charlton County	\$6,500	General Funds	Complete

<b>Community Facilities/ Transportation</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>Status</b>
Continue to provide funding and support to the Family Connection programs	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$12,500	Grants	Underway
Implement continuous bike trails along the Okefenokee Trail and GA Hwy 40 from Kingsland to Folkston	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	TBD	Federal, State, local	Discontinued at the local level
Complete Paving of Spring Lake Drive	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	300,000	Grants, SPLOST, General Funds, DOT	Complete

<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>Status</b>
Pursue manufacture and/or process of native materials such as wood/fuel pellets	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$150,000	General Funds, Available grants	Underway
Market sale/rent of vacant Truss plant and Sawmill buildings	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$200,000	General Funds	Complete
Continue to provide funding for Charlton/Folkston Development Authority and its programs	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$29,000/yr	General Funds	Underway
Continue to use Chamber for promotion of County to attract business and promote eco-tourism	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$10,000/yr	County promotion budget	Underway
Continue to participate in workforce development	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$7,500	General Funds/ grants	Underway

Housing	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	Responsible Agency	Annual Cost	Revenue Source	Status
Renovate homes for elderly, low and/or fixed income who did not qualify for CHIP Program	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$150,000	General Funds, grants, CDBG	Discontinued (lack of funds)
Apply for housing for moderate to middle income workforce	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$150,000	CDBG, grants	Discontinued (moved to private sector)
Continue to provide funding for building and code enforcement program	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$40,000/yr	Fees, General Fund	Underway

Land Use	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Revenue Source	Status
As economy improves, lease or purchase large tract of property for industrial park to draw potential investors	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$150,000	General Funds, grants, CDBG	Underway
Conduct review of ordinances on an as-needed basis	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$2,500	General Funds	Underway
Continue to support land uses that encourage growth, enhance economic development, and afford employment opportunities and environmental sustainability	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$2,500	General Funds	Underway
Establish Firewise Community Programs/Plans for all communities within the county	x	x	x			Charlton County, City of Folkston, City of Homeland	\$80,000	Georgia Forestry Commission	Underway

Land Use	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Revenue Source	Status
Establish a county agricultural and forestry committee that will encourage the diversification of agriculture and forestry industry in order to increase sustainability and independence of the county	x	x				Charlton County	N/a	N/a	Discontinued (moved to private sector)

Natural and Historic Resources	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Revenue Source	Status
Pursue areas in the County to promote and dedicate to outdoor sports such as mud bogging, ATV. Trails, and air boats	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$100,000	General Funds, and available grants	Discontinued due to environmental concerns
Market future development of private buildings into Bed/Breakfast Inns	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$10,000	General Funds	Complete
Promote and encourage outdoor recreation activities such as bird watching and bike riding.	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$5,000	General Funds	Underway
Continue funding and support of the St Marys River Management Committee	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$2,500	General Funds	Underway

Natural and Historic Resources	FY 2011	FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	FY 2015	Responsible Agency	Estimated Cost	Revenue Source	Status
Re-survey historic and cultural resources identified in the 1990 Architectural Survey of Charlton County and update with resources now 50+ years of age					x	Charlton County	\$20,000	General Funds, GA DNR Coastal Incentive Grant	Discontinued (moved to private sector)
Create a comprehensive historic preservation plan for Greater Charlton County to establish the historic context of the County, develop goals and priorities for the identification, evaluation, registration, and treatment of historic & cultural resources, identify fiscal needs and provide for public input in conjunction with the comprehensive historic & cultural resources survey					x	Charlton County	\$5000	General Funds, GA DNR Coastal Incentive Grant	Discontinued due to lack of funds



**City of Folkston Short-Term Work Program – Report of Accomplishments**

<b>Community Facilities/Transportation</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>Status</b>
Continue to support drainage and paving unpaved roads as funding is available	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County, City of Folkston, and City of Homeland	\$1,000,000	LARP, DOT, General Funds CDBG	Underway
Establish a community center		x	x			City of Folkston, Homeland and the County	\$300,000	SPLOST, CDBG	Underway
Maintain community facilities	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	N/A	SPLOST, CDBG General Funds	Underway
Continue repair, refurbishment and replacement of defective wastewater lift stations, manholes and distribution lines	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$100,000	General Funds	Complete
Continue funding and monthly support of the Charlton County Library	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$26,000	General Funds	Underway
Continue to maintain the Funnel as a platform for viewing trains	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$5,000	General Funds	Underway
Match infrastructure systems support desired growth patterns	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$57,500	USDA, DCA grants, and General funds	Discontinued

<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>Status</b>
Participate in the development authority instead of taking a reactive stance to development	x	x	x	x	x	City and County	N/A	SPLOST, DCA, General Funds	Complete
Actively seek businesses and industry to our area	x	x	x	x	x	,Chamber of Commerce, Development Authority	\$10,000	General Funds	Complete (moved to private sector)
Develop and Implement a marketing plan for the City of Folkston		x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$15,000	General Funds, DCA grants	Complete (moved to private sector)

<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>Status</b>
Continue to provide funding for the Charlton/Folkston Development Authority	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$26,000	General Funds	Underway
Continue funding for programs that attract businesses that are compatible with our goals, natural resources and unique geological features	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$5,000	General Funds	Complete
Continue to provide funding for initiatives that promote the revitalization of the City of Folkston to support economic growth	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$5,000	TEA grants, General Funds	Complete
Continue to provide funding for programs that promote eco-tourism as opportunities for local businesses	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$5,000	General Funds, Quality Growth grants	Complete
Continue funding the Okefenokee Chamber of Commerce	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$33,300	Hotel/Motel Tax Revenue and General Funds	Complete
Continue to revitalize core downtown business districts	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$25,000	General Funds, Quality Growth grants	Underway
Continue support of organizations that enhance economic development growth and implementation strategies	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$216,000	General Funds	Complete
Continue support and participation in the multi-jurisdictional Development Authority	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$86,660	General Funds	Complete

<b>Housing</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>Status</b>
Develop a plan to attract more middle to high-end housing units to attract the workforce commuters in this area and also retirees looking for a slower pace		x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$100,000	DCA Housing Grants	Discontinued
Provide funding for the building and code enforcement program	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$40,000	General Funds	Complete
Encourage property owners to clean up areas using the Dangerous Building Ordinance	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$10,000	General Funds	Underway
Continue to ensure that existing codes are enforced through Dangerous Building Ordinance, building inspections, and CDBG efforts	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$320,000	General Funds, CDBG, USDA, and HUD grants	Discontinued as City responsibility, included in county program

<b>Land Use</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>Status</b>
Develop countywide land use regulations to promote controlled growth in the county	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$45,000	General Funds, available DCA grants	Underway
Revise ordinances on an as need basis that are in conflict with desired development and growth patterns	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$7,500	General Funds	Complete
Continue to support and encourage land uses that are supportive of current and future land use patterns	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$15,000	General Funds	Complete

<b>Natural and Historic Resources</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>Status</b>
Support programs and agencies that promote and protect the historical and unique character of Folkston	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$20,000	General Funds	Underway
Promote the Satilla and St. Marys Rivers	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$10,000	General Funds	Discontinue (lack of funds)
Create a Historic Preservation Commission through the adoption of a historic preservation enabling ordinance and protect the historic & cultural resources of the City through the adoption of designation ordinances					x	City of Folkston	\$1,000	Application Fees	Discontinue (lack of funds)
Research and submit a National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Folkston Downtown Commercial Historic District				x	x	City of Folkston	\$3,500	General Funds	Discontinue (lack of funds)

<b>Intergovernmental Coordination</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>Status</b>
Pursue intergovernmental cooperation when cost effective	x	x	x	x	x	Folkston, Homeland, Charlton County	N/A	N/A	Complete
Continue to participate in committees, groups, and organizations promoting intergovernmental cooperation	x	x	x	x	x	Folkston, Homeland, Charlton County	N/A	N/A	Complete
Improve intergovernmental coordination	x	x	x	x	x	Folkston, Homeland, Charlton County	N/A	N/A	Complete

**City Of Homeland Short-Term Work Program – Report of Accomplishments**

<b>Community Facilities/ Transportation</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>Status</b>
Extend water service to Nature Trails Estates. System will have fire hydrants	x	x	x	x	x	City of Homeland	\$200,000	USDA, DCA grants, General Funds	Water service complete (fire hydrants underway)
Continue to upgrade all recreational facilities and parks on an as needed basis	x	x	x	x	x	City of Homeland	\$20,000	General Funds	Underway
Pursue grant funding to construct new City Hall with built in fireproof value	x	x	x	x	x	City of Homeland	\$300,000	CDBG, USDA and General Funds	Underway
Install galvanized chain fencing at Homeland Cemetery			x	x	x	City of Homeland	\$7,500	General Funds	Discontinue (lack of staff)
Continually seek available grants to maintain and replace existing fleet on an as need basis	x	x	x	x	x	City of Homeland	\$25,000 - \$30,000	DCA grants	Underway

<b>Economic Development</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>Status</b>
Continue funding for the Homeland Economic Development Authority and its programs	x	x	x	x	x	City of Homeland	\$50,000	General Funds	Underway

<b>Housing</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>Status</b>
Continue to fund the building and code enforcement program	x	x	x	x	x	City of Homeland	\$25,000	Fees, and General Funds	Underway

<b>Intergovernmental Coordination</b>	<b>FY 2011</b>	<b>FY 2012</b>	<b>FY 2013</b>	<b>FY 2014</b>	<b>FY 2015</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>	<b>Status</b>
Pursue intergovernmental coordination when cost effective	x	x	x	x	x	City of Homeland, Folkston and Charlton County	N/A	N/A	Complete
Continue to promote sharing of services	x	x	x	x	x	City of Homeland, Folkston and Charlton County	N/A	N/A	Complete
Continue to participate in committees, groups and organizations promoting intergovernmental coordination	x	x	x	x	x	City of Homeland, Folkston and Charlton County	N/A	N/A	Complete

## 6. Community Work Program – 2016 to 2020

### Charlton County Community Work Program

<b>Development Patterns (Land Use, Housing, etc.)</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>
Continue to provide funding for building and code enforcement program	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$40,000/yr	Fees, General Fund
As economy improves, lease or purchase a large tract of property for an industrial park in order to draw potential investors	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$150,000	General Funds, Grants, CDBG
Conduct review of ordinances on an as-needed basis	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$2,500	General Funds
Continue to support land uses that encourage growth, enhance economic development, provide employment opportunities, and promote environmental sustainability	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$2,500	General Funds
Establish & Maintain Firewise Community Programs/Plans for all communities within the county	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County, City of Folkston, City of Homeland	\$80,000	Georgia Forestry Commission

<b>Resource Conservation (Natural and Cultural Resources, etc.)</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>
Promote and encourage outdoor recreation activities such as bird watching and bike riding.	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$5,000	General Funds
Continue funding and support of the St Marys River Management Committee	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$2,500	General Funds
Develop a plan for outdoor recreation programs that will not have adverse environmental impacts		x	x			Charlton County		

<b>Community Facilities &amp; Infrastructure (Infrastructure, Recreation, Transportation etc.)</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>
Build Voting Precinct Building at GA Bend Area			x	x	x	Charlton County	\$50,000	SPLOST
Pave portions of Newell Road and other Connector Roads	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$500,000	General Funds, SPLOST, DOT
Continue Maintenance of Roads & Bridges	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$500,000 per year	General Funds, LMIG, DOT, CDBG

<b>Community Facilities &amp; Infrastructure (Infrastructure, Recreation, Transportation etc.)</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>
Make general improvements to government buildings	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$100,000	General Funds
Schedule and implement park Improvements, such as playgrounds and landscaping	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$175,000	SPLOST & Grants
Purchase Fire Trucks & Fire Equipment	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$400,000	SPLOST
Purchase Sheriff's Vehicles & Equipment	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$500,000	SPLOST & Grants
Expand the Public Library	x	x				Grant & Charlton County	\$700,000	Grant & SPLOST
Build Vehicle Fuel Centers - 2 Units		x	x			Charlton County	\$100,000	SPLOST
Renovate the Health Department building		x	x			Charlton County	\$50,000	SPLOST
Resurface Suwannee Canal Road with Bike Lane from Hwy 121 to Refuge	x	x				Charlton County & ONWLR	\$750,000	Federal Aid
Construct EMS Facility		x	x	x		Charlton County	\$200,000	SPLOST
Renovate and upgrade Fire Stations			x	x	x	Charlton County	\$200,000	SPLOST

<b>Social &amp; Economic Development (Economic Development, Population etc.)</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>
Pursue industries that involve the manufacture and/or processing of native materials such as wood/fuel pellets.	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$150,000	General Funds, Available grants
Continue to provide funding for Charlton/Folkston Development Authority and its programs	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$29,000/yr	General Funds
Continue to use the Chamber of Commerce for promotion of the County to attract business and promote eco-tourism	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$10,000/yr	County promotion budget
Continue to participate in workforce development	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$7,500	General Funds/ grants
Approve and construct General Class Business Airport	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$25,000/yr	General Fund, SPLOST
Develop Phase I of Certified Industrial Park	x	x	x			Charlton County	\$150,000	General Fund



<b>Governmental Relations</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>
Hold Municipal Elections by Municipal Contracts	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$30,000	Municipal Payments
Implement County-wide Building Inspection & Permitting Services	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$40,000	Fees & General Fd
Implement County-wide Recreation Program	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$80,000	General Fund
Implement County-wide E-911 Service for Cities	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$10,000	General Fund
Implement County-wide Jail Services for Cities	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$50,000	General Fund
Implement County-wide Fire Services for Cities	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County	\$100,000	General Fund

**City of Folkston Community Work Program**

<b>Development Patterns (Land Use, Housing, etc.)</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>
Encourage property owners to clean up and maintain areas using the Dangerous Building Ordinance	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$10,000/yr	General Funds
Develop land use regulations to promote controlled growth	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$45,000	General Funds, available DCA grants
Revise ordinances as needed that are in conflict with desired development and growth patterns	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$15,000/yr	General Funds
Continue to support and enforce land use regulations	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$10,000/yr	General Funds

<b>Resource Conservation (Natural and Cultural Resources, etc.)</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>
Support programs and agencies that promote and protect the historical and unique character of Folkston	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$20,000	General Funds
Continue water audits to reduce number of gallons not metered	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$10,000/yr	Water-sewer funds, grants
Support programs that encourage and promote eco-tourism for local businesses	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$10,000/yr	General Funds

<b>Community Facilities &amp; Infrastructure (Infrastructure, Recreation, Transportation etc.)</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>
Continue to support drainage and paving of unpaved roads as funding is available	x	x	x	x	x	Charlton County, City of Folkston, and City of Homeland	\$1,000,000	LARP, DOT, General Funds CDBG
Build a community center	x	x				City of Folkston, Homeland and the County	\$300,000	SPLOST, CDBG
Maintain community facilities	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	N/A	SPLOST, CDBG General Funds

<b>Community Facilities &amp; Infrastructure (Infrastructure, Recreation, Transportation etc.)</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>
Continue repair, refurbishment, and replacement of defective wastewater lift stations, manholes, and distribution lines	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$100,000	General Funds
Continue funding and monthly support of the Charlton County Library	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$25,000/yr	General Funds
Continue funding for rail viewing platform	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$10,000/yr	General Funds
Continue repair and replacement of defective water/sewer lines	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$25,000/yr	Water/Sewer Funds, Grants, SPLOST
Expand water system and build 1.5 MGD wastewater treatment plant	x	x	x	x		City of Folkston	\$10,000,000- \$12,000,000	USDA loan/grant program

<b>Social &amp; Economic Development (Economic Development, Population etc.)</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>
Continue to provide funding for the Charlton/Folkston Development Authority	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$26,000	General Funds
Continue to revitalize core downtown business districts	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$25,000	General Funds, Quality Growth grants
Continue funding and support of the Chamber of Commerce	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$35,000	General Funds, water meter tax

<b>Governmental Relations</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>
Continue participation in committees, groups, and organizations promoting intergovernmental coordination	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$5,000/yr	General Funds
Continue to pursue intergovernmental cooperation between cities, county, and all boards and authorities	x	x	x	x	x	City of Folkston	\$5,000/yr	General Funds

**City of Homeland Community Work Program**

<b>Development Patterns (Land Use, Housing, etc.)</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>
Continue to fund the building and code enforcement program	x	x	x	x	x	City of Homeland	\$25,000	Fees, and General Funds

<b>Resource Conservation (Natural and Cultural Resources, etc.)</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>
No projects listed.								

<b>Community Facilities &amp; Infrastructure (Infrastructure, Recreation, Transportation etc.)</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>
Extend water service to Nature Trails Estates, including fire hydrants	x	x				City of Homeland	\$200,000	USDA, DCA grants, General Funds
Continue to upgrade all recreational facilities and parks on an as-needed basis	x	x	x	x	x	City of Homeland	\$20,000	General Funds
Pursue grant funding to construct new City Hall with built in fireproof value	x	x	x	x	x	City of Homeland	\$300,000	CDBG, USDA and General Funds
Continually seek available grants to maintain and replace existing fleet on an as-needed basis	x	x	x	x	x	City of Homeland	\$25,000 - \$30,000	DCA grants
Continue funding for the Homeland Economic Development Authority and its programs	x	x	x	x	x	City of Homeland	\$50,000	General Funds

<b>Social &amp; Economic Development (Economic Development, Population etc.)</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>
No projects listed.								

<b>Governmental Relations</b>	<b>FY 2016</b>	<b>FY 2017</b>	<b>FY 2018</b>	<b>FY2019</b>	<b>FY2020</b>	<b>Responsible Agency</b>	<b>Estimated Cost</b>	<b>Revenue Source</b>
No projects listed.								

## 7. Economic Development Element

The September 2012 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), as developed by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission under a grant from the US Department of Commerce Economic Development Administration, is hereby incorporated by reference into this Comprehensive Plan to serve as the Economic Development Element for Charlton County and the Cities of Folkston and Homeland.

The Southern Georgia Regional Commission's (SGRC) Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was designed to bring together the public and private sectors in the creation of an economic roadmap to diversify and strengthen the regional economy. The SGRC CEDS analyzes the regional economy and serves as a guide for establishing regional goals and objectives, a regional plan of action, investment priorities, and funding sources.

As a performance-based plan, this CEDS plays a critical role in adapting to global economic conditions by fully utilizing the region's unique advantages to maximize economic opportunity for its residents by attracting the private investment that creates jobs. The SGRC CEDS is a regionally-owned strategy that is the result of a continuing economic development planning process developed with regional public- and private-sector participation. This plan sets forth the goals and objectives necessary to solve the economic development problems of the Southern Georgia region, and clearly defines the measures of success.

The Southern Georgia CEDS gives an overview of the region, briefly describing geography, population, economy, labor and workforce development and use, education, transportation access, environment, and regional resources. It reviews the state of the Regional Economy and provides a list of achievable Goals and Objectives for the region, a Plan of Action to ensure success, and Performance Measures used to evaluate the Southern Georgia Regional Commission's successful development and implementation of the 2013-2018 CEDS. Implementation of the goals identified in this plan is significant to the economic future of the SGRC District.

Policies, issues and opportunities, and Short-term Work Program implementation strategies located in the current Comprehensive Plans for each of our 18 county region were used extensively to develop the CEDS Goals and Objectives, Vital Projects, and Problems and Opportunities.

Included below are goals and objectives from the CEDS which are aligned with the current economic development goals of Charlton County and the Cities of Folkston and Homeland.

**Goal:**

*Improve/upgrade the educational levels and labor force skills within the region.*

**Objective:**

*Develop and support community-based efforts to address improved educational levels and labor force skills.*

**Objective:**

*Support the continued improvement of the educational system in addressing educational/skills improvement and ensure WIA coordination.*

**Goal:**

*A well trained workforce, professional, technical, and skilled, capable of accommodating new industry and maintaining existing industry.*

**Objective:**

*Improve educational attainment by reducing high school dropout rates.*

**Goal:**

*Public services and facilities adequate to accommodate existing and future growth.*

**Objective:**

*Industrial Parks/properties with all necessary infrastructure and transportation links, to attract new and expanding businesses and industries to the region.*

**Objective:**

*Availability of speculatively built and other buildings to attract new and expanding businesses and industries in the region.*

**Objective:**

*Availability of adequate financing and/or financial incentives to attract new and expanding businesses and industries to the region.*

**Goal:**

*Maintenance and improvement of existing and future housing and the elimination of the region's substandard housing conditions.*

**Objective:**

*Assist local governments with the development of a Building Inspection Program.*

**Objective:**

*Encourage local governments to participate in CHIP, CDBG, and USDA housing programs.*

**Objective:**

*Work with local governments to develop ordinances for manufactured home usage and placement.*

**Goal:**

*Provide affordable housing options for low-to-moderate income persons.*

**Objective:**

*Develop homebuyer programs for low-to-moderate income persons*

**Goal:**

*Conservation, maintenance, and improvement of existing/future housing and neighborhoods, and elimination of substandard housing conditions in the region.*

**Objective:**

*All cities and counties should be encouraged to establish and maintain an annual housing condition inventory; and adopt or revise and update building and housing codes, using applicable state or national models.*

**Objective:**

*All substandard housing units that are inventoried and suited for rehabilitation should be scheduled for rehabilitation in a manner consistent with the local comprehensive plan.*

## **8. Land Use Element**

### **Character Areas for the City of Folkston, City of Homeland, and Charlton County**

Each character area has a unique description, stating either the existing or desired qualities for that area and showing the differences that exist among the various areas in Charlton County. The development strategy for each character area should serve as a guide for all development and redevelopment taking place in that area. Adherence to these development strategies will ensure consistent and complementary development, which promotes a greater sense of place and overall improved quality of life. The inclusion of permitted zonings, where appropriate and desired, provides guidance as to the type of land uses encouraged within each character area in order to ensure compatible uses within and between the character areas.

Character areas in Charlton County were defined by looking at the size and type of lots, site design features, availability of infrastructure, density and intensity of development, type of development, environmental features, and vision for future development. Some character areas are broader in their scope and cover multiple geographic areas in Charlton County that have the same characteristics, issues, and goals for their future. Other Character Areas are more specific and are defined as such in their name; these function more as an overlay zone than as a Future Land Use designation.

## Conservation Character Area



Source: USFWS

### **Description**

The Conservation Character Area is intended to identify those areas in Greater Charlton County which exhibit unique or special environmental characteristics, and may be held either publicly or privately. Conservation Character Areas in Greater Charlton County include the Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge, the St. Marys and Satilla Rivers, the Devil's Elbow, and Trader's Hill.

### **Predominant Land Use**

Conservation areas contain significant natural resources, including watershed and groundwater recharge areas. These areas are undeveloped, natural lands with significant natural features including floodplains, wetlands, watersheds, wildlife management areas, and other environmentally sensitive areas not suitable for development. The primary mission is to maintain and improve critical water quality, preserve endangered species, preserve wetlands, educate future generations, and add stability to the ecosystem.

### **Vision for the Future**

Protect the natural habitat in order to maintain or improve water quality and groundwater recharge areas. Protect significant natural resources such as pristine wetland and upland habitat and wildlife while utilizing the natural resources' attraction to visitors to build a sustainable economy around the Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge and the St. Marys and Satilla Rivers. Passive and active recreation uses will be allowed in addition to some limited residential uses.

### **Quality Community Objectives:**

#### **Resource Management**

Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. This may be achieved by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; encouraging green building construction and renovation; utilizing appropriate waste management techniques; fostering water conservation and reuse; or setting environmentally sensitive areas aside as green space or conservation reserves.

#### **Efficient Land Use**

Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the traditional core of the community; designing new development to minimize the amount of land consumed; carefully planning expansion of public infrastructure; or maintaining open space in agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.



### **Regional Cooperation**

Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. This may be achieved by actively participating in regional organizations; identifying joint projects that will result in joint efficiency and less cost to taxpayers; or developing collaborative solutions for regional issues such as protection of shared natural resources, development of the transportation network, or creation of a tourism plan.

### **Implementation Measures:**

- Limit active development of conservation areas to uses which are compatible with the natural restraints of the land. No invasive residential or commercial development should occur inside those areas other than that typically related to the mission of the refuge or conservation area, compatible outdoor recreation opportunities, and public health and safety.
- Establish Greenway and Blueway Corridors to connect areas of predominantly environmentally sensitive lands in cooperation with willing sellers. Such Greenway and Blueway Corridors will also serve as recreation corridors for active recreation tourism, including kayaking, canoeing, hiking, and biking.
- Provide conservation incentives such as clustering of buildings away from environmentally sensitive areas in developments that are adjacent to conservation areas.
- Pursue grants to purchase the most sensitive lands for public protection. Funds are scarce but could be found through donations, grants, or low-interest loans through programs such as the Georgia Land Conservation Program, or even a special voter-approved tax assessment specifically for that purpose.
- Adopt development standards for landscaping in areas adjacent to the Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge to minimize impacts to the refuge's conservation mission and the threat of wildfires.
- Adopt density standards for developments relying on septic tanks within and adjacent to conservation areas.
- Adopt development standard outlining requirements for buffers for developments adjacent to conservation areas.
- Establish a Tourism Council, whose main purpose will be to market Charlton County as an eco-tourism destination and to develop incentives to attract necessary infrastructure, such as overnight lodging.
- Develop public boat ramps for the St. Marys and Satilla Rivers that are patrolled and provide for safe access to the rivers.
- Incorporate the St. Marys River Management Plan into the long-range planning efforts of this Comprehensive Plan.

## Mixed-Use Transitional Character Area



### **Description**

The “Mixed-Use Transitional” character area designation in Charlton County is intended for those areas outside of the more developed areas which are associated with agriculture and/or forestry-related activities. These areas are being recognized as appropriate for cash crops, livestock, and ranching activities. Many of these agricultural/forestry lands are under the 10-year conservation designation (15-year for forest lands) through the Tax Assessor, and therefore will not be available for development until that period is over. The Mixed-Use Transitional Character Area serves as a buffer between the Conservation Character Area, with its natural constraints on development, and the Mixed-Used Preferred Development Character Area, which is the preferred area for potential future development.

Many wetlands and groundwater recharge areas are located within the Mixed-Use Transitional Character Area. The soil suitability does not lend itself to prime development due to extensive coverage by wetlands and streams and incompatibility with development using septic systems. Water and sewer services are generally not available within a cost-feasible distance and will not be available in the near-term future. Also, the Mixed-Use Transitional Character Area adjacent to the Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge is subject to increased wildfire danger. As such, additional standards for fire-resistant landscaping and construction should be observed here.

### **Predominant Land Use**

Land Use types allowed in this area include: agricultural farm/silviculture operations and related activities; natural resource conservation; groundwater recharge areas; and low-density residential development accessory to agricultural or farm operations of varying sizes. Limited commercial operation that will not adversely affect the adjacent conservation areas should also be permitted.

### **Vision for the Future:**

Protect the rural/agricultural/forestry character of these areas by maintaining very low density residential development with large lot sizes, primarily accessory to farm operations. Use of conservation easements to protect environmentally sensitive areas should be encouraged. Roadways in these areas should be widened only when required to meet public safety standards.

### **Quality Community Objectives:**

- **Resource Management**

Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. This may be achieved by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; encouraging green building construction and renovation; utilizing appropriate

waste management techniques; fostering water conservation and reuse; or setting environmentally sensitive areas aside as green space or conservation reserves.

- **Efficient Land Use**

Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the traditional core of the community; designing new development to minimize the amount of land consumed; carefully planning expansion of public infrastructure; or maintaining open space in agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.

- **Sense of Place**

Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

- **Regional Cooperation**

Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs. This may be achieved by actively participating in regional organizations; identifying joint projects that will result in joint efficiency and less cost to the taxpayer; or developing collaborative solutions for regional issues such as protection of shared natural resources, development of the transportation network, or creation of a tourism plan.

- **Housing Options**

Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource-efficient housing in the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood; promoting programs to provide housing for residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds, including affordable mortgage finance options; instituting programs to address homelessness issues in the community; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community

- **Community Health**

Ensure that all community residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, have access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities. This may be achieved by providing services to support the basic needs of disadvantaged residents, including the disabled; instituting programs to improve public safety; promoting programs that foster better health and fitness; or otherwise providing all residents the opportunity to improve their circumstances in life and to fully participate in the community.

### **Implementation Measures:**

- Permit agricultural/forestry uses and encourage the maintenance of the rural character and agricultural operations from development pressures. The preferred land uses would be agricultural farming and low-density residential development on larger lots.
- Maintain agricultural and forestry lands near suburban areas to facilitate desirable and efficient production-distribution relationships, including community-supported agricultural and forestry operations.
- Preserve agriculture and forestry to maximize return on investments in agricultural soil and water conservation practices and minimize conflicts between agricultural operations and suburban-type land uses.
- Encourage private land owners to establish more weekend hunting camps on private property for increased destination tourism.
- Increase joint public-private marketing efforts aimed at nearby areas of Florida, including Duval, Baker, Nassau, and Clay Counties.
- Establish or continue the existing Firewise Program in cooperation with the Georgia Forestry

Commission to reduce the risk of wildfires to the residents of the area.

- Consider allowing Planned Developments in this character area on condition that those developments deviate from traditional site plans by clustering homes on suitable soils, thereby minimizing impacts on environmentally sensitive areas. Allow for more flexibility of uses and design options, and allow for more compact development.
- Provide for buffers between conservation, agricultural, and residential uses.
- Allow for Conservation Easements to be provided by private citizens on a voluntary basis.
- In order to reduce traffic, allow for neighborhood businesses and at-home businesses.
- Wherever possible, connect to the regional network of green space and trails that is accessible to pedestrians, bicyclists, and equestrians for tourism and recreational purposes.
- Encourage the location of bicycle and pedestrian ways off to the side of the highway within power line easements to maximize separation from heavy truck traffic on county and state highways.
- Provide for regular maintenance of dirt roads to reduce stormwater run-off and groundwater pollution.
- Widen roadways only if absolutely necessary or to address safety hazards.
- Develop incentives to steer non-residential development into the Mixed-Use Preferred Development Character Area.

## Mixed-Use Preferred Development Character Area



### **Description:**

The Mixed-Use Preferred Development Character Area is intended for those areas in the county where the soil suitability and the availability of or potential for water, sewer, and road infrastructure allow for compatible development of residential and non-residential uses. These areas are in relatively close proximity to major transportation corridors such as rail or highways, and water and sewer lines are either currently available or can be made available at a reasonable cost. The majority of this area also follows prior trends of growth, such as along north-south corridors (SR 121) into Florida or east towards I-95 and Kingsland.

### **Predominant Land Use:**

Allowable land uses in this character area include low-density residential development outside of the incorporated areas, as well as industrial and commercial development along the major highway corridors. Inside the incorporated areas, main street and infill development are encouraged, with a wide variety of uses, in order to form a traditional town.

### **Vision for the Future:**

Outside the incorporated areas, attractive gateways and development corridors present themselves for future development in order to provide a sustainable mix of residential and business development that will improve the quality of life for residents and businesses alike.

### **Quality Community Objectives:**

- **Economic Prosperity**  
Encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community. Factors to consider when determining suitability include job skills required; long-term sustainability; linkages to other economic activities in the region; impact on the resources of the area; or prospects for creating job opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse local workforce.
- **Efficient Land Use**  
Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the traditional core of the community; designing new development to minimize the amount of land consumed; carefully planning expansion of public infrastructure; or maintaining open space in agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.
- **Local Preparedness**



Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer) to support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.

- **Sense of Place**

Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

- **Housing Options**

Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing in the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood; promoting programs to provide housing for residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds, including affordable mortgage finance options; instituting programs to address homelessness issues in the community; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community

- **Transportation Options**

Address the transportation needs, challenges, and opportunities of all community residents. This may be achieved by fostering alternatives to transportation by automobile, including walking, cycling, and transit; employing traffic calming measures throughout the community; requiring adequate connectivity between adjoining developments; or coordinating transportation and land use decision-making within the community.

- **Educational Opportunities**

Make educational and training opportunities readily available to enable all community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, manage their finances, or pursue life ambitions. This can be achieved by expanding and improving local educational institutions or programs; providing access to other institutions in the region; instituting programs to improve local graduation rates; expanding vocational education programs; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure an adequately trained and skilled workforce.

- **Community Health**

Ensure that all community residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, have access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities. This may be achieved by providing services to support the basic needs of disadvantaged residents, including the disabled; instituting programs to improve public safety; promoting programs that foster better health and fitness; or otherwise providing all residents the opportunity to improve their circumstances in life and to fully participate in the community.

### **Implementation Measures:**

- New developments should be carefully reviewed to guard against unintended adverse impacts, while at the same time providing sustainable economic development and a pool of quality homes in all price ranges.
- Encourage the use of compatible architectural styles that maintain Charlton County's character, and limit "franchise" or "corporate" architecture.
- Provide an interconnected system of sidewalks and bicycle lanes to increase safety and connectivity between developments.
- Develop a 20-year water and sewer plan to steer development into those areas that are most advantageous for Charlton County in terms of connectivity and cost feasibility.
- Encourage infill development on vacant parcels.

- Implement development standards that will minimize the cost of development to Charlton County taxpayers and ensure compatibility of development, e.g., landscape buffers, parking, signage.
- Research and implement a type of user fee or surcharge on short-term rentals (less than six months) to help cover expenses for the county relating to road maintenance, security, and other transient-related expenses.
- Provide an inventory of the locations of processing plants in Charlton County. Provide incentives for building plants in locations that shorten the distance traveled between raw material production and the production of value-added products. This will make agricultural operations more efficient for local farmers.
- Continue to pursue the development of a second rail line through the County.
- Monitor the growth moving north from Florida to minimize its impacts on Charlton County.
- Establish or continue the existing Firewise Program in cooperation with the Georgia Forestry Commission to reduce the risk of wildfires to the residents of the area.
- At the appropriate time, consider implementing a local business license to help offset local expenses.

## City of Folkston Character Area



### **Description:**

The City of Folkston was created in 1881 as a train station for the Savannah, Florida, and Western Railroad. Trains no longer stop in Folkston, but as many as 60-70 trains per day travel through the city. Folkston has become a tourist destination for train watchers and visitors to the Okefenokee Wildlife Refuge. Folkston is only one hour's drive from Jacksonville, Florida, and is deriving much of its economy and many jobs from that area.

### **Predominant Land Use:**

Primary land uses for this area have been identified as city services, entertainment, commercial, recreation, main street, mixed-use businesses, business support services, newer residential subdivisions, and traditional older but stable neighborhoods. Interconnectivity and walkability have been identified as some of the primary factors for revitalization of the area, along with preservation of historic resources, attracting private developers to the downtown, and providing attractive outdoor spaces.

### **Vision for the Future:**

Preserve, restore, and reuse historic buildings. Improve the environment for private investment and development. Expand downtown's green spaces and civic spaces. Mix land uses and control building architecture. Become a center for eco-tourism and local artisans. Develop a niche farmers' and arts market that draws tourists and visitors from Jacksonville. Become a high-quality, sustainable alternative to metro living.

### **Quality Community Objectives:**

- **Economic Prosperity**  
Encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community. Factors to consider when determining suitability include job skills required; long-term sustainability; linkages to other economic activities in the region; impact on the resources of the area; or prospects for creating job opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse local workforce.
- **Resource Management**  
Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. This may be achieved by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; encouraging green building construction and renovation; utilizing appropriate waste management techniques; fostering water conservation and reuse; or setting environmentally sensitive areas aside as green space or conservation reserves.
- **Efficient Land Use**  
Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development or



redevelopment of sites closer to the traditional core of the community; designing new development to minimize the amount of land consumed; carefully planning expansion of public infrastructure; or maintaining open space in agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.

- **Local Preparedness**

Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer) to support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.

- **Sense of Place**

Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

- **Housing Options**

Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing in the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood; promoting programs to provide housing for residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds, including affordable mortgage finance options; instituting programs to address homelessness issues in the community; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community

- **Transportation Options**

Address the transportation needs, challenges and opportunities of all community residents. This may be achieved by fostering alternatives to transportation by automobile, including walking, cycling, and transit; employing traffic calming measures throughout the community; requiring adequate connectivity between adjoining developments; or coordinating transportation and land use decision-making within the community.

- **Educational Opportunities**

Make educational and training opportunities readily available to enable all community residents to improve their job skills, adapt to technological advances, manage their finances, or pursue life ambitions. This can be achieved by expanding and improving local educational institutions or programs; providing access to other institutions in the region; instituting programs to improve local graduation rates; expanding vocational education programs; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure an adequately trained and skilled workforce.

- **Community Health**

Ensure that all community residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, have access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities. This may be achieved by providing services to support the basic needs of disadvantaged residents, including the disabled; instituting programs to improve public safety; promoting programs that foster better health and fitness; or otherwise providing all residents the opportunity to improve their circumstances in life and to fully participate in the community.

### **Implementation Measures:**

- Allow only appropriate zoning districts which will benefit the City of Folkston's sense of place and historic character.
- Market Folkston as a regional center for tourism, education, medical services, recreation, and the arts.

- Encourage the conversion of buildings for new uses, especially from non-housing uses to housing uses.
- Establish community design standards or guidelines that can ensure that the physical appearance of new development (or improvements to existing properties) is compatible with the character of a community, is built to a high standard, and has a pleasant appearance. The standards or guidelines should provide a basis for local planning and zoning boards to evaluate proposals, and also provide guidance to developers, property owners, and businesses.
- Allow for flexibility in zoning standards that allows different types of uses to locate within the same area and in the same building, provided these uses are reasonably related and compatible.
- Provide for a downtown development coordinator to take the lead on the historic preservation, revitalization, and development of this character area.
- Provide for flexibility of zoning regulations to encourage residential and commercial infill development, as well as an appropriate mix of uses, including higher densities.
- Provide incentives to attract private investors and encourage public/private partnerships, including financial and density bonuses.
- Provide for pedestrian connections and increased walkability.
- Encourage attractive designs, art, and landscaping to increase attractiveness of place, including architectural design guidelines.
- Provide for underground utilities wherever possible.
- Provide for traffic circulation and parking that will assist business without detracting from the pedestrian experience.
- Allow for a minimum building frontage in Downtown Folkston in order to ensure that development has a street presence
- Allow for on-street parking.
- Encourage the adaptive re-use of older, historic landmarks for modern functions, such as city hall or the police department.
- Allow for architecturally compatible residential and commercial infill in historic neighborhoods.
- Allow for building codes with standards more appropriate to the rehabilitation of older buildings, encouraging reinvestment in blighted areas.
- Allow for code enforcement to protect vacant buildings from unlawful entry by boarding up openings, stabilizing structures, and encouraging rehabilitation, as opposed to demolition.
- Establish or continue the existing Firewise Program in cooperation with the Georgia Forestry Commission to reduce the risk of wildfires to the residents of the area.

## City of Homeland Character Area



### **Description:**

In 1906, a group of investors purchased about 8,000 acres of land one mile north of Folkston and began surveying and platting the “1906 Homeland Colony Company Domains.” The town included 144 blocks, platted streets and alleys, a town square, and approximately 800 acres of five- and ten-acre tracts for small-scale homesteading and farming. While the town had been conceived as a self-sufficient retirement community, that goal has not been implemented to date. As part of the adoption of this comprehensive plan, the City of Homeland is renewing its goal of becoming the retirement town envisioned by its founders.

### **Predominant Land Use:**

Allowable land uses for this character area include: low density residential uses; limited commercial/industrial development; and civic or institutional uses, as well as any service uses to establish and maintain a well-functioning retirement community.

### **Vision for the Future:**

Preserve and rehabilitate what remains of the original housing stock, while rebuilding new, attractive neighborhoods on vacant land following the principles of traditional neighborhood development. The neighborhoods should include a well-designed new neighborhood activity center at an appropriate location. Reactivate goal of being a retirement community.

### **Quality Community Objectives:**

- **Economic Prosperity**

Encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community. Factors to consider when determining suitability include job skills required; long-term sustainability; linkages to other economic activities in the region; impact on the resources of the area; or prospects for creating job opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse local workforce.

- **Efficient Land Use**

Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the traditional core of the community; designing new development to minimize the amount of land consumed; carefully planning expansion of public infrastructure; or maintaining open space in agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.

- **Local Preparedness**

Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer) to support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.

- **Sense of Place**

Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.

- **Housing Options**

Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing in the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood; promoting programs to provide housing for residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds, including affordable mortgage finance options; instituting programs to address homelessness issues in the community; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community

- **Transportation Options**

Address the transportation needs, challenges and opportunities of all community residents. This may be achieved by fostering alternatives to transportation by automobile, including walking, cycling, and transit; employing traffic calming measures throughout the community; requiring adequate connectivity between adjoining developments; or coordinating transportation and land use decision-making within the community.

- **Community Health**

Ensure that all community residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, have access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities. This may be achieved by providing services to support the basic needs of disadvantaged residents, including the disabled; instituting programs to improve public safety; promoting programs that foster better health and fitness; or otherwise providing all residents the opportunity to improve their circumstances in life and to fully participate in the community.

### **Implementation Strategies:**

- Provide a master plan with preferred locations for a community center, health center, restaurants, and other amenities and services necessary to develop a sustainable, self-contained, and attractive retirement community.
- Develop a zoning/land development code that will allow flexibility in the development of parcels for housing and related services for retired and aging persons, with a particular focus on meeting the needs of residents.
- Provide for commercial businesses at a neighborhood scale.
- Encourage creative design of green space and open space, including bicycle and pedestrian ways to provide for walkability and continuity of sidewalks and bikeways.
- Develop and encourage golf cart ways and parking.
- Provide flexibility to mix compatible uses and allow for residential and non-residential infill.
- Allow for a mix of uses that will allow the roots of a traditional neighborhood to appear.
- Provide for flexibility in design standards to allow infill development to take place on smaller lots and provide for more affordable housing.
- Provide for public/private partnerships to construct and rehabilitate quality housing.

- Protect historic properties from demolition and encourage rehabilitation with appropriate incentives, including National Register of Historic Places designation, which enables eligibility for tax incentive programs.
- Utilize streetscaping features such as decorative lighting, street furniture, landscape buffering, and sidewalks to create a safe and comfortable environment.
- Establish or continue the existing Firewise Program in cooperation with the Georgia Forestry Commission to reduce the risk of wildfires to the residents of the area.



## St. George Character Area



### **Description**

In 1904, St. George was founded as a Colony Company community for retired Civil War Veterans. Today, the unincorporated area of St. George is a blue-collar bedroom community for Jacksonville, Florida and MacClenny, Florida. Of the 3,000 residents in southern Charlton County, approximately 1,000 residents live in the immediate St. George area. St. George is also home to the Cherokee Tribal Grounds and is a crossroads for heavy truck traffic from I-10 near MacClenny to Valdosta, Folkston, and Waycross, as well as truck traffic destined for the Chesser Island Landfill.

### **Predominant Land Use:**

The allowable land uses for this character area are identical to those already existing here. The predominant land uses in St. George are one- to five-acre residential parcels with many vacant infill parcels. The main intersection of SR 94 and SR 121 also features a small commercial center including a feed store, two restaurants, two gas stations, a general store, the volunteer fire department, a community center, and an elementary school. The predominant type of home is a manufactured home, making up approximately 50 – 70 % of the housing stock in Charlton County.

### **Vision for the Future:**

To develop a thriving crossroads community that will provide services, employment, and quality housing for residents in south Charlton County.

### **Quality Community Objectives:**

- **Economic Prosperity**  
Encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries that are suitable for the community. Factors to consider when determining suitability include job skills required; long-term sustainability; linkages to other economic activities in the region; impact on the resources of the area; or prospects for creating job opportunities that meet the needs of a diverse local workforce.
- **Resource Management**  
Promote the efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas of the community. This may be achieved by promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy generation; encouraging green building construction and renovation; utilizing appropriate waste management techniques; fostering water conservation and reuse; or setting environmentally sensitive areas aside as green space or conservation reserves.

- **Efficient Land Use**  
Maximize the use of existing infrastructure and minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land at the periphery of the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development or redevelopment of sites closer to the traditional core of the community; designing new development to minimize the amount of land consumed; carefully planning expansion of public infrastructure; or maintaining open space in agricultural, forestry, or conservation uses.
- **Local Preparedness**  
Identify and put in place the prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve. These prerequisites might include infrastructure (roads, water, and sewer) to support or direct new growth; ordinances and regulations to manage growth as desired; leadership and staff capable of responding to opportunities and managing new challenges; or undertaking an all-hazards approach to disaster preparedness and response.
- **Sense of Place**  
Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities. This may be achieved by maintaining the downtown as focal point of the community; fostering compact, walkable, mixed-use development; protecting and revitalizing historic areas of the community; encouraging new development that is compatible with the traditional features of the community; or protecting scenic and natural features that are important to defining the community's character.
- **Housing Options**  
Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and resource efficient housing in the community. This may be achieved by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, costs, and densities in each neighborhood; promoting programs to provide housing for residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds, including affordable mortgage finance options; instituting programs to address homelessness issues in the community; or coordinating with local economic development programs to ensure availability of adequate workforce housing in the community
- **Community Health**  
Ensure that all community residents, regardless of age, ability, or income, have access to critical goods and services, safe and clean neighborhoods, and good work opportunities. This may be achieved by providing services to support the basic needs of disadvantaged residents, including the disabled; instituting programs to improve public safety; promoting programs that foster better health and fitness; or otherwise providing all residents the opportunity to improve their circumstances in life and to fully participate in the community.

### **Implementation Strategies:**

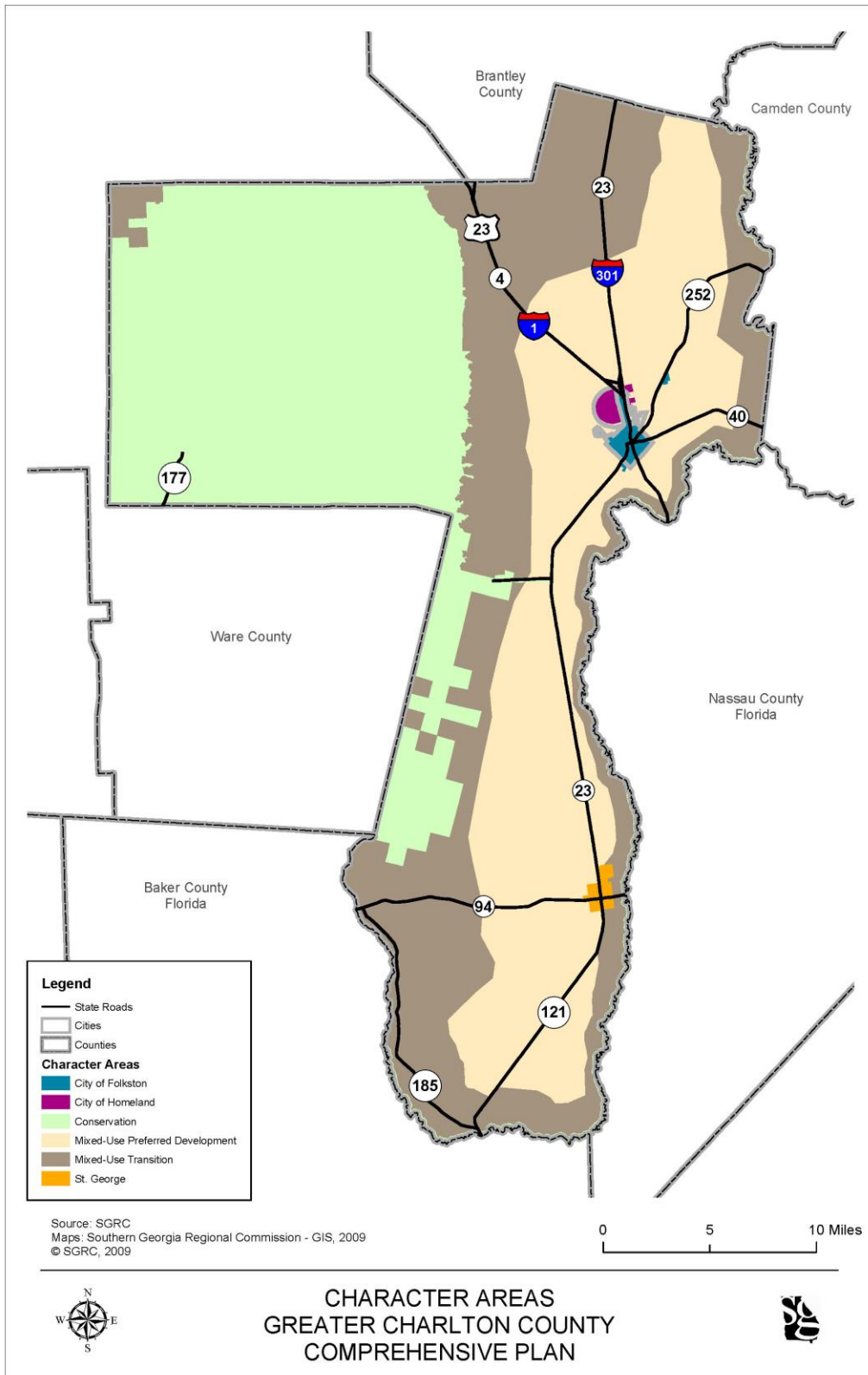
- **Consider development standards to implement the Goals, which include but are not limited to:**
  - Incorporate flexibility for an appropriate mix of uses, appropriate architectural guidelines, and incentives for location of businesses that would contribute to the goal of a crossroads community.
  - Provide for continuous safe bicycle and pedestrian lanes to enhance the attractiveness and walkability of the area and increase pedestrian traffic for local businesses.
  - Provide incentives to preserve historic resources and provide for consistency of new construction with historic architecture. These architectural styles should blend with and be consistent with local architectural styles.
  - Encourage infill development for residential and commercial development.
  - Encourage location of businesses serving the heavy truck traffic coming through St. George.
  - Develop a 5-year public sewer plan for St. George.
  - Identify and research all available funding to encourage and enable infill development on smaller, more economical lots.
  - Develop a 5-year public water plan for St. George in order to provide more protection for the St. Mary's river corridor and groundwater recharge areas.
  - Encourage/require that newly permitted septic systems be set back from tributaries as well as

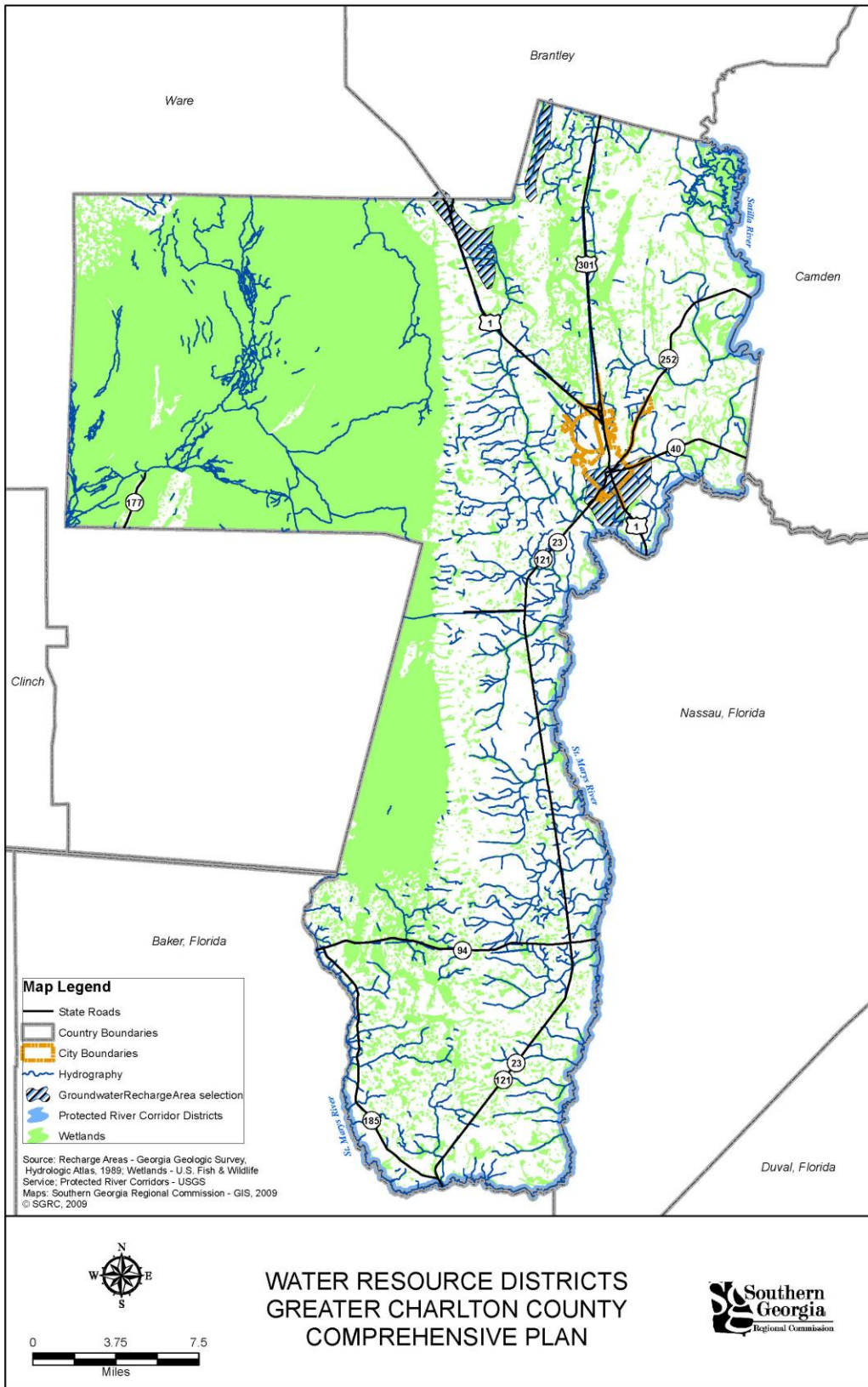
from the main stream of the St. Marys River.

- Develop policies to remove junk yards from river corridors and groundwater recharge areas and work with private property owners to locate more appropriate properties.
- Develop a 5-year paving plan to identify a list of roads to be paved and assign a priority ranking to those roads in order to minimize stormwater runoff and minimize long-term maintenance expenses for the county.
- Continue to minimize the number of mobile homes or manufactured homes in the county that are older than 10 years.
- Establish or continue the existing Firewise Program in cooperation with the Georgia Forestry Commission to reduce the risk of wildfires to the residents of the area.



### III. Maps





**IV. Appendix**

**Sign-In Sheets  
Public Hearing Notices  
Transmittal Letters  
Adoption Resolutions**

**Southern Georgia Regional Commission**  
**Charlton County and the Cities of Folkston and Homeland**  
**Comprehensive Plan Update**  
**"KICK-OFF Meeting"**  
**Date: 9/16/2014**

	Organization	Phone	Email
Sherry Davidson	SERC		
Pamela Levy	City of Folkston	912-496-2549	Pamela.Levy@gohoc.com
Al Pearce	CHARLTON COUNTY	912-296-2064	Al.Pearce@charltoncountyga.com
MADE Johnson	Charlton Co		MadeEJohnson@aol.com

Southern Georgia Regional Commission  
 Charlton County and the Cities of Folkston and Homeland  
 Comprehensive Plan Update Meeting and Assessment  
 Date: 10/29/2014

Name	Organization	Phone	Email
Kelly Patton	One Hundred Miles	404.444.2987	kelly@onehundredmiles.org
Kate Zidar	U		kate.zidar@gmail.com
Ar. Carter	Carter County	<del>404.496.7579</del> 912.496.7579	Ar. Carter@cartercountyga.com
Ender Lloyd	City of Folkston	912.496.2563	enderlloyd@yahoo.com
Julie Sheuchel	SGRC	928-533-5277	jshuechel@sgrc.us



**Southern Georgia Regional Commission  
Charlton County and the Cities of Folkston and Homeland  
2nd Workshop for Comp Plan Update**

Date: 12/2/2014 I + D + WP

Name	Organization	Phone	Email
Sharon Prealey	Citizen	496-4206	chesserlegacyparks@OI@gmail.com
Byron Prealey	Homeland	11	11
Al Grace	Chesserlegacyparks	<del>496</del> 496-2549	Al.Grace@Chesserlegacyparks.com
Peter Lloyd	City of Folkston	496-2563	PeterLloyd@ymha.com
Julia Steward	SGRC	229-333-5277	jsteward@sgrc.us

SIGN - IN SHEET  
 January 20, 2015  
 Workshop #3  
 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan Update  
 Charlton County, City Of Folkston, City Of Homeland

NAME	ORGANIZATION	PHONE	E-MAIL
Byron Presley	Homeland	(913) 390-1476	cityofhomeland@yahoo.com
Pender Lloyd	City of Folkston	912-496-2563	penderlloyd@yahoo.com
AL Grace	Charlton County	912-496-2549	AL.Grace12@charltoncountyga.gov
Tulsa Shuck	SGRC	229-333-5277	
Ariel Godwin	SGRC	229-333-5277	

# PUBLIC NOTICE

## Kick Off - Public Hearing

### For Charlton County and Cities of Folkston and Homeland Comprehensive Plan Update

A public kick-off meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 16, 2014 at the Charlton County Administration Building, located at 68 Kingsland Drive, Suite B, Folkston, GA 31537-2845. The purpose of this hearing is to brief the community on the process to be used to develop the plan, opportunities for public participation in development of the plan, and to obtain input on the proposed planning process.

Persons with special needs relating to disability access or foreign language should contact the Charlton County Commission Office at 912-496-2549. Persons with hearing disabilities may consider using the Georgia Relay Service, at (Voice) 1-800-255-0135.

All persons are invited to attend the Public Hearing. If you would like more information, please contact Janice McKinnon, SGRC Planner at (229) 333-5277.

32d092014dms

# ALLAHAN

## Family Eye Center

# VAL-Uvision

### Kid's Special

Metal Frames &  
Polycarbonate  
Lenses

**\$119**

Eye Exam,  
2 Metal Frames  
and Lenses

**\$159**

GLASSES • CONTACTS • EYE EXAM

**ALL THREE**

1 Pair of Glasses  
• 2 Boxes of Disposable  
Contacts

**\$159**

Charlton County Herald 9/3/14 SHERREY



# invites you to Walk Georgia

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Georgia is another example of Coca-Cola's commitment to help people lead active, healthy lifestyles," said Lori George Billingsley, vice president of community relations, Coca-Cola North America.

"This commitment starts with our home state of Georgia."



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Through Walk Georgia, University of Georgia Extension's Charlton County office invites you to spend 12 weeks increasing your physical activity level in a fun, community-oriented way.

The goal is to be active,

whether you're walking, biking or dancing.

"We hope that participants will start being active if they aren't already, and then continue to maintain physical activity when the 12-week period ends," said local UGA staff.

"We hope the program will be a lifestyle change that will improve participants' quality of life."

Walk Georgia is an online program where you can log your exercise. The aerobics class during your lunch break counts, and so does a walk with your dog or a pick-up game of basketball at the recreation gym.

Using a dropdown menu including more than 70 physical activity options, you can record your daily movement and exercise.

Walk Georgia is a statewide program, so someone here in Folkston or St George could challenge her cousin in Canton and her

brother in Savannah to a Walk Georgia contest. Create a group through the program, set mutual goals and get moving.

Further, the program works well in schools, facilitating competition between classes and instilling lifelong, healthy habits in youth.

Walk Georgia can also be used in the workplace as part of a worksite wellness program. Incentives are available; contact your county office or email walkga@uga.edu.

"We wanted to do a statewide program that all of Georgia's counties could be involved in at the same time," said UGA staff.

Registration for Walk Georgia is free. Visit WalkGeorgia.org to register.

For more information, contact the Charlton Extension office by calling 1-800-ASK-UGA1 or 496-2040 or email uge4049@uga.edu.

Charlton County Herald 2/14/15

**McMillan**  
**NG & AIR**  
*ma Do It, Do It Right"*



**Authorized  
nt Dealer**

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## PUBLIC NOTICE

A public meeting to review and transmit the Charlton County and Cities of Folkston and Homeland Comprehensive Plan Update to the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Georgia Department of Community Affairs for review will be held on Thursday, Feb. 19th at 6:00 p.m. The meeting will be held in the Charlton County Commission Chambers, located at 68 Kingsland Drive, Folkston, Georgia 31537. Residents are invited to attend and participate in the planning effort. Copies of the Plan Update are available for public review at the Charlton County Commission office, at the Cities of Folkston and Homeland, and for download at the SGRC website: [www.sgrc.us](http://www.sgrc.us).

For more information, contact the Charlton County Commission at (912) 496-2549, or the Southern Georgia Regional Commission at (229) 333-5277.

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*Ariel*      *Sherry* ✓

*Charlton County Herald*

**S**

## **PUBLIC NOTICE**

A public meeting to adopt the Charlton County and Cities of Folkston and Homeland Comprehensive Plan Update will be held on **Thursday, April 23 at 6:00 p.m.** The meeting will be held at the **Charlton County Commission Chambers, located at 68 Kingsland Drive, Folkston, Georgia 31537.** Residents are invited to attend and participate in the planning effort. Copies of the Plan Update are available for public review at the Charlton County Commission office, at the Cities of Folkston and Homeland and their respective websites, and for download at the SGRC website: [www.sgrc.us](http://www.sgrc.us).

For more information, contact the **Charlton County Commission** at (912) 496-2549, or the **Southern Georgia Regional Commission** at (229) 333-5277.

366-H0311

09/20/08 15/01/11



## Charlton County, Georgia

### Board of Commissioners

James E. Everett, Chairman  
Alphya Benefield, Vice Chairman  
Jesse Crews, Commissioner  
Ronnie Pollock, Commissioner  
Luke Gowen, Commissioner

68 Kingsland Drive, Suite B  
Folkston, GA 31537-2872  
(912) 496-2549 (office)  
(912) 496-1156 (fax)

Al Crace, County Administrator  
Jenifer Nobles, County Clerk  
Edmund H. Skorupski, Attorney

February 20, 2015

Southern Georgia Regional Commission  
327 West Savannah Avenue  
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

RE: Charlton County Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

Charlton County has completed an update of its comprehensive plan and is submitting it with this letter for review by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs.

I certify that we have held the required public hearings and have involved the public in development of the plan in a manner appropriate to our community's dynamics and resources. Evidence of this has been included with our submittal.

I certify that appropriate staff and decision-makers have reviewed both the Regional Water Plan(s) covering our area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) and taken them into consideration in formulating our plan.

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Al Crace, Charlton County Administrator, at (912) 496-2549 or [Al.Crace12.Charlton@gmail.com](mailto:Al.Crace12.Charlton@gmail.com).

Sincerely,



James E. Everett, Chairman  
Charlton County Board of Commissioners



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Visit our website at [www.CharltonCountyGA.us](http://www.CharltonCountyGA.us)





LEE GOWEN, Mayor  
RUBY BAKER, Councilmember  
MARION DAVIS, Mayor Pro Tem  
STANLEY GOLASZEWSKI, Councilmember  
R. GREG JOHNSON, JR. Councilmember  
JOHNNY G. MILTON, Councilmember  
LEONARD H. LLOYD, City Manager  
DARLENE WILLIAMSON, City Clerk  
WESLEY GREEN, Chief of Police  
J. KELLY BROOKS, City Attorney

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2/20/2015

Southern Georgia Regional Commission  
327 West Savannah Avenue  
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

The City of Folkston has completed an update of its comprehensive plan and is submitting it with this letter for review by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs.

I certify that we have held the required public hearings and have involved the public in development of the plan in a manner appropriate to our community's dynamics and resources. Evidence of this has been included with our submittal.

I certify that appropriate staff and decision-makers have reviewed both the Regional Water Plan(s) covering our area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) and taken them into consideration in formulating our plan.

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Darlene L. Williamson, Folkston City Clerk, at (912) 496-2563 or [folkston1@windstream.net](mailto:folkston1@windstream.net).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be "Lee Gowen", written over a horizontal line.

Lee Gowen, Mayor  
City of Folkston

541 First Street · Folkston, GA 31537 · Telephone (912) 496-2563 · Fax (912) 496-3844  
[www.charltoncountyga.us](http://www.charltoncountyga.us)

**CITY OF HOMELAND  
401 PENNSYLVANIA AVENUE  
HOMELAND, GA 31537  
PHONE: 912-496-7332  
FAX: 912-496-3747  
[cityofhomeland@yahoo.com](mailto:cityofhomeland@yahoo.com)**

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2/20/2015

Southern Georgia Regional Commission  
327 West Savannah Avenue  
Valdosta, Georgia 31601

RE: Comprehensive Plan Update Submittal

The City of Homeland has completed an update of its comprehensive plan and is submitting it with this letter for review by the Southern Georgia Regional Commission and the Department of Community Affairs.

I certify that we have held the required public hearings and have involved the public in development of the plan in a manner appropriate to our community's dynamics and resources. Evidence of this has been included with our submittal.

I certify that appropriate staff and decision-makers have reviewed both the Regional Water Plan(s) covering our area and the Rules for Environmental Planning Criteria (O.C.G.A. 12-2-8) And taken them into consideration in formulating our plan.

If you have any questions concerning our submittal, please contact Bernice Pascal, Homeland City Clerk.

Sincerely,



Ouida Johnson, Mayor  
City of Homeland

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**CHARLTON COUNTY**

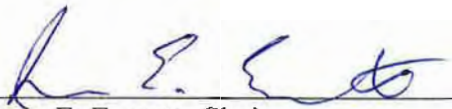
**RESOLUTION TO ADOPT  
2015 JOINT CHARLTON COUNTY  
AND CITIES OF FOLKSTON AND HOMELAND  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, Charlton County has completed the 2015 Joint Charlton County and Cities of Folkston and Homeland Comprehensive Plan;

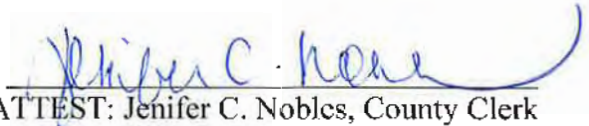
**WHEREAS**, this document was prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989;

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, that Charlton County does hereby adopt the 2015 Joint Charlton County and Cities of Folkston and Homeland Comprehensive Plan.

Adopted this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of April, 2015.



James E. Everett, Chair  
Charlton County Commission



ATTEST: Jenifer C. Nobles, County Clerk

**CITY OF FOLKSTON**


**RESOLUTION TO ADOPT  
2015 JOINT CHARLTON COUNTY  
AND CITIES OF FOLKSTON AND HOMELAND  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Folkston has completed the 2015 Joint Charlton County and Cities of Folkston and Homeland Comprehensive Plan;

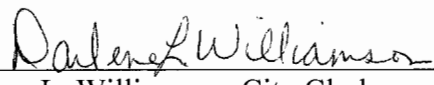
**WHEREAS**, this document was prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989;

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, that the City of Folkston does hereby adopt the 2015 Joint Charlton County and Cities of Folkston and Homeland Comprehensive Plan.

Adopted this 23<sup>rd</sup> day of April, 2015.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Lee Gowen, Mayor  
City of Folkston

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Darlene L. Williamson, City Clerk



RESOLUTION NO. 600-051815

**CITY OF HOMELAND**

**RESOLUTION TO ADOPT  
2015 JOINT CHARLTON COUNTY  
AND CITIES OF FOLKSTON AND HOMELAND  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Homeland has completed the 2015 Joint Charlton County and Cities of Folkston and Homeland Comprehensive Plan;

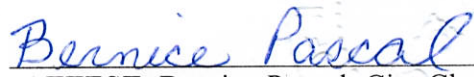
**WHEREAS**, this document was prepared according to the Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989;

**BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED**, that the City of Homeland does hereby adopt the 2015 Joint Charlton County and Cities of Folkston and Homeland Comprehensive Plan.

Adopted this 18<sup>th</sup> day of May, 2015.



Ouida Johnson, Mayor  
City of Homeland



ATTEST: Bernice Pascal, City Clerk

