

# McIntosh County

2018-2038 Comprehensive Plan

## McIntosh County 2018-2038 Comprehensive Plan

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



McIntosh County is facing dreary social indicators including an elevated high school dropout rate, low educational attainment, lack of employment opportunities, cost-burdened housing, severe housing problems, an exodus of middle income families, and little if any private investment.

McIntosh County, Georgia has a population of 14,007 people with a median age of 47.6 and a median household income of \$42,988.

Between 2014 and 2015 the population of McIntosh County declined from 14,172 to 14,007, a 1.16 percent decrease which is projected to continue over the next twenty years.

The median household income declined from \$45,216 to \$42,988, a 4.93 percent decrease.

In 2015, the percentage of cost-burdened housing was 49.3 percent for rental units, and 41 percent for households with a mortgage. Based on housing costs rising at a faster rate than household income,

the percentage of cost burdened housing is expected to increase.

In 2015, the median property value in McIntosh County declined 10.2 percent to \$108,400 from the previous year's value of \$120,800.

Additionally, the nearly one-third of the land area in McIntosh County (85,232.83 acres) is owned by the state and federal governments and not subject to ad valorem taxation.

Then again, the people and the county are much more than its dreary social indicators.

McIntosh County is home to the most distinctive ecological, historical, cultural, ethnic and archaeological area of the eastern seaboard. The interwoven characteristics of each intrinsic quality provide for an especially unique opportunity to experience the best of Coastal Georgia. Surrounded by marshlands, maritime forests and the mighty Altamaha River, McIntosh is full of natural beauty.

On any given day, one may see osprey, bald eagles, great blue herons, red tailed hawks, and owls. Research estimates that nearly three quarters of all migratory waterfowl in the Western Hemisphere spend time in the Altamaha River delta every year. The vast marshes provide recreational activities such as fishing, canoeing, and kayaking as well as bountiful habitat for wildlife.

Sapelo Island is the last intact Gullah-Geechee community in the United States, still inhabited today by the direct descendants of slaves brought to the island in 1802. The residents of Sapelo are working to preserve and revitalize the culture of this irreplaceable community.

A local comprehensive plan is fact-based and creates an environment of predictability for business and industry, property owners, investors and for its residents. A comprehensive plan is an important tool for economic development initiatives.

The County needs federal and state government incentives designed so the County can preserve its intrinsic qualities, and implement sensitive, well-planned management of its own resources. The abundant beauty and wealth of resources lend themselves to eco-tourism ventures. Eco-tourism is defined as environmentally responsible travel to relatively undisturbed natural areas in order to enjoy and appreciate nature that promotes conservation, has low negative visitor impact, and provides for beneficially active socioeconomic involvement of local populations.

The County needs the dollars generated by managing its own resources in order to change the outcomes of its social indicators, and provide fundamental services to its residents. The County needs these dollars in order to provide a top-rate education, ensure successful futures, and create economic development opportunities. Although outside the Comprehensive Plan's purview, steering committee members understand that breaking the cycle of low-level educational performance positively impacts McIntosh County.



## COMMUNITY VISION



### McIntosh County is:

**“A safe, family oriented community where access to history, natural resources and economic opportunity abound.”**

McIntosh County is committed to achieving this vision through:

- Advancement of community by emphasizing education, promoting housing of various sizes and pricing, creating employment opportunities and a community with a variety of retail, commercial, and improved multi-use parks and public spaces.
- Balanced growth guided by planning principles that promote interconnected green space, affordable housing, economic development and access to recreation and the County's rich natural resources.
- Balance between natural resources preservation and economic development by recognizing these resources are necessary to meet the needs of future generations.
- Cultural diversity by recognizing different cultures are part of the County's rich history. The County celebrates the diversity that exists in the people of McIntosh understand their value and contributions are celebrated by the County.



The vision addresses the County’s desire to maintain a safe, community oriented feel with commercial, employment and economic development opportunities. The vision is supported by the following overarching goals created to help shape McIntosh County’s future development:

	<p><b>Promote a more informed citizenry and government transparency</b></p>
	<p><b>Improve the Board of Education and McIntosh County’s reputation as a place to invest, work, and educate</b></p>
	<p><b>Create a personality for McIntosh County that can be used to market the County as place to live, invest, play, and educate</b></p>
	<p><b>Remove blight and improve cost-burdened housing</b></p>
	<p><b>Preserve, enhance, and promote the area’s cultural and natural resources</b></p>
	<p><b>Maintain the sense of place and small-town character and feel of McIntosh County</b></p>



McIntosh County’s vision is further defined by the Character Area Map. McIntosh County is made up of smaller areas that have their own set of defining characteristics. The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) Local Planning Requirements calls for identification of character areas, and for a vision and description for future development of each character area. Character areas are defined as specific geographic areas that meet the following criteria:

- Have unique or special characteristics;
- Have potential to evolve into a unique area when provided specific guidance; or
- Require special attention due to unique development issues.

The Character Area Map plays a role in guiding future development and is further supported by the Future Land Use Map which also provides guidance on future land uses that is in keeping with the County’s vision.

The Character Area Map and descriptions can be found later in the Plan on page **53**. The Future Land Use Map can be found later in the Plan on page **68**.



## NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

The recommendations of McIntosh County's Comprehensive Plan were created to address the Needs and Opportunities identified through the public outreach effort and the existing conditions analysis.

Among the recommendations of McIntosh County's plan, the following six items are key in achieving the County's vision for the future. These help the County to achieve multiple goals and its long term vision.

## KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Promote a more informed citizenry and government transparency

Improve the Board of Education and McIntosh County's reputation as a place to invest, work, and educate

Create a personality for McIntosh County that can be used to market the County as place to live, invest, play, and educate

Remove blight and improve cost-burdened housing

Preserve, enhance, and promote the area's cultural and natural resources

Maintain the sense of place and small-town feel of McIntosh County

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# 1

# PLAN OVERVIEW

- 1.1 Purpose
- 1.2 Scope
- 1.3 Methodology

## PURPOSE 1.1



McIntosh County's Comprehensive Plan is a living document that is updated and shaped by its leadership, staff and citizens. It is a policy guide for making zoning and land use decisions and establishes policies for County officials and staff concerning the development of the County.

The Comprehensive Plan is a long-range land use plan to guide growth and influence the physical development of the County. The goals and policies within the Comprehensive Plan are designed to help McIntosh County become a prosperous, healthy, equitable, and resilient County.

McIntosh's Comprehensive Plan is a five-year update as required by the "The Minimum Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning," (Minimum Standards) adopted by Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA). The latest version of these standards can be found in O.C.G.A. Chapter 110-12-1, effective March 2014.

In meeting these standards, this plan update enables the County to maintain its Qualified Local Government (QLG) Status, making it eligible to receive certain types of state funding. This update reassesses where McIntosh County is today, and how it intends to develop. Following the requirements of the Minimum Standards, the plan update presents a community vision, goals, and a work program designed to make the vision a reality.

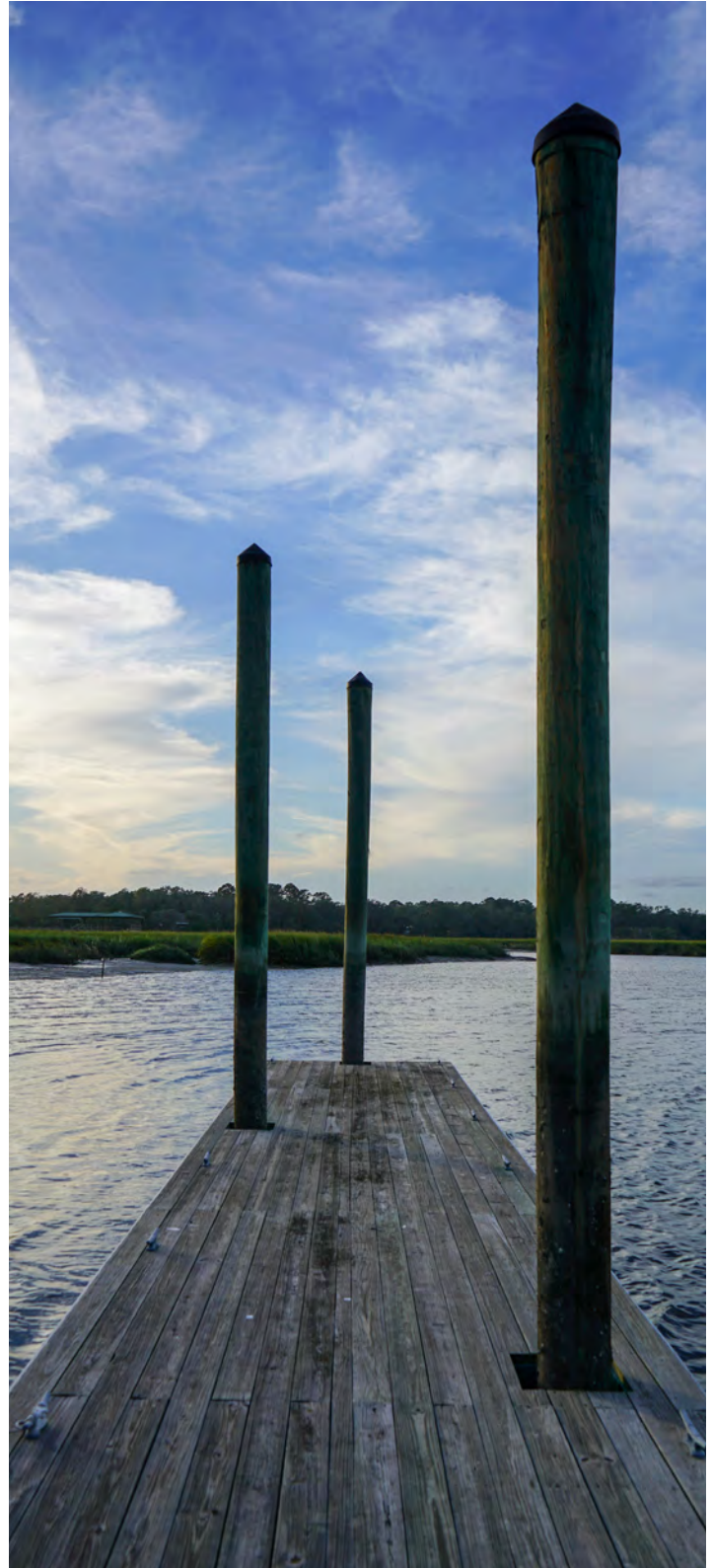
## SCOPE 1.2

In keeping with the Minimum Standards, this plan is presented in three components:

- 1 COMMUNITY VISION** - which lays out the future vision and goals that the community wants to achieve in text and maps;
- 2 NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES** – which provides a list of the various needs and opportunities that the community will address; and
- 3 COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM** – which provides a 5-year Short Term Work Program designed to address the needs and opportunities. This program include activities, initiatives, programs, ordinances and administrative systems to be put into place or maintained to implement the plan.

In addition, the plan incorporates planning elements as defined by the DCA Minimum Standards that are important to shaping the future of McIntosh County.

A Record of Accomplishments highlighting the success of the previous Short-Term Work Program, a description of the public involvement proves, and a report on how this plan is consistent with the Regional Water Plan and Environmental Planning Criteria is a part of this report.

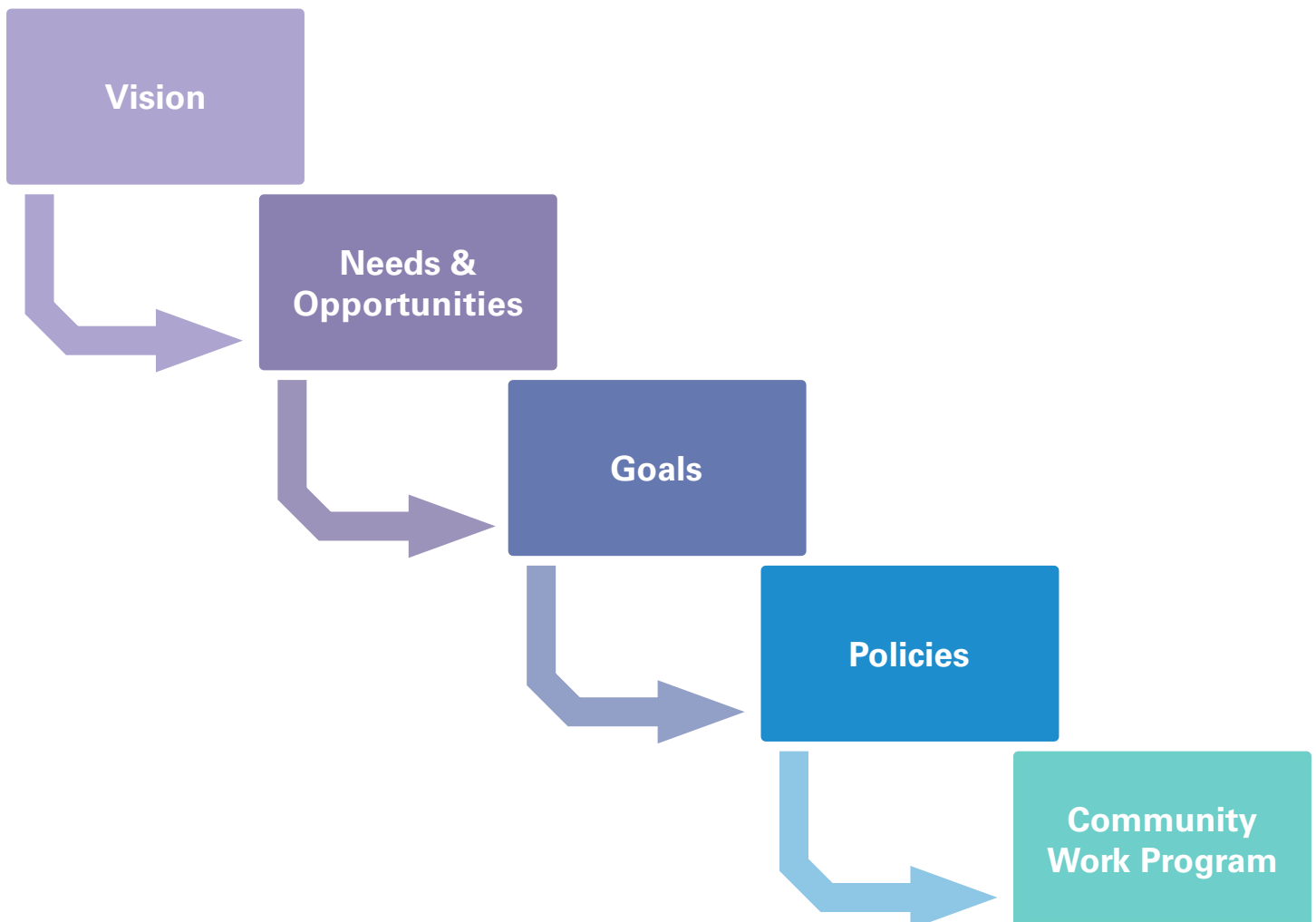


## Boundary and Description

McIntosh County is one of six coastal counties in Georgia and is home to the second oldest city in the state. McIntosh County was created in 1893 and became the state's 17th County. McIntosh County is the 113th most populated County in Georgia. Adjacent counties include Liberty County to the north; Glynn County to the south; Wayne County on its western corner; and Long County on the northwest corner.

The County has a total area of 575 square miles; 433 square miles is upland and 142 square miles is water. Nearly one-third of the land area in McIntosh County is owned by the state and federal governments.

McIntosh County is rich in history, cultural and environmental resources. The aesthetics of the area, including, live oak canopies, expansive marshland vistas and barrier islands, create a distinctive atmosphere that defines McIntosh County as a coastal area of unmatched natural beauty.



## METHODOLOGY 1.3



The public outreach effort launched for this plan update included two public hearings, a kick-off meeting, a community-wide workshop, bi-weekly steering committee meetings and bi-weekly stakeholder committee meetings.

The Steering Committee formed was comprised of members representing a cross-section of the community including an elected official, key staff, the school superintendent, the County attorney, the EMA director, a member of the planning commission, and a business owner.

### Goals of the Steering Committee

**Seek agreement on key issues.**

**Help craft a common vision for the future.**

**Provide guidance on action needed to achieve that vision.**

**Affirm public input.**



Members of the Stakeholder Committee included the Executive Director of Georgia Conservancy, Executive Director of Coastal Workforce, Tourism Project Manager, GA DCA, the Director of Downtown Development, the Director of the Industrial Development Authority, the Director of the Chamber of Commerce, and a member of the Gullah-GeeChee committee.

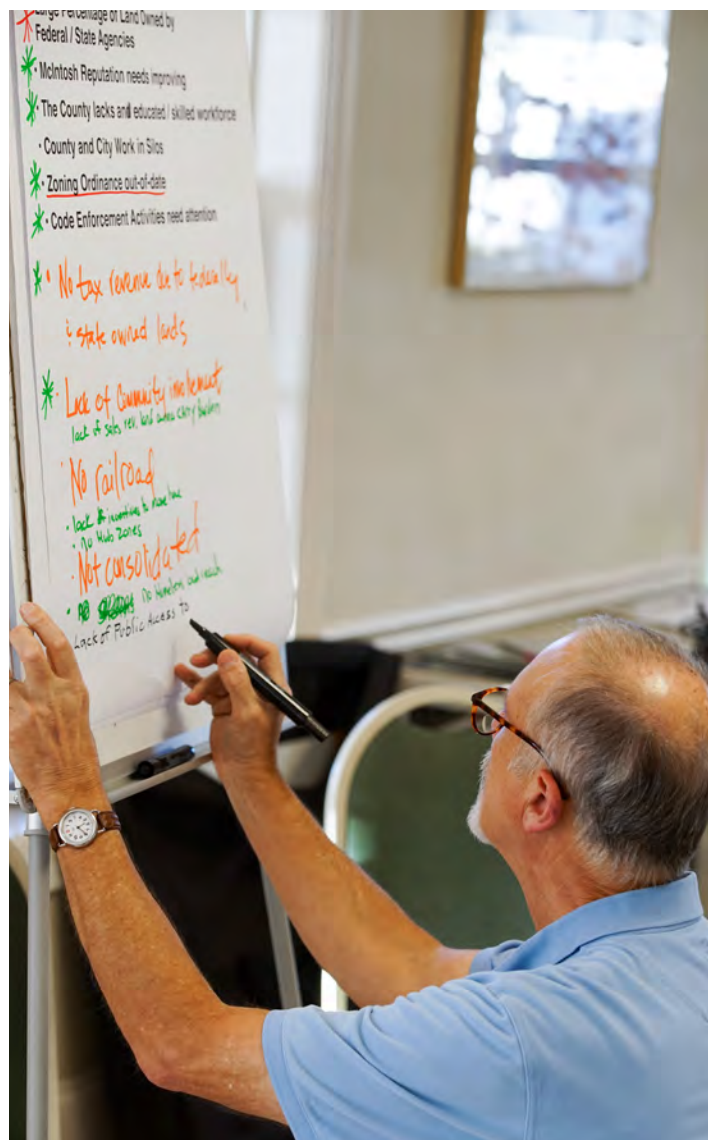
The kick-off meeting was held Monday, July 24, 2017 at the EOC Building, in McIntosh County. This first meeting introduced the members of the committee and provided opportunity to discuss the role of the committee. The kick-off meeting also provided an overview of the planning process, and the purpose of the Minimum Standards and Procedures as set forth by the GA DCA.

A public hearing was held October 10, 2017 that briefed the community on the Plan Update process, and provided members of the public opportunity for public participation.

A community-wide workshop was held 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. on October 24, 2017 at the United Methodist Church, downtown Darien. Community stakeholders participated in carrying out a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis of the County and helped to identify Needs and Opportunities of McIntosh County.

Additionally, key speakers were invited to address the members of the steering and stakeholder committee.

On November 27, 2017 Michael Tucker, Executive Director for Coastal Workforce Development presented an overview of the program and tools available to promote economic development in McIntosh County. Coastal Workforce Services administers job search, training, and placement services. Mr. Tucker explained to address issues for workforce development, strong partnerships can be developed to meet the needs of local employers, attract new businesses, and improve the employment outcome of job seekers.





On December 4, 2017, steering and stakeholder committee members heard from Cheryl Hargrove, Tourism Project Manager The Coast, GA DCA. Ms. Hargrove provided important facts related to the economic engine of tourism. Members learned of the importance of creating a 'personality' for the County as an effective method in promoting tourism, and resources unique McIntosh County. Ms. Hargrove explained that the idea of establishing a personality helps to better strategize and prioritize potential activities and possibilities for positive, memorable experiences. It also cross fertilizes and leverages with other goals such as promoting better signage and design guidelines.

As part of the outreach efforts, steering and stakeholder committee members were invited to participate in a relevant webinar Made in Place: Small-Scale Manufacturing & Neighborhood Revitalization hosted on Thursday December 7, 2017.

On December 20, 2017, the Honorable William Ligon, Jr. addressed members of the steering and stakeholder committee. Senator Ligon stated that the House Rural Development Council was created by House Resolution (HR) 389 during the 2017 Legislative Session of the Georgia General Assembly. He asked that members review the Recommendations Overview and to follow-up by providing him the challenges facing McIntosh County which are distinct and unique to County. He indicated HR 389 is for two-years and that the council will report recommendations for consideration by the General before the council sunsets, December 31, 2018.





On January 22, Kevin Suitt, Range Manager for the Townsend Bombing Range, and Ariel Fuguete, Analyst for the Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, addressed members of the steering and stakeholder committee. Townsend Bombing Range is the primary air-to-ground training range for Marine Corps aviation units stationed at Marine Corps Air Station Beaufort, South Carolina. In addition to being an essential training asset to U.S. Marine Corps aviation units, the U.S. Navy, U.S. Air Force and Air National Guard, and U.S. Army also train at Townsend Bombing Range. Attendees discussed how effective planning policies and partnerships can sustain military missions to support national defense while enhancing the quality of life of McIntosh County residents.

Announcements and notifications of these meetings were included on the Coastal Regional Commission website, <http://crcplanning.org/updates/?view=calendar&month=>



# 2

# NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- 2.1 Public Input
- 2.2 Analyzing the External Environment
- 2.3 Analyzing the Internal Environment
- 2.4 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT)
- 2.5 Needs and Opportunities Matrix

## Needs and Opportunities

The process which identified the Needs and Opportunities unique to the County was based on indicators from the technical assessment and input collected as part of the engagement process.

A need can be defined as a condition of something that is required or wanted, while an opportunity is a chance for progress or advancement. In order to achieve McIntosh County's vision and goals for the future, a number of Needs and Opportunities that the County must address were identified.



# PUBLIC INPUT 2.1

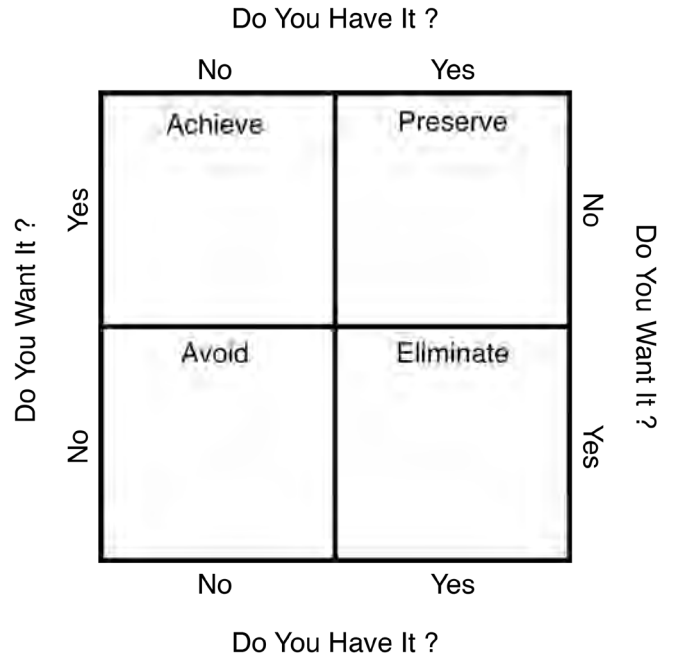
Members of the Steering Committee participated in a kick-off workshop held for the Comprehensive Plan Update.

Community members participated in a **Needs and Opportunities** workshop held by McIntosh County on October 24, 2017 at the United Methodist Church.

Needs and Opportunities were identified through a facilitated discussion of the **Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities** and **Threats**.

In order to collectively steer the process, a 2x2 matrix was constructed to examine the *Yes* and *No* answers to two questions:

1. Do we have it?
2. Do we want it?



The SWOT analysis was designed to identify priorities for the City and was conducted through a “Matrix” that included an exercise with the interplay of ‘yes’ and ‘no’.

The interplay of Yes and No answers to these questions define four basic categories, **Achieve, Preserve, Avoid or Eliminate.**

## ACHIEVE

- Stop light at the end of GA 251 and HWY 17
- More retail/sales tax generator
- Better use of historic resources
- Market eco-tourism
- Educated workforce
- Brand/Personality of McIntosh County
- Training for Planning & Zoning Commission
- County Board retreat
- Attract new residents
- Better relationship with bombing range and timber industry
- Improved parks and recreation
- Industrial development
- Property value increases
- Known as a destination to live, work and play
- Livable communities
- Higher levels of schools attainment
- Leisure services include program for baby-boomers
- Public access to Sapelo Island
- Historic markers identifying Sapelo Island’s assets
- Identification and preservation of historic sites
- Way finding signage
- Make ferry schedules ‘visitor friendly’
- Public dock at Sapelo Island for day-visitors is needed
- Improve the Sapelo Community Center needed
- Incentives to Sapelo Island residents to encourage cottage industries
- Privatization of Reynolds Mansion and other assets
- Historic assets on Sapelo in peril such as former slave cabins, and barn at Chocolate, the Greenhouse need to be restored and preserved
- Renovate and restore the Reynolds Mansion
- Make Harris Neck an ecology tourism/education destination
- Provide interpretation and education opportunities at Harris Neck
- Mark trails and historic sites on Harris neck
- Incentives to residents at or near the entrance to Harris Neck to encourage cottage industries
- Provide additional promotion of Harris Neck, Butler Island and the County’s Historic Churches
- Promote the bird and wildlife viewing on Harris Neck
- Promote Altamaha River Corridor as excellent opportunity for kayaking; boating tours sport fishing and commercial fishing
- Establish designated kayak/boating tours
- Establish outposts and nature walks
- Encourage fishing guides; water taxi’s to provide access to waterways
- Improve the facilities on Butler Island, restore Mansion and Dairy Barn
- Collaborate with Townsend Bombing Range on compatible land use and planning

## PRESERVE

- Area's historic churches need to be preserved
- Fishing villages of McIntosh County and character need to be preserved
- Cultural heritage needs to be preserved

## AVOID

- Unplanned growth
- Attracting wrong money makers
- Uninformed citizens
- Spot zoning
- Obstructed views

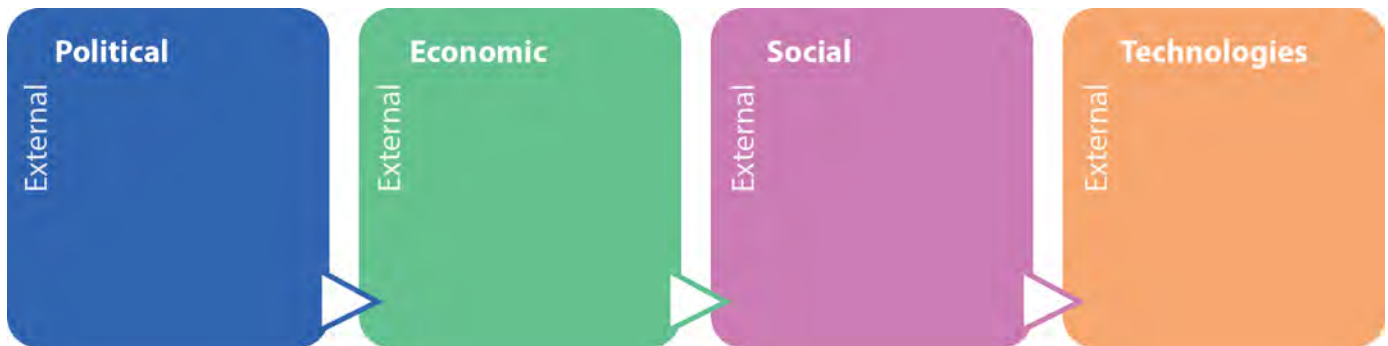
## ELIMINATE

- Blight / underutilized parcels
- Lack of industry and diversity
- Lack of job skills
- Several housing problems
- Cost-burdened households
- Drugs
- Negative County reputation
- Negative school reputation
- Littering
- Poverty
- Lack of Code Enforcement



## ANALYZING THE EXTERNAL ENVIRONMENT 2.2

Once the four categories were identified, the analyses of the **external environment** including social change, new technologies, political environments was examined to determine how, if at all, might affect McIntosh County. A chart for analyzing the external environment is the **PEST** chart, an acronym for Political, Economic, Social and Technologies analysis that encompass the process.



### External Analysis Political

- Elected Officials
- Federal and State agencies own nearly 1/3 of the land area
- Military owned land
- State only pays \$100k per year

### External Analysis Economic

- Cycles and market
- Funding streams
- Economic growth
- High unemployment
- Poor school reputation
- Low educational attainment
- Low median household income
- Low per capita personal income
- Long commute time between home and work
- All Industries Employment Growth rate -30.3% from 2006-2016
- Number of firms established went down by nineteen (-19) from 2006-2016

### External Analysis Social

- Growing elderly population
- Overall declining population
- Cost-burdened housing
- High poverty rates
- Loss of working age population
- High poverty threatens the quality of the labor pool
- Decreasing population with higher education
- Percentage of adults not graduating from high school higher than State

### External Analysis Technologies

- Number of movies filmed in McIntosh: 1
- No Class I railroad in McIntosh County
- McIntosh County has no emergency evacuation route data
- McIntosh County has high vulnerability for critical infrastructure in Category 1-5 hurricanes
- McIntosh County has sufficient broadband
- McIntosh County lacks technical school

## ANALYZING THE INTERNAL ENVIRONMENT

### 2.3

A critical component in the planning process is also documenting what McIntosh County knows about itself, analyzing the internal environment. An internal analysis is an exploration of the organization. Analyzing the internal environment enables the County to determine what it can do by identifying resources, capabilities, and core competencies.

The conditions, entities, and factors within the County that influence its activities, particularly its employees considered part of the internal environment as well as the County's leadership style. What defines McIntosh County's culture? What is its image in the eyes of its stakeholders and others? Are clear lines of communication present? Is there a skilled and experienced staff?

#### INTERNAL ANALYSIS

- Fiscally responsible
- Ethical and competent staff
- Poor image in the eyes of the state
- Strong project management skills
- Strong leadership at the executive level
- Overcoming reputation of unilateral decision making
- Overcoming reputation of minimal communication with citizens
- County and city work in silos and need to collaborate to work on common goals together

# STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS (SWOT)

2.4



The information derived from the external analysis feeds into the Opportunities and Threats segments of the SWOT analysis.

The information derived from the internal analysis drives the Strengths and Weaknesses components of the SWOT.

Citizen input helped determine the McIntosh County's needs and opportunities as part of the comprehensive planning process. The results are incorporated into the body of the plan.



## STRENGTHS

- Fiscally responsible
- Ethical and competent staff
- Strong project management skills
- Strong leadership at the executive level
- Rich in history
- Broadband capacity
- Available land for development
- Boating and kayaking opportunities
- Abundant natural resources
- Small town charm and feel
- East Coast Greenway
- Close proximity to I-95
- Close proximity to Intracoastal
- Known for the area's fresh shrimp, fish and oysters

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Growing elderly population
- McIntosh County has sufficient broadband
- Movie has been filmed in McIntosh County (film ready)
- Become an eco-tourism destination
- Become a livable community destination
- Market natural and historic resources
- Market waterways and Viewscapes
- Market bird and habitat watching
- Funding and resources available through USDA and grants
- Promote biking
- Promote Sapelo Island
- Promote Historic churches
- Promote Harris Neck

## WEAKNESSES

- Poor image in the eyes of the state
- Overcoming reputation of unilateral decision making
- Overcoming reputation of minimal communication with citizens
- County and city work in silos and need to collaborate to work on common goals together
- Median income is less than the State and U.S.
- County reputation needs improving
- Zoning ordinance out of date
- Code enforcement activities need attention
- Lack of job opportunities
- Sapelo Island lack convenient access for tourists
- Lack continuity in promoting the area's assets
- Industrial development is limited

## THREATS

- Nearly one-third of the land area is owned by the state and federal governments, and not subject to ad valorem taxation
- Cost -burdened housing
- Poor school reputation
- Low educational attainment
- Low median household income
- Long commute time between home and work
- Overall declining population
- High poverty rates
- Loss of working age population
- All Industries Employment Growth rate -30.3 percent from 2006-2016
- Number of firms established went down by nineteen (-19) from 2006-2016
- No Class I railroad in McIntosh County
- Decreasing population for those with a higher education
- Percentage of adults not graduating from high school higher than State
- McIntosh County has no emergency evacuation route data
- McIntosh County has high vulnerability in critical infrastructure for Category 1-5 hurricanes

## NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES 2.5

A need is identified as a condition of something that is required or wanted, while an opportunity is a chance for progress or advancement. More specifically, a “need” refers to the gap or discrepancy between a present state (what is) and a desired state (what should be). The need is neither the present nor the future state; it is the gap between them. An “opportunity” refers to something that the County has that should be maintained, promoted or that the County can capitalize on that improves the community.

Input from the Steering and Stakeholder Committees, the technical assessment and citizen input helped determine McIntosh County’s Needs and Opportunities as part of the comprehensive planning process.



## POPULATION

### ISSUES

**Population Declining** – From 2000 to 2010, McIntosh County experienced significant growth. According to Georgia Governor’s Office of Planning and Budget (OPB), beginning in 2015, the population would continue to decrease for the next few decades, averaging 1 percent per year.

**Exodus of Working Age and Families** – Total population from 2000 to 2017 decreased for the following groups for McIntosh County: ages 10 to 14, 35 to 44 and 45 to 54. These age groups typically include families with children and, future planning should consider jobs and opportunities that might attract more young families.

**Aging Population** – Age composition from 2000 to 2017 shifted to a smaller percentage of children (under 18 years) and a larger percentage of retiree-age adults (62 years and over). Total population substantially increased for ages 62 to 74 years and 85 years and over. McIntosh County’s aging population will increasingly have special needs in terms of residential choices and community services and facilities.

**Declining Average Household Size** – From 2000-2010 the average household size decreased 5.9 percent from 2.54 to 2.39. From 2010 – 2017 the County continued to decrease by 0.8 percent to 2.37. According ESRI Business Analysis, the decreasing trend is estimated to continue. Some of the decrease can be attributed to the larger retiree-aged population living in households without children.

### OPPORTUNITIES

**Livable Communities** – McIntosh County is considered a retiree community. The County can assess their age readiness, and implement initiatives designed to help prepare for their aging population by focusing on making local level changes to facilitate aging in place.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### ISSUES

**Low Educational Attainment** – The significance of education in today’s competitive workplace cannot be stressed enough as being extremely important. The percentage of adults not graduating from high school in the County is 24.9 percent which is higher than the state at 17.7 percent. For adults age 25-34 with at least a bachelor’s degree, McIntosh County decreased from 17.3 percent to 15.1 percent.

**Larger Percentage of Employees Work outside of County** – 52 percent of the 2015 population of workers (16 years and older) work outside the County.

**Declining Employment** – From 2014 to 2015, employment in McIntosh County declined at a rate of 2.54 percent from 5,551 employees to 5,410 employees.

**Lacking and Educated Workforce** – For adults age 25-34 with at least a bachelor’s degree, McIntosh County decreased from 17.3 percent to 15.1 percent.

**Declining Median Household Income** – In 2015, the median household income of the 5,296 households in McIntosh County declined 4.93 percent to \$42,988 from the previous year’s value of \$45,216.

**Poverty Rate Higher than State and U.S.** – 21.3 percent of the population in McIntosh County, GA (13,886 people) live below the poverty line, a number that is higher than the national average of 14.7 percent. The largest demographic living in poverty is female age 35-44, followed by female age 45-54.

**Declining Property Values** – In 2015, the median property value in McIntosh County declined 10.2 percent to \$108,400 from the previous year’s value of \$120,800.

### OPPORTUNITIES

**Unrivaled Historic and Cultural Resources** – McIntosh County has extraordinary and unsurpassed historic and cultural resources including the Geechee Community of Hog Hammock on Sapelo Island. With enhanced access and restored facilities many of the County’s resources can become large economic drivers in the County.

**Broadband Capacity** – McIntosh County has sufficient broadband. Bandwidth means greater speed and broadband can deliver several million bytes per second or megabytes/Mbps Broadband/high-speed Internet has become a key economic development tool and private sector job creation vehicle.

**Available Land for Development** – McIntosh County has available land for industrial and commercial development.

**Eco-tourism Destination** – The waters of McIntosh County are known as the Fisherman’s Paradise. The abundance of rivers, wildlife, birds, fish, and proximity to the ocean makes the County prime to be marketed as a first-class eco-tourism destination.

**Boating and Kayaking Opportunities** – McIntosh County has miles of tributaries where one can see rare tidal forest containing bald cypress, sweet black gum, and water tupelo flowing through undeveloped sections of the County. McIntosh County waterways provide an excellent opportunity for kayak and boating tours.

**Abundant Natural Resources** – McIntosh County has abundant natural resources with opportunities to market bird watching, wildlife viewing, sport fishing, and nature walks. The County has opportunity to create interpretation and educational centers and enhance access to its abundant resources.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT (continued)

### ISSUES

**Prime Lands Owned by Federal and State Government** – Nearly one-third of the land area in McIntosh County (85,232.83 acres) is owned by the state and federal governments and not subject to ad valorem taxation.

**Lack of Quality Retail Stores** – the County lacks retail opportunities both to generate sales tax and to provide opportunities for new retail to its residents. When retailers evaluate the market, evaluation of buying power and related household income is a factor.

### OPPORTUNITIES

**East Coast Greenway** – McIntosh County is part of the 155 mile East Coast Georgia Greenway connecting from downtown to Ft. King George Drive to McIntosh Trail into Georgia Highway 99 and terminating at Blue-N-Hall Road.

**Close Proximity to I-95** – In addition to the Industrial Park having close proximity to I-95, other opportunities with close proximity to I-95 exist including the Harris Nick Wildlife Refuge where cottage industries can be encouraged.

**Working Relationship w/Bombing Range & Timber Industry** – Fostering strong communication between military and community stakeholders can provide opportunities to develop mutually beneficial partnerships. For example, Townsend Bombing Range and the county have shared interests to protect, manage, and enhance natural resources, which can promote economic development. The Department of Defense has many programs to support these relationships such as the Sentinel Landscapes program.



## HOUSING

### ISSUES

**Cost Burdened Housing** – Cost-burdened households are those households paying 30 percent or more of their net income on housing costs. Based on housing costs rising at a faster rate than household income, the percentage of cost burdened housing is expected to increase. In 2015, the percentage of cost-burdened housing was 49.3 percent for rental units and 41 percent for households with a mortgage.

**Households with Severe Housing Problems**–Severe Housing Problems calculates the percentage of households with at least one or more of the following housing problems: 1) housing unit lacks complete kitchen facilities, 2) housing unit lacks complete plumbing facilities, 3) household is severely overcrowded, and 4) household is severely cost burdened. Severe overcrowding is defined as more than 1.5 persons per room, and severe cost burden is defined as monthly housing costs (including utilities) that exceed 50 percent of monthly income. 15 percent of housing units in McIntosh County have severe housing problems.

### OPPORTUNITIES

**Infill Housing** – Infill housing opportunities can contribute and enhance established neighborhoods.

**Managing Development** – The County has opportunity to identify land use and a new zoning classification to accommodate workforce/affordable housing opportunities.

**Incorporate Universal Design** – Universal design incorporates design elements usable by everyone including seniors, and people with disabilities without the need for adaptation or specialized design. The County can prepare the demographic change by incorporating these design features for new residential developments.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

### ISSUES

**Restricted Infrastructure** – Growth in McIntosh County comes with the challenge of providing infrastructure including the lack of sewer and water infrastructure.

**Community Center Sapelo Island** –Improvements/enhancements to the Community Center need to be made so that the facility can function, host events and be a focal point.

**Fire Protection on Sapelo Island** – A suitable location needs to be identified for a fire station for safety of residents and visitors on the island.

### OPPORTUNITIES

**High-tech Infrastructure** – McIntosh County has adequate high-tech infrastructure in place to support business recruitment an expansion.

**Future Water Needs** – Substantial water resources are available in McIntosh County that can support long term growth with proactive planning and resource management.

**Coordinate Infrastructure** – The County can coordinate its infrastructure needs with population projections and land use applications to ensure that adequate and proper infrastructures is being maintained and developed timely and in appropriate locations for long term needs.

## TRANSPORTATION

### ISSUES

**Travel Patterns** – Physical and jurisdictional topography play a significant role in shaping travel patterns within McIntosh County. Physical constraints serve to limit travel choices, thus influencing travel patterns. I-95 and U.S. HWY 17 are the only routes for inter-County north-south travel.

**SR 57 has no Passing Lanes** – McIntosh County SR 57 is an important route that carries commuter traffic east-west but has no widened areas or passing lanes.

**Traffic Light for Safety** – McIntosh County has no traffic lights.

**Evacuation** – Sapelo Island, since accessible only by boat, has issues if not evacuated early.

**Unpaved Roads** – According to the Regional Transportation Assessment, McIntosh County has 700 miles of unpaved roads.

### OPPORTUNITIES

**East Coast Greenway** – The Highlander Trail runs from Sapelo Dock Road along SR 99 and connects to the pedestrian/bike trail in Darien. This trail is a section of the East Coast Greenway, which extends from the northernmost point in Maine to the southernmost points in Florida.

**Stoplight GA 25 and HWY 17** – For safety, there is opportunity to include a stop light at GA 25 and HWY 17. This intersection is busy with consumers entering/exiting the grocery store parking lot and residents on motorized wheel chairs attempting to cross the HWY 17.

## LAND USE

### ISSUES

**Timber Industry** – Huge tracts of McIntosh County are owned by the timber industry and as a result much of the County is zoned Agriculture/Forestry.

**Total Area** – The County has a total area of 575 square miles; 433 square miles is upland and 142 square miles (24.56%) is water.

### OPPORTUNITIES

**Proximity to Waterways** – Growth is expected along SR 251 west of I-95 and along SR 99 in northern McIntosh with proximity to waterways.

**Sense of Place** – McIntosh County is identifiable because of its extensive marshes and tree canopied roads.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION

### ISSUES

**Department of Natural Resources (DNR)** – DNR manages much of the prime lands in McIntosh County and needs to work closely with the County to enhance access to its historic and cultural facilities on Sapelo Island.

**The Federal Government** – the federal governments manages the Harris Neck Wildlife Refuge and needs to work closely with the County to enhance access and educational opportunities.

**Historic Preservation Division** – Many of the historic structures in the County are in danger and the state and County need to work together to develop a masterplan for restoration and preservation.

**Board of Education** – Although not under the County’s jurisdiction there should be open dialogue between the County and the Board of Education in support of higher education attainment, workforce development and the long term economic viability of the County.

**McIntosh County and City of Darien** –The City and County cooperate on a number of services, but can work together to provide better services which are also more financially sound. Collaboration can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of local government.

**Community Partners** –The County can strengthen its relationship with community partners such as the Industrial Development Authority, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Board of Education in order to better communicate, and plan for the viability of McIntosh County.

### OPPORTUNITIES

**Coastal Regional Commission (CRC)** –The County maintains close working relationship with CRC for GIS services, transportation and as the County implements its Comprehensive Plan.

**Community Partners** –The County has opportunity to strengthen its relationship with community partners such as the Industrial Development Authority, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Board of Education to better communicate the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and to plan for the viability of McIntosh County.

**Townsend Bombing Range** –Townsend Bombing Range is critical to include as a stakeholder in planning processes, from conservation to transportation, and more, in order to promote military and community capability and new partnerships.

## ISSUES

**Dreary Social Indicators** – McIntosh County is facing an elevated high school dropout rate, low educational attainment, lack of employment opportunities, cost-burdened housing, severe housing problems, an exodus of middle income families, and little if any private investment.

**Poor Reputation** – There exists a poor reputation as it relates to the Board of Education and throughout the County in general.

**Land Not Subject to Ad Valorem Taxation** – The nearly one-third of the land area in McIntosh County (85,232.83 acres) is owned by the state and federal governments and not subject to ad valorem taxation.

## OPPORTUNITIES

**Natural, Cultural and Historic Resources** – The natural, historic, and cultural resources in McIntosh County give the County its sense of identity and collectively tell a unique and compelling story.

**Sapelo Hammock Golf Course** – The Sapelo Golf Course is an 18-hole course that provides opportunity for economic opportunity, recreation, youth sports, and in tourists a positive experience.

**Low Crime Rate** – According to Business Analyst Online (BAO) the total crime rate (June 2017) for McIntosh is 95, is lower than the U.S. level 100 and much lower than State's index, 116. The index values for the U.S. level are 100, representing average crime for the country. A value of more than 100 represents higher crime than the national average, and a value of less than 100 represents lower crime than the national average.

# 3

# COMMUNITY VISION AND GOALS

- 3.1 Vision Statement
- 3.2 Goals
- 3.3 Community Policies

## COMMUNITY VISION AND GOALS

### 3

The Community Vision and Goals identify McIntosh County’s direction for the future and are intended to serve as a guide to McIntosh officials in day-to-day decision making. They are the product of public involvement and include the following components:

- Vision Statement
- Overarching Community Goals
- General Policies
- Character Areas Map and Narrative
- Future Land Use Map

## VISION STATEMENT

### 3.1

The Community Vision paints a picture of what McIntosh County desires to become. The vision statement offered below was refined through discussion with the Steering Committee.

**“McIntosh County is a safe, family oriented community where access to history and natural resources abound providing economic opportunity, and a strong sense of place.”**

McIntosh County is committed to achieving this vision through:

- Advancement of community by emphasizing education, promoting housing of various sizes, sizes and pricing, creating employment opportunities and a community with a variety of retail, commercial, and improved public spaces.
- Balanced growth guided by planning principles that promote housing, economic development and access to recreation and natural resources.
- Natural resource preservation by recognizing these resources are necessary to meet the needs of future generations.

The vision addresses the community’s desire to maintain a small town feel with commercial, employment, and economic development opportunities.

The vision is supported by the following overarching goals created to help shape the McIntosh County’s future development.

## GOALS 3.2

McIntosh County identified a number of goals to achieve in order to make the County’s vision a continuing reality. The following goals represent the recurring themes, and received the highest rankings among community stakeholders. Like the vision statement, the goals were derived from a vetting process involving County staff, the steering and stakeholder committees, and members of the public.

	<p><b>Promote a more informed citizenry and government transparency</b></p>
	<p><b>Improve the Board of Education and McIntosh County’s reputation as a place to invest, work, and educate</b></p>
	<p><b>Create a personality for McIntosh County that can be used to market the County as place to live, invest, play, and educate</b></p>
	<p><b>Remove blight and improve cost-burdened housing</b></p>
	<p><b>Preserve, enhance, and promote the area’s cultural and natural resources</b></p>
	<p><b>Maintain the sense of place and small-town character and feel of McIntosh County</b></p>



## Promote Having a More Informed Citizenry and Government Transparency

During the planning process, members of the community overwhelmingly identified promoting a more informed citizenry as most important.

For our representative form of government to work it needs not just an engaged citizenry, but an informed one. One of the most critical jobs facing political leaders is to forge a consensus among diverse people and interests holding competing views. A democratic society depends on its citizens forming good judgments, and for representatives to act accordingly. If ordinary people can't or don't devote the time and energy to be informed, the County's efforts to promote economic vitality, sustainability, and profitability will suffer. Regardless of good leadership, if a community does not have discriminating citizens, the County does not function well.

There is no single fix. Part of the answer resides with our public officials, who have a responsibility to provide the public basic facts. Part of it resides with the media, and part of it resides with civic groups. In the end, the burden resides with each of us as citizens. Living in a democracy may be a basic right; but it is also a privilege, and one that must be earned by living up to the expectation for a well-educated and knowledgeable community.

Transparency – in terms of both information disclosure and dissemination and access to decision making – is therefore very important as it better enables civil society to:

- Hold government and/or key decision makers to account;
- Promote good governance;
- Improve public policy and efficiency; and
- Combat corruption.





## **Improve the Board of Education and McIntosh County’s Reputation as a Place to Invest, Work, and Receive a Great Education**

During the planning process members of the community, steering and stakeholder committees identified making the connection between educational attainment, and economic development opportunities a pressing goal. McIntosh County is facing dreary social indicators including an elevated high school dropout rate, low employment, cost-burdened housing, severe housing problems, an exodus of middle income families, and little if any private investment.

Replacing housing will not attract families if schools are in poor shape. Schools cannot be expected to perform well where children show up unprepared. County governments, authorities, and the public school system must find a means to collaborate across their operating silos so that transformation becomes a strategic priority. An approach that is geographic, holistic, and specific to the unique assets and deficits that exist within McIntosh County needs to be developed to be effective in attracting middle-income families and eradicating educational performance gaps.



## Establish a Personality for McIntosh County and Utilize Strategic Marketing

McIntosh County takes seriously its responsibility towards building a positive image to support its vision both internally and externally to provide a favorable experience. An effective strategy to create a positive personality for McIntosh County includes creating a clear and consistent identity for the County based on qualities that are important to the County.

A well-executed strategy that takes into account a personality reflective of McIntosh County's strengths can successfully communicate values and tell a compelling story. The goal of creating a positive personality for McIntosh County is to define its culture and speak to its uniqueness. During the planning process, participants shared the need to positively change the negative perception and create a consistent context for marketing.



## Remove Blight and Improve Cost-Burdened Housing

The government standard for a “cost-burdened housing” is one where 30 percent or more of net household income goes to housing costs. The goal for McIntosh County is to align resources and work together to improve the health and well-being of all County residents. Through the utilization of data, the integration of best practices, and the coordination of resources, the goal of McIntosh County is to remove blight and improve housing that leads to positive change.



## **Preserve, Protect, and Enhance the Natural and Historic Resources of McIntosh County**

The natural, historic and cultural resources associated with the people, events, and characteristics of McIntosh County give the County its sense of identity and collectively tell a most unique story. These resources are the most tangible resources of McIntosh's heritage. Throughout the planning process, participants expressed pride in the County's abundant assets with the goal of developing and incorporating them into economic development efforts.



## **Preserve and Enhance the Sense of Place and Small Town Feel of McIntosh County**

The definition of sense of place, and small town feel, is complex and multi-faceted. It's a blending of the physical characteristics of the area with its culture, history and natural environment. A sense of place, emerges through knowledge of the history, geography and geology of an area. People develop a sense of place through experience and knowledge of an area. Places said to have a strong sense of place have a strong identity deeply felt by residents and visitors.

The following goals also represent the goals derived from the vetting process involving County staff, the steering and stakeholder committees, and members of the public.

## COMMUNITY POLICIES 3.3

Policies set preferred direction and describe what must be done to achieve goals. They are specific enough to help determine whether a proposed project would advance the values expressed in the goals. The following policies are intended to provide on-going guidance and direction to County officials for making decisions consistent with achieving Community Goals and in implementing the Comprehensive Plan. The policies are organized by goals, although individual policies will achieve multiple goals expressed by the community.



### **Promote Having a More Informed Citizenry and Government Transparency**

People will simply make up what they don't know, often assuming the worst. Transparency matters for an organization's culture, as it builds trust, stronger relationships among employees, management and constituents. It leads to more collaboration, shared learning, faster problem-solving and ultimately improved performance.

- The County will have broad public access in to information about the operations of government.
- The County will post agenda's and minutes of public hearings on the County website in a fast and efficient manner.
- The County will create a communication task force that includes members from agencies such as the Industrial Development Authority (IDA), Downtown Development Authority (DDA), and Chamber of Commerce, the City of Darien and members of non-profits and members from civic groups to promote an informed citizenry and explore ways in which to promulgate County information.



## **Improve the Board of Education and McIntosh County's Reputation as a Place to Invest, Work, and Receive a Great Education**

Although the County does not have oversight over the Board of Education, members of the community strongly expressed the correlation between the future viability of the County and the educational performance gaps. Throughout the planning process, members also expressed improving economic development opportunities and quality of life for its residents.

- The County will create a task force with members of the Board of Education, IDA, DDA, Chamber, business, civic, non-profit, and faith based leaders that monitor the comp plan implementation and policy development in response to major issues that are, or can in the future have significant impact on the community and the constituencies it serves.
- The County will host an annual retreat that includes monitoring its accomplishments, training and developing current and new leaders within the board and committees, and assuring that the same development is occurring within the professional staff.
- The County will work with the BOE and other partners to strengthen schools in workforce preparedness and competitiveness for Economic Development.



## **Establish a Personality for McIntosh County and Utilize Strategic Marketing**

McIntosh County takes seriously its responsibility towards building a positive image to support its vision both internally and externally to provide a favorable experience. An effective strategy to create a positive personality for McIntosh County includes creating a clear and consistent identity for the County based on qualities that are important to the County.

A well-executed strategy that takes into account a personality reflective of McIntosh County's strengths can successfully communicate values and tell a compelling story. The goal of creating a positive personality for McIntosh County is to define its culture and speak to its uniqueness. During the planning process, participants shared the need to positively change the negative perception and create a consistent context for marketing.



## Remove Blight and Improve Cost-Burdened Housing

Households that are cost burdened are more likely to struggle to pay for other basic needs such as healthcare, childcare, transportation, and food. Income levels play a significant role in determining the percentage of households that are housing cost burdened. Through the utilization of data, the integration of best practices, and the coordination of resources, the goal of McIntosh County is to remove blight and improve housing that leads to positive change.

- The County will make application to the Georgia Department of Community Affairs program known as the Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH) to address issues with housing.
- The County will update its ordinances as they relate to code enforcement, property maintenance, and abatement to address the issue of blight.



## Preserve, Protect, and Enhance the Natural and Historic Resources of McIntosh County

The natural, historic and cultural assets are the most tangible resources of the County. McIntosh County seeks to enhance and promote the area's resources. Developing the assets for economic development ensures the County can provide a top-rate education and provide residents with fundamental services.

- The County shall work with the private landowners and the State of Georgia to enhance the access, safety and educational facilities on Sapelo Island.
- The County shall seek to provide public dockage for day-visitors and work with the State of Georgia to make ferry schedules "visitor friendly."
- The County shall seek to make improvements/enhancements to the Community Center on Sapelo Island.
- The County shall seek to provide fire protection to the island and work with the state to find a suitable location for a fire station.
- The County shall update its ordinances to provide residents of Sapelo Island incentives to create cottage industries such as bed and breakfast facilities, restaurants, bakeries, cart rental, gift shops, water taxis and other tourist related commercial endeavors.
- The County shall work with the State and seek privatization of certain assets, including the Reynolds Mansion.
- The County shall seek private investment to rehabilitate and preserve the mansion.
- The County shall work with the State to identify assets in danger, such as the slave cabins, and barn at Chocolate, the Greenhouse.



- The County shall develop a masterplan for restoration and preservation of assets on Sapelo.
- The County shall work with the Federal Government to enhance access and educational opportunities at the Harris Neck Wildlife Refuge.
- The County shall seek to mark the trails and historic sites at the Harris Neck Wildlife Refuge.
- The County shall seek to explore an interpretive center at the Harris Neck Wildlife Refuge.
- The County shall update its ordinances to provide residents at or near the Harris Neck Wildlife Refuge incentives to create cottage industries such as bed and breakfast facilities, restaurants, bakeries, cart rental, gift shops, water taxis and other tourist related commercial endeavors.
- The County shall work with the Chamber of Commerce to provide additional promotion of the asset.
- The County shall work with the Chamber of Commerce to promote the Altamaha River Corridor and those assets associated with the “fisherman’s paradise,” boating, kayaking, commercial fishing and sports fishing.
- The County shall work with the State of Georgia and the City of Darien to improve and restore the Huston Mansion and Dairy Barn on Butler Island.
- The County shall work with the State on enhancing eco-tourism on the River Corridor.
- The County shall establish designated kayak/boating tours in various waterways and explore the establishment of outposts and nature walks through areas of interest.
- The County’s ordinances shall be updated to encourage fishing guides, water taxis to encourage access to waterways.
- The County shall work with the Chamber of Commerce to promote the County’s historic churches.
- The County shall work with the individual churches to establish ‘open’ hours for visitors to tour the structures.
- The County shall identify the church structures at risk and identify funding sources for preservation.
- The County shall preserve, enhance, and promote the Fishing Village Character Areas by working with the Chamber of Commerce to promote the asset.
- The County shall preserve, enhance, and promote the Fishing Village Character Areas by providing signage unique to the village that identifies places of interest.
- The County shall encourage the establishment of cottage industries in the Fishing Village Character Area.



## **Preserve and Enhance the Sense of Place and Small Town Feel of McIntosh County**

A 'sense of place' can be defined as a blending of the physical characteristics of the area with its culture, history and natural environment. A 'sense of place,' emerges through knowledge of the history, geography and geology of an area. Balancing economic activity with the County's sensitive and conserved lands supports quality of life, environmental services and maintains the County's unique assets for future generations.

- The County shall ensure policies, programs and partnerships support quality of life, encourage entrepreneurs and foster the long-term protection of the County's natural, historic and cultural assets.

# QUALITY COMMUNITY OBJECTIVES

## 3.4

DCA's Vision: Every Georgia community offers a quality of life where people and businesses can grow and prosper. This section is used as a guide to determine which Quality Community Objectives McIntosh County will seek to accomplish with future planning efforts and developments.

### 1. Economic Prosperity

Encourage development or expansion of businesses and industries suitable for the community.

McIntosh County is in Region 12 and is one of six coastal counties located on the Georgia coast at the mouth of the Altamaha River. McIntosh County is approximately 50 miles south of Savannah, 20 miles north of the Port of Brunswick, and abuts Interstate I-95 and Highway 17.

Coastal Workforce Development Plan identified four main industries for the region including manufacturing; logistics & warehousing, healthcare and hospitality. In 2016, within the manufacturing sector, Region 12 had 1 percent above the nation average in manufacturing jobs, and in 2016-2020 there is expected to be an increase of 6 percent. In 2016, within the logistics sector, Region 12 had 7 percent above the national average in logistics jobs, and there is expected to be an increase of 3.2 percent. In 2016, within the hospitality sector, Region 12 had 17 percent above the national average in hospitality jobs, and in 2016-2020 there is expected to be an increase of 4.5 percent. The projections of modest growth in in-demand industry sectors are important to the future of McIntosh County's economy especially in Manufacturing, and Logistics & Warehousing. Established trails offer an opportunity to enjoy natural beauty.

### 2. Resource Management

Promote efficient use of natural resources and identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas.

McIntosh County contains coastal marshlands, waterways, and maritime forests natural resources. Salt marshes and their adjacent rivers and creeks play a critical role in the recreation, economy and quality of life of the community. Salt marshes function in the filtration of the pollutants from Inland sources while tidal creeks support fish and invertebrates on which this local economy has traditionally been based. The vast marshes and waterways provide recreational activities including fishing, canoeing and kayaking as well as bountiful habitat for wildlife. The maritime forest represents the last stage of forest growth succession. Acting much like a rainforest canopy, live oaks filter sunlight and rain to provide a shaded understory that contains American holly, Yaupon holly, magnolia and saw palmetto. The protection on environmentally sensitive areas promotes the long-term sustainability of McIntosh County.

### 3. Local Preparedness

Identify and put in place prerequisites for the type of future the community seeks to achieve.

McIntosh County has identified Character Areas to provide guidance on the type of development and communities the county seeks to achieve. These careful planning will help manage growth and support the planning of needed infrastructure such as roads and water.

#### **4. Efficient Land Use**

Maximize use of existing infrastructure by encouraging redevelopment; designing new development to minimize the amount of land consumed; and, carefully planning expansion of public infrastructure.

McIntosh County seeks to minimize the costly conversion of undeveloped land. Future development will be achieved by developing sites closer to the traditional core of the counties communities to minimize the conversion of undeveloped land and maintain traditional lands of agricultural, forestry and conservation. The County has also identified a target area for redevelopment along Highway 251 and I-95, at the former site of the Outlet Mall.

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

Protect and enhance the community's unique qualities that are important to defining the community's character.

McIntosh County's history, geography and natural environment contribute to the County's sense of place. The surrounding wetlands, waterways, and historic landmarks contribute to the identity of the County. The County identifies its sense of place through its abundant natural, historical, and cultural resources.

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

Cooperate with neighboring jurisdictions to address shared needs by actively participating in regional organizations.

McIntosh County is closely connected with surrounding communities in the area. The shared history of the Georgia Coast has left a wealth of facts, events, and landmarks that help identify the region. The County seeks to further develop collaborative solutions for the development of a region wide bicycle network, workforce issues and to improve the educational attainment and performance gaps.

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

Promote an adequate range of safe, affordable, inclusive, and efficient housing in the community.

McIntosh County seeks to promote an adequate range of safe and affordable housing by encouraging development of a variety of housing types, sizes, and costs, and densities through the development of livable communities.

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

McIntosh County seeks to address the transportation needs, challenges and opportunities of all community residents.

McIntosh County is dedicated to providing and improving mobility options. The County is working on region wide efforts for the U.S. Bike Route 1 designation and the Georgia Coastal Greenway. Traffic congestion is not a major concern in McIntosh County, however, the speed of traffic moving through the County on Highway 17 needs to be addressed to improve safety along this corridor.

# 4

# LAND USE

- 4.1 Character Areas
- 4.2 Future Land Use

## CHARACTER AREAS AND DEFINING NARRATIVE 4.1



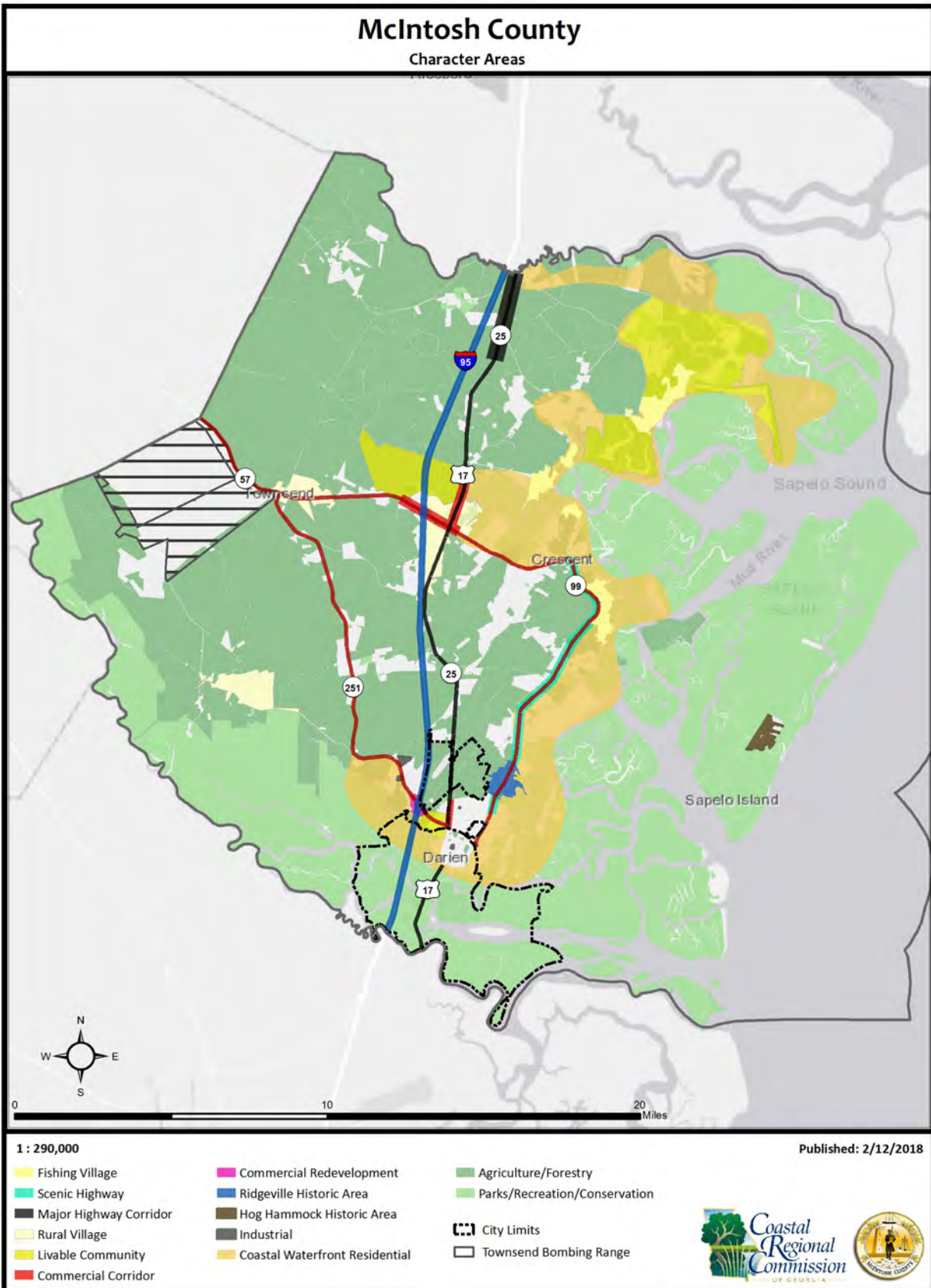
The Character Area Map, along with the character area narratives that follow, lay out a vision, specific goals, appropriate land uses, and implementation strategies for McIntosh’s unique sub-areas, districts, and neighborhoods. There are 13 character areas in total.

Interpretation of the Character Area Map is provided in the supporting text to be considered along with the County’s zoning, the Future Land Use map, and other local policies when decision-makers consider land development questions or requests. The supporting text provides written description of the patterns of development that the County will encourage in each area.

The supporting narrative provides policy direction for regulating development with the goal of furthering consistent character within each area as defined by the County’s vision. Where appropriate, statements for policy and goals are also established.

### MCINTOSH COUNTY CHARACTER AREAS

- Commercial Corridor
- Commercial Redevelopment
- Fishing Village
- Scenic Highway
- Major Highway Corridor
- Rural Village
- Livable Community
- Ridgeville Historic Area
- Hog Hammock Historic Area
- Coastal Waterfront Residential
- Agriculture/Forestry
- Parks/Recreation/Conservation
- Industrial



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## COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR

### Character Area Description

The Commercial Corridors areas are of medium-intensity development along Highway 17 in the southern portion of the County and along the intersection of Highway 99 and Highway 17 in the central portion of the County. These areas are also gateways seen by all who travel into McIntosh County and provide an opportunity to symbolize good design of the public realm.

### Community Vision

Commercial property is an important land use element of McIntosh County. This designation is applied to land which is, or should be developed for general commercial purposes plus institutional and professional services.

The vision is to establish a local commercial corridor that enhances the quality of life for neighboring residential areas, and provides commercial opportunities for visitors and travelers. Development is to be compatible with the surrounding area, encouraging the most appropriate use of land, and ensures safe and efficient movement of traffic.

### Future Zoning Considerations

- CN** Commercial Neighborhood
- CG** General Commercial
- RVD** Recreational Vehicle Park District
- AF** General Agriculture
- AR** Residential Agriculture

### Implementation Strategies

- Applicable development proposed within this district shall be subject to procedures, standards, and guidelines.
- Allowed uses are to reflect the needs of the local market and compatible with nearby residential neighborhoods.
- Design and architectural standards should be compatible with surrounding area.
- Allow flexibility for the parking ratio currently required for commercial development.
- Establish maximum parking requirements versus minimum requirements.
- Incorporate current and future needs for housing, infrastructure, and natural resource protection into economic development initiatives.





## COMMERCIAL REDEVELOPMENT

### Character Area Description

The Commercial Redevelopment area is high-intensity development along the interchange of Highway 251 and I-95 in the southern portion of the County. Land uses in this area include:

- Residential
- Commercial

### Community Vision

The vision for Commercial Redevelopment is to return to productive use land and buildings that are currently vacant or underutilized, generate new tax rates, create jobs, spur further investment and prevent the spread of blight.

### Future Zoning Considerations

- CN** Commercial Neighborhood
- CG** General Commercial
- CI** Interchange Commercial District
- IR** Restricted or Light Industrial District

### Implementation Strategies

- Improve the area in ways that contribute to the physical, economic, social and aesthetic well-being of McIntosh County.
- Encourage new commercial structures to be street front, and where possible create a shopping “square” around a smaller internal parking lot.
- Enhance the physical appearance of buildings with façade improvement, new architectural elements, and/or awnings.
- Reconfigure parking lots and circulation routes for automobiles.
- Provide pedestrian and bicycling amenities, including covered walkways, benches, lighting and bike racks.
- Add landscaping and other enhancements, trees and landscaping in parking lots to provide shade and help reduce storm water runoff.



## FISHING VILLAGE

### Character Area Description

Fishing Villages in McIntosh County are established communities historically characterized by commercial, recreational fishing and waterways. There are five fishing villages identified including Meridian, Valona/Cedar Point, Belleville, Pine Harbor and Shellman Bluff, each with their own character and unique personality.

### Community Vision

The vision for the various Fishing Villages are to maintain characteristics unique to each village and continue development that promotes traditional fishing, recreational fishing, populated by services including locally owned restaurants, bed and breakfasts, small hotels, rental cottages, golf course and personal services.

### Future Zoning Considerations

- MT** Maritime District
- R-1** Single Family Residential
- R-2** One and Two Family Residential District
- R-3** Multi-family Residential District
- RVP** Recreational Vehicle Park District
- CN** Commercial Neighborhood
- CG** General Commercial



### Implementation Strategies

- Adopt site planning principles that protect and enhance stream corridors and wetlands and water quality to maintain a healthy eco-system for the fishing industry.
- Develop a theme and install way-finding signage to promote amenities of each Fishing Village .
- Work with regional tourism to promote the Fishing Villages as a historic and recreational destination.
- Include recreational activities of the Fishing Villages on the County website.
- Adopt design guidelines that enhance and maintain the characteristics and integrity of each Fishing Village.
- Create and market destinations that draw residents, visitors, and new business.
- Provide strong pedestrian and bicycle connections to encourage residents to walk/ bike to work, shopping, or other destinations in the area.

## SCENIC HIGHWAY

### Character Area Description

McIntosh County's designated scenic highway travels follows State Route 99 and US 17. The Altamaha Historic Scenic Byway in McIntosh County travels from the Sapelo Island Visitors Center past historic sites such as the Ridge and Ashantilly Plantation, and an alternate loop passes Fort King George. This Byway lets visitors explore both the rich cultural heritage and the diverse marsh ecosystems found along McIntosh County.

### Community Vision

Scenic byway designations offer opportunities to highlight outstanding assets and attract visitors to increase economic activity and benefits from tourism and recreation. The vistas from Highway 17 boast sweeping marsh views, and majestic live oaks draped with Spanish moss.

### Future Zoning Considerations

- CP Conservation Preservation District
- R-1 Single Family Residential
- CN Commercial Neighborhood

### Implementation Strategies

- Promote the scenic highway with tourism material geared towards bicyclists, tourists, and visitors.
- Develop educational kiosks to provide information to visitors.
- Create an interpretive map outlining areas of interest and the intrinsic qualities along the scenic route.
- Update and implement the Altamaha Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan.
- Semi-trucks should be banned from HWY 99 for scenic route reasons and because trucks using the route could potentially be avoiding the weigh station on I-95.



## RURAL VILLAGE

### Character Area Description

McIntosh County has several communities where forestry and agriculture contribute to the rural character. These rural villages are located throughout the County and include Cox Community, Eulonia and Townsend Community. The villages are distinguished by agricultural which is a traditional industry that contributes to the County's culture. These communities also offer affordable housing options.

### Community Vision

The existence of rural lands, open spaces, scenery and natural areas adds an important dimension to the County's quality of life. The desire to "maintain their rural town character" was a common theme. Traditional rural recreational opportunities exist including equestrian, hunting, and fishing that contribute to rural experiences.

### Future Zoning Considerations

- AF** General Agriculture Forestry District
- AR** Residential Agriculture District
- R-1** Single Family Residential District
- MHP** Manufactured Housing Park District
- RVP** Recreational Vehicle Park District
- CN** Commercial Neighborhood

### Implementation Strategies

- Preserve large contiguous blocks of open space and natural resource areas such as recharge areas, wetlands and wildlife habitat.
- Identify preferred growth areas, as well as sensitive natural areas lands where development should be avoided.
- Identify preferred areas for neighborhood commercial opportunities, farmers market and services to meet every day needs of rural residents.



## LIVABLE COMMUNITY

### Character Area Description

The demographics in McIntosh County has shifted to a larger percentage of retiree-age adults (62 years and over.) Livable Community principles facilitate personal health, independence and engagement in community life. Lifelong Communities include the fundamental principles of good urban design including connectivity, diversity of housing stock, range of transportation options, walkable environments and access to retail, social and health services that are essential for quality of life.

### Community Vision

Livable communities include characteristics that meet the needs of the population, and also provides for a greater civic good by including elements that are beneficial to the environment, sensitive to a broad population and embrace economic\ financially feasible management.

### Future Zoning Considerations

- R-1** Single-Family Residential District
- R-2** One and Two Family Residential District
- RVP** Recreational Vehicle Park District
- CN** Neighborhood Commercial District



### Implementation Strategies

- Inventory existing assets and elements that would support and/or impede the implementation of a Livable Community.
- Develop an action plan specific to each identified Livable Community that addresses and include appropriate measures related to the seven tenets of Lifelong Communities:
  - Connectivity – the physical connection of streets, pedestrian networks and public spaces that promote ease of access
  - Pedestrian access and transit –public or private methods of mass transit-oriented forms of mobility and pedestrian forms of mobility as a primary or equal method of transportation when compared to vehicular modes.
  - Neighborhood retail and services- proximity to relevant supporting uses and services including mix of services oriented to population needs.
  - Social interaction – social interaction is a proven requirement of lifelong communities which includes a full stratum of dwelling types, community programming elements and careful placement of improvements for a socially vibrant community.
  - Dwelling types – a range of dwelling types is crucial to meet the social, economic and physical goals of a lifelong community. Creative architectural, a strong but flexible regulatory framework, and policies that promote efficient and sustainable methods of construction.
  - Healthy living – accessibility to fitness, education, cultural and health programming elements.
  - Environmental and Sustainable Solutions - appropriate preservation of natural and cultural resources, promotion of sustainable construction techniques, innovative methods of power generation and integrated food production.
- Ensure the zoning ordinance allows a range of dwelling types including accessory dwellings units.
- Adopt Universal Design/Accessible Building Standards.
- Plan for a floating zone specific to future housing needs.

## RIDGEVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT

### Character Area Description

The era of lumbering created the Ridgeville historic district located along Georgia SR 99. The Ridge is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. It overlooks salt marshes, and boasts:

- Italianate style of architecture, a distinct 19th-century phase in the history of Classical architecture that achieved popularity in the United States from the late 1840's to 1890.
- Greek Revival, an architectural style lasting until the Civil War in the United States. It may be looked upon as the last phase in the development of Neoclassical architecture. The style is looked on as the expression of civic virtue.
- Eastlake is an American 19th-century architectural design reform movement and is considered part of the Queen Anne style of Victorian architecture. The geometric ornaments, spindles, low relief carvings, and incised lines were designed to be affordable and easy to clean, however the designs are artistically complex.



### Community Vision

The Ridge Historic District has local significance in the area of architecture. The buildings embody the period when McIntosh County functioned as the center of transportation, and commerce. The vision is to maintain the historic integrity of the district, including the architectural exterior features and materials when considering a certificate of appropriateness.



### Future Zoning Considerations

R-1 Single Family Residential District

### Implementation Strategies

- Create design guidelines to maintain the integrity of the historic district.

## HOG HAMMOCK HISTORIC AREA

### Character Area Description

Hog Hammock Historic District is a 47-acre community on Sapelo Island unique in its historic culture and traditional patterns of development. The community includes homes, churches, a general store, and other small businesses. Hog Hammock is one of the last Gullah-Geechee communities of slave descendants remaining on the Southeast coast.

### Community Vision

The vision of Hog Hammock is to promote low intensity residential and cottage industry uses which are environmentally sound, and promote the economic viability of its full-time inhabitants, Gullah-Geechee residents.

### Future Zoning Considerations

**R-1** Single Family Residential District  
**CN** Commercial Neighborhood

### Implementation Strategies

- The County shall ensure that ordinances do not impede the implementation of cottage industries.
- The County shall work with residents to create guidelines that maintain the historic integrity of Hog Hammock.



## Coastal Waterfront Residential

### Character Area Description

The County's waterfront communities have distinctive sense of place created by their history, as well as by their characteristics sights, sounds, and smells, the activity on the docks; and the opportunity to boat and fish nearby. Living near the water has historically been, and is expected to remain desirable.

### Community Vision

McIntosh County's coastal waterfront community's vision is to carefully integrate a mix of land uses that can deliver many benefits including generating vibrancy from active streets and public spaces. The vision incorporates the area's distinctive visual, historical and natural features into the daily life of residents and visitors, giving people a strong connection to the coastal waterfront.

### Future Zoning Considerations

- R-1** Single Family Residential District
- CN** Commercial Neighborhood

### Implementation Strategies

- The County shall ensure that water-based activities and compatible non-water-dependent uses are close together, where appropriate and protect and ensure access to the water-dependent uses.
- The County shall continue planning for the needs of water-dependent recreational, commercial users.
- The County shall create maps for pedestrians, bikers, and "blue trail" users with tours and points of interest, information signage and guides to boating facilities.





## Major Highway Corridor

### Character Area Description

This character serves as the entrance or access point to McIntosh County and has areas that consist of primarily undeveloped land on both sides of the roadway. The major highway corridor of highway 17 at the northern end of the county enhances economic development opportunities. The corridor connects the northern part of county and provides access to the County's communities. This corridor is part of the U.S. Bike Route 1, a cross-country bicycle route that will run the length of the eastern seaboard from Florida to Maine. U.S. Bike Route 1 is one of the two original U.S. Bicycle routes.

### Community Vision

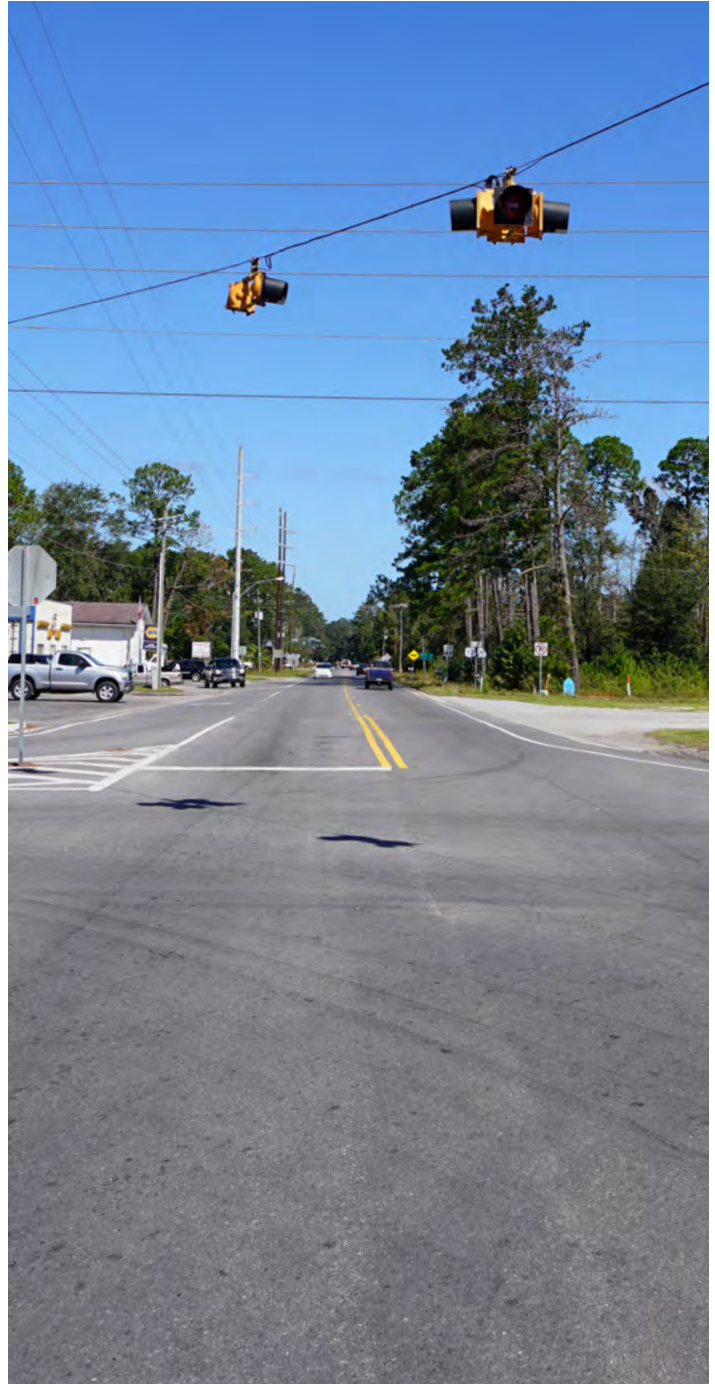
The physical and visual relationship of the roadway to its surroundings is a key factor in the aesthetics of the roadway. Without compromising safety, the vision is to maintain the visual rural character in a way that blends and complements since the view to and from this highway contributes to the perception of McIntosh County. This corridor also connects destinations in McIntosh County with high tourism potential.

### Future Zoning Considerations

- A-F** General Agriculture-Forestry District
- CP** Conservation Preservation District
- CN** Commercial Neighborhood

### Implementation Strategies

- Work closely with GDOT to ensure that the designated state route will include bike lanes, bike-able shoulders and wayfinding signage whenever possible.
- Encourage a variety of businesses which benefit from close proximity and serve the surrounding area.



## Agriculture / Forestry

### Character Area Description

Agriculture and forestry are part of the County's natural area and contribute to the County's rural character and rich culture. These lands also provide secondary benefits such as open spaces, land and cover for wildlife, maintaining air quality and providing for groundwater recharge.

### Community Vision

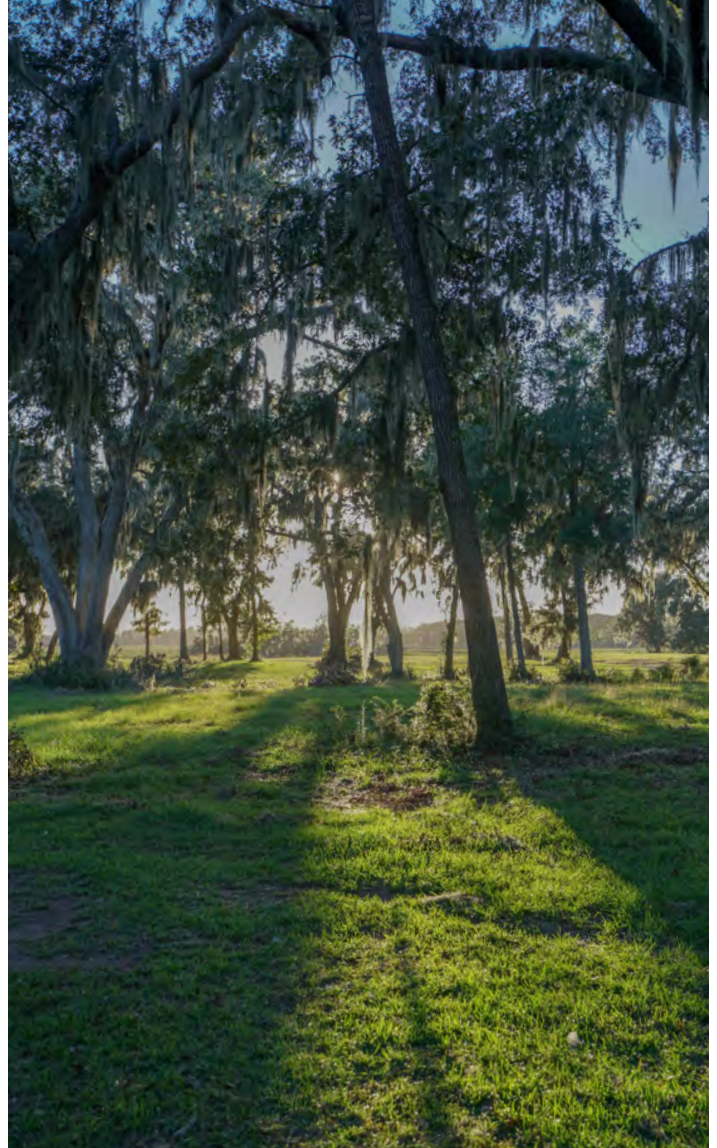
The rural character and scenery found in agriculture and forestry lands represents an intrinsic quality of McIntosh County. It is the vision of the community to maintain viable agriculture as the backbone of a functioning network of working lands, open spaces and natural areas.

### Future Zoning Considerations

- A-F** General Agriculture-Forestry District
- A-R** Residential Agriculture District
- R-1** Single-Family Residential District
- MHP** Manufactured Housing Park District

### Implementation Strategies

- Preserve areas for agricultural production by designating areas for rural residential development.
- Limit potential conflicts between farms and residential subdivisions.
- Preserve large contiguous blocks of open space and natural resource areas such as recharge areas and wildlife habitat.



## Parks / Recreation / Conservation

### Character Area Description

The designated recreation and parks in McIntosh County enhance the quality of life for residents through the provision of open space, parks and recreation facilities, special events, and cultural and entertainment opportunities. The conservation area primarily describes undeveloped natural lands and environmentally sensitive areas not suitable for development.

### Community Vision

The vision for the parks/recreation area is to represent the recreational preferences of diverse residents by prioritizing community needs with recreational opportunities.

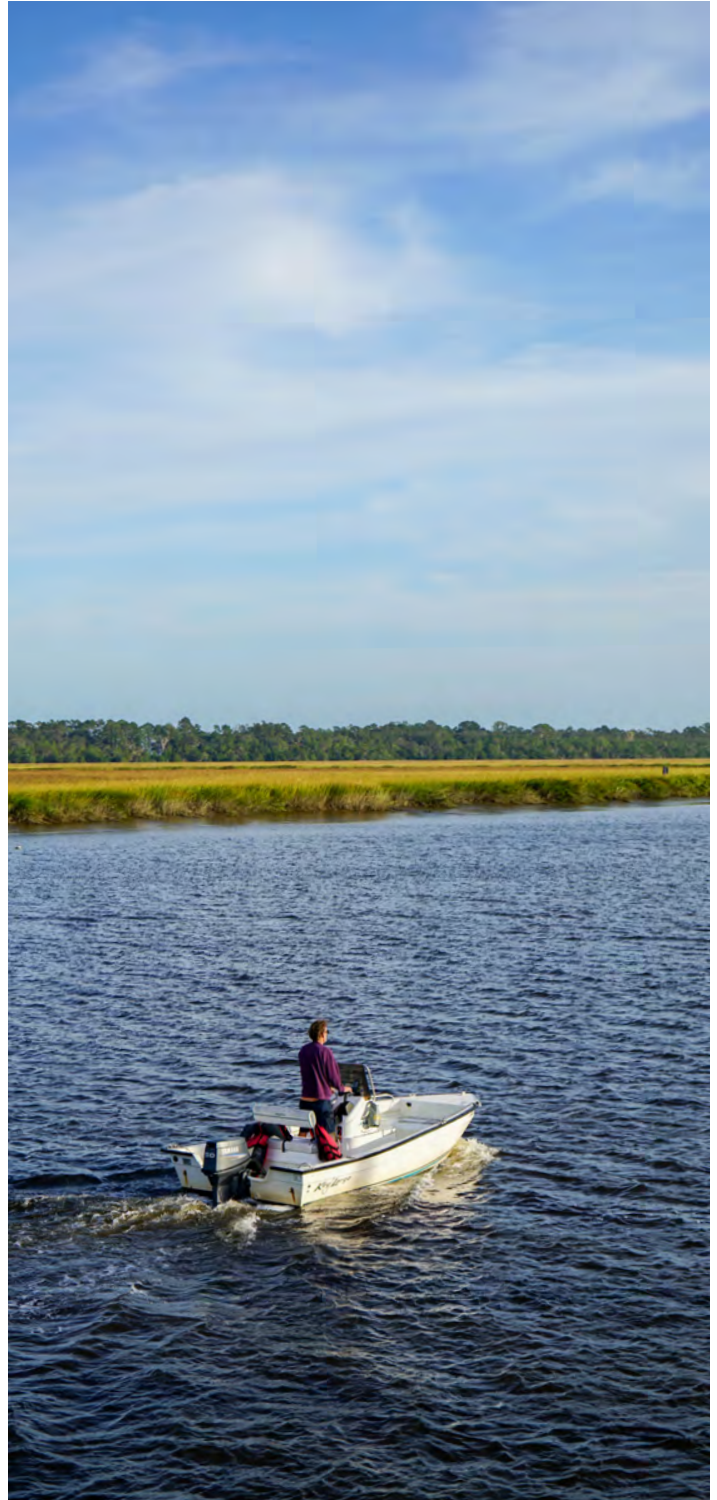
The vision for the natural lands is to control development within certain land, marsh, and water areas. The conservation areas serve as wildlife refuges, possess great natural beauty, and are of historical or ecological significance. The natural lands also provide outdoor recreation that serves the interest of residents, visitors and tourists.

### Future Zoning Considerations

CP Conservation Preservation District

### Implementation Strategies

- Prepare a parks and recreation master plan to address service delivery, deficiencies, recommended improvements and potential funding sources.
- Promote the areas suitable for passive-use tourism and recreational destinations.
- Incorporate natural areas and unique ecological features into the park system.



## Industrial

### Character Area Description

This character area encompasses the present and future Industrial area of the county. This district is created to provide land for industrial, manufacturing, and warehousing operations.

### Community Vision

The vision for the industrial park is to attract compatible and strategic opportunities, high wage jobs that provide private investment in McIntosh County.

### Future Zoning Considerations

I-R Restricted Industrial District

### Implementation Strategies

- Enhance workforce development by collaborating with business, industry, and planning of educational entities that provide necessary workforce skills.
- Participate in the entrepreneur friendly community initiatives such as small business incubators.
- Implement the Unified Economic Development Strategy for McIntosh County.
- The Target Industry Analysis determined emerging industries including light manufacturing and drone manufacturing have moderate to high growth potential and a good fit for the Industrial Park.
- Partner with Coastal Pines Technical College to develop training programs based on employer input and needs.



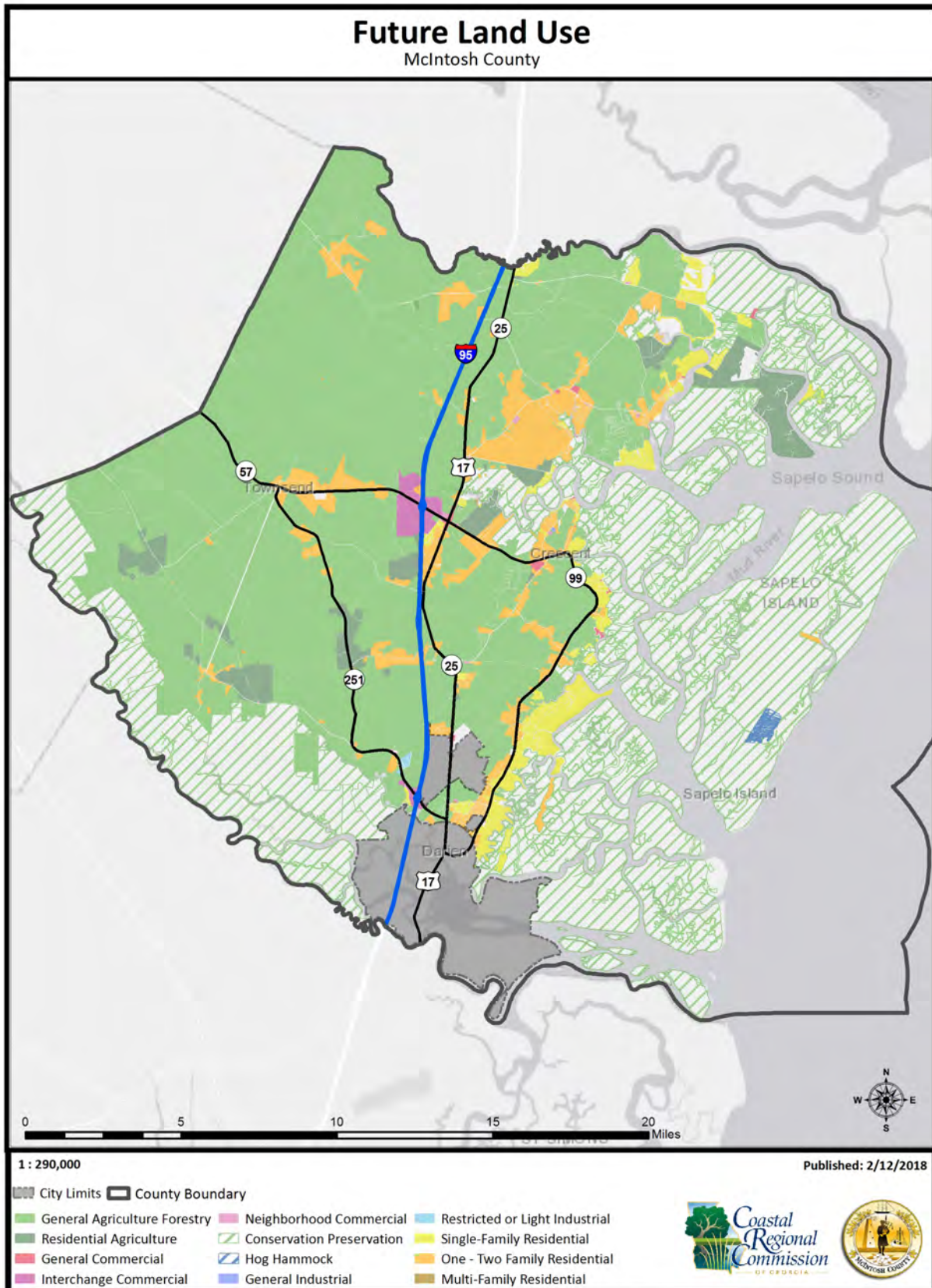
## FUTURE LAND USE 4.2

### Future Land Use Map

The Future Land Use Map is a visual representation of the County's future land use.

Interpretation of the Future Land Use Map is provided in the supporting Future Land Use table.





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DESCRIPTION	LAND USE
<b>Agriculture</b>	
<p>This category is for land dedicated to farming (fields, lots, pastures, farm-steads, specialty farms, livestock production, etc.), agriculture, or commercial timber or pulpwood harvesting. This category is also for land dedicated to active or passive recreational uses. These areas may be either publicly or privately owned and may include playgrounds, public parks, nature preserves, wildlife management areas, national forests, golf courses, recreation centers or similar uses.</p>	General Agriculture
	Residential Agriculture
<b>Industrial</b>	
<p>This category is for land dedicated to manufacturing facilities, processing plants, factories, warehousing and wholesale trade facilities, mining or mineral extraction activities, or other similar uses.</p>	Industrial-Heavy
	Industrial-Light
<b>Residential</b>	
<p>The predominant use of land within the residential category is for single-family and multi-family dwelling units organized into general categories of net densities. This land use is protected from encroachment of industrial or other uses capable of adversely affecting the residential character.</p>	Residential Single-Family
	Residential One-and-Two-Family
	Residential Multi-Family
<b>Commercial</b>	
<p>This category is for land dedicated to non-industrial business uses, including retail sales, office, service and entertainment facilities, organized into general categories of intensities. Commercial uses may be located as a single use in one building or grouped together in a shopping center or office building. Communities may elect to separate office uses from other commercial uses, such as retail, service or entertainment facilities.</p>	General Commercial
	Interchange Commercial
	Neighborhood Commercial

DESCRIPTION	LAND USE
<b>Conservation Preservation</b>	
<p>This category is for nature preserves, wildlife management areas, forests, marshland, and water areas, which possesses great natural beauty, of historical or ecological significance, and can be utilized for outdoor recreational purposes.</p>	<p>Conservation / Recreation</p>
<b>Hog Hammock</b>	
<p>This category is intended to preserve the community of Hog Hammock on Sapelo Island. The land use allows for low intensity residential and cottage industries which are environmentally sound and protect the long-term sustainability of the indigenous population of the Gullah-Geechee.</p>	<p>Historic District</p>



# 5

# HOUSING

- 5.1 Housing Types
- 5.2 Occupancy
- 5.3 Housing Costs
- 5.4 Cost Burdened Housing
- 5.5 Condition of Housing
- 5.6 Job Housing Balance



The Housing section provides a framework for promoting a diverse housing supply, protecting and improving the health and livability of the County's communities, and making adequate provisions for the housing needs of all economic segments of the community. The County must foster housing that is affordable to those at all income levels - from those low-income and workforce families, to those earning higher wages.

Housing demand is largely driven by economic conditions and demographics. Demographic characteristics influence market demand with regard to the number of households; household size, make-up and tenure (owner v. renter); and preference for styles and amenities.

Perhaps the most pressing and complex challenge facing the County is housing affordability for all economic segments of the community. The quality of any community is defined, in large part, by whether families and individuals are able to find the type and size of housing that fits their household needs at a price they can afford.

The County's distinct communities include residential districts that are differentiated by housing density, age, size, architectural style, condition and other features, and neighborhood commercial districts with mixed housing types. These communities, each with their own unique character, offer a variety of housing and lifestyle opportunities.

Some of the factors that local governments can influence are the supply of available residential land; the availability of public services; development regulations (density and design), and support for low and moderate income housing through funding or incentives.



Total occupied units decreased from 5,687 to 5,296 between 2010 and 2015

Detached single units steadily increased from 57.1 percent to 63.4 percent



## HOUSING TYPES 5.1

The majority of the occupied housing types in McIntosh are detached single units. From 2000 to 2010, there was an increase in total occupied units. The percentage of detached single units increased 3.8 percent, 2 apartments increased 0.8 percent, 3 or 4 apartments increased by 0.5 percent, and 5 to 9 apartments increased 0.9 percent.

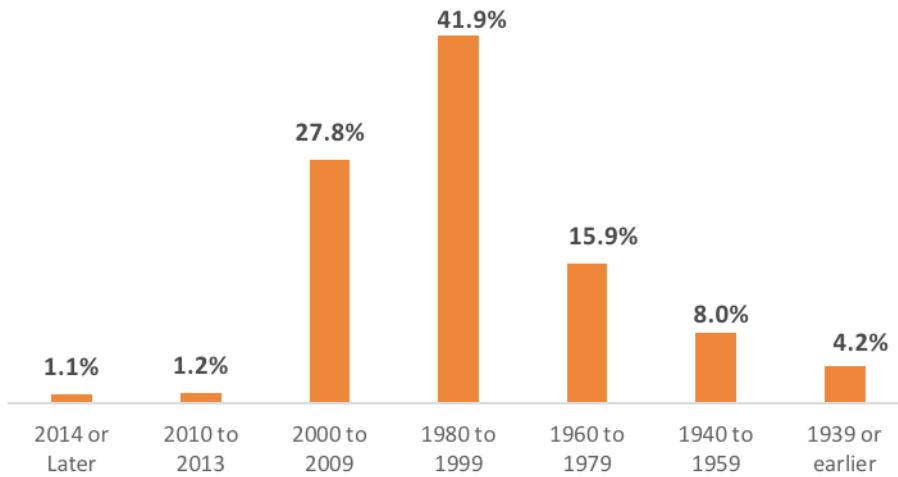
Attached single units decreased from 0.5 to 0.1 percent and 10 or more apartments decreased from 1.5 to 1.0 respectively. Mobile home or other type of housing experienced the largest decrease from 42.6 to 37.5 percent.

From 2010 to 2015, the total occupied housing units in McIntosh decreased from 5,687 to 5,296 units. Detached single units steadily increased from 57.1 percent to 63.4 percent. From 2010 to 2015, mobile home or other type of housing decreased from 37.5 to 28.5 percent.

## Age of Occupied Housing

The largest percentages (~42 percent) of structures built in McIntosh County were built between 1980 and 1999. The second largest percentages (27.8 percent) of occupied housing units for McIntosh County were built in 2000-2009. In McIntosh County, approximately one-quarter of the housing units were built from 1960 to 1979.

Between 1980 and 1999, 42 percent of structures were built in McIntosh



U.S. Census Bureau

McIntosh County

## OCCUPANCY 5.2

From 2000 to 2010, because of the increase in development, total housing units growth in McIntosh County was 49 percent. However, with the economic downturn in 2008, the percentage of vacant units rose. From 2010 to 2015, the total housing units increased in the county and vacant units increased by nine percent.

### Occupancy Characteristics

Category	McIntosh County		
	2000	2010	2015
Total Units	5,735	8,586	9,304
Owner-Occupied	61.2%	49.5%	44.2%
Renter-Occupied	12.1%	16.7%	12.7%
Vacant	26.7%	33.8%	43.1%

U.S. Census Bureau





## HOUSING COSTS 5.3

From 2000 to 2010, median home values increased at a larger rate than monthly gross rent and monthly homeowner costs. From 2010 to 2015, median home value held, but monthly gross rent and homeowner costs continued to increase.

From 2000 to 2010, median household income, and Per Capita Income was far behind the growth rate of median gross rent and homeowner costs in McIntosh County. This results in a larger fraction of income being required for housing costs.

From 2010 to 2015, median household income and per capita income either exceeded median gross rent or remained the same for homeowner costs.

**Median Rental and House Costs Comparison (Dollars)**

Category	McIntosh				
	2000	2010	2015	% Change 2000-2010	% Change 2000-2015
Median Monthly Gross Rent	369	592	600	60.4%	1.4%
Median Monthly Owner Costs (w/Mortgage)	843	1,062	1,208	26.0%	13.7%
Median home Value(Owner Occupied)	81,700	103,400	108,400	26.6%	4.8%

U.S. Census Bureau

## COST BURDENED HOUSING 5.4

Cost-burdened households are those households paying 30 percent or more of their net income on housing costs. Based on housing costs rising at a faster rate than household income it is expected that the percentage of cost burdened housing to increase for renters and those with a mortgage.

In 2010, percentage of renters in McIntosh County that were cost burdened was 49.1 percent. In 2015, the percentage of renters cost-burdened maintained almost the same percentage.

In 2010, those with a mortgage and cost-burdened were 39 percent. By 2015, those with a mortgage and cost-burdened increased grew to 41 percent. Compared to the state, cost-burdened households with a mortgage were much higher in McIntosh County.

In 2010, households without a mortgage and cost-burdened were 15.9 percent, which was 2 percent more than the state. In 2015, those without a mortgage and cost-burdened remained the same.

**From 2010-2015, approximately 49 percent of renters were cost burdened.**

**From 2010-2015, housing units with a mortgage that were cost burdened increased from 39 percent to 41 percent.**

**Summary of Cost Burdened Housing Units**

Category	2010			2015		
	Darien	McIntosh County	Georgia	Darien	McIntosh County	Georgia
<b>Occupied Units Paying Rent</b>	380	1,080	1,036,967	346	948	1,190,334
Gross Rent Exceeds 30% of Household Income	47.3%	49.1%	51.4%	44.5%	49.3%	52.4%
<b>Housing Units with a Mortgage</b>	416	2,201	1,668,262	249	2,229	1,526,935
Selected Monthly Owner Costs Exceed 30% of Household In-come	38.0%	39.0%	35.6%	72.7%	41.0%	31.7%
<b>Housing Units without a Mortgage</b>	300	2,025	644,878	406	1,883	711,202
Selected Monthly Owner Costs Exceed 30% of Household In-come	4.7%	15.9%	13.9%	24.1%	15.1%	13.10%

U.S. Census Bureau



## CONDITION OF HOUSING 5.5

Good housing conditions are essential for people's health and affects childhood development. Condition of housing includes those units with insufficient plumbing and kitchen facilities. In 2010, units without complete plumbing facilities were 2.1 percent and units without complete kitchen facilities were 1.7 percent. In 2015, both units with incomplete plumbing and kitchen facilities decreased by 1.2 percent.

A category in the County Health Ranking labeled "Severe Housing Problems," includes at least one or more of the following housing problems:

1. Housing unit lacks complete kitchen facilities
2. Housing unit lacks complete plumbing facilities
3. Household is severely overcrowded, and
4. Household is severely cost burdened.

Severe overcrowding is defined as more than 1.5 per person per room, and sever cost burdened is defined as monthly housing costs including utilities that exceed 50 percent of income. "Severe housing problems" is one of the factors included in "Physical Environment." According to the most recent data from 2009-2013, 15 percent of housing units in McIntosh County have severe housing problems.

## JOB HOUSING BALANCE 5.6

A job to housing ratio in the range of 0.75 to 1.5 is considered beneficial for reducing vehicle miles traveled. The job to housing ratio indicates whether an area has enough housing for employees to live near employment and sufficient jobs in residential areas. An imbalance in jobs and housing creates longer commute times, more single driver commutes, and loss of job opportunities for workers without vehicles.

A balanced community generally has a jobs-housing ratio of 1.25 to 1.75. From 2010 to 2015, as housing units increased and employment decreased, the jobs-housing ratio dropped from 0.73 to 0.59. McIntosh County is below the target range for a balanced community.



### **Purpose Built Communities**

Purpose Built Communities is a non-profit consulting firm that works side by side with local leaders to plan and implement a revitalization effort tailored specifically to McIntosh County. The goal is to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty by helping local leaders transform struggling neighborhoods, and bringing together the vital components necessary for holistic community revitalization: high quality mixed-income housing, an effective cradle-to-college education pipeline, and comprehensive community wellness resources.



### **Community Development Block Grant**

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program is a flexible program that provides communities with resources to address a wide range of unique community development needs. The CDBG program works to ensure decent affordable housing, to provide services to the most vulnerable in our communities, and to create jobs through the expansion and retention of businesses.

Over a 1, 2, or 3-year period, as selected by the grantee, not less than 70 percent of CDBG funds must be used for activities that benefit low- and moderate-income persons. In addition, each activity must meet one of the following objectives for the program: benefit low- and moderate-income persons, prevention or elimination of slums or blight, or address community development needs having a particular urgency because existing conditions pose a serious and immediate threat to the health or welfare of the community for which other funding is not available.



### **DCA Georgia initiative for Community Housing (GICH) Program**

GICH is a three-year program designed to help communities improve their quality of life and economic vitality through the development of locally-driven housing and revitalization strategies. This is accomplished through technical assistance, training, and ultimately producing a community housing plan with objectives and goals.





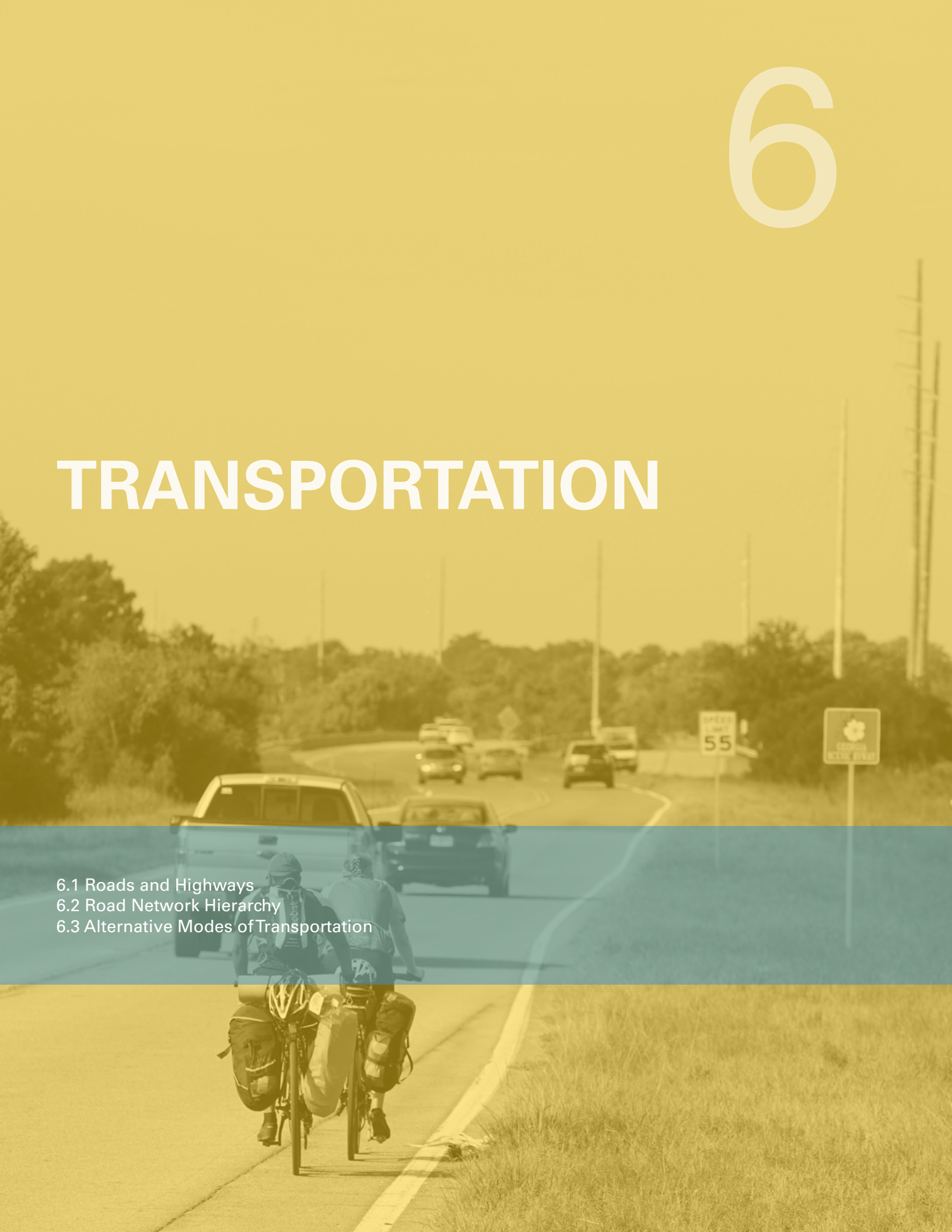
## **U.S Department of Agriculture Rural Development**

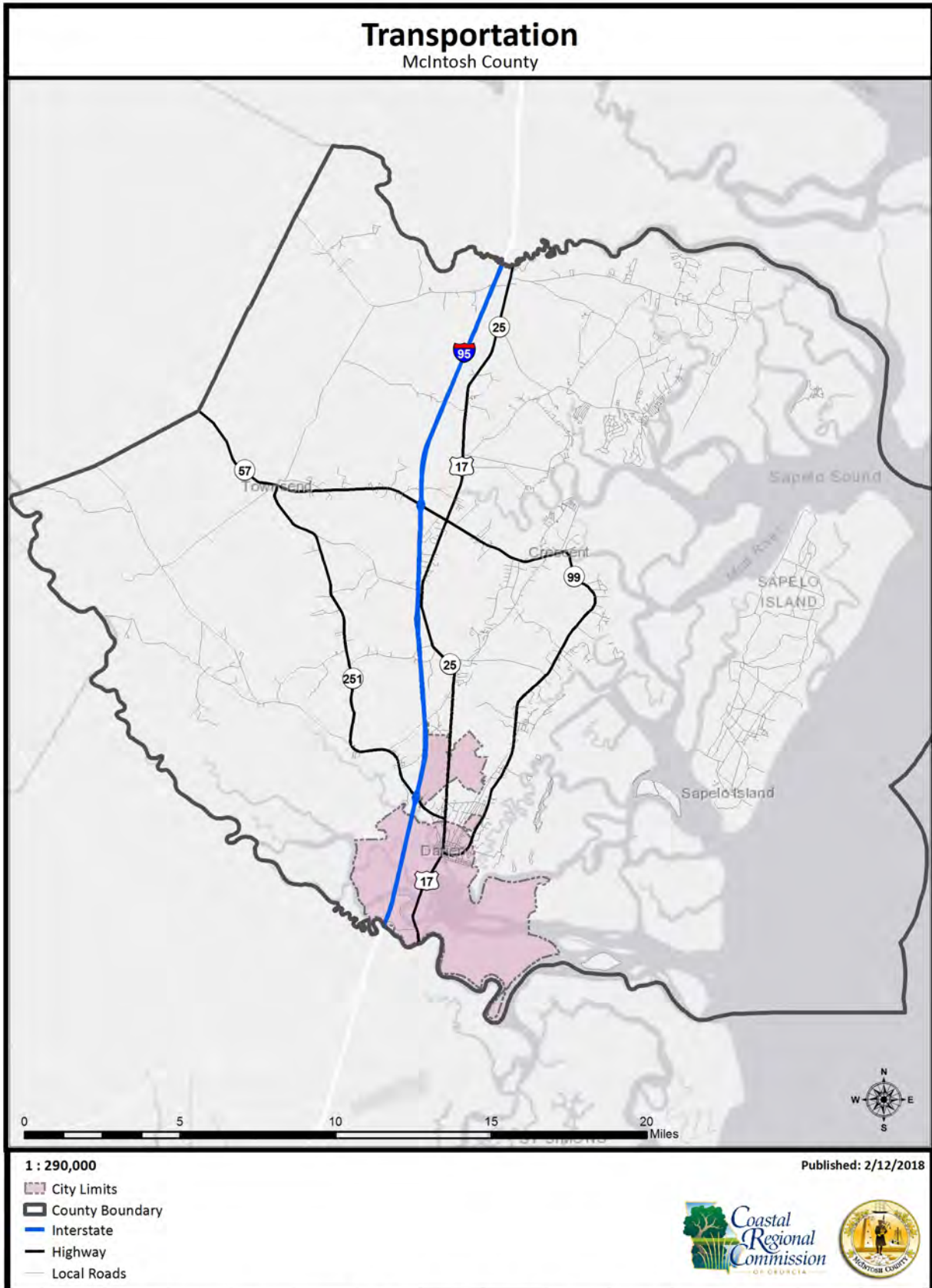
Low interest, fixed-rate Homeownership loans are provided to qualified persons directly by USDA Rural Development. Financing is also offered at fixed-rates and terms through a loan from a private financial institution and guaranteed by USDA Rural Development for qualified persons. Neither one of these home loan programs require a down payment.

# 6

# TRANSPORTATION

- 6.1 Roads and Highways
- 6.2 Road Network Hierarchy
- 6.3 Alternative Modes of Transportation



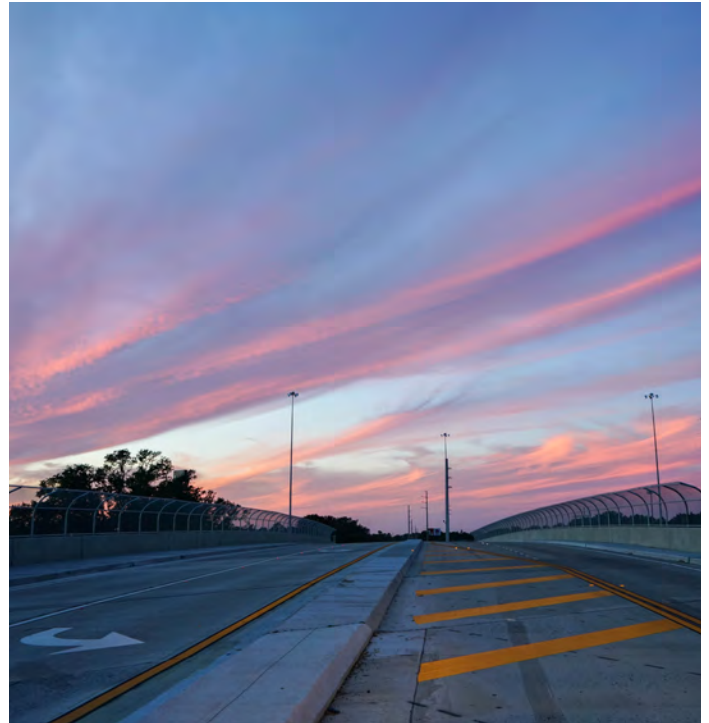


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Transportation is an important component of the economy as economic opportunities are linked to the mobility of people, goods, and information. The relationship between the quantity and quality of transport infrastructure and the level of economic development is apparent. Highly connected networks are efficient and provide economic and social opportunities that result in positive multiplier effects such as better accessibility to markets, employment, tourism activities, and additional investment.

In McIntosh County transportation contributes directly to economic activity through road and can potentially contribute through maritime local services.

Transportation facilities are the artery for economic growth and proper management and maintenance of these facilities is imperative.



## ROADS & HIGHWAYS 6.1

McIntosh County contains Interstate 95 (I-95), U.S. Route 17 (HWY 17), State Route 25 (SR 25), State Route 57 (SR 57), State Route 99 (SR 99), and State Route 251 (SR 251). The remainder of the County consists of primarily local roads with collectors providing access to the major transportation routes in the County.

### Inter-County Travel

Inter-county travel in McIntosh County is primarily north-south in nature and reliant upon Interstate 95 (I-95) as a primary travel corridor. As with many coastal counties, rivers form the southern and northern borders of the county. I-95 and U.S. Highway (HWY) 17 are the only routes for inter-county north-south travel. State Road (SR) 57 is utilized to travel to and from the west as well as to Interstate 16 (I-16).



## ROAD NETWORK HIERARCHY 6.2

### Freeways

Limited access roads, freeways or motorways, including most toll roads are at the top of the hierarchy. These roads provide largely uninterrupted travel, often using partial or full access control, and are designed for high speeds. Interstates 95 in McIntosh County is a limited access freeway.

### Arterials

Major through roads that are expected to carry large volumes of traffic are designated as arterials. These are often divided into major and minor arterials, and rural and urban arterials. Examples of rural minor arterials in McIntosh County include US 301/US 25/SR 57/SR 251. SR 57 has no passing lanes and is an important route that carries commuters traffic east-west.

### Collectors

Next in the hierarchy are collector roads, which collect traffic from local roads, and distribute it to arterials. Traffic using a collector is usually going to or coming from somewhere nearby. Examples of collectors in McIntosh County include Blount Crossing, Smith Road, Shellman Bluff Road, Churchill Road, Warsaw Road, and Harris Neck Road.

### Local Roads

These roads are at the bottom of the hierarchy, have the lowest speed limit, and carry low volumes of traffic. In some areas, these roads may be unpaved.

### Bridges

McIntosh County has identified 7 major bridges within the county. There are three bridges that span over the Altamaha River, (one on I-95 and two over HWY 17), a bridge over the Butler River, and a bridge over the Champney River, the Darien River, and the Cathead Creek.

### Signalized Intersections

McIntosh County has no signalized intersections. There is one flashing light in the County at a four-way stop intersection of US HWY 17 and GA HWY 99 in Eulonia.

### Signage

The County has identified a need to invest in signage at community access points including the US HWY 17 Scenic Route, US Bike Route 1, and the East Coast Greenway. Additionally, wayfinding signage to the area's natural assets including the historic areas and the fishing villages help to inform visitors and direct them to the unique resources within the County.



## ALTERNATIVE MODES OF TRANSPORTATION

## 6.3

### **Pedestrian & Bicycle Paths**

The Coastal Georgia Greenway is a 155-mile trail system which connects South Carolina to Florida through Georgia's six coastal counties. The centerpiece of the Coastal Georgia Greenway is a continuous trail along various north-south routes including the US HWY 17 corridor. The Highlander Trail runs from Sapelo Dock Road along State (SR) 99 and connects to the pedestrian/bike trail in Darien.

The US HWY 17 corridor is part of the U.S. Bike Route 1, a cross-country bicycle route that will run the length of the eastern seaboard from Florida to Maine. US Bike Route 1 is one of the two original US bicycle routes.

### **Public Transportation**

The Coach buses operated by the Coastal Regional Commission provide rural transit service to residents of McIntosh County.



## TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS 6.4

The County is interested in a feasibility study and in working with GDOT to create an interchange at Exit 52 and to upgrade the bridge on King Swamp Road. This infrastructure improvement will provide access to the Industrial Park. Additionally, this interchange furthers the County's efforts to connect economic development efforts with workforce development initiatives.

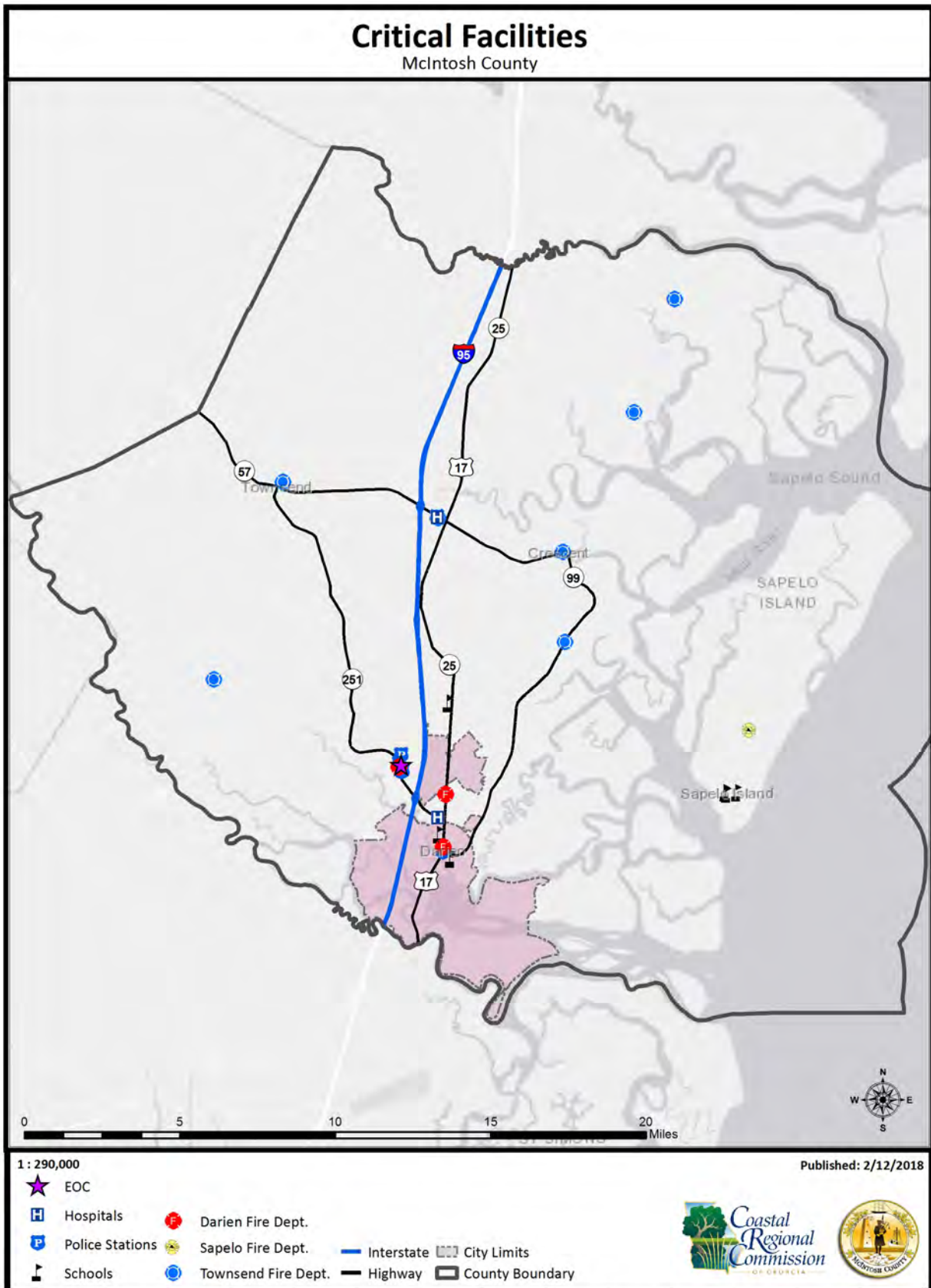
In 2016 the Georgia Legislature passed SR 730 to support implementation of the Coastal Georgia Greenway. McIntosh County desires to implement approximately 3 miles that provides connectivity from downtown to Ft. King George Drive to McIntosh Trail into Georgia Highway 99 terminating at Blue-N-Hall Road. The distance between Blue-N-Hall Road is 1.55 miles with a projected cost of approximately, \$650,000.

# 7

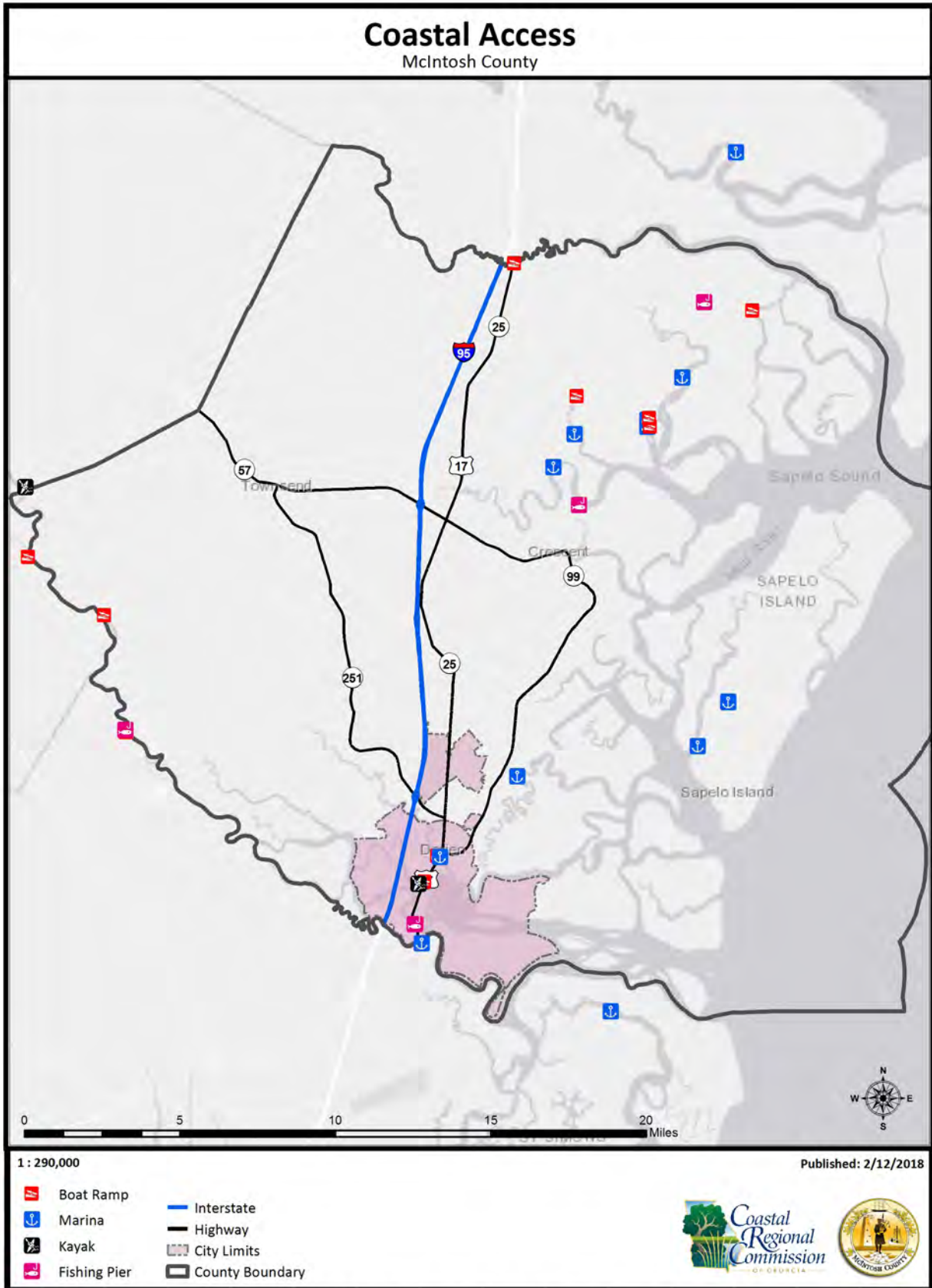
# COASTAL VULNERABILITY AND RESILIENCE

- 7.1 Natural Hazards
- 7.2 Storm Surge and Development
- 7.3 Vegetation / Open Water Buffers
- 7.4 Vulnerable Populations
- 7.5 Income and Poverty Level
- 7.6 Means of Transportation
- 7.7 Housing Type





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## Coastal Vulnerability and Resilience

Resilient communities minimize any disaster's disruption to everyday life and their local economies. Resilient communities are not only prepared to help prevent or minimize the loss or damage to life, property, and the environment, but they also have the ability to quickly return citizens to work, reopen businesses, and restore other essential services needed for a full and timely economic recovery.



## NATURAL HAZARDS 7.1

Locations of McIntosh County are located within low laying coastal plains. These areas are susceptible to flooding from rivers and canals. As a coastal community, the County is also subject to flooding from hurricanes. The St Catherine's Sound, Sapelo Sound, Doboy Sound, and Altamaha Sound all intersect the County and contribute to the threat of flooding.

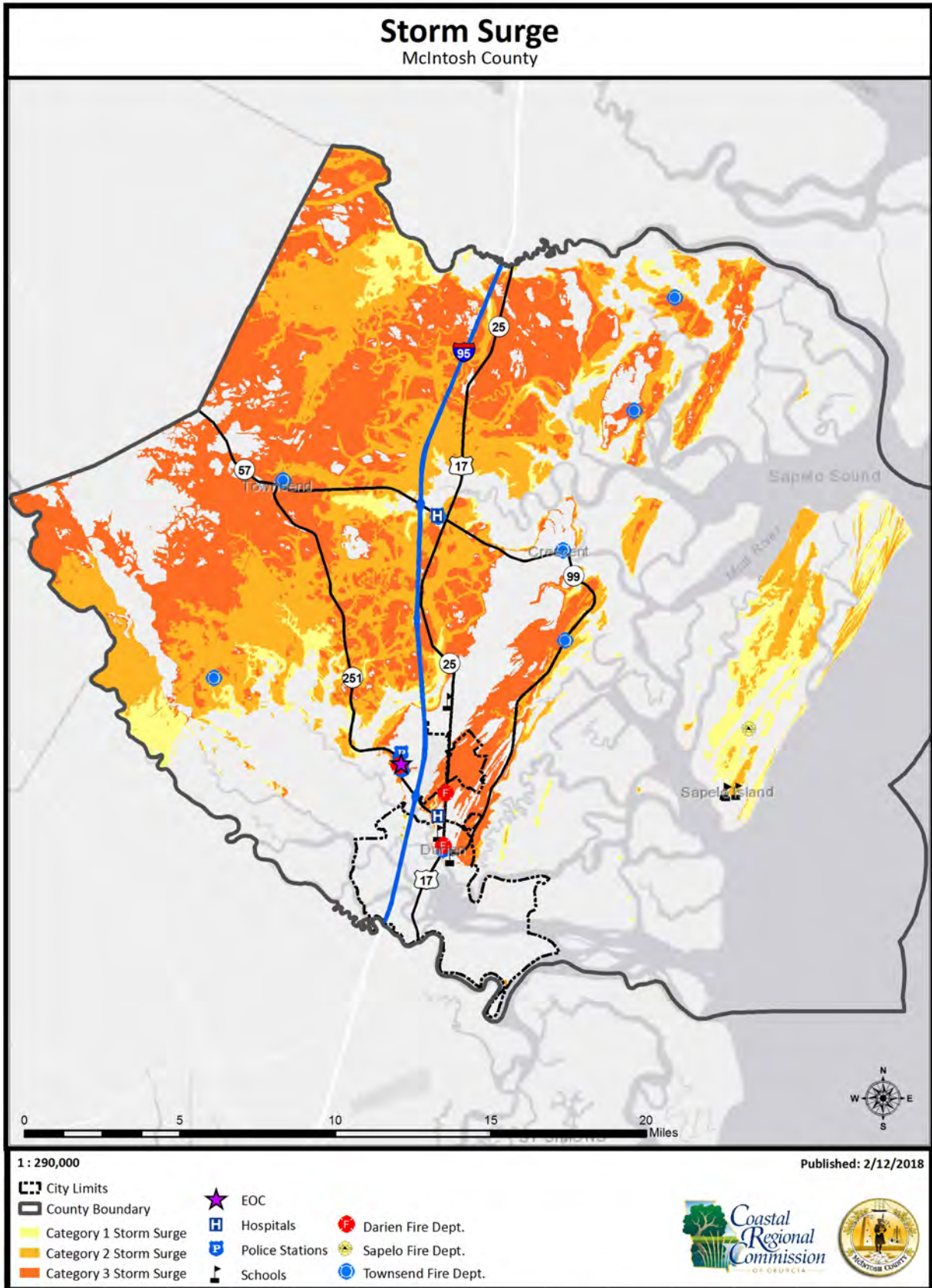
According to the research by the College of Environment + Design, McIntosh County can at times suffer from extreme drought due to low precipitation levels of the region.

## STORM SURGE AND DEVELOPMENT 7.2

Category 1 Storm Surge shows that McIntosh County's development is below 10 percent within storm surge 1.

Category 2 Storm Surge shows that McIntosh County contains 20 percent of development within storm surge 2.

Category 3 Storm Surge shows that McIntosh County has an increase of development to 30 percent within storm surge 3.



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## VEGETATION/OPEN WATER BUFFERS 7.3

Riparian buffers can be given a value based on their presence and allowance from open water and wetlands towards the built and developed environment. Three categories of consideration include: 100, 150, and 200-foot riparian buffers. A 100-foot riparian buffer is the recommended minimum based on literature reviews by the scientific community. As reported by the U.S. Agriculture and U.S. Environmental Protection agency in 1997, there are specific riparian widths that are associated with specific objectives. The recommended buffer width for flood control should be up 200 feet. This buffer width provides flood and sediment control as well as wildlife habitat.

Buffers narrower than 35 feet can provide some limited benefits but may require long-term maintenance since their ability to trap sediments is reduced.

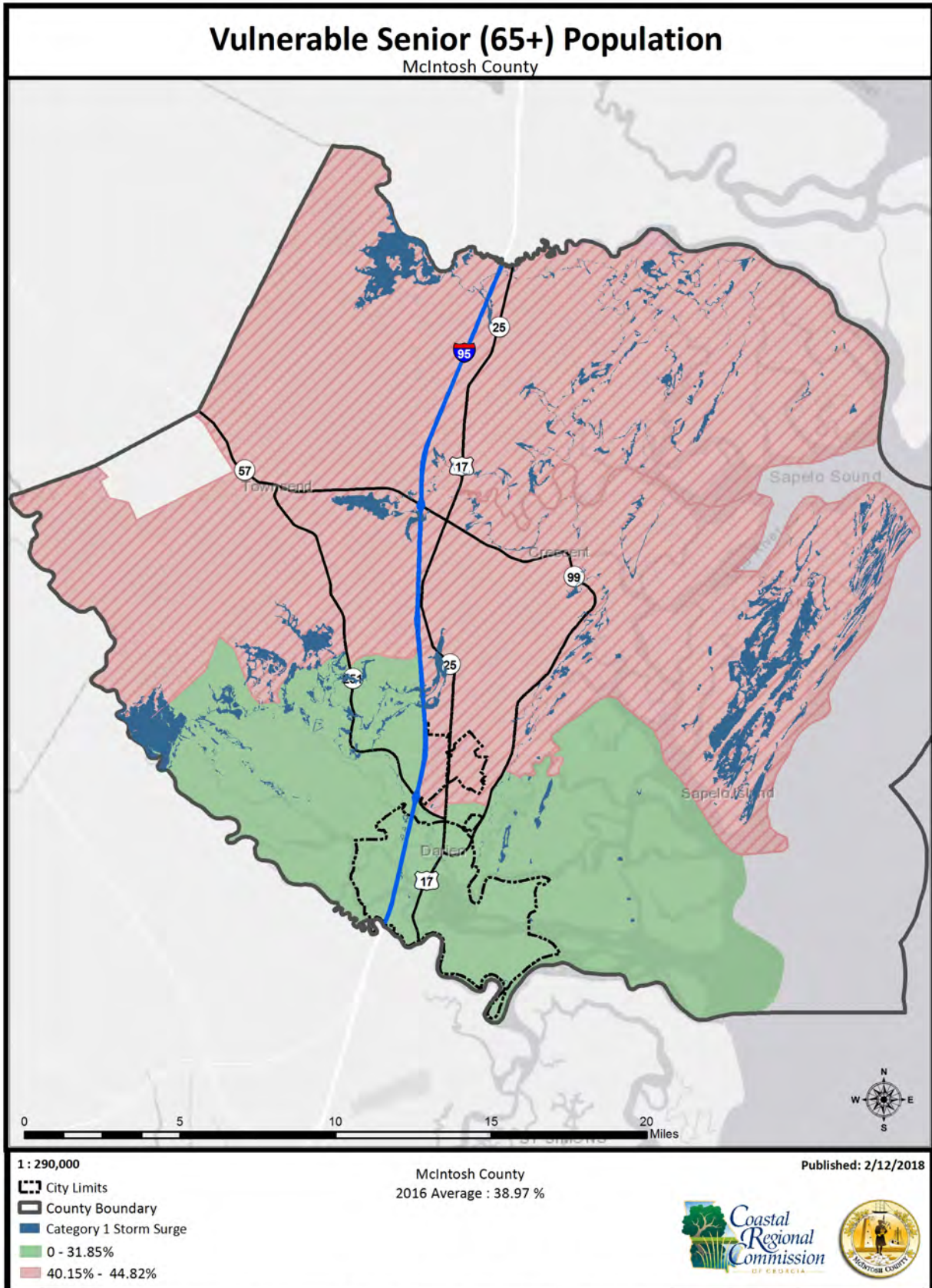
McIntosh County has ninety percent vegetation coverage within the 100-foot riparian buffer. The state currently mandates a 25-foot buffer from hydrology, which is inadequate for protecting the vital natural system.

## VULNERABLE POPULATIONS 7.4

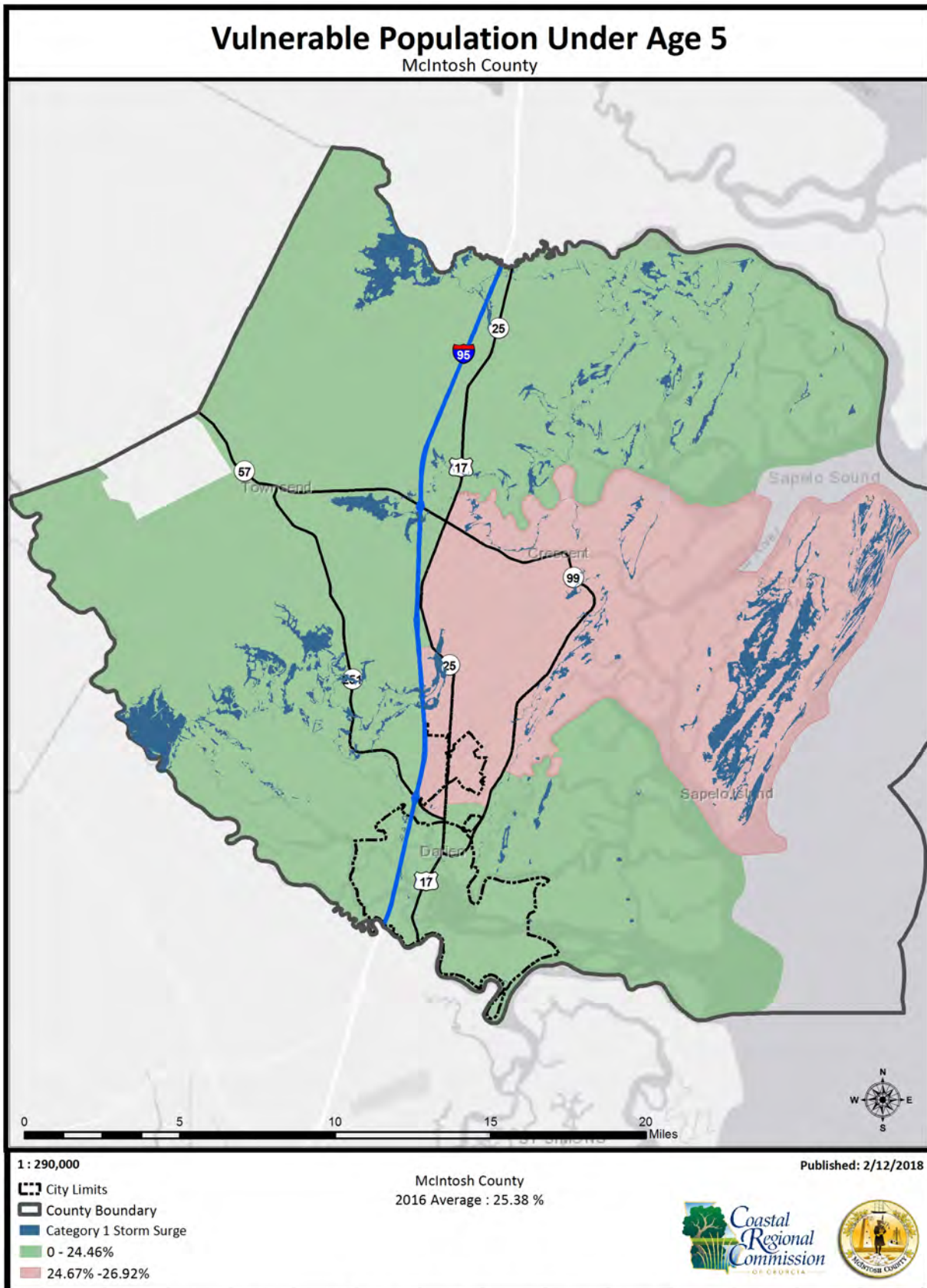
A key factor in examining resiliency is quantifying vulnerable populations. These populations include those residents who live in vulnerable areas, the 100-year and 500-year flood plains, but also those who may have difficulty in heeding evacuation orders due to age, income, and mobility.

The most vulnerable populations include children less than five years old, the elderly and frail elderly, persons living in poverty, and persons without reliable transportation that live in communities with limited public transportation. For elderly, we have identified the percentage of the population 65 and older. There is no specific age cohort for frail elderly, but the literature defines frailty in people 65 and older that called for the diagnosis when three or more of the following five criteria were present: unintentional weight loss of 10 pounds or more in the past year, self-reported exhaustion, weakness as measured by grip strength, slow walking speed and low physical activity. The frail elderly are individuals, over 65 years of age, dependent on others for activities of daily living.

In McIntosh County the percentage of children under age five grew by nine percent from 2000 to 2010, while the percentage of persons 65 and older grew by 48 percent during the same period.



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## INCOME AND POVERTY LEVEL 7.5

Income can directly relate to a family's ability to have reliable transportation, which then directly relates to a family's ability to evacuate their homes in the event of an evacuation order. Income also impinges upon a family's ability to secure temporary lodging (hotels or motels) beyond publicly provided shelter, or to obtain replacement housing should they lose their homes due to a storm event or natural disaster.

According to the U. S. Census Bureau, McIntosh County's median household income in 2015 was \$42,988. Low- and moderate-income is defined as up to 80 percent of median household income, which would be \$34,390 for McIntosh County. Poverty levels are established by the federal government and are based upon income and family size. For McIntosh County, 21.3 percent of families fall below the poverty level.

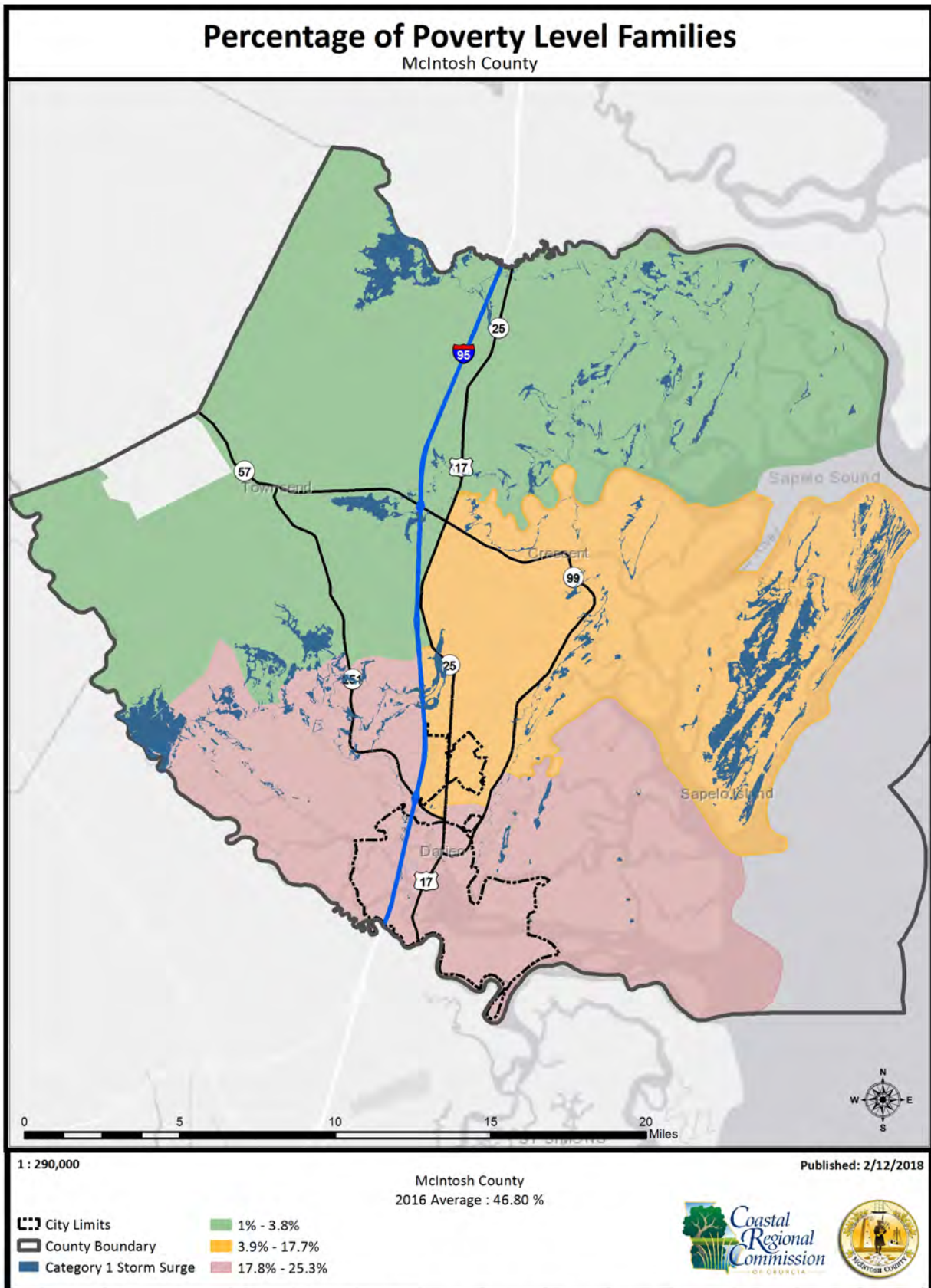
## MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION 7.6

The U. S. Census reports on the number of vehicles available to households. This is an important indicator of the percentage of the population that has reliable transportation should they need to evacuate their homes in the event of a storm or other natural disaster. In McIntosh County 5.2 percent of households do not have a vehicle.

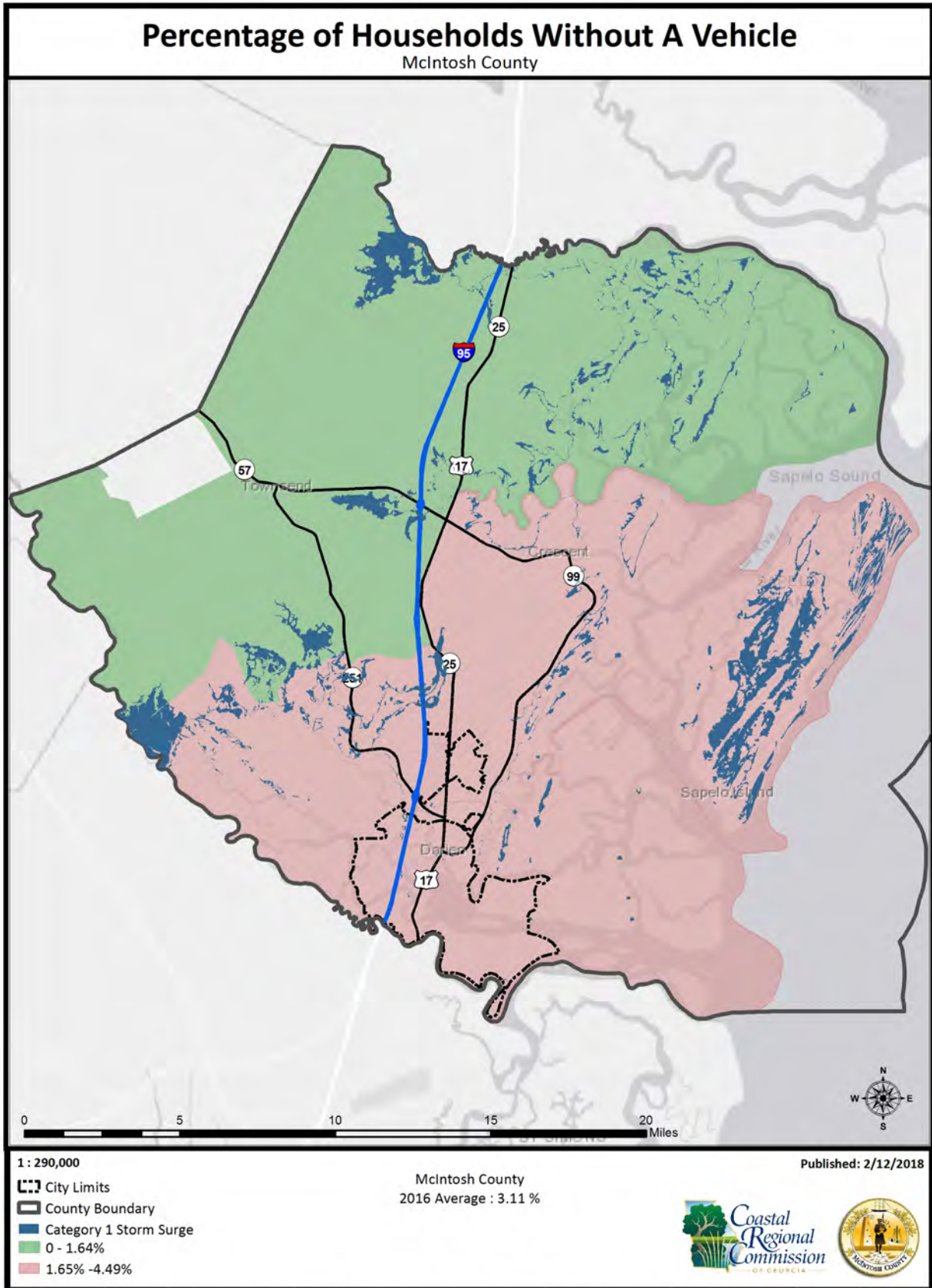
## HOUSING TYPE 7.7

Mobile homes have been identified as a particularly vulnerable type of housing during storm events due to their susceptibility to damage caused by high winds and flying debris. In McIntosh County 28.5 percent of families live in mobile homes.

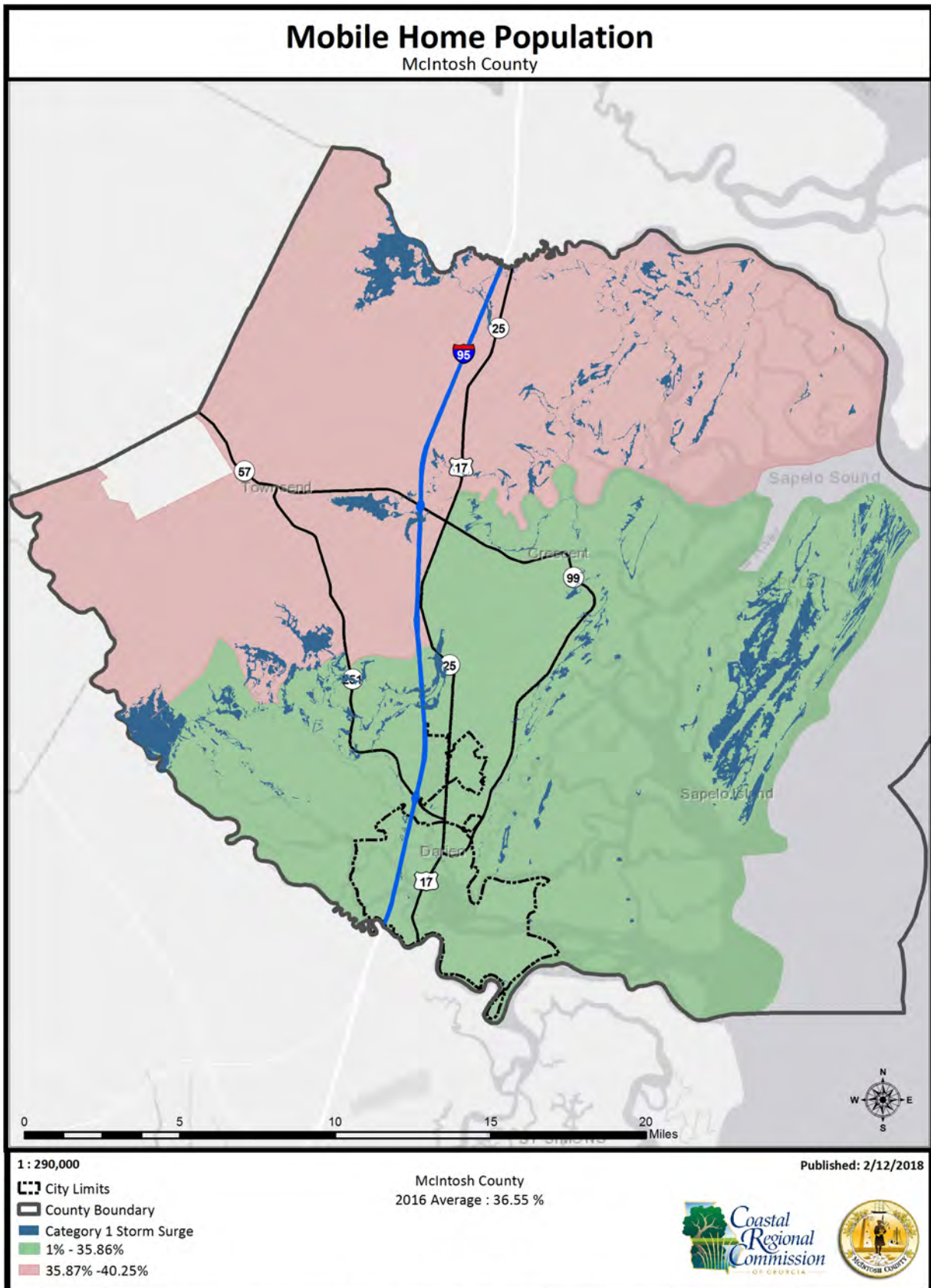




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# 8

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- 8.1 Economic Base
- 8.2 Unemployment Rate
- 8.3 Occupation
- 8.4 Class of Labor Force and Places of Employment
- 8.5 Workforce Development Issues

TWILIGHT

TWILIGHT



## Economic Development

Economic development creates the conditions for economic growth and improved quality of life by expanding the capacity of individuals, firms, and communities to maximize the use of their talents and skills to support innovation, and responsibly produce and trade valuable goods and services. Economic Development requires effective, collaborative institutions focused on advancing mutual gain for the public and the private sector.

Economic development is policy intervention with the goal of improving the economic and social well-being of its community. Economic growth is observable through productivity and the rise in the value of services produced. Increasing productivity can raise living standards because more income improves the ability to purchase goods and services, and improve housing and education.

Economic development opportunity via tourism for McIntosh County is tied to its coastal assets through waterways and the natural, historic, and cultural resources. McIntosh County's economic development and economic growth can also be leveraged through industrial development in the main industries identified including manufacturing; logistics & warehousing, and hospitality. The projections of modest growth in in-demand industry sectors are important to the future of McIntosh County's economy especially in manufacturing, and logistics & warehousing.





## ECONOMIC BASE 8.1

The table provides the percentages of McIntosh County workforce employed in each industry type from 2000 to 2015.

Industry Type	McIntosh		
	2000	2010	2015
Total Employed (16 years and over Civilian Labor Force)	4,689	6,230	5,410
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	4.6%	5.3%	1.8%
Construction	11.7%	13.1%	5.8%
Manufacturing	11.9%	8.6%	10.3%
Wholesale trade	5.0%	1.6%	1.1%
Retail trade	14.8%	10.8%	12.5%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	3.5%	4.7%	7.8%
Information	1.7%	1.2%	3.3%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	4.7%	3.6%	5.5%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	4.3%	6.5%	4.9%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	15.9%	18.2%	21.9%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	10.2%	11.0%	10.5%
Other services, except public administration	5.2%	5.6%	4.1%
Public administration	6.5%	9.8%	10.5%



## UNEMPLOYMENT RATE 8.2

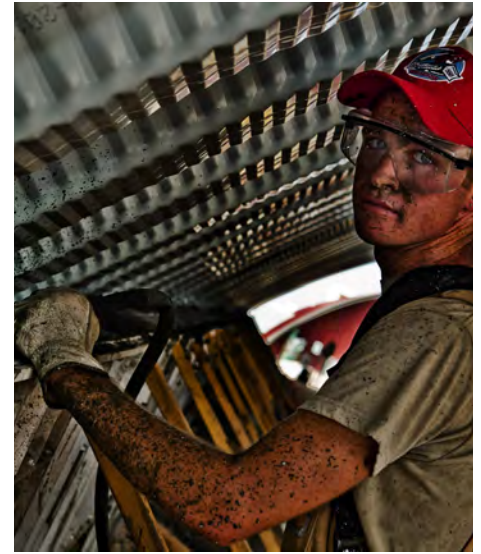
In 2000, McIntosh County’s unemployment rate of 4.3 percent was lower than the state and nation. In 2010, the economic recession of 2008 resulted in a high unemployment rate for the county at 10.6 percent. In 2015, McIntosh County lowered its unemployment rate to 6.5 percent.

## OCCUPATION 8.3

The U.S. Census reports five primary occupation types and the trends of total employed in each occupation for McIntosh County since 2000 are presented below.

**28.5 %**  
SALES AND OFFICE

Occupation Type	McIntosh
Total Employed	5,410
Management, Business, Science, and Arts	22.8%
Services	18.7%
Sales and Office	28.5%
Natural Resources, Construction, and Maintenance	9.5%
Production, Transportation, and Material Moving	20.5%



## CLASS OF LABOR FORCE AND PLACES OF EMPLOYMENT 8.4

The class of workers in the labor force includes 64.8 percent private and salary workers, 20.9 percent government workers, and 3.1 percent self-employed workers.

Class of Labor Force	McIntosh
Total Employed	5,410
Private Wage and Salary Workers	64.8%
Government Workers	20.9%
Self-Employed Workers	3.1%
Unpaid Family Workers	6.0%

**64.8 %**  
PRIVATE WAGE AND SALARY

In 2015, McIntosh County had 52.1 percent of its working class working outside of the county.

**52.1 %**  
WORK OUTSIDE  
COUNTY

Location of Workforce	Population	Percentage
Population of Workers 16 years and over in McIntosh	5,121	100%
Worked in state of residence	4,998	97.60%
Worked in County	2,330	45.5%
Worked outside county of residence	2,668	52.1%
Worked outside state of residence	123	2.4%





## WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT ISSUES 8.5

Workforce development issues, which threaten quality economic development in the region include:

- High poverty rate;
- Low rates of educational attainment;
- Inferior skill levels for high-wage; and
- A poor level of occupational “soft skills.”

These factors present the risk of disinvestment and also pose difficulty in recruiting new firms to the area.



### Coastal Workforce

One of the primary roles of the Coastal Workforce is to provide leadership and coordination of economic development and workforce programs.

Coastal Workforce coordinates and participates in partnerships that align with business, such as organized labor, community organizations, economic development practices, and education that enhances the economic viability. Coastal Workforce also coordinates with government agencies, such as human services, education systems (e.g., public school systems, community colleges, and universities), unions, and industry and trade associations.

Coastal Workforce is charged with ensuring that its job centers are business/customer-focused and outcome-based, with the placement of job seekers who meet businesses’ hiring needs being a high priority. Because Coastal Workforce maintains effective workforce development systems, it enables many quality connections, matching employers’ specific needs with those seeking gainful employment. All centers concentrate on the existing and emerging economic conditions and in-demand target industries.



**Department of Community Affairs Economic Development**

DCA offers a variety of economic development incentives and tools designed to help promote growth and job creation throughout the state.



**U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Development**

USDA provides economic opportunity through financial assistance programs for a variety of rural applications, including funding to develop essential community facilities, projects that will create and retain employment in rural areas, and other activities leading to the development or expansion of small and emerging private businesses in rural areas.

# 9

# COMMUNITY WORK PROGRAM

- 9.1 Implementation Program
- 9.2 Short Term Work Program
- 9.3 Report of Accomplishments

## IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM 9.1

The implementation program outlines a variety of action items that need to be undertaken to address the needs and opportunities. These action items include policies, ongoing efforts, short term efforts, and long term efforts. Short term efforts are those that can be accomplished in the next five years and are included in the Short Term Work Program. Long term item efforts are those that may be accomplished beyond the 5 year immediate time frame or an opportunity may arise.

## SHORT TERM WORK PROGRAM 9.2

The Short-Term Work Program (STWP) identifies specific implementation actions the County government or other entities intend to take during the first five-year time frame of the planning period. This includes ordinances, administrative systems, community improvements or investments, and financing arrangements or other programs/initiatives to be put in place to implement the Community Agenda. For each action the STWP outlines the following information:

- Brief description
- Time frame for undertaking the activity
- Responsible party for implementing the activity
- Estimated cost
- Funding source

POPULATION								
Action/Implementation Strategy	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Provide recommendations on HR 389 for consideration.	X					Staff	Staff Time	General Fund
Plan for a floating zone specific to Livable Communities.	X	X	X	X	X	Staff	Staff Time	General Fund
Update Ordinances to include principles of Livable Communities	X	X	X	X	X	Staff	Staff Time	General Fund
Work with Purpose Built Communities to eradicate poverty and improve educational attainment.	X	X	X	X	X	Staff	Staff Time	General Fund
DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS								
Action/Implementation Strategy	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Pursue completion of the Highlander Trail.	X					McIntosh County, DCA, CRC	\$500,000	DCA/CRC Greenway Funds
Continue to develop marketing program for environmentally sensitive economic development.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	\$5,000	General Fund, Private Organizations

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT								
Action/Implementation Strategy	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Create a communication task to promote an informed citizenry and promulgate County information.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, IDA, DDA, Chamber of Commerce, City of Darien, civic groups, NGO's, media	Staff Time	General Fund
Work with BOE to strengthen schools in workforce preparedness and competitiveness.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, BOE, Coastal Pines, Business, Coastal Workforce, IDA	Staff Time	General Fund
Work with Coastal Workforce on existing and emerging economic conditions and in-demand target industries.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, Coastal Workforce, IDA, Business Leaders, Technical Colleges	Staff Time	General Fund
Create a clear and consistent identity for the county based on qualities that are important to the County.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, IDA, DDA and Chamber of Commerce	Staff Time	General Fund
Seek to provide public dockage for day-visitors and work with the State of Georgia to make ferry schedules "visitor friendly."	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, DNR	TBD	CIG, SPLOST, General Fund
Work with private landowners and the State of Georgia to enhance the access, safety and educational facilities on Sapelo Island.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, DNR, Stakeholders	TBD	CIG, SPLOST, General Fund
Update County ordinances to provide residents of Sapelo Island incentives to create cottage industries.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, Stakeholders	TBD	General Fund
Develop a masterplan for restoration and preservation of assets on Sapelo.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, DNR, Stakeholders	TBD	General Fund
Seek funding to restore the Reynolds Mansion.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, Sea Island, DNR	TBD	General Fund
Seek private investment to manage the Reynolds Mansion.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, Sea Island	TBD	General Fund
Update County ordinances to provide residents at or near the Harris Neck Wildlife Refuge incentives to create cottage industries.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	Staff Time	General Fund
Work with the State of Georgia and the City of Darien to restore the Huston Mansion and Dairy Barn on Butler Island.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, DNR, City of Darien,	TBD	HPC Funds, CIG, African-American Historic Funds
Establish designated kayak/boating tours in various waterways and establish outposts and nature walks through areas of interest.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, DNR,	TBD	CIG, General Funds
Work with the Chamber of Commerce to promote the historic churches.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, Chamber, Church leaders, DCA Tourism	Staff Time	General Funds
Work with the Chamber of Commerce to promote the Altamaha River Corridor.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, Chamber, DCA Tourism	Staff Time	General Funds
Host an annual retreat that includes monitoring accomplishments, training and developing current and new leaders, and appointed officials.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, BOE, CRC, IDA, Chamber, DCA Tourism, DDA, Workforce, DOD	Staff Time	General Funds

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT								
Action/Implementation Strategy	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Continue to revise regulations to be consistent with Coastal Comprehensive Plan.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	Staff Time	General Fund
Develop proposal for community facilities projects and set priorities within project classifications.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	Staff Time	General Fund
Continue to identify and implement recreation projects as part of the list of potential capital projects.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	TBD	General Fund, Grants, SPLOST
Promote area around I-95 exit for economic development and as gateway to the county.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, IDA	\$5,000	General Fund
Continue to develop and distribute promotional materials in support of history and culture-based tourism.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, IDA	\$5,000	General Fund, Grants
Continue to coordinate and cooperate with BOE on issues of mutual interest such as development of infrastructure.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	Staff Time	General Fund, Grants
Consider actions to encourage construction of low and moderate income single family housing.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	Staff Time	General Fund, Grants
Work with IDA to install new infrastructure in Industrial Park.			X			McIntosh County, IDA	McIntosh County, IDA	\$110,000/yr.
HOUSING								
Action/Implementation Strategy	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Submit application to DCA Georgia Initiative for Community Housing (GICH).	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, CRC, Stakeholders	Staff Time	General Funds
Audit the ordinances and include initiatives to update or draft new development regulations including those that support affordable housing, livable principles, and address accessory units.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	Staff Time	General Funds
Audit and update the ordinances as they relate to code enforcement, property maintenance, and abatement to address the issue of blight.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	Staff Time	General Funds

COMMUNITY FACILITIES								
Action/Implementation Strategy	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Identify a suitable location for a fire station on Sapelo Island.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	TBD	General Funds
Work with the State to rehabilitate the Community Center on Sapelo Island.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, HPC	TBD	Grant Funding
Construct a public dock for day visitors at Sapelo Island.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, HPC, DNR	TBD	Grant Funding
Complete renovation of existing County Courthouse	X					McIntosh County	\$350,000	SPLOST
Create Masterplan or future Leisure Services Complex on purchased property.	X					McIntosh County	\$10,000	SPLOST
Seek funding for construction of future leisure services complex.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	Staff Time	General Fund
Continue to improve water infrastructure countywide.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	TBD	CDBG/USDA
Install a Voter system to improve public safety and emergency management communications.	X					McIntosh County	\$50,000	SPLOST
Construct a Water Department Facility	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	\$50,000	SPLOST, CDBG
Purchase three fire tankers	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	\$150,000/each	SPLOST, CDBG
TRANSPORTATION								
Action/Implementation Strategy	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Work with GDOT to secure an Interchange at Exit 52 for adequate access to Industrial Park.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, IDA, GDOT	TBD	GDOT
Pave King Swamp Road to industrial arterial standards to promote industrial development.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, IDA, GDOT	TBD	IDO
Submit yearly grant application to complete the Highlander Trail of the East Coast Greenway.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, CRC, GDOT	Staff Time	General Fund
Complete the sidewalk on 251 through to Hwy 17 for mobility and safety.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, GDOT	TBD	TBD

NATURAL, CULTURAL, AND HISTORIC RESOURCES								
Action/Implementation Strategy	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Work with US Fish & Wildlife to properly mark, label the historic content of the Harris Neck National Wildlife Refuge for visitor interpretation/education.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, US Fish & Wildlife, The Nature Conservancy	TBD	TBD
Work with US Fish & Wildlife to create an interpretive center on the Refuge.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, US Fish & Wildlife, The Nature Conservancy	TBD	TBD
Identify historic church structures at risk and funding to assist with preservation efforts.	X	X	X	X	X	Chamber of Commerce, McIntosh County, DCA, HPC, Stakeholders	TBD	TBD
Work with the Chamber to provide additional promotion of the area's most tangible resources including the Altamaha Corridor, Harris Neck, Fishing Villages, and historic churches.	X	X	X	X	X	Chamber of Commerce, McIntosh County, DCA, HPC, Stakeholders	TBD	TBD
Implement the Altamaha Scenic Corridor Management Plan.	X	X	X	X	X	Chamber of Commerce, McIntosh County, City of Darien, HPC, Stakeholders	TBD	TBD
Create Highway 17 Cultural and Heritage Tourism ordinance to protect and enhance the corridor.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, DCA, HPC, Chamber of Commerce, Stakeholders	TBD	TBD
Continue to develop programs to enhance and promote cultural and historic resources to the public.	X					McIntosh County	\$1,000	General Fund
Continue to designate historic districts, unique landmarks, and to protect natural resources following DNR/HPD guidelines.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	\$25,000	General Fund, Grants, SPLOST
Continue to investigate all opportunities for conservation of protected animal and plant habitats, achievement of water quality standards and management of water resources, conservation of freshwater and saltwater marshlands, and protection of aquifer recharge areas.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	Staff Time	General Fund, Grants



LAND USE								
Action/Implementation Strategy	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Audit ordinances to update or create nature-based economic development initiatives are consistent with natural resource conservation and protection.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	\$5,000	General Fund
Audit ordinance to update or create covenants for industrial park standards that adhere to best management practices.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	\$5,000	General Fund
Conduct a feasibility study on the long-term need of development impact fees.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	TBD	General Fund
Update or create tree ordinance that also maintains existing natural vegetation.		X				McIntosh County	\$5,000	General Fund
Develop a Public Parks Masterplan that includes opportunities to maximize walking, bicycling, and other recreational activities.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	TBD	General Fund
Audit ordinance to update or create specific desirable uses on major highway and gateway corridors.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	\$5,000	General Fund
Audit the ordinances to update or create overlay districts that protect the character and promote compatible development.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	\$5,000	General Fund
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION								
Action/Implementation Strategy	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source
Host an annual retreat that includes monitoring accomplishments, training and developing current and new leaders, and appointed officials.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, BOE, CRC, IDA, Chamber, DCA Tourism, DDA, Coastal Workforce, DOD	TBD	General Fund
Provide training for the Planning & Zoning Board.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	TBD	General Fund
Work with BOE to strengthen schools in workforce preparedness and competitiveness.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, BOE, Coastal Pines, Business, Coastal Workforce, IDA	Staff Time	General Fund
Work with GDOT to create Interchange Exit 52	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, GDOT, IDA	Staff Time	General Fund
Work with State of Georgia for privatization/ intergovernmental administration of Cabretta Island Campground, the Reynolds Mansion on Sapelo Island and the Huston Mansion on Butler Island.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, DNR, Legislators	Staff Time	General Fund
Partner with Workforce Coastal to improve workforce training and readiness in support of economic development.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, Workforce Coastal, BOE, IDA	Staff Time	General Fund
Work with City of Darien on areas of mutual interest.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County, City of Darien	Staff Time	General Fund
Continue to initiate contact w/other local governments and institutions in our region to find solutions to common problems, or to craft region wide-strategies.	X	X	X	X	X	McIntosh County	Staff Time	General Fund

# REPORT OF ACCOMPLISHMENTS

## 9.3

Activity	Year	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Status
<b>DEVELOPMENT PATTERNS</b>					
Pursue completion of the Highlander Trail.	2016	McIntosh County, DCA, CRC	\$500,000	DCA/CRC Greenway Funds	Underway (on-going)
Continue to develop marketing program for environmentally sensitive economic development.	2013-2018	McIntosh County	\$5,000	General Fund, Private Organizations	Underway (on-going)
Support DOT improvements Hwy 251 at I-95 including road, sidewalk and landscaping improvements.	2015	McIntosh County	\$15,000	General Fund, IDA, DOT, TEA, Private Organizations	Completed
<b>SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b>					
Continue to revise regulations to be consistent with Coastal Comprehensive Plan.	2013-2018	McIntosh County	Staff	General Fund	Underway (on-going)
Develop proposal for community facilities projects and set priorities within project classifications.	2013-2018	McIntosh County	Staff	General Fund	Underway (on-going)
Continue to identify and implement recreation projects as part of the list of potential capital projects.	2013-2018	McIntosh County	TBD	General Fund, Grants, SPLOST	Underway (on-going)
Promote area around I-95 exit for economic development and as gateway to the county.	2013-2018	McIntosh County, IDA	\$5,000	General Fund	Underway (on-going)
Continue to develop and distribute promotional materials in support of history and culture-based tourism.	2013-2018	McIntosh County, IDA	\$5,000	General Fund, Grants	Underway (on-going)
Continue to coordinate and cooperate with BOE on issues of mutual interest such as development of infrastructure.	2013-2018	McIntosh County	Staff Time	General Fund, Grants	Underway (on-going)
Consider to consider actions to encourage construction of low and moderate income single family housing.	2013-2018	McIntosh County	Staff Time	General Fund, Grants	Underway (on-going)
Work with IDA to install new infrastructure in Industrial Park.	2013-2018	McIntosh County, IDA	\$110,000/yr.		Underway 2020
<b>RESOURCE CONSERVATION</b>					
Continue to develop programs to enhance and promote cultural and historic resources to the public.	2010	McIntosh County	\$1,000	General Fund	Underway (on-going)
Continue to designate historic districts, unique landmarks, and to protect natural resources following DNR/HPD guidelines.	2013-2018	McIntosh County	\$25,000	General Fund, Grants, SPLOST	Underway (on-going)
Continue to investigate all opportunities for conservation of protected animal and plant habitats, achievement of water quality standards and management of water resources, conservation of freshwater and saltwater marshlands, and protection of aquifer recharge areas.	2013-2018	McIntosh County	Staff Time	General Fund, Grants	Underway (on-going)

Activity	Year	Responsible Party	Cost Estimate	Funding Source	Status
<b>RESOURCE CONSERVATION (continued)</b>					
Continue to pursue adoption and implementation of tree ordinance.	2013-2018	McIntosh County	Staff Time	General Fund	Underway 2019
Build and operate a convenient center for recycling at the landfill.	2013-2018	McIntosh County	\$10,000/yr.	General Fund	Completed
<b>GOVERNMENTAL RELATIONS</b>					
Continue to initiate contact w/other local governments and institutions in our region to find solutions to common problems, or to craft region wide-strategies.	2013-2018	McIntosh County	Staff Time	General Fund	Underway (on-going)
<b>COMMUNITY FACILITIES</b>					
Complete renovation of existing County Courthouse	2014	McIntosh County	\$350,000	SPLOST	Underway 2020
Feasibility study for County Courthouse	2014	McIntosh County	\$20,000	General Fund	Postponed Funding
Masterplan future Leisure Services Complex on purchased property.	2013	McIntosh County	\$10,000	SPLOST	Underway 2022
Seek funding for construction of future leisure services complex.	2013-2018	McIntosh County	Staff Time	General Fund	Underway 2020
Construct fire station on Sapelo Island	2015	McIntosh County	\$50,000	General Fund, Water Fund, SPLSOT	Underway 2020
Continue to improve water infrastructure countywide.	2013-2018	McIntosh County	TBD	CDBG/USDA	Underway (on-going)
Purchase a mobile command vehicle for the EMA.	2015	McIntosh County	444,000	SPLOST	Postponed
Purchase two ambulances.	2015	McIntosh County	\$150,000 each	SPLOST	funding
Perform annual road paving according to priorities.	2013-2018	McIntosh County	4,180,000/yr.	SPLOST	Completed
Install a Voter system to improve public safety and emergency management communications.	2014	McIntosh County	\$50,000	SPLOST	Underway (on-going)
Purchase two motor graders	2014	McIntosh County	\$125,000	SPLOST	Completed
Construct a Water Department Facility	2018	McIntosh County	\$50,000	SPLOST, CDBG	Underway (on-going) Accomplished as Completed
Purchase three fire tankers	2014	McIntosh County	\$150,000 / each	SPLOST, CDBG	Underway (on-going) Accomplished as Completed

David Stevens, Chairman  
Bill Watson, Vice-Chairman  
Joel Williams, Commissioner  
Charles Jordan, Commissioner  
Kelly S. Spratt, Commissioner

Adam S. Poppell, III, County Attorney  
Richard E. Braun, Jr., Deputy County Attorney  
John "Patrick" Zoucks, County Manager  
Shawn Jordan, Deputy County Manager  
Sherrell D. Davis, County Clerk



McIntosh County Board of Commissioners

P.O. Box 584 • 1200 North Way • Darien, Georgia 31305 • 912-437-6671 • FAX 912-437-6416

State of Georgia

County of McIntosh

Resolution 2017-8

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MCINTOSH COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS TO  
ADOPT THE MCINTOSH COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**Whereas**, McIntosh County is subject to the State of Georgia Planning Act of 1989 which calls for a certified Comprehensive Plan in order to obtain and maintain the status of a Qualified Local Government; and

**Whereas**, McIntosh County is a member of the Coastal Regional Commission, an agency created to provide regional planning and intergovernmental coordination among certain county and city governments in the coastal area of Georgia; and

**Whereas**, the Comprehensive has been prepared in accordance with the Minimum Planning Standards and Procedures for Local Comprehensive Planning established by the Georgia Planning Act of 1989; and Public Hearings were held on October 10, 2017, February 26, 2018, and March 28, 2018 before the McIntosh County Board of Commissioners, where the public had the opportunity for public input, to review goals, objectives, and strategies associated with the plan.

**Whereas**, the Comprehensive Plan was transmitted for regional and state review on February 27, 2018 and approved by the State of Georgia Department of Community Affairs (DCA) on March 16, 2018.

**Now, therefore be it resolved**, that the McIntosh County Board of Commissioners hereby adopt the 2018 McIntosh County Comprehensive Plan Update.

SO RESOLVED this 28<sup>th</sup> day of March, 2018.

THE BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Mr. David Stevens, Chairman

Attest:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Clerk, Board of Commissioners

